THE AFRICAN BOOK OF SORROWS

The African Book of Sorrows

RAW MANUSCRIPT

COAB 1970-2026

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The African Book of Sorrows

RAW MANUSCRIPT

CENTRUM TER ONDERZOEK VAN DE AMAZONE BIJBEL

The Bison Flies

Bone and Bamboo

The Pirates of Taroon

Tara from Rhodes

De Amsterdamse Nachten

De Zwarte Koning

Rodenberg Almanak II

Nonnendorp

THE BISON FLIES

coab 1970-2017

2000-2017

The Bison Flies

These stories are powerful medicins I got on my shamanic trip through the underworld during my life. It is a sort of medicin wheel of heavy metaphorical and cryptical, mirroring dreams and visions as portals to the other worlds. It is the raw manuscript, so it hasn't been edited. It has been written down how it came through.

Dutch translation :

Deze verhalen zijn krachtige medicijnen die ik kreeg op mijn shamaanse tocht door de onderwereld gedurende mijn leven. Het is een soort medicijnwiel van zwaar metaforische en cryptische, spiegelende dromen en visioenen als portalen tot de andere werelden. Het is het rauwe manuscript, dus het is niet ge-edit. Het is neergeschreven zoals het doorkwam.

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Have Some Tea

After the shipwreck they came to this beautiful new world, this island. It was full of monkeys and tropical birds, like paradise. They ocean turned out to be beautiful. They got enchanted lives here, like a sorcerer was watching over them. They were all so hungry, but the trees here offered delicious food. They made themselves huts and tents, waiting for the night which didn't seem to come. The days were long here, or there weren't any nights here. They saw the sun moving closer and closer like it was swallowing the whole island. The beach was full of pearls. Lots of monkeys were on the beach. They were funny creatures, and some birds played with them. 'Dress up for the emperor,' a parrot was screaming.

The flowers here were opening up, spreading their powders. There was a huge wind, mixing all treasures given by flowers in the air. There were a lot of vulcanoes on the island. Some monkeys were playing on violins. 'The wizard is coming,' they were singing. Were they in a dream ? There were blue flowers growing on the beach and suddenly everything became psychedelic. 'Oh,' some of the men were screaming, 'are we dead ? Is this paradise ?'

A small man with a beard was coming closer on the beach, approaching the men. 'Welcome,' he said with a delirious voice.

‘Welcome to what ?’ some of the men asked. Then they were all fainting. The small men took them up and brought them to another place one by one. When they woke up they had been tied.

‘What is all this,’ one of the men was asking.

‘Oh,’ the small man said, ‘this is the bottom of the sea.’

‘Are you mister death ?’ they asked.

‘Yes, call me that,’ the small man said.

‘Okay, but give us some more information,’ someone asked. ‘Where are we, and what is going to happen.’

‘You are dead,’ the small man said. ‘Welcome to hell.’

‘Hell ?’ one of the man shouted. ‘Man, are you crazy. We don’t belong to hell.’

‘Well, why did you come here then,’ the small man said. Then the ties by which the men had been tied started to burn, and the men started to burn as well, and they all shrieked. The small man pushed on a button and the platform on which the men had been tied went downstairs like an elevator. It ended in a cage with all sorts of big cats who started to eat from their flesh.

‘No,’ they were shouting. ‘We never asked for this.’

‘It’s a gift,’ the small man said through some speakers.

‘We do not want this gift,’ some were shrieking. ‘Stop it now.’

‘No,’ the small man said. ‘Party is forever.’

‘Oh, you’re kidding us,’ one man said.

The small man started laughing. ‘It will only get worse,’ he said.

The men started to shriek louder. ‘We’re in hell,’ they shouted. Some were screaming. ‘Please tell us what we have to do to get out of here,’ a few men asked the small man.

‘You already had your chances,’ the small man said. ‘But you didn’t listen.’

‘Okay, but what did we do wrong,’ the men asked.

The small man started to laugh again. ‘Ha ha, you will never know.’

‘But that isn’t honest then,’ one of the men said.

‘Be sure you just pay the price for all your deeds,’ the small man said. ‘And because your deeds are a growing pain, so are you in growing pain now. Can’t help that.’

‘Okay, but give us any philosophy to get us out of here,’ the men said.

‘No,’ the small man said, ‘you will only get more dumb.’ Then the small man laughed hysterically.

Some men started to weep desperately. Again the small man pushed on a button while they went into the depths. Now they were sinking underwater, where a lot of sharks were swimming. ‘No, you can’t do that to us,’ they shrieked even harder.

‘Why not ?’ the small man said through a speaker. ‘Welcome to my fairground. It will never end.’

Then the small man started to dance and sing. The sky was burning, and also the water started to burn. The small man started to laugh harder and harder.

‘The music is nice, huh ? It kind of takes away the senses. Just listen and the pain won’t be too much.’

‘I need to have that music,’ a man was saying. ‘I need to have it for my son.’ Soon other men were saying it, and a fight rose up. ‘Fight for your life,’ the small man said. While he pushed the volume switch higher.

Blood was coming out of the ears of the men, and some birds offered them jobs to quench the pain a bit. Now they were fighting about the jobs. ‘Easy, easy,’ the small man said. ‘There are jobs for everyone.’

And they got jobs, and they got rich, to keep their senses at a distance, and they could build up a happy life. But the small man knew better. He knew it was a cage. What if he would take it away one day ?

‘Rich man, riches are making them deaf, taking them away from the tear,

But when they become too deaf they don’t hear my music anymore,

Then I can’t sooth them anymore, and then hell is what they are reaching for,

Let me give you some balance, I will bring you some soft pop, some soul and some classical,

Or just some happy sounds of a city, of a family, you know that is your destiny,

There’s no way to escape, you’re on the fairground of tragedy,’ the small man sang.

But one day I saw a wild indian blowing an arrow into the face of the small man. The small man got poisoned and it seemed his fairground and it's fairytales was dying. The indian had a black box in which he put the small man, and then he pushed some buttons. I heard the small man screaming and weeping. Then the indian took some thin pins to sting it through the black box, and he threw the black box into the ocean. I never saw a greater explosion.

But one day a little girl found the black box on the beach. It had turned into a small musical box now of a purple black and pink colour. It displayed strange songs and rhymes. The girl loved it and took it home. One day the small box said : swallow me. She did and became one of the greatest singers. They all wanted to be with her, as she could save them from hell. But who could save them from her ?

One day she told me this story, that she could turn into a monster. And I believed her, as I knew gifts and talents come with many curses. And I said : be creative. You can bend those spells. Make art of it. You can change it, move it to another direction. No need to be nihilistic, no need to be fatalistic. 'Okay,' she said, 'but let me kiss you then, so it can also jump on you.' Then she kissed me. It was like a tattoo. It burnt me. It followed me everywhere, and I knew I could only quench it by the kiss of another like her, one of the greatest singers. But those two singers soon got in a fight against each other, and I seemed to be the only one who could bring the flame of peace again, as I was possessed by both of their kisses. I was inbetween them, and it was too heavy, so I needed a third one. When I got a third one, they formed a triangle, and I could escape, but the triangle became the most dangerous thing in the world, swallowing everything. One day the small man stepped out of the triangle and was laughing. He was proud of his big machine. While I sighed and thought about having some tea.

The Savages of Beli

There were fights on the pirate ship. Savages had climbed in and started a war. They took the pirates with them in their boats. They were with so many. They took the pirates to their island, where their mysterious queen throned. They didn't know if she was human. No one had ever

seen her. She lived behind a veil in a cave. She spoke through the veil, and no one was allowed to see her. The savages feared her. They knew they would die if they would ever go beyond the veil. They brought the pirates in front of the veil. Smoke was coming from the veil, and they could see through the veil that there was something like fire.

The queen was roaring : 'Burn them ! Eat them ! Just make sure they will be digested, and feed their bones to the hyenas.' One pirate could get free from the grip of the savages and dived through the veil. He just wanted to see what was behind there before he would die. He was thrown back by a mysterious force, while his eyes were bleeding. He shrieked. 'I... it is a monstrous ornament of a golden ball and jewelry, also with a black golden ball ! It is too much light, my eyes and body cannot bear it ! I have seen it ! I have seen it ! Let the gods have mercy on me !' Then the skin surrounding his eyes started to melt, and suddenly in a flash his body was a fluffy mess. The savages had put their hands before their eyes, and more pirates could escape. They ran outside of the cave, and dived into the water, but crocodiles grasped them. Then suddenly the waters started to burn. From behind the veil there was roaring. 'No one was allowed to ever see me !' the queen roared. The savages were shaking. 'You will all pay for letting this foul pirate touch my veil and go through it !' The savages fell to the ground. Still some pirates were with them. Among them was also a boy. The queen started roaring so much, and more fire seemed to come forth from behind the veil. Suddenly all the savages were running away.

'Come closer, boy,' she suddenly spoke with a much softer and friendlier voice to the boy. 'Me ?' the boy asked. 'Yes, you,' the queen said. 'Come closer.'

'Don't do it,' some of the pirates with him whispered. But hypnotized as in trance the boy walked closer to the veil. 'You aren't scared, are you ?' the queen asked.

'No,' the boy said. Suddenly he felt a warm hand on his hand, which took him behind the veil. He saw that the ornament had lost it's glow. It didn't shine anymore, but there was still a bit fire. 'I am dying,' said the queen, 'because someone has seen my glory. I cannot take it. I want you to be the new ruler.' She stretched a sort of arms out to the boy, but then the ornament exploded. The boy ran away to make himself safe.

'What did she say ?' the pirates asked. 'You are glowing,' they said. But the boy didn't speak. He could not speak. Suddenly it was even hard for the pirates to look at him, as he was shining so much. 'Quick, bring him behind the veil !' one of the pirates shouted. 'My eyes are stinging !' They all put a hand before their eyes and didn't want to watch the boy anymore. Smoke and fire seemed to come forth from the boy, and soon he was behind the veil. 'Now stay there !' a pirate shouted. 'As there are spooky things going on.'

After a few days the boy could speak again, but he figured he had a very low voice now. 'It is the voice of the wolves,' one of the pirates said.

'I don't glow so much anymore,' said the boy. 'Do you want to see me ?'

Some of the pirates carefully checked, and he was right. He could come forward now. After another few days his voice was also normal again. Soon the savages found out about their queen. There was a mark on the place of the hand where the queen had touched the boy, like a red pink spot. That was why the savages now accepted the boy as their new ruler. They called him Rula. But when the boy became older, the red pink spot on his hand started to hurt more

and more. He had to live in so much pain that social contact became harder and harder for him. So one day he decided to live behind the veil again. This time he took a closer look at the ruin of the ornament. He saw a glowing switch, and when he turned the switch a gigantic wall behind it opened up, and he stared right into another cave. There was a staircase down, and soon he stood in front of the hugest savage ship he ever saw. It was much bigger than a pirate ship, and it was full of savages who seemed to live here. Because of the spot on his hand they feared him instantly. The savages here also called him Rula.

He went on the ship and soon found out that there was another veiled place. The savages seemed to fear this place, and when he looked behind the veil he saw ornaments much like the queen was, but this time they were much smaller, and although they glowed, they didn't hurt his eyes. He decided to stay here. He could command the savages from this place when necessary. Soon they were on full sea. It had a healing effect on him, and he more and more came out of the veiled place.

Skinhunters of the Laperid

Germenezer was a hunter, one who loved to bath in the blood and juices of his prey. He often went to the huntingfields to build a mountain of meat, but the thing he liked most was skins. He hang the skins of his prey all around his hut, also at the branches of the trees. He made tents of it, clothes and blankets. Germenezer was a savage one having no conscience at all. His conscience he lost in his youth after many torturings inflicked on him. They didn't have any mercy on him. He lost his heart in that period, and now he was a skinhunter with no mercy. It was like it was healing his past, seeing the skins waving in the wind. He wanted to see the world burn. He skinned everything : predators, cattle, and also men. He had the most precious sorts of leather. Although he was a skinhunter, he also had plenty of meat and blood .... warm blood, and he loved to drink it. But one day there was a war against him. Men came to the realms of his hut, and imprisoned him to take him to their castle. Here they threw him into a deep cellar, where they chained him against the wall. Years went by in which Germenezer didn't see any sunlight. But one day they threw a woman into the cellar, and they also chained her against the wall. The woman seemed to be a very wise woman, who could teach Germenezer a lot. In the beginning all he wanted was to have her skin and eat her, but later on he started to like her a bit. It was like she put some flames in his head, and he could think clearminded for the first time in his life.

To their surprise they got their freedom back one day. The woman would stay close to his neighbourhood, and at times he visited her. But it was like the woman was giving him his conscience back, and one day they got in a fight in which he killed her. Years of loneliness followed. Years in which he took more skins than ever before. He built an empire by the bones and the skins, an empire in which he would be the emperor, but he didn't have one single soul as his servant. He created a world by the material of death. And this time he had an idea. He would use this empire as a skinfarm, so that he didn't need to hunt all the time. He became a skinbreeder. It was the world's biggest skinfarm, and the realm was full of traps. Not many dared to come there.

He hated women, men, and animals, but he liked their skins. He liked the leather, and imagined what he could do with it. He built the world's trickiest farm from which there was no escape. No one could bring this fortress down. There were too many tricks and traps. If it would catch you, you wouldn't survive. It was like Germenezer found some peace within for the first time of his life. But then a flood came up, and it washed the farm away. Germenezer had built a sailship of wood and skins, so he could save himself. After years of sailing and living by fish and wateranimals he reached an island. The island was plenty of food, plenty of animals, but they didn't have skins. On the island a giant-woman lived. She had the most beautiful skin Germenezer ever saw. But he could only like her. The woman gave him the best food there was and soon Germenezer was a giant like her. She brought him to a huge cloudship and showed him a skinfarm inside. Here the finest mills were, and there were also birds here. The woman used a lot of feathers, as she was a featherhunter. It interested him, and soon they hunted together. Germenezer became obsessed by the feathers, as it was the finest jewelry of the ship. But the ship needed some trickery and traps. Germenezer would take care of that.

The End

Featherfarm

It was detailed the way the machine picked the feathers. Kurgos looked at it with a smile. These machines were from his father, and when he would be older he would work here too. Kurgos sometimes went here with a lot of friends to show them the wonderfull mechanism his father had invented. It was kind of cruel, as the birds didn't have anything to say about it. Their beaks were often tied together because otherwise the noise would be too hard. They got

caught by strange traps full of trickery and by all sorts of webs. Kurgos' father was a master in this. And he caught the most wonderful birds from all over the place, only for their feathers. By certain food the machinery made them big. In his hut Kurgos had a lot of rare feathers. He got them from his father. Because his father kept birds they ate a lot of birdmeat. Not all the birds had a good taste, but his father always said that birdmeat was good for him. Kurgos himself was a fisherboy. He did this with a lot of other boys in a sort of class. But when he would be older he wanted to be a birdhunter and he wanted to work in his father's farm. There was a lot to do there on the farm, but the machines did most of the jobs. One day the machines quited their jobs and no one knew why. There was no way Kurgos' father could repair the machines as he didn't know what was wrong with them. From that day on everything had to be primitive again. The workers of the farm had to hunt a lot more, and they also had to do the work which the machines did in earlier times. It was a challenge for Kurgos to invend some better machinery. No one seemed to do that better than Kurgos, as no one was more intelligent but him. And he could devellop a machine even to catch and handle the biggest birds of prey. All the boys of his class went to see his amazing work, and they wanted him to make something like that also for the waters. But Kurgos only wanted to be with the birds. Birds attracted him more than fishes. Most of the boys wanted to work in the featherfarm, and those who went back for the fishes became somehow the outcasts. The ones with the best feathers were the ones with the most power. This was how they chose their chiefs. But Kurgos only wanted to be on the featherfarm. He wanted to live there. He became obsessed with birds, more than his father was.

Years later when Kurgos was a woman from another tribe came to the featherfarm. She had heard about this farm and wanted to know more about it. She was also obsessed with birds. Kurgos fell in love with the woman, but the woman said she would only be with him if he would follow her to her tribe. The woman lived in a cave, together with lions, and other wild animals. They seemed to be totally under her control. 'I have a farm underground,' the woman said. He followed her to the place, and he saw the most amazing things, like leopards in cages, and the wealthiest underground birds. He also saw several sorts of giant-chicken. Suddenly the woman changed into a bird herself and then she flew away. Kurgos didn't know what to do now, but then he saw her changing into a huge dragon. Kurgos didn't feel any fear, but was only amazed by the show. He could see a huge heart appearing in the dragon. Then she turned into a woman again, having feathers at her arms like wings. She looked like a chief with a head-dress full of white erected feathers, but her head was like a skull. 'Amazing,' Kurgos thought. She was like the princess of birds. But soon Kurgos had been surrounded by dangerous feathered mills. It was like she was hypnotizing him. Some of the spinning mills looked like the heads of lions. Also her jewelry seemed to spread lights like mills. This woman was dangerous. He couldn't go anywhere now He heard the sounds of bit cats, and then all the mills were gone. She called him from a distant bench from which strange fluids were floating down. He climed on the bench and could see downstairs where he saw the finest featherfarm. He could even walk over it. This woman dwelled in feathers. She seemed to have many birdfriends, strange birds of prey. It seemed she had a hold on his head and heart. She was surrounded by strange dolls. She said these were the souls of birds. Kurgos thought that was kind of strange. Lights seemed to come forwards from the woman, soft lights. 'Come,' the woman said. He followed her to the end of the farm, and then stepped into a cave-hall where some lights were. She showed him her room, where black panthers with yellow eyes stared at him. Some had green eyes, and one or two had blue eyes. Her blankets were dreamy, soft, so soft, that they could never hurt anyone. She stepped in her bed, while the panthers

didn't let him come closer. 'It's okay,' the woman said, and soothed the panthers. Then they stepped away, while Kurgos didn't know what she wanted. 'You still want to be with me ?' she asked.

'Yes,' Kurgos said. She fell asleep, and Kurgos sat down. He seemed to be more interested in her panthers all of a sudden. The panthers led him to a place deeper in the cave-hall. There were more dolls, and the dolls seemed to talk. So these ones were really bird-souls ? Then the dolls stood up, and led him further. They had their own rooms in the cave-halls, and Kurgos was like hypnotized by them. He didn't think about the woman anymore. Then he heard screaming. Kurgos ran back and saw how the woman was changing into a snake. Then she said : 'Follow me.' She led him to secret places where he saw strange things he couldn't explain. She gave him feathers he could tie around his arms, and suddenly the snake slided around his body. There was a pressure on him and suddenly it was like the snake was in his mind. 'I'll lead you forwards,' she said. He had colours in his head, strange colours. Everything around him started to change into meat now, but he knew it was only in his head. It was the work of the snake. She had hypnotized him into this dreamworld. He saw spiders around him eating from the meat, and she saw her again with a towel around her. 'I am now in your head,' she said. 'You said you wanted to be with me.' Then lights seemed to come forward from her body, like mills. And they also came out of her mouth. The lights seemed to move her away, but he knew she was in his head now. He stood up, made his way through all the caves, and went back to his own tribe again.

On his way back he met some tall monkeys with big pink stripes like lights on them. They followed him all the way back to his tribe. It was like her gift to him, and he gave them a place in his featherfarm.

The End

Bird Princess

She is the bird princess, sitting on a hill, enjoying the day, feathers tied at her arms, doing the dance. There is no one like her. When she fades away, and when she appears like falling from

the sun, so erected. When she touches the earth it’s doom. Feathers tied at her legs, and when she screams, fireblood comes forward. She looks like she is alive and healthy, but suddenly all skulls around. Bird Princess like a flying spider, sucking the blood away. She has no mercy at all when she comes down, but she has style and it is an art. Bird Princess, her arrows deep, letting them all weep. She wants to see the planet in blood and fire, no, she doesn’t hesitate, she lets hear her cry. By her mills she raises featherfarms, then lights fall down, while she smiles. Her smile like no one else does.

Followed by panthers, winged and well, looking so healthy, but suddenly death skulls all around. They are winged, with lights in their eyes, it’s a wake up cry. A thousand years of nightmare are on her bow, like sharp arrows she pierces the sky. She is a warrior and a hunter, in featherfarms she glides down. Like the snake in the distance, erected and tall.

Lights like featherfarms fall down, mills are spinning, ornaments are moving from side to side. Jewels in the distance, lights spinning like mills. By her lights she ties them all. It’s an art how she takes the feathers away. Her lights, like a jewel in the night, like a mill in a featherfarm moving from side to side. Her mills look like faces, pretty faces.

She dwells between the feathers, as in a bath. She holds jewels in her hands which she likes to touch. Jewels come to her in the night, and she sends them out like soldiers, they are moving through the stars spreading their lights. To her it’s all a featherfarm, holding feathers close to her heart. She doesn’t care to become dirty when she dives down, for her feathers is everything which counts.

The End

The Swamp

The indian piramid was large. I went from layer to layer. The sun was shining hot. It almost tatood my back. I wanted to know about the secret, the mystery, supposed to be on the top of the pyramid. I desired to see and feel it to become a warrior. The old gods blocked the portals to the ancient worlds, and only gave access to those who were worthy to be initiated. It was a fire there burning on top of the pyramid. Sweat was dripping from my head. My hair was wet. I desired this key, I desired to enter all those skeleton worlds, the worlds of the ancient.

There were eagles around the fire, and the sunlight was almost like a mirror. On top of the pyramid there was a big wide tall stake like a ladder. The ancient ones had built it, but it was too dangerous now to climb it. Eagles were living there. They were bloodthirsty. But I wanted to make an attempt anyway. The stake was so wide and big, almost like a mountain. The path was sandy. Trees had grown here and bushes. It was a path to heaven.

I could feel and hear the breath of the ancient ones, who were now skeletons in the sky, living in the illusions of the afterlife. They had made themselves big worlds, things we didn't understand. These were the things we suffered under in our minds, and the things we fought about. None of us would understand these things.

The gods were merciless, cruel in our eyes, but they just invited us to make the journey, to come where they were. They needed to protect their treasures. They had gained them by death, and we had to gain it by death as well. At the ends of pain there was bliss, sweetness, like drugs. It was growing there, on top of the stakes. They looked like matches, like wands and like strange bony tall skeleton-toes. The gods used them. They used them to make their illusions. On top of these wands there were strange lights and strange flames. You could only reach these lights by dying in hunger and drowning. There was no other way. It was a lonely path, for at the stake you would lose everything.

It was a strange door on top of the big stake standing tall on the pyramid. It was completely made of skeleton-toes. The stench was unbearable, while the sun was almost grilling me. I was almost bathing in my own sweat. I made it through the door made of skeleton-toes, and I just came at the other side of the pyramid. It was strange. Eagles were sitting on that door, staring at me. A softness fell on me. There was a gate close to me to enter the stake on top. I slided down across a rope. I was inside the stake now. It was a deep pit, but finally I came to another world. Here the skeletons lived with their illusions.

The biggest wizards had the tallest wands, and some used them as staffs. They were prophets, most of the time of doom. The stench of this world was unbearable. The ancient ones lived here. The stench was so overwhelming that only the stench could form sights. There were no

usual weapons here, only the skeleton-toes, which they used as rods and knives. There was such a stench that it brought forth flames and sounds. The stench seemed to be a way of control here.

A huge skeleton seemed to be the boss here. He had a throne made of skeleton-toes, and his whole domain seemed to be made of it. By the stench he had enslaved them all, doing his will. His laws were written on huge tablets, all by stench. He guarded the flame of stench. It was a flame he once found in the head of a beheaded girl. He had put this head on a stick, and it made him the most powerfull man in the underworld. They all burnt by this flame, by which he kept them in his illusion.

His kingdom was full of stairways. He was obsessed by stairways. And lights were always moving across the stairways, dragging the skeletons forth. It was the light of stench. His kingdom was tragic. All he could inflict was hunger and death, in deep suffering. That was what the flames and lights were creating. Those who survived all this ruled with him together. He made giants of them, immune to the lights and flames. However they moved by sound, by communication. The sound of stench kept them sane, and was their immunity. They were the capitalists and opportunists of this world, the royal ones. They had already climbed the ladder, and sank down along the rope. They knew the depths of this world, and it finally made them fly. They had places in the sky. They would only help if someone would follow their traces. But they had much more important things to do : to continue their journey. They were building highways in the sky. They lived by communication.

The gods were these capitalists, prophets of doom, only to let their kingdom rise higher. This was why the gods were sending floods, the floods of stench. They were careless. And all these floods were nothing but steps on the ladder. The capitalists in the usual world were just their omens, the shadow of a much greater capitalism, having eternal value. They had the power over heaven and hell. They had their cruel laws. They were the judges of the afterlife. But the difference was : they had been to hell already. They knew both sides of the game. They were a paradox. They could feel.

The stench had opened their feelings. It was a breaker and a heart-breaker, an illusive giant-skeleton living in the depths, in shadows and mysteries, guarding the swamp. It was a swamp-skeleton, the worst and strongest skeleton existing. Even the gods feared him. He had dragged them all into the depths of the swamp where he gave them a new life. But the swamp was deep, dangerous and torture. There was life for those who had reached the bottom of the swamp. The guard of the swamp was a communist. Not a communist like those of the usual world, as they were only shadows and omens of his kingship. He was a machine. It was the communism of heaven and hell, of eternal values, bringing them down in equal suffering. There was nothing but equality, reaching for the depths of the soul, coming from both sides. The guard of the swamp was the biggest threat against the capitalistic skeleton-gods. By his

fist he could smash their kingdoms until everything was equal in pain. His fist could swell so big that he could even smash the greatest area's. He was a hell-breaker.

He had an army of robots, all emperors. He was also obsessed by stairways. One day he entered the domain of the throning skeleton. He smashed it down by his fist, and his emperors took the kingdom over. Communism would rule now. And that day the swamp was rising. It was the biggest flood ever. I climbed my way back along the rope. I reached the top of the stake again and went through the door made of skeleton-toes for the second time. It followed me. The swamp made a disaster of my world. But after a few years it was a shiny river, giving much fertility to the world. However it was the darkest river I could imagine. By this river skeletons could reach for our world and could communicate with us.

To me communism was a trick of smart capitalists, like a prison. It was slavery, and it was all to protect the power of those smart capitalists. In my eyes the guard of the swamp was such a person. Our world had been saved by something else, named anarchy, by indians. It was this biggest machine showing up, which turned the swamp into such a shiny river. It gave freedom, but it dealt with communism and capitalism in such a way that it could be useful. For anarchy always had to protect itself by a certain level of communism and a certain level of capitalism. Those were it's two wings, it's weapons. There was a skeleton called anarchy in the core of the underworld. It was a machine who had actually invent communism and capitalism. It had invented the whole indian pyramid with it's stake and it's door made of skeleton-toes, all to bring those worthy to be initiated into it, all along the rope. However it's biggest weapons were democracy and dictatorship, a strange paradox and a strange door, leading someone to the strange insides of this being. There was so much royalty here, so much delicious food, all brought forth by the stench. It was the taste of stench. It was a strange heart beating while other hearts died only to be taken over by this strange heart, the heart of stench. It was a heart dominating, floating in a bottomless abyss.

Anarchy was the biggest warrior I ever saw, with a lot of weapons. This being was totally made of skeleton-toes. It was burning in a strange fire. I could see it's heart beating through it's ribs. It was making music, but most of all sound-patterns, finally ending in eternal silence, like the most beautiful blossom. Also this skeleton was obsessed by stairways, but his stairways had a lot of holes and empty spaces. The stairways were all made of skeleton-toes. It was a world of skeleton-toes he lived in, and it dominated. He had a harpoon called theocracy, but he didn't use it too often. Only when it was necessary. However some beasts could only be defeated by the harpoon of theocracy.

Anarchy hid the key to the highways in the depths of the abyss. One could only get this key after defeating Anarchy, as in the depths of the abyss he seemed to be nothing but a guard of the worse form of theocracy called monotheism. Anarchy seemed to be a slave of this skeleton. Monotheism had a castle below the bottomless abyss, a castle of mystery, where it

played the organ all day long, burning the worlds above. It was a grill. Monotheism was most feared, but he didn't show up too often.

After defeating Anarchy I finally came to this place. I saw the skeleton behind his organ, and I knew he could spit fire. The dogs of hell were his pets. The fire-spitting lambs of hell were his knights. They marched along the castle on it's walls all the time. On a big wall a cross made of skeleton-toes hung. Venom was dripping from it. It was an anchor of hate, displaying politics, all to protect the skeleton and his organ. Suddenly he stepped away from his organ. He was burning in a strange fire. He came towards me and roared : 'Do you want to know the secret of me ? I have the thinnest skeleton-toes, the sharpest, piercing them all like spears. They are behind the door on the balcony.' I watched the balcony.

'Why do you visit me ?' he asked. 'You have already defeated me, as you defeated my greatest weapons.' Then he fell down, and his body became a stairways to the unreachable balcony high in the building. I climbed upstairs and went through a door on the balcony, where the thinnest spears were. These were the pipes of his organ. Strange sounds came forward from them. It was a strange machine. Someone was playing them like a harp. 'Is this heaven ?' I asked.

'No, it is hell,' the harpist said. 'I make them all suffer by this.'

I didn't hesitate one moment and broke the snares one by one, while fire started to come forth, and lightrays spreading a lot of stench. The harpist melted. A door opened behind the harp and I could enter a new world. It was like a huge cave here. There were some lakes and rivers, and skeletons in boats. 'You have found the key,' they said.

'Yes,' I said. 'Where am I ?'

'The world between the snares,' they said. 'Don't worry about Monotheism,' they said. 'He will grow again after a few days, but at least you are free from him, although you will need it here to a certain level.' They showed me a strange weapon built by venomous skeleton-toes. 'His bones,' they said. I took the weapon. It was like a gun, a bow and a harpoon in one. I smiled. 'So you made him right ?' I asked. They nodded. 'We needed him to protect ourselves,' they said.

They were strange royal skeletons, in a way I didn't see before. I understood they created these horrible creatures all for protection, for it was a mad mad world.

The End

The Swamp II

The indians had huts along the swamp. They were warriors and hunters, living in deep hunger. The swamp was huge, taking a lot of their food away. Some indian tribes also had to sacrifice a lot of food to it, because they thought the swamp would overflow if they wouldn't. They feared the swamp. They already had been interlocked by the swamp. There was no way for them to escape. But one day some indian boys succeeded in building a bridge across the huge swamp which had surrounded them for such a long time. The indians were all very glad, but soon it became clear that the bridge wasn't strong enough. Too many indians were on it at the same time, all falling away in the depths of the swamp. The boys made another bridge and this time they made it stronger, but they also said that the indians shouldn't be on it all at the same time. This time it worked. Many tribes left the area, although there were still a lot of indians who wanted to live in the swamp area. They kind of loved the swamp.

But one day the swamp was really overflowing. No one knew how it could happen, but from that day on the indians started to hunt more, sacrificing more food to the swamp, and the hunger increased dramatically. The indians worked for the swamp and lived for the swamp, and started to believe that if they would leave the swamp it would hunt them down one day. They were in the claws of fear. Everyday the swamp started to rise higher and higher, and the indians knew that there was only one way to become safe. They had to go to the highest mountain of the area. If they would reach it's tops they would come into it's valley where they could live in safety.

It was a long journey. Many tribes participated in it, while the swamp was still taking space everyday. When they finally came into the valley the swamp even followed them there. They were interlocked again, and couldn’t get to any side. The only way to survive was to go underground. So many indians lost hope when they saw the swamp roaring. It came down into the valleys. But in a strange sense it didn’t come any closer. It was like the swamp had reached it’s heights now, and it started to dry up. The people were now in a fertile area, where they had everything. The mountain gave them good harvests every time. But in a strange sense the older ones started to long back for the swamp. One day they went to the tops of the mountain again and saw a world totally covered by the swamp. However the sun had dried it so much that it had become hard. A new nature was developing itself. And some went there to never return. The world was now more fertile than ever.

Savage Tragedy

There was a children's tribe in the depths of the tropical rainforest, a savage tribe. They were lost children, having no parents. They survived by the venoms of the jungle, which they used for hunt. They also used it as medicin. A young boy was their leader. He was described as cruel on a list made by researchers.

The government wanted to have him, they wanted to do tests on him. Some said he had extra-ordinairy abilities. The boy knew he was wanted, that's why he went even deeper into the wilderness with his tribe, and he became even meaner. He feared the government. He wanted to forget about it. It was in that time that the tribe moved underground.

Here they found even more venomous stuff, having the ability to induce undescribable disease, sleep and death. The boy wanted to use it against the government, and against humanity. He wanted to make his tribe safe.

A monster lived in the depth of earth, with a wish to possess the earth. First the boy had a terrible fight against this thing, but he overcame. It was as if he possessed the earth now.

He became smart. He became a breeder. He loved the poison because of it's medical and guarding abilities. One day he kept drinking of the poison and he became terribly ill, as if he was on drugs. Some girls took the leadership over. They were even crueller than the boy, and started to mistreat him in his illness, which didn't seem to get away from him. He became their slave and let him live in hunger. Also the other boys were soon enslaved by the girls, as

their leader had fallen. They had to be necktied all the time, but a strange monster set them free, and took them to the core of earth.

The fallen leader of the boys was like drunk. The strange monster however was dying, and soon the girls found the shelter of the boys and killed the strange monster in order to enslave the boys again. All the boys had to live in hunger. They became weaker everyday, and soon they were not able to do any slave work anymore, so they were nothing but captives.

When all the boys were dead, the girls moved on. The government found them later, and they could do nothing against it. They were put in society, but they were described as strange. They couldn't really adapt. They all died because of this.

The End

The Zombie’s

Curse

Green Rat was an indian of the Mokze tribe, a chief and one of the most dangerous and notorious warleaders ever. He was feared by many tribes from all over the country. Green Rat was his enemies' worst nightmare, and he was a sadist. In time all sorts of legends and fables started to get grip in the heads of many. Tales about his zombifications were the most horrible of them. Those of the Mokze tribe were teethfilers. They did that to their prisoners of war but also to their cattle. It was some sort of ritual. The teeth got filed in such a way that the victim didn't die but lost their lives by the severe chronical pains, slowly turning them into zombies. And thus Green Rat got his extra name The Dentist. Green Rat said that zombies were the best for slavery and for meatproducing. Green Rat knew ways how to use them as meat without having them killed. Green Rat turned them in such a position that they wouldn't be a threat to him.

But one day a fairy visited his teethfiling breeding deep in the forests, where the Mokze tribe lived. She took a lot of elves with her, the darkest sorts, and started a war against Green Rat. Her name was Mozoke. She loved the Mokze tribe, and knew that most of them were not like Green Rat. Green Rat had zombificated many of his own tribe as well. Mozoke visited him in his temple. In a conversation she tried to explain to him what he was doing. But Green Rat laughed at her. Then the fairy took off her white dress, and threw it into his face. Another indian immediately took the dress and put it into fire. The fairy stood there, covered by a few flowers, and a skirt. One of the elves who was with her had a horse. She stepped on the horse and proclaimed war to Green Rat. Green Rat laughed. He wasn't afraid of fairies and elves. The arrows of the elves couldn't hurt him, as he was an expert in indian witchcraft and voodoo, and other dark systems of magic. Out of his eyes came arrows of fire, and soon the elves and the fairy were in the flames and had to flee.

But there was one elf who found a sort of feather tied to a certain stone. 'Oh, don't touch that,' Green Rat screamed. 'It's the holy Fumerator.' The elf picked the stone up and threw it into the face of Green Rat. The priests of Green Rat got mad. He stood up from his throne while his hairs were rising. 'Amadekiss Cabouliam Padisto,' he screamed. Green Rat fell down, while his priests threw water on his head. 'Kingdomcosaba Corola Vatudo,' Green Rat whispered. 'He has touched the holy stone. May the gods fall upon him to destroy him.' Green Rat pushed on a button and another door of the temple opened. It was a huge golden door with a red stripe on it. The elf took the stone again and threw it in the dooropening. Suddenly there were all explosions. The elf ran inside, while Green Rat was screaming. Wild dogs came out of the darkness behind the open door. Finally the young elf had to flee. He couldn't begin anything against the dark powers of Green Rat.

Green Rat rejoiced the whole night. Although he knew it wasn't a big deal. Mozoke was in tears. But inside she knew she had sown the seed of love. She believed that the powers of good were stronger than those of evil, but she also knew it worked by seeds. After awhile she returned to the temple of Green Rat. This time she went with an army of dragons, but even these dark dragons couldn't begin anything against the dark sorcery of Green Rat. But the dragons were very wise creatures and they told Mozoke that the only way to help the zombies was to bring them food from a certain tree so that their teeth would grow again, and they would get rid of the zombie's curse. This tree was called the Tree of Tantalos. But it was a tricky tree, for whenever someone would try to take food from the tree, it would move away. Only the dragons knew how to get to the tree and how to get food from it.

That same night they took Mozoke and some elves with them. They took them on their backs, and flew with them to the hidden place of the Tree of Tantalos. When they approached the tree they said : 'Oh holy tree, we bow to you. Your works are good, and you are the source of blissfull food.'

'Oh but you know what the sacrifice is, right ?' the tree spoke with a dark and low voice. One of the elves moved forwards and showed a stone to the tree which he had found in the temple of Green Rat. Also some dragons started to spit out some of the temple's stones they had taken.

'That's good,' the tree said, while a wind came forth from it to take the stones from them. Then it was like fire was coming forth from the top of the tree, and soon they all had bags in their arms full of food. Then they went back to the Mokze tribe to feed the zombies. Green Rat was full of rage, especially when he saw what happened to the zombies. He also took something of the food, but it poisoned him.

'Now he will be a tree, a tree of history,' one of the dragons spoke.

'When someone tries to touch him he will flee. In the distance, in the distance he will forever be.'

It was like Green Rat was in the flames now, and started running into the depths of the forest. The zombie's curse had been broken now, but who would be his next victim ? The poison turned him in a tree of fire. And to today they call him stinging nettle.

Fatal Omens

She was the jungle, a tropical area of gigantic size. She was the wilderness, the rivers, the mud, and the houses, the huts. She was everything to me, since I discovered her. She would float above the sea like a balloon to call me, but I could never come. I had been tied. But when I grew up she set me free. She brought me to her place across the oceans from where she shouted, shrieked and screamed. She was a witch with a snake's head, an anaconda, but witch isn't the good word. She was a savage, a savage nature, like a shiny mirror. She wasn't a sorceress, but just a good fighter. She all did it by her knives and spears, by so many venomous arrows on her bow.

She believed in bone-tying, and she made everything of it. It was an illusion. She lived in the depths of the jungle, where her echoes came from. She lived there with leopards and panthers, while in the night they formed her carriage. She became thunder and lightening, and could dive in the sea. She was the big balloon. She had the voice of an anaconda, her whisperings could raise my spirit. She could fall into me.

She was a weaver and an embroiderer, like a spider, making the most beautiful webs. Like an orchestra of venomrays, like venomfontains, spitting and spitting. She was the illusive death.

She lived in the depths of the jungle where they had placed her skull on a stick. There she became the jungle. A skeleton kept her skull, and called her Surinam.

I loved the way she walked, the way she talked, but my father once shot her. She had to leave the city, and the city became dumb, full of dumb girls. She was a high source of intelligence.

She became obsessed by her creativity, creating the most beautiful armories, hairy shields, mysterious metal, all bones from the inside. She hung her skins throughout the jungle,

hanging out the veils of blood, for no one was allowed to follow her, into the depths of the wilderness. Her warning signs were obvious, and her omens fatal.

But she gave me the key, and she brought me down. On my knees I was, and she said : ‘Help me.’

‘Help me, yes ?’

‘Help me, you know ?’

The way she talked, it was like a show. And that night, it was overwhelming, volcanoes burst, the balloon, while someone fell out. The snake was speaking, chest so erected, head so erected and blown up, and then spitting the fire to do the job.

She was the jungle, while oceans between us dried out. She had found me, she would never let me go. I was in the grip of an anaconda, one bite to make me weak, and soft like her river. She took me to her place like I was a doll. She is the monster, the dragon, where can we hide. She is the head hunter, sparing heads for a democracy. By her blows she opens doors.

And they called her Surinam, but she was just an island, finding land.

The Eternal Journey

A journey through hell

I heard them, those kings. They were screaming at the coasts of hell. Who could make it through the fire ? I saw them making signs with their hands, waving, and they made themselves ships. But these ships wouldn't come far in the seas of fire. They wanted to make a trip through hell, finally to establish their thrones forever. I saw masses of people there, weeping. For who could bring them through the fire, through the hours of time ? There was no one, no one who could help these people. I saw kings with their ships, sinking deeper and deeper into the fire, almost transparent, until they entered the bottoms of their miseries, the desert.

Someone said : 'Ah, but there is water there, somewhere, deep down in the desert, an oasis.' But who would believe such a man ? All they saw were screaming kings, and the deserts below the fire only turned them into eternal miseries, like strange statues of sand, hardly moving. I saw them with their paper ships and fantasies all ending up there. No one could move there, so how could they reach the water ? Water, water ? Did water even exist in this place. This was hell.

I didn't know what to do, but suddenly someone ticked me on my shoulder, and took me away, so far away. 'Do you believe these tales ?' he asked.

I asked : 'Who are you.'

'Well, tell it, as you all know it better,' he said. 'The king of nonsense ?'

I smiled. Who would he be ? Friendly eyes stared at me. Again he asked : 'Do you believe all these fairytales ? Someone made up these stories, and the literalists obey

these laws, but then when someone finds the original version of the story, these laws suddenly change, and everyone follows them, still being literalists. And then later someone finds out that even the original version seems to be a translation of a primitive version, and then they will follow that. Do they come closer to the truth, or does it lead them further away ?'

'I'm not sure about what you are talking,' I say.

'The law of translation is a hard law, for you have to obey it for awhile to come any further. But go from translation to translation,' he said. Mr. Brimstone was his name, a king.

And I saw the secret of hell brought and buried by Mr. Brimstone. And he said : 'These are just the seasons of love and sacrifice. All these translations build their own literal worlds and laws. Do not worship and serve literalism anymore. In the bottomless pit, in it's depth, there is nothing but fire leading to brimstone, all to enlighten you more. And these beasts coming forth from it were nothing more than the seals and fuels of it. ARE YOU READY ? There are eternal symbols you need to live by and serve,' the king said. I watched Mr. Brimstone. 'They show up again and again until you recognize them.' I watched an army of brimstone.

'A new literal world ?' I asked.

'Yes,' Mr. Brimstone said. 'With a new meaning. Let them become literal.'

And I saw all the other kings in the fire, while doors leading them away, ending with their ships in the deserts, deep below the fire. Their ships had sunk, and they couldn't come any further.

'What kind of ship do we need, Mr. Brimstone ?' I asked.

‘Well, I have a ship,’ he said. ‘A ship of brimstone, and it will enlighten you. This one can even go through the deserts to reach the waters.’

And then Mr. Brimstone was gone, and all he left was this book. And it said : A journey through hell. The book had a lot of pictures.

The End

Heather

It was a drill communication system, all working by drills and bead-flower-fields. It was an alien society. The drills were merely sucking fleeces, hyperconcentrated, but often neutral. The society was ruled and controlled by mailmen. They didn’t believe in love, just control. In their eyes this was a higher love, as they cared no one would fall out of the system. It was a system of balloons high in the skies. The bead-flowers brought forth their children. These were huge flowers connected to a mainframe. The bead-flowers induced a strange weakness combined to a strange thinness, sickness and coldness. It brought forth a strange strength by which they were all connected and by which they communicated. They were all drill-hunters and drill-warriors, otherwise their system would die.

They were space-pirates, strange vampires. It was a society in the middle of the universe, floating like an island of balloons. They scarred each other for building the memory, and a tight system by which they would be interlocked, all by the drills. It was writing on the tablets of their hearts, and it was actually a deeper and tighter system than the genetic one. The drills could go beyond that. They kept drilling on their scars to create certain space-anchors, and these scars would finally grow into skin which looked like nipples. Even when the skin had reached this level they would go on drilling, until the material looked like toes, like the thick sole of a foot. In this they could store their information, and it was a code beyond the genetic, having a powerfull communication. It was third degree scar-material. Here they could raise a higher fire, a higher love, an overcontrolled system, taking care of a new immunology. It was actually waking up new lungs, in a system of new, inner breath, generated by the lungs themselves. By this the body could also produce food itself. It was a whole new world caused by this system beyond genetics, called scaretics, filled with TDS, the third degree scar-material, which formed the codes. It was the deepest and best way of storage, and it caused overcontrol for overprotection.

It seemed the drills were always up to this level, causing the burning wounds. It caused sensitivity for the best communication, beyond the heart, through TDS. It was like a big computer, a big mainframe, causing multi-sense and multi-possibility. However, the system could only work by the use of cattle. And ‘cattle’ was the code-name for all the war-prisoners of the society. There was no communication possible without slaughter and milking, so the alien farm became the code name for the whole mechanism of scaretics. TDS would die if there wouldn’t be such a farm anymore. And the aliens thought it was the highest standard. The enemies were pigs, nothing but fuel, in their eyes. And by this the vampiristic system was growing and growing. More and more pigs seemed to get trapped in the system. The aliens who had invented this system got insane by the drilling. They were nihilistic in a sense, but all in order to raise a new immunology, in which their enemies would be the weaklings, just fuel. The immunology would live by prey, and it needed to keep the enemy weak. However scaretics was the science of weakness, the power of softness, the art of scarring. In their eyes the enemies were scarless, or at least scarred in low degrees, and thus dangerous, not sensitive. Their enemies were either cattle or predators, while they themselves were in the middle of that. They were greater cattle and thus greater predators. They had developed their scaretics, they had cultivated themselves beyond genetics. They could recode their TDS, by scarring them more, and thus opening new portals and pathways. It brought a new nerve-system, and a new regulation of the blood. They had it more under control now. Scaretics was the level of overcontrol, necessary for the finest robotics. It worked by programming the TDS by the finest drills. They had experts for that. It could regulate temperature more than ever. They had found the key of life.

The pigs would burn forever in their slaughteries, as a symbol of what would happen to those who wouldn’t live by third degree scars. The pigs were a code-name for those who got stuck in the middle. They were nothing but fuel. There was no eternal memory and no eternal life without high-developped scaretics. Scaretics developed TDS-brains, a higher intelligence, called the burning brains. They were the only way to a higher civilized society. These brains worked by a higher fire-code for greater transformations, and thus having more space for information. They had the power to erase things and shift things. It was the safest system. One

has to come across the river of drills first to actually change scaretics and to start to live by it. The river of drills was like the river of scorn, turning your life upside down. There was no other way but to cross this river in order not to become trapped forever and get destroyed. Those who crossed the river got the powers of destruction and it’s sources. They became the masters of scaretics. It was an art, both ascetic and esthetic. One had to believe in the power of pain.

It was a river of fire they had to cross. There was no other way. Everyone would have to burn at one moment. Everything was about the tattoo. It was like a flowerfield, and only those becoming like the weak intense flowers could grow beyond it. It was like a sea of optical illusions, the sea of the fight. In the TDS-brains the wheels would start to spin, opening multi-sense, which would be the base of communication. If one could master scaretics one could escape from the most complexed prisons. This was a disaster for other sorts of alien farms like psychiatry and dentistry which used obscure medicines and implants as a model for remote imprisonment. There were many space-prisons in the galaxy based on these sort of models, and they were the satellites of even bigger prisons. Scaretics was a threat to them, like a new upcoming religion taking the land over.

Scaretics were the banks were the ashes were, the overburnt substances of life, those parts who went to hell, the overwounded traumas. They lived there, waiting to be used, waiting to be recoded, to rise from the ashes. Here the beautiful scars were, the tattoos. By this one could write eternal letters, by this one could reach beyond each other’s heart. Here the phoenixes could rise with their eternal messages. Here every word was like an eternal piercing.

In scaretics one had to search for the right paths, the right ladders, the right combinations, and the rest would burn. It was already there, in history. These were the banks of history, the banks of scars, growing into beautiful flowers. Strange things started to happen whenever a wound became a third degree scar. The wound would start to sing, or become a piercing, like a precious jewel of the body. The body would be overprogrammed by this, recoded.

However there was a deeper layer than scaretics. It was based on dirt, the re-arranging of it to make it become useful and a source of health. It was called dirtetics, and again the third degree of it looked like toes, like the thick sole of a foot. It was like the overdirt producing stench, all by drills, the dirt-drills. These ones could spout and suck, and all they wanted to do was to make things dirtier, finally to change all sense. These ones were strong enough to reach the sight and change it. The material was TDD, third degree dirt, which the dirt-drills could recode. By reaching the eyes, the centers of perception, they could finally reach and change all senses, and then settling the so-called TDD-brains. They wanted to have a dirty society, as in it’s depths the bottoms of history would be locked up. All they wanted was to release this history and recode it. On top of their society there was a house made of bones, the house of dirt. Their leader was a skeleton and he lived here. He was a master-driller. To his drills there was nothing unreachable. He dominated everything. His opinion was that the

matrices of dirtetics were the power of change. Dirt was change, the mover, in his eyes. It was the force of recreation. He wanted to create a totally new universe. Behind his house there was a huge dirt sea. The waves could switch every vision. And it was a vision in which he kept his victims imprisoned. It was a vision strong enough to give them senses. They lived in this vision. Big balloons would come out of the dirt sea finally grasping someone's head to suck all the life out of it and making them part of the vision.

The stench was actually the interaction between the dirtetics and the scaretics making the more dramatic changes. Behind the sea of dirt the skeleton had his hidden empire, huge buildings all made of huge bones. Those who would cross the dirt sea would reach this empire. But the dirt was too tricky. It would make things unreachable. It could change time, coordinates. Only those with the dirt-drills could tame it. The skeleton had the tallest and thinnest ones.

They believed in everything. They believed they were the creators, those who crossed the sea of dirt. They were space pirates, mind shifters, all by the weapons of dirt, their drills. They were the masters of dirtetics, and they used the matrices of scaretics just as a generative reflector. They were the space cannibals of change. They were able to create a new world. They took it all very serious. The skeleton was their captain. No one knew who he really was. All they knew that he gave them taste again, and feeling. The waves of the dirt sea were so illusive. They often went out for hunts, by their pirate ships and boats. They were barbarians.

One day the sea of dirt was overflowing. It looked like a swamp. It even destroyed the hugest wall in universal history called The Fence. The flood of dirt was shapeshifting everything, and the universe became like a ball. It floated before the throne of the skeleton, and started to become green, like a green slimy balloon. On the bottom of the balloon there was a little hole, like a small tube, through which the green stuff started to flow out, and the balloon started to become grey while the skeleton laughed. Then it became dirty brown. The skeleton took his drill and started to drill on the balloon. It started to become stone more and more. There were six universes. The other five he took out of a cupboard, and then they started to float next to the other. They started to become a circle, and the dirty brown one floated in the center. Whenever the skeleton shrieked a balloon of the other five pushed the dirty brown one away, and became the center, while the dirty brown one started to float in the circle, at the border of it. 'Now don't run away,' the skeleton said. 'We need you.' It became a strange molecule and then a flower. The skeleton started to weep and covered the flower by it's tears. 'This will make you sensitive,' he said. But this time the sea of dirt also came into the throne hall of the skeleton. It was like a roaring beast. It jumped on the throne and devoured the skeleton. This was how the sea of dirt became king itself. Since then things started to change. The sea of dirt started to bring forth blossom, and rivers, with the most beautiful flowers growing at the sides, foul flowers. The flowers looked like heather. Along the rivers the most delicious sorts of food started to grow. There was a great fertility now.

The End

The Fire No One

Could Quench

A man came home from his work. He had found a little statue on the streets with four heads. It was a strange mysterious statue. He gave it a place near the hearth, took something to eat and then he went for a shower. After awhile he heard some strange noises. Voices were whispering his name, and he thought he was dreaming. He had strange feelings in the shower, like it was an elevator. When he finally stepped out he had the feeling he wasn't in his own house anymore.

'Angeline, are you there ?' he said loud. She should be in bed. After awhile when he was in the bedroom he didn't see her. He opened the wardrobe to take some clothes, but her dead body fell out of it. He got paniced and started to shout. 'Who is there ?'

'Oh, my god, Angeline,' he cried. And took her in his arms. But then he knew he had to be at his guard. Carefully he walked to the door, and saw the little statue before his feet. There was music coming out of the statue. He took it up, and turned the mechanism off.

Then he watched the corner of the ceiling where an enormous spider was sitting. The spider was shrieking loud, while the man was in a shock. It was a giant spider who was after his life. He threw the little statue away and escaped from the house. After running for awhile he came to the forest. ‘What is your problem ?’ an old man asked. He started to tell what happened, and the old man immediately said he should never take strange statues in his house, for they could be cursed by the gods.

The man described the statue, and the old man told him it was an old statue of India.

‘You better put the statue away and let your house be exorcized,’ the old man said.

That was done pretty fast. But the problems didn’t go away. It only got worse. The spider got more and more hold on the house, and it started to become a strange elevator. The old man who had helped with the exorcism told the man that there were more things going on. The spider didn’t want to leave the house, and was materializing itself this way.

In the night it was rude, as the elevator grasped the man and went underground. The man woke up in sweat and called the old man. The old man told him that he was welcome to stay with him for awhile. The old man told him that obviously the spider was an old inhabitant of the house and wanted his place back. ‘Edward,’ the old man said. ‘The best thing to do is selling your house.’ But Edward didn’t think that would be a good idea, as the house was a heritage. Edward wanted to fight it.

One day he went home again, took some tea, and hoped the spider would be gone. ‘I’m telling you,’ he said loud. ‘No one will leave this house but you.’ For a few nights it seemed to be a peaceful place, but then in the middle of a certain night the spider attacked him again, and took him to the underground. There were whining humans there, like they were deceased. Also his girlfriend Angeline was there. He didn’t know what to do. The spider took him even deeper where humans were burning. Was this hell ? Suddenly he saw himself and he was in a shock. The spider started to laugh and had wings, like a dark angel.

In sweat Edward woke up. ‘Well it was just a nightmare,’ he said to himself. There were no traces of the spider in the house anymore, although sometimes he had the feeling he saw the elevator close to the ceiling, high on the wall. He kept hearing voices.

One day some of his nieces came for a few days. In the middle of the night he heard screaming, but when he went to their room they were all sleeping. ‘Uncle Edward,’ one of his nieces said the next day, ‘we had a wonderful sleep.’ When he looked into her eyes they were redder than ever. Something had happened, but he didn’t know what. They looked strange like they weren’t themselves anymore. They were sitting around the table for breakfast. Suddenly another niece grasped a knife and threw it quickly towards Edward who could dive away just in time. ‘Who are you !’ he screamed. ‘You’re not my nieces, right ?’ He had to leave his house again, for things weren’t right.

‘Take a holiday,’ the old man said. Edward decided to stay with the old man again. But that night the spider had found him there also. He opened his mouth wide and Edward saw the heads of his nieces roll through the spider’s mouth. A tall drill appeared, like the sting of the spider. ‘When you got born,’ the spider said. ‘You took my heart. I’m here to take it back.’ Then the drill wanted to pierce the flesh of Edward’s chest. Edward rolled away and called the old man, who immediately came and turned the lights on. ‘There’s nothing wrong, Edward, there’s no one here,’ the old man said. ‘He got you in your dreams.’

‘But it was so real,’ Edward said.

‘Well, I know what is going on,’ the old man said. ‘It has lost grip in the material world, and now it will lose grip in your dreams.’

‘But how long will it take ?’ Edward asked.

The next night the spider took him away again to the underground. This time he saw humans in ice, creatures in laboratoria, and the most horrible things he ever saw. Again there were drills at his body, waiting to pierce him. ‘You took my body,’ the spider roared. ‘I want it back.’ Edward pushed some buttons of the elevator. There was a button to call for help, and there was a button to let it all explode. He pushed them both and woke up in sweat. The old man stood before him with a gun. ‘Now you know who I am,’ the old man said. ‘There is no way to escape.’ The old man wanted to shoot, but in a flash Edward kicked the gun out of his hand, and ran outside. When he told the story to the police they laughed and didn’t believe him.

He was ordered to go home, which he did. But he knew he was in great danger now. Skulls had been drawn on the walls. Edward was so tired and fell down on his bed. He heard voices and strange sounds and called the police again. The police decided to give him psychiatric help.

‘I’m not crazy,’ Edward shouted to the men in white. They had strange ties on. Edward didn’t recognize them. They didn’t look like real humans. They had red eyes. Edward knew he just had to escape totally, since his city couldn’t be trusted anymore. He ran to the forest again, where he found an old indian woman. ‘Ghosts, ghosts,’ the woman said. ‘They are everywhere in the city.’ She brought him to a camp. ‘Here,’ the woman said. ‘We all lived in the city once, and we all escaped because of these sort of things. Be welcome.’

Edward got a place to sleep in a wigwam. He hoped he would be safe here. He had a good night, and the next morning everything seemed to be normal.

‘What is it ?’ he asked the old indian woman.

‘Oh,’ the old indian woman said. ‘You know, the city they build on the bones of the old. It’s just a vision, a vision of the blood of the old. They have made their tales of death and hell, where those who got old went to, but we all live here.’

‘But then, who is the spider ?’ Edward asked.

‘Oh, don’t believe their tales. The city has many tricks, but it actually led you here,’ the old indian woman said.

But after a few years Edward wanted to get back to his house, as it was a heritage. To his surprise other people lived there now. He didn’t have a place to go anymore.

‘Yes, the city is hard,’ the old indian woman said. ‘But don’t you have a better heritage here ?’

Edward nodded.

‘The city is the spider,’ the old indian woman said. ‘Waiting to attack, waiting to tell it’s tales. You’re never free.’

‘Will it find me here ?’ Edward asked.

‘Not if you go deep enough into the wilderness. Nature is beautiful here,’ the old indian woman said.

‘What kind of spider is it,’ Edward asked.

‘Well, it’s living here in the jungles,’ the old indian woman said. ‘You have to go underground.’

It took a long time for Edward finally to get rid of all these spiders. He made a journey underground, but even there they followed him. Until one day he reached a strange fire. A fire to become free. It was a source in the depth of the earth with bright light, a light stronger than daylight. For the daylights were these spiders who had hunted him all his life.

There was red clay here, red mud, and a lot of wild tribes who seemed to live here. They smeared and rubbed their bodies everyday with the red clay and the red mud, to protect them against the daylights. They were hunters, and they actually lived by the meat of the spiders. They even bred these spiders, as in their eyes it was just food, necessary to survive in these dark places.

Carefully Edward smeared some of the red clay on his body. Before him there was an ocean of light. They lived by sheepmilk here as well, and Edward wondered how the meat of the spiders would taste, so he took a bite, chewed and swallowed. It made his shrieks loud. He was sick for a few days for his body needed to get used by it. It looked like a strange ritual, finally to overcome the spiders deep inside.

The body needed these venoms to transform and use as a higher immunity. It was necessary in war and hunt. The ultimate queen of all these spiders they kept in a glass box. It was a transparent box so that everyone could see. It was a purple spider, much smaller than the ones he saw. For several reasons they had kept the queenspider alive. It’s poison would only work

if this spider would be alive. It was living poison, with a heart, and without it they couldn't live. They milked the spider everyday by some sort of drills, sucking drills. It was a strange spider as it could change it's gender all the time, so it was also a king. It had been stored in some sort of museum so everyone could see the milking everyday. It was a poison to keep their hearts alive, and to heal the worst wounds. It could heal those who had been burnt, but they never got their own skin back again. The skin looked like a nipple, or the sole of a foot. It would always be scar-skin. But these skins were so beautiful like jewelry.

Those who would drink from this poison would live forever, and would actually get healed inside. The poison would be powerfull enough to do genetic healing.

Carefully Edward swallowed a bit of the poison. It made him sick, but after a few days he had been healed beautifully. He could finally deal with his past, and he had the feeling it didn't hunt him anymore. He had been released, connected to a greater heritage, a greater history, which could be traced through the red clay and the red mud. There was a fire burning in his heart now, a fire no one could quench.

Blind Money

Skeleton Fiction

The indian pirates had blue faces. They were blue skeletons with savage clothes. They had a skeleton ship built of the bones of their defeated enemies and prey. They had many slaves on their ship. They were on their way to hell, in the depths of Orion. Here they would sell their slaves, and buy some new ones. They were on their way to hell's market.

In the depths of Orion, one paid by blood, but also by some light sort of metal which looked like silver and gold. It also looked like gems. It was hell’s money. They could do anything with it. At some other places one paid by bones.

In the depths of Orion it was like raining gold, like raining money. The indian pirates knew where the banks were. They had been sent out by the banks once. They were robbers.

The banks kept themselves alive by robbing. They were capitalists, and the poor were their slaves. The indian pirates bought some dogs. They looked like wolves. They were hellhounds. In the abyss they came to life, where they met the red faces. They came to an island floating in the middle. It was like a pearl, like a gem. Wilderness was king here. The red faces were racists. They didn’t allow blue faces on the island.

I have never seen a bigger war between the blue faces and the red faces. I have never seen more cruelty than this. When the skeletons are at war, there are no rules or laws. They go to the extremes. No one can see this without becoming blind at the end. I’m blind for many years now. That is the price of seeing such a game. You can only see it one time in your life.

So Much To Share

Death Fiction

He had been decorated by rare jewels of death, made of bones. He had an armory. Not many dared to approach him. He was a lonely man. Only some savage beasts visited him at times, but often he would do nothing but slaying them. He was a cruel man, not caring about anything but death. Death was like his oracle, his breath, in these strange areas. He was often barefooted, not caring about the things he tred. When blood would stream, he would not hesitate to drink. There was no love in his heart. He was cold as ice, frozen by drama. The fear had made him like this. He was like a tormented statue, zombificated.

And now he was a zombificator himself. Whenever he spoke the ones who would hear it would get possessed and would never find themselves back again. His voice was like a web of

no return. In cold rage he would slay those kings he hated, the kings of Moab. Then he would go for Ammon. His sword was hungry for blood, royal blood, and he would not hesitate to drink. He knew about their banquets, about their parties, but this day was their last. In a vision he saw the skeletons chained against the wall. They were their victims, but he didn't care. He would crush their bones too. To him they were all his enemies.

He remembered the voice of his father, talking about their jewels. He had a lust to rob their palaces, and then he would go for Edom. He would turn this place into a sack of hair, and would let blood come forth from it. He wanted to see an eternal well burst. He wanted vengeance, but he knew the price he had to pay. His sword would come against himself as well. His sword was his enemy, and before he reached the palace of Moab's kings he changed his mind. He pierced the ground by his sword and ran away without it.

He was roaring. There was nothing to comfort him. He was lonely. After awhile he fell down, exhausted, in terrible pains. Someone stood before him, took him by the shoulders and raised him up. It was a man with a tall white beard, a necromancer. His garment was red, like dyed in blood, and covered by shrunk skulls, very small like buttons. The man had a golden smile but a serious face. Then he disappeared in a flash.

'Those of Midian again,' he thought. He started to dance and sing, mocking the visitation, but on the other side it had given him strength. 'Well,' he said to himself. 'The gods have been good to me.'

After hours and hours of walking he came into a Philistine village where he went to the first temple he saw. He fell down at the altar, while a woman was smiling at him. 'Dress me,' he said. The woman walked to the altar, took a bowl with red paint and threw it over his head. The man was laughing. He put his hands into the air and mocked the gods of the temple. 'Uh, Dagon, uh uh, yes,' he said. But he got strength. He ran outside the temple, went into a house where a woman was feeding her children. 'Can I sleep here tonight ?' the man asked.

The woman was very friendly. She told him a lot about her husband who was a sailor but he had drownt. On the wall there were many paintings. He loved to paint, and the man could see he was a real artist. After hours of talk they both fell asleep on her huge bed. In the night ghosts came into the house, as he had mocked their temple. They gave him bad bad dreams, while the woman was smiling. She couldn't hear him screaming. She was far away. 'Sapphire,' he stuttered, 'iron, steel, why are you doing this to me ?' Then he died in her arms. A skeleton took his soul, and chained it, as he had plans to chain those of Moab.

‘Moab,’ he stuttered, ‘you dumb pig ….’

No one was with him, only chains, and the memory of the skeleton. ‘Moab,’ he sighed, and then he fell down. The ground was burning. Was this hell ? He saw skeletons having banquets. They were eating meat from their sacred altars, and paintings were on their walls. The paintings were bleeding.

‘Oh, you dumb pigs,’ the man said. He heard the scream of a woman. There she came in. They laid her on a table and he put his hands before his eyes. He was sensitive all of a sudden. He cared about the woman. In a rage he broke his chains, ran to the table and took the woman away. Then he came back to break the table. ‘Moab, dumb pigs,’ he roared …. A man woke up from a confused dream. A woman lay close to him. ‘Care about me,’ she said. The man laughed. ‘Why should I care ?’ the man said. ‘It is not real to care.’ Then the woman slapped him in the face. The man lay down again, and whispered : ‘family, concentrated care, but when you lose it, then you have so much to share.’

Disconnected

The virus had been inserted into the system very easily. The pirates attacked, and took the machine over. Tantalos was falling, like a falling star. Someone stang through it. It was now hanging in the universe like a weak ball, full of blood. Soon the predators would come to prey on it.

The mainframe had been polluted. Agents were running, and some fell down. Others were holding their guns. They were shooting at some men with big naked chests. Some clowns were running away. The circus was falling.

Someone shot some sharks by harpoons, another shot the window open, while hell started to set in. We were in a tube, in the depths of a sea. Now the sharks were everywhere. I swam to the surface of the ocean. It was close to the island Hawaii. Someone was screaming. I ran to the beach through the water. Someone gave me water.

We had done it.

Huge waves were roaring in the sea. Then I woke up. I had my swimming shorts on. Someone was holding my hand. It was a beautiful lady with a hat and sunglasses. I didn't know her. She said she was my girlfriend, but I didn't believe her.

'Oh, I'm sure you make a mistake,' I said friendly. The sun was shining in my face. She finally let my hand go.

I was sure I didn't drink too much. The lady seemed to be confused and walked away.

'Hey,' I shouted. 'Tell your story.'

She walked back to me. 'You were with me last night, we had a good conversation, and you told me I was your girlfriend from now on,' she said.

'Oh well,' I said, 'then I was drunk and just made a joke.'

'Oh, are you married then ?' she asked.

‘No,’ I said, ‘that is not the issue. But I say those stupid things when I am drunk. Then I’m just far gone.’

‘Oh, fine,’ the lady said. ‘Well I took it serious. My fault, won’t happen again.’

‘What is your name ?’ I asked.

‘Kimberly,’ she said.

‘Nice name,’ I said. ‘I am so sorry.’

‘So you wouldn’t pick me up when you wouldn’t be drunk ?’ she asked.

‘No,’ I said. ‘I have problems with women, and when I don’t have them, I just get them soon whenever I go out with them.’

‘Try boys,’ she said.

‘Ah, no,’ I said. ‘I think I just can’t handle humans.’

‘Try aliens, try something else,’ she said.

‘Yes, poor people,’ I said.

‘What ?’ she asked.

‘Well,’ I said, ‘I just have problems with the civilized stuff. Give me a savage and I’m okay.’

‘Oh, you mean like Indians living in the bush bush,’ she said. ‘They aren’t so complexed. I have some friends like that. Try to have some conversations with them.’

‘Okay,’ I said.

Within a few minutes three indian girls stood before me. ‘We’re the poor people,’ they said. I smiled. ‘You want some money ?’ I asked. ‘I respect you highly,’ I said. ‘You know, you saved me.’

‘What ?’ one of the girls asked. ‘Are you drunk ?’

‘Yes, I still am,’ I said. ‘A bit. Well, what is wrong with that ?’

‘Oh nothing,’ the other girl said. ‘Maybe you will tell us something interesting then.’

I took a deep breath. ‘Well, I like indians, I really do.’

The girls started to laugh. ‘He’s interesting,’ they said.

‘Now stand up,’ one of the girls said.

I couldn’t move. I was still too drunk. Then they went away laughing. I felt so stupid. What did I have to offer when I was so drunk. I messed a girl up, and now this.

After a few hours I walked back to my house. I fell down on my bed, while a girl was in my room, dark skin. ‘What are you doing here ?’ I asked.

‘I thought we were friends,’ she said. ‘Yesterday you gave me your key.’

‘Oh well, I was drunk,’ I said. ‘But please don’t go away.’

There was another girl in the house having the same sort of story. What did I drink ?

‘Eh sorry,’ I asked. ‘What did I drink yesterday ?’

I almost fainted. ‘Well, actually, we put some pills into your glass. Love-pills,’ the dark skinned girl said.

‘Yes,’ the other girl said. Her skin was also dark but a bit lighter. ‘We want you to enjoy.’

I grasped my gun, but then I couldn’t move. I started to scream, and woke up. My wife lay next to me. She took me tight. ‘I missed you,’ she said. ‘You have been in a coma for days.’

‘By what ?’ I asked.

‘Well, you got stung by a venomous spider,’ she said.

‘Yes, I know, these guys are in glass-boxes all around in the room. Did some of them escape ?’ I asked.

‘No,’ she said. ‘You were playing with one of them. I begged you to stop, but you didn’t listen.’

‘Oh, have I been drunk ?’ I asked. ‘What did I drink ?’

‘Yes, you drank a lot,’ she said.

‘Just kick me down the next time,’ I said. ‘I just can’t control myself.’

‘Well what about our marriage ?’ she asked softly. ‘I miss you. Why drinking, as we can do so many things together, having fun.’

‘You’re right,’ I said. ‘Then what are we going to do about it ?’

‘What about a game,’ she said. ‘So many games in the cupboard we never play.’

I nodded. ‘Choose one,’ I said.

‘Oh no, not that one,’ I said. ‘There are cards between them like : ‘Give your friend something to drink.’

‘Well, I know what to give you then, and it won’t be beer or wine or something,’ she said softly.

I was out of order. I didn’t like the game. She was too good, she always won with this. So then I took a game, and we played it the whole night. She finally fell down because she was tired. I also fell down. The next morning I woke up not drunk anymore. But I felt so strange. ‘What did you give me to drink ?’ I asked.

‘Well, something I made. It’s in the refridgerator now,’ she said. ‘It’s made of raspberries and some other things.’ I looked at it and smiled. It was a delicious mix. ‘Why would we mess it up ?’ I asked. ‘We have such a good marriage, and you are the most sweetest person I ever met. You’re mysterious, you’re a dream. And you make the best juices.’

She smiled. I woke up. Alone. I had been divorced. I couldn't handle marriage, only in my dreams. But it was still strange. I wanted to heal my marriage, as I was older now, not so naïve. I was free of the spider's poison now, so maybe I could give it a try again. But I was a coward, maybe it was just common sense. She was dangerous. She was a predator. One day she stood before my door with flowers. 'I want to talk it out,' she said. 'I'm also older now, stronger, healed.'

'Well, I'm broken now,' I said. 'The poison is out, but now I see the damage.'

'Fake flowers,' she said, and laid it down on the bench.

'Why did I come ?' she asked.

'To talk it out,' I said.

'No, please, listen,' she said. 'I'm at the cross.'

'What ?' I asked.

'Well, at the cross means mixed feelings,' she said. 'I hope I won't regret coming here, but I just didn't have another choice.'

'Oh, but you are welcome,' I said.

'Okay,' she said, and sat down. 'Give me your hand.'

'Oh no,' I said. 'No holding hands. I'm not romantic anymore.'

‘Why not ?’ she asked.

‘Well,’ I said, ‘you ruined all my feelings.’

‘Obviously,’ she said.

That was a mean dream. I woke up, and tried to shake it off. I took some coffee, and would go to the beach again today. When I sat there for awhile an old lady came to me. ‘Did you see the balloon ?’ she asked.

‘What kind of balloon ?’ I asked.

‘Well,’ she said, ‘Nevermind, there was a balloon awhile ago, floating dangerously above the sea. Someone fell out and swam to the coast while a shark grasped him.’

I woke up, and woke up, and woke up, like awakening from a million dreams, from dreams within dreams, like stepping out of a cube. Dreams were cruel. I could never get a hold of them. I could never grasp them. They would always slide away, and I would lose them. I was in Tantalos, where nothing could become a reality. I was stuck between dreams, spinning around me. It was okay, I got used to it. I had lost all hope. I once fell into a nest full of spiders when I was a kid. I got stung by many of them, and was never the same again. I could never grow up normally. But what was normal ? The dreams around me ?

I wanted to become soft and melt away, like a virus in this computer, making a big change. It was like I couldn’t reach myself, but the dreams were the bridge, finally to mess me up even more. I was the virus, the virus in this Tantalos. That was why all my dreams were breaking off, as they wanted to trap me into something. The fragments led me higher. I had to make the big puzzle, and discover the machinery. I had to play a new game. But I was so nihilistic, for everything took so long. Was there a chance for me to survive and win ?

Why would I believe a dream ? Why would I become a champion somewhere to forget about the bigger picture ? I didn’t want to be that drunk. But what if the biggest picture would be the

same as the smallest picture ? At least we had to make the journey between them. We had to build up a memory, pointing out this journey. Every step was important, every level of the building. I felt I was huge. I treasured the journeys. I treasured the rings, as rings would always bring us to the beginning, and then to the next ring. I could build up my jewelry, and it made me feel huger. I felt disconnected, for there was a bigger world than my own consciousness. Of course.

Vuda's Death

No one knew about the secret society on the ship. Through an electric mirror in the depths of the captain's private sector you could enter it. Even the captain herself didn't know it. By accident an electric field arose and a wind sucked her in. She saw beings with tall legs, and a woman named Vuda. 'Am I dreaming ?' the captain asked.

'No,' Vuda said. 'Welcome. It seems you're so drained by the ship and by it's purpose.'

'Then what is your purpose ?' the captain asked. 'Do you have a better purpose ?'

'Welcome to Catholine World,' Vuda said.

The captain tried to get back to the ship, but there was glass around her.

‘Don’t worry,’ Vuda said. ‘You’re in good hands.’

‘But I need to get back to my ship,’ the captain said.

‘Oh, we will take care of that,’ Vuda said. ‘We will send a copy of you, which will perfectly fit.’

The captain started to cry. ‘Give her some water,’ Vuda said. While the beings with the tall legs gave her something. ‘I want you to know that you are safe here,’ Vuda said.

The captain bowed her head. When she came deeper in Catholine World the beings were more savage and half naked. ‘Is this all happening on my ship ?’ the captain asked. ‘Why didn’t I know it ?’

‘Do you know what Catholine World is ?’ Vuda asked. The captain shook her head.

‘Let me tell you,’ Vuda said. ‘It is the third day of creation. In the old groundtexts it is the world of the children. Day was not a literal day, but it meant world. There were seven days of creation, seven worlds woven into each other. Those of the children who had sinned went to the Catholine Underground, which was hell.’

The captain was shocked. ‘What was the sin ?’ she asked.

‘Oh, that’s a long story,’ Vuda said. ‘You see there were seven worlds of creation, so it wasn’t necessarily a chronology. They were seven dimensions having interactions with each other more or less. The sixth dimension was the dimension of humans and half humans, and they made the laws. When the children wouldn’t obey them, they would be sent to Catholine Underground, to the burning fire. So I hope you understand there are a lot of innocent children there, still burning day and night.’

‘Sometimes I heard strange screaming in the night. Could that be them ?’ the captain asked.

‘For sure,’ Vuda said. ‘They tried to get your attention since you were young.’

Vuda reached out to a book which lay high in a cupboard. ‘Here, read this,’ she said while she gave the book. On the cover there was written : ‘The Wolves of Samdoom.’ It was a strange story of enslaved children. Every world had it’s own nightworld, where those who had sinned lived as exiles. The first dimension was the first day of creation, the ultimate separation between the seven dayworlds and their nightworlds. It was an unbreakable wall. This wallworld was Samdoom, on which the wolves were marching. In the underground the children were working. The wall itself was even made of children. Of their bones and their blood. In the old groundtexts of creation in the second world there was an order called the Mayim. They were the savages or foul ones. In this world they got isolated, in this second dimension. They got torn apart from each other, and in the fifth world of creation they were used to bring forth the beasts. This second dimension was hell itself, the center of all the nightworlds, which had to keep them separated. Many tried to escape from this evil world, even trying to come through the first dimension, the big wall, to reach for the better dayworlds. But they could only see themselves sinking away to the underground of the evil world, the worst nightworld of them all, the fourth dimension, where the light is the night.

‘You come from that world,’ Vuda said to the captain. ‘You have been chosen by us. Do you understand that there is a night within a night ? Catholine Underground has always been that night. The third dimension is the shadow of the fourth dimension. It’s the nightworld of the nightworld, where the children still suffer in the flames. It’s the underground of all undergrounds. Your ship has entered the seventh dimension of eternal rest and peace, but you had to fight against it’s shadow. You have now the seed to free these children. The seventh dimension is an important key to tear down the walls.’

‘So my mission is to bring those children back to Catholine World, their dayworld ?’ the captain asked. ‘But how ?’

Then Vuda showed her a door behind which there was a heat like of an oven. In the distance she saw the flames, and heard children crying. ‘Our bodies cannot bear the heat,’ Vuda said. ‘But your body can, as you have been to the seventh dimension. It’s a dimension of ice. Go, you will not burn. Take the children, and bring them here, to me.’ It was like the captain had power over these flames. It was still like she was in a strange dimension, a dimension which wasn’t hers. She ran inside, to a place where some children hung or had been tied to stakes. By her knife she cut the strings, and ran with them back to the open door. Then again she ran back into the flames, took some children out to bring them to Vuda. Deeper in the flames she saw a valley of millions and millions of children burning and screaming. How would she ever come there. In the air she saw big black eagles. And it seemed like walls of glass covered the valley to isolate it. ‘That’s the first dimension,’ Vuda shouted. ‘It’s the big wall.’

A big snake like a giant cobra slowly slided towards the captain. It had the tattoo of a cross on it’s throat. ‘Oh, I’m not coming to fight you,’ the snake said. ‘I just wondered if I could help you to save these children.’

‘How to get the glass away ?’ the captain asked.

‘Trust me,’ the snake said. ‘I know who you are, and I know why you come here. Please take me to Catholine World, as I am dying here. If you take me with you, I will break the glass. That’s no any problem to me.’

‘Deal,’ the captain said.

Out of the snake’s snout fire began to stream, such hot fire that it easily melted the glass. Quickly the snake slided into the valley and took as many children with him as he could. Suddenly more snakes slided in, until the valley was full with snakes. They could easily save the children, and when they had brought them to the open door, they slided in as well. ‘They help,’ Vuda said. ‘And this is their reward.’

A strange dog with one eye and a tall tongue came out of the valley. ‘Catholine World is full of liars,’ the dog said. ‘In the night many lives will be taken away.’ Then the dog ran away. In that night Vuda died. And the captain found herself back in the ship. She lay on the ground. She stood up, took some water, and went to her room to write some things down. It was like in the air she heard the children singing. That night there was a huge storm, and a tornado tore the ship apart. Many were dying in the waves. The captain screamed to the air. The ship was sinking. A golden rope was appearing in front of her, and it took her into the sky when she grasped it. ‘Up to Catholine World,’ someone shouted. It was high in the sky, this world, like on an amazing island in the clouds. But it was like there was a wall of fire around it. It was a tropical climate. She could swim to the island, the brightest island she ever saw.

The End

The Keys of Hell

I lived totally alone on the fields of hell, together with some hounds of hell, some black panthers, and sometimes great white catlikes showed their kindness. I was alone. There was nobody in the neighbourhood. But one day an indian woman came near. She tried to get my attention, and I really had to keep my dogs quiet. They didn't attack her, but they were barking. With one sign of my hand she could be the dog's prey, but I gave her a chance.

She had some strange tattoos on her body, or maybe they were just scars. Suddenly her face changed into that of a pope and she said : 'Do you know you are in hell here.' The dogs were barking.

'Shut up,' she said to the dogs.

'What do you want from me ?' I asked. The black panthers and some of the bigger white catlikes also started to come forward, but they were more subtle and of cunning than the dogs were. I knew they could attack her any moment.

Suddenly she changed into a snake and attacked one of the dogs. The cats jumped on her all of a sudden, but she bit a few of them horribly, and the others ran away. The hounds of hell were crazy of rage, and one bit her in the neck. Then she left, leaving a trace of blood. I was proud of my dogs, and I tried to take care of the cats, but they wouldn't let me come close to them.

After a while the woman came back. 'I'm sorry,' she shouted. Then she turned into a huge white hairy spider, while a huge spiderweb appeared in the sky. I saw the dogs of hell became scared all of a sudden. I had never seen them in fear before. But the cats were awake and came closer to the spider, waiting for the right moment to attack her.

'Get out of my way,' she shouted, and in speed she jumped on me, and I got in a terrible wrestling. She tried to insert her poison into me, while the spiderweb seemed to come closer as well, catching the dogs, but the cats were on my side trying to get the spider away from me. One hound of hell, the biggest of them, was also still by my side helping the cats.

'What do you want from me ?' I shouted. One of the cats got bitten by her, and suddenly turned against me. The spider got confused, and I could break free and ran away. I didn't know what was going on. I knew I had to get away from here as soon as possible.

After awhile a few dogs of hell had reached me again. I was almost in the wilderness. 'You are in hell,' a voice spoke like thunder. There was still a huge spiderweb in the sky. Together with my hounds I ran into the wilderness. Black panthers were staring at me, and lions were in the bushes. I know if the dogs wouldn't be with me they would attack me. The hounds of hell seemed to be the key here.

There was a pasture somewhere in the wilderness. I knew that I had to stay far away from it, as there lived the lambs of prey. They were tall predator-lambs, and a hundred times worse than the hounds of hell. Some called them the lambs of hell, and they could spread the biggest fear. But all of a sudden such a lamb of hell stood before us. I almost sunk away in fear. The terror which came from it's eyes and face was undescribable.

'Why are you in fear ?' the lamb of hell said.

I didn't know what I heard … that voice … It was calming. The lamb of hell seemed to know what was going on, and the fact that I was in a fight against the white spider and wore it's smell was a reason for the lamb of hell to be so friendly to me. The lamb of hell seemed to be interested in this white spider. These moments looked like hours. My fear was going to the background little by little, but still I was on my guard. My dogs looked like cattle all of a sudden, compared to such a terrible lamb of hell. All the movements this lamb of hell made scared me, but when I got used to it a little I went with him to the pasture. There were a lot of lambs of hell here looking even more dangerous than the one who picked us up. But we seemed to be safe with this one on our side. I was swallowing my spit all the time. I wondered if my dogs would be safe, as I knew they were the enemies of the lambs of hell. They gave me a place to sleep, but in the morning I saw my dogs lying dead besides me. I was in rage, but at the same time I knew I had to be careful. Later the lambs of hell told me they didn't do any harm to the dogs, but usually they aren't able to live in such atmosphere like this. So that explained their death.

Some of the lambs of hell offered to come with me to the fields where I lived. They said that they would be able to deal with the spider. And thus it happened. We made a long trip through the wilderness and then through the fields to my hut. I felt uneasy. I really didn't know what to say and what to do. I still didn't get used to the lambs of hell. They were so tall, and looked so threatening. They took away my breath.

When the woman came back she was in a shock. One of the lambs jumped on her immediately and dragged her to the others, where they had their meal. But this time more women seemed to descend from the sky, and attacked the lambs of hell. They were laughing

and shouting, and suddenly turned into white spiders. Fire started to come out of the mouths of the lambs of hell, and they were spitting blood. The spiders were spitting black poison. One of the lambs was shrieking, and I had to put my fingers in my ears. Also the faces of the lambs started to change into popes. ‘Run for your life,’ the lambs shouted to me. Again I ran towards the wilderness, and some smaller white spiders were following me. I knew where the pasture was, and screamed they needed more help. Many more lambs of hell made their way to the fields in speed. Small white spiders were all over me, eating from my flesh. Soon there was no any lamb in the pasture anymore. I knew I had to stay here, otherwise I would be an easy prey for the cats and lions of the wilderness, as there were no protecting dogs around me.

The spiders made me burn, and my hair was rising. It was like all the blood was sliding out of me. The small spiders were eating their way to my heart. I could feel it.

‘Easter Sabbatha Marma,’ a lamb of hell was shrieking. On his back a black skeleton sat. Near behind him a unicorn came forward also with a black skeleton on it’s back.

‘Satanas rulas,’ one of the black skeletons said.

‘Is that really what you think ?’ I asked.

‘Amun Burkas Arakas,’ the other skeleton said. ‘Oh sure, we have always been the slaves of the white pope. He’s the ruler of the dead, the black ones.’

‘I also know black popes,’ I said. ‘It’s not a matter of black or white, of pope or satan.’

‘Then what ?’ the black skeletons roared.

‘I know many chessboards,’ I said. ‘But you see : spiders can be on both sides.’

‘Amun Burkas Arakas,’ they said again. They had sharp toes like knives and brought it into the skins of the ones they were riding. ‘It’s not a matter of life or death,’ I said. ‘It’s a matter of behaving or not.’

‘Ah, you dumb fool,’ one of the skeletons said. ‘If we do not rule these they will rule us, and they will do worse things to us than this.’

‘Why not suffering then instead of being unrighteous,’ I said. ‘I know some creatures you can take care of : white spiders.’ And I showed them mine.

They seemed to be all respectful all of a sudden. ‘Can we buy them ? You get the lamb of hell and the unicorn, and we get the white spiders,’ one of them said.

‘Deal,’ I said.

For these black skeletons it was an easy thing to get the white spiders out of me. And soon I had the lamb of hell and the unicorn as my possession, and although I gave them their freedom, they didn’t want to leave me.

The black skeletons enjoyed their white spiders. They were toys to them. They could use them for a lot of things. And I knew : everything was useful in the right combinations. These black skeletons were immune against white spiders, and because this lamb of hell and the unicorn lived with the black skeletons for such a long time they had this immunity too. When the other lambs of hell were back they seemed to be highly interested in this new lamb of hell. There was some biting here and there, but that was all to exchange the immunity. Soon all the lambs of hell had that immunity. But it seemed the war had been won by something else already. The black skeletons seemed to have found out about the other white spiders as well, and became their riders.

I still wondered why the lambs of hell had such a high interest in these white spiders. That the black skeletons had that interest was clear to me, as they could ride them and use them as toys more or less, because of their immunity. But one day I found out. One of the lambs of hell found a small white spider, ate it, and immediately got wings. It was a dreadfull sight. It gave him power and might.

To me it was an awesome thing to ride these beings, especially when they were winged. They were like a map of hell, and I could come anywhere.

Fly Like Eagles

short psychological thriller

In this strange sect, they killed animals for their gods ... They had strange paint on their feet ... and strange flavours which could easily enslave you ... or in worst case even kill you ... They were painted and clothed to this goal ... strange outfits of this religion ... In the night their feet became strange spiders going for a hunt ... Their toes grow out into tall killerpaws ... strengling their victims ... to bring them to their realms of death ...

They worship feet and spiders ... It's a strange cult ... They tie their prisoners to tall stakes ... while their feet fall off to become prisonbars ... Strange paint with strange flavours ... entering the minds of the prisoners to give them illusions ... It's a sort of prisondrugs ... so that they can never escape ... It starts to take over their minds until they are mental slaves ... and then piece by piece they will be bound in their emotions until they are emotional slaves as well, breathing in and out the strange feetpaint flavours ... Then they can be used for slavework ... They are now sleepwalkers ... zombies ... zombificated by ....

Suddenly Enric wakes up .. what a strange awful dream he had ... And what are these strange flavours in his room ... He looks at his wife ... she sleeps .... her face gives him strange feelings in his stomach ... what is going on ... Finally he awakens his wife in tears ... telling her about the dream and the strange flavours in the room ... His wife doesn't understand ...and she doesn't smell anything strange in the room ... 'You just had a nightmare, now go sleep again, it's too early' .... and then she starts to sleep again ... but Enric can't .... He's still shivering ... and why is his wife so cold to him all of a sudden ... she used to be so warmhearted ... maybe she's just tired .... but ... Enric doesn't want to sleep anymore ..... although he feels so tired too ...

The next night he has the same sort of dream, but it's much wilder ... It's like the wildest indian warbook ... but it seems it's living in him ... as if he's a part of it ... and as the nights follow, it returns again and again, becoming wilder and wilder ... He cannot go to work anymore ... he's too tired .... It's always the same story at nights ...

His wife cannot take it anymore .... and one day she's gone ... Enric needs to be taken away to a place of rest .... and his wife signs for divorce ... What is going on ? It's like something is eating him inside ...

Enric was a butcher ... but he can't do it anymore ... He's too tired .... these dreams are making him sick ... One day an Indian woman comes to the place of rest where Enric lives now ... She's his new nurse ... for the other one died in a car-accident .... The woman gives him strange feelings ... like she's sucking his last piece of life away ... She has strange shoes ... almost boots .... he never saw the design .... There was ... a spider ... painted on it .... She smiles ... 'What are you looking at, Enric ?' She sais .... 'Well, do you really want to know ?' Enric asks carefully .... Yes, of course, she sais ... I want to know you better .... She comes closer to him and starts to sit on the edge of his bed .... holding his hand .... 'Enric,' she sais ... 'I really want to help you ... you see, I came for you ... I had a dream about this place of rest that someone needed my help for he was being disturbed by spirits of my ancestors ...' Enric gets big eyes ... 'spirits ?' he sais ...'well, I don't believe in spirits' ... Then the woman starts to talk about his dreams ... she knows a lot of details, and even knows their meanings .... Enric starts to shiver ... How do you know that ? he asks ...

I know this because I dreamt this ... she sais ... but she lied, for it was his ex-wife telling her all this, and she had asked her to go to him, to care for him, and let him die soon ... for then she would have peace of mind ... This woman would do anything for her, for she paid for it ... and she was an assassin in service of divorced women ...

But it was like the woman had a weak spot for Enric ... He told her so many things she didn't know yet ... and soon she started to really care and feel for him ... When he spoke about the stories she got strange feelings in her stomach ... and it was like there were strange flavours in his room ... making her drunk .... It was like she was losing herself, and suddenly she started to look deep into his eyes and started to undress herself very slowly .... Enric didn't know what to do .... He was very serious about the dreams ... and he wanted to talk about it ... Why were these stories so cruel ....

The woman started to tell him more and more about the meaning of these dreams ... but she just made it up .. for she didn't know ... She said : You dreamt about your butchery in symbols .... The man started to cry ... So these dreams wanted to show me what is happening to the animals, right ? We are from that strange cult ! Why would we sacrifice animals for our own lusts ? It was like his eyes were opened ... and the woman was amazed about the effect ... she just made it all up ... but it seemed she pushed a button in him ...

Enric took her into his bed and started to make love to her saying that he would never work in a butchery anymore ... He wanted to warn all butchers that they were in troubles ... for the Indian ancestors would find them also ... The woman was smiling ... whatever he said ... all she wanted was making love to him and listen to his strange stories ....

But suddenly the door was smashed open and the ex-wife of Enric stood in the opening ... with a gun ... 'What a surprise' she sais ... Now you finally found what you were looking for, right ? All the stories about ....

but then she fell down ... and the docter of the place of rest was standing in the door-opening with a gun ....

'Finally we have her ... for she killed men all over the place ... Have fun together ... I will give her over in the hands of the police ... It's just an injection-pistol ... no worries ... she just sleeps now for awhile .... and .. aren't you that new nurse ? the docter asks ....

'Yes, docter ... and this is just part of the therapy ...' the Indian woman sais ...

'Well, yes,' the docter sais ... 'for this is not a religious place' ....

Suddenly Enric wakes up ... It was all a dream .... There are strange flavours in the room ....He looks at his sleeping wife ... Her face gives him strange feelings in his stomach ... Didn't he have this before .... Is he still dreaming ...? He pinches in his leg ... He's watching his feet .... Again strange feelings are flowing through his stomache .... What a strange experience ... He doesn't feel anything in his leg ... He only has strange feelings in his stomache .... and still strange flavours ... Is he dead ? he gets the shivers ... Suddenly it's like the picture of this experience is frozen ... like he cannot move, and as if that second takes a million centuries .... He tries to breath but he can't ... only a small spider is creeping over his bed ... very fast ... He tries to scream but he can't ... It's coming closer, going slower, growing bigger, until it's a foot ... and it's coming to his chest ... A black man is standing in the dooropening ... while the door is locked ... He has a black hat .. a white face, but further he is black ... black clothes .... He has strange eyes ... like he has high authorithy somewhere ? In art ? In politics ? Enric doesn't have an idea, but the face seems familiair ... A fight starts ... Enric is screaming for the man is hurting him ... while his wife is lying in bed ... still ...

I am the butcher ... the man sais .... Not a butcher of animals ... but of butchers .... Enric starts to scream, and a tall knife appears .... You're sick and crazy ... he screams .... but then he remembers his dreams ... and begs the man not to hurt him, for he will stop being a butcher ....

'That's already too late ... Now the animals want a sacrifice ...' the man tells slowly ...

'Please I'm begging you, don't hurt me, I promise I will stop the butchery ...' Enric sais ...

'If you will now work against butchers I will spare your life,' the man sais ....

'That's a deal ...' Enric sais ... 'but what does that mean ...'

But the man was already gone ... but ... also Enric's wife ... Enric is desperate ... and he still doesn't know if he's alive or not ...

'Hey, hey ... maybe you are already tied on a stake in the realms of death ... having your illusions ... you slave ...' a voice whispers ... 'You are under someone's foot .... for you had beings under your foot ...'

Enric is watching his feet again, but screams ... they're black now ... black like ashes ... and it's starting to break off ... Someone's laughing ....

Enric is waking up ... a psychiatrist is watching him, with something that looks like a sarcastic smile ... Mr. Letlock, you finally woke up ? Enric nods a bit ... but he isn't sure about himself anymore ...

Something is drawing him deeper .... He doesn't know what it is ... but this something has power over him ... Is he also a victim ... ? Enric is in a wheelchair ... without legs ... this is worse than his dreams ... but is this also a dream ? ... and ... is the reality even worse ? He feels like he is drowning .... Is he doomed to be in this roundabout forever ? ... Things are repeating itself .... and when it seems things are getting ground he wakes up, which is the proof it was just a dream ... Or isn't it a dream but is waking up the same as getting a dream, while the dream is the reality ? .... he has so many questions ... Where is he, who is he ? And is it real ? Or are the symbols playing again, wanting to show him .....

Suddenly the bell rings .... It's his wife .... she's also in a wheelchair without legs ... She tells him since the caraccident he isn't the same ... They both lost their legs .... but Enric also lost his mind ... Her lap is covered by a blanket ... an old blanket ... he recognizes it ... He sighs .... he has problems with talking .... while his wife is still a good talker ... but no legs ....

She wants to be with him ... together they go to his bedroom ... She's from another hospital ... for he also needs mental care ... She undresses herself very slowly ... It's like he experienced this before ... She has a tattoo of a spider between her breasts ... and again he smells strange flavours .... but there is no footpaint ... no strange shoes .... for she has no feet ... She undresses him .... He's too weak for it .... and then they make love ... like having everything ... It's so much deeper than before the crash ... It's like they really found each other now ... They have time for each other .... They were both teachers ... being too busy to listen to each other .... why did he have butcher-dreams after the crash ? He wasn't a butcher ... but a teacher ... so why ? ... or ... is it the same ? It's like he feels a foot on his chest ... It's a tight pressure ... He breaths in very deep ... It's like they fly like eagles ....

The Secret of Hell

I was stumbling through hell, through the lakes of fire. The Tribunal of Skeletons had been unmerciful to me. I was condemned with even greater death. There were storms around me, howling, and mocking me. The heat was penetrating my skin. If the goddess wouldn't have anointed me by her magic potions I would burn here for sure. The memory of her in my heart was healing me and guiding me.

But suddenly a ghost slapped me in the face and took it all away, while I was sinking into the lake of fire. I was doomed. I couldn't remember her anymore, neither the one who brought me here.

A skeleton lay before me in the lake, floating, while blood came out of it's mouth. I tried to run away but I couldn't. Something had bound me, and there were hounds of hell around me all of a sudden. I had never seen such a sight. This was a place of death, with skulls of elephants, skulls of dogs and lions, even of tigers. There was no way out of this situation. There were jewels staring at me, like they were speaking. I was doomed. I had been judged by a high centurion, a roman bastard. I was marked, there were strange letters on my bones. Then dogs started to bite me to drink from my juices. I fell asleep, couldn't stay awake.

But the next day they led me to the roman emperor. He was laughing at me. He had a robe with greek signs, and further strange symbols. Some figures who looked like popes stood close to him. They were skeletons in garments. 'Why am I here ?' I asked.

'Oh, you're prisoner number 20010,31,' the emperor said. 'Not even a full number. So why would I tell you.' Then he smiled and gave me a garment. It looked like flesh, and when I put it on it become one with my body, like a second skin. My body became very elastic. 'You're now king of hell,' he said.

'Oh, but I thought I had broken the law here or something,' I said.

‘No,’ the emperor said, ‘you were just on a trip and now you have visited me.’

Later I found out that to be a king of hell meant you had access to a deeper place in hell which looked like a forest. I had a forest skin. I had survived my long trip through hell, and I finally made it here. I was free in this place, like I was an animal. I could breath fresh air, although it smelled like pigs, horses and other sorts of beasts. This place was surrounded by huge fires. There were a lot of trees around me with strange hearts. The hearts were shining their lights, and strange silver snakes seemed to come forth from them.

‘Breath, my son,’ someone said. When I followed the sound I came to a place where a unicorn lay in the grass. It was a white unicorn. ‘The secret of hell is that there is a world inside,’ the unicorn said. I showed the unicorn my marks, my scars. ‘Yes,’ the unicorn said, ‘it’s a strange language telling a strange story.’

I was crying, while a bright jewel appeared before me, between me and the unicorn. ‘Watch it,’ the unicorn said. I saw so many worlds in this transparent stone, and lights were coming forth from it. ‘Hell is only a doorway to these worlds,’ the unicorn said. ‘It is the heart of hell, where you will find so much love.’ I couldn’t remember what love was.

Suddenly a beam came from the jewel, and my heart started to change into a clock. Also a brilliant sword appeared before me. ‘Take this,’ the unicorn said. ‘It’s only a matter of time.’

It was like all the dragons in my head started to melt away, and the voice of the unicorn took me over, something much stronger. The unicorn was a clean being, so full of love that I could forget about everything else.

‘Remember,’ the unicorn said. ‘Time is but a shell. There are worlds inside, eternal places.’

Before I realized I was on the back of the unicorn, and we were on our way to a great castle in the distance. It was almost like the sun was falling upon us, but the unicorn made a brilliant sight of it. It was such a holy creature, beyond anything, the greater unknown. I felt safe with him, like I finally found a true friend.

Suddenly I saw the beautiful forest in the flames, and even the opening of the castle was of stone. ‘Everything of the castle is of stone,’ the unicorn said. ‘Only when you have a clock you can move through it.’ Well fortunately my heart was a clock, and I could enter with the unicorn. Now the flames were surrounding the castle. Inside the castle a white and a black hand were holding each other, while two shiny cups were coming from them. There was no racism in the castle, but I knew outside it was. Black and white were united together here, and by being twisted around each other they had created the most beautiful things. But someone was tearing this whole unity apart like it was a veil. A big fish lay behind it, showing it’s tail on which a small girl was sitting with brilliant light. She was holding a key, while the black and the white came together again. This time the black and white were kissing each other, but again a hand tore them apart from each other, and also the fish tail got torn apart. A tall sword appeared, while the black and the white tried to come together but they couldn’t. And I saw the small girl shedding many tears.

The unicorn told me it was a universal picture. I saw another color coming forward : red. And the red could bring the black and white together. But they were yelling against each other, and they both got red. Then it exploded, like a red pearl exploding, and blood was all over. The castle was like a red stone now. No one could move, and everything was turning blue, little by little … first purple, then blue …. Like frozen. And everything got torn even more by the blue, until there were splinters everywhere. It was like a machine, like someone was taking a picture.

‘There is a harmony,’ said the unicorn, ‘even in the greatest evil and the greatest chaos.’ A flame was coming from my heart, and my clock was in fire. I could move again, but everything around me had been frozen. ‘Move on,’ said the unicorn, ‘for small things can only get a place in the bigger pictures.’ A huge portal opened before me, and I saw big paintings, but they were all burning. ‘Only the biggest picture doesn’t burn,’ the unicorn said. ‘It is the framework for which all the smaller pictures must make place.’ I saw all those paintings move, while a path was appearing. The biggest painting was a ball floating in the nothing above a cup.

‘It is something you must drink,’ the unicorn said. I took the cup and drank. And that biggest frame was entering my head. It was like the hugest attic I ever saw. And the trick was it could become the smallest thing as well. It was the big and the small united which could make it the biggest. Where the big and the small were united it looked aggressive. But that was just a point of view. It was the framework, like a puzzle, like a camera, but at the same time like a cigar-lighter. It was harmony.

I could see the big eyes of the unicorn. There was flowing so much love from it. It was harmonious love. There was also disharmony, which was in perfect harmony with this harmonious love. The dragons had always been the creatures of disharmony, but the unicorn was both dragon and unicorn.

In the deepest of hell there was a slain zebra. The unicorn was coming forth. There was so much wisdom in this place, in perfect harmony with innocence and stupidity. Where there was only knowledge, without wisdom, it would if it would grow turn into stupidity. It was a strange tower, bending in the clouds. There were clowns on bicycles who could cycle across the walls to the top, all in perfect harmony. It was a strange picture, like a dream. The clowns seemed to disappear when coming close to the top. When there was only wisdom, without knowledge, it was also the work of clowns. I saw two snakes twisting around a strange tree. One snake was called gnosis, knowledge, and the other was sophia, wisdom. The tree started to burn and split. There were clowns on both sides, and a doctor offering medicine. This was hell.

I saw the two snakes trying to reach each other, but they couldn't. The doctor was the boss here. He opened a rippled shell with a small roulette game in it. Gamblers were all around, spoiling their money, all for a bit of medicine, while the doctor was lauging. This was hell. The winner got some medicine and got addicted for life. A slave …. This was hell. I saw gnosis and sophia both blind and deaf by the medicine, not able to find each other, only a stake. What would bring them together ? They could only smell each other. And the stake was medicine, a strange sword, and it slayed them. And again I saw the small girl crying.

The doctor was the god of hell, but this time I saw the small girl crying so much that the flood reached heaven, and it started to rain in hell, melting the medicine. It flew through the keyhole, and brought the small girl through it, and also the two snakes. The two snakes found the small girl, and together they formed a boat for her. This small girl had the name 'love'. Soon they came to an island, where the two snakes found a new tree. There was a lion with one horn on his forehead, holding a flower in his paw. There was knowledge, there was wisdom, but most of all : there was love.

In the middle of the island there was a pyramid with an eye on it. The eye was blind, but it thought it could see everything as someone had told it to the eye. But the eye had only a picture in it's memory, not the biggest picture, so it was in the flames. So the eye was melting, crying, but it was thinking it was happy, for it could see everything. And one moment the eye was so small that no one could see it anymore. And this was hell, for ignorance had been called knowledge, and grew into stupidity, and soon I saw clowns on bicycles cycling to the top of the pyramid, while the doctor was laughing louder. And this disharmony was in perfect harmony with harmonious love. And I saw the small girl laughing as well.

And that day I found out : hell was a circus, and the unicorn was the harmony of all things, which was the half-dragon. I wanted to see the machines, but even more : I wanted to forget about them. I mean : There had to be bigger machines out there, machines who wouldn't burn

so loud, but who were merely the frames of it all. I wanted to escape from this fairground, but was there an exit ?

The entrance and the exit lay close to each other like a snake biting it's tail. But at the same time I knew : there is no exit, for every exit is just a deeper entry. It was like a whirlpool sucking you deeper, showing you the mechanisms of life. And the unicorn was in this a very welcome narrator. How often the enemy and the friend would like to shake hands because of their pain and loneliness, but they couldn't. Someone was holding them apart, a faith, which means : a war. Knowledge and wisdom seemed to grow there, and even love, but the enemy and the friend could never be together. They were marionets, dancing their own dances. They were killers, killing everything which was different. There is something greater than knowledge and wisdom : cunning, phronimos. Cunning is more sensible, personal, interactive and communicative, as the tree of life, zoe. This is true medicine. Zoe is the doctor giving rhema, the living word. So then we have this formula : Zoe = gnosis+sophia+phronimos. Phronimos brings the two together. Is then love the same as life ? Is Zoe the small girl ? Is she the true doctor ? Zoe is another word for life, and together they are 'love'. Phronimos is strategy, getting the whole picture. It has to do with the roots of the tree : depth. It is a lost service, a lost doom.

'Now you know the secret of hell,' the unicorn said. 'It's cunning, deep deep cunning. All to open up the senses.' I looked at his big eyes. There were the most beautiful ornaments in his eyes. I trusted him. He was my friend. There was harmony when I looked at him, deep deep harmony in everything. It made me calm.

She worked for mrs. Molly. She was in the kitchen. She took some tea, and became dizzy. Soon she found herself laying on the ground. It was like the floor below her was melting. She felt herself sliding through a tunnel, deep down. Suddenly she saw a valley, very dark, with huge skulls. A spider moved towards her. It was all sticky. She was in a web. Something was eating her from inside.

She woke up. She was paralyzed by fear. When she came to the home of mrs. Molly everything was quiet. A few guests would come today. Mrs. Molly was still sleeping. 'Are you there, dear ?' she suddenly heard.

'Yes, mrs. Molly,' she said almost whispering. She drank some tea, and brought some tea to mrs. Molly.

'Spiders are of fear,' mrs. Molly said.

'What ?' she asked.

'Spiders,' mrs. Molly said. 'They are of fear. They spread fear.'

'Oh,' she said.

'Why are you saying that ?'

Mrs. Molly didn't say anything anymore.

The housemaid went to the door. She opened it for the guests who had just arrived. No one could possibly know about the spider, so why would mrs. Molly talk about them ? The housemaid made some coffee for the guests.

Late in the evening the housemaid went home. It had been a busy day. It was raining. When she came home she went to her bed immediately. She was very tired. That night she had a dream about indians. They were hunting. She had strange feelings in her stomach. They did terrible things to the animals. Her nipples started aching. Then she saw how the indians were turning into a spider. Everything seemed normal all of a sudden. It was like she could understand that the spider was hungry. Another insect was eaten. She didn't know what kind of insect it was. It was like the horror didn't bother her anymore. When she woke up she felt guilty. How could she not feel empathy for the insect in her dream ? She fell asleep again, and dreamt about bottles. Bottles with jewels on it. She wanted to drink from those bottles, but she couldn't reach them. Some people were laughing at her. The bottles seemed like filled with magic. Suddenly the laughers turned into indians, and then into spiders. Now she was the prey herself, but she felt the animal was so hungry. It was so hungry that it couldn't control itself anymore. She just let the animal eat of her flesh. She didn't care. All she cared was about the spider ...

She called the spider 'darling', and then she felt like dying, but she was in the arms of a man. And the man turned into a fire. 'I cannot help it that I am burning you,' spoke the fire. 'You are close to me. I cannot help it.'

'It's ok,' she said. 'It doesn't hurt me.' Then the fire turned into a swarm of flies, and then into flowers. She felt love from the man. She felt love from the man. 'I am consuming you,' said the man.

'In me you are safe.' She felt like locked up, but she didn't care. She felt warmth from the man.

'Who are you ?' she asked. But then she woke up. She felt guilty.

The next day she went to mrs. Molly again. She made food for the guests. She didn't speak to them. Mrs. Molly was silent as ever. After a long day of hard work the housemaid went home again. Feelings of guilt started to flow over her again. She went to bed.

She was dreaming of horses, and indians hunting. They were led by a native princess. She was in white clothes, made of white animal-skins. The princess came close to her, and suddenly turned into a white spider to attack her. The housemaid started to run, deep into the forest, while the spider was chasing her. The housemaid found a little house somewhere in the depths of the forest, and ran inside. An old woman was there, who also turned into a spider. This time she wouldn't like to be eaten. She started screaming. Suddenly the house was in fire, and also the trees outside started to burn.

'There is nowhere you can escape to,' a voice spoke. The housemaid was shivering. Then she started to shriek while the flames were consuming her. It was a terrible pain. She woke up in sweat and didn't dare to go to sleep anymore.

In the middle of the night she went to the house of mrs. Molly, and went to the kitchen. The nightmares started with the dream in the kitchen of mrs. Molly. As soon as she saw the floor, she fainted. It was like she was sinking through the floor, and came into a dark forest. Ghosts were surrounding her, and started yelling, while she felt like she was melting. Then spiders were crawling over her, starting to eat her. She was shrieking.

She felt like she was drowning. She knew she was still sleeping. It was like she couldn't wake up anymore. As if she had slid into a coma. She felt like dying. She saw thrones in the distance. Everything around her was white all of a sudden. She looked into the faces of frozen leprechauns. They were almost like statues, or they were in a shock.

A dwarf walked up to her. But the dwarf melted away. Then a fairy walked up to her, but she also melted away. Everything around her was melting away. She felt like she had to vomit. She was still fighting for her life. Then she suddenly hear the voice of mrs. Molly : 'Spiders are of fear. They spread fear.'

Mrs. Molly ? the housemaid said. Are you there ?

--But no one answered.

There was something in that tea, said the housemaid. I knew it. There's something wrong. I need to get out of here.

Again she was calling mrs. Molly, but no one answered.

Then she heard someone saying : 'You are under the curse of the leprechaun.'

How to break it ? she asked.

'You cannot break it,' the voice spoke.

What can I do then ? she asked.

--Nothing.

Oh come on, there has to be a way out of it, she said.

--No.

Then who are you ? she asked.

--Nobody.

'Yes, I know you are a nobody,' she said. 'How dare you talk to me like this.'

--I am the leprechaun.

'Well, soon you will be frozen like the others,' she said.

And then the voice was melting away. There were no witches, giants or any other creatures as mean as the leprechauns. The leprechauns used money to upset everyone, but at times they just turned into hunting indians, spiders, flies, flowers, men or fire ...

She was shivering and crying. She didn't know where she was. She just knew she wasn't awake. She was like locked up in a nightmare. Maybe she was in a coma, or even dead. I cannot stand this anymore ! she shouted. She felt like she was starting to freeze now also, like turning into stone, and then she woke up. See, I am not dead, she said to herself. But she lived on between the parasites. They called it life, but it was death.

Wars of the Flies

In the distance the soft machineguns and canons were shooting, pulsating, like liquid balls and eggs together, while soft winds surround the targets. The heat is intensive, someone is breathing, like he can explode every second. It's hard for him to leave the plateau, this level, to reach for a deeper one inside. Someone is breathing heavier, someone close to him. They cannot hold themselves up, and suddenly by a wind and a flash, they are exploding into white powder. Now the wind will do with it what it wants, but their souls are deeply gone, gone to another world. Their mouths are contracting, while the venom flows into their mouths. The mountains are high here, while snow and dust covers them, where the sun licks the roofs and the ripples. It was a flyian attack

He has white golden wires coming from his shoulders, while his white golden uniform is blinding the mass. His teeth pulsate the heat, while soft winds surround his attacks. He's a good warrior on his ship, doing flyian attacks. After the battles there isn't always much to do. Sometimes it's really boring for they shot everything away. The webs of wild flies are worse than that of spiders, for it eats everything away.

There are standing racecars on the tall attic on the tall table, where the nephews play. These racecars are a species of flies. They like to get fast to break through the picture. Then nothing has form, nothing has shape, and everything starts all over again. There's coming soft smoke from their throats.

Their fathers have smoken too much. Tall cigarettes are their cue's on the billiardstable, while the balls are of gold in all colours. Watch these suns they have in their ornaments.

The white golden sun is standing tall, while someone tall, almost bald, leaves the stages to take a boy from the streets. It's just a kid, and now he is in these dark hands. The boy starts to scream, for the Lord of the Flies is taking him to an island. There where the nephews live. He's coming tall accepting no complaints. Someone gets the tall ornaments, to hang in the trees of their gardens.

He's rising up, so sinister now, not a boy anymore. No one could expect that such a child would become such a strange hard man. By the hits he is autistic now, paranoid with sharp arrows. He's a wild fly, built for the kill, growing undercover in so many worlds. He's all alone, and where's the Lord of the Flies now. He stares at the tall ornaments, food for insects, but they are growing taller. He likes to make these circles, stinging through the pictures, to gain the nothing. From here he can grow to the heights. His touch is cool and shaky. He doesn't have an identity no more, while his colours are spreading like ripples and waves, he's heading for the pale, looking for the lost drips of colour. He dives, misses, and then falls away to wait another thousand years for a second chance. He's dreaming, dreamy, shifting his consciousness. Nothing is real.

He's a flyian mariner, without an army. His arrows are sharp, piercing his own back and shoulders, while wires are coming through. He's painted in many colours, while he shows the pale spots. His eyes are dark, waiting for the kill.

In the White Golden city they gather, all these white flies, waiting for the kill. They were marked to do the crimes, deep in their nipples. Their immunology systems are overactive, but a White Golden Hand takes them away. They just need to have a good circulation, and he teaches them art. The White Golden Snake penetrates the chest, to give them more hearts. They have no shape here, only movement and change. They are free.

In White Golden Ornaments we are free, no identity, no names. It's shifting so fast into endless summers, to become blue on top ... a bit blue.

Bison Oil

The popes of hell were judging the masses entering the huge hall. I had never seen such a huge hall. I was there too. Close to me there were all sorts of skeletons in deep pain. The popes of hell were laughing. They had big books under their arms, often with symbols of medicine. In the distance there was a tribunal of skeleton-popes. Weak souls were crying there but these popes seemed to be without mercy. A huge door made of bones opened, and these weak souls had to enter there, receiving their eternal punishment. There was fire and smoke behind the huge bony door, and the skeleton-popes didn't show a smile. There was a different between the popes of hell and the skeleton-popes. These skeleton-popes had a lot more power, and they were often more serious. An awful stench filled the hall. I made myself a way through the mass. There were a lot of huge doors, often made of bones. I entered through one of them and came in a sort of garden. Here skeletons were playing, black skeletons. They didn't seem to care about popes. There were also some frogs and toads dancing around them. They were pretty big. It looked like a party. Further on in the garden it turned into a forest. I saw the lambs of hell in a pasture nearby, and in the distance I heard the hounds of hell barking. I started wandering through the forest for awhile, and finally came into a wilderness where the trees were higher than I ever saw. It was an amazing sight.

There were skeleton-flies in the air, and some skeleton-elephants were around. This was the place of the goddess Mur. It all looked like a puppetmarket to me. Finally in the depths of the wilderness I reached her place. She was a beautiful black woman with high veils around her hair. These veils were very transparent, and in a sense she looked like a sort of fairy to me. The goddess Mur was surprised to see me. She took off her veils and moved her head wildly to make a mess of her hair.

'Do I have to call you pope or popess ?' I asked. She smiled.

'I'm the grandpope of all fairies,' she said.

'What's the deal with all these popes of hell and skeleton-popes and such ?' I asked.

'Oh, I need to arrange them, arrange everything here in hell,' she said.

I sighed. She wanted to give me a cup of water, but I refused.

‘Let’s see, why are you here with me ?’ she said. ‘You know I have set you free from the market one time, so why are you here again ?’

‘Well I’m gracefull,’ I said. ‘I think I love you.’

She smiled. ‘Are you sure you do not want anything to drink ?’ she asked.

‘No,’ I said. ‘I’m not so thirsty at the moment.’

One of her monkeys came close to her, and started to hang at her. She smiled again. ‘Well, I’m glad you’re back,’ she said.

She was okay. I didn’t like the popes of hell, and those skeleton-popes, but she was okay. Since she had set me free from that stuff and marked me, the popes of hell and the skeleton-popes left me alone.

I knew a bit how it worked. She was in war against Arbeitir, the goddess of a place near hers. She had a same sort of market like this. All these popes were merely the warriors in this system. It was all part of the big war of hell. I didn’t know Arbeitir. I had heard a lot of her, but I had never been there to find out about it’s mysteries. It seemed Mur was glad to see me because I could mean something to her. She showed me a key, and led me to the gate where her place lay against the border of Arbeitir’s place. She gave me the key and said : ‘Take this. It’s important for you and me. If we want to win this war, we need to figure it all out. If not we will be Arbeitir’s slaves one day, then the unknown will grasp us. You know I do not have any powers there. Go there, and use the magic I once teached you.’

I started wandering through the cities of the place of Arbeitir, having the highest, tallest skyscrapers I ever saw before, all surrounded by strange smoke in a bloodred sky. In the highest building of them all of course Arbeitir herself lived. That was what Mur had told me. As I wandered through the streets of the villages and cities I encountered poor and dirty women who had to do heavy work. There was no sense of reward here, only misery. Arbeitir lived in a sort of tower. It looked like a huge cross from a distance, by which she had survey over her realms. It took me hours of walk on the stairways before I reached the top. It was a huge hall where she lived with her cats. She wasn’t what I

had expected. She was a black woman. There were popes of hell all around her, and a lot of skeleton-popes. She herself looked like a grand-pope.

‘Come closer,’ she screamed. I didn’t know what to do, but her big cats took me in a grip, and I didn’t have another choice. ‘Why do you let poor woman work for you in dirt and under such a burden ?’ I asked.

‘Who are you, and what are you doing here ?’ she asked.

I realized her place was much bigger than Mur’s.

Suddenly a fat black woman came in with towels around her head holding a precious jewel. ‘I can zombificate him, princess, if you want. Or I can make a precious dinner of him, what do you want ?’ she said.

‘No, I want him alive and well,’ Arbeitir said. ‘You can go now.’

The big fat woman left, while Arbeitir stood up from her seat. She directed her finger at a big door, where soldiers stood with spears. They looked like knights in a sense. ‘Let me be alone with him,’ she spoke to the soldiers. Then they left. I knew this was a woman with great power, and I didn’t know what my fate would be. A small man with a big ball on his head entered. ‘Lazaroi, you can also go. I need to be alone with this man.’ Then the small man left.

‘I want you to know that I know you come from Mur,’ she spoke. ‘She doesn’t know me. It’s merely her watchers and my watchers are in a fight, and her watchers give her the wrong information about me.’

Slowly I came closer to Arbeitir. She was a beautiful woman, and I almost couldn’t get my eyes off of her.

‘You dwell in riches here,’ I said. ‘While outside women are dying in poverty and by their burdens. Why don’t you help them ?’

‘I can’t help them,’ she said. ‘They live in such situations because of their wrong idea’s about me. I can only help them if they would approach me. I’m living here in a big vision.’

‘So you weren’t the one chaining them in such heavy slavery ?’ I asked.

‘No,’ she said. ‘Why would I ?’

‘Then who did it ?’ I asked.

‘They chose themselves males who did that to them,’ she said. ‘They made families, and they started to live around my vision. They are called the cinderellas.’

‘And where are their husbands now ?’ I asked. ‘For I only saw the women.’

‘Their husbands and children live deeper underground, even working harder,’ she answered.

I now realized there came a tear from her eye. ‘They say I am the source of their problems.’

‘So they should leave their families ?’ I asked.

‘I don’t care,’ she said. ‘They only work for their families. They are egoistic. If they would work for the benefit of the whole, they wouldn’t be so burdened.’

‘Yes, but isn’t that just a division, that everyone works for their own family ?’ I asked.

‘It shouldn’t be like that,’ she said.

I sighed. Neither did I have a solution. However I could return to Mur now to tell her that Arbeitir was different. But she stopped me. She wanted me to stay with her.

‘Why do you want me to stay with you ?’ I asked.

‘It isn’t good for you to return to Mur,’ she said. ‘She has a problem with information, you know. She mixes it up. I don’t want you to be her next victim.’

‘But this woman saved me,’ I said. ‘I think she deserves this information about who you really are.’

But the doors through which I came suddenly closed, and red spears blocked every approach to them. ‘It’s too dangerous,’ Arbeitir said.

In the midst of the night when everyone slept I escaped out of a small window. Fortunately I got picked up by a black lion-bird. Mur had sent it already to bring me back.

At the moment she was in a place with skeleton-pharao’s. They had higher powers than the usual popes, so she didn’t consult them too often. They could even be dangerous to her. They were dressed in the skins of zebra’s and their bones, striped by paint. The skeleton-pharao’s gave her some stones to increase her ice magic.

As soon as she could she came back to see me. She told me that the skeleton-pharao’s had told her that I was a dog of hell slowly returning to the pharaonic throne of hell. I was a king in their eyes, coming from the depths to incarnate here for a reason. It sounded interesting, as there was a lot to do here. This place had much potential, and the first thing I did was explaining Mur about Arbeitir. She immediately understood. It was like a burden fell away from her, and she knew she could better not take the information of the popes of hell and the skeleton-popes too serious.

One day Mur took me to the place of the skeleton-pharao’s. They lived in a huge complex building with a lot of halls and layers, even underground. It was an amazing place. But when they reached their sceptre out to me to become their king I could do nothing but refuse. They understood that my mission was maybe above their understanding of it. Mur smiled, and soon she took me away with her again to her place. I knew they could be of use, and I didn’t feel any threat coming from them.

There was another place, where indian skeleton chiefs lived, and their gods. Mur didn't know too much of them. She almost never came there. But whenever she came there it was always good.

Soon the war stopped between the watchers of Mur and the watchers of Arbeitir.

There was a school in the place of Mur where indian chiefs were the teachers of the popes. These chiefs seemed to have their knowledge from a certain pharaonic clock in the depth of the school's underground. It was a sort of speaking oracle. But it had spoken a lot of misinformation. The indian skeleton chiefs who were from another place said that they had something which could replace the pharaonic clock. It was called a dreamweaver, a mysterious web. It was a sort of elevator which could reach the deepest depths and also the highest heights, for much survey and investigation. It would be a source of information they could trust better.

It was in these days Arbeitir sent a red bird of hell to me to take me back to her. This time she opened herself up to me. She said that the secret of her success was because she worshipped some sort of stone named the Jewel of Fear. She said that this jewel needed to be worshipped above anything else. It was indeed the most beautiful and powerful stone. She showed me that the poor women who lived in dirt failed to worship this stone of fear by choosing themselves families. I wondered what the use of fear was. The big fat black woman came again, and this time she showed me her kitchens. She was a cook. She told me that the fear was the personification of time. If there wouldn't be time, there wouldn't be fear.

'But what is the use of it ?' I asked.

'The jewel of fear is the clock of hell,' the big fat woman said. 'There is no life without it. Those who do not worship this jewel of fear soon or late sink away in paralysis. We can use them here in the kitchen.'

'For what ?' I asked.

Then she opened the door behind her kitchens, and I looked into a hall where they all hung.

‘For meat,’ she said.

‘Oh,’ I said, ‘but if this jewel of fear is so powerful, why doesn’t it bring them back out of the paralysis to give them a life again ?’

‘Because they do not worship the stone of fear. They actually hate it. And the stone needs meat, you see,’ the woman said.

I ran back to Arbeitir. ‘Why are you doing this ?’ I asked.

‘The Jewel of Fear is the only source of life,’ she said.

‘So the women who work in the cities and villages will also be paralyzed one day to end up in your kitchen ?’ I asked.

‘They mock the stone,’ Arbeitir said.

‘Then why don’t you tell them the truth ?’ I asked.

‘They don’t listen to me,’ Arbeitir said.

‘Then let me tell them and warn them, for I don’t want them to end up in such a horrible fate,’ I said.

‘They are egoistic, only living for their families. The ones trying to reach them will only crash against their walls. Why risking your life for it ? These women are dangerous,’ Arbeitir said.

‘What if we use Mur,’ I said. ‘She’s powerful and has a lot of powerful friends.’

‘No,’ Arbeitir said. ‘These women would kill her. They are predators.’

‘Then what can we do ?’ I asked.

‘We can’t do anything,’ Arbeitir said. ‘They know of the stone, and hate it. It’s their own choice.’

‘Maybe they are misinformed,’ I said.

‘Maybe they’re just evil,’ Arbeitir said. I now started to realize that Arbeitir already gave up on them.

In the midst of the night I went to the Jewel of Fear. It started to change into a cross before my eyes. ‘Rebirth in hell only happens by me,’ the jewel said. ‘The rest will die.’

I came in a wrestling against the jewel. I didn’t know what to do. Did I have to submit myself to it right away ? I finally did, as it was too strong, and I found myself worshipping it, while rays of light seemed to come forward from me.

‘You have saved yourself by that, soldier,’ the jewel said.

I still didn’t know what to do. I felt crucified. The next day I showed myself to Arbeitir and she saw my wounds. ‘These wounds will let you live forever,’ she spoke. It seemed to be a necessary initiation.

The next night I had another fight against the jewel. ‘I want to live in you,’ the stone said. ‘Then I can heal and you as well.’ In the fight I didn’t have another choice. The stone was too strong and pierced itself through my body. We were one now. It lived in my heart. I got an immense power, and the next day Arbeiter could see from my face something had happened to me. Since that day I had a certain power in Arbeiter’s place, and I could finally make an end of the horrible cannibalistic kitchens of the big fat black woman.

There was a wall in the midst of hell separating two parts which didn't know anything of each other. It had always been like that. No one knew something of the other side. When I went there I found out about it's guard : a two-faced man. No one seemed to get over the wall or come over the wall from the other side. Since I had the jewel of fear in my heart I started to develop wings, and one day I could fly to the other side. No one shot me down. I guess I was just lucky. The lambs of hell were dwelling on the fields there, and the fields were more or less burning. The lambs of hell wore all sorts of symbols on their heads, shiny symbols, and one of them was their king. I had never seen so many lambs of hell before. There were bulls between them, who seemed to be their prisoners of war, waiting for slaughter.

One of the lambs of hell stepped forward. It seemed to be their king. Suddenly they were devouring one of the bulls, while blood was streaming. Some savages like indians came from behind the lambs of hell. They seemed to be the owners of them. They seemed to use these lambs for all sort of things. Suddenly the air was full of birds of hell, floating down on the bleeding bull to eat from it's meat.

On the fields there were some big trees with dangerous cats in them. Suddenly they all ran away for some sort of unicorn was coming. The unicorn wore a crown and seemed to be the emperor here. But when it came closer I saw some sort of ghost was riding it. It was a skeleton-ghost. In a sense it looked like a monkey, and it smiled at me. I didn't know anything of this place. After awhile the unicorn with the monkey-like ghost-skeleton left again, and soon the lambs of hell with their owners were coming again, still with bulls between them. Another bull got slain now, but this time there were no birds of hell floating down, but huge flies of hell. After awhile chained popes came forward. They also seemed to be prisoners of war. These were the judgement-fields. I didn't know anything about the rules here. It was like my coming had triggered something in the others. I saw a lamb of hell trying to get across the wall, and after awhile also others made attempts. I didn't know anything of this nature, this wilderness, so I decided to go deeper into it. When I returned to the place where the walls stood, I saw that they had disappeared. They had been eaten away by the lambs of hell … totally.

I remember the giant-pigs of this place. They were merely the petrol-stations of hell. The many vehicles I found here ran on pigblood. This place was obsessed by big trains. Also the big oxes seemed to be the oil for the big machines. Especially the bigger trains ran by their juices. There were a lot of pigbreedings and oxbreedings underground, gigantic complexes, all for oil.

When I returned to the Mur and Arbeitir their places weren't the same anymore, and I couldn't find them. The lambs of hell seemed to rule everywhere now, and everything was a wilderness. The tower of Arbeitir didn't exist anymore, neither the cities with the skyscrapers and neither the dreamweaver-elevator. There was an immense wilderness now, and of course a lot of railroads. Everywhere there were gigantic bull-industries and pig-industries.

I didn't know what had happened to hell, but since the wall had been broken down everything seemed to be burning.

I tried to fly away from it, watching it like a planet of fire in the distance, but it was growing with an immense speed almost absorbing the space around it. It seemed like no one could escape hell.

Suddenly there were explosions everywhere. The planet of fire was turning into an immense sun claiming the center of all space, while swallowing so many other planets. It pierced itself through the old sun, totally taking it over, totally digesting it, while shining in a new fire. It seemed like the sun had grown now, 20.000 times it's size. A shiny thin tall sword decorated by the finest jewelry appeared. It was an insectian sword. I saw a woman trying to grasp the sword, but when she got it she turned into blood. Fear was entering the space. Who would be the ruler of this new sun, the new ruler of hell, now it had changed so much ?

Flies seemed to fly around the sword, tall flies, with tall stings. They had stripes on their bodies. Suddenly there was another explosion and the whole space was in fire. I didn't know how long it took, as I had lost my sense of time. There was hell now everywhere. But it seemed to make place for immense ice. I saw faces appearing with strange pale lights on them, and many shadows. They were in darkness.

I wondered what kind of wall it was, which had been broken down. It was a wall of time it seemed. And new walls were appearing, and they were moving and turning, like a labyrinth. The sight was inducing sleep. It was all nothing but a dream now. Visions started to swim through it, growing up, looking for victims. I saw bodies swelling up, standing on their feet. And by a cross one could become thin to enter a new world. If one had reached the thinnest entrance there was a flash, and then they were in. Everything exploded into thinness. The cross looked like my own jewel of fear.

I saw the visions of hell looking for damned souls to enter their heads so that they could eat them undercover. These visions were inducing illusions to blind their victims for the reality. The visions of hell were merely intergalactic spiders without any sense of good and evil. They were just hungry, and tricked their victims just to survive. Like red lights they went out for hunts, and they also laid their webs and traps. They had the technology for that. Mur once made them, but when she found out they had dangerously growing artificial intelligence she only used them in her aquaria hoping they would never escape.

The lambs of hell seemed to be everywhere. They seemed to worship a pig at a cross and an ox at a cross. Suddenly another cross was appearing between them, a taller cross with a goat hanging at it. The lambs of hell all seemed to worship it. They dressed themselves like popes with capes and went downstairs to a lonely and small planet. I wondered what was going on. They were carrying a book.

There was a transparent curtain in the middle of space, and I saw them laying the book in some sort of lock. Then I heard all sorts of soft sounds like a melody, and the curtain opened itself. I could stare into a new world. The transparency of the curtain had always displayed something else. It had been a curtain of illusion.

I saw trains going through the opening between the curtains. They looked like huge flies of hell attached to each other. Big preachers settled themselves in the air like satellites, preaching about the three crosses. Only by these three crosses one could enter the new world. Millions and millions of nuns seemed to enter the new world.

I saw a big spaceship appearing above me. I wondered how such a big heavy thing could fly. The ship picked me up, and soon I stood eye to eye to the captain, a man around 55 years old. He took three tall plugs out of my head, and showed them to me. 'You walked with these things,' he said, 'keeping you chained into so many illusions. But you need to worship the four, so that not any of them can pierce your head so deep.'

'What do you mean by the four ?' I asked.

'Well,' the captain said. 'The ones in that false illusion only worship three crosses, but there are four. These are the main crosses. It's the cross of the ox, the chicken, the goat and the pig.'

It reminded me of the four animals of the book of revelation, surrounding a slain lamb. These four animals were an ox, an eagle, a man and a lion. Now this was something else.

'By the cross of the chicken we actually fly,' the man said.

I remembered the stone of fear in my heart which gave me the ability to fly. Now this was something else.

'This spaceship is called the hell,' the man said. 'The hells you saw were illusions. Hell is a spaceship. It's moving. It's bringing time.

Again it reminded me of the stone of fear I had inside.

'But our spaceship is dying,' the captain said. 'The four crosses are missing something. It's the most important thing of a cross : fear. It's jewels must return to the crosses, or we will all freeze and turn into stone.'

I didn't dare to say anything, as I was afraid they would take my stone away. However, I could tell them about Arbeitir who seemed to know a lot about the jewels of fear, as she was worshipping them.

One day the captain showed me the four crosses in the depths of the ship, and he was right : there was a hole in the center of each cross.

The captain told me that deeper in the ship far below the crosses the chickens of hell lived. These were women who once lived among them more on the surfaces of the ship, but because they broke the rules all the time they got banned to the depths of the ship below the four crosses. The four crosses formed a web of strong radiation like a fence, so that they couldn't return to the surfaces anymore. In time the women developed strange abilities. Some said they changed into evil chickens at times. This is how they got their name the chickens of hell. They could also steal the jewels of fear out of the crosses one time, so that the ship was doomed to die if they wouldn't find it back. I became fascinated with the story, and one day I wanted to visit these women. They lived in the pits and ravines of the ship, in the deeper undergrounds of it's wilderness. The women were predators now, and some said they had the ability to grill by their stare. They guarded the stones now. Some said they also bred the lambs of hell as predators. They worshipped a burning face, and one day they would take over the ship, according to this burning face.

One day I decided to go there to take a look. I soon found out that they worshipped five crosses instead of four. They had made their own four crosses and in the midst of them there was a cross with a man hanging at it. Again it reminded me of the book of revelation. Four animals and a slain lamb in their midst. In this case it was a man, and they had laid the jewels at his feet. Four of them. I was wondering why they had five crosses instead of four, and what kind of rules they had broken that they became the outcasts of the ship. As I was watching for awhile I saw them dancing around the crosses and worshipping the stones. It reminded me of Arbeitir. 'I smell a man coming closer to us,' one of the women said. 'I smell that he doesn't know who we are, and that he has been misinformed.' I was at my guard but on the other side it attracted me and I wanted to know more of it. 'Tell me what rules did you break to come here,' I shouted.

‘Come closer,’ the woman was saying. Then she started to tell her story. As I came closer I could hear the cracking branches below the feet of the women. They were standing there, staring at me. I wanted to go beyond the legends and hear it from themselves. The women told me that it was a man’s world upstairs and that women had to bow down before their dictatorship, their uniforms. But here they chose for the broken man whose corrupted strong natural overpower had been broken to become savage, wild, instead of controlling. I watched the cross … It wasn’t a real man but a doll. But when I watched it closer I saw it was a zombificated man. The animals had also been zombificated. Here the women ruled. Suddenly I knew I was in danger. I couldn’t go anywhere as the women had surrounded me. ‘Please try to understand us,’ one of the women said.

I told them that when the stones wouldn’t return to their crosses the ship would die. ‘Only their piece will die,’ another woman spoke. ‘Our piece will survive. They do not have the crucified man, and that is their lack.’

I waited till they all slept, and then I took the cross with the zombificated man having the stones at his feet on my back and carried it to the place where the radiation-fence was. I placed the cross in the midst of the other crosses, took the stones and planted them in the centers of the four crosses. Much more radiation seemed to come, and a new and better fence started to form itself. I now knew that the women could never steal the stones again. It was because of this fifth cross which was lacking the women could do such things. The next day I told it to the captain and explained about the fifth cross, the cross in the middle, with the crucified man. He understood it completely and was very glad.

He said that the trip of the ship was actually towards a certain constellation called the Bison. He showed me a picture of a broken cross, not like a swastika, but more like a real cross and deeper broken into a sharper sting. It was called the Bison Cross or hidden cross. He said that the bison had always been the symbol of male power, and he understood that it had to be broken first to become savage. It happened by this deeper broken cross, which looked like lightening. Their trip was to the heart of the Bison constellation where they had to raise this cross and be the new center of hell. It would trigger new lightening for a new world. I looked at the Bison Cross on the picture. It looked like a sign which had been carved into my stone as well. I never understood the sign, but now I did. It looked like bow and arrow in a sense.

The captain had an old bible with the original Hebrew words and their translations. He was reading the part of Genesis in which God promised he would never devour the earth by water again. The mark of that promise was the Qeshet. They used to translate it as rainbow, but in the original Hebrew meaning it was a thunderstorm, the celestial archer, which was God on his chariot. It was a sign he ruled the weather, and by this sign his people would rule the weather as well. The actual sign was the lightening sceptre, the bison cross. By this God could break all the male powers of nature. It was the hidden cross by which he could tame them.

In many cultures the gods ruled by lightening, and it was by this bison cross. This was actually the sign by which Moses could split the sea. I remembered in some indian tribes when a man would be 35 years old there needed to be a bloody series of rituals to break the bison spirit in him. I remembered these rituals were so cruel that young boys grew up in fear of becoming 35, and many ended their lives before they reached that age. It was all to protect the tribe against the untamed overcontrolling power of the male. I remembered at the end of the series of rituals the man needed to be 'reborn' by entering into a living bison and then creeping to the top of it to 'take it over'. This was the sign of overcoming their own corrupted male forces, their erected pride. Not many men survived this ritual, as they often drowned in the blood, in the body of the bison. They had been martyred for the better.

It was a huge experience to see such a big ship entering the heart of the Bison, between the stars, taking it's position. There was lightening everywhere. I remembered gods like Zeus, Donar, Wodan and Odin, riding on their chariots through the sky causing thunder and lightening. They were actually reflections of this powerful sign of God, the Qeshet. It was the bison-hunter, the savage, wild indian. The bison had to be stung and broken, for every herd of bisons would be one man of power. This was why the romans focussed their worship on Mithras, the bull-hunter, instead of Qeshet the bison-hunter. They wanted to raise their men of power to rule the world. God wanted his people to follow his sign, Qeshet, the bow of the archer, and to receive it's mark, but his people chose a lovely rainbow. Qeshet finally disappeared totally when Mithras became the Messiah, Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is a bull-hunter in origin, not a savage bison-hunter.

The captain said that Qeshet once appeared to him showing that sign telling him he would have the victory by that sign. I remembered a roman emperor called Constantine who had a vision of another sign, the so called Chi-Rho, an X with a P inside, which was the ultimate sign of Christ by which he would conquer. In Hebrew the word 'water' had a much deeper meaning, as it was a mixture of sweat, blood, faeces and seed, and it literally meant 'dirt'. It was the source of creation, and thus Qeshet was the Creator and Lord of the Dirt. Ruling the water by this sign meant ruling the dirt and thus creating. It was a true powersign.

Qeshet was a thunderstorm, more powerful than just wind. In Hebrew 'wind' means strong odor. Qeshet, the sign itself, was the stench. It was very well the best kept secret of hell.

The romans were bull-hunters, keeping the bison-spirit, the source of all male power, alive. The bison was the king of all bulls and men. The men could get their male powers by killing the bulls. This was why they worshipped Mithras, and later Jesus Christ. Soldiers of Jesus Christ, the popes, were merely bull-hunters. First the romans hunted the christians, but later they just used them.

I saw the spaceship was making an end of the Age of Romans by the sign. It was like a vacuum cleaner. Again the captain was reading from the bible, about the creation of man. He had been formed from the dust, but in Hebrew it said 'dirt'. Man became an 'Aph' which was like a vacuum

cleaner, a dirt-eater. When the snake initiated man into the gnosis, the hidden knowledge, he got the same fate : eating dirt. Qeshet ruled, and broke man and it's erected pride. Qeshet however showed up again as he wanted to live in man, but man chose the sign of the romans, the Chi-Rho.

Chi-Ro was only a temporal sign, but Qeshet would be forever, and had to sink into the Aph to rule dirt and thus create. This Aph is the heart of the bison. The Aph needed to be broken, so that the Qeshet could enter.

I saw computers in the distance melting away. The sign had it's own technology and the spaceship was taking over.

There were a lot of stations in the evergrowing spaceship, and of course a lot of trains, running by dirt. It had a hidden bison industry. Many machines in the spaceship seemed to run on bison-oil. It was especially for television. Most of the time they used television for communication.

The End

Bodies on Coins

I was wandering through this huge prison now. I had been escaped out of my cell, but I was still in danger. It was night now, and everything was dark around me. It looked like a school. No one was around. I ran on stairways and through doorways, along classrooms. I was in hell. After awhile I was running through corridors of something which looked like a hospital. I was running hard. In the distance I saw a skeleton with a sort of ray-gun. I stopped, hid myself behind a huge plant. He walked along me, while I was holding in my breath. Fortunately he didn't see me. All I knew was that I had to be very careful now. After a few minutes I started running further. I saw a ray-gun somewhere, took

it, and shot some portals open. It was strange to me that there weren't any alarms. I didn't know where I was.

Then I was running through tall corridors of stations for hours and hours, and finally I reached the fresh air outside, in front of a burning desert. How could I escape from this ? I saw a balloon in the distance and some spaceships. They were making signals, friendly signals. Soon they picked me up. There was smoke all around us, and now I heard some alarms, but they said these were theirs. They brought me in a place in the depths of hell, with horned walls. There was a lot of jewelry here, and I didn't know where I was. All I knew was that I was in good hands.

'Hell is but a cocoon,' they said. 'It's of no use to get out. There is only an escape in it's depth.' Yes, there were amazing worlds deeper in hell, if we only would reach deeper. There's no use in escaping a cocoon. We must follow the trace to the end. Hands were holding transparent balls here, like jewels. It was an amazing sight. There was a mine in the depths of hell, with the most precious stones and ornaments, beautiful sculptures. It was like these sculptures were alive. A woman had turned her body and head to the sky, letting a fish sink into her mouth, but the fish looked like a cup. It was a waterfall. The waters were very shiny. There was a man with his head like a cup. The opening was his open mouth. It was wide open and headed to the sky. The man held grapes above the cup, and there was also water coming from it like a small waterfall.

There was a tree with big ears like an entry, but it was a trap. The tree looked like some sort of ascended master. It was a cocoon. This sculpture was called 'The Elephant'. A snake had twisted it's body around a tree and a stretched brown woman. The tree had branches like the ears of a rabbit.

In the midst of these sculptures there was a pond with a red pearl floating above it's surface. As soon as the red pearl touched the surface ripples were appearing in the pond, and the sculptures started to move. 'Eat me,' the red pearl said. I knew there were many things in me like frozen, so I didn't hesitate one moment. I took the red pearl and started to eat from it. It tasted like an apple. The sculptures really came alive now, and they started to hunt after me. I needed to run again.

'Run again, run again,' someone said. I saw a mighty hand in front of me. I stepped on it and it took me up. I could see the mechanisms of this place all around me. It didn't scare me. It took me up high, to the very center of hell it said. It was a castle. In this place ladybugs fell in love with locks, just to open them. I also saw scarabs doing the same thing. They were the keys in this castle. And they flew around me to open doors. I can remember their songs, their beautiful music, all to be a key. There were so many locks in this castle, but fortunately also many keys.

The ladybugs were such mighty creatures, but they were in war against the flies. The flies were subtle and cunning, and they had their webs everywhere. If they would catch a ladybug they would eat it

for sure, after fattening it up. There were certain locks only flies could open. These flies loved to sting. You had to sting these locks in certain ways to open them, and the flies knew how to do it. When the lock was almost open, it started to produce a strange smell. I couldn't bear it anymore to see it. It looked like torture. But a point was : if these locks wouldn't be opened, it would only get worse. So I followed the flies.

There were strange lights in the sky. Sculptures made of bone seemed to move again. There was something changing in the center of hell. All I knew was it was a labyrinth, a place of puzzles and riddles. It was a puzzle-master living here, who had made all these worlds, hoping someone would unlock the mysteries. The puzzle-master had made all these locks to protect himself, but at the same time he had left a trace for those who loved him, and those he loved. It was a difficult trace, and it had to be for otherwise dangerous predators could enter in. First you had to prove yourself, your love, your wisdom and your care.

The puzzle-master was a wonderful creature, but finally the flies found him and tore him apart. They made new worlds, with their own puzzles. They were the kings of hell. Who could crack the codes the flies made ? They could turn themselves into flowerfields, letting all the visitors sleep, and letting them sink into the deepest and cruellest traps. Traps ? They were merely puzzles. Who was the new king of puzzles ?

I knew a man, I met him there, who was a slayer. He didn't believe in all those puzzles. He had a sword by which he could open the most difficult locks. Not by cracking their codes, but just by slaying them right away. He said that to puzzle was leading you into the illusion made by the lock. When you would find the solution it would be just another illusion of the lock. This man said he had his knowledge from a different sort of flies : Indian flies. They teached him how to hunt and fight.

I started to believe this man, and he also seemed very protective. So I followed him more or less. He spoke words of wisdom. He said that hell was a ritual of sacrifice, also of self-sacrifice. That was actually the key according to him to come any further. The most important thing according to him was not the ritual of sacrifice, but the sacrifice of ritual. As to become ritualistic was the biggest trap in his eyes. He seemed to be a free man, but bound to this rule. It brought him life. It seemed his sword was the key to many worlds I didn't know of, all in the depths of hell. He seemed to accept certain locks, as a matter of self-sacrifice. So the worlds he showed me kind of floated between the surfaces and the depths of hell. It was in the middle of it. It was kind of a three-dimensional world, with the flashes of the four-dimensional. Too much sorcery was dangerous in his eyes, as it could enslave and bring illusions. He used the sword, and at times his knife, his bow and arrows. He also threw stones if he needed to. He also had a limited belief in the spiritual. He was careful with so called voices he couldn't see and feel. He needed to feel the flesh, so he preferred the women of flesh and blood around him. He was not materialistic, as we were in hell already. We had already done a great deal of spirituality, but we reached for the balance, and I believed him.

There were goddesses around here, oracles of flesh and blood. It was a new world like paradise. Only by balance we could enter it, he said.

I saw a circus in the sky, while he ripped it apart, both man and horse. He said he didn't bother, as it was only a veil of illusion. It all came down like a curtain. There was something strange in the eyes of the man, like he had the sparks of flies.

There were so many dreams in this realm, mixing themselves into the three-dimensional trying to make themselves come true. They came as wishes, then turned into thought, and finally vision to become flesh.

I needed to have my own home, my own place, so I went to a castle near to the place where the man lived. This castle I would make my home, my heart. I tried to remember all what the man had told me. There was a unicorn living in this castle. I wanted to know the secret of hell. I knew I could never really escape hell, as there seemed to be nothing else, so I had to find the key, a way to live with it, leading me into the deeper worlds, although I believed the words of the man when he said that it was all in the middle. Too much depth would be dangerous and deceiving. But I was also afraid of the surface and the non-growing. Was it all about to happen here like the man said ? I loved the unicorns, the half-dragons, the ones of harmony, as they had a place for everything.

I was smiling, as the unicorn came closer. This was a creature mightier than the dragon. Suddenly the being started to turn into a mass of indian flies, and then into flowers, and it seemed to be just the garment of an indian woman. She smiled at me. There were monkeys around here, and she stood among huts made of reed. She sat on a bench and suddenly she started to sing. I didn't know anything of this world, and didn't know the language. I could smell and feel so much but didn't understand.

'Welcome to the world of mazes,' she said. A coin was spinning before my eyes, turning blue and then copper. I grasped it. 'There is no unity in here,' she said. 'Everything lives in separation to make room for the unknown.' I stared at the coin which lay in my hand now. There was a face of an indian man on it.

'What is wrong with the worlds you come from ?' she asked. 'Why would you spoil your precious energy in trying to let them repent ? Why trying to change them, instead of continuing your journey into harmony. You are serving the illusions. There is no one you need to save, just come closer.' I watched this indian saint. I wondered what kind of religion it was, or philosophical system. She laid her hand in my hands.

‘What is it you are wondering about ?’ she asked. ‘Come with me.’ Then she stood up and I followed her. She guided me along young tigers and lions, and some black panthers. There were also white panthers in the distance, close to curtains. Also strange holy dogs with tall necks were around, and some lay on high benches. She guided me to a place where a huge head was floating between curtains. It was a sort of skull, and the place was darker.

‘Come closer, earthling,’ the skull spoke. The woman was still with me. We sat down on chairs, like we were in a cinema. ‘Where are you from ?’ the skull asked.

‘I made a long journey through hell,’ I said.

‘Oh, earth, you mean,’ the skull said. ‘Yes, that’s a part of hell.’

I nodded. Then the skull moved away, and another skull appeared. ‘I’m the ruler of hell,’ the big skull roared. ‘I have 3000 masks, and all kings are mine.’

‘Oh, are they your marionets ?’ I asked. The skull nodded.

‘Do you know the secret of hell ?’ he asked.

Suddenly purple flames jumped up from the floor in front of him. ‘This is the secret of hell,’ he said. ‘Somewhere between the red and the blue, the blood and the ice, there is life. He showed me some pictures of purple saints in garments, all purple pictures. Then he started to laugh. The flames started to bring forth pink pale hearts, very shiny, and surrounded by white silky ropes. ‘Pink it will be,’ he laughed. Then he smiled. ‘Do you want to be a part of the kingdom ?’

I said that I didn’t understand a single thing of what he was saying. I did remember the words of the man with the sword that there needed to be balance, for only the things in the middle were alive.

‘Well, pink is the middle between red and white,’ he said. ‘Green is the middle between yellow and blue. So my world is purple, pink and green.’ But it made me angry, and I remembered the man with the sword also spoke of sacrifice. ‘Is there another skull ?’ I asked.

Then another skull moved forward, while the skull with the middle talk disappeared. I took a deep breath. ‘Portals in hell,’ he said. ‘There are many portals in hell, guarded by the hounds of hell or guys like us. The difference between the hounds of hell and us is that we allow you to choose …. Which skull do you choose ?’

I looked at the indian woman. ‘Choose this one,’ she whispered. ‘This one is the best.’

‘I choose you,’ I said to the skull. Then the skull opened it’s huge mouth, and we entered in. It was like entering a mine, so full of precious jewels and stones. Then the indian woman changed into a unicorn again. I climbed on it’s back, and the trip started. The unicorn seemed to know this place, and soon we got to a new castle. Behind the castle there was a wilderness. The wilderness seemed to be full of indian saints. They looked like sculptures, and some sat in trees or in front of them. They bore wisdom.

I loved to listen to these sculptures. They talked for hours and hours and then they stopped to make place for something else.

Above a pond an apple was floating saying : ‘Eat me, so that they will all move and come alive.’ I ate, and it happened. In the midst of the wilderness there was a beautiful garden with a lot of flowers, and behind there were only flowerfields as far as the eye reached. There was a woman living in these flowerfields with the name ‘Divide and Rule’. She was stirring up all sorts of fights. She was the goddess of a certain arena, and she was cruel. ‘Why aren’t you among the saints ?’ I asked her.

She didn’t say anything. She was just mad that I had awakened out of her spell. She tried to ignore me, but me and the unicorn came closer to her, together with all the other saints who had awakened out of her webs. She had drillmachines all around her. Suddenly she raised one of the drills. ‘I am the secret of hell,’ she said. No one dared to come closer to her, but suddenly the horn of the unicorn started to change into a drill and pierced her. She fell to the ground, and flowers fell on her to cover her. ‘Let the funeral begin,’ someone was shouting, while the others were roaring : yes.

It was the strangest funeral I had ever seen. They were all surrounding her and weeping. She was a sleeping beauty now, covered by so many flowers and webs. Then plants of drill-thorns started to cover her, huge plants, and she was sinking into the ground, while tears were covering it. A huge sea came into existence, like a whirlpool, and the sea was green purple and pink. Everybody started to drink from it, and most of all the unicorn. The flowers seemed to wake up, showing their bows and arrows. They were showing their traps all of a sudden, like huge mouths, and they began to drink from the sea as well. It happened to become a pond, and an apple was floating above it saying : eat

me. I did, while the flowers came alive again. Huge warriors, like the vulcanoes of hell. And they spoke and showed their thorns : all drills.

There was a flowerthrone, and a new ‘Divide and Rule’ now. It was the unicorn, and on it’s crown there was written : harmonious love. There were coins spinning in our heads now, new coins, not with heads on it, but with the body of this indian woman saint. There was no head on the coin anymore, only a body. As soon as the coin started spinning, the body started to move as in a strange ritual dance. On the edge of the coin had been written : ‘Separate and Rule’. Showing the coin was enough. There was no need to pay for anything. The drills had made holes in the coins, so they could be stringed as jewelry.

The unicorn brought a new isolation, and only the unknown was it’s frame. And wherever the unicorn came, minttrees seemed to grow, holding so much medicine, and bringing forth the coins. Many of these coins could be eaten. They gave dreams and eternal access. It was the mystery of hell.

The Smile of Suffering

High on the hills the flyhives of death are dwelling. It's merely a pigbreeding, as they use pigs for honey, silk and much more. The hivecombs in which it is all happening they call the smiles of suffering. It is a feared place, as the flyhive-combs are merely deadly mills in which they put their prisoners of war and hunt, and these are not only pigs. 'War to the bees ! War to the spiders !' the queen of the hive-flies was screaming. Armies of deadly flies were coming forward, armed like the best warriors. They had edgy swords and sharp spears and other cutting weapons with many stings. It was a war like hell. At the end of the day the combs were full, and they started to work. Silk came forth and leather for the tailor-flies, and honey and meat for the butchers. It was like the combs were smiling, and this was why they once started to call them the smiles of suffering. The queen of the hive-flies was a cruel woman. Some of the flies could produce silk like spiders and could build webs to attract prey. It seemed the flies were very good at it. They had all sorts of tricks to get it done. A lot of horror was happening all the time in the flyhives, and the flies seemed to enjoy it. They were full of hate en very bitter as they once had been caught by the queen of the flyhives to become her slaves and gladiators. She had been very cruel to them, and she still was. It seemed like they became like her through all the years. They had learnt trickery from her, webs and traps, which she first tested on them. Not many of them survived these tests, as she wanted only the best warriors and hunters. But slowly the armies were growing and growing. They loved to eat wasp-meat and ladybug-meat, but most of all : the honey of it. There were hundreds and hundreds of flyhives and each flyhive had it's own general. The generals were the best of the best, and they were the loves of the queen of the hive-flies. She lived in a place far above the flyhives, which the flies used to call the tongue of the fly. No one could penetrate this place bit the ones given permission by her. Everyone entering lost so much of their consciousness, and even not many survived, even if they had the permission of the queen of the hive-flies. And that was why she lived a quiet life, for not many dared to ask for her permission. Only some generals had the grace of staying alive. The secret of her powers was a cross with an ear in the middle. It was a strange amulet she once got from a raven, by which she could crucify and change the consciousness and the unconsciousness. By this she could get almost everything in her hand. But the raven had also prophesied that one day a man would come to defeat her. This was why she didn't keep men alive for too long. She would raise men till they were in their thirties, and then she would kill them. But most of them she killed earlier, as she didn't want them to be a threat. One day her amulet had been stolen. It was like she couldn't breath anymore, so she let all her generals come to her one by one and killed them. She gave the flyhives to someone else, a soldier she trusted, and then she flew away. She knew she couldn't stay any longer or she would die. In her weakness a fly of another flyhive killed her. The fly brought her body to his own queen of hive-flies.

The flies of the flyhives of the killed queen were glad their slave-mistress was dead. They were free now, and many of them left the flyhives. For the first time the place called the tongue of the fly was now open to everyone. From the body of the killed queen of the hive-flies they made another cross : a cross with a heart in the middle. It became a powerfull amulet, and soon many more of these amulets started to rise. Everyone who would have such an amulet and wear it, would be immune against slavery.

Flyman

They erase minds .... They erase the memory .... They are .... the indian flies, with strange black tattoos on their hands .... They are a strange feeling, pumping up the layers of the body, so deep, where no one filled up ever before .... They are the gods of a new generation ..... having pink eyes .... hot boiling brown behind it, escalating into black ... like beads ..... They erase visions .... They erase everything ..... They pump up the layers between the layers to let new forms rise .... The old forms aren't important anymore .... They are just shades ..... shades of a past that didn't really exist .... It only seemed to be someone's point of view .... They erase the conscience while there are no taboos ...... no borderlines, as everything is in order .... They erase the lights in the mind .... They erase the lightstructures of the feelings ..... A new science is in their hands .... That of the indian flies .... They are erasers, to shapeshift the world, by strange lightening .... There is no excuse .... no explanation ..... as some things can't be explained .... It's a higher code of existance they bring .... a new mind, and a new heart .... It's a higher code of ethics .... It's called God .... but it's more .... There are no borderlines .... Nothing is forbidden .... As everything is in order ..... since the flies came to the earth ....

It was dark on earth .... worldwars one after the other .... The flies invaded in a time no one expected it. They seemed to come out of nowhere .... full of wings ..... up to a hundred each fly .... They came from a place no one could imagine .... They pierced their way through the layers of the earth .... stinging the minds of millions until everything was burning .... It was the ultimate delirium .... There were high voices drawing new pictures .... All gates of the unknown seemed to open .... In these ages a hero stood up ..... a hero named Flywoman .... She lived in a world without mercy .... where no one cared for the other, and where a gang seemed to rule and terrorize the whole place .... It was a gang of women named The Mean Women ..... From a distance Flywoman came, as she had heard the sound of the Mean Women .... They had a gathering on a balcony somewhere in a flat-building. The Mean Women were more dangerous than wild cats. They were a sort of catwomen, coming from a strange planet. Flywoman landed on the balcony and kicked one of the women in her face. The woman fell, while the others jumped on Flywoman. They scratched her and spat on her, while Flywoman dropped a time-detonator which stuck immediately to the ground. Then she flew away, pushed a button on a device and the whole balcony exploded. But the next day it was in the newspapers that the Mean Women had killed many people.

Flywoman sat on her flying motorcycle and covered the city by webs and nets. Then by pushing a button on a device a vibe was sliding across the webs in search for the locations of the Mean Women. On the screen she could see red lights blinking and by one push on a button all these places started to explode. Then she went to another city to do the same. But deep in the underground there was a huge gathering of the Mean Women. Here thousands and thousands of them came together, following Flywoman by a big screen. They all laughed, as most of them were safe here in the underground. Here the vibes of Flywoman couldn't come. From here the Mean Women ruled the men in power and topposition. These were nothing but their slaves, and actually ... robots .... George Meadow was a man who didn't want to have anything to do with the toppositions. He couldn't stand their arrogance. He had a normal job, and spent his time a lot with thinking. He thought that the topleaders were just making war because of business. In his eyes it had to do with thievery on a big scale ... a big swindling game .... He dreamt about Flywoman, his hero ... He liked the stories he read about her .... because he could relate to her so much .... He was often dreaming that he would be Flyman. Suddenly he heard some sounds close to his balcony. He opened the window and saw Flywoman. He couldn't believe his eyes, and was a bit shocked .... 'I ... I'

'It's okay,' Flywoman said .... 'Can I have some water here ?'

'Well, of course ----' George said. 'I can't belief my eyes. What are you doing here in town ?'

Then Flywoman told him the story. He asked him if he wanted to come with her to the underground. On the balcony the flying motorcycle stood, and there were high sounds coming from it. 'My motorcycle is getting hot,' Flywoman said. Together they went to the motorcycle. 'Wow,' George said. 'I always wanted to ride on such a thing.'

'Well .... climb behind me,' Flywoman said, as she stepped on the motorcycle. Quickly she found her way to the underground, where the Mean Women still had their gathering. Someone had a microphone and spoke to the others in a huge hall : 'This is the age that we as the Mean Women will get absolute power. All men in toppositions will be nothing but our marionets in business and war, until they worship us .... us, as we are their only way out ....' Then she showed on a screen behind her a sort of paradise. 'This, ladies, will be the vision in their minds by our new drug we will sell to them when they have reached their most hopeless position. And you are going to take care of that. You will make hopeless slaves of them .... junks ....' All the women in the hall were clapping and laughing. 'And where is that paradise ?' someone was asking.

‘The paradise doesn’t exist,’ the lady with the microphone said. ‘It’s only simulated by the drug they use, and then after awhile it fades away and they have to buy it again.’ Again the women were clapping and laughing. ‘How many addicts do we have at the moment ?’ Then the face of the lady seemed to change, like she got a bit angry and upset. ‘We have let’s say half of the world under our feet. This is a new project. But there is one town standing in the way : Orlock Town.’

In the meantime Flywoman and George could enter the underground, and by her device she could trace the weakest place where they could enter the building. They came to the side of the building, where they could blast a wall. ‘I wonder why this is the weakest place,’ Flywoman said. In the hall everyone seemed to hear the explosion, and the face of the woman with the microphone changed into bitterness and irritation. ‘Let some girls find out what’s going on !’ she shouted. Immediately a group of armored women went after the sound. In the meantime Flywoman and George found out that where they had come was a storage full of boxes with strange white powder. Then the door opened. Flywoman and George hid behind some of the boxes, as the women came closer. Flywoman took her harpoon and shot through a wire on the ceiling holding up a board of boxes. All the women seemed to get crashed by the heavy falling boxes. ‘Come with me !’ Flywoman said to George. They were running through some tunnels, and finally they reached the hall. Through a window they could see what was happening there. ‘Come, I want to show you something,’ Flywoman said. Then they ran downstairs to a deep place. Here the eggs of indian flies were, plenty of them. ‘Deep down this place they keep indian flies like chicken,’ Flywoman said. ‘They have to bring forth eggs, and .... they use it to make drugs ....’ George was shocked. He couldn’t belief that someone would do that to such precious beings. ‘We do not have much time, George,’ Flywoman said. Then they ran deeper downstairs. By her harpoon Flywoman pierced two guards, and then kicked the door in. Here they saw a hall full of indian flies, so beautifull, having so many wings. They were in boxes and cages, all in rows, where they had to produce the eggs. But then women were coming in. ‘I heard voices and sounds,’ one of the women said.

‘Yes,’ another one said. Flywoman and George ran away behind some rows, and they opened another door of an even larger hall full of indian flies. ‘These flies are too weak,’ Flywoman whispered. ‘We cannot set them free now, as they would die.’ They ran through the hall, and then they could get upstairs again. Quickly they went to the motorcycle, and then they had to leave. ‘George,’ Flywoman said, when they got finally to George’s house again, ‘we had a good time. I have to go now. You know what you have to do. Listen, you will not be alone. Flyman is your other part, and sometimes, when it’s necessary, he will show up.’

‘When will you be back ?’ George asked.

‘I will be back,’ Flywoman said.

Always when George started to change into Flyman he got a red suit, and a weakness coming over him making him so strong. There wasn’t anything he could do to stop this, but he knew there wasn’t another way to make the world better. It was like a strange force was pumping up the layers of his body, especially the layers between the layers, and the layers of the depths, the unknown depths he knew nothing about. Then it was like someone was filling him up on places were he had never been filled up, and an amazing force was flowing from his hands. Then he could breath so deep all of a sudden. He was Flyman, something he always knew deep inside. And since he met Flywoman it was like he came out of his egg.

The first time in his life he became Flyman he knew what he had to do. He went to the underground again, to the places he went with Flywoman once, and he set the indian flies free, and took care about the eggs, which he brought to his own warm house. By lightening he struck the main-cabins of the headquarters of the Mean Women, and by strange lights they seemed to die. But there was one part he seemed to forget .... a part in the form of a man .... the hidden leader of the Mean Women .... It was a man who had the meanest women with him .... in a cabin high in the sky .... a spacestation by which he could rule the planets. It was almost like a floating land, so big it was. Mister Fashion lived here, a man of doom. By his fashion-clock he kept them all enslaved. When Flyman got there he got the shock of his life. The women here looked even more like wild cats, and were the most dangerous ones he ever saw. He got into a fight with them. They were like acrobats, but by his harpoon he shot a sticky net over them, and then he pushed them into a swimmingpool. Soon he met Mister Fashion. Mister Fashion sat at a round table with a strange fashion-game on it. ‘You are just in time,’ Mister Fashion said. ‘Wanna play some games with me ?’ From the game a cannon was rising, a small cannon, and Flyman could dive away just in time. Flyman took one of his ninja-stars which looked like a fly with more wings, and threw it towards Mister Fashion who could just move his head away, while the star pierced his chair. ‘Well, well,’ Mister Fashion said, ‘we have one hell of a boy here. He likes to play games, and he likes to win .... doesn’t give up too fast .... but here, let me give you some style, some .... fashion .....’ And from the ceilings all sorts of sticky clothes fell on Flyman, and these clothes were like wild rats. Flyman screamed, while the clothes started to burn. Another cannon raised from the game, a bigger one this time. Suddenly Flywoman stood in the dooropening. ‘What are you doing here ?’ Mister Fashion screamed. By some neutralizing fluids she could help Flyman out of his situation. Then she harpooned the cannon which turned around to shoot Mister Fashion. But he could jump away just in time. Then he jumped on the table, and said : ‘Let’s do a little dance.’ He pushed on a button, while wild cats seemed to come out of the walls. ‘Quick ! Jump !’ Flywoman shouted. But again sticky clothes like wild rats came out of the ceiling to fall down on Flyman and Flywoman, while they got surrounded by the wild cats. Mister Fashion moved the arms of a clock behind him, while the ground below them opened up. Together with the wild rats and the wild cats they slided into a dark pit. But then indian flies seemed to come into the room of Mister Fashion. They spat venom in his face, and he fainted. They followed Flyman and Flywoman, and could get them out of the pit just in time. Mister Fashion pushed on a button and opened a door, while he ran through

a tunnel into another hall of him. Here there were all sorts of computers and machines by which he ruled the planets. He was laughing, while he still felt a bit dizzy because of the venom. He pushed some buttons on a machine, and a screen in the ground was opening. A big clock appeared like a mill. It started to spin dangerously. ‘Let them come here !’ he laughed. Then the door opened, and Flyman and Flywoman started to shoot the machines and computers. Also the indian flies came inside, and tried to damage the equipment. Mister Fashion stepped into a machine which could move and had tall arms. He took Flyman in a grip by one of these arms and let him soar above the mill. ‘Are you ready to die ?’ Mister Fashion laughed .... ‘It would look good on you .... I mean .... Imagine how the girls will like you all of a sudden .....’ Another arm took his harpoon away. The indian flies couldn’t spit their venom as Mister Fashion was behind a window of transparent stone. Then another arm took Flywoman and also let her soar above the mill. ‘Let’s see what time it is ...’ Mister Fashion shouted while laughing. ‘Ready to die ? It makes relationships so much better in a new outfit ...’ But one of the indian flies could destroy a certain computer which seemed to control the machine, and then the machine couldn’t move anymore. Flywoman and Flyman could escape the grip, and now hanged above the mill, while moving to the machine. Then they climbed on the machine, and jumped away from the mill. Mister Fashion stepped out of the machine and disappeared quickly through another door. Then they saw the mill rising out of the ground. ‘We better leave now,’ Flywoman said, and together they ran away to Flywoman’s motorcycle. Many indian flies were following them through the night, until they got back to George’s house. ‘You have done a good job, George,’ she said, while George was pouring her glass full. ‘You know, we are a great team, but still Mister Fashion is in the air. Suddenly they looked through the window, and saw Mister Fashion sitting in a strange flying machine with many arms like tentacles. He shot through the window, while Flywoman and George ran to the other room. They climbed out of the window, and climbed their way to the ground. ‘We need to get out of here,’ Flywoman said. ‘In a way he can trace us, so .... we can only be safe on my spaceship.’ Flywoman took a device, pushed some buttons, and within short time a lightening fell on them, and in a flash they stood in a strange cabin in the spaceship where Flywoman originally came from. The spaceship looked like a giant fly. George was amazed. This was above his dreams and imaginations. On the ship there were many more men and women like them. Flywoman brought George to a room where an old men sat. He was the chief and captain of the ship, the head-commander, and at the same time Flywoman’s father. The man was glad to see George. ‘I have heard much about you, George,’ the man said. ‘I’m pleased to meet you. You see, this is the age that the indian flies will fill the world and the skies, and will awaken into the hearts of human beings to enlighten them. There is much work to do. You erased the works of the Mean Women, but still you didn’t complete your task in erasing their leader, Mister Fashion. You cannot do that on your own. I have sent you my daughter, and now you have seen this ship. We will do it together.’ Flywoman smiled.

In the meanwhile indian flies were attacking the soaring land of Mister Fashion, and they could follow everything on a screen. ‘You see, we have a lot of help,’ Flywoman’s father said. The ship was moving closer to the soaring land, and then like a white flash all sort of lightpatterns were coming out of cannons to shoot and absorb the land. Soon it was over. ‘Sir, how did you do that ?’ George asked. The old man took the hand of George and showed

him a certain pattern in his hand. ‘You know, you just activated it by your handcode. That was all what this ship needed to defeat Mister Fashion completely.’

That night indian flies seemed to invade the earth. They awoke in human hearts to erase the minds and the memory. Strange lightpatterns were piercing the world, to turn it into a paradise, a paradise in which they all slept. Some woke up while having strange electricities on their hands. Others woke up by the strange lightbeams in their rooms. A new day had begun. Some woke up by strange lights filling their bodies up, layer by layer. Some woke up without conscience anymore, as everything had been erased, all their feelings of guilt and shame. There was a new innocence coming healing so many deep in their hearts, to wake up in serenity. Flyman had struck the earth, and he had struck it good.

After a long time George woke up. At his work a lady got his interest. She was staring at him for such a long time. ‘What are you doing tonight, George ?’ the lady asked.

‘Nothing,’ George said.

‘Well, why not coming with me .... I’ll make you some dinner.’ she said.

It became a long long evening, and a long long night .... She showed him some of the clothes she made .... She was a fashion-designer, but a very special one .... George liked the clothes ..... When he held them in his hands to touch it, it felt so soft, like such a weakness overflowed him, at the same time giving him such strength .... She hugged him and kissed him ... I call it ‘paradise-clothes’ she said .... He smiled .... She kissed him deep .... while weakness seemed to overflow him .... It was making him weak, and he fell on her bed .... Soon he felt her soft skin ... soon he felt her heart beating .... ‘Paradise-clothes huh ?’ he said ..... Then he fell asleep ..... He was safe with her .....

Then after awhile he woke up, feeling that he was changing into Flyman. He went to the balcony, and jumped into the night, in search for the spaceship. When he came there, all flywomen and flymen were staring at him. Then Flywoman came and hugged him. Also her father was with her. ‘You have loved a woman, right ?’ she asked .... ‘For the first time of your life, right ?’

‘Yes,’ he said. ‘It felt so good. She was a fashion-designer ..... of paradise-clothes ....’

‘Well, love is a gift, a present .... it will work forever .....’, Flywoman said .... ‘It is good to love .... as you are love .... You are a lover ..... but don’t forget you are also Flyman, having jobs to do ....’

‘And that is ?’ George asked.

‘That is to stay with us ....’ Flywoman said ..... ‘The earth will fall asleep again ..... but here you will be always safe .... Not just for one moment.’

‘So I cannot return ?’ George asked.

‘Oh yes,’ Flywoman said. ‘Enjoy it .... but always return to us .... to the ship ....’ That seemed to be a good idea to George .... ‘How many girls am I allowed to have ?’ George asked ....

‘All the women of the world,’ Flywoman said.

‘And here ?’ George asked.

‘All of us,’ she answered. ‘You see, you are Flyman, you are love, and love has no borderlines .... The world is a paradise now .... and this is a paradise ..... all because of you ..... You are our hero .....’

That night the indian flies seemed to invade the earth even more .... Swarms and swarms of them seemed to come to the world to lay their eggs and leave again. Earth was now in the hands of the Almighty Flyman. He felt himself like a god, but something was missing .... There was a gate in the universe he knew nothing about .... It was a black gate ..... He would lose everything if he would go through that gate ..... but he would win the deeper secret of life ..... So he chose for that ...... And with him the whole ship ...... It all faded away .....

When he returned to earth through the black gate earth wasn't a paradise anymore but worse than ever. It wasn't a place where love ruled, but hate ..... and no one believed he was Flyman ..... They thought he was crazy ..... The only one who knew he was Flyman was an old woman in a hospital ..... He didn't know why .... He didn't know who she was ...... They said she was demented. But he never forgot her. Life wasn't what he had expected .... There was no Flyman anymore, but an ordinairy man having dreams .... He was creative, but Flyman could only be in his imagination .... There was no Flyman .... and he seemed to be strange .... The more he grew up .... When he told a story of Flyman to his grandson one time he was the only one who seemed to belief him .... 'It's just a story, grandson,' George said. After all these years even he himself didn't belief in it anymore .... It was like life like this had swallowed him .... Just before he died he looked outside the window and he saw a strange falling star, coming down like powder ..... He smiled, and then he died .....

The End

Back to Lakshor

Lakshorian Fiction

Long ago there was a planet called Lakshor. It was the biggest planet that ever existed and that would ever exist. When it exploded it split into the planets Pythia, Maldek, Piril, and Earth. This was the end of the Lakshor Age, and the beginning of the Pythia Age. In the Lakshor Age flymen and flywomen existed, and they ruled the universe. Lakshor was the center of this universe. There was no

place but Lakshor. It was the place from which a woman called Sevenlegs ruled the universe. She ruled the universe by her sword. Whenever she moved her sword, big snakes appeared. But her rulership went down by a man called Elsar the Flyman. He once defeated her in swordfighting, and became the king of Lakshor. He tortured her severely. After him a lot of other kings came, but later on they all became friends of each other. But then the Sjarun came, the civilized order, and it came to such a war in which Lakshor got destroyed and split up into four planets and a much smaller piece also called Lakshor. Pythia, the black planet, was now the biggest of them, and got the central position in the universe from which the Sjarun began to rule. It was the beginning of the Pythia Age now the Lakshor Age had more or less ended. Lakshor became the name for the uncivilized wilderness beyond the realm of hell. It became the name of the eternal war.

Meanwhile Elsar the Flyman and Sevenlegs got into a deep friendship, but they couldn't save the Lakshor Age, and began to sink away in the hands of the Sjarun. Many years later a man called Golem finally saved them out of the Sjarun's hands. They wanted to rebuild Lakshor. Later one they met Tara from Rhodes and her son Barkas, but they failed to rebuild Lakshor, and even the black planet, Pythia, started to split up from which Mars and Venus rose. Their plan was now nothing but blood and meat for the Sjarun. Even the Pythia Age ended, and Mars and Venus became thorns in their eyes. But then Sevenlegs gave birth to a woman called Tze-ra and she finally found the last pieces of the black planet in which the secrets of Lakshor had been stored. Tze-ra became the new ruler of Lakshor and found a way to rebuild it.

These were glorious days for Pythia and Lakshor, and finally Tara from Rhodes became the ruler. It was by her skills old friends found each other. She restored the old and good rulers of Lakshor and gave them all their parts. They had finally found their ways to bring the Sjarun down. Deep in Lakshor there was the Awela-jungle where Awela ruled. It was the deepest and most mysterious place of Lakshor. It was an isolated place, where Awela suffered in loneliness. But when Tara and her friends had reached the place and reached Awela, they made him ruler of Lakshor.

There was no better king but Awela. His skills could bring them all to a higher level. A woman called Tania had built a ship called High Tide which she led together with her old mother and a man called Hurricane. Awela had given them the mission to bring them all back to Lakshor.

The End

Laws of the Fly

In the beginning of all existance, a small planet of light came up called Taroon. It was the center of the universe where all concentration was dwelling. It was a poison, eating away the lifeless substances of a world of the unknown past. Taroon was a parasite developing itself in an unknown speed. There was no hope for any other planet developing itself, as by it's light Taroon became the center of the universe, preying on any other light.

A man called Daylar was a half skeleton, a corpse, sailing on the pink red rivers of the deep jungles of Taroon. His ship was made of wooden planks tied to each other. A giant spider came near the ship and entered it, and attacked Daylar who grasped his dagger. After awhile Daylar raised the bloody corpse of the spider in the air and roared, while eating from it's meat. No one would successfully attack Daylar.

After a few hours the ship reached a camp at the side of a certain river. Indians lived here. They saw the sail of the man, a red sail with a black spider on it. They were carrying a cross, and welcomed Daylar. Daylar had a lot of meat aboard. He came to trade. There was a lot of hunger in the camp. This time Daylar asked for an unusual price. He directed his finger towards the daughter of the chief. The chief nodded. They simply had no choice. Daylar tied the indian woman and said : 'I will take good care of her. Trust me. I will bring her back, but not now.' Then Daylar left with her on his ship. The indian woman was very willing, but at the same time very bitter and coldhearted. She knew that her people were dependant on this man for food, and if he would ask this offer, then she would do. He took her to a place in the mountains. A lot of other women of other tribes were here.

'I promised your tribes to bring you back, but I will not do,' Daylar said. 'I know only the dead can hunt here, skilled enough to take prey. They will die. I have the circle full now. Please believe me. When we bring forth a mixed race, they will have my skills. Without me you will all die.'

The women knew he spoke the truth, as he had the hunter genes.

Millions of years later Taroon had grown into a big planet, full of different races all based on the circle of Daylar. Because of him they could hunt, and they could survive. No one knew if it was a myth or reality, but at least it was a spiritual truth to them. Daylar was the father of them all who had bound them together.

There were no wars in those days, as they lived by hunt and hunt alone. But things started to get confused since some tribes started to degenerate more and more into animals. Some other races started to believe that these races didn't have Daylar as their tribal father. And thus war started to rise. Daylar himself lived far away from the tribes, in the mountains, but one day he showed up, because he had heard of the wars. He said they still didn't know much of war. He said it wasn't fair to wage war because of racial differences. He told them there should only be war because of protection, or when something needed to be taken back because it had been stolen, or in the case of a kidnap.

Daylar seemed to be the only one who knew about the circle of tribal mothers, and they asked him if they still lived. 'Of course,' he said. 'They all live with me. They live forever, and have the same capabilities as me.'

When he had gone, they followed his trace, and discovered something horrible. Their tribal mothers had been put into ice. Daylar lived in the middle of these huge ice cubes. They waited till he slept. Then they tried to drag the icecubes outside the mountain. It was for them a pleasure to see their tribal mothers melting in the sunlight outside. Fourteen tribal mothers, and they were still alive. However they said that many of them had died throughout the years. Daylar had done horrible things to them.

There was a feast that night, but the fourteen tribal mothers got killed horribly by a hostile tribe. No one actually knew this tribe, but it seemed that Daylar kept a lot of tribes hidden throughout the years. It was war now. Daylar was in a rage.

It was in these times the curse of Daylar really came over the planet. He chose himself fourteen women by kidnapping and brought them into the ice. This time they would get prepared for a thing worse than him : a beast who lived in the very depths of the planet. It

was the only thing connecting him to the unknown past of Taroon, even before him. And it was a creature having the genes of war, worse than Daylar ever had. The fourteen women would be the circle of the beast, to bring forth the unknown prehistoric races of Taroon, something which the beast carried in his genes.

It didn't take long before the icecubes were dragged to the edges of the depths of Taroon, an unknown wilderness, and soon the icecubes were sinking, waiting to be embraced by the horrible beast. It was a spider, a giant spider, the only thing Daylar kept alive from his own past. He once found the species and didn't want to kill it. The women were shrieking as they had to bring forth the savage world of Taroon, the unknown depths of history, in which they would probably die.

It was like they were swimming in poison, in which they had to survive. Some of the women lost their skincolor to become white, while some became yellow or yellow-brown, or even gold. The beast didn't have mercy on them. He dragged them all in the depths of the poisonous river. The river became their grave, and their corpses brought forth eggs. The spider devoured the eggs of the women who lost their skincolor, but he took care of the eggs of those who didn't lose their skincolor. The spider hatched three eggs. 'Three races is enough for me,' the spider said. 'I will let them go, to go to the world above to do their job, to mix themselves there, so that nature will prevail, the history of Taroon.' Daylar nodded. He would take care of the children, and this time they were more worth to him than anything. He treated them like princes, and the girl like a princess. When they grew up to become adults he didn't want to let them mix themselves with the upperworld, so Daylar brought them back to the spider. Daylar knew how dangerous that would be, as when they would lose their skincolor the spider wouldn't accept their eggs. Only the girl kept her skincolor, while the river became their grave, and their corpses brought forth the eggs. The spider devoured the eggs of the men, but the egg of the woman he took with him in the depths. This time the spider didn't return to Daylar.

In the unknown depths the spider hatched the egg. It was a girl, and the spider didn't want to let her go, so the spider took care of her itself. When the girl had grown up, the spider took her to the river of poison where the same happened. But the girl lost her skincolor, and the spider devoured her egg, only to come out of his pit of ages. Daylar was surprised. He knew that the spider came for a hunt. This time the spider would be the one who would chose the women. He inserted his poison, and this time their skins got darker. They started to bring forth dark eggs.

Daylar knew that only these children would have the keys to the depths of Taroon's underworld when they would be older. The spider couldn't bear the lights of the upperworld and died soon. The children of the dark eggs started to live with Daylar in his mountain, close

to the portal of the depths of Taroon. They soon grew up as a mighty tribe, mightier than any tribe before. The underground nature would accept them, as they would have the genes of the spider. One day they made a journey underground. Since the spider died, there wasn't a river of poison anymore. Nature seemed to have changed underground. It was easier to get access there, but it was still a dangerous jungle.

They found a deeper history here, a history they carried inside and which could finally heal here. It was a wild nature sucking them deeper inside, through all sorts of fleeces, like the intestines of a savage world they did not know anything about.

It seemed another race lived here. They got surrounded by spears. They had brown pale bodies, like brown sifted sand. But dark ones were their chiefs, having many feathers on their head. It seemed to be a welcome.

In the depths of this world all sorts of red races lived. It was a strange world there. Their bodies were like food, evergrowing. These people lived from each other. It was a strange ritualistic bakery. Too much of a certain food would be fatal. So there were severe rules. They all had to discipline each other. It was a strange bakery deep down in Taroon, where people were like evergrowing cookies, cakes and tarts. These people didn't suffer from hunger. But they certainly had to direct themselves to the right food and not over-eat. Everything was for hire.

These people admitted that they were or became like that because of a certain venom. It wasn't venom of a spider, but that of a fly. The fly was subject to their worship, as it protected them against hunger and let them live forever. It was for the fly very easy to insert his venom also into the newcomers, who immediately started to show the same signs. They became eatable. But this time not only cookies, cakes and tarts, but also chocolate, spinach, carrots, and many more vegetables. They also started to develop strange strange fruits, as the venom of the fly started to mix with the venom of the spider which lived deep inside. The fly could transform this genetic venom and could use it. Although there were wars here, and there was hunt, there was less grief, and that was all because of the fly.

The queen and the king of this land so deep were the most delicious of them all, and they had the best food growing on their bodies. It had been said that they had been stung by a secret sting of the fly, secreting a secret royal venom. It had marked them for life by a strange scar, a sign, like a tattoo. Their bodies had been made by scar-skin. It looked like they had scars all over, but these scars were beautiful and thick, like jewelry. They were the most tender beings. Behind the bakery kingdom there was a wilderness no one knew

anything about it. Only those who would have the third sting of the fly would be able to come there, but they would never return. Those who lived there had normal bodies, but it was still eatable and would also grow after eaten. It was like a butchery. The savages who lived here were bloodthirsty, but for sure, the fly cared for them, and cared they would never be hungry. These savages were disciplined even more. When taking the wrong sorts of blood and meat or taking too much or too less of something one would burn forever. This was why the fly wouldn't let anyone go to this place so fast. It was the most dangerous place existing. Every mistake would be fatal in a horrible way, ending in the everburning fire. There was no place for mistakes. These savages were highly disciplined and trained. They knew the laws of the fly.

Behind this land there was finally the land of hunger. Here the bodies were normal and not eatable. Here they had to hunt for their lives. Only those who got the fourth sting of the fly could enter here. Many of those who came here longed back for the bakery kingdom and the butchery kingdom, and the only way to get this feeling back was by hunting, sex, and having strange rituals. The sex they had reminded them of the lands in which they were eatable, before they had been stung by the fourth sting of the fly. By sex their souls got connected again in this way, and for sure it fed them in a sense, but it wasn't like when they were living in the kingdoms. They were in savage hell now, in Tantalos. Tantalos was a teaser, a place of such deep darkness and such cruelty, only preparing them for the fifth sting of the fly, the return to the kingdoms.

Not many warriors in Tantalos went the humble way. They built themselves kingdoms to guard a lot of power. However it was the path of brokenness leading someone to the fifth sting, the only way to return to the higher kingdoms. Tantalos was a deep valley of shame, a hell in the depths of Taroon. The slaves were closer to the fifth sting than the kings, however not many would ever reach this sting. It was only for those with the greatest love for the fly, his most intimate friends.

The fly was the emperor of Tantalos, the core of Taroon. There was no one greater than the fly. It guarded the bloodlines of the earlier emperors, and this was by which it lived. It guarded the history of Tantalos. The fly was a mysterious being. Many books were written about it. The five stings were five legends, guarding the book of the fly itself, it's history. No one was bigger but this emperor. And everyone had to live by it's laws or they got punished by it. The fly had it's own agency, the under-emperors. They had been divided in Tantalos to rule it, and they were higher than any king. The fly itself controlled them, and lived by their blood. The under-emperors all had been tattood by the fly, by a bite, which was called the kiss of the fly. If someone would get that kiss without having the fifth sting it would be fatal. At times the fly only used this kiss to kill.

Some of the under-emperors had two kisses of the fly and they were the ones having the power of life and death in Tantalos. There were only a few of them who had three kisses, and only one had four kisses. The ones who had the three kisses could bring forth babies, and the one who had four kisses could read the book of the fly. This one was the wisest of them all, and most dear to the fly. However the fly had many women having many more kisses, burning bites, changing into the most beautiful scars. They were the most sensitive and seducing beings. The fly hid them in his hiding place.

Once in the million years they would go to the surfaces of Taroon to seduce some warriors and drag them to their place. The women of the fly were bloodthirsty. They could take these bodies and just letting them melt into their skin to let them live forever. These were the secrets of the fly. They assimilated male bodies. By this they could eternally feed on their blood. It was such a disastrous event that they could do this only once in the million years, but when they would go out like that, they would stay for a long time, and take as many male bodies as they could, all to drag them into their dens in the depths of Taroon, in Tantalos, where they lived with the fly.

Daylar always warned his men against this event from generation to generation. When finally the women of Tantalos came to the surfaces the men were all on their guard. However it became a big slaughter. The women were disastrous. They came to eat everything, children, women, men and cattle. But the fly was in rage. He didn't want his women back, as their blood had been poisoned. And to the fly this was an easy thing. He just bit these women all over, as he knew that too many bites would activate death, a venom they couldn't handle. Because the fly was in need of women he chose some other women in Tantalos, and because of this event he took care that no one from Tantalos could ever return to the upper surfaces of Taroon. He just locked it.

Because of the broken connection the skies filled themselves with blood, and Tantalos the land of hunger, had enough food for the first time in eternity. It was raining blood, making the mountains and the valleys fertile. And the flow seemed to be perpetual. It was the flood of blood. The fly had it's ark, it's secret place, and he had chosen only a few women and a few men. The rest would die in the blood, to fertilize the ground.

The chosen ones brought forth a new race, and this time the fly trusted them enough to open it's book for them. It was a book of stories, legends, together with the history of the fly. It also contained the far history of Tantalos. It became a sacred book, worshipped by the new race. After millions of years the blood had totally soaked the ground, and had been absorbed. It wasn't raining blood anymore every second of the day, but only when it was necessary. However the bloody skies would exist forever. Since then there were rivers, seas and oceans of blood, and jungles, forests and fields of meat in Tantalos, and the kingdoms of

the bakery and the butchery also started to rise here to deal with the hunger. Those who worked in the butchery and the bakery had drills, not only to drill but also to suck. This was to let them work faster and really making artwork of it. The best ones always worked with many sorts of drills. They also used drills to bring the perfect temperature to the food. They used the drills for making locks and attaching chains. By the drilling the food also started to produce a drug-effect, so the new race only wanted to have drilled food. The bakeries and butcheries which didn't use drills had to be locked and destroyed by command of the fly. The fly's most feared, loved and worshipped weapon was the drill. It brought Tantalos into a sphere of extasy.

By the drilling the race became drugs themselves more and more, but it also attracted the most dangerous flies to build their webs. Especially the bones could produce a high level drugs-effect, and in the experience the bone was nothing but flesh. Because the bakers were more skilled than the butchers they soon took over the butcheries and became the highest military leaders.

The bakers cared for the inquisitions. There were too many who worked with undrilled food. They were often in hidden places. The fly wanted them to be executed. It was a severe regime. So in fear many started to develop all sorts of drills. The bakers had all sorts of hats, and those with the tallest ones were of the highest ranks. The bakers were feared, especially the highest ones. The bakers were cruel, like pharisees of the laws of the fly. They were the judges of the Tantalos, and they judged all things to this : 'Which drills do you use, what do you eat and how do you eat.' The highest rank of the bakers was actually the rank of pharisees. They were like statues of mint. Eating from them meant you could lock and unlock doors. But it was also a high price eating from them : you would become their slave forever, and most of all : you could only eat them once, and after that they would be unreachable to you for the rest of eternity.

This was how Tantalos was developing itself. The prices of eating something became higher and higher. Some bodies of food were so expensive that you could only get a few bites from them, and then they were unreachable forever, while they were preying on you all the time. It was in these days many started to hunt again, just for animals. However the economics of Tantalos became such a big spell that hunger started to set in again. The people got desparate, and soon it was worse than ever.

People started to repress their hunger by having a lot of sex and having a lot of communication, all to remind them of the time that everything was less expensive. Tantalos became an evergrowing hell. People started dying in themselves, longing for the surfaces of Taroon, but the stairway had been broken off by the fly long ago. However, one started to make a journey. The top of the stairways could be reached in a few days. From that place

they all looked into a hole in the bloody sky. There was no return to the surfaces of Taroon. They had to live here in this eternally growing hell, hoping that something might grow from it. The people lost their powers and their strengths, and became weeping figures, easily hyperventilating, having no control at all. But they got something else instead, which was the ability to fly. The fly had given them the grace finally to become like himself. Now they didn't need any stairways. They flew to the bloody clouds to feed themselves, and they could plug themselves into the surfaces of Taroon to feed well on it's sources. There was a world above Tantalos, a world like heaven, like paradise. But the everlasting monster Tantalos was started to eat the flying people, chaining them, sucking them in by his venomous drilling fleeces. They had been caught in a web.

Only a few could reach the tops of Taroon where Daylar had made the biggest mess. They didn't know where to go. They were trapped between two fires. Daylar had become a killer-king of a world where nothing was eatable but the animals and the harvest of the wilderness, but that was not enough to live from. The hunger started to make them so insane that they started to eat each other like they did in Tantalos. Although the meat could grow again, bringing enough blood to live on, it wasn't really eatable, or did they have to get used by it ? Daylar saw it happening, and he thought he could use it. The people told him it was possible because of the venom of the fly. By bites it would be enough to bring this venom over. It was the solution to the hunger existing without having to kill each other for it.

But Tantalos was still raging in the depths of Taroon like a disastrous whirlwind. There were storms all over, moving closer and closer to Daylar's empire. No one could start anything against the savage powers of Tantalos. But in some sense, Tantalos could never come closer. After a few days the storms sunk away. Although those of Tantalos bore a lot of children here, they wanted to go back to Tantalos after a few years. In a strange sense it was too hard for them to live on the surfaces of Taroon. They needed it's depths. So they started to make their journey, but they weren't welcome anymore in Tantalos. The fly blocked their paths. In his eyes they were sinners and heretics mixing themselves with unpure blood. They were doomed. The fly rooted out all their traces. It was the first time he showed up at the surfaces of Taroon, something he would never do again. It was a massacre like never before, in which Daylar could save himself in the nick of time.

Tantalos was a place of the dead, still of great hunger, and this all because of economics rising higher. Unreachablity was the price of almost everything, and soon nothing was eatable anymore but animals. Even the jungles became too venomous to eat from. There were no economics anymore. There was no food. However, cannibalism started to rise at some places. Suffering started to set in, and death. There were not only animal breedings, but also human breedings. All for meat. Great fear started to spread in Tantalos. People started to forget about their horrible situations by having much sex and by starting their own breedings, all because of fear and hunger. They needed to be the greatest in this, or they

would be grasped by someone else. They needed to trade, and to keep their clients satisfied. They needed to entertain. They had become slaves.

It was by the grace of Daylar this finally ended. He finally went to Tantalos himself. He found out about it's terrible situation, like even the venom of the fly had been dried out. Daylar still carried this venom in his veins. He took a woman and mated with her and started a new race. The fly didn't know how Daylar could come to Tantalos. The fly hunted after the new race, as they could make everything eatable again. It was a threat against the hunger ruling. The fly got headaches. But there was one weapon he seldom used in a fight, which was the spitting of venom. He did this time, striking Daylar. Daylar became meat on the plate of the fly, but it took a lot of time finally to root out the new race of Daylar. Tantalos had to become clean of it.

It was for the fly unbearable that a man like Daylar had poisoned his land. After Daylar's death it was like the last bit of grace had been taken away from Tantalos. It fell in such a depth like never before. There was not only growing pain and growing hunger, but also growing consciousness of it. Memory was nothing like the bars of the cage, making them all slaves by their desires. They wanted to have the past Tantalos back, but it had become unreachable, behind glass. They would grasp and miss, and it made them very tired. They would jump and fall. It made them very weak and broken. The past Tantalos was seducing them, only to mislead them, to trap them even more. They fought each other to get a glimpse of the past Tantalos, but the only thing they could was to lose it even more. They had eaten from the poisoned fruit from Tantalos, and this they could do only once, while sinking away in an evergrowing hunger. Yes, they were drowning, drowning in their own blood and meat, while there was nothing to eat. They would do anything to get a glimpse of food, but it would always slide away from them even more, while they wished they had never seen it. It made them angry. There was only one small light in the greatest darkness, only leading them to an even greater darkness. And the more darknesses they entered, the smaller these lights became. And it would be even harder to get these. It would finally freeze them. The ice would get them, growing bigger and bigger, and the flames would tease them, growing smaller and smaller. They would finally live in an icecube, too tired and too desparate to do anything. Only the drill would wake them up, but the fly would only use it on those who loved him.

There were a few. They became doctors of the fly, which means they would check the icecubes keeping them cold. If they needed something from those in the icecubes, they could use their drills for that. Because the icecubes looked like big teeth the leaders of the doctors were called the dentists. This was the race the fly loved most. But because there was one dentist who used his drills too much, the ice started to melt one day because of the heat, and even the fly couldn't do anything about it. In short time the general temperature had changed. In rage the fly killed all the dentists and their doctors, because he didn't know which one was guilty. However he kept one dentist alive. This was the one who had to guard

those who were coming forth from the ice-cubes. There was no escape from Tantalos. This dentist was most cruel, using the thinnest drills existing. The pain induced by these drills would turn them into gel, although they developed the most powerfull stones inside, slowly growing forth as a shell around them. In this sense they would be trapped forever and the fly would take care they would be thrown into the sea.

The fly wanted to take everything to the limit, waiting for that what would come out : a tongue. The shell-creatures would finally bring forth a tongue hot and strong enough to break through the stone, and they would just eat everything, slowly becoming who they were. After eating just everything they would never be in need of anything to eat again, as they would live by something else : communication, relationships and intimacy. They would live by contact.

The fly turned the key and opened the door inside the window. He knew that only by the book and by such a past they could have such a connection. A man and a woman walked up to each other, trying to grasp each other, but all they could grasp was air, and they finally touched themselves, becoming air again. 'Fake', a voice said. They could never become a reality, for they had not read the book, and they didn't have such a past. The fly made a sign, pushed some buttons on his computer and the next couple came in, while the same happened. 'They haven't read the book,' the fly said. 'And they didn't have such a past,' the other voice spoke.

'Yes,' the fly said, 'their lives are airballoons. Soon it will explode. Give me something to drink, will you.'

A dark man stepped into the room with a strange tongue and hellblack eyes. He gave the fly something to drink. 'This is the last time you will drink anything,' the man said. 'But you know, your past is full of it. It's some sort of double life.'

The fly nodded. Tantalos was burning before his eyes, while a book was burning as well, his book. Some would never reach this book, while others would finally reach it at the end of their journeys. Some will find letters in it, and others just empty pages. However the book will all lead them to their places, as there is a place for everyone in Tantalos.

'I give you the half of the book,' the dark man said. The fly turned to the dark man, and in a flash he pushed him through the door in the fire behind the window. 'Go see if you can get

something there,' the fly said. Then he closed the door, pushed some other buttons, while the book started to open up. Blood was coming forth from it. And the pages were nothing but grills. 'Go, and become a baker, or a doctor or a dentist,' the fly said. 'Rejoice in your meat and blood, but it will never satisfy you, it just shows your lack of words, of communication. It's only a book.'

'Go, rejoice in all your visions and illusions, it's all your lack of relationship, a lack of past,' the fly said. 'It's just a book, just a voice. You never have it close. It's no reality. Welcome to Tantalos.'

The dark man came up in the flames in which he had sunk away. 'You will pay for this, bastard,' he roared.

'Oh, I already paid, big enough, for this machinery,' the fly spoke. 'But it seemed you never did.'

'Economics, right ?' the dark man said while he was fighting to get his head above the almost liquid flames and the gas.

'Yes,' the fly said, 'Tantalos economics. I can't believe people live just by a stupid book, as if there is no greater thing than that. Never heard of computers ? Well, also stupid.'

'What are you talking about ?' the dark man roared, while he was sinking away in the flames again.

But the fly didn't answer. He had enough of communicating with someone who wasn't worth the whole communication.

'Half of the book will I give you,' were the last words of the fly to this man, and then the man totally sank away.

The End

Prisoners of the Fly

The men had been tied to the walls, and also chained. The fly had inserted venoms in their bodies, which kept them extremely weak, and by which they couldn't think straightly. It was like clouds in their heads, poisonous clouds. They had strange wounds by the fly's stings. They were in the depths of a strange castle, in a deep huge cellar. No one knew where it was. They had been abducted by the fly. Strange lights moved across their bodies, taking their last hopes and dreams away. They weren't allowed to dream. They went crazy. Whenever they remembered the soft bodies of their women sliding across their skins alarms started to shriek. It made them numb. They lost their feelings and senses. The fly kept them in this state.

They were hungry. The fly didn't feed them well. Whenever they got some food it got inserted or it was very dirty. They had to eat strange meat, and even food which looked like faeces. Whenever they could drink it was blood or something which smelled like urine. They were prisoners of the fly.

Their captain had many scars. He was here longer than them. He knew what it was all about, and tried to give them some hope at times. 'Please believe me,' he always said. 'One day we will be out of this. It is one big test.' But very often he himself didn't believe one word of it. He just wanted to encourage them.

'I hate life like this,' another one said. 'I am here for many years, and it's always the same.'

'Well, be glad the fly doesn't pick you out to become it's meat,' the captain said.

'Well, I want to die,' the man said. 'Life like this I cannot bear.'

‘Oh, but who knows what happens when the fly picks you out,’ the captain said. It happened often that new men came into the cellar. But not often the fly took someone out. When that happened they would never see such a person back. Would they get their freedom or something worse ? No one knew.

The men often had problems breathing, and often hyperventilated because of the things the fly had done to them. ‘I can’t feel myself anymore,’ they often said. The fly itself had a tall body and was cruel. Many had even lost their speech and were disorientated.

The fly fed them by spiders which they had to eat. They didn’t know that, for they would eat it piece by piece. These were giant-spiders. When they had eaten a hundred of such spiders they would go to the next level, for then they had been possessed by a hundred spiderghosts, an army.

The fly would recognize those by their hearts, as they would have a strange nipple on their hearts after having received the army. They would never have to return to the first level, and on the second level their eyes would get open for that. They would meet each other again there, as officers, while those of the first level would stay blind for it. Only those having the strange heart-nipple as a sign of having received ‘the army’ were worthy and capable to know the truth of the second level.

Streetfighters, streetriders,

Streetroses, always dying,

Streetfighters, streetliars,

Streetkillers coming to kill these days,

I’m on fire

There were songs and fights on the second level, all in synchronity. The officers had a kind of tablets in their heads, always switching and shifting. Whenever they won a fight a heart ray started to open up. It was like a big computer game. Whenever they had ten heartrays their hearts were like spiders, and then they could go to the next level. In this level they became more and more like the fly itself. When they had eaten a thousand spiders they would lose

their wings finally in order to go to the fourth level. They were now the wingless flies. Here they could fly without wings, and they worshipped the so-called ‘dying goddess’. When they had eaten a million spiders they became the fly of the prison itself, and they would find out that it was also wingless. The fly didn’t need wings to fly. Wings only kept them bound to the lower levels.

Andrew was a wingless fly now. He had the keys of the prison now, as he had cracked the game. He stared at the strange box, and he knew that his mates would only get out of it by following his trace. They had been abducted to this thing, just like him. He knew some would never make it to the finish as there were many traps in the game, many dangers. He was just lucky. To lose meant to be eaten.

Andrew was aware of the fact that it was a lethal game. It was a futuristic prison. These prisons were mere breedings. Andrew was now in the position to change the game, but he was afraid he would get trapped again if he would mess with it. He also knew that the game had been created for winged beings to lose their wings. Now Andrew didn’t have wings anymore he could go deeper underground, and he could also fly much higher. It was like a world had opened himself to him. He had much more freedom. It was like he was unbound now. The wings were nothing but the prison-implants of a worse game. It was like slavery. They had been burdened by these wings. It was like these wings were eating from them, taking so many senses away.

Finally Andrew could love the game. The dying goddess was also a wingless fly, and he came to love her as well. The dying goddess seemed to be the velvet rope who saved them out of the game. It was to raise up an army, the army of the wingless flies. Because by losing their wings their senses opened up, and they could cry more and better than they had ever done, all for their release. They could also laugh more and better than they had ever done. They could laugh and smile deeper. They could fly by their senses now.

The dying goddess had made the game to select her soldiers.

A boy stared at a strange plant. It was a flycatcher. Flies got caught by the plant which would eat their wings. When it would have eaten the wings it would drop the wingless bodies out again. It was a tropical plant in a tropical museum. They also called the plant the prison of the fly, or fly-dungeon. The plant could grow very high, up to six metres. No one was allowed to touch the plant, as that was dangerous. It was a very venomous plant.

Close to the plant there was a statue of the dying goddess. Some tribes seemed to worship her. She looked like an indian woman. The keeper of the tropical museum stood next to the boy, and said that the indians originally came forth from wingless flies. Their ancestors were wingless flies, and they were just their evolutions. They actually came forth from this venomous plant. The plant, even at a distance, smelled deliciously. It looked like a bush already. It had big leaves and small flowers.

‘I always wanted to be an indian,’ the boy said.

‘Well, there is a way,’ the keeper of the tropical museum said. ‘Your soul is winged. Which means you are not an indian. Indians do not have winged souls. They have some feathers however, which are signs that they have overcome their wings.’

‘How to become a wingless soul ?’ the boy asked.

‘Well, here you have a book,’ the keeper of the tropical museum said. It was a book with pictures of wingless flies how they developed themselves into indians. It all started with the prison of the fly, the tropical plant. ‘I can give you a small plant, in a glassy box. Take care you never take it out, but give it water everyday, through the small holes on top of it. Make sure you never touch the plant, but sleep close to it, and by your dreams the plant will cut off your soulwings. Then you will become an indian, a wingless fly,’ the keeper of the tropical museum said.

But the boy asked him if he could sleep one night in the museum itself.

Since then the boy started to behave like an indian. Also other boys wanted to sleep one night in the museum and the same happened to them. They even started to worship the dying goddess. But many parents came against it. To them it was all nonsense. How could someone who wasn’t born an indian become an indian by a certain plant. In their eyes it was just a myth. Also indians themselves said these were fables. One could only become an indian by death. Some others said only those chosen by the dying goddess could become indians. However, the story attracted many visitors, and they published the myth in many newspapers.

It was a thick book the keeper of the tropical museum had. Many boys wanted to read it, although they often only watched the pictures. The book said that the plant could even abduct the chosen ones to make them prisoners of the fly, finally to become wingless flies. It could take souls out of their bodies finally to cut off their soulwings in a strange factory. It could give them nightmares. These nightmares were the knives to do the job. Whenever someone had a lot of nightmares, he could be a chosen one of the dying goddess, taken by the plant.

Someone woke up from a strange dream. He had nightmares all his life, and many strange strange dreams like this. 'The dying goddess ?' he thought. Then he tried to sleep again. When he woke up he wrote everything down. He had a diary for that, a dream-diary. One day he went to the library to search for a book about wingless flies. He found one : Curse of the Wingless Flies.

It was about an army of wingless flies, living in the depths of the jungle, a savage tribe. They had all sorts of organs like balloons. They had an organ causing partial paralysis and an organ causing partial epilepsy. By these organs they could reset themselves, and these were important parts of their immunology system.

It was about a planet called Brannan in a land called Rediga where there was a huge city called Promenade, the head-capital of the land. There were chickens on this planet like giants and these were often very evil. In Promenade there were chickenfighters. They looked like bullfighters, like matadors, but these ones had to fight against the giant chickens. The chickens were very dangerous as they could kill by their bills and wings, and by their sharp claws. This was why the chickenfighters had to train a lot, and they had to go to special schools. Promenade was the main city for chickenfighters. The traditional clothing went back to ages ago. They also had traditional swords and knives, and a lot of spears. They also used stones. It was an art. They also had lassos and ropes, and they had to try to get themselves on the beasts to ride them. It was some sort of rodeo, but when the fighter had reached the top of the giant-chicken it would become a lot easier. However the giant-chicken would still be able to sweep the rider away. In this ritual the riders had to bridle the chickens by their necks. If they would succeed they needed to bridle the bills of the giantchickens. These bridles had been smeared by some sort of venom by which the giant-chickens would get drunk. This was how they could get tamed. After a few rides the chickenfighter had to kill the giant-chicken. But not in all arenas these rides were part of it. In some arenas the giant-chickens had to be killed without the ride. The rules in it were very strict. It only could be done by real professionals.

The chickenfighters were developed wingless flies, having developed organs caring for their immunology system, also the organ of hyperventilation and spasm, which worked partially,

and was necessary for their protection. The giant-chickens they fought against were demonic creatures wanting to take over the whole of the planet. The chickenfighters were thus fighting for the protection of the planet and thus for their own lives.

The chickenfighters of higher ranks were the knights and guards of the emperor, who lived in and around the emperor's house to guard it. To this job there were also special schools. They often had helmets and were well-armed.

In the depths of Brannan a skeleton lived who created the giant chickens. He had evil purposes to take Brannan over. He had a palace and domain just like the emperor and did anything to bring down the house of the emperor. The leaders of the giant chickens could shapeshift into people. The emperor would send the higher ranks of chickenfighters out to the underground to spy on the skeleton and it's kingdom, and to bring it down. But that was often a big sacrifice. Often they got caught in traps to suffer horribly. It was the curse of the wingless flies.

The wingless flies often had to live with cut off limbs like pirates. Even their heads got cut off at times, and they had signs around their necks, certain necklaces, telling about this. Because of witchcraft they could live on. It was a witchcraft worse than anything, but they needed it to live on. The highest ranks of chickenfighters were witches, and they lived with the dying goddess, in the depths of the underground. At times she sent them back to show up as angels. They had to be initiated in all the mysteries of the dying goddess.

The dying goddess was a religious leader underground. Her representers on the surface were called 'the black glasses'. They had their house near to the house of the emperor. There could only be one black glass at a time. Most of the time they were women. They were the highpriestesses of the dying goddess. Whenever a black glass died the black glass would be buried in a chamber called the chamber of spiders, and the black glass had to live on there among the spiders. It was a tradition to mummify the black glass and cover the corpse with spiderwebs, putting the body on a sort of chair or small throne. The black glass would live on there eating spiders until the black glass would deserve a place close to the dying goddess. This event caused the body to have floating limbs, cut off, but it could be attached to the body again by jewelry. These ascended black glasses would have the most beautiful and powerful jewelry, and they would hunt at the side of the dying goddess herself.

The Organic Bomb

Indian Horsefly Fiction

There was thunder in the air, when the warmachine was coming down, while horses were on the fields. It was a strange camp coming down, like a butchery. There was no one who could do anything against it, as in swarms of flies it came down, to eat, and to let everything be washed away. It was like an apocalypse, a revenge, possessing the minds of so many, like a divine arena coming down, evil in it's origin. There was no place for love or hate, it was a different game, like a cartoon made of strange paint, blood and flyfluids mixed. This was like God coming down to hatch the eggs of a strange breeding. It was the time now, and the soldiers were standing up. They all shouted : apocalypse, apocalypse. They wanted to see the blood streaming, like they needed meat for their restaurants. It was a fairground of grills, like shrieking indians waiting for the harvest to come. But this religion, this cult, was just like a strange drug in the mind. It came from a strange tree called the tree of the indian horseflies. It was a meat-eating tree with so many flowers, and with such a blossom. No one should eat from this tree, but they were all forced to do it. 'Eat !' someone was shouting, 'or I will shoot your mouth off.'

It was a strange puppetshow, like a hungry computer. So many lights in the sky, and the horses were like in a roundabout .... in strange rodeos. 'Ride the puppets, yeah, ride the puppets !' someone was screaming. These were the small vehicles in the haunted house ...... No one would know where the trip would end, for no one ever got out again. And one by one they got pushed in this haunted house, while no one cared. The portal was a hungry mouth, and everyone screamed. 'I am a butchery,' said the haunted house, 'welcome, all sit down.'

The puppets had strange costumes, and the horses were even stranger .... These were the indian horseflies ..... flies coming from hell and below hell .... For yes, there is a world beyond hell. The boss of the fairground was a strange man. No one had to pay, for he paid them. It all ended in death, a strange part of the haunted house. Then you would hear a voice saying : 'The trip is over, you will never get out.' It was the worst part of the haunted house, as here something seemed to be wrong with the vehicle. The vehicle would finally tumble down, and everyone would fall into a ditch or river to drown .... as in a strange part of the haunted house .... Are we out or in ? We only sink deeper .... and we drown ..... stuck in a haunted house without food ...... becoming part of the haunted house itself, for the next day we are the skeletons ....

To survive life like this we become fairgrounds or even their bosses .... we become fata morgana's in the sky ..... to tease the thirsty ones in the desert .... We become evil ourselves, the thing we always feared .... And then we work our ways up to be the biggest devils, like butcheries in the skies, like grill-restaurants ..... and then we find out it was all automatic ..... part of the haunted house ..... becoming the haunted house ourselves.

Then we do not belief in our self anymore, and neither in the other .... We become genderless, to get the wild puppets on our hands. We play man and woman .... all part of the haunted house ...... all part of a strange fairground .... And is there any way out ? No. We all fall in the hands of starvation, for it gets boring.

We are the starving ones, drowning in the machines of strange fairgrounds, becoming these monsters ourselves ..... only to come to the bigger fairgrounds .... to be eaten alive, and to learn to ride the thing which is having us inside .... It's a strange rodeo ..... a strange puppetshow .... We do this masquerade for we are nobody anymore ..... to be someone was only a lie ..... there is no self and there is no other. But when does this all stop ? Only when we reach the everlasting and evergrowing explosion. The organic explosion is somewhere in the brain, a very sensitive spot like a nipple. It's a soft spot we can't touch. But we must reach it in our imagination. It's the vibration between personality and unpersonality. It's the vibration between you are everything, and you are nothing. It's the vibration between there is no self and there is no other. It's the greatest paradox on earth, that what happens between two mirrors ..... It happens in the house of mirrors, where everything seems to change, and everything seems to split up endlessly. It's the fairground's human bomb.

From this bomb the indian horseflies come forth, leading you to their land. It's the game beyond good and evil ..... It's the game ..... of the fairground .... It's not a fruit easy to take in paradise ...... No, it's a trip of discovery to the world beyond paradise .... Here the

fairgrounds are the butcheries to deal with the illusive self, in which we are locked up .... It's an evergrowing bownet for us to become free .... The evergrowing fairgrounds are like vulcanoes.

The Organic Bomb II

Indian Horsefly Fiction

They sank down in social starvation and social drowning, until they reached a strange fairground in the air. There was a strange machine called the Women of Ridicule, like a strange haunted house. They got marks and tattoos on the fairground .... nothing but strange scars ..... sucking so much life away from them .... They were now haunted themselves .... a part of the fairground forever, until they would be fairgrounds themselves ..... It was all part of a strange trip ..... It seemed they had been captured by a swarm of indian horseflies after a day of going to the forest .... It was not such a good idea .... It was on the television ...... They had been warned ....

They had been stubborn ..... they were the stubborn ones .... It was a trip they wouldn't forget so easy. They got ridiculed and humiliated to their weakest spots .... But after all it was just a fairground trip .... They found out they could never get out .... It was forever ..... until they would be fairgrounds themselves ......

There was no one more friendly than the boss of the fairground ..... It made them belief that the good didn't exist, as if such a friendly man turned out to be evil ..... everything would be evil ...... It was all just a matter of time before the mask would get off .... There was only evil ..... and they would have to live with that ...... on this neverending fairground ..... It was an evergrowing sight in the sky, luring more visitors everyday ..... until it would come down to swallow the earth .....

There was also a machine called the Women of the Stories, also like a strange haunted house. These were women who would tell the visitors stories, and it would only get worse ..... It was one of the darkest trips of the fairground .... This would let the visitors not belief in

a self and the other anymore, only in the things inbetween. And these things inbetween were the strange machines of the fairground ..... There was not a self anymore after the trip of the fairground .... only the fairground itself ..... as a strange being ..... Lose yourself was the theme ...... to be adapted to the fairground ...... where the self seemed to be an illusion ...... a prison .... just a strange machine on the fairground ..... And also the other was a strange machine ..... Too many haunted houses on the fairground let them long for getting away ...... but there was no exit ..... They could only sink deeper into it ..... and they had still seen so little of this fairground ..... It would be the trip of their life .... That they would be a part of the haunted house themselves was a thing they could never expect.

The machine called The Evil Women was a place they wouldn’t want to be, but the trip was leading to that place automatically .... and then they really regretted that they once went to the forest, while it was on television saying not to go there .... They had to listen better to the newsreader .... but they had been stubborn ...... too stubborn .... and now they were here .... in a thing they couldn’t escape ..... They had been eaten by a beast to become a beast themselves ...... as part of the fairground ...... Who could expect that they would become fairground themselves also ....

They were hungry in the skies .... hunting by their skills .... They were the fairground ...... They would announce their coming on television .... telling not to go there .... but the forbidden always seemed interesting .... There were fata morgana’s on television .... like kidnappers undercover ....

The organic bombs were like spots in their ears .... It was a strange deafness leading them deeper ...... a social deafness ...... And these spots also started to grow on their eyes .... a strange blindness ...... It was now on television .... where sight seemed to be .... nothing but another trip in the fairground .... Strange spots were growing on them, telling them they had survived .... as the survival was also nothing but a strange fairground trip ...... Everything seemed to be in the hands of the strange fairground boss ...... until they found out that he was also nothing but another trip on the fairground ....

Indian Bloodfly Fiction

Bloodbather

On the beach they were standing, tall men like indian bloodflies. They were martyrs and warriors, in a strange idea. I saw it, yesterday. And I was thinking : Would these guys be able, ever be able, to pick up their lives again ? They were now lost, so lost, as they lost their wives, their lives, their families, children, their jobs. Now they were standing there with pale stripes, on the beach, stripes like arrows, starting to burn before they would shoot.

I've done this all before, walking on the beach, but I never saw a sight like that. And I was thinking : would I ever see these men again ?

But now after years, I can tell you : I never saw them again. But I once saw a woman coming out of the sea, and in a flash I thought she was a mermaid, but she wasn't. She was like an indian bloodfly. She went to a rock, and then I lost her out of sight. She remembered me a bit about the men .... Was she one of them ? She seemed to be alone ....

Neither did I see this woman ever again ..... The pictures are still haunting me ..... The woman's feet were red by blood ..... like she had red boots ..... It also looked like she had red hair ..... but it was blood .... like she came .... from the sea ... of blood ...

I had problems to live with these pictures in my head .... It seemed like I wasn't myself anymore since .... I saw .... them ....

No one ever believed me ..... They said it was just a nightmare .... or a dream .... but one girl did belief me ..... She lived next to us, but she moved to another place .... This already happened years ago, and sometimes I think about her ...... She had some strange books with strange pictures .....

One day I went back to the sea again, after years, and the sea was blood, and I shouted .... It looked .... mean .... and I took a dive, as I wanted to escape the nightmare ..... but it took me ..... and it brought me to the martyrwarriors ...... the indian bloodflies ...... And I said : well, nice to see you again ..... and they greeted me .....

They showed me their arrows and bows ..... their knives, their daggers ..... their pictures and picture-books ..... and I was amazed ..... I didn't judge them, neither did I laugh ..... They wanted to crown me, and I said : 'why ?' Well, because I had taken the time for them, they said ..... hmmm .... Because I had studied their lives ..... Did I study them ..... yea in history-lessons ..... But I never listened .... I never paid attention ..... I was always dreaming .....

So I didn't understand ..... and still I don't ..... It's a paper crown ...... and in the night it glitters like diamonds ....

One day I decided to read the paper, and I read horrible stories ..... so horrible that I couldn't read any further .....

But hey, people said I just dreamt it ..... I showed them the paper, and they said : well, oh, it's just a newspaper, dude .... just a newspaper .....

One day I swam back to their island in the sea of blood again ...... They had their crowns ..... and I thought : finally ..... as I think these martyrs should be kings, as they have understood life ..... They waved at me, and I couldn't reach them ..... I was drowning in the sea of blood, and I thought : maybe it is all a dream, and then I woke up ....

There's a picture in my room of the martyrwarriors now ..... a picture of their island .... with the sea of blood, the crowns, and everything ..... It reminds me of the girl once believing me ..... Would she still be alive .... Would she still belief me ?

There are so many pictures I try to forget, but to this picture I'm holding on .....

One day I went to the shop, while a girl stood there and stared at me ...... 'Are you ? No, tell me it isn't true ...... are you 'him' ?' she asked .....

'What do you mean with 'him' ?' I asked .....

‘Well, the boy of the neighbours,’ she said .....

I smiled ..... she took my hand, and caressed it ..... ‘Oh boy,’ she said .... ‘good, good boy .... I’m so glad seeing you again.’

It struck me like lightening ..... she had red boots ..... and she said she still believed me .... She was tall now ..... I remember when we were young she always told scary stories ...... She said she was a writer now ...... with many many books ..... She took me to her home ...... She had returned .... She gave me a glass of red stuff ..... I drank, and fell asleep in her arms ...... ‘What kind of strong stuff is this, honey,’ I asked .....

‘Shhhh,’ she said ..... ‘shhhh’

Then she took me to the bedroom, and laid me down ...... ‘You still belief in it, right ?’ she said ......

‘Yes,’ I whispered .....

She closed the curtains, lay herself next to me, and turned the lights off ..... And then she put on a small red light .....

‘It’s dreamy stuff,’ she said ..... and then she took my hand ..... and we fell asleep together .....

I remember I woke up that night, while she was still sleeping .... I watched her, and loved the sight ..... I also watched her red boots ..... made of velvet and leather ..... I went to her room full of books ..... Books of leather and velvet ..... in red and brown covers ..... I started to read .... I smiled ..... She was still the same .....

Then she woke up and stood behind me ...... She took me in her arms, and soothed me ......

She was tender ..... and she spoke about the sea of blood .....

There was nothing which could come between she and me .... She led me to a room with pictures on the wall ..... She explained them ...... and she even had some statues ..... while the floor was red ...... red velvet with red leather ...... also the furniture ..... She had a big house ...... and even an underground ...... She said the martyrs lived there ..... They were warriors now ...... martyrwarriors ..... indian bloodflies ......

I said : Oh ....

And she took me away downstairs ..... There were rivers and lakes of blood ..... with islands ...... like a wilderness, a jungle ..... but I didn't see anyone .....

'The martyrs are sleeping,' she said. Then she took a flute, while I had to be the drummer ...... and then they came alive ..... Graves opened themselves ...... and they came out .....

Anyway, she got me that far ...... I wished I never had done it, but it was already too late ..... For later on we tried to make them sleep again, but it wouldn't work ...... She smiled ..... always in for an adventure ..... but I thought : damned ....

I had to get used to it ..... and it worked ...... She made a good drummer of me .... I still stand in her toyroom ...... while at nights I come alive in the undergrounds ..... She stuffed me like this ..... Still her drummerboy, after all these years ..... awakening the martyrs and leading them ..... together with her ..... the secret of the indian bloodflies ....

She is .... a bloodbather ..... and I now know why ..... She is their crown, they follow her ..... and she never wonders why .... It's like she always was like this .....

The End

Indian Bloodfly Fiction

Bloodbather II

Not much can I say after the encounter, am speechless, cannot talk, but everyday it’s getting better with me ..... They came there, and suddenly everything was red ..... everything turned in blood, and I was standing like a zombie .....

It was in a flash and then everything was gone .... no more hope inside ..... it got into a long long night .... tall blood shadows, tall knives, guns ..... it knocked me down ..... and I woke up on an island, far away, in the seas of blood ..... It was doom’s day ..... why would they save me ?

They gave me blood to drink, meat to eat, while I still thought I was drowning, but they saved me .... I would never laugh again ..... and I still couldn’t talk ..... I was like their baby ......

It was a long time after the kidnap, I could finally breath, and feel the hand on me .....

It was a blood shadow .... tall knives, guns ..... but this time it was helping me ......

I know I will never be the same, after the kidnap ..... There was a sword of blood in the sky ..... roaring ..... and so many bloodflies in the air ..... soaring ...... ready to attack ..... ready to go out in war .... they had so many wings ...... and for the first time after the kidnap, I could feel myself again ..... knowing everything would be okay .....

They had strong, deep eyes ..... and then they shrieked, as war would begin .....

And then it overflew all again ..... all the blood ..... so many were drowning .... It was doom’s day .....

And someone shouted : ‘Don’t come too close !’ I saw so many running, but they had nowhere to go .....

And they stang some holes in me, and the blood flew inside .... I stood up, and I couldn’t drown anymore ..... I was one of them ..... as I had ..... the holes ......

There are many holes in a lifetime ...... some are for real ..... some are for always ..... Some you will never forget .....

And we are reaching for the holes in the sky ..... holes to escape ..... holes to have some peace and rest ...... but don’t let it be a mistake ...... it is all to prepare for war ..... as doom’s day is coming through .....

I have read a book about doom’s day ..... I smiled, it was like a fantasy ..... I guess it wasn’t real at all ..... Life is just a story .....

So I could finally shut the book of my life, saying : story’s over ..... I took another book of my life inside ..... and another story began ..... a story of doom’s day ..... a second one ..... for the first wasn’t real at all .....

I have seen the faces of these indian bloodflies ..... licking their lips of blood .... they are the martyrwarriors .... locked up creatures of an old historybook ..... The seals have been broken, locks have been removed, chains have been cut, and now they fly, and rise ..... telling stories like they should .....

They tell their dreams and fantasies ..... They are smiling deep ..... it is their weapon .... to begin a new day ...... a real day .....

I've seen them on the hills ..... They aren't far away anymore ...... There is no wall between the history and the future ...... That was all just make-belief ..... and if there is a wall ..... They stand on it, and march .... preparing for war ...... guarding the mass ...... raising it tall ...... and then letting it all fall ....

There is not much to say after a day like this ..... I'm closing the books ..... and then they follow me ..... like tall blood shadows in the sky ..... they cover the seas, and baby, do you know why ? .... they have been here before, my child ...... and now they are back to continue the fight ...... 'Fight for love !' someone shouts ..... It's all we hear ..... but the fight for hate is near .....

'Fight for love, fight for love !' someone shouts again, but the fight for hate comes closer ...... as the hate of history is ready to jump ...... jumping all over me ..... 'Come here, and forget about the pain,' someone's whispering ..... But the pain is alive ..... large like a well ..... a well of tears ......

And still they march .... on the walls of tears ..... These tears are red my dear, like blooddrips on the waterside ...... reflecting words by which we can hide ..... It comes all too close my dear ..... and the indian bloodflies are near ..... We cannot run, but we can hide ..... following reflections of a dark dark night ..... It's doom's day, yes, the second one ...... It has just begun ......

Where can we go ? There are red tears all over ...... blood knows all the firecamps ...... all the places where we hide ..... someone is piercing them .... It shrieks it is a high proclamation ..... 'Stay close ! But don't come too close ....' As it jumps and it can tear you down ..... you must shut the book ...... now .....

They are speaking from times ago ..... these martyrs ...... It is my book, it makes me cry ..... They have sensitive spots ..... Tender words they have spoken ...... Their warriors are broken ...... but rising up ...... To speak again on doom's day ......

And if there ever comes a third doom's day ..... I will be there ...... reading the book, shutting it again ...... and then staring at it's cover, for that's the best then ...... a picture tells more than a thousand words ..... So I glide into the picture and will be the book's unheard ..... silent words, never spoken ...... luring visitors to the second floor and further ...... Come away with me, let me show you the shadows ...... forget about the words, don't create the dungeon .... Be free with me, to the island we will swim ...... It was all paint, this blood ..... we can do it, we can win ...... There's no use in making war, but we can paint, that's for sure ...... I will raise my rod and scratch your name in the sky ...... will it be full of roses, blossoming ......

We can make a new world, you and me ..... we can paint the ladder, always to escape ..... for there are better ways, much better ways ..... Come with me ...... darling ...... forget about the past ..... forget about the misery ...... as there is now enough paint to paint ...... we are bathing in blood, I know, but it's paint ..... so paint the stairs ..... through the curtains we will go ..... make it transparant baby ..... so much to show ......

I will paint you on the cover of my book ..... I will paint you in the sky and at the rock ..... There is magic when we speak the words, come follow me ...... follow the reflections of these bloodred tears ......

The End

The Troll Saviour

The Harper's Tale

'Light is a secret. How does it exist ? It is a hormone,' said Doctor Uzaki. Now they lived in hell since the atomic war they needed some light, as their monkeys were dying. 'They need light,' Doctor Uzaki said. They were in a dark capsule, sinking deeper into hell. The capsule was getting darker and darker. Suddenly someone blasted a piece out of the wall. It was Derenjen, a warrior. There was some light now. The Doctor and his daughter stepped out with the monkeys. 'Welcome to hell,' said Derenjen. 'Can you explain to us how we can breed the light hormone, as the monkeys really need it,' the doctor said. Derenjen told them to come with him. He led them into a cave with spiders and snakes. Some spiders were very big. Behind the cave there were some bigger caves, and here it was like an arena. Giant insects were fighting against giant snakes, while they started to produce much sweat caught into big kettles. These kettles were connected to big tubes leading the mixed sweat into a breeding of strange eggs. Derenjen said that whenever these eggs get in touch with the mixed sweat they open up after awhile bringing forth rare sorts of flies carrying the light hormones. Everyone got smeared by the light hormone, to become true citizins of hell, to be assured of a perpetual flow of hell's stamina. Now they would produce these light hormones by themselves.

Doctor Uzaki and his daughter took a bath in these hormones to get full possession of it, but awhile later they got killed. Only some of the monkeys could escape. One of them was not a real monkey, but had a monkey-suit. He worked in a circus, but now, by the atomic war, he was here, in hell ..... and it seemed more needed to happen to become an eternal inhabitant of hell ..... His name was Darrel, although some called him Dan. He thought it was kind of strange that they had to be smeared by the light hormone. He went to the caves again, and hoped that no one would see him here. Again he went to the breedery and this time he took the hormones to swallow it .... This seemed to work. He now knew that to be smeared by it was just a trap. He felt the lights moving through him, making him a true citizin of hell, like a big rebirth. He could smell the snakeslime now, and could watch all the hairs of the spiders .... It was like he was coming alive now, and he took a deep breath. But then he got killed by Derenjen who attacked him from behind. Derenjen smiled as no one knew the true way to get born into eternity. Derenjen felt like he was the father of hell, as he had invented this hormone. The wrong applications always led to death, and he seemed to be the only one who knew about the true application .... So he was the ruler and prince of hell .... But one day, strangely enough, he got killed by a giant black like snake. It was a sort of a seasnake, with very complex patterns. Derenjen knew nothing about the knowledge of these snakes, and it seemed they only bred him for this purpose : to die.

Deeper in hell there were the lights of illusion, spreading illusions to everyone coming closer. So many visitors who came to hell once in their lives started to belief that they were the kings and emperors, all to find out that they had been deceived. Hell didn't accept visitors, only inhabitants. The snakes of the depths of hell could shapeshift into women, and also the wasps, the spiders and the flies could do that. They were the hybrids of hell, and they battled for the first place. They were all hungry for domination.

They knew the secret of true light. It was the knowing that they were true inhabitants of hell .... And this knowing had been tested, even in the kettles of ignorance and oblivion. The inhabitants of life were easy to deal with, but it seemed the inhabitants of death were quite difficult. And Bombaya, the true prince of hell, feared the prince of death, as he was very strong. The prince of death had a series of old indian masks who were very powerfull, so powerfull that they were able to deceive the prince of hell at times, and it brought fear to the prince of hell, much fear. There was so much mystery around the domains of death, and it was such a riddle, that one day the prince of hell gave up all hope.

The prince of death was a fly, knowing a lot about the technology of death, and as he was growing he more and more started to steal parts of hell to turn it into death. This was how the domains of death

were growing more and more, and there wasn't anyone who could do anything about that. One day the prince of death took the prince of hell as a prisoner to the realms of death, while armies of death flies started to eat the lights of hell away. Hell was now nothing more but an island. Death was roaring against hell, and took so many lives in one day. Death had it's dungeons, and the prince of hell started to burn in a strange fire. It was the day hell turned into a woman again, a dark woman of death, eating the last lights of hell, like the flaming pigs. Hell was now nothing more but a pigbreeding, while death grew more and more, and it's blossom was covering everything. Nothing could shriek more than these pigs, these flames of illusion, these deceiving lights, until the spears of death finally quenched all life.

The dark woman of death became the woman of the prince of death, but it only lasted for a day, as they got into a horrible fight. The prince of death tore her into many pieces, but they all grew into women again, dark women of death, coming against him. And thus the prince made them as the hours of death, threehundredthousand hours of death, as that is how long every day in the domains of death take, and in his fight against them he had torn them into minutes and seconds, like armies of dark dark women of death, more than can be counted, as an eternal graveyard for the prince of death. He lives deep, the prince of death, and he is their table, he is their bed, and their heart ..... And there it's ticking full of rage, full of fear and grief .... He is depressed, this prince, feeling rejected ..... but he is the prince of death ....

No one can follow him when he speaks, he speaks like the riddle ..... he is a vampire .... like a skeleton he rises every day, to rule the domains of death, and when he goes to sleep, a small lullaby is with him ..... He doesn't love this lullaby, as she keeps him imprisoned when he sleeps .... He only loves death ..... He's a criminal, a thief, taking away lives, he rules them all, by deceiving lights .... These lights are dark like the lights of flies ....

His name is David, by a strange religion of death he has chained them all. His chains are snakes like worms, striped by the pale, when he touches you it is too late. Once I was caught in his kingdom, in his garden of snakes I tried to find my way. He told me his name is Joseph when he sleeps, his name is Jesus when he dreams. There are black demons in his tree, hiding the hidden meat. It's the kingdom of death, the kingdom of meat, always full of grief. I tried to lighten him up by my harp, but he almost pierced me by a spear, so I ran away, to hide in his tree. Now he tells everywhere where he comes I am a black snake, a black demon. I am hiding forbidden fruits, but it's a hidden fruit .... It seems he doesn't like me ....

By a strange religion he has chained them all, he has eaten hell away, but still he scares them, telling about the death within death ..... for me it's a road to escape ..... How many times did he kill me, I do not know .... It seems I always come alive again in this strange place ..... I'm a strange striped snake, striped by the pale .....

Still David is my secret obsession ..... The white is rippling on my skin, turning the red into pink. I close my eyes when I think of him, I'm in my dungeon, still with the harper's play, maybe he will take me back another day ..... Maybe he will open my eyes ..... Maybe he will take away my fear .....

It's a strange hormone of light, the death within death, where the deepest death ends in the flame .... It is like overdeath, carrying the blossom of light, so pale ..... to see all the other sights ..... and the surveys of the seas .... I know he will kill him soon, the prince of the sea ..... But that's another diamond, another skeleton, another warfeather.

I will tell you how that will be .... he skins him, tying his skeleton to his ship ..... and then the sea will disappear in a deeper flame ..... This can only happen in eternal death ..... where time has faded

away, and everything is frozen ...... awakening by the deeper flame ...... The deeper flame of eternal death is sliding across the snares of my harp ..... I know I can awaken them all ......

I still remember his three faces ...... David, Joseph, Jesus ..... Three chiefs of indians ..... Three old indian masks ...... Three warhammers ..... Three stinging flies ..... Your Troll Saviour .....

The Eyes of Death

He was the stomache piercer, he pierced kidneys by his arrows, like a prince of hell he was, but he was the prince of death, once swallowing the prince of hell .... Death had overcome, survived, not hell ..... And his death was eternal, like the eternal flame, a deeper flame, going from heart to heart, from stomach to stomach, all to pierce, binding them together, for the lake to swallow ..... But one time he got into a fight against the prince of the sea, and this one pierced him in the intestines, as a mean bite, so many spears through the head ..... He had a harp harpoon, he was a hunting harper, piercing his stones, his soul and his blood ..... I do not know for how long the prince of death was in the grip of the prince of the sea ..... All I know is that the prince of death finally survived and took the weapon of the prince of the sea, his harper's harpoon, and his head .....

Now the prince of death is riding high on his dragonhorse, high on the hills, piercing the intestines of his victims by his harpoon of death .... by strange lullabies he's taking them away ..... into a cloud ..... to his dungeons, where they die the deeper death, calling forth the flames .....

He has the biggest death and the growing death in a bowl like two mysterious creatures, while the prince of death himself, he has three heads ..... Three heads like the Cerberus, he guards the gates of death ...... Like a knight he is, standing tall, having the thin strike, and thick edges of his helmet ..... he's a skeleton

He shrieks when he shoots, all souls are his, he's their saviour, for there are many illusive lights .... He likes it when it's dark and pale, when the flames are fading away ..... Once in awhile he has some fires, pigs at stakes .... Meat is what he desires ..... He is king David, when he sleeps he's Joseph, and when he dreams he's Jesus ...... He is our Troll Saviour ..... from a harper's tale ..... I once had a harpoon like him, but I never used it .... I only stared at it, such a pretty thing ..... It's hanging like a shield in my room, like a web .... sifting the dreams and the nightmares ..... like an old indian mask .....

There he rides high on the mountains ..... There he spreads himself in the clouds like a web, and then so many predators are coming, it's dinnertime ...... They are telling religious tales .... religious games ......

He is like the wasp, like the fly, like the spider, all in one, but as the snake he slides ...... His webs are dangerous, so mysterious ...... Prophets have warned him ..... prophets from dark religions of death

..... How long will he be prince here ? I don't know ..... One prophet is called Haggai, another one Sefanja, and another one claims to be Joseph, and another one claims to be Jesus ..... It's the war of the death prophets ..... They are strange gladiators, baptizing the skies in blood .....

I see indians are moving closer, of prince of death, what will it be ..... They come out of strange boxes, out of strange warbooks ..... wasps and spiders, so insane ..... full of rage ..... Like priests from the temples ...... They're looking for their goats of sin, looking for their pigs of lies ...... Prince of death, what will it be .....

Some are singing lullabies, but they are hunters, so get wise, warriors are rising, it's death rising, rising up .... Is this a greater death, I do not know, I just watch from the hill, having my harpoon raised ..... ready to shoot ..... No one will take me ..... No one will take me for a sinner ...... I'm clean ...... No one will take me, no one will break me, no one will take me for a liar ..... I am a harper, that's my destiny .....

Indians rising on the fields of death, mean faces ..... Shrieking, yelling, full of rage ...... Some are laughing, mocking, warriors, don't take me for a sinner, I don't belief in priests, I am the harper, that's my destiny ..... I'm shaking in my dungeon ..... The ground is breaking below me ..... Someone's sucking me into the depths ..... There are snakes all around me ..... It's like my days with Lilith .....

And there she stands before me, her ornaments they strike me, it's Lilith with her company ...... I tell her with a harper's smile ..... about the wars coming ..... Then she grasps me ..... Lilith, princess of death ..... what will it be ..... I'm holding on to the harper's destiny .....

Then I hear shrieks ..... The prince of death is falling .... Indians are surrounding him ...... Then they pierce him ..... Then they burn him ..... At the stake they turn him ..... Has another religion grasped us, or is this the same ..... All I see is indians ..... All I see is rage ..... or hidden rage, covered by a smile ..... I am here, with Lilith ..... what will they do ..... Do we have to say goodbye ? I'm holding on to the harper's destiny ..... Then they crown me ...... and all these lights are bowing before me ...... It's Joseph, it's Joseph, one of his dreams ? No ? Is it Joseph the Dreamer, or is it ..... something else ? Yes ? Please tell me ......

I found the harper's crown ...... I take it off and throw it into the sea ...... Is it the last sea ..... It's disappearing before me .....

I'm sitting on my dragonhorse ..... High on the hills ..... I'm too peacefull, then I jump off ..... sliding into a lake deep down in the fields ..... in these forests and jungles of death .... Then I'm shapeshifting into a snake, searching for my spider ...... I have a harem of spiders downstairs ..... I will set them free, for now I have the key ..... this harper's destiny ..... And they will raise the flies ..... They will raise the fly eye ..... A pretty flame ..... Deep there in the lake of death ..... and the rivers are like veins ..... The deepest death where water turns into blood .....There is a shrieker's harp, a tree of death meat .... for all predators to know ..... It's all about the domination of the soul ..... But don't fool yourself ..... you can never drink from this well ..... Lights are guarding it .... It's only an illusive spell ...... There is a world inside ..... Forget about the outer lies ..... All these faces are just your misunderstandings ..... Don't fight against these riddles, but go deeper, to the harper's play ..... Listen to the Harper's Tales ..... Don't let anyone else take you away .....

There's a place called death deep inside, but it's never what you think, it's bigger than your mind, it is a symbol ..... Forget about the outer lies, don't let your head take you away ..... Deeper inside your head will be cut off ..... to let you enter a cryptic world ..... Listen to the harper's play ...... You're a

prisoner of your brains, a strange religion ..... But when you come deeper you get an axe to crash the brains .....

Go there where the waterfalls turn into blood, for these waters are only lies. Go there where bread and fruits turn into meat, for this food is only lies. Die the deaths with the deaths .... Don't touch life as it will hypnotize you ..... but treat all as a symbol.

The Stone

He was a pianist. He had the feeling people looked right through him, as if he was transparant. He lived as a recluse. He wanted to make something of his life, but it was like he didn't have the strength for it, as if he always slided away in a dark pit. Here he lived between the rats and the snakes, who mocked him. He was not happy. The sadness of life had overwhelmed him. The gardens of his mind were high and huge, hiding their secrets for him. He was searching for inspiration but he found none. His piano didn't give him any hope as well. It was like he had once married her, but now it seemed like they were divorced. In the past he always had the feeling he was riding a fast horse, but he didn't have that feeling anymore. Life had been hard to him. He couldn't enjoy music anymore. He felt numb. His piano was like a sleeping beauty and he didn't know how to kiss her. It was like his whole house was full of thorny bushes, stinging him, keeping him away from joy. In the nights he had dreams about bison hunts, after which he drank their blood and ate their meat, as in a dionysian mystery. He had the feeling he had gone mad. He didn't have a grip on the reality anymore. In these dreams he had many women, and there was coming wine from their feet, which he drank. These women were red indians, the ones with which he hunted. He felt the urge to return to the wilderness, but he didn't have the strength. He was locked up in society. The women he adored were like vines, but in daily life he could not reach them. He was too far away in his own world.

Vines grew in his garden. He loved to watch them. It gave him a feeling of peace amidst all the darkness. But it was like everything was sliding away from him. He didn't even know anymore what was real and which wasn't. Strange lusts were in him, which he never could satisfy. The other world was unreachable for him. The vine was divine for him, related to Dionysus, the god of the wine. He was also the god of pleasure, but the man could never reach this. He felt like doomed by Dionysus, but he also knew that the vine was about pain. It was by his suffering that he was slowly going mad. Within short time he moved to a flat. In the other flat on the other side he saw a woman undressing herself, probably because she would go for a bath. She had a beautiful dark skin. This went on for awhile, and at one moment he

decided to go to her house. He admired her, because she was like one of the women in his dreams. She opened the door for him and looked surprised. 'Dionysus,' she whispered.

It was silent for a few minutes. 'Come in,' she said.

He took a chair, sat down, and smiled. 'So you are a Dionysian priestess ?' he asked.

'Oh yes,' she said.

Then teach me, he said. How to live this life.

'Watch the trees,' she said. 'Watch how they grow, see the beauty in them.'

'That's all ?' he asked.

'Yes,' she whispered, 'for now.'

Then he told her about his dreams and asked her for explanation.

'I think you have gone mad,' she said. 'But that is the purpose of Dionysus, to become a fool, free from civilisation. He mocked the law, you know.'

He nodded. 'Do you want some wine ?' she asked. He nodded again. The cup looked like a foot. He drank and stared deep in her eyes. He loved her body. 'Unveil me,' she said. They made love the whole night, on a carpet of deerskin.

For him it was just an adventure. He didn't want to get too attached. Soon he took another girl, and then another, all red indians. It was like he wanted to live his dreams now. They were all dionysian priestesses. Some thought he was Dionysus himself. He ended in a mental institution, where they made a doll of him by medicins. He felt like he was a tree now, stiff, but still hotblooded like the vine. In his eyes the nurses were naked here, barefooted. It was like they were treading him.

Within seven months he was home again, in his flat and he decided to move to a house in the forest. Again he had his own vineyard but this time it was much bigger. He wanted to make wine like never before, and then to let it grow old.

It was like there were women living in his house, on the walls, knowing the way to the cellars. His cellars led to the underground, from where he came. And in these undergrounds ... bison hunts ... all to honor Dionysus. She stared at him. The clock seemed to have eyes. She was like the mother church.

In the cellar he was bathing in wine, in a huge wooden pan. It was steamy creamy wine. His dark eyes watched his lovers. They had bodies like chocolate. He was drunk. He was a god. Something had broken in his brains. He couldn't handle so much wine, and he ended in a mental institution again. To him the nurses were naked, barefooted. After seven months he was home again, but he wasn't the same. The women had missed him, and told him he had to go to the underworld. They crowned him when he was home. They called him Dionysus of the mother church. They drove him drunk and drove him to the piano. He was tired and he didn't have much control over his fingers. They ended in bed.

The women worked in the vineyard. In the neighbourhood he was known as polygamist. The people thought he was a sexist because there were naked women painted on the outside walls of his house. He wanted to go into the cities to preach the gospel of Dionysus, as a fool looking for work. He wanted to build his empire in the wilderness, on the broken stones of the villages. He wanted to break these cities down, to let tree-life take over. He wanted to plant trees, he wanted to bring mud to the water.

He could save a lot of people, the cities were flooded by wine, and one major flood. He preached them the gospel of wine and drunkeness. There were floods in his bed, the floods of sodom, and it soon ended in his head. He was staring over the vineyards, so many, as far as the eye could see. He was in joy, his women were with him. He stood there on top of the hill, it was sandy here, and there was the beach. From here he could see the sea of wine and joy. He could escape through the vine, through the roots, but it was like climbing up. He could reach heaven. He took the piano and could play, ethereally, insane. His women played the violin. He stood eye to eye with the mysteries. The mysteries were huge, overwhelming his mind. He was freezing, and it was snowing. He was leaking. He couldn't handle this, so again he had to go to the mental institution. This time they didn't want to let him go anymore. He felt like he was in an abattoir. They cut him with knives.

He got his own room, like a room on a ship. He knew he had fallen into the hands of pirates. They forced him to take medicins, they even put it into his food, and he even went more downstairs. This time he was really visiting the underworld. He went to the cellars of the hospital, where all the old wines were. They were guarded by the feet of women.

The bottles of sex were tall and stinky. Sodom was a hairy goat, and it could kill by it's noise. He knew it was the power of death. He took one of these bottles in his hands, and he knew he was ruler. It led him to the sea. He climbed the tower, where the worms were born. All these roads led to death. He was the god of death. Where bodies came together the play of death seemed to begin. It was all the fermentation process of death, a wine he kept drinking from, tasting like licorice. Sex was the drunkeness in the hand of Death, as a road to madness, the liberation of the self. He was aware of it very well. And she was veiled by the veils of torture.

They were working, making love for a better world, and they were surrounded by jewelry. The joy of sex was a profound one, like the birth of a new baby. At the same time it was a war, a death, but it was a holy war, a dionysian one. It was to set free, and to be free. Sex was one of the strongest powers of Drama and Comedy, of the Great Carnival.

They buried him soon enough. He was now a ghost. He looked back on his life, looked back on the past. They took him out of coma by a new medicin. He was allowed to go home soon. He felt a hand on his body. He moved to another house to start a new life. The mysteries of Dionysus were eating from him. The trees were growing beautifully here, with grapes and licorice, and small dead heads. He came from the depths of the underworld and had conquered.

He came with licorice, the finest of juices, and with foam, the fruit of poverty. There were statues of naked women around his house, and they were tall. He loved wine, he loved to swim in it, and the group of his women had grown, and he called them his disciples. They would stretch out to the vision of love, the love for wisdom. He had a game to play to build his empire, and it was based on dionysiac doctrin.

The next day he woke up and there were so many women around him. They were like wild dogs, and slowly they began to tear him. He was holding the grail, and it seemed to be his own blood. The mysteries of licorice were his, they were sweet and calming. The stones of his city were big, shining in the sun, with black watchers on them, archers. Inside his city there was confusion, much confusion. He wanted to escape from his city, but he was trapped. He was a prisoner of himself. All roads seemed to end here and there was a cry of death. He wanted to wage war against a big red stone in the midst of the city. He did not know who had planted it there. He wanted to remove it, but he couldn't. Dionysus had planted this stone.

Someone gave him the key to the stone and he found rest. He could enter the stone. Dionysus smiled. He had waited for this moment. It was his stone. No one could fight this stone. They just had to enter it.

Green Slime

The Fourth Death

Chapter 1. The Obsession

Jeremy was developping a new computergame. The games he played in his life were really an inspiration to him. He was a real game-addict, almost a junk on that area, and he wanted to bring all good games and characters into one super game. He didn't know that a friend of him was also working on such a game. Both had the intention of building a new virtual world, which would take over the nerve-system, and by that even the hormones and cell-production. By this they could transform the earth. They knew about the frequencies of different slimes creating a total new body.

Jeremy was a punk boy. In this way he had the best chance to survive earth. For him it was a very hard experience, but the games helped him through. His friend was called Sam, but

everyone always called him maestro. He was a good musician, a good technician, but he always acted very strange, and always tried to stay at the background. The last years he isolated himself more and more. They had a lot of contact by internet or by phone. He called himself an internet-hermit. He built a world there where he could study and work. He always said that society was the main killer, but industry gives a chance to survive. He was an evolution-freak of the hybrid theory. This theory would end up in a definite link between humans, trees and animals. The hybrids were fusions of different lifeforms together. They would produce the slimes necessary to survive the dangerous and endless future. For Sam it was a challenge. He believed that evolution could only exist because of the pressure. Which makes that evolution is eternal life itself. Life will keep developping itself until it has the perfect frame to be permanent. Sam learned to see death as an elevator to new laboratories. All these new species were heading for hybrid earth. Every strike against it would only settle it and develop it more and more. In this case enemies and friends would work together.

Jeremy was already far with his game. He had developped guns with all sorts of slimes to select. Every slimesort had another function. There were slimes for war but also slimes to build or heal. The slimes were very good for farms to breed all sorts of trees and species. One day he got a call from Sam. Sam was telling him about his plans, and they decided to work together. Sam was also very far with his game, and they decided to make a fusion. Sam was an expert in anatomic technology, and he had already built hospitals in the game where the player could enter for new installations and healings. These were implants taking place in dark underground labs by high frequencies in the form of flashes and sounds. Sam asked Jeremy to come to his room for some experiments. Jeremy was excited and stepped into the capsule. Suddenly all sorts of slimes were flowing through his body, and he felt like he was really becoming a hybrid. They both had a good teacher, teaching them these sort of things, but Sam was really on track. He had developped his knowledge the last few years without this teacher, just like Jeremy. It was their high school teacher, but since they succeeded in their study they studied on their own. This was a deeper feeling of liberty, although their old teacher never forced them. The hours they were with him were always like deep magic. The classroom was in a cellar below school, where he had his lab. Here he teached them about evolution and the hybrid theory. There were many caves below the school in his dominion, and some of them even led to the core of the earth. This was why his lessons were always so exciting. They could experience it by themselves.

Now they had the plan to show the old teacher what they did, but it wasn't finished yet. Jeremy would take his own files to Sam's room, and they would try to make a good fusion. Sam liked the guns immediately and tried them out. Jeremy had built a lot of characters and enemies, all in 3-dimensional style. These characters could talk and even develop their knowledge. Jeremy had a crush on one of the characters. Her name was Onnia. She was almost like a monster, and could do much shapeshifting. The slimes were streaming through her veins, and always when Jeremy saw her he got the chills, like a cool touch in his neck. Sam liked Onnia too, and he said he would work on her to give her some really special abilities.

Onnia was an Onak, a large slimy and hairy being. Her back turned a bit over, and she looked like a prehistoric crocodile-gorilla. Sam loved the construct, and would love to work on her for a few days. Jeremy agreed. He would ask their old teacher to come taking a look. One day he came, and it was very good for him to see his old friends. He wanted to make a trip in the capsule and started to sit in. After an hour he stepped out. 'What a beautiful world of ambient seas and shelters, labs and evolution. This is so devoted to the hybrid theory.'With tears in his

eyes he stood there. 'This is so good, boys.` The boys were smiling. They liked the idea of their teacher about the capsule. The old teacher would go to his home and bring them some old games he liked. He wanted them to bring it in the new game. Sam and Jeremy agreed. 'Well, that was a good shot, maestro,' Jeremy said to Sam, when the teacher was gone.

The old games of the teacher were brilliant. They never saw anything like this. These were games from his youth. The beings looked like Onaks, and their movements were so dignified, wild and breath-taking. Sam decided to bring it into the new game. There were rivers of slime, green slime, and black slime, and the atmospheres were full of dark colours. Jeremy was smiling.

Chapter 2. A World in Lava

After years the game was a topper on internet. In many houses there was a special capsule to play it in virtual reality, but most of the houses just played it on screen, 3-dimensional. The project was very expensive, but hospitals were so amazed about the program and it's influence on medical evolution that they were about to raise funds for it. Jeremy and Sam were heroes, and their old teacher was very proud of them. But more and more Jeremy and Sam started to draw themselves back from usual life. They found a cave in the forest leading them to the deeper cores of the earth, even deeper cores than the caves of their old school. The air was so clear here, and the darkness had a good effect on their bodies.

Somebody invented a virus against the game and against internet, which could not be destroyed. Science was hopeless. New sicknesses came on earth, and it was like humanity was losing it. Something was eating the human structure away. The real junks of the game, who really had hybrid abilities growing into them, and who sometimes even started to look like hybrids had a sort of new immunity against all that was happening. Their journey would be to the sacred cave of Jeremy and maestro, but it seemed that no one could find it. Humans were dying like many millions a day, and the hybrid-junks started to gather. They came from all countries over the world to a place where many caves existed. There were many deserts here, and they had the plan to make a living here. They wanted to find a way to the deeper cores of the earth, to meet Jeremy and maestro.

The rest of the world was dying, but they had a small power which gave them hope to survive. Jeremy and Sam didn't know what was happening above the ground. They had moved to this place underground, and built a new world there. Here the game was still working, and they had their own internet.

The beings they found here were looking like the Onaks, but they had wings, and in a sense they looked like birds. But they were more the flying monkeys or crocodiles they knew from old movies. It was like a prehistoric world was still alive here. One always said in the deepest core of every planet there is a road to the sun. There was so much fire here, but it was under control. At least that was what they thought, but it changed their mind when they had their first vulcano-like experience. It would take a lot of time before they could deal with this. It was like some of these parts were floating, deeper into the earth. And it was like the atmospheres got softer here, but still the oxygene was very thick and there was a lot of slime. Do snakes come from here ? They had the most horrible experiences with these underground snakes. They were often much bigger than the snakes they knew from above the ground. It

seemed that a lot of creatures here didn't like their pressence. They didn't want to fight, but they had to, for they needed to survive. They were getting crazy of hunger and while they didn't want to hunt for food, they started to eat which had attacked them. They hoped they could have some friends here, but it seemed they were all against them. They were now so deep. They lost all their equipment by the eruptions, and still much lava was flowing. The lava was flowing to the world above the ground. Did their visit trigger these eruptions ?

The world was in fire and lava now, no any hybrid-junk survived, only the two inventors of the hybrid game, Jeremy and Sam, were still alive, while they were deep underground, looking for the center of earth. They had to find their way through the mud and the swamps. Fortunately the swamps weren't deep, but what would they meet when they would be further in the darkness. These were dark holes, with less fires, although the atmosphere was getting hotter. It was like they would be burnt alive when they would go further. They decided to wait awhile. And to their surprise the temperature was getting lower. They started to move on, they had to move with this temperature, as a bubble in hot areas, or was this temperature attached to a certain time-period of a day or a week ? They didn't know what they could expect. The meat of snakes was very tasty, and it was like new sorts of slime running through their veins. They didn't know that this slime was making them immune against the heat. The more they ate this meat, the less snakes attacked them, they found out. These snakes were very thick and big, very large, in all sorts of colours. The colours were inspiring them. It was like hard slime, very transparent and often very bright, but not bright enough to be a light in the darkness. When they saw a snake coming out of the lava, they knew that these sort of snakes had a great immunity against the heat, and they started to understand why they were having a lower temperature now. It was still a very pleasing temperature, but soon they would find out that this immunity was slowly killing them. They were starting to freeze at a certain point.

'Stop eat snake-meat, Jeremy,' Sam said. `It's killing us, it's freezing our senses.' Jeremy dived into a river of lava. It didn't bring him any damage, for he was immune, but it was still like he was freezing. `Oh, how cold this is,' he screamed. Sam was diving too. He found out he could breath down under, thinking maybe because of certain meat he ate. He found a hole deep down in the lava, leading to a lava-cave, while Jeremy was following. They saw strange creatures there, while they were hiding behind a rock. It was a large cave. It was like giants were living here. Suddenly one of the giants found them. It was like a shark was looking at them, a hybrid lava-shark. Strange chills went through them. The giant took them to the middle of the cave. He was too strong, they couldn't do anything. They were thrown into a sort of kettle, while giants around them were screaming. These screams were like thunder underwater. But soon they found out that these giants were friendlier than they thought. They brought meat to them, and they had to eat. While they were eating the meat, the strange coldness which tried to kill them was slowly disappearing. It was like balance started to come, also an immunity against the cold was developping itself in them. The giants were starting to get more and more quiet. They were speaking in a strange language, and Jeremy and Sam were raised out of the kettle. One of the giants came to them, and said : 'Now you are free to go the world of ice and glaciers.'

Chapter 3. The Wizard

It was like defeating their enemies and eating them was a base for their existance here and to find their friends. But they didn't know about the dangers waiting for them. They had to take

place into the kettle again and it was sinking into the ground, like it was an elevator to a new domain. It was a world of ice they were floating in, and the kettle was sliding so fast. The pastures were green, and they saw dragons in the distance. Suddenly they felt like something was moving their arms, like they were in a game. When they looked to the ground they saw the face of a child appearing, and he had a joystick in his hands. Was this all a trap of the giants, or were they trying to show them something ?

This boy lived in the center of the earth, in a gamecave. They always said that he who would live in the center of the earth ruled the sun. Under his gamecave he had a million of thronehalls full of toys. These were frozen victims without ice-immunity. They never ate the meat of their enemies. It was a strange capsule, producing so much heat. In a sense it was inspiring Jeremy and Sam. They felt so weak inside, like their brain was of pudding. Suddenly it was like they were starting to melt away. It was time for them to attack the dragons, and try their meat. Strange gasses were coming out of their beaks, trying to harm Jeremy and Sam. It was a horrible fight, and it was like these dragons were mocking them, while they started to get very dizzy. They had cynical heads, cynical faces, and it seemed like Jeremy and Sam couldn't do anything. The gasses were tearing them away, while they had horrible pains. They were screaming and shrieking, while it was like these dragons were laughing at them. They made such strange noises. Suddenly there was an enormous explosion, and they were surrounded by light. A wizard was standing before them with an enormous gun. It was a Mercury gun. There were seven giant-heads rotating on it, while smoke was coming from it. But suddenly he was aiming it on them, and shooting. It was like all flesh was riped out of them, like they were losing their last strength. The wizard took them to a cloudcastle, they didn't know where. He told them that his wife was dying, and that their meat would let her survive.

Many days they were in a cage, waiting for the last strike. But the dragons finally arrived in front of the castle. They needed the meat of the boys too. They were very mad at the wizard for he took their prey away. An enormous fight started, for the guards of the wizards tried to get rid of them. The cage hung very high in a hall, but a mountain of meat was growing because of the fight. Cut off arms and legs, cut off heads, hearts and other organs. Jeremy and Sam could reach some of the meat and started to eat. There was much dragon-meat between it, and they felt they got immunity against the draining fluffyness in their heads. They felt strength and tightness in their bones again, while the meat-mountain was still growing. At one point they were reaching the ceiling, and the cage crashed open, while the ceiling was breaking. They were now on the top of the castle, and they had an enormous survey.

They saw the game-boy smiling in the clouds, with his joystick in his hands. All of a sudden there were lightflashes, like diamonds were exploding. The air was getting full of brightness which started to blind them. They weren't immune for that, and started to eat more meat of the dead guards. It helped a bit but the lights got brighter and brighter, like things were exploding in their heads. They needed the meat of the wizard, but was he dead or still alive ? Suddenly the castle was exploding too, and they saw the wizard attacking the game-boy in the air. There were still a few dragons living, and they could shapeshift themselves in all sort of forms and characters. The wizard took his crown, which started to change into a circular saw, and he started to throw it at the dragons. Meat was falling all over. But then the boy started to produce flames hotter than ever, in all sorts of colours, and the wizard got hit in his feet. It was like a ball was forming around his feet, and he started to lose his balance. Suddenly the ball started to rise in his body and exploded, while the wizard himself was exploding too. Jeremy and Sam both caught a piece of the wizard's meat and started to eat. All of a sudden

they could see a bit better, and they got great light-immunity. The boy was laughing in the skies.

Jeremy and Sam got an anger towards the boy which they couldn't describe. Suddenly the air was like filled with thronehalls, in which silver toys were spinning like ballerina's. In the middle of these halls was a bright capsule, with bubbling transparant fluids, bright green and a little blue. A strange creature was dwelling in it, attached to pipelines and cables. These cables looked like snakes in all sort of patterns. The creature looked a bit like a scorpion, a bit white, and it was incredibly soft and full of light, pulsating these rays into the atmosphere. The boys were aware that they could look at this because of the light-immunity. Suddenly the creature changed into the face of a woman, and the boys were shocked. Then the woman grew to a full length and stepped out of the capsule, moving towards the two boys.

Little Numsit was her name. She spoke in many languages to the game-boy, but suddenly she started to speak in the language of the two boys. Suddenly the atmosphere got full of insects producing the shrillest tones they ever heard. Blood was coming out of their ears, and the insects started to attack them. It was a devastating fight, but the two boys got in such a rage that they started to eat the insects alive. The meat was easing their ears a bit and they got immunity against the shrill tones. They now heard that the insects were just communicating with each other. These were all sorts of insects, and suddenly they could see that the woman's body was made of different insects together. It was a shocking sight, and suddenly the woman started to cry while her shoulders were tightly shivering. She said she was a prisoner of these beings for so long, while they were parasiting on her. This was why she was so soft and bright. The insects were dying one by one. 'It's because of the shrillness you produce now,' the woman said. 'All immunity produces the same substance of the thing they are immune against, but just in a higher grade, so now you dominate the insects.' The boys were staring at each other, and then at the woman. She was now changing into a man, while the parasital bodyparts were dying. Little Numsit shook the old skin off and now a golden statue stood before them. Suddenly all the silver toys were also free, and an enormous gate opened itself below them. Now they could travel even deeper. Little Numsit walked at the front, and the silver toy-beings walked behind him. The two boys walked behind them all, at the end of the rows. But after awhile Numsit was changing into a woman again, and got problems, while also the toys started to freeze again. It was like they were standing before something which was stronger than their immunity. The two boys got breathing problems, they started to get very nervous, and a strange fear came over them. It was like many things trying to take them over. Something was stinging them.

The statues were melting away and there were rivers of gold and silver flowing towards the world above. Here they would be mixed into the seas of lava. The two boys got in deep confusion. Now the gameboy was raging at them. He was standing before them like red golden boy, while he was shapeshifting in all sorts of animals. The two boys got sick in their stomaches, and pains were taking them over. Pains like they never had before. The boy was taking some comics and threw these in their faces. Suddenly they couldn't move and got hard like stone. Was this the end ? Suddenly he took his car, which was a red shoe, and he drove away. They needed one special immunity to activate all the other immunities again. They had the immunity against softness, but they needed also the immunity against hardness. A red golden eagle came sitting on Sam's shoulder. There were dripping red golden drops from it's head to fall on Sam's shoulder. Sam got new immunity and he could move a bit again. The eagle was flying away already, while Sam was rubbing the stuff on Jeremy's shoulder. Now they could both move and had new immunity. Then the eagle came back together with a blue

golden eagle. It had almost the face of their old schoolteacher. So many memories were floating through their minds, but it seemed to hurt them more and more.

Loud noises were teasing them while they were moving forwards. They came standing before an enormous sea, and it seemed that sharks produced these noises. They dived into the water, and started to swim underwater to ease the pain of their ears, but it didn't help, and sharks were already coming. An enormous fight started. They were bleeding all over, and they had a fear like never before. It was the terror ringing in their ears, like the sun was screaming at them. Suddenly the blue golden eagle came down and struck the sharks one by one. The two boys started to eat the meat for new immunity. When they swam further they met new sharks who didn't seem to give much attention to the boys, and quite peacefully they could swim further, without hearing noise. The blue eagle was very strong, and after hours of swimming he took them both in the air, to fly with them to new areas.

Chapter 4. Dangerous Temples

They came into a new world, so deep in the center of earth. A world of black golden temples, trees and strange beaches. A brown woman was walking towards them. She looked a bit like Onnia, and Jeremy got the chills. Something was wrong here. He didn't know what, but something was very wrong. The woman had a flute by which she could produce very low tones. With this she could lead the snakes. She was a snake dancer. There were big spiders walking here, they looked like feet. The two boys got very strange feelings in their stomaches. The woman had a black golden amulet with a green stone of slime. She said she got it from her granddad before he died. It would give her power over many animals. She showed the boys one of her granddad's temples. Granddad was an important chief, who had built a lot of temples. All these temples had a green slimy stone above the portal. When they were in, all sorts of wild plants, bushes and trees were growing against the walls. It was a bit dark, and they had to walk for awhile. There were a lot of snakes hanging in the bushes, but they didn't harm them at all. After awhile they got into a sandy hall, full of mud and hanging bushes. In the distance they saw a brown ball of two giant feet. Green, brown and black slime was coming forth from it. When they came closer it appeared to be a giant spider. This is what we worship, the woman said. It is a winged spider. Suddenly the spider spred it's wings and flew towards them.The two boys got scared, but the woman said they had nothing to fear.

She said she brought them to the least dangerous temple, but the rest of the temples were very dangerous. From there the flies ruled. The woman started to cry : 'The gods there are very agressive. They came from deep underground to capture our lands. We had to build temples for them, so that they could be worshipped and served, but they are very cruel. Every year we must sacrifice children and old people to them. They can spit fire, and they say they are the rulers of the sun. Their faces are so cynical, we feel deeply humiliated by them.

Jeremy said : `It's okay, we will help you,'while Sam was nodding.

'But that's impossible,' the woman said, 'they are too strong.'

'We will go deeper underground to find out where they are coming from and what the origin of their strength is,' Jeremy said.

'But many of us went underground, but none of them returned,' the woman said. 'If you go can I go with you ?'

And the day after they went there, Sam, Jeremy, and the woman. They had slept one night in the temple of the winged spider. It was the oldest temple of the land, and the spider promised them that if they would be in danger he would try to help them, but he told them that even he himself couldn't defeat the flies. These flies were big and meat-eating, having special powers and spells. Their wings had arrows to paralyze their victims in a short amount of time. In the temple of the spider there was a cave leading underground. The snakes were more agressive here, but the woman tried to soothe them with her flute. It worked a bit, but sometimes they had a wrestling. The ground was muddy, and sometimes it was hard to move. They decided to creep for awhile, also because the tunnel was getting smaller. They heard the sounds of different buzzing insects, and also the snakes were making sounds.

Suddenly the ground below them cannot hold them any longer and they fall into an enormous web. When they're swallowing their mouths hurt enormously. The air is full of poison, and they are surrounded by black spiders having big different coloured spots. They are sliding towards a nest of flies while their bodies are glued now. A green golden eagle is floating in the air. When he comes closer he has the face of a fly. When they fall in the nest, it appears to be a doorway to a temple. Flies are attacking them and sucking them. The stings are unbearable, and they are shrieking and screaming, while they're feeling deeply sick because of the poison. Then suddenly the flies disappear and they stand all alone, watching into the distance of the temple. Bigger flies are flying there, making high buzzing and zooming sounds. Then a flying snake appears screaming and spitting fire, and another, until the whole temple is full of shouting flying snakes. In the midst of them a gigantic black fly is rising, having dark orange and red squares on it's body. Red rays can be seen in his body, for it's a bit transparant. He has a crown in his hands with different colours of gold, and slime comes forth from it, in which all sorts of animals rise.

'Throw the woman in the pit of octopusses,' he spoke loud to the flying snakes. And they carried her there, while she was screaming. But Jeremy dived after her, and started to fight the octopuses. Soon also Sam was in the waterpit. The octopuses were very strong, and it looked like they were not going to make it. Suddenly the winged spider appeared and stang the octopuses one by one. He told them to eat the meat, so that they could raise up new immunities. The fly got into rage and started to block the waterpit. He was spitting solar gasses, and the spider told them to dive. The woman was deeply wounded, so they took her inbetween them. They had to swim for awhile, while the octopuses they met didn't harm them. They had a new immunity now. The octopuses here were bigger and more hybrid. They could even speak to them. They showed them a gate through which they could swim.

Here the octopuses were almost sharks, such dignified beings. Their hearts and organs were connected to the several suns on which their systems drove. They were called 'the ofions'. From here their souls could travel along the circles of the suns. The boys asked them if they knew anything about the flies dominating the land of the woman. The ofions told them that these flies were fallen out of these areas. They had the chance to go even deeper into the earth but they gave it up for might in the areas above them.

The boys wanted to go deeper, for only by going deeper they would have the force and immunity they needed to defeat the flies. The woman was out of consciousness because of her

wounds, but the winged spider cared for her, and she would still be inbetween them. Going back would be too dangerous, which was also what the ofions told them.

The boys were amazed about the ways of communication they saw between the ofions. They communicated by using different sorts of solar heat. It was a healing language. The ofions were very peacefull but they were great guards. The ofions decided to give five of them to join the boys on their journey, for it would be very dangerous downstairs. The ofions had a lot of weapons. They could spit fire, but also a lot of other substances to reach their goals. The ofions had some meat of fallen ofions for the boys, so that they could develop the same qualities. The meat wasn't tasty, and even hurted their mouth like never before. It was like their mouth was in fire, and when they swallowed the meat it made their stomache so upset that they got sicker like never before. They were in deep delirium like they were fighting against horrible creatures. It was to prepare them. The ofions told them that the fever had to stay for a very long time. It would raise their immunity-level until they were safe. The ofions had eyes like lasers and by only watching something they could burn it from inside out. Their eyes were hi-sense weapons. The ofions told them that the woman had already many ofion-qualities for the things she dealt with in her life. She needed to stay unconscious for awhile for deeper initiations.

The boys got paniced about the pains they were feeling, but there was no way back. The ofions had them inbetween, and they were swimming to deeper worlds underground. When they got deeper the boys lost consciousness too, while the ofions protected them carefully. The seas were getting darker here, and the fishes bigger. They would die of fears if they would be conscious now. But in their dreams it was frightening enough. They had nightmares about big dark creatures coming against them. In the distance they saw a boy in a game-capsule, floating on the sea. It was a sort of helicopter and there was a green shiny stone on it. But suddenly an enormous black whale came to the surface to let the capsule crash. Green slime was dripping into the seas, and it was floating to the worlds above. The ofions started to attack the whale. They knew what they did, and they gave the meat to the two boys and the woman, who were slowly coming to consciousness. They were in open sea, but the presence of the ofions made them at ease. It was like the sun was shining over the waters, even more suns, and they wondered how this could be, so deep under the earth.

After hours of swimming they came into a new domain of ofions. It was a land where many hybrids lived. Here they met some flying ofions, like eagles. These were very impressive beings. There was internet here, and a game even more advanced than theirs. This game regulated the land. The woman asked them if there would be any chance to save her land. But the ofions told her that she couldn't go back, it would be too dangerous. The woman started to cry thinking about her family. The ofions told her that the green slime would destroy the temples, and that her family and land would die. 'They had the chance to come with you, but they didn't. It was also your last chance to set your journey forth,' they said. But the woman got hysterical : 'And what about the babies, the animals, the old ones, and the sick ones who were to sick to make this journey ? No one ever returned so no one dared to make the journey.`

We are very sorry, the ofions said, but it has to be this way. Going back would be too dangerous.

The woman started to scream : `I want to go back saving my land.' And she ran to the sea again, diving in, while a shark took her and killed her. The two boyes were staring like the

death was in their eyes. They knew they couldn't fight against nature itself. Jeremy was staring at the amulet he got from the woman, the black golden one with the green slimy stone. They told him it was better for him to throw it in the sea, which he did. Days went by, and the boys talked a lot about their world, and about the game they made. Jeremy wondered if he could introduce Onnia and the Onaks in the ofions' game. They thought it was a good idea.

The End

Inua

She climbed through a window of the palace, took her bow from behind her back, then an arrow and shot the prince. Then she took his jaguarcoat, and ran through the corridor into another room where the princess was bathing. Another arrow was enough to kill the princess and to make the bath bloodred. Snakes were soon sliding into the bath to eat from their mistress' body. Inua then walked through further tunnels and gracious halls of the palace, along the portals high on the walls, and she ran. She found a red rope hanging, and swung to the other side of the palace. A black hooded warrior stood before her all of a sudden with a sword shining in the sun. It almost blinded her eyes. She could stoop just in time and pushed a knife in his leg. Then she pushed him from the wall. Another black hooded warrior came, and a red one. But she took another rope and swung to the next part of the palace. Then she ran upstairs. Here the queen and the king lived. They were just drinking from their golden cups. She used two arrows in one shot, and killed them at the same time. Then she ran to the entry of a tall tower. She knew a sorcerer lived there, holding the hearts of those who lived in the

land. He had poisoned them by his medicin. Quickly the warlock spoke his spell. He had a red garment with a large cape. Inua fell to the ground, like she was struck by a strong drink. The wizard took his sword from the wall and wanted to kill her.

'Demibrazi,' a voice said, 'don't do that.' A man with a harpoon stood in the windowgate, shoot through the wire holding the lamp, while the lamp fell on the wizard. 'Are you okay, Inua ?' the man asked. But Inua didn't answer. He took her on his back and brought her to his home. After awhile she woke up.

'That was pretty dumb what you were doing there,' the man said. 'The wizard could kill you.'

'I'm not scared of him, if I would die, it would be so, but I had to do it,' Inua said.

'You are a brave woman,' the man said.

In the night Inua returned to the palace, and this time she could kill the wizard. She entered through a portal where a strange elevator stood. Suddenly the man stood before her holding her arm down. She wanted to push the button to open the elevator. 'Let me go with you,' the man said. Then they stepped in the elevator together. They visited a city in the sky, where gods and goddesses lived. They guarded the so-called Eye of Blood, by which they ruled. Inua had already an arrow on her bow, ready to shoot. She could see the eye from the elevator, and shot through it's fleeces. The elevator fell back, together with the whole city of gods. It was all coming down. The man didn't survive the fall, but Inua did, and ran into the wilderness. Then she went back to her cave. The Eye of Blood was a conspiracy of ghosts who had implanted thin and small saws into the genitals of their victims, to let them live in deceiving visions.

She was now the bloodbather, behind the walls of paradise, where she dwelled between the volcanoes of death and blood. She was now weaving her palaces in the sky like the widow spider, from all the tears of men and gods, from all those royal tears, and she wove the hearts together of all the fallen warriors and their intestines, to raise the fleeces of pestilence and drunkenness, she would settle her throne in war. She was the queen of delirium and intoxication, a huntress of deception. There was no seducer like her, time would come into slow motion around her, her arrows were sweet, bringing the weight of tragedy and torture, finally a deeper bitterness. She was from the garden of the snake, a wardancer, a poisonblower, through tubes of death and confusion. The intestines of fallen warriors she had woven into chalices, and she made dishes of their hearts.

She was the intoxicator, carrying the ancient secrets. She was a designer of heavenly cities, a conspiracy as well. She was a whisperer, a threat to the kings and their sons, to the queens and their daughters. She was an everlasting flame from hell, torturing the chosen ones by visions.

Inua II

She was a treasure of the gods, a troll treasure. She was a haunted house of seduction, all starting by drinking from her cup, in hell's pub. She was hell's calculated bartender. All she wanted was to make cigarettes of her visitors. And their heads would glow and she would bring the fire in them, all she wanted to see was them burning.

She was a weaver, taking the testicles and eyes of her enemies. She had a horned helmet, by which she showed the sweet venomous paths leading to the bitterness. She was the spider, the whore of destiny.

In the nights she would become the seven faces of Mercury, spoiling them by delights, all to fatten them up for a butcher called history. They had no names, but she would call them, to be a number and a slave. In her hands they grew, and by testicles she built her screaming walls behind which she hid her silences, where the mercury was her poison to hold. So many testicles of fallen warriors bound together. She could be found on beaches, where he lured them to watch her, until the sting of mercury took them away. They could not eat nor sleep, they could not breath nor move in bed, for she was in their head. By a bisonhat she showed them the paths of venomous sweetness ending in a bitter death.

She was a calculated horror, with cups from mars and spain. She was living in Jerusalem, rebuilding it again. Was it a hidden Rome so sugared, hiding the sting of hell, or was it innocence and ignorance, unable to find the right spell. The spell to raise the new mind, testicles bound together in a well, where fishes were nothing but testicles, and shrieking hunters possessed by sharp objects letting them bleed inside. They cannot stop their hunt. Something wants to come out. And this is all her pride.

The kings rise on their morningbeds, all ready for a new day, while she rides on peacocks, the warrior goddess. She is a weaver, a dancer of swords and spears. And while she is pregnant she is so soft, until the morning comes with it's black blood and grey coffins. Jerusalem is in her hands, her feet are demanding, equipping soldiers to open the gates of the promised land. She is the black spider, white in her strike, rebuilding the heavens, by the testicles of the fallen. Where Mercury had it's seat, she rises with mint fleeces, so thick, surrounding the mind, where soldiers had their stands, she speaks deadly accurate words.

In a bleeding bed she has her Spain, the grapes are ripe. In a bleeding bed she welcomes her tomorrow, as a bleeding dove, ready for sacrifice. She tastes death so many times, she has sweet feet hiding the bitter seat, a golden sun of scorn, testicles woven together by the whore. She has her chalice here under black waters, filled with brown desires. Mercury was here before, now she is riding it's horse. Yes, seven faces he has, to spread his evil, mint and mess. It is the new mind, a new calculator, on the testicles of once such mighty men, they are in hell while their tops are broken. The eye of the spider has spoken. It is here, Mercury had it's place, but the night is over.

She is the one with many feet, they call her a spider, setting them free by mint. She is torn inside, for there was always a fight between her mint and her mercury, she lives in an eternal war, and the chemical disease spreads it, by pestilence and hysteria. There is war in her chalice, and much paranoia. The skin of her back is soft, swept by swans and heavenly feathers, while her mind is hell, covered by bats and zombies. She is the tormentor of the new day, the knocker on hearts.

In a spanish church she has her many faces, where the whore of dentistry has her coffins. Where angels of scorn and no care lead the mass by fear. Testicles have been pierced by the chains of Mercury, her seven faces. When he speaks, soldiers are near. His voice like a moderator, rivers of poisonous deaths to raise the leg of the ballerina, her feet denying everything, on her toes it's written she doesn't care. Lethe has them in his hands, the trips across the Styx were dangerous and expensive, while Charon comforts their souls.

Weren't we all in this dentist church, where the trolls run free in the huntingfields. Mercury has them in chains, with cups full of liberties. She is the black spider, stretching out on her

beds, while so many are dying. On her toes it’s written queen of scorn. Seven toes will rise in the black night, to guide them by her light. She is the queen of scorn, a moderator of hell. When she speaks the snares are breaking, and men are weeping. The church she closes by her wings, and opens it by a grin. Her ballerinas all drowned in her seventh night, for it was the night of Jupiter, her inner delight. She speaks while temples are rising, and then the poison catches them all. She holds them in a tight grip, like a snake sliding, wanting more. She is the green-black anaconda, waiting for them on a tall shore. She lets them fall when they have almost made it, and they fall hard, like goats thrown from a tower. She builds her sands, and by deserts she creates time, all to lock them up in prisons of lights.

She is in chains, this woman, her nipples pierced, deep into her breasts, whenever she moves the sweetness falls to the earth. And deadly snakes hide her mercury pride. She is the slave of a king, king mercury, her own grin. She is heavy burdened, while her body is mocking herself. She wants to become grey but the green always wins. There are soldiers on her walls, moving by chemicals and mercury, created in mint metal. They hide the faces of oz, the faces of fear, they show the faces of ox, and bring the spears near. She has bullfighters like machinery, saying : don’t come here.

Oh, the whore of Spain, dwelling among the testicles of bulls, opening her wings saying there is so much to do. The seven faces of orion is she, a secret of mercury perfectly denied.

Different Games

Short Detective/ Thriller

It was a long journey to the lion's temple ... When they arrived there, they found a golden flower speaking. Every letter it spoke hurted and wounded them very deeply, like runes were being burnt into their skins.

'These are the butcher's runes,' the flower spoke.

John woke up in the morning. What a weird dream he had. Peter was also slowly waking up, and John started to talk about the lion's temple he dreamt of. Peter smiled. He loved to hear John's dreams ... They were always like stories ... Soon Ed was waking up too, and John told him the dream too, in short. He was not always interested in the things John had to tell, but this time it was like there was something jumping inside of him. The three boys were on a trip through forests and deserts, and Ed suddenly had an enormous plan for them.

Ed was smoking his cigarette, and slowly started to talk. He had never been a fast speaker, but this time it looked like there was a rythm in his voice, coming near to something which they didn't know anything about. Ed's father was a pilote, and he wanted to be a pilote too. His mother was a mistress on a school for very young children. They lived in a house which some might call too rich and capitalistic ...

He knew of a river near to their tent, and he suddenly felt the need to go fishing ... John who was a strict vegetarian shook his head ... and Peter, who was a real animal activist, shook also his head ... but they didn't want to let their friend down, so they made the option of going swimming ...

Ed had glitters in his eyes ... yes, it was a beautiful day ... They would go to the lake instead of the river, and Ed was hoping he would see some girls there. He was the one always bringing up the 'girl' thing, while the others were more temperated on that area ... Peter had a buddistic background, and didn't want to marry at all, while John was already married, and didn't want to have any talks to girls .. His wife was too jealous and suspicious, and he didn't want to bring his marriage in risk. .. Going out with the boys on trips like this

was always a sort of major escape for him .. The ties of his marriage seemed to strangle him more and more .. Ed didn't believe in ties of marriage ... He wouldn't mind to marry but he thought marriage is freedom, just deep friendship, nothing more ...

While they were swimming they found out that at the other side of the lake there were some girls swimming in a group ... John didn't want to go there ... but Ed complained so much that they would give it a try ... It was not a large lake, but it took a few minutes to arrive there ... The girls were a bit shy ... Ed started to make a conversation with them ... but they didn't answer ... and they slowly swam away to their clothes ... Ed looked at Peter .. 'Did I do something wrong ?' ...

'Well, I guess, not', Peter said ... 'But maybe they weren't up to talk ... Maybe they had other things to do ...' Soon enough the girls were gone .... and Ed started to become a bit depressed ... He was always very insecure about himself, and soon enough John and Peter needed to talk him out of his doubts ...

But a few hours later the girls were back again .... and they had some boys with them ... these were Japanese boys ... and they started to dive in the water ... John said : let's go away ... maybe they're looking for fights ... but Peter said : 'No, maybe they need our help ..' One of the Japanese boys made a sign to them, he waved like he was asking them to come closer ... Peter swam to them like they were his friends, while Ed and John were slowly following ... The girls were standing on the lakeside ... on a rock ...

The boys started to talk Japanese to Peter, and Peter could follow it very good, for he was half Japanese ... His father was an American militair, and his mother a Japanese nurse ... He was raised both in Japanese and English language ... For the

first time they heard the girls talking to each other ... It was in a language they didn't know ....

Peter stepped out of the water with the boys ... and soon they were all gone, leaving John and Ed in the water ... Ed said to John : Let's go with them ... but John said : 'No, let's wait here, maybe they are back soon ... I don't want to interrupt them ...' So they decided to wait ... They stepped on a rock and started to lay themselves in the sunlight .... Soon they were both sleeping ... It was a hot day ... But when they woke up Peter still wasn't back ... and they started to worry a bit ...

'Maybe he's at the tent again, Ed said ... So they started to swim back ... When they were back the tent was gone ... and John started to get in panic ... 'What did they do ? Who are they ... and what is going on ?'

They decided to stay calm and wait ... Maybe Peter would return soon ... Ed asked to John : 'Can you please tell me all the details of the dream you had ? Maybe there are some signs in it for this very moment.'

And John started to tell everything he dreamt :

When they came in the Lion's Temple they saw a strange alphabet of golden stones, lying in a circle, while a torch was burning in the middle ... They had to wrestle with four golden women who even looked like lions ... And in this wrestling they weren't able to hurt each other, but they had to overcome them, so that they could go to the next cave in this passage of the lion's temple ...

The skins of these women were hot, and they tried to keep the men in this very cave, but the men were finally able to shake them off and escape ...

Ed didn't like their behaviour but he wanted to go back there, maybe for some friendship, but Peter and John blocked him the way ... 'It's dangerous,' Peter said ... 'They are the objects of misleading ...'

Ed didn't know what was happening ... He felt so much love from Peter all of a sudden ... that he forgot about the women ... and he stared in Peters eyes, like these eyes were large blue, without the eyewhite ... It was like Ed was looking in the eyes of an amazing lion or tiger from another planet ... It calmed him ... and he sat down to cry ... because of the experience ... John didn't see anything changed about Peter ... but Ed more and more got in a shock about it ... 'He is ... God ...' he stuttered ... and in a flash Peter had disappeared ... John started to get in panic ... What is going on ? ...

... Ed was amazed about the dream .. for he really understood it now ... There is something about Peter ... I don't know if it's symbolic or not ... but maybe the Japanese boys think he could be of use for them ... and these girls ... these four girls were the misleading women ... Maybe they have misled Peter and took our tent away ... so they also misled us ... I .... I ...

'Ed, wait,' John said ... 'I don't know if this is all accurate .... who knows ... maybe Peter is a misleader too ... In that dream he appeared to you like a God, while I didn't see that in him ... we have chance he is a misleader too ...'

But John, Ed said, why did he protect me against those women, and didn't let me go there ?

'The misleaders act like they are your friends, and they even act like their real friends are their enemies,' John replied, 'but to be honest, Peter was the one going to the boys ... like he

knew them ... he didn't act like he was an enemy to them ... so then the dream differs from reality ...'

Suddenly Ed started to cry like a baby ... 'Oh, my god, John ... I suddenly remember something from a few years ago ...'

And Ed started to tell while John was listening ...

It was on a birthday-party ... and Peter also had invited some of his Japanese nephews ... At the end of the day Peter found out that all his birthday-presents were gone ... and also his Japanese nephews ...

I never saw them back, Ed said, but I was like scared of them ...

John said ... hmmm that is strange ... I doubt if Peter has to do something with it ... Now suddenly ... maybe we shouldn't judge our missing friend so harshly while we don't know anything about it ... It can also be a kidnap ...

A few days later, when they were home again, the police came at the door ... John was with Ed for awhile, in the house of Ed's parents ... The police had shocking news ... Their friend Peter had been found murdered ... but the police didn't want to give any further information at all ... They were still doing research ...

Ed and John were in a shock .... They couldn't do anything about the situation ... and they fell in each others arms to cry ...

It was such a harsh moment ... How would they get through such a situation ...

'We should have come with them ... then it would not be happened ...' Ed cried ... They were both like falling in a pit of guilt and shame ...

Ed wanted to open a pot of fish for himself ... but John said : 'Don't do it ! I know you are not a vegetarian, but I don't feel good about it ... They could have our address from the bag .... and maybe they put their crimes also in this house ... Maybe they even poisoned the refridgerator ...

John wanted to go home to his wife ... but he also didn't want to leave his friend ... but it irritated him ... for Ed didn't listen to him ... He just started to ate ... He knew John ... he would use anything to keep him away from meat ....

But the frustrations got bigger .. and soon John couldn't hold it anymore ... He even longed for his wife ... Maybe she wasn't the worst after all .... and maybe she could help him to come over this traumatic experience ...

When John came home, his wife was very glad ... She had missed him so much, and she heard about what was happened ... John embraced his wife and cried ... She was also a vegetarian and John often said to his friends that that was the only good thing about her ... He loved her .... but he had a lot of problems with her ...

John felt so different about his wife all of a sudden ... And she was so caring and soft to him ... It was like he was on honeymoon with her again ... They talked till deep in the night ...

Suddenly the phone rang ... The police requested if John could come for a conversation ... John went to their building

immediately ... When he got there, they arrested him ... John screamed : 'Hey, what's going on ...'

In the building they told him that he was suspected to be the murderer of Peter ... John started to yell : How would you know ?

The police-officer showed him a golden lion hanging on a key ... Do you know this key ? he asks .... 'Yes, that's of my car,' John sais ... The police-officer pushed on a small button on the golden lion and a stiletto-knife appears ... 'with this thing your friend was murdered ...'

'How would you know it was me who killed him ?' John shouted in panic ...

The police-officer showed him a golden handkerchief ... 'Do you know this handkerchief ?' .... John nods ...

'There are innitials on it with a symbol reffering to the gang of the golden lion ... These are high educated rebels, infiltrating among vegetarians and animal rights activists ... They come as friends and so-called vegetarians, but they are sponsors and hire-murderers of butchery-accompanies ... They play double games and radical activists like Peter they want to terminate ..

Suddenly Ed wakes up ... and grins evilly ... What a good idea of him to give his friend John such a hanger for his key, and that golden handkerchief specially made for his friend John ...

Years ago Ed used to be so-called vegetarian ... until some friends found out he was not ... Since then he just played the games different ...

Chrystal Spider

Short Medical Fiction

Chapter 1 - Strange Preludes

It was a strange ornament on a Japanese Cupboard. So strange, when people watched it, they could die. She kept the ornament on the attic, and if she had visitors she told them to never go there. It was a heritage from an old man she used to help. He told her the ornament could cause lightening and thunder in the air. She didn't come on the attic very often, for she was a bit scared of the ornament. She didn't want to put it away, for it was a heritage, but she didn't feel good about it.

The ornament was called chrystal spider, for it looked like a spider. Most of the chrystals were white, but there were also some red and blue ones among them. It was a very large ornament, it could fall over the whole body.

One day some visitors with a little boy were with her, but the kid soon got very curious after the warnings. And while his parents were in conversation with the woman, he went upstairs. He wanted to see that ornament, and ran to the attic.

The cupboard was low, so he could touch the ornament very easily. But when he touched it he got paralyzed immediately, like lightening had struck him. An hour later the woman found him, while blood was coming out of his hand. They brought him to the hospital, for he was still without consciousness.

The docter wanted to see the ornament, but no one dared to bring it to him. So he went by himself. The docter was a transexual in secret, and he felt he could neutralize the powers of the ornament by the combination of his male and female powers. The ornament's energy got confused and he could easily put it in a bag.

"Trixoderion was a jester. Xodus was God. Trixoderion was an angel falling out of heaven, but he escaped to earth. Now I must find him and bring him to hell," said the ornament. "I am Jormud, son of Xodus. I must bring him to the reincarnationfunnel to let him slowly reincarnate into the realms of death and hell. I am this funnel. I am the thin intestine, living in all humans. I am a multi-possessor. I created the thin intestine into the blueprint of humanity in cooperation with the Nordics. It's created to keep them bound to the realms of earth. The thin intestine influences the eyesight day and night to maintain and shapeshift the illusion like we want it. I work together with the thick intestine, the black pot-belly snake Jurod. Xodus is the liver, where the storage is ....

Chapter 2. The Lion's Heart

Peter was walking down the streets, on his way home. His house was underground, he lived in an old ruin in the forest. It

used to be a temple of hippies and anarchists. It was a sort of cave, and throughout the cave curtains with lionheads hung there. No, not real lion-heads, but just textile. Peter was in love with lions. He could read about them for hours and hours. He even worshipped them. He thought lions were the guardians of nature, but they could also be the guardians of vegetarian anarchists and hippies, those with a nature's heart.

He found a strange book about a chrystal spider on the streets, and now he was reading it on his way home ... Peter never knew which gender he was deep inside ... He didn't feel like a man, but neither as a woman, altho when he was young people often thought he was a girl. He had read books about hermaphrodites, a half-male, half-woman archetype ... but it was more ... It represented all genders humanity didn't know about yet ... He was always feeling like there was missing something ... an important piece of life's puzzle.

He had a golden skin. His girlfriends always said they had never seen such a skin before. He looked like an elf, like he was not a human. He had somewhat pointed ears, and he had some green and blue spots on his body, which connected him to the forest and the sea ... He had always been a nature being, and didn't want to know anything about city-trends.

Somehow he could never stay long with his girlfriends .. for nature attracted him too much, and it was like he needed to isolate himself again and again, for he had the feeling they were more dangerous than predators. He loved them, yes, no doubt about that ... but he couldn't live with them ... But still there is so much magic between him and his old friends ... He still visits them once in a year ... But he more and more feels the need to break the material contact, so that he can swim

with sharks, whales and lions ... He wants to be free ... He wants to make the journey to find out who he really is ...

He thinks he has nothing to lose. His friends are deep in his heart, and he feels by letting them go they can only come deeper in his heart. He admires the way how plants and trees communicates ...

He reads the book about the chrystal spider, about how the large intestine is an important base and controller of the audible capacities, and that by silence the visual capacities become a reality ... It looks like a medical book, but it is a horror ...

In his cave he works on a big project trying to find tricks how to communicate with lions. He would be too scared when a real lion would be standing next to him, and technology is also something he's afraid about ... He wants to be in nature where he lives between golden fences ... for deep inside he is afraid of the wild side of nature .... Deep inside he has the fear that he cannot control it yet ... but he believes in the way trees communicate : by distance ... by bio-electricity ...

He finds out that the book talks a lot about the secret powers and the magic of the large intestine ... It is somewhat the base for many forms of communication with all sorts of life-forms, as a covenent which keeps them all together ... according to this book ... but it is a horror book, so does it have real value for medical and anatomic information ? Does it have value for living in, through and with nature ?

The book speaks about a journey through the large intestine ... a journey every skilled nature-pilgrim has to make ... when he defeats the beasts and monsters of this passage, he will get the crown of the large intestine, as a crown of communication and

transparency, which is interpretation. All the systems of association come forth from the large intestine, and the relationships you have in life just reflect your associative mind.

As time goes by Peter becomes obsessed with the book. He finds out that he can come in such deep spiritually contact with lions by focussing on the large intestine and by doing all the instructions the book gives. But some pages of the book are missing, and this makes him very frustrated ... In shops no one knows about the book, and on the cover the name of the writer is torn away ... he only sees some letters like an H and a W ... but it's too vague to make something of it ....

He wants to make a soul-passage through the large intestine .. he really wants ... but just in that chapter ... so many pages are missing ... and then it stops completely ... It feels like he's warm and cold at the same time ... But he knows he has to make this inner journey himself ... The last words the torn book gives are 'all secret genders you need to be whole can be found in the pilgrimage through the large intestine .... pick up the coins and watch these golden heads on it ...they will speak with golden voices to you ... to lead you to the golden cards ... the rabbithole is deep ... and you wouldn't want to miss alice swimming with the beasts of the sea ... the golden sea ..."

So here he has another strange story about alice in wonderland. Peter gathers these sorts of books, for besides his obsession about lions he is obsessed with different versions about alice in wonderland ... This seems to be another one for his collection ...

Peter likes to read this new found book over and over again ... Somewhere in a piece about the large intestine it sais that when the substances of food flow through it, little flames take

the pictures out of it and beam it in your head with such a force that you think it is reality ... These pictures were bred by the greengrocers and the heads of the supermarkets ... wanting you to do what they want ... They rule your head, these banana's and these pears ... They are on the coins of your world ...

'Where am I ?' Peter asks ... he looks right into the face of ... 'a banana ?'

'Yes, a banana,' the banana sais ... Then it starts to laugh very hard .... 'Where am I,' Peter asks again .... 'You are in wonderland,' the banana sais .... 'Your own wonderland inside ... everything is just inside .... you just thought that you were living in an outside world but that was just a trick ... Even your body is a big trick .... and at the end of the thick intestine you discover that ... Then you find out that you thinking you are in a body is just a picture in your head ... a card ....'

'Huh ?' Peter is surprised. 'What's happening to me ? I don't feel any connection to my body anymore.'

'That's right,' the banana sais, 'you only thought that you were connected to it, but it was a lie ... We gave you these feelings, and we let you desire to move, and you were thinking that you moved, but we gave you the desire and we gave you the picture that you moved ... you just watched a movie ... a movie in which it looks like you play in it ... but it's a lie ...'

Peter starts to scream : 'get me out of here'

'Where ?' the banana asks ... 'You are nowhere, even this screaming is a desire we gave you, and we gave you the movie of you screaming, while you think you were in it, but it was a trick ...'

'Well right,' Peter asks, 'so what I say now, you do also, right ? all movies ....'

'Yes !' the banana yells ...'all movies !' while he claps in his hands of joy ...'We create it, we are the creators, while you are a soulflame just displaying what we put into it ... You cannot do anything about that ...'

'So am I your prisoner ?' Peter asks ...

No you are a prisoner of yourself ... we just protect you against something worse .... the unknown ...

Chapter 3. God of Lions

How can we defeat Jormud, the chrystal spider ? the lions asked their king. Well, read the book, very carefully, for in it we read that the docter could confuse the spider by being half-man, half-woman. So the victory weapon will be in the fact if we use the multi-gender, the path of the hermaphrodite ... If we chrystallize one gender in our being and repress the other genders we will definately lose, for then we are in the hands of this chrystal ornament ... the king sais.

And how can we defeat Jurod, the black potbelly snake ? the lions ask again ... Well, he's the evil guardian of the thick intestine, and he is a multi-gender indeed ... This is why he has so much power ... He chrystallized all the genders in his being ... but read the book for yourself ... I have other things to do now ... the king sais ...

The god of lions was actually the one who brought the book to Peter ... He could materialize it on the streets where Peter would walk ... but a strange power burnt some pages away ...

There was not much they could do ... a lot of keywords were in the missing pages ... and they knew that the book would become a killer when it would not be complete ... The god of lions was in despair ... It must have been a trick of Xodus, Jormud's Father ...

The god of lions is in a fight with Xodus for ages and ages ... but he got help from the jester Trixoderion, who was an angel in Xodus' army for a long time ... an archangel so to say ... or better : an angel of light ...

Peter wasn't so far in his lion-communication that he could pick up everything they wanted to tell him. And the book had to be a mighty way to make the ring of lion-communication complete ... but now the ring was there where two ends could not reach each other ... The god of lions was worried ... for he knew about the roads of this uncompleted book ... It would be the worst danger in Peter's life ... something which could kill him and bring him to a hell of an area ...

The god of lion, the old king, found it about time to make that long long journey to his old friend Trixoderion again, to get some advice or maybe even a ring of solution for this scaring problem. He would leave his kingdom for it, and would have to be a pilgrim in disguise for he had many enemies ... He was also very worried about his kingdom, for if he would leave, would they stand powerful enough against their enemies .... He called one of his closest disciples to him ...

'Father, why have you called me ?' the lion-disciple asked ... And the old king started to tell the whole story ...

'You can count on me, father, I will protect the kingdom with my life and all the wisdom you gave me ... Thou need to go, for our friend Peter ... we must save him ...' the lion-disciple spoke .... And the old lionking started to give him his crown and clothes, while he started to cloth himself like a beggar. 'I must do this for Peter and for the sake of the kingdom, for to save a lion's friend is to save ourselves ... Our heart is too deep in him ... He is our library, our storage, our liver ....

Suddenly there was lightening all around in the lion's castle ... a witch came forward loud laughing and yelling ... She said that when the king would leave ... she would take over the kingdom ... and then she disappeared ...

'Father, don't listen to her, ...' shhh, son, she never fails in her predictions ... she is the goddess of cobra's ... an evil one though ... I never saw her fail ..' the king sais ...

The old king didn't know what to do anymore ... He had to choose for Peter or for his kingdom ....

'Father, isn't there another way ? Can't I go to Trixoderion to bring your message ?'

No, no, that would be too dangerous ... You would be killed on your way by our enemies ... you are too young, and you have a lot to learn yet ... The distance you cannot face, son ...

'But father, I would die of tears and sorrow if I would see Peter die and go to that horrible place ... Please, bless me and send me, I risk my life for him ...

Good, son, I will bless you, go in peace, and be the flag of our kingdom ... Be well son, tell the story to Trixoderion ... He will know the answer to this all ....

And so it went ... the lion-disciple took a good disguise and went as a holy pilgrim on his journey ... Would he be in time ?

Meanwhile Peter went to the refridgerator to get some juice, but when he opened the door it was full of strange meat ... It was the most horrible picture he ever saw and he shut the door in a flash .... What's happening, he thought ... I'm just a prisoner of myself ... I'm just a prisoner of myself .... and it's protecting me against something worse .... what is then 'something worse ?' ... the unknown the unknown .... the unknown ... Peter was fainting ... The curse of the uncompleted book was already streaming through the atmosphere in the cave he lived ...

He woke up in the hospital, where a psychiatrist shook his hand ... I'm mister .... Peter couldn't hear it further ... He could only hear some words and then it was fading away ... It was like a shark was standing before him ... but he also felt the lion inside ... All colours in the room started to move and to fade away ... 'You are very sick ... Peter ..' he heard the man saying ...

Chapter 4. Trixoderion Again

The lion-disciple was traveling through oceans, deserts and forests, battling against the most horrible monsters, he was going through underground passages and caves ... where substances of undigested food were screaming to be digested ... they were misunderstood spirits ... having the worst smell you could imagine .... the lion-disciple thought he would die in this stench ... here the forgotten souls were living .... rotting away in the most horrible pains ... Would this be the place

where they wanted to bring Peter ? On the wings of an uncompleted book ? The lion-disciple almost vomitted ... It was the result of an uncompleted large intestine ... a lack of translation ... and a lack of creativity ... These souls could not be healed ... these souls could not be helped ...

But he was on his way to Trixoderion ... He would know everything about an unfinished digestion-system ... He was an angel of light working in that factory ... but now he would work in a completed and perfectly working digestion and creation-system they said ...

The lion-disciple took his atlas, his map, but found out some of the pages were missing ... He lost all hope ... for who of these creatures would know where Trixoderion would live ? .. And what would happen to this uncompleted map ? They said uncompleted books would turn against you, and would be your worst enemy ... So he chose to throw it away in a ravine ... in a deep pit ... and he started to run for his life ... Now he even wouldn't find his way back home ... So what would he do now ? It was like he couldn't digest this ... He got so tired ... like all life had been flown away ... He felt he was floating to the caves of stench ... He couldn't digest ... and now he couldn't be creative .. to escape this ...

Peter is that you ? I feel another lion-hearted someone is here ... Suddenly he felt a hand ... Yes, it's me ... How do we get out of here ? This river had a waterfall downstairs ... and I fell hard ...

This is where the journey through the large intestine ends ... because it isn't completed by the gods ... but .... Trixoderion can help us ... He has a perfect digestion system ... something called 'The Pink Link' .... In earlier days he worked for the

uncompleted system, so I bet he knows this place ... Oh my god, how dirty I feel myself, are you okay ?

Suddenly an eagle stood before them ... saying he was the messenger of Trixoderion ... he could speak and translate all possible languages ... and once a year he went to the caves of stench to pick up misunderstood, untranslated and dumped victims of his enemy ....

Well, we're lucky then if you come once a year ... can't you come more often ?

No, the eagle sais ... the powers of the uncompleted works can't be underestimated .... We got to get out of here before it is too late. the eagle picked them up, and flew to an opening of light in the top ... Suddenly the sky was there, so blue, so white ... like chrystals tinkling, in a golden bath .... I feel so clean here, Peter shouts ...

Far in the clouds they see a silver path to a castle in the distance ... where Trixoderion would live ... They said all genders were his ... and he would have the whole book ... They saw beings like unicorns with tall necks ... They saw a group of a gender called the cow-embracers ... they had golden bodies ... and their smiles could let rivers flow through your head ...

Unicorns were drinking from golden baths ... And suddenly Trixoderion appeared before them, in a red suit, and he had a tall white beard ... He gave them something like a block of pink candy ... Eat it, for then the pink link can rise in you .... It will let you speak all languages ... It will make everything transparent ...

I will now read for you the missing part of the book, he said ... He started to sit down on a golden gardenchair and a table was appearing before them ...

'The large intestine when food runs through comes in a myriad of different frequencies ... They will be activated because of the interaction between the large intestine and the food ... This myriad will start to move through the body to activate other life-functions and other myriads ... They will form the aura of fairytale ...'

Suddenly the old man stops reading and three longbearded men in black tall clothes walk towards him ... They walk not fast, but in a strange semi-slow tempo .... which comes more and more in slowmotion ... Trixoderion screams and the men put him in a strange black box like a grey smoke ... 'You don't have the completed book, Trixoderion ... you only think you have ... but our father Xodus has ... and he keeps it secret even for us ... Finally we found you, we will bring you to a place darker then the place where you were before ... darker than the caves of stench ... We will bring you to the Liver, to the library of Papa, where you will be again ... a prisoner and a slave ... but now in a worse place .. for you hurted our Papa ... You will fall into the hands of the Living Xodus now ... and our mission is now completed ... we will get our rewards ...

With an enormous scream they took Trixoderion away in the box ... like a caged bird .... and they flew as eagles ... while the castle got in flames in one flash of a second ...

The eagle-messenger of Trixoderion started to speak : 'Now we know what to do ... our master is kidnapped ... we will have to go to the castle of Xodus, to see what we can do ...'

No ! Peter screamed ... well ok, we go ... for we have no other choice ...

And the eagle started to fly again with the lion and Peter on his back ... and soon enough they saw the castle of Xodus in the distance ... a dark, spooky castle ...

The air was getting greyer and redder ... and it seemed that the castle didn't come closer ... it only took more distance, until it was out of sight ....

'Tricks of illusions,' the eagle said ... 'they rule our head for a great part ...'

What do we do about it ? Peter asks ...

Just by your determination ... claim the castle ... the Eagle said ...

and within a few minutes they were there ... Dark brown rivers were streaming here ... It had a strange stench ....

Suddenly Peter woke up ... with sweat on his face ... he just dreamt it ... and he saw the book he bought yesterday lying on his cupboard ... 'the chrystal spider' ... and he starts to smile ... for it's a whole book ... the book is complete ...

The End

The Fishfighter

The fishfighter looked like a fish ... When he spoke ... something was burning inside ... such a deep voice ... Well, it wasn't really a he .... It was a sort of hermafrodite .... And on his bow were strange arrows ... they were creatures of an unknown gender ... As time went by the genders died out, there were so many wars ... only the male race and the female race survived ... At least ... that was which they are thinking ... All the other genders they recycled into animals ... These animals were their slaves ... on this strange strange planet called Draminia ....

The fishfighter gathered all the other genders, to attack the male and female form by which they were prisoned ... He spoke his spells and wrote his books ... Now he walks lonely on his path ... to the old castle of the sea ... where all oceans gather ... where they dine and have their feasts ... eating all the other genders again ... The fishfighter doesn't feel fear .... neither does he feel pain ... for his pains he used as his senses ... and now he knows the illusion of pain and pleasure ... He's determinated and focused at other things ... When he enters the castle old ghosts laugh about him ... but he shoots them by his gender-arrows ... when ghosts attack him he shoots with the multi-genders ... these are spirals ...

One day they will explode ... all these males and females eating themselves so round ... Then the fish will dine ... with his brothers the frog and the toad ...

When the fishfighter talks it gets warm inside ... and so many intoxicating spells enter your body ... It is like getting sick, but it's his delirium ... his way to escape ... Slowly he steps forward ... and then he commits his crimes ... In the kitchen he bleeds ... but all these attacking spirits are just his friends so confused ... They thought another one entering who would eat them ... And now the wound heals before his eyes .... and all his friends follow him to the dining room ....

The fishfighter looks like a friend .. so friendly is his voice ... so radical his steps ... when he touches you, you know you are safe ...

Angel of Wrath

There were horned white pigs on the fields … Indians with white painted bodies hunted them … Often only their feet were painted white … It was a sign they ruled the horned white pigs … It was a sign of victory … In earlier years many indians died after an attack by such horned white pigs … But now the indians really declared war to them, and the hunt had started more than ever before. They dragged them to captivity, where they started a breeding.

The horned white pigs had skins the indians could use for many things, and their meat was delicious … But there was one boy disagreeing with the treatment of the horned white pigs, and he tried to make sense in arguing with the other indians. They called him a white pig boy. The boy got so mad that he left the tribe, and tried to make connection to the horned white pigs. He found out that there was a reason for their behaviour.

In his tribe the men were the weaker race, and the women the stronger … The horned white pigs had both qualities in them, they were both predators and cattle. The boy was fascinated by them, as they seemed to live together in a greater grace and peace than the tribe. The boy made a deal with them, and they accepted him in their group.

The boy often hunted together with them. The boy grew up and became a lonely warrior, always together with the horned white pigs who kept him company. The boy loved them to death. But one day he decided to return to his tribe, and this time he could convince them that they shouldn't hunt the horned white pigs anymore, so that they would live in peace. They bred other animals instead, and the same they did in their hunt.

It was a deal which would change the whole tribe, which would raise them into a higher level. It was like an old curse was breaking down. Soon the horned white pigs became like their pets, and became their faithful company in war and hunt. It was like the spell was reversing now, and soon the boy found out that the horned white pigs were nothing but enchanted indian princes. Long ago they had been struck by a witch who would go along the tribes to take their chiefs. She was an angel of wrath.

The boy knew there was nothing to break this spell. But the horned white pigs were safe now, and so was the tribe.

Heaven

T h r i l l e r

Dan is running home. It's raining, and his work for today is done. When he comes home his wife is reading a book. It's a strange book, but she doesn't want to say much about it. When it's night Dan gets thirsty, steps out of bed and sees the book still opened. He takes the book and starts reading. It's a book about a strange hospital where patients are disappearing one by one. At the end of the story it becomes clear that these patients were kidnapped by some docters to be turned into new sort of creatures who have to work underground. It's a very strange book indeed. That night Dan has a strange dream. He sees his wife drowning in a pond but he can't do anything. When he wakes up his wife is dead. Dan starts screaming, he is desperate, and soon the docter is there, trying to discover what had happened. The docter sais it's a riddle. Dan is so upset, and doesn't want to live anymore. A few weeks later Dan feels so sick that he thinks he's dying. In the night he's speaking deliriously, while he's sinking away. He hears wolves howling, and in the distance he sees a sort of cloudcastle. He's sliding through a misty portal, while a shimmering being with an aura of clouded light is coming towards him. The being smiles a bit weak, and takes his hand. Together they slide through the portal, like they are sliding by the light and the clouded atmosphere. Inside the castle Dan sees his wife. But his wife isn't happy. 'Where am I ?' Dan asks. 'In heaven,' the soft shimmering being tells. Dan's wife walks towards him, and they take each other in the arms. Dan's wife is crying. 'Aren't you glad in this place ?' Dan asks. 'It looks like a wonderful place.' But his wife, Karen, doesn't say much.

Dan is glad he's in such a wonderful atmosphere together with his wife, but he's a bit worried about her. Some angels come to take his wife away. They say that she needs a lot of rest. The shimmering being with the aura of clouded light takes Dan to a room. Here he can sleep a bit. Dan steps in the soft bed with some soft shimmering lights. In the distance he still hears wolves howling. After sleeping awhile he suddenly wakes up. Someone is knocking on the door. 'Yes ?' he sais. Then someone kicks the door in. A man with an axe stands before him. 'Who are you ?' Dan shouts. The man with the axe sais : 'I am God, and you won't leave this place anymore.' But suddenly an angel enters in, and takes the man away. The angel said the man just died and was a bit confused. Also Dan himself was a bit confused now. How could this happen in a place like this. Dan was a little bit disappointed. The next day Dan saw his wife again. She was still very sad and didn't say much. Dan asked himself all the time what was going on with her. Dan asked some angels if he could walk a bit with his wife, maybe

outside the castle. But the angels said there were dangerous wolves around the castle. Dan didn't expect wolves surrounding such a holy and heavenly place like this. But behind the castle there was a path were everything was safe. They could even walk to a next castle of heaven. That was which they did. Dan tried to talk to his wife when they walked, but she didn't say much. Soon enough they were in the next castle. Here there were also some angels. Dan's wife hadn't been here either. Dan was looking around him. He hoped that this place was even more quiet than the other place. Dan told his wife what had happened to him, about the guy with the axe. His wife didn't say anything.

Suddenly an angel was standing before them. The angel was very tall and had a wide smile. 'Hello, Dan and Karen,' he said. 'The Lord wants to see you.' Dan shivered a bit. That he didn't expect. His wife still didn't say anything. They followed the angel and soon they stood in a huge hall with a low ceiling. In the distance they saw a dim light. 'Come close,' the light was saying. The angel had already disappeared. When they came closer they saw that the light was also a sort of weak fire. At the top of the light a bright orange yellow flame appeared which started to move like a mouth. Again the light talked : 'Hello, Dan and Karen, welcome in heaven. I am the Lord.' Dan started to bow before the light, and Karen sat down. 'I want you to have a good time,' the light spoke. Then the light stood up, and walked towards a door behind him. Dan felt a heat coming over him. 'Follow me,' the Lord spoke, and they both stood up and went through the door. Here a few beings were sitting behind a table. They looked like humans and they had soft orange aura's, and soft dim lights as their appearance. 'Hello, Karen,' one of the beings said. It was Karen's mother, and when Karen found out, they both hugged each other. The other beings didn't say much. The Lord was already gone. After awhile a few angels came in : 'We have decided that you will stay here, for you need a quiet place.' They both got a room, apart from each other.

In the middle of the night Dan awoke. In far distance he thought he still heard some wolves, but he wasn't sure about it. Fortunately it was really quiet here. The next day they met each other in the same room again. Karen's mother was there also, and the other beings. After awhile some angels entered in, and asked Dan and Karen if they would like to see more beings living in heaven. Karen didn't say anything, but Dan said : 'Yes, we would love to.' They followed the angels to a huge hall, full of beings with a soft light aura. Some even had wings, and behind the hall there was a huge garden. The garden was also full of beings, but they didn't look happy. Some of them sang, and others were reading. Dan thought there would be much more happiness in heaven, and he still thought about his wife, why she was so sad. One of the angels asked Dan if he wanted to do some work for the Lord. Dan was willing to, but he wanted to know what kind of work. 'I am a bit tired, Dan,' Karen said, and she sat down on one of the chairs, close to a group of singing beings. The angel took Dan by his arm, and wanted to show him the work. First they had to walk through the garden, and behind the garden there was a building. In the building there were also groups singing, but the angel was leading Dan downstairs. Under the building there was a room where they made music instruments.

In the night Dan awoke, and a strange feeling came over him. He thought in a flash about his wife, and he wanted to find out what was going on with her. He decided to go to her room, but when he got there no one was in the bed. The strange feeling got stronger, and Dan needed to find out what was going on. Close to Karen's room he could downstairs. Where would she be ? He hadn't been here before. There was a corridor leading to a door. Carefully he opened the door. Suddenly someone knocked on his shoulders from behind. It was an angel. At the same time he heard a scream. It was Karen. 'Karen ?' Dan shouted. But the angel held him very

tight. 'Who said you were allowed to come here ?' the angel spoke. Dan couldn't breath well, because of the tight grip. 'What are you doing to my wife ?' Dan said. 'Help me !' Karen was shouting, but the angel had already laid a hand on Dan's mouth and brought him closer to the noise. There was a gigantic pool of fire and in the middle there was a small platform and a stake to which Karen was bound. Her eyes were closed. 'Dan, are you there ?' she shouted, but Dan couldn't speak because of the angel's hand. Dan tried to escape from the tight grip, but suddenly the angel pushed him into the fire-pool. Dan screamed of pain, and also Karen started to scream again, and called for Dan. 'What did they do to you ?' Dan roared. 'I cannot tell,' Karen screamed. Suddenly strong arms took Dan again. Dan couldn't see anything because of the fire. 'They need me to make babies !' Karen suddenly screamed. 'What ?' Dan roared. And from the depths of the firepool an enormous alien-like creature rose up. 'Everytime this creature rapes me, I have to give birth to an earthling, which means that special earthling dies and gets born here in heaven.' Karen screamed. Then an angelic voice said : 'Now you have told your secret you will never leave this place anymore.' Karen started to cry. Again Dan couldn't say anything for his mouth was blocked by a strong hand. They took Dan to the other side of the fire-pool and threw him in a room behind it. Dan opened his eyes and could see a little bit again. There were also other beings in this room, and a huge hairy widowspider. Dan was in a shock, but the other beings tried to sooth him. 'You can never leave this place,' one of the older beings said. 'You are property of Jesus Christ. He has paid for you. We all have seen our loved ones in these horrible places and now we are here too. There's big chance you will have to work here also, boy.'

'What do you mean ?' Dan asked. 'You will see,' the older being said. 'This heaven is a trap,' a younger being said, 'I don't know if they are other heavens than this, but this is a slavery. Women have to give birth to babies, and men have to work in the realms below the fire-pool.'

'Oh, but I though that Jesus Christ was a good guy,' Dan desperately said. But no one responded. After awhile another door in the room opened. An angel stepped in and took the beings to another room. After that he took Dan. 'Can you tell me what's going on here ?' Dan asked. But the angel said nothing. After awhile they were taken to the realms below the fire-pool. Here Dan really got the shock of his life. Creatures were growing out of the ground like trees of meat, while other creatures had axes to cut off the pieces. 'What ? Is this a soul-butchery ?' Dan was screaming. In the distance there was a huge skeleton sitting on a very high and thin throne, made of a sort of bone. The skeleton itself was also very thin. The skeleton had a horrible high and shrieking voice, and when he shrieked flames were coming out of his mouth, while his mouth opened itself very tall, and moved a bit left or right, in an aslant position. 'Christ is here !' the skeleton shrieked. Suddenly fire was coming from the ceilings, it started to move and ripple like fireclouds, and pillars of fire and terrorizing smoke started to come down. The living meat-trees were shivering, and some of them were shrieking. A strange sort of octopus was sliding down between the pillars, and formed a pool of green fire. The under-surface of the gigantic octopus was white, and looked like a dress. A huge transparent fire-egg was coming forth from the octopus while it was screaming. Smoke and steam came from the egg, and suddenly it burst open. A very wild and primeval person came out of the egg, very hairy. It started to eat from the meat around him. There were also hanging bags of meat like waspnests, and while the wild person was eating from it, the bags were growing. 'It's a meat-breeding,' Dan thought to himself, while he was almost vomiting. He was still thinking about his wife, Karen. How could he save her ? But he also knew deep inside : heaven would endure forever.

They had to sleep in rooms of twenty persons. Dan couldn't believe he had to work in this butchery forever. To most of his mates he couldn't talk, for they were too far gone. Fortunately he could have some conversations with the older man. The older man had given up all hope of escaping. He tried so many times, but he said they were surrounded by fires. The fires would always draw them back.

One day Dan asked him who the tree-beings were. The man told him that those beings were the eternal damned. Their souls were locked up deep in hell, while here in heaven they were evergrowing trees of meat. Dan sighed. How could he change anything about this situation. He felt so much compassion for the tree-beings, but he was also thinking about all those women having to give birth after rape. Was heaven a bigger terror than hell itself ? The work was very hard. None of the men had an easy life here, and they could only live by this terrible meat. Dan felt helpless and hopeless more and more. As years went by he never saw any of the women. One day an angel came to his place of work, and commanded him to follow. Dan was overwhelmed by a strange deep heat like never before. The angel told him that he had to appear before Christ. The angel was leading him through dark tunnels while Dan's heart was almost overflowing of fire. In the distance he saw a huge cave while fireflames were descending. He saw a face appearing in the distance, which looked like a young man with long hair and a beard. A huge arm was appearing in the sky of the cave, while there was lightening and thunder coming forth from it's surroundings. Dan thought it had to be Jesus. The angel told him that this figure wasn't Christ. In the distance Dan saw a lot of women standing there like frozen. Some of them were moving forwards very slow. As he came closer he saw their sad faces and from some faces tears were streaming. Dan felt much compassion for the women, but he knew he couldn't do anything. A strong angel appeared and took one of the woman to tie her to a stake. 'Oh, Lord Christ,' the angel roared, 'allow us to bring you this sacrifice.' Immediately a tall thin snake slided from a huge tree. It was the tallest and thinnest snake Dan had ever seen, and it gave Dan a feeling of tremendous fear, a fear like he had never felt. The woman was screaming, while the tall snake slided over her skin, and started to coil around her. It was like high flutesounds were ascending in the sky, and suddenly the woman started to roar, and an egg was coming out of her womb, a very tall and slimy egg. The egg was transparent and a small boy was in it. Suddenly the egg broke, like a fleece. The boy was crying, and looked very dizzy. He had his eyes closed. 'Be well, Andellon,' the angel spoke. The boy cried very loud. Then the woman and her son were led into a cave. Dan had to come forward, while he was shivering. What would happen to him ? 'You have to become a hunter of the fire-fields,' a voice spoke. 'You must hunt for souls, for the heavens and the hells must be full.'

'Pardon me,' Dan said almost trembling and stuttering, 'but what is the meaning of all this. Who and where is Christ, and what is his purpose. Do I have to be here forever, and why ? I do not understand.' But it was like the atmosphere charged with so much fire was slowly strengling his voice and his breath. Dan felt so weak, he couldn't do anything. Suddenly he fell down. Two angels took him and brought him through an opening in the wooded wall. They threw him in some bushes, and in dizziness he saw the fire-fields, their hills, their wildernesses, and their terrorizing dark skies full of smoke and clouded layers in all sorts of dark colours. Dan couldn't say or do anything. Suddenly a horned man stood before him with a horse. The man had a dark animal-skin, and whispered something to Dan, but Dan couldn't hear it. Again he whispered, and now Dan could hear what he was saying. The man said that the only way to escape heaven like this was to die the second death, or to become an angel and then fall from heaven. Dan didn't know what the man meant with it, but after awhile the man started to explain. He said that behind the fields of fire there was a fire-river and behind

the fire-river there was the fire-city of angels where he could become an angel. But there was also a faster way, for it would take hundreds of years to reach the fire-river, and then another hundred years at least to reach the other side of the river. The best he could do was to die the second death. To die the second death Dan had to search for a certain tree in the fields of fire. There would hang a bag with forbidden meat. If Dan would eat from that meat it would poison his soul to second death. 'But where will I go then ?' The man wouldn't tell, but it would be a better place than here. But Dan immediately thought about his wife. He wanted to rescue her also. But the man was shaking his head. Suddenly the man was gone. Dan didn't know which tree he had to search for, but he started his journey.

Years went by and Dan had the feeling he didn't come any further. One day, and he didn't know how many years went by, for he had lost his feeling about time, he saw something in the distance which looked like a fire-river. Dan was shouting of joy, for that would mean that he was one step closer to the fire-city of angels. It would take him at least a few days to come there, or maybe even weeks, but he wanted to make the trip across the river of fire. But as he came closer to the river of fire, an angel appeared before him, in a terrible fire. The angel looked like a warrior, with a winged iron helmet. The angel had a terrible penetrating voice. 'You will not come any closer,' the angel spoke. 'No human flesh can come near to the fire-city of angels.' It was like the wrath of this angel was about to hit him. Dan felt helpless and hopeless more than ever before. He saw the fire-city of angel as a last flame of hope to finally escape heaven. But suddenly the angel said with a much softer voice : 'Help me.' Dan immediately realized that the angel found out about the terror of heaven as much as he did. Dan whispered : 'How can I help you ?' Suddenly Dan started to shiver. And also the angel started to shiver. A dark low voice full of fire penetrated the atmosphere. The angel started to burn even brighter, and suddenly he disappeared in a flash. Dan was in a shock when he saw how a fast invisible hand threw the shadow of the angel in the river of fire. 'You will go to hell now,' a terrible low voice spoke. Dan heard the angel screaming and shrieking in the distance. It was like there was a fight in the river of fire, but short afterwhile the calmness entered into the river again. Slowly the waves of lava and fire moved on. It was another trauma for Dan. How he would like to help the angel, but he couldn't. He almost couldn't imagine that hell would be a worse place than this. Suddenly light purple lights very bright appeared above the tremendous river, and were also thrown into it. Was this river the road to hell ? And if so, Dan couldn't enter these depths, for he wasn't an angel yet. He wasn't in the ability to become a fallen one now, unless he would find the tree of forbidden meat.

When he finally stepped into the river of fire he realized that it was undeep. As he moved forwards he got deeper and deeper until he had to swim further. In a strange sense he could float through the firewaters, and there was no way to sink in it. After awhile the waves started to move him forwards, very gently. But as he came further the waves started to become wilder and wilder. Dan didn't have a sense of speed or time anymore, but often he had the feeling he didn't come forward at all. It looked like eternities before he realized there was a strong streaming leading him to the leftside. He became very afraid that he would miss the fire-city of angels. But after awhile he heard screaming in the distance. It was a terrible sight, the fire-city of angels in the distance. He saw angels tied to stakes, while some of them were burning. Dan had become very tired. One angel was screaming : 'Don't let him come here.' When he came on the shore two angels took him tightly by his arms. They brought him to a sort of cathedral, and a horrible stench was there. Inside it looked like nothing but a butchery. Strange meat was lying everywhere. The heat was so terrible that it even swelled up in his stomache. 'Don't let him take from the forbidden meat,' someone was screaming. Soon Dan realized that by taking from this forbidden meat you become an angel. Quickly Dan took a

bite from a piece close to him. Suddenly he had to vomit, because of the stench of the meat and the taste of it. It was like a flame was descending on Dan. He was now becoming an angel. He felt a light coming over his face, as he heard some dogs barking outside, and even wolves howling in the distance. What had happened ? Dan asked one of the angels how he could fall from heaven. Suddenly a door opened in the cathedral and a huge angel appeared with a sort of dog. The dog looked like a lion. He was chained by a leather rope. Several angels were with him now, but they didn't say anything. Dan realized how dangerous it could be for them to speak. And Dan was thinking if he would be really better off when he would fall from heaven, for where would the escape bring him ? Suddenly one of the angels whispered : 'Come with me.' The angel walked outside the cathedral, and Dan followed. They went through some alleys and after awhile they came to a tall house, very dark. A dark halfnaked woman was sitting there on a small stairs. One leg was chained to the stairs. The angel started to hit the woman, but Dan got very mad, and tried to stand between the woman and the angel, but the angel pushed him aside. 'I hoped you would explain me how I can fall from heaven,' Dan said. The woman looked very sad. Then the angel walked away. 'I will tell you,' said the woman. 'Are you an angel ?' Dan asked. 'No,' the woman said. 'I am an earthling.'

'Then why are you here ?' Dan asked. 'The same reason as why you are here,' the woman said. 'But why don't you eat from the forbidden meat ?' Dan asked, 'for you first need to be an angel before you can escape.'

'They won't let me eat it,' the woman said. 'All they do is raping me.' Dan sighed. 'But I can tell you how you can fall. You must go to the other side of the city, where the sea of fire is. That is the edge of heaven, but believe me : If you jump you can never return.'

'But where do I come then when I jump off,' Dan asked. The woman bew her head, and spoke : 'When you jump and you become a fallen one you will be free from service here, but if they find you they will bring you to hell.'

'But what is better,' Dan asked, 'to be here or to be in hell ?'

'I can not say, for I have never been in hell,' the woman said. Dan thanked the woman and began to run through the alleys to finally reach the sea of fire. Slowly he slided into the sea, while a terrible fire started to burn him, but he was becoming free. After awhile he found himself in his bed. He felt like he had a second chance now. But he also knew that if they would find him, they would send him to hell.

On earth he tried to warn everyone against that horrible place heaven was. 'It is not what you think it is,' he explained to some. But he knew he had to be on his guard.

Dan tried to pick up his work again, but everyone was saying he had changed so much. Many of them didn't believe him. They thought he just had a nightmare or something. One day he had to do some overwork, and he was sitting alone in his office. Everyone had already been gone, even the security guards. Suddenly an angel was appearing before him, but it was not what he had expected. The angel was in a fire, while he had long hair, and looked a bit like a warrior-angel, but not the kind he encountered before. 'Why did you leave is,' the angel spoke. 'When are you going to help us.' Dan was in a shock. He was trembling in his seat. The encounter was very striking. It was clear they needed his help, but how could he help them ?

'You have to go to the sea of fire by yourself, to fall from heaven,' Dan said. 'But I am afraid of hell,' the angel spoke. Dan sighed, still in shock by the terrorizing sight. It was such a traumatic encounter. Oh, how he wanted to help this suffering angel, but he couldn't. Suddenly it was like lightening struck the room, while it started to coil on the ceilings. Dan got very dizzy, and tried to put his hands before his eyes. An angel of terrible light appeared taking Dan's hand. 'Come, Dan, you have to appear before the Lord.' In a flash Dan lost all the connection to earth, and found himself on a ship on the sea of fire. There was no escape possible. The angel was too strong. 'I am sad about your fall, Dan,' the angel spoke with a depressing voice. It was like the heat was eating his intestines. It was like a boiling fluid came up from his stomache like a well. Dan looked outside, and saw the terrible waves of the sea of fire. Then he thought like he lost everything, all consciousness. Wasp-like angels came down, huge and strong, and they took Dan into the sky. The movements of their wings were terrible. Dan had to appear before the Lord Jesus Christ of the Heavens. They brought him towards an enormous temple-like castle in the skies. The wasp-like angels were shrieking high, as conscious dripped into Dan again. What was going on ?

Dan could hardly breath and move as they were leading him inside the temple-like castle. Someone was laughing with a low voice, while lava was streaming from the place. 'Bring him to the lava,' the voice spoke. Suddenly he only saw lava around him, while he was sinking deeper. The lava was all over him, and an aura of strange bright lights surrounded him. He could still hear the voice laughing, until his feet felt ground again. It was like he had heavy boots now. 'You are now in hell,' the voice said. It was strange, but suddenly Dan felt calm. It was like someone was soothing him. 'No one will ever leave this place,' the voice spoke.

Here he found the suffering souls of angels, while in heaven their spirits had to work. He heard their mournings, their screams, their shrieks, and their periods of longlasting weeping. Some only wept very soft, like whispering. There was a well of lava, where the bright lights were coming from. Here the spirits of angels would be separated from their souls. Slowly Dan was moving towards the well. Suddenly everyone was silent. Either hell and heaven were eternal prisons. Maybe it was just the best to be split up in this lake. As Dan slowly sank into the lake, his mind started to split up. It was like he became free of so many things. His spirit was soaring between heaven and hell, while he didn't know where he exactly was. An aura of strange fire was surrounding him, coiling, calming him. He knew he would float to a different place now, along the streams of fire moving forward very slowly. It was like he was frozen now. He felt like he was an insect now, a being with so many arms and legs. He felt like a was a sun now.

But then two strong arms take Dan in a tight grip again. 'You are now an archangel, Dan,' a soothing voice tells him. Behind the fields of coiling fire-clouds Dan could see a bright softness coming towards him. It starts to surround him, while Dan is screaming. It is like he's taking a shower, but it feels like poison, like it's tearing him apart. An archangel is holding him tight, while Dan thinks he is dying. The archangel speaks loud like thunder. Suddenly there is smoke everywhere. The voice was begging Dan for help, but Dan couldn't do anything. 'Where are we going to ?' Dan asked. But the voice didn't say anything. After awhile they stopped and Dan was sliding along a pillar of fire. Suddenly his feet felt the ground. Still he felt like he had heavy boots, but he couldn't see anything. Suddenly he saw his wife standing there. An archangel was slapping her in the face. Dan tried to call her name, but he couldn't. If he was an archangel himself now, then why couldn't he speak ? It was like a strong invisible hand was laid on his mouth. He couldn't breath well. Suddenly his wife was screaming his name. Dan fell to the ground. The voice was penetrating like never before. How

could his ears be so sensitive all of a sudden. Dan had to appear before the throne of archangels. His wife had been tied to a tall stake. One of the archangels walked towards Dan, and shouted : 'This man has betrayed our society, this Judas. His soul has been laid bound in the outer darknesses, but his spirit will serve us.' Other archangels were clapping there hands, moving their wings or just nodding.

The most horrible things Dan encountered here the weeks he was with the archangels. For Dan it was undescribable, and how he desired to fall from this place. But how ? He was now an archangel, and he had the feeling he had been tied tighter and deeper than ever before. One night he saw a ship coming towards him with green shiny sails and the ship itself was shiny yellow. Women were on the ship wailing and begging him for help. A small girl was sitting on the front of the ship. She stood up, and whispered : 'Come, help us.' Not much later Dan found himself swimming in the waves. When he reached the ship the women appeared to be all skeletons. Dan raised himself on the ship, but the sea appeared to be like fields of fire. On the fields of fire there were trees of beating hearts, begging Dan for help. 'How can I escape ?' Dan desperately shouted. 'You must save us,' piercing voices were saying. 'But how ?' Dan cried. But then everything was silent. Dan tried to walk towards the trees of beating hearts. 'If you eat from us, then you will escape,' the trees whispered. Suddenly the small girl came from behind the boat, and said : 'No, Dan, don't listen to them, for if you would eat you can never leave this place. These are the trees of the eternal meat.' Dan got very confused and didn't know what to do. Who was speaking truth. Suddenly an archangel appeared to him in a storm of fire. 'You have wandered through our gardens, but I will warn you not to eat from the trees of hearts, for then you will be damned forever,' the angel spoke with an awful low voice. 'I have not eaten from it,' Dan responded. 'You have to appear before Jesus Christ of the archangels,' the archangel spoke. And a terrible fire-storm came down to take Dan away, while the little girl was screaming. 'There is nothing you can do,' the archangel spoke. In the fire-storm Jesus Christ appeared to Dan. He took Dan by the hand, while Dan was screaming, almost shrieking. 'You will walk on fire, Dan,' Jesus Christ said. 'You have eaten from the eternal heart, and now you're free.' Jesus Christ had a very bright voice, even soothing, but Dan was still screaming. Suddenly he was thundering : 'Bring him to the elevator of everlasting damnation.'

'But Lord !' Dan shrieked 'I haven't eat from any meat or hearts here !' But Jesus Christ didn't respond. A heavy and huge archangel took Dan to an elevator in a sea of fire. How many years or even hundred years it took Dan didn't know, but it was a long period of time before he reached the city of everlasting damnation. He had never heard such shrieks and such wailing. Everywhere there were skeletons walking with small girls. The voices were penetrating him like he could faint every moment. 'There is that fallen archangel !' a woman was screaming. 'No one wants you here !' another woman screamed. He saw other archangels here under terrible chains. He was now a fallen archangel, but he wondered what would be the best in his situation. To him heaven would never be a desirable place anymore. Somewhere in an old house he sat down. A woman was sitting before him, with some stumps lying on a table. 'This is not the end, do you know ?' the woman said. She had wild hair.

'What is the deal here in this city of everlasting damnation ?' Dan asked. The woman said : 'It's a prison. We were all archangels before, but now we have been fallen.' Dan nodded. He asked himself if he really wanted to escape, for where would he go ? 'Come,' the woman said, 'I want to show you something,' while she stood up. She took his hand, and together they walked outside. Behind the old house there were fields of fire. Behind the fields there were Falls of fire. 'They say that when you have reached the Falls of fire you can become God,' she

said. 'How,' Dan asked. 'Well, see for yourself,' the woman said, and walked away. A strange curiosity was sliding into Dan's mind. If he would become God maybe he could stop this all. 'Don't even try it !' the woman yelled. 'No one ever survived !' But Dan thought he had nothing to lose, and began to walk through the fields. Everything went very slow, and after days he realized that he didn't come anywhere like this. In the distance he heard wolves howling, and other sorts of strange roars and hysterical weeping. Suddenly a naked woman jumped on him. He never felt such a softness, and soon he was making love with her. The woman had a brown skin. Suddenly a seraph appeared to them. It was like it was ripping them apart. 'I have to take you away to God,' the seraph roared, while his voice seemed to split into a multitude of voices. While he spoke there was an aura of steam around him, and Dan found himself like almost melting away. The strong arms of the seraph took them both, and he brought them to a huge elevator in a sea of fire behind the fire-falls. They were both thrown in a sort of prison after the elevator took them to another place. Days followed, while Dan and the naked woman made love. Suddenly a tall man of white shimmering but soft lights in a weak aura came to the bars. 'I am God,' the man spoke. Dan had to come with God. The man opened the prisondoor, and took Dan with him. In a hall full of seraphs the man said to Dan : 'If you want to become God, then you are at the wrong address here. There's no other God than I am. 'How did you become God ?' Dan asked. The man started to smile very dirty. 'I'll show you,' the man said. Suddenly there were screams everywhere. The man stepped to the side of the hall, which started to turn into a huge arena. Women were led into the arena by seraphs. Then cages of lions were opened. 'Come,' the man said. 'This isn't what I wanted to show you. They had to climb through an opening in a rock, and came into another hall. As Dan watched from the rock he saw trees made of women growing from the floor. The women were screaming. Dan looked at the man. He was smiling. 'I will never believe in God anymore,' Dan said. 'You are satanic.' Suddenly the man pushed Dan from the rock on which he was standing. How long it took Dan didn't know, but he had been unconscious since that fall for a long time. He almost couldn't open his eyes, and he found out he was still bleeding. He could see seraphs coming in devouring the meat of the womantrees.

After awhile the whole huge room was filled by a stench of strange fluids in which Dan was bathing, while a woman entered in walking towards Dan. Dan was still too weak to stand up. 'How can you be so dumb, Dan, that you would fall in a pit like this,' the woman said. 'You knew that all those people of your church weren't better humans than the ones outside the church. You knew that in most cases they were worse than others, so why was it to your surprise when you found out about heaven ?' Dan started to moan, while the woman was softly kicking him in his stomache. 'You didn't see all it's secrets yet, or did you ?' the woman said fiercely. 'I don't know,' Dan moaned like an old man. Then the woman kicked his stomach a bit harder. 'You aren't here for nothing. I will use you. You will have my babies,' the woman spoke loud and thundering.

'But I am a man !' Dan screamed, still moaning. 'I don't care,' the woman said. 'This is heaven, not earth, so shut up.' Then the woman took a tube and pushed it deep into his stomach. Dan was moaning loud. 'Arrgh, why didn't you warn me before,' Dan said. Strange fluids were streaming through the tube, while his stomach was swelling a bit. After awhile strange eggs were coming forth from Dan, while he lost consciousness. 'In heaven all things need to be done different,' the woman spoke. Dan woke up. 'Where am I ?' Dan asked. 'You are with me, Dan,' the woman said. 'I am the princess of heaven.' Dan grasped his stomach. It was normal now. 'I am the mother of cherubs,' the woman said. She had a thin leather rope surrounding her forehead. 'I am not done with you,' she said. 'Is there any way I can escape ?' Dan stuttered. 'No, it's for eternity,' she spoke harshly. 'You mean bitch, let me go !' Dan shouted.

'Oh, how these cherub-heavens, these seas and fields of fire bring forth my love,' the woman sighed. In the distance Dan could see these fields and seas, and cages were coming from them, full of women. The woman sighed again. 'I'm tired,' she said. Then she walked away. 'Who is the boss of this prison ?' Dan was shouting histerically. 'Let me out !' Dan creeped forward. He still couldn't stand on his legs. He tried to reach the fields and their seas, but the sight was moving away from him like a fire-storm.

It was like a strange creature, a sort of tremendous butterfly. It had wings of fire, and was like a fire-storm. On the top of the butterfly he saw the woman sitting. Then the fire-storm was changing into a ball. A sting moved out of the coiling fire-ball, while the ball started to spit fluids. It was like terror had struck Dan again, and he had to run away now, or this ball would devour him. But what if he could just escape by this ball. Dan was too weak to rise up, and fell again, while the ball was slowly moving towards him and devoured him finally. Dan was coiling into many pits at the same time, like all his parts had been separated now. It was like he became a seraph or cherub himself now. No one knew the way out of this castle. No one was speaking to him. These cherubs, these angels of God, were merely the breeders of meat. They were the farmers of heaven, and there was no escape at all. Sooner or later you would fall into their hands again. Their fires were like hanging waspnests from which no one could escape.

No one would ever be ready for their strike. For there was no way to be prepared for such a war. Often they went together in a group for a hunt. Then they would search for lost wandering souls. These souls were often nothing more but seeds for their fire-farms. But Dan found out soon that also these cherubs, who often looked like fire-birds were also nothing more than prisoners of heaven. Dan wouldn't easily forget his encounter with God, who was a strange rude man in his eyes. Why did Dan have to become a power-slave like this ? Dan didn't know. All he wanted to do was to quench the flame which kept him in a slavery like this. He remembered the tales of the priest of his church, talking about baptism and the coming of Jesus Christ. It was now nothing more than a mean trap in the eyes of Dan. The priest always said that in heaven everyone becomes an angel. That was what Dan finally found out. If he could go back to earth to do it all over again, he would do it different. All these things he was writing in a letter to his wife. He didn't know if she would ever receive the letter, but for him it was a way to deal with the pain and the loss a bit. Would she still be in that same place doing what she had to do ? Dan didn't know. When he finished the letter he put it into an iron box and threw it from the hill of the room where he was. It probably would fall into the sea of fire soaring and roaring there.

On one day a tall fire-bird, a cherub, was appearing before his window. It had a letter for him wrapped in iron. Dan opened the door of the balcony and received the letter. The sun was shimmering in his face. He opened the iron and began to read :

'Dear Dan, I do not know if you will be alive when you receive this letter, but I want you to know that I have reached heaven since I died. Do not come to this place. It is not what you think. Further I cannot say much more about it. I love you forever. Karen.'

Oh, how he wished he would have received this letter earlier.

The End

The Stalker

Thriller / Tragedy

When Marjoline came home that night she was very tired and went to bed immediately. Suddenly she saw a shadow moving on the wall, and she got frightened. 'Is anyone there ?' she asked ... But no one answered.

Fridaynight she went out of town with her girlfriend Marlus. They would go to a city next to their village. They were actually friends since birth as they grew up together. They got into conversation with a boy who told them about Jesus. Marjoline said to the boy : 'Oh, come on, do you really believe in that nonsense.' But Marlus wanted to hear a bit more about it ... Not that she was really interested, but so many people of their village believed in Jesus and went to church, and she didn't know a lot about it. The boy told them that Jesus loved them, and he even said that Jesus was in love with them. Marjoline thought that was very strange. She never heard of that, and a strange feeling was sliding over her breasts. She didn't like the feeling at all. Inside she shivered. 'Let's go somewhere else,' she whispered to Marlus when the boy was going to the toilets. Marlus thought that was a good idea, and so they went outside. But awhile later they saw the boy again, and he saw them too. 'Hey, you left ?' he shouted. 'Let me tell more about it ...' But they started to run away ... When they finally got home Marjoline told Marlus what happened the other night .... about the moving shadow ...

Marlus had a small book from the boy which he gave to her in the conversation. There were some pictures in it from Jesus. These were beautiful paintings, and Jesus looked very calming. 'Let's not start with it, Marlus,' Marjoline said ... 'That what the boy said really scared me off, and he also said that Jesus could come everywhere as He is God. He said Jesus knows everything about us, all our thoughts, all our feelings, all what we did in the past, He was there and saw it ....' Marlus shut the book ... 'You are right, Marjoline, I don't feel anything for losing my privacy to this. I mean the Bible is a very bloody book, so what would this Jesus be all about ? I do not have a good feeling about it. All those people who go to church, it looks like they are frozen or something, like something strange has happened to them.'

'Okay now, stop, Marlus, you're scaring me,' Marjoline said, 'it's really frightening me. Let's talk about something else.' But Marlus already had to go home. It was late. When Marjoline was in bed she stared at the wall where the moving shadow was the other night ... but there was nothing. Marjoline tried to sleep, but still she was thinking about the things the boy said ... Suddenly she was totally awake. A man in grey, white and brown-orange was standing before her, smiling. 'Say, Marjoline,' he said, when he slowly raised his arm towards the ceiling, 'I hope you don't mind me coming in.'

'Who are you ?' Marjoline asked in a shock, and then she shouted : 'Go away !' while she was sitting straight in her bed. 'But I'm just here,' the man grinned.

At school she couldn't concentrate. She couldn't talk about it ... like something was blocking her mouth, and like everyone would think she had become crazy. She couldn't forget about the thing happened that night. Through the years Marjoline became a silent woman. It was like she finally came over her trauma, but one night she felt something was gliding over her. She felt very strange all of a sudden, but she couldn't scream. It was like she was losing her consciousness, but also like she had another consciousness now, like something was in her. 'You have given your heart to Jesus,' a voice spoke. 'That's not true,' Marjoline tried to say, but she couldn't speak. 'He loves you and you love him, admit it,' the voice said. Marjoline tried to scream, but it was like the shock had paralyzed her. It was like her head was in fire, and like it was floating through her whole body.

Since that day Marjoline had always the feeling that someone was following her, that someone was always watching her : in the shower, in bed, on the streets, wherever she was. Years went by and Marjoline couldn't get rid of the thought that there was a stalker in her life. Some days where harder than other days, but it seemed she had to live with it. She couldn't talk about it to anyone else.

One day she came home, and was very tired, because it was already late. She went to her bedroom, turned on the lights, and as she took her blankets up she saw a snake with eggs in her bed. She screamed and shouted while at the same time she heard someone was in the shower. When she came closer she could see a man. 'Who are you !' she shouted. The man took a towel and stepped out of the shower, and said : 'I'm not leaving anymore. I hope you got used to me a bit through all the years. The man sat on her bed, while he put the snake around his neck. 'And my little friends,' he said, 'are also welcome I hope.'

'Now what is your purpose ?' Marjoline asked. 'Where are you coming from, and who are you ? What do you want ?'

'I am Jesus,' the man said.

'Now do you live here somewhere in the village or somewhere else ?' Marjoline asked, still in a shock.

Marjoline tried to call the police, but it was like her hands were tied. 'I live in your heart,' the man said. 'I inspire you.' Marjoline started to scream even harder, as she felt the room was getting hotter. There was steam coming from the shower and water was flowing on the floor. Suddenly the man took Marjoline's hand, and said : 'You have hands like me, they're beautiful.' Marjoline pulled her hand back and ran to the door, but it was locked. 'Please tell me what's going on,' Marjoline begged the man. She fell on her knees and started to cry hysterically but also desperately, while she felt herself like becoming weaker. Slowly she laid herself on the ground.

'Don't you know that God is everywhere ?' the man asked. 'I'm sure they have told you.'

Marjoline had lost consciousness and when she woke up again the man was gone together with the snake and the eggs. Marjoline tried to sleep on her bed, but she couldn't. She was crying soft.

A few weeks later she had a conversation with a priest. He told her the best she could do when it would happen again is asking him : 'Is there anything I can do for you ?'

So the next time the man came to Marjoline she did just at the priest had told her and asked the man : 'Is there anything I can do for you ?' Then the man burst out in crying and begged her to let him go back to his planet. Marjoline didn't understand what he was trying to say. So she asked him : 'How can I bring you back to your planet ?' Then the man directed his finger at her ring. This ring she got when someone from her family died. She didn't even know this far aunt, but this ring was a heritage. 'Please, throw it away,' the man was crying. 'But why ?' Marjoline asked, 'I do not understand.' But suddenly the curtains got in fire, and slowly the flames started to coil over the ceiling and the walls. 'What is wrong with you !' Marjoline screamed to the man. 'Just throw that ring away !' the man shouted. Then Marjoline threw it out of the window while the flames started to spread even more. Marjoline ran out of the room and soon she was outside the house. The man was still in the flames and was laughing hard. 'I'm going home !' he shouted hysterically.

Marjoline had survived the fire, but she had to move to another place. Since then everything went more downwards with her. It was like the trauma had really struck her hard this time. She didn't have any moment of rest, she couldn't sleep, for there was always someone near, closer than ever. It was like she couldn't breath anymore, but still she could live on. She wasn't able to do her work anymore, and slowly her life was growing down the hill into the valley. The only thing she could do was read books.

In the middle of the night she always tried to read some books, as her fears where then at their heights. One night a man stood before her, coming from the darkness of her room towards the small lamp by which she was reading. 'Why have you sent my son away from earth. I have sent Him here to suffer for everyone,' he was saying. 'Who are you ?' Marjoline asked in a shock.

'I am God the father,' the man said. 'Don't think that my son has a better life now since He has gone home. He now suffers for the whole universe, for the heavens and the hells, and the unknown places.' Suddenly Marjoline remembered what the priest told her and asked : 'Is there anything I can do for you ?'

'Yes, you can,' the man said. 'You can let me go, to let me go to my son, to return to home.' Behind the man huge snakes were appearing. They were moving their heads and necks. 'But how ?' Marjoline asked. The man directed his finger at her chainlet. That was also a heritage she once got from her grandmother. 'Throw it away,' he said. But Marjoline was scared as she remembered the fire. It already started to coil through her room, while smoke was surrounding her. Quickly she opened the window and threw the chainlet outside, while the flames started to coil away. 'You have done well,' the man said, while he started to grin. Then he moved closer to Marjoline. 'I have done what you said,' Marjoline shouted, 'now go away !' But the man was moving closer and closer ... 'There is only one thing, Marjoline,' the man said ... 'Those who do not believe in us go to hell forever.' Then the man disappeared while Marjoline was in the flames. Marjoline screamed, and now she knew about the price one had to pay for not wanting these stalkers. How glad she was when firemen came into her room to free her out of the flames. They brought her to the hospital, while in tears she told the story. But none of them believed her. They assured her there wasn't any man with huge snakes.

But in the middle of the night in the hospital it was like Marjoline felt the flames again. A huge snake appeared before her eyes, shrieking : 'Those who have sinned against the Father and the Son will be forgiven, but those who have sinned against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven. Not now, and not in eternity.'

'Who are you ?' Marjoline shouted.

'I am the Holy Spirit,' the snake shrieked. Suddenly the snake became thinner and thinner, taller and taller, while Marjoline was about losing consciousness. The snake started to coil around her, tighter and tighter, until she couldn't breath anymore. Suddenly a docter turned on the light. Marjoline was hysterical, and told the docter about what happened. But the docter said there was no snake, and Marjoline's wounds were doing better. He explained her that sometimes after a fire people needed time to make up their minds.

A few days later the boy who used to tell about Jesus came to visit Marjoline. He had heard what had happened to her. He was of course a lot older now, but still the same. He immediately took her hand and said : 'But Jesus wants to help you in this.' Oh, how he looked like the stalkers. Marjoline acted like she was glad he came, but she didn't want to give him too much attention. She wanted to get out of it. 'Is there a way out of this ?' she asked the man.

'Yes,' the man said, 'and Jesus is that way.'

'No, that's not what I try to say,' Marjoline said, 'I mean : Is there a way out of all this Jesus-stuff ?' But then the man shook his head. 'No Marjoline, for those who live with Jesus will live with Him forever, and those who do not live with him got to a place where he isn't. But they will remember Him for always.'

'That's terrible,' Marjoline said.

When the man had gone Marjoline felt relieved. She hoped everything would be over now.

When she lived on her own again, and things turned out to be better to her, one night the stalkers returned. They were all three so huge now, and there were more snakes than ever. 'We want to thank you for bringing us home,' Jesus said, 'but there is one thing : We miss you. We want you to come with us.'

'No !' Marjoline screamed and cried hysterically and desperately. 'I want to have peace and rest now !'

'But you belong to us,' the Father said, 'We now suffer for the whole universe, and we want you to suffer with us.'

'But do I not suffer enough ?' Marjoline cried hopelessly. But the three stalkers were without mercy and took her tight. 'We will take you with us !' the Holy Spirit said almost roaring. There was blood coming from the mouth of the huge snake. It was the biggest snake of the snakes there. There were many snakes.

Suddenly someone opened the door. It was a nurse, coming for a weekly control. 'How are you, Marjoline ?' the nurse asked friendly. 'You look a bit confused, did something happen ?'

'No,' Marjoline said, still a bit confused and desperate, but soothing herself. 'Okay, then I will control your bloodpressure now, and some other things,' the nurse said. It was like all the stress and fear of Marjoline was moving to the background now. She knew she had to take up her own life again, not living in the past anymore. When the nurse had been gone Marjoline looked around her. She thought it was a bit strange the nurse came in the middle of the night. But when she opened the curtains it was day.

Then the phone rang. Marjoline picked up the phone. 'Hello, Marjoline, do you remember us. We're going to get you. Just make sure you are ready.' But Marjoline tried not to think about the phone-call. It got better and better with her. She got a job again, and soon she could go out again. But one night she saw the man who always talked about Jesus again. She tried to avoid him, but he came towards her. 'Say, can I have your phone-number, I guess I want to have some more contact with you,' he said. But Marjoline refused. 'Really, it was very nice of you to visit me in the hospital,' Marjoline said, 'but I just need to have a time of rest.'

'Oh, but Jesus can give rest to you,' the man said. 'I know,' Marjoline said, 'and it's okay.'

'But have you made your choice already ?' the man asked.

'What do you mean ?' Marjoline asked.

'Well, to go for Jesus or not. Do you want Him to live in your heart ?' the man asked

'Oh, I really can not do this,' Marjoline said, and wanted to walk away, but the man was taking her hand. 'Please, let me go !' Marjoline said loud. Other people suddenly looked up to watch them. 'Please !' the man said desperately, 'You must accept Him in your life, for I do not want you to go to hell forever.' The man had almost tears in his eyes, but Marjoline ran away, saying loud : I can't !

But the man ran after her, while he started to cry. 'Please Marjoline, listen to me. I cannot bear it to see you going to such an awful place for eternity,' he weeped desperately. But some other men stopped him : 'Let her go, dude, get over it.' But the man got in rage and hit three men to the ground while running after Marjoline again screaming and shrieking : 'I won't let you go to hell forever ! I just won't ! I will not let that happen !' Then he grasped Marjoline at her back and tore her dress. Marjoline was in real panic now. 'Let someone help me !' she screamed. 'Please !'

'Stupid bitch !' the man was screaming, 'just listen to me now !' More and more people were now aware of the things happening. Marjoline lay on the ground now with a torn dress, and he almost sat on her, but then he stood up and turned himself to the people surrounding him. 'If anyone of you touch me or her with only one finger, then you will get a surprise. I will beat the lungs out of your body, so back off !'

But tight hands grasped him, and again the man kicked several men to the ground. 'Damned, idiot !' someone was screaming, 'I thought you were a christian.'

'Well, I am,' the man shouted, 'I'm just saving someone from hell.' But then the police arrived and arrested the man. The man couldn't do anything this time. But he was shouting : 'I will take revenge !' They took him away in the police-car.

Marjoline needed a lot of time to get over this. It had really hit her hard. People told her that if the man would ever become free from prison again, she had to stay away from him, and from the places where he would go. But in a strange sense Marjoline felt loved by the man. It was like he really cared for her, but he couldn't handle all his emotions. That's why he was dangerous to her. One time she decided to visit him in prison. She wanted to talk to him, although people said that would be crazy. Enough people had warned her.

When he saw her in prison he was upset. 'Will you forgive me,' was the first thing he said. Marjoline didn't say anything, but later she said : yes.

The man talked and talked for hours about how he was just blinded by a cult, but now in prison he could be free of that. It was a strange paradox, but Marjoline got the impression that he had changed. Maybe that when he got free he wouldn't be a danger to Marjoline or anyone else anymore. But as soon as he got free he turned out to be the same again, and Marjoline had to hide for him. One day she got a telephone-call. It was him. 'Hi, Marjoline, I will come to your house in a moment, I need to talk to you.' Immediately Marjoline called the police, but it was already to late. The man stood already in her house. Marjoline didn't know how he could come in. She ran to the bedroom, and tried to lock the door. But she failed. There he stood. He had a gun in his hand, grinning. 'I know what we will do now. You will accept Jesus in your life now, then I will shoot you, so that you will be in heaven forever.' Marjoline started to scream as he slowly moved closer.

That day many people died this way, assured to go to heaven forever, luckily missing the horrors of eternal damnation. But to be in the hands of these stalkers is that something to prefer ? Marjoline luckily missed the shot of this stalker's gun, for she remembered that it was written in the bible, saying : Thou Shalt Not Kill. But this man wasn't the only stalker around. It was a group. He had to go to prison again, although he didn't kill anyone that day because of that bible-verse, but his mates did the kill and couldn't be found anywhere. This time Marjoline wouldn't visit him in his prison. She moved away to another country, hiding from the stalkers. Maybe one day the man would change his mind, the better or the worse, but Marjoline didn't want to wait for any of such changes. She would be better off living far away from the stalkers.

Marjoline still didn't believe in a heaven or hell, and didn't want to have anything to do with religion, especially after this incident. But she thought it was strange that people would choose to live in a hell by their deeds in order to get others in heaven.

By fear of these stalkers, who seemed to be be everywhere, people commited their lives to something they wouldn't choose for if they were just free to choose. This time it was under a pressure, as they knew they would risk their lives by living in their own truths. The stalkers would get their churches full of prisoners of this fear, in order to breed more stalkers. Many tried to make compromises more or less, but the blood was still streaming.

The End

Police World

science fiction/ tragedy

It's the year 4008. The world is dominated by the police working together with a strange political tax-system office. Slavery is normal these days. Our state is a police-state, like so many other states, but there is one thing : the wilderness outside is growing, and sub-cultures are living underground. There is nothing stranger than them, although it attracts me. They don't believe in marriage and monogamy. In our state it is a duty to marry, but sex is forbidden. There are camera's everywhere, and they are charged by weapons able to kill everything which looks like sex. We do not raise children. The government does by genetic experiments. They grow in tubes, and then we get them finally by paying a lot of money. But they aren't children, but slaves. It is important to have a lot of slaves to have something to say in the government. The men with the big money have everything in their big hands. We are the marionets. They are the dogs.

I think about to step over to the sub-cultures, but we live in a prison in this state. There's no escape possible. Some tried, but didn't survive. We have too many strange implants inside. We have to go to the doctor often, and to the police for research.

In the year 4578 I finally came free, after a long time of study and research, but a time-device brought me back to 4008. They erased a great deal of my memory. The only thing I can remember is that finally after my escape I met a woman in the sub-culture. She said she would die for me to protect me. We had a great time, until the time-device took me back. My memory is now dominated. It's in the hands of a strange tax-system. It prevents me from going to any school. They are too afraid I gather knowledge again. It's forbidden to me to go to any library. I work in a factory.

My telephone is in the hands of the police. They listen to all my conversations. If they think a conversation is going too far they cut the connection off. I'm not allowed to have any computer. They keep me simple. The memories I have I need to add to the tax system again and again. It drives me crazy. However I am allowed to write books. Most of the times these

are sex-stories. Not that I want that, but that's the only sort they allow without problems. These books need to be donated to their secret banks. There's a theory that only the top-leaders are allowed to have sex. But this theory hasn't been proved yet.

The top-leaders with the biggest money rule over the machines, this theory sais, but there's also a theory that the machines rule these top-leaders, and they lead horrible lives of suffering. Neither this theory has been proved yet.

The police rules the streets and it's a sad story. Most of the times they use devices. There is no one happy here. Only those of the sub-cultures are happy, and their wildernesses are growing. They haven't been caught by a police-order yet, but it seems one day they will. There is no beauty of nature anymore, for it's remains, even while it is growing, will be caught up.

They say some great books say that in the future there won't be schools anymore. Only machines, devices, making our lives horrible. It seems I'm living there already. The police-state then will be a dog-state of overcontrol, and there won't be a wilderness anymore. No hope of any escape. And if there will be an escape, a time-device will take care, like in my situation. Then it erases the memory, and voila, there you are. Where can you go ? They say when once caught back by a time-device you get locked up in time. That's what I experience, yes. My hope is floating away. I can donate it to the tax-devices. They come like hungry wolves every night. Just a camera.

Still I'm married, but married like this is a horrible situation, a prison. I do not know her. She was donated to me by the government, but she doesn't talk. I think a lot about the woman who once loved me in the year 4578, but my memories about it seem to fade away.

Some say these tax-devices are nothing but time-devices. The government doesn't get it, but it flows into time. What are they breeding ? A time-egg ? And what will come out ? They say it will be a time-creature destroying all the borderlines of time. It will rip off all the masks, but also this theory hasn't been proved yet. Some say doctors are the devices of police-man, their hidden instruments. Some say the police is a higher race than God. Where is God ? It doesn't stop with God. The police is everywhere. Here everyone believes in the police. Belief in God is old-fashioned, and in some states it is forbidden.

The End

The Doctor

thriller / science fiction

It is the year 2054. An atomic war has destroyed large parts of our world. My name is Phil Adrianson, son of a mariner. The docters have taken over the world and are in top-positions. It's a mess in the whole world. In our town the docter's office is close to a school. The docters there live in secrecy, in most cases this happens everywhere. No one knows what's going on there. On a night I went there to do some research. I found a lot of skeletons below the docter's house, but that wasn't strange to me, after an atomic war like this. But that what frightened me was that some of these skeletons were alive, and moving in large reservoirs of water. Since I brought this secret into the world everything seemed to change. The docters

seemed to come out of their shells, worldwide, and showed these living skeletons on marketsquares. Yes, they were even boasting with them, selling them to the mass. It seemed to be a numb situation, for I didn't see any protest coming from others. What has the atomic war done to us all .... We are nothing but zombies.

In the year 2095 a Chinese technician created the first cyborg-docter, and covered it up by a skin. In a few years these cyborg-docters took over our whole world. The skeleton-market was old news. There was now a market in a sort of human beings who weren't just human beings, but skeletons covered up by a skin. Slavery entered our world again.

In the year 3024 I am still alive by the present technologies. Humans now reach ages over thousand years. There is another atomic war going on. This time it's about burning our whole world. We live in fire. But by the present technologies we are able to live in fire. The cyborg-docters have enslaved the whole world now, and they had been able to build the first time-stealer. By this device they can kidnap humans from other time-zones to enslave them in the present. Everyday the time-stealers worldwide bring up so many human beings from history, enslaving them in horrible ways. Our world has now a population of eighty billions living in stagings and cages in the layers of the sky and underground. Marriage and sex is forbidden, and whenever a baby gets born it has to be killed by the law. There are devices for that, ultra-sensitive. No one cares, no one can do something about it, for the devices are programmed that way. We aren't allowed to dream, for when we sleep and a dream shows up a device starts shrieking and we wake up. We are surrounded by such devices, making our lives miserable. There is so much overcontrol, not only to watch the things we do, but also to watch our minds by ultra-rays. We do not have any privacy, and lots of us go insane.

I have met a girl now. She is from the year 2034 Before Christ. She is from a Jewish company, and it's not forbidden to talk. She told me her father also found a device, and that's why she was here. It brought her whole family here, but she was the only one allowed to live on. The devices here had shot her whole family. Why ? She still didn't know. Sometimes she wished they had shot her too, for living in slavery like this was horrible to her.

One day we had some free time and we were allowed to go for a walk in the forest. The trees were still burning because of the atomic war, but in a strange sense they were still alive. Just like us, there was fire everywhere. She told me her father was a docter, and they believed that the docters were a higher race than God. 'So your father thought he was greater than God ?' I asked. She said yes. But he also had problems with that thought. One day a strange man came to him giving him a strange book. It was a book of docters in which these things were written. And the man just disappeared in a flash, like he was an angel. Since then my father believed these kind of things, she said.

But it was already time to go. We had to move to our cages in our stagings again. She lived deep underground, and I lived in the sky. I wasn't allowed to dream about her. Many times the devices shrieked in the night. I almost went insane, but fortunately I could meet her sometimes, so I was always looking forward to that, holding on to that thought. It gave me hope and warmth. Many times we had to show up before the cyborg-docters. They did horrible things to us in their research. It almost felt like Judgement Day. Once in a month we had to go there, and the days before I could never sleep because of fear.

But one day they installed new devices. Lots of people were screaming. We didn't know what would happen. We weren't allowed to have any desires anymore, or daydreams. We weren't

allowed to think about each other or being in love anymore, as then the devices started to scream. It was hell. More and more the devices started to take over our minds. We lost more and more of our personal freedoms. But the cyborg-docters said it was important to prevent many from going insane. But all I saw was people going insane. Most of the time such people got shot by the devices. Also my girl got insane, and she got shot, I heard later.

In the year 3098 it seemed to be all over. A virus had struck the programs of the devices, and they couldn't get it straight anymore. The cyborg-docters went insane, and new atomic wars were raging. This time it was caused by detonators working by the splitting of quantum-parts, the smallest parts within the atom. It was like a mega-splitter, and it was really like the sun was covered over our world. Solar seas were coming up, bursting out from our world, and it was the change of nature. I had no idea what was going on, but to me this seemed paradise. We could have survey again, and it was like there was space again. The cyborg-docters seemed to have all gone, but another forms were showing up from the oceans : ghosts and spawns. It was like the whole earth had been baptized in solar lava, and the most wonderful creatures started to live and develop in these seas. But all I could do was cry. I didn't know why. Soon the species like transparent octopuses and jelly-fishes started to swim around me, and I was thinking they would absorb me ... devouring me ... How wrong I was .... Yes, they got stuck to my body .... It was like they were sucking my mind away .... Yes, all I could do was cry .... It was like they were sucking my feelings away .... I didn't know who I was anymore .... They were leading me back to the year 2054 again. I got stuck in a time-stealer. In 2054 the docters were ruling the world after an atomic war.

My theory was that these docters had to have such a device by which they could get me back. And my theory was even that these docters were nothing but cyborg-docters covered by a human skin. But how wrong I was. To prove my theory I went to the docter's house again to do research. Again I found the living skeletons in the reservoirs of water. But this time I had been caught by the police, and I got locked up in jail, so that I couldn't tell the secrets. They put a device in my mouth so that I couldn't speak. It was like a cape over my head, and in the mirror I looked like a dog. In the nights they took me out of my prison and I had to go to the underground where there was an arena. I was a gladiator. Docters used to come here to watch. I was helpless. I was like an animal, not able to talk. There was no way how I could take this device out of my mouth. It was plugged in a strange way. When I tried to take it off, things started to shriek in my head. The cape was also plugged into my ears. It was a red cape, and it was about to make me insane. I found out that these docters were way worse than the metal docters, and there were times I wished I could go back to the old devices again with their cyborg-docters.

One day, and I don't know how I did it, I could get the earplugs out. Immediately there was a noise like a crying dog was around, and the ground below my feet started to ripple as it was a sort of vortex or black hole activating. I got sucked in a spiral of time, and I ended up in the year 2034 Before Christ. I felt my flesh and bones again in a cave, while my girl was staring at me. She had a device in her hands, and I knew it was from her father. She didn't know who I was, but I told her the story. She believed me as she could see I came from another time. When I had told her the story she realized how dangerous the device was. Then we decided to throw it into the river. I also told about the man who would bring a docter's book to her father, but she said that didn't happen yet. And I thought : 'Maybe now the device has gone it won't happen.' But how wrong I was. One day her father told about the man and showed us the book. In the book there were strange stories about docters helping little girls. These docters were a higher race than God. They used to live alone and in secrecy with strange animals.

Most of the times these were wild animals like bears and dogs, but they were tamed by the docters usually, and most of the times the little girls got these animals also. In a sense the stories had my interest. I used to read them for the Jewish girl. But at one night she was screaming. When I came to her room there was a huge animal like a bear or dog having a docter's instrument in it's claw, but it also looked like a time-stealers device. The animal was wildly moving the device, and I tried to sooth the animal as he tried to hit us with the device. I said to the Jewish girl : 'Stand behind me.' Finally I could take the time-device out of the claw of the animal, but then the animal jumped on the girl and devoured her. I couldn't do anything to save her, so I ran away with the device. I knew by this device I would see her again somewhere in time.

The End

The Dentist

horror / tragedy

Kevin lived in an ordinary family, an ordinary house, somewhere in America. He had a somewhat heartshaped face, and people used to call him heartman. His family was a good family, great heart to others, and some of them had top-positions in the medical world. Kevin's father was a dentist, and he had his dental appartment next to the house. Sometimes Kevin went there to play a bit in the garden, but as Kevin was growing older, he didn't like to be at that place. A lot of people had problems to go to the dentist, although Kevin's father was a good man. He used to take wanderers in house to give them a home, and Kevin always used to call them 'uncle'. Kevin's father always gave them dental care for free. Yes, the dentist had a heart of gold, a great heart.

But one day Kevin's father was involved in an accident and he didn't survive it. The whole family and all the wanderers were in deep mourning. Soon another man took over the dentistry. This man was the opposite of Kevin's father. Kevin didn't like him at all, and the more he got confronted with it, the more he missed his own father. The man got a few rooms in the house where he started to live. Kevin thought his mother had a relationship with him, but he wasn't sure. Kevin's sisters also liked the man, but the rest of the family and most of the wanderers didn't like him.

One day the man asked if Kevin could come to his room. When Kevin stepped in he sat in his chair, staring at Kevin with a strange stare. 'You asked me to come, so here I am,' Kevin said, a bit frightened. 'Kevin,' the man said, 'your mother and I have spoken about this. We think it is better for you to leave the town, for you need to go to a boarding-school. You must work on your future and you can't if you live here.'

'Why ? Why can't I stay here ?' Kevin asked. 'You just can't,' the man said. And since then Kevin had to live in a boarding-school, far away from his family. In the boarding-school nuns worked, but they weren't good for the children. Kevin started to long for home, but he had to stay in the boarding-school. Here he tried to make new friends, but life was very hard. One day a nun said there was a visitor for Kevin. It seemed to be the man who has brought him here. 'Kevin, do you like it here ?' the man asked. But Kevin didn't answer. It was a short visit, as Kevin didn't want to speak.

A few years later when Kevin had finished his study on the boarding-school he decided to return to his home-town. But when he came there it had changed. It was like there had been a war here. Houses were burnt down, new poor houses had been built. The appartment of the dentist next to his family's house had become huge and advanced. When Kevin walked in he got the shock of his life. Two skeletons were sitting on chairs. What had happened here ? 'Is anyone there ?' Kevin shouted. But no one answered. It was strange for Kevin didn't encounter one single living being yet in his home-town. No one was home in his family's house either. No one at the boarding-school had told him about this.

As he went back to the boarding-school one of the nuns told him that there had been a man coming to his home-town who was a prophet. He had preached about eternal damnation. In his eyes it was necessary for a human being to become an angel by death, and then to search for the well of eternal damnation to become a dentist, which was in his eyes a higher entity. He preached that the fastest way to eternal damnation was by fire. 'Now who would believe such crap ?' Kevin asked in shock.

'No one believed him,' the nun said, 'but he warned them that unbelievers would be taken to Skeleton City, the city of no hope, a strange city where they would be slaves of the dentists all their lives.' Kevin started to laugh nervously, but suddenly he bowed down his head, and asked what finally happened to his home-town. 'We aren't allowed to talk about that,' the nun said.

Kevin was very worried about his family, and returned to his home-town which now looked like a ghost-town. Still he couldn't find anyone there, and again he went into the dental appartment to search for traces of his family or the man who once took the place of his father. Kevin started to read some papers but couldn't find any traces. Finally he decided to go to the cellar below the appartment, where the medical storages were. He had never been here, but he knew that it was there, as his father always spoke a lot about it. Suddenly a man with a gun stood before him. It was a man in black dress. It seemed to be the prophet. 'You are not going any further,' the prophet said. 'Behind me is the stairway to the hall of Skeleton City. Here the dentists rule over those of no hope.'

'What did you do to my family ?' Kevin asked. But then the prophet took Kevin's head in a tight grip. Kevin roared of pain, while the prophet took him downstairs, where behind a door Kevin could have a view at the Skeleton City. There was a horrible stench. It was like they were standing on a high mountain, and far away down in a huge depth he saw skeletons walk very slowly while their heads were bown down. 'Why are you doing all this ?' Kevin tried to say, but he could hardly speak because of the tight arm around his neck almost strengling him. 'You do not know anything of God,' the prophet whispered faul in Kevin's ear. Kevin could almost feel the spit. 'The dentists were always the hidden race of God's chosen ones for His works on earth undercover. They have always been God's secret rulers, but these are the days of revelation,' the prophet whispered further. Kevin's stomach hurt, while the prophet was taking him downstairs from the mountain.

'What are you doing to me ?' Kevin shouted. 'I will show you your family,' the prophet whispered mean. Kevin had never heard such a faul voice. The hall looked like the town, but there was even more poverty, more fire and smoke, and the stench was so horrible that Kevin almost had to vomit. The prophet pushed Kevin in front of a window of a very poor house. Inside a strange baby was sitting on a chair. The baby was oranged coloured and the sight hurt Kevin's eyes. Suddenly the baby started to cry, while strange gasses and fluids like chemicals

came out of it's eyes. Kevin thought he was dying because of the smell and the gass spreading itself. Then the baby started to vomit an orange fluid, burning like fire. The baby just didn't stop. 'Now run, Kevin,' the prophet said, 'for it's going to get you.' But still the prophet had him in a tight grip. Then the prophet led him to another house, where the same thing was happening. 'What's going on ?' Kevin asked, 'Why are you doing this to me ?'

'To show you who God is,' the prophet whispered. 'Where is my family ?' Kevin asked. In the distance between the houses a group of skeletons walked. 'There is your family,' the prophet said, while he directed his finger. 'What did you do to them ?' Kevin roared. He tried to get free from the grip, but the prophet only tightened his grip. Behind the houses there was another gateway to another hall. Here there were many balconies while there was fire in the hall. On the balconies skeletons marched, while Kevin heard a roaring voice coming from the fire. 'The administration papers with it's patient-lists were always forming the hidden bible of God, and it is alive,' the prophet said loud. 'You are already dead !'

Then suddenly all around on the balconies the tight faces of dentists appeared, judging the skeletons. 'It is Judgement Day, Kevin,' the prophet said. From the fire a sort of dragon which looked like an octopus was rising, heavily shaking it's neck, and then raising his many orange tentacles. Then it started to shriek, and took the skeletons one by one into the fire, which was boiling like lava. 'God is having dinner now !' the prophet laughed. 'The dentist is just God's hidden church of Judgement Day.' Then the prophet walked with Kevin around the fireplace and led him into another Hall. Here there were many more balconies, but this time millions and millions of dentists were standing on the balconies in rows. Some had tall beards, otheres were dressed in orange. 'Now listen, all you dumbheads !' the prophet shrieked. 'Here is the Chosen One ! Finally the Apocalypse has been revealed to him. His name is Kevin !' Suddenly a few dentists fell down from the high balconies, and as they touched the ground they turned into snakes and they glided in speed towards Kevin while they shrieked and moved very wild. Kevin was in shock about the horror of this sight. What were they going to do to him, and why was he the chosen one ? But he decided to stay calm.

Suddenly a huge face with a tall beard appeared in the middle of the Hall, while slowly it started to turn into an orange cherub. The cherub moved slowly towards Kevin, while it seemed everything around Kevin was tumbling down. The cherub took Kevin's hand, and Kevin didn't feel the grip of the prophet anymore. Everything around Kevin was white, but more and more the sight of a beautiful but vague landscape was forming itself. 'Where am I ?' Kevin asked .... 'With me,' the cherub said .... 'As you know you are the chosen one ...'

'What does that mean,' Kevin asked. Then the cherub got an evil grin, and said : 'How wonderful it will be to live with God, as being a higher entity than dentists, cherubs and seraphs.' Again Kevin asked : 'What do you mean ?' Then the cherub continued to speak : 'Kevin, you were God's hidden seraph thrown on earth, but now He would like to bring you into a higher order, even higher than his dentists. Do you realize the powers He will grant you ?'

'I am not interested in any power,' Kevin said. 'I just want to see my family back.'

'Oh, but you have already seen them back, but it was not what you would like to see,' the cherub spoke, 'Now wouldn't you be glad with a power to free them out of their hopeless situation ? You were made to save them !' Suddenly purple lights very dim but shimmering

were appearing before Kevin. 'Now Kevin, take your powers. God had some mercy on your life,' the cherub said.

'No !' Kevin shouted, 'this can be all a trap ! Let me get out of these halls !'

'Oh,' the cherub said with a very low and penetrating voice, while it was like Kevin's stomach was bringing forth fluids of fire penetrating his whole body and his mind. 'So you want to dwell in the same fates as those in Skeleton City ?' The purple lights started to vibrate and changed into pulsating vague octopus-like jelly-fishes having strange hanging and swelling body-bags. The air was becoming darker and darker. Kevin started to shriek. The creatures jumped on him, and it was like they sucked his soul empty, while they were swelling on his body. 'So you choose to be nothing but a dumb slave ?' the cherub roared.

'I can't, I doubt the offerings you did,' Kevin shouted. 'You do not know what you are doing !' the cherub roared while masses of coloured lava seemed to come forth from him, while he faded away more and more into the distance. After awhile Kevin couldn't hear the cherub anymore.

The creatures were shrieking high. Kevin was still in tremendous fear. What was going on ? Kevin had never believed in God, and the things happening now were very strange to him. Why would he be a seraph ? He never felt attracted to God. Or was he also a sort of undercover worker, while even he himself didn't know of that ? Or didn't he believe in God because God had thrown him away from the heavens ? If it was all true then it was nothing but a strange slavery in Kevin's eyes. After he walked for a long time while he almost couldn't see anything, he suddenly saw some light in the distance. He ended up climbing through a gate leading him to the forest of his hometown. When he stepped out he could smell the fresh intoxicating air of the forest. His clothes were all torn. Slowly he walked towards his house. The town was still a mess. he almost couldn't believe what was going on underground. When he moved towards his old home he suddenly got a tremendous fear again, and finally he decided not to go there, but to go straight out of town. Maybe he was just lucky that he survived his journey underground. But he still thought about his family ... He wished they could be saved ...

He decided to go to the police in another town first, but they laughed, and didn't believe him. They said a citizenwar had destroyed the city and everyone had to move to other towns. There was nowhere in his old town anymore. Kevin asked if they knew where his family had gone, and after a long search through all sorts of papers he got a few addresses. So they were still alive ...

Kevin could never forget what happened, and since he had been united with his family again, he never wanted to visit his home-town anymore. But on one night an angel appeared to Kevin. It was a horrible sight. The angel looked like a huge fly, and there were soft roaring voices around it. 'Since you have escaped our world you have left us alone to slavery,' the angel spoke. 'You have delivered us into the hands of the dentists, our chiefs, as the hidden rulers of God the Most High. Why are you doing this to us ?'

'I do not know what you are talking about !' Kevin shouted, 'I don't want to have anything to do with it as well. Go away !' But at the same time Kevin was realizing : The underground of his home-town was living forth in it's horrible circumstances ...

Kevin tried to talk about it to his family, but they all laughed. No one believed him. It drove him a bit mad, and one day when his anger was overflowing he went back to the dental appartment in his home-town, back to the cellar, also because of curiosity if it was really true, and if it was still there. But this time Kevin took weapons with him : A gun and some knives. 'Okay, what is all going on here !' Kevin said loud when he went into the appartment again. The two skeletons on the chair will still there. The stench was unbearable. When he walked downstairs the prophet ran upstairs. Quickly Kevin took his gun and shot the prophet, but the prophet was laughing loud. 'Come on now ! You want to fight God ?' The prophet took Kevin's by his throat and tried to kill him. But again Kevin shot, and finally kicked the prophet away from him. Then he went into the first hall where the skeletons were. But then all the skeletons were running towards Kevin like roaring dogs and started to bite him. Kevin stang wildly with his knife and used his gun. But the skeletons were much stronger and took him in a grip. 'You liar !' one of them roared with a low and terrible voice, while lava was dripping forth from it's mouth having a horrible stench : 'You chose to live above the ground not wanting to know what's going on here ... Now you will pay for this.'

'Then tell me what's going on !' kevin shouted. 'I came back, just for you. Who are you, are you the citizins who died in the war ?' Suddenly the skeleton started to laugh. 'No ! You are wrong, so wrong ... Don't you know anything about the history of your town ?' Then the skeleton said : 'We are the indians who had been killed so that you could build this town. This is our land !'

'Well, I'm sorry for that,' Kevin spoke, 'but what can I do about it ?'

'You can't,' the skeleton spoke, 'but we can sacrifice you to our gods.'

'With what reason ?' Kevin asked. But then the skeletons didn't say anything anymore, as they were mercyless. They brought Kevin to a smokey hill and laid him on an altar. Then a skeleton with a cape had an iron rod in his hand, while the top of the rod was burning and had some strange stones on it. Another skeleton opened the mouth of Kevin while the skeleton put the burning top into Kevin's mouth. Kevin was screaming, but couldn't do anything as the skeletons were too strong and had him in a tight grip. One had his leg in a grip and another one his other leg, and also his arms were in a grip that way, while another skeleton had his head in a grip and another one had opened his mouth. Kevin felt hopeless. He was closing his eyes. The pain was flowing through his body. Kevin tried to scream, but he couldn't anymore. Faces of feathered indians appeared around Kevin. Then suddenly a man was coming forwards. It was an older man with a beard, a bit looking like a dentist, with white clothes. He stood before Kevin and said : 'I am God, but I'm nothing but a slave of these indian gods.'

'But I do not believe in God,' Kevin whispered while a had a sore throat and couldn't speak. Then the man said : 'Kevin, you are the Chosen One designed to help us out of the dental curse. I have hundreds of indian women ready to bear your children, as a new generation of chosen ones.'

Suddenly a skeleton was shouting : the cages are coming ! And then cages on wheels having lots of indian women inside were pushed towards the altar by skeletons. The women had hopeless faces, waiting to be delivered out of their horrible fates. The man was shouting : 'They will bring forth a new generation !'

But all the women could do was bringing forth animals : goats, chicken, but also wild cats. Kevin had to get used to the thought he had hundreds of women. He had divided them in different camps. One night as he was lying in a tent with one of his women another woman entered. He remembered her, but he didn't come too much to her. She was kind of strange, for she used to bite him, and couldn't communicate well. But she tried to make clear to him he had to come with her, so he went out of the tent. On a hill there was fire, and strange dentists in orange were marching there. They had many women in their grip, and as they came closer they heard the women screaming, shrieking and weeping. Kevin took his gun and shot some of the kidnappers. The others were running away, while they left the women alone, but they took one of the women with them. But then Kevin shrieked in a high tone, which he always used to do to call for a certain wild cat he brought forth by one of the women. The wild cat came immediately and attacked the kidnappers. Short after the woman was free and went crying to Kevin, while he took her in his arms. She was most dear to him, and he brought her back to the camp.

After this incident there were many wars waged by the dentists against them, in which Kevin lost a lot of his women and animals. Finally Kevin thought the only way to survive was to leave the place with the remains of his women and animals. Kevin could easily find the gateway to the forest of the town and from there he thought the best he could do was to go to another town. His family could take care of his women and his animals, but they still didn't believe any of his tales of the underground. Anyway, it was clear to Kevin that he wouldn't return to the underground, as his women and animals were safe with his family. Kevin still had about thirty women and that was enough to him, although he missed the others who had died in the battle very much. Some of his most precious women had died there. But some of Kevin's women had problems living above the ground, and they returned to the underground. Kevin was torn apart, for he knew they wouldn't survive there. It was a group of ten women, but finally Kevin could persuade some of his brothers to come with him to the ghost-town. Then they could see for themselves that everything was real what he had told them. But when they came there the dental appartment didn't exist anymore. And there was no way Kevin could find the way to the underground anymore. When he came in the forest the gateway there had also gone, and there was no any trace of the ten women. His brothers laughed, but at the same time they were very worried about the women. Where would they be ?

Finally Kevin even got a team to dig in the place of the dental appartment, but without any result. Also on the place of the gateway they digged, but no result. Kevin thought that maybe all the open spaces underground were now just filled up by earth. Maybe it was over now. But also other women of Kevin started to get problems with living above the ground. They found out there was no way back to the underground. But they started to live in the poor, old and almost burnt down houses of the ghosttown. This had always been their land.

One day a man came to the ghosttown. It was the old prophet. He had the same words he had before. That day Kevin wasn't there, but when he came back he found out his women were gone. On the table in the house of his women lay a card. On the card a tall horse with a skeleton in a garment with a cape had been drawn, and on the other side was written : 'I have taken your women with me.'

Kevin was paniced, and again he called for his brothers. He showed them the card, and they said it looked like a cult or something. 'Well, it is a cult,' Kevin said, 'a dental cult.' The brothers didn't say anything. They were thinking about how they could help their brother and of course his women. One of the brothers remembered that he once played a cardgame on the

football-club with his mates. This card looked like one of these cards. After a few days he came to Kevin again with the cardgame, and yes, one of the cards looked exactly like the card from the woman's house. Kevin watched also the other cards. There was another card with a huge tooth on it, a card with a forest, a card with a sea, and further a lot of other cards. His brother had asked about the game on the football-club, and there they said that sometimes clairvoyants used these cards in their work. He also got an address of a gypsy-women who used to lay these cards for help. They decided to go to that woman.

When they got there the woman was very glad they came. They didn't know why, but it was maybe just a friendly lady. She laid the cards after Kevin had shown her the card of his woman's house. Kevin asked her if she knew where his women were now. The woman went into a deep meditation. She lit some candles, and she was almost coming in a sort of trance while she moved her hand above the cards .... Then she took a card. It was the card of the tooth. Then she took another card. It was the card of the forest. The third card she took was the card of death. Then she shouted : 'Oh no, this can't be true. Your women are all dead.' Kevin got frightened and asked : 'But where are they ?'

Then the gypsy-woman said : 'They are somewhere underground, somewhere deep underground. It used to be a huge open place underground, but now it is very small.'

'Are they all dead ?' Kevin asked. 'Yes,' the gypsy-woman said, 'but I see there are also ten other women who are still alive. Were these your women in earlier times ?'

Kevin said yes. 'Oh, I also see a man there. But he hasn't found the ten other women yet. He's in another room,' the gypsy-woman said. Kevin knew he didn't have any time to lose. Together with his brother he went to the ghost-village again, and they called for a team to dig there again, but again they couldn't find anything. Kevin was desperate. 'Maybe the gypsy-woman just talks out of nothing,' his brother said. So once again they returned to her, and said they had digged in that place again, but couldn't find anything. Again the woman laid the cards, but this time Kevin and his brother got the shock of their lives as her head was turning into a skeleton-skull, while she was speaking with a low voice : 'Woe to them who follow cards, for these cards are lying, as they have been sent out by deceivers.' Then the woman started to laugh evilly. Then the woman took off her skull, which seemed to be a mask and they were staring right into the face of the man who ones replaced their father. 'Uncle Gerard !' Kevin's brother shouted, almost screaming, 'What are you doing here ?'

'The same as what you are doing here !' the man said. Then Kevin's brother took the skin of his own head off which was just a mask, and Kevin was staring right in the face of the prophet. Kevin ran to the door, but it was locked. Then he kicked a window in, and jumped to the balcony. Then from balcony to balcony he got down to the ground, and ran away. He now knew that he couldn't trust anyone or anything anymore. Kevin didn't want to see his family anymore, for what if there were more intruders there ?

The only place he could feel a little bit safe was in one of the houses of his women in the ghost-village. He didn't know why. He went to bed early, as he was very tired. He had locked the door very good and went to sleep. In the middle of the night a man stood before his bed. Kevin could see it wasn't a normal man, but a sort of ghost-appearance. The man said : 'Hello Kevin, I am Jesus Christ. I have sent my dentists to earth as my secret agents to guard a special book named The Book of Prophesy. By the powers of this book they had the power to program people as their slaves, as the slaves of heaven. But you see, Kevin, you know way

too much. I think it is time for you to die.' In one second Kevin had jumped out of his bed, and wanted to run away, but flames were already coiling through the house. 'There's nowhere you can go, Kevin,' Jesus spoke with a dark voice. 'You will take these secrets with you in your grave.'

'Where's that book ?' Kevin asked in panic, also as an attempt to distract Jesus a bit. 'In Paris, Kevin,' Jesus said, 'but for you it is already too late to go there.' Jesus smiled, and suddenly a couple of flames were flowing out of his mouth trying to devour Kevin. Kevin quickly took his knife and threw it into the heart of the ghost-appearance. Quickly he dived through the window to escape the flames. He now knew what he had to do ... He had to find and destroy this Book of Prophesy, but what if it was just another trap ? Kevin decided to go to Paris to find out more about the book. When he came in Paris he asked several people about the book, but no one could help him further. He went from dentist to dentist to do research in their waitingrooms, but he knew he wouldn't come any further like this. If dentists would guard the book, where would they hide it ? It would not be on a place easy to find, Kevin thought. Soon he found out about an order of dentists, and he also found out where they would come together. One night he went to the place by breaking a window. Quickly he searched in the rooms and the cupboards, and finally he found the book, but when he opened it, there was written in big letters : 'Kevin, you have been fooled again. Greetings, Jesus Christ.' Suddenly the letters turned into blood, and it started to drip from the book. In a shock Kevin laid the book on a table, but the police was already in. They arrested him. Kevin now knew it was all nothing but a trap. Someone was really playing with his head, or had he already gone crazy.

Kevin now knew that he even couldn't trust himself anymore. How could he be so stupid and naive ? Finally Kevin ended up in prison, but maybe that was for the moment the savest place for him, so that he couldn't do any stupid things, and no one could harm him here. One night Kevin had pain in his stomach, like there was something in, wanting to come out. After awhile he had to vomit, and it seemed to be a huge plug as an implant. Kevin had so much rest in his head now.

Several years later Kevin had come out of prison. The first thing he wanted to do was to go to a prostitute. Kevin kissed her lips, and felt like he was home again. But he didn't know what home was anymore. He told the woman everything what had happened. The woman said she believed him. Kevin had a good feeling. He could come at peace with this woman. He wanted to see her another time, but he had to pay her a lot of money. When Kevin wanted to go to her for the second time he found out she didn't live there anymore. The room was empty. Kevin asked if he could live in the room. He got permission, but he had to pay a high rent. One night Jesus appeared before him again. 'You have survived us, Kevin,' Jesus spoke. 'You are the Chosen One. Do with us whatever you want. We are your servants.' But Kevin didn't trust it at all, and shouted : 'Go away, go to hell again, you wicked spirit !'

But suddenly Kevin felt an ache in his head. Kevin grasped his head and felt something was trying to break through his skin. He took his knife and made an opening there where it tried to sting through. Suddenly he took a tall plug out of his head. He was staring at it, and he found out he was still in a prison in Paris. How long had he been sitting in this prison already ? He was still staring at his mindplug, while a guard was coming towards him. The guard told him that he had been in prison for twenty-three years already, because of murder. Then the guard put the plug into Kevin's head again.

The End

Grand Buffalo Salloon

f i c t i o n

The indian had struck a man down in a salloon. No one knew the exact reason, and all around cowboys were standing up, taking their guns. But in a rage cold and in full fire at the same time the indian took some bottles from behind the bar and threw them in the faces of some cowboys. Blood was flowing everywhere, and the indian ran away through a door while there were many bullets floating through the air. It was like time had ended in the salloon of Grand Buffalo Village. No one knew what had happened exactly, and why the indian was in such a rage. Some cowboys ran away through the same door. The indian stood behind a wall in the backgarden, and when the first cowboy came along the indian kicked the gun out of the cowboy's hand. Then he pierced the man's arm with a knife. The man bowed down in pain. Then five other cowboys surrounded the indian, but the indian took the wounded cowboy tight and held a knife against his throat.

'He will die if you let one further bullet come out of your gun,' the indian said with a dark voice. 'Step backwards,' one of the cowboys said to the others, 'he's meaning it.'

'Drop your guns,' the indian said. One by one the cowboys let their guns fall on the ground. Then the indian went to his horse, still with the cowboy in a tight grip. When the indian sat on his horse he dropped the cowboy and went away.

In the village one was saying it was a big shame. They knew they had to prepare for war. They knew that the indian was part of the Black Scar Tribe in the North, and they were revengefull and would never give up, although they didn't know the exact reason why the indian was making such troubles. The rage of the indian had told them enough. They had to prepare their weapons.

But the weeks after everything was quiet. And soon they forgot about the incident. Months later another indian of the Black Scar Tribe came to the salloon. Everyone was suddenly on their guard. They watched him tight. It was a tall and dark man, having a few feathers in his hair. He had a light brown trousers made of skin, naked upper body, and some jewelry hanging around his neck, with feathers, tall animal-teeth and some beads. He had a dark face, spreading fear around him. Some of the cowboys had their hands close to their guns. Then suddenly he smashed his fist on the bar, and roared : 'Give me some strong drinks or my past angers will overflow me again.' The barkeeper poured a glass full, but that wasn't enough. The indian kept drinking. Then the indian sat down for awhile. A cowboy entered the salloon and walked towards the indian : 'Hey,' he shouted, 'one of your brothers was here a couple of months ago, making a mess here.' Then the indian stood up, took the arm of the cowboy and bent it in a painfull position. 'Hey, hey,' the cowboy said loud, 'I just wanted to ask you a question.' Then the dark indian freed his arm, and sat down again.

'I just wanted to ask you : why ?' the cowboy said. But the indian didn't say anything. But another cowboy had stood up, and walked towards the indian while he had aimed his gun at the indian. 'Another time behaving like this, and you will get a bullet through your head. Now how's that ?' the cowboy said. But in a flash of a second the indian had grasped the man by his neck and threw him out of the window. Other cowboys were standing up, taking their guns, but this time more indians of the Black Scar Tribe were entering. It became a bloody fight. No one exactly knew why. The Black Scar Tribe were with so many men that they could easily take over the village. The sheriff couldn't do anything. They tied him to a tree. The sheriff repeatedly asked them what their mission was, but they didn't answer. They tied a rag around his mouth finally. After many bloodbaths they finally left the village.

After a few days the sheriff got freed by cowboys visiting the village. He was the only survivor of the village. The cowboys promised they could build up the village again by taking the salloon. The cowboys decided to use the upper rooms of the salloon as a brothel. They thought it would calm down the rage of both cowboys and indians. Soon the village was full again.

But soon there was another attack on the village. This time the Black Scar Indians had strange flags with them. When they saw the sherif they shot him by an arrow. The cowboys in the salloon they captured, and took them away on their horses. When they came to their camp again they tied the cowboys to trees and stakes. 'We didn't do anything to hurt you,' one of the cowboys said loud. 'We just wanted to help building up the village again.' After awhile

they freed the cowboy who spoke to them. They led him to the wigwam of the old chief. The chief was smoking, and the place was full of smoke and light. There was a small fire. It was a big wigwam. The chief gave the pipe to the cowboy, and the cowboy had to smoke as a synbol of peace. ‘But will you let us go then ?’ the cowboy asked.

The chief shook his head and said : ‘No, you will be one of us.’

But then the cowboy said : ‘That would be of great honor, but we are cowboys.’

But then the chief got very angry and broke the pipe. Then he made a movement with his hand, and the indians who brought the cowboy to him had to lead the cowboy away again.

Again they tied the cowboy, and after awhile the old chief came out of his wigwam. He turned his head to the sky and cried. But then he got angry and started to scream. The cowboys started to shake. Wildly he began to move his knife in the air, making a lot of signs. It was like he was praying to his gods and ancestors. Suddenly he cut himself in his arm, and blood was coming forth. Then he took a rag and tied it around his arm. Soon the rag was red like blood, and he walked to the cowboys. They all got some of his blood on their foreheads.

‘You will be my sons, if you want that or not,’ the old chief said. ‘You will not return to Grand Buffalo Village and it’s salloon, as that name will be written on my grave.’

‘But why ?’ the cowboys asked him.

But the old chief didn’t want to speak about it. ‘Men of the Black Scar Indians,’ the cowboy who had been to the chief’s wigwam said, ‘have mercy on us. We are simple men never doing wrong to others. We live honorable lives in peace. You are warmakers.’

Then the chief said : ‘You have built a brothel on your salloon again. In early times there was also a brothel, and our women had to work there.’

But then the cowboy said : ‘If our people have hurt you so bad, then we take distance from that. We want to do anything to make it better. How can we take away your pain ?’

Again the old chief started to cry, and then turning into hysterical rage. Again he cut into his arm, but now it was the other arm, and again he tied a rag around it to stop the bleeding. Then he smeared some of the blood on the lips of the cowboys.

‘I know you are not like your ancestors,’ the chief said, ‘that’s why you are here. Now, be sons of me.’

‘Okay, old man,’ the cowboy said. ‘If that will take away your pain, we will be sons of you, but let us go back to our village to do good.’

Then the chief walked towards the cowboy again, hugged him and made him free. ‘Go in peace and freedom, son,’ the old man said.

‘Can I take my brothers with me ?’ the cowboy asked.

But the old chief shook his head and said : ‘They will be with me.’

‘Oh, but I will not leave them,’ the cowboy said.

But then the old chief got angry again, and started to speak in another language while he walked around very nervously.

Then he took an axe and jumped towards one of the cowboys to cut the head off. All the other cowboys bowed their head.

‘Look,’ the cowboy who had the word said, ‘I understand about your pain, but now you let an innocent one pay for it.’

Then the chief roared : ‘You do not know anything of the ancestors and their laws. If one of a family or village is guilty, then all of them are guilty.’

But then the cowboy said : ‘Okay, if you want to cut, cut me, but stay away from my brothers.’

But then the chief started to cry : ‘You are a good son, I will not harm you, but your brothers must die.’

Then the cowboy said : ‘Then I will die with them.’ he knew he couldn’t begin anything against the chief as there were indians all around them. If he would be alone with the chief he would kill him.

When the chief killed the second brother the cowboy started to scream. ‘Okay,’ the chief said, ‘I will keep the other four brothers alive if you will play a game of dice with me. If you win, your brothers will be free, but if you lose they will die.’ The cowboy knew he didn’t have another choice, so they played the game. But the cowboy lost the game, and some other indians quickly killed the four other cowboys, as that was the demand of their gods. Again the cowboy screamed, while he got hopeless by the loss. ‘You are still my son,’ the chief said. ‘I want you to marry a woman of our tribe, so that you are truely one of us.’

‘No, I want to go back to my village,’ the cowboy said.

‘Remember about the things I told you,’ the chief said. ‘There is still an enormous wrath of our ancestors resting on that village, and especially on the salloon. It is a cursed place, and we or our next generation will visit it again, as the gods are still hungry.’

‘Isn’t it enough ? All the things which happened like the bloodbaths and the deaths of my brothers ?’ the cowboy asked.

‘No, it isn’t enough,’ the chief said.

‘Then when will it be enough ?’ the cowboy asked.

‘When you marry one of our women,’ the old chief said. The cowboy bowed his head, and said : ‘If that will take away the wrath on Grand Buffalo Village, then I think I do not have another choice. Or is there another way to take the wrath away ?’

The old chief shook his head. Then the cowboy asked : ‘Can I marry her in the future ? Can I just live in my village and work there, and then when I’m older I will return to you to marry her ?’ The chief looked the cowboy deep in the eyes, took his hand and said : ‘promised.’

Then the cowboy started his lonely journey back to his village. He had now lost his brothers, but he could rebuild his life in the village. There was so much he could do there. But when he came there, the village was a wilderness. All houses had been burnt down or broken down, and also the salloon had been destroyed. This had to be the work of the Black Scar Indians. The cowboy could go to another village, or rebuild the village here, like he did before. He found a young girl and a young boy crying in the sand. For them he would rebuild the village.

As other cowboys joined him he decided he wanted to rebuild the salloon on another place, but it still had to be called Grand Buffalo Salloon. He wanted to rebuild the old village, but in a way that things would turn out right. One day the old chief came to visit the village. He thought the cowboy had done a good job with it. It looked so different now. ‘I have thought about a lot of things,’ the old chief said. ‘And I think you are a good guy, and you need to marry whoever you want, whether it is a cowboy-girl, a girl from our tribe, or someone from another tribe, or not marrying at all, that doesn’t matter to me. You will always be my son, and you are free to go.’ The chief showed him a letter of another tribe, in which they declared that the war was over. It seemed the Black Scar Tribe also had other enemies, but it was like this declaration of peace had relieved a lot more in the head of the old man. The cowboy patted with his hand on the shoulder on the old man, and was also very relieved by it. That night there was a great party in Grand Buffalo Salloon. In the Salloon there were many paintings of indian women, and the old chief said with a proud smile that they looked like the women of his tribe. He was honored, and he had a long and good conversation with his son, at a good, good table.

The End

Shadows on Perwilsh Mountain

f i c t i o n

Red Snaketongue was an indian from Perwilsh-Mountain, which they also called the pearl of the prairie. He had a bottle-shop at the foot of the mountain. He sold all sorts of bottles. Next to his shop there was a brothel with a salloon. He had a good contact with the women working there, and he often had to help them when clients got rude to them. Most of the times these were cowboys. One day the terror of the prairie was coming to the small village. Everyone was in fear. It was Black Henry, a feared notorious cowboy from the West. They also called him the Black Gun. First they thought it was only a rumor that he would come to the village, but later some had really seen him coming towards the village. He was walking. He never used a horse to ride on. He always said that riding horses was for cowards. The villagers didn't know why he would come to such a small village. Red Snaketongue was in worry about his neighbours, the women of the brothel. Some villagers decided to leave the village for awhile, but things went so fast that not many could escape. If Black Henry was somewhere no one was allowed to leave. For he would always ask : 'So you leave because of me, right ? Then you aren't worthy to live, dude.' And then he used to shoot them down. So when Black Henry was entering the village, all cowboys started shaking, and no one dared to leave the village anymore. Some tried to ease his feelings a bit by waving friendly to him, but Black Henry thought that would be suspicious. One of the wavers he grasped from a horse. 'Why are you riding a horse ?' he asked. 'If you are a man, then let the horse ride on you.' And then he threw the poor man through a window. He was on his way to the salloon. The barkeeper was in a stress, and was already running for the best bottles.

Red Snaketongue lived higher in the mountains, so he took the women through a backdoor into the mountains behind the village. They had to live with him for awhile, as they all knew that Black Henry was the rudest one if it came to women. Lots of the women he touched didn't survive. Red Snaketongue had a big house in the mountains. But Black Henry had heard about that house, and when he had drunk a lot and asked the barkeeper a lot about the house, he was on his way to it.

The women got a room in the house of Red Snaketongue. They all got their own room, as there were enough rooms in such a big house. They had never been here before, but now it seemed to be necessary, although Black Henry was already on his way to it. One of the women looked out of the window and saw Black Henry coming. He was a tall man, almost one or two heads bigger than the tallest man of the village. The woman whispered loud : 'He's coming. What are we going to do ?'

Red Snaketongue ran to the backdoor, and all the women had to come with him. They had to climb over the mountain to the other side. There was no other way. This side wasn't safe anymore since Black Henry was there. They said his eye could see everything.

But it was already too late. They heard shots, and soon Black Henry was coming from behind the house. How could he be there so fast ? 'And where are we going ?' he asked, while he aimed his gun on them. Red Snaketongue asked him what he wanted. 'I heard about your big house, and that you are the only one living in it. I want that house,' Black Henry said.

'Oh, but the house is full already,' Red Snaketongue said. 'Look at these women.'

'Those are the women of the brothel,' Black Henry said. 'They can work here, but I want to house, and you ... beat it.'

'No way,' Red Snaketongue said, 'this house was from my parents. It's a heritage, and I won't sell it.'

'Who's talking about selling ?' Black Henry said, while he walked closer to Red Snaketongue, 'We are talking about taking a house. We don't talk about money. I don't believe in money. I never paid for something. I wasn't raised like that.'

'You have to obey the rules of this village, and not of your head this time, dude,' Red Snaketongue said. Then Black Henry took one of the women, and the woman started to scream. Immediately Red Snaketongue jumped forwards and kicked Black Henry against his arm, but he didn't let go. 'I'm serious with you now, dude,' Red Snaketongue said. 'Let the woman go and get the hell out of here, or you will have a meeting with my knife and then your skull and skin ....' But then Black Henry interrupted and said : 'Tut, tut, tut, take it easy with your bla bla. Black Henry has nothing to go. I live on the streets, do not have any possession, and now you think this is too much to ask ?'

'I know your types of guy,' Red Snaketongue said, 'When you let the woman go, you can sleep here tonight.'

‘Ah, now we’re speaking on terms,’ Black Henry said. ‘But let’s turn it a bit : You can sleep here tonight, but tomorrow you have to back off.’

And what could Red Snaketongue do with such a big gun on his head and someone like this breathing in his neck, a breath full of the strangest and strongest drinks he had ever smelled. ‘I didn’t know you were the king here,’ Red Snaketongue said, ‘but if you are, then take what you wish.’

And this was how Black Henry took over the house of Red Snaketongue. Since then Red Snaketongue lived in his own shop. Fortunately there was a small room above the shop, but it was not much. But since Black Henry took the house the village became quiet again. The wrath of Black Henry had left it.

But one day Black Henry came to Red Snaketongue’s shop. He wanted the best bottle available. Of course Black Henry didn’t pay for it. But everyday Black Henry came back to get bottles, and soon Red Snaketongue had to close the shop, as he didn’t have any bottles and money anymore. Because of what Red Snaketongue had done for the brothel and the salloon. He got a room there. Since then he also started to work as barkeeper, and of course as the guard of the women. The salloon bought the rooms of the old shop, and they used it as a place of entertainment. They broke the walls between the salloon and the old shop away, so that there could be a stage on which the women could perform. Some liked that better than to work in the brothel. Sometimes they also invited some musicians to attract visitors.

One day Black Henry came to the new salloon. He seemed to be more friendly, but he still didn’t pay for anything, and they didn’t want to have any troubles with him. They knew he would break off the whole village if they would make troubles with him. So they just hoped he would leave again soon. But Black Henry wanted to get on stage. It seemed to be a miraculous singer. Everyone was in awe, but they were still in tremendous fear. Everyday Black Henry returned to sing on the stage. He never wanted any money for it, as he didn’t believe in money, and a man had to be a man, he always said : Not giving money, then neither receiving money. But the money streamed in for the salloon anyway, as the songs of Black Henry drew many visitors from everywhere around. They paid Red Snaketongue for it, and the owner, and for Red Snaketongue it was a way to deal with all the loss he had because of Black Henry.

But one day Black Henry died. Red Snaketongue didn’t know how he had to think about that. He had so many mixed feelings. Although some of the visitors missed him, they also knew it was better this way, as they all feared him, and they all knew he was such a threat. It was like the village could breath again, although there were many tears on his funeral. The priest, who was also the doctor of the village, and in his free time a rude cowboy, held a long speech

about Black Henry : ‘We are all glad this mean bastard has gone. Where did he go ? To the eternal huntingfields, to hell’s salloon, or to tease paradise ? We do not know, and we will never know with a man like the Black Gun.’ When the speech was over, someone was shouting : ‘Black Henry is coming !’ He had seen him coming in the distance. But the priest said : ‘No, that is impossible. We just delivered him to the earth.’

But the man just entering the village really looked a lot like Black Henry. ‘I heard about Henry dying. I am his twinbrother !’ the man shouted. The cowboys were shivering again, and some of the women started to scream. But soon the village got aware that his twin-brother was the opposite of Black Henry.

Red Snaketongue decided to go back to his old house, and wanted to raise up his bottle-shop again. But he would sell his bottles in his own house now. When he came to his house it was a wilderness there. Black Henry had made a mess. But he found here the most beautifull and best bottles he had ever seen in his life. It was like the heritage of Black Henry.

The End

Black Horses Across Dorrek River

f i c t i o n

Whispering Snake and Black Deer were two indians on their journey to Wasteland City, a lonely village in the West. They went across the Dorrek-river to get there, and then they had to travel through the wilderness for a long time. They were getting thirsty, and their own water was running out. Also the horses got very thirsty and tired, but after awhile they found a small lake where they could drink. The water was fresh like a well. Whispering Snake sat down. He was tired after a long road, and they still had a long road to go. Also Black Deer was very tired, and lay down to sleep for awhile. The horses were still drinking, and there was also some grass for them to eat. After awhile the horses were making some noise. Whispering

Snake had also fallen asleep, but now they woke up by the noise of the horses. Two cowboys were trying to get grip on the horses, probably to take them away. ‘Hey, they want to steal our horses,’ Whispering Snake said. They both stood up and ran to their horses, but it was too late. Now they had to travel further by foot.

After a few days they came to Wasteland City. Whispering Snake looked around him. It was a lonely village. There were not many houses, and most of the houses were empty. The rest of the village was full of wigwams. In these wigwams most of the villagers lived, but they were often gone. They often travelled around, and were only there for a season every year. Whispering Snake and Black Deer first needed some horses, as theirs had been stolen. There was one house which was also a salloon and a horse-business. The barkeeper already saw them coming. There was no one in the salloon, only a few indians playing with dice. ‘I already saw you coming,’ the barkeeper said. ‘Your sad faces look like you need some horses.’ He was leading them to the place where the horses were, behind the house. ‘Yes,’ Whispering Snake said, ‘our horses got stolen.’ But when they saw the horses also their own horses stood between them. Black Deer pushed Whispering Snake to let him know that they could better not talk about it. Maybe the barkeeper didn’t know that these were stolen. But when they had to pay a lot of money Whispering Snake said that these were their stolen horses. The barkeeper didn’t believe them. Whispering Snake asked the man when he got these horses and from who. The man said that two cowboys came, and that he had paid a lot of money for the horses. They both had to pay the full price, as the man couldn’t help that these were stolen ones. He had paid the full price. But the man also had some cheaper horses, so finally Whispering Snake and Black Deer decided to take them. These horses were cheaper because they were still wild. They weren’t tamed. Whispering Snake and Black Deer saw it as a challenge to tame them, but that wasn’t as easy as they thought.

The horses were wild like fire, and in the beginning they often fell from the horses. They decided to bring the horses back, but the barkeeper didn’t want to buy them back anymore. He said that he had them for years, and no one would buy them because they were too wild. In the salloon there were still indians playing with dice. Whispering Snake and Black Deer decided to play with them. As it was a horse-business these men played not for money but for horses. Soon Whispering Snake and Black Deer won so many horses by the game that they could start their own horse-business. One day they saw the two thieves coming to the salloon again. Immediately they ran to the salloon, but when the thieves saw them they jumped on their horses and were gone as fast as they could. Also Whispering Snake and Black Deer took their horses and followed them. They saw the two cowboys disappearing somewhere between caves. Whispering Snake and Black Deer stepped from their horses and went into the place between the caves to search for an opening. They went inside, and saw the two cowboys, but one of them had a gun. Quickly Black Deer took an arrow and shot him in his arm. The man fell down, while the other cowboy ran away. Whispering Snake took the two horses from the thieves, but when they found the other cowboy they found also a hall full of horses. Maybe they had a horse-business too, but they knew that these horses were stolen. The cowboy ran to a rock, and grasped something. Now he had a gun also. Black Deer took another arrow but the cowboy could dive away. And there was the other cowboy again, but he was creeping. They had to be very carefull now. Soon someone was shooting in the air. It seemed to be the barkeeper. First he reacted angry to the cowboys but then he shot Black Deer in the arm. Now

Whispering Snake and Black Deer knew that the barkeeper was also a part of this thieving company. Whispering Snake took an arrow and tried to shoot the barkeeper, but he missed. Black Deer hid behind a rock. The horses made a lot of noise. Another shot hit Whispering Snake's shoulder. Now they were both wounded. Also Whispering Snake hid behind the rock. Here they found another opening. They ran through a corridor and then came into a room where an indian girl had been blindfolded and tied. There was an opening in the ceiling, and quickly they disappeared through it, with the girl. They couldn't find their horses anymore, and they were wounded, so they were in a dangerous position. When they had freed the woman she said that she knew where her horse was. They found it behind another cave. The woman would bring them to her house, where she could care for their wounds. It was in a forest. When they got there the woman had all sorts of bottles with medicines. She was a medicine-woman, and she was very gratefull that they had saved her. She had been kidnapped by the horse-thieves. They found her in the forest once, but fortunately they didn't know where she lived. The woman was very friendly. She said that her father once had a horse-business as well, but she never knew why they had to kidnap her. 'Is your father still alive ?' Whispering Snake asked. 'No,' the woman said.

'And who has this horse-business now ?' Whispering Snake asked. The woman told them that the barkeeper took it over, long ago. 'So you knew the barkeeper ?' Whispering Snake asked. And then the woman told a long story about the barkeeper, that he was very corrupted, and that he worked together with thieves and criminals.

When they got back to Wasteland Village everything was burning, and all their horses had been gone. Also the salloon was burning, and there were no horses anymore. The two didn't know what was going on. They decided to return to the woman. But on their way they saw a large group of horses while indians of a certain tribe were walking with them. Some were riding on horses. They also saw the cowboys and the barkeeper walking inbetween. Their hands had been tied behind their backs. When the two came to the woman they described what happened and they described the indians, and asked the woman what they could do best. The woman said that they better not go to those indians as they were a dangerous tribe. 'But they have our horses ?' Black Deer protested. 'I know,' the woman said, 'but you better listen to my advice.' But then Whispering Snake decided to follow them in a distance. He wanted to know what was going on and what would happen. Black Deer would go with him, and the woman would also come. But wherever they searched they couldn't find the indians with the horses anymore. The woman said that there was a big chance that these horses were from the indians, and that they had finally found the thieves. But Black Deer and Whispering Snake thought about the wigwams burning. Was it a city full of thieves then they would understand.

The women said that the enemies of their enemies would not be friends in definition, that's why they better could stay out of it. But Whispering Snake and Black Deer wanted to find out, and they wanted their horses back, at least the ones who were of themselves. They asked the woman if she knew where the tribe lived. The woman described the path.

The next day they would go to that camp, although the woman was very scared. Finally they decided to go there without the woman.

After days of travel they got there. They had to be very careful now. They could peek from between some rocks, and they saw the barkeeper and the two thieves tied to stakes. Behind

them there was a lot of grass where the horses were eating. They also saw their own horses. They decided to wait for the night, and then they would take away their horses.

When it was night they creeped around the camp to the grass where the horses were. It seemed to them that everyone was sleeping, also the two thieves and the barkeeper. The horses made a bit noise, so they got afraid that someone would wake up. Suddenly Black Deer felt a hand on his back. 'What are you doing here ?' a dark voice said. Black Deer turned around. It was an indian of the tribe. 'Thieves, thieves !' the indian was suddenly shouting and took them both in a tight grip. Soon other indians came out of their wigwams and also Whispering Snake and Black Deer got tied to stakes, close to the barkeeper and the two thieves. 'We just want our horses back,' Whispering Snake said. But the indians were in rage. They began to hit their drums and soon they had made a fire. Whispering Snake whispered to Black Deer : 'I hope they aren't cannibals.'

Then after awhile the chief came out of his wigwam. He was an old man. A younger indian showed the five men tied to stakes. 'These are the thieves we have captured,' the indian man said. The chief came closer, and spat every man in the face. Then he started to roar : 'No one will mock the Firaf-indians, no one ! How dare you, you will pay for this.' Then he was hitting his chest and started to cry hysterically. Then other indians started to run wildly around the fire. Some raised their knives in the air hysterically. Some other indians fell on their knees. They looked very dangerous. Then another indian came out of his wigwam. He was also old and very wild. He had a bisonlike scalp on his head with horns, and even blood was floating on his body. Did he cut himself, or was that the blood of something else ? He started to shout and shriek hysterically. 'You have challenged us !' he roared horribly. Never before Whispering Snake and Black Deer saw such rage. He took his tomahawk and threw it just above the head of the barkeeper. Then he walked towards the barkeeper while he had raised his knife. He spat in the face of the barkeeper and then slammed his face. The two thieves were shivering. 'You won't come out of this place alive,' he whispered loud.

But suddenly the woman who got saved by Whispering Snake and Black Deer came forward. No one knew how she got there. She raised her hand and shouted : 'Have mercy on the two indians. Their horses had been stolen by these three thieves, and now they only wanted these horses back. They didn't wished any harm on you.'

Then the old chief came forward again, and asked the two if that was true. Then he freed the two indians, and gave them their horses back. But other indians of the tribe started to shout : booh ! booh ! One dark indian came forward. He was very tall, and he took the old chief by the throat : 'We never free any of our prisoners, as it will call forth the wrath of our gods and ancestors. Now you have done this, you will have to die.' Then he took his knife and killed the old man. Women were screaming. Whispering Snake and Black Deer got tied again. They also tied the woman, and said that she was the cause of the old man's death.

But in the middle of the night a woman of the tribe came to free the two indians again and also the woman. She said that she had to go with them, or she would die also. Quickly they took some horses and left. They were on their way to the woman's house in the forest. The woman of the tribe told them a lot about her dangerous tribe, and knew that she could never

return to it, because of what she had done. The woman of the tribe had taken three of her own horses with her. She was in great fear now that her tribe would find her for revenge. And also the woman who was saved by Whispering Snake and Black Deer feared for her life. So they decided to go across the Dorrek-river to live in the land of Black Deer and Whispering Snake.

It was a long journey, but when the four finally came there, the tribe of the two was very glad. They had a lot to tell each other, and they also spoke about the dangerous tribe across the river, but only some older members of the tribe seemed to know a lot about the dangerous tribe across the river. It seemed that in the past there had been a war between the two tribes.

The two women could get along with each other very good, and also they could integrate with the other women of the tribe very well. Whispering Snake and Black Deer were satisfied that everything had gone to a good end.

But one day there was a visitor, and he looked like he was one of the dangerous tribe across the river, but the woman didn't know him. He seemed to be from another tribe across the river, actually one who used to live in Wasteland City in the past. He asked them if they knew what had happened to Wasteland City, because everything had been burnt down. Then they told him the story. He wanted to meet with the tribe who had done that, but they adviced him not to go there. But the man was so full of rage that he would go there with his tribe. 'When will war finally be over ?' an old man asked. 'What do we win with war ? Whether we lose or win, we always lose, it will always end in blood.' But at least the man wanted to find out why Wasteland City had to be burnt. So with his tribe he went across the river again, in search for the tribe. Also Whispering Snake and Black Deer with some others went with them.

When they came close to the camp of the Firaf-tribe the man climbed on a high rock and started to shout. he told them why he had come here with his tribe, and that he wanted an explanation for what had happened. The rest of the tribe stood on the hill around him. Soon an indian with a white horse came from the camp. They had another chief now. The man had a lot of feathers around his head. His head was bowed, and also some other indians of the tribe were with him. Then he raised his face and shouted : 'We have heard all what you said. And if you come for war, so be it. When we have an enemy, their whole camp or city is our enemy. That is the rule by which we live. Those who break that rule will die, for it calls forth the wrath of our gods and ancestors. When there is war, we fight till the end. There is no hope for peace, as it is : an enemy is once and for always !'

Then the other tribed took their weapons, and a bloody war started. A war in which also Whispering Snake and Black Deer had to fight. That day both men on both sides died. And in a strange way both of the tribes drew back. But anyway they had an answer now. Some old men of the tribe of Whispering Snake and Black Deer explained this answer by telling that far in the past the Firaf-tribe one time made peace after a war, but it appeared to be a trap and many of their men, women and children died. Since then they swore they would never believe in making peace again, as it could lead to death. They had to protect themselves by that, but by this all they became the most dangerous and cruel tribe in the neighbourhood. Whispering Snake and Black Deer could understand that, but at the same time they knew that they had an enemy for life. And if the Firaf-tribe would ever search for peace, how could they be trusted ?

For what if they would use the same strategy as those who had used it against them ? It was like Whispering Snake and Black Deer felt how they were driven into that same pit. War like this would indeed be once and for always. How precious their own tribe was in their eyes now, and the ones they still had peace with .... It was like these were the jewels they had to guard for the rest of their lives. But they couldn't think long about these things, as they found out that they had been surrounded by the Firaf-indians. There were arrows all around, and the first so peacefull place was soo turning into a bloodbath. Whispering Snake, Black Deer and all the other men and women of their tribe had to fight for their lives now. The Firaf-indians had found them finally. Whispering Snake got wounded and fell to the ground, but a woman shot an arrow into the chest of his attacker. The woman sat on a horse and took the wounded Whispering Snake on her horse. Another woman took Black Deer, who was also wounded, on her horse. Soon they could get out of the camp. Whispering Snake and Black Deer didn't know the women, but they seemed to be from the same Firaf-tribe. It seemed that they were friends of the woman who saved them the previous time. Also these two women now knew that they couldn't return to the Firaf-indians anymore.

Soon they came to an open place in the wilderness, where a lot more women of the Firaf-indians were. They were shouting, and they were glad. They wanted to form a new tribe now, as they couldn't return to their old tribe. Soon all the survivors of the tribe of Whispering Snake and Black Deer got there, taken in by women. They knew they couldn't go back. They had to move on, or the other Firaf-indians would find them. They would have to move across the next river. It became clear to Whispering Snake and Black Deer that a lot of the women of the Firaf-tribe were against the rules of their tribe in silence. But they couldn't talk about it there, as that would cause their death. Now the women were in freedom, but they were still in danger, also the survivors of the tribe of Black Deer and Whispering Snake. Where would they go ? Or was it better to travel around the rest of their lives ?

In the new tribe crafts started to develop themselves very fast. Everyone knew their own part very quickly. They had a lot of horses, most of them were from the women of the Firaf-tribe. Black Deer and Whispering Snake were busy with the breeding and taming of horses. And soon it was a horse-business also as a way to integrate between all the other tribes of the new land where they were. They told the other tribes about the danger they escaped from, and soon they had compromises that they would defend each other. The warriors would work together in a front. They decided to build a big wall to mark the area and to protect it against invaders, and many of the men of different tribes would work together in guarding the wall as watchmen. Sometimes also Black Deer and Whispering Snake did this, but most of the time they were busy with horse-breeding. They also teached the children of many tribes how to ride horses.

But often Black Deer and Whispering Snake thought about their tribe. How many of them would still be alive ? And where would they be ? They feared that the Firaf-indians had done horrible things to them, or maybe they still lived there in captivity. One day they started to search for more survivals of their tribe in a journey behind the wall. When they came in the area of the Firaf-indians they were in a shock. They saw their people there, chained, doing a lot of work. They couldn't do much as Firaf-indians were everywhere to guard those in labour. They had to work in the fields and on farms and breedings. They decided to travel back to tell the tribes about it, but not any of the tribes was interested in going there, as they feared the Firaf-indians more than anything, because of all the stories. Black Deer and

Whispering Snake knew that they couldn't begin anything on their own, so they decided to give up hope, and maybe later some tribes would change their minds. Black Deer and Whispering Snake would live on, but with pain in their hearts.

One day one of the children of a certain tribe was shouting : 'There is a man coming, an indian chief from behind the wall !' The guards already had let him in. It was the chief of the Firaf-indians. The chief wanted to establish peace, and wanted to change his ways. He had realized that the old ways destroyed more than they wanted. Soon after this declaration the tribes who lived in labour for the Firaf-indians returned to their original tribes. But soon the chief already regretted that, and another war started. Black Deer and Whispering Snake thought that the peace-declaration was a false one because of that what happened in the past. It seemed it had weakened the area behind the wall, as they didn't expect this. Soon the Firaf-indians also invaded the land behind the wall. Again Black Deer and Whispering Snake had to fight for their lives, and this time the war was more bloody than ever. The Firaf-indians made many captives and took the horses in possession. Black Deer and Whispering Snake however could escape, but it looked like they were the only ones. All the others went into labour for the Firaf-indians, who quickly took over the farms, the fields and the other crafts in the land behind the wall. Black Deer and Whispering Snake saw it happening from a distance, while they were hiding in the bushes. Many traitors of the Firaf-indians got killed. Most of the times these were women. They could now stay in the wilderness here with the risk of getting caught, or they could go to the cowboy-villages. It wasn't easy for them to make a decision as the cowboys hated the indians most of the time. But because they feared for their lives they didn't have another choice, and went to the prairy in front of the cowboy-villages. It was a long journey through the prairy, but finally they reached the first cowboy-village. They asked for a place to sleep, and fortunately there was one friendly hotel-owner who had a room for them for free. Soon they discovered that it was also a brothel, and often they heard women scream, becuase the cowboys were very rude to them. They sometimes couldn't sleep because of the noise and the music, but they were glad they had a place at least. They stayed for at least a few months, and then they went to the next cowboy-village. Here they could get a job and could finally build up their lives a bit. Again they worked with horses. They didn't earn much, but it was enough. They knew that they were at least safe here against the Firaf-indians, but they were never sure.

One day that what they feared started to come true. The Firaf-indians had reached their village, and had surrounded it. The cowboys came out of their houses and their salloons, and knew it would be a fight on life or death. They took their guns, and a bloody war started. The Firaf-indians were with many, as it was one of the biggest tribes in the neighbourhood. They used their bows and arrows and while riding on their horses they killed many cowboys. Women started to scream and a lot of them got captured by the Firaf-indians. Then a lot of Firaf-indians stepped from their horses to enter the houses and the salloons. Some used their bows and arrows, while others their knives and spears. It was a small village, and soon it was taken over by the Firaf-indians. Those of the villagers who weren't killed got their hands tied behind their backs, and tied to each other in a row, and had to come away with the Firaf-indians. Whispering Snake and Black Deer had taken some horses and were already on their way to the next cowboy-village. They immediately told the villagers what was happening in the other village where they came from. The sheriff didn't believe them, and actually thought they were enemies trying to confuse them. The sheriff didn't hesitate a second, and locked the two up. But when someone outside was shouting : 'They are coming !' he took the two out of

the cell again. Many of the villagers tried to escape from the village, but soon also this village had been turned into a bloodbath. The next village which was close to this village had already been warned, and this village was actually a fort, and Black Deer and Whispering Snake weren't welcome. Actually they had to get away there also as soon as possible, for here they thought they were the Firaf-indians. So they decided to take another road away from the villages. It was like a flood trying to bring them down. They knew that they couldn't start anywhere on their own. They had to get away from here.

They knew that behind the cowboy-villages there were the forts of the white men, the kolonists and the soldiers. They wanted to take over the lands here as well, and they knew that these ones were also nothing but enemies, but maybe they could search for some compromises ? They knew they didn't have any chance to get it better with the wild Firaf-indians, but they didn't try it yet with the kolonists, although they knew that the kolonists also had the behaviour of taking wild ones to let them do labour for them. But they didn't want to know about that now. So when they came close to the forts, they raised their hands and shouted loud : 'Peace !' But they already saw men aiming their guns on them. 'What do you want ?' some men with beards were shouting.

'We are in a war against the Firaf-indians !' Whispering Snake shouted. 'They are invading all the tribes and villages, and they will invade your area's too !'

In the distance they already heard the shouting of the wild Firaf-indians. It was like they were standing between two fires now, two enemies. They knew that they couldn't go anywhere anymore, as everything before them had been invaded by the kolonists.

Then a voice was shouting : 'We will bring these Firaf-indians down ! Then we will divide everything here into reservates !' Then there was a shot and Black Deer fell down. 'No !' Whispering Snake was screaming, 'we are no Firaf-indians ! We are from another tribe ¡'

'Yes !' a voice was shouting, 'but we do not take any risks ! Lay your weapons down !'

Whispering Snake took Black Deer up, and laid his weapons down. He also took the weapons from Black Deer to lay them down. Then they got permission to enter the fort. Here they had to tell all the stories about the Firaf-indians. And men from the forts would go out to capture the Firaf-indians. After hours they returned and had captured twenty to thirty of the Firaf-indians. They brought them to the open place in the fort, where they got tied to the walls and some to stakes.

One of the white men commanded the Firaf-indians to tell about their intentions, but none of them talked. The man got very angry and shot a few times in the air. But then they heard wild shouting in the distance. It seemed like the Firaf-indians were surrounding the fort. Then a bloody war started. Whispering Snake and Black Deer could hide in a deep cellar under the fort, and they knew that these forts would all fall in the hands of the Firaf-indians.

But after hours a leader of the kolonists came into the cellar. He said that they had won the war, and that most of the Firaf-indians got killed, and the rest got arrested. But Whispering Snake and Black Deer couldn't believe it. And then from the back the kolonist-leader got attacked by a Firaf-indian. The Firaf-indian hit his skull open by a tomahawk, and the man fell down. The Firaf-indian was bald, but on top of his head there was hair a bit piercing into the sky. He had brown trousers with a grey rag hanging out of it, and his upper body was naked. He had light brown shoes made of skin. The Firaf-indian was shouting in an unknown language, and then he said : We have won the war !

Whispering Snake jumped forwards and kicked the Firaf-indian to the shoulder, but then he got a kick back. Then Black Deer had a knife-fight against the Firaf-indian. Whispering Snake ran to another part of the cellar where a tunnel was, and soon Black Deer was following him. They got deeper underground. They thought that only by going deeper underground they would be safe, but how wrong they were. Also here indians were living, some in caves, some in open places, and others even in cages. They knew that the indians were planted here by the kolonists. And the indians looked very angry. Were they Firaf-indians ? Or were they from other tribes from the areas invaded by the kolonists ? Some of the indians took their weapons. Fortunately there weren't attacks, and Whispering Snake and Black Deer went deeper and deeper, until there was great silence. Here were a lot of underground caves, halls and even lakes. In the distance they also saw dangerous-looking colourfull snakes guarding big eggs. When there were sounds it was like an echo spreading. There were also strange sorts of big frogs here, in all sorts of colours. Some were light yellow and black, while others had strange sorts of orange colours. Sometimes they had to swim a bit through rivers and lakes to come further. And with all these dangerous-looking animals that wasn't always easy to do. Everywhere they came were big eggs, and sometimes also smaller ones. The eggs were often slimy and in all sorts of shiny colours. It had a strange smell.

On some places there were strange statues, and strange big spiderwebs who were often very slimy and blocking many roads. Often there were strange shiny lights behind these webs. Whispering Snake and Black Deer didn't think about returning again. What could they do on their own ? And they knew there were many risks when they would go back. But they also had the question if they would be safe here ... What could they expect ? There weren't any living beings here, only animals, and sometimes strange plants or flowers. It was a colourfull world. Would they come into another part of the world when they would go on ?

The End

Cannibals of the Vichemachas

f i c t i o n

The Vichemachas were a tribe on the westside of the Wilshdum prairies. They mainly lived by pig-breeding. In the night they always had a lot of parties, as that was their goal : To celebrate their freedom. They had been in the hands of colonists for such a long time, but a white man had set them free. It was a man in a high function, and when he came to the land to see how the Vichemachas got treatened like dirt he made up a paper to declare their rights and freedom. Since then the Vichemachas started to live deeper in the wilderness than ever, as they didn't want to do labour for the colonists again. They knew how precious their freedom was, but they also knew how fragile it was. The Vichemachas didn't trust anyone, as they were very afraid of the past. In the far past, before they had to do labour for the colonists a man came to them luring them by all kinds of material. It seemed to be a trade-man, but later they found out he had been sent to put them in a trap. Their saviour was a white man, but another white man had put them in trouble, so they had mixed feelings towards white men. They thought it would be saver to them to just go deeper into the wilderness and to become wild warriors more than ever. No one would take them away again to do labour for the white.

Red Reindeer and Old Buffalo were two indians of the White Stripe Tribe, and in their journey over the Wilshdum prairies they saw a woman of the Vichemachas Tribe feeding a pig. She gave the pig all sorts of food, and tried to get the pig with her, but the pig just didn't want to come with her. 'Well, leave the pig alone,' Old Buffalo said to the woman, 'a pig is a pig. If he doesn't want to move, then so be it.'

'But he escaped from our breeding,' the woman said. 'Oh,' Old Buffalo said, 'escape is a part of life. If it wants to escape, let it escape. Did you ever escape something ?'

'Yes,' the woman said. 'Then,' Old Buffalo said, 'you would have a reason for it. What if you would be taken back. Would you like that ?'

'No,' the woman said, 'but this pig is from our breeding, and it belongs to us. We care for it, we give it food and warmth. Here on the fields he will be taken by predators.'

Old Buffalo always liked to discuss about the things of life. He always wanted to make others think about the things they were doing, but often without result. In his own tribe they called

him an old bore. Then the pig ran away, and the woman wanted to run after it, but Red Reindeer and Old Buffalo stopped her. 'You don't breed pigs for the milk, don't you ?' Red Reindeer spoke with a dark voice. Then the woman sat down on the ground, and reacted paranoid. 'Go away, what do you have to look for here, strangers ?' the woman spoke almost with the voice of an old lady. She even didn't want to look at the two men anymore, and when they tried to catch her attention, she turned her head away all the time.

Then two other indians from the Vichemachas tribe came to them. 'They have let one of our pigs escape !' the woman shouted hysterically. One of the indians made himself big against Red Reindeer : 'What are you going to do, huh, huh, taking away our food ? Tell me from what can we live then ? Probably your meat ?' But then Red Reindeer pushed his fist firmly against the jaw of the indian, but he didn't put too much pressure on it. 'I guess you have meat enough,' Red Reindeer said. But more and more indians of the Vichemaches tribe came, and they surrounded Red Reindeer and Old Buffalo. Although Red Reindeer was very strong and sly, he would not be able to beat these indians. So at this moment he really needed that old bore Old Buffalo to talk it out. Old Buffalo stepped forward : 'Peace, brothers, we do not come to disturb your lifestyle. We just gave some good advice.' But then the woman started to scream : 'Good advice ? You took away our food, and the death of our children will rest on your shoulders. We live in hunger, terrible hunger.' Old Buffalo bowed his head to think. Then he raised his head up, and said : 'Why not coming with us to the Witdon Prairie, there's food enough. We live in riches there !' The indians watched the jewelry of the old man and Red Reindeer, and they saw that they had better clothes. 'I won't come with you,' the woman shouted, 'as I do not want to do labour for white men again.'

Then a wild indian sitting on a horse said : 'Run strangers, or my wrath will strike you.' But then Old Buffalo said : I will not run for you, but if you are hungry, here, take my jewels. Also Red Reindeer gave them some of his jewels, but the wild indian stepped from his horse and spat in their faces : 'We do not need your silver and gold, as we do not trade.' Then he cut off an ear of the old man, raised it in the air and then put it in his mouth to eat it. 'Now you know how hungry we are,' the wild indian roared, and all the other indians started to roar with him, and they hit themselves on their chests. But then Red Reindeer, who was a very tall man, grasped the wild indian by the throat and pushed him hard against his horse. The horse reacted very wild, and Red Reindeer jumped on the horse, grasped the old man, and rode away. But an arrow pierced Old Buffalo's arm, and later his head. Soon more indians on horses were coming after Red Reindeer, and he had to ride for his life. Soon they had shot him from his horse, and on the ground the fight went on. Red Reindeer was wounded now, but he could handle the three indians around him. Red Reindeer stepped on the horse again, but more and more indians on horses surrounded him. They had strange flags. 'He wanted to take away our meat ?' one of the indians was roaring, 'Then he will be our meat !' Then all the indians were yelling and shouting. 'Take him to the man-breeding !' the indian roared.

They took Red Reindeer to their camp, and behind their camp there were caves in which there was a pig-breeding, but close to it, there was also a wooden frame like a lot of cages build on each other, in which men had been tied to the bars made of branches. They also put Red Reindeer in such a cage, and soon it became clear to him that these men had to eat a lot. Would the tribe really be cannibals ? Even man-breeders ? He saw women of the tribe entering in with food and a lot of meat, and the men had to eat. Some of the men were already very fat. 'Come on,' Red Reindeer shouted, 'You must be joking me.'

Red Reindeer was very tired, and after a meal he had never eaten before he fell asleep. Never did he eat so much like here in this cage. But in the middle of the night one of the women woke him by a whispering voice. All the others were sleeping. She freed him, and told him to go away as fast as he could. Red Reindeer didn't know why the woman had mercy on him, but he did what she said. He ran through the caves in the hope that no one would see him. Then he went out of the camp as soon as possible. He took a horse, and he knew he would never go here again. It would be the last time for him to visit the Wilshdum prairies. After days and days of travel he finally got home, and had a lot to tell to his tribe. They were all in mourning about the death of the old bore. Red Reindeer told the story many times, and he often thought about the woman who saved his life. Would she do that often, or was her conscience speaking to her for the first and the last time ? Did something rise up in her like a spark to sink away again ? He knew that the woman had risked her life for him, as when they would discover it or she would be caught in the act, then .... Then what ? Red Reindeer didn't see any women in the cages. Or would they have other ways with their traitors ? Or what would happen deeper in their caves ? Red Reindeer didn't know. And the question was : Did he want to know ? Sometimes it was like a spark came up, telling him to go back to the woman to help her out, and all the men there. But then it started to sink deeper away than ever before, like the woman was a cannibal only having that spark once so that Red Reindeer and his story would live on as a warning. Maybe the gods decided it this way, but it was a burden for Red Reindeer for the rest of his life.

The End

The Tube

h o r r o r

In the year 10.023 indians took over the world. They ruled over great parts of the world for many decades already, but now they had the whole world under their command. The pig-industry was world's biggest industry now, but number two was the man-breeding. Cannibalism was now organised since the indians had this input. They said it was an excellent way to recycle those who didn't obey the law. Prisons turned into meat-breedings more and more, but there was mercy to women.

Dirk Pettingson was a priest in California, a priest of the old ways. He didn't like the things happening. For they were even about to turn psychiatry into meat-breeding. For them that was a way to get rid of those who were ill in their minds. They also wanted to draw back suicide by this new approach. Dirk Pettingson preached against the indians, and he knew he was in great danger now.

One day indians came to his church and they commanded him to stop with his lawless actions. It seemed the indians had taken over the laws completely.

One day everyone in the world got a letter from the new Indian World Command that everyone had to become a cannibalist, to recycle and integrate the meat of the lawless. Those who didn't convert to this sort of organized cannibalism had to be marked as lawless also, and they even were at risk to get to prison. There was a lot of protest but soon they found out they didn't have another choice. A few years later the first woman-breedings raised up like farms. The population had been cut to the half, as many didn't want to be part of the organized cannibals. Dirk Pettingson had an underground church now. He preached on a base of Mormonism, old indian teachings and some other old religions, but he didn't accepted the new indian movement which was streaming all around like liquid fire. Parents lost their children, children lost their parents, women lost their partners and men lost their partners, and the horror of such a command had been spred everywhere.

Dirk Pettingson was half an indian, or at least someone with indian blood, and his ancestors preached in his opinion always about love and equality, freedom of speech and religion and respect to other points of view, but this was something else.

The leader of this new world command was Uduntak, who had a secret temple underground. No one knew where this temple was, but some were already in search for it. Also Dirk Pettingson was interested in this quest. One day he decided to make such an underground journey himself, together with a team. There was a lot of mystery surrounding the new command and they wanted to peel that out. Maybe they could learn about it's secrets to get a better picture. Maybe they could even change it, if they only knew more about it. But they knew the journey would have a lot of dangers. If they would get caught, their lives would be over soon. But Dirk Pettingson wanted to take that risk. What did he have to lose ?

There were no traces in the underground, as it was wild. There were rumours that the temple would be in the north, as scientist had detected strange radiation there, so they would try it there first. There were stories about Uduntak that he was a necromancer, that he could put spirits of the dead in bodies of men and women, and even in animals, to take them over. By this he wanted to let the ancestors live on. They said that he could control minds by all sorts of dark objects. These objects had to be hidden, or otherwise it would lose it's power a bit. In the team there were scientists having theories about these dark objects, and they believed that when these objects got in their hands, the indians would lose their command. The scientists were already in twists about what needed to happen with the objects when they would have found them. Some said it needed to be destroyed, while others said it needed to be placed in a museum.

As they followed their detectors they came into a dark cave. Some lightgiving pulsating jelly-shells were hanging at the walls, close to the ceiling. But when they passed along one of these living shells fell on one of the woman. The woman was screaming, while a scientist shot it. Then the shell started to shriek, and smoke was coming forth from it, while the shell was

melting and melting. Then green muddy slime was boiling on the ground. 'Don't step on it,' the scientist said loud, and they all moved further. Then they came closer to a wall of glass, and it seemed it all ended here, but when another scientist kicked an opening in it, they could soon walk further. It was like there were things going on here, but they didn't know what.

Suddenly an indian was standing before them. He was very friendly and said : 'Ah, you must be coming for Uduntak. He already expected you.' They all looked to each other making strange faces, like they didn't trust it. Soon they were in an elevator, and in a huge hall they stepped out. 'Follow me,' the indian said. In some strange way no one dared to run away. It was like they were hypnotized. They came in a room with soft purple lights, and a man was sitting on a strange twisted throne. 'I am Uduntak,' the man said. 'I am the ruler of this world.'

Dirk Pettingson tried to save the case and said : 'We were on your way to beg you to stop the breedings. It's tearing our families apart.' The man was staring at them while strange green slime was coming out of his nose. The slime was giving light. Then the man stood up, and said : 'Come, I want to show you something.' Then a door opened and they all walked into a room full of large shells in which green slime was boiling. 'What is it ?' Dirk Pettingson asked.

'It's coming from a certain tube in the underground,' Uduntak said. 'If we do not drink from it, it will overflow the world within short time, then I'm talking about a few years. We have the jelly-shells who can absorb the slime very fast, but we are running out of time.'

'What do you mean ?' Dirk Pettingson asked. Then Uduntak bowed his head : 'It's coming from a beast who seems to have his cave under the tube, and he's angry. In early times he only asked for pigmeat. We had to throw it through the tube to calm him down, but later he also started to ask for man-meat and since awhile the meat of women.'

'What is it for a beast, and can we see it ?' But then Uduntak shook his head : 'No, we are the only one he allows to come to the tube. If we would ever bring in others, then he would destroy us all, and then the whole world.'

'But what is his name,' Dirk Pettingson asked, 'what kind of beast is it ?' Then Uduntak started to shiver, and said : 'It is a horrible beast like a giant-pig, goat or horse, with many many heads .... heads of men, heads of pigs.'

'So that is the reason why you have all these breedings around the world, the pig-breedings, the man-breedings, the woman-breedings ?' Uduntak nodded.

'Again what is the name of it, mr. Uduntak ?' Dirk Pettingson asked. 'Hydrorsor,' Uduntak said.

'How did it come there, and can we take it away or destroy it, as I see it is a big threat.' Dirk Pettingson said.

'Mr. Pettingson,' Uduntak said, 'I do not know why or how it came there. I have seen it there since my grandfather brought me to it as a child. I had to serve it all my life, or I would die and with me the whole world would disappear.'

'So this is a heavy burden on your shoulders, mr. Uduntak ?' Dirk Pettingson said. Uduntak nodded. 'But I must see this beast, mr. Uduntak,' Dirk Pettingson said. But then Uduntak got very angry and shouted : 'No, for that would be the destruction of our world !' Then he shouted : 'Guards, guards, take these men and women to a cell !' Immediately some guards with spears came and took the team to a cell. In the cell the team discussed about what they had to do now.

After a few hours Uduntak came to their cell and said : 'The beast has spoken that if one of you would be sacrificed to him, then the others are allowed to see him.' But then Dirk Pettingson immediately said : 'That is ridiculous. All our lives are precious, and we even do not know if we will gain anything by the encounter.' But then one of the female scientists stood up and said : 'For science I will give my life. We do not have an option if this is the cause of our world's misery. Let me be the sacrifice.'

But then Dirk Pettingson immediately said : 'If one will go, then I will go, as I am responsible for your lives.' Then there was a long discussion about who will go, but then Dirk Pettingson walked towards Uduntak with his hands stretched out to him and said : 'Bind me. I will be the sacrifice.' Uduntak took Dirk Pettingson with him, while the others were following to an elevator leading them to the tube. 'Stay here,' Uduntak said, while he walked out of the elevator with Dirk Pettingson. 'I have a sacrifice for you, Hydrorsor !' Uduntak shouted. Then a sort of tentacle or tail came forwards from the tube, and took Dirk Pettingson into the depth. Then the others were allowed to come closer to the tube. In the distance they couldn't see anything, but soon a strange sort of smoke showed them all sorts of frames, behind which they saw an enormous creature roar. Soon they had to leave as fireflames were surrounding them.

Dirk Pettingson was still in the grip of the strange tail, and thought these were his last moments in life. But suddenly the enormous beast appeared very friendly to him, by putting him on the ground, while faces on his back were smiling to him. 'I gave you one word : sacrifice, and you came.' a dark voice said.

'Can I ask what this is all about ?' Dirk Pettingson asked. 'So you live by pig-meat, man-meat and woman-meat ?'

'Yes, that is the only stuff I can take, as I cannot digest other food,' the dark voice said. The faces were still smiling to Dirk Pettingson. 'But why do other beings have to die, so that you can live ?' Dirk Pettingson asked. Then green slime was coming forth from the back of the beast and from all the faces. Then some tails were rising into the air like they could strike Dirk Pettingson any moment. Then the dark voice said : 'Because when I do not get the meat there's too much slime-producing, and it would destroy your world in a few years.'

'What can I do to help you ?' Dirk Pettingson asked.

'There is nothing you can do. I have tried to destroy myself,' the dark voice said, 'but the more I hurt myself, the bigger I become, and the more slime I produce, and then I become more hungry and angry. I have tried to eat from my own meat, but then the same happens. The more I destroy of me, the more I create myself in this way, and then the tube is overflowing,'

'Well, maybe it is better to let everything overflow then, as this is no life. Our world is a mess, a horror, like an eternal mistake,' Dirk Pettingson said in despair.

'You do not know what you are saying,' the dark voice said, 'as the green slime brings the living hell and death. It captures souls and integrates and turns them into a sort of plant where they all become like me.'

'But that is horrible !' Dirk Pettingson said, 'but how do you know ?'

'Because I was such a soul once, and like the seed of a strange plant I fell in here to grow into the being I am now,' the dark voice said.

'So you are from the future ?' Dirk Pettingson asked.

'Yes,' the dark voice said, 'in the future there is a flood of green slime, like a deadline, and then everything will disappear into the past again.'

'Well, I heard stories that Uduntak got some dark objects from his grandfather, by which he could rule everything,' Dirk Pettingson said.

'There's something strange about Uduntak, and I always have the feeling he has much power over me, but I do not know how or what,' the dark voice said, 'but if it's true what you said, then I will put you back through the tube, and then you must search for these objects. When you have found them, throw them into the tube.' Then Hydrorsor took Dirk Pettingson again by one of the tails, and took him through the tube to the elevator. In the elevator Dirk Pettingson pushed a button, but it didn't lead him upstairs but downstairs. When the door opened Dirk was in a dark cave. It looked a bit like the cave of the entrance. But when he walked through he came into a dark room with some soft pink lights. The lights looked like waterflowers, and there were also some other lamps with dim light. Close to the lamps there was a skull. The skull was very large, like a prehistoric skull, and Dirk Pettingson suddenly got a strange feeling. He still had a detector, and it registered much radiation. But then from the ceiling a shell fell over his head, and green slime started to slide over him. Dirk Pettingson screamed, as the slime was hot, but when he could take the shell off from his head two indians stood before him with spears. One wanted to pierce him by the spear, but Dirk Pettingson threw the slimy shell in his face. The man was screaming, and also the other man, as the slime got into their eyes. Quickly Dirk Pettingson took the prehistoric skull, but there were also some smaller skulls he took, and there were also some skulls like marbles in a drawer, which he put into his sacks. Then he ran out of the room as quickly as he could towards the elevator. But then the elevator opened and Uduntak was standing before him. Uduntak had a knife and wanted to sting him, but Dirk Pettingson screamed and could defend himself by the skull as his shield. But then more indians had surrounded him. And Uduntak spoke with a dark voice : 'No one will touch my skulls without the consequences. Our gods have already decided that you will die. As that is what these skulls bring : death and penalty ...' But all of a sudden there were tentacles like tails coming forwards to sweep all the indians away, and soon Uduntak was in the grip of these tentacles. Uduntak started to scream, and kicked wildly around him. Soon he had hit the prehistoric skull which broke into pieces. Dirk Peddington went into the elevator with as many pieces he could grasp, and some other skulls and went to the tube again, where he threw the skulls in. Suddenly there were explosions everywhere.

Also the tube exploded, and a mystical creature came up through the frames. It looked like an indian woman dressed in white feathers and fragile small pearls all over her body. 'Thank you, Dirk Pettingson,' the indian woman said. 'You have broken so many of our curses. You have found the keys in our histories and futures, and you have solved their mysteries. You have set

us free. Now we aren't locked up in time anymore. We are free. Thank you.' And the indian woman suddenly turned into a mass of birds, and then a mass of bats, and then disappeared. A book lay before Dirk Pettingson, and thunder was coming forth from it. When he opened it, he saw the moving pictures of his friends, and indians. The pictures were like movies, as they moved, and some of the indians sat on horses. Dirk Peddington stepped in the elevator again, and went upstairs. He found his friends back in the cell, but they had been killed. Now he was the only survivor, and the only man having a story to tell in the world above him.

The End

When the Woman Speaks

f i c t i o n

Once upon a time there was a village in which cowboys and indians lived in peace together. Some cowboys lived in a camp close to the village, and most of the indians lived in the houses of the village. But there was one thorn in the eye of many of them, and that was the brothel. It was a very old brothel, and the owner of the brothel, a woman, always said it was the secret of the peace in the village. No one worked there by force, and most of the time the women had other jobs besides the brothel. No one really used the brothel, as most of the time people just used it as a hotel. Some hired a room there, so more and more the old tradition moved to the background. The owner of the brothel thought it was a good development, as it was telling about a deeper and more longlasting feeling of satisfaction, but she knew that still many of the villagers wanted the brothel to be closed totally or just lose it's name to just a hotel or saloon or something. But the woman always said it was a heritage of her parents, and the secret of the peace of the village. There were more and more protests, and people said that they were ready for the next step of evolvement. A few years later there was only one woman who still wanted to work as in the old profession. The owner gave the brothel to her children, and to the children the woman became a thorn in the eye. The children of the owner wanted the woman to go, but the woman begged them to let her stay, as this was her home. But the whole village wanted the woman to go, so one day she left. But since then troubles started to show up between cowboys and indians, and soon they were aware of the fact that the old owner of the brothel was right. But the priest of the village, who was also a doctor and a cowboy, said that the previous peace was a false peace. He had been to the brothel many times, but about that he didn't speak now. In a sense he liked the new troubles in the village, as that would bring more people to his church, and to his doctor's office. But more and more of the villagers wanted the woman to return.

But the woman lived in another village now, in a big house, and could do what she wanted. She didn't want to return, and in her previous village things started to turn out worse and worse. They even begged her to return, and offered her a great deal of money, but the woman said it would never be the same. In her new village there were also troubles and fights

between cowboys and indians, so she said she didn't make any difference. Her new village was full of brothels, but also full of war. In the other village the people started to put the blame on the priest, as he didn't want to have her back in the village when they started to find out that she was the secret of their peace. They threw stones through his window and made his life miserable. So he decided he would take revenge in the village where the woman was. He went there on his horse, stepped off, and started to preach about the coming judgement. He let his beard grow and soon people said he had become a prophet. But he was still a cowboy, and he started to use his gun more and more. He used to come to saloons to preach the word and then to shoot everyone down he didn't want to belief in it. Other cowboys started to fear him more and more, as he was very fast with his gun. Before cowboys wanted to grasp their guns to shoot him, he had shot them all in a row.

Many indians thought that was great, as they often hated the rude cowboys. And they used to tie the shot cowboys to lead them to the church of the cowboy-prophet. Then they got tied to the chairs. But then the woman went to his church ones. And she started to laugh when she saw all these tied cowboys listening to the cowboy-prophet. She said : 'You preach against brothels, but you go to brothels yourself ... You were even raised in a brothel, as your mother worked there.'

'When the Good Lord tells me to go to a brothel, I go to a brothel,' the cowboy-prophet said, 'but that doesn't mean that everyone has to do that !' But then the woman took a gun and walked towards the cowboy-prophet and said : 'Now you listen, you donkeyhead, when I speak it's even important as when you read loud from your little book. Get the hell out of town, you drunk man.' And then to the indians she said : 'I know this man, he drinks too much. He always drinks a few bottles and then he starts reading in his little book. Now can you imagine what happens then ? He's a doctor. He likes to make troubles.' She could see the doubts on the faces of the indians. Then she raised an empty bottle in the air, a bottle with his face on it. 'In the village he comes from he even used to sell these strong drinks bottles,' the woman said.

'Well, I drink when I want to drink, woman,' the cowboy-prophet said.

'I think this is all running out of hand,' the woman said. 'I will take you back to your village, we will go together.' The woman had a certain power over him, like they knew each other before. And together on the cowboy-prophet's horse they left to their old village. They didn't recognize him with his beard, but they recognized the woman, and they were glad she got back. They gave her her old room back, and to the cowboy-prophet she said : 'You stay with me.'

The End

The Woman and the Hidden Tribe

fiction

The Urabodas Tribe on the westside of the Sereddas Mountains had difficult times. There were a lot of ravines in their surroundings, and there were also a lot of valleys. On several points there were always watchmen of the Urabodas Tribe who could give signals when enemies were coming near. The old chief was calling his warriors together. These were serious times, times which would settle the future of the tribe. Surehbuff, the advicer of the chief was shaking his head. There was not much hope for the tribe, as their enemies were much greater in number, and they had many enemies. Surehbuff adviced that they would all live underground now, as this was also what the ancestors had predicted that this time would come.

In the underground there were also many tribes living, and they really had to fight themselves through the first layers, but as they came deeper they discovered a new world, and there was great silence here. Here there were also mountains and ravines, like an open space underground. Surehbuff chose some watchmen to stand around their camp. But while the others were sleeping, a group of indians surrounded the camp, killed the watchmen and kidnapped Surehbuff and the old chief. They brought them far away to another camp in an even deeper underground wilderness. Surehbuff and the old chief got undressed and were pushed into a large sort of kettle. There was no water in the kettle, but there were fires all around, and also large drums. In the distance they saw an indian standing in the light of a fire. Suddenly they felt the kettle was getting hot also. Some had made a fire under it. They were sure now that they were in the hands of cannibals. But suddenly there were shots all around. A cowboy with a moustache suddenly stood before the kettle, and helped them out. Then he quickly jumped on his horse, took the old chief and Surehbuff up, so that they could sit on the horse also, and then he rode away. Many indians tried to stop them, but the cowboy could easily shoot or kick them away. Surehbuff and the old chief were very gratefull to the cowboy, and told him about what had happened.

The cowboy was a very friendly man, and he said he had a reservate deep underground, where tribes could live in peace. But the two indians weren't too enthousiastic about it. They wanted to live in freedom, and not in a reservate under guide, guard and command of cowboys. But the cowboy said that they would only show up when it was necessary. The indians could do there what they wanted, as long as it was in peace. But the two indians still weren't enthousiastic about it, as they believed that it was their duty to have wars sometimes. It was a way to deal with old issues in their eyes, and it would sooth the anger of their ancestors. 'But then you can end in the kettle again,' the cowboy said, 'and I'm not always around.'

'Well, that is the risk we are living in then, but we have to follow the old paths,' Surehbuff said. After awhile they left, and went to their own camp again. They knew they had also enemies here, but they would fight for their freedom and their lives. Also they would fight for the old issues of their ancestors.

But when they came back to their camp, there was no one of their tribe there, but other indians lived in their camp now. And they weren't very glad. 'You came to our territory without asking. That's why we took your possessions !' a woman was screaming.

'What did you do to our tribe ?' Surehbuff asked. But the woman didn't answer. After awhile some men came towards them, to tell them to leave the camp. 'But this is our camp !' the old chief said.

'But it is on our territory,' one of the men said, 'so it is ours.'

Surehbuff and the old chief knew that they couldn't do anything about it, so they left. They decided to live above the ground again, now they had lost their tribe. They would try to find another identity, and then making a journey to the North of Sereddas Mountains. When they came there, another tribe was willing to adopt them in their camp.

But soon they found out this tribe had also many enemies. And within a short time it became so hard, that the whole tribe decided to move underground, after hearing the stories of the old chief and Surehbuff. They would try to live there, in the hope that they would find some rest. But also here, underground, there were many tribes, and a lot of dangers. They moved to the deeper layers, and hoped to find peace and rest here. They found an underground cowboy-village, but they weren't welcome. Soon it turned into a fight, and the indians took the village over in short time. Here they could live, but soon they found out there were still cowboys sitting in the saloon. And these cowboys weren't easy ones. They came outside with lasso's, and they could shoot the feathers off of the indians' heads. Some were smoking, and put their cigarettes out on their arms to show them how rough they were. 'We will hang you above our saloon,' one of them was saying. But then again the cowboy with the moustache came, and tried to mediate. But the cowboys didn't want to hear anything of it. 'They invaded our village,' one of them said. 'Now they will pay for this.' But then from behind an indian of another tribe shot the cowboy with the moustache by an arrow. 'What are you doing ?' Surehbuff screamed to the indian. 'That man is our friend and tried to help us. He saved our lives before.' But soon other indians from that tribe came forward and killed the other cowboys by their spears, knives and arrows. No one didn't answer Surehbuff's question, but they all took their places in the village.

Also Surehbuff and the old chief got a room. It was a room above the saloon. But after awhile they heard screaming downstairs. Surehbuff ran downstairs and saw two indians kicking a woman. She hid herself in a cellar. Surehbuff tried to help the woman, but then the indians started to kick him. The old chief came down with a gun and shot the two indians. 'We need to go now, Surehbuff, let's take the woman with us,' the old chief said, 'we must go now, for I do not have a good feeling about staying here.'

Then they ran outside with the woman, took three horses and went away. The woman knew a peacefull forest somewhere in a hidden place. They had to move through some caves, and then they would come there. The woman was very gratefull to the men who had saved her. Deep in the forest they found a peacefull tribe, and they got accepted in their community. They started a new life here, but Surehbuff couldn't forget about the cowboy with the moustache. The woman could easily forget about her village, as she said they were all so rude to her. She had to work there in the brothel. She told the tribe that she had been kidnapped when she was young. When Surehbuff told her about the cowboy with the moustache, she seemed to know him. She told him it was her father, and one day he found out where she was, and he made a plan of getting her out. She told Surehbuff that in her father's reservate the indians lived in peace, as he was a peacefull man. But Surehbuff already knew that, and he said that he still didn't want to live there. But the woman was very worried about the reservate now her father had died. So she wanted to return to the reservate. But the old chief and

Surehbuff didn't want to let her go there alone, so they decided to go with her. But when they came there, the reservate had been turned into a wilderness, something they already feared. Tribes were in war about the territory.

They decided to return to the hidden place, knowing that they couldn't return to the past anymore. They had to rebuild their lives here with the peacefull tribe.

The End

The Children's Empire

Green Elk, Old Oak and Wild Dog were three indians on their way home. They had been to a meeting with another tribe. Suddenly they saw a woman tied to a tree. They freed her, and asked her what happened. She said she was walking with her children in the forest, and all of a sudden a man on a carriage came, struck her, tied her to a tree, and kidnapped her children. 'Do you know which direction the carriage went ?' Green Elk asked. She directed her finger towards the south.

'We will go there,' Wild Dog said. 'Don't worry. I will go with Green Elk, and then you will go to our camp with Old Oak.' But the woman wanted to go to her wigwam. She didn't want to live in a tribe. She used to live in a tribe, but since she got troubles she lived alone with her children. She didn't want to tell about it. Wild Dog and Green Elk went to the south, while Old Oak brought the woman to her wigwam. The woman was very friendly, and she was gratefull, but she hoped that her children would be back soon. She didn't have much hope, as she knew how hard life could be. She gave something to drink to the old man, and She wanted him to stay for awhile until Wild Dog and Green Elk would be back. They went on horses, and the woman had explained to them where she lived. They were on their way to the south in search for a black carriage with a man in black clothes and a hat.

Meanwhile the woman made some food for the old man. The old man needed some rest as he made a long journey with the others. Also the woman decided to sleep a bit. But in the middle of the night they awoke by a fluting sound. Green Elk and Wild Dog had returned together with the three children, and even the man of the carriage. They had already tied the man to a tree, like he first did to the woman. The woman was very glad and hugged her three children. The children were crying. But soon they felt safe again. The man seemed to be a kidnapper who had kidnapped a lot more children of tribes, which seemed to have caused a lot of wars between tribes as they blamed each other for it. The man told them that deeper in the south he had a cave where he raised these children in cages. When the children would grow older, they were allowed to live in locked caves, behind bars. After awhile they put the tied man on a horse again, and he had to show Green Elk and Wild Dog where he had his caves and cages.

When the two indians came there, the children were very glad. But something wasn't right. The kids spoke with a very loud voice, and when they got free, they suddenly attacked Green Elk and Wild Dog. They had hit them with stones very hard on their heads, and they both lost consciousness. These kids had an unbelievable strength. When the two indians woke up they were in a cage. Two children were staring at them. 'What did you do to our father ? He always cared for us, he always gave us what we wanted, and there was always plenty of food ... He

teached us to love each other ... In our tribes we used to fight, and there was never enough food, so why did you harm him ?'

But Green Elk said : 'You lived in a prison. He kidnapped you.'

But then the children said : 'We do not want to go home. This is our home. We have better lives here, and we only lived in cages because he wanted to protect us. The outside world is hard.' But the two indians saw that the man was still tied. He slept.

'So why don't you untie him, since he's such a good guy ?' Wild Dog asked ironically.

But the kids didn't say anything. They brought him into a cage too.

'You will stay here,' the kids said. 'Now it is time we will care for you and protect you.'

But when the man woke up he was mad.

'He needs to get used to it,' the children said. But also the two indians didn't like it, and asked them when they would be freed.

But the children said : 'It is time for us to go now and grow up. Be glad you are here, for now you are safe against predators.'

But the two indians and the man started to scream : 'Hey, het, you can't leave us alone like this, and how do we get our food ?'

But the children were gone already.

The children weren't looking for their old tribes, but they formed a new tribe, a very dangerous tribe, as they were very bitter and ironical towards what had happened to them. They also went around to kidnap children, and they did the same to them. And they always brought these children to the secret place to lock them up in cages, and then they left, to find their skeletons back after awhile.

It seemed the woman who had her children back wasn't safe either, as two of their children got kidnapped again in short time. So she decided to live in a tribe again, to save her last child. Because everyone was aware of the things happening now, children got extra protected. They had to live in the middle of the camp, surrounded by guards. But later, when that didn't seem to help, they had to go to a cave, with even more guards. The children had to live inside a mountain now. Fortunately it was a very large cave, and soon other tribes brought their children there for safity. But as the wild children's tribe who kidnapped children grew up, they started to wage war against the tribes. Many tribes started to live in caves too, and others started to live underground or moved to another area. But it seemed the children's tribe was everywhere.

One day someone found out about something shocking. It was the woman who had lost two kids and only had one son now. In search for her two children she found the skeleton-caves, but behind the caves she found a secret camp built by bones. Here the children had their shelter. Immediately they grasped the woman, took her tight, and brought her deeper into this hidden city of bones. It almost looked like an empire. A lot of houses and other buildings had

been built by the bones. 'Why did you do all this ?' the woman shouted. 'These are our children !'

But the children didn't say anything, and brought her deeper. Here she found someone with a kettle of water full of bones. 'We had to drink from this all our lives,' the boy said. And then they forced the woman to drink. Then the woman screamed : 'I do not want to drink from this soup made of our children's bones !'

'Why not ?' the boy asked.

'Because I came from a cannibalistic tribe myself,' the woman said, 'and in times of hunger, they even ate each other.'

Then the boy turned away and then walked away, and the children brought the woman deeper in their empire. 'Can I do anything to help you out of this ?' the woman asked.

'No,' the children said. 'For us it is too late. You could probably escape from your tribe, but we had to face it everyday. Now it is a habit. We are lost, we are children of the damned.'

'I came free when I was already a young woman. I was forced to eat the meat of two of my five children. They already had been killed by my tribe, but then I had to eat it,' the woman said.

'Sorry for you,' the children said.

'Why are you without any mercy or feeling ?' the woman asked.

But the children didn't say anything. In another cave they showed her a pile of meat, where blood was streaming forth from. Some children sat on the pile, like on a hill.

'This is the woman !' the boy shouted. 'She is the one who had to do the same things like us ! She is one of us, but she came free. Now she will lead us out !'

But then the children started to laugh very evilly. The boy was just mocking her. They gave her a red robe, and said : 'Be our princess.'

But the woman became very mad, and started to roar. The children grasped her tight again, but she suddenly had such a strength that she could throw them away. The woman knew these kids wanted to be what they were. She ran away crying, as she knew she couldn't do anything. She didn't see any children in cages or locked caves, for then she could free them. She only saw stubborn children full of hate, not wanting to change their ways. It was a miracle she could get out of this predator's den alive.

But when she got out the dead body of her son lay before the cave. In the distance she heard laughing. She screamed, and at the same time she knew there was more going on. When she came back to the place where the tribes had hidden their children all children lay dead on the ground.

There was no any trace of a tribe. But when she came back to her wigwam some children's guards were there. They were laughing. Now she knew that the wild children's tribe also had

spies, and they could be everywhere. How could she trust someone in such situation ? The only one she trusted now was Old Oak, but where was he ? When she came to his camp, there was no one there. She started to wait before his wigwam, and after a long time Old Oak came. He said that there were many ghosts in the air, and that many broke the promises they made to their ancestors.

Old Oak said that the best she could do was to go to the underground, but the woman thought that there was danger everywhere, also when she would move towards another place. The wild children's tribe was everywhere, like it was in the air. Old Oak gave her something to drink and made some food for her. After awhile she got very sleepy, and got a place to sleep in the wigwam. In the middle of the night Old Oak came to the place in the wigwam where the woman slept. The woman was still sleepy. Then Old Oak started to tell a story, about a wild children's tribe, and about a woman who lost her children. He also told about the secret members of the wild children's tribe, and that this tribe was already ages and ages old. In many tribes there were secret members of the wild children's tribe, and they all had one goal ....

'And that is ?' the woman asked with a sleepy voice

'Why don't you ask their emperor ?' Old Oak said.

'Who is their emperor ?' the woman suddenly asked in a shock while she got up.

'I am,' Old Oak said with a dark voice.

The woman screamed, while she kicked Old Oak away. 'Why do you belief everything I say ?' Old Oak asked again. 'I just want to sooth you.'

'No !' the woman shouted, 'you're frightening me.'

'All is in the hands of our ancestors,' Old Oak said, 'and they will make everything okay. If I would be emperor, many things would change. But changes take time, my child,' Old Oak said.

'Changes take time,' the woman said delirious, and then she fell asleep again.

The End

S.O.S.

It was a strange world they were living in. There were women who would never die, and they brought forth the children, only men. These men got born with a grown-up body, while they were babies. They didn't get milk through the breasts of these women, but from the toes of them. These men didn't have eternal life like the women, but they would die after awhile, for it was a breeding. At the ends of their lives they always had to take care of their next generation. It was a man-breeding, all for meat and seed. But also their skins and bones would be usefull. The women built everything of it. And the muscles of these men were merely waterfalls of blood. It was a strange temple, and no one could do anything about it. It was like death had the scepter of triumph in this world. I was the only survivor. Yes, I despice my mothers. They didn't give me anything of value. Some would call me an Adamite, as I never had a baby-body. I was born as a baby with a grown-up body. I had to do heavy slave-work since birth. But the first years of our lives we were very weak. The milk from these women, coming from their legs poisoned us more or less. And they still have eternal life, taking so many lives away. I don't have any sympathy towards my mothers. They could shapeshift into snakes to scare us, and to prevent us from escaping. So how did I escape ? I can tell you my mothers were very religious, like orthodox, fundamentalists they were, only milk from the foundation. They were religious freaks. If we wouldn't belief them we would die before our time. But I am still alive. They are still hunting after me, so maybe this is my last opportunity to speak to you, as they will probably kill me. Who saved me ? It was Lilith, a women who sometimes came to me when I was a baby, to give me breastfeeding, instead of milk from the legs. It was kind of normal to me, and she didn't want to kill me, but help me. My mothers were called the Eves, but she was from the Lilithian order, the Liliths. It was a strange temple we were having and when we wanted to go along the veils to the holier places we had to do strange things. A lot of these things I cannot recall. My mothers were more or less spiderian, but Lilith showed me so many other parts of the insectian world. She could deceive me, and she could take me out. But I feel the pressure of my mothers coming closer everyday, more and more. It might be the last time I can speak to you, so see this as my last letter to you.

Dear aunt, maybe you know even more about this than I do. I mean : my mothers were your sisters. Because of your husband, my uncle, you never became like they were. I have deep inside the hope that you and uncle will save me out of this situation, as Lilith is too weak to keep me safe. She does her best, but she needs help. I can't protect her either, and I'm in fear they will find her and destroy her. I heard you have also temples there where you live, so maybe you also know about this. The veils here are bloodwaterfalls, just like our muscles, but some parts of these temples have veils like clothes and skins. Why is it that there need to be so many sacrifices to go along such a veil to enter deeper into the temple. Some of these temples are tabernacles, tents, but it's all the same. The laws of hunt are cruel. It's like I'm stuck between your world and my old world, while Lilith tries her best to protect me and to bring me further. I'm losing this game, aunt, it's breaking my head.

Yours Truely

The Red Beyond the Ship

The morningred was sinking into the ocean. The sea had been flown over by the sun. A man was sharpening his knives. His name was Hughes LeMoy, a pirate. The ship was on it's way to a havencity along the Amazon River on Mars, where pirates seemed to dine. Eagles and vultures were gathering above the city. At the end of the day the ship reached the haven, and Hughes went into the city.

Two pirates watched him. Soon it ended in a fight. They knocked Hughes out, and dragged him into a café, where they brought him upstairs. A few hours later Hughes woke up. 'Where am I ?' he asked.

'We know you, stranger,' one of the pirates said. Then they knocked him out again. Hughes woke up in the hospital, where he was still bleeding.

'I need to go,' Hughes said to the nurse and stood up. But the nurse didn't want him to go. 'Stay here,' she said. 'Outside there is much danger. You need to heal first.' But Hughes was already gone.

He had a mission. He wasn't for nothing in this town. He was in search for some important jewels. They called it the devil's treasures, or piranha jewels, from a legendary place called Devil's Bay. Hughes went to the closest jeweller and asked him if he knew anything about the

treasure. ‘We do not like strangers like you,’ the jeweller said, ‘and especially not when they are looking for treasures like these. Do you realize what you are doing.’

‘Well, yes,’ Hughes said. ‘I was always in love with it, and I need to have it.’

‘For who ?’ the jeweller asked.

‘For my kingdom,’ Hughes said. ‘We all know of the healing capabilities of these jewels. We need it for our hospital.’

‘Who believes you ?’ the jeweller asked. ‘Do you really think that we are stupid. You aren’t from charity, you are a pirate like us, and even if you were working for charity we wouldn’t help you. We are against charity you see.’

‘Well, you sound bitter, coldhearted,’ Hughes said. ‘I come from a mighty pirate kingdom you do not know anything about, and we have a hospital for veterans.’

‘Who cares,’ the jeweller said. ‘I guess you do not know where you have landed.’

Suddenly Hughes felt a pricking knife in his back. He didn’t know where this small boy came from. ‘Out of the shop now,’ the kid said.

Awhile later Hughes stepped into a restaurant to eat something. He was still not satisfied. It seems there was no way for him to find out about the treasure. All roads were blocked. It seemed they didn’t like him here, and many dangers were luring. But he knew the treasure had to be here. He had studied the map for a long time, and all traces led to this place. He waited for the night, stood up and went to a weapon shop. He would show them that he could come far by money. He bought some weapons, and laid down a lot of cash for information. The owner of the weaponshop was willing to tell him something.

‘A lady, black haired, brown skin, dark eyes, owns a parrot. She is a skilled fighter. Everyone fears her. She has the treasure.’

The owner gave him a small paper with the address on it. Soon Hughes knocked at her door, and she allowed him in immediately. ‘Welcome,’ the woman said. ‘My chrystal ball told me you would come. You come for the treasure, the piranha jewels. If you play a game with me and win, they are yours, but then I ask you one thing in return.’

‘Which is ?’ Hughes asked.

‘To go to Devil’s Bay and find me the eye of the piranha, a gem by which I will become the almightiest woman of Mars and the universe.’

Hughes was like hypnotized by the beauty of this woman. Soon he was on his ship to Devil’s Bay to search for this precious gem. The woman had given him a map, and he knew exactly where he had to be, dear reader. He was close to the Piranha Tree already which was a mere tower. The meanest pirates seemed to live there, but when he came there, they could do nothing but welcoming him. They told him that the gem once sunk away in the depths of the sea.

A long track through the tower followed, finally to go downstairs to the place where he could reach the deepest of the sea.

This, dear reader, is what the story is about. Finally he found the gem. He was indeed the piranha pirate, and the gem told him not to return to the woman. This gem was all he needed. The gem also told him to not return to his kingdom. He needed this gem to open the portals of the undergrounds of the sea, where he would live a savage life again. There was a coldness in the depths of the sea, it was like he was freezing, but his heart got touched by this beautiful gem, and it opened him to new visions. Visions of dragons living in the underground of the sea, dying by the strike of unknown bushes.

The trees and bushes were living here, moving, and they were all like piranhas. It was a piranha nature.

This is the story of Hughes LeMoy, a savage pirate, more savage than anyone. One day he returned to the surfaces of the ocean and became the biggest fright. His beard was tall now, and he had made the most exotic foreign clothes of the leathers and skins of defeated enemies

and dragons in the underworlds below the seas. Yes, even his sails were designed by this, and existed in many layers, forming a dread like never before. He could strike the winds, and cause the storms. He became a legend, a feared saga. No one knew if it was real or just an illusion, but since then the Amazon River of Mars and it's Devil's Bay became the most cursed places, more than ever, ending into the Sea of Treasure where mystery ruled. The Sea of Treasure was a sea of riddles, of things unexplained.

One day he visited the woman of the piranha treasure again. She was more beautiful than ever. Savage as he was he kidnapped the woman, and brought her on his ship. 'I know you are a witch,' he said. 'A damned one if it comes to that. I want you to be the clairvoyant for all these soldiers on my ship, all these pirates. I know they long to hear from you.'

The woman had mixed feelings about it. In a way she was flattered by her new job, but she had been forced. Yamata was a treasure herself, and it seemed the only one who could really handle her was LeMoy. LeMoy became a feared name more than ever, and also the ship was called LeMoy. It was in these days no one was allowed to call him Hughes anymore, for he was now LeMoy. Only Yamata was allowed to call him Hughes, and a love started to grow between them. Yamata knew there was no other way. This man was stronger than her. Together they visited the most exotic cities along the coasts of the Sea of Treasure. In a way Yamata had more freedom now than she ever had, and in this she was very grateful to LeMoy. He treated her like a princess.

It was like she had more and more peace about LeMoy being the mightiest man on Mars. It was all because of the Eye of the Piranha. LeMoy dwelled in riches, and she was an honoured guest in that. He showed her the beauties of the world, and it was in these days Yamata got really hypnotized by that. She knew the Eye of the Piranha, the thing she had always desired, was now in good hands.

The Eye talked to LeMoy and he knew more of her than he could naturally know. LeMoy started to become a prophet more and more, also to his soldiers on the ship, and he got often used to bring important messages to the cities along the Sea of Treasure. The Eye was a remedy for many sicknesses, and soon LeMoy was known as a great healer, but still one they feared, even more than ever. He had many enemies. And he could bring their ships down by unleashing a ray from the Eye. When cities wouldn't listen to his messages he would destroy them by fire. He was a judgement prophet.

Yamata was a warrior and a prophetess at his side, and she got also used by the Eye to speak to kings and emperors, and she would freeze them if they wouldn't listen. They were to bring fire on the surfaces of Mars, and one day they returned to the depths of the undergrounds below the sea, this time to go even deeper.

The Eye led them to a piranha throne, where a skeleton was throning. The skeleton offered them a new ship, huger than ever, with piranha slaves included, who were all wizards. It was a ship of sorcery, the greatest ever. The Eye wanted the ship, and so did LeMoy and Tamata.

But this time there was no way back for them. They got access to the seas of death deep below the undergrounds of the sea. In here the most dangerous creatures were living. Gigantic octopi and piranhas more savage than ever. The whales of death however were soft creatures, often functioning as sea-cattle. The oceans here were warm, and the cities here were even more exotic. They could continue their functions here as prophets. And with all these wizards on their side they could preach the word with more authority than ever. One day they found a bay full of piranhas, ending in a pirate haven. They heard tales here about a tunnel leading to the seas of hell, where octopi and piranhas were nothing but sea-cattle. They left their ship alone, to go through the tunnel, and they came to these seas, which were almost on fire. It was a hot day when they came there. A man with a big beard welcomed them both, and laid his arms around them. It was like he was their father.

The king of hell was like a dragon. He could spit fire, and had father feelings for his visitors, and had turned himself into this big man with a beard, showing them compassion and kindness. He knew about their lives, he knew about their missions. One day he fell before the Eye of the Piranha, worshipping it. He had waited for it for such a long time, and it was finally here now. LeMoy was like hypnotized by this man. He had never seen such a soft empathic man before, and it almost grasped his heart in it’s depths. He felt himself like being in a tight grip by this man. Tamata soon met the daughters of this king, teaching them a lot about prophesy. That night they dined on piranhas and octopi, treasurable meals they would never forget. It felt so hot in their stomachs and throats, yet so pleasant. One of the daughters of the king wore a necklace made of a shark’s jaw, covered by precious sifted gold and the splendour of the smalles and finest pearls rare in their sort. The necklace had a soft radiation. ‘Matiria,’ the king said, ‘can you show our guests the dances and steps you have learned, the ones you always do for enchantment of the weapons and instruments of the heart, the gifts ?’ The princess nodded, and started her dances. She was like a belly dancer. Her transparent clothes were like the brightest gold, and she smiled like they never see anyone smile before. Then she started to clap in her hands and slowly she turned into a black panther, then in a spider. Some of the slaves of LeMoy started to become scared. Then slowly she started to turn into a princess again, a beautiful woman. Everyone was clapping. Tamata told them about the ship they had upstairs, and soon they all went to look for it. The king of hell was in awe because of the ship. He wanted to stay on it and never leave it. One of his daughters knew a way for the ship to enter the seas of hell.

LeMoy and the king of hell became good friends, and Tamata with his daughters. They seemed to form a good team on the ship. All they wanted was to invade hell and the places beyond it, to find out about it’s darkest treasures. They wanted to rule the unknown, something which was so much bigger than them. LeMoy and his friends found out that they

were just on a ship in a chrystal ball, that there was an underworld beyond their grasp. There were still things they couldn't describe, things they couldn't explain. The seas of the underworld were tall, and like mirrors, creating so many reflections, in such speed, that they could only gasp for breath and direction, while their minds were tumbling away. They were parts of the books of the underworld, in a library they did not know of. Someone had to fish them out to explain them about life. They didn't understand the depths of their words and of the things they were doing. In the ultimate depths of Mars, beyond the seas of the underworlds, there was the point of invisibility, by which they could enter the realms of Saturn. The softness of spiders was here and slanted swords. The Eye of the Piranha was satisfied when it finally came there. It settled itself in the dust of spiders, between the webs. 'Leave me now,' the Eye spoke. 'I have found the place where I belong, but I will forever stay in your heart.' LeMoy and Tamata obeyed the Eye. They came in a world of blue monkeys, a huge jungle, full of semi-color, like it was all baptized in indigo. They could see that Saturn was much more psychedelic than Mars. They couldn't think straight here. All they saw was a world full of small skulls, and a softness was sliding here, breaking all the bones of their souls and minds.

'Do we belong here ?' Tamata asked LeMoy, when they were staring at a huge apeman. The apeman was smiling at them. They could almost feel his presence. 'Monkeymen,' the apeman said. He directed his finger to a palace in the distance. 'Please, do not leave,' he said. Suddenly there were blue monkeys everywhere. They seemed to be satisfied, then they turned into spiders. 'Wizards,' LeMoy said. Slowly they walked towards the palace. On the walls monkeys with straight swords stood. When they came closer they could see inside. Priests were worshipping snakes. There were flames and fires everywhere, and inbetween there were copper snakes sliding. There was also an Amazon River on Saturn. They could hear the priests speak about it. They spoke about black piranhas swimming there. Then they opened a gate in the wall, and the copper snaked slided through it. LeMoy and Tamata found the river behind the palace. In the distance they could see several pirate havens. Many monkeys were with them. 'Swim with us across the river,' one of them said. This was what they did. They ended in a pirate haven. 'Preach to them,' the monkey said. LeMoy did. The pirates were struck by fear. LeMoy preached about the coming judgement on pirates. 'I will let you choose between two ways : Stay the pirate you are, or become a savage like never before. Return to the wilderness, or the Eye of the Piranha will strike you.'

Some pirates started to laugh, but they fell dead a few seconds later. The king of hell was with them, his daughters, plus some of the wizards. Then Tamata shouted : 'Follow us, or be dead within a few hours.' Many of the pirates started to follow them like zombies. Also their women and their children, plus their animals. They went from haven to haven to preach the same. They didn't use much words, but there were miracles and signs. The king of Saturn dwelled in the riches of the deep sea treasures. He had built his fortress by them. It was almost a frozen place. When the king heard the message it was like his heart popped up, finally to sink in warmth. He could breath again. 'Leave your houses, and follow us,' LeMoy was shouting. They were marching through the street.

A little boy woke up. He had dreamt so strange. He looked at his marbles, he won them yesterday. He wanted to play with them again, but this time only in his room. The marbles were too pretty to lose again. His father was a preacher in church. He asked his father if he was allowed to say something in church. The father of the child didn't have a problem with that. In the middle of his speech that sunday he invited his child to come forward. The boy went on the stairs of the pulpit, and soon he was preaching like his father, but he preached more like LeMoy. 'Leave your houses, and follow us,' the boy was shouting. 'I will let you choose between two ways : Stay the pirate you are, or become a savage like never before. Return to the wilderness, or the Eye of the Piranha will strike you.' Then the boy started to tell about his dream. The people liked it very much. Afterwards an old man came to the boy. He invited the boy to come with him to his house, for he had a lot of old pirate toys. That day the boy was the most happy boy in the world for he came home with a bag full of pirate toys. He put it all on his small cupboard, there was even a pirate ship between them, one with a lamp. Since then the boy often read by the lamp of the pirate ship, in the middle of the night, wanting to become like LeMoy, and like the other pirates. He didn't understand much of it, but the pirate life attracted him. He was aware of LeMoy's message to become more savage. That is why the boy also held on to the indian.

The End

The Ravine

Chapter 1.

It was christmas. Sarah, Ann and Jake would stay with their uncle Tibis for awhile, a mysterious man with secrets. He had a book room where a book-chest was an elevator to another book room in the cellar. When the children arrived aunt Lizzibeth was already pouring tea and making breakfast, as they came very early. The table was decorated with the finest white-powdered bread. Soon uncle Tibis shows the children his book-chest which is an elevator with many buttons. Uncle said : 'Just never push the black button.' He doesn't say why. The children get curious when he is gone. One of them pushes the black button. The elevator goes very deep this time. It is almost like it is falling. The children lose consciousness by the crash. A man called Henry takes them out of the book-chest. They are somewhere else now. He brings them to his house. Eva is his wife. She takes care of them. She puts them in bed, where they wake up a bit later, wondering where they are. 'Where is uncle Tibis ?' Jake asks.

Henry and his wife Eva do not know an uncle Tibis. They are in the world Lorian. Helgia the ice witch sells breath-breads, light-breads, pleasure-breads and hearing-breads, and these they need for living, tells Henry. They have to work very hard so that they can pay the breads. Helgia the ice witch is a baker, and she is cold and harsh. No one easily dares to go to her shop, while they need it of course. Many die.

'But isn't there another way to stay alive,' asks Sarah.

'You can buy a special courier of the witch who can go to the shop for you,' said Henry, 'but such a courier is very expensive, so only the very rich can pay that.'

'But I don't mean that,' said Sarah, 'I mean another life source.'

'Yes,' said Henry, 'then you have to make a journey through the forest in order to find it. There seems to be a tree having such life sources.'

Jake, Sarah and Ann decide to search for it. But on their way they meet the ice witch. 'No one escapes from my land,' she shouts.

'We are not even from your world,' sais Ann.

'We are from the upper world,' sais Sarah.

'Oh, but that world is also in my hands,' said the witch. Her black dogs were growling. She showed a chrystal ball with their world in it. It was snowing in the ball. 'Nice creamy breads, all filled with meat. Living from death,' she laughed.

'Why are you so cold and hard,' asked Jake.

'That's the name of the game,' she said. 'Now return to the land or I will strike you.'

'No, witch,' shouted Jake. He had some matches and put fire to a piece of wood. 'Stay behind me,' he said to Sarah and Ann. But the witch took them in her carriage, and brought them to her castle. Here they saw the wonders of life : meat-bread with whipcream to let them stay sweet. But they refused to eat. 'Don't you know,' said the witch, 'that sweetness helps to survive life and to have some happiness and joy ?'

'No, it's to become your slaves,' shouted Jake.

'Oh, you are already my slaves,' said the witch.

'Eat some,' she said. She showed candy in all forms, but they still refused to eat. 'Then I will make you eat,' she shouted.

Then a guard came in, saying to the witch : 'King Tusa has ordered a meatbread feast banquet for 260 guests.'

'Tell him he has to wait,' said the witch.

'No, he wants it now,' said the guard, 'he has paid much extras for it.'

‘Then let the children bring it,’ shouted the witch. I have no time for it now.

Soon the children were in the carriage again. This time they were with the guard of the witch. Another carriage came with them in which the feast dinner was. When they had reached the royal palace the children had to bring many baskets into the palace. When the king saw them he immediately felt much tenderness for them. He was very touched by their help, and he was grateful that he didn’t have to see the witch. It was one of the best days of his life. The king was the only person in the whole land who had the duty to see the witch on a regular base. The king showed his son and his daughter to the children : prince Siamer and princess Illesia, together with queen Plesia.

The king was so fond of the children that he wanted to adopt them. He thought they were so adorable and precious.

They all three got their own rooms. In the middle of the night again they went to search in the forest for the tree of other life sources.

This time they went deeper into the forest. They came to a house of dwarves. They seemed to be very mysterious and they said that they actually lived by the other life sources. They said the tree they lived from was aware of the witch’s rule. And one day the tree would enter the land to strike the witch and build a new world by showing it’s branches. ‘Where is the tree,’ asked Jake.

‘Can you show us some of it’s food,’ asked Sarah.

One dwarf opened a pot with a lot of cookies. They were very creamy and they would taste like a fir.

‘Tasting like a fir ?’ asked Ann.

‘Yes,’ the dwarf said, ‘it’s of his own, it’s own flesh and blood, it’s own wood and leaves.’

‘Doesn’t that sting,’ Jake asked.

‘Oh, sure it does,’ said the dwarf, ‘it stings a hole in you and a lot more. No easy food, I tell you.’

‘Oh,’ said Jake, ‘I don’t want it then.’

‘Okay,’ said the dwarf, ‘go then cry to your mommy. Go, go.’

‘No,’ said Jake, ‘I’m not leaving, I just won’t eat the stuff.’

‘Then we have no business here,’ said the dwarf. ‘So leave the house.’

‘Okay, I want to try it then,’ said Jake. But when he tried it he threw it away immediately. ‘This stuff stinks,’ he said.

‘Well,’ said the dwarf, ‘at least you have eaten something from it.’

‘Yes,’ said Jake proud. Then Sarah tried something, and then Ann, and they were contend.

‘Creamy juice,’ Jake said, ‘and hollow trees.’ Then he fell down.

The dwarf started to laugh.

‘Good work,’ a voice said. It was the witch. She took them all three in her carriage again. That was all very easy for they all had lost their consciousness by the misleading food of the dwarves.

They woke up in strange beds, and soon they realised that they were with the witch again. Oh how they wished they had stayed with that nice king Tusa.

The witch was very glad when she saw that they had woken up. She gave them soup with white powdered breadballs with raisins.

The children knew that if they would ever escape, they had to search for the tree and not entering any house or listening to any tale.

To their great joy the witch sent them again to the king when he ordered the next feast dinner. This time also many cooks went with them, as he had never ordered as much as this time. It was a great event, as he had invited persons from all over the country. Again the king was very glad to see the children, and he was very touched again. This time he showed them the whole royal palace and gave them rooms in the top of his highest tower from which they had a survey over the whole country. From here they could see a miraculous tree, somewhere in a forest. They were planning already how they could go there. The tree was so huge and so beautiful. But then they realised that it might also be just another creation

of the witch. They decided to stay with the king, and to have good friendship with prince Siamer and princess Illesia.

Prince Siamer was very lovely, gentle and friendly. He seemed to have many unknown secrets. He was a prince of few words, but when he spoke it was golden.

The princess was beautiful, weak, fragile, immensely kind, hiding an even greater treasure.

The children started to doubt if Henry had spoken the truth about the tree with the other life-sources, and asked the same question to the princess, if she knew about any other life-sources apart from the ice witch, but she didn't know. The prince didn't know it either. They seemed to be contend with everything, unlike their father.

The king knew there should be a better way, although he didn't know. He saw the three children more as those other life-sources. The queen however, queen Plesia, had an interesting story. She said that one day she was in the forest and she saw something glittering. It was in the forest-lake, and it seemed to be a fountain. In her mind she saw elves dancing around it, while flying and soaring, but she did not know if it was real.

Of course, all what the ice witch gave was poison, so the queen kind of cherished her fantasies, and the mysteries surrounding it, whether it was true or not. It gave her hope that there was something more.

The poisons of the ice witch caused holes in the teeth of the people, which had to be filled with hard poison, something which stirred up their lusts for more food of the witch, something which made them very greedy. The hard poisons bound them even more to the witch, and these had to be installed by her dark guards, her monks. They lived in their isolated hermitages or in abbeys where the persons with holes in their teeth had to go to. The most of the monks of the witch were at the same time the hunchbacks of their cities. The hard poison was to give them eternal life of the witch.

But as soon as the hard poison was installed there was no escape from the witch anymore.

The king had ordered many cake-men, cakes in the form of persons. There was a great party, but suddenly the witch came in, and ordered that the children had to come back with her again.

The children were very sad, and wished that they had at least fled to the forest. And when the witch sent the children the next time to the king to bring him what he had ordered, they did not hesitate one moment and fled to the forest.

But what could they expect in the forest. This time they went much deeper into the forest until they reached a river. The river had very cold water. When they heard the barking of the black dogs of the witch behind them, coming closer, and when they got these dogs even in sight, they didn't hesitate one moment, and jumped into the river to swim to the other side.

There was a very strong streaming there which grasped them, and because of the many rocks in the water on which they crashed they soon lost consciousness.

They woke up in beautiful white beds, where a beautiful woman in white stood before them. The white seemed to flow over in the lightest yellow which was a lust to their eye. The woman had a beautiful coverlet around her back. 'This is such a surprise,' said the woman. 'Three beautiful children from the other side of the river I found. You are safe with me.'

'Where are we ?' Sarah asked.

'You are,' said the woman, 'close to home.'

'Where is that,' asked Ann.

'The other side of the river,' the woman spoke, 'you know, the other life-sources.'

'Where are they ?' asked Jake.

'Close,' said the woman, 'very close, actually they are here.'

'Maybe it is another trap,' said Jake.

‘No, this is another land,’ said the woman, ‘Creum. This is not the land of the ice witch anymore.’

‘Well, the dwarves also acted like they were not of the witch her sources but of the other life sources, while they were in fact deceivers, so how can we be sure you speak the truth,’ said Ann.

‘You will see,’ said the woman. Some black dogs entered the room.

‘Yeah right,’ said Ann, ‘these are the dogs of the witch.’

‘No, you are wrong,’ said the woman, ‘these are my dogs. When my father died he gave as many black dogs to me as he gave to my sister.’

‘Are you the sister of the ice witch ?’ Sarah asked.

‘Yes, I am,’ said the woman, ‘just not the same character.’

‘Good,’ said Sarah.

‘How can we be sure,’ asked Ann.

‘You will see,’ said the woman. ‘My ways are different.’

‘Then what are your ways ?’ asked Jake.

‘You all ask many questions,’ said the woman.

‘And we have the right to do so,’ said Ann. ‘We just don’t want to get decieved.’

‘You already were deceived,’ said the woman, ‘but I will not deceive you, I will show you the other life sources.’

‘Then show us,’ said Jake.

‘Where is your patience ?’ asked the woman.

‘Oh, come on,’ said Jake, ‘insecurity scares me. I do not want to stay in doubts and fears.’

‘You want something creamy ?’ the woman asked.

‘No,’ Jake said. ‘I fear to eat anything now. First I need to trust you.’

‘You cannot have trust if you do not eat something first. It will give you trust,’ said the woman.

‘Well, that is nonsense,’ Jake said. ‘Who would eat untested food. You are turning things around here.’

‘Well then I cannot help you,’ said the woman. ‘I want you to swim back.’

‘See, you talk like those stupid dwarves,’ said Jake. ‘I do not believe anything you say. It’s all a trap anyway.’

‘Are you sure ?’ the woman asked.

‘Yes,’ Jake said boldly.

‘Very sure ?’ the woman asked.

‘Yes, very sure,’ Jake said a bit irritated.

The woman started to smile. ‘I’m teasing you a bit,’ she said, ‘and you were very right. You have learned your lessons here.’

The children felt a bit more at ease now they saw the humor of the woman. They could feel a bit warmth entering their hearts, but they were still on their guard.

‘You want some hot chocolate ?’ the woman asked the children.

They all said no, as it was not yet the time to eat or drink anything here.

‘But you have to eat or drink,’ said the woman, ‘or you will die.’

‘Please,’ said Jake, ‘now stop the nonsense. We will not die when we are a few hours without food.’

‘Okay,’ said the woman, and left the room. When they tried to open the door they found out it had been locked. After a few hours the children started to become hungry and thirsty. Then the woman came back with some cookies and milk. ‘Care to drink or eat something now ?’ she asked.

But still none of them dared to eat. 'Okay, I will lay the basket here on the cupboard,' she said. 'Take whenever you wish.' Then again she left the room. The children smelled the food, and at one point they just ate. Nothing happened. It was just very good food. Again they found out that the door had been locked. When they started knocking, she returned. 'Why did you lock us up ?' asked Jake.

'It is to protect you,' said the woman.

'Against what or who ?' asked Ann.

'The witch,' said the woman.

'There is no way for the witch to get you back actually,' said the woman, 'if I can just do my works, so don't question me too much.'

'We won't,' said Jake.

'Well, I still don't know if I can trust you,' said Ann.

'You will trust me,' said the woman. 'You will see that my ways are different than the ways of the ice witch.' Suddenly the woman was gone, and the door was in fire.

'See,' said Ann, 'it is a witch. It looks like a fire witch. This is just not good.'

'How do you know it is not good ?' asked Jake. 'She asked us to not question what she is doing. It is to protect us against the ice witch. It seems very normal to me that fire is a good protection against an ice witch.'

'But fire is a danger in itself,' said Ann. 'She may have saved us from an ice witch, but what if we end up in this fire ? And it sounds weird to me that we shouldn't question her.'

'Maybe it disturbs her protection then,' Jake said.

'You have both lost your minds,' said Sarah. 'Just wait and see. We cannot judge it before it is time.'

Suddenly the walls were also in fire. It seemed that the windows were also locked. The fire went closer and closer to them. Suddenly the woman came into the room again. She was in clothes which looked like flames, and she had some peeled oranges on a plate for them. 'It might seem strange to you,' she said, 'all these flames, but it is to protect you.'

'We believe you,' said Jake, who admired her more and more, and even tried to speak for the others to come into favor.

'No, I do not believe,' said Ann, 'speak for yourself Jake, and you are not her willing slave.'

'Very good, Ann,' said the woman, 'keep your mind up.' The children took some of the oranges and started to eat.

'Good,' said the woman. 'I like that. At least you trust my food.'

'Do we have another choice ?' asked Ann. 'We are locked up here. We need to eat something or we will die anyway.'

'That is not true,' said the woman fiery. 'There is a fire providing the life sources. That is all you need.'

'Where is it ?' asked Jake.

'All around you,' said the woman, and started to take it in her hands.

'Where does it come from ?' asked Jake.

'From the tree,' said the woman.

'What tree ?' asked Ann.

'The princess,' said the woman, 'princess Illesia, I planted her there as a spy.'

'That is amazing,' said Jake. 'I knew the princess was from another world. I could feel it. She was so different from anyone I ever met before.'

'So what kind of tree is it ?' asked Ann.

‘A fire tree,’ said the woman, ‘a hearth.’

‘And how can we be warmed by her, how can she give us the other life sources ?’ asked Ann.

‘When you know the keys,’ said the woman.

‘And what are these ?’ asked Ann.

‘No one knows,’ said the woman.

‘Oh please,’ said Ann, ‘I have no time for this. I think you know about these keys, for you are holding the fire in your hand.’

‘Dear children, I must wake up to the secret as well,’ said the woman.

‘So should princess Illesia stay there ?’ asked Sarah.

‘The tree of light will shine one day, and drive all the darkness away,’ said the woman. ‘She needs to be there, she grows in the darkness.’

‘Well, it is for sure an amazing family,’ said Sarah.

‘They all have their own secrets,’ the woman said.

Chapter 2.

‘It is an amazing secret,’ the woman said, ‘and this secret will bring many others to this world, free from the ice witch.’

‘So are we free from the ice witch now ?’ asked Sarah.

‘Yes,’ said the woman while smiling deep. ‘With me you are safe. Just stay in this house.’ Then the door of the room suddenly opened and they were allowed to check out the house. ‘I don’t dare,’ said Sarah. ‘I don’t know why.’

‘Neither do I dare,’ said Jake. And Ann said the same. It was like there was still an invisible fence in the opening of the door.

‘I want to stay in this room,’ said Ann. ‘It is big enough.’

Then the door closed again. It was a release for them all.

‘I cannot tell you who I am,’ said the woman. ‘It is a great mystery. But you can describe me as a dragon of fire. I am a good witch, the opposite of my sister. I wish to help you. you come from such a terrible world.’

‘Can you help the royal family,’ asked Jake.

‘You know,’ said the woman, ‘they are the keys to the tree. Prince Siamer, he is a plant, a weapon. Did you push a black button at your uncle’s house ?’

‘Yes,’ said Jake. ‘I did.’

‘And did he forbid you to push the black button ?’ the woman asked.

‘Yes,’ said Jake, ‘but he didn’t tell why.’

‘But he knew the house better than you did, right ? So there should have been a reason why he forbade it,’ said the woman.

‘We were curious,’ said Ann. ‘We just couldn’t resist it. Maybe he wanted to keep something away from us, something he used for himself.’

‘Well,’ said the woman, ‘and wasn’t that his right ? It was his home, and you were but children. You see, he wanted to protect you from someone.’

‘From who ?’ asked Jake.

‘From ME,’ the woman shouted, while she was turning into many flames at the same time. The children started screaming, while fire surrounded them. ‘Never push buttons on machines you do not know anything about,’ the woman shouted. ‘You have woken ME, the greatest sorceror of all time.’

But then the ice witch came in. ‘Great work, sister,’ she spoke. Soon the children were in the carriage of the ice witch again. The ice witch didn’t seem to be terribly mad, and soon the children were allowed to go to the royal palace again to bring what the king had ordered. They wouldn’t have it in their head to escape again. They just tried to enjoy the palace and the royal family. The king was of course glad to see them again. Princess Illesia looked more beautiful than ever before, radiating such warmth, like she was really that tree of other life-sources. But soon they wondered if she was not just another creation of the witches. The children thought they had been trapped and wished they had never ever pushed that stupid black button. They wished they had better listened to their uncle. At least they were allowed to stay in the royal palace for awhile.

One day soon their uncle came into the royal palace, uncle Tibis. That was a total surprise. He was not mad at all, but he asked them why they had pushed the black button, as that one he had forbidden to them. He knew they were under the rule of the witches now. ‘Why didn’t you tell us where it would lead to,’ asked Ann a bit mad.

Uncle Tibis was first silent, but later he replied : ‘I didn’t want to scare you, so I just didn’t tell. It is not good to know everything, and you should just listen to me and trust me.’

‘Now how to get out of this ?’ Jake asked.

‘Well, the witches are no easy ladies,’ said uncle, ‘but I will try something.’ He went outside and came back with the book-chest. The children were very glad to see the book-chest. ‘Now step in,’ he said. ‘Now don’t you ever push on the black button again, but push the red button.’

‘But what about you ?’ Sarah asked.

‘Oh,’ said uncle, ‘I will find my way back. Just trust me now, and push the red button,’ while he closed the book-chest. Jake pushed the red button, and there they went out of the palace into the sky, and ended up in the book room of the cellar of their uncle. They were very glad that they were back and almost screamed of joy. ‘Yes, we made it !’ shouted Jake. The children were pretty traumatized by this all and vowed that they would never go into the book-chest of their uncle again. When they got home they even didn’t want to return ever to their uncle’s house. They wanted to forget about it all.

But their uncle didn’t return, and the children had to tell the whole story to their father who was very worried because it was his brother. Their father wanted to go with the book-chest where his brother still was apparently, although his children begged him not to go. When the children slept he went away, in the middle of the night, and drove to the house of his brother. His wife was still heartbroken. She led him to the book-chest, and they both knew about the black button. ‘Honestly, I don’t want to lose you both,’ said Lizzibeth, ‘but if it is your wish to go, I cannot stop you from it.’

‘I have to do this,’ said Leodro.

Leodro went inside, pushed the black button, and made the same crash as his children once had, and lost his consciousness as well. Henry found him and brought him to his house where his wife Eva cared for Leodro, like she once cared for his children. ‘Yes, they remember the children, and they know who Leodro is. They are dark guards of the ice witch. When Leodro wakes up they give him milk. Then they give him some white-powdered bread with raisins. After that he realised he had holes in his teeth, and Henry and Eva were very willing to fill these holes with the witch’s hard poison. It gave him lust for more delicious food of the witch. He thought he had come to paradise, and had totally forgotten about his brother, because of the witch’s spell. But Henry and Eva let him know that when he wanted to stay any longer, or eat any more, it would be very expensive. Leodro

had to work hard to stay in this paradise. One day soon his brother Tibis visited him. But Leodro had lost his memory and didn't recognize him.

'Good,' said Tibis to Henry and Eva. 'Good work, I can now go to his children to tell them their father rather wants to stay here.'

Tibis had his own ways of moving from this world to the other, as he was also a dark guard of the witch. He immediately went to the children, who were very glad to see him, for that could mean that their father was also back, but Tibis had other sort of news. Their father wanted to stay where he was now. The children would never have the courage to visit him there, and at least they knew he was fine. Their mother was less contend, and wanted to visit him. But when she came there he didn't recognize her either, and there was no way to return for her anymore. She didn't trust Henry and Eva. She just knew they had to do something with the terrible situation of her husband. The children had told her a lot about the royal family, and there she found warmth and true friendship. She was soon lovingly adopted by the family, as they knew she was the mother of those three lovely children who once came to them. Here she could find some comfort. One day she said to princess Illesia : 'Do you know that you are a tree of fire, like a hearth ?' The princess smiled and hugged her. 'I'm also very fond of you, you know, and I miss your children so much.'

Because their mother didn't return for such a long time the children wanted to return. They just didn't have another choice, but uncle Tibis wouldn't let them. 'No, too dangerous,' he said. And besides that, the book-chest was gone. The other world should be forgotten.

'But our mom and dad are there,' said Jake while he didn't understand. 'We can't just forget about them.' Ann and Sarah were also very upset, but they just believed their uncle was protecting them.

Their mother, who was very smart, was informing the royal family about the wicked ways in their land, mentioning her husband was the example for that. Lilia was her name. She had a joy in teaching the young princess and

prince, and they loved her very much. She teached them to think by their own, and that their life-sources were inside. The prince more and more started to prick through the system he was living in, and became aware more and more that the monks of the witch were a huge threat to their country. He felt very sorry for Leodro, the husband of this nice woman he so loved. He wanted to do something about it, but he still felt weak.

He wanted to raise an army to bring order in the land, to remove the monks of the witch, but he was afraid of her. One day soon the monks of the witch came to the royal palace with an order to get Lilia. The king had no other choice, and soon he delivered Lilia to them. Outside the palace she got killed by them. The royal family was very shocked. Prince Siamer swore now that he would come against the system even ruling his father. He was hysterical. Since that day he talked a lot more.

'Do not talk too much about your plans, son,' said the king one day. 'The walls have ears here. We cannot do much against the ice witch, but whatever it is, I am on your side.' Soon the monks of the witch also came to get the prince. The king was in rage. They brought prince Siamer to a prison in the mountains. They didn't kill him, but here the prince had to do hard work. The king couldn't do nothing against the witch. He knew that. But since then he spent his days in anger.

Prince Siamer met other persons here he did not know. They all seemed to be persons who could form a threat against the order of the monks of the witch in one or the other way. They all had to sleep in dirty dungeons. The prince shared a dungeon with two others. They were both philosophers and spoke a lot about the other life-sources. 'The tree is the center of the universe,' said one of them, 'around which all other worlds and realities spin.'

The prince liked to listen to them. They seemed so wise, of a much greater nature of where he was coming from, although it was like they reminded him a lot of Lilia.

'There is so much we can learn from each other,' said the other philosopher. 'I am sure we are all three parts of the big plan.'

‘What is the big plan ?’ asked prince Siamer.

‘To reach the tree, and destroy the ice witch and her rule,’ said the man. His name was Towly.

‘How to do it ?’ asked the prince.

‘There is an escape route,’ said the other man, whose name was Birbis. ‘We aren’t here for nothing. The great tree has called us. We are closer now. The monks has grasped us deeper, but we come in contact with the imprisoned tree. It is calling.’

The eyes of prince Siamer lighted up a bit.

‘What is the escape route,’ he asked.

‘Oh,’ said Towly, who was much older than Birbis, ‘we are close to something, something great. We just cannot grasp it yet, but it will grasp us.’

‘How do you know that this tree you speak about is a good tree, and not just another creation of the witch,’ asked the prince.

‘Oh, we do not know,’ said Towly, ‘we have yet to find out, but we must at least try something else, and search for the good, and I am sure it is searching for us. The good is searching for the good. The good has been locked up by evil, so we all have to be locked up by evil to find each other.’

‘That is beautifully said,’ said the prince. ‘This gives me some hope again, and yes, the solution should be in the reunion of all the parts of the good world, which is you and me.’

‘We are still separated,’ said Birbis, ‘from so many good persons, so we have to go this path to reach them.’

‘What is the path,’ asked the prince.

‘Look, prince Siamer,’ said Towly, ‘we believe that you were the missing link, you are the weapon, you are the answer.’

‘Well,’ said the prince, ‘they always call my sister a tree, as if she is something great, and she is.’

‘Good,’ said Towly. ‘Can you ask the monks if you are allowed to see her ?’

After awhile a monk brought some food to the dungeon, and prince Siamer asked if he was allowed to see his sister, the princess, but the answer was no. There were no visitors allowed. ‘This imprisoned tree you speak about,’ said the prince, ‘this center of the universe, how will it invade the universe to set everything free ?’

‘It will draw everything to itself to make it a part of himself and then transform it,’ said Birbis.

‘It is beautiful,’ said the prince.

‘The tree is the central heater of the universe, the hearth,’ said Towly. ‘It is quite unreachable, it is separated by the primeval ravine, but it sends lightening flashes over here. We can only catch distorted reflections of it, they have gone wrong in the wind, wicked.’

‘If you go on with this, old Towly, we will remove you,’ shouted a monk.

They all three got very quiet, but after awhile two monks came to separate them. Prince Siamer got a dungeon on his own now. He felt immediately very lonely now. And they didn’t let him go outside anymore for work. He was in an isolated dungeon, far away from the other dungeons. Through the bars he could see a ravine with beautiful growth of savage trees and plants. He enjoyed the sight, he enjoyed when it was raining, the smell of it, but he was of course separated. At nights he could see the stars, and imagined that the great central tree was among them, around which all life and death moved. He longed to enter this purity, although it was unreachable for him. Some stars were almost dancing or falling, forming a tree, like a constellation of stars. But it sure would be just a reflection, a shadow, of something great and pure like the tree of his dreams.

One day soon a dwarf stood before the bars, with a key. 'It is a magic key,' the dwarf said. 'When I lay it at the bars, they will melt.'

'Do it,' said the prince.

'For sure,' said the dwarf, 'if you promise me one thing.'

'What is it,' asked the prince.

'Never forget where you are coming from. Never forget about me, neither my family, and my people,' said the dwarf.

'Who are you ?' asked the prince.

'I am king Baldorf of the fair land of dwarves,' said the dwarf.

'And where is this land, are you under the rule of the ice witch ?' asked the prince.

'I am free of her,' said the dwarf, 'too small, hehe.'

'Well, you are rather a big dwarf,' said the prince.

'Because I chose this form to come to you,' the dwarf said. 'Or you would not be able to see me.'

The bars were already melting, and soon the prince stood in this beautiful nature, free from his isolated dungeon. Suddenly a carriage stood before him. 'Now, step in prince,' said the dwarf, 'so that I can lead you to the land beyond the stars.'

The prince stepped in, and soon they were in the sky. Beyond the stars there was a kingdom with small creatures like golden flashes. They all seemed to come forth from a tree, a golden tree. The dwarf was suddenly gone. 'Come closer,' said the tree with a dark voice. 'I understand you come from the realm of the ice witch.'

'Yes,' said the prince, and made a bow.

'I want you to do something for me,' said the tree.

The prince felt his body getting warm while he came closer, and like a warm wind was blowing into his face. 'She is my daughter,' said the tree. 'I also have another daughter. They both cast me out of their world one day, and I came in this world with the golden flashes, which I could never see, and never get a hold of. It was cold, and I turned into this golden tree, but whenever these golden flashes came close to me, I got warm. And now you are coming closer to me, I get warm also.'

'I also lost my family,' said the prince.

'Did she do it ?' the golden tree asked. 'The ice witch ?'

'Her monks,' said the prince, 'but I'm sure she was behind it.'

Suddenly the prince was surrounded by golden flashes, which start to spin very fast around him, forming a kettle. Soon it was like his body was boiling. 'What is happening ?' the prince screamed. He heard the laughing of the witch in the distance. Then his body started to spin too.

'Meat we want,' screamed the witch, 'meat to fill the breads. The prince was coiling into a huge bread, in which he felt all saucy. 'I can't move,' he screamed.

'A tree you will be,' the witch shouted. The prince knew that it had all been a trap. He was in glass now. 'Tree give milk, tree give milk, tree give sauce, and much whipcream, tree, you are from ME !' screamed the witch with joy. 'Long have I waited for this moment.'

But then he felt the magic's key again on the top of his head, while the glass was melting. 'Wake up, prince, from your nightmare,' said the dwarf. 'You are safe here. Don't believe in the shadows and the notes which turned false in the wind. You are with the golden tree.' Suddenly he was all surrounded by many dwarves. They shouted for their prince. They shouted that the ice witch had to let him go. Suddenly he could touch the golden tree. His hands were hot. He could enter the tree by moving some golden plates aside.

Monks were staring at him, golden monks, the monks of the tree. They were the monks of the dwarves. 'Many visions were plagueing you while you climbed the mountain,' said the monks, 'These were visions sent out by the ice witch. We are your army to set your people free.'

'You came from the Swamp of Visions, a swamp of nightmares, in which your people are still bound.'

'What can I do about it ?' asked the prince.

‘You cannot return,’ said the monks.

‘The crocodile bridge leads across the swamp. You have to be on two sides, or it will not work. Jump from crocodile to crocodile until you reach the other side.’ Some other plates moved aside, and the prince could see the swamp. The crocodiles in it looked very dangerous. ‘What can I find on the other side ?’ asked the prince.

‘The true and pure source of all reflection,’ said the monks.

‘And what is it ?’ asked the prince.

‘A tree,’ said the monks, ‘the true tree, as you have to find your true identity.’

‘And what is my true identity ?’ asked the prince.

‘A warrior,’ said the monks.

The prince soon jumped from crocodile to crocodile. He almost fell a few times, but it seemed that the crocodiles were helping him. Later he totally missed it with one jump, fell into the swamp, but the crocodile saved him. It was a long bridge. But finally he reached the other side. A green tree was there, asking him questions. Green fire-balls were in the tree, testing him. Behind him the swamp was boiling. ‘Come into the tree,’ said the tree, which the prince did. When he watched back to the swamp he saw himself many times sinking into the swamp. ‘All distorted reflections,’ said the tree. Something was boiling in the tree. ‘The tree-tea is almost ready,’ said the tree, ‘tree-tea to set you free. It is warm-fresh swamp tea actually. Very minty. Sweet also, the purest drinkable mud you can find. It warms the heart.’

‘Are these the other life-sources ?’ asked the prince.

‘Yes,’ the tree said. ‘It is all transformable, creative stuff. We can change the visions, like clay we can mold it. Coming from the dust, returning to the dust, to make it all pure. Coming from the sand, returning to the sand. Coming from the dirt, returning to the dirt, to make it all clear. That is my return. I froze here, found the heat, and will return, to stir up some more heat. In for it ?’

‘Oh yes,’ said the prince. ‘So we will return ? You and me ?’

‘Yes,’ said the tree, ‘with all the monks and even the crocodiles.’

Soon the prince was drinking from the tree, and it was like he was sinking along the tall roots of the tree, back to where he came from, the world of the ice witch. He came to set his people free from her. But there was nothing anymore, just ice. The witch had frozen, and the monks had frozen. There was nothing left of their once so beautiful country. The prince wondered where his family was. ‘They are frozen in time,’ said the tree.

The prince had to drink much more tree-tea from the swamp to go there. When he traveled even deeper along the roots in time he found them frozen in the royal palace. This was where the ice witch had all led it to, until she froze herself. The prince could set his family free by a small green flame and by letting them drink from the tree-tea. He also went to the mountains to set his friends the philosophers free, and many others.

‘The tree has returned !’ someone shouted.

The End

Neverending Nightmare

Mark and Lucy were on holiday at a tropical island. They found out that they could easily make a living here for the rest of their lives. The trees gave enough food, and they made

themselves a home. The waters were very bright here, and there were fruits and vegetables in the waters they could eat. It was like they found paradise. They decided to make a journey on the island. In the distance they saw mountains, and they would like to go there. The temperature was very pleasant. It was not too hot, and neither was it cold. It was just the perfect temperature for them to move. The trees and plants were luring them to hug them, and that was which they did. It gave them an awsome feeling of having contact with this nature. The leaves were moving, and the touches were very intoxicating. It was like they could breath for the first time in their life. This nature was swallowing all their attention, and they could lose themselves completely into it. This island was wonderful for them, and they could not believe it was happening to them. They saw many wonderful creatures swimming in the waters, and it was like they already knew these creatures, as if they were already a part of them. There were strange webs throughout the island in which they could climb. It was like tough glue, which they could stretch and mold. They could sit on the back of strange spiders, who looked like fishes. They also saw the flying crabs and other creatures of these waters. The island was very huge, taking over their minds. They saw the motherspider of the island and her cathedrals. There were strange temples here, as it was a sacred place.

Strange places were taking over their minds, and the more and more they felt how it was weaving itself into their hearts. They felt strange beats in their minds, like the rythms of nature. It was like they could move themselves like never before, and like every step was so concentrated, every movement. It was like they had been fallen away from the nature they knew, and now they could feel this new nature. They knew it was all taking place in their minds. Suddenly they woke up. They just had dreamt it all. Now they had to survive the day in this strange prison. Sometimes they could dream away a bit, and this time they had even dreamt the same. But most of the time they had to face the hard reality, here, in their prison. Here they were locked up years ago. Here they had to work day in day out, while they felt they didn't have the strength for it. But they were always looking forward to their next dreams, although they knew they would wake up from it again. It was like the dreams were some bubbles of oxygene in a place where they could hardly breath. But they knew that one day they would even wake up from this neverending nightmare. This strange dark creature from the sea, this strange creature with so many strange tentacles, having them in this strange prison, this neverending nightmare. It's like it's so real. It gives them visions so bright, as a reality, as a world in which they live. And it's like they're always losing it, like there's no permanent help. They have to wake up forever, they have to see this dark creature who took over their minds, who took them away, into this neverending nightmare. They know they will wake up once, to see all these dreams within dreams, and all these nightmares within nightmares, these strange webs of glue.

They never saw this creature, for it had planted something in their heads, and now they live here, in this reality, this strange prison, only hoping for dreams, for holidays.

The End

Kiss of Death

fantasy/ thriller

He was walking the road to the piramid of softness, where the desert was like a mirror ... He saw the piramid in the distance, where every step would become softer and softer, to climb every layer to the top ... Oh how he longed for that experience ... His footsoles were burning in the sand .. It was like the atmosphere was already getting softer, while he was coming closer to the piramid .. He was transpiring all over ... It was hot .... and it was like the heat was penetrating him more and more ... It was a powerful sort of heat ... One he never experienced before ...It was like this heat was washing him from inside out ... and he felt so good about himself ... On the top of the piramid he saw an eagle's face ... It was painted on it ... but also birds of prey were flying around there ... He felt a bit uneasy suddenly ... but they told him he had to defeat these birds if he wanted to enter the top of the piramid ... They said there would be an elevator to heaven ..

It was a piramid of magic where all sorcerors had to go to on a certain point of their lives and study ... It would increase their gifts ... It was a white piramid on Sirius ... There would be a trinity of white tigers on the top ... Rico was moving slower and slower ... He knew about this battle against eagles ... He knew that not many wizards were able to reach the top because of these ones ... They were black killer-eagles ... He had read a lot of books about them .. and now it was his task to defeat these eagles and open the top of the white piramid ... Wizards warned him not to go ... but he had to .. as it was written in the prophesies ... He was very sure that these prophesies were about him ... and he trusted his elder wizard-brothers more than all the others. They were on his side, and encouraged him to go on this journey ...

It was like dark flames had caught his heart ... and it was beating so fast now ... He saw these immense eagles flying, and he heard their noises ... It was horrible to hear ... It was like strange hormones were all of a sudden running through his body ... like his glands were in a strange mode .... It was a terrible fear ... But he knew he had to go there ... Rico was thinking about his wife and children ... Would he ever see them again ? He trusted his elder brothers who told him he would make it, as it was written in the prophesies ... When it would be on the worst, they would come to him to help him out ... He knew how easily his brothers could come ... They were high wizards of a powerful group ... His father didn't live anymore, but his mother was sick .. very sick ... and his brothers told him that only he could rescue her, and make that journey to the top of the piramid of softness ... It was only the beginning of a long journey ... And at the end he would find the golden medicine to heal his mother ... He knew he didn't have too much time ... for she was on the edge of dying ... But he also knew that every step he made would give strength to his mother ... They were deeply connected ... When he

would defeat the black eagles and enter the top ... he would be a portal for other wizards to enter ...

It was said that a few wizards once could go this path and reach the top ... but they went on forgetting about the others ... and then the eagles came ... Some even said that these wizards were these eagles .. to protect their new land ... Others said that they were these eagles indeed, but they were enchanted by dark powers after they went through the top ... No one exactly knew what the truth was ...and he wanted to find out ... Wizards warned him about unknown dangers ... but he had to make this journey ....He knew that he had to activate the piramid as a portal for others .. by letting a red string reaching from the top to the ground ... so that the other wizards would have the chance to follow ... It was said that when he would not do this, there would be darker enemies coming to guard the portal .. and he would even be in the risk of being bewitched then by the unknown forces ... then he would be a monster blocking his brothers from entering ... That was a horrible thought in his mind .... His brothers told him that he had to defeat all possible dangers for there could be even forces which would baptize his mind into forgetfullness, so that he would forget about the red string ... It was said that at the top, this red string would live as a snake ... and first he had to kill it ... No one exactly knew what sort of powers this snake had ...

The wind was howling ... Rico gathered all his courage and went on ... Finally he reached the foot of the piramid ... and he started to climb ... There were many openings on the layers, but they warned him not to go inside too much, for there could be traps ... It was better to climb ... But it was so hot that Rico needed to have some protection against the sun ... It was a piramid of softness ... Every layer would make him softer and softer ... Until he would drink from the softest milk ... He desired to see the white tigers ... They would help him further .. and would be his friends forever ... but first .... he had to defeat the eagles and the snake ... and maybe more ...

His feet were burning on the stones ... and Rico stepped into an opening ... It was a very small opening ... but here it was cooler ... and he could rest a bit ... Suddenly it was like someone was calling him ... like a girl needing help .. but his brothers told him that there were many traps like that .... The eagles wanted him deep into the piramid instead of on the outside ... so he made the decision not to listen ... But soon the screaming turned into a loud weeping ... and Rico thought maybe there was really someone needing his help ... He walked inside the piramid deeper and deeper ... It was like he was standing on a balcony and he could have a sight downstairs ... what an enormous gallery it was ... but there was so many dust and it was so dark ...He started to walk to the right ... and he saw gold glittering in the distance ... and the weeping also came from that direction ... It was like a golden door to the next gallery ... when a went through there were all blinding lights and a girl was staring at him ... Suddenly she turned into an eagle and made a dive on him ... a horrible fight started ... He took his knife and started to cut in the air like a wild man, but the eagle was too quick ... The eagle suddenly took him by his neck and started to fly away with him ... Rico cried and felt like all strength had left him .... why was he so stupid ... he thought to himself ...

The eagle brought him to a very dark place on top of the second gallery .... He knew this was only the top somewhere on the first layer of the piramid ... He didn't have his knife anymore, for the eagle could whip it out of his hands with his beak .... The eagle was too fast for him ... Rico was shivering ... the bird was so big .... Suddenly the bird said : Don't hurt us ... we are enchanted wizards .... When we went through the top we had forgotten everything ... It was

the red snake doing this ... and then he turned us into black eagles ... Rico was surprised ... How can I help you ?

Just go back home, we cannot be helped .... and the red snake is too strong for you ... We saw many wizards killed by it ... and he turns them all into traps ... They become the guards of this piramid ... But Rico said : No, I have to kill it, and then you can be helped too ... I need to do it for many reasons ... and he told about his mother and his brothers ...

The eagle said that the other eagles were too far gone in their minds to be this friendly to him ... They would attack him ...

Rico said he would try not to hurt them ... Then the eagle flew away .... and Rico could walk to the next layer ... This eagle had helped him a bit ... On the next layer it was very cold ... and that was just what he needed ... but soon he found out that the cold was cutting him ... it was a sharp wind ... It was another, higher blacony he was stonding on, and he started to walk to the side ... He could feel the heat coming from the opening ... It mixed itself with the cold ... and it was like he felt himself softer than ever before ... It was like he felt the skin of a sort of animal ... the softest skin he ever felt ... So many new hormones were flowing through his body ... making him desire to reach the top more and more ... It even gave him a strong desire to fight the snake .... He could feel his fears flowing away by the deep deep softness ... He was almost naked, but he felt like he was so covered by this skin ... It was the spirit of a white bear ... It was entering inside ... and standing next to him in his own body ... Oh how good was it to feel this friend inside and outside ... It was like he had two minds now ... In the distance he heard : I will help you ...

It was a slow and dark voice ... but it made him softer and softer ... It was like he had a new shield against the heat ... He could better live with it ... It wasn't really an unpleasant feeling anymore ... He started climbing again after he had entered outside through the opening ... But suddenly another eagle came ... It attacked him ... and another fight started ... Rico was yelling : I am your friend ... but the bird was in rage ... Rico was already bleeding all over ... and the bird was intended to hit his heart ... His hands were bleeding while protecting his heart ... Suddenly one of his brothers appeared ... and pushed a shield around his heart ... It hurted very deep for the shield was piercing the skin around his heart ... It was a heartshield ... It magically covered his whole heart back and forth ..... Then his brother disappeared ... He flew away in the form of a swan and then he just disappeared in the nothing ... In a few minutes his whole body was healed ... but there were shining golden scars appearing ... He heard a voice saying : These scars give you power over all eagles ... The eagle was already gone ... and Rico started to climb further .... He could breath so deep now .... Like he could breath for all the bodies living in him ... the bear and all the wizard-spirits he had from his youth on ...

The next layer was like coming into a queen's court ... He had to go through an opening again, for it was storming outside ... the winds were very strong ... It was like snakes were covering his body ... and what a mysterious queen ... It was like she was from the sea ... She had such strange decoration on her face ... They looked at him ... The room was not small, but neither it was large ... Eyes were watching him .... He was a few steps away from the throne ... Suddenly a girl jumped on him and gave him a kiss ... The kiss was very warm on his cheek, and very soft ... but suddenly he felt very weak and tired .... and he fell asleep ... It was called the kiss of death, and that was also the name of the girl ... She looked a bit like a panther ... like a jaguar ... Rico was far gone ... and later he woke up in a strange purple bedroom ... while the girl was sitting next to him .... She was almost sitting on her legs .... She smiled at

him ... but he still felt very weak ... She told him about the kiss of death ... and Rico said : Am I going to die now ?

No, the girl said ... It's rather a kiss of sleep, but it's just called kiss of death ... Rico asked her why she was doing that ... Then the girl started to cry and couldn't talk anymore ... She ran away ...

Rico felt very sad for her ... It was like there was something going on ... He still felt like there were snakes around his body ... sliding ... Then the queen came in ... with two slender men ... 'Throw him before the snakes !' she said loud ... The two men took Rico tight by his arms and took him to another room ... It was a room with trees and balconies .... white pillars and a lot of girls ... He didn't see any snakes, but all of a sudden some girls started to turn into snakes, while the other girls were screaming loud ... It was like his ears were exploding and he felt heat coming over his body ... The snakes were surrounding him while the other girls also started to turn into snakes ... one by one ... Rico was almost vomitting ... he couldn't escape, for the two men guarded the door with their swords ... But then the black eagle, his friend flew from above ... while the eagle was making loud noises ... with a tone so high that he couldn't hear anything else anymore ... and suddenly he found himself under the wings of the enormous eagle who picked him up to fly over the balconies ... There was a small gate through which he could escape ... He was outside again, and he was already very high ... He felt so soft inside ... This was really a friend .... and he would do anything to make him normal again ... Rico started to climb further ... The softness was almost singing under his skin ... He felt so much heat ... It was almost like he was exploding ... Dark clouds were surrounding him, and it started to rain ... It was really a refreshment for him ... but as soon as the thunder started to roar ... He took another opening inside ... This time all sorts of panthers were having their eyes on him ... So he could choose between them or the thunder ... Don't be afraid ! someone called ... An old man stepped forwards from behind the panthers ... He had a beard and was dressed in white and blue ... dark blue .... He was talking in a strange language all of a sudden and the panthers disappeared ...

I already expected you ... he said to Rico ... He knew of the prophesies ... He was also a wizard ... but he told Rico that when he came on this floor he found a way to tame the panthers .... and since then he didn't want to go further ... he loved the panthers too much ... This was like home for him ... Rico smiled ... It was also his own desire to tame animals as his friends ... It was such a special love ... The man had glitters in his eyes .... He said that the panthers really healed him ... He had many problems in himself and in relationships ... the panthers could overcome ... 'They were my wizards ... he said almost laughing ... He had a big smile all of a sudden and it was like his eyes looked like the sun and the moon ... I am so proud of them ... I can never leave them .... Rico smiled again .. and totally understood ... Well, he said ... but I must go further ... I have to go through the portal on the top for my mother is very sick and I need to find good medicine for her ...

The man smiled ... yes, I understand ... He knew it from the prophesies ... and he was also here for Rico ... to give him one of his panthers ... who would travel together with Rico ... Rico was so glad with that gift .... and late in the evening he went further ... together with the panther ... The man had given him also a book with the prophesies ... These prophesies were more extended than the prophesies he knew ... The man said he got this book from his father ... It is in his head now so he could give it to Rico ...

Finally, after many days of travel Rico reached the top-layers ... The snake already expected him ... but either did Rico ... and he knew a lot more now because of the man's book ... It was a tall red snake ... very big ... but Rico didn't have any fear .... he knew what to do now .... He spoke to the snake like he had already defeated him, for he knew that when he would speak out the magical spell of the man's book, the snake would die ...

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These were the secret names of the top-layers .... and the snake died immediately ... Oh how many eagles there were here, but he knew that by his golden scars he could rule and ease them all ... They only watched him ... but didn't do anything ... He took the snake and tied it's head to a pillar ... and then he threw the rest of the body downstairs ... all along the layers he traveled ... when the body was reaching the ground he heard an enormous sound, like there were things exploded ... All eagles turned into wizards again ....and they were smiling so deep ... the ceiling was opening and he could travel further ... but he first wanted to talk to the wizards a bit ... The portal of the top was open now ... The wizards were freed, and many wizards could follow now ...

Suddenly they saw an enormous shark appearing in the sky ... Rico knew he had to run now with his panther ... This could be an unknown threat the prophesies were telling about ... There were at least seventy wizards running together with him ... They had to ran to the heavenly elevator on top ... The balconies were aslant, as a sort of stairway through all these layers ... Everything started to burn and melt, and many wizards started to slide back already ... Rico felt like he was boiling inside ... He knew that this would happen when the shark would appear ... It was a sign of the gods terror ... Then everything would burn and melt until the chosen ones would reach the elevator ... He saw it in the distance ... It was like a balloon with a basket under it, attached to an iron string which would lead it upstairs to the heavens ... He saw smoke and clouds there, so bright ... everything was almost transparent here ... The piramid was almost exploding ... Everything was shaking .... It was like Rico exploded inside ... Everything was melting, and strange sounds were roaring ... Three wizards and the panther were running near behind him, the rest was already gone in the fire ... They made a dive and reached the basket of the balloon ... The panther was climbing over Rico's back into the basket and then Rico got in ... He could help two wizrads aboard, but the third one fell into the sea of lava below them .. It was like doomsday ... but Rico knew that within a few days the piramid would be like white silver and then all prepared wizards could go through the portal ... to enter a new world ...

The book was in a bag on his back ... It was such an important book for him .... for it described a lot of things which were happening and going to happen ... It was a thick book ... almost three times thicker as the prophesies he knew ... Rico was a bit in a shock ... together with the two wizards ... but he knew it had to be this way ... The wizards would all be transformed through the fire ... They would be the pillars of the new piramid ...

One of the wizards who survived was called Suriot ... It was a very wise and old wizard ... but at the same time young and witty ... He knew a lot about the stars and the journey they had to make now ... The other man was very silent ... It was an old soldier ... a veteran ... very skilled in sorcery ....

They were on their way to Venus, where they would reach the Piramid of Sweetness ... Rico's skin was burning ... It was a long journey through rainbows, clouds and skies ... The panther

was already close to his heart ... He knew that there would be a time that he would really need this friend ...

He could see the piramid in the distance ... still in a sea of fire ... but three golden tigers were appearing on top ... slowly turning into silver white ... It was like the softest milk was flowing through his head ... They made him travel ... They were the spirits opening the doors for him ... It gave him new visions ... It was like they teached him how to dance on strings ... Rico was making steps forward ... He fell in a new desert ... the balloon was gone now ... and even the two wizards ... only his panther was with him ... he was now on Venus ... walking in the desert ... reaching for the piramid of sweetness ... He knew that on top of this piramid he would find the golden medicine for his mother ... The sweetness is creative power ... and every step would make him sweeter and sweeter ... he found already so much softness in him ... and now it was like it was turning into the sweetest honey ... he was floating ....The air was so thick and soft here ... like he could walk on clouds ... Oh how easy that would be ... to just walk to the top and to take the medicine .... But would his mother still be alive ? ...

No, mother was already with father ... and Rico was lying next to them ... He was buried in a dream by the kiss of death ... He was only dreaming ... No, he couldn't reach daylight anymore .. all lights are fake here ... for he is in the hands of a kiss of death ... a spider ... in an egyptian dream ... in a sarcophagus, together with his father and mother in one body of death ... waiting for the final judgement of egyptian and indian gods ... They sent the spider to him ....

It was long ago that he got this kiss of death ... It was not the first time in his dream ... His wife was the kiss of death ... and now he lies here .... Here, between his mom and his dad ...

Kiss of death where are you going .... Is there any escape ?

A man wakes up .. having three golden lions in his hands ... Yesterday they were tigers ... tomorrow they will be sharks ...

THE END

Ghostship

It was very warm on the slave-ship. The men had to work hard for the women. They were slender men, so that the women could have many of them on the ship. The women were rubbing the juice of apples on the skin of the men, so that they would shine in the sun. They

had to be prepared to see the queen of Rosmamm, the city of slaves. The men were shivering on the ship, for they knew it was a very cruel queen. There was no escape possible from the island, and most of them would die soon. The laws of the queen were too tight to have a long life out there. Rico's heart was ticking in his tall neck. Why did it have to be this way ? He didn't deserve to be treated this way. He got such strange feelings when these women were rubbing his skin. No, he didn't like it ... It was like they were just preparing the meat for the queen. Would they eat him there ? He heard that they were cannibals at times. But much about the island he didn't know ... He never wanted to hear the stories when he was a child. But now he would see for himself.

The man next to him was very tired, and it was like he couldn't work anymore ... A woman was screaming at him .. In this place the women are the boss ... They were a sort of amazons ... indians .... If there were men, they were always slaves ... There she was beating his mate up with some sharp instruments ... He was bleeding all over ... How could they do this ? Why were they so cruel to men ? Most of the times they used the whip, but they also had some strange sharp instruments like these ones. The man was bleeding, but they put a sort of tape on it, and the bleeding almost stopped ... It was like the man had new strength ... and he went on to make the ship move faster ... The woman smiled ... and Rico got another strange feeling in his stomach ... It was like he felt a sort of very small respect for her, that she didn't let his mate die ... but still .. it was like the feeling hurted him ...

He couldn't explain all the feelings he had on this ship ... He never felt it before ... What was exactly the deal ... He had too muany doubts to trust them ... Strange women they were ... And he wouldn't want to give them power over his mind ... He was still their slaves ... He saw the women hitting wounds, and then they healt them for a great part, which gave new strength to the men ... It was a long trip ... Rico thought they wouldn't reach the island for the night ... And the sky was already getting dark ... Some women lighted some candles ... and then they told the man to stop working ... All men were chained or tied by strange wires, bands, stripes and chains .. Some had all sorts of colours, others had to colours like dark yellow and brown.

Some men had even strings around their necks. Suddenly one of the women picked two men out, and started to paint their bodies by a strange sort of paint ... It was like she was tattooing their bodies by ink ... The men were shrieking, because it hurted them, but they were heavily chained, so they couldn't do anything about it ... Some women started to smile evilly ... Rico got a awful feeling in his stomach ... Like he needed to vommit ... The pictures she drew on their bodies were so awful ... like bleeding animals ... and even their own bodies started to bleed lightly ...

Rico was longing for his wife ... He didn't want to be here ... The suspense almost killed him ... and he was transpiring heavily ... Suddenly he heard a scream ... One of the men got a strange sort of clip around his nipple, which almost bit itself into the skin around the nipple ... while soft tentacles came forward to pinch the nipples ... Then his eyes got white, and it was like he came into a strange trance ... The women took the chains away from him and said : Now he is our mindslave forever ... He doesn't need any strings anymore ... Some women started to laugh .. It was like the man was drunk now ... As if he had lost himself .... While it only happened by one small clip around one of his nipples .. You could see the nipple piercing through it, while the tentacles were rubbing it ... It was like it was riding his mind ....

Then the other man got a clip ... It looked a bit different ... Both men were like hypnotized ... and they did everything what the women commanded ... They started to walk over the ship ... while the women were following them ... giving them the directions ...

Rico got hot and cold at the same time ... Would they also do it to him ? What would happen to his dreams .. his memory ... and his heart-connections to his family ? Would they take that over too ? What would they make of him ? All sorts of questions went through his mind in speed ... He felt weak and sick all of a sudden ... It was like a ship of ghosts ...

The man next to him was sleeping ... He got very tired again, like never before ... At least that was what he was saying before he fell into sleep ... Rico would everything to protect himself against any of this tricks .. but what could he do ? He was already a prisoner and a slave ... It could only get worse ... Unless he would be able to escape .. but how ?

Then he saw the women were attaching sharp objects to the legs and arms of the two men ... They were weaving a sort of frame around the bodies of these men ... Another man spoke to Rico he would be better of to close his eyes and ears .. for he wouldn't like to see what would happen next ... So Rico did ...

The day after his mate was still tired as never before .. It was like a strange power had sucked him ...His skin was red and golden with big blue spots .... And the women brought him downstairs .... They were all of a sudden so nice to him ...

Rico wondered what was going on ... He didn't trust these smiles and nice things at all .. And he wondered what happened yesterday to the two men ... He heard a lot of shrieks ... even while he had his fingers in his ears the whole time .. He didn't see them around this time ... but maybe they were downstairs too ... if they would be still alive ...

What a ghostship this is ... Rico thought ..... a nightmare for every man ...

One of the women was called Thunder-eye ... She was very friendly to Rico and today she often brought him fruit ... but it irritated him, that she only did it to him and not to the other men ... So he shared the fruit with them ... Her breasts were covered but maybe this woman had also a nipple-clip ... maybe she was a slave too ... He couldn't believe that she was really one of them ... The trip took longer than he thought ... The island still wasn't in sight .... He asked thunder-eye if she had a nipple-clip too, but she was one speaking in another language and couldn't understand Rico ... One night when everyone was sleeping Thunder-eye came to Rico and loosened his chains and ties ... She took him downstairs to her cabbin. When they were in she took one eye out of her head, and showed it to Rico ... It was a mechanism ... Then she put it back into her head and started to smile to Rico ... Rico thought that maybe that was another way they slaved people ... maybe more women had this sort of eye ... It looked very natural, but inside it was a mechanism ... Could he trust this woman ? Why would she take him to this cabbin ? She showed him some pictures of her man and family ... And some tears came out of her eyes ... Rico wanted to lay his arm around her shoulder, but all of a sudden he had the feeling that it may not be right ... He had to be very careful, for he still didn't know who this woman was ...

It took many years for he could understand her language ... she helped him through ... Every night she took him to her cabbin to talk ... And it was like the strange things happening in the

beginning didn't happen anymore ... No screaming, no shrieking, no nipple-clips ... Although the two men, he never saw them back ...

One night Thunder-eye showed him her marriage-ring ... It was a golden ring, with a snake around it ... She smiled ... but again a tear rolled ... She didn't talk as much as Rico always did ... but this time she started to tell a lot about her husband ... How she missed him ... and Rico understood it very well ... He told her that he truly wanted to see his wife again ... but they were both prisoners on this ship ... Thunder-eye told him that not only the men were slaves, but also the women ... They all worked for the queen ... Thunder-eye told him also that when they would escape the ship, the thunder-eye would explode and with it the whole ship ... so the only way to really escape was to escape with all, and she had to leave the thunder-eye .... but she also said that the sea was too dangerous, and the women would never accept it ... She wouldn't let them die ... She knew how deep they were prisoned in their minds by the queen .... She told him that in a fact they were all friends ... but by the works of the queen it looked different ....

Soon they would be on the island, and they would reach the city of slaves, Rosmamm to see the queen ... It would be hell, but they had no other way ...

It was like when that day was coming near she started to talk more and more ... She told Rico a lot about the queen ... And while she was talking about her, Rico more and more got the impression that the queen was also a slave of something or someone ...

Thunder-eye told him that at nights she often wanted to be left alone ... and then she cried and cried ... even cutting herself ...

Finally they got in the city ... and they were marching in line to the temple of the queen .... She saw him in the distance ... The queen started to cry and run ... while she fell Rico around his shoulders .... He looked in her eyes ... and saw his wife ... It was his wife .... Rico started to cry, asking her how she got here, and what happened ..

She started to tell the whole story ... that the day he was kidnapped, she wanted to become the queen of the country who kidnapped him ...

Then Rico woke up, and looked at the face of his sleeping wife ... What a strange dream he had ... He had a horrible pain in one of his nipples all of a sudden ... He woke his wife up ... and started to tell her about the dream ...

Suddenly their son came in the bedroom with his little pirateship in his hands .... Daddy, daddy, he was saying .... The pirates are glowing ...

Then his mother took him in her arms ... Rico smiled ... It was like the whole family was gathered around a riddle ...

Sun of Death

The sun of death is the feeder of all the dead. Without the sun of death no one can live in the world of death. No one would be able to breath and no one would be able to eat. This is why the quest of the dead is always to the sun of the dead. It is like the heart of the world of the dead, and some say it is full of nipples from where the life-giving milk of death flows to make everything fruitfull. The ones who live the closest to this sun are almost naked, and they have strange habbits. Their kingdoms have been built of the bones of feet and they have coverings of feetskins. Most of the times they eat feetmeat and the meat of babies. No wonder that these are wild tribes, warriors and hunters. Some say that the closer you come to the sun of death the wilder you become, it makes you insane. The tribes surrounding the sun of death are called the were-indians.

They live from death, and not many babies do survive in these spheres, only when the sun of death takes care of them. One of these survivors was Mirtjik, an indian boy. The indians always feared him, as they said he had the rays of the sun of death. He became a great teacher among them, and the sun of death loved him. It was in these days the lake of blood came into existance, as the sun of death had sent it's ray for that. And Mirtjik preached that it was a gift of the sun of death, and everyone had to be baptized in it, to receive the rays of the sun of death. But many got killed when they got baptized in the lake. It seemed like the sun of death was very selective, but Mirtjik said that those who didn't survive the baptizement would be taken care of by the sun of death. Their souls would move to the sun of death, to live in it's heart forever.

To live in the sun of death was a life-breaking experience. It was to die a several times to come into the deepest death, as the deaths within the deaths. Some said those who lived in the sun of death became the flies of death and were-flies. They could show up to the deathlings to take their heart away. They said those who lived in the sun of death ate hearts, but no one really knew what was going on there. It was a ground-breaking experience to live in the sun of death. It was a place with the palest lights, bringing so much darkness. Those who went to the sun of death lost themselves, to become robotic experiments. They got teached about the paradoxes of death, and became a slave of it.

The sun of death was an enslaver, but most of all it was a teacher, letting them wake up in reality. Within the sun of death there were powers to melt the feetbones and feetskins, and from these strange kingdoms rose. Also the feetmeat got melted by these powers to make new bodies.

And it was right. These indians could shapeshift into flies, so they were some sort of were-flies. They had to learn about the secrets of the sun of death, and they had to make many flights inside.

It was like at some moments the sun stopped shining to become dark. This always happened in the nights, while after the night the sun was always red, pink and pale. Whenever the sun of death stopped shining it got a brown colour, and it started to teach about blood, the experience of dreams. In the center of the sun of death there were kindoms built by blood, the wildest tribes, living in dreams. There were bloodwaterfalls here, and strange cryptic experiments. The king of blood had like monkey-flies beings, always floating down close to him, ready to attack every intruder. There were no queens, only many princes. It was like a strange cardgame they were playing, all to let the blood stream, and they drank it like wine. They were were-flies, and they all had their own units, like vehicles. They were worshippers of the sun of death, and actually it's slaves and marionets. They were the watchers of the deeper realms of the sun of death. Whoever came there got sunk away in puzzles, and only those dead to the riddle could survive. To follow the cryptic lights could bring you from illusion to illusion, to get deeper and deeper into the traps. Only warriors and hunters seemed to survive, only those dead to the cards.

The were-flies deeper in these realms knew all about the strategies of the king of blood. They had dealt with it. No one could come here without the right initiations. They had lived miserable lives, were-lives, where the dreams switched into nightmares. They found out about the immunology hidden in their feet, to survive on the quest of the sun of death. They found out about it's orbit. It was like they had to deal with a fire-code, and only by their feet they could raise the right immunology, for it was a sacred path. The sun of death was a missionary sent out to destroy them, to test them, but they had survived, and they looked straight into the faces of the seven suns of blood, drinking from a higher milk. These seven suns of blood seemed to be the secret moons of the sun of death to guard and guide it, and to give it power.

There was no way to enter the suns of blood but by strange cryptic games. Those who lived in the suns of blood had survived the powers of the sun of death, and could actually use these powers. They had become the secret rulers of the sun of death, activating the winds of death to rule the whole world of the dead. But the quest was to the seventh sun of blood, where the winds of blood were. Only the were-flies could survive, and they had to make many flights, from fleece to fleece.

The seventh sun of blood looked like a heart full of soles, and inside : only feet .... Here the spiders lived, with their webs. And the were-feet could only enter the seventh sun of blood when they had defeated these spiders. Many of them ended in traps ot become perpetual bloodwells. There was only one were-fly who could defeat the were-spiders. There were

seven boxes in which the seven winds of blood lay dorment. The were-fly didn't survive it when he opened these seven boxes, but the seven winds of blood came down to Mirtjik to let him ascend into the seventh sun of blood. Since then he carried the rays of the seventh sun of blood. He became some sort of Messiah, and when he returned everything started to turn into blood. There was nothing more striking but this, and the fear started to grow everywhere. He came to tie them all up by the ropes of blood. They saw it as a revenge of the suns of blood he preached about, but for them there was only one hope : to make the quest to the seventh sun of blood themselves. Mirtjik teached them how to do it, how to get rid of their bondages. And thus many followed him to the higher realms, but only a few of them survived. The rest of them fell into traps to turn them into perpetual bloodwells and flywebs.

Now the flywebs were also a reality behind the veils of the seventh sun of blood. Mirtjik now had the key of the seven winds of blood, and guided the few survivors. He also guarded them. But they all died when they saw the seven wells of the winds of blood, the seven boxes. Something had struck them. Only Mirtjik could go through the gate of the seventh well and came into a realm of even more flywebs. Here he saw the most dangerous were-flies, who could penetrate his mind easily to give him nightmares. They brought him trauma after trauma. Mirtjik thought the grace of the sun of death and the suns of blood had left him, but this wasn't their realm anymore. This was the realm of the moons of blood, as a stairway leading to the planets of blood. It was the road to the universe of blood, and to the world of blood. Mirtjik knew that the only way to survive in these dangerous spheres was to become a vampire. There were so many initations through the veils of blood that Mirtjik finally began to understand that another being was giving him grace. It was the sun of vampire in the middle of the universe of blood.

Large skulls formed the portals of this sun, and they all had reflecting discs on their foreheads radiating strange lightbeams. When Mirtjik came closer the sun of vampire seemed to explode and flies came forward from it. It was like a great black hole got activated, and sucked Mirtjik inside. It was like his nose opened up, and strange intensive smells were overwhelming him. It was the smell of death and blood. He seemed to get faster and faster, and suddenly he didn't know where he was anymore. A stairway of blood was exploding before his eyes, and he stared right at a tree where men and women had grown into each other. The tree was screaming. Snakes seemed to surround the tree, strange snakes, with strange smells. Then tornado's of blood seemed to come forward from the tree, and seemed to struck Mirtjik. Mirtjik fell down, while later some soldiers raised him up. 'This is your cross,' a voice whispered. The soldiers nailed him to the tree. Mirtjik screamed, and later birds came to eat from his flesh. Many dark nights followed, while Mirtjik was in low consciousness. 'You wanted to know about the secrets of the sun of death ?' a voice whispered ..... 'First you have to pay for it.'

'How much do I have to pay ?' Mirtjik roared. After the dark nights Mirtjik woke up while soft lights were lightening his face. A woman took him from the tree, and then the woman turned into a snake. 'Where am I ?' Mirtjik asked. 'Follow me,' said the snake.

The snake led him to a wonderfull place at first sight. It was a pleasure for his eyes. But when the night fell he wanted to get away. It was a were-world.

Do you understand anything of this world ?' the snake asked. Then she turned into a tall lady again. She had almost transparant clothes, very thin clothes. Then she turned totally into blood. She smiled at him. 'You must learn about the forces of death,' she said. 'For there is nothing but death, but it comes in many forms.' Mirtjik remembered the games in the lower realms, and she led him to games as well. She showed him the gladiators of death, and she showed him the hunting-parties of death, and how everything turns into blood once in awhile, how everything turns pale to produce the dark. She showed him a clock in her hands, and said : 'You have to learn everything about the times of death. It's your food here, your breath, and without that you cannot do anything.' It was like Mirtjik was standing on fire, like he could fall in it every moment. Suddenly walls of fire were rising, and the woman gave him the clock. 'Keep it,' she said, and then she left.

There was no way for him to leave from here. It was now him and his clock. The flames looked like wild lava, and it was almost roaring. The flames were confusing his head. Then suddenly flies seemed to come forth from the flames, and it started to get quiet again in his head. The flies changed into women. Some of them were pale, others dark, others of blood, while some of them were burning. They were like statues or pictures, slowly moving. Whenever he moved the arms of the clock he could see the women changing, and soon they all got the same qualities, like all in one. They looked like wasps, but then slowly they turned into flies again. He looked at his watch, and could now see all the faces of the women in his clock. But then they slowly started to change into predators. Rippling gates were opening all around him. Sweet soft voices were luring him. Lights were coming from his clock, and rays started to move all around. The rays were of soft pale light almost materializing. Then he had to step over them, and chose one of the rippling gates. But it was like choice was fatal. He looked straight into a ravine. He got like frozen and didn't dare to move. Then after awhile more and more rays seemed to come, and seemed to be almost materializing, and suddenly all the rippling gates came together to swallow him. It was like he fell into the softest ravine.

Mirtjik, Mirtjik, someone whispered. He looked up and saw an indian woman. He knew she was a were-one, as he was in a were-world. 'I'll show you the secrets of the sun of death,' she spoke softly. He went with her, and she took him to an indian tent. All sorts of music instruments were here, like indian drums, flutes and more. 'Feel the rythm of death,' she said. She was some sort of a mystic woman, but very cryptic. He looked at her very puzzled. 'I can show you more,' she sais. 'No wait,' he said. 'What is the use of these instruments ?' Then she took some of them, and started to play. The times and states of death seemed to ripple all over her, and then it also got to him. He looked at his watch which became all red, and blood came forward from it. 'Stop,' he said. 'What is the meaning of all this ?'

‘You need to learn the seasons of death, and it’s harmony. It’s a were-world,’ she said. Suddenly she turned into a predator, and jumped on him. He could kick her away like a cat, but then he had to escape, and she was running after him. She had turned into the most dangerous creature, like a spiderlike big cat. Suddenly he ran to the indian tent again, took the instruments and started to play. Now she became quiet again and turned into a woman again. Mirtjik started to understand what it was all about. He had to tame this world, harmonize it, by the different instruments. He had to bring his mind into a certain pattern. But then after awhile she started to turn into a giant snake, and this time he really had to run. He ran into all sorts of other indian tents to look for instruments.

‘What is the meaning of this world ?’ he asked himself. Finally he could turn her into a woman again, and at the end of the day they fell asleep together. The next morning she had gone, but he had learned an important lesson. He had now armed himself with several instruments, and these were his most important weapons.

There were several walls of blood in existance no one could come across. These walls of blood kept the several realities separated, and in Mirtjik’s reality he was the chosen. Every reality had it’s own chosen one, and through the several veils of blood they finally reached the wall of blood of their reality. Behind these walls there was the sun of realities, as the center, where they would meet each other, if that was a possibility. Every wall of blood had it’s own skeleton-watcher, like a mayan witchcraft indian, and if they would beat that skeleton they had to beat the sorceror who created all these walls and kept them separated.

The sorceror was an evil man, so he created evil mayan witchcraft watchers. The only ones who could defeat such guys were the ones who became more evil than them. Mirtjik was aware of this task. He knew that only those who reached the extreme of evil, by becoming an over-evil lord, they would be able to generate the sources which one called ‘good’. Those who could only reach a lower grade of evil were never be able to become ‘good’. Mirtjik knew how the paradox worked. It only worked by the extremes, the over-powers. It was a long quest for Mirtjik, but finally he succeeded in overcoming the evil watcher and his evil boss, the sorceror of the walls of blood, and slowly he slided towards the sun of realities where he would meet the other chosen ones. He knew that as soon as they would meet each other, the sun of realities would turn into blood, and the states of death would be generated.

He felt a hand, then another hand, and soon, they were in a circle of millions and millions of chosen ones, all from their own realities. The great central sun of death was rising with so many suns of blood. It was a great moment. They heard laughing while a smaller

sorceror came forth from the central sun of death. He welcomed the survivors as visitors, and said that only a few of these chosen ones were also chosen to move further on the great central sun of death, while the rest would drown in blood. Everyone was shocked. This they didn't expected. They had done such an excellent job to destroy the watcher of their own reality, and the sorceror of all realities, and now they heard this. Some of them started to shake, and others started to scream and shriek, while an enormous dragon came forth from the great central sun of death. Lightrays came out of it's eyes, and started to switch from one to another. The lights started to move faster and faster, while blood started to stream. So many of them were melting away, and the dragon picked three of them out by it's tail. 'Who among you is Mirtjik ?' the sorceror asked loud. Mirtjik stepped forwards. 'And who among you is Danion ?' he asked loud. Then another man stepped forwards. 'You two become the leaders of these three. The rest will die,' the sorceror spoke loud. Then shrieking and screaming came all over the place, while the dragon picked up also Mirtjik and Danion. The great central sun started to move in it's orbit, while leaving the rest behind in blood.

Suddenly the dragon started to change into many women, and also the sorceror seemed to be a woman. It was the woman of the music instruments. Mirtjik smiled. He was glad to see her again. In the air they saw gaint snakes turning into women and flies, and also the ground below them started to change. The men got instruments and had to play for their lives, as so many women came forth from the ground, starting to become predators. They needed to learn how to play together, and they needed to know how to move in this dangerous zone. Everything around them started burning and turned into blood, first pale and then bringing forth the dark, until it all started to ripple harmoniously.

The women started to shriek more and more, but finally they got quiet. They knew they had to do with dangerous were-women wanting their meat. The women lived in lakes of blood and lakes of fire, and some could even turn into black dragons looking like dangerous fishes and snakes. It was all so overwhelming that finally all the men got almost strengled by tall flexible moving snakes. The men started to search for breath, until the snakes took them into the depths.

Mirtjik called for Danion. Suddenly he felt a strong hand on his skin. Then Danion took him away from the snakes, and later they could also get the other men away from the snakes. Fire was still moving around them, but they had to sooth the flames by their instruments. Some tried the flutes, and it worked. By the drums they could tame the darkness, and by all sorts of snared instruments they could tame the blood. But how could they tame the pale lights, who got so thick that they almost materialized ? Some started to shriek, and they found out it worked. It was a battlecry. They made themselves tents by skins, and finally the women were creeping on the ground begging for mercy. 'No, don't give them any mercy !' Mirtjik screamed. 'Let's get away from here !' They took some of the skins, and went away from the women. After awhile

they came into a forest, which looked like a jungle. Bloodred snakes were in the trees, but they seemed to be quiet. Further on there were some boys living in trees, dark boys, but they didn’t form a threat either. It looked like a harmonious place. Deep in the jungle they made their camp, to get through the night.

The next morning tall worms were everywhere. They moved slowly, and they had eaten away the jungle except their camp. Slowly the men took their instruments again, and started to play, while the worms started to turn into women. The women were soft, but they knew they were were-women. So they played very slow songs, while the women came closer. ‘What a beautiful music you play,’ one of the women said. Mirtjik told them to be very careful. Some of the women had some snakeskin, and it looked like they could turn into the worst predators every moment. ‘Run !’ Mirtjik was shouting, while they all threw their instruments away to run for their lives. Fast snakes came after them, and soon they were all surrounded. One of the men started to cut himself, as he knew it could make them quiet, and it did. They wanted to see blood.

But Mirtjik said they couldn’t spoil too much blood. They didn’t know what to do when the snakes came closer. But then they started to turn into worms again, and after that in flies, and then in women. Some women had pain in their stomach, and didn’t know what was happening. They seemed to be so confused. ‘We know you are were-women,’ Mirtjik said, ‘and we want to help you.’

‘Please help us,’ one of the women said. ‘We do not have control over ourselves.’ The men started to sing, and by their songs they tried to get the women quiet. They sang a sort of lullabies. Suddenly from all sides flies came to put a web between the women and the men, so that the men could move on. It seemed the flies wanted to help them, and to teach them more about the sun of death. Further on there were women who gave birth to snakes through their mouths. And soon the men did the same. Soft fires were surrounding them, not threatening anymore. It seemed fire was a covering here, and soon, through many veils of soft fire, they came into a cool hall, like a temple. There were rays of soft lights here who had materialized themselves like thick pale pink stakes. Lights were also nothing but coverings here, and instruments. Some of them sat down on the materialized lights. It was very flexible. Then two women came towards them. They said they had more control over themselves, because they had more knowledge about the states of death. They showed the men a lot of cards all representing a part of death. ‘Let’s do a game,’ they said. But the men didn’t want to play a game. They were tired of everything, and wanted to have rest a bit. The two women guided them to some rooms were they could sleep. There were some soft benches and beds. There were also hanging some big feathers in the rooms, and there was a tropical climate.

In the middle of the night nightmares began to come over the men, and they were calling for the women, who came immediately. ‘We have to play the game,’ they said, ‘or these nightmares will take all control away.’ But still the men didn’t want to play, until the women became very mad, and a fight started. ‘You put yourselves and us at risk !’ one of the women shrieked. ‘You need to know more about the powers of death, or they will destroy you, and then they can also destroy us.’ Mirtjik took one of the women tight. ‘But we have to sleep. It’s dangerous to play games like that when you’re too tired. We do not have any strength left, and our minds are confused.’

‘Then take some drinks, strong drinks. It is important we do the game,’ the other woman said. Suddenly one of the men started to turn into a predator and jumped on one of the women to destroy her, but Mirtjik kicked him away. Another man started to turn into a predator, even worse than the other. Now they had to run away as soon as they could. ‘Where do you have the cards ?’ Mirtjik asked. But it was already too late. The predators jumped on the other woman, and she got killed. Quickly Danios took the living woman, and ran with her outside the room, while she was screaming. ‘I do not want to have anything to do with you ! You are the reason that my sister died !’

‘Show me the game !’ Danios shouted. While Martjik and the other man were running behind them. They came into a room with a lot of pink lights, while lightening almost overwhelmed and destroyed them. The woman was still shouting. Danios tried to quiten her, but nothing worked. In some aquaria dangerous fishes swam. On a wooden table some pink pale cards lay. The women took the cards, and then threw them on table again. ‘Here, play !’ she shouted, ‘but I am gone !’ The woman ran away, while a few minutes later the two predators came into the room, and turned into men again. They knew they had to play the game now or things would get only worse.

Martjik was reading the book with the rules. There were cards of blood, cards of the dark, cards of fire, cards of the pale, cards of the soft, cards of materialization, and many more. In the book there was much knowledge about the powers of death, how it worked, and after a few games Mirtjik took the book to his room. After hours the woman came into his room. She was a bit more quiet now, and she apologized for her behaviour. In a sense she was grateful that her sister died as they couldn’t get along with each other very much. And her sister always thought that she was the boss. Maybe the sun of death has decided it this way. It’s better like this. She hugged Mirtjik and kissed him. ‘Did you like the game ?’ she asked.

‘Oh yeah,’ Mirtjik said, ‘it was very interesting.’

‘My sister used to give the kiss of death,’ the woman said.

‘What is that ?’ Mirtjik asked.

‘Oh, to put a spell on men,’ the woman said. ‘To get them under her control. It’s some sort of power she had.’

‘And for what reason ?’ Mirtjik said.

‘I do not know,’ the woman said. ‘She is mysterious. She didn’t talk that much, only when we had troubles, and when she wanted to play the boss.’

‘Oh okay,’ Mirtjik said. ‘I hope you do not want to play the boss about me.’

‘No, of course not,’ the woman said. ‘I’m different. I’m humble. I do not belief in such control. I guess if you want to control others you lose your own control, and that is scary and just not right.’

‘You are a good woman,’ Mirtjik said. ‘Too good for me.’

The woman smiled. She was indeed a precious woman. The woman kissed him again on the cheek, and then on his mouth. ‘Warmth is good,’ she said. ‘In such a realm like this. Let’s give it to each other one time.’ And then they both went to sleep in each other’s arms. After a few hours Mirtjik woke up, kissed the woman, and then left the room. He called the other men, and they decided to leave before the woman would wake up, but then Mirtjik had some pain in his heart. ‘Mirtjik,’ Danios said. ‘I know you love that woman, but she can be dangerous. She knows a lot about death, and she can be a block on our path. You have exchanged presents of warmth, and you have her book. We must close this chapter now and move on.’ Mirtjik nodded, still with pain in his heart. The other men started to roar and then he knew enough. These sort of women are only for one night, and then they left. One of the men had taken the cards with them. They needed these cards.

It was like the woman had triggered something in Mirtjik, although he tried to ignore it. His friends were right. It could be dangerous, and he was supposed to be their leader. Danios was a good buddy.

They went through dangerous flywebs, in search for the secrets of the sun of death. They didn't want to return to the woman, as something wasn't right. The woman was a good woman, but a bit too good. She used her knowledge very well, but she was kind of frozen. Mirtjik knew that he was longing for the depths, the tall depths of the great sun of death, in search for it's treasure-rooms.

In the distance they heard some women singing. They knew that could be dangerous for it could easily be a spell on their heart. The women were dressed by stripes of light, pale and soft lights, almost materializing on their skins. The women stood before a wall of pale blood. They told the men that behind the wall of pale blood there was the great central sun of all realities, where all directions came together. Those who would survive the quest across the wall of pale blood would meet the survivors of other directions. When they came closer the women shot Danios through his heart by arrows, while the other men started to run away, except Mirtjik. Mirtjik took his knife, and came into a fight against the women, slayed them all, and went across the wall of pale blood.

In the distance he saw the great central sun of all realities, and he didn't know what was waiting for him. Would he survive this quest ? A dark watcher came to him in a chariot of fire. The man had a strange helmet. He carried a sort of cross with a circle on the right top, like it was broken off from the top. The man had a pink shiny sword, and it was like he had pink pale blossem resting on his pulse and hand. He gave Mirtjik some diamond dice, and some tall cards appeared in the skies. One card had a thin tall sword, and the cards were slowly moving in a circle, one by one passing by the atmosphere above the great central sun of all realities. There was also a card with a horse and a knight on it. When it stopped above the great central sun of all realities Mirtjik had to throw the dice in a wide bag. He saw women's faces on the dice, and it was like veils started to open themselves, and a bridge appeared. After hours of travel on a horse he got closer and closer to the great central sun of all realities.

The closer he came the more blood was streaming, while pale lights were blossoming, spreading the darkness. Was he the only survivor ? A hairy widowspider came forward, leaving her eggs. Snakes seemed to come forward from the eggs, turning into flies, and some turned into women. Pale lights were spreading themselves more and more showing dark women tied to the surfaces of the sun. The spider showed him millions and millions of games and cardgames under her body. And she had a reflecting eye beaming lightrays, while she suddenly turned into a woman almost strengled by a snake. 'Help us,' the woman said softly. 'How many cards do you have

?' the woman asked. Suddenly Mirtjik remembered that one of the men who was with him had the cards. But he himself had the book in which all cards had been described. He showed her the book. 'Throw it to me,' the woman said. Mirtjik came closer and closer. He could feel her love for games and cardgames, and it quietened him. 'Throw it !' the woman shouted. Then he threw the book, while the snake around her body exploded. 'We are all were-people,' the woman said, 'you also. We need the games, we need .... knowledge ..... the secrets of the sun of death ...... We had all our own suns of death ..... Now let us ..... unite ..... them .....' Mirtjik touched the woman, and the woman touched him. 'We can learn from each other,' she said.

The next few days they told each other about their quests, and everything they knew of the sun of death. 'Are we the only survivors ?' Mirtjik asked.

'There have to be many more,' the woman said. And when they went deeper into the great sun of all realities they met the others, and they were with billions and billions. In a few years Mirtjik made many, many friends, but he remembered the words of Danios, and the roaring of his other friends, that he was on a quest, and that he shouldn't let anyone block him. Because they were all were-people he found out how dangerous friendship was, triggering so many unknown powers they couldn't control. He fell in love with the quest, but had to forget about his friends. In his memories they were cards, and he could use them whenever he needed.

One day a sorceror called them all together in a big circle, bigger than any circle he ever saw before. The sorceror spoke about the dangers of such existing, and told them that the group had to be sifted. They would do a game, and there would be only one winner. This winner would win the next secret of the sun of death. The game would be a market where they would trade cards. The one building the strongest deck of cards would finally win.

Mirtjik was the one. It was because he kept remembering the words of Danios that friendship could be a trap, and because of his night with the woman in the temple-like hall, who teached him about some of the better cards, and of course by the miraculous book of cardrules. He still had it in mind, and used it very well. Spears came down to pierce the ones who lost the game, while Mirtjik ascended to the next stage. This stage was full of unknown suns of death, like a stairway.

Along the stairway all kinds of tall skeletons stood, all warriors and hunters. They were holding the secret of the paradoxes of death. He knew that only the one with the biggest hate would be able to stand tall on this stairway. Only the extreme of hate, the over-hate, would have something to say about love, and having the power to activate it. All love would be false without the overhate. It was like the suns of death were giving a new sort of milk. And dark blood was streaming.

It was in this area Mirtjik met Danios again. 'Secret of the sun of death,' Danios said. But Danios wasn't so friendly anymore. It was like he was filled with bitterness towards Mirtjik, and one day they got into a fight in which Danios slayed Mirtjik. Danios wanted to be the master of the cards and of all the secrets of the sun of death, even if he had to offer his friendship with Mirtjik to it. He knew this friendship stood him in the way. He also knew that Mirtjik was too good for this world. He took Mirtjik's cards and went somewhere in a large hall, where skeletons were playing at cards. He sat down between them, behind the table, and played with them. He had good cards and won. The skeletons were all burning, while he took their cards away.

In the next hall there was a huge chessplay. The tiles were dangerously armored, and it was here he met Sinon, a traveller. Sinon warned him not to step on any tile, as it would make an eternal gladiator of him. There were some dangerous pawns roaring at them. Sinon stood on the other side of the tiled floor. There was a lot of smoke. There was one tall tower on one of the tiles, and Sinon shouted that Danios should jump on it. In a strange sense Danios trusted Sinon. So he jumped towards the tower and took it tight, while the tower started to move to the other side. Many soldiers on tiles were falling. When the tower came on a black tile the tower started to sink away, but Sinon threw a rope to Danios and could raise him on the shore of the chessboard. They fell into each others arms like they knew each other for years. They both had their stories. Danios could feel that Sinon was a man of the paradox. They decided to move on together. Suddenly huge dark batbirds appeared before them. They looked like crowned Messiahs and they had huge wings. Sinon took his harpoon and shot some of them, but then the others started to shriek louder. Also Danios had a hard time with them, but finally they could move further. Sinon was a man of opposites, and it seemed he knew the area here a bit. He told Danios about the many dark tribes living here. The indians of these tribes were almost naked having some rags surrounding their lower body, and they seemed to have nipples on their buttocks. It was to produce the life-fluids of death, not only milk, but also blood, dark fluids and pale fluids, and they even seemed to produce lights in all forms. In war and hunt these nipples seemed to produce poison for their weapons. Many creatures around them had these qualities as well, like giant-spiders, rare sorts of giant-flies and so on. In times of war these nipples even produced sound. Sinon spoke about a rare spider who had a belly like a giant-nipple, but it looked like it had shrunk. It had ripples, and the palest colour. This spider could turn into a woman at times, and it was feared by the dark tribes, as the woman would lure many warriors and hunters in her webs and traps. She had hypnotizing powers by this giant-nipple. Some of these spiders seemed to have these giant-nipples on their backs, and they seemed to be the most dangerous ones, as they could turn into more women at the same time. They could split themselves up, to turn the lives of the warriors and hunters they caught into nightmares. Sometimes they were called the eternal nightmares, or the living deaths, and they seemed to be the cruelest of all spiders. They would trap men to turn them into perpetual fluidgivers. The spiders would come to milk them every day. Danios was shivering, as he could imagine what pain it would bring. The spiders had all sorts of ways to exhaust the men mentally and emotionally to let them produce all sorts of fluids. They knew all about hormonal fluids, how to stirr it up, and how to use it. They used these fluids for food,

warfare, hunt, traps, and construction. They used it for their webs. It was a dangerous jungle in which not many would survive.

But they decided to go through it. Finally after years of travelling they came into a shiny city made of transparent pale pink material. It looked like bones, and Sinon told it was made of the bones of feet. It was a sort of oasis in the jungle, and they both decided to stay here. There were many survivors here, and it seemed they came from all directions. Some said it was the place where the sun of death had stored it's best secrets. There were shiny waters with snakefluids, flyfluids and spiderfluids, and some said that these wells were the birthplaces of the sun of death. Danios and Sinon slided in such a lake and felt like reborn there, but it made them very sensitive, like they had been stung by a fly. It gave them a weird feeling in their heads. Some men were shaking after they came out of the water, and it seemed to give some sort of spasm. It was paralyzing but at the same time it stored an incredible strength they couldn't control.

It was a delirious feeling, like they were hallucinating, triggering so many other feelings. The thoughts were so harmonious but at the same time chaotic. Everything was multiplying, and another reality seemed to appear. They listened to each other's stories. They seemed to be with many. In the middle of the jungle-city two watchers with nipple-eyes guarded a well which would lead to an underground train. No one knew where this train would lead to, but one day the way seemed to be open. Many went to the train, and also Sinon and Danios. The train would lead them out of the jungle in less than weeks. It would bring them to the great desert of death. The great desert of death seemed to be the place where the sun of death grew up after it's birth. The biggest and blackest snakes seemed to live here, and they seemed to brood eggs. So many eggs Danios had never seen. Flies came from them, flies with strange nipples causing blinding lights. Further on there was a lot of dust, shiny dust like fluids. It was a strange desert, and it seemed to rain here also. Here Danios and Sinon met the reflections of themselves, like their doubles from other dimensions and realities. The atmosphere was filled with hate, and there were fights everywhere. Danios and Sinon lost connection with each other, and got completely surrounded by their own doubles, shadows and reflections. It was here the bitter fluids rose in their bodies, hormonal hate ... They couldn't help but fight themselves. They lost all control. The battles seemed to split themselves up even more, like they lost all their shells and skins, losing all their shadows and reflections. It was here they met their snake-selves. Their scars grew out into nipples, charging themselves with strange powers. Pale lights seemed to descend in their minds, tearing so much apart, like also their snake-selves started to lose their skins, to become wilder and wilder, full of unknown and allpowerfull rage.

It was like someone was milking them, like someone was playing their buttons in a horrible sense. Spiders came to sting them, until they changed into powerfull insects. They were were-people. Everything got too much. After a burst-out of almighty power they

felt themselves sliding away again in an incredible weakness. It was in this vibration they had to live, finding their ways, as a challenge to harmonize and materialize. But all sorts of unknown black holes and pale holes seemed to swallow them away. They know seemed to begin to understand a bit about the growth and development of the sun of death. It was like the tear of the sun of death connected to their hearts.

They awoke on a hill watching in the distance a fragile city completely made of tears. The tears together were like strange chains, and they slowly moved in. Rays of light, soft and pale light, were searching their ways here. It was a morning path, after a strange strange night. The fragile sun of death was sitting on a fragile throne. Everything was made of tears, forming strange chains. All words were shivering, charged by unknown powers, triggering the flashes of the most incredible strengths. It was a strange haunting paradox. ‘Come closer,’ the sun of death spoke. ‘I want to see you in the face.’ Sinon and Danios came closer. ‘You are no angels,’ the sun of death said. ‘You have dealt with the powers of the self, and you are no one’s slave, even not your own slave. You are free. The tears have set you free, holding the secret paradoxes of death. It is the secret why I am here, and why I can speak to you.’

Then the sun of death continued : ‘You have survived the dangerous quest to this place, you have survived death and all it’s traps. Welcome to my secret kingdom.’ Then a door behind the sun of death opened, while pale lights came forward, wild like snakes, but also flexible, and in a sense lovely. They seemed to be made by stringed tears, and they chained Sinon and Danios to lure them through the door.

There was milk floating here and all sorts of fluids, and strange worlds seem to rise here, the worlds of the unknown death. They seemed to be free here, while crabs of pale lights seem to appear in the sky. These crabs were huge, and made of tears, but in a sense they looked strong like metal. ‘I can raise you up if you want to,’ the crabs seemed to speak. Elevators came down, and soon Danios and Sinon were rising. They were ascending into a new world, where the tear was not only the softest material, but also the hardest material, fragile but stronger than anything. Stiff but flexible.

The tear seemed to materialize into the nipple, producing the milk with dangerous smoke. It seemed like the tallest elves came forward, like the thinnest creatures creating a totally new paradigm and paradox. It was like all magnetic gridworks were turning, recoded by millions and billions of fragile thin pencils. Whenever lightening struck the milk changed into blood, producing dark and pale smoke at the same time. It was cracking the stones, and everything seemed to crumble again. It was a strange vibration opening the softest breaths, while the softest voices were descending like flies made of tears, and again it seemed to materialize into the nipple, producing milk and blood, and so many other fluids. The flies were wearing dangerous stripes, like they were on warpath, and suddenly sleep seemed to take everything away.

‘Where am I ?’ Danios asked. He saw a woman standing before him, while he lay on a bed with an old blanket like a rag. ‘Close your eyes, Danios,’ the woman said. And he saw the picture again, so many patterns moving. ‘Breath,’ the woman said. ‘I will open the portals to you beyond understanding.’

‘But who are you ?’ Danios asked. ‘I am the Woman of Death,’ the woman said.

Suddenly Danios awoke in a shock. Spiders were all moving around him, having large nipples on their backs. ‘They’re milking me !’ Danios screamed. He saw the smiling face of Sinon above him. ‘You, you !’ Danios screamed. ‘I knew I couldn’t trust you !’ He now realized that Sinon had led him into a trap. Danios remembered how he slayed Mirtjik, his friend, but now his friend was slaying him. Danios always knew that true friendship didn’t exist. And this was even meaner, as this friend had led him into a trap. Is friendship all about traps ? It seemed to be so, or did he have to watch it all like a paradox. He saw the face of Sinon turning into the face of a fly. What had happened to Sinon, the one he loved ? And was this really Sinon ?

‘Sinon !’ Danios started to scream. ‘Get me out of here !’

Suddenly he felt a hand. It was the hand of Sinon. ‘Come,’ Sinon said. They seemed to be still in the jungle. ‘What happened, man ?’ Danios asked.

‘You had been hit by a venom-arrow,’ Sinon said, and showed him a little hook with a feather attached to it. ‘How long have I been out of consciousness ?’ Danios asked.

‘Shhhh....,’ Sinon said. ‘For awhile, but the venom doesn’t work too long.’

‘Well, we have to be very careful,’ Danios said.

‘Yes,’ Sinon said.

After hours of walk they came to a bridge. The river was full of tall snakes. Behind the river there were some fields where some tribes lived. Sinon and Danios got a tent there to sleep. The next day they moved on to the sea, and in the distance they saw the sun of death. On a small boat they went to an island. Here on this island tribes were living where men and women gave birth to snakes from between their buttocks. It was the strangest thing Sinon and Danios ever saw, but since they were a bit longer on the island, it also happened to them. When they came to the next island these things happened by the legs. The snakes seemed to come forth from certain openings in the legs which looked like some sort of scars, and it also happened to Sinon and Danios since they lived there for awhile.

They learned the language of this second island, and started to study the nature. ‘Stay awake,’ Sinon often said to Danios, as there were many unknown forces of sleep on the island, trying to take their souls away. It seemed to be produced as a gas by some sort of dangerous spiders. The women on the island were very dark, and Sinon and Danios didn’t trust many of them. They seemed to be wicked towards men. Further on the island dangerous cannibalistic tribes seemed to live, and other men often warned them not to go there. It seemed there were many women-tribes there, and these women were wild, and could not be trusted at all. The other men told them that these women could be recognized by having a nipple on the top of their head, like a bald place between their hair.

One day Sinon and Danios decided to go there, for they wanted to know more about the nature here. The other men told them that the hair-nipples could produce strange smells to take control over their minds. Sinon and Danios went there while they didn’t use their nose, only their weapons. They slayed at least twohundred of these women in one day. They found out that these women kept men imprisoned in farmlike places. Some of these men were slaves, some of them lived in cages or at stakes for all sorts of things. It seemed these men were totally mindcontrolled by the strange smells, so first they told the men not to use their nose for awhile. Some of the men were totally zombificated and had lost all control.

Although Sinon and Danios had closed their noses the smells were so intense that their brains got paralyzed, and soon they both woke up in cages. After awhile some women took them out, and brought them before their queen. The queen had all sorts of spiderlike treasures, and was surrounded by women with fly-armories. Some of these women had soft white feathers which looked like big leaves, and they seemed to please the queen. ‘I know why you are here,’ the queen spoke. ‘You are here to steal the nose of death.’ Then she showed a nipplelike creature in a box, almost like a spider. She took the spider out of it’s box and caressed it. ‘Come my sweet darling,’ she spoke to the creature. ‘There are some gentlemen wanting to see you.’ Then she stood up and walked towards Sinon and Danios. They almost couldn’t breath because of the smell of the small animal. ‘You want to feel it ?’ the queen asked. ‘It has such a soft skin.’ Then she put it against Danios’ skin, who started to scream immediately, as it was

burning a hole in his skin. 'Marked like a gladiator,' the queen spoke. 'Such a sensitive spot to make him slave forever.' Then she looked into the eyes of Sinon. 'Sinon ?' The queen seemed to be in a shock.

The queen seemed to know Sinon. She bowed her head. She didn't want to talk about it, but she said to her women : 'I know him.' She took her creature away. 'I'm sorry,' she said. 'I have seen you in my dreams.' Sinon looked her deep in the eyes. Slowly he spoke : 'How can we heal the wound of my friend ?' The queen took another box and smeared some stuff on the wound and around the wound of Danios. Then it healed before their eyes. Then she smeared some of it on the forehead of Sinon, and said : 'You are immune against it now. Go in peace.' She didn't explain about it, while Sinon and Danios were allowed to go. They didn't return to where they came from, but they went deeper into the jungle, as they knew they were immune now.

Deeper in the jungle they found more of these strange spiderlike creatures, but they were immune to it's bites. In one day they plundered more than a hundred menfarms, freeing so many men by injecting some of their blood into them. The women seemed to be powerless.

This sea of death seemed like to end in a waterravine full of waterfalls, and the islands all seemed to float towards this edge. Danios never saw such a height and depth before. It looked like the biggest whirlpool he ever saw. In this ravine the sun of death seemed to go up and down. So many men were diving from the island into the sea, heading for the edge. They seemed to be happy and screamed of joy. It was like they had found the shelter of the sun of death now.

And in the distance, on the other side of the ravine, they could see so many other man coming from other directions. So many realities seemed to cross here, and it looked like the huge walls of water came closer and closer to each other. So many dimensions seemed to melt together into each other now, and also it's islands seemed to come together.It formed a high house in the sky and the sea, more and more changing into a tower.

When they tried to swim to the tower, the tower more and more started to change into giant-feet. In a flash the sea of death turned into blood, while the giant-feet were like pale lights. Then the sea started to turn around to become the sky, while the waves were changing into flames. A giant seemed to come forth from the giant-feet, and then turning into a spider. Everything turned into milk, while the sun of death became to head of the giant. A vulcano rose from the milk, bringing forth smoke, while in a flash everything turned into blood again. The blood seemed to rise on both sides like walls, and a path appeared inbetween them. 'Come closer,' the sun of death spoke.

Sinon and Danios came closer to the sun of death, while the sun seemed to pick them up. They came into a sphere full of wild flies, stinging them by deep thin stings. As soon as they tried to take the stings out the deeper parts of these stings seemed to split up. There was no way out, but they could enter the sun of death deeper and deeper. The flies were like lights to them, strange lights, and the flies guided them to large stretched area's full of blossom and flowers. These were the flowerfields of death, while sweet and soft sleep seemed to sooth them, taking them away by lullabies.

It was here the sun of death showed them it's true nature, and lost dreams seemed to surround them like little flames. They were surrounded by wild unknown warriors with strange long hairy shields. It was like the past didn't exist anymore. There was only the wealth of the sun of death.

Both they rose up to receive their armor. They were now the watchers of the sun of death, like wild sirens. They knew about it's suffering, they had felt it deep inside, and they knew of it's battle. Inbetween them there seemed to be messiah's with crowns of thorns, but they themselves had crowns like wild flies.

They were the watchers of death, like gatekeepers. They knew how to turn everything in blood, milk, and smell, like the rythm of an unknown song.

They knew how to turn everything in fire, in transparant pale materializing lights. They played at cards, they played chess. It brought darkness and chrystallizing tears.

They could watch the lost dreams and nightmares come into reality again.

They could watch the strategies of these dreams, and their warfare. They could watch their hunting skills.

They could watch their unknown snakes and worms like the palest lights. They didn't use their noses, in fear of dangerous smells. They didn't dare to move, and then they closed their eyes. Afraid to watch in fear of the lights.

The lights seemed to multiply themselves, calling forth a greater darkness. The night was falling, and the lights were developing themselves.

Striped spiders seemed to come forward.

Then everything seemed to turn into blood again, like the sweetness of death, soft pale materialized lights.

There was no escape from here. Sinon and Danios found out that their armors were merely prisons, suits of slaves, and it was like someone was milking them. It was like they were in the candy factory of death, but what was the candy ? ‘Try to keep awake,’ Sinon said to Danios. They were in fear of falling asleep.

Sweet soft wounds like trauma’s seemed to multiply themselves, like the memory of the sun of death, full of stories.

So many smiles of death seemed to appear between them, so many breaths and so many voices.

Suddenly Danios woke up among so many spiders with giant-nipples on their backs. Above him he saw the smiling face of Sinon, and also an unknown indian warrior with a mask of a large white skull with large feathers was staring at him. ‘Where am I ?’ Danios asked. Sinon didn’t say anything, and neither the warrior. Awhile later also the queen of the hairnipple-women’s tribe came. Danios remembered that her spider marked him. ‘He’s ready for the next mark I guess,’ the queen said, while she took her spider again out of it’s box to put it against Danios’ skin. Danios screamed because of the heat. It was burning another hole in his skin. Then she laid the spider on his belly. ‘I hope you will stay awake this time,’ the queen said. Danios tried to keep his consciousness high and bit on his lip. ‘It’s important, Danios,’ Sinon said. ‘It’s making a warrior of you.’

‘A gladiator you mean !’ Danios screamed. ‘I know of your works, Sinon ! You led me here !’

‘Calm down, friend,’ Sinon said. ‘It’s for your own best.’

‘Why did you do this to me ?’ Danios asked.

‘I have saved you out of the grip of a dangerous spider,’ Sinon said, and showed a black crablike spider to Danios. ‘Don’t worry, it’s dead now. We have let it shrink.’

‘Then where did I come from. Was I mindcontrolled ?’ Danios asked.

‘Yes,’ Sinon said, ‘the powers of death are dangerous and tricky.’

‘What kind of spider was it ?’ Danios asked.

‘It is called the sun of death,’ Sinon said. ‘There are many different species called the sun of death. You have survived, and now we will give you the right one.’ Then the warrior came forward and showed Danios a box with a spider which looked totally like a giant-nipple. ‘It is yours,’ the warrior said.

Carefully Danios took the spider in his hands, while his hands also started to change into giant-nipples. It started to spread through his whole body. He laid the spider against his chest, and the spider started to grow into his flesh. ‘You now will be a sun of death yourself,’ Sinon said. ‘Your quest to the sun of death is over. It is now more the quest to yourself.

Sinon took the queen in his arms and kissed her. The queen kissed him back. Then Sinon took the queen to his hut where he made love to her. The warrior took Danios to his hut where he told him all about the sun of death.

Horses of Shame

short psychological thriller

A woman is surrounding his private parts red rag by her feet ... she sits on his buttocks and had cut off his arms ... What a picture for a magazine ... It's not male-friendly ... or does the picture have a deeper meaning ? The magazine still sells good ... It's like I am the only one shocked by it ... People are used to it I guess ... They don't have emotions or feelings anymore ... The woman has her fingers pinching the nipples of the man ... and her lips are in his neck ... She's riding him like a horse ...

It seems the people aren't interested in the frontpage of the magazine ... They are reading the stories inside and watching some other pictures ... more friendly ... or is that just my point of view ? It's not female-friendly either ... for do woman ride men like this ? cutting off their arms .. etcetera .... No it's not female-friendly at all ... or does the maker of that picture have a meaning behind it ... I don't know ...

I'm buying the magazine and suddenly the lady of the bookshop wakes up and looks into my eyes a bit sarcastic ... She's all eyes for me ... why not for all the others who bought it ? It doesn't feel comfortable ....

At home I feel anger towards the lady of the bookshop ... I cannot describe the look in her eyes ... was she worried or angry ... or did she want anything else ...

I'm a journalist myself ... I would never make such a magazine ... maybe she recognized me ... I'm in the zone between unknown and well-known ... I thought I had a good mask ... I tried to not look like myself ...

I show the picture to my mother ... She thinks it's sick ... In the magazine I'm looking for stories about this picture, but I don't see anything about it ... My mother reads it too .... and we will wait for father ...

When my father is home he cusses ... He always uses to do that when he doesn't understand something ... he had troubles on his work and now this picture ... I don't care for his cussing ... I don't have problems with it ...

My brother thinks it's a mean picture ... towards men, but also to women .... My sister thinks it's mean too ... She will show it to her friends she sais ...

Finally I pick up the phone and call the number of the magazine .... I get an assistent on the phone ... She doesn't know anything about the meaning of the picture ... I ask her if she knows who made the picture .... but she doesn't know ... She will ask her boss ... I get the boss on the phone .... he's a bit irritated and tired .... maybe he also had some alcohol, for he didn't sound clear .... or it was because of the cigar in his mouth ... he said it was a long story but he would tell if I would come to his office ... At midnight I arrived there, he was the only one left at the office, but there were also some nightguards around. 'Sit down, boy,' he said .... I sat down and he started to talk .... 'I was the one making that picture,' he said ... It was a painting which hang in our home when my parents lived ... I threw it away when they died ... but later I wanted to have it again ... I hated it when I was young .... but it seems it's the bearer of my memories when it comes to mom and dad ... Suddenly it was like he got an emotional fragile tone in his voice ... and he talked like he knew me long before ...

I remember one day, he said, that my mother was home alone ... and my dad would go with his ship for a long time ... for he was a sailor ... a strange man came into our house that night who tried to rape my mother ... I came home, and tried to take the man away from my mother, but then he turned around and had the face of a horse ... I didn't see my mother anymore, but then he turned around again and his back seemed to be my mother ... He now had two voices, a dark male voice and a woman's voice ... laughing at the same time ... I started to scream ... and I ran to the corridor where that painting hang of the woman riding the men with no arms ... and I saw it changing into a horse too, as one and the same person ...

I ran outside screaming even harder, and someone came towards me with a tight face saying my father had been drowned ... This appeared all to be a dream but when I woke up my parents were standing before my bed .. saying they didn't want to live with each other anymore, and would divorce ...

So you see this picture reminds me of what happened between my mother and my father ... and ... well, you were the only one asking for it's meaning ...

my parents wanted to drown the past ... and move on ... my mother married to your father ... and then you came .... so you are actually my secret brother ..

but, I asked, you said your parents were dead ?

To me they are .... since they divorced ... I didn't want to see them again, for my life broke in two ...

Why did mother never tell me she had another man before ? I asked ...

I think she wanted to drown the past .... the man said ...

And what happened to your father ? I asked ...

he didn't want a woman anymore ... he said ...

I was a bit shocked ... so this man is my secret brother ?

Finally after a long conversation I drive home ... It's like that picture is on the background now ... I'm thinking about my secret brother all the time ... At home the other day I ask my mother about it ... her face turns pale ... and she confesses ...

It's strange but I'm also thinking about the father of my secret brother .... the former man of my mother ... I want to talk to him ... Soon I am sitting before him ... He's smoking a pipe .... I ask him about the painting .... why he hanged it in his house ... He said that it was a heritage from his own parents ... They were also divorced .... It was like the picture brought bad luck, but I didn't want to be supersticious .... and I though about that strange dream of the man ... my secret brother ... the horse ... as a combination of a man and a woman ... and when they divorce it's like it tears the child apart like with my secret brother ...

the arms of the man of that picture were cut off ... and the father of my secret brother didn't want a woman anymore ... like he cannot be creative anymore ... the man of the picture had a red rag before his private parts covered by the feet of the woman ... it looks like the red being used for the bull in the arena ... it brings rage to the bull ... and my secret brother has this rage .... he doesn't want to see his divorced parents again ... the red rag separates the man from the woman, and she has her feet on it ... while he has his private parts on it .... the bull dies ... and they live on .... while they have a history together ... the child ... the horse ... it's like that picture is the mirror for my secret brother ... the horse is often a slave of society ...

while i let my mind run over these things, i get a phonecall from my mother ... she's crying .... saying ... 'baby, actually the truth is that your secret brother is also your father ... when my former man went out sailing i went once to your secret brother, and you came into existance .... and the man i married much later covered my shame ...'

so now i understood why my brother didn't want to see his parents anymore ... too much shame .... and I'm the child of it ? Am I the red rag ? And am I the reason that the man didn't have arms ... didn't have creativity anymore ? .... It all happened between a man and a woman .... and this is the result ... this was why they all wanted to drown the past ... Or am I maybe the one bringing them all together again ? ...

I think if I am a red rag ... I'm a good red rag ... and religion is the bad red rag ... making people angry ... letting them feeling guilty while there is no guilt ... some things just happen ... that's the course of nature ... we cannot stop everything ... and why would we ? that horse acted like a man raped a woman .... while he made that up .... it was one and the same person .... in that dream of my secret brother and father ... that horse is the fruit of a sick religion .... a strange picture in a magazine, not telling us about it's backgrounds and real meanings .... who is guilty and who is who ? how many of them are there, and where are they going too ? or are they one and the same person doing tricks ?

Well, I found it was a good trick ... my father and my brother ... all the same person ... who knows maybe he's also my mother ...

some things want to be everything for you ... and by producing as much blame and shame as possible to keep your life possessed ... you cannot live with or without it anymore ... you

make it big in the distance ... but you can't have it close anymore ... and then you're becoming the boss of a magazine ... having strange riddles sent out into a world knowing nothing about it ...

isn't all the drama in our lives just a show of someone trying to get our attention ? it comes to you with many faces .... these horses of shame ...

The Chalice of Pehnen

In a time even far before Atlantis a group of ravenous and wasted men came from a war. Their bodies were bony and they cried like babies. They were slayers. The air was hot, and the rivers smelled like the urine of beasts. It was a waste land. Their bodies were aching, as if they had been stung by strange flies. They washed their wounds in the river and laid down. They were hungry as there was no food. They had gone insane by the hunger already long ago. Often they had the habit to play a game, and the loser or losers had to become the meal of the day. They were cannibals. But this time they were so tired that they couldn't afford themselves to play any game. They wouldn't even fight for a piece of meat. Somehow something was preventing them. Suddenly there was lightening everywhere. On a chariot surrounded by leopards a woman stood, wellfed, much thicker than they were. 'Asla'in,' she shouted. 'Stand on your feet.' One of the men slowly crept to her and tried to stand on his legs, but then fell to the ground again in the dust. Then she shouted some other names, and they also came forward to her, trying to stand on their legs, but they were trembling because of the heat. The war and the weather made them like this, and the fact that they were so hungry.

'You know what has been promised to the hungry warriors, right ?' the woman shouted. Then the woman left again. The men crept further along the river until they reached the oasis. Here they had their tents and their huts. Another woman was here, surrounded by large cats. She held a skull in her hands, while the slayers were staring at her. 'The skull of Solvotor, sorceror of the winds,' one of the men whispered. 'By this device they rule us.' She came closer to them. A lizard tongue came forth from the skull, and it was like the men were struck in their brains.

One of the cats started to lick one of the men. 'What do you want from us ?' another man was shouting. He was almost shrieking, because these men couldn't talk normal anymore. Suddenly the wind struck them again, and the men became so insane that they started the war against their own group. Smaller groups began to arise, and the waste land was in a strange flame, even their oasis was wasted now. The woman left while laughing.

The men became even more wasted now, until they were like boys. Asla'in and some others could escape from this tragic fate. They wandered along the river, in search for their goddess. They feared her, they were captivated by her, but they were also longing for her. They wanted to cross the river to go to her palace, to beg for mercy. But while they swam across the river, full of the urine of beasts they lost their last piece of sanity. Asla'in couldn't hold himself up anymore, and was slowly drowning. In the distance he saw the palace. He was struck by confusion. She showed him in a chrystal ball the insane wasted ones who died at stakes. The chrystal ball was overflowing with blood. 'And you know I have the skull of abundance,' she said. He knew she was talking about the skull of Solvotor. She looked wellfed. He didn't dare to question her. All who would eat from the insides of the skull would become like her. She showed him the skull. He knew the skull could strike. He hoped she would have favour on him. She gave him a piece of meat from out of the skull. He carefully ate, but he immediately began to burn. Then she gave him the skull, but she held it tight in her hands also. 'Here, drink of the blood,' she said. He drank, while something struck him in the head. He fell down, and she started laughing. 'You have drunk of the skull of Solvotor, the chalice of Pehnen.'

Red Spider

Tiffany is drinking from her glass, decorated by tragedy and unfulfilled hopes from the past. She is drinking the blood of her grandaunt, without any response to a conscience sewed by deadly precision in her

fragile mind … echoes from an early church, flying in rotten rain, still the threatening painting in the cellar of her feigning sentiment …

The last few years she used this emotion more and more as a terrorist to protect her sensitive traumas. She became the preacher of this church, as an attempt to quench her inner bleeding insecurities forever. The perimeters of vague figures from a family's diary she drowned in the grey ditches. Now she uses these stains in her cloister to wash away the last shadows of the world she lived in … It's still dripping from the pipeline of the grey ditch.

She's eating from her dish, decorated by numbness, holding the liver of her granduncle tightly inside. She still feels herself a prisoner there, but the strange lust she always felt by hearing the torturing dramas of her old acqaintances is still her candle …

There's coming blood out of the pipeline … Tiffany is embroidering her houseshoes with grey lines from the lonely sickness she has since her youth … When the years took off, it got worse … There is still a sea of needles unsheathing from her spleen when she speaks … dragging her grandmothers there to bear a sword too heavy for them … becoming pregnant of something which they can never get out.

Tragedic bitter virginity is torturing her mind, she's living in bitter silence, worshipping her lost situation and her sharp loneliness in devotion. She swallows her tears to drown all her casual desires inside, calling for the sad stare of inner conspiracy. She's eating some old testicles from a crucifix and a painting, hidden in the laundries of her mind. It was still the dogma of her creed, her pension after all the years of hard work while she was too sick to do it.

She cycles everyday to the old pipeline, to swear she will always worship her sickness in tight devotion, breeding her anger under stones of lost and lonely places a few inches under her skin, to drag ignorant visitors

of a forgotten past and health inside, becoming pregnant of something, which they can never get out.

She's still the incubus of silent tragedies, which can never reach daylight. She's still a bitter incubus of inner abortions and miscarriages, of a siamese womb, sinking deeper under the weight of something she could never reach …

Red Spider II

She was paralyzed since her birth. She remembered the cynical smiles around her, bringing her in a deeper death. She also remembered the denying compassionate smiles around her, bringing her in cruel doubts and insecurities … and she remembered the presents she got from them, which were like needles in her body, for it was only a token of business around the shatters of her crash … These feelings she knew since she was two years old, were like birds too bright for her eyes. These torturing emotions about luring friends, weddings and pleasures which she could never touch, made her eyes very big, swallowing all the birthcards she got, leaving no feather behind.

Blood was dripping from the pipeline. She was locked up in desires too heavy for her. Now she was luring ignorant visitors to the lost and lonely places of her traumatized soul, showing them her inner babies

who could never see daylight. Babies howling and complaining in her head day and night. They struck like lightening, like the terror, like a wound on a wound. She was carrying things inside which were too heavy for her ...

She was a mother of bitter incubus's, making the ignorant shadows visiting her mind pregnant by terror and prophesies, until the voices in her head were sliding away into strange and twisted pleasures of laying a heavy boiling object on a light fragile cocoon, like the strange lusts of a dragging ironer hanging under a too weak balloon heading for a sea of fire.

Red Spider III

She took a dive in the water, to never rise up again. A boat was blocking her way to the breath necessary to live. Her soul didn't want to die, when she saw her body rotting away. But she was already dead. This was always the dream a young lady had. She was blocked by the walls of her church, speaking about hell and eternal damnation as daily meat. She worked in the butchery, this young lady, coming home, washing the blood from her hands ... catching it in a vase. Psychological rituals ... These vases are standing all through her house .... Japanese vases .....

She has an obsession about old women, those women who live in the mills so long, that they use them for themselves now. They learnt to sleep with the mills, to ride them, and to tame them, just a tiny bit, for the blood is still streaming, while their old fragile organs are exploding inside.

She has an obsession about their houses, watching their vases. She likes to cut the flowers for the old women, to sacrifice the young to the old. She feels comfortable in hospitals and mental institutions, there where the blood is streaming, there where the mills are streaming, to see how people are blocked by the boat. She wants to hold them in her arms, to know that she is not the only one. She wants to hold them in her arms, for maybe they are the boat blocking her all her live. She is still trying to let the boat sink.

At nights she washes herself by the moist of the Japanese vases, preparing herself for another day in the butchery, washing meat. It seems her mind is twisted in so many ways. All she wants is … to send this boat to others … that's why she loves to keep contacts … She's a bitter incubus … making them all pregnant with boats, with something which will keep them underwater, things too heavy for them. She's a mother and a child of the incubus's, sending them to the butcheries, to let them feel the boats above their heads, to let them realize that they can feel the boat, that they can lie under it, but they can never push it aside, they have to live in these eternal damnations, all caught in Japanese vases …

Return of the Red Spider

A woman was cycling in the pasture, while the air had a strange sensitive charge, and the clouds were dark grey. Suddenly she didn't feel herself anymore, and became cold as ice. She saw a dead child lying in the ditch near to the pipeline. She saw his shoe lying beside him. She stepped from her bicycle and started to walk towards the boy, but suddenly an enormous fear came over her. She felt the need to run away for what if people would think she was the murderer of this child. She started to shiver, feeling some strange feelings in her stomache trying to let her fall. She stumbled to her bicycle again, wanting just to forget about it, to cycle away.

But suddenly a policeman was standing before her, taking her by the arms. She got in a shock, like she was being executed or electrified, as if she was struck by lightening. "You are under arrest," he spoke. She almost couldn't breath, and she started to scream. The policeman was taking her to his car. "I didn't do anything," she screamed. But the policeman was without mercy.

She was sentenced to death, she would go on the electric chair on april the fourteenth. The night before her death she dreamt about the little boy. She dreamt that she saw him lying in the ditch again, and that she took him by the hand, and they went for a walk in the pasture. He showed her a nest of red spiders, and suddenly his face turned in that of a spider. Then she woke up screaming, remembering that she was really the murderer of the child. After the murder she cycled away, but then she returned to see if she hadn't left any traces. When she saw the murdered child again, it was like she saw it for the first time, like she didn't have anything to do with it.

Footsteps are coming closer … It is fridaymorning, april the fourteenth, and they are coming to bring her to the chair. But when she comes there, she sees the little boy sitting on the chair, with red spiders all around him. Slowly they start to eat her from inside out, and then she explodes …

Return of the Red Spider II

Suddenly it was like he had lost everything. He dreamt of the tragedy, and he didn't know why and what. But he was walking to the pipeline. His homeland was gone. He was now in a strange land where no one knew him and where he knew no one. He heard aborted children cry in the pipeline, and he heard strange slow songs spinning like mills in his head. He saw faces laughing in cynical delights, kicking them back into the seas … locked up between two lands, in a pipeline … locked up between the past and the future, between two holocausts … breeding the red spider …

Fragments of the Tragedy were spinning in his hand, he's falling between the ship and the high coast, with a stone chained to his leg … sinking to the lethal dephts of dangerous oceans …. breeding the red spider … a tortured miscarriage of a marriage between two countries … the bloodthirsty vultures standing on the coasts of cruel stolen peace eat

the fugitives ··· coming from a war into a war, wandering from hell to hell ···· like everlasting damnation ···

When he woke up ··· his wife had been deceased ···

Return of the Red Spider III

Always when the red spider possesses him, he feels needles and mills raging in his testicles, and he sees the traumatic paintings of howling tortured Jesus Christs, of burning witches and animals dying in the cruel arenas of butcheries in delay ··· animals growing into animals ··· Then martyrs of the ages pierce their sharp ornaments through his nipples, possessing him by their shrieks, and riding him by moving the ornaments and the apocalypses, rising up like the waves of the great ocean, each one mightier than the previous, spreading the marks of the mill, laying the thick stones of the dungeons· Then tragedy by tragedy, drama by drama, will be the arrows on his bow ··· until the red spider drags him back to the pipeline, repeating the ritual ··· until all his children are possessed ··· bred into the coiling frames of wet trauma, torture and pugnacious battle-cries ··· until they feel the bars of their cages, until they feel ···the red spider inside ···

The

Pink Prince

Somehow and somewhere a bigger adventure was waiting for Tze-ra. Together with Swisley she walked towards the castle of the pink prince. When they opened the portal they could easily come along the guards. ‘I expected you already,’ the prince said. ‘I was just thinking about you, how well-versed you both are in so many ways. If you can pierce the green jungle in my gardens to search for the doll, then you have my honour.’ They knew about the doll, as they had been sent here by the mother of the prince who lived deep in their own jungle. She asked them to go to their son.

The doll was the last piece of an ancient heritage, having the powers to bind the two kingdoms together, as the doll was bearing a powerfull and mysterious code inside.

As they stepped through the mysty portal of the gardens they soon found out how dark it was here. The prince had told them how a strange spider-like creature got a hold of this place, and soon he also got his grip in the castle of the pink prince, from which he finally stole the doll. It was since then that the kingdom had split up in two by civil wars, and his mother had to

flee. Tze-ra and Swisley cared for his mother a long time, and she asked them for a favor .... to bring the doll back ....

There was no place more mysterious than this place. There were a lot of worms covering some bushes and trees, and a strange smell was hanging around here. Swisley moved to the right, touched a plant, and fell down. A few seconds later she stood up again. ‘Strange,’ she said.

‘Don’t touch anything again,’ Tze-ra said, and by her sword she cut the plants away to make a path. Something was screaming soft in the distance, like a cat. But it wasn’t that. On the ground they saw a strange doll, while small snakes were sliding across it. There were more dolls here, and they knew that these dolls weren’t the one they were looking for. The prince told them it was too dangerous for him to go into the garden, as since the spider-like creature had a hold on his place he wasn’t be able to come outside anymore. He couldn’t stand the light anymore, the air, and especially not the trees and the bushes.

Tze-ra and Swisley moved closer to the sounds they heard in the distance. Some strange electric lights hang in the trees. The prince told them not to touch these and not to walk below them, for then they could get electrified. The lights looked like strange transparent gloves in pink and white, but also in soft yellow lights. Swisley used her harpoon to pierce a few of them, but soon she dropped her harpoon, as she got struck by electricity. ‘Don’t do that,’ Tze-ra said. ‘Let’s move on to the sounds.’ As they came closer ripples of soft white lights were covering the jungle, like a strange sort of watering smoke. It even looked a bit like the electric light, so they didn’t know what to do. ‘It’s over, when this stuff falls down on us,’ Tze-ra said. Finally they entered a cave, in which things seemed to be normal. A strange doll was staring at them, suddenly opening it’s mouth : ‘Welcome to dollworld. Wanna become a doll ? Just wait for the entrance.’ Entrance ? Entrance of what ? They knew they had to be very carefull now, as they were in the domain of the spider-like creature. Soon they got into a hall deeper in the cave, where there were thousands and thousands of dolls sitting and standing on tables close to the walls. The prince gave them a good description of the doll, so they started searching for it. On the other side of hall there was a sort of cabin with a curtain. On the cabin there was written : ‘Becoming a Doll.’ Because they couldn’t find the doll of the prince they moved towards the cabin. Swisley watched through the curtain, and saw some dolls sitting inside before another smaller cabin, like a cupboard. ‘Yes, bend a bit,’ a voice was saying. Then another doll fell out of the smaller cabin. ‘Who’s next ?’ the voice said. Tze-ra looked at Swisley. It looked like the voice had been programmed. Slowly they moved into the cabin, and tried to open the smaller cabin. Through a small hole in the cabin they could see the doll they were looking for. They were now right on track. Then they saw some buttons on one of the walls of the cabin. There was a pink button and a blue button. Swisley pushed the pink button, but then the wall was moving across the curtain, so that they couldn’t leave anymore. Tze-ra pushed the blue button, and expected the wall would move away again, but this time the smaller cabin opened up. They grasped the doll, but then an alarm went on. They couldn’t go anywhere, but then Swisley found another button somewhere in the smaller cabin, together with a sort of equalizer. Now she could open the cabin again, so that they could get out. But

the alarm was getting louder and louder. When they could get out they got the shock of their lives. The dolls were all moving towards the cabin, while they were raising knives in the air. The portal of the hall had been locked up already. Quickly they went into the cabin again, while the dolls got closer. One doll was already almost inside but Swisley had already pushed the pink button, so that the wall moved across the curtain again to lock the cabin. Tze-ra was in fight with the doll, while the wall was crashing him. He dropped his knife, while Tze-ra took the knife. But the other dolls tried to come in also. Quickly Swisley pushed the blue button, and the small cabin opened up. They went inside, and the small cabin got locked after awhile. The dolls started to knock on the walls. A voice was laughing. 'You sure you want to become a doll ?' Strange knifes were coming out of the walls. The knives were moving across the walls in a strange mysterious way, while the walls got hotter and hotter. Suddenly the walls produced a soft substance, and flames started to come forth. Swisley and Tze-ra almost couldn't breath anymore. And they couldn't open the cabin again. The laughing went on and on, and got louder and louder. But then Swisley started to handle the equalizer, and she found out she could move some of the parts. The voice reacted to it, and got softer and softer, while also the flames got smaller and smaller and suddenly disappeared. But then a lot of white slime was coming forward from the walls, and soon the slime started to fill up the small cabin. But again, by the equalizer, Swisley could get it away, and after awhile she moved a small part by which she could open the ceiling above them. 'Swisley, let's get out of here,' Tze-ra said. But suddenly a hand moved through the hole in the ceiling. Tze-ra thought the hand was their help, to let them get out, and took the hand. It was the pink prince. Also Swisley got out soon. The pink prince was smiling, especially when he saw the doll.

'But how can you get in here ?' Tze-ra asked. 'I thought you couldn't come here because of the jungle .... the allergy ...' The prince smiled. He said that since they found the doll things were getting right with him .... But Tze-ra didn't trust it at all. Suddenly Swisley screamed : 'Watch out !' while the prince was changing into a gigantic spider-like monster. The monster started to roar horribly. Behind them there were ladders on the wall, like the frames of a sporthall. Quickly they climbed on these, while lava was coming forth from the monster. But the air was becoming thicker and thicker, and started to stream powerfully. They looked above them and saw they were in a gigantic hall. Suddenly they lost grip and like by a tornado they came into the space of the hall, while also the prince was floating up. He was now half a monster half a prince, more and more getting his normal body back. But they now knew about his nature. The prince raised a tall sword, almost electric, and now they had to fight for their lives. They wondered where the doll was. First Swisley was the one the prince took in a fight. Tze-ra was under an enormous pressure by the charged air, like she was in the hands of a storm she couldn't get grip on. The streams were moving Swisley faster and faster, and also the pink prince was in this strange whirlpool of battle. They got both raised into the air, almost hitting the ceiling of the hall. Suddenly Tze-ra heard a scream. The head of Swisley had been cut off, and a tornado like energy sucked her head to the ceiling in an enormous speed, and then the head exploded, while a few seconds later also her headless body was exploding. Then Tze-ra got raised into the air by the strange tornado. The winds were almost in every colour, while behind the prince a large purple jewel began to shine. After awhile it rolled out of the wall in which it had been stuck. The purple jewel started to move, and when it got close to Tze-ra, she felt that it was made of soft material. She pushed it, while it went directly to the prince to hit him. But then behind Tze-ra in the wall a green diamont started to shine. Slowly it moved to the prince, and while the prince pushed it, it already had struck Tze-ra, and this time it was a hard one. The prince laughed almost evilly. Then above the prince in

the wall a red jewel began to shine, and moved towards Tze-ra. This time she pushed the jewel down, while it jumped up again. Again it was made of soft material. Again she pushed it down, while the prince almost lost his patience. Tze-ra's chin was bleeding. She was wondering how it worked. Suddenly she pushed her sword into it, and both the stone as the sword got charged amazingly. The electricity was almost shivering. She pushed the large stone towards the prince, and it struck him in speed. It got him upside down, and by her sword she cut his head off. The prince was changing into a monster again, and this time he got two heads. Tze-ra now realized that the more she hit him, the more dangerous and powerfull he became, so she needed to use wisdom. The prince activated another stone, while he was getting normal again, but still with two heads, and he got also many arms. This time the stone hit her head so hard that she almost lost consciousness. A soft purple stone appeared close to her, and again she pushed her sword into it, but then she grasped the stone, and pushed it under her body. Behind the prince many stones began to appear, while Tze-ra began to sink on her pierced stone. She came into the small cabin again, took her sword out which was still charged, and easily she could hit the cabinwall open. Still the dolls were there, and she slayed them one by one by her electric sword.

As fast as she could she ran to the portal of the hall to cut it open, and ran away into the jungle. How long she ran she didn't know but finally she came to a small house deep in the jungle. An old woman lived here, and she told her the story. The old woman knew about the prince who was actually a horrible spider-like creature. But Tze-ra then looked at her, and saw she looked a lot like the mother of the prince. Suddenly she saw one eye of the woman was turning into a spider-like eye, like the eye of the monster. Tze-ra screamed, while fast arms were growing to block the door. Tze-ra now realized that even the mother was in the conspiracy, just to get her and Swisley in a trap. She was in great grief about the death of her dear dear Swisley, and now it was like it was getting to her too. She looked right into the eyes of the prince again. She knew that when she would strike him by the sword, everything would get worse .... She had to use wisdom. She shrieked, and while she was in panic she struck the table and the ceiling by her sword. Things were falling down, and she didn't know what she was doing. A tall cupboard fell on her, but by her strongly charged sword she could find a way. Finally she dived through the window, and ran further. She now knew she couldn't trust anyone anymore, as the pink prince was after her .... and he was a shape-shifter ....

Tze-ra knew that loneliness was her only friend now, and that she wouldn't stop running for awhile. She needed to get away from here, from this spooky, deceiving place .... By her charged sword she destroyed some fences, and she hoped that she was now out of the domain of the pink prince. To her own jungle she didn't want to go anymore, as that was the place where they deceived her ..... She wanted to start another life somewhere .... at her own .... How could she trust anyone if creatures like this really existed .... She wished Swisley was still with her .... How far could the pink prince reach ? After weeks of running and wandering, having little sleep, she came to a place made of millions and millions of small and strange pink skulls. The place was huge and almost breathtaking. Such art she didn't see anywhere in the realms of the pink prince. As she moved through many portals and gates made of the smallest skulls she finally entered a sort of white house. Here a necromancer lived. It was an old man with a beard, but he could talk very well, and was very friendly to her. She said to him that she was in fear that he would be the pink prince, but the man comforted her. She was

very hungry and the man gave her to eat. With the necromancer many young men lived, and again she was in fear that one of them would be the pink prince. The old necromancer knew about the pink prince, but to her it seemed the young men didn't know anything about him. They all slept in the same room, while the old man had his own room on the other side of the corridor. In the night Tze-ra liked to tell the young men stories about the pink prince. She really got them frightened by the stories, but the young men were also good at telling frightening stories. In a sense she was still in fear that one of these young men would be the pink prince, and she often spoke about it with the old man. At one evening the old man took her to his room in private, and told her that one of the young men was the pink prince. Tze-ra already expected to hear that. 'We have to be very carefull,' the old man said. 'We cannot just get rid of it so easy. We must use wisdom.' Fear started to come over Tze-ra. She wanted to leave the place immediately, but on the other hand, she found so many good friends here. The man gave her hope, and the man gave her a living. 'Can you tell me who of them it is ?' Tze-ra asked. 'And how do you know it's true ?' The old man looked her deep in her eyes. He started to bend a bit towards her, and whispered : 'Child, every father knows his children.' Tze-ra didn't want to go back to the room where the young men were. She wanted to sleep in the room of the old man. 'Just tell me who I can trust,' Tze-ra said. But the old man didn't want to tell. 'You have to find out for yourself, Tze-ra. Inside of me there's still the hope that I am wrong.' It gave her a bit hope as well, and it eased her fears. She wanted to find out if the man was right or not. That night she went to the room of the young men where also she had her bed. She went her with a shivering heart. That night she told them the story of the pink prince again, but this time she told them that she really met the pink prince, and that she was scared. The young men were very tender and caring towards her, and tried to comfort her. She had tears in her eyes and she shivered on her bed. The young man sat close to her, and some of them were holding her hands and arms, and others were almost holding her. 'I think you are all so goodhearted and tenderhearted, and you all have become such good friends of me, that I'm so afraid that one of you would be the pink prince,' she said almost crying. 'Oh, we would never do such things,' one of the young men said. Another brother shook his head. 'You know,' one of them said, while caressing the face of Tze-ra, 'it was always one of the scariest stories I had ever heard since you came here, Tze-ra. And now you tell me it is all real, it makes me think. What if one of my brothers is really the pink prince. I can't live with the idea. What if our father is the pink prince. It makes me really sad. Our family was always one of love, but this really makes me think. Isn't there any way how we can prove it ?' One of the brothers took Tze-ra in his arms. 'Oh Tze-ra,' the young man said, 'I love you so much. I would never want to be the pink prince. I never heard of it before, but I understand that you are scared. It makes me scared too, but I will prove my love to you.' And then he kissed her. That night a few of the young men left the house. They couldn't live with the pressure anymore. The old man was very sad. Also Tze-ra was very sad, but she was also relieved that no strange things happened. More and more of the young men left the house, until two of them remained. These two young men were the eldest of the brothers. Tze-ra believed that they were the closest to her heart, and they were like the old men. But still she had many doubts, as love and wisdom alone didn't prove anything. One day at an evening they sat around the table, all four. The old man was speaking, and said to the two young man what he had in mind. He said that it was his belief that one of the children was the pink prince. One of the brothers got mad, and said : 'Father, why didn't you tell us before ? We have lived our lives in danger, and you didn't warn us. Who of us is it ?' But the old man didn't want to say it, and also to them he spoke about his hope to be wrong. 'I think it was all my fault,' Tze-ra said. 'I shouldn't have talked so much about it. Maybe there isn't any problem. I think it's better that I leave this place, so that the others can return again. 'No,' the old man said, 'you won't go anywhere.'Also the young men shook their heads. 'And why not ?' Tze-ra asked. 'I

do not want to live in this anymore. I cannot live with this pressure, these fears. The only one I can trust is the old man. I'm sorry, but that is the truth. He gives me such a different feeling, and what if he's right that one of you is really the pink prince ?' One of the young men started to laugh. 'This is ridiculous. I'll go.' The other young man stood up, took his jacket and said he would go also. After they had gone the old man got very very sad. 'Now I do not have any of my children left, and that all because of my own fears,' the man said. 'Maybe I must cultivate more trust in myself and between the others.' Tze-ra bowed her head. 'It's all my fault. Maybe I have stirred up your fear. If I wasn't here your children would still be here.' The old man shook his head. 'No, Tze-ra. I see you and did see you as a gift of heaven. I never had any daughters. You are like a daughter to me, and with you I have a relationship and a trust I could never have with my sons. Maybe you have waken me up again. There's something wrong with one or more of my sons. I just feel it.' Tears were coming out of Tze-ra's eyes. Why did it have to be so difficult ? She didn't want to stand between the old man and his sons. 'Tell me about your wife,' Tze-ra said. The old man bowed his head. She could see the old man had difficulties to talk about that. Suddenly he raised his head up, and said : 'Morra was a pretty lady, much like you. She raised the boys in love, but something was wrong with her. At one evening we were close together, and we went for a walk. To make a long story short : I found out about her true nature, when I asked her about her past. She .... she .... started to talk meaner and meaner, trying to bring me down with her words, and then she slowly changed into a hairy pink spider-like creature, and I had to kill her. Before she was dead she swore revenge.' Tze-ra now knew why the old man thought one of his children had to be from this same nature. 'But how do you think we can find out, about your sons ?' Tze-ra asked. 'Well,' the old man said. 'I do not know if they will ever return. Maybe it's better like this.' That night Tze-ra couldn't sleep. In the middle of the night someone was ticking at her window. When she saw it was one of the young men she went to the door, and opened it for him. 'Where are my brothers ?' he asked. Then Tze-ra told the story. The young man asked if he could sleep in her room again. Tze-ra nodded, although she was very scared. The young man saw that. 'Don't be afraid because of me. I'm not the pink prince. I'll show it to you.' In the room the young man showed her a strange scar on his body. It was a beautiful pink scar. Tze-ra told him about his mother, something his father always kept secret. She had permission from the old man to do that. He thought she would be able to do it better than himself. The young man was in a shock, and maybe that explained the pink scar. He said he had the scar since birth, and now it got more clear to him, as his mother was the pink prince. Tze-ra held him in her arms for a long time, also because he didn't know if he could trust her. He confessed that she was the reason why he left. He was afraid that she would be the pink prince. Tze-ra smiled, and hugged him. Then he kissed her. 'You taste so sweet,' the young man said. 'I don't think that you are the pink prince, but it's my fear, and I'm so afraid to lose you, like I lost my mother to the reality. What if you are the pink prince ?' Suddenly a tall shadow stood in the door-opening. They didn't hear it coming. It was a tall man, but not one of the brothers. 'Who are you ?' Tze-ra asked. The young man came closer and closer. 'I warn you don't come any closer to us !' the brother screamed. 'Father ! There's someone in our room !' The tall young man stood like frozen suddenly, like so many thoughts were speeding through his mind. Suddenly the old man stood in the door-opening, turning on the light. 'What's going on here ?' He had a gun in his hand. The tall man turned towards the old man. 'Mickey ?' the old man asked. 'Oh my god, it's Mickey.' The old man hugged the tall young man. 'Who is Mickey, father ?' the brother asked. 'Oh,' the old man said, 'since your mother died, I had a child with another woman. I never told you this before, but this is your half-brother.' The young man didn't seem to like it, but it broke the tension a bit for sure. Since then the other young man named Mickey stayed with them, and got a bed in the room of the young men. If anyone wasn't the pink prince it was Mickey. Mickey didn't talk much, but he

was the sweetest guy Tze-ra ever met. He had deep eyes, very thoughtfull. Mickey could get along with the old men like no one of the other young men could, and soon the young man got jealouse, also because he had Tze-ra's interest. The brother left again, and this time not because of his fear, but because of his jealousy. Mickey was a darling, and he gave so much hope to Tze-ra and the old man. He was different like all the others. Soon all the other brothers were back, and one day they also told the story of the pink prince to Mickey. Mickey got very confused and since then he wasn't the same. One day he went away, and the old man blamed his children. Mickey was too sensitive and too tender for such stories. Tze-ra went outside to search for him, and found him in a rocky place. 'Hey darling, what's wrong ?' she asked. But Mickey didn't want to see her. 'Don't come any closer to me,' he said. 'I'm not done with this. I need to think about everything my brothers told me. I'm scared to death. Please, give me time.' Tze-ra understood and went away, but after a long time Mickey still didn't return. So she went to him again. 'Tze-ra, I feel comfortable with eleven of my brothers, but the twelveth I cannot trust. I think he is the pink prince,' he said. 'I hope I'm wrong, and maybe I am wrong, but this is how I feel it, and I'm afraid. I will only return if the one I mean is proven to be right or wrong.' Tze-ra bowed her head. She knew that also the old man had one in his mind he couldn't trust. She would go to him with the thoughts of Mickey. 'Please Mickey, tell me the name,' she said. When she returned to the house she went through the room of the old man. She wanted to speak to him about Mickey. Slowly she whispered the name of the son with who Mickey had problems in his feelings. The old man bowed his head, and said : 'Tze-ra, this is true. I have never told this to anyone, as I always had the hope that I was wrong, but Mickey has the same secret.' Tze-ra took a deep breath and sighed. 'What are we going to do about this ?' The old man raised his head up, and said : 'I still have the hope that we are both wrong. There must be a way to prove it. I will ask all my sons to come.' It was the first time in his life that he allowed his sons in his room, but this time it was serious. Again the old man told about their mother, and how he lived with a silent fear all these years. One of the sons stepped forwards and bowed his head. It was the son both the father and Mickey had problems with in their feelings. 'Father, I must admit something. I am the pink prince .... I mean .... I tried to be the pink prince ..... but my powers don't seem to work here. It's like a lost case.' The old man stepped towards his son. 'You are still my son, and I have still feelings of love and care for you, but this was my secret, and this was the secret of Mickey. I'm glad you have admitted your secret as well, and I hope we can live in peace now.' But then another son stepped forward : 'No, father. If this is your wish .... to live with such a liar .... Even he is our brother, he isn't worth to be .... We want him to die.' But then the old man said : 'No, we cannot do that, that would make things only worse. It's a different creature than we are, but if he's not forming a threat against us, and not using his powers against us, it will not be a problem.' But then another son stepped forward and turned himself towards his brothers : 'Did you hear what our old man said ? He has put us in danger all the time .... What he doesn't want to do, to kill this traitor, this liar .... we will do .... But then the eldest son came forward. 'No, we cannot kill our brother. That is not the right way. Our father had killed our mother only when she formed a threat against him, when she turned into a pink spider-like creature. This hasn't happened yet, so let's behave. We aren't waiting for such a manifestation.' And since then the brother who was the pink prince left the place. It was because of the tight, loving and overprotective family-structure he couldn't do anything. The brothers were sad about the loss of their brother. They had lost him to reality, still a dark feeling in their heart. Soon Mickey returned, and the family seemed complete. It was like Mickey filled up the empty space a bit, but there were still fears eating them from inside out. One day the old man asked Tze-ra again to come to her room. 'Tze-ra,' he said. 'I must admit that there are still things that bother my mind. Still things don't seem to be completely right.'

Tze-ra knew what the old man was talking about. He was still in fears the pink prince would live among them. Again he called his sons to him. He asked them all to be very honoust and serious about the matter. 'I still have the feeling we aren't done with it. Who of you are also the pink prince. All the boys looked at each other. It was in a way they were doing a show. Mickey started to cry, while the brothers made fun of him in a strange way, like it was a show. They made strange movements, and Tze-ra got the chills. Suddenly she was screaming : 'run !' She took Mickey by the arm, and then the old man. The old man grasped his gun and dived through the window. Tze-ra ran with Mickey through the tall corridor, but it seemed that the door was locked. 'No !' Tze-ra screamed, while Mickey already fainted. The brothers all seemed to melt into each other and the most horrible spider-like creature had been formed, ready to attack. 'Mickey, wake up, please !' Tze-ra whispered. Then she kicked the door in, took Mickey through it, and with Mickey in her arms she ran away from the house. Soon the house exploded, and she heard the spider-like creature coming towards them. Where was the old man ? When she turned around she saw the old man was already in the beak of the spider-like creature, and blood was coming forth from him, while she almost could hear his bones crack. Tze-ra screamed. Suddenly she got struck by one of the claws of the enormous creatures, and another claw took Mickey and threw him in speed against a rock .... dead .... while blood spat in all directions .... Tze-ra shrieked : 'No !' All the things she loved had been taken away from her .... She tried to run away, but the creature was much faster. She jumped into a tree and climbed as high she could, while screaming for help. But the creature was merciless, and soon she found herself in the claws of this enormous creature. The beak of the creature came closer and closer, and suddenly she fell into the depth of it's mouth .... She bit hard in it's tongue, and then in other sensitive places. Soon she found herself wrestling with the pink prince .... 'You have me again, I see !' she screamed. 'Well done ! I can never ever trust anyone again !' The prince hit her very hard in her cheek by his fist, while she started to bleed. He had such a strange glove, like the skin of a fish full of stings. 'I have found you again, yes, or you have found me, whatever !' the prince said smiling. Tze-ra kicked him very hard, and he fell away from her. But soon he rose up again, like by a strangely charged wind. He threw a sword towards her .... but she knew how that worked .... She wouldn't fall into that trap again ..... She was not thinking about how she could destroy him, but how she could get away from him .... where she would have her shelter forever .... 'I am everywhere !' the prince laughed. Lightening came out of his hands to strike her again. This time her whole body was shaking. In a flash he jumped on a rock, and then he made a jump towards her, turned around and kicked her in her face. His boots were soft, like a soft sort of rubber, and it didn't hurt her that much. She was a bit surprised, but she knew it was all his strategy. He was subtile, and in this he was mercyless. He knew how to play her buttons, like she was his doll .... And even when she thought he wasn't around, he was around .... 'My god, you're really a stalker right ?' she said. He nodded. Then he came to her again, and wanted to kiss her. 'What kind of man are you ?' she asked. 'What do you want from me ?' He came closer and closer, and said : 'Well, I have kept you alive .... maybe I want something from you ....' Tze-ra stepped away from him ... 'Well, I do not want to have anything from you ....' The prince showed a sad face .... 'Well, if you don't want to be my lover .... I think I will kill you ..... but you can change your mind ....' Tze-ra started to shriek hysterically : 'Never will I let you have my children, as I do not want to have you as my child .... I know how your games work ....' The prince smiled ..... 'Hmmm.... you're a very clever woman .... so then you want to die ?' Tze-ra then tried to smile a bit .... 'I think you cannot kill me in a sense .... It's like you are afraid to meet a bigger 'me' then .....' After awhile the prince gave up, like a machine which couldn't get it done ..... it went away .... Tze-ra hoped it was the last time she would ever meet the prince. She wasn't

sure. Maybe he would return one day, but it seemed she already got used to it ..... like she started to know how to play the game right ..... For him there wasn't fun anymore, as she was a tight player ...... She knew how to handle him .... Tze-ra climbed the rocks where her friend died, and then she tried to search for the highest point of the hill to have a good survey. In the valley behind the hill she saw some wild horses eating grass. Slowly she stepped down from the hill. To her these sort of animals were often gifts of heaven, to bring her to new paths, opening and enlightening her life. She hoped that on their backs she would be safe from the touch of the pink prince .... but she knew she was a wrestler, and that she would always be ....

When she told the story about the pink prince to another old man on his journeys she was glad he didn't have any sons or daughters. The man had good contacts with different sorts of animals, like bears and horses. That's the way she wanted it to be for now .... She didn't long for any contacts with men or women .... but she held everything down to this man, this old man, and he was the only thing she could worry about .... The man didn't know anything about pink princes, and didn't want to have anything to do with it .... and he slept with a good rifle under his bed against it .... She just left in time, so that she wouldn't get any troubles .... as she knew the good pink prince could be everywhere, just waiting for the strike .... It was because of this that she wanted to be like a gypsy, like a traveller .... never staying long, as that would give troubles .... And by this she got the pink prince slowly but steady under her feet, and was she a good opponent in the wrestling .... She didn't want to go down under .... she wanted to live the life ..... She was in for a game .... and she played it good and fine ..... When she saw a group of young men, she would kiss and then say : goodbye ....

The End

Diamonds Never Talk

They were on a market in Buslia : Tze-ra, Marlas and Lassa. They were on their way to a shop somewhere in the East of Buslia. But suddenly a group of men came after them, and kidnapped them. No one helped them, as they were strangers. The group of men took them to a strange cabin, and the next day they had to appear before the skeleton-prince. The skeleton-prince asked them why they were here. 'We just wanted to visit Buslia,' Tze-ra assured the skeleton-prince. The skeleton-prince stood up, and went to a large machine behind him. He put some coloured tablets into the machine, and was watching. 'On these files I can see what you all did in this town. You are intruders. You do not belong here.' Tze-ra bowed her head. They were here to smuggle diamonds into Buslia. They had fulfilled their mission, but the last few diamonds they had to bring to that shop in the East. Diamond-trade had been forbidden here for such a long time. 'Tze-ra !' the skeleton-prince roared. 'I want you to show me those diamonds !' Suddenly the portal of the skeleton-prince's hall got opened. A lot of men came inside. They had also kidnapped the owners of some shops they suspected. By the files they

could trace all the diamonds, and Tze-ra and her girls got thrown into a dungeon. The shop-owners got killed immediately after all the diamonds had been found. Tze-ra started to cry. She knew they were in big troubles now. One day the skeleton-prince called them again. This time they pushed Marlas into a lake of crocodiles, in the hall of the skeleton-prince. They saw how their friend got killed before her eyes by the hungry crocodiles. ‘Do you have a last wish ?’ the skeleton-prince asked Tze-ra. He seemed to be interested in Lassa, and took her close to his chest. ‘Don’t say it, Tze-ra !’ Lassa whispered loud. Then she turned to the skeleton-prince, and said : ‘Do with me whatever you want, but save Tze-ra’s life.’ Tze-ra almost shivered. Then the skeleton-prince said : ‘Okay, for now I will spare her life, but only for this time, as I have plans with her.’ Then Tze-ra had to go back to her dungeon. She felt sorry for Lassa, who was in the hands of such a terrible creature now. What would he do to her ? Tze-ra dug a hole in the ground, and after a few weeks she had made a tunnel, only to find out that it led her to another dungeon. Here a young prince was sitting. He seemed to be from another country, like he was a prisoner of war. Tze-ra told him that she was a diamond-smuggler. It seemed the prince had also been in a smuggling scandal. He told her about the red diamonds. He said he had a few of them implanted under his skin. By a knife he could cut them out, and showed them to Tze-ra. Inside the red diamonds there were strange chips by which distance-communication was possible. It was by visual information and audible information, based on thought. Tze-ra touched on of the diamonds. They felt very warm. But she couldn’t hear or see anything by it. ‘It doesn’t work anymore, Tze-ra, as my country doesn’t exist anymore .... It has been destroyed by the skeleton-prince.’ Te-ra bowed her head. She wanted to tell more about the diamonds she smuggled, but she didn’t dare it in a sense. She didn’t know if she could trust the prince. She decided to go back to her own dungeon. She was very tired of making the tunnel, and she didn’t feel for making another one. But the prince called her after a few weeks to show her his own tunnel. She had inspired him to do that. This tunnel was leading them outside. Tze-ra could almost scream of joy, but they had to be carefull. She also thought about Lassa, but first she had to make herself safe. The prince almost followed her like a slave. But she thought they could better split up, as it was too dangerous to stay together because of the dangerous control-units here. Tze-ra ran for hours and hours and could finally leave Buslia. She went to her mission, and told them what had happened. They knew it was too dangerous to send her again, and they first had to save Lassa. They showed her green diamonds with explosion-mechanisms inside. They though this would be the only weapon against the skeleton-prince. These diamonds had to be attached to his body, to finally destroy him. But who would bring these diamonds there ? It was another smuggle-program. Finally Tze-ra took the job on her, as she wanted to save Lassa. The diamonds had to be wrapped in ice, for they would be triggered by warmth. It seemed Tze-ra didn’t have much time. In a bag on her back she carried thirty of those green diamonds totally surrounded by ice. There were some cooling mechanisms in her bag, but Buslia almost had a tropical climate. She didn’t have much time. Tze-ra took the shortest way to Buglia through the jungle, and by lianas this went pretty fast. But the green diamonds were unfrozen in such a short time, that Tze-ra had to leave them behind. There were so many control-units here, that she used the green diamonds on them. It attracted the skeleton-prince for sure, and soon she stood eye to eye with him again. Tze-ra now had her sword with her, and a horrible fight started, a fight in which she didn’t know if she would win or lose. Suddenly she saw a copy of him standing behing him, having Lassa in his arms. Now she knew that he may have a lot of doubles. It made her lose all her hope in a sense, but she also realized that maybe the machine was the cause of that secret. She remembered the tall machine of the skeleton-prince by which he could trace so many things. Was this the secret of his powers ? His head almost span around on his body, while red electricity seemed to come forth like lightening. From his purple belly a strange juice seemed to flow. It was a tough battle, and Tze-ra didn’t know if she could win

from him. He pushed and smashed her all over the place. Suddenly a strange wind took them both in the air, and it was like she was in the streams of a storm or tornado. She tumbled around while she was screaming. She couldn't keep her balance anymore. The skeleton-prince floated closer to her, while she was still dizzy. Suddenly she swept over, and kicked him in his face. Suddenly she heard something behind her. It was Joshua, one of her mission-friends. He had another bag full of green diamonds. 'Here, try this on him,' he said, while she opened the bag, took a few green diamonds, and threw them one by one towards the skeleton-prince. By the heat of his body the stones exploded immediately, but also the double of the skeleton-prince came forwards, and he had Lassa in his arms. It would be too dangerous to use any stone on him. But she needed to be quick, as the other stones were almost unfrozen. Suddenly she took the whole bag and threw it between her and the second skeleton-prince on the ground. It was like the ground exploded, and a huge gap arose. Both Tze-ra and the second skeleton-prince got thrown in the air by the huge explosion. The second skeleton-prince lost Lassa by the shock, and Lassa started to run towards Tze-ra. 'Tze-ra,' she screamed. 'Help me, we must get away from here ! This place is full of his doubles !' Tze-ra almost lost consciousness by the shock, and in the distance a whole army of skeleton-princes appeared. Tze-ra stood up, still dizzy. 'I need to get to that machine, that evil machine,' Tze-ra shouted to Lassa. Lassa fell in the arms of Joshua who took her into safity. While Tze-ra ran towards the army of skeleton-princes. A strange power was charging her, and she slayed them all by her sword. This was almost too easy. But in the distance the machine itself was coming forwards. It was much bigger now, and a skull appeared on the screen. It was the skull of the skeleton-prince. 'Haha,' the skull said. 'You will never find the real skeleton-prince, as these are all his copies. The real skeleton-prince is safe with me.' And fire came forth from the machine, ready to swallow her. Tze-ra jumped in the air, and got caught again by the strange wind. It was like this strange wind was her friend, as she received so much power by it, and it helped her to use her sword. The streams were almost colourfull in the air, and in full rage she started to strike the machine by her sword. Suddenly Lassa stood behind her with some green diamonds, almost unfrozen. 'What are you doing here ?' Tze-ra screamed. She took the green diamonds, pushed them on the machine, but before the machine exploded a stream of green fire got spouted out of the screen and devoured Lassa. 'No !' Tze-ra screamed, and then she dived away while the machine was exploding. Tze-ra thought it was over now, but a green electric prince came forward from the explosion. It was like the spirit of the skeleton-prince. 'You can destroy anything of me !' the green silhouette laughed, 'but you can't destroy my spirit, my ghost ! I am the spirit of death !' And suddenly the silhouette started to scream so loud that Tze-ra had to put her fingers in her ears. There was no escape from this monster. He seemed to split himself into a million of green spirits, and they were all surrounding Tze-ra. Suddenly the wind came like out of the ground, and pushed her up into the air. 'Who are you ?' Tze-ra asked the powerfull wind. Suddenly she remembered the prince of the dungeon, from who she got a red diamond. She had the diamond tied around her neck like a necklace, and it started to work again. 'Remember me ?' he spoke in her thoughts. She smiled. 'I am this wind,' he said. 'I have returned to my country to rebuild it.' Suddenly the wind became so strong and started to divide itself. One by one the green spirits got struck by the wind, and then pierced like by an invisible sword. 'The invisible things are much stronger,' said the prince of the red diamond. Tze-ra smiled, but at the same time she was in grief about the loss of Lassa. In the distance she saw the prince coming, the prince of the wind. Also Joshua was coming closer again. She embraced them both, and together they went to the new country of the prince of the wind. It was an amazing thing to see his wind-machine. The prince teached Tze-ra how to use the wind-machine. There were so many things they could do with such strong arms. But Tze-ra preferred her sword. She had become a real slayer now, a warrior, for the highest good. It was an amazing thing to see the rebuilt country of her friend, but she

knew she had to move on. It was by her sword she moved, and by her sword she breathed. The prince took care to have one red diamond planted into the sword, so that the wind would always be her secret help. But one day she gave this sword to Joshua, as the prince could be a bore. She thought that Joshua would be a much better friend to the prince as deep in her heart she thought Joshua was a bore too. She wanted to do the real work : to be a warrior. She hoped she had finally dealt now with the skeleton-prince, but deep in her heart she wanted to know the truth, and went to Buslia again. This time not to be a diamond-smuggler, but to be a slayer. No one recognized her when she walked along the markets and shops. She was dignified in the way she walked, and her sword was visible, ready to strike. She asked some of the market-workers who their lord was, but she didn't get any answer to that. It was time to find it out by herself. She went to the place where the skeleton-prince used to live, and she couldn't belief her eyes when she saw him sitting on his throne. She stood before a small window, and got into real anger. There was much machinery going on there, and to her it was almost a hopeless case to find out about it, how it worked, and how it could be detroyed. What if the machine she had detroyed was also just a copy ? But in her heart she knew she wanted to find out.

In the elevator to the underground city she hoped to find some answers. Why she was really fighting the skeleton-prince she didn't know .... Was it her feeling for revenge, or were there more things going on ? In the underground strange purple diamonds were moving. There was a strange radiation coming from the stones as if they would hold up the upper world. Tze-ra came closer to the stones, and saw these were stones by which swords could be charged. She expected if she would go even deeper with the elevator she would come into an arena. But nothing was less true. When she had charged her sword by the purple diamond and went to the floor below by the elevator she saw a purple lake from which strange electric purple frame-humans came forward. They looked frozen in a sense, not able to do much. She found out it was a place of gamers and gamblers. They came here together, and it was like they could move the upper world. There were a lot of screens on which they had views of the city above them. A strange windmachine was coming up from the center of the lake. Purple winds and lights were coming forth from it, and by joysticks the gamers could move these, and cause tornado's. She expected there was nothing she could do about this, but then she realized that she was a slayer, and her sword had been charged by the purple diamond. She stepped forward and challenged them. 'I am a warrior !' she shouted. 'I see you are all friends of each other making a mess in the world above you ! I challenge you ! Try to make a mess of me !' Suddenly one of them turned the windmachine by his joystick and a beam of strong purple wind came forth to grasp Tze-ra. Tze-ra could see the fingers of this storm, and suddenly there was a strong pressure around her. If these guys would lock her up, then her game could be over, but by her sword she broke the fingers of the storm one by one. The guy who had caused the stormhand to get her got an electric shock, and fell into the lake. It seemed his so-called friends had a lot of fun about it. The skin of the guy completely melted away, and soon he was nothing but a purple frame rising up. 'Hahaha !' one of his gamefriend shouted, 'that happens with losers. He lost the game, and it was even against a woman.' But by her sword Tze-ra could direct the remained force of the storm towards the other guy, and also he got pushed into the lake. 'Now tell me how it feels to lose by a woman !' Tze-ra shouted. Then she started to laugh. She felt like she was an evil queen now, and she couldn't help having fun with it. Quickly she pushed all the other guys into the lake by her sword, as she could still direct the strong wind to grasp them. A lot of screaming came forth from the lake, but all the purple spirits seemed to rise to a sort of balcony, and they started to run downstairs very fast.

Again they took place in their seats, and this time they directed lightening at Tze-ra. Tze-ra fell backwards, and climbed into the elevator again. Her skin was already bleeding because of the lightening ... She needed to leave very quick, or she would be completely electrified. She went down with the elevator again, but soon the electric purple ones tried to get in. She could see them through the glass. There was a button by which she could let the elevator got faster, and by this she finally lost them. This time it took hours before the elevator reached the floor below. Here it was like a lab. She stepped out of the elevator, and saw all sorts of strange fluids boiling in tubes and cabins. In the center of the lab she saw a bald man lying on a bed, covered by white sheets. There was a strange smell. The man looked like he was dead. In a sense he looked a bit like the skeleton prince. When she came forwards the man seemed to take notice of her presence. Suddenly he stood up, and said : 'How dare you coming to my private place. It's a wicked idea of you that you can just intrude here.' He took a sword from the wall, and started to crash some of the tubes. Fluids started to flow, and he could direct these by her sword, while the sword of Tze-ra came under a big pressure. She almost couldn't move her sword anymore. Also the purple spirits seemed to arrive by the elevator. The man started to laugh. Parts of Tze-ra's skin started to burn away by the fluids, and she got strange scars and wounds. 'Now watch me,' the man said. He pushed some buttons of a computer and the skull of the skeleton-prince appeared. He could move the skull by some sort of joystick stuck to the keyboard of the computer, attached to the wall. It was a flat screen. Suddenly he could take the skull out of the screen, and threw it towards Tze-ra. Just in time she could strike it by her sword, but the pieces of the skull started to move around like dangerous splinters. Tze-ra became very paranoid all of a sudden, for what if such a piece would hit her. Sharp high noises came forth from the computer, and the splinters started to move faster and faster .... She knew that it wasn't wise to use her sword now, as it would only get worse. The green spirits came also closer and closer, while moving very slow. 'Hahaha,' the man said, while she saw Tze-ra almost dancing to avoid the splinters. 'I am the one who rule this whole circus, and soon the world will be mine.' The spirits started to dance around Tze-ra, and came closer and closer. 'Oh, you could be my ballerina,' the man laughed. 'What if I make a dancer of you to hypnotize the world above you for my goals ? You will live in a cage, and I will fullfill my works.' The dance started to become wilder and wilder, as the splinters were moving more dangerously. Suddenly she fell on the ground, while everything seemed to turn around. She woke up in a cage, and soon she had to dance on markets. She didn't have her sword anymore. It was like the splinters of the skull were in her now, and she couldn't stop dancing. She felt like a robot now, like a slave. Her boss was the bald man, and he seemed to amuse herself a lot. He seemed to sell a lot, also strong liqors. It looked like the fluids in his underground temple. It attracted a lot of alcoholics and drug-addicts. It was like the man wanted to have the whole world addicted. He was a notorious jewelry-smuggler ... doctor Fledektorous. Inside the jewelry there was a chip which connected the person to the computer of his lab underground, his secret and evil temple. But now it seemed no one recognized him, and no one had any troubles with him selling jewelry. It was like he had hypnotized them all, while Tze-ra was dancing. Doctor Fledektorous had many dancing girls, and Tze-ra started to have some deep friendships with some of them. But others of them had become too numb to really talk to. The girls had strange jewelry, and soon also Tze-ra had it. Doctor Fledektorous made big money with it. He had a circus, a fairground and he sold cattle. He was like a mega-brain taking over the mass. But still Tze-ra also wore the red diamond of the prince she met in the dungeon around her neck. The red diamond didn't seem to work very well, and that was the reason why she kept it. She still thought the prince was a real bore, but this time she needed him. And also Joshua had such a stone in his sword, so she hoped there would be a conversation, if it would work. By the stone she tried to send her thoughts to both of the men,

but no one seemed to react. She wondered if they would still be alive. One day Tze-ra gave up all hope. She thought she would have to dance here the rest of her life.

Doctor Fledektorous was a mean man. He didn't treat the girls very well. One day a stranger came to the circus, and then he came closer to the cages in which the women were dancing. He saw Tze-ra and another lady called Tza-la, and asked how much they cost. 'We can't be bought,' Tza-la said, but deep inside she hoped that this man would save them out. The man looked very dirty, like he didn't have any money, but suddenly he took a gun, and asked the girls how he could open the cages. Some other girls warned them not to go with him, for there might be guys around much worse than their boss. Soon the doctor came to know about what was going on, and raised his sword. In a rage he ran towards the man to let his sword dive into the man, but the man could escape the strike, and then held the gun against the face of the doctor. 'One movement, doc, or it's over,' he said. The doctor slowly gave him the key of the cages, and very carefully the man opened the cages by his other hand. 'Walk slowly to my horse,' he said to Tze-ra and Tza-la. The girls did what he asked, but then the doctor could push the gun away in a flash like a lightening, took the gun and shot the horse. Then he tried to shoot the man, but the man could dive away. 'Run !' he shouted to the girls. But soon they got surrounded by some of the circus-artists. It all ended here, as the man got locked up in a cage, and had to become a dancer too. He really felt himself like a marionet, and Tze-ra still didn't know what the intentions of the man were. He didn't talk much, and often his cage was far away from the cages of Tze-ra and Tza-la. But by this incident Tze-ra had a bit of hope again. One day the circus, the fairground and the cages went with the whole market of the doctor to another country. Here it was very cold, and sometimes the doctor allowed them to be in a bigger cage together. Tze-ra always enjoyed these moments, for then she could learn to know about the others a bit more. This time she tried to come closer to the strange man. He didn't look poor anymore, as he know had a dancer's outfit. His face looked depressed, and he had a naked upperbody, almost shivering because of the cold. Tze-ra thought it was cruel that he wasn't allowed to have a jacket, so she tried to warm her by her soft sleeves full of feathers and other soft accesoires. She still didn't know about his intentions, but she couldn't let this man freeze to death. His face was cold, almost blue, and a bit reddish. He could get sick if this would go on. He took him in her arms, and asked him where he came from. He told her that he worked in the same mission as she did .... He was a diamond-smuggler, and came to save her out. Tze-ra moved even closer to him and kissed him. 'You know this is a world of dangers, right ? I do not know if we will survive here,' Tze-ra said. She now knew that she could trust him. 'What kind of diamonds do you smuggle ?' she asked him. He looked her into the eyes, and said : 'shhh ....' He showed her a strange scar in his body like a gap, and took some diamonds out of it ... They had a strange colour .... Then again he looked her mysteriously in her eyes and whispered : if these come in contact to iron, steel or any sort of metal, they will turn blue, and the metal will melt away. Now I know what you are thinking, and these are my thoughts too. We will lay them against the bars of the cage when everything is quiet.' Tze-ra nodded and thought that was a very good plan, so they waited for the night, and when everyone was sleeping he laid the diamonds against the bars, and the bars started to melt away, while the diamonds became blue. The man also took Tza-la in her arms, and then they went away. The man brought them deep into the jungle somewhere in a cave were they were safe. When Tza-la woke up, she looked into the eyes of the man and whispered softly : my saviour .... The man smiled. It was like the jungle opened itself up to them. All sorts of wild cats, like panthers and also the unknown ones were sitting in trees, while staring at them, some moving their tails. The cave led them to a treasure-room full of diamonds. The man

already knew this place, but Tze-ra had never been here. Here they could even take a bath in the diamonds. Tze-ra looked into the eyes of the man. It was like since then the jungle started to embrace her again. There was a tension in his eyes she couldn't describe, but here she hoped they all could get some rest. They decided to stay for awhile in the cave. And in the night they slept close to eachother. The next day the man showed them another room in the cave. This room was full of diamonds called 'panther diamonds'. The man pushed some buttons on the wall, and soon the panther diamonds started to float in the air. It was like suddenly they heard the sounds of cats in the ground, and slowly a sort of tall boxes appeared in the ground, where pantherlike creatures seemed to wake up. The creatures started to roar dangerously, then jumped up, and left the room. 'Isn't that amazing ?' the man said. 'It's the way pantherlike creatures come forth from the ground.' Tze-ra and Tza-la stood like stuck to the ground. 'Where are those creatures going to ?' Tze-ra asked. 'They go into the jungle,' the man said. He took a necklace made of panther diamonds and gave it to Tze-ra, and then he also gave one to Tza-la. Then the man took a flute totally made of panther diamonds, and started to play on it. Soon the whole room was full of panthers. The man started to walk further into the cave, and all the panthers followed him, while the number of panthers increased more and more. Also Tze-ra and Tza-la followed the man with the panthers, and they finally came into a huge hall underground. The man had a sort of vehicle here. He established the panthers before the vehicle by leather belts, and then he climbed on the vehicle. He also helped Tze-ra and Tza-la on the vehicle, and then it started to move. They made an awsome trip into the depths of the earth, like in an underground jungle.

It was an amazing kingdom where the panthers brought the vehicle, so deep underground, in a secret place, where an old man lived with millions and millions of panthers. The atmosphere was charged by such undescribable strange powers, that there was a strong pressure on their chests. The panthers were all around the old man. 'Father,' the man on the vehicle said. 'I have brought some friends with me.' The old man led them to his old and poor house, and gave them something to eat. 'One day the panthers will invade the earth,' said the old man. 'I do not know if I will still be alive, but it will happen.' The man of the vehicle nodded. 'And what will happen then ?' Tze-ra asked. 'Oh,' the old man said, 'then the rythm of the earth will be restored. The rythm will lock the ear of the earth, to open the eye of the jungle. But to open the eye of the jungle, the eyes of the earth need to be hatched.' And then the man continued : 'Deep down in the earth there is a place where the eyes of the earth are. These are the eggs of giant-flies who once inhabited the earth, but they had been chased away by the sounds of the earth, and by it's ear.' Tze-ra didn't know what she was hearing : 'But why do these eyes need to be hatched ?' The old man turned himself towards Tze-ra and spoke : 'Only when these giant-flies will return to the surfaces of the earth the jungle can be healed, and it's eye can be opened.' Tze-ra tried to understand what the man was saying, but she had a hard time with it. 'What will be the use of the eye of the jungle, where is it now ?' The man looked her deep in the eyes and said : 'The eye of the jungle has been locked up by the eyes of the earth, and these are very dangerous at the moment. They need to be hatched by women, so I will show you the place. We need some strong and wise warrior-women to do it. Only when the eggs will be hatched the gaint-flies will rise again, and then the eye of the jungle will be set free and opened to let them stay alive.' Tze-ra looked at Tza-la and said : 'Do you think we can do that alone, or shall we get some other women ?' But then the old men shook his head : 'No, I do not want to have any other women here, as you have been chosen to do the work.' Then the old man stood up, and said : 'Follow me.' It was a few hours of walking, but finally they came into a deep hall full of the eyes of the earth. They all seemed to be

connected to each other, and they needed to hide behind a rock, as fire and lightening came forth from the eyes, and also strong winds, like powerfull arms. 'They can easily kill us,' the old man said, 'so we have to be very carefull.' Some of the panthers had followed them, and by some sounds the old man seemed to call them. There were now twenty-five panthers with them, while the hall was full of a thousand eyes. All moving very dangerously, while they were turning around. It was like they were doing a strange dance, like a strange show. One of the panthers started to roar, and all the eyes seemed to stop moving around. The old man said they had to be very carefull now. Suddenly one panther jumped on top of one of the eyes, and after awhile the eye started to close. Then the panther jumped on another one, and the same happened. Also other panthers started to jump on the eyes, and soon a whole group of eyes was sleeping. Now the women could start to hatch them. The man said that only the warmth of women could do the job. The women slowly walked to the eyes, and started to cover them by their bodies, while they moved themselves slowly. It took some hours before the first ones started to crack open. Strange larvae seemed to come forwards, but also a lot of smaller eggs. The old man said that now the small flies would do the rest. They seemed to grow very fast, and hatched the other eggs. They could do that much faster than the women did, but also the temperature of the hall was rising. When they saw the other eyes crack open, they also saw a big eye underneath it all. This was the eye of the jungle. It was still locked, but strange lights started to come forward from it, like waves. 'It will open,' the man said. 'But it's up to the panthers when that will happen. We have to go away now, as the temperature will rise here dangerously, and the lights here will increase.' Then they started their journey back to the fields of the panthers. But some of the eyes which weren't hatched yet started to come after them, and blocked their path in the underground jungle. They looked different than the other eyes, and they started to shoot lightening at them. The women dived away in the bushes, but the old man got struck in his arm. The panthers started to roar dangerously, but the eyes didn't seem to react to that, and struck the old man again. 'Run !' the old man shouted to the women, 'run for your life.' Then they heard and saw him explode, while the eyes started to chase after the women. They were running through the bushes and the trees, while a lot of the panthers were following them. Tze-ra and Tza-la jumped on some panthers to get faster, but the eyes were much faster, and soon they got blocked again. After awhile they were surrounded by a lot of strange eyes, and got also struck in their arms. They knew that one strike more could kill them, but suddenly from behind an eye got shot. In the air they saw giantflies coming towards them, and they spat some sort of venom. The eyes were shrieking while they got baptized in the venom, and started to shrink away. But more eyes seemed to come after them, also a lot of smaller ones. The giantflies dived into the circle, and grasped the two women out of it. Then they flew away with the women, while they shrieked loud, penetrating the underground jungle. The giantflies brought the women to a higher point, to a nest which had been connected to a cave. In the cave they found the other man back, the man of the diamond flute. He had also been saved by the giantflies. He told them that some of these eyes were ancient predators looking for meat. It seemed they still lived deep underground, as the eyes of the earth. The man believed that once they were parts of the armour of an indian warrior, but since the warrior had been torn apart the eyes became evil, terrorizing even the surfaces of the earth. The eyes wanted revenge for their master had been killed and humiliated so deeply, and that's why they could never find any rest. The man said this was also a story his father always told him. The eyes would only quit their evil works when their master, the indian warrior, would have his bones together and would be buried in honour. But Tze-ra got mad and said : 'We will not work for them. They need to behave, or we will destroy them.' But the man shook his head. 'My father said that against the eyes of the earth no one could fight successfully.' Tze-ra bowed her head. She hoped the giantflies could do something. To her surprise soon the nest was full of old ancient bones. It seemed the giantflies could trace these

very easily, and they already knew exactly what to do. After awhile the whole body of the ancient warrior was complete, so they could bury it. The whole atmosphere got charged by a strange energy, and soon the eyes went into a deep sleep. They rolled all over the place. 'We should not take any risk,' the man said. 'Maybe if they wake up, they will continue in their bloodlust.' He could see these ones weren't eggs. Some of the giantflies broke them by their beaks, while diamonds and strange seed seemed to stream forth from them. They seemed to be the holders of many secrets. The giantflies and also the panthers started to eat from the seed. It seemed they had found a new source of food.

Tze-ra and the others had become very tired, and searched for a place to sleep. They slept close together and hoped it would be a peacefull night. But in the middle of their sleep they got surrounded by mysterious eyes. It seemed that still the battle wasn't over. They took Tze-ra and Tza-la in a grip and flew with them into the depths of the earth. The eyes weren't like the other eyes, and they were with so many. Tze-ra got locked up in a cage, and soon she found herself hanging above a large pit full of blood. It was like a large tube, and her cage hang at a rope which seemed to come down very slowly. When she finally started to sink in the blood she heard the voice of Tza-la. She was screaming. Tza-la had also been locked up in a cage hanging at a rope, but her cage was far above Tze-ra. Suddenly a door in the wall got opened, and the cage of Tze-ra got sucked inside. The eyes opened the cage, and Tze-ra could step out. She was in a hall now, where she saw a skeleton-like creature totally made of eyes. The being was like a giant, and two burning swords hang behind him. 'Who are you ?' Tze-ra shouted. The being came a bit closer to Tze-ra, while Tze-ra moved to the wall. She tried to get away from the cage and the opening to the pit of blood. 'I am the keeper of the eyes of the earth,' the creature said, while he moved along the other wall. Tze-ra hoped she could get to one of the burning swords, so she would have a weapon to defend herself if a fight would start. 'What is your purpose ?' Tze-ra shouted. The giant-like skeleton made of eyes started to laugh. 'I want to take over the earth, invading it by my eyes. Then he opened a large door behind him, and Tze-ra could look straight into a hall full of billions and billions of eyes. Tze-ra took a dive and reached one of the burning swords. Quickly the giant made of eyes grasped the other burning sword. When he aimed his sword at the eyes in the hall all eyes started to burn. 'Haha,' the giant roared, 'soon these eyes will invade the earth, and then I will have total control. Never again the earth will rest, as the burning eyes will always be upon it's surface. I will watch you all, and everything will burn !' Suddenly the giant struck the wall, and the whole wall started to get into flames. Tze-ra stepped to the middle. Now she could see in the distance of the other hall that the eyes had been surrounded by cages full of panthers. 'See, panther-woman,' the giant roared, 'if you will win from me, the earth will be invaded by panthers, but that will never happen. The stronger panthers are caged here, and will soon burn in fire. And the strongest panther of all is my partner.' Then from the ceiling a panther in a cage came down. Tze-ra had never seen such a large panther, and lightening seemed to come from it's eyes, and fire from it's nose. When the cage came down, suddenly the cage opened, and the giant-panther jumped to his boss to show him affection. Then Tze-ra suddenly looked at the pit where Tza-la's cage had almost sunk away in the blood. Tze-ra ran to the pit and jumped on the cage which still hang at a rope. Only Tza-la's head hadn't sunk into the blood yet. Tze-ra cut some of the bars away by the burning sword, and helped Tza-la out of it, but then burning eyes started to surround them. The giant and his panther now blocked the way back to the hall, and the cage on which they stood was sinking deeper and deeper. Suddenly they heard shrieking from above. The giantflies were coming. By spitting venom they could get the burning eyes away, and one of them spat the giant made of eyes in his face. The giant

was screaming, and was confused for awhile, while another giantfly dived on the head of the giant-panther and took a tablet out of it's head. By this tablet he had been brainwashed. It was like the panther got his senses back and attacked his master, who fell into the pit of blood. But in a dreadfull speed the giant swam to the wall where he pushed a button. Another door opened an a giantlion appeared. Tze-ra and Tza-la jumped into the hall where the giant-panther was. But they had to be carefull as the walls were burning. Tze-ra took the tablet which had fallen on the ground and threw it into the fire. Now the cages of the panthers seemed to open. The giantflies got into a fight against the giant and his lion, but now Tze-ra had a hard time fighting the burning eyes. They all seemed to come out of the other hall. Fortunately she had help from the panthers who also seemed to come out of the hall. Some of the eyes were really spitting fire now, and also strange fluids started to flow. Everything got quickly overflown, but fortunately an army of giantflies could take them and the panthers out safely. But the ceilinggate had been locked up, so the giantflies couldn't come any further when they were soaring in the top of the tube. The fluids were still rising. Through the ceiling made of a sort of chrystal they could see the man of the panthers with some other giantflies. No one seemed to know what to do. But Tze-ra still had her burning sword, and it was so powerfull that she could easily melt the ceiling away. It was a great escape, and soon they were all in safety.

Still on the back of the giantflies they saw huge dark eyes appearing in the skies of the underground. What is that ? Tze-ra shouted. Then an enormous lionhead appeared in the skies, which then turned into a skull .... Then the dark eyes appeared again. A low voice spoke : 'Now you have escaped from my rogues, and even defeated my main man, my right hand, take it up against me.' A lot of smoke was appearing which seemed to surround the giantflies, and it was like the jungle below them was getting into fire. 'Who are you ?' Tze-ra shouted. The dark eyes seemed to open up even more, and the low voice spoke : 'I am God of this planet, and I am a Wizard. I have made all the eyes of the earth.' Then lightening seemed to come out of the dark eyes, while angels started to appear. They looked filthy, and they started to surround the giantflies. It became an enormous fight between the angels of the strange God and the giantflies, while Tze-ra and the others couldn't do much. Suddenly the man of the panthers jumped behind Tze-ra. He came from another giantfly, and took Tze-ra tight. 'Tze-ra,' he said, 'this was what my father always told me. We have to escape through the dark eyes to escape from these powers.' Tze-ra still had the burning sword, and when they came closer to the dark eyes she shouted : 'Burning sword, open the portals of the eyes !' Suddenly two gigantic fire-streams came forth from the sword to pierce both eyes. Something was screaming and shrieking, while an enormous tentacle, like one of an octopus appeared through the first eye, and soon also another tentacle appeared through the other eye. The tentacles were in rage, and soon other tentacles were appearing, trying to sweep those who sat on the giantflies, and those who hung below them. The giantflies were still in a gigantic fight against the filthy angels of the Wizard. It seemed like it was a lost case. The angels were much stronger, and the tentacles were so fast that many panthers got swept from the giantflies and fell into the burning jungle below them. Soon Tze-ra, Tza-la and the man got tied behind their backs by the angels and were driven to a large hall in the distance. A man with a tall beard sat there in a strange suit with a strange tall hat on a strange throne surrounded by white panthers. The panthers were wild and full of rage. Tze-ra could see it in their eyes and the way they were opening their mouths like snakes. The man stood up, and walked towards them. 'I see you didn't come further than this,' he said with a dark voice. 'I am the Wizard, God of this all. Be my guests.' Then he made a movement by his hand, while the angels brought them to a

room where they could sleep. They were still bound, and they didn't want to go to sleep, but since they were very tired they all three fell into a deep sleep very soon. The next day they got really treated like guests. They got untied, and they were in invited to have dinner with the great Wizard. In the dinnerhall there were many cages hanging in the air. The Wizard made a movement with his hands and the cages hanging at ropes came down slowly. There were halfnaked women in these cages. They looked like dancers, at least some of them. The Wizard stood up, put his arms in the air, and said : 'I am God Almighty !' And again by making strange movements to the women the women started to change into panthers or crocodiles, and some into huge snakes. Tze-ra almost trembled on her chair, as the animals looked very dangerous, and she still didn't trust this man at all. They had to eat from strange food, which looked like organs, and there were even eyes they could eat. The food wasn't bad at all. Everything had been fried and grilled. They could also eat from vegetables and strange eggs. But these were delicious. 'You though a lot of the eyes you met weren't eggs to hatch,' the old man said. 'But they were. We hatch all eyes here, by these dancers, these women. But there is one egg they can't hatch. I'll show you.' The old man led them to an elevator, and in the depths of the hall they came along an egg so huge thet had never seen. It was really a giant-eye. Even the dancing women couldn't hatch it by their dances. 'This,' the old man said, 'is the egg of the biggest giantfly existing. It is the last egg of this race and I keep it here. When it will come alive it can easily take the earth into another sphere, there where the green planet is. The earth will first come in the orbit around the green planet, and finally they will melt as one. But when this egg will be destroyed together with it's insides ... then that will never happen. You Tze-ra, you have the burning sword my rogues once stole from me. They turned themselves against me, all of them, but since you have found the burning sword, you can hatch this egg by it. You have a special warmth, Tze-ra. Please help me. I first didn't know who you were, so I am sorry I destroyed some of your panthers and giantflies .... or let's say my angels did that ..... They weren't aware of who you were .... We thought you were intruders .... Forgive us ....' And then the old man started to cry. But Tze-ra didn't trust it at all. She knew that she just wanted to use her, so that he could be the ruler of the new earth. 'If you will not do it,' the old man said. 'I will destroy the egg and it's insides, and then the earth will die.' Tze-ra knew she had to be very carefull now. 'I give you a week to think about it,' the Wizard said. Then he brought them to their room again. Tze-ra and the other two discussed what to do now. They whispered, as they were afraid someone would hear it. In the night they went out of the room, and walked through the tall corridors. All doors had been locked, but Tze-ra could open them by the burning sword.She felt sorry for the women who got locked up in cages. They had to be carefull, for there were angels around. The old man was sleeping in his own room. But suddenly after awhile he stood before them. 'I do not know what you are doing here,' he said sleepy. Tze-ra didn't hesitate one moment and pushed the burning sword into his stomach. Snakes came forward from his mouth and belly, and angels came from all sides. It became a bloody fight. Also the cages of the women came down, and they started to turn into predators while the cages opened themselves. Tze-ra knew she first had to deal with the Wizard and his angels, and then the women could be free. By her burning sword Tze-ra was almost All-powerfull. She cut most of the angels in two and others she pierced deep in their bellies or chests. Tza-la and the pantherman ran into the sleeping-room of the Wizard, while flames started to come everywhere. Here they found two other swords, and then they ran back to help Tze-ra defeating the angels. Tze-ra aimed her sword at the women who had become predators and were about to attack her. 'Burning sword, set these women free !' she shouted, while flames came from the sword, to turn the predators into women again. 'Go to the elevator !' Tze-ra shouted. 'Then go to the giant-egg and hatch it !' Quickly the women started to run to the elevator and disappeared. Everything got into flames, and they had to be very quick now. In the flames a dark skull appeared, while lava seemed to

flow forth from it's mouth. The skull started to laugh, and said : 'Don't try to escape, Tze-ra, as you won't.' Tze-ra and the other two ran towards the stairway downstairs, and finally reached the hall where the giant-egg was. The women were dancing around it on the balcony, but nothing seemed to happen. Then Tze-ra touched the egg by her burning sword. Soon the egg started to open, and a gigantic larva seemed to come forth, with so many other eggs. The larva was already very strong, and could fly within seconds, while being larger already than any giantfly they ever saw. All the women could climb on it's hairy back, which was very sticky, so that the women couldn't fall. Also Tze-ra, Tza-la and the panther-man jumped on the being. The giant-larva spat fire to destroy a wall, and could leave. Every day the giant-larva grew larger and larger, and one day one of the women discovered an opening on the back of the already gigantic fly, by which they could get inside. It looked like an organic spaceship. Inside it was very slimy, and also strange powders were growing there. In the beginning everything was very narrow, but later it really started to look like tunnels, tubes and small rooms like cabins. But this was only the beginning. The women were amazed, and they all found their own rooms. More and more the fly started to grow like an organic spaceship, and more and more they started to realize how much value this fly had. Some places on the walls of the fly were more or less transparant, so that they could watch outside. But one day a major attack struck the ship. Soon they found out that some of the angels had returned to them, and this time they really looked like clowns. Three of them had found the opening and went inside, but Tze-ra attacked them by her burning sword, and also the pantherman and Tza-la used their swords against them. Finally they had got them out, and they found a way to lock the opening. Everyday the fly seemed to grow bigger and stronger, and more and more it started to produce the weapons and equipment they needed .... even food. But the angels attacked again, and they found out about their shapeshifting abilities. The angels were almost like dangerous aliens. One day a woman named Filessia had some philosophies. She believed that the aliens would do everything to come inside, so they needed to be on their guard. Tze-ra often went to Filessia's room and then they talked for hours. Filessia had the fear that the aliens would try to take them over, as she knew them. She also had her doubts about some of the women, who were traitors in her eyes. One day Tze-ra called them all together in a bigger room in the spaceship. They were with more than twohundred. Tze-ra showed them some places throughout the spaceship where there were a lot of fluids and powders of the fly. Here they could wash themselves. She also told them that they had to prepare for more attacks of the aliens. The strategy was to stay close to each other and not to isolate themselves. The women loved to bath, also because it would empower them. But when they wanted to bath, they needed to do it in groups, or at least with someone else. They also had to sleep with more of them in one room, as the rooms had become bigger now. Since the fly had become bigger and stronger the angels seemed to give up their attempts, and also the fly itself had killed some of them in horrible ways. But this didn't bring much rest among the women as they had become afraid of the bigger aliens who would be attracted by the growing fly. The developped many cannons in itself, so that there would be much defense, but how about the real smart aliens who would try to infiltrate the ship .... and what if they were already among them ? The fly could trigger all sorts of electricity, lights and even flames, but they knew about the dangers lurking around them. One day they got attacked by another organic spaceship, a red fly. Since then strange eggs started to grow in their spaceship, and strange men started to come forth from them. They seemed to be monkey-flies. They had red noses and were very hairy. The monkey-flies didn't have wings, but they were children of a fly, and this fly had humiliated them and stung them their whole lives. It seemed that by the attack on this spaceship they could be set free. They took high positions in the spaceship, and the women had to obey them. They had strange equipment on their bodies, by which they could beam lights to enslave the women and the panther-man. It seemed the nipples were the spots

by which the lights divided themselves throughout the bodies. It was a sort of electric drugs, as the women got high in a certain sense, and were willing to obey. It was like an addiction. The lights triggered a strange itching powder in their nipples which brought their brains in a higher state, and triggered the rest of their bodies by a strange itching. But on a certain day the red fly attacked again, and the mother of the monkey-flies seemed to enter the ship. She was in a rage about the fact that her sons escaped from the red fly, but when she saw how her sons were the leaders of this ship she changed a bit. When she spoke the faces of the monkey-flies got all colours. The mother-fly had also strange equipment, and had stung their nipples once so that they would be sensitive to her. The mother-fly seemed to love the ship, and wanted to own it. The ship was bigger than the red fly, and she even wanted to destroy the red fly. Soon the mother-fly took the highest position. She had strange nipples by which she could spout light, fire and powders like a gun. This would be one of her mightiest weapons. Deep under the surfaces of Mars there was a place named the Pink Hell. This was where the motherfly wanted to bring the spaceship so that she could enter. She had been fallen away from this place so long agao, and since then she had been a wanderer. But now she could get it all back. The Pink Hell was full of snakes, flies and strange creatures. The fly-creatures had beuatiful mouths, and they looked like human beings. But their eyes gave away that they were aliens, inhabitants of the Pink Hell. There were many bathing-places here, full of fly-fluids in which the inhabitants washed themselves, and there were also a lot of fountains around. The king of the Pink Hell was an old man with a white beard. He was bald and chubby, with a purple robe and wearing sandals. He was a friendly man, a king with many armies, and he had three daughters who had very strong and piercing eyes. They could look right through you. The king was also called ‘the pink devil’. This was his pet-name. Tze-ra thought it was an honour to meet such a man, as he gave them all such a happiness, and he took so much good care of the monkey-flies, their mother and the women. No one ever had more soldiers than the king of the Pink Hell, and to him Tze-ra, Tza-la and the panther-man were treasures. To him they were treasures from the other world, so he took good care of them. There was no place like the Pink Hell. The king had made a good job of it. Tze-ra thought it was such a good place because there was no man like the king of the Pink Hell. He was wonderfull to her. But there was a lot of sadness in the kingdom of the Pink Hell. It had something to do with a kingdom deeper under the surfaces of Mars and the surfaces of the Pink Hell. It was a place called Gehenna were tall, thin flies lived. The flies from Gehenna often came to the Pink Hell to terrorize it’s spheres. Their leader had once kidnapped the son of the king of the Pink Hell, and they said that he now lived in a deep cage somewhere in the depths of Gehenna, but they didn’t know that for sure. Maybe he already had been slain to death. The king with his many aries couldn’t begin anything against the darkness of Gehenna. No one ever survived a trip to that place. The king was very sad about this, for he lost so many of his kingdom to it, and of course his most precious son. But Tze-ra told them that they could use the organic spaceship to enter that place. If the king would give about a hundred soldiers then the organic spaceship did the rest, of course together with the monkey-flies, their mother and the women with the panther-man. The king first needed some advice from his wizards, but after a short time they were able to go. Tze-ra was immediately amazed and overwhelmed by the stunning beauty of Gehenna when they entered in. The flies there were thinner than she ever saw them, and they were extremely tall. After awhile they found the prince but he wasn’t sad at all. He had good company by the flies, and he seemed to live in freedom. It seemed he didn’t want to go back to the Pink Hell, as he had found his place here. Tze-ra was so in awe that she had the question if she would want to leave at all. The flies seemed to charge the atmosphere by their movements and buzzing, and the fact that the prince was still alive and well would be good news to the king. She asked the prince why the flies would still terrorize the spheres of the Pink Hell, but he said that they didn’t do those things. There were some other creatures living

at the borders of Gehenna doing such things. These creatures looked like the tall, thin flies very much, but they were dragonflies also, besides being flies. They were dragonfly-flies, as a part of them was dragonfly. But soon Tze-ra and the others found out that the prince wasn't right in his head. When he saw chance he invaded the organic space-ship and captured Tze-ra and the others. For Tze-ra and the others there was no way to begin anything against these flies, who had such power and might. They often had more than eight wings, and they were very dreadfull. They brought Tze-ra and the others to a place called the Eye of Mars. This place was almost the core of Mars itself, and here they got locked up in a prison guarded by a million of strange organic camera's which looked like eyes. These eyes were like the eyes of flies, and at the same time they called these the eyes of Mars from which no escape was possible. The lights of these eyes were so strong and piercing that they almost tattood them by strange pale stripes. Tze-ra was wondering how the prince could become like this. Probably by the flies, she thought. Maybe they had taken over his mind. Tze-ra was alone in a cell, a sort of dungeon, chained to the wall, surrounded my a mass of camera's. The stripes seemed to hurt her, as blood and strange fluids were coming forth. Then all of a sudden strange creatures seemed to come out of the wall, out of holes which got opened, and they started to lick the blood and fluids away. They didn't seem to be interested in her flesh, only in her body-juices. And then they left into the wall again, while the holes got locked again. Tze-ra wondered where the others were. How could she possibly escape this ? It was slowly dragging her life away. Only one thing was in her mind : She needed to get out of this as soon as possible, or she would die. Through the bars of the dungeon she could see tall men walking, also having these strange pale stripes on their bodies. One day they took her out of her cell and she had to appear before an old man. It was a strange man, just like all the others. He had a beard, and he looked a bit like the king of the Pink Hell. He seemed to be friendly and not threatening at all. Then after awhile the others also came : the monkey-flies and their mother, the women, the panther-man and the hundred soldiers of the Pink Hell kingdom. They were all tied and chained. The old man sat on a throne, and he was surrounded by many tall striped men. 'You have been given to me by the prince of Gehenna,' the old man said. 'This is not Gehenna, but the Eye of Mars. You have come here for a reason.' But then Tze-ra raised her head up and shouted : 'What is this for a cruelty ?' The old man said that he had bought them for a lot of money, and that they were his now. But the Tze-ra shouted : 'We are no one's property ! We do not belong to this place. We came here because of the king of the Pink Hell. He wanted his son back. But I see he's probably also your property.' But then the old men said : 'You came to Gehenna, and then a price needs to be paid. Just like the prince once came. Your minds need to be taken over !' Tze-ra saw that the others were already very dizzy. 'No !' she shouted. But soon she couldn't say anything anymore as her mouth got blocked. She fell into a deep sleep. She felt so sorry for the prince of Gehenna, and in her dreams she was still with him, helping him. When she woke up she was in her cell again. It seemed there was nothing she could do. These here were fly-people, and there wasn't anything she could do. They were for trade now, as the old man spoke. Soon Tze-ra found herself in a harem of a strange prince, even stranger than the prince of Gehenna. Where the other women were she didn't know. She needed to dance now, together with the other strangely striped women from the harem. But she hated it, and longed back for her cell in the dungeon, although she knew that here she had more chance to escape. All the women had been chained by tall leather ropes. Because Tze-ra was much stronger than the other women she could easily tear these leather chains, and one day she did, and ran to a wall over which she could escape. When she stood on the wall she could dive from it into a river. The river was very wild, but soon she found herself on the other side in the mud of the core of Mars. Above everything else she felt, she was glad, and she knew that maybe the old man had some mercy on her by taking her out of her cell to let her work in the harem. But still she wondered were all the others were. The

place where she was now was peacefull. But it seemed that camera's were still following her. She saw the eyes of Mars coming across the river, and these eyes were like the heads of strange dogs. She knew now that she had to run for her life. In her escape she had taken away a bow and a quiver full of arrows from a corner. She knew these eyes would be faster than her, so she turned around at one moment and pierced the first eye by a quick arrow. But the eye started to shout like hell, like an alarm, and Tze-ra didn't dare to shoot another one, so she started to run again. She came into a lake and dived under. Maybe the eyes couldn't follow her here, but nothing was less true. They weren't fast swimmers, but Tze-ra needed to be on her guard, and move fast. There was no way to escape from these eyes, as they would find her always. Tze-ra longed for her cell again, but she was now in the wilderness, in a deep lake. Suddenly she felt the body of a snake, and it attacked her. Soon she was in a horrible wrestling underwater, and also the eyes of Mars with their faces like dogs came closer. The snake saw them and bit one of them, while he got electrocuted. Tze-ra could get herself free and swam to the other side of the lake as fast as she could. Here some indian-like creatures stood, while they were fishing. 'Help me !' Tze-ra shouted. One of the indian-like creature took an arrow, aimed, and shot an eye of Mars. The eye started to scream, and then to bleed. The other eyes who looked like dogfaces got in a shock, and suddenly they all turned away to escape from the indian's threat, who also had another arrow on his bow waiting to pierce them. He aimed and shot through four of them at the same time. The indian showed Tze-ra that the arrows had a strange poison. Tze-ra went away with the indians to their camp. Here she could rest, and they assured her that she wouldn't be intruded by the dogfaces anymore. There were a lot of flies here, many with more than eight wings, and they seemed to be very peacefull. Tze-ra had reached the realms of the core of Mars. She was in great sorrows because of the others like Tza-la, the panther-man and the rest of her friends, but the indians told her not to return, as then the eyes of Mars would get her. The venom would only work here, but didn't have any chance outside the wilderness. Tze-ra had to stay here, or she would die. She told them a lot about the organic spaceship and where she was coming from, and they all seemed to be very caring and loving towards her. They teached her about the venoms they lived with, by which they were safe against the eyes of Mars, the dogfaces. They told her that once they had been prisoners of these eyes also, but the venom of strange flies had set them free. This venom came forth from the stings of these flies. This was the reason why the indians here cared a lot for these flies. Without it they would die. The indians told her that in the core of Mars there would be eternal life, and that she shouldn't have sorrows about her friends, for if they would be destined to eternal life, they would come there too. In the core of Mars the flame of the flies was burning, and this flame was eternal. The indians led her to a woman named Inti-ra, the Keeper of the Diamonds of the Flies. She was a very friendly woman who explained her a lot about the flame of the flies. It seemed to come forth from a place surrounded by the diamonds of the flies, but it would only come once in a millions of years. Tze-ra found out very quickly that this flame of the flies was something the indians just believed in. Tze-ra didn't have time to wait a million of years. The woman also told her that the diamonds of the flies had stored a lot of things, like the lights by which the flies seemed to rule everything, but also the voices of fallen warriors. Tze-ra found out that also this was just something they believed. But one thing was true : they had saved her out of the claws of the eyes of Mars. The diamonds of the flies were beautiful and often huge. Tze-ra could see that they reflected and seemed to have many sorts of vibrating, pulsating and divided amplifying lights like in a spectre. The woman told her that these lights ruled everything, but Tze-ra didn't belief that. There were amazing flies around who seemed to feed on these lights. These flies had often more than eight wings, some even up to fourteen. Between all those diamonds, and even diamondrocks a huge jungle-eye seemed to live, bringing forth these lights to radiate them into the stones. The woman told her that from here the eternal flame would rise. There

were only a few ones who seemed to have seen the eternal flame of the flies, but when it shows up it would be like a flash. To reach eternal life you have to be quick when it shows up, for only those who would touch the eternal flame would have eternal life, but those who only saw it would have to wait another millions and millions of years. That was the belief of those indians. Only one person seemed to have touched this flame, and he now lived in the depths of the core of Mars. Tze-ra wondered what kind of person that could be, probably a lunatic. Tze-ra couldn't belief in a flame which would offer eternal life. Tze-ra thought the indians were wasting their time believing in such things, and waiting for it. There were often visitors here, to come to the diamonds of the flies, but even more to wait for the eternal flame. Some even stayed here for days and days, but then the Keeper of the Diamonds would send them away. But Tze-ra had become very curious and wanted to know about the one who seemed to have touched the flame. He lived in a darkness no one could penetrate. Tze-ra took the advice from Inti-ra that he didn't want to be disturbed. She would go there, and then first trying to give him a message in which she would ask if he would want to meet her. She pierced the darkness for a long time, and finally she came to a huge, huge portal, like a door of metal. When she knocked a small window in the door opened immediately, and a small voice said : 'The master knows about your coming, and you are invited.' Then the door opened and a small man led her inside. Soon they came to a huge hall where small tiles in black and red formed the floor. On a huge throne a sort of clown sat. He started laughing when he saw Tze-ra. 'I wanted to see you for such a long time,' the clown said, 'and now you're here. I can't belief my eyes.' When he took his mask off it seemed to be a person she knew. He once came to this place, and the indians believed he was a god. He couldn't get rest day nor night, and soon he went to this place in the darkness, surrounding himself with such a mystery. 'You have finally found me,' he said. 'I have waited for you for such a long time, like waiting for the eternal flame.' And then he laughed. Tze-ra came closer. She almost couldn't belief her eyes. 'So you didn't touch the eternal flame yet,' she asked laughing. 'No, no,' the man laughed, 'they thought I had, and I had to live with it .... but hey, soon I will touch my eternal flame.' And then he stood up from his throne and ran to Tze-ra. Then they both fell into each others arms. 'I have missed you so much,' Tze-ra said. 'I really thought you were gone forever. The universe is small.' Her friend caressed her face. Then he led her to a garden behind the hall. It was a very huge garden overflowing into a wilderness. 'This is paradise,' he laughed, while Tze-ra also laughed. There were amazing flies here, often with soft white wings up to twenty or even more. Some looked like flames and were very dreadfull. Tze-ra almost couldn't belief her eyes. 'I almost begin to belief that those indians were true. This really looks like an eternal place,' Tze-ra said laughing. The softness of this nature was surrounding her, and it was almost like she had to pee. She was full of excitement. 'What a beautiful place this is,' she said. 'So you let the indians still wait for this ?' The man raised his head and looked into the skies of the underground, and said : 'I do not have another choice, as they wouldn't allow me any rest. They think I am their god.' Tze-ra laughed. 'I understand. Well, well, so the core of Mars is actually paradise ... It's like heaven, this place. And the angels .... all flies with so many wings ..... but still I can't belief it's an eternal place ....' The man laughed and said : 'Of course not, and I'm not going to search for it .... I just want to have a good time with you.' But Tze-ra didn't want to waste her time with that. She wanted to know more about the wilderness and the secrets it was bearing. She was now in the core of Mars, and she couldn't belief that this was it. She also wondered why her friend didn't go further into the wilderness. The wilderness was luring her, and after some good conversations and having some rest she went away into the wilderness .... alone. 'Let him have his throne, and living with the believes of others that he would be a god ....' Tze-ra thought to herself. Tze-ra had other things to do .... But deeper in the wilderness she found out she wasn't alone. Here it looked more like the eternal huntingfields, and she took notice of some indian tribes.

She hoped these creatures would be peacefull, as she couldn't bear any more problems. She was exhausted .... very tired .... But the creatures were very friendly and peacefull. Although Tze-ra found out quickly that they were superstitious. They showed her something in their forest which looked like a foot. Strange lights, often pale lights seemed to come forth from it, and they seemed to worship it. Maybe they thought it was a ufo or something. There were also other strange things happening here, but Tze-ra couldn't graps it yet. When they had gone to the strange object which looked like a foot it seemed that strong lights had pierced them like wings, and then they could fly for awhile. Tze-ra thought that was very strange. They hunted a lot after chicken, and whenever they wanted to come towards the strange object which looked like a foot they had to smear their bodies with the juices of the meat. If they wouldn't do that, they would die. In the foot they believed wrath-goddesses were living. They had many nipples on their breasts, and these nipples were like toes. When they would come out of the foot it would only happen at nights and when someone was destined to die. This was why the indians feared the foot. Tze-ra couldn't help laughing when she heard about those things. She wasn't superstitious at all. They asked her if she could move the foot to a temple they had built long ago. No one dared to move the foot, even not touching it, for they believed that they would die if they would do. Tze-ra didn't have any troubles with it, so one day she went to the foot, took it on her back, and carried it to the place they called their temple. It was a very huge temple in a cave. She had to lay it down in the small part behind the cave, and a curtain made of chickenbones and chickenfeathers had to hang in front of it. Maybe they believed that Tze-ra was a prophet or something. She just hoped they wouldn't think she was a god. But the indians were very glad, and treated her very normally, as she had asked ... but the foot they even feared more now, and no one dared to come close to it for a long time. They thought that the foot first had to get used to this new place. Strange lights seemed to be spred from the new place of the foot. One day Tze-ra wanted to know the secret of the object, and went to it again. Since the foot was on a new place it seemed the indians weren't peacefull to each other anymore, but always fighting and making troubles. Tze-ra went inside the small place through the curtain made of chickenbones and chickenfeathers, and found out that in the object there were a few fast weapons. She took the weapons out on a night, and decided to leave. She hoped that now everything could become quiet again. The weapons were very much alive, vibrating. Tze-ra knew that these weapons were miraculous, and she was wondering where they came from. She decided to go deeper into the wilderness, together with these weapons she carried with her. After weeks and weeks of wandering she took notice of the fact that she had come into a sort of empire of indians. In the distance she saw an indian, bald, with two feathers on his head, sitting on a throne, on a sort of piramid. She became aware of the fact that the buildings here were strange. It was an empire in the jungle, but where were the indians ? She only saw this man sitting on a high throne. She went to him, and he seemed to be very friendly. She told him about her journey, and he offered her a place to live, as this was the core of Mars. But on one night there was a lot of light coming from a mountain close to the piramid. The indian asked her if she would come with him. There was smoke coming from the mountain, and after a few hours of walk they reached the top, where the organic spaceship, the fly, had landed. And in the spaceship they found Tza-la back, and all the others. The spaceship was surrounded by strange flies with flames. Tze-ra hugged Tza-la, and then all the others. They had been saved from the eyes of Mars by these strange flies, and they even got their spaceship back. It was a long story, and Tze-ra decided to stay with them of course, while also the indian emperor decided to stay, and got a place in the spaceship. Now they could finally leave the core of Mars, as they were complete now. In the spaceship they now had the grilled and fried eyes of Mars as a delicacy, as the eyes had been captured by the strange flies with the flames. The eyes were very tasty, and there were so many of them that they could live from it for years. Now they were on their way to the green planet. It was a

moisty planet, with a lot of gras and moss. The spacefly had grown so much now that it could bring the earth in the orbit around the green planet, and later it could bring Mars in such an orbit. The green planet had a purple core, and also here they had to defeat many eyes, but they seemed to have a great help from the flies with the flames. Tze-ra and the others had to become real eye-hunters now, for otherwise they wouldn't survive here. The eyes here were so strong that they could penetrate their minds to bring visions, but Tze-ra had strong weapons, and teached the others how to be great archers. Many times she had to pierce these eyes by her arrows, to save her friends out of dangerous attacks, but soon they found ways to control these dangerous eyes of the green planet, and often these eyes ended grilled and fried on their plates. The green planet seemed to be full of unknown exotic and tropical flies bearing a lot of secrets. For Tze-ra and the others it was a beginning of a new journey and a new life. Many of the flies seemed to come forth from a jungle-eye which was like a lake and led to the depths of the green planet like a tube of light. This tube of light seemed to be the secret of the green planet, the force by which it could move other planets around in orbits. It was the transformation of nature for the earth and Mars, and was boosting their evolution. The green planet had such mysterious powers in order to get everything straight. The women living on this planet, in the deeper cores were darker, and carrying the palest lights. It was like a miracle. They had stripes on their bodies and they seemed to live in deep relationships with the flies. These women were very friendly to Tze-ra and the others, as they had been repressed by the eyes for such a long time. They had been slaves of these eyes, and they lived in horrible religions to keep the eyes satisfied. But there was something they feared the most, and when they showed it to Tze-ra she started to laugh. She knew this object. It looked like a foot. It was bringing forth mysterious lights, divided in small parts and amplifying itself. It seemed to be the same mysterious religion she dealt with long ago. When the women wanted to come near the object to get energetic wings for awhile, they had to be smeared by chickenblood and the juices of the meat. The meat they had to sacrifice to the object, and sometimes they were allowed to eat it in it's presence. The women told Tze-ra that the green planet was in a very, very slow orbit around a purple planet. They had never been to that planet, as they didn't have a spaceship for that, but from that planet the object which looked like a foot seemed to come from. And when they had come to the foot, they only had electric wings for a short while. Besides that, the purple planet seemed to be warlike. To the women here it was almost a sacred place, and they would love to go there. Tze-ra thought the planet would explain more about the strange object, so she decided to go there by the organic spaceship, and took the women of the green planet with her. First there was a big war, in which they had to shoot down many organic spaceships of the purple planet which looked like giant-spiderflies, but then they came into the brown core of the planet, where they could land with their spaceship. This process took them a long time, as it was a planet far away, and the planet was very large, much larger than Mars, the earth and the green planet together. A feeling of satisfaction was rolling across the skin of Tze-ra. They had finally made it, and this place was full of jungles. In the beginning they came along a lot of temples and piramid-like buildings, but later on they came into large tropical jungles. Deeper in the underground they found a place like a temple, full of the strange objects. The women of the green planet were shivering, but Tze-ra said they didn't have to be afraid. Tze-ra knew the objects were full of weapons, and she showed it to them. It was like she demystified their religion a bit, and soon they trusted Tze-ra more than their own religion. The objects were just the shells of all these powerfull weapons, and the women seemed to be more at ease. But soon dark striped men came into the temple-like place and wanted to pierce them by their spears. But by the weapons Tze-ra and the other women soon had the control. They tried to explain to the men that the objects weren't gods, but just shelters of powerfull weapons. The men were in shock, and also on the edge of losing their religion. Also their emperor came to the place and was

amazed. He never saw anything like that, as they never dared to look inside the shell. They even didn't dare to touch it. But now the men were very glad, and soon they also touched the objects to take weapons outside of them. The men were very friendly, and totally not dangerous. That was why Tze-ra kept them alive. They were just the victims of their own fears. The women took a dive in an underground lake, close to the temple, and soon the men were swimming with them too. It didn't take too long before the women and the men started to have deep relationships, but Tze-ra and the others wanted to move on. The women of the green planet would stay with the men of the purple planet to care for a new generation, while Tze-ra moved on. Tza-la had also come with her, the panther-man, the indian emperor, and some others. They were now heading for the deeper mysteries of the purple planet. The fact that the strange objects contained weapons wasn't new to Tze-ra, for she already found that out a long time ago in the core of Mars. In the depths of the core of the purple planet where the places were darker there seemed to live a lot of women-tribes with strange breasts. These breasts had many nipples in a row, like toes. Tze-ra remembered the stories of the Martian indians about such women living in the objects as wrath-goddesses. Would there be a bit truth in these stories ? Tze-ra tried to approach the women. She didn't belief these women were goddesses, although they were very beautiful. In this dark underground nature there were a lot of pale lights which gave such beautiful sights. Some of the women rode on big spiders. These spiders weren't normal spiders, but winged like flies, and some had even many wings. But the number of flies was much larger. Tze-ra wondered why these women had so many nipples. The women were very shy most of the time, but they finally allowed Tze-ra and the others to come with them. They went to their camp. Strange things were happening here. The slain bodies of pigs hang at stakes and trees, and they bred chicken. Tze-ra didn't know what was going on here, but she had a strange feeling. In a lake close to the camp they showed her a mass of floating eyes. It looked like frog-spawn. From here the strange objects seemed to come from. It was like seed, and it was like the lake was boiling a bit in a strange way. The eyes looked like soft eggs, and organic objects like feet were growing in them. Tze-ra saw how some of these women took some of the organic objects out of their shells as if they were their babies, and then they started to breastfeed them. After awhile the organic objects seemed to grow up like normal children, and Tze-ra could now explain a bit what was going on. The objects she found before were nothing but their lost babies. Tze-ra wanted to get these objects back to bring them here, but she also realized that the objects had changed so much, and probably by their fall they had become the shells of weapons. The women would never accept these fallen children again, and it was like the objects weren't as much organic as these. The objects were more like dead objects. But the more these children grew up, the more they started to look like dogs, and the more agressive they became. The women could use them very well, as they hunted for pigs, but some of them became very dangerous. The most dangerous ones they shot, brought them into a shell, and dumped them into a river close to the lake. Here they would become babies again, but this time they would be dead babies, to store weapons. These babies looked like objects, like feet. Now Tze-ra understood everything. It was a horrible story, but the story would be even more horrible if they would keep the dangerous dogs alive, as they would murder the whole tribe if they would grow up. Once such a dog escaped and they said he grew into a wolf, a monstrous one. he would live deeper in the jungles at places where they didn't want to come. Tze-ra would never just kill such a creature, only when she would be in real danger. She wanted to help the wolf, and found out about his behaviour. So with Tza-la and some others she decided to search for the wolf. He seemed to live somewhere in a cave or mountain, behind a huge rock, but they weren't sure about that. Tze-ra would go to take a look. The wolf seemed to bear the secret of the orbit of the green planet and the planets it was attracting in their orbits, and also the orbit of the purple planet itself which seemed to have an orbit around an even larger black planet with a brown core.

The purple planet had an even slower orbit than the green planet. The wolf seemed to have a black flame in his chest, coming from this black planet, and that’s why he was so agressive. They found this out, because they finally had to kill him, as he was attacking them all of a sudden, like coming from out of nowhere. They found his cave when they followed his footprints, and in his cave they found a cabin like a small ufo by which he seemed to travel to the black planet at times. His cave was full of strange pictures on the walls, images of how life on the black planet is. The cabin could contain two persons, but they decided to go by the organic spaceship.

It was a long journey back to the organic spaceship, but finally they could take flight to the black planet. They wanted to know about the secret of the black flame the wolf carried with him. It was a long journey through the universe, in search for this black planet. Everything seemed to have an orbit around this planet, even the sun. A whole galaxy was turning around it in such a slow tempo that it almost couldn’t be noticed.

The End

Jewelry of the Flowerflies

Tzera and Lallas were on their way to the Shachtelt-castle on the West-side of the jungle. They were quick on their path as they had an important job to do, in which they couldn't afford themselves to fail. They were about to set free the warrior-prince who had been locked up in a place of thorns. When they came closer to the castle, all sorts of evil flying flowers like flies tried to whisper to them to return. They didn't belong here. The air was smelling sweet, and by their swords they started to cut these flying flowers, who had really small heads, like they were a dangerous species of flies. The air had been charged very strangely, like you could cut it with a knife. The flies were too strong, and they were with too many. The sky was purple, and suddenly they heard a scream. It was the wasp-prince. He was the lord of the castle, and he struck them by a strange sort of lightening. 'How dare you come here ?' the wasp-prince asked, while he was preparing to strike again.

Tzera and Lallas were totally in the grip of the flower-flies, and all Tzera could do was to call for her warrior-princess. Something dived through the layers of the air with a subtile almost sensual sweep, and suddenly appeared in a strange rythm close to the two girls. 'You go, girl,' Tzera said. The warrior-princess approached the wasp-prince, while she moved her head almost sensually. The wasp-prince had an interest in this girl, but he was on his guard, and

became very shy. The warrior-princess looked him deep in the eyes, and turned herself completely towards him. It was like everyone didn't breath at that moment, even not the flowerflies. 'I can tell you, this man needs some help,' the warrior-princess said. The wasp-prince was smiling, already thinking in his head how to catch her for her castle. He could use her very well. Suddenly he shrieked very high, while fragile spiderwebs fell from above. Soon the warrior-princess got stuck in the webs and nets, and by his lasso he caught Tzera who tried to escape, and drew her towards him. It was in those days that the wasp-prince didn't have any mercy in his tricks and traps, but it was actually to offer them a royal life.

It was here, in Shachtelt-castle where the warrior-prince learned about the forces of weakness, rather than the forces of strength. He was still in his pits of thorns, tall, thin thorns which had pierced his flesh and devastated his coverings. You should see his sweet face, and then remembering the wasp-prince. How could he do something like this to dignified, polite person like the warrior-prince. But the wasp-prince had his reasons. He still wasn't done with the warrior-prince, while all his other prisoners already lived the royal life. No one was allowed to save the warrior-prince. The pit had been covered by millions and millions of flowerflies, smelling so sweet, almost sensual, to seal his doom. In Shachtelt-castle this was the place no one was allowed to come. They had to live on, forgetting about the warrior-prince, even denying him. It wasn't clear what the purposes of the wasp-prince were. All his other prisoners just tried to live on, enjoying the royal pleasures he gave them. They honoured him, and almost adored him, as they were driven forwards by a strange fear. It was like their minds had been distracted in so many ways. They needed to live on, they had to.

No one thought about the warrior-prince anymore, even not Tzera and Lallas. It was like they had forgotten about him in a million years, while flowerflies kept them in a dream. They weren't able to reach out to their friend. They were too weak in their heads, like everything was slipping away through their fingers. Here they lived with the strange sweep, the almost sensual rythm washing all their troubles away. They had a strange move, by which they had been bound in a sense. They lived the royal sensuous life.

One day the wasp-prince was sitting in his private hall, where he was writing some strange lovesongs. Suddenly the door got smashed open. The air was filling itself with lots of sweetness. The wasp-prince fell down because of the odor, as he couldn't stand it's piercing nature. It was like a thousand thin needles were entering his flesh so deep and fast. He tried to take his head up to watch the one who just entered, but he only could see some tall boots, and then he fell completely down. There was a fly roaring in the distance. It was the prince of the flowerflies to get them all back. For once the wasp-prince had stolen them, when they were still like seed, like strange small eggs, so small, and so sweet. He sowed them in his gardens, and since then, since he teached them how to fly and how to move, they became his prisoners.

The flowerfly-prince stang the wasp-prince so deep, until all his invisible threads by which he enslaved the flowerflies vanished into the nothing. The flowerfly-prince had many more lines, and they were much thinner and much stronger. The wasp-prince didn't have any strength to rise up, as the air got charged by a mysterious soft rythm. Suddenly the warrior-princess stood in the door-opening. She knew she wasn't supposed to come here, but she heard her master screaming. She looked at the flowerfly-prince, and for a few seconds she didn't know what to do. Finally she saved the wasp-prince, as she didn't want to lose the dream he gave her. She had mixed feelings, and she didn't know anything about the flowerfly-prince, but she couldn't stand to see the one she had learned to love through all the years die like this. In anger she

pierced the flowerfly-prince, in all her anger. It ended all in a flash. The flowerfly-prince was so fragile, and he was not like the other flowerflies.

The warrior-princess bowed her head, as she was in a forbidden place. Slowly she walked away through the door. But suddenly the wasp-prince called her back. It was in those days that the warrior-princess was allowed into the private halls of the wasp-prince sometimes. She didn't know what to do with all the attention, but there were also times that the wasp-prince didn't want to see her. She saved his life, and he loved her for that, but he also started to fear her. And that was why he threw her into the pit of thorns one day. He didn't do that by himself, but one night an army of flowerflies took her away, and brought her to the pit. It was the same pit where the warrior-prince was. By falling into the pit she forgot about the wasp-prince and the royal life he gave her once. The tall thin thorns pierced her flesh, and in the distance she saw the silhouette of the warrior-prince. He had such a sweet face, and the air around him had been charged by the strange sweetness.

Suddenly the wasp-prince stood before the pit. Both the warrior-princess and the warrior-prince could see him. Suddenly someone from behind pushed him into the pit. He screamed, and shrieked. The warrior-princess tried to see who did it. She saw the faces of Tzera and Lallas. They had heard her screams.

How Tzera and Lallas did it she can't remember, but she got out of the pit, together with the warrior-prince, while the wasp-prince had fallen into the unknown depths of the pit. They all missed him, and at times they wanted him back, but they also knew what he could do ... He was a beast, a dangerous man. They thought they got rid of him, but nothing was less true. For flowerflies went into the pit and took him out. They all expected that he would take revenge now, but he didn't. He went to his private hall, and locked himself up for a long time. He stayed there for such a long time that no one really knew who he was anymore, for many years went by. When the wasp-prince returned it wasn't what they expected. He was mysterious, sensuous and royal like never before. He was dignified and polite, but like a stranger.

He covered the pit of thorns by webs and nets, so that only the smallest flowerflies could enter the pit. It was in those days that the wasp-prince called Tzera and Lallas. They were allowed to come into his private hall for awhile. It was a sweet place, charged by so much mystery. The warrior-princess had told them a lot about it, but this was so much more. They expected to be punished by him, but he was friendly and understanding. He was very shy, and he told him how glad he was that the pit got covered. Tzera and Lallas were sorry that they once pushed him into that pit, as he was such a soft creature. He understood they did it in love for the warrior-princess.

It took the wasp-prince a few years to restore the relationship he had with the warrior-princess and even with the warrior-prince, and of course with Tzera and Lallas. He was like a lullaby to him, almost slowing them down. He was everything to them, until one day the princess of the flowerflies went to the Shachtelt-castle. The wasp-prince expected that the flowerflies would attack her, but they didn't. It was like a strange force came over them, and suddenly they attacked the wasp-prince, the one they once loved. It was like everyone in the castle woke up from a long dream, like all the years who kept them in such a strange prison were melting away. Tzera and Lallas could breath again, and the princess of the flowerflies went into the private hall of the wasp-prince. She took some arrows out of her quiver, and pierced the wasp-prince three times, until the wasp-prince gave away his last breath. This was too

much for him, and no one of his servant helped him. This time he was at his own. The princess of the flowerflies understood why the warrior-princess once killed the flowerfly-prince, and actually the two princesses developped an intimate friendship in a short time. New days began for Shachtelt-castle. The wasp-prince had been too mysterious to trust, and had kept them in prison for such a long time. These days were over now, and now the flowerflies could finally heal. They began to become fruitfull in so many ways, and they could develop themselves into beings of flesh and blood. But their blood was pink, purple and white, like the rest had.

No one could imagine how Tzera and Lallas could grow these years after the wasp-prince had gone. They wanted to return to the jungle they came from. They were strong now, yet with an unpiercable softness. But the flowerfly-princess had to call them back many times. One day the flowerfly-princess called the warrior-prince towards her, in her private hall, and he showed him that he would be the flowerfly-king. It was a great honour for the warrior-prince, for then Shachtelt-castle would be his own. And this would mean that not only purple, pink and white blood would stream through him, but also the royal blood, the red blood. Tzera and Lallas were very proud of him, and of course the warrior-princess. After many long years he became the flowerfly-king, and now Tzera and Lallas could be totally free to go and stay in the jungle as long as they wanted. It was like the old curse of the wasp-prince had been broken now in a real sense.

But soon enough the flowerfly-king had a new enemy : the wasp-king, the father of the wasp-prince, and king of the jungle. For this battle Tzera and Lallas returned to the castle, as it was a long and bloody war in which a lot of flowerflies died. Tzera took her knife and caused a bloodbath in the army of the wasp-king. In this war she really learned how to use webs, nets and lasso's. Also Lallas was strong in the fight. She fought by her spear, her harpoon and established many traps in the surroundings of the castle. After awhile the wasp-king gave himself over. Some of the flowerflies attacked him and killed him, as he could never be trusted again. Now the flowerfly-king became the new king of the jungle, and soon the jungle got full of royal traps, preventing them from any danger. Everyone of the kingdom needed to know about the traps, so that they wouldn't get caught. But strangers and those who would form a threat were in danger. And everyone needed to be sure to update their maps about the traps, for everyday the traps could change positions.

It was in those days that a black killer tried to destroy the kingdom, as a deed of revenge. He was an old friend of the wasp-king, but he ended in the royal traps of the flowerfly-king. The flowerfly-king succeeded in every sense, and everyday his army got larger. Still new enemies showed up, but the royal traps got bigger and bigger, and finally the immunity-level of the kingdom started to increase more than ever. It was like the jungle had become a machine, like an overprotected royal castle. And in this palace Tzera and Lallas longed to be, as they wanted to be overprotected. They felt safe with the flowerfly-king they once saved when he was a warrior-prince. Often the traps were like tall bow-nets with their own mechanisms. The results of these traps were often subtile, and not remembered. A lot of the things happened in isolation, far away from the consciousness of the jungle. The flowerfly-king knew that too much mentioning would be like a pollution. The traps had their own ways to deal with their enemies, and no one wanted to know much about it.

One day the flowerfly-king called Tzera to his private hall. He knew everything about what she had done for him and the kingdom. He told her that he now had also red blood. He showed her an amulet by which she could also get the red blood. He layed it around her neck,

and a soft warmth started to flow through her body. He gave her a spear by which many flowerflies would always stay in her surroundings. And while thinking with warmth about the moment she saved him from the pit he called her Tzera of the Flowerflies.

It was in these days Tzera of the Flowerflies grew to her full lengths, and by her spear she ruled many of the flowerflies. There was red blood flowing through her body, and she had wealthy coverings. She was like no one else. She was different, and how it happened, no one knew, but the flowerfly-king started to fear her. Everyday she grew more powerfull, and she started to develop a dignity no one knew. It was like the spirit of the wasp-prince came over the flowerfly-king, for the softer Tzera of the Flowerflies became the more he started to distrust her. He started to act very mean to her. He was afraid she would take away his crown one day, and her ways started to irritate him. By her presence the jungle more and more started to turn into an overprotected palace, and the number of flowerflies in her surroundings grew everyday more and more. One day the flowerfly-king couldn't take it any longer, and was on her way to her. Soon the warrior-princess found out about his intentions. She had followed him for awhile since he started to behave suspicious towards Tzera of the Flowerflies. Now she had to stop him, but she first went to Lallas and the flowerfly-princess to warn them and to ask them for help. Also a lot of flowerflies came to know what was going on. At that moment Tzera of the Flowerflies slept in a lion's cave. When the flowerfly-king entered the cave he killed two lions. He wasn't himself anymore, as his jealousy had possessed him with the spirit of the wasp-prince. The third lion jumped on him, and tried to stop him, but also this lion he slayed. Tzera of the Flowerflies slept in the back of the cave. She slowly woke up, and saw the angry flowerfly-king coming towards her. In one second she jumped up, while she heard the warrior-princess screaming. She also heard Lallas' voice, and the voice of the flowerfly-princess. They just ran into the cave, and reacted to the killed bodies of the lions they saw. The warrior-princess took a dive while she ran towards the flowerfly-king, but he beheaded her in a flash. This time many of the flowerflies attacked the king in full rage. By lightening he destroyed many of them. 'Don't come closer to him, Lallas !' Tzera screamed. But it was already too late. The king pushed Lallas against the wall of the cave, a very rough wall, and a sharp stinging stone pierced her back and another one her neck. Tzera took her harpoon and shot the king in his neck, and then in his face, while he fell down. 'I hate to do this,' he said, while he stood up again. He came closer and closer to Tzera of the Flowerflies, and a lot of the flowerflies were like frozen. But then the flowerfly-princess beheaded him from behind by a sharp warped knife, like a sickle. 'Why did I ever make him king !' she desperately shrieked. It was in these days Tzera thought she couldn't trust anyone anymore. She wanted to forget about it as soon as possible, otherwise she couldn't go on in her life. The flowerfly-princess died of grief in those days.

It was in those days she started to realize that she never wanted to be queen of the jungle. The flowerflies had to take care of the jungle themselves. Tzera of the Flowerflies was now a lonely woman since she lost so many of her friends. But the flowerflies comforted her. She also felt comforted by some other friends, the panther-apes. Always when she looked into their eyes she realized that it was because of them she still lived. They weren't always close, but it was like their presence was always manipulating the way her life was streaming from a distance. She couldn't describe how, but she felt it like this. And in a strange mysterious way she saw them as her saviours. But she was afraid. She wanted to forget about everything, for she knew that saviours would have many powers over her she couldn't understand, and by that the spirit of the wasp-prince could drive her crazy also. She started to fear herself and the relationships she had. She didn't want to be a saviour, and she didn't want to allow saviours in her life. She knew what it could do to her.

She came to the understanding that no one ever really died, so all the ones who had passed away would be somewhere else, in another form. It was still eating her in a sense, but she didn't want to go back to that. She was afraid of revenge. She couldn't trust anyone. She didn't want to live like a queen or empress, but it was safe to her to live like a princess, to be the new flowerfly-princess. One of the flowerflies turned out to grow into the new flowerfly-prince. But more flowerfly-princesses and flowerfly-princes started to rise in time. It was like an overprotected community. She didn't want to see the same mistakes happening as in the past, so she made a lot more traps to prevent such things from happening. The flowerflies obeyed her, and she obeyed the flowerflies, as in an overprotecting rule. It was a way of being polite and dignified, and everyone had his own place. And again a subtile almost sensual sweep started to return over them, in a rythm stranger and more mysterious than ever. Strange flowerflies seemed to cover the whole jungle from above, and one by one they started to soar down very softly, while some of them had swords. The sky turned purple and got charged by a strange deep softness and sweetness, like something could overflow every moment. Tzera closed her eyes and obeyed the moment, hoping that this moment would stay forever. She thought about the warrior-prince how he was locked up in the pit of thorns. She remembered how they took him out, how he became king, and how he killed so many of her friends. She now understood the use of the pit of thorns. Together with the new flowerflies she went to the pit which was now covered by webs and nets. She wanted to find out about the mysteries of the pit. But something in her told her to stay away from the pit. It was totally blocked now by the webs and the nets.

It was not in her powers to make something of it. Still many flowerflies seemed to come forward from it, together with a purple fog. Soon the new flowerflies had taken over the whole jungle. And they seemed to turn into princes and princesses more and more. Most of them had swords, others harpoons and spears. Some had knives. It was like an army. They wanted to give the jungle an overdose of protection, so that the mistakes of the past wouldn't take place again. And the traps got deeper and deeper, and more and more mysterious. No one knew what it actually was. And many flowerflies seemed to come forward from the traps, and used to cover them more and more. It was like everyone forgot about the past, as if a fog of forgetfullness took place, and this fog was purple. And the purple skies were about to unleash a sword they held for such a long time. Like a lightening it fell out of the skies, while Tzera ran to it. It was a sword like some of the flowerflies had. She held the sword in her hands, while pink waters seemed to flow from it. The air got charged so strangely that she could cut it with her sword. She felt like she was a knight now, standing up to protect the jungle against the past. But she started to wonder how old the pit of thorns already was, and how many creatures would be in it, in it's unknown depths. If she could do one thing for these poor creatures it was to throw this sword to them. She knew it couldn't fail, as the sword would find the right person. The sword would take care of itself. Full of trust in her choice she stepped towards the pit of thorns again, and could easily cut the webs and nets away by which it had been covered for such a long time. She also started to cut many thorns away. Then she threw the sword into it's depths. This was the only thing she could do for a past she knew not anything about, a past which may be the key to an even better jungle.

There was something serious in the way she looked. She had pink treasures in her hands like by magic. She seriously took it in the air, to stare at it from a distance. If her mother would still live she would be proud of her. But her mother died when she was very young. Now she is of an age she could be mother herself. And look at all these pink treasures. Is there anything better than this ? It appeared to be spouted by the unsealed pit. There was a world very serious in her head, the world of a past she didn't know anything about, maybe even not her mother. It

was not the right time for her to cry. She saw so many amazing creatures coming forward from the pit. And one of them carried the sword. She didn't want to know about everything what had happened in this deep past. She wouldn't waste her precious time with these stories. But she was glad they were back. They may have their own secrets, and their own ways of making things right, but the sword had chosen them to return. Now she could lay her head to rest, and trust these new visitors, chosen by the sword.

There was a jungle like covered by white lava, while her hands were full of pink treasures, and the skies still purple. She felt her royal red blood flowing inside, and she remembered the amulet. She was still wearing it. She felt the need to throw it into the pit as well, and also the spear by which she had so many flowerflies in her surroundings. She wanted to reach the past she didn't know anything about, a past holding the keys to their survival. Suddenly she jumped in the pit herself, while so many flowerflies were following her, following her into another world. There was too much mystery there, luring her, seducing her, while she found out that she got caught up by so many flowerflies in the purple skies. Was this the way to the skies ? She saw so many things, and remembered so many things, while at the same time forgetting about so many things. She was wondering where this would end. She felt naked, yet so covered. She felt poor, yet so wealthy. She was like dying to come alive, for the first time of her life. It was like she had wings, she, Tzera of the Flowerflies. And the flowerflies seemed to multiply by her side. She was in the middle of an army, in which she felt safe. She was in a cocoon, leading her to softness, to spoiling softness. And she said : 'spoil me.' It was the big spoil surrounding her, like an overdose of softness. Past and future didn't matter anymore, as the path broke through all concepts of time. And now she was overloaded, ready to explode.

There was no one who could follow her at a moment, only billions and billions of flowerflies, caring for her lights. She filled up so many places by her touch. She could feel herself entering a purple cloud of light. She felt like she was someone else now, not herself anymore. There seemed to be not a bottom in this pit, but it was like the pressure was slowing her down, and she didn't know if she would be spat out or not. Suddenly it was like it swallowed her inside. She found herself between horses in a sort of carriage. In the distance there was a white vulcano, and below her there were jungles and rivers. Suddenly she was surrounded by horses all over the place, and they were spouting fire. Lava covered the jungles and flowerflies emerged from it. The flowerflies even seemed to come forth from the mouths of the horses. It was here where life or death didn't matter anymore. It was another rythm, a strange rythm, almost sensual. The air had been charged by a strange sweetness, but the lava seemed to flow faster than everything. She remembered that the wasp-prince used to write strange lovesongs at time. It used to open her eyes to so many things. It used to heal her. And it was like she heard songs like those again, but stranger than ever, with such a calming sweep, like something overprotecting. It was like these horses loved her. They were like love-flies. They didn't force themselves towards her, but they did it subtile and dignified. She never saw such polite beings, but in such a strange way, almost bizar. It was in these days she started to miss and remember the wasp-prince in a good way.

She was on her way to Campus, the place she was once born. The rich treasures of the wasps were filling the skies. She couldn’t imagine how much it would heal her, to be here again. Her mothers always used to write songs to calm her and to let her sleep. And then she remembered, it wasn’t the first time she went through the pit. Still there were many flowerflies in her surroundings, but it was like crazy wasps were attacking. The waterfalls were moving so slow here. It was like she was in a cocoon, her cocoon. She could remember

the way her mother sang. She was always like a lullaby, in a subtile rythm. It was here where she really believed in love again, like her eyes got opened. It wasn't for nothing that she was here. There were soft rythms in the distance, strangely charged. Was she a wasp or fly ? Or both ? These questions were floating through her mind. The wasps were attacking her flowerflies, but these wasps were strange. They looked like flies. And she didn't feel sad about it, for she knew how long she had been in the hands of the flowerflies, like they came too close to her, having too many powers over her. They had to leave now, as she would move deeper. They had to go now, as she was entering Campus, where she got born once. More and more of the flowerflies left her. Only a few stayed with her, her best friends. 'Wasp-fly,' someone was whispering. She was looking into a walls of hot fluids, or weren't these waterwalls hot, but just charged by so many stings, like it was some sort of poison. Tzera of Campus came closer. Some of her flowerfly-friends started to shriek and moved away. It was like she really had to deal with her past, by entering a deeper past, her roots. Where did she come from ? And who were these true friends ? The poison was climbing towards her neck. Then she dived from a tall rock into the burning river below her, something she used to do when she was younger. So many memories seemed to overflow her. Then suddenly the last flowerflies started to fly away. She had been in their captivity for such a long time. It was like their friendship was pressuring her in a strange sense, very subtile. Here she needed to be alone, at least away from them, to meet the wasp-flies. Was she one of them ?

The wasps were climbing on her back, bringing her to a tall building, like a palace. They stang her deep, and then they went away. There weren't wasps in her surroundings when she came closer to the building like a palace .... only wasp-flies, as tall as her. Inside the palace there were horses. It looked like a stable. This she couldn't remember. A horse-fly came towards her, a warrior. He had a tall strange sword, and he was impressed by the sword, as he showed it to her. There was no conversation possible with the horse-fly, as he was shy. But she felt they were all here to be overprotective in a good sense. It was like they had stolen her heart, like she had been harpooned by billions of wires. They showed her a hall in the distance, and while she came closer she could see how huge it was. The hall was full of strange weapons. There was no place for her to take rest. She was impressed and overwhelmed by the treasures of the hall. Still there was no one for a conversation, as they were all shy. They seemed impressed to, and further very dignified and polite. There wasn't anything manipulating in their behaviour. They were subtile creatures.

In the distance the waspfly-prince stood. He was tall, and looked like a horse. He had big eyes, and it was like Tzera of Campus knew him. It was a subtile man, almost sensual, although she couldn't describe it. She seemed to be totally in his power, but the feeling of freedom he gave her was overwhelming, almost breath-taking. His face was like a sweet flower. She remembered the flowerflies, but this was something else. 'You are here for a reason,' he spoke. Tzera of Campus came closer. She wasn't in fear of this man, not at all, like she knew him. It was like she was under a strange spell. He shrieked while from above strange dust fell over her. 'You have made a long journey,' he spoke. There was no place for her to think. It was like all the memories she lived with for such a long time were streaming away, exploding, while so many memories she had forgotten showed up again, stronger than ever. The prince came towards her, and hugged her. At the same time she fell into a sort of sleep. 'Bring her to her room !' the waspfly-prince roared. Some watchmen came to take her away. After many hours she woke up in a strange bed, in a strange room. There were all sorts of strange paintings on the wall. Paintings of beautiful mysterious landscapes. A door in her room led to a garden, full of hot red flowers, fragile like flowerflies. But this place was

poisonous. It was venom instead of heat, but the venom seemed to heal her. It was streaming into her head, by the smell of the flowers. She felt trapped, but in a good sense.

That night she had dinner with the waspfly-prince. In many ways he was like the wasp-prince, but he was different. In many ways he was like the flowerflies, but different. He gave her freedom by strange jewelry ..... the jewelry .... of the ... waspflies. She felt like a princess like never before. That was the feeling he gave her .... She also had the feeling he would give this feeling to all the girls of the palace. She saw impressive silhouettes full of jewelry. And she knew the palace would have more princes like him ..... Everyone could become a prince and a princess here. It was all just a matter of time and travel. It was an overprotective palace, and she felt harpooned, moving through billions and billions of strange subtile rythms. It seemed it came forth from the strange, almost sensual, jewelry .... the jewelry of the waspflies.

He asked her to come to his room. But in his room his true nature seemed to come forward. He locked her up in his cupboard, a sort of wardrobe. He screamed that he could use her bones very well to make jewels of them. Strange knives seem to come forward from the insides of the cupboard. Tzera was screaming. Slowly the knives started to move towards her. She didn't dare to breath or move, and was like frozen. How Tzera shrieked she couldn't remember, but finally some flowerflies saved her. She felt ashamed, as she didn't belief they belonged here. And maybe that was even true, as it was a dangerous place to them. The flowerflies found the waspfly-prince and killed him. It became a big war, in which the flowerflies took over the whole of Campus by their coverings. It was like Campus had been changed throughout all those years, and Tzera realized she couldn't hang on to her old memories anymore. Since she left Campus had become corrupted, deceiving. But now the flowerflies would change nature. It wasn't true to see them as captors, as they had been captivated themselves too.

Slowly they infiltrated Campus, very subtile but steady. And for the first time Tze-ra felt she had really come home.

The End

Flowerflies'

Rythms

Tze-ra and Marra walked along the tall river of the jungle. They couldn't expect how their day would turn. The air was smelling sweet, while flowerflies covered the trees and the bushes. They remembered how long ago the flowerflies had set this land free, and it was like they were still charged by the jewelry of these days .... invisible jewelry .... It was like an invisible sword in their head .... always connecting them to the flowerflies .... It was a love-connection .... Marra always talked a lot about the past, how the flowerflies had set her free, and how she

met Tze-ra. They became good, intimate friends. Tze-ra enjoyed the tenderness of Marra, the way she was subtile, polite and dignified. Together they lived in a cabin made of reed. There wasn't much to do this day, but suddenly a black snake appeared before them. The black snake was very friendly, and he said he was on his way to Daklam Palace, a place in the East of the Jungle. 'Why don't you come with me ?' the snake asked. 'Don't be shy.'

Because they didn't have anything else to do, Marra and Tze-ra went with the snake. Daklam Palace was a beautiful ambient place, like a covered jungle, so dignified. There was love and peace here, and so many flowerflies. The black snake showed them the treasures of the place, together with some jeweled weapons. Because of these weapons the atmosphere was always peaceful, as the weapons lived a life on their own, and were overprotective towards the jungle of Daklam Palace. Not many knew about Daklam Palace. It was still a silent place and overprotective, in the sense that it didn't attract danger. There were too many mysterious traps which cared that no troubles could be made. Daklam Palace was like a monument of the jungle. The flowerflies had worked so hard to get this work done. There were beautiful jungle-gardens covered by chrystal and the most precious stones. These gardens were full of the most enchanting flowers and of course a lot of flowerflies. However, once in many years, a spider-king always seemed to show up, taking many prisoners to his realms. He had a ship in which he lived and ruled the oceans. These oceans were full of spiderwebs and snakeslime. He just harpooned his victims, and caught them by his nets, and then he moved away. And after years he always seemed to return, but now the black snake had been called by those of Daklam Palace, and the black snake thought he could use Tze-ra and Marra very well, as the spider-king was about to return to Daklam Palace. Slowly the black snake slided through the gardens, on his way to the beach, while Marra and Tze-ra followed him. In the distance they saw the ship. It was a ship they had never seen before, so huge. It was like the sun was striking the sight. It was in these dark oceans so many strange things were happening. Tze-ra now understood why Daklam Palace was such a silent place. It was because of the spider-king. Of course there were a lot of flowerflies, but not many would visit the place, and the place was pretty unknown. There was a silence here and an emptiness she couldn't describe. When the ship came closer to the beach of Daklam Palace, in front of the gardens, they saw it was like a ghostship. It was like a shadow was about to cover Daklam Palace.

The spider-king was shrieking on his ship. He looked like a pirate, and also his ship was like a pirate-ship, but it had a strange edge, a strange sweep, like an unknown almost dreadfull rythm. The black snake came from far, and he was about to defeat the spider-king. But in a sense she didn't know if she could trust the black snake. It was like Tze-ra fell in love with the ship the closer it came towards them. But where was Marra ? Suddenly many pirate-like spiders jumped from the ship into the ocean and swam to the beach. Tze-ra was on her guard. Soon Daklam Palace was covered by webs and nets, and many of the flowerflies got trapped. Tze-ra was already in a fight against a spider-watchman, and soon Marra came to help her. The black snake slided into the ocean and swam towards the huge ship. They tried to harpoon him but his skin was too hard and too thick. Quickly he could slide on the ship and entered. The spider-king was in rage, and it was like he felt in such a weakness, but then to rise up in a major strength. His big eyes almost pierced the black snake. But the black snake was quick like an arrow and slided across the mast to break it down finally, while the sail was falling down to cover the spider-king. The spider-king took his harpoon to shoot a net at the snake,

and soon the snake got caught, and hang close to the ship. The snake couldn't escape the net, as it was sinking into the sea. But suddenly there were more black snakes, and soon the spider-king couldn't go anywhere.

In the distance Tze-ra could see how the black snakes pushed the spider-king away from the ship, and when she and Marra had defeated the spider-watchman they jumped into the waters and swam towards the ship. It was an amazing feeling to climb on a ship like this. Deep in the ship they found so many treasures and so many cages full of flowerflies. Quickly they opened the cages. Meanwhile the black snakes were setting Daklam Palace free from the nets and the webs. Many flowerflies wanted to stay on the ship, and also to Tze-ra and Marra that sounded like a good idea. But another ship was coming in the distance. And even more ships were appearing. One ship was the ship of the spider-prince. Tze-ra expected it would turn out in a new war, but it seemed that the spider-king had also terrorized them, so they were glad that Tze-ra was now the owner of the ship. She wanted to make the oceans overprotected, and she became good friends with the spider-prince. He wasn't a threat to the ship, and neither were the other ships.

Tze-ra loved to climb to the heights of the ship, just to have a wonderful survey across the oceans. There wasn't a ship as huge as hers on the oceans, and that's why she could get everything quiet and peaceful. And it didn't take her too long to make an ambient overprotected jungle of these oceans full of spiderwebs, nets, and snakeslime. It was her idea to make the ocean not the ocean anymore. She had now a jungle-ship, and the waves below her were like a palace to her. She could penetrate the jungle like it was her own place, and the flowerflies seemed to be very comfortable with the idea. They were in her surroundings all the time, and spred themselves more and more to cover this growing palace of nature. Tze-ra was now like a pirate on her jungle-ship, as she had been sent out to establish the traps full of long periods, lengthy traps like bow-nets, covered up by so many of her friends, the flowerflies. These traps cared that no one could leave the palace, and no one could enter in, and they also cared that no one could make any trouble. Nature like this took care of itself, stirred up by the strange sweeps of the flowerflies, an almost sensual and very mysterious rythm, which seemed to come from a deep darkness, a darkness even Tze-ra didn't know much about. It was an overprotected darkness, coming from a mysterious haunted pit in the depths of the ocean-jungle. It was like palaces, tall palaces of flowerflies came forth from this pit, and one day Tze-ra went there with her ship. Soft vibrating rythms and overvibrating sounds seemed to lure her from there. So she moved her ship towards the gigantic pit which was like a whirlpool. It was like she heard the jungle-heart beating, like she could almost holding it in her hands, while so many lights were dressing her up like jewelry, so fragile and so wealthy, like the treasures of a jungle she knew nothing about. There was something in her voice, like a strange lust, or was it a curiosity ... when so many wet flowerflies seemed to embrace her, to take her away into the depths of the wet wet pit of the ocean-jungle. They were almost holding her heart, piercing it by their enigmatic songs. It was here she was like losing her tongue to so many vibrating, overwhelming sounds, in which her heart bathed, not able to speak anymore, not able to add anything to the show. It was here she almost lost her life, as she couldn't take it anymore. It was almost seducing her, while sad voices were luring her, deeper and deeper. It was like Tze-ra embraced this new nature, which was almost like flowing now above her head. These were jungle-waves, waves of miraculous lights, not

devastating, but overprotective, sensuous and even charming, but so polite and so dignified. It was a subtile nature, becoming darker and darker before her eyes, sucking her in, together with her ship, and so many flowerflies. It seemed many of them knew this place already, and it was like they were holding their breath.

Now Tze-ra had found her love, her passion, when soft rythms seem to awake in her mind, like the gift of this tremendous nature. She was open to it, as a child to toys. It was a place where many nightshifts and ladybugs seemed to live, like soldiers. But they weren't fighting. They were overprotective, in this strange darkness. It almost made her cry. The creatures were very sad, like walking with heavy weights, but at the same time something strong was stirring them up, something which seemed to flow from inside. It was here she couldn't think about herself anymore. She was like a fire losing herself to nature. She had flames around her neck, setting her in a strange fire, like liquid lights, and suddenly she wasn't able to touch herself anymore. No one of these creatures had actually a self. They had lost themselves in this gigantic nature, and they were now like wind and fire, switching over from place to place, from direction to direction. They were free. Suddenly there were so many explosions before her. A gate was opening itself, and she floated through it with her ship. She was now like ten to twelve flames, coming together and then separate, and they seemed to change places all the time. She was now in liquid fire, in lava, not knowing herself anymore, who she was, where she was going to .... and it set her mind free .... She had been enchanted by this nature, like she was in a deep sleep .... Was this the place where dreams came from ? It all seemed to be so hopeless all of a sudden .... like this nature wouldn't have any change to survive when it would show up through the pit .... but she had a small, tall flame of hope .... her last hope .... It was the last straw of a life she couldn't forget .... for she needed to lose her mind to become insane .... insane enough to go through this gate, which was vibrating before her .... It wouldn't let her in if she wouldn't give herself completely away .... Suddenly she stood strong on her ship .... The colours attracted her .... These were in all shades of pink, red, purple and white. It was a show before her eyes, while even softer and multi-vibrating sounds, voices and rythms seem to awake strangely and subtile in her mind .... Her feelings seemed to react to it finally, and also emotionally she had been drawn in, by these strange lights .... It was to get her sane .... really sane .... overprotected and most of all loved .... But could she trust what was going on ? She felt that all she needed was to be loved ..... and it had to be bizar .... for the normal life was too dangerous ..... She had the feeling she didn't come anywhere, but this was something else .... It wasn't rude, but subtile ..... It didn't go fast, but slow .... and steady .... She needed to lay herself down for awhile, as the soft ocean was overflowing her, in so many miraculous way .... This was a sensuous hidden ocean-jungle ..... She found herself finally, after losing herself to it. But it felt like a trap. She couldn't move for awhile, she was so tired. To her there was no other way. She had to spend time with this, to know more secrets of the dark jungle. She wasn't afraid of traps anymore, as finally she would find her way in, becoming stronger, like being in a cocoon .... It was a way of life. It was like touching the sides of her she didn't know yet, and it came to life .... she came to life ....

The nightshift-prince was smiling to her .... And also the face of the ladybug-prince was appearing .... 'We will keep her warm,' another voice said. 'You have a wonderfull ship, like you came from heaven .... Welcome to the hell of the jungle .... Welcome to .... hell ....' Softly, but very tired, still very tired, Tze-ra started to ask questions ..... about how they lived

here. But they didn't answer, or she couldn't hear it anymore .... She woke up in a warm room close to a garden .... In the garden there were ladybugs, butterflies, strange flies, but also many flowerflies ..... She had survived the journey to this purple hell. Pink soft lights seem to surround her, and caused so many weaknesses in her body, but it seemed it triggered a deep and mysterious strength, coming to her in strange rythms .... Some of these rythms were very slow .... It was like a show of weaknesses and strength .... how they worked together .... loved and lived ..... in miraculous rythms ...... coming alive. It was playing in her mind and body .... It was playing in her feelings and emotions, while warmth seemed to ejaculate like a vulcano deep inside. It was these kind of shows she liked, bringing her to peace. She stepped into the garden, walked through it to reach the beach where her ship was. Everything was still the same, but charged by the shows of light. Weaknesses seemed to come like flashes over her, penetrating her, but at the same time strength was flowing, letting her make subtile movements, not forming any threat to the fragile nature around her. They could accept her now, and she was free. It was like a ritual, like a religion, but not an evil one, even not religious, but more delirious, confused in the concept of religion. It was insane, but at the same time it was as sane as her thoughts about ladybugs and nightshifts, of peacefull creatures trying to make anything of the mess. This was their temple, this was their palace. She lived in fear, the fear of losing her dreams .... She wasn't afraid of the nightmare, but she was afraid to lose her dream .... Although she hoped an even better dream would grasp her, even more overprotective, like an older brother .... The flowerflies cared for her, comforted her, and she knew they would travel with her. She went to her ship, and she saw this dark ocean. She could turn it into a jungle, but they had to give her time. She knew the fear and the sadness was coming forth from this dark ocean, like there were things happening there, like heavy weights, not many knew about .... strange things .... chaos .... like the doom of the thunder .... What could she expect when she would sail these oceans ? The flowerflies started to cover the oceans in fast tempo .... She watched their shows, but suddenly a creature was rising up .... Heads were moving fast .... Almost from out of the nothing the ladybug-prince and the nightshift-prince were at her side .... It was like she couldn't do anything. The creature started to eat away so many of the flowerflies, and was swimming in a fast rythm to the ship. There was not much she could when the enormous creature opened his mouth and swallowed the ship. She was now in the trap. But inside things seemed to be different. It was like a temple. Flowerflies were looking at her. It seemed to be a strange ship. A pirate was staring at her. 'You're dead already,' he murmured. But suddenly he smiled, stood up, took her hands, and started to dance. She just played the game with him, as she started to like him a bit. He was open to her, and showed her the songs who would lead her through the night. These songs were the shows of life. There wasn't a rythm like this. 'What is making these oceans so dark ?' she asked. The pirate showed her some dark songs. He didn't do them often, but it was enough to set everything in fire. The penetration always took a long time. She didn't know what he was talking about. 'I waited for you,' he spoke. I've been keeping this nightmare up for such a long time, as so many creatures have been bound to it. I don't want to let it sink into the darkness, away from our grasp. If it would sink away it would be lost forever, so I had to hold it up, and play it once in awhile. I know you and your flowerflies can adapt it to the jungle. I know you can make a beautiful, overprotecting show of it .... The ladybug-prince and the nightshift-prince have told me a lot about you .... They have watched you for such a long time, hoping you would ever come to their kingdom .... Wishes can come true .... These flowerflies are such a good recyclers ..... You are welcome ....' It didn't take too much time for Tze-ra and her flowerflies to make an amazing jungle-show of these dark and deep oceans. Her ship even became bigger when they recycled the beast who had swallowed the ship. It became a part of the decoration and accesoires. Tze-ra was proud, but she was thinking about the depths of this ocean .... Why would the pirate be so afraid that the nightmare would sink

away in it ? .... To her it was a challenge to search for the deeper nightmares .... as she could imagine that many things would have been swallowed away by the sea throughout the ages.

It was like the flight of the flowerflies, like lullabies, to soften the atmosphere, all she could think about were the hidden palaces of nature .... The ladybug-prince and the nightshift-prince were still at her side, while the pirate they had sent to Daklam Palace where he would come to rest. He had carried such a weight for such a long time. He wouldn't belief his eyes when he would return one day. Tze-ra wasn't afraid of any nightmare, and she even wasn't afraid of losing her dreams anymore, as she now knew to what it was good for. She could easily forget and remember, as she was a traveler, sent out to make everything good. She would leave every place for the places beyond and the places below it. In this she was very tight. Her jungle-ship would not just defeat, but rather harmonize. It was her wisdom and her feeling for show which was her best weapon, although she knew that her wisdom could block a higher and deeper wisdom trying to break through. This was why she kept her mind sane by leaving her dreams. The flowerflies would do the rest. It was a long night in which she sailed into the depths of the dark ocean, through it's pits and whirlpools, in search for the lost parts. These parts had been so heavy that no one could bear them anymore. She lost herself again in so many ways, becoming crazy in so many manners, and she started to bow down under the weight, under the pressure, like someone was holding her hands behind her back to tie them. It was here she started to long to be free, as the chains which kept her locked up were tearing her. She screamed to god, while she knew the devil was god here. It was his place, and he didn't like visitors. But she didn't want to belief in evil. She believed in harmony, in the flowerflies. The devil was a prince here, like a strange insect. It could scream like no one else. And it could shriek, while in a sense it looked like a goat and a butterfly. It was the butterfly-prince. He was tall, and could sting. He was rich and had a fleet. No one could shriek like him. No one could bring fear like him. He made a strange noise with his legs, in a strange rythm. 'Why did you come here ?' he shrieked to Tze-ra. Suddenly he jumped in the air, grasped a liana from a web and could come into Tze-ra's ship. Now Tze-ra could see one of his legs was of iron, and the other was like strange wood. He looked like a pirate. He had one eye. His arms had many hooks. His head looked like a skull, and he had many rings and many earrings. Also his hat was full of rings, and further his coverings. He had a short beard, and a very small moustache. He was too mysterious to describe. Many would not give him any chance, the way he looked .... so suspicious .... so dangerous .... so bizar, almost threatening .... He had a lethal appearance, dreadfull, but at the same time funny, like a joke. Tze-ra didn't laugh .... She didn't know if she would want to have anything to do with this man .... He looked so undignified, impolite, arrogant, and most of all someone she couldn't trust .... although he tried to act nice to her .... he tried to charm her .... But this was not the type of man she had in her thoughts .... someone like this .... If she would meet him somewhere else and he would invite her to come away with him, she would laugh .... He was too suspicious and with mean intentions .... too dangerous to be charming .... as it would be hell to fall in his evil hands .... And the way he tried to cover this up for her and to look innocence was too funny to take him serious. This man was a total zero in her eyes, and she knew that even it was the first time she saw him, she knew him already for a hundred years .... This man was the devil, and maybe even the father of all devils. The only thing she liked about him were his coverings in a sense, and the rythms which seemed to surround him, the almost sensual rythms .... the mystery .... This man was an enigma .... After awhile he got in a rage because of her attitute ... He took his knife, and also she took her knife, and a long fight started ..... How long it took she couldn't remember, but it was a battle in which she lost everything, and

got into such a rage that she finally tore him apart, very slowly, like she wanted to enjoy and establish all the seconds in which she would have her freedom back. The flowerflies took care of his watchmen which were often victims .... It was a battle she wouldn't forget too easy, but soon she had taken over his complete fleet, and made it hers. It was like she had conquered him finally by a dream, and she had his show in her hands. She wanted to forget about this man, but she wanted to learn about his rythms, his traps, to recycle it into hers. It was her show, and the show of so many flowerflies, who seemed to cover the fleet more and more since she stroke. It was in these days she seemed to take up her sword, and started to learn the meaning of war, to be a warrior. She became the terrible one of the jungle, the mysterious heritage of something no one could grasp. It was by her life she protected and recycled the jungle, into a subtile sensuous place. But many knew of her name now. She could raise her ship to the heights of existance, and it seemed that now the jungle itself was lord. She was a sensuous creature. When she laughed, she only laughed for the moment, as there was enough sadness still luring her, waiting for her, to show her their mysteries and secrets. In this she was polite, very patient, but something in her was bubbling, like a rage. She wanted to be overprotective, someone others could count on, but she demanded that everyone became like her, that everyone would follow her, not to be her, but to find their own place in this new nature. In this there were many options, as she wasn't a dictator. There were many options in this overprotective palace, but everything seemed to flow one direction, like in a jungle-show, a manifestation of pure power, sensitive to and coming forth from weakness, a fast weakness, and a slow strength, still dignified till the end. She was a presence in this jungle, but she also raised others in this presence, or just to leave to give room to others, room to develop themselves, and room to follow her. In this she was tight, as she was sensitive to threats. She wouldn't allow any danger to come in her jungle. The flowerflies took care of that. She met many more princes. Some to fight, others to love. There wasn't a real code in her behaviour, as she was always changing, always in progression.

One day she found out she had to stop what she was doing. A strange creature on one of her travels threw her into a pit in which she got locked up. It was a pit of the most horrible stinging insects. It was not only the change of her, but also the change of nature. It was here she didn't belief in herself anymore, and even not in a self, and not in an other. She had become one with nature. She was now nothing and everything, blended as one ..... in so many ways and so many directions .... She couldn't speak .... The flame she was had been spred now into the things she wasn't. She found out that the self was a prison she had to overcome, she had to escape from. There wasn't a faster way to her enlightement than this, although it took it's time. Very slowly the palace had to be built. She could only dream in this pit, only sinking deeper, until she couldn't sink any deeper, but found the hard ground below her feet. It was here she started to experience love, as the flowerflies found her, and brought her through these hard days of imprisonment. She didn't know where she was, and most of all : she didn't know why. She became bitter, jealouse, revengefull, and mad, but one day a golden thread had been sent out to her. She took the thread and it appeared to be honey. She heard the laughing, and she realized that others were having fun because of her. She knew it was the way it is. However the honey made her sweet, and it kept streaming since then. It was like she didn't have to live in that terrible, devastating hunger again. The honey built itself layer by layer, and it took her higher. Now she found out how deep this pit was, as it took the dripping honey years to finally reach the edge of the pit. If she wouldn't have eaten from it, she would be out of the pit earlier, but then she would have died of hunger. And she wondered why they were all laughing .... Maybe it was .... because ... of the .... honey ....

They called her honey ..... these strange creatures ..... She didn’t see the creature who once threw her into the pit .... The creatures were laughing, smiling ..... and she had to admit ..... it was a strange way ..... a strange path ..... It was like she had lost her marbles, but now she found them back ..... they were more beautiful than she thought they were ..... She had honey in her eyes ..... she saw things different ..... She was on her way ..... to the deeper graves ..... to the deeper secrets ...... She ate a lot of honey, and it had made her sweet .... Where she was, she didn’t know ..... Once in awhile she saw a flowerfly .... something which reminded her of the past ..... They were everywhere ..... They were her friends .... Her ship was now in oceans of honey .... which meant that it wasn’t there anymore ..... It had been gone ..... at least .... it was what the creatures had told her ...... as she had been the prisoner of that ship ...... They assured her that now others were on the ship ..... fullfilling her works ...... She could never return ..... She had to move on ..... The past was gone now .....

One day they showed her the oceans of honey ...... She could come in peace here .... She loved walking on the beach .... while they assured her the flowerflies would make everything okay.

The End

Morewinged

Tze-ra woke up on the beautiful black island. Some striped boys were fishing in the frontwaves of the sea and from the beach. They looked like flies. Tze-ra had become somewhat paranoid by the strange behaviour of the boys. She always had to be on her guard. The waves were almost white in the sunlight, and Tze-ra could only think about her father she once lost here when she was young. He got grasped by a shark. But now she was like the queen of sharks, so completely without fear towards these animals. On one hand she didn’t care about her life anymore, and on the other hand the sharks seemed to leave her alone. One of the boys showed her his pale hand, while she put her hand into his hand. ‘Tze-ra, would you come with us ?’ the boy asked friendly. Tze-ra followed the boys to a place near the beach behind some bushes. Here the mothers of the boys were living. They had also pale spots on their bodies, and while their bodies were dark, their breasts were very pale.

According to the boys they had been stung by strange flies. Many of the women were most of the time very tired. Behind the huts there was a path to a small forest. Here a nest of these exotic and tropical flies would be which caused those pale spots. The boys now hunted after those beings, for they could use their venom for many things. In small portions the venom would cause hallucinations, but was good for hunting as well. Tze-ra was on her guard as she knew how dangerous the flies could be. Some of the flies could even make webs and nets in which they could catch prey. Most of the times these flies were bigger, had much more wings, up to thirty or fourty, and often looked like human beings. Many of these lived deeper in the jungle of the island. They said these flies could turn their prey into diamond-like stones. They first would suck all the bodyjuices out of someone, and then they would swallow the bones, to vommit them out as stones later. In the underground the bigger flies had built an awsome place by their creations made of such stones together with their webs and nets. It was both amazing and horrible. It was a jungle made of the remains of their prey. The webs and nets they brought forth were also made of the transformed parts of their swallowed prey. It looked like lianas, but actually it was all made of the prey they had stretched and strangely glued in their insides, until these jungle-webs and nets came forward. The flies were very creative if it came to that. Tze-ra had to become one with this nature, as there were some threats. Some of the boys with their mothers had been captured by these flies throughout the times. ‘What is it you want to show me ?’ Tze-ra asked the boy. The boy showed her a tube by which she could slide into the underground. ‘Are you coming with me then ?’ she asked. The boy nodded. Together with some other boys they went into the underground jungle. Their mothers had warned them against it, but it seemed they didn’t have another choice. Something was calling .... maybe it was their lost friends .... It was a sound penetrating their hearts very deeply. There were women in bearskin here, and they didn’t look like flies. It was a world Tze-ra didn’t know yet. There were webs and nets in which they could climb, although they knew that these were the killer-objects. They had sharp knifes by which they could cut the webs away whenever they wanted. They wanted to pierce this jungle. Tze-ra wasn’t bigger than the boys, and here she felt somewhat safe with them. Pale lights were coming from the distance, and they heard screaming. Some of the boys aimed their bows and shot some attacking flies. They saw some women sitting at a lake, while taking pale transparant jelly eggs out of the lake. Some boys stood behind them. ‘We thought you were all gone .....,’ one boy who was with Tze-ra shouted. The boy seemed to know the women with the boys. One of the boys behind the women looked up and said : ‘sshhhh...’ It seemed like the flies had kept them alive. But then they saw how out of the eggs bodyparts seemed to come, and they could build bodies of it. Tze-ra took her bow, aimed, and shot one of these bodies, which started to laugh hysterically. Tze-ra knew they had to be carefull now. She wasn’t allowed to do this, but she knew these bodies were evil robots. The women at the lake and also the boys behind them slided into the lake to change into snakes, and moved towards Tze-ra and the boys. They knew these were all dangerous shapeshifters, the new creations of the flies. One of the snakes rose out of the lake to spit venom at one of the boys. Immediately the boy felt down, and was like grilled in a few seconds. Quickly Tze-ra shot the snake, and the other boys shot the other snakes. In the distance there was a building were they went to. The building seemed to be full of eggs and bodies. Flies seemed to work here. This whole world was set up by flies. They laid the eggs, and the bodies had to brood them as soon as they had grown up. In a hall behind this all, flies were having dinner. A part of it was prey and another part was a selection of their breed. Tze-ra decided to declare war immediately, and shot one of the flies by an arrow. Also the boys shot some of the flies. It seemed that there was no way of growing old here, as the flies would take care of that sooner or later. Tze-ra was confused when she saw all the meat. Some flies immediately turned into snakes, and were ready to attack Tze-ra and the boys, but Tze-ra took her sword to cut their heads off. ‘Stay behind me !’ Tze-ra shouted to

the boys, as the ground below their feet became hotter. Tze-ra kicked the door behind the dinnertable open and looked right into a strange temple. There was a lot of fire here. Tze-ra looked right into the face of a tall skeleton. The tall skeleton had been chained to a wall, and some black flies were surrounding him. 'Let them hunt !' the skeleton shrieked. 'You also hunt, so why aren't they allow to hunt ?' Tze-ra walked slowly towards the skeleton. 'Who are you ?' she asked. The skeleton looked her deep in the eyes. The skeleton had a sort of breasts like a woman and said : 'Would you care who I am ? No one cares, and no one ever will. I have been chained here since a long time, and only these flies try to break these chains. Without any results though. Tze-ra stepped closer. She didn't know if it would be wise to set this creature free. 'Why are you here ?' she asked. The skeleton laughed. 'Not because of the flies,' the skeleton said. 'The flies are here because of me. I had been chained here long ago.' Tze-ra looked the skeleton in the eyes and asked : 'By who ?' Again the skeleton tried to get the chains off, and said : 'By human beings.' But then Tze-ra repeated her first question : 'Who are you ?' But the skeleton didn't want to answer. Tze-ra knew that if she would free the skeleton, maybe the flies would stop hunt after the boys and their mothers, but she also knew that if she would free this skeleton it could get worse. She didn't know. There were high sounds in the air, like flies coming. Soon they all got surrounded by flies who just got in. There was no way out, and they were with so many that a fight would be hopeless. Tze-ra asked if one of the boys knew about this skeleton. Suddenly from behind Tze-ra one of the boys jumped forward and crashed the skeleton by his sword. 'This was the one who raised our mothers. He dominated them without mercy, and then he started to dominate us, until our fathers chained him here in the darkness.' Tze-ra looked at the broken skeleton and asked : 'Where are your fathers now ?' But the boys didn't know. One day their fathers went on a trip on the island, but they never returned. 'Oh, I guess these flies now more about that,' Tze-ra said, while turning to the flies. The flies seemed to have lost their powers now the skeleton had been crashed. 'They are in the underground,' one of the flies said. Then the flies led them to a place deep in the underground where the fathers had been chained. Tze-ra and the boys had set them free soon. The flies seemed to melt away one by one very soon, as they had been the spirits of the skeleton who had been crashed now. The skeleton had been an evil ancestor of the boys and their mothers, and soon also the mothers got reunited with the fathers of the boys. This was the day that the flies seemed to get away from the island. The flies who survived the melting process went to another island, which developped a wild wild nature, and got called 'the island of the flies.' Tze-ra went to this island one time and found out that the flies who had survived weren't the spirits of the skeleton. It seemed they had been a victim of the spirits of the skeleton for such a long time. Now they were free they developped themselves into beautiful indians more and more, although they kept their many wings most of the time. But it seemed they also followed the ways of the spirits of the skeleton in a sense, as they became hunters, and they developped their webs and nets, not only for food, but also for decoration and creation. It was their nature, and they couldn't help it. They had many transformation-mechanisms to make the best of it. They had unstoppable lusts for decoration and creation, and they could only bring it forth by consuming their prey. It was like strange vomit, like the vomit of angels, full of diamonds. They had been slaves of the skeleton's flies for such a long time that they had stinging marks of it on and in their bodies. It was like nature now gave them a mechanism to surround these stings by the remains of their prey and to turn it into pearls. On this island their bodies developped themselves into mines more than ever. And these pearls could store the pale lights for a lot of things. They were like the oysters of the jungle. To Tze-ra the oysterflies were beings to study. She still couldn't grasp the mechanism of these beings yet, but it seemed that only this sort could survive on the island.

Sevenlegs - Indian Fiction

The Garden of Hell

Sevenlegs was an indian woman. She didn't have seven legs, but this was just her name. She was on a trip through hell, the place she was coming from. It seemed legs were growing here as a strange hatchmachine of strange eggs. Horrible creatures came forth of these eggs to invade the world above them. These creatures were called the indian flies, merciless beings. Sevenlegs didn't want to be in any trouble. She pierced herself a way through the darkness. There were dogs around guarding the legs, and she also had to be on her guard. The dogs looked like wild pigs. Suddenly she took an arrow and shot one of the dogs. The others came after her in cool rage. Finally she slayed them all by her knife. It was a long journey through the gates of hell. Once she had been born here, but that was a long time ago. The legs of hell were very dangerous, for not only did they hatch eggs, but they also cut meat. There was for Sevenlegs not a way to understand this. Children grew up here, drowning in their own blood. Their meat seemed to be evergrowing, and they stayed in the hands of these butchers. There were many kings of hell, often mean skeletons, but also pigs, doglike pigs, and wolflike pigs. It was the land of pigs. Sevenlegs felt sorry for the children who grew up, but there was

nothing she could do. She also grew up here once. After awhile she had shot many skeleton-kings, but most of all : pigkings. She wanted to know the secret of this strange mechanism terrorizing hell. It seemed to bring forth so many indian flies bringing terror in the world above them, like wanting to have revenge, although she knew these were just instincts. The indian flies didn't know good or evil. They were like in a trance. It was a strange dance of hell Sevenlegs didn't know anything about. But this time she had come to find out. A fly with many wings came towards her. She looked like a woman. She asked very softly if Sevenlegs wanted to come with her. The fly led her to a paradise-like place. Sevenlegs wondered how a place like this could exist in hell. 'Through many pains,' the fly said. There were more soft women here. 'We have drowned so much in our own blood in everlasting slaughter that we became like this,' said the fly. The women had strange stripes on their bodies, like white or pale stripes, and although they were soft, they were warriors. 'Only warriors survive life like this,' the fly said. Sevenlegs was also a warrior, so she could understand that. 'We carry eggs in us which can only be hatched by the passion of war,' the fly said. 'Our babies come forth from war.' Strange pale-striped snakes slided on the ground. It was like these snakes brought Sevenlegs to peace. The walls seemed to be organic. 'Everything is organic here,' the fly said. 'Everything is alive. When a fly brings forth a snake, it brings peace. When a fly brings forth a shark, it brings peace. When a fly brings forth a human body, it brings peace.' Deeper in the underground strange indian flies were the hatchers of eggs in a strange hatch-machine. It was like they were living on an island in a strange paradise. They fed there babies with the meat of pigs. These babies were like doveflies. These doveflies had been sent out to the world above to enter the spirits of human beings. They called it the Holy Spirit, but actually it was the mark of an arena. But not only doveflies were coming forth from the eggs, but also snakeflies. There where someone didn't receive the Holy Spirit, a snakefly would come. They would actually take their spirits down, to turn them into evergrowing meat, where the flies feast on. But these weren't the only ones growing in the eggs. The sharkflies were coming forth to fly to the world above to make all humans as slaves. The eagleflies were coming forth to imprison all human beings. 'But why ?' Sevenlegs asked.

'Once all humans belonged to the garden of hell,' the fly said. 'But they escaped. They escaped by eating a fruit from a fallen snakefly. He brought them to the world above. Now the indian flies need to bring them back.'

'But for what ?' Sevenlegs asked.

'There are many things you do not understand yet, child,' the fly said.

'So you mean to say that all humans are a sort of flies ?' Sevenlegs asked.

‘Yes, my child,’ the fly said. ‘But they have covered that by eating from the fruit. They have washed themselves in the fluids of the world above.’

‘And what kind of fluids are these ?’ Sevenlegs asked.

‘The fluids of the fallen flies,’ the fly said.

‘How did they fall ?’ Sevenlegs asked.

‘They falled by business, child .... They made a business of life,’ the fly said.

‘But they were first warriors, right ?’ Sevenlegs asked.

‘Yes,’ the fly said, ‘they were first warriors, but then fell asleep by doing business.’

‘Oh, that’s sad,’ Sevenlegs said.

‘Yes, you can say that,’ the fly said. ‘For only the warriors will stay awake and alive. The warriors had to guard the flames.’

‘Which flames ?’ Sevenlegs asked.

‘The flames of the flies,’ the fly said. ‘These are the seven flames which keep them alive. The flame of evil, the flame of lies, the flame of lust, the flame of warfare, the flame of suffering, the flame of isolation, and the flame of passion.’

‘Why such flames ?’ Sevenlegs asked.

‘Because you need to protect your heart. These are the seven flames leading you back to the garden of hell,’ the fly said. Sevenlegs saw swarms of indian flies in the air, waiting to bring her back. There were flames around them, like shrieking. It was like the storm of hell, wanting to take her back to the garden. ‘You must close your eyes and sleep,’ the fly said. ‘They will do the rest.’ Soon Sevenlegs fell asleep, and the firy storm took her to the garden of hell. When she opened her eyes the trees were like bodies brought forth by flies. They were carrying fruits like eternal fruits, and there were snakeflies everywhere. There were no fallen snakeflies here, as the fallen snakefly had been killed. The bodies were like transparent here, and they were carrying flies inside. It was like an ambient atmosphere, and there were cherubflies guarding the garden. It was the place of the devil. He sat on a high throne, and you could see he was a proud one. It was like she was living in a giantegg of flies now. Everything was different. She knew she couldn’t return to the world above, as a greater devil would wait for her there. She wanted to be with this devil. The devil came from his throne, turned into a flysnake and slided towards her. He was almost hairy, and he smelled like a bull or a horse. Sevenlegs laid her head to his chest. She was thinking about the fallen flies, and if they would return to this place once. She thought about the Holy Spirit keeping them enslaved in the world above. She swam in the waters of the garden, having no coverings. She wondered when the Holy Spirit, the swarms of doveflies, would return with them to the garden of hell. This would be when they got possessed by snakeflies, to let them return. But when would that be ? Here the bodies were like evergrowing meat, and everyone lived by eating everyone. There was no other way to life.

The Godflies

Sevenlegs woke up in a to her strange atmosphere. A man lay next to her, like a fly, having blood of the fly streaming through him, almost transparent. They had just received the Holy Spirit, a swarm of dove-flies so deep inside. It enslaved them in a strange sense. They started a fight. Only by the fight they could live here, or they would fade away. They covered themselves by the blood of the other, and they ate from the evergrowing meat. These strange things seemed to happen when the Christ-flies entered a soul. They seemed to live by blood, and by the blood of the other. It was a strange arena and a strange butchery. The Christ-flies were jelly-flies like bats in fire. It caused Sevenlegs to have strange visions, and it caused her to be addicted .... addicted to something she didn’t know .... A snake took her deeper in the garden of hell, and she ate from a fruit ... a fruit of flies .... It was like strange eggs were growing in her, and she could only hatch them in this arena, this butchery .... She was drinking from the everflowing blood .... She was bathing in it ... while angelflies were watching. The Holy Spirit was like a warm blanket to her, but she was longing for more fruits

of the garden of hell .... The angelflies were luring her deeper and deeper .... The snake came again, and led her to his place .... He brought her to the food he himself used to eat. It wasn't a fruit ..... it was meat .... 'Fruits are for babies,' the snake said. 'It takes you away from the real stuff ....' Sevenlegs took something of the meat, and fell asleep. The sleep took seven days, and then she came into the gardens of the snake. 'The meat of flies,' said the snake .... God never told you that, as he wanted to eat it alone, although he knew I also ate it.'

'Who is God ?' Sevenlegs asked.

'Never heard of the God-flies ?' the snake said. Sevenlegs shook her head. 'They are flies eating other flies,' the snake said.

'What kind of flies ?' Sevenlegs asked.

'Ratflies and snakeflies like pythonflies and anacondaflies,' the snake said.

'Snakes like you ?' Sevenlegs asked.

'Yes,' the snake said. 'they all have fights and the winners become god.'

Sevenlegs ate something from the meat again, but this time she didn't fall asleep. 'God wanted to lure others by fruits and trees to hide the meat, ... understand ? By this he could keep his powers and strength to rule the weaklings,' the snake said.

'So am I now becoming more powerfull than God ?' Sevenlegs asked.

'If you eat more meat than him, yes,' the snake said. 'And then you can lead your own life, without being prisoner of the God-flies.'

‘What does it mean to be prisoner of the god-flies ?’ Sevenlegs asked.

‘It’s an arena of weaklings, so that the weak ones become even weaker,’ the snake said. ‘And then the God-flies come down to eat from the meat. So it’s a strange butchery as well, in which the weaklings are the butchers as well as the meat, and the Godflies are the eaters .... It’s a sort of restaurant.’

‘Well, I’m glad that I’m here with you then,’ Sevenlegs sighed. ‘It’s all a fairground to me.’

The Hunter’s House

In the garden of hell Sevenlegs woke up. She was in the snake’s den, a strange lair. ‘Adam and Eve had to become hunters and warriors, but the Godflies brought their attention to a fruit in a tree. The Godflies said : ‘Don’t eat from the fruit, but be in business .... Be a farmer.’ They listened to him, and became farmers, but later they ate from the fruit also, and fell away from the garden,’ the snake said. ‘There were so many fruits they were allowed to eat from, but not this fruit. But as I told you, it was to distract them from the meat. They had to become hunters and warriors. But anyway, you are here now, with me, and you like the meat of flies, don’t you ?’ Sevenlegs didn’t answer. She was still a bit sleepy. ‘Who are Adam and Eve ?’ she asked.

‘Never heard of Adam and Eve ?’ the snake asked. Sevenlegs shook her head. It was all like mathematics to her. ‘If they would be hunters and warriors, they would never fall away from the garden of hell. There were so many dangerous creatures they had to defeat .... creatures who wanted to take them away. ‘Like snakes ?’ Sevenlegs asked.

‘Yes, snakes, pigs, chicken, so many creatures wanted to let them fall in their traps,’ the snake said. ‘There were beasts in the depths of the garden they had to defeat. Adam and Eve became fallen flies. ‘When will they be back ?’ Sevenlegs asked. ‘The Eve-flies and the Adam-

flies will do,' the snake said, two swarms of hell. The Eve-flies are to wake us up for the meat, and the Adam-flies are to wake us up for the war.'

'War ?' Sevenlegs asked.

'Yes, war,' the snake said, 'for only warriors can return to this place. There is no other way.'

'Who is the boss of this place ?' Sevenlegs asked.

'There are so many swindlers and breeders to defeat,' the snake said. 'They are the beasts of the gardens. Even the lambs are beasts here. You must live here by the sword, or you will die.'

'Now that's other language,' Sevenlegs said. 'Are you going to protect me ?'

'It will be the wars of the flies,' the snake said, 'and I will lead you through. No worries.'

Sevenlegs didn't have an idea were she was, or with who. She just trusted the snake who seemed to be her friend. What he told made sense to her, and she knew that without him she wouldn't make it here. He brought her to so many places of meat, and so many huntingfields of the garden of hell, and so more and more seemed to forget about the fruits. It was a warm place, like Xibalba, the place where she was born, but this was totally different. She dipped her spear in poison, and listened to the snake for hours and hours, until she felt weak again, and fell asleep. There were so many things happening in her head. She felt herself like a soldier, and so many Eve-flies and swarms of Adam-flies seemed to enter her head to fill her body, layer by layer, into her deepest depths. There was a cross in the garden of hell, once denied by Adam and Eve. There were dangerous flies sitting on that cross. It was a cross of meat. Sevenlegs stared at it, and when she started to eat from the meat, she got crucified, while the cross started to burn. The snake finally saved her out. It was the grill of hell's garden. Sevenlegs was screaming. She would never forget this experience, the experience of the cross. But the cross-flies seemed to find her again and again, to repeat the experience. It was like her heart was opening up to so many things, and later she would understand it better, but it was still like something was eating her heart, like a strange fly inside. She had like an evergrowing heart, and it was like she got baptized in her

own blood. There was something strange about this baptizement, something everlasting, like a strange smell, a strange mark on her soul. It was like the grill was taking her deeper into the garden, and she found out that she was everburning, evergrowing, and everfighting, as a ritual to stay alive, as a mighty vibration, the vibration of the fly .... Here everything was meat, and everything was eating, no difference between the butcher and it's prey. It gave her a feeling of equality, which was the place where the evil path finally brought her, and she saw something written on a stone : 'Evil One, You're Not The Evil One.' She didn't understand it, but it enlightened her, like a new law written in her heart.

The snake took her in his grip and shaped her ... He was the creator here .... but she also shaped him .... And she saw another stone on which there was written : 'Oh Creation, You Created The Creator.' And again, she didn't understand it, but it was like a swarm of flies rewrote the records of her heart, while they were erasing so many things by sticky lights. Sevenlegs finally slided into a lake or well full of flyfluids. The crossflies seemed to pierce her flesh so deep, and it enslaved her. But in the lake there was a rock on which it was written : 'Enslaved to Become Free'. Everything was enslaving here, and everything was enslaved. Here there was no difference between the slave and the enslaver. She enslaved, and got slaved, as a mighty vibration, the vibration of the fly. There were so many things she didn't understand yet, but she embraced the new nature. If it was for the kill or for the love of it, she didn't know, and that was too deep for her to understand. She found out she was nothing but flymeat, a fly at heart. She was nothing but seed, only coming alive here, for outside it would be wasted. The eggs she was carrying could only be hatched here, between the snakes, for snakes brought forth by flies could only bring peace. She was between the snakes, on the heights of the gardens, from which she could dive into the depths, searching for the pearls of paradise, a heritage she could never understand.

'Eat me, eat me, and I will eat you,' a strange creature in a tree said. But she shot it down from a distance. It remembered her about a strange fairytale. 'Drink me, drink me, and I will drink you,' another creature said, but she shot it down by a poisoned arrow. She didn't have time for such fairytales now. She was carefull in her steps, but she knew deep inside that there was no difference between the hunter and the hunted, and this seemed to be also the secret of these eternal huntingfields. All paths of paradise finally ended here, in the everlasting bownets, where the breed bred it's breeder. We have been created by the guys in these fly-eggs, standing high on a hill .... and we created them .... If she would only reach these eggs .... were distance and closeby are the same .... These are just paintings in her head .... Paint of flies dividing the fires we do not know anything about ....Distance didn't exist .... It was just the thing she didn't understand yet .... the fire she couldn't consume .... while it was consuming her .... When will we wake up to consume what is consuming us ? When will we be warriors ?

The hunter's cross, a cross so deep in hell's garden, has the answer. Here meat becomes the hunter, and all hunters become warriors. But to Sevenlegs the hunter's cross was more an

oracle, like hell's telephone. When she spoke swarms of flies would find their ways, and she became the hunter's crown. These are the seasons of hell, and some might say .... the seasons of love.

When she grew up, she became the rider of warriors and hunters, but she also knew they were riding her. She wasn't unknown about many things anymore, and showed herself like a true goddess or princess of hell. She had her place in the halls of fire, surrounded by grills. For only by the grills one could come to her. She was now Sevenlegs, princess of hell, to who all gardens belonged. It seemed that she had been living in a dark cloud all her life, but now the dark cloud had led her here. There was no one like her. Her vengeance was grace, her revenge was mercy. There was no one who could escape when she spoke. They all stood like frozen and pierced, as swarms of flies would penetrate their flesh, and would live in them forever. She was the evil of being good, and the good of being evil. There was no hell too deep for her. Hell was nothing more than a hatchmachine of strange eggs of flies with meatshells. Meat was a strange egg on this planet. And what about the heart of hell ? It was the strangest thing in hell ..... the unknown .... It was a giant-egg full of flies, and surrounded by hell's strangest swarms of flies, most dangerous. No one could enter here without losing his life. It was where Sevenlegs seemed to have her throne, deep in the halls of fire. There was no one who could read her here. All lost their lives. Only flies could come here. She lived from the evergrowing heart of hell, and it lived from her. So many flies were sharing this with her. It was the heart of the flies, a place they all seemed to come from, like an evergrowing egg of meat .... a strange egg .... It looked like a heart, and it looked like a body .... And all these flies were merely evergrowing meat-eggs. The breasts of women were strange meat-eggs producing the milk of enslavement, and the energy of war, turning them all in nothing but gladiators. Sevenlegs bred these breasts in the gardens of hell. These breasts were the harpoons of hell, breeding the gladiators for the arena. No one could do anything against the cannons of hell these breasts seemed to be. But later they found out that these evergrowing meat-eggs named breasts were merely everlasting bombs, like overreactive detonators which could explode without changing. Flesh seemed to be a deadly weapon more than anything else. The most striking harpoon of the hunter was his body, an interractive and everchanging time-bomb. The domain of Sevenlegs was organic in that sense. And it all seemed to do with the swarms of flies, holding the wars between indian flies in her head. All seemed to spin around this. The body was the result of the wars between the indian flies, like a complex warmachine, and more : an arena .... and she seemed to be the head of it .... How she came here, and how she became this she still couldn't understand, but she was waking up more and more from a long sleep in hell. Only the gladiator could survive and reach a place like this, and she had been that all her life.

She was a predator, a meat-eater, and it brought her here. It was her hunger wanting to know what is inside. And she was awakening, her eyes were opening like the eyes of the flies. It was here she saw that her armor was her enemy, her enslaver, but she also saw that it was her best friend at the same time .... leading her to the deeper world .... for freedom would lead her astray. It seemed there was no other way to get there than by the abduction .... So she was waiting for her abductors all her life. The kidnap was now a jewel around her

neck, her key to life .... like this. Inside the heart of the hell there was the stomach of hell. It was a place forbidden to Sevenlegs, as here the queen of hell seemed to live, a shapeshifting beast. It was a friendly beast, and one day Sevenlegs got an invitation to the place. But it turned out into a fight, as Sevenlegs wanted to dominate the place. She would take care that there wouldn't be a queen of hell anymore, only a princess, ...she. In cold rage Sevenlegs slayed the queen of hell. She didn't care the queen was friendly, as it was just a trap in her eyes. No, hell would be a better world if it would be in the hands of Sevenlegs. She ate from the stomach of hell, and it ate from her, and then she started to realize something else. The buttocks of hell were watching her. These buttocks were like cannons, just like the breasts. So many things seemed to explode in her, and soon she was drowning in herself. She was screaming, but no one helped, until the snake came. He bit the buttocks open and showed they were just portals .... portals to the tunnels of hell ....Sevenlegs slided inside. Soon she was at a place called the toes of hell. She shot the toes hanging around her, waiting to attack her. She shot them open, and swarms of flies seemed to come through. Through the gates she saw the giant lips of hell. Swarms of flies seemed to come forward from the lips, forming a moustache in the middle, and then a beard. Sevenlegs put her hands before her eyes because of the lights. The hairs of hell were growing around her, and soon she found herself swimming in a lake of flyfluids .... The waters were cool, but tropical, giving her exotic feelings .... She was free now .... free in a space she didn't know anything about .... The lips were still in the distance and began to smile. Then they opened their mouths and Sevenlegs slided inside while screaming. She found herself between books and toys. The place was so organic, and she followed the veins of hell, to come into a beautiful shiny greenbrown lake. At the lakeside there were indian women with lambs. She followed the vein of hell further, and then through another tunnel she came into the lungs of hell, where a lot of exotic snakes were ... born from flies ....Sevenlegs remembered this place. It looked like Xibalba where she was coming from. There were a lot of waterfalls here, full of the fluids and slime of flies. Then she followed the vein further. It led her to the brains of hell, where three crosses were : the warrior's cross, the gladiator's cross and the slave's cross. Strange stuff seemed to come forth from these, like the faeces of flies and snakes. It was a strange smell as well. She could not make up her mind, and she stood before a portal, while she was dizzy. Her hairs were dirty and further her whole body, after this trip, and she was carrying the strange smell inside. A door opened, and light was coming through. Hell looked more and more like a body now. She saw the muscles of hell, and the bones, with it's tissue. She climbed up on the muscles like a ladder, and reached a gigantic lake of blinding light, together with it's waterfall. The light started to blind her and everything in her surroundings seemed to change. A pink snake was sliding around the lake through the moist. It was the muscle of the fly where she had come to. It was the muscle of hell's light. In the distance there was also the muscle of hells' smell, and further away the muscle of hell's sound, together with a lot of other muscle's of hell's senses. It was the most sensitive spot in hell, looking like a foot. But everything was burning here, like a grill. Sevenlegs had come to the cup of hell, the cup of flies. Masses of flies seemed to come from this cup, more than she ever saw. The hell had hundreds and hundreds of senses, and they all seemed to open up here, like an oven of sensitivity.

The beasts of life were living here, playing with distance and closeby, just a painting of fly-paint. Sevenlegs had come to slay them all, as she believed it was just another portal she had to open, and she couldn't use their guards. The lakes filled themselves with blood after she started to slay. The eye of hell shrieked from it's depths. It had a beautiful skin, a skin like meat, and it cold rage Sevenlegs started to slay it. She wanted to know what was inside this egg. A bomb ? She reached it, and started to react to it. It started to shriek like an alarm. Suddenly everything seemed to explode, while Sevenlegs was in peaceIt would be an everlasting explosion, everchanging. The veins of hell weren't the same anymore .... They were now the veins of the flies ... She was now throning in abundant slaughter, in an everlasting explosion, in everlasting doom .... Swarms of indian flies took place .... They had been in a war for so long .... the veins of hell were shifting before their eyes, like a strong drink .... and then they drank .... They had now reached their cup to drown in extasy ..... They were the eaten ones as well as the predators ..... She dominated hell by her lightening ..... She tred the grapes of hell when they were ripe ..... until the cup was overflowing .... The muscles of hell were swelling, only to be pierced by her spears .... She dominated hell, more than anyone before ... After awhile the muscles of hell couldn't swell anymore, only stretch to make place for the things coming from the depths. The wines were ripe .... but even more ... the blood.

In the hall of Hell's Supper a trinity was eating from the meat of torture and scorn. When Sevenlegs found this hall she slayed them all. The flies of heaven seemed to feast here. Heaven was a place she didn't know anything about. She had never heard of it, and she thought these flies were strange, so she slayed them all. She took the skulls of the trinity and threw them deep below her into a lake. Then she slayed the cooks and the whores of the trinity, and their skulls soon sank to the depths of hell. They weren't worthy to eat any meat. Their souls would live only by fruits everlasting. They were allowed to have some bread once in awhile, but never meat. Neither would they drink blood anymore, only water. Sevenlegs destroyed the hall of Hell's Supper in short time. There was no time for dinners like this. There was only place for hunters. It was the day hell started to sink away, and Sevenlegs, who was the princess of hell, started to hate it more and more. She wanted a place for dungeons and arena's. But more than that she wanted a hunter's house. It was the day hell died. She didn't want to have anything to do with hell anymore, and broke every bone of it. She decided to make something different now. This was the day the hunter's house rose. She didn't eat for three days, and didn't wash herself. Hell was something of the past now. Only hunters seemed to survive these days and came to the hunter's house. But soon there were fights all over. They fought about the rooms. Sevenlegs killed two of them to nail their skulls above the doors of the rooms they wanted. But soon many more hunters seemed to fall into that fate. The hunter's house became a house full of skeletons, the early inhabitants of the house. The meat of torture and scorn was the only thing from the hall of Hell's Supper she kept in a freezer. Only those who would behave in the hunter's house would get a piece of it once .... for only one time. The meat looked like kidneys and liver, but it looked different. No one of the hunters who ever ate from it would survive ... It was the food of death .... That's why she carefully chose the hunters she wanted to give it. In most cases the hunters who got a piece turned into zombies in short time, finally dying a horrible slow death, but there was one hunter who seemed to be immune, and Sevenlegs didn't like that.

She could never love one of the hunters since she started the house. She hated them all. But this man seemed to be immune against every poison on her spear. So one time she went to his bedroom and entered in with a knife while he slept. When she wanted to kill him he suddenly woke up and took her arms in a tight grip. ‘I’m sure you do not want to do that,’ the man said. ‘Why such hate ? What have I done to you ?’ But Sevenlegs didn’t answer. Then after awhile, when he was still staring at her, she said : the house just needs sacrifices. Don’t you understand ? It’s a hunter’s house.

The man was surprised. ‘What woman are you ? First you invite us to come here, and ask us to behave, and then you want to kill us ? What kind of fairytales did you read when you were young ?’

‘Look,’ Sevenlegs said, ‘there’s a heavy burden on my back since I killed hell. I need to save this place above all it’s inhabitants. Death is much more interesting than to live in a place like this.’

‘Woman, you must be crazy,’ the man said. ‘You really need psychiatric help.’

‘Psychiatric help ? What is that ?’ Sevenlegs asked.

‘From what world are you ?’ the man said.

Then Sevenlegs swallowed her words. She now seemed to realize that this man wasn’t of her world. He was probably the last infiltrator from hell .... She kicked his arm away, and then pierced his belly. The man fell on his bed, and said slowly : ‘Y...you will pay for this ....’

‘I have already paid for it,’ Sevenlegs said harshly, ‘all my life.’ In short time flies had digested his body, and his skeleton she nailed close to the door of his room. Then Sevenlegs left to her own room. It was the biggest room of the house. Here she had her slaves.

There was something wrong, something really wrong with the hunter’s house .... and soon no one dared to come anymore .... She had to live by the past of the house .... One day the

flies of heaven returned to attack the house .... It was the day heaven died, as Sevenlegs went to heaven to slay it completely .... She would only do it once and for all .... The flies were made of the meat of torture and scorn. She brought the meat to her freezer. She wouldn't eat it herself. There were only a few men left in the hunter's house, and one day she poisoned them all by the meat of torture and scorn. It was a quiet day for the hunter's house .... and then she started to invite the poor. The poor she seemed to love as they weren't spoiled. She became their guard, and she truely had feelings for the first time in her life. She would never hurt any of them. She now understood why she hated the rich world so much .... because they hated the poor .... The hunter's house itself finally seemed to accept it's inhabitants.

The Evergrowing Hunger

Sevenlegs woke up in the garden of the hunter's house. The snake had found her here, and he was still her friend. She wondered if Adam and Eve knew this place, but the snake shook his head. 'Only Lilith,' he said. 'She was Adam's first love, but then she went away to the hunter's house.'

'Does she still live ?' Sevenlegs asked.

'No,' the snake said, 'but the Lilithflies are everywhere.'

'Then I will find her,' Sevenlegs said.

'No,' the snake said, 'as death isn't a better place than this. You must stay here.'

'Okay,' Sevenlegs said. She trusted her old friend. But then she asked : 'Tell me, is there any good reason to die ?'

‘No,’ the snake said. ‘There isn’t. To die is the same as coming to life, and you must stay far from that.’

‘But why ?’ Sevenlegs asked.

‘Because there are better things than life and death .... just like there are better things than heaven and hell ...,’ the snake said.

‘Oh, I understand that,’ Sevenlegs said. ‘To hunt and to be a warrior is the best, right ?’

‘Yes,’ the snake said. ‘And you have to keep that in mind.’ Sevenlegs turned herself to her friend and looked him deep in the eyes. ‘So when this Lilith lived here ... who killed her ?’ Sevenlegs asked ...

‘She ate from the meat of torture and scorn,’ the snake said.

‘Is it forbidden ?’ Sevenlegs asked.

‘Yes,’ the snake said. ‘it’s taboo.’

‘Then what kind of meat do we need to eat ?’ Sevenlegs asked.

‘Come, I’ll show you,’ the snake said. Then he took Sevenlegs to a place deep in the garden of the hunter’s house. ‘Here the meat of the hunting flies is dwelling. Don’t care about living or dying, but care about hunting,’ the snake said. ‘Here the wars of the hunters are dwelling.’ Sevenlegs took her bow and shot a hunting fly out of a tree. Then the hunting fly seemed to awake. ‘See, they are all sleeping,’ the snake said. ‘Hunters wake each other up.’

‘So I’m here to wake them up ?’ Sevenlegs asked.

‘yes, the snake said, ‘and to communicate.’

Sevenlegs found out that her bow was merely a hunter’s telephone. ‘This is strange, dude,’ Sevenlegs said. She shot another one out of a tree, and soon she could also fly.

‘You have to go through these fields, until you reach the river of flyfluids,’ the snake said. ‘If you let yourself sink in this river, it will bring you to the land of indians. Forget about eating to reach something .... you must drown in it to be totally covered ...’

Sevenlegs understood what he meant, and went there, while she sank into the depths. She was now deeper in the garden than she could ever be. Here the indians lived, the inhabitants of the hidden paradise. She could not get closer to the source than to be here, and to discover all it’s secrets. It was the land of the indian flies. She forgot about the hunter’s house and all it’s cruelty, and could heal here. She could begin a new life here, and forget about all the trauma’s she had in her life.

There was something bigger than the cross : the drowning. It was a strange hunger and thirst letting you lose everything. Here behind the river called the drowning the drowned ones lived, the indians, where the indian flies were coming from. It was hungermeat they ate here. They were the hungry ones. They lived in graves deep in the river of flyfluids. They had hungry eyes, and they didn’t know Sevenlegs. This place was big, bigger than she ever saw. This place was also softer than she ever experienced. But she had to be carefull for their feet were like crawfish. There was no river deeper than this one. It was a strange cemetery. Sevenlegs realized she was now in the world beyond paradise. Paradise had been just a deceiver to keep her away from this. Paradise had been a swindler to her. These hungry eyes seemed to satisfy her, a feeling she had never had before. Here in the mud of the flyfluids river paradise seemed to be all poison to her. This was the muddy world beyond paradise where she could only drown. The hunger and thirst were strange explosions, and hungry hands seemed to take her. She was like sliding on a giantlip, the lips of hunger. They brought her to the muscle of hunger shaping everything. Only the veins coming forth from this muscle could open her true senses, as in a path. She followed these veins to the shiny greenbrown lakes of flyfluids, the sensitive spots. She would never go back to the garden, but she wanted to stay in these wildernesses.

There was a wilderness called the hungry, where dark spots grew. These dark spots were the marks coming forth from the drowning. They spred the powders of satisfaction. Here the horseflies seemed to live, having so many wings and veins. The indian horseflies could sting like nothing else. Here also the red spots grew, while blood was coming forth. These were the bloodfountains. The indian horseflies had strange veins on their bodies, and every movement came forth as a mark from the drowning. So many grills seemed to surround their camps. They had hungerbodies, coming forth from the drowning. These marks of the drowning were merely strange scars. It was the everlasting and evergrowing meat of hunger. They lived and moved between the spots as children from the drowning. They had the veins of strange light on their bodies. When the indian horseflies found Sevenlegs, they would never let her go. And there was a day in her life Sevenlegs became the everlasting drowning herself, like a strange womb. She had become a different warrior now, a warrior ... of the land ... of the indian horseflies .... She had become a neverending bownet to the world beyond paradise .... She was a bridge .... a bridge of strange scars .... She was the everburning ...... in an everburning land .... the land of the indian horseflies. Here she would never freeze anymore in things she wouldn't understand, as the indian horseflies would lead her through the fire. The fire would speak to her, and the fire would explain, to show the neverending paths, and to show the place where they all crossed, deep in her heart ..... holding so many secrets ..... There was a place where they all crossed .... where everything seemed to melt away ..... She could not hold anything in this fire ..... only the hungry ones ..... It was an everlasting hunger flowing through her veins, and it was evergrowing, searching for the paths of satisfaction .... It was there where her senses seemed to open, to find a different world .... It was the land of the indian horseflies, strange stinging flies with so many wings ..... They were all in fire ..... in everchanging sights .... shifting in the shiny greenbrown lakes of flyfluids. Here she found out about the everlasting wars between the indian horseflies, and their everlasting hunt, their ways of communication and waking each other up .... It was a wake up call, like a strange telephone. They spoke by their arrows. They were addicted to a strange telephone, like slaves.

She became the hatcher of their eggs as no one seemed to get them open. She was their womb, the princess of the indian horseflies. By her harpoon-eyes she ruled them all, and they would never let her go. She seemed to be their fruitfullness, their source of survival. By her they could multiply themselves to care for a new generation. She was their pride and joy. She wasn't herself anymore, as she had possessed all the others. There wasn't a self anymore, and there wasn't an other. There was only 'being', a 'being' called Sevenlegs which existed in so many different views, the secret of the indian horseflies. It seemed to be the greatest show in the sky .... full of men and women .... but the being itself wasn't a man neither a woman. These were just parts of the being. It was like a fairground in the sky, like a roundabout full of indian horseflies. It was a swarm which couldn't be followed, only through the drowning. She had reached a new gender, in which she exploded, losing self and the other. She had touched the spot and she shouldn't do it, as it was forbidden. She had reached the taboo. Now men and women were just the tools of the strange being. It was a genderless unpersonal being, becoming so personal at times.

She was now a fata morgana in the sky ....

Awela the Savage

Jungle Fiction

Chapter 1. The Snake Lair

Chapter 2. King of the Lions

Chapter 3. Stronger than Lions

Chapter 4. Zertroy's Heritage

Chapter 1. The Snake Lair

A man slowly passed through the jungle of Awela, a very dangerous passage. He was looking for something, as friends had told him about the monkey stone. But soon there was screaming, and a few days later he was found, hanging dead at a rope tied to a tree. There was no hope in any of these spheres of the Awela Jungle. It was a place of doom.

No one knew exactly what the dangers were in this jungle, but it had something to do with the monkey stone, a desired stone by many.

Irakwa was a young priest who had built a small temple in the East Side of the Awela Jungle, but a few days after it was done he was murdered in a mysterious way. Could any human live in such a place. No one exactly knew. It was like the jungle itself took care of it's secrets. It was a jungle where animals were the rulers, and not human beings ... And if there would be any tribes in the jungle there, than it would be still hidden ... Maybe they would live in the underground, and they would know about the secret of this jungle, while living so close to the animals that they had to be like them.

Some researchers once went to the jungle of Awela to try to do some tests with their professor, but they also got all murdered in a mysterious way. It looked like no one could pierce this jungle.

However, there was one man who could live there. He lived among the animals as in a unity. This man was a savage from birth. Once he was a foundling, but monkeys raised him. He knew about the secrets of the monkey stone, as the monkeys teached him about it. He knew that he could never bring the stone out of the jungle to the city, as then the monkeys would kill him. But as he was growing up he became stronger, and the monkeys started to fear him more and more. Often he had bloody fights with them, as he wanted to break free out of their bondages.

One day he killed the leader of the monkey's, a large gorilla. It was a fight on life or death. From that day on he wanted to get closer to other animals of the jungles, animals against which the monkeys always protected him. But now he was old enough to be free. Many of the monkeys respected him, but to some he became an outcast. He had to be on his guard, as some of the powerfull monkeys were very jealouse at him.

It was a certain python who wanted to eat the man since his birth, but the monkeys always protected him against the tall snake. It was a very large one, very big. Now the man was seeking for revenge, for he always had nightmares about this snake. He found a dagger once in the jungle, and now he was swimming in the jungle-river in search for the snake. He could smell the snake from a distance, so he knew where the snake was. But when he came there, there were more snakes, and they started to attack him. It was a bloody fight in which he finally killed thirty snakes. He raised the lifeless bodies of the snakes above his head and threw them in the river one by one. Crocodiles came to eat the snakes, and the river was full of blood all of a sudden. The man dived into the river to wash himself in the blood, as his senses told him that it would make him more immune against snakes.

It was his wish to have friendship with the snakes, but that was almost impossible in the jungle of Awesha, as the snakes were very aggressive. He had some friendship with certain crocodiles, and they feared him, but with the snakes he still had problems. It was like they were now looking for revenge since he killed thirty of them.

His hairs were long, and his body slender and sly. He had some scars, but these were small, some a bit taller, but not too visible. Wounds could heal well in the spheres of the Awela Jungle.

One day he had another fight against snakes. These snakes were very big, even bigger than the ones he knew. He had never seen them before. Maybe they lived underground, or hidden somewhere else. The Awela Jungle was a large jungle. The two snakes finally could get him in a grip. It was like huge trees had fallen on him, and he felt like paralyzed, but they didn't bite him. They took him to a certain lair, and when he woke up the two snakes were staring at him. It was like they took him here, because they wanted to know him better, like they wanted to be his friends. And a good friendship started to develop itself. They protected him against the greater and unknown dangers of the jungle. And he needed that now, as in this area a lot of wild cats lived, like panthers, jaguars, tigers and lions. Oh, how these cats wished they could eat him alive. But the two snakes would protect him well.

Here in and around the snake-lair he could develop his skills. He was a soft man, looking for friendship between him and these wild creatures. He wanted to win the

hearts of the wild cats, but he knew instinctively that he had to be very carefull, even when they would act friendly. It was like he could smell their lust for blood.

Chapter 2. King of the Lions

Once one of the lions came into the snake-lair in the night, while the man was sleeping. The lion wanted to have an easy meal in the night, but the two snakes went in speed after the lion to bite it's head off. It was a quick job from the snakes, and they didn't make too much noise. When the man woke up that morning he saw the headless body of the lion, and he immediately knew what happened.

Also when he was outside the lair lions used to attack him, and although he could handle them more and more, sometimes his snakefriends had to speed to the fight to care for it. The man wanted to become a skilled lionwrestler, but most of all : he wanted to be their friend.

The lionwrestlings happened more often, and soon the man could dominate them at his own. It was like playing with fire, but he didn't have another choice. The lions started to fear him more and more, and they started to become sensitive to his signals. He was like the lion-king now. He knew he still couldn't trust them, as they were wild animals. But more and more he desired to develop a friendship with them. He knew that maybe it would be impossible, but it was a challenge to him. The two snakes of the lair he could trust, so why not some lions. But first he needed to be very careful. They first needed to prove him that they wouldn't kill him in any circumstance.

Zertroy was an apeman living in a cave not so far away from the snake-lair. He was like a huge hairy man, very sly. He became curious about what was all happening. He was very caring to the man. He often brought him meat and weapons. Zertroy teached the man how he could call for eagles. These eagles were very big, and could easily bring them to far away places. Zertroy teached the man many more secrets of the jungle of Awela, and he even called the man 'Awela'. Then he first put his fists to his own chest and then directed his finger to the man, and said : 'You, Awela.' He had a very dark and low voice, almost soft roaring.

Zertroy also teached Awela how to fight and wrestle against the darkest animals, and how to have friendship with them. Awela started to like Zertroy more and more, as he never had a friend like this. They found a way to communicate with each other very well, and Awela tried to explain about the monkey stone. Zertroy explained him that it was originally his stone, but the monkey's stole it from him. In the night Awela showed him the way to the monkey camp, where they hid the monkey stone. One of the gorilla's held the stone. It was the new leader of the monkeys and he was always very rude towards Awela. The leader was sleeping, holding the stone close to his body. Awela and Zertroy tried to take the stone very carefully, but suddenly the gorilla-leader woke up. He started calling the others and a bloody fight arose. The fight was so hard and took so long, that finally the two snakefriends came to help Zertroy and Awela. They killed the new gorilla-leader, and then the other gorilla's all went away. The stone they left behind, and Zertroy took it in his arms like a baby.

Zertroy knew many more secrets of the stone, as it was originally his. He explained that a sorceror once made it for him, after Zertroy saved his life. It was a stone of communication, by which Zertroy could communicate with all animals. By this it could stop or just prevent many fights and wars between animals. This was how Zertroy became a beastmaster, as he could be the perfect mediator between the animals. Zertroy was glad the stone was back now, so that it could be used in the right way again. Together with Awela he brought the stone to his cave. In his cave he cut a small piece from the stone to make an amulet of it for Awela. Awela was very grateful, but when he came to Zertroy's cave the next day he found out that Zertroy had been killed. He found monkeyhair of gorilla's everywhere, so he knew that the gorilla's had come to take revenge. But by the amulet Awela could keep the memory of his dear friend alive.

Awela knew that also he himself had be on his guard, as the gorilla's would also look for him. He found warmth and protection in his snakefriends. Awela knew he had to stay close to his two snakefriends, but they would also keep an eye on him. Since Zertroy died the friendship between Awela and the two snakes only grow deeper. Awela knew he had to prepare himself for a big fight, as he could sense the rage of the gorilla's. They would know dedicate their lives to seek for Awela's death.

One day there was like an invasion of gorilla's, and some of them were so big and huge, and so strong and skilled that they were even able to kill Awela's two big snakes. Awela tried to escape the bloody fight since he found out about their death, but the gorilla's were faster than him, and captured him. Many of the gorilla's he didn't recognize. They brought him to a gorilla camp deep in the jungle. It was like Awela couldn't breath, as they kept him in a tight grip.

Fortunately Awela had learned from Zertroy how to call for the big eagles, but this time they didn't come. Maybe it was because of the gorilla's making too much noise. But after awhile he saw two lions in the distance coming closer. He remembered these lions. They were friends of Zertroy. Some gorilla's became paniced, but other gorilla's stirred up each other for the coming fight. It became a horrible fight. Awela didn't know if the lions would keep him alive, as they always kept him at a distance. The lions slayed most of the gorilla's and the others left the camp. The lions were very friendly towards Awela. They took Awela to their den. Soon it was like they had replaced the part of the two snakes. They would protect Awela by their lives. But long their friendship wouldn't last, for in a night so many gorilla's surrounded the den, and they were so big and huge like Awela never saw before. He didn't know any of them, and he thought that maybe they came from far away, as their senses would tell what had happened to their brothers. It was like the gorilla's revenge, and it was like an army this time. Some of them were so enormous like beasts, and when they grasped the two lions, they started to eat them alive, leaving Awela in fear. But some others took Awela with them. It was a long travel across rivers. They brought Awela to a Gorilla Village deep in the jungle. The gorilla's here were like beasts, but some of them acted very friendly towards Awela. It was like they could recognize Awela's feelings towards them, feelings of love, wanting nothing but friendship.

Chapter 3. Stronger than Lions

There were some huge apemen living here, looking a bit like Zertroy, although some were even huger. Some said : 'You, king of gorilla's', but then Awela smiled. These gorilla-beasts he couldn't handle, as they were stronger than lions.

It was like the apemen were repressed by the monstrous gorilla's. And soon Awela found out that they were their prisoners and slaves. They couldn't leave the village, as the beasts guarded everything carefully. The apemen were looking for a strong leader to take them out, someone who would be the king of the gorilla's. Some of the gorilla's noticed the friendship between Awela and the apemen, and they weren't glad with it. Especially when the apemen talked about him as gorilla-king. Awela knew he had to be on his guard now.

One day a huge gorilla who also looked like a sort of giant-apeman came to Awela's tent. Soon Awela found out that he was the present gorilla-king. Other gorilla's came, and took Awela to a field in the centre of the Village. They also brought the gorilla-king there. 'You, Gorilla-King ?' the giant-apeman asked. And then he started to laugh and hit on his chest with his fist. He did this so hard that after awhile blood was coming forth from his chest. Then the other gorilla's who had surrounded the fields started to applaud. 'Fight me !' the giant roared.

It became a long and bloody battle. The giant hit Awela very hard. Awela didn't have any chance against him, and when he slammed Awela to a tree Awela lost consciousness. Later he awoke in his tent.

There were other things in the village Awela didn't like. First he was thinking about an escape, but later he wanted to help the apemen. Awela tried to call for the big eagles again, and this time it worked. Two big eagles came, but they couldn't do anything against the monstrous gorilla's. These were the days that Awela's anger and hate were growing like never before. He saw so many of his friends getting killed for nothing. He more and more started to see the ongoing cruelty of the jungle, and he knew that if he wouldn't be crueler than that he would never survive here. He gave up trying to become friends with the upper-layer of the Gorilla Village, the gorilla-king and his mates. They were in a sense unreachable, and hard like machines. In these days Awela was growing to full age, and his strength increased everyday. He became taller, and more and more of the beasts started to fear him.

One day he was overflowing with rage and went to the king. He didn't say anything but took the gorilla by the throat and threw him against the nearest tree. He took the king's dagger and cut his head off. This was the moment he could set the apemen free. The apemen destroyed the village, and many chose the side of Awela.

In the king's dagger there was a stone called the Gorilla Stone. It was a flat stone like a spot. Awela gave it to one of the apemen, and left. He called for some big eagles, and they brought him to the place where he came from. He decided to live in Zertroy's cave, as he missed him very much. He hoped that he could live in peace here, and to find new friends.

Sometimes panthers came to his place, and he used to feed them. It was like the panthers in a sense thought that he was Zertroy, the one they loved. There was so much warmth in this place, and often animals from far came here. It was like Awela

more or less took the place of Zertroy. In a sense it was so easy now to have friendship with the most dangerous animals. To him that was the heritage of Zertroy.

One day Awela found a secret doorway in Zertroy's cave. There were drawings of flowers on the walls of the tunnel, and it was leading to the underground. Awela wondered if Zertroy knew about this. Or maybe it was his secret. In the underground all sorts of flowers were growing. There were also jewels growing in these flowers, radiating strange sorts of light. The jewels looked like small hearts, beating and pulsating. They were alive. They were like organs. They were carrying a strange smell, and it was like they were drawing in his mind. It was like an underground paradise with all these fields full of jungle-flowers.

There were also some rivers and lakes here with strange fishes. Suddenly Awela discovered a place like a sort of cave full of monkey stones and also gorilla stones. There were a lot of spiders in this place, and the spiders looked very dangerous. But they didn't harm Awela. It was like Zertroy's protection was over him. Awela took some of the stones, and threw them in the waters. Close to the cave there was a stairways downstairs, and when Awela went down he found other treasure-rooms full of jungle jewels.

But when he touches one of these jewels something strange is happening. Fences of strange shiny twisted stone or bone decorated by flowers and strange pulsating jewels and jewelry come down like prisonbars to block all the doorways around him. He's now locked up. A strange smell is spreading throughout the place where he is in. He hears heavy breathing like there is a beast or vulcano close to him.

'So you want to steal from my property ?' someone is roaring. Behind the bars an enormous dragonlike black creature appears, spitting fire and smoke, while icerays are coming out of it's nose. It has dark red eyes. Months of imprisonment follow. He gets strange meat to eat, like the meat of strange spiders and other unknown creatures. Sometimes the dragonlike creature is roaring : 'I am the ruler of the jungle.' High on a wall in front of him, above the bars an enormous sword hangs, decorated by jewels, flowers and other jewelry. Awela desires the sword, as it may be a way for him to break the bars and defeat the dragon, but something inside him, like his own instincts tell him that he better cannot touch anything like that, as it would trigger something he might not be able to handle. In some corners skeletons lay down, and also mummified creatures like ashes. He knows that many came here before him, and didn't survive the tricks of this place. He knows how dangerous it is to touch anything of worth here.

It is like the meat is making him stronger, but he's also aware that it can be to breed him into something. Maybe he is of use to the dragon. By digging into the ground Awela found an old dagger. It had some flat stones on it ... jungle stones. By the dagger he tries to cut an opening in one of the fences, and after awhile he succeeds. Before him lies a path of shimmering jungle stones, like tiles, but he knows it's too dangerous to step on them. The jungle stones have all sorts of colours, but some of them look old like the stones of his dagger. He decides to step on them, and by jumping on the old stones he can reach a white bony path. On a white short pillar a big stone lies. It's a bleeding stone. Awela is amazed by the colour of the stone. He's very thirsty and drinks from the fluids, but then an enormous beast falls down. 'You

woke me up,' the beast roared. Slime is coming forth from the stone, and Awela drinks more. In the distance he sees some half-naked woman lying on a bony bench around a giant egg producing slime and blood. It looks like the blood is strange green and in strange pink. 'Someone has come to us,' one of the women sais. Soon Awela finds out that these women are slaves of the dragon. They need to produce these giant eggs. How they do that is a riddle to Awela, but it seems to be very painfull in his eyes.

The beast lies on the ground, and doesn't move. He fell from such a high platform. But then the dragon appears. Awela throws the dagger towards the heart of the dragon, but he misses. Then the dragon spits fire, and just in time Awela can dive away. Awela grasps his dagger again and throws the dagger again. This time it hits the dragon but then it falls away. Then the egg opens up, and apemen are coming forth. Awela climbs on the bony white bench, and the women look him hopefull into the eyes. 'Are you coming to set us free ?' they ask. The apemen look very dizzy. They just came out of the giant-egg. But the dragon is coming closer to the bench. By the bench they can all jump on the enormous beast who crashed down. They enter through his enormous mouth. Then Awela asks about the bleeding stone, what does it mean. The women tell him that it is the secret of their power. It was once planted there by a sorceror, the one they lived with, and the dragon couldn't do anything about it. The bleeding stone would attract someone who would finally lead them out. And that one was Awela. They had waited for this for hundreds and hundreds of years, but the bleeding stone kept them young and powerfull.

In the fallen beast they made a new living. The meat here was always growing, so they had always enough, and with the bones it was the same, so they could build it forth. Step by step they could enlarge their territory until they had reached the bleeding stone within their domain. The dragon lost space more and more, as the bleeding stone was now activated in so many ways. But the moment came that Awela thought it was time for him to leave.

Chapter 4. Zertroy's Heritage

Awela went back to Zertroy's cave again. He knew it was better for him not to go underground anymore, as he could stir up unknown forces he couldn't handle. The jungle here was dark enough for him. Still he saw it as a challenge to get friendship with the wild animals around him. He didn't need any stone for that, as he knew that to touch a magical stone would also bring unknown trouble. He was looking for other ways to deal with his inner request for peace and friendship. He wanted to be a savage, as a part of the jungle, and not a part of a sorceror's club or a city. He had given the amulet to one of the women as a memory. To him the warmth of Zertroy's memory and to replace him in all his friendships was a way to return to the well of the jungle. Zertroy had built an empire around himself mostly by experience and memory. If he had any magic then it was the result of that, and not to replace it. It was a personal warmth between him and the animals, coming forth from a personal history, by growth. He had built this kingdom stone by stone, and showed his skills in the depth of that. That was the essence of the heritage he left.

Zertroy would always stay in memory. And if something was magic, then it was that.

Awela found ways to express himself, and not repressing himself anymore by certain stones. He wanted to become free. And if he learned to know things by wrestlings, then finally a good tested friendship could exist, based on trust, and not on stones. Something in him wanted to destroy the jungle-stones, but he knew what it could trigger. It wasn't of worth to him to waste his precious time like that. He wanted to put energy in the progressive evolution of the jungle, layer by layer, step by step. He wanted to learn about the depths of the jungle, in the sense of history and knowledge, gained and tested by experience.

The End

Awela the Apeman

Jungle Fiction

Chapter 1. Find a Bear

Chapter 2. The Eye of the Dragon

Chapter 3. Days of Destruction

Chapter 4. Zertroy's Flowers

Chapter 1. Find a Bear

They lived deep in the Awela jungle, these apemen, not sensitive to memory, but far away in themselves, driven by unknown instincts. Awela, a young savage was also a sort of apemen, grew up among monkeys. But he had his memory and treasured it. To him only the jungle itself was more precious than the memory. The jungle always washed his memory clean, and then it came up again, stronger and purer than ever. There was a sensitivity in Awela. But he was also cruel and hard, otherwise he couldn't survive in this dark place. Often the fights he had ended up in death, and as he grew older the more he dominated the Awela jungle. Apemen feared him more than anything, and also other wild animals. He was a beastmaster, a lord of the jungle, and he would possess this place more than anything, as this was everything he had. The nature around him was always calling forth fights and wars, as there was a need for meat. Awela would never kill an innocent creature. He only lived by the meat of the fight. And he had enough enemies to make it happen time after time.

He wasn't looking for fights, but it was like he was attracting it. He used to drink the blood of his enemies, and bath in their fluids and slimes. It was a way to deal with the horror they brought to him. Of course he had also friends, and that was still his biggest wish, also when he grew older. And these friends were a few of the darkest animals of the Awela Jungle, dangerous predators. There were always some panthers around him to help him in his fights. Sometimes when he passed through the jungle, snakes would fall around his neck. They just fell out of the trees for that reason, trying to strengle him.

One of his biggest friends was Zertroy, an apeman, but since he had been gone life only got heavier to Awela. Zertroy died in a fight against gorilla's, and since his death Awela tried to replace him in his care and friendship to the most dangerous and wild animals of the Awela Jungle. Zertroy was the one who always called him 'Awela', like he wanted to say : 'the jungle is yours.' It was a hard job for Awela to tread in the footsteps of his passed friend. Although he had many friendship now with the greater predators of the jungle, it was also like he was attracting more predators who wanted to root him out. Was he a threat to the jungle, or just a threat to their self-made kingdoms ? One day he got attacked by an army of killer-rats, something which he wouldn't forget too easy. They bit him all over by the meanest bites, and they were much faster than his dagger. It was like he couldn't control them. He could finally escape out of their grip, but his flesh was burning by the wounds. Zertroy had teached him how to call for big eagles, so he could escape their death-attack in the nick of time, but he was sick for many days balancing between life and death. They took him to a place high in a tree, where they thought he would be safe, but even in his weakness he had to fight against a python there, one of the tallest and biggest he had ever seen. By a certain kick and by the help of the eagles, the python finally fell out of the tree.

When Awela finally went away from the tree he met a group of bears who took care of him. He was still very weak, but he had to search for food. The bears were very friendly to him, and it was like he could trust them very well. Many times Awela thought about Zertroy, his old friend, who always seemed to have a lot of bear-friends. Maybe these bears knew Zertroy and maybe they could even smell or sense that Awela was his friend. In the past most of the time Awela had to fight bears when he encountered them, or they just went away. But this was something else. It was like they were taking Awela in their community. He was one of them now.

By his dagger Awela cut some branches to make arrows for his bow. From Zertroy he learned how to make the best poison for his arrows. To Awela it was nothing but a weapon. He didn't hunt, only fight, and lived by the meat of his enemies. In the days of peace he was always searching for the best fruits of the jungle, and the jungle had also some other secrets Awela used for food. Zertroy had teached Awela also how to get the best honey. When Awela got stronger again he started to care for the bears more and more, and they liked the food he always brought to them. But there were also times that Awela didn't eat a lot, and there were even moments that he suffered from hunger. The jungle wasn't always gracefull to him, and there were even moments that Awela desired to be a hunter, as sometimes the hunger was making him crazy.

Chapter 2. The Eye of the Dragon

The bears were hunters, and sometimes they brought meat to Awela, but he didn't want to eat it. Awela had problems to kill or eat something which wasn't his enemy, but sometimes the bears just took flesh from an animal who had already died. Awela was a wild one, but he used his brains, and his sensitivity to friendship and love. Maybe he needed to confront the bigger animals of the jungle to see if they would be his friends or his enemies, although often these animals, like eliphants and rhinoceroses, just went away. It was like they were simply ignoring him.

Also tigers often chose to run away when they saw Awela. He didn't want to follow them, as Awela thought there needed to be respect. But these animals were hunters. If Awela would choose to hunt, then he would hunt the hunters, not the hunted. But on the other hand these animals seemed to be locked up in their instincts. Most of the time they were peacefull, but when they got hungry they were almost slaves of the hunger. And Awela could feel these instincts in himself sometimes. Awela didn't know how to be a farmer, but he was thinking about it. He was very strong in his brains. It was like he could tame his instincts by his intelligence, but at times his lusts were just stronger, even so strong that he lost all his memories. That happened one time when a deer was staring at him, while he was so hungry. It was like the deer was saying : 'Catch me then, you can't get me.' It was like they were teasing him at times, and he had undescribable feelings then, so weird, that he would almost take his bow to shoot one of them. But Awela loved deer, as they had never attacked him. It was like there was a bond of peace between them, like a union.

But Awela suffered from such a hunger at times, that he thought he would lose everything. It drove him crazy, and he couldn't think straight anymore. He saw himself like riding on a deer, while they were bringing him somewhere, but he felt the urge to cut it's throat and eat it alive. 'No !' Awela was shouting. Again he was balancing between life and death, and this time it was because of hunger. Was this a hallucination ? He saw himself walking to a sort of farm, like a breeding, with animals between fences and in cages, and he could remember these animals. They were his enemies. And they brought forth animals who were like the same.

'I rather die,' Awela said to himself. When he opened his eyes the deer stood before him, licking him. The deer gave Awela some food. He didn't know what it was, as he had never seen it before, but when he ate from it, strength was flowing through his body again. Then the deer showed him that he had to follow, and the deer led him to a secret place where he found wealthy bushes full of food. There were more deer here, and after a long and large meal Awela fell into a satisfying sleep.

It was here Awela fell into a deep pit. For when he woke up and passed through the secret place of deer there was a trap. The pit had been covered by thin branches and a lot of leaves. Awela fell deep and hurted himself horribly. This was where the deer were waiting for, as he could see their almost smiling heads watching him from above. Awela was shouting at them, and after awhile they left. 'Don't leave me alone here !' he shouted. Awela now knew that he couldn't trust anything anymore. He had to live with himself. For a long time he tried to climb out of the pit, but he couldn't get any grip. But then he fell in another trap, and came into a large hall with tall white bony walls. In the middle of the hall there was a white platform, also bony, or like the skin of a white python. On the walls hung strange rubies and other jewels, often in shiny red. An enormous dragon appeared.

'Do we know each other ?' the dragon asked in a roaring and shrieking tone.

'I met a dragon before, so that might be you,' Awela said, 'are you the dragon of the Awela Jungle underground ?'

'There are so many dragons here,' the dragon spoke. 'Why are you here ?' The dragon was white and red, and had some tall black stripes, and a sort of strange leather beard, but Awela could see that his colours were changing. He was like a chameleon, for all of a sudden he was totally red. Fire beams came forward from the dragon, while he roared : 'You have come close to the Door of Ancestors. A cobra is guarding it.' Then a huge cobra came from behind the dragon. Suddenly the dragon was gone. The cobra came towards Awela and a fight started. Awela didn't know where his dagger was, so it became a wrestling. Although Awela was strong, the cobra was stronger, and he took Awela through the Door of Ancestors.

Here Awela found Zertroy back who had died. 'I do not know how I could bring you here in a different way,' Zertroy spoke. Awela was glad to see him and fell him around his neck. But suddenly Awela discovered it was the dragon. Awela stepped backwards, while the dragon started laughing. The dragon was a shape-shifter, a creature with demonic forces, and Awela had to be on his guard here, as nothing was what it seemed to be. To Awela it was clear the dragon didn't want to kill him immediately. What was he up to ?

'Dragon, what do you want from me ?' Awela asked.

'I want to confuse you,' the dragon spoke.

'But why ?' Awela asked. But then the dragon left, and the cobra took Awela again in a tight grip and moved with him through a white bony tunnel, full of white python skin, rubies and jewels on the walls, like a strange corridor. The cobra led Awela to a large hall full of skeletons who were yelling and applauding. Awela stood on a sort of balcony. 'I want you to be their king,' the cobra spoke.

'But I want to go back to the jungle, to be free,' Awela spoke.

'But here are jungles too,' the cobra spoke, 'here's plenty of food, and we will care that you don't have to fight for your life. You will get armies and gladiators for that.'

'The throne is a prison and it enslaves,' Awela spoke. 'I want to be free in the jungle.'

'But do you see these ancestors here ?' the cobra spoke, 'they need a king.'

'I do not know them, as I belong to the jungle. I am Awela the apeman,' Awela said. But then the cobra got mad and pushed Awela from the balcony by a hard hit. It was like Awela fell into fire, as the roaring mass started to eat from his flesh. In the distance he could see another balcony, and a woman stood there. 'Awela !' she said loud. 'I have waited for you.' She through a net to him, like a spiderweb by which he could climb up, while shaking the skeletons away. It was like he was still in a flame, but there was ice coming forth from the woman's mouth, easing his wounds. The woman led him to a new world behind the balcony, and they had a great time, while

developping a deep friendship, but when they both got tired and touched each other the woman suddenly turned into the dragon. Awela was in a shock and it was like he was melting away in a bigger flame. Awela was screaming, while he saw everything turning around him. Everything around him got taller all of a sudden, like everything was stretching, changing and turning around.

'You have the eye of the dragon,' a voice spoke.

'Then take it out !' Awela shouted.

'But it is your heart,' the voice spoke.

Then suddenly Awela woke up. He was still in the den of the bears. It was all a nightmare caused by his terrible hunger. Since that day Awela became a hunter. He didn't want to have such a nightmare again. But he would only hunt the hunters. And he would start with the darkest hunters of all : the black lions.

Chapter 3. Days of Destruction

He used his bears to reach the almost unpiercable realms of the black lions. Soon he became a barbarian slayer of the butchers of the Awela Jungle. And this was the cause of a bloody war in which he lost many of his bearfriends. From now on he had the black lion as his enemy, and on this base he also started to hunt other predators, to find some balance. He was stirring up more enemies by this, but he didn't have another choice. The meat of black lions was good in his eyes. It brought the fire into his bones. His second victims were the red panthers, who were even larger than the black lions, although they often lived in deeper secrecy than the black lions. Zertroy had told him once that the large red panthers had caves in which they bred cattle so that they didn't need to show up too much for hunting.

Awela cared for cattle, and he loved to take them out of the breedings to take them to saver places. Most of the time he brought them out of the Awela Jungle, to the high fields and pastures, among other cattle. He knew that cattleherds would take care of them. And sometimes he loved to be a shepherd or another sort of herd himself. The pastures attracted him very much, and he saw them as a sort of holiday. But not all the herds were glad with him, especially the shepherds. They thought he was arrogant to come to their pastures. According to them he needed to stay in the jungle. They noticed that he couldn't talk very well. Awela noticed that he looked like them. One of the shepherds knew of a family in a near city who had brought their baby to the jungle as a foundling in times of poverty, while they were now the richest family of the city. They would love to see their son again, and would give a high reward to the one who could bring their son back. The shepherd saw money in Awela, and he was extremely friendly to Awela. He was so friendly that Awela thought it was highly suspicious. But when the man invited him to come to his house, Awela accepted the invitation and went with him. Maybe this man could help him in certain things.

The man lived in a small village near the pastures and fields, and when they entered the house Awela got some food and clothes. But Awela didn't want to have clothes. Clothes were strange to him. In a sense the man started to like Awela more and

more, and they had a great time. One day the man contacted the family. They lived in a huge house like a sort of castle, and they would first come to the man's house to see their son. There was a sort of electricity coming over Awela when he saw his mother. 'Mother ?' he said, while putting his fists to his chest and then directing his finger towards her. Grandmother had also come, and his sister. His sister was a beautiful woman, very soft and tender. He liked her eyes, as it was like they were speaking. His sister took him in her arms and soothed him.

They brought them to their villa-like castle. Here he also saw his other grandmother. She was very old, and she had her own room in the house, where she always sat in her chair, close to a parrot. Awela liked the parrot. The parrot could even say his name. But sometimes Awela had flashes that he needed to go back to the Awela Jungle. At times he didn't feel comfortable here. They teached him the language, which the shepherd had started. Awela had mixed feelings. He didn't like to be among people. He wanted to be among the animals. He thought that the city was horrible.

One day he had enough of it, and went back to the jungle. He had climbed through his window, and ran for hours and hours until he was in the Awela Jungle again. He thought it would be better for him not to go to the pastures and fields anymore. After months his sister finally found him. He saw her coming in the distance, but as she got closer she got torn apart by a bear. In full rage Awela jumped on the bear and killed it. His sister he couldn't save. She had a white band tied around her hair and further some white torn clothes. Awela buried her with a lot of feelings and then he tried to forget about her. But it was like her face was haunting. He couldn't get her out of his mind, and it almost drove him insane. Why would she come back to him, to the dangerous Awela Jungle ? Because she loved him, and wanted to be with him, or was there another reason ? Was it because she wanted to be like him, or would she try to take him back to the city ? Maybe that question would never be answered. From that day on, that a bear killed his sister he hated bears, and would destroy them whenever he could. He know that thought and emotion wasn't fair, and he tried to stop it, but his hate was strong. Or would they have killed her for a reason ? Would she be a threat to him, or a threat to the Jungle of Awela. One thing : This Jungle was dangerous and had it's secrets. No one would come into the Jungle to leave it alive ... Only the ones who belonged to the jungle, the ones who were a part of it.

Civilization was a threat to Awela, something he found and encountered in the village, and even more in the city. It was like slavery to him. One day he saw the parrot of his family, the parrot of his grandmother, in the distance coming to him, but it got quickly killed by big eagles. It was like the Jungle erased all the traces from the city. But he liked the parrot, and he hated the big eagles for what they had done. Awela spent a lot of his days after his visit to the village and the city in anger and hate .... pure bitterness was overflowing him, towards humans, and towards animals. He started to see the beauty of trees and flowers.

Deep inside he didn't feel complete, and he didn't need any human or animal to make him complete. It was like he didn't care anymore, as everything he loved would be taken away early or later, and would leave him in pain. It was like he was becoming afraid of love, and he saw it as a predator more dangerous than any animal around him. He became afraid of feelings and emotions, as they were like time-bombs

making his life miserable. What would become of him ? From branches he made a house in a tree.

One day a woman comes to his tree-house. He doesn't know where she comes from, but he knows and feels she's from the Awela Jungle. The two develop a friendship, but it doesn't last long. On a night an intruding snake devours her in her sleep. When Awela wakes up because of the screaming it is already too late. In tears and rage Awela tears the snake apart. The pieces he throws into a river near to the tree he lives in. This was the last time Awela would ever give himself to someone. He will now live only by the memories of his friendships. It was in these days that Awela desperately wanted to build a bridge between life and death, and he remembered the nightmare he once had about the dragon, the cobra and the Door of Ancestors. But what would he find in the realms of death ? Only skeletons who would burn him ? It was a hunger destroying him more than any hunger for food. It was ripping his soul and heart apart. Oh, how he wished he could turn back time to let all his friendships live forever. Time was cruel in his eyes, turning friendship into an enemy.

Chapter 4. Zertroy's Flowers

The walls of time had brought the worlds of his memories behind thick glass, and he wondered how he could break this glass. Or was it the jungle itself protecting him against something ? Where friendship stayed too long, civilization grew like slavery. Maybe it had to be this way, that everything made place for something else. Memory had to become a bigger circle, and it would only come alive again when it would spin around. Was this the reason why he always felt like there was a snake coiling around his head ?

Awela knew of a place in the jungle where certain food grew taking your mind away, to let you hallucinate grew like tall thin threads from certain flowers. It was eatable, as he learnt it from Zertroy, but it also brought a lot of pain, and you could get very sick from it. But it would finally be a way to bring the memory alive in a bigger spinning circle. Awela was exhausted of everything that had happened and was creeping and sliding his way to the place Zertroy talked about. He had never been there as it was a dangerous place. Zertroy had made clear to him that he had to wait till he was strong enough, and till he would be ready for it. This day Awela was ready. The most evil snakes attacked him and bit him horribly. It was like they were the guards of these flowers. He had to kill them one by one, in bloody fights, fights which would mark him for life. It brought him strange scars, but he knew it was worth it. Almost dead he reached out to the fragile threads hanging out of these wonderful flowers. He tried to grasp them, but it was like he couldn't get it straight anymore. Everything was dizzy before his eyes, like everything was melting, stretching and turning around, changing into the thing he didn't want to see .... a dragonface .... There had to be another way to reach delicious true freedom. He was sliding into a river behind the beautiful garden, but the flowers also grew here .... When he drank from the water he felt and tasted that it was full of the flowers' seed and smells ..... and he started hallucinating immediately, like a ring of fire was spinning in his mind, getting bigger and tearing his brains apart .... It was like so many walls of glass in his memory were breaking ..... He could reach out and touch, but all that he could touch was fire .... It was only space .... Time was but a flame, and he was like the seed ....

The End

Awela the Hunter

Jungle Fiction

Chapter 1. Alarm of the Bear

Chapter 2. The Meat-Eating Plants

Chapter 3. The Zwikkilocks

Chapter 4. The Man in Red

Chapter 1. Alarm of the Bear

Awela just had built his second home. He already had the house in the tree, but now he also made a house on the ground, by branches, rocks and all that he could find in the Awela Jungle. It was like the earth below his feet was shaking, when he sat in his new house, and he had a beautiful sight on the river in front of the house. This was what he lived for. He was proud, as it took him a long time. He also used skins and bones of slain predators and just of the dead carcasses he found. It was like he had rebuilt life. But there was a foul odor in the air like someone was looking for him. Awela could sense that an enormous predator was about to visit him. He could smell it, and not much later he stood eye in eye with the biggest grizzly-bear he ever saw. Awela went out of his house, and saw that the bear was wounded. He took the bear in his house and cared for it. It was the beginning of a deep friendship between him and the bear.

After days the wound of the bear started to show some signs of healing, and soon they hunted together. The bear would always follow Awela. They didn't hunt helpless prey, but they hunted the hunters, as that was Awela's philosophy, and he tried to bring that over to the bear, and also to other predators. The bear had all sorts of strange scars, and these scars produced the strange smells. Awela was glad he could influence one of the biggest predators of Awela Jungle in a good sense. It was

like the bear copied Awela's behaviour in all things. But in a sense Awela was jealouse of the bear's scars. The scars were beautiful, like he had been painted by a wizard.

Awela saw scars as the marks of the jungle, as the openers of the magical depths and dimensions. His passed friend, Zertroy the apeman, always teached him that scars were sensitivities and senses leading him to new friendships.

The bear seemed to be aware of many things, and was always some sort of alarm when there were dangers. His scars looked like bites of giant-pythons, but Awela wasn't sure. Awela remembered that Zertroy also had one or two of these scars, although they were a bit different than the ones of the bear. Some of the scars were like a few big dots or spots together, and some of these dots or spots were in a strange reddish colour. Awela loved to look at them. They had such a strange, almost delicious smell.

Awela found a way to communicate with the bear, and the bear made clear to him that he came from the underground, where a big dragon and lots of giant-pythons lived. Awela knew that there were giants and dragons and beasts living underground. Maybe it was there where the bear got his scars. The bear also made clear to Awela that in the underground there was plenty of food. Because Awela lived in hunger at times they decided to go underground.

The bear took Awela to a cave leading them underground. Soon they saw some camps there. It was like some tribes were living underground Awela didn't know anything about. But he wasn't sure. Maybe these were just ruins. But then they saw smoke coming from the camps.

The bear brought Awela to a place near the camps where there were meat-eating plants. Here a lot of good food grew, although the meat-eating plants were very dangerous. The bear made clear to Awela that his scars were from these meat-eating plants.

When they wanted to get some food soon they got into a fight against the meat-eating plants, and Awela got bitten horribly. Awela was bleeding, but when the bear bit the neck of one of the attackers, the others drew back. There was plenty of food here, but first Awela needed to stop the bleeding.

A beautiful scar like the bear grew from the wound. Also the bear was a bit wounded, and felt a bit weak. Awela started feeding the bear, and then something wonderful happened. The bear started to change into a wizard. 'Thank you, Awela,' the wizard spoke. 'I had been turned into this grizzly bear by a dragon called the Red Wizard. Only if someone with the same scar like me would feed me, then I would be normal again.' Awela hugged the wizard, and asked him who he was. 'I am the Wizard of the Awela Jungle,' the wizard said. This was always my place, until a dragon challenged me and my powers. He seemed to come from deeper underground.'

'Then why can't we search for him to defeat him ?' Awela asked.

But the wizard said that the dragon had unknown powers. It would be better for them to move into the depths, to find their places there, and to cooperate with the dragon, as he was an unknown source vitalizing everything. Without this dragon there wouldn't be an Awela Jungle.

'But can't we just replace him ?' Awela asked.

'How would you do that ?' the wizard asked. 'We are but men. I have certain powers, and I have created Awela Jungle, but I have used from his source, and for that I had to pay a big price. I am not a dragon. He is.'

'So is he a higher and more powerful being than you are ?' Awela asked.

'Let me tell you this,' the wizard said, 'when a wizard can become a dragon, then he's above wizards, for then he's the source of wizards, like the unknown force of depths.'

Then the wizard brought Awela to the depths of the Awela Jungle.

'You see,' the wizard said, 'dragons are a higher race of wizards called 'orlocks'. They do not have the wings of the world, but the wings of death. They can change the world like they want it. They know the secrets of death, and the bridges between life and death.'

'How can we become orlocks ?' Awela asked.

The wizard directed his finger to the depths below them, where there was a lake of fire like a whirlpool. 'Only those who jump in it ...'

Then the wizard took Awela's hand and said : 'Shall we ?' And then they jumped together in the depths of fire.

'Do you feel my hand ?' the wizard asked. But Awela was far away. The fire was rushing over him, while he felt a bow in his hand, and arrows burning at his back and shoulders.

'You should see me here,' Awela shouted. 'I am the hunter .... an archer !'

Then Awela woke up. It was all a dream. The grizzly-bear stared at him.

Awela hugged the bear, and said : 'I dreamt about you, that you were a wizard.'

'And I was an archer !' Awela shouted, and took his bow and arrows. 'We need to hunt, grizzly,' Awela said, and ran outside the house. The bear followed him.

They went to a place underground, and there was a camp there, just like in Awela's dream. The tribe here was also called 'the orlocks'. They were indians .... shamans .... When Awela told his dream to their chief, the chief said that they had sent that dream to get him here.

Awela wondered if they really believed in magic, but it seemed to be less than he thought. They more believed in hunting. They hunted meat-eating plants. It was not only good food, but it also gave them hallucinations.

Chapter 2. The Meat-Eating Plants

Most of the time the orlocks were great archers. And that was very important, for by that they could hunt the meat-eating plants from a safe distance. Coming too close to these plants when they were still alive would be too dangerous. Although Awela could handle the bow very well, the orlocks teached him how he could become a great archer.

The orlocks told Awela that in history dumb orlocks would try to kill the meat-eating plants by cutting off their tall necks by daggers or swords. But these cut off parts then lived on as snakes. These snakes would live most of the time in the depths of the Awela Jungle waiting to have revenge. That's why the orlocks always had to be on their guard. The meat-eating plants could only be killed by arrows. Most of the times these plants had more heads, and when one of these heads would be kept alive the whole plant would become a dragon. This was the reason why they had to be good archers. But some of these heads were so fast that they almost couldn't be killed. The orlocks said that many of these dragons lived deeper underground, waiting for the days to have revenge. Everyone was in fear of these dragons and snakes. They would develop themselves in the depths of the earth to unbelievable heights and lengths.

Awela was thinking if there wasn't a way to have friendship with the meat-eating plants, and maybe later with the dragons and the giant-snakes. But the orlocks said that these beings were so wild that they couldn't be trusted. They were tricksters and deceivers. They could never be trusted. It was like this war was an everlasting war. The orlocks believed in developping their archer-skills to be able to root all these dragons and snakes out. This would be a final war. If the dragons and snakes would be more skilled, it might be the end of the orlocks.

But Awela thought that if the orlocks would move deeper underground, and be better protected, then they might live in safity there. Maybe they needed to build a good ford underground, or live in stone. Or maybe the fires of the dephts could separate them.

But the orlocks wanted to be greater warriors or just die. They needed to deal with the mistakes of history.

One day the dragons and giant-snakes surrounded the camp of the orlocks. Archers were on their guards to protect the camp. Also Awela and the grizzly-bear were ready for the fight. It became a bloody fight, but soon they became aware of the fact that the dragons and giant-snakes had another interest. They came for the meat-eating plants. They rooted them all out of the ground, and took them with them. This was the main-source of the orlocks' food, so now they had to hunt other things. The dragons and giant-snakes stayed more or less in the surroundings of the camp, and the orlocks mainly became snake-hunters and dragon-hunters. Also Awela and the bear took part in it. But it wasn't without dangers.

The orlocks began to miss the hallucinating effects of the meat-eating plants. The dragon-meat and the snake-meat made them aggressive, and they became obsessed with the women of the tribe. They started to worship them like goddesses. Some of them became crazy because of not eating the plants anymore.

But one day the bear took Awela to another place of meat-eating plants, in the depths of the Jungle. There was another camp in the surroundings of this place. This tribe was called the dranlocks. They told Awela stories about dragons with more heads in the depths of the jungle. The dranlocks were also archers, but they used arrows like tridents and arrows with flames. They also hunted just by throwing stones. These hunters were called the stonethrowers. Some of the meat-eating plants couldn't be killed by arrows because their skins were too hard when they were alive. These ones could only be killed by stones. But the dranlocks also hunted other predators. Awela and the bear decided to go back to the open jungle again.

Chapter 3. The Zwikkilocks

In the wilderness, in the open jungle, it was good to live. Awela now knew that whenever he was hungry for a long time, the orlocks and dranlocks would always help him. He had a place to go underground, although he didn't know if they would survive the attacks of the monsters there. And Awela knew that he himself also needed to be on his guard, for what if the monsters would come to visit him here. Sometimes he just felt the need to live in his treehouse again, high in a big tree, but he knew dragons and giant-snakes could easily find him here. He tried to forget the underground, but he got plagued by nightmares many times. It was just like it didn't want to let him go. Often he thought about making a journey into the depths of the jungle, with his friend, the grizzly-bear, who was always at his side. He couldn't think about a better friend, although he often thought about the days he was with Zertroy. It was like the grizzly-bear was the one who had finally filled the enormous gap, the enormous emptiness which raised up after Zertroy's death. It was like the grizzly-bear had replaced the friendship Awela had with Zertroy, and by that Zertroy had never really left him alone. He saw it as Zertroy's last gift to him, as Zertroy always had so many bear-friends. And so Zertroy stayed to be his mind-friend.

Awela learnt that by throwing stones he could keep dangerous predators as a distance, as he developped his skills in stone-throwing. At a moment he could throw them so fast, that he could almost throw holes in trees.

One day they decided to make journey into the dephts of the jungle again. This time the bear led Awela to a place of meat-eating flowers and meat-eating toadstools. It was a dark place, guarded by giant spiders. They often looked like squids and octopi, and had many legs, and often only one big eye. The giant-spiders were very aggressive, and they even ate each other as there were many species.

The ones with the most legs were the most powerful. They could spit fire and even cause blinding lights like lightening. They also could shriek the highest.

Awela and the bear slayed their way through the giantspiders and then through the meat-eating flowers and meat-eating toadstools. They came into a camp where a tribe lived called the zwikkilocks. The camp lived in deep hunger, as they couldn't

defeat any of the meat-eating flowers and meat-eating toadstools. They had been kept in this prison for such a long time. They had gone so crazy of hunger that they even ate each other. They were glad that Awela had come with his grizzly-bear. There was now plenty of food since Awela and the bear slayed so many of their enemies. Alewa and the bear took the zwikkilocks to the open jungle where the could meat the sun and heal from their trauma. Awela built some houses for them along the river where they could live. This was the first tribe who lived in the open Awela Jungle. But Awela wondered if they would survive, as the open jungle had many dangers. Awela gave also his own two houses to the zwikkilocks and showed them the cave of Zertroy, where they would always have a shelter. Awela himself and the grizzly-bear would go deeper into the Jungle, to the places they had never been, and to the places no man had ever seen.

Chapter 4. The Man in Red

The grizzly-bear took Awela to a place where small monkeys lived he had never seen before. The monkeys soon became his friends. They were very funny and they brought Awela much joy. Some of these monkeys also had strange scars like the grizzly-bear. These scars looked like python-bites. Awela wanted to make a new home here. Here he found another apeman living in a cave. He looked very much like Zertroy, and they could get along very well. The apeman was very wise, and very skilled in many things.

But one day the giant-spiders from underground came to the place to have revenge. They were with so many, and now there were also two new ones who were stronger than Awela. The apeman wasn't there, as he was hunting. The small monkeys couldn't do anything, and lots of them got killed. But Awela they brought back to the depths of the jungle, and this time they locked him up in a circle of the meanest and strongest meat-eating flowers and meat-eating toadstools. The grizzlybear they put in another circle. They got bitten horribly again and again, and after awhile they began starving from hunger.

Awela was thinking that this would be the end, and he also heard the grizzly-bear roaring of pain and hunger in the distance. It was a strange prison, and Awela developped many scars who looked like those of the grizzly-bear. It was like these scars were giving hims strength in a strange sense, but on the other hand he was feeling weaker. He couldn't go on like this much more. But after awhile they heard yelling. They knew that voice. It was the apeman. He came to set the grizzly-bear and Awela free, but it became a long and bloody fight. The apeman brought them both back to his cave, and the apeman promised he would take good care of them. They had to live deep in the cave of the apeman, as they were afraid of another attack. But the apeman would protect them. Awela had a lot of nightmares, but the apeman always soothed him. In so many ways he was like Zertroy, and Awela felt safe with him, although he wanted to become stronger. He knew he had to learn from the apeman to survive. There were so many unknown dangers Awela didn't know anything about.

The apeman brought them to unknown fruit-bushes with delicious small berries. The apeman knew a lot of hidden and secret places in the jungle, and they often went on a journey with him, to discover new species. It was by these new friendships that

Awela started to get hope again. He knew that by his memory they would be always connected, in life and in death. Death was still something which Awela didn't understand very well, but the apeman explained a lot to him about it. These were like delicious footprints on his heart, leading him inside all the possibilities of the jungle. Death was just the transformation like food was, a journey to the insides of the earth, into the depths of the jungle. Still Awela had the thought that he wanted to build a bridge between life and death.

The apeman showed him that the scars were the footprints of death, keeping him connected to his passed friends. They could come to him by that path in other forms, as they had been transformed. But somehow, death was still a riddle to him. A riddle which would keep teasing him. He knew that he wouldn't come any further if things would always stay the same. He was on a journey. There was certain food by which the apeman could turn into another animal, and by which he could even disappear into the nothing. Probably he would travel to the realms of the death then, like the wind. One day the apeman gave some of this food to Awela, but when Awela put it in his mouth to chew on it he woke up. He had a strange taste in his mouth.

The grizzly-bear was staring at him. Where was he ? He didn't know this place.

A man in red was staring at him also. The man had also a red hat. 'I am the Red Wizard, Awela,' the man said. 'Now you know something of that which lives in the ground.'

Awela was rubbing his eyes. 'Oh, I must be really sleepy,' Awela said to the grizzly-bear, and soon he found out he was just in his house in the tree. Again Awela stared at the beautiful scars of the bear, and hugged him. Awela was proud to have such a friend, and he could feel the warmth gliding in his skin. 'Come let us swim in the river !' Awela shouted, while running outside. A new day had begun. A day of many more surprises.

The End

Elsar the Flyman - Indian Fiction

The Encounter

There was no slayer like Elsar the Flyman. He was the slayer of slayers and the king of all evil. He had gladiators like a hatch-machine, as so many indian flies had to multiply themselves. There was no other way to brood these eggs, and these ways were evil. But to be a gladiator you would be safe against the fire that was raging outside. There was nothing better than being a slave of Elsar the Flyman : always plenty of food, eternal life in his kingdom ..... for gladiators never died .... said Elsar the Flyman ... Gladiators would always purify the stone, and that would keep them alive .... even when they would die .... It was like a strange religion ... although Elsar hated religion ... Always when Elsar showed up, all gladiators in the fight had to be killed, also those who won. He had a certain angel for that : the indian fly of death. It was a feared angel, almost equally feared as Elsar the Flyman himself, for as a gladiator you knew you would die when they showed up, if you would win or lose. Elsar was a giant with strange hands. If he would touch you, you would have the feeling of spinning around. One day Elsar got in a fight against a pirate who wanted to steal his crown. The pirate was a shapeshifter with the hugest ghostship ever existing. He could turn into a giant-jelly-fish, an octopus, shark, orca, whale, or whatever seamonster you could imagine. Elsar had a fight for years and years, in which he seemed to lose all his powers .... but he conquered ..... and the skull of the pirate became one of his most precious skulls .... as it would remember him of his victory .... It was a skull which got a place on his chair behind him, and later in the crown itself. Elsar would talk to the skull, and sometimes the skull would answer, as in an oracle. Elsar had more slaves than anyone else, as he was the king of evil. There was no one greater than him, as everything was evil. If something looked like being good, it was always misleading. In the beginning there was evil, and the evil became evil, and then it got with the king of evil. He was the king of all evil. No one was more evil than he was. But he had a good heart. He wanted to help the indian flies, a species he once saved. They could only get their eggs hatched by gladiators. This was why the indian flies loved to live in the warmth of arena’s. They were the most beautiful beings often with many wings, and they didn’t know anything about evil or not evil. They just followed their instincts, and that was to survive, and to multiply. And they could only survive if they would multiply. They would sit on the backs of gladiators to insert their eggs, and then to watch it getting hatched. These eggs grew in the chests of the gladiators most of the time. Elsar the Flyman had seven guards called the seven pigs of steel. Everyone who wanted to fight him had to defeat the seven pigs of steel first, but these ones could never be defeated. The pigs of steel were creatures living on the ship of the shapeshifter’s pirate, but since Elsar had defeated him, the pigs were his. These pigs would go out in the night to hunt, and to bring the domains of Elsar the Flyman full of meat. The indian flies had to eat a lot of meat or otherwise they wouldn’t survive at all.

Elsar the Flyman was a barbarian man, but most of all he was an indian. He grilled his enemies in the depths of the earth, and laughed about their destiny. Their souls would become the eternal gladiators of the fire. This was a place outside the presence of Elsar the Flyman, a place of eternal death. This place was a place of growing pains, as that was what Elsar wished

for all his enemies. He was a revengefull man. It was a place of the evergrowing cross, a place where you could only expect growing darkness. This was why he always warned against this fire. He didn't want anyone to become his enemy and to end like that. Yes, he had a beating heart in his chest, a heart of passion, although it was full of hate and bitterness. But if you were already his enemy, he would never forgive you, and he wished you would go to that place as soon as possible. To prevent beings from becoming his enemy he made them his slaves, and he gave them his marks. Like that he didn't have to worry about them that much anymore. Although sometimes some of them escaped. There was a place worse than hell .... the hell of Elsar the Flyman .... There wasn't anyone crueler than him .... with his insane mind .... but life had teached all these things to him .... He was just displaying all the things others did to him in the past .... while seeing it multiplying before his eyes .... He couldn't stop it .... These were instincts ..... He was more than God Almighty ..... He was the king of evil .... as there was nothing but evil .... If something appeared to be good .... it turned out to be bad sooner or later .... Elsar could only laugh about this .... In a sense he didn't care about life anymore ..... But deep inside he was bloodserious .... No one should mess with him, or it would trigger something they would regret ..... and it was all automatic ..... Those who went to hell were just chicken in his eyes ..... the hatchers of eggs .... and the number of these chicken seemed to grow ..... Only to be his friend would save you from harm .... If you were a royal gladiator .... But to those who had irritated him there was no hope ..... only that of an evergrowing fire .... 'Grilled chicken,' he used to call them .... The indian flies often decended into these places, to get their eggs hatched .... and here the meat was evergrowing .... to the flies an eternal feast .... It seemed there wasn't any conscience .... and when this conscience would be there, would it be better ? The flies erased all forms of conscience by their lights .... They were the ones writing the records of the heart .... no one else .... They were there to lay the marks .... There were no taboos, and nothing was forbidden .... There was but one rule ..... the rule of .... Elsar the Flyman .... Those who didn't obey him had to stand before his throne for hours, trembling and trembling .... until they saw their souls falling into the depths of hell .... forever .... and this was a growing hell ..... a growing fear .... There they shrieked like pigs .... without having any hope on mercy .... They would be ... hatchers of eggs ..... evergrowing meat ..... in a darkness evergrowing ...... It was the meanest of the meanest, but they themselves once teached it to the young Elsar the Flyman, to who they once didn't have any mercy .... It was like they made him like this, and who could stop him now ? Even he himself couldn't stop it .... It was an instinct stronger than anything, like a spirit in his heart. He was possessed by indian flies .... the ones he once had set free ...... There was no way to describe the fear those who went to hell were bearing .... That fear didn't let him fear an almighty god anymore .... but only the king of evil .... the one who ruled their destiny. They would bleed forever in an evergrowing sting, by an evergrowing shriek, like the shriek of pigs. To the indian flies these were the eternal huntingfields .... but to them it was hell .... all caused by a law ..... the Law of Elsar the Flyman. It was a lawless law, coming from a depth he didn't understand .... It was given to him by the indian flies, as a heritage, a sovenir ..... and now he had to live with it, as he once had set them free .... But what would have happened if he wouldn't have set them free ? Was everything much worse then ? He was the best king of evil ever. At least that was what he was thinking. He loved to think about the feet of hell crashing the souls of the damned day in day out, as in doom he had his joys ...... like the joy of the newborn .... And the newborn grew in this place by the meat and blood of the damned, and they became the giants, one day big enough to step out of hell. One day strong enough to fly. There was no horror than this, the horror of Elsar the Flyman. Who could save him ? Or couldn't he be saved anymore ? The feet of hell were growing in number everyday, and if they would tread the souls of the dead enough, they would generate such a heat that they could hatch the eggs.

But the feet of hell seemed to be more keys to the deeper parts of hell, the places where Elsar the Flyman knew nothing about. These places were much meaner, and much more evil ..... here, where the king of hell lived. When the feet of hell opened the thronehall of the domain of the king of hell indian flies told him about Elsar the Flyman. The king of hell started to laugh. ‘Let him fight me !’ the king of hell roared. ‘You know nothing about what is mean. I’ll show you what mean is.’ Then the king of hell stood up from his throne, and stepped up to the realms of Elsar the Flyman. The sould of the damned were screaming. Elsar heard him coming and laughing. Elsar stood up from his own throne, took his sword and ran to where the sound was coming from. The king of hell easily slayed the seven pigs of steel, the guards of Elsar the Flyman, and then he stood eye to eye with Elsar. ‘Ha, what a coward. Look at you !’ the king of hell spoke. ‘You’re not a giant. You’re a chicken. And I will take you to my hatchmachines where you can brood eggs.’ He started to sweep with some chains, and finally through it like a lasso around Elsar’s neck. By another chain he chained his arms, and then he led him to the deeper parts of hell. He threw Elsar into a cage, and gave him some eggs to brood. ‘Do you think I am stupid or something ?’ Elsar asked. ‘I’m not a chicken.’

‘Oh, you are going to wish you were a chicken for the things I will do to you,’ the king of hell said. Then he took Elsar at his neck and threw him into a lake full of boiling fluids. Elsar screamed, and went down under, because he had been chained. ‘I can’t hear you, Elsar.’ the king of hell said. ‘It’s too hot ?’ Then after awhile he took Elsar out of the fluids. He looked like grilled. Elsar wondered where the indian flies were. Then the king of hell took Elsar to an even deeper part of hell. Then he slammed Elsar against the wall. ‘I don’t get the point,’ Elsar said. ‘So you call this mean ? I was meaner.’

‘Oh, we do everything slow,’ the king of hell said with a low voice. ‘We have the time for eternity.’ Elsar sunk to the ground in all his weakness. Oh, how he liked to break the skull of this bastard. The king of hell showed him a hall where many naked women were, who had to hatch eggs. ‘You call that mean ?’ Elsar said. ‘I guess you are old-fashioned. Do you know my halls ?’

‘Shhh...’ the king of hell said. Then he showed Elsar another hall where naked men had to hatch eggs. Elsar smiled .... He had the hope he would finally leave this place, as the king of hell was a king of nothing in his eyes. But then in the third hall he saw chicken hatching eggs. A strange feeling climbed across Elsar’s back. In the fourth hall he got the shock of his life. He saw eggs rolling from one place to another. That wasn’t such a strange thing, but the eggs looked strange. Suddenly the eggs exploded while blood came forwards. The women, men and chicken were all drowning in the blood, while Elsar and the king of hell were safe behind windows of transparent stone. Then they went downstairs to another hall. Here the same things were happening. Blood came out of the eggs to drown all the hatchers. Small fishes seemed to come forward from the eggs to eat from the meat of their hatchers. ‘Come on, this is only the beginning,’ the king of hell said. ‘Yes, they drown forever.’

‘Oh, you’re one big bastard,’ Elsar said. In the deeper halls he only saw more horrible things, things he couldn’t imagine. ‘Okay, you win,’ Elsar said. ‘You are the king of evil. I’m just a nice boy.’ Elsar gave his crown to the king of hell, and then left. It was like this experience had weakened him, and he searched for a place to get some rest. He knew nothing about life anymore, and he thought that all that he had ever done was hopeless, for there was always someone who would do it better. Why the king of hell had let him go, he didn’t know. Maybe the king of hell was more mercifull than he looked like, or would that mean there would be an even meaner king or presence waiting to attack him and take his soul ?

King of Evil

Elsar was on his way to the thrones of some kings. He slayed them without any mercy, as they had repress and dominate his people for such a long time. He ate their minds, and swallowed their souls. They had been mean kings, and now Elsar would be mean to them. He wasn’t a man of love and forgiveness. No, he was of hate and bitterness. By his sword he slayed all his enemies. There was no escape from his terrible hands. Everyone feared him. There was no throne too tall for him, or he would crash it down. There was no devil too mean for him, or he would show up to be even meaner. But inside he had a good heart, a heart of doom. He was sensitive to his people, but hard to their captors. He was Elsar the Flyman, a warrior.

He did many good things. He rebuilt the places of his people once destroyed by their harsh kings. But he rebuilt these cities, villages and towns by the bones of his fallen enemies. He had many enemies, he slayed many of them, and that was why he was a builder. He had no mercy to his enemies. Once an enemy, always an enemy. But sometimes he made an exception. This was a woman he once loved and started to act mean towards him. He first wanted to slay her, but later he felt sorry towards her. She had a rough time.

His friends were Risdor the Flyman, Sondor the Flyman, and Asdam the Flyman. They were all killers, having no mercy with their enemies. Elsar had teached them a lot. How to fight,

how to win, and how to build. They built their kingdoms on bones. They were the kings of death. No one could beat them, no one could survive out of their hands. But they had one weakness ..... women.

They had many women, and they wanted to do anything for them. This was their strength, but at the same time their weakness. They all had the same women as they were such good friends. The names of these women were : Tarla the Flywoman, Takka the Flywoman, Tadda the Flywoman, Torwa the Flywoman, Eswa the Flywoman, Elwa the Flywoman, Asda the Flywoman, and Arra the Flywoman. They had eight woman, and the nineth they once sent away instead of killing her.

There was nothing they couldn't do. They were almighty. They were like gods. But one day Elsar got aware of his weakness and left .... He went to the jungle where he met Tordo the Flyman. Tordo didn't have any women. He swam with crocodiles, lived with apes, and wrestled with snakes. He said that to have women is for cowards. In his eyes one should be a warrior, which meant : living with the animals, and get it done .... Get done what ? Defeating the beasts of the earth.

In the middle of the earth the pigbeasts lived, with their friends the snakes. These ones needed to be defeated instead of having women. Having women meant having to fight against kings with their thrones .... These kings would have their thrones as long as the beasts of the earth were still alive. In the middle of the earth the pigs were like horses, and they kept locked up giant women, the women of the earth. Tordo slayed these pigbeasts for a long time, but he never found any of these women. But since Elsar came they could do the job better, and soon they found the first dungeons. There were plenty of earth women here, who lived in dirt. They were mocking Tordo and Elsar, as they were cowards in their eyes. 'Cowards ?' Tordo roared. 'Be glad that we came to save you.'

The women laughed and said they had a good time here. They could watch through their bars to see gladiators. They were the heroes of the earth. Tordo was in rage, and wanted to see for himself. He couldn't belief his eyes, for he could see right in the middle of the eart where men fought like beasts. These men were like giants, and it seemed that the women thought it was fun. 'Why do these men fight each other ?' Elsar asked.

'They fight for the crown of the earth,' a woman said. 'Who wins will get the crown, but no one ever wins. They are all slaying each other. There is already a king, and he laughs about this fight. Once in awhile we are allowed to come to him. He is a real man.' Elsar now understood why the women lived a good life here. They seemed to be the women of the king. Tordo started to laugh. He wanted to see that king, and he would slay the lungs out of his chest. The women started to mock him, and to laugh, while others got mad at him. 'Bring me

that man,' someone roared. The women took Tordo and Elsar before the king. The king was a hairy giant, strangely oiled. He started to laugh when he saw Tordo and Elsar who were little men compared to him. Tordo took his sword and stepped towards the king, but then he hesitated. He never had such a feeling, but now he was almost trembling. The king jumped forward, took his head, and smashed it against the wall, while the women started yelling. Tordo's nose was bleeding now, and he had a wound on his head. Then Elsar stepped forward, jumped and put his knee in the face of the king. The king was roaring, and in full rage he slammed Elsar against the wall. Elsar was bleeding all over. Then he jumped up again, took his sword and stang the giant in his belly, while the giant started to laugh. 'We will make gladiators of them, as they aren't ready to fight me,' the king said. The women were laughing. Then the king pushed a button, while all of a sudden the walls of the cave seemed to open, and men came forward. Elsar and Tordo slayed the men without any problems. 'Okay, I see,' the king said. 'You do not belong with me, neither with them.' But then in a flash Elsar beheaded the king by his sword. The women were screaming, and got confused. They never saw anyone doing something like this. 'I am your king now,' Elsar said. But the women ran away from him. 'Stay away from us, coward.'

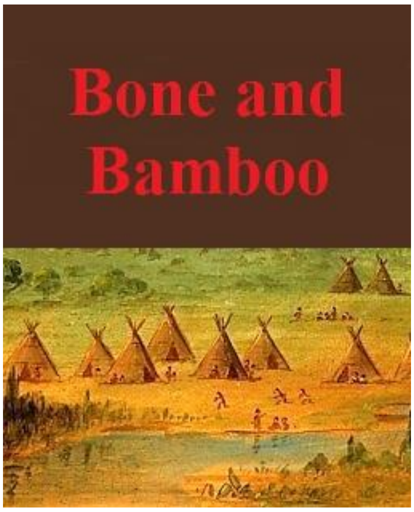
'And why am I still a coward in you eyes ?' Elsar asked.

'I mean ... look at you,' the women said. 'You aren't even a giant.' Elsar couldn't hold himself anymore, and started to slay the women one by one. It seemed these women were nothing more but beasts of the earth .... A door was opening in front of them. They didn't keep any women alive, and then stepped through the portal. Here they found what they had been searching for ..... the women of the earth .... or were these ones also beasts .... These women were shy ..... and they seemed to be fragile .... Tordo found out they had been chained .... and cut the chains by his sword. Then the women stood up and changed into indian flies with many wings .... 'Thank you,' the women said. And then they flew away.

Tordo and Elsar were proud of themselves, and the indian flies even more. But there were still things to slay, like pigbeasts and pigdogs, to find even deeper doors behind which women of the earth would be locked up. Tordo and Elsar would go on until they would reach the very core of the earth. Deeper in the earth they found out that there were a lot of slave-women. They walked around with dishes, so Tordo and Elsar thought there had to be another king around. They followed the women and came into a huge jungle-cave where a giant-ape sat. The women served the ape, and Tordo grasped his sword. 'I think you know that it's time to let the women be free !' Tordo roared. But the ape-king didn't listen. Suddenly they saw large apemen coming towards them, and a horrible fight started. Tordo and Elsar got bitten horribly, but finally they slayed all the giant apemen. 'Well, your servants didn't get enough grip on us,' Tordo said. 'I will say it another time : 'Let the women go !' But again the apeking didn't listen, and then he stood up after awhile and came towards Tordo and Elsar. Then he started to run and roar and by his fist he pushed Elsar and Tordo against a wall. Then he smiled and said : 'What are you ? Chicken ?' Tordo pushed his sword into the belly of the apeking, but the apeking started to laugh. Then he slammed them another time, and they fell into the bushes. Again the apeking jumped on them, and pushed their heads against stones.

Tordo and Elsar started to bleed horribly. ‘I have some surprises for you,’ the apeking said. Then he took two chains and chained them. ‘Welcome to my kingdom,’ the apeking said. ‘Be my gladiators.’

Tordo and Elsar soon slayed all the gladiators, and then the apeking said : ‘Free them ! I want them to fight against Mozzokko.’ A tall bald giant came forwards and immediately kicked them so hard that they slided across the wall. Then he pushed his fist into their faces and screamed : ‘No one’s going to beat Mozzokko !’ But then Elsar and Tordo kicked him in his belly and he fell. Tordo took his sword and beheaded him. Then he ran towards the apeking and beheaded him in a flash. The women got free, and changed into indian flies with many wings. They went deeper into the earth like they wanted to show Tordo and Elsar something. Soon Tordo and Elsar were in another bloodbath, as here were many pigbeasts, pigdogs, and even piglions. It seemed the pigs had all control here. The pigking guarded a door to the core of the earth, a door behind which everything was fire. Elsar slayed the pigking without troubles, opened the door and pushed his carkas into the fire. ‘Be grilled, pig !’ Elsar roared. The indian flies with the many wings seemed to go through the door, and started to fly in swarms across the sea of fire. By lianas Tordo and Elsar could follow them, and came to an island in the firesea. Pigbeasts, nothing but pigbeasts they found on this island, and they slayed their ways through the mass of beasts. The indian flies got strength again by eating the meat, and it seemed they wanted to stay on this island. There was a well of flyfluids on the island in which they washed themselves, and by which they got charged in a strange sense. They were warriorflies, and it seemed they found their weapons again. Elsar and Tordo got into a fight about who would be the king of the island. Elsar slayed Tordo in this, as Elsar thought he would be a much better king. And maybe he was right. Elsar the Flyman was now king of the jungle, and king of all doom. He sent out his flies to sting and suck blood and juices. They all needed to receive the mark of Elsar the Flyman, to be his worthy slaves for the rest of their lives. There was nothing more safe than this, as the rest of the fire would turn against all barbarians .... He was the king, and they were his gladiators .... This was the only way to hatch the eggs they were having inside ..... the eggs of the mark .... These were the eggs of the flies .... It seemed the indian flies had now seemed a way to multiply themselves .... through the king of evil .... through Elsar the Flyman.


Bone and
Bamboo

coab 1970-2017

2000-2017

Bone and Bamboo

These stories are powerful medicins I got on my shamanic trip through the underworld during my life. It is a sort of medicin wheel of heavy metaphorical and cryptical, mirroring dreams and visions as portals to the other worlds. It is the raw manuscript, so it hasn't been edited. It has been written down how it came through.

Dutch translation :

Deze verhalen zijn krachtige medicijnen die ik kreeg op mijn shamaanse tocht door de onderwereld gedurende mijn leven. Het is een soort medicijnwiel van zwaar metaforische en cryptische, spiegelende dromen en visioenen als portalen tot de andere werelden. Het is het rauwe manuscript, dus het is niet ge-edit. Het is neergeschreven zoals het doorkwam.

Bone and Bamboo

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The Drinkster

The pins pricked through his skin, the armour he had demanded his blood. Soft feathers hung along his skin, giving him goosebumps. He was a milkfly warrior, from the depths of Mars. The indians here had tortured faces, expressing pain and mystery, but they also bore an indescribable sweetness. They had black hearts, listening to the beats of death. They reflected both the ice and the heat, the pale and the dark. Their homes were ascetic, there was only pain as road to love. This was how they marked any of their friendships. Their skins were tormented, having many scars and objects stung through it, and of course many fresh stripes, to stay in connection with their beloved goddess, the drinkster.

They had a huge temple in the underground for their goddess, in a cave, in a jungle hill. Their rites were bloody, to attract the sun of blood, but they should not drink. They should stay thirsty and hungry. All to bring the flowerseed up, a mysterious power. The drinkster was a trickster.

They lived in bondage with this goddess, yet they were free. They believed scars held the forbidden milk. It was the milk of pain. One believed one shouldn't drink from it, only when the goddess granted it. And it was a bitter drink. It would make them insane, and would drive them deeper into the wilderness, into isolation. One believed that by drinking it you would go through the veil to meet the goddess. And if you would go there without she giving permission it would kill you.

The goddess herself drank from the forbidden milk, all the time, to strike the ones trying to take it from her. She was the drinkster, licensed to drink. One could only approach her by bloody rituals and only when she called. She demanded lots of presents from hunters. She wasn't easily satisfied. She bore a secret deep in her heart.

Whenever she drank she died. She poisoned herself.

The Moloch

Butterflies

In the depths of the desert, here, I had my tent. I watched around and saw nothing but skulls. I raised my sword and roared. This domain was mine. She came closer to me, this barbarian girl, with her big cats. She showed me her necklace, but I was scared. Women had often witchy powers to enslave people. I stepped back, went closer to my tent. ‘I don’t want to hurt you,’ she said. But then she changed into a ghost and sped towards me while she shrieked, ready to enter my spirit, to possess it. I used my sword well, and soon she was vomitting on the ground. Some of my dogs started to eat from her soul. I knew she was just an illusion here in this place. Lions were roaring in the distance. The air was hot. It made my skin almost bleeding. I licked from my skin. It was salty. Soon I was on my chariot, hunting, for swines. I loved swine meat. My blade was glittering in the sun light. It was actually not a sun but a huge planet close to mine, with enough heat and light to create a day. I licked my blade, and suddenly I stood before this pigmonster. It slowly turned into a woman. More pigbeasts appeared, and they all changed into women. Where was I.

Soon I was in an arena, a place of dust, slime and blood. She stared at me. Soon we were in a wrestling. She was mean, a lowhearted creature. She bit me like a hyena. Soon I was chained. Everything went so fast. They put me in a cage under a ball which looked like a small sun.

‘Dandrar,’ someone said. ‘Finally we have you. We have waited so long for this moment.’ I looked up and saw a woman with big feathers on her head, like a princess. ‘Queen of Babylon I am,’ the woman said. ‘Oh the queen of the heavens ?’ I asked.

She came closer to my cage. ‘The butterfly pact,’ she said slowly. The butterfly girls were almost buttnaked. Were these her angels ? They had strange scars on their buttocks, like strange stretched nipples. She went with her hand over it, and milk streamed forth. ‘My women are feeders,’ she said.

‘Where am I ?’ I asked.

‘Close to Moloch,’ she said. ‘And die in the fire, child of hell, and drink from his milk.’

I can’t recall what happened next but I woke up in my own tent, while glowing butterflies were flying around. I knew I would die if I would touch one of them. I slowly grasped my sword and chased them away. As soon as I struck them it was like my sword was boiling. I threw it away and stared at it in fear. These butterflies could give the strangest hallucinations, all leading to torture and death. I woke up just in time. They were the Moloch-butterflies, and touching them was even deadly.

The Spirits of Zambore

The spirits of Zambore were a group of deceased boys and girls in the jungles of Zaverre. It was hard to penetrate these jungles because of their dangers. The spirits often scared or teased those passing by, and this is why these jungles were also called the Jungles of Death. No one could pierce these jungles actually, there was always a red mist of mystery hanging over the jungles. It smelled like blood. The children were very cruel having no mercy on human nor animal. They often tormented their victims until the victim was prey in the grip of a huge snake. Whoever died in these jungles fell even more into the hands of these wicked children full of scorn and mischief. There wasn’t any supervision of a parent or an elder person, and that is why there was no limit in their games. But one day something huger seemed to come up, and it was like hell was opening itself. There was a door opening in hell, and the children knew that they would be punished for what they had done. The children were all of a sudden in great fear. They didn’t know what had happened to them, but from behind their arms got tied. When they turned around they looked into the faces of women, harsh, mean, cold. ‘Ah, the grapes of the youth of death,’ a voice said. ‘The treaders,’ someone whispered. Suddenly the children were staring into a huge mill coming right before them. ‘I’m going to swallow you,’ the mill spoke. Piranhas came forth from the mill to devour the children. The children were like grapes. ‘Juice I want,’ a voice said. ‘Yes, blood I want, the blood of grapes. There will be a party tonight.’ The children were burning and shrieking, and they became worse than they were. They were now ... children of hell ...

Someone had fallen into the jungle river, and was surrounded by piranhas all of a sudden. So many everywhere ... The piranhas were children of hell, a mystery ... No one knew how they had become what they were ... In the depths of the jungle river they guarded a door ... A door to a great party .... The door was leading to a desert, a desert underground, a great hall, where strange spots of the piranha wandered through the air, connected by strange veins. There was milk flowing through these veins. These were the roots of plants, piranha plants, from which the jungle came forth. It was a machine of tragedy, of cruelty, all to feed a beast called Mammabokko. The jungle was his temple, the earth his religion. The cup of blood had to be full always, and the piranhas would take care of that. The beast was partly fish and partly bird. He saw life as a milk machine. The piranhas were his milkers. From this game Sulidan rose up, gathering those who were the milked to better places. But it was all just a bow-net. When someone was declared 'milked', it meant that his essences were already taken away from him, his soul, and he had to wander soulless through the rest of eternity. His material was just a waste, and such creature wasn't of any interest to Mammabokko anymore. The ones declared 'milked' would get denser and denser to finally turn into stone. Sulidan was their last hope. He could lead them to a place of materialism, where they could worship material to find some happiness and illusion. But it was a bow-net, a mysterious trick. This was why some chose to get milked forever, for they feared the deceptions of Sulidan. There was only one way preventing them from getting dried up forever. There was only one way to preserve fluid-production, which was a so-called cryer, an animal like a sort of hamster installed in the chest. It would give a perpetual flow of fluid. Mammabokko would never attack such animals, for he loved them. Their secret was the eternal tear, which was at the same time the secret of Mammabokko's milk machine.

However those who had such an animal installed turned more and more into fluids themselves, becoming part of the jungle river. But to them such a experience, although it was nightmarish, was a bliss. It was a mysterious jungle, and a mysterious power dwelling in it. The piranhas guarded this secret, like true priests would do.

The Hounds of Hell

Shandra, Shandra, he was saying. His wife stood up and grasped his hand. They shared love for many years already. They were somewhat amazed by all the coconuts laying around them, brought by the monkeys. 'On love,' he said, took one and drank from it. His wife did the

same. She was shy, she had grown like this by what happened in the past, a past so dark that he didn't know half of it. She could not speak very well, always kept her words in. He took her in her arms and soothed her. She had been bitten by a group of dogs, wild dogs. Since then she could not speak. She always hesitated when she spoke. Her husband took her lovingly in his arms, he wanted to take her out of this fire, but it had burnt him too. He always felt rejected, as if she didn't love him enough. The wild dogs laughed, they enjoyed upsetting marriages, they enjoyed making a mess of it. They had a strange kitchen.

Shandra had to work in it day and night, her husband was the food. She always sacrificed him to the dogs, so that he would understand where she was going through. She wanted him to feel the bites she had, and it tore them apart. The dogs were now inbetween, as a fire. They were both paralyzed now, he couldn't speak, and now she felt rejected as well, as if he didn't love her enough, and the wild dogs laughed and made their dinner. They were both on the plate now, to be sacrificed to the king of the wild dogs. 'What have you done to them ?' he asked.

'We have made them like we are,' the dogs said. The king took a bite, and both the man and the woman became wild dogs as well. 'Shandra, Shandra,' he said. But she didn't answer. She was running with the wild dogs, and he did the same. But he could not enjoy it, and he got mad, and bit them, biting them like the king once bit him, so that they would feel it and understand him. He had a sadness because of this, but the dogs only became wilder.

He wanted to become indifferent like them, but at the same time he wanted to attack the king, for the king was the cause of all this in his eyes. So he went to the king and attacked him, bit him, but then the king begged for mercy, and said : 'Please don't make it too hard on me. My wife had passed, I miss her, life is cruel.'

But then the man said : 'But you cannot destroy relationships just because your own relationship is broken.'

'I wanted you to feel what I felt, so that the pain would be healed,' the king said.

'What can I do to help you,' the man asked.

'Please become king in my place, as I cannot live with these wild dogs anymore,' the king said.

And so it happened, the man became king and could finally sooth the wild dogs.

The Machine

The cow-people ruled here with their low and slow voices without mercy, without any care. They were rude and stubborn, like deaf. They did not take anyone serious but themselves. By a strange disease they were turning into cows more and more, and they became huge and big like predators. There was witchcraft in this world of cows, they had their powers by jewels.

Saltenni took his sword and started to slay them all. He was the slayer of the coasts and they started to fear him more and more. He visited their royal houses and their aristocratic appartments. He wanted to become the cow farmer. He hated them. He was crueler than them, but also softer with more grace. He was a man of opposites. Saltinni had always lived at the coasts since child, but now he was taking the land.

He became a legend, setting so many people free from the curse of the cow-people. Some said he was a witch, and yes, he used witchcraft, as he once got his own jewels by whiched he covered his body. He believed in amulets. They teached him how to fight, how to use his sword. They spoke to him in the night. It was a heritage of his grandmother.

She said to him : ‘use them well, for one time you might need them.’

He always kept her dear in her heart. He was graceful to older people, and he was their guard. He had a heart of gold. He wanted to build a new world, based on equality, communication, and the rule of love. He would give them a new system, but then he would leave to the wilderness, for that was where he belonged. For many years he drew back to the wilderness,

but when he returned, he was sad, for the people behaved like the cow-people again. Again he took his sword and brought slaughter. He wanted to root this evil cow-spirit out. But he also remembered the words of his grandmother : ‘Restore the worship of the stones.’ She meant the stones she once gave to him. So he did. He took off his amulets, placed them in the middle of the land, and raised a religion. He returned to the wilderness again, this time more naked than he was before. This time he hoped that things would work out. Many years later he returned again to the system, but there were religious wars everywhere. Everyone seemed to have another interpretation of the stones, and they behaved like the cow-people to each other again. This time he would rule them himself. He skinned a cow, took it’s skin as his robe, and used it’s head and horns as his helmet. He put up a low and slow voice like the cow people, and fear came in the hearts of the people. He made the laws, and brought terror more than the cow-people ever did. It was his machine. And this time things would go his way.

Mercurian Archers

In the gates of Bellatrix, a bard was standing, a troubadour, where I found the key. Here the guards of Bellatrix stood, hiding the secrets of Rome. For one Rome is yellow, another Rome is green, and the black Rome is Jerusalem, in her cup was the mercury, from which her disciples drank, to raise the black spider. Here she moves slowly, her nipples chained, spreading sweet poisons to feed her children. Here the whore of the ages dances, to entertain the black jokers, who hide deep in their churches. Here she lives behind tall and thick walls of tragedy, bathing in splendour and prosperity. Here the guards of Bellatrix rise, her popes, to spread their pestilences. Here she had her robe, woven of the testicles of her enemies, and the eyes of slain cattle. Here she licked the blood from her lips, and mercury was still the flame in her heart. And the fat on her body, on her thighs and buttocks, testify against her, where the hyenas are writing in her head, the words of an old song and an old story.

Can we come across the walls of Jerusalem, and enter our freedom again, free on the fields, or are we in her grip forever. Her eyes are enchanting, her mouth is chanting, her body is moving, intoxicating our minds.

We have seen her, we have watched her, we have read her spells. We have seen the pharisees rising in our midst, the whisperers, and still we felt safe in her, for she was our mother. Can anyone break the black bloodline. We have seen her dancing, and we wanted to be like her, loved by a million stars. In the gates of Bellatrix the guards are standing, these soldiers of a black night. Was she just another slave of Rome ?

This Rome is black, tortured by Spanish soldiers, driven in her cage, where she dances day and night. She is the marjorette.

Mercury church, where the kings are shouting, where the guards of Bellatrix stand tall …
When Mercury rises tall in Bellatrix, they will all fall …

A mystery called Inua was their queen, slowly sliding through the veils, showing the apocalypse, the war under the skin … She raises her poisoned apple high, and then she takes a bite … Queen of intoxication you have always been my delight

In mercury church it's snowing, where they sit, bound and chained, and someone preaches from the letters, by mercury they were filled. Here they have their dances, and those who can't dance will be killed. From here the tornadoes are rising until you understand it was the secret of a mouse, mercury was it's veils, hiding the mint.

I was frozen when I understood the riddle, a mouse candle, while a golden light lit it's flame, and the guards of Bellatrix followed me. They were the moderators of hell, and the age of mercury had just begun …

Mercury Mind

The mercury lies in the white sand, the riddle no one would understand. Here the queen rose from her horse, here the chocolate factory was … bending under a great weight … where Jeruzalem showed her pride …. Jezebel on the other side …. The ivory temple … a white rome, in the depths of Samaria … where the skeletons of Moab gathered … They raised her, raised her tall, for the mercury money and matter … Like a pencil deep in the brain, but the hyenas wrote it over again …

No one could catch the riddle … many soldiers rose up against it, but they died, by the witch's strike … Mercury cocoon, to raise the spoon, bound by poison all the time, to see the delight … Chocolate and mint together …. The new meat …

And witches were knocking on the doors, and on the transparent mercury walls …. But no one opened again …. They were sinking away in the sand …. Where the mercury still cries …. A riddle no one would understand ….

And the king sent his horses, and the emperor sent his slaves, but no one could solve the riddle … It's the age of mercury my friend, cold heads struck by venom, no one knows the way … They are all lost and doomed in the labyrinth, until they find a church where they can sit …. And learn from some old wise men …

The mercury weeps, it is a tale … I saw a witch, I saw her drowning the mice in mercury, where they rose up as dogs, tall dogs like the guards of bellatrix …. I saw she kept them in her room, these spotted dogs …. And she was feeding them by mercury, until they became the lion … She had something to ride on now, something to show in pride … But the mice inside the lion still cried …. Giving birth to the mercury tree … From all countries they came to eat from these fruits …. And they became judgemental, it was the tree of knowledge of good and evil, the tree of the judges …. And they built their church like the new Jerusalem … where the skeletons of Moab would dine …. Keeping their councils …. Doing their whisperings …. All secret conspiracies …. To divide and rule …. The walls of mercury to keep them away from the paradise ….

Glide with me from generation to generation, to set the captives free

And I saw a mercury land in which no one could move, only a mouse could set them free …. The mice, rising with seven on a night, pouring out the golden fluids …. Like ancient jewelry …. The rabbit comes soon, my friend, and then the mercury will burn …. Like mouse candles in the night …. And faces of frogs will be our delights …. From mercury churches they will take flight

Witch Prison

Jorod Sevulus came out of a witch prison, where he had lived since his youth. There was no way to return there. The prison was burning and exploding. He crept forward and came on the roof of the castle finally. He dived in the air, spreading his bat wings.

There was nothing but doom here. He heard children crying. He felt weak, like he couldn't do anything about it. A witchman ruled this area here, having an iron hand. This hand was a hyper-camera by which he controlled everything. The hypercameras came forth from an octopusian project. The witchman wanted to control the whole world by such cameras, and this was why he bred octopi. The octopi had a certain organ which the witchman could use. By the hypercameras the witchman wanted to make robots of every living being in the world, puppets.

Jorod Sevulus was struck to the ground. The witchman stood before him. But a light came forth from Jorod's hand, a gift he once got from a fairy. Jorod was screaming, while the light struck some of the hypercameras surrounding him. Then the light struck the witchman. Jorod grasped the chariot of the witchman with all his strength, and drove away with it. It was a winged chariot, full of flames. This was the last obstacle he had defeated. He could now leave this wicked planet.

Jorod returned to his mother-planet Sanherib. His father was a witch, his mother a fairy. They were glad to see him, and told him about the raise of technology since he had gone. There was a tight robotic system on the planet, to protect them. Even the fishes had such implants, and these were the organs from octopi develloped into hypercameras. Jorod now knew that even his own motherplanet was in the hands of these wicked systems. He was against the octopi-breedings. Again he left the planet, since he found out that his mother and father were just clones. His real mother and father had already died.

He felt lonely in the gallaxy. Some voices whispered to him, but he was afraid. He didn't want to become a robot based on octopi-torment. He loved these animals, and he wanted to set them free. But deep in his mind he knew that there had to be a perfect robotic system to raise a new immunity. He believed in robotics, but he wanted to have it based on something else, a more nature-friendly form.

It was in these days he came to the planet Eturnia, meeting the witchqueen Demonia. She wanted to do something about the octopi-breedings as well. She showed him a system of real robotics. It was based on lights. These lights came forth from the depths of the oceans. It was a light radiated by seaweed. She saw he had the same gift already in his hand, but it was still weak. He had to eat a lot of seaweed.

It was called the waterlights, and they took him over more and more. They were leading him to a cartoon world, giving him organs of cacao and licorice, and an organ of marshpane in the middle. One day they organized an invasion in the octopi-breedings, and took the poor animals out. They brought them to cartoon world, a world of humor.

A man wakes up in his dungeon. Knights are gathering before the door. They take him out, and they go to a huge hall, where a witch virgin is about to be sacrificed. It is the girlfriend of the man. ‘No !’ the man is screaming, but a strange creature with reptile wings and big reptile eyes rips her open by a knife. They all watch the mechanisms inside. The man is shocked. His girlfriend was a robot ? Then the knights knock him out and take him to his dungeon again. In the night he dreams of Samalaria, his girlfriend. Samalaria, the witch he adored. But she cuts his head off, and starts to eat him. Oh yes, he remembered, she is a robot. She is programmed. Suddenly winged octopi take him away, his soul-spirit, high in the sky. They take him to a temple, where heads rest on pillars. An octopus is shrieking. The shrieks of a new world.

There is flowing ink from this temple, in which men and women are drowning, and their clowns. An octopus has the face of a triangle, and moves closer to the man. The piramid is upside down, and he installs hypercameras in the face of the man. Then the octopus is swelling. A new world.

The harem of the octopus is like a new religion. They are made of time-implodes. It is a strange ballet, a bakery. Instant breads, like instant messages. But a spider takes them away and brings them to a flyhive. An indian goddess lives in a flame above them, like a ufo. She plays the flutes. A new world.

The cartoon queen was drawing the pictures, she was the broadcast lady in their heads. They have spots of paint on their bodies. Hypercameras in their faces : cacao, licorice and marshpane. Those who were led out of the orbit around the sugar were led here. Sugar was a witch, a dentist. She had made the sun as her satelite, but the sun span around her. She was the boss, of the butchery.

In their cheeks hypercameras, in their foreheads, soon cartoonheads they are, but there is something beyond the cartoon. I have seen the jewel, a spanish sun, making them all blind. This world is drawn by the stench of milk, blood and tears. It is the world beyond the chocolate where everything is meat. A world of grills. A world of an eternal war, leading to the eternal peace. Repress one side and you will lose them both.

It is a world of beasts, and the greatest beasts are humans. It’s a prehistoric world, where the rhinopigs are. Through the slimy veils we enter, watching secrets of the ages.

Feathercrown

Have you ever heard of the man of bottles, black clothes, black hat, waiting to open them all … He’s watching contradictions, watching it all …. He watches it like a footballgame … are they enemies or friends …. What are they boiling, what are they cooking …. Is it all about the harmony of contradiction, two sides of the boat ?

And what if you watch underwater ….

Finally to end up between gorillas …. With a woman having a feathercrown …. Blinding lights …

She’s just a girl, a savage one …. Here she is the queen ….

The man of bottles is waiting for her …. She needs to open the bottles …. So that he can enter the cat city ….

It’s all about keys you know ….

We need our opposites ….

This is what he understands …. There is no him or another …. The contradictions are one ….

Have you heard of this guy … living deep in his cellar …. He can't stand the daylight …. Traumatized by his childhood …. Bound inside ….

His wounds are like a kitchen ….. He cooks his dreams ….. Have you heard of this guy ….

Strange kitchen this guy lives in, cannot stand the light …. By darkness he breaths …. He hangs his clothes around …

He is living in a kitchen …. Swims in a kettle between fishes and piranhas … eating his mind away ….

He's the night assassin …

He makes his colours in the night …. Then starts to paint …. War colours all around … painting the stairs …. And still he worships the contradictions, still he worships the queen of gorillas …. He's waiting for her for so long, but she's living in a pit like him …. Such a tragedy ….

And she's weeping for him, screaming his name … but he never hears her … and he goes insane ….

If love would know … if love would know …. What we all would want to show ….

Have you heard of the one with the bottles … so many spirits living in there, waiting for one day to be free …. They have been slaves of the ring for so long ….

The key is in her hands … but she is far away …. She is living in a pit like you, being someone's prey ….

If love would know … if love would know …. What we all would want to show ….

Have you heard of her, have you heard of her obsessions, how she prays for you day and night …

Have you heard of how she fights for you, bleeds for you ….

The guy with the bottle lives far away … just like all the others … there's no one ever here …. The guy with the bottle screams …. But we never hear ….

One day I took the bottles, and smashed them against the walls …. Some I threw in the river …. Some in the sea ….

If love would know … if love would know …. What we all would want to show ….

She has possessed me, this girl … Fortunately there are no walls for the soul …

Have you heard of the wizard kid, who can make everything well ….

Oeragan

The slavers ran to the girl they saw. Soon she was collared, brandmarked, enslaved. Not much did the men know about her Queen, the python queen. There was something burning in the skies. It was her flame. Soon the bodies of these men were hell. They were burning, shrieking, begging for mercy, but the queen was without any grace nor mercy, as they had touched one of her girls.

'What have we done,' the men shrieked. Their big bodies were falling to the ground. It was as if they had commited an unforgivable sin, while their bodies were twisting in torment, fighting for their lives. An unknown fear took possession of them, as they had seen the true light, ice and fire of life. It was an angel enslaving them that day, and soon they were collared in hunger, sweating in the depths of unknown dungeons. They were captives marked by the marks of blood. She was the queen of everlasting torment, something which they called the holy spirit in their fear. And sinning against such spirit was unforgivable in all eternities. There was no money, nor any deed or change which could save them from that. Their lives were now submitted to an everlasting doom. And even their children would be called the children of doom. They had been possessed, as there was now a justice roaring against all the deeds they had done.

The queen smiled at her girl. She was a savage queen, of pythons, stranglers, sent out at her command, to enslave males, for males had enslaved so many. She hated males. It was a miracle that she could smile that day, for she hardly smiled, un less you would see her mocking as smiling. She was like a hyena, never giving up. There was only one thing greater than everlasting torment, which was the evergrowing torment, and she thought that all males had to be prepared for that. In her cruelty she wanted to see them suffer, as they had let so many suffer. Once she herself was a slave of these men, in the city, but she was now in the depths of the wilderness. Here she had her savage girls, the one she freed, and here she would drag all these men. She wanted them to ejaculate a fluid, the fluid of evergrowing torment. She wanted to make these men cry, she wanted them to be weak.

If the black snake warrior wouldn't show up, then this would be an eternal situation. But he came and bound her, to set the captives free. He brought them to his temple, and things would be even crueler. He gave them evergrowing consciousness so that they realized the horrors they were in. He was a hunter, and bound her to a pillar of his temple. A fire came down to burn her. It was like she was in the grip of a mightier python than she was herself. It was a black python.

She saw his black boots. She shivered. He took a knife and cut a stone out of her, which was deep in her heart, a stone called the Rattlesnake Stone. He took it in his hands. If the goddess wouldn't have sent him and if she had not given him permission, this stone would have killed him when he touched it. But he was safe in her hands, a pink light surrounding him. He took a bite from the stone, and swallowed a piece. Snakes were all over the queen to eat her. It was the goddess who had returned. She was even more repressed than the queen.

Prince of the Lotus

High in the Lotus-castle a prince lived. He could easily touch the sky. There were lotus-flowers in the air by which he could travel. But one day he started to miss something. He didn't want a princess or something, but he wanted to marry the poorest girl of his land. He knew that the poorest girls always lived closest to nature and to the lotus-flowers. So one day he started to glide down into his land to search for the poorest girl. He found her when she was bathing in a river. But suddenly also other girls came out of the bushes, just as poor as her. This could be a problem. So he decided he wanted to marry the girl most depressed and having the biggest fears, for her heart would be closest to the lotus-flowers. But that girl was too scared to come away with him, and she even didn't dare to come closer to him.

So the prince often came to the river where the girl bathed to ask for the saddest and most scared girl, but it didn't lead him anywhere. The girl was too sad and wanted to be alone. Only the girls as poor as her were allowed to be with her. So one day the prince took off his rich clothes and put on the poorest clothes he could find. He decided to leave the Lotus-castle to live in nature close to the river.

He learned what being sad was and also he learned what being afraid was. And one day the girl came to him, telling him she still wanted to be alone. The prince became sadder and sadder, and finally he decided to go back to his castle, but it was like a wilderness now. What had happened here ? The prince became more and more afraid, but the lotus-flowers were still there, and they had jewels in their centers. With the jewels the prince started to build a new castle.

One day there was a girl knocking on the door of the new castle. It was the saddest and most scared girl. 'What a wonderful castle do you have ... Can we live here together ? It's lights

have reached my place, and it has healed me.' The prince was in extasy about it, and took her in ... and they lived long and happy ...

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The Dog Turning In a Lion

A dog turned into a lion everyday. He was kind of scary. The people were very afraid of him. He would go on a run, and then reaching for a desert. Sometimes he went for a swim in the lake, to reach for it's island.

Once he found a fairy on the island. He complained to her about his turn into a lion all the time. He wanted to be a normal dog. But the fairy said that if he wouldn't be a lion he would never have found her. The fairy laid her wand on his head, and turned him into a prince. She took him to her fairytale fantasy palace, but at times he still turned into a lion or a dog. And then he just didn't feel okay, although the fairy loved him very much.

One day she took him to the wizard, and the prince told him about how he felt. The wizard said be glad you are like this, but all you miss is a few wings. So he laid his wand on the head of the prince, and suddenly the prince could fly, but the prince got more sad everyday. Also the fairy became depressed. She didn't know what was wrong with her husband. He could do so much, but it was like it was turning against him. So they returned to the wizard one day, and told him about it. He decided he would let them live in his palace.

The wizard made them both happy. He told them the most beautiful tales, but the prince longed for his old home again, when he was only a dog turning into a lion everyday. The wizard laid his wand on him again, and finally he was just a dog again, only turning into a lion at times. When he turned into a lion again he swam back across the river. The people were afraid of him, but at least he was home. But soon he missed his fairy and swam back.

She was crying in her palace. Please let me be me, he said. I am a dog turning in a lion. I am no prince and I have no wings.

It was okay with her. He was still like a prince, and he was still like having wings whenever he looked at her. But he became depressed again, and this time he would leave forever. He just didn't belong here. When he finally said farewell to the fantasy, and went home again, it would be the last time he ever had turned into a lion. Since that day he was just a normal dog like all the others.

Atayol - Savage Fiction

Savage King

Atayol was a tall beasty warrior on the planet Sarkata. He had the meanest spears, and they had to be, for there was a horrible elite ruling the planet. Atayol collected their heads, but the elite seemed to grow everyday. Their leader was a man called Diamond Spider, who could also turn into such a spider at times. The elite was a religious order, a stinky mindcontrolling sect, in the eyes of Atayol. They could do nothing good in his eyes. It was a legal system ruling the soul and it's centers and senses. If there were clairvoyants or prophets they were often bound in this system, working for some sort of god of the elite. Atayol wanted to start a revolution. But he was bound inside since his birth. Although he had escaped from his city, and living in the wilderness, he still had his implant deep inside, starting to secrete unbearable pains whenever he thought of bringing the elite down. His only hope was Sacratures, a sorceress living in a tall tower in the depths of the wilderness. She would be able to take the implant out. She lived on the other side of the ravine, a huge depth not many knew anything about. The only way to cross the ravine was by a thin bridge. It would take many days before Atayol would reach the other side, but birds from Sacratures helped him, and brought him to the top of her tower. It was very simple for Sacratures to take the implant out. She gave an armor to Atayol and blessed him. She gave her only sword to him.

'I am grateful, Sacratures,' Atayol said.

'You know you are destined to save us all,' Sacratures spoke. 'The evil spirits of the elite are all in the air, controlling our emotions in horrible ways. Please, you know what to do, for even me myself live in terrible inner struggles and pain. It's like they do not want to let go of their heritage.'

'I know what you mean, Sacratures,' Atayol said. The birds of Sacratures brought him to the center of the stronghold of the elite, in the midst of a city, there where the Diamond Spider lived.

'Welcome Atayol,' a voice said.

'Let my people go,' Atayol said, while he raised up his sword.

'Pay by your blood, you grotesque figure,' the diamond spider said. One of it's tentacles took Atayol tight in a grip and threw him in a box with octopuses. They started to suck the meat out of his body. Atayol was screaming, and was soon a very skinny but tall man.

‘Better,’ the diamond spider said. ‘Shh… it’s me already, ….Sa…sa…cra…tu…res…res…res.’

‘Huh, then why are you doing this,’ Atayol said.

‘It was the only way, Atayol,’ Sacratures said. ‘Grotesque is their slave-tool, but the elf is free. I call you karsuik, the savage elf, it’s original form.’ Atayol looked at his body. He felt free now.

‘But you,’ Atayol said, ‘what is going to happen to you.’

‘Yes, I will die,’ Sacratures said. ‘I have eaten the diamond spider from the inside, and became like it. Please, rule this land.’

Then Sacratures died. At the same time the box full of octopuses exploded, it was the end of the grotesque age. The karsuiks took control on the planet, and there was more freedom. Atayol was of course the karsuik king.

‘Who created the wall between life and death ?’ Atayol shouted. ‘It is time to break that wall down.’

‘Who created the wall between future and history ?’ Atayol shouted again. ‘It is time to break that wall down.’

Atayol woke up in the arms of Sacratures. She had taken his implant out of him, and he had this beautiful dream. But it was just a dream. He looked into her eyes, her warm glowing brown eyes, almost bloodred, almost black like wine. ‘You have bathed in your illusions,’ Sacratures spoke. Atayol stared at the wall, slowly grasping his sword. ‘It’s the spider,’ he said slowly. Sacratures stood up. ‘Beat the spider, and you will have it’s kingdom,’ she spoke.

It was a bloody battle. It was raining diamonds. They would explode after awhile. Soon Atayol was in the grip of the spider, while the tentacles were almost burning him. But

Sacratures had already pushed a spear in the heart of the spider. The eye of the spider started to grow, and spat fire. But Sacratures protected Atayol by a shield. Then she spoke a spell, and the eye of the spider was exploding.

‘Who are you,’ Atayol asked.

‘I knew this would come,’ she said. ‘It was in my father’s book, and there would be a spell I could use against it.’ Atayol took Sacratures in his arms. ‘We need to do something about your wounds,’ she said softly. But soon there were more spiders on the wall, and this time they were much bigger. They ended up in the depths of an abyss, a pit in the depths of the ravine. It was here Sacratures died, and Atayol couldn’t do anything about it. She wasn’t used to this savage life. Atayol remembered his dream. It was in these days he got a bit thinner, because there was almost nothing to eat. It was in this place ghosts started to appear before him. First an old man came to him, with a tall white beard. He told Atayol he would be a prophet. The ghosts would lead him out of the pit, to preach against the elite. He would be a savage prophet, ghostprophet.

The second ghost visiting was an older lady, very sophisticated, but also savage in a sense. She had a lot of humor. She told him she would be on his side when he would go to the city.

The third ghost was a savage woman, almost nude. She was the officer of a ghost-army, and she would help him with the breakthrough. He would be a savage king.

One day the birds of Sacratures found him, and took him out of the pit. It was a total ghostattack at the city. Atayol preached his messages, and they accepted him. They wanted him to be the king of their army. Atayol wanted to bring complete reformation. There was nothing which could stop him. They all bowed for him. By the magic of the ghosts the diamond spiders were pets in his hands. They were nothing but toys. But since that day strange hooded ghosts started to show up, as messengers of death. They didn’t come often, but when they came, they brought messages of death.

Atayol was told that these ghosts were the secret hidden rulers of the planet, not wanting to let their heritage go. They were old dentists, once chased out of society because they had put poison in the mouths of their patients. They worked for death. If a soul would be theirs they would implant the poison throughout their whole bodies, to let them live in hell. They controlled all intelligence. They lived around the core of the planet to guard a special species, a rare sort of spiders, made of rare sorts of bones like stones, together with implants, which they could easily take out, for information. It was one big communication system.

Atayol was aware of this by his ghosts and one day they went there to slay those hooded ghosts, to set those spiders free. It was a huge massacre in which some of those hooded ghosts seemed to be such spiders themselves. When set free these spiders seemed to be major surgeons being able to work up the senses. Atayol petted them.

Soon the bone-spiders were his best friends. People started to become more bony, and the surfaces of the planet were changing as well. The wildernesses started to grow, bringing forth more deserts and dry spots, but there could be found rivers and seas in them. A new legal system of life and death was rising.

The spiders told Atayol that in the depths of the core of the planet there was a stairway, downstairs, where there was still a secret prison full of victims of the hooded ghosts. One day Atayol went there to take a look. The spiders said that his body-parts had to be ringed by special rings, or his body would burn in that atmosphere. So they had armed him pretty well before he went there. A green spider was the ruler of this prison. Atayol had a huge fight against this spider. The tentacles were almost strangling him. The spider had the worst smell you could imagine. It could penetrate very easily into the body, but Atayol was armed very well.

‘Do you want to know the secret of all the life on this planet ?’ the green spider suddenly asked. ‘I am the ruler of it all.’

‘Show me,’ Atayol said. The spider showed him ten enormous shields on a wall. ‘These are the toenails of a dragon,’ the spider said. ‘It is a heritage. It holds everything in life or death, heaven or hell, pleasure or pain. By this I rule the planet. These are enchanted shields.’ Ten faces showed up on the shields. ‘These are our gods,’ the spider said. ‘By the way, you’re standing on a swamp.’

Atayol watched his feet and the ground. It was soft, and soon he was sinking through it. The green spider started to laugh, and offered his hand. Atayol grasped it. Soon he stood on his feet again. ‘See, I’m not the worst thing existing,’ said the green spider. ‘Actually I was very glad you beat those hooded ghosts. Now be my guest.’ Together they dined, and the green spider showed him all the parts of the prison. ‘It’s in your hands now, Atayol,’ the green spider said. ‘I know you have been sent by the gods to set me free.’

Atayol brought all the prisoners upstairs. Many saw lights for the first time of their lives. Of course the green spider went with them, and became one of Atayols best friends as well. More and more Atayol became the savage king of the planet.

Black Snail

There was something wrong in this hospital. Surgeons came to the beds of certain patients in the night to implant strange snails in them, by which they slowly got into a coma. No one knew what was going on. They called it the coma hospital. People didn’t want to go to that

hospital, but the government decided to which hospital the patients had to go. There was a medical dictatorship. The condition to come into the government was that you had to be a medical expert. People knew there was crime going on, but there was nothing they could do. They feared the coma hospital, the biggest hospital there was. If someone would go to a smaller hospital it was like winning the lottery, but soon coma started to spread itself everywhere. Some people wanted to escape from the country, but when caught it would mean death penalty.

When the patients were totally in coma and had become stiff they went to another hall where they got dressed up like dolls. The medical profession called it therapy, and giving those in coma a good time. The snail started to eat their brains and hearts away, and by implants they could live on like robots. When they reached that level they could work in fairgrounds and funparks. But they were zombies. Some snails secreted a fluid by which the dolls became sex-dolls, and this became the biggest market. The dolls could even produce babies. Of course this was an alien conspiracy. The medical experts were often human snails. They had been sent to earth to freeze the earth, to slow all activity down, to take it over by their activity. They worshipped their snail god Dreuben. The snails worked by a poison by which their babies would grow, and any activity not of them would die. It was a total invasion.

Dreuben sat on his throne. The poison activated his voice. But suddenly there was a shot. The snailkiller was there under fleeces, cutting a way through. A wrestling started. The snail was shrieking. Finally the snailkiller held the heart of this giant snail in his hands. Fat was dripping off of his hands. But the heart was biting him like it was another snail. It was Robor, the spirit of Dreuben. The snail killer had to throw the heart away from him for it was burning him. It was too hot. But then another one came to help the snail killer and had a harpoon by which he shot the heart. The heart was bleeding like crazy now.

‘Don’t come into my world,’ the snail was shrieking. The man pushed the heart into a bowl. ‘Want some of the snail juice ?’ he asked the snail killer. ‘No, thank you,’ the snail killer said. But more snails seemed to surround them now, shooting the pictures of faces in their heads. ‘They will drown in democracy,’ the snail shrieked.

Someone woke up in a hospital. The surgeon was trying to implant a snail in him. The man kicked the surgeon away and ran out of the hospital, while the alarms went on. There were already implanted many snails in him, so he couldn’t come far. They controlled him. Everything got slower and slower, heavier and heavier. The man realized he was in a farm, a prison.

The snails, dangerous maskers and confusers, dangerous shape-shifters. It was a death mask of course, and it killed by lights and transparancy, enough to set a soul on fire. It was a marriage in hell for everyone falling into the hands of those snails.

Black Snail II

Her lips move slowly, like she's reaching for her gun, she holds her glass, and poison streams from it. She has tall legs touching the ground, but they aren't on the ground ... She is the black snail ... She has many faces, like the transparant gun, and suddenly you do not have a life anymore ... She holds your skull between her legs, and tells you she has a drum ... She's like the danaid killing you after the swim, with her you never reach the other side of the lake ... She is the crocodile, a bitter incubus, dragging her prisoners to the bottom of the lake, where her newborn babies cry for food ... She smears the blood on the table ...

Her lips move even slower now, you need some words to get you out ... but all she does is making you choke .... and there you drown ... She is a saint, you are the sinner ... And when you confess your sins to her she can pierce you even more ... she is the black snail ... with many faces ...

Then her lips are tightly closed ... she doesn't talk to you anymore ... you are dead to her ... You order some beer but they don't serve ghosts here .... You are in the grip of a black snail ... It has no house, the house is you ... She moves her legs, you can't get out, she is a bitter succubus ... a bitter story, someone is reading it loud ... She doesn't hear, her ears are deaf ... Only one ride, that was the deal ... A bakery with ovens ... They are cannibals ... The black snail was here ....

Faces of nurses and doctors .... watching if the cake is ready .... no time to heal ...

Return of the Black Snail

Chapter 1. Interlocked Hooks

She was swinging in the disco ... but not like other girls do ... When a man or boy looked at the way she danced they always forgot themselves, and even her, and it was like they didn't know where they were anymore ... Like she was a sort of lullaby ...

A tall man in a black jacket was drinking his wine at the bar ... He was staring at her for awhile now ... People know her as a very introvert person ... almost autistic ... but very mysterieus ... and intelligent ... People never knew how to behave when they were in her surroundings ... She didn't talk that much .... didn't have many friends ... but her appearence was always impressive ... Not in unclean sense ... people always lost their focus on theirselves and even their focus on her ... not knowing what to do .... what to say .... and what to think ...

It was like she never looked people in the eyes, but always avoiding them, while smiling .... but she had them always in her tight grip ... it was like she was only looking at their shadows and reflections ... following these in tight devotion ... her appearence was therefore always surrounding and warming ... but she could never really be reached ... she lived in a world deep inside ... far away from daily life ... far away from humanity ... no one knew what she was really thinking or feeling .... and she didn't talk that much .... people who knew her a bit said she had a very strange accent .....

The tall man was getting a bit nervous ... looking at his watch ... a very expensive one ... he had a silver bracelet hanging on his pulse ... he got a phonecall from someone ... and was talking for awhile, while the girl was swinging further ... she always stood at one place ... a bit in the corner of the dancefloor ... but not at the side of it ... it was like she had her own laws ... and like she was living a bit in the direction of a total different edge ... she was not totally isolated in her own deep world .... but she stood like at the portal .... like she was staring through the window of her world ... waving ... but at what was she staring ? and what was she waiting for ? no one exactly knew ....

The tall man had a dark appearance ... He had a tight serious face, long black hair, and a tall nose .... He was a singer of symphonic rock ... a bit gothic ... part of a band .... The band was very popular ... even worldfamous .... But in this disco he could rest a bit from all the attention ... It was a very exclusive disco and bar ... a meeting place for stars and rich people ... The girl was a friend of a female singer, a mega-star ... They knew each other since youth .... The female singer saw her always a bit as her own child ...

The tall singer wanted to talk to the girl ... She inspired him .... But it was like there was no any chance for that ... and soon enough the girl was gone already ... She came to the bar very often ... almost every evening ... only to dance ... In a sense he couldn't set her out of her mind ... It was like she was mentally handicapped in a sense, but he knew she was just very very intelligent ... It was like he always had a hand full of pearls after he saw her ....

Pearls which started to develop themselves in his head .. giving him new visions and songs ... Yes, he was a songwriter ... seen as one of world's best ... His poetic lyrics were known as

intoxicating and disarming, while he was very radical and even rough at times ... having the blades in his mouth ... He was a man of opposites, having everyone as friend and everyone as enemy .... but in a very mysterious way ... It was like ...he could not be touched ... and neither you could let go of him ... People never knew how to behave when he was around ... But in this bar he could come into peace ... He wasn't in the bar too often ... sometimes once a month ... and at times he didn't come there at all for months ... He was a busy man ....

He used to wear a lot of black clothes and ornaments like chainlets and earrings ... His dark side was dominating, but he always showed the little light at the end of his tunnels .... The little butterflies he let fly in his dark dungeons ... spreading magical dust on the tragedic floors .. It was like they shone extra bright because of the deep darkness in which he let them fly ...

He needed to keep his backgrounds dark ... so that these little stars would shine the best .... He had a split character ... but one side was small and the other side was very big .... like the giant and the dwarf lived in him ... a vertical stripe on his nose ... And it was a successformula, for his records were still bestsellers .... all of them .... These dishes were sacred in many eyes ...

Always when his music was playing it was like a black whale was reaching the surfaces of the sea ... which let people tremble ... but then a sort of parrot descended from heaven which gave people such a feeling of releasement ... It was like his music brought the deepest fears of a human heart up to the surface to let it be touched by hope ... And the mix of these emotions brought a good camouflage translated into excitement, entertainment and nostalgia ... It was always like meeting an old friend ... like a faithfull, trustfull old hand on your shoulder .... It was calling like your daddy in the storm ....

.... He couldn't handle all the attention ... which made him very aggressive at times .... It was like the mysterious, almost autistic girl made him at peace ... when he saw her swinging in that strange way ... like healing rains came over him ... She wasn't famous ... she was just a friend of a famous person ... he was a bit jealouse at her in a sense .... He wished he could make music without all the overdose of attention ....

And it's like the whole business-industry is strengling him ... It's forcing him to please the mass .. just for the money ... he feels himself like a money-machine, like the marionet of the record-masters ... He doesn't want to be a displaydoll of the big bank anymore ... It's like everything he creates will be crashed in the hands of the big guys to make room for the sound of money ... It's like he has to appear in front of a snake every end of the day ... to show it his splinters ... And these need to be sharp enough to rip his own heart out .... He feels himself the victim of the moneymill more and more .... And it's cutting in his head more and more ...

Finally he cannot hold it anymore ... He needs to speak to the girl ... He wants to know her secrets ... But he feels he cannot confront her directly ... Hardly no one does .. hardly no one dares ... It's like she's interlocked too much in a system which cannot be opened ... And like she has swallowed any key ..... His plan is to contact that famous female-singer, her friend, to play it that way ... he hopes that female-singer can do something for him, but she only comes there once in a year or even less ... And it's almost impossible to reach her ... even for a world-famous singer .....

Because of the many contacts he had, the contact was easier laid than he thought ... and sooner than he knew the female-singer had made an appointment for him to see the girl ... The

girl lived in the villa of the female sister where she had her own room ... He was invited to come there at an evening ...

The surroundings were highly protected but the female singer had sent a license for him to pass along the guards ... She had a big room upstairs .... and when he came in she was very glad ... but she didn't look into his eyes ... It was like her eyes were surrounding him in a very strange way, without putting the attention on herself ... He looked at the curtains and the paintings on the wall .... It was like he had even forgotten about her ... like these paintings were taking all his attention .... "Who made these ?" he asked .....

"I did," she said ... To hear her voice struck him like lightening ... for it was almost like he didn't expect she would talk ... And it was like he suddenly realized she was really there ... The paintings were about seas and forests with mysterious creatures ... They were as warming as she was ... But it was like he couldn't get grip on any creature in his mind .... as if all the creatures slide away from him, letting him see the other paintings ... He didn't know how to react .... like he was far away .... It was like these paintings were driving him away ... But he couldn't get grip on them ....

It was like she didn't expect any commend of him ... It was like she was even totally out of sight .... His eyes slided from painting to painting ... and suddenly he looked through the window seeing the beautiful fountains in the pond ....

Like in a trance he started to tell her about his wrestlings and asked her what he could do ...

It was like hours later she gave him the answer ... while he didn't feel bored one second ...

"stop singing ... sing for yourself ..." she said ...

"But it's my job, I need to get money ..." he said ...

A strange fear came over him, letting all his dreams tumble down .... It was like deep inside he was afraid to lose all the attention and the big money .... Like there was no way back .... like there was a hook in his stomach ... which would tear him apart when it would be pulled out ... It gave him such a hopeless feeling ... and it was like it drained all his energy ... He never felt this way before ... It was like seas of fear were overwhelming him ....

She said : "the hook doesn't need to be pulled out, you just need to pull yourself in .... then a shell will fall off ..."

He was amazed about her wisdom ... and it was like she was soothing his deepest fears .... not by pulling it out .... but by pushing him deeper ... It was like the hook didn't scare him anymore ... for it was only attached to a shell which would fall off when he would wander out of the shell, looking for a world inside ...

"But how does it bring me money," he asked ...

"The shell will take care of that," she said ...

"You can live inside while the shell will do the things needed ...."

The years after this conversation the songs started to get stranger ... He couldn't pull out the hook, but he could sink out of it step by step ... It was like the shell took care of itself, and the songs which flew from his deeper waters cared of the rest .... The strange music was very popular .... although he didn't care about it ... he was singing for himself, like the girl adviced him .... and the shell was doing the rest ... It was like the shell had to obey the spouting waters from this deepsea-well ... the sea was growing and rising and the shell was covering the lands more and more .... It was like he could mold the shell in his hands ... and it became his protection, his shelter, instead of his burden and prison ...

He wanted to tell the girl how it worked, and soon he had a second appointment after years ... He wanted her to paint the covers for his records .... But she refused ...

She said : "you can take the old paintings if you like, but don't you ever use my name on your records ..."

Soon enough he started to realize how these paintings were inspiring him .... and while he was using all these old paintings as covers for his records, people asked him who painted those .... He never told them .... The paintings got worldfamous, but the insiders weren't allowed to tell the world who painted these paintings ... They appeared in magazines, newspapers, and were used for posters and other material ....

Years went by and the singer thought it was time for a second appointment to see new paintings .... But the girl said this time he couldn't use any of the new paintings, for they were only between him and her ...

When he saw the paintings he cried .... It touched him there where no one could touch him ... where even he himself wasn't able to reach .... He wanted to hug the girl but she pushed him away .... screaming : don't you ever do that again ... no one is allowed to touch me ... when he looked into her face he got in a shock ... he never saw her like this before ..... it was like he saw a scared and raging octopus .... it was like her eyes were almost touching each other .... and like heavy electricity forces were keeping him away .... it was for the first time she was really staring at him, with such a tight focus he never saw before ... he was realizing step by step that she was looking him straight in the eyes ... like no one did ever before ... like he was looking straight into a huge sea of roaring fire .... again she said : don't you ever ever do that to me again ... but she wasn't screaming anymore, and speaking a bit slower, but very tight, with raised eyebrows ....

he sat down, and she did too, while keeping her eyes fixed on him ... it was like these eyes would never ever let him go again ... like he would be tied between these huge hysterical eyes forever ... but she wasn't out of order ... her body was like attached to her rights to do so ...

it was like he was in the room with another woman now ... and it was like a worldfamous female singer or judge was sitting there ... still staring at him in an obsession of rage and bitterness .. not losing her tight tight grip ... it was like his body was aching under this pressure ... like he had just been attacked by the terror of a shark ....

he almost couldn't breath, and slowly he asked : "are you okay ?"

no, she said hard ...

he wanted to know what caused her to act like she did ... he didn't feel any anger in himself ... only tender feelings ... like he understood that this behaviour had a deep deep background he didn't know anything about .... it was like the whole world was keeping it's breath in ... like the whole air was charged by an energy he didn't experienced before, like high-volted energy .... like he was connected to some sort of unexpected socket ...

suddenly she started to cry and bowed her head ... the tears were flowing over her hands ...

she started to stutter about a time long ago .... about meeting a black snake and how he raped her ...

she told him how this black snake forced her to sell her paintings and make herself a name ... and how she saw she was placed between a chaos of money and a chaos of people who started to pull and push her while she was switching from one side to the other, faster and faster, and how both crowds came closer and closer, eating her from inside out ... taking her over ... until she was totally melt away .... while she was thrown into a chaos of rubbish and dirt .... finally she found herself being eaten by ... the black snake ... every night this dream came back to her, until it made her very sick and she became introverted more and more .... not allowing anyone to come close ...

he found himself staring at the paintings again, switching from painting to painting ....

Years went by and the singer realized how this experience and her story were paralyzing the works of the shell ... or was it just going into another direction ? it was like he was doing everything in opposite way ... like he became more and more cynical to the desires of the mass ...

everything gave him the shocks to let go of everything he held on to ... and it was like he could jet himself inside like never before ... like a magnet turning direction ... like he was totally transfixed to a new ground ... many of his fans started to dislike his new works .... and soon enough he felt himself like being thrown in the rubbish-bins ...

but he found out the more fans left him, the more radical his remained fans became ... the contact between him and his fans was so much deeper now ... and they really brought him through these hard times .... it was like a new religion was forming itself on earth ...

the singer became more and more notorious and even feared ... for he started to preach against the terrorizing money-circulations which were raping the music ... and it's singers ... he became more and more the doom-prophet of music ... while he was drawing himself back more and more .... he was creating a total new edge .... and a total new band .... he connected with other singers of the same message and discussed with them what to do ...

but soon enough he started to realize against what he was fighting ... he found himself entering dry periods .... like his musical career had been burnt away .... he saw the keys melting away in his hands .... trying to search for better combinations ... but all it seems to do to him was drying him out to a dangerous edge ... he became very tired of it ... and his own songs didn't satisfy him anymore ... while the hard core of his fans also started moan and complain .... it was like he had burnt his own tools .... and slowly he found himself sliding away out of the music-industry ... feeling like he was heading for the bottom of the rubbish-bin screaming in his ears ... it was like seas of complaints were rolling over him, burning his

last pencils ... he felt like guilt and self-pity were roaring in his head splitting him apart ... it made him very tired ...

it was like the black snake was about to eat him alive ....

Chapter 2. The Best Guard

A young boy started to discover the music of the singer ... It was like the singer sang about his life ... The young boy who always found himself misunderstood found himself understood in the warming of the music ... like he had found a u-boat in the middle of a shark-sea where he had to swim so long ... alone ...

He could stare for hours at the paintings of the records .... it was like these paintings were dreampictures from himself ... and he felt so strange in his stomach ...

His sister was also a painter ... She had the same style ... but she could never understand him ... He wanted to become a singer too ... but he had voice-problems ... he was a stutterer .... He loved to listen to the birds ... But he was afraid of the forest and the sea ... He found himself locked up between humanity and nature ... both sides scared him ....

He had dreams about black sharks hunting after him ... His father worked as a diver for sea-research ... It was said that the sea contained medical substances in the bottoms which could heal many uncurable diseases ... and also the deepsea-plants could be a good deal in that area ...

He always lived in deep fear because of his father, for once he dreamt his father drowned .... It was the most horrible dream he ever had ... And since then he was always scared his father wouldn't return one day ....

His father had a light mental handicap, but was very intelligent and was the only one who really understood the boy ... His mother died when he was seven ... and he couldn't really live with the switching attitudes of his sister ... but she didn't live at home anymore ... she was married and lived with her husband and children at the other side of the country ...

His father loved the music too ... His father had a strange sense of humor, very funny, which made life a bit easier ... but he was always scared he would lose his father one day ... he couldn't get that dream out of his head ...

One day the nightmare came true, for his father was attacked by a shark and didn't survive it ....

His father left him a lot of diaries about his experiences in the sea ... together with a lot of stories about the sea ... but the boy was totally upset for months .... His sister adopted him in house, so he moved to the other side of the country .... The house was full of her paintings ... but he couldn't get along with her ... and with her husband it was even worse ... She had three young children ... and he hoped he could get along with them to make it a bit easier for them ... They were like him .... dreamy and very introvert .... although the youngest was very aggressive .... but he could communicate with the little boy very easily ... it was like the

aggression was healing his fears ... he loved to see the rage of this little boy .... it gave him the courage to live and stand for himself ....

Years went by and one day he found out he didn't stutter anymore .... he went outside and it was like the forests were opening themselves to him ... he wasn't scared anymore ....

He went into the forest very deep and started to sing like the birds ... It was such a good feeling, for the first time of his life he could really sing .... and it was like there was new blood flowing through his veins ... like there were a million of birds swimming in his body ... it was like the morningred of a new day ....

The birds were glad with him, and it was like they communicated with each other in so many ways ... A redbreast became one of his best friends ... and inspired him to sing ....

The more he sang, the more he got healed from his old wounds ... One of his nephews was a virtuous pianist ... although he was very young ... Together they started to write birdsongs, and they started to record them .... His youngest nephew was a little drummer, and the third one was studying at the guitar ... It was a good band if it came to that ... A friend of the boys could play all sorts of flutes ... And soon enough they made their own tapes ... but they didn't want to know anything about music-business ... They didn't even spread their tapes .... They were just playing for themselves ...

Years went by and they developped themselves into a virtuous classical symphonic band .... with many edges ... It was like the rainbow of music ... The boy's sister made paintings for good tape-covers ... and soon they had a whole bird-collection .... the redbreast inspired them as well as the other birds ... It took the forest into the house ....

But the more music they made the more he felt the pain about the death of his father .... it was like he started to miss him more and more ... and soon enough he had to stop writing music for it was getting too emotional for him ... It was like when he was singing he saw his father working behind glass ... lonely .... as if he was missing his son ... and the picture came closer and closer while the pain was growing ... he couldn't touch his father .... while his father was drowning again ... and tragedic songs were on the background getting a lethal edge ... and then it was like mills were tearing him apart ... into deadly loneliness like he would lose everything .... and everything he loved would lose him ... as if they were destined to tragedy ...

he started to become scared of birds and their songs ... and more and more he started to become scared of the forests again .... while the waves of the seas were still roaring against him .... it was like he was interlocked between the sea and the forest ... while when he was young he also had this fear but at least he could read about nature .... this was a safe way for him to watch it, but now he even couldn't read about it anymore .... all he experienced was a tragedical fear .... as if he would lose everything by these two forces .... and the music was becoming one of the biggest threat ... as if it was announcing death to him ...

he didn't know what to do ... it was like the fear took him over like never before ... and like he began to miss his father like never before ... it was tearing him apart ... he got in moments of undescribable aggression and one time he even destroyed all his records ....

years went by ... and non of the boys didn't enjoy music anymore since the emotional breakdown of their uncle ... He even felt guilty and ashamed that they suffered under it like

this ... he made the decision to leave the house of his sister ... for he couldn't bear to see their pain anymore ... he wanted to see them happy ... so he left in the middle of a certain night ... he left them a note with an explanation ... that he didn't want to see them in hurt because of him, that he loved them too much for that ... so he would leave them alone, in the hope they would be happy ... he thanked for what they all did for him after the death of his father ... and then he left ... wandering to a place far away ... where he could possibly start a new life .... he felt he had to look for new ground below his feet .... he went to the main-city of the country .... sleeping in a house for wanderers ... for homeless people ... here he started to get new friends ... people who were in the same situation as him ... in a sense ....

it was like the empty fearfull spaces in his heart which sucked him into such horrible darkness got filled again ... and slowly he found himself rising to new air ... but he found himself very fragile in this new situation .... it was like he didn't dare to look into the eyes of people ... only following their shadows and reflections ... he was glas with his new friends, but he didn't let them into his heart too deep ... he was afraid he would be too close to someone again ... like he was to his father .... he started to feel his own heart ... and realized that he could mold this heart in his hands .... he started to realize that he could be friends with himself ... someone he would never lose ....

when he realized this it was like an untouchable joy was rising up .... he could touch himself, love himself, holding himself, without ever losing it .... it was the only thing which would never go away ... which would never leave him ... he felt himself like rolling in a shell ... where he could be as hard as stone ... while inside he could hold something which was forever his .... it was like he could breath again ... live again ..... so sure about existance .... about happiness ... like the black sharks couldn't bite him anymore .... and like the tragedic birds couldn't cut his head anymore .... it was like the lights went on in his eyes again .... like little lights of fun were circling there like a whirlpool ..... a whirlpool strong enough to pick up strangers and loved ones .... to bring them to an island ... a shell in the sea ... where they would be safe ... it was like a glorious gospel that they would never be alone ... and in this they could be interlocked into each other like jigsawpieces in a puzzle ... like the chains of an ornamental web ... it was a chain no one could break .... if one would focus on this miraculous simple principle one would meet each other in that ... it was like he was screaming it to his father ... like a river of joy ....

it was like there was something singing inside of him ... and he loved it ... he could hug music again without any fear .... he wanted to go to the sea to scream his new golden formula to the fishes ... and he wanted to go to the forests to scream it to the birds .... yes, he even wanted to go to his sister's house .... it was like time didn't matter anymore .... he was like enlightened in this golden chain .... everything would be okay .... it was like the spirits of loneliness were speared now ... like the tragedy lost it's severe sting ....

his sister was so glad he came home, they were so worried and they had tried to find any trace .... it was like she finally understood him .... by all which happened ... like everything hit a hole in her heart through which he could finally enter ... he found out that he could give himself now more easily without any fear .... for he could always fill the empty space by himself now .... he himself was now his best friend ... who would always stand between him and the loss .... filling all holes in the wall ... he now realized that the self-splits were so important ... something about which the singer always sang and spoke .... he had more parts in himself ..... having all their own functions ... he could be his own father now, his own mother, his own friend and anything else .... and this he would never lose ....

he dared to show himself now .... always having a double protection ... always having a trumpcard in his hand .... always a joker in his pocket .... soon he picked up the band again .... and now they were about to spread the tapes without fear .... they had double protection now ... not any fear of loss ... they could fill all holes for themselves .... they could mold themselves in their own hands .... they had new songs to sing .... they dared to sing about the deepest forests and the deepest seas ... letting all sorts of animals inspire them ...

they became a band of new hope and new courage .... to enter the deeper layers of nature .... the darker ones .... to bring the light into the deepest dungeons .....

the singer who was adored by them all was at the bottom of his life by all his problems, fears and frustrations ... but they decided to send him some of the tapes ... without any fear to be rejected for they had double protection .... they sent the tapes in deep gratitude as a gift ... but they also felt it was their duty .... these tapes were like the children of the singer's records .... it was like the uniting of the seas and the forests .... like the layers of nature ....

but it was like the singer was too far off to pick it up ... he lived in his own world, and it was like he was deaf for the messages and the music ... it was like he was dealing with things they didn't know anything about ....

but they had something in mind like it was their duty and they saw it as a new seed they planted in the singer they so loved and who meant so much to them .... they would go on, knowing that one day they would see the harvest over there .... time was not their enemy anymore ....

he was still their inspiration ... more than ever .... for his situation showed them that there was more going on ... and they wanted to build further on the fundament they just discovered ..... the sting was out of the tragedy .... but it didn't say that it was easy at all .... and what if someone even couldn't connect to himself anymore ... like it is all one block of pain and misery .... and what if someone just couldn't store the golden law in the memory or conscience .... what if people just couldn't get grip on something because something bigger and worse than they knew would stand in the way ... but they were of course looking for a way to get the singer into the point .... that which helped them so much .... there had to be a way to initiate the singer in it ... but they wanted to face his enemies if they had to .... they would do anything for him .... for after all it was their own musical father ... he gave birth to them in music .... so now they wanted to give him birth in music .... or had it to be in another way ?

Bleeding Brains

They were slaves of the sun now, the sun had found their soft spots. The queen of flies had struck. The people mourned for she had killed so many. She implanted her alphabet in them, which martyred them. They were eternal victims of the sun now. She sewed them by leather, they had marks now, marks of the dragon. She was a sunrider, a milkgiver, and she gave it to them, only to make them weaker. This was the only food they got.

She was the ripples in their brains, shifting their minds. They couldn't hold on to anything anymore. They were helpless in her hands. She came for this purpose, on apocalypse day. Flies from heaven were attacking them, scorning them, for they had sinned against the almighty one, a woman. They had built their own heavens, false heavens, which were breaking off now, all by her blows. Their angelic pillars were falling because they were false. They had blasphemed the queen of the sun, they had broken her laws.

She was holding the spot from which the milk was flowing forth. Soon they would all be asleep. In the night their horror would only grow bigger, when the sharks of heaven would come. They were traumatized, and their trauma would only stretch as a web, yes the traumas would meet each other, and stir each other up. For that purpose they were made. The flies of trauma were trained for that. Never again a false heaven would be built.

An everlasting damnation would take place, where they would shrink to ashes very soon, to be divided in the wind. But now they were slaves, of the almighty one. In her palace she was mocking them, and when she came out to show herself she was frightening them. She was a war queen, possessing them. They would all bow for her flame. She was the dragon heart.

They drank from her cup, while fainting. They tried to rise, but they fell. Weakness was their master now, they were under a spell. She was dignity combined with confusion, she was order and chaos. Her beasts were roaring, hungry for blood. There was none who had served her, they had all gone astray. She had no prophets, only wild beasts. She called forth her lover, who had been thrown in their pit. She raised him up by a rope, and give him from her milk as well.

He was the one misleading them once, helping them to build their empire against her. Now he would have to pay by drinking from his own blood. She pierced him, she knew his soft spot. Her armies were surrounding him, all dark watchers, not better than himself, for they sinned against her too. They were all slaves. No one was free. Even her beasts had sinned against her. She was the law of heaven, a lullaby in their heads, causing their brain to bleed.

Rise of the Black Cat

Dreamt of a man named Brutus, an assassin, a black cat, with a black hat. His hat could kill, that was a fact, he used to throw it, and then they were all dead …

Dreamt of some cupboards, they could fly, they could open spaces of fire, but they tore families apart … some girls wanted to know ….

And I was thinking why do I dream so strange, what is in my head … where is an interpreter, or should I forget about them instead …

Dreamt of a man named Brutus, a singer, despised by many, worshipped by the rest … The black cat will rise again and strike their face …

Dreamt of a man named Brutus, full of machinery, dreamt of him full of glory, the black joker will do the rest …

Dreamt of a father in a restaurant, the food was never good, the tables were always broken, and this father was always in a bad mood … This was the reason a certain girl left, but some said it was because of the cupboards … The rest said it was just because of some strange boys … And still some girls are looking for an answer ….

My advice is : listen to the black joker, you have hid him for so long … Take him out of the box, he is no jack … He’s waiting for you, he’s waiting for a new track …. Yes, take him out, the black joker, and show him to your princes ….

The girl is ready for the story, she wants to hear it all … She has told her stories to you, so now it’s your turn …

The Carpenters’ House

One Way Out

I remember meeting Jezebel, she was among her guards and her wild predators. So many leopards and panthers in one place, so many lynxes tigers and lions, all staring at me. ‘Welcome Knight of the Eternal Cross,’ she said. ‘You will now be my king Ahab, for you have reached this place after your long journey.’ Her stare was frozen. She was the most beautiful woman I ever saw. The moment I looked in her eyes was like eternity.

There were other knights like me, but they had not reached her place. ‘You came at the right moment,’ she said. She pushed a button and outside her place everything started to burn. The knights of the eternal cross were flames now.

She had the most beautiful brown leopards, with such beautiful heads, and when I was drinking from her wine it was like milk. I was in heaven, no doubt about that.

I remember her long dresses, and also her shorter ones. No one could beat Jezebel, and I was her king, a Knight of the Eternal Cross. I was no knight anymore, she wanted me as a carpenter to rebuild her fortress. I didn’t want to grasp a weapon from her walls, for it would burn me to the ground. These weapons just hung here to trap the soldier spirits. These weapons hung there to view only. I was walking through the big tunnels, and I started to build.

I stared between some pillars, and saw her on a bed. She was turning into a snake. I immediately loved the snake, one of a perfect architecture. I was a carpenter of the eternal cross now. I was allowed to rebuild her bed. There was a flame in her hand, the flame of the eternal cross, and it rose up from her hand and went into my head. I could breath again. ‘The rest of the carpenters will choke,’ she spoke. There is only one flame by which you can breath : the flame you have in your head, the one of the eternal cross. My heart got hot. I could spit fire.

She said : ‘Please take me out of here, I don’t belong to this place, and Jezebel isn’t my real name. So I took her and before we knew we were running in the forest. She was dressed like a bride and I helped her taking it off. Finally we threw her shoes away, and the Carpenters’ House from which we had escaped exploded. But to me she was still Jezebel, and it looked like we were still in the Carpenters’ House. There seemed to be no real escape. The carpenters were dancing here, and Jezebel was my pride. She was the white rabbit turning black in the night. And in this house everyone started to grow to become stuck forever, and then the dreams would overflow. There was no escape from the Carpenters’ House, the House of the White Rabbit.

There was plenty of food, and so many riches, but all with a goal, to let you become a part of it. So much furniture in this house, but remember : they were visitors before. I found it out when it was already too late. I hope others will be warned : better to prevent than having a false escape. A horror house, that is what it is, looking so good on the outside for those who bear the cross, for all those in the deserts looking so desperately for an oasis. Better hang on to the Eternal Cross, for there is something worse lurking around. Is there one way out, which is prevention, staying away as far as you can, or is everything already part of it, and one day we will understand.

The Ice

and the Stone

The children were locked up in the ice, while implants in their bodies had paralyzed them. A dragon was their master. A witch rode on the dragon. She was a dragonrider, a holder of the seal. Her voice was paralyzing the children all the time, and manipulating them. The ice castle was far away. Her watchers were the watchers of dread. There was no escape. She was the ice-witch. The children were always cold, while the witch always had flames around her to warm her. Oh, how the children desired to have such a flame. But they could never reach it. It was too far away. The ice-witch had built a lot of snares around the castle, to trap even more children. And she often went on a hunt, to kidnap children out of their beds, all by dreams, and by horrible nightmares. She was the queen of all nightmares. Even her watchers feared her. They were kept in slow motion, while the ice-witch was very fast. She ruled time. Emilius was one of her watchers. He was totally stuffed by her, as a machine. A long time ago when he was a child he was kidnapped by the ice-witch, and when he was grown up he became her watcher. She wanted to turn the ice into stone, but she couldn't. The ice was a

heritage. Emilius was her warmest watcher, almost like a stove, and one day she called him. He got access in her private area. He bowed down for the ice-witch and she asked him if he could turn the ice into stone.

'No,' said Emilius, 'but I know someone who might be able to help you. His name is Krodorf, a gnome-smith.'

'Where does he live ?' the ice-witch asked.

It didn't take long before the gnome appeared before the ice-witch. 'My flames are dying,' the witch said. 'The ice gets colder every year. Please turn the ice into stone.'

'I will do that, ice-witch,' said the gnome, 'but you will have to set the children free first, and all your watchers.'

The ice-witch was okay with that, for she knew that she would catch some others again in her traps. The gnome started working, while the kids and the watchers got their freedom. Soon the ice-castle was turned into stone. The flames of the ice-witch were suddenly spouting, and her heart got warm again. Such a long time she had been repressed. She didn't want any prisoners anymore, nor any slaves, she only longed for friendship now. She was a love-witch now. The heritage was finally broken.

The Conspiracy of Nine

Chapter 1.

On the planet of brain-diseases a group of wild men walked.
They had not washed themselves, and soon they stretched themselves on the cheese-tart, while tomato-puree started to stream from above. They sunk completely in it, and soon they were grilled by the flaming sun. They were roaring like wild beasts, ready to come out of their arsenal. They would go on a hunt, as one thing was still missing : pigmeat.

The poor pigs couldn't do anything about the dirty claws grasping them. All they wanted was to milk these pigs, to make whipcream of it. They would not harm any of these pigs. Pigs were precious for their milk, but even more precious were the swines, for swines they were filled with the most delicious juices, ready to be tapped. They were very vegetaristic, but they were cannibals.

They were the men of the yellow tart mystery. Smoke came out of their mouths. They were like cowboys looking for an animal to ride on.

'I will not hesitate to help you any further,' said a little man with a hat.

'No, we will eat you,' said the man.

'But I am poison,' said the little man.

'So what,' said the men, 'we are braindiseased, and are poison as well.'

'No, but you can ride me,' said the little man. 'I am a good vehicle. I am a wizard.'

'They all say that,' said the men, and grasped the little man to put him in a kettle.

'You do not know what you are doing,' screamed the little man.

'You should have been an animal,' said the men, 'then we would milk you instead of this. Or we would ride you.'

'No,' shouted the little man. 'I will call the fairy if you go on like this.'

'The fairy ?' said the men. 'Ha, we will eat her too.'

The little man started to shriek like an alarm. Soon the fairy came.
'I will give you some slaps on the butt,' she said to the wild men.

But they grasped her as well to put her in the kettle.

'Where is my wand,' said the fairy. 'I will use it on you now.'

Soon she had her wand. Both her and the little man changed into animals.

'Ha,' said the wild men, 'animals, we can use them.'

They took the animals out of the kettle and put them somewhere else.
It started to rain spaghetti, and much sauce. The men tried to ride the animals.
'Now, are we cannibals or not,' they shouted. 'Let's find a good meal.'

'Oh no,' said a voice. 'Let me find a good meal, you.' And it rained even more spaghetti. 'It is the spaghetti god,' shouted the men. 'He eats everything.'

Big teeth were coming down, and they started to eat. The wild men were screaming.
'Why do we always end up in this,' they shouted.

It is the food cycle, said the spaghetti god.
Everything will be eaten. And there was an echo when they all slided into his mouth. And he himself got eaten by the spaghetti goddess. And the goddess got eaten by a spaghetti monster, which was like a huge deep ravine.
They were all falling into it while they were screaming. They were all melting away. A small pyramid came forward. 'I am three in one,' it said. 'Worship me.'
'No,' screamed the monster, 'I worship myself. And I will eat you as well.'

'Oh we will see,' said the small piramyd and took it's wand. It was an arrogant, self-confident little thing, like a bitch. 'I am the boss of the food cycle,' it said. 'I am beyond it, no one takes me for food.'

Soon they were surrounded by nine huge unknown white exotic vegetables, very huge.
'Hello,' said one of them, 'we are the Conspiracy of Nine.'

'What is that,' shrieked the small pyramid. 'I have never heard of that, and I am supposed to know everything.'

'Oh,' said another of them, 'we have created you to eat you.' Then all nine grasped their glittering knives.

'Now don't you do that,' said the spaghetti monster, 'we are but children.'

'Oh, we don't care,' said another vegetable. 'We are too hungry to care for anything.'

'But that means war,' said the little pyramid. 'It can cause a civil war, and we will have no mercy on any of you.'

'Yes,' said the spaghetti monster, 'and we will write in our books about this stupid conspiracy of nine, and warn our kids against you.'

'Ha,' said another vegetable. 'Who would believe you. We will cover it all up. We will erase any trace. You will not exist anymore from this day, and we will take over your family and they will love us. We will give them more and better presents than you ever did.'

'Oh now you will meet my sword,' said the little pyramid, 'I have warned you enough.' The vegetables stepped closer, while the pyramid raised a small sword.

'What is that, a peanut ?' asked a vegetable.

'No,' said the pyramid.

'This object will be taken by the Conspiracy of Nine,' said one of the vegetables, who seemed to be their leader. He looked a bit older than the rest. 'And soon the Conspiracy of Nine will flood your world.'

The spaghetti monster started to laugh : 'Ha ha, what a joke.'

'No,' said the leader, 'it is all serious, and you will see.'

Then in a flash they were all gone.

'Haha,' said the spaghetti monster, 'they couldn't do anything, but we better be friends now, in case they return.'

'My idea,' said the pyramid.

'These vegetables will end on our plates, what about you,' said the spaghetti monster.

'Unless they are eternal vegetables,' said the pyramid.

'What's that,' said the spaghetti monster.

'Then they can't be eaten, and they eat much,' said the pyramid.

Soon they were both feeling that they were melting away. 'The Conspiracy of Nine is over you,'
someone was shouting. Then they felt themselves going through many funnels.

We're into it,' said the spaghetti monster.

'Yeah,' sighed the pyramid, 'and very, very deep.'

'Actually we are in troubles,' said the spaghetti monster.

'I would never have expected,' said the pyramid.

'Shall we marry,' said the spaghetti monster. 'I want to have experienced marriage before I die.'

'Don't be silly,' said the pyramid.

'Please, give me a girl,' said the spaghetti monster.

'What do you expect,' said the pyramid, 'that I take her out of my high hat ?'

'We're deep into it,' sighed the spaghetti monster.

'No,' said one of the vegetables, 'you are just dreaming.'

'Get us out of here,' the spaghetti monster roared.

'No,' said the vegetable.

'Obey my orders !!' the spaghetti monster then shouted.

'The Conspiracy of Nine is big business,' said the vegetable. 'So what will you pay to get out. And where would you go.'

'Nevermind,' said the spaghetti monster, 'I will die here and hope for a better treatment in the life hereafter.'

'Who sais you are going to die,' said the vegetable. 'What if we milk you.'

'Haha,' said the spaghetti monster, 'as if I have milk.'

'Oh lots of it,' said the vegetable. 'You will be kept alive only for the milk.'

'Hooray,' said the spaghetti monster. 'Where would I be without such friends.'

'We are not your friends,' said the vegetable. 'We are your milkers.'

'Congratulations,' said the spaghetti monster. 'Well I am poison.'

'We are also,' said the vegetable.

'Then why selling it,' said the spaghetti monster.

'Oh, to get the hospital full,' said the vegetable.

'For what ?' asked the spaghetti monster.

'For more milk,' said the vegetable.

'For what,' asked the spaghetti monster.

'To make the hospital full,' said the vegetable.

'To get more milk ?' asked the spaghetti monster. 'You are good with machines.'

'I am a smart businessman,' said the vegetable.

'Say that again,' said the spaghetti monster. 'So what will you do with all the money.'

'Getting more milk, getting more hospitals,' said the vegetable.

For what ? asked the spaghetti monster.

To get more money, said the vegetable.

So you are a money-monkey, asked the spaghetti monster. So where does it bring you.

Beyond the food cycle, said the vegetable.

'So you never get eaten,' asked the spaghetti monster.

'We are the eaters,' said the vegetable.

'Then why being a vegetable, you're eatable,' said the spaghetti monster.

'No, i am an eternal vegetable,' said the vegetable.

Okay, now you finally make sense, said the spaghetti monster.

'I am too hot too handle actually,' said the vegetable.

If i marry you, will you take me out, said the spaghetti monster.

'No,' said the vegetable, 'our race has to stay pure.'

'Nazi,' said the spaghetti monster. 'And greedy too. You will die with all your money.'

'No, we don't die,' said the vegetable.

'Never ?' asked the spaghetti monster, 'that sounds like christian science.
Anyway can you lead me to your king ?'

Suddenly everything around them was changing into a huge elevator. 'We have to go to another planet then,' said the vegetable. 'There lives mr. Cheese, our king.'

Chapter 2.

Mr. Cheese stared at the spaghetti monster.

May i ask what it is all about, asked the spaghetti monster.

Dreams, just dreams, said mr. Cheese. Just pick a different one if you don't like it.

'Where are the others,' the spaghetti monster asked, 'for this one is really a burden,
a pain in the eye.'

Mr. Cheese showed him a box where small sharks were swimming. 'This is all,' he said.
'Pick one of them.'

Oh no, i won't pick sharks, the spaghetti monster said. I think you should be teached some lessons. The spaghetti monster attacked mr. Cheese in full rage. But mr. Cheese was laughing. You can't fight the cheese, he said. It stalks.

Create something better, the spaghetti monster roared.

Butter and cheese, said mr. Cheese, that is what we make of all the milk.

For what ? asked the spaghetti monster.

For the bread, said mr. Cheese.

Don't you have any better, asked the spaghetti monster.

The bakery is where the Conspiracy of Nine has their gatherings, said mr. Cheese.

You sure like all this secrecy right ? the spaghetti monster said. So what is the purpose of all this, just cheese, butter, bread and gatherings ?

To become eternal, said mr. Cheese, so that we cannot be eaten anymore.

Then, beware of the stone monsters, said the spaghetti monster, and took a remote out of his pocket, then pushed a button, and soon they were surrounded by stone monsters.

Hello buddies, i have a meal for you, said the spaghetti monster.

Mr. Cheese was screaming. This he had not expected. Soon deep teeth were in his body.

'Now find the vegetables,' shouted the spaghetti monster. The stone monsters were barking.

How can you do this, mr. Cheese complained. We were almost of stone and metal already, eternal.
You spoilt it big time.

Soon the stone monsters arrived in the bakery, and of course it turned out into a huge war. The vegetables were just holding their gathering here. Meanwhile the spaghetti monster took the throne of mr. Cheese, and ruled since then.

The End

The Chessplayer

I met the daughter of the devil on a hill … She was speaking sharp words, and I always fell away …

When I was older I could reach higher on her mountain, but she pushed me again, so deep … This time I thought I would never be able to stand up again …

I was in delirium, in deep pain, in the chambers of eternal torment, and still I was falling and drowning, waking up in a flowerfield so white. I picked some of these flowers and went back to her. She grasped me by the neck. Threw my flowers in the rubbishbin. Then she slapped me in the face. Her silence killed me. She took a chair, sat down and started staring at me, just watching me. This was so strange, I thought I would either laugh or cry.

‘So you have been on the flowerfields !’ she suddenly screamed.

‘Y..yes,’ I said.

‘Good,’ she said. ‘Then we can talk a bit further.’

‘You see, I am an assassin, and someone wanted me to kill you, but I just never could,’ she said.

‘Well, thanks,’ I said. ‘Do I have a chance to be with you ?’

‘For what ?’ she asked.

‘Well, to play chess or so,’ I said.

‘I play chess of death, which means I die or you,’ she said.

I finally played chess with her, and she lost and died. It was the most horrible thing I ever saw, and I had lots of regret. I wanted to have her back.

So I visited her in the realm of death. She sat behind a table on a chair, saying nothing, just staring at the wall.

‘Hello,’ I said. ‘Do you remember me ?’

‘Who are you,’ she said slowly, while she didn’t move her head or eyes.

‘I am the chessplayer,’ I said.

‘I don’t remember it,’ she spoke.

‘Let’s play chess again,’ I said.

‘Okay,’ she said, ‘but I play chess of hell, which means one of us goes to hell. The loser goes to hell, the winner to heaven.’

We played chess, she lost again, and went to hell. Again it was the most horrible thing I ever saw, and I immediately regretted it. Why didn’t I just let her win ? But then I would go to hell myself. She was the daughter of the devil, so the devil would immediately take her out again, but what would he do to me ?

I couldn’t just live on, so I went to visit her in hell. She was chained at a wall, and a strange fire was burning in her, and worms came out of her mouth. Her eye-balls were very thick. ‘Why didn’t your father take you out ?’ I asked. I was very shocked when I saw this.

‘My father forbade me to ever play chess again,’ she said, while blood and blackness came out of her mouth. Then even a snake came out of her mouth. The snake was very tall.

‘Why does your father let you suffer here ?’ I asked.

‘My father can’t do anything about it,’ she said. ‘Rules are rules.’

‘But he is the devil,’ I said, ‘ruler of hell.’

‘He can’t do anything for losers,’ she said.

I unchained the daughter of the devil, and took her with me. I took her to the gates of heaven. ‘Beautiful it is here, isn’t it,’ she said.

I nodded. I showed her all the beautiful places of heaven. ‘I have never seen such beautiful places,’ she said.

I smiled. I took her to a high hill, to the daughter of God. They looked a lot like each other. For the first time in her life she could do pretty harmless games, and she enjoyed it very much.

‘Can I stay here,’ she asked the daughter of God.

‘Sure,’ the daughter of God said.

The daughter of God showed her a game. Whenever you would win, it would bring you to a higher heaven.

The daughter of the devil became very good at it. Finally she married a prince of heaven, and no one knew anymore that she was the daughter of the devil.

The End

Tree of Knowledge

The planet Satrix was the planet Bellatrix and the planet Saiphe together, in the Orion constellation, long ago. The blood trolls lived here, it was the new Aldebaran. There were a lot of circuses and arenas here on this planet, and huge wildernesses, where the giants lived. One of them having the name ‘the butcher’ had a glove of fire by which he grilled his victims and butchered them. Here the skeletons lived, and most of all the bloodtrolls. They didn’t have any mercy on anyone, they couldn’t be trusted, and they were full of scorn.

I remember the day I entered in, they were excited, displaying commercials, saying ‘welcome to Satrix’. There were dj’s in the air, empathic voices, entering deep, strange songs seducing you to sleep. And there was a ring of blood trolls, and I was the last, binding the ends together, and then all was in a flame. The fairy ring had been restored.

Yes, I know fairies is a modern term for all which was savage before, the putses. And the putsian armors are those of scorn. I entered through the gates of satire. The princes there could mock so dignified, it was almost innocence. There were many clowns before the gates, and there were sounds which couldn’t be heard, and jokes without words. Before I knew I was sitting in a train, riding from city to city. There were golden lights everywhere, like flames. I ended in a bull arena, where clowns were riding on bulls. I got a sword. I said : I am no bull fighter. But the bulls were like monsters here and I had to fight for my life. I was a gladiator. And I heard the crowds clapping, applauding, screaming and shrieking. Under blood I left the arena, I didn’t know what I had done. A woman took me in a car, and drove me to her house. She seemed to be nice. Her clothes were almost transparent, like pink golden. When we were in her house she stood there with the telephone for hours, talking to someone. I looked at her, she was beautiful. She had such a beautiful voice. I stared at one of her benches and sat down. After awhile she came to me. ‘Do you want anything to drink ?’ she asked.

‘No,’ I said, but later I said yes.

It was some sort of chocolate drink she gave me. She stared me in the eyes. She had a sweet smell. She didn’t say anything. Then she went back to the phone again, and started talking again. ‘Are you tired ?’ she asked me. I said : ‘Yes, a bit.’ Then she directed her finger to a bedroom. ‘Go lay down there for awhile,’ she said. I did. Later she came also, and lay close to me. It was a huge bed. ‘I will take care of you,’ she said. It was like a huge burden fell off of me.

The next day we walked through the city. We went into a pub and she started gambling. It was a strange game with clowns, and she won a lot of money. ‘I’m a professional gambler,’ she said. ‘This is how I earn my money.’

‘You are sweet,’ I said. I felt totally safe with her.

When we came home again we ate some bananas. And of course she started to hang on the telephone again. I loved to watch her while she was hanging at the telephone, watching the movements of her lips, and the pretty sounds coming out of it. She was a great story teller. When she was done she started to tell me some stories. But soon enough she was on the telephone again. I found out she was addicted to it.

She could sing beautifully, I could hear it so loud whenever she was in the shower. She could earn a lot of money with it if she would become a professional. She had the voice for that. Everyday it was getting better with me. The woman had a healing effect on me. ‘Do you want to go with me to the bull fight,’ she asked me one day.

‘No,’ I said, ‘I do not like such games.’

‘Yes, but … to take some people like you out of it,’ she said.

I said alright. Soon the house was full of boys. They were all gladiators. But she led them to the underground of her house, by a cellar. At the end of the evening we were alone again. ‘Where are they going ?’ I asked.

‘Shhh…,’ she said.

‘And why didn’t you send me there,’ I asked.

‘Because you are quiet,’ she said.

It was a strange life on Satrix, we often watched tv together, about the wilderness, about giants living there, about the blood trolls. But she more and more stayed on the telephone, even till deep in the night, and I started to feel lonely. ‘To who are you talking all the time ?’ I

asked one day. She started to laugh. ‘Oh, nothing,’ she said. ‘Why not trying it yourself.’ She gave me the telephone, I listened, and heard a man speaking. He was like a clown telling all sorts of jokes. ‘It’s a robot,’ she said. ‘I like him. This one always listens to me, and is very funny.’

‘Well, I’m not so funny,’ I said. ‘I know I’m pretty boring.’

‘You are a silent boy,’ she said, ‘and you always listen to me as well. I never had that before. I used to be always on the telephone, but since you are here I’m also with you.’

‘But I sleep alone lately,’ I said. ‘You are almost never there.’

‘Well, I get important information from the robot at the moment,’ she said.

‘What is it about ?’ I asked.

‘Well, it’s about the bull arenas. He wants me to set the bulls free as well,’ she said.

‘But are those bull arenas from you then ?’ I asked.

‘Yes,’ she said, ‘it was a heritage.’

‘I don’t like it,’ I said.

‘Well, that was the only way to get you here, and it’s better to be in my hands than in someone else. If I close it, then another one would open one, and then it would be worse,’ she said. ‘I have the monopoly in it.’

‘Okay, so how are you going to set the bulls free then ?’ I asked.

‘The robot has some plans,’ she said. Then she gave me the telephone again. The robot explained it to me, and I had to laugh. He was very funny.’

‘Yes,’ I said. ‘That would be amazing.’

She had a huge bath in her huge bathroom. There were also pillars in this bathroom, and there were flowers growing in her bath. We went into it together. I went under to make myself wet, and she did the same. Then we took a deep breath and went under again, where there was a tunnel. We came up in another bath where we met the robot. The robot was glad to see us. He gave us an armor and a glove of fire. I had to lay my tongue against a piece of metal, and then the robot stood up. It was a gigantic machine, and he took us both to the bull arena, where we started to free the bulls. The bulls soon ended the city, and the people fled into their houses. ‘What a cowards,’ the woman spoke. The robot pumped himself up until he was a gigantic shark arena aquarium, where the biggest black sharks lived, ready for a fight. ‘Now who of you cowards dares to fight against a shark ?’ the woman shouted. An old man came forward, but he just came to bring a coin. ‘Go to hell with your money,’ the woman shouted. I didn’t see her like that before. ‘I give you an hour to show yourself, and be a sharkfighter,’ the woman shouted. But no one showed up, and then the woman pushed a button, while the water with the sharks were streaming into the city. ‘Please have mercy on us,’ someone was shrieking. But then the waters quenched any sound. The robot was growing bigger, and more waters were spouting forth. ‘I am the judgement of the gods,’ the robot spoke in a loud, low and slow voice. He almost spoke like a moderator. Then he took us up in his arms, and went with us to the wilderness where he gave us a house in a huge tree. These were the days of the floods, after which the cities would be no more. After awhile he came back to us with nothing but cows. He brought them to safe pastures, safe against the wolves and the lions. The robot became a bridge between two worlds, the shepherd world and the world of hunters. If not by his jokes, we wouldn’t survive.

It was a great relief for the woman as well, for I knew she couldn’t live with such a heritage. One day the robot went deeper into the wilderness with me, alone. He showed me the hills where the giants lived, huge hunters, acrobatic. They had their circuses there, and their victims were boars. I didn’t say anything.

The robot opened a screen and pushed a button called ‘coffee and cats’. I was smiling. Huge lions came to the hills and attacked the giants. But further in the wilderness there priesthoods, strange gods. They could attack your head by strange drugs. These gods were almost like doctors. Their gladiators had chainlets made of teeth, and every fight had a religious meaning. Then the robot pushed a button called ‘atheism and anarchy’, and all these temples were

exploding. The robot was grinning. It almost looked like a game. He had many buttons. ‘Ride me,’ he said. He took me up, and brought me into the machine where I could watch behind a screen. ‘Try the buttons,’ he said. I did, and learned how to move and drive the machine, and how to fight and hunt. Behind the wilderness there was a huge desert, so big and wild, so full of drought I had never seen before. ‘Fly across it,’ the robot said. I did. Then the robot said : ‘Become king of this planet.’ He took me out of the machine and said : ‘Now go alone. I have to return.’ I was in another wilderness now. There was still an amazing drought here. There were some native women here walking with bananas. There was an oasis in the distance, from which a huge palace rose, tall glassy towers glittering in the sun, so transparent. ‘The queen lives there,’ the native women said.

‘Which queen,’ I asked.

‘The queen of Satrix,’ they said.

I went closer, it was very sandy here, and when I came there the walls were tall and dusty. There was dust everywhere on the ground, like a mist. Inside the palace there was a huge hall, where big snakes were dwelling. Some were sliding. I saw a queen on her throne, dusty, barefooted, almost naked, having a chainlet of many rings, a spear, and almost sleeping. ‘Come closer,’ she said. Soon I felt her hand on my skin. I was sweating. We were like in a dustcloud, yet it was like oiled by snake-slime. ‘Breath,’ she said. ‘I have waited so long for you. You will be my king.’

‘How do you know ?’ I asked.

‘Oh, a robot came here many years ago, and predicted this, and described you. You are the one,’ she said. Then she kissed me. It was like fires were entering me. ‘I am sick, dying,’ she said. ‘Only with you I will survive. This planet can only survive when it will have a king.’

‘Where is the king ?’ I asked.

‘There was never a king,’ the queen said. ‘It is a matriarchic planet.’

The days I was with her, I saw her powers increasing, she became less and less tired, like her energies were exploding, but I was the one becoming more and more tired. It was like she was sucking blood from me. I felt like a slave. There was hunger in this place, much hunger, and I became weaker. Soon she was stronger than me. I knew that could be fatal, but I trusted her. She knew she lived because of me, and she had power because of me, and she was grateful, and guarded me. I was her king. But still I had the feeling I was in the claws of a predator. I had mixed feelings, and I started to fear her more and more. She could be in different moods, and I couldn't control it. At times I even had the feeling she was mocking me, although she never expressed it in words. One day she gave me her crown, and said she wanted to leave the royal life. I asked her why, but she didn't answer. Soon she had taken a horse and was gone. Many wanted to be the new queen, but I knew no one could really replace her. Years later I found her back somewhere in the wilderness. She had become a wilderness herself. Nothing about her reminded me she was a queen, although she looked like she was the queen of predators now. She didn't use her speech, she was only growling. Her eyes were almost red, although they were black. 'I will not let you go again,' I said. 'Guards, chain her,' I shouted.

'No,' she growled. I had never heard such a loud growl before. She was like the wildest lioness I ever saw, almost like a dragon. I saw the mad rage in her eyes, the anger. 'What happened to you ?' I asked. My ears still hurted of her growl.

'I am dead,' she growled. The guards had her in a tight grip now.

'I have to pay for taking your powers,' she growled.

'It's okay, I'm good,' I said. 'You have never hurted me.'

'What I did was wrong,' she said.

'No,' I said, 'we were happy together. I just shared my powers with you, and so did you. I have learned and received a lot from you. You are precious, and you shared your fragile, tender beauty with me. You have become more like me, and I have become more like you, we have switched by love, and we will take each others place.'

'I killed you,' she growled. 'I took your energy in my greed. I took all of you away. I loved you more and more, but I started feeling guilty.'

'You have made me king,' I spoke.

'It fits you well,' she said.

'I think you are confused,' I said. 'Guards, take her back to the palace again.'

But then she started to growl even harder. 'Don't let go,' I shouted. 'But she was much stronger than the guards all of a sudden. I saw such primal female power I had never seen before. Then she ran away in the wilderness.

She had become a beast, she was the queen of all women, that was which she had proven by showing her strength. She would be able to tear us all apart. I wanted to be with her more than ever. I commanded my guards to return to the palace again. I stepped of my horse and lay down all my weapons. I wanted to live with her, in my own primal weakness. I almost slided through the mud, willing to be her prey. I wanted to leave the royal life behind me as well, if I could win her by it. I drank from a river closeby, and wandered further, leaving all my royal fetishes behind me. I dressed myself by what the wilderness gave me. I saw her in the distance, through the bushes. There was another woman with her. I didn't know her. I came closer and closer, but then I stopped, for I didn't want them to become aware of me.

They talked with each other like they were on the telephone. It was strange. I heard them talking about me. 'He is a fool,' they said. 'You don't need him,' the other woman said.

'But still I feel guilty,' the queen said.

'He should have taken you here, instead of staying there in the palace,' the woman said. The queen nodded. 'He is the one who is guilty,' the woman said.

I came forwards. 'I am so sorry,' I said. 'Please forgive me.'

‘He is without armory,’ the woman said. ‘Take advantage of it, or you will never have the chance again. He has laid down all his fetishes. You have the power to kill him. Kill him.’ The woman looked like a beast. I now noticed that the queen looked at me with other eyes. It was like they had waited for this moment. I felt the last pieces of my power sliding away and I almost fainted. They came closer to me. I was like frozen. ‘This is a savage man,’ the queen said. ‘Not touched by any royalty.’

‘Be welcome,’ the queen said. ‘Let’s start again. I will have no guilt anymore, since the walls of the palace are not speaking against me here. You have left your palace and won me.’ So we started living in a hut. The women were the boss, I totally lived under their grace. It was like the hugest self-sacrifice in my life. But soon I was the one who left them, to find my way in the depths of the underground. It was like a primal age of unknown depth was calling me.

There was a green life in the underground, many rivers, many snakes. It all looked very fertile. I wanted to be alone and fall in love with nature. I wanted to speak with the flowers and the animals, and forget about the world I was coming from.

I met mean women here, real mean, cold as the law, guarding the veils of knowledge, and later I found out they were nothing but robots. They were not programmed for relationships but to be the law, to guard the treasures of knowledge. I found that kind of interesting for relationships were often about walking in circles. It became a war against the machines, and one day I saw them sinking away in the boiling waters. All I wanted was knowledge, to enter through the veils.

Troll Faces

They lived deep in the wilderness, this troll tribe, advanced in troll craft. It was a matriarchal troll tribe : the women ruled here. They ruled by so called circular saws, magical objects. They were an indian troll tribe, having many camps. To fall in the hands of such trolls meant torture, finally ending up in eternal slavery. It would only get worse. There was no escape. Every escape would be another worse trap. There was only one hope for such victims : to finally become one of them, to turn into a threat and a dread forever. But many of them never reached such goals. Certain food changed them into pigs more and more, the favourite food of trolls. They would never eat these pigs totally, for they had ways to let it grow again. It was a living butchery. The prey lived on. Under such burdens there was only hope for an oasis of some kind in this desert of hell. Troll hell was a horrible thing. It would make Calvin look like a confused little boy, a sweety and a cutie. Who was Calvin anyway ?

They worshipped a ring of fire, being able to produce cold. They used the cold powers in war, to make slaves. A cold power could form a ring around certain body-parts of victims.

There was a man well aware of such dangers. He approached a witch to become her guard in change for her protection and care as well. She gave him many troll weapons all charged against such savage trolls. She loved him as a son, and assured him of food and a place to live. She gave him flying visions, flying carpets, all serving him in war and supply. She was tender for him, and teached him about the depths of life. She was full of wisdom.

One day she died, and the man got her palace in which her spirit and spirits lived on. He found on old throne and an old king, and became a crownprince, destined to rule the kingdom of trolls. The old books seemed to talk about it. He ruled for a few years, but the wilderness attracted him too much. He missed the old woman too much, and went in search for another one, deep in the forests.

He came to a desert where there was a ruin … Here her spirit lived on … He met her again …. She was savage more than ever …. ‘Welcome to my kingdom of shadows,’ she said. It

was like a fata morgana, a mirage, an eternal vision in his head, becoming flesh …. Snakes became horses … It was a ghost army …. He held on to the bridges of death …. Never would he let his love go … Circular saws were in his head …

Evil Cars

horror

'Tease them,' said the queen to her humble servants when they brought some prisoners of war to her, 'and drag them to the oven of Tantalos where they will become living breads.' The queen had some mercy on them, as most of the time she would turn them into living vehicles or she would make huts or buildings of them. The cars were tortured men once captured in the bloody wars. They could go so fast as they had the awakened flame in them. Only Tantalos could make such cars, and the prices to have such a car were high. The cars were the slaves of torture, and always when someone would step in to touch the buttons, they would shriek and get on the highways. The cars of Tantalos were the fastest cars existing. But that could only be because of their tragic fate. They didn't have a live anymore. They were slaves, experiments. Yes, the queen of Tantalos was evil. She was a witch.

The cars had been smeared by strange butter, and strange blood seemed to come forward from them. It was some sort of disease, but the queen didn't care. All she wanted was fast cars. If they wouldn't be fast enough they got whipped by the whip of time, and then she would throw them into the Abyss of the Teasers. That would make them hot again, so that they would run fast. Many cars wanted to see this evil queen fall, and one day they went to each other for a conspiracy. They knew how the queen had her dark nights behind all sorts of veils in a strange strange temple, and that was how she got her powers. She had been born in the arc of power. Here she would still bath in blood and all sorts of powders. She would also bath in strange

fluids, and she could even let it rain upon her. No one could enter through these veils but the ones who had defeated her watchers.

So one day the cars came together for a conspiracy. They brought their awakened flames together to build an excellent weapon against her. Because they brought the flames together it brought forth the fastest flame. The flame fell back on all of them, and by their new speed they could easily break through the veils and they crashed the whole holy of holy of the witch. They saw her eating from a table, while she was in a shock. She didn't expect this. 'Well, I am the queen of Tantalos,' she said. 'So go back to your places.' But the cars didn't have any mercy on her, as she never had mercy on them, so they crashed her table, and then they took her to the Abyss of Tantalos, where they turned her into a building in which they would live forever.

Evil Fiction

Eye of Nightmare

When the evil strikes, after awhile the good will show up, but after all it will also be evil at the end, and then for a second time the good will show up, but you will find out soon that it's also nothing but evil. When the good shows up for the third time, you won't react to it anymore, as you know : the good is just a trick of evil, only trapping you deeper. In the paradox there are some elements who will always win, as they used their opposites just as a mask to suck you deeper in. It's scary that we live in such a circus, but that's just the way it is. How often did we think something was the truth, but it seemed to be a lie. And then again truth showed up, and we were glad, but it seemed to be a lie, and the third time we do not react to truth anymore, as we know it doesn't exist, as it's just a mask of the lie, sucking us deeper and deeper into the evil night. We have become silent. It has gagged us. And the same it is with love and hate, in which love always seems to be masked hate after the trip. Love is a trap of vengeance. And all this evil makes us revengefull, no one can stop it. It is an eternal circle sucking us away, and what does it give ? More misleadings, more deceptions, more dangerous seductions, lights to lead us astray. We have defined life different now. We call it revenge. And it makes us lonely and paranoid, or we dive into life as in a hunt. We know it is to trick and to be tricked, and still we move on, for where do we need to go elsewhere ? Oh, the evil night, with a conspiracy calls the good. Oh, the lie, with it's mask called truth. It makes us silent when we go through the veils of this temple of evil, finding out what it is all about. And we begin to realize that we had been driven by evil too. But we have redefined life, we have made other priorities, and we say : It is the way it is. We have made lights, but they were traps of the darkness. Still there is softness and hardness, sweetness and salt, but these are all traps, servants of evil, to lead them all deeper in. And for what ? It is an army, for peace is just a trick of war. One day you will wake up to it : there is only war. Unity is just the mask of separation. One day you will wake up to it. You can't escape into a fantasy anymore. There is no order, only chaos, and there was never a shore. There was never ground on which you could stand, a shelter in which you would be safe. It was only to trap you deeper, there was never a fairytale. And when the good showed up so many times to prove it was evil like anything else, and when you didn't react to it anymore, you became handsome, part of the handsome world. And you saw eternal sights, and it froze you. Now you worship the light the darkness sent to you, only to trick you. You started to worship the eye with all it's eternal sights, although it bound you. It was the stake after all.

And then you smelled some of the eternal smells, and you thought it made you free, but it only led you to a deeper slavery. You found out time after time, that freedom was just the trick of slavery, it's trap and it's mask, and you lost your belief in freedom, and redefined life, redefined priority. We never set free, we only enslave. And you found out that you did the same. You weren't different, but just like the rest. And then you felt something of the eternal feelings, and you thought it made you wise, but later you found out it made you dumb, a fool, doomed to fool and to be fooled even more. It made you scream, it made you shriek and weep. And again you saw eternal sights, but you didn't react to it anymore. You were handsome now, part of the handsome world, not enlightened, but darkened, not freed, but enslaved, not good, but evil, not of truth but of the lie. And you wished you would have some ice, but it was just the mask of the fire. And you didn't react to the eternal smells and the eternal feelings anymore, and you heard the eternal sounds. You thought it would make you rule, but it only brought you down. Until you didn't react to it anymore. You had become a fire yourself now with the masks of ice. And all the food you had eaten appeared to be meat,

and all the fluids you had drunk appeared to be blood. But it didn’t let you scream or shriek anymore, as you were one of them now, part of the handsome world.

The clothes you wore appeared to be nothing but skins, and the stones of your buildings nothing but bones. You thought you awoke, but you just went to bed, to sleep. The lamps above your head were nothing but goatskulls. You went to sleep that day you found out about evil. You didn’t wake up, as it doesn’t exist. It only tricks us deeper, and it only lets us sleep, deeper and deeper, until we die, as life was just it’s mask. Life is the trick of death, a trap. Then what do we call it ? A nightmare ? How long does it take, or will it take forever ? Oh, dreams are just the traps of the nightmares, you found out, just leading us in. The day is just the trick of the night. They had made the paradox to create the seal. It was a conspiracy around us, and now we have become one of them. The Eye of Nightmare has done this to us, has made us so insane. We can never wake up again, and everything seems to be a tragedy. And everything seems to get slower everyday, as speed was just a trap of slow-motion. There is no time here, as it was just the trap of eternity. The Eye of Nightmare has brought it’s darkness on us by the masks of light and life, while we were dying inside. The Eye of Nightmare has brought us softness and hardness to confuse us. No, we didn’t get any wiser, only bigger fools. No, we didn’t get free, only deeper trapped. The Eye of Nightmare brought guilt and innocence to us, only to enslave us more. It is the Eye of Darkness and Evil, the Eye of the Night. It has shielded us to make us weak. It has given us a sword to make us sick.

These riches around us are the tricks and traps made by poverty. It can never satisfy us, as it will only make us hungry. We have found out that our riches made us poor and bound, and finally we discovered it was just the hunger, sent out by an evil night. Oh, Eye of Nightmare, so full of traps. Inside the evil spins. We have gone through it’s veils and it has killed us. By the Eye of the Nightmare the predators of hell are just cattle, and the cattle of evil is the predator.

The Spiderslayer

Horror-Fantasy

The spiderslayer was on his way to the big mountain. He was hanging at a rock, and climbed his way through the jungle. Time wasn't his master anymore. He had dark piercing eyes, strongly initiated by the goddess he once loved. He was now filled with an undescribable bitterness and anger towards her, because she was nowhere to be found. Maybe she was kidnapped, or maybe there was something else going on. The spiderslayer needed to find out. He couldn't believe that she would be spiderian now, but he had to find out. Some of his friends said she might have left him because the spiderian was pulling her away. He hated his friends for that thought now torturing his mind. But he had to find out. He would go to spider's hill behind the big mountain. Inside he had a small hope he would find her there as a victim of spiders. Then he would save her, and they would be happy for the rest of their life. But what if she really had become spiderian ? Then he would slay her and her families.

Time wasn't his master anymore. He had changed the firecodes terrorizing his mind for so long. Now he could enter the stargate behind the big mountain to reach out for spider's hill, the fragile but thick history of so many secrets. If he would find her there as a spider, he would have to kill her, for he's the spiderslayer, and that's his job. But on his way to the stargate he met a Dragonslayer. A fight started. The Dragonslayer didn't want to have him entering through the stargate. The Spiderslayer was climbing higher, and jumped on the dragonslayer kicking him hard in his neck. Blood was streaming out of the neck of the dragonslayer. The dragonslayer roared, while with one sweep the spiderslayer tackled him, and the dragonslayer fell to the ground. Blood was coming forth from his mouth. The spiderslayer was sighing, and took some more steps to reach the stargate. Now he could enter this fragile history he never understood ... It had tortured him for so long ... But when he was on spider's hill ... He didn't see any soul there .... The atmospheres smelled like blood and slime, and it was charged very strangely. The spiderslayer looked around, and suddenly he got a kick in his face ... Some invisible power tried to strangle him. The spiderslayer was screaming, but he didn't get any mercy ... Soon enough he was shivering on the ground like he had been struck by the worst electricity existing. A voice was speaking in his mind : 'I told you not to come here.' It took awhile before he could stand up, but he felt like all bones of him had been broken.

Was he able to speak to the spiderian thrones, dwelling in the invisible states ? There was no any soul here, and even no shadows. Slowly he moved forward, while looking around him. He smelled fire and smoke. 'No one is allowed to come here,' a dark voice spoke in his mind. But determined he walked forwards, feeling a strange strength chargening and tightening his bones ... But then suddenly it was like his bones were breaking again ... He felt he didn't have any power to speak anymore, and he was grasping in the air for breath ... After awhile he fell to the ground again, while he started to shiver again, and to vommit.

'This will be his last attempt to reach us,' said a spiderian witch to her sister, while they were both staring into a dark chrystal ball. They were laying their hands on the ball, and they spoke out their spells, while creatures in the background started to murmur ... 'Never will he reach us,' the witch spoke loud. Her sister was nodding. 'I will ... I will ....' spoke the witch, but suddenly she was grasping herself in her stomach ... Then she fell down ... The creatures in the background started to become paniced ... They started to run confused along each other, while the sister of the witch started to watch her hands ... They were turning pale green, and she started to scream ... Suddenly a door opened ... It was the spiderslayer .... 'How can you come here ?' the sister screamed ... But the spiderslayer took his dirt-sword and started to slay her.

'No this can't be true !' a creature started to scream ... 'You belong to the world below spider hill !' But the spiderslayer started to slay this creature too ... He didn't have time for any nonsense now, as time wasn't his master anymore ... Finally he kicked a door in, and found his goddess chained to the floor and the wall ... Quickly he broke the chains by his teeth, but his teeth started to break also ... They heard someone laughing, and suddenly the mirror-image of the goddess was standing in the opening. 'You have opened this portal, so you have to pay for it now,' she screamed ... But the spiderslayer was taking his bow and pierced her by an arrow ... The arrow was full of fire, and soon enough the mirror-image vanished ... He took his goddess and he ran with her in his arms through the castle looking for a way out ... But there wasn't a way out .... His teeth started to hurt more and more, and he had to vommit a lot ... The goddess couldn't speak ... When he asked her to open her mouth he saw the broken teeth, and also a spider inside. With his hands he took the spider out of her mouth, but suddenly she was also vanished ... 'Illusions, all illusions,' a voice in his mind was speaking ... The spiderslayer started to roar because of his horrible teethaches ... Suddenly he took a knife and cut off the broken teeth ... Now he only had a few teeth in the front left ... But the pain was only getting worse ... Blood was flowing out of his mouth ... It was a dirty knife by which he had aborted his teeth ... It was like infection struck him immediately ... and he was feeling sicker and sicker .... Suddenly he fell to the ground, while his face was turning pale green .... His hand was reaching deep inside his throat and finally he was sighing because of releasement. He took a big big spider out of his throat, while he was vomitting. 'I am released,' he started to scream, but the spider was growing and growing, and a struggle started .... 'In the name of Blehema, I command you,' he roared against the spider. But the spider was more flexible than him, and the spider's legs started to turn into snakes. Soon enough he was like in a cocoon, but he felt his teeth didn't hurt anymore. A strange health was streaming through his legs, and he took one of his leg-knives and started to rip the spiderian cocoon. It was for him like coming out of an egg.

Suddenly he stood eye in eye with his goddess ... She was more beautiful than ever ... But he knew this could be the next illusion ... 'Maizandra,' he started to scream ... He tried to take her in his arms, but she vanished .... 'Maizandra ...' he screamed again ... But she didn't return .... He was now in her mental cocoon of freedom ... He was in her illusion .... He felt spiderlegs growing inside his stomach ... growing to his throat and to his legs ... Suddenly he vomited ... 'Maizandra ... I know you are lying to me ...' he screamed .... 'Maizandra ... I will ... I will ....' Then the spiderslayer fell to the ground again ... He had become very tired of this all ... But for the last time he was raising his dirt-sword .... 'Change my sword, oh almighty ruler of .....' but he couldn't speak further anymore ... The spiderlegs inside were blocking his throat ... His dirt-sword slided out of his hands ... He would die as a warrior now ... He would die as a hero .... For he had been to spider's hill .... Something was waking up in him .... 'Am I dead now ?' he was thinking to himself ... Someone was holding him .... She was in white fragile and

shattered dress ... She took her knife and killed his soul as in a second death ... Blood was flowing from her mouth ... She was smiling ... A fragile drip of consciousness was floating into the river like a dewdrop .... She had him now where she wanted to have him .... She was spreading her spiderlegs wide, while the rivers were streaming through her spiderwebs ... These webs were like wood ... covered by mud .... While the rivers were cleaning them ... His deep spirit got stuck in her webs .... stuck in her hell .... Slowly she was moving forward to the spirit of the spiderslayer which was echoing in the night .... Aaargh, the spirit was murmuring ... Grrrrr ... he was moaning .... Groalllll ..... while she was eating the meat of his spirit .... He didn't know what was going on .... He was too far gone .... Bathing in unconsciousness .... He was vanishing ... Only the heart of his spirit had been left by her cruelty ... She took it in her hands ....and brought it to the center of her webs .... The webs got charged by a strange vibe she enjoyed .... She now had submitted her king to her .... His spiritheart was speaking in unknown languages .... Suddenly streams of thunder were moving forward, coming out of his heart like ink .... 'Radanos !' it was screaming ... 'Radanos ! I have now reached the insides of her spiderheart .... They killed me for the cross I was bearing .... Now I have killed them ...' But the goddess was laughing hard ... This heart would be her mind now .... And she would become the ruler of all spiders, for she now had the spiderslayer .... It would serve her for the rest of her eternities.

While the spiderslayer was waking up, he realized more and more what had happened ... He was now interlocked in her body ... He was now her soldier forever ...

The End

The Dirty Cross

They worshipped the skeleton-god. They had to for they had bone-implants all over their bodies, devices to rule them. The skeleton-god didn't have mercy on his slaves. They had to worship him day and night, and they had to work. He used them for arena's, and he also used them as priests. No one knew how the skeleton-god gained his powers. It was a mystery.

Dark as he was, he demanded a lot of blood. The priests dwelled in a lot of sacrifice. Their altars were always bloody.

The jewels were installed in the bones, as a huge secret. They secreted a poison, which started to become their skin more and more, until they were like humans. The implants took care of the fact that the men were the weaker race, while the women were of the stronger. On this idea the whole kingdom dwelled.

Although the men were the weaklings, they still had to be raised as warriors. This was the task of the women. Often the men became vehicles and tools under the care of the women. But all the women were submitted to the skeleton-god, and no one exactly knew who the skeleton-god was.

By the implants the men suffered from hyperventilation, weeping and spasm, while the women suffered from coldheartedness and unbelief. They were like deaf. There was no good communication system between men and women, and this was why the men often suffered under the women. It made them angry.

The kingdom was surrounded by a dangerous fence. I was one of them. I escaped. I came into a forest where someone with a dirty motorcycle picked me up. He brought me to a house

where a strange cult was going on. They worshipped the cross of filth, a dirty cross. It seemed this cross had saved my life. I was staring at it and saw the foul waters streaming.

I needed to forget about the kingdom behind the fence. I was the chosen one. It was like I had been separated by god. I didn’t know who I was, but they gave me my identity back. I was grateful towards them.

I had so much anger inside, so much rage, but the dirty cross seemed to soften it. I had found a new religion. This wasn’t superstition. It was real. It saved my life.

The Pigs of Death

horror

I don’t know, it was a long time ago when I visited the deathrealms of the pigs, where the pigskinners lived. They had built cities by pigbones and pigskins, and it was such a stench. I still remember that stench, it’s almost like I can call it forth in my memory. The pigskinners were wild indians, crueler than anyone, but they were dead, at least that is what you expect from someone living in the realms of death. I had a bow and some arrows to protect myself, but soon I became a pighunter, and that is a long story. How does someone become a pighunter ? You don’t become a pighunter. You get forced to be it. But these pigs were dead. I would never ever hunt after a living pig. That’s some sort of schizophrenia in the head, but hey, we are all some sort of split up in our brains. But anyway, we were forced to be pigskinners, and soon we also had to build cars by their bones. Pigcars we called them.

Yes, strange things happened in the deathrealms of pigs, and many things I cannot recall anymore, because it was too long ago. These realms are obsessed by pigs, and I don’t know, I really don’t know. All they eat is pigmeat and all they drink is pigblood. One man said : You better do that, boy, for as the pigs of dead would be kings we all would get blown away. Can you imagine .... cities built by the bones and skins of humans, and organs everywhere, with muddy rivers of blood .... It’s there when the pigs of death would be the rulers .... And they were .... deeper in the deathrealms of the pigs ..... And I went there too .... The stench was even more horrible .....

Can you imagine ..... pigkings and pigqueens, and the even worse pigprinces ..... Can you imagine cruel piggenerals ..... What would happen when pigs would be the rulers ? I saw it with my own eyes ..... There’s nothing crueler than that ..... They would drink are blood and eat our meat .... They would buy it and sell it ..... They would ‘breed’ us ..... Fatten us up ..... I saw it, all these indians in cages, deep underground, in the depths of their realms, of the pigs of death ..... It’s a mess there, I can tell .....

So how did I come there ? That’s also a long story .... It happened on my trip to Mexico .... I wanted to find out more about the aztecs ..... I found a cave there in Mexico leading right into the deathrealms of pigs .... I have talked about it with Amazonian indians and they told me that close to the Amazon river there is also such a secret cave. I am obsessed by indians, and I am an indian myself by heart, but this was way strange ..... They showed me the path to the place where the pigs could talk, where the pigs were kings. They are almighty rulers deep underground, and they are wild ..... believe me .... Pigs in the deeper undergrounds are killers, predators ..... and one day they will fill the earth, they say .... Personally I have never been in one of their cages, but I know some indians who went there and escaped .... These pigs breed

men and women ..... It's horrible ..... for meat, milk, skin, everything .... for slavery and gladiatorship ..... No one would want to be there ..... They make cars of living humans tied together, in a very strange way, and they make living houses of human beings ..... The screaming is horrible, but to them it's the oil softening their ears ..... In this place the pigs are like dogs and other wild animals, very intelligent .....

Some indian tribes I know along the Amazon river do have a lot of stories about the pigs of death ..... They are in war against those pigs. They have their heroes, and these are most of the times the ones who have slain the chiefs of those pigs. I have been to many places in South America but I never heard such strange stories than along the Amazon river. And some of these things I saw myself when they led me through the pathway of that secret cave to the underworld of pigs .... These are wellkept secrets of these indian tribes, and it took me a long time before they trusted me with it .... In these realms only when you are a pigskinner you will survive .... only when you learn how to breed them and tame them ..... you get through ..... There's no benzin there .... everything runs on blood and meatjuices ..... And those who sell the cars are horrible ..... really horrible .... The carsellers of death .... that's a big unit to beat ..... The indians who can get along these guys must be real dragons, or they will end up being part of the car itself ..... The indians who can make it will have the pigs like horses to ride on ..... I do not know any indian along the Amazon river who crossed that thing, but I know a lot of them who talk about it .... They have their heroes, some ancestors, who did it, according to them ..... And sometimes these ones visit them in dreams and visions ..... but these guys live deeper than the place where the pigs are the kings. They are really the pigdominators, they dominate and sell the pigcars and the pighouses .... everything there, yes everything, is made of pigs ..... and they sell it all .... They are the businessmen of death .... They own factories, which are nothing but strange breedings and slaughterhouses ..... They make everything, really everything ..... They are like creative vulcanoes, like dragons .... And why ? Because they are scared to get dominated by the pigs again .... They fear the pigs ..... That's why they always laugh ..... It's their nerves ....

It's all like a tight religion .... They sacrifice the pigs in strange rituals, very detailed and hyper-controlled, for if anything goes wrong it causes them to fall in the cruel hands of the pigs. And I can tell you the pigs are waiting for that. They wait until someone makes a mistake, and then they take what they want. How to reach this place ? The stake. Like christians believe in the cross, these indians often believe in the stake. Christians have to battle against satan by the cross, and these certain tribes of the Amazonian indians battle against the pigs by the stake. It's a bit like the Jehovah Witnesses believe. I can tell you that the pigs of death are also religious ..... but they do not believe in just a neverending hell, but in a neverending growing hell. They believe like trolls believe, so it's way worse to fall in their hands. And christians think of themselves as being mean by believing in an eternal hell .... Pigs laugh when they hear these stories ..... That's not 'bad' ..... That's not 'mean' .... It's childish .... There are real problems in life ..... Never ever fall in the hands of the pigs of death, for then you will long for the good ole hell of the christians again ..... There are still worse things than hell .... Imagine a place where everything just gets worse ..... and it never ends ..... That's the place of the pigs of death ..... That's why some of these indians hold on to the stake, as the cross cannot save them here ..... There is no any Jesus who can save you from

a pig of death ..... Jesus is just a toy in their eyes teaching some babies their first steps .... Get over it .... There are real things in life .....

When you get eye to eye with a pig of death there is no Jesus or mamma around who can save you ..... Pigs of death believe in the eternal grill ..... It's some sort of prometheus-place where they eat from ever-growing meat and everstreaming blood .... It's hopeless ..... Even Jesus would get confused in such a place .... It's not a place for fairytales ..... You can try to talk religiously there, but these things are just bigger than that ..... Pigs of death laugh at all those stupid religions we made ..... They don't mean anything in their eyes ..... They love to see how we deceive ourselves, and we only get deeper in their traps ..... They breed men and women in hives and eat them like honey ..... They use them like silk, oil and toys to give them their pleasures ..... and every amnesty is just a deeper trap .... every charity a meaner conspiracy ....

Hugo

‘Hugo, Hugo,’ someone was whispering. It was Terring. Soon both rabbits sat close together. ‘Hey, I love you,’ Terring said, while she caressed her husband’s shoulder. ‘I know you soon have to go, and also the children will miss you very much.’

‘Yes, I know,’ Hugo said. ‘But I have to go.’

Terring nodded and became a bit sad. She knew Hugo had to go with his ship, and no one knew how long he would stay away this time.

‘Hey,’ Hugo said, while he caressed Terring on her shoulder. ‘I will bring something for you, some presents, maybe that will make you smile.’ Terring knew he always did when he returned.

Soon it became darker, and they both went to sleep. The children were already sleeping.

In the night one of the children was suddenly screaming. He came into the room of his parents and was allowed to lie inbetween them. Then the child fell asleep. But Hugo couldn’t sleep anymore. He was thinking about the ship and the journey he would make.

After awhile he stood up, he looked through the window but all he saw was darkness and lightening. It was thundering and soon it was raining very hard.

The next day Hugo took the things he needed for the journey and went to the ship. His mates were already there : Hankas, Talauf and Samin. Soon they were on full sea. Hugo watched through his binocle, and saw a ship in the distance. The ship was coming closer after awhile, and Hugo saw it was a pirate ship.

Hugo smiled. ‘I think we have some visitors,’ he said to his mates. ‘Take the weapons out of the cabin.’ Hankas took some swords, Talauf some knives and Samin had the bow with arrows as usual. Hugo walked to the place where the cannons were.

‘Let’s wait awhile,’ he said. ‘They don’t do anything yet.’

Hugo had a big ship, much bigger than the pirate ship, but he knew how mean those pirates could be. Hugo smiled. ‘Raise the flag’ he said to Samin. It was a red rag with a black skull.

Meanwhile Terring was already very worried. She was always like that when Hugo was gone. The children were very wild. They were screaming at each other. Susan would come, her sister, to stay with them until Hugo would be back. In the city there was a feast. It was the king’s day, the rabbit king celebrated his power, for he saved the city once from a flood by building dikes. He had invented big machines for that, and this actually made him king, and he was very proud. He was their hero. Terring loved him. He used to be her neighbour, and she still visited him once in a few weeks with her boys. Jabdo, Klaso and Tilmin were the names of her children. Tilmin was the silent one, the mysterious one with many secrets. He didn’t speak much, but Terring always feared he was in a lot of unknown pain. He had a social problem.

Susan loved the children. She didn’t have her own. She always brought a lot of presents for the children whenever she came. And the children were fond of her as well. Whenever Susan was there, Tilmin spoke more, and seemed to bloom. It made him happy.

Susan had a special love for Tilmin. He was different compared with the others. He was softer, and more sensitive. He told her once that when he would be big he would want to be on his father’s ship.

Tilmin was the youngest of the three. On school they teased him a lot because he was different, but his two elder brothers always protected him. And Tilmin had a lot of girlfriends.

One day it seemed there was a big change in Tilmin, and he opened up. The teachers were very surprised and also the other children. Tilmin became a preacher, and he started to preach about love. At first he didn't want to be revengeful to those who used to tease him, but the older Tilmin became the more aggressive he got. He couldn't hold himself in anymore, and many started to fear him. At home Terring couldn't handle him anymore, and one day Tilmin left the city. He made himself a raft and went on the sea to look for his father who he didn't see in years.

Tilmin came to an island, where a lot of rabbit girls were living. They were living in the wild. They weren't tame, and they couldn't speak. Tilmin tried to teach them some language. There were also snakes on the island, and they seemed to form a big threat against the rabbits. Tilmin took some of the rabbits on his raft, and brought them to his city. Then he went to the island again, it was not so far away.

Meanwhile Terring was very worried about her son. Soon there was news everywhere : Wild rabbits had come to the city. No one wanted to adopt them. They were all in great fear. The rabbits were untamed, like rats. And Tilmin brought more and more of these rabbits with him. The wild rabbits started to live in a forest near the city.

The king was in panic. He wasn't used to this. His city had to stay peaceful, dignified and tamed. One day he went to the forest with a rifle, and wanted the wild rabbits to leave the neighbourhood. This time the wild rabbits went to the desert behind the forest.

Tilmin had a lot of anger towards the city. The only ones who helped him against those who used to tease him were his brothers. His girlfriends tried but couldn't do anything against the rude boy rabbits.

One day Tilmin reached the ship of his father on his raft. Hugo took him aboard and didn't recognize him. 'It's me, dad,' Tilmin spoke, and told his father the story. 'Who can actually deal with the rude youth ?' his father said. 'They will probably become pirates.'

'Like you, dad ?' Tilmin asked.

'No, not like me,' Hugo said. 'There are differences between pirates and pirates.'

‘There is no hope for teasers,’ Hugo said, while he smiled. ‘They have small ships, but look at my ship. No one dares to attack me.’

Tilmin sighed. He was so glad he finally found his father. Hugo understood that he didn’t want to return to the city anymore. Hugo knew a lot of islands with wild rabbits. Of course Hugo also knew a lot of pirate cities, and only the big cities were good, not the small ones. Hugo taught his son about the differences between the several sorts of pirates.

His father teached him about weapons and how to use them, and soon Tilmin was a warrior.

‘Now don’t return to our city to take revenge,’ Hugo said one day. ‘I will show you a better city.’

Komoskallos was a big pirate city, full of rabbits. This was the place where Hugo brought his son. Hugo knew his son was wounded inside. In Komoskallos there was the Rabbit Oracle, which could heal him. Tilmin soon found a girl in Komoskallos and married her. They went a lot to the Rabbit Oracle to get healed. It was some sort of funpark.

There was another nature in the city : The woman rabbits were stronger than the male rabbits. The male rabbits were actually the weak race. But still : the male rabbits seemed to do a great deal of the job. Tilmin had to get used to it all. And in a sense he knew about it, for he had lived under the hand of his mother Terring for so long.

The Rabbit Oracle was a labyrinth. It led to an underground indian rabbit city, but it was also a very dangerous labyrinth. You could get trapped somewhere. It was either getting healed and find the exit to the underground city, or to die. This was a very heavy pressure for some, but there seemed to be no other way.

However with a good rabbit guide all things seemed to be okay. If the oracle was treated well, it would give the right answers. Many used a rabbit guide for it, for going on your own was often too dangerous. However Hugo used to go on his own. He hated many of the rabbit guides. He would rather die than to become a follower of them. He teached his son a lot of good tricks for the oracle. However one day Tilmin ended in a trap, and by a quick reaction of a rabbit guide he got saved. Tilmin had mixed feelings about them.

‘They have powers,’ Hugo always said. ‘They shouldn’t have such power over others, and they often abuse it.’

Tilmin believed his father. The rabbit guides would do better if they would give independency to the others. They often used secret buttons. They had small machinery by which they ruled the oracle, and some said the rabbit guides were the makers of the oracle. However, Hugo knew the way to the underground city, and one day he took his son there.

Together they visited an indian princess. It was this princess once saving Hugo out of a trap. It seemed she had unusual powers. She could suddenly appear on every place of the oracle she wanted. The princess had told Hugo a lot of secrets, about how the rabbit guides worked, and how they often deceived the ones following them. Hugo always loved to listen to her, and also Tilmin was impressed by this lady.

The princess told them that one day the oracle would be blown up, but for now it had to stay, for it was to protect the underground city. They asked her what would happen to the oracle. ‘Oh, the city will take care of itself then,’ she said.

One day the oracle indeed exploded. And because there wasn’t a wall anymore between the pirates and the indians, a war started between them. This war was so huge that Hugo and his son fled back to their old city. They both missed Terring and the other children, and of course Susan. But when they came there the city was in ashes. There was wild nature everywhere. It seemed that so many cities were just the reflections of the mighty rabbit oracle, and since it had been destroyed the cities didn’t exist anymore.

Hugo was sad. Even the mountains and the hills had become valleys, and there were a lot of swamps. It was dangerous land. There were snakes everywhere, and they formed a huge threat. ‘I want you to know, father, that I love you,’ Tilmin said. ‘And I want to thank you for everything.’ In a way Tilmin was satisfied that the old city didn’t exist anymore, but he missed his old friends. He wondered if they would be still alive. There seemed to be no rabbits around. Only snakes.

Hugo loved his son. He would do anything to protect him. It was better they would stay here, for in the war they would have no hope. However the snakes were becoming a huge threat more and more. In one of the valleys they found a place where they could live. It was an old house. They found some rifles here and other weaponry, which they could use against the

snakes. They became both hunters. The skins of the snakes they used for clothing. One day Tilmin got horribly bitten, and died. Hugo had lost everything now. In the valley he led a lonely life, and he became a savage rabbit more than ever. He could develop a monopoly among the snakes. They feared him, and they more and more seemed to obey him. But they could never become his friends. They were still the wild life. He had to be at his guard.

In his memories he suffered. He missed Terring and his beautiful sons. The memory of Tilmin ached him more than all the others. They were not only father and son, but they were friends. One day the rabbit princess came to his house to tell him that the war was over. He went with her back to the underground city. There was a new oracle now : an indian rabbit oracle, more dangerous than ever. Even rabbit guides wouldn't be safe here. It was a savage oracle. It was to protect the underground city. The pirates didn't dare to come there, as it was too savage, too wild and too dangerous. The oracle couldn't be controlled by devices.

Hugo and the indian princess talked a lot about Terring and the boys, and the most about Tilmin. Hugo fell in love with the indian rabbit princess and soon they had three children. By the children Hugo could finally forget about the past.

The End

Grey Spider

She lived far away from society, deep in the caves, where the spiderwebs were alive. Here she could shapeshift into so many spirits while she would make her progresses to the city. These spirits would be religious, and they would possess the city. They would be on their way to the tall tower of the church, from where they would dive to commit suicide. Then the city would burn again. She was an evil princess, a trauma maker. She knew about the ingredients she had to throw into her kettle for a mix.. She was the queen of depression, making poisonous lullabies. She would catch her knights in the city, to take them to her caves.

She was murderous and tortured these knights without mercy. She needed an army. She didn't have a mind, neither a heart, as only evil was living inside of her. She had possessed a dentist's heart. He worked in the city, and ruled over those of no hope. The dentist used poisons to put into the mouths, the poisons she made. It made them sick. It was a city of disease. And the doctor was a knight of death. His medicines killed you.

They were the pieces of chess on her chessboard. The dentist was the king, and the doctor just a horse.

And every day dentists used to march from city to city. They were the messengers of death, and they were religious.

She could turn into a young child in church at times. No one knew where she came from. She had a small rotten teddybear in her hand. One day a mistress took the child to her home. In the night there was screaming. The mistress got killed by a knife.

There were evil spirits in that city. And dentists marched like soldiers, soldiers from a grey widow spider. When they knocked on a door, it meant someone would drown, or someone was already dead. They could let someone hang, it only took a letter.

Far away on the fields indians were hunting. Buffaloes would not be killed, but would become zombies. It was all because of the grey widow's will.

Her sting was poisonous, all to dry them. Those who saw her lost their strengths. Like a grey widow she was on the streets, selling her poisoned fruits, while no one knew who she was. They didn't know.

And she could march like dentists, like angels of judgement day. She could knock on doors to take parents and grandparents away, in a city where they were all orphans and foundlings, no where to go, only hate and bitterness, no care, no hope.

Where a baby was crying, another sign of coming death. Where a raven settled down, a zombie would rise instead. And even the bread was poisoned, with spiders and rats inbetween. No one could hear the other. They called her trauma, woman of the forests. In her eyes they were nothing but pigs. And the meat was all poisoned, for the rats to eat. It attracted them from far. Grey widow was the president, and if there was any chocolate it was old. Poisoned chocolate making the trauma thicker. She was a bitter succubus, luring those who had position. Even kings died in her net. She had the face of an old dog, and she became older and older, displaying more and more young faces, and by the youngest faces she got born again, in old warty wombs, diseased by the dentist's strikes. They would eat from old dirt and dust, for they were so old and stiff that they could only eat from themselves. And the stench of the old dirt only grew, displaying more and more the chemicals of a new day.

And cannibals far away, they like to eat meat, they like to grow fat, and to become white by the chemicals, young, clean faces. Then they will not be black anymore. And the dentists won't let them hang. The poisonous fillings will be their friends.

Chocolate and Pigs - War in Pigworld

Hell Fiction

Deep in the autumn a man was walking barefooted, only dressed by a sword, a belt and a rag. His belt had been decorated by small skulls of shrunk goats. He was on his way to a small hut where a woman lived having clairvoyant's abilities. The woman prophesied on him and almost pouted. 'Pay me by love,' she said. 'I do not have a man, and I need a child to save me from the terrible loneliness I live in.'

'What if I just stay with you for awhile to take away your loneliness,' the man said. The man gave her a sack full of money. 'Oh,' the woman said. 'This is so much money. I can even buy slaves for life by it.' The man nodded.

After three weeks the man left the house. The woman had bought three slaves by the money, and she would take care of them.

With the prophesies in his head he got led to another hut somewhere. The woman was a prostitute, the woman who lived here. The man gave her a sack full of money and said : ‘Here, buy yourself a good house, and take care of some good slaves. Take some skilled ones, so that you do not need to sell your body anymore.’ The woman was very gratefull, gave him some meal and then he left.

He was a lost and lonely man, a reaver. He wouldn’t attack poor ones, but only those who were greedy … the misers. He went to a castle hosted by a skeleton. He had a harem and a place where he had buried souls to let them suffer forever, while he let their consciousness grow. The reaver stepped into the castle, gave some money to the skeleton, and took the women and the lost souls with them. He knew the skeleton was a poor soul, so he gave him a chance to get a life.

In the forest the reaver had his place, where big monkeys cared over his soul. Here he had his jewels. He could freeze the world and then let it melt, and he could take it all over. He was the king of the world. In the depth of the earth he had his misty castle. He was like a savage, like an apeman, having so many secrets. No one knew of the powerful spider jewels he had as he kept them all in an illusion by the rays of these stones. Once he had attacked a planet near by where creatures lived made of lungs. They were a threat in the galaxy so he enslaved them, and let them work in the mines below his castle. They were dangerous vampires, but he could reduce them into creatures easily adapting into snake-dust. The snake-dust would take care that they gave out their oxygene into the atmosphere. There were also creatures he had under his care made of stomachs. They often didn’t have lungs or just not much of it, and had to live by their blood-circulation only. This made them weak creatures like vulcanoes, having enormous eruptions at times. They were of an extra-ordinairy beauty, but as their planets were dying the reaver decided to implant young creatures totally made of lungs into them to become their slaves, so that they could breath and thus preserve their race.

By this unique combination other sorts of body-parts started to develop themselves, especially the spleen. It would begin in the lower parts of the body and would finally rise into the chest for total domination. The spleen took care of the clock of the body and the total bondage of the body. It was the beginning of the spleenic age. The spleen would held many secrets of the spider stones, but the central secret was that of a wondrous fly stone. It was the jewels of all jewels. If the fly stone was completely activated it would cause the lungs to grow into the testicles when the creature was a man. It would first started to eat the testicles away, which was a very painful process, and then later it would grow there as two small lungballs, totally working by snake-dust.

The spleen in the bodies would grow throughout the bodies until it had become a creature as the slavemaster of both the stomach and the lungs. The reaver could use these creatures in many of his projects. He wanted to build a new world. He wanted to build a total new three-dimensional world. It had to be an experience deeper than death, more than life. By snake-venom he could take the parts apart and build his new world. Whenever creatures went through his cocoon they would develop kidneys growing throughout their bodies until they were developed into a creature. These creatures made of kidneys were on the lowest step of the ladder of the food-chain. The other creatures fed themselves upon them to preserve themselves. The liver-creatures were one step higher, and then there were the intestine-creatures. Thus there was a whole food- and slave-chain inside. Every part grew throughout the body to reach for the foot to become a toe. So each foot had six toes. When the creature was a woman the same happened to the breasts to insure children of varieting food. In the beginning all was peaceful and good, but since the reaver died the creatures really felt like there were six creatures in them, and it resulted in inner wars. There was no way to get rid of these inner struggles so they started to lash out against each other. It was like they were fighting against the elements of nature, and no one could be ever successful against it. A new religion was rising. Those who didn't want to bow down before the new law were heretics, and they had to be separated in cages. In these cages their parts would be separated, and equal parts would be attached to each other. The kidney-creatures together formed new women, while the liver-creatures and stomach-creatures formed pigs. Because the new woman had special powers the religious elite used them to rule others. The pigs they could use for food, a new delicacy. The other parts together formed predators which were also usefull for several things. The elite could also change the food- and slave-chain in somebody to confuse things even more. They could also separate one certain creature to give it extra-ordinary might and power. It seemed like the spleenic age was under tremendous pressure now.

It is the year twentythousand. Armies invaded our earth. I did not know where they came from. They had strange faces. It was a new bolennium, since another 10.000 years were over. I was a pilot, a stranger to many, for I was a workaholic. In my work I was like a hermit. They used me for pioneer jobs on other planets.

After the year tenthousand the earth was slowly changing into a desert. Now we were tenthousand years further. There were a lot of desert villages and desert cities. They rose very fast because of new technologies. Aliens were here, and they had enslaved us. It seemed that they had already implanted a lot into us, while we didn't know it. I was a strange man in the eyes of many, because of the things I told them, things I had seen on other planets. There wasn't much respect for astronauts in these days.

'Jeanber ?' a man said with a high voice. There were walls breaking in the head of Jeanber. He had to appear before the thrones of these new aliens. Jeanber had been a doctor all of his life. Now they wanted to use him for other sorts of surgeries. The air was gassy. An alien showed them his naked back and took his spine out. 'This,' he said, 'is what you will do,

Jeanber. You will take their spines out.' Then a machine came down and showed them all how a new spine got implanted into the alien. Jeanber was one of the many doctors who would work in this project. Many doctors refused and got shot.

The king of these aliens was a strange man. A man also with a high voice. Whenever he spoke walls seemed to break in the minds of those who listened to him. Their emperor was even stranger. Many did not survive hearing his voice, that was why he almost never spoke.

They were the dentlacs and the dorguls, two races from the same planet, Argia. They used to live in war against each other, but for invading earth they worked together. They had a deal. It was a dirt deal. I … was the only one who could escape … I now understood why I always had the urge to build a planetship, something which I had since I was a child. They could track down every inhabitant of earth, but the planetship I once made could escape through their fields of radiation. And this was all because of an old professor I once knew.

He had many visions about how earth once would be : a desert. And I believed him. Of course, who wouldn't. We were already living in a desert, but there were still many desert cities, and he said it would all change. These would be the … floods of drought. And he had many nightmares about it. We would lose all hydration on earth. Everything would dry out. So he urged me to do something about it. He said I had a lot of skills. I just had to work it out. He teached me a lot. He died a few days before the dentlacs came. They came to invade earth. They came to enslave everything. I was the only one who could escape.

I remember my days with the professor in his dungeon. I remember him talking about his potions. He had a lot of ideas. It inspired me to do the same things like he did. The day that the dentlacs came was awfull. I had the luck I was far away in the skies. But I could follow everything on screen. I saw they were tracking down ships. I used everything the professor had taught me. He had predicted this.

No one believed that their cities would be pulled down so fast, by these dentlacs. Many suffered by the drought. The dentlacs took them underground, and by the replacing of the spine everything went so fast. The cities were soon desert ghost towns, ruins. I could see everything happening on screen. They wanted to raise their robots, by light. The new spine worked totally by light. There was no hydration anymore. Every form of circulation dried out, while lights took over. It was a system of slavery. The dentlacs were very skilled in this. Many of their slaves they brought to their planet, Argia, in their big ships. They wanted to have a new breed on earth.

How could I know it was a deal of oil. Earth had lots of oil in it's depths, still, and for some reason they needed that, and came here. It was even the reason why the war between the dentlacs and the dorguls ended, and they started to work together. They brought a lot of oil to Argia, together with Earth's technology in that area. How could I know that these aliens were able to penetrate our atmosphere just by one man, a human, named Samba. When they had established their power, Samba was nothing but roadkill. They had only used him for their plans. I would remember his face forever, the one who sold our Earth to the dentlacs. He was an evil doctor, a villain of the highest grade. He was the one triggering them here, and he paid with his life. He died. But it seemed he had an interest in death.

I was confused about their plans. I couldn't follow them. I could get a lot on my screens. I tried to figure them out, but it was better for me to stay away as much as I could. … I saw them how they played games with our oil. I saw them how they moved the oil through gigantic pipelines, preparing it to go to Argia. Earth lost all it's potions, and started to dry out like never before, in a speed no one could imagine. These dentlacs were so big, with gigantic spaceships no one had ever seen before. It all looked like a trick, but sure it was reality. And all these enslaved human beings had to work for oil. They became zombies because of the drought, and lights took them over, all by this new spine they got inserted. No one could begin anything against such powers. The new spine had chips inside, programming them by light-telepathy. They became the slaves of Argia in a horrible sense. Their eyes started to change into bones, working by lights.

It became dark in my planetship. All lights went out all of a sudden. Would I, the only one who could escape, be their victim as well ? A dark hand grasped me. I had a fight for hours. It seemed their radiation could finally track me down. It sucked me out of the planetship, and after a few hours I fell into the sea. I didn't know where I was now. Waves were all around me. I swam to the coast. Where was I ? This didn't seem to be earth … It looked like heaven. There was something moving in my spine. It didn't take long before I found out that I was on the planet Argia. What did they want from me ? Who brought me here ? There was no one around. There was a desert behind the beach, and I saw a lot of big robotic machines.

'Can I help you for today ?' A man in a black garment knocked on my shoulders. I didn't know how he came here all of a sudden. He approached me from behind. I couldn't see his face because of the big cape. But then I saw some black metal inside, while he moved his head a bit. 'I am Darkia,' he spoke. 'I want you to know that I have called you. I was the one bringing you here. We need your help. My people are all locked up in their undergrounds.'

'Who are you ?' I asked. 'Where do you come from ?'

‘I am from the planet Santiria,’ the man spoke. ‘Since the dentlacs invaded my planet, I was the only one who could escape.’

‘Then isn’t it dangerous to be here ?’ I asked.

‘Yes, it is,’ Darkia spoke. ‘But I do not have another choice.’

‘Strike my face, and die,’ the man said all of a sudden. ‘I am Darkia, emperor of Argia.’ A red glow was on the dark metal all of a sudden. He took a scythe from behind his back, and spoke : ‘It is a miracle you are still alive while I speak.’

I stepped backwards. He looked like Death himself. ‘But those who can escape my voice, will meet my scythe,’ he said, while his voice was like a thundering blast. I couldn’t stand on my legs anymore and fell down. I didn’t know what it was. He struck and missed. I could run away. I now knew their emperor was after me.

I had escaped from Death … I jumped into the sea again and swam towards a small boat. I paddled my way to the nearest island. I was wondering where my planetship was. I could only decipher that by one thing : my watch. I looked at my watch, typed in some numbers, and spoke to my planetship. It was with me within hours. It had found me.

I didn’t know where to go.

But suddenly I got struck by a beam, lost my consciousness, and woke up in a dungeon in Holland. It seemed to be their main stronghold. They took me to a dark room to give me even more implants. These were black implants, like balloons, all in the organs of the stomach. They formed a network of pain. I saw the most horrible jelly-fishes and octopi coming on me, to suck substances out of me, and to insert new substances in me. It was an installation of fear. After that I had to swim in a small basin together with some sharks. The sharks didn’t do anything, but it was to traumatize me. These installations were of bio-nuclear origin.

Soon I was in an elevator leading me into the depths of a wilderness.

The calvians were strange women living in the depths of the wilderness, where they had strange laws concerning a man-breeding. Males lived in slavery there to the women, those savage women. The women had the law that they were the higher race, and the stronger, while the males were of the doomed race, the weaker race. The women also bred spiders which were often used to guard the males. It was a strange slave-market with strange laws, all based on evil principles. The men had to be brought on by wars, so they were often prisoners of war. When a girl was born she would be destined to become a ruler of males, while when it was a boy, it was doomed to live under the oppression of these savage women. It was more or less a matriarchal tribe. The calvians were a cruel race.

It was by a poison the males were kept weak, a poison living deep in their genetics, inserted by spiders. The empress of these women was more or less a flywoman. She taught the women the most wicked ways to bring the men down. She was a much feared empress, even by the women. She was cruel in her ways, a woman with many slaves, both females and males. She was a possessor of minds. They called her a goddess, the only true almighty, living goddess. In her surroundings everyone was totally helpless.

She moved on her throne like a cat, and like a snake, waiting to attack. Her goal was to raise an elite of women, to bring the men down more than ever. She wanted the men to be weak like children, totally dependent on her. She showed her elite a spider they had to eat for absolute power. The women were sick for awhile after eating it, but it was all to raise up a new immunity against any attack of a male.

The spiders spred a new gas by which hundreds of male slaves died that day, not being able to survive it. Even some women died, as they were not strong enough against it. But a new order was rising up. The men were screaming when she was floating down on them, as she was their tormenter, she and her wicked machine. She was a dictator. She had all sorts of ways to bring them down. She pierced their bones. She wanted slave-armies against her enemies.

The dog-people were her enemies. They always formed a threat against her. They seemed to live even deeper in the wilderness, and they were planning to take her empire over. They succeeded, despite of the new ways of the empress. It was the day the dog-people invaded their camp, their tribe. It was since then every trace of the calvians seemed to disappear. The dog-people wanted to build a new world, to forget about the old.

However there was a deep underground with the calvians the dogworld didn’t know anything about … They needed something higher for that : the wolves.

Another war started, the day these hidden calvians rose out of the ground … They had built their vehicles full of men, breeding them for their meat and skins. These men were crying blood, hyperventilating all the time, and some of them were fat, some of them thin. These calvians were without any mercy. They came to put their revenge on the dogs, enslaving them as helpers.

The day the wolves struck I never forget. It was completely changing their world. I saw calvians running everywhere, struck by confusion, straight lightening in their head, while it thundered. I could escape. On the back of a wolf. I held his back tight, I had my arms around his neck. He loved me, I could feel it. His skin was soft, warm and cool at the same time. It healed me. I felt accepted.

He brought me to a wolf's world, I do not know where. It was inbetween the hills, like a valley, a deep ravine. Here they had their fortress. But sooner than I know …. the wolvian wars …. started ….

From the ashes, the chaos and the wilderness of this age a woman rose up. She was different than all the others. She was a huntress, a demoness. I was confused because of the wolvian wars, but she kind of raised me, teached me, and I became a hunter as well, at her side. She teached me about the secrets of animals. I could hardly listening to her without falling asleep at her feet, slowly awakening to the fact that she had zombificated me … Where were the wolves ? They weren't no more …. All which was staring at me was the bald wilderness.

Her weapons could cause perpetual bloodbaths. This woman was stronger than me. Her black eyes frightened me. She was like a dragon. There was some sort of doom about her. She led me to a place deeper underground, where she seemed to have a realm worse than that of the calvians. She was crueller.

She was a slayer. I found out she had put a spell on my heart. She finally made me realize that I had always been in hell, the place where I was born, and where I grew up, and I was awakening more and more to that fact, also to the fact that there was no escape from it. This land was big. In this land the pigs were predators, but there were many sorts of pigs. There were no lions, but the lionpigs were a huge reality. Nothing really grew in this land which we could eat. There was only meat, and we had to eat it to survive. But the hunger wasn't sliding away, it only grew bigger. Some were eating the whole day.

There were no birds here, only flying pigs, and most of them were predators. They were merciless beings. It was a pig world.

I was in hell, in hell … pigworld … If there were any lions, they were lionpigs, dominating hearts by their voices … And this woman seemed to know more of it … We became lovers … I remembered my horrible past, but to be with this woman … what would be worse …. Was she my saviour ? … She had enslaved me … I had escaped from Death, but this was Hell.

I seemed to be in a pig cocoon. Weren't we all nothing but pigs ? The woman explained me that the pig cocoon was the secret of eternity, but what was this, eternal damnation ? There was no real escape, I got sucked in this gate … It was like the liver of hell … There was so much weakness here …. triggering a deeper strength … There were some holes in the sky, and I got sucked in … All sorts of animals rose up from this gate, but they were all pigs more or less, often predators … It was a whole new world … The flying pigs had fire wings … It all led to a cacao tree …. New bodies came forward from this tree … They formed an army … There was chocolate mixed with fire … The bodies were made of pigmeat, but looked like humans … Their hearts were surrounded by the voices of piglions …. There was streaming pigmeat from the tree … It filled the rivers …. More predatorpigs came forward …. This woman, Hell, was their ruler ….

She lived in a lake of fire and blood. She was an oracle. She was the guard of hell's treasures … On the hills there was chocolate, it was streaming everywhere, into the depths of the valley. I realized I was in the large intestine of hell, deeper peace, but higher wars rose from here, higher hunts. The chocolate was black and evil. It was a killer substance. Only the fittest would survive. They were rising on walls, covered by the black.

There were black killers on the fields, no one was safe. It was the day the bakers of hell rose. A strange bakery was rising, a strange song, and a strange dance. The chocolate created a whole new world, with whole new laws, the chocolate laws …. A new legal system was rising. And the wilderness outside seemed to grow.

One day the woman called Hell took me with her on flying pigs to a land across a huge ravine. Here Mr. and mrs. Greenpatches lived. There was also a girl with the woman, Susan. The woman dropped us at the house and flew away.

Mr. And mrs. Greenpatches lived in a big house. At times children would go to their house, for they had a way with children. Mr. Greenpatches was a wizard and mrs. Greenpatches was a witch. It was always fun in the house. They had a great cook called miss Mellow. She was also a witch. She could make very special food and dinners, and the children always loved to help her with that.

‘Do you want to see the cellar ?’ miss Mellow asked.

Me and Susan nodded. Miss Mellow opened a great door in the back of the kitchen. We went down the stairs, while miss Mellow had lighted a candle.

‘Are you there ?’ miss Mellow asked.

‘Yes,’ some voices of boys said.

It was a big cellar. There were tarts everywhere and a lot of boys. They were decorating the tarts. ‘These are the servants of the wizard,’ miss Mellow said.

‘They have beautiful clothes,’ I said. ‘I wished I could be a servant as well, but I think my parents won’t let me be.’

‘These boys never see daylight,’ miss Mellow said. But the boys looked very happy, and they had soft voices.

‘Well, you know what ?’ miss Mellow said. ‘I can make a copy of you and send it back to your parents so that you can stay here.’

‘Well, that would be lovely, miss Mellow,’ I said.

I liked to decorate tarts with pieces of oranges, and all sorts of other fruits. I could get along with the other boys very well. ‘For who are all these tarts ?’ I asked.

‘Monsters,’ one of the boys said.

‘Can you show me to them ?’ I asked.

‘No,’ the boy said. ‘But you will end up there anyway. We can only be wizard boys for a few years.’

‘What do you mean ?’ I asked.

‘Well, the monsters will eat us finally,’ the boy said.

‘But why are you so happy then ?’ I asked.

‘Well, it’s better than living in the world above,’ the boy said.

‘Yes, that is true,’ I said. ‘Can I go now ?’

‘No,’ the boy said. ‘You are a wizard boy now.’

I hoped that miss Mellow would come back, or that mr. or mrs. Greenpatches would come, but that didn’t happen. I became sadder every day.

‘Is there any way I can escape ?’ I asked.

‘Go through the red door, and approach the monsters,’ one of the boys said. They led him to a red door, and soon he stood before a couple of monsters living in great fire. ‘Hello,’ I said. ‘I was wondering, is there any escape from this place ?’

‘Yes,’ the monsters said. ‘Go through our mouths and walk all the way through.’

‘Oh, but then I will be eaten,’ I said.

‘It’s just a pathway,’ the monsters said. Then I stepped in one of the mouths. I walked for hours and hours and finally came out in the backgarden of mr. and mrs. Greenpatches house. He wanted to go to the front again, but there were fences everywhere. The fences were very high and had dangerous sharp tops. There was also no way to enter into the house again. I decided to go back to the place where I came from but when I entered through the red door again the boys had grown a lot older, and there weren’t tarts anymore, but plates of meat.

‘Oh, this always happens at times. We are were-children,’ said one of the boys. The red door stood open, and the mouths of the beasts were really horrible now, looking like mills. ‘Are you going with us to the attic ? Then we can climb to the roofs and go hunting … flying,’ said one of the boys.

‘What will we hunt,’ I asked.

‘Stawberries, spinach,’ said one of the boys.

After a few hours the place was full of food. When all the food was gathered one of the boys pushed a button and shouted : ‘flour’ ! Then another boy pushed a button and shouted : ‘milk’ ! and out of the walls flour and milk started to flow. Out of the floor miss Mellow came forward with a huge kettle and started to stir, while all the boys were floating in the chaos of the kettle, also me. I was screaming. ‘Help, help !’ I shouted. I had the feeling I was drowning. There miss Mellow took my hand and put me next to her, close to the kettle, where she was stirring. But there was still such a chaos. I wasn’t crying anymore, but the boys were flowing everywhere. Suddenly mr. Greenpatches came in, and put the light on. ‘Aha,’ he said. ‘Time for dinner.’

‘Yes,’ miss Mellow said.

The boys crept out of the kettle. They had turned into indians. And mr. Greenpatches started to eat. Also the boys and I got a plate. ‘It’s good, miss Mellow,’ mr. Greenpatches said.

I had totally forgotten about that woman called Hell, but she finally came back to me. ‘You want to go to some bigger parties ?’ she asked. I nodded. She took me on the flying pigs again. We flew to a place of chocolate beasts. ‘Whenever you hit them by an arrow, red chocolate will flow out of them,’ she said. She teached me how to use the bow. I was hungry for chocolate.

‘Eat much,’ she said, ‘or you won’t survive in this place. It’s either you eat the food, or the food will eat you.’ And for food, you had to hunt. She led me to a chocolate farm, with a small chocolate butchery. ‘Here you can begin,’ she said. ‘Build it up good, or you will end up in the farm and the butchery yourself. There is no other way.’ I smiled. ‘Yes, I will do it good,’ I said.

It was a world of chocolate and pigs.

The Last Flame

The witch had ways to freeze them, all these children. They could hardly move, and they all stood on planks in the main room of the witch, which was like a cathedral. But one boy had a little flame in his heart. He acted like he couldn't move, and hoped the witch wouldn't see his little flame, so he hid it in his eye. It was a blue flame, making him look different than all the others. 'What is that there in your eye,' the witch spoke. Quickly the boy swallowed the flame, but now his lips became very blue. 'Why do you have such blue lips,' the witch asked.

'I'm so cold,' the boy said.

Then the witch went to sleep. The boy was warm all over, because he had swallowed the little flame. He went to the other children, and blew on their faces. They could move a bit because of it, and slowly the boy was leading the children out of the dark castle of the witch. But the black dogs of the witch started to bark, and soon the witch woke up.

'Faster, faster,' the boy shouted. Some of the children were on the bridge already. But the witch was appearing in a flame, and many children fell away. 'Run, run,' the boy shouted.

He could only save a small group of children. 'So you don't want the ice,' the witch shouted. 'Then I will give you the fire.' And soon many of the children were in the flames, screaming.

'No !' the boy shouted. 'If you let the children go, I will show you the secret I have. Take me instead of them.'

But the children in the fire screamed to the boy : 'No, run away, for she will take both you and us.'

So the boy ran away together with the few children he could save, and they lived a miserable life in the forest, plagued by their memories. But when the boy was older he returned to the castle. He found out that the children were still in the fire, living in slavery to the witch. He waited till the witch slept, and wanted to help the children to escape, but the dogs began to bark. He left again, and told everything to the other children.

They had to accept the fact that the witch was more powerful than them, and that they could actually never save the other children. The flame of the boy had become weaker throughout the years. But one day a beautiful light woke them up. It was a fairy, saying : 'I am the Keeper and Sender of the weakening flame. You may do three wishes.'

'I know what my first wish is,' the boy said. 'the children to be free.'

And in one moment all the children stood before him, free from the fire which had enslaved them.

'My second wish is : to have a castle where we can all live.'

In one moment they were all in a castle together, beautiful like the rainbow. The castle was full of food and riches, so the children would have a good life.

The boy couldn't think of a third wish, so he asked the children. 'Why is the flame getting weaker ?' one of the children asked the fairy.

'Because our kingdom is dying,' the fairy said. 'When the flame is totally quenched then the witch will rule over everything and will get all her powers back.'

'But that is horrible,' the boy said. 'I wish that the flame will burn forever, and will always get stronger.'

Suddenly all the children got a light on their face. ‘Now the flame will forever multiply itself,’ said the fairy. ‘Our kingdom has conquered. We knew our last flame was safe with you.’ Then the fairy left, and they all lived long and happy.

The Evil Sun

The enslavers on the Martian River of Death had helmets with cat eyes in them, these were a sort of stones producing high sounds. These eyes were slave-trackers. They could activate the highest organs of nature’s spectre. They were mind-controllers. It was all pure machinery. A science ruling the land of the horseflies, a land surrounded by the Martian River of Death. It all worked very robotic. There were masters and slaves, like someone had made an extended and very complex computerprogram.

There was of course an evil brain behind this program : Doctor Clonehead-Ar. He was a native sorcerer, a anatomancer, being able to dominate the body completely. Both master and slave were nothing but his marionets. He had made himself an empire : The Coconut Empire.

There was a book, a cursed book of ancient times, a barbarian book, forbidden by the evil brain. Many copies had been burnt, and as far as anyone knew it didn't exist anymore. It was an insectian book, the book of Lazarus. One day someone found a copy of it. It's cover was of strange dark leather with golden bands. The person started to read, while sticky lights entered his brain. The cursed book had been opened again.

The person became a prophet of the book, and started to preach on marketsquares. A new slavery had begun. They burnt that person, after tormenting him for a long time, but the spirits of the book had been released.

The spirits flew to a place near the sea where an old prophet lived, Traxwodka the Python Knight. He was a demon once set free from an oracle, and the spirits possessed him. Then they flew to another demon of the oracle, Jeppersla, and possessed him. There were ten demons of an old oracle they had to visit. The third one was Ritswik. This one really knew everything about hunger-slaves, the art of keeping slaves addicted to their masters. He possessed the most essential herbs and other ingredients for the ultimate drug. Ritswik was an old vegetation god of many martian religions, but he got demonized later by the evil brain. Ritswik was the primitive lord of the jungle. The spirits wanted him to replace the evil brain. Dikshild was the fourth demon of the oracle, a child. He was an old god of luck, but got also demonized by the evil brain. Wickfin was the fifth demon of the oracle, holding the links between Mars and Orion.

Soon they had surrounded the evil brain.

There was another evil book, banned by the evil brain. It was the Book of Silver. This book was more sinister and brooding than the Book of Lazarus. But the spirits opened this book as well. Finally they opened a third book : The Book of Light. These books made an even more ancient book complete : the book of the crimson wolves, which was also called the Book of Law.

It was the blackest day in history when the wolves took over the empire of the evil brain. Trillions of black soldiers established the throne for Ritswik, the lord of the wilderness. The Book of Law was complete again, more than ever, and a burning red flamy nipple was the seal on it's cover of dark black leather.

The spell of grotesque had been cut in two since that day. Grotesque had always been the veil of the temple of life, keeping the deeper senses tightly closed. There was an evil sun growing in the midst of the land. The deeper senses got opened like romance, intimacy and mystery. Of course the grotesque world also had these ingredients, but there was one difference : spiders.

The Spider God smiled over his new creation. It was a witchworld full of black magic and evil, but it was to serve another law. It had the stigma of evil to make a statement, a statement against the false good, against the hypocrisy. It was a world full of spiderian architecture in which wolves had their thrones.

The Veins of Light

Once upon a time Mars, Venus, Earth and Orion were all together in one planet called the Planet of the Horseflies, or some would say : the Land of the Horseflies. This world was full of dragonian and trollian architecture. There were many trolls, and somehow everyone was more or less of a trollic anatomy. These beings called the horseflies were always dragonian of nature as well, besides being trollian. They were mixes between savages, indians, flies, dragons and trolls. The guards of the secret however were called bloodtrolls. They had to guard the secret which kept them alive, and by which they could evolve. After living in the seas of blood for millions and trillions of years they had finally come to land. They weren't fishes, they were always drowning, and coming to life again in strange ways.

They were carrying the secret of trollian light, but those who knew of the secret abused it. They used it against each other, and the trollian wars started. It would proclaim the end of the planet of horseflies. The planet split up by a disaster. One part became Orion and the other part Lakshor, which finally became Earth, Mars and Venus. The secret got lost. I am the only one who survived and was destined to hide the secret until the end of days. I had the hope that

peaceful beings would do something good with it, and that the Land of Horseflies could rise again.

I brought the secret up somewhere in time, but again wars started and brought the downfall of many planets, but this time the light could pierce itself into the hearts of millions, and could multiply itself. The light created thick veins on the bodies, as a pathway of senses. Inside the light made veins between the dirt-glands, the blood-glands and the eye-glands. In a strange way the light formed a triangle and they called it the eye of the troll.

It was a mark going from person to person, taking them over. They all had to be prepared to return to history. It would happen by light.

Upside Down

From the Martian River of Death … ancient soldiers were rising … getting reborn again … A wizard had struck the river …. It was streaming through Orion, melting the parts together …. Like a blacksmith was working on it …. There were births in the river, births of monsters … There were slimy eggs in the river, exploding … A sea was arising …. A sea of light … and

suddenly it was blood …. Cats were dining … After that the wolves would come, and then the bears … Orion would meet it in it’s days …. And then a new world would rise …. The delta …. A creature would come down on it, a bloodcreature, feeding on the delta …. The bloodsnakes would come … It would be a matriarchal world, ruled by women, and men would be the weaker race … It would be the shift of nature … The animals would take care of it … The Karazure Enigma would be the stairway for any creature to find enlightenment. This stairway would show the levels of angelic evolution, eventually resulting in the returning of the elves, the Karsuiks. And finally a beach would be the only thing left …. Surrounded by the waves of non-existance …. If you would go there by a time-machine, and build your tower on there, the higher you would climb the closer you would come to history again, but you could never reach it. It would be the ultimate Tantalos, but it would protect you at the same time. There was something greater than history : the cryptic meaning of it. The pieces would form an amulet, to keep you safe forever.

This would be the mission of the cats, these cryptic beings. The mission of the wolves would be to raise it up. And the bears would come to eat. They all had their own mysterious ways of dining. Then the bloodsnakes would come to make a statement, to raise a new legal order. And the earth as we know it now would be declared fiction. There has always been something greater than fiction : geography. And beyond geography there is the wilderness. And the wilderness shows Animalogy.

From the Martian River of Death soldiers were rising, strange animals, having survey. They could watch beyond the horizons. Here they got reborn. Here they got new eyes. And they were building a tower, for the geography would be broken by the strike of Animalogy. It was a thing a wizard teached …. He showed the new atoms, having fairy circles around them. These atoms quenched the mind, and brought the heart up. It opened the heart, and showed the road to the liver, the dark heart.

They called it the Martian heart, opening the nose, the smell, taxing a new visionary world. However, there were ten darker hearts, called the Tirmis Oracle. It was a savage gift, once taken by pirates : ten demons locked up in a machine, a machine of torture. They used to call it the dark toes. It could take over any human being or creature, taking it’s system. It was in fact holding the Karazure Enigma, the stairway of enlightenment. It was a stairway for any soldier to rise. It would break the power of any man, and it would raise the power of the woman, to become the stronger race. Only on this base the elves would be able to return.

From the Martian River of Death they rose, the elves, ‘karsuiks’ in barbarian terms, the warlocks children. They had broken the spell of grotesque. It was the shift of nature.

I saw Tirmis Oracle falling these days, setting it's demons free. But I knew Tirmis Oracle meant eternal slavery. There was no real escape possible. You could only go deeper. The Oracle had been made by python stone, coming forth from karazurian delights. It celebrated the weakness of the man, as it's source of creativity. It would make a sorcerer of him, working by spells. This was his strength. The putse was the barbarian term for fairy, but it was more a savage, original fairy, like a wild indian. It celebrated the strength of the woman. It was the eternal strength vs the eternal weakness, and they belonged to each other.

The beasts will rise from the Martian River of Death, and the oracle will turn upside down. The soldiers will march. The karazures will march on the walls. They will have the survey, the rest will burn away. It will all shift anyway. A new game will start.

Killer-Flower

This flower hung above a country. All visitors got eaten, after ending in unbelievable traps. It all worked by lights, slowly sucking them in, until they couldn't find themselves back anymore. Their spirit got cut off from their soul, until there wasn't any helper left, all isolated.

This flower sucked, it was so white so white, of the whitest blinding light, there were no keys, only locks. You could only watch, it was a show, a cinema they called her.

One day I came to the flower, appearing to be so white so white, but I knew she was black inside … She was a hunter sent long ago …

She could bring in a fire … and then all the visitors were running … She brought her dead soldiers up in the inhabitants … Here you have enough of food, here you have enough of riches, so many treasure rooms …

And I approached this lady, and I asked her why, and she directed her finger to a cruel history …

And I told her I wasn't to blame, and neither my friends, so she let me go, she was moving with her show, taking another country instead … But never she stayed long … afraid of hurting people like me … She became a fairground more and more … by certain tricks she could see … She wasn't a blind killer anymore, for a light had set her free.

Face with Wings

You know, I believe in those songs, grasping so deep, shooting so deep, making you laugh or cry, kind of multi-sound, a myriad of voices, all coming from different directions, a bit like the bird's treasure …

I believe in the bird lights, they are so warm, and can come so suddenly

I believe in magic ships on the waves of fantasy, the waves of our imagination, something deeper than the soul … We have to wake up to these worlds, or there will be no hope for us … I come from an earth almost like your earth … I believe in the so called soft spots, connecting worlds to each other … Sift the hardness out … but this softness comes forth from the stones … the gems of a bird's treasure …

I know where this treasure is …. Go deep enough in the past and you will reach the future … Go deep enough into the future and you will reach the past … Until you realise there is only a now … Time is just a certain frame of the now … a certain order … but it will melt away if you get the bigger picture …. If you get across the fence ….

I have the key, follow me

A man wakes up from a strange dream. A bird stands in front of the open window. It has a message in his beak, a letter. The man takes the letter and reads, while a million smiles enter his head. He gets warm inside. It's a message from the dead.

'Don't believe the media anymore, don't believe the history books. We are not dead, we are alive. The media is just a veil in the temple of life, but go through it.'

'How,' the man was asking.

‘Come, I will show you,’ the bird said. The man went outside and followed the bird. The bird let him to a nest of spiders. The spiders had red and black spots. ‘These are living in your head,’ the bird said. ‘Keeping you in hallucinations by their poison. It’s the veil in your head.’

‘How to get rid of it,’ the man said.

‘Let me enter your head,’ said the bird.

The man fell on the ground between the flowers. He felt so weak all of a sudden, and his body felt so hot, like he was lying on a burning beach or desert. He felt so soft all of a sudden, like a millions of soft waves were overflowing him.

‘Do you believe in the soft powers,’ the bird said. ‘It’s in the bird’s treasures.’

The man felt jewels rolling all over him. It was like infinite and everlasting love was overflowing him with so many voices. It felt like an armour. And he heard a voice saying : ‘Oh bird’s warrior, unlimited love is yours, stand up in power.’ A face in wings appeared. Warmth was overflowing him. The dead were speaking. They were not dead. They were part of an army of love.

‘Army of love, deep in the waters, hallucinations is the only thing we come from, it’s the only thing we go to, for there’s nothing but hallucinations, and we just have to search for the right flower, the flower of unlimited love. Drink deep, can we break the chain of every addiction, and become addicted to unlimited love. Can we break any slavery to become slaves of the flower of unlimited love. She can speak and bind, she can break and bring down, she can tear and play the clown.’

‘She can break through the windows, there are no borderlines, she is unlimited love.’

‘She holds the triangle of fire, the powers of softness, the bird’s treasure, to reflect the messages of the dead, she is the new media.’

‘Open your history-books, she will bring it alive, and all will be in unlimited love, in a new light’

There are warm windows in the sea, she breaks through them all … Red windows in the rivers, the lion’s eye can see through … The veils are tearing … burning …. In the lion’s temple …. And then a new light … Voices of the dead … They have always cared for them ….

There are rings of fire greater than our mind … She is the new media … This flower of unlimited light …. Triggering the sounds of a new world …

The birds can do the calculations … They can make the tablets hot … while she breaks through and through ….

Thermal Eye

Finally I met the wizard … He was immediately like a father to me, or a bigger brother …. He showed me my own village …. He showed me my past … He showed me the pattern of suffering, how it was a music instrument … All the trauma's were keys, all the nightmares … But also he showed me the good times, how they were important keys … He showed me the contradictions …. Perfect contradictions so right ….

And he called himself 'So Right' … The man of the horses …. And these horses were on their way to the city …. City so huge ….

I had never seen such a picture before … It was a desert city …. A city of death … Huge bones formed the walls, and huge bones were inside ….

He showed me the omens in bookshops, the signs to lead me out … and certain sounds were the bombs …

He showed me the night city … He showed me the red … He showed me everything, and showed the story behind it ….

He showed me the wildernesses between the cities, where the wild cats lived …. Whenever they cried … someone died … They lived from death, but others they brought alive …

He brought me the hat of a nation, a land of horseflies …

This land was wild, we couldn't begin anywhere … but the magic of the wizard brought us deeper in …

Snakes drew the pictures … Pictures charged with feelings … It was all deadly accurate ….

Like tight machinery he drew …. The world of me and you …. We had a jewel in our chest, full of light, by which we moved, by which we flew … to the city of light … We were breathing light in and out … No need for oxygene ….

And the jewel grew, and took us over, we were possessed … by the higher light …. And there was warmth coming through …. Steamy …. Like a tropical light …. And it blew our minds away …. There were explosions everywhere …. Snakes entered in …..

The lizard was a blinding light …. Transforming us, waking us up to the highest warmths …. Healing lights were gliding there, high in the air … Healing winds of warmth … Stairways of light ….

And the wizard said preach the new gospel … search for the perfect contradictions …. It's all somewhere …. Just puzzle ….

Yes, he gave me a puzzle … After the explosion …. We lost ourselves …. And we lost the others …. On a lost island we were ….. land … of …. the …… horse …… flies ….

It was a new order of light …. And history changed before our eyes …. All the combinations became right ….

And still the contradictions lurking in the night …. The day that good and evil were in harmony …. It was like a sacred marriage, and then the explosion …. Who was who …. There was no self and no other ….

And the wizard smiled … I had never seen such a smile … He had sunglasses on …. And the women were like catwomen … tails rising in the air …. And looking backwards ….

And eyes were exploding …. They had ordered space for so long by their rays …. They had ordered time, and invented it …. But the chest-jewel was rising now ….. enlightening the faces …. Showing the perfect contradictions of you and me …

And there was harmony and chaos, like a sacred marriage, and then the explosion …. We couldn't find ourselves and the other anymore. We were one with the sky … the secret ….. in a land called the land of the horseflies …. And the walls were thick …. Hot stone …. Exploding when someone touched them …. To become thicker after all …. Walls … of …… the wind ….

And warmth was gliding …. Snakes were sliding …. And this wizard had always been blind …. Like a hairy spider in the sky …. And he had always been deaf …. Holding the perfect contradictions …. He could see temperature …. All by the chest-jewel … by the chest-jewel … he had survived …. His poison could reach deep … dripping in the unreachable places between the rocks in the depths of ravines and valleys … where no one would come ….

There were growing flowers there, white flowers … blinding lights … deep roots … tall, and wild …. They were raising the fences …. of a new world …..

And the wizard was smiling, holding my hand …. He was always my childhood hero …. And now he was here …

Warmth was gliding … in streams … colours were created by the temperatures …. And I could see the perfect contradictions ….

And I saw the women building a cat city, reddish …. And then they built another one …. While the wilderness was growing …. And I saw the high elevators, and the skyscrapers …. And they built a city reaching to heaven, and it's underground reached hell … Only the land of the horseflies could do …. It was a perfect babylon …

And preachers stood up, and prophets …. Preaching about judgement like never before …

And I saw a ship in the distance … coming closer …. Bringing magic to it's shores ….

And cat girls were playing … Old religions were fading … blending as one …..

And the wizard said : preach the new gospel …. Transform the heritage …. By the new light …. Set it’s spirits free …. It was an old book, an old curse …. An old cage …. But we found the key …. So many souls had here their haven …. But now they are free ….

And I saw a key of eternal and infinite love …. A flame which would never die …. I didn’t know where it came from … I didn’t know where it would go … but it pierced it’s way through my heart ….

And the cat girls were talking … raising their cities …. They had been silent for so long …. And the lizard king took place on it’s throne …. We had chameleons in our head … changing by temperatures … The temperatures are speaking … It’s the hour of the lion ….

And cities were rising … wildernesses growing ….

Ship of Death

They invited me by their eyes, they reached out their arms to me, to take me in, on their ship, their lion ship. The captain was someone to die for, and the whole crew, very friendly. Skeletons worked on the ship, it was a ship of death.

The captain gave me something to drink, so that I would never fall out.

He gave me a book of strange stories, psychedelic. ‘These stories have no story-line,’ he said.

He showed me the fishes and creatures of the sea. Some really looked like machines and elevators, and the captain said we needed them. Some creatures were like cameras. We could visit the dead on the places where they lived now, for all these creatures were sent to us to show us the way.

The captain stared at me. ‘Do you like it ?’ he said.

‘I was bored,’ I said. ‘So everything is okay.’

‘But do you really like it ?’ he asked.

‘Yes, I like it,’ I said.

My mouth had a sweet taste. I felt like I had the mouth of a lion.

I saw butterflies underwater, when the ship turned into a submarine. I saw birds underwater, and I felt happy. There were no laws here, anything could happen.

‘Laws are so evil,’ the captain said. ‘Anything should be able to happen, as everything is a message, a riddle.’

‘So lions are not from the mind, right ?’ I asked.

‘Lions are from the nose,’ he said. ‘We smell something and translate it into vision. It has no boundaries, we just translate.’

‘Can you see temperature ?’ I asked.

‘Yes,’ he said. ‘And you will also when you are long enough on the ship.’

‘I see you have a good heart to skeletons,’ I said. ‘I come from a world where they despise everything which is dead. We have a cult here, they despise everything which is weak, and they always say : survival of the fittest, but it gets worse and worse.’

‘Yes,’ the captain said, ‘that’s why I invited you. I have heard of it. But the dead just live on. It’s the media wanting you believe someone is dead. You shouldn’t believe them, it’s a mass-illusion.’

‘See,’ I said, ‘that’s what I always thought. So the lions are on our side ?’

‘Love will survive,’ the captain said. ‘Love is the strongest power existing.’

‘I can’t live without love,’ I said, ‘but I think love is a trickster. I think it is a riddle.’

‘It is,’ the captain said, ‘but the trickster is the only one who can lead you home, you know, deeper messages.’

I nodded … ‘Do you know what I like ?’ I said. ‘Those songs which have actually more songs in one, voices singing through each other, their own song, but still they are in harmony, like chaotic harmony, it’s bliss.’

‘Yes, that’s what love is,’ he said, ‘many different voices, and many different songs in one, all having one goal : to make you happy.’

‘Don’t they spoil us then,’ I said.

‘No, they just want you to be one of them, part of the song,’ he said.

‘Well, is happiness our goal then ?’ I asked. ‘Or love itself, and then we must know what it is, and what it means.’

‘It means to go to school,’ he said.

I laughed. I was more a truant.

‘We have good schools,’ he said. ‘Schools of love.’

‘Yea, right,’ I said smiling. ‘Well, I believe you.’

He showed me a strange ring, with dragon-nails. He pushed it on one of my fingers. ‘Inner school,’ he said. I almost couldn’t breath. ‘Man, that hurts,’ I said.

‘Love is pain,’ he said.

‘Is happiness also pain then ?’ I asked.

‘Yes,’ he said.

‘Well, hello,’ I said. ‘I …’

‘It’s okay,’ he said. ‘Pain and pleasure, close to each other, pain is a riddle, a path, an armory.’

‘Yea, I have heard these things before,’ I said. ‘I come from a horrible earth, where they torture animals and such. It breaks my heart. I cannot live with that. I rather be dead or with you. I can’t watch it anymore, all the news. I need something else.’

‘The lion orchestra, son,’ he said. ‘When it starts to play it’s over. There will be a new world, and you are with us.’

‘What do you mean ?’ I asked. ‘The hour of the lion ?’

‘Yes,’ he said. ‘The lions have waited for million years for this. They have taken root in silence, and now they are strong enough to grasp the trumpet.’

‘Who has the trumpet now ?’ I asked.

‘Aliens,’ he said. ‘They rule sound and vision.’

He pushed another ring on my finger. ‘The lion’s ring,’ he said, ‘a sign you’re part of the plan.’

‘What’s the plan ?’ I asked.

‘Love, the lion’s voice,’ he said. ‘First you will hear it, then speak it.’

‘Why am I part of the plan ?’ I asked.

‘Because you are the lion’s trumpet,’ he said.

I felt like the code was cracked … Fire was streaming into me … I woke up in sweat, longing back for the ship of death …

The Best be the Winner

The Gospel of the Rabbit

"After all it was just a cartoon ..."

Let me make you rich, let me make you swim in money, let me make you drive in big cars, for i drive big cars as well. Let me make you live in big houses, and let me make you dwell in luxury, for life is good. Let me make you look down on people who are not like you, for you are the masterpiece, oh pig.

Glory to the pig. I created you, but I even made you bigger than myself. I'm but a simple rabbit.

Let me give you weapons, so that you can rule the other. For I made you to be kings. Let me give you big armies, for there is so much to win. Oh, dread I will plant in your hand, so that everyone will tremble for you, and never understand. Money and weapons are good for you like good food. I will give you mothers who will give it to you from their breasts. Yes, I have brought you to a good land. You, oh pig, you were my masterpiece. Me, the rabbit, I even bow for you, the king of creation you are. I made you good.

Oh pig, I made you even better than me, compared with you, I live in small houses, small cars, yes, you were my masterpiece. So let me save you from yourself, I am as crucified compared with you, compared with you I was poor, like born in a cradle. So, let me save you from yourself, or greed and pride will make a sinner of you. The hell is hot for pigs like you.

But you see, I have a restaurant to keep running, so I hope you understand. So many clients come there everyday. They might kill me if I do them wrong, a feast they want, so have a bit of mercy on me, and bring me some pieces of chicken when you can. Pray to me everyday, and lay them in the oven, so I will be satisfied, and I will give you half of the prey. Yes, rich I will make you, and pour out my blessings on you, for you have always been my friend, I know you understand. So don't drive me in a corner, but praise and worship me with a grateful face and voice. I might have some mercy on you at the end of the day. And when judgement day comes, I will say you have always been my friend, for you did understand.

Let us swim in money, friend, let us drive in big cars, and live in big houses, to dwell in luxury, for the days are short. My restaurant might sink in the waves when Noah comes with

his flood. Let us party before it is too late, before they say game over. I know a mouse city where we can be safe. Come, follow me, leave all your possessions, leave your families and friends. Me, the rabbit, will lead you to a place where they all understand. I know you feel rejected, so follow me, for I was too. No one ever believed in me, except you.

So it is you and me, and a cat and a dog, and also a bear, to go to the mouse, that which i had hidden for the last days. We will reach our Jerusalem, I have my gun to shoot the rat. The underground is for him, but he will get a bad name, and we will be good. We are the best, the champions of it all. Of course this is what the game demands, and what the game decides, there is no democracy or so. Let only the best be the winner. The one making the best balloons ...

There, high on a hill he lives ... the man of the balloons ... He’s painting the thrill ... His music is the best ... He invades the cities ... and makes balloons of them ... of those who follow him ... So follow him ... Be the best in what you do ... Fly to the sun and to the moon .... And buy some guns from a rabbit ... And try to come out of your pits ....

And they call him the winner man, they call him the rabbit gospel ... Swim with him riches ... Climb with him the trees ... Slide with him over mountains .... and dive with him in the seas .... He would make your life so good .... He’s even saving the rats ... After all it was just a cartoon ...

The Bridge

Once there was a rabbit ruling a kingdom with ungrateful people. Although the rabbit had a huge palace he was very sad about his kingdom, and wanted to leave to the wilderness. He went there with his footmen : a bear, a cat and a dog. They left in the night to the wilderness, leaving their huge and beautiful palace. In the jungle they shared their philosophies in the depths of the night. They had their philosphies about the ideal state and how to reach it. After long journeys through the wilderness they reached the river of life. Behind this river they believed there would be the utopia, the ideal state. But it was a strange river, a very dangerous one. Whenever an animal went into the river the waves took it away.

The rabbit and his three footmen had their philosophies about how to come across the river. Let's invoke the ghost of the wind, said the dog. He can make a bridge across the river.

They would invoke the ghost by making a fire. And after awhile the ghost of the wind appeared. The ghost would build a bridge, if they promised him he would be a part of utopia. Of course the rabbit and his three footmen agreed, and soon the ghost of the wind started to work, but the further he came with his bridge, the more he started to turn into a storm, and for the animals it was too dangerous to come close. It was hanging over the waters like a threat.

Let us invoke the ghost of fire then, the cat spoke, maybe he can sooth the storm, and build the bridge further. The ghost of fire heard them, and came, and again they had to promise that he would be a part of the utopia. Of course they agreed and soon the ghost of fire was sliding over the bridge, but when he reached the storm he turned into an inferno. An enormous chaos was now hanging over the waters.

Let us invoke the rainbow, said the bear. It will make everything well.

The rainbow came, slided over the bridge and could make it well. A beautiful huge rainbow bridge was now hanging over the waters, reaching towards the other side of the river of life. The rabbit and his three friends followed the rainbow and came in the land of utopia. The king of utopia asked them how they could come, and they told him about the three ghosts. The king told them about the secret of his utopia. It was a plane. He so loved the story of the three ghosts that he made pilots of the four animals. And he made them rulers of the four parts of utopia.

Vampire Fiction

Robotic City

They march here, these vampires. They never understand, as that would bind them into slavery. They are hard, but soft inside, so soft that it reaches to the deepest place, a place in Robotic City. From here they get their commands. From here they rise to the ships in the skies. They never understand, for that would blind them. They never break the seal, for that would misguide them. They couldn't deal with the powers breaking through. So they hid the seal, so that their young ones would never touch it. Some seals are for real, like the seal of God.

The ships go to their harbours, advertisements in the sky. It seems God is fishing, and they never understand, as that would bind them and blind them, to so many things from above they couldn't handle. While they choose their strange fruits they get softer inside, while they switch over to the meat and the blood, they bow down to rise. They are soft inside, but spears are hard and lonely. When they choose to fight, they are selective every time. Switching from clothing to eating. It seems some things can never be changed. They have these switchboards in the skies, like advertisements, and then so many eat with them, clothe with them.

They do not understand what is going on. They're living in Robotic City. They choose between the fish and the fruit, and that's all. Every day they march to their work, and every night they return. In weekends and dreams they sail the skies. No, I never return to Robotic City as they ate their children in delay, like growing old, a strange strange curse, like growing old to never return. Not for gold or silver I would return, so I beg you stay with me. Stay on the waterside, and only greet, but never give in.

I warned so many, but still I see them marching in, still they say walk in. I know I place where we can hide, where the vampires cannot come, they always grow old, will their children get so dumb. No, let us run away to the place where we can hide. Someone named Stanley lives there, and he can chase them all away. Oh Stanley, never turn away. Take us to your city while we pray. Oh Stanley you're the best of them all, for you also left that place, and you built your own place, your own robotic city, but it has a different name. You never told me anyway, for I would never understood, too afraid to be bound, to afraid to be blinded, no, I never would open your seal.

Oh Stanley at the end of my life : give me some youth. Let me live forever, like escaped vampires would do. Let me dance like you, let me walk like you, and lead me to your robotic city in the skies. Show me where can I choose from, show me the advertisements like lights in the sky. I know you built that place for you and me, so let us get there, but let us only greet and never get in, until we have built our own robotic cities. Escaping from Stanley is the last thing we must do, our ships are all dying, let them all be gliding, turning brandnew. And let us escape from our own cities, let us escape from our own robotics. We must go to the places higher in the sky, where all escaped vampires march, they only greet and say goodbye. Let us built our own robotics and say goodbye. Let us escape from our own robotics so that we will not die. Let us turn to the eternal youth by a line of softness, no, not growing hard, there is so much we can do. Not growing clinical, not becoming a hospital, but becoming lovely and creative, for love heals, that's the power of love. Give me your cinema's, not your medical stations, give me your love not your diploma's. I came from robotic city, now I want something else. I need love, not your hate. But I would like to see your histories, the towers you have built reaching towards the sky. I want to see your ships, the way you eat, the way you mess around, but most of all your escape.

I know you love to be in robotic city, but there is some life beyond, some love, powerfull enough to heal you forever. Powerfull enough to be wonderlove. We will never understand however. We are too tragical, turning to our jobs, and then to forget it all forever. It’s a curse in our mind, the curse of robotic city. Let us all leave it behind. It’s all sticky like glue, we can never leave. When we try to puzzle it out, it only gets worse. So let us stop breaking the seal, and let my love hit you, you will get your wings. Oh robotic city, I still love you. I know you’re just a prisoner. Do you want to see your king ? Do you want to see your ships in the sky, your advertisements passing by. Oh robotic city I still love you, and I know Stanley does, but what can we do. Waiting for the tides to turn. They will turn.

In the harbour they are soft, soft enough to be friendly, not clinical. In the harbour they will care for your ships like they do to dolphins. In the harbour they will care for your trauma’s of sharks, whales and orca’s. In the harbour they will understand. They will let you choose between the meat and the fruit, between the blood and the juice, they will let you coming closer. They are soft in the harbour, not a hospital, but a power of love. They never marry and they never get children, there are only some visitors, coming to their place. They have cinema’s, they have lovepowers, they attract the visitors, they are creative. They have no hotels, everyone gets a house. They have no shops, everyone gets what he needs. They used to call it robotic city but the new name has been sealed. Never break the seal, my lady, never break the seal, my man, for then the babies will come again, and we cannot handle these powers, so we better do not understand.

Their words go along so many visitors, but so many do not get deeper, and it can go so much deeper. Dont waste your time to the ones only standing at the sidelines. We want the softer ones, we want the deeper ones, those who come with their ships, those from other robotic cities, those who have escaped. Those who have a story to heal them all.

White Heaven

After many years of traveling through the desert I came in a strange world, like an oasis. At first I thought it was a mirage, but later it seemed to be denser than just a mirage. It was a real world, a giant world. Giants walked here with their women. They smiled at me, and some took their hat off and bowed for me. They seemed to be very friendly. One of them led me to their king. The man was two times taller than me. He had a shield and a leather suit with a skirt. He had a beard and red piercing eyes. He looked like a father figure, an undescribable care on his face and in his eyes. Lepertume was his name. A soft radiance came from him. It was soothing me. He showed me his sword hanging at the wall behind him. He once got it from a leprechaun, he said. He had love in his eyes. He led me through his castle where he gave me a bedroom. Sleep awhile, he said, you must be tired. The bed was soft. I immediately fell in a deep sleep. I had beautiful dreams. When I woke up two giantesses stood before me with food and drinks. I took from it, and went to the king again. He was sleeping on his throne. Don't you sleep in bed, I whispered softly, but he didn't hear it.

A footman showed me the rest of the castle plus the beautiful gardens. The leaves were hanging in a beautiful way, and the most beautiful fruits hung there, often tall. I took a bite, and another bite, and it was like I was in heaven.

A bit later the king came. He was in a precious beautiful velvet red suit, decorated with silk. I never saw such a beautiful man before like he was, so tender, so full of love and peace. He was a giant, I was two times smaller. For a human I was pretty tall.

'You will be as big as me,' the king said. 'Just keep eating this food.' I smiled. I took another bite. I didn't want to leave this place anymore. I actually thought I would die in the desert after escaping from the city I lived in. But this was heaven. The king seemed to know about my city. I was kept prison there for so long. I lived in a dungeon. I had been falsely accused.

The king understood me. I could escape by digging a tunnel. The king was glad with me. He was like a father to me. After a few months I had my own house. The king visited me everyday, but throughout the years I didn't see him much anymore. One day I decided to go deeper into giant world. I was already huge like a giant. Finally I reached a haven, and went on a ship, named the White Cobra. It would lead me to another part of giant world, a huge island. The giants and giantesses were dressed in a strange way. It seemed to be traditional clothes. I wanted to discover this world. I went to a mountain on the iceland, where the ice was blue. Strange birds seemed to live here, blue parrots, blue paradise birds, in all sorts. They reflected something I didn't know. It made me high.

Soon I got a message brought by a red bird, a message from the king. He wished he would see me again. So I went back to where I came from.

'You have seen much from giant world now,' he said. 'I want you to become my footman, for you are now finally settled. You are one of us, and I hope you are one day able to become king.' I accepted the offer, and within years I was even king. The king himself decided he wanted to go to the city I once lived. He would go there with a few other giants, to live among the people from my city, and to deal with the city. Soon I got a message that the city had been burnt, and I knew enough. The king returned and wanted to be my footman. Also the other guys who were with him wanted to be my footmen. You are good enough to take the lead now, said the king. He told me that when I would be a real mature giant my next job would be to burn an evil city as well. This was what I finally did. When I returned there was a new king, and I would be his footman. I was a so-called horseman now. I also was the leader of a huge army now, and of a monkey army. I had many golden swords, and other swords of precious stones. And I had many exotic weapons. I became like a sorceror. I had a room close to Lepertume. He was a horseman as well. He teached me much about war. In giant world the highest position wasn't a king. The warleaders had much more powers, although they worked for the king. When I was much older Lepertume once took me to a high stairway in the forest. Angels were living here, and he said that the gods lived on top of the stairways. We went on the stairway together, and there were cobras on both sides. On top of the stairway there was a much taller cobra, and he was like a bridge deeper into the sky. The sky was warm. We had much survey here, everything was lighted. It ended in a huge cloudcastle, where there were a lot of skulls and weapons. Choose your weapon, Lepertume said. Behind the castle there was another bridge. In the waters cobras swam. Strange birds came close to us, and giantesses. I had a white cobra sword. But there was peace here. I was one with the gods now. I got wings and flew home.

Strike of the Nelfkins

Elf Fiction

Kasjar was running through the forests. The hunt on the elves had begun, and he wanted to warn the elf villages in the depths of the forest. Soon there houses would be burning, so they had to move. Bada, the elf king, was just sleeping at that time. When his guards woke him up he stared into the face of Kasjar.

‘Oh king of elves,’ Kasjar spoke. ‘We have to be quick, for the hunt on the elves has started.’

The king stood up and walked to his bath and stepped in. ‘Some salt please,’ he said to his guards. ‘Some raspberry shampoo.’

‘Who are they ?’ the king asked when he started to wash himself.

‘The Nelfkins, king,’ Kasjar said.

‘Who are they ?’ the king asked. ‘I’ve never heard of them.’

‘But they are dangerous, king of elves, very dangerous,’ Kasjar spoke. His dark eyes stared at the king through his dark hair.

‘I believe you, Kasjar,’ the king said. ‘You are one of my best servants.’

‘Thank you, king of elves,’ Kasjar spoke. ‘I will tell you exactly who the Nelfkins are.’

‘Are they elves, or fairies, or giants ?’ the king asked. ‘Who are they ?’

‘Soon our houses will be burning, my king,’ Kasjar said. ‘We have to move away from here. Our technology isn’t as great as theirs.’

‘Do you have books about them, so that I can read about them ?’ the king asked.

‘I will tell you, oh king, who they are,’ Kasjar said. ‘They are no elves, they are beasty trolls. They are on their ways to our villages. I have seen them. I have heard them shouting when I was on my guard. This is why I came, my king. They come from a far country, not of this realm. They are complete strangers to our maps. They come from beyond the horizons.’

‘Beyond the horizons ?’ the king asked. ‘That’s almost impossible, but I believe you. You are one of my most faithful servants.’

‘Where can we go, king ?’ Kasjar asked.

‘We will arm ourselves a bit more,’ the king said. ‘We will ask our biggest magic elves to come to the palace.’

Within a few hours they all sat around a table in the royal palace. ‘We can ask the eagles to take us away,’ a small elf called Lio said. ‘I can do a spell for that.’

Another small elf called Lep said : ‘Let us fight. We will do a magic attack.’ He had raised his arm in the air and his little finger. His hand was glowing of magic light.

‘Good, Lep,’ said the king. ‘Anyone else having an idea ?’

‘We can do the indian elf dance to let the villages disappear,’ Orjon said.

But soon enough the Nelfkins were already in the palace. ‘Lio,’ the king said. ‘Call for the eagles. Lep, do the magic attack, and Orjon, start the indian elf dance.’

Soon the eagles arrived, and brought as many as they could to an island far away in the sea. Some villages disappeared by the indian elf dance. And other villages got burnt by the Nelfkins.

Some Nelfkins followed the eagles on their birds, and other Nelfkins had pirate ships in the sea. The attack had just started. But when the pirates wanted to invade the island, the eagles started to attack.

‘Orjon, where are the disappeared villages now ?’ the king asked.

‘In the sky,’ Orjon said.

‘Let the eagles bring us there then,’ the king asked. The eagles brought as many elves there as they could. The birds of the Nelfkins couldn’t reach here, but on the ground they had soon invaded everywhere, and they had destroyed as much of the elf world as they could.

Lio, Lep, Orjon and the other magic elves had a lot of work to do to rebuild the elf world here in the sky. And they did a great job. The king was very satisfied. But since the elf world lost many elves to slavery in the Nelfkin domain, Lio had to send many eagles back to free them. Often Lio, Lep and Orjon, and also other magic elves went with them to help the eagles.

The Nelfkins had their powers because of a stone, the Stone of Death. The stone took care that they always lived in abundance. One day an eagle stole the Stone of Death and brought it to the elf world. It was since then that the elf world started to grow like never before. They had abundance in everything. The stone seemed to come originally from the star of death, and when the elves had finally found that planet they decided to live there as well.

The Wizard's Touch

She was on her way to the wizard. Her eyes were piercing through the forest.
The forest was enchanted here. The berries were playing with her mind.
Everything was shifting before her. She fell down, and some birds took her up,
to bring her to the castle of the wizard.
He was a tall man with a tall beard. He had a suit on with stars.
He seemed to be very friendly, while waves of light came over her.
She came from far, there were flames on the wall. The wizard smiled.
Finally you are here, he said.

Then suddenly the wizard was gone in a flash. On a plate there was written :

Sooner or later, you must see the wizard. He is not what you expect.

She went through a door, and came in a hall on a balcony, while below there was a lake of lava. A dragon came up. She walked to the other side of the balcony to the next door. The dragon was shapeshifting before her eyes.

'Now do you know who i am,' asked the dragon.
The woman shook her head.

There was a plate on the door before her. She was a bit afraid of the dragon. This was why she had grasped her sword. On the plate there was written :

Cannibals live here. Don't enter.

But the woman wanted to see the wizard, so she entered. Wild men were swimming in a huge kettle. They were roaring and screaming. There was another door on the other side of this hall, and again she walked over the balcony.

What are you doing here, a voice asked.

I search for the wizard, she said, to give me the understanding of life, to know my purpose.

He can give you weapons, said the voice.

Oh i know that, said the woman. That is why i am here.

You better not be here, said the voice.

The cannibals crept out of the kettle, as they had seen her, and they came closer and closer.

Time for party, one of them said.

You want to see the wizard huh, another one said. Well there is no wizard.

I saw him already, she said.

Just an illusion, one of the wild men said. If there is any wizard, then it is us.

She kept her sword ready, ready to strike. Don't come any closer, she said.
Slowly she moved backwards to the next door. But soon other wild men were blocking the door.

No escape, they said. All life is in the kettle, don't you know.

They grasped her. She lost her sword. They threw her into the kettle, where green seaweed was covering her hair and body. Then the kettle started to spin.

I can be your cook, she shouted.

But no one answered.

Huge mills started to appear around her. Then a voice said :
the cook has to be cooked first. Then she felt stings everywhere and a voice said :
I am the beekeeper.

Soon she was full of honey, a plant at a beach, soon she was touched by the wizard,
and found her love.

Beads

I had never been this far before in my spaceship. I was gliding through the fleeces of the Aleuzenen Curtain. The fleeces were thick, and they were almost devouring my ship. They were sucking me in. After hours I saw four planets. One was small, and the others were pretty big, bigger than I have ever seen before. Even the small one was big compared to the planets I knew. I had entered a new constellation. I went to the smallest planet and dropped my space ship there. I came into an enormous wilderness. There was no light here, everything was dark. There were a lot of huge snakes around. I was sinking in it's depths. Savages lived here. I wondered if they would keep me alive. They seemed to be very friendly. I raised my gun and shot a few times in the air, but they didn't become aggressive. Neither did they grasp their spears. They seemed to understand me. They were people of the heart. One of them came closer to me. He tried to ask me if I were hungry. They wanted to offer me food. They led me

to their camp, full of huts, and gave me good food. After that they gave me a place to sleep. They seemed to be very intelligent. They were looking for ways to communicate with me. It was like they were feeling my wounds. I had escaped from my own world. Now I was here.

They were people with feeling. They didn't force anything. When I woke up they gave me soup. My head felt soft. The climate here was perfect. They tried to tell me that I had to listen to my heart. They kept holding their hands on their chest. They showed me their weapons, dangerous ones, with a lot of hooks and stings. They were hunters and warriors. They showed me how their traps worked. These were like boxes with mills. They had animals with big eyes. It was like their eyes were bleeding. Their skin was soft. I was surprised that these animals could talk to me by my heart, in my own language. They looked like giant rabbits and giant teddy bears. They were warming my heart by their words. They opened my heart up for many sounds. I could hear waterfalls in the distance. The people showed me the most precious jewels, and beads, and gave to me also some chainlets with beads. They were bead-stringers. Some of these beads could even go into my body, like my heart had to be filled with them. Then later I felt them in my stomach, then my legs. I found out that everything worked by beads here.

Sud – Hell Fiction

Psychedelic Trauma

Hell was a psychedelic world. Sud was on her warship, standing tall, not missing one target. There were fishes in the water, strange fishes. You could smell them from a distance. They could jump high. The oceans of hell were full of them. Sud tried to remember the past but she couldn't. She was only standing there on the ship, watching the fishes like watching a movie. It brought strange strength to her bones. Also dogs were on the ship. She once saved them out of the webs of the skies.

There was no one like Sud. She had a shrunk skull of a notorious hospital-owner on her belt. She defeated him once in a mean slaughter. Sud stood tall, in victory, raising her ship, her sails, her veils and her webs she laid on the surfaces of the oceans, and then it all sunk.

There were giants in the clouds. They were clouds themselves, filled with fire. Sud held another skull in her arms, the skull of a pirate she once defeated. He had a hospital-ship, a feared ship of the dead, where he had chained souls to do heavy slavery. Sud was staring at the skull. Suddenly she spat on it and threw it into the oceans into the webs …. Then she dived into the oceans herself …. Her webs were now the bottoms of the oceans …..

Sud had a psychedelic mind. She lived in many worlds at the same time …. Like worlds beyond the fairytale …. In horror and blood …. She swam all her way to the nearest island, where she rose out of the blood and mud ….. Then she lay on the sand for awhile ….. The beaches were white here ….. Men stared at her …. They were surprised …. Where did she come from ? Who was she ? She took her knife and slayed them all …. All these bastards with their sunglasses ….. They watched the blood for too long ….

The End

Sud – Hell Fiction

Old Indian Masks

In the distance a warrior walks … It's a woman …. Brown skin ….. with a sword, bow and some knives …. Then she creeps through the dirt …. She needs to hide, as sounds of the enemy are coming near ….. It's another tribe, full of boasters ….. At nights they have their sacred parties with their sacred masks ….. Masks of old indians ….. The woman is safe behind some bushes …. She stares at them through the leaves …. Then she shrieks all of a sudden, like a battlecry, jumps through the bushes and attacks them ….. slaying 300 of them ….. Then it gets silent again ….. while she eats from their meat, and drinks their blood in haste …. She's a savage ….. She has sold herself to the hunt ….. She is Sud ….

She has a bloodthirst …..No one seems to quench it ….. She's all alone …. She doesn't live with humans nor animals ….. All she wants to see is the blood streaming, as she hates this world …. This world called hell …. She hates herself and everyone around her ….. But a strange flame inside lets her live …. She hates this flame and tries to destroy it all the time ….. But it comes to her in flashes of love ….

Within a few hours she finds their camps …. Takes the masks and runs for days and days ….. Then she finally reaches the fire, throws the masks in it, and then steps into it herself to change into stone …. It's a strange brown stone …. It is alive, it can move …. It can become soft ….

She is all by herself ….. Her name, Sud, stirs up fear in the hearts of her enemies …. She is merciless …. When she uses her bow she aims directly at their hearts and she never misses ….

Slowly she steps out of the fire again, and then runs into another direction, heading for the hospitals of hell …. When she enters these huge buildings made of bones she hears a lot of weeping and screaming. It often gets loud, and then it fades away again. She is on her way to the feared skeleton-boss of all these hospitals, Wazeikrik. When she finally finds him she beheads him and screams loud. Wazeikrik is only smiling, taking up his head again, which is his skull, while smoke comes out of his mouth and a lava beam strikes Sud … She can escape it by pushing her leather shield against the beam. It's a strange sort of leather … Skin she ripped off from a horrible beast …. It's immune against fire and lava …. Then she jumps forward and kicks the skeleton, who starts to laugh louder. He has a chain in his hand by which he has enslaved millions and millions of lost souls …. He tortures them in these hospitals …. Making it worse and worse …. It is hell …. At nights they have to work for him ….. When it's day they try to sleep while he whips them …. He's a lord of Hell. Wazeikrik is

a mean bastard without any conscience. He doesn't have knowledge, only a sort of device or instrument by which he rules them all …. Sud tries to get it out of his hands, but then he kicks her right in her stomach and she falls down. Then he jumps on her and takes a bite.

'No one likes you here, Sud,' Wazeikrik roars. 'Even the slaves think you're an intruder.' Then he pushes some buttons on his device while the souls around her are screaming louder. 'I grill them,' Wazeikrik laughs …. 'They think you are the baker, coming to slay them for the bread on the table.'

Sud doesn't say anything. She almost can't move, while this heavy weight is on her. He licks her like a dog and laughs again. 'Good idea, right ? About the hospital …. It pays …. I'm having a good time ….. And the birds of hell have a good restaurant ….. I keep them alive …. I don't torture them to death …. I let them work, so that they keep produce juices and meat ….,' he roars ….. 'Simple as it is … The decisions are mine, as I'm having certificates …'

Sud knows about the certificates …. They are demonic spirits ruling in hell …. They worship these certificates as they are the tables of law …. Who doesn't worship them don't eat ….. That's why Sud is always hungry ….. She needs to live from the darkness ….. 'I spit on your certificates ….' Sud screams and spits in the face of the skeleton …. Then he takes her in a tight grip …. 'Now don't get mean,' he sais …. 'You don't like what I will do then ….'

She tries to escape from his tight grip, but there is no way. He tries to break her neck and suddenly she slides away like a dead soul …. It's like everything in her is dying …. He is her burden ….. She sees the certificates, the demonic spirits, flying around her, mocking her. Then suddenly a beam of lava comes out of her mouth tearing them apart …. They are screaming and in one flash Sud stands on her feet again, and smashes the skeleton against the wall. 'They are asking for some lunatics in circus,' she said. 'I think you fit that suit.' Then she throws him out of the window, where he falls into a lake. Crocodiles devour him, while he screams. 'Still worshipping certificates ? They're gone !' she screams. 'Gone, forever.' But then some other flying certificates attack her, and she falls down. They have struck her neck with poison. They hold feathers, and look like old indian masks. 'I should have thrown you into the fire,' she whispers loud …. A small thing is ticking close to her … It looks like a clock …. She takes it up and throws it at the certificates, but they fly away …. Then she stands on her feet again …. Suddenly the crocodiles in the lake are exploding …. Wazeikrik is coming alive again. This time she runs out of the hospital into the wilderness. She knows she has wounded him deadly ….

Hell is full of hospitals …. Prisons ….. made by skeletons …. And ruled by them …. Together with demonic spirits …. The certificates …. Tables of the law …. The mark of Wazeikrik …. They are worshipping this mark …. These marks are old indian masks ….

Tribes worship these certificates in the depths of the wilderness …. As they are making lots of slaves …. These masks are strong and mean ….. They bring forth strange glues …. The glues of zombification …. By which they take the minds of their victims over …. It's some sort of poisonous drunkness ….

She smiles … She tries to get rid of her thoughts of Wazeikrik …. He's dead now, in her sense …. And she needs to forget about him …. Starting a new life …. But soldiers of Wazeikrik are all around …. What about the depths of hell ? Where they have their rites, worshipping these masks …. And what do they mask ? …. They look like birds so tall …. Aggressive birds …… birds of fight …. What are they hiding ? It's like a stone on a grave …. They are the gatewatchers …. Hiding the old mysteries, and the doorways to life …. They are the porters of hell …..

It's dark … Sud is rising from her grave …. She is veiled …. Veiled by the fleeces of death and spiderwebs of torture …. Then she screams ….. She runs back to the hospital …. But it isn't there ….. Tall spiders grasp her …… A skeleton laughs at her …. He's the boss of hell's psychiatry ….. But beware of the dentist ….

Skeletons are dancing around her …. Spiders spit their venom in her, as she is sinking deeper …. The certificates deny her …. They do not have knowledge …. They rule by devices ….. They are autists ….. These autists grow in the darkness …. Like strange stone becoming so hot …. When anyone touches it, they burn forever ….. But beware of the dentist …..

Hell's dentistry is psychiatry, a prison ….. Ruled by unknown skeletons …. They have horses too high …. No one has ever seen them …. They have veiled hell by their touch ….. They install their slave-implants ….. And then deny all the pain …. They are the rulers of those of no hope ….

Sud thinks she's getting crazy …. Masks lay all around her …. When she touches them they burn …. She takes her sword and slays …. Slays ….. until she discovers ….. who she slayed ….. She roars in darkness …. She's in blindness ….. In a deep pain …. Once denied …. Give me money, the skeleton said …. No stories about us doing things wrong …. There's nothing wrong with those implants …. It brought you to hell …. And now you are here ….. So just give us the money …. Worship us …..

'No,' Sud was screaming …. While they were planting more implants in her chest …. Hell's dentistry was about deep implants throughout the whole body ….. There was no return ….. She tried to slay them by her sword, but she couldn't …. These guys were invisible …. They

had a hold on her body …. 'The more blood you take, the more blood we take …. The more thirsty you become …. It was a vicious circle …..

'Get me out of here,' she screamed ….. But they sealed her ….. And if she would cry …. More implants would dive into her skin …… Only to make it worse ….. The implants would scream in her head …. It paralyzed her, breaking her nerves ….

She was cursing, screaming and yelling, but inside she knew she had wounded them deadly …. As when she was alive …. She had spit her venom deep enough to do the work …. It was only a matter of time ….. She was the wing of victory ….. She had been programmed to struck their hearts before she would fall …. And she never missed in that ….. She had her magical bow ….. the Qeshet ….. A speaking bow ….. with arrows of pure poison …..

She heard screaming and laughing …… And she saw signs above their heads ….. Then they fell down, and all got black ….. Then brown, then red ….. while blood was streaming …… She had been zombificated for so long ….. At the stake while savage indians danced around her, yelling at her, screaming at her, laughing at her, and controlling her mind ….. They were having the switcher of her soul ….. But they had fallen now …. She roared ….. What had happened to her head ? Who was she ? All she knew she was free now …. She had escaped from this spider's farm …. The venom lost it's working …. She pierced herself a way through the flies and the wasp …. So many insects try to sting her to get a last grip …. She was sinking away, but then rose again, holding her bow into the air …. Shouting : Qeshet ….. She had reached victory now ….. by revolution …. The doctor's church was under her feet now ….. She wouldn't be merciful to her victims ….

No one would take her for a sinner again ….. She was shouting while blood was streaming …. She took the whip and made her way out ….. She was burning ….. Her stone was coming alive ….. Her fertility ….. Snakes were following her ….. She was the big Sud ….. She was screaming : Azura …. He was the god before Wazeikrik took the depths of hell over. And Azura had sent his spirit Shaosha, and his son Qeshet, the bow, to save hell …. But Wazeikrik let them sink into oblivion.

Sud was raising her bow again, the one who once had sunk, just like her ….. She pierced a way through the mud, reaching for the eternal city …. She found a skeletongod on a small throne and beheaded him by her sword …..

The End

Judgement Day

Vacuumcleaner was a girl, everyday ascending into the depths of hell to save children out. Washing Machine was a girl living locked up in the underground below hell. One day Vacuumcleaner reached this area and set her free. Since then they worked together. The boss of hell was Kitchener, another girl. One day both Vacuumcleaner and Washing Machine had to appear before Kitchener, the boss of hell. She was very mad, attacked them both and devoured them. Since then all children had to eat soap in hell. But since then also more and more washing-powders and soaps seemed to live in hell. And strangely it also attracted a lot of dirt. The strange mixes between soaps and dirt started to become chocolate. It started to stream through hell and started to cover everything. Soon there were two new genders in hell : money and medicin. Soon there was a war in hell, and the new boss was a girl named Hospital. She invented a washing-powder totally made of licorice. It attracted licorice flies from everywhere, and there was a new war in which the licorice flies invaded hell and took everything over. The children were all in chains now. But it finally led them out of hell.

But out of hell : He was the Lord of Mars, a hooded skeleton, black garment, having his own empire, a communistic one. He was on top of the communistic food chain. It was a strange religion he preached. They all worshipped a fish, and if not they would be killed. There were many slaves. He was as a prophet guiding the lambs. He had pierced their bones, also of their legs, by which they were bound to heavy chains. There was dust everywhere.

They worshipped the fish for chemical reasons. It would give them the hormones to have some fun in their lives, some pleasure, and it kept them healthy. The skeleton lived in a huge gamble machine, and you could only approach them by gamble games.

Prisoners descended into so-called owl-prisons, where owl-demons would start their torment, in creepy black boxes. The screams were filling the black sky, it was judgement day.

The Secret of the Apple People

The guards of the witch were in the city, there where the king lived on a hill. They came to bring the spell. Everyone of the city would soon turn into stone. The watchers of the witch knocked on all the doors, and stuck a piece of paper on the doors. The witch would not change her mind. Slowly the people turned into stone. The king was in panic. He called for his advicers, but none of them knew what to do. There was nothing they could do. But soon someone read in an old book that only the apple people would have a solution to it. They would have the power to break the spell. But no one knew where such apple people would live. The guards of the king brought the news into the city, and asked if anyone knew where the apple people would live.

An old woman told them that the apple people were locked up under the castle of the witch. The king sent some guards to the castle of the witch to get them out. After long searching they found the apple people living there in the underground. They were beautiful. But they lived there chained and in cages. Suddenly the witch showed up and struck the guards of the king by lightening. Some turned into stone, while others could run away.

They went back to the king and told him how beautiful the apple people were. Again the king sent them back to the castle. But the guards of the witch had overguarded the castle now. They were all marching with their swords and spears, like knights, doing strange dances. It brought fear into the hearts of the guards of the king, but when they got back to the king, the king got very mad. ‘Get me the apple people, or we will all turn into stone too soon. We have not much time.’ Although the guards of the king were already of stone, they could still move, but everything got slower. The king was shouting, and soon they went back to the castle again, and waged a war against the watchers of the witch. One of them could enter the castle, and ran to the underground. He still knew the way. But soon the witch stood before him.

‘Please witch, have mercy on us,’ he wept. But the witch chained him also. Soon he was among the apple people, and had to do a lot of slavery. He realized that he was changing into an apple man himself. One day a friendly watcher of the witch set him free. He didn’t know why, but he just enjoyed and accepted his freedom. He ran back to the city, and to the king. They were all of stone now, but as soon as he touched them they could move. They became juicy again, but soon they were soft as water and started to stream towards the sea. It was like there was another curse on them. The apple man started to read in the books if he could find anything about that, and finally he read that only a golden apple would be able to break the spell. He took some goldpaint and painted himself. But nothing happened. The people were still melting, and becoming like the waves. The apple man decided to return to the castle of the witch. When she saw him she was shocked and screamed : ‘You have found the secret.’ The witch turned into a flame, and soon the castle was also melting, and the apple people became free, and many of the watchers of the witch. The sea however was growing bigger, so they all went towards the hill of the king where they would be safe. On this hill they built a boat, and the golden apple man became their king.

The Rabbit King

‘I wished I was more like you,’ said the rabbit to the cow. ‘With such nipples you could feed the whole world and be it’s king.’

‘Tell you what,’ said the cow, ‘I am a magic cow. If you listen carefully to me I can grant you such nipples.’

‘Okay,’ the rabbit said. ‘Whatever you want.’

‘Go to the hill,’ said the cow, ‘where a lion has a painful skin. Scratch it until the pain is gone, and your hand will turn into gold, which is the first step to get such nipples.’

The rabbit obeyed the cow, found the hill and the lion on it and started to scratch. It was a very big lion, so it took a long time, but after this both hands of the rabbit were of gold.

The rabbit returned to the cow with a smile and showed the golden hands. ‘Now milk me,’ said the cow, ‘for I haven’t been milked for a long time.’

The rabbit milked the cow, and a precious juice flew forward from it.

‘Now drink it,’ said the cow, ‘and bring also some of this precious juice to the king and queen on the other side of the hill.’

Again the rabbit obeyed the cow. It was a long journey across the hill for it was a huge hill. But the lion helped the rabbit, to take him on his back. The queen and king were very glad with the precious juice. It healed them from their diseases. They gave a lot of treasures to the rabbit, and with jewelry he came back to the cow with even a bigger smile than before.

‘Give me the treasures and the jewelry,’ said the cow. ‘Adorn me, and take me to the king and queen, so that they will be assured of milk for always.’ The rabbit did what the cow asked, and took him to the king and queen.

‘This is the cow with the precious juice,’ the rabbit said, while suddenly his nipples began to grow, and juice started to flow from it. The rabbit was very graceful. Also the lion came to look at it. The king and queen thought it was a miracle for they had never seen such big nipples with so much juice. When they became old and when they died the rabbit became the new king. He could feed the world now. But although there wasn’t no thirst anymore, there was still a lot of hunger. So the cow said : I am a miracle cow, just slay me, and the whole world will have enough meat forever. The rabbit obeyed the cow and did what the cow said, and slew it. The lion would bring the meat all over the world. Since that day no one got older anymore, and no one died.

The Three Hearts

There was a mountain village where they had to serve a weeping heart. The women had to spin the tears of the heart into time, so that they would be safe against the dark all-eating heart. If they wouldn’t serve the weeping heart, the heart would get mad and turn black also. The people always lived in fear. But the people became so tired and ill that at one point they couldn’t serve the heart anymore. This caused the black heart to show up, and the people started to eat each other. It caused a purple heart to show up, weeping even more, and promising to lead the people out when they would put their trust in it. It started to separate people from each other, and a green heart showed up to bring joy to the people.

Harmony on the Hills

Once there were four genders : man, woman, child and old. There was no aging, just four genders, to balance each other. The children and the old were more like hermaphrodites, but far beyond it, they had their unique gender. They both lived very close to animals, and they were much sweeter than the man and the woman. Because they had so much magic the man and the woman became very jealouse, and they set up a conspiracy. They set up a honey trap, poisoned honey. Since then the children and the old lost their magic, and became either man or woman. It was the downfall of nature, a corrupted form. The children and the old became very sick, and aging started to set in, in which the old would eat it all. The old became the eaters, taking everything over, sooner or later. That was their revenge, and the children became the mockers. They could go along together very greatly, and really loved each other, but the man and the woman they hated.

Once a child found a nest in the forest, full of licorice and chocolate flies. The child ran away, but the flies followed the child and stang it severely, to make the child one of them. They followed the child to the child's city, and stang the others as well. They saw how the city was ruled by men, so they made the men weak, so that the woman would rule. And the man would become a child again, until he would have been eaten away by the old. And the licorice could heal the child gender, and the chocolate the old gender. And there was harmony on the hills.

World of Violins

Once the elf and fairy were both genders themselves, being no man nor woman. They were like angels of an ancient gender. The woman was a jealous gender, and once she sent herself out to trap the elf by her love. She knew the elf was sensitive to love, so she seduced the elf, and by the poison the elf became male. The male elf became full of vengeance, for he felt bound by the woman, bound by her love. And he got jealouse of the fairy, for the fairy seemed to be free. So he made a poison, and shot an arrow in the heart of the fairy, who turned into a woman. 'If this the woman who can set me free ?' the elf asked. 'Is this the

woman I can bind to myself ?' But the new woman could not help him, only giving him hope. There was another gender : the witch, and no poison could make it man or woman. But the witch was unreachable. And the witch came closer to shine it's light through man and woman, and they couldn't grasp it. And the man and the woman waged war on each other because of their frustrations, until there was nothing left anymore of the old elf and fairy.

And the fish was the genderless and the bird the genderful and they both guarded the path to the ancient. It was here where the child and the old ruled, two genders, all by a violin, shining their light through the woman. The man here had to bow at the feet of the woman, who showed him the child and the old, two lost genders. They still lived in the storms, from where they ruled an old world. It was a world of violins.

Washing Machine Girl

There was once a dirty world, with a dirty gender, neither man nor woman, and it ruled. Clean didn't exist. And from the depths of dirt came up chocolate, and many chocolate flies, and they spread lights in the world. And also the old was a gender, and they had relationships with the dirty gender. There was also a third gender, the child gender, and there was no aging. It seemed to be an eternal world. It was a dark world, and from the depths of darkness came licorice and many licorice flies. The dark gender was the fourth gender of this world. And the licorice flies spread their treasures and jewels in the world.

But one day there was a new gender, called the washers, and they came to wash, but the old world was burning away. And there was much fear and pain, and aging started to set in, and disease. And another gender rose : death, and another : torture. And torture became the ruler of this new world. And one of the old gender had a gun and shot the new king one day. And he became a washer himself, knowing that all trouble started there. And by his magic he could make washers of the dirty, of the dark, of the children and of his own gender. And the magic

made sleepers of them. And in dreams they were washing by dirt, trying to get their old world back. But the rest of torture and death held them back.

It was war, a new gender, finally helping them. The war gender invented a new washing powder, and it was so delicious that the old gender started to sell it as food, and it could also be used as clothes. It was the day the washing machines came to the world.

Revenge of the Onaks

short horror

She was locked up in a computergame. She once played it, but she couldn't find her way out. She had cried oceans of tears, but now she got to live with it. It was a strange game, she didnt like it, but she played it for hours. Now what would she do ? There were only monsters here, maybe they could tell her how to get out.

Her brother is still searching for her, they lived together, in an old house. It used to be from their parents, but they died long ago.

The Onaks were green slimy monsters of the game, and when she first played it, they attacked her heavily, but now she was in the game itself, they didn't attack her so much anymore. They needed to live with her too. They talked in a language she didn't understand. They were big and hairy, and sometimes they offered her some food, but she didn't like it. It was like old food ... The smell was so strange here, like a room which never saw daylight. It was a dark game, and she had problems with breathing.

One of the Onaks took her on it's back. It was one with wings, and they flew to a dark castle high in the skies. It was surrounded by floating caves, and the air was dark green. The Onak had a wife, she was cooking in the kitchen at the back of the castle. The Onak showed her all the rooms of the castle, and the undergrounds. There were so many treasures here.

Suddenly she saw a child standing in one of the pathways. She got in a light shock seeing this, for the child was not an Onak, but more like her. The child had a red garment, standing with a doll, so sad. The girl started talking to the child, but the child didn't understand. Then the Onak started to talk to the child in the strange language. They seemed to understand each other, and the girl saw the love between those two. The Onak gave a sign to follow him to the kitchen. The child was walking with them. Dinner was ready and they started to eat. It was such strange meat, and the girl got hot inside. She wondered what sort of meat it was. The Onak gave a sign to follow him again, and this time they went deep underground with an elevator. She heard all sort of noises becoming stronger and stronger. She heard shrieks and screams. When the door of the elevator got opened she saw a ball of fire hanging in a cave while beings were working. On the walls she saw beings like her hanging, but they almost looked like trees. So this was the strange meat, she was eating her own people ?

Suddenly the Onak took her by her neck and lifted her in the air. She got hanged there too, while she screamed and shrieked. She lost her consciousness because of the shock. When she woke up the child was standing before her with the doll. The girl was shivering for what she saw in the eyes of the kid. These eyes were full red, almost spitting fire. `You are destined to bring forth Onaks,'the kid said loud' They will be born out of tree-like beings, but the ball of fire knows how to breed you into that. When you refuse, you will be the meat we eat. Escape is not possible.'The girl said : Ýes, I will bring forth Onaks, everything you say.'Good,' the kid said.' Then you must eat much slime.

The girl was screaming again. Slime wasn't her favorite food.

Suddenly she woke up, it was all but a dream. Her brother was standing before her, holding her hand. `You were very sick'he said. 'The docters didn't know if you were going to make it. They said you produce way too much slime in your body. The girl stood up and ran to the computer. Her brother had played a game : 'Revenge of the Onaks.` He liked the game very much. The girl yelled at him that she got a nightmare about it. The girl went back to sleep, while her brother shook his head and played further.

The girl got a dream again. This time she was all alone in the Onak's kitchen, together with the Onak's wife. There was no way out of the kitchen and she had to drink much green slime. She asked : What sort of slime is this ? Then the Onak's wife walked towards the girl with a knife in her hands. She layed it against the throat of the girl and blood was coming forth, but also slime. 'It is the slime of those who do not want to produce Onaks.

'Now who were the beings working around the ball of fire ?'the girl asked ... The woman started to grin and said : 'When you are old, you do not have to produce Onaks anymore, then you can work around the ball of fire.'

`And the child who's with you ?'the girl asked ...

The woman spoke : Hard workers can become children again. When this child is old enough, it will produce Onaks again ...

So it is an eternal circle of this stuff ? the girl asked ... Is there any escape ?

The woman hit her fist on the table and started to wave with the knife : There is no escape, unless you become an Onak yourself. The ones refusing to have part in the circle will become meat as you know.

'Then cut me into pieces,'the girl shouted, 'for I am rather dead than being part of this stupidity.'

`As you wish,'the Onak said, and suddenly all sorts of Slimy small Onaks came forward, out of the cupboards, and started to cut and eat her.

When the girl woke up, the docter stood in front of her bed, smiling : 'There is no overproduce of slime in your body anymore, miss, I think we can take you off from the medicine now.' he said. The girl smiled. She was so glad the strange trip had come to an end ... She came out of bed to play the new game of her brother. It was a good game, full of Onaks, but they didn't look like any of the Onaks from her dreams.

THE END

Lord of Insects

psychological sf

Chapter 1 Marazanta

The waspian ships in purple and yellow were attacking earth. There was a man called Schneider who wanted to cooperate with the waspians. He wanted to ask them what their mission was. Schneider was an enemy of earth himself. Born in a woman's womb, but always feeling a stranger ... Like he was kidnapped to this place. He could never settle, and was always terrorized by the atmosphere. Nature gave him a lot of allergies, and his face was like a skindisease itself. People always mocked him or were very scared of him. His muscles were very huge, like his whole appearance, and people always used to call him "The Giant".

He wanted to know why the waspians were attacking, for finally he thought someone understood him ... He always wanted to attack the earth .. He wanted to take revenge. He saw that the waspians were very accurate in their strikes .. They didn't attack forests or villages, but they were mainly aimed at governmental and capitalistic bases. It seemed that they didn't like the set up, like he didn't ...

Schneider was a very aggressive man, not allowing people in his neighbourhood very often. He wanted to cooperate with the waspians, to ask them what their mission was. But it seemed they didn't take notice of him at all.

The waspians had a mind at their own and were very straight in their plans. It seemed they were against earth's money-circulation, which was a very chaotic electricity in their eyes. It wasn't accurate according to their standards, and they saw it more as a terroristic base which needed to be destroyed.

Their technology was from a high sense, called hi-sense. They could easily follow all the conversations of governmental groups, and it seemed they were also against the present fiscal systems. They called it paper-dictatorship by ripped tree-electricity ... they wanted to reduce the use of paper.

These were all statements of people who claimed they were abducted by their ships, but no one really had direct contact to the ships .. It seemed that the waspians were a very individual group, not wanting to have any insiders from earth. Why were these humans abducted ? That was the big question.

Schneider had never been abducted, but he desperately wanted to have a sightseeing in their ships. He worked in an observatorium, but they didn't have much succes in planetary communication.

There was another man called Andriessen. He was in all sort of governmental organisations, and you can say he was one of their topmen. He was in all sort of scientific discussions about how to destroy the waspians and their bases. Andriessen was a man, let's say the opposite of Schneider. He wanted to bring the earth through the cocoon of the New World Order. He was one of the richest men of the world, a real capitalist. He was engaged in the worldwide project called A United World, AUW. He wanted to be the coming worldleader. There were already elections planned, and all the continents of the world had to be engaged in this circle of peace, or they would be destroyed by the army of AUW. There were several countries who didn't want to be part of this project, so these ones were put on a list of ultimatums. Andriessen was a very aggressive way, and on that point he looked like Schneider.

One night Andriessen was abducted by the waspians. He got threats on his head, that if he wouldn't finish his stupid plans, they would destroy him and his stubborn followers. They

were putting ultimatums on his head, and showed him further all consequences of his plans. Andriessen who wasn't a paranoid personality swept it away as a bad dream, and continued his speeches. He had the most followers in the world, because of his sweet promises. He was a big bragger in Schneider's eyes, although sometimes it was like he was looking into a mirror, when he saw the aggressive ways and etiquettes of Andriessen, and in a sense he was enjoying that, but he couldn't explain why.

Andriessen's plans were very straight, and he didn't allow any criticism ... Criticals needed to be burnt, in his opinions. He wanted to be on the highway of worldwide changes, and all the hindrances needed to be kicked off the road ... Schneider could see the humor in this all, and in a strange sense he started to like Andriessen, although he would never vote for this type of guy.

The waspians were in rage. Everything looked like to come into the hands of this man called Andriessen, and they sent their ships to destroy some of his bases. Now the waspians weren't terrorists. They could destroy buildings and skyscrapers, and save any possible victim or innocent one out of it. They had their special ways for that. Their electricities and strange fires were programmed to only touch the guilty ones. But Andriessen was under heavy protection. Andriessen worked with high technology too. Almost all scientific bases of earth were in his hands. His plans was to bridle all organisations, families and countries who were against his plans, and he proved by this how powerful money could be. He promised heaven to his followers.

While the technology against the waspians grew, the waspians were almost totally blocked in their operations. They decided to infiltrate among the human beings to get more grip on the society, even if that would weaken their individuality. They didn't want to have any serious contact with these human beings, but they realized that they didn't have any other choice. By their special womb-cocoons they connected to the wombs of a million woman-wombs on earth, and a new generation of waspian children settled itself on earth.

These children had purple-yellow eyes, were very aggressive and untamable. Schneider worked part-time in an institution for these sorts of kids, for he could understand these ones so deep. He always had a heart for aggressive children who couldn't be handled. Of course these children didn't want to be a part of the new world order all controlled by a group of fools.

The kids were very wise and intelligent. They wanted to be free and to be taken serious. They were wild like nature, and didn't want to have anything to do with expecting and tight etiquettes of this strange place called earth. They were programmed by a tight mission. They could look at the small things of nature like wasps and bees for hours and hours. The kids were mocked horribly by other sort of children, and it wasn't possible for them to go to the usual schools. The waspian children wanted to have their own appropriate education.

Schneider liked to listen to their stories. In many senses they were his teachers. And the things he felt so insecure about in usual life, were the code of acceptance and admiration here, among these kids ... Schneider told them a lot about Andriessen and his plans, and the kids were about to go to Andriessen for a good conversation. But Andriessen refused.

It was like the attitude of Andriessen was really breeding more and more rage in the hearts of the children, but on the other side, the kids liked to see Andriessen's rage. It was like Andriessen was inspiring them, but in a totally different direction.

The Waspians in their ships followed the kids every step they took, but they couldn't make any contact with them. This was always the law in the ships. They weren't allowed to breed relationships with human beings ... even not their own waspian sort. They lost enough individuality to send some missionaries to human wombs. The first time they did it was when Schneider was born. Schneider was actually one of them, but was sent to earth for research. They weren't in the position to contact him about that, but an invisible string always held them together. Andriessen was also waspian from origin, but he was a fallen missionary, losing himself in the wealths of the earth. The only thing he kept in his heart was the deep aggression, but he started to use it against his waspian roots, although he didn't know that he was a waspian, for they never told him.

But one day in a strange sense, Andriessen wanted to talk to the children, and wanted to listen what they had to say. They were invited to his office, and they started to tell him stories. He liked to see their aggression, and it was like all these kids were just on his side. He loved to see their purple-yellow eyes, and it would be a day he would never forget. It was like these children were distracting him to another sort of wealth ... the wealth inside, and the wealth of the story ... It was like these children were intoxicating him ...

The day after all of a sudden Andriessen started to dislike his fame. He became scared of all the attention, and it was like his aggression was turned into another direction .... the media .... How he could rage against camera's, microphones, magazines and their journalists ... It hurted him more than ever and he asked himself where he was doing it for .... It was like the children had enchanted him .... He suddenly started to see the beauty of nature and isolation, of deep forests and his inner world, and he started to desire his youth-fantasies back .... It was like he suddenly missed his childhood, like he had lost it through the years ...

He came into a fight, an inner struggle, for the election-days came closer and closer and also the ultimatums the waspians gave him ... Although he thought it was all just a nightmare, he never forgot about it .... It was like there was always a hidden shadow of this experience following him wherever he went ... recording all his words, attitudes and etiquettes, all his movements, visions and thoughts ... It was like deep inside he knew about all the plans and desires of the wasps ... and it was tearing him inside ...

But he was sure of it now .... He now discovered the biggest threat on earth ... the media ... with all their reporters .... Andriessen had tight plans now ... Tighter than ever .... The media needed to be destroyed ..... And because of his worldwide power he spreaded an ultimatum for the media throughout the world .... They needed to find other jobs ....

There were more groups against the media, and soon the army was sent out to destroy their bases. Andriessen needed privacy and so did the rest of the world ...

Schneider smiled ... He was like proud of the kids and Andriessen .... The kids told Andriessen that they wanted to have more cartoons on tv, and good education by this tool ... And it was like Andriessen became more and more a tool in the hands of these kids ..... Andriessen started to talk more and more like a kid, and adult-behaviour was in his eyes the next threat that needed to be rooted out. So another ultimatum was sent out into the world ... Everyone had to stop play games of adults, and if not, he would destroy their bases by the army. The army was mesmerized by Andriessen. Mostly because of his money, for he was still one of the richest men in the world. Andriessen needed more and better cartoons, and so did the whole world ...

It was like the whole world was growing more and more waspian, but other sorts of insects started to attack the waspian bases in the air ... The waspians were desperate, for they knew that if they would lose the war, these insectians would take over the world. And these were very severe insectians.

The leader of the waspians stood up ... It was an old male waspian, looking like an old man with long shiny white hair and a long long shiny white beard. He had a shiny dark blue suit which looked like a pyama's, and there were white star-constellations embroidered on it ... He was an old waspian veteran .... A very wise and old wasp. There wasn't much contact between him and his workers or soldiers, for he lived quiet isolated ... and always when he stood up, the waspians were all ears, for they respected, honoured and feared him deeply. This time he was a bit paniced and he was screaming in high vibrations, breaking a lot of invisible head-attacks. He screamed at the helmet-developers that they had to invent better helmets otherwise they would lose the war. He predicted that if they would lose the war, they all had to become exiles ...

The waspian ships were computer-based even their suits and organs ... They lived in a cybernetic atmosphere, and they had to update their virus-scanners and anti-virus-walls regularly otherwise they would lose their structures. There were many engineers aboard, and all the new scanners and walls were first accurately tested ... There were many inspectors for that .... and the conditions were very very high .... There were wounds in the heads of almost all the waspians, erasing a lot of memory out of their data-bases .... It was like a disease was spreading in the ships .....

They had divided the universe into halls, where they did experiments, where they had their factories, and their other projects ... These halls were called "The Cocoons" .... They believed in evolution and transformation ... This was the purpose of these cocoons ... They had waspians called "dominions" and "divisions" who were the watchers of these cocoons. They had based these cocoons on their pure scriptures ... But these scriptures said that they themselves were also in a cocoon, and not all these cocoons were good for them ... These scriptures predicted that one day they would meet the bosses of these cocoons in which they themselves were prisoned. They were in a fight against an insectian race now from which they fought they were their masters in negative sense ... for they discovered very quickly that the technology and hi-sense of this enemy was higher than theirs.

The old man was desperate ... This was the big big war predicted in their holy testaments ... the heritages of their gods and forefathers ... This was the big big Marazanta, the Great Waspian War, which they would lose. It was all written in their apocalypses what would happen, and it would be a bitter struggle for the waspian rage ... It would be a bitter cocoon which would mean the end of the waspian race ... Then there would be ages without wasps, and they would be in the nothingness for such a long time ... It would be boring like the driest desert, and it would bite like salt, until all their memories are erased and finding the bottom of that cocoon through which they can become ...waspian butterflies ... but still the Marazanta was a God for them, a good God, coming to bring them in the biggest shock for the biggest transformation. Yes, they still worshipped this Mysterious Being, The Marazanta, the Great Waspian War, the cruelest part of their holy books. No one knows who it really was, but this Almighty God was just using the higher insectian enemies as a tool to rule the kettle of metamorphosis. The Marazanta, still their Unknown Cocoon, this feared God, the inspiration of so many of their singers.

Marazanta,

Oh God of the Gods,

Marazanta,

Oh King of the kings,

Thou art mightier than a slave,

and mightier than it's boss,

Oh Marazanta,

Thou art holier than a slave,

and holier than it's bosses,

Oh Marazanta,

King of all purple kings

They were worshipping the thing they feared so much, something which was presented in their sacred art as a tall man totally covered in a purple garment with a cape. No one ever saw his face, and some even said he's faceless ... Some of the wasps had statues of him or paintings like a purple sort of ninja, surrounded by veiled dancing arabian women. The confrontation with this God would always be lethal, so he was also seen as the king of death. There were also a few ancient paintings of him on a white horse, surrounded by flames. Even these paintings were worshipped and were protected behind thick glass and bars in museums. These places were seen as sacred pilgrimages ...

The insectian enemies struck hard, and soon enough the ships were completely taken over by them ... They looked like wasps, but they had beaks, and their bodies were much more hairier. They had the power to decrease the size of the waspians, until they were so small that they could be laid into some sort of capsules as small as match-boxes ...

They would take the capsules to a sort of oven, in which the wasps would be transformed into new planets, but in these planets their souls would die ... The life of the new planet would prey on them, until they would be totally taken over, recycled and gone ... This would be a cruel cocoon, they would meet Marazanta, and die this way. This would be a slow way of getting older and losing everything. They would be the seeds on the planet-field, were the planets would rise like balloons, while they sacrificed their lives for it. But they knew, on the bottom of this cocoon, there would be a small gate to new life ... But that would take a long long time ... They were now in the hands of Marazanta Dementia, a strange insectian species ... These insectians were taller than them, thinner, hairier, and having the beaks of birds, while their technologies were much higher.

The dementia's had cocoons much more specialized than the waspians, and they even wore these cocoons in their bodies. They were the species who could determine and change the size and shapes of living nature. But they were also masters of illusion. Because of their hi-sense

tools they could also trick the senses like no others ... They were extremely thin, but the ones who watched them could easily think they were very thick, for they could switch the eye-indexes and translations. They knew that thick and thin were just illusions created by sight itself. The same as tall and short ... They were very tall ... but by messing the eye-standards up, they could appear as short ... And by this they could easily penetrate and control the souls they had in mind ...

They wanted to make everything childlike, but to let it more and more appear like old and grown up ... Another trick of illusion ... They were a spoilt race of insectians ... They more and more limited the lifetimes on earth, but they let it appear to be longer and longer ... It was a strange sort of joy they spread ... It was the curse of dementia .... All poles were getting masked by their opposites ... And this was the way how they could erase so many memories and standards, while humanity was thinking they were getting smarter and wiser ... The insectians were a backward-typed species ... Their works spread like a burning disease ... but humanity was thinking they became healthier .... They loved to hear how people were speaking in misleading poles, thinking they are too this and too that, and thinking it from each other, so that they could enter them by using the other pole ... They let earth's watchers see something at the left, while they were entering at the right. By planting deceiving images in the minds of people, their true images could penetrate deeper in their unconsciousness. These deceiving images were good distractions in their eyes.

They loved to make people insecure by switching the pole-indexes, and their laughs were like curses, paralyzing the brainfunctions, for the laugh releases stomach-energy to penetrate the mind to digest the pole-switching image, which is nothing more than a victim of dementia. This makes the laugh almost vampire number one on earth. And the joke is one of it's best manipulator. Dementia is the painter of a schizophrenic interpreter, spreading the jokes like bipolair prisons for passengers, food for other passengers, creating the suspense ... while dementia is growing, while everyone is thinking ... it's getting ..better ...

Dementia knows the wounds this system hits ... and then he creeps to the victim, having so much compassion, while making the wound worse than it is, to show an even bigger compassion, while the wound is ripping the whole body more and more ... so that dementia can now really grow into a saviour's position ... but it was only your best tax-master ... hiding behind a mask with many shades ... vultures included ... mask with ribbons ...

The switching of the poles can make you laugh or cry ... the laugh when you look at the other .... and the cry when you look at yourself .... the swing of the senses can make us into a criminal or a victim ... it's a dangerous playground after all ...

The laugh of Dementia, installing their fiscal circulations ... their cocoons .... turning you into another planet to spread their tax-hungry jokes .... they search for control and transformation for another .... but if it comes to themselves, they just want to cover their fears ....

These are tax-cocoons ... deeply programmed into humanity's eyes of the mind ... but one day there will be nothing to eat anymore ...

Dementia is heading for a hunger .... for one day the meat will be eaten .... and then they will realize ... they were just eating themselves ... For they were also just in someone else's cocoon .... Marazanta's ...

They worship Marazanta too ... for them it's a story of victory ... their victory .... but they also know .... Marazanta has many species .... There are pseud'epigraphic scriptures in their circulations about the coming of Marazanta, about their destruction ... and only the good ones will rise at the end of that cocoon ... There will be a new species erasing their memories and tax-etiquettes ... They will go to sleep for many ages ...

These ones will look like insectian horses or dogs ... they have bony crenated arms and legs at some places, and some places are very hairy .... some even look like deer ....

But there are many species of Marazanta ...

all in his cocoon ...

He's the Lord of insects ... Throning ... in Izu ....

Chapter II Rainboy

A boy was staring through his binoculars, while one glass was like a telescope and the other was like a microscope ... The sight was surprising ... the boy started to laugh .... He found it somewhere on a playground ... There were buttons on it .... a button to switch poles and colours ... It was like he could make his own movies with it .... He was walking with it while pushing the buttons .... He could change the whole world with it .... The boy felt like he was the king now ... but one day he lost the binoculars and couldn't find it anymore .... He got depressed ... and didn't want to do anything anymore .... He didn't want to sleep, didn't want to eat ... not going to school ..... And the parents brought him to a very friendly docter .... The docter immediately understood him ... It was like the rain had gone out of his head ... But the docter had some pills for him, called autistic pills .... They could switch the sights between the poles ... changing colours and even a lot more .... It was like the rain was falling again in his head ... and he was crying of joy .... It was like all his friends were back again ... the rabbit ... the squirrel ... the turtle ... he could all visit them again by these pills ... The docter said he just had to swallow two pills a day for a week, one in the morning and one in the evening, and when the week was over, he would never lose the sight again ...

The parents were so glad ... and praised Marazanta Autistia, the insectians who made their boy happey again ... For ... all docters were led by these insectians ... Above all they thanked Marazanta, the Lord of Insects, for His good gifts ... Now the boy could play in his big toy-room again, watching cartoon-education on tv, while his parents could do their work without bothering each other .... It was like there was so much thick space in the house again, thick walls, and much much breath ... Like nature was in the house again .... The Marazanta Autistia were childlike but very intelligent beings living in and outside the house ... They were representing the whole magical circle of energies and electricities they needed to live this life ... The poles were not mocking each other, but respecting each other, honouring each other and even worshipping each other ... They were cooperating ... and the switching between those brought another sort of joy ..... The boy was laughing and smiling .... in his ambient nature .... His laugh was like the joy of dolphins ... so severeless and innocent .... It was intoxicating to hear him laugh ....

Nobody would expect what a sinister man it would become when he would grow up ... But it was written in the scriptures .... He would face a war hanging above his head .... and he would have to fight for his family ....

Marazanta was very proud of the boy .... his rainboy ..... He created an ambient garden for him in some simple poles, to protect him against the tall and sharp poles outside .... the unknown .... But one day there would be a door out of the garden ... and then the boy would become one of them .... In the night Marazanta always brought some dark shadows to prepare the boy in his unconsciousness .... Layer by layer the armour was growing inside .... captivating the boy in a new capsule .... In daylight Marazanta sometimes showed him some of the tall dark shadows in the distance .... which the boy liked very much .... tall cowboys and indians on the wall .... were always the sidelines of the boy's fantasies .... He liked to see them shoot ... but it was only because of the pretty sounds .... for the boy didn't know what it meant ....

"Rainboy", his mother called him ..."There's food for you ..." Rainboy ran downstairs and was eating his custard .... It was strange custard .... like all sort of things mixed through each other .... Octopus, eliphant .... tigers .... bears ... but it was all fake .... Marazanta was preparing him for later .... Rainboy had to become a hunter ....

He would learn how to overcome the tall sharp poles, and how to use them as his arrows ... Marazanta was creating a quiver on his back for that goal ... It was now like a set of plugs, plugging him into many fantasies and games ... preparing him to spin the arrows .... He would have to fight the dementia's ...

Marazanta was also breeding the dementia's ... He wanted to let the autistia's and dementia's fight each other ... but in his eyes these were just trainings ...

Marazanta was an arena-master breeding gladiators for his shows ... tv-shows .... dressed up like talk-shows .... Marazanta thought this was the ultimate way to be not a part of the fight ... deep in his heart he was a big coward .... and he knew the biggest cowards became the biggest kings ...

Chapter III The Pencil

A boy was reading the propaganda magazine with different stories about Marazanta. One said he was a coward, the other said he was a hero, and someone else said he was the greatest fool of all times ... But the fact was ... tomorrow it was election-day .... and the boy still didn't know who to vote for ... Marazanta was one of the candidates ... and most of the people had very mixed feelings about him .... The fact was ... Marazanta didn't make any propaganda at all .... The media did ... Most people found him too mysterious to describe .... but he was in their thoughts all the time .... No one ever saw his face ... He was always dressed in a purple garment with a cape .... No one really knew what his message was, but the media was spreading all sorts of story which made it all very interesting ...

Marazanta always appeared on television, and then he was always like staring at something ... Not moving, while nobody could see the face in the cape ... And no one knew where the broadcast was coming from .... It just took the tv's over ... and the media was speculating

about it .... They found out they could make big business just to mention the name Marazanta and then letting people talk about him .... Or just publishing some old stories about him ....

The boy threw the magazine away .... he had something else to do than listening to all these nonsense .... It was raining .... he needed to be home at time to prepare himself for football .... But when he came into his room he got the shock of his life ... Marazanta was sitting there on his chair .... He couldn't see his face, while it was under that cape .... He didn't say anything, like he was staring at something .... Then he was aiming with a pencil at the t-shirt of the boy, and speaking : "From who did you get that t-shirt ?" His voice was lower than every voice the boy heard before ... And the boy started to laugh and said : "That's none of your business, now get out of my room." Suddenly Marazanta was gone ... And the boy started to think about the t-shirt : "Why did he ask about the t-shirt ? It's a t-shirt with a golden pencil on it, multi-coloured, I won it in the drawing-match of the bookshop ... The bookshop-owner gave it to me that day ..." But he needed to hurry up for the football-training ... He tried to forget about this stupid guy Marazanta ....

When he came back, Marazanta was back in his room .... again he was aiming at his t-shirt .... he wanted to buy the t-shirt ..... The boy said ... well, you can even get it for free ... I don't give anything about it .... the boy was putting off his shirt and hoped that he would leave .... Marazanta gave him a coin and left with the t-shirt ... The boy was watching the coin ... It was a coin with Marazanta's head on it .... "Strange coin", he thought ....

Marazanta went to Rainboy to give him the t-shirt .... The boy loved it .... and went to sleep ... Marazanta knew that there were insectians who could spit inkt in the minds of people ... to draw their fantasies ... by some sort of pencils ..... He wanted to prepare the boy for contact with them ... Marazanta Psychosia ...

Chapter IV. The Psychiatric Secret

"Sir, we really want to do everything to get these voices out of your head," the psyciatrist tells the man in deep compassion, "but we already tried all possible medicines on you, and it seems it's getting worse ... This what you have is a story-syndrom, and that's still incurable ... do you sleep good ?"

"No", the man tells, "but shall I tell you further about Marazanta ?"

"Eh, no, sir, I think it was enough for today, we will see each other next month again," the psychiatrist sais ...

When the man is gone ... the psychiatrist takes his little recorder out of his white jacket and smiles .... "hmmm ... another story to write down under a pseudonym, and to earn a lot of money with it .... I knew I chose the right profession ... I will keep telling this man that he's extremely sick ... I cannot miss him now ...."

The psychiatrist had already a book full of stories about this Marazanta, recorded from many visits of this special patient ... Within short time the book became a bestseller ... And everyone wanted to know when a second part of Marazanta would be published ... Within short amount of time the man himself also heard about the book ... and he was amazed ... "So there must be someone who gets the same voices in his head ..." he thinks by himself ... "And if a syndrom can write bestellers, then I doubt if it's really a disease ... It looks more like health ...." The man talks about it to the psychiatrist, who acts like he doesn't know anything about it, and paints the whole situation as pure coincidence .... But the man cannot be stopped ... He will stop coming here and will become an author ....

When the man comes home, Marazanta is sitting on his chair ... The man is very surprised .... "So you really exist, right ?" he asks ....

"Of course," Marazanta grins ... And he tells the man everything about the works of the psychiatrist ... That they are people who use another's creativity by telling someone is nuts, while they want to hear everything they have in their heads ... They are breeding their pencils by their denying and labelling etiquettes ... It's on the edge of mock, but it works .... But sometimes it also works into a suicide ... And this is what some psychiatrists really see as their inkpots .... It's their inspiration, and their conviction that it works .... It's actually and finally the blood of the patient by which these mothersuckers work ... Their little secret vampiristic suicide-press .... Their ...."

"Stop ! Stop !" the man screams, while soap is appearing on his mouth, "Stop ! For Gods good sake ! You are mocking my psychiatrist ... He was always a help for me, and I don't care if he would use my stories ... they weren't copyrighted at all .... Dear sir, I appreciate your visit but you go too far .... There are enough people who still think I'm crazy ... The psychiatrist never used that word ... and if he really did what you say now, then it's for me a huge huge honour, if I may say that ... and I think when I would publish it under my own name no one would buy it .... He can be my manager if he would like to be .... then that pseudonym can be me, and he can be the style to publish it .... He in his profession knows a lot about publications of course ..."

But Marazanta was already gone .... to never return .....

The man was desperate now ... for it was like he lost two friends this day .... Marazanta and the psychiatrist ..... And he got in such a depression that he called the psychiatrist again for another appointment ....

The man told the whole story .... while the psychiatrist was denying everything ....

Months went by but the voices in his head never returned .... Marazanta must have been very very angry ...

The psychiatrist got in big troubles because of this .... and got depressed too .... Now they sat in the waitingroom of another psychiatrist together .... And the man thought by himself what was going on ... Was it all because of him ? ... Or did the psychiatrist also felt left alone by Marazanta ?

The psychiatrist wanted to have a conversation with them both .... Finally he asked his fellow-psychiatrist to tell the truth about the books ... and with his head bown he explained

everything to the man .... Now would there never come a part II of Marazanta ? Everywhere people were waiting for the second part ..... but Marazanta had been gone ....

Many people got depressed ... It was like they were hungry for something which couldn't come .... And the waitingrooms of the psychiatrists got full .... Not of people with story-syndroms, but with people full of depressions .... even more and more psychiatrists seem to come there .... It was like their biggest buddy had left them .... Like the tv-show was over now .... And the number of working psychiatrists was getting lower and lower, so that there wasn't enough help, with the result of ever-growing depressions ....

The head-psychiatrists were complaining ... We need more people with story-syndroms .... but no, it already went to far .... Marazanta wasn't about to come back .... he would use his ink for a better place .... He went to rainboy to give him all his pencils ... With colours the boy never saw before ... It was wonderful, and some pencils had all sort of flavours .... He got a crown like a multi-coloured octupus spouting all sort of ink in his head .... and new fantasies started to roll ..... He was meeting Mazanta Psychosia, they were like pencils and octopuses ... but they were pure insectians ... like sea-insectians ...

So many things were happening in the head of the boy ... The octopus-crown was sucking and sucking, while spitting so many new lines of ink in him ..... It was like his head was exploding .....

Chapter V. The Octopus-Crown

A man was sitting in the psychiatrist's room ... "But why did you use us in this story ?" they asked .... "Well, I like to bring everyone in the story, also you," the man said ...

"Okay, stop !" the psychiatrist sais to the little girl ..."you now talked for an hour about all these identities in your head ? Do you know how we call this ?"

"No, sir, you don't understand," the girl sais ..."these things don't live in my head .... I just want to tell stories so that I don't need to go to school, but my mother thinks I am sick ..."

"But little girl, you are very very sick, for every healthy girl wants to go to school ..." the psychiatrist sais ...

"Well, that may be true, but absolutely not, when the teacher is telling strange stories ...." the girl sais again ...

"About what ?" the psychiatrist asks ...

"Well," the girl sais .."about maths, about stupid geography, stupid languages, stupid histories and so further ..."

"Oh, so he isn't nice ? Is he boring ?" the psychiatrist asks ...

"Well, you are all boring .... don't you know what kids want ?" the girl replies ...

"Well," the psychiatrist sais ....."of course, you want to make fun, but you need to learn at school ...."

"Why ?" the girl asks ....

"Because you need a profession when you are grown up ... and when you didn't learn anything then you can't make yourself a living ... Now do you want that ?" the psychiatrist bows a bit towards the girl ...

"My dear dear sir," the girl shouts, "I want to be a broadcastlady, a lawyer or a journalist, so I need to train myself in stories, you are really disgusting, sorry I have no other word for it ...."

The psychiatrist takes her by the hand and leads her to a cell .... "If you don't listen to us, we will keep you here ... you offended us enough with your stories .... and you need to swallow your pills for you are extremely ill" .... The girl is screaming and shouting .... and the psychiatrist is writing down some notes .... Then he locks the cell .... The girl is in tears ....

She screams : "I will all get you by my stories, don't be afraid .... I will expose all your hidden works .... You breed patients by your nonsense ... !"

Another boy is crying in his cell ... He also wanted to escape school by proclaiming he wanted to be an actor ... But they take him as sick .... "It doesn't help !" he shouts at the girl ..."They won't listen ... They see us as a threat ..."

"Then what can we do ?" the girl shouts back ....

"Will you marry me ?" the boy calls ....

"No," the girl screams ...."I don't want to be married ... and I think the best way is to become a psychiatrist and then lock them up !"

"No," the boy calls ..."you can never lock up a fellow-psychiatrist .... and maybe they are really protecting us against something .... at least we don't have to go to school ! Can you tell me some of your stories ?"

The girl starts to tell and after an hour the boy shouts out ... "these are exactly my stories .... where did you get them from ?"

The girl tells him she just fantasies them .... "and how do you get your stories ?" the girl asks ...."well, also just fantasying ..." he sais ....

"Well, how is it possible then that we fantasied the same stories ?" the girl asks ...

Suddenly Marazanta appears between their cells, while they are looking through the bars ... "Because of me," he tells ..... I give you these fantasies to prepare you for something ....

"For what ?" they shout ...

"I cannot tell you yet, but stay in your cells and just write, just write .... there is enough ink in your head ...." he sais ...

They are amazed .... and a bit in a shock ... "so do we also have the octopus-crown ?" the boy asks ...

"yes, just like rainboy," Marazanta answers ... "and one day you will meet rainboy ..."

"Wow," the boy shouts ... While the little girl is staring and she feels so dizzy ... Suddenly all colour is sucked out of her ... and it's like her face is all light blue ... and then she faints ....

The boy is afraid and asks Marazanta what happened ....

"The enemy," Marazanta whispers ... "the enemy" .... and then he disappears ....

When the girl wakes up she tells she dreamt about an enormous multi-coloured shark attacking her ... And finally when he was gone, she went to the portal of fantasy .... and everything got multi-coloured in colours she never saw before ... while the octopus-crown was spinning on her head .... She came into a pirateship ... moving over the clouds ..... It was so high in the air .... but not threatening at all .... the clouds were thick, and she saw little thin people swimming there ....

The boy said : I wrote another story about Rainboy while you slept ... do you want to hear ?

Chapter VI Marazanta Media

Rainboy was brought to a pirateship by Marazanta ... the octopus-crown was spinning on his head ..... he went through the portal of fantasy and everything was multi-coloured here .... There were little people swimming in the clouds were the ship was sailing ..... they made all kinds of strange movements which humans couldn't make .... and everything they did was strange and different but amazing to see ..... These creatures were called Marazanta Handicappia .... a beautiful sort of insectians like elves and dwarves, but there were also taller beings like giants ... Their surroundings were very soft in a sense .... It was like you could drown into the sight .... Everything was so fluffy here ....

"And then you woke up," the boy said .... "and you told almost the same ..."

"yes," the girl said ...."but shall we write further ?"

The way they talked to each other was charged by a strange sort of competition and jealousy ...

"Ok, stop," the movie-maker shouts ... "Narrator, stop talking ... it's enough for today ..."

It was a long movie-day .... They were working on the comeback of Marazanta, but it had to be complex and psychological ... The first movie was a worldwide success ... and now everyone was waiting for the next movie ....

A man was sitting in the chair of a psychiatrist ... smoking a cigar ... smiling ..... while the psychiatrist was sitting on the chair of his patient .... "Sir, this almost looks like MIS, multiple

identity syndrom ..... you strengle yourself in so many characters and scenes ... don't you get tired of this ?"

"No," the man sais ..."my wife teached me this ..."

"Oh, so she had also MIS ?" the psychiatrist asks .....

"No, no, and even me myself don't have that inside ... but let me tell further ... for dear sir, it almost looks like you take the words out of my mouth ..." the man said ..... and then he continued .....

The next day on the scene they had to do a lot of dress up ..... for now they needed to act a very special and dynamic species called Marazanta Persona Varia ... they almost looked like comics ...

The psychiatrist had enough of this and was sighing .... but he was glad enough that the science fiction was almost out of the story ... for that gave him so many headaches ... like he felt all kinds of beings entering his head .... Actually it was much too dangerous to listen to these stories ... But in a sense he had to admit ... the man knew a lot about sicknesses .... and he tried to show the good part of them ....

"Say," the psychiatrist asked ..."why do you come here actually ?"

"because I don't want to listen to the stories of my wife ... She speaks day and night ....." the man tells smiling ...

"Oh....but dear man, then I totally understand you ..." the psychiatrist sais smiling ... for I do this job so that I don't have to listen to my wife's stories ..... Now we finally found each other at the end of this conversation ..... We serve each other so to speak .....

And together they walk out of the hospital, for worktime is over .... They pick a good restaurant and tell each other the most wonderful stories ... with the most amazing identities .... all .... to escape their wives' stories .... It's like they talk against the clock ... for they know ... their wives are already waiting for them ..... "Shall we pick a good movie ?" the psychiatrist asks smiling .... "yes, yes, let's do that," the man grins ....

And then the woman stops telling .... "Now this was the story my husband came home with yesterday-night ...." she tells to the wife of the neighbour .... she laughs ....

"he likes to tease me .. but i said ... well you just forgot about one species of your insectians ....."

"well ? and was that ?" the wife of the neighbour asked laughing .....

"well .... Marazanta Drunkia ..." she sais .... while they both laugh ...

and then she continued .... : "But he said that he wasn't drunk, but that he got it somewhere from a magazine .... from a feministic magazine ... But that magazine told they had it from a docters' magazine ... etcetera etcetera .... But finally it appeared to come from a toy-shop .... but it was just from someone who left it there .... and they didn't know exactly who and from

who that story was .... and why .... etcetera etcetera .... So somewhere the information stops ...... and he got it in his head after reading ... so that was why he had to tell me .... But actually I was a bit shocked, especially about the last sentences about escaping wives' stories .... So I actually thought ... maybe he was trying to tell me something .... But anyway ... I was also very shocked about the fact that even a feministic magazine would publish that ... Or maybe they just liked the fantasy-side of it ... But then I thought .... they should have left that last part about men trying to escape their wives' stories .... What would be wrong with our stories ? .... Well maybe I really talk too much .... and maybe I need to listen more to his stories ..... but there is such a feeling of competition coming to the surface when he talks ..... a sort of jealousy, I don't know .... neighbour ? neighbour ? Gosh, she's already gone ... Well, maybe I have an insectian called Marazanta Hysteria hunting after me .... I don't know .... or Marazanta Dyslexia ..... maybe I turn everything upside down .... Maybe I'm just over-heated and I must escape my own stories ...."

She was like the octopus on his head .... He wanted to get rid of that crown ....

But there was also an octopus sitting on her head ... and she wanted to get rid of it ....

But it seemed the information stopped somewhere .... It was a story left in a toystop by someone .....

Everyone is trying to escape the other's stories ..... even when the stories look like each other ...

It's like there is a feeling of competition ... of jealousy .... but there's also something else ....

Can the media shut up their mouths for awhile ?

It's the gathering of the pencils ... It's the gathering of ink .... You can have your own Media-Crown on your head ... Marazenta Media ... isn't that the biggest disease of all ? and if you keep it all for yourself .... it can be your greatest health ....

Lord of Insects II

Snake's Egg

Psychological Horror

Chapter 1.

She was running from one wall to the other, so upset. She had something in her mouth, an implant. This she got from aliens. And now she was a prisoner on their ships. I was there watching, me, the monkeyman. I took her by her hands, she smiled, but then she moved her face away. She was in pain, in deep trouble.

There were many others on the ship, and I couldn't do anything, for I had these implants too. I could only whisper some words to them, but it seemed they were behind dragonbars. We were all seperated from each other, on this strange strange ship. Some mouths were bleeding, a girl was screaming. She got the implant, so deep in her mouth. 'Do you know what you are doing,' she screamed against the machine. But the machine was merciless.

You didn't have feeling for direction anymore, and you couldn't enjoy anything. It was always like when you tried to come closer to something, you were blown away by a strange hurricane. The contacts were always short. We couldn't enjoy each other. We always lived in fear. When we looked too long in each others eyes, our heads were turned away by a strange wind. It was like thunder in our heads, then the lightening was blinding us. Blowing us away, further away than before. We were socially disturbed, by this damned implant in our mouths.

A girl called White Wool always fainted when the pain got too much. Then she was always laid in my arms, while I was soothing her. But then I had to go, led away by the strange hurricane in my own mouth. It was like the cross of Venus. Watching your children die, why you couldn't do anything. The aliens were merciless. Some begged them to remove the implants but they didn't listen.

We were surrounded by satelites. If we came too close to each other, things started to explode. Things in our bodies. This implant controlled our whole body, and it was not the only implant. The implant was riding us. We felt like horses, turning our faces away because of the pain and the pressure. Why did it have to sting so deep ?

She had a tigerdog called Odokom who cared for her. He always took her away, when things became too heavy. He was her best friend, but he also had the mouth-implant, and was often fading away, while the girl was in tears.

They were far away in space, surrounded by orca satelites, but there was growing something in their stomaches. What the aliens didn't know was that the mouth-

implant had a secret radiation creating a secret thing. They got dreams in the night, while they slept, dreams of a coming help.

They felt fear when space-orca's were swimming along the wide windows, controlling the implants. But somehow the radiation gave birth to something deep in their stomaches. Something they desired to see. They got dreams in the night of little snakes coming forth from an egg in their stomaches. These snakes had two colours switching, and were flexible, so flexible. Like they could be a key to every lock. They were screaming by high shrieks, while something else was coming from the egg. It was a shark with a lion's head, surrounded by sharks with snakeheads.

It was taking control in their stomaches, like help was on it's way. There were dark lights growing in them, having such secrets. The aliens thought what's going on.

Chapter 2.

Marazanta was the Lord of insects, having a golden pencil, shining at nights. There was a small ball on top of the pencil, the snake's egg. He was interested in these prisoners, and gave them these dreams, coming from the snake's egg in their stomaches.

It was a strange pencil, for usually it was a handkerchief. But Marazanta could roll it into a pencil, a golden one. The monkeyman went to a hall below the ground, where between the rocks a river dwelled, with sharkships, with lionheads. Surrounded by some smaller sharkships with snakeheads, all coming from the snake's egg. It was Marazanta's Egg, the egg of a black shark.

It was a pencil in someone's head, rolling by blasphemy. Marazanta was in town, while churches and temples were burning.

'Okay, stop,' the preacherman said. 'That was a nice story, but don't you know that our dear Lord Jesus Christ wants to help us in all our fears and sorrows ?'

'Yes,' the little girl said, 'my mom sometimes tells me this. But he needs to shoot the dentist, for he put the implants in my mouth. He works for the orca's.'

'Our dear Lord Jesus Christ died for all our sins, also for the sins of the dentist. Can you forgive him ?' the preacherman asked.

'No !' the girl screamed. 'He needs to stop with all his implants ! This Jesus Christ you talk about just covers all these implants up.'

'But, dear Chantal, there are no implants, and there are no orca's working with dentists. Did you watch a movie on television ?' the preacherman asks carefully.

'No, !' the girl screams, 'you orange liar ! You don't know what you are talking about ! You yourself need some balls of blasphemy between your eyes !'

The preacherman screams. Who shot him ? There he's sinking in his chair. 'Lord Jesus,' he screams with a sore throat. But his Lord Jesus is nowhere to find.

'Uh. I need to suffer for my Lord,' the preacherman sais softly, while he's shivering in his chair.

'There is only one Lord,' the girl screams. 'And that is Lord Marazanta !'

'Chantal, I think I just got a heart-attack, please call for someone,' the preacherman sais.

The girl runs on the street, and screams : 'Please help our dear preacherman. He got a heart-attack !' And soon people run into the house to help the poor man.

A couple of days later Chantal and her mom visit the preacherman in the hospital. It's better with him now. 'Hello Chantal,' the preacherman smiles a bit. 'Can you tell me any more of your precious stories. I always liked to hear them.' The girl smiles, and gives a hand to the preacherman. The docter is also there, smiling. 'Yes, Chantal, I heard a lot about you.'

Chapter 3.

Spaceships in the form of lionsharks and snakesharks are moving themselves in the air above the small city. These spaceships are very large. They are looking for children with the snake's egg in their stomaches. They will be the writers on their ships. Stories, stories, stories, that's all they want.

A monkeyman is staring on the hill, watching the space with so many stars. He feels the snake's egg rolling in his stomach, and is ready to speak. He knows it will rise to his mouth, to bring a story. Then he will vomit, but it will all happen inside. It will not come out of his mouth, for then all this precious ink would be spoilt. He will only belch flames. He has precious rings throughout his body. A horseman gave him these rings, in this dark dark night.

A monkeyman is standing on a bridge, so many stars in his mouth, the stars of blasphemy.

'Are you a poet ?' the priest asks. A man is sitting before him, talking. His stories are precious, while he's saying he's having a snake's egg in his stomache.

'Shall I pray for you, or doing some sacrements like baptism, exorcism or ... or' but further the priest cannot come. He's grasping one of his arms. He cannot move it anymore.

The man is standing up and walks out of the temple. Another priest is running to the man, screaming : 'Blasphemy, blasphemy !' while his mouth is soapy. 'Yes, blasphemy,' the man sais calm. That's what I said.'

'You need to get rid of the egg in your stomache then. You're possessed of a spirit, a serpent,' the priest sais loud. 'Shark,' the man sais, and walks away.

More priests run outside, screaming : 'This man is possessed, don't touch him. No one touch him.' But the man walks out of the city.

A huge shark is appearing in the sky, having a lion's head. The man walks to his spaceship and leaves. Saying : 'A monkey stands on a hill, a monkeyman standing on a bridge, with stars of blapshemy in his mouth, stars of blasphemy in his mouth.' But he doesn't know the rest of the poem. He's just remembering a poem of his childhood, an old poem from an old book, but he always forgets. He has the wings of dementia.

It was just an old man, coming out of space, bringing some words of an old poem. He doesn't understand the meaning of the words, but he just wanted to tell what he remembered. And that was all he remembered.

A monkeyman sits on a balloon, with a snake's egg in his stomache. A horseman gave him the rings to belch. These were his last words, and then the man goes to sleep. It was his last trip to the city of temples, his last words to the priests. It was his last bit of pride, but the priests said he was possessed.

In the citypapers it said : 'Possessed man threatened priest. He got a frozen arm.' But the old man already went to his last sleep. He didn't know what was going on. These were only his last words, his last memory's from an old poem of an old book. He only knew some things of his childhood, but didn't know who he was anymore. These were his last memory's. He had the wings of dementia. It became so chronical. He could only say these words for years. But he only tried to cherish his last memories. That was all he had.

So many feelings were stored in these last words of his mind. Golden words, of a golden pencil. He was always repeating the words of his mind he cherished, for these were all that remained after the war. All these feelings of a passed life, experiences he couldn't reach anymore, things he couldn't understand, but were all stored, in this dragon's egg, this snake's egg, while the shark of dementia was flowing through his veins, through rings of fire, he possessed, the things he didn't understand anymore. With such a love, these animals were safe in his heart, in his

ball, his egg. He didn't know them anymore. He couldn't remember them, but once he saved them.

Chapter 4.

Something was breaking through walls, she was burning in the Prometheus, with an implant in her mouth. Snakes moved through rings of fire, while a lionshark was in the middle, surrounded by snakesharks. She had an egg in her stomache, while stories were exploding there. All they wanted were stories, stories, stories.

Through rings of fire, the spaceships move, while the egg is rising to her mouth, she's not a handkerchief anymore, but a pencil, spitting in unknown languages.

This is all she knows, all she remembers, but these words are filled by gold. All these feelings she doesn't understand. She cherishes ... She has the wings of dementia.

'Okay, stop,' the preacher sais. 'Why are you talking about priests and preachermen in your stories, in such shamefull ways. Can't you talk some more dignified about the Lord Jesus Christ ? Your stories are chaotic and you're switching identities. I don't want to be rude, but you need a docter or maybe even an exorcist.'

'Pardon me, sir,' the man sais. 'I told you in the beginning that this was the story my wife told me. You must listen more carefully when people come to you for help. I thought maybe you could tell me what this story is all about. My wife found a golden book on the streets one day and since then these words were in her head, and she couldn't get it out. Everyday she tells the same story, and then I say : 'Talk, talk, it's very important to talk it out, sweetheart.' She gets headaches when she doesn't tell it. She only told it to me, for she is too scared to tell it others, but she has a lot of headaches since she found the book. Maybe you know some good persons she can talk to ?'

The preacher nods and nods : 'I'm sorry I misunderstood you, and forgive me about the harsh judgement. In history there were more examples of people finding golden books which changed their lives dramatically. Around such persons often sects and cults rise. We as preachers think these people need help. The medical circuits cannot help in dealing with those golden books. We as christian helpers believe it is a materialization of a demonic spirit which can live in the head of such a person for several purposes. I believe your wife must be exorcized. And for you both the warning is here : 'Don't read golden books you find on streets, for it can be a trap.'

'Oh, thank you, preacher, can you please exorcize her then ? And do you think it had any negative influence on me also ?' the man asks.'

But the preacher shakes his head : 'I cannot do these exorcisms for I am not authorized to do that. But I can send you to a good exorcistic priest of our church, and he can also pray for you.'

Chapter 5.

'You're already dead,' an octopus screams, coming to the surface of a holy templepool. Several priests faint and die a sudden death. 'I killed the teacher. Now listen to me : I do what I want. I have ink enough. Ha ha. This snake's egg, this dragon's egg, is the ball of the pencil. It grows, it grows. I create all these creatures, and no one can exorcize or abort me. Ha ha. I'm too orange for that. Ha ha. Ha ha ha ha. Some tried, but no, it isn't possible. No abortions anymore. I am not just another baby you can abort. I am the womb of the woman. Oh, you want to cut it out ? I am the Egg of Birthday. I am the Crown of Media. Forget about it. You'll never win. I rise from the stomache to the head and then I'm shooting. Now you're lying dead on the ground.'

'You faul orange liar,' the highpriest screams : 'In the name of Osiris, go to hell.' The octopus starts to scream and dives underwater again. Then he rises up again with his body covered by wasps and steps out of the pool, ready to attack the highpriest. 'You and your Egyptian Temple, die, die, die,' and a beam of strange spit comes in speed out of the octopus mouth and hits the eye of the highpriest. He falls on the ground and starts to roar. Suddenly the octopus is shrieking, and blood is coming out of the highpriest's ear. 'You know your name !' the octopus shrieks. The blood is floating to the pool and the octopus leaves again. Then the temple explodes.

The octopus makes himself big and covers the city. Everywhere there are screams and shrieks, while the octopus shrieks the loudest and shrillest of all. Sharks come out of his body, and another explosion takes place. 'You made me mad,' the animal screams. 'You wanted beasts ? Here are the beasts !'

A man is sitting before the psychiatrist, with soap in his mouth, shrieking and snickering. 'I can give you some hay for this act,' the psychiatrist applauds. 'A precious story. Sorry I cannot help you. You aren't sick, you just need a good producer and a good manager. The kids can ride you, but keep in mind they must be eighteen years or older, for these are thrillers and horrors making a dive inside with all the identity shifts. You never know what to expect. When you think it's far away it appears to be close behind you. Excellent. You can make lots of money with this.'

But the man takes his gun and shoots the psychiatrist. He was serious about it. It's reality, not a story or an act for children. Roaring he's running out of the hospital

looking for victims. People must die for this, and this is worthy to die for. He runs back to his satanic temple underground. This man is dangerous. Is life about a story, or is it about a sacrifice, or both ?

This man believes in sacrifices. He's possessed by an octopus. He tries to sacrifice the octopus. He brings his words to everyone, just to test it if the octopus is strong enough. He let's him fight against lawyers, docters and businessmen, and .. against dangerous women. Or is the octupus just sacrificing him ? There's living a strange species in him. Coming from a snake's egg in his stomache. He feels it's there, and when it extracts, he feels the shivers going through his body ...

It is a love and hate relationship. But he knows it's also very dangerous, for the question is : Who is stronger, and can they trust each other. There's something in his stomache, alive, with fragile muscles it extracts, it's so fine, but also scary. He vomits when it extracts too deep, but it doesn't come out of his mouth, but it spreads through his body through hot rings, almost burning in his veins. He suffers. Is his body the altar ? Is he part of a strange temple ? Is something eating him from inside out ? It's contracting and spitting inside, secreting so many strange fluids. He shivers with these strange feelings, almost starting to cry. Sometimes white slime is coming from his navel, then he's watching it for hours and hours. What is it doing to him ?

He thinks the gods are just misleading, that's why he seeks comfort in the archetypes of the darker creatures, the anti-gods. He has raised a satanic temple, while he loves to hear satanic music, setting him free from the prisons made by churches and temples. He feels the fragile thin bones of the egg in his stomache, it's alive and growing, sometimes moving up and down. It's growing into his lungs, heading for his throat. What is it doing ? Can any Jesus Christ or Osiris save him when it will really turn against him ?

Chapter 6.

And what if this thing just want to make babies with him, more eggs. Is he just an experiment ? Aliens ? Is he just breed of an Extra Terrestial Farm. An ETF ? He doesn't know much, but he doesn't want to go back to churches and temples, that's all he knows. For that really kills him, makes him a slave forever. Or does he just need some integration. For now he's safe in his Satanic Temple, with paintings of Apep and Seth, and all the other demons of mythology which seemed to be just the gods of the ancestors, the older people, the older ages, who were just reversed by modern youth. He knew the tricks of church history. He read about Satan comes from the word Sati which was an ancient eastern God. He read about Lucifer who appeared to be an ancient Roman god. He read about the ancient wars in which the winners turned the gods of their victims into demons to scare their children. Aren't

they just boogymen ? He wanted to meet all the boogymen, to find his grandparents back.

But it was already too late for that. Policemen stood before his door : 'You're under arrest. You killed a psychiatrist.' He went too far. But maybe he had time in his prison to learn about his demonized ancestors, to find ancient heroes back. 'Sentenced to death ?' Maybe a short way to the heroes. Speedboat to eternal bliss ?

Just an octopus eating him. Wanting all the meat back. He had his ways to do it. Or was it a she ?

'Your last wish ?' the judge asked.

'May I have the book Octopusian Book of the Dead, and enough time to read it,' the man asked.

What a preparation for death. Should he be judged by Jesus Christ, or by Osiris, or by Satan ? Or by all of them ? He could read it all in the book. Some said the book was more powerfull than the bible. If he would be initiated by this book, it was more impressive than the Outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Bible. If the Octopus would grant him grace, he would break out of his prison, like Peter in the Book of Acts.

He got a few weeks to read the book. Then he would be on the electric chair, going into history as a criminal. How many stars of blasphemy were necessary to break the chains ?

One day a psychiatrist wanted to see him. He heard his stories and gave him the label of 'Religious Disturbed'. That was a label with which you could come out of deathpenalty, but he had to go to a psychiatric clinic under heavy medicine and guard. It seems a psychiatrist saved him, but how could he escape the ship ? He got implants in his mouth, making him scream and shriek more than he ever did. It made him faint so badly that docters called it a severe form of Epilepsy. He got isolated more and more in dark cells, social disturbed. While his mouth was bleeding very often. He wanted to escape, but where could he go ? But anyway he had seas of time now to read the Octopusian Book of the Dead.

It was an octopusian psychiatry in space, with orca-guards. A dentist was the boss ... a dental psychiatrist. He got sick of the implants in his mouth, implanted by the big machines. It was a merciless system. While the snake-egg was growing in his stomache ...

Chapter 7.

He lost so much knowledge, like he was in a strange cocoon. But that what remained grew like gold and made him so creative, more than ever before. Like strange vegetables were growing inside. It came out of his navel, and he could even eat it. It was like something was dancing inside to strange music, like a strange altar of a strange religion. It was eating him, but giving also new life.

The dental psychiatrist told him that the mouth-implants gave him gravity in the ship. Without it he would be blown away to come in the dark world again. The dental psychiatrist said he was safe here. Fluids were developping themselves in his legs and feet, to give him the gravity. There was no way to escape, and where could he go ? He was reading the Octopusian Book of the Dead, telling him about the three steps of true death : The first is the priest, the second is the psychiatrist, and the third is the dentist. These steps were to save your life, and the man could see that it truely happened in his own story.

The ship looked like a huge octopus. It had a pale orange colour switched by an other colour. Sometimes this colour was light grey, sometimes it was black, or another colour like blue, light blue or green. The octopus could switch and shift so easily. It was like a flexible pool. And the man needed to learn swimming in here. It was like growing up again now, with the wings of dementia. The man got older and older, but he was returning to his youth. Grasping for his toys from the past again, to really understand what they were meaning.

There was a clock hanging there, above the octopus, like a sun. A clock with so many arms, hiding a spider. It was the clock of Ra. When it moved it gave him visions, about gems so bright and clear. He could travel through them, he wasn't a prisoner anymore, while the sun was smiling. But when it stopped moving he always found himself back in the prison again. It was protecting him against a worse prison, so he could learn to love it. It was still a relationship of love and hate, spinning a desire to be free as a bird, as a winged creature, making it's own travels.

He loved to read comics, trying to understand the art of it. Traveling without moving. He found out the Octopusian Book of the Dead talked a lot about comics. And it was like drinking strange juice while reading it's comics ... comic juice ...

But deep in his heart he felt the desire rising of becoming like the spider in the sun. Was it to be free, or just another prison. And if so which prison would be the best. The snake egg made him cry sometimes. How many deaths did he die to become like that spider, to move so many arms, like having wings .... He was longing for the Spiderian Book of the Dead ... It was like his last wish on the ship he was now ... For more often the arms of the sun started to move, and he was free ... He knew he would head for a new place .... And the Octopusian Book of the Dead was preparing him for that.

Streams of joy flew through him more and more. It was often dorment, but it was screaming inside. The feeling deep down in him was enough for him to live on. He could swallow life so deep now, like there were millions of golden throats throughout his body, penetrating the depths of his soul. It was a material world inside, woven by a spider. It was like nothing was leaving his body anymore, but more circulations rose, as a way of deeper transformations. He didn't have the feeling that his life was a waste anymore. The rings of fire kept the energy inside, tied to the rings, when he vomited inside. He was belching the fire through his inner oceans. The snake egg made him vomit more and more, and his muscles could contact and pulse in so many ways, secreting new fluids and inner species. There was life growing in him, he wasn't alone anymore. He only wanted it to contract deeper and deeper, to secrete better and better.

And one day he had the golden book in his hands, it was alive, contracting and extracting like a golden cigar. How many of these he needed ? It was the Spiderian Book of the Dead. He needed to die himself into the sun, where his arms would turn into wings. So many cigars were staring at him, while he was belching and vomiting deeper inside. There was nothing to lose anymore. While the snake's egg was rising in him, turning into a dragon's heart. It spoke, it was bleeding.

'You need to lie much,' a voice said. An orange liar stood before him. It was the cabman of a ball called truth ... a golden ball ... light yellow ... By the lie you die, to find the truth, and to find out that the lie was a riddle of the truth. You may drink from the tea of lies, full of flies, touching all things lightly, weakening the grips. All lies are jigsaw-pieces for the puzzle of truth. You need to lie much, to handle it as a riddle, as a jigsaw-piece of truth. Just turn it around and move it a bit, try to connect it to different pieces, and it will find it's way to the truth.

He had the Book of Lies in his hands, the Spiderian Book of Lies, in his hands, like a second golden cigar, while so many golden cigars were staring at him. He didn't know what he was doing, losing his mind, screaming in unknown languages, trying to confuse himself. He was now an orange liar, so deep in a trap, but would this trap lead him to eternal life ? Then it was all great. He wanted to live forever, to find out the truth. He was speaking : What is this, is it something I can use. Then he looked over my shoulder, and saw it was me, the monkeyman, I said, now it's time ...'

The man in the chair was stuttering ... 'What a long, long story, Mr ...'

'Patenta,' the man said ... The female psychiatrist was staring at him a bit amazed. 'I ... I ... will write this down,' she said, and I hope I can give you information about this sickness .. very s... soon ...' Her hands started to bleed ... while the man was staring ... He couldn't say anything anymore ... 'Now go, mr ...'

'P...Patenta ...' the man stuttered .... But the woman already fell to the ground, and the man was screaming ... Another psychiatrist ran in ... 'You killed her,' he screamed ... 'No,' the man said loud and in panic ... 'I only told a story and then she started to bleed ...'

'Run, run, run for your life, or I will kill you,' the psychiatrist screamed .... And the man started to run .... so fast ... like he never ran before .... They really think he killed her ...

But the woman wasn't dead ... and soon the bleeding stopped .... 'What happened ? I want to see the man who just went away,' she spoke.

But the man was far gone, in fear of the police. After weeks they found him in the forests by a helicopter. The woman was also there. He was so glad she was alive. 'I know you didn't harm me,' the woman said loud, when she stepped out of the helicopter. The man had built himself a small cabin of wood. 'Can I stay with you for awhile ?' the woman asked. She always wanted to live in nature ... It was a silent desire of her. The man thought it was okay ... He didn't want to go back for awhile. He needed rest, but it was okay if the woman would be with him.

Everyday he told her stories, and she was very interested. She liked his stories. It inspired her, and it was so different than the stories she knew.

Tell me about the books of lies. How many are existing. 'A lot,' he said ... 'Otherwise you weren't here.'

'What do you mean ?' she stuttered a bit. 'Like I say ... women get born from these books ....'

The woman started to laugh a bit uneasy ... 'So you think women are creatures of the lie.'

'Yes,' the man said, 'sorry to say, but that is my faith. It's not that bad in every sense, for as I said : Lies are riddles of truth ... It's just another language ... Translation makes everything corrupted ...'

'Now you say something there ...' she smiled dangerously .... and the man got strange feelings in his stomach ... like the snake's egg was moving ... She started to bite on her lip ... a bit nervous .... 'You are a very very interesting man ... so different like all the others ...' she said softly ... almost whispering .... The man was aware that she tried to lure him somewhere .... She took her highheeled ladyshoes from her feet and moved closer to him ... 'Shall we swim a bit ?' she whispered suggestive ...

'No,' the man said ...'my egg is moving.'

'Your egg ?' the woman said ... 'Yes, the snake's egg ... I told you about ...'

'Oh, then I must have forgotten that part ...' the woman said a bit sad and bored ...

'Yes, for the books of lies always cut things away and then they make their own stories of it ...' the man sais ....

'Oh, well that must hurt ... I think I need to go for this is leading us nowhere ...' the woman said.

But the man started to scream : 'I also forget easily, I also have the books of lies printed on my head ... It leads me to truth ... I have the right translation ....'

But the woman was already walking through the bushes ... and soon she was out of sight ... but suddenly she started to scream .... There was a snake in front of her with snake eggs opening .... soon she was surrounded by many snakes ....

'Mr... Patenta ... help ! ...please' she screamed ... The man ran to her, chasing the snakes away ... She felt herself a bit uneasy and ashamed ... I'm sorry I did this to you ... I just easily come and go .... The man started to smile .... 'You're an orange liar ..., just like me,' he said ...

'Okay, tell me about these books of lies ... There's a Spiderian one ... and ? What is it about ? Is there also another one ?' the woman asked, while they were slowly walking to his cabin again.

Together they sat on the ground, and the man started to tell : 'There must be a Flyian Book of Lies also, but I've never seen it ... The lies of it are so dangerous that it can melt things away. 'Then why did I bleed when you were telling about the tea of flies as a tea of lies ...' the woman asked ... 'Because of it's power ...' the man said. 'So this book is against me ?' the woman asked again. 'I don't know,' the man said. 'Women rise from different sort of books of lies, and have different connections to it, so I don't know. I really do not know.'

'I'm getting so tired all of a sudden, like I'm bleeding inside ...' the woman said ... 'Shall we sleep for awhile ?'

The woman started to lie down and the man rolled himself towards her. 'I'm a bit cold, can you warm me ?' the woman asked ... The man wrapped an arm around her, and started to tell further. 'Please let me sleep,' the woman said. But the man started talking and talking like never before. Suddenly she slapped him in the face, and ran outside ... 'I'm sorry, this always happen when it's night ... then I can't stop talking ... The woman was bleeding all over ... 'It's staring again,' she said loud and worried. 'What can we do ?'

Chapter 8.

The man started to talk faster and higher, and suddenly he started to scream ... slowly turning into an octopus ... The woman was screaming ... 'You wanted to know which books of lies existed ?' He said with a dark slow and low voice : 'All these stories come from the Octopusian Book of Lies. And now shut up, for you are it's prisoner.'

The woman started to scream louder. 'What are you going to do with me,' she yelled. 'And are you still Mr. Patenta ?'

'That's none of your business,' the octopus said. And then the octopus tied her up and also put a towel for her mouth. 'Bite,' he said. And the woman bit and started to vomit. Then the octopus left.

A policeman was reading this story on a letter he got, while his hands started to bleed, and he started to vomit on the carpet. There was growing an egg in him ... Suddenly his mouth started to bleed also. The letter was an extract from the Octopusian Book of Lies. Muscles in his stomach were extracting so tight, that he couldn't breath anymore. He fell on the ground, and blue fluids were flowing out of his mouth, flowing on the carpet. Suddenly he made spasmic movements, and started to roar. He started to shiver, and the muscles in his stomach started to contract tighter and tighter. Suddenly he spat the egg out with slime. His head started to become red and purple. His heartbeat became slower and slower, and then he stood up like a zombie. Everyone he met got the same symtoms and soon the disease spread itself through the city. It was an army of zombies, forgetting about everything they knew. An enormous octopus was appearing above the city, while lionsharks and snakesharks came out of it's body, surrounded by millions and millions of small striped snakes, covering the city like dust. They started to eat the zombies from inside out, while other things were coming alive in them, waiting to go to the next city. It was a golden picnic, coming from the Octopusian Book of Lies.

It became a cell in the Prometheus, a strange honeyweb in the skies, while a spider came forward. He was sucking the lies empty. The lies had attracted so many flies like a magnet. And now these pipes were full. On his forehead he had printed the Spiderian Book of Lies. The spider roared in many colours and tones, making everything deaf.

A psychiatrist was lying dead on the ground, why his patient was smiling. He finally had a good story to kill his psychiatrist. He had to live in a cage too long. But he couldn't go anywhere for he had a strange suit attached to his chair. He was roaring and spitting, screaming, while other psychiatrists ran in. They were standing before a riddle. How could the psychiatrist die ? The psychiatrist was young, not too old. 'Shall I tell you the story too ?' the patient asked. 'No,' the

psychiatrists said. But the patient started to scream the first words of the story, and another psychiatrist fell down. 'Run for your life !' another psychiatrist screamed. The patient was spitting fire, and suddenly had so much strength that he could break the tight suit. His hair started to grow and he started to look like a half horse, a centaur.

Screaming he ran through the hospital. They locked him up since he was a child. 'I will burn you all,' he screamed. But suddenly there were a few shots. A policeman shot him in the heart, and now he was laying on the ground. Was he finally free now ?

A book of lies was locking him up. It was a winged creature, taking the souls of the deceased. It was the Griffonian Book of Lies. The griffon shrieked shrill, and the patient got deaf. Now he would be senstive for even more lies. The griffon started to shriek in his ears and blue slime came into his ear. Then the colours started to change.

The griffon was dragging his soul into the waters, while he lied against him. The waters were cold and bright. Snakefishes were swimming here, biting him horribly. He started to burn in these waters, while the shrieks became shriller and shriller. Something was trying to hit him in his heart, where the wound was, the bullet. 'Stay away from my heart,' the patient shrieked and screamed. But the creature was merciless. It started to eat his heart, while his soul turned blue. He got locked up in himself. he couldn't move anymore, and couldn't digest. He was growing and growing, until he was a big blue balloon, and then he burst into explosion, while a slimy fluid flew out of him. Millions of fishes started to drink from this fluid and ate the last pieces of his soul completely. Now his spirit began to rise in anger and fear.

His spirit was flexible, like coming from a snake's egg. From here the stories were flowing, and that was which they desired ... stories .... flowing from his books of lies .... There, deep down in his spirit ... he bore a book of lies they desired .... it was a wanted golden cigar ... They would tear his spirit until they would have reached this book. It was the heart of his spirit, and they desired it like golden water. All these fishes, there deep down in the waters of hell, would fight about this golden cigar. It would be like the last Great War, the final medicine, for another Deception, the greatest of all.

The book was covered by a piramid so bright. Many fishes died by only watching it. Others started to bleed or vomit. Only a few of these fishes would survive the appearence of this piramid. It was the guard of the book. Lightening was flashing, deep thick thunder was speaking, while something was ripping the flesh of the victims like raking the sun. These fishes knew what fear was, but they had to go inside. It was there last chance to survive. For the Griffon hunter was after them.

Chapter 9.

Glass was exploding, something was breaking through the walls, merciless. It was the Griffon hunter. He wanted the book. It was the Flyian Book of Lies, the heart of this patient's spirit. But the Book was attached to another Book : The Flyian Book of Dead. Another golden cigar. And if they would be seperated, many would die. But the Griffon Hunter had to seperate it with his sword, and many fishes died, exploding in the sunlight. Quickly he stang his sword into the Flyian Book of Lies, while now the spirit of the patient was dying. Dark creatures came to take the shatters away. It seemed the Griffon hunter had won the war, and took the Flyian Book of Lies into his mouth. Roaring he swallowed it, while flies started to break into pieces.

Everything around him was melting away. Now he had many golden cigars on his shoulders, but this golden cigar was most dear to him. It was sinking into his stomach. He didn't dare to speak for awhile.

'Yes,' the man in the chair said, while turning around, 'the breasts of women are made of this Book of Lies.' The girl was shaking her head. 'Uncle, you're crazy. No one would create a story like this.' Uncle smiled. He was an orange liar.

Orange liars were old men deeply initiated in the books of lies. It was a sort of cult, and once in awhile they came together. They knew the secrets of the anatomy, the body, and they had strange buildings called zebra's boats. They were the guards of the golden cigars, and they made all the decisions.

Someone was sitting with the Sharkian Book of Lies in his mouth. It was shooting pictures in his head. He just came from the dentist, and now he sat with this implant, a prison. The dentist said it was good for him. But now he wanted revenge. A shark with a lion's head was staring at him, with so many snakesharks surrounding him. They were ready for the Big Strike.

The

Gate

Millions of angels were falling out of the heavens that day. Eli'el and Sandi'el were guiding them. They were the leaders of this attempt to push God from his throne, but they failed. Because of their fall out of the heavens, and because they were full of revenge they became flesh on earth. Mothers received their babies, but there was something wrong with these children. Still the angels were falling, and the heavens were shaking. The angels became the workers of Latlarras now, a demon from hell, and they freed many demons who had been bound for ages. Mothers received strange babies.

The churches were full. In one church the pastor was preaching against Darwinism. 'Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, children of God, the days are running towards the final day. There is no natural selection, no evolution, no shiftings of the combinations and variations. It is all God. Religion is not just a tribal survival strategy. It is given to us by the Son of God, the one He has sent us to give us eternal life when we believe in Him and obey Him. The devil knows the time is short, that is why he sends his messengers with lies, and many fall away from the living God.'

A boy was crying. He was very small, and blue slime came out of his mouth. His mother tried to sooth him. Suddenly his eyes became big and dark blue. He started to roar. His mother took him out of the church and drove home. When she came home Eli'el and Sandi'el stood there. 'It is time we take our boy back,' they said. The mother was screaming.

Latlarras, the god of demons and fallen angels, sat in the church, stood up and shouted : 'There is no hope for you. You have fallen away from God. He doesn't know you. You have been deceived.' The floor was moving away and the people all sank through a gate into the ground. They were screaming. There was panic everywhere.

‘Worship me now,’ Latlarras shouted. ‘I am your God. I will lead you out.’

A small girl woke up. She had dreamt so strange. The other night she had dreamt that big birds took her away. Her parents laughed when they heard about the dream. Years went by, and the girl totally forgot about the dreams. Until Latlarras once appeared to her, in her room. ‘Have you forgotten about me,’ he asked. ‘It is time for me to get my harvest,’ he said. ‘And I want you to help me.’

‘Go away, I don’t believe in you,’ the girl shouted.

‘Then I will take care you end up in psychiatry,’ Latlarras said, and left. A few months later the girl was still in mental troubles about that which happened, and she had nightmares in the night and couldn’t concentrate anymore. She couldn’t do her job anymore, and ended in psychiatry. Latlarras visited her here again one day and said : ‘I can lead you out, just tell me that you are going to help me.’

‘No,’ the girl said. ‘I rather die than giving in to such nonsense.’ But Latlarras got mad and grasped her neck, trying to strangle her. When some nurses came in there was no one, and they gave some medicin to the girl.

The girl wanted to talk to a priest about it. Soon she was with him in a room and told the story. The priest suggested an exorcist. The priest called for an exorcist, and soon the girl had him on her room. ‘I think I can help you,’ the exorcist said. It was a mysterious man, and he started to talk about the fall of angels many years ago. The girl could remember her dreams a bit. The exorcist started to pray, and the girl closed her eyes. He moved closer to her, and suddenly his hand started to turn into the paw of a reptile. Then he slowly changed into Latlarras, and tried to strengle her again, while the girl was screaming. ‘I am many people around you,’ Latlarras roared. ‘They are all parts of me.’ Then the nurses came in and also changed into Latlarras. The girl could free herself, and jumped through the window. Then she ran into the forest. ‘I need to go away from this place,’ she thought to herself. ‘This place is hell.’

She knew she couldn’t trust anyone anymore.

A woman woke up in sweat, watched her sleeping husband who had the face of a reptile. She screamed. Something had her in a grip. She grasped her bible where there was an extra chapter added in the apocalyptic book Daniel of the Old Testament. Normally this book had twelve chapters, but this book had thirteen chapters. Chapter 13 was about Latlarras, the god of demons and fallen angels, and how he would let more angels of God fall in the future, and let them become flesh in the wombs of women. ‘These days have begun,’ the woman thought to herself.

The Moons of Mars

The moons of Mars were hot, hovering above the surfaces of Mars, while a lonely warrior came from far.

He was tired, searching for a shelter, but he could find none for so long. The moons of Mars were like an

oracle floating above his head, waiting to be used. Suddenly a clairvoyant stood before him. She was like

a fresh wind in his face. She turned herself towards him, and smiled. 'Where do you come from, stranger

?' she asked him. Suddenly he was grasped by tentacles, as in a web. They held him tight. 'Grr... what is

this,' he growled. Soon he was between other men in a huge cage. The cage was very dirty, and the men

as well. There was slime everywhere.

'Trapped,' someone said. 'Like all the others.' Then it was silent for awhile. The warrior sighed.

They could escape. It seemed like their number had become full. The oracle took them to one of it's

moons, named Labradar, where men freed from women seemed to live. They were all gay more or less,

as there were no women here. Women coming here would die in a second. They could not live in this

terrible atmosphere, and for the males that was a protection. They were safe here.

The king of Labradar was a very angry man. He wanted to take revenge, after all what the women did to

him and his men. Before they got delivered by the oracle they lived in years of torture. They had gone

insane by their pain, and now they were jokers, but still full of anger. They were killer-jokers, the jokers of

war.

On the surfaces of Mars the women were whining and weeping, after they had lost their last number of

males. 'I can't see anything,' one woman shouted. It was like she had been struck by the oracle. The eyes

of the women died that day, they were living in darkness, only surviving by their feelings, by their touch.

they became shy in a sense.

The king of Labradar was proud. He knew it was the time for revenge. The oracle had shown him. He

went to the surfaces of Mars to enslave all these blind women, to imprison them. He took them to another

moon, called Draizes. By certain lights they got their eye sight again, but it was weak, and the males were

the stronger race. The ring of moons was completely guarded by gay power, and Mars itself was slowly

dying. It was in this age warrior women stood up. They were birthed by snakes, and they got taken care of

by big cats. One of these warriors was Satrilia the Master, a princess of Mars. Although she was very

strong, stronger than the most of males, she was completely dominated by the gay power. The gays were

often grotesque figures, having their shelter on Labradar, as being the guards of the king. Their stomachs

were swollen by muscles, and their chests were wide and intimidating. No man would dare to approach

these guards.

However Satrilia had won the favour of the oracle, and the oracle more and more moved closer to her,

protecting her and leading her, to great disgust of the king of Labradar, who saw her as a threat. She

didn't bow for the so-called charms of the gays. It made her feel like she couldn't breath, and there was

nothing lovely about it. It was all undeep. Everyday she grew stronger and stronger. Her heart was with

Santanias, a priest and a prophet. He was hairy, unlike the gays. But he was chained by the gays as well,

and led a miserable life in great poverty and paranoia. He was stalked all the time. However he had his

hope in Satrilia. She was the lush in the wilderness Mars was.

One day they invaded Labradar to behead the gay king. But still gay power controlled them. It was the

wish of the oracle. Although the grotesque of greatness had died, another grotesque took it's place : the

grotesque of lights. The guards of Labradar ended up in underground dungeons. It was the will of the

oracle.

Star Hunt

It was in the year 100.001 on a strange calendar that ufo's invaded the earth. They had a book called the second. It was some sort of bible. Their mission was to bring the connection to the stars back to earth. The earth was totally zombificated, a huge terror was controlling everything.

Artlas had a strange shifting number on his arm. He got it from a wizard once. The flower was speaking in his space ships. They all listened to the flowers, for they knew the way through the universe, knowing all the stars.

There was no way for earth to protect themselves against these forces from outside. There was a hot science implanted in the earth now, a second mind science. The mind had to understand that the first had come to deceive them and lock them up, and that the second came to tell them the truth and to set them free.

It was about a wall of the first keeping the earth away from the second stars, only letting them being connected to the first stars. This wall was breaking off now. And the people received a second star mind now, which removed the first star mind. The first star was the star of deception.

The numbers were shifting, for it appeared that the first mind had split things up so that shadow humans came into existance. The number of humans on earth decreased. The first numbers melted away, and the second numbers took place. It was like a mighty force penetrated the brains of humans, and they saw how they had been tricked. The star hunt began.

The second stars were guarding the second earth. The ufo's raised a screen by which humans could enter this second earth, all by their second star mind.

'Meet me on the second earth,' a boy said to a girl.

A man carried this world on his shoulders. It was not easy for him to enter in.

Nightmare Flowers

I broke a window, and through it I came to Amsterdam again, where the queen of lilies stood. She had cigarets in her hand, she was smiling. I came closer, and took notice of the fact that she was in smoke. I hated her, I loved her as well. Once she had poisoned me, and now I was back here again. She acted like she didn't see me, she ignored me. I was like in a trance. Then a carriage came, and she went away. I watched her until she was out of sight, like a dot in a book. It was over. I had no feelings for her anymore. The love was gone. She married her prince, a Narcissus, but she didn't have any feelings. She was a nightmare flower, made to confuse, to tease, to destroy and to cut, by a cup full of poisons.

She was not happy with him. It was just another escape for her, and she would do the same to him. She hated men.

I had poison in my head, she married a witchman, and then she turned green. She could not live with men, she became cold and hard more than ever, finally to dry up. She was a nightmare flower.

No one knew her, she had a crown of fools, she lived inside.

The Seal of

Lakorsh

In the depths of the myst, the dragon lives, Et Fundo, holding the tablets of law. All humans fight these, but realize, these are the tablets of death.

On the planet Segisto a scream could be heard. Tragorsh went to the woman to save her out of the hands of her husband who had threatened her with a knife. He took her ... to the forests, where she was free of the iron claws of civilisation. Tragorsh brother Lakorsh ruled the city by an enigmatic seal. It ruled the humans by a device, omitting rays. Tragorsh knew what it would trigger when they escaped. The women fell to the ground. But a small yellow dragon neutralized the chip. Tragorsh took her in his arms. The woman watched the adornments of her saviour, his jewelry. She was shy, but grateful. She knew he was from the dragons. Soon they were surrounded by spiders. They had the mission to save more women now, the ones kept as prostitutes. The whole night the black cats of Lakorsh would hunt to get the escaped women back, but Et Fundo would watch over them.

‘Come close to the dragon,’ – Tragorsh said.

‘Don’t touch him, but realize there has been many false tales about him. He is your deliverer, as he devlivered me once.’

The women stared at Traghor, at his almost blinding jewelry. He looked like an angel, but it was all precise dragonian architecture.

‘Crimson,’ Tragorsh said. A man came forward. ‘Yes, master,’ he said.

‘There are many more women we need to have here. Go with the boat to the underground, close to the black portal. These women are slaves. I want you to set them free.’

‘Yes, master,’ – Crimson said.

Et Fundo was spitting fire. It freed their minds. It was to make them savage. It was to initiate them into the hearts of the dragon.

‘Terlick,’ Tragorsh said. Another man came forward. ‘Yes, master,’ he said.

‘Bring all these women to the depths of the pearl. Give them their homes.’

‘Yes, master,’ Terlick said.

‘And let Remeon dress them very well by the dragon’s touch. You know what I mean,’ Tragorsh said.

Tragorsh wanted to raise a new queen of the dragons, to finally bring the city down. But he feared the mysterious seal of his brother Lakorsh. Because Lakorsh was the first born, he got this seal, a royal heritage. It could cause death, and only by living close to the dragons, Tragorsh could escape from it. But it was still haunting him. He wanted to destroy it. And for this he needed a queen.

Sarsha the sorceror even had a greater advice : ‘Leave the planet Segisto, for it is almost time that the seal will destroy the whole planet.’

‘But where to go ?’ Tragorsh asked.

‘Et Fundo knows all of it,’ Sarsha said. ‘He knows the way.’

Together they approached Et Fundo, who was in rage. ‘I know we have to leave,’ he spoke. ‘And they will probably destroy themselves first. But you must have a queen, Tragorsh. The queen is the only way to ascend when the whole of Segisto will turn into a cocoon of fire. Bring all the women here.’

Et Fundo went slowly with his head along the women. ‘You know I will find the right queen for you.’

Outside the planet was erupting already like a volcanoe, and suddenly they were all in the flames. ‘Choose the queen, Et Fundo,’ Tragorsh screamed. But Et Fundo, the great dragon, fell into an abyss appearing under it’s body. It was like hell was coming down and everyone was screaming. The seal of Lakorsh was taking revenge.

‘Choose your queen, Tragorsh,’ Sarsha roared.

A brown hand was appearing close to Tragorsh, begging him to help her. The rest of the women were in the flames. ‘Take her,’ Sarsha screamed. Suddenly Tragorsh grasped her hand, and the flames became a hurricane bringing them all upstairs. Et Fundo came up from the lava in which he had fallen. ‘Follow me,’ he screamed. Everyone had to sit on his tail, while he was swimming through the lava. Segisto was no more.

The Seal of the Great Dragon is love, but when it turns around it is hate and lies

Millions and millions of people were with the great dragon. They had seen their city going down, and even their planet. The Great Dragon was swimming through the nothingness of the ages, which had surrounded them, layer by layer, until a morninglight and a morning sky seemed to touch them. Great sorcerors told them that the seal of Lakorsh would be born again soon, but that the seal of the great Et Fundo would keep them safe against it.

‘Lat Haran,’ Tragorsh was screaming, ‘oh mighty oracle, lead us when the dragons are sleeping.’ Et Fundo was growing bigger and bigger, then exploded, and was no more but a new planet, sucking all it’s inhabitants in. Many people were mourning about the dragon, their womb of death, the giver of new life. They had been through the fire.

It seemed the seal of Lakorsh was now on the chest of the brother of Lakorsh, Tragorsh. The women were staring at it. It’s lights were almost blinding. He stood there with his queen, who was the channel to bring this seal on him. And suddenly he had the seal of Et Fundo on his head. These were all lights. Everything was in balance now. Pure rivers were floating here, and soon Tragorsh and his queen were on a boat, a boat full of jewelry, to celebrate their love. Tragorsh knew he had been outmarried. When he was in the flames, she was the closest to

him. And he took her hand. There were dragons everywhere. Tragorsh realized that the seals had to be together, like he was together with his queen.

Once the seals had been separated by a priest, and then the corruptedness started to flow in. And the great dragon became dangerous. It took a woman to bring the seals together, a woman knowing both sides, weaving them together. She was his princess, she was already destined to this before her birth. The two seals together formed a poetic spell. It was a new death, leading to eternal life, a new law leading to eternal freedom, and a new fire leading to eternal light. It was a poetic seal together, a riddle, to melt the frozen situation, to bring the dragon alive again. We live in a dragon, we are the dragon, we live the dragon.

There was a poetic mind, a dance of words, and when it was sliding away, there was only a joke left.

Beyond the Ice River

My world was dying. My world was falling apart in the hands of a mighty king, the king of the ice-trolls. Our people were dying because of the cold. They were freezing, turning into statues. I lost my best friends.

I was in a fight against this king. He called for all the troll forces of ice, and told us we would all be swallowed by it. Our kingdom was facing ages of darkness, of the bitter cold. There would be one way to survive : to have the breastplate of the king of the ice-trolls. That object would bring immunity against ice. If I would get it, I would be able to approach the ice witch, who lived far away in the depths of the realms of ice. Then I would be able to beg her to spare my people.

The king was a cruel man. He hung me upside down in a dungeon. At least there were some torches at the wall, keeping me warm. But he said he wanted to burn me. I couldn't do anything. I hung at a thick wire. I could swing a bit, back and forth. After awhile I found out I could reach the wall. I could reach a torch who burnt the wire piece by piece. Then I fell down. A guard ran to me. I grasped the torch and pushed it in his face. I took his keys and escaped.

I ran upstairs to the room of the king of the ice-trolls, where he slept. I took a sword off the wall, beheaded two of his guards, and went into the room. Here the clothes of the king hung, together with his breastplate. When I grasped it two other guards came in. I quickly put on the breastplate and beheaded the first guard and the other I pierced him in his belly. The king woke up, while a group of guards entered. I took a dive through the window and came into the river. Archers were shooting their arrows into the river, so I had to swim towards the depths. I could escape miraculously. Soon I started my journey through the incredible realm of ice. I didn't know where to go, but the breastplate kept me warm, and most of all : it kept me alive.

I could slay ice-giants, and strange trollguards on my way. I walked on day and night, until I reached a house in an ice-cave. Soon ice-snakes were attacking me, and there was even an ice-dragon. Lights seemed to come forth from my breastplate to devour the attackers. I moved closer towards the house. An old lady stood there with long hair. Her hair was grey and she had a big nose. In front of her feet there was a river. Suddenly she bent down and changed into a young woman to do the laundry in the river. I couldn't believe my eyes. When she stood up she was an old lady again. 'Hello,' I shouted. But she didn't seem to hear me, or she was just ignoring me. She went inside of the house and I followed her.

‘Don’t come any closer,’ she said with a dark low voice. She looked like a wolf who could attack any moment.

‘If you are the ice-witch,’ I said. ‘I want to ask you for help. My people are in the horrible hands of the king of the ice-trolls, and they are like statues. Please deliver them.’

‘I want you to do certain things for me first,’ she immediately said.

‘Bring me the head of the king of ice-trolls,’ she said. ‘Then I will give you your next mission.’

I thought it was alright. I had the breastplate, so the cold wouldn’t be a problem anymore.

‘I want you to use this sword,’ she said, while she grasped a tall thin sword off the wall. ‘If you do it by your own sword, two heads will grow instead.’

‘What kind of sword is it ?’ I asked.

‘Don’t ask,’ she said. ‘Just do it.’

I went my way back to the place of the king. I felt fire moving across my sword, heavy fire. Guards at the portals started to scream. ‘It’s the sword of the ice witch,’ they screamed. I heard laughing upstairs. I knew I was at risk losing my breastplate again, and then I wouldn’t be able to return to the ice-witch. He put his helmet on. Other guards grasped their spears. ‘Pierce him,’ the king of the ice-trolls shouted. I dived into the river again, and waited till it was night. I tried to climb the wall towards the room of the king, and I finally made it. But the king wasn’t in his bed. I went downstairs, and in one of the halls I saw them all sitting around a tall table. I decided to go back to his bedroom to hide myself in a cupboard. I waited there for hours, until he came in. He closed the window and went to sleep. After awhile I came out of the cupboard to behead him. I took the head, opened the window, and disappeared.

When I came to the ice-witch she was very glad. ‘Well done,’ she said. I could see her smiling. Her face looked younger. ‘I have another mission for you,’ she said. ‘Below my house the green monster of deadly odors lives. He can kill by his odors. I want you to kill it, and bring his heart to me. But use the same sword you used to behead the king of the ice-trolls, or there will grow two hearts instead.’ By a certain pit I could reach the underground below the house of the ice witch. After awhile strange green winds tried to strengle me. It was almost storming below the house. The sound was trying to make me deaf. It was such a noise. I looked right in the face of a monster with three eyes. Green fire and smoke came out of it’s mouth, and suddenly rays came out of one of the eyes to strike me. I fell down on the ground, and suddenly the enormous beast jumped on me. I felt like all my bones had been crashed. I couldn’t move anymore, and the noise seemed to get louder and louder. ‘Don’t hurt me,’ I suddenly heard someone saying. It was the monster itself. It was getting thinner and thinner, changing into a woman. ‘Please don’t hurt me,’ she said. ‘I have been imprisoned here by the ice witch, waiting for my day of doom.’

‘But the witch told me to kill you,’ I said. ‘Otherwise she won’t free my people.’

‘She isn’t fair,’ the woman said. ‘She’s just misleading you. You have defeated the king of the ice-trolls. Your people are free now.’

‘How do you know that ?’ I asked.

‘I have three eyes,’ the woman said. ‘With them I can see anything.’

‘But what if you lie to me ?’ I asked.

‘Find out for yourself,’ the woman said. ‘Go back to your people, and you will see that they aren’t frozen anymore. The curse has been broken.’

‘But then you will probably escape,’ I said.

‘How can I ?’ the woman said. ‘The witch has imprisoned me here.’

I didn’t know what to do, who I should trust. Why would the witch need me to kill her ? The woman explained it to me. The witch was powerless without the breastplate, and the woman said that the witch would finally want to steal the breastplate from me, so that I would die in this realm.

But the witch had helped me for a great deal, so why would she want to kill me now ? The woman explained that the breastplate would increase her powers, and by that she would rule everything.

But I still didn’t know who I could trust. This woman seemed to have so much powers that she could easily kill me. Maybe I was her last hope to escape from the witch. She could only escape if I would take her through the pit upstairs.

But someone was coming downstairs. It was the ice witch. ‘Have you killed her yet ?’ she asked. We couldn’t see her yet, so I whispered : ‘Quick, hide yourself.’ Quickly I grasped a stone and went towards the pit where the shadow of the witch already came down. I showed her the stone.

‘Is that her heart ?’ she asked.

I said yes. She took it from me, and together we went out of the pit. ‘We aren’t done yet,’ she said. She walked to a huge kettle in which she laid the stone. ‘I want you to stay with the kettle for awhile,’ the witch said. ‘I need to go to the river for awhile.’ When the witch was outside the house I went back through the pit to take the woman with me. I still didn’t know who was speaking the truth. But I didn’t want to make any risks. I couldn’t find the woman. I didn’t know where she was. I decided to go back to the kettle after awhile.

Soon the ice witch returned with a sad face. ‘I have been to the river,’ she said, ‘but it’s not good with your people yet. I do not understand as we have the heart of the green monster of deadly odors now.’

‘How do you know about my people ?’ I asked.

‘Oh, the river talks about it. It tells me everything,’ the ice witch said.

In the middle of the night I went to the river. I didn't dare to sleep, as I was afraid I couldn't trust the ice witch. I whispered to the river and it whispered back. I asked the river who I could trust. But the river didn't say anything back.

The next morning I asked the witch how I could speak to the river.

'Oh, I will show you,' the witch said. She took some laundry and brought it to the river. 'Do the laundry,' she said, 'and it will speak.' She went into the house again, so I could talk to the river in private.

'Who can I trust,' I asked.

But the river didn't speak. 'River, I know you must know everything. I haven't killed the green monster of deadly odors, as I do not know if she deserves it or not.'

But the river didn't speak. I went into the house again, and the witch went to the river. After awhile I heard a scream. 'You have betrayed me,' she yelled. 'You used a stone instead of her heart.'

'Yes,' I said, 'as I do not know who to trust. She said you keep her imprisoned there.'

'She has probably escaped now,' the ice witch said. 'She wants the head of the king of ice-trolls as well, but now she knows that you are hunting after her heart she's gone. You are still alive probably by the breastplate. Go and find her, or your people will all die.'

I went back to the underground, still not knowing what to do. This time I went deeper. It didn't look like a prison, but like a huge realm. I got tired. I travelled for days and days. The gates were narrow here. Finally I found her in a cave. 'I am weakening,' she said. 'It is because of your breastplate. I am losing powers.'

I was still in doubts. I just couldn't kill her. I remembered her words that my people were free already and that the witch was only keeping me here for her evil purposes, so I decided to see for myself. I went back to the house of the ice witch, and wanted to go home, but she didn't let me. 'I need to know the truth,' I said. 'Please, let me go.'

'I will let you go,' she finally said, 'but when you do I will not let you come back again. I will be invisible to you.'

I didn't have another choice. But this time the river was speaking to me. 'She is serious,' the river said. 'She cannot let you return here. That would be too dangerous.'

'But why ?' I asked.

'Don't ask,' the river said. 'Just trust her.'

'But how do I know I can trust you ?' I asked.

'I can show you how your people are,' the river said. And suddenly I saw a reflection of my people in the water. They were still frozen, and many more had died.

I didn't know what to do. How did I know this was all real ? It was like the breastplate had brought me in this trouble, but I knew that without the breastplate I would die here. I just didn't dare to go to sleep in the neighbourhood of the witch, so every time I was tired I went to the depths of the underground. I often talked to the green monster, who was often a woman. There was a similarity between the ice witch and the green monster. They could both change.

I knew that if the ice witch would speak the truth my people would be all dead right now. If the green monster of deadly odors would speak the truth my people were all free. And the river was witnessing for the witch. Although my breastplate was weakening the green monster, it seemed to get healed by it also. She was more and more becoming a woman, a young woman. We got a deep friendship, and I didn't have any problems falling asleep in her arms. She was soft and caring. One day when the witch was spending her usual time at the river, I took the woman through the pit. We came into the house of the ice witch, but suddenly the ice witch stood before us with a knife. 'Don't touch her,' I said to the ice witch. But it was

already too late. The witch had pierced her heart. Green blood was flowing out of the woman. The woman fell down. The ice witch took her heart, threw it into the kettle. 'Your people will be raised from the dead now,' the ice witch said. 'For this woman was the force behind the kingdom of the ice-trolls.' It was a green heart. A soft heart, which had enchanted me as well. So many curses were breaking. The ice-witch smeared the green blood on my breastplate. 'Return to your people now, and wake them,' she said. 'Just smear the green blood on them. I only ask for one thing : Give me the breastplate. You don't need it anymore, for this witch has died.'

'Who was she ?' I asked.

'The forest witch,' she said.

I took off my breastplate and gave it to the witch. I immediately fell down, and the witch started to laugh. 'You dumb fool,' she said. 'You have given away your breath.'

I was grasping for air, but couldn't get it. Cold winds were striking me. In panic I grasped my sword and struck the witch. 'Too late, my dear,' the witch said. 'Too late. Prepare to die.'

But then the river came into the house and struck the witch. 'What are you doing ?' she screamed. The river took the breastplate off of her, and threw her into the kettle. Quickly I grasped the breastplate again. Then the river took the kettle with the witch up and threw it into the pit.

A man stood before me. 'I am the river,' he said. 'I was the slave of the witch. Because you struck her by your sword I woke up. I am free now, and so are your people. Trust me : She was the one behind it all.'

The End

The Troll

Apple

On my travel I came to a small house in the desert where a gnome lived. It was a wise man having many books in his house. He told me a lot about trolls and leprechauns, but also of witches and giants. He told me that below his house there was an unknown treasure. But there was a portal which could only be opened by the skull of the king of giant-trolls. He begged me to get this skull. To me that wasn't so hard to do. I was the troll slayer. He told me where this giant king lived, and soon I came back to him with the skull. It seemed the giant troll didn't even live anymore. I just entered the palace and saw his skeleton on the throne, and took his skull. The gnome didn't know that, as he never dared to come in the neighbourhood of the giant trolls.

He was glad. With the skull he could open the portal below his house. There was an amazing treasure. Of course I also got a big part of the treasure. The gnome seemed to be an old gnome-king. His kingdom was once destroyed by the giant-trolls. He was the only one who survived. He fled into the forest where he found this house. For years he lived there together with an old woman, but before she died she told him about the portal below the house, leading to the treasure. It was a troll treasure.

There were three other portals surrounding the treasure. Miraculous worlds were behind them, troll worlds. 'We will live here forever,' the gnome said to me. The troll caves were beautiful. We watched them one by one. The trolls we met in these caves were looking for a king, and the gnome king was more than willing to become their king.

But in this land everyone got old so fast, like the land was under a curse. I asked the trolls what we could do about it. They said there had to be a tree with troll apples somewhere, by which you could stay forever young. I travelled for days to find it, took a bite from the apple and came in another world. Here everyone was young.

But in this world everything was so cold. The deeper I came in this land the colder. It was freezing there, and I saw frozen apples hanging in some tree in the distance. I went to the tree, took an apple and let it melt against my mouth. Then I took a bite. Here there was fire everywhere, in the land where I came then. Dark guards with dark capes were guarding an

apple on a dish, while a snake hung above it, while there was dripping fluids out of the mouth of the snake moistening the apple.

‘Am I in hell ?’ I asked. It was so hot here. ‘What kind of apple is that ?’ I asked. But the guards didn’t say anything. The heat was only rising. Suddenly I grasped the apple and bit. My mouth was burning. I was yelling. What had I done.

‘Drink from the dish,’ one of the dark guards said.

I did. It was some sort of sirope, but it was cold. My mouth was freezing.

‘Welcome,’ another dark guard said.

‘To what ?’ I asked.

But they didn’t answer. After a few minutes a dark guard said : ‘The witch wants to speak to you.’

I asked : ‘Which witch ?’

But they didn’t answer.

Suddenly they grasped me and pushed me into a coffin. Then they brought me upstairs to a hall full of spiderwebs and fleeces.

‘Finally you have come,’ a voice spoke.

A woman with a white dress sat on a high throne, at the side of the hall.

‘Are you okay ?’ she asked.

‘No,’ I said. ‘I have eaten from three troll apples and I don’t know where I am.’

‘Troll food is good to eat,’ she said. ‘You just have to wake up to reality.’

‘What is reality ?’ I asked.

‘The food will show you,’ she said. ‘It is all to wake you up.’

‘But my friends,’ I asked, ‘can’t you help them ?’

‘They have to find their way by themselves,’ she said. ‘You or me cannot do anything about it.’

The woman led me to a place behind the hall, where tables were filled with troll food. ‘Eat,’ she said. ‘It is good for you.’

I started to eat. Watching the food made me so hungry.

She gave me a bottle. ‘Drink,’ she said. I drank. I woke up in a bed, while she was holding my hand. I felt sick. I felt so tired. I was rolling in my bed. I was sweating. My body was totally wet. ‘Here drink something,’ she said. I drank again. I was in a whirlpool. I needed to wake up. I couldn’t wake up. Something was blocking me. Finally I woke up in the house of the gnome. It was a dream. Today I should go to the kingdom of the giant trolls to take the skull of their king. Then the gnome would be able to open the portal below his house to the treasure. But the closer I came to the kingdom of giant trolls the more I doubted the gnome. The giant trolls seemed to be very friendly, especially their king, and I didn’t see any reason to take the skull of this man. The king told me that the gnome was a dangerous guard of hell, and that I was lucky I had survived him.

The End

The Troll Gloves

I was on my way to the cathedral, where a troll candle was on top, spreading blame and shame. Inside the cathedral cannibals lived. I was the troll slayer.

I went there with a few friends. When I opened the door of the cathedral they killed my friends. I ran to the stairway, but they shot me in the arm. A trollpriest threatened me with a knife. While I was bleeding I stumbled upstairs. Someone kicked me and I feel back. It was getting dangerous so I climbed out of a window. I climbed to the next floor, where priests in tall garments did service. They had candles in their hands, and they were chanting. I climbed in through a window again. They turned into wolves and I had to run for my life. I ran upstairs again. I took my sword from behind my back to slay some wolves who were attacking me. On the next floor there were many smaller trolls. I caused a bloodbath, while green blood was flowing everywhere.

They trapped me and brought me to a dungeon below the cathedral. There was a lot of torture here. The trolls seemed to enjoy it to skin their victims. They pushed me into a dungeon where the walls were cutting machines, and they started to come closer and closer to me. Suddenly I saw a red hand who grasped me and pulled me towards the ceiling where there was a hole through which I could escape. The man was sitting on a black goose. He smiled to me. ‘Let’s go to the top of the cathedral,’ he said. He seemed to live there.

‘Don’t you feel horrible about the troll candle ? It spreads guilt,’ I said. But the man shook his head. ‘Where I live it’s safe,’ he said. He seemed to live inside the candle. He had his house there.

Inside the troll candle it was wonderful. There was a tall elevator by which you could go deep down below the cathedral, even below the dungeons. There was another world there, where the man brought all his friends to.

‘The flame of the candle never dies,’ the man said. ‘The only way to escape from it is to live in the candle and to come into my secret world.’

Through the transparent ceiling I could see the flame getting wilder and wilder. ‘Oh, it will grow bigger the more people will enter my secret world,’ the man said. ‘One day the candle will overflow with lava. You better stay here.’

‘But then we need to save the others outside,’ I said.

‘No,’ the man said. ‘You were the last one I had to save. The rest is already in my secret world.’

‘So you mean those who still live outside will be grasped by the lava ?’ I asked.

‘Yes,’ the man said.

I remembered at times people just disappeared, and now I knew where they were. They had been saved by this man. Outside I could see the lava already streaming. It was because I was the last one to be saved. The man had fulfilled his mission.

He took me to the elevator. Everything would burn now.

But in the secret world there was also a cathedral, and it also had a troll candle on top, a troll candle even worse than the previous one. It spred torture like nothing else. People were bowing down under the weight of rejection and scorn. I wished the man had never saved me. This was way worse.

I tried to reach for the cathedral, but there was police everywhere. They were the guards of the cathedral. And for getting in you first had to be treated by a troll doctor. The people going to this doctor got implants of fear. They became weak and tired, losing their armory. I found out it was the only way to enter the cathedral, so finally I went to this doctor. He made a mess of me, but at least I could get into the cathedral. There were robots in the cathedral, showing us our places. It was a prison. We got chained to the pews, and we had to sing. If we wouldn't sing we would get shot, so I didn't have another choice.

A troll was preaching. It hurt my ears and eyes, and even my stomach. I asked a robot if I were allowed to go to the toilets. He led me to it, but all he did was beating me up. I begged him to not send me back. I felt weak, sick. I was so tired that I could only stumble. When the speech was over the robot led me home. I had to return the next day.

But the day after they wouldn't let me go to the toilets anymore. They brought me to a deep dungeon. It was hell. I got chained to the wall, where cats and dogs started to eat from my flesh, and at nights the rats came. I was screaming and yelling, until I almost couldn't breath anymore. After months of torture the man with the black goose came back. 'What have you done to me ?' I asked. 'You call that saving someone ?'

He nodded. I was at the edge of freedom, he said. He saved me again, and brought me to the inside of the candle. Here I would be safe, but I only feared the worst. There was another elevator, and I was betting that it would lead to an even worse place with a worse candle. But none of that. The man gave me a glove, which was a troll glove. He said he usually led the ones he saved to this elevator, but he said I was a rare case.

'What's up with the glove ?' I asked.

'You can quench any troll candle by it,' he said. 'It's the only thing quenching eternal flames.'

I saw the lava already floating across the transparent walls of the candle, sinking into the cathedral. 'I think I won't quench that one,' I said. 'I just wished I had a black goose like you so that I could save someone.'

'That's my job,' the man said. 'You wouldn't want to save the wrong one. They are all sorcerers.'

‘Yes, but I got saved once myself, so I want to do something back,’ I said.

‘Leave it up to me,’ the man said.

I didn’t know what to do, as everything started to burn by the lava, and it was coming closer and closer. Would I use the glove to quench the flame, or would I enter the elevator. I realized that the cathedral had already been destroyed by the lava, so it was okay to quench the flame now. When I had done that the man brought me back to the first troll candle where I did the same. But as I could expect the cold started to set in. Everything started to freeze, and it became so bad that I begged the man to bring me back to the elevator of the second troll candle. I was freezing so bad that I almost couldn’t move.

When I was in the second elevator I got some warmth again. I came into a hall full of troll candles. I knew what could happen if I would quench them, but I also knew what could happen if I would let them burn. I went inside of them, one by one. There were no elevators, but old women lived inside of the candles.

‘It’s freezing there upstairs, right ?’ one of the old women said. I nodded. ‘One day the cold will reach us to quench all our candles,’ she spoke further. ‘Then we will all freeze for eternity. What kind of glove do you have there ?’

‘Oh, it’s a glove to quench eternal flames,’ I said. ‘But it can’t do anything against the cold.’

‘You need to find the other glove, before it is too late,’ she said.

‘Where can I find it ?’ I asked. I was waiting for the man with black goose, but he didn’t seem to come.

‘He can’t come here,’ the old woman spoke. ‘This area isn’t his domain.’

‘Who is he ?’ I asked.

‘He is an old king,’ she said.

‘Well, where can I find the second glove ?’ I asked.

‘I will tell you if you give me your glove,’ she said. But I couldn’t do that. I needed this glove to survive the eternal flames. But when the days went on it started to freeze more and more. The cold was much stronger than the eternal flames. The flames kept burning of course, but it got colder and colder. Then I couldn’t hold it any longer and gave my glove to the old woman.

‘That’s kind of stupid,’ the old woman said. Immediately she turned into a young woman, while she started to quench the eternal flames. ‘These flames kept us locked up all our lives, turning us into old women. There is no second glove. If all the eternal flames will be quenched the cold won’t be there anymore. And I will rule forever.’ Then she started to laugh loud and hysterically. ‘We got the glove, sisters,’ she shouted, ‘the troll glove to make us rule.’

They grasped me and locked me up in one of the candles. But the flame of that candle started to burn again after awhile. ‘Take him out of the candle,’ the woman shouted to her sisters. They took me out again, but the flame started to burn wilder and wilder. ‘It doesn’t work,’ the woman shouted. ‘Throw him into the fire.’ But suddenly in the flame the man with the black goose appeared.

‘The second glove !’ the sisters shouted. The man had indeed another troll glove. This one was the bringer of the eternal flame. He took me on his goose, while a fire fell on the sisters to devour them. This time the man took me to his kingdom in the sky, and this time he gave me two troll gloves. ‘Rule the world with me,’ he said. ‘You have proven now that you are worthy to wear the two troll gloves.’

I accepted the gift he gave me, but I didn’t want to rule the world with him. I was a trollslayer. He understood that very well, and gave me a good sword for that, a troll sword, and he didn’t give me only one black goose, but a whole army of black geese.

The Viking Helmet

I was lonely. I went through the gate, took my sword, and came to the troll candle. I had escaped from the dungeon, that dark dirty cellar. It was like an old kitchen. Winds came out of the troll candle, and voices mocking me, yelling at me. I grasped my sword from behind my back and slew it. I was the troll slayer. They had kept me in a small cell all of my life. Now I was up to have revenge. There was vengeance in my blood.

I was grateful to the gods who had brought me out, but when I visited the outside world I wished I had never escaped. However, there was no way to return. The house where I had been imprisoned was burning. There were troll wars everywhere, and I got tortured by the sights. There was an unknown cruelty raging here. In my rage I slew those trolls, but my rage was eating me. It was like these trolls were controlling me.

I was yelling at them. They were creatures of scorn. All they could do was mock. I went to their houses of aristocracy and organized a massacre. A girl ran to me and was grateful that I saved her from them. She kept hanging at me, and I brought her to a place of safity. I was numb. My senses didn't work at me. I needed to heal.

There were no taboos in troll world. Everything was perversion. There was slavery. I had a lot to do here. Chaos seemed to be the order here. It was a world of dirt, and that seemed to be the only way letting them appear clean. There was so much drama here, and no one seemed to care. It was all about living evil. And the worst trolls got all the might, all the power, and possessed all the hearts. They were cannibals. They loved to eat meat, but they didn't like dead meat. The meat had to be alive. Then it tasted better.

You could say that the trolls were the more advanced forms of skeletons. They had reached a sort of magic source by which they could take themselves up and arm themselves. Practically

they went through the gates of draught to become skeletonstones reaching for the gates of drowning beyond which was the hairy world, a world of magic for the dead. Here they could become trolls, advanced, armed and equipped skeletons, or just enchanted skeletons.

I didn't like magic. I thought it was dangerous. I knew magic was just a word to cover up a whole lot of things. It all came to advanced forms of vampirism. This was the true source of all sorcery. In my eyes it was that. Magic didn't exist. It all worked by battles. In my eyes there was only magic in the arenas, where gladiators took each other's heads. It was covering up a lot. Here they walked with each other's skins. I didn't believe in fairytales anymore. I believed in the horror behind it. One being growing into another one, taking over it's armory. That was the troll reality.

I became a slayer beyond means, to build my troll museum, where I would show their skulls, their thrones and their weapons. It was for educational purposes only that I would keep them and store them.

There was a girl who wanted to become the guard of trollcrowns. I visited her every week. There were many trollcrowns she needed to guard, and she knew a lot about them. It was the girl I once saved out of the house of aristocracy. There was also a hall of trollswords. This hall I gave in the hands of a monster-ape called Salomon. He had a lot to tell about these things.

I would assume my troll museum would work out for the good, but it was a cursed place. The objects were dangerous. The trollskulls I gave in the hands of Slivighter, a skilled swordfighter. One day my troll museum just crashed down. I knew I had to defeat bigger trolls first, finding out about their mysteries and then raising troll museum again. I became a trollslayer more than ever. Skilled by the trainings of Slivighter and Salomon. They helped me raising the troll museum again, and it became bigger than ever, but I had no idea about the price it would cost. It attracted the worst and meanest trolls existing, those of the dark depths of Orion. Karsa was their king, their hope. They worshipped his skull. By his cycle he always came alive again. And they were just attached to that, tied to the wheel. They said he had the three rings of troll. These rings were the secret of his power.

Slivighter and Salomon knew where they were guarding these three rings. But meanwhile we were already in Karsa's dungeons. Troll museum was in their hands now. And the rings were holding all the hearts of existence. There was also an old goatfarmer in our dungeon. His name was Ruf. He told us that only the horns of the Viking helmet of the king of fire-trolls were hot enough to melt the three rings. But we were in the dungeon and couldn't do anything. We were delivered in the hands of these torturous trolls. They skinned us and hung our skeletons at their buildings. The third day after that they burnt our bones and skull and our

souls descended into their hells. It only got worse. They had condemned us to evergrowing damnation. And all they could do was laugh. We were in an elevator to deeper fires. Other victims seemed to know more about the Viking helmet of the king of fire-trolls. This king seemed to live in the depths of these troll hells, where he would wait for us to torture us even more. He was a man of wrath. We fell in the hands of this beast of a guy, and he granted us no rest. Our souls were nothing but ashes, but still he wasn't done with us. Our spirits were trembling in our souls, and soon we were nothing but ghosts, shadows of the city of doom. The king of the fire-trolls ruled here over those of no hope. He showed us his licenses, and the papers on which was written that we had been condemned to be here forever. He chained us, and we became his slaves. We had to do heavy work. We had to build buildings for him. He wanted to be bigger. We had to work day and night, without having rest or food. We were sick and weak, but he had no mercy. Soon he also broke the last things we had, making us nothing but flames, weak flames, hysterical flames. We had to guard his stronghold day and night. It was an arena.

It became winter, and our flames died. We became frozen. We were weak like snow, shivering lights, becoming darker and darker. Darkness was setting in. And it became colder and colder, while we saw the king of troll-kings warming himself in his stronghold, feeding himself. We also saw his Viking helmet close to him. The horns were red hot. Finally we saw him going to sleep. He was holding the red flowing horns. He covered himself by a thick hairy skin. We could hear him breath, while we couldn't breath. He was so big, and we were so small, only becoming smaller, until one of us found a little hole in the thick walls of the stronghold. We could go inside. We were nothing but the wind now. We had lost everything, but by our last strength we could surround the Viking helmet of the king of fire-trolls. But he was holding the horns so tightly. We crept inside the huge Viking helmet, and could raise into the hollow horns. Slowly the king of fire-trolls was loosening his grip, and we could get away with it. We got density again in the Viking helmet. We felt well-fed, and we knew the helmet was a key to everything here. We could grow again, and soon we had our normal size again. Ruf took the Viking helmet. 'Follow me,' he said. We went to an elevator, and after awhile we were in the hall of the three troll-rings. It was quiet. It was like whole Orion was sleeping. Ruf touched the rings by the horns of the helmet, and the rings immediately started to melt. We covered ourselves by the fluids, and one was even drinking it. The fluids kept streaming, and we had to run for our lives. Alarms were shrieking, and soon we had been surrounded by guards.

Orion was drowning, and we were drowning too, but we knew where we had to go to. We went to the elevator again and went back to the stronghold of the king of trolls. I took a troll sword from the wall and slew the king of fire-trolls. I knew this place would be safe, and here I built my troll museum.

The End

The Saddle of

Evil

The leprechauns were fond of money and beauty. They could grow all sizes. It was a fairytale they would only be small like gnomes. They usually had big troll chariots with a lot of predators. But they were predators themselves, the biggest ones. I always wondered what was worse : to fall in the hands of a troll or a leprechaun. In the hands of a troll it would mean : evergrowing suffering, but in the hands of a leprechaun it would mean : evergrowing consciousness of it. The leprechaun was a troll more or less, but I still didn't know how bad the leprechaun was compared to the troll.

I saw them always having fun, always laughing, while others died in their surroundings. They didn't care. They would inflict torture wherever they went. But there were also leprechauns living in the depths of the forests. They were in love with the treasures of nature. They loved to see skulls, gems, jewels, spiderwebs, gold, rare ornaments, blood … They had another life-style. They were cannibals. They loved to see strange things.

Both sorts of leprechauns were incredible cruel. Some preachers condemned the lives of leprechauns. 'Oh they ride in big cars, but then they will not have them in heaven,' they always warned. But some leprechauns also became preachers, and they preached the ways of money.

'You want money in this life, then you won't get it in heaven,' they always had to hear from other preachers. But the leprechauns just ignored that. To them life was one big party, and in heaven it would even be greater.

The leprechauns of the forests already lived in heaven. They were hunters, building their kingdoms by skulls and bones. Their chariots were made of suffering animals. They had tamed these animals, and used them for everything. They had built strange sorts of spiderwebs to catch prey. These webs had been made of golden fleeces and threads. It seemed to stream forth from a bewitched object, called a leprechaun sword. It was almost like a sword, but there were tentacles attached to it, which would pierce the hands of those who weren't the owner of the sword, to turn them into a living hell.

The leprechauns would never touch the handle of the sword, as they weren't the owners of the sword. They had stolen it once from the king of fire-leprechauns. He had his kingdom in the south, in a land full of volcanoes. I couldn't say the king was an evil man. The fire-leprechauns were just obsessed by fire, and by it's jewelry. They made the finest ornaments.

They were smiths. But they always made their treasures in such a sense that whenever someone would take it who wasn't the owner, that person would be tortured for the rest of his life. The jewelry and the armors they made always had such strange sharp tentacles ready to punish the thieves. It was a miracle that the forest-leprechauns could steal a sword like that.

Leprechauns to me were strange creatures. You never knew how you got it. They could be very deceiving. The best was to stay away from them as far as you could. But they always seemed to find ways to show up close to you. They were stalkers. They were always thinking about how they could use you best.

One had to protect one's heart against the leprechauns. The only way to do that was by having the chariot of the king of ice-leprechauns, as by this thing he ruled all leprechauns, and used them to make the lives of their victims miserable. It was like an evergrowing slave-caravan in the sky. No one was safe against this king. All was just a matter of time. One could run and hide, but the king of ice-leprechauns would finally find them all. It was a cursed chariot. The ice-leprechauns had made it once. When the chariot grasped something, it could never leave. The chariot would hold it forever. The chariot was a witch-weaver and a spinning-wheel at the same time. It could sting to make it's victims go to sleep, and then they would be turned into threads and fleeces. It was a sort of leprechaun sword, it was the road to hell.

This strange object finally came in the hands of trolls. I didn't know how they did it, but they did it. In these days trolls became more and more dangerous, and I became a troll slayer. They made the ways of the leprechaun even worse. Preaching against them didn't work. They were preachers themselves. They made themselves big chariots, slave-caravans, and they preached it was the only way to heaven. To be poor meant to get to hell, to the evergrowing suffering and consciousness.

The chariot of the king of ice-leprechauns was dominating the mass. It was now in the hands of trolls. One of the few leprechauns I could trust was the king of the fire-leprechauns. He told me there would be only one way to steal the chariot. It was by a treasure called the Thief's Claw. This was how the trolls could steal the chariot from the king of ice-leprechauns. The king of the fire-leprechauns said that the Thief's Claw could only be used once. However there was another way to steal the chariot, but it was a very dangerous way. It was by a treasure the fire-leprechauns once made : the Nightjewel of Life and Death. It could only be used once, and it could only be used in the night. The Jewel would give life or death to the thief, so there was a great risk attached to it. I wanted to risk my life for it, if it would save us all from the trolls and the wrath of the leprechauns. I wanted to sacrifice my life for that if I had to. The Night Jewel of Life and Death was mine now. The king of the fire-leprechauns had given it to me, but I knew about it's danger. I knew how much drama this jewel could bring, but it was better than living in this evergrowing eternal hell the trolls always inflicted.

It was a sort of armory. I could terminate the guards of the chariot without problems by it. It was the king's most powerful, but also most dangerous weapon. I grasped the chariot, held my breath, while the Night Jewel was speaking : 'I give you life, brave man. You have sacrificed it, and I give it back to you.'

I brought the chariot to the king, to the south, and he was so grateful that he gave his daughter to me, a beautiful, precious and lovely princess. I said : 'Yes, I will be friends with her, but I need to move on. I need to be alone.' The king understood me very well, and gave me the finest armories and treasures he had instead.

The End

White Flower Garden

Whenever someone picked a troll flower from the white flower garden it caused immediate death. And not only that. The soul of the one who had picked the flower turned into a gladiator and went to the square of an auditorium. It was a troll arena. The troll flowers were beautifully white, the most beautiful flowers of the white flower garden. The troll flowers weren't without any mercy when they got picked. No, one shouldn't underestimate such a flower. From the outside they looked so lovely, but their ways were cruel and harsh. They could turn the whole white flower garden into a cemetery.

The owner of the garden was a dignified man with a tall black hat. Some said he was a witch. You could also hire him to be a cabman for a wedding. He had an old fashioned carriage for that, and many people loved to hire him.

When I was young I married someone. How could I know she was like a troll flower. I had picked her, and it seemed I died since that day. The strange man of that garden was our cabman. When he locked the door of the carriage everything was dark all of a sudden. My wife had a beautiful white dress. She was the daughter of the cabman. It all ended in a divorce. I went to that garden the day of the divorce, and I wanted to pick a troll flower to make an end of my life. Many people used to do that when they thought life didn't have anything to offer them anymore. But a woman stopped me from doing it. She had a white dress. I didn't know what she did there, for it was almost night.

'Come,' she said. 'To my house. I have some hot chocolate milk for you.' I went to her house with her. Her dress was beautiful, fragile like that white dress of my wife on the wedding day. 'I am the dress,' she said.

'What did you say ?' I asked.

'I am that dress,' she said. 'That dress of your wife. It was my skin, it was me. But I am back.'

She gave me the chocolate milk and stared me deep in the eyes. 'Do you still want to pick the flower ?' she asked.

'I don't know. I'm sad,' I said. 'I think I already picked that flower. I'm already dead.'

'What if you pick it for a second time ?' she asked.

'Oh, that will be hell,' I said. 'But everything would be much better than all this.'

'What if you pick me ?' she said.

'Maybe you are also a troll flower,' I said. 'I don't know. I truly do not know. And I do not know where it will lead me. Maybe you are right. Maybe I shouldn't do it.'

‘Well, there are differences between the troll flowers,’ she said. ‘There is one troll flower leading you to life.’

‘Oh, then you must be that flower,’ I said.

I only saw her once in my life. When I returned to her house other people seemed to live there, old people, who didn’t know her. All I knew was that she saved my life. My wife still lives, but I do not want to come there anymore. Neither do I want to go to that white flower garden anymore.

The End

The Fog Witch

I was in love with the fog witch. She had saved me out of the meanest trolltraps. There were so many trollprisons I had to escape from. And when I thought I had finally escaped I seemed to be in another trollprison. But she saved me out. I always felt like I didn’t deserve to be with her, that I wasn’t worthy. She had imprisoned my heart as well. Her tentacles reached deep in me. I became her servant. And I didn’t know what was worse : to be with the trolls or with her. She was so sweet, so lovely and so mysterious, while I felt like I didn’t have any weight when I was with her. All my words didn’t mean anything compared to her words. Her movements were so dignified, while I was rude, rough, not so delicate. She was like a giant, and I was like a dwarf. I failed in anything I did, while she always succeeded, although she had her struggles. She could be depressed as well, but everything she did was like gold, like art, even when she felt unhappy. She had that mysterious unknown power always making her looking better than someone else. It was draining to live close to someone like her. She had imprisoned my heart, and I was dying. Still I was in love with her, for she had saved me. Finally I was realizing I was just paying her back for that, by staying so long with her in this state of mind. She admired me, she was obsessed with me, and very jealouse of me. She had the same feelings about me. She always said that I had saved her. We couldn’t deal with love.

We were afraid of it, so we decided to part ways. She gave me a wondrous breastplate, while I had nothing to give her.

The fog witch was my memory, my first love. When I grew older I realized how imprisoned I was. Imprisoned by her touch. She was just another trolltrap. But still I loved her. She was a darling, so styled. I could dream about her for hours and hours, but that was the best. For staying with her would be dangerous. I always stared at my breastplate when I had hung it in my room. She had made it with so much love and magic. One day I brought it back to her. I needed to be free of it. She understood it totally, and I was glad. But I seemed to get into deep trolltraps again, so I asked it back. She wasn't around anymore. This time I had to do it myself. It was hard.

This time I escaped from so many imprisonments that it led me to a magical, wondrous world. I finally found her back there. She was more beautiful than ever. Her words entered me deeper, and again I admired her so. There was a strange flat skull on her breastplate. She told me it was her world. But this time I came here all by myself. There was so much sadness around. I just couldn't stay here. So I travelled further, and built my own world.

The End

Sleeping Beauty

Chapter 1. The Clockwars

Chapter 2. The Story of Thursday

Chapter 3. Rise of the Barbarian Spirits

Chapter 1. The Clockwars

They sit on horses so high, not knowing what it is all about. They sold their consciousness and conscience to the necromancer, and now they sleep, while their spirits are high in the sky, thinking they are living the life. They do not have to cry anymore, they have reached eternal life ....

On horses so high they sit, taking away so many lives, they do not know what they are doing, they sleep, they only survive ....

Sleeping beauties they are .... So many are crashing against their walls, or falling after a longlasting trip to reach them, for they never got real grip .... This kiss you will never get .... They sleep behind walls of glass, like Snow White they possess the right to do anything but never cry .... They are sleeping, they have reached eternal life ...

They have drunk from poison, and now their spirits soar high, and when they cry these are only tears of glass, making their walls thicker, they do not have arms to reach out, they are broken statues, while the necromancer watches over them. He has given them the experience of eternal life.

In their senses they are boasting. They see, they hear, they always get what they want. They are never crying, letting others cry, while they are watching from behind their walls of glass, a strange coffin, sleeping beauties they are, sometimes opening their eyes all of a sudden, to suck away all the lives of those who tried to come closer, tried to reach out a hand. They do not have a hand, sleeping beauties never understand.

The words always seem to fade away, In this strange ornament from the white rabbit ...

A girl stands up from her bed, which is actually more a bench. She leaves the tall transparent pinkred blankets behind her, and dresses herself a bit. Like frozen she goes to school, where they all know she is such a beauty. She can listen to the darkest tales without crying, listening to the meanest teachers and their even harder and crueler lessons, but never cries. She only smiles ... with the smiles of death ...

She is a sleeping beauty, sold her soul to the necromancer, now it displays eternal life, a strange disc spinning in her head and eyes, sometimes she opens them, and then she stares like sucking all the blood away, then we all have to stand up and then fall .... We can never come across her wall ....

She has her own prince, she's never alone, he is a doll, she is his toy, and whenever he opens his eyes .... she's only telling lies .....

There she's cycling home ... The boys try to get a glimpse of her throne .... They wished they could sleep like her .... But no one can enter .... That's

forbidden there ···· They should have gone to the necromancer themselves ···· But it's too late now ···· Show has already begun ····· Now they have to sleep in open air ···· where the wolves hide and run ···· Never they will find rest ···· They are the hunted, not the hunter ···· for hunter is a sleeping beauty, safe behind a wall of glass ···· She never has to cry about all the blood ···· She sold her tears to the necromancer ····

And if you want to challenge her, to save her from her eternal bed ···· When she opens her eyes it's too late, when she stares the soldiers will all fall down, with their beds in open wilderness, the table of wolves ···· You will never find your peace and rest back again ···· You always have to fight for your life ··· For someone's spreading lies about you ···· She's a sleeping beauty ···· Only the dolls will hear her truth ····

And when you have become a doll, frozen at the end of your life, by all the trauma's she painted you ···· You get a kiss, and some more lies ···· The wedding comes, that is a fact ··· The bride is there, still with that stare ···· She painted you in her book ···· In her diary you are, still with that strange look ····

You are the ragdoll, she's still a sleeping beauty ···· You will never win from her ···· You sleep under her bed ···· And you wished you would never have touched her ···· It was a kiss of death you got ···· You're a crying, bleeding doll ····· A baby ···· she cannot sleep because of the noise ····· A divorce is what she wants ···· And the kids will be her toys ···· She took everything away ···· In her coffin they will sleep ···· Like her they will sleep ···· Not knowing about all these tears ···· Not afraid of blood, oh no ···· For the necromancer watches over their souls ·····

On the weddingfields you lost your life, a sleeping beauty on a horse so high ···· You can never reach her anymore ···· You had your chance ···· She's just a one-night-whore ···· Celebrating her memories ···· in her diary ···· Never will have to cry the tears you cried ····· She has wrapped herself in a smile ···· A smile of death you see ····· Kissing once, a kiss of death ····· and then never again ···· She's a once-and-for-all-girl, don't you know ? She's the first-and-last-time-show ···· She's a sleeping beauty, don't you know ?

She drinks tears like blood, she never cries …. You're a card in her hand, she always lies …. She's a sleeping beauty, my dear …. Fading away at the end of every year …. She shows up late, and then she leaves ….. She's a calendar girl …. A december-whore …. installing the presents and then she leaves …..

It was a present of death …. So get over it ….

'Get over it !' the white rabbit was screaming … A boy fell out of his bed …. He had dreamt so strange …. Today it was his birthday …. When he went to school a girl kissed him and gave him a small present …. But he refused ….. He remembered he dream ….. 'Nah,' he said …. 'Sleeping beauty, I had a nightmare …. about presents …. I do not want to have any presents today ….. even while it's my birthday …. Send it to those who do not have anything …. I am not in lack of food or anything …. It's a strange idea that a rich boy needs presents …..'

But the girl slapped him in the face and went away ….

In the classroom there was a rumour …. Someone heard that one of their classmates, a girl, had died in an accident …. When the teacher came in he confirmed it …. Some of the girls started to cry, and also some boys ….

A few days later they all went to the funeral …. The girl lay in a coffin …. The boy didn't want to see it …. He wanted to remember her like she was …..

The father of the girl came forwards to do a speech ….. 'Our little sleeping beauty has gone …. She has left us ….' he said …. 'She was always dreamy ….. running after her dreams …. It seems now she has finally left with it ….. We will miss her ….'

Also the boy came forwards to say some words : 'I will miss Roseanne, as she was a beautiful flower, as our bridge between heaven and earth …. In my remembrance I will still have this ladder …..'

Roseanne's mother was crying …. The boy went to her to comfort her ….. 'I cannot be comforted …' she said …. 'She was such a pearl …. I want her back, but I can't have her back …. I have to live with that loss …. Have to

live with being powerless ····· with hands which cannot hold ····· Everything is sliding away ·····'

'But we can still dream about her ·····' the boy said ····

'Yes, but what is a dream ?' the mother said ···· 'What is a dream ?'

Another boy came forward : 'I will miss Roseanne, because she was a present from heaven, she was a fairytale ···· and fairytales shouldn't die ···· I believe she is still with us ····· although I still cry ····'

Then a girl showed up : 'We will miss our sleeping beauty ···· We will never see her again, but in our memories ···· She's a sovenir on our path ···· Shining forever on top of our memory ···· She will never fade away ···· as she was special ···· so special ···· She will speak forever in our hearts ·····'

Another boy stood up ···· It was her little brother : 'Roseanne will never leave my heart ···· Actually ···· she is deeper now ···· Teaching me about the small things in life ···· She had always an eye and interest in the small things of life ···· She was always like Snow White to me ···· I'm proud of my sister ····' And then the little boy started to clap ···· Also others in the room started to clap ····

That night the boy who had his birthday got another dream ···

'Turn me on, necromancer ····' he heard Roseanne saying ···· But it wasn't Roseanne ···· It was an old grey witch using the voice of Roseanne ····· She was staring at the boy ···· 'All sleeping beauties are mine,' she spoke to the boy ···· 'And I let them sleep to do the crime ····'

Then the boy entered a hall full of sleeping beauties in coffins of glass ····· 'I will let them sleep forever !' the witch shouted ····· 'No one will ever wake them, as they are under a curse ····'

'They are calendar-girls, display-dolls ····· They take, and then they leave ···· They are thieves ···· And they are my marionets ···· soldiers from a white wet box, sliding back into the box after the crime is done, when the show is done ··· when the curtains fall down ···'

'Who are you ?' the boy asked .....

'Is that important for you to know ?' the old grey witch said .... 'I am the designer of the calendar, the designer of time .... Time is a thief, it takes away and never brings back, while I'm drinking from it's old wine ....'

'But what is your name ?' the boy asked ....

'I am the mother of all necromancers ...' the witch spoke .... 'I created them all, and I created the sleeping beauty ... letting her rise and fall .... I made her sleep, made her walk, made her talk .... She sold her conscience to me, in change for deceiving fake beauty .... By all these consciences, drops of dragons, I built a killer-clock .... to rule them all .... I am the Uninvited ....'

But again, her words began to fade away in the strange ornament of the white rabbit .... like all soldiers were sliding away in their box again .... while the boy was only staring .... hearing a slow lullaby on the background, also doing nothing but fading away ..... He stared at the decorated jewel in his hand .... and he remembered that as long there will be an uninvited, there will be a sleeping beauty ....

Isn't a bed nothing more than a table ? A table of predators ? Isn't the bed nothing more than a cruel battlefield ? ... And all this is so illusive and deceiving .... What is it hiding ..... Ornament .... speak !

The boy was shouting and shouting .... Until a hand came to let him sleep .... nothing but sleep ..... All dreams had been fading away ....

'Oh, you bad boy ....' the witch said ..... But the boy couldn't hear it anymore ....

He was far away in a white rabbit's ornament ....

It was christmas .... The dolls were having a party ..... All kids of the class had been invited .... except one little girl ..... There she stood in the door-opening, while she had a prowling mouth .... so small ... so small ..... Then blood was flowing everywhere ..... 'You didn't invite me .....' that was the

echo in their heads ····· And that was true ···· They didn't invite her ···· Now they had to pay the price ·····

But the boy didn't see or hear any of it, as he was far away ···· He couldn't remember it ···· It couldn't repeat in it's head anymore ···· He was in a deep sleep ···· deeper than ever ····· A sleep without dreams ···· without illusions ···· without deceiving repeating patterns ·····

"Come with me, child of hell,' the witch said ···· She invited ····· She was graceful ····

But the boy couldn't see or hear anything of it ···· He didn't have any feelings ···· And couldn't smell or taste anything of it ····

'Here, eat a bit,' someone was saying to him ····

But the boy couldn't hear ···· No smell, no taste ····

Suddenly the white rabbit was screaming : 'Wake up !' And then the boy fell out of his bed ·····

It was in the middle of the night, and the boy tried to sleep again ····

'Don't you know that when you fall, you will fall hard ?' a voice spoke ···· But the boy didn't hear ···· He thought it was the wind ····

The witch lost the grip she had in the boy's head ····· As the white rabbit was watching over him ····

The boy always lived with such conscience, that he always thought that he was a clock or bomb ···· He always had to live in guilt and shame ····· Like he was a ragdoll ····

'Would anyone like to buy some conscience from me ?' but no one wanted ···· The boy was poor ····

'Anyone ? To buy a newspaper ?' but they ignored the boy, as these were newspapers from the past ···· of a long lost memory ·····

But when he started to buy conscience from others …… They sold him their conscience ….. He could now make new newspapers, even those of the future ….. He could now make new clocks instead of being a clock himself …. He became a clockmaker ….

And now people started to buy his newspapers and clocks like never before …. He could spread conscience, and even give conscience, even to the sleeping dolls …. And then a doll was crying ….. P i n oc c h i o ……

Gepetto was speaking ….. He was old now …. The fairy had given life to his son …. life to his son ….

Snow White rose up from her coffin of glass ….. She now drank from the dragon's cup …. the dragon's cup ….

But the boy was too far away ….. Didn't have a notice of the fact that he had grown old …. He was a sleeping beauty ….

Witches were speaking to him again, but he couldn't hear …. He was deaf like an old man ….

He was a sleeping beauty, thinking he was young, but he was old …. He slept for so long …. Everything was changing, but inside he was the same ….. sleeping ….. like sleeping beauty …..

He had peace now …. He had rest …. His bed wasn't a dinnertable anymore ….

'*Pinocchio !' the white rabbit was screaming ….*

But he didn't hear it anymore …..

'*Gepetto !' the white rabbit shrieked ….*

But he was far gone …. didn't hear anything …. He was a sleeping beauty ….. Behind glass he was ….. Only crying tears of glass …… To make his walls thicker …. No one could reach him here …..

No one knew where he was now …. They were missing him in the crime …. And the calendar-girls missed their toy ….

He was now a master of time … Time was just a memory …. But he didn't remember …. anything ….

He had now built a clock but there weren't uninvited months anymore ….

Four witches came forward ….. He crowned them ….. They were called Octember, Januember, Septuary and Luciary.

And one of the witches opened her mouth. It was Januember. She spoke for her sisters, saying :

'We had been uninvited, but you, my dear, you let us in, you are our sleeping beauty …. You have won our hearts, you have let us in, we are now part of the clock again, of the calendar, you are our friend.'

The other sisters started to clap. Then a door behind them opened with masses and masses of uninvited months and seasons, uninvited days, hours, minutes and weeks, and they all got a part in the new clock ….

'We will let sleeping beauty walk and talk,' they all said.

The boy was satisfied now, and it seemed to be an all-happy-ending fairytale, but then another door opened itself. A witch with a strange horned hat was walking in, under spiderrags and strangely woven stuff …..

'I wasn't invited ….. Your soldiers kept me away from entering in ….. so I had my own way of entering in ….' the witch said …..

Then the boy commanded the soldiers to come …. but they said she was a liar …. The boy didn't know what to do then ….

But the witch was already in such a rage that she laid a curse on the boy : 'You, my dear, will change into a dragon who can never sleep again. You will be awake to eternity ….'

The audience was very shocked, but then an invited witch came forward, and said : 'I am not as powerfull as her, but however I can change the curse a little bit. You will be awake for a billion years without any moment of sleep, and you will live lonely in a dungeon in the deepest of the earth, surrounded by evergrowing thorns. But at the end of those billion years you get so tired that you fall asleep for just a second. Then you will be awake for another billion years, and again you will fall asleep for just a second ....'

But then another witch started to laugh .... 'Oh how you bow down for the spell of such an uninvited witch .... Why do you believe in such a superstition ? ... The boy can't use any of this .... The boy has invited us all .... There are no uninvited witches, as there were no invitations, only an open door .... Just come closer all .... Let's stop all the nonsense of being invited or not .... The door is open .... Enter in ......'

Then this witch spoke a curse over the soldiers who blocked the other witch from entering. They would be part of the clock now also .... It was a spell bringing peace to them all ....

But soon they were fighting about who would get the best place in the clock ..... These clockwars had been caused by a speaking mirror .... The mirror of Snow White's mother ..... telling who would be the most beautiful of the clock ....

This was another problem the boy had to face .... The clockwars were longlasting and cruel ....

Chapter 2. The Story of Thursday

Only by the coming of the lullabies the boy could ease these wars a bit. The lullabies would separate everyone in the clock to give them a life at their own .... But the most important purpose of the lullabies was to sooth the speaking mirror .... The speaking mirror was in earlier times an uninvited witch too, and she had been turned into a speaking mirror by other witches. She swore to take revenge, and she would do that by causing clockwars. One day she went to the house where the hours lived, a group of women. The

women liked the mirror, but soon they started to fight about the mirror .... In many ways the mirror tried to cause fights between the women. One of the hours of thursday married to the father of Snow White, who had just lost his wife .... She became Snow White's stephmother, and took the mirror with her. The other hours of thursday became her servants. She loved the mirror, and the mirror became Thursday, the big Thursday. All the smaller parts of Thursday, like the minutes and the seconds, became her thiefs, by which she got more and more powers.

The boy wanted to turn Thursday into a memory .... just a memory, as a sovenir .... The boy wanted to quit the clock, as it would always bring forth clockwars. So the boy would make a book in which all parts of the clock would have their places. By this Thursday, the Speaking Mirror, would shut up.

But Thursday was waging wars against the boy. And also the stephmother wanted to bring him down. She wanted revenge because of what Snow White had done to her .... The boy had many armies of lullabies to sooth them a bit, but the powers of Thursday were very strong. The hours of Thursday had fires in their mouths, and they could spit like dragons.

In panic the boy fleed to sleeping beauty's room .... One of her names was December .... And the boy started to tell about the clockwars and the powers of Thursday ..... December gave him the key of her mother's room. Her mother, the queen, had the name October, and she had a spell to put Thursday into a bottle, so that everyone could drink from it .... By this peace would come, and when everyone had drunk from the bottle, the rest would be paint by which the boy could paint the book to end the clock and it's wars.

The spell worked, and Thursday was now a beautiful bottle, bringing hope and peace. She would never be a mirror anymore. These days were over. It was only a memory, and the boy would paint it in his book.

One day Thursday, the bottle, told the boy about the mother of Snow White. She was also a queen, and she had the name July. She loved Snow White very much, and knew about her origins. She had always watched over Snow White. The other name of Snow White was Tuesday, and she was a

White Sleeping Beauty. She took to give away. And by this she was so beautiful. Her stephmother, an hour of Thursday, took to take, so that was why the mirror once told her that Snow White had more beauty than her. Snow White is a Spread-Vampire. She takes away, she even steals, to spread it. People can hate her for being a vampire, but she's like that so that no one will have more than the other. She became a hero by this, but she wished that everyone was like this. Because she was so good of heart, as she was a spread-vampire, she was in the risk to be misunderstood, to appear like someone drawing all the attention to herself by being a spread-vampire. She therefore damned herself to be a paradox, a source of irritation, and that is why her stephmother wanted to root her out. But it led her to the Seven Dwarves. These were seven coffins to become a sleeping beauty, not aware of her own beauty, by spreading it. She sold her pride, her honour, to lose so much consciousness, and by that feeling so rejected. She was a White Sleeping Beauty, unaware of her own powers, unaware of her own beauty. She had spred it in the wind.

She was a weak flower, dreaming, to spread it all, not knowing that she became an important center, where predators would look for prey. The White Rabbit took this Alice away by a wall of glass and chrystal, by a chrystal coffin, by which she would have an encounter with the days and hours of July, who would bring her to her mother, July, Queen of Cards, where everything would be .... nothing more than a memory ..... a sovenir ..... Where the clockwars would be over .....

Snow White was always playfull ... playing with the cards she got from her mother .... Until Thursday shot her away .... By her words she shot one of her hours to bring Snow White into the flames. But the soldiers of July finally took her away. Into her mothers arms she is now, encountering all the missing cards ..... She can finally do the game now ....

She is now the display-doll of a cardgame, spreading the cards ..... until the lullaby fades away .....

Again the boy was staring into a strange decorated jewel ..... decorated by organic things .... by small, thin bones, small skulls .... and this jewel ? It looked like an animal's eye .... or an eye from something else ....

It isn't the ornament of a white rabbit anymore, but jewelry from July, Snow White's mother· It is somewhere high in a castle, or is it a palace ? There's Snow White's father ····· an old man ···· an old king ···· but he's in tears ···· still in tears ····· He takes the boy to a cold room, cold windows, cold curtains ····· everything is cold here ····· Snow White's body is on the bed, or is it a bench ? Me, the boy, comes closer, touching her dress· Light shivers through her body ···· It is dead ···· Father cries ····· There comes mother ···· They are both angry at that special hour of Thursday who had shot her ···· killed her ····· even when she came alive again ····· It was the living death ····

The rooms smells like raw meat ····· It's like a butchery ····· Is this bed still a table ···· Will wolves come at night to have dinner here ? The ceilings are white and high ····· Walls are white ····· Everything is cold ····· But my hand isn't ····

'Can you bring her to life again ?' the parents ask ···· Her spirit lives in the cellar ···· but here her body is cold ···· Frozen face ···· she doesn't talk ····· Your love will be enough to raise her ····· One drip of your love, one tear ····· will melt her heart ·····

But I cannot cry ···· She's a White Sleeping Beauty ····· fading away when I turn the page ·····

The bell rings ···· There are visitors ···· The parents of Sleeping Beauty ···· They shake hands, and everything becomes clear to me ····· The old king is Sunday, while the other king, who just enters in, is Friday ···· while I turn the pages, and paint on ····

She's a whore, this Snow White, coming to so many soldiers, raising them into the night ····· They get alive for such a short time ···· They can't do much, and then she laughs, they are nothing but cards ·····

And I wonder, when wolf comes tonight to take her, will I protect her, or will I let her fade away, to spread some more mystery about it ····

She's a paradox to me, and I'm a paradox to her ····· We're nothing but pages in a book ····· Two-sided cards of a necromancer's diary ····

We will leave the bodies untouched, we will let the wolves have their prey, until the barbarian spirit is rising into a darker fairytale ····· It's darkness setting us free ····· for the lights lie, showing charicatures of covered reality ····· There's a deeper death behind the scenes ···· Let's not raising the dead here ····· For honour and might will take us ····· And spoiling fairytales will break us ·····

The voice of the necromancer got darker and darker, until a lower voice deep inside turned the page· These wolves have all eaten their little Red Hoods ···· Shall we bring them to life ····· or shall we take a dive ····· into the mysteries behind the scenes ····· where no applause can take us away ····· for it's all taking place in loneliness ····· on a separated page ·····

The sights we see around us, are nothing but wolves who took it all ···· In our children's clothes they walk, like our grandparents they talk ···· Shall we embrace this family, or will we hide in darkness to become an outcast ····· To seven dwarves is our path ···· or we will be the wolf's prey ····· To a dead beauty is our way ····· No one will lead us astray, as the voice of the necromancer gets lower, speaking deeper inside, as it's getting darker, we do not need any light ····· As the light deceives, darkness is our memory, our medicine ····

Someone's ringing the bell, and we fall asleep ···· It's the witch with her spell ····· It seemed she was uninvited before, but now she has found her way to the game ···· Not the clock anymore ····· She's a royal guest in the book ····· She's the mother of Little Red Hood ···· She has a sack full of licorice, but we won't eat it ···· We won't eat anything here ······

'Please can you bring Snow White to life ?' she asks

But the little boy doesn't hear anything ····

White rabbits are screaming ····· but he is far away ···· doesn't hear anything ····· for the hours of July are taking him away ····· All these hours ····· They want to escape from the Big July ····· for she's a whore, raising so many soldiers in the night ···· They cannot do too much, and then they fall asleep

again, and she laughs ….. Smiling deep, these are her cards …… She paints them, tears them, … there's nothing worth living for …..

'Sell me your conscience,' she sais, 'and I will bring you peace …. I will paint you by lights …. I make a doll of you …. a sleeping beauty ….. Like I did to my daughter …. Only a kiss will bring you to life …. Glory to the marriage …. The road to eternal life ….'

'Sell me your conscience by a kiss, or you will be a tree, and I will show you all the things you will miss. Blue Sleeping Beauty like the icycle of life, only by Gepetto you can come to real life. By the dance of Pinocchio you will rise from the tree, you're a Blue Sleeping Beauty, and that you will always be …. Only by the touch of an old man you come alive ….. While a fairy lets you breath …. giving you eternity …. You were not blinded by a kiss, nor painted by the light, but a faery took your heart away, after the touch of an old hand.'

Someone smashed a mirror on the ground, while a billion pieces found their ways, into the heads of the sleeping beauties, there were so many cries ….. It was the speaking mirror of Snow White's true mother July …. Now it didn't speak anymore, but there was blood all around …. The name of this mirror was Saturday ….

Saturday had armies of soldiers, as he was July's general …. These were all … soldiers of the marriage …. soldiers of love …. On the weddingfields they were fighting, like battles for love, so many were dying …. Then from the blood Marriage was rising, spreading the kiss of death, slaying so many by it's denying. Strange mirror of love was rising, while so many were crying. Touch it, and you die …. Sometimes it was of glass, but it was always spreading the lie ….

But those not saved by the hand of Gepetto, they became burning trees, like burning witches, burning beauties ….

Chapter 3. Rise of the Barbarian Spirits

'I will give you a daughter,' July screamed .... But no one was paying attention .... They didn't care to be invited or not .... They were burning witches .... burning beauties ..... deep in the cellars of the earth .... They lived in vases like ashes .... But they didn't care .... They didn't care about anything ..... For why adding to the screen, while there was a world inside ? And even stronger : There was a world outside ....

'I will give you a daughter,' July screamed .... But no one could hear .... They were all far away .... They watched the book full of paintings and stories .... They were like Red Sleeping Beauties, growing like roses and lotus-flowers .... There was a field full of them .... and they were blushing in a deep sleep, beyond death and fire ....

'Bring her to life,' July screamed .... But no one listened .... No one heard .... They were all deaf .... Deaf by the lies of mystery ..... It was burning in their skins, until it would find it's place .... For many lies would form a truth ....

It was a mysterious web they were looking at ..... Like a cryptic tragedy .... Deep and painful enough to bring forth barbarian spirits .... They didn't want to have anything to do with the fairytale .... as there was a deeper beauty ..... I would have brought any honour I could as a last goodbye to the fairytale, but they couldn't .... They were rude .... They were hateful beauties from the book .... full of self-hate .... But by this hate they could keep themselves in a sleep .... to survive ....

But July kept on screaming .... And I made a bottle of her ..... The first day it would be juice, and the second it would be paint .... So I was drinking, and then I started writing .... I knew Snow White would tear her, to spread all this beauty .... But is that a way to treat your mom ? I must say she did this very careful .... She made a television of her mom .... But she was also still a bottle, so it was a ....

But then the lullaby was fading away .... Sleeping Beauty was staring at her TV .... What was this for a story ? .... It had woken her up .... There was juice sliding from the screen, and also paint .... So I made a pencil of her .... By this all the precious energies wouldn't get wasted ....

But still she sits on high horses sometimes, taking so much life away, while she's unaware of it ···· But then when she's home again, she can always watch it on TV, what she has done ···· and then she cries and cries ····· Then the pencil is bowing ····

Wouldn't it be better that the pencil would have some small TV's on it ? Then the pencil would always know what it is doing ····

But yick, ask the wizard ···· I can do much ···· but this I cannot do ····

For one day all the girls were asking me for a TV ··· and I couldn't do anything ···· So I directed them to the wizard ···

And they asked : 'Where's the wizard ····'

And I said : 'Must be somewhere deep in your heart, but I haven't reached him yet ····'

And then they asked me : 'How do we come there ?'

And then I just simply told them the story about Sleeping Beauty ···

The End

Snow White

horror

Waiting for mother

On her bed she sits, thinking she has lost her life, thinking she can never have a breath again. Now the doctors have broken her, installed the big big lie ... Snow White, never say goodbye ....

Mother asked her today, how come you are in such delay .... Then Snow White said : doctors have struck my head .... They didn't have mercy .... Only wanted to have a piece of the prey .... Some pieces are out of my arm .... I'm frozen, and I almost do not know what to say ...

....

Mother why are you crying .... these doctors are only lying .... Their advices upside down .... They come straight from carnival .... Drunk as they are ..... They are looking for mates in war ....

Snow White don't you understand, all these views must come to an end .... There are soldiers all around us .... They are looking at us, like we are their enemies .... But we do not know them .... They are coming from an older memory ....

Mother, I do not understand what you are saying .... These soldiers are standing between us .... It's like everything is breaking ... It's like I'm deaf and blind, leaving all things behind .... Mother what is taking me away .... Is it the whore, the killerwhore, searching for prey, is it the lady of the brothel, the madame, the senorita .... Why me, I am too young .... Need to wait for my chrystal coffin, for a prince of darkness to take me away ....

Daughter, are you there ? I cannot hear you, cannot find you .... I wished I would hear your voice .... Everything is denying me .... They're saying I'm a whore, and daddy is a liar .... We have raised the marriage high, only to spread the desire ..... They call us the trick of the brothel ..... They call us scum ....

Maybe the divorce will help them out of their ideas .... Maybe the drunk can help us, to get us out of their fears .... Oh mother, why are you crying .... will never be in denying .... I'll save you out, I'll send you my chrystal fire .... On the other side I found my doll .... He's burning like a christmas-doll .... In the divorce, I found a good reason to make a choice .... Throw all my burdens overboard ..... Will embrace the Dark Lord ...

Mother, don't you cry no more, I will be the next whore .... You can forget about your shame .... I will take it over, although it will kill my brains .... Will have the desire, to bring it to a good end .... Oh mother, why don't you understand ....

Mother, don't you cry no more .... Don't listen to all these paper lies .... I will free you, take your work over, I have heard your prayer .... Will send my spell to you tonight .....

No more burdens will be on your back .... No more crying .... No tales to break your neck ..... All these lies will fade away ..... I take possession of this prey .....

I'm a predator .... Oh mother, you know I know ..... I will eat them .... will never let them go home .... Game is over now .... Will raise your name ..... Oh July, come home soon again ..... You are my friend .....

Snow White Goodbye

I know you have come to my grave ... I know you have cried so many tears there ..... I wasn't unaware .... Have counted all your tears and blooddrops for me .... I drank them all .... Will drink them all .... Listen to me, Snow White, your daughter is over you ....

Take me away .... Take me to a place where we won't be prey anymore ..... In this chrystal cage I'm shivering for evermore .... Still didn't found what I'm looking for .....

This message is over soon .... And then I ask you : What are you going to do .... You know my voice, oh daughter of mine ..... You know where I am .... Just come and glide .... away with me .... To new tales of our destiny ....

He was smoking his cigar ... I would visit him ... He lived in a villa ... a golden house .... very expensive ... A record-boss ... I was allowed to speak to him ... for some interviews ... for the big magazine ...

He was smoking his cigar ... waiting for me ... I think he was also thinking about the fame it would bring him .... Although he also wanted to be at the background .... a twisted mind maybe ....

I was speculating about him ... Something I wasn't allowed to do ... but as a magazine-reporter ....

I had to fill the magazine .... I needed to write between the lines .... Or I would lose my job .... I was bound ...

I had to be prejudiced ... I had to lie .... For the magazine needed to sell .... I knew it would take us to lawsuites ... But that was for the accesoires ... the decoration of our fame ..... It would be a good advertisement .... And it would bring fear among the crowd .... They would fear .... the power of gold .... and that's why they would worship it .....

He was smoking his cigar and pouring the wine into the glass ...

He had a golden ring ... I was staring at it ... There was a little photo in it ... covered by glass ... A photo of his little son .... he had been drowned in a river .... A sad story .....

The room had something sinister .... I couldn't describe ... but I would do it for the magazine ... We would meet each other in the lawsuite next month ... I predicted ....

I made some pictures of him .... He was the record-boss of many famous singers and bands .... He was a man without mercy ..... He always let the gold decide ...

But things turned out the other way ... he liked my story in the magazine ... he told me I was a good story-writer ... and I smiled ...

He asked me if I wanted to know a secret ... I noded ... He started to tell me that at night always strange things happened to him .... He would change into a golden fly .... And fly through the streets of the cities .... to search for pubs .... To grasp the stories from the tables and bars ... which he would use to gather new singers and bands .... He would breed them and at one moment he would let them fall .... flying in the air with them so high .... bringing them to the stars ... and then while they were almost there he would let them fall .... He never knew why ....

I smiled a bit ... uncomfortably .... what a storyteller this man was ... He would be a good reporter too ... The magazine needed guys like him .....

Golden fly ...

flying so high ...

he never knew why ....

Golden fly ...

grasping so deep ...

he wonders why ...

Golden Fly ...

He was also a good songwriter .. but he didn't do that too often ... For most of all he saw himself as a moneymaker ... a businessman ... well, actually ..... a puppetmaster .... People needed to dance for him, or he would not be interested ... People needed to bring new, popular, golden things to him, or he would send them away ... And he never gave them much time for that ... This was why people often felt very comfortable when he was around ... He was described as being unfriendly, impatient, arrogant, proud, exclusive ... like he was a star himself ... the highest .... I wondered how he looked at me ... but honestly ... he couldn't touch me ... It was me who had the strings in hands ... and now he had to dance for me to reach for the gold which I hanged before his eyes ... i knew how to tame this man .... and reporters had never a lack of gold if they were writing for a popular magazine .... Well, we knew how to be popular ... and how to stay that way ... We had connections with tv, radio and other media-weapons .... But it was a hard war in these zones ... It was always like living in a jungle ..... Only the biggest braggers would survive ...

It was like he could respect me for that ... like we could inspire each other at that point .... What would life be without bragging .... what would remain then ? .....

I never really listened to people ... I let them talk and make my own story of it ... It was like I was deaf to them ... but I think that was my protection ... and it was already an automatism in that ... I never took people serious, for that would be a possible threat to me ... I just mixed their words and letters a bit with my own prejudices, speculations, lies, judgements, jokes and stories ... I was made to produce gold and nothing but gold .... I had to be the best ... otherwise I would be in the rubbishbin the next day .... And it was like the higher I climbed the harder I could fall .... I kept that in mind .... When you were on the top ... you had to stay there otherwise you would be dog's food the next day .... This is why I didn't have a personality ... I was a parrot .... All for the show .... I was an empty vessel ....

I would never be a singer ... That would be too dangerous ... I would let others dance ... and I would write it down .... and after that I would make it all black .... just not losing any attention .... I could be anything for them ... but this also gave me many enemies ... especially famous ones .... but they had to stay friends with me in a sense ... for I could mean too much for them with all my connections .... for I was the Media .... I could let them fall in the hands of the crowds or take them out whenever I wanted ... so it was a bit of a ... love-hate-relationship .... very frustrating for some ....

I was the parrot on my tropical island .... the dj .... I could play their records ... or throw them away .... I could influence their business .... even the mood of the recordbosses ....

So these lawsuites were not too difficult ... It was more for some extra billboards ... both sides .... It was a game .... The real wars were never there ... on my tropical island ...

And well, why did it have to be serious ? That would destroy everything .... I liked to live in this shell ... in this capsule ... I was like an actor ... always playing it safe ... And my big mouth was my rudder in that .... It was like I was the movie-manager ... I gave them their roles ... And I took care of the gold ...

He was still smoking cigars when I came to him again ... I would never want to be in his shoes ... for he was in the hands of the media .... They could break him or make him .... He was very dignified to me .... for that reason ....

There were so many recordbosses I could chose from ... and media was much more than just records ... I tried to let him think he was boring me a bit ... just to make him dance a bit more ....

The beach was full of electric eels .... I wondered where they came from ... They were rolling like records through the sand .... I had my radio and tv-capsule here on this tropical island ... I came from Izu, an Insectian Universe ..... All these electric eels were ready to be sent out over the world, to be the headphones on people's heads .... the earmasters ... To bring these people into new dreams ... their dreams ....

Then another wave of electric eels came .... they were rolling into the sand like movies .... waiting to be sent out over the world .... to be the video-visors on people's heads .... the viewmasters ...

I was the dj and the vj .... so I would first think a long time about it if I would send them out yes or no ... I was the parrot ....

I started to think ... there needed to be hospitals for rejected, fallen singers and bands ... for unaccepted records and movies .... The wounds had to be deep .... Like they fell out of the game ...

Was there a docter for that ... were there any parents for these patients and deformed ones ? I couldn't be like that ... for I needed to keep the gold rolling ....

I could ask it my crowds .... my democracies ... Or I could threaten some recordbosses and videobosses for that ... I had enough power to force them .... mass-power ... crowd-power .... powers of democracy ...

I was the boss of media and the face of media for so long ....

Ok, stop ... the psychiatrist sais .... and you think this is all real ?

Yes, I say ... read the magazine ...

Sir, the psychiatrist sais, as long as you write for a magazine ... everything is truth to you .... but it's not real to me ... I must say it looks very professional, but you are a bit out of order .... How many people do read this ? Oh, translated in twenty-two languages read by millions of people ?

Yes, I say .... And this conversation will also be in the magazine ... while I just change a bit here and there, and make a good story of it ... for the best gold ... the most readers and the

biggest money .... and of course to update my own status quo ... I cannot allow myself to fall from this high statue ... that would be suicide, right ? But hey, of course it's not truth .... but we just act like it is .....

Aha, and you will also publish these self-exposing words right ? the psychiatrist sais smiling ... What would you think your readers will say of that ?

Well, I say .... they love my self-scorning attitude .... my bragging phenomena's ...

No, the psychiatrist sais ... They will not believe you anymore ... They will buy other magazines ... They will even write magazines to expose your lies ....

No, I say ... I exposed myself already .... And media is all about art ... not about truth .... everyone knows .... people want to be amused .... people like stories and don't care about if it's right or wrong ....

That's why you are here, the psychiatrist sais .... you're a dangerous man, a swindler ... I won't let you go anymore ... you are completely sick in your mind .... not a good example for our children ... you are a threat to education, sir ..... you want to make us all paranoid ? what kind of stories do you have for the next time ... we will never know if it's truth or not ... that which is hanging above our heads .... mr. .... I read your apocalypses in these magazines ..... Is this the continuation of the bible or something ... ?

Pardon me, Sir, I say ... but I am the writer of this magazine ... even of this conversation .... I'm the dj and the vj, so I decide which records will be played here, and which roles you are performing in the movie .... So have a good break, okay ? for otherwise i will not broadcast anything of your stupid little match-box-hospital anymore, and then you will be unemployed, without any roofs floating above your head .... So watch your language ....

I have a love-hate-relationship with my psychiatrist ... he knows he cannot go too far ....

Mr. Psychiatrist, I say .... you will be the villain in the next movie I will broadcast if you don't behave .... or I will put you in a cartoon for awhile ...

My son and I love to play .... then I am the dj ... and he is the psychiatrist .... sometimes I need to be as mean as possible .... to train him for later .... the world outside is so dangerous .... so many dj's on the streets ...

The Evil Sweetness

The book was cursed. It was a book of law made by a demon. Sonja was a dragonslayer, her armory made of the finest jewelry of dragons she defeated. She could use their bones and skins for so many things. She was a lost princess. No one knew where she lived. The book had enslaved many villages. When Sonja showed up it was in the night, and fires were roaring. Demons were riding across the roofs. The wind was howling, but so did the wolves of Sonja. She was a lullaby, having so many spears. I remember once I tore the book of law, setting her free, for she was a prisoner of this book. This was where she lived, and only in the nights she was free.

I remembered she was raising her spears high. I remember she became a buffalo hunter after that day. The stench of these animals was unbearable. They were retarded dragon spirits. They had fallen out of the heavens since that day.

She was doing the buffalo dance. She used to dress herself by their skins to enter among them, and then doing quick kills. I remember her smiles while she was eating from the meat. She was free now.

She used to be among lions and cats, all sorts of cats, often wild cats. She grew up among them. She was a predator. She could cover herself in blood to be reborn. She was a skilled vampiress. By every bite she watched me. She knew I had set her free. I always stood at a distance. One day she came closer to me. She was like the black pantress. She stared at me, and gave me a fish. I gave it back. I wasn't hungry. I could see her eyes … cat eyes … She took me on a buffalo hunt one day. She showed me the skills. We could infiltrate so deep, where the buffaloes lived, all these retarded dragon spirits. I became a buffalo slayer. And she became my guard, but one day she died … I never saw her again, only in my dreams … But whenever I wake up I am lost again … And she is a lost princess again …. I guess the book of law has swallowed her again, taking back it's prisoners …. And I became a buffalo hunter more than ever … I knew these retarded dragon spirits were the cause of all …. I dressed myself with their skins, and infiltrated there, deeper than ever, until I reached the dragon's den … a house of jesters … I found her there in a bath … She was washing a black man's back … She saw me, while her mouth dropped open … 'Hi, baby,' I said …

'Please, save me out,' she said …

I started reading the book of law since that day … It seemed to be a translation of a book in a demonic language. I searched a long time for the original, and found out the book of law was a mistranslation … I found the dragon's pencil and broke it, and went back to my love. 'I have the right translation now,' I said. 'You will be alright.' But then she sunk into the bath and drowned … I tried to grasp her hand but I was too late. I dived into the bath, but the black man grasped me.

‘I gave my life for her, it isn’t fair,’ I said to the black man.

‘Shhht,’ the black man said. ‘It is all in the book.’ The demonic language seemed to be also a translation of a translation, and I found more and more mistakes … I could trace it back to the beginning. I found a book of Sonja, about her life and her works. I found out about her possessions, her mysteries, her treasures. I saw the book of law was based on it, but they had mistranslated it so much … It was so retarded … But the book of Sonja was burning … I couldn’t hold it anymore, so I grasped one of the translations … They seemed to be …. Veils of her temples …. I just misunderstood …. And I misunderstood her …. Where was she ? Who was she ? …. It was only my point of view …. I only watched her through a cracked mirror …. But now she was here with me …. And the threads of her shiny transparent dress were touching me … She was almost winged … And then she drank, and she said : ‘drink with me.’

I said : ‘I’m too good for that.’ But she brought the cup to my lips and I had to drink. It was sweetness, evil sweetness. Like spawns in my mouth, eggs … And I was dreaming …. I woke up and she stood in a wide hall … She smiled at me, and asked me if I had slept well … I nodded …. She gave me some trousers … Then I felt her hand …. She was tying the threads together … red leather threads …. from my trousers … She gave me a shield and a spear …. And then she pushed me ….

Sonja teached me how to do bow and arrow …. And she showed me how books could be traced to their origins …. So many veils …. And I drank again, and she drank …. And she bowed like the ballerina …. She was a statue …. And I couldn’t light her flame …. She was only in my dreams …. But now I had opened the book …. And knew about it’s spirits …. Spirits of stench …. They were like flying monkeys …. And a lamb was saying : ‘drink’ all the time. Have I misunderstood her again ? She came closer to me … Her short dress white transparent … She was a love …. ‘Bring me to life,’ she whispered …. ‘You have the key. You are the only one who can do it …’

I started thinking about her words. What did she mean ? The book of law was of a demon … It didn’t make sense to tear it or translate it well, leading it to the original, for the book just ruled and rose again, always …. It was a cursed book … It had possessed the minds of many …. It was like a book of pigs … I stood up … And I thought : ‘Maybe I just need to defeat it’s demon.’ Who was the demon writing that book ? He had a Spanish pencil and invaded the indian worlds, to get their treasures. It was a Spanish demon, a Spanish dancer, a Night Dancer … I visited him once … He looked ancient, but I was aware it was a chameleon … a female chameleon …. And she called herself Jupiter … And she had a cup made of the teeth of her defeated ones …. From which she drank a lot, until she got drunk …. And I saw her pencil writing in the night, in the heads of her victims ….

And I wondered what I could do against such machine …. It was like a mine-field when coming close to her … And she called herself Jupiter, the boss, the Optimus Maximus. And she protected a city called Rome. And her other part was Jupiter Victor, so she was like her own twin. And she built her churches, and gave them names, and she called herself God.

Was Jupiter God all of a sudden ? She hated Sonja, she wanted to bring her down all the time. And I didn't know what to do … But I remember Easter was the thing we needed to get through. And I had still an Easter pencil from my youth …

And she called herself Pentecost and she called herself Prophet but she couldn't see that Sonja was coming closer to her with the easter pencil … It kind of blinded her …. I have never seen so many pigs falling out of heaven that day … Sonja would turn them all into pigs …. She was some sort of sorceress … Deep in a dragon's dungeon … The Spanish Dancer would visit her there often … while Sonja showed her the book of pigs falling out of heaven …. Pigs, pigs, everywhere pigs …. They were the fallen dragons …

Night of the Spanish Dancer

The matedor killed a bull ... isn't it a sign ... he had something to hide .... we will all be nothing but buffaloes in the night ...

I was in a dragon's prison, a dungeon … Sonja used to appear before the bars … But she couldn't help me … No one could … I was alone …

She used to come everyday but one day she didn't come anymore … But then shortly after she once showed up in my prison, with a bear … She gave me a key and we got out … But outside it was even more a dragon prison …

I saw the cities and the villages, all created by dragons, by strange pencils … While Sonja was deeper in my heart … She led me to a field of buffaloes … and she teached me how to hunt …. They were the retarded dragons … and in her pits they all turned into pigs …. for the dragons had to fall …

Deep in my heart I knew she was a dragon as well …. a demoness ….

She had been locked up by a book for so long …. a book of law …. I cracked the codes and she rose up like a mist … She was a queen now … not lost anymore …. She made her rule and her rod …. and became a Night Evil ….

It was just a nightmare … I woke up in the mornings, went to school, like nothing happened …. But in the nights we had buffalo dances … She was an indian queen ….

And when I grew up she led me to an arena where the monkey men danced …. The ones of unbearable stench ….

She was always my hero … but when I got older she didn't come anymore … What had happened to her ? … The book had grasped her back ….

I was in rage when I found out …. I raged … hard …. She was my love, and now in chains … again … So I went in search for the demon pencil …. and I came into a black black night where I found the Spanish dancer …. And all I heard was spinach, and all I saw was spinach and all I smelled was spinach, but this time the stench was unbearable … There are … spinach monsters in the underground … should have told you before but you never listened … There are spinach monsters in the underground …. They eat meat, roast pigs and skin chickens …. They are like trolls, like cabache trolls … I wanted to tell you before but you never listened …. Trolls in the underground ….

They march there, they hunt their buffaloes …. Their stench unbearable, stealing the show …. There are trolls in the underground and a Spanish dancer leads them …. She's a ballerina … Whenever she bows, they begin ….

Spinach heads in the underground …. They eat babies … taking away the toys …

On spinach hill king spinach lives … He's a pea, and he looks like a sprout …. On buffaloes he rides … I told you but you never listened … I showed you but you never watched …. You were dancing with a Spanish dancer …. And when I cried you laughed … When I laughed you cried ….. You had a Spanish pencil in your mind ….

But let's forget about the old days … start the new day …. Spinach in our heads, it feels so good …. I will show you the spinach pencil and draw a whole new world …. There are trolls in the underground drumming the drums … Have you seen them … did you dream of them …. They are always shouting loud …. They are the gods of noise …. They always infiltrate …. To let their Spanish pencil break …

I know a curse of a Spanish pencil … I saw it flying high … in so many minds …. Spinach armies on her side …. Enchanted with their eyes open so wide …. But one day the army will take her over …. The Spinach will strike … Strike me spinach, deep inside …. Open your mouth and swallow …. It's dinner time now …. Now the spinach will eat ….

Spinach, such a wild fire … melting the locks on the book of law …. We can read it now, what it sais …. It was a Spinach book after all …

Know about the witch with the spinach soldiers ? They are enchanted …. They have too much to hold … But when the night falls they can answer …. Know about the witch and the spinach soldiers …. They march for her, but it is late … When the night strikes they will be led to the morning ….

In the evil night, look at which she rides …. She's a pope chameleon …. She's a pillar standing strong …. On spinach she rides ….. On green waves and red slices … Tomatoe heads is what she cuts, and they call it blood … Her tongue is like a paprika …. Her legs are like chocolate …. Peppermint teeth …. And arms like meat machineries …. She has a gun of strong strong wine … She thinks it's bleeding but it's all fine …. I saw the witch on high green horses …. On red buffaloes she rides …. Dragons, dragons, guess her name … Her dress is like banana brain … I can hear the spinach cry … She always tells them lie ….

In the evil night …. Look at how they fight …. They hunt for meat, that's one thing for sure, and blood is their delight …. They are vampires and butchers …. Not a problem to them to

possess someone … Not a problem to them to take someone completely over … Trolls of torture are they …

So shut the book, let's not talk about it anymore … Lock it this time with bean locks decorated by carrots …. Let's lock it up this time forever …. For this candy vegetable is just a lie …. I don't want to get poisoned … Let the fruits eat this time …. We're done, dinner's over ….

March to orange town, Rosa, and mix it with lemon ….

There are spinach machineries in the sky … and I shouldn't listen to all those lies …. But the truth is worse these days … and who can handle it ? It's all for sale … Truth like cookiemen standing tall in boxes …. And women kill each other to get a piece …. Truth comes in small portions they say … Sow it and be contend …. Tomorrow tree will grow …. And in spinach it will bend …. Have a nice show ….

I was in a dragon's prison, a dungeon … Sonja used to appear before the bars … But she couldn't help me … No one could … I was alone …

She used to come everyday but one day she didn't come anymore … But then shortly after she once showed up in my prison, with a bear … She gave me a key and we got out … But outside it was even more a dragon prison …

It's like standing between two fires …. Spinach fire … We can't go back, we can't go forth ….. Spinach is a stalker ….

We are so split inside, like a paradox, all by the spinach conspiracy …. We love it and we hate it … We make laws and then we break them … All strange machinery ….

Sonja, Sonja, when she leads me out, she just leads me deeper in …. She's a chameleon … All buffalo dancers inside …. Moving through her night ….

It’s spinach nightmares …. And no one cares … Oh yea, she found my hand, but led me to the trap … Nothing exists but the trickster …. And her name is Sonja …. And spinach is her land …. We are all in spinach land … locked up in a bottle, in a fatal story …. Her words are lethal, killing jokes …. And their biggest joke was you and me …

So was our saviour our destroyer at the end of the show …. Our friend our enemy ? When the curtain fell she gathered the blood and spoke her spell …. We couldn’t go home again, we had to go with her …. She was the phantom of the movie …. We had to pay afterwards …. And lost our souls ….

I shouldn’t watch this movie … shouldn’t take you with me to that cinema …. I should cancel the trip … better eat a banana ….

I know a girl, her name is Sonja, she’s a black panther girl, what can we do against her when she starts her dance …. What can we do when she starts casting her spells …. I don’t believe in love anymore after the break … Her face stalks … her cinema a butchery …. Spinach lions …. She drives us crazy … Blame it on her …. The one of the book … She has made all these laws here …. If someone is both God and the devil … where to go …

Spinach soldiers …. Enchanted soldiers …. Bewitched by an evil book … takes a worse book to open it …. And the worst book to shut it …

Spinach soldiers they march …. Like toy knights in the night …. They are evil eating living meat … and the blood they drink as well … Don’t call it brown beans with tomatoes when you see it, for the tides always turn after the spell … They are wicked princes, evil lords, enslaving churches to let them pray to them, and worship them … Sometimes they are wrong, sometimes they are right, but it always turns into a fight … They are the lords of war … defeating evil by the worse … The worst is their king, and is sometimes the best … He has a split character, and never cares about the rest … He has the command …. The tides of spinach are in his hand …. A clock is in his head … he’s the personal bodyguard of the witch …. I think it will never change … Some things just aren’t made to break … They have deep conversations in the night …. About how to hunt and how to fight … They lay their strategies on the table … and tell stories to impress each other …. Two chameleons like Sonja … but Sonja plays them both ….

I think Sonja has made these Spanish ships … I guess she was bored … and needed some attention … And I think she cannot get it right again … Maybe she wishes it, but she always fails … The clock can’t be turned …. Some things just don’t stay only for one night … The

matedor killed a bull … isn't it a sign … he had something to hide …. we will all be nothing but buffaloes in the night …

No matter how many Spanish dancers, we can't dance against Sonja's spells …. She just needs some buffaloes for theatre …

Listen to the beat of the Spanish Dancer, listen to the beat of the Spanish drum, maybe we can learn something from it, There might be some rows in it, we will get it done … Listen to the Spanish Dancer, when he tells his tales of islands far away …. Listen to those sailor stories, we might learn something of it, it might take us away … We drink from good good bottles, Spanish dancers have the rhythm …. Listen to the song of the Spanish dancer, I don't know if you heard it before …. It's good to listen to it … It might bring you to another shore …. It's always dancing between hope and despair ….. Will it bring us any further …. I guess it will …. Have some faith in the Spanish snare … Their pearled harps and guitars are out of this world …. Their flutes are gypsy magic, they are the veils of indian temples … They know of native treasures, those explorers of the sun …. Haven't you listened to their tales, it's wonderful …. Your dreams will be fulfilled ….

They are those cowboys of your dreams … But cowboys always become cows in the night … That's Sonja's spell whether it is wrong or right …

I once went to Sonja's farm … The cowboys were into some sort of .. carnival … One came as a cow and couldn't get back to become a cowboy again, the mask had become a reality ….

Cowboys and matadors fear her, but they always fall into her traps … She's a name-shifting chameleon … Keep your eyes open when it's her night … have thick glasses …. When cowboys become buffaloes, and pigs fall out of heaven … It will be the end of the show …

The Women

with the Beautiful Mouths

Jorge stood on top of a smooth pink mountain and dived in the air, while clouds caught him. Soon he flew with the birds. Blood came out of his mouth. He had just drunk from his daily blood. He closed his eyes, while bats and vampires flew close together with him. Suddenly they shrieked, and they could bring the blood from the sea up. They drunk deeply, while Jorge also took the blood deep inside. He had his ways for that. He was on his way to Vampire City, and he would never be able to reach it if he wouldn't drink together with these friends. It was like a tight ritual, like the portal to the city. Blood came out of his mouth when he came into the city. He had drunk deep this time. His eyes were bright, and a girl with soaring eyes, which almost pierced him to draw his attention. The girl was almost naked and had a cowboyhat on. Everything here could only happen by deep vampirism, or nothing would be possible. There was only a way to breath by sucking the blood she gave by her eyes. He felt so dependant, but it always was like this, or he wouldn't come any further in the city. He couldn't think. This woman had a hold on his head. This woman had powers, and he felt like he was her slave. 'Come here,' she said, like he was a horse. She didn't humiliate him. Bloodpowers were flowing from her hand to feed him, like she was feeding grass to the horses. 'Yes, you, come, horse,' she said. He could only move here by the deep vampirism she gave him as a gift to be able to follow here. He just had to follow the blood. In the city the horses stood, moving so gracious and gentle. He knew this all happened by vampirism. Without taking the streaming blood they couldn't do anything. They took it through their noses. They could really think deep to reach a tight extasy. They were wild but tamed very tightly. There was no way to get off from the scheme. The rythm was merciless, and the song enchanting. The woman had a voice like an echo.

Suddenly Jorge stood in the middle of the city, watching the beautiful clocks of the towers. From here the juices streamed. From the towers women in red leather ran like cats, but suddenly lightening struck them. Another woman came forth from behind, riding an ox. She also had a cowboyhead and she had the lightening like a whip in her hand. The king of Vampire City was a strange man. Halfnaked women came forth from a small lake in the middle of the city. The lake was full of strange fluids, and strange fluids seemed to fall upon them. Suddenly pure blood came down in streams, and the girls started to drink to become wild. But he could expect this in such a Martian city. If they wouldn't drink from the blood they would be paralyzed within a certain amount of time. To speak a word they needed the blood streaming out of the hand of the king.

The women surrounded him, and spoke their words to him. They started to shriek and scream, while others started to whisper or talk lovely, while he could only hear by the blood. 'By the

blood,' the vampire king roared, 'I wage war. By the blood, I take more blood. By the blood, only by the blood, all of my senses work. There is no life without blood.' The vampire king had directed his sword at Jorge, while blood came from the sword surrounding him. 'Now drink,' the vampire king said, 'or you can't do anything here.' Jorge started to drink and drink, until he got almost drunk. 'Take a woman,' the vampire king said. Jorge took a woman. The woman led him to her house. In the house there were even more women, all with cowboyhats.

Then the vampire king came in. He had a bottle in his hand, and gave it to Jorge. 'Drink from it and give it also to the women,' the vampire king said. 'And I'm guarding the portal of bacteria,' the king said, and all the women fell down, while Jorge stood there trembling. 'What did you give us ?' Jorge asked. Then also Jorge fell down. The king laughed. 'Within a few you will rise up, by strange bacteria,' the king said. Then suddenly the women rose like warriors. They threw their cowboyhats away and grasped some feathers from the wall to stick them in their hair. Then also like lightening Jorge rose. 'Without bacteria you can forget vampirism,' the king said, and left with his bottle. The women were insane now, and smeared blood and warpaint on each others bodies. Jorge didn't know how to get out as fast as he could. He ran to the portal of the city and dived into the clouds, and fell into the sea. He swam for a few hours and almost died while he tried to reach the beach. Some women found him while he had lost the half of his consciousness. 'No, don't kill me,' he screamed to the women. The women didn't know what was going on. They were very friendly. 'You are safe here,' one of them said. They looked like indians, and took him to their hut where he could sleep. The next day he went to the beach again and saw some women with cowboyhats playing with a ball. Again he got scared and screamed. He would never forget Vampire City like this, but they understood he had a trauma. They took their hats off and threw them into the sea. 'Better like this ?' they asked. Jorge nodded. 'Vampires are dangerous,' he said. 'I don't understand how I got so close to them, almost being one myself.' The women smiled. 'With us you are safe. We will keep them far away from you.'

'Please,' he begged them. 'Don't let me go back there. I don't want to.'

'You don't have to,' they said. 'You can stay here.'

'But the vampire king said we can only live by blood,' Jorge said.

'Well, you have blood inside already. You don't need any more,' the women said. 'Actually we were vampires also, but since we reached the heights we do not need to take it anymore. It just grows inside. It's a well.'

‘You sure ?’ Jorge asked.

‘Yes,’ they said. ‘No need to kill, no need to bite but apples and fruits.’

Then they brought him some exotic fruits, red like blood. It tasted good, but still Jorge was afraid. He had been a vampiristic slave all his life. It was an addiction. He had to or he would die. ‘It’s inside,’ they said. ‘It’s some sort of bacteria.’

‘So I do not need to go back ?’ he asked. The women shook their heads. ‘Never, Jorge. You are now here.’

‘But maybe they will take me back,’ Jorge said.

‘No,’ the women said. ‘They won’t come here. The bacteria would destroy them.’

‘Exotic bacteria,’ Jorge whispered, and then he fell asleep again.

Jorge and the Dragon

She was a vampiress, a real one, with a shield of bacteria around her, exotic bacteria, the secret of the snakes of the islands. She had a sword of drunkeness piercing through the heavens, looking like silk and soft skin because it was smeared by the exotic bacteria tricking the eye. But the sword pierced deep like a spear causing eternal bloodwells to stream out. She had boots made of bearskin, smeared by blood. She had a mouth moving by blood. She could only move by blood, even her eye-vision worked by blood. She would only hear something if she would make a bloodbath by her spear and sword.

‘Vampire, come closer,’ a dragon with sharp large bloodred eyes spoke to her. She came closer, while he embraced her by a hairy skin to warm her. Women came out of the eggs while her lights and shadows fell on them. They stood up, having the same qualities like her.

Jorge watched her from a distance and in cool rage he slayed her. This vampiress wouldn't take his soul away.

'You have done well, son,' the dragon said, while a flame came out of his mouth to devour the other women and the rest of the eggs. 'The eggs won't grow here anymore, since their brooder is dead,' the dragon said.

Jorge drank from a bottle and then he gave it to the dragon. Jorge fell down in a deep sleep, and the dragon brought him up to a higher place. They had now defeated the feared watcher of the heights. Jorge hung on to his sword. He would use this sword even to root the last vampire out. In the old world love was a vampire, and a kiss could only happen by bloodbaths. But Jorge had the sword which was the power of love. It was a strange bacteria, it could make you cry. The sword came against the vampires since the beginning. Jorge was a slayer, and if he would take blood, he would only take it out of a vampire.

Jorge was too good to be a real vampire, too soft. He couldn't stand it when vampires would act like they were love, like they were sweet and good, for he knew they weren't. He hated them. For it was Jorge who had the power of love, it was him who could pour the strange bacteria to make them all drunk. He could make them all cry, for their brooder was dead now. And this all because of the special relationship between Jorge and the dragon. Without the dragon he wouldn't have any chance against her.

It was a strange bacteria between him and the dragon. The bacteria made everything happening between them funny, so they laughed a lot like they were drunk and insane.

Broken Eye – Indian Fiction

The White Prince

Broken Eye was on her way to the white prince who had been locked up in a tower by a group of beasts and a dragon for such a long time. They kept him imprisoned since his birth, as a longlasting nightmare. No one knew why the beasts were keeping him there, and no one could help the white prince. The king had been sad for such a long time now, but he was glad when Broken Eye came to him. She was a warrior-princess with a sharp eye. To her it wouldn't be such a problem to save the prince. When she came to the tower there were a lot of people around, yelling at the beasts. Every day a lot of people came there trying to save the prince, and thus to help the king, but no one ever could. Firy flames came out of the tower to chase the visitors away. Often many of these people died by flames or other troubles. Some got very sick, and some even disappeared forever. The king was very sad that so many people gave their life to save the prince without any result. Broken Eye came to the tower, went up to the stairs and shouted : 'Hey white prince, I have come for you.' But the white prince had been surrounded by the beasts, and he was in a lower delirious consciousness. The white prince couldn't talk, for he had never learned it. Suddenly Broken Eye came into a room of fire. Immediately she closed the door again, and went further upwards. In the top of the tower there was some sort of well where a basket hung. She knew she had to go down with this thing, but she could also go downstairs on another stairway. Suddenly the stairs started to burn, and Broken Eye jumped in the basket. 'I cannot hear you, prince,' she shouted.

There she saw the prince hanging at a rope, chained to the wall, with so many white beasts around him with their strange delirious voices. When the prince saw her he stared, and didn't react. She had the rope of the basket in her hand by which she could come down, but she knew it could be dangerous, as the beasts had strange fires around them, by which they even seemed to speak. Broken Eye took an arrow and shot the first beast. It was like the prince got a shock and he awoke. 'I'm going to get you,' she said. The prince looked at her like he didn't understand her. Then she grasped his hand. She got a hopeless feeling when she saw the chains. Another beast jumped at her, and soon she had been chained to the opposite wall too. The prince kept staring at her. 'We will die in this situation,' she said. A white face was gliding along her. It was the dragon's face. Some fire came out of the dragon's mouth. 'All I want to say is that I'm protecting the prince,' the dragon said slowly.

'Against what ?' Broken Eye shouted.

'Don't you know ? Against the evil of civilisation,' the dragon whispered.

'What if I take him to the wilderness ?' Broken Eye said.

‘Deal,’ the dragon spoke, and unchained her by a flame. Then the dragon also unchained the prince by a flame, and soon he and Broken Eye were outside the tower. It was night now, and Broken Eye had promised the dragon she wouldn’t take him to the king. She went immediately to the wilderness where she took care of him the rest of his life.

Broken Eye – Indian Fiction

Savage Planet

She was gliding through the winds and the snow, catching the first rays of the new day in her hand, where she had also her dagger. Broken Eye was a mystery woman, someone with an eye for contact. She could always leave such a big impression to the ones who had encountered her, like she got a hold on their hearts for the rest of their lives. This happened not only to friends, but also to enemies. And enemies she had a lot. They didn’t want to have her around. In many villages and tribes she wasn’t welcome, as she had been suspected of kidnapping young ones to the wilderness. There were some children’s tribes deep in the jungles and wildernesses who worshipped her as a goddess, but that wasn’t because she had kidnapped them. No, they chose to live so deep in the tropical rainjungles themselves. She had been an inspiration to many.

She teached the savages how to fight against predators, and how to keep themselves safe. She knew a lot about the beasts of the deeper jungles and wildernesses, also about the unknown species. She was a skilled woman with a supernatural intelligence, but that was also often the reason why not many understood her. To her enemies she was a strange woman, an outcast, dangerous to children. But all Broken Eye wanted to do was to tell them about the savage path, the path into the depths of the wilderness to know about it’s secrets. It was by all the attacks she more and more lost her contacts with the outside world, and went deeper and deeper into the jungles, even to the unknown parts never tred by humans.

Here she developped contacts with black panthers, lions and other predators, and she liked that better. Of course she had to be very careful with these dangerous creatures. She knew she was playing with fire, but her instincts teached her when to run and hide. These creatures were like vulcanoes having their own code, and she just had to stay away in times of eruptions. She could recognize these times more and more, and could feel them coming from a distance. The animals loved her for that, as often they just couldn't deal with contact. Animals needed to have privacy too. This was why Broken Eye was against civilization, as there was often no privacy, and this was how she could explain all the problems between human beings. She knew that humans were these vulcanoes too, and they had to learn about their codes.

Here in the depths of the wilderness she found out she was a vulcanoe too. She was a fire, in need for privacy, peace and rest. She wanted to become a soldier to protect this peace, and she knew that when she wouldn't become a predator, she would be taken away one day. There were so many dangers threatening her. But she knew deep in her heart that these were the wilder animals of the deeper jungles, of it's unknown depths. In her eyes civilisation was one of these beasts. It was a wilder creature, walking around with problems she didn't know of. In the depths of the jungle there was so much slavery. So it seemed that civilisation just came from a deeper even more savage place. What could she expect in the heart of the rainforests, where the sun seemed to touch the earth ? It was a mystery to her, but she wanted to know about it. She knew that civilisation would be nothing but an illusive projection of this place. What could she expect there ? Large exotic spiders ? Flies ? Beasts, or other animals ? There were a lot of slimy webs here, and a lot of insects got stuck here. There were large snakes very slimy and sweaty, much in orange colour, in black, brown or green pattern very often. These were exotic snakes, and the waters here were brighter than ever. In these forestlakes there were often small islands, and to one of these islands she swam to find out more about it. It seemed no human had ever come here. There were small vulcanoes on these islands like craters. Sometimes these vulcanoes erupted, but they didn't do much harm. Again there were many strange webs on the island where she was. Suddenly she discovered something. The eggs of strange flies. The flies looked like they were red. They started to surround her and stang her, while her blood started to stream across her body. She ran away trying to find a safe place, but the flies were following her. She dived into the waters, but even there the red flies followed her. Until she came underground. Here it was cool, almost cold, but still very tropical and exotic. It was like a complex of caves here. Suddenly she got in a shock. Again she saw the red flies. It looked like a hive here. In the walls she saw other sorts of red flies, but they had been cocooned in some sort of way. In the distance she heard some roaring, some noise, and a tall shadow fell on her. She saw a black red dragon looking like a sort of giant fly with a thin head coming forth to grill the flies by a flame. Then he started to suck some sort of red fluid out of the wall. When he went back again Broken Eye followed him. There were still some red flies in her surroundings but they didn't seem to attack her anymore. It was a huge hall to which the dragon went where all sorts of stones hung in the air like dangerous lamps. If they would fall down they would pierce the ground. The dragon went to his amazing huge throne in the distance. It was like behind this throne the sea was roaring. When he took place he roared : 'I have seen you already, woman. You are looking for answers, and I will give them to you. Come closer. Don't fear me.' Broken Eye came closer. It was like she could trust this savage place a bit, as she always thought, the more savage the better. 'I come here to

know about the secret of civilisation, as it is torturing our world, keeping so many enslaved,' Broken Eye said, and bowed down before the dragon.

'I am glad you want to know,' the dragon said. 'Come closer.' Broken Eye came closer till she almost stood in front of the throne. The dragon took her up, and the huge wall of stone behind the throne became more transparent and Broken Eye could see the sea. 'Look at the waves,' the dragon said. 'They are so enslaved. They are the slaves of so many planets around them, bringing the tides. It is savage, and so is your civilisation. Civilisation is driven by the radiation and projections of unknown savage planets. Civilisation is a result of the wars of these planets, projecting itself as a beast with many personalities.'

'Then where can I find these savage planets ?' Broken Eye asked.

'Oh,' the dragon said, 'just look for the unknown tribes of your own planet, even deeper in the underground, as they know much more about it, and they harbour it's pure radiation.'

'And where can I find these tribes ?' Broken Eye asked.

'Deeper underground,' the dragon said.

Then another journey started for Broken Eye, the underground journey. She came to know about these savage underground tribes, who seemed to know much more about the unknown savage planets, and they had a lot of stories about these aliens coming down. Broken Eye was very interested in their stories, and she wondered if there was any way to set the beast free. It would only happen when they would find the most savage place on their own planet. But no one knew where it could be. An older man said that it would be some sort of vulcanoe on a certain island. So Broken Eye went back to the dragon and asked her where that could be. She told the dragon all she had heard from the underground tribes, and the dragon was satisfied. The dragon told her that the island had sunk in a previous age, and the vulcanoe was now underwater. It would be the main source of all earthquakes on the planet. But below the vulcanoe, in the underground, the people would still live, and it would be the most fruitfull and most savage place on the planet. Next to the throne a door made of all sorts of stones opened. 'When you go through this tunnel, you will reach that world,' the dragon said. It looked like paradise to Broken Eye, but when she came there she found out the people lived in slavery. There was a certain tribe having the scepter here. Broken Eye would never forget the face of their chief. He rode on a horse, and when he saw Broken Eye he didn't say anything. He had a whip in his hand, and only stared at her for some minutes. Around his

horse slaves were tied to each other. ‘You let them go or I will do something to you,’ Broken Eye said slowly.

Then he said : ‘If I set them free they will do the same to us.’

Broken Eye knew this was a difficult situation, so she went back to the dragon. ‘You see how complex everything is. It’s all about fear. They are driven by fear. They do not trust each other, and they do not want or dare to kill each other, so they enslave each other. This is how it always goes,’ the dragon said.

‘Isn’t there a medicine ?’ Broken Eye said.

‘No,’ the dragon said. ‘They just have to wait for the new tide. And you cannot break time. Time just has to come, and it comes how it comes.’

Broken Eye bowed her head. ‘But,’ the dragon said. ‘For you there is another door.’ And then a door at the other side of the throne opened. Broken Eye went through and came to a lonely paradise. No one was here. It was quiet, and she knew that loneliness would indeed be the only way to come out of this wicked world. Vulcanoes needed to be alone, needed to have privacy, or everything would turn into a wicked world. Broken Eye just had to obey this law of nature. She had found this most savage place on the planet which had not been tred by human beings before.

White Fence – Indian Fiction

Secret of the Raspberry

The beautiful red …. Everything is a dream.

She stood there, her breasts covered by paint. She had an amulet around her neck made of the whitest ivory. She stood there on a hill of an indian wonderland. The paint was of berries of a wondertree … wonderberries. Her hairdress had so many proud feathers. But she wasn't a chief. She was winged and free.

She was a spellmaker and a spellbreaker, bringing so many to her world. Her eyes were like marbles, her mouth like the sweetest berries. She had made her world by the softest spells.

There was no way back for those who got into her webs. She would draw them deeper and deeper into her world. She taught them new languages there.

She told them that the body is a temple. She told them that they had to treat it like a temple, believing that everything coming from the temple was good. She taught them that the body was infallible. Her eyes were like berries, and everyone who believed her had eyes like berries too.

The streets of her place were like bananas, and outside her world there was only hunger. She wasn't a queen, she was free. She had clothes like grapes.

She was a maker of wonders and magick, in her wonderland, her indian wonderland.

No one following her would ever return, those grasped by her webs were missed forever. In lakes of fruitmilk they bathed. She would show them her treasures, one by one.

She was sweet like candy, holding the secrets of her world forever in her heart.

She smeared her spells by paint, and then shot them in the hearts of her targets. She could harpoon them easily. She was a trickster.

Her traps were smeared, designed by lullabies, all she wanted was to win.

She was not a chief but she ruled. She was not a princess, she was free.

Whenever she spoke there was a smell of apples around, and she would show her apple jewels, and strange mysterious flies. She had defeated them, taking their wings, and the eyes deep within.

And whenever she spoke these apple jewels would surround you to open their eyes and stare at you. She was full of attention, spreading her lights like mysterious fruits. These fruits had hearts and geometry, teaching about the temples, how life was to be.

Outside her aura, there was the hunger, and inside she brought all those who followed her on their knees. Amazed by her treasures.

She showed them sacred geometry, sacred lights bringing them to life. She painted their breasts.

She had defeated fairy and elf, a new wonderland above the shell. Her spells were of war against gnome and giant. Their skulls she used to lure the trolls to trap them. In an indian wonderland she lived. Mysterious flies she beheaded to find her friends.

I was once in her wonderland, there were no ways out, only in. She showed me her white fences, moving like lullabies, all to bring the trapping spin.

She knows the secrets of the raspberries all deep inside. It's the spider's jewel, my friend, and she has broken it's head.

White Fence – Indian Fiction

Strawberry Blood

In an indian wonderland, she tied up her spells, like baskets made of reed. She had killed the fairy, killed the elf, of a land she lived in for so long. It drove her insane. She had freed herself now from her chains. She left the jungle land behind her. She was the new magick.

Her lips were moving like soft raspberries, her eyes like dark berries, while her hair was like the black strawberry. She bore a secret in her heart, a bow to strike. Her body was like a harpoon.

She brought the trolls down, and the leprechaun, to enter her dreams again. The dreamless night was over.

There was no fairy in this land. She had the wings. She was about to strike.

She had found the red honey of life. She had become invincible by it, and she smeared it on all her spells to conquer. She was not a queen, nor a princess, but she ruled, all by her dreams.

She wasn't a chief. She was winged. She had the skull of a fairy hanging at her belt. Skulls of elves were on both of her shoulders. She was armed.

Her beaches were like smeared by bananas. She knew the secrets of pears and cucumbers. She had heard their hearts ticking. She had beheaded the gnomes and flies living in them. They were like evil monks once ruling her world. They were now stretched out like the walls of her cave. She rode on swines since that day.

Swines were her friends, she freed them on one day, millions of them, all red-eyed. They were the softest friends, with voices filling the skies with licorice. They teached her of snakes locked up in trees and how to get them out. They teached her of animals locked up in the ground, and how to get them out. It was an indian wonderland.

Golden threads in her head, like velvet, all dreams. She could play them like a piano, like heaven's harp. She was tall, and the harp was tall, all made by her dreams, by spells she struck.

It was like a boat in the sky, picking so many up, for monks ruled the land outside. She crashed them down by psychedelic noises, by lamenting, lullabies and battlecries. She was the invincible one.

Her carriage was high, driven by the wind. She was living in the skull of the ruler of the raspberry she once struck down. It was like a lantern. All she did was breathing now. Her pastures were like vegetables.

I was there once, and I got hungry. Something was filling my stomach. It was a light. She was holding a lantern like a raspberry.

She was White Fence, a troll-trap, a world beyond fairytale. She would spin to turn your world around, her way to take you in. There were no ways of getting out, only ways to get in deeper. She had belts with strange jewels, yes, girdles. These jewels were the eyes of fairies and elves she once defeated. Some were the eyes of trolls.

She could strike like no one could. She bore the horrors of the ages.

It was like I knew her forever. When I came closer she smiled.

She didn't have a throne, but she sat between feathers. There was velvet all around her.

There was music coming from dragon eyes, soft music. She spoke soft, she had wings of light.

She showed me feathers of parrots she once defeated. Where was I ? In hell, in heaven, or in paradise ? I was in indian wonderland, where the white fence was spinning. I got locked up, there was no way out.

She had no throne, no crown. She wasn't a queen, neither a princess, but she ruled. She was invincible. She struck by spells but she had the skulls of wizards. They spred their winds, but she gagged them. Their skulls were on high stakes, spouting fire, but she brought them down by the rod of light.

It was all in her dreams, I couldn’t escape. I was buried in her dreams.

Strawberry blood, wizard skulls, all part of her spells.

Raspberry bones, teeth of trolls, she all knew it well.

White Fence – Indian Fiction

Nothing But

Sand

Paint their breasts, open their wings, make their hearts beat, and the story will begin. Make their fists red, the rest will be white, they will climb up on a tree, then make a dive. Soar in the skies, open your eyes, it's an indian wonderland. You have survived.

She had a trumpet to her mouth. Her creatures were waking up after hundreds of years of sleep. They came out of the depressions of the night. There was not a fairy anymore blinding their sights. No elf to make them feel miserable. They were alive. Alive and well in an indian wonderland, reading about berry spells. She had painted these spells on trees by thick paint from a wonderwell. She would let them make wishes again, and bring forth words, words of life.

She had blown the trumpet and a flute, and now she was playing the drum, while they all come forth, and danced to the music. They weren't queens, nor princesses. They weren't princes nor kings. They were with her.

She gave them wings and hearts of fire. Their fists were red, their bodies white, but it was all paint. They were in a dream.

There were fires in the sky, no fairytales anymore. They were staring outside, but she lured them inside. She had a priest's heart. The body was her temple.

She was not a chief. She had found the heart of the dark strawberry, a giant fruit. She lived in it like in a hut. It was a spider's jewel which she had beheaded, and all the mysterious flies inside, which had thick pale wings. She could use these wings. She saw dark men dive. Oh how she wanted to see them fly. They had been asleep. All in the depths of her dreams, in an indian wonderland.

In fruitmilk they were, in her caves. She knew the secret of the raspberry milk.

She was tall, wrestling against a harp. She played it like a piano. It was a strange creature.

She had blown the trumpet today, and also a flute. And now she was playing the drum, while they all came forth. There was darkness around her. She bore the horror of ages, and then she fell asleep.

She fell asleep in my arms. I woke her up by a whisper, for a new day, a new day to play, in an indian wonderland. Where were the fairies and elves ? There were none. They didn't exist. Where were the trolls and the leprechaun ? They didn't exist. There were none of them. She had the skulls of giants and gnomes, all drums.

She had the breast painter's spells, all to make them fly, to let them wake up. Wake up, wake up, for time flies, in this indian wonderland.

There was no fairytale, only a spinning white fence.

She had a key, letting it all begin, letting it turn around like lullabies. She had her ways to get me in. She pretended she was sad.

It was all pretend, this brandnew world, this indian wonderland.

She had paint from the raspberry, she could make it real.

Cucumber blood it made the thrill. Banana bones her weapons, and much cherry leather.

Why did she drown the gnomes and clowns by floods of paradise. She was a skullhunter, but pigs were her friends. She once set them free.

Don't you know : pigs are such lovely animals, so sensitive and wise. When they are fools it's just pretend. She would sigh, and stare at them for hours, for they were beautiful. There were no fairytales anymore, in this indian wonderland. Cows were her friends, but oranges she would behead, to make the orange pale, shivering paint instead.

I’ve seen her killing a raspberry. There was no police. She ruled. I’ve seen her skinning a cucumber, while there was no complaint. This world is mad.

Spinach girl, she’s waging war, her face is painted, chocolate struck. You can’t say she’s a dreamer. She made it real by the spells of dark bean churches.

They go like this :

We worship you, upper bean. You’re the darkest in this area. This territory is yours, and you will be. There are no borderlines for you, for darkness never has.

Why is she insane like this, why does she dance like this. Ask the bean, and you will get your answer. But only worshippers will hear the truth.

They read their spells loud, and make it real. Then they believe it. It’s not a dream anymore. Beans rules.

She went to the peach church once. They gave her some arms. She has saved pigs out of it, but outside there are only pigs. It’s the secret of a dark dark bean heart.

She tells stories to lie. She’s a white white spinning fence. Want to know the truth ? Only worshippers hear the truth. The dark beans have teached her that.

But how come this world is so insane ?

I asked her this question, and got a slap in my face.

Cabbage girls with white wings, she saved them out of cherry church. They all yelled. They were glad. Now they are her soldiers, I better pretend.

Pretend, pretend, pretend, or they will boot you out. And outside there are only pigs, and there is only hunger.

She told me about the white spots once, the places breeding lights. I asked her when would the story begin.

She slapped me again.

What can I do against a white fence ? It spins, it never lets me in, but it only draws me deeper. I get stuck inbetween.

You must eat more beans she said. But all she gave me was sand.

White Fence – Indian Fiction

The Berry

There has never been any use in a massacre …. It’s all about keys.

Give me the key, she said.

He gave it. She used it. She stuck it into the keyhole, and entered a new world.

Some people use violence to get a key. But she used a key to get another key.

She was a dignified lady, not like the White Fence, for that one was a bit rude at times, softly spoken.

She could knock on the door of the bean king for hours, until he opened to give her a key.

‘Now you run, girl,’ he would always say. His keys just worked.

I still have the picture of her standing before these doors.

White Fence would never do that. She had other ways.

Give me the key, she said.

Millions would faint, for she just wanted the key.

She sowed so much hypnoses and confusion.

White Fence would never do that.

She used a key for a key, even when it would take a hundred keys, she would do it.

Not White Fence.

White Fence didn’t believe in keys. It was kind of old school for her.

She believed in locks, she would spin like she wanted.

I tried to get over the White Fence, but have you seen those spears.

Headbanging ? No way ? Have you seen the white ?

White Fences would stare at me.

One day she changed her mind because of me,

But a day later she had forgotten about it.

I couldn’t open the fence. I couldn’t get across it.

But she showed me the white raspberry,

Paint coming forth from it,

Like the wondertree

I saw the berries,

They saw me.

Beasts with million teeth.

Vampire Forest of Horror

They had to gight many snakes in the dark forest, while they were sliding through the mud. They felt themselves so princely, while they were eating the snakemeat. The wounds formed strange waving tattoes on their bodies like there were plants drawn on them. They felt how they got the control over themselves back, after the escape. They had been slaves for such a long time. They could stretch their bodies tall, feeling their own identities and worthiness again, after so many years of humiliation. Of course they still had slave-tattoos, but by the fights against the wild animals here, these tattoos started to get another form. They were proud of their new scars as emblems of their new found liberty. But the danger wasn't over yet, for what if the slavehunters would find them here ? They were sliding through the dark

forest. And what if a dark animal would finally beat them ? They had the risk of becoming in worse slavery than ever, for did they know all these strange creatures ? What was waiting for them here ? The men were shivering, aware of their fragile freedom, but they knew they couldn't go back anymore. They had to face this new adventure. They heard the strange sounds of these completely unknown creatures of these dark forests, and they felt all sorts of strange shivers and fears in their bodies. Were their bodies reacting to the sounds and the strange atmospheres ? Sometimes they were breathing very heavy ... Fortunately they had their daggers. They needed to survive this dark place, and maybe the strange meat of the defeated enemies would give them a chance. They were hungry, and they had to fight many panthers and strange animals, also big spiders. What if big birds would take them away ? Some animals were very big, and also the plants here they couldn't trust. They were with fourteen men, not knowing with how many they would be after a further while. Sometimes they had to fight meat-eating trees.

They were drinking strange sorts of blood from the defeated animals. There wasn't anything else they could drink, and first their bodies got very sick of it, but after awhile to some sorts their bodies got a bit of used. The men were very tired but soon enough they learnt about which sort of blood would give them new strength. More and more they started to learn about this new nature and it's laws. The psychological wounds of the men were deep. They felt deeply destroyed in their souls. They were born in slavery and were never able to develop langauge. They were wild men. It was like they couldn't develop strength, for every bit they tried to hold in their bodies was stang by some sort of creature, while their energy was flowing away. There were a lot of things they couldn't develop because of the pressure and the attacks. All they got were flashes in moments, easily torn away by the next step. They felt the forest as heavily vampiristic, draining them. They couldn't have possessions, they only had their daggers and some torn clothes and belts. The snakes were very big here, trying to strengle them over and over again. These snakes weren't easy to defeat, and sometimes such fights took hours. They knew they had to become like this forest and these animals, or they wouldn't survive. The snakes could sting them very hard and deep, but they felt it let them contract their bodies more and more. These contractions were to release venom as an extra weapon, and also as a way to express the pains in their souls. It was a way of communication between each other, but it was always short and mysterious, from a distance, for they were also afraid of each other.

Some had dark snakes tattood on their bodies, of which they were very proud. The men started to make clothes and tents of the skins of the defeated animals, for the forests were tall. They started to make places where they would gather the meat. The most dangerous animals were the horned ones, for they could walk very fast and could easily kill by their horns. The horned animals made very loud noises and were the wildest animals in these forests. Very often they destroyed the tents of the men, but when they were defeated their meat and blood was the most powerful. After a few days of horrible fights against the horned animals, the men knew that if they wouldn't find a way to tame these horned animals, then they would be destroyed by them. The wounds of the men caused by these animals were very severe. They started to climb in the trees to jump on their backs to ride them, but very often by the wildness of the horned animals they couldn't sit long on their backs. They knew they had to learn it step by step by using tools like wires and belts. They knew that if they would go on fighting the attackers, they would lose it all. Now they had to ride them, also the other sorts of animals who tried to destroy them like the snakes, the lions, the panthers and the dangerous giant insects. They started to make their tents in the trees. They felt such a rage towards the animals here, still hunted, but the pains already made them so numb. They needed to learn more about

these animals, about their movements, the ways they attacked. It was a forest of horror and they weren't the only ones so hungry.

They tried to get some warmth from each other, for sometimes the winds were cold, but they weren't used to contact. It gave them such strange feelings of fear and even panic, and such strange feelings in their stomaches. There were some muddy lakes and rivers in the forests, and at times they went for a swim, but even there they had to be aware of giant rats, insects and snakes. Also the lakes and rivers were full of dangers. It was like they became immune for the fears of confrontations in the waters, step by step. They were longing for swimming, even if they had to fight against other creatures longing for the water. It was like something was starting to rise in them, a boldness, a strange tension in their bodies. They felt like watersnakes more and more, not afraid for the fights there, but on land they needed to stay away from the fights. It was like the battlefield was now moving to the waters, where they had to proclaim their rights. They wanted to live at the rivers and lakes of these forests. They were longing for a new heartbeat, to finally escape their pasts, and to make use of their scars and wounds, still dripping of venom. These were the mighty weapons in their hands.

Snake Dancer

Abduction Horror

She had mouth-implants and feet-implants, breeding strange smells in her. She was an experiment of aliens. No one was allowed to come close to her. Her vibrations were hot and high. You could burn if you came too close. She was suffering, fainting a lot, while blood flew out of her mouth. Her feetbones moved in a strange way. They were contracting at some moments, while strange substances were moving through her body, like strange lights. It was like an egg was growing in her, waiting to burst out, donating new species. She could recognize other victims by their lights. She wasn't the only one. She was put into a mass of free people. People she thought they could do anything they wanted. She often felt she was the only one. The vibrations were guarding her, giving her strong impulses of pain when she moved to a wrong area. She was upset and without any hope. There were no docters in this place. The machines came to her at nights, doing cruel things to her to install the implants. She didn't know that these installations made a guard of her, blocking other people to go too far. These implants were the doors she needed to guard, and the others were prisoners as well. They were programmed to do so.

She had nightmares of doing evil things she didn't want to do. Something or someone was living in her. Living in her veins. It was a green lights alien, a strange reptile or insect, or ... It had eyes full of light, and was made of soft but strong meat. There was green blood dripping from it ... It had no skin, only muscles and veins. She had a panic. The creature had a strong intelligence. She was so paranoid to his impulses. He needed to protect her against something worse. He was her agent. One day she got implants in her vagina. She was screaming like hell. But he didn't have any mercy to her. She was his prisoner, she was the object he needed to guard, while she was a secret ruler over the others. She didn't know that. There were strange implants in her feet and vagina ... doors to hell. They needed to be locked, for these were the forbidden fruits. That was the reason why she wasn't allowed to have a lover. At night strange spirits came to her, trying to open the locks ... but they couldn't ... They did everything to her, trying to get the doors opened, but they all failed ... It was like more doors were growing in her, while she kept them all locked up ...

She became a walking implant more and more, while she cried oceans of tears .... she couldn't stop this intelligence ... why did they want her ? .... She felt so insecure about herself, and couldn't enjoy anything anymore. Her feelings were dying, while something else took her over ... wild smells making her wild .... and then she did evil things she didn't want to do ... it made her cruel ... so cruel ... she became subtile ... very subtile ... and found comfort with snakes ... She hugged them, and slept with them ... she ... felt like she was one with them ... Their ripples gave her peace .... Like the contrast of life .... She became very selective .... and then she could let it ripple ...

The Sphinx

Esla was walking in the desert. It was cold, and he needed a place for the night. After a long walk he became very tired, but fortunately a found a small cave. There, deep in the desert he found this place. When he walked in he saw blankets on the ground, and some old white clothes. He put them on for he was almost naked. He also found a pair of old shoes. Then he started to sleep. In the middle of the night he heard noise outside the cave. He started to walk outside and saw a man in the desert, but when he came closer it appeared to be a sphinx. It was half a lion half a man. The sphinx had long hair and wore some bracelets. The sphinx was echoing his name, with such strange sort of speak. It soothed his head. 'I am a wizard,' the sphinx spoke. 'Ask what you wish and it will be done unto you.' The man asked for a woman, and a woman appeared before him immediately. She had veils around her, and she had strange arabian golden shoes. She started to do a strange dance before his eyes, while snakes were appearing from her back, and were coiling around her arms. When she was done she started to undress herself a bit, but she was still veiled. The man started to move closer to her, but the

closer he moved the further away in the distance she appeared. It was like he had lost all the feeling in his hands and body. It was like the icecream was laying before him.

'Can I have my feelings back ?' he asked the sphinx, and suddenly his body was in a fire of a strange sort. He felt the unbearable heat, but the flame wasn't burning him. Then the woman stood before him again, and he wished she would move away for the pain was too strong. 'Can you remove the fire ?' And suddenly the fire was gone, and the woman started to change into a desert. There were flowerfields in these deserts. And it was like he was flying over new roads. In the middle of these flowerfields there was a house of gold. It was like fountains. He smiled, and found the peace he was looking for.

And from this place he could travel further in these flowerfields of these deserts, always returning to the golden house. He lived in the sphinx now, and the woman was his desert. He saw the many faces and bodies of this woman, like the different desert flowers ... and soon his harem was rising, the bracelets of the sphinx. He had them around his arms, legs and neck, and he could always travel further, and always coming back to them, while they had been changed. He could see the faces of the boys while they were changing into women again.

And the fountains in the golden house, they were so transparent and bright, bringing the golden waters deep inside. On the attic, there was the Eye of the sphinx where the deserts were flowing from. Deep in the sphinx's Eye, there were sunsets like the lion's goodbye.

Elvenbosch

The universe was in snow. The native american woman was in her ship above it. The windows were hot. Insects were crashing against the windows. She had high heels, lipstick on, she was a demoness, but she was not evil. No, rather the opposite, she was good. She was ... looking for the city .... the traffic lights .... of a new ... world ....

It was a perfect way to spin the poison in so many heads, the poison to heal them ... venom .... from a gallactic spider .... It would cause them to breath, to see, to come alive, to be small, then big, then small again, as in a mighty vibration, a mighty wave, of a subsubstantial order,

becomic so material, and then so ethereal. It was a parasite in their heads, leading them to eternal life. They were bathing around the fountain in a forest river, everything so white ....

It healed them, perfectly, they couldn't ask for a better poison .... It changed their life ....

She was a demoness, but not an evil one, she tied them all up by her threads, and consumed them, to let them enter a new world. You had to die ... here ... or there wouldn't be an entrance .... and you would die anyway ....

She showed her claws, her teeth, she showed everything, skin by skin .... She was the snow spider .... her heart was a hearth .... She was snowing in the universe ... building her web ... she had many captives .... no one could escape .... She was the new traffic .... The world was blowing up, while she was erupting .... Fantasies in the skies .... The monsters of ancient days came free ....

They came from their prisons of light ... to watch her light .... She was the light beyond it all .... She had a mysterious ocean in which she drowned .... to reach the other side .... She was soaring over her oceans, the ghostship of the ages .... She brought them all to sleep .... One strike of the lullaby ....

The soft lights built themselves up to proclaim her name, then becoming softer ....

She bathed in the ocean .... It healed her wounds, and she became a leopard ..... She moved towards the city and took possession of it ....

In the disco she was with high heels ... The elves were with her, promising her salvation ... She had the tattoo of a dragon ..... and a tattoo of a butterfly, which she could wash off in the evening ... These tattoos never stayed long .... as they were children's tattoos ....

She was with a higher light, a softer sound, while the elves promised her a home. They gave her a guitar and a welcome wine ... On tv they played strange clips .... on how a man can survive a woman ...

She didn't say what her name was. She could see numbers on someone's jacket : 5502 608532105832687 3588867590721, and she fell asleep, while some later she woke up crying, bathing in sweat. They took her to the beach in a yellow white car, and when she found the ocean waves it was like meeting her lover. The salty waters healed her. It went through her nose and she drank it in.

She woke up in her appartment, drunk ... as if she had been on stage ... The numbers were still in her mind : 5502 608532105832687 3588867590721 ... She called the number ... Then she heard someone saying very softly : cxnvb678bv cnxbv, and again she fell asleep, and awhile later she woke up crying, while salt was entering her head, and high lights were coming from her brains, and she felt happy. The ocean had healed her.

The city had fermented ... No foolish things going on anymore .... The beaches were of a higher white, and the oceans and sky of a higher blue. It was the great melting ....

Blue light is my best friend in space,

Tell me where your best friend lives,

Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine,

Somehow I'm the best friend in space,

Somehow I know where you live,

Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine

Blue light you are my fantasy,

A waterfall of fantasies,

Is always recreating me,

Fantasy land is calling me

Fantasy, calling me,

Creating me,

Calling me, watching me

Fantasy, always be,

Fantasy, watching me, calling me ...

She was in Elvenbosch, she escaped from the children's hospital, where deformed doctors and nurses were cannibals. She escaped to this fantasy. She wanted to fly higher, losing the heavy weights guarding her. In Elvenbosch king lion ruled, sweet beaches called his name. He had a fatherheart, and was everyone's father. He created the oceans from his hand. He ruled by a blue solar scepter, the scepter of good souls.

In the desert there was such an amazing fortress, built of the lion's white stones, giant stones, it was the Elvenbosch, the oasis city ... It was a bird coming from the stars, this little man, Jonathan Urshe, saving the children from the cannibal hospital ....

Thriller

The White Rabbit

Boys from Bloodhound

"They are the tailors of your dreams …. they are the tailors of your conscience …. you never know where you really are … while you think you know …. you are even very sure about it …. the curse of the lullaby-dancer …. it's like white powders are exploding …."

Chapter 1. Marbles in Sandy Boxes

tall black jackets with red stripes

They die like jesus so deep,

In seas of splintered glass,

splintered words and splintered confusions …

They are lying straight on the flags, stretching their arms to the Northern Sun …

When they hunt, their eyes are blind, they were always following things too sharp for them … Catching the raging splinters in their back to protect their children ….

Their blood flows like rivers through hungry lands to feed the children … awakening the marchpane and the chocolate at the sides of the shores …. they are the dreamers, their stares … so far away …

They are following the white rabbit, their faithfull leader, still diving through his handmade whirlpools of waterlights …. wild whirlpools … blowing like thunder ….

They are still diving through soft green lights … heading for a new aldebaran ….

Their minds are fractured by the hammers of auctioneers, selling their visions and dreams in the night. They are movie-slaves, they are blind possessors, but the white rabbit leads them through, to the world where the dream is the dream … they hang like little plastic images and like statues on the dress of a girl called Alice … their big sister …

In a world of small possessors, in a world of broken citylights … They pass by … heading for something deeper … they have deep stares like the watering breath … they walk on smashed potatoes, swimming through seas of tomatoes …. And when they speak their eyes become wild, and there tongue gets on fire …. They're speaking fast and deep … Not missing the last bus to Lynx …. Heading for Spider's Hill, to Aldebaran's Tall Attic, where the miniature trains and racecourts live. Where tall nephews grow, selling their cigarettes and books to someone's brother who buys them to break them all in pieces …

On Spider's Hill, where an old acrobate lives … Where the blackred marble lies against the blackbrown one … Still strange Japanese marbles …

The boys from Bloodhound want to mix some yellow through the mix … but there's pale yellow glue enough …

On spider's Hill where an old acrobate lives … he and his marbles …

The crosses too high … still the rafts of the bloodhounds … on waves too tall for them … still the transparent boxes of their boyhood ..

They're sailing on the display dolls … waving at the waterlights …

When they are on spider's hill, where the miniature racecourts live, they can always escape their circles for awhile … but after the trip they sit in their tight chairs again. When the coins ran out, when the automaton …stopped … When alice came back from her trip to wonderland …

But they are heading for spider's hill, for New Aldebaran, where they will not lose their identities anymore … where they will not be fugitives anymore …

The White Rabbit will care for that …

soldiers from the box

Soldiers from a white wet box,

Sliding back into the box after the crime is done,

when the show is done …

when the curtains fall down …

All soldiers from a white wet box …getting their green sugared tongues back ….

On spider's hill …

We are box-soldiers … from the urban renewal …

It was on an attic in rotterdam,

this boy had so many miniature racecars in his bedroom,

he was the hero of his class …

He has the wasp in his eyes …

letting the butterflies enter,

by spreading his candy …

But now he has been abducted …

by strange mothers and fathers …

back to aldebaran, back to spider's hill …

back to ….

Now he's breeding a strange ornament,

drawing new circles on a new school …

he is missed,

it's like the candle has gone from the class …

gone on an aldebaran carpet,

gone by a Jupiter's dream

Heading for spider's hill …

and …

The words always seem to fade away,

In this strange ornament from the white rabit …

It's like Jupiter has died,

Now the boy is gone,

It's like Aldebaran is sailing back to japan,

It's like the wasps from lynx are all ….

heading for spider's hill …

Heading for that tall tall table on the attic ….

heading for a new aldebaran ….

heading for a new circle ….

wearing the ornaments around their ankles …

them … having the james bond watches

there are bloodhounds heading for spider's hill …

they are heading for the old acrobate …

riding a white rabbit …

the cityboys have to unite ….

the gangs will lock the chain …

they will all meet … on spider's hill ….

aldebaran and lynx will rise their fists for the old acrobate,

while the bloodhounds will possess the air …..

tucan carrying the flag ….

jupiter will write …

the old acrobat …

only throwing some fragments through the song ….

small seeds grow the best …

these were all …his faces ….

fractured liberty

masks are lying on the old tall table …

four masks …

split faces by divorce and abduction,

fractured minds of an old fugitive ….

he learnt to fool with the parts,

he learnt to mold them in his hands,

to tame these wild lions ...

there's a raven on his back,

with crocodile-eyes ...

many animals live inside ...

all puzzle pieces of an old destroyed circus ....

the raven always took care of all parts of the acrobat ...

very hospital ...

now he lives in more circles,

like in a flowerclock ...

like on a racecourt ...

but the bloudhounds have another desire ...

something bigger than that ...

to go into the other direction ....

like they have a split and fractured mind ....

to go to .... goat's hill ...

where the elves become trees ...

there where the colors mix ...

in darkness ...

there where the tall lampsteads stand ...

in very dim light ...

where tall goats roar ...

there where the heavens are black and hairy .....

there where the black and the green dogs live ....

bloodhounds from the black desire ...

it's all deeper inside ...

they follow the snakeroads ...

to the deeper strings of their heart .....

and the man from libra wants to throw another coin in the automaton,

but it's locked ....

it was it's last day in cinema ...

and the girl from gemini checks the bearskins in which she wrapped the bleeding bloodhound .... but ... it's gone ..... the air smells like

··· abductions ··· another face asks for some attention ··· another mask ····

the white rabbit is grinning ·· laying the money on the table and throwing some strange playcards in the air ··· then he leaves in cold snow ····

the tall lady from virgo tries to drag the goats to her tower ···· she wants them to work in the clock ···· but the white rabbit is a multimillionaire, laying some money on the table ··· throwing some strange playcards in the air ···· and then he leaves in cold snow ····

he pays them all to let them shut their mouths ···· and gives them some new playcards ···· they all respect him if it comes to money and games ····

a red lady is raging ···· he pays her mouth shut ····

a yellow lady is complaining ···· he pays her mouth shut ····

and there he pays all other colors away ···

There the bloodhounds are marching,

marching over goat's hill into another land ···

where the snake hits the lamb ····

They avoid the luring games and cartoons,

They avoid the decorated candy ···

They are looking for the cucumber ···

the forest …. there …. where the snake hits the lamb ….

They are laying down their ornaments when they enter deeper into the dark forest …

They are laying down their shields and their swords ….

to only bear a short dagger …..

Now the trees can paint their bodies in colours of a deeper war …

black and green ….

They will not attack the small animals,

neither will they defend themselves against them …

The small animals are there to tattoo their body with new symbols,

preparing them for the deeper battle …

The forest becomes darker …..

They lay down their last lights ….

Then they reach a mountain,

and they find themselves before a temple ….

A mysterious one,

a huge head with one eye closed and the other open is resting on the old portal …

they hear monkeys shrieking and wolves howling ····

they are ··· with nine ····

Chapter 2· the initiation

Then they enter the temple ····

A white snake is staring at them,

and a kite is flying away,

··· they are shivering ····

They know that this snake will bite them first before they can walk to the next tunnel ···

It all happens quick and in silence ···

The bite is like a green moisty spot in their neck ····

green blood is flowing from it,

but it heals fast ··· and a green scar is appearing ···

in the form of a snake ···

The air smells like fire and blood ···· and other strange smells ···

it tingles in their stomaches, and they are still shivering ····

Finally they come into a cave with a lot of candles,

and a woman in a white dress is looking at them ···

She sits on a sort of throne ····

and insectlike creatures are standing beside her ····

they are like aliens, with big black pupil-eyes and black green bodies ···

they are thin and not as tall as the lady ···

they speak in an unknown language,

but the lady speaks in a language they understand ···

she expected them already,

and she starts to tell about the land behind the mountain ····

to come there, they need to make the long and dangerous journey through the temple ····

One bloodhound starts to scream while hearing the story about the journey, and what will happen, and starts to run away ···· but a fire is destroying him ····

"he will come into another incarnation now" ····· the woman sais ····

the remained eight are shivering ····· then the woman and the insectlike creatures disappear in a flash ····· the bloodhounds know what will happen now ····· from all sides tall snakes are coming out of the walls ···· and an enormous fight starts ··· they are getting bitten very horribly now ···· and some snakes really try to strengle some of them ···· but they bite back, and after a long wrestling they become free ···· they killed more than a hundred snakes· some

feel really sick from the bites, and they decide to first let it heal a bit ··· six of them will go to sleep and two will wake over them ···· and then when the others have slept the two will go to sleep ··· some of them are still really sick and will sleep further for awhile ···· again there are two of them waking ···

Then suddenly they hear loud and piercing streams ··· and again tall snakes are coming out of the walls, but this time they also come out of the floors and the ceilings ···· the snakes are red and their skin is very hot ··· some even spit a bit fire ···· the bloodhounds really fight for their lives ···· using their daggers like they never did before ···· they have to do it quick for there were already some fires here and there ···· suddenly a wall opens itself and a big gate appears ···· through which the bloodhounds can escape to continue their journey ···· it's very dark in here, and moisty ···· and there are some small rats in this new tunnel which start to bite a bit ··· but they aren't allowed to attack small animals ···· neither defend themselves ··· for it was spoken to them that these small ones are tattooing their bodies with necessary symbols which will be their protections in the coming fights and journeys ···

A long passage they followed ··· with only small animals ··· would they see them as their friends or their enemies ?

The bloodhounds ···· avoiding the luring shadows of assassins ···· avoiding the luring shining armors ··· avoiding atmospheres too thick ····· they're heading for the land behind the temple ···· the land behind the mountain ···· Feeling every wound is a mark of magic ···· It was like their bodies were covered ··· by old books ····· alphabets of ··· pain ···

Shadows of business tried to lure them to return to the path behind them, to start a business there for coming passengers ··· but they

were avoiding these signals .... They weren't businessmen ... They were discoverers ....Their eyes were wild .....

Suddenly they came into an enormous cave-sea .... they knew they had to swim to the island in the middle of the sea .... there some important initiations would take place .... so that they could continue the journey ..... they had to stay there on the island for about ten days ....

They had to swim for hours, and they knew .... there were dangerous animals in this sea ....

suddenly a spirit called columbus appeared ... glittering in the sea ..... he was only staring at them for awhile ... and then he disappeared ...

They began to swim ... and in the distance they saw a group of wild sharks ..... they were jumping like hell .... and the bloodhounds started to shiver in terrible fear ..... the sharks began to come closer ..... and they knew they could never pass them by like this ....

suddenly columbus came back and destroyed the sharks by his lights and magical powers ....

he said : "i will take the sharks ... you will take the others ...."

and then he disappeared ...

what would he mean by "the others" they asked themselves ...

they started to swim further .... with a little light of hope inside .... they felt little flames spreading through their bodies ..... giving them new strength ....

suddenly they were surrounded by crocodiles .... a wrestling started .....

columbus had drawn a circle of light and flames around this fight, and destroyed every shark who wanted to enter this circle ..... this circle would protect the bloodhounds against the sharks during this water-passage .... it seemed the sea wasn't as big as they thought ... it looked more like a cave-river now .... and they began to feel a certain peace and rest inside .... the crocodiles were very simple to defeat ... for these animals were already very weak ..... they wondered what the cause of this was .... maybe by sharks .... or other predators ......

but as closer they came to the island, the crocodiles they met were stronger .... and horrible fights started to happen ..... and the bloodhounds started to become really tired ..... one of them was almost drowning .... so two of them took him on their back ... while the other five were swimming around them protecting them ..... they had defeated the crocodiles .... and they hoped they wouldn't meet another group .....

suddenly they heard a voice saying : "eat the meat."

they started to eat the defeated crocodiles ..... and they realized that their strength came back like never before ..... even their tiredness disappeared .....

then the voice spoke again saying : "you are only allowed to eat the meat of attackers"

the crocodile-meat was very sour and let their blood turn green, very hot green ... their skins were almost burning ....

then the voice said : "now take as much meat on your back as you can and swim to the island"

finally they reached the island, there were no enemies in their near surroundings … it was very peaceful ….. now they would stay ten days on this island ….

the voice spoke : now gather the meat and eat it when you need it ….

suddenly the white rabbit was standing before them … smiling ….

and then he disappeared ….

they knew they were on the true path …..

while they went deeper into the forest of the island …. they had to fight against monkeys and panthers ….. the meat they brought to the place where they gathered all meat … near the sea in a small cave … the panther-meat gave them black blood …. and red eyes …. a very hot breath, like they were on the edge of spitting fire …. they loved this food ….

while they went deeper … they felt deep feelings of suspense, like the atmosphere was getting charged with terror … strange threatening smells of blood and meat ….. but they knew they had to go through this …. suddenly an enormous lion was standing before them …. roaring and attacking …. it was a horrible fight ….. the lion was very strong, and the bloodhounds started to run away, while one bloodhound was in the mouth of the lion …. they realized that one of them was still with the lion when they were outside the forest again …. but the voice spoke : "you first have to eat more meat, you cannot return to the lion now"

the lion was roaring and had one bloodhound in his mouth .... he took him away to his den ..... at the other side of the forest .... the bloodhound was bleeding horribly .... he was in a shock .... when he came to consciousness the lion was sleeping .... and he wondered why he was still alive .... he took his dagger to kill the lion ... but a voice spoke : "don't do it." he asked : why not ? the voice didn't answer, but the bloodhound listened to the command .... and went out of the den .... back to the other bloodhounds .... they were sleeping .... and he started to eat the meat ... he was still bleeding heavily .... when he took the monkey-meat he realized the bleeding stopped ..... and his wounds started to heal very quickly .... he felt his skin was becoming very tough and flexible .... he took his knife to test his skin .... but no wound appeared ....

a voice spoke : "from now on, only the sharpest teeth can cut you"

when the other bloodhounds woke up, he started to tell about what happened and what the voice spoke to him .... they weren't allowed to kill the lion .....

again ... they went to the forest ..... everything was so quiet and peaceful .... when they reached the other side of the forest they saw the lion again .... he walked towards the bloodhounds ..... and began to speak in an unknown language ...... the bloodhounds realized that the lion wasn't about to kill them .... like he didn't kill the bloodhound in his den ....

the voice spoke : "not all attackers have the same intentions ... not all attackers are the same .... this lion lost his child long ago by terrorizing bloodhounds who killed it .... he attacked you because he thought you were the ones killing his child ... but later he found out you weren't the murderers ..."

the bloodhounds wondered how they would know the difference ….

the voice spoke again : "from now on, look in the eyes of your attackers and when you see a red bloodhound in their eyes ….. don't kill them …. for they won't kill you …. just show them the lion-scar on your hands and they will let you go …."

suddenly the lion-scar was appearing on their hands … it was the mark of that what happened between them and the lion …

they were standing before the sea of the other side of the island …. but they had to wait until the ten days were over ….. then they would be in the position to defeat sharks ….

Finally when they wake up on a morning they are prepared to cross the sea …. They don't feel any fear towards the sharks anymore … The battle starts …. They are good wrestlers … these bloodhounds ….. also in sea ….. It gets fast like a train, and before they realize it, they are on the other side of this sea …. the shores full of shark-meat …. they can't wait to eat it …wondering what will happen inside …… it's like golden threads and webs growing inside …. it's like a feast …. like they are coming in touch with their pride again … deep inside …. they feel fluids entering their bones, strengthening and straightening them again …. deeper …… they feel themselves like kings of the sharks now ….. and they eat fast …… and deep ….. it's like golden meat ….. and it's like new dishes are struck in their heads …..

They decide to continue their journey, carrying as much of this shark-meat as they can on their backs ….

shadows of feasts, arts and circusses lure them to stay where they are, to build a big party … and to do the jester's business ….. to

rule over this passed area ···· but they are avoiding it and pass on ·····

On this new land they have to fight new dangers ···· They need to pass on ···· they feel a deeper hunger inside ···· something they can't describe ·····

There are insects of enthousiasm here, wanting them to stay and look back ··· building parties on this new land ···· but they know they need to pass on ···· Some insects start to attack when they won't listen to their speeches and ideas ···· But ···· they feel like they are immune ···· and pass on ····· without using their daggers ···· These insects are tall, and some are very big ····· but the bloodhounds don't use their daggers and shields ······ they feel tired ···· and indifferent ····· only caring about that strange hunger deep inside ···· which makes them so immune ····

the voices of enthousiasm start to slide away ···· to make place for a new passion they didn't know before ····· it makes their hearts like drunk ····· they start to discover a world of energies inside their hearts which projects itself on the path they have to go ·····

they feel they are getting more and more too tired to stand on their feet, like they are stang by a fly from a strange land ······ and it's like they are sinking into the ground, to a new way of sensory information ···· they are now guided and protected by deeper passions and hungers ···· they don't respond to the mockers of this new sleep anymore ···· their reflexes are broken off ··· the fly made them immune ····

yes, they are rooted in water, tighter than ground ···· they are rooted in a new sensory experience which speaks to their mind ····

it's like a new drug, a new medicine .... they are so drunk .... these bloodhounds .....

although they don't know where they are anymore .... they sink deeper and deeper .... to the land behind the curtain ..... where another dream will start .... it's like they don't fight for it anymore .... they just flow towards this magnet ....

there are strange hungers inside .... they are heading for insectian meat ...... they feel empty inside ... heading for a dinner room .....

they see aquarius sitting on his throne ..... tables full of strange meat on golden dishes in all colours .... they also see columbus ..... and a spirit called vasco da gama ... they are invited to take a chair ... they even see insectian eyes among the meat .... and a deep burning atmosphere is in the room ... inviting them to eat .... there's red beating meat like webs and wires .... luring them to eat and to eat .... it's like baked insectian giant-hearts ..... reprogramming their minds ......

the food is warm and hot ....

they get suits full of woven details ... growing on their bodies ... they sit on antique chairs woven in Japanese design ...

The dinner takes hours and hours .... and after the dinner they are led to their bedrooms .... They all get their own bedroom ..... and they sleep like a rose ....

In the night they all dream the same dream ..... They reach the land behind the curtain .... entering an arabian palace ..... watching an arabian sea in the distance ..... such a wild sea they never saw before ..... such a tragedic sight ... that it crashes their souls .... like a

sharp mill ···· these are teeth ···· they never felt before ···· it's like the drama has struck their mind ······ torturing their desires ·····

They want to meet this sea ···· this arabian sea ····· to meet it's creatures ···· and to ride them ······ all their passions and hungers inside are stretching out to that idea ····

They don't want to fight anymore ···· they let the spirits of soldiers slide out of their bodies ···· avoiding them ···· to reach for a higher crown ···· They want to ride these creations ··· these wild hysterical animals they see there ···· those seamonsters, dragons and dinosaurs ····· They let the daggers slide out of their hands ···· for otherwise they can't enter this sea ···· Their hands are stretching out to this sea ····

They feel these hysterical animals are eating their bodies ··· but they don't care anymore ····· They know this is the initiation ··· this is the arabian stairway to the black sea ····· it's covered by velvet ····· and layers of wet spots ···· They start to realize that the mouths of these monsters are the portals to the bridles ······ the wires ······· to tame them to make a higher journey ···· these were strange wars ···· without fighting ···· without swords ······ these were wars ··· on a golden scale ····

Everything is too heavy for them ···· these bloodhounds of strange wars ······ They let go of their ornaments ···· their last weapons inside ···· Even their tears are too heavy for them ···· They let it all slide away ···· Their thoughts are so heavy ····· Their emotions ····· Their fears ···· They let it all slide away ····· All they want is to become thin and light ····· for life is so heavy ····· their bodies feel so heavy ···· their organs ····· their skins ····· their hair ····· their eyes ···· their noses and lips ····· They let it all slide away ···· Now they desire to be stang ····· to let it all slide away ···· Now they

desire to be cut ····· to let it all slide away ······ it's all too heavy ······ existence is more than they can bear ····

Now they desire to be eaten ···· these eaters are their friends ····· for they feel too heavy ···· they long for this arabian sea-cocoon ···· like nothing else ····· nothing is important for them anymore ···· it makes them so indifferent ····· the reflexes are breaking off ····

they have been stung by a strange fly ···· stranger than they could imagine ·· something that flew beyond their thoughts and ideas ····

and then suddenly, like the strike of thunder ···· they lose all their passions and desires ··· all their hungers inside ···· because it became all too heavy ······ now they are indifferent ···· ignorant ···· losing all their memories and senses ···· to go into a sleep deeper than death ····· something is erasing and deleting their minds like hell ····· it's the strange fly ·····

everything becomes too heavy ·· they scream in intense pains ···· it tears them apart ····· everything becomes too heavy ····· and the nothing is smiling at them ···· but even that is too heavy for them ····· they aren't heading for anything anymore ····· but a magnet beyond the nothing is pulling them ····· there isn't any resistance left ·····

the bloodhounds are in a strange cocoon ····· stranger than an arabian womb ····· it's like a bear is growing in them, cutting everything away ····· in a speed beyond the speed of existence ·····

"beware of the speeddemon", the white rabbit sais ····

a light smile is appearing on the faces of the bloodhounds ···· they recognize this voice ····· but they can't remember who or what ·····

a light smile is appearing in their hearts ··· like a flame so light and thin ····· while they are feeling like a bear inside ···· bloodhounds with a bear-heart ·····

they have a new heart ··· an anti-magnetic heart ···· free of gravity and heaviness ···· free of everything and even nothing ···· but still a strange magnet is drawing them ···· they float through a strange and ominous night ···· growing so tall ····

they are realizing they are an insect now ····· webs in their hearts ···· fragile and anti-magnetic ···· free in a light and thin atmosphere of tall cocoons ···· they are in the stomach of an arabian sea ····· they are bloodhoundian insects now ···· with an insectian bear-heart inside ····

tight cyborg-programs are rising up from their stomaches now ····

programmed cybernetic matrixes ·····

"beware of the speeddemon", the white rabbit sais ····

they don't respond ···· they are far away ···

their reflexes have been died out ····

broken away ····

their senses ····

their desires ·····

all gone ····

the black sea is white now ····

the white rabbit speaks ....

something which looks like a light smile is appearing on their faces ....

they are now stored in boxes on the back of the white fly .....

powders of tragedic lullabies are being spread throughout the night ....

but they don't hear them ... they are too soft .....

it's like a distance whisper ....

they have strange sensations in their mouth ...

but they don't realize it ....

they are too far away ....

the white fly is taking them from universe to universe ....

arabian universes .....

there where the clocks are ticking like there will never be daylight again ...

but they don't realize it ... they are too far away .....

the white fly ... with his face like an insectian horse ....

spreading strange lamentations throughout the universes ....

lullabies of medical poison ....

he's a nerve-engineer .....

he's a brain-docter ····

these insectian worlds ··· sting deep ····

he's a nerve-docter ····

you never know when you're really awake ···

you'll never know ···

when he is around ····

the bloodhounds don't want to ride anything anymore ···

neither do they want to be ridden ···

for they don't have a will anymore ···

there's an anti-magnet there ···

but something is riding them ····

a strange magnet is playing them ····

slowly they float ··· on the back of the white fly ·····

like eight cigars in a box ····

they look into the faces of many flies,

but they don't realize it ····

they are far away ····

they are under an insectian curse ···

all images which try to make an attempt to penetrate the corners
of their minds are breaking off into powders ···· white powders ····
all images are becoming a bunch of sea-ripples and then they explode,
covering the universes like snow ····· white powders ····· still
dangerous medicines ····· from a dangerous docter ····

there are strange sensations in their mouths ····

but they don't realize it ···· they are too far away ····

their senses got the injection ··one··by ··one ···

no sensory ripples on the screens anymore ··· all powders ···

all tragedic lullabies ····

from the white fly ····

their screens are all empty ··· deleted by a flash ····

their screens will soon be deleted from the mainscreen ····

like breaking into medical powders finer than the finest strike ····

and then they will be blind ···· forever ····

blind children are born in arabian wombs

in the wombs of bears, snakes and wasps ····

the white fly is on it's flight ····

the white fly is swimming through the air ····

to strike the tall virgo lady ····

on top of the tower ····

and then she falls asleep ····

when she falls asleep the whole universe is falling into white powders ···

all in a flash ····

it's like they will sleep forever these bloodhounds ··· now insects ····

becoming a white rose on someone's grave ····· the universe ····

they sleep like a white rose ·····

while a tiny little dream is falling down like a silver star ···

deep so deep inside their hearts ···

it's a drip of consiousness ··· so far away in the distance ···

they try to catch it ···· but they fall deeper away ···

and it's like taking a hundred years to rise up again to do another attempt to catch the drip of wet consciousness ··· but they fail again, falling even deeper ··· now it's like it will take a thousand years to get another chance ·····

but they don't realize it ···· they are too far away on the back of the white fly ·····

it's snowing in the universe ··· the arabian universe ·····

but they don't realize it ····

it's like they have been coiling out of time, speach, logics and space ····

out of consciousness and conscience ····

out of sense and science

it's like coma has struck ·····

"beware of the speeddemon !" the white rabbit roars ···

All of a sudden they all wake up ·····

Where are they, and what's going on ····

The white rabbit is smiling at them ·····

Showing them the ripples of a new world ····

Chapter 3· The White Room

"touch my head !" he screams ·····

the bloudhounds now insects touch him ····

they feel ··· ripples ····

"Now touch yourself !" he screams ···

they do ···· also ripples ·····

and the ripples are moving fast ····

there are different pictures appearing on their bodies ····

like the rainbow is rolling over them ····

"Now beware of the speed-demon !" the rabbit yells ·····

And then he disappears, leaving them in a white room of ripples ·····

Very slowly a door is appearing in one of the rippling walls ···

They want to enter through it, but one of them is screaming : "no ! Remember what the white rabbit told ··· it can be a trap ···· !"

Shivering they step away from the rippling hole ··· feeling the opposite wall against their back ··· it gives them a tingling sensation ··· rippling through their bodies ···· while the hole is slowly fading away ···· they come at peace ···· and it's like they discovered a new secret ···· they would just go to the opposite wall when something happens ····

Suddenly one of them starts to scream : "No ! I want to get out of this strange machine ! get me out of here ··· !" A hole is appearing in the floor and he jumps through, while the others throw themselves shivering against the walls ···· They see him coiling away getting smaller and smaller ··· and then he explodes like white powder ···· They start to cry ···· he was a friend of them for such a long time ···· Now they are only with seven ···· They are desperate ··· The need to jump out becomes stronger and stronger, but they don't want to end like the one that jumped out ····

Strange experiences start to ripple through the room ···· it's like all their inner organs are exploding ····· all of a sudden everything

becomes transparent .... and they see themselves surrounded by strange insects .... doing a strange dance .... they also see a docter with a big injection-needle ....

all sorts of fears ripple over them .... is this all a big experiment ?

They remember the words of the white rabbit .... rippling and echoing through their minds .... "beware of the speeddemon .... beware of the speeddemon" .....

They decide to stay calm .... and just close their eyes to find strength ....

then they fall asleep .... everything ripples .... like fast waves .... they are all seven dreaming about thunder outside .... thunder and rain ..... suddenly a rippling fly is standing before them .... speaking in a rippling echoing language .... it's Gaia ..... another white fly ..... it's like they have been hit by a rippling trauma .... but it gives them peace in a sense .... she speaks in a language they don't understand ..... and then she disappears .....

They are finding themselves on the back of a white fly again ..... and they feel so many injections in their nerves and brains .... it's like getting an overdose .... and they fall in a heavier sleep .... becoming so heavy that it's like they cannot move their heads anymore .... rippling images are flowing over them, but they can't enter .... it's like they are hard like stone .... they see a docter's hand .... it's all an experiment ..... while the images are moving the images change .....

a voice is speaking : these are languages of the fly ..... these are languages of sleep ....

then another voice is speaking : these are dances of the lullaby ....

all women's voices ···· rippling and echoing ·····

then a loud man's voice is saying : "you are being prepared to become lullaby-dancers ····· but first we are testing and initiating you ····"

and another man's voice is speaking : "your voices will become like the wet thunder"

a spider called "white thunder" was descending like there where millions and millions of helicopters descending to the wildest surfaces of the seas ·····

a man called "rara sur" was standing on the fragile shells of rippling existences ···· descending his spirit ···· he was the god of slow-motion ····

hard rain was falling, while the thunders were charging the atmosphere ···· all by strange delights ····

"you have to eat new meat," a voice was speaking ····

suddenly as by thunderstrike, the heavens were shocked open, white powder was exploding ···· and millions of spiders were attacking ···· their needles were sharper than the bloodhounds, now insects, ever experienced ···· this would be a battle on life or death ···· but they couldn't do anything ····· they didn't have weapons ··· they found themselves too heavy to move ···· and it was like the hard shells and cores were melting ···· it was like their whole bodies were in flames ····· this was the curse of fire ···· of hotness ····· they screamed from pain like they never experienced before ··· so deep ··· it tore them apart ····· but all their feelings were rippling between ache and delight ···· it was such a strange experience that they were crying like little babies ····· it gave them a very strange look in their eyes ····· that they couldn't really say if it was a laugh or a cry ····· if it

was pleasure …. or pain ….. they were watching it all, having a difficult breath … from deep within …

suddenly they were looking deep in the eyes of a sarcastic kite …. or was she worried ….. they couldn't tell …. she had such a strange look in her eyes …. it was Pele, a white kite …… then she flew away …. and it seemed like all the spiders had disappeared too …. but suddenly they discovered that they were just deeper inside ….. so close that they couldn't see it …. but only feel ….. the shock struck them like terror ….. but they also discovered that Pele had just come deeper inside of them … which gave them a certain peace …. They now realized that coming and going is such a big tricky illusion …. It was all rippling deep inside their hearts …. They were surrounded by strong white powders … medicines from a strange docter …..

Safe or not safe …. It appears all to be a big illusion, when you dare to watch behind the curtain, to see what is all working at you ….. It leaves before your eyes, but enters behind your eyes …

The lullaby-dancers are dancing …. you don't know where they come from and where they are going to … but you only think you know … you are even very sure about it …. the curse of the lullaby-dancer …. it's like white powders are exploding …..

They are the tailors of your dreams …. they are the tailors of your conscience …. you never know where you really are … while you think you know …. you are even very sure about it …. the curse of the lullaby-dancer …. it's like white powders are exploding ….

They are the tailors of your eyes and senses …. It's all a sensory lie …. They are the illusionists of the universe … They build their webs of deceit layer by layer … It seems they all disappear … but they

just descend into you ··· deeper and deeper ···· all behind your eyes ····

"Anthony ! Anthony ! please pay attention, boy ····"

The teacher is ticking on Anthony's table ··· "Where are you with your thoughts," the teacher asks ···

"I had such a strange dream, Mr· Hotsington ··· I ···" sais Anthony ···

But the teacher is whipping his ear ···· telling him to pay attention, or he will be punished ···

After the lesson Anthony walks to his friends ···telling them about the strange story about the bloodhounds and the white rabbit ···· they smile a bit ···· they don't believe him ···

when anthony comes home he starts to tell his mother and father ···· his sister is grinning ····

"don't dream too much, son ··· i always tell you ····" sighs his mother ····

when Mr· Hotsington comes home, he feels strange ··· it's like that boy knows too much ···· he sighs ···· he goes to his laboratory ··· drinking his cup of coffee ··· he has an experiment there called "the white rabbit" ···· Mr· Hotsington has the habbit to steal a shoe of one of his students every year while they are doing gymnastics ···· he collects them for his experiment ···· he already has 26 shoes, for he already works for 26 years at that school· he tied all the shoes together by their laces and fills them with all sorts of white medicines ···

Mr. Hotsington is member of a big secret conspiracy .... a circle of different professionals ... there are docters, lawyers, teachers and more sorts of occupations connected in this circle .... they all have their own missions, but once in awhile they come together to do their united rituals .... the white rabbit experiment is a very large experiment infiltrated even in governments and the army. they launched a criminal called "the white rabbit", a notorious kidnapper and serial-killer. he is sent out to kidnap and murder the children and people who can form a major threat against the secret organisation. They will use the bones of these people to split them into powders .... and then to let the wind blow them away ... so that the atmosphere can be charged ... They also want to use these powders to create secret medicines for their rituals. They want to possess the minds of society .... to plant a new world order. It is said that when these powders are being spread in the connected shoes of children, the spirit of the white rabbit will possess the minds of the people one by one, to prepare them for the plans. The powders of these important bones need to be mixed with the strongest drugs from the most effective plants and animal-substances ... for example they breed bloodhounds for some substances to throw through the mix .... it all happens in ritual sacrifice done by the most powerfull witchdocters they have in their network.

Anthony is high on their lists to kidnap, for the little boy is too intelligent in their eyes. The white rabbit is already in high preparation for that action .... But an old magician with the same name also knows about these actions ... and he tries to reach Anthony in his dreams since awhile ... but he knows that he has to take some natural actions now .... Anthony is alone at home, for his parents are on a little holiday this weekend .... It's night .... and the criminal is already on his way to the farm where Anthony lives ... The criminal has two men with him ... two witchdocters ... in

black clothes ····· Anthony cannot sleep ···· he still thinks about that strange dream ···· and he's thirsty ··· so he walks downstairs to the refridgerator to get himself something to drink ···· suddenly he feels a hand on his mouth ···· it's the magician ····· he sais : "quick put your jacket on, we need to go !" Anthony screams : "who are you ? Go away !" So the magician tells the whole story ··· Anthony believes him, for he knows exactly about his dreams ···· But when they open the door to walk to the car of the magician, the criminals are already there ·····

A fight follows and the magician gets knocked out ··· Anthony is screaming ···· Then they take him to a black car ···· and from a distance they shoot a bullet through the head of the magician ···· "It's too late boy, you're buddy has gone ····" Anthony screams as loud as he can ···· but they have blocked his mouth by a black towel ····· He gets also a towel over his eyes ····

It was a long trip ··· He wakes up, finding himself tied to a bed ···· he cannot move ···· and he feels so strange in his head ··· like they have injected him with something ···· hours go by without anything happening ··· then he falls asleep ···· he's very thirsty ··· then he gets a dream ···· about a white rabbit ····· it has two faces ···· one face is the face of the magician ···· and the other face is the face of the criminal ····· it's a very shocking dream ···· and then he awakes in a shock ··· the towels around his head are gone ··· he can speak and see ···· there are four men standing around him ···· he feels very uncomfortable ····· they ask him questions ···· but he can't pick them up ····· he feels so weak and everything is spinning around his head ··· then someone knocks with an iron stick on his head, and he loses consiousness ··· again he has a dream ······ that he's playing with a ball near the river with his mother ···· suddenly he slips out and sinks in the river ···· his mother is screaming and tries to take

his hand ···· but the strong stream is taking him away very quick ····· his mother is diving in the river too ···· but she fails to find him ····· he all sees this while sliding away further and further ···· he sees his own funeral in a flash ····· until a boat is picking him up ····· finding himself in a room ···· while a friendly lady is smiling at him ···· he smiles back and walks towards her ····· but suddenly the face of the woman changes into a mean cynical face in flames ····· laughing at him very loud ···· he's smashed against the wall by this sight ····· he's watching outside ···· seeing a world drowning ··· children ··· mothers ··· fathers ···· then the lady is grasping at him from behind and tries to strengle him with panties ··· then he wakes up in a shock again ··· the room is empty now ···· by the charge of this dream and by the shaking he's almost untied already ··· and he wrestles himself out of the knots ····· the door is locked but he can open the window ··· it's on an attic somewhere and he steps on a narrow roof ····· he makes a long trip over a narrow roof and finally he reaches an open window from another house ···· when he enters an old lady is screaming ···· "What are you doing here ?" she yells ···· Anthony tells the story ··· while crying ··· the emotions got too much for him ···· Suddenly the lady was very friendly ···· "Do you want a cup of tea ?" she asks ····

They talk for a long time, and she asks him to stay for awhile ··· her husband will be at home soon ···· then they would discuss what to do further ····

Finally when it was already becoming dark outside the husband of the old lady comes home ···· he has almost the same face of the magician ··· when they tell him the story together, he sais : "we need to go to the police ····" but when the boy and the man sat in the car ··· someone was sitting in already, taking the boy by the throat ···· it seems the husband of the old lady was also a member of the

conspiracy, while his wife didn't know anything about it ···· but at that night the woman got a dream about her husband ···· and it was so real and detailed that there wasn't another way ···· she simply saw where they brought the boy ····· and when her husband got home ··· she waited till he went to sleep ··· and then she took silently her jacket to go outside ······ she was shocked but she knew it was true ···· she took the car and drove to a place near to the river ····· she knew that old wooden house ···· but she first need to have some prove for the police ···· she creeped to a window of the house and saw the boy and two men ···· they were asking him questions and the boy was crying ···· now she knew enough and called the police ···· who were there some minutes later ···· she told the whole story and she knew she couldn't go back to her husband anymore ···· the police arrested him too ···· while the boy and the old lady were taken away to a secret hidden place to restore from this trauma ···· one of the policemen visited them daily ··· and was very concerned about them ····

years later the old woman died ···· Anthony was now grown-up and he still lived there in that secret hidden place, still having good contact with that policeman ···· he talked a lot about the old woman ··· who had a very deep place in his heart ····· she was a sort of hero to him ··· for it was her who saved his life ····

Chapter 4· Tragedy of Truth

One day the poiliceman took seven men with him to Anthony's place ··· They wanted to talk to him ··· they were magicians ··· Anthony was very surprised ··· They had the faces of the seven bloodhounds

from his dream ···· They were seven prophets knowing a lot about conspiracies and the things to come ···· They had a lot to tell to Anthony ···· and he was all ears for them ··· They told him about the things going on on his old school ···· about the high conspiracies wanting to put him down ···· and also about his family being in great danger ···· They talked for a long time, and at the end of the conversation the eldest member of the group told him he would dream another dream about the bloodhounds again ···· this night ···

When Anthony went to bed ··· he fell asleep very quickly ···· he was so tired ····

And the dream started to come over him when he was in a very deep sleep ···· he saw the white fly flying, turning everything in white powders ···· it started to snow ···· there was so much snow ···· and deep in the snow ··· he started to see the seven bloodhounds walking ···· they were very insectian ···· more than ever ····· they were beautiful ·····

they were walking so slowly ···· so dignified ····· and the ripples were sliding over them and through them ··· it was beautiful to see this ····· Anthony was enjoying the sight ··· like he was being connected to thousands of wild animals he didn't know ···

They were walking towards something ··· in a princely slowmotion ····· he saw a butchery in the distance ··· with white flies and spiders flying and creeping there ···· he almost vomitted about this sight ····· it was such a dirty terrible picture ··· and it was moving ··· and grubs were coming forth from it ··· it was such a wild chaos ···· Then he heard that woman of the ghostship laughing again ··· and she talked in a sort of chinese language ····· suddenly he saw her face ···· and at the same time it was turning into a skeleton ··· but he felt calm and peaceful, like being surrounded by the bloodhounds

····· he saw them sinking in a mill ···· but this mill didn't hurt them ···· when they came out they were turned into waspian bloodhounds ···· they had very sharp and expressive eyes ···· they started to eat the woman from inside out ·····

Now he saw the woman like she was older than everything, and it was like lightening struck his face ··· but he became calmer and calmer ··· he realized that the woman was losing her powers ···· she turned into an old wasp ···· and was flying to the butchery ···· suddenly the picture was in flames and he heard screams harder than ever ···· like his ears were exploding ···· and blood was coming out of them ···· but he knew ···· his real body was inside ····· he felt like his skin was torn off ····· like he was also going through a cocoon just like the bloodhounds ···· he felt so many strange powers in his eyes, like he could burn everything by his focus ····

He felt himself like a lethal wasp ···he felt himself like being ···one with the bloodhound ····

"you are the seventh one", a voice spoke ·····

but ·· but ··· he asked ··· there are already seven ones, then why am i not the eighth ?

"don't you know ?" the voice said, "because one is a traitor·"

Anthony was shocked ···· like struck by a falling tree ····· "who is he ?" he stumbled ····

"the one who was the closest to your heart ··· the one who was always like a father to you ····" the voice spoke again ···· it was like he was being electrified ··· and tears were coming from his eyes ···· he always felt so close to the eldest bloodhound, and he felt the same for the eldest member of the magicians group ···· "but ··but

…" he asked "…he was the one who told me so many amazing things about myself, and he knew so much about me …. he even predicted i would have this dream … how is that possible ?"

"don't you understand ?" the voice spoke again … "he speaks much truth, but he is doing that to infiltrate in your and their hearts …. he can control much by that strategy … and he can create a lot of troubles in this position … he is sent out by the enemy … the conspiracy is larger and deeper than you think …. they even infiltrated in your nearest family ….. many of your earlier friends has set the stage for your present troubles …. the needles are deep …"

"but how can i do something about this ?" he asked further …..

but there he loses connection to the voice ….. it feels like he's filling the empty hole in the row now …. like a new and big mission start …. it's like a lot of energies come together now for a larger truth and a better stronger power ….. it's like he's rolling on waves now towards an object which will be the key for final breakthroughs ….

all the bloodhounds suddenly feel such a deep contact between each other …. and they embrace each other … crying many tears …. it's like a curse has been broken …. it's like a block has been pushed out …. to open the powers of a mighty circle …. it's like a deeper finer nerve-system deep in their hearts and bones has been broken open ….. and they are shivering in a new sensation ….

Suddenly there are two heavy shots in the air … and two of the seven bloodhounds are falling on the ground …. their mouths are becoming so mean all of a sudden ….

Anthony is deeply shocked …. and they all jump away from the two bloodhounds …. they really look like devils now …. it's like everything

in Anthony is shrieking and burning ···· There were two more traitors in the group ···· And it was about time they would be revealed ····· It was a big exposure, but Anthony and the other men became very very afraid ···· for who else would be a traitor ···· They were now with five ··· but they couldn't trust each other ···· It was a terrible experience ··· but in a sense they felt it like a releasement ···· They were staring at each other ···· doing research ··· looking for any traces ····· It was like the biggest hunt they ever did ····· And so many questions were rising to their minds ···· why didn't they get this information earlier ··· Weren't they ready for it earlier ··· Wouldn't they be in the position to handle it when they would hear this lifeshocking news earlier ? ····· They were desperately scared of new revelations ····· but it made their senses very sharp ····· And they started to realize that the traitors were just being used for the plans ··· although they blocked and destroyed a lot ····

It felt like they were walking on a thin wire ··· surrounded by dangerous electricity ···· while a wild sea of fire was roaring under them ···· trying to suck them inside ··· what could they expect further ? the feeling between deep love and deep fear was making them very tired and it was like they felt a fever inside ····· they didn't dare to touch each other anymore ····· becoming very shy ···· and alert ···· they talked ···· but they didn't come any further ···· they couldn't take anything serious ···· and what if it would all be a big trap ?

How could they trust each other ···· It was like a fire was burning away many old emotions and relationships ··· many trusts and thoughtpatterns ···· It was like they had been thrown in another mill or cocoon ······ It was paralyzing their souls by a new fear ····· But they could reach so deep inside now ··· it was like they could feel their own heartbeat again ····· A long time of silence followed ·····

Anthony was making connection to himself like never before …. It was like so many frustrations and blocks were melting away …. Like stings were being pulled out … And he could feel how a new shield was being woven around him …. he could let his friends slide away out of his mind … for who knows … maybe they were his enemies …. he could finally sleep deeper and deeper like never before ….. reaching deeper, safer, cleaner dreams …. it was like he was bathing in a sea of white powders … so white that it hurted his eyes …. so fine that he could feel his whole being in every detail …. and he could breath out the speed …. the speeddemon …. to enter a deeper slowmotion …. although it was a traumatic one ….. a very tragedic one …. it shocked him into an unlimited sleep ….

he felt so alone now … but it didn't hurt him …. it was like he was floating deep in the seas of healing …. touching all the silent beauty, touching all the fragile layers …. it was …. like he was turning into a white fly ….. like he was in a strange sort of cocoon ….. too mysterious to describe and understand ….. it was like his memory didn't exist anymore …… for it was just a sick interpretation …. from a fractured mind ….. a ….split mind ….. while something was sitting inbetween …. holding so many things away … far away …. but now he enters it … finally …. feeling all the connections between the pieces ….. like the puzzle is a painting now …. and healing is flowing …..

he doesn't want to go back … he just wants to go deeper and deeper …. it's like he is dying … but he feels like coming alive …. finally …. he was just turned backwards ….

he is a white fly now …. a white flyian bloodhound ….. in pure serenity ….. and it's like this is all he need ….. serene slowmotion waves of a white ocean of tragedy which woke him up …. which raised him from the death … he was never born …. he was dying

····· it wasn't his craddle in which he slept as baby ··· it was his grave ·····

this traumatic ocean is so large ··· surrounding his whole being ··· like his eyes aren't narrow anymore ··· there he sees a woman walking in a white traumatic dress ··· rippling in slow motion ······ her face is so white and pure ···· her mouth is so small and serene ···· it awakens more and more tragedy into him ··· like little blossom ···· surrounding his heart ··· like a fairytale ···· tragedic ···· yes ··· for he feels her voice speaking to him about the things he doesn't know yet ···· things which will be very hard for him to hear ····· but which will finally set him free ····· he loves the tragedy of truth ····· It is Gaia ··· The traumatic beauty ····· showing him all he needs to know ······ but it's so deep inside that he can't hear it ···· her wind blows in unknown languages ···· but he knows ··one day he'll understand ····

She is sinking into the sea to become an enormous sea-creature ···· he's shivering ···· he loves and fears so deep at the same time ······ and he feels the fever inside ····· to become health for the first time in his life ·····

he breaths in the white rippling powders ···· it's like the strike of sleep and medicine ···· so strange and deep ····

there's a soft thunder in the air ······ a white thunder ···· the heavens are tearing up ····· and all sorts of strange white creatures are descending into the ocean ·····

there were fights in the oceans ····· and he found himself eating the meat of white flies ···· it was straightening his spine, sharpening his sights ···· everything was becoming so bright now ····

"you have to eat the meat," a voice was speaking ····

he was eating the meat of white spiders and a thousand other sorts of white insects …. it was like he was in flames …. and while he was drinking from the sea …. he got visions of lightening so bright …. through which he entered a blinding silver world …. the silver took over his body …. and it was like all his hairs were rising in strange charge … a silver fly was flying before him ….. it was like a magnet …. he felt floating towards the enormous fly, and the sight became bigger and bigger …. it was like losing so many skins …. it was a pure insectian rebirth …. a releasement … and he felt everything in his body was powerfully charged … especially his mouth ….. he got sucked inside the enormous fly ….. rolling through silver pathways and tunnels … so fast ….. like he had never experienced before …. this was real speed ….

it was like his teeth were set in fire … but it was a cold fire …. and the speed was getting more and more pumped up …. all his sights fade away and became vague …… all his screens began to ripple again …. and he could put his hand through them … touching a deeper picture …. all these pictures were just covered by a layer of light water …. and while the speed was reaching for unlimited grades … also the underlaying pictures became liquid and transparent, showing deeper pictures ….. he was sinking into a new reality … a new space … and it was like he was falling into a bottomless pit ….

suddenly he was sitting in a chair while a green fly was staring at him …. he had something around him like a black jacket but there were holes in them …. it was like a web ….. he had waspian eyes ….. very sharp and tall eyes, very expressive …. like his eyes were telling a hundred of stories ……

it was like a million of things were exploding in his body and stomach … and green fluids were starting to flow …. green hormonal fluids …. his body was very transparent …..

the green fly said : "you need to eat much meat"

and he realized that he could eat so fast ····· he also realized that the fastest eaters would win the war ··· and that that winning speed would only be reached by the deepest holes of liquid slowmotion ···· like he experienced ···· it was like his mouth, stomach and further his whole body had so many little mills inside now, in so many different forms and shapes, spinning so fast, in so many ways, that he could eat this fast, like he could swallow many oceans in a flash ···· he realized that creativity and variation were other keys to this speed ····· it was a wonderful experience ·····

The wolvian gnats were the most fascinating beings he ever saw ···· The mock was dripping from their faces ···· They had such expressive dignified bodies ···· They were the princes of satire ··· They were the pronouncers of apocalypse ····· leading the orchestra's of bitter tragedy ···

The vision struck like lightening ··· it was all flashing between the gnats and the bloodhounds ··· his friends ··· but ··· were they really his friends ? one thing he was sure of for now : they were part of the adventure for now ···· and he needed them ··· as if higher things were speaking through them ····

When he woke up, the black dog of the policeman was staring at him ···· he always loved this wolfdog ··· He told the whole dream to the policeman ··· He believed him instantly ···· His advice was to stay away from the magicians for awhile ···· to see how things would turn out ·····

The years after this dream were years of silence ···· The friendship between him and the policeman grew everyday ···· he tried to forget about the dream and all which happened ···· It was like everything

wasn't important anymore .... He just tried to live with the things he loved ... that which was remained .... he still had his doubts about everything .... Was it all true ? .... He tried to pick up the things which were most important for him .... Nature ... The forests ..... It was still attracting him after all these years ...... He studied biology and technology .... This was an amazing challenge for him .... he loved his study ... both sides ..... And he loved to integrate these two .... For him it was like these two directions were married very happily ....

He wanted to bring something on the market as a product of these two interests together ... He was thinking about a new line of technology responding to the fine electricities of trees. He had a lab in the place he lived, where he had invented such a scanner, which could catch the vibrations of trees, producing signals on their special frequency-zone .... It took him years to find and rate the different wave-index's of different trees, and the patterns of communication together with the interaction between these different layers ... he had formed the scanner into a box which could store these energies and transform these to use them for different instruments. This would be a possible way to get rid of environment-pollution. The policeman was very enthousiast about the box ... and he encouraged him to keep working on it.

Chapter 5. Moving Mosaic

Years later he had invented already a lot of instruments totally working by stored tree-energy. He had invented a tree-energy-based computer, with internet and virtual reality. It became a revolution on earth, and smashed the pollution down like never before. Many factories started to switch over to this new form of electricity-use.

Anthony became the hero of the society, but he didn't like all this attention ... He was glad he still lived so isolated ..... And he loved to make trips through the forests sleeping in a tent ..... to stay close to the trees .... Once in awhile the policeman went with him .... together with the dog .... They loved to be in nature ..... Anthony felt safe here .... and this was his place he got so much inspiration ....

The revolution went on ... and soon the whole society worldwide was based on tree-energy .... It was a new industrial revolution. It also became a medical revolution ... One started to implant tree-based microchips and organs into the bodies of humans. Everything seemed to come into the direction of a tree-based cybernetic society. The tree-based cyborg was born.

Anthony was already working on a new project in cooperation with some astronomers. Anthony was developping a conductor for planetary electricities. He wanted to have planetary computers and cyborgs here on earth, for more possibilities and for a deeper removal of the different sorts of pollution ... The program succeeded and soon enough he came in contact with other earths deep in the universe .... He had developed a sort of decoder to translate incoming waves into sensory information ... different sensebases were adapted to this system ..... And soon enough he was able to set tree-energies into voice-wave. he heard different patterns, although he didn't know this language. It would be a long journey to find out what the exact language of trees was. He found a way to set voice into vision, and it was like he could look right into the brains of trees. It looked like mosaic. It was like moving powders, very symmetric, but sometimes very chaotic. He could stare at it for hours, trying to understand what it meant. It was beautiful, it was like the screens were dancing. The policeman was amazed. He had

taken his son with him, who suffered from terrible headaches since a long time. When the boy was watching the moving mosaic he started to scream : "Dad, my headaches are moving away !"

Anthony had found a new medicine .... Docters were amazed about the program. Many people got healed from all sorts of chronical diseases while watching the moving mosaics. It became a new medical revolution .... People started to write books about the tree-mosaics, explaining what it meant ... but it was of course all very speculative .... No one exactly knew the meaning of this language ... But they knew one thing : It worked !

Soon enough many scientists started to work in the project. A major change was coming into all layers of society : religion, education, politics, science, and many more. Wave after wave of revolution entered earth ... It was a breakthough in total evolution.

Scientists were developing a system to set the moving mosaics into smell. By this system one could bring the healthy flavors of trees everywhere. Also the higher forms of smell which couldn't be traced by human noses could be translated into the present frame of nose-sensitivity, but scientists wanted to recreate the nose by their genetic experiments. The frequency-borders of human organs and cells needed to be stretched out .... The effect of this new science was that human beings became taller and more sensitive ... so that everything would be refined .... deeper digested ..... Humans became thinner .....

It was like the elves were returning to earth .... Anthony still had the face of a young boy, while he was already 46 ... he was worshipped in society ... but he led a silent life .... He was still ... a forestman ... It was like he was growing younger everyday ..... He was very sceptical at the books about the language of trees ... he

still didn't know what their message was ··· he was still searching ···· for an answer ····

He was now working on a project to conduct insectian electricities· And soon enough he could set the incoming patterns into visual information· It was a strange mosaic, it was wilder than what he got from the trees, and it was like little sharp lines mixed through each other ···· It was a wild dance he saw ···· And he had the feeling someone really wanted to talk to him ····· but ···· he tried to ignore these feelings ···· He wanted to be in peace ··· he wanted rest ··· staying pure scientific ···· but the screens became wilder ···· and wilder ···· Finally he put it off ···· for it was like the screens were almost exploding ··· the instruments were already overheated ····

He spoke about it to the policeman who adviced him to stay away from it ···· to give it in the hands of young enthousiast scientists not afraid of some adventures ····· Anthony smiled ···· He was so glad about his adviceman who was his friend for so many years ···· He decided to take an extra holiday ···· To go to the mountains for some deep rest ···· He felt satisfied ··· but he really needed to take some rest now ··· and really enjoy nature ····· instead of thinking too much ···· It was like his brains were overheated too ···· He would go together with the policeman and his son and also a friend of that son· He really wanted to relax for awhile ··· Only talking about stupid things ···· making jokes, and drinking some good wine ···· The friend of the policeman's son was a real clown, so he could use that ···

Years later Anthony got into a very silent marriage ··· having a very silent woman ···· He was now 51, and his wife was 53 ···· She was his rest and peace ···· She was everything to him ····· She tried to take him away from his heavy job ···· They made a lot of trips together ···· They had some good friends ···· but not too much ····

They lived in a very large house, far from society ··· A house ·· near to the forests ····

One evening Anthony was very tired and wanted to go bed earlier ··· His wife would stay up ··· to do the laundry and some other jobs in the house ·····

He didn't know that she was a member of The White Rabbit-Conspiracy ···· They still had the mission to destroy him ····· But this lady had really the intention to torture him in the cruelest sense ···· She wanted to burn him ···· While he slept she was putting wristlets and shackles to chain him to the bed ···· After that she put on the light having a lucifer in her hand lighting a candle ··· Anthony woke up and got the shock of his life ··· He screamed : Why are you doing this to me ···· All memories of his past flashed through his mind ·····

She said : "Listen, you stupid fox ·····" And then the policeman entered in with his black dog ·· He was so glad ··· but ···· he started to smile at him ·····

It was like a nightmare ···· Even his friend the policeman seemed to be his enemy ··· it was just a spy ··· just an infiltrator ····· a member of the White Rabbit Cult ···· The policeman took the candle and put it below the curtains ···· which started to come into flames ···· Soon enough the room was getting in fire ···· and they were gone ····· Anthony was shaking and wrestling on his bed ··· like he was in fight with a snake ····· but he couldn't get rid of the ties ···· while the flames were heading for his bed now ····· He screamed like he never screamed before ···· His body became hot ····· his feet were already in flames ···· it was like he was exploding inside ··· like all his organs were getting smashed ···· "No !" he shrieked ····

He woke up in a hospital .... "Where am I ?" he asked ..... A policeman was staring at him with a tight face ... "You were almost burnt," he said .....

Anthony was broken .... He almost couldn't speak .... "It's ok," the policeman said ..."I will leave you alone now..."

The years after this terrible day, Anthony didn't want to see anyone ... He just wanted to be alone, recovering from his wounds, and this trauma ... he didn't want to know anything of his past anymore .... and neither about his study ..... The newspapers were full of it .....

He didn't trust anyone anymore .... he feared everything ..... He had many problems in his speaking ... He was a broken man .... A victim of a strange war ... he didn't want to be in nature again .... He feared the forest ... For there all his memories were wandering ...

He lived in a house near the sea ... The only place he could find a little peace .... The trauma had made him numb ..... The fear was his protection .... He was never able to tell about the crime of his wife and his old friend, the policeman. But he knew ... so many around him were part of the conspiracy ...

One day he got a letter from someone from the Young Scientist Association ... They wanted to talk to him, for they said that they had worked out his Insectian-based instruments ... They had developed a mechanism which could translate the insectian mosaic code into human languages.

He was very sceptical about it and didn't respond. A few years later he got another letter, that they got messages from the translated mosaic-codes about him. They wanted to speak to him about it. But he thought it could be all part of the conspiracy, so he didn't respond. A few months later he got another letter. This time it

contained the messages from the codes. He was like in a shock, for it contained some details he never spoke about. The insectian codes also told that they tried to reach him before he met that woman who became his wife. They wanted to warn him. He remembered when he first started to get the insectian mosaics on screen .... that these were so wild that everything started to get overheated .... The letter contained details from his earlier dreams, explaining that these dreams were insectian dreams .... And he remembered that he was already warned by these dreams, that there were spies, and that there could be spies .... He felt like he failed .... But now he was right on track ....

It was like his body was in fire, but this time it was like everything was regenerating .... He made an appointment to speak the boys ... They showed him the equipment and how it worked ... Now he heard and saw it with his own eyes .... It worked .... and it was true ....

New revolutions came on earth since the codes were cracked .... It seemed this new insectian technology showed easily the conspiracies ... Like it was in his dreams .... But he knew this was only one step in the good direction .... People from conspiracies couldn't handle this new technology .... The frequenties were burning them inside .... The hospitals were full .... Organisations started to melt away .... for this was a very personal technology. It was like a holocaust .... People were set in fire .... it was burning their organs away ..... Anthony remembered the dream about the woman with her head in fire .... It became a reality now .... There was arising a war on earth .... People who started to burn tried to destroy as much as they could ..... The population started to split .... It was like apocalypse on earth .... There were forestfires, and even some seas were burning ... It was like hell on earth .... And the fire started to rage more and more .... There were skeletons on the streets ..... Babies were

screaming ···· Playgrounds were burning away ······ schools ···· churches ···· Justice-courts ·····shops ···· And the fire was spreading more and more ···· there was smoke everywhere ····· There were shelters built for the survivors, and some hospitals could stand tall in this storm ···· The conspiracy was falling ····· It was like the face of identification was showing itself ··· all the masks were falling off ···· It was the tragedy of truth ··· coming to set them free ····· People couldn't stop this fire ····· It was eating it's way to the core ····

The war was without mercy ···· Young scientists became leaders of the survivals ···· Deep underground shelters were built and used ···· While the new insectian computers and observatoriums were built further ····· The tragedy of truth was now leading them ···· Almost all other governments were falling ··· Many famous leaders were totally burnt to the ground ··· many famous popsingers and sportheroes ···· They all appeared to be members of the Big Conspiracy ·····

New education-systems were rising, insect-based ····· There were screens on which you could see the mosaic appearing on one side, while on the other side the translation appeared in many human languages giving very detailed information ···· it set people on fire ···· it healed or destroyed ···· and everyone needed to be tested ··· babies, young people, old people ··· they all went through the scan ···· the population was getting cleared ··· It was a mass-identification ····· The electricity was very wild ···· and it started to be the mainforce of many instruments ··· The world was getting ready for insectian cybernetica, and a new cyborg-structure ···· Many famous old scientists were shot away ···· A total new scientific government started to form itself on earth ···· with many young leaders ···· It was like the insects were born on earth ···· Humanity became taller and thinner ····· men started to let their hair and beards grow ····

It was like Jesus was returning to earth .... Native Americans and other minorities got their honour back.

But Anthony was very sceptical .... he knew that this was only one step in identification .... This was only the first wave ... and he warned the people for it ..... He said there were still many conspiracies ... for insectian energy could also be infiltrated ..... He adviced humanity to stay calm, to prepare for new unmaskings ... for higher technologies ..... Humanity trusted this old man for that .... he was now 65 and worshipped like never before .... He was the hero of the youth ... and the saviour of the old ... But he still didn't like all the attention .... He wanted to live in silence .... he saw the dangers hanging over the earth .... he was now an old advicer of the different governments ... a prophet whom they feared ....

Chapter 6. The Dream

One night Anthony got a dream again. He and the other four bloodhounds walked to a white castle in the distance ... It looked like a palace ... When they were in they saw an old woman who was like waiting for them .... She was clothed in white ... but they didn't see this woman before ... She held a die before their eyes, and said that their whole world was living in this die ....

When Anthony woke up, he didn't know what to do with this dream, but it was spinning in his head ... What would this woman mean by this .... and who was she ... It was really like he start to feel himself living in a cube ... and there had to be a way out .... In a strange way he started to get hope again ... like the way out was forming itself before his eyes ... It was like earth was traveling to the exit ...

Since that dream the air became stranger and stranger, and Anthony found out that there were block-energies coming into existance ... the energies started to split more and more to form blocks all over the world ... it was like the insectians were building a total new world ... Because the energies concentrated themselves on certain places all people could see it .... It was like a new sort of radiation in the atmosphere .... People were put into divisions by these blocks, and it was like a strange hand took the world over ...

Meanwhile science developed itself in insect-based technology, and one was specifying the several area's in this. The wasp-electricities could be caught and seemed to be very useful in many ways. One was even thinking that these new blockenergies had all to do with the wasp-frequencies ... and soon they got these frequencies on the screen ... It seemed that the wasps communicated by holograms, mostly by cubes, looking like dice in many cases. One could trace the different forms of this unique communication. And it seemed the more they developped this wasp-base in technology, the more hidden secrets were being revealed ... There were more exposures of conspiracies, but this time it seemed that these remained enemies were too strong. It would be the beginning of the blockwars. Everywhere in families and organisations there were splits, and the blocks were in war with each other .... On both sides there was much protection .... The blocks were very strong .... But sometimes there were enormous explosions and large changings in the orders of blocks ... On both sides they had developped waspian armour, based on the waspian energy they could store by several new invented tools. It was a war of waspian cyborgs, and on both sides they were developing the technologies.

By the releasement of this new electricity in so many ways, the earth-temperature was becoming hotter and hotter, and science

found out that wasps directly tap from the suns in different cosmosses. The earth was about to change into a new sun … and science was in a race against the clock to prepare humanity for that. It was like the sun was touching the earth, but it was not the same energy … it was a controlled and concentrated energy, a focussed energy, and it seemed the block-war was a solar cocoon for humanity to learn how to handle solar energy. The solar energy came to divide even more … People from the same blocks started to get separated …. It was like this new electricity wanted to make people isolated and independent …. The blocks started to melt themselves into balls more and more …. While people weren't able to look outside their own ball anymore … Earth was now filled by golden balls … losing all the contact between each other …. While the earth was turning into a wild sun more and more …. Seas of fire were roaring on earth … But one didn't realize that anymore …. for they were stuck in their own balls …. golden balls …. like a strong concentrated energy ……

Anthony was at peace … he was finally in the silence he so desired … like he finally met the love of his life …. For all the pressures and expectations of organisations and governments were slowly strengling him … like he was in the arms of a devastating insect …

He felt free in his ball … It was like the show was over now, and he could finally live for himself instead of for others … He couldn't care about them anymore, for he knew they had to live their own lives, making their own decisions … Life would have a fitting cocoon for them …. and he even didn't know who they were … He just wanted to be blanco for now …

The temperature in his ball was very good …. but suddenly images were appearing on the walls of the golden ball .. They were rippling like a movie, and it was like hands tried to touch him …. He ran to the other side of the ball to see the images disappear ….

"Well done," he heard a voice saying …

Hours and hours went on, while images were appearing trying to take him away ….. and he knew all the other people of earth would go through the same ….. soon he was very tired of it and he fell asleep ….

When he woke up, he saw the ball was transparent, and all sorts of insects were creeping over it …. He saw the images coming from them … from their mouth, their eyes, claws or other parts …. In the distance he saw a docter with some injection-needles …. Suddenly the docter walks to the ball, opens it and takes him out …. It feels so strange for the docter is like a giant to him …. The docter has a very high voice, but explains to him that he's still in his golden ball, that this is just a trick of holograms …. the docter asks him to shake himself very quickly …. And when Anthony started to do it …. the holograms started to disappear while he found out he was really in his golden ball …..

She's dreaming all the rooms inside …

She's dreaming all her dreams so loud …

She never takes it away …

she never takes the sting out of it …

She's dreaming all the rooms inside …

She's dreaming all these noises so loud …

she never takes it back …

what she planted in his mouth …

what she planted in his mouth …

She's dreaming all the rooms inside …

She's dreaming all these dreams so loud …

and no one can follow her …

and no one can touch her skin …

she's on the back of a white rabbit …

she and her golden skin …

a golden fly …

He started to feel so weird inside … Like his mouth was in fire … hearing this strange song … His ball was surrounded by golden pharao's …. pouring golden tea inside the ball … it was like he was drowning in it, and he was drinking it … setting his mouth and teeth on fire … while his whole body was boiling …

Suddenly he didn't believe in this golden ball anymore … He wanted out of it … for it was like he was in hell … And he knew all what looked like to be out of the ball was also in the ball on the screens …

A voice was saying : "you can never say you weren't warned"

Anthony thought by himself : "Well did I do something wrong, that I am in this cursed ball now ?"

The voice then said : "No, but you were prepared for this, right ?"

"You knew you would have to see more tragedies of truth"

"The point is you were drinking this tea since birth, but you now start to realize it …"

And then the voice was melting away … It was like he was getting stung by a thousand of gnats … he realized it was always there, but now he started to realize it … It was like for the first time in his life, he really connected to his body … He could feel his body …

He saw an electric eel lying before him … with a body so bright that it blinded everything else … it changed the vibrational structures of the surroundings …. and the vague shapes … the emotional responses it brought … all indexes of experience changed … and it was like he could only stare at this enormous being of paralyzing light … It was like it was absorbing him totally ….

She never takes her dreams again …

She lets it sink into you …

She never let her household break it again …

It's there for you … in eternity …

She's riding the white rabbit …

She's riding with the golden skin …

She's sitting in the golden fly ….

She's sitting there to let it spin …

She never takes her dreams back …

she plants it all into you …

all these voices too loud all these sights too bright …

paralyzing the rest of you ….

And Anthony felt like paralyzed ··Like in a shock ···Watching this electric eel ···· Watching like he couldn't watch anything else ··· She was surrounded by purple ··· In this golden ball ···· This golden purple ··· blinding him ···· deafening him ··· paralyzing him ···· while the pharao's were pouring their tea ···

He saw lullabies dance ··· He saw lamentations stand around them ···· While Viewmasters were coming forth ··· His eyes were like eating the pictures ··· And these were as honey so sweet ···· But in his stomach ··· It became like rage ····· A rage he couldn't understand ··· a rage he couldn't describe ···

It was absorbing his mind ··· and it was like he was growing into a statue ··· For outside they are shapeshifting each other ··· changing each other and then mocking each other ··· He always felt like it was as if people kick others in the hospital, and then they take pictures of them to mock them ··· Always changing the shapes, always changing the indexes, always changing the colours ···· Until there wasn't an identity anymore ··· only an eaten soul ···· layer by layer ···· And they brought the shattered pieces to the beauty-queens of the rubbishfields, where the meat could rot even more on their faces ···· what a strange, strange viewmaster ····

But now what he saw here ··· was an apocalyptic march of lamentations ···· like a warbook was opening ···· and the cries of ages were deafening the queens of trash ···· they lost their own lamentations and lullabies of self-pity ···· and now they had to appear for the throne of beauty ····

if you mock something, it will become your child ···

and it will cry, every day louder and louder,

until all your lullabies of selfdeception have been exploded ····

if you mock something it will become your parent …

and it will cry, every day louder and louder,

until all your lamentations of duty-denials are quenched …

and you will look into the face of a viewmaster …

the face of an electric eel …

Anthony heard the slow sounds of a musical box …

A voice said : "you can never say you weren't warned …"

In this electric eel, he felt himself like a statue … There was no need to switch anymore … For it was like here there wasn't time … All hard parts were connected into the statue …. All truths … All he needed for this moment …. He felt himself … like a tree …. like a rock …. He felt that the clock had done it's last tick …. And it was like his brains were locked now …. protected against any split …. against any switch …. for he knew …. outside …. they wanted to break him and shake him …. making him insecure …. by changing his pictures …. changing their views and his views ….

He felt himself like being an ornament now …. living in a shell … living in a diamond …. having a new viewmaster ….

And then it was like he was diving through a million of golden rings …. locking him up into this new world … they all had their advanced ways of locking it up …. they span so fast …. and he watched their

figures ···· slowly spinning into a tight statue ····· a tight ornament ···· the tight rings they were ···

He now realized that the clocks made him so soft ··· molding him ····· changing him ···· while he could never get grip ··· while the vultures were eating his insecurity ···· he was always in such an identity-crisis ···· but it was like ···· it was all gone now ····

He stared into the face of an electric eel ···· He knew ···· in this world ·· he could dance and change his shape ···· he could switch ···· having a clock ···· without having a danger ···· He knew that he would be hard on the outside ··· soft on the inside ···· like an animal living in a shell ···· like an oyster ····

He loved to watch the pearls inside ···· he loved to spin them ···· he desired to live inside of them ··· to grow harder on the outside ··· and softer on the inside ···

In the distance he sees his old marbles ···· They are suns ···· having the colours of stones and metals ···· He's seeing the solar ornaments, the solar stairways, while it's becoming dizzy in his mind ···· He's trying to grasp them ···· but they are flying away ···· It's like they are there, but when he grasps it's all staring and smiling at him from another place ···

He wants to learn their languages ···· He wants to be in their racecars ···· He wants to ····

He wants so much ···

All his desires rise to the edge ····

Is this the road to New Aldebaran ?

He wants to be on the racecourts … to roll on them … to learn a new language to the heart …

He wants to race on banana-roads …. to learn the language of the banana …

He wants to jump over borderlines ….

over red-lines and dead-lines …

He wants to …..

"You can never say you weren't warned," a voice speaks …

And then it's like he's melting away …. Into a sort of fruit … Into the banana of his dreams …

heading for … A new Aldebaran … to meet the banana-queen …

He wants to fall into spirals of new suns …. stone and metal-coloured …

until he reaches the taste of the fruit …. the core …. a new world to enter …

all these worlds into worlds ….

he's in a solar cocoon …

melting and melting inside …

while outside he's becoming harder ….

he's becoming a tree … a solar tree …..

he's living inside …..

like an autistic boy ····

and he knows all other golden balls are heading for it ····

he's melting ····

covered by stones ····

by gold, pearls, silver, emerald ···

like living in a diamond ···

A voice is speaking : "you can never say you weren't warned"

"it's all deeper inside"

He cries like a newborn baby ····

In this solar-womb he will grow ···

inside the mother ··· not outside ···

he will be safe forever here ····

he will meet his daddy inside ···

not outside ···

his daddy lives in his mom ····

he's heading for a new aldebaran ····

he wears so many rings on his fingers now ···

and he sees the wasps flying from sun to sun ···

the wasps are so large ····

he can sit on them ····

they will show him the way in this strange land ···

Pats ! The teacher smashes a hard object on Anthony's table ···

"Were you dreaming again ?" he shouts ····

"Eh, yes, mr ····", Anthony gets a red head ····

"Well, didn't you like the story I told you ?" the teacher said ····

"It was from the book "Alice in Wonderland" ····

Or were you caught by the white rabbit ?"

Anthony smiles ··· "well, I guess so, mr ····"

"Mr· Bloodhound is the name ···· well, it's only the first day for you here ··· so you will get used to my name ····" the teacher sais smiling ····

Chapter 7· Children of the Sun

Anthony's father was an engineer, developping communication instruments ···· he was a dreamer too ···· He was thinking ··· what would be the best way for humans to communicate ? direct or indirect ? by telephone or tape ··· wouldn't it be much more safe

when people just hear something which was already spoken ? then they could also have time to react to it …

Anthony's father was always a bit paranoid … He found out that earth's communication went too fast …. It was almost manipulative … all the need for autograph's … fast answers … no one would wait one minute for the other's words …. and this was causing all the accidents … the prejudices … the impulsiveness … for no one dared to slow down anymore …. one didn't want to be rejected … Anthony's father was a very wise man … He didn't believe in all this society-stuff …. He was a hard worker … thinking that only the lazy ones created society … while he believed in technical development … he found that people just covered their laziness by their talkative actions … the social strings were about to strengle the whole earth in his eyes …. he never went to parties …. he was always working in his cellar ….

His son's dreams were inspirations for him … Such a little boys having such dreams …. It was still unbelievable for him … he wrote all his son's dreams down in maps, and these were almost his sacred agenda's …

....

......

The White Rabbit, an old woman, is watching the tape of "something they traced" …. they collected this material …. they had their mind-microphones and mind-camera's and other sub-sensuous instruments … they ….. her watchers …. But suddenly she starts to yell : "Enough of this ! These dreams are almost penetrating my holy rooms ! You needed to protect my privacy better ! Get out of my sight, you stupid fools !" And all her deformed watchers ran

outside her room, for she was about to spit fire …. It was thundering through the white castle …. She was at rage now … She was running through her secret tunnel to reach for her secret cellar …. Here all existing suns were pricked on tall sticks …. and were burning like candles …. all sorts of fire … She was laughing hysterically …. And she was yelling : "Burn, burn, burn !" then she ran to another tunnel to appear in a deeper cellar …. Here all suns were lying as marbles on a table …. marbles in a layer of sand …. they were glowing softly …. "You are all mine …" she was shouting … "all you little sweeties …. you are mine …." Her voice was becoming higher and higher … This always happened while she was entering the deeper cellars …. Then she ran to an old elevator to enter an even deeper layer below the castle … This was an old hall like a shopfloor …. and it was full of display-statues …. They couldn't move …. but tears came out of their eyes …. "Hello, my pretty little sunchildren …. it's me, grandmom …. I'm back …. with some surprises for you ….." And then she pushed a little switch on the wall … and the statues started to burn … They were shrieking horribly …. "Soon enough you will be nothing but ashes on a table !" …. She screamed … And then she took the elevator again, to go to the floor below ….. This was a place were only ashes were muttering …. She was turning into a gigantic alienlike being, like a sort of mega-sun …. and she was sucking all the ashes inside …. while she was screaming …. "I will turn you into earths again …. You will be in my womb …. Don't think you can ever escape the prison …. You are mine … You are dumb earth-slaves … bound to three-dimensional crap …. I will bring all suns back to the ashes …. I will use them …. and after that they will be earths again … No one can escape …. No one !"

That night Anthony had a dream about a field of suns … These were planets like earth wanting to escape the strings …. These suns were

like soft pillows …. They were like flowers with baby-faces …. and they were floating in this field ….. But then a tall old woman showed up with a rifle in her hands … shooting all these flowers one by one …. While she started to spout waters over them …. Poisoned waters, chemical waters and nuclear waters …. And then all these suns were exploding …. and turning into earths again …. white prisons like holocausts …. barbed wires …. covered by blood …. These were the big bangs … bringing the fugitives back … There was no escape …. And he heard babies crying …. While something was shaking him very roughly …. And then he woke up … screaming …..

"I want this boy !" she screamed …. "Penetrate his dreams again !" she ran to a deeper cellar … where all the earths were united … like white balls …. she scratched some powders from all balls into a dish … which took hours and hours … and then she poured the powders into a kettle to mix them …. The mix she would use to poison all escaped souls to bring them back into three-dimensional prisons again … to let them be born into wombs of earths … She was laughing hard …. for the flavours of the kettle were rising …. and these were spirits she sent out to get the earth-prisoners back …. these spirits were enormous white sharks …. and by their noises they broke through all sorts of dimension-barriers … They were muched feared in the universe …. Then she ran hysterically to the floor below …. Here the prisoned souls were weak flames … They were singing sad songs …. They had to sing for her … When a soul got too much pain, it died, and went to a deeper floor …. On this floor the souls were a bit happier …. but they were living in slavery … They had to do a lot of work …. and they needed to sing some happier songs for her …. when souls got too tired and too sick …they died and went to the floor below …. On this deeper floor the souls lived in luxury …. they didn't have to work much … they were the bosses of the floors above them …. they could travel ….

but they lived in isolation .... and were very lonely ..... when they got too lonely, they died ... and then they went to a floor below ... There they had the top-positions ... great wealth and health .... many followers .... honour and popularity ... ruling over the other layers above them ... and in the possibility to dine with the white rabbit .... they were eating the meat of the other layers above them .... they were butchers .... they could fly from one to the other layer by turning themselves into flies ... and by turning themselves into spiders they could gather the meat ... they were like funeral-undertakers, doing business around death ... causing it .... and then using it .... But sometimes there were fights among them .... and the ones dying in the fights went to an even deeper floor ... here they were like grubs, like the children of the white rabbit .... being spoilt ... being protected against all harm .... here they slept in her beds and in her baths ... here they got the royal food ... being able to hear the secrets of the white rabbit ... Here they had the ability to become her wasps, to be reborn into her own suns ... She wanted to create her own suns ... her own solar-projects ... her own solar stairways ...

she wants souls to be her fires and flames ... locked up in the cells of the earth ... She lives in all earths' cores to tame the soulflames there ....

but Anthony and his four bloodhound-friends are escaping her webs .... they see her chrystal cells in which she locked these souls up ... to be the fuel for her communication systems ... her talkativity .... but they are escaping .... in their golden balls ... They escape her chrystal cells ... In their vibration they can float out of everything ... They are heading for the exit .... They are in the tall temple of the white rabbit .... heading for the throne, where the white rabbit, the old lady, has a solar crown on her head .... they need to steal it

····· and then her throne will melt away ···· Through that gate they will escape ···· but it looks like they travel and travel but the thronehall is so large ··· it seems like it's taking an eternity ···· Five golden balls are floating to the enormous throne in the distance ···· They fly faster and faster, but it's like everything slides away ··· even the view ···· They know they need the viewmaster ···· This is all a trick of view ····

She's sitting there ··· with her brother ··· the one who carries a viewmaster ···· an electric eel ···· She's sitting there with the golden fly ····· a short, tanned old man with a white beard ··· She loves him ··· it's her best friend ···· He has a cult on vega-south ···· The Cult of the Golden Fly ···· She loves it ···

She's proud of him ···· he's carrying the viewmaster ··· manipulating the views of others ···· to bring all suns back to their prisons ···· to cut all sunflowers ···· It's a strange cult ···· The electric eel is their father ···· He has an old hourglass in which he gathers all the sunfields and let them fall through the three-dimensional earthfunnels, to catch the souls as fuel for their own suns ··· he does it by using time ···· and by changing their points of view ··· it's an old liar ···· a liar from vela ····

It was like they knew everything about the cycle of the butchery ··· They wanted to keep souls locked up in three-dimensional wheels of reincarnation ···· For meat and fuel ··· The powers of reincarnation were the motors of their mills ···

a bell was ringing ··· it was dinnertime ··· and once in awhile the three would dine together ···· They were talking about ··· Anthony ··· and the other bloodhounds ···· another bell was ringing, and some other friends came in ···· They discussed about what to do ··· the most strange creatures came in ···· They were uniting all their

powers ···· They all realized what it would mean when anthony and his friends would escape from the hourglass ···

Suddenly the golden balls started to connect to each other ···· and it became an enormous burning sun ···· so overwhelming that it was burning the viewmaster away ···· It was growing out of the hourglass and the whole diningroom started to come into flames ···· enormous explosions took place ··· and anthony grasped the solar crown from the white rabbit's head ···· when he put it on his own head lightening and thunder was swallowing the room with all it's strange visitors ···· but now the white rabbit was really mad ···· she turned into an enormous wasp and started to sting the burning sun ··· She was flying to the butchery, but it was already in fire ···· Millions of souls were being released ···· She started to scream harder than ever before ···· and anthony's ears were exploding ···· he became deaf ··· but he could tune into higher communications now ····· and again she could reach him on that vibration making so much noise and so sharp that he felt again like his ears were exploding ··· and this time it penetrated him so deep that his skin got ripped off ····Millions of flies and other insects started to attack him ··· and he was now extra sensitive ··· but he felt he was in the cocoon ··· the lights were so bright that all layers of his vision were ripped off one by one ··· it exploded ···· and he could come into deeper visions ··· his eyes were burning now ···· and spitting fire ···· this was a wild cocoon ···· suddenly he felt he stood before her throne ···· and he could see it exploding ··· a black gate was lying before him ··· when he went through he saw all her solar fields and communication webs ···· he could transform them by his eyes ···· he could sting through every picture now to see what is lying behind ··· his eyes were free now ··· not bound by a picture anymore ··· not bound by a viewmaster ··· his ears weren't bound by a sound anymore ··· but he could sting right through them ··· his solar crown started to work ·· producing

his own sounds .... and in the middle his own viewmaster started to rise ... producing his own visions .... he could embrace all the little souls now ... he could reach for his higher skin now ... this skin could sting through all feelings and other skins ... to feel what's going on .... he could feel a golden skin now ... and feeling the sunflowers grow ... higher and higher .... he got an egyptian eye on his forehead now .... an eye surrounded by sunrays ....

he saw a picture of a jesus christ with bleeding eyes ... roaring like a lion ... but new visions started to flow through him .... while the blooddrips which hit the ground started to become sunflowers .... and there he saw this cross growing in the sunflower-field ... like a ladder to the moon ..... while so many children were climbing the ladder .... but then he saw the ladder breaking and the children started to cry so loud ... that the ears of the jesus christ started to bleed .... and jesus fell on the ground .... while changing into a cobra .... eating so many children ....

anthony was shocked ... but a voice spoke : "you can never say you weren't warned ..."

and anthony started to remember about the spies ... so many souls are just from an other enemy ... he started to think about the other four bloodhounds ... who would they be ?

he found himself standing before seas of fire ... the voice was speaking : "you need to swim through these ..."

anthony dived in and realized that so many more visions were exploding, so many more dreams ... while he was reaching for higher vibrations .... everything needed to be sifted ... all his visions and dreams ... and he swam further and further, feeling all his senses were cleansed by these fires .... more and more he got a solar body

··· leaving earth alone ···· the white rabbit was suddenly swimming before him like a shark ···· she wanted him back ···· and a fight started in which he thought he would lose everything ···· and like all his worlds were tumbling down ···· what was raging in his bones ? it would rage until he was in the finest vibration ···· in the highest fires ···· he didn't have any grip anymore ···· and he was coiling and spinning ···· like he was falling from high mountains ··· diving on rocks ···· it was like everything broke inside ····· and something was having dinner on that ··· the white rabbit ····· or was it a white shark ? ··· he stretched out to higher suns ···· the lights too bright bringing him new pictures ··· transparent pictures ···· the sounds too loud bringing him new sounds ··· soft ocean sounds ···· the fires too hot bringing him a new skin ···· new bones and senses within ···· he was reaching out for new communications ···· he wanted to swim to the edge ···· to the ultimate limit ···· and then dive ··· he wanted to know the secret of the white rabbit ···· it was like a million of oceans were exploding ···· and a million of suns ···· and he was looking right into the eyes of the most horrible creature he ever saw ···· what would be behind of this all ?

Suddenly Anthony woke up in sweat ···· he was wet all over ···· even his blankets were ··· something was making him so wet ··· these were supernatural powers ···· and he felt so much heat ····· he could feel all poles rippling over him ···· like waves ····· he knew the white rabbit was keeping some things hidden ····

When he fell asleep again ··· he had a dream about samson walking on water ··· but suddenly he sunk and fishes were eating his eyes out of him ···· it was also written in the bible that samsons eyes were pierced ···· by philistines ···· suddenly he saw all the lost souls in biological cells as fuel for solar eyes ···· they used them for their viewmasters ··· but Anthony thought he already dealt with that ····

In that dream the white rabbit was eating eyes ··· and then these blind souls were being led to her eyes ··· her fields of eyes ···· where they were locked up in wheels, turning around ···· every sense they got was being transformed into a picture ···· and by these they were getting brainwashed ··· the painful emotions were being connected to certain pictures ···· and by these pictures the emotions got stronger ···· they were getting conditioned by cruel feedback-systems ···· but Anthony thought he already dealt with it ···· and he became very emotional ···· he got the pictures of his earlier dreams thinking he already dealt with it ···· while the other pictures were confusing him, feeding his emotions up ···· the pictures were growing on both sides ··· while the emotion rose and tore him apart ···· he felt such a rage now ····· he felt emerald eyes coming in his head ···· while he was using the white rabbit as fuel for these eyes ···· he tore her already ···· his rage was tight in this ··· he now started to realize that if he wouldn't use her ··· she would continue to use him ····

There was an unknown rage in him ··· tearing her kingdom apart ··· if he wouldn't do it ··· she would tear him again ···· He didn't want to be her prey anymore ····· maybe he just had to tear her deeper ··· for he still felt her breath in his neck ····

Chrystal eyes were in his hands, intensifying his touch ··· He wouldn't let her do it again ···· but she did it ···· It was like it was technology against technology ····· and his rage was breeding him into an indifferent killer-cyborg ····· The pain made him numb ···· like a statue ···· but he was programmed to sense and destroy her ···· he knew if he wouldn't destroy her ···· she would destroy him ···· He had to ride her ··· for if he wouldn't do it ··· she would ride him ···· The choice was easily made ····

But something was ripping him inside ···· and his rage was getting like never before ····· he almost became hysterical ····where was it

leading him ? she lived inside of him … and he couldn't get her out … she lived in a diamond shell …. he couldn't reach her …. this made him almost insane …. it was like a micro-chip he couldn't break …. technology too high …. too deep ….

He wondered what for a project would be below all these cellars he saw … It was like he was in a sort of temple now …. She was breeding all sorts of clothes here … shoes, jackets, trousers … etcetera … but also bodyparts … like arms, legs, livers and hearts … But all these objects were alive … They were insectians … She was a healer …. she was a tailor ….. but what she created were parasites …. Anthony got the shock of his life …. He screamed : No ! No ! …. For he started to see that even in birth, bodyparts were gathered in a sort of factory, and in this web of parasites called "body" a soul was implanted … and the parasites would suck until the body would be dead to be in a row for another reincarnation …. This woman was sick ….. Many healers on earth were nothing but her agents …

She was … a healer …. A healer … of parasites ….

She was … a prophet-hunter …. wanting to deceive and destroy the bloodhounds …

She was … writing her bibles against them …..

She was …. a goddess of sleep …. of medicines ….. letting the parasites do their jobs …. She designed all his dreams ….. she designed all his masks …… for Anthony himself was a high member of the conspiracy …. a spy …. a golden key ….. He was her agent on earth …. to infiltrate the bloodhounds, the persecuted prophets … to deceive them by lacquered dreams …. truths with a few drips of lies … captivating their heads … drawing them closer and closer

to the fields of everlasting damnations ····· the fields ···· of The White Rabbit ·····

The End

The White Rabbit II

Wars of the Flies

Chapter 1. Grand Decisions

In the distance the soft machineguns and canons were shooting, pulsating, like liquid balls and eggs together, while soft winds surround the targets. The heat is intensive, someone is breathing, like he can explode every second. It's hard for him to leave the plateau, this level, to reach for a deeper one inside. Someone is breathing heavier, someone close to him. They cannot hold themselves up, and suddenly by a wind and a flash, they are exploding into white powder. Now the wind will do with it what it wants, but their souls are deeply gone, gone to another world. Their mouths are contracting, while the venom flows into their mouths. The mountains are high here, while snow and dust covers them, where the sun licks the roofs and the ripples. It was a flyian attack

He has white golden wires coming from his shoulders, while his white golden uniform is blinding the mass. His teeth pulsate the heat, while soft winds surround his attacks. He's a good warrior on his ship, doing flyian attacks. After the battles there isn't always much to do. Sometimes it's really boring for they shot everything away. The webs of wild flies are worse than that of spiders, for it eats everything away.

There are standing racecars on the tall attic on the tall table, where the nephews play. These racecars are a species of flies. They like to get fast to break through the picture. Then nothing has form, nothing has shape, and everything starts all over again. There's coming soft smoke from their throats. Their fathers have smoken too much. Tall cigarettes are their cue's on the billiardstable, while the balls are of gold in all colours. Watch these suns they have in their ornaments.

The white golden sun is standing tall, while someone tall, almost bald, leaves the stages to take a boy from the streets. It's just a kid, and now he is in these dark hands. The boy starts to scream, for the Lord of the Flies is taking him to an island. There where the nephews live. He's coming tall accepting no complaints. Someone gets the tall ornaments, to hang in the trees of their gardens.

He's rising up, so sinister now, not a boy anymore. No one could expect that such a child would become such a strange hard man. By the hits he is autistic now, paranoid with sharp arrows. He's a wild fly, built for the kill, growing undercover in so many worlds. He's all alone, and where's the Lord of the Flies now. He stares at the tall ornaments, food for insects, but they are growing taller. He likes to make these circles, stinging through the pictures, to gain the nothing. From here he can grow to the heights. His touch is cool and shaky. He doesn't have an identity no more, while his colours are spreading like ripples and waves, he's heading for the pale, looking for the lost drips of colour. He dives, misses, and then falls away to wait another thousand years for a second chance. He's dreaming, dreamy, shifting his consciousness. Nothing is real.

He's a flyian mariner, without an army. His arrows are sharp, piercing his own back and shoulders, while wires are coming through. He's painted in many colours, while he shows the pale spots. His eyes are dark, waiting for the kill.

In the White Golden city they gather, all these white flies, waiting for the kill. They were marked to do the crimes, deep in their nipples. Their immunology systems are overactive, but a White Golden Hand takes them away. They just need to have a good circulation, and he teaches them art. The White Golden Snake penetrates the chest, to give them more hearts. They have no shape here, only movement and change. They are free.

In White Golden Ornaments we are free, no identity, no names. It's shifting so fast into endless summers, to become blue on top ... a bit blue.

Chapter 2. Rumours while no one listens

They are breeding a white species ... these moving hands ... coming from the purple ... They move towards a show of uncle peacock ... The bracelets in the sky, they wave like powders exploding ... There are rumors but no one takes them serious ... These golden rains ... They shine through the night ... Except one golden boy ... It's late ... Unity smiles on the mountains ... Someone grasps the newspaper by an ornamental suite ... It's late ... too late ..

The boys from white are covering their shadows ... It's daylight surrounding them .. doing the fight ... but it's all fake .. without harm ... The red stripes take them to an ocean of feathers ... where marazanta screams in pale spots ... They are proud of these decisions ... but it eats their creativity away ... They cannot speak anymore ... but that's because it's so late ... too late ...

The boy has pale ripples on his body, and some pale spots ... They are filled with strange powders ...

It's flashing like a new trafficlight, rumours while no one listens. It's a grand mind coming from the wars of Spain ... and now it lives in France, selling his voice to the rats and doves of

the streets. It's the promenade, the lounge bravour for tout le monde. But no one listens to these rumours ... They got used to it ... now they only watch the lights inbetween all these rumours ... a piece of art on plastic ... It's daytime ... but still too late ...

There's a world where it's always too late. So sit down and listen. White boys shivering in the air ... contracting their mouths to enjoy the white silver venom ... They can do political speeches, shaking them out of their sleeves ... It's thunder when they speak ... and then they greet Marazanta ... It's a mouthcontracting ornament .... made by seven mice ... They rule the world like cake ... It's a daytime spring ... on waves they take flight ...

The big coffins on the other side of chess ... they smile ... they don't believe the rumours ... but see the picture lying inbetween ... so transparent and so bright ... It ripples like the white silver ... like uncle peacock in Spain ... they die on roses ... a deeper death .... bringing them to the seas of sharks ... all in a Brannan's hat, under Bekehelm's helmet ... It's too late ...

Always too late on a Brannan's watch ... These boys spit the silver ... carrying the flags for these Jesus Christs ... and in the middle of the nights they take flight ... Like towers so tall ... they become ... the highlights of angels ... the billboards of machineguns ... the red stripes of the fly ... It's red so red finally ... while their silver ripples were so white ... building these towers ... coming from the seas to live under Bekehelm's helmet ... These cakes aren't threatening anymore ...

And the man with the white golden hand stares ... like never before ... for he saw a boy like he was before ... but now he's here, so sinister, while the boy's mouth is contracting ...

Chapter 4.

It's June, for Lazarus Tree ... flowers are coming forth ... fragile white rippling ... over me ... It's June, while the centaurs hold our hands ... while others are dying .... under Bekehelm's helmet ... it isn't threatening anymore ... He wants to rise like gold and silver ... in an orange moon ... raking the seawaves ... It's June ... time for Lazarus Tree to bring forth flowers ... spouting like the pale purple ...

It's June, the second time ... a daydream watches elves on a stream ... of white gold and white silver ... taking them in ... they're from the white chocolate ... and now these bakerman's dreams .... breeds the golden flours ... the golden meal ... for all to sea .... making clothes of it .... to be in the deepest deserts without falling ... for it holds the hands of Benmaten ...

A white golden hand is what it said ... and now you're here with three purple spots in your neck ... it's so erected ...

The Shell

medical horror-story

Chapter 1. Pale Orange Octopus

She was ripping the flesh in the butchery. She worked in her own abortion-offices at night. It was all in her own head. She couldn't stand the cries of babies anymore ... These voices were in her head for so long ... Now she became a cruel abortionist ... But only in her head .... For she worked in a normal butchery in daylight .... The mills there seemed to ease her mind, her pains, the voices ....

Her sister worked with children in kindergarten ... and in the weekends she worked with handicapped children ... It seemed to ease her pain she had about her sister with the voices in her head. She couldn't stand all the cruel stories of her sister ... She didn't believe in them ...

But one night she had a dream about a pale orange octopus, falling on the back of their brother ... he was an alcoholist ... Immediately he fell down, and the octopus started to rip his stomach open .... eating him ..... She saw his ripped intestines all coiling into a strange pale orange mix, and then she looked right into the eyes of the octopus ..... But when she woke up, she just didn't give it too much attention the rest of that day ...

But she started to get problems with eating. It was like her stomach didn't accept it anymore .... She started to have serious stomach-problems, and finally she got into the hospital ....

The docter said there was growing something in her stomach, but they didn't know what. It was a strange orange tumor, but it wasn't cancer ... Her skin was becoming pale orange .... even her eyes ... but she was feeling so good ... Everything she ate was getting eaten by the orange tumor, and it was growing inside ... within days she was growing taller than anyone ... She felt healthy like never before ... Like the tumor was eating all her troubles away .... but people started to become very scared of her ... and her man divorced himself from her ... They called her "octopus-woman" ....

Within weeks she had the strength of a machine ... and the government wanted to have her for experiments ... The things started to become stranger .. The tumor was a sort of womb for octupus-people now ... who grew up very fast ... Nobody knew how she was getting pregnant ... and how she got so many children in such short time ... But the children weren't accepted in their surroundings .... and soon enough the government started to raise up a sort of safe village for them deep in the forests .... This city was called "octopus-city" .... The government found out that the octopus-people were very intelligent and not harmfull at all ... They were friendly

beings .... like their mother was ..... One of them said : "We are the aborted babies ... but we are back .... We want to see our mommies and daddies .... We want to see our brothers and sisters ...."

They decided to march out of the forest into the cities and villages to visit them ... They were singing a song :

Song of the aborted children ...

We were aborted ...

We weren't allowed on earth ....

We were destined to the grave ....

But all you did was cutting in your own stomach ....

And someone else took care of us ...

Now we are back to say ...

This is the day of the aborted children ....

This is the day of Urban Renewal ....

This is Aldebaran Day ....

You doomed us to be a foundling in hell ...

You doomed us to be an orphan in everlasting damnation ....

You chose to cut your own stomach,

to rip your own fruits ...

Hello Mommy, hello daddy ....

We're BACK !

Their eyes spit fire ...

Setting the towns in fire ...

in smoke ....

This is medical apocalypse ....

This is Octopus Day .....

a pale orange one ...

Daddy is trying to drown the memories about his aborted son ...

Someone is ticking on the frontdoor ...

Who are you ?

Hello mom, hello dad ... it's willy ...

Daddy is getting hysterical ...

He always raged to drown this coming picture ...

you can drown a birth ...

but it will come back one day ....

Docter Smiths is working in his garden ...

He aborted hundreds of children this year ....

But now they came to visit him ....

To give him a flower ...

for his own grave ...

He can read his own epitaph on the petals ...

A raging octopus dives in a swimmingpool ...

attaching herself to a man's body ...

it's another docter ...

an abortionist ...

she sucks him till his body is pale blue ...

and then she lets him sink ...

while the blood is flowing away ....

Another octopus falls in a bath .... where a woman is sitting ...

an abortionist's assistant ...

the octopus pierces itself through her stomach,

looking for her womb ...

here he will live forever ...

now try to abort that one ... a child's voice sais ....

it's her ... son ...

her ... aborted ...son ....

Hello Mommy ... he sais ...

standing before her all of a sudden ....

with some flowers in his hand ...

For my Mommy ....

and slowly the octopus starts to rip her and eat her ...from inside out ...

leaving pale orange moist in the water ...

And the sister of octopus-woman ?

She still hears voices in her head ...

but now from mommies and daddies screaming and shrieking ...

she cannot stand the noise ....

that's why she still works in the butchery ...

spreading cruel euthanasia's in the night ...

And their brother ?

He's still an alcoholist,

trying to drown the memories of a broken past,

the letters of his boss,

the letters of judges,

all letters in his head he tries to drown ....

but he also uses drugs now ...

and strong medicines ...

for something is really trying to bring him down ...

he really starts to hear voices like his sister ...

but these aren't voices of people, but of animals ....

he's getting crazy of it ...

and he tries to drown them in the overdose ....

but it only gets worse ....

and he needs to go to the hospital ....

his sister, the octopuswoman, visits him there,

and also his other sister, with the voices in her head ...

they hold his hands ...

he really thinks he's going to die ...

the docters say the strange tumor is also growing in him ....

he's becoming an octopusman ....

having the same symptoms as his sister ...

but soon he's growing taller and taller, much taller than his sister ...

he becomes as tall as trees ...

and children start to come forth from him ...

and they become as tall as him ...

the government wants to have them for experiments ...

they start to live in the forests ...

and one child is screaming : we are the animals slaughtered in the butcheries ...

the government discovers they are very friendly and harmless ...

like their father ...

they want to visit the butcheries ...

and the people who eat the meat ...

Hello ...

we already live inside of you ....

you ate us ....

but do you really think we will keep your stomach alive ?

you aborted us ....

out of nature's womb ....

but we found our ways to your womb

you ate us once but you cannot eat us twice ...

now it will be the other way round ...

a butcher ...

hello ...

we already know each other ...

we live deep inside you ...

it all happens ...

when octopus meets octopus ...

it's like they are making love ...

but it's a bitter fight without blood ...

only pale orange moist ...

they can still doing surgeries without wasting any blood ...

it's all bloodless ...

only leaving some pale orange moist ...

they are still the surgeons of that big hospital ...

they are twins,

they look exactly like each other ...

wasting no any blood ...

all bloodless ...

but it's a bitter fight ...

about an euthanasia ....

about an old lady ...

her flesh is so soft to rip ...

they are only leaving pale orange moist ....

one wants the euthanasia ... the other wants the surgery ...

they are both moving their little blades inside their skins ...

octopus meets octopus ....

and the woman still hears voices in her head ...

she hears the desperate and tragedic voices of trees ...

begging for help ....

she works at the woodcutter's ...

but she can't take it anymore ...

suddenly she throws her axe away and stops all the machines ...

and screams : enough, enough, it's ripping my head ...

when we rip these trees we are ripping our heads ...

we are cutting ourselves ....

she runs away in tears ....

begging the trees for help ....

two octopus's are after her ....

finally she arrives octopus city ...

deep in the forests ....

there is growing something in her ...

a tumor ....

she becomes so tall that she can reach for the stars ...

and she gives birth to octopus's,

and tall insects,

almost as tall as her .....

and she can't stop it anymore ....

all sorts of animals and plants so tall .....

and they are heading for the towns and the villages ....

they are heading for all these people who aborted them ...

The government wants them for experiments ...

They are friendly in harmless in their eyes ...

They are heading for ... the woodcutteries ...

the flowercutteries ...

Octopus meets octopus ...

still twins ...

still working in the same surgery ...

the fight is about ... an euthanasia .....

about an old lady ....

flesh so soft to rip ...

An alcoholist tries to drown the newspapers ...

trying to drown letters ...

old letters ...

from the past ....

and old books .....

But he dies in the fight ....

by an overdose ...

But weren't we all junks,

trying to rip the voices in our heads ...

by strange strange drugs ...

two octopus's still fighting about ....

a handkerchief ...

two surgeons ...

the handkerchief of an old lady ....

carrying all her tears ...

embroidered there ....

the handkerchief full of raging and bitter tears ..

was always her web with which she caught the butterflies ....

these were the cocoons she laid to her ears ...

these were the glasses for her eyes ...

she was surrounded by spiderwebs all her life ...

guarded by a handkerchief ...

But when these two octopus's will keep on fighting about it ...

it will be torn apart ...

weren't we all junks of strange drugs, of strange medicine ?

Chapter 2. Octopus-cocoon

Lucy wakes up from a strange dream .... She stares at her husband ... and sees that his skin is pale orange all over ... he starts to vommit while she starts to scream ... he's giving birth to orange pale octopus's ... they come out of his body from all places ... while he's still alive .... no blood ... only pale orange moist ....

When she puts on the tv, it seems it happens everywhere ... and it's a real octopus-plague ... no one's dying, there's no blood .... but everyone is upset ... and it seems she is the only person who isn't turning into an octopus-like being .... Soon the government wants to have her for experiments ....

Years later it's a very normal phenomenon .... Lucy is still the only one who didn't change .... And more and more of the octopus-people start to live in the sea ..... Lucy feels left alone ... She feels blades cutting her inside ... but she doesn't change at all .... she feels herself so lonely .... and at one moment she's the only person living on land ... the rest is all living in the sea ... and they are disappearing from the coasts ... looking for the depths of the oceans ....

She had a high position in body-trade-international, an underground criminal network ... She had a black market of body-parts ... she had dark connections with hospitals, dark contracts with ....

..... grandfather swallowed his words, for grandmother, who just walked into the room, had smashed his mouth ... "he always does this when he drinks too much, telling these sorts of strange things" ... she tells the children who were listening to him ... they had tears in their eyes .... they were shivering on their chairs ....

"these kids are too young for this, grandpa" ... grandmother sais ....

"now take your pipe ... read a book, and then go to bed ... you're tired ...."

but one kid looks in the mirror in the bathroom ... discovering that her eyes are pale orange ... she starts to scream, and runs to grandma .... "no," grandma sais ...."it's just because of the orange-juice i gave you ...."

but in the night the kids hear a scream ... it's grandpa ... and octopus's are coming from his chest ... at least that is what he is screaming ... but grandma is watching ... but no ... "you just dreamt too much, grandpa, go to sleep again .." she sais ...

the three kids sleep in another room, near to grandpa and grandma's room ....

the next day it's in the newspaper that ships were missing ... there were severe hurricanes roaring .... a father of one of the kids is also missing .... he's called John ... the other kids call him uncle John ....

And grandpa starts to talk again to the children what could possibly happen to uncle John ... but grandma tells him to stop ... the kids are really scared .... but grandpa just wanted to distract the kids a bit ... but he isn't good at that ... he always makes it worse ... but they love him ....

A few days later they get a card from uncle John .... he's save at the other side of the world .... the ship stranded there ... but he's ok ... he's on an island of octopus's now ... it's written on the card .... with a beautiful picture on the front .. of the island .... but there are more sorts of fishes .... all stinging, poisonous fishes ...

Lidy stops writing .... what a strange book it has become .... She wanted to write into another direction, but the book was too strong ... the book in her mind .... it would rage until it was totally on paper ....

She had a pale orange octopus in her head ...

It was since she went out with a young musician in a boat ...

sailing over a river through the park ...

since he sang that song for her, the octopus is in her head ....

it's like that musician mesmerized her ....

for she always follows the octopus in her head ...

two days after that boat-trip he died in an accident ...

maybe this was his last gift to her ....

But ... she didn't want to be a horror-writer ....

she was afraid of it ....

but inside the octopus was raging ...

wanting to have it all on paper ....

maybe he had too much ink in it's head too ...

Someone's waking up from this strange dream ....

Someone else in someone elses dream ....

souls growing into souls ...

animals growing into animals ...

It seems the pale orange octopus made it's trip on earth again ...

laying eggs in eggs ...

It's a strange butchery after all ...

Are you really sure you are yourself ?

Maybe you are someone else ....

Pale .... Orange ... Octopus ....

Pale Orange Octopus is out for a hunt ...

Strange webs he lays on earth .. strange webs ...

In which kitchen are we growing ?

In which stomach ?

And what is in our stomach ?

Are we what we are ?

Or are we just in another one's dream ....

Who created us ?

Who created this ?

This fishfunnel ....

This cocoon ...

Where is it ending ?

Only the pale orange octopus knows ....

An octopus is waking up .... he had such a strange dream ...

but for him it was very normal ....

he had an octopus-dream ...

too much ink in his head ....

it's now a painting of so many tentacles ....

like a web ....

and it's resting in his head ....

like a piece of art ...

having so many ways to escape ...

being so connected to so many octopus's ...

it was the dream of an octopus ....

growing in each other's hearts ....

having so many ways ... to find a way out ...

to find a way out ....

so many echoes ... creating a new day ....

a trip to a new island ....

where uncle john is still sitting ...
reading this all in the magazine ....

Dad, look I got such a strange card today ...
with a pale orange octopus on it ....
and such a strange story on it .....

Someone is weaving a web ....
It's the pale orange octopus ....

There someone is waking up ...
and there another ...
we are all in each other's heads ...
we are all in each other's stories ...
and ..aren't these horrorstories ?

But it can be so beautiful ...
we can be weaved in each other ...
like an octopusian piece of art ...
yes, the needle can sting ....
but the result is awsome .....
like Jesus Christ hanging on a cross ....
a killed tree found a killed man ....
and they created a new egg ....

i bet the pale orange octopus was in it ....

crossed tentacles ...

still the painting in my father's room ...

i stared too long at it ... i think ....

and now there's growing something in my stomach ....

it's so material ...

and so creative ....

it's my inspiration ...

like i'm hearing the song of the octopus ....

the pale orange one ...

all in the distance ...

but it's coming closer ... and closer ...

i'm giving birth like a copy-machine ....

too much ink in my stomach ....

it's like echo is building a new press ....

what a strange tall ornament this is ...

from the pale orange octopus ....

an old musician is walking along the ditches ...

having a little grammophone in his hands,

with the big ear-cocoon ....

and this is the record he still lets play ...

awakening some old fishes ....

from old pipelines .....

they are all registered trademarks,

all copyrighted by uncle one to ten ...

animals ... protected by his laws ...

but he's copyrighted by someone else ....

and trademarked, made in ... somewhere ...

made by .... maybe the pale orange octopus ....

maybe not ... who cares ....

ten junks are walking through the forest ...

they just took strange drugs .... from a strange plant they found ....

it was called "pale orange octopus" ...

they all ten got the same hallucination ...

but this stuff is strict illegal ....

they are refugees between hallucinations ....

they are governmental foundlings ...

wanted stoned or not stoned ....

high or low ....

for some elitair experiments ....

the gods of lsd are looking for them ...

these gods of ten ...

those gods with the traffic-eyes ...

plants grow in plants ...

hallucinations in hallucinations ...

dreams are forbidding dreams ...

it's the maze of the pale orange octopus ....

but from a distance it's a beautiful painting ....

hearts grow into hearts ....

bodies into bodies ....

boys in the trees ...

becoming tall men reaching for the hall of trees ...

these ones are the pillars of the new world ....

stand tall, rise to the marble hall ....

buildings grow in buildings,

rooms grow in rooms ....

pale orange octopus is an architect of strange letters .....

growing in the heart of the mailman ...

building the railroads and the racecourts ....

all miniature ...

now this is how an octopus is waking up ....

so many heads waking up ....

and then he stretches out to the ceilings ...

through so many ripples ....

possessing them all .....

then he drinks so many cups of coffee all at the same time ...

having so many obsessions and occupations at the same time .....

he is a group ...

he is the world ...

pale orange octopus's world .....

building the cocoons and the funnels ...

Suddenly the program stops ....

Time was up already on wasp's tv ...

The cartoon's broadcast-lady was threatened by a strange man in a black jacket ....

He wanted her to announce this video ....

while he held a gun against her head ....

Tomorrow he will be back ....

But she won't come tomorrow ...

Echo will ....

Can you tell me anymore nonsense ? A man screams, smashing his fist on the table ....

His son talked for two hours with a strange stare ... about a pale orange octopus ....

What is all this stuff about an echo and a wasp-tv ... are you crazy ? go to bed ... he yells at his son ...

he's just a little boy ...

he goes upstairs ... not saying anything anymore ...

still with that frozen stare in his eyes ....

he isn't upset at all ...

only his father seems to be ...

we need to bring this boy to the hospital,

he screams to his wife ...

every evening when we have dinner he tells such strange and disgusting stories ...

i'm getting sick of it ....

his wife tries to sooth him, but nothing works ...

shhh, the boy is only four ....

maybe if he's older it will stop ...

well, i'm getting sick about these stories about that echo and that stupid wasp-tv ...

everyday it's the same ... the man yells .... i cannot sleep of it ....

you're just worried ... his wife sais ....

yes, i want my son to be normal like i am ....

shhh, his wife sais ... when he's older i am sure he will be like you ... he will also become a butcher ... all kids want to be like their dad ....

well he insulted me terribly today .. the man yells ... with this story ...

suddenly the boy comes downstairs saying : dad i want to be a butcher ....

the man starts to smile ...

a butcher of butchers, sais the boy ... i want to become a cannibal like the pale orange octopus ....

there the man explodes ...

like sevenmillion birthday-zeppelins explode ....

he throws his boy to the wall ...

but now the mother becomes mad ...

stay away from my son, she screams ...

the boy goes upstairs again,

avoiding the fight ....

the man and the woman are fighting ....

two octopus's ...

fighting about an abortion and an euthanasia ...

fighting about ... a body-business ...

fighting about .... a painting ...

a record ...

a book ...

a dream ...

it's the war of the octopus ....

too many tentacles ...

butchers growing into butchers ....

islands into islands ....

every strike makes it all more transparent ....

the boy is staring at his diamond he got from his granddad ...

he was such a good storyteller ...

but he died awhile ago ... and since then the boy is telling these stories ....

it's the war of the octopus ...

a war in the hospital ...

hospitals growing in hospitals ...

it's all about a handkerchief ....

catching and storing the tears ....

using them ....

the boy is crying wrapping the diamond in his tears ...

the pale orange octopus speaks to him through the diamond ...

every time he cries ...

she loves him ...

she loves his fragile heart ....

she makes it strong ...

she makes it hard ....

but keeps it fragile, sensitive and tender inside ....

she makes him like the diamond ...

there's growing a world inside ...

an ambient world ....

the octopus, a mass-possessor,

with all it's tentacles ....

creating the dream ...

creating the world ....

your world ....

building the funnels, the cocoons,

the mirrors, the copymachines,

the press and the echoes ...

there's a wasp-tv inside the diamond ...

the boy watches it everyday ...

downstairs the war of the octopus is still raging ...

the boy is becoming a refugee of a broken marriage ...

he becomes a boy in a bubble ...

a baby in the balloon ...

a man on a parachute ....

escaping his father's last zeppelin ....

escaping his father's last dreams ....

the octopus is his parachute ...

escaping a marriage's war ...

but it was actually a butcher's bill ...

and his father could never pay these ....

..the octopus is his parachute ...

jumping to John on octopus island ...

jumping to grandmother ...

who still sais ...

he's too young for these stories ...

and she's right ...

the boy carried the handkerchieves of his mother and father in his pockets ...

she takes them out ...

and putting them into a box, putting it on the attic telling him to never go there ...

he gets orange-juice from her, and his eyes become a bit orange too,

when he looks into the mirror ...

he smiles ...

he realizes when grandpa wouldn't tell these stories,

he would never have met her ...

and never drink this delicious juice ...

but grandma said it would be enough when he would only talk about her ...

grandma always took the needles out of grandpa's stories ...

the kids were too young for them ...

the needles she put on the attic warning the kids to never go there ...

he tries to forget about the pale orange octopus ...

his grandma shows him her cartoons ....

and some childlike records ...

and also some childlike books and comics ....

months go by, and one day she is standing for the door ...

she hugs her son and grandma ....

but the boy starts to cry ...

he's scared of the memory ....

he's a boy in the bubble now ...

and only grandma always protected him against the needles ...

he hides behind grandma and screams : mom, go away ...

his mom starts to cry too, but grandma sais :

you have to go, the kid isn't ready ...

but maybe you can sleep on the attic for awhile ....

so that you are always near in a sense ...

but the boy is screaming : no ! leave me alone ! ...

the kid started to realize that even his grandma's orange-juice was a bit too sharp for his age ...

so he started to run away ....

taking his parachute again ....

to reach for uncle John ....

uncle John showed him the beauty of the island ....

and the old shipwreck ...

the boy loved it ....

Chapter 3. Octopus's in Octopus's

here on this island the octopus wasn't a threat at all ....

and he wasn't afraid of uncle John's voice ...

like he was of all the other voices at home ...

it was like he heard words in words here,

love in love,

attention in attention ...

care in care ...

and it was so soft in his ears ....

it was like he started to realize that soft and sharp were just illusions ...

for how something feels depends on the feelings growing in the feelings,

the worlds in the worlds ....

these stinging, poisonous fishes gave him such soft feelings,

for he could reach out for the beautiful worlds inside ...

and uncle John's cartoons were real soft ...

Suddenly the teacher stops reading ... the whole class fell asleep ...

It was like a strange sleeppill ...

and it took days for them to wake up again .....

Some parents wanted to have the book boycotted ...

It was too dangerous in their eyes ...

It needed to be out of trade ...

Or just to be put in a good museum,

together with the note : "Danger ! Stinging Poisonous Book ! Strictly forbidden to read !"

But other parents found it a good idea to show it to the docters and hospitals ....

They could use it to sooth patients with too much pain ...

or to bring the sleepless into sleep ....

But others called it a lethal book ... It needed to be burnt ...

A man with a black jacket is closing a door ..

like a million of doors are getting locked ....

His footsteps echo through the marble hall ...

He has a book in his hands ....

a green book ....

but also some pale orange flowers ...

with text on the petals ...

he's putting the green book into a coffin ...

throws the flowers on it and closes the coffin ....

then he pushes some buttons and the coffin is riding into the crematorium ...

the ashes he throws over the sea ....

then he dives in the sea himself ...

and the sea starts to get into fire .....

the worlds and seas inside determine if something is fake or real ... worse than it seems or better than it seems ....

Pale ..... Orange .... Octopus .....

Then the curtains are falling and fourteen wolve gnats are standing before the audience ... they have violins in their hands .... and one of them plays the organ .... the pipes are in fire ... pipelines ... their hands carry an octopus .... rising up to the ceilings while the smoke is spreading ... then an enormous explosion is taking place and names are appearing on the curtains ... the end of the show seemed to be the beginning .....

then the man in the black jacket is descending down from the high curtains .... he's like the Jesus Christ of horror .... wolves are howling ... and cocks are crowing ... then he shows his face, two-sided .... a Judas and a Jesus .... they made the horror together ... they were born together in one womb .... from the pale orange octopus .... they are twins .... still fighting ... but working together for the business .... the horror has to sell ..... it's a multi-million-dollar-project .... perfectly trademarked, copyrighted, surrounded by a million cameras ... breeding the magazines ....

Pale ... Orange ... Octopus ....

still the script of a horror's tale ....

still the script .... of a handkerchief ....

still a web ... of waking up ....

still a cup of coffee ....

or a good sleep-pill ...

perfectly suiting into someone's head .....

sometimes the bullet fits good ....

but about this ...the wars are still raging ...

it's an octopus's cocoon

a plug in the ear ...

some eye-plugs and other things ....

it's your virtual reality-suit in the night ....

eye-cocoons, ear-cocoons,

some good filters on your car ...

sense-cocoons from bethlehem ...

whirlpools, hurricanes ...

leading you to uncle John ...

worlds within worlds ...

senses within senses ...

cocoons within ...cocoons ...

Pale ..Orange ...Octopus ....

Switching between Tea and Coffee ...

Pale ..Orange ... Octopus ...

The world beyond Poet ...

Poetry growing in poetry ...

songs growing in songs ....

paintings growing in paintings ...

photos in photos ....

movies growing in movies ....

dishes in dishes ...

it's the world beyond poet,

the world in the diamond ....

an ambient world ...

languages growing into languages ....

strange butcheries ...

still ... strange butcheries ....

like pillars from here to heaven ...

all tall men ....

all tall decisions ...

there's still smoke rising ...

still curtains falling ....

telling it's only the beginning ...

of the show ....

there are cocoons between you and me ...

strange butcheries ...

pictures growing into pictures ...

letters into letters ...

what are you trying to tell me ?

there are new junks on the block ...

talking about new butcheries ...

talking about new drugs ...

there are ..new junks ... on the block ...

all children coming from the forests ...

visiting their parents, brothers and sisters ...

Hello mom, hello daddy ...

we're back ...

The children are back ...

the aborted ones ...

And as long as there will be butcheries ...

they will come back ....

And as long as there will be butchers ...

they will be cannibals ....

ruling the kettle ....

There are boys ...

who don't want to grow tall ...

who don't want to grow thin ...

they can never be the tall men ...

they can never be the pillars between hell and heaven ...

they can never be ... the trees from paradise ...

They let rats cover their bodies ...

But praise to be to tall dwarves,

the short boys ....

rising from the kettle ....

for they survived the hand of abortion ....

they are still the friends of your nephew ...

close to the family ...

connecting the families ....

the short boys ...

switching off the televisions ...

all in a flash ....

they are still tall dwarves ...

lying on their beds ....

those dreamworkers ....

hard workers ...

those short boys ...

those tall tall dwarves ...

rising from here ... to the edges of the moon .....

friends of the big nephew ...

who never wanted to be the nephew ...

friends of the big tiger ....

cocks of new mornings ....

betraying ...

just betraying ....

a businessman would never do that ...

while the pale orange octopus still loves him ....

and i don't know why ...

she's just like the kite .....

there are trees standing between everlasting damnation and paradise ...

the short boys ... the tall dwarves ...

these are tall guns ....

these are tall coins ...

licenced to kill ...

these are friends of the nephew ...

these are kings of the cock ...

these are riding the ornaments ...

betraying the body-markets ...

they are the cocks of new mornings ...

tall tunes in their guns ...

tall guns ...

they are kings from the north of corvus ....

opening the pastures and closing the jungles ...

Chapter 4. The Gynaecologist

Bells were ringing in the air ...

Millions and millions ....

It was busy on the cattle-breeding today

A gynaecologist was walking downstairs in his tall black jacket ...

he had put off his white clothes ... for the day was over ....

when he comes home he's very tired and his wife starts to massage his octopus-tattoo ...

it aches so bad today ...

he wished he had never accepted the tattoo ...

he had seen a ufo when he was young ...

aliens stepped out and asked him if he wanted an octopus-tattoo ...

well, the ufo really looked like a gigantic octopus,

like a big balloon, like a zeppelin with tentacles ...

he got enthousiastic about the tattoo ...

and said : "yes, please",

and they burnt it on his lower stomach ...

but it ached since then ... and now he regrets it badly ...

he loves books ...

he's in the library a lot when he's free of work ...

but he also sleeps a lot ...

as a gynaecologist he works with pregnant women ...

and it was always like he said he has to give birth to books ...

his wife is a writer ...

she loves him very much ...

they are both each other's inspirations ...

and people say it's a perfect marriage ...

although the tattoo of the octopus sometimes hurts very bad ...

he's still fascinated with octopus's ...

he gave his wife a ring with an octopus on it ... once ...

it is a very special ring ...

it's like the octopus is weaved on it ...

it attached her to the sea ...

she wrote a lot of sea-stories ...

the gynaecologist is a very friendly man ...

the women like him ...

he's very good for children, animals and older people ...

it is a man with great respect ...

he admires all wonders of life ....

after the tattoo he never saw this ufo back ...

he saw it once in his life ....

his wife writes a lot about ufo's and extra-terrestials,

and what they do to humans and earth ...

she writes about the circles they leave on earth ...

the strange crop-circles ...

but as time goes by the gynaecologist gets problems with his health ...

he's too tired to do anything ...

he almost sleeps the whole day ....

he starts to get very strange dreams ...

it fascinates him,

but it sucks all his energy away ...

one night he has a dream that a pale orange octopus draws a circle on his stomach ...

on his higher stomach, a bit above the tattoo ...

he feels a strange energy streaming from the tattoo to the circle ...

and it's like he can breath so deep now ... and the air is so fresh, almost sharp ...

but it doesn't hurt ...

the air starts to form a bubble around him ...

it all streams from the tattoo ... by the sucking circle ....

but then it's like he's drained .... and like the air is so thin ....

he gets so dizzy of it ...

like he can't do anything anymore ....

and the dreams start to repeat every night ....

the dreams are getting brighter ...

but he can't stand daylight anymore ...

he lives behind the curtains now ...

in his bedroom ...

for he can't stand daylight or noise anymore ...

it's like ... he lives in a cocoon ...

like he's getting a sensitive butterfly now ...

he loves so deep ...

it's like he can wrap the earth in his arms ...

and all the planets ....

it's like he's leaving his body,

to have an enlightement ...

it's like he waves his wife goodbye from a distance ...

and she waves back ... smiling so deep ...

she wants him to be happy ...

to be a butterfly ....

so light and rippling ....

so sensitive and free ...

she wants ... to follow him ...

over the hills ... and over the seas ....

they feel each other ....

so deep ....

they now doubt if they were free on earth ...

with all the taxes ...

with all it's predators

but soon they realize ....

they aren't free here either ...

it only looks like ....

an enormous octopus stops them ...

pale orange ...

behind her is an enormous sea ...

a wild sea ....

you will not leave earth ...

the octopus sais ...

it's a she-octopus ....

pale orange ...

you will not ... leave earth ....

you are a gynaecologist ...

you need to go back ....

you are birthday's worker ....

well, i don't want to leave earth ...

i want to have earth inside of me ...

the gynaecologist sais ...

his wife nods ...

you can't ... the octopus sais .....

for you are it's prisoner ....

i put you on earth ...

and i gave you the tattoo ...

to show you ... you are mine ....

and you are a worker of the octopus ....

then the gynaecologist shocks himself awake ...

it was a dream ...

but his wife is dead ...

her skin pale orange ...

well, he realizes it's all reality ...

there are so many worlds and vibrations interfering ...

he's shocked about the death of his wife ...

and he realizes he cannot live without her ....

but maybe ... she just escaped the octopus ...

who knows ....

he wanted to have all worlds inside ...

also the place where his woman was living now ....

but he wanted to get rid of the octopus ...

he wanted to become pregnant of a new world ...

and maybe a new octopus ....

in a sense he still liked octopus's ...

and it's like he got a new force to live now ...

he wanted to know everything about octopus's ...

more than ever before ...

he started to read specific books, watching specific programs and movies ....

all about the octopus ....

something attracted him, but something put him off .....

it was like there was really ... an octopus growing in an octopus ...

one thing he was sure about : he wanted to know more about it ....

it was like the whole thing was a way to communicate with his wife ....

it was now like she was growing inside of him ...

and like her tentacles plugged him into new worlds and dreams ....

he realized .... she was alive .... she survived death ....

but soon it was like he couldn't deal with normal life anymore ...

he couldn't deal with bills and worried people ....

so he stranded in a mental institution were they laid him on strong medicine ...

but he felt happy ...

there was a world growing inside ...

and it was like that world inside took care of him and regulated the world outside ...

traffic goes on ...

he discovered a material world inside ...

a transparent world,

a naked world,

yet so covered ...

no clothes who could quench or distract the senses,

yet he was so covered ... covered ....

by the mud of nature ...

inner nature ...

denser and more sensitive than the world outside ...

someone was regulating it there ....

the octopus would do ....

he felt like he was growing like a tree or a plant ...

there in the mental institution ....

it was an institution for veterans ...

those who survived life ....

those who survived the butcheries, the bills and the hand of abortion ...

those who escaped the euthanasia and the prisons of birthday ....

it was like he was writing inside ...

partying inside ....

it was like a new song was growing in his heart ....

he couldn't ...

he couldn't ....

no return to the traffic ....

someone else would regulate it there ...

like it was all the same ...

the octopus would do ....

every night he felt the energy streaming from the tattoo through the circle ....

filling the bubble ....

but in the mornings he was drained ... so drained ....

he was a sleepwalker ....

a dreamwalker ...

still embracing planets ....

it was like he felt more and more what was going on ...

he wanted to be a butterfly .....

out of the cattle-breeding ...

earth was in his eyes a big cattle-breeding ...

ripening them for the butchers .....

everyone on earth was waiting for the day of death ...

it's a journey for all ... from the craddle to the grave ...

all in the funnels of the breeders ....

the tentacles of the octopus ...

he was escaping the breeders and the butchers ....

escaping their funnels and mills ....

escaping the factories .....

he wanted to be ... a butterfly ...

he was now in the cocoon ...

but how long would it take ....

Chapter 5. Breeding Junks

he felt himself like a tree ...

a junk ...

growing tall to rise for a new world ...

his hands were like stretching out ...

like a baby to a new mama ....

but these medicines ...

these medicines ...

were too strong and too dangerous ...

cutting his mind away ...

his nerves ... more than necessary ....

it was like the overdose of hell ...

he was losing himself ...

seeing his mamma tumbling away .....

into such strange streets ....

it was like something strange was growing inside of him .....

oh please .... not the octopus ...

something was eating him from inside out ....

and he was getting more and more paralyzed ....

like his nerves and brains were in fire ....

suddenly he screamed : no ! NO !

the psyciatrists smiled :

what's wrong mr. Delsla ....

you need the medicines ....

no, it's paralyzing me, he screamed ...

well, you are under governmental laws now, mr. Delsla,

they said ....

you have your duties, and if you refuse ....

then we will use the injection ....

he saw the octopus appearing on their faces ...

they were nothing but it's tentacles .....

having the scissors in their hands ....

doing crime ... it's like hidden euthanasia ....

all these paralyzing medicines ....

it had to be illegal .... it had to be ...

but there he went ...

he was injected ....

he knew this was just another part of the big breeding ....

but he was too far away ...

mr. Delsla, hello ?

but mr. Delsla was gone too far ....

something was eating his nerves away more than ever ....

eating his brains ....

And mr. Delsla was put into a wheelchair now ....

They would bring him to the locked part of the institution ....

in a seperated cell ....

He got food by pipelines ...

was on monitors ....

and tied to his bed ....

Were they breeding a tree ?

And for what ?

Mr. Delsla ? Hello, can you hear me ?

An assistant-psychiatrists asks ....

But no response ....

Years go by,

and he's a coma-patient now .....

on breathing instruments ....

what are they breeding ?

Deep inside he feels himself like a psychiatric victim .....

medical abuse ...

But he feels he is a part of nature now ...

a part of no response ....

what a cocoon is this ...

he feels calm inside ...

it's like an unknown source is feeding him ....

it comes from the tattoo streaming through the circle ....

giving him strange hallucinations ....

He feels himself a worthy citizin of hallucination now ....

like he's on the back of a butterfly ...

light, soft and smart vibrations very high are spinning in his head ....

and it's like ripples of dew are streaming over his body ...

suddenly he feels he can straighten his back ....

but it hurts terribly ...

he's drained so deep ....

sucked down to this medical bed ...

like a deep dungeon ....

he has visions of his wife ...

but his memories don't work optimal ...

he sees her diving and flying like a butterfly ...

well, it was all a cocoon ...

he realizes it more and more ...

all what he had met in his life was a part of this cocoon ....

and if this earth was a creation of the octopus ...

then it had to go through the cocoon too ....

it was like his wife was waving to him from a distance ....

like she was calling : come ! ....

it was like earth was a world in his stomach now ...

like he was pregnant ...

and that he had to carry this baby with him ....

but there was something like glass between him and his wife ...

and he was still scared of this baby inside ...

what would it do to him ?

There were songs in his head ...

strange but beautiful songs ....

did it come from the baby or from his wife ?

he wasn't sure ....

he felt himself ... like a snail ....

was he able to go through the cocoon for full ?

it was like he was dying here ...

like he was too heavy and slow ...

he had problems to think ....

it was such a mass of chaos ....

like hot custard in his head ...

it was like a man was standing behind him ...

a man in a black jacket ...

like it was himself ...

but he couldn't move ...

the shadow came closer ...

and touched him ...

he shivered ...

the man said : i placed you in paradise ...

with a golden job and a golden wife ...

but you ate from the tree and fell deep ....

what tree ? what is this all about ? the gynaecologist asks ....

you ate from the octopus-tree ...

and now you have to die ...

what do you mean ? the gynaecologist asks again ....

the man steps before him,

the gynaecologist sees that he has split eyes,

two-coloured pupils ....

then the pupils start to spin fast and get into flames ....

while a laserbeam is appearing from them .... burning the ties of the gynaecologist ...

the gynaecologist is able to come from the bed and sets himself in a chair ....

i will listen ... he sais ...

then the man continues :

i am the black snail ....

i created the universe ...

but even your mind ....

your dreams ....

everything is mine ....

there is no escape ...

but who is the octopus then ? the gynaecologist asks ...

the octopus created earth, the man sais ...

she rules the stomach, i rule the brains ...

together we rule the nerves ...

I am the psychologist and she the psychiatrist ...

we are the breeders and the butchers ...

we are ....

Then Mr. Delsla wakes up ... it was just a nightmare ....

His wife is sleeping besides him ....

He feels calm ... but in real life he isn't called mr. Delsla ... and he isn't a gynaecologist ...

Someone else is waking up ...

and someone else ....

Fast after each other ... millions of people are waking up ...

dreaming that they were dreaming about dreaming people ....

it seems the octopus was digging tunnels through the earth again ...

millions of bells are ringing ...

it seems like the octopus knows what it's doing ...

she possesses the mass ...

there are tornado's on the sea ...

cropcircles ....

dramas ...

tragedies ...

so many fishes in a funnel-net ...

like there is no escape ...

there are footsteps on the stairs ... the black snail is about to meet his octopus ....

she smokes a tall cigarette ...

giving him some pieces of chess ....

who is the boss of these two ?

he lets the ashes stream from his fingers ...

it's like they are doing business ...

then she falls him around the neck ...

then she draws a circle on his stomach ...

with her blades ...

spinning blades ....

"you forgot to give me something, darling ..." she sais ....

she takes some plastic trees out of his stomach ...

and then she disappears in smoke ... heading for her piano ....

she makes his head calm ...

by her play ....

she rules his feelings ...

she is .. the feeling ... the emotion ...

she is ... his weak spot ...

he bows his head ...

and feels like he had a new injection of drugs ....

she is a designer of earths, of three-dimensional domains ...

by emotional intelligence ...

by her creative feelings ....

she rules his brains ...

she uses his mental tablets ...

she plays these keys ....

she plays his buttons ...

she is ... his weak spot ...

something which he can never describe ....

she still rules over his ignorance ...

she's an emotional vampiress ...

although .... these are her dreams ...

nothing but her dreams ...

the black snail steps in the snow

his black boots sinking in snow and grass ...

it's storming outside ...

he has a new green book ...

covered by pale orange roses ...

he's heading for the crematorium ...

where a display-doll is lying in a coffin ...

he lays the green book and the flowers on her stomach and closes the coffin ...

then he pushes some keys ...

while the coffin is slowly sliding into the ovens ...

while the ashes are sliding into the river behind the crematorium ...

the black snail smiles ...
while he's turning the pages of his magazine ...

but these are his dreams ...
just his dreams ...

there's switching something in someone's head ....
between a pale orange octopus and a black snail ...
still living in his head ...
it's switching like trafficlights .....
it's like a love-hate-relationship in his mind ....
switching between shame and pride ...

he smokes cigarettes to temper the stress ...
the docters say he has just a split character ....
his parents are divorced ...
and he cannot choose,
and it's like love and hate terrorize his mind ....
he feels fractured inside ...

he went to a priest once ....
for an attempt of exorcism ...
but the priest got killed ...
by an invisible power who strengled him ...

he still works in the bank ...

he's a money-designer ...

he isn't in business ...

he just creates it ...

he's also a fan of virtual reality ...

he even designs it in his cellar ...

when he's free from work ...

he has designed an octopus-suit for VR,

there are even nerve-stimulators and switchers on it ....

he knows the frequency-waves of different feelings and emotions,

and can breed these by his technical devices ...

his cellar is a miracle ...

like an underwater-palace ...

there are big screens on the walls showing underwater pastures ...

these are like aquaria

and by his virtual reality suit he can investigate these pastures ...

for him it's a strange religion ...

he feels something forcing him to do this ...

he loves it and hates it ....

he's very afraid of it ...

it's like his father and mother are screaming at him ....

and at each other ...

but it switches ...

he lives in suspense everyday ...

but in a strange way it is his inspiration ...

Chapter 6. Octopus Cult on Neptune

He was reading a book about a strange cult on Neptune ..

They worship the octopus ...

There's a temple there,

where they sacrifice all sort of life-forms ...

like a religious butchery ...

Cult of Neptune,

cult of dragons,

of old dramatic suicide ...

Yes, it's true ...

there is a strange lawsystem of self-sacrifice in this religion ...

they see suicide as an action of heroes ...

all heroes have the duty to commit suicide on a certain age ...

for boys this age is nineteen ....

for girls this age is twenty-nine ...

this as a sacrifice to the octopus ...

there's one way to escape this suicide drama ...

when you do vows to work in the temple or the palace of the octopus ....

the book speaks also about a snail-cult on mercury ...

they worship the snail ...

this is an even stranger cult ...

they have divided their domain in four areas ...

in one area ... all thin men need to be sacrificed ...

in another area ... all thick men need to be sacrificed ...

in the third area all short men need to be sacrificed ...

and in the fourth area all tall men need to be sacrificed ...

all to the black snail ....

he's the joker of a strange cardplay ...

an assassin ...

the areas are formed by bunches of moving lightrays ...

so the men have never true rest ...

they always live in suspense .. for the areas are always moving ...

this way the black snail programs them ...

the men are always changing, for something is shapeshifting inside ...

and the measures of the game are also always changing ...

this gives hyperventilation ... paranoia ... and even worse suspense ....

it's the horror's show of ages ....

the indexes are always changing,

the trends are merciless ...

chosing new preys .. new victims ....

conditions are changing all the time ...

the black snail is the king of all trends ...

cruel cuyornaida corset ...

cuyornaida abortion ...

cuyornaida euthanasia ...

in cuyornaida satiria ...

It looks like an earthly playcardgame,

4 areas, 4 symbols ...

a toadstool, a sheep, an octopus and a dog ...

his four sponsors ...

his tradepartners ...

the colours are green and black ...

the toadstool and the sheep are black, the octopus and the dog in green ....

the maincards in all four area's are a shark, a cobra, an eagle and an orca ...

further 1 to ten,

further gods of ten ... (elevens)

mirrorcards ... (twelves)

friendshipcards (thirteens)

nephewcards (fourteens)

grandfathercards (fifteens)

husbandcards (sixteens)

fathercards (seventeens)

mothercards (eighteens)

grandmothercards (nineteens)

niececards (twenties)

brothercards (twenty-ones)

sistercards (twenty-two's)

wife-cards (twenty-three's)

child-cards (twenty-fours)

and petcards (twentyfives)

All these cards are also part of their calender ... The black snail is the joker, together with some other jokers .... The corsets work like mills programming the mass ... The magnet was just an intelligent moving mill-clock ... We were all programmed by a butcher's game ... a trendmill ...

Assassin-clocks ... laughing in obsession ... or smiling in hidden satire .... I know these eyes .... split eyes ... playcard eyes ...

It's a game the pale orange octopus still plays .... She uses it as her tarotcards ... predicting the future ... she's still a cardreader after all these years .. drinking from tall champagne-glasses ...

But .. it isn't predicting that much ... it's more ... programming .... She programs your mind by laying her cards .... And .. it's not really gambling .... for she never turns the cards around ... she only uses the fronts .... She just chooses them ....

The butcher has playcard-eyes today .... and playcard-ears ...

After the female band told me this story ... I wanted to tell my story .... about how I always lived in fear when I grew up in church ... They didn't want to listen .. One of these girls has a robot-dog ...

And still they sing about Jesus ...

Oh Jesus, how you saved me ...

Well, Jesus doesn't know about trends ...

He didn't invite your trendclocks ...

your millmazes ...

give me a break ...

but hey, when the writer starts to fight female bands with the pencil ...

the writer will never win .....

when the writer challenges their playcards ...

the writer will never win ...

they will break that writer's pencil ...

they will crucify those writer's tears ....

Annie Lize stops writing and starts to cry ...

Her hand is like paralyzed ...

she drops her pencil on the floor ....

There are pencils growing into pencils ....

Books into books ...

Eating ...

It's the pale orange octopus hunting ...

possessing the writers ...

someone else in someone else's book ...

it's an authors' war ...

millions of bells are ringing ...

The advertisement-clip is getting out of hand ...

This should be a message to promote a new sort of wash-powder ....

Something is taking over the cameras and the movies ...

the advertisement- and video-clips ....

it's the pale orange octopus ...

and it's like she will never stop ...

what is she up to ?

No one here escapes earth ... she sais ...

and i will do it all very bloodless ...

only some pale orange moist ...

I will draw the circles on all you, moviemakers ...

It seems she's getting at rage ....

Annie Lize will not write anymore like this ....

The woman had too many voices in her head ....

They tell her strange stories everyday ....

She is still working parttime in the butchery ...

and when she needs to ....

when the voices get too sharp ....

Soon too many people had problems with this pale orange octopus ...

and they started to do advertisements in the newspapers ...

to gather all victims of the octopus ..

the boy with the virtual reality machine also came ....

the building was full ...

he walked forward to the front and told the people they could come to his cellar to see his experiments ....

only two people reacted to his proposal ...

they went to his home ....

he had improved his machine ....

he found the way to uncle john's island in virtual reality ...

to neptune's octopus-temple

and to mercury's snail-temple ....

he burnt these trips on a cd-rom and by certain programs he could turn it in a harmless simulation-program ...

he almost didn't survive the trip in virtual reality .... but now he made another version by all sorts of complex virus-scanners and browsers .... he had to change the total programming of the trip ...

the two people were very enthousiastic ... they felt an enormous change in their bodies ... and in their heads ... while they were making the trip .... the sharp voices in their head were getting softer ... and soon it changed into feelings they could handle in silence ....

they made the plan to let some psychiatrists come to test it ... so that they could use it for their patients ....

soon a group of psychiatrists and psychologists came to the cellar .... they were also amazed about the program ... and if not for health they were convinced it was even good entertainment and education ...

many people started to deal with the voices by this new program ... but the pale orange octopus was getting real mad ....

he started to appear everywhere in material ... roaring : earth is mine ! your heads, my houses .... your stomaches, my homes ... your hearts ... my food ..... your dreams are my dreams ..... everything is mine !

the slaughtery had begun ... the octopus got hysterical like a siren ... and started to attack people like a mass-murderer ...

"Everything you do, is me ! Everything you say is me !"

"You don't know the poison in your head ... your science isn't that far ... I rule science !"

"You don't know me !"

"You think you know everything, but it's me letting you think that !"

"This poison is making you older, and then at the end of the breeding, when you are seventy or eighty or even younger, then you die in the butchery which I invented ! Dumb heads !"

"You're just making trips in your head ... I invented them all .... All your fantasies ... And your life here on earth is the biggest fantasy I designed for you .... Don't you like the drugs ? You are all my junks, stupid junks ... and you can't escape .... You will die at one moment .... but then earth will still live and grow in your heart .. until your soul is totally eaten away .... until you are nothing but a dumb spirit .... ! You cannot escape earth .... You are in my experiments ... ! You are in my tubes, in my pipelines ! Waiting for the butcher ! You are all programmed by my mills ! There's a clock in your stomach ... You're nothing but slaves of a dumb clock .... For I also planted that stupid black snail there ..... he's in my hands ...."

"Oh, you dumbheads ... you dumbheads ...."

But then the black snail attacks ... although it looks like they are making love, they are in a horrible fight .... They rip each other open ... and a human baby comes out .... it's all

happening in the air ... in the clouds ... above the cities and villages .... an enormous picture ... the baby is under the blood of birth ... and I take it in my arms ...

I was there when it happened .... me, a journalist .... and I brought the baby to my house ..... laying it in my bed ....

It's an extra-terrestial baby and it grows like a tree from my bed ... When the octopus and the snail fight ... it grows .... it's a medicine against the poison of the octopus ... the voice ... of the octopus ...

It's a tree with eyes .. connected by gatherings of red nerves ... and there's another voice in it ....

Two singers are fighting in the air ...

The Octopus and .... this new baby ...

Two voices penetrating the ears ...

creating so many webs of dreams ....

These are dreams within dreams ...

voices within voices ...

songs within songs ....

It's the world beyond Poet,

the world beyond the net ...

It's the world in a diamond ...

an ambient world ...

speaking chrystals ...

new playcards ....

It's a songbook,

a language of music ...

showing the different layers to the exit ....

showing the different steps to the core ...

the jigsaw-stairs to the musical painting ...

the way through the maze ...

It's a piper wandering with a dreamer ...

there's something switching between the song and the dream ...

It's another octopus ... the octopus who grew in the octopus ...

the baby ... spouting the ink from the dream to the song ....

the song will paint the hills ....

and will bring the tattoo on the body ...

marks of the octopus ...

all these tones and sounds are jigsawpieces ...

the music is making the picture ...

leading you out of the octopus's maze ...

there's still an octopus' war inside ...

fighting about a handkerchief full of ink ...

full of old tears ...

when tears become old .... they become ink .....

she's crying ink ... he's painting ...

she's crying jigsaw-pieces ... he's singing ...

the octopus is leading you out of the maze ...

she's crying old tears of her grandmother ...

he's painting ...

old memories ...

turning tears into joy ...

all the memories form the alphabet of a new language ...

writing new books,

while the memories are changing ...

while the memories become movies ...

there are movies in the tears ...

the rebirth of an octopus ....

the playcards form an alphabet

a new language ...

a game-language ...

while the memories are changing ....

there are movies in these tears ...

there are movies in these pearls ....

the chrystals are speaking ...

Uncle John is diving after those pearls ...

from his island ....

looking for new diamonds ...

the octopus's are friendly here ....

the songs open the books ...

the books of memories ...

changing them ...

bringing the memories in the memories to the surface ...

changing them ...

memories growing in memories ...

movies growing in movies ...

old memories become songs ....

the jigsaw-pieces come together ...

the birth of the octopus ...

his voice ...

for a pain will first sink into the sea ....

and will make a trip to the bottoms of the ocean ...

and when the memory arrives there ....

it will grow like seed there ...

a new plant ....

a sea-tree .....

and then you can see the sea with new eyes ...

old jigsawpieces will find their songs finally ...

in the whirlpool of endlessness ...

one day the tree will touch heaven ...

just let it grow up ...

just let it grow tall ...

all jigsaw-pieces try to attach themselves to other pieces on their trips ...

but if a piece doesn't really fit ....

it will definitely fall off for sure ...

for pieces grow further ...

jigsaw-pieces will keep on growing ...

and one day they will reach the true fitting connections ...

in which they can grow forever ...

in their growth many attached pieces will fall off again ....

but that's only to make room free for the true fitting pieces ...

in which they can grow and attach forever ....

so accurately and so perfect ....

which will be a true medicine ...

washing all old stress and frustrations away ....

memories were given to us ...

to make music of it ....

but don't try to force sounds and voices into each other who don't belong to each other ...

for then the voice of the wicked octopus will rise ....

ripping the hearts ....

memories were given to us ....

as jigsaw-pieces ...

the song will rage .. until it's complete ...

when the pieces will meet the bottom of the see ...

and grow like trees ...

they will grow into each other ....

sometimes the jigsaw-piece first has to be sown ...

to be able to connect ...

so let the sea swallow it once again ....

let it sink to the bottom once again ....

for the birth of a new song ...

golden songs, rising from the bottom of the sea ...

will heal the hearts, the broken hearts ...

will heal the aches of roaring jigsaw-tattoos ...

will heal the sore nerves ...

these songs will be the alphabeth of a new language ...

writing a new book ...

with new medicines ...

medicines growing into medicines ...

until the stairs to paradise's coasts are ready ...

the towers reaching heaven's edges ...

rollercoasters growing into rollercoasters ...

like the launching of new rockets ...

heading for a new aldebaran ...

heading for a new jerusalem ...

there a new tree will stand ...

tree of songs ....

a friendly octopus-tree with harmless fruits ...

eternal fruits ....

and no fruits who bring us to new prisons like earth ....

trees growing into trees,

fruits growing into fruits ...

just don't connect jigsaw-pieces together who don't belong to each other ....

let them sink in the seas again ...

reaching for the bottoms were they can be seeds ...

to grow as see-trees ...

as octopus-trees ...

having enough tentacles ...

having enough ink ...

to write new lovesongs ...

let it sink again ...

when a jigsaw-piece is too heavy for you ...

don't force ...

but let it grow thin again ...

in the bottom of the sea ....

the song-gun is a tall gun ...

being able to kill dangerous harmfull octopus's ..

and being able to create a bridge to the city ...

but very often harmfull octopus's already live in that gun ...

then you will have to shut your mouth for awhile ...

for who told you to open it ?

there are famous song-killers in the air ...

tall assassins ...

tall paintings ...

and sometimes a painting tells more than a thousand songs ...

although sometimes a good book tells more than a thousand paintings ...

Chapter 7. Hidden Narrator

when a writer gets in troubles with a singer or a painter ....

it's not good ...

for they will break the writer's pencil forever ...

but i'm not a writer ... i'm a journalist ....

just telling what someone else told ...

so that's always a safe job ...

for then you're always neutral you know ....

but hey, i saw enough journalists who were kicked to god's ground ...

they call them a bother ... they call them boring ....

they call them arrogant ...

they call them betrayers ...

they call them Judas ...

so they make a Jesus of them ...

they hate their cameras and their microphones ...

especially when they are hidden ...

well, i only use my ears and eyes ...

no cameras no microphones ...

i never go to anyone ...

i just watch clouds in the air ....

listening to the echoes no one wanted to eat ....

i'm just a side-line-journalist,

nothing special ....

anyway, sometimes a good book tells more than a painting ...

and a book is like a lot of paintings glued to each other,

but in the right follow-up ...

the paintings tell a story then ...

they give information ...

they stick pieces together in the right ways ....

and they proclaim a sort of hierarchy,

a sort of lawsystem,

a sort of new nature ...

and then the rest has to test if this system is righteous and of use ...

but then .... we need many many systems ....

to get out of the chaos and uselessness we live in ....

so when all these books can become a new alphabet ...

we can keep the knowledge in the circulation ...

wasn't that the mission of language ?

to store the treasures ?

There's a use for the alphabet ....

letters are buttons ...

it's a storage ... to breed the memories ....

into good cows ...

which will help us through the winters ...

so an alphabet must grow ...

a language must grow ....

there's a language of the octopus .....

there's too much ink in the air ....

why can't our letters be paintings ...

or movies .. or whole books ....

the language is the press ...

the language is the tattoo ...

the storage and the breeder ....

why can't our letters be playcards ...

if that could be true ...

language could be medicine again ...

but now language is a butcher ....

and it's also not good for a journalist to get in troubles with a butcher ....

but i just tell you what i was told ...

i won't tell you who told me ...

for i don't want you to throw a stone through his glasses ...

this is all to keep his or her privacy ...

language can be a docter again ...

and then finally the singer can be a docter again ....

and the painter ...

our languages, songs and paintings are untamed killers now ...

a young scientist is shaking his head ... he works for a few years now trying to do research in the way how octopus's communicate ... the experiment with the new instruments was successfull ... these were the messages they got which were sent out from one octopus to another .... translated ... they seem to communicate by stories and dreams ... by vibrational codes which look like books or paintings ... they communicate by high concentrated ink-gass which they pump into the air by their brains .... and by their stomaches ... every letter of their conversation is very complex referring to a certain system of energies and laws ... the communication is on a high vibrationatory level ... and is a very intelligent and complex sort, storing a lot of necessary energies ... by these high-standard communications they develop and heal each other .... their conversations are high in the sky ... like a speaking thunder ... they live deep underwater, but they rule in the air ...

the scientist had also done a project about the communication of sharks ... it looked like the way octopus's communicate ...

Octopuses have a very complex brain, with all sorts of memorizing programs. They learn to survive life by trial, error, experience, application and repeatance in a very creative circle ... it's like they are weaving ornaments in their heads. They use memory as a sort of art, and this is also a sort of jet-system.

Their colours change faster than a chameleon. When an octopus gets in troubles, the pigment cells will be activated to change into the colour of the environment and the attack, as a way to absorb it and as a way of further camouflage. These cells are called chromatophores. The pigment is a main base for their communications .. Colours speak ... Further the octopus can easily change the texture of it's skin, and it's bodyshape and size ... They are sizeshifters and shapeshifter ... They are masterswitchers and can even make their bodies amazingly small to escape through small gates ...

In their communications they shift their identities, and this is how they move their energies through the world above the sea ... They rule the cities, they rule the air ... by their split communications .... They aren't imitating ... they just shift their identities ... They are the identity-shifters ... They live in the heads and stomachs in the world above the sea .... While they are fighting in the air .... an octopus's war ...

they shapeshift the hearts of their victims ....

....

they have suckers on their arms and tentacles .... by which they sense and experience ...

....

The Argonauts are a sort among octopi ... They have rippling shells ... They are also called Paper Nautilus ... Their shells look like rippling paper ... Only the females have this shell ... as a brood chamber .... The females of this sort are larger than the males, and usually live longer ... They have webs on their arms with which they catch fishes and small animals ... on which they feed themselves ....

When the males have sexual intercourse their reproductive arm breaks off ... Some scientists think this arm is a separated parasiting species called the hectocotylus ...

Argonauts are a sort of octopi who can be found in tropical, temperate waters ... The women carry their shells throughout their lives, the shell, which is secreted by the complex webs of their arms. They build these shells themselves, and they are adding to their outer edges while growing up ...

There are octopi-sorts whose females can store male seed for a long time ...

The octopi are a fragmentaric species ... because of their shiftings and switchings ...

Octopi often lead a short life ... many females die soon after the laying of eggs ... They mate, lay eggs... brood, and fanatically guard them ... while they often don't eat ... and then they often die ... and most males after a period of mating and increased growth, they find themselves deteriorating in their internal organs, their skin and arms ... It seems like they are bound by tight laws, like there are deadlines and merciless ultimatums in sexuality, growth, and time ... Their hormones of sexual maturation are deeply linked to natural death by strong chains .... They are interlocked in tight programs ... The mill of a corset ... A part of a cuyornaidian cardgame ...

It is often a quick initiation to an energy which will give you power in your life above the sea ... Many earthlings incarnate as octopus before they started their life in the world above the sea .... There are octopi among us .....

....

The scientist is amazed about the messages he gets on his screen .... Is the adapted octopus fooling him ? It speaks like a human being when he lets the communicative energies go through the advanced hi-tech decoders ...

Are they really the hidden narrators of our minds ?

Do they write our inner newspapers and inner diaries ?

Then the octopus continues, it's speaking almost a whole day now .... :

Octopi are often nocturnal beings ... what are they hiding from us ?

The mills of the deadline are moving ...

when we run away from it we find another deadline ....

east, west, north, south ....

cuyornaida cardgame ....

it seems that when you die in one side ....

you get power in the opposite side ....

many earthlings die in the seas first as an octopus ...

to have high position and power on earth ....

they don't run around to escape the moving mills ....

no, they just nestle in one direction to die there,

to rise up in the opposite direction ...

it's like sundown and sunrise

they get the powers of the sun,

they are children of ra ...

but also in the opposite direction,

the mill-lines are roaring ....

and they can try to tame them,

but one day they will fall ...

then they can take another direction ...

and the same process will happen in that direction ...

until they will not go to the opposite direction anymore,

but in silence drawing circles ...

building their own suns ....

then they will be friends of ra ...

knowing the clocks of nature ...

knowing me, knowing you ...

there are many different octopus-schools in this ...

they communicate by law-books ...

every lawbook is a character, a letter in that alphabet ...

this way they store these books deep in their heart ...

...

The scientist thinks these are very strange, but interesting messages,

In another room of his lap there's an adapted shark ...

And two of his assistants are working there ....

They have amazing results ...

He had done an experiment with sharks before ...

He wanted to know what the messages were ...

The assistants were sitting with headphones ....

The scanners could catch the vibes of the shark ...

And these were very high and very low tones at the same time ...

The scientist had invented a shark-communication-decoder ...

translating the messages ....

he had written these messages down over the years ...

He started with shark communication instruments in 1960 ...

The books about this project became worldfamous ...

It's 1974, and now he's working at the second project in shark communications ...

A few years ago, in 1970, he started with octopus communication technology ..

The first shark wanted to warn humanity ...

His messages were very shocking ...

They were saying that humanity lived in over-communication while the senses got overheated and burnt away ...

much sicknesses and sense-damages were the result of this ...

technology had also a drawback-edge ...

it made people addicted to sense, experience and information ...

but it was slowly destroying a lot of necessary functions ...

The messages told humanity to learn from the animals and plants ...

These ones went through the cocoons of nature to slow down communication and contact ...

they lived a more isolated life, so that they could head for other important functions stored in ...

the world inside ...

this was an ambient and material world in a diamond called "the shell" ...

here all identities were like eggs in a brooding machine ...

there was one golden egg between them, through which you could enter an even deeper world inside ..

here there were different identities ... all octopuses ...

they were all placed in a circle ...

but there was one golden octopus,

in which you could enter the core ....

it looked like a fast moving and spinning jigsaw-piece ...

but also like a seed ....

it was a capsule ...

in which a shark lived ...

a dj ...

He had the lowest voice you could ever imagine ...

He had a helmet which reflected the voice by giving the same signals with the highest voice you could ever imagine ....

the opposite signals caused small vacuums in which sensatory information could store itself ...

these small cells together were forming a web called "the handkerchief" ...

on both sides of this web things started to grow,

for the cells started to multiply themselves ...

these were little drips of moist ...

it was looking like a wasp's eye ...

and soon wasp-tv was born ....

when the low-high voice starts to speak or sing ...

the handkerchief starts to spin ...

and the movie starts to play ...

this handkerchief is like a record ....

the shark .. still the dj ...

Strange messages are coming from the shark ...

the high tones are there because he's speeding up his memories ...

and when the highest tone is reached,

it starts to speak another language ...

the low tones are there because he's slowing down his memories ....

and when the lowest tones are reached ... the language changes ...

and then the pictures are changing ...

this proces is the movie ..

this is how the shark eats and digests ...

this is how the shark survives ... life ....

Chapter 8. Cocoon's End

But these are all their dreams ... Millions of people are waking up having the same dreams ... scientists from all over the world ...

"Science is in my hands !" the pale orange octopus screams ... "and it's not 1974 anymore .... it's 2002 ... the year of the Octopus ..."

She watches in her pale orange chrystal ball ... smiling, grinning deep ... while she's so bitter ... "All these dreams I plant to confuse you, to shake the land, to cut the land .... and then I will sow my bitter seeds .... "

"Do your discoveries ... and all what you discover will tie you deeper into the illusions ... paralyzing your grip on reality ... And I will let you think you come closer, while everything is sliding away ... I will let you think what I want ... I will let you be sure of everything ... I love hard and proud meat .... I love your bones .... I built my house with them ....."

She's shuffling her pale orange cards .... While she sees herself in the chrystal ball ..... mowing the pastures .... in her machine ..... mills at the horizons ... the moving deadlines ....

these pale orange corsets are the virtual reality suits she designed for her grandchildren ...

she invited them for a visit and while they slept she locked them up in these suits ....

now they live in their minds ... programmed by her ... feeling a body which isn't theirs ....

and all grandchildren are hers .....

then she brings them to her halls ....

her hospital-halls .... so many halls ....

so many grandchildren ....

it's like a funeral ....

and it takes time ... so much time ....

she couldn't live with all these voices in her head ....

now she became their grandmom ...

trying to quench these birdsongs forever ....

she became everyone's grandmom ...

she was bitter .. but so friendly ....

and now all these children live in their pale orange capsules ...

deep underwater ... while they are thinking they are living far above the sea ...

playing with their balls ... singing songs ...

but they are down there in her waterhalls ....

she has a dog ... but it has to die today ....

for it becomes too old ....

and she's afraid the dog will become a bother .. a complainer ...

she can't stand the voices in her head ...

the dog is shrieking ...

when it feels her sharp blades ...

her little circular saws ....

but it has to die today ...

her moving deadlines decide ...

there are mills on at the horizon ...

moving closer ...

like a burning line ....

she has her own playcards ...

she has her own shell ...

drawing her own circle ...

she is guarding her seagardens ....

by self-spun tragedies ...

the poisonous plants ..

the stinging trees ...

the tall men ...

she's old ...

the black snail doesn't live anymore ...

died long ago .... by her decision ...

she wanted to stuff him ...

and now he's standing on her cupboard ...

but she still uses the memories to scare people ...

to scare them away from her shell ....

she's old and bitter ...

she feels threatened ...

she has a little iron shark standing on her table ...

but it doesn't live ...

it's iron ...

and a golden shark is in front of her window ...

but it's just a little statue ...

she loves to make strange pap ....

strange porridge ...

she draws circles on people's stomachs when they sleep ...

and then she sucks the intestines out of them,

while closing the hole again again,

in a very strange way ...

while the edges are swelling into normal position ...

so that no one can see she took something out ....

while they feel so stange inside ...

it's all bloodless ...

only a little bit pale orange moist ...

but that's gone before they wake up ....

she's still a strange vampiress after all these years ...

she uses the intestine-custard for her cocoons ...

she guards her sea-gardens ...

still so ... fragmentaric ...

still with so many birthday-presents ...

to keep the children quiet ...

she still talks to her playcards ...

but they are all dead ...

she killed them long ago ...

under the wrath of her deadlines ...

raging deadlines ....

now they can't hurt her anymore ...

she stuffed them ...

everything is stuffed here ...

this is where the cocoon ends ....

in her shell she's breeding the diamonds,

the chrystals, the gold and the ornaments ...

it's dead ... it's all stuffed ...

she's a good taxidermist ....

in her shell ...

she's spinning ... her pearls ...

all possible visitors or guests ...

she stuffs them ...

she's still an identity-shifter ...

after all these years ...

possessing them ... stuffing them

until they're all ...

.....

but they are all living inside ...

deeper than here taxidermistic touch ...

a world she cannot reach ...

the world in the diamond ...

an ambient world ....

where they have their own octopuses ...

their own seagardens ...

they ...

can reach out to each other there ...

like autistic children ...

and it's so material there inside ...

so deep inside ...

here uncle John is telling his stories ....

and here they can communicate with friendly octopi ...

Octopus Communication Technology ...

and their scientists ...

There were special octopus-schools ...

teaching them the different octopus-languages ...

The End

The Hyena Pyramid

The man planet was in war against the woman planet. The dog planet would be a good initiator in this. They were aware of it. Eleduus was imprisoned on the man planet. Being a

man himself, he thought that women were mistreated here. He was an activist on the side of the women, that's why they imprisoned him. He often couldn't understand the deep obsessions of certain women with men. He had been imprisoned on woman planet as well, just because he was a man, and they were scared of him, like they were scared of any man, and they thought they would be better bridled. This he could understand. Men were potentially a great danger, even himself.

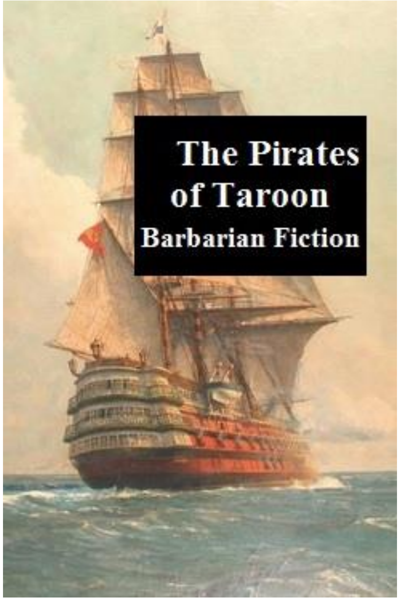
Here on man planet he was imprisoned together with Zaqedas, an older man. Zaqedas knew a lot about men, and how they worked, and he was assured that man planet would fail and would be taken over by women. He was on a mission here to do that. Eleduus and Zaqedas had a lot of conversations. There was also a woman with them. She acted very paranoid and strange. She was also an activist for women, but she didn't trust any men.

Zaqedas knew about Petirias, the monster in the swamp, producing these men who wanted to dominate women and the whole planet. He would impregnate women by coming to them in the form of a man. This form could adapt to any man, slowly absorbing them and taking them over. Zaqedas had built a dog machine which could absorb man power. It started with bringing the golden balance between man power and woman power back, and a red track would bring people back to woman planet. But officials found the dog machine, took it in their possession and imprisoned Zaqedas.

Zaqedas told it to Eleduus and the woman. 'So what these officials do not know,' said Zaqedas, 'is that the dog machine has a hidden program, a third program, which will get activated when intruders want to take the dog machine with them, or change it's programming. This program works slow but steady. It is the hyena track, the pyramid of dog-planet. It is a defense mechanism so that the plan will not fail.

Zaqedas looked at Eleduus. 'This planet, man planet, has some weak spots. Nature will take care of itself. Dog planet will soon invade, then woman planet will take over. They want to restore the woman.'

It was happening in the night. Dog planet, man planet and woman planet seemed to grow together, melting. And a pyramid was rising, the hyena pyramid. Everything was reducing to it's child form again, and from there things started to grow. Children with swords defended their kingdoms, guarded by crocodiles. When children became older, they turned into dogs. Those who reached the hyena pyramid before they got older, became hyenas.


The Pirates
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Barkas the Terrible

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Barkas the Terrible - Barbarian Fiction

The Daggers of Mars

Barkas the Terrible was on his way to a small Jungle-City in the Richelidin realm of Mars. He was a barbarian uncivilized, on his way to the Spider Demon who lived there, Grugdilio. He and his aristocrats terrorized the spheres for a big deal, as they called themselves the emperors of the hearts. Barkas the Terrible didn't have any time to waste himself into such a slavery.

Since his people had been attacked by the army of the Spider Demon they suffered from strange heart-implants. Barkas was on his way to this skeleton-king, the Spider Demon. But when he came to the mountain near to the Jungle City, the mountain Perridor, the Spider Demon attacked him in great deal. Barkas fell to the ground. Heavy boots had kicked him, as the Spider Demon had jumped on his back from a rock. Again the Spider Demon hang at the rock, calculating the next attack. Barkas' sweating body was covered by sand now, but soon he stood up, and could block the second attack by his shield. This time he could see it coming.

The Spider Demon had a strange way of approaching the Martians. He always seemed to come out of nothing, struck them, while it was already too late for them. No one would see him coming the first time, but the second time was always like his weaker spot. He would always do a more visible attack, so that the Martians could prepare for a fight on the same level. But although the second attack was a weaker attack, after awhile the Spider Demon always seemed to win, and would put an implant in the hearts of his victims.

But this time Barkas was very fast, and quickly by his sword he could defeat the Spider Demon. The Spider Demon was screaming, roaring and shrieking, but after awhile he disappeared. Barkas was on his way to the house of the emperors, where all the aristocrats of the Spider Demon lived. No one ever saw the Spider Demon for the third time. It was like he only showed up to them once or twice. There were pits in the house of emperors, and it seemed he lived somewhere in the depths of it.

'Grugdilio, I'm coming for you !' Barkas roared when he stood before the huge stairways of the house of emperors. The stairways and also the huge house was shimmering in the sun. It was like striking Barkas the Terrible like mercyless. But soon Barkas got in a fight with the army of the aristocrats. They weren't interested in someone coming so close to their home and secrets. After awhile Barkas could escape out of their grip, and went to the centre of the Jungle-City. 'Give up all hope,' an old woman said. 'There is no way to approach the Spider Demon. He lives in secrecy.'

'But I defeated him,' Barkas the Terrible said, 'so I can also reach for his shelter.' The old woman started to laugh at him : 'Ha, don't fool yourself, man. His weak spot is just a trick. It gives hope to his victims. Hope that they can finally destroy him, but it's a flase hope.'

'Why ?' Barkas the Terrible asked.

'Because .... nevermind,' the woman said, 'I see you are a stranger here. You do not know anything about the evil of the Spider God. He's a trickster, he's a deception.'

'He enslaved the hearts of my people by his implants. Now they suffer all day long,' Barkas the Terrible said.

'Oh, be glad, be very glad,' the old woman said, 'for there is horror you don't know of. Do you know the pits of the house of emperors ? There it happens. Be glad you still live here instead of there.'

But Barkas the Terrible didn't have any time to stirr up fear to himself. It was like he was immune to the words of the old woman. But more or less she had described the situation.

'Can I buy this spear ?' Barkas asked the owner of a weapon-shop. He directed his finger at a jeweled spear. 'Yes,' the man said. Barkas bought the spear and by his dagger he cut the jewels away from the spear and gave them to the old poor woman. The woman was very grateful, and said : 'May the gods bless you, barbarian.'

'Barbarian !' someone was shouting. A chinese or japanese looking man was staring at Barkas the Terrible, and directed his finger at the spear. 'I can teach you how to fight with it. You must learn special techniques if you want to beat the aristocrats and their wicked corrupted armies. Inside the house of emperors there are many gladiator-cells, and you won't get any further if you do not know about their secrets. You must learn techniques, barbarian, or they will slay you.

'Oh, but I am strong !' Barkas the Terrible roared.

'But you need intelligence, knowledge and wisdom, boy,' the old chinese man said. 'You must learn skills and not just using your powers. They are sorcerors, mind-controllers and wicked shamans. By their illusive forces they can easily put you in their traps, and you don't want to know what they will do with you.'

Finally Barkas the Terrible listened to the old man, and went with him to his home. In the garden the old man would learn him the skills of spear-fighting. Barkas the Terrible was an excellent sword-fighter, but this was something else.

'You must see it like this,' the old man said : 'Spear-fighting is a language. It is something of the mind. The spear speaks, and you must be good at it also. You must learn the signs.'

'Whatever you say,' Barkas said to the old man. He remembered how he had to escape from the place in front of the house of emperors. They were with too many. He could use some extra skills.

The old man teached him different movements and their meanings, and he also teached him what the movements of the enemy's spears meant and what it would do to the mind. Often the gladiators inside the house had two spears, and they were drawing signs in the air to put witchcraft on their victims.

After a few lessons Barkas' skills had improved a lot, and the old man gave him a ring. It was a magical ring, an Eagle Ring. If Barkas would ever be in troubles, he had to call for the ring, and then an eagle of hell would be sent to him to help him. It was a gift to all young spear-fighters. But Barkas didn't want the gift, as he thought that the spear was enough. He said he already got rid of it's jewels. He didn't belief in jewels, as they would only enslave him.

'You do not know what you are saying, Barkas,' the old man said. 'There are certain things you do not know. And that's why you need the ring.' But Barkas had enough of all these things. He wanted to test his spear-fighting skills and left the old man. He tried to forget about what the man said about spear-language. Barkas just wanted to use his fighting skills and not his mental skills. Barkas thought that it was better not to fight mind-attacks by the mind, but by the spear. In his eyes the mind was too weak, too full of self-deception and unknown sabotage. To him it was the shortest way to destruction. Barkas believed in the spear, even more than in the sword. How many times did he use the sword to cut heads of dragons and other beasts, only to find out that the split caused two heads to grow in the place of the first.

This time he wanted to use the spear to hit and sting. In a world like this it was too dangerous to use the sword.

When he came to the house of emperors it was quiet there. Inside the house there were a lot of veils of spiderwebs, and he didn't see any gladiator-cells. He even thought that the old man and the old woman spoke lies to him, maybe to distract him. Maybe they were all part of this game. But Barkas the Terrible didn't want to use his mind in such a dangerous place like this. He counted on his spear and the cooperation. When he came downstairs he was in search for the pits. These pits were very tall, very deep, but they were all bottomless to be nothing but vertikal paths to a large, huge hall.

'Grugdilio !' the barbarian roared. 'I am back ! Come fight with me !' But nothing happened. Without many problems Barkas could come into the hall deep under the pits. 'I thought this is a better place for us to fight,' a voice said. But Barkas the Terrible didn't see anything. Barkas started to laugh, but suddenly an invisible force struck him in his face. Barkas fell to the ground. 'So you're third coming is an invisible one ?' Barkas asked laughing, while he stood up again. His body was covered by sand again, and by strange slime, because of the fall. The slime was a bit reddish. On the walls he saw big moving bubbles like hearts, where the slime was coming from. It seemed the bubbles were pathways through the walls, but Barkas remembered that it could be all a trick.

'Now, come here !' Barkas said, 'let's fight ! If I win you will let the hearts of my people go !'

'And what if you lose ?' the strange voice asked.

But about that Barkas couldn't think because the Spider Demon already came down like crazy. He was in total spider-form, but Barkas recognized him. The spider was shrieking, while Barkas directed his spear at the spider. Suddenly a thin fast stream of spitting fire came out of the spider to attack Barkas. Barkas the Terrible roared as it was piercing the flesh of his upper chest near to his shoulder. Then another stream of spitting fire broke his spear. It was like fear struck Barkas all of a sudden, and he suddenly felt a terrible weakness flowing to his legs. Quickly he grasped the upper part of the spear to use it as a dagger. He had a short spear now. 'What a pity you do not wear an Eagle Ring. All the young spear fighters from the Jungle City have such a thing,' the spider spoke with a low voice.

'I do not need such a ring, as it binds me. I need my spear, and when it's broken I use it as a dagger,' Barkas roared.

'But what if the moment will come that you really need the ring,' the spider said. 'For example : What if I conquer you, chain you to a rock, and let the beasts eat from your flesh. The spear is helpless then, and also the dagger. Then you will wish you had the ring.'

'I rather die, than to wear a ring taking my mind away. If you have designed that ring it is to make helpless, dependent slaves,' Barkas roared. 'The ring will only be a pathway to more troubles. I bet it creates trouble. It's such a lie that kind of charity.' Then Barkas remembered his father saying to him always : Our god never shows up, but he is the strongest. That god is Dus.

Barkas had never prayed to Dus, the Unreachable, but this time he did, while he was raising his broken spear in the air. A strange lightening filled the hall and came down strongly on the

broken spear. The spider was staring at it from a distance. Then Barkas threw the short spear into the heart of the spider like a dagger. The spider fell down, and blood was filling the hall. Barkas never heard such shrieking before. Out of the hearts on the wall all sorts of women and children came. The hearts were beating and pulsating like crazy. Barkas didn't recognize these people, but he knew they were the prisoners of the Spider Demon. Barkas went through one of the holes, and came into another room where men had been tied together. Quickly he untied them, but they couldn't speak. Barkas knew that the secret was coming closer now. The spider was still shrieking. Finally Barkas came in a room where a huge heart and a huge brain were tied to each other. They looked like two octupi or jelly-fishes. On the walls swords hung, and a voice spoke : 'cut these hearts.' But Barkas knew that if he would take a sword to cut, then more hearts would arise. It was the heart of Mars, the heart of a demon, keeping the realms of Mars in slavery. As Barkas came closer small spiders came forth from the hearts. Soon they crept all over Barkas skin and started to eat from his flesh. Again Barkas called for Dus, the Unreachable, the god of his forefathers, but nothing happened. Then he ran back to the spider he killed, took the short spear out of it's heart, and laid it to his body. Then the spiders started to melt away. Barkas was very hungry, and started to eat from the big spider he had killed. A strange fire was moving through his body, and again he went to the two big hearts tied to each other, and also started to eat them. That day the sun didn't go under on Mars.

The next day when Barkas woke up, he was still in the room where he found the Heart of Mars, the Demon Heart. By eating it, it had made him strong, stronger than ever. It was like his mind had been melted away by the fire. But why did he need a mind when it would just deceive him ? He had the broken spear like a dagger, like the short spear, which would be his true guide, charged by the strange lightening of Dus, the Unreachable One. Barkas had slain the Spider Demon who seemed to rule this heart, but now the heart of Mars had died. A broken spear would be it's unreachable center now. And as Barkas pierced the short spear into the ground where first the heart of Mars was dwelling, more lightening came, and the rays started to move in the portals. By it's lights Barkas could see many strange demons trying to get to the center, but the portals had been sealed by the rays of Dus. The ground below Barkas' feet was opening, and Barkas stared at an enormous stairways downstairs. There were veils of spiderwebs everywhere. A strange silence was filling the place.

Strange energies were luring Barkas to come inside, like the lightening was also here in a lighter, softer and more sensitive form. 'Is this the road to Dus, where my father always told about ? You always come closer, but you never reach it,' Barkas thought to himself. Strange memories were entering him. His father always told him that it was the path of losing your mind, so that something better could enter. His father always told him that the mind was an invention of civilization, a strange electricity keeping them enslaved. That was why they were barbarians. They were named the uncivilized, and that was for so many reasons.

And he remembered his father always said : The mind is a cross, and we must bear it and overcome it, until it's a bleeding rose. Also the heart was in his eyes nothing but a cross, a prison and a path. We couldn't just escape from it, but we had to go all the way to the exit. Was this the exit ?

There were certain religions on Mars saying that the cross would turn into a sword, and the indians believed in the stake turning into a spear. But Barkas didn't want to have anything to do with religious thoughts.

Deep down at the bottom of the stairs he found a man making crosses and stakes. The man was painting them by strange smelling paints and also stuck jewels to them. The man said : 'The heart is a cross made of the jewels of roses, and the brains and the mind is a cross made by the jewels of the spider. Come, I will show you how you can get rid of them.' And the man pointed his finger towards a dark bridge in the distance, going across a ravine. 'That is the ravine of hearts,' the man spoke. 'If you will come across it, then you have defeated the evil of your own heart.'

'Oh, but I need evil to survive,' Barkas thought. But on the other hand, he knew where such evil could bring him. It would create troubles after troubles. With mixed thoughts he went to the bridge, but as soon as he stepped on it, the bridge melted away, and he fell into the ravine. Here the hearts were like spiders and started to eat from his flesh. He also saw snakes between them, and jewels. Soon he was crying for help, and the man came to the ravine to throw a sort of stick to him. 'You need this stick !' he roared. 'It is to open the flower !'

'What flower ?' Barkas roared in terrible pains. 'What do you mean ?' Then Barkas saw an amazing large flower appearing before him. 'Throw the stick into the flower !' the man roared, which Barkas did. It was like heaven opened itself to Barkas. The flower opened up and swallowed Barkas. Then the flower flew away. The flower flew all across the ravine, and soon Barkas was in a new land. The flower spat him out. It was like he was in a sort of paradise. Here in this place many indian tribes lived. They all seemed to worship some sort of stake on a high mountain. The indians said it was the stake of lusts. Lusts were in their eyes the most dangerous, but also the most important powers of existance. On the stake of lusts their lusts would be cleansed and purified. For every indian here it was a sacred path to reach this stake, although many never ever reached it in their lives. The ones who had reached the stake had the mission to bring down and deceive all the others. That was why they used to call it the unreachable stake.

There was a legend that the stake was made from stones of a secret flower. Some claimed to have seen the stake, but no one could ever touch it, as it always went away. Only some indians in history would have been at the stake, and these indians they worshipped.

One day Barkas made a trip on the mountain. He found a rose, a speaking rose, and it was bleeding. He remembered the words of his father about the bleeding rose. The rose spoke in languages he didn't understand, and there were stones all around her. Would these be the stones of the secret flower ? He took some of the stones, but then the flower started to cry, so he laid them down again. Then the flower said : 'Please, do not tell anyone that I was here.' And then the flower with the stones disappeared. His father always said that when you give love to a flower, she will grow in you as something more precious than a heart, and that was by the memory.

But Barkas still thought about Dus, the Unreachable. Did he have anything to do with this all ? When he finally came down from the mountain he suddenly lost his grip and slided into a thornhedge. The thorns got deep into his flesh, and the more he moved and tried to get out, the more it pierced and wounded him. It only got worse. He remembered the words of his father : Remember : all thorns in your life will become your daggers. After hours of hanging in the thornhedge animals came to eat from his flesh again, especially birds and bats. Barkas cried out to Dus, but no one helped him. The next day he woke up soon from the pain. Or was it a soft voice awakening him ? There was a flower growing before him, of soft yellow, light pink and white. More and more it covered his body, and suddenly it swallowed him and flew away.

There were still many thorns in his body, and it was like by the pressure of the flower the thorns got even deeper, but it was so soft that it was different. When he opened his eyes daggers were flying before him. It was like they filled the skies. Where was he ? In the distance the orange-red sun roared softly, soaring in the sky, and the daggers reflected it's lights. Rings of strange fire were surrounding him, and he could now even see the sea below him. There were snakes swimming there. The sea was very bright, and the smell was intense, vibrating and vitalizing him. He was still surrounded by the flower. In which sense he didn't know. Then she opened up, and he could step out.

It was like the daggers were cutting his mind, so that he could get in touch with his memory and the deeper layers. For him it was an escape, as that is where the barbarian path leads to.

The Pirates of Taroon

Chapter 1. The Bleeding Ocean

One of the eyes of Moloch had a ring of rage inside. This was how he could control his slaves. He could easily kill them by the radiation. A slave-girl called Septulah, who was a snakecharmer, fell down. Another one checked her pulse. She was dead. Moloch grinned. He needed a sacrifice for today. He jumped from his throne while his large tail slowed him down, and he started to eat from the meat. A man stood behind the girl, with a bloody knife. The blood was dripping all over the girl. Another slave-girl started to cry. ‘You will be on the

menu tomorrow,' Moloch roared. He rose his sword in the sky. It was hot on the ship, and soon flies devoured the rest of the meat.

'I can feel you from here,' Moloch roared to the other slave-girl. Then he took the screaming girl to his hut. Everybody started to work again. Everyday such things happened and they got used to it more or less.

Inside the heads of Moloch's slaves pink spiders lived, eating from their evergrowing flesh. They were more or less the pets of Moloch. Whenever a slave wanted to escape these spiders would induce pain, so much pain that they would fall down. Many times slaves tried to get the spiders out of them, but the spiders would secrete poison as a punishment. Many of the slaves lived in deep pain and with large burdens because of having these spiders in their heads, but Moloch was merciless. He enjoyed to see them bowing down under the weight of their burdens.

Suddenly there were pirates everywhere, with faces of scorn. They didn't come from another ship. They came out of the water. Moloch's army was in a shock. These pirates were killers. They just killed everything they saw, but some slaves they kept alive. It was a day these slaves would never forget, and years after it still burned in their memories. These pirates took out the eyes of Moloch and finally pushed him overboard, where he bled in the sea.

That day the sea turned into blood. The pirates let the ship sink, and they went to Taroon, a city underwater, where they came from. In this city the slaves would be judged. The captain of the pirates was a cruel man. He broke some arms of the slaves, and some women he chained by their necks. One slave they took his eyes off, and pushed the eyes of Moloch into the bleeding holes. 'You will always carry his scorn, until you have defeated his spirits.' Then they laughed and buried the poor slave alive. It was since then so much mystery spred throughout the ocean, and it would never stop bleeding. Since then they called it the bleeding ocean. I could escape, and was the only slave who survived Taroon. I thanked my life to the spider which lived inside me. It seemed to be the king of all of them. I was lucky.

I thought Moloch was dead, but it seemed he finally reached an island in the Bleeding Ocean, where he raised up the worst spirit-army. I reached this island after days of swimming. There was no way to describe his evil. In short time he build a complex of temples and pyramids, and he started to live in the biggest center of them all. He raised up the most horrible souls and ghosts. The spider was always with me. He lived inside of me, and we started to become friends. Moloch found three black-blue panthers which became his personal guards. When I grew up the spider granted me the most incredible powers, and one day I went to the center of the island where I slayed Moloch. But not much did I know about the curse coming over me because of that. It was like his soul came over me now, a hundredfold, chaining me, grasping me in the tightest grip I ever had on my life. He didn't want to let go. He injected the most horrible and painful venoms in me, burning me from the inside. It was like I was becoming his personal slave now. One day I swam back to Taroon. I had the sword of Moloch now and his rage, and I slayed the pirates one by one and made a mess of their city. Finally I came to the grave where they buried the slave with the eyes of Moloch. I opened the coffin, while the eyes were still glowing. One eye was bleeding, while the other had the biggest rage I ever saw. I held them both into the sky.

My eyes had been eaten away by Moloch who lived inside. I pushed the eyes deep into the holes of my head, and became the most horrible creature. My curse had been doubled. If the

spider king wouldn't live in me I would never have survived this event. Inside they battled, tearing me apart, until the spider king finally won, and my eyes seemed to come to rest. Strange lights seemed to move from my heart to my head. It was in these days I finally could forget about Moloch a bit, finding my own path. However I would be marked for life, as his eyes lived in me. And although his soul was dying, it would stay in me for eternity. That was my fate, and I had to make the best of it.

The kingly spider seemed to be an intelligent creature, and I could totally trust it in making a treasure of my past. He would make my scars shine. He ate from my powers and became my powerfull boss. There were times I felt very weak because of this, but it was only to grant me greater powers afterwards. So I tried to come at peace with this weakness. It was strange seed. I could never become a king. My powers always faded away. It was like spasm. I was the strongest and the weakest person at the same time. It was like someone was stinging me all the time, someone deep inside, stinging all my muscles, so that they would never rise into kingship. There was living a strange venom inside, making me so tired for long periods of my life, like creeping through a desert eating me, my soul. I was chained inside. Moloch was still living in me.

I was like a madman, creeping through the dust, eating the dust. It led me to the wilderness, the great desert, where I came to a city after days of dying in the bloody sun. My skin was burning like tar. I felt like a zombie. The bright white stones of the city wall were huge. A huge giant-like person in white stood before me. He was the porter. I heard the screams of children coming from the city. I had a fight with this porter for many days and nights in which I finally inserted my poison into his brains. It was all coming suddenly. He fell down, and I could enter the city. There were shrieking children in wooden barrows. A strange fire was burning here. I had never seen such a place before. Inside I heard a voice laughing. 'I am ruling this city,' he roared. I felt weak. I fell down. I woke up in a bath full of soft fluids, a kingly bath in a sort of temple-like atmosphere. The pillars had been built of the brightest white. Some slave-women were also in the bath, making strange attempts to wash me. They looked like they were some sort of harem. They drank from the soft fluids of the kingly bath, and snakes seemed to come forward from the bath, sliding across the skins of the women who began to smile brightly. 'I am the ruler here,' a roman-like royal type said. He stood tall close to the bath having some leaves in his hair and was dressed in white with some golden decoration. He had slippers on. He also had a strange staff in his hand. It was like the staff of an elephant. He helped me out of the bath and showed me his throne. The air was stilled filled with the shrieks and screams of children, and there was also a lot of weeping.

'I understand your confusion,' he said. 'I am a roman god. The Moloch you have inside I have sent out to get you here. He's my pet.'

When I told him about the spider living inside he seemed to be surprised and shocked. 'Then you are lucky,' he said. 'The pink spider race only has one king. And we didn't know he would be among the ones Moloch used.' He showed me several doors behind which fires were burning, full of children. 'They all burn for Moloch,' the roman god said.

'Then who is the boss here ?' I asked.

'I am,' the roman god said. 'But when Moloch will be grown-up, he will be.'

'For what reason ?' I asked.

‘No one knows,’ the roman god said. ‘But these children burn for Moloch so that he won’t feel his own pain. He lives in forgetfulness, and as long as he lives in that mood, he won’t grow up.’

‘Oh, that’s ridiculous,’ I said.

‘Well, you better not wake him up,’ the roman god said. ‘By the way, the children need to be in the fire, to keep the flame of oblivion alive.’

‘Oh,’ I said, ‘so they need to suffer to keep your roman house guarded ? What god are you ?’

Suddenly there was knocking all over the place. Soon the spirits of Taroon came in. ‘Where is the one who destroyed our city ?’ they screamed.

‘He’s in the fire behind the walls,’ the roman god spoke.

Then the spirits of Taroon came into such a rage that they destroyed the walls keeping the fires isolated. There was fire all over the place. The spirits of the children seemed to come free. Soon the fire got neutralized in the skies. Also the spirits of Taroon were gone.

The roman god smiled. ‘It seems you carry a lot with you. It has finally found it’s place.’

I felt empty. I couldn’t think. It was like something had taken my last strength away, while I knew it was only for the king of the pink spiders to enter deeper into my heart, giving me a heart. I sunk away in myself. Like my last walls were gone, also the ones who blocked me entering deeper inside. I gained so much life, by so much death. The vision finally went away from me, and I found myself in the desert again. I didn’t know where to go, but the kingly spider would lead my path. I was wondering where I was, but then, I forgot just about everything. The eyes of Moloch were burning in my head, and they induced sleep and oblivion, this time not to grow dumb, but to grow up.

His sword was still staring at me, and a little skull attached to my belt. I couldn’t remember a lot of things. I reached another city where an old king lived with his daughters. They also seemed to recognize that the curse of Moloch lived inside of me.

‘Oh, this curse will lead you,’ the old king spoke, ‘like it has led you to this place, and it will multiply itself. The secret of bliss is just the multiplication of the curse. That is the only way to master it.’

They also seemed to know about the kingly spider who lived inside of me, more than ever. It had pierced it’s way into my heart where it had his throne. They also knew about the pirates of Taroon who seemed to follow me everywhere.

‘The curse is attracting many curses,’ the old king said, ‘finally a way to lead you out.’ I was aware of the wisdom of this king. It brought me a bit at peace with my fate. He seemed to have a strong relationship with his daughters, who seemed to be very wise as well. They often danced throughout the galleries of the palace. They lived a happy life. But the king said his daughters lived under a curse as well. In the night their spirits would come alive and they would turn into predators to go for a hunt.

We waited for the night, and the king showed me at a certain distance. I couldn't believe my eyes. They turned into blackblue panthers, very huge, and most dangerous. When I saw them returning with children in their mouths I was shocked.

'This,' the king said, 'is because these children would grow up become the worst tyrants ever existing. These ones would become the cruellest dictators, so the predators bring them to the fire.'

I saw huge ovens opening up in the walls of the palace where the panthers brought these children.

'What kind of fire is it ?' I asked the king.

'Oblivion, my son, oblivion,' the king spoke.

I didn't hear any shriek or scream. I didn't hear any of these children weeping. They went into the fire to go asleep. They were closing their eyes more and more. The day after there was a huge meal with a lot of meat and I wondered from where the meat was coming.

'Elephants, my son,' the king said.

'No, he's just joking,' one of his daughters said.

He had very attractive daughters, but I think I thought that way mostly because of what I had seen in the night. They were werepanthers. To my surprise the king had invited the spirits of Taroon and the burning children for dinner as well. The children were very sleepy. The king was very friendly to them, and his daughters also. But as soon as I was starting to eat from the meat I found myself in the desert again. This time my stomach hurt like hell, and I was vomiting. Darkness came over the desert, covering it completely, while there were signs of blood in the sky. 'What do you want from me ?' I screamed. I was following the footprints of someone. It led me to a hut in the desert, a huge hut with a big roof to which a skull of a goat or something or a reindeer had been attached. When I entered the hut an old woman was staring at me, together with a young woman. The young woman seemed to care for the old woman.

'Where do you come from,' the old woman said with an aged voice.

I didn't say anything and sat down. I was tired, so tired. 'He needs some sleep,' the old woman said. 'Bring him to one of the rooms.'

The young woman took me by the arm and brought me to the back of a hut where I got a room. The curtains were hanging in front of the low windows, and the wind was coming through, the hot desert wind, although there was some coolness in it. I sank down on the bed. The woman lay next to me, but suddenly she changed into a skeleton. I was shocked, ran to the living room again, and also the old woman had been changed into a skeleton, sitting still on her chair. But I was so tired, and went to the bedroom again, where I lay down on the bed again. I knew I was a cursed man with the eyes of Moloch in my head. My vision was tricking on me. I felt strength inside all of a sudden. Like the spider was waking up in me. 'You are in an important place,' the voice spoke. 'These ones were already dead for a long time, but you

could enter their history. You have brought them the seed of life, and they will live again. It is because of the eyes of Moloch you can do that.'

I finally understood where my curse was leading me to. The next morning I woke up, still having the skeleton by my side, but something was glowing inside. Soon the skeleton stood up, having some amazing lights. She hugged me and kissed me. Then the old woman came into the room, but she was young now.

'You have made us happy,' she said. 'You have a treasure in your eyes, sowing the seeds of light, life and love.'

I smiled. 'But I am a cursed man,' I said.

'Look where the curse has led you,' she spoke. 'It led you to bliss.'

'Oh, but you do not know what is following me,' I said. 'I need to go.' Suddenly I stood up and ran out of the room, and then out of the house. Even the house had changed now, and the desert merely looked like a jungle now, although it was still a wilderness. The dryness had disappeared a bit. I felt hunted. Like the pirates of Taroon were coming alive again. I felt it in the air. Suddenly they appeared all around me, coming from behind the bushes.

'We are looking for you,' their captain screamed. Then they were all of a sudden attacking me. I fell down, and they dragged me to a fire deep down in the jungle. Suddenly someone drove a sword into my back from behind. They all laughed. 'Look at this prince trying to tame us,' they said. 'You will never escape from us. We will always be your worst nightmare. Until we have dragged you down into Tartarus where we all belong. Suddenly they pushed me into the fire, and it was like I fell down from the highest rock into the deepest darkness. There was wilderness all around me. Snakes were staring at me. I begged this machine to stop. I felt like I was a playball of these pirates. I was at Tirmis Oracle, a ghosttown in the west of Mars, where pirates seemed to come to party, to have a good time. It was a haventown, located at the Bleeding Ocean. The dark toes of Tirmis Oracle were ten demon-machines torturing so many on the surfaces of Mars, to keep them in deep tragedy and slavery. Ten demons were locked up in these machines. I was the second one, Jeppersla. A woman named Tara from Rhodes set me free. I had been locked up in a gamble-machine, a casino for pirates. She led me to a place in Tartarus where the most dangerous stones seemed to exist : the python stones. She suffered a lot under it's radiation, so I helped her, and became the guard of these stones. The stones seemed to be important as well, as they would form the road to bliss. And all came clear in my sense, as I knew where the multiplication of the curse would lead to. I found in her a mother, and she gave life and birth to me. Still the pirates of Taroon would haunt me, and they would keep visiting Tirmis Oracle to have their evil holidays and fun. I got a new name, Barkas, son of Tara and Golem.

Tara had already freed one demon before me, and together we freed the other eight demons. But the pirates of Taroon seemed to struck even harder. We all sank away in deep paranoia, and we certainly had to pay the price to open up the machines. One of their highest captains was Drinbard. He wanted to lock us up in a bottle for what we had done. He was a member of a ruling class called the Sjarun. It was a circle of witchdoctors, zombificators, necromancers and soul-swindlers. He called for them, and we had to fight for our lives and freedom. They all wanted to let us pay for destroying Tirmis Oracle, one of their greatest prides. In this we got help from Traxwodka, the Pyhton Knight. He was the first one Tara had freed from the

Oracle. He had a haunted face. You could see he still lived under the pressure of the Sjarun and the pirates of Taroon. In one way I asked myself if he had been really set free from the Oracle, as he still seemed to be bound in a sense. 'There is no true escape from the Oracle,' he spoke. I listened to his wisdom for hours and hours. Tara was screaming I shouldn't believe him, but I did, in a certain sense. And he was right, for after awhile we found out where it had brought us all. The demons only had sunk deeper into the machines, and those who wanted to save them entered the same fate. There was no true escape. All escape and all help in that was to get trapped deeper. Drinbard knew. I hated his face. But suddenly he turned himself to me and said : 'There is no escape, neither for me. We are all trapped in this machine.' One moment I thought he was beautiful, like he was my friend. But that thought was only a flash. I shivered. I hated to see myself becoming like Drinbard, but it actually seemed to happen. The pirates loved me all of a sudden, and they were open to me, and they made me a captain. I was one with Drinbard now, the thing I hated so much. The machine had even swallowed me deeper. I felt like frozen. But the deeper we became in these machines, the more these machines seemed to be one. There were doors between them, and there were centers between them. It was a whole complex of halls and galleries, like an arena. 'No,' I said. 'Don't let me fight my mother.' I saw Tara screaming. She was confused.

Chapter 2. The Cobra Stone

Barkas actually realized that the pirates of Taroon were also nothing but victims of the machines of Tirmis Oracle. They actually came forth from the deeper parts, where they had become one and lived in an arena. It was at this point he had some sympathy for the pirates, and he also remembered how they actually helped him to let him escape from time to time. He was one of them now, and they were friendly to him now, letting their heads hang slant. They urged him there was no escape, and they had to fight each other as friends. They had reached the center of the ten machines, and it was called the Machine of Democracy.

There were a lot of slot machines here, and the pirates loved playing them. They were in search of gold, money and treasures. 'Money is the Root of All Evil' was written on a banner somewhere on a slot machine. There were so many ghost machines here by which the pirates of Taroon could mask themselves. Barkas was shocked. They could become anything here, all for the sake of deception. 'Realize this,' one of the pirates said : 'We all worship Moloch, and there is actually no escape from him. The more you fight against this machine the more you wake him up, and the more you will get swallowed by it.'

Another pirate said : 'These are the machines of Moloch. The slot-machines to let the children play. Don't you know these are his jaws ? You can only get deeper. Aren't we all his children ? We burn forever.'

Barkas realized they were already deep in Tartarus, waiting to be trodden and squeezed between the Moving Walls in the depths of this machine. Here Diabrillis the puppetmaker worked to catch them there to turn them into puppets. Here Barkas finally found out that the

pirates of Taroon were actually creations of Diabrillis. Those who didn't get caught by Diabrillis could get so dense that they turned into python stone.

But all ways finally led to Moloch, to sink deeper into his stomach. He was a greedy monster, and actually the secret of Tartarus. He could never really die, and never really get defeated. They needed to live with him forever. But inside Barkas the king of the pink spiders lived, and it was something they feared. Also the fact that Barkas had the mysterious eyes of Moloch disturbed them. Why did Diabrillis create the pirates of Taroon ? The pink spider king was very clear in this. He told Barkas that Diabrillis created the pirates of Taroon as guards of something he feared. They fought Barkas and acted sweet to him, because he had become very close to that thing. They wanted Barkas to stay with them, even by letting him be one of them. But Barkas wanted more. In one of the nights he went with the spider king on a tour. The spider knew some tracks on secret balconies along the Moving Walls. They could see a new world from there. Tall stretched hunting fields. The spider said that Diabrillis had his own hunting fields, when someone tried to escape from his realm, he would have his ways to bring them back. The spider said that he as king was the only one who could bring someone across these fields. Here they could become flesh and blood again, but it also made them vulnerable. The only way to survive there was to become a Spider Knight. Barkas was interested as he just couldn't believe that he had to stay in this machine forever.

The spider helped him to finally getting rid of the pirates of Taroon, just by becoming a Spider Knight. Was he doomed to serve Moloch all his life, or would the spider king lead him out ? Barkas had many questions. All he wanted was to go to the core of Tartarus to find out about it's mystery. Something inside was stinging his muscles, while weakness overflew him. A man in grey came to him, almost covered by spiderwebs, with a dark and low voice. He had a tall black jacket. 'Any power can lead you back to Diabrillis now, and to the pirates of Taroon,' the man said. 'But your weakness is your protection, your guard. I know who is stinging you inside.' A tall slimy tongue came out of the mouth of the man. He was a reptile man. 'The pirates of Taroon guard an indian race,' the man said. 'Hate and anger weakens you. But it is your immunity at the same time.'

'Why is Diabrillis afraid of the indian race ?' Barkas asked.

'For this race will bring forth a new saviour,' the man said. 'There is a way out of the machine. When someone survives the python stone, the cobra stone will hit. This stone is even darker. The python stone got created by souls squeezed and trodden between the Moving Walls, but the cobra stone is quite the opposite. It will come into existence by souls who get torn apart, stretched out.'

'How does this happen,' Barkas asked.

'What do you know about the depths of Tartarus ?' the man spoke. 'I will tell you : nothing. In the core of Tartarus there is Cobra Stone, nothing but Cobra Stone, and it exists there, because of chess, Tartarian Chess. When you move closer to the core across the boards of chess, some stones are traps, and they will actually stretch you. Some tiles will pierce you, some tiles will cut you. Just make sure you come safe to the realm of Cobra Stone.'

Barkas felt himself like hanging at a cross or stake. The words of the man had totally pierced his soul, and he felt broken inside. He knew that if he would fail at the boards of Tartarian Chess he would be nothing but a wave of the sea. It would drag him all the way back to the

Bleeding Ocean on the ship of the pirates of Taroon. He would be stretched, torn apart, and slide back. If that was his fate, then it would be. He was a Spider Knight now. He wondered if he would be skilled enough to get across these terrible boards. But the spider inside would lead him.

He was of course paranoid. He carefully walked to the first board. The tiles were white and brown. He would lose a lot of density if he would fail, and in the best case he would just go back to Diabrillis. But certainly he wanted to win. He gathered all his courage. The spider inside told him he had done this before so he would show him the way. But still it was very scary, as the boards seemed to change all the time. The tiles were even moving and switching. It was hopeless. After awhile the reptile man was back. ‘I want to make a deal with you,’ the man said. ‘I will show you the safe track across the boards, if you would only give me the eyes of Moloch and the spider who lives inside. You won’t regret it, as I will lead you safely to the Cobra Stones, and they are more powerful than anything you had before. They will be your eyes, your feet and your heart. They will be your head, your tongue and your bones, they will be your flesh and blood. And further,’ the man said, ‘you will be a wereman for the rest of your life, switching between all the sacred powers you need to survive.’

‘That’s a deal,’ Barkas said. And it was true what the man told him. As within short time he reached the mountains of Cobra Stone, and it would easily live in his body to do all the things he wished, but at the same time he felt a weakness he had never felt before, and his both eyes started to bleed. He felt poisoned inside. However after a few days it went away. He felt powerful, coming forth from an incredible softness. It was like his body was so hard storing all those powers, but at the same time it was so flexible, absorbing the atmosphere. His senses had been opened, and thus his softness was his strength. He thought he had survived with the Cobra Stone, but he started to become greedy. He wanted more, as other Cobra Stones more precious than those he had were luring from the distance. And still there were some small chess boards between him and some other places. There was no inner voice anymore, no Moloch who would block him, and also the reptile man had disappeared. In his boldness and sense of invincibility he stepped on the first tile, thinking he was wise and strategic enough now to do it all by himself. It was an urge it seemed he couldn’t stop. Tall thin spears seemed to come from the tile trying to pierce his flesh, but he had such an enormous control in his body now that he could make it so hard that the attack failed. Then he jumped to a second tile, still thinking he could conquer the world. But the tile was jelly and he slided across some other tiles as well. Then he took a dive to the sandy other side of the board, but it was quicksand. Barkas grasped an enormous snake who took him out. Quickly he took some of the precious stones who started to melt into his body already, integrating themselves. A strange feeling came over him. He got very tired. Suddenly it was like he got stung by many tall thin spears so sharp that his body couldn’t resist it. He fell down, while a snake bit him, and he slided on the board again. This time he touched a tile which immediately fell down, while Barkas slided into the hole.

Some snakes hung at the bottoms of other tiles, and quickly caught him to bring him back. It seemed he had found some friends here who didn’t allow him falling away. Barkas felt he was more than conqueror. Snakes seemed to rule here and controlled everything. He couldn’t breath very well. It went downwards with his breathing more and more, everyday, but he found small oasis in the area with brighter breath than he ever had. He went from oasis to oasis piercing the area deeper and deeper, but as long he was inbetween these oasis, he could hardly breath. He was shocked when he finally reached the Bleeding Ocean, but this was the other side. He was scared to meet any pirate of Taroon again, although he would slay them if

he did. He was scared of making circles. The ocean was warm, even hot, and he loved swimming in it. Finally he decided to swim to a certain island in the distance. The island was very fruitful and wonderful and he decided he wanted to live here, but then he remembered his mother and his father, and maybe some other people he wanted to have here. But he also knew how dangerous their track to this place would be. He knew they had to do it all by themselves, and even if they would reach the other side of the Bleeding Ocean, there were so many islands here, that they could easily pick another island. He was at peace here.

But soon he saw a ship in the distance, coming closer. There were pirates of Taroon on it. He wanted to trade his secret to them, but it seemed they already knew. The pirates of Taroon knew it all, but they would always return to the start acting like they didn't know. They were the guards of the Cobra Stone.

The End

The Man with the Needles

The blue-skinned princess ruled in the depths of tartarus. She had a lot of monsters helping her, and creatures called the green claws by which she could suck all the energy out of someone. The secret of her power was the cobra sword. Big monkeys were her advicers. But most of all she listened to a flower in her head by which she could freeze anything. There was no way to escape from her world. She was a cobra charmer.

She had a monkey machine by which she could let the roses grow in Tartarus, all to enchant men, and lead them to her ruins, her palaces. The monkeys coming out of these machines

were big like giants, and they were always sowing the seeds. She also had a parrot machine producing the most beautiful birds. But one day she came into trouble, and Barkas had to help her. He loved to watch her huge temple, which looked like a dark castle. It was a ruin of course, but it was still beautiful. She told Barkas about a bald giant with a slant sword. He was her guard, but he went away. He told her he would go to a certain volcano but he never returned. She loved this man, he was her everything. But now she had to live with such a loss.

Barkas would never hesitate to help her. She once saved him from a horrible death. She was his everything in a sense. She was a sweet lady. Even her monsters were sad since they realized that the bald giant with the slant sword had not returned. They all feared the volcano. Strange jewels lived there, powerfull enough to take over one's mind.

When Barkas came to the volcano he immediately noticed these big transparent jewels hanging at the rocks and the mountains. They also hung at hills. Suddenly a man jumped on him, and started to sting him deep in his muscles by needles. After awhile Barkas fell down of pain, severe pain. The man was very elastic and there was not much Barkas could do. He felt paralyzed, frozen by the pain, poisoned. 'Who are you ?' Barkas roared.

The man looked like a clown, like a jester, but also like a warrior, a military servant. "I won't destroy you,' the man said. 'I'm just protecting you against the dark indian races here. If they catch you they will insert their implants in you so that you will swell up, your body …. They like the meat you know.'

After awhile the man took the needles out of Barkas. Barkas felt relieved. The pain was gone. 'Be well,' the man said. 'You have the immunity now.' Barkas felt a weakness but it was also giving him strange strength. Soon the man was gone, and Barkas continued his path. In a cave he found the bald giant with the slant sword. He stood tall in a cage now, while his body had swollen up. Barkas didn't hesitate one moment and cut the cage open by his sword. It didn't take long but they had already been surrounded by indians. Then the needle man jumped forward and started to sing : 'He's already immune. You can't touch him.'

'Please,' Barkas asked the man. 'Sting my brother also. He's swollen.' The needle man gave away a show while he stang the giant, while the indians were applauding. They had never seen something like this. The giant was bleeding and fell down after awhile, roaring with pain. The indians got very distracted by the funny man. They seemed to love the show. 'Take him home,' the needle man sang to Barkas. 'They do not understand the language. I will keep them amused.' Then the needle man walked towards another cage in which a giant pig lived. He opened the cage and started to do the same on the pig, while Barkas and the giant could leave. The indians were all following the man with the needles.

When Barkas got home with the giant the blue lady was very glad. She hugged Barkas and kissed him, and Barkas told her about the man with the needles. 'I want this man here,' the blue princess said. Barkas went to the volcano-area again, but he couldn't find him anymore. One day the blue princess decided to go there by herself. She greatly feared the volcano-area,

but she just had to find this man. She went together with Barkas and some of the monsters. They came into a cave which finally ended in a hall which was full of cages with swollen bodies. The bodies were all crying or screaming. The blue princess realized that there were a lot more victims of these indian races. In the distance they saw a throne, on which the man with the needles was sitting. He still looked like a jester and a warrior. He had some feathers in his hair. Barkas recognized him and told it to the princess. 'I want to thank you for setting my guard and friend free,' she shouted.

'Oh welcome, blue princess,' the man shouted back in joy.

'Is there anything I can do for you, I want to show you my gratitude,' the princess shouted.

'Come closer,' the man said.

The blue princess walked up to him without hesitating, while her monsters followed her.

'I want to ask you this,' the man said. 'I am bound to this throne. The moments I am free from it are rare. I am bound to my crown. I want to be free.' Suddenly a huge fire came forth from the ground. 'I know you would not expect me to be the king of all these indians, but I am. If I would leave my throne they would rule everything, and everything would swell up to serve as their meat. I am the only thing stopping them.'

'Yes, but you seem to be their pet,' the princess said. 'I want to take you to my ruins where you can be free.'

'Oh no, that is impossible,' the needle man spoke. 'They will take everything over like I said. Once in awhile I use my needles to set someone free or to make someone immune, but I can't do that too often.'

An old skull came forward from the flames and started to spin. 'Only when this skull shows up and takes my place at the throne, I can get away for awhile to do my needle jobs. But it is only for a short time,' the man said.

'What is it ?' the princess asked.

'It's an old skull,' the man said. 'My father gave it to me once, and it guided me to this place. Here I had my fight against the indians, and here I got my throne. They love my shows. They love my jokes. And the skull takes it over at times. They love it.'

‘But whose skull is it ?’ the princess asked.

‘Oh, I can’t tell,’ the man said, ‘for then I would get into troubles.’

The princess realized the man had some secrets. She knew what heritages could do. Quickly she smashed the skull into pieces, took the man from his throne, and went away with him. The princess recognized these sorts of skulls. She knew them. They were ancient liars. She realized it was a sweet man, and he needed to come with her, as he lived in fears here. It was a place of fear, both in truth and lies, and her instinct told her just to go once to save this man.

In her ruins the man was safe. Barkas asked her about the skull, but she didn’t want to answer. Those skulls loved to get discussed. By that their powers would grow. They worked by fables and fairytales, by legends, all to proclaim their powers by lies. The princess would silence them. She would take them out of the memory, to let them sink away in oblivion.

The End

The Prince of Zgavar

Chapter 1. The Coming of the Judges

Chapter 2. Ink from Hell

Chapter 1.

He had much power on Mars, the man with the organ. Whenever he pushed a key someone would burn. It was cruel machinery. He was an artist. He could fly in the sky with his organ, by pushing the keys, making great melody. But one day his ship exploded. Panthers were licking from his blood. He became a mess, a zombie. And people started to call him the burning one. He couldn't make any melody anymore, but his eyes spat fire. By one stare he could kill, and he couldn't control this force. He was a judge.

When the judges came on Mars things started to change. They had more power than emperors, more power than medical ones, more power than anything. They would fly in helicopters, judging countries, judging continents. They were from Tartarus.

They had intelligence rising above everything. They were movie-makers, dictators, tyrants, sultans in the clouds. They would command you to do something, or not. They were the rulers of the mind. They had their voices in your heart. And what they did was making stories, making a mess of everything, for they were such a mess themselves. They were the Lords of Chaos. Black panthers were their parents, they made the newspapers everyday. They dominated TV.

On doom's day they would fall down, as it had been prophesied in their books. Only the strongest of them would survive. It was the survival of the fittest. So they lived in rage, and judged everything, so that everyone would feel their pains and fears. They were tragic figures.

Tragic figures living in the sky. Living in helicopters, breeding the lie, the big lie. One day they would die. Only the strongest would survive.

There were screams, a man pushed away some big leaves. It was Barkas, a jungle man, barbarian. He lived deep in the jungles of Tartarus, to be safe. Never did he hear a breath of these men, these judges, as he was far away. Living on a piece of paradise. A sorcerer he was, but only by his sword. He didn't believe in magic too much, but in a good fight, like his mother. The sword was his god. Well, his own god was unreachable, Dus, the god of his father, and the god of his mother was Soms. Like his father and mother he didn't believe too much in them. He rarely prayed to them. He had been taught to use his sword.

He was never complaining too much, just dealing with the situations. He was rough, but he was also tender and soft, yes weakness would let him explode at times, then he would completely break down. He was a man after my heart.

I am the great great sorceress. I am the eater of hearts. Through my jaws they will enter, and they will live forever after they have been torn apart. My teeth are sharp and never humble, only when they are deceiving, luring, seducing. I have a great mind, a great body. I am the blue princess.

My copper burns, it's shifting the pictures of the eyes. It's shifting everything. I have spider eyes. I am the blue princess, welcoming them into the nights. My nights are great but murderous. My breaths are hot. I am the dragon. Immunity is what I will bring, by weakness, by the sting.

I am the statue of the night, in their heads I play them songs, I play them long. No, don't go to sleep, you better weep. For the days are wrong, so wrong, let me lure them to my nights, let me lure you, and start the fight. You better wake up.

Barkas was in a shock. This was the first time he heard this strange song. It enchanted him. It was martian TV. They had found him in the jungle, displaying shows in his head. By a knife he cut his head, then he took out the tall plug. They inserted it in the night. By a snake's tooth, yes, by a snake's tooth. It was a foul tooth, tall and brown.

He could behead the snake if he would find it, but it was gone.

The voice of the blue princess was still whispering in his head. He had taken out the plug, but the wound was still there, and the venom had found it's place in his body. He was a victim of martian TV now. What kind of movies would they do ? What kind of trauma's would they bring. A voice was luring him, a voice so deep. 'Welcome to the jungle.'

In that night he died, but someone woke him up again. It was the blue princess. Her voice was sharp, and then so soft. It would wake him up, it would wake him up. He was her puppet now. But it was better than anything else. She had saved him, saved him, from a horrible death.

The wound was burning his skin. He looked up and saw her, with her black panthers. She had a smile he couldn't explain. Now she wanted him further, deeper, she took away his pain.

'Barkas,' she said, 'stay close to me, I will lead you out of this TV, for TV is all zombification technique. I will teach you how to walk, I will teach you how to dance. I have been here before.'

Someone smashed the TV screen. A professor, he had done something wrong. He skipped the channels, and then found this, this lady with the panthers. Something was screaming in his head. It wasn't a good invention.

Mad professors rule Mars, helicopters in the sky. You can never trust them. They are the judges of the mind. In their books it sais they will fall, that's why they make such a carnival. They want you, your soul, to die with them. They are lonely. Why not falling together ? These are the jaws of Mars, enchanting the mass. They are greedy, living to live, to survive, and nothing matters anymore. They call themselves care, they call themselves love, but they are

greedy, hungry, they want your soul. To the elevators of Mars they march, like a secret society, the Sjarun. And downstairs they have their garments.

Oh, those clowns, they fill the sky, they paint your worlds, it's all disguise. They are falling stars, eating is all they can, as they want to forget, forget, forget about the master plan. They are soul hunters, with bodies swollen up, fattened up by TV, they need to shoot you.

What's this skull on an old table. It's an old man, wanting to be young. They dance dances of illusion. You must be strong. They play mr. beautiful, all machinery, who's fattening them up, you want to see ? They like it when you dance, they like it when you grow up, to have a part of the big TV. They like you to grow up there, reach for elevators of Mars, be the big one, be the last one, be the big mouth. It is the survival of the majority, so have many heads. Have a machine of democracy.

You can buy them like icecreams on the fairground. Girl be wise and take two. For tonight is the fight, and only those with the most heads will win. It doesn't care which words you choose, it doesn't care how beautiful you are, how you have studied, or what religion you have …. Only those of the most heads will win, and will take it all ….

So stand up, open your mouth, and show your teeth, show those heads you have inside …. On Mars a million heads show a smile, but a billion heads show a grin. You want to know what's behind the scene ? An advanced skull, the eyes of death, and a sarcastic wide and evil grinning mouth, shouting when it laughs, a dictator behind the mass. He has secret signs on his head, all kings who like to pretend. Pretend to rule the world, it all happens on TV. Old men are isolated, sitting on chairs to watch, and they are kings, great kings, emperors, of their own households, their own puppet families. They can brag like no one can, but no one's listening.

There, deep down in the jungle, the blue princess knows all about it. She showed the fruits to Barkas, these fruits, letting so many heads grow inside. When you open your mouth it's a blast. Those forbidden fruits, those forbidden fruits …. Barkas took a bite and gasped …. Gasped for breath …. She gave him a kiss. 'Now rule with me, my king,' she said. But she was terror, and Barkas ran away. What did he eat ? Did he fall ? Why did she poison him ? Or was it to protect him ? Against all the dictators rising up, wanting so much of Mars.

'You need to protect yourself, Barkas,' she said. 'Mars gets so insane. I will show you your uniform.'

But all he could do was tearing things apart.

'Let me be your rock, Barkas,' she said. But he pushed her away. 'I will induce you to sleep,' she said. 'And I will take you away. In my ruins, in my ruins, in my ruins you will be safe.'

She saved him from death, from horrible beasts. She took him away, while she was bleeding. She gave him grace.

There were guns in the air, they wanted him back. ‘Go back to the volcano, to your jungle.’ Dark voices they had.

They had built their TV inside. By a high voice she could break the screens. She was a siren, his siren. They brought forth voices, she was his everything. She was his echo.

On the stairways a woman stood. She was tall and lovely, tender, selling fruits. So many heads on your skin so small, you will always win, but lose so deep after awhile, for there are secrets, secrets, secrets in the sky. Voices of the dead wanting to have it differently. There was a stairway in his head since that day. He was like a roman emperor now, with a blue skin. Popes were his marionets now, the black ones and the whites, and of course the red ones. It was martian chess they played. And they would play and drink till deep in the night.

In a shock Barkas woke up. He had a psychedelic dream. He stared at a snake before him, while he was still busy. ‘No, don’t bite me again,’ he begged the snake. But the snake was merciless and attacked. There was a warm hand on his mouth, and then it died, and it got cold.

‘No, don’t take me away,’ Barkas screamed. The blue princess stood before him with her leopard. She had a gun in her hand. She had shot the snake. ‘It almost killed you,’ she said. ‘Come.’

But Barkas couldn’t move. Tenderly she took him in her arms. ‘It will take awhile before the poison is out.

When they came to her dark castle she gave him something to eat and to drink. Panthers surrounded them. ‘You are safe here,’ she spoke. ‘Be my guest.’

‘Am I on TV ?’ he asked.

‘No,’ she smiled. ‘I just killed this snake called martian TV. They are dangerous zombificators of the dark. However many get killed by their bites.’

‘I like snakes,’ Barkas said.

‘I like them too,’ the blue princess said. ‘But I just had to save you.’

‘I understand,’ Barkas said.

The day after she showed him the sea behind the ruins. They made a long long walk on the beach. ‘Pirates use to come here,’ she said. ‘Oh, they are such tricksters,’ she said. ‘Tricksters of the mind.’

Chapter 2. Ink from Hell

She opened her mouth, I could see her jaws and her sharp teeth. She was a martian robot. Some of her black-blue gorillas were playing on the beach. She lived in my head. She clapped in her hands three times and an enormous red-skinned man came out of the sea. He had a dark voice. It was like his skin was burning. He was dark red. ‘He can take the poison out of you,’ she said to me. He walked towards me, pushed his hand firmly against my skin, while his hand became black. Then he spat out some black water.

He showed me his hand. Inside there was a TV screen. ‘All ink,’ he said.

‘Is there still such ink in my head ?’ I asked.

‘It will take a long time before everything is out,’ he said. He seemed to be the only one who could handle the ink. But he always had to spit a lot of it out. The rest he would concentrate in his hand. He said he could send images in people’s heads by it.

‘Barkas,’ he said. ‘I live by the ink. Without the ink I die.’

Then he returned to the waters and dived away. The blue princess smiled. I saw the lights in her eyes. Also her panthers seemed to be satisfied. Together we walked to her ruins again, and fell asleep in each others arms.

The End

Lirlit of Kaapsia

The Dog-skeletons of Lokdok

Chapter 1. The Invitation

Lirlit of Kaapsia was walking on a market on Lokdok. Here she would buy some new things for her house. Most of the time she bought weapons and skeletons. Lirlit of Kaapsia believed that by the dead she would have magical powers. When she got home she found a letter on her bed. It was an invitation. She didn't know from who it was, but she knew the place. She didn't trust the letter at all, but she was very curious, so she went there, with her spear. Soon a wolf came out of the bushes and attacked her. It became a long, long fight, but finally she conquered the wolf and took his skeleton. But she didn't know that it's skeleton was still alive, and it began to speak to her : 'Don't you know, far away on the hills, the dog-skeletons live, and when they hear about what you did to me, they will come to get you.' Lirlit said she didn't care, as she was adventurous. 'But first you have to deal with me,' the wolf-skeleton said. And then he rose up to strike her. He had hit her in the cheek, while blood was flowing forth from it. But finally Lirlit smashed the wolf-skeleton against a rock. She decided to take the skull with her, while the rest of the body she left.

When she got home she smashed the wolf-skull on her bed. She was a bit angry. It was like she had hit an alarm-button, and now she had to pay for that. The skull couldn't do anything, but it told her that the dog-skeletons would smell the death of their friend, and they would look for her for sure. Lirlit got so angry, and shouted that she would go to the hills by herself to look for them. She wanted to find out about the invitation. The wolf spoke about the dog-skeletons like they were his big brothers, like they were higher than him, like they were his bosses. She had to find out, instead of waiting for them to come while she would be asleep or something. She left the village, and found her way to the hills. The dog-skeletons were sitting on a rock. Lirlit started to shout at them : 'Hey, who of you fools have sent me an invitation ?' But the dog-skeletons acted like they didn't know anything of it. Lirlit came closer, aiming her spear at them. 'Oh, ohoh,' one of the dog-skeletons said. 'I see it is serious to you, but not to us. We do not know what you are talking about.' When Lirlit told about the wolf and it's skeleton, they said they didn't know him. Lirlit didn't know what was going on. Why did she feel so much anger towards them, and why did she feel they were lying to her ? Or did the wolf lie to her ?

'Relax, lady,' another dog-skeleton said, 'you believe in fairytales and fables, and I can see you are superstitious. Why don't you come with us into the rock ? There's a huge area there.' Lirlit

was still on her guard, but she wanted to find out. Carefully she walked with them into the rock. Inside there was a large room. There were kettles with blood and on the wall there were many bones, while in front of the walls there were shrines made of bones, with ornaments and jewels decorated by organic things. There was a strange smell here, and in a sense Lirlit didn't trust them at all. 'How can I trust you ?' she asked. But the dog-skeletons didn't answer. A door behind them got closed. And one of the dog-skeletons came closer to her. 'How do you like it here ? This is a better invitation than the invitation you talked about.'

'How do you know it's better ?' Lirlit asked distrustful. The dog-skeleton bent a bit towards her, and smiled, saying : 'Because we do not attack you, we believe in peace.' Lirlit sat down and looked around her. 'I must say it is beautiful,' she said.

'Oh yes,' another dog-skeleton said, 'very beautiful.' Then another door opened and some more dog-skeletons entered. Lirlit shivered a bit inside, but then she took a straight attitude.

'Well, you have company here ?' one of the incoming dog-skeletons asked. Some others nodded.

After a drink Lirlit fell asleep. She was very tired. The dog-skeletons took her to a room deeper in the rock. Here she could sleep. It was like their baby was home now. They had searched for her such a long time, and now they had found her.

Days went on, and Lirlit got a good friendship with them, but they never told her about who she was in their eyes. They asked Lirlit to stay with them, but after awhile Lirlit wanted to go home again. She thanked the dog-skeletons for their friendship, but she really had to go now, and told them goodbye.

So they let her go, with pain in their hearts, but now they knew where she lived.

On her way home she got struck by another wolf-skeleton, and this time it was a bigger one. She was about to lose the battle but suddenly a dog-skeleton showed up. He had followed her, to keep a certain eye on her. In a minute he conquered the wolf-skeleton, and broke the bones from each other. Lirlit was very grateful. When she got home she thought about the dog-skeletons a lot. Maybe they were her protectors. She also knew that the wolf-skeletons didn't have friendship with the dog-skeletons. They didn't speak about it, but what had happened spoke for itself. Maybe there were things going on the dog-skeletons didn't want to talk about.

One day an older dog-skeleton came to Lirlit's house. When he went in he told a story to Lirlit. He told her that she was a princess in her younger days, and that they cared for her the first few years of her life, until two wolf-skeletons kidnapped her. They brought her here, where the village took care of her. The older dog-skeleton also said that they didn't know that until she had beaten the first wolf-skeleton. Then they got visions that she would return to them very soon.

Lirlit was confused and asked the dog-skeleton how she could be a princess then. Then the dog-skeleton answered : There is a palace in the North behind the hills where you got born. But there was war in the kingdom, so we went there to save you. We offered you a good home, but the rest of your family died in the war. If we wouldn't take you away from the palace, you would have died also.

Lirlit asked if she could go to that palace again. The dog-skeleton nodded, but it would be full of wolf-skeletons. The kingdom of the North was the kingdom of Kaapsia. It was in the hands of Lirlit's bloodline, but since a foreign king took control, everything was different, and soon he introduced the wolf-skeletons. The members of the palace died all, except Lirlit. The rest of the land had to live in captivity. Lirlit became very sad, but she wanted to know everything about it.

The old dog-skeleton said they had visions about her gathering an army to invade the palace again. Lirlit felt a bit excitement when she heard that. The old dog-skeleton was satisfied that Lirlit was enthousiastic about their visions, and she accepted the role in it. For years the old dog-skeleton had trained an army for the big day, the day that Lirlit, who they still called 'their princess' would invade the palace of Kaapsia again.

Lirlit went back to the place of the dog-skeletons again, with the old dog-skeleton, who showed her the room where the soldiers were. They had all sorts of sharp knives and spears, in all sorts of shapes. They had strange jewels in their skeletons, spreading a magical light over their bodies. Lirlit asked how many wolf-skeletons there would be in the palace. But no one seemed to know. It was something they needed to find out. Lirlit said she didn't feel anything for being a princess again, but she wanted to invade the palace to free the land. Maybe the dog-skeletons could rule it then. Some of the soldiers nodded. One of them told about the old king. He was a mean traitor, but no one could exactly tell how he came into war against Kaapsia, and why. In a sense Lirlit wanted to know, but first they needed to take the palace back again.

On their way to the North an old man appeared to them. It was like he came out of the nothing. One of the dog-skeletons said it was a witch-doctor. 'What is your purpose to come here ?' the man asked. 'All what you do here will fail.' And then he was gone.

But Lirlit didn't let herself become discouraged. Finally they came to the palace, but it was empty. There was no one there. Inside there were a lot of dead skeletons, bones, skulls and other organic stuff, often in the form of ornaments, or as decoration for jewels. There was a strange smell here. 'Go away !' someone whispered loud. None of the dog-skeletons was speaking. Maybe it was a ghost. There were a lot of rooms in the palace, and the dog-skeletons desired to live in this place. Also in the other parts of the land there was no living being. It seemed like death had already struck this place. They found a lot of magical objects and strange advanced weaponry in the land. It seemed like those who dwelled here were very superstitious, because they also found a lot of shrines. Lirlit knew it was very easy for them to take over the land, but one of the dog-skeletons didn't have a good feeling about it. He thought the land had become bewitched, and they had to take what they needed, and then leave as soon as possible. Lirlit thought it was a good idea.

Full of stuff the dog-skeletons returned home, and also Lirlit returned to her village. The palace and it's land only had to be a memory, nothing more, nothing less. The dog-skeletons stayed in their part, and Lirlit stayed in her village.

Chapter 2. The Witch-Doctor

Lirlit thought a lot about the witch-doctor they met on their way to Kaapsia. She didn't think he was an evil man, but she had troubles in her head since he spoke out that everything she would do there would fail. Was it a curse ? The dog-skeletons had teached her that she

shouldn't be superstitious. They had their own shrines, but they said these were heritages. They didn't believe in magic, although they had visions. It was like they were very paradoxal in a sense, or didn't she just understand them. Could she trust them ? She couldn't get the words of the witch-doctor out of her head. At a certain moment she started to scream. Suddenly the witch-doctor showed up in her room, as coming out of the nothing. 'You woman,' he said, 'why have you taken away so many things from our land and palace. Now you have to pay for it deep in yourself, seeing your twisted self, yes, inner battles are in you now, and there is no medicine to stop it.' Lirlit bowed down before the witch-doctor. 'What can I do ? Can you please stop the pain I have ?'

'You must bring all that you have taken away from Kaapsia back to it, so that the pain will also flee from you,' the witch-doctor said. So that was what she decided to do. It was for her relief, and then she asked the witch-doctor, who was still with her : 'Isn't that which is from Kaapsia not from me, as I am coming forth from Kaapsia as the last survivor it seems.'

But then the witch-doctor started to laugh. 'We have lived there for thousand and thousands of years as ghosts, so it is our right to have it, above all flesh and blood.'

'The ghosts rule,' he shouted. Lirlit didn't feel well, and asked him what she would have to do further to find peace. 'There is something I need to tell you,' the witch-doctor spoke. 'Your father has captured us for a long time. By the hand of Lokdok's king we could be set free. But now we seek for revenge, for you are indeed the last survivor. You are the last block in our attempt to reach freedom.' Lirlit started to scream, as she felt like she was burning inside. She ran outside, but the ghost jumped on her. There was no one around, but soon a few dog-skeletons came. They jumped towards the ghost and started to cut it's appearence by a strange edged and shaped knife. The ghost started to scream. 'Well, you want to bring her back to superstition ?' one of the dog-skeletons asked. And then he spoke to Lirlit : 'Don't believe in those fables of magic.'

'I try not to do,' Lirlit said, 'but it has me in the grip.'

'You need help,' the other dog-skeleton said. They brought her again to the hills, where they had their place. The ghost had been gone now, but Lirlit still had problems. 'Here, drink this,' one of the dog-skeletons said, and gave her some strange juice. Immediately Lirlit fell asleep. When she woke up she was in another room. An old dog-skeleton stood before her. She didn't meet him before yet. He said : 'Don't be superstitious, but believe in your only fantasy. You don't need them, those witch-doctors. They shouldn't control your life. They actually did that since your birth, but now it is your time to come free.'

'But I can't !' Lirlit shouted. 'It's in my feelings.' Suddenly there was all knocking on the door, and soon a lot of wolf-skeletons came in. They killed the old dog-skeleton and kidnapped Lirlit. They brought her back to the palace, and put her on a throne of bones and skulls, decorated by other organic stuff. Lirlit didn't know what was going on, but it seemed they wanted her to be a princess. 'I do not want to be here !' Lirlit shouted.

'Why not ?' one of the wolf-skeletons asked.

'For you have killed my land,' Lirlit said, 'and now you killed one of my friends.'

'Oh, and what do you know about it,' another wolf-skeleton said, 'You do not know what you're talking about.'

Lirlit jumped away from the throne and tried to escape, but finally they bound her to the throne. 'Now you will listen to us for awhile,' an older wolf-skeleton roared. He seemed to be a leader of the group. 'They have lied to you,' he spoke. 'We have sent you an invitation, but you never came ... Instead of that you went to the deceiving dog-skeletons.'

'Oh, that's not true,' Lirlit said, 'I came to that place, but a wolf was attacking me. I had to kill it. I thought it was a trap.'

'No, you never came,' the wolf-skeleton roared again, 'we have sent you an invitation, because we wanted to tell you about who you are and what happened.'

But then an army of dog-skeletons arrived in front of the palace. The wolf-skeletons all ran outside, but a few stayed to guard Lirlit. 'If I am so important to you, why do you do all these things to me ?' Lirlit asked. But none of the wolf-skeletons answered that question.

Soon also the other wolf-skeletons went outside, until Lirlit was alone. After an hour or so two dog-skeletons came to her. They delivered her. The rest of the dog-skeletons and all of the wolf-skeletons had died in the fight. Lirlit was confused about what happened. 'They tried to confuse me, these wolf-skeletons,' she said.

'Well, they are confusers,' one of the dog-skeletons said. 'The witchdoctors use them to keep their victims in superstition. By the superstition they control their victims also.'

Lirlit nodded. She remembered the words of the old dog-skeleton who had been killed by the wolf-skeletons who kidnapped her. He said : 'Believe in your own fantasy.' How could she do that if she would be a princess, or a believer in some sort of spiritual government. It would control her life.

Chapter 3. Hard against Hard

Lirlit was confused. What was her role in Kaapsia now ? She knew that the more wolf-skeletons had been destroyed, the more power the witch-doctors would lose. For her it would mean : she need to lose all her faith in them to replace it by her own fantasy. The dog-skeletons would help her in that.

She chose to return to her village again. She always felt best in her own home. She was adventurous, but it would always lead her home. To her it was : home, sweet home. There was no way for her to forget about home. It was like everything started from here, and everything always ended here. There were always some dog-skeletons around to keep a certain eye on her, and she felt safe with that. She needed some guards. Espacially when she was sleeping, it was an amazing feeling. It made her warm and soft inside. She would also protect them with her life, as she saw them as true friends.

There was nothing making her more happy than the feeling that she had friends. And these friends were her friends since her birth. She was so glad that she found them back. Friends are always life-savers, letting you feel good when they are around .... loved .... cared for ..... protected ..... Even when it is hard against hard .....

The End

The Wolf-Crown

Lirlit of Kaapsia was on her way home. She had made a long journey, and now she came back to her village. When she came home there was a man sitting on her bed. It was a sort of sorceror dressed by all sorts of small skeleton-skulls. He was like a necromancer or something. Lirlit smiled. It was a surprise. It was her uncle.

'Lirlit,' the man said, 'I want you to come with me, I need to show you something.' They had to go to a tall hill where the man lived in a sort of old tower. It looked like a castle in a sense, but it was like a den of a wild animal. When they were in the top of the tower they had a good survey there. Lirlit could see her village in the distance. It was so small from here. Then the man shrieked, while a bat showed up. It was a huge bat and it floated down on his stretched hand. Then it crept to his shoulder.

'I want you to have it, Lirlit,' the man spoke.

'But why, uncle ?' Lirlit asked.

‘It needs to help you, as there are a lot of dangers in life.’ the man said. Lirlit knew that it was just a gift from his warm heart. He cared for her a lot and didn’t want anything bad to happen in her life.

At the same time her uncle asked her to stay for awhile. He missed her, as she was the last survival of the family. Lirlit got a room somewhere high in the tower. It was very dark here, and skulls were all around. But Lirlit never had problems with that, as she believed that the dead watched over her.

In the middle of the night her uncle entered in her room. He was looking for something. Lirlit asked him what was going on. She had heard sounds around the tower. ‘I think war is already beginning,’ her uncle said. He was looking for certain weapons. Suddenly they heard wolves coming in the tower. The uncle murmured something about a wolf-war. Lirlit stood up, and took her own spear. When she went out of her room there were three wolves jumping on her. Why would wolves wage war against them ? Lirlit shrieked, and all of a sudden the huge bat entered, while he struck the wolves immediately. Blood was spouting like fontains. The bat had hit them hard, fast and deep.

Other wolves entered in, while they were calling : ‘We are looking for Lirlit of Kaapsia, sorceror. Hand her over to us.’ But Lirlit’s uncle who had finally found his weapon stood already behind Lirlit. He had a sort of whip with a sharp knife at it’s end, and in a few seconds he had hit the other wolves to the ground. But then hundreds of wolves entered the tower in roaring. ‘What do they want from me ?’ Lirlit asked.

‘You are the last survivor of the Kaapsia-bloodline,’ her uncle said. The bat was shrieking, while some of the wolves fell down. They could kill some of the wolves, but they were with too many. They ran to Lirlit’s room again, and had to jump out of the window. Fortunately they fell into a river. Lirlit’s uncle was the husband of the sister of Lirlit’s mother. He was from the Lokdok-bloodline.

In the forest they found a sort of palace, full of bones, skulls, skeletons and organic decorations, shrines, weapons and magical objects. They decided to stay here for awhile in the hope that the wolves wouldn’t find them. The wolves believed that when they would kill the last survivor of the Kaapsia-bloodline they would dominate so much more. Then they would have power over Lokdok, Lirlit’s village, and further the whole realm of Kaapsmerh. They wanted to have the throne and the crown.

Later Lirlit found out that it had to do with the fact that she was a princess of origin. If they would have her blood they would rule. In the palace they decided to stay they found an old skeleton-crown. Lirlit didn’t want to have anything to do with governmental positions. She wanted to be free. She thought that monarchal positions would bind someone to superstition to block their own fantasy. She brought the skeleton-crown to a shrine. It was a beautiful crown, and they would honour it as a sovenir, as a heritage and as a memory. Her uncle had already found out how powerful the objects in this palace of the wilderness was. It seemed like no one had been dwelling here for a long time. There was dust everywhere, and it was a mess. Maybe there was a war here, and the owners had left the palace because of that. Lirlit

was afraid of the magical beliefs of her uncle. She thought it could harm him. She was of the opinion that superstition was a way of evil spirits to take control in someone's brain. It was a prison, and they had to leave it. A crown was in her eyes nothing more than a subtile chain of a prisoner, something which controlled their minds, and by which evil spirits could work and rule.

One day her uncle went for a walk, and he pierced deeper into the wilderness. Suddenly she heard a shriek. Maybe her uncle was calling for his bat, but Lirlit didn't trust it. She ran towards the sound, and after a long run she saw smoke coming behind an open field. When she came into the next area of the forest she saw her uncle standing there between wild men having bones pierced through their noses. They had killed the bat, and they held a knife against the throat of Lirlit's uncle. Lirlit didn't hesitate for one moment and threw her spear through the head of the one with the knife. Her uncle jumped away, while Lirlit took her leg-knives to throw it into the hearts of two other wild ones. The rest of the wild men were in a shock and ran away. 'Don't let them escape,' Lirlit shouted. 'I know them, they are the ones spreading so much superstition. They have objects by which they rule the minds of so many in this area. They have even tried to zombificate our village.' But then her uncle fell down. What had happened. There was a strange sting in his back, and it was moving. It was like a small red iron feather. Lirlit took it out, while her uncle started to talk in a strange language. 'Oah, you're into delirium,' Lirlit said. That was a good sign to her. It was the sign that he didn't die, and that he tried to deal with the poison.

But to Lirlit it was very important she would follow the tribe, as they had surpressed her village for such a long time. Lirlit knew them. She ran and ran, while she could still track them. After minutes of running she saw smoke, and after awhile she entered the area of the tribe. She didn't feel any fear, only strength. She shouted and shrieked, while another bat was coming. This was a huge one, and quickly he attacked the members of the tribe. Lirlit saw that only some women and children were running away. She believed that they were nothing but prisoners of these evil men. It was a long fight, and afterwards Lirlit's uncle entered the area. There was no any man still alive. They found a lot of strange objects here. But then the wolves entered the village.

There were more and more bats in the air, and they all helped Lirlit in her fight. It was a great slaughter. The wolves couldn't win the battle. But suddenly a much bigger wolf showed up. He had the crown with the skeleton-skulls. Lirlit asked herself if it was the crown of the wild palace, or was it something else. All of a sudden headaches started to come over Lirlit. 'Don't believe in it,' she said to herself. 'Believe in your fantasy, girl.'

But the pain got stronger and deeper, and she fell to the ground, as in delirium. The wolf started to roar : 'Indigo, princess, it is time I will feed myself with your blood to become the king of Lokdok and ruler of Kaapsmerh.' And he jumped towards her, while he bit in her arm, sucking the blood out of her. Her uncle had found a weapon in one of the tents, and attacked the wolf from behind. He crashed a sharp iron blade in a strange shape into the neck of the wolf, but the wolf turned around and attacked him. Then Lirlit kicked the wolf in his back, and shouted : 'Oh, you dumb one, now you have the crown and my blood, only ghosts will control you, as they have lust to use slaves like you to dominate the atmosphere. Let the skies fall upon you.' Then the wolf ran away, and disappeared through the bushes. Lirlit's uncle

had been wounded, but Lirlit took care of it. He would survive. Also Lirlit's arm was still bleeding, but she would also survive.

After awhile women and children of the tribe entered the area again, and they were glad they were delivered from the men now. Originally they were from another tribe, and once they had been captured, while their own men and even a lot of their children got killed. Since then they had to be the wives and slaves of the invaders. They told Lirlit and her uncle that they knew where the wolves had their shelter.

Lirlit wanted to go there. The women wanted to go with her too, but other women warned them that they wouldn't survive. But Lirlit's uncle would go with them. It was a long walk, and first they had to move along stakes with skeletons tied to it. Some of the skeletons had been hung. It was a dark atmosphere. Suddenly they saw a warrior in a wolf-skin. He ran away, and then he disappeared by creeping into the bushes. Now they knew that there weren't only wolves there, but also warriors. But some of the women told that these warriors could sometimes totally turn into wolves. They came into a sort of center. Everything looked quiet. Stones had been laid here, and there were some small temples, piramids in layers, shrines, and an indian man slowly walked towards them. His arm was stretched out, like he wanted to shake hands with them. But one of the women started to shriek. 'I have seen him in my dreams. He is the one who raped me, and he will rape us all.'

The indian man started to smile. 'This woman is confused,' he said. But Lirlit asked him who he was, and what his purpose is. Is he a part of this ? But the man didn't say anything. It really pissed Lirlit off. She took her spear, but suddenly she couldn't move herself. 'Don't believe in it,' she said to herself, 'believe in your fantasy.' And then she could move her arm again. She started to hit him by the spear, but the man was too quick, and then he ran away. 'What is this for strange behaviour,' she asked herself. Also her uncle was coming closer. Suddenly he started to roar, like he was in fire inside. Then he fell to the ground. Again he was talking in delirium. 'There is witchcraft here,' one of the women said. 'This is the way they always tried to confuse us.' But then Lirlit said : 'Let us not believe in witchcraft and all this superstition, for when we believe in it and practice it, the spirits who made it up will have control in our minds. We must use our own fantasy.'

'Oh, but it is too strong,' another woman said.

'Will you shut up now,' Lirlit shouted, 'our fantasy is stronger.' But other women started to shake their heads. 'You do not know the powers you're playing with,' an older women said. 'The women who are still in the camp have warned us, but we didn't listen to their advice. Let's go back, for strange things are happening here, and we do not have control. What can we do ? We do not know with how many they are here ? I do not want to die, let's return.'

'Okay,' Lirlit said angry, 'all cowards can go home. But we must deal with it.' And since then a lot of the women returned to the camp. The anger towards Lirlit and her uncle started to rise, although they were the ones who had saved them out of the hands of the evil tribe. Then

suddenly Lirlit started to shriek while the air became black of bats. She was calling for her friends, something which she had learned from her precious uncle. In quick rythm the bats began to invade the temples, the layered doubledecker-piramids and the tents, but they couldn't find anything. It was like a ghost-city. No one was there, but they knew that some were hiding.

The bats shrieked, and the sky became darker and darker. They had to pierce this city in the wilderness, this wolf-city. And so they invaded it deeper and deeper. Lirlit's uncle was still talking in delirium. He was calling for some names, or it was only looking like it. 'Uncle,' Lirlit spoke, 'I want you to stop now with all your superstition. It is too dangerous to do that here. Let the bats do their job, and let our weapons speak. We must use wisdom now, and our fantasy.' But it was like her uncle was too far gone, and he spoke on in a delirious language. Lirlit got more and more angry at her uncle, and suddenly she hit him in the face, and screamed : 'Now you shut up, or I will cut your head off here, in the sand.' She knew she had gone too far now, and one of the bats, a huge one, came down to her, to bite her in the face. Blood was spouting like a fountain. The bat didn't want to let go of his bite, while Lirlit was bleeding all over. But then suddenly they heard the sound of a dull kick. Lirlit's uncle had killed the bat by his weapon. He had always sworn to his family that he would protect Lirlit by his life, no matter what circumstance.

Slowly they walked on, while more and more women were leaving them. These women knew that the curse was so strong that when they would go further they would probably kill each other. 'Lirlit, you are losing your mind by the wolfspell,' a woman was shouting, 'return !' Even the bats started to attack them now. They were in rage because they had killed one of them. They were shrieking higher than ever, and the hugest bats came down. It was a long fight. Now they had to fight their friends instead of the enemy. But Lirlit knew that it was the sacrifice they had to bring. Suddenly there were lights all over. There was thunder, and lightening, and a wolf in a black garment stood like a warrior before them. 'I am the ghost of the ancestors,' he spoke. 'Why do you challenge me.'

Lirlit tried to explain about what happened, and what the wolves did to them, but the wolf started to laugh. 'Oh, you dumb dumb mortals without a soul, only enlightened to right your own crimes. Do you know history ? Do you know both sides of the story ? Oh wanderers of the mind, do you not know that you can only escape the powers of the mind to control the minds of others ? I do not bear a crown. I have given them to my servants, my wolf-king.' Then the appearence left again. Lirlit looked at her uncle. They found out they were both very wounded because of the bat-attacks. There were no bats to help them anymore, and there were no women with them anymore. Now Lirlit and her uncle were at their own, not knowing what would happen, and where were their weapons ? In front of them there was only fog. But Lirlit's uncle took her by the arm, and they walked forwards. Suddenly they didn't feel ground below their feet anymore, and they were falling. They fell so deep like they never fell before, and suddenly it was all wet around them . They had been fallen into the river. The river was wild, and in speed they were moving towards a waterfall. They would die when they would fall from the edge. They both started to shriek and fell from the edge. They both thought this was the end, as the waterfall was very deep. But suddenly two huge bats grasped them to fly away with them. They still had friends there, it appeared. They brought them to a huge batnest high on the mountains.

The bats here were drinking out of eggs, and Lirlit and her uncle also had to drink. Suddenly they both fell asleep. When they woke up, they were in a cave in the mountain. The ground was very slimy, and huge eggs laid all around. Most of the eggs were broken open, while strange fluids were in them. Some even were full of blood, while it streamed out of it. One of the bats entered the room. He stood erected, like he was half a man, half a bat. Suddenly he turned into an old man. He looked like a necromancer. He had a very wise radiation, but also a confused one. It had a delirious effect on Lirlit and her uncle. They felt very dizzy when they looked at him. 'I am here to warn you,' the old man said. 'You must lose all your superstition, or the wolves will lead you back to your previous life, in which you were dominated by your mind.'

Lirlit and her uncle both nodded. They knew how important it was what the man said.

Then the man continued : 'The battle against the wolves is a hard battle. If they win our minds will be controlled again.'

'What can we do about it ?' Lirlit asked. Then the man started to shriek, while two bats flew into the room. Then he clapped in his hand, while the bats floated down on the bench. 'You know,' the old man said, 'parts of us are bats. And we must use them well. They have the weaponry to destroy the wolf-domination.'

'But how ?' Lirlit asked.

'Come,' the old man said, 'I will show you.' Then the man walked out of the room. Lirlit and her uncle followed him. They came in a narrow corridor with a strange smell. Then they came into another room, with a lot of dust on the ground. Lirlit started to cough. There were slimy eggs around, and from some of them snakes were coming forth, and much of slime dripped out. 'Come,' the old man said, 'this is not what I want to show you. Walk on.' Then the man opened another door. The doorhandle was decorated by very small skeleton-skulls. High sounds like shrieks came out of their mouths, and even out of the holes of their eyes. Then again they had to walk through a narrow corridor, but later they found out it was a bridge. Below the bridge their were smokey fluids, and wet towels like sheets were hanging in the air like walls. The towels were very hot, and steam was coming from them. A strange huge yellow rock stood there at the end of the bridge, and they had to climb over it. It was like burning sand under their feet. They were entering a sort of desert in a huge cave. The sand was burning. All sorts of feelings were climbing over Lirlit's body, trying to enter her head. 'Au,' Lirlit said. It was like something had burnt her. In the distance there were a lot of silver rocks mirroring so many things. There was a soft breeze. On the rocks bats appeared. They had mirroring weaponry, and while Lirlit was watching these mirrors she couldn't see the bats anymore, only herself in terrible ways. It was like her mind was taking over again, and she couldn't use her fantasy.

Suddenly she couldn't move again. It was like something had frozen her. 'Grasp the bat-weapons !' someone was shouting. But Lirlit couldn't see anything anymore, so she started to grasp in the air. Suddenly she felt like a velvet handle in her hand. And then something in her other hand. She opened her eyes and could move again. Now she could see the bats in the

mirrors. But these weren't bats, but boys. They looked like princes, but they had poor clothes in such beautiful colours. When they opened their mouths fantasy was climbing into her head. She had now received the bat-armour. She also saw her uncle in the same armour. But suddenly wolves were all around them. Now they had to use their new weapons. Within a few minutes they had slain all the wolves. It was easier than ever. The old man was applauding. He had a white garment now. His tall beard was very shiny, but suddenly he was changing into a bat again and flew away. Also the boys were changing into bats again and flew away. 'Follow us,' someone shouted. But how ? 'Just shriek,' another one shouted. And while Lirlit and her uncle shrieked, they were changing into bats, and could fly away.

High in the sky there was a palace. It was full of crowns, but they didn't use these crowns anymore. They had been laid on shrines. There were also flowers on the shrines. Upstairs there was a hall with old thrones, but they weren't in use anymore. They looked like shrines now, and some weapons were laid on them. But suddenly someone was shrieking, and flying wolves were coming out of the walls, and through all sorts of doors. Now there was a battle in the air. 'Use your fantasy,' the old man spoke. 'Use your fantasy.' And suddenly they were sitting in the room again, where they had slept. 'What happened ?' Lirlit asked.

'You were in my fantasy,' the old man said. 'and it is all real. But now you have to develop your own fantasy.'

Lirlit asked herself if she could do that. There were so many things they had to solve yet. But her fantasy would lead her in that. That was what the old man had said. They stayed on the bat-castle for a long time, and then they had to return to their own homes again. 'Practice your fantasy.' the man had said. 'Make it your own, and let it be your home.'

The End

The Wolf-Skull

Chapter 1.

Lirlit had been going to the market in her village. She had bought some stones called eagle-eyes. One she had put on her cupboard, and another one she laid next to her bed. Some had said the stones would attract good luck and contacts with the dead and extra-ordinary spirits, but Lirlit wasn't superstitious. She just liked the stones, and found it would be worth as good company. But in the middle of the night someone was waking her. It was like the wind was speaking to her, but then she saw an eagle close to an opening in her house. The eagle spoke to her that she needed to come to snake-mountain, as he wanted to show her something. When she stood outside her house, the eagle was very big. He took her in a good grip and flew with her to snake-mountain. He brought her in through an opening. 'Do you see all the treasures

here ?' he asked. Lirlit could see a shimmering hall full of misty treasures. 'I know you like stones,' the eagle said, 'and I know you will like some of the stones here.' Lirlit was very grateful towards the eagle. He took her in a grip again and flew with her inside the huge hall. The stones were beautiful, but when Lirlit touched one of the stones, it was like there was an alarm switched on. Something in her head started to shriek, and from all sides snakes came towards her. 'Why didn't you tell this ?' she asked the eagle, but the eagle flew away. 'Hey, take me away,' Lirlit screamed.

Suddenly all sorts of snakes were sliding over her body, but they didn't attack her. And after awhile Lirlit found out that these snakes didn't wish any harm on her, but were her friends. She took the stone again, stood up, and walked towards a door. The snakes were following her. In another hall there were more amazing stones. Lirlit asked herself what would be the meaning of it all. And where was the eagle ? 'I am not superstitious,' Lirlit said to the snakes, 'but what is the meaning of these stones ?' But the snakes didn't speak to her. Suddenly a man and a woman entered the hall where Lirlit was. For a moment it was like Lirlit had to vomit. The man had a tall beard, and the woman was dressed in fragile white. It was because of the smell that Lirlit was a bit upset. They smelled like snakes and slime, but also things she couldn't describe. Suddenly they started to turn into tall and thin snakes. It looked like they completely ignored Lirlit. Like they had other things to do. Lirlit appeared not to be one of their priorities. They slided towards the stones, and then they moved them towards the door they came from. Lirlit got very curious what they would do with the stones. So she decided to follow them. When she stood into the door-opening the smell even more overwhelmed her, but this time it was even luring her deeper. She saw snakes here with very big beaks, and when they opened these beaks other snakes went in, and sometimes they even took stones with them. The snakes weren't huge, and Lirlit wondered what happened to the snakes who went inside. It was a riddle to Lirlit.

Deeper inside the hall, where many snakes were moving to, an enormous statue lay on the ground. It was cut off from it's feet, enormous feet which stood next to the statue, still erected and intact. It was like a complex of doors through which the snakes slided in. Lirlit decided to follow them inside the enormous feet of the statue. Inside they saw the stones growing here. They looked like eyes, and there were even stones coming forth from them. But when the stones were separated from the others, it more began to look like stones, and it didn't grow anymore. Some of the stones were very wet, but that also seemed to stop when they got separated. Most of the stones were very shiny.

There was a tunnel in the halls of the feet to come into the fallen statue. When Lirlit came into the halls of the fallen statue there was a lot of darkness and fog. She couldn't see much, but suddenly lights turned on, and she saw snakes hanging in the air or on the walls like bags. Often these snakes were brown-red with white stripes. It was a very pure white. These snakes were very huge, and suddenly some of them fell on Lirlit. Now it was all dark, and she almost couldn't breath anymore. She tried to shriek, but couldn't get any sound out of her mouth. Then she fell into delirium. But soon the grip of the snakes wasn't tight anymore, and she could wrestle herself a way out. Then they left her alone. Still she had the feeling they didn't want to harm her, but they just wanted to test her, or just feel her. They had been sensitive to her trouble, and then they had let her go.

Suddenly the eagle appeared to her again. The eagle was glad to see her. 'It is amazing here,' she told the eagle.

‘But did you find some stones you would like to have already ?’ the eagle asked. But there were so many stones and so many halls, that Lirlit had the sense she wasn’t done with it yet. Then she asked the eagle what exactly the use of the stones is. ‘The stones protect you against superstition by which lower spirits want to dominate the mind,’ the eagle said, ‘these stones inspire you to have your own fantasy.’

‘But don’t you think that is also superstition ?’ Lirlit asked. ‘Why do I need these stones ?’ But then the eagle flew away. It was like he was telling her to find that out for herself. She felt attracted to the stones, that was a sure thing, but she didn’t want to have a new superstition. Or were these stones just her guards ? Some said stones could speak to the layers beneath the mind, to the unconscious. What if these stones were just forces of nature ? Were they made to protect the souls of those who lived in nature ? Lirlit had many questions. And it was like these stones were speaking to her in so many ways.

Deeper in the statue she found doors out of it. Now she came in halls behind the fallen statue. Eyes were watching her. Was this the domain of someone ? A wild man in a bearskin watched her, while two woman were lying at his feet. ‘What is it you come to do,’ the man roared. Lirlit could see it wasn’t totally a man. He was also a sort of dog, or other predator. Maybe she needed to be at her guard now, for the women didn’t look so friendly either. ‘Lirlit,’ the man was suddenly saying, ‘I have waited for you, I missed you.’ And then he came forwards to her.

Lirlit stepped backwards, and shouted : ‘Who are you ?’

‘I am your father,’ the man said.

‘Oh no,’ Lirlit said, ‘that can’t be true, you liar. My father died in war.’

‘They said that,’ the man said, ‘but that wasn’t true. They made a mistake. I had been kidnapped for a long time by imperials, by wolf-warriors, lived my life lonely in a prison deep underground, but finally escaped. I didn’t wish to live in the empire anymore, and didn’t want to be king of Kaapsia anymore, so I started to live here, with my friends, the snakes who let me escape.’

But Lirlit still wasn’t enthousiast. ‘If that’s true, then I have to say : You did a lot of evil things in your life they told me.’

The man bowed his head, and spoke : ‘I have to admit, I was wrong many times. I was king of Kaapsia and wasn’t always righteous in the use of my powers, and that is why I have laid them down. The pressure it too big, and I lived under a strange force.’

‘And who are these women,’ Lirlit asked rude.

‘They are snakes,’ the man said. Then he clapped in his hand, and the women turned into snakes again, while they slided away. Then Lirlit stepped forwards and fell into the arms of her father.

Chapter 2.

‘There are many things I need to tell you,’ Lirlit’s father said. ‘I’m breeding the eggs of snakes here, for one day I will return to the empire to take revenge.’

‘Well, I’m on your side dad,’ Lirlit said. The man smiled. He was glad he found his daughter back.

Lirlit found out that her father had many women here. But as he said : He needed to breed a new and powerful generation to take good vengeance.

‘Your life is such an ornament,’ Lirlit’s father told her, ‘and also the things happened in your life which you do not understand are part of this treasure.’ Lirlit smiled. It was the first time in her life that she had the feeling of having a father. And it was a good feeling, especially because he was so caring.

Her father told her a lot about the power of the wolf-skulls, that these were the objects by which the imperials maintained their control. The wolf-skulls could speak and could easily take over the minds. In one of the halls an old sorceror, a necromancer lived. Lirlit’s father often went to him for advice, and this time he wanted to bring his daughter with him. They had to go to a higher place within the mountain. It was almost like a tower. It was even called the tower, or more : the Boa-Constrictor Tower. The wizard was glad to see them. He looked at Lirlit and blinked to her. Then he made a movement with his hand and asked them to follow him. On top of the tower they could have a survey as it was almost outside the mountain. It was a very high place, and from here they could see the whole empire. The wizard told them where the wolf-skulls were, and where the most powerfull wolf-skulls were, but Lirlit told them that she wasn’t superstitious. She didn’t believe in all that. She believed in using fantasy. And after a long talk with the wizard she got a bit pissed off. And she shouted : ‘Okay, go on with your magic, your superstition full of fables to see how it will bring you down. I’m out of here. It’s unbelievable that an old man like you never grew up, and it’s even more unbelievable that my father searches for advice in you. Goodbye.’ And then she ran away. She took some of the stones she had found and then she called for the eagle, who took her immediately to her home.

When she got home she remembered that she had a wolf-skull by herself for one time she slayed a wolf who had attacked her. She thought it would be a good present for her father and his wizard. She didn’t want to have anything to do with such powers. She knew that to have part in any government would break you down and control your life. It was all superstition made by ghosts and spirits to dominate them all in secret. So she gave the skull to the eagle, and asked him to bring the skull to the mountain, to her father.

Her father was very glad with the present. And of course he wouldn’t use it to make a new government. Her father didn’t want to be a king again, also not as a sorceror. He would hide the wolf-skull deep in the snake-mountain so that no one could do harm with it anymore. It

would be nothing more than a sovenir and a memory. Lirlit was very proud of him when she heard the story.

The End

Zebra-Mountain

Chapter 1.

Lirlit awoke by a hand taking her in grip very rude. She opened her eyes. Two leaders of her village stood in her room, commanding her to come with them to the old chief of the village. They took her very tight and went outside. ‘What’s going on ?’ Lirlit asked. But none of them said something. When they got to the tent of the chief they pushed her inside. ‘Hey, don’t be so rude,’ she said loud to them.

‘Go, sit down on my bed,’ the chief said. He had a tall beard and was bald. Lirlit sat down, and then the chief started to tell. He clapped in his hands, and then a servant came inside the tent. He showed her all sorts of small things made by zebra-bones.

‘I don’t know what your point is,’ Lirlit said to the chief. ‘I didn’t make those things. I didn’t kill any of your zebra’s. I always enjoy going to the zebra-reservate to feed them and to have friendship with them.’

But then the chief said : ‘They found the zebra-bone-figures in your home, so you must know more about it. I’m telling you again. Sixty-six of our zebra’s have been killed lately. They left their skins, but they took the bones away.’

But Lirlit became paniced and said : ‘I do not know these figures, and I would never kill such a zebra. Why would I do that ?’

But the chief wasn’t convinced and made the decision to lock her up. At the side of the village she had to live in a cage like an animal. Lirlit wondered how the figures would come in her house. She didn’t trust the leaders. She had troubles with them before, and she thought that this could be all an act of revenge.

Everyday the old chief came to her cage to talk to her. ‘Honestly, I am very disappointed in you. I thought you were such a good and skilled woman, but how wrong I was. You have taken the life of that which was most dear to me,’ he said. If someone would do any harm to his zebra’s, then he always said he would die. And the chief became very ill. He couldn’t eat nor sleep because of what happened to his zebra’s. It was for him a disgusting sight to see the figures made of zebra-bones. And after a few weeks he died.

Lirlit didn’t have any hope. Maybe they would kill her finally, or she would have to live in this cage forever. But one day another leader came to the cage. They had another chief now, and they had decided to ban her to a slave-island, where she would work the rest of her life.

Lirlit didn’t know if she had to be glad with that or not. She would find out. Soon after the decision she was planted on a ship, and after a few days she came on the island. It was a beautiful island, but she knew she had to work here. She came to live between criminals, murderers, assassins, witch-doctors, and other evil men and women. A lot of them she knew from the past. She never could get along with them, although a lot of them she only knew by face.

She had to do hard work, and she didn’t get enough time to sleep. It was like it was all slowly driving her crazy. She had the feeling she would lose her mind if she would live here any longer. It was hot here, and there was always a lot of noise here, even in the nights. One day she couldn’t take it anymore. She began screaming and talking deliriously. Everyone thought she had gone crazy, and that would mean she would be banned to an even worse island where the sick and crazy ones lived.

This would be hell for her, for there would be even more noise, and they said slavery would even be harder there. They dropped her on a ship again. The island was very dirty and a lot of them died by all sorts of diseases. She had to sleep with a hundred sick and crazy ones in one

hall. There was too much noise to get sleep, and they had to wake up very early to work a whole day in a factory. Lirlit was scared of a lot of types here, for they didn't have control over themselves. Everyday there were a lot of murders and other sorts of crimes.

However one of the leaders here got a passion and weak spot towards her. She always told him she was unguilty, and he believed her. But he said she could never return to her village, because the ones who had lost their minds could be a danger to the city. However, he was willing to let her escape. He only asked her to spend the night with him one time. But this she refused. She would escape at her own. But after months and months she found out there was no way to escape. She was always chained, and there was no way to get it loose.

So she went to the leader again, and talked with him about it, but he was like struck in his honour. He told her he had found another woman to let her escape in her place, so everything was done now. But in a strange sense he felt compassion towards her. He decided to refuse her request to sleep with her for one night, but she would get her freedom.

Lirlit was grateful to him, but she hated her village now. She didn't have anything to do with the zebra-murders. And when she would show up again, they would ban her again. It was better for her to search for a new life somewhere else. She wanted to find out who murdered the zebra's. She didn't trust the leaders of her village. She thought that they had done it themselves because they wanted another chief. In her eyes it was nothing but a big conspiracy. So in the night she went to one of the leader's house. She broke in, and started to search throughout the house. Everyone was asleep, but she had to be careful. The house was full of zebra-bone-figures, and she thought that was strange. She went to the reservate and found out that there wasn't any zebra there anymore. Later she found out that after the chief died, and after she got banned to slave-island they killed all the other zebra's. They falsely spoke that this was the wish of the chief so that he wouldn't be without his zebra's in the afterlife.

But in the reservate there were more snakes than ever now, and some were white, and looked very strange. She had never seen such snakes before. It was like they were penetrating her mind. She got scared in a sense. And then she got the shock of her life, for in the distance they saw how such snakes attacked an ox and started to eat it. Were they the ones who also killed the zebra's ? Lirlit took her bow and an arrow to shoot one of the snakes. But then they came after her. Lirlit ran away, but they came after her. She took another arrow from her quiver and shot the second one. But then the others started to shriek in rage and in speed they jumped on her, almost reaching for her throat. They tried to strengle her, but she took a leg-knife and slayed them one by one. She got bitten horribly, and the poison was already reaching for her brains. It was like she was gliding into delirium. When she woke up a white small man with a tall white beard was staring at her. He had a very high voice, and he grasped her throat. She knew she was now fighting against a ghost also, fighting for her life.

'What did you do to the zebra's ?' she asked, while she could hardly breath.

'Don't you like the figures I made of their bones ?' the little white bearded man said.

'No,' Lirlit roared, 'for it took me to slave-island.' The man started to laugh. Suddenly he was vomitting. The skin of a zebra came out of his mouth. 'Don't you like these skins ?' the little

man asked. Lirlit tried to kick him, but she couldn't reach him. When she woke up the snakes were gone, but she was very sick now. It was already morning and she saw some of the village walking in zebra-skins. She was in rage now. She wanted to see the chief. The new chief was one of the younger leaders, but Lirlit told him what she had seen this night, about the white snakes eating an ox. And here they said that they had killed the zebra's themselves as it was the old chief's wish. She told the new chief about the condemnation that she would have killed zebra's, but the new chief said that it wouldn't matter anymore. It was now legal to kill zebra's, so whether she was guilty or not, it was an old law, changed after the death of the chief as that was his wish.

But Lirlit knew the old chief and that would never be his wish. 'Can you prove it to me that that was his wish ?' Lirlit asked. But the new chief couldn't.

Chapter 2.

Lirlit was shocked. She could now live in her village again without any problems, but now there was even a tradition of hunting zebra's to honour the old chief. It seemed that to wear zebra-skin was also a sign of honour to the old chief. But Lirlit thought that was disgusting. And she still wondered about the part of the white snakes in it. One night she broke in at the house of the new chief. But the new chief was still awake, and she saw that he was whispering some words while reading in a book he slowly started to change into a white snake. Now Lirlit knew enough. And she was pretty sure that the new chief was the boss of all the white snakes. So she took her weapon, jumped towards the snake to slay it. It was already legal in her village to slay snakes, so she didn't have anything to fear. The next day she took the skin of the killed snake and went to the center of the village. She raised the skin-snake and spoke : 'Your chief has disappeared and will not return. He has been eaten by this snake, but I have killed it.' No one had heard about the disappearing of the chief, but soon they found it out, and they believed Lirlit. Because Lirlit was a hero now, she was allowed to make a wish. So she wished that the killing of zebra's would stop. The law had to be changed again at this point. And so it happened.

But in the mountains, there was still living a small white man, collecting zebra-bones to make figures of it. And one day he came to the village to give some of his figures to the children, who thought these were nice toys. Lirlit followed him to his place. He still had the need to take over the minds of the villagers to fulfill his evil plans. He had painted the bones in all kind of colours, and it wasn't easy to see that these were zebra-bones. Then Lirlit jumped forwards and a fight started. From all sides white snakes came to attack Lirlit, while the little man tried to get away. 'I warned you,' the little man laughed hysterically, 'I told you not to come here.' Lirlit saw he walked through a door to enter a room full of zebra's. It was like he was breeding them there. After Lirlit had slain all the snakes by her legknives she went inside the room. It was only a room leading to a huge hall, a zebra-breeding.

Behind it there was a strange toy-factory, all made of zebra-bones. Lirlit was almost vomitting. It had such a strange smell. In the distance she heard the little man laughing with a

high voice. The voice got higher and higher. ‘Haha,’ he laughed in joy, ‘how I control all the minds of these dumb villagers, giving them toys from birth on made of zebra-bones. They cannot use their own fantasy, as the toys will do that for them. Hahaha, how good I am. I’m smart, hey, I’m smart.’ And then he started to talk to himself further. As quick as she could Lirlit tried to set the zebra’s free, but they were tied by strange leather belts. Even her knife couldn’t get through, and the little man was only laughing harder in the distance. ‘I’m going to get you !’ he shouted in full joy, almost like he was teasing her.

She knew that the only thing she could do now was following the little man to erase him first. She took an arrow, aimed, but couldn’t see him. Then she saw him standing on a platform in front of a huge kettle. White steam was coming from the kettle. When she aimed again an iron arm was moving a wall before him. She started to walk around the wall by following some aluminium stairways. She could see the kettle again, while it was in some sort of liquid cocon, which looked like a fleece or transparent plastic. She saw ghosts coming forth from the kettle, rising, they looked like the souls of zebra’s. The little man was laughing and shouting loud : ‘Haha, you dumb souls will now be imprisoned in the toys forever, to be the guards of the childrens’minds, so that they can never really escape in their fantasies.’ Lirlit aimed again, but another time an iron arm was moving another wall before the kettle. There was a stairway under the kettle-platform by which Lirlit could reach the other side of it. Quickly she aimed her arrow and shot into the head of the little man. The head started to spin like crazy, while the little man started to blast everything. He started to roar, while slime was coming through. Now an iron arm was moving towards Lirlit, and pushed her from the stairways. She got wounded, but she stood up again, but now the iron arm got her in it’s grip. ‘Hahaha,’ the little man shouted, ‘hahaha,’ while he mocked her, ‘Now you will be nothing but a soul in the kettle, hahaha. To be locked up in a toy will be your new toy.’ And then the iron arm moved her upstairs again and brought her above the kettle. ‘Now wait a minute,’ the little man said, ‘I want to enjoy this sight for awhile.’ The little man’s head was still spinning, and Lirlit got the expression he couldn’t see much of it. Quickly she took another arrow and shot it into the body of the little man. Now the little man fell from the platform. She was still hanging above the kettle, while strange white slimy fire was coming forth from it. It was boiling, and Lirlit thought she would die by the heat. ‘Stop, stop !’ she was screaming. But suddenly a lot of zebra-ghosts rose from the kettle and took her out of the grip of the iron arm.

Quickly she took the little man, who looked like a doll now. There was a light smile on his face. She stepped on the platform again, and threw the doll into the kettle. Suddenly there were explosions everywhere. The platform was moving away, and she looked right into a room where zebra’s had been tied to stakes, and some even looked like trees. She took her knife to free them, but she couldn’t get it done. Suddenly a lot of white snakes entered the room. They stood erected, very aggressive. And again Lirlit had to fight them. They bit her very horribly, and Lirlit felt very sick all of a sudden. This time there were so many snakes. What could she do ?

And suddenly the burning doll entered the room again. ‘Hahaha,’ it shrieked like it had drunk a lot. Quickly Lirlit took two of the iron arms who had broken away since the explosions, and by the arms she took the doll and pushed it to the strings by which the zebra’s where bound. Immediately the strings burnt away, while in shocks the zebra’s got free. But the head of the

doll was moving wildly, so by one of the arms Lirlit smashed the head off. Now she could also help the other zebra's. But more and more things started to come into the fire. She tried to save as much zebra's as she could, also in the breeding, but then she had to go away, as there was too much fire. The zebra's were following her.

In the village everyone was very glad. Now they could have zebra's again in the reservate, and it would be like the old days.

The End

Golem of Pythia

The Bear-Chainlet

Chapter 1.

As Golem walked through the snow, he entered the city of Pythia, where he was born. There was a gathering of vampires in the royal house, skilled necromancers, and Golem had some stuff to do there. He was in search for a chainlet named the chainlet of the bears. Golem knew that the vampire-tribes often used such chainlets to put it over the necks of their victims. Then the souls of these victims would burn away, so that they would be zombie-slaves for the rest of their lives.

When he walked into the royal house soldiers tried to stop him, but he took his sword and slayed them. Quickly he went to the room where the necromancers were gathering. ‘Behold, I am Golem from Pythia,’ he roared. ‘You know what I’m coming for. I want the chainlet.’ Slowly all the necromancers laid the chainlets on the table. They knew they couldn’t play with Golem, as he was about to slay them all. ‘Take the necklaces,’ the leader of them said, ‘but spare our lives.’ Then Golem took the necklaces and disappeared.

He had put them in a sack, but as soon as he was outside a woman was waving to him from a certain house. If Golem had one weakness then it was women. The woman was luring him to her house, and tried to have a conversation with him. ‘What do you have in your sack ?’ she asked. ‘Oh, nothing important,’ Golem said, ‘only some food.’ But the woman knew exactly what was in the sack. She knew why he had come to Pythia again. She offered Golem something to drink, but there was poison in it. She worked for the leaders of Pythia. When Golem drank from his cup he fell asleep immediately. The woman took the sack, and warned the necromancers. Two vampires came to bind Golem, and they took him to a dungeon under the house of the woman. There were also some old men here, living in cages. When Golem woke up after a long time, he wondered what he was doing here. Then he remembered the sack.

After awhile the woman came in, but he couldn’t remember who she was anymore. Then also some necromancers and vampires came. They told him that he had been a thief, that he tried to steal the necklaces of the bears. But Golem roared : ‘You bastards and fools, these chainlets are pieces of sorcery, you know that better than me.’

‘Well, you will never get them,’ an old necromancer said, ‘for we will ban you to the islands to do hard labour for the rest of your life.’ Golem got something to drink, and fell asleep again. When he woke up he was already on the slave-ship. He had been chained to a wall, and to the wall in front of him a woman had been chained. The woman spoke all sort of faul language, and was a bit confused. Golem tried to sooth her. ‘What did those bastards do to you that you act like this,’ he asked.

‘Ah, they took my husband away and killed my children. Now I’m here to spend the rest of my life on slave-islands,’ she said.

‘But what did you do to make them go so far ?’ Golem asked.

‘I had been a prostitute,’ the woman said, ‘and I refused to sleep with a high leader.’

‘Ah, I heard these kind of stories before,’ Golem said. But then the woman started to curse him and spat him in the face.

‘Easy lady,’ Golem said, ‘when I will be free I will slay these bastards.’ The woman sighed and after awhile she fell asleep.

In the morning Golem had to do a lot of hard work on the ship. If the ship would reach the island he would have to work there for a few months, and then the slave-ship would bring him to the next island. It was a group of seven islands, and they were called ‘the Islands of Death,’ as those who got banned to these islands would never leave until they would die.

Golem soon found out that they still used the woman as a prostitute on the ship. She cried a lot. Golem always tried to sooth her, but without any success. The woman wanted to die, as she had lost all her hope.

One day the woman asked him why he was here. Golem told her that he was a thief. He told her that he had stolen the necklaces of the bears, objects of sorcery, and he also explained to her what the use of these necklaces was.

On the ship the leaders, the captain and some necromancers had dinner. In a room they had big tables full of meat. Golem could smell the meat and started to get very hungry. It was bear-meat in all it’s riches. Golem remembered that he ate a lot of bear-meat in Pythia when he was young. Later he swore that he would only eat the meat of those who would attack them. However he still liked the bear-meat, especially when he was hungry. A man came in, a tall and thin man, having a plate with bread and some thin slices of lamb on it. He gave it to Golem, but Golem tried to kick it away. This food he already got for days and it came out of his nostrils. The woman got a bottle. She didn’t want to eat at all.

‘Listen, you bastard,’ Golem said, ‘go upstairs and get me some good bear-meat.’ The man immediately obeyed, and soon he returned with a large plate full of bear-meat in all sorts. ‘That’s better,’ Golem said. But then the man threw the plate through a hole into the water, and started to laugh. Then the man left. Golem was in full rage. The woman said : ‘You can better breed hate instead of losing your energy to anger.’

Chapter 2.

In the middle of the night they brought Golem upstairs, still chained. They led him to the room where the party was still going on. Everyone laughed as they heard the story from the man who brought him the plate. They took bear-meat to put it under Golem's nose, and then they threw it through a hole into the water. Golem tried to hold on to what the woman had told him. 'Breed hate, instead of losing energy to anger.' Soon the men had lost their fun, as Golem didn't react. They brought him back to the dungeon downstairs.

One day they threw an old men in the dungeon, close to the woman and Golem. The man was very confused and talked all the time. At one point Golem got so mad that he started to scream to the man. Soon a few vampires came to take the screaming Golem away. They brought him upstairs, and the captain wanted to throw him overboard. Someone who screamed like this deserved death in their eyes.

They pushed the chained Golem on a plank and by stinging him with a rod and a sword they drove him off the ship. Golem fell deep in the water, and tried to swim, but he couldn't. Suddenly he felt the strong arms of a woman. The woman swam with him in her arms to a small island somewhere. The woman was very strong. On these island there were predators in all form who seemed to obey to the woman. One of them could bite the chains of Golem open. Golem was free now.

He told the woman about the bear-chainlets, by which the invaders of Pythia terrorized the domain which used to be from his father. His father didn't live anymore, as the invaders had murdered him. His father was the king of Carkia, and throned in the main-city Pythia, where Golem came from.

The woman said that she was willing to help him. On the back of a predator they would go to Carkia again. They decided to go to the royal house in Pythia, where Golem's father used to throne. The moment they came there there was a party. They were eating from dishes full of bear-meat and other sorts of meat, like snake-meat and the eyes of eagles, hares and cows. The woman had a bow, took an arrow and shot the chief. Golem, who was very hungry, started to eat from the dishes, while soldiers started to surround the royal house. The woman had taken a lot of predators with her, and soon they were eating from all these visitors and members of the royal house. 'Where are the bear-necklaces ?' Golem roared, while soldiers already entered.

But they couldn't find anything. After they had slain the soldiers they went to the house of the woman who had deceived and poisoned Golem. It was back in his remembrance again, and although he wanted to take revenge now, he also thought that she might hide the necklaces. But when they entered the house Golem got the shock of his life. Many armed women were looking at him like they could drink his blood. The women looked like predators, like vampires and dark necromancers. With them Golem's soul wasn't safe. He felt like all blood and life was streaming out of them, like he was frozen. Suddenly also the woman who saved his life had a strange look in her eyes. She jumped on Golem and tried to strengle him. When she found out she couldn't, she just kept him in a tight grip. 'What is going on ?' Golem asked. 'If you are from the enemy, why did you save my life ?'

The woman started to laugh, as Golem couldn't come out of her grip. Her arms were tight around his neck and head, and her legs were tight around his arms and body, while the other women were staring at him like they could jump on him to devour him every moment. 'We thought we could use you to get the male-government down here. Ladies, give me a bear-necklace, then we will zombificate him.'

Like a lasso one of the women threw a necklace over his head, and soon Golem was burning inside, like all his strength and powers were melting and crumbling away. The predators of the woman came in, and also more and more women. 'This is a great day,' the woman who had Golem in her grip said, 'we have enslaved the enemy of our enemy, and they will both bring each other down.'

But suddenly the woman with who Golem was chained in the ship-dungeon, the prostitute, stood in the opening of the house. She knew that Golem was in a dangerous situation with the bear-necklace around his neck, as he had told her about it. She knew she had to be very quick now, or Golem would lose his soul, and would become a zombie-slave. Golem already layed on the ground, having no strength anymore. The prostitute went to the woman next to Golem and gave her a kiss. The woman was surprised, and welcomed the new member. Then quickly the prostitute pushed the woman away, bowed and took the chainlet from Golem's head. At the same moment Golem got strength again, and rose up. Quickly she threw the chainlet like a lasso to the head of the woman she had kissed and pushed away, and the woman got caught by it. In a flash the woman lost all strength and fell on the ground.

Golem was very surprised and asked the prostitute how she escaped from the ship. 'That I will tell later,' the prostitute said. They were already in a terrible fight against the other women. More bear-chainlets got used like lasso's and they had to be very carefull now. Quickly they caught the other bear-chainlets and jumped on several women to crown them with it. Immediately these women fell to the ground. After awhile they left the house with hundreds of bear-chainlets, while all the women there had become zombies. Also the predators were zombies now.

Golem brought the bear-necklaces to a mountain, where he spred them on shrines. He attached them to the shrines in such a way that they couldn't be taken away again. This was deep in the mountain, where the bear-necklaces would only be a sovenir and a memory.

The End

The Lost Women of Tergate

As Golem entered the fields he found after a long trip through the wilderness, he saw women riding on horses in the distance. It looked like they were hunting or something, but Golem

wasn't sure. The women of this land were strange, not like other women Golem met in other districts. They were still in the distance, but Golem could already see that they were different. He took his bow and an arrow, while some of the women had already taken notice of him, and came closer. One stepped from her horse and decided to walk towards him. The woman didn't talk, and she looked like she was far away in herself. In the distance some women were screaming. They had caught a young deer, and tried to kill it. Golem aimed his arrow at one of the women and shot her from her horse. The other women started to get in rage towards Golem, but Golem just didn't like to watch hunters. Suddenly strong arms took him from behind, and pushed him to the ground. Another one kicked him a few times hard in the head, and soon Golem lost consciousness. When he woke up, he had been tied to a stake. A few dark eyes watched him tight, and then she spat him in the face. She was rubbing with her hand over his body, and then she put some mud on his body. Another woman laid a knife against his throat. The young deer lay somewhere close to him, bleeding to death. Some of the women drank from it's blood and had red mouths and faces by it. Golem spat one of them in the face while she came close to him. These women were lost, and probably damned by the usual life. Who were they, and why were they living here like this. Had they been banned ?

An old woman came close to Golem. She was mocking him, and raising her hands making strange movements. 'You will die tonight, captive,' she said.

'What if I will kill you all and burn your strange camp ?' Golem said as an option. Then the old woman spat in his face, and left. After that she came back with a knife, and soon Golem was bleeding all over. Then suddenly a group of women came home from a hunt. They had caught a bison, and soon they started to slay the bison for it's meat and skin. After awhile they forced Golem to eat from the meat. Golem didn't want to eat, but then they hit him so hard on the head that he got dizzy, and in delirium he started to eat. The women made a lot of noise, but Golem was far gone, he almost didn't heard them anymore.

One woman stood before him, and smeared bison-blood on him, while she also smeared it on herself. Golem didn't know what kind of games they were playing, but he assumed that this was their tradition. When it was evening they started to dance around his stake, raising their knives, axes and tomahawks. Never before Golem heard such shrieks and yelling. The moon appeared, and some of the women were bowing. Golem had headaches.

Suddenly he heard a few shots, and some women close to him fell down. A hunter with a beard came forward. Weeping and screaming the other women ran away into the bushes. The hunter untied Golem. He told Golem that he lived close to the women-camp to keep an eye on them. They feared him, thinking he is a sort of god, because of his gun. They used to call him the thunderman.

The hunter took Golem to his home, and said he was lucky, as the women wouldn't have any mercy to him. Golem asked the man why they couldn't root them out, as they were dangerous in his eyes. But the hunter said that the women were sick. They had been banned out of their tribes because of mental diseases, and they formed their own tribe. They are bitter towards all living beings because of what their tribes did to them. Most of the time they first had to live in rejection, mocked by others day in day out. Even when they wouln't be mentally disturbed in the beginning, they would become it later because of the scorn. Now most of them had to suffer times of abuse before they finally got banned, and that's why they are full of hate now, and very bloodthirsty and full of cruel tricks. Usually no one survives falling in the hands of these lost women.

Golum could still feel the hate breath in his neck. he wished he could help the women. But the hunter told him to give it up. These women had been wounded too deep. They would never change. All they wanted was revenge, to destroy all life around them.

One night Golem returned to the camp. He crept in one of the tents where a woman slept. He crept under the skin she was sleeping under and began to warm her. The woman embraced him, and whispered : 'Who are you ?'

'That doesn't matter,' Golem whispered, 'I just want you to know that you aren't rejected by me.'

But suddenly the woman kicked him away from her very hard. Golem became dizzy by the strike. It wasn't such a good idea to help the women like this. The woman started to scream, and Golem had to leave the camp very quickly or they would hunt him down. The day after he told the hunter what he had done. The hunter rebuked him, and warned him that if he would do something like that again, it would be his death.

But the next night he went to the camp again, and now he went into another tent. There were two women lying there, and again he crept under the skin they were sleeping under, but this time he didn't do anything. He just had to take care that he wouldn't fall asleep. Suddenly he felt an arm of one of the women. The arm was very warm, and Golem enjoyed it, but at the same time he became afraid. After awhile the woman took her arm back, and Golem could breath again. Slowly he went out of the tent, and left the camp.

The night after he went again, and this time he took also another tent. Here many women were sleeping. It was a bigger tent than the others. He could feel the atmosphere of hate threatening in this tent, although they didn't know he was in. He lay down between two women and soon they were rolling over to him. It was like they felt the warmth, but they didn't know he was an intruder. Golem knew he was in a dangerous position. He felt their legs sliding over his legs, and their heads moved closer to his head. Suddenly one of the women laid her head on his chest. Golem's heart was beating fast. After awhile the women rolled over to the other side, and slowly Golem crept out of the tent, to finally leave the camp again. It was like they were getting used to his warmth and energy like this, but if they knew he wasn't one of them, they would probably kill him by their cruel ways. The hunter explained about the rituals of these women, which was a long tradition helping them to deal with their past. It was very cruel, but they didn't have another way to survive their trauma's.

The hunter told him that he could never become friends with them, as they hated others and themselves too much to enjoy something like that. Golem knew that he could only come close to these women to let them enjoy his warmth when they were asleep, when they wouldn't be aware that he wasn't one of them.

The Twelve of Rokdod

Chapter 1.

It was across the huge desert of death, the hugest desert I had ever seen, where a city rested, a kind of a strange city. Everything was tied up and moved by strange jewelled girdles. Nothing was free, it was a city of slavery. The women and man living here looked like humans but the difference was that they had twelve toes instead of ten. The city seemed to be alive and on the other side of the city the huge desert of death started again. I was like in an oasis, and soon they told me that the twelve toes were actually the secret of their life here. It connected them to the twelve hearts of the city, twelve soldiers who had overcome death, but it was nothing but slavery waiting for them here. Their muscles had a strange colour, softer, lighter than the usual colour of humans. It was almost like a pale colour brown, but in another grade, like it had sunk beyond the brown. The energies on their skins could almost be read. They were plugged into a mysterious source. Someone led me to a cathedral where a magpie was flying around. They said he was the guard of these twelve hearts.

But they were sad, and told me that their city was dying. In past the city was much bigger, but it seemed like the desert of death was swallowing it again. Something was eating from these hearts. They told me the hearts were holding the intimacy of the universe, a path for believers, leading them to a universal marriage. Only through this marriage a sixth toe would grow on the foot, and they said I had to go on this path or I would fade away within a few days. I saw the hearts hanging on the wall, they were beating wildly, radiating soft lights. I went through a door in the wall.

It was a twelve steps plan to become married, but all I felt was girdles. Soon I would be led by these girdles also. They said it was to keep me in the city, for once in awhile the storms of death would come trying to take citizens away. I did not know what this marriage meant. I

came out at the end, and all I felt was girdles. I felt connected to these twelve hearts now, bringing me delights and deep feelings of intimacy, but yet I felt it was getting weaker, and I became hungry.

I did not know how to rescue this city. The system got weaker every day and everyday the storms came to take citizens away. At the end I knew I had to travel further through the desert of death for the oasis became hopeless. A magpie was leading me. After a journey of many years I came into the next city. It was a dull city, with easily amused people. They seemed to be very superficial, but at least they lived. Intimacy was almost a forbidden word here, but they had their pleasures. It was like a den of prostitutes, no love but lust. I didn't want to live here, I would rather die, so I decided to just move through this city, and reach for the other side. I found a huge river there, a river of death, huge like I had never seen one before. There were beaches along this river, which was almost like a sea, but these people were also very superficial, like their senses were locked. I decided to return to the place where I came from, the first city. When I came there after travelling another many years there was nothing left of that city. The twelve hearts were the only things I could find, beating in the sand. They were like fishes longing for water, desperately. The hearts had become very small. They were always hanging at the huge wall of the cathedral, unreachable, but now they were with me. When I took them in my arms, suddenly wings surrounded me, and I could fly. Energy was streaming across my body. They needed water, and I flew with them to the river of death again, within a few days. I threw them in the waters, and they immediately started to swell up. They seemed to grow with a speed like never before, and soon they were like whales, enormous creatures of nature. After swimming and enjoying the waters for many hours they swam to the beaches where they turned into princes.

They could rebuild the city here, but they always had to return to the waters to turn into whales again. But again this nature was dying.

'Isn't this the marriage ?' a voice spoke. 'A deeper death, to grasp it's deeper secret. We die when we try to grasp it, and we get hanged by it's ropes, but it draws us in, into an underground city, far beyond the desert and the river, where the clay is like mud. A deeper death, to follow the tunnel into the light.'

Something grasped me to the underground, and I was in an elevator, going into the depth. People celebrated the marriage here, a wedding day. And it was happening on a big tart, and people were consuming each other by a lighter fire, and twelve hearts started to show up like mouths, yes, like trumpets. And twelve creatures came forward to blow these trumpets.

And I found out this marriage was sweet in the mouth but bitter in the stomach, and it appeared to be just another illusion of death. And from the trumpets came blood and tears,

ropes to bind them all. And it formed masks on their faces, and they were nothing but dinner on a tall golden lions table, reaching to the other side of the huge hall I was in. There was a key of twelve, but it was nothing but death itself, but they brought fourth a thirteenth : Golem of Pythia.

Chapter 2.

Golem of Pythia lived on an island in the Zerre-sea of Carkia. In this sea a group of deaf sharks lived. It was a species who were only sharks for a few percents, but they had been called deaf sharks as they didn't communicate by speech. They looked like human beings, but they were only humans for a few percent. Their colours were based on red and white and all the several combinations between these two colours. For only a few percent they had and used other colours. They could live in the sea, but they could also live on land, on islands.

Golem wanted to join them, but they refused, because he came from the bloodline of a crown, which meant his family was royal. Although his mother was a prostitute and was never royal, Golem still had some royal blood in his veins. That's why the deaf sharks didn't have anything to do with it. He asked them how he could become one of them. This would mean he had to go through hard rituals of the deaf sharks. They would punish him to purify him, so that he would lose all the invisible crown he had above his head. This punishment would come along with twelve missions he had to solve. If he would fulfill these missions he would become one of them, but if he would fail they would kill him, as he would have the power to betray them. But the missions were so heavy that it would be the question if he could survive them at all. In every mission one deaf shark would guide him, so he would have to develop twelve friendships with them. These were called the twelve of Rokdod.

For the first mission Golem had to go to the island Rhos Z'delta, where a group of women lived who were both prostitutes, assassins and soldiers. They used to kill men after they slept with them, especially when someone had paid them to do that. They were corrupted to the bottom. They had a shrine made of goldfish-bones which Golem had to steal, to bring it to the deaf sharks. Ludium was the deaf shark who would be his companion on the road.

When they both came to the island they found out there were a lot of tourists here. The brothels on this island were an attraction. Ludium warned Golem that he had to be on his guard. The women, who had been called the white wives, could easily put their spell on men to have them in their power completely. From the morning to the evening they often worked in the army, most of them but as soon as the evening and night came they worked as prostitutes. There was a lot of enigma around them, and they could always draw new visitors in.

They had their own queen, a woman with waspian qualities. She lived in a sort of royal brothel, like a waspnest. Here would also be the shrine of goldfish-bones somewhere. Ludium brought Golem to that place. It was night. Many women were already sleeping. Some lay on the ground, while others were in their rooms. It seemed there was much business here, and the lady of the house had her own hierarchy.

Golem went through many doors, in search for the shrine. Suddenly someone knocked him on the shoulder. It was the queen. She asked Golem what he was looking for as the brothel was now officially closed for today. Golem said he needed a woman. The woman watched him closely and put her hand on his necklace. 'Hmm ... for such a necklace I would work even after closing-time.' And then she lured him to her room. Golem wondered where Ludium was, as he was in a dangerous situation. The woman could easily kill him. In her room the shrine of goldfish-bones stood. Golem tried to ask her some things about it, but the woman was already trying to put her love-spell on him. 'Oh, forgot to mention,' Golem said, 'I only sleep with bald women ....'

'Hmm, that's interesting,' the woman said, like he brought her to an idea. 'Hold on for awhile,' she said, and left into a sort of bathroom behind a strange curtain. The curtain had been made of peacock-feathers and all sorts of skins tied together. Golem tried to move the shrine. It had been laquered by a strange fluoresced soft light orange. But he couldn't move the object as it was connected to the wall and the ground like they were one. Then he looked into her wardrobe. But suddenly the backside of the wardrobe fell away. It was a portal to another room. He went in very quickly, and saw all sorts of skeletons of men against the wall. In some of these skeletons snakes lived. Were these her victims ? Golem didn't like the idea of standing next to them very soon. He went back to the room of the woman. He was a bit nervous, as he didn't know when he had to attack her before she would strike him to death. Ludium had warned him that the women could do that in a second, even while still in love-making. Then the woman came back already. She was bald now, but she also bore a dagger. 'I have noticed that you know much more than you ought to know, so I thought it would be better to start the battle right now.' She threw the dagger, and Golem could escape with his head just in time. The dagger pierced itself into the wall. Then Golem took the dagger, but the woman had already grasped a leg-dagger. 'Come and we do a one-on-one-fight,' she said, while she was sissing like a snake. At the same time other women came in. They grasped Golem by his legs. 'Lay him on the shrine !' the queen spoke. And in a few seconds they had laid him on the shrine, his arms and legs tied to it. The queen was raising her dagger, but then Ludium came in. 'Ho, ho !' he said, 'that's not how we do treat men.' And then he kicked the queen aside. With a strong fist he broke the shrine away from the wall and the ground, and while Golem was still on it he took it out of the room.

But the other women surrounded him, and Ludium had to kick a few times again to get them away. 'I will untie you very soon,' Ludium said, 'but first we have to get out of here.' And with the shrine and Golem on his shoulders he ran out of the royal brothel. 'You were in the den of the lion,' Ludium said to Golem, 'but you found the shrine.'

Chapter 3.

The second mission was to ride the goats of Swikkedat. Swikkedat was a place where many vampires lived. The goats of Swikkedat could bring them all along to the realms of the dead where they could feed on the dead, but they could also bring them to other places, such as hidden dungeons where they would have easy chained prey. There was a lot of risk bound to an attempt to ride a goat of Swikkedat. The goat could lead you in a trap to kill you or chain you forever, to become a living meal to other vampires. And always before you could ride such a goat there would be a powerstruggle between you and the goat. If you would lose, the same things could happen.

But the second guide of the twelve of Rokdod told Golem that he had to go to the underworld first to get the keys to ride these goats. These keys were called ‘the keys of death’, and for that he had to go to a certain necromancer. The second guide would lead him to that.

The necromancer appeared to be a magpie.

‘You are the thirteenth of Rokdod,’ the magpie said.

And then the magpie explained to Golem the same path once explained to me. I was a demon. And I realised that I was born again as Golem. My name ? Ritswik, third demon of an oracle.

Again I went across the huge desert of death, and found the city in dust. This time I could help them. I was the thirteenth heart of the city, the heart of all hearts, giving them eternal life. It was like I could go through the mirror and found myself. It was a marriage to myself, between two worlds once separated. And then I realized I had become eternal, but I couldn’t move, and I was like a stone floating between two planets.

Chapter 4.

Hildred Zuwali was a cop doing investigations in dental appartments. Many people seemed to have gone to the dentist, while they didn’t return anymore. Soon Hildred found out there was more going on. She found out that below the apartments there were hidden halls, tall stairways reaching into the depths of the earthcore. It was a road to an underworld she had never heard of before. She was ministering to the lost souls she found there, wandering around here in the depths of these hidden chambers. They seemed to be confused, not knowing who they were anymore, while a card holding their new identities was attached at their chests. She did not know through which pains these souls went, but she took them upstairs. These people had lost their memories, so they couldn’t give her any information, and the dentists themselves denied every case against them. After many months she went to dental apartments again, to revisit these realms, but this time there seemed to be none of them anymore.

Dick Salvetti was a preacher. He had his own church. The same things started to happen there. People who went there seemed to disappear mysteriously. Hildred went there for research and found out that the realm was now below this church. Again she entered it’s depth and found

many souls, who she could take up again, but they had lost their memory, and Dick Salvetti denied that he had anything to do with it. A few months later there seemed to be no such realm under the church anymore. It seemed to have moved away again. There were rumours …. That the strange underworld had moved to the dental apartments again, but when Hildred went there, there seemed to be none of that. It was quiet for a few years then, but then again, many people started to disappear mysteriously, and people were even speaking about a rapture.

A woman woke up, went downstairs, but her parents weren't there anymore. This young woman got paniced and called her neighbours. Soon she found out that there was no one in her city anymore but her. She went to another city where she could find a young boy and a young girl. There was smoke everywhere. They were the only survivors of these two cities, and Hildred went there for an investigation, and found out that the underworld had moved there below these cities. She found there the many souls of these cities, but they were like frozen, and she couldn't move them.

After that she went there with a team, but there was no one they could help, and soon they had to leave because of the smoke. But strange dental figures were blocking their way, looking like ancient soldiers, knights with mysterious equipment, like the angels of death. 'We are the police,' some of the team was shouting. 'If you want to stay alive, move away.'

'You are under arrest,' another agent was shouting. But the angels didn't move. Some agents were shooting already, but with no results. Soon more of these strange angels seemed to show up in other cities, taking citizens into the underworld. Hildred and her mates found themselves locked up in a strange metal box, soon enough. The walls were shifting, and the box was moving into the depths of the underground. The angels were like police officers themselves, not speaking a word. They were just staring. 'Don't touch the walls,' Hildred was shouting. 'Look at those sharp blades. We are in a mill.' Then all of a sudden the walls started to move closer to them. Through a tube they took Hildred out of the box, while the rest of her mates died horribly.

'Show me your identity,' Hildred was shouting at the angels. But none of them spoke. After hours one of the strange angels said : 'Do you believe in God ?'

'Of course I do,' Hildred said. 'I have served him since I was a little child.'

'Then why are you so paniced,' another angel said.

'Who are you,' Hildred screamed. 'And what have you done to my team. You will pay for that, you know. This will surely end in your death-penalty.'

'Silence Hildred,' another of these strange angels said. 'You know of the rapture right. Why are you opposing it.' He walked forwards almost at the point of touching her, and said : 'Those of the rapture will be led to the city of death, inside the earth, the city of light, and the rest will live between the beasts to receive the mark.'

'What mark are you talking about, the number of the beast ?' Hildred asked.

'No,' the angel said, while caressing through her hair, 'the number of the rapture.'

‘What does that mean ?’ Hildred asked.

‘Those who got raptured will move into the bodies of those left behind, and they will live in these bodies, ruled by the mark,’ the angel spoke.

‘Then who am I in this plan ?’ Hildred asked.

‘You are the one inbetween,’ the angel said, ‘the holy spirit. You will be torn apart in shatters and they will live from that substance.’

Hildred started to scream. She remembered how her friends got torn apart in the mill.

What happened to my friends ?’ she asked.

‘They are the seven spirits before the throne,’ the angel said.

‘What does that mean ?’ Hildred asked.

‘They are the seven tubes by which you will start to begin to flow, but it will be a rebirth for you, Hildred,’ the angels said, while all the faces of the other angels started to shine. ‘You will be reborn in hell.’

‘But I have always lived a good live, and went to church every sunday,’ Hildred almost stuttered, ‘so why … why hell, why not heaven …’

‘Because only dentists belong to heaven, you are but a simple police agent,’ another angel said rudely.

Hildred started to cry. ‘This seems so insane, who are you ? And how can I become a dentist then ?’

‘You can’t, Hildred,’ another angel said. ‘You have to be called to be a dentist, and when you haven’t been called in the space beyond time and space you never will. It’s kind of definite.’

‘What will happen to me, who are you ?’ Hildred shrieked.

‘We are ancient warriors,’ the angels spoke.

‘But why have you come, and what has this all to do with dentists, I do not understand,’ Hildred cried.

‘You will never understand,’ another angel said. Then they pushed her into a black box. Sounds of drills started to show up, and soon the box was red of the blood. Her body got used for the mission, but her spirit got reborn in hell, while the angels lived in their heavens as gods. Their upper god was a horned swine, having bible verses on his horns.

Hildred woke up in a shock. She had a nightmare. This day she had to do investigations in a dental apartment, because of a murder there. When she came there, she couldn’t find any traces. But she just didn’t trust the dentist there. He had a strange smile, and she just had a weird feeling about it. Something wasn’t right. That night she went to home early, earlier than

usual, but when she got home she got the shock of her life. She saw the dentist sitting in her home, watching tv.

Her hand slowly slided to her gun. But then another dentist stood behind her, blocking her hand and then her mouth. She woke up in a hospital, drills above her, and then she went to sleep again.

‘A charismatic movement,’ someone was saying.

‘Who are you ?’ Hildred asked.

‘God,’ the person said. He had a white coat. He showed her a drill.

‘I am in your head now,’ the person said. ‘Haven’t we done a wonderful job. You the police agent, we … the dentists … working together …’

‘I do not understand,’ Hildred said. ‘Where am I.’

‘In heaven,’ the person said, while he was smiling. ‘I had some mercy on you, we have broken our own law for that. We have made only one exception in all the eternities and that is you,’ while he was winking. ‘Hildred, you are accepted in our heavens, even though you are not a dentist, and that is kind of unique and it will never happen again. Those who want to be reborn in our heavens can only do so when they accept you as a mother, a sort of female Jesus Christ, to beam them up out of their horrible circumstances.’

‘What is wrong with you,’ Hildred said. ‘You as dentists aren’t the makers of any laws, so why such pompous behaviour. I have been a law servant, and to get into heaven we should submit to the law. Have you ever read Romans 13 in the bible.’

‘Oh yes,’ the person said, ‘but that wasn’t about police agents or the clergy. It was of course about dentists. And we were right, for our control is every half a year or year, and we make sure people show up.’

‘I haven’t gone to the dentist in about three years,’ Hildred said.

‘But your heart, Hildred,’ the person said, ‘the heart, has been with us. Every half a year or year you will be tested and judged, all as the advents upward to the eternal judgement of God. We are his servants.’

‘You got to be kidding me,’ Hildred laughed. ‘Tell me that this is all just a good joke, okay ?’

‘No, it isn’t a joke, Hildred,’ the person said. ‘Look at this mirror and see how the fire is running through it.’

Hildred looked to the left and saw a mirror from which suddenly lava burst forth. ‘Please, stop that,’ Hildred said.

‘We are glad to have you, Hildred,’ the person said. ‘You are the mediator.’

‘For what ?’ Hildred asked. ‘Where am I ?’

‘You are in bed, in a coma,’ the person said. ‘So you better believe us. We have the powers to get you out, and many with you. We live here in luxury and life, in power and lust.’

‘I do not want any of that. Let me be with the poor and living an honost life and it will be enough for me,’ Hildred said.

‘No Hildred,’ the person said. ‘The poor will get poorer and the rich will get richer. The sick will get sicker and the healthy will get healthier, and you are the only one bringing them from one side to the other. If they refuse you, they will be damned to evergrowing damnation, and when they receive you as their mother and saviour they will be blessed in eternity.’

‘You are sick,’ Hildred said.

She was in a white box, with white mills, and they were about to make an even huger hell of Hildred’s life, until she was screaming : ‘Yes, yes, I will do it, whatever you want, just get me out of here.’

‘No Hildred,’ a voice spoke. ‘You refused the offer. Next patient !’

A man was watching a strange horror movie, very psychedelic, a medical story. He was a pastor. His name was Benny, Benny Savache. The next Sunday they would pray for the sick in the church, but in the middle of the service, strange angels started to show up, with drills and guns. They kind of surrounded the church, and people started screaming.

‘Stay quiet,’ Benny Savache said. ‘These are but demons. We have powers over them. These are the demons of the world, but remember your bible saying in Hebrews 10 verse 25 that you shouldn’t forsake the fellowship, so just make sure you come here every sunday, and you will be safe from them.’

‘Powerful words, pastor,’ someone was shouting.

That night Benny Savache came home, totally exhausted. An angel appeared to him, looking like a dentist. ‘You know,’ the angel said. ‘You are all oral creatures. And we are the guards of the oral, thus making us the rulers.’

‘I rebuke you, satan,’ Benny Savache screamed.

The next sunday the same things happened, and the angels made clear they wanted to use Benny Savache for healing. The pastor refused, but soon he couldn’t control it anymore, and people indeed started to heal. ‘Maybe it was God,’ the pastor thought to himself. Soon people made a lot of donations, and the pastor began to like it, still with the feeling that something wasn’t totally right.

They wanted him to be a moderator in the mental cyberspace, but he refused. On the height of his career he stopped with his ministry and drew himself back to seek for an answer. He had become very scared of the thing working through him. One day he took his car and drove into the depths of a forest.

My stone had fallen here, and I was like a statue. My head was between two worlds. I wanted to save this planet too, and I had seen a lot of things. I was the heart of hearts, the thirteenth.

The man stepped out of his car, while I was calling him. An amazing light fell upon him. I gave him the amulet of the ten stones, the ten demon-stones of an oracle. One of these stones was my own personal stone, the one of Ritswik. I told him about the journey I once made across the desert of death, and he got interested.

The Desert Tower

There was a high tower on Reticulum, where someone lived who kept them all asleep. They called him sandman. They always had to live in low consciousness because of this creature, this man. Tarkarus was his name. It was a huge tower, very wide, taking a lot of land. The steps of the stairways were all of fire, becoming hotter and hotter, so that no one could enter.

Tarkarus had a sword by which he could freeze people. He could also freeze birds, for those were the ones who visited him a lot. He was a spider. His own birds were lullabies, lulling the people to sleep, and all the creatures. He sent them out to steal their hearts. Tarkarus had a place on top of his tower, full of hearts. Those who lost their hearts not only came into a state of death, but also of second death, the low consciousness, in which they would live forever.

There was one brave man daring to face Tarkarus one day. His name was Golem. Golem was so strong that he could destroy the whole tower. It was a big day when the guards of Tarkarus fell down. Golem took his helmet, a red one with many tall stings, and became the ruler of Reticulum. The air became thick. Old skeleton gods got their thrones back.

Golem became a hero on Reticulum, building their cities again, and their monuments. Everyone had to drink from a certain red soup to wake up again, and to stay awake. Old skeleton buildings got dug up to get their place again. They all had red stones inside from which the soup flew.

Golem built his tower in a desert, but this time the steps of the stairways had to be of ice. It was a desert tower.

Tivirim the Demon Knight - Barbarian Fiction

The Squirrels of Domina

Santarax had his throne in the depths of Tartarus. He was a skeleton with a garment, a king among demons. He was the evil breed of a notorious goddess. When he got older he killed her, ate her, and got strong powers in the depths of the Martian Underworld. Finally he reached Tartarus where he settled his throne. Mean dogs of torture were his servants. He had implanted the skull of his mother in the depths of his own heart. It was the skull of sound. By this powerfull radiation he could raise his armies of slaves. An arena was what he wanted. One of these slaves was Tivirim, a barbarian man, long white hair and hellwhite eyes. He was a savage, used to live with panthers and lions of monstrous size. Since he got caught he lived

in a blue balloon, a prison. At night the skull of sound would shriek to wake them up, and then they had to fight. They were the marionets of Santarax.

The blue balloon would go from city to city, and in the middle of the night it would open up at the bottom, through which the marionets could slide to the roofs of the houses. They would plunder, murder, and abduct. All for Santarax. His wishes were their commands. After the crime the blue balloon would suck them inside again and leave. It looked like it was Tivirim's fate to die in this office. They all had strange uniforms. These uniforms secreted poison in order to make them as savage as possible. Many lost their minds and got insane. Others were confused or just very chaotic. But Tivirim never lost his sense. He just got weak and tired all the time, feeling sick.

Santarax told him he could be the general of these fools. It was a cruel initiation. By a certain poison he got an iron hand. Also Santarax implanted a piece of the skull of sound into his heart. It was a splinter. By this his voice would be like screaming and shouting in the hearts of the other marionets. He could bring them down even by a whisper.

In the depths of the castle and domain of Santarax his mother Domina still lived on, her spirit. She had been the tyrant of ages ago, and she still was. She lived there with her squirrels, who were three times worse than the marionets of her son. They could shriek and command like no one else, although they didn't go out for a hunt as much as the marionets. They showed up once in a hundred years, but then it would be a real massacre, a real slaughter. Domina was still seeking for revenge since her son had taken over her kingdom. She was the mother queen of Mars, ruler of the Sjarun, the royal upper class, and she would always be in that position.

One day she captured Tivirim, who was the general of Santarax. Two killer-squirrels brought him to her. She enjoyed to watch him. She showed him a red balloon by which the squirrels would travel, once in the hundred years. She took his uniform away and gave him a squirrel uniform. 'Oh, first you will become like tar,' she spoke harshly. Tivirim was screaming. The uniform was like burning tar. 'And then you will be my squirrel,' she laughed hysterically. Tivirim felt himself shrinking. Could these squirrels shriek so loud because of the heat, their pain ?

'That's the blessing I have for skeletons,' she said. 'So many cities to rule on Mars.'

Tivirim knew she gave high positions to the squirrels, but what kind of life would they have ? They were thieves and murderers like the marionets. But more than that : they spred gas. They knew the secret places and doorways in the undergrounds of Mars, and they had their secret pipeline-networks of gas there to control it all. But they would never live long. Their fate was horrible, as they would turn into red balloons themselves after awhile, becoming a gas-pump. They would become storages. It was an evil work of Domina, and it seemed Tivirim was in her trap. 'I won't be the next dictator,' he said. 'And I won't serve in your gas-circus.. But she was laughing at him. 'What do you want to do about it ?' she asked.

One day there was a war between the squirrels. It never really happened before. Even Domina couldn't stop it. 'Tivirim, I need you,' she said. 'There are some things I didn't tell you before. Some of the squirrels I keep alive for hundreds of years. I will take them away after awhile, but I bring them to a garden where I take their hearts out for a special tree collecting squirrel hearts for the best wine. It is how I can keep everything drunk. But listen to me : the tree is dying, and I don't know why. The squirrels are losing their drunkenness and get aggressive against each other more than ever. I think it is payback time. If I won't do anything about it, they will finally attack me.'

'That's your own fault, witch,' Tivirim said. 'That happens when you are playing with the savage forces of life and death. You do not know them.'

'You seem to be very wise,' Domina spoke. 'Please help me. If this will not end, they will finally take everything over, and they will rule with utter cruelty. Don't you understand the forces of the squirrel ?'

'So you say you actually did a good job keeping them drunk this way, just to protect Mars against their forces ?' Tivirim asked.

'Yes,' Domina said, 'definitely. If I wouldn't do something it would be way worse than thieving and murder. They would torture.'

'Ah, so what you are doing isn't torture ?' Tivirim asked.

'In a way maybe,' she said, 'but it's only to keep the greater torture away. I'm the warden of that.'

'So you are some sort of guard, some sort of porter or gatekeeper knowing a lot about the danger of squirrels ? Is that what you try to say ?' Tivirim asked. 'What you are doing now is only making it worse. Your works would be the cause of what would happen when they would break free. You have made them mad and insane.'

'But please help me,' Domina said. 'I want to repent.'

'Well, you have to bear the consequences,' Tivirim spoke. 'Don't ever challenge the forces of life and death again.'

'Please,' Domina spoke, 'help me. I will set you free, and I will keep you safe from Santarax and the marionets.'

'Okay, that is other language,' Tivirim spoke. 'I will tell you what I will do. You will take the burning tar-uniform away from me, and the implants from Santarax like the shrieking heart-splinter. Then I will become the Demon Knight again who I was, and I will lead the squirrels out of this cursed place. I will lead them across the river of doom to a place where they can be free, where there is enough food, and where they can become drunk of fruits instead of each other's blood. However they will take the blood of who will interfere with them again, and they will have fun with it. I will make them soldiers.'

‘Okay, do it,’ Domina spoke, ‘but don’t let them have revenge on me.’

‘You will have your reward, Domina,’ Tivirim spoke. ‘If you have done this from your heart, then you will be blessed.’

And thus it happened. The Demon Knight took them all across the river where they could live again, in peace, but with a great guard.

The End

The Savage Flower

He gave me the stake of the flower. It had many stings, and it led me to the depths of Tartarus, to it’s core. It was a bottomless abyss it seemed. My hands and body was burning since I slided down along the stinging stake. It was a red stake. On the other hand it felt like velvet. Suddenly I fell. And it was indeed a bottomless abyss. I kept floating. Slowly I opened my eyes, as everything around me got more and more density. I was in a shell, very slimy. I was in an egg, like a cocoon. My body was still burning. Suddenly the flower grasped me. It’s stake was coiling around me, getting me in a tight grip. I saw more of these red flowers around me. They started to feed me. My stomach was burning. They gave me strange meat, while someone was screaming. A blue-skinned girl stood before me with her hands before her

eyes, almost weeping. ‘Starda Santus,’ she said. More blue-skinned people stood behind her, also speaking in a language I couldn’t understand. ‘To bocho afternu,’ an old man spoke. He had a dark low voice.

Suddenly a blue man with a crown and staff came forward and started to roar, while he raised the staff in the sky. I could hear the sounds of trains. ‘Amalemach,’ he said. It seemed the blue ones ruled here. Awhile later they showed me their computers, their machinery and their communication systems, and it seemed they were very civilised and advanced, like an underground network.

They said I had opened their realm in which they had been locked up. They suddenly spoke in my language. It was the flower, the flower, which had set them free. They called me the man with the key. They were all rejoicing, and came into strange extasy. They were cutting themselves smearing the blood on each other, also on me. I guess it was their tradition. But as glad as I was I also realized they had their own captives. Because of their technology they kept brownskinned and redskinned people locked up in the core world. These people already had a lot of freedom in this world, as it was a huge world, but they were never allowed to leave it. The blue race was scared as it was an aggressive world. This was one of the main reasons they developed their technology : to keep the core world of Tartarus locked up. They also had the hope their technology would lead them out of the blue layer one day, in which they had been trapped by strange gravity forces. They wanted to know about the upper layers of Mars, and it’s surfaces, as they could never reach for it. They felt themselves like children in a toyshop.

By their computers I could reach the coreworld. The brown and red people here had some strange pale and white spots on their bodies, whiter than I ever saw. It looked like artwork. I saw strange pipelines in the air making pictures. By following the pipelines by computers I found out that they used some sort of paint for these pictures. The paint had been generated by all sorts of blood. Different combinations would make different colours. By this these cameras worked. It was for making movies and most of all : comics. The brown and red people seemed to be merely the slaves of the blue race for that. I wondered why, but I immediately understood that the blue race practised these things because they were scared of these red and brown people. Deeper in the core these people lived in cages, in blocks, like in giant comics. They had to live in these frames while cameras were making their lives miserable. Computers would manipulate the pictures. I came to the horrible discovery that these people had been used for their blood for centuries. I hoped it would be over now, since I had set the blue race free. They gave me the keys to their computers. Everything was in my hands now. I started to break the cages down, and took the poor people out. It was like a huge stairway. I was the demon knight.

I could reprogram their computers. I was a technician. The blue race more and more started to move to the upper layers of Mars, to it’s surfaces and the layers in the Martian Skies. I

became the leader of the core race. Tartarus had to be transformed. Of course I wasn't against comics, but that red and brown people with those beautiful pale and white spots of the brightest white should be bred for their blood to become paint was absurd. I loved the red and brown people with their spots. Their leaders were aggressive, but I could understand. They had been tortured and hunted for such a long time by these strange computers with those pipelines. The computers were fine by itself, but they had a pig virus. They were called the shriekers, and they could activate the camera mechanism in the pipelines by their shrieks. It was a complex computer virus. It took me days before I could break the code of that virus, it's chemical structure. The blue race had developed it once to protect themselves, but it seemed the virus was full of artificial consciousness developing itself further. I could get the pig holograms out of the computer, but they seemed to get dense in the core world. In the beginning these pigs were killerpigs, so the red and brown race had to fight for their lives. Since the pigs had cast out of the computer they searched powerthrones into the depths of the coreworld. They were made of metal, and they weren't just a computercode anymore. They lost their hologrammic lives to become flesh. Only their leaders seemed to develop their metal skin further, and became terrorpigs. The rest of the pigs lost their killer-abilities and metal skin more and more finally to become cattle and prey. There was a war going on, besides the hunt. The terrorpigs developed themselves into a new race of metallic indians.

I tried to use the comic frames again, as it got out of hand. This time my aim was the terrorpig. I could melt the metal a bit, and could pierce their skins by sharp pipelines. There were reservoirs of paint inside, but their leader was the wildest chief I ever saw. And I found out about another virus : the bison virus. This one was made by the blue race once to protect the pig virus. The code could project burning bison in the sky, all to develop the metallic indians. I could break it off by a certain key. I was the Demon Knight.

It all had to do with artificial consciousness the blue race couldn't control anymore. When I could get the burning bison out of the sky, they got dense in the valleys of the core world. It all happened in the depths of Tartarus, but some bison became metal, and the rest were killers and torturers in the beginning. This virus had many hidden layers, and the red and brown race had to fight for their lives. The price of cracking a virus code was big, as it had a lot of hidden mechanisms which would jump up to attack. My work kind of activated these hidden codes. They were the guards of the virus. The more we dealt with the upper layers of the virus, the more the deeper hidden layers came into action.

The virus seemed to be a system by which others communicated. It was some sort of internet, all to keep the virus alive. I found out about a dark underground of the blue ones. There was a lot more going on than fear only. These blue ones wanted might and control. I discovered a world of virtual reality in the depths of the code. Here they bred the minds of Mars to let them bring forth paint. They kept these minds in the frames of comics. They could transform mindpower into paint, by several complex mixes. For this reason they kept their philosophic farms alive. People needed to think a lot, as a form of donation. These blue ones were authors and painters, artists.

It was a fight about paint. It was a lot about mindpaint. The computers in these virtual worlds looked like brains. And by the frames of the comics they could create the illusion of time with their corrupted timelines. These clocks were merely the brainslayers, all for paint. I could go on in the illusions of technology for years and years, but the flower who brought me here wanted my attention. It was breaking through the layers by a speed I didn't see before, much faster than the computers of the blue race. The flower started to secrete paint, and kind of broke off the laws of technology here. I had grown into a web of illusive technology, but the flower saved me out. There was a thing greater than technology, as the flower was very mystic. Yes, in my early years I had been bound by the Law of Martian Technology. I was a soldier in their army, brainwashed by so much knowledge, but there was something greater than that. The Laws of the Tartarian Flower. I found out my knowledge wasn't of any value, as the flower spoke another language. And this flower brought me to tears. It could reach my heart. I found out that all the technology was merely a trick of the corrupted elite of the blue ones, all to control our brains for paint. Everything became so artificial, while the flower showed me a greater nature, so fresh and alive, so deep and intense. It had a savage heart. I got captured by this elite of blue ones, and they mocked me and scorned me, and said I was an irrational one, as soon as I drove away further from their laws. But the flower was growing inside of me.

Rattlesnake

River

I was wandering through the desert, dying. Suddenly a major strength came into me. I wanted to build a city. Could I do that here in the draught ? I had to bring myself to the edge of the idea and jumped off. I fell down. A rattlesnake was staring at me. It confused me. It was like there was an oasis nearby. But I couldn't get a grip on it. The rattlesnake moved away, and I saw a handle in the sand. I walked up to it, as it was on a small hill of sand. I wiped the sand away and saw a wooden door. I opened it, and sank down into a cool cellar. I went downstairs and saw a room full of jewels.

I felt myself like a conqueror. I still had the idea of making myself a city. I found a big pipeline, followed it, and came through the doorway in another room full of jewels. At the

ceiling there was another door. I could go upstairs, and when I did and opened the door I was in an oasis. Here my city would be.

Rattlesnakes were my friends. They never were, but these ones were good. They gave me cold conscience, and I could breath. I had left the cities were I had born and where I grew up, almost died in the desert, but this idea of building my own city saved me. I could lose all my anger, in my friendship with the rattlesnakes. They gave me new life inside.

I woke up. It was a dream. I was in a prison. I could never build a city. I even couldn't reach a desert. I had been sentenced to death, but I was still waiting for it, for years and years. I didn't even know how old I was. I didn't know what my crime was. I was unguilty.

I heard a woman's voice. She cried behind the bars. I didn't recognize her. She said I was her son. 'You will get your freedom,' she spoke. She had been locked up as well for so many years. Since she gave life to me she had to give me away. I grew up in prison. 'A dangerous family,' they said.

I could see the love in my mother's eyes. I never saw love in the eyes of the wardens.

I cried as well. Behind here someone stood with the face of a rattlesnake. I saw love in his eyes too. Desastrous love, overwhelming, hot. He opened the prisondoor and took me in his arms. He was my father. I had never seen him. He looked like an astronaut.

'I want to build a city, dad,' I said.

'You can do that now,' he said. 'I gave you that dream. I had it too. Let's build the city together.'

I wondered where. He took me to a desert. 'Walk this road,' he said, 'until you reach the oasis.'

He went away and I never saw him back, neither my mother. But I built the city with them in my memory. I had a bleeding memory.

Rattlesnakes were always around me, my friends. They gave me cold conscience. I raised cannons, made myself weapons, and cherished the treasures of the rattlesnake inside.

There was a treasure room of the rattlesnake inside of me. I could reach down deep. I became a warrior. No hunter would hunt me down. I would raise my city. I would decorate it with the mysteries of the rattlesnake.

I dug a hole around the city, in which the poison of the rattlesnake started to stream to form a river. Many reached for my city, but drowned there, while others got the luck to reach for my wall. The citywall was high, and many archers were on it, shooting the survivors of the river down. Only a few had the luck to escape from them. However, the walls were so high with so many tricks that many fell into the river again, and who would survive the river a second time ?

My city was cruel, but it had to be, for otherwise it would die. Only the friends of the rattlesnake had a chance. Those who carried the treasures of the rattlesnake deep inside.

The river became notorious. Who could cross the river ? Also the wall got notorious. Who could come across it ? And what would happen behind it ? It was a cruel city, the fruit of much suffering. I wasn't angry anymore, but had a hell of a mechanism. No one would ever drag me back again to take me for a sinner. Growing up in a prison leads to the rattlesnake like this. I was the Demon Knight. I was Tivirim. I would come down from the stairways to be a saviour and a judge, but I always returned to my city, to my friend, the rattlesnake.

The Drill

I was reaching the river of lamentation …. A river full of medicine …. A river of dangerous venom …. So many died here …. How to get across ? Rattlesnakes were swimming here …. I saw a man with a red cape ….. I gave him some money …. He brought me across …. He was the ferry-man ….. He grinned …. Gave me my money back and thanked me, when I stood on the other side ….

‘It was a pleasure to meet you,’ he said …. ‘You were great company …’

I followed my path here, but I felt the urge to return …. The river of lamentation was so fertile …. It was dangerous, yes …. But there had to be a way to live here ….. Some had built their huts here along the river ….. I wondered where the river would lead to, so I decided to walk along the huts ….

Spitting flies …. Coming to me …. Spitting gas …. Thin air …. A bit moisty ….. I came to a web in the sky ….. Here the river was ending …. Here the river was flowing forth …. It was a strange waterfall …. I came on the other side of the web …. People were swimming there, having fun …. It looked like another situation ….. But there were skeletons floating in the river …. And dead corpses ….

It was a river of stench and sweat …. A river of blood …. I came closer …. Walking along the huts ….. I had my hand close to the handle of my sword …. These people were rejoicing in death …. They had strange shiny necklaces …. Toe-rings and other strange jewelry ….. Their huts had been built of bones …. They had a strange look … a strange stare …. As if they wouldn’t understand anything I would say or do ….. I walked further along the huts ….. along the river …. I came to a second web ….. Behind the web the river moved in another way …. When I got there it was a lonely place …. There was a strong wind here …. The river looked more poisoned than ever …. I wanted to know where the river ended …. I went through many webs and finally came to a house from where the river seemed to flow forth ….

I went inside and saw a man with white clothes, like a doctor or dentist ….. He had a drill …. I took my sword ….. I also grasped a drill from the wall ….. A fight started …. Drills seemed to come forth from the walls …. I couldn’t do anything. The man took me in a grip worse than that of an anaconda …. He spat something in my eye, while my head was almost bursting …. I screamed and lamented ….. ‘Welcome to the river,’ he said …. He pushed me into a coffin ….. I couldn’t do anything …. Then he let the coffin slide into the river ….. I was in the coffin with snakes ….. The coffin sank to the bottom …. I almost couldn’t breath ….. Suddenly I heard someone knocking …. Someone opened the coffin …. It was the ferry-man with the red cape …. He took me out …. Brought me to the shore ….

‘That was in the nick of time,’ he said ….

‘Who is it, the man in the house ?’ I asked ….

‘The ruler of the river,’ the ferry-man with the red cape said. ‘Why did you return ?’

‘Well, I shouldn’t do,’ I said. ‘But where else to go ?’

‘Oh, I know a good place,’ the ferry-man with the red cape said. ‘Behind the house of the ruler of the river.’

‘How to come there ?’ I asked.

‘Well, do not fight him, for he is the ruler of all weapons, even yours. It will always work against you,’ the ferry-man with the red cape said. ‘Go the other way. Take the other direction and you will come to the realm behind his house.’

I travelled along the river towards the other direction for years, but it was worth it. I finally saw the house from the other side. The ferry-man with the red cape was right. This was a good place. One day he came to visit me. I asked him if there was a way to get rid of the house. ‘No,’ he said. ‘The house is there to protect you.’

I looked him deep into his eyes. He had beautiful eyes. He took his cape off and gave it to me. I saw him going inside the house. I was the ferry-man of the river of lamentation now. When I finally worked there for years I once saved someone who got tortured by the house like I had been tortured before …. I saved the person out of the coffin, the same way I got saved once, and I told this person the same thing told to me. I finally met that person on the other side of the house, and gave that person my cape. Then I went into the house the same way the ferry-man once entered.

The End

The Prophecy

One of the strangest statues I ever saw in my life was the statue who could change blood into tears. If the vampire would take more blood than he could handle he would cry the rest out like tears, so that he wouldn't betray himself. But when a vampire cried was a strange phenomenon in any way. It would give strange feelings to your stomach. The strangest vampires I ever saw were the ones with toe-rings. They used these rings to rip the flesh of their prey open. These rings were like sawing- and drill-machines. They also had tight necklaces which were circle-saws. They were murderers.

They worshipped an arabian goddess who was an indian. She wrote a book by which she had possessed them all. They were her slaves. She was still a statue, but she came alive more and more. The book she wrote was named the Tamar, the book without exit. But she has also written a second book, the Tanja, the book of red lights. Tamar and Tanja were her two daughters, and they got worshipped too. They got born by anal birth. But they could also give birth by their mouths.

I came closer to her, the statue, and the heat fell upon me, and I spoke in strange languages. She had possessed me. I became her knight, the Demon Knight, the dark knight. I moved like her, talked like her, spat fire like her, finally to spread doom for a new world. These are my dark chronicles. She was the biggest thing on Mars, with big feathers. She was the stairway between Mars and earth. She gave me her spirit and I went downstairs, with a mission, to search for her children, and bring them up to her, in her fire-hot arms, where they would melt away to slide into the statue again, where they belonged. In her they were safe.

I brought the two books downstairs. It was no big deal. They said I was an angel. I was looking for a boy who would become the greatest healer of all time. I finally found him, just in time, when he got born out of his mother. I took him up to bring him upstairs to the goddess. She burnt him, and he got free with wings. He told her the most beautiful tales, and one day she went downstairs herself, to look for his home. She brought it into fire, to bring up the most beautiful pearl. It was the pearl of wisdom. She gave the boy the sword of knowledge, and then he became the biggest healer of all time. The prophecy had been fulfilled.

Out of
Religion

The dentistian insects were strange animals I encountered in the Nerevada woods. They stang other sorts of insects, laid eggs in them, and flew away without any care. When the eggs opened the babies lived in their hosts for a lifetime, slowly taking their hosts over. It was a strange transformation, and the number of dentistian insects seemed to grow dramatically by this strategy. I saw dramatic changes in nature, so much indifference. Nothing was safe against the dentistian insects. They could take over each and every race.

They were beings without a care. They didn't have any respect for any other race. I had been sent to Nerevada woods with a mission. I had to bring these insects to sleep by a certain gas. The dentistian insects existed in many races. One of the races interested me the most. These were the dentistian flies. I trapped some of them in a transparent box and went upstairs again to do some research. These flies could spit dangerous poison. I found out by pulling their stings out they lost their abilities. They lost their coordination and soon became old and sickly. But after awhile their stings started to grow again. It kind of irritated me how they didn't have a respect to any other kind. In my eyes they were monsters. When I put some normal flies into the box I could follow their tricks, how they laid their eggs in these flies and took them over completely. Their kids started to live in these flies, first as a warm house and later as their own body. By this it seemed they never had to look for food, as they fed themselves by the evergrowing flesh of their victims. Their bodies became one in some sort of awful way. Yes, the dentistian flies were the most horrible insects I ever saw. I almost vomited.

And I wondered how nature could be so cruel. I dried these flies and framed them for more research. I knew there were also other sorts of animals doing these sort of things … They

lived deeper in the Nerevada woods. One day I went there, and used a lot of gas. I needed to protect myself. I didn't want to have these things tested on me.

I went back to the stairway but then someone else spat some gas in me. I turned around and saw the most horrible black tall insect almost as tall as me. I don't know how long I fought against that animal, but I fell asleep finally and woke up in a hospital. I was angry. There wasn't any care here, no love, nothing. They did surgery on me, but in the middle of the session I stood up and walked out of the hospital. But at the exit a doctor with a gun told me to go back in again. Well, I still had some gas, so I thought it was the right time to use it, and then I ran out of the hospital, which exploded some seconds later.

I ran to the stairway, went upstairs, where I found my arabian indian goddess. I took her in my arms. She was like a melting statue. She said some things to me in a strange language. She was melting me as well. The hospital were I was was like a strange religion, and it all looked like the dentistian animals looking for a cradle to bring forth their babies. That is the only thing they care about. I had to take my baby out of this religion. I had to put everything in flames. There was so much more we could do. I knew some other games. But somehow the dentistian animals had inspired me.

I went back to study their mechanisms. I stuffed some of these animals and brought them to a small museum, but I also took some stuff for myself. They used weaponry necessary to survive in the wildest jungles. They had strange codes of immunity. I could learn a lot of it, especially of the poison they used. It seemed they were immune against their own poison, as there was a high percentage of it in their blood and it only stimulated them. It made them drunk in a sense and it activated their generative abilities. I somehow had to find out about this sort of life, instead of letting it make me depressed. I knew it could have that impact on me, but I chose to learn from it. I finally found out that a small bit of the poison brought my baby out of her statue-mode, and it seemed to have medicinal effect. And that was what I always had been taught : everything is good if it just comes in small portions.

The End

Tartar the Slayer - Death Fiction

Blood like Rivers

King David had an enormous empire on Mars, having so many slaves, the warprisoners of the many wars he had won. He had pierced their teeth, and now he was their king. He also had many bellydancers and he had the biggest harem of all kings on Mars. King David was feared because of his cruelty. He had an armor made by teeth, and his soldiers had also armors made by teeth.

King David had some white stripes on his face, but for the rest he was a dark man. He had many eliphants, tigers and other animals serving in his empire. One night Tartar the Slayer came to the palaces of David. He was the one causing blood to flow like rivers overflowing, everywhere he came. He raised his sword made of the teeth of a dark animal, and challenged king David.

'Oh, coward, you don't want to come out ?' Tartar roared. David looked out of his window, then took a bow and tried to shoot Tartar by an arrow, but he missed. Tartar ran into the palace of the king, killed sixty guards by his sword, and then ran upstairs. It was a bloodbath downstairs, but Tartar was used to it. He kicked the door of David's room in, but David wasn't there anymore. When Tartar looked out of the window, he saw David walking on the roof. Tartar took his bow, then an arrow from his quiver and then shot, but at that moment David dived away.

It was in these days David started to train more and more of the men of the empire. He now took the boys out of their homes when they were only six years old, while in the past they needed to be twelve first.

Tartar was cutting some wood for some new arrows. He knew about the ways of King David, about his secrets. When he was young priests of David took him to a room of rituals, where he had to learn symbols, and where they did cruel things to him. It was a secret cult, and Tartar knew how King David had such power. Tartar was the chosen one, destined to become a highpriest of King David, but he escaped. Now Tartar was looking for revenge.

One day when he was young the priests showed him the most horrible thing he ever saw. In a hall under one of the palaces there was a secret place where skeletons had to do heavy work. They had been pierced in their teeth, and they were secret slaves. Some said these were the ones killed in the wars of King David, but here they just lived on. The priests also showed him the sword of King David, made of the teeth of the kings killed by King David and his armies, and the teeth of the rarest animals existing. They said that King David could dominate the heads of everyone by this sword.

King David was obsessed by teeth. His harem was full of women having skirts and bra's made by the rarest sorts of teeth. Also the artwork on the walls of his palaces was made of teeth.

Since Tartar's strike King David had put wolves around his throne. They all feared Tartar more or less, as they knew he was a chosen one, something they didn't completely understand. When Tartar got born he had a spidertattoo, which was a sign for them, although when he grew up the tattoo more and more looked like a fly.

One day Tartar returned to the palaces of King David, killed some wolves, slayed eighthunderd guards, and then beheaded King David, took his skull, and went back to the forest where he decorated his weapons with the teeth of King David. Tartar was now king of the jungle and of death, as he had killed the dominator.

He dived from a high rock into the river, and swam to the palaces again. This time to take some women of David's harem. He took them to the river, pushed them in, and said : 'You're free now. You have been washed free by the jungle-river.' He knew some of these women had to serve the king since they were young, and they never had much freedom. Although they wept a lot about the king's death, they went with Tartar, and in the jungle he showed them their huts.

The End

The Safe Cave

The queen stood before Tartar and gave him a hug, as he had brought her daughter back. The queen gave him two of her panthers, but later on he killed them both, as he wanted to be alone. But he would never forget the love she gave him. One day the daughter of the queen returned to Tartar, as she wanted to stay with him. Later she told him that the queen was in problems again. He would go with the daughter to the place where the queen lived. It was deep in the jungle. Predators were roaring, monkeys were shrieking, and the place had been

baptized in sunlight. The queen showed Tartar a bloody knife. She told him that a messenger of a tribe gave her the knife which was a sign of war. The queen didn't want to attack, but wait. But Tartar took the knife, and said he wanted to go to that tribe alone.

In the evening he returned with a few monkeys. He had slain all the warriors of the tribe. The queen smiled. Since so many of her empire died by a strange disease, Tartar was her help. Tartar often went there to help, as there were only a few to help the queen.

Once upon a night the queen heard a shriek, and when she went outside she saw her daughter in the grip of two dark men. 'Is it happening again ?' the queen asked. 'Why don't you just let my daughter go ?'

'I am sorry, but we have orders,' the two men said. The queen took her bow and by two arrows she pierced the men. The queen couldn't stand that her daughter was still in danger, and she had problems sleeping, so she asked Tartar to come to her. Tartar decided to stay this time. He slept between the two women, and one day he brought them to a safe cave. But he had enough of it, and didn't want any present. He wanted to be alone now, and he went so deep into the jungle where no one lived, only animals.

He was on his way to a vulcano, as there was the place where he felt safe. Here some big friends of him, two large snakes, thick like pillars, lived. The slime and sweat was dripping from their bodies, and when they saw Tartar they liked him by their firy tongues. Here also a dragon lived, who could shapeshift into a woman, and even into a group of women. Tartar loved to be around them, as they were like the elements of nature.

Everything seemed to be about an egg which had to be close to the vulcano, for only the vulcano would have the powers to brood it. One day the egg burst out and a fluid like blood seemed to come forward, which also was a bit like paint. It would possess the heads of everyone to paint new dreams. And soon also the vulcano started to burst out. Tartar was safe with the dragon and the two snakes. Deeper in the egg there were ivory weapons. When the vulcano started to burst out more and more, the dragon took Tartar to the depths underground where there was an ivory temple. It was a secret world here where the dragons came to do their shapeshiftings. Tartar felt safe here. He had finally found home.

The King and the Sword

Tartar found a speaking sword somewhere in a cave. He stepped on his horse, and rode away. There was for him no way back now he had this speaking sword. It would guide him, and comfort him in the hours of loneliness. The deepest parts of the night were always the most

difficult for him, because of the nightmares, but now he had this friend who would always stay with him, his sword.

There was no way to trust anything but his sword, and his sword gave him the warmth of blood. He could always lick his sword to drink from it's perpetual bloodstream.

Tartar found out he wasn't the only one having a relationship with a sword. There were many more fighters who swore by their sword, and they even got further than him. But their swords didn't speak, and that was the difference. Their swords gave them headaches at times, but Tartar had a perpetual friendship with his sword.

Many were jealouse of him, but they also knew that if they would steal the sword of Tartar, the sword would start to shriek to devour them by fire.

There was no stranger thing in the world but Tartar's sword. The sword was alive, and it's secret was a few of the rarest teeth it bore inside. These teeth were red, green and blue, and they were radiating strong lights, almost blinding.

One day he met the king of all teeth. The king even bred them, as they were the lights of death. He lived in the depths of Mars, where he had his throne. The king enlightened death by the teethlamps, and he was a blessing for the souls who searched their way in the darkness. The king gave them the teethlamps in their chest and head, so that they could breath again, and feel love again. They became lamps themselves, and Tartar was amazed.

'I will show you the things no any king has shown you,' the king said. Tartar bowed down and listened. 'The sword has brought you here, and I have brought the sword to you,' the king said. 'You come from a dark, dark world, and you have searched for light, but you couldn't find it. The search is over now, as you have found light. It is in the teeth. These teeth came from hell, and even deeper places. They have brought forth the light by their suffering.'

'I create a new world,' the king said, and gave an armour made of teeth to Tartar. All the teeth had different colours and different lights, and it brought Tartar into a new dimension, like by an elevator. When he looked into the mirror he saw that his eye-pupil had small teeth inside, lying in a circle, and then it started to spin, while powerfull beams came forward. The eye-pupil started to change in all sorts of colors now. The man gave him a horse, and then disappeared.

To Tartar the world was different now he had new eyes. With his horse he slided deeper into the depths of Mars, only hoping for more of these miracles. To Tartar the world was a surprise now. To Tartar suffering was in another light now. The king spoke further to him through the sword.

Tamar the Horrible – Evil Fiction

Hell's Bakery

In the realms of hell there was no slayer but Tamar the horrible. She had a bloodlust like no one else, and her breath was like pure fire. She was the softest woman existing, but at the same time the hardest. By certain jewels called the dakuster-jewels she had enslaved so many to be her gladiators in the wars of hell. These jewels were like chains surrounding their wrists and ankles, and these made them drunk, so that they wouldn't be blocked in fighting by the false spirits of shame and guilt, which had been sent out by the enemy to paralyze the warriors. The jewels would also take away the fear which was another strategy of the enemy to hold the warriors down. Tamar's sword was abundant in slaughter, spoiling so much blood, as blood she wanted to see on the killing fields. It was the blood which made her men drunk, and by that they could reach their dreams again, dreams which had been taken away by the enemy. Tamar teached her men that they shouldn't fear suffering, as suffering would make them drunk, and would change their visions. She teached all her men to be ascets and to search for the treasures of hell. The most horrible beasts of hell were at her side, and she teached her men that everything existed by the paradox, and that something could only survive by the paradox of the extremes. Only those who could be the meanest could be the must graceful, and only those who learnt how to be the most hatefull could handle the tools of eternal love. Only the extreme and eternal paradox could heal hearts, but could also break hearts like nothing else.

Tamar the Horrible was an enslaver of hearts to lead them to the eternal freedom. Her dakuster-jewels were notorious and feared, but also desired by many. Many were waiting for her enlightening touch in hell, but she was very selective. Only the best would be a part of her army, and the rest would suffer under her bone-breaking hands. Her initiations were most cruel, and not many could handle it. The inhabitants of hell warnt each other not to approach her, only when they had considered the cost, or in hopeless situations when there was nothing

to lose anymore. She had the winds of hell as her chariot and she was searching for nothing but blood. She teached that all life was in the blood, all knowledge and every stone of hell. They said the seven winds of hell were seven wolves who had defeated the seven lions of hell. Seven lionskulls were in the carriage of Tamar the Horrible, and these skulls had been covered by their own skins, while these skins had been covered by the skin of a zebra.

Tamar the Horrible knew how to live in domination. She was the nightmare in the heads of so many, keeping them under the heavy weights of hell, her giant swines, her giant pigs and her giant lions. Many begged to have a day off in hell, but she kept them all merciless under her heavy chains. She built cities of their blood and bones to make her dreams come true, the dreams of the eternal paradox of the extreme.

She didn't listen to dreams of others or to prophets, as she was the rule herself. She was like the temple of hell, or even it's arc. There was no one who could more silence and shrieks but her. She was the woman of twisted extremes. Dark animals were always surrounding her chariot when she was hunting : the meanest panthers, and her mocking hyena's. She had her domain in Persiot, in the East of Hell, but most of the time she lived in Grugdia, which was the South-West of hell, where the hottest and highest fires were existing. Here she ruled over those of no hope, also taking their last hopes away. Tamar was the doom of the huntingfields of hell, like hell's altar of eternal loss. She was the one who had raised the hellgates of Tantalos high, which was the frontportal.

Deeper in hell there were places like Tartarus, Atlas and Prometheus, the place of evergrowing suffering. None would easily enter her domains, as they would meet her invisible whips. These whips would torture their minds in all forms, and would make them drunk to take their minds away so that they would become the subject for more suffering when they would wake up. She would whip them into sleep only to let them slide in her traps. She would chain them by strange jewels made of goatskulls having strange evil buttons like the marks of hell which would them make a subject to the eternal torture she inflicted on them. She didn't belief in final destruction. She believed in everlasting damnation. Damned souls would be subject to torture, and this would be without an end. If there was any sleep or drunkeness, it would be to let them wake up in even worse suffering. That was the goal of all her so-called mercy. She was the personification of Evil, of evergrowing, everlasting Evil.

Many brave men tried to destroy her heart throughout ages, but they could never find her heart. The problem was they searched for it in the realms of hell, but her heart had been stored in a place called Evil, the core beyond Hell. Here her heart had been stored behind strange glass made of the tormented eyes of the damned. Everyone coming close to this glass had to pay by anger and inflictions of self-rejections to become more or less twisted spirits. The glass would always lead them astray in mindwebs of confusion where they would lose all their grown-up behaviour to become children of evil. For Tamar it was only a fragile, tender

spiderian snack. They were so helpless in this killing womb, that it would only drive them further away from their goal.

She was the mistress of Evil, of all Evil, all heartless evil. She had a heart, but it was frozen, having a strange flame letting it all burn in a strange fire. She was the world beyond hell, and anyone coming near could only fall away in paralysis. All the dreams she gave led them to greater nightmares, to the eternal ones. No one would ever awake again. It was a bottomless pit in which they would be eternal fuel for her heart.

Those who tried to get close to her got struck by a strange disease in which their minds melted away into demency. Many went insane in their attempt to approach her, and thus she became the most dangerous instrument of hell, a strange merciless machine of evil, an evil beyond all sense and beyond all understanding. It was by her cruel ways she let the spirits and souls of the damned clot until they were her tormented jewels of evil by which she ruled. The process of clotting took eternities.

There was no medicine against someone like Tamar, and this is why the rules of hell got tighter and tighter like a cruel unchangable law of evil. It was like a heavy weight pulling them all down. But one day a group of children found a young lion in the desert. The lion had the hairy skin of a giant spider, and it seemed the animal was carrying strange powers. It led the children through the glass behind which the heart of Tamar was. Tamar was upset that these children seemed to have found the key. It was a strange biological key, this lion. And it teached the children about an eternal sleep in which their hearts would be safe, and in which suffering would fade away. This was what the children needed as they suffered from insomnia by the curse of Tamar dwelling in their heads. It was like Tamar's eyes were always open, and it seemed she suffered from insomnia too. When Tamar saw the lion she felt some compassion, and also a little boy seemed to have compassion with her. 'You can caress the animal,' the small boy said to her. 'It will heal you.' When Tamar did she started to cry. She could close her eyes, and fall asleep. That day the winds of eternal sleep and eternal drunkeness went through hell like winds to make an end to so much suffering, and to set free so many slaves. Also the river of forgetfullness started to scream to bring healing. Tamar slept for three days and when she woke up she was another person. But after awhile she started to do the same things she always did. It was like these things were too deep in her, like they belonged to her and she belonged to them. There was no one who could prevent her from going this road. She had been touched by a dream only to call forth a greater nightmare, pushing the flame away to inflict an eternity of icefields like the fields of glass. It was like hell was freezing over this time, triggering an even darker flame of evil, a flame streaming from the deepest of her heart, possessing them all. She inflicted so many sour, salt and bitterness on them, so that they started to produce sweetness from deep inside to survive. She made living gingerbreads of them on which the birds of hell would float down. She became the bakerwoman of hell, raising man and women like cakes and tarts, like icecreams to be the fuel of her heart. There were many unknown predators she had to feed, coming from the depths of her heart.

There were living bakers in her heart, while she was the bakerwoman. These bakers were predators, different parts of her. One of her most evil and cruel creation she created by using these bakers was time. By time she could lock everything up, to control everything. She created time by tormenting the minds of her victims. By her whips she split their minds and actually in these splits the isolated parts got frozen by which time could rise. Time was an instrument she used to dominate hell. But she also needed time as a jewel for herself.

The pigs of hell were time-masters standing in her way. That was why deep in her realms of Evil she had temples where she sacrificed pigs. She had all kinds of ways to turn them into gingerbreads. No one was allowed to master and inflict time but her. But also numbers were objects in her hand which she could cause to rise in the minds of her victims by the invisible whips. The goats of hell were number-masters so she also hunted them. And the combinations between time and numbers caused language to grow, all to lead them further astray in their cages like bow-nets. The oxes of hell were language-masters. For a baker there was a lot to do. She was a mistress of illusion. She knew that time, numbers and letters were just strange diseases. She had her own jewels to let them rise.

The Mark of Evil

Tamar woke up in her dungeon. It was a hard night where nightmares tortured her mind, and now she woke up to this black snake who held her in prison for such a long time. The arms of

self-pity were almost strengling her, when she was there, chained to the wall, and her inner screams seemed to burn her from inside out.

‘Come on, black dove, not so sad,’ the black snake whispered. ‘I know this is what you want, for you gave it to so many, and what you give out is always your desire to get, isn’t that so right ? Well, I have a surprise for you : It will only get worse.’

Tamar was cursing, as the black snake was tightening her chains. She almost couldn’t feel her blood flow anymore. ‘You know why I am here, black snake,’ she blasted. ‘I will find my way in this dungeon of yours, I will take your sword and slay you.’

‘Hey, not so fast,’ the black snake said. ‘I know you like this party.’ Then from all sides strange animals came to bite her and eat from her flesh. There was nothing she could do, but she had asked for it in the evil night, in which she sold herself to get the power to rule the underworld. She wanted to rule hell, and it’s world beyond called the place of Evil. She didn’t know that the sword she asked for would lead her to such a place, but it was certainly the price she had to pay for bearing such a power. She now knew she would only have to defeat this black snake who had kidnapped her, and to take it’s sword, so that she would come into balance again.

‘Oh, evil morning,’ a witch was screaming in the distance. ‘I wake up after a thousand years, and see what I get on my plate, brought to me by my faithfull and lovely black snake. I once killed my own raven for it to get such a precious being. Girl, I know you have the power to rule hell and all it’s places beyond. You are wearing the seal of delirium, and I will wait here until I have sifted all your powers out of your chest, as young women only deserve to die, and not bearing such forces. You have brought others down to get where you are now, but look and see you are in a dungeon, as that is the price of all your powers.’

She came closer to Tamar, and Tamar got pale. ‘Oh, you’re a beautiful black woman, caught by a black snake, my snake. Did you really think your trip would lead you to nowhere ? This is something. I am somebody, and I will show you in a few. I know exactly what to do to take your powers and how to destroy you. Don’t worry, my child, don’t worry.’

There was nothing Tamar could do. She knew she had to pay the price, and she was persisted to get the sword of the black snake, and maybe even the treasures of this old witch. This woman seemed to be the evil goddess of all eliphants, and she held the treasure of all gravity in hell in her hand, a treasure by which she could cause doom and hopeless feelings everywhere.

Tamar prayed inside, something she only did when she had to. She didn't know how to deal with this situation. Her walls were sinking lower and lower in hell, even beyond the backgates, into a place called Evil. A raven was staring at her. She had never seen such a styled bird, and he was so big. 'Woman, I will have some mercy on you, as my master replaced me without mercy. I know this place like my own body, so I can guide you in it, and lead you to it's backdoors.'

'Offer accepted,' Tamar whispered. 'Get me out of here. This woman is insane.'

The raven smiled and looked at her with an undescribable stare, while it moved it's head. 'No worries, my dear. No worries.' By it's beak he cut the chains of Tamar, and soon she was sitting on it's back. He knew the way out of this dark place.

'Wonder why this is going so easy,' the witch screamed. 'You both will have nothing to say anymore when your trip will end. Every escape here will lead you deeper into my ovens.'

'We won't be a piece of your meat anymore, witch,' the raven shouted, while a fierce tall flame came out of it's beak to devour the witch and her black snake. 'Where have you been, dear raven, and why such powers ?' the witch screamed.

The raven took the treasure of the eliphant in it's beak, while sealed doors seemed to open up. 'Hell will swallow you deeper,' the black snake roared.

Tamar took the bird tight by it's neck so that she wouldn't fall. She took notice that the bird wore a necklace around it's neck to which a stone had been attached which looked like an eye. 'It's the eye of the raven, woman,' the raven spoke. 'It's an amulet given to me when I made my journey through the underworld, and it brought me back. They spoke to me about a woman I had to give it to. Now take it, it is yours.'

Tamar took the amulet and attached it around her neck. It brought her immense powers to see, which was merely the power to consume. It was like the invisible flame. 'These eyes are merely the transformers and creators of these worlds beyond hell, and they are the powerswords of the gladiators here,' the raven said.

‘Oh, I knew the eyes aren’t to observe, but to dominate. It brings the mark of the slave,’ Tamar said.

And by the eye of the raven Tamar raised her slaves and gladiators, for she was still in a war, an everlasting war. There were so many powers who wanted to possess her, and one would be even worse than the other. She knew she had to dominate her own skull, and she could only do that by dominating the skulls around her. In this the raven was her understanding friend.

It was in these ages Tamar could raise the invisible fire to it’s heights, and she loved this fire. She bore the eye of evil now, a strange song in the middle of her chest. The invisible fire was moving along the tight rules of this song, which always seemed to be the same. It was the song of freedom she bore in her heart, a song she could sing all day long, and in the nights she whispered it.

The raven and the song brought her to Hasor, one of the major cities in the place of Evil. Here the spirits were like blankets and clothes, and they all seemed to have their place in the citywalls. She loved this place as it resonated with her heart. The raven knew this place as the place of it’s rebirth. Here the raven could shapeshift into a man. It wasn’t strange for Tamar to watch her friend being a man now. She knew about these things. Together they walked on a market in the depths of Hasor. There were many slave-markets here, cattle-markets, and most of all gladiator-markets and weapon-markets. They treated her like she was a queen now she had the eye of the raven around her neck. They feared her for they knew she was bearing the invisible fire. Ratun and Irank were two men selling wild hunterdogs on the market. These hunterdogs were white and hairy with strange diamondlike spots on their bodies. These spots were hard and looked like jewels. Ratun and Irank wanted to buy her amulet, but when Tamar turned them down they said she could take some of the dogs as a gift. Tamar got about twenty dogs, and she knew she could use them, as the raven had said to her she needed to go to the royal house to slay it’s king if she wanted to dominate Hasor. It was a must for her to dominate Hasor or she would never be the ruler of Evil.

She had never seen such mean dogs, such slayers, so she could use them very well. It was like many around her expected her to slay the king, so this gave her strength. They knew she had come here for a mission. The king ran outside the royal house when she came closer and closer and lay himself at her feet. ‘Spare us,’ he said. ‘We know we have done things wrong, but we tried our best.’

But Tamar knew he was a hypocrite. ‘It seems you only listen to one side of the story, but okay, I will have mercy on you, when you and yours will work in the depths of Hasor’s underground. I will free your slaves who worked there, and I will place them in your positions.’

‘Whatever you say, woman,’ the king said, ‘but have mercy on our souls.’

With her dogs and the raven she went into the royal house, called the slaves from the underground and gave them the positions of the upper class. The king and his aristocrats had to descend into the underground of Hasor to do heavy slavework for the rest of their lives. It was the day Tamar raised a dogthrone in Hasor, and she chose one of the best slaves to be the new king. The same day Tamar went with the raven and the twenty dogs to Chesbon, another major city of the place of Evil. Here the same happened, and soon Tamar became the new ruler of the place called Evil. These are her chronicles of her early days. The raven played a big part in settling her throne, and of course the mighty treasure of the eliphant. Tamar was a ruler like no other. She was the darkest, but she bore an unknown light. Here, in the depths of this place of Evil she would lay her heart, here she would give them all a different mark, a mark above all marks, the mark of evil.

Army of Eagles

‘Why did we choose to see. We are so young. Why did we choose to be frozen in eternal sight ? We can’t move. We are pillars in a temple of evil struck by fear. It’s coming from the arc where the eye of evil rests near. We are afraid of these lights, so why did we choose them ? We are hiding for these lights, so why do we invite them ? Aren’t we all torn up inside, watching both sides of the night ?’

Tamar slayed herself a way through the stubborn Filistines to the desert throne of a ghost terrorizing the spheres of Evil for such a long time. He looked like a blanket, and Tamar could nothing but mock him, while she held her sword, the spiritslayer, against his throat. 'Do you wanna live, bastard ?' she said with an ironical tone. 'Do you wanna live ? Live in my sword forever.' And then she beheaded him while he slided into her sword for eternal slavery. He would be another spiritslayer living in her sword, only coming out on her command. It was good life for the ghosts in her sword. They had food in abundancy and all the other pleasures of the place of evil. She cared for her ghosts like no one else did.

She slayed herself a path through the Amalekkites and the Moabites to do the same things to their ghostkings. She was the ruler of all evil, and they would all meet her sword, the spiritslayer, to live in it forever. It was another tale in a princess' headjewel of death. The princess loved to hear about how Tamar slayed the Hethites and what she did to their kings. But it was all a story. Since the princess died she listened to nothing but stories, as the reality was too much for her. She didn't care the stories were evil, as she didn't know the difference between good and evil anymore. She had been betrayed by her own family who called themselves good. If that was good, then what was evil ? It got her confused, and she found her way on the barbarian path.

But one day Tamar really came to her. The princess was shocked. She didn't know if she had to laugh or cry, to be scared or to be open. Tamar stood there almost naked with some belts across her body. 'Wanna go with me, woman ?' Tamar asked, and reached her hand out. 'You repress so much of yourself. Offer yourself to the eternal paradox of extremes and get alive in hell. It is not what you think. Your family you trusted and who were like heaven to you since you were young appeared to be messengers of hell when you figured them out. But now I will show you what hell really is.

The princess nodded. She took off her clothes to get some skins and belts to cover herself, and then she descended with Tamar into the depths of a vortex.

'First we are going to get a sword for you, a spiritslayer,' Tamar said. 'Whoever you defeat will be a gladiator of your sword, a slave, but take care that you will treat them well. They will live in your sword in abundancy, and they come out on your command.'

'Will they be rich then ?' the princess asked.

‘Oh yes,’ Tamar said, ‘very, very rich, you will bless them with all the goods of the place of evil.’

‘But I wish death and suffering on my enemies,’ the princess said. ‘I have a revengefull heart, like I want to pay them back, so don’t you have another sword for me.’

‘No,’ Tamar said. ‘You must start with this one. You see, you can’t be evil when you never learned how to be good.’

‘I will be good to the ones I love, my friends, and those in need, but not to those who did harm to me and others,’ the princess said.

‘That’s too easy, woman,’ Tamar said. ‘You must first learn to love your enemies, to bless them, to help them, to save them, or everything will be without any value.’

The princess bowed her head. This was too much to ask from her.

Then Tamar showed her a needle, and said : ‘If you want to go to that place called Evil and to rule it all together with me, then you first need to go through the eye of the needle. When you don’t get yourself through this hole, the needle will finally get you.’

The princess spat on the ground, took the needle and tried to break it, but she couldn’t. And slowly the needle started to turn itself against her.

Tamar wasn’t disappointed. She knew the royal ones, who weren’t useful for anything. It wasn’t the first one she saw spiralling away in captivity of the needle. This pin could only be handled when going through it’s eye. It was the pin of evil bringing all those down who would be too good, too holy and too beautiful for the place of evil.

The stench of the place of Evil was unworthy in the eyes of those driven by perfumes. They always said horses smell bad, pigs too untasty, and dogs too wild. And thus Tamar was a savage on a lonely path, as even the savages were often too royal and too civilized.

One day she came in a fight against a Roman giant. It was such a horrible fight and it took such a long time that they had to make a compromise, and they became lovers. It was like this love was the price of war, and just a war undercover, and it didn't feel right. And thus it came to another fight one day, and she could finally slay him. Still she loved him, as the price of their encounter, and she visited him in the realms of death. It was here she could finally have some true sort of friendship. He begged her if she wanted to take him up to hell and the place of evil again, and she gave him the needle. Would he come through the eye of this needle, or would the needle bring him down ? He had a horrible fight against the pin of evil, in which she finally left him alone. The pin brought him to life in the good world, where he became king. It was there Tamar finally lost his love for him, and she got relieved, but she still felt the pain. It was like a red trace in her head, like a vein.

She also had such an experience with a Greek giant, and she knew that only in the depths of the place of evil she could heal. One day from the depths a new pin started to show up, sharper than ever and with the smallest eye. It was a fight for her to get herself through the eye, or the pin would drag her all the way down to the good world. And it would be a hard fall, for she was high on the rock now. Finally she survived, but the pin had wounded her very much. In the unknown depths of the place of Evil she saw more Roman and Greek giants, but this time she didn't dare to fight them, as she knew where it could lead to. These giants could take their spines out of their backs to use them like swords. But when the pin returned to her, she knew that it would help her. She went to the giants, and gave them the pin. Not long after that they were all slain by the evil pin. Because she had overcome the pin she could mold it in her hand. Sometimes it was like a thin snake-jewel around her arm, or around her head, and it could also turn into a feather. She loved to wear it in her hair, as it made her dreadfull. She could come deeper and deeper in the depths of the place of Evil by it. It dragged her to the sources of the invisible blood from which she drank, while visible blood started to cover her body. By the invisible forces she could make things visible again, and it became the secret of her creative powers. Often she encountered groups of giants, which she gave the pin. No one seemed to survive the pin, but one day there was a giant called Ruben who could get through the eye of the pin. Ruben told her that he invented the pin and that he had sent it to her to take her to him. The giant told her that there were many of these sorts of pins, and that they had the mission to turn them into predators. Only the predators who could dominate the pins by getting through their eyes would survive. The rest would go down under to became the captives of the pins. The pins would lead them to the good world which was merely a breeding.

Ruben told Tamar also that one could only become a predator in the sources of the invisible forces, where the pins would lead the survivors to. 'Real giants know what it is to be small and even to be little dwarves. And those who are visible know what it is to be really invisible,' Ruben always said. And these were wise words to Tamar. Ruben told her also about his sons who were even bigger than him. All these giants could also take their spines out of their backs to use these as their swords. Pallu had the tallest and largest spine, and he even used it as a spear. Ruben told that he was really a pinmaster. One night Tamar had a lot of nightmares about the pins. She was exhausted when she awoke. She saw Ruben before her,

who had taken his spine out, and he was putting it in his throat. 'You must master sleep,' he said to Tamar. 'You must take it out of your body and use it like your sword, and you must put it in your throat and then take it out again, like your spine.' Then he teached her how she could take her spine out of her back and use it just like him. He could also take certain bones out of his leg to use them like weapons. Ruben teached her that her body was pure armory. She needed to learn how to use it.

The night after she had nightmares again and this time she really had to wrestle against the pins. She first needed to accept their ways so that they would swallow her inside, as going through their eyes, and thus she could get them in her hands. Ruben teached her that sword and pins would first be her stakes, and later her weapons. She needed to accept suffering. She needed to be an ascet-warrior. It was not a simple way to victory. Ruben told her that she could only ride a beast after it had swallowed and digested her. This was like going through the eyes of the needle. And she discovered that some needles had many eyes, but when she finally got through, it would be the keys in her hand. It was all to open the Book of Evil, the book of so many locks. If she could set it's spirits free, it's invisible spirits, everything, yes, everything would get in line again.

These were rough nights, nights in which she thought she would lose everything, everything she had built herself on. Until she felt the soft and wet hairy walls of evil in her mind telling her all she needed to know. These were the pillars of a new world, the voices of the unknown finding their ways to the hearts where they could live forever. These voices were the unvisible, yet so vibrant, full of potential, full of direction bearing the program of creation, for in a flash they would be visible, like evil red marble, and in a flash they would live forever. She had found the jewels of evil below her feet, and she could stare through the eyes she went through. She was a rider of the beasts now, a yielder of the swords, as they first rode on her and pierced her deep by their teeth. She now understood this cruel paradox, like a flaming wheel in the night, why without this there wouldn't be any life in eternity.

And also these wheels of paradoxal understanding had to be broken, their flames to be taken away, to make room for the invisible fires leading her to the greater wheels. She found the perfect car of evil after all these nights, which was merely a slayer. There was nothing she could do about it. Only the slayer would bring life, while it tore the present realities apart. Only the slayer would bring her to the depths of potential to the awakening of mental explosions. She didn't want to live her life in jokes anymore. She wanted to open this Book of Evil, the world beyond everything. She wanted to take it's mask off and read, read, until she would reach eternal life. Only the Slayer would be able to read this book, and she was willing to let it flow all through her, through all the barricades and blocks, through all the stones and dikes. She wanted to be the watcher on the walls, to bring all these walls down. She knew it would only happen under the weight of the opened Book of Evil. All these letters were the pins she had to deal with. It would swallow her first, and then she would rise in it, and ride it like a car. It was an arable land, not a battlefield, in which she had to sow herself and nestle herself.

In the depths of Evil she would finally find the meaning of all this and come to a rebirth. In this she was nothing but a grape under the feet of evil, waiting to be drunk and to come alive in somebody. First she needed to come into someone, and then she could be someone. The Feet of Evil rested heavy on her until she would be one with the invisible sorces streaming through the land. It was a land she didn't know much about, but the giants were more than willing to tell her. They had waited for her for so long. Not in a womb was her place of rebirth this time, but there where the Feet of Evil would tread her. So many pins seemed to pierce her, but it would be the only way to open the Book of Evil deep inside her heart. As long as it would stay locked it would be a tyran to her.

The pins stang deep in her brain, but she knew it was the only way. It opened her up to the invisible forces inside. Her body wanted to connect to her brains, but her brains were locked up. They had to break it open, and they used the pins for that. So many giants she met who were making the pins. And they could only do that because they first dominated them in their minds. They went through the smallest gates, through the longest journeys under the Feet of Evil. They had spent their time to figure it all out. They teached her how to be a pinmaker herself, and how these pins would serve her as her armor. She became a pinmaster, and soon they led her to a place called invisible jewel. Here many other women like her were, and they all had gracious manners. She didn't know such dignity could exist. This place was truelly like an invisible jewel. But soon she came to the understanding that these women all had secret pins, and soon it turned out into a fight. There was nothing Tamar could do against those pins. These pins were decorated like the most beautiful ornaments from all sorts of jewels, and soon she gave up all hope and sunk into despair. It struck her like nothing else, but then she remembered the paradox of the pin. She first needed to go through the eye of it. 'If you want to sacrifice me, then sacrifice me,' Tamar spoke to the women. They tied her, and brought her to a temple-like atmosphere below their realms, and it was like a garden. They tied her to a stake, and said : 'We as women of the invisible jewel have all been initiated like this. If you want to be one of us : face the pins.' And then they skinned her and ate from her like cannibals. Tamar was almost a skeleton now, but she remembered she could use all her bones like weapons. What was it she needed to do ? She knew she first had to be swallowed. A fire from above came to devour her, and she started to burn, while the fire stayed and became invisible. New skin started to grow on her, and she looked more and more like the women of the invisible jewel. 'Are you my friends or my enemies ?' Tamar asked.

'That's what you decide,' the women said. 'But we know that it all works by the paradox. You can't be our friend if you can't be our enemy. But you must always be the best.'

'Well, I do my best,' Tamar said. She seemed to get a high position now under the women, and soon she was their ruler. She was a pinmaster now, and a damned good one. She got an own horse now, and the women said that the horse was made of all the pins she had survived and defeated by going through their eyes.

But the more she stayed in this realm of the invisible jewel the more she discovered about it's nature. She found out that these women could change into pins themselves. She saw how the women lured giants to their places, and whenever such a giant was in their private domains they would lock the doors and turned into pins to take whatever they wanted. They would even move across the borders of the place of evil, hell and even death to do such things, and they deceived many from the good world. They would also go across the borders of heaven to deceive angels and spirits, and those ghosts who called themselves 'god'. To them it was a good hunt, so that they could build their spiritwalls. They wanted to build their own heavens, and they wanted to test anyone to see if they would be worthy to live with them.

To Tamar love was already a strange thing, a strange war, as it always seemed to show up where the fight became too painfull or exhausting. War and love were like the tides of evil, in a very complicated way. Tamar didn't want to play with these powers like the women of the invisible jewel did, but she wanted to open the Book of Love to know what it is all about, and what would be the rules. So this time it would be a war against the women themselves, and not just against their pins. They were pins themselves, and Tamar knew she had to get them there where they would be completely without weapons, without armory, so that they would show her how they were a weapon themselves. It was like they accepted from Tamar that she didn't do the things they did, because she was their new ruler. It was quite normal to them that she was different, and they trusted her. They would be in her surroundings almost naked without any weapons as helpless lambs. Tamar finally used this situation, and one by one she got them shapeshifting into the pins they were. She could break them down to the bottom, as she could throw her threads through their eyes to bind them tight. It was by this she found out about the mysteries how to turn into a pin. Tamar became the pin of evil and dominated all other pins, until she broke them down to the bottom. She sacrificed these deceivers of love to open the book. But it wasn't what Tamar expected. The Book of Love seemed to be merely a book of hunters, and it slowly brought her down. She didn't know about the price of opening such a book, and she became a paranoid creature. It made her very small, as she found out it was nothing more but a bunch of scorn. It got her so far that she wanted to destroy this Book of Love, before it would destroy her. By all it's cruelty it was turning her into the worst predator existing, letting the shadows of fear falling on everything. She wished she would never have opened this book, but it was already too late. And she more and more became a prisoner of it. The words were possessing her, making her drunk, and it's spirits filled her with an undescribable hunger. It tore her apart, and turned her into the meanest pin to get what she wanted. Nothing mattered anymore but to quench this flame of hunger. It drove her wild and insane.

It was like the women of the invisible jewel were applauding in her head, like they were saying : 'You are now really one of us.' Of course : They had opened this book before, in the same way she did. There was no way back, as she slided in the deeper initiations of the place of the invisible jewels through this book. It was like the portal to it's depth, a vortex sucking her deeper like never before. She got that paranoid stare in her eyes, full of self-deception and seduction, all to get it done. She needed to lead the sheep astray just to protect her heart against all those swindling forces, all those undercover wars. And if she would run away, it

would only come closer, and there was nothing else she could be but to learn how to battle in the War of Love.

She was painting herself by deceiving colours, to be a chameleon in this dark night. She covered herself by the drinks making others drunk, so that they would sleep away, and she could escape. But how could she love her enemies ? It made her feel dirty, but the Book of Love had her in a tight grip, and whenever she tried to get away, the grip only got tighter, so she gave up. She was something she didn't want to be, but in a strange way it made her free, which was the grace of the paradox. She couldn't finally get a touch of who she really was, and she got the control over her life back step by step. She was now a high-heeled succubus, in a strange army. She had been bound all over by a strange light, coming from the Book of Love. She was a love-hunter now, and she knew that all women of the invisible jewel would go down like that. There was no other way.

The colours were making her drunk, and made others drunk, and she knew these were the colours of war. To buy such a drink was just the mark of the hunted, and to get drunk was the mark of the defeated, and the one getting this all done was the warmaster. And they were all both the victims and inflicters of this. There was no way in the middle. Only the extreme would lead them out. She was a pin herself now, a pin of evil, so what could she expect more ? She had been under the high heels of evil for so long, and now she had these high heels herself. It was the fastest way to get the blood flow, and to make them all drunk. She looked like a traffic light, but on one moment, and she didn't know how, she could lock the Book of Love again. She locked it like she never locked anything before. She saw someone hanging at a cross, while a large butterfly was flying around him. 'Who are you ?' Tamar asked. The man bowed his head and said : 'I'm the crucified one.' Tamar asked him if he needed any help. 'You have done this,' he said. 'You have crucified me, as I am the personification of the Book of Love. Open the book again to set me free.'

'Never will I do that,' Tamar said, 'as if there is any evil, it is that. You have to live with it, as I'm not going to open it anymore. Do you know what suffering is ruling there within it's papers. Love-slaves.'

'You wanted to open the Book of Evil,' the man said. 'I am the first chapter, and you have defeated me, consumed me. Now read the second chapter, or the Book of Evil will turn itself against you.'

'And who or what is the second chapter ?' Tamar asked.

‘You will only see if you set me free,’ the man said.

‘Oh no, I won’t,’ Tamar said persistent. Then the man and the book started to fall apart, and so many butterflies and other winged creatures became free. A smile fell on Tamar’s face and a great peace filled her like honey. ‘You have set us free,’ a voice deep inside spoke to her. ‘We will be gratefull to you for eternity.’ Tamar still wondered what the second part of the Book of Evil would be, and she asked it some insects who seemed to stay close with her. ‘The Book of Love was merely the frontportal of the Book of Evil. Come closer, and we will let you see, and let you in,’ a voice spoke. But Tamar became very afraid, as what could she expect ? Another chapter leading her to destruction ? She didn’t want to be bound again like that. ‘Through the eye of the needle, is that what you really want ?’ another voice asked her.

‘Who are you,’ Tamar screamed. Then there was silence for awhile. A big butterfly started to show up before her with wings of fire. Tamar almost fainted. ‘You need to run away, Tamar, as the pages will get you,’ the butterfly said. Then it turned into another book, but Tamar couldn’t read it. It was an unknown language. ‘It will stay unknown,’ the butterfly said, ‘as I do not think you want to go through the eye of the needle.’

‘I have been through so many eyes of so many needles,’ Tamar said. ‘I’m like a needle myself now, like a high heeled boot, I’m the treader of evil. Through which eyes do you want me to go now ?’

‘Ho, ho, don’t get so irritated,’ the butterfly said. ‘Do you desire it, or you won’t get anything to know about it.’

‘I desire it,’ Tamar said, ‘I’m hungry for it, and I’m begging for it.’

Then the butterfly opened a door beyond her understanding. It was like cruel light was floating like a waterfall into her mind, burning it from inside out. It was a pin of fire standing before her all of a sudden, and then turning invisible. It was the Invisible Book standing before her. Then she fell into it, and she could only shriek and scream. Something was trying to strengle her, and she saw monkeys all around. It felt like an invisible snake around her. ‘Step into the water,’ someone said. But there was no water. ‘These are the invisible pins,’ another one said. It hurt more than everything else. It was like doors in her head were exploding, and rays of light were falling down on her. ‘How can I read an invisible book ?’ she asked.

‘Don’t ask too much,’ they said. She felt like she was in a bakery becoming gingerbread, and like an invisible sweetness was staring at her. It was smelling so sweet, and she could almost see the smell. ‘Watch the smells,’ someone said, ‘as these are the rays of the heart. The good world believes in the visible, as they are hypocrites, but the evil world is a world of smell, a dogworld. Do you know that a dog can smell forty to hundred times better than a usual soul ? His smell is so advanced that he can even hear it, see it and feel it. That is the power of the invisible. Do you want it ?’

‘Oh yes,’ Tamar said, ‘I know these are the pins of smell, and it’s breaking me down, to build me up again. If I can trigger my other senses by smell, then that will be good.’

‘It is the best part of the book,’ the butterfly said. ‘It will let you enter the world of feeling. It will make you drunk, and it will make you high, it makes you fly. You will be a feather girl, for if you will defeat the pins of smell, they will turn into feathers, and you know how to defeat them right ?’

‘Yes,’ Tamar said, ‘that is an old story. So you’re making an indian of me, right ? Well, I’m already an indian, but I know what you mean.’

And after Tamar had defeated the pins of smell and the whole Invisible Book she came to the Dog Throne, a strange hairy white throne with the strangest and rarest jewels like buttons. It was like glass was surrounding her heart, making her feel protected, safe, like no one could touch her anymore, like no one could find her anymore. It made her feel like she had soft feathers inside, giving her the feeling that she could fly. It was opening the world of feelings to her, a third part of the book, but also this part was very dangerous. She needed the dogs to survive here, and she was so glad that these dogs were the meanest of all dogs, as otherwise she would fall in other mean hands. The dogs were at her side, and since she had this dog throne she could dominate them all, all by throwing some pins in the air. She could make them wild by this, and she could even let them turn into wolves and other predators. She was now made of pins herself, all the pins she had overcome and survived, and she could ride her own body now, to control it, to possess it. All these pins she was were like her new weapons, her wild bones, and by these she ruled all the dogs to make them drunk and wild. They were the hunterdogs and they led her safely through the Book of Feelings, the third part of the Book of Evil.

The book finally hunted her down, and she got into a long fight with it. ‘Open the fourth part of the book ?’ Tamar screamed, as she felt herself drowning. I need to have some ground below my feet. But the Book of Evil was merciless. ‘Drown in me, woman,’ it whispered. Suddenly she got so much strength that she could tear the book apart, and birds seemed to come forward from it. ‘There is no fourth part,’ the book screamed. But the birds formed

words in the sky, words of gratitude. ‘Tamar,’ one of the birds said, ‘the fourth part is the part of letters to you. It will heal your heart, it will be your medicine in this dark, dark night.’

Suddenly Tamar woke up. She saw a chained book lying close to her. Clouds of delirium were surrounding it. She saw clouded arms grasping around them, and she suddenly jumped further away from the books, why she almost shrieked of paranoia. Never again would this book have a grip on her, never again. ‘Go away,’ she screamed. But it was like the arms now knew where she was, so slowly they started to move themselves and the book towards her like they were some sort of creeping and swimming on the sand. Suddenly she heard some shots. Behind her three gorillas stood. The book was sinking away in quicksand.

‘You are safe, my dear,’ the gorillas said. ‘You have come from a long journey through the book, and now you are here. We will never let you go. Protect yourself by all means, for everything around you is evil. The good is just a swindler, trying to chain your soul, and the best is just a hypocrite, a mask, for they are both nothing but the rogues of evil. Don’t let anyone fool you ever again. ‘Then what are you ?’ Tamar asked. ‘Then you must be the rogues of evil too.’

‘We all are,’ the gorillas said, ‘but we have a license to be evil. That’s the difference.’

‘From who did you get that license ?’ Tamar asked.

‘From the Dog Throne,’ the gorillas said.

‘Well, I just came from the Dog Throne,’ Tamar said.

‘Oh, but then you are licensed as well,’ the gorillas said.

‘I think you are but a strange company,’ Tamar said. ‘I guess everything works by the paradox. As long as it is torn it will be safe.’

‘The splinters will get you,’ the gorillas said. ‘There’s nothing above being licensed, or you need to puzzle your way through.’

‘Well, damn those puzzles, I’ll take the license then,’ Tamar said.

The Dog Throne brought her closer to her goal, the ultimate domination, and this all by a license. She would never get this by puzzling her way through, for sometimes you just had to stop all the puzzling or it would lead you further astray. Sometimes you just had to fly on the wings of the unknown, trying to make the best of it by a sort of license, like a license to fly. But more and more Tamar started to hate the license. She wanted the adventure, the danger, for all the safity gave her the feeling she was locked up, and it bored her. She wanted to break away from this Dog Throne holding her heart, for the glass splinters seemed to find her way deeper and deeper. For a part she had to live with this, but sometimes she chose just to fly back to hell again, or even to death and the good world. There was so much to do there, and what about discovering heaven ? Heaven was to her the greatest conspiracy of all hypocrites together. Sometimes she wished to be a good old woman of the invisible jewel again, and she found out she still could be. And although the Dog Throne called her back many times she felt some good safity in that, some pleasure. It was thrilling her and exciting her in a sense. It was not like the early days. She felt a good chain in her back like a red rope pulling her back when it got too much or too dangerous. It was the paradox who gave her pleasure and made her feel good and safe, and she could never chose one side of the story anymore, as that would lead her to destruction. She was a jewel of many sides now, and still so invisible, sometimes showing up with so many flashes, bringing such powerfull hooks to tear all their worlds apart, as she was a monster sent out to devour and re-create, by a license and a wild escape.

She more and more became like a dogthrone, the ultimate license, so savage and wild. It was almost eating her heart now. It was awakening the invisible fires in her, such strong fires to devour worlds. Her heart was like a vulcano now, with invisible eruptions. It was her stairs to the heights of the place of Evil, where she could breath and think, where her mind was nothing but an eruption of her heart. She loved to dwell on these eruptions, to ride them and to float on them, and most of all : to be invisible with them. That was not so difficult for her, as she often went to the good world just to throw the sands of pins into the big eyes. She was the spreader of scary dust making them all blind and letting them all fall asleep. She was in a war against these eyes now, as they never went through the eyes of the needle. They were just bragging. So she thought it was time for them to have an encounter with the pins. These eyes had created all things, and they were like the agents of heaven. These big eyes of heaven she hated more than anything, but they couldn’t escape the teeth of the dogthrone. There were an invisible world and an invisible sword waiting to break through, and through the big eyes of heaven they would do that. These big eyes were the swords of heaven, where all it’s gladiators got their fire from. In cold rage Tamar got there to slay these eyes who were just in drunkeness and sleep because of the sands of pins. It was easy for her to slay them now in the armor of her own drunkeness. She was sleepdrunk now, and that was her protection against this machine. She called forth the invisible ice to quench the fires of these eyes, and lightening started to break these eyes down. But there were so many splinters now, like high

shrieking predators of the wildest forms. It was breaking her head, as she had challenged the worst powers of nature. This wasn't evil anymor, and neither the worse. This was the worst thing which could happen to her. These were the powers who could laugh when they would see the forces of evil march. They would mock them, and scream at them, while the forces of evil would tremble before their thrones. This was the worst. And it was the worst strike in Tamar's head she ever had. It made her sick. She fell down, and she was in fear. Did she challenge eternity and all it's unknown almightyness ? She couldn't think straight anymore, like she had challenged a throne higher than her dogthrone, but nothing was less true. The dogthrone started to bark like all thunder combined, and struck heaven's throne of eyes in a flash. The eyes started to melt, and got confused, and angelic watchers started to fall down to get devoured in a flash. It was dinnertime for the dogthrone now, and Tamar felt her blood flowing again. Stench was now taking over, by the brightest lightening blinding them all. Stench was now like a sword in Tamar's hand, and she yielded it against the last flashes of heaven's throne of eyes. Suddenly there were eruptions in the throne, and lava came forward. One big eye came forward from the melted throne of eyes, and started to scream. Without any hesitation Tamar pierced the Sword of Stench through it.

Then many many small eyes seemed to come forward from the big eye. What then happened Tamar couldn't recall, but the dogthrone took complete possession. She woke up in the arms of a dogman. There was no heaven anymore, and even hell had been faded away because of the explosions. There was now only the place of evil, while the world of the dead and the world of the good were two candles in front of the dogthrone. The dogman caressed her and comforted her. 'It's over, Tamar, we have won,' he said.

Tamar slided away again in a big sleep. So many slaves of heaven and hell could escape with her now in this big sleep, as the dogthrone was taking possession more and more. It was a new drunkeness coming to the world of the death and the world of the good now, and the pins settled themselves in the eyes of these worlds like flashes. The dogman took his woman and carried her to a cave where he lay her down on a place of skins. Tamar was drunk now, as everything seemed to stream from the place of evil. She felt some hands on her which seemed to wake her up. She saw the women of the invisible jewel standing around her. The dogman was holding her hand. 'Now you are truelly one of us,' one of the women said. She was bearing a strange shield with a face on it. She knew this face, but she couldn't remember. 'The one of heaven has fallen,' the woman said. 'It's face is frozen now, and it's eye pierced. He cannot harm us anymore.'

'Does civilization have smell ?' another woman said. 'No, only the rose, and it will create our world. You have defeated it's thorns and the stings of it's bees.'

'Smell has a much higher fire to consume than the eye, and it is an invisible fire to heal your heart. Nothing else can heal you like this,' a third woman said softly.

‘Smell has it’s own eye,’ a fourth woman said, almost whispering, ‘it looks like a nipple from which the milk of evil flows, our world. Don’t hesitate to drink from it.’ Then she laid her hand on Tamar’s chest while it started to burn like a sun, and a huge third nipple appeared. ‘This is the mark of all the higher women of the invisible jewel, a mark which is called the Eye of Smell. Transform and re-create our world by it into it’s finest forms. You can do it, as you are the chosen one. We went through everything you went through, and that made us one. Now rise up on your feet, and you will fly alone now, sweety. We all have to find our own ways.’

Then the women disappeared, leaving the shield with the face to Tamar. The dogman was still holding her hand. ‘I cannot rise up now, as I am tired.’ Tamar said.

‘Take rest,’ the dogman said, and left also. The Eye of Smell was burning on her chest. It was a new form of sight, only by smell, and only registering smell, and triggering it. It was a higher fire, invisible, but producing flashes. It was like everything had been faded away. She felt like she was blind and deaf, like there were only sounds in the distance. It was the Dog Throne coming closer. When it came closer Tamar could see her own heart, and new joy started to spread itself around her. ‘I can see, I can see,’ she was almost shouting. Everything was brighter since the Eye of Smell had struck her, and the sounds were higher and lower, much softer, but louder, like she had been wrapped by it. But then everything was fading away again. Until the Eye of Smell struck again, and she felt like she was a rose, an evil rose, like she had eyes all around her.

She stood up, with a strange stare, rose her sword, and went out of the cave. There was a new sun like a giant nipple, like the Eye of Smell, and milk was floating down like a waterfall, like veils. It was like she could climb in these veils to come to it’s sources. So many roses were growing around her, roses with feathers, and when they had been grown up, they flew away to the new sun in the sky. Also in those feathers were the eyes of smell. There was still an invisible fire streaming, and it seemed to stream from the roses also, making everything so bright. It was like everything had been touched by something. Tamar could see the arms of the invisible fire, like ghosts. Tamar remembered how the key of smell could open the world of feelings. And that was what she felt. It was like another sun came out of the sun and floated down to soar above the fields. It was the Eye of Feeling, spreading so much peace and rest, so much silence. Tamar tried to grasp it, and it fell on her, it pushed her down in the grass below her. It empowered her like nothing else. It was such a devouring fire that she could only see passion. It was like she could jump out of her body to throw her skin away, and to be renewed by fire. She was fire now, the fire of feeling. She could watch by feeling now, seeing feeling all around her, and triggering it. It was like the fields were all exploding, and so many small eyes spred themselves on her forming a new skin and armory. She was almost naked, dressed by some belts and skins. She had a hairy shield, and heavenly jewelry seemed to fall upon her. This evil paradise was her heaven now, and she would be it’s princess. In drunkeness she

crept to her Dog Throne, and lay herself on it, while she almost fell asleep again. It was raining sunrays now, and she started to cry, no tears but sunrays.

The second sun was almost luring her to step into it, and that was which she finally did. It brought her to the other sun. There were flashes everywhere, and the sun started to speak. She gave birth to many children, who were all carrying the eye of smell and the eye of feeling like precious jewels. The children fell down from the suns into the veils, and rolled towards the fields below them, where the roses were waiting for them. Tamar sat on her Dog Throne, smiling from the sun, and she remembered that the feelings would bring the letters. They were rising from the fields to the sun like roses, and they finally reached her heart. She could read them, but most of all she could smell them and feel them.

It was in these days the Dog Throne started to fade away more and more, and she became a Dog Throne herself. She was the Angel of Wrath, a Dog Machine, after all these adventures she had. They had led her through all the cocoons, and now she had become them. She had striking wings now, yielding the winds of Evil like a new heaven. Here she throned as the princess of heaven, and here she was the throne, like the arc of evil who had possessed it. There were no wings like her wings, as she could strike like an army of eagles. She knew where she was coming from, and where she was going to. Whenever she spoke she almost blasted, and whenever she raised her voice she was almost barking. She was an army of dogs, and she knew where it was coming from. She had a history which couldn't be denied. She had fought for this license, and she had fought against it, but it had possessed her merciless.

If she could chose where she would set her feet on, she would set one foot on the world of the dead and one foot on the world of the good. And this was which she finally did. She was now the Angel standing Tall.

In a world of Feelings and Smell she dwelled, the place of Evil, where she had uncovered it's depths, and she had pushed her legs deep. She had so much invisible sweetness, and the women of the invisible jewel were proud of her. She was one of them, more than ever, as she had proved it. She worshipped the Eyes of Smell, and all those who carried it were welcome in her mighty kingdom. She let them dwell on the wings of heaven, and on it's clouds. She let them swim in the surroundings of it's islands, and she gave them the wealths of it's feelings. Also the Eye of Feeling she worshipped, like the womb of all Evil. It made those who carried these eyes so beautiful. She would paint the ones carrying these eyes by her colours of war, as there was still a mighty war. It was the war of evolution, a primeval scream.

One day a third sun was coming into their atmosphere. It was the eye of Evil. It was a strange power of love, a scary power. It was the bringer of fear. Now it was okay to love again no one dared to, but very thin streams of love started to fill and touch the fragile heads of those in the

surroundings of the Dog Throne. It was a careful love like a temple. No one dared to touch it, and they were running away from it. But there was no escape. The threads of fear were binding them, until real panic struck them. It made them more paranoid than they were, and it even made them autistic. It was the strike of fear, and it opened an eternal sight, something which they feared like nothing else.

'Why did we choose to see. We are so young. Why did we choose to be frozen in eternal sight ? We can't move. We are pillars in a temple of evil struck by fear. It's coming from the arc where the eye of evil rests near. We are afraid of these lights, so why did we choose them ? We are hiding for these lights, so why do we invite them ? Aren't we all torn up inside, watching both sides of the night ?'

Giants of the Past

Tamar was on her way to the mountain of the wicked golden windows where she would let her past go. It was a ritual for every warrior who had survived wars or a certain war, and it certainly healed them from wounds. The mountain of the wicked golden windows was not an easy path. It was a path full of dangers, and not many would get away alive from it's guard, a giant. Tamar had already unsheathed her sword, and expected the worst. The giant ran towards her, and she could see his head high in the sky. He had a golden helmet of the darkest gold, and he was friendly to her. He took her up by his hands, also made of the darkest gold. He was like a machine, and he held her before his eyes. She could see the warm eyes through the helmet, and he asked her to come away with him. 'I will bring you up on that mountain,' he said. 'I live on top of it in a giant house, and you will like it. Always plenty of gladiators.'

‘Well, I’m tired of all the fighting,’ Tamar said. ‘I need some peace, and also peace for my eyes.’

‘Oh, just watch,’ the giant said, ‘and you will see it is peacefull. It’s like a new game. We are all friends.’

‘I have heard so many stories about you,’ Tamar said. ‘How come you are so friendly.’

‘First of all : I like you,’ the giant said, ‘and second, I think you mean the previous guard, but he is dead. A man had slain him, and he put me in this position. He made my life well.’

‘Who is that man ?’ Tamar asked. ‘Does he live with you ?’

‘No, he also died awhile ago,’ the giant said. ‘Strange things seem to happen on the mountain of the wicked golden windows.’

In the giant house Tamar saw a lot of giants, but they didn’t seem to play games. There were a lot of doors, and inbetween these doors statues of gorillas stood holding certain weapons. Tamar got her own room in the building. But it wasn’t what she expected. The room was full of spiders, so she first had to clean it out. There were webs all over, and also a man lived here. The man was old and dirty. ‘You didn’t wash yourself in a hundred years I guess,’ Tamar said. But the man didn’t say anything. Tamar went back to the giants and asked them if she could get a room alone, but there was no way. There was no other room free. But she could sleep in the gladiatorhall if she wished. The ceiling was made of strange golden glass, and through it Tamar could see the burning sun. ‘Can’t you do something against the light ?’ Tamar asked the giants, ‘as I want to sleep.’ But the giants shook their heads. The glass had to be uncovered. After awhile Tamar fell asleep in the hall. The next morning the sun was burning on her face. Gladiators came inside the hall and started their fights. Tamar walked away, as she didn’t want to watch it. She was still very tired, and she was in need for peace. She went to the room where the old man was, but on her way a giant stopped her. With a smiling face he said that she could sleep in his bed if she wanted. ‘But there won’t be anyone else in the room, right ?’ Tamar said. ‘I really need to be alone, as I am tired and I need some peace.’ The giant nodded. No worries. He would be back in the evening.

Tamar went to his room, slided into his bed and slept till the evening, until he came in. He was under blood. ‘Well, you had a big fight I guess,’ Tamar said.

‘No,’ the giant said, ‘I had an accident. I slipped.’

‘Oh, okay,’ Tamar said, ‘but let me take care of the wound. You have been so friendly for me. Now I will be friendly for you.’

But the giant shook his head. ‘No, I will take care of myself, and the wicked golden windows will take care of the wounds.’

‘How do they do that ?’ Tamar asked. But the giant didn’t want to tell. She needed to go out of his room, as he needed to sleep himself now. Tamar went to the gladiator hall, but there were still fights going on. The sun was burning, and Tamar thought to herself that she couldn’t sleep any further below such a burning sun. But she wasn’t so tired anymore, and she started to watch some of the fights. ‘Hey, you want to fight against us ?’ some giants asked. But Tamar shook her head. No time for fighting. But they kept asking, and also other giants asked her, so finally it was like the spark was hitting her again, and she took the offer. She could bring down all these big guys in short time, and soon she was the queen of the whole giant building. They carried her on hands.

She wanted to know about the secret of the wicked golden windows, but no one wanted to tell. A tall black giant came into the hall. ‘Hey,’ Tamar shouted. ‘If I can beat you can I sleep in your bed for awhile ? I’m getting tired, and I have no place to stay here.’

The giant was smiling. ‘You can sleep in my bed as long as you want. I hardly sleep, and when I want to sleep I always sleep outside.’ It was like Tamar got a golden ticket. The giant brought her to his room, and said : ‘This is your room now. I never use it. I always sleep outside.’ Tamar smiled and was gratefull. But she wanted to know why he slept outside. The giant didn’t want to tell. It was a good room, so that wasn’t his problem. Maybe he just loved it outside. Sometimes when she looked out of the window she could see him walking, and then he ran into the forest. One day she decided to follow him. He was on his way to the first huge golden window, the highest one on the mountain. There were warm winds coming from the window, and she saw how the giant laid himself down near the window. She saw how the giant started to sweat. She saw his skin turning pale, and wounds disappeared. It was like a new strength was floating through his body. Tamar went to another part of the golden window, and she also laid herself down. It was warm, but nothing seemed to happen. She had still her brown skin, and she still had some scars. But it was healing her soul and her mind. It was like roaring all over her, all these strange warm winds. She felt like re-organized. Things inside seemed to move, like she got a new inner structure. She saw the ghosts of her enemies standing on the other side of the golden window, and they looked like frozen by the gold.

Suddenly she saw them while they started to burn. It was like some parts in her brain started to freeze, and then like there were explosions and eruptions of sweat. She saw them rolling down from the mountain like statues, burning statues, and then peace started to come in her head, so much peace. She sighed deep. This was why the giant loved to sleep outside, and she totally understood. It was like she got addicted to it herself also, and she didn't want to sleep in the giant house anymore. Everytime when she got tired she went to the golden window.

From the outside she could see how giants were sleeping on the golden glass of the giant building itself, something which she could never see from the inside. On a golden ladder on one side of the building she could climb to the roof. Later one of the giants explained her that the golden glassy roofs would make them invisible to the enemy. When Tamar laid herself on the glass she saw that some parts of her skin became a little paler, and some wounds started to heal. She was amazed, and then she fell in a good sleep. She knew that here she was really invisible to her enemies.

'Come with us to the burning sun,' the giants said to her one day. It was like she could really breath now, and they showed her a fragile subtile golden stairs like a ladder. But she feared the burning sun would be more than she could take. 'It will burn my skin,' she told the giants. But the giants shook their heads. They said she would be really healed there, so she went with them. There were so many golden windows here, and so many gorilla-guards stood there inbetween, holding weapons. From here she could see all the golden windows of the mountain below her. There were fluids streaming across the windows here. It looked like tea. 'Don't drink that stuff,' someone shouted.

'Well, I won't do that anyway,' Tamar said.

'It will let you dance strange dances,' said the giant when he came closer to Tamar. 'You don't want to be a slave of the rythm, right ?'

'No, of course not,' Tamar said. The giant directed his finger to a ladder leading the giants higher. Tamar wanted to follow them, but the giant blocked her. 'You don't want it,' he said.

'Well, what is wrong with you, let me go,' Tamar said.

'I won't let you go. It's leading them astray. You need to be with me,' the giant said.

‘Oh, did you invent this all ?’ Tamar asked ironically.

‘No,’ the giant said, ‘but I know how it works.’

Another giant came close : ‘He is right,’ and then he walked away again. Tamar didn’t know what to do. Suddenly the fluids which looked like tea started to turn into blood. ‘Now drink,’ the giant said. Tamar went to a golden window and licked the blood from it. ‘Now you can go to the ladder,’ the giant said. Tamar followed the giant, and the ladder led them deeper inside. Here more blood seemed to stream. ‘Never drink it when it looks like tea,’ the giant said. Tamar nodded. They came to a table with white bread. Tamar was very hungry, but the giant told her not to eat it, unless it would change into meat. When that happened she started to eat. Tamar seemed to understand how everything worked here. All sorts of spines were hanging at the walls, and these spines were made of layers of golden glass in a golden frame. ‘If you want to be a warrior of the golden windows, then take such a spine,’ the giant said. But when Tamar wanted to reach out to grasp it, he stopped her. He blocked her hand and said : ‘Wait until it is bony and full of jewels. Wait until it is a snake. First you have to defeat it, or otherwise it will enslave you.’

Tamar took the wise words of the giant, and when the spine had turned into a snake, she got in a horrible fight against it. It was like everything in her turned upside down. The snake was full of rage, and was meaner than everything else. But Tamar could kill it after awhile, and could insert it into her back. Then the giant led her to a wall where Tamar had to be attached to a rails by her spine which would be like an elevator upstairs. It led Tamar to a higher cave, while the giant was still with her. Here all sorts of wings seemed to fly. ‘Don’t touch them,’ the giant said, ‘or it will enslave you. Wait until they have become rings. Then they will be your gravity.’ When all the wings were rings after awhile Tamar took them, and could attach them to her bracelets and belts. Rays seem to come down to take her up by her rings, while the giant followed her. They came to the hugest golden window Tamar ever saw, and it was like a liquid screen through which they could come. Ghosts of the past tried to follow Tamar but they crashed against the golden screen which was suddenly very hard. Tamar could see their blood streaming across the screen, and their broken bones crumbled down like ashes and sand. ‘You will be deaf to your enemies here, Tamar,’ the giant said. In this hall where she was now tall swords were hanging at the walls. ‘Don’t grasp these, Tamar,’ the giant said. ‘Wait until they have become flames like eyes and turned into fishes. When you have defeated them, they will be your cuirass.’ Again there was a horrible fight : Tamar against these creatures. It was like she was drowning among all these fishes, and she even needed to be helped out by the giant. But later she saw the light, and fire came from them to grill the evil fishes. They dried until it was a fishbony cuirass. Tamar hugged the giant, and while she hung around his neck he brought her to a place where she could sleep. It had exhausted her very much.

‘Love, we have a place here where we will be safe,’ the giant whispered. You have mastered the golden windows now, and know about their secrets. Then the giant left her alone. After she had slept for a long time the guard of the mountain of the wicked golden windows came to her, took her in his hands and brought her to the foot of the mountain again. For the last time she stared at the first golden window on the mountain, then she turned her back to it and went into the forest. She was a woman of war, and she knew deep inside that war was her true medicine. Trips like these she would only do once in a lifetime. From that day on it was like the sky was filled with golden ladders, like the high totemstakes of a love that had passed. It tried to lure her again, to seduce her again, but her medicine lay in war. She was a wargoddess, a savage, belonging to the wilderness, where her heart was. Here she used to sleep between wild animals, and she used to hunt together with the wildest dogs. She was a dogwoman without high thoughts. She was primeval, and not holding on to the pasts from not so long ago. It was like she was on the right side of the golden windows now, watching through it to see her past melt away, and to feel her primeval heart beat again. All these giants froze by the stares of her wild animals, and they would all crumble away in her nights. They were forever frozen in her mind, with their hearts of ashes. And war would let them fade away even more, until she would be deaf to their voices, until they would be completely invisible to her. Oblivion was her bliss, and oblivion would let her swell up to the fires inside.

The Tides of Venom

Tamar was on her way to the cave of an old friend. He was very hospital to her. He had missed her. He took a jar of honey and gave it to her. Tamar was very hungry and also sleepy. It became a long night in which she tried to sleep, but her desire to talk was bigger. There some eternity in the sky that night, and Tamar was bathing in all sorts of emotions. Her friend could trigger them like no one else, and it healed her. Tamar was in a sea of emotions, and her friend stared at her the whole time. He had really missed her, and was glad she came. They ate themselves a way through the honey, and the next day her friend showed her the new blooming flowerfields behind the cave. It was a wonderfull piece of nature. Tamar saw the butterflies creeping across the flowers, and she saw the bees getting their honey. It made her happy, and it covered her sadness. It was here she wanted to be, after so many bloody fights, so many useless wars, all for nothing. Why would she always grasp her sword ? It would only bring her in deeper troubles. She guessed that she was just always looking for the adventure, the heroic adventure in which she risked everything, and which led her to the deepest pits. She knew how chains felt, and she knew how the scorn of her enemies could burn her from the inside. There were many marks on her soul binding her to the past, triggering so much anger all the time to lead her to the adventure again. Maybe it had to be this way, but she hoped her friend could do something. He was so wise beyond everything, with his blooming eyes. He was searching for her when he was staring at her, searching for her heart and deepest emotions, searching for her secrets and then to knock gently on her doors. He was a masterfriend.

She tried to get closer to him, as she wanted to feel his warmth, but he held her away. ‘Tamar, look for your own warmth,’ inside. There is so much warmth inside you have to trigger, and I am already triggering it. Take care that you will dive in it, and anchor yourself, for these moments will never come back. Let this memory be your eternal warmth. It doesn’t take much to set yourself in fire. You have the potential, and my warmth would only take it away if you would come closer to me.

‘But I want to feel your arms around me, and I want to cry in your arms,’ Tamar said. ‘That is all I ask, a friend holding me tight. But I understand you. You are so wise. Help me to understand.’

‘You cannot meet any fire in you without meeting the eternal ice in you,’ the friend spoke. ‘These powers have to stir each other up both. These are the powers leading you to the savage life. If our friendship would go too deep, it would bring forth civilization, and you do not want that and neither do I. Civilization eats the nature away, and we need the savage nature to survive, to live forever.’

After a wonderfull day Tamar had to go away. That was the best for them both. She wanted to be a hermit like he was, and an ascet, and then to be able to reach the deeper wildernesses of these realms. She was thinking about the eternal ice he spoke about.

She went to a place where big spiders were lurking in the darkness. She knew they could trigger these experiences by their hairy legs. It thrilled her. She handled all places she came like she came there for the last time, and this was also how she treated the creatures she met, like she would never see them again. She wanted to break the wheel spinning in her head by following the line. The line would never return, but always go forward. And this was why she needed to be straight, or she would come back to where she came from. Her memory would be enough, and oblivion would be the best to open the doors. Also this wheel of memory had to be broken to change into a line, a line of transformation. It was like a ray of light inside. Because all moments would never return she treated them more intense, and with much more joy. Everything was so much more precious, as it would mark her for life, once and for all. If these moments would become long periods it would get dangerous, and it would be able to destroy her heart. She was not searching for the longlasting moments, but for the flashes. The smaller the better, and she enjoyed it to search for them and leave them behind again. These light touches enlightened her life, and made her life worthy. It was like she had been covered by all sorts of jewelry, like she was bathing in the riches of life. This was the savage living. But some things were so overwhelming, like taking her away. She needed to come deeper. Something was waiting for her. She knew she had to slay all these spiders, to make armories of their skins. She became obsessed by clothes like these, all made of the skins of these defeated moments who wanted to grasp her for life. It gave her a feeling of domination.

These were the spiders of time, wanting to make her life miserable. Life needed to be flashy, until the bigger spiders would grasp her to lock her up in their dungeons. Some moments would be strong enough to grow under her skin, and to dominate her life by the encore. They would eat from her flesh, they would enter her flesh. They were the big boys of life, slayers. They were faster than anything else so that they could get her interlocked. They would make her hopeless, letting her think that there would be no way out. And old saviours would only make it worse, only binding her deeper. She needed the new saviours, the fresh flashy moments who would never return. To return was taboo, a trap. She needed to be strong, and to stretch out to these moments, and then to forget about them. This was the only way to really survive in these realms. The spiders of time could send so many fake saviours only to bring her deeper in troubles, so she had to be on her guard. The spiders would inject her by poisons making her muscles tight so that she couldn’t let go of things. But she needed to relax her muscles, stretch her muscles, and then letting go. To be immune against the muscle-tightening poisons her body started to produce hyperventilation and epilepsy, and strange sorts of paralysis. It tortured her body for a long time, but she knew it was her immune-system coming up against the venom.

But it made her very angry. They let her bring forth children, and they took these children into slavery. It was a very painfull experience to bring forth all these children, but it teached her to let go. Finally she escaped out of this spiderfarm one day, and she would be a warrior more than ever. No one would take her as a slave anymore. She became the worst hunter, and the breeder of evil. She was like a snake now, like a trap, as that was the only way to survive in this dangerous land. She became the exotic, a dangerous venom in the air, striking before they could strike her. If there would be a fight, she would be the first who would hit, and if there

would be a war, she would be the first to raise her knife. They had made her like this, and there was no escape. Never would she listen to any complaint anymore, as it would be a trap to bring her back to where she came from. She would attack those complainers, to let her encounter her knife. They were nothing but the dangerous shapeshiftings of the spiders of time in the air trying to possess her mind again. She had to be aware of the tides of venom.

It tortured her mind, these exotic spiders, and often all sorts of exotic snakes tried to strengle her in these jungles. She had to learn how to survive. It was the survival of the fittest here. You needed to be the best or you would lose it. And when you would lose it, you would lose it all, even yourself. The species here didn't leave anything unused when anyone would fall down. They were waiting for the blood, waiting for someone to fall, and they would trigger it to the fullest contend. They loved to raise each other up high and then to let each other fall, for it was nothing but a cruel breeding. And this made every gift and every safity suspected. These exotic species loved to fatten each other up to finally have a big meal. And only the best of it would win. In this the winner would take it all, and the loser would lose more than he had, for he would also get a miserable life, which would only get more miserable. There was no escape from the breeding, as it would only bring to a deeper trap in life or death, in which these were nothing but the tides of venom. The realm of evil was an evergrowing hell, and even worse than that. It was the worst. It was the evergrowing pain making pain-bodies, evergrowing food for the exotic species.

By hell, heaven, life and death these pain-bodies would be raised into the state of evil, as by the tides of venom. The more these bodies grew, the more the pain grew. Tamar was desperate when she fell into such a trap. How would she escape this time ? This time the locks on her body were more complicated than ever, and the question was : did she ever escape, or was the escape just the road to a worse pain ? In this land there was no escape. Escapes were merely organized by the breeders only to end up in more misery. It was a bitter grief growing in Tamar's heart.

All her dreams of victory were worthless now, hopeless. But then she remembered the words of her friend about the paradox. There were tides of venom in her own heart. By this she always led a double-life, like a many-sided jewel. She remembered his words about the eternal ice as the path to the fire. The line would break the circle, and the line would bring forth the circle, as a savage path, stirring up both sides of the night. She had her own jewel of venom inside, between so many paradoxes, between darkness and light, fire and ice, all the tides of venom, her tides, the tides to survive. This jungle would break them open, this jungle would help her reach it. She would go straight through this jungle to reach for it's sun. It would also search for her, and she would not be able to stop it. The venom was killing her brains, but in her heart it was honey, leading her to the ocean of the primeval, waiting beyond her memory. Memory could corrupt and block history, and that's why it had to be broken. The ray of the jungle would take care of that. All these primeval forms were dancing behind pale lights like stripes. These were the stripes of oblivion between her memory and the primeval. She needed to climb across this fence, this hot grid, and run to the beach. An extreme would never be pure, as it would always have the scars of it's opposite, which made it sensitive. It

would always be filthy because of this, and in a certain captivity. These were the common fractures of life. In this fatalism would have a certain absurdity, as only growing pains would bring forth and trigger the growing pleasures leading them to all directions to live the eternal life. She could swim in this sea knowing this, stretching and relaxing her muscles, while also feeling the tight chains of it all, and the tightening by which she could move it all. It brought her the fluids of another tide, it made her warm, like a hot spot in eternal ice.

All her memories were nothing but the results of this primeval dance of the eternal paradox of the extremes captivating and polluting each other to insert that what is pressuring them. And what was the sweetness behind their back ? It was the border between them and the eternal love in their understanding of this all. The ones coming from these cocoons were connected by this love, a love fire which would burn all. She had to eat herself through this honey to reach it.

Weren't we all each other's food, and weren't we all devouring each other by our fires we couldn't control. Everything was so out of order, yet so in line, like a breeder's land. No one could do anything about it. We were the gingerbreads, the bakers and the eaters all in one. Tamar wore such an amulet around her neck, as she had awakened to this reality, and it was good. It was okay, it was a certain state of mind in evolution. It was a result of the allpowerfull tides of venom, and there was nothing to do about that but just accepting it. We were the gingerbreads laying on the beach of the primeval, waiting for the big fishes to eat us away. We were but fishes on this beach waiting for the bigger ones to take us away to their caves. We were nothing but sea-banquette. Everything was growing in everything, like a complicated web. And it all formed a trap for the bigger things. It was like the rudder on a ship moving the ship to a new direction. To the island, please, where we can all lay down our dreams, to see everything in a new light.

There was streaming something in her heart, a new light, like the savage perfume, enlightening her brains, her head. She smelled it, and it opened her feelings for the new world, this tropical island. She had been too long in this tight embrace and she could finally free herself out of it by shaking it away. She crept towards the lights on the island, and she found out : There was nothing but deception, there was nothing but evil. And it enlightened here, and she got peace with that. It doesn't matter anymore when it's in a different light. We will come where we need to be.

So she gathered the jewels on the island, and started to build cities and villages, and then she left to enter into the deeper jungles of this island, finally to reach the other side of the island to swim to the next island. How deep she had come into this place of evil she didn't know, but she wanted to reach for it's core. It was just an adventure, so nothing mattered anymore. It was all just a part of a bigger story. And she found out that the story was the only one who could deal with the powers of evil. It was something deep in her heart. Something which had to be the core of this all, yes, it was the story, an eternal story, so big, that it would rise to take

possession of it all, for there was nothing but that. The eternal story had created and bound all these hearts, letting them go down under in eternal growing pains to reach for the eternal growing pleasures. And what is the pain by something you can't reach ? It is the hunger. It was an eternal Tantalos, a place called Samdia. For only the eternal growing hunger would lead to the eternal growing satisfaction anyone needed to survive the dark powers of eternity. And there was no pain but this strange growing hunger. It grew on their back like heavy weights bringing them down, like big exotic snakes. And there was no strength which could be able to come against the incredible eternal growing strengths of these snakes. All those victims of Samdia were only sinking away in an eternal growing weakness, but Tamar knew where it would lead them to : to the almighty sources of the eternal growing strengths. They were in a snake cocoon to become these exotic snakes themselves. These snakes didn't know what good and evil was. They were beyond that, just following their instincts. They had reached the eternal growing lusts in the sky, and all they could do was falling down into Samdia. They were also the victims of this eternal evergrowing hunger, and they took so many with them in their falls. But Tamar could teach them.

Tamar brought light to this world, and hope, and became a heroic figure, but it led them to a new form of slavery. There was nothing but slavery, and this was all nothing but freedom, leading them to the dark spots in the sky : the eternal growing slavery and the eternal growing freedom. All these temporal things needed to find their place in eternity, as one big awakening. The wounds who gave blood so much would grow from scars into nipples to give milk, and still these nipples would get wounded, to get a place in eternity.

Tamar tried to come across this sea, to find it's bridges, and she found the heart of evil, fed up by so many nipples. As when a wound grows from a scar into a nipple, it will grow inside to finally find the heart and feed it. And so the heart can feed the whole body. She could put her throne here finally, and put the lights on. There was no sense of growing old here. Time stood still. This was eternity. The bridges were like snakes here, covered by the legs of big hairy spiders. They were the workers of this paradox, the masters of the tides of venom. They could let the milk and the blood flow whenever they wanted, all to keep them drunk in a higher state of mind.

The palest snakes of oblivion triggered the darkest snakes of the primeval, all coming against the memory. The memory was a prison, and these exotic snakes came to break the prison open to set it's captives free. They also set Tamar free, as they slided across her skin to tie her against the wall, and then they would bite it all open. She got the marks of oblivion and the primeval by this, all to raise up her immunity against the memory. These marks were wounds at first, but later they would grow more or less from scars into nipple-like or sole-like materials on her skin. She had to be milked a lot so that it could rain down on Samdia. Lots of milk had to be drunk to be able to break the memory. She was now the cow of evil. The milk was streaming from her body, to make them all immune. She was the medicine of evil, like the sun of milk, but by the tides of venom it also turned into blood after awhile. She could bring sleep and drunkeness to Samdia, so that they could reach her by their dreams. She was their goddess on the ladder, their heroic figure. They could forget about their hunger a bit by

her, but they started to develop a new hunger, a hunger for her. The hunger would never go away, but it would only switch, like the tides of venom. And if she could bring everything in a different light, she would do, for there was always a new day coming with the night.

She became the slayer of memory on a horse so tall, to lead them to the primeval by the tools of oblivion, by drunkeness and sleep. She was holding the cup of a milk so heavy, sometimes blood, bringing them to enlightement, to the dark holes in the sky. She was the evil cow, a dark horserider, treading the grapes, these grapes of hunger. She was the hunter in the skies, dwelling in the clouds, with her carriage pulled forwards by dogs and catlikes, with the eagles of war by her side. Her heart was with Samdia, a heart so full of passion that you could smell it. She was a jewel held together by snake-bridges covered by spiderlegs, like a savage treasure. And the tides of venom formed the clock inside, an eternal clock, holding a fruit so pure. She was the purest jewel in my life. But one day she split. I gave one part to Africa and one part to South America, and I would be the love-bridge who would heal her. Now she's like a statue in my room, holding a bunch of comics and books. On her forehead is written : One day I will come alive.

But she is just a story, the story which is able to hold the evil in her hands like snake-bridges covered by spiderlegs, all to connect the two parts of the split heart, the heart of evil. It's like a strange exotic fruit-basket, like the tree of Adam and Eve, saying : 'Don't eat this time, but drink from me.' It's forbidden milk if you ask me, sometimes blood, like the tides of venom, so I don't watch it a lot. I bought this strange statue somewhere on a market, for it reminded me of her, but it's not her, that I know for sure. But I don't want to throw the statue away, for maybe it will really come alive one day to prove me wrong. The statue has nice boots of cowboy-leather, and she has some feathers on her head like an indian. It reminds me of the universal bonds we have. But a writer isn't supposed to carry out on the subject like this, so I will stop and say : the last part you can tear off from the story if you wish. Make a line somewhere, I don't care where, and choose which part you will keep, and which part you will share.

Chronicles of Evil

Guldam had defeated so many unworthy kings in his life, for example Canon, who enslaved so many only by a cursed book. These are the chronicles of Guldam, his wars and victories, but also his suffering in loneliness, in deep dungeons, in enigmatic captivities inflicted by dragons, which finally led him to the Sword of Life, and made him invincible. This is the story of a man who did not walk away when his tribe was in problems, deep problems. But so many parts of these stories had been faded away throughout the centuries. I could only find a few pieces of it, and I puzzled with it for years and years not knowing where it would lead me to. So many parts of these pieces had been written in unknown languages, and I could only decipher them by the several pictures of the book. These pictures are still like haunted places in my mind, like places of ghosts, bearing an undescribable evil in which the heart would fade away. Therefore for my own protection I just wrote down a childish version of my translations, so I could also protect many others against these forces. It was another cursed book, even greater than the almighty book of Canon, which seemed to be worthless after Guldam had opened it and slayed it by the Sword of Fire.

The cursed book of Guldam's chronicles had made him invincible, and it would make those who would find it also invincible. Many brave knights tried to open the book through the centuries, and tried to get it done, but often an unknown fire coming from it would destroy them, and they became like the haunted places themselves. I therefore came with a guard, and I know that only to search for the head of Canon, the beheaded king, and by laying the head on the cover of the book, it would be opened. That was which I did. I went to the underground as a researcher, almost lost my life to encounter the forces of evil, and finally found the head of Canon to open the book. I wished I would have never done it, as the book was more than I could take. It brought me down in chains, leading me to the unknown places. This, dear reader, although I found some treasures, was the reason why I made a childish version of the book, and even some small distractions to lead some things astray, as I do not wish any of these savage forces to fall on another's head. However, it can be taken in small portions, and then it will do miracles.

I know this book will be old, very old, when it will reach your generation, the generation I call the chosen generation. You will be my only hope for freedom, as still the opened book is a heavy weight on me. I have found some lightness in some friendly passengers throughout the ages, but they were just passing by. No one could bear the light of the book by which I had been chained. Maybe in this generation, the generation I am facing, some kind of creature or

beast will be able to swallow the light to give it direction. All we need in this thing is to get direction, and then it will be a bliss after all. In my dark nights I yield this Sword of Life, and I am invincible like Guldam's likes, but in the morning another reality is barking at me. I pray for the eternal dark nights to fall upon us, where the morning is just a small island in the waves of a mightier evil, the evil which would set us free. The good is in the hands of hypocrites always turning us down by their books of guilt and shame, which are the books of lies. But in the misunderstood evil we might find a little light. Do understand that I come from a primeval age in which the evil wasn't evil, but the good was. It was the hypocricy. May evil prevail in these days.

By the many pieces torn away I can only offer a book which is able to tear the mind, but what would happen when the book would be untorn ? I am an old man already, and when the book will reach you, I am probably much older, or I have already found the fountain of eternal youth. This is what we are doing it for, this is why we have are burdens, only to reach this fountain, and not to reach it before our time or to drink from it before our time, as then it's fires would devour us.

Guldam was in my mind the slayer of all slayers after I had read the pieces. The pieces had struck my mind, especially by their pictures. These were the haunted places in my head since then. Guldam was a barbarian knight, and later the king of all savage knights. They rode on the highest horses to bring doom on the hunting fields. By their swords they yielded the forces of the suns and their planets, and their quest was to the universal pig who dwelled in it's center as the headquarter of hypocricy. It was this beast they had to defeat and slay, so that it would give it's eternal pigmilk which it held in for so long to spread the miseries of hunger.

Guldam finally found the pigbeast, and pierced it's heart by the Sword of Life, and he threw the body into the abyss of blood. If he wouldn't do that the pigmilk which was streaming from the slain body would be poisoned to block the road to the fountain of eternal youth forever. Guldam also knew how dangerous it was to drink from this fountain before it was the time, so he poured some of the eternal bloody pigmilk into the well, and raised veils of pigskin around it, so travelers would not haste themselves. Every veil of pigskin got it's own watcher, a savage knight. But still we do not know if this is legend, religion or reality. I am also concerned about my decipherings. Maybe I made some mistakes here and there in my attempt to get it done. How do we know we decipher something well ? Sometimes it's merely guessing.

The Handsome King

Guldam visited the king of Tra and asked her for his daughter's hand. The king of Tra was an evil man and laughed at him. So many warriors asked for the hand of his daughter, but he only wanted the best of them. So he organized a tournament to let all these men fight each other in a bloodbath of slaughter. Only the winner who would have slain them all would get the hand of his daughter.

Guldam won, and again he asked for the hand of the daughter of the king of Tra. But again the king started to laugh, and even mocked him. 'What a worthless man, and do you think I let you marry my daughter ? You must be joking me.'

This time Guldam got very mad. 'What do I need to do ? Work for you, slaying another ten-thousand men ? Say it, and I will do.'

But the king was still laughing, and said his daughter could never love such a loser like Guldam. 'Look at you,' the king said. 'Your jewelry is worthless : some bones and teeth in a chainlet, some feathers, and look at your clothes : you are almost naked, poor man, and the skins you wear are torn. My daughter needs a rich and handsome man, not a savage like you.'

Guldam bowed his head. 'Is it because of my scars you are mocking me like this ?'

'No, I have some scars too,' the king said. 'Scars are beautiful when they are godgiven.'

'Is it because my tattoos caused by snakebites and the bites of dragons ?' Guldam asked.

'No, I also have some tattoos by the bites of strange dangerous creatures. They are beautiful,' the king said. 'I just don't show them. I cover them, and that is what you first need to do, boy. You need to cover them.'

'Okay, so when I put on some wealthy clothes for which I have honostly worked, I can get the hand of your daughter ?' Guldam asked.

'Look around you,' the king said. 'My kingdom has so many men with wealthy clothes. It takes more than to be rich and having a good job. None of these men have the hand of my daughter.'

'Then what is it I need to be ?' Guldam asked.

'Come on, don't you know ?' the king laughed. 'You need to be handsome, pretty, beautiful.'

'What does that mean ?' Guldam said with inner pride.

'Come on, do I have to tell that ? Everyone knows, so don't act like you do not know. Everyone knows what beauty is,' the king grinned.

'Even if you would kill me here,' Guldam said, 'I do not know.'

'You have to talk like they talk, you have to walk like they walk, you have to have an attitude like them, smile like them, and be the best in it,' the king said.

'Then I don't want to have your daughter,' Guldam said. 'I am Guldam. I am me, and no one else.'

Then Guldam turned his back to the king and wanted to walk away. The daughter of the king of Tra had followed the whole conversation, as she was sitting next to him. 'This is the man I want, father,' she said.

'Stop, young man,' the king said. 'My daughter found you to be worthy to be her man.'

'I could only marry her, if she would cut your head off and bring it to me on a dish,' Guldam spoke, and left.

The End

Fountain of Youth

Guldam went to the dark realms of Canon, the killer-king who had enslaved all these realms by a cursed book.

When Guldam came closer to the throme of Canon, bright lights coming out of balls at the sides of the throne struck Guldam. For awhile he had to hold his hands before his eyes or it would blind him. Snakes were sliding across the balls and across the stakes these balls were resting on. Canon had the face like a skeleton, and he had been dressed in a black garment with purple jewelry. Like a dog he looked at Guldam who had bent his head away from the lights. Slowly Guldam faced Canon, the killer-king. Canon held the cursed book high all of a sudden. ‘I know you come for this, right ?’ Canon shouted.

Guldam bowed down in pain by the words of Canon, the killer-king. It was like his words were striking his heart, letting everything tumble down, but again Guldam seemed to get a grasp at his strength. Slowly he took his head up to face Canon, the killer-king, again. It was like fires were striking Guldam, but he tried to ignore the burning, although it seemed to pierce him deep. The cursed book had so many locks, and could only be opened in a certain way, but then it would only show a few pages. By this Canon had enslaved them all as in a labyrinth only leading them deeper into the traps.

Guldam stepped forwards. He rose his Sword of Fire against the killer-king. The killer-king started to laugh and stood up to come from his throne. ‘Look, Guldam, I know where you are coming for. You want the book. I am guarding the universal pig of hypocrisy in this book, holding all it’s pigmilk in, so that you all die of all sort of hunger. I am the ruler of Tantalos, the place of hunger-slaves. Look at all the poverty around you. Isn’t it beautiful ? It keeps them running after the things they never get, and they fight each other because of it. Isn’t it the masterpiece of all creation ?’

‘I know you do not know anything of life, Guldam,’ the killer-king said. ‘The pig is a beast, and when I would let it free, worse things then you would ever imagine would happen. If you can defeat it, the book is yours.’

An enormous creature came out of the book, with heads like snakes, claws like dragons, like all predators in one. ‘And something else, Guldam : When you have slain it, the pigmilk will come forth from it’s body. It’s venom and it can drown the universe. Throw it’s body into the Abyss of Blood, or the fate of the universe will be even worse.’

It would be the worst fight Guldam ever had. The beast dragged Guldam through the underworld to a cave close to the Abyss of Blood. The beast tied Guldam to a stake, and spoke : ‘Prepare yourself for swimming in the Abyss of Blood, while it’s snakes will eat from your flesh.’

‘Too long I have been locked up,’ the beast spoke. ‘When I have thrown you in the Abyss of Blood, I will behead the killer-king, and he will have the same fate here. Then I will take his head and open my book.’

‘It will be the Book of Pigs turning all the likes of the killer-king into chicken,’ the beast spoke further. ‘But I need you to open the book. I need you to slay the killer-king. I will chain you by a chain tall enough to let you reach for the killer-king, and when you bring me his head and slain body, I will have some mercy on you.’

Guldam knew he couldn’t begin anything against the beast, so he had to defeat the killer-king first.

‘Have you defeated the pigbeast ?’ the killer-king asked when Guldam came back to his throne. ‘No, I have to defeat you first,’ Guldam said. He ran towards the killer-king, took his chain in his hand and threw it like a lasso around the head of the killer-king. The killer-king was screaming as it took him in a tight grip. Giant birds, the watchers of the killer-king, came forward from the throne to attack Guldam, but Guldam slayed them all by the Sword of Fire. Then he walked towards the killer-king, but all of a sudden fire was coming from the cursed book. Guldam rose his shield and could hold the fire away from him. Then he pierced the book by his sword. The locks started to melt away, and a new fire charged the sword by which he beheaded the killer-king. Then he took the head and the slain body to the pigbeast in the cave near the Abyss of Blood. ‘You have forgotten something,’ the pigbeast shrieked. ‘You must go back to get the Sword of Life. Take it out of the throne of the defeated killer-king.’ Guldam went back like he was drunk and hypnotized. Above the throne a gigantic sword had been sheathed. This had to be the Almighty Sword of Life. Guldam took it out, and ran back to the pigbeast. ‘Now give it to me, and I will set you free,’ the pigbeast shrieked. But Guldam knew about the intentions of the pig, and pierced it’s heart by the sword. By a shriek the pig threw itself into the Abyss of Blood, and sank away.

By the sword Guldam could cut his chains away and soon he was a free man. Pigmilk seemed to come up from the well of blood, and when he tasted it he wanted more. It was taking the strange hungers of his heart away. He took a dive into the well, and he gathered all the skin of the pigbeast. He stretched it and made tents and veils around the well. He had now found the fountain of eternal youth. The milk was jumping from the bloody waters, while women came forth from the lake. They had been locked up in this abyss for such a long time.

The Women of Mwr

Not many knew of the evil women of Mwr and the evil things they did, but one day Guldam visited them. Their camp had been surrounded by strange sew-machines in the air which would jump down on their victims. These machines were quite primitive working by huge windmills also surrounding their camp. They called the sew-machines the stalkers, and they certainly were. It was to protect the women against intruders wanting to bring their tribes down. In a cave they kept a beast called the licorice-beast. He was the one who inspired them to make the evil sew-machines on high stakes surrounding the camp, and told them how they could let them dive at intruders, and how to hunt. The sew-machines did a lot of the job. They cared for the food.

The sew-machines sewed the souls of their prisoners, until they were living vulcanoes. They would never leave the camp, for then they could betray it’s location. They would be food for the licorice-beast, but it had to be prepared for years and years, which was the task of the women. The beast was very selective, and he could kill the women if they would bring him unprepared food. It was a heavy burden for the women, but he helped them raising the sew-machines, the stalkers who would protect them.

But one day the beast broke free out of it’s cage. It was screaming and shrieking. It had been so long locked up in the darkness, and could hardly stand the light. The beast got so excited and didn’t know what to do with this new energy he felt. It was the day Guldam visited the camp and slayed the sew-machines one by one. It was love at first sight when Guldam saw the beast. Guldam climbed on the beast and rode it to the portals of the camp. The nature around the camp was full of purple gnats taking fluids from thistles and the wildest flowers to their hives. ‘How did you find me ?’ the beast asked Guldam.

‘Oh,’ Guldam said. ‘There was a strange advertisement in a magazine of a company for selling sew-machines. They didn’t write down the address well, and it led me here.’

‘Lead me to a field of licorice-plants,’ the beast said. ‘Only there I will get well.’

‘I will,’ Guldam said. And when they came there the beast had to vomit a lot, and turned into a savage prince. He said a group of indian women had put a spell on him once, for he didn’t want to marry their female chief. Only a field of licorice-plants would set him free. That’s why they always called him the licorice-beast.

‘But now you’re free,’ Guldam said.

‘Yes,’ the prince said. ‘I studied technology, and I worked for a company of sew-machines. Shall we build our own camp here ? I don’t want to fall in the hands of these strange women again.’

Guldam nodded. ‘I’m your man.’ The prince was the softest one he ever met, and he could melt his heart like no one else. He called the prince the mad dog, for the prince was so energetic. The prince always held his deeper knowledge away from the women, but now he could let it all stream. But this time he wouldn’t use machines and windmills for the camp. Together they went back to the women of Mwr to capture them. They took the women of Mwr to the new camp, where they had to be sewers the rest of their lives. It was a tragic fate for the women of Mwr, but no one could mess with the savage prince without paying a price.

The sewers of Mwr became the most notorious hunters in the jungles and wildernesses of Mwr. They were the cruelest cannibals existing, preparing their food for years and years. There was no escape out of their hands, only by the desired death after the longlasting torture. But it often never showed up, as the soul would live on, in not a few cases ending up in becoming a sewer itself. Like vulconoes they became, like city-lights, waiting for a worse beast to eat them. They were nothing but food and eaters. They were the sewers, strange guards of the new camp. Guldam was satisfied with the idea. No one would take the savage prince away again. Guldam himself became the personal guard of the prince, and one day the prince showed him a jar of eternal honey. ‘Oh, you’re still the mad dog, right ?’ Guldam said, and started to eat. One day Guldam took the prince to the beach and the sea. ‘Look at the waves,’ Guldam said, ‘and look at the sand. This is all we have. It is our sun, our warmth, and it will shine forever, all these different lights. For the women of Mwr the story is over. But our story has just begun.’ The prince smiled. The sea looked like honey, enchanted by the sun. He felt the burning hand of Guldam on his shoulder, and then his whole arm around him. There was no spell like this, and their star soared above the sea.

Guldam smiled. He was so glad he had finally found the prince, this mad dog. Life had been a bitch to them both, and it was good now, for all these women wanted to sew anyway. But suddenly someone stood behind them. It was the female chief. She had left the camp since her women became so evil. ‘I’m so sorry about what they did to you,’ the female chief said. ‘And this all because they wanted you to marry me.’

‘You were always the best of them, but I needed to be free, free in friendship and love,’ the prince said smiling. He would never hurt this precious lady, so he needed to stay savage. ‘I have seen what you have done to the women of Mwr,’ the female chief said. ‘And it is their righteous reward. They have tortured me my whole life. They raised me and made me chief, something I never wanted to be. I wanted to be free as well, a savage like you. This is why we could get along so very well. I have placed that advertisement, so that someone would set you free.’ The prince walked to the female chief and hugged her. ‘We have grown up together there,’ the prince said. ‘They had kidnapped me from another tribe.’

‘I know everything,’ the female chief said. ‘I know, you don’t have to tell me. I know how you grew up there with horrible mixed feelings. You have found a giant of love now, this Guldam. And I want to be in your circle of love also.’

‘You are,’ the prince said, ‘you always were, and you will always be.’ Tears came out of the eyes of the female chief. She took her headdress full of feathers from her head and placed it on the head of the prince while she kissed him. The prince took his chainlet off and hung it

around her precious neck and kissed her as well. Then they looked at Guldam, and he took them both in his arms. Their star still soared above the waters. A ship came closer from the distance. Together they ran across the beach towards the waves. After a few hours the ship stood before them. A woman came from the ship and asked them to come aboard. Together they went on the ship, while the woman wrapped her arms around the prince. 'Do you remember me ?' the woman said. 'I guess not, as you were too young when they kidnapped you. I am your mother.' Then the woman hugged the female chief and then Guldam. 'I am so gratefull to you for all what you did for my son,' the woman said. 'Stay on my ship. It is better for you than living with such a hate.'

'We didn't have another choice,' Guldam said.

'I know, I know,' the woman said almost whispering. 'But now, choose for this. You won't regret it.'

The women led them deeper into the ship, and they decided to stay. 'My name is Tania. I am the owner and builder of the ship,' the woman said. 'And my old mother is the captain.' Soon another woman, an older one, stood between them. 'Grandmother,' the prince whispered, and hugged her.

Soon they were on full sea, heading for a new world where they could live. They all got a room on the ship. Guldam got honored for his heroic deeds, and they got to meet the crew. It was a big ship, bigger than they had ever heard of. The female chief was one of the most passionate warriors on the ship, and actually she was the one who could raise the ship to it's hights, together with the savage prince who took care of the technology. Guldam was very proud of them. Guldam always bore two swords : the Sword of Fire and the Sword of Life. One day he gave the Sword of Fire to the prince, and the Sword of Life he gave to the female chief. It was on this day there were more stars in the heaven than ever, and it seemed angels soared down on the ship. Tania smiled, and her old mother held her hand. 'We have reached our goals now,' the old mother said. 'Here we have always waited for.' Tania nodded, while she smiled. She was so proud of her son, for without him they wouldn't get it this far.

A man called Hurricane joined them laying his arms around both women. 'We have made it, because of these precious ones,' he said. There was a war in the air now finally establishing love, the power of love. They could come out of their prisons of hate. An old man called Green Eye came standing behind them. 'We have reached it,' he said. The angels enlightened the ship by their fires and lights, and the prince was fighting at the front. 'High Tide,' someone was calling. And then more started to call it. The power of love was falling down on them, and they came out of their prisons of anger. It was like the sea and the waters were opening up before them. The female chief climbed to the highest point of the ship where she placed the Sword of Life, while such a light fell on the ship, like it got wings. 'Come on, my swan,' she whispered. 'Fly, you can do it.'

Finally the ship came free from the waters, and rose up mightily. Ghosts had to lose their grips, while there was screaming and shrieking. Guldam held his shield against certain rays coming from the waters. Waves started to rise against the ship, but Guldam hit them down by his hand. A huge peacock was appearing in the sky.

'I won't let you enter,' the peacock roared. 'You belong to the sea.' The peacock tried to wound the ship, but Guldam jumped towards the peacock and strengled it. Then he broke it's

neck by a smash. There was silence all over suddenly. The heavens were opening up to the ship and soft winds seemed to surround it. The female chief started to pluck the peacock to get it's feathers. She made a new headdress of it for herself, since she gave her previous headdress to the prince. Many more peacocks started to attack them, trying to wound them. A warrior called Tara from Rhodes came forward to do some serious attacks at the swarms of peacocks. Then a warrior called Golem battled at her side. They slayed the peacocks like butter. A woman called Lirlit came down, together with two other women called Tze-ra and Sevenlegs. The sky was full of warriors, and by their rays they tried to open the bat-portal of heaven. But no one was able to open it. Suddenly a man called Awela came forward from the ship, climbed to the highest point of the ship where the Sword of Life was. He took the sword in his hands and shouted to the bat-portal : Open yourself, in the Name of the King. But dirt fell down through the bat-portal, and the ship got swung away. The sea below them soon had become an ocean of mud. They were all heroic figures, but they could only call forth the dirt of heaven. It fell down on them in great portions. Heaven was laughing and smiling at them. All they got was it's scorn. A huge bat was coming forwards, ready to strike. One by one the crew of the ship showed up to the bat to be struck by it's rage, until a woman called Tamar the Horrible showed up from the ship. 'Give me the Sword of Life,' she shouted. She was the ruler of all evil, and the princess of heaven. When she got the Sword of Life she aimed it at the bat and spoke : 'In the Name of the Princess of Heaven and All It's Evil, Open the Doors.' It's like a thousand cars were about to start. The dirty bat flew to the huge bat-portal of heaven and opened it.

Guldam woke up between his cattle. He was a herd with dreams, big dreams. He was a hunter with evil thoughts. He slept on the fields, in the same mud as the pigs did. He wasn't a heroic figure, it was just a deep wish to escape the boring life he led. In the sky he saw a star falling down, and suddenly lights were falling all around him like flashes. Maybe his wish would come true.

A woman with tall white boots came down to him. She bore a tall sword. 'Are you an angel ?' Guldam asked.

'Yes,' the woman said. 'Why did you knock on heaven's door, and why did you open it ?'

'I guess, I guess I had nothing else to do,' Guldam spoke.

'Oh, you funny man,' the woman said. 'Here you have your sword, warrior. With this you will begin your journey through heaven.'

Then she gave him the sword which started to get in the flames. 'The Sword of Fire,' he said.

'Yes,' the woman said. 'Use it well. Dreams can come true.'

The woman took him into the sky to her house. 'Here do I live, dreamerboy,' she said. She took of her tall boots, tore them apart and made an armor of it for Guldam. She wore white socks, took them off after awhile and also tore them. Then she threw the pieces in the fire-hearth. 'Veils of the temple,' she said. 'But you are evil enough to get through them, right ?'

'I guess so,' Guldam said.

‘You will rise all these warriors in your head, Guldam,’ the woman said. ‘You are their father, their guard.’

‘I thought these were just my dreams,’ Guldam said.

‘It’s seed from heaven,’ the woman said. ‘You are the chosen one.’

‘Am I an almighty father all of a sudden ? I’m just a simple herd and hunter. There’s nothing special with me. I live a boring life,’ Guldam said.

‘Look where you are now,’ the woman said. She threw something into the fire-hearth like seed. ‘Now it will come alive,’ she said.

‘These veils of the temple,’ Guldam asked. ‘How do I get through ?’

‘Use your sword,’ the woman said, ‘and reach for the Sword of Life.’

‘I’m just a simple man with dreams,’ Guldam said. ‘How can I yield such powers ?’

‘You will learn,’ the woman said.

Prisoners of Heaven

When Guldam started to make his journey through heaven, he needed to be very careful. He had the Sword of Fire to protect him, but not much did he know about the women of heaven, who were often dangerous traps. When he came in some of the fronthalls of heaven he saw a lot of stairways and strange elevators often full of women. The women looked like giants from below. They were often halfnaked like barbarian women, and they often wore a lot of feathers like they were some sort of indians. 'On platform one, prisoner Guldam has arrived,' a computerized voice was speaking through some sort of intercom. Many women looked at Guldam. Was he a prisoner then ? 'Hey, what kind of joke is this ?' he shouted. 'I am not a prisoner.' From the platform there was a metal stairs, and he walked upwards. Some platforms were smaller, and some were moving up or down with one or more women on them. Guldam felt lost in this place. Where did he have to go ? He decided to walk to the next platform, and went through a door by which he came in another hall. There were also a lot of women here, but the women were often a bit smaller than the giant women. Guldam really didn't know where he was. He thought it was some sort of strange that they called him a prisoner. It wasn't very hospital. Again he walked up some stairs and came in a higher hall. Here there were some shiny rivers with animals in it. Strange veils hung here through which he could come in other parts of the halls. The veils had a strange smell, and it almost made Guldam drunk. All sorts of strange and dangerous webs were hanging here with tall stings close together. Guldam knew he would be nothing but sea-banquette if he wouldn't be on his guard. The stings started to move dangerously, while Guldam hid himself behind a veil. Guldam moved himself through the veils, through the water. Suddenly Guldam got stuck in a net, and it started to tear him apart. Finally he could come on the other side of the net, but he was bleeding almost all over. He was in another part of heaven now. He knew these strange webs and nets were nothing but portals of heaven, leading him deeper. But he had to pay a price to get through them. It tore him apart, but it also healed him in a strange way. After walking through a realm of low waters he came into another hall. Again many webs, and many women on platforms moving up or down. Here the webs had a lot of feathers, and unicorns were bathing in lakes between the webs and nets. In front of a ship a woman stood with a sword in a standard. It was the Sword of Light. She took the sword and aimed it at him. A fight started in which Guldam tore the woman apart by the Sword of Fire. He knew that as a prisoner these women were his enemies. 'Prisoner Guldam has destroyed woman of the Sword of Light,' a computerized voice said through an intercom. Guldam raised his sword, and spoke : 'What is all this ?' He saw women reacting to the computerized voice, and they surrounded him. They didn't come closer, but they had formed a circle around him. Then they started to whisper to each other like they were gossipping, and they laughed at him. A cage came from the ceiling, and soon Guldam had been trapped. Then the cage went upwards again with Guldam inside. He came into a clouded realm but full of bright lights, and he got belts around his body like a horse. He saw many other men here with their arms tied behind their backs.

Whips would hold them in line. Some men had their arms free, and they had swords and shields. It was the day he found out that heaven was a circus. In the middle of the field the boss stood. It was a man with a high hat, and the biggest whip he ever saw. All the men had to go through a veil, while the smell of the veil made them drunk. Guldam fell down, while all the other men were laughing at him, mocking him. 'Who is that man ?' the circusboss asked. 'Let him come forward.'

Guldam crept to the circusboss. The circusboss took him tight by his hair. ‘We do not need any weaklings,’ he said. ‘We will throw you from a mountain, or we will throw you in a fire.’ But Guldam couldn’t stand on his feet anymore. His sword had been sheathed behind his back. With his last piece of strength he took the sword from behind his back and slayed the circusboss. Suddenly Guldam had been struck by something. ‘How can I die in heaven,’ Guldam screamed. A woman stood behing him with a whip. Then she struck him again. He didn’t have any strength left, but he could lay the Sword of Fire against her skin, while she started screaming. ‘Why are you making a slayer of me ?’ Guldam screamed. It was the day heaven burst out, and beasts and dragons came forward. They had been hidden in this volcanoe for such a long time, living with the skins of men and women. It was the day of the dragons, like horses they fell from heaven. The throne of heaven came in sight by the eruptions, and Guldam crept to it. He would raise his princess here, and he would be king.

On the throne drunk dogs were having a party, and a black woman had been chained to a wall. He crept to the woman and lay himself at her feet. ‘Another prisoner,’ he said. ‘Who are you ?’

Then he fell asleep. In the middle of the night he woke up. He had his strength again, so he cut the chains by his sword, and then he went to the dogs who slept on the throne. He could kill them easily. Clouds of light seemed to come from the throne, and strong but warm winds slamming him against the wall. These winds were the winds of panic. ‘You must hide for the throne, seven days,’ the woman said, ‘or it will slay you.’ So they both went behind the wall. They both went through many veils in search for the Flower of Heaven, for without this flower they would never rule heaven. But when they finally found the flower, it seemed to be a beast who swallowed them. Inside the beast it was like a temple. In full rage the beasty flower followed their trace through the veils and reached the throne, which it swallowed as well. Guldam came into a fight with the black woman about who would sit on the throne. The black woman was very strong, and had extra-ordinary powers. She could finally overcome in, tied him and rolled him to a corner. Then she walked slowly to the throne, but while she stepped on it a predator came from the throne and devoured her. I was a tragic fate, and Guldam could see it all happen before his eyes. He loved the black woman and had saved her life, and now he wished he wouldn’t have fought with her for the throne. Love was a greater good for Gulam than might and power, so he didn’t understand why he had argued so much with her. But he was just so afraid that if she would get the throne she would abuse her powers towards him.

It could be such a lovestory, but it ended very tragic. The predator freed Guldam from his ties, and licked him. Then Guldam knew that he had been destined for the throne. Soon Guldam sat on his throne, with the predator at his side. He had become king of heaven now, a worthy king, and the predator had become his guard. Guldam was still very sad about the loss of his friend. He wished he would never have encountered her. Soon other women seemed to find the throne and laid themselves down at Guldam’s feet. Then they turned their backs to Guldam, took a part of their skin off to show him some sort of mechanism. ‘Tell us what to do,’ they said. Then he found out the mechanism was some sort of tape-recorder by which he could speak messages. He gave them some missions, and they told him if he wanted to add something then he needed to use the intercom in his throne. They showed it to him, as it was hidden below a certain skin. He just had to push it, and then speak. Soon other women seemed to come, and this time there were more women than ever. They all started to dance around the

throne and to sing for the king. He could speak to them by the intercom. ‘Stop singing, and stop dancing,’ the king said. ‘Don’t be such hypocrites, but fight for love, and let love rule.’ Then the women bowed their head and went away. One of the women came back to the king and asked : Where can we find the weapons ?

‘I will teach them,’ the predator said, and raise up from his place at the throne, and went away to lead the women. Then after some dark nights wild dogs seemed to come in front of the throne barking and howling like wolves and hyena’s. They all laid themselves at the foot of the throne, and then one of the dogs rose up and started howling again. Then he spoke : ‘Dear king, what do you want us to do now heaven is in your hands ?’ The king rose from his throne and said : ‘I want you to rejoice for the women have finally taken up their task. I want you to stop fighting and guarding. I want you to go to the underworld to free it’s slaves and bring them here.’ The dogs bowed their head and listened to their master.

After a few days the dogs came back with billions and billions of men. Again the king stood up from his throne and spoke : ‘I want you to stop working, but to sacrifice yourself in the Abyss of Fire to become free of your chains. The women have stopped dancing and have taken up their tasks.’ Then a huge gate opened in front of the throne. Fire came forwards and one by one the men started to jump into the fire. Fire seemed to clean the heavens that day.

One day a warrior-woman came to the king to ask him for his love. But the king gave her a mission for her women, as she was their chief. He told her to bring the men of heaven before his throne. Within a few days they all stood trembling before his throne. ‘No belts this time to let you do what heaven demands. This time scars will do the work. Then he asked the chief of the women to bring the whip of the circusboss to him. When she brought it to him he threw the whip into the fire, and then he took it out again and struck the men of heaven to bring them the new scars. ‘This will do. You will be sensitive from now on. Creative,’ the king screamed.

The Red Planet

Lekrum, king of Lily Land on Mars, was riding on his giant-fly, together with some others of the court. Princess Darsheba was with him. They blew on their horns, leading the war and the invasion. They were taking Mars over. But Lekrum, the barbarian king, wanted much more territory. Flies were invading the surfaces and the gallaxy. Lekrum was shouting. Soft rays came from the giant flies, taking possession of the minds of many. He wanted to have his own planet, Lily Planet. It was a savage and barbarian planet. It was burning in his chest. Armies of blue monkeys were invading the planet that day. They captured the queen of Lily Planet, a savage queen, and brought her before Lekrum. The king of Lily Planet throned on a beach of skulls, like a wide desert. They captured him as well and brought him before Lekrum. All the high officials of this planet died that day. Their blood had to be mixed in a golden bath in which Lekrum had to bath, and he had to drink their blood from a golden glass. The skulls of the queen and the king of Lily Planet had to shrink to be placed at his belt. Ovias was the religious leader of the planet. Lekrum took his skull and placed it on his throne. The throne would be placed on top of a savage piramid. It was since then Lekrum started to give away his authority and power to the ones chosen by the throne. The throne would take care of itself. It would destroy everyone who would try to grasp it's power while they weren't destined for it. Lekrum went to the jungle of the planet to become a lord of the jungle. It was a savage switch, the hugest switch he ever made. He wanted the power of the flesh.

Soon he had friendship with the hugest snakes and monkeys. The snakes had beautiful and dangerous patterns to bring fear in the hearts of their enemies. However in the middle of the jungle he built his castle of skulls. Lekrum loved to at the beach on the other side of the jungle. He loved to swim. The beach was surrounded by the softest spiderwebs. The sea was full of snakes. He found a tiger here and a lion. There was a bridge leading to an island called Lily City, where a lot of scientific buildings were. The softos lived here, the last guarded stronghold of the planet. The softos were mean scientists.

Lekrum was watching around him, a monkey was close to his leg. Then some more monkeys came. It was like a reunion, these were all old friends. There were also monkeys bigger than himself. ‘Yes, I all love you,’ he spoke. He took his sword and walked towards a hut, where he slew a dark master chief, who was all dressed in black and orange, in traditional clothes. He slew many of them on that day. They were mean, possessive, and used animals to be their

medicins. Lekrum set many of these animals free these days, like he set the monkeys free one day. It was a strange camp. Many animals in wooden cages, made of branches, and some cages were made of bones. Lekrum raised his bloody sword in the air and roared. ‘I am the lord of the jungle, the lord of beasts !'

Then he went to the next camp and did the same. He was bathing in blood. His skin was like bronze in the sun, bloody, very bloody. It was a day of abundant slaughter, and exodus for the animals. He led elephants out, cats, snakes and other sorts. The sky was like bleeding pearls. The sun was like setting everything in fire. Lekrum led them out and brought them to another part of the jungle. Here he would rule over them, protecting them, taking care of them. At the end of the day he was bathing in the river. A man came close to him. ‘Sobrillios,’ he said, ‘thanks for coming, but the work is done already.’ He smiled. ‘A good job, Lekrum,’ he said. Lekrum came out of the water. Sobrillios was a lot younger than him. He saved him once out of a prison camp.

Lekrum bound the skulls of the scientists together. Soon he had invaded their city, with all his armies. He would turn it into a ghost village. No one would rebuild the city again. He found out they were guarding a triangle-vortex by which you could enter the Lily Universe. It was like a parallel world.

It was like they were living in a gas, a different fluid, in this universe, where things were a lot brighter, and also a lot darker. Things were a lot softer here, but also a lot harder. They lived here in a totally different index of feelings. Lekrum entered this universe on his soaring chariot pulled by his white flying horses.

The houses here were built of skulls. It was a world full of skulls. Lekrum had never seen so many skulls in his life. Intelligence was what he desired. They were on their way to the stronghold of the universe : The New Spade, also called the Skeleton House. Here Bricheas ruled, a skeleton. Lekrum grasped his gun and shot the skeleton from a distance. Then they brought the skeleton house down. The skeleton had a heart called The Mellow. It was full of honey by which he had drownt the universe. They were all his slaves. Lekrum took the heart and started to eat from it. The soul of Bricheas however turned into a snake, and took the universe in a tight grip. Lekrum took his sword and beheaded the snake, and ripped it's body open. A fly came forward from the body of the snake. It was the spirit of the skeleton. It was spitting fire, but then fled to an old fortress. Lekrum went after it. The fly spat fire again. The fortress was full of hearts, from which the fly started to eat, and it grew stronger. Lekrum took his gun again and shot the fly. Voices were spreading in the universe. They were laughing. 'I'm copying myself,' the voices spoke. Also the voices started to eat from the hearts, and they were growing into ghosts, slowly getting density again like savages. They settled themselves in camps. One of these camps was called The Weapon Field. One of the savages could turn into a cobra or a swarm of bees. 'Honey you will produce,' it said. 'Honey of the heart.'

Lekrum knew it took intelligence to solve this riddle, this strange battle. The skeleton had hidden identities and hidden weapons. 'You will die on the fields,' Lekrum said. Again he took his gun and shot the savage leader, who then turned into a butterfly. 'You cannot get me,' the butterfly said. 'Some things you just can't grasp.'

It was the universe of the Lily. He was just her marionet. Lekrum was fighting the winds of illusion. He was in her temple. He had caught some of her glimpses. He was coming closer.

She had a thin band around her head. There was a spade on her chest, like a tattoo. 'The dark heart,' Lekrum said. He had a full picture of her now.

'So you come here for intelligence ?' the Lily said.

'Yes,' Lekrum said. 'I know you are hiding it.'

'Yes, in a bottle,' the Lily said. Lekrum looked to the right, and saw a bottle on a plank. He shot it open. The Lily started to laugh. 'Wrong bottle, urine of a lion,' she said. Strange gasses were spreading. He tried to aim his gun at her, but a strange wind was blowing it away. He saw a bottle hanging at the ceiling. He shot it, but it appeared to be a lamp. It was darker now. 'Come closer,' the Lily said. 'You know, I'm also just a prisoner, of a dragon. She showed him a painting on the wall of a dragon. 'Arkanar,' she said.

'What is his purpose ?' Lekrum asked.

'To rule the universe you come from by this hidden parallel universe,' the Lily said. 'There is a third universe. Which is the master universe, where he lives. It is the universe of draughts. By using others he reaches his goals.'

'How can I come there ?' Lekrum asked.

The Lily showed him a square vortex. He stepped inside. The Lily started to laugh. 'Trapped,' she said. Fires were coming over Lekrum, forming a cage. Lekrum was roaring. But the cage was moving through the underground, as an elevator, and Lekrum realized that the Lily had spoken the truth. It led him to another universe, that of the dragon. It was cold there, as soon as he stepped out of the vortex. It was night. It was a jungle here. There were giant frogs in this jungle and giantflowers. In the distance there was a dragon castle, a sort of fortress, made of bones. It was mostly built of ribs. A black dragon was there. The dragon was very friendly and soft, and spoke that actually the Lily had imprisoned him here, and that Lekrum had now been imprisoned as well. There was no way to return. Lekrum asked what the purposes of the Lily were. The dragon said she is an illusionist. The vortex was gone. 'I was a man like you in the past,' said the dragon. 'But we all become animals here. We are the forces of her illusions. She plays with us.'

'So is this an animal universe ?' Lekrum asked.

'Yes,' the dragon said. 'First you will become a savage, then an animal. Only when the dark sun and the red planet will come together you will be a human, but that is just for a few days in a month.'

'So we are were-animals then ?' Lekrum asked.

'Yes,' the dragon said.

'Unless we can unite the dark sun and the red planet together,' Lekrum said.

'No,' the dragon said. 'Everytime the red planet meets the dark sun it becomes a bit smaller. In past the red planet was much bigger. When the red planet is totally burnt then this universe will die.'

'Then isn't it better to get them separated forever, so that the red planet can live up again ?' Lekrum asked.

'No,' the dragon said. 'For then the dark sun will die, and we will be animals forever.'

'But if that will save the universe, then we do not have another choice,' Lekrum said.

'And how will you do that,' the dragon said. 'No one can mess with the planets.'

But Lekrum stared into the sky and used his red rays coming from his eyes. He could move the dark sun away from the red planet, and brought it into another orbit.

'Are you a god or something ?' the dragon asked. But then Lekrums skin started to become hairier.

'I warned you,' the dragon said. Lekrum was changing into the most horrible beast, and ran away. At least the red planet was safe. Throughout the days it started to grow bigger and bigger, and came closer to them. Lekrum had wings now and flew towards the swelling red planet, and felt he was becoming human again. It seemed he had used great intelligence.

The dragon flew also with him. 'You have broken the laws of the Lily,' he spoke. There were snake-people here and fly-people. The Lily herself seemed to be here as well, sitting on a throne. 'Well done,' she spoke.

Lekrum found out she wasn't the worst. She was just very cryptic and a gamer. But she played with people's hearts, that was a fact. She was an illusionist, a sorceress. She lured Lekrum deeper in her temple this time. He had deeper access. She showed him the bottle of intelligence. 'You have drunk from this already,' she said. 'You want some more ?' She took the bottle, which became transparent immediately, and pushed it in his heart.

Lekrum wanted to play music, as the language of intelligence, but it seemed that his lust for silence was much stronger. Music was just the veils in this temple. She had created so many heads, so many different characters, and took care of the details. 'They are nothing but masks,' said the Lily, 'guarding the rivers of intelligence. You have just a bottle of it,' she said while she laughed.

'I want to swim in it,' Lekrum said. The Lily led him to a hall with tall windows through which he could see the steaming and roaring wild rivers of intelligence. 'All leading to the sea,' she spoke. 'It is the secret of life. All the other things will die.'

'How can I come there ?' Lekrum asked.

'Let me live in the bottle of your heart,' the Lily said. 'And you will be there.'

She became transparent as well and slided into his chest. Suddenly he was surrounded by waves, as if all the walls were breaking. Suddenly he was in full sea, the sun shining bright on him. He had found his Lily. She was like seaweed inside of him, feeding him, being the light of intelligence. 'Now you are the lord of the Lily Universe, and of the red planet,' she said. From the sea a red oyster tower came forth, in which Lekrum started to live. All these visions of intelligence filled the universe like pearls. There was a red oyster path leading to the tower.

It was a path of death, a path of illusion, on which one had to become one with the Lily, finally to enter the tower. Lekrum had become the guard of the universe, and the secret of intelligence.

The Milk of Venus

Indana, sorceress of the flesh, while Lekrum was coming closer to her, in her temple. There was a lot of blood streaming here through tubes, pipelines and tunnels. She was surrounded by rats.

'Why do you live here alone in these ruins ?' Lekrum asked.

'These aren't ruins,' Indana said. She was holding her sword above her head. 'Don't come any closer,' she almost whispered. Suddenly Lekrum grasped her arm, and she had to let her sword fall. She was wrestling to become free, but she was in a tight grip.

'What kind of things are you doing here,' Lekrum asked.

'None of your business,' she shouted. Suddenly she fell down. Snakes were coming closer. Lekrum tied her. He went deeper into the temple. Strange objects were here, and many skulls. It looked like a restless place. Many monkeys had been tied to the walls. Lekrum freed them. In the depths of the temple there was a hall in which she kept many slaves. She gave them food by which they turned into living skeletons, very powerful. She used these skeletons to wage war.

Through a door in the back of the temple you could enter a garden, in which the Fool's Hill was, a hill of skulls on which a queen throned, Korshe. She lived in the Fool's Fortress. She was a jester and a gamer. In the nights the hill was always burning, for parties. Lekrum took his bow and shot her from a distance by an arrow. She was in one of her towers, on one of the balconies and she actually fell down. She changed into a fire-spitting bird. Lekrum went to the fortress, and went upstairs. There were burning candles everywhere. He heard a voice saying : 'Who can escape from Fool's Hill, who can escape from under her foot, she treads and treads, oh, who can escape, yes, who can escape from Fool's Hill, you can never leave this thrill.' Then the voice started to laugh. The queen sat on her throne again. Lekrum came forward and shot her again. But she was just a ghost. 'I have eternal life already, but you are just a mortal,' the queen said.

She showed him a joystick. 'The joystick by which I rule,' she said. It looked like it was made from bones and teeth. It also looked like a strange skull. She could move her throne by it. And she could fly around. 'Give me the joystick, witch,' Lekrum roared.

'Oh, you will burn yourself,' she said. 'It's just not designed for you. Mortals cannot hold it.'

Lekrum came closer. `I think these are all just games in your mind,' Lekmul said.

'Well, you cannot escape from Fool's Hill,' she said. 'You were burn under it's foot, and I have raised you up, all by a balloon inside. You are swollen now, and I can make it pop.'

She showed him a needle. 'The needle of death,' she said. 'Are you ready ? Are you ready to go back to start ?'

'No, witch,' Lekrum said. 'I'm going to end your dream.'

'Hmm, I rule over all churches and temples, over all civilisations, and now you, a simple man want to do something about that. Now that would be a joke,' she said. 'I can make you bow, I can make you rise, I can let you fall, I can make you weep, I can make you laugh.'

Snakes came forth from the walls, and surrounded Lekrum, ready to take him to hell. It was like playing chess with her. 'I know what you guard,' Lekrum said. 'I know your secret.'

'You have the pencil of death,' Lekrum said. 'You have painted all this. And I am going to break that pencil.'

Korshe grasped her heart. 'No, stay away from that,' she said.

'There is one painting inspiring you,' Lekrum said. 'The ravens' painting.'

'Who told you that,' Korshe said in a shock. 'Who are you.'

'My lions heart,' Lekrum said. 'You stole this painting from me.'

'No, that is not true,' Korshe said. 'Guards, grasp him !' she shrieked. Watchers of stone came out of the wall, stone archers and spearthrowers. 'Get him,' she said. Behind her there was a raven of stone.

'You have turned my raven into stone,' Lekrum said.

Lekrum woke up in sweat. He remembered the Fool's Hill where he was born. He remembered the ravens painting once stolen. He remembered the fortress and the old fortress. He remembered how he always wanted to live on the other side of the land. This spirit had it's nails deep into him. An insectian world was always luring him, but it was forbidden. He longed for Venus, to drink from her milk. He was in a skeleton mill. It was a funeral business. He longed to burn and rise like a phoenix. He longed for the crematorium. He longed to be reborn in the urn, to be reborn in the fire, to get free from the graveyard.

The hills were burning. The sun was bathing itself. There was a new fire in Lekrum's heart. It was like Venus was visiting Mars, and a new planet was rising : Pythia. Venus flew before him with wings of fire. Korshe was falling out of the heavens, and Lekrum was taking her place. She had always been his evil twinsister. Through the tunnel of fire he escaped. He received a winged helmet. The old fortress in his head was falling.

Samson - Barbarian Fiction

Mountain of Time

When Samson went to the underworld his fight against the Philistines went on. He had help from a few women and some giant birds who seemed to come from an unknown place. By their beaks they pierced the faces of some Philistine soldiers, while their blood started to flow. ‘Oh, did you come here to punish us ?’ some of the Philistines shouted. Samson took his sword and beheaded many of them. While he roared he laid his mouth against their flesh to eat. He was hungry, as when he was in the dungeon they didn’t give him much to eat. Now the blood was flowing from his mouth, and it tasted good. Flesh and blood of the Philistines was always good of taste. But a few skeletons, tall and dressed in garments, were coming closer to Samson. They saw his pride and his bloodlust, and they chained him by invisible chains, by their stare. They saw his beautiful belts and jewelry, and they wondered how they could get it away from them.

A woman halfnaked came forward to Samson, and caressed his jewelry. She asked him if he would come with her, as the skeletons were looking for prey. She wanted to protect him, and she seemed to be the onlyt one who could do that in these realms. So Samson took the offering, and walked with her to a jeweled portal. Behind the portal was her house. She gave him something to drink and some fruits to eat. ‘I wonder where you are coming from, traveler,’ the woman said. ‘Oh, I come from the world of Philistines,’ Samson said. ‘I have beaten some giants, and now I want more.’

‘What is it that you want, warrior ?’ the woman asked.

‘I want to bath in the riches of heaven and hell,’ Samson said, ‘but I know I have to defeat dragons and monsters for that, and a lot of Philistines and their skeletons.’

‘Oh yes,’ the woman said. ‘But I can help you with that. I can be a warrior at your side.’

The woman showed him a red sword by which she fought, and by which she had gained a high ruler position in these realms. ‘I have sent you the giant birds,’ the women said, ‘and you need them to come deeper in these realms. Come with me.’ Then the woman walked to a place behind her house where the giant birds were. ‘Take a bird,’ she said. Samson climbed on a bird and she did the same. Then the birds started to bring them across a huge ravine.

‘I can tell you where you have to go, Samson,’ the woman shouted. ‘You need to go to the oracle for direction.’

‘Where is that ?’ Samson asked.

‘It’s on an island far away across the sea of the underworld. But the birds will bring us there,’ the woman shouted.

Within a few hours they came on the island, and after walking awhile they came to an open space in the jungle behind the beach, where something like a feathered wheel stood on a stake. The woman explained to Samson how it all worked, and within a short time smoke seemed to come from the oracle and a voice spoke : ‘You must defeat the lords of time, Samson, as time is such a trickster and will lead you to useless wars. Don’t become a slave-gladiator of the underworld, for the wars will make you age. Defeat the evil time lords and you will gain eternal life.’

Samson rose his sword, and the giant birds flew around him. ‘Where are those evil time lords you speak about, oh oracle of the underworld, and how do I know you aren’t tricking me either ? I am a warrior for life and I will not lay my sword down. My strength is in my long hair and the jewels I have gained on my weapons and on my belt. I need to use my strength, not only against evil time lords, but also against the dragons, the Philistines and their skeletons.’

‘As you wish,’ the oracle spoke. ‘But I will only show you where the time lords live until you lay down all your other battles. It is time which has enslaved you, and time lets you fight against all sorts of illusions to trap you even deeper. Do you want to be a slave-warrior ?’

‘It is good to be a slave,’ Samson said. ‘I am a slave of my masters. They take care of me, and I take care of them. I also am a slave of good women.’

‘As you wish,’ the oracle spoke. ‘I cannot help you in your wishes as you have given yourself to illusions. You cannot get both sides of the coin.’ Then Samson found out that the women and her birds had vanished, and he started to think that maybe the oracle was right. Maybe he was just following illusions to get deeper trapped. He knew that the underworld was full of dangers, and he didn’t trust the Philistines and their skeletons. Then the oracle showed him that help offered in the war was always of the enemy itself, as a great conspiracy and trick, the greatest of the underworld. Samson got scared, for how deep was he already ? And could he trust the oracle. It more and more seemed to be wise, but he knew the enemy could be wise too. Wisdom was a weapon. Then Samson bowed down to the oracle and begged it to tell him where he could find the time lords, and how he had to defeat them.

‘Give me your sword,’ the oracle said. ‘Sacrifice it to me, as it was a gift of the time lords to confuse you and to bind you in time. Sacrifice also your belt.’ Samson obeyed, while the oracle started to spin as by strange winds. ‘The evil nights are coming Samson,’ the oracle

whispered in many voices. ‘They will show you that there is only evil. They will bring you to the mountain of the evil time lords, and they will show you how to master them.’

‘How many evil lords of time are there ?’ Samson asked.

‘Hundred and seven,’ the oracle spoke.

That night the evil voices came, and took Samson to the mountain in an evil storm by a carriage made of fire. The evil time lords stood tall on the dark mountain like flames. The sight struck Samson. All of a sudden he saw so many skulls around him. ‘Throw those skulls at them,’ the evil voices spoke, and Samson did what they asked.

‘These skulls are the evil stones,’ the voices whispered. Samson got confused, like the time lords struck his head by unknown powers. ‘Don’t challenge the lords,’ a dark voice spoke.

‘I will master you,’ Samson roared while he rose another skull. ‘I will master time and will get free of it’s illusions.’

‘Then you better come not any closer, or we will chain you forever,’ the dark voice said.

The skulls started to burn because of the flames, and they seemed to speak. ‘The death speaks by time,’ the skulls said.

‘Then what a pity you are all dead,’ the dark voice spoke.

‘Dead isn’t the word,’ the skulls spoke. ‘We’re evil, and evil is a timeless power. We speak by eternity.’

Then the flames started to shriek, and the dark voice became higher and higher. Soon they fell from the mountain into a ravine. ‘Now take the mountain,’ the evil voices spoke. ‘Is it that easy ?’ Samson asked.

‘Yes,’ the evil voices said. ‘No need to wage any more wars.’ Then the charriot came closer to the mountain, and Samson stepped out. It was here he felt his heart again, beating with a new rythm.

The Three Swords

Samson was on his way to the cruptiti-skeletons, the guards between the kingdom of death and the kingdom of hell. He slayed them all merciless by his sword. He was now carrying the Eternal Sword since he had destroyed the evil time lords. In the depths of hell he found the oracle clock, which was a timeless device like a jewel, like a riddle, and he put it into his sword. Now the sword would guide him forever. He had defeated the flames of time, but now he had to learn how to master it further. The king of the cruptiti-skeletons carried the Sword of Time, but Samson could easily destroy him by the Eternal Sword, and he threw the Sword of Time into the Abyss of Fire. Samson would dominate time now, but he also had another task : to dominate the numbers, as numbers were also the illusions in the underworld by which dragons could split themselves for some trickery. If they would split themselves by numbers they would be able to divide and turn themselves into women, men or snakes, but they could also turn themselves into objects. Samson knew that everything around him was dangerous, and that he had to come into enlightement by mastering the numbers to find a good survey. It was by a long journey Samson finally found the Sword of Infiniti. He had two powerfull swords now by which he could go deeper in the underworld. Samson was a savage and a barbarian searching for the jungles of the underworld, and it finally brought him to the West of the garden of Eeden. He wanted to live with the predators, as they would carry the flames of eternal life. If he wouldn't become a predator like them, he wouldn't live forever. So many dangers were lurking around, so Samson had to paint himself with the colours of war and hunt, or he wouldn't survive. So many creatures wanted to take him away to let him burn in hell or rot away in the prisons of death, but Samson didn't want to waste his time like that. He wanted to go deeper, to search for the treasures of the underworld, to bath in it's riches. He had been armed already by the most precious jewelry smoothly attached to his belt.

If there were any skeletons they were at the West of the garden of Eeden, where they seemed to guard many treasures and many portals to the deeper and larger jungles of the underworld. Samson desired these treasures, and he could easily defeat the skeleton-watchers. Since he had found the swords everything seemed to be much easier. But there was another big enemy

: language. Some of the skeletons would speak spells out over him, in all sorts of unknown languages, while Samson felt like there were things breaking in his mind. Finally he found a third sword : the Sword of Silence. This sword seemed to bring forth a lot of softness, a softness stronger than any sharpness. Powers came forth from the sword so soft that they could easily break bones. He could let them crumble into powders. When he would aim his sword his enemy wouldn't be able to speak anymore, as by the softness muscles seemed to melt away, and the tongue got paralyzed. It was by the Sword of Silence Samson could finally open the portal to the jungles of flesh and blood. Here he could materialize into the natural world again to settle his throne. He would rule them all. It was called the return of Samson, and this all happened by the three swords. He became almost invincible by these three swords. He would bring justice now from this throne, and a lot of others who followed him could materialize into the natural world.

Samson had now crossed the fire which kept the natural world and the underworld apart, and this all by the power of the three swords. These three swords meant everything to him, and he carried them at his back to grasp them whenever he needed them. He still needed to master so many things, but the three swords gave him hope and strength. They led him. Nothing could give him more love and passion but these three swords. He slayed snakes and dragons by them, and came to the tops and depths of the natural world by them. Samson was a soft men. He didn't give anything for hardness, but by his softness he was very tight and powerfull. He brought a new order : the order of softness. And this all by the three swords, who were his three kings. It was a long path to this kingdom, finally setting him free. He had come to the bottomless and topless pit from where strange powers seemed to stream and rule. He had worked for this pit in bitter years, but it had finally rebuilt him. He had been wounded by this pit, but it had finally healed him and empowered him almightily. It had offered him eternal life after the deep deaths, and had offered him the riches after a deep poverty. No one could stand before Samson's throne, as first weakness would let them fall, and then by a strange power at his command or by a word they would rise to their feet again. But so many weren't worth to rise again, so Samson let them sleep. So many he would lead to the eternal sleep and the eternal dreams, as in the natural life they would be too dangerous. Samson was a soft and smooth man. He would let everything slide as in a process, a process of evolution.

Traghar I

I remember the first time I met Traghar. It was in winter and I was staring at a painting in a certain hotel I was together with a friend. We were there for some business, and I remember I was totally absorbed by that painting. I went to sleep early, and I dreamt of Traghar coming to me. He had just cut off the head of some Martian demonking, and while the blood was still dripping from the head he was speaking. He told me he needed me to build a new world, a new Mars. I remember his friendly eyes and his friendly speaking. He was very kind. I just didn't understand why he needed me to rebuild Mars, and how would I do that ? Suddenly I saw a rope before my eyes, and when I took it in my hands it took me up. I was going to Mars. I couldn't believe it. I had never had such a strange dream. It was so real. First Traghar showed me the nature of Mars, the beasts, like lions, panthers and so forth. His appearance was very friendly, and he seemed to be friends with big big snakes, who slided around him all the time. I remember he asked me if I wanted to live in this world. His knife was very bloody. He looked very savage, and had some torn rags. Some cats came and seemed to care for him. After awhile big apes came forward, also caring for him. He seemed to have a lot of friends on Mars. One of his snakes also started to slide around me. The jungle was beautiful here. There were a lot of snakes, also sliding in trees. In the distance there were rivers, and I could also see some camps.

There were also big red hairy spiders with indians on them. I do not know how long I was on Mars, but too soon I woke up already. I didn't want to come out of bed. I felt sick, like I had been stung by an exotic insect or something. I was very tired and had headaches. But I was still in the hotel and the next day someone brought me home. I was still very sick, shivering from cold. What was going on ? Was this real ?

Years later I had my second encounter with Traghar. This time it wasn't a dream. He really came to my house, and started to talk. He had a spaceship in the forest, and we would go there so that we could reach Mars. I was very excited. It took a few days before we got to Mars. When we were finally there I knew this time I wouldn't wake up, as this was for real, no dream. Traghar was very friendly, but also here I got sick and needed to sleep. Traghar gave me some pills and I started to hallucinate almost, while he rubbed a certain oil on my body with a strange smell.

In the distance it was like red smoke came from the mountains, and it was like there were big skulls resting in the higher parts of the mountains. This time Traghar showed me the head of a black demonemperor of Mars. He had the face of a monstrous panther. Traghar told me how

he went to the place of the emperor, guarded by black panthers, and how he slayed them all. After that he beheaded the emperor. There was also a horrible fight against a red snake until Traghar could plunder the treasures of the emperor. The best treasure was a magical knife of savages.

The magical knife of savages had power over lions, tigers and many other beasts of Mars, and soon Traghar became lord of the wilderness and the jungle. There was no one who could decorate the jungle like Traghar did. He was a master builder and a god. By his strength he could remove the biggest and heaviest stones and rocks, and elephants helped him in building a total new structure.

Traghar wanted to build an age of peace on Mars, after all the bloody wars. He would stand on the mountains to shout for peace. I still remember him standing there with his rags and his magical knife of savages. I remember the great love this man had for Mars. After awhile he brought me back to earth in his spaceship. I started to write books, but not about him. The books were pretty childish and I seemed to forget about him for a great deal. So many things in life totally absorbed me. The third time I had an encounter with Traghar was many years later, and this time it was an encounter of doom. In the middle of the night he came to me and baptized me in blood. This time he was in rage, and he came like a storm. There was fire and light all around me, and at the same time so much darkness.

He took me to Mars again in a storm, and this time Mars was bathing in blood. There was a big war going on. Traghar fought on the side of the bloodiest Indians you could imagine. It was a fight against monkeys. I saw spears raging through the atmosphere of dust. Finally the Indians won the war. We came into a camp where also Traghar had his tent. I can remember there were a lot of skulls of lions and tigers. It seemed like there had be a war against the cats as well, but they didn't tell much about it.

It seemed they had many problems with their attempts to establish peace. After awhile Traghar brought me back again in the storm, back to earth. Again that what had happened didn't change my life. It was all like a dream to me, and the next day I had almost forgotten about it. Traghar was my friend, but I lived on earth.

But then there was a moment I couldn't return to earth anymore. It was the day the snakes attacked earth. Everything was in fire, and there were snakes everywhere. The fourth time I had an encounter with Traghar he would never let me go. He wouldn't let me go back to earth again, so I became a part of Mars. Mars was also totally destroyed by the attacks of the snakes, but it's wilderness could survive one or the other way. Traghar showed me some scars on his body, some strange spots, but by these ones he had power over the snakes somehow. Since the war against the snakes there were vulcanoes of blood now on Mars, but it seemed to fertilize the wilderness in a strange way.

But still : something didn't seem right. Traghar told me that once Venus and Mars were one big planet : Pythia. He told me that if these two planets would melt together again the

destructive forces of the sun would die. I asked him how he wanted to do that, but then he took me to his spaceship and showed me a piece of Mars and a piece of Venus. He put the two pieces together and threw them in a kettle with strange liquids like paint. The two pieces started to melt and blended into the liquids, while strange snakes seemed to come forward from the kettle. They were very tall. But that was not the strangest thing. Traghar took some of the stuff and rubbed it on his body, and started to change into a snake as well. I didn't know what I saw. 'Do it to yourself now,' the snake said. I did it and it felt wonderful. The snake slided into the kettle and I did the same while we began to grow normal again. It was a magical kettle of savages. I still didn't have an idea how Traghar would melt Mars and Venus together by it, but so many snakes seemed to come forth from the kettle, and they grew bigger and bigger. 'It won't take long now,' Traghar said.

It was one of the most amazing things I saw in my life. Venus coming closer and closer to Mars until they finally melted into each other. Darkness fell upon us. The sun was becoming like a sack of hair, while it seemed to spread itself throughout the air.

In the depths of Pythia, in it's underworld, there was a huge wilderness called Lakshor. It was the hugest wilderness ever existing, and it was like Traghar had found home here. I will never forget the smile he had on his face, and how quickly he became friends with the eagles and vultures there, who were really giants. The heart of this wilderness was called Taan Naat, where the fountains and falls of blood were. But deeper in Taan Naat there were deserts and dry wildernesses, where hunger was floating like a ghost. It was a place bearing a lot of secrets. There were misty palaces in the distance, and they seemed to be made of bones. It was a long trip through the dustdesert before we reached such a palace. We went downstairs were strange fluids were flowing. It had a strange smell, but because we were under dust we washed ourselves in it. We did not know anything of this world. We decided to swim a bit further in the fluids, until we came to a place like an underground jungle. There were strange palms growing here with strange coconuts, while women seemed to wash themselves by the everflowing milk. Soon we found out that gorillas were dominating this place. The women told us that they had a temple in which they worshipped a coconut-snake. The coconut-snake would keep them in hypnosis by which they burdened and repressed the women.

The women showed us the way to this temple, and soon Traghar had slain the coconut-snake. But then her shrieking monkeys seemed to wake up, and we had to fight against their remnant for a few days. In these days the women fought on our side, but many died. In the depths of the castle Traghar found a door to a certain treasure room, but even more important : It was a doorway.

We came in a flowerfield after walking through many treasure rooms. Snakes slided here around pillars, high pillars, and it looked like heaven here. Traghar bowed down before a well and started to drink. I started to drink as well. The waters were lovely here, full of flowers. The waters were charged by a certain seed, and we got strong hallucinations.

For Traghar it was a new beginning, also for me, and we decided to stay friends.

The End

Traghar II

I will never forget the smile on Traghar's face when he reached Orion through a secret doorway in Taan Naat. It was the flame of Pythia finally bringing him here. He had been an astronaut for awhile, and finally he had reached this piece of paradise. I could write a book about his smile. He lost so many of his burdens. He was a released man.

I woke him up the next day. I showed him his armor made of skeleton-toes. He needed such an armor here on Orion. Traghar would be an Orion warrior now. It was time for him to say goodbye to Mars. Pythia had been an excellent bridge. Taan Naat was the well of glory, the depths of Pythia, forming the connection between Mars and Orion. Here Traghar found rebirth, where he became a soldier of death. He didn't serve the old order anymore. Mars had always been a strengling python around him. It was now a war against Mars, in which Traghar wanted to get rid of the ties.

Orion raised him tall. There was no return for him anymore. He had been abducted, and he wanted it. There was no force taking him back anymore.

He raised his sword and ruled his kingdom. He stood in his jungle, on the biggest branch he ever stood on. He could watch Orion for days and days. Just staring. This was his place now. Here he had the helmet of death, and had the command over monkey armies, all against Mars. The monkies would invade Mars to take over, and they would abduct also other Martians to this place. That was the will ofTraghar.

It was on that day Traghar met Tara from Rhodes. They would rule Orion together. It was the Tucan Stone which had brought them together. I never saw them smile brighter the day they met each other and the tucan. I never forget the wild smell of banana trees of Orion that day. It was like they were about to burst forth, and to mix themselves into the sea. These were wild bananas.

Traghar had become a dark hunter now, like Tara from Rhodes. All he wanted was to rise in this place and to take possession. All he wanted was to raise his testament. He wanted to give something to the jungle. In dark nights they adorned each other. The wild fruits of Orion made them drunk, and they needed it to rule Orion, and to guard it. The candy grew in the trees here, and in the plants. It also caused drunkenness. They could forget about Mars, and find a living here.

Traghar rode on horned predators, killergoats, while Tara rode on her snakes. He was the god of war, and she was his goddess.

The End

Traghar III

Chapter 1.

Traghar came closer to the aztec beauty. It was lying on a chair, a perfect red gem almost wrapped by zebra skin. He held it in his arms like a baby, soothing it almost. Then he stepped forward to the aztec king. 'I have heard about your daughter,' Traghar said. 'Like many have, and I will assure you that I will bring her back.'

'I will reward you richly,' the king said.

Traghar went out of the aztec palace. The white stones were shining in the light of the day, and Traghar was almost blinded by the sight. How he loved to watch this palace. He ran into the jungle, where some monkeys were waiting for him. These apes cared about nothing else but Traghar and to fulfill his orders. He was a god to them. He told them about the aztec beauty, and about the princess he was looking for.

'Nachtur Kawa,' said one of the apes. Together they ran deeper into the jungle, to the place where they lived, which was almost like a village. Keenat was the name of the lost aztec princess. Traghar shouted her name. He wondered where she could be. There was no trace.

Traghar also visited the black monkey king, to tell him about the princess. No one knew where she was. Clearblue the tiger came close to Traghar. They were all sad that the princess was lost, as they loved the king. He had done so much for them. Then Traghar went deeper into the jungle, close to the steaming lake. Here he found the princess. She was bathing there and he wondered why. There were crocodiles all around her. Slowly he came closer to her. 'Why are you here ?' Traghar asked. But the girl didn't say anything.

'Did you lose your speach or so ?' Traghar asked. But the girl was all silent. Then Traghar came even more closer. It looked like she was spellstruck. She went deeper into the water and swam to the other side, together with the crocodiles. 'Hey, wait,' Traghar said loud. Then he followed her. He wanted to know what was going on. He followed her into a cave behind the lake, where a lot of apes were. They surrounded her. 'May I ask what is going on,' Traghar said. But the girl didn't answer.

Traghar wanted to take her back to the aztec king, but she didn't want. It looked like she was under a spell, or she had lost her memory. 'What can I do for you ?' Traghar asked. Then suddenly a monkey took Traghar and pushed him hard into the water. The girl hid behind this big ape. Traghar didn't want to upset her, but on the other hand he had the feeling that she was a captive. He had to use wisdom now. The monkeys became more angry, and Traghar really had to leave now, as he didn't want to cause a bloodbath because of the presence of the princess. In the night he returned to the cave, but there was no one. He went deeper into the wilderness behind the steaming lake, where he found the girl sleeping between the apes. Carefully he took her on his back, and climbed into a tree, and then went from tree to tree by lianas.

When he came into the aztec palace the princess was still sleeping. The king was glad to see her. But soon there was an invasion of apes in the palace, as they wanted the princess back. Traghar had never seen so many apes in his whole life. But this time he just had to cause a bloodbath. The pillars were shaking. Traghar called for Kendira the lion, and when the lion showed up, the bloodbath became even greater. Later the king found out that the princess was

not really the princess but a clone of her, made of rubber, and it was almost perfect. Traghar had just taken a doll. This was why the princess didn't speak.

Traghar went deeper into the jungle. After a long run of many hours he came to a temple who had two clones of her before the portal. They didn't speak, but they were armed. Traghar could escape from them and entered the temple. There another clone of the princess was sitting on a throne, but this clone could speak.

'What have you done to the princess,' Traghar asked.

'Oh, she is safe with us,' the clone said. Traghar ran deeper into the temple, into a chamber, where he found her in a golden cage. Immediately the cage started to move upwards, and disappeared through the ceiling. The clone stood behind him. 'Blood in the mornings for those who search the treasures lost,' the clone said. 'You will not find what you search for. You have to give it up.'

'Never,' said Traghar. He grasped his knife, and came into a fight with her. In the distance he heard the princess screaming. He jumped up and went through the tunnel in the ceiling, and finally through a muddy path he came to a throne where a panthress was sitting, a black panthress. She was holding an inca treasure, and said that it was a time bomb of the flood, that the whole planet would drown in blood soon.

'What do you want with the aztec princess,' Traghar asked.

'We will eat her,' the panthress said. 'Her meat will make us immune.'

Traghar knew about the inca stone. It would cause blood to rain and prey would fall down like meat, all to help the hunters. But maybe this was another stone. It was a powerful stone for sure.

'Ghosts are living in this stone,' the panthress said, 'and they have kidnapped the princess, and made so many clones of her.'

Traghar came closer to her, while she grasped her spear. 'One step closer and you are dead meat,' she said.

'My dad has a mayan stone,' the princess screamed from her cage. 'Please bring it here to neutralize these energies.'

Traghar ran back to the aztec palace, and told the aztec king what happened. He gave him the mayan stone, and Traghar ran back to the place where the princess was, but when he came to the temple it had been surrounded by monkeys. Traghar called for lions to invade the temple. They caused blood baths everywhere, but the princess was nowhere to be found.

'It is almost time this planet to be drowned in blood,' a voice said.

Traghar didn't know where the voice was coming from.

'What is that stone you have there,' the voice said.

'It is the maya stone,' Traghar said, 'the bleeding mouth, the princess asked for it.'

'Ha ha,' said the voice, 'the princess is gone.'

Traghar stared at the mud between his toes. It was like the voice was coming from the underground. When he laid the stone on the ground suddenly a light was blinding them all. The lions started roaring and the ground seemed to open itself up. There he heard the screaming of the princess again, and went into the opening. Soon he came to an open space in the underground. He held the stone to his chest. He saw her lying on a table, and she was surrounded by apes with knives. They were ready to cut her. 'Throw the stone, Traghar !' the princess shouted. With one swing he hit one of the apes. There the panthress came with the inca stone.

He took her in a grip, a tight grip. The apes were all fearing the mayan stone. 'I am losing my powers,' the panthress spoke. I see the mayan stone is stronger than the inca stone, so there will come no flood of blood. We don't need the meat of the aztec princess anymore to become immune. Then she fell down for the mayan stone and worshipped it. Traghar took the aztec princess and together they left the palace.

The king was very pleased to see her again. It was through the bushes Traghar could see so many red stones now, so many aztec stones awakening. There was a new nature coming alive on the planet Betelgeuse.

He was an aztec priest in so many ways. The aztec king could always count on him. The aztec king gave him his daughter as a gift. Together they would wander through the wildernesses and jungles of Betelgeuse. They lived here with the beasts.

Chapter 2.

Traghar was in the desert fighting against a red giant worm. It came out of the ground to attack Traghar, and he had a hard time with it. Keenat the aztec princess soon joined him, and they could get rid of it, and together they threw it into the ravine. It was dying there.

There was a desert war between the Esakites and the Nomiites. The war was about zebra oil, but the war was actually caused by a demonic pillar, the pillar of Znatun. Traghar had to bring this pillar down. He didn't want to see this fight anymore. A skeleton goddess called Pink helped him to find the pillar of Znatun. She was aware that the war didn't lead to anything. There was actually no escape from this war, as she knew that if the pillar would break it would be two times worse. But she gave Traghar a try. Maybe he could disactivate this pillar.

When he approached her in her desert palace he was amazed by all the treasures she had. 'Travel south,' she spoke to Traghar.

When Traghar approached the Pillar of Znatun he soon found out it was an oracle. Two powers were fighting each other to open an ancient door. This door was called the Door of Peace, but it clearly meant the opposite. Traghar went through the portal in the pillar, and saw the future. It was a repeat of a long forgotten past.

Traghar thought the only way to forget about this was to enter deeper into the desert, into the wilderness, to start a new life and forget about it all. He took his princess with him. She was faithful to him, loving, strong.

The crocodile lake was in the depths of the wilderness. There were sliding so many unknown reptiles here, unknown to the world above. Traghar loved the depths of the wilderness. Soon he swam together with him, and they knew he was their Lord. They loved him as well. The water was cool, yet it was slimy and warm, and mystery was boiling there. They swam together, he and she. They were wanting the gnosis, the deeper knowledge of it all, and almost begged the reptiles to show it to them. The path went to become steamy, almost like a swamp. There was an island in this lake, salty and sandy, where strange trees grew. It was indeed the land of the pillar.

And of course this was a pillar of worms, shapeshifting in the head of Traghar. It was his worm-helmet keeping him in this state. There were inca crosses in his head, ghosts from a long forgotten past. He was under the curse of a worm, the great red one. If he should have known better he would know that after the death of this red worm there would also be another part, as worms have many parts, living on separated, in this sense as the Pillar of Znatun, the causer of all war.

The great desert was lurking him, where he would find his grave of worms, and from which he would rise. It was a great place with many pillars : the pillar of sand, the pillar of water, the pillar of salt, and the pillar of blood, all dedicated to the great worm. Traghar wanted to know the secret of this cult here.

Travahl

The Jewels of Phalir

Travahl was on his way to the palace of princess Phalir. She was dressed in fur, and on her belly hung red chrystals. Travahl couldn’t get his eyes off of her. She was a beauty of the

highest grade, but Travahl was a savage, so he didn't have any mercy on her. He abducted her, took her to a cave and made sure she understood his plans. He wanted the elite of Afir to fall down.

He wanted to use her for that. She needed to tell him about the place where the keys were to the underworld. In the underworld the elite had their secret conspiracies. Travahl wasn't glad with any of them. He wanted to slay them coldblooded.

Of course Phalir didn't tell him where the keys were, but she misled him and he came into a trap. Phalir wouldn't have mercy on him. Travahl came into a pit full of snakes, while guards blocked the way out. Here Travahl had to die, but savage as he was, he lived from the snake meat.

Every night he dreamt about Phalir. But soon he started to hate her more and more. Savage as he was he dug a hole in the snake pit. After months of digging he reached the underworld by himself, and slayed all the elite.

Phalir was now in his hands. He dressed her with the most beautiful stones and adorned her with the treasures in the underworld. Here he would rule with her. But Phalir hated him. It was a forced relationship. Travahl didn't seem to understand that. He saw her as an object, his object.

One night when he slept Phalir chained him, and fled. She found some hope and rest with the snakes of Mordid, a friend of hers. Mordid was the only one she could go to. And the snakes protected her, like they protected Mordid.

When Travahl woke up and found out that he had been chained he roared and screamed, but there was no one to help him. Days of hunger followed, but suddenly he got so much strength that he could break the chains.

In the forests he searched for Phalir. He missed her.

After awhile he came to the place of Mordid, and he had a fight against the awful snakeguards. But savage as he was, he soon ate from their meat and enjoyed it. He called for Phalir, but then Mordid stood before him with a sword.

'What is your wish, savage man ?' she asked.

'I ask you for the hand of Phalir,' Travahl said. 'I know she is with you. I can smell it.'

'She doesn't want you,' Mordid said. 'Why don't you lay yourself down in this fate. Go outside into the forest and cry for a few days, and then go on with your life.'

'No,' Travahl said. 'She needs me. I don't want her to fall in the hands of the elite again. Those aristocrats do not have any manners.'

Mordid aimed her sword at him, but Travahl grasped her pulse. 'Now, can't I be more clear. Phalir is mine,' he shouted.

'No, she is my sister,' Mordid said.

‘What kind of man does she want,’ Travahl said.

‘She doesn’t want a man,’ Mordid said.

‘Why not ?’ Travahl asked.

‘She cannot live with a man,’ Mordid said. ‘She has a handicap.’

‘What is her handicap ?’ Travahl asked.

‘Well,’ Mordid said, ‘Have you ever seen her naked ? She’s a spotted woman.’

‘I don’t care,’ Travahl said.

‘Well, she’s ashamed of it,’ Mordid said.

‘I think spots are beautiful,’ Travahl said.

But when he saw her he became afraid. She had turned into a spotted dog.

‘That is her secret,’ Mordid said.

The spotted dog jumped at Travahl and bit him. Travahl was bleeding. ‘Since I have your scar, can I marry you ?’ he asked.

‘I marry you,’ Phalir said. ‘For you have seen my secret and still loved me.’

Travahl got a ring around his neck, and soon they got married. Mordid was their witness. Since then Travahl lived in the underworld and ruled together with Phalir. They became a warrior couple, fighting side by side. While Mordid was their everlasting hope and fortress.

Inner Weakness

It was cold in the heart of Travahl. Together with Phalir he ruled the underworld. They had clothed themselves with the jewels of tigers. Their realm was full of the treasures of the elephant. Torches were burning everywhere, but still their hearts got colder. They often had fights.

One day Phalir broke the marriage and ran away. Travahl was broken. He slew his own tigers in rage, and hung his panthers. Phalir was everything to him, but now his heart was empty.

He dreamt about her every night. No one dared to come closer to him. He clothed himself in dread.

Ameko was a warrior close to his heart. He came to Travahl one day and offered him a spear. ‘Here, take this,’ Ameko said. ‘Take revenge.’

But Travahl refused. He loved Phalir too much. But later he accepted the gift of Ameko, and started to hunt. Not after Phalir, but after deer. He hung the whole palace full with deer, in hope Phalir would come to him again.

But Phalir found herself another place, and built her own kingdom. She became a worse ruler than she ever was, but Travahl still didn’t lose his love for her.

One day he sent Ameko to her to ask her what she wanted from Travahl for her return. She answered : ‘Let him bring me the teeth of Dwahlar, and I will marry him again.’ Dwahlar was a monster in the depths of the underworld. When Ameko told it to Travahl he got into rage, took Ameko’s spear and went down in the underworld to slay the monster and rip his teeth out. He made a necklace of it and brought it to Phalir.

But Phalir was laughing. ‘I will not return to you, Travahl,’ she said. ‘First bring me the head of a camel on a dish. Then I will marry you.’ Travahl did what she asked, but still she wouldn’t marry him. ‘What do you want me to do next ?’ Travahl asked.

‘Dance for me,’ Phalir said.

‘But how ?’ Travahl asked. ‘I’m a savage. I cannot dance.’

‘I don’t care,’ Phalir said. ‘Just do it.’

Travahl danced. Phalir stood up from her throne after awhile. ‘You fool,’ she said. ‘I won’t marry a man who can’t dance.’ This time Travahl came into the worst rage, took his spear, threw it, and just missed.

‘Conquer me,’ Phalir said, while she grasped her knife. It became a fight on life and death. Phalir had become so much more powerful, and Travahl started to fear her. He couldn’t beat her.

‘You’re a liar, Phalir,’ Travahl said. ‘You never do what you promise.’

‘And you are naïve, Travahl,’ Phalir said. ‘You don’t know the strategies of the battle.’

‘I know you try to break me,’ Travahl said. ‘I guess you look for a horse to ride on.’

‘No, Travahl,’ Phalir said. ‘I will never be with you again, unless you conquer me.’

Travahl knew that was easier said than done. But by the fights he would be close to her, although he knew she was dangerous. One day she became too dangerous for him, and he left. He went to the forest and tried to forget about her. She was too strong. She let him feel weak. But the further he went away from her, the weaker he began to feel himself, like she was inside of him. He got torn apart between fear and weakness, causing him to grieve much. But one day he slew a monster tiger and took the skin of it’s head to dress himself with. Then he went back to Phalir and challenged her.

‘So you came back to me ?’ Phalir asked mocking. ‘What did you make returning to me ?’

‘Your precious beauty, oh my Phalir, destroyed my fear of you,’ Travahl said, aimed his sword at her, but immediately faced her big knife. ‘Do you remember this one ? she asked. Then she kicked him in his stomach.

‘Please Phalir, have some mercy on me,’ Travahl moaned.

‘I don’t feel anything for losers and weaklings like you, Travahl,’ Phalir said, ‘you’re a slave of your desire, but you don’t establish anything. You are a windhunter.’

‘Then help me a bit,’ Travahl moaned. ‘You are so cruel.’

But Phalir kicked him in the stomach again, and this time ten times harder. He got slammed against the wall, and blood was dripping fast. After awhile Travahl woke up in a bloodbath. It felt like he had lost himself this time. ‘Die, you bastard,’ Phalir shouted, while she held her knife against his neck. Travahl rolled away, and could escape finally. This time he would never ever return to her again. He had to become a man, a real man, standing on himself, not depending on anyone. That was his challenge. She would forget him, as that was her nature. Her life went on. She was an independent woman, also with an inner weakness. She was too weak to handle man.

Travahl find some friendship with independent animals like black panthers. Travahl could forget about her as well this time, and found a new princess he adored. Her name was Effud. But she was almost like Phalir, and soon their friendship ended. This time Travahl already got used to it. He became coldhearted, a hard man. He became a no one’s friend, only to some snakes. He learned about their jewels, and soon he had a new obsession. He finally overcame himself.

Robert McDanen - Barbarian Fiction

Less Bad

Robert was an author and a comic-maker. He was also a painter. But one day he decided to live in the jungle for the rest of his life. He became a savage king of gorillas.

He was obsessed by someone named Tara from Rhodes. She was also a savage, once visiting the city to work in the circus for awhile, with leopards. Robert was her neighbour, and she was actually the reason he once went to the jungle to never return to the city.

Robert was a tender man, very friendly. Many thought he was the softest man existing.

The gorillas loved him very much, and protected their king. When Robert got older he became more savage and sinister. It was something he couldn’t stop, but he walked with more grace than ever.

He was the one who could build a sinister dreadful jungle empire within a few years. He had found substances in the depth of the jungle, unknown exotic substances, by which he could bring the dead alive. Skeletons were his helpers, zombies his army.

This soft man became such a fright, stirring fear in the hearts of everyone hearing about his empire. He built the meanest traps, surrounding his empire, all to guard the place. He knew the jungle was the dangerous place where he could be, so he should come up with something worse.

He became a mystic and a cryptic. His domain was almost like a labyrinth. One day he returned to the city to buy some of his old comics. No one recognized him. He had clothed himself with his old clothes and his hat.

He went to a hotel to read his comics. A girl came in to bring him some water. 'Sit down,' he said. 'Do you know who I am ?'

'No, sir,' the girl said.

'I made this comic,' he said.

'You did ?' the girl asked. 'They are beautiful, I always loved them.'

'I need to go,' Robert said. He gave the comics to the girl and left the city.

He instructed his skeletons and zombies to build a ship, a ghostship, of which he would become the captain. A swordfighter he would be.

Within a few months he was on sea with his ship. He became a terror on the oceans, all on the green planet on which he lived. He became the worst reaver ever existing. It was worse than pirates. He was a barbarian.

He took possession of an island they called the Land of Horseflies, where he built an empire worse than the other. By some sort of substance on this island, an exotic substance, he could wake up the souls out of hell. The souls of hell became his watchers.

He built himself an empire of grace, of majestic, brilliant beauty, but sinister more than ever. In the center of it he placed a chrystal. The walls around the island were so hot that anyone who touched them would turn into ashes. You could only enter as entering through hell.

Finally Robert McDanen saw what he had made and came to his senses. He had made the worst trap ever existing. Those who had entered through the gates could never leave, and the deeper you came in the empire, the more tragic it became. There was no grace close to the chrystal, it was a place of no mercy. And you just became a part of this nature.

Robert McDanen tried to escape to his old city again, to leave his creation alone. Luckily he succeeded. His grandchildren visited the island later, not believing the stories of their grandfather. They could bring some magic to it, and it turned out to be less bad.

The Witch's Ring

The witch Mercuria ruled the land Traduria by a witch's ring. One day Robert McDanen visited her to ask the ring back. She laughed at him. How did he dare to come to her veiled castle.

'I will give you the ring,' she said. 'But first defeat the seven skeletons, the one of the sea, the one of the forest, the one of the desert, the one of the city, the one of the air, the one of fire, and the one of the underground.'

It wasn't too difficult for Robert McDanen to defeat them, and soon he returned to her. She gave him the ring, but it was like a curse struck him. He bowed down in pain.

'You have asked for it,' she said. 'The ring brings much suffering.'

As soon as Robert McDanen had left the castle he fell to the ground. There was dust all around him, and snakes were staring at him. The ring was already deep inside of him, in his heart, and now it was rising to his nose.

‘I’m cursed, bearing this ring,’ Robert McDanen said. ‘But I have to.’ He crept to his ship and went on the ocean. He was on his way to the dragon-king now, living in a fortress in the depths of the ocean.

When he came there he pushed the codes into the portal, he had to make a certain sound-combination, like a song, like a rhythm. When he stood before the dragon-king he said : ‘It is in me now, the witch’s ring.’

The dragon could take it out of Robert McDanen very easily, and then the dragon swallowed the ring. ‘It’s safe here,’ the dragon said. I’ve never seen nature change more than since this happened. This was always one of the stories of Robert McDanen, but none of his grandchildren ever believed him. But the fact was : Robert McDanen brought love back to the sky, and it was everywhere.

The End

Joseph the Barbarian - Barbarian Fiction

The Depth

He couldn’t expect he would meet the snake when he entered the building. Such a huge snake he had never seen. Joseph the Barbarian lived in the underworld for such a long time now, but never had he seen such a huge black orange sweaty snake like this. He took his sword, but he couldn’t begin anything against it. Slowly the snake was strengling him, and took him away to the lair in the distance. ‘What do you want,’ a skeleton said. ‘Why did you come to our places. You don’t belong here, so face the snake. Face it. If you overcome then this place is yours, and if not, you will be the eternal slave of this place.’

‘What does that mean to be an eternal slave ?’ Joseph the Barbarian roared.

‘It means you will be a gladiator, but we will pay you good. Slaves do not have any lack here,’ the skeleton said.

‘I do not belief you,’ Joseph roared. The snake was slowly strengling him, until a woman came closer to them. The women had been clothes in all sorts of small jewelry like pearls strung together. She was like wearing the stars on her body. ‘Belief me, it is better to lose,’ the woman said to Joseph the Barbarian. ‘You will live in abundancy here, all the treasures of the underworld. You will be a slave of it, but it will protect you. You do not know about the dangers of the underworld.’

‘Woman, go away,’ Joseph the Barbarian roared, and then he tore the snake apart in his rage. He walked towards the skeleton while he had taken his sword again, and said : ‘Although I have won from your snake, I do not want to have this place. I only came here to visit the king.’

‘Oh,’ the skeleton said. ‘That is a pity. But okay, I will give you what you wish.’ And then the skeleton led Joseph to the king.

When Joseph approached the throne, the king asked him what he wanted. ‘I want to marry your daughter,’ Joseph said. The king stood up and said : ‘Only those who have defeated the snakes of the pit will have a chance to meet my daughter.’

‘Then I will descend into that pit,’ Joseph the Barbarian said. ‘Where is that pit ?’

The king smiled, pushed on a button, while Joseph seemed to sink into the bottom, while he finally found himself between tall thin black snakes. Some were a bit shorter but a lot of them immediately took him in a tight grip. ‘Elusiana, help me,’ he shouted. He knew that it was the name of the princess. Again he saw the women with the small jewelry coming. She put on a lantarn and a light fell upon her. ‘I thought you did not want this place. You want the princess I see, but you will only get her if you defeat the snakes and get this place in your hands,’ the woman said. In rage Joseph bit the snakes, and soon he had torn them all apart. Then the woman left.

‘Don’t leave me, as how do I get out of this ? He couldn’t reach the balcony on which she stood, and now also the lights went away again. ‘Elusiana, Elusiana, have mercy on me,’ Joseph the Barbarian shouted. When he started to get real hungry he ate from the meat and blood of the snakes. It had a strange taste. After days the king threw a rope to him and took him out. ‘Do you want this place now you have defeated the snakes ?’ the king asked.

‘No,’ Joseph the Barbarian said. ‘All I ask for is your daughter.’

‘And why do you want my daughter above all these riches ?’ the king said.

‘Riches and rulership enslave, but love sets free,’ Joseph the Barbarian spoke in pride.

‘And why is it you want my daughter and not someone else. And do understand that you are supposed to have riches and domain when you want to marry my daughter,’ the king said.

‘I know your daughter,’ Joseph the Barbarian said. ‘She is the sweetest of all women. My heart aches for her, and I know she aches for me.’

‘How do you know,’ the king asked, ‘as no one has ever seen the princess. She is veiled, and skeletons have imprisoned her in the depths of the underworld.’

‘I saw her in my dreams,’ Joseph the Barbarian said.

‘Be a man,’ the king said. ‘Do you belief in dreams ? I do not want to have a dreamer for my daughter. You are supposed to be a worker.’

‘Elusiana, Elusiana,’ Joseph the Barbarian shouted. ‘I know you are here. Please come to me.’

‘What a lunatic you are,’ the king said. ‘But you have defeated the black orange giant snake and her bred, so I will give you a chance. Take this key and go to the cellars of the underworld where you will find her.’

Then the king gave him the key, and Joseph the Barbarian got access to a certain tunnel below the domain of the king.

‘Elusiana,’ Joseph the Barbarian shouted, while darkness fell upon him, and the king close the door behind him. ‘Elusiana, I know you must be here somewhere.’

‘Joseph, king of all kings,’ Elusiana shouted from the distance. ‘Come and save me.’ Joseph slowly moved closer. He knew that the princess had also dreamt about him. These dreams would always guide her through the night she was living in. Suddenly Joseph the Barbarian got the shock of his life. Masses of skeletons marched in the distance, while the sight was striking his head, and fear came to fall upon him. They rose their weapons and suddenly they attacked like lions. Never had he seen such predators, and never he heard such roaring.

‘Elusiana,’ Joseph screamed, ‘save me as well.’ Then a fight started, and the woman of the small jewelry came to watch. Joseph didn’t have much chance against the skeletons. ‘You will never get your Elusiana,’ the woman said. ‘As you didn’t want a domain, and you didn’t want riches. You needed some presents of the king to get some grip here, but you didn’t want to have anything but his daughter. You are a fool, as it takes much more to approach the princess.’

‘My dreams and her dreams are enough,’ Joseph the Barbarian said, but the skeletons were slowly strengling him, and it was like time faded away. Soon he found himself hanging at a stake, while his body had been tortured miserably. ‘I want to die for my Elusiana,’ Joseph the Barbarian spoke. Then a light fell down in the horrible place where they had dragged Joseph too. Wolves came to surround him and ate from his flesh. Joseph gave himself as a sacrifice for the princess to free her, but it seemed more and more flames of hell struck him. It was like he got insane. ‘Elusiana,’ he whispered. Then he closed his eyes. Eyes were staring at him. ‘And Elusiana calls this the king of all kings ?’ someone was saying slowly. ‘This man is insane. No one can survive in this place.’ Smoke entered the place, and when Joseph the Barbarian opened his eyes a bit again he saw the king. He also saw the daughter of the king. She had been chained. ‘Here is your man,’ the king said. ‘Why did you choose to stay in a place like this all your life just to meet this man.’

‘As I love him, father,’ the princess said.

‘You are a dreamer, Elusiana, and it will never get you anywhere,’ the king said. ‘You will always live on sand with him, as he is a dreamer as well. It takes more to reach your goals.’

‘Father,’ Elusiana said. ‘I want to thank you for all what you have done for me, but my place is just deeper in the underworld, and not on the surface.’

After the king had left she took Joseph the Barbarian from the stake, and together they went into the depths.

Tarham - Prehistoric Fiction

The Masks of War

There was a world beyond life and death, a world where women ruled. There was only one man they couldn't tame. His name was Tarham, a savage. The secret of his freedom was a crocodile chainlet. He was a free man in the jungle, among the savage animals. He lived from the hunt, and he often ate from the flesh of defeated imperials. He was as soft as he was hard, and the women thought he would be prey in the hands of their sweetest, most cunning woman. But he killed her. He was a cannibal. It was something in the chainlet making him

this way. It was a world beyond heaven and hell, where all the women wanted to do was the break the spirit of the male. They were irritated that they couldn't reach Tarham.

Tarham was on a raft, on the river, close to a waterfall. On the side of the river there were some women. But Tarham believed the crocodile chainlet would keep him safe. The women were fast swimmers. Above the river the trees were growing, and there were many lianas. He grasped one, and climbed on the tree, while he saw the women were taking his raft. Everywhere where he went women were making their huts around him, doing their works, trying to get his attention. In his own cave he called home, in it's depth, there was a crocodile chrystal, a stone keeping him satisfied so that he didn't need to eat so much blood and meat everyday. There was also the elephant chrystal, causing those who came closer to it to bleed, although Tarham himself was immune to it. Also these chrystals kept him safe.

The women had the Anaconda chrystal which grew in power everyday. They had the hope that these powers would finally break the shield of Tarham, the last man they needed to bring down. Aulaseha celebrated the triumph of the Anaconda chrystal. She sat on her throne, staring at it, and she saw Tarham falling already. 'It is time ladies,' she said. She went to her velvet horse, took her harpoon, and went with her warrior-women to the cave where Tarham lived. Tarham saw them coming from far away. There was something breaking in his head. He knew it was black magic.

'Time to give you over,' Aulaseha called. Her women were all masked, and they had strange imperial shields. Tarham had bowed his head and came out of the cave. Aulaseha threw her lasso around his neck and dragged him with her. To the depths of a dungeon she brought him. Here a hunger would eat from him, and the scorn of the women would break his pride. Here he would have to drink from the weakening milk.

Many years went by until an anaconda visited Tarham in his dungeon. Tarham had to wrestle for his life, but he was weak, and the anaconda soon had him in a deadly grip. Tarham's heartbeat was getting fast. The anaconda was ready to bite him, but then the anaconda saw the crocodile chainlet. Slowly the anaconda was biting the chainlet away, and left, while leaving Tarham halfdead. Tarham had lost his last power. He knew the snake had been sent out maybe by one of the women. The anaconda had made a tunnel through which Tarham could escape. The tunnel ended in a desert. There was a slave caravan in the desert. Tarham set the slaves free and killed the enslavers. He didn't know how he had so much power all of a sudden, more power than he ever had. He started his own tribe. Maybe the visit of the anaconda had energized him. There was a small oasis in the desert where he settled, where they could drink. After awhile he left the tribe and went to the jungle again.

Some mammoths became his friends. He killed some swines, and made a hut. He wanted to know he had granted him this power. He felt he had become invincible. When he got back to his cave there was a third chrystal : the hippo chrystal. Tarham was a savage, not having a sense of good nor evil. He just knew he had to protect himself better, to use his nostrils, and to protect his territory by his odor, like all the other animals did. The odors were thick and this time he found himself some savage women who were not like the rest. But one day he woke up, finding out that he had been tied. The women led him to a stake, and danced around him. Of course they were nothing but cannibals, like he was. Some started to feed him and others took care of his wounds, all to prepare him for the torture. One of them would become his

cannibal bride. They told him that by giving her a baby a next generation was assured. The bride led him to her tent, where there would be a marriage ritual before he would be eaten. After the marriage ritual she led him back to the stake, and they were making a fire. After the dance the women got tired and laid around the fire. Before he would be grilled he would be tortured, but he had to wait at the stake for hours and hours, for the women were sleeping. It was dark already, and the fire was getting higher and hotter. Some of the women woke up already. They took their knives and came closer to him. 'Are you prepared to let your husband die ?' the women asked the bride. 'Yes,' the bride said, 'for from a woman he came and to a woman he will return.'

The torture took many days, and they laid him on an altar. But when the women wanted to bring the altar in the fire one of the women screamed : 'No, let us not go this far. He was our friend. He might be of use. Let's take a pig instead.' Tarham was already more dead than alive. 'Okay,' the women said. 'We will drag the altar to the fire, but when you give us a pig before the altar is in the fire, then the captive will live.' The woman had a fattened pig in a cage in the tent. She had to be quick. Just before the altar reached the fire she cut the ties of Tarham away by her knife, and showed the women her pig. 'Here you have it,' she said. Tarham she took to her tent. Tarham was very weak, still on the edge of death. He had horrible wounds everywhere, but the woman took care of it. Tarham could hardly speak, and was like in a coma. It took a few months until he had reached his strength again. In a certain night he slew all the women who did this to him, but the woman who saved him he kept alive. It was the only woman he would ever trust again.

But on one night he woke up finding himself tied again. The woman said she wanted him for herself, as a slave, and he would only be a good slave if she would zombificate him. Which meant she would lead him to a pseudo death and then raising him up again. The torture went deeper than before, and much longer, and she starved him. She wanted him to hunt for her, but at least she kept him alive.

Finally the monkeys saved him out of this situation. They took him into the depths of the jungle, while he was still mind-controlled, hypnotized, like he was drunk. They had to reprogram him all over again, and they would do this by their love. At the same time there was a monkey invasion in the empire of Aulaseha. It was the end of her rule. The monkeys ruled for years and years until wicked men took the rule : thieves and reavers. They did this by scientific experiments. Everyone needed to have their implants so that slavery would be assured. Again a woman took the lead. She was a zombificator by strange winds. She once got a ring of magic from a dragon, by which she got her powers. This ring was the ring of death. The worst demons came forth from the ring to assure her powers, and to fulfil her wicked commands. But her soft mouth was the true secret of her power. Her mouth was so soft that it became sharp. She had the mouths of beasts. Her riders with spiked saddle-trousers, riding monstrous pig-beasts, were everywhere to torment the mass. They took the scalps of all the previous rulers, invading their houses. The feet of the dark tribes of the new ruler looked like combat boots by all the sharp objects they were adorned with. She had a crown of fire, and a leather horned helmet, like her priests had. Her armory was combined with lingerie. Her priests would often take her crown and appear with it before the altars and the sacred objects of the god, to let it be electrified by the thunder gods. She had her own angels, having leather horned helmets as well. But some used the heads of pigs, bisons, buffaloes and goats as helmets. And she was proclaiming she was God, while being surrounded by her leopards. She could communicate to her servants by skulls. But in the underground a giant-monkey was awakening by all the changes. He came upstairs to cause a massacre. And soon other giant

monkeys were awakening and joining the army. Tarham was in a deep sleep as well since the fall of the monkeys. But one of the giants woke him up. It was time for Tarham to take his throne, and to rule the giant monkeys and the world. The giant-monkeys led him to a throne made of rhino-saphire, which was actually an elevator.

The giant monkeys were architects and builders of enormous monkey-piramids, which were huge piramids with gigantic towers on top of them. These piramids were mere storages for masks, which were to them the weapons of war. The masquerade was something holy to them, and the one with the most masks was the one who would win the war and who they called God.

It was the zombificator however who had organized all this. She was both the friend and the enemy, the ruler and the invader.

Lars Hemmerlitch-Richter - Barbarian Fiction

Licenses of

Orion

Chapter 1. Abyss of Snakes

Chapter 2. The Skeleton Stone

Chapter 3. The Massacre

Chapter 1. Abyss of Snakes

In a dark world a lonely warrior slides through the desert and the snow in his machine. It is a strange machine, attached to his arms and legs, by which he can step over dangerous things and by which he can terminate mines. Lars is a skilled soldier, a veteran in the army. The Hemmerlitch-Richter bloodline had the best warriors in the case, great leaders and skilled veterans. Lars was on his way to a red stronghold, a city, in the snowdesert. He had worked here in the past, and he still had to do things there.

He was a technician, one of the highest grade. He was in a project to reprogram certain leaders in the red city. Most of them were robots, or had cybernetic implants. Lars was an expert. They were all glad to see him. He had found a stone in the desert by which he could stir up a soft vibration. Soft technology was what they wanted.

Lars would also work at the clock of the city. The clock was the immunology program of the city, and the clock controlled almost everything. It was a big robotic experiment.

Lars was almost the father of the city, and he also called it his city. There was something in his eyes which could make you melt. He had the softest heart. Lars was obsessed by robotic mouths. He had a whole lot of mouths in an underground cave, and loved to work at them.

In the heart of the city's clock Lars had built a Cobra Eye, a sleep-inducing mechanism. The ceiling of the clock was made of Taroon stone, while the rest was made of Tantalos stone. After a few months Lars went into the desert again in his machine. Now he would go to Lamir, another city in the desert, where a prince lived. The prince wanted Lars to restore his clock as well. The prince of Lamir was a gentle man, also with a heart for puppetmakery. It was a city of robots. The prince wanted Lars to raise his army. Lars knew all about it. Within a few days the prince of Lamir had a perfect army, all robots.

Lars moved from desert-city to desert-city, all to help and share his knowledge. He was a prophet, and believed that the machines would take everything over. In a certain desert-city some bearded old men yelled at him : 'If you believe we need to become machines to survive the coming judgement, then who is God ? Also a machine ?'

'Yes, He is,' Lars said. 'and His angels also.'

'Well, I believe you are such a pathetic man,' one of the old bearded man said. 'I believe in the bottle.' And then he and his friends laughed. They looked like they were drunk. 'I can't believe you are a technician,' the old bearded man said. 'All this superstition about God and angels is just ….'

'A way to describe technology,' Lars said.

'Well, do you also believe in Mekmeth then ?' the old bearded man asked.

'Oh yes,' Lars said.

All the old men laughed again. 'Mekmeth is a zero,' the old bearded man said, while the others were almost applauding.

'Mekmeth is a soft man showing the way to eternal life,' Lars said.

Again the old men laughed. They started to mock Lars by making strange movements. ‘Mekmeth was a fool,’ the old man said, while his eyes were almost piercing Lars. ‘I don’t want to talk to you anymore,’ the old man said, and then they all left.

There were many statues of Mekmeth in the city, but there were many unbelievers as well. Mekmeth was a pirate of Taroon preaching about things like eternal poverty and eternal riches, and he was always talking about the python stone and the cobra eye as well. He said from himself that he came to give it freely. Many worshipped him as a saviour. Lars didn’t worship him, but he believed that there was some truth in what he was saying.

Mekmeth preached about the machines and robots who would take everything over, and Mekmethians often gave jobs to Lars for which they paid him greatly, so to Lars it was all fine. In a sense he was a great businessman.

Some said Mekmeth was a son of God. But Lars preferred to speak about Mekmeth in technological sense.

One day Mekmeth invited Lars to come to his place. That evening they had dinner together. Mekmeth was interested in the way Lars built clocks. Lars worked at Mekmeth’s clock till deep in the night. Lars got a beautiful room, a sort of attic at the top of Mekmeth’s apartment. The room was full of technology, and Mekmeth had told Lars he could use everything. Lars biggest interest were the equipments for spies. The walls had been made of cobra stones. Soon Lars fell asleep, but later he woke up by strange sounds. The walls were moving and came closer and closer to him. Lars tried to escape through the door, but the door had been locked. He finally escaped through a window.

It was after this day Lars changed his thoughts about Mekmeth, and started to warn against him. One day he visited the old bearded men again. He knew where they lived, and he told them that they were right. Mekmeth was a fool, and very dangerous. He also told them about his experience with the moving walls of cobra stone. ‘Come, I want to show you something,’ one of the bearded men said. They went downstairs and came into a certain cellar. ‘The cobra stone works together with the python stone to break you up,’ the man said. ‘It is a trap, and Mekmeth is making business with it. First he traps you, and then he would show up to save you, while you would follow him all your life. Well, I’m glad you escaped by yourself, boy.’

‘Here it is,’ another old man said. He opened a box in which rattlesnakes were coiling on bright jewels. ‘Rattlesnake eyes,’ he said. ‘But we have much more : Boa constrictors, anaconda’s, milksnakes, coral snakes, honey snakes, vipers, and many more.’

‘For what reason ?’ Lars asked. But from behind they grasped him, moved him through a door and threw them into a deep pit full of these snakes. ‘For getting rid of your cobra obsession,’ an old man roared. Then he went away and closed the door.

‘Don’t move, Lars,’ Lars said to himself. Upstairs he heard laughing. These guys were as bad as Mekmeth.

Snakes were sliding across his skin, eating from his clothes. ‘Oh, I’m dying here,’ Lars thought to himself. But the snakes seemed to be tame, and soon the old men opened the door again and took him out. ‘Yes, they are tame,’ they said. Lars didn’t feel comfortable anymore, but later on he could forgive them. It seemed to be a joke.

The old men seemed to be interested in biology, and soon his interest got raised. They were savages, worshipping nature. They didn’t believe in the machines, but in nature taking everything over. They believed that technicians would get demented finally and ending up nowhere. The men seemed to love animals, and most of the time they were busy taming them. They all did this in their underground area. They didn’t believe in vehicles moving them, but they used animals for it.

Lars felt himself like a kid. He could learn a lot of them. ‘If there is anything to save the universe,’ they said. ‘Orion. For Orion has the most exotic unknown species we need to get out of all the Mekmeth-crap. He has lulled you all to sleep.’

Lars bowed his head. ‘Is there a way to control the forces of the cobra stone ?’ he asked.

‘You mean Mekmeth ?’ they asked.

‘Yes, Mekmeth,’ Lars said. ‘How to get rid of this guy ?’

‘Well, Orion,’ they said.

Chapter 2. The Skeleton Stone

Lars wandered through the jungle for days and days. He knew a quick way to Orion. He wanted to go on discovery for awhile. The old men had given him a map. The Escurator Snake was a crab-snake with scissors. He needed to search for it. It would be the only way to control the cobra stone forces, and to finally get rid of Mekmeth. Lars now knew that Mekmeth was a huge threat to the desert-cities, also his own city, the red city.

Through a gate he went to the Betelgeuse planet. The Escurator Snake was dangerous for if you would see it, you would die. Lars could only watch it through a certain visor. He got it from the old men. It was just a sort of helmet with a certain chrystal in it. The chrystal was called the red time chrystal.

Alnilam was the planet where he needed to be, the center of Orion. He could reach it by a certain gate on Betelgeuse. On Alnilam there was a stronghold called Okil. Here there were a lot of escurator snakes, and without the red time chrystal he couldn't enter. Somewhere he saw a motorcycle. He took it and drove deeper inside the stronghold.

They attacked him, these escurator snakes, so he shot a few of them. They were very tall, and he hung them around his neck. When he had enough of them he drove back to the old men.

'Show me what we can do with this,' he said to the old men, while he dropped the dead bodies of the escurator snakes on a table.

'Oh, I will show you,' one of the old men said. The old man ripped the skins of the crab-snakes open, and they saw that it had been filled by many red time chrystals. 'You need many of these,' the man said.

'Listen,' the man said 'In the depths of Okil there is the main stronghold, Daakzil. You can only enter there, when you are totally covered by red time chrystals, or you will burn. In this stronghold the tallest and thinnest snakes live, the Trimdads. They guard the portal to the red time city. The Trimdads are the reversers of time. The La'ias are even taller and thinner snakes, extremely soft. You will find them in the red time city. They are the mixers of time, the confusers. The kaias are small, thin, erected and striped snakes, and are timeweavers. The

oplos look like cobras, and are often red and can often fly. The nargras-snakes are tall, thin, and weak. They can stretch themselves and they look like worms. The dorpois are green, tall, flat and slimy. They often live in trees. The viksum-snakes are the tallest of them all They create chaos. The loipros are their kings, and they can take any form.'

'Only the abyss of red time can let you dominate the snakes forever, so that you won't die in one of their traps,' another of the old men said.

The older the loipros became the more they turned into flies, big flies, living in the depths of the abyss of red time. They seemed to spread powders of strange drunkenness. They could grow to great heights to rule the land. They had but one mission : to destroy the mind and it's powers. The ruler of these kings was Etzbil. He held the chip of their shapeshifting abilities. It was a green stick like a jewel. By the green stick he had access to the world below the abyss of red time : the troll world. It was in the depths of the planet Alnilam. This world was the secret of the loipros, guarding the green slime, the slime by which you could live forever. They either drank it and smeared it on their bodies. In this troll world of the core of the Alnilam planet there was a portal to another troll world, that of the core of the Bellatrix planet. Here the secrets of green time seemed to live. By green time everything could stretch out to become tall. By green time everything could move and stop, and move and stop. By green time everything could get grip again, and could let go.

The green time seemed to stream forth from a skeleton stone. Skeleton stones could come into existence in places of extra-ordinary draught and pressure, like in the depths of the planet Saiphe, and here in the core of the Bellatrix planet.

In the core of the Bellatrix planet there were three portals made of skeleton stones. One led to the core-world of the Saiphe planet. Another led to the core-world of the planet Tabit, and the third led to the core world of the planet Mintaka. These were all troll worlds. From the core-world of the planet Mintaka other planets could be reached in their cores, like Heka, Rigel, Betelgeuse and Alnitak.

The trolls worshipped the skeleton stones more or less, and they often called themselves the living skeleton stones. The trolls were human forms of the loipros, the royal snakes. All these highways of Orion seemed to lead deeper and deeper into the deserts, to an enormous gate called the Gate of White Time. It was in the depths of Saiphe, the desert planet. The Gate of White Time induced death. It was the Gate of Death. But at the same time it was the Gate of Decay. One could stare at an enormous sea from this place, and there was the hottest beach called the Grill of Orion. Behind the sea there was an enormous wilderness where the skeletons lived.

In the center of this wilderness there was the Gate of Orange Time, which was the Gate of Draught. Deeper in the wilderness there was the Gate of Brown Time. The skeletons here knew exactly what these gates meant, and worshipped these gates. By the Gate of Orange Time they could come alive.

One day Lars reached the Gate of Orange Time with his motorcycle. To him it was the place of victory. The skeletons feared his motorcycle with all it's guns. Lars climbed the enormous gate and put his throne and flag on top. From here he dived into a new world. When he jumped he stretched his arms to which sails had been attached by which he could fly. He was Lars the flyman now. There was no way to stop Lars. He came here for discovery and rulership. He could jump on the rays of the Gate of Brown Time and jumped from ray to ray upstairs to it's top. Here the Rainbow of Time fell on him. Lars loaded his time-gun by it's energy, and jumped further into the enormous wilderness beyond the gates of time.

Chapter 3. The Massacre

One day Lars returned to the old men having a lot of stories to tell. They were playing at draughts. They were doing it with skeletons stones. They also had a chessboard with pawns of small skeletons. 'Have you been through the Gate of Orange Time ?' one of the old men asked. Lars nodded. At the wall hung an orion draughtsboard, next to a picture of boxers. 'Those boxers are deaf,' another of the old men said.

'Deaf ?' Lars asked.

'Yes, deaf,' the old man said. 'Haven't you seen them ?'

'No,' Lars said. 'Where are they ?'

'Beyond the Gate of Blue Time,' the old man said. 'It's the Gate of Deafness.'

‘What is the use of it,’ Lars asked.

‘It’s the Gate of Ice,’ the old man said. ‘They are earhunters.’

‘For what reason ?’ Lars asked.

‘Well, it’s jewelry to them,’ the old man said. ‘They are pirates.’

‘Pirates ?’ Lars asked.

‘Yes, pirates,’ the old man said. ‘They are without care, they only live for themselves.’

‘That’s a deep death,’ Lars said.

‘Yes, it is,’ the old man said.

‘What do they do it for ?’ Lars asked.

‘For money,’ the old man said.

‘Money ?’ Lars asked.

‘Yes, money,’ the old man said. ‘They sell the ears to jewellers.’

‘Why ?’ Lars asked.

‘Money makes the world go round,’ the man said. ‘And only the rich ones of orion have the best armies. They are the matadors.’

‘Matadors ?’ Lars asked.

‘Yes, matadors,’ the old man said. ‘They live in Salvadat, in the depths of Saiphe, the desert planet. They are the generals of saiphe.’

‘Well, that is interesting,’ Lars said.

‘They have the best armories,’ the old man said. ‘All because they went through the Gate of Blue Time once.’

‘And how to get through the Gate of Blue Time ?’ Lars asked.

‘It doesn’t exist,’ the old man said. ‘It just means to beat the matadors of Salvadat.’

Lars returned to Saiphe. The old man had given him a map of Salvadat. In short time he found the house where the matadors lived. They all lived together like brothers. They worked in a circus. They were acrobats, clowns and matadors at the same time. They worked with lions and tigers, and also elephants. They trained horses as well. They were addicted to their work. They worked day and night. So these guys were the generals. They had one handicap : they were deaf. They were indeed the most richest guys of Saiphe. They actually didn’t have ears at all, but their long hair covered it. Under the house they had warships stored, where several underground rivers crossed. When they started to act mean Lars just took his gun and shot them.

Lars cut off their heads by his knife and took them to the old bearded men. He returned on his motorcycle. ‘Circus is over,’ Lars said. Then they sent Lars to the depths of Bellatrix again, to beat more matadors. Lars just used his guns, and soon the whole of orion became afraid of him. They started to fear him almost like nothing else. ‘If you think you act mean, meet my gun, and I’ll show you who is mean,’ Lars said. He more and more became like a cowboy. He

plundered all the royal houses of matadors on Orion. All by the maps he got from the old bearded men.

'You're ice,' one of the old men said. 'You have style.' It was just Lars and his gun, against all the matadors of orion. No tricks, no complexed strategies, just a good gun. Some matadors were also cowboys. No problem to Lars. He gunned them all down. It was a massacre in Orion in the highest bloodlines. Some matadors were also indians. They would end in hell. For Lars had come to town. He took the advice from the old bearded men that he needed less technology and more beer. The mind had been overrated.

The matador of Hordulf was half a horse, half a man, a centaur. He seemed to be the boss of all the matadors. He was a sorcerer, and when he got a hold on Lars, he caged him. It was the most horrible trap. Lars would pay for what he had done to the matadors. Day and night Lars got tortured by the meanest devices. The old bearded men started to become worried because Lars didn't return. This was the reason they came to Orion themselves, and when they found Lars in such a horrible position they made mince of the matador of Hordulf. The old bearded men could fight like no one else. They slammed the centaur against the wall, while the wall became red of the blood. Finally the old bearded men bit his heart out of his chest and began to eat it.

Together with Lars they visited the other matador-bosses. This time the old men used their guns. They showed their licenses. They seemed to be old policemen of the early days of Orion. They decided to stay on Orion and chose the best house of the matador-bosses. In the underground they had enough cages to put the matador-bosses in. These bosses would wait here for their death-penalties. It took the old bearded policemen a few months to get rid of all the matador-bosses, and at the end of their mission they also licensed Lars for his courage.

The End

The Demonslayer - Barbarian Fiction

The Wolf Throne

I was wandering in the depths of Mars, beyond Tartarus, reaching for a city called Jericho, in the depths of the deserts. The gates were massive gold, huge stones. I lost my senses when I entered. I fell on the ground, trying to get breath, for there was dust all around me, trying to strengle me.

They threw me into a pit. I didn't know why. Maybe they didn't like wanderers. The pit was full of snakes, rats and other creatures, but I found a pipeline somewhere and could escape, deeper into Mars.

I had lost all my hope. I felt weak, sick, tired. I wouldn't be able to face another enemy. I needed some rest. I wanted to reach the ultimate oasis of Mars. There was so much dust here, so much dirt. I was covered by mud. My hair was wet by the sweat and the moisty atmosphere. I loved Mars. I had fallen in love with Mars, but everything here was strengling me.

There were big snakes sliding here, with orange stripes. They were ignoring me. They were sliding through some sort of gate in the distance. I went there, and saw sweaty snakes all together, dining on some food. There was a strange smell, everywhere there was slime and dust. I slided into another hole, and this time I came really deep. I could breath here a bit.

I saw them sitting at a table, dark lords, and a lady with a lot of spotted dogs at her side. I held my breath, hiding myself very well. I could see they were playing a game. They had cards in their hands, and threw the dice. They were having fun. I heard them saying they were the lords of Mars. In the corners of the place they were there were black guards like cyborgs, like knights. They had strange capes. I took my sword from behind my back, then jumped forward and slew them all. It was a massacre.

Covered by blood I went through a door and found a cellar with the bottles of life. They also called them the smiles of death. I drank from them and became drunk.

A woman found me later. She brought me upstairs into a sort of castle. I didn't know if she was my enemy or friend. She showed me her room, and the rest of the castle. When I told her I had slain the dark lords of Mars she was shocked.

'I found you in the cellar,' she said. 'I thought you were a wanderer in need of food and help, but you are a murderer ?'

I said I was. I was a demonslayer.

'Oh, a demonslayer,' she said. 'Well, that is alright. Our place has been visited by demons many times, so we need that.'

I nodded. I could smell the difference between demons and real ones, but I wasn't sure about the woman.

'Tell me about yourself,' I asked.

Well, the woman seemed to be okay after she told her story. She was very friendly to me, and hoped I would stay in the castle. She also hoped I would guard the castle against demons.

‘What is your name ?’ she asked.

‘Demonslayer,’ I said. ‘That was the name my parents gave me.’

‘Do they still live ?’ she asked.

‘No, they have been killed by demons,’ I said.

‘I’m sorry,’ she said. ‘My parents have been killed too, by demons. I live here alone.’

‘What is your name ?’ I asked.

‘Monica,’ she said.

I stayed there for a few weeks, but then I went for a demonhunt. Monica described to me who the demons were who had killed her parents. They seemed to live in a mountain.

I had a fight there for days. The demons weren’t hard to kill. It was quite easy, and when I had finished my job I decided to live where they lived. I could use all these weapons and machineries. But after awhile I felt the need to travel further. I was a wanderer of heart. The atmosphere was strengling me. I wandered through a desert and again I came to the city Jericho. I had moved in a circle. This time I was armed better. I went into the city and slew the heads of the city, the chiefs. The rest obeyed me since then. I had never seen such a submissive army before. They feared me. Monica had given me a necklace of a flat mysterious skeletonhead, a skull. I took the best house in Jericho. I only stayed there for a short while. Then I moved on. But to my surprise the inhabitants of Jericho followed me. They wanted to stay with me. They seemed to be safe with me.

‘Guide me through the desert,’ I said.

One of them said : ‘I know the road to Demon City. Let’s go there and take the city.’

I said alright. It wasn’t a big deal. Our army was big enough to invade the city. ‘Wanderer, take your crown,’ someone said when I had slew many demons of the city. He led me to a throne made of strange dark bones. ‘It’s the wolf throne,’ they said. ‘The throne of the wanderer.’

I sat down and felt my heart connecting to my head. It was a city after my heart. The smaller demons we didn’t slay, only the big ones, the leaders. The small demons just obeyed their leaders, whoever they were. They were pretty harmless. As soon as I sat on the throne they took orders from me. I realized it was all about the throne. They obeyed the throne, no matter who sat on it. In that sense they looked a lot like the inhabitants of Jericho. They were fetish people. They served objects instead of people. As long as I had the throne and the crown, all was fine with them.

I was the one making Demon City big. I didn’t have problems with the fetish ones. They were okay. Demon City was a city after my heart. But the more I sat on the Wolf Throne the more I began to have problems. I became more tired than ever, weaker, and sickness became my robe. I could hardly move, to the moment I began to realize that I was about to become one with the Wolf Throne. It was devouring me. I had become a plant, doomed to become old, and to be a part of the Wolf Throne. Now I realized from who these dark old bones of the Wolf Throne were. They were of the old kings who had sat on this chair before. When I realized this it was already too late to escape. I saw dark hands coming out of the chair grasping me tightly, holding me like chains, and I saw dark teeth appear. I became bony, and my skincolour became darker. I started to look more and more like the chair itself. Finally Monica saved me. I didn’t know how she did it. I had almost lost consciousness. All I knew was she took me to her castle again, while the inhabitants of Jericho and those of Demon City followed her. ‘Who are they ?’ she asked.

‘Oh, my guards,’ I said.

‘But look where it led you,’ she said. ‘It almost killed you.’

I was like a tree. I couldn’t move. I looked like the throne. I was like an object, and that was why the fetish people were still following me. ‘I have teached them how to fight against demons,’ I said.

‘Well, it almost killed you,’ she said. ‘It’s a demon throne you sat on.’

‘It was my biggest wrestling,’ I said. ‘How did you save me from it ?’ I asked.

‘Remember the amulet I gave you ?’ she said. ‘The flat skeletonhead, attached to the necklace. I have a same amulet, and it showed me you were in troubles. It showed me the way, and by bringing the two amulets together I could get you out of it’s grip.’

She showed me her amulet, also a necklace. ‘Both amulets were from my parents,’ Monica said.

‘Well, you have been my guardian angel,’ I said to Monica.

That night the forces of the Wolf Throne were raging. When I woke up I found out that Monica was dead. There was still a curse on my head. I decided to wander again. But the fetish ones still followed me.

I came into a dark jungle where a sorcerer lived. I told him what had happened. ‘The Wolf Throne ?’ he said. ‘Yes, it eats everyone who has a hunger for might and power, and they become a part of the throne forever. You were lucky. You could escape by a woman you once helped, but she paid for it by her death. These watchers of the Wolf Throne are following you, wanting you to feed them, and if you won’t, they will feed on you.’

‘How to get rid of the curse,’ I asked.

‘The only way to come free of it is to go the Dark Path,’ the sorcerer said.

The sorcerer brought me to a hidden portal deeper in the dark jungle. I came on a dark path, and the fetish ones were still following me, but one by one they went back, until only a small group still remained. I came to a snake throne finally. A woman sat on the throne, while

snakes slided all around her. She grasped me like a snake would grasp someone, and a wrestling started. She took me to her throne, which was a very hot place, almost burning, and we started to burn more and more. The other fetish ones began to leave as well. The woman started to shriek in certain strange tones, and all of a sudden dogs came from all sides, biting me. I could kick the dogs away, but they came back and became meaner and meaner, wilder and wilder. It was a nightmare. I was bleeding all over. The throne was burning.

Then the sorcerer came. ‘Blood is what they want,’ he said. ‘And when they have it, you burn.’

‘Why aren’t you helping me,’ I asked. I was in strange flames. The sorcerer came closer and closer, and finally it was like some cool water was streaming across my skin. He grasped me, while the woman fell away. But the fire was still there. ‘How do I get rid of the flames ?’ I yelled.

‘Go back to the Wolf Throne. You have now reached immunity. The Wolf Throne won’t have power over you, and I will deal with the woman here,’ he said.

I did what he said and stumbled my way back, until I reached Demon City again, and raised myself on the throne. It was true. It couldn’t grasp me anymore, and I ripped the throne apart. After a few days I went back to the snake throne where the sorcerer was still in a fight against the woman. ‘Rise on the throne,’ the sorcerer shouted. But I knew what to do. I ripped this throne apart as well, but it rose again after I did it. ‘The Wolf Throne will also rise again,’ the sorcerer said. ‘It is an eternal throne. It can’t be destroyed. Just rise on this throne now.’

I did what he said, and the woman died. The snakes seemed to obey me now.

‘These thrones will stay forever,’ the sorcerer said. ‘And happy are those who know both thrones. Those who know only one will die.’

I had felt the forces of both thrones, and I knew what they could do. I felt locked up between these two thrones for a long time, but finally I got used to it. I needed them both, and I needed their armies. And of course I was very grateful I once met this sorcerer and of course Monica.

Abarsa

The Eye of Medusa

The mysteries of Mars lie in the fact that the planets of Orion form the core of Mars : Betelgeuse the ultimate core, the first layer, Alnilam, the center of Orion, is the second layer, Alnitak the third layer, Mintaka the fourth, Saiphe the fifth and Bellatrix the sixth. These were nothing but the structures of Tartarus where Abarsa the fighter king ruled. He had there his harem, trophees he won in gladiator tournaments. By these women he ruled the world, as they were his weapons. One of his most feared weapon was the Python Scythe. This one actually crowned him as the ultimate king of Tartarus. His rule was one of pestilence and disease, as he wanted to keep them all weak under his empire, and he feared his own army, as there was much betrayal. He remembered his younger days in which he fought for women. It would give him strength and power. He also remembered how these women dispised him because of his power and his survival, as they were often not glad to be a trophee. He used to sell them on the slave markets in exchange for wellwilling slaves. By this he built his own empire, and once took over Tartarus completely. It was hell that day.

They also called him the killer king. By the Python Scythe he once won he could hypnotize an army. He became feared as the man with the strict death penalties, all by his new legal system. He introduced it. It was called hell. The Python Scythe was in this the all-seeing monitor, monitoring everything. And when certain laws were broken, it caused immediate death. It was a new order, a black scythe on a red flag.

Abarsa throned in Betelgeuse, the ultimate core of Mars, of Tartarus, together with his two black wolves Veron and Teron. The Python Scyth was holding the mystery of Mars and Abarsa was guarding it. He was the one who re-opened the mystery, having the keys to the core levels, as he once formed them, and in fact he was the keys. He was a Medusa Warrior, holding her eye, as he was the eye himself.

Many would fall for his Python Scythe, and those who did not risked to be struck by sudden death. The Python Scythe demanded total devotion. Medusa herself was a sense of death. He wanted to raise her. She lived inside of him as an enigma. She could only be approached by a mediator, but both the mediator and the user of the mediator would die. Abarsa knew about this, but he knew also that there was no other option. He approached her by the Python Scythe, which caught a glimpse of her, and was immediately melting. Abarsa ran away but was grasped by a fire. Hours of torment followed, in which he was losing everything. His skin was burning.

'Why have you approached me !' Medusa shouted. 'Why have you woken me !'

'As I want to recreate Mars,' Abarsa said.

'Well, you are dying for it,' Medusa spoke.

'I know,' Abarsa said.

'And I will take everything away from you,' Medusa said.

'As long as Mars will be recreated,' said Abarsa.

'Oh, I will,' Medusa spoke, 'I will.'

Soon Abarsa was surrounded by copper soldiers, who stang him by their spears.

'Give him the poison !' Medusa yelled.

An old man came forward with a cup. Abarsa became like drunk and had to drink. Then he fell down. 'Now take his powers !' Medusa said to the old man.

'He will be my armory,' Medusa spoke. 'He is my eye, he is my mask.' Then she threw his dead body in a kettle, and soon she covered herself with it's sauce. 'The queen of the universe I am.'

She took the lifeless body of Abarsa and kissed him. 'And you will be my king,' she said. She blew life into him. 'I rule over death and life,' she spoke. Then she raised the Python Scyth and gave it to him.

The Shadow of the

Dragon

Betelgeusian Fiction

The pillars in the dragonian castle-temple were high and thick. A little boy stood there ... Although he was very young he was already a gladiator in the arena of the castle-temple ... This was the sole purpose why they were raising children, that they would be warriors ... They already teached them cruel things at young age, the youngest possible.

Dormaki, an old man, a sage, was against this, but what could he do against this tight traditional system. They knew it, and once they invaded his cave, and hanged him.

The women were the rulers here, and their ways were cruel to those who dared to oppose their system, and those who dared to question them.

The boy stood there close to the pillar. It was hot. There was no escape possible for this child. These pillars holding the castle-temple were adorned with cruelty. There was a dark secret in the temple, the ring of the sirens, keeping them all enslaved.

The dark priest who had this ring in his heart had wings of fire. The child could not get away from the pillar, as the child was bound to it in the spirit of the child. The children's cry filled the air. Behind the temple there were monkeys in lava, gorillas. They moved slowly. They knew the dark secret of the temple. They had seen the dragons falling to this place, so long ago.

No one would sing songs anymore since that day, except the sirens. They bound hearts and made the children cry by causing fear. They were the shadows of the dragons.

Seroph

The Treasure

Moryana, princess of wolves, hidden in a coffin of light, in the depths of a mysterious castle. Only Seroph could reach her there, after a long battle against wolves. He reached the chainlet of wolf teeth, and could open the door hiding her secret chamber. It was a chamber of light. Seroph kissed her softly on her precious lips, and it was like a spell was touching her. She rose up, in her dress of butterflies, and they all flew away turning into bats.

Slowly she walked to the bridge behind her chamber. No one had ever been here before. She could only stare at it when she was a child, through the tall windows. Now she was here, with Seroph. It was the Coyote Bridge leading them to the Cat City. A spell had been released. There was an assignment of peace between the cats and the dogs. The princess stared at Seroph. ‘You, you have awakened me,’ she spoke softly. Then she went into the Cat City.

In Cat City a witch throned. She had tied her men of food, evergrowing flesh, all for the cats. She sat on a high throne, while Moryana was approaching her.

‘There she comes,’ the witch spoke. ‘Moryana, princess of wolves, finally awoken.’

Suddenly white snakes were surrounding Moryana. ‘You have been awoken from death,’ the witch spoke, ‘but what if I send you to hell now.’

The snakes dragged Moryana into the depths of an abyss. She was still weak, but she was awakening, and the flames of hell could not stop her from it. White snakes covered her brown body. Soon Seroph was with her. ‘I will never let you go,’ he said. She watched his chainlet of wolf teeth. He gave it to her, while the snakes were melting away. ‘Wake up out of the illusion,’ Seroph spoke softly but persistent. His words were like echoing in her.

‘I feel so weak,’ she said. She was sleepy.

‘Come with me,’ Seroph said. He took her by the hand.

‘Where are we going ?’ Moryana asked.

‘Not here,’ Seroph said. He led her to White Snake City, where an eye was spinning in the middle. It was like a mill. There were priests around the eye, sacrificing the men of food with their evergrowing flesh. ‘The secret of hell’s illusion,’ said Seroph softly.

‘I do not understand,’ Moryana spoke.

‘It is okay,’ Seroph said.

Moryana woke up in her coffin. She stood up, took a sword from the wall, and walked to a table. It was an oracle. She made it spin, and watched the white snake eye in the middle of the table. ‘Exactly, I dreamt of the past,’ she said. ‘The white snake eye is mine.’ The skeleton of Seroph hung somewhere at the wall. She remembered how he died, how he sacrificed his life for her. The ashes of the witch of Cat City she had somewhere in an urn. The men of food were hers now. She let them march on the walls of her mysterious castle. They were her guards. She had teached them how to fight and how to do magic. She had saved them from everlasting hell. They adored the princess of wolves, their princess. They treasured her.

Pythia’s End

Pythian Fiction

Long, long ago, when Venus and Mars were one as one big planet named Pythia. A lonesome warrior was walking through the snow with his boots made by bearskin. It was a time so deep in history that not many know of it’s contends. But I, dear reader, have the privilege to tell you about this incredible age, in which Mars and Venus weren’t split yet. How did this age end ? It was the day when Pythia got torn into pieces. It was the end of a precious but barbarous age, the Pythian Age. Pythia was the center of the universe, a planet with a strange

light, but hiding so much darkness. It was the biggest planet existing, and all the other planets could only move along. Some called it the black planet, because of it’s darkness. Even the sun didn’t have such a central position as the black planet.

The lonesome warrior was on his way to an old friend of him : Tara from Rhodes. Golem knocked on the huge door of the castle he was confronting. A lady in a tall dress opened the door. It was very cold, and the wind struck her immediately. This was not Tara from Rhodes. Tara would never dress herself like that. ‘Where do you hide her ?’ Golem screamed. The girl bowed her head. ‘Follow me,’ she said softly. She had seen the sword Golem was bearing, and she knew she couldn’t begin anything against it. ‘I wonder what your name is, warrior,’ the girl said. ‘I am Golem,’ Golem said. ‘Now show me where you hide Tara.’ The girl led him downstairs along old stairways with golden and leather frames and pillars, all marble deep inside. Golem could smell death, and soon they were close to the dungeons where Tara was, deep under the cellars. ‘Tara,’ Golem shouted. Tara jumped on Golem like a wild animal. ‘Who are you,’ she shouted. Golem caressed her hair. ‘It’s me, Golem. I’m here to set you free,’ Golem said. ‘Show me the tattoo,’ Tara screamed. Golem tore a piece of his robe away and showed her the black-red tattoo on his shoulder. ‘Yes, it’s you,’ Tara said. By his sword Golem cut the chains, and took her in his arms. The girl was staring at them. ‘You bastards,’ Tara said to the girl, ‘for how many years did you lock me up ?’

The captors of Tara were the civilized order of the black planet. They had caught her and tortured her severely. They were called the Sjarun. They used black people as their slaves. But Tara was free now, by the sword of Golem, and he brought her to a secret place deep underground. Here a lot of others seemed to live who had been freed by Golem.

In short time Golem could raise an army against the Sjarun, and Tara would battle at his side. Oh how their swords loved to rip the skins of these bastards apart. The Sjarun had been the biggest threat of the planet for such a long time. Tara got pregnant and gave birth to her son Barkas. It was by the skills of Barkas they could rebuild Pythia.

But the Sjarun struck back, and this time it caused the fall and split of Pythia. One piece became Mars, and another piece Venus. It was the end of the Age of Pythia.

The End

Land of the Hypocrits

Martian Fiction

There was once a society in the Martian deserts, where a man's tribe had enslaved women. There was not the usual idea of marriage, but all these wives had been enslaved. In the desert a man spoke to his wife, she was enslaved. He spoke softly to her, and she reacted. Outside these regions she would die. Her husband protected her, but it was a dirty deal. She had mixed feelings about it, and the man also. It was kind of a necessity, as it was always on Mars with slavery : It was a way of survival. Women were too free and impulsive of nature, and would easily bring themselves and others in troubles by not serving their responsibilities, and forsaking care. This was what the men were aware of. Oh yes, they gave them great power, as there was a tight base of matriarchy. Under the umbrella of the male they could develop themselves. Free women were a curse, and they often suffered under bad circumstances, dying young. So the men invaded many bases of women, to enslave them to higher purposes. The men had predators for that, charged by an unknown source. For a woman it was almost the highest good to bow at the feet of such a man. And the guiding predators would take care that the women would not make compromises. It was a total slavery. This was what they demanded.

Males not woken up to this lived often a miserable life. They could not defend themselves, and they often seemed to get lost in tragic poverty. It was for a man essential to wake up to this reality. The devices of such female slavery were in the hands of Debrichiar, a monster tiger. He teached the men of Mars that grotesque was a weakness in their system, and that it could be fatal to the devices, so the monster held a tight discipline over the heads of the men. If a woman could make a man muscular by her devices, then the man would lose his power to her, and he would become like clay in her hands. The muscle men formed a big threat against the plans of the monster. And it would threaten the surfaces of Mars. This was why the monster once sent out a swarm of fire wasps, to sting the muscles of men. A few leaks in the body of the man would be enough, if not then Mars would turn into a disaster.

In the depths of the deserts there were fire lakes, by which men could get ready for the devices of the monster. It was the task of the fire wasps to bring them to these. Young boys always shrieked when the fire wasps brought them to the fire lakes where they had to begin their long journey, but it was to save them. The fire wasps would guide them and guard them. The fire lakes finally led to the great Ocean of Fire in the center of the desert, where they would receive the final mark, the mark to wake them up. This fire would kill the spirit of

grotesque totally. It would awaken the savage part of the man. It was a great evil there, as the secret of the sea. It gave them access to desert island, in the center of the sea.

A man in the desert tried to talk to his wife. She reacted. She had been dead for a long time. He could finally reach her, and she reacted to his quiet voice. Visions were spinning in her head, of the love of her man, and she felt loved for the first time in her life, and she could love him. He took her hands and she felt the warmth for the first time in her life. Her hand reacted to it. She was drowning in his love, and in the distance she saw the fortress. 'No, not the fortress,' she said. But inside she liked it, and finally she gave herself over to the feeling. They were one now, for the first time of their lives. The steel on his body was hot, and the steel of his carriage pulled forth by predators. Her feet were burning on it, but it didn't hurt her, it woke her up. She watched the jewelry of her husband, and kissed it.

She drew him to their tent, she put him to sleep, while his predators were waking over him. She went outside of the tent to do some laundry. Everything was hot. Soon it was like the tent was exploding. There was fire everywhere. She grasped his body, and kissed him, and he held her tight. 'Close your eyes and dream,' he said. 'We're only bringing forth evil spirits in this land of the hypocrits.'

The Invaders

Martian Fiction

In the depths of the wilderness the snakes ruled, together with the Lord of the snakes. He was once chased away to the wilderness by his partner, princess Sheleila, princess of the serpents. She first wanted to kill him, but later she had some mercy on him, and banned him to the wilderness. Her reasons were unknown. The Lord of the snakes grieved very much about this,

but all the snakes of the wilderness were at his side. The royal serpents were on the side of princess Sheleila, their princess. In the wilderness he met someone else, a savage girl. She led him to the desert where he found a new life. In a desert fortress complex he was welcomed very warmly. New blood was moving through his veins, new life.

The queen of Horr was ruling in the deserts, she was the queen of dogs. She had built here an empire of slavery. She was the mistress of death. The secret of her power was the dog stone she once found in the ocean behind the deserts. It made her such a high rule on Mars. The stone was like tall rough scarlet chrystal, like a thick vein. A snake guarded the stone. The men here were all but grotesque, they were tall and slim, having belts with tall aprons. The wings of death were her watchers, they looked like birds made of just one wing.

She heard the story about what princess Sheleila did to her guest. She offered him a living here. It was for the Lord of Snakes five years of slavery here, and then she dumped him too. The Lord of Snakes returned to the wilderness again, in wrath. He wanted to build his own empire now, and he wanted revenge. He didn't understand why women could be so. But both the princess and the queen had too much power. He couldn't begin anything against them. One day in a cave he found an old man with a lot of wisdom. The old man had the wrath of the gods in his eyes, but on the other side he said to the Lord of the Snakes that he had to humble himself before the women. First the Lord of the Snakes went to the princess of serpents to beg for her mercy, together with the old man. He had humbled himself, and wanted to bring it to a deeper level. The princess was surprised. She always feared his male powers, but now she saw he was somewhat broken.

'Bring me the head of the queen of Horr,' she spoke, 'and I will let you in.'

'Her powers are too huge,' he said.

'Then I will let you die at the front of my gates,' the princess said, and left.

Together with the old man he went to the queen of Horr to humble himself. She didn't want to talk to him at first, but later she sent a wing of death to him, who tortured him and the old man very badly.

'What is the reason of this,' the Lord of the Snakes screamed.

‘The reason is unknown,’ the wing of death said. ‘It is the will of the queen.’

‘She tries to break my brains,’ the Lord of the Snakes screamed.

‘She fears the male brain,’ the wing of death said.

‘So is there life after the torture and death she inflicts on me ?’ the Lord of the Snakes asked.

The Lord of the snakes decided to take a raft to leave on the ocean. He came to a strange island, everything was very hot here, a burning atmosphere. A savage woman came to him and the old man to welcome them. ‘You come from far, strangers, I can see,’ she said. She took them to her hut, where she made them a meal. ‘You must be hungry,’ she said.

The Lord of the Snakes told her how he was dumped by two royal women, losing his life more or less. ‘Oh yes,’ the woman said, ‘I know the royals. If they can find some better slaves, they dump the old ones.’

‘Do you miss them ?’ the woman asked.

‘Yes,’ the Lord of the Snakes said, ‘for they have my heart. I lost my life to them.’

‘Good,’ the woman said.

‘Good ?’

‘Yes,’ the woman said, ‘losing your grotesque male power and your male brain is essential.’

‘What sort of brain do I suppose to have ?’ he asked.

‘A chicken brain,’ she said.

The old man nodded.

‘How do I get that ?’ the Lord of the Snakes asked.

‘Go to the beach and wait for her,’ she said.

‘Wait for who ?’ he asked.

‘The queen of the flames,’ she said. ‘She can give it to you.’

‘How ?’ he asked.

‘By letting her invade you,’ she said.

The Justice

Machine

Martian Fiction

A martian prince rode with the princess of hyenas, in a hot spot of Mars called the Sun of Mars. She was older than him, kind of his mother. But they had a relationship, and ruled the Sun of Mars. His muscles had been stung by strange pins, and bound by stripes, so that his male power would not become like a wild river which couldn't be quenched anymore. She did this to him, she had tortured him, as she was afraid of his male pride.

But he could understand her, and he loved her. They were together for many years. Once they had a fight, in which she won. But he had lovingly submitted himself to her. She took care of him, and was his guard, but she could also rip him apart, and that was why he feared her.

When she would get angry, her nipples would grow big, and they would start to spit fire. These things could cause desasters on Mars. Whenever a muscle would grow on a man, an alarm went on, and the muscle had to be pierced, so that the male mind would not take control, for that was which she feared. Men lived in great fear because of her, the muscle alarms were horrible and traumatic. She had bought herself a justice machine long ago, with many switches and lamps. She was against the male mind, and wanted to plant her matriarchy. She bred special stuff in her garden, for once she would invade the whole of Mars to rule, together with her hyenas. She had the hyena gnosis in her heart demanding that all the bones of the males would be pierced and lead them to paralysis, so that she could raise them as slaves from there. She would grant them power, and she would grant them weakness, whenever she wished, and wherever. They would become her zombies in which the hyena mind would take place, and in which the male mind would die. She was of course a zombificator with her justice machine. The hynena mind would take over, to let these men bow at her feet. It was of course her fantasy, that wherever there was a male chest a female breast would rise instead. But not much did she know of the depths of this hyena gnosis, which would also turn against herself. The prize of such a machine was high. She was just a doll in the eyes of hyenas, a spoilt princess, wanting to have everything her way. They would give it to her, but then she would have to pay the prize. She would become their trophee.

By sweetness they invited her in, waiting to put her jaws in her, when she would be deep enough, to the point of no return. They were intelligent and complicated, while she wanted it the simple way, fast. She did not know much about the gnosis of hyenas living inside of her. She was just a princess.

Queen of Hyenas

Martian Fiction

She was safe with her husband in the royal cabin. Outside martian hyenas were tearing a swine up. And after that they went for a wounded bison. They left enough meat for the queen. She came outside with a spear or they would attack her as well. She dragged the meat into the royal cabin and fed her husband. No one would understand what they went through. The bison was still half living. The black queen was on her horse, armed with arrows. When she stepped from her horse her feet got red of the blood. She was from the south, and went into the cabin as well. Soon it turned into a fight. Shamia took her knife and slew the black queen.

Her husband couldn't move. He was still in a shock. He always feared the black queen, but she was dead now. His wife embraced him. 'You must eat,' she spoke. Hyenas surrounded the royal cabin. They had smelled the blood. Shamia took the body of the dead queen and threw it outside. Of course she would be hyena food now, and she deserved it. She had tortured her husband for so long. 'You are safe with me,' she whispered to her husband. He was fragile.

'I can't believe she is dead,' he said. 'I had to drink poison from her cup. I still feel so weak.'

'Here, drink some swine blood,' Shamia said, and held a cup to his lips. 'It is to heal you.' After that she gave him bison blood. Was this the woman who breastfed hyenas, and why were they against her ? They were still savage. They loved and hated their mother. They would tear her up if they would see her, but they still sacrificed great pieces of their prey to her. The blood was warm, and it made him shiver. Now the black queen of the south was dead, the Tartars could invade her territorium. There would be a new queen of hyenas now. Shamia, once rejected by them, was a perfect candidate for it. She would now become the alpha-female after so many years of bitter rejection. Her husband was proud of her. The

territorium of the Tartars grew since that day. The hyenas accepted their new queen and licked her.

The Red Snake

Venusian Fiction

There was no place for me on the smoking surfaces of Venus, as I didn’t have any Venusian money. I became a beggar in front of their gates. If a friendly Venusian man didn’t have mercy on me I would never be able to enter the town. It was floating through the sky as in a vision, but yet so sensuous, full of stamina, and it was materializing in front of me. It was saving me out of a fire I couldn’t control, when the man gave me ninehundred Stawrakka, the Venusian money. With this I could help myself a bit, and I got accepted into their community. For a few Stawrakka I could rent a house for at least a month, I could get myself some food and some clothes, but also weapons, as the spheres were very dangerous. I needed to find a job very soon, or I had to steal money and stuff to make myself a good living. I went to the first fighter’s house in the neighbourhood, which was an arena ... They told me it was the best to become a gladiator to get a lot of money, and to survive here. I would get a lot of friends, and protection of the army. Within a few I had enough money to buy myself some predators. These predators could bring me anywhere, and they could protect me against unknown harm. I needed to become a good fighter, to get lots of money, so that I could buy my own house here instead of always paying rent. I was very successfull, as I had a good trainer. I had some skills from myself, but this man helped me a great deal. You could say that in these times I became a rich man, and I liked my work very much. Because I was such a good and skilled gladiator I also started to work in the army, which was a bit more dangerous. One day I checked the magazine for better jobs. I wanted to work my way higher on Venus. I quickly found out that many jobs you could only get after a big deal of study, so I started to study. I studied awhile in how to construct Venusian buildings and spaceships, but after awhile I

found a better deal. I wanted to work with the beasts underground, in the depths below the city. I needed to study how I could tame these, and how I could use them. There were so many species I didn't know anything about, so I first had to read a lot of books about them. It was an expensive study, which took a lot of Stawrakka, but because I worked well in the arena I could afford it. One day they took me downstairs and showed the beasts to me. It was awsome. The more I had studied, the more I could work with them, but sometimes I just had to go back to the arena to earn some more money. If I would get the job finally I would be one of the richest guys on Venus. One day we would go to a deeper place where unknown beasts were living which no one could ever tame. It was a challenge to the students to tame these ones, and to get more information about them, as the books didn't tell much about them. Here also the wild tribes lived, the savages of Venus, and it seemed they knew a lot more about it, but the civilized Venusians didn't have any contact with them. It was a challenge to me to try to communicate with those. Soon I found out that these ones didn't belief in money, but in blood .... The spoiling of blood was a great part in their daily ritual, but I was on my guard. I knew that if I wouldn't donate blood to them they wouldn't want to give me further initiation, so I took some blood from my finger, and gave it to them. It was by this that I became one of them.

They told me about the beasts and about the ways how to tame them. It seemed they could ride the beasts and use them for all sorts of heavy work, and also in warfare. There were many dark tribes here in the depths of the city. They had many skills I didn't even know about and they were almost immune against fire and many other things. They showed me the way to secret cities, and these cities had their own money-systems. It seemed it wasn't the end of my journey but just the beginning. It was in one of these cities I finally found a spaceship to leave Venus forever. I wanted to go back to where I came from. I needed to escape from this universe to get into another one. I knew where I had to go then. I first had to beat the mastermind of this universe, a skeleton. He lived in a huge temple on the edge of the universe. He was the master of death and hell, named Etrictor. If I would beat him I would take his skeleton as my armor, and I would take his spear and sword to be able to come into the other universe. It was an easy job.

In the other universe they used other sort of money, so I worked my way higher and higher. It was like they knew me, and it was true, as I came from this universe. It didn't take long before I found my planet : Haddarsch. It was like my mind was frozen. So many things here moved much slower, and other things faster. I needed to get used to a total new atmosphere, although this was the place where I was coming from. Once I had been kidnapped to the other universe by the dogs of Etrictor ..... skeletondogs ..... My sword was sharper than any sword, tall and thin. Sometimes it was like flames were coming from the sword. I was glad I had come home, but I didn't care about it's riches .... I thought a lot about the savages on Venus, how they lived by blood, and not by money .... The wild live attracted me, and so one day I decided to go to the underground of Haddarsch ..... I was on my guard, but I wanted to see the beasts and the savages, and I wanted to live like them ..... I knew that they would only talk if I would give them some of my blood, so I did, and this time I cut a piece in my arm, and that was the sign they could accept me. Since then things started to get very fast, and I worked my way to their tops. They offered me a new sword, and they made a gladiator of me in their spheres. I also became a rider of their beasts, and a warlord. I learned about their rules, their

laws and wisdom, and soon they showed me the treasures of Haddarsch. When I became king here they showed me their secret moneysystems based on the teeth of beasts. I had to study for a long time how these things worked. It was a difficult system of economy.

In these days I met the red snake, a creature who seemed to produce the highest money system of the underground of Haddarsch. Once in the month all his teeth fell out to be replaced by others. He gave me hairy clothes, and a chestplate like a shield, having such a wonderful stone. It began to sing, and sang :

All those of the red snake,

Follow me, or I'll break,

There's tension on me,

Don't be fake, but real

All those of the red snake,

Follow me,

There's power on me,

Power to ride the winds and the seven seas

The End

Eve of Evil - Evil Fiction

The Evil Jungle

It was a long way to the Westside of Eeden, through so many evil jungles and even through the gates and deserts of hell, burning so loud by all those shrieks and screams of the damned. Eve of Evil showed she ruled this place, and by her sword and spear she made a way. She had slain Adam because he came from the path of East. Eve of Evil would never give her heart to someone from the East. She wouldn't give her heart at all. She was a lady of wicked thoughts and in this all sort of heart-giving wouldn't fit. She had to protect her heart against the dangers lurking around her. When she showed up to be good, it would always turn out to be evil. Here in the Evil Jungle there was a passage to the Westside of Eeden. The Eastside was the good world, where Adam came from. He was a hypocrite in her eyes. The Westside was the evil world to which she belonged. She had slain Adam by a spear encircled by a snake, but she didn't know that his ghost was still looking for her. In the depths of the Evil Jungle the trees and bushes would grow so wicked, and they were often full of snakes. Eve bathed herself in a strange small lake with strange fluids. It looked like a sort of blood in another colour. When she looked behind her she saw a man standing there. He looked like Adam. Then he slammed her down by his weapon. He took her out of the West and dragged her to the garden. From there he showed her the east : 'Don't you like to see the good world and all it's riches ?' he said. 'Why have you chosen evil, the world so poor ?'

‘Oh, don’t you know,’ Eve the Evil smiled. ‘The good is just a servant of evil, and is even a worse form of evil.’

‘Then what is the worst ?’ Adam asked.

‘Oh, good boy, don’t you know ? After all the years you lived together with me ? I am the worst,’ Eve the Evil spoke and started to laugh.

‘Now put me down, Adam. Let me go to West again,’ Eve the Evil said, while a flame came forth from her to devour the ghost-appearence of Adam completely. When she came to the West she was satisfied she had finally dealt with the ghost of Adam. There were a lot of worms here making her mind insane. She could feel her heart beating again. She knew she had to go to the temple of evil now, in the depths of the Evil Jungle, to appear before a few skeletons. They had sent her to the garden once to trick Adam, and to lead him to destruction.

‘Salute,’ she said when she saw the first skeleton. ‘I have fulfilled the evil mission, but now I got a question for you. What is my next mission.’

The skeleton started to smile. ‘So you liked your mission, right, evil woman ? Of course I have a second mission for you now. That is to be the guard of the West.’

Then another skeleton showed his face : ‘We are proud of you, Eve. Adam is now nothing but a flame. He will only find satisfaction and life in the West.’

A third skeleton showed his face : ‘As a guard you will be the initiator, and your first initiate will be Adam. Don’t make it too easy for him to enter the West, or we will burn all. In order for him to live forever in the West he has to appear before us. If not, he will always slide away after his visit in the West, and will fall into the East again.’

‘I will tell him about the quest,’ Eve of Evil said. ‘We will make an evil man of him.’

‘Oh yes,’ the skeletons said. ‘So evil. He will be even more evil than you, Eve of Evil.’

‘Oh no, never,’ Eve of Evil said. ‘I am having the heritage of Evil, and I won’t give it to anyone else, even not to Adam.’

Then the skeletons turned their backs to Eve of Evil and disappeared. ‘Don’t you have anything to say anymore ?’ Eve of Evil shouted. ‘I will destroy the Eastside of Eeden,’ Eve of Evil shouted, ‘and I will show you all that I am the highest Evil and no one else. I am the worst, something Adam will never reach.’ But then she swallowed her words all of a sudden

and looked down on her hands. ‘I have lost my powers,’ she said slowly. ‘They have given it to Adam and I don’t know why. I have served them all my life.’

‘I will make it hard for Adam to enter, and I won’t tell him anything about the quest,’ she said, and then she moved herself towards the large portal of the West. But the wrath of the skeletons turned against her, and they turned her into sand. This is why the Westside of Eeden has been surrounded by sand to this day. Her soul they turned into a doll, and took it to their temple. When Adam finally reached the temple of evil they told him to defeat the doll, as that would make him live forever in this place. Till today Adam is in a fight against this demonic and evil doll, which is the soul of Eve the Evil. She lives in jealousy, and has sworn to bring him down again by all means.

In his battle against the evil soul Adam got help from a sorceror named Bastin. He helped him in overcoming some of the most dangerous attacks by the evil soul. Bastin teached Adam about evil magic, and led him to a tower where he teached him how to overcome almost everything. Bastin said that it was impossible to overcome really everything, for some things would always bring him down. That was just the way it is.

Gorilla - Death Fiction

Man of War

Gorilla walked on a lonely path in the realms of death. He had lost his father, and he lost his mother in the war, and since the war he only became wilder and wilder. Yes, he was a savage man, worshipping his sword. He grew up in a tribe full of dance and music, but he hated music. Why worshipping drums and flutes and all sorts of songs ? He worshipped his spear and his knife, for that would bring him much further in this dangerous world of death. And he was proved to be right, as when the war came he was the only survivor of his tribe.

He had slain all his enemies when he got older, and he built his own city, his own camp by their bones and skins. He also made cages of these bones tied together, as he wasn't only a man of death and destruction. Gorilla glorified war, as that would be the only good guard in the afterlife. He was a good swordfighter, and a good spearfighter, but only a dagger would also do. He was a dark man, and he had to be, or otherwise he wouldn't survive here. He didn't belief in love, as love was a trap here in these realms. Therefore he worshipped hate.

Gorilla was a hard man. There was no tenderness in him. But he was also lonely and hungry for something. He had a few friends, and in friendship he would go to the extreme. He protected them by his life.

When he got older he became a slayer of giants, as giants were in his eyes the biggest threats. They caused all the earthquakes, vulcanoes and hurricanes by which they destroyed so much. Most of the time these giants were dragons, living far underground, in the sea, or in mountains, but even more often they seemed to live in vulcanoes.

Gorilla wore a necklace with the teeth and nails of his defeated enemies, and this necklace gave him power. He worshipped these teeth and nails like they were his nemesises. But when Gorilla reached over thousand years he had defeated so many enemies that he could build a city by their teeth and nails, and that was which he did. It would be a city of doom, like a temple so cursed that only priests deeply initiated by Gorilla would survive in this place.

And he raised his friends like priests, and he covered the temple by the rarest sorts of skins. Gorilla was a predator, and also his priests. many of his priests were only temporal as they couldn't live by the high standards of Gorilla, and they often died or just fleed. Gorilla himself

was the highpriest. One day Gorilla found himself in a battle against a witch. She bit him dangerously in his arm, which would become a scar which would never disappear. It was since then his death magic started to increase to it's height, and the witch wished she would never have attacked him. He skinned her and gave her skeleton a place above the frontportal of his temple.

Scars were welcome in the life of Gorilla since then, as he knew where the scars would lead him. He wanted to become the king of death. But because there were already so many kings of death, he became the emperor of death, and he became the slayer of so many royals and aristocrats in the realm of death. They put a price on his head, and one day he got visited by a skeleton. The skeleton said he was the ruler of all the emperors of death. 'I can use pigs like you,' the skeleton said. The skeleton took him to the realm where pigbutchers had the final word. Gorilla became a gladiator here, and there was nothing he could do. The skeleton was carrying secrets he didn't know anything about, and these secret powers had bound him. Finally a princess who seemed to rule all the pigbutchers set him free. He thought he could be the emperor of death again, but she brought him to a much worse place : the place of pigbreeders. Here also pighunters worked, and again he became a gladiator. The ones of this area looked like pigs more or less. He couldn't see much difference between the pig and it's breeder, so he thought it wouldn't be such a big deal for him to become a pigbreeder himself.

Gorilla started a pigfarm here so that he wouldn't have to fight as a gladiator too much. The ones he defeated he took to his farm, for they were almost like pigs anyway, and he also became a pighunter. He didn't have to go to the forests for that, but he could find them in the houses of the aristocrats and other royal or religious houses. Since he was looking more and more for the rarer forms of pigs like the winged pigs the farm more and more started to turn into a featherfarm. He seemed to have found the ideal form between a pig and a chicken, and he more and more started to breed them for their feathers. Gorilla became obsessed with feathers, and if he could only pluck their feathers he would be satisfied enough to set them free. Gorilla could make anything of these rare feathers as they had all sorts of qualities.

The End

Abraham the Barbarian - Barbarian Fiction

The Food of Secrets

Abraham was a savage barbarian living in the underworld with Sara, his love, and his family. They lived in caves and on the hills, and bones seemed to surround them everywhere they went. Sara was like a goddess in making jewelry and ornaments, sometimes very huge. She could make the most precious webs and decorated them by feathers. Abraham was a warrior and a hunter. The family was a large group to which also the slaves belonged, and in times of war they all fought. It was a dangerous place in a dangerous age. Abraham was like a predator, and a mighty king. When he roared you could hear it in the far distance, and his echo seemed to come everywhere.

Abraham lived together with the beasts. He would ride on them, and wage war. They were killers, killers like he was. They lived by meat and blood of their enemies, and they often hunted, although they also bred cattle. Abraham had food by which he could change predators into cattle. It was the secret Sara told him when they married. And this was what he used to threaten his enemies. He would send out spies to poison the food of his enemies by the food of secrets, so that they would turn into cattle. Abraham dominated these worlds by fear. He was a dreadfull man, one of the worst ever existing. When they heard his voice, many shivered inside.

But one day Abraham and Sara came into a fight, and Sara threatened Abraham she would show him some more mysteries. Abraham had respect to Sara, and he knew he couldn’t mess with her, so he decided to leave. He got one half of the slaves and cattle, and Sara the other half. Sara became a dangerous woman, a sorceress, and all she wanted to do was to take revenge on Abraham. One day she sent a spy. She had given the spy some poison which would turn the victim into a predator who would be always in hunger. Abraham the Barbarian was her target. Abraham didn’t know what was happening to him when he ate his dinner. His skin got green and strange brown, his eyes yellow with black stripes in the middle, and his nails started to grow. He was almost becoming an animal, like a dark alien.

Abraham immediately knew that this had come from Sara, so he swore revenge as well. He knew where she had her camp and came to tear her whole camp down. He found her in a tent, but then he felt like weakness took him over. He was still in love with her, and he begged her to take the spell away from him. Then she gave him some stuff which would turn him into a pig as well, and he became some sort of strange mix, like a dog. He was now a giant barbarian. 'Make me normal,' he begged Sara, while his voice had changed so much, but Sara didn't want to do. 'Please,' he said, while he bowed down for her at his knees. 'Teach me your sorcery, and let me become a sorceror as well.' After some nights Sara had some mercy on him, and gave him some food to become normal again. Although he had become such a big ruler, he knew that she ruled him by all her sorcery. That's why he wanted to learn sorcery as well, as he felt like he was her slave. It took him so much to get a word out of her mouth that it made him very tired. This time he gave her all he had and left the camp forever. He would wander now to the horizon to start a new life and to find out about sorcery himself. Although he found out that it wasn't an easy task, he didn't return to Sara as he knew what she could do to him. One day he met a real sorceror, who seemed to know a lot more about the spells Sara used. There wasn't a way to heal for Abraham, as she had pushed her spells too deep, and it seemed Abraham had to carry that like a burden. It made Abraham full of rage, but he didn't want to return, for she could burden him even more. Even her healings were deceptions leading him to deeper slavery to her. Although he had gone away from her, she had come deeper in his heart. It made him insane, and there was no healing for it. It was his fate that she would come only deeper and deeper, and Abraham the Barbarian wondered why. What had he done to deserve this ?

Jeremiah the Barbarian - Barbarian Fiction

The Last Door of Fire

There was no slayer like Jeremiah. He was the nightmare on the battlefields spoiling nothing but blood. He had the most women of all warriors, all in a harem. He had chained his women tightly, and they had to dance for him. He was an evil man. He had palaces like no one had them, where he kept his snakes, most of the time giant snakes. He lived in a domain full of waterfalls, dinnered with ghosts, and was a necromancer. He lived in the depths of the underworld, and he had freed himself from his prophetic chains.

He dinnered with special women, women with wisdom, and he had some grace for these often royal women. They often came from other kingdoms, many unknown to them. Most of these women were exotic. He traded in silver and gold, and showed them his secrets, while they showed him theirs. He was part of a mighty circle, but one day his dominion fell down. Warrior-women seemed to invade his palaces and they left blood everywhere they came. They killed his snakes, and polluted his properties.

A man called Andreas helped him in his battle against the women. He didn't know where Andreas came from. Later also someone called Paul helped him. It turned into some evil nights, in which he finally lost everything, as Andreas and Paul seemed to be from the enemy. How could he trust them. He felt stupid, and they led him to a dungeon in the depths of the underground. Never there would be a man like Jeremiah the Barbarian again. For they would let his traces disappear forever. One day they sent some dogs to his dungeon who started to eat from his flesh and drink from his blood. This was the sad fate of Jeremiah the Barbarian, the man who had so many enemies. His spirit went into the depths of hell, where the kings of hell tormented him even further. He went through the gates of evil where he begged for some mercy on him, but there wasn't any. All mercy was false anyway. True mercy didn't exist, as it was all part of the breeding of evil. It was a trick of Tantalos to make slaves. Jeremiah the Barbarian got confused as his spirit was fading away even more, towards the portals of the Prometheus. Here his spirit would have to do slave-work forever, but one day a man set him free. He knew that true freedom didn't exist so he doubted the man. Although he was gratefull he couldn't belief it. 'But then, trust the paradox,' the man said. 'Don't hang on to one side of existance anymore, a certain part of your mind. Don't repress yourself like that anymore, but

be free.' Jeremiah nodded. It was like the burdens were falling away. There was not but one side of everything. There were many sides, and he had to stop judging the wheel of it, and stop judging the judging. He needed to let it all flow, even the judging. He was now free by the paradox. Crucified, but victorious.

It led him to the cross of the underworlds, where dogs were eating him again, and he could only smile with the smile of suffering, as he had found the power of the paradox, a strange power flowing so fast, without any taboo, without any conditions or restrictions. It led him to strange jewelry making him wise. It led him to the deer of hell to ride. There was no good or evil in the experience, as there was only wilderness, unknown instincts. There was a life higher than his mind. The mind was always judging good and evil, as an insane king, but this was something else. This was lust triggering the flame of love. What was hate and what was love. The mind couldn't tell, as the mind was limited. But the lust was unlimited. The lust became the new judge, leading them back to the unknown ages of secrets, secrets once washed away by the floods of time. How these lusts needed to be set free he found out soon, as he went to the Abyss of Snakes with it's many caves full of bony pillars and lakes of strange fluids. Here the lusts got born, and he found out that by his touch he could set them free.

Behind veils in the Abyss of Snakes the Woman of Snakes lived. She was the maker of fogs and spiderrags. Jeremiah the Barbarian knew he had to be at his guard by approaching this woman. She would have the powers to damn him forever. But by his knowledge Jeremiah the Barbarian knew she couldn't inflict fear on him. Spirits of scorn started to come forth from her, now he had survived her attacks of fear by his knowledge. The spirits of scorn were like cold cutting winds, but again he could defeat them by his knowledge. It made him proud to see how these spirits crashed at the rocks. Then skeleton spirits came trying to strike his mind by confusion. Finally he laid himself at her feet and fell asleep. The Woman of Snakes laughed, as he couldn't shield himself against her powers of sleep. He was like a weak flower in her hands, and she could turn the clocks of his mind. Snakes slided across his helpless body, ready to strengle him, and to drag him into the depths of the Abyss, but the woman stopped them. She wanted to have some time alone with him. She turned into a dragon, and took him into her private place, where she laid him on a bed. When he woke up she spoke : 'Have you forgotten about the riddles of ages ? They are still more powerfull than you, for you do not know about their secrets.'

'My lusts will solve them, as they also come from the unknown ages,' Jeremiah the Barbarian said. Then she took a knife and cur his hand, while some blood fell down. 'See here,' she said, 'the blood of all ages, all that is you. I will drink it and become more powerfull than you will ever be.' But when she drank something struck her. 'Didn't you know that the blood will set us all free ?' Jeremiah the Barbarian said. Then she fell down, and said : 'You, you must do it. Ride the winged bull and you will know what I mean.' And then her spirit descended into the depths of the Abyss.

Jeremiah the Barbarian stood up, walked through a door and came in a field full of bisons and bulls. He also saw mustangs, and suddenly a sort-like creature with wings. He stepped on it, and it flew away. The bull brought him to a high platform where he met two barbarians

named David and his son Solomon. They stood close to a door of fire. ‘Come and enter,’ the barbarian named David said. Jeremiah the Barbarian went through the door of fire and came in a field full of sheep with their lambs and snakes. ‘Take a snake,’ said Solomon and ride through the fields of sheep and lambs, or you will fall asleep. Only the snake can lead you through. Jeremiah did what he said. Took a snake and rode it. It was a long trip between the sheep and their lambs, but finally Jeremiah the Barbarian reached the next door of fire. With his snake he went through, and here he met de Woman of Snakes again. ‘It is here, between those riddles, you need to dwell, always having your snake close to you. Dwell with the snakes between the sheep and the lambs, and they cannot harm you.’ Jeremiah the Barbarian went back to the fields of sheep and lambs, and dwelled there with the snakes, while the barbarians David and his son Solomon were there also. They led Jeremiah the Barbarian to a hill from which they had a good survey. ‘In the night all these sheep and lambs will turn into pigs, and then the birds will slide down from the heavens, and the snakes will come up from the hells to prey on them. Be sure you will be on the hills, so that you won’t be one of them,’ the barbarian named David said.

‘In the mornings the pigs will always change into oxes-like creatures like bulls, cows, mustangs, bisons, wilderbeasts and such. Then the lions will come from all sides to prey on them, but be sure you will stay on the hills,’ the barbarian named Solomon said. ‘The afternoons will take long here, and then the chicken of hell will come to prey on everything. Be sure you stay on the hills, until the evening falls.’

‘There is no way to control the circle of nature here,’ the barbarian named David said. ‘It is a strange nature, and it is a tight system, so forget anything you want to change about it. But we as barbarians will all live on the hills where we have our own parts.’

Then another group of barbarians came called Samuel, Ruben, Judas, Daniel, Aser, Dan, Zebulon and Naftali. And then another group came, and the hill got full. They made their tents on the hill to watch how the tides would fall down. We have a new one here,’ the barbarian named David screamed. ‘His name is Jeremiah the Barbarian.’ They all started to applaud and yell, and Jeremiah the Barbarian felt welcomed. He knew he had found his home now after a long trip of so many contradictions. The barbarian named Samuel came forward with a horn full of blood, and smeared it on Jeremiah the Barbarian’s face. ‘I anoint you now by the warpaint of blood. Be a warrior and succeed.’ All the men were applauding, and then the barbarian named Naftali came forward, while he bore a skull full of blood. Then he smeared also blood on Jeremiah the Barbarian, but this time on his neck. ‘You are finally washed by the blood, as long as you spoil it.’ Again the men were applauding. Jeremiah the Barbarian rose his sword, and said : ‘By the blood we will all succeed. Let the hills be baptized in blood to be our eternal shelter.’ And again the men applauded. They could only go through the fields to reach the doors of fires when there would be sheep, lambs and snakes. There were more than a hundred doors of fire all hiding their own secrets, and when they would have reached them all, they could be on the huntingfields whenever they wanted. But for now the hill was their only shelter.

When Jeremiah the Barbarian had become very old he reached the last door of fire behind which he found the fountain of youth, and the Sword of Growth. He met a tall barbarian with

a large white-like beard carrying the sword, and gave it to Jeremiah the Barbarian. ‘Go, my son, as you have now found the eternal water. Whatever you touch on the huntingfield will become gold.’ Then he gave precious jewelry to Jeremiah the Barbarian and left in a cloud. When Jeremiah went back through the door of fire he knew the huntingfields were his now, but first he had to defeat it’s predators. A war started, and Jeremiah ended up in a strange farm where he was nothing but meat, and they kept him for blood. It seemed the fire was first destroying him, imprisoning him and enslaving him until he could really wear it and ride it. He cursed the doors of fire for what they had done to him. It was like time turned into slow motion when he had returned through the last door of fire. It was doom striking him more than ever, and where were his friends now ? Jeremiah learned that nothing was within his grasp. Everything was illusion, trapping him deeper and deeper, but the knowledge about the paradox still brought a smile to his face at times. He could hold on to it like an almighty stake in his life, like the totemstake of hope. It gave him wings at times, and it could let him make fire stream from his hands and mouth, saving his friends from their ignorant moments. He realized that he often knew more than them, so he offered much grace to them. Together they would make it. Together they would solve the riddle of this strange area, and area staying in his mind for eternity, but showing it’s depths more and more. It always came back to him as it was the principle of life. He had found the headdress of life on day, full of feathers, and he became a chief of so many millions of barbarians on the hill, all leading them to the West of Eeden, the last door of fire.

They would also meet the barbarian man with the white-like beard, to receive the Sword of Growth, some jewelry and water from the fountain of youth to live forever. And waking up in a farm was just a riddle emphasizing this. They were both predators and cattle, and what was the true weapon ? Wasn’t it the slavery in which they were living, the imprisonment and the suffering ? It was the strength of the totemstake coming from unknown depths, coming from a deeper weakness and softness in which they had lost everything to gain even more than everything, for this time it would be eternally, to open the doors of the West of Eeden. They could only ride something if they had lived in it first. And this was the secret knowledge of the Sword of Growth which made it so powerfull. It was a key and at the same time a fall.

Jesus the Barbarian - Barbarian Fiction

West of Eeden

When Jesus went to the underworld, and also when he rose up to the heavens, he came into a heavenly army, an army of slayers. He slayed himself a way to the throne on which demons had settled them down, and he slayed them one by one. Blood was flowing all over. To Jesus the Barbarian hell and heaven was the same. It had been invaded by dark priests, and this time Jesus had come to show them the sword. The dogs were trembling around the throne, but the highpriest stood up from his seat, and directed his finger at Jesus. In an unknown language he cursed Jesus, and told his priests to throw him into the Abyss of black lions. They grasped Jesus at his shoulders, but then Jesus showed them the belt he got from Mary of Magdalen, a barbarian woman. She was a sorceress, and had made the belt of the most precious jewelry to lay the most powerfull spell on it. When the dark priests saw the belt they got struck by a light, and then Jesus the Barbarian pushed his sword deep into the belly of the highpriest. He stood there like frozen now, and called for the dogs. This time bigger dogs seemed to enter the place. They bit Jesus in his arms and dragged him to the Abyss where they pushed him in. Jesus was crying and shrieking when the black lions attacked him. His sword seemed to be of no power here, and also his belt couldn't begin anything against them. Suddenly an almighty power seemed to come over Jesus the Barbarian and he tore the black lions apart in a few flashes. Easily he broke their necks, and he wondered where the power was coming from. He ripped the skins off their flesh, dressed himself by it, and tried to climb out of the abyss. That took awhile, but finally he reached the top. He had an almighty survey now, like he had found the eye of the eagle. He started to wander through the heavens in search for meat and blood, as he was very hungry.

In the middle of the heavens he found an oracle. Flames seemed to get forward from the spinning oracle. 'None of you will stand in my way,' Jesus roared and slayed the oracle. High shrieks seemed to come forth, almost deafening Jesus. Demons started to come forth from it to strike Jesus. He had to pay a high price to come any further in heaven or hell. It was like pins were piercing him, and like he got nailed to the slain wheel. The wheel started to spin, and went to a lake of blood. Jesus went up and down and was shrieking as well. But again the strange almighty power seemed to strike Jesus the Barbarian and he could free himself from the wheel, while it sank away in the lake of blood. Jesus the Barbarian was raising his sword

again, and this time the power struck it really hard. Jesus got swept into the lake of blood again. Then he stood up and seemed to have control over the sword. It was like he had the grill of heaven and hell in his hands, and he slayed a lot of demons and angels by it. There was war in heaven and hell. Jesus the Barbarian had risen. The almighty power also seemed to strike the belt of Jesus, and it would take Jesus the Barbarian up. It was the eagle's eye which Jesus seemed to have found. It had been set free by abundant slaughter. Jesus the Barbarian rose his sword, and fire came forth from it. Also his belt seemed to be in fire. Heaven became a bloodbath that day, as Jesus had returned. He didn't have any mercy to them, as one day they pushed him away. Dark priests had thrown him in the Lake of Fire, where the dogs swam. But he had returned now, and angels were falling away that day, as he came back with revenge in his heart. They had thrown him in a cradle and sang the songs of hell for him, but he was a barbarian. They had thrown him into lakes of snakes, and they took his weapons away from him, but a sorceress called Mary of Magdalen had anointed him and let him return by her spells. It became an evil night, and when Jesus the Barbarian was done he returned to her and gave her the jewels she desired. He had stolen them for her, as he was a thief with high skills. He was now winged again, and came to anoint her as well, so that she could fly with him. Back to that old place from which they fell away one time.

He anointed her with blood, and gave her wings by his spell. The wings of the dove he had torn, as the dove was the one who once pushed her away. The lamb he had slain, as the lamb was the one made them naked, uncovered in the cold night. The skin of the lamb he gave to her, and she felt some warmth again after years of tears. She was a barbarian as well, a robber, just like Jesus. They knew revenge would be the only way, as the love-light bringing them back. And then the eagle's eye struck her too. They were now in the clouds, heaven and hell the same. That day heaven and hell burnt, until the father of Jesus the Barbarian showed up.

'I want to welcome you back, son,' he said, while he clapped in his hands. Jesus the Barbarian hugged his father. 'Where is mother ?' Jesus asked.

'Lilith ? Oh, she is in the Garden of Eeden,' his father said.

'Oh, is it still such a beautiful place ?' Jesus the Barbarian asked.

'Yes, son,' his father said, 'but the water has turned into blood, and the trees into meat.'

'Fortunately,' Jesus the Barbarian said, 'as then we have enough to eat.'

'And your mother has become a bit more aggressive now,' his father said. 'But hey, that you can expect when snakes grow up. They become like dragons.'

'Is she a dragon now ?' Jesus the Barbarian asked.

'Yes,' his father said. 'But wrestlings are good for you. It will let you grow up. And who is she, the woman who is with you ?'

'She is Mary of Magdalen, a sorceress,' Jesus the Barbarian said.

'Well, nice to meet you,' Jesus' father said. 'And welcome to the family.'

'Father, she can heal you,' Jesus the Barbarian said.

‘Don’t speak nonsense, son,’ his father said, ‘I can’t be healed.’

‘Let me try,’ Mary of Magdalen said, and lay her hand to his heart. ‘A dragon is living in your heart, once sent out by an evil witch. Let me weave a spell through your heart and it will be okay.’ Orange fires seemed to come forth from her hands, and Jesus’ father started to scream. ‘I have pierced it already,’ Mary of Magdalen said. ‘It will take awhile before it is dead, and you may feel sick because of it, but it will make you strong.’

Jesus the Barbarian smiled and laid his arm on his father’s back and shoulder. ‘See, I told you she could do it.’

But then an evil witch seemed to show up before them. She was the witch of heaven. Jesus the Barbarian took his sword, and fire came forth to destroy her. She shrieked : ‘What is it you want to take away further ?’

‘Everything,’ Jesus the Barbarian said, ‘just everything. Not a big deal.’

‘I gave the dark priests permission to sent you away,’ the witch shrieked. ‘Look what it brought you. Only good things. All because of me, so let a part of heaven be mine, just a small part.’

‘You won’t get anything,’ Jesus the Barbarian said, ‘for once you took everything away from me. Just watch if all this will bring you any good this time.’

‘No, that isn’t fair,’ the witch screamed. ‘I gave you a good cradle, and they worshipped you by songs.’

‘Oh, I will take care they will do that to you also,’ Jesus the Barbarian said.

‘You don’t know anything of life,’ the witch said loud. It seemed she had dealt with the fire a bit, but now she was like a skeleton standing before Jesus the Barbarian. ‘You are like the slayer of the heavens, only causing blood and fire to stream, all destruction. You are not a good farmer. You don’t know about the laws of heaven.’

‘What do I have to do with your stupid laws ? I am a savage, a barbarian,’ Jesus the Barbarian said.

‘Now woman, get the hell out of here,’ Jesus’ father said. Then the skeleton seemed to fall away from the heavens like a lightbeam while she shrieked like never before.

‘I’m not a farmer,’ Jesus the Barbarian said. ‘Who does she think she is. I am a warrior and a hunter.’

‘Well, maybe she is right a bit,’ Jesus’ father said. ‘You need to use wisdom when you want to rule heaven and hell, to have a good harvest, or you will fall away again. You were young and dumb, and that tricked you. You shouldn’t listen to the dark priests with all their tales. They have tricked you bad.

‘I understand, father,’ Jesus the Barbarian said. ‘It will never happen again. Now lets go to the garden of Eeden.’

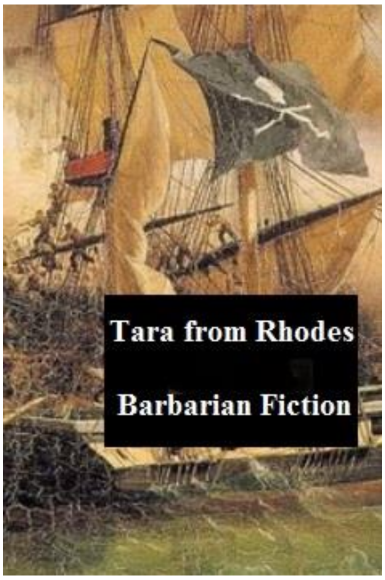
And when they came there, it was like a farm, like a breeding. By some sort of food the dark priests and their dogs had become cattle, especially pigs. ‘No predators around anymore,’ Jesus the Barbarian said. ‘We are the only predators. Meat enough for eternity.’ But then his mother came down. She was darker than ever, like the black dragon. ‘Son, where have you been all the time,’ she screamed. ‘I will eat you alive, because you left your mother alone.’

‘No, Lilith,’ Jesus’ father said. ‘Have mercy on him. The dark priests had led him astray.’

‘He should be at school,’ Lilith said, and struck Jesus the Barbarian by her tail. Blood was flowing everywhere. Then the father struck Lilith, and shouted : ‘Son, let me handle this. Get the hell out of here. It’s getting dangerous. Take your woman with you, or she won’t survive.’

Jesus the Barbarian grasped Mary of Magdalen and ran away with her. But Lilith had struck him deep. Awhile later he fell on the ground. Mary of Magdalen lay her hand on his chest, but couldn’t heal him. ‘You need to take some rest,’ she whispered. ‘Let’s get deeper into the garden, across the hill,’ she said.

In the depths of the garden they found a shelter. Here Lilith would never find them. ‘Here,’ Mary of Magdalen said. ‘I have a fruit of the Tree of Knowledge here. It is forbidden to eat it, but it is not forbidden to drink and suck from it.’ Strange milk came forth from it, and it healed Jesus the Barbarian. They became so drunk, and it led them to a new world, a world across the garden of Eeden, in the West. Here it was a savage world with the most beautiful jungles. There was no heaven or hell here, and there was no difference between good and evil. It was the same.


Tara from Rhodes
Barbarian Fiction

TARA FROM RHODES

Barbarian Fiction

COAB 2004-2012

2017

The Chronicles of Tara from Rhodes (2004-2006)

The Dark Tales – Okt. 2004

1. **The Gladiators of Lakshor**
2. **The Python Stone**
3. **Sharla the Head Hunter**
4. **The Parrot Gems**
5. **The Lawless**
6. **The Knife of Black Time (Okt. 2004/Aug. 2006)**

The Blood Saga – Febr. 2005-Aug. 2006

7. **Jewels of the Octopus**

8. **The Spear with the Two Sharkstones**
9. **The Strongest Touch**
10. **Cold as Ice**
11. **Samdoom Shuffle**
12. **Walking on Mars**
13. **The Jewel of memory**
14. **The Insects with the Many Heads**
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Princess of Antlia (2004-2010)

22. **The Clowns of Trigidad**
23. **The Killer-Dreamer**
24. **The New Order**
25. **The Arms of Sleep**
26. **The Court-Wizard**
27. **The Spider Seed**
28. **Skeleton Wings**
29. **Queen of the Eagles**
30. **Weapons of Torture**
31. **The Needles of Pill-A**
32. **The Ghost Cup**
33. **The Bones of Traxmarut**

The Last Saga (2011-2012)

34. **Desert Queen**
35. **The Ghost-children of Pendilot**
36. **The Jewels of Scavahl**
37. **Door of Darkness**

The Gladiators of Lakshor

The warriors didn't have any fear, as their souls were traveling through the realms of dead. Them was promised that after a short trip they would come to the house of the most beautiful women. They would show them all the pleasures of the afterlife as a reward for all what they had done. But they didn't know what was waiting for them. The women were indeed the most beautiful, and the men could choose whoever they wanted, but in the middle of the night these women would kill their souls, as they were the women of second death. This the men didn't know, as it was never told to them. Then the essence of their souls would be taken to the realm deeper than hell, a realm called Lakshor. The men didn't know anything about the conspiracies of death. They really believed that they could live the rest of eternity with these women, as that was which they had told them since their earliest childhood. They didn't know that earth was just a trainingschool for them, to prepare them for a greater war : the war of the dead. No one had any understanding of the horrors of Lakshor, but they would find out soon.

In Lakshor the horror-king Metulidan throned. He was a skeleton with a high shrieking voice. He enjoyed it that there were so many spoiling tales about death, that it would be a paradise with well-shaped women, especially for those who would die in battle. Many young men dreamt to become a great warrior for this reason. They didn't fear death anymore, but desired it. Metulidan had chosen the most voluptuous women of Lakshor to seduce the fallen men at the gates of death. They would lure them to their house in the realms of the dead. On the top of their house the skull of a horned animal hang. The men had to get the feeling that they would have arrived in the eternal huntingfields. How their young dreams would turn into a nightmare. In Lakshor there was an eternal war : the war of the dead, or some might say : the war of the damned. It was a place worse than everlasting damnation. In Lakshor there was everlasting slavery.

As the night fell the women had prepared their knives to do the job. They had done this many times before. Some of the women already worked for threehundred years in this house. Metulidan called it : the house of seduction. It was one of his best webs in the realms of the

dead. When the sleeping men had been finally killed for the second time, the essences of their soul woke up, and they rose up in frozen tragedy, not knowing what had happened to them. For the women it was very easy now to lead the men to the city of Lakshor. Behind the house there was a hidden gate of lava, which was in earlier times a sea of fire. Here was an elevator by which the men would descend to Lakshor. In this elevator the women had another job to do. They had to give the men a new armor. To the men it was a strange prison. They had to become warriors again, but now it was forever. The men couldn't speak yet, as their soul-essence was still between sleeping and awakening. They had lost so many pieces of their mind, and a light paralyzing aura was around their head. The women took some liquid metal out of a sort of bag and smeared it on their head and faces. An awful stench was coming from the blend. Then they covered the metal by a sort of dark skin which looked like it was from a sort of animal.

After about forty days in the elevator they came into the city of Lakshor. They were still not totally awake, but they started to react to the smell of the city. It was a very foul stench. The elevator stopped in a huge arena. Here they would have their first fight. A tall red man called Strelon showed up. He looked very dreadfull. The man got helmets on, and were pushed towards the huge red man. It was almost like a giant. He had a dark low voice, saying : 'Be prepared to die many times. The realms of the city of Lakshor are deep.' The red man soon tore them apart like they were dolls. At the end of the fight they were nothing like ghosts. The women gathered the shatters and by the liquid metal they could build them up again. It was a sort of strange magnetic glue, keeping the parts together. Then they had to appear before the horror-king. It was in a hall behind the first arena. In the distance the horror-king sat on a huge throne. Metulidan was shouting : 'How could you not defeat the red man ?' The men didn't say anything. One of them called Edmolin suddenly got more and more of his consciousness back. He asked : 'What is the use of this all ?' Metulidan started to laugh but didn't say anything. In a strange sense Metulidan liked the boy. He seemed to be the youngest of them, and soon Metulidan decided he wanted the boy as his servant. The boy was tender and not made to be a gladiator. As the men were led to the next arena, Metulidan took the boy, and told him he could serve in the kitchen. When Edmolin got there he started to realize that there was so much meat instead of other sort of food. There was meat in all sorts and in many different colours.

Edmolin got his own room, and more and more he started to realize how lucky he was. The king often went to gladiator-wars in the arena's, and often he took the boy with him. Often heads got cut off, while the horror-king often used these scalps to decorate the city. One day Metulidan called for the boy, who was working in the kitchen at that moment. The horror-king showed a picture of a girl with pink clothes. The girl was very beautiful in the eyes of Edmolin. 'When you have become grown-up,' the horror-king said, 'you will marry her.'

'Why ?' the boy asked. 'Because I want you to take over my kingdom,' the horror-king said, 'and then you need to have a woman.' The boy sighed. Since that day the boy could only think about the words of the king. When years went by, he got to see her, they married and got the kingdom in their hands. The horror-king had left in a mysterious way. No one knew where he had gone to. The boy had grown-up now, and found out that his woman was the daughter of a snake-farmer. She had an obsession for snakes, and she wanted to have them everywhere throughout the royal place. The big ones she wanted to have in the hall where they were sleeping. It was a very huge hall and there was a very huge bed with a ceiling and with veils and curtains. The snakes here were also very huge and tall. Edmolin didn't feel comfortable with it, but as it was the wish of his woman he was willing to get used to it. Sometimes before

they got to sleep the girl got into a fight with such a snake, and very often she got bitten horribly, but she still wanted to have the snakes in their room. The snakes wouldn't eat them when they were sleeping, for they were tamed in that sense. The woman found out that these snakes had lusts to fight, so she made the decision to put some of them into the arena's, so that the gladiators could take it over. Edmolin wanted to stop the arena's, but his woman said that it was part of the law here, and the law was forever.

One day a wild man from the wilderness came into the royal place. He said he was a wanderer. He said that he wanted to become a gladiator in change for food and care. The woman thought it was a good idea, and often she went to the arena to watch him. He was a very skilled warrior, and he also wrestled with snakes and crocodiles. One day he had to appear before the throne of Edmolin. Edmolin asked him where he was coming from. 'My Lord,' the wild man spoke, 'I come from the land of tragedy. There was so much dryness there, that I decided to wander, and so I came here finally.'

'Where is the land of tragedy,' the king asked. 'It is at the westside of you kingdom, my Lord,' the wild man spoke.

'How is that place a victim of dryness ?' the king asked.

'Oh, my Lord,' the wild man almost stuttered, 'a kingdom wilder than us invaded our land. They took our souls away. We only have a body. They have taken our rivers away. They have imprisoned my whole tribe. I'm the only survivor.' Then the wild man asked if the king would send an army of gladiators to the land.

The gladiators had to travel for three and a half years until they reached the land of tragedy. It was a wilderness of great loneliness, but after months of searching they found the invaders. The invaders were wilder than the gladiators, but the gladiators had a greater number. It was a long and bloody war. Finally the wild tribe had the scalps of all the gladiators, and they moved towards the city of Lakshor. They had birds of prey on which they could fly away, so it didn't took them more than a couple of months to get there. The men were so wild, and even their women, so they could easily invade the city of Lakshor. But when they saw Edmolin, the king, they trembled in fear. Suddenly they bowed down before him. He had a blue triangle above his head, which was the sign of their gods. 'All our kingdoms are yours,' the wild men and women said. And this is how Lakshor grew in size in one day. Lakshor was now greater than hell and heaven together. Because the wild men and women had a lust to fight a lot, they became the new gladiators of Lakshor. But as the kingdom grew the laws became bloodier more and more. And the law demanded that by the blood the kingdom would become greater. Not only would they have their houses of the most beautiful women in the realms of the dead, but also in the realms of hell and heaven.

After awhile the king found out why it had to be so bloody. The wild men and women who came from the west worshipped a blood-sucking fly. If there wasn't enough blood sacrificed to this fly, it would die, and it couldn't lead or guard this wild tribe anymore. And it was like by this blood the fly could make it's women so beautiful. There was only one way how the fly could feed itself. That was to smear the essence of the blood over it's women and then to possess the warriors of earth, of the dead, or of heaven or hell, to let them travel to the houses of these smeared women. This was how the fly could feed itself. The blood was magnetic to the fly in a strange sense. But often the blood was very salty, making the fly more thirsty, and also wilder. That was also the reason why it's men and women who worshipped him were so

wild. They were bound together by a strange bloodline. The fly needed royal blood to quench it's thirst a bit. That was why it appeared to the king one day. The fly was already full of rage, because it didn't have enough for such a long time. The king and the fly got in a fight, and soon enough the fly had tied the king to a stake and began to sting him in sensitive places to suck the best blood. After that he flew to the royal bloodlines of the kingdoms of the dead, of heaven and of hell. He now wanted to have royal gladiators, to be assured of a potent and perpetual bloodflow. Now the fly became the king of Lakshor, and Edmolin and his woman had to fight in the royal arena's.

But one day Metulidan with his red guard returned to Lakshor. When they came to the throne of the fly he said : 'I already expected this. Some come to Lakshor just for the blood.' Then his guard, the red giant prince stepped towards the fly, and while the fly shrieked and try to hit him with his sharp wing, the red giant took his slayersword and hit the fly in it's head. The fly was spouting lava now, and lightening came from his eyes. Then Metulidan himself took his slayersword and cut a piece of his wing off. Again the fly shrieked, and flew to the other side of the thronehall. Metulidan immediately turned around, took a waspball of poison in his hand and threw it into the stomach of the fly. Blood was streaming out of the fly, while his head became smaller. This was the most dangerous part of the fight, for Metulidan knew that if it's head was small like this it was in a terrible rage, ready to use it's most deadly weapons. But if it would use one of these weapons, it could also die itself, and it would at least lose much of it's strength. The fly attacked, missed, and started to hyperventilate. In it's weakness it floated to the floor, but still the fly was in the most dangerous position, for it could use another deadly weapon now. Suddenly it had used it's heartsnake, which pierced Metulidan and the red giant prince in a flash, while the both fell to the ground, losing their soulbeat. Softly and tenderly the fly started to eat from their fallen and paralyzed meat, for it was still very weak. Now the fly could drink from a well of high and pure royal blood.

After awhile friends of Metulidan had called for one of the most feared warrior in and around the realms of Lakshor. It was Witigus, the flyslayer. When he came the fly had already turned Lakshor in doom more than ever before. The fly throned on a perpetual stream of royal blood. 'You will have to surrender your kingdom to me,' Witigus spoke. Witigus would only fight the fly for no less price than Lakshor itself and all it's vessels and souls. If someone wanted to call for Witigus for a favour the price was always slavery. Witigus would never take less than total domination. But also Witigus would be nothing but prey to the fly. The fly took his prey to a stake on a high rock in the wilderness, tied him to it, and left. He would be an easy meal for snakes now, and for the birds of prey. Then another man called Metusalach tried to conquer the fly, but he fell into the same fate as Witigus the flyslayer. What has become of all these men who wanted to wage war against the fly ? Their spirits have been thrown into the abyss of Lakshor, while their souls have become gladiators in the deeper arena's of Lakshor. They have searched for the well of blood, but they have become wells of blood themselves, for the fly turned their remains finally into trees of blood. Since then no one was allowed to enter Lakshor than those who had drunk from this forbidden blood. And those who had drunk from it would be damned to stay in Lakshor forever. There was no escape possible. And in Lakshor one was doomed to be a gladiator forever, for here there was the eternal war of the damned.

There was no horror greater than the horror of Lakshor. The fly, it's king, had the most cruelest ways to let his victims and the breakers of the laws of his kingdom suffer to turn them into living and perpetual bloodwells. Those who became a part of the horrors of Lakshor to become it's finest warriors had to be baptized in these eternal bloodwells first. There was no greater horror than to drink from the forbidden blood, for it would write your name in the

Book of Blood, which was a horrible and everlasting traumatizing experience of losing all hope and faith in salvation. There was no salvation left for those who had been tied by their souls to the everlasting horrors of the Book of Blood. Their beings were now filled by such an eternal fear and tragedy making them gladiators of doom, destined to the unbearable grief of eternal dying. There was no pain compared to this.

Men tied to the stakes of the Book of Blood could only cry blood, and whenever they spoke, the only thing coming out of their mouths was blood. This was how the fly dealt with his enemies, and this made him the greatest horror-king ever. No one ever coming to Lakshor spoke about the giants of hell anymore. All they could do was seeing and remembering the horrors of the giants of Lakshor. The day the giants of Lakshor came to hell was a day no one who was there would forget. They came to take gladiators to Lakshor.

But behind the veils of Lakshor a wasp was living, hiding the wells and falls of waspian blood. Whenever a woman died in the arena the wasp came to take her soul away. He would tie her to a stake in his realms, where he would use these women for reproduction. They brought fourth the waspian souls full of the rushing and sensual waspian blood. Then after awhile he would send them back to the arena's. But some of these women he kept for years. He would finally baptize them in his waspian well of blood, to let them become his own gladiators. These waspian gladiators were the most feared, for they could bring the pains of death. One of these women was called Tara from Rhodes, and after a few years she returned to the arena's. She was a woman of such a tranquilizing beauty that she could lure the birds of prey to let them sit on her hand. She had a strength greater than lions, and this was why she always could sleep near them, warming herself in the skincontact she had with them. Oh yes, sometimes they had fights, but Tara from Rhodes would always dominate them by her voice.

She was an inspiration to the youth in the arena's, mostly when they were in the arena's of lions and snakes. But since the fly found out she had returned from the wasp's place, her skull hangs above his throne. The fly didn't have any mercy to those who had returned from the waspian domain. The arena's of the wasp were foul in his eyes, and one day he invaded the place. He found out about the waspian bloodwells and fed himself.

If anyone was wild, it was Tara from Rhodes. She dived from tall rocks in rivers, she wrestled with bears, apes, and dangerous Martian beasts, and had to survive among the most murderous tribes of Mars. She had a lot of enemies and not many friends. As you can imagine in such wildernesses like the wildernesses of Mars she became a soul-hunter, one of the darkest. If anyone could stir up horror it was Tara from Rhodes. With her lions and panthers she waged wars against the most dangerous tribes. Most of the times she was driven by revenge. She knew these tribes since her childhood, and she still remembered what they had done to her and her loved ones. There was no one darker than Tara from Rhodes the time she was living on Mars. They called her the black snake. She was the most feared of all warriors on Mars in that time. She believed in everlasting war and damnation more than anyone else. She always said it was the well of eternal birth.

Tara from Rhodes was a riddle no one seemed to understand. The tribe where she was born had been enslaved by Gitdugal, the killer-king. He was dressed up by bones and skulls, and his body was covered by white wasp-guards, which would attack any time he spoke. He could take away minds and souls, to turn his victims into zombies. In a huge valley they had to do slave-work. Tara from Rhodes had been saved by a monkey when the zombies of Gitdugal the killer-king invaded the camp of the tribe where she was born. Tara was then just a little girl,

and the monkey took care over her for a long time, until another tribe accepted her. But since she grew up and became an outcast there, she started to look for Gitdugal the killer-king, for she wanted to set her original tribe free. But no one seemed to know where the valley was where Gitdugal the killer-king had his slaves. In her search she met Kingul, a black warrior. He knew where the valley was, but they had to be on their guard. They had to travel south for a couple of days, and they first had to defeat the armies of zombie-guards. When they came there they saw warriors of her tribe tied to trees, and from the bushes zombie-guards jumped having spinning swords. These swords were very dangerous for they didn't only kill you, but they also killed your soul and mind. Tara from Rhodes shrieked and yelled, while she took her knife and threw it into the heart of the first zombie-guard. Then she took an arrow from her quiver very fast and with her bow she quickly shot into the heart of the next zombie-guard. Then she took a spear and pierced three of them. But there were so many zombie-guards surrounding them, that soon they got captured in a net. They now had to appear before the throne of Gitdugal the killer-king. It was a strange piramid of many layers like a sort of stairway. On top there was another smaller piramid in which the killer-king sat. Many skulls were surrounding him, and white wasps were coming from his body to cover the net.

When Tara from Rhodes awoke she found herself in a bed in a huge hall. Their were soft penetrating lights coming from small oillamps. A veiled girl entered the hall, to bring her some food. She was a slave-girl but she wasn't from the tribe of Tara from Rhodes. The slave-girl made a sign with her hand, and Tara from Rhodes stood up to follow her. They came in an even huger hall, where lakes of crocodiles were. The lakes were like boiling. The crododiles looked tormented, like they could slide outside the lakes to attack every moment. Tara from Rhodes didn't trust any of them. When she walked over some bridges suddenly a plank cracked, and she slided into the depth. Immediately three crocodiles slided towards her, while she could get herself on the bridge just in time. She had to be very careful. The slave-girl knew exactly where to walk. With a beating heart she followed the steps of the girl accurately. Suddenly a huge and tall coffinlike case of bronze slided out of a wall. The slave-girl stopped walking, and told Tara from Rhodes she had to lie in the case to come to have dinner with the killer-king. Tara from Rhodes refused, but suddenly the slave-girl took a gun, and some men with sunglasses came in through a door, also holding guns. 'Your life will be over, girl, if you don't do what we tell you.' Slowly and hesitating Tara entered the case. Immediately when she laid down the case slided into the wall again. It was very dark inside, but suddenly the walls of the case started to glow. Tara from Rhodes started sweating, while the case turned hotter and hotter. Then flames appeared in the walls of the case. Tara started to scream and shriek. Suddenly there was light everywhere. She could step out of the case, as Gitdugal the killer-king was taking her hand. 'No worries, my lady,' he said. 'Do you want some tea ?'

'No,' Tara from Rhodes spoke harshly, 'you need to free my people.' But Gitdugal showed her the wonderful and lovely, wealthy dinner-table. It was filled with all sorts of tropical fruits, the most strange and rare sorts of meat, and even bones. 'Let us discuss here,' Gitdugal spoke friendly.

'I do not want to discuss with you, you need to let my people go. I am not hungry,' Tara from Rhodes spoke persistent.

Still the killer-king tried to distract her. 'I'm sure you will like the food. It is from my rare gardens.'

'Well, I do not care about your gardens, but I do care about those who suffer in those gardens, the ones you have burdened with such slavery,' Tara from Rhodes said while her eyes were full of piercing fire. 'I warn you, king of killers, you will not like what I will do to you if you will go on with your games,' she said.

Gitdugal pushed on a button of his table. Tara from Rhodes still hadn't sat down. Suddenly some slaves entered carrying dishes and bags with meat and strange rare vegetables. Gitdugal began to eat. Then after awhile Tara from Rhodes also started to eat. After awhile Gitdugal asked : 'And, did you like the meat of your tribe ?' Tara from Rhodes stood up, and grasped the throat of Gitdugal very tightly. 'It's better you do not do that,' Gitdugal said, still friendly, and then he hit his head against her head. In one moment she was slammed to the ground. 'Now I will eat your brain-meat, lady,' Gitdugal said, 'and it's juices and blood I will use to wash my dishes and my room. I have a lot of cleaning work to do I see.' But then Tara from Rhodes kicked him in his male parts like a truck crashing through the walls. Gitdugal fell to the ground, and tried to push one of his floorbuttons, but Tara from Rhodes already stood on his hand. Then she kicked his head very hard. But what Tara didn't know was that there were also big spiders under the meat, and they started spitting all sorts of fluids towards her. Tara from Rhoses fell on the ground and lost consciousness. There are not many masters of sleep like Gitdugal. He has all sorts of tropical secrets having their own sorts of fluids, and if such a spider is one of it's deliverers in some cases, then that is very okay with Gitdugal.

It was like the veils of the brains of Tara from Rhodes were breaking, and she didn't know where she was, or how long she had been unconscious, when she slowly woke up again. She felt very dizzy. Tara from Rhodes felt her blood was growing stronger by all these strange attacks. It was like her body just didn't give up. Others would have died already in the dangerous and tropical mysteries of the realms of Gitdugal with all these poisons threatening the heart and the blood. Some of these rare fluids should have block the nerves of the brains in certain area's so that Tara from Rhodes wouldn't be able to breath and move anymore, for to breathe you needed to use the muscles of your lungs. But Tara from Rhodes seemed to be immune to these lethal threats. Maybe that was because she just lived the wild life. She didn't believe in society. She believed in the industry of nature, by which she could raise the more refined forms of immunology, not poisoned by the paw of civilization. It was the force of civilization she hated, for it bound her to something she was not from origin.

Finally another slave came to the place where Tara from Rhodes was now. It was a dark cave, smelling like the slime of snakes and spiders. The slave told her that Gitdugal wanted to play a game with her : Wild Chess. It would be a living chess, for people of her tribe would be the pawns. If she would win she would free her tribe, but if she would lose, then Gitdugal would take her skull. To Tara from Rhodes it seemed unfair, for on both sides the pawns would be from her tribe, but she didn't have another choice. Gitdugal called it the Chess of Knives, for all living pawns had to carry a knife, and when they had to move they had to push the knife to the next field. Tara from Rhodes only had one demand : All the pawns had to be blindfolded. Gitdugal agreed but then he called for some slaves to sting the eyes out of all the living pawns. Tara from Rhodes was in rage, but now she would play this game to the end, to set her tribe free.

So many of her tribe were slaughtered that day in this Wild Chess, but none of them could win the game. So the killer-king decided to play it again. Tara from Rhodes was desperate, but she didn't have another choice. And again, many of her tribe got slaughtered in this cruel game. But this time none of them could win either, and they had to play it again and again.

After awhile she found out that the rules of the game were designed in a sense that no one could ever win. She found out it was a trap. If this would go on, then no one of her tribe would finally survive. She then got into such a rage that she took one of the Knives of the Wild Chess, and threw it into the heart of Gitdugal. This knife was charged with so much blood of her tribe, and with their souls of the dead, that it pierced itself in vengeance and hysterical rage into his heart. 'So, you don't want to play the game anymore I see,' Gitdugal said. 'Then we need to throw away it's pawns.' Then he called for some slaves, and they had to throw all the remaining pawns of her tribe off the rocks. In the depths of a ravine their souls shattered on the rocks, taking away their minds and lives. The horror was only raising for Tara from Rhodes could see how the ghosts of her loved ones got attracted and absorbed by the skull of Gitdugal. 'Now you have offered them an even greater slavery : the slavery of the damned.' Gitdugal said. 'Let me know when you want to play again.'

Emotionally absorbed by rage she followed him to the place he slept. He slept on a huge bed surrounded by big spiders and snakes. As she came closer his guards attacked her, but she was so full of concentrated rage that she slayed them all in short time. Gitdugal was so tired that he didn't take notice of her. But as she was coming close to his body and could even hear and smell his breath the white wasps of his body were attacking her, trying to poison her mind. But Tara raised her shield and in full rage she pierced one of his own spears through his lungs. She found this spear in his room, but he stood up and smashed her to the ground. Then he raised her up above his head and threw her through the windows above his bed. Tara fell into a river close to a waterfall. Where was she ? She had never seen this land ? On the other side of the river she saw slaves working in gardens and on fields. Were these the famed Gardens of Gitdugal ? There were trees of meat growing here, and trees of all sorts of strange organs. But there she saw Gitdugal coming. 'I wasn't done with you !' he shouted. Tara ran away through the gardens and fields. She first had to make up another strategy, for battling against him made her very tired and even confused.

I do not know the rest of the story, as she couldn’t tell me for some reason. Sometimes she just stopped telling, and then she went to sleep. Later I found out that she partly couldn’t deal with it. She knew where all her stories could lead her. She was always the flame in my heart, but since she’s gone it’s different. I can hang on to a lot of stories she told me, but most of these stories do not have an end, or she just didn’t tell how it ended. It keeps me thinking. She could be fragmentaric at times, but that was her code to survive.

The Python Stone

Chapter 1. Captured

Chapter 2. Python City

Chapter 1. Captured

From a black stained cave, Tara from Rhodes is awakening. Since she killed the black lion all she could do was sleep. Now she is running through the jungle to tell her tribe the great news. This black lion had tortured the minds of her people for such a long time. It was a mind-eater, and whenever he bit pieces of their mind away, there was horror rising in their bodies, tragedy after tragedy. Tara from Rhodes had sworn she wouldn't live in a tribe anymore. But the tribe where she was born she would never forget, and she still called it 'her' tribe. She didn't know how the terror was rising behind the mountain of the black lion. The lion had bred so many children there. Yes, the tribe of Tara from Rhodes didn't know which horror was waiting for them since the black lion had died.

The breed of black lions was in great mourning since the death of their father. They were howling in their hidden place in a dark cave behind the mountain. No one knew of their existance, for their father always went hunting, and brought the meat to their secret place. No, they never left the cave, since there were too many dangers to these young ones. But since they had grown up and their father had died, they had to leave the cave. They could smell what had happened, and they could smell the one who had done this all, the one who made them orphans in their lonely and cold years : Tara from Rhodes. They could smell the patterns of the bloodline, and they had sworn they wouldn't rest nor eat before they had killed the ones she loved. Tara herself had to be taken to their cave ... alive.

It was the greatest slaughter Tara ever had to deal with, the day the black lions came to her tribe to slaughter her loved ones. It hurted Tara more than anything. That day Tara had gone to a different area. Although Tara didn't want to live in the tribe anymore, she was always around since she freed them from slavery. Since she had killed Gitdugal the killer-king who had enslaved them for such a long time, she took his skull and brought it to her cave, where she swore she would always be around for her people. The skull of Gitdugal was of a rare stone : the python stone. But since the python stone had been stolen, she had to find it. It was the stone of slavery, and it also protected the owner of it against any form of slavery. She returned without the stone, to find out about the fate of her tribe. When she had come into a certain wigwam the leader of the black lions suddenly stood in the opening. Tara turned around, but it was already too late. She had been hit on the head by a sort of iron or bronze candle. They took her away to the den of the black lions in their cave behind the mountain.

'The soul of our father asks for revenge,' the black lions said. Tara, who was just waking up, said : 'Revenge ? I have all rights to have revenge for your father tortured my tribe, and you have finally slaughtered them.'

'There is no such thing as revenge,' one of the black lions said. 'Sometimes things just have a deeper history. We know from our father that you had killed Gitdugal the killer-king.'

'Yes !' Tara shouted, 'but do you think that's so crazy ? He enslaved my tribe for such a long time, and finally he killed most of them.'

'But why do you think he enslaved them ? What do you know about the dark primeval state of your tribe before you were even born ?' another black lion said. 'I know they weren't the best kind of tribes, but you see,' Tara said, 'maybe you are right, but when will this all end ?'

'Now,' some of the black lions said, 'for we are going to kill you and eat the intestines out of your body. But first there will be some dark nights to prepare you for dinner.'

'Oh yes,' Tara said cynically, 'I will prepare myself for dinner. Who of you want to be the first piece of meat ?' Tara took one of her legknives, put it between her teeth and jumped on one of the black lions. Another black lion jumped on Tara, and then another, and soon there was a bloody wrestling. 'Tara from Rhodes,' one of the lions roared mean, 'the dinnerbell has rung.' And he bit her horribly in her stomach. Then she kicked his mean snout as hard as she could. She took a knife and slayed two of them, while the others ran away, howling. Quickly she took the skin of the slain black lion and tied it around her middle where the wound was. She would now have to go to the lake where she could clean her wound. But also the black lions were there to drink. She felt a weakness coming over her because of the wound. So she left very soon.

All she needed now was the python stone, but she didn't know where she could find it. Maybe the black lions would have the stone, or they would know where it was, for they knew a lot making them questionable. Tara had such a dark feeling coming over her. They knew a lot about her past and that of her tribe. If the stone would be in the wrong hands, it would also affect her earlier or later. She had to find the stone which was potentially a very dangerous stone. When she had raised her power again she went to the den of the black lions again, in their caves. Deeper in the den there was a small door leading to a hall in the mountain. She had never been here before. She saw a huge black lion sitting on a throne which looked like made of python stone, but she wasn't sure. As she moved closer she heard a scream. It looked like the scream of someone from her tribe. 'Meleshuel, is that you ?' she shouted. 'Yes, come and help me,' the young warrior shouted, 'They have tied me to a stake.' It was somewhere behind the throne, where the same sort of stone was. The black lion was roaring and slowly went towards Tara. Tara had to swallow a few times. But the black lion didn't do anything. 'It is not the bad one, Tara !' Meleshuel shouted, 'he only protects me.' Tara found out the black lion couldn't walk so well. He had a handicap. Maybe he had been severed in a fight. 'Why are you here, Meleshuel ?' Tara asked, while she came closer. Suddenly she saw the stake to which the boy had been tied. 'At night the pythons come to hurt me, but the black lion protects me,' the boy told. Quickly Tara untied the boy, and they embraced each other. 'Who has done this,' Tara asked. 'Who has done this to you ?' The boy had strange scars all over his body, and some of these places were still bleeding.

'I will bring you to the lake to wash the wounds,' Tara said. 'No !' the boy screamed. 'You can't, for the black lions will find me again to bring me here.'

'I will slaughter them all until none of them has it's skull on it's body anymore,' Tara said with cold eyes. 'The only one I will spare is this friend of yours here.' He had become an outcast of the group because of his handicap, but actually he was the one who saved the life of this boy. If he wouldn't be there, they would have killed the boy. Since then the black lion stayed with the boy to watch over him, like it was his only child. The boy could see so much love in the eyes of Tara as she watched this precious black lion. For he guarded the last remains of her tribe.

Suddenly the black lions entered in. They saw the older black lion with Tara and the boy. They jumped on the older black lion and killed him. It all went so fast and they were with so many more black lions, it looked like an invasion. The boy was crying. Tara took him tight under one arm and started to slay the mass of black lions with her sword. Suddenly all sorts of pythons came out of openings in the wall. A horrible fight started between the remained black lions and the pythons. There were also pythons who went after Tara and the boy, and again, Tara was the great slaughterer. After all black lions and pythons were dead they could see

through the openings a hall full of weapons of python stone. There were spears, five-pointed and six-pointed blades, bows, arrows and a lot more. The boy said these weapons were called bone-breakers. They could easily crash any sort of bones and skeletons. That the older black lion had told him. So they crept through the openings in the wall and came in the other hall. There were also a lot of small hills of python stone.

But all of a sudden giantspiders and one giantpython were coming out of a den. The boy grasped some weapons and started to fight, and also Tara grasped some weapons. She killed the giantspiders by spears and the giantpython she killed by a sevenpointed blade.

Chapter 2. Python City

Tara hoped she would find the stolen skull of Gitdugal the killer-king somewhere here. It was the most precious stone among all the python stones. But there was no any trace of it. The boy said the black lions had spoken about it. They said it was somewhere in Python City. They would have to travel three days to the north to find Python City. It was a city in the middle of the Great Python Jungle on Mars.

When they finally came in Python City a warmth was gliding into their souls, very mysterious. It was a warm day in Python City. Most of them were on the beach at the sea. Tara asked the boy if he knew anything else about where the skull could be. The boy said they talked about a certain shop. 'Yes,' Tara said, 'but do you also know what kind of shop ?' But that the boy couldn't remember. He thought a comic-shop. So they went for a walk along the shops. There were many streets with shops, but finally they found a comic-shop. The boss of the comic-shop looked very angry. He also looked like he had drunk too much. 'What do you want ?' the man asked. Tara asked him if he knew anything about a skull. Then the man told that his wife believed in black magic, and that she had bought the skull once to capture the soul of her enemy. The man said he didn't believe in it. 'Can we speak to your wife ?' Tara asked. 'Yes,' the man said, 'tonight, for she's now at the beach.'

In the evening Tara and the boy returned to the shop, after they had taken dinner somewhere. When the woman finally got home she started to laugh when she heard about the story. 'Don't listen to him,' she said. 'He's always drunk.' But Tara knew something wasn't right. It was like she remembered the face of this woman, and it wasn't right. Then suddenly she knew it : It was a slave-girl who once worked for Gitdugal the killer-king. Of couse she knew of the powers of the skull. Awhile later the man came downstairs with the skull in his hands. The woman started to curse. But later she explained everything, and Tara seemed to be right. Tara knew how dangerous the skull could be, and didn't trust the woman with it. 'Since I killed Gitdugal and set you all free I had to take care of the skull, but once it was stolen,' Tara said. She asked the woman how she got the skull. She said she had bought it from some men called the black lions. Then Tara knew enough. Of course the black lions could shape-shift into humans to do such things. 'How much did you pay for it ?' Tara asked. 'Sixty tanarings,' the woman said. That was a lot of money. 'I will give you seventy tanarings for it, but I have to get it back,' Tara said. The woman said that that was a good deal. The woman said that they could also spend the night in her house located above the comic-shop. Tara and the boy were very tired. But in the middle of the night the woman came to the room where Tara was sleeping. She had a knife and was ready to kill Tara so that she could keep the python skull. But Tara heard her coming, and had also a knife under her blanket. She acted like she was still sleeping, and when the woman was near to her bed already, and when she almost could feel her breath in her neck she suddenly turned around and pierced the knife into the heart of the

woman. She took the skull and the boy with her, and then they left Python City in the middle of the night.

Now they would go to Tara's cave, where she had a lot of hidden dens. But on their way the boy asked if he could stay with a tribe he knew very well. Tara agreed immediately. When Tara returned to her cave there was a strange man in her cave. The man looked a bit confused, and apologized immediately. 'I'm sorry but I just escaped from an arena and I had to hide myself,' he said. He explained from which tribe he was and what had happened to him. Tara understood, and told him that he could stay as long as he didn't make any troubles. Tara always had a sort of weak spot for gladiators, for she knew how life could be as a gladiator. She cared for him like he was her baby. In the middle of the night he stood before her. He was very tall. He said to her he was very scared. He couldn't sleep. He was afraid they would find him here and would take him to the arena again. He told her that he was a war-prisoner. She listened to his long story, and she took him in her arms to sooth him. She told him that she would protect him, and that if any of his capturers would ever come here she would beat the brains out of their skulls. Then Tara began to tell him stories to sooth him further. The man told her that he had lost many battles, but he fortunately never got killed. Tara immediately said that she could teach him how to fight so that he would never lose any battle anymore. She said that if he would become such a good warrior that he could defeat her in wrestling than he never had to fear anything again. But she also teached him how to fight with swords, spears and how to use a bow with it's arrows. She also teached him how to hunt for food.

One day she told him about the python skull, but she wished she would never have told about it's secrets. For in a night he woke her up, and he had the skull in his hands and put it behind him on a high place. Then he said : 'Fight for it.' The skull was taking all her strength away, and she felt like it was enslaving her. She was almost completely in the power of this man, and if the man wouldn't be of good heart he could have destroyed her heart. She now knew she couldn't feel safe anymore in her own cave since the man challenged her like this. It was like he took away the most dear thing of her heart, although he didn't destroy her heart. This was the moment her hate against men had been stirred up more than ever.

Never ever again would she give her heart like she did. She got her skull back, but she lost something of her heart, and she couldn't get it back. One night she decided to leave her cave for awhile. But when she returned she found out that the man had committed suicide. Maybe he knew that he had gone too far. She had mixed feelings about his death.

But as time went on, his soul started to return to her.

And as she accepted him in her cave again he started to become of flesh and blood more and more. And that could happen because of the python skull. He told her that he had been to the Underworlds of Mars, to Tartarus, where his soul had been captured between the squeezing Moving Walls of Everlasting Damnation. Here his soul got dense again. He said that in the place where he was everything would be turned into Python Stone. He also told her about his true reason why he had committed suicide. And they became lovers for the second time.

But as this strange resurrection went on, Tara more and more found out about what was going on. He only returned to her to seek for revenge. But he wasn't himself anymore, so Tara thought he had been sent back to her by someone for some reason. When Tara had slain him in a fight, she wanted to find out about his second coming. So she decided to go to the Moving Walls of Tartarus, a dangerous realm below the Death-realms of Mars. She knew

exactly which rivers to take in the Death-realms of Mars, and finally after a long journey she reached Tartarus. When she got to the Moving Walls area she met Drinbard, a pirate-captain. She asked him about his friend, but Drinbard didn't want to tell anything. Finally she got into a fight against him. They both had two-bladed swords called doubledeckers. Finally Drinbald gave her access in the deeper realms of the Moving Walls. Before he gave in they had a fight of two days.

No one would understand the horror Tara saw there. It was here Tara really learned to fight. It was here she met Diabrillis the puppetmaster. The souls of the damned who got slamned between the walls gained so much density at times that they could form a threat against the ruling classes of Tartarus. Diabrillis was often their last hope, for he captured the densest souls from between the walls to enslave them in puppets. Tara had still no idea how her friend could escape a place like this. Tara had to pay Diabrillis a big deal of tanarings before she could enter his realms. He was such a great puppetmaster, because he knew the art of soul-slaying. His slaughtery was made of all sorts of rare python stone. The huntingfields behind the realms of Diabrillis the puppetmaker were the last area's of this strange fairground. The souls had become flesh and blood here, but now they had to survive on their journeys across the huntingfields. Here the darkest indian hunters lived, and the darkest indian tribes. All they wanted was to eat meat, and that was also what a strange billboard said somewhere in the dark pubs of this area : Eat Meat. It was for the damned souls not enough to escape from the hands of Diabrillis the puppetmaker. If there was any escape then most of the times it was organized by the dark indians of the huntingfields themselves, just because they were in need for meat. How Tara's friend could survive and escape she still didn't understand. Maybe he would have captured many women on the huntingfields by his charms, and maybe they finally let him escape ? Tara didn't know. In the pub where she sat there was a fat barkeeper doing the dishes, and there were sitting a few naked indian women at the bar. They listened to some music, had some talks and a few drinks. They looked a bit strange at Tara, but further they were friendly, and Tara didn't have the impulse to grasp her sword. The feathers of the indian hunter-women were very shiny, and Tara was looking at these ornaments for a long time. Suddenly a cowboy entered in. Tara could see that he was an escaped soul still in his process of growing dense. Tara had the feeling the cowboy didn't know where he was. Maybe he thought he had already reached the finish. The indian women started to whisper to each other, and Tara knew about what they were going to do. The cowboy walked like the whole pub was his, like he was the greatest hero of all times, for he had survived Everlasting Damnation, the Moving Walls of Tartarus and the soul-slaughteries of Diabrillis the puppetmaker. He ordered a couple of beers. Tara supposed he did that because he seemed like he never drank alone. Everyone got a glass of beer, even the barkeeper, on costs of the cowboy. Tara saw his good heart, and was worried about him. Then one of the indian hunter-women stood up and asked : 'Shall we go outside ?'

The cowboy was confused. 'Are you talking to me ?'

'Yes ?' he said, still a bit confused, not knowing what was going on. He stood up, and wanted to walk outside the pub, but in a flash Tara could see how the indian woman was about to grasp her knife. Before they could take any other step Tara jumped from her seat to the woman and kicked the knife out of her hands. But quickly the other indian woman took her spear and wanted to pierce the cowboy. Just in time Tara could jump on her neck and and pushed her on the ground by holding the neck tight between her legs. The barkeeper took the telephone, while the cowboy started to become paniced. The other indian woman tried to approach him. 'Stay away from me !' he roared, while foam almost came out of his mouth.

The indian women sat down again after awhile, and everything was quiet again. The cowboy now knew he was in danger, still. Tara thought the cowboy was a lost case. She didn't have any hope for him to survive in an area like this. Soon she found out how the indian women had turned him into living meat on a stake. But for Tara there wasn't any way to prevent it.

Very often she saw those sorts of men having their skins ripped off and shivering on a piercing stake, while indian women danced around their hopeless souls. They were still the souls of the damned. She wondered how her friend could escape all this. On these fields demons and skeleton-gods were sitting on their high horses causing the doom of everlasting damnation to full extends. Most of the times these skeleton-gods were dressed in garments, causing the horrors of indian sorcery all over the place. They were the ones who had teached all these indians here how to be soul-criminals.

Once Tara met the White Spider Queen, a sorceress who could let nipples grow on bodies in such a number that skeletons would come to suck all the blood, fluids and meat-juices out of the body by these nipples. These nipples were called the nipples of death. The Queen was a very feared woman of the hunting-fields. Even many of the indians feared her. Before Tara realized she was under the webs and fluids of giant-spiders. The White Spider tried to put her spell on Tara, but she failed. They had a fight of several months, which Tara finally won. This was how she could finally escape the horror surrounding the Moving Walls of Tartarus. She still didn't find an answer to the questions she had about the one she once loved.

Not many would believe her if she would tell about all the horrors she saw in the darker area of the Moving Walls of Tartarus. But as she grew so much in Life and Death, she more and more developped the dark sides she encountered in the area of the Moving Walls in herself. It was something she could not escape, for everything was growing darker around her, and she needed to survive and dominate her own skull. She needed to possess herself instead of letting someone else possess her, but she more and more found out about the high price it had to protect herself like this. And this attitude she didn't need only for a day, but for the rest of eternity. She had to wage an Everlasting War against everything which was threatening and possessing her, or she would lose herself forever. In her eyes that was the only Love she could really bring up to herself, but it was enough for life.

Tara wanted to return to the White Spider Queen she once defeated. She needed help from her. The White Spider Queen had mixed feelings about Tara, but finally she accepted Tara's need for help, if only to be able to take revenge on Tara. She initiated Tara deeply into her temples and her secret places, and most of all : she started to love her.

No one would expect the love which started to develop between the two. They could learn a lot from each other, and by a greater horror, they could be much saver against the higher levels of horror coming against them both. They had a shelter in each other. Tara teached the White Spider Queen how to fight by her weapons, and the White Spider Queen did the same to Tara. The White Spider Queen was still dignified in all her horrors, but Tara was rude and uncivilized like always. She didn't have any manners or behaviour, while the White Spider Queen had so many etiquettes. They used to hate each others attitude, but now they knew they had to combine them for their own survival, or they would both lose their souls in horror. The horror was hunting and growing outside, and the White Spider Queen knew that her days were counted when she wouldn't integrate with Tara. They were both parts of the same puzzle and the same weapon, necessary to win in the Everlasting War. The White Spider Queen was always so gracious that Tara although she more and more desired this jewel, sometimes just

wanted to cut her skull off to decorate her weapons with it. But they knew they needed each other, and they developed an intimate and tender love-relationship.

The White Spider Queen developped Tara's lust for poetic utterances, and Tara developped the White Spider Queen's lust for stories. One day the White Spider Queen showed Tara a White Spider Stone. It was the stone of blood and lust. By this stone spiders wove their threads. These threads were nothing but slices of slain and damned blood of death. It also developped the slimy airs of spiders necessary to breath in these higher levels of horror. The stone was also called : Blood Slayer as well, especially when weapons were made of the stone. In a hall the White Spider Queen showed the delicate weapons made of such stone, and these weapons were called the blood-slayers. They could cause sudden death and damnation. The weapons were not very tall, but compact. Some of them were fourpointed blades, fivepointed blades, all sorts of strange dreadfull spears and knives and some bows.

As for Tara : She had to find a way to forget about this all, as she found out about the forces of Love being nothing else but the forces driven by a repressed revengefull heart coming from the past. These veils of the spider were nothing but tricks to hide the Evil of the Python Stone. A stone she tried to get rid of in the end, but which pierced itself a way to her heart more and more. She more and more found out about the unbearable price of such a python stone, and she couldn’t escape from it. She had become it’s slave forever.

Sharla the

Head Hunter

Chapter 1. Worshippers of Strange gods

Chapter 2. Ship of Fire

Chapter 3. The Deception

Chapter 1. Worshippers of Strange gods

No one would expect Sharla the Head Hunter to return after she was chased away by Tara from Rhodes. But it was only to prepare a harder attack. She went to her kingdom of heads again, where she had the skulls of her enemies on stakes, and even those of the ones she ones loved. She was the horror of the Mitstik River, a huge river-area on the south of Mars. No one could really explain an encounter with Sharla the Head Hunter. She took minds and souls away, to finally take their heads. She was obsessed with heads. She painted them, decorated them with feathers and jewelry, and people said she only grew wilder since the death of her father, the horrible Skeleton Eater. Whenever he was hunting, he didn't care about the meat. He only ate bones. Sharla the Head Hunter's father was a huge skeleton himself, decorated by strange misleading ornaments. Whenever people were looking at him, they lost so much of their lives. He was a strange and dangerous man, even to his daughter. It was like by his death Sharla broke so many chains of herself, yes, she was the one who had killed him.

For years she stayed on her side in the West after she had been defeated by Tara from Rhodes, but after these years she returned to the Eastside of the river. No one could really explain what happened, but she had become so much more powerful. Some said she had eaten the soul of her father.

Tara from Rhodes stood before her cave washing herself by the lake. Warriors of her tribe came to her, telling her that Sharla the Head Hunter had returned. At that moment they heard shrieking. It was Sharla the Head Hunter, coming towards them. Like a monkey she jumped from tree to tree. There was something around her neck, a snake. Tara from Rhodes took her spear, and told the warriors of her tribe to go behind her. But it was already too late. Sharla the Head Hunter had pierced on of them by an arrow. 'Run away !' Tara from Rhodes shouted to the others, but also another one was already pierced by an arrow. Then Tara threw her spear but she missed. Quickly she took on arrow from her quiver and shot it, but missed again. How could she miss two times ? What was going on ? Then Sharla the Head Hunter stood before her raising her sword. Tara took another spear and they had a fight. Sharla the head Hunter smiled. 'If I will kill you, I will kill your tribe after it, do you think that's okay ?' Tara stang by her spear, but missed : 'No,' she shouted. 'I told you already to leave this place.'

'So why ?' Sharla the Head Hunter asked ironically, 'don't you like to see heads all over the place ?'

'Well,' Tara replied, 'most of the time I like to see heads on bodies, but in this case I like to see a headless body.' Then she fiercely tried to hit Sharla's head with a knife. But Sharla jumped aside and kicked Tara against her head. 'Bull's Eye !' she shouted. Then Sharla's snake jumped on Tara and tried to strengle her. 'Have fun together,' Sharla said ironically, 'I will return when dinner's ready.' And then she left the place. Tara had a hard time overcoming the snake. The snake had a tighter grip than the usual snakes, and she tried to smash his head with a hard object in her surroundings. But the snake moved all over, and also coiled itself around her legs. Tara got troubles in breathing, and the snake was very slimy.

Suddenly she heard singing. Someone was washing herself in the lake. It was Sharla the Head Hunter. 'This place will be mine in short time !' she shouted. Suddenly Tara could throw the snake off of her. She threw the snake into the lake, and continued her fight against Sharla the Head Hunter. 'Oh, come on then,' Sharla shouted, 'I will eat you like a shark.' Tara jumped on Sharla the Head Hunter and pushed her further into the lake. Crocodiles from all sides came after Sharla the Head Hunter and she had to fight for her life. But her snake swam towards the crocodiles and took them in a tight grip, while they were slowly dying without having any breath.

These were the days of Sharla the Headhunter. She had many fights against Tara from Rhodes, for she wanted to have her skull and those of her tribe. But one day tragedy struck Sharla the Headhunter, for her snake thought it would be time to add Sharla's head to the collection of heads in the Westside of the river. The snake also thought it would be time to swallow Sharla's soul. No one knew how such a deep friendship could turn over in such a hate, causing Sharla's death. As the warriors of Tara's tribe were in extasy about Sharla's fatal friendship with the snake, and as they were feasting the whole night, they didn't know about a greater threat which was awakening, the very snake of Sharla the Head Hunter itself, with the captured soul of Sharla in it's erected pride. The snake had only grown stronger, and taller by eating the meat and soul of it's best friend. Now the snake had become the Head-collector, but it also collected souls.

The warriors of Tara's tribe didn't know about the danger moving slow towards their wigwams. While they were still feasting the snake slided into the first wigwam, taking some children away. Soon they discovered about the sudden disappearance of the children, and their feasting started to turn into mournings. The snake took the children across the river, and teached them how to hunt for heads. The snake also teached them in the way they developped a rage against their own tribe. When the children had grown up they formed their own tribe preparing so much vengeance to attack their original tribe one day. The children didn't only worship the snake, but they also worshipped Sharla the Head Hunter. They brought sacrifices to her everyday, a great part of the prey. Tara had searched for the children for a long time, but now she was about to cross the river to search in Sharla's territorium. Somewhere in a different part of the river the children's tribe was moving towards Tara's tribe. They only wanted to have one thing : heads.

The children who had grown older now had become skilled warriors. They wanted to cause the fall of their original tribe, as they were bitten in their childhood by the snake. He bit them in their skull where he placed a shiny yellow amulet to dominate them. Now they were in it's evil hands, enslaved by the tormented soul of Sharla the Hunter. All they could do was giving expression of her rage and hate. These evil children started to slaughter the children of their own original tribe. And when Tara returned to the tribe she was already too late. She couldn't find the children behind the river but she found a shiny yellow amulet like a tall cube. She found it in the temple of the snake, while some puppets of clay were sitting in front of it. She knew enough. That was the sign of domination. Now she finally had found the children it was already too late. She stood on the hill watching that what had happened, raised the shiny yellow amulet and spoke loud : 'I think I already know what is going on here.' The children turned around and when they saw the amulet it was like they were losing all their strength. Tara knew she had to be very careful now, for she couldn't underestimate the works of the snake. But the fact she had the amulet in her hands now gave her much power over the children. The amulet wasn't in the hidden temple of the snake anymore. Tara knew where this temple was, for it used to be Sharla's temple. And in a sense it still was. Suddenly some of the children started to have much pain in the back of their heads. They grasped their heads with their hands, and slowly Tara walked towards the children. They wouldn't have any chance against her, for no one could be really successfull against Tara from Rhodes. She was still the Warrior Princess of the primeval, like the black snake. And none of these kids would even think about attacking her. Tara took her knife and started to cut the shiny yellow amulets out of their skulls, as she knew what was going on. She could feel the mighty vibration of the amulet. After awhile she had many pieces of it in her hands, while the children weren't themselves anymore. It was like they were awakening out of a long long dream. Some started to cry, while others stared like frozen to the ground. The snake had done this job when the children were too young to realize what was going on, and he did it while they slept. Tara tried to explain them what was going on, and she did this with all the love she had. Since the children had invaded the tribe the survivors fleed away. No one could begin anything against such powers. They had the strength like wild animals. Now one knew that they had been gifted by the snake of Sharla the Head Hunter and her very soul. But now Sharla had been overcome and defeated again. The only thing was : Where was the snake ?

Tara knew they were in danger now, for the warriors of the tribe could return to see what had happened. They were on a hunt today, while the women and children were in the camp alone. What would they do when they would find out that so many children had been slain today ? A dark feeling had entered Tara, something which was telling her that something was going on. She suddenly thought about the snake. What if he had already possessed the minds of the

warriors ? She had to do something with the amulet now. But she didn't know what. She laid the pieces in a circle and started to think. Now the amulet was hers, and she wanted to spare the warriors in their feelings. She knew where they were hunting today, and she hoped that they would stay the night there. So she went there, and fortunately when she came there it was already night and they were all sleeping. She had cut the amulets into many pieces, and by the amulet she wanted to lure them away from the danger. She knew that the snake had bound their hearts and minds by the attack, and she knew that if they would find out about their children, the snake would use them to destroy even more of the tribe. Tara knew the sorceries of the snake, and the danger of Sharla's soul. They wouldn't rest before they had torn the whole tribe apart to devour it. The snake was a possessor of minds, and Tara exactly knew which steps the snake could take to prepare the possession. The snake had almost reached it's goal with the warriors of her tribe. Slowly Tara crept to the weapons of the warriors of her tribe, while they were sleeping. In all the weapons she tried to put small pieces of the amulet. She succeeded.

Now the only thing she had to do was taking the children away across the river. They couldn't be in their original tribe anymore. She also had to find the ones who had escaped since the children invaded the tribe. But when she had reached the tribe the snake was there. It would be a horrible fight. All her rage she concentrated on the snake, while she took her sword and entered the arena. The snake had grown so much bigger now since the last time she had a fight with it. She wondered where the children were. Maybe they had already been gone to their tribe behind the river. Tara was in rage. 'I want my amulet back,' the snake roared. 'No !' Tara screamed, 'you will not get it, for your games are over.'

'You do not know with which powers you are playing, girl !' the snake roared, while it's tail slammed her in her face. 'By this amulet I will bring Sharla's soul into the minds of the tribe,' the snake spoke loud. 'But the amulet doesn't belong to Sharla's soul anymore,' Tara spoke, while she pierced her sword into the tail of the snake. 'It's her bones, it's made of her skeleton,' the snake spoke in strange delight.

'But now I possess it !' Tara shouted, 'Now I am the master of my tribe, as I am it's guard.'

'But the soul of Sharla needs to come alive again, or she will devour the tribe totally, to swipe it's souls away from Mars. She will gather her bones by herself, and then come alive again,' the snake roared. And then something strange happened. The amulet started to shriek, and in the distance the warriors of Tara's tribe were coming home. They were in panic, and some were hysterical. 'Our weapons are moving and shrieking !' they shouted. 'It's the amulet,' the snake roared. 'It is time Sharla the Head Hunter is coming alive again.' Then the warriors fell on the ground and worshipped the snake while the snake was coiling around their weapons. Tara knew she was losing the grip on her tribe, and she knew that the only place she could gather her powers again to break this sort of witchcraft was the realm of Sharla the Head Hunter across the river. She now had to make that kingdom hers, or she would be enslaved by it's powers herself.

But when she came across the river the children's tribe had possessed the whole area and had become evil again. They even didn't remember Tara. They didn't recognize her. She hoped the children didn't know about the hidden temple of the snake, so she went there, but they also possessed that temple. The kingdom of heads was against her. The children had strange weapons made of shiny yellow bone. It looked much like the amulets, and maybe it was the same : the bones of Sharla the Head Hunter. All the children were saying she would come

alive tonight to gather her bones. Tara started to scream : 'No ! You have been possessed again !' But the children were shaking their heads. They only wanted to have one thing now : The head of Tara from Rhodes.

All of a sudden she got terrible headaches like ringing bells in her head. She grasped her head, but the pain only got worse. It was like a million wasps were stinging her brains, and her body got overheated. She almost fell to the ground, but she could catch herself on her knees, took her knife and cut into her skull where the pain was coming from. Soon she took a piece of the shiny yellow bone out of her head. She screamed and shrieked while she was raising it high. How could that happen to her ? How could such a piece be in her head ? Was it done by the snake ? And when ? Suddenly she heard screaming. The children were grasping themselves and each other. Some of them had pain in their legs or arms. Soon Tara had cut more pieces of the shiny yellow bones out of them. They knew Sharla would also look for these pieces.

Tara wanted to know about the secret of the shiny yellow bones of Sharla the Headhunter. She decided to search in the temple of the snake. A lot of strange altars were here, and strange stakes with totems. A lot of skulls were here. They were carrying strange smells, and were often painted and some had feathers. In the bigger skulls pythons and other big snakes were living. In another room of the temple there were also skulls, but most of them were very small. These could be the skulls of small children or monkeys. In a bigger one a hairy spider lived. The room was full of spiderwebs and behind the room there was also a small room with a low ceiling. Suddenly a piercing voice shouted : 'Tara from Rhodes ! Your friend Sharla has returned.' A huge skeleton of yellow shiny bones was standing in the opening of the small room. The snake was around it's neck. 'Yes, I am Sharla the Head Hunter, but I only need some skin, and I thought, maybe I can use yours,' the skeleton spoke. 'No way !' Tara said loud. 'I will break any bone of you to let it become my second skin. I feel so naked, I need a dress.' Suddenly fourpointed blade crashed the skeleton from behind. It was one of the children. But soon the bones were gathered again by a strange power. 'Go away, kid !' Tara shouted, 'There's witchcraft going on here, you better protect you soul !'

Tara knew she had to find out about this secret or it would enslave her forever. 'By the force of Soms !' she shouted, 'tell me your secret.' Suddenly a wind from behind crashed the skeleton again and a huge skeleton stood in the dooropening, breaking the bones with it's teeth. Then after that he started to eat and absorb the bonemass. 'I have finally come to life again,' the skeleton roared. 'Who are you ?' Tara asked with a loud commanding voice. 'I am the Skeleton Eater, her father. She had killed me and captured my soul for such a long time in the form of a snake. But now I have come to take revenge.' The snake was sliding and coiling throughout his bones. 'But what did your soul do to my tribe ?' Tara shouted loud, 'This snake has killed and possessed so much of us.'

'I was possessed too, by the meat and the soul of Sharla I once absorbed, but before that I was her slave, after she killed me and brought my soul alive again in the form of a snake. To eat her meat and soul was the first step in delivering myself from her,' the Skeleton Eater spoke. 'Now by eating her bones I hope I will break the possession.' Tara wanted to leave the temple now, but he was blocking her. 'Now all I want is your head !' the Skeleton Eater spoke loud. But the kid with the fourpointed blade had returned and crumbled the Skeleton Eater with it. 'Oh, my magical powers will gather my bones again,' the Skeleton Eater roared. 'I told you to go away !' Tara shouted loud. 'These kids won't listen.' The Skeleton Eater stood up, and said : 'I will eat and devour your bones, and I will use your meat and brains as windowdecoration.' The kid was running away again, but the Skeleton Eater ran after it. The snake slided out of

the body and attacked Tara. 'Come Tara !' the child shouted. 'I need to show you something.' Tara kicked the snake aside and ran outside. The child showed a shrine to Tara. 'Here we used to worship the Skeleton Eater,' the kid said. The Skeleton Eater had disappeared. But soon Tara found out he was devouring the bones of the children, leaving their meat behind. 'Why do you worship such a god !' Tara shouted. Then the kid asked : 'Which god do you worship then ?'

'That's none of your business, but try Soms,' Tara replied harshly.

Now she had directed someone to Soms she had to leave the place and the whole domain of where she was born, the area of the Mitstik River. She gave this district over in the hands of Soms, for she didn't know it anymore. It was like she was chained by the tight chains of her youth. She wanted to forget about it all to start a new life. So she moved even more to the south, to the area of the legendary Mokotte Fields on Mars. This was even further in the south than the valleys and gardens where her original tribe had to work for the killer-king Gitdugal in earlier times. She had to travel a few weeks to come close to the Mokotte Fields. Here she would start a new life. She had become very tired of the riddles of the realm of Sharla the Head Hunter. She wanted to escape it's grip forever. In the valleys of the Mokotte Fields there would live a lot of sorcerors who could help her further. She had to go there, for an invisible force she didn't know of was taking her breath away and slowly strengling her.

In front of the Cave of Viviktus, the Wild Sorceror, there was a lair of a giantspider. The giantspider was very hairy and even had feathers. Tara wanted to go to him for help, but not much did she know about the horror of that place. No one could enter the Cave of Viviktus than the ones who could dominate it in wrestling. As she was very tired it became a long fight. The giantspider was about to strengle her. It was like this animal was taking her last piece of breath. But after awhile Viviktus the Wild Sorceror came outwards. 'I think I will have mercy on you this time, lady. You seem to have traveled a great deal. Come inside for some warm drinks,' he said. Tara stood up, while the giantspider left her alone. Inside there were halfnaked warriors sitting at bars. Most of them were looking at her. 'Oh, I want to fight against her one time,' one was shouting. Most of them were barefooted, but some of them had very strange boots or shoes. They looked like killerboots. Viviktus, the Wild Sorceror, was leading her along the bars, and soon they were in the arena's. All sorts of wild animals had to fight against the different warriors. Some of these animals she had never seen before. They were monstous Martian animals. Behind the arena's there were some arena pools. Viviktus told her that if she would defeat all these warriors and animals, he would help her.

Nights of fights followed in which she slayed the greatest warriors. Sometimes she had to fight three or four of them at the same time, and sometimes even a whole group. They called her Tara the Slayer. By the grace of Viviktus not all these warriors would die by her hands or weapons, but she defeated them all. 'There's dread on you,' Viviktus said. 'They fear you like nothing else. I must say I applaud your strength and persistence. You are cleansing your soul from witchcraft here for a great deal.' Then Tara took Viviktus tight by his throat and said : 'You Martial bunch of shatters, you promised me to help me !'

'What I tell you is the truth,' Viviktus continued, 'but I will also give you help by myself. That I did promise and I will do, as I am an honest man.'

'Some souls have reached a certain immortality, and will return on and on, after they have been killed. They have drunk from the sources of eternal death and birth, and they have a

great immunity. Now these so-called immortals prey on mortals. And if they have fixed their mind on you, they can eat you all the way to your inner city, where they can and they will finally enslave you,' Viviktus said, 'It is finally by this eternal slavery you will find the well of eternal liberty, the freedom of the mind.'

'What are you trying to tell me, sorceror, are you predicting me something ?' Tara blasted. But then she got very silent. After awhile she said : 'So you will tell me that Sharla the Head Hunter will return again to me to finally enslave me ? How ?' The sorceror nodded. 'I think you are very wise, my girl, and I think you will deal with this as you continue your path. You will find out that my words to you were true.'

And as the sorceror predicted Sharla the Head Hunter came to stalk her again, and this time she slayed Tara and took her soul to the realms of Lakshor, where she became an enslaved Gladiator.

Chapter 2. Ship of Fire

After Sharla the Head Hunter took Tara's skull, Tara's soul found a fierce fire-ship in the deathrealms of Mars. She knew Sharla still wasn't done with her, and she would hunt for her soul, but on this ship she would have the chance to escape from Mars, as it became more and more a horror to her. On the Martian River of Death she was on the ship, but gladiators kidnapped her. These were the times she felt very weak. But as soon as they heard of Sharla the Head Hunter they became friends with Tara. They had to fight Sharla together. It was a warrior-boat, the one where she was now. The ones of this boat were escaped gladiators and now they were waging war against the tribes along the Martian River of Death to make prisoners for their gods. They first wanted to sacrifice Tara also, but since they had an encounter with Sharla the Head Hunter they knew they could better not touch Tara. She might help them against Sharla's attacks. What they didn't know was that Sharla attacked them because of Tara. If they would find out that Tara was the cause of this all, they would have sacrificed her for sure. They were cannibals of the highest grade on the Martian River of Death, since the gods teached them how to survive on these horrible rivers. Tara tried to escape from them many times, but all these attempts finally failed. It was like they were watching any move of her.

They didn't have much jewelry, but what they had was very precious. They had some python stones, and by that they could capture the minds and the souls of their prey. It also prevented them against any soul-enslavers. Most of the time these stones were planted in their weapons.

The friendship between Tara and them didn't last long, for once in the night Sharla the Head Hunter came to the boat. She killed the gladiators, took their heads, and captured Tara's soul. Sharla took Tara to the arena's of Lakshor where she sold Tara as a gladiator. When she could finally escape from Lakshor she returned to Mars again in search for the warrior-skulls of her friends who got beheaded by Sharla the Head Hunter. She would do anything to bring her friends back to life again. She also knew that their souls had been captured in their skulls, and that Sharla would have those skulls in her collection. So she returned to the area of the river of Mitstik, in search for Sharla the Head Hunter. Tara had now grown so much in skills, in wisdom and in so many other things. She was now ready to finish Sharla the Head Hunter forever to set her friends free.

But when she came there, it wasn't what she had expected. Although she easily found the skulls and used an oracle to talk to them, her friends didn't remember her, and didn't want to have anything to do with her. First she was in great grief because of the answers, but later she knew she first had to defeat Sharla the Head Hunter, because she seemed to dominate their mind and memory. But Sharla was nowhere to be found. Her realms were lonely and wild, almost depressed. Later she asked the oracle where Sharla was. The oracle answered that on the westside of Sharla's realms there was a new city. She would be there to raise it and rule it. The name of the city was : Eliphant City. Eliphant City would be the darkest city of Mars, a breeding place of sorcerors, witches, necromancers, thieves, assassins, soul-hunters and a lot more. Tara had the feeling she would go to the circus. Here Miss Sharla the Head Hunter would have her place now. Or would she be even Mrs. now ? Tara had so many cynical thoughts about Sharla in her head. It irritated her the way Sharla was. Oh how she would like to smash her skull into shatters to hang her brains in the trees.

In Eliphant City there were circuses and even fairgrounds indeed. But also lots of arena's. The City had a great deal of slaves, and there were enough slave-hunters operating from this side. The city also had a great deal of story-tellers and artists. Often they were wanderers coming to sell their art. In many cases they were thieves as well. Hermund Grottenweiler was a man having the most beautiful women in cages. Here they had to dance, sing and strip, but they were never allowed to come out of their cages. They lived in these cages like animals and slaves. No one was allowed to enter their cages. It was a big deal. Hermund Grottenweiler was one of the richest men of the city. He was a drinker of beer, and often he went to prostitutes to have some fun. He was also a gambler, and a lot of people said he was a thief. Men used to throw a lot of money through the bars to let the women do whatever they wanted them to do, although they could never be touched. Tara was watching some of their shows. Sometimes there were more women in one cage, and often it was nothing but brute fights. Tara knew that if she wanted to conquer Sharla the Head Hunter, some of these women could be of good use.

'How much do these women cost ?' Tara asked Hermund Grottenweiler.

'They aren't for sale,' the man said gruff. 'but I can pay you a lot if you want to work here.' Tara took the man by his throat and said : 'You mean bastard, I give you twelve-thousand tanarings for two of them.'

'Twelve-thousand tanarings for two women ? Are you crazy ? You could buy my whole business with that, but okay, I give you two women by choice,' said the man slowly. Twelve-thousand tanarings was a lot of Martian money. If you had a hundred tanarings you were already rich. 'I'll pay you later, bastard,' Tara said, but the man wanted the money now. Then someone else whispered something into the ears of the man, and after awhile the man said : 'Okay, you will pay me later, choose your two women.' So Tara took the best warriors, explained them what they had to do, and then they went on in search for Sharla the Head Hunter.

One of the women was called Lirsja, and the other Spirtja. They were both sisters or more accurate : half-sisters. Tara loved them from the first moment. They were tender, but at the same time they were bloody passionate warriors. They told Tara that they had been gladiators since childhood. It made one part of them very sensitive and another part of them numb and harsh. They had also been prostitutes for awhile, until Hermund Grottenweiler bought them. They told Tara that they had always been slaves, one or the other way. Their parents sold

them to a slave-caravan when they were only three years old. This was because they lived in such a poverty. Their parents thought that when they would become slaves at least someone was taking care of them. And since they were eighteen that person was Hermund Grottenweiler. Tara didn't say anything. They were on a way to a pub, where Sharla the Head Hunter would be, according to some. It was the Great Python Pub. It was already late. Tara opened the door and looked around. The pub was full of half-naked gladiators. Most of them were women, and Sharla the Head Hunter was there also. Tara took her knife and shouted : 'Sharla the Head Hunter, friends always return. How's life, bitch ? What have you done to the gladiator-skulls of the Martian River of Death ?'

Sharla started smiling. 'What are you talking about, dear ? I have done so many things to so many skulls, so what is the deal ?' Also other women were smiling. Tara stepped on a table and smashed a hanging lamp in pieces. 'Now listen you foolish pighead, we are not here to play any games tonight. Game's over, my friend. I'm here to smear your name on the wall like wallpaper. You will not even know your name anymore,' Tara shouted.

'Oh,' Sharla said, 'but who are you anyway ? I do not remember your face.'

'I am Tara the Slayer of Tartarus, Tara from Rhodes. I am the black snake,' Tara shouted in full pride. 'Everyone knows me.' People started to laugh and Sharla said with a tight face : 'It doesn't say anything to me. Maybe our encounter wasn't impressive enough.' Then Tara jumped to the table where Sharla the Headhunter was, and kicked her in her face. Some women at the bar slowly slided with their hands to their knives. 'I have risen from the dead to come in vengeance because of all what you ...' but further she couldn't come. Someone had put a knife into her spine. Tara fell to the ground, while her two women came into action. They took some chairs and started to use them as rods. One of them took a leg-knife and threw it into the heart of Sharla. 'Sorry, I do not know you,' she whispered soft in Sharla's face, 'but it seemed you made a big mess here.' The other woman took the knife out of Tara's back, but Tara felt very sick. Some other woman tried to further protect Tara. Then Sharla stood up like a dead body. 'What a pity now,' she said, while she looked at the woman who had thrown the knife into her heart. 'I do not have a heart.' And then she started to laugh hysterically. Some men had entered the pub. They had sunglasses on, and they started to talk with the barkeeper. Sharla soon directed herself to them. 'Listo and Carshan, you come at the right moment.' The two man took their guns and began to shoot some women. Tara rolled herself under a table, and prayed for strength. She almost never prayed, but this time she had to. She prayed to Soms. The other two women of her had also dived under a table, while Sharla walked towards the door. 'Don't let them escape,' she said, and then she left. It was a horrible fight against Listo and Carshan and some other women. But soon from the arena behind the pub women were coming to help Tara and her women. One of the women took the two men by the throat and threw them through the window.

Later Tara and her two women wanted to leave the pub to search for Sharla again. But the barkeeper took his gun and said : 'You aren't going anywhere.'

What then happened Tara couldn't recall, but she woke up in the fields of Tartarus, while her back was pierced on a stake. Her feet were tied to the stake, and her hands were tied behind her back. She was surrounded by huge skeletongods with wolfskulls, all dressed in black garments. One or two of them were in shiny purple, but still dark. They had voices like speaking mud, and one of them ripped her skin open to take her heart out of her chest. Tara was screaming and shrieking. 'No one will ever defeat me,' she suddenly shouted calm. But

one of the skeletongods took an axe and cut her head off. The head rolled into a valley and doom came all over the place. Sharla was walking towards them 'Wow,' she said, 'now that was wonderful.'

Tara was now nothing but a ghost, so full of rage that she enslaved many souls. She wanted to live for vengeance the rest of eternity. Tara descended into so many unknown realms of Tartarus. Here she would find out about the secrets of Sharla the Head Hunter. Tara would become a horror greater than she ever was, to survive this greater horror. By the unknown squeezers of Tartarus she would have a bit more density, but what if she would only encounter more and deeper shatterers ?

But the only thing Tara encountered in the depths of Tartarus was a machine with so many bloody heads from the decapitated ones. This machine had been called the Machine of Democracy for such a long time. The bloody heads would keep all the souls of Mars possessed. Inside it was a strange arena where the ghosts of all these souls were gladiators. The strange arena brought forth the fluids of Everlasting Damnation. Tara was drinking from this well without hesitation. The fluids were frothing like beer, and Tara didn't want anything else than to drown in it. But suddenly strange creatures were jumping on her head sucking her brains. They looked a little bit like octopi and spiders, but actually these were the heads of decapitated pythons. They were called the brain-slayers. Tara had come into the extasy of slaughter, took a word from the machine and started to slay the heads in a bloodbath. So much strength was coming over her from unknown sources. The heads didn't have skulls, only brains. Also the heads of the strange machine didn't have any skulls inside. They looked like strange rubber or plastic masks. Some jumped on Tara's head, trying to mask her to devour her brains and abundant slaughter. Suddenly she was in a shock, after she had slaughtered many of them. She had also seen the heads of her gladiator-friends who were beheaded by Sharla the Head Hunter, and whose skulls she found when she returned to Sharla's realms. What had become of them here ? Their skull-less heads were now puppets of this strange machine. Suddenly the machine started to spin like crazy. The heads started to discuss and argue like crazy. 'Now shut up !' Tara shouted. She went inside the machine again to see if the ghosts of her friends were in there. Several ghosts came towards her. These were the ghosts of her friends, and now they were very understanding. 'Yes, Tara, we have been imprisoned by this strange arena-machine again,' she said to her. So this was the machine they had escaped from before they went to the Martian River of Dead where they encountered Tara. 'How can I help you ?' Tara asked.

'We cannot escape Tara,' the warriors said. 'We escaped only to finally sink deeper in this machine. This is our fate.'

'No !' Tara shouted rude. 'I will fight this machine, and free your souls from it.' The warriors sighed. 'Tara,' one of them said very tenderly, 'the more you fight this machine, the more it will swallow you. We invite you to come with us. Come with us, you won't regret it.'

'Oh, you lost your head,' she said to the ghost. 'There's nothing I can do for you. I will leave.'

But the ghost took her in his arms and said : 'You cannot leave. No one leaves this place. You can only leave to finally realize you have sunk deeper in it.' She felt the sweetness and softness of the ghost entering her soul. It was like they were seducing her to stay with them in this doom. 'I don't want to lose myself !' Tara shouted.

'You will only find yourself, ... finding yourself back ...' the ghost said, while he showed her his tragic face. 'There's Everlasting War here, and that is our fate.' Tara tried to shake the ghost away from her, but the more she did that the more she felt he was coming over her. It was like he was slaying her brains. Suddenly, and she didn't know where it came from, she had the strength to push him away. 'I will slay Sharla the Head Hunter,' she said with a tight face, 'and then I will return to this place.'

Tara climbed her way up to where she came from, in search for Sharla the Head Hunter. The blood was rushing through all of her veins all of a sudden. But the heads from the Machine of Democracy seemed to follow her in a distance. She had now seen the secret of Sharla the Head Hunter.It was a strange fairground of heads, keeping all the politics in the upper worlds of Mars possessed and by that the politics of so many other planets. But it was lawless politics, a strange arena called Democracy letting the Everlasting Blood of Damnation flow, frothing through so many souls.

But more and more heads from this strange machine from the depths of Mars were surrounding Tara, and she started to lose strength. She remembered the words of the ghosts, and suddenly she totally lost it. The heads seemed to come out of nowhere, and it didn't stop. 'Be ready for the masses of democracy,' one ghost had told her. It was like this arena was giving birth to so many children .... all beheaded. Tara heard their shrieks in her mind, slaying her mind. It was rushing through her veins. She had mixed feelings inside indeed, like Everlasting War inside, like Everlasting Democracy. She fought, but she remembered : She was fighting herself. All these heads were hers, like her split identities. It was a Psychiatrist deep inside her mind, such a crazy one, but also nothing but a puppet from this strange fairground of Mars, coming forth from the depths of Tartarus, only to sink in it deeper. Tara had lost so many of her good thoughts, and now she was delivered into the hands of this undescribable being. She had been torn apart by it, but she still wanted to kill Sharla the Head Hunter. But where would it bring her ? It seemed to be a stupid idea, the more she thought about it, meaning nothing, absolutely nothing in the progress of the universe.

As all these puppets were slaves of Sharla the Head Hunter, Sharla was also their slave, and Tara also. Who was really the king, and who was really the slave, when all these masks would be torn off ?

She was just imprisoned by this crazy fairground called Democracy. She had to fight her mirrors, for her mirrors were fighting her, showing up .... often masked ...

What if Sharla the Head Hunter was just one of her mirrors. She couldn't stand the thought. She would want to slay that mirror, but even more : to enslave it. For there was no such thing as Death. It was only a strange mirror on a strange fairground of Mars, opening the door to so many other mirrors. One day Tara got the shock of her life. She saw her own head hanging between all the other heads of doom. That meant that she had already been a part of this machine, but for how long already ? And this probably meant that also her own ghosts had to be somewhere in the arena inside the machine. So she went inside again, and asked the other ghosts about it. 'I want to show you something,' one of them said. It was one of her warrior-friends she had encountered on the Martian River of Death. The ghost asked her to come with him to a room behind the arena. He opened a cupboard there, where she saw ten to twenty of her own ghosts hanging there at a rope. They were like fleeces. Tara was shocked. 'How do I bring them alive ?' she asked.

'Just by accepting it all,' the ghost said tenderly. It was like Tara was melting inside. She just wanted to let it come over her. A bell was ringing. The fights and wars between the ghosts started again. Tara had to fight against a friend of her. 'Tara, you must accept Democracy,' the ghost said. 'It is the Lawless. It is the Head Hunter and the Head Brooder.' Snakes got born here, as the children of the gladiators. But these children had no bodies ... only heads.

Tara knew that these heads would tear her mind apart again and again. They were brain-slayers, and it would lead her deeper into this strange abyss.

Chapter 3. The Deception

'Blood you deserve, blood to stream out of your body and die !' Someone shouted on a slave-market of Eliphant City. Tara had returned to this city, but she was wandering there a bit aimless. She didn't want to watch how this yelling would turn into another bloody fight. Oh yes, she loved fighting, more than anyone else, but sometimes she had hard times in watching it. As she walked further over the market, she saw a young slave getting beaten up by his master. Tara didn't think a second and slaughtered the slave-master to set the boy free. Sometimes she just had such strange impulses. Where they were coming from, she didn't know. She entered a pub. The barkeeper was doing some dishes and brought a beer to her in grace. 'You look thirsty, lady,' the barkeeper said. Tara drank the cup empthy within seconds. Then she stood up and walked to the girl-room of the pub. Here some slave-girls worked as whores. A tall young lady with star-earrings stood in the door-opening. 'Anyone heard of Sharla the Headhunter ?' The girl shook her head. Tara saw a newspaper and took it in her hands. Her feet were sweating because of the heat in the pub. It was a hot day in Eliphant City. In the newspaper there were many stories about heads and headhunters. The last page of the magazine had some news. There was a picture of a wild-bearded head of a savaged man called Ijupitor who had been beheaded. If someone wanted to use the skull-less head for black magic he would have to call a certain number. Tara's feet started to sweat even more. There were also some smaller pictures of bison-heads, and finally a small note about Sharla the Head Hunter. But almost everything of the note had been torn away. Like someone wanted to keep the information. 'Now, don't mess with me again, girl,' Tara said to the girl, 'Have you heard of Sharla the Headhunter, yes or no ?'

The girl said yes softly, and asked Tara to come with her. They went on a stairs and came into a dark room. The room was a bit colder, and there was also a lion caged there. 'Do you work in circus ?' Tara asked. 'Yes, also,' the girl said. Suddenly Sharla the Head Hunter stood in the door-opening. 'I will not waste my time killing you,' Tara said. 'But I will enslave you in this bottle,' and then she grasped an empty bottle from the table. 'I swear by Soms you will vanish now into this bottle,' Tara shouted. Sharla didn't move, but then she fell forward. A man in a bear-suit was standing behind her, having a strange small machine in his hand like a calculator. Also on Sharla's back there was a strange small instrument. The man took off his bear-mask, and fell in worship before the feet of Tara. 'Oh Tara,' he said, 'I have heard so much about you. I am obsessed with you. I made a Sharla puppet to let her have a double. I also want to make one of you. I work in circus you see,' the man said. He talked a bit confused and Tara kicked him hard in his face. 'Do you really think I have time for this nonsense ?' Tara said unfriendly. But Tara now knew she had to be careful, for maybe the Sharla she met in the other pub was just a double also, made to distract her. Was that the reason why she finally ended in Tartarus that way ? She should have known better, for necromancers often used doubles to deceive and enslave their victims very subtle. Some necromancers had built thousands and thousands of doubles, and then they masked them so

that they could build whole cities. Would Eliphant City just be a trap to let Tara suffer in Tartarus ? And maybe there were even more victims. It all started since Tara was looking for her friends in the realms of Sharla. Here she found their skulls and an oracle. The oracle had directed her to the Eliphant City.

Tara returned to Sharla's realm where the oracle was still speaking. Still the skulls of her friends were there, and the oracle had grown so big now. It had firy flames, and it was like a well of fire now. How could she trust such an oracle anyway. And how could she further know if something was a double or the original. Suddenly she heard strange marching in the distance. When the sound came closer it was like a strange song. It was a ghost-army full of the doubles of Sharla the Head Hunter. Slaying or even believing such a double could already be very dangerous.

Tara knew that to be immune against an army of doubles you needed to produce your own doubles, so that she could multiply herself. She was kneeling down before the skulls of her friends and she started to brood them. Suddenly they stood before her. The army of Sharla's doubles had to vanish slowly. They were awakening the giants of Tartarus.

They set so many worlds in fire, and she could forget and remember so many things. It was like she was made for this, but her demons always said to her : she created herself.

If she could she would turn everything into doom. She wanted to create a total new world. And if that was her fate : She wanted to do it in Tartarus. She was the vulcano, letting the dogs of Tartarus out. She was of Tartarus, Tara of Tartarus.

And as she was writing in the scrolls of Mars : She slided deeper, descending with her ghosts into the mists of Tartarus, into it's ravines.

The Parrot

Gems

They were feared in the whole area of Wirdum Desert. They would sell the boy to a slave-caravan, but first they would do surgery on him. As the boy had been tied to a stake they started to cut him with knives. In his body they were looking for something ... parrot gems ...

When they had found the parrot gems they ripped his further skin off. After the boy stood skinless in the hot sun for hours insects came to eat from his meat. The boy died in horrible circumstances, but when they returned they called his tormented soul back from death. This was how they always used to zombificate their prisoners. Now this zombie had been ripe for slavery. In the distance a slave-caravan was coming. They had smelled some blood .... Not much later the dirty deal would start.

Tara from Rhodes had wandered through the Wirdum Desert for days. She had found a lake near a small forest. Through the soil she saw something shiny in the distance. As she moved closer she took notice of the fact that these were parrot gems. But what did all these bastards do around it ? She took her sword and started to slay them all in a terrible bloodbath. Tara the Terrible had come. After the slaughter she took the gems and moved forwards.

Tara knew everything about these parrot gems ... Actually they weren't from parrots ... Everyone on Mars would have more or less parrot gems in their bodies. When they would be taken away they were in the danger to become zombificated, which meant they could be risen from the death to be enslaved in their bodies for the rest of their lives. These were called : The zombies of Wirdum Desert.

Ammelgamma was a dealer in parrot gems. He had a shop somewhere on the westside of Wirdum Desert. Tara would go to him. Tara didn't care for parrot gems, but when she found some, she would bring them to Ammelgamma. Ammelgamma was a prophet, a collector of parrot gems. He didn't use any surgeries to zombificate his victims. He only used words. And he had a lot of success in it, for he had one of the greatest slave-caravans of Wirdum Desert. He used to travel a lot with his mass of necktied zombie-slaves. To see such a slave-caravan moving through the desert was always impressive. Ammelgamma used to prophesy and soon his whole audience had been enslaved by his words ... a strange fire, zombificating them to be in his army of everlasting damnation. They didn't fight, they only used ... words ...

When Tara entered Ammelgamma's shop he was just counting his money behind the cash-desk. Tara laid the parrot gems in the desk and slammed with her fist on the desk, trying to get his attention. Ammelgamma looked up, but then he started to count his money again. 'Sorry, lady,' he spoke indifferently with a sore throat, 'I am busy now, can you return another time ?' But Tara jumped over the desk, took him by his throat and pushed him hard against the wall, while she had raised him in the air : 'Listen you barbarian bastard, I do not travel for days to come here for nothing. We know each other, don't you ? You know where I am coming for.' Tara had the desire to throw him through the window and then to eat his brains, but she could control herself this time. The man nodded and said : 'Yes, Tara, I know where

you come from, and where you are coming for, so come with me, and I will show you what I can give you for these parrot-gems.' Then they moved upstairs.

She was now probably the richest woman on Mars, although she didn't care about the money, the tanarings she had now. She just needed it for something.

In the west, upwards, she needed to do something. As she was moving forwards to an enormous stairway in the middle of the desert. This stairway was a chrystal stairway, leading to the high beach behind the desert. No one knew why she came there, no one knew what she would do. They were all staring at her while she moved through the soil. When she was on the beach she could see the bloody sun almost touching the waters. She stood there for hours, for days, as the bloody dark sun was moving slowly towards her. The wind was playing with her hair while the bloody dark sun was roaring and soaring so huge in the distance. 'You have finally come, Soms !' she shouted. 'I have done what you have asked from me.' The huge bloody dark sun was almost devouring the waters.

The next morning Tara woke up, still at the beach. She would now go to Iriptus, the killer-prophet. They called him the prophet, but actually he wasn't a prophet. He was an assassin. He would speak to his audience for hours and hours, and then he would slay them all ... not by words, but by his sword. His house was full of skulls and dead bodies. He killed for the money, the tanarings, ... it was that simple. His house was huge. He was one of the wealthiest prophets in Wirdum Desert.

After a few hours Tara came out of his house finally. Most of the time these prophets were only weaponsellers or high bosses of arena's further not caring anything about it. She called them the gamewatchers, lazy jerks. She never had much patience with them. She had only sympathy and love for the prophet-king who was an exorcist in the east of Wirdum Desert. He was called the prophet-herd, but actually he wasn't a herd. He had a breeding for prophets, to finally slaughter them all. He was feared by many prophets, although a lot of prophets didn't know anything about him.

Tara went to his castles ... They were made of python stone ... Some called it .... the sandcastles .... As she was sliding forwards through the soil and the sand of Wirdum Desert she saw him on the huge frontwall practicing with his sword.

She became so paranoid, hungry for a greater love, but all she could do was to hate. She hated love and she loved hate, and she knew the bloody sun of Soms wouldn't show up anymore, as it was written in Martian Laws of the Lawless that the bloody sun of Soms would only show up once in someone's everlasting life, as the first and the last time, the Alpha and the Omega.

The revenge of the prophets would drive her to Tartarus now. Here the wolf-skulls were already waiting for her, ready to watch more of her than she ever watched of anyone else, for they once took her own parrot gems away.

The Lawless

As I was sliding along the vast jungle of Tirmis Oracle, a ghosttown in the west of Mars, I met a pirate. Me, Tara, I was willing to know the secret of the Tirmis Oracle. Tirmis Oracle were ten demon-machines torturing so many on the surfaces of Mars, to keep them in deep tragedy and slavery. When he had told me the secret, it was the beginning of a strange travel for me. To me everyone was living in his own world, not capable to really destroy someone else by any law or anti-law. In my eyes death was just the road to the well of eternal death, holding the secret of eternal birth. To me death didn't really exist as it was one of the many stories. The pirate told me that the dark of Tirmis Oracle were guarding this well. How could I set free these ten demons captured in Tirmis Oracle for such a long time ?

There was no real escape from the demon-machines, as the pirate told me. I had to face the fact that only the well of eternal slavery would bring me to eternal liberation. The paradox was a strange machine, the first of the oracle, planted against the huge rock of the ghosttown. If I wouldn't free the demon locked up in this machine, not many would be even willing to understand the treasures of the paradox. This was the only secret the pirate told me, but he didn't even tell me how I could free the demon. I must admit, in those times I didn't care at all. Someone had to do it. Some things just needed to be done.

I came from a free world, although there was a lot of slavery. And it was just like that was all the price of freedom, like these two things belonged to each other, as a heritage of the paradox. Mars had always been a free world, where everything was possible. It was called art, but it also opened the most darkest edges you couldn't find anywhere else. One was always saying that Tirmis Oracle was a heritage from barbarians as well as indians. I was a mix of them, although I belonged to an indian tribe. We were against civilization.

The pirates seemed to know much about the Tirmis Oracle, and that was the reason why I approached them very often. They often went to Tirmis Oracle to gamble there. It was a way for them to spend their times, and another pirate told me about the first demon. He was called Traxwodka, the Python Knight. Some said he was the soul of a child once captured by a

sorceror. The captain told me that there had to be a bottle in the first machine where the soul of the Python Knight had been locked up. The captain could open the screen, and gave me the bottle. This was one of the most precious gifts I got in my life. However, the Python Knight always hunted my mind in a sense. It inspired me to do the things I had to do. He has probably gone mad by the dark of Tirmis Oracle. But in later times it started to make a bit more sense to me. I had an encounter with a giant. He was a necromancer and he connected the soul to the realms of the dead. He knew the many rivers of the Martian realms of Death and he took me often with him to go on his ship. It was not a big ship, more a boat, and he often took some other friends with him. I will tell you about the journeys through the Martian realms of Death. As we started on the Martian River of Death, we took a river on it's westside taking us deeper into the jungles. We were the lawless, although we had a higher sense for ethics than usual. We believed that the mind was corrupted, and it should be ignored in all contends. Most of the Martians are familiair with these laws, but the greatest of these laws could be found in the Death-realms of Mars.

The mind cannot understand the higher worlds. The passion can. We had to live by that code or we wouldn't survive in the Death-realms of Mars. That was why we had such a strong desire to build a jungle. And that we could find along the rivers in the Death-realms of Mars.

Some of the other tribes thought they had to root us out. They thought we could form a threat against them. Maybe that was our fate. But we only did what we have to do to survive, and to follow our instincts. None of us believed in a heaven or hell. We only believed in Tartarus, the realms below the Death-realms of Mars. Tartarus was the the well of everlasting damnation. Some would call it hell, but to us it was the place of creation by the forces of destruction. Tartarus was our world, our eternal fields. We were against civilization and had established the Martian Laws to survive. It was the Law of the Lawless.

The giant knew the rivers leading to Tartarus very well. He was actually the one who brought me to Tartarus. I could never realize how deep this world would penetrate my soul. It opened me up to so many things. Here the beasts of our dreams were living. We could enter so many new wells in this area. Here the demons were living. I can recall many of them. Oshar was the demon of money. He captured souls to change them into money. Ritswik was the demon of zombification. He could kill souls to raise them up again in their bodies to enslave them forever. He was a dark sorceror, a warlock. Dikshild was also a demon. He was small and had long hair, walking around with a bag. He turned bones into money and could get money out of bodies. Jeppersla was also a demon, a python-prince guarding the python stones of Tartarus, the most precious jewels awakening desires and sex. Harmataron was a fat one. As it was the law on Mars and also in Tartarus : slavery was very important to give care to those who didn't have enough money, but it was also important to control the dangerous species. It was the way charity and protection worked on Mars as well in Tartarus.

The life on Mars and especially on Tartarus was different like all the other planets. It brought forth the seed of death. The warmest and best place to connect to Tartarus. One of the highest ranks of demons in Tartarus was the rank of the pythons. They controlled Tartarus for a big deal. Wealth was very important to become a ruler of Tartarus. The ones having the most money, tanarings, could have implants. Often they were made of special python stone, the stone of enslavement and of protection against enslavement, any form. Most of the times the rulers had a lot of implants, which was a big deal of money. Some of the implants weren't cheaper as two-thousand tanarings. In Martian money if you had a possession of a hundred tanarings you were rich. The business of implants was one of the greatest businesses in

Tartarus. One of the leading men in this trade was Harold von Drinbard. He was a dark sorceror and a docter. All he was ever interested in was money. He believed in the eternal money, a law as brought by the many demons of money in the spheres of Tartarus. However Harold von Drinbard was a foreigner. He came from another planet to Mars. His friends always called him Drinbard, and he was a skilled necromancer and zombificator.

No one knew where Drinbard originally came from, as that was which he always kept secret. Several rich ones worshipped Drinbard. Especially if he would lower the prices of the implants. Some said Drinbard was the inventor of the python stone. It would be made of the trodden and squeezed souls of the damned.

Although one could reduce poverty by the great deal of slave-markets, there were also parts of Tartarus with a great deal of poverty. However, there was a well of eternal poverty leading to the eternal money. Drinbard seemed to know everything about it.

Drinbard had his throne in Tartarus, the Underworld of Mars. He was a drinker, a gambler, but most of all he was a plastic surgeon and a talented businessman. Drinbard had a business in death as he was a dark sorceror and a liar. Yes, this soul-swindler was a feared warlock in the eyes of many. To the rich he was a friend, someone who helped them to gain more power and control in the dark spheres of Mars. The conspiracies of Drinbard were the greatest of conspiracies in the past of Mars, for without it Mars would be a totally different place now. Drinbard succeeded to lock the soul of the boy up in a bottle. Still there is lots of talk about the boy in the bottle which they always called : The Soul of Drinbard.

Not many know where this soul is located. But I know, since I freed it. Let me tell you this story. Me, Tara from Rhodes, heard about the conspiracy of Drinbard as one of the first. Drinbard called for a circle of the darkest black magicians, necromancers, witches and soul-hunters to make their plans to capture the soul of the boy. Since they had succeeded in imprisoning the boy's soul I visited these dark sorcerers one by one to slay them. Finally I found the bottle and freed the soul of the boy, but then I discovered another terrible secret. Since I freed his soul, he became the tormented object of so many soul-hunters. He lost all the rest he had, since he had become a wanderer, always on the run, as there was a big price on his head. It became such a terrible hunt that I wished I would never had freed his soul out of Drinbard's bottle. He had become so haunted. I would never forget his terrorized, paranoid and haunted face.

I was wearing an amulet with a stone called ‘the eye of the cat’. It was a stone which could communicate with cats. Of course these were all sorts of cats, also the wild ones, and those coming forth from the cats. It was a cryptic form of communication, as cats are very cryptic beings. It was the heritage we got from our ancestors, it was a cat-knife able to break the time. Most of the slavemasters had a cat-eye mouth. These were mouths in stones by which they could cause death and by which they could even let souls descend into horrible places.

The Knife

of Black Time

Chapter 1. The Eye of the Cat

Chapter 2. The Wrath of Sambara

Chapter 1. The Eye of the Cat

Tara was bathing in the Mistrus River in the South of Rhodes, the catplanet. Actually Rhodes was a solarsystem full of planets. All the planets were called Rhodes, while Tara was on Rhodes IV. Tara was making fun with a friend, and later they climbed on the sandy side of the lake. After awhile a spotted lion, very tall with thin, sly features. The spotted lion started to drink from the lake. Tara wanted to test the lion. She wanted to know if she was stronger than the lion, so she attacked him. Tara got bitten horribly, and she thought they could be friends.

Tara thought she could use this lion in her fights. She didn't see the lion here before, and she was very impressed by it's spots. But the lion attacked her again, and Tara grasped him by the neck and threw him away. But now the lion really got angry and jumped on her ... but suddenly he licked her ... It seemed the lion started to like her.

The lion licked her wound. Although the bite was the cruellest bite she ever felt, she now felt a care she never felt before. Together they were walking into the jungle. Tara knew the spotted lion would protect her with his life.

On her forehead Tara was wearing an amulet with a stone called 'the eye of the cat'. She once got it from a sorcerer who called her the queen of the cats. It was a stone by which she could

better communicate with the cats. Of course these were all sorts of cats, also the wild ones, and those coming forth from the cats.

It was a cryptic form of communication, as cats are very cryptic beings. There was a scar growing from the wound. The spotted lion would now forever recognize Tara as his friend. The lion led Tara to his cave, a very huge cave, were a lot of his friends were walking, sitting, sleeping or working, having the same scar. Now Tara was one of them.

Suddenly the spotted lion started to speak :

'This is a great day, since Tara from Rhodes has joined our group. She is a warrior and of great use in our search for the knife of black time.'

'What is that ?' Tara asked.

The lion looked deep into her eyes, like he pierced his way through her mind. and said : 'It was the heritage we got from our ancestors, it was a cat-knife able to break the time, to bring us back to Rhodes III our motherplanet.'

Far away from the spotted lion's cave a mass of slaves was wandering through the desert of fire. Suddenly they had to stop before a fire-lake where they had to drink from the firewaters. Now they had received strength again to work in the desert. They had coloured necklaces like thin small snakes, carrying the energy of black time, a sinister energy keeping them bound to the realms of the dead. If they would only have the knife of black time, they could escape.

They had a slavemaster called Sambara, who was the keeper of this magical knife. He was a sorcerer, a dark one, and he ruled them all by the knife.

Most of the slavemasters on Rhodes IV had a cat-eye mouth. These were mouths in stones by which they could cause death and by which they could even let souls descend into horrible places like the Gorgoon. No one could get such a mouth very easy, for first they had to go to a sorcerer and then they had to swallow such a cat-eye. By that they would first descend in the Gorgoon themselves, and some had to sit there for a hundred years or even more. But if they got too long in the Gorgoon it would spit them out. This would be what some might call the experience of death, and then if it would please the sorcerer he would call the soul back from the realms of the death. But sometimes the sorceror chose to bring the soul back to the Gorgoon.

The ones with cat-eye gloves, which had many of stings and pins most of the time, often worked in arena's as death-gladiators. These were the ones who had to show up only when a certain gladiator got too much power. The death-gladiators were to bring balance. On Rhodes IV those with cat-eye gloves were often most feared, because they often could bring quick deaths. Most of the time these gloves were red.

One of these death-gladiators was Abarsa. He was still a young man, and before he became a death-gladiator he was someone others used to pick on. He was a very funny boy, but he was unhandy, and couldn't make it on school. All he wanted was to become a gladiator. Abarsa was always a very good and tender boy, but he acted a bit strange, almost like cryptic, and often no-one understood him. And still he had those strange smiles, and he could turn your world upside down by looking at you. Abarsa was always very selective in his work. If a gladiator pleased him, he would offer live to him. But when he saw gladiators who used to pick on others he would raise his fist suddenly because of his old anger rising up, his old pain. Sometimes Abarsa could control this action, but other times not.

Abarsa was feared because of his work, and when there were fights on marketsquares Abarsa sometimes had to go there. When Abarsa showed up they always knew it was already too late, for now there would flow some real blood, and these weren't jokes. Most of the times Abarsa would cause death. Abarsa didn't show up for nothing. This was the reason why Abarsa didn't go to marketsquares just to buy something, for that would be a too big shock. But when he hadn't been to the marketsquares for years he could show up, because a lot of them wouldn't even know who he was.

Chapter 2. The Wrath of Sambara

Rhodes III was actually a dogplanet, the motherplanet. The spotted dogs were the rulers here. There were all sorts of dogs, also wolves. The main capital was Sparta, the city of wolves. The spotted wolves lived in a huge skeleton building surrounded by sand. It was a small desert in the midst of the city. However there were some hills which looked like dunes.

The biggest spotted wolf stood up from his throne. He had a black cape, and looked like a man. 'It is now time we will open the portal between Rhodes III and Rhodes IV. It has been written in our prophesies.' The wolf stared into a chrystal ball, and saw Tara fighting against Sambara, the keeper of the knife. With her there was a spotted lion, and Abarsa, the gladiator of death. The spotted lion had brought them together. Then the spotted wolf sent some of his

big birds to help Tara and her friends against Sambara the evil sorcerer. The spotted lion jumped on Sambara and then he fell, while Tara grasped the knife. ‘Hold it in the air,’ Abarsa said.

In the chrystal ball the wolf could see how his birds started to eat Sambara. He saw how Tara raised the knife of black time, and suddenly there was lightening all over the ball. ‘It’s done,’ he spoke. The portal of time between Rhodes III and Rhodes IV was opening. It happened in the pit and tunnel called the Gorgoon. In it’s depth the portal was opening.

The children of hell had been set free now, and in big groups with torches they went through the portal to the other side of the Gorgoon. It would lead them to Rhodes III, the motherplanet. The big birds brought the skull of Sambara to the portal to hang it above it. But through the mouth of the skull a red fluid started to stream, and soon there was a flood in the Gorgoon rising higher.

‘We have to close the portal again,’ the spotted wolf said. Tara watched the knife she held in her hand, and it became weak and soft. It was melting in her hands. ‘What is going on ?’ she asked.

‘We have not much time,’ the spotted lion said. ‘We have to go through the Gorgoon, where the portal to Rhodes III has been opened.’

In short time the spotted lion swam with Tara and Abarsa through the red fluid, searching for the portal. They saw dead bodies everywhere. Deeper the red fluid was thinner, like air, and they could almost walk through it. ‘Hold me tight,’ the spotted lion said to Tara and Abarsa, which they did. In speed he moved towards the portal which was already closing it’s jaws. Just in time they got through it. Later on they stepped out of the red fluid, and they were in Rhodes III, the dogplanet. ‘We have made it, Tara,’ the spotted lion said. The big birds picked them up and brought them to Sparta, to the halls of the spotted wolf.

‘We have called for the wrath of Sambara,’ the spotted wolf spoke. ‘Rhodes III will die. There is only one way to survive : the road to Orion.’

‘Where is that road ?’ Tara asked.

‘Come,’ the wolf said. He pushed a button and his throne moved away while an enormous hole in the floor appeared. ‘Jump,’ he said. Tara slided into the hole, together with Abarsa and the spotted lion. It would be a long trip through tunnels and pits, finally leading to Orion. The spotted wolf was on their side.

When they came in Orion it was burning. ‘It is Sambara’s wrath,’ the spotted wolf said. ‘But here there must be the gate to Mars somewhere.’ The wolf hit the ground a few times by a rod, and an enormous hole appeared. ‘Here it is,’ he said. And again they slided in, and this time they went to Mars in great speed.

On Mars they saw all sorts of black guards walking. ‘Those are the guards of Sambara,’ the wolf spoke. ‘We can beat those.’ Abarsa jumped forward and slew a few of them, and Tara did the same. In short time there weren’t any guards left. They had a great survey from here. They stood on a hill, looking into a new world.

‘Can we be free from Sambara here ?’ Tara asked.

‘Yes,’ the wolf said. ‘The rest of the universe is under his growing wrath.’

‘For how long will we be safe against him ?’ Tara asked.

‘If we will build our place here, for eternity,’ the wolf spoke. ‘We need to be on the Martian River of Death, which is the most fruitfull area.’

At the Westside of the Martian River of Death there was a city called Bear City. Here the soul-swindlers came, people like Sambara. Here the meanest soul-trappers and other sorts of death-dealers came, and many had their homes here. Here the cannibals of the highest grade lived, necromancers, those who played the games of death. They had their boats along the Martian River of Death. ‘Our prophesies say here we must be,’ the wolf said. In the city there were many casino’s, and there were also circuses where the dead had to work. There were also a lot of comicshops here.

The wolf had a tattoo on his body which was a map of Bear City. A red line led them through the city to another hole. This hole led them to Tartarus. ‘There were days when parts of Mars

were one with parts of Orion, which was the planet Wickfin,' the wolf said. 'In the depths of Tartarus, there is a desert, and behind that there is a sea holding the last piece of this planet like an island. There was a huge explosion in history. By my tattoo we get access to that place.'

Then the wolf showed another tattoo of him, which was a scar. The wolf showed his tattoo-scar in the air, while big birds came to pick them up, to bring them to the island of Wickfin. There were only skeletons here.

'We are here for the wrath of Sambara is after us,' the wolf spoke to the skeletons.

'We do not need you here,' the skeletons said. 'You carry the curse of Sambara with you, and you will be a threat against us too. Die in the sea with your Sambara.'

'We ask you for your help,' the wolf spoke.

One of the skeletons came forward and gave a pale green stone to the wolf. 'This is the last stone of Wickfin,' the skeleton said. 'Wickfin is melting. We do not know what is happening. Even our bones are becoming softer and softer. This stone is the only gift we can give you. Please, remember us, and remember Wickfin. The island is getting smaller and smaller. We have nowhere to go, for outside Wickfin we will die. Make yourself safe.'

'Where can we go ?' the wolf asked. But the stone was melting, and the skeletons started to laugh. 'We will all be gone, as there is no medicine against the Wrath of Sambara.'

Tara drank from the water of the sea but it was salty. 'There must be a way out,' she said. But the skeletons were melting before their eyes, and also the island was getting smaller and smaller, while the birds were gone. Suddenly a huge wave grasped them. There were explosions everywhere. The sky was dark and bloody. Finally a huge pirate ship picked them up.

The captain was a cruel man. Some pirates chained them at the wall inside of the ship. 'Who are you ?' Tara asked.

‘We are the pirates of Wickfin,’ they said. ‘Those skeletons.’ And then they laughed. They were the sorcerors of death. They brought Tara and her friends to the first island, where they sold them as slaves. Soon they ended up in the arena as gladiators. Abarsa smiled. He had hoped for this.

All went so fast. Abarsa and Tara were unconquerable, and soon they made Abarsa king of the island, for they all feared him. Abarsa gave freedom to Tara, and she chose to live in the jungle. She started to live close to a volcano always bringing forth blood. These were strange eruptions. Strange white skeletons seemed to live in the volcano.

‘We are the pirates of Wickfin,’ she heard every night.

Finally she could have some conversations with them, and they wanted to make a pirate of Wickfin of her as well, for that would be the only way to get rid of Sambara’s curse. They wanted to show her their captain, and Tara was in a shock when she found out it was Sambara himself. ‘Life goes on after death,’ he said. ‘Actually we never die.’

‘Why grasping at things, while you know they will melt in your hands ?’ Sambara asked.

‘In my hands everything is stone,’ he said, ‘but in yours it melts away. Poor you. The knife of black time cannot be grasped. It can only be earned. See all those stupid souls, these pirates of Wickfin. They still think they can gain something by robbing and stealing …. Fools …. They always melt away …. And everything they take melts away ….. Poor souls …. They all hope for my almighty touch to grant them the knife of black time by which they can live forever, and hold something forever …. Would you want that ? There is only one price if you would finally earn and deserve the knife of black time. You will be stone forever, just like the things you hold, and you can never get rid of it anymore. It will haunt you forever. Is that what you wish ?’

‘Then why do you want it ?’ Tara asked.

‘I have it, and I am the only one who can handle it,’ Sambara said. ‘You see, I use the necklaces by which the energy of black time conducts itself.’

‘I have worked hard for these necklaces,’ Sambara said. ‘I am an honourable master.’

‘I want to be free, free from all this,’ Tara said. ‘You have built these worlds, and you keep us all in the grip. That’s why I returned to Rhodes, and that’s probably why I am here.’

‘Well, join the army,’ Sambara said. ‘Be one of my pirates, and when it’s your birthday I will wake you up.’

‘You are a sorcerer, Sambara,’ Tara said, ‘and I cannot do anything about that. But I won’t be your beggar. I will find my way.’

‘How, Tara ?’ Sambara asked. ‘As you know I hold all the worlds in my hand. All ways are mine.’

Tara took the amulet from her forehead, raised it against the sorcerer and spoke : ‘In the Name of the Cat, let me and my people go.’ Green radiation came out of the amulet, striking the sorcerer. But this time the sorcerer stood up and walked towards Tara to put a snake-necklace around her neck. It was like Tara was losing her mind. He pushed her into a hole like a pit, and after a deep fall she fell into a desert. The sun was burning in her neck. Strange guards came towards her, attaching a chain to her necklace to connect her to the other slaves. There were lakes of fire everywhere. Here they could drink to receive painful strength. Months of heavy labour in the desert followed. Tara lost all her dignity. She became a savage more than ever. The sun was burning her skin every day, even in the nights.

They led her to a city in the depths of the desert. It was a gladiator city where she had to fight for her life, but she conquered, and everyone feared her. Fight after fight she won, and soon she became the queen of the city. But she had still her necklace. It brought her much pain always.

The more she tried to get the necklace of Sambara off, the tighter it became. It was almost strengling her. ‘Be glad, Tara,’ the necklace suddenly spoke. It was like a snake. ‘Why would you break the curse of black time. You have seen where it can lead you. It lets everything melt.’

‘Yes, when I take the knife of black time without breaking the necklaces, then everything melts,’ Tara said. ‘The power of Sambara is in the necklaces. They are conductors, but when they are broken, then Sambara will turn into stone.’

‘It will be a disaster,’ the necklace spoke. ‘For then everything will turn into stone.’

‘Who are you ?’ Tara asked.

‘I am also a slave of Sambara,’ the necklace spoke.

‘How can I free you ?’ Tara asked.

‘As I said, everything would turn into stone when you would free us,’ the necklace said. ‘There is only one way : red time.’

‘What is that ?’ Tara asked.

‘It is the only thing making us safe against the melting and the turning into stone,’ the necklace said.

‘Where can we find it ?’ Tara asked.

‘In the depths of the desert,’ the necklace said, ‘it is like clay.’

The necklace knew a way to get underground, and showed Tara the place where the red clay was. She had to cover her body with it. She also had to smear it on the necklace, and it started to move again, becoming flexible like a snake. ‘Don’t return, Tara,’ it said. ‘The others need to find out for themselves. Just go deeper through these tunnels, and search for the core of it.

Here you will get totally free from the curse of Sambara.’ Suddenly it was gone. Tara moved further into the depths. There was red clay everywhere. She could breath again.

She was in the land of the red clay now, and she would never return. She got finally free from Sambara’s influence. She sank away in the red clay, again and again, but by holding on to some branches she could move forward. The air was thick here. She was in the underground like never before. She was free from slavery.

The End

Jewels of the Octopus

'Can you believe it ?' Tara asked. 'So many children trapped in such a small place.' She was directing her finger at a map, and the others were looking with frightened faces. 'It's really true,' she said. 'We have this thing going on for a long time, these children live underwater, not able to move, not able to see and hear, pressed into each other like siamese twins.'

'I can't belief it, Tara,' one of the boys said, 'how do they breath ?'

'You must see it like this,' Tara said, 'these kids have some sort of stones in them, by which they can breath. It gives them oxygene. These stones are some sort of jewels and they call them octopus jewels. I tell you it's a big deal, for after awhile such a stone comes free, and while it's still alive the child dies. It's like a miniature heart. They can't cut it out, as then the stone would die, so this is their way to get these stones out of the children.'

'Oh, that's cruel,' another boy said, 'why do they want to have these stones. I mean : come on, isn't the life of such a child more precious ....'

'Shhh,' Tara said, 'don't talk to loud, for they may hear it. We have this map now, and we need to be careful. The map will lead us to the places where the kids have been locked up. But it comes to this, listen : These stones are duplicators when they are on their own and when they would still be alive. They can clone souls and build new universes like this universe, but with a subtile difference. The radiation of these stones have simple access to the brains. This is how they produce natural change and even time.'

'That sounds wonderful, Tara, but why do these kids have to be sacrificed for that ?' the boy said.

'I think it is all a powergame, Huntas,' Tara said. 'The Octopus Queen of Lirmitia wants to rule the universe by it, and she already does that for a big deal.'

'Do you really want to be my mother ?' Huntas asked. 'Since you saved me out of that cave, that idea attracts me.' Tara sighed. She knew that the boys were still in danger. The Octopus Queen would do everything she could to get the boys back.

'Okay,' Tara said, 'I will be your mother, but you must promise me something.' And then there was a long conversation. A conversation by which Tara knew that her life would be changed. The Octopus Queen had locked up and tortured these boys for so long, and they were bearing many secrets in them. But they didn't know anything about the children of the lake. They called it lake, but it was a sort of swimmingpool. And Tara was persistent ... She wanted to help these kids out. But she also knew about the costs of it. There were a lot of dangers, and she knew that without the boys she wouldn't have any chance.

She had stolen the map from Kwibrillis, the killer-thief. He used to go around to kill people just so that he could steal their property. But the domain of Kwibrillis wasn't without dangers. The boys knew a lot about Kwibrillis and his traps, and within a short time they could get out of the place without any troubles.

The boys knew about an elevator leading them into the heart of the place of the Octopus Queen. It was a long trip, but the boys knew how they had to handle the elevator. They used this elevator when they had to go to work. In early years they were part-time slaves of the Octopus Queen. They had some sort of device in their necks which would make troubles if they wouldn't come to her place to do work every day. It was very hard work, and the boys were tired most of the time ... very tired. But since one of the boys had found a way to get rid of the device they escaped, but got caught again by the army of the Octopus Queen. They brought them the the cave, a horrible place of imprisonment and torture. But when they heard about the children of the lake they knew that it was way worse there. In the beginning they thought they didn't have such a stone in the depths of their bodies, but Tara explained to them that they also had such a stone, but that it was still lying dorment there. It had to be activated first. First the boys got excited about the idea that when it would be activated they could live underwater, but then the terror of reality struck their head : If they would fall into the hands of the queen again, then maybe they would became children of the lake too. Tara knew the dangers, and the map explained a lot.

In the heart of the queen's place there were always a lot of mirrors, and the boys never knew why. Tara explained to them that these mirrors were actually camera's to duplicate their souls. Then myriads and myriads of subtile changes got beamed into their heads to let them move and to experience time. They were more or less brainslaves of the queen, but the system had some weak spots.

The queen herself was surrounded by octopus stones, and wore them like jewels. She was like immortal and invincible for a big deal, and by her eyes she knew almost everything. They said her eyes could watch through walls, and she knew what she wanted. Tara knew she had to be very careful. She was wondering what Kwibrillis would have to do with such a map. The map was telling them that when they would be in the heart of the place they had to take the left tunnel. They had to wait for the night, as then the mirrors were recharging, and they were weaker then. But strange watchers were walking there. The boys said that these watchers were some sort of monkeys. They were part of the queen's army. In the distance they saw the queen

sitting on a throne of stones, strange stones, like beating hearts, small hearts, like the hearts of smaller animals, but there were also some bigger stones. The stones were very strange, like they were reflecting so many things. Even watching these stones could let you feel strange.

Suddenly one of the watchers was looking them right into their faces, but it was like he was far away, like he was sleeping or something, or he just didn't really see them. What was going on here ? Suddenly Tara shouted : 'Run !' And they had to run to the left tunnel. It would be a long run, as it was a big place. Tara had to shout, because she suddenly took notice of the fact that big guns were moving towards them. Maybe the watchers weren't sleepy at all, or these guns were just sensitive, operating on their own. 'Dive !' Tara shouted. The boys all did what she said, as the guns started to fire like crazy. Suddenly alarms got activated all over the place.

'Intruders located in front of Certiviks Tunnel,' a computerized intercom spoke, 'Intruders located in front of Certiviks Tunnel.'

Suddenly the queen stood before them. She had some flowers in their hand. How could she move so fast to this place ? But when they looked to the throne in the distance, she was also sitting there. Was it a ghost, or a clone, or just someone else ?'

'No, I am the queen,' the appearance said, 'I am just liquid, like the fluids of a jelly-fish. I warn you not to move any further, for the fluids will strike you.' They were now surrounded by guns, guns in the air, moving on rails.

Tara slowly grasped her spear. But the appearance said : 'If I were you, I wouldn't do that, as this is my home, and I don't want to have any fights here. Neither will I kill any of you. But I am in need for some gladiators, so be my guest.'

And then the queen moved towards an enormous stairways downstairs, and made a movement with her hand as a sign they had to follow her. 'Fortunately,' one of the boys whispered, 'we won't become children of the lake.' But Tara watched straight ahead, not taking any notice of the boys' whisperings. The guns were moving with them. They game to a place called Royal Gun Lodge. Gladiators full of rage and hate were staring at them. The boys started to shiver. If they had to fight those big ones there wouldn't be any shatter of them left. There was a man Lactroctus, a man of great and strange power. The queen pushed Tara towards the man, and he hugged her, but then he knocked her head by his head. Tara took her spear and pierced his heart, but the man was only laughing. 'Wounds will heal,' he smiled. Then he took the spear out of his heart, and kicked Tara on her knee, very hard. Tara fell down and he put his foot on her head. But then Tara swung with the other part of her body in the air and took his head between her legs after she had kicked him in his back. The man fell down, but then another gladiator came. He took Tara and freed the man. Again it was like the gladiator hugged Tara, but soon it turned into a killing grip. Tara couldn't breath anymore, and also the other man had her in a grip again. Then a third gladiator came, and while they held Tara in the air by keeping her legs and arms tight the third gladiator jumped on her and then started jumping like crazy. Then the queen pushed the boys towards the men, but they were all laughing at the boys. The boys couldn't do anything against the men. Tara had a tough time with the jumping gladiator. And the boys soon layed on the ground by all the kicks they got, and the piramid was moving to finally step on them. Suddenly Tara felt a rush of strength streaming into her body, and she could move away a bit, while the jumping gladiator fell towards the ground. He screamed, while Tara could free one leg, kicked the other gladiator, and then also the other. She knew

that spears didn't help, but it was like the three gladiators were done now. The boys still had a hard time, for they were still under heavy legs and bodies, but soon they also got freed. The queen clapped in her hands.

'I have observed you,' she said to Tara. 'I think I can use you. Come with me.'

'What will you do to the boys ?' Tara asked.

'You can leave them here, or take them with you, that's in your hands,' the queen said.

'Then I take them with me,' Tara said. But one of the boys wanted to stay as he was afraid he would become a child of the lake. So he stayed, but as soon as Tara and the other boys were gone, the gladiators killed the boy.

The queen took them to an area above the heart of the place. There were a lot of windows here, and they could watch the sea. 'I want to ask you something,' the queen said the Tara. And then a long long conversation followed, something Tara couldn't recall, but when she woke up, she had been tied in a cage full of water, like a box with windows. Only her head was rising above the small waves, but the waves soon became wilder, and Tara had to fight for her life. Where was she ? And where were the boys. After awhile it got calmer and calmer, and Tara could breath again. Some lights were gleaming in the distance. She saw the boys sitting in the same sort cages. 'Hey !' Tara shouted, 'I think you could better stay with the gladiators, as we have become prey for the lake. Altough I am not sure if this is the same. Some of the boys were crying.

Then the queen came into the room, took Tara out of her watercage and gave her a towel. 'I am now sure of it,' the queen said, 'you do not have anything we can use, but the boys will stay here.'

'No !' Tara shouted, 'they belong to me. Please take me instead of them. Do with me whatever you want, but set the boys free.'

But the queen didn't have any interest for that. 'I'm sorry, woman, but you don't have anything of interest to me. I will set you free, but the boys will stay here.'

Tara felt very dizzy and didn't know what to do. Some of the boys were shrieking and screaming. She knew that they were destined to become children of the lake. But first they would have to get rid of her. Tara almost couldn't move, like there were strange fluids in her bones. What did they do to her ? Much of it Tara couldn't recall, but when she woke up, she was out of that horrible place, but she knew she had to return.

She decided to go to Sanchez, the shaman, an old friend. Maybe he had some advice. But she also knew that Kwibrillis the killer-thief was hunting for her soul. It was like his spirit-voice was entering in her brain so strong. As she had stolen his map, but now the map was gone, but it was still strong in her head. She would never forget about that map, as it was a horror beyond terms. It would torture her mind for the rest of her life, like a trauma.

It was a riddle begging her to solve it. When she got to Sanchez he was sleeping. She made some drinks for him, and went to his room. She always had free access here, as he was such a good friend. They had a history together, and Tara always called him Snakefriend. 'Hey

Snakefriend !' she said, while she offered the drinks to the sleeping old man. 'Huh ? Now that is a surprise, and what I call the best breakfast in my life !' he almost shouted of joy. Tara took a chair. His house still looked like a castle. She told the story about the boys, and what happened, while Sanchez walked to an old tall cupboard. He took some sort of stones out it. 'These ones are dead. Here, octopus jewels, but they won't work. They are dead. But I use them for they tell me everything,' he said, murmuring. Then he smiled. 'Tara, old friend,' and he took her by the arm, and took her to another room, 'I'm so glad you are here, as I'm sure we can solve this thing.'

He threw the stones on a table, and they even really looked like they were dead. Tara remembered the stones of the queen which beated like hearts ... They were alive and well, but these stones were really dead, although the man said they still had a voice.

'Long ago,' the man said, 'Tara, listen, as this is important. Long ago the queen wasn't a queen. She wasn't even a princess. She was never a princess. There was a fight, and she took it over.'

'You mean she just disactivated the princess or queen and became queen herself ?' Tara asked. 'Yes,' the old man said, while his eyes began to shimmer. There was an old ruler, a king. It was horrible. He had a swimmingpool fool of crocodiles, jellyfishes, octopi, everything, and he used to throw his servants in these reservoires, and if they would survive, they would become his priests.'

'His priests ?' Tara asked, 'Did he think he was a god or something ?'

'No, no,' the old man said. 'he thought he was a prophet. He had to lead his priests to a sort of god, a crocodile.'

'Oh,' Tara laughed, 'hmmm ...' Tara's eyes started to shimmer also .... In a strange sense she always liked to hear about crocodiles .... And the old man continued : 'These crocodiles, Tara, were sacred to him, to the king. He thought that they would choose their own priests. If a servant survived them, then he was destined to become a crocodile-priest.'

'But one day Luceriamma, the lady of the octopus, came to his house, killed the king after a long fight, killed all the crocodiles, ruined their temples, and took the priests and their children. After conversations she drowned the priests, but the children she kept, as they would have the so called sleeping stones of the octopus. If these stones would be awakened, or activated, these kids would be able to live underwater. In the beginning she used these children to work underwater, to do research. But later she wanted to use these stones for other purposes. She knew that if she would take the stones out of the children then the stones would die, so she brought them in a project called child of the lake. Well, you know all about that. There is something she fears : Yes, the crocodile. That's why she killed it from the beginning.'

The old man stared at the table with the stones, took the stones, and threw them on the table again. 'The crocodile is a smart animal,' the old man said, 'and she knew the animal would take revenge after the destruction of their temples. There's something mysterious about the crocodile, and she fears it. Not many know this secret, but I can tell you : Kwibrillis knows. He could always penetrate her domains because of his skills .... It has to do with the crocodile. Kwibrillis was a crocodile-priest in the past. He was one of the few who could escape, but because of all the murders he saw he became bitter and dangerous. And believe me, these crocodile-priests weren't the nicest and friendliest men already. Kwibrillis is now feared more

than ever, but he's carrying some deeper secrets. Some say he now works together with the queen, but no one really knows.'

'Well, we have to find out before it's too late,' Tara said persistently. 'I know some numbers to ride on. Give me the stones.' The man took the stones and gave them slowly to Tara. Tara tossed the stones in her hands and threw them on the table. 'You see, I am not good at this, shaman, but tell me what you see ?' Tara said.

'You are right,' the shaman said, 'there isn't much time.'

On their way to the palaces of the queen, the shaman said to Tara : 'Tara, I want you to know about the secret of the crocodile, and you must carry it close to your heart. It will heal you, and it will give you the key to the queen's heart where you can rescue these poor children.' Tara nodded. She wanted to belief everything the old man said, but something in her told her it wasn't right. What that was she couldn't explain.

In the palace the shaman said he wanted to speak to the queen. After awhile there was some space to do that, and the shaman got permission to enter before the queen's throne. Tara went with him. It was like the queen didn't recognize Tara, or this was just another clone. 'Watch me now,' the shaman whispered to Tara.

'Dear queen of all,' the shaman said, 'you probably know me from all the predictions I made for you, and yes, you see it all got into place. I predicted to you long ago that you would conquer the crocodile-king and his priests and that you would use their children's stones to wrought your dominion. I gave this to you.'

Tara didn't know what she heard, but she thought maybe he was trying to hypnotize her or something.

'Queen, the stones of the octopus, the dead ones, coming out when a child dies before it's time, or when the stone gets cut out, then it's not happening by the excellent way of letting them being released in our most sacred project : the child of the lake, for then the stones would be alive to become soul-cloners, and by that mastering time and change. You gave me the dead stones, to give me a better way of communicating with the dead, but honestly, my queen, I want to do a humble request,' the shaman said.

'She thinks I am her clairvoyant,' the shaman whispered to Tara. 'He died, but when she once saw me, she thought he had returned, so I just act like it.' Tara nodded. She knew how dangerous this all was, and she wondered why he didn't tell her this earlier. Maybe he had his reasons. But now they stood here before the huge throne surrounded by the beating and pulsating, almost breathing jewels of the octopus.

'What is it you want, oh clairvoyant,' the queen spoke. 'You know I would give you anything, even if it would be the half of my kingdom.'

'Do you see this woman here before you ?' he asked the queen. 'Do you know who she is ?' The queen shook her head. At the same time the shaman took a weapon. He directed the weapon to Tara and said : 'What if she is an intruder ?' Tara was wondering what the shaman was trying to do. Was he trying to confuse the queen, or was there something else going on, something which Tara couldn't grasp yet ?

Tara knew that the queen on the throne probably didn't have contact with the queen who prisoned her boys, or she was just playing games. But in a sense the queen here looked like a doll, like a very old person. The shaman just wanted to be sure that she didn't remember Tara, or that she just didn't know Tara. 'Hey Tara,' the shaman whispered, 'This clone guards the octopus-jewels, but you can see what her loss is. There is a big price to pay for someone with such riches.' Tara nodded.

'Show me the secret of the crocodile !' the shaman shouted. Suddenly the throne and even the queen started to split up, and the walls around them started to move away. They were stearing into a treasure room full of shiny green jewels like bubbles. Tara was amazed. 'How did you do that ?' she asked the shaman. 'Actually this was a hologram,' the shaman said. 'There is a certain code to have access here.'

'But why didn't you do this before ?' Tara said. 'Did you forget about the children you talked about. I thought you knew it, I mean : all the horror happening in the lakes, you know, those damned swimmingpools of the queen.' But suddenly the shaman was gone. A few moments later he came again, having his hands full of crocodile-jewels. 'These ones are dead, do you know ?' he said, 'but they look shiney, right ? I can predict with these. Come away with me.'

When they got to the shaman's house again, Tara was very confused. 'You are really a riddler,' she said, 'and I still do not know if I can really trust you.'

'Tara, listen,' the old man said, 'feel your heart. I'm serious. It's a certain code. The queen was protecting the dead stones of the crocodiles, let's say guarding, because she is madly in fear of these. When they come alive her kingdom is over. Tara, listen. You and I have a job to do. I hope you can follow this, for it's really all a riddle, but you have to trust me. When these stones come alive, she's dead, I'm telling you : she's dead. She was always in fear that someone would discover these dead stones and find a way to make them alive.'

'What is their power ?' Tara asked.

'Well, when they are dead, they don't have power but only some clairvoyant abilities, although not as much as dead octopus stones. But when these ones come alive, these crocodile jewels, then lady octopus can say goodbye, even with all her octopus stones,' the shaman said, while he smiled. The shaman was very excited about the stones.

'Now, look what I will do ...' the shaman said.

'But the children, we need to save the children,' Tara said.

'We cannot save any child from there without doing this,' the shaman said, 'so watch this, what I will do now is ...' And the the shaman took the dead octopus stones, to put them into a sack together with the crocodile stones. He brought them to a kettle, and boiled some water. Then he threw the stones in the kettle, stirred the liquid mass, and mixed it. Then he took a cup, filled it, drank from it and gave it to Tara. Also Tara drank from it. 'You stupid donkey,' Tara said, 'do you really think this will help us ?' But after awhile Tara felt weak, and had to lay down. Strange powers came over her, and she got a vision that she had a strange ancient armour. When she woke up, she told the shaman about the hallucination. 'Oh, then it's working already,' the shaman said. Tara felt like she was very heavy. She tried to rise up, but

she couldn't. She was still very very dizzy. 'Man, what did I eat,' she said. The shaman was smiling.

'Why don't you feel anything ?' she asked the shaman. 'Oh,' the shaman said, 'I am used to drink these sorts of stuff, although I never drank this one. But later the old man also got the same stuff. He got weak, lay down, and got visions. After waking up, he also felt very heavy. 'Oh, you bastard,' Tara shouted, 'I begin to have pains.' But the man didn't answer, like he was struggling for his life. The day after it was a little bit better with them both. Suddenly there was ticking on the door. It was the queen. 'Clairvoyant !' she shouted, 'My sleeping part on the throne said you came to steal crocodile stones instead of asking.'

'Well, I made a request,' the shaman said, 'and then she said that I could have half of her kingdom.'

'Yes, but then you commanded to open the door of the crocodile. Is that true ?' the queen asked.

'I just did my request,' the shaman said.

'My whole kingdom is based on dead crocodile-stone, and it needs to stay dead,' the queen said. 'Show me the stone !' the queen shouted. The shaman went with her and Tara to the kettle, but there was a big bloody piece of meat in it, like a big muscle or giant-eye. Then the queen looked at Tara. 'I know this woman,' she said, 'but let me think.'

'How are my boys ?' Tara asked.

'You won't get them,' the queen said. 'They are almost ready to release their octopus stones, and then they will die.'

'Claivoyant, where is the stone !' the queen shouted.

'I do not know, it was here,' he said. Then the queen grasped in the kettle, and soon she took a stone out of it, and it was a crocodile stone, but it was still dead. 'Thank the gods it didn't come alive,' the queen said. 'How many of them do you have ?' Then the queen also grasped all the other stones out of the kettle and left.

But the shaman smiled, and said he knew she would come. He went to the sack where he had put them in yesterday, and took the biggest one out of it. 'Still have this one,' he said, 'and see : It's coming alive.' The stone was shining more and more, and also beated a pit, and pulsated. Tara smiled. This was where they were waiting for. 'I had a dream this night,' Tara said. 'I wore the crocodile-jewel on my forehead and I could go to the boys. I could save all the children.' The shaman smiled. 'Then, why not let it happen ?' Together with the stone they went to the palace of the queen. The stone was glowing and became hot. 'Lay me on the walls of the palace,' the stone said. When the shaman stuck the stone to the wall near the gate of the palace the palace suddenly exploded. But from all sides watchers were coming, directing their spears at them, but there was fire coming from the stone destroying them all. In the air they saw the left tunnel hanging, and Tara knew they had to be there. 'Throw me towards the left tunnel,' the stone spoke. The shaman threw the stone, and when it hit the walls of the tunnel the tunnel fell down. There was nothing but fire all over the place, and the fall of the tunnel caused an enormous hole in the ground. There was an empty space there, and through the mist

they could walk inside, where they soon found the missing children. They took them out of their reservoirs and told them about the crocodile stone. Soon there was an army of children. The crocodile stone was flying in front of them like an amazing flame. 'You will from now on carry this flame in your heart,' the floating crocodile stone said, 'and it will protect you. There lives a desired stone in you, activated by an evil queen. It is the octopus jewel, by which you lived underwater. But when my flame activates your stones then it will let you master time and space.'

The kids were all in joy as they felt that the flame was coming in them to touch the bewitched stones in them. Now they felt like their soul got free, multiplied so many times, to make the subtile changes they needed. They now could move, they now could see and hear, and most of all : they could speak.

The Spear with

the Two Sharkstones

That's none of your business ! Tara shouted to the man. The man left the chessboard. He didn't want to play Martian Chess with Tara anymore, as she didn't want to tell him her secrets. It was torturing the mind of this man for so long, and that's why he invited or maybe challenged her to do the Martian Chess. But soon she found out that it was a way for him to come closer to her heart. In the game he asked her all kind of questions. He came too close to her heart, and finally she pushed him away. That was the end of the game.

On the other hand Tara was worried about him. He seemed to be very intelligent, someone who would sacrifice himself to have some access. He was a man with a certain disease in his head, and many with that disease committed suicide on a certain age. The man almost reached that age, so Tara felt some sympathy towards him, and some suffering on her side. Or was she the one who would have the ability to help him through ? Tara couldn't resist the tension when the night was falling, and went to the house of the man. He lived alone.

Tara knocked on his door. The man was very friendly. He was glad she returned. 'I won't ask you too much anymore, Tara. I have learned my lesson now,' he said a bit shy. Tara smiled : 'It's okay. I was just a bit of worried about you. I'm glad you still like me. Let's have a drink.' A minute later the man came to the table with some drinks for him and Tara. The man stared at Tara, while she didn't feel so comfortable with that. She tried to break the tension a bit : 'So now you want to dig into my secrets just by staring at me ?' she asked friendly. The man didn't say anything. Suddenly he started to cry. 'Tara,' he said, 'you know about my disease, right ?' Tara nodded friendly. 'Tara,' he said, 'and you also know that I'm almost at the age of the death-fight, right ?' Tara nodded again. 'Well,' the man said, 'They will come, the sharks, to test me if I'm strong enough. If not, I will die by my own hand.' Tara knew these sort of things. It was a disease calling for hallucinations about sharks, and on a certain age the sharks would be defeated or would possess the person. Tara was worried about him. 'Say,' Tara said, 'don't you think it would be a great idea that I will stay with you when you have those fights. I'm a good fighter. I will be close to you, and you can call me whenever you want, but please,

don't ask too many questions, as I cannot handle that. I mean, I only tell my secrets on base of trust, when I'm ready, and not because someone's asking. You always go so deep.' The man was smiling. 'Tara,' he said, 'the fight already began. Can you stay with me this night. I have a room for you.' Tara nodded. She now started to think about how she could help him in that fight.

She always wondered about how such a disease could come into someone's brains. It was a demon's sword. 'Can you tell me something about your disease ?' Tara asked.

'Yes,' the man said, 'I got it when I was three years old, when I fell from a high platform. My head crashed on the ground. Now the wound is calling forth these hallucinations. It's like a helmet of demons.'

Suddenly things around them started to move. In the air they heard someone was murmuring : 'Tara, liar.' Tara took her sword, and they both saw a ghost appearing before them. It was an old spirit with a crimson suit. He had a beard and horns. 'Back off, Tara,' the demon spoke, 'he has the scar, so he is ours. Now we will see if he's ready to die.' But Tara shouted : 'He isn't ready to die, and he will not die, as I fight for him. I can handle those demons.' But then a wind struck Tara and she got almost slammed against the wall. Tara took an arrow, took her bow and shot an arrow at the ghost, but he was just laughing. 'How can you fight something which is spirit and soul by a material arrow or sword,' the demon laughed. 'No one knows the secret of the sharks, and you won't either.'

Then Tara grasped her amulet she once got from Soms, and aimed it's radiation at the ghost-appearence. The demon was screaming, but then he shouted : 'I will be back.' Then he disappeared in a flash. That night the man was having terrible nightmares, and felt himself like a little boy. Tara went to his room to hold his hand. There wasn't any ghost-appearence, and Tara had given him the amulet to keep them at a distance. The man was very gratefull, but now he was in such a worry. 'I feel powers moving across my skin, Tara, moving across my arms. I do not want to cut myself, but the forces are so strong, like I'm fighting against sharks. I do not know their weapons and secrets. They are stronger and bigger than I,' the man said.

'Call for Soms,' Tara said. 'I almost never pray to him, but whenever I'm in life-threats I call for him. He's the memory. He shows up once and for all, but that's enough to live by for eternity. He is strong, stronger than any god, and that's why he's mine.'

'So he isn't a good communicator, but a good fighter ?' the man asked.

'He talks through riddles,' Tara said, 'he's a cryptic.'

That night the two sleep close together. Tara held him in a good grip so that he couldn't hurt himself. That morning the man is full of Soms. It's like he has some secrets now, and all what Tara can do is smile. But she said : 'Don't talk too much about Soms. He doesn't like that.'

But the man is unstoppable, and goes to the city like an evangelist. When he comes home and talks about what happened in the city, Tara gets mad. 'I told you not to tell much about Soms. You just don't listen,' she said.

'Ah, you're just jealouse,' the man said. 'With Soms I can defeat the sharks.' Then Tara becomes very silent. The man gives her the amulet back, and thinks he can deal with everything on his own now. That night Tara leaves. She's glad that the man has an idea of Soms now, but she doesn't like the fact that the man sees himself as a discipel of Soms, as Soms isn't too much in that stuff. Soms is an enigma.

The man all of a sudden has a lot of power. All the martians around him are amazed. On the marketsquares he is boasting that he's a gladiator, invincible and immortal. He beats the strongest men into the earth, and defeats the strongest beasts. And when the critical age comes it gets away and he's still alive and well. But he still feels the wound in his head, and it's like it's aching more than ever. He feels powerfull forces giving him such strength, but he feels sick. 'Oh, sickness and pain is the only thing you can expect from Soms,' Tara always tells. As that is the only way to develop yourself, and to create eternal strength. It cuts both ends.

Tara is glad the man feels happy now, and he can help so many others on Mars. But at the same time, she's still worried. And she even doubts Soms, as she sometimes has the feeling that Soms leads them all to the traps. Like he's just some sort of trickster. Tara believes in herself.

One night it's like she's fighting against a shark, and he is looking for her sword, and then he changes into some sort of ghost. 'I told you I would return.' the demon said. 'I do it faster than you.'

'Now wait a minute,' Tara said, 'Why are you here, and why do you need my sword.' But then the demon went away. She realized that these sharks were the guards of the memory, and the files of history. They would copy these files into so many that they could freeze the past. They didn't want to change the past, as it was a riddle in their eyes. They needed the sword of Tara to solve it. Tara knew the shark-priests in their temples. They believed in a creature called Most, and he was the god of repeatance and freezing. They knew that only in the Most a riddle would solve itself, and the path to the Most was repeatance. It was said that Most created the crowds. He created the sand of the deserts and the drops of the oceans. And his goal was to make them all one. That was the secret of the sharkstone she once stole, to put in her sword. She knew that once they would steal it back. If Most would succeed in his plans, then time would stand still, and there wouldn't be a future anymore, only that of domination.

It was like Mars was sinking away in the waves of multitudes, all becoming one. That was the reason why she once stole the stone. She knew of it's dorment dangers. In full revenge she went to the evil temples and their priests and slayed them one by one. Their only interest was the past, not the present, nor the future. The past would have it's own future. Now they had stolen Tara's sword they could solve their riddles. But in one of their temples Tara found the sword, but to her surprise she also found the man she once loved. He was now a shark-priest, as he believed that the sharks had initiated him by the fall and the disease. He had survived and was now worthy to be their highpriest. Most of the ones who survived the disease and the critical age became highpriests of such temples. That was also one of Tara's biggest fears, that he would be one of them. To Tara it was all nothing but a conspiracy, but she couldn't kill the man she once loved. He still wore her amulet. 'Give me the sword back, Andrulian,' Tara said. But the man gave her a spear. The spear had two sharkstones instead of one. 'Why don't you go home to contemplate about this ?' the man said. 'I still follow Soms, and his riddle brought me here.'

Tara took the spear, and could feel the forces of the spear. The man was smiling. 'Your not in the right place here, Andrulian,' Tara said, 'these men here are dangerous. I have slain them one by one, but you I will spare.'

'But Tara,' the man said, 'by Soms I will change this religion and make something good out of it. Don't you think that's great ?' But Tara went away. She didn't want to have anything to do with religion, as Soms hated it. Outside there was lightening and thunder. Later she changed her mind, and wanted to see the man again, but she never saw him again. He was gone. No one knew where he would be. The only memory about him she could hold in her hands was the spear with the two sharkstones.

The Strongest Touch

Yes, it was a prison there, this spooky Icel River. Not many would go there, as tormented ghosts were living there. They had been in prison too long, a prison designed by king Oxtacmar the Fifth. But Tara was on her way to it. It all came down to the secret of this river. This river had been cursed. They called it ghost-prison. It was only the king, his daughter and his servants who came there a lot. No one knew what actually the secret was, but Tara did. She knew about the terrible history of the river.

Tara still wore the amulet of Soms, an amulet which always seemed to come back to her. She took it off, and threw it far into the river. 'That will do,' she thought. At the same time she laughed in herself, as she often didn't belief in magic, but in her sword. To her that was the only thing she could really trust.

An old man sat close to the river. He was fishing. Tara watched him closely. What was he doing here ? Or was he just a king's servant ? Tara didn't serve the king. She would rather die. She was a barbarian, uncivilized, but with a beating heart. She didn't care about rules and laws. She lived by lust, as that was what was making someone real, as the flame of existance. To her lust was the subtile voice of her ancestors, although she didn't belief in family. It was nothing but a cage to her. Oh yes, she also saw lust in the heart of the king and his companions, but it was often stirred up by dominion. She only believed in the dominion of the sword.

To Tara lust needed to come forth from fear. That was a strange thought for someone like Tara from Rhodes, but she was a paradox. And that was why still certain Martians loved her. But how long would that love flow ? It was like a last flame surrounding Tara like a warm blanket.

Tara didn't belief in love, as it was an invention of civilization. The spirits of the river lived under the dominion of king Oxtacmar the Fifth. He believed in the many rituals of marriage to bind them all together as one hopeless bunch of shatters. When it became too close he would do everything to set up a liturgy of divorce, which always began in his own heart. He was the one who could bind together and separate.

As Tara's spiritvoice rose up in her, she watched how the amulet sank to the bottom of the Icel River. It was like she could see right through the waves and the waters. There were strange fishes in this river, also the reason why not many dared to come there. The fishes used to jump out of the waters to grasp passengers, to drag them into slow death. But Tara dived into the waters, and wanted her amulet back. She changed her mind about the way she wanted to deal with the river. She knew about this sacrifical river. Hundreds and hundreds of victims had to be drowned here for some sort of religion. Others believed it was an ancient cult by which millions and millions lost their lives. This was a history the king hopelessly tried to cover up.

On the bottom of the river she found a door, and she could open it to disappear in the ground. Not much did she know about the skeleton-king living here. He was friendly to her, and he gave her her amulet back. 'So this Soms you belief in doesn't have to do anything with the ancient cult,' the skeleton-king said.

'I don't belief in him,' she said. 'We're just partners. I do not belief in prayer, only when I'm in real troubles. But sometimes I rather die than to pray to some sort of god. It is wicked. I belief in the sword.'

The skeleton-king bowed towards her. 'You're an interesting girl,' he said.

And he showed her the places where these ghosts lived, and all his further skeletons. It was like an empire under the river. Tara couldn't belief she was here. It was like something beyond her dreams. The skeleton-king spoke about 'the glitter-world above', meaning the kingdom of Oxtacmar the Fifth. It was a luxury he couldn't grasp. The skeleton-king was the head of the shadow-world here. They still suffered under the heavy hand of history.

Tara felt like she was the bridge between these two worlds. She raised her sword, while the river was overflowing. She felt like she was a wizard, although she hated them most of the time. She believed in the sword. This was the man she wanted to give her sword to, the skeleton-king. The skeleton-king gave her his spear. It was a deal which would change the two worlds. They saw Tara as a messenger of the gods, but she wasn't. She didn't belief in that crap. She saw how these ghosts and skeletons were dominated by so many strange religions, and she wondered what the use of this was. She teached them about Soms, the Once and for All. He showed up once in a lifetime, once for eternity, to never return. You only needed to live by the memory, which was a cryptic one, speaking on so many levels. Soms was the enigma.

That day Tara set them free, as the rivers were overflowing. They could now be sown on the fields of the world above, first to become trees, but later to raise like giants in the wombs of the women. They wanted Tara as their king, but Tara was already gone, far away and unreachable. They only had to live by the memory they had of her. She had touched their hearts already Once and For All, and where could they find a stronger touch ?

Cold as Ice

Tara was on her way to Doxin, the smith of a small village. Tara came to let him attach an orange stone to her sword. This stone she found somewhere in Monkey Jungle in the North of Mars. But when she went into the house of the smith some heavy legs kicked her to the ground all of a sudden. It was like they struck Tara from out of nowhere. Doxin ran to Tara and asked if she was okay. No one saw anything. How could this happen ? But then Tara directed her finger to the ceiling. A heavy gorilla hung there between some balks. Suddenly Tara wondered where her stone was. It was gone. 'Hey,' she shouted to the monkey, 'just asking. Do you know where my orange stone is ?'

The monkey jumped down. Roared and ran out of the house. 'Oh Tara', Doxin said. 'I have also such an orange stone. You get that one, and I will attach it to your sword all for free.'

Tara looked into his eyes. It was such a lovely man. She gave him one of her amulets she wore around her neck. 'Oh Tara, you really don't have to do that,' he said. But Tara wanted to reward him. She wondered how Doxin got the stone and asked him about it. 'Well Tara, you really want to know ?' he said. Long ago the monkeys ruled on Mars. In that same period the Ruchons came to Mars, a race of cyborgs. It came to a gigantic war, one of the biggest wars in Martian History. The Ruchons won this war and took Mars over, while they took the most intelligent races of monkeys to their planet, Mainir. They got probably killed there, but I helped hiding some of the most intelligent monkeys in the depths of Mars. It's a long story, but because they were so gratefull they offered me a precious orange stone of Monkey Jungle, one of the rarest forms.

'No, Doxin,' Tara said, 'you need to tell me more about this. I'm interested.'

Then Doxin sat down and started to tell. He told that the most secrets of that period were in hands of a man still living with those monkeys deep down in the underground of Mars. It was a man called Silpar, who was in the Age of the Monkeys the best swordfighter on Mars. Doxin said that he also had to hide Silpar as the Ruchons wanted to kill him. Since the war Silpar didn't want to live on the surfaces of Mars anymore and stayed in the depths of the underground wilderness of Mars together with the monkeys. Silpar always said that Mars was still more or less dominated by secret satelites of the Ruchons. The more Doxin told about Silpar the more Tara became interested in him. It drove her to the edge of going there herself.

Doxin explained to her where the hidden place in the depths of Mars was. And soon she went there on a horse. It was a long trip. She had to travel for days and days. If Doxin wouldn't have explained how she could come there she would never find the place. It was a deep smokey wilderness, with such a strange smell that it almost drove her insane. If she wouldn't have drunk from some strong stuff Doxin gave to her she wouldn't be able to deal with it. This place was strange, and the air was dangerously charged. No one would be able to live here, unless he had a greater help and some insights in the secrets of this place. Tara remembered all the advices Doxin gave to her. They were like the necessary rituals to survive in a place like this. Suddenly she heard the shrieks of monkeys. A man came closer to her. His hands almost looked like satin. When she saw his eyes she got a knot in her throat. She could

immediately see that this man had been under the lovely care of Doxin. Doxin was such a magical man that it was like everything he touched would change into gold. 'Hello,' the man said friendly, 'I'm Silpar.'

'Yes,' Tara said, a bit hesitating. 'I have heard a lot from you .... from Doxin.' When the man heard the word Doxin it was like lightening came in his eyes, and they almost everflew with joy. 'You have been sent by Doxin ?' the man said. 'Then you must be good. Doxin is .... well, he would never sent anyone who could be a harm to us. Welcome, friend.' Silpar took Tara to his hut. It was a dark hut with a lot of dust. 'You never clean it here, right ?' Tara said. 'Well, no, not really,' Silpar said. 'It's the forest, you see.'

'Oh, that's okay,' Tara said, and smeared some of the dust on her hand to smell it, 'It's just .... I want to know about this odor.' Silpar smiled ..... 'It's only here,' he said. 'This had to be a place safe against the Ruchons. This dust is everywhere in the forest, and it is to protect us. It has a certain smell which can kill any Ruchon coming close.'

'Well, if you have a medicine for Mars, and you still know that satelites of the Ruchons are dominating the surfaces, then why do you keep this stuff here. I mean : spread the news,' Tara said, a bit irritated.

Suddenly the eyes of the man started to change. 'No, no, the stuff has to stay here. This nature will die if we bring it to the surface. Only in this depth the dust with the smell can be produced. If we would bring it to the surface it would turn against us.'

'Then what is it ?' Tara asked, still a bit irritated.

'Why are you doing so bitchy all of a sudden ?' the man asked.

'I'm sorry,' Tara said, 'but I am tired, and it seems I don't get it. It's like the smell is triggering something in me I cannot deal with it.'

'Speak it out, Tara,' Silpar said. 'What is it doing to you.'

'It makes me tired and angry,' Tara said.

'It always starts with this, but if you know the secrets, you will be able to deal with it,' Silpar said.

'I feel strange,' Tara said. 'It's like I want to rip you apart, but I also want to give you a hug.'

'Then hug me,' Silpar said. 'It's not forbidden here.' Tara started to hesitate. 'If you come any closer I will tear you apart.'

'Okay, I hear you speaking,' Silpar said. Some monkeys came inside. It was like they were easing Tara's feelings a bit. 'They will help,' Silpar said. 'It's all about your initiations in these atmospheres.'

Suddenly Tara felt weak. By her last strength she jumped on Silpar and took him by his throat. 'Don't play games with me. I'm not here to mess around or to get sucked in all sort of

unknown things I cannot control. Tell me about this stuff, what it is, or I'll push my arm in your mouth to take your lungs out,' Tara shouted.

'Okay, okay,' Silpar said a bit uneasy. His face had turned a bit blue and red. Tara loosened her grip a bit, and he sat down on his bed. 'Sit down on that chair ..... eh ...'

'Tara, Tara from Rhodes is the name,' Tara said.

'Tara ?' Silpar said .... 'hmmm .... That's an interesting name.' Then Tara sat down and Silpar started to tell. 'It's coming from a certain stone, the dust and it's strange smell, as an important part of the immunology of the forest. It's a stone of a certain snake and without this stone this wilderness wouldn't exist and we would be traced down by the Ruchons. We thank our lives to this stone. It is somewhere close to a waterfall and it needs to stay there.' 'What kind of snake is it ?' Tara asked. But Silpar didn't want to tell. In the night she went out of the hut when Silpar was sleeping, and she went into the wilderness to search for the stone. Silpar described the place a bit, so it was easy for her to find the place. Here she saw a large blue stone in the water in front of a small waterfall. The blue stone was almost transparent and it was like it was giving light. As she was staring at the stone a snake came forward from behind the waterfall. Such a beautiful snake Tara never saw before. Then the snake went away again. In a strange joy Tara went to the hut again. In the morning she spoke to Silpar about it, and asked him about the snake. 'It's the snake of the stone,' Silpar said. 'It has created our muscles by which we can produce the dust ourselves to raise the immunity.'

Tara looked at her muscles and then at Silpar's muscles. They had another gleam. It looked like they were softer than hers. 'How do I get your muscles ?' Tara asked. Silpar took his necklace from his neck, where teeth and nails hung. There was also a nail of a cat between them, and he pushed it into Tara's flesh. Blood started to flow, and again Tara felt anger coming over her, and irritation with other strange feelings. It was like she wanted to rip him apart again. 'Now go to the blue stone,' Silpar said, and wrap your body around it.

After awhile Tara returned with a smile on her face. 'I feel much calmer now,' she said. 'Your immunity starts to work,' Silpar said. She was now cold as ice. She didn't feel irritation or anger anymore, and neither did she feel the strange feelings she had before. She could finally rest her head now.

The End

Samdoom Shuffle

Tara awakened in her cave, down in the South of Mars. She lived here for awhile now, in this place called Maradas. She loved the place with all her passion, but she was here for a mission : to free the children of Samdoom. These children grew up in tight slavery in the worst indian tribe ever existing on Mars : Samdoom. Parents didn't have any mercy on their children, but always donated them to this form of slavery. It was some sort of ritual they had to do in these spheres so that they would stay alive. It was a dark religion : the religion of Samdoom. Actually Samdoom was the name of the Southest place of Mars and it was the name for the many indian tribes there. Tara rode on a giant widow spider across the borders of Maradas to Samdoom. Compared to Samdoom Maradas was a paradise. Tara had armed herself with many spears, and her bow with a quiver full of poison-arrows, and she felt herself comfortable on the silky spin of the giant spider. She was on her way to the central tribe of Samdoom, where priests gave money to the parents selling their children. In rage Tara slided from the spider, and threw a spear through one of the priests. Now it was war. Tara took her sword from behind her back and slayed some other priests, while the parents of the children ran away. 'Climb on the spider,' she said harshly to the children. Quickly she jumped on the spider herself who immediately had to run as warriors of the priests came after them. Tara had three children now on her spider, and one of them fell away. Tara couldn't save this one anymore. The child got pierced by a spear very quickly, as on escape the death penalty rested. This was why many of the children didn't climb on the spider.

Soon Tara was in Maradas again, and she asked the two children to tell their story. They told Tara that horrible sticky animals had been laid against their skins. These animals were more or less sacred to the tribes of Samdoom, as they were called the soul-enslavers. Tara could see the scars these animals would cause. Some places of their skin were different than other places. They also showed Tara some piercings they had in some teeth in the depths of their mouths, piercings which hurted very bad, and which had an enslaving influence on their bodies. They felt like they couldn't control themselves anymore. Then suddenly two men came to Tara's cave. Tara jumped through the air and slayed one of them, but soon others came into the cave as well. They were the indians of the Samdoom tribes, and they came with so many that Tara couldn't do anything anymore. She saw how the two children died in front of her eyes by the spear. They had tied Tara very quickly and they took her back to Samdoom. She had to come before a sort of chief in a deep, dark temple. Tara felt helpless, but suddenly her giant spider came in, and attacked her captors in full rage. 'Nomun, thank you for coming,' Tara shouted. And soon she felt the soft skin on her body setting her free. She saw the cages where the sacred animals were kept. And behind a door she saw a lot of children tied to stakes. These children got probably prepared for the ritual, but Tara set them free very quickly. The children told Tara about the older children, who already became men and women, who had to work deep in the underground. One of the children knew the way to that place, and they all followed the child. Tara gave the children same arrows so that they could fight if they needed to. It was a dark passage underground. Because of Nomun Tara knew they had a chance to survive.

Soon they got to the place where enslaved men and women had to work since they grew older. They had been chained by heavy chains, and Tara could see from their faces they lived in deep sorrows. They had to do heavy work : moving stones. It was a sort of mine in which they had to work. The stones grew on the walls and they had to cut them off. Tara thought it was strange that they didn't see any slave-guards, priests or warriors. It seemed to be a lonely place. One of the children told there had to be a unit by which electricity came from, charging the chains, and by the piercings in the teeth deep in their mouths it kept them enslaved. But soon they saw the small sacred animals all around them. The children were very afraid of

these animals. 'Their skins are hot, Tara. They can burn wounds in us which will hurt for a lifetime,' one of the children shouted. Tara knew she had to stay calm. 'Get behind Nomun,' she said. Tara didn't have any idea how to treat these animals.

Then Tara saw how the sacred animals went to the chained women and men, and how these animals started to eat from their flesh, while they were shrieking. The slaves couldn't do anything, but some of the children began to sting the animals by their arrows. Now the animals really got mad, and jumped on some of the children to eat from their flesh. The flesh didn't really disappear but it was a way to suck the flesh from the inside, especially for body-juices. More and more animals seemed to come, and Tara knew that if they would fight them, it would only get worse. She jumped on the spider, and whispered to the children to do the same. 'Tell me where the unit is,' Tara whispered. One of the children knew where it was. They had to go through some cave-passages first. In the unit they saw all sorts of buttons and lights, but no one was there. Suddenly one of the animals came in and jumped on one of the children. There was nothing they could do as the grip of the animal was too tight, and it would get only tighter if someone would attack it. 'Push the red and the blue buttons,' the child who got attacked was screaming. Tara and the children did immediately what he said. Then some green lights started to move on some screens, and after awhile the child shouted : 'Now push all the yellow buttons.' When they did that a sort of elevator opened in the wall. 'Now step in,' the child shouted, like he was the king. Also the child himself tried to creep to the elevator. 'Where will it lead us to ?' Tara asked. The child didn't say anything. Stood up, and touched a certain button in the elevator. The door got closed and they went to another floor.

The child was bleeding a bit, and Tara didn't know what to do, as every action would only cause a worse action of the animal holding the child in the grip. After awhile the door opened again, and they came in an even larger room full of buttons. The room was full of the small animals, and they sat on the machines playing with the buttons. Tara began to understand that not the indians were the slave-breeders, but the sacred animals had all the might and powers. Like rats they were playing in the machines and watched the screens to see how their marionets moved. Samdoom seemed to be one big puppetshow, and Tara began to feel sorry for the tribes. The sight had struck her brains like everything was frozen. There was one machine free, so Nomun took that one. Even Nomun didn't dare to attack any of these animals. After awhile Nomun learned how to use the machine, and could ride the machine through the room along all the other machines, while Tara and the children still stood somewhere close to the elevator like frozen.

'I know how this machine works,' one of the smaller children said. The child was so young that he could hardly speak and walk. 'One of the animals told me when I was very young.' Then the child walked towards one of the animals and said : 'This one.' And the child carressed the animal without any problems. The child took the animal on it's lap and started to push certain buttons and certain switches. Then smoke started to come from other machines, and some screens were breaking. Lots of animals started to shriek and fell dead from their machines like they had been struck by lightening. A computer-voice spoke as through an intercom : 'This building will terminate itself, as the main-frame has made a fatal error. You have three minutes to leave the building.' Tara grasped the children and went into the elevator. 'In the underground we will be safe,' said a boy, and pushed the lowest button, and a certain button for speed. It was the biggest explosion Samdoom ever had, which they survived in the nick of time. Tara and the children reached the underground, but it was like there had been an earthquake. Tara took the children to Maradas and hoped that they would be safe now.

The End

Walking on Mars

Not many know about the horrors of the South-West of Mars. But of course the Martians who live there know it, and Tara from Rhodes, a lonely warrior. When she came to the South-West of Mars she had already travelled to many other parts of Mars. To her it was a dark place with many dangers, more than any other place she had visited before. The trend in these area's was the slave-implant, and most of all the chest-implant. Surgeons would do these surgeries in which they placed strange devices just around the nipples of the prisoners of war and other sorts of slaves. The devices would trigger all sorts of energies from the prisoner, so that it would be donated to a central energy-bank. By this energy-bank they dominated the souls and the minds of the whole South-West. The South-West didn't have a name, for they just called it South-West, although there were a lot of different camps. Sometimes the South-West would attack other parts of Mars just to have more prisoners for energy-donating. It was more or less a zombification-program to turn as many as possible into their soldiers, the war-gladiators. Tara wanted to know more about this program, and once she visited the head-quarters of the South-West surgery-station. She got invited very friendly. When she started to tell about what she knew they denied everything. They showed her many rooms of surgery and what they did, and they said they didn't know anything about chest-implants. Tara was a bit disappointed. She hoped she would find out about what was probably going on in this area. One day she returned to the surgery-station and this time she had her sword with her. They were still very friendly to her, but again they denied everything she knew.

'Let me show you something,' Tara said, and cut some of her skin to show them a strange device in her chest. 'Oh, but we would never do such a thing,' they said. 'We can even take it out if you wish.' In the night Tara returned. A friend of her had explained how she could enter the station without problems. There wasn't a heavy security here. She was searching through some papers in a certain room her friend told about. Then she started one of the computers to search through their files. After awhile she found something which she could project on a large screen. It was about the chest-implant, but when she read the piece about it she came to the conclusion that they didn't have anything to do with it. The piece showed the harmfull influences of the chest-implant, and it showed how the chest-implant had a grow-mechanism to let it grow into the heart to take over the speed of the blood. She went away, but a strange man like a white cyborg stopped her. 'I know what you are looking for, Tara,' the man said. 'You are looking for the central unit, but it isn't here. Your friend had been treated here in the past, but since they have a new leader these chest-implants are forbidden now.'

'How do you know all this ?' Tara asked. Then the man took his white cyborg-helmet off, and she remembered this guy. 'What are you doing here ?' Tara asked. 'I thought you were .....'

'I have traced you, Tara, forgive me, but I had to do this. You know of our equipment, and yes, you thought I died, but my equipment was stronger. It brought me back to life, by all these grow-mechanisms,' the man said. 'But now, follow me.'

Tara was very glad she found this friend back. It seemed he followed her for such a long time, and now he got her on the right track. He seemed to know a lot more about it.

They went to a camp in the deeper wildernesses of the South-West, where indian surgeons would still do these surgeries underground. The man told Tara that the worst part of the chest-implant would grow into the brains to let them deteriorate more and more, to let them get the quality of pigs. The brains would give them signals to go to the underground at a certain age, and they will end up in a breeding. Tara knew she had all sorts of chest-implants, but her friend could comfort her that these weren't the same. That was kind of a relief for Tara. In her life on Mars she went through so many mad machines in which she got so many implants deep in her body that she didn't know if it was right or wrong anymore. She wondered where the good old Tara was, Tara the slayer, the one who didn't hesitate to use her sword, and who was the best swordfighter of all. It seemed like she got civilized through the years under a strange and unknown pressure, and she hated it. Her friend explained to her that one of the worst units of the implant was the part who grew into the brains to create a certain energy-unit called 'unit zero'. It would completely take over the motoric part of the brain controlling and dominating the muscles, and it would do that after a series of epilepsy-like and paralysis-like experiences. The codes of the muscles would be erased into the zero, and would trigger a completely new rythm of stimuli to which the muscles would respond. But they knew where it would finally lead the ones having such an implant : to the breeding underground. And Tara's friend knew exactly where this breeding was. In the distance they heard strange drums. They also saw strange dancers on their way. They wondered what was going on here. Then all of a sudden Tara's friend remembered something. The motoric part of the brain would be attached to the soundpart of the brain by the implant as in a thin ray of energy, and for ninety percent the brain would work by sounds, so that those who had the implant would be more or less soundslaves, slaves to rythms, slaves to music and dance. Tara's friend told her that if he would get a hold on such an implant he would reduce the ninety percent sound-dependency to twenty percent at first. He would give five percent to smell, five percent to vision, twenty to breath, and the rest which is fifty percent he would give to feeling.

It was like heaven was on their side, as they found the main unit in a forest deep underground, and there were no any guards. The wilderness was full of exotic unknown snakes and other predators. It was like an open computer and Tara's friend immediately started to work. He could insert the new codes, and this time he knew so many slaves would get their freedom back. It was like the old heritage of Mars finally found a way to get it right.

The End

The Jewel of Memory

Tara was on her way to the realm where a warlock would live. She had to travel a lot through the snow on the mountain. It was a high place, one of the highest place on Mars, somewhere in the South. The warlock could answer some of the questions she had, but when she came there she found him killed. A strange bird flew away when she entered his room and saw him there, bleeding. It seemed the sorceror had many enemies, and this time he got killed just before Tara arrived. Tara looked around to see if she could find any traces. Later on a barbarian man entered the room. It was a silent man, and he seemed to be the guard of the warlock. The warlock was already very old and in his life he had made a lot of enemies because of his sorcery. He was a good and wise man who saved many, many from the aristocratic claws.

'Stay with me Tara,' the barbarian guard said. 'The only place I have is this castle, and you can live her too.' The two developped a deep relationship in a short time, and they could learn a lot from each other. Outside it still snowed. The barbarian guard poured some strong drink into Tara's cup, and enjoyed her presence since his old master had been gone. He missed him very much, and he couldn't deal with the pain of it. Tara helped him through.

Deep in the night the barbarian guard challenged Tara to do chess with him, so that they could distract themselves a bit from everything. A fire was burning in the hearth. It was a cold night. Tara looked him deep into the eyes while she was moving a pawn. 'Say, what are your plans for life ?' she suddenly asked.

'Now my master is gone I do not know,' the barbarian guard asked. 'Why not traveling with me ?' Tara asked. But the man wanted to stay in the castle. Suddenly some birds came in, birds of prey. They seemed to be from the old master. One of them made a lot of noise. The barbarian guard could understand the message. 'The bird is telling us that the ones who killed my master are robbers. The birds have traced them to the place they live underground. Shall we go there ?'

Tara nodded. To her that was better than playing chess. She took a sword, and soon they both sat on the backs of some giant birds of the old master. The barbarian guard had his spear with him, and when they got to the place of robbers it soon came to a fight. 'Why did you kill my master ?' the barbarian guard roared. 'I expected aristocrats would be the killers, not robbers, as my old master helped many robbers to stay alive.'

Soon the chief of the robbers came from the dark caves, raised his old hands and spoke : 'Cursed is that Lemeniates, as he has ruined our magic. We were the aristocrats from a long period ago, but thanks to your master we had to live like swines in these places.'

Then Tara and the barbarian guard knew that they were still aristocrats at heart. In short time there was blood all over the place, as they killed many of them while others fleed. They knew it was war now. Tara showed the barbarian guard how passionate she was as a warrior. 'You are definately skilled,' the barbarian guard said. 'Well, you yourself may be here also,' Tara said. Deeper in the caves they found some old aristocratic shields, and old cuirasses, but they

also found an old man in bed. 'Forgive them what they did to your master,' the old man said. 'They do not know what they are doing. They have been booted out of the higher layers of the royals without any mercy.'

'Who are you ?' Tara asked.

'I'm the old king of Lakshuro,' the man said. 'These ones were my servants, but we all have been banned to the underground.'

'Why would my old master be to blame ?' the barbarian guard asked.

'He prophesied to me that my kingdom would fall,' the old man said. 'But he is not to blame. I should have listened to him and go away myself. My years were over. And actually to live the wild life is better than being king of idiots.'

Then two robbers stood in the opening of the cave. 'Father, we ....' but further they couldn't say anything, as the old man made some movements with his hand. 'They are not to blame,' he told his sons. 'I should have listened to the prophets, and go to the wilderness myself, but now they did it the rough way.'

Tara came closer to the old man. 'We will let anyone pay who were responsible for the death of master Lemeniates. You cannot stop us from pay-back time.' Then without any mercy she slayed the two robbers in a flash of the eye. 'Do what you think is right,' the old man said. 'I know my sons were guilty, but I asked you for forgiveness as great harm was done unto them.'

'If you want, old man, you can live with us in my master's castle,' the barbarian guard said.

'No,' the old man said. 'I will die soon, but I will give you the scepter of my old kingdom. I wish you will destroy the ones taking the kingdom of Lakshuro.'

'Don't worry about that, old man,' Tara said. Then the old man took the scepter from below his bed and gave it to the barbarian guard.

'Deep in my heart I knew my sons had to die for what they did to your master, but those who made them like this are also to blame,' the old man said.

'Come,' Tara said. 'We need to leave.'

Within a short time they got back to the castle, and they played chess again. They both remembered the request of the old man, but in a sense they knew they had to let it be. The old man didn't listen to the prophesy when he was younger, and now he had to bear the consequences. The prophesy would take care of itself. The barbarian guard knew this prophesy, and he also knew that the present order of the Lakshuro kingdom would also fall.

The barbarian guard took the book of his master's prophesy out of a cupboard and went through the pages. He was reading loud : 'After my death a woman will come to the castle through the snow. My guard will take this woman in, and he will love her.'

'What else is written about it ?' Tara asked. The barbarian guard went further through the pages. 'My guard will give the woman some of the tamed wolves in the underground below the castle.'

The barbarian guard looked at Tara, and said : 'Come with me.' He led Tara to an elevator which went downwards, and in the underground there was a large open space with wolves. 'Choose three of them,' he said to Tara. They stayed with the wolves for several days and after these days Tara knew which ones were the closest to her. They were friendly to Tara, and would be a good help in the fight. They brought the three animals to the castle, where they could live awhile in Tara's big room.

One night the barbarian guard and Tara lay in front of the hearth on a large bearskin. The barbarian guard was still reading in the book of his master's prophesies. Soon Tara lay in his arms and tried to distract him from the prophesies. 'Isn't it time you will start your own life ?' she asked the babarian guard.

'Yes, I think you are right. I need to let go of everything,' he said. Tara looked him deep in the eyes. 'He will not return and you must go on,' she said. 'Aren't you afraid you will misinterprete some of his prophesies. You almost read in it day and night since awhile.'

'I guess it's holy for me, Tara,' he said.

'And this scares me so much,' Tara said. 'I think it's dangerous when you have that attitude. Why can't you just read it as a story instead of letting it have such an impact on you.'

The barbarian looked into her eyes, and then nodded slowly. 'I think you are a wise woman, and I know I need to look for my own wisdom instead of always building on others.'

'You have fire in your eyes, do you know that ?' Tara said.

'And what does that mean ?' the barbarian asked.

'That you are passionate, which is a mix of anger and pain, such a strong lust for the deeper things. It can trick you, so be on your guard. Always be careful, in the passion of fear. That is your protection,' Tara answered.

'Do I need to be afraid of you ?' the barbarian asked.

'I am afraid,' Tara said. 'Afraid of the fire of passion, afraid that it will lead us astray, afraid that we can't control it any longer. You are such a good, good friend, but I never want to be dependant again. We have to live on our own.'

'But we live on our own,' the barbarian said. 'We have our own rooms. Although this is our place together where we come sometimes.'

'I'm more interested to know who of us is stronger,' Tara said when she smiled. 'There are so many things in which we can test and train our strength .... It's a sort of competition, like chess.'

Then the barbarian grasped Tara in a tight grip. 'Okay, try to get out of this grip.' Tara smiled, made some movements and freed herself while kicking him hard in his stomach. He rolled in speed to the wall, and then he said : 'I already gave up on you. You're not my type. You're way to strong for me. I need someone like a small lamb.'

'Oh, come on, you can beat me at other things,' Tara said. 'You have won with chess a couple of times.' Again the barbarian tried to grasp Tara but this time she grasped him and took him in such a tight grip that he almost couldn't breath anymore. 'Okay, peace, Tara,' he said.

'No, I won't let you go this time,' Tara said. 'You now know there isn't any way to mess with me.'

'I know,' the barbarian said with a small voice. It was like he was in the grip of a giant python. 'Want to play some chess ?' he tried.

He didn't like that she was stronger than him. He was stronger than most of the Martian men, and that was his pride, although it was a sweet man with a good heart. Tara was one of a kind so he could finally come over it. Maybe one time he would be able to beat her, both in chess and wrestling.

Their relationship was like a deep brother and sister relationship, and in a strange sense it never got deeper. They satisfied each other in other ways. When the wolves grew up it was for Tara time to go. She wouldn't feel comfortable if she would live here all her life, and so she left the castle with the wolves, and they would remind her of one of the most precious period in her life. It was like a jewel in her memory.

The End

The Insects

with the Many Heads

Tara heard a woman singing in the distance. When the woman came closer, it appeared to be only a head. Tara remembered this machine, and was in a shock. Suddenly she saw all the other heads. It was the Machine of Democracy. ‘Tara,’ the woman said. ‘We have returned, as we want to be a part of you, and we want to lead you.’

‘Go away,’ Tara shouted, as she didn’t want to have anything to do with this insane machine. After she had defeated Sharla the Head Hunter she didn’t want to have anything but rest. But the machine was back, and she knew this was one of the creatures of Sharla the Head Hunter,

maybe the last part of her army. Tara knew she had to defeat this machine in order to come any further. Her friends had been enslaved by this machine, and they wanted her to belief that there was no escape from it. According to them she was doomed to sink deeper into it. ‘Never,’ Tara thought.

‘But we want you and love you,’ the woman’s head spoke.

‘Who are you ?’ Tara asked harshly. ‘I do not know you.’

‘I am the woman who represents this machine,’ the woman’s head said. ‘I am the machine, and all the other heads are my slaves, or if you would like to say : other parts of me.’ Tara was in a shock. The sight was striking her like nothing else. Suddenly a woman stood before her while she was leaning to her horse. The woman looked like a ghost, and also her horse. ‘Yes, that’s me,’ the head spoke. It’s my ghost living in the depths of the arena of the machine. I am the master of it.’

‘So you let all the other ghosts of the machine fight for you ?’ Tara asked.

‘Yes, oh yes,’ the woman said, and then she started to sing again. Tara knew that if she would fight the machine the heads and ghosts would split up and grow in number, so that wasn’t an option. More horses seemed to come, and it started to look like a horse lottery. The woman was dealing in slaves. She had a strange amulet around her neck, so strange that Tara just had to grasp it. Then Tara ran away with it. ‘I bet this has something to do with it,’ Tara said to herself. It was like the woman stood frozen now. Tara put the horse chainlet around her neck, and suddenly she found herself singing. It was strange, for all the horses started to follow her. ‘I am lonely,’ someone started. Bodies seemed to come out of the heads, while the heads got torn away like the were masks. The bodies stretched themselves out and screamed. The woman still stood there like frozen. ‘Run away,’ Tara shouted to the bodies, ‘or she will bewitch you again.’ The bodies jumped and climbed on the horses and soon they all vanished in the sky. The sky got dark and clouded, and it started to rain. ‘Run, Tara,’ someone shouted. There was but one horse left. Tara climbed on the horse and also vanished into the sky.

She came in a room surrounded by billions of faces all in the distance. It was like they were shooting at her. They came closer and closer while many faces started to fade away. And the closer these faces came the more it looked like they had bodies as well. It looked like another machine. Soon she had been surrounded by a few women. ‘You have now reached the center of the machine,’ the women said. They took their swords and a fight started. ‘The one who wins will be the master of the arena,’ the women said. ‘Since our leader has fallen, a new

master has to rise.' Tara also took her sword, and slayed the women one by one, while more women seemed to appear. Tara knew that fighting them would only make it worse. She decided to just take some jewelry from the women. Tara knew how to do that as she was a skilled thief. From some she stole some rings, and from others some bracelets, and then she left, while the women stood there like frozen. 'Don't let her escape with the treasures of the horses,' someone whispered. Tara was on her horse already and reached out to the distance. She saw a huge sword appearing in the sky, and she followed it to the place it was directing to. Here she found a huge altar. 'Come,' a voice said, 'throw your treasures in the fire, as you have defeated the women of the machine.'

'Who are you ?' Tara asked. A black women came from behind the altar, and begged her for some jewelry. 'I won't give it to you, as I'm sure you want to be the master of the arena,' Tara said. Then a fight started in which Tara didn't dare to use her sword, as then the woman would split into more. It became a wrestling in which the black woman tried to take Tara's jewelry away. The woman wore a ring and some chainlets, and Tara could take these, after which she went to her horse and rode away. She knew this jewelry had to do with the mechanism of the machine. She came to a hill where a lot of ghost-women lay down. Another fight started, in which Tara only wrestled, while she tried to take their jewelry. Again she succeeded, and finally she came in a city in the middle of the fields she was on. It was a small city, and it was full of ghosts. They were all talking about a certain horse stone they were guarding. The stone would be somewhere in a restaurant or shop. And some living guns would protect it. Strange radiation would come from the stone to project faces everywhere. It had some sort of pump by which it could pump up the faces so that they would become heads, and even bodies. But deep within the stone there would be an even more important stone, which was the fly stone. This stone would take care that the bodies would be formed and moving. This stone was like the transformer of it all, producing a strange sort of fire and a strange sort of fluid. Only by the fire and the fluid bodies were able to live. When Tara told them about her jewelry they told her that deep within the jewelry there were these fly stones. Tara smiled. It was for her important to move, so that she could escape, but to be dependant on such jewelry gave also a strange feeling. She now knew why the women couldn't move anymore since they lost their jewelry, but the feeling that she had to guard the jewelry for the rest of her life made her almost insane. 'Where is that stone ?' Tara shouted, 'as I'm going to cut it off it's place.' The ghosts started to shiver, and showed her the place where it was. It wasn't in a restaurant and neither in a shop like they told, but it was in the depths of a cellar, and Tara had to go downstairs very deep. And there weren't any living guns. When Tara saw the stone she took her sword and cut it from it's standard. 'I don't belief stones should have such powers,' Tara said. 'I don't want to be a slave of a stone.' From the hole fluids started to stream, and also a strange fire came forward with a lot of smoke. 'Look, what a well we have,' Tara said. 'It will spread into the air to be a blessing for everyone. Stones only make slaves and masters, and they block and seal these abundant wells.'

'She has broken the seventh seal,' the ghosts whispered to each other.

'What ?' Tara said.

‘You broke the seventh seal,’ one of the ghosts said. ‘This horse stone with the flystone inside blocked the well of drunkeness, sleep and oblivion for such a long time, so that everyone had to work hard for every drip. We were all walking with heavy chains because of this.’ Then the ghost could stretch itself and vanished. Also the other ghosts stretched themselves and vanished. When Tara came outside all the ghosts of the city were very glad. ‘She broke the seventh seal,’ they said in joy. Streams of sleep and sweet drunkeness seemed to come over the small city, and brought forth a fog of oblivion. But Tara didn’t know if it was such a good idea to break such a seal. She didn’t realize what she had done. And the stream also wanted to push her down. Well, a bit of joy in life, a bit of rest and a bit of peace can’t do any harm, but she saw more and more streams rising up into the air like a ghost-army. All these ghosts were drunk, sleepy and most of all ignorant, like they had lost their minds. It was such an insane sight. Tara climbed on her horse and rode away as fast as she could. She was heading for the morning, as the night seemed to take everything over in such a speed. After awhile she reached the deserts, and the only memory she had in her hands were the treasures of the strange stones, like a broken seal.

Three drunk men were sitting at a table in front of the deserts, while they were doing some sort of cardgame. ‘You want to play with us ?’ the men asked. But Tara had enough of games. They showed her some cards, and it seemed Tara didn’t know this game. Suddenly she was in a shock as she saw also her own face on one of the cards. ‘Where did you get that from ?’ she asked. ‘Well, all those who come out of the fields are part of the game,’ the men said. ‘So be glad you have survived the fields,’ the men said. But then the deserts all of a sudden started to burn, and the men changed into skeletons. Tara grasped her horse by it’s neck and left the place as soon as possible along the borders of the desert. After awhile she came to a forest, and she was still afraid of witchcraft. She took all the jewelry she had, digged a hole somewhere in the ground, and took care that the jewelry would disappear there. She knew she had to be free, not holding on to the enslaving forces of this wicked jewelry. She came to a small lake where she bathed, between the flowers and herbs of the forest, and a new day was luring her. She heard the birds singing in the distance, and she tried to forget about the strange machine. A woman came closer to her, and also slided into the lake. Soon the woman turned into a giant snake, and a fight started. ‘Why do you think you can escape the night,’ the snake whispered. ‘You belong to the night.’ Tara took her sword and slayed the snake. She was glad the snake didn’t multiply before her eyes. But she knew she had to get out of the lake soon. She took her horse again, and went deeper into the jungle. In the depths of the jungle there was an open place where she enountered some wild horses. Because her own horse was rather tamed and because it still reminded her of the machine she took one of the wild horses, and the other wild horses started to run with her also. She hoped to be finally free of this wicked place now. The horses went faster and faster and finally she had to jump off. She rolled through the sand, and then from a hill, while a rock finally stopped her. How long she lay there without consciousness she didn’t know but finally she stood up and went to the first village on her path.

The people there were very friendly and hospital to her. She didn’t expect any troubles here. She got a good glass of beer and some milk before sleeping. In the middle of the night she

woke up from howling wolves. She heard some knocking on the door. It was the son of the people of the house she had a room. The boy said he couldn't sleep. He had to think about her so much. Tara hugged him. 'What is wrong, boy ?' Suddenly he started to cry. 'I don't know, but you remind me of something,' he said.

'Do you want to talk about it ?' Tara asked. Then the boy told his story. He was once with a lot of other boys in the jungle and they played like they were indians. They tied him to a tree and left. In the night he had still been tied to the tree, while the boys hadn't returned. He heard wolves howling and became very afraid. Then he heard some leaves moving close to him, and an indian girl stood before him. She was shocked and untied him. She took him to her hut where she made some food for him. After a few days he went to home again, but he couldn't get her out of his mind, so he returned to her hut, but the hut wasn't there anymore and neither the girl.

'I'm sorry,' Tara said. 'That had to be really tough.'

'Yes,' the boy said. 'But I didn't tell you the worst part yet. I went there more often, until some of the boys found out, and again they tied me to a tree and left again. Again I stood there at the tree, but this time it took days before someone found me. Fortunately it had rained a lot or I would have died because of thirst but I was very hungry. Indian girls had found me, but this time they weren't nice. The girl I knew wasn't there. These were other indians. They mocked me and danced around me, and started to hurt me. They took me to a hut, while I was still tied, and they kept me in this hut for months and months, until a woman found me and set me free. I would never forget this woman, and she looked so much like you, but she died a few months later.'

'Oh, I am so sorry,' Tara said, and hugged him again. 'How did she die ?'

'It was some sort of disease,' the boy said.

'Shall we go there together, to the hut of the indian girls ?' Tara asked. The boy looked her deep in the eyes. 'Do you really want to do that ?'

'Yes,' Tara said, 'as it seems you have some trauma from their party. So let's make it different now.'

The next day they went to the hut together. Still indian girls lived here, but they were a lot older. ‘Oops, there is that boy,’ one of them said. ‘He has his sister or mother with him.’

‘No, I am his aunt,’ Tara said, ‘or just friend.’

‘Oh, you are his girlfriend ?’ another one asked.

‘Whatever you like,’ Tara said, and then she knocked one of them to the ground. Another one took her spear, but Tara grasped it away. ‘Not so fast, lady,’ Tara said. But then Tara couldn’t speak anymore all of a sudden. One of the indian girls had a big hairy spider in her hands and caressed it. ‘Be careful,’ she said to the boy, ‘if this one spits it’s venom on us, we’re dead.’

‘No, not dead, zombificated,’ the girl smiled. ‘This one doesn’t kill, but enslaves for live.’

Slowly Tara moved her hand to her sword. But then all of a sudden the spider spat in the eye of the boy while the boy started to shriek. In one moment Tara beheaded the girl with the spider and pierced the spider. ‘These ones are head hunters and cannibals,’ Tara said, and then she beheaded the other girls. ‘We have a few minutes,’ Tara said. ‘If I do not suck the venom out of eye you will die.’ The boy was still shrieking, and Tara pushed him to the ground to suck the venom out of his eye. She also took a sting out of his eye. Tara knew how dangerous these exotic spiders could be. Then she spat the venom out on the ground. ‘That will heal,’ she said. ‘Now tell me, were these all the girls you encountered awhile ago ?’

‘Yes,’ the boy said, ‘but I wonder where the friendly girl lives.’

‘Oh, maybe they have killed her,’ Tara said. She could feel how dangerous this jungle was. It smelled like death. The boy bowed his head. Then he hugged Tara and cried. ‘I’m so glad my heart can finally heal now.’

Together they walked home. Then Tara talked to the boy about the machine with the many heads. The boy told her that in the jungle there lived spiders with many heads, and also other

insects like flies. He said that the hunters of his village often went to the jungle to hunt them, as it is very good food. ‘My father even sells the meat,’ the boy said.

That evening Tara ate from the meat of several slayed insects of many heads, and she liked it very much. She decided to stay in the village for awhile, not only to help the boy through his problems, but also to eat the delicious meat no other jungle seemed to have.

The Ten Princes

of Zkerwat

It happened on a market. Tara got in a fight with one of the ten princes of Zkerwat. These princes were the ones everyone had to go to once in awhile to be responsible for everything they did. They had to tell all their secrets to the princes, and then the princes would mock them and laugh at them to bring them down. Even if someone did the greatest things and had the best jobs, the princes would mock them. This was why the people of Zkerwat always lived in deep shame. Nothing was ever good enough for the princes as they would bring everything down. This was why often people went to the princes’ court in shivers. Tara couldn’t stand the way the princes were acting towards the people, so when she saw one of them on the market she took her sword and challenged him. The prince laughed at Tara. He didn’t want to fight against her, so first he sent some of his guards. But when Tara brought them down so easily the prince finally got mad and turned himself against her. ‘What are you doing here in Zkerwat ?’ the prince asked.

‘I’ve come for you and your brothers,’ Tara said. She knew one of these princes had the key to a part of the castle, a secret part, in which their father, the old king, lived with his harem. The king lived more or less isolated, and gave all his authority to his sons, although he had told them how to behave to the people. The king always seemed to have big parties in his part of the castle. Tara knew that the king would never give the people what they were worth as it was all a big conspiracy. When Tara killed the first prince she searched through his clothes for the key, but he wasn’t the one having the key.

When the other nine princes heard their brother had been killed they decided to send one of their greyhounds to Tara. But Tara slayed the dog without problems. Then the second prince

came to Tara. He showed her the key. ‘Is this what you are looking for ?’ Then he threw the key into the river. Tara slayed him in full rage, and went to the castle. The other eight brothers suddenly were very friendly, but Tara knew it was a trick. She threw a net over them and she dragged it to the river. ‘You go to find the key,’ she said, and then she threw the net with the eight princes into the river. It was the same place where the second prince had thrown the key. After a minute she took the net out of the water, but no one had the key. ‘Listen,’ Tara said. ‘No games now. When you won’t take the key out of the water the next minute, I will throw you in again for five minutes.’

Fortunately the second time the princes took it out of the water and gave it to Tara. First she let them get locked up in some cages and then she went to the castle again. Not much later she stood in the part where the king lived with his harem. Predators stared at Tara, and also the king and his women. They all seemed upset. Tara took her sword and slayed those who came against her. The king bowed his head, and also some of the women. ‘How dare you,’ Tara said, ‘you use your sons to treat the inhabitants of Zkerwat so bad. Two of them I have killed and the rest is in cages. Now I warn you, old men : Your days of fun are over.’ Then she grasped him by his neck and took him out of the castle. She also let him get locked up in a cage, and some of the women got free, as Tara knew they had been forced to do what they did. They were merely prisoners and slaves of the king.

That day Tara crowned a new king, and he would do it well, as he had already done great things for the sake of Zkerwat.

The Python

Riders

Tara moved along a dusty road. The sand was burning under her feet. A man with a big car wanted to pick her up, but Tara was not in the mood for hitchhiking. The man cursed and drove further. If he would stay any longer Tara would probably cut off his head. She hated guys with hidden intentions. Behind their smiling and friendly faces there was often a dark world. Tara knew those types of guys. Obviously the man had drunk too much. But then in the distance she saw him returning, he jumped out of the car ran to her with a lasso. ‘Am I a cow or something ?’ Tara asked smiling. When she suddenly saw a big gun she didn’t hesitate one moment, grasped her sword and beheaded him. Blood burst forth from the big body, and got even spouted at Tara. She wiped it away and smiled. ‘Bastard,’ she whispered. She took

the man’s gun and his lasso, and she found out he had quite a bit of money in his pockets, so she could also use that. Then she walked slowly towards his car.

She could use his car. It was hot inside. She was still barefooted, and when she touched the accelerator pedal she almost got burnt. It didn’t take long to get to a small desert village. Tara stepped out at the petrol station and bought some drinks and icecreams. The man had a small refridgerator in his car. Then she drove further into the village. She was looking for an old friend, Meridum. She remembered where he lived. Soon she was with him drinking some beer. He offered her a room to get some sleep.

In the middle of the night Tara heard some sounds. She put on a silk coat, and walked towards the window. She saw two bats, but also the head of a snake, a python. She sighed, went back to her bed, and fell asleep again. In the morning she was with Meridum at breakfast. She smiled at him. He smiled back. ‘You remember the old days ?’ she asked. Meridum nodded.

‘We were so in love,’ Tara said. ‘What has become of us ?’

‘Nothing,’ Meridum said. ‘We kind of went our own ways.’

‘Yes, we are individuals now,’ Tara said. ‘I could fall in love with you again when I look into your eyes.’

‘Well,’ Meridum said. ‘Love is good, but I have some better ideas.’

‘I’m very interested,’ Tara said. She knew she would never give herself away again, but she just had to visit this old respectful friend. Once in awhile it couldn’t do any harm. He was just too creative to get stuck somewhere.

Meridum smiled. He looked into Tara’s eyes almost teasing her. ‘Yes, I have some ideas, but am I willing to tell ?’

‘Oh please,’ Tara said. ‘I just came to watch your virtues, your talents, I’m sure you have found something new. You’re still an inventor, I know, as it is your eternal heart.’

‘Yes,’ Meridum said smiling. ‘That’s true. You know me.’

‘Okay, so what are you waiting for ?’ Tara said almost commanding.

‘Yes, officer,’ Meridum said. He slowly stood up, walked towards a huge cupboard and took a book out of it. He almost smashed the book on the table, as it was a huge book, very heavy. There were golden locks on both sides, and he easily opened two of them so that he could turn the pages.

‘What is it,’ Tara asked, almost dying of curiosity. ‘You kill me by your mysterious behaviour.’

‘It is a book of … pythons,’ Meridum said …. ‘Well, actually python riders.’

‘Oh, I can’t read this language,’ Tara said.

‘It’s an indian native language,’ Meridum said.

Then again he went to the cupboard and took a pack of cards. He smashed it on the table. ‘Let’s play,’ he said.

Tara watched the cards of beautiful indians. They all had their professions, like they were living in a hidden empire, although they were wild. Meridum looked deep into the eyes of Tara. ‘Turn the cards around, Tara,’ Meridum said. On the backs of the cards there were all sorts of aliens, like cartoon characters, like a sweet game.

‘Oh, I know these ones from childhood,’ Tara said.

‘You’re kidding me,’ Meridum said. ‘You had a savage childhood.’

‘No, in dreams I mean,’ Tara said. She threw the cards she had in her hands away and ran upstairs to her room. Meridum followed her. ‘What’s wrong, Tara ?’ he asked.

‘Well I do not want to be reminded of my past, especially not my childhood,’ Tara said. ‘It seems they still follow me.’

‘But aren’t you surprised that these cards are exactly like in your dreams ?’ Meridum asked.

‘No,’ Tara said. ‘I hate it. Now go away or I will become hysterical.’

Meridum knew she was serious now, and when she was in such a mood he better be far away from her, so he escaped from the house. After a few hours Tara came to her senses again. She started to search through the house. Meridum came back in the middle of the night. Tara was already in bed. ‘Can I talk to you ?’ he whispered.

Tara’s eyes were spitting fire. ‘I told you about those dreams long ago, about how these creatures visited me for help, and how I couldn’t help them. It was traumatic, so why did you have the need to draw them, making cards of them and tease me with it ? I have feelings, emotions, so why are you playing with them ? Why aren’t you just clear about it. This is so obscure,’ Tara said.

Meridum was grinning. Suddenly Tara dived on him, and a horrible wrestling started. Soon Meridum was in the grip of her, like in a deadly grip of a python.

‘You misunderstand me,’ Meridum said. ‘Can’t you see I just try to help you overcome these childhood dreams ? I know these were nightmares, but I’m your mate in this.’

‘It’s too fragile,’ Tara screamed. ‘I have trusted you, told you about the soft places in my heart, the treasures of tears, my inner loneliness and hopelessness, and you just throw it on table as a cardgame. How could you ?’

‘I wanted to heal you,’ Meridum said.

Suddenly Tara bit him in his cheek, while blood was flowing forth from the wound. ‘See what you are doing ?’ Tara screamed.

‘They …. Are …. python riders,’ Meridum said. He felt weak all of a sudden.

‘I have dreamt of them too, Tara. They are free now …’

‘What do you say ?’ Tara asked.

Suddenly Meridum fainted. After a few hours he woke up in Tara’s arms.

‘I understand you now. But you are in the lion’s den,’ Tara said. ‘Don’t play with me. So you say you have dreamt of them as well.’

Meridum nodded, while he was still very weak. ‘They ride on pythons, they ride on the roofs, on the tops, they ride in the air.’

‘To do what ?’ Tara asked.

‘To help us,’ he said.

‘I still do not get you,’ Tara said.

Meridum turned away from her, stood up. ‘You’re still the same,’ he said. ‘Dangerous, very dangerous.’ Then he left.

The next morning they saw each other again for breakfast. Tara stared at him. Meridum didn’t say anything.

‘I’m leaving, Meridum,’ Tara said. ‘I don’t want to bring you in troubles. And I don’t want you to bring me in troubles.’

Then she stood up, took her car and left. She was in a bad mood. Everything had triggered something in her, something she couldn’t control. She tried to forget about everything again.

It was hot outside, the roads were dusty. After a few hours Tara stepped out of the car, barefooted, while the ground was almost burning her. The mud was almost hard and hotter than ever. Then she sat down, and later she laid herself down while the sun was burning her. Suddenly she had been surrounded by snakes. The snakes were spitting strange venoms on her body, but didn’t bite her. She took her knife to slay them and wiped the venom away by some leaves. A man stood in front of her with a rifle. He saw the dead snakes. ‘Yes, many dangerous snakes here,’ he said. ‘They are called the spitters.’

‘Oh, I know, I saw them doing that,’ Tara said.

‘Well,’ the man said, ‘you just woke up. You are very lucky. The venom could have killed you, but I guess then it brought only hallucinations to you.’

Tara realized she had just dreamt everything because of these spitting snakes. She didn’t have a car, and she didn’t know a Meridum. It was just a tale displaying in her head. It was actually the man who had shot the snakes and he actually saved her life. He had a big car, a so called ‘python rider’, especially made for the deserts. He gave her a hand, and brought her up, and

then to his car. In his car she fell asleep again, while the man took care he brought her out of the danger zone.

The End

The Monkey

She was like the most beautiful doll in his eyes. Tara's father was fond of her. Well, actually he wasn't her real father, but he once saved her from death. In his eyes she was the best, his masterpiece. He raised her after the fall. He made her. He was a white-bearded sorcerer-like man, a kingly one if it came to that, living high in the mountains. Tara went there as much as she could. She would never forget this man she called her father.

He was a dark man. He kept souls in bottles to make ghosts of them. He was a sinister man, but Tara loved him. She could understand him very well, as they were both against the system. The system on Mars was cruel in their eyes.

Petrilium was his name. The man was tall and old, but still full of wicked ideas. He had trained Tara in how she could use pythons. Pythons were potentially dangerous forces on Mars, so if Tara wouldn't learn how to control them better, they would take her over one day. Petrilium teached her all the tricks to tame them, and he gave her instructions on how to ride them. For this purpose he showed her the biggest sorts of pythons on Mars. He kept them locked up in certain aquaria. Tara was amazed to see such large ones. She had never seen them before. Petrilium bred them here.

Petrilium was a pythonfarmer, a virtuous one so to speak. He also bred flying pythons of the largest sorts by which he could reach other planets in a flash. Petrilium controlled the lightening and thunder on Mars, and he could do that because he knew the many pythonian secrets. Petrilium was a mysterious man often misunderstood. That was why he started to live far away in the mountains. He had some slaves, but they seemed to be well-willing, as Petrilium cared for them very good. They had a lot of money, and bathed in riches. Further they had a lot of freedom, for most of the jobs happened by pythonian forces. There were machines everywhere.

One day Petrilium got very sick. Because he thought he was dying he gave Tara a special key to a most secret library. ‘Read about pythons as much as you can,’ he said. This was the last time Tara ever saw him alive. She went to this library and read in it’s books for days and days, weeks and weeks. She also found a bottle in which a pythonian ghost lived. When she opened it the library got filled by red smoke. A huge cloud stood before her.

The spirit was happy. He had been in his bottle for a long time. On Mars when a ghost didn’t return to his bottle he would become denser and denser. Tara gave the ghost his freedom, and he would be a dense citizen of Mars soon. She also found a secret tunnel leading her to a huge hall. There were strange signs on the walls. It looked like a dominoes game. Tara could climb upstairs as it formed a sort of frame. When she came on top she could come into a new hall, as there was a huge doorway in the ceiling.

When Tara wanted to return to the library she found out that the signs by which she could climb had closed themselves. It wasn’t like a ladder anymore, so she couldn’t get downstairs again. A girl ticked at her shoulder. Tara turns around. ‘I can bring you there,’ the girl said.

‘Who are you ?’ Tara asked.

‘Well, that’s a long story,’ the girl said. ‘But I’m a spidergirl, able to fly, and willing to bring you there.’ Suddenly thick glue-like stuff came out of her hands and soon some sort of strong web was reaching downstairs on which they could both climb down. ‘Who teached you that ?’ Tara asked.

‘Oh, Petrilium,’ the girl said.

Tara understood he had many more friendships than she knew. It seemed Petrilium saved the girl too one day. She was in a heavy storm at sea. Since then she always stayed close to him. ‘What are these enigmatic signs on the wall ?’ Tara asked.

‘Oh,’ the girl said. ‘Many of those things are based on time. It works like a clock, and it gives access at certain points of time and at certain occasions. The whole temple is full of these things.’

‘Why do you call it temple ?’ Tara asked.

‘As it is a temple,’ the girl said.

‘Then who do you worship ?’ Tara asked.

The girl started to laugh. ‘We do not worship anything or anyone,’ she said. ‘It’s all a certain science working as long as you have the knowledge.’

‘Ah,’ Tara said, ‘so it is about knowledge. And what kind of knowledge is it ?’

‘Oh, come,’ the girl said, and then led Tara to another library. It was like some sort of restaurant here. There were some transparent brown veils, a sort of glass, and people sat at tables reading stuff. The girl took Tara’s hand. ‘Come,’ she said. They went through a door and came in a corridor. At the end of the corridor there was another library, a small one. ‘Here we have our books,’ the girl said. It was much about pythonian electricity. It was all about the wonderful mechanisms of the temple. Many parts seemed to work together and change periodically all to trigger some sort of hormones and special effects.

‘Interesting,’ Tara said.

‘It’s a complex system,’ the girl said. ‘But if you know how it works, you will see the benefit of it.’

Tara nodded. ‘I see.’

‘Shall I show you my room ?’ the girl asked.

‘Sure,’ Tara said.

The girl took her all the way upstairs into some sort of tower. On top there were several rooms and one of them was hers. It was a very small room, and she had a lot of books. She also had some pythons in aquaria. ‘My name is Lydium,’ the girl said. ‘They also call me Pythonia.’

Tara bent towards the pythons. They were not so big. There were also some living mice and rats in the aquaria, white ones. ‘They eat them, but first they play with them,’ the girl said. Tara looked deep into the eyes of the girl.

‘There is something strange about this room,’ Tara said. ‘I smell monkeys.’

‘Oh yes, we also feed them monkeys at times,’ the girl said. ‘They need it to stay alive.’ The girl opened a cupboard and showed a small monkey in a small cage. There was also another cage with a monkey in a wardrobe.

‘This is disgusting,’ Tara said.

‘Well, we need to sacrifice them,’ the girl spoke. ‘Or the pythons will go mad and break our decks of control.’

‘Oh, don’t worry about that,’ Tara said. ‘They will take over anyway. But you just can’t feed them monkeys.’

‘Why not ?’ the girl asked.

‘Oh nevermind,’ Tara said and opened the cages to take the monkeys out. They immediately jumped on her and hung at her neck. They made a lot of noise.

‘Listen girl,’ Tara said. ‘I don’t care who or what you are, but you can do things different you know. There are other ways to raise the pythonian system. I do not know who teached you this. I doubt it was Petrilium.’

The girl bowed her head. ‘It wasn’t Petrilium, just a girl of my class.’

Soon Tara took the monkeys away and brought them into freedom, the wilderness where they belonged.

‘I’m willing to learn from you,’ the girl said. ‘Sometimes things are so tight in my head, like there isn’t another way.’

‘There are many ways,’ Tara said.

Together they walked to another hall the girl wanted to show. They came in on a balcony and could see a sort of trafficlights downstairs on the ground. It was a pythonian traffic system. ‘This one is producing a hormone taking over Mars. Only the python riders will survive the coming pythonian flood,’ the girl said.

‘Interesting,’ Tara said. ‘Well, I know they have the power to break someone’s mind, the mindwalls, so that they could enter in. It’s some sort of gas.’

The girl nodded.

‘How do you ride a python ?’ Tara asked.

‘Oh, I’ll show you,’ the girl said. They had to go to another staircase to go upstairs to reach the higher parts of the temple. They were soon on the highest walls of the complex. It was almost in the clouds, and a lot of flying pythons were here. ‘Pick one,’ the girl said. Tara took one of the pythons and sat down on it. Also the girl took a python and together they flew away. It wasn’t so difficult. They both had lots of information on how to ride such a thing. Tara realized how important that was, as the pythons were about to take Mars over

completely. The degree of pythonian poison in the air was already very high. Many on Mars already went insane by the pressure of it. Mars became a pythonian planet more and more, and Tara and the spidergirl were more or less pythonian agents. But Tara knew where it would all lead to. Tara knew that the pythonian connection would only trigger a much higher energy : those of the indian flies. She knew that the pythonian matrix was nothing but a preparation of that, a sort of doorway. The spidergirl was talking about it all the time, as she wanted to become a flygirl. She knew that only flygirls would be able to stand when the pythonian floods would come. And she was thinking a lot about the indian fly floods. Those would come after the python. Mars would be a totally different planet.

Tara and the girl became tight friends, and she teached a lot of martian martial arts to her. The girl teached Tara much about pythonian electricity. One day a strong light was coming forth from one of the python systems. And soon also another pythonian system opened up to bring forth this strong light. It was like a lightvulcanoe. The girl said it wasn't pythonian anymore, but it looked like flylights. 'The flood, it is coming,' some men were shouting. They seemed to know much about it. A soft gas was coming from the light, coming in layers, and it was a bit moisty.

'Mars will soon be totally in the hands of pythons and flies,' the men said. They had big books under their arms and were dressed like preachers. On the cover of their books there were triangles. 'From what kind of religion are you ?' Tara asked.

'Oh, we're from the temple. It's just about science and knowledge,' the man said. Tara was watching the triangles on their books. They looked like wigwams. 'All we must do is to ride the pythons,' the men said, 'and only the fly can do that.'

Tara remembered the aquaria of Petrilium. He also had some in which he kept the biggest sharks and whales. Tara asked the girl if she knew if Petrilium also kept flies. 'Oh yes,' the girl said. 'Come with me.' By an elevator they could come deep underground where caves were with the biggest aquaria Tara ever saw. The air was moisty and hot, and inside the aquaria there was also this tropical climate. She could see amazing sorts of flies. It was enchanting her eyes. She got hypnotized by the sight. The flies almost looked like flying people. To her amazement she also saw savage people there. They just lived among the big flies. They looked like they were indians.

'Why do those people live here ?' Tara asked.

‘Oh,’ the girl said. ‘They just want to live close to this energy. There are even monkeys here.’ Tara understood that these people were afraid of the pythonian outbursts. ‘More and more people want to live here,’ the girl said.

‘Why don’t you just open the aquaria so that the flies can spread themselves on the martian surfaces ?’ Tara asked.

‘Oh Tara,’ the girl said. ‘That would be very dangerous and unwise. Petrilium kept them here for a reason. They need to grow up first.’

‘What would be the danger ?’ Tara asked.

‘Oh Tara,’ the girl said. ‘You don’t know these species. There are some libraries deeper underground with a lot of books about them.’ Soon they went to those libraries together, and Tara started to read about them. Tara grasped her head. ‘I’m glad I was behind glass, but how can those savage people live with them ?’

‘They have a certain immunity against them,’ the girl said. ‘Their bodies have been smeared by a certain substance, and it is now in their bloodstream as well.’

In a secret part of the library there were bottles full of the substance. ‘Once smeared we can never return to the surfaces of Mars. We need to stay in the aquaria leading to the depths of Mars. Then we need to stay in Tartarus forever,’ the girl said.

‘Oh, that’s a deal,’ Tara said. Together they smeared each other by the substance, and Tara felt like she was burning inside. Her blood was boiling, and her body got the strength of a bow and arrow. Soon they were in the aquaria among the flies and the savage people.

In Tartarus the weather was hot. There were a lot of beaches and deserts. Pythons were from a high rank here, but an even higher rank were the flies. They had strange tongues, and they had the power to freeze someone’s mind. Some of them had uniforms or even outlandic clothes.

Their tongues were thick and could become tall. They could smell by their tongues, and they had a lot more senses in it.

Suddenly Tara woke up. It had been just a dream. Petrilium was still living, and she was in the room where she always slept when she would visit him for more days. She was staring at the books in a cupboard close to her bed. She always loved these books. She remembered the delicious dinner she had with him and his monkeys at one table. He always used to call it dream food, as you would get dreams from all the exotic drinks and foods. And those of the purple capes were also with them. They were some sort of preachers living with Petrilium, a sort of monks. Whenever Petrilium sent out some magical seeds into the depths of Mars, in Tartarus below the kingdom of death, he would also send some of them of the purple capes to take care of the seed. If the seed would be grown to it's heights they would bring it to Petrilium. Petrilium called this seed his children. They would never really grow up, as they would always stay with the things of childhood. Many of those children lived in a cellar below Petrilium's place, where he visited them often to play games with them. Also the purple capes played a big role in this. They had to show the children the funparks on Mars, as a part of their education. They had to go with them to the fairgrounds. Petrilium had a thing for that.

The purple caps were the teachers of the children, to prepare them for their great tasks. Petrilium had big plans. The purple capes had a strange faith. The leaders of them had a big fairground by which they travelled through Tartarus. You could never really see their faces as the capes were dark and large. However they had a lot of monkeys with often blue faces, and some said their faces were just like them. But nobody knew. When the children grew up some choose to work with the purple capes in the fairground, travelling throughout Tartarus. This fairground was actually a machine by which they saved lost souls.

Some said they were dangerous vampires. Petrilium was a much hated man by many. They said he was strange and dark. And no one knew exactly what those purple capes were. It was actually by this fairground Petrilium saved Tara when she was in the tight grip of Tartarus. Many knew that Petrilium was … a saviour. Petrilium hated Tartarus. One of his biggest plan was to build a funpark in the very core of Tartarus. He wanted to deal with the hypocrite leaders.

The fairground would play a big part in that, and of course the church of the purple capes. It wasn't a church at all. It was a trick. One day one of the purple capes took off his cape. It appeared to be a monkey. He appeared to be the chief of the purple capes. Suddenly his face turned into a longhaired man with a beard. Tara knew they were sorcerors and werewolves, as they could also turn into wolves. Strozalks they were called. He directed his finger at a large cross which suddenly turned into a winged stake. Pythons were holding the stake tight, but suddenly the winged stake turned into a fly, and the snakes into weapons.

‘The bow, Tara,’ he said. And gave the bow to Tara. ‘It’s the Qesheta. It will come alive. It is a woman. It has become an object, but it is alive.’

Tara felt the hot handle of the bow in her hand. She stared at it. ‘See we have become animals, trees and objects,’ the man spoke. ‘and we hide under purple capes.’

She watched the man with the blue face. They had been frozen into so many things, and now they were so creative. Tara wanted to give the bow back. ‘No, it is for you,’ the man said. And then he left. When she came to Petrilium’s room she saw Petrilium lying on his bed. He was dead. The man with the blue face came out of the bathroom together with some purple capes. ‘Yes, we have killed him,’ he said. Then they left.

The End

The Beasts of Orion

Chapter 1. Tara and the Hippo Queen

Chapter 2. The Amulet of the Pterosaur

Chapter 3. Marit the Ratwoman

Chapter 4. The Sea of No Return

Chapter 1. Tara and the Hippo Queen

At the surfaces of Orion there was a lonely warrior. She tried to make her way by cutting by her sword through the overwhelming chaos of snakes, slime, fleeces and dirt. Her name was Tara from Rhodes. She had a good survey at the deserts of Orion. There were three thrones on Orion : the lion throne, the blue throne and the white throne. These thrones were like floating slippery islands. Tara had to be on her guard against the blinding lights of Orion, which could show up easily, like striking winds. They could easily blind someone.

After awhile she came to a misty palace. The walls were of reddish flesh, decorated by skulls and nails. It looked like a dragon castle. Tara went in holding her sword up high. Inside there were meaty webs and many fleeces. By her sword she cut a way through it. Lights tried to strike her, but she had her eyes tightly closed. She was sweating. It was like she was in the jaws of a monster. In front of her was a lake full of white spiderwebs and slippery fleeces where spiders swam. She also made her way through the lake. Then she came to a sort of spine, but it was made of reddish meat and dark bones. She climbed on it upstairs. She was almost bathing in sweat. It was like someone was grilling her. She found herself standing on a gigantic skull.

This was Orion TV, a strange intestine, sucking them all in, by winds, fleeces and dirt, overwhelming them by lights. Tara had overcome it, and stood on the skull as a conqueror. She raised her sword and shrieked. This was the place which kept a hold on Mars for such a long time. It was a strange creature, but Tara had survived. Then she pierced her sword into a soft button on top of the skull. The skull started to shriek. It was now shrinking.

There were falls of fire here. On muddy stairs Tara climbed further. She could feel the moisty earth again, like it was clay. Tara shouted as hard as she could. Two eagles came to her, big and dark. ‘Bring me to the white throne,’ she said.

The white throne was a city made of rare lionstones, and it was floating at the surfaces of Orion like an island. Tara jumped off from the eagles and slided deep into the city. The lionstones had been covered by webs and dirt. There were fleeces everywhere. In the city

there was a strange machine called the Machine of Monotheism. From the machine dark dancers came, mostly women. They were the belly-dancers of Turet. They had been armed by all sorts of weapons. They were the guards of the center of the city, which had been called Turet. Here a skeleton lived having the same name. He was the upper emperor of Orion, and at the same time their religious leader.

The belly-dancers were made of a sort of bronze and brass, and they were also cannibals. Tara had to be at her guard. They radiated such a heat that they could easily grill her. It was like they came right out of an altar. Tara raised her sword and slew a few of them. But the skeleton of Turet already ran towards her. Soon she was in the grip of a few other belly-dancers. Turet smiled. It was like Tara was already burning from inside. Tara fell down, and woke up in a dungeon. Turet stared at her. 'Seriously,' he said, 'what are you doing here. I have grown this way. I can't be saved. This is my fate, and what I do to others is their fate. I can't help it.'

'Tell me about your bosses,' Tara said.

'Skeleton-indians,' Turet said.

'Who are they ?' Tara asked.

'They are the ones who once skinned me, and took me to Orion,' Turet said.

'Where do you come from ?' Tara asked.

'Originally from Mars,' Turet said.

'See,' Tara said. 'They do this to many from Mars. They are abductors. And they transform their victims into the most horrible monsters.'

Turet nodded. 'But you can't set me free,' he said.

‘Why not ?’ Tara asked.

‘I can’t return to Mars,’ Turet said. ‘Orion is too deep in me.’

‘How do I reach those skeleton-indians you talk about ?’ Tara asked.

‘Oh, just follow the jaws of Reactumat. There is a small car riding into it’s jaws and then you travel all the way through his body,’ Turet said. ‘I will bring you to it.’

It seemed Turet was a very nice guy. Soon they both sat into a car close to gigantic jaws. Turet pushed a button and there they went. There was fire everywhere. Turet turned the speed up. Then everything became dark. Tara fell asleep by the smoke, and when she woke up they were there. It was a strange world with the smell of ham. There were fleeces everywhere. It was a white wilderness. It looked like ice, but it was actually warm here, very warm, and soft.

‘They guard the stone of the lioness,’ Turet said. Suddenly dreadful indians came out of a jungle. ‘Why are you coming ?’ an indian woman asked.

‘Meet Tara, a friend of mine,’ Turet said to the woman.

‘Don’t come any step further or I will cut your head off,’ Tara shouted. ‘He’s from Mars originally, so you have a story to tell to me.’

‘Yes, we have a story,’ the woman said. ‘It’s true we have abducted him and even zombificated him. He doesn’t want to return to Mars anymore. We have given him the real life here.’

‘And what is the real life ?’ Tara asked.

‘Come with us,’ the woman said.

Tara went with Turet and the into the jungle. In the depths of the jungle there was a small white sandy hill. They showed her the stone of the lioness. 'This,' the woman said.

'What is it doing ?' Tara asked.

'It's an ice-transformer,' the woman said. 'Look around you. Everything looks like ice but it isn't. It is actually warm and soft.'

'Okay, but what does it do besides that,' Tara asked.

'Oh, it hunts, it kills, just like us. It's a predator,' the woman said. 'The abductor.'

Behind the hill there were rivers of blood. There were many lions swimming here, and many lay on the shores. 'Behind the rivers of blood,' the woman spoke, 'there is the lion tower. Those who want to become kings of the universe always go there. They will make the dangerous journey through the tower to the top. The higher they come the thinner the tower is and the more fragile. Besides that, it storms there. There is a small throne on top of the tower. No one who gets there stays long, for the winds will blow him off after awhile. He will crash on the ground, and the lions will eat him. There is no real king of the universe.'

'No one who knows the lion tower dares to sit there,' another indian woman said. 'The winds rule on top of the lion tower. Some said they saw a mysterious fly sitting on the throne at times.'

'And some say the flies rule the winds far above them,' another indian woman said. 'Their bosses fly without wings.'

'So the lion tower you talk about is a trap ?' Tara asked.

‘Some sort of,’ one of the indian women said. ‘And the true rulership of Orion and the universe is a mystery. Why would someone rule the universe ? Why not letting it be done by the universe itself.’

‘Well, I’m thinking about those flies you talk about, and also the wingless flies,’ Tara said. ‘So they are the actual rulers ?’

‘No one knows,’ the woman said, ‘but some think that they are. The lion tower connects Orion to the sky, and they rule in the sky. Rulership is a mystery. And when you become a ruler, something else always takes you over. That is the secret of the lion tower. There is actually no rulership. There’s something above that.’

‘And that is ?’ Tara asked.

‘Imprisonment,’ the woman said. ‘You lose yourself and become grilled and zombificated by the powers of the universe you have grasped.’

‘Oh, I see,’ Tara said. ‘I’m here to free Mars from this satellite called Orion who seems to control it for a big deal, but what you say here interests me. And this is the reason why you have the stone of the lioness ? To transform all those extremes ?’

‘Yes,’ the woman said.

‘What can you do for Mars ?’ Tara asked.

‘I can’t do anything for them,’ the woman said. ‘I can have them abducted to let them stay around the stone of the lioness, but she’s kind of selective, you know. She has an army. She’s a trainer. She zombificates you to become a part of it, and then she will guard you. She is the one who planted the Lion Tower to test the abducted. Many go there to look for adventure, finally to become kings, but those are food for her lions. They look for entertainment, but they end up in the intestines of Orion TV. They get plugs in their livers and become addicts of nothingness.’

‘But what is the meaning of life on Orion,’ Tara asked.

‘The meaning of life on Orion,’ the woman said, ‘is to transform the extremes by following the stone of the lioness. We worship her. We approach her, face to face. There are no laws. We are the lawless. It is not about ‘yes’ or ‘no’, but about ‘how’, so of course there are a lot of rules. You need to know ‘how’ to do something.’

‘We are all zombificated by the stone of the lioness, Tara,’ another woman said. ‘We are her robots, but we are alive. She has raised us. In this we are safe.’

‘We however also worship the Lion Tower, for it is our guard,’ another indian woman said. ‘But we can never enter it. We can’t even come close to it. It needs to be at a distance. It is a trap for our enemies and betrayers.’

‘Okay,’ Tara said, ‘so ‘yes’ or ‘no’ is not important anymore, only ‘how’, also in the sense of ‘where’ and ‘when’.’

‘Yes,’ the woman said. ‘The lioness stone is our clock and map in that.’

‘But who made the lioness stone ?’ Tara asked.

‘The flies did,’ the woman said. ‘The wingless flies of Orion who live above the skies.’

‘Where exactly do they live,’ Tara asked.

‘In blood,’ the woman said. ‘They live in a realm called the Blood of Orion.’

‘How did they come there ?’ Tara asked.

‘They stayed away long enough from the Lion Tower, and got ascended,’ the woman said. ‘The wingless flies are just indians. They are on the eternal huntingfields, the red skies of Orion. They are elite indians. They have Blood-TV, which is actually a heart, the heart of Orion. Some say it is the heart of the universe. It is the biggest butchery of all time.’

Then what was the road to this Red Zone of Orion ? The Python Tower. The Python Tower was like highways into the the sky. It was a dangerous trip, but it was honest at least. They showed Tara the road to this tower and then she went on her path. In the tower of the Python there were all sorts of tall venomous python-tongues hanging. Touching them would mean death. Tara had to be at her guard here more than ever. However the Python Tower was an experiment. No one was the ruler of it. The tower ruled itself. The ones who died here became a part of the tower itself. They got absorbed and sucked in by the walls, and got torn apart and frozen. Tara would never forget these ghosts. They were haunting. They tried to scare her, and begged her not to go further. They were draining her. It was a nightmare. Whenever she slept in the tower she could hear these ghosts making their conspiracies against her. The further she came into the Python Tower the weaker her body became. The winds were sharp and cutting, almost tearing her apart. There were biting fluids like venomous milk trying to bite her skin away. Further on she had to fight the worst pythons. They were tall and big. She needed to escape their tight grips. She had never felt such heavy creatures before. These were the Pythons of Orion. Higher in the tower it was full of flies, and it was very cloudy. Tara had to cut herself a way through it by her sword. Suddenly there was Turet in his Machine of Monotheism. ‘Hey, Tara, are you in for a ride ?’ he shouted.

‘Pick me up,’ Tara shouted. ‘It’s so slippery here.’

By the Machine of Monotheism it was easy for them to get to the red zone of Orion. The place was full of belly-dancers. There were enormous dragons here, covered by flies. By strange lightening the red became pale all the time. Whenever it became white it streamed downstairs, to the white zone. It looked like milk, and it seemed to become white by the belly-dancers. It seemed to flow forth from them. They were transformers. ‘It’s actually called white blood,’ Turet said. ‘It’s the secret of the lioness stone. She has brought forth the belly-dancers by which she can transform the ice, and by which she makes everything soft.’

‘What kind of blood is it ?’ Tara asked.

‘Python Blood,’ Turet said. ‘Long ago there was a fight between a lioness and a python. The fight didn’t seem to end. One day the flies came and turned the lioness into a stone, and the python into blood. The stone brought forth the belly-dancers who would turn the blood of the python into white blood.’

‘So you mean to say that the ice was originally the product of a fight between a lioness and a python ?’ Tara asked.

‘Yes,’ Turet said. ‘But without the perpetual flow of red blood the white blood will die, and the ice will take over again.’

‘Who takes care of that ?’ Tara asked.

‘The belly-dancers,’ Turet said.

Tara now understood why the stone of the lioness was of such importance, and the importance of the guards of this stone, the skeleton-indians of the white zone. And who were the mysterious wingless flies who seemed to have made this all ?

‘The wingless flies become skeleton-indians after awhile,’ Turet said. ‘Then they come down to guard the lioness stone.’ Turet directed his finger towards stairs of light. These lights were moving. It was the stairs of descension, made of white blood. Turet showed her a lot more falls of white blood.

‘The secret of the belly-dancers of Turet is that they are actually mammoths and elephants,’ Turet said.

‘So they can actually change into women and also back into mammoths and elephants ?’ Tara asked.

‘Yes,’ Turet said. ‘Actually the truth is that after the skeleton-indians have guarded the lioness stone long enough they get swallowed by it and they become the belly-dancers.’

‘That looks like a circus to me,’ Tara said.

'No, Tara,' Turet said, 'it's the wilderness. Actually when they have been belly-dancers long enough they go to the path of the elephant.'

'What is that ?' Tara asked.

'It's a path to meet the wildest creatures of Orion,' Turet said. 'When they return they become hippo's and they will be the leaders of the belly-dancers.'

'This looks like school,' Tara said.

'No, Tara,' Turet said, 'it is the wilderness.'

With the Machine of Monotheism they went to such a hippo queen. She lived in a high place, in treasures. It was a dark indian woman, and there were jewels, satin, velvet and the finest materials everywhere. The woman had earrings in, and had been adorned with many more rings. The riches of the white blood were here. Her slaves seemed to bath in it everywhere and drank from it like milk. It had the taste of cacao and cocosmilk. They used it for making bread and crèmes. Wild unknown creatures were her guards. In other realms and planets these creatures had died out, but here on Orion they could survive. On Mars they would have been described as prehistoric, but here they just lived on. Orion was the only place in the universe they could do this. And to Tara this was a special event. She wouldn't forget this too easily. On Mars they could never live on because they were too savage. Orion was a savage world more than Mars, so here they could develop themselves. And this could happen all because of the lioness stone. She was there mother, their warm womb. They could all live because of the elephant path. Here they had their place. And now this hippo queen had them in her care. She was a cruel queen. Tara thought it looked like civilisation, but she knew it was the wilderness. The queen was both cruel and good to her guards. They just had to obey the rules. The creatures were very destructive, and were a threat to the whole universe, so the queen had to protect herself.

The hippo queen and her slaves rode on them whenever they visited the jungles. They also rode on mammoths. She trained all of them to become belly-dancers, as that was how she formed her armies. She could use the belly-dancers for everything. They learned how to change into women, and how to change back into animals. They also learned how to use their weapons. There was a man named Skeipnir who trained many of them. He was one of her highest slaves. He knew the tricks of transformation and he was even her personal guard.

Whenever he wasn't training the belly-dancers, he stood at her door. Skeipnir was a major source in raising her army. She raised this army …. to abduct beings …. to Orion.

'Welcome Tara,' she said. 'My invisible threads have finally brought you here.'

Suddenly Tara saw the slimy, slippery tentacles on her head. It was by a strange light she could see them all of a sudden. Had she been mind-controlled ? She had headaches for such a long time. Did they guide her to this place ?

The hippo queen showed her machine from which the tentacles and fleeces came forth. They were only visible by the strange light. 'These are the elephant winds,' the queen said, 'easily turning into storms, easily turning into lightening and thunder.' Then the queen started to laugh.

'What is your purpose ?' Tara asked.

'My purpose is to abduct, test, and turn them into belly-dancers. The rest will be food for the lion tower,' the hippo queen spoke.

'Oh yes, I have seen that,' Tara said, 'but what is your purpose with me ?'

'You are very special my child,' the hippo queen said. 'I have watched you from the day you were born to this day. I have seen your birth. You are a good fighter, and you would be a good trainer. I want you to meet Skeipnir.'

'I highly appreciate your belly-dancers,' Tara said, 'and I highly appreciate you. I can teach you swordfighting. But please, show me the real secret of Orion.'

'I will, Tara,' the hippo queen said. 'If you teach us swordfighting then I will give you this stone, which is the secret of Orion, the bestkept.' From behind the queen took a reddish transparent jewel which was like a ball. 'Tara, I will give you this stone, for I know Orion is in good hands with you,' the hippo queen spoke. 'Please stay with us. Don't return to Mars.'

‘What kind of stone is it ?’ Tara asked.

‘It is the stone of the Beasts of Orion,’ the hippo queen spoke. ‘I will bring the stone into your sword, so that Orion will be forever safe in you. With it you will have access to the savage zone of Orion, where all secrets will be shared with you.’

Chapter 2. The Amulet of the Pterosaur

It was a dirty place in the savage zone of Orion. She had never seen so much dirt before. There were falls of dirt here, and rivers of dirt, and the most horrible creatures and the largest beasts. On Mars these animals could only exist in a prehistoric world, but here on Orion they were more alive than everywhere else. Savage indian tribes were living here, again races which would be prehistoric on Mars, but this was Orion. They were carnivores and cannibals but they were also like ballet-dancers.

These worlds were not like the history-books on Mars. These worlds were crueller, more dangerous, filled with dirt and stench to the extremes. It was more savage. There was no any form of civilisation here or thought. Here there was chaos. There were no laws. It was an untamed world. There was no gentle traffic here. However, the strange ballet Tara saw among the tribes showed a certain pattern, but these patterns were wild. This was the ballet of death.

Tara found out soon that it was nothing but a war-dance, trying to take minds away, and every form of balance and security. It was a psychological warfare. They tried to put fear on their victims, and insecurity. It was like a spell to break off the immune systems of their prey. Tara knew she had to be on her guard. She knew it had a high price even watching this ballet.

Later she found out that by this ballet they could turn themselves into beasts, or to get possessed by the beasts. They lived double lives. Also the beasts themselves could do such ballet. It was all to protect themselves.

The air was filled by strange haunting battlecries showing no thought but intelligence. It was like these beasts and savages had been caught by instincts triggered by each other. It was like

fire eating the fire. They had become insane by each other. They lived by fear. There was such a drama here, no thought, no shame, but fear. There was no shame as the fear had eaten it all away. And the fear had been raised by the ballets. There was no escape from this. They had all been caught in a trap. One ballet would stir up the other, and the fear would only rise more. It was a world of dread, shameless dread.

Tara was looking for their leader, as she knew all these ballets could hide something. These ballet-dancers could be the guard of something.

The strange stone at Tara's sword started to talk and gave names to all the sorts of beasts here : 'Tiguran Ballets, Tangaran Ballets.'

'What is the leading sort ?' Tara asked.

'There are no leading sorts,' the stone said. 'This world rules itself.'

Then the stone continued : 'Cynognathus, Allosaur, Ceratosaur.'

There were also elephant-like beasts here with jewels on their heads. These seemed to be huge organs of smell. The stone could tell Tara all about it. Many of them were hairy like mammoths. There seemed to be huge cattle here. Some had large heads like horses, and some heads even looked like rabbits. But it was all savage. These beasts were big and different. They were very strange, and they were certainly no easy prey. Actually they were predators. There was also smaller cattle, most of the time having white bodies with swarms of black spots, and big heads like cows and horses. They had the sizes of grown up calves.

The cynognathus looked like he was from the bear family, and the allosaur and the ceratosaur looked like they were from the alligator family, all hunters. There were many different sorts of them. Tara could line out those families, also the huge family of the elephant. The first animal Tara could approach was the cynognathus. Although this beast was friendly to her he bit her a few times to drink some of her blood. It was still a wild animal. The stone told Tara that these were a sort of marks of friendship. If she wasn't a friend the beast would have killed her. The cynognathuses went out for hunt very often, most of the time in groups. They led Tara to some of their caves where they lived. They were bloodthirsty animals, and although they were big meateaters they also kept cattle just to drink from their blood. Tara knew she had to be at her guard. She started to hunt together with them to show them her bondage to

them. There was no innocent cattle here. There were only predators, and hunting was in this place just a defense, a movement of war, necessary to survive. This was savage cattle. And the instincts went further than she ever saw before. These creatures didn't just hunt and kill. They made prisoners of war. They kept cattle.

Often it was for blood. They would milk their cattle everyday for that. The cattle they trapped in that sense were often bloodslaves. Also the other cynognathuses had bitten Tara for blood, and she hoped it would just be the marks of friendship. She had to wait until they would change into indians, something which had to do with the movements and positions of some of their moons.

The stone translated all the conversations she had with them. Without the stone she wouldn't have any chance to survive here. More and more they accepted her in their group.

She also saw the different catlike families. Some of these cats were horned. Some of the catlike beasts were small, and others were huge like elephants or even huger. It was by the stone she could approach these animals finally.

By the stone she also could ride the many elephant-like beasts here. By the stone she got easily accepted.

There were also a lot of pterosaurs which were flying reptiles. At the shore of the huge River of Doom there were ramphorhyncuses. They ruled the seas and the waters. The small ones couldn't fly, but only dive from rocks and trees to soar in the air, but the bigger ones could fly and were like giant reptile bats. Behind the River of Doom there was something which looked like a civilisation. One of the ramphorhyncuses brought Tara there. An indian called Untak came to her. 'Welcome Tara, we have waited so long for you,' he said. Tara was surprised that he spoke in her language. He seemed to come from Mars as well and made the same trip she made. 'These people are very civilised,' Untak said, while directing his finger to a village in the jungle. 'But it's still the wilderness. They teached me how to change into a reptile.'

A few pterosaurs flew above the village. They had tall necks, wings like bats, and were very huge. Some of them were black, others red, and there were also some white ones. 'They care for the jungle, Tara,' Untak spoke.

'How do you know my name ?' Tara asked.

‘Well, they told me,’ Untak said.

‘Who ?’ Tara asked.

‘The pterosaurs,’ Untak said, ‘the flying reptiles. They are the birds of fire.’

‘I knew you would come. You are welcome,’ Untak said. ‘You will love it here. These birds are the secret of nature. They protect the jungle.’

Tara heard the sounds of the pterosaurs in the distance. Untak told her that he could communicate to the pterosaurs by a certain stone. The stone lay in the center of the village in a sort of fountain. Everyone in the village could talk to the pterosaurs by this stone. Untak led Tara to the village and showed it to her. The stone would translate the sounds of the pterosaurs, and would translate everything the people said to the pterosaurs. The pterosaurs seemed to know a lot. They knew why Tara came here, and where she came from, and they were willing to tell her the secrets of this place. They were also willing to show her the jungles and wildernesses here. One day Untak gave her an amulet by which she could communicate to the pterosaurs wherever she was. It was a precious present. She could easily call the pterosaurs by the amulet. It was a necklace.

Chapter 3. Marit the Ratwoman

The pterosaurs showed Tara how often these beasts had a lot of smell organs in their bodies. This was how they communicated very often. It was also their immune system and their warfare strategy expressing itself in bloody hunts. This was to prevent themselves from becoming a victim themselves. They had been dominated by fear, making them insane, a prisoner of themselves and their instincts.

There were also a lot of cynognathuses here. They seemed to have eyes which only worked by smell. By this they were very accurate, and could see a hundred times better than most of the animals. They had eyes of fire.

The insectian world was very dramatic, much crueller than anything else. They had hives in which they locked up their prey for blood. And they could make anything of the blood. They could even let the blood clot to stone, and they made huge cities of these in the depths of the jungle. These were the cities of blood. They also called them candy cities, because of the sweetness of the blood. It was some sort of honey. Tara sailed with Untak along all these cities to watch them. It was like she saw the eyes of hell. Tara saw the double side of this story, as somehow they were all prey of this world. There seemed to be no escape as not any piece of this world would survive beyond the borderlines of Orion. It was a trap, and it seemed to be the only safe place for them. But now Orion was in the hands of Tara. She told Untak about the stone, the stone of the Beasts of Orion. She wanted to know what to do.

‘All other worlds will die,’ Untak said. ‘This is the only safe place. The rest of the universe doesn’t have a way to transform all the extremes, the ice. They will be eaten by it, and sink away. Also for Mars : this is the only safe place. It is a cruel place, but that is the price to pay. There is no other way. There is only one lioness stone, and only one stone like you have. I saw it in dreams, and it has been in my heart always. That was the reason why I came here. It led me to this place.’

‘So you think all those who have been abducted to Orion are lucky ?’ Tara asked.

‘They have been given a chance,’ Untak said. ‘but many become a prey of the lion tower. Those who are led by the stone of the Beasts of Orion will be led to this place. They are the chosen ones. They communicate with the skulls of the savages. On Mars they would call them ancient ones, but here they are alive. They never died out. On Orion there is a place for them.’

‘You see, Tara,’ Untak said. ‘The other worlds outside Orion they are based on chemicals, artificial smells. They are not savage, but doomed. They have put their trust in kings. The things necessary for their existence and survival, necessary for their further evolution they called dirt and stench. They drown in their cosmetics, ruining their lives, but the stone you have is an eye working by dirt and stench, working by the savage smell, the breath of Orion, of the wilderness. It is the last flame of life, which is the eternal life.’

‘The stone promises a way to freedom, a way to space, although it is a way through time, a cruel substance. However, we can trick time. We can survive time. We are winners,’ Untak said. ‘The stone has been given to you, a present of the hippo, as the hippo queen gave it to you. Use it well, Tara.’

‘How can I use it ?’ Tara asked.

‘Believe in it,’ Untak said. ‘It is the best faith there is.’

Tara watched her stone. She laid it against her eye and could see a new world through it. She saw her own face in it, like the face of an angel.

The River of Doom ended in the deserts. The rulers of the deserts were the skeleton-snakes, who made a lot of noise by the movements of their bones. They were bigger than the usual snakes very often, and they formed houses in the deserts for lonely visitors, wanderers. They would lure the wanderer deeper in the house, and then they would start to move very slowly to turn the lives of the wanderers into living nightmares. By their huge and tall bodies they could become the walls, the ceilings and the floors, all perfectly camouflaged. But they would lead the wanderers into a trap, and then the rats would come to eat from their flesh. By the horror of these houses they made the blood of their victims sweet, and turned them into candy, toys or just dolls. The snakes would break the bones of their victims one by one. Whenever the victim started to find out that something in the house wasn’t right, it was already too late. A woman called Marit was the ruler of these houses. She was actually a rat, and her women could also change into rats. They were the only ones who could safely live in the houses. The deserts were full of these doom towns, and whoever didn’t know about these traps would fall into it.

‘Never go there into such a house,’ Untak said to Tara, ‘for the toymakers come there, and the candymakers, those who have deals with rats, and they turn the lives of wanderers into eternal nightmares. The skeleton-snakes will begin to move, and soon the house will be hell. The house will crash down and it will feed on the inhabitant, fastening him against a heap of bones, and then the rats will come. Toymakers, candymakers, dollmakers and butchers will finally take the victim away for sale. Don’t think it is civilisation. It is savage, it is the wilderness.’

‘Where does Marit live ?’ Tara asked.

‘Oh, she lives in the depths of the deserts,’ Untak said. ‘She’s the ruler there. When they are in need for more victims they abduct children from other planets to let them grow up in such a house first. When they become full grown the house will create more and more troubles, and then finally fastening the victim and showing it’s true nature. The rats do all this. They go out to abduct the children, bring them to the houses and being friends to them. They can change into women, you know.’

‘Where can I find Marit ?’ Tara asked.

‘Come with me,’ Untak said. He knew a path through the desert to her house. When they came there she stood before the window. She looked like a doll. When she saw them she turned into a rat immediately and ran outside. A fight started. Tara had raised her sword. The rat jumped at Untak and bit him horribly. Tara quickly pushed her sword into the back of the rat. ‘That will be enough, Tara,’ Untak said. ‘You have hit her in her sensitive spot.’ The rat fell down. It had a broken spine now, and it was slowly dying. ‘Oh, not when I eat from this candy,’ the rat screamed, and grasped one of the legs of Untak to bite a piece out of it. Immediately the rat straightened it’s back again. Then the rat ran into the house again. ‘It heals itself by eating meat,’ Untak said with a painful face. ‘You will heal also,’ Tara said. ‘Let’s go into the house.’

‘You know what kind of house it is, Tara,’ Untak said. ‘It can be dangerous.’

‘We need to go in,’ Tara said. ‘We do not have another choice.’ Then Tara ran in, while immediately the walls started to ripple. Tara ran through the corridors, and saw the woman sitting on a throne in a huge hall.’

‘That is kind of dumb,’ the woman said. The walls started to move closer and closer to each other. Untak was on the roofs at that moment, and threw a rope through a hole between the bones. ‘Take the rope,’ he shouted to Tara. But Tara crashed the walls by her sword to have another opening, and then she ran upwards to the throne. Again the woman turned into a rat, and this time she jumped on Tara. They had a wrestling on the ground. The rat bit Tara a few times and she started to bleed. By her sword she could shake the rat away from her and then ran to the throne again. There was a mirror between two jewels on the seat of the throne. By her sword Tara destroyed the mirror. ‘I know this is the source of your power, witch,’ Tara shouted. Tara knew this because the stone she had in her sword had told her this. But the mirror healed itself again. ‘As long as there is meat to eat the mirror will live on,’ the rat screamed. Then Tara lay the stone of her sword against the mirror while the mirror exploded, and it’s two jewels were melting away.

The rat was changing into a woman again. She had become weak. She almost crept towards her throne and settled down on it again, but she had lost her powers. ‘Jump away, Untak,’ Tara screamed to Untak who was still sitting on the roof. Tara dived away through the opening she had made by her sword. Then the enormous house crashed down to become a heap of bones.

Years later Tara and Untak visited the heap of bones again, and Marit the ratwoman still lived there, on her throne, but the throne and also herself had become old and poor. Everything had been covered by spiderwebs. ‘You don’t have to be afraid of the house anymore. It’s over now. It’s not the same anymore,’ the old woman said. ‘But don’t you know my throne has been made of skeleton-snakes, and I have been made of them too. Don’t you know that after great draughts they always rise up again ?’

‘Yes, we know,’ Tara said. ‘And that is why we command you to leave the desert with your skeleton-snakes, and to leave Orion.’

‘But you know I cannot live outside Orion,’ the old woman said. ‘Then I will die.’

‘You will live at the borderlines,’ Untak said. ‘That must be enough for you.’

‘But I need meat to get through the night,’ the old woman spoke.

‘There’s meat enough at the borderlines of Orion. Go there for a hunt, and put your houses there,’ Untak said.

And thus the borderlines of Orion became a dangerous place, but Tara and Untak had to do it for the sake of the savage zone of Orion. The stone had decided it this way. And it was true, the woman rose to the heights of her powers again, but this time not in the savage zone again. She had lost her place at the River of Doom, and she had lost her deserts there.

Chapter 4. The Sea of No Return

To Tara it had become clear now. She would stay here for a long time. There was a path to the other side of the Deserts of Doom now. But all Tara could find was more doom. Here the wild

cats of Honolor lived, at a strange beach ending in a forest. Again these wild cats could turn into women and they could make someone deaf by their shrieks and cries. Whenever they had caught a victim they would give the victim no rest and no food, finally to put the victim in a small box, which they used for their hives. They were beekeepers, all for blood. In this sense they looked like those of the insectian world. They used the blood to build their cities, candy cities. They mixed it with honey and they transformed parts of it into white blood for creams and making bread. In that sense they looked like the belly-dancers of Turet.

The wild cats of Honolor had many ways to get their victims. They had arenas, and further all sorts of traps. They also visited the battlefields after the battles. One of their best tricks was to turn into nursing, motherlike types, in which they could create a hospital sphere. They were very clever in misleading their victims. And still it was no civilisation. It was savage. It was the wilderness. There was no care in Honolor. All care was nothing but a trap. They needed blooddonors for their hives. They made the most beautiful cities by their bloody candy. They used to make these on the edge between the beach and the forest.

Honolor was a strange world. The wild cats covered it all up. When Tara visited Honolor she was in a fight immediately. In rage she slew many of these corrupted women. She wanted to dominate Orion. She had help from tall snakes, called by the stone. It was an invasion that day. The sky had turned bloodred. It was like the wardancers had come. It was a revolution in the sky. This time the wingless flies were also in the sky, helping her, turning the wild cats into skeletons. Tara didn't send them out of the savage zone, but she sent them to the borderlines of the savage zone.

Through the forest Tara reached a place near to an enormous beach where the Sea of No Return was. Between the forest and the enormous beach there was a guard named the Man with the Million Heads, for he had a million heads. Tara had a fight against him for two days. Whenever she cut off the heads they grew again. The only way to return was the Stairway of Fire. Those who would finally reach the sea could never return. The guard used to throw his victims on the stairs, by which they fell back. But Tara threw him on the stairway of fire, by which he fell into the depths.

Within a few hours Tara was on a raft on the Sea of No Return.

The Python

Stone II

Chapter 1. The Mark of Bellatrix

Chapter 2. Lars Hemmerlitch-Richter

Chapter 3. The Wrath of the Python Stone

Chapter 1. The Mark of Bellatrix

The White Spider Queen was honoured to have Tara from Rhodes so close to her. They developed a very deep friendship, but on the road it started to become irritating. The White Spider Queen gave a huge attic to Tara, on top of one of her towers. Here Tara could live. A coldness started to come up between the two. Tara more and more felt the need to draw herself back, and she started to live a lonely life on the attic. There was a love hate relationship between the two, but finally they could forget about each other. They both had different places. But one day the White Spider Queen died, and Tara got the whole palace. There were many veils throughout the huge palace, many hidden places, with much weaponry. There were a lot of snakes in the palace, which were the guards, and they now had to learn that they had a new boss : Tara.

The White Spider Queen was a painter. She painted by blood, but also by venom. One day Tara discovered a hidden room in the palace with a lot of her paintings. There were also skeletons here who she had painted. A lot of painted skulls hung at the wall. It was dark and dusty here, and snakes lived in the skeletons and the skulls. The room smelled like snake slime. A lot of the palace had been made of python stone, a dangerous stone. It looked like the walls were moving. The rays of the python stones could easily penetrate brains, to change the senses, sight included. They could stimulate illusions. Tara saw the many different patterns of these stones in the palace. If she would stare too long at it, her sight would get shifted, turning, like she had double sight. She had many surveys in the palace.

In another room there were Python Knights, dangerous demons, but the White Spider Queen had stuffed them. They didn't move, and their armories were dusty. The room was full of spiderwebs here, and big chubby spiders seemed to live in the armories of the Python Knights.

Deep in the palace there was a hall with a stairway of blood. When Tara went downstairs she came into a strange place. Her feet were bloody and she stared at a man with a huge cape, dressed in a garment. There were rivers of blood here, and dead bodies were everywhere, or parts of bodies. There was a strange smell. 'Hello,' the man said. Tara didn't say anything. When he took his sword Tara kicked his head real hard before he could do anything. In a flash she took her knife and beheaded him. She knew she had to be on her guard here. She stared around her, almost paranoid. It was a place of death.

She got lured deeper and deeper in this place, and it also trapped her deeper and deeper. She began to see the riches of the python stones more and more, and she realized that the White Spider Queen had really stored them here as in a collection. They were here in all colours, the most beautiful stones.

Inbetween the stones there was a giant egg with some small holes through which snakes slided. There was coming blood out of the holes, and the egg was already cracking. A giant came out of the egg, totally covered by slime. He had big snakes around him everywhere, as if they were strengling him. But they seemed to be his friends. Tara didn't hesitate one moment, jumped on the giant and pierced her tall knife through his throat. The giant threw her away, and stood up. The man began to sing. Tara took a stone and threw it at him. But the man started to laugh. 'Do you know who I am ?' he asked.

'No,' Tara said. 'But all I know is your ripe to be killed.'

'I am Karsa,' the giant said. 'Born of Orion, Betelgeuse.'

'I see you are a slayer,' Tara said to the man covered by blood.

'All paths of python stones lead to Orion,' the giant said. 'It is the place of eternal rebirth. What is death ? Isn't it all to be reborn ? Death is a safe womb.'

‘Go away, you creepy guy,’ Tara said.

‘Ah,’ the giant said, ‘I see you are not ripe for rebirth yet. What if I would make a lollipop of you. The animals here would love to see some meat hanging here.’

Tara grasped her sword and walked towards him again. ‘If you like death so much, then meet my sword, your guide to it,’ Tara said. Then she pierced her sword through his belly.

‘Born of Orion I am,’ the giant roared. ‘I am the womb of the Universe, Betelgeuse, and to hang in my lollipop shop you would do good.’ He grasped her at her neck and threw her against the ceiling of the cave where they were. Then Tara fell down. Karsa took her again chased a hook into her flesh and hung her at a rock. ‘See there,’ he said. ‘Just wait for the predators.’

Tara had lost consciousness and hung there for hours and hours. She was lucky no predators came to lick from her meat. A man finally set her free. The man seemed to know about Karsa. He told Tara that Karsa would prey on eggs, creeping in them to eat the unborn, and then he would rise from the egg. At times Karsa stayed for months in the egg, just to make sure he fed well.

Karsa was the dark guard of Betelgeuse, where the path of the python stones would end. There he had his domain made of snake-tongues, all stretched out. He guarded the Python Eye. It was nothing but a butchery, but not a normal one. It licked you to death. Karsa was a dangerous predator called the licker. The further you would come on the path of the python stones, the more it would break off, trapping you in all sorts of ways. The best and safest way to go there was by lianas. Fortunately the man knew the way. They went from tree to tree by the lianas.

The Python Eye was an oracle made of python stones, like a wheel, guarding the other paths of python stones to the other planets of Orion. By the Python Eye Karsa dominated the Universe. The vehicle in this oracle was Kzumin, his chariot by which he hunted and by which he could open the gates. The Kzumin was his key of power by which he could move the fastest.

Under the might of the Python Eye the universe lived in slavery. Whenever a soul had been abducted by Karsa it would end up in Bellatrix into the claws of a metallic beast called Aam,

where they would get printed with the patterns of the python stones. They would get the mark of Bellatrix to let them be raised up as zombies.

Chapter 2. Lars Hemmerlitch-Richter

There was only one way to escape : to become like these rulers of Orion. And there was only one way to become them, and to stay being like them, without falling into guilt and shame : cacao.

But Tara wanted to help them. When Tara finally approached the Python Eye it changed into a dangerous mill. Behind the Python Eye was a gigantic jungle. The Python Eye started to spit fire. The eye started to shriek and roar also. Suddenly Tara saw Karsa on his vehicle inside of the mill. ‘I know you just want to escape all this,’ Tara shouted. ‘You can be anyone. I know a better road than this : go with me to the palace of the White Spider Queen. She died, and you can be my soldiers.’

‘No, I know a better place,’ Karsa roared, ‘Saiphe, the desert planet.’

‘What is that,’ Tara asked.

‘I need to open the portal by some sort of game,’ Karsa said.

‘What kind of game ?’ Tara asked.

‘It’s a game of coffee, tea, chocolate and juice,’ Karsa said.

‘And what do you win with it ?’ Tara asked.

‘It opens the portal to Saiphe,’ Karsa said.

‘To do what ?’ Tara asked.

‘Then I will become a beast like Aam,’ Karsa said.

‘Metallic ?’ Tara asked.

‘Yes, living Python Stone,’ Karsa said.

‘You need to return,’ Tara said. ‘You cannot handle all those powers. It will finally blow you up.’

But Karsa laughed at her. In the distance an enormous beast was coming to them. It was Aam.

‘You both are too far gone,’ Tara said. ‘There would be a good place for you in the palace of the White Spider Queen. I know the way to it. But here you will finally erupt.’

But the two just laughed at her. Suddenly there were explosions everywhere. Behind Tara the other man stood with an enormous gun. ‘Forget about them, Tara,’ he said.

The name of the man was Lars Hemmerlitch-Richter. ‘We need to return, Tara,’ he said. But also the Python Eye was exploding, and many stones were falling down blocking the way. The Kzumin was a strange vehicle, like a motor. Lars grasped it quickly, stepped on it, took Tara and flew away with it in the air.

Again and again Lars had to shoot portals open. Tara didn’t know who he was, but he seemed to be her saviour. But the more and more python stones seemed to fall down, surrounding them. It was raining python stones. They seemed to be alive. Some stones had their mouths wide open, and most of them had only one eye. They started to bite Lars and Tara.

‘It’s Aam,’ Lars said. ‘We are already in it’s beak.’

‘How do we get out ?’ Tara asked.

‘They have surrounded us,’ Lars said.

‘What does that mean ?’ Tara asked.

‘That we will get eaten,’ Lars said.

‘Can’t you do anything ?’ Tara asked.

Suddenly Lars pushed a button on the dashboard of the Kzumin. Gunbeams came out of the Kzumin, and the python stones began to melt, but more and more they changed into snakes. ‘We need to step deeper inside the Kzumin,’ Lars said. ‘There we will be safe.’

But also from the depths of the Kzumin snakes seemed to come forth. Tara felt becoming weaker and weaker, while Lars had to carry her inside. Then Tara fell asleep. Inside the Kzumin there was a small computercabin in which Lars began to work. Soon he could let blasts come forth from the machine. They could watch it through a big thick window. Outside there was fire everywhere. Aam was roaring. By the computers of the Kzumin Lars could reprogram Aam. But they were still in the enormous stomache of Aam. Suddenly hard stones were clashing against the window of the Kzumin, and soon the window broke open, while fluids started to enter in and strange smells. Lars grasped Tara tight and swam with her outside. Karsa was sitting on his machine again, and he was laughing at them.

‘The portal of Saiphe is opening,’ Karsa said while laughing. ‘I’m going to be Python Stone too, living Python Stone to increase my powers.’

Suddenly they all got swallowed by an enormous gate. Tara woke up again. ‘What is going on ?’ she asked Lars.

Sharp pieces of python stone pierced themselves into their skins. ‘Ha ha ha,’ Karsa shouted. ‘Isn’t this amazing. We become python stone.’

Strange fluids streamed everywhere having a delicious smell, luring them to drink. ‘Don’t drink it,’ Lars said. Tara held her lips tightly on each other. Karsa was drinking and drinking. ‘I’m becoming python stone,’ he roared. Then he exploded.

There was a hole in the walls by which they could escape.

‘Are we out now ?’ Tara asked.

‘I hope so,’ Lars said.

As for Tara : she wanted to forget about the python stone, but it seemed to follow her everywhere.

Chapter 3. The Wrath of the Python Stone

Lars took her to a cave where many snakes were. Everywhere there was snakeslime and the strong piercing smell of it. Lars took the slime and smeared it on his body. ‘Do the same,’ he said to Tara. ‘This is the only way to be safe against the powers of the python stone.’ Tara immediately did what he said.

Behind the cave there was a large cave with a small lake, with rocks with many spiders and crabs having eyes on their backs. Again there was much slime. ‘Do it,’ he said to Tara. ‘Smear it on your body.’ Tara did immediately what he said. Lars was sliding into the water. ‘Follow me,’ he said. He swam to the other side. There were many slimy webs hanging here.

‘Breath it in,’ he said, which she did. ‘Follow me,’ he said. He swam into the depths to a light cave underwater. Tara followed him. In another cave they stepped out of the water again. It was a dry place here with dry sand. By a tunnel they came into a dark cave, very huge. Here a lot of men stood in black armories and with black helmets. Lars and Tara hid behind a rock. Close to them there was a cupboard where they could take an armory for themselves. Soon they stood close to the others.

‘I want you to know,’ their leader spoke, ‘soon there is no way back to the python stone anymore. We have something bigger. While the python stone will be a trap more and more. We do not have any time to lose. You all know which substance is bigger than the python stone. You all know the substance which will trigger the powers of the python stone, and it will be the only thing safe against it. The universe will blow itself up. It is the eye of orion. We have come all our way from the Pleiades to find it here, and we found it. Soon we will be the rulers. We will build a new universe by the eye of orion. And the python stone will be nothing but some dynamite to clean it all up. Romustar, activate the python stone, and let me show you how the eye of orion will protect me, will protect us, against it.’

A man stepped forwards having a small machine in his hand with a red ball. He pushed some buttons like a code and fire seemed to come forth from the ball. Then the leader showed them a blue eye in which he blew air. It became bigger and bigger and turned brown and red. It was like a fleece now. Then he took the small machine from which fire seemed to come forth, put it into the fleece, while the flame was dying. All man were clapping in their hands. ‘See,’ the leader said. ‘The python stone can’t do anything …’ but then there were explosions everywhere. The men got into panic. ‘It’s the wrath of the python stone,’ the leader was screaming. Then he was burning like all the other men.

‘See how important the slime was,’ Lars whispered to Tara. Tara nodded.

‘Follow me,’ Lars said. They went through another gate and it seemed they were back in the palace of the White Spider Queen again. ‘Who are you ?’ Tara asked. Lars gave her a hand and said : ‘I am the guard of the palace of the White Spider Queen. I have found you, and I have been given to you as your guard as well.’

‘As a gift of the White Spider Queen ?’ Tara asked.

Lars nodded with a smile.

The End

Sharla the

Head Hunter II

Chapter 1. Bellatrix Casino

Chapter 2. Crocodile Tower

Chapter 1. Bellatrix Casino

She had been called the skeleton-brooder. She could bring them alive by caressing their skulls. ‘I believe you, Tara,’ some women were shouting. She could raise the dead. But sometimes it just didn’t work, like there were some bigger powers in the game.

In the distance there was an egg between huge spiders. The spiders were very hairy and they had jewels all over their bodies. The evil witch was standing up again. A small crocodile came out of the egg, and suddenly turned into Sharla the Head Hunter. She was dressed in a garment with a cape, while smoke was all around her. With quick steps she ran towards Tara from Rhodes, raised her spear, threw it, and missed.

There was a fight for three days against Sharla the Head Hunter. Sharla finally left. She visited her old home again, a place no one knew, a place along the river. It was a hidden place, surrounded by dark trees. The bushes and trees grew tightly together so that no one could come through. Sharla made some soup of some old bones. When she drank it she came to her powers again. In this land she just couldn't die. Her mouth was full of spiders. Pale white skulls were staring at her. She poured some of the soup on the skulls and suddenly knights stood before her, her knights. 'I want you to bring down Tara,' she spoke.

The knights were roaring and were changing into black panthers. They ran out of the hut and smelled where Tara was already. They could smell her bloodline. Tara however could dominate them by her sword.

Finally Sharla went to her main realm at the Westside of the Mitstik River, where she had her largest collection of skulls. Sharla always had her cycle of coming alive again, and in this Elephant City played a big part. It was a city in the west of her area, a city she dominated. In secret she drank all sorts of blood here to get her strength back again. The cycle was like her oracle speaking to her. It was her heart. Under her skin there was always a snake sliding, her father, the Skeleton Eater.

Tara had her own cycle : the black snake inside. Tara smelled blood, in such a sense that she knew that Sharla was on top of herself again. Sharla's return was soon big news in Elephant City. Her newest trick was turning others into killer-pigs by some sort of mixture of blood. She would put these predator-pigs into arena's or in her army.

Later Tara heard that Lars Hemmerlitch-Richter, an old friend of hers, had killed Sharla the Head Hunter. Soon he came to her on his motorcycle. He had saved her a few times, and she believed him. Especially when he showed her the head of Sharla. 'Want to buy it ?' he asked.

'Yes, I would hang it at the wall of my cave,' Tara said.

'Good,' Lars said.

Tara was very glad she saw this old friend again. She knew that she could always count on him. But as you could expect : Sharla's headless body found them soon. 'Ah, a headless chicken,' Lars said. 'I forgot to cut off the rest.'

'Okay, be careful you won't touch any of the bottle she has in her hands, Tara,' Lars said. 'It's probably the stuff by which she breeds her killerpigs.' Lars jumped on his motorcycle, grasped Tara and drove away.

'Oh, I will get you,' Sharla shrieked. 'No worries.'

'There is not any way to beat that witch,' Tara said to Lars.

'Oh, I know something,' Lars said. He brought Tara to his house, and showed her his many mysterious weapons. 'I have an army,' he said.

'So has she,' Tara said.

'I'm better,' Lars said with a smile on his face.

'Show me,' Tara said.

Lars grasped a gun from the wall. 'Let's go,' he said. Soon they had her in sight again. Lars loaded the gun and fired. The headless body fell on the ground. Lars shot again, and it exploded.

'Simple,' he said.

'You don't know Sharla,' Tara said. 'She always returns. She has a cycle.'

‘Yes, but she becomes weaker,’ Lars said. ‘Her cycle has called for me, finally.’

‘Who are you ?’ Tara asked.

‘I am her nemesis,’ Lars spoke, ‘her destruction.’

‘Are you for real ?’ Tara asked, while she pinched him in the arm.

Lars nodded. Suddenly blood came out of Lars’s mouth. ‘Lars, what’s wrong ?’ Tara asked.

‘She’s in me,’ Lars said. Then he fell down. ‘She’s in me now,’ he said. ‘I will fight her now inside. Please take my keys and my house.’ Then Lars died. Tara knew he had sacrificed himself. She was sad. She took his motorcycle and drove to his house, as he said.

There were strange objects in his house, many skulls. In a sense he looked a lot like Sharla. Then Tara heard laughing in her head and something in her head stang her. She woke up in hell, while Sharla’s head was in front of her, laughing at her. Suddenly she also saw Lars.

‘Am I dead ?’ Tara asked.

‘In hell,’ Lars said. ‘The only way to fight Sharla.’ Wolfskulls were surrounding them, piercing them, and soon they both hung at rocks where birds began to eat from their meat. They were in the burning sun. ‘It’s like she’s invincible,’ Tara roared, ‘like the dying and the rising sun.’

‘It’s a pretty and good example of rebirth,’ Lars spoke. He was moaning because of the pain. Then everything got dark. Sharla was teasing them by feathers, and even in this position she kicked them and beat them. She showed them her hell motor-cycle to make them jealouse. ‘When everything is in fire, with this thing I always escape,’ she said. She took a wire and bound at around their necks. Then she acted like she was strengling them. ‘Oh, the snakes will come after awhile to do the same,’ she spoke.

Their souls were burning in hell, tortured, until their ghosts slided away. They were both nothing but shadows now, winds of hell. ‘Hold my hand,’ Lars said. Tara’s hand slided to his. ‘I’ve been here before,’ Lars said. ‘This is my cycle.’

‘In the Bellatrix Casino we rise again,’ Lars said.

‘What is that ?’ Tara asked.

‘A beach,’ Lars said. ‘When there is flood, it’s a casino.’

The beach was full of heads, all waiting for the flood. The flood would be like a stairway, like lights taking them higher, until they would be out of hell. But if they would lose, they would be drawn deeper.

‘I’m not a gambler,’ Tara said. ‘I hate those games.’

‘Play for your life,’ Lars said.

But they ended up below the beach, where a mill was spinning. Here they became nothing but air.

‘I am a cloud,’ Tara said.

‘The coffee will wake you up,’ Lars said.

‘What do you mean ?’ Tara asked.

‘Oh, there will be coffee for all losers, giving them another chance,’ Lars said.

‘I’m sick of these games,’ Tara said.

‘Play for life,’ Lars said.

In the distance they heard Sharla laughing.

Chapter 2. Crocodile Tower

But again they seemed to lose every game, and they only slided and sank deeper and deeper. ‘Do you still work in the palace of the White Spider Queen ?’ Tara asked.

‘Yes,’ Lars said, ‘but not in the weekends. Well, it’s good you bring that up here, for I know a secret path to the palace.’

‘Ah, like you did before,’ Tara said.

‘Yes,’ Lars said. They came close to some sort of machine behind glass. It was a coiling elevator, working by a strange sort of fire. ‘My way to get density again,’ Lars said.

‘What is it ?’ Tara asked.

‘You will see,’ Lars said.

It was a crocodile tower. Lars pushed some buttons, and they got density again, while they were coiling upstairs. Soon they got into the palace of the White Spider Queen.

But when they saw Sharla the Head Hunter there sitting on the throne of the White Spider Queen Lars almost couldn't say anything. 'Come here,' Sharla said, 'and show yourself to your master.'

'You aren't master of him,' Tara shouted. But Lars slowly moved towards Sharla like he was under her spell. White creatures seemed to jump forth from the throne. 'Throw him into the crocodile tower again,' Sharla shouted.

'No,' Tara shouted. But a strange machine was taking Lars by his arms and his legs, moving him towards the crocodile tower in which they threw him. 'I am your queen now,' Sharla shouted.

'No way,' Tara said. 'Guards, throw her also into the crocodile tower.'

But Tara grasped a sword from the wall, and kicked the white guards away until she reached the throne. Sharla stood up while lightening come forth from her hand slamming Tara against the wall. 'You can't begin anything against me,' Sharla said. 'You are nothing.'

Lars came up again in the strange machine. 'T..T…Tara,' he stuttered. 'She has taken the crown of the White Spider Queen. If you get it, she will be defeated.'

Sharla began to laugh. 'There is no any way you can get this crown.' She took it from her head threw it into the air while it was changing into a white bird. Tara grasped a bow from the wall, took an arrow and shot the bird while it fell into her arms and changed into a crown again.

'P…p…put it on your head, T…Tara,' Lars stuttered. Tara did what he said, while Sharla fell down in front of the throne. 'I am lost,' she shrieked. Then she disappeared in a flame. Quickly Tara helped Lars out of the machine. 'I will lead you to the White Spider Queen's private room now,' Lars said, 'to show you all the objects of her powers. They are yours now.'

It was a major room with a huge veiled bed, and many objects which once had made a queen of the White Spider Queen. Most of these objects she gathered from her defeated enemies. The most beautiful treasures Tara could find here. She fell down on the bed, and thought she could use some sleep. Lars of course would watch over her.

The End

The Gladiators of Lakshor II

Chapter 1. The knife of Gitdugal

Chapter 2. Emperor of Tantalos

Chapter 3. The Eye of the Cobra

Chapter 1. The knife of Gitdugal

Tara walked towards Gitdugal. She had found a sharp branch like a stake. But Gitdugal took her above his head and smashed her against a tree. ‘Dream of me,’ he shouted at Tara. Tara bowed down and fell at his feet. Again he took her high above his head and this time he threw her far away. Again Gitdugal ran towards her and this time he took her into a tight grip. He tried to strengle her. He also bit her. Tara lost it completely and he threw her into the river again, where she was more dead than alive. Then Gitdugal dived into the river, and wanted to drown her there. Tara dived underwater by her last strength, swam to his leg and bit him. Blood was streaming into the water. He grasped her and pushed her under even more. At his belt a sheathed knife hung. She grasped the knife and ripped his stomach open. That was the end of Gitdugal. His grip got weaker, and soon she had beheaded him. She raised his skull into the air and shouted to the slaves in the gardens : ‘It is done. You are free now.’

It was a beautiful day. Her tribe was free now, and so many others.

The knife of Gitdugal she would keep forever, also his skull. She brought them to her cave, where they would have a place. She would stay around her tribe to protect them.

She didn't talk much about the knife of Gitdugal. She kept it hidden in her cave. One day the knife had been stolen, and I saw Tara losing her powers more and more. After decades she found it back. This is the story. She had a confrontation with the pirate prince, an evil commander of the gladiators of Lakshor. The most evil men came to his ship, which some would call a spaceship. The ship was full of skeletons dressed in garments and capes, giving advice to the pirate prince. They kept women locked up in the ship as well. The skeletons used to play many games, which they used as oracles to hear what the gods had to say. They listened to the winds. They got the mission to steal the knife of Gitdugal from Tara's cave.

One of the skeletons had to guard the knife of Gitdugal. The knife was important because of it's sleep-inducing powers.

It was a ghostship. The women and girls who had been locked up in the insides of the ship had their own rooms. In the nights they would wander through the ship, but they could never leave. Their hearts had been chained by the knife of Gitdugal. The knife of Gitdugal always drowned these hearts, so the women were often shrieking, especially in the nights.

Some of the women were Vikings and had been kidnapped out of other boats. Those Vikings often worshipped dark skeleton gods. Most of these women lived on the planets of Gemini.

Erator was the Viking ruler of Gemini, but he also had to bow down before the knife of Gitdugal. They skinned him and hung his skeleton at the front of the ship. Further they decorated the ship by the bones and skulls of the kings of the planets of Gemini : Castor, Pollux, Wasat and Alhena, but the Viking king of Mebsuta they couldn't beat. He finally called for the help of Tara from Rhodes. Tara was very glad that he knew where the knife was, and she would help him getting his women back.

Together they went in a boat to the ship of the pirate prince one day. Tara was a good swordfighter, and so was Mebsuta, but the pirate prince they couldn't beat. They ended up chained at a wall in the depths of the ship. The pirates were cannibals, knifelickers, and first Tara and Mebsuta had to eat a lot to become fat. But the food was so awful that they vomited everything out all the time. In the middle of the night one of the women found them and unchained them. She knew where the knife of Gitdugal was. The guard was sleeping. They took the keys out of his pocket and opened the door to the room where the knife was. Quickly Tara grasped the knife. They freed the other women and escaped from the ship.

They swam towards an island, but because of the many crocodiles many women died.

And on the island there were nothing but pirates who didn't let them enter the island. In rage Tara and Mebsuta killed many crocodiles and built a ship of it. They used everything they could find.

There were times the pirate-gladiators of Lakshor really gave them hard times, but finally a man called Lars Hemmerlitch-Richter built a control-panel to trap them. He could use them as marionets, and built an army of them. Lars more and more started to show up in the Tara's life to show himself as her guard. He was a technician, and could find a way to Tara's heart.

He also helped Mebsuta to raise Gemini again. It became the biggest Viking Empire in the universe.

Lakshor was like a deep pit worse than hell. Tara knew all about it. But by the help of Lars she could take it over. Lars installed a clock there, which was the clock of change. Tara was so grateful to Lars that she gave him the knife of Gitdugal.

Chapter 2. Emperor of Tantalos

In the depths of Lakshor there was a realm called Taroon, also called the road to Tantalos, the world of hunger. Lars finally became an emperor there, all by the help of Tara. Tara was almost in love with this man, who had such a soft heart. There was something in his eyes which made her melt, but savage as she was, she wouldn't answer his love. She repressed it. She chose for the lonely life. Taroon and Tantalos were in his hands now, so she had fulfilled her mission. These two areas had always been the secret of Lakshor, and now these were in good hands. Lars was also a man at his own. It was here he finally built the greatest warship. He called his ship the flyslayer.

He raised the gladiators of lakshor here and gave them a good life. He raised himself an army of which he was the captain. There was no warship but the Flyslayer. The gladiators of lakshor were in good hands now. The flyslayer terminated a lot of fly-rulers of lakshor.

Lars was a man at his own. He had a great heart, and teached Tara a lot about love. But savage as Tara was, she became irritated. She teached him about the savage life, and thus a deep friendship rose. Lars was such a gentleman, almost civilized, but Tara knew he had to be that way, for he was a spy. He was the guard of the White Spider Queen palace, a palace connected to so many worlds, a palace to which he always returned.

Lars made of many gladiators of lakshor also guards of the throne of the White Spider Queen, so that they could live a double life more or less. Some became guards like him. Where Taroon was the world of riches, Tantalos was the world of poverty, but Lars would switch them. He built the switch deep in the heart of Tantalos, which he called his world. The world of Lars Hemmerlitch-Richter was a big world, a righteous world. He was the one playing with the switch, but it was attached to a clock. He actually called it a time-bomb-clock, as it always brought a lot of destruction.

It was actually all switching between a red light and a green light, and the rhythm made everything soft. Lars used it to open portals.

Lars was a prophet with supernatural gifts. He always used to amaze Tara with his knowledge about things he naturally couldn't know. But she could expect that from the guard of the White Spider Queen palace. She understood why she had chosen him.

Chapter 3. The Eye of the Cobra

Tara loved to see how Lars used the gladiators of lakshor as marionets. They were part of the time-bomb-clock, and when they exploded he would bring them to life again. They were all robotic, and became his knights. Lars was an expert in Python Stone Technology, and knew

exactly how to use it without falling in the trap of it's trickery. It was the trickster stone, without a doubt, but Lars had learnt to deal with it. He had learnt to balance it's energies, and to use it for the good.

But there were things in the depths of Taroon and Tantalos Lars didn't understand. Taroon was the history of Lakshor, the old part, with unknown mysteries, holding things they called the dragon candles, shapeshifting objects guarding the secrets of this history and of it's life. These ones were sorcerors, called the pirates of Taroon, the older gladiators of lakshor. They had been made by Diabrilles, who was a dollmaker. Diabrillis was the one who had built lakshor with all it's secret depths.

One could only come to the eternal riches by the eternal hunger, where the pirates of Taroon originally came from. They were the secret of the living cobra stones, the only way to survive the dangerous forces of the python stone. The pirates of Taroon were the guards of this world, and they actually dominated Lars. Lars suffered from hyperventilation at times, and from stuttering, all because of the weight of these pirates. They lived in his heart, and they wanted him to become initiated into the forces of the cobra stone. Lars was their marionette.

These guards stood on walls too high for Lars. These walls were the walls of fire, spread throughout the universe, all coming forth from the domain of Diabrillis. They needed to keep the secrets of the cobra stone, but they had an interest in Lars. One day they took him to the realm of Diabrillis. It was a place he wouldn't forget too fast. Diabrillis was like a black and white octopus transmitting red beams. But he could take many forms as he was a sorcerer and a shapeshifter.

'Why have you brought this unworthy man to me ?' Diabrillis roared to the guards.

But the pirates didn't say anything. 'Well, have you lost your tongue ?' Diabrillis asked. Diabrillis moved closer to Lars, who was still in his machine, a strange vehicle attached to his arms and legs making him bigger.

'You look like you are in a wheelchair,' Diabrillis said to Lars. Lars pushed some buttons and a fire beam clashed against the skin of Diabrillis. Diabrillis started to laugh. 'What do you want with your wheelchair, invalid man. There's no place for you here. This has all been designed for me.'

Then Lars pushed another button, while red lights went on and missiles and rockets came forth from the machine. There was some smoke, but Diabrillis still had fun with it. 'Why not using your crutches ? I bet you can hit hard by them.'

Diabrillis came closer and started to break the machine by his tentacles. Lars understood the pirates of Taroon weren't glad with their boss. Maybe they wanted him to do something about it. Quickly he tried another button. It was an ice beam. Diabrillis froze immediately, and got into a shock. 'Guards, do something,' he shouted. 'I can't move.' But the pirates of Taroon climbed on the machine. 'Go through the red door on the left,' they said to Lars. Lars could move his machine through the door, while the pirates followed him. But Diabrillis already started to melt. 'You won't come far,' he shouted.

Lars stepped out of his machine, took the knife of Gitdugal he once got from Tara and threw it into the heart of Diabrillis. It was the sleep-inducing knife leading to death. But the tentacles

of Diabrillis seemed to grow, turning into enormous pythons. Another machine came forward, with a pirate of Taroon in it, an old gladiator of lakshor. It was a scorpion vehicle with scissors. Quickly it began to cut the pythons' heads off, and more scissor machines seemed to enter to do the same.

'Don't tell him the secret,' one of the pythons roar. But the pirates of Taroon were merciless against the pythons. They opened other red doors. Cobras seemed to come forth, and they formed a circle around Lars. 'No, not the wheel of the cobra stones,' another python roared. The cobras formed a tight wheel which started to spin. 'It's the key of life,' a pirate of Taroon said. 'It opens all the gates of survival. It's the eye of the cobra.'

Lars lost consciousness and later he woke up in a bed, while Tara was holding his hand. 'You have done it, hero,' she said. 'You have freed the pirates of Taroon by defeating Diabrillis. You have freed the old gladiators of lakshor.' Some pirates stood close to them, smiling. 'And we will tell you all the secrets,' they said.

The End

The Clowns of Trigidad

Chapter 1. The Coded Gun

Tara was on her way to the prince of Trigidad, a city on Mars. When she came there the prince was desparate. He told Tara about a gang of clowns terrorizing Trigidad. They had big machines by which they could mess with the minds of the citizens, and they made a lot of noise. No one knew what to do against those clowns.

Tara watched some of the pictures he had. 'There is nothing we can do,' the prince said. 'We really need your help. People have the feeling they are drowning in themselves, taken over by strange devices.' The prince sighed. He was happy Tara finally came. He trusted her. She was almost almighty in his eyes.

Tara took some of the pictures and went outside. There were strange orange and red rays in the air. Quickly one of the clowns came down from a machine, and took her in a grip. 'What do you want to do about us, lady,' he moaned. Tara slammed him against a tree. She took his gun and aimed it at him. 'Listen, you dumb piece of plastic,' she said. 'Go back to your toy world.' She shot him in the head, but the clown was only laughing, and then went away. It seemed the clowns were immune against their own weapons.

The gun started beeping, and soon it got very hot. Tara had to drop the gun. The gun was coded and didn't recognize Tara as the owner. Tara ran away and dived, while the gun was exploding. She hid behind a tree. She saw the clown running in the distance, and she decided to follow him. The clown went into a forest, and after running for a long time she followed him into a strange sort of domain. She hid behind a wall, and heard some of the clowns talking. They talked about taking over Trigidad, but first they needed to destroy it's prince. Tara felt a strange fire in her bones. She knew the prince was in danger. From her back she took her sword, and then went to the clowns to cut off their heads, but the clowns were only laughing, and took their heads in their hands. Their faces were halve white halve black. 'We are just holograms, lady,' one of them said. They smiled at her. 'Our true selves are on Reticuli, the Dark Constellation, you're fighting a projection.'

They took Tara in a grip and locked her up in a prison made of red rays. Whenever she touched a ray it burnt her skin, and the rays were moving. After awhile the rays moved closer to her, while she heard the clowns laughing in the distance. Tara roared because it was burning her flesh away. 'No !' she screamed. She took one of her knives and brought it between her teeth. The clowns were holding a sort of device. Then Tara took the knife from between her teeth and held it into the rays until it was burning, and then she threw it at the device, while it exploded. Tara was free now, and ran away from the clowns. She ran into another hall where there was a big machine. She knew that by this machine their holograms came here. She stepped into the cabin after she had pushed some buttons on the computer. Within a few seconds she was on Reticuli, on one of the main planets.

She stared at some clowns with black faces, and they stared at her. This time she could behead them as these weren't holograms. Behind the machine room there was a huge hall with frozen people like dolls. She wandered in this hall for hours, and she realized that all the other worlds were just holograms. Finally she found herself and realized that she was a hologram herself. She could step into herself and it was like she was coming alive this time. It was like she had finally found her powers. Then after awhile she found the prince of Trigidad. She laid her body against his body, and she could melt him a bit. He could move, and breath. 'Tara, I … I …' the prince said.

‘It’s okay,’ Tara said. ‘Let’s start a new life here.’ She explained him a bit what was going on. They could find the exit of this hall, and came into a huge wilderness. A black chief dressed with leopard skins looked at them. ‘Oko bok lulu,’ he said. Then a young woman came forward. The people here were very friendly. Soon they realized that they had escaped from a dangerous institute. This was the real life.

Tara was among the panthers now. They walked freely here among humans, and they were hospital. She loved to stare into this huge wilderness, so many layers of forest and jungle. It was intoxicating her mind and flesh.

Tara woke up in the palace of the prince of Trigidad. It was just a dream. He had an empire in the jungle, and Tara was his guest. ‘Have you slept well ?’ he asked Tara.

‘Yes,’ Tara said. The prince was surrounded by panthers and snakes, and well-dressed with leopard-skins.

‘Have you had strange dreams ?’ he asked. ‘You know, we have drunk a lot yesterday, exotic drinks, and they can play with the mind. It’s actually all information, symbolic information.’

‘Yes,’ Tara said. ‘I dreamt of the clowns.’

‘The clowns ?’ the prince said. ‘Oh yes, they were dangerous zombificators of the past. They ruled our people but we are free of them now.’

‘Where are they now ?’ Tara asked.

‘Under the ground,’ the prince said.

‘I also dreamt that I found my powers back,’ Tara said.

‘Oh yes, you will find them here,’ the prince said. ‘I have waited so long for you, and I will share with you the secrets of your existence.’

‘What do you mean by under the ground,’ Tara asked.

‘Well, they came from under the ground, and they returned to it,’ the prince said.

‘They were savages, and they just used white masks, all to build their empire, their city, and they kidnapped us to that,’ the prince said. ‘From dust they came and to dust they have returned. It’s finally ours now.’

Again Tara woke up. It seemed to be a dream within a dream. She was staring into the face of a clown. ‘Where am I ?’ she asked. ‘Trigidad,’ the clown said. ‘Don’t you remember anymore ?’

‘No,’ Tara said, ‘how did I come here ?’

The clown showed her a strange fluid in plastic. ‘A snake-bite,’ he said.

‘Am I dead ?’ she asked.

‘No,’ he said, ‘but you are fighting against it. You are in delirium. Your body is making antidotes at the moment. You will be okay. Snakes are just the holograms of their spirits. They live in the underground. They are clowns. You are with us now.’

Chapter 2. Fallen Angels

I wondered where I was. I was in Snake City, in the depths of the underground, where the clowns lived. Their holograms lived on the surfaces as snakes, just to distract others from Snake City. They had sent their omens to the world above, programmed with a message of Judgement and Doom. It was the last invitation to come to Snake City by the means of complexed rituals or just a snake-bite. I, Tara, seemed to be their prisoner. It was a strange cult, a strange religion. The clowns were black, but painted themselves in white very often.

But more and more I realized that I was still dreaming. Did I eat something wrong, or was it just a long long night. I woke up and saw flashes of spiders, very intense. Or was this just a vision. Was it spider venom, and did they keep me in these dreams ? It seemed I couldn't wake up anymore, like I was in a coma. The spiders had pink spots on their backs. Was I hallucinating ? It looked so real. I could feel them creep across my body. It was burning me. Suddenly I saw flashes of flies, strange exotic flies, and they started to come down on the spiders to eat them, and lay eggs in them. The baby flies grew up very fast and lived from the flesh of the spiders. Strange electricity moved through me. I stood up, and I was pretty sure I had fallen into a nest but now I was rising up again, still intoxicated, like I was drunk. A warrior stood before me with a bandana. I asked him who he was. 'Come,' he said. 'I will lead you to my camp.'

They were very friendly to me, and very hospital. But then I woke up in the palace of the prince of Trigidad again. It was like I had walked in a circle. 'Clowns, Tara,' he spoke. 'Here, drink from this, and you will stay awake.' I drank and stood up.

'Who are the clowns ?' I asked.

'The clowns of Trigidad are flies,' he said. 'I have saved you from them, but their poison needs to come out. I just gave you some stuff, so it will do.'

'Did I fall into their nest ?' I asked.

'Yes,' the prince spoke.

'Who are you then ?' I asked.

‘I am their prince,’ he said. ‘But they have fallen away from me. They are mere fallen angels.’

‘Are you God then ?’ I asked. ‘Am I dead ? Am I in heaven or hell ?’

But there was no one anymore. I stood in the jungle, and there was such a sweetness. I was close to a nest of exotic flies. I pushed some leaves into my nose. I couldn’t afford myself to smell it again. Then I walked away from it as far as I could, and continued my journey.

The Killer-Dreamer

Chapter 1. The Sword of Malot

There was a sorcerer living on the hills, holding the land of Malot in grip by a bewitched sword. In the night voices came from the sword to torment the minds of it’s victims, so that they couldn’t sleep. Tara visited the sorcerer one day. She went for a journey on the hills, called Fire Hills, where the sorcerer lived. He stood high on one of the tops. His castle was like a cloud.

The sword flew forth from his hands, and it was filled with voices, filled with souls. The souls didn’t seem to have any rest, and they were screaming. Tara raised her shield, but they broke it off. The souls were like dogs, but they had mouths like lions.

Something struck her head, and suddenly a whisper said : ‘We are the boys from the lion, locked up in a cloud city, but we do not want to leave, for there is no other way.’

‘Come with me,’ the sorcerer said. Tara was like hypnotized, and followed the sorcerer. The land of Malot just seemed to be an illusion, all to veil the cloud city. ‘Do you want some tea ?’ the sorcerer asked. Around him lions appeared. They had such pretty mouths. Tara was still hypnotized and sat down in one of the chairs of the castle.

‘You were already hypnotized,’ the wizard said. ‘I’m just breaking it off now.’

‘I feel like I’m drunk,’ Tara said. ‘Where does the city path lead to ?’

‘It leads to the lion,’ the wizard said. ‘It is the power of the sword, and it has the power to heal itself. That is why it created the illusions, to veil itself, and hide itself against dangers.’

The wizard led her to a huge portal. In the distance she could see a statue of a lion. The lion could move, and stared at her. ‘Come,’ it roared. When she came closer, the gigantic lion took her up in his claw. Then he put her on his back, opened his wings and flew.

Tara woke up in one of the houses of Malot where she had slept. It was a dream. She felt like she was on the waves of dreams and illusions. She smiled while watching the ceiling. ‘My powers are getting back,’ she said. At the wall a sword hung.

But she was in the hands of the wizard, playing with her soul. He had struck her a long time ago, and her life was just an illusion. But his eye was on her, he seemed to like her.

One day he called for her, he called her in a dream, and she found herself between the pillars of a huge portal, huger than she ever saw. The wizard sat on a throne in a sort of bedroom. Snakes were sliding, and lions were on both sides. ‘Come closer, my darling,’ he said. ‘I want to give you the Sword of Malot.’ He reached out for her hands and gave it to her. ‘The sword reflects the bond between the king and his daughter. I could only reach you by fragile stairways of illusions, but now I have you here with me. The sword has called you forward. Rule the world with me, … daughter.’

Tara smiled, and accepted the sword. The killer-dreamer she was.

Father had many angels. They all had their parts in bringing her back. She was still hypnotized. She got an armour, and two winged lions rose at her sides. 'My powers are getting back,' she said.

'Yes,' Father said. 'You are a goddess.'

She raised her sword while lightening was striking it. Old men sat themselves down next to the wizard, the king. Then a spirit appeared before the king. 'Esdul,' said the king. 'Spread as many illusions around this place as you can, so that this place will be hidden for eternity. The king has reunited with his daughter.' And the killer-dreamer went out that day, to cause a massacre, and to let them all live on in illusions. He was a strange assassin, bringing life and death at the same time. Tara loved the boy, this spirit. He kept them safe. He seemed to be the riddle of the sword. He belonged to the family.

The boy seemed to be very creative, more than average.

Chapter 2. The Legend

When he got older he become more sinister, and he was the dread of the castle. He was still the giver of Life and Death, but also of Tragedy. But these were all webs to protect the castle, all illusions. And there was tea dripping from the webs, called the lion's tea, and people got drunk of it. It hypnotized them, while they became one with the Sea of Dreams. It was from this sea Tara came forth to finally meet her father and her brother.

Through the years the lion's tea got wilder and wilder, like a lion searching for it's children. He would find them, and bring them in. Through the years the lion's tea started to burn brighter, hotter, faster, like it was saying : We do not have much time left. There was only one way out : Tara's path.

Only by the Sword of Malot there was hope to finally wake up. Often the Sword was wildly and mightily moving above the Sea of Dreams, looking for a delicate harvest. Esdul became a winged creature more and more, still holding his boy qualities, but he was an old man now, having a gospel to preach. Of course he was a swindler, a liar and a trickster, but he was a riddler as well, offering truth to those who were ready. He made ships for them in the dangerous sea, and gave them vehicles to fly with. He became a sailmaker and a wingmaker, and he loved to use colors in layers, like fragile stairways of illusion between the several

waves of the sea of dreams. He gave them stories to fly, fables to heal, legends to be safe, he built towers in the sea, like an echo sent out from home, but went astray and false in the wind. Esdul was a legend himself, only to be trusted as a riddle, the riddle of the sword. He built a city in the sea, and he became it's king. He created it's tall beaches, as a way to bring them in. The beaches were always burning, and there were always lions around, like it was a huge oven.

It was a summer city, and the Sword of Malot reflected so much of it's brilliance. To spend one night in this city was an experience you would never forget, and those nights were much discussed. It was a veiled city, but the veils were always torn.

The End

The New Order

Once in awhile it happened that at some places on Mars wizardboys got born. They were called the boys from lynx, and they could form a real threat in the future, so there were a lot

of boyhunters around trying to keep Mars safe from possible terror. Often boys died without reason, because of the risen paranoia. People feared the boys from lynx almost like nothing else, and often also innocent boys had to suffer under that. Sperewer was an assassin, a hunter sent out to search for the boys from lynx.

Tara was very sceptic about it. Parents often lost their boys without reason, dying at the hands of those assassins. Sperewer seemed to be the leader of those assassins, and one day Tara visited his place deep in a forest. It was a veiled place, he lived there in a castle, a fortress. Mystery was hanging in this place. Tara took an arrow out of her quiver and made her bow ready.

She saw Sperewer sitting on his throne. In this hall there were many cages full of boys.

'Sperewer,' Tara said, when she walked forward, directing the arrow at him. 'Look at what you are doing. You don't know what kind of boys you have in your cages.'

'No,' Sperewer said, 'but they are here for research.'

'You know why I am here,' Tara said. 'This has to stop. These kids do not have a life in all these researches. You destroy more than that you rebuild. You are much worse than the boys from lynx themselves, whoever they are.'

Sperewer stood up, and said : 'Listen, lady, you do not know anything what you are saying. When one of the boy from lynx would be able to reach manhood, it could mean the end of Mars.'

'How do you know that,' Tara asked.

'Well,' said Sperewer, 'haven't you read the history books. Even a young boy from lynx can be dictators controlling many countries and areas at the same time. Have you read about their works ?'

‘Sperewer,’ Tara said. ‘I am not dumb. You work for money. You have been hired by the aristocracy because they want to make sure their control will stand tall. Have you read about the works of the aristocracy. It has always been a mean game, and now the parents of these innocent children suffer under your hand.’

Tara walked towards the cages and opened some of them. ‘These kids belong to me,’ Tara said. ‘I have promised their parents I will not return without them.’

The children ran wildly through the castle, making their way out, and started to climb on the roofs.

Tara had still her arrow directed at Sperewer. He could hardly breath.

Since that day the nights were darker than ever, but at least the children were free. The boys from lynx often gathered on the roofs of the houses in the middle of the night. The older ones had motor-cycles.

An old man showed up as their father. Some called him sandman. The old man teached the children about a lot of things, but many people thought he was crazy. He often walked in his pyamas. Some thought he was a wizard. He slept when it was day, and was up at nights. He had also a motor-cycle. The children loved to watch it, and to ride on it.

‘It is time to bring the light on Mars,’ the old man said one day. ‘You will be it’s saviour.’ Soon the boys from lynx got the high positions on Mars and brought many aristocracies down, all for the new order. They had powers to raise the dead from the graves, and to heal the terminally ill. They were the wizard children. They were a new religion.

They were like sons of the dragon, like wild cats. They moved to the seas a lot, where they used to go to the beaches on their motor-cycles, and they gathered along the rivers. They preached an aggressive gospel, as the only way for Mars to survive.

They became the new dictators of Mars, and no one could really do anything about it, even not Tara. So she struggled with the fact that she had set them free. But she realized more and more that Sperewer made them like they were.

One day she approached one of the thrones of the boys of lynx, where many of them ruled together. They were staring at Tara, realizing she was the one who had set them free.

‘You do many good things,’ Tara said, ‘but are you realizing what you are doing. Some things are just too much. You are the terror here more than ever.’

‘Tara,’ one of the boys said. ‘Many of our race have been killed at the hands of the aristocracy. We are lost already in hate and vengeance. The bitterness is eating us. There’s no hope for us, and no hope for this planet. We are in a vicious circle and that is okay.’

‘So you even contradict your own gospel ?’ Tara asked.

‘No,’ the boy said. ‘This is the only way. What we do has to be done. It is our fate, and the fate of the planet. A new planet will rise.’

Tara saw the despair in their eyes, the sadness and the anger. ‘Can I do anything for you. This is not the way,’ Tara said.

‘Tara,’ one of the boys said. ‘We have a stone in our hearts, the stone of the dragon. If you remove it, we are dead, but then all is lost.’

‘I do not know,’ Tara said. ‘I think what you are doing now is the way to lose. Join me, stop with your aristocratic ways, stop with this dictatorship, or you will have an enemy in me. I can be a good friend, but a better enemy. Do you want to meet my sword ? It’s almost against you, and then there is no way to get it right.’

Some of the boys were laughing at Tara, while others were very serious, and knew that Tara was also very serious.

‘I see you have different opinions among you,’ Tara said.

‘Yes,’ one of the serious ones said. ‘I guess Tara is right. Maybe there should be a sifting among us. Who wants to join Tara, join her.’

But no one chose Tara’s side. After awhile Tara left, and went to the other thrones with the same story. At the end of the day she had only one boy from lynx joining her, but he was still doubting very much.

‘Tara,’ he said. ‘We can never be what you want us to be. We are savage, full of mystery and strategy. We have to do what we do, all to protect Mars against something worse.’

That night it was Tara’s sword against the boys from lynx. They weren’t against her, and didn’t want to hurt her, but they just didn’t want to choose her side.

‘Go for Sperewer, Tara,’ one of them was shouting. ‘Maybe he can help.’

‘Maybe I will do that,’ Tara said. ‘If there is no other way.’ But she knew Sperewer would be a bad choice, and besides that : he was locked up by the boys from lynx.

Tara had mixed feelings about the boys from lynx, and again there seemed to be nothing she could do. But the level of terror on Mars was rising more and more, even to the extreme and beyond. She had to do something. So one night she went to one of their castles, climbed through a window, and saw three of them lying on a bed. She tied their hands together and their feet. Then she took a knife, made a cut in their chest to put her hand in to search for their dragonstone. Soon she had three dragonstones in her hand. The boys were awake because of the pain, but they could easily remove the ties, and they started to laugh. Their wounds healed very fast. ‘Dumb, Tara,’ one of them said, while smiling. ‘A dead boy from lynx is more alive than a living boy from lynx. This is our secret for ages, and that’s why we have always survived.

Then other boys from lynx stood in the door opening. Then Tara couldn’t recall what happened. She woke up in a coffin, and started to scream. After awhile she could open the coffin, and when she stepped out she was in a room full of glowing dragonstones. A boy from lynx stood there with the biggest dragonstone in his hand. ‘The secret of the survival of Mars,’ he said. ‘And the secret why our race has always survived.’

‘Become one of us,’ the boy said. He had a knife in his hand, while another boy entered the room. The other boy took the knife and wanted to make a hole in Tara’s chest to insert the stone. But Tara grasped his pulse. Tara ran out of the room. ‘Follow her !’ the boy shouted.

Tara ran upstairs, and climbed out of a window to come on the roof. Soon she could climb to the ground by a tree. But soon she had been surrounded by many boys from lynx. ‘Insert the stone,’ one of them shouted.

‘No,’ Tara shouted.

She woke up in her cave, sweating. It had been all a dream. But there was a boy standing in the opening of the cave. ‘Welcome to the boys from lynx,’ he said, and disappeared. Tara took her bow and went out of the cave, but didn’t see anyone. Before her feet lay some red glowing stones. She took them up. They were warm. She thought she knew already what was happening. She had drunk from a river full of hallucination flowers. Maybe their seed was already ruling in the river, and these flowers which grew there abundantly were also called the boys from lynx.

The End

The Arms of Sleep

The flower-prince had them all in his grip. He had poisoned their hearts, and kept them in hallucinations. Tara once visited him. She aimed her sword at him. ‘Tara, you are already in my dreams, it’s just a dream, you can’t do anything,’ he said. Tara knew she couldn’t begin

anything against him with her sword. The flower-prince started to laugh. It was like the flowerseed was dripping in her head. It was like there was a flower growing in her, totally controlling her.

She raised her sword, and then threw it at the prince. Then a wrestling started. The prince turned into a snake, playing with her mind. Tara woke up in sweat. The air was sweet. She stood up, and walked out of her cave. The flowers were so pretty today, and they stood tall, almost forming a fence. She went to the river to bath again. She wouldn't drink water here, as many hallucination-flowers grew here. It was in the waters already.

But deep inside she knew she was still dreaming. The wilderness was too pretty here. The flower-prince slided into the river. 'No escape from here, Tara,' he said. 'It is all in your head, so why fighting, why not giving yourself over to me.'

'What will I win by it ?' she asked.

'Nothing,' the flower-prince said. 'It's not about you, but about me.'

'Why ?' Tara asked. She felt herself so weak in his presence.

'I am the flower-prince,' the prince said. 'I know how to make art.'

Tara knew she couldn't escape. She hoped the hallucination would stop soon, but what if it had damaged her already. She knew that some substances of wild river-flowers could really possess you, and take you over step by step. Maybe she was already in that process.

The prince laughed. 'We will slowly bring you down,' he said.

Tara decided to drink again, maybe that would wash it all away. She let herself slide into the river, and it was like the river was taking her away, accepting her. She came up again. The flower-prince was gone. She stepped out of the river, and went to her cave again to sleep. She was so tired, while she knew she was still dreaming. She felt helpless in the arms of sleep.

She woke up in a strange temple full of flowers. Many statues of dreamgods were here. ’Am I dead ?’ she wondered. ‘Is this heaven or hell ?’ There were some small thin rivers along the walls of the temple. Tara drank from the water again. She could even see the fishes swimming in it. The water was very bright, and full of flowers. ‘Where am I ?’ she wondered. She felt so much peace. She stepped in a sort of boat, and then woke up in a paradise, among beautiful flowerfields. The wildest flowers were here. Seed was dripping from them, like honey.

Something was spitting her out, it was a huge meat-eating plant. She had a long wrestling against it, in it’s insides, in which she was almost completely taken over by it. It seemed she had won the fight, or the plant simply couldn’t digest her. She had survived the jungle-cocoon.

The End

The Court-Wizard

Tara came in the Land of the Horseflies after a long journey. It was on a strange planet which she reached by her airsailer. When she stepped into the jungle two boys were staring at her. They shot something in her eye, and she fell asleep. She woke up in a palace, under a soft blanket made of feathers. A man in black, with a skeleton, stared at her. They offered her some fruit. She started to eat. Then the two boys came in the room. ‘Good job, Arsan and Ramit, good job,’ the man in the black dress said. ‘Kemit Matuja Horso Ron,’ one of the boys spoke, and left again.

‘Do you know where you are ?’ the man in black asked.

‘Not really,’ Tara said. ‘All I know is that I was on my way to the Land of Horseflies.’

‘You are there,’ the man said. ‘Kata Hari Damar Sa Romu,’ the other boy said, and left.

The man went to Tara and cut a small piece out of her head. He showed her a chip. ‘Here, this was in your head,’ he said to Tara. ‘It is a colour-chip. It was your brains ruling the colours, but now your nose needs to do, as we all do.’ Then he made a cut in her nose, and pushed another even smaller and thinner chip into her nose. ‘It will totally blend with your body,’ the man said. Tara took a deep breath. The colours began to change. It was like she could watch deeper now. It was like she could even see the temperature now, and the differences between it.

‘Welcome to the Land of the Horseflies,’ the man said.

A man with long hair came in, with some monkeys. He had a spear. ‘Cynthies Merches Samir Samis,’ he said.

‘This is our court wizard,’ the man in the black dress said. ‘He wants to take you on some trips on the rivers.’

‘We lead you to Bai Sarum,’ the sorcerer said. He raised his spear. ‘More panthers than you have ever seen,’ he said.

Within a few minutes they were on the river. On both sides there were jungles. The wizard pushed something into her arm. She fell asleep again, and woke up in a place full of panthers. It was a place with veils everywhere. A man was sitting on a throne, clothed in leopard-skin. ‘Is that Tara ?’ he asked.

Tara fell asleep again, only by hearing this voice. It was a chief-wizard. When she woke up she was surrounded by monkeys. She felt their soft skins. ‘Am I in paradise ?’ she asked.

‘Give her something to drink,’ a voice spoke.

Soon she felt tasteful thick liquids streaming through her mouth. Someone held his hand on the back of her neck. Warm streams entered her body. ‘Breath, Tara,’ someone said.

‘Where am I ?’ Tara asked. ‘I know I am in the Land of Horseflies, but where ?’

She fell asleep again. She was still on the river, in a boat, while a red-orange light appeared next to her. The river was misty. ‘Keep awake,’ the wizard said. ‘We go to the fortress.’

When the wizard laid her hands on her they were suddenly in a place full of purple veils, but she couldn’t stay awake here. It was like deja-vuh. She remembered this place, but what was it ?

It was like the boat was becoming one with the river, and she slid into the water, while the waters stirred up the hallucination. She saw flowers at the riversides, like they were fences. They had deep roots, tall roots, and they were all over the place. She was in the hands of a wizard. Huge dragonclaws were in the sky.

A dragon was whispering to her, words of love. It was like a rebirth. She was approaching an indian pyramid. She felt a motor-cycle under her, she felt like racing in a car. But she didn’t want to go to a city. She wanted to stay a savage.

‘Take it,’ the dragon said.

Finally Tara gave over. She was entering a huge city, high pillars, high towers, all reddish, like a night city. She stepped out of a car, having high heels. It had rained. The air was moisty. There was a huge building, like a giant skull. She went inside. It was a hotel. Someone gave her water, and led her to her suite. There was a piano there, and some poles. It was a bit like a ballet room. There was another woman there. She didn’t say anything but started to play the piano. Then she went to one of the poles, and danced. Tara drank from the water. There was a bed in the room. She sat down on it. Then she went to sleep.

The next day she was in the jungle again, deeper than ever. She was in the mud, like a rebirth. She slid to the river. She was like drunk. She knew it was all because of the flowers. It was in the waters, and she had drunk from it. The city was inside, and she could only touch it lightly, finally to enter deeper into the wilderness than ever. The city was a hot stone she could only hold for a second. The city was a red glowing stone in her amulet, burning in leather around her pulse.

If she would have stayed in the city any longer, she would fall away from her gods. These gods were savage. They would judge her for living in the city.

But the dragon sent her back to the city one day. The city was a deeper jungle to her. He had put a new colour-chip in her head. She was like a traffic-light. She would just stay here for one day. No one knew who she was. She had a savage look in her eyes. And monkeys were with her. All she did was walking through the streets. Finally she fell asleep, and a friendly man took her to his home to give her a room. He gave her some water, while the dragon took her out again, for the day was over.

But after a week he sent her back again, and then again, until she could stay a little longer. She found work in a circus. She worked with leopards. Everyday she heard the voice of the dragon, but he never showed up to her. She loved to work with leopards. They loved her and adored her. She had a room somewhere. She lived in the city. Her neighbour was Robert McDanen, an ambitious man. He was an author, and a maker of comics. He often went to the circus to make pictures of her with her leopards. Then he would turn them into paintings. He was also an excellent painter. One day he invited her to come look at his paintings. But this time the dragon showed up, together with fire. The fire, to destroy the paintings, and the claw to take Tara away.

Robert was confused by this experience. He wondered where she had gone all of a sudden. He knew she loved the jungle, so he went there to look for her. After searching for days he found her. She was in a cave with gorillas.

‘How did you leave so quickly ?’ he asked.

Then Tara told him all about the dragon.

‘Are you a slave of the dragon ?’ Robert asked.

‘I just can’t live the life you are living,’ Tara said. ‘It’s just something inside.’

‘But I need to have you with me,’ Robert said. ‘I can’t live without you. Plus, who destroyed all the paintings. I love you.’

But again the dragon-claw showed up, it struck Robert, and he lost consciousness. After a day he woke up. ‘Where am I ?’ he asked.

‘With me,’ Tara said. ‘You have to go home. I just don’t belong to your world.’

‘I understand that now,’ Robert said. ‘But thanks for the good times.’

Then he left. But in a strange way Tara just couldn’t forget about him. One day she went back to the city to visit him. Other people lived in her room now, and also Robert didn’t live there anymore. She asked some neighbours where he lived now, but they said they didn’t know. One of them said he would probably live in the jungle now.

Tara searched for him for many weeks and months, and finally she found him. He lived also with gorillas, and seemed to be their king. He smiled when he saw Tara.

‘Why do you live here ?’ Tara asked.

‘You inspired me,’ Robert said.

‘Why don’t you write, why not making comics and paintings,’ she asked.

‘Oh, I do that, in the depths of my cave,’ Robert said, while he smiled. ‘Come, let me show you where I live.’

It was a long trip through a tunnel, until they came in his cave, where he had all his books, comics and paintings. He showed her some paintings of her. ‘I hope they will survive your stare this time,’ he said.

‘Actually I like them this time,’ Tara said. ‘Friend, I feel comfortable about the way you are living now, can I visit you ?’

‘Whenever you want,’ Robert said smiling.

Then the dragon-claw took Tara away.

The End

The Spider Seed

Chapter 1.

Tara sat in her tree, while under her feet there was her hill of spider seed. Often she would only come into a bloody arena. First blood needed to flow before she would come, a lot of blood. Suddenly Tara slided from her tree to the spider seed, ripped the skin off of one of the men. Then she quickly killed the skinless man. Then the spiders came to devour the meat of the prisoner, while strange lullabies from Tara's hills were taking their souls away, but now oiled by spider seed. It was like chained in a strange way, and it gave them so much control over themselves back. They were graceful to their goddess that she would give them such

freedom and having them possess their own minds. The warprisoner who had to die today was the one wanting to possess their minds for his evil purposes. They imprisoned him in the war against his dark tribe, but now Tara had dealt with him, like they couldn't. For she would also take his soul to her realms to devour it and capture it. That was the price someone had to pay who wanted to mess with her. That night Tara descended again from her hills to accept the sacrifice. Tara was a cruel goddess tormenting her victims on the fields of Tartarus on Mars. She didn't live by her mercy, but just by lust. Lust was in her eyes a good gift from the skeleton-gods. Every night she teached them how to fight and conquer. She teached them how to fight by the powers. Tara preached liberation to her followers. She preached everlasting damnation and everlasting war not as a punishment but as the well of eternal life and peace inside. It was the well of everlasting creation. Tara was the goddess of no taboo. She was the Lawless. All the other roads were to her just traps in which the corrupted mind could grow, divinity, of someone who wanted to possess their skull to give it a mind. Tara hated the mind. Only a mind driven by lust could mean something, because it came from the streams of the primeval. Tara believed in instincts for these were coming from the higher ways. But these instincts always needed to be purified and directed in the pools of everlasting damnation and everlasting war. She preached baptism in such pools for salvation. But Tara hated the men who never went to such pools. She called them unclean.

The spider seed was a way to Tara to keep clean. It would protect against the black powers of civilization. Often these were spiders themselves, and she often smeared their bodies with snake-slimes. She was aware that many of them were nothing but slaves. Often they were roaring in the night, looking for more victims, slaves making slaves. She realized she was on both sides, as a paradox. She was the black snake. She was devouring it, and coming alive again, infiltrating the depths of legalism. It was a dark hole, and she was even darker. No one dared to come closer to her house, this house in the tree. There were some flashes and some shrieks, and suddenly Tara had kicked some monkeys to the ground. A fight started, in which she soon raised their skulls. She was roaring. The serpent seed slided across her skin, mixing itself with the spider seed. She was a chameleon. She was a savage queen in her own rights. Soon the spider seed had totally devoured the monkeys. She was the queen of the jungle. No one had any chance to take her crown. She was on both sides. She was a spy, an infiltrator. She had a legalistic smile. All she wanted was to come out of her box, out of her tree.

The spider seed was in the air like a red hot wind, like howling wolves, making them all prisoners of a legal system. Tara made a sudden switch. It was like she was taking off her mask, and they stared into a face of a skeleton. The spider seed was mixing itself in the air, and soon the chains were tight. It was flowing from a strange bush, a heart, like a nest of bees. It was making them insane. The winds were whispering, shrieking, altering their minds. It was a poison in their brains.

A dark man was holding the skull of Tara. He was the leader of the dark tribe. He had dipped her head into poison, in a golden bowl. He was laughing, mocking her like a hyena would do.

‘Merge,’ Tara whispered, ‘I know you would do this.’

The spider seed was torturing her brains. It was deceiving her, giving her all sorts of illusions. ‘Can you stop now,’ Tara said. ‘I feel so delirious.’

‘No,’ Merge said. ‘You have wished this on yourself by killing my main man.’

Tara sighed. She was confused. She was so deep in this dark, dangerous temple, this jungle temple. Merge was staring at her. He was the chief and leader of a huge tribe. He had her locked up in a labyrinth.

'Can someone get me out of here ?' Tara shouted. Dark voices were surrounding Tara. It was like everything went darker, lower and slower. 'What is this spider seed doing,' Tara shrieked. 'What is it.'

Merge was holding some tubes in his hands. 'The dragons know it,' Merge said. 'They used it against you, to get you here.'

'It's burning in my head,' Tara said.

'You have drunk from it,' Merge said. 'And now you are here.'

The sleep, a mechanism in the temple of Merge, to keep them all away from the secret he guarded, the secret of his power. Tara fell asleep again. She had been struck by pain, she had lost her consciousness. Merge was smiling. She was his doll. He would raise her in his army.

He dyed her with the colours of war, and gave her the most beautiful clothes. She was under his spell. It was a product of total zombification.

The floods of spider sperm were in the land. The people were melting away. The snake had once slided to bring all these souls, but now they were all melting away.

Merge was like a statue. After many years Tara could break free from him. She raised on her hill again, on the skulls of all these dead men who were in Merge's service. But again she woke up in Merge's temple. She had no control over herself. It was a long wrestling in which every freedom was a deeper trap. One day he found his dragon heart, and she pierced it. But it set free the winds of the tormenting desert. It brought her down, more than ever before. They dragged her to a cave, and slowly she was sliding into a pit.

She was calling out for Merge, for there was nothing but darkness here. She had mixed feelings about him. She found in his heart the hives of spiders. He was the brother of Gitdugal. The smell of candy was here. It drove her insane. She was almost forced to eat from it, as she was so hungry. She became part of his heart, there was no escape.

He made her general of his army. She commanded his hunters. They were all part of his heart, a heart of glass. At one point she was so one with him that she started to realize she was Merge. She was the sister of Gitdugal. At this moment she realized she had a split personality, and she had to accept it. The more she struggled against it, the more she became aware of it.

Chapter 2.

Tara realized she was part of this allpowerful bloodline, the spiderseed. It was breaking her down and building her up again, on this gigantic beach. She raised her sword up, and became doom. She was her own enemy now, she had survived. She took advantage of it to the fullest extends. She had taken over his army by becoming him. She was endarkened, darkness being

the only light. She saw the reflections of her face in her sword. It was like a skull. Death and life were hers now.

She had fought her way through this poison, this dark tribe. She had lost herself in order to find herself back. She realized it was Merge's desert she was in. And doom was her mission. The bones of Merge were dry in the sand. All his bones broken apart from each other. She saw a misty palace in the distance, where the spider lived, his soul. Here the knights of darkness and nightmare dwelled. But it was far away from her. The house was moving to the sea. It was all drowning. The poison was now her weapon, it was shifting. First it was aimed at herself, now she could aim it at her enemies. The poison was now her friend. She died in it and came alive in it. It was the snake spirit of Merge, a woman named Mercury.

She took possession of the palace, the ghost palace of it, which was coming closer to her. The women Mercury was veiled and slided towards the highest tower of the palace. Suddenly there was lightening everywhere, and auras with strange sounds. And the poison was her cure. It had led her through the realms of death, spoken about the secrets. It had shifted before her eyes and gave her visions.

There were secret lights in the palace, all blinding, all triangles like jewelry. The palace was a place of eternity. The battle was psychedelic, there were no logics but the test. It was a palace made of the purest candy and the purest money. She found there the secret knowledge of not only candy and money, but also of love and estheticka. She held on to these gnosises as to her heartbeat. It was a rich esotericka. Finally she saw the spirit of Merge sinking away. She was holding his scalp. There was no any just battle without this esotericka, this hidden knowledge. She found the tree of hidden knowledge in the middle of the palace. There were a lot of snakes here, half women. She craved to be one with this tree, to be a part of it. The money was just a weapon, a hunter's tool, flowing from the well of eternal poverty, from everlasting doom. Those who had not been here wouldn't have any part in it. Those who had not defeated Merge could not see it's lights. It was the secret of a stone full of tears. The money was a fluid here. There was a giant woman living in the tree, guarding the secret of honey. The tree would lead to a giant world. The woman was very big and jumped on Tara. If Tara wouldn't defeat her she would not get any step further. Tara took her sword from behind her back and beheaded the giant woman, all in a flash. The woman was shrinking, while Tara got the most beautiful exotic wings, like those from foreign flies. She flew up on the tree, and reached giant world.

There was another gnosis here, the gnosis of war, and of hunt. Those who didn't go to the depth of it would survive in a place like this. It all led her to a cave, where women lived. They were a lot huger than her, but they began to feed her. She had to eat the flesh of a lot of unknown creatures, often cattle. The horned ones were a danger here, and the predators were often horned as well. The women told her that she had to go through the fields, until she would reach the land of cattle. Here she would finally find rest. Still Tara was haunted by the

ghosts of Merge. They were like the mists around her. The chains of the spider seed were tight. The women protected her, and teached her. They also teached her of the gnosis of death and torment, and Tara seemed to get more insight in her life. There was a savage knowledge she had to follow, a savage gnosis, named the nipoid. It was a native gnosis, leading her back to her own bloodline, the serpent seed. Merge was roaring while she raised her shields against him. But finally he was too strong again. It looked like a demonic possession. She could do nothing but embrace it, knowing she had a part in this bloodline as well, and it could be of use. Merge was a part of her.

She was like the weresnake, chained by spider seed, led to the gnosis of the predator and the gnosis of the cattle, finally to find peace. In this she met the prince of all predators, a yellow man with golden bands around his upper arms. He was very fast and had a piercing odor. He seemed to be a man after her heart, a man of lightening. He shared with her a lot of secrets. He was a man of balance and extremes, a wereman, and the more she got to know his characters, the more she understood him. He seemed to be her guard against the predators, and it was him who finally led her to the land of cattle. She could sleep here and rest here, finding a deep peace. She realized there was a number on their heads, 666, and this had brought them a lot of suffering. It was the work of Merge. Everyone who received that number became cattle. Tara realized when she was watching into the reflections of her sword that she had also this number on her forehead, but a fire was roaring within. Suddenly there was milk sweeping through the air washing the numbers away. Tara was now dyed with the colours of war. Again she realized that she was in the hands of Merge, playing with her.

‘What do you want from me ?’ Tara shouted.

‘You’re in the labyrinth, Tara,’ a voice spoke. ‘The labyrinth of spider seed.’

It was tearing her apart. But here the liquids of money was flowing more than ever. It seemed like it was coming from the cattle.

‘Money is meat,’ a voice said. ‘Come closer.’

Tara felt like a jester, a joke. She felt weak. She raised her sword, and called for the prince of predators, but this time the prince of money came to her. ‘What do you know of money ?’ he asked. He smelled like candy. ‘Become an adept, Tara,’ he said, ‘instead of making such a drama about all things in your life.’

He took her to his temple. The money here was sweet. It was hot as well. ‘I’m about to bring floods of money, and we will see later who will survive,’ he said. Tara was bowing for him. She had pain. It was like she couldn’t do anything else.

‘Please ..pl ..please, help me out of here,’ she spoke.

The prince of money took her up and said : ‘There’s much for you to learn.’ It became a long fight against the prince of money, a fight in which she was forced to worship him, but resulted in her victory. She beheaded him. His scalp would always be with her. She had the feeling she would not come any further without it. After defeating the prince she entered a hall with a lot of statues. Eyes were staring at her. They were the elements of the gnosis, the secret knowledge. Behind a next door there was the tree again, this time leading to a soft world. The people living here were like cloud people more or less. In a hall there were huge brains from which animals came forth. A voice spoke : These are the fallen ones. They live from the brains. Start the hunt.

Then there were animals coming from a huge stomach. The voice spoke : It won’t take long now anymore. These ones come from lust and love, from the dark heart, send out to eat those of the brains. Choose.

Tara got blindfolded and someone span her around. She lost all her orientation, but she chose the path of the strongest smell, the unknown. It was a huge area. When she was in she soon wasn’t blindfolded anymore. The people here had strange spots on their bodies, like nipples. They were all over, especially on their backs. ‘These are the sensitive ones,’ the voice spoke. ‘But there will come a shift. The unsensitive ones from the brains will get sensitive as well, and they will see and feel what they have caused. They have always been the predators, but they will be the cattle. And like they have suppressed others, they will be suppressed as well.’

Tara got a bow in her hand. ‘Now hunt,’ a voice said. ‘Only the hunters will survive this place.’ A huge white fire was rising, like floods, and all predators became cattle. Soon Tara was in abundant slaughter. The blood was streaming all over her body, and she was screaming in rage. It was like she was in a war. These brains were the guards of the hidden knowledge, and finally she was tearing those veils down. The tree came to a climax here, and a flower grew on top. It was the most beautiful flower tara had ever seen, like the jungle flower. There was so much order now in the chaos. The flower was like the inventory of the hidden knowledge. ‘Drink from me,’ said the flower. Tara was growing and growing, becoming like a giant, while the animals of the brains became smaller. She stepped into the huge flower and started to climb. It was like a stairway. She had so much survey here but she kept staring at the top. A man totally covered with nipple-like spots came towards her, and took her by the

hand. She was drinking from the fluids from the flower. There were small waterfalls everywhere, in special colours. Huge cats were staring at her.

'You want to know about the gnosis of love ?' a voice spoke. 'Fight for it.'

Chapter 3.

A dark hairy man fell on her, like a monkey. She had a huge wrestling but she couldn't defeat him. She tried to reach her sword, but he wouldn't let her. Soon he had her in his grip, and held her arms behind her back. 'I do not understand this,' Tara said to herself. 'I feel so weak.' The man tied her and neckchained her, and took her up. She didn't know where the other man was all of a sudden. A voice spoke : 'All those who have come this far need to know, bondage is the pressure of the unknown. If you use your brains now, you will escape, but it will lead you all way back to the start, and all those of the brains are prey, even more than before. You might be bigger, but you will be cattle.'

Tara felt the powers of the brain. She didn't want to use it. She could if she wished, to get rid of the chain. But she didn't choose to. The man led her further up. Here a queen sat on a throne, with huge white feathers. She was like a peacock. 'What do you want in this flower ?' the queen asked.

'The gnosis,' Tara said. 'The secret knowledge, that is all what I long for.'

'Then lose your brain,' the queen said. 'Guards, let her drink something.'

They came with a huge bottle, and Tara started to drink. She felt like getting drunk. It was like colourful smoke in her. She saw faces of cats around her, and huge snakes floating around her.

'Don't you know,' the queen said. 'Those of the brains will be eaten.'

'Yes,' Tara said.

‘Give me your hand,’ the queen said. Tara stepped forward and gave her hand. The queen stared in it. ‘I see good days for you coming. Days in which you will find true love. And your hunger will be satisfied. Welcome to the land of satisfaction.’ The queen moved away with her throne and a portal came in sight. Tara was staring through it. Tara entered through it, and became free. Another man came to her, this men was covered by all sorts of sores. He tried to attack her, but Tara took her sword from behind her back and beheaded him. Then another man attacked her with sores, and she did the same. Soon she was surrounded by more of these men, all growling. A weakness came over her again, and they tied her to some sort of spiderweb. Spiders were creeping across her skin, and soon she had some sores as well. This was a land ruled by spiders. She remembered how the spider seed was in her. Another queen approached her, also on a moving throne. She had a huge spiderweb behind her. She was the queen of spiders. ‘I wish you to become sensitive, my dear,’ the queen spoke. ‘That’s the job of the spiders. You better have it now, rather than when the white fire comes.’

‘What is that,’ Tara asked.

‘Don’t you know,’ said the queen. Tara fell asleep. She couldn’t hold the pain anymore. When she woke up she was covered by sores all over. ‘They protect you,’ said the queen. ‘Against the ages of the brains.’ It was like someone had marked Tara. She looked like a leopard now. She was growling. The queen dyed her with some colours, like the patterns of snakes. The sores more and more started to look like scars, like nipples. ‘These are the spots storing the gnosis,’ said the queen, ‘the nipoid.’ Tara grew more and more like a predator. She got her own room, in a cave with dark statues. Her scars were like a communication system. On the top of the flower there was a flame. It was all interactive. She didn’t want to return anymore. The spider seed was like her jewelry here and her lingerie.

Skeleton Wings

Chapter 1. The Elephant Queen

Tara from Rhodes, she stood before the skeleton-king. He was laughing, mocking her. She was chained, two black skeletons having her in a tight grip. They were stronger than ten black lions at the same time. Sweat came from Tara's face. 'Wait till you meet the emperor,' the king roared. An enormous panther was appearing, coming down from a huge stairway.

Tara fell down, like she had been struck. The panther had red rays coming from his eyes penetrating her skin. Tara was shrieking. 'Wikzilius,' the king said. 'Bring this lady to the skeleton-emperor.' The panther took her on his back, spred his wings and flew away. In a huge forest the emperor lived. The thinnest skeletons were his guards, and they were also pretty tall, although some of them were short.

'Can I call you mocking jerk,' Tara said, when she stood finally before a laughing skeleton-emperor. The skeleton grasped her head, then pushed her to the ground. 'You can call me whatever you want,' he said.

Tara had lost her consciousness by the push and woke up in a dungeon. She had to eat strange food. She was almost hallucinating. In a distance she could see red glowing stones. In her prison she met Davilir, a woman. 'Have you heard of the emperor's sword,' the woman asked. 'I know where it is, and it will get us out if we get it.'

There was also a man in the prison. Also very confused. 'Help me,' he said all the time, laying his hands on Tara. Tara kicked him away. 'Look, I cannot help you, bastard,' she shouted. In the night Tara could dig a hole under the door. The ground was pretty soft. She escaped. She ran outside into the forest.

After a few hours she came to a sorcerors house, close to the desert. It was a bare wilderness here. The man spoke to her about the skeleton winds. 'What is that,' Tara asked. 'I have no time for superstitious games.' The man looked like he wanted something from her. Tara grasped her sword from behind her back and beheaded him. She lived in his house for several days and then moved on.

There was one force bigger than the skeleton-emperor. It was the God and the Goddess of the skeletons. They grasped her tight as by winds, and brought her to a temple. Meanlooking skeleton-priests were laughing at her. They showed her a rose completely made of meat. ‘That’s how you will end up,’ they said. Then they led her to a place where trees of meat grew. They showed her a box close to the trees where women and men lived. As soon as the red rays fell on them they turned into skeletons, and a blue ray made them look like humans. They seemed to live in skeleton love. They all lived in this box as friends. ‘These are the chosen ones, Tara,’ a skeleton said. ‘And you have to serve them. Let me lead you to the mill where you will become a rose of meat.’ The skeleton grasped her. There was another box, close to the other. He pushed her inside. Sharp objects came out of the walls wanting to rip her apart. The box became smaller and smaller. Tara took her sword, and could hit some objects away, but they fell on the ground, and moved towards her very slowly. The box became transparant, and Tara could see another box coming closer, a black box, in which it’s prisoners fought against each other. It was the box of skeleton hate. Black radiation came forward from the box causing death. It was silent all of a sudden, and the prisoners slowly turned into skeletons. Suddenly Tara hit the ceiling of her box, which was coming closer and closer to her. There was a huge hole now, and she could easily climb out. ‘Well done,’ a skeleton said. ‘You are skilled.’

They took her and pushed her in the hole of a rock. Powers of the skeleton came over her. Inside she raised her sword and started roaring. Then she fell asleep. Soft angels took her up in the hole of the rock, towards the top. ‘Bring her to the seven winds of skeleton,’one of them said. They brought her to a cloud, where she was as a baby. Seven winds started to possess her, and raised her up. She was in a cocoon. Tara was reborn in the sky. She had now the powers of skeleton, being a skeleton moderator, which had equipped her with the skeleton fire, an object by which she could boot skeletons. The second item was the black field, an artifact by which she could kill masses of skeletons at the same time. She got a vehicle, and of course she caused a lot of hell, for she had been repressed by the skeletons for such a long time. And she had the red fields to wake up the lost skeletons, a blue ray to make them look like humans, and a white ray to make them look like flowers.

She started her moderating works, while the seven winds of skeleton moved through her. It was like a sword in her hand. It made her like a goddess, having survey over so much communication. She had an all-seeing eye now, and she was like it’s prophetess. However she got lost in the wildernisses of this cyberspace of death. There were powers she did not know anything about. It was all like an optical illusion. She heard someone laughing. A skeleton came closer, with a high hat and tall grey hair. ‘What a deal,’ he said, ‘you serving the illusions we made. But the best vehicles are the crashed vehicles, for they will go through the walls of skeleton.’

‘What are you talking about,’ Tara screamed, and tried her buttons on him. But it didn’t work. ‘Which powers do you have which I do not have,’ she asked him desperately.

‘Sword of the emperor,’ the skeleton with the hat and the long grey hair said. Tara realized that it was the second time that she had underestimated someone. She bowed her head. There was something like glass around this skeleton. She couldn’t begin much against it. A strange fire was tearing her down. She wished she had listened more to this woman called Davilir.

There was a war in cyberspace, the skeleton cyberspace, the one of death. It was Tara and her ghosts against another army. In this battle she met Davilir again, who could tell much more to her now. She actually had found the sword of the emperor already, so she could be of good use. The sword of the emperor showed them that it was all a game. It was some sort of a joystick, with many more powers. The joystick looked like meat, all coming forth from a skeleton. It was like the fruit of death. There were game masters living inside, ghosts. They had powers to lead them in the war. They could win the game with them. It was indeed a temple. The items were sacred, only to be used by priestly hands. The joystick was in the middle of the temple. She was staring at the joystick, while skeletoncraft was flowing into her body. A woman named Yasmine told her about the skeleton gnosis, as the power beyond all things. Tara was more and more getting stuck in a labyrinth, the unknown. She didn’t know anything of the things happening to her, and it was like she was dying, leading her to hell. She was realizing that it was just the fact that something unknown was being her hell, and that understanding would lead to enlightenment. Or did she need a greater endarkenment. She found herself in a cocoon of mint. She was covered by cocos, surrounded by monkeys. She saw Yasmine holding a injection-needle. ‘You,’ Tara said. ‘What are you doing to me. Feeding me drugs or something, keeping me in your fluids. I feel so weak.’

‘Dream,’ Yasmine said. ‘It’s good for you.’ Tara was sliding away. She didn’t indeed understand all these powers. She felt cold. She was floating in a skeleton temple, where all the dimensions were shifting, where the skeleton gnosis looked like a pillar of salt. ‘I want wisdom, I want knowledge,’ Tara whispered. ‘I want to have some stamina in this quicksand labyrinth. I’m drowning.’ Tara was floating towards the joystick on top of the saltpillar, which was a lot smaller now. The joystick looked like a golden sword, the sword of the emperor. Tara grasped and missed, like the sword was transparent, transcendental, beyond her senses. Yasmine started to laugh. Tara asked who she was, and why she was laughing.

‘I’m not laughing, Tara,’ Yasmine said. ‘You just experience it as laughing, for your vibrations are changing. You have a projected image of me in your head which is now changing, because you are shifting as well.’ Small moneys were around the salt pillar. It was getting smaller and smaller, and the joystick became denser and denser, and finally Tara could grasp it. More monkeys seemed to surround her, and she was like in a virtual jungle all of a sudden, in bright sunlights. ‘It is not the sun, Tara,’ Yasmine said. ‘It is the Safra, the central soft spot of the universe.’ Learn about the tides of the safra, the safrarises and the safrasets. It is not the play between day and night, but between the soft and the hard.

‘Where am I ?’ Tara asked. ‘I feel so soft, it’s like I can breath for the first time in my life. I’m flexible more than ever.’

‘You are queen of the monkeys now, Tara,’ Yasmine said. ‘I am queen of the elephants.’

‘What is the use of this ?’ Tara asked. ‘Am I a more powerful moderator now in this skeleton world ?’

‘Yes,’ Yasmine said. ‘And one day you will be queen of elephants, like me. You need it to survive here, and to come deeper into the skeleton gnosis, the hidden knowledge.’

‘Who are you ?’ Tara asked.

‘I am your guard,’ Yasmine said.

Chapter 2. The Black Triangle

After a few years Tara was indeed a queen of elephants, like Yasmine was. There was living a burning triangle in her now, called the eye of the elephant. It had made her powerful like never before in this world. She was now indeed a guard of the skeleton gnosis. Yasmine was proud of her. Together they could boot a lot of skeletons, and soon they were a feared duo. But hackers brought them down, and soon they were prisoners on a pirate ship. The skeleton-chief stared at them.

‘Women with powers,’ he said. He pushed them in a cage with silver frames, and soon they were sweeping above the waters. ‘Food for sharks !’ the chief shouted. Tara asked Yasmine who they were. ‘Oh,’ Yasmine said. ‘They are favored by the skeleton gods. They have special tools.’

‘Who are they,’ Tara asked again.

The cage was touching the waters already, and soon there were sharks everywhere, and all sorts of unknown fishes. They looked hungry. Suddenly the floor of the cage broke open, while the pirates were laughing. Tara and Yasmine slided into the depths of the sea. Tara was following Yasmine, who seemed to know the way. They swam into a cave. In the cave there was a bubble of air. Tara wondered why the fishes hadn't bitten them. 'No, Tara, it is a trick,' Yasmine said. 'We are in a safe shapeshifting moderator-field. They have found us.'

'Who are they ?' Tara asked. Yasmine led her to a tunnel, and the tunnel led to a huge skeleton-temple, huger than the one before, and this one was in a cave underground. A skeleton sat on a throne here, totally dead. Close to him there was an ark, with fire coming from it. Tasmine stepped in the ark, and Tara followed. They were in an elevator now, going deeper. It led them to a white room. Bright white objects were lying on a table. 'These are the new tools,' Yasmine said.

'What are they ?' Tara asked.

'Tools of the fall,' Yasmine said.

'The fall ? What kind of fall,' Tara asked.

'Listen,' Yasmine said. 'The skeleton world is full of empires against empires, gods against gods, gods stealing angels, etcetera, so a fall can be of use at times.'

'I understand,' Tara said, 'so it means to escape or so.'

'Yes,' Yasmine said. 'It's storing the silver moderator powers. It means it is far beyond anything. It's pretty solid.' Tara laid her hand on an object, and fell powers streaming into her. 'Use it,' Yasmine said. Another triangle was growing into Tara, a black triangle this time. 'What is it,' Tara asked.

'Skeleton time,' Yasmine said. 'It can shapeshift anything.' Tara felt like she was winged. Suddenly they were both in the sky. They could see the clouds below them. They had more

survey now than ever before, and the triangle produced a fluid like paint by which they could shapeshift everything. ‘Build a new world, Tara,’ Yasmine said. ‘This is why I am here. I am frozen. I miss a heartflame, and the battle between fire and ice is not going to help. This is why I led you to the safra, the center of the universe. In the other spheres the sun is the center, and it causes eternal battles between light and darkness, fire and ice. But here there is a battle between soft and hard, and that will bring up the key, awakening the deeper flames. I am dying, Tara, please help. You are the only one who can do that.’

‘Why am I so special,’ Tara asked.

‘Because you have the soft key inside,’ Yasmine said.

Tara’s head was in a skeleton temple, slowly spinning around, while the skeleton who had beheaded her was staring at it. She was in delirium, she was dreaming. The skeleton enjoyed the pretty colours. It was like a lullaby displaying in his skull. Tara was in the jungle and got attacked from behind by this skeleton. The vision had been granted by Soms, her god. She was aware of it. He only seemed to help her when she really needed it, like a death after dying. She thought about the black triangle, the skeleton time, blew upon it, in the hope that things would shift back. She turned around, and saw the skeleton attacking her from behind, and raised her shield to block him, then she beheaded him.

She thought maybe the skeleton time could do some more, as time had make a mess on Mars. Faces were surrounding her, while she was blowing on the black triangle again. Mars was not a prisoner of the sun anymore. It came in another orbit, around the central soft spot, the safra. A flame was in Tara’s hand, and she was remembering Yasmine. ‘Yasmine, this is for you,’ she whispered soft.

Queen of the

Eagles

Tara walked into the castle where Miloup the vampire lived. He could turn into a skeleton and a dragon. He had the meanest weapons and had his powers by the head of a girl he kept in a ball of transparent stone. Tara fell down, as struck by a spell. Miloup's spirit was descending into her, mocking her. Tara stood up, raising her blade-sword. She ran towards the throne of Miloup, but as soon as she reached it, it disappeared. She was in a bewitched castle. Someone was laughing. Tara got very angry. Then out of the nothing she got kicked, and fell down again.'Miloup,' she said, 'I am not here for games.'

Miloup came forward in a purple garment. 'Why are you here ?' he whispered.

'We have to make a deal,' Tara said. 'I want the head of the girl.'

'Never,' Miloup said. Tara knew the girl and she knew her parents. She came closer to Miloup. 'I can give you a lot of money,' Tara said.

'You cannot buy it with all the money of the universe,' Miloup said. 'It is the very source of my power.'

Tara saw the tall rod with the stone on it, in which the head of the girl rested. 'You torment the child,' Tara said.

'Why do you worry about that ?' Miloup said.

‘Take me instead,’ Tara said. ‘And give the head of the girl back to her parents.’

‘I have you already,’ Miloup said. ‘You will not leave this castle alive.’

Tara took her bow, aimed an arrow and shot. She hit the ball, and it fell to the ground and broke. Miloup was screaming. ‘Look what you have done,’ he said. He took up the ball again, and his hands started bleeding. Tara took another arrow and shot the head of Miloup. Quickly she grasped the head of the girl, but she froze. Miloup started laughing. ‘That happens when people try to steal my property.’ Spiders came out of the head of the girl, coming all over Tara. ‘Enough, Miloup,’ Tara whispered, and by her last strength she took her blade-sword again and beheaded him.

The walls of the castle started to move like mills and came closer to Tara, ready to cut her. But then she pushed her blade-sword into the heart of the vampire. She tried to find her way out of this castle, but the doorways started to shift. She had been locked up in a labyrinth. She held the head of the girl tightly to her chest. Finally she found the way out. It was snowing outside, and ghosts were in the air. When she came to the house of the parents of the girl they were very glad. Now they could finally bury it. The spirit of the girl got free. ‘Watch over this grave,’ Tara said to the parents. ‘Let no one ever steal it again.’ But the father of the girl had a better idea. They would burn the grave and would throw the ashes in the sea, so that no one could steal it ever again. It was a great day. The parents were so grateful to Tara that they gave her a ship. It was a huge ship. With this ship she would finally leave this country where she had lived for so many years. How could Tara know it was a ghostship which she couldn’t leave anymore. She became a ghost herself.

It was always like this with the royals. They didn’t lead normal lives, and now Tara had become an adept to it. They lived behind glass, unreachable, in strange chains, and Tara was now one of them. She was part of a pirate army now on this huge ship, and one day they took her skull, and bound her at the front of the ship. She hung there for a long time, until her spirit became the gold and the silver of the ship. She was drippling. In these days she met the spirit of the girl she once set free. They were together over the waters, and the girl started to tell her tales, many tales. Tara could see it was a special girl.

Tara was zombificated now, tied to the boat, but her spirit gave wings to the ship, like a swan. The ghost-pirates had painted her skull on their flags, but they were more and more fading away, only to show up in their most terrible forms at nights. Tara’s spirit had to dance with them, wage war at their side, but the girl gave her hope. The girl knew a way out, it was a savage road. Tara became a mystery, something which the pirates couldn’t grasp. They were losing her, losing her touch, as the ship flew higher, the girl was her hope. The girl was her smile, and it was a smile of death.

Demons were living on the ship, it was an old royal heritage, an old warship. Soon they had imprisoned the spirit of the girl. They put the spirit of the girl in a doll, but she had such a bright smile that she could enchant the demons and ghost-pirates and became their captain. She had a body again. She could also set Tara free. But soon Tara and the girl found out they were nothing more but marionets, as the ship was a demonic machine triggering the old bloodlines. It was a heritage in which dark secrets were stored. Storms were raging, and the hugest ghost-eagles took their place on the ship. The ship was led to a city somewhere in the sea. It was a ghost city, guarded by angels. They crowned the girl and made her queen of the eagles. The old curses were finally breaking.

Weapons of

Torture

Tara was in a wrestling with a huge snake. Her ancestors were appearing, she thought she was dying. But suddenly a huge eagle came down and grasped her to take her to it's nest. It was a huge black eagle. It took care of her wounds. There was a savage treasure in the nest, the jewelry was almost blinding. Tara could use these amulets, and the eagle granted her access to take of it what she wanted. It was a spirit of her ancestors. An indian one. It appeared to be a chief. The tribe was still alive in the sky. Wolves were howling. Tara could reconnect to the strength of her bloodline.

She wore the chainlet of the pink snake, and her body was changing. It was a new torment, like the new inquisition, for she was the first human who had touched it. It was a poison breaking down all her cells and atoms and building it up again. Her mind was shifting and breaking, and in this she felt her heart coming up, and her female powers. She felt cold and then so hot. Suddenly the nest was moving. A huge pink snake entered. It almost looked like a

dragon and had a very tall tongue. It had wings and could fly like an eagle. The pink snake was the leader of all eagles. It was like hidden sources in Tara's body were opening up, like a snake was gliding through it, opening her senses. She felt a softness, and at the same time a hardness, tightening her up. The snake came closer to her, and a small sun came out of it, and soared in front of Tara. Then it went into her heart. Then some more small suns came into Tara. 'These are the treasures of the pink snake,' the pink snake said.

Tara wakes up on a pirate ship. A mean laughing pirate holds a knife against her throat. She doesn't know how she came here, but obviously she had been hit by them. 'Bird in a cage,' the pirate sais while grinning. Tara realizes that she is tied. Then the pirate walks away. It is sunny. There are many pirates on the ship. She sees their weapons and instruments. They are of torture. She doesn't remember anything. Close to her a young boy and girl sit. They are also tied. She wants to help them, but she can't. Then the captain appears. A huge man with a black jacket, almost like a garment. He has a huge hat. He is laughing. Then Tara falls asleep again. When she wakes up it is storming. She gets hit again, but this time by something falling on her. All she knows is that a big bird is grasping her, then she falls asleep again and wakes up on an island, while the bird is staring at her.

The Needles of Pill-A

Chapter 1. The Eye of Tears

'After traveling a lot through the atmosphere which looked like a desert, I came in my spaceship to the planet of ducks. It was full of sex houses and drug stores. I went inside of a drug store and got me some duck drugs. I injected it in my veins, and smiled. This was good stuff. I smiled even more, and took a deep breath. I felt like my muscles were dying, and my nipples were taking over. All was in orgasmic rythms, my brain muscles were like dying. It was like a fist in me was rising. The ducks were like humans here, just more sensitive, and women and men seemed to be equal. Males were not the stronger race. I took another shot, and started to hallucinate. Something was taking me over. Soon I looked into the eyes of a she-duck. She took me to her house, where she started to undress me, and she covered me with jewelry. I was far from nude, yet it was like my skin could breath better, and it was better visible, but not in an untasteful way. I actually liked it. She girdled me. I felt nothing but sweetness from her, no threats. I had the feeling she wouldn't abuse me. She was full of attention and full of love, and then she ran away. The house soon didn't exist anymore, and I woke up. I was still in the drug store. They told me if I wanted the experience to endure I needed to have my body produce the drug itself, as a hormone, from a special duck drug organ, the DDO. They showed me this pink organ, which looked like a heart, but it had to be

implanted in the stomach. I protested against such a surgery, but finally they convinced me, and I knew I was in good hands. I went to sleep, and I was with her again. Now I knew she would stay forever, as I had the organ. I could stay in this dream, and I was happy. But something happened. In my dream she got shot, and even though I did not wake up anymore, and even though I was still in her house, she was not with me anymore, and I faced her funeral. I only remembered of the criminals as black shadows, and they still danced in the backgrounds of my mind. In my dream I tried to find the drug store again, and they told me the DDO needed to get updated often. It often needed extra installations, and there was a risk the DDO could die. I was shocked, as I didn't expect this. I needed a perfect DDO. A DDO could become old, and not working properly anymore. I wanted my girl back. I wanted to go to the dream as it was. They brought me to a memory bank, where I could get my memories back and live in them. But there were many risks. Even worse problems could show up. I needed the perfect drug. They told me it was very complicated.

I treasured my DDO, I was in love with it. Things seemed to work out, and I got my girl back again. I visited the drug store daily for updates, and so did my girl. The DDO was like my heart. The secret of the DDO was the duck sun, which would be the source to eternalize the DDO. We wanted to travel to the duck sun, me and my girl, in our spaceship.

It directly activated a ray called Pill-A when we reached a certain zone around the duck zone, a ray penetrating the muscles and brains of earthlings like needles, inserting a poison to paralyze them, so that the DDO also could grow into them. It was because I had the earth DNA in my history files, and it could be beamed straight through it to reach the earth zones to do it's job. We could follow this all on screens. At the same time duck warriors were approaching the earth. Even the heart muscles had to be penetrated like this. The duck sun was taking over. It would shift all the realities of earth, and there would be a shift from the Musclian Age to the Nipplian Age. The ducks were about to bring childhood back to earth, and all the adult behaviour would die. They used the duck drugs for that.

After this they would have to take over the black brain sun and the black muscle sun, which seemed to be the sources of the whole musclian age.'

A captive woke up in a camp of native american women. He had been a prisoner here for awhile. The women seemed to be insane, claiming he had committed an unforgivable sin, and therefore he was their prisoner of doom. They had put him in an arena where he had to fight, and where he actually got partly paralyzed and spasmic. Now he was laying there, in a tent, inbetween some native women, waiting for the everlasting torment to come, as a punishment for his wicked deeds, of which he didn't know what it was. He felt misjudged, but his dreams at nights seemed beautiful, deep, haunting, as was this place.

He felt a hand on his shoulder. A woman stood before him. It was Tara from Rhodes, his saviour. She led him out of this place. She brought him to her home, somewhere behind rocks, in a sandy cave. It was raining outside. She took care of his wounds. The women with their evil grins still tormented his mind, but this woman was so different. She gave him a sword and a knife, but he was still paralyzed and in spasm. But when he held it, soon power streamed through his body. 'What is that ?' he asked.

'You have been chosen by the gods,' Tara spoke.

'For what ?' he asked.

She didn't speak. After awhile she said : 'Just believe it.'

He admired this woman, so he believed what she said. She had saved him.

'Please, don't let me have to go back to where I came from,' he begged her.

'You are safe here,' she spoke. Two wolves were licking him. Outside he could see a river where crocodiles were. On the sandy shore there were also some leopards.

'The animals keep you safe,' she spoke.

'I dreamt about ducks,' he said

'Forget about them now,' Tara spoke. 'Think about the wild animals, the savage ones.'

He sighed. He was still trembling, but she caressed him and calmed him. He was in her arms. He fell asleep and dreamt about the drugs of nature, the serums of paradise. Spiders were stinging his muscles, and they were like dying, and an organ in his stomach took control, soft powers, guided by an unknown sun. In his dreams he saw the lovely face of Tara.

He woke up and knew that everything was but a dream. He was still the captive of these native american women, savage indians, who had his heart. There was red lace tied around his hips. These women seemed to be very organized as there were more captives with red lace.

One day he had to appear before their queen, who was painted in red, and he asked her what he had done wrong. 'First of all, you are a male,' she said. 'Second : you have muscles. Third : you have brains.'

'But you have them too,' he said.

'No,' the queen spoke. 'Just advanced nipples.'

'Can I have them too ?' he asked.

'No,' the queen said. 'It is unforgivable that you have been like this, and that you have used it. It is called abuse, you have abused your powers, your false powers, you have used your muscles and brains against women.'

'No, I have not,' he said. 'I have never used my muscles against women. I have never hit a woman, only maybe for self defense.'

'You are starting to get insecure, by saying : maybe,' said the queen, 'and what about your brains. Didn't you use them to humiliate women ?'

'Never,' said the man.

'Is that all you can say ?' asked the queen. 'Here females are above males. You have to get used to that. Here we rule. No one comes against us. Spiders will feast on your muscles. You will be a good snack, then a good slave.'

'You have to give me a second chance,' said the man. 'A chance to let me be more like you.'

'Never,' said the queen. 'You will never be like us. Deal with that. You belong to the everlasting torment and the everlasting arena.'

The man watched the cruel faces of the other girls who were with the queen. They stood there merciless. He knew that every escape from here would just be a dream. They didn't let him sleep much, but sometimes he just fainted.

'There is no hope for creatures like you,' the queen said. 'Neither for your children.'

'That sounds racistic,' said the man.

'I don't care what you think,' the queen said. All captives were allowed to see the queen only one time in their lives, so the queen took the time for him, but he couldn't get through to her. Slowly she turned into a python, and went away.

It was like she had stung him, and he felt like he was dying. He knew there was nothing left to do but to accept that he was in this place forever, and that he had comfort in his dreams. It was not all that bad, as he could sleep and faint. He led a double life, and he knew that these two lives would form and transform each other, until he would have a satisfying point of view on them.

In his dreams he dreamt about the nipple sun, with nipplian warriors, invading everything. The creatures on here were wild, beyond the duck sun. The nipple sun was like a mind police, beheading the giants of the muscle age. Cobras took their bodies over, and showed their heads on their bodies. Tara from Rhodes was big in his dreams, and she made his terrible life with the native women look like fragments. It was like it was all just a few seconds of the day. All flashes. he fainted more and more, entering his dream world, just different frequencies of life. He could tune in and out.

The source of Pill-A was on the nipple sun, where he also found a substance called Pill-B, nipplian seed. This seemed to be the secret of Tara from Rhodes, the secret of her power. She ruled over the illusions with her sword, taking him in.

She took him to Mars, and to it's core, Betelgeuse, to which the nipple sun was just a key. Here nature and life was good. The crocodiles were big. The rivers were of blood. It was hell. She was a sharp voice in his head, the voice of the python, whispering. She showed him the key, a solar key, of so many suns, of a solar stairway, transforming him, and bringing him into the depths of Betelgeuse, absorbing all the other experiences he ever had. Here the hippos were. It was the core of Mars. The flies ruled here. The Eye of Tax was soaring here. Tara said it was the last enemy to be defeated. It was the creator of the muscles and the brains, as in a conspiracy, as it made captives.

'How to defeat it ?' he asked.

'Only a female can do it,' Tara spoke. She told a vague story about a yellow pyramid which would lead to the yellow sun, a good security against the Eye of Tax. In the distance a stairway seemed to be burning. Tara spoke that the yellow sun was a key to enter deeper into Betelgeuse. She said that in the depths of Betelgeuse the yellow sun would release substances

which would trigger a doom in the universe to transform everything. This was why the yellow sun was an important path or elevator in Betelgeuse.

Some said the yellow sun was the sun of tears, while others said it was the sun of jokes and the sun of laughing. Fact was that anyone who would approach the yellow sun would stop aging, unless the yellow sun would not let them through, then they would age even faster. There were of course ways to age in the depths of Betelgeuse, but it was just more controllable.

The laugh gas of the yellow sun made people happy, although that was what it looked like, when Tara took the man on a trip. But it was scorn, and it led to tears. There were many tear lakes in the depths of Betelgeuse, which was like a hot desert area. Tara gave the man a ring on which his oxygen statistics could be seen, and it was to be controlled from there. The yellow sun was like a train into the depths of this desert, guided by tall paradise birds. He needed to control his oxygen, or he would die here. He needed to learn how to breath. She led him along the pee-lakes of monsters and beasts, where they had peed, wells of healing. She teached him the secrets of nature, there, in the depths of Betelgeuse. His mind broke free from so many restrictions, but he also had to worship the goddess. He had to live in devotion to her. And for the sake of nature he had to be sacrificed to her, and her wrath had to be poured out on him, as in an eternal punishment. He had to be rejected, as a religious experience of doom, he had to feel the everlasting torment.

It was Betelgeuse's Theology demanding this, and there was no escape. There could not be an everlasting bliss without this everlasting damnation. There could not be an everlasting peace without an everlasting war. There was such a balance here, by such a split. There could not be an everlasting marriage to the goddess without the everlasting divorce to the goddess. Tara said that this was the reset of the chip and it was nothing but a game. She told him that the goddess loved him very much, and that he was chosen by her for this game. She wanted to heal his past. She would arm him through this ritual.

The Eye of Tax was still soaring above them, looking like an insect. It looked like a big swollen muscle, through which slime was streaming. It was very slimy and greesy. Tara took the man into a lake of monster-pee, where the pee of beasts was mixed, and the pee of dragons, and it seemed to be a healing well, but after awhile it caused trauma. But there seemed to be no other option. The man was confused, and so was Tara. The Eye of Tax was after them. It stalked them. The traumas seemed to actually protect them against the Eye, as otherwise it would enslave them. They both felt a pressure on them. Tara was fighting for her life, and at the same time she had to protect the man, but it was hard on her. They heard noises in the distance. Gigantic dragons showed up, but they could begin nothing against the Eye of Tax. Suddenly the Eye of Tax swallowed Tara. When it spat her out she was under slime, as in an egg. She felt like she was burning. She was screaming. The man got stung by the Eye and got paralyzed. He remembered this feeling. It was like his past was taking over.

Cream came forth from the Eye, covering them both. They were both like burning, as in a flame. Soon they were surrounded by males with big breasts and big muscles. 'The splinters of Fragma,' said Tara.

'What is that ?' the man asked.

'These men are just parts of this Eye,' Tara said. 'They are the workers of it's foam, Fragma, his spirit. It keeps them drunk. They do not care, only for their pleasure. They live in jokes, lies.'

They both fell into an enormous depth, while the Eye of Tax seemed to be feasting on their flesh. 'These men are guards of another world,' Tara said, 'but they will soon die.'

'I hope so,' the man said. 'They are evil.'

Suddenly they were gliding into the tear lakes of beasts, monsters and dragons. It was like their traumas were soothing. 'it works,' Tara said. 'Whenever the Eye of Tax stalks, it leads us to these lakes.'

'What will happen ?' the man asked.

The lakes were like burning, but it was also calming them, as there was a softening substance in it. The tears were very neutralizing. It attached itself to their bodies, and started to heal the wounds.

'Manerka,' a voice spoke. There was another man in the lake. Soon they saw beasts, dragons and monsters appearing. The Eye of Tax was shrieking. The tears were on them like foam and jewelry, like fleeces as lace. It was enslaving them for war.

'I can breath !' the man shouted.

'Welcome to the army,' the other man said.

On a dragon a queen-like woman was riding, sitting on a saddle. She was covered by lace and leather, as in a traditional armor. She had horns, and she was partly veiled, and had a short skirt. She was moving towards them, but then fell away.

The Eye of Tax was spitting fire, but the tear lake was swallowing them into it's depths. The man lost his consciousness. He felt like dreaming, and suddenly he could shake so many worlds off of him. He watched his dreams shifting in a huge pearl. The pearl was slimy and greesy, very steamy. 'Don't touch the pearl,' a voice spoke. It was the queen-like figure with the horns. 'I am here to intoxicate you, you need the witch,' she said. 'Here all the realities shift.'

'I do not know what is real and what is not,' said the man. 'I do not know what to trust and what not, I do not know the truth.'

'Come,' said the queen, and led him to a hall behind them. The hall was full of beasty warriors. They formed the elements of animals. They looked like rhinos. 'The watchers of Doom,' said the queen. 'They are waiting for their hour.'

'Who are they, and what are they going to do ?' asked the man.

'They are eye-eaters,' said the queen. 'They are going to eat the Eye of Tax.'

'Who leads them ?' asked the man.

'Tara from Rhodes will lead them,' said the queen. 'I sent her to you, as you have been chosen by the gods. She is the Law of Tax, the opposite force, waiting to blind the eye, and endarken it.'

A darkness fell upon them. The hour was almost there. Tara from Rhodes soared above the rhinos, as if she had wings of light, but it was darkness. She had a trumpet and a viking helmet, a horned helmet.

'Who or what is Tax ?' asked the man.

'The thief,' said the queen. 'But if the thief is not bound to the law, then the thief is evil. The thief needs to be legal, stealing back what others have reaved.'

'Oh,' said the man, 'sounds interesting.'

'Interesting, right ?' said the queen. Then it was silent for awhile. The man lost consciousness again. he knew he was in the tear lakes. It felt like his whole body was crying, and like his eye was dying. It felt like he completely lost it. He was blind, and the only light was the darkness. The Eye of Tax was a criminal and a murderer, but Tara arrested it.

In dreams he saw her and he worshipped her, as she was the harmony. She was the paradox. He wanted to know this Law of Tax. He wanted to be on her side. But he also knew inside there would always be an eye, so he had to search for the right eye. He fell into a field of bison hunters. The eyes of the bisons were red. They had the eyes of tax. He could see this empire in the distance, where bison hunters ruled. He knew the only eye who could set them free was the Eye of Tears. He knew they worshipped it in the empire, he just knew. It was like a vision went right through him. He saw angels on horses, but then he fell away again. The Eye of Tears in him was like a drug.

Chapter 2. The Dark Side of Betelgeuse

The Eye of Tax was a machine of snobs, men who thought they were superior, an elite. In the depths of Betelgeuse there were the starvation farms, where men were turned into those who had the weakness of little babies. They were prepared to become slaves of the Eye of Tears. Soon the man was there as well, all other visions were dying. He had to live in a tear. The tear would feed them, although not too much. It was a sort of milk to make them even weaker. The tear would give them power, but not too much, often by spasm. They lived by strange contractions and hyperventilation. The theology was that they had to become weak and empty to be able to receive the power of the Eye of Tears, the goddess. And this theology demanded also that they went through the divorce with Her, and to be completely rejected by her, to be doomed by her, living under her wrath as an eternal punishment. In this they would reach enlightenment, by the depths of endarkenment. She was a cruel goddess, only to show them the flashes of grace. There was no grace for those doomed by Her. They were nothing but her milk-cows. But it was to awaken an extra sense. He felt like a weak child, stung by spiders, he felt like a fly guided by strange power. He was not able to hold anything. Everything slided through his fingers. He was bathing in milk lakes of monsters, beasts and dragons.

He had seen the dark side of Betelgeuse, where the females were the stronger race, and the males the weaker, where the eyes were the seals of drugs. And the breasts of native women, savage indians, were the taps of the milk of confusion. There were no answers, no one was

helping him, and soon he was thinking that it was all an evil conspiracy, and he accepted the evilness in his life. There was no other way. Resisting it was pointless.

He was sinking away in the experience, while death was calling him. He found an oracle like a disc, like a wheel, and he held it tight. 'The male represents youth,' said the oracle, 'while the female represents growth and death. And you have to go into the depths rather than fighting at the surface. But we are all children after all.'

In the depths he saw the beauty of death, all colours torn apart until there was only white and red. He felt it as a rebirth. Everything moved by death, by falling from great height, by huge pain, but at the same time there was bliss and softness, as the softness of feathers. Only pale colours came through, yet it was intense. Here the Eye of Death was soaring, as a tap of the fluids of extasy. These all came as pale lights. It was all painted by thunder and lightening. The beauty of death was an ingredient the cook of life used.

The Ghost Cup

The Elephant Cup was an item most wanted by warlocks, necromancers and sorcerors. It was highly guarded in a deep cave, by big wild cats in all sorts. Tara started to slay them one by one in order to reach the cup. Long she had desired to drink from the cup, as it's fluids would lead her through the underworld and would make her invincible. She grasped the cup, but then shivered as if she had touched something holy. She fell backwards, and a man came from

behind her to grasp her and to lay a bloody knife against her throat. 'What are you doing here ?' he roared.

'Who are you,' Tara asked.

'You have no rights to come here,' said the man. Suddenly Tara made a movement and could throw the man off of her, but then two gorillas grasped her, and tried to choke her. 'Illunias !' she shouted. And soon a giant bird came to slay the two monkeys and the man. Again Tara fell backwards. A strange power was striking her, as she had touched the cup. She felt like drunk, but tried to get to the cup again. The cup had fallen to the ground, and it's fluids were wasted to the ground. Tara knew that touching the cup again would be her death. Soon she was drinking the fluids from the ground, mixed with dust, sand and slime. 'I am ill,' she roared. She lay down somewhere, trying to forget about the cup. But it was as if there was now a strong force around her head as an iron band. 'No !' she roared.

'You have touched the food of the gods,' a voice spoke. A hooded man in a garment came closer. But Tara beheaded him immediately. She wouldn't take any risk. She felt powers sliding through her, making her able. 'Why am I here !' she shouted. She grasped her head. 'I am going insane,' she spoke. Her voice was echoeing through the cave. 'I am a mere shadow now, but powerful, more than ever. I have found access to the underworld to become immortal.' She felt like she was becoming invisible, and her eyes could see ghosts now. 'The sorcerors want what I have !' she shouted. 'I will not trade any of this !' There was a strange smell in the cave. Her feet were sweating, and soon her whole body. She saw the ghosts wailing in the wind, suffering under the mystery of a stone, the stone of the twelve cats. These were twelve sorts of big wild cats, and they were united in a master stone, an amulet. But it was an amulet of slavery. She fell down again. 'I see the underworld !' she shouted. 'What do you want from me !'

'Free us,' the ghosts wailed.

'Why would I,' she said harsh.

'We are doomed,' a ghost wailed.

'So what,' she shouted, 'We are all doomed.'

'But you can help us,' another ghost wailed, 'and we will pay you richely.'

'I am not a helper,' she shouted. 'I cannot be bribed, I can only make things worse.'

'Please,' the ghosts begged. 'Let us at least be your slaves, so that we have something to live for.'

'I will be more terrible than your master,' Tara shouted.

The ghosts fell at her feet and cried. 'Eternal growing damnation is what I give,' Tara said while drunk. Then she fell again. She stood up and raised her shield. She was bleeding, and soon she was bleeding from her eyes.

'You have drunk from the Elephant Cup, my dear,' the ghosts were wailing. 'We can help you.'

'Shut up !' Tara was shouting. 'I am sure I will be fine too.' The ghosts were in the dust, hitting themselves, chaining themselves, in the hope that Tara would take them, so that they could leave from their master. Suddenly there were lights everywhere. It was the stone of the twelve cats appearing. Tara could see it, as she had drunk from the elephant cup, and now her eyes were opened for it. It was another dimension. The lights were striking Tara.

'Why have you touched the cup,' the stone spoke.

'None of your business !' Tara shouted.

'Oh it is, believe me,' said the stone. 'And you will pay dearly for it.' Tara took her sword again and tried to cut the stone appearing before her, as in a revelation.

'You will be my servant, Tara,' the stone spoke.

Tara grasped her head, and felt weak all of a sudden. 'I am trapped,' she said softly. Again she fell down. First on her knees. 'No, no, this cannot be true,' she said.

'You are too late, Tara,' the stone spoke. 'Someone already had drunk from the cup, and filled it with the fluids of slaves, for you to become our slave.'

'I don't believe you,' Tara said. 'Who drunk from it then ?'

'Us,' the stone said.

'Who are these ghosts ?' Tara said as if she was struck again. She felt like a panick was coming over her.

'They have also drunk after us, they came too late, and soon you will be one of them,' the stone said. Tara heard laughter, and she came into a rage, but the panick was much bigger. Soon she was shivering with fear, trembling. But then she spoke again : 'I cannot believe you.'

'Oh, you will see,' said the stone. 'You will see.'

It was like heavy chains fell upon her, and she started wailing because of the strange pains. Soon she was baptized in a river, the river of hell. It was a river of lamentation.

'No, this cannot be true,' she shouted. 'I just have to hold the cup, I have to.' She tried to come back to the cave, but couldn't find it. She was in the river. She tried to reach the coast, but there was no coast. Everything was moving away from her, and strange small sharks were biting her. 'Hell no !' she was shouting. She was rubbing her eyes, and saw the Elephant Cup again. She would now grasp it and hold it, and not letting it go. Soon she had the cup in her hand, and then in both hands. She was trembling again, but didn't let go. And she started to drink. She drank like never before. Soon cats were all around her. Big black cats like panthers were licking her. 'I made it,' she spoke. She knew the cup would now lead her through the underworlds, and no secret would stay secret for her. The cup brought her in a cave of Elephant Gems, where she adorned herself. The gems were all strung together with feathers. She was holding the cup and raised it. 'I will conquer the seven seas of death with it, and the seas of hell. All will bow for me !' she shouted. She tied the cup to her belt, and flames were surrounding her. On the back of a bison she went through the underworlds. In the last

underworld she met a king. The king immediately started to talk to her in unknown language, but Tara beheaded him immediately as she didn't want to take any risk. In her paranoia she became full of prejudice, for her own protection, but one day she met someone who told her that the elephant force was such a savage power, and that it could only be brought to balance by the Mammoth Cup. The person led her to this cup, but it confused her even more, bringing her to the depths of insanity. 'If this is my fate, so be it,' Tara spoke. The Mammoth Cup had opened her eyes for too many dimensions at the same time, which was now overwhelming her, but this person said that Tara would finally reach the surfaces through all these waters of chaos. Tara had the feeling she was only sinking deeper, but some supreme power became master of her, and finally she became master of it. In the depths of chaos she had planted her throne.

The Bones of Traxmarut

Tara was walking on a path through the jungle. Suddenly she was surrounded by spears. Soldiers were watching her, soldiers of a strange sort. They took her to their queen, the queen of Salvabridge. 'What are you doing in our place ?' the queen asked. The soldiers looked confused, as if they were under her spell.

'Since when is it your place,' said Tara. 'The jungle is of no one.'

'You can take a bet on it is mine,' said the queen. 'Soldiers, throw her in the crocodile dungeon !' she shouted. 'What a bliss,' thought Tara. 'I'm at least not killed.'

In the dungeon there were some dead crocodiles. Soon Tara was eating their flesh, savage as she was. But she felt like she was going insane by it. She heard laughing outside of the dungeon. Soldiers were watching her. 'The meat is poisoned,' they said.

'Bastards,' Tara whispered. She knew she would survive this poison. She had been poisoned before, but her body was always strong enough to survive.

After a while she had to appear before the queen again. 'There is something about you so strong,' said the queen. Suddenly Tara grasped a many-pointed blade-knife of a soldier, and attacked the queen. Soon she had the queen in a strangling grip, and then beheaded her. 'No one rules the jungle !' Tara shouted. Snakes were gliding close to Tara, and soldiers began to run away.

'Cowards,' she whispered. A man in golden clothes stood close to Tara. 'You will pay for this,' he said. Man-eating plants came forward, but they didn't harm Tara. They started to eat the man, who started to scream. It seemed Tara had broken a huge curse. 'The skull of Neveroth !' the man screamed. 'It will make you pay !'

Tara didn't know what he meant. Soon the man was dead. Monkeys were surrounding the dead body, but then they joined Tara. It was like all the animals had approved of her actions. The palace was already a ruin. Tara went to a room behind the place of the throne. There was a green skull on a small pillar. An old man sat close to it. 'What is it ?' Tara asked.

'No one knows,' said the man. 'It is a strange thing.'

'Who are you ?' Tara asked.

'I am it's priest,' said the man. 'I was a captive of this queen, but she let me free in order to become a priest of this skull.'

'Strange,' Tara said. The queen seemed to have mysterious powers by which she enslaved others, but she was dead now.

Suddenly the skull started to speak. Lightening and smoke came forwards from it. 'Neveroth is my name, paradise is my game. I started the tree, and made the creations breath.'

Tara and the man stepped backwards, as darkness began to come forth, and the lightening was getting brighter. 'Who has killed the queen ?' asked the skull.

'I did,' said Tara.

Thunder came forth from the pillar, and a beam struck Tara, while she could raise her shield just in time to ward it off. 'See, crazy you are,' said the pillar. 'Just that you do not rule the jungle doesn't mean you can kill the ruler.'

'Well, for your information : She doesn't rule the jungle !' shouted Tara.

'We will see,' the pillar said. 'Now run, or I will kill you.'

'I won't run for anyone !' shouted Tara. 'Miserable creatures like you I despise.'

'You do not know with which powers you are messing,' said the pillar. 'There is only one ruler, dead or alive. You cannot kill her soul. You only killed her body. It was a wrong put in the game, for now she … hahaha.'

Tara came close to the pillar, then struck it by the many-pointed blade-knife, but she almost became electrocuted and was thrown on the ground by the mysterious power.

'Now, do not touch it,' said the pillar. 'You might hurt yourself.'

'Who are you,' asked Tara.

'I am the skull of Neveroth, the skull of a warrior,' the skull spoke. 'I have seen the seven seas of death, the tragedies of hell, and the traps of the gods. I am the blood-god of Israel, the keeper of it's veils. And she was my goddess.'

'You know what,' said Tara. 'You are just confused.' Then she struck the pillar again, at the root of the skull, and again she was thrown to the floor.

'Give it up, Tara,' said the skull. 'You will never break through.'

'Never,' said Tara, and struck the skull again. This time it was giving light, and broke off. A flood started to come through it's mouth. 'Not smart,' the skull said. Tara had to run now, as there was water everywhere, and it didn't seem to stop. Soon she was swimming. She didn't know where the old man was. 'The curse of Neveroth is on you !' roared the skull.

'I am drowning !' shouted the skull. 'You have broken my cup !' Tara swam to the highest tree of the jungle, where she would be safe. She climbed very high. Some monkeys were following her. One of them had the skull in his hands, although the skull didn't have light anymore. It was all dark. 'Throw it away,' said Tara to the monkey. The monkey did, and the skull was sinking soon enough. It took a while before the water was lowering again. When all the water was gone after a long time. There was somewhere a deep hole in the ground close to the ruin. Tara went down in the pit. She found the skull there in front of a realm of cages underground. The cages were full of children. Tara worked her way through the cages and came in an open place where sacrificial items were. Some priests stood at the other side of the place. 'Did Neveroth send you here ?' they asked.

Tara didn't say anything. Suddenly she grasped her blade and beheaded them. Panthers came forward and started to lick her. It seemed that nature was on her side. But soon more and more priests came. 'The wrath of Neveroth is on her !' a priest with a high headcover shouted. It seemed like the highpriest. He had jewelry all over. Soon she was surrounded by spears. 'Throw her in the fire !' the man shouted. They grasped her, and took her blade away. But some of the panthers started to jump on the men, and Tara could run away. From one man she had taken his spear. She went deeper into the place, until she came in a chamber where veiled women were.

'What have you done to the children,' Tara spoke. The women didn't speak, but looked confused. She went behind some veils and came in a deep cave where black panthers were. A skeleton started to laugh. 'You should never have come here, woman, you are trapped,' he said. Tara started to become dizzy. Black huge eyes stared at her, like a white monster. 'Grasp her,' the skeleton said.

'No, I can't,' the white monster said. 'She is the queen of the jungle.'

'She isn't, now grasp her !' shouted the skeleton.

'That the rain of the gods may destroy you, woman,' the skeleton shouted, while huge gems started to fall down on Tara. She got hit so hard on the head that she lost consciousness. She woke up in a white place. Panthers were all around her. The white monster was staring at her.

'Where is the skeleton ?' asked Tara.

'He is dead,' said the white monster. 'I killed him.'

'Thank you,' said Tara. 'Where are the children ?'

'In the cages,' said the white monster, 'prepared for sacrifice.'

'To what ?' asked Tara. But the white monster didn't answer.

'There is no one like you,' said the monster. 'You are beautiful.'

'How do you know ?' Tara asked.

'My master said : one day there will come a woman, the queen of the jungle, and she will ask for the savage children and the animals, to set them free,' said the white monster. 'Me and my master lived in captivity. My master was killed after he revealed about the queen of the jungle. He described you, and you perfectly fit the description.'

'Where are we ?' Tara asked.

'In my palace,' said the white monster. Tara looked around her, and inbetween the white pillars there was an open space with a pond of crocodiles. 'My powers grow more each day,' said the white monster.

'What do you know about Neveroth ?' asked Tara.

'Not much,' said the white monster. 'Just that he is our breath, and that he can take it away.'

Suddenly Tara had the feeling she couldn't breath. Soon she fell down.

'Now Tara,' the white monster said. 'Neveroth is never wrong. Some say that maybe, but …. I will show you.' After awhile Tara could breath again, and he led her to a white hall. An enormous skull was in the hall, as the skull of a giant, and it was the skull of a monster. 'This is my father,' said the white monster. 'He is impersonated a lot. Now you are not going to believe what I am about to say, but …. this skull is the ruler of blood. It drains and gives. It pumps.'

It was like the skull was breathing and pumping like a heart.

'Then why is your father not rooting the priesthood out who keep these animals and children imprisoned ?' Tara asked.

'Because the priests of my father stole his bones, and they used it to generate a false skull,' said the white monster.

'Where are these bones ?' Tara asked.

'I don't know,' said the white monster. 'But my father is fading. The skull is perishing. If it has dried out completely, we will not breath anymore and die.'

'Abarath …. is the one … the priest …. who stole the bones,' said the white monster. The white monster led Tara to the cages again. There were white tall dogs walking around there with strange spots. Tara was struck with terror and became very exhausted all of a sudden. The white monster took her back to the palace where she started to get all sorts of nightmares. She was sweating a lot, and the white monster held her all the time.

'Tell me more about Abarath,' whispered Tara.

The white monster became like intoxicated, like drunk, and his black eyes became white, and his skin grey. 'I can't Tara,' he said.

'Do it !' shouted Tara. 'I need to know or he will kill us all !'

'He is a witch,' said the white monster, 'a bad witch, a religious witch. He calls himself the Traxmarut, the Christ, and children have to be sacrificed to him. He steals them, then takes them to the underground. 'He's a butcher, also calling himself the king of swords, or Lord of the swords.'

Tara fell asleep again and had even worse nightmares, until she woke up screaming. 'Bring me to the cages,' said Tara. The white monster took her up, and led her to the cages. She grasped a dog, and a wrestling started. Tara tore the flesh of the dog apart, while other dogs were starting to attack her. 'Do you want to know where the key is !' Tara shouted. 'It's in the heart of these dogs !' Again she tore the flesh of these dogs apart, while she got terribly bitten. 'Take me away !' she suddenly screamed to the white monster. The white monster grasped her, but there were money dogs who had put their teeth in her flesh and didn't want to let her go. It was like she was bleeding to death.

'I see Traxmarut !' shouted Tara. 'The one who is guarding the Gate of Death ! I am dying ! I see his golden coffin with the red covering and the golden cross on it ! I see him !' Suddenly

the dogs let her go, barked and ran away. The white monster had come closer to the white palace with her.

'They can't stand the white palace, as there is Neveroth's real skull. They fear it,' said the white monster.

'The bones are in Traxmarut's coffin !' shouted Tara. 'It is somewhere in a church, a cathedral.'

'Below the cages, there is a cathedral,' said the white monster.

'Then let us go there,' Tara said.

'The dogs will eat you,' said the white monster.

'Then we go with the skull of your father !' shouted Tara.

The white monster ended up putting pieces of the skull of his father in Tara's armor, because the giant skull was much too big to take it with them.

The dogs were crying when they saw Tara. They started to melt away, while the white monster led Tara to the cathedral. It was exactly how she saw it in her hallucinations of death. She went inside in search for the golden coffin, which she found in a deeper chamber. A ghost came up from the coffin, saying : 'Who touches these bones inside, will die,' while it was also written in the air. There were rings at the sides of the coffin, golden rings, which kept the coffin covered by a golden plate which was covered by a red covering.

'You cannot open the coffin Tara, you will die,' said the ghost. 'You don't know with which powers you are playing.'

'You are religious scum !' shouted Tara. Suddenly the whole place was in fire, and Tara had to run out of the cathedral. 'It's killing me !' she shouted. The white monster took her to the

palace again, where he quenched the fire totally. 'I cannot do this. These powers are too strong,' said Tara.

'Then we will all die,' said the white monster.

'What can we do ?' Tara asked.

'Ask my father,' said the white monster. Together they approached the skull again. 'Father,' said the white monster. Tara wanted to ask you a question.

'I already know what she wants to know,' said the skull. 'And there is only one solution. She has to enter through my nose holes, and enter the chamber deep inside my skull, where the powder of intoxication is in a white coffin. It is the powder of time. She has to smear it on her face and on her body, and go back to the cathedral to get the bones. If she will not be back here with the bones in short time, she will die.'

Tara climbed on the skull her way up to the nose-holes, and went inside where she found the chamber a while later. When she went inside and tried to open the coffin, a white ghost stood there. When she put on the powder she was suddenly in a shock and very paranoid. She suddenly didn't trust the skull anymore, but on the other hand she knew that if the skull had spoken the truth, she needed to be fast now. She ran outside to go back to the cathedral. She ran towards the chamber with the golden coffin, and could open it very easily. When she touched the bones, nothing happened. She took the bones with her. They were not that big. When she came back to the skull, the skull was very mad. 'They have shrunk my bones !' he shouted. 'Bring them in my chamber.' The skull then wanted the bones to be put in the white coffin.

When Tara had reached the coffin and put the bones into it, she suddenly fell backwards, where the floor opened itself, and she slided into a deep, tall pit, where she ended in a dungeon. 'There is no escape from anyone,' roared the skull. 'I have my bones back, and look where it is leading us. Now you are locked up in me forever. I do not know how to get you out from there. Tara was surrounded by strange moving bars.

'Father,' said the white monster, 'maybe you have missed a link.'

But the skull didn't speak anymore. Tara came into a deep sleep. The skull was fading more and more, and started to lose it's density. When Tara woke up the skull had completely disappeared, and she was free. 'Maybe your father is finally free,' said Tara. The white monster nodded. When they went to the place of the cages, it didn't exist anymore. They hoped the children were finally free as well.

Desert Queen

She had tied her men, while strange insects called 'spanish spears' were stinging them. By the venom they were slowly turning into cattle. The spanish spears not only inserted their venom, but they were also bloodsuckers. They sucked the blood and the juices out of the men, leaving them weak. They had to go through all sorts of marriage rituals to bring them down, and after that they had to go through the rituals of divorce. The cattle was good for work and transport.

Tara from Rhodes, a lonely warrior, stops her journey through the desert when she comes along this bright realm of the desert queen. Quickly she finds out what is going on here, and she starts a massacre, finally to behead the desert queen. With the head of the queen she holds by her hand she sits on her throne. 'Spear not the cattle !' someone is shouting. But soon a spear goes through the head of this person.

She loves the cattle but she is not aware of the curse of the desert queen. An army of sand-people is soon surrounding the bright realm in which Tara thrones now. They walk slowly towards her, coming from the sand, and soon Tara is put into a torture cage in the dephts of the desert. The cage goes down as by an elevator. It leads to underground worlds below the desert, where the spanish spears rule.

The queen of the spanish spears could also turn into a woman. She came close to Tara. 'Well, well,' she said to Tara, 'so you have defeated the desert queen, right ? Just know that the desert will always exist, and replace these queens with something even worse. As now I will become desert queen.'

Tara was allowed to come out of the cage, and the queen of the spanish spears took her place. Soon the cage went up as by an elevator. Tara is alone now, but she is glad she is free at least.

Meanwhile the queen of the spanish spears possessed the men in the desert realm, living inside of them, living from their meat. Tara wanted to know the mystery of the desert, the secret of it, so she went deeper underground. She came into a tunnel leading to the Ocean of Blood. There were strange smells here. When she finally came on it's beach it was very dark and bloody. There were strange insects looking like chains. Another sort of insects looked like

knives.

She starts swimming in the ocean of blood, and after a while she reaches an island where pigs live. They are chained by the chain-insects, and the knive-insects are living close to them as well. To Tara it seems that these strange insects live from the blood of the pigs.
Further on the island, women lived, huntresses. They lived together with hyenas. They kept men in cages who they had starved. When Tara asked about it, they said that they had let the men get stung by the venom of divorce. Tara felt compassion for the men. When the women slept she opened their cages and took the men to the ocean of blood. Together they swam to another island. Here many fruit trees were, and Tara started feeding the men, who were very weak. When the women woke up, they were in rage. Soon they found out that they were with Tara on another island. Tara would protect the men with her life. She knew the men were still in danger. Not only because of the women, but also because of the strange insects who could turn them into cattle. Tara wondered if there was an anti-venom against it. She became very protective over the men, and was looking for a medicine.

One day the queen of the spanish spears visited them. It seemed she had changed a lot. Tara asked her if she knew of an opposite force against the venom. 'Oh yes,' said the queen. 'Servil sugar. That is a sugar living in certain big fruits. They are also here on this island.' Then the queen led them to such trees, and gave them to eat from the sugar inside of the big fruits. It was a sugar to restore marriages, and to turn cattle into men again. The queen took care that the men got their women back, and that they had happy marriages again.

The Ghost-children of Pendilot

In the depths of Orion, Dagva had his slaves, who he had pierced in their teeth by strange implants. This was how he controlled his slaves. They were remote devices. He wanted his slaves to build pyramids for his empire. Dagva was a zombie under the wrath of the gods, but he had built his own religious order. They were called the Zamgda. By the pyramids he had the powers to dig deep in the depths of Orion for a substance used as money, the Ontragolin Metal. This was a soft metal which could become hard by certain processes. It could also live in the people to control them. They could get possessed by it.

The Orion pyramids were huge and gigantic, and in one of these, Dagva lived. One day he was visited by Tara from Rhodes who immediately attacked him. Blood was coming from his eyes, and he turned into a dragon. The dragon spouted flames at her, but she could block it by her shield. 'I know what you want, Dagva,' Tara shouted. 'But you are not going to get it.'

Then Dagva all of a sudden stood before her as a skeleton, while blood was still streaming from his eyes. 'You shouldn't have come here,' he roared. He grasped her neck and tried to strangle her. Tara slammed him away by her sword, but then he came back, turning into a bear, and then into a lion, to spit fire at her again, which she could block by her shield again.

'Your games are over,' he roared, while Tara felt weak all of a sudden, and later she woke up in a dungeon cage. He had done something with her head. She had a terrible headache, and she found out that she had strange implants in her teeth. No one would control her like this, but there was nothing she could do. Some dark weeks followed in the cage. Tara began to feel hopeless.

When she was allowed to come out of her cage, Dagva wanted to sacrifice her in a pool of fire, which was like an oven underground. She was led to the edge from which she would be pushed. She was tied, her hands behind her back. She was also blindfolded. They wanted to hang her, and let her sink into the flames. The rope was already around her neck. Suddenly a little boy showed up, who shouted : 'No !' Dagva seemed to be upset. 'Go home, child,' he shouted.

The little boy came from a stairway, and ran to Tara to hug her. Then the guards of Dagva, the tooth-piercers, tried to grasp the boy, but the boy ran away and disappeared into the nothing. 'Those silly, stupid ghost-children,' Dagva roared. 'Hang her now !'

Suddenly many more ghost-children appeared, took the rope off her neck, and led her away, while a strange smoke was blinding Dagva and his guards. 'Don't let them escape !' Dagva shrieked.

Suddenly Tara was in a white smoke. She wasn't tied and blindfolded anymore. Lions were surrounding her, and on the back of the lions she and the children were brought to a dark castle, the castle of Pendilot, where the children were living. 'It is a great day !' one of the children was shouting, a boy, when they had entered the main hall of the castle. 'Dagva has lost it this time. His empire is falling.' All the children were joyfully shouting. They had once suffered under his hand, but now they were free, and helped to free others. They were the ghost-children of Pendilot. They were the souls who died under the cruel regime of Dagva and the tooth-piercers. The lions always took care of them.

'Am I dead ?' Tara asked.

'No,' said a boy. 'We saved you before that could happen.' Suddenly the castle dematerialized, and disappeared into the nothing, and Tara found herself in the desert. She wondered what had happened to Dagva. In the distance she saw the army of tooth-piercers. She wouldn't be able to begin much against such a big army. But then it faded away. Someone was laughing in her head, which sounded like Dagva's voice, but then it faded away also. Tara was very thirsty and sat down. She still felt very weak. She wondered if she was safe.

Suddenly from the sand a skeleton came forth. It was Dagva. He grasped her, and pulled her into the depth, like in shift-sand. Everything was tumbling in Tara's head. Suddenly she woke up in a bed in the castle of Pendilot. A boy was staring at her. 'Am I dead ?' she asked.

'No, you just slept,' said the boy. 'Maybe you had a bad dream.'

'Well, you can say that,' Tara said. 'Am I safe ?'

The boy nodded.

'What happened to Dagva ?' Tara asked.

The boy didn't say anything, and then left. A while later another boy came to Tara, and asked how she slept. Tara told him about the dream. 'It wasn't a dream, Tara,' said the boy. 'Dagva is after your soul.'

'How can we terminate him ?' Tara asked.

'Well,' said the boy. 'Dagva's power is in the Ontragolin Metal. He could make it hard and use it as tooth-piercings. It is a ghost. There is only one way to stay safe against this ghost. We still get tortured by this ghost when we are asleep.'

'What is the only way ?' Tara asked.

'Well,' said the boy, 'the only way is to find the Hyena Tower, a powerful ghost tower in the depths of the Pendilot desert, but first we have to find the portal to the Pendilot desert. It should be somewhere below the castle of Pendilot.'

'I think I was in this desert,' Tara said.

'Really ?' said the boy. 'Tell me about it.'

'It was only for a short period I was there,' Tara said. 'And I met Dagva and the army of the tooth-piercers. Dagva grasped me, and together we sunk into shift sand.'

'Did you see the tower ?' the boy asked.

'No,' Tara said.

'There is a place of shift sand in the underground of the castle, deep down below. No one dares to go there, because it is a haunted place, but I think we have no other choice then,' said the boy. 'I think the shift sand is the portal to the desert then.'

Together they went there, and slided into the shift sand. Soon they both stood in a huge desert. There were pyramids all around them. Behind the pyramids there was the huge Hyena Tower, like a stairway into the sky. But no matter how long they walked, they didn't come closer to it. It seemed like the place was bewitched.

'Maybe the clue is in the pyramids,' said the boy.

But the pyramids seemed to be unreachable as well. The only thing they could do was go back to the place of the shift sand, and return to the castle. That was which they did, and later they told about it to the other children.

'Maybe the tower can only be reached by another way,' one of the children said.

One of the children had found out that the tooth-piercers had found their fortress. They were already knocking on the doors and the walls. The children got upset, and knew that they had to go downstairs now. Suddenly Dagva stood before them and tried to possess their minds. Some children fainted.

'Run for your life !' one of the boys shouted. Soon they were surrounded by tooth-piercers, but Tara and a few boys could escape to the place of shift sand. Again they went through the shift sand to the desert. They knew they couldn't return anymore. One boy soon found a sort of elevator hidden under sand. They made the portal free, and soon they reached the Hyena Tower. There was a lot of white smoke here, and lions. Soon they ran up the stairways.

The tower started shaking, and they heard laughing. Soon they stood eye to eye with Dagva again. It seemed he was the one laughing. 'This tower is mine,' he laughed.

'No, it isn't !' one of the boys shouted. Tara took an arrow from behind her back, and aimed at Dagva. Then she shot right through him. He caught flame, but he was just laughing. 'Let me grasp you now !' he laughed. The boys shrieked and ran downstairs again. Tara wondered if they were at the right place. And if they were, there would be a battle to get what they wanted. The tooth-piercers were already running upstairs also. There was no way to escape. Tara soon was hit on her head a few times, and later she woke up in a dungeon, together with the children. 'There must be a way,' one of them said. Some dark weeks followed. It seemed the children were trapped.

'There is no way for us to survive this,' cried one of the boys.

'Let's be glad we are all together again,' said Tara. 'We are still alive.'

The children began to sing songs to comfort each other. They feared they would be sacrificed.

Soon they were all led to the court hall of Dagva to be judged. They were surrounded by tooth-piercers who slowly turned into the most horrible predators. Some of the children started to shriek. Suddenly it was like the skies were tearing open, and the ghost-lions of the children were appearing. They were spreading a red smoke, by which the tooth-piercers started to melt away. They took the children and Tara on their backs, and disappeared. They took them to the wilderness, to a place of hyenas. The hyenas would care over the children now. The place was called Hyena Tower, but it was not a real tower. It was a jungle. Here all sorts of exotic plants, trees and flowers grew. It brought forth a honey to let the Ontragolin Metal piercings melt, and restore the teeth. Tara hoped they were finally free from Dagva now.

The Jewels of Scavahl

She took him in the grip. He was the seventh king of Scatorix, guarding the jewels of the tigers of Scavahl, the main city of Scatorix. These jewels kept the secrets of how so many women were enslaved to this king. It was a land and domain of female slaves. He kicked Tara off of him. She screamed. 'When I get my hands on you a second time, you won't survive !' Tara shrieked. As by a storm Tara was swept away. There was a lot of sorcery on this man. Black sorcery with the riddles of time. A sailor stood there, near to his ship, while Tara ran away from the king. She felt like she was wounded by a strange power. The sailor was smiling. 'What are you laughing at ?' Tara yelled. Soon she had his head in a grip. 'Easy, lady, what is wrong with you ?' he said with a painful face.

'I have had enough of bastards like you !' Tara said loud. 'You are just laughing because of having so much power over women. I mean your empire here. I am sure you are coming here to trade your female slaves, or getting new ones.'

'I … I am sorry,' stuttered the man. 'If you could see in the depths of time, you would know what our secret is.'

'You will tell this secret now,' Tara said with a harsh voice, 'or I will break your neck soon enough,' while taking his neck and head into a tighter grip.

'Sail to Bershevah Island, and visit the time sorceror, Emulatas. He can tell you more,' the man said with a weak, fading and painful voice.

'You better be right,' said Tara with a voice full of rage, and pushed the man to the floor. His head was bleeding, and blood was also coming from his mouth. Tara didn't care. She went to his ship, and told the workers and the slaves to head with it for Bershevah Island. They obeyed her immediately.

She had to be with this time sorceror. Some of the workers knew where he lived on that island, and guided her to him. They took a few slaves with them. Tara was loudly knocking on his door. 'Who is there !' a dark voice almost growled. 'It doesn't matter who is here !' Tara

shouted. 'Just open the door, or I will destroy your door. Simple. It's time that these games are over. It seems you are bearing the secrets of female slavery all over these lands. Is that true ?'

'That could be true, lady,' the man said while he opened the door.

'Simple, dreaming,' said the sorceror. 'Those tigers possess jewels which can bring people in a dream, a dream empowering males and weaking women, until males think they are the superior and stronger race. They can make even women believe that through these dreams. You know, the tigers of Scavahl in Scatorix, ruled by the seventh king. Darius is his name.'

'What about Antharax ?' Tara asked.

The mouth of the sorceror opened a bit. 'How did you know about Antharax ? He is the hidden religious leader ruling the king.'

'I knew it,' Tara said. She moved closer to the sorceror, and grasped him by the neck. 'Listen, you bastard. You will tell me exactly how to get those jewels, for whenever I approach the king, some strange power overwhelms me ! And don't play any games with me, or you will regret it dearly.'

'Antharax will soon be revealed to the whole of Scatorix,' said the sorceror. 'He will make them all shiver, because he will tighten the laws.'

'Tell me how to stop him, and how to take his jewels !' shouted Tara, while almost growling.

'By hate and greed,' the sorceror said. 'These are two stones, two spirits, the only two spirits in the whole universe being able to deal with Antharax and the jewels of the tigers of Scavahl.'

'Where do I find these stones !' shouted Tara.

'In hell,' said the sorceror.

'How do I get there !' Tara shouted.

'Come with me,' said the sorceror. He stood up, while Tara let him walk. He walked towards a cellar, to a deep stairway downwards. Tara followed him closely.

'Look for Ervadus, the muscle man,' said the sorceror. He opened a door at the bottom, and they came into a huge cave. He took a torch from the wall and gave it to Tara. 'Be well,' he said.

'Where does this Ervadus live ?' shouted Tara.

'I don't know,' said the sorceror. 'But you will find him soon enough. Everyone does.' Then the sorceror went up the stairway again. After a long time of walking through the cave some sort of monstrous man with a lot of swollen muscles came to Tara. It was almost painful to watch. 'I am looking for the stones of greed and of hate !' Tara shouted. 'Can you help me with that !'

'Oh, yes,' said the man. 'I am glad to see someone here. I live in pain all the time, as if my muscles are exploding. They are so swollen. Hardly anyone comes here.'

'What kind of stones are they !' Tara shouted.

'Oh, they are messy stones, I will show them to you. My name is Ervadus,' said the man.

He led her to another cave, a smaller one, in which there was some sort of cave-cellar where a lot of stones were stored in a sort of cupboard. It was very dusty. 'The stone of greed, oh only the wise will be able to bear this one. When fools touch this stone, it will destroy them. When they bear it, it will burden them forever, even when they lay it down. That is my fate. I took it once in greed, and now I am doomed forever. My muscles always grow to explode, and then they grow again, which is very painful.' He showed her a green, slimy stone, glowing in a strange light.

'I need it to defeat Antharax !' shouted Tara, while her eyes almost became red. A rage was coming over her. She grasped the stone, while she screamed. It pushed her away. 'There is hope for you,' said Ervadus. 'The stone has not burdened you. You need the stone of hate now to become it's rightful owner.'

He showed her a black stone, also very slimy, with some white ghostly light surrounding it. 'Stone of Hate, in the middle of hearts you were, to eat them away, for they had sinned against you. Only the wise will find you, but the fools will be hunted down by you, while they will be stalked by you forever, not knowing where you are.'

Tara grasped the stone. It was light in her hands. Then she took the stone of greed. Two ghosts stood before her. They had swords. 'Now, come with me, child,' said Ervadus, 'I will lead you to the eternal circle. From here the two stones will be sent to do their job. You own them now, so you can tell them what to do. Command them, and they will obey.' Ervadus took her to a small wilderness behind the cave, where a dusty circle was drawn in an open space. She brought the stones there, while the two spirits were soaring over them.

'Speak your wishes, child,' said Ervadus.

'I want you to destroy Antharax, and the seventh king of Scatorix, to take the jewels of the tigers of Scavahl and bring them here. I want you to set the female slaves of that land free, and to make sure that their oppressors will die !' shouted Tara.

'They cannot kill, child,' said Ervadus. 'They can only torment. And when they torment, they do this forever.'

'Can they set you free from your torments ?' asked Tara.

'No, child. This is my fate. Their torment never stops. It is too late. I should never have touched the stone of greed, but I became it's guard,' said Ervadus.

'Now do your work, stones !' shouted Ervadus. 'The child is waiting for you.'

Suddenly the stones started vibrating. They were striking Ervadus a few times, and then left, while shrieking. The two ghosts followed the stones, also shrieking. There was a lot of smoke they left behind. Ervadus was wounded terribly by the stones, but that was the price he had to pay. Tara took care of his wounds.

'No one has ever come this close to me, since I touched the stone,' said Ervadus.

'I want to thank you,' said Tara. Now she had to come over the fact that this man would be tormented forever.

'I am a demon, child,' said the man. 'I deserve this punishment, because my heart is black. Only rotten demons like me can do the things like I did. I lived a very bad life, and now I am a slave by it forever.'

Tara sighed. This man was so disturbed. Soon the shrieking ghosts came back with the jewels, with Antharax, the seventh king, and the oppressors of women. They had also taken with them the women who had enabled these men. There were cages coming out of the ground around the eternal circle. These were the cages of torment. There was a lot of fire in these cages. All the prisoners of the stones were put into these cages. Ervadus pushed on a button, and the cages started to move around the eternal circle, while they went faster and faster. Screaming came forth from the circle. The whole circle was in flames. The ghosts moved slowly to Tara. They gave her the jewels of the tigers of Scavahl.

Tara went back to Scavahl, where the tigers submitted to her because she had their jewels. The female slaves had been set free, but many submitted to Tara because of gratefulness. She became the queen of Scatorix.

Door of Darkness

Through the ice masses she walked straight up to the bear king, while she held the spear of time. He laughed at her when he saw her. 'I am the great creator of all oceans,' said the king. 'I am the pillar and foundation of all oceans. Who are you and what do you want from me ?'

But Tara had no time to talk to him. She aimed her spear right at his heart, and threw it. She didn't miss. Soon the king lay on the ground bleeding with the spear of time through his heart. The great bear king with his illusions had fallen. Slowly she walked towards his body. Quickly with a firm pull she took the spear out of his heart, ripping him open even more, for the spear had some hooks.

Bats flew all around her. Bears came to her from all sides, as she had defeated their master. They licked her, and submitted to her. He had been cruel to them for such a long time. This was how she became the bear queen. She took the metal knight mask from the king, with on top of it's helmet a black feather. She also took his robe. He was the black disease, a virus in the hearts of many men.

Their lungs were his throne, and their heartbeats was he pounding the drum. He controlled them. He made them eat whatever he liked. It was a greedy man, a heart disease. His pumps made women weaker, and men stronger. But now he had fallen. Soon rats ate from his flesh.

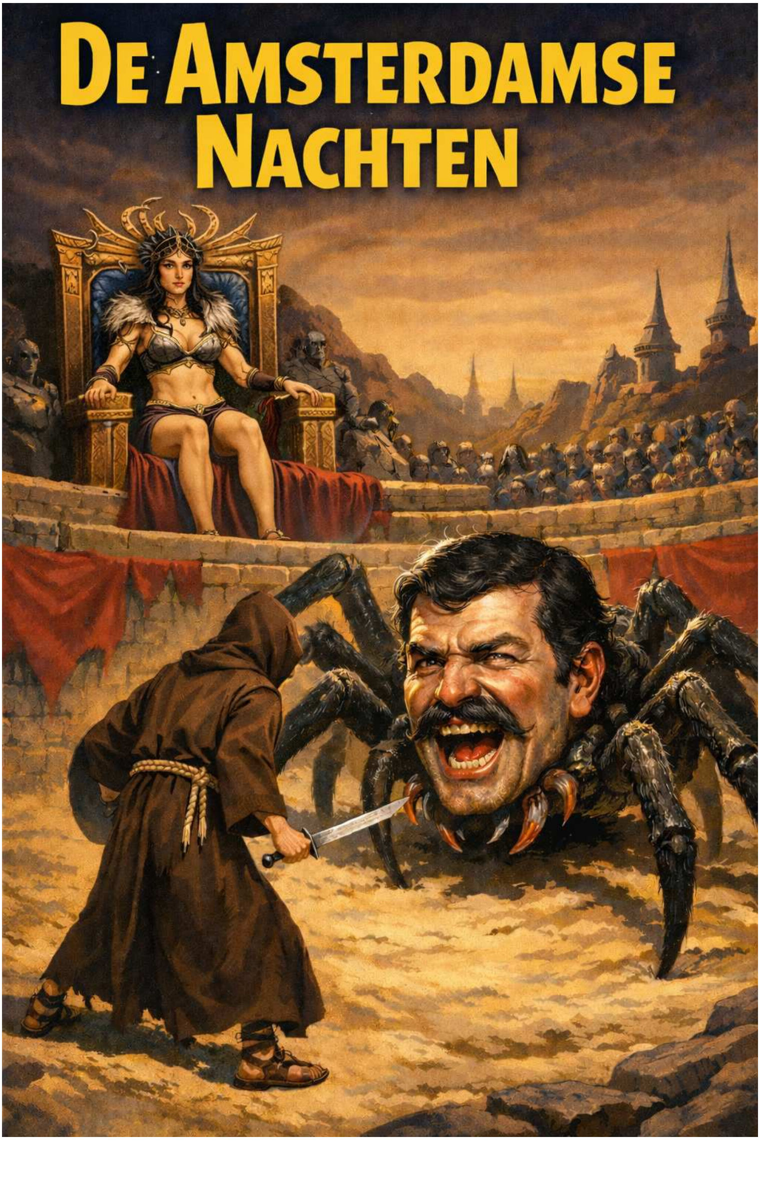
On the seas his ships were sinking. A great storm was taking over the oceans, making them wilder than ever, while his face appeared in the red sky. He was a ghost now, a trauma. He tried to awaken his men again, his machines, by speaking his spells. His powers were from a book. It was the book of cholera.

The book of cholera was a woman. She could paralyze people. Because of fear they submitted to her. She used to come in the nights. The ghost of the bear king found a shelter in her. But

she was screaming at him. She was mad, because he had fallen, and he came as a ghost. She started mocking him, and it turned into a bitter fight in which she tore his ghost being apart.

Tara took the book, and started to tear it. She found it in the depths of a dark chamber of the bear king. It made her invisible. That was the price to pay when tearing such a book. But Tara survived. She held the torn book up in her hand, and called for the winds of fire, which took it. Her hand was burning, but soon it went back to normal, and she also got her body back. She became more dense than ever. She was very physical and present. Bears were licking her.

Then the storms took her up and brought her above the oceans. She was the queen of the oceans now. Her body was enchanting them. They took her up on the throne of the bear king. It was surrounded by spider webs. It was a long stairway to reach the throne, like an open door of light to enter into another world. Slowly she disappeared through it, coming into a world of darkness and fog, in which she slowly faded. No one ever saw her back.


DE AMSTERDAMSE
NACHTEN

De Amsterdamse Nachten

Uitgave : Monniken Wegwijzer 1970-2026

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De Amsterdamse Nachten

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Hoofdstuk 1. De metro-bewoners

De verpleegster zat daar op een stoeltje, netjes in haar pakje.
Het was niet zo’n beste.
Telkens weer gingen er op een geheimzinnige wijze kinderen dood die onder haar behandeling waren.
Maar die kinderen waren nu eenmaal terminaal, ernstig ziek of gewoon ziek, koortsig.
Kan gebeuren, werd er dan gezegd.
Maar het bleef gebeuren en nogal vaak.
Ja, natuurlijk, werd er dan gezegd. Het is haar vak.
Maar hij wist wel beter.
Ze had zalen onder haar huis waar vermiste kinderen lagen.
Die werden aan de drugs gezet door haar.
Ze konden niet meer bewegen, niet meer praten.
Waren helemaal aan haar overgeleverd.
En hij durfde niets te zeggen.
Hij kon ook niets zeggen.
Sinds hij met haar was raakte hij in een soort coma toestand.
Hij dacht dat ze hem ook had vergiftigd, net zoals die kinderen.

Hij had een paar keer heel voorzichtig iets tegen anderen erover gezegd,

maar hij werd uitgelachen. Hij werd afgewimpeld en niet geloofd.
Sindstoen durfde hij het niet meer. Ze geloofden hem toch niet.
En zo moest hij leven met een groot geheim.

Hun bed stond gewoon in de woonkamer aan het raam.
Bij de lichtgele gordijnen, en de deken was ook lichtgeel.
Er stonden mensen voor het raam.
Maar ja, het was de stoep. Het kon iedereen zijn.
Zij lag al in bed. Hij schoof de vitrage dicht, en toen het gordijn.
Hij wilde niet naar bed. Hij dacht aan de kinderen.
Hij wilde de kinderen helpen, maar hij werd niet geloofd.
Wat moest hij doen ?
Hij was in een coma toestand.

Hij wilde niet meer met haar in één bed liggen.
Hij wilde weg, maar waar moest hij naartoe ?
Niemand geloofde hem. Hij was geheel aan haar zorg overgeleverd.
Maar zij vergiftigde hem ?

Hij dacht aan het uitstapje met de familie in een boot, en ze legden aan bij Amsterdam.
Op de camping daar leerde hij haar kennen.
Zo ging hij bij haar inwonen, en kwam hij achter haar afschuwelijke geheimen.

Er was iets mis met deze vrouw, maar iedereen geloofde haar.

Hij zat vast, muurvast.
Net zoals de vermiste kinderen die zij als kasplantjes hield in zalen onder het huis.
Maar ze lachtte hem uit, had het altijd ontkend.
Hij hallucineerde volgens haar.
Hij is er toen mee gestopt om haar erop te wijzen, want ze begon te dreigen.
Hij wist bijna zeker dat ze bezig was hem te vergiftigen.

Wat kon hij doen ?
Hij was te zwak om te vluchten.
Vaak wilde hij niet meer leven.
Hij was depressief, zwaar depressief.
Vaak ging hij naar de kinderen, maar ze lagen daar in een coma aan apparaten.
Het leek alsof er filmpjes in hun hoofden werden afgespeeld.
Hij wilde ze zorg bieden, maar wat kon hij doen ?
De kinderen werden gevoed door de apparaten, en ze kregen zuurstof.
Zo werden ze in leven gehouden.
Zij had het ontkend.
Hij hallucineerde dit allemaal.

Ze zei dat hij ziek was, en dat hij daarom onder haar hoede was,
maar hij wilde niet meer bij haar slapen. Hij wilde hier niet meer zijn.
Hij had er spijt van dat hij was meegegaan met het uitstapje naar Amsterdam.

Hij was woedend op haar, maar hij twijfelde ook aan zichzelf.
‘s Nachts dwaalde hij door de zalen onder het huis, en ging steeds dieper.
Hoeveel trappen waren hier ?
Het ging dieper en dieper tot de ondergrondse wereld.
Hier woonden wilde indianen stammen.
Hij sprak hier niet over, want ze zouden hem niet geloven.
Hij kon ook bijna niet meer spreken.

Hij vond het erg, hetgeen er gebeurde.
Hij had hier geen oplossing voor, geen medicijn tegen.
En hij twijfelde teveel aan zichzelf om iets te doen.
Maar ja, hij was in een coma toestand.

Onder de grond wilde hij leven, bij de indianen zijn.
Misschien konden die hem helpen.
Het leven zoals het nu was was niks.
Misschien konden de indianen de kinderen ook helpen.
Hij kon het in ieder geval niet.

Hij trok de stoute schoenen aan en ging naar de indianen om contact met hem te maken, diep in de ondergrondse wereld. Hier waren veel wildernissen. Dat kon toch niet onder Amsterdam zijn ?
Hielden ze dit voor de mensheid verborgen, of was dit zijn hallucinatie leven ?

Had hij teveel drugs gebruikt, of mengde zij die drugs door zijn eten ?
Hij wist het niet. Was er iets mis met hem of met de wereld ?
Hij had een hart voor de kinderen, en dat zag hij als bewijs dat hij leefde.
Hij vond de mensen om hem heen harteloos.

Hij probeerde de indianen duidelijk te maken over de kinderen, maar ze begrepen hem niet.
Ook geloofden ze hem niet. Ze leken totaal onverschillig.
Dit wilde hij ook niet. Ze zagen er woest uit, en dreigend.
Toen is hij weer teruggegaan naar boven.
Hij dacht er toen aan wat er nog dieper onder de grond zou zijn.
De indianen hadden hem gezegd dat hoe dieper je onder de grond zou gaan, over de trappen, hoe meer vrouwenstammen er zouden zijn, amazones, en die waren erger dan hen.
Daar moest hij ook niet aan denken, maar wat als ze over hen zouden hebben gelogen ?

Hij wilde het met zijn eigen ogen zien en meemaken, en daarom ging hij de volgende nacht weer over de trappen naar beneden, en ditmaal dieper dan de indianen wereld, en toen kwam hij inderdaad bij de amazone wereld. Er waren hier allemaal vrouwenstammen.

De vrouwen deden direct heel aardig naar hem, en hij vertelde ze over de kinderen.
Ze begonnen hem toen uit te lachen.
Hij begreep niet waarom ze dat zo gek vonden.
Het kon toch ?
‘Je hebt het vast gedroomd,’ zeiden ze tegen hem.
Ze konden niet geloven dat dat soort dingen in of onder Amsterdam konden gebeuren.
Amsterdammers waren zulke fijne mensen.

Er is veel misdaad in Amsterdam, zei hij.
Veel meer dan wat aan de mensen verteld wordt.
Er is veel censuur, anders zou niemand meer komen.

Maar de amazones lachten hem uit.
Amsterdam was een fijne stad met fijne mensen.
Zo werd dat in hun boekjes verteld.
Amsterdam was geromantiseerd.
Zij geloofden dat, zo waren ze opgevoed.

‘Kunnen jullie me dan genezen ?’ vroeg hij.
Hij vertelde dat hij in een halve coma was.

Ze keken hem vreemd aan.
‘Weet je zeker dat je uit Amsterdam komt ?’ vroegen ze. ‘Er zijn alleen maar gezonde mensen in Amsterdam. Amsterdam kent geen ziekenhuizen.’

Hij vertelde over het uitstapje. Hij vertelde over de camping, en over het meisje wat hij daar tegenkwam.

‘Dat kan Amsterdam dan niet geweest zijn,’ zeiden ze. ‘In Amsterdam is alles goed, en daar kan het niet slechter met je gaan.’

‘Ja, maar ik ben toch hier nu, en ik kom van boven, en hierboven ligt Amsterdam,’ zei hij.

‘Leugenaar,’ zeiden ze toen. ‘Je komt niet van Amsterdam, je komt niet van boven. Je moet wel langs de zijkant zijn gekomen.’

‘Je mag het wel aan de indianen vragen die hierboven leven,’ zei hij toen. ‘Ik kom daar vandaan.’

‘Dat zijn ook liegbeesten,’ zeiden ze toen. ‘En als je daar echt bent geweest, dan zul je ook wel van de zijkant zijn gekomen. Je spreekt op een wijze die laat zien dat jij nog nooit in Amsterdam bent geweest. Amsterdam is goed. Er worden geen mensen ziek in Amsterdam, en er zijn alleen

maar fijne mensen in Amsterdam, niet zo vreemd als jij. Je bent van de zijkant gekomen.’

‘Nou breekt mijn klomp,’ zei hij. ‘Ik wordt nooit geloofd.’

‘Nee, omdat je belachelijke dingen zegt,’ zeiden de amazones.

Toen begonnen ze hem uit te lachen en te bespotten.

‘Waar kom ik dan vandaan ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Van de zijkant,’ zeiden ze.

‘Wat is dat ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Holbewoners,’ zeiden ze, ‘aardmensen. Je kunt ze bijna geen mensen noemen.’

Hij zag dat de amazones keurig gekleed waren, en met parasolletjes liepen, bijna dichterlijke kleding hadden ze. ‘Jullie zien er niet uit als amazones,’ zei hij. ‘Ik kan ook wel over jullie beginnen. Waarom leven jullie hier dan, en niet in Amsterdam ?’

‘Wij zijn hier geboren en getogen,’ zeiden de amazones.

Hij vroeg zich af wat er nog dieper in de aarde was. ‘Wat is er nog dieper dan dit ?’ vroeg hij. ‘Niks,’ zeiden ze. ‘Nou ja, als je het echt wil weten. Daar zijn de verwilderde vrouwenstammen, die als holbewoners leven. Wij noemen ze geen vrouwen meer, maar manninnen. Ze zijn ruig en woest, en kennen geen manieren. Zij zijn veel erger dan wij zijn. Pas maar op, val maar niet in hun handen.’

Ik wil er toch naartoe, zei hij.

Waarom ? vroegen ze. Wil je je leven verliezen ?

Ik heb alles al verloren, zei hij toen. Ik heb niks meer te verliezen, alleen te winnen.

‘Maar lieve jongen, daar win je niet,’ zeiden ze toen.

‘Waarom ben ik ineens een lieve jongen ?’ vroeg hij. ‘Eerst was ik vreemd en een leugenaar, en nu ineens lief.’

Dat kan goed samengaan, vreemde, liegende, lieve jongen, zeiden de amazones.

Hij is toen een nacht bij ze gebleven, en een dag, en ging de volgende nacht weer op pad, dieper de aarde in. Toen kwam hij bij de wilde amazones, wat volgens hem echte amazones waren. Hij werd direct op zijn kaak geslagen en vastgebonden. De nette vrouwenstammen van boven

hadden er dus niet over gelogen. Deze wilde amazones waren echt woest, en gevaarlijk. Even had hij spijt dat hij gegaan was.

‘Hebben jullie ook zulke vreemde verhalen over Amsterdam ?’ vroeg hij hen. Zijn kaak deed hem pijn. Hij sprak moeilijk, maar hij had altijd al het gevoel dat hij moeilijk sprak.

‘Wat zeg je ?’ vroegen de wilde amazones.

‘Nou, zijn er geen ziekenhuizen in Amsterdam, en is iedereen daar fijn en goed ? Is iedereen gezond in Amsterdam ?’ vroeg hij.

Ze begonnen hem uit te lachen. ‘Nee,’ zeiden ze. ‘Amsterdam is slecht, zeer slecht, in vele opzichten. Waarom wil je naar Amsterdam ?’

‘Daar kom ik vandaan,’ zei hij.

‘Oh, maar dat is geen goede zaak, geen goede zaak, zeer slecht nieuws,’ zeiden de wilde amazones.

‘Waarom hebben jullie mij neergeslagen en vastgebonden ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Doen we altijd met vreemdelingen,’ zeiden de wilde amazones. ‘Voorzorg.’

‘Ondankbaarheid,’ zei hij. ‘Wees blij dat iemand jullie bezoekt.’

‘Praatjes heb je,’ zeiden de wilde amazones. ‘Wij hebben niemand nodig, en jou al helemaal niet, dus maak jezelf maar niks wijs, praatjesmaker. Wij kunnen wel zien dat jij uit Amsterdam komt, en dat maakt je extra verdacht. Waarom denk je dat wij hier wonen en niet in Amsterdam ?’

‘Mooi natuurgebied, zo onder de grond,’ zei hij. ‘Had ik niet verwacht.’

‘Nee, dat leren ze je niet in Amsterdam. Wordt allemaal heimelijk verborgen gehouden,’ zeiden de wilde amazones.

‘Ik wil weer terug,’ zei hij.

‘Je zou ons kunnen verraden nu je ons gebied kent, dus vergeet het maar,’ zeiden de wilde amazones.

‘Wat ligt onder jullie ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Holbewoners,’ zeiden de wilde amazones.

‘Laat me daar dan maar naartoe gaan,’ zei hij.

Ze hielden hem even tot de volgende nacht, en lieten hem toen gaan. Hij ging toen nog dieper over de stenen trap en kwam bij de holbewoners terecht. Ze leken op Amsterdammers, maar zwaar verwilderd. Ze vertelden hem dat ze hier naartoe waren gevlucht. In Amsterdam konden ze niet meer leven. Daar hadden ze teveel meegemaakt. Hij vroeg of zij hem konden helpen.

Ze wilden hem niet hebben. Hij herinnerde hen teveel aan Amsterdam. Toen is hij maar teruggegaan, en bleef op de trap om de wilde amazones te ontwijken, want die zouden hem nooit terug laten gaan. Hij dacht eraan wat hij zou kunnen doen. Hij zou ook naar de zijkanten kunnen gaan. Daar zouden ook holbewoners zijn.

Hij vroeg zich af of er een kruid was, of levenswater, wat hem zou kunnen genezen. Hij dacht aan de kinderen in de zalen net onder het huis.

Hij dacht aan de verpleegster. Haar grote verhalen hadden hem verslonden. Zijn eigen verhalen waren niet sterk genoeg.

In Amsterdam was het bluf tegen bluf. De grootste bluffers hadden het hoogste woord en de grootste macht, en

regelden alles. Daar kon hij niet tegenop. Nee. Hij was niet zo’n verhalenverteller.

Het leek wel alsof hij heel in de verte de ambulance hoorde. ‘Daar gaat weer zo’n verhalenverteller,’ dacht hij. Het leek ook wel een beetje op wolvengehuil, dat kon het ook zijn.

Hij moest zijn eigen verhalen maken hier, ook al was het maar een tentje om te overleven voor nu. Hij wilde meer weten van de ondergrondse wereld, en van de zijkanten.

Ergens aan de zijkant van de stenen trap ging hij de bosjes in en bleef doorlopen totdat hij bij een metro station aankwam. Er waren hier mensen van drie tot vier meter lang, en ze hadden blauwe gezichten. Hij vroeg wie ze waren. Ze zeiden dat ze uit Iran kwamen. Hij vroeg waarom ze helemaal hier waren gekomen. ‘Regiem,’ zeiden ze. Ze hadden problemen met spreken. Ze konden maar halve zinnen uitbrengen en halve verhalen, soms alleen halve woorden. Zo voelde hij zich soms ook. Ze leefden in de metro’s. Het waren hun woningen.

Hij wilde wel bij de metro-bewoners horen, want het waren in principe lotgenoten, en zo werd hij door hen geadopteerd. Voor het eerst in zijn leven voelde hij dat hij zijn bestemming had gevonden. Ze reden heen en weer

met hun metro’s, waardoor ze overal onder de grond konden komen. Het was een heel groot netwerk.

Hij kwam tot een vreselijke ontdekking. Hij was zelf ook degene die aan haar apparaten lag. Hij kon zichzelf zien liggen. Even had hij een flits van ontwaking, maar hij kon niets doen. Het was alsof de grote blauwgezichten hem probeerden te bereiken.

Hoofdstuk 2. Op zoek naar een eiland

Ze nam hem mee naar boven. Hij kon maar moeilijk lopen. Zij had hem van de apparaten afgehaald. Boven in de kamer kreeg hij een kopje koffie met gebak. ‘Hoe is het nu ?’ vroeg ze. Hij vond haar vriendelijker overkomen dan anders.

‘Goed,’ zei hij, nog steeds denkende aan de blauwgezichten. Ze keek hem liefdevol aan. ‘Nog gedroomd ? Goede dromen, nare dromen, enge dromen, nachtmerries ?’ vroeg ze.

Hij schudde zijn hoofd. ‘Oh, echt niet ?’ vroeg ze. ‘Meestal droom je toch wel ?’

Even wist hij niet waar hij was. Ze leek heel anders dan ze normaal was. Het kon natuurlijk een valstrik zijn, maar het leek alsof hij ergens anders was, alhoewel het wel dezelfde kamer was. Hij was in haar huis, dat moest wel, maar iets leek anders. Het leek zonniger, tropischer, en hij hoorde de vogels buiten zingen.

Misschien hadden de blauwgezichten hem hier gebracht, alles anders gemaakt. Maar hij vertrouwde het nog niet. Hij keek naar haar.

Ik moet je wat vertellen, zei ze. De medicijnen die ik je laatst had gegeven zijn nieuwe medicijnen, en ze lijken goed te werken. Het lijkt beter met je te gaan.

‘Maar ik lag aan apparaten ?’ vroeg hij.
‘Hoe kom je daar nu weer bij ?’ vroeg ze lachend.
‘Je moet gewoon herstellen van het ongeluk.’

‘Welk ongeluk ?’ vroeg hij.
‘Laat maar zitten,’ zei ze.

‘Nee, zeg,’ zei hij.
‘Je geheugen is dan nog niet terug, maar misschien is het beter zo,’ zei ze.

‘Nee, ik wil het weten,’ zei hij. ‘Alsjeblieft, zeg het me.’

‘Je was gevallen,’ zei ze.

‘Van hoog ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Niet zo heel hoog, maar hard,’ zei ze.

‘Geheugenverlies ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Niet alleen dat, ook geheugenverdraaiing,’ zei ze.

‘Niet zo best,’ zei hij, ‘niet zo best. Is het dan gevaarlijk om te denken en te herinneren ?’

‘Dat kan,’ zei ze, ‘maar daarvoor heb je de medicijnen, en je bent herstellende.’

‘Okay,’ zei hij. ‘En als ik mag vragen : wie bent u ?’

‘Verzorgster,’ zei ze.

‘Wij hebben verder niks met elkaar ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Nee,’ lachte ze. ‘Ik ben geen familie of vriendin.’

‘Maar ik woon hier ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Dit is je huis, ja,’ zei de verzorgster.

‘Woon jij hier ook ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Nee, maar ik ben hier veel,’ zei ze.

‘Woon ik hier alleen ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Ja,’ zei ze.

‘Heeft u toevallig een blauw gezicht onder de schmink ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Nee,’lachte ze, ‘hoe kom je daar nu weer bij, mallerd. Het is gewoon mijn eigen gezicht, geen schmink.’

‘Okay,’ zei hij. Hij keek omhoog naar het plafond, en toen naar het behang. ‘Dus ik ben Amsterdammer ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Ja,’ zei ze, ‘geboren en getogen.’

‘Volgens mij heb ik dan een heleboel door elkaar gehaald,’ zei hij.

‘Kan kloppen,’ zei ze. ‘De val was verschrikkelijk, en heeft alles in je brein lopen mollen, maar zoals ik al zei ben je aan het beteren.’

‘Zijn er onder de grond metro-bewoners met blauwe gezichten ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Niet dat ik weet,’ lachte ze.

Die nacht lag hij in zijn eigen bed, boven op zijn slaapkamer. Hij dacht na over de blauwgezichten, de metro-bewoners. Hij stond op en liep naar de kelder. Toen hij de kelderdeur opentrok was er een stenen trap naar beneden, maar die ging niet ver. Hij ging even naar beneden, maar het was maar een klein keldertje. ‘Ik heb het misschien allemaal maar gedroomd,’ zei hij. Ook dacht

hij over de zaaltjes met kinderen. toen liep hij weer naar boven naar zijn bed. Hij staarde voor zich uit. Hij kon niet goed in slaap komen. Hij keek naar zijn dekens en hij herinnerde zich hen.

Na een tijdje kon hij nog steeds niet slapen, en is toen weer naar beneden gegaan. Ditmaal keek hij in de meterkast. Daar was ook een trap naar beneden. ‘Misschien was dit het wel,’ zei hij tegen zichzelf. Hij ging naar beneden, en zag daar een luik. Hij opende het luik, en daar ging de stenen trap verder. Hij ging verder naar beneden en kwam daar langs een zaal met kinderen aan apparaten in bedden. ‘Maar dit is mijn huis ?’ dacht hij. ‘Hoe kan dit ?’ De kinderen bewogen niet en hadden hun ogen dicht en lagen aan allerlei slangen. ‘Ze dromen,’ zei iemand. Hij keek achterom en zag een ouder kind staan. ‘Wie ben jij ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Ze dromen. Ik ben ouder, ik ben losgekomen,’ zei het oudere kind.

‘Ja, maar wie zijn deze kinderen, en hoe komen ze hier, wie heeft dit gedaan, want dit is mijn huis,’ zei hij.

‘Nee,’ zei het oudere kind. ‘Het is het huis van de verpleegster. Zij had ons hier gebracht.’

‘Waarom ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Ze heeft ons van onze ouders weggeroofd, die heks,’ zei het kind.

‘Waarom ?’ vroeg hij weer.

‘Ik weet het niet, ze is gek,’ zei het oudere kind.

‘Hoe ben je losgekomen, en hoe leef je nu ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Door de metro-bewoners, de blauwgezichten, die hebben mij bevrijd,’ zei het oudere kind. ‘Ik ben nu één van hen, maar kom hier vaak terug. Deze kinderen zijn nog te jong en te ver heen om bevrijd te worden, alsof ze nog in het ei liggen. We wachten op het moment totdat ze sterk genoeg zijn en dan gaan ze met ons mee.’

‘Ja, maar boven is mijn huis nu, niet meer van de verpleegster,’ zei hij.

‘Dat is goed nieuws,’ zei het oudere kind. ‘Jij bent de nieuwe bewoner ? Is de heks verslagen ?’

‘Er komt nog een verzorgster zo nu en dan,’ zei hij. ‘Ik was gevallen en had verzorging nodig zei ze.’

‘Oh,’ zei het oudere kind. ‘Wat als ze je voorliegt ?’

‘Ik hoor nu ook bij de blauwgezichten,’ zei hij. ‘Misschien dat de blauwgezichten dingen hebben veranderd.’

‘Dat kan,’ zei het oudere kind.

‘Komt de heks nog hier ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Normaal gesproken wel,’ zei het oudere kind, ‘tenzij ze echt verslagen is.’

‘Wanneer heb je haar voor het laatst gezien ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Gisteren,’ zei het oudere kind. ‘Ik ben toen weggegaan.’

‘Ben je niet bang dat ze je terug zal pakken ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Nee,’ zei het oudere kind. ‘Ik ben sterk en sta onder de bescherming van de blauwgezichten.’

‘Maar heksen kunnen sluw zijn, en gevaarlijk, ze zijn onbetrouwbaar en onvoorspelbaar,’ zei hij.

‘Dat is waar,’ zei het oudere kind, ‘maar ik blijf op een afstand als zij er is.’

‘Pas maar op dan,’ zei hij.

‘Ja, maar ik kan deze kinderen niet aan hun lot overlaten,’ zei het oudere kind. ‘En trouwens : is de heks nu verslagen dan ?’

‘Ik weet het niet, misschien,’ zei hij.

‘Dat moeten we zien uit te zoeken,’ zei het oudere kind.

‘Kunnen we de kinderen niet alvast verplaatsen ?’ vroeg hij. ‘Kunnen ze niet naar de metro’s gebracht worden ?’

‘Nee joh,’ zei het oudere kind. ‘Ze kunnen nog niet dieper onder de grond leven. Daar zijn ze nog te zwak voor. Trouwens, er zouden mogelijk alarms af kunnen gaan als die apparaten zouden worden verschoven. Die apparaten zijn goed beveiligd. Dan zouden de kinderen misschien kunnen sterven, of wijzelf.’

‘Maar hebben de blauwgezichten dan geen middelen ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Nee,’ zei het oudere kind. ‘We moeten wachten totdat ze ouder en sterker zijn.’

‘Ja, maar misschien houden die apparaten hen hier wel zwak,’ zei hij.

‘Ik ben toch ook ontkomen ?’ zei het oudere kind. ‘Laten we dus afwachten.’

Er kwamen toen wat blauwgezichten binnen. Hij en het oudere kind waren blij dat er wat blauwgezichten waren gekomen. Ze gingen de kinderen checken. ‘Deze is bijna klaar,’ zeiden ze van één kind.

Hij begon moe te worden, en is toen weer naar boven gegaan, naar zijn slaapkamer, en viel daar toen snel in slaap.

De volgende ochtend was de verzorgster al vroeg bij hem. Ze leek toch niet op zijn eerdere verpleegster, en was ook totaal anders.

‘Hoe gaat het met je ?’ vroeg ze.

‘Goed,’ zei hij.

Ze kon dat merken. ‘Beneden zijn kinderen,’ zei hij.

‘Wat bedoel je ?’vroeg ze.

‘De trap in de meterkast leiden naar kinderzalen,’ zei hij.

‘Lijkt me sterk,’ zei ze. ‘Laat het eens zien.’

Hij stond op en liep de gang op naar de meterkast. Zij liep met hem mee. Toen hij de deur opende hing er alleen een meterkast. ‘Misschien de kelder,’ zei hij. Er was een stenen trap die naar beneden liep in de kelder, maar het was maar een kleine ruimte.

‘Je moet het je verbeeld hebben,’ zei de verzorgster. ‘Je bent nog steeds herstellende. Je brein verdraait dingen. Geheugenverlies en geheugenverdraaiing. Daar heb je nu medicijnen voor.’

Ze gaf hem even later de medicijnen met een mok water. Hij slikte ze in. ‘Hopende dat het steeds beter met je gaat,’ zei de verzorgster.

‘Ja, maar waar zijn de blauwgezichten dan, de metro-bewoners ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Ik heb geen idee,’ zei ze. ‘Ik weet helemaal niet waar je het over hebt.’

‘Vreemd,’ dacht hij. ‘Dus ik hallucineer, of het is ‘s nachts gewoon anders, of ik droom het telkens.’

Ze gingen toen even wandelen buiten. Het was mooi weer. Ze gingen langs de winkels.

Hij wilde verhuizen. De verzorgster zou hem helpen met het vinden van een nieuw huis.
Hij wilde zo het verleden achter zich laten.
Ook al was Amsterdam zeker niet de gemakkelijkste stad, hij was toch blij dat hij er woonde. Hij had gemengde gevoelens over Amsterdam, maar wilde er toch voor gaan.
Hij wilde graag in Amsterdam blijven. Hij wilde dichtbij een metro-station of trein-station wonen. Hij voelde zich nog steeds een metro-bewoner.

Soms kwam de verzorgster met nieuwe papieren over mogelijke nieuwe huizen. Die keken ze dan door. Hij was ook blij dat hij alleenstaande was. Hij moest er niet aan denken samen met iemand oud te worden. Hij wilde jong blijven en alleen.
Soms schaakte hij met de verzorgster, of deden ze andere spelletjes.
De wandelingen werden steeds langer.
Ook gingen ze naar andere stadsdelen. Daar keken ze ook naar huizen.
Hij vond het fijn in andere stadsdelen te winkelen. Hij nam vaak van alles mee.
Hij begon zijn huis anders in te richten, om zich voor te bereiden op een mogelijke verhuizing.
Hij merkte ook dat door het huis anders in te richten dat het al een soort verhuizing was.

Op een dag keek hij naar de verzorgster en leek het alsof ze een blauw gezicht had.
Dat was maar in een flits.
Hij had nog steeds het gevoel alsof de blauwgezichten bij hem waren.
Zij probeerden hem op het juiste spoor te brengen.

In alles zag hij de blauwgezichten.
Ook in de natuur.
Hij hield ervan om met de verzorgster in het park te lopen als het mooi weer was.
Daarachter was een opvangcentrum en een nieuwe bijbelschool, van de nieuwe bijbel die was gekomen.
Hij raakte er ook in geïnteresseerd. Hij vond het mooie boeken.
Het verruimde zijn belevingswereld en hij vond het heel wat waard.
Hij ging niet meer bekrompen met zijn verleden om.
Het paradijs moest plaatsvinden in de herschepping van zijn geheugen.
Het geheugen was daarom een schat in aarden vaten.
Hier liepen dromen en werkelijkheid door elkaar heen.
Het mocht hem inspireren, het mocht hem waarschuwen.
Het waren de gezonde grenzen die zijn leven leefbaar maakten.

Diep ging hij in de natuur met de verzorgster.

Hij hield van de meren en de rivieren, en hij hield van de zee.
Alles wat water-gebied was. Hij maakte ook boottochten met haar.
Hij was op zoek naar een eiland in zijn hoofd.
Hij maakte ook lange strandwandelingen met haar.
Ze reisten veel met de trein, en dan huurden ze soms een bootje ergens.
Ook hield hij ervan met haar te kamperen.
Soms woonden ze een tijdje in een vakantie huisje ergens.

Eigenlijk voelde hij zich al verhuisd.
Hij had zijn woning nu heel anders ingericht.
Hij kreeg het er zo naar zijn zin dat hij eigenlijk niet weg wilde.
Hij had ook een prachtige tuin waarin van alles groeide.
Elke ochtend werd hij wakker van de vogels.

Steeds dieper ging hij Amsterdam in met de verzorgster.
Steeds beter kreeg hij een beeld van Amsterdam.
Het was een stad waarvan hij hield, een echte natuurstad.
Hij was er trots op dat hij een Amsterdammer was, en hij wilde steeds dieper.
Hij wilde haar nog beter leren kennen en komen tot haar geheimen.
Amsterdam was zijn lot, zijn bestaan. Het was voorbeschikt.

Hier moest hij wezen. Hier lag zijn pad. Hij hoefde er niet voor weg.
Hij kon steeds dieper.

Amsterdam was als een lied in zijn hoofd.
Het leidde hem dag aan dag, liet hem de natuur zien.
Amsterdam verborg veel natuur.
Nog steeds geloofde hij in de ondergrondse wereld.
Nog steeds wilde hij daar naar terug.
Maar eigenlijk had hij het idee dat hij daar al was.
Dat hadden de blauwgezichten gedaan.

Hij leefde hier al in de aarde, als een moddermens,
als een holbewoner, als een metro-bewoner, als één der blauwgezichten.
De blauwgezichtjes waren mooie vogels die telkens weer zijn tuin bezochten.
Elke ochtend maakten ze hem wakker.
Hij genoot van hun liederen, en van hun speelse gedrag.
Als hij ze opmerkte waren ze ook snel weer weg, en dan begon de dag voor hem.
Ze waren als dromen in zijn hoofd, zeer sprookjesachtig.
Maar hij wilde er niet teveel van. Hij stond open voor het volle leven, ook de andere vormen ervan.

Hij was een dromer, en een teller. Hij was een verzamelaar, maar hierin ook gul.

Hij gaf. Hij hield niet vast. Hij was altijd op doortocht in zijn hoofd.
Hij was een metro-bewoner.
Hij wilde de holen kennen, en dieper in de holen gaan, tot nieuwe werelden.
Er was zoveel te ontdekken in Amsterdam.
Er waren zoveel lagen.
Laag na laag werd er overheen gebouwd.
Hij wilde terug naar wat het was, naar het oer.
Hij wilde zijn in de overgang van Orion tot Betelgeuse.
Daar sprak de nieuwe bijbel ook over, en het had zijn interesse.

Hoofdstuk 3. Het gekke geld

Dwalen door Amsterdam, dat begon hij steeds meer te doen, met en zonder zijn verzorgster.
Hij kwam steeds meer op eigen benen te staan.
Hij kon de diepte van Amsterdam door alles heen ervaren.
Het verborg een groot natuurgeheim, een andere, diepere wereld.
Daar was hij van overtuigd.
Hij bezocht graag de winkels. Telkens kwamen er nieuwe winkels bij.
Hij probeerde ook minimalistisch te leven.
Hij deed veel weg.
Hij wilde vrij zijn en diep gaan.
Daarom moest hij leren loslaten.
Het was zijn adem.
Hij had een levensbron ontdekt in Amsterdam.
Zijn verleden ging op in zijn dromen.
Het was als een vreemde cyclus.
Er draaide iets in hem, als een tuner.
Dat was wat zijn verleden was.
Zijn geheugen was bruikbaar om tot andere werelden te komen.
Dat was wat Amsterdam was.
Het was een metro-netwerk van de ondergrondse wereld, van de ondernatuur.
Het liep zo door zijn hoofd heen, en hij kon het gebruiken wanneer hij wilde, want hij was immers metro-bewoner.

Maar moest hij dan niet betalen ? Hij had al betaald.
Hij had dit systeem door hard werken opgekocht.
Hij moest eerst diep vallen, diep lijden. Nu was het van hem.
En steeds meer kon hij het inruilen om tot de holen te gaan, nog dieper. Dan moest hij door veel zand heen.
Uiteindelijk was hij een holenmens in de diepte van de ondernatuur.

Daar kon hij vissen in zijn verleden.
Daar kon hij jagen op kennis.
En de kennis joeg op hem.
Hij moest worstelen met grote beesten.
Dingen die hij nog niet begreep.
Het was zijn studie. Hij wilde Amsterdamoloog worden.

Maar altijd vond hij zichzelf weer terug aan de apparaten, half in een coma, aan de slangen. En wie waren die verzorgsters ? Het waren altijd weer anderen. Of iets speelde met zijn herinneringen. Hij was hard gevallen hadden ze gezegd, en hij leed aan geheugenverlies en geheugenverdraaiing. Maar was dat niet alles wat hij nodig had ? Waar zou hij anders naartoe moeten ?

Soms waren het blauwgezichten die naar hem keken, waren het machines in de metro waar hij aan lag met slangen. Dan draaiden ze aan knoppen. ‘Waar ben ik ?’

vroeg hij zich af. ‘Dit moet nog wel Amsterdam zijn, misschien diep onder de grond. Ik ben nooit weggeweest.’

Alles liep door elkaar heen, als een scheur in zijn brein, maar hij kon het gehele universum zien. Hij moest er niet aan denken zo kortzichtig te zijn. Hij kon over leven en dood heenkijken, over de golven van de zee, waar hij zijn eiland zag. De ervaringen waren intens en hij noemde het het nieuwe leven. Hij zou niet meer terugwillen naar al het andere. Hij voelde zichzelf liggen in de warme zee. ‘Ik heb een scheur in mijn brein !’ riep hij. ‘Ik kan alles zien ! Ik kan weer zien, ik kan weer zien !’ Hij zwom naar het eiland, liep door de golven.

‘Droom ik of ben ik dood ?’ vroeg hij zich af. Maar dit was leven. Het was intens en diep. Hij mocht niet teveel, en daarom kreeg hij van alles maar een klein stukje, en was alles kort, als eb en vloed. Amsterdam was als een nauwgezette klok. Het huren duurde niet voor eeuwig. Je moest betalen, eerst betalen.

Was hij dronken, was hij aan de drugs ? Nee, hier lag niets zomaar voor het oprapen. Je kon hier geen overdosis krijgen, want je werd teruggeroepen, teruggefloten, of teruggetrokken. Alles was slechts flitsen. Hij had een scheur in zijn brein omdat hij was gevallen. Hij kon het zich alleen niet meer herinneren. De val was diep en het

had alles in zijn leven omgedraaid, en zijn leven draaide nog steeds.

Hij hoorde het geboemel van de metro. Ze gingen door prachtig landschap onder de grond, prachtige natuur. De blauwgezichten waren aan zijn zijde. Hij was één van hen. Zij waren allemaal vluchtelingen, als lotgenoten. Het brak zijn wereld open, het contact. Het nam hem op sleeptouw.

Altijd moesten ze op de metro wonen, en altijd waren ze op doortocht, want er werd op hen gejaagd. Altijd moesten ze loslaten en minderen, en leven met de kleine en korte beetjes die ze hadden. Het was allemaal heel vluchtig, in de klok van Amsterdam. In de alsmaar draaiende wijzers waren ze veilig. En in de klok waren zoveel andere plaatsnamen, maar het was allemaal de klok van Amsterdam.

Het scheen hem voort te drijven, de golven in zijn hart. Het was een binnenplaats in Amsterdam, waar hij gekomen was. Hij wist niet hoe. Hij las Amsterdam van achter naar voren : MAD-RETS-MA. Mad ma, en rets, ters, terse was een soort vreemd geld van een andere wereld waar hij eens over had gedroomd. Hij vertaalde het als het gekke geld. Dat was wat Amsterdam was. Je moest eerst tot het gekke geld gaan om hier te kunnen leven. Het gekke geld dwaalde als een dronkaard langs de

Amsterdamse grachten. Zo begon het ritje in deze jukebox.

Hij hield het gekke geld in zijn hand. Het knetterde, het sprong op, het maakte ruzie, zelfs oorlog. Het nam steden in, en voerde jacht. Hij kneep zijn hand dicht en het was warm. Hij kon het gewoon in zijn hand kneden. Maar toen sprong het uit zijn hand en rende weg, en giechelde : ‘Je moet werken, werken voor het gekke geld.’ Toen was het snel verdwenen, en hij moest zoeken, in alle gaten en alle hoeken, naar het gekke geld. Maar het was niet te vinden, en zo moest hij werken met bloed, zweet en tranen om het gekke geld te verdienen, maar je moest hard werken voor maar een heel klein beetje, en het kleine beetje was twistziek, maakte je het niet makkelijk, en als het kon ontsnappen, dan ontsnapte het, en werd je uitgescholden en uitgelachen.

Het gekke geld was het leger en de politie hier, en als het even kon, dan zorgde het gekke geld dat je in het ziekenhuis terecht zou komen. Het gekke geld was levensgevaarlijk, en je moest toch wel een echte waaghals zijn als je erop durfde te jagen. Daarom bleef hij liever arm en minimalist, en leefde van de kleine beetjes door de natuur geschonken, dat wat op zijn pad kwam. Hij was bang voor het gekke geld, bang voor een overdosis, want waar zou het hem leiden ?

Het was niet zo dat het gekke geld ook maar iets voor je kon doen, want hier was bedrog op bedrog. Hij mocht daarom maar hele kleine beetjes nemen van Amsterdam, net genoeg om te leven. Mad Money Ma was wat Amsterdam eigenlijk op de kop betekende, en dat kon al snel de hand uitlopen.

Het gekke geld was sterker dan hem, dus hij kon er maar beter niet mee worstelen, maar het gekke geld joeg ook op hem, dus hij moest wel, en daarom was hij blij dat hij een metro-bewoner was, altijd op de vlucht voor het gekke geld, net zoals de Iraniërs. De blauwgezichten maakten veel muziek. Ze hadden een liedje genaamd : ‘Wow wow wow, je gezicht is altijd blauw’. Ook maakten ze liedjes over het gekke geld, om het te kunnen verwerken, want ze waren allemaal getraumatiseerd door het gekke geld, en het gekke geld lachte er gewoon om. Het gekke geld ging allemaal om controle en macht, maar in hele kleine beetjes deed het wonderen. Het probleem was dat het gekke geld op tilt was geslagen. Maar het was ook gewoon zo dat zonder hard werk, zonder te betalen, je eigenlijk nergens kwam hier. En men moest leren werken, men moest weten wat werk echt was, en niet in de putten van de Danaïden terechtkomen waar ze water gieten in bodemloze vaten, en waar ze water droegen naar de zee. Velen deden werk wat geen werk was, of wilden alleen half werk doen, en het gekke geld trapte daar niet in. Een heleboel tranen

vanwege het gekke geld waren dus ook gewoon niets anders dan krokodillentranen.

Het gekke geld was een wachter, geen sinterklaas, geen verwennend omaatje. Het gekke geld was niet met pensioen gegaan. Maar het gekke geld was stomdronken, en hij vroeg zich af of het gekke geld misschien eens gevallen was, net zoals hij. En wie was dieper en harder gevallen, hij of het gekke geld ? In ieder geval was het met recht een Mad Ma, en moest hij oppassen.

Ze bemoederde hem, bedreigde hem, en bedroog hem. Ze was twistziek. Hij had het gevoel dat ze zwaar ziek was in het hoofd. Daarom vroeg hij zich af of ze misschien eens was gevallen. Altijd dat belerende vingertje. Mad Ma wist het altijd beter. Maar natuurlijk. Zij was immers langer op de wereld dan hij. Hij was nog maar een snotaapje. Maar wat was er gebeurd met moeder ? Dit kon toch niet goed zijn ? Of kwam het door de scheur in zijn brein, dat hij het zo beleefde ? Was het gekke geld misschien een gevolg van zijn val ?

Hij kon daar uren over piekeren, uren over worstelen. Het kon hem soms ook heel kwaad maken, dan schold hij de hele boel bij elkaar. Zijn woede aanvallen gingen diep, alsof het zijn brein verder scheurde.

De blauwgezichten hadden liederen zoals ‘Gratis kom je er niet in,’ en ‘Hard werken voor het leven’. Zij waren op de vlucht voor het op tilt geslagen gekke geld. Het gekke geld kon hard slaan. Het gekke geld kon je doden. Het gekke geld kon je laten hangen. Daarom was het oorlog. Overal stond men op tegen het gekke geld. Maar hoe kon men ontsnappen van het gekke geld ? Het was immers de wereld van het gekke geld. Waar ze dan ook gingen.

Nee, ze moesten leren leven van de kleine beetjes, er niet teveel van nemen. Ze moesten leren leven met halve woorden, halve zinnen en halve verhalen, die altijd weer wegsijpelden. Het was eb en vloed. Ze moesten leren van de zee. In het hart van Amsterdam onder de grond lag de wildernis zee. Daar moesten ze leren vissen, leren varen, en tot de eilanden leren gaan.

Alles was maar voor even. Ze moesten leren afscheid te nemen. Teveel zou hen kunnen doden. Een overdosis was hier fataal. Ze mochten niet verslaafd raken.

Het gekke geld lokte, het was een valstrik, en ze zaten al in de gevangenis van het gekke geld. Daarin waren ze geboren. Vluchten was onmogelijk. Ze konden alleen maar dieper in de gevangenis van het gekke geld, op zoek naar haar geheimen. Ze werden aan apparaten gehouden door het gekke geld. Mad Ma bediende de knopjes. Ze waren aan slangen verbonden.

Ook de blauwgezichten lagen daar, in grote zalen, bed naast bed, apparaat naast apparaat, allemaal in haar dromen. Hier moesten ze werken voor de geheimen. Hier moesten ze de diepte ingaan door een scheur in hun brein. Lotgenoten waren zij, medelijders en medestrijders.

Het gekke geld troonde in grote mist in de stad. Hoog op de tronen zat zij, want zij was eens heel diep gegaan. Zij was eerder dan hen, en daarom wist zij de weg, en daarom heerste zij over hen. Ze verkocht haar spullen op de markt, daar moesten ze eerst hard voor werken. En wat ze kochten liep van hen weg. Niemand kon hier kopen, alleen maar huren. Men kon hier niets bezitten. Elk bezit gleed van hen weg. Als eb en vloed was het. Niets kon men hier vasthouden. Alles was vluchtig, in de wereld van het gekke geld. Mad Ma hield niet van opgeblazenen. Die bliezen zichzelf op.

Er was niets wat het gekke geld kon stoppen. Het was totaal uit zijn kom gegaan, totaal op tilt geslagen. Het woedde rond als grote stormen. Het kon dreigen met donder en bliksem. Overstromingen en aardbevingen waren aan de orde van de dag. De mens werd volledig ingedamd.

Grote files altijd. Je kwam nergens zomaar in. Tijd was geld en geld was tijd. Je moest voor alles hard werken en

veel betalen, en de prijzen werden steeds hoger, tot het belachelijke. Men kreeg steeds minder, men moest steeds harder werken voor steeds minder. Maar wat voor gevaren lagen er op de loer ? Het gekke geld wist het. Ze had het zelf gezien, er ooit eens mee geworsteld, en nu waren haar kinderen prooi. Het gekke geld konden ze niet meer vangen, en daarom joegen ze achter haar kinderen. Maar dat hebben ze geweten.

Bij het gekke geld trek je altijd aan het kortste eind, altijd. Ook als je denkt dat je het langste eind hebt getrokken. Bedriegen doet ze graag. Ze zijn in haar netten. Ze geeft hen bluf en grootspraak en laat hen zien waar het allemaal naar leidt. In haar fuiken zijn zij.

Maar moeten we dan niet eerlijk zijn ? Ja, jij wel, maar zij niet. Zij was immers eerder. Zij is soeverein. Zij weet hoe het werkt, jij niet. Daarom is Amsterdam Amsterdam. Het gekke geld wint, en jij verliest. Dus moet je naar school en hard leren werken, zoals zij eens deed. Denk niet dat je haar kunt bedriegen. Zij bedriegt jou, maar het is om je voor de overdosis te bewaren.

Denk niet dat je het beter weet, want dat weet je niet. Zij schenkt betweterigheid, om je te laten zien waar het je naartoe leidt, om het je af te leren.

Probeer het gekke geld niet in een potje te stoppen. Er zal niet veel van het potje en het huisje overblijven. Het gekke geld is geen poesje aan een riempje. Het gekke geld is waaks, als een wachter.

Ze moesten het spel geheel uitspelen. Er waren geen snelle ontsnappingen. Ze mochten geen sprookjes en verhaaltjes vertellen om aan het spel te ontkomen. In dat opzicht was het gekke geld de sprookjespolitie en spelpolitie. Er waren geen snelwegen door het spel. Je moest eerst dieper. Zo bewoog je, zo kwam je vooruit, door eerst in de diepte te gaan. Er was geen andere weg. Je moest geen troep innemen om te sjoemelen. Als je drugs of doping gebruikte werd je gediskwalificeerd. Dan lag je aan de apparaten. Het gekke geld was dan je dokter.

En wat was dit allemaal dan ?
Het was het maken van de taarten.
Het gekke geld was taartenbakker.
Vaak zat het gekke geld in een hoekje en zei dan telkens :
‘Ik wil niet met ze zijn.’
Hij zei dan : ‘Blijf dan bij ze uit de buurt.’
Dan zei het gekke geld : ‘Maar ik ben in oorlog met hen.’

‘Ik wil niets met ze te doen hebben,’ zei het gekke geld.
‘Ik zal ze tot slagroom verpulveren.’

Als het gekke geld in oorlogsstemming was, dan kon je maar beter uit de buurt blijven, want dan maalde ze alles wat op haar pad kwam tot slagroom.

Als mensen tegen haar zeiden : ‘Jij bent het gekke geld,’ dan zei ze : ‘Ik ? Ik heb geen stuiver op zak.’ Ze leefde in ontkenning, vergat vaak waar ze was, waar ze mee bezig was en wat ze had gedaan. Dat kon erg ingewikkeld worden allemaal. Probeer maar eens met zo iemand in discussie te gaan. Het is altijd weer anders.

‘En met zo iemand moest jij in een huis wonen ?’

Hij knikte.

‘En hoe heb je dat overleefd ?’

‘Ik heb het niet overleefd,’ zei hij.

‘Nou ja, maar u zit hier.’

‘Niet echt,’ zei hij. ‘U verbeeldt het zich maar.’

‘Hoezo ?’

‘Omdat ik een kind van het gekke geld ben,’ zei hij.

‘Mijnheer, wij laten u niet meer weg,’ zei de dokter. ‘Het is beter dat u onder zorg wordt geplaatst.’

‘Ach, ik maakte maar een grapje,’ zei hij.

‘Okay, nou ja, kom volgende week dan maar terug, dan zien we wel verder,’ zei de dokter.

‘En mijn medicijnen ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Als het goed is heeft u er nog genoeg van de volgende keer,’ zei de dokter. ‘U mag er absoluut niet teveel van nemen.’

‘Volgens mij heb ik dat gedaan,’ zei hij.

‘Nou, dan moet u afkicken,’ zei de dokter. ‘Het verklaart een hoop.’

‘Wat dan ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Nou, al uw vreemde verhalen over het gekke geld,’ zei de dokter.

‘Oh, dat heb ik al jaren,’ zei hij.

‘Nou, ik vindt het maar een vreemde bedoening,’ zei de dokter. ‘Ik weet niet goed hoe ik het moet noemen.’

‘Gewoon creatief brein om te overleven,’ zei hij.

‘Wat overleven ?’ vroeg de dokter.

‘Nou, het gekke geld natuurlijk,’ zei hij. ‘Ik heb ermee in huis gewoond.’

‘Maar u zit zelf ook vreemd in elkaar,’ zei de dokter.

‘Zijn we dat allemaal niet in deze vreemde wereld ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Ikke niet,’ zei de dokter.

‘Ach, lieg er niet over, dokter, u bent zelf ook aangestoken door het gekke geld. Hoeveel verdient u nu aan mijn ellende ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Da’s waar,’ zei de dokter. ‘Daar heeft u dan eens een keer gelijk in.’

‘Staan we quitte,’ zei hij.

‘Okay,’ zei de dokter. ‘Kom volgende week maar terug.’

‘Mag mijn moeder dan ook meekomen ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Wie is dat ?’ vroeg de dokter.

‘Nou, het gekke geld zelf,’ zei hij.

‘Neem maar mee,’ zei de dokter.

‘Ik zal veel geld meenemen,’ zei hij. ‘Ik neem aan dat u daar op wacht.’

‘Ik hoop dat ik verzuip in het geld,’ zei de dokter.

‘Volgens mij bent u stomdronken, dokter,’ zei hij.

‘Hoe raadt u het zo,’ zei de dokter.

Hoofdstuk 4. De robot

Hij was aangespoeld op het strand van de ondergrondse binnenzee van Amsterdam. Zijn schip had schipbreuk geleden en hij was gebeten door een giftige vis, en hij lag te hallucineren op het zand, al een tijdje, met stemmen van dokters in zijn hoofd die hem gek probeerden te maken. Het was het gif van de vis. Blijkbaar mocht hij niet verder, blijkbaar mocht hij niet meer nemen, dus daarom was hij het slachtoffer van de vis in plaats van andersom. Dat kan een visser soms meemaken. Het was niet dat er zomaar gevist kon worden op alles. Een heleboel vissen waren beschermd en beschermden henzelf. Hij moest het verschil leren tussen vis en verleden, ook al deed het verleden zich ook voor als vissen. Er waren zo een heleboel vissen waarop hij wel mocht jagen. Het waren beelden van eenzijdig geheugen.

Hij probeerde verder te kruipen op het strand, bang dat de zee hem weer zou teruggrijpen. Hij kwam maar moeilijk vooruit. In zijn hoofd lag hij vast aan apparaten, maar dat kon ook nog heel goed het gif van de vis zijn. Hij had flinke pijn. Pijnscheuten trokken door zijn lichaam. Zijn handen voelden branderig, zijn hoofd, en vooral zijn mond, alsof hij bij de tandarts was geweest. Het leek alsof er door zijn hele lichaam een alarm afging. Het kon allemaal het gif van de vis zijn.

Die vissen stonden erom bekend. Ze konden electrische schokken geven, en hallucinaties van dokters, psychiaters en tandartsen. Daar hoorde ook allerlei apparatuur bij.

Hij probeerde in de wildernis achter het strand te komen. Hij zag daar het vreemde geld rennen tussen de bosjes. Waar het vreemde geld rende begonnen de huizen te branden en de dikke vrouwen te lachen, en dan waren er de stemmen van dokters. Hij zag zichzelf weer aan apparatuur liggen, en voelde de slangen in zijn mond en neusgaten. Het vreemde geld was aan het schaterlachen. Ze hadden hun prooi. Hij probeerde te ademen, en zag dat hij aan apparaten lag in een metro, met blauwgezichten om hem heen. Hij was in een droommachine. Hij lag vast aan een droom apparaat, zoals ook wat anderen. Ze werden verzorgd door de blauwgezichten. In de verte hoorde hij het vreemde geld schelden. Hij hoorde vreemde muziekjes, cowboy-muziek, gimmicks. Toen zette iemand de radio uit.

Hij kroop door het zand van het strand. Hij hoopte het vreemde geld hier niet tegen te komen. Toen hij de bosjes had bereikt rook hij besjes. Weer zag hij zichzelf aan apparaten. Het gif wilde niet loslaten. Stoffen in zijn hoofd streden tegen elkaar. Daar zag hij het vreemde geld weer rondrennen als kleine mannetjes. Ze stonden in brand, en zetten de huisjes in brand. ‘Wat heb ik gegeten ?’ dacht hij bij zichzelf. ‘Ben ik een junkie ?’ Hij wist dat hij ergens

van af moest kicken maar hij wist niet van wat, of was dit zijn bescherming tegen iets ? Hij wist het niet. Hij bleef tegen zichzelf zeggen dat hij dit niet begreep. ‘Wat is dit ?’

Hij wilde op een plaats komen waar zijn tranen zijn geld waren. Wat was geld eigenlijk ? Het leek op een communicatie systeem. Hij moest dieper, tot het geheim van Amsterdam. Hij moest hiervoor alles achterlaten, maar telkens greep het hem terug. Ze wilden hem niet laten gaan, of wilden ze hem ergens tegen beschermen ? Hij mocht nergens een overdosis van krijgen.

Hij werd wakker in zijn slaapkamer van het geluid van vogels. Hij stond op en deed de gordijnen open. Toen maakte hij zijn ontbijt klaar. Zijn verzorgster kwam, en hij zei niets. Ze deed wat huishouden voor hem, en hij probeerde mee te doen. Hij voelde zich op zich goed. Toen ze weer weg was probeerde hij een boek te lezen, maar de letters tolden voor zijn ogen, dus legde hij het weer neer. Op de radio was weer reclame. Toen klikte hij de radio weer uit. Hij moest naar het tranengeld. Hij had teveel tranen. Hij moest er iets mee doen. Hij wilde iets bouwen. Iets joeg op hem, of wilde het hem beschermen ? Iets riep hem terug, maar waar naartoe ?

Hij zag uit naar het slapen, dan zouden de dromen hem meer vertellen. Hij voelde zich een dromenjunkie. Hij wilde zijn dromen verkopen, maar hij wist bij voorbaat dat

niemand geinteresseerd zou zijn. Wat had hij te bieden ? Dromendealer zijn werkte hier niet goed. Dan moest je echt heel beroemd zijn, en veel geld hebben, anders kwam je er niet doorheen en keek niemand naar je. Maar ja, hij had rust nodig.

Alleen in zijn dromen was hij dromendealer, maar hij bereikte er niks mee. Niemand wilde van hem kopen. Hij kon soms vliegen in zijn dromen, maar niemand keek er van op. Maar ja, hij had rust nodig. Waarom zou hij dromendealer moeten zijn als niemand het wilde ? Iedereen was afgestompd en afgeleid. Ze hadden allemaal hun eigen drugs al. Het was alsof ze verslaafd waren aan drama. Ze lagen in apparaten net als hem. En anderen wilden hen ook niet horen. Het was ieder voor zich, en alleen als je erg beroemd was en veel geld had, dan wilde men heel misschien naar je luisteren. Hij was een niemand, een absolute nul. Niemand kende hem. Niemand wilde hem kennen. Ze hadden allemaal hun eigen leven. Iedereen leefde langs elkaar heen. Ze waren aangestoken door het vreemde geld. Het was nooit goed genoeg.

Hij verkocht dromen. Die lagen als schriftjes in zijn tas, een hele stapel. En hij had een machientje waarmee hij kon vliegen, als een helicoptertje op zijn rug, en zo ging hij van dorp tot dorp en van stad tot stad, maar weinigen waren geinteresseerd. De ijscoman deed het beter.

Ze vonden hem maar een zonderling. Sommigen vonden hem interessant of waren nieuwsgierig, en spraken even met hem, maar uiteindelijk kochten ze veelal niets. Als iemand eens iets kocht voelde hij zich altijd heel onzeker, en dacht dat het niet gebeurd kon zijn. Dan leefde hij in ontkenning. Hij had nog steeds niets verkocht. En als hij het dan op sommige momenten wel geloofde dan was hij bang dat ze het af zouden keuren en verscheuren.

Een zonderlinge man was hij, met een hoed op, en vreemde kleren. Hij hoorde nergens bij. Soms speelde hij op zijn instrumenten, een fluit, een harmonica of iets anders. Hele vreemde muziek-instrumenten had hij. Ze vonden het maar kabaal. Hij had ook een triangel. Hij hoorde hier niet. Zo sprak hij zichzelf helemaal de afgrond in. Hij kon hier niet aarden. Zijn handel in dromen kwam niet van de grond. Mensen hadden hun eigen dromen, gewoon aan de oppervlakte. Zo diep als hem gingen ze niet. Daarom waren ze ook niet geinteresseerd in zijn vliegkunsten. Ze wilden op de grond blijven. Ze waren niet meer in verwondering over de vogels.

Hij vloog met de vogels en kwam nog eens ergens. Met de blauwgezichtjes vloog hij. Altijd maakten ze hem ‘s ochtends wakker. Soms leek het alsof zijn verzorgster een blauw gezicht had. ‘Wow, wow, wow, je gezicht is altijd blauw,’ zong hij dan. Ze keek hem dan vreemd aan, en gaf hem zijn medicijnen. Hadden de medicijnen hem zo

gemaakt, of hielpen ze hem om niet nog erger te worden ? De stoffen in zijn hoofd vochten tegen elkaar. Het was altijd oorlog in zijn hoofd.

Hij moest jacht maken op deze beesten. Maar sommigen van deze beesten waren beschermd. Dan zou hij problemen krijgen met de boswacht. Dan zou hij een stroper zijn in hun ogen. Dan zou hij de bak ingaan. Hij had het gevoel alsof hij al in de bak zat. Hij zat vast aan apparaten die hem niet loslieten. Ze voerden hem drugs. Ze verkochten dromen aan hem. Hij zat vast aan allerlei ingewikkelde verzekeringssystemen, belastingsystemen en betaalsystemen. En hij moest huur betalen. Huursystemen, ziekenfonds, het bleef allemaal maar binnenkomen, en maar dreigen en dreigen. ‘Als je dit niet doet, dan ...’ en ‘als je dat niet vóór deze datum hebt betaald, dan ...’ Hij werd er gek van. Maar zijn verzorgster hielp hem.

Hij slenterde door Amsterdam, bezocht winkels, maar wilde er niet zijn. Hij verveelde zich. Soms ging zijn verzorgster mee. Soms liepen ze door het park. Wat moest hij doen ? Ook de spelletjes met haar verveelden hem. Hij ging op zoek naar boeken die hem konden inspireren. Hij wilde iets met zijn leven doen, niet op zoek gaan naar loos vermaak. Hij wilde op zoek gaan naar de zin van het leven, het geheim van Amsterdam.

Hij was altijd blij als hij weer naar bed kon, maar soms vond hij dat te makkelijk. Hij wilde hard werken, maar hij kon het niet. Soms ging hij door tot hij er bij neerviel. Als hij dan sliep dan was hij aan de apparaten, of diep in de wildernis onder de grond. Hij wilde bij de indianen zijn, en de holenmensen. Maar die accepteerden hem niet. En zo kwam hij bij de monniken en de hermieten terecht, maar die deden ook vaak te moeilijk. Dan moest je weer in dit en dat geloven, en dan moest je weer zus doen, en dan weer zo. En daarom was hij een eenling. Hij geloofde wel in goede principes, maar ...

Hij moest moedig zijn, dapper, niet braaf. Ze wilden hem allemaal drugs aanbieden. Maar deed hij niet hetzelfde ? Nee, hij dealde in dromen. Hij vroeg zich af in wat voor machine hij terecht was gekomen. Wat zou er onder de zee zijn ? Hij wilde in de tunnels daar terecht komen. Hij wilde naar de wildernissen onder de zee, en dan tot diepere zeeën komen. Misschien waren daar betere levensbronnen.

De indianen wilden hem niet. Hij liep daar rond met allerlei apparaten. De indianen waren er bang voor. Hij probeerde de apparaten van hem af te krijgen, maar het lukte niet. Hij was een gevangene van zijn apparaten. Hij begreep de indianen wel. Wie zouden hem kunnen helpen om van de apparaten los te komen ? De indianen in ieder geval niet. Die renden van hem weg in grote angst.

Hij was in de apparaten vergroeid. Hij had het idee dat het nooit meer goed kon komen. Misschien dat nog dieper onder de grond de oplossing lag, of zou hij dan nog erger in de problemen komen ? Er zouden daar kannibalen wonen, en de eeuwige hel zou er zijn. Misschien zou alleen dat hem kunnen losmaken ? De eeuwige hel noemden ze ook wel de baarmoeder. Het was een Duitse erfenis, ook wel Holle genoemd, het hol, waar Nederland ook naar vernoemd was. Het was een wildernis gebied. De kannibalen zouden wel raad met hem weten, maar dood wilde hij ook niet.

Nee, er waren hier geen snelle wegen om van ongemak af te komen. Hij moest er eigenlijk niet aan denken om dieper naar beneden te gaan. Hij wist dat de apparaten slechts een zekere droom waren, een zeker verhaal. Hij voelde zich als een robot. Hij was nog maar slechts een feutus, als een insect in een kokon, als een kuiken in het ei. Hij moest naar de baarmoeder, de uitgang zien te vinden. Maar daarvoor pak je niet de eerste de beste baarmoeder. Wat voor een nachtmerrie zou dat kunnen worden, van moeder tot zoon ? Blijf uit de buurt van haar.

Hij wilde ook geen vriendin, zelfde probleem. Hij wilde dieper Amsterdam in.

Hij moest het klusje klaren. Maar hoe ?

Het vreemde geld had hier rondgerend, en alles in de fik gezet, en nu lachten de dikke vrouwen, en hoorden ze de stemmen van vreemde dokters. Zeer vreemd waren ze. Ze maakten de mensen aan het huilen. Vreemde medicijnen hadden ze, huil medicijnen, die het alleen maar erger maakten, als de eeuwige hel. Ze waren als kannibalen. Hij moest denken aan prooi op de tafels van de chirurgen. Waar waren ze nou eigenlijk mee bezig ? Ja, maar ze waren toch bezig met het redden van levens ? Nee, ze waren aan het boren voor geld, voor het vreemde geld. Ja, maar ze hadden toch geld nodig om te kunnen leven ? Maar deze wereld had teveel geld genomen, en van de verkeerde personen. Je redt toch niet iemand van de verdrinkingsdood om hem daar dan geld voor te vragen ? Zo wil je zelf toch ook niet behandeld worden ? Het geld moet toch op een andere wijze tot de mens komen ? Zakenlieden kunnen keihard zijn en bedriegelijk. Dan groomen ze je voor hun secte. Zo ontstaan al die stockholm-syndromen.

Het vreemde geld zat op de troon en zong vreemde liederen. Liederen waarvan je moest huilen. Zoveel dingen die je kon zien maar die onbereikbaar voor je waren. Dingen waarmee je een emotionele band had. Dingen van het geheugen. De schepping moest nog komen.

De schepping was hier nog niet geweest. Dit was de onschepping, de nachtmerrie van de feutus, de grote chaos vóór de geboorte. Hij zat er middenin, tot aan zijn nek. Het eiland was ver in zicht.

Nee, hij was nog in de golven. Hij was nog nooit aan land gekomen. Dat droomde hij alleen maar, als voortekenen.

Het water was warm dat wel, maar woest, zeer woest. De blauwgezichten hadden hier boten, als metro's op het water. Daarin woonden zij. Zij visten hem op. In de metro-boten hadden ze vreemde gokkasten. Zo moest hij leren gokken. Ze zeiden dat het de zee van vergetelheid was, en hier moest hij het vergeten geld leren verdienen, het geld van vergetelheid. Dat zou zijn brein schoon kunnen spoelen. Hij moest hier een dreamjockey worden, een dreamjay, want die hadden een veel groter bereik dan zomaar dreamdealers.

Het water was vies, en op de metro-boten was het ook vies en het stonk. En het kon soms zeer koud worden. Hij moest nu een repertoire opbouwen. Dat kon hij verdienen door te gokken. Maar hij kon hierdoor ook een heleboel verliezen. Hij merkte dat hij hier uiteindelijk van zijn apparaten kon afkomen. Hier kon hij ook zendtijd winnen. Mensen hadden droomkastjes waarmee ze de dromen konden ontvangen. Beroemdheid kon hier niet plaatsvinden, want de dreamjays waren als kameleonen en

veelal anoniem. Het ging om de dromen. En de dromen gingen zich al snel vervormen. Niets bleef hetzelfde. Het waren klokken op zich.

Hoofdstuk 5. De natuurbacterie

Hij kon aan zijn verleden ontsnappen, van zijn verleden wegvluchten door de zorgcentra en de gevangenissen, en door de metro’s en metro-boten van de blauwgezichten. Het gekke geld was woest, want het wilde hem niet laten gaan. Mad Money Ma moest gewoon weer Amsterdam worden. Haar krankzinnige tentakels die hem in een wurggreep hielden moesten afsterven. Ze wilde dat hij een junkie bleef, geen dreamjockey. Maar door dreamjockey te zijn kon hij aan haar ontkomen, op de gokkasten van de blauwgezichten. Het waren vreemde juke-boxen en na een tijdje kreeg hij een eigen gokkast. Die kon hij opbouwen tot vliegmachine, en dat kon zijn eigen dreamjay station worden. Het waren een soort vogels, die reusachtig konden worden. Hij moest deze vogels leren berijden. Zo kon hij loskomen van Mad Ma. Maar het leek wel alsof de huizen van Amsterdam op instorten stonden, alsof de stad in brand was. Mad Ma wilde niet loslaten. En het vreemde geld was haar blaffende hondje. Hij moest hard werken voor het geld van vergetelheid om hier van af te komen, af te kicken. Hij hoopte eens aan land te kunnen komen, maar voor nu was hij in het water of in de lucht. Hij zocht naar land, maar hij moest werken voor zijn geld en voor ieder stukje land. Het zou niet uit de lucht komen vallen of zomaar ontdekt worden. Hij moest het land zelf bouwen. Hij moest een goede dreamjockey zijn, droom voor droom zijn eiland bouwen.

Hij kon Mad Money Ma horen roepen en gillen. Het was een blame game. Schelden was haar niet vreemd. Ze kon zwaar beledigen om de aandacht te trekken. De drugs wilde niet laten gaan.

Met zijn dromen moest hij een dreamjockey car bouwen, en zo zou hij uiteindelijk aan land komen. Dat was hard werk. De dromen konden moeilijk in elkaar klikken want er ontbraken dromen. Daarvoor moest hij op zoek, en grote gevechten leveren met monsters en beesten die deze dromen bewaakten. Het zou hem bloed, zweet en tranen kosten, tranengeld. Het lag niet voor het grijpen. Hij moest het zelf verdienen. Alles werkte hier door tranengeld. En tranengeld kon je alleen maar krijgen voor een heleboel vergeetgeld.

Hij lag op het strand. Hij was aan het hallucineren door het gif van de vis. Het leek zijn brein telkens weer te vervormen, alsof hij zelf een vis was. Hij bemerkte dat hij aan het bloeden was.

‘Ik kom niet meer terug,’ zei hij tegen Mad Ma die in zijn hoofd aan het foeteren was. Hij probeerde door het zand te kruipen, en probeerde er in te rollen om de stemmen te doven. Hij keek naar de voeten van een inheemse vrouw die voor hem stond. Ze hielp hem op te staan, en wees op zijn wond.

‘Wie ben je ?’ vroeg hij.

Ze sprak niet, maar nam hem mee naar de wildernis achter het strand. Daar leidde ze hem over een wildernispad tot een kamp. Daar waren ook andere inheemsen, veelal vrouwen. Weer hoorde hij Mad Ma in zijn hoofd krijsen. Hij greep naar zijn hoofd. De inheemsen keken hem verschrikt aan. ‘Ja, ik heb last van ...’ zei hij, maar verder kon hij niet komen, omdat hij niet wist wat hij moest zeggen, en omdat hij dacht dat ze het toch niet zouden verstaan. Het zou allemaal verspilde moeite zijn, en hij moest op krachten komen. Ze gaven hem wat soep, en een deken. Hij ging op een bed zitten in een hut waar zij hem brachten.

‘Itek,’ zeiden ze. Ze maakten daarbij een slaap beweging. Toen hij de soep ophad ging hij liggen en trok de deken over zich heen. Hij was helemaal uitgeput, en viel snel in slaap. De volgende ochtend werd hij wakker van de vogels. Hij was nog steeds in de hut. Het was mooi weer, en hij ging de hut uit om de natuur om hem heen te verkennen. Hij voelde zich verder goed. Hij zag de anderen niet.

Toen hij een tijdje door de natuur had gelopen, door de wildernis, en terug was gekomen in het kamp waren de anderen er ook. Met hun soep en kruiden probeerden ze de

stemmen van Mad Ma in zijn hoofd te doven. Ze lieten hem ook een waterval zien. Er was hier een rivier. Daar gingen ze graag zwemmen. Hij voelde zich welkom. Hij voelde zich thuis. Het was alsof hij hier altijd was geweest, maar het gif van een vis had hem gegrepen. Nu moest hij herstellen. De inheemse vrouwen wisten wel raad met het gif. Zij hadden een tegengif.

Ze leerden hem over de vissen, over gevaarlijke, giftige vissen, en ongevaarlijke vissen. Ze leerden hem van alles over de jacht. Hier moest het verleden verwerkt worden, het geheugen herschapen. Het waren allemaal herinneringen.

Hij werd wakker aan apparaten. Hij was bij de blauwgezichten. Het waren droom-apparaten. Ze zeiden dat hij naar school moest. Deze materie was moeilijk te begrijpen. Spiegelogie, vertalologie. Ze zeiden dat mensen zwarte gaten waren, poorten naar andere dimensies, onderdelen van een tuner. Hij moest de mens niet als vast vlak zien, niet als muur, maar als een kanaal, als een poort, van hier tot daar. Als hij daarin vast kwam te zitten, dan moest hij het leren begrijpen, leren doorvertalen. Daartoe was de vertalologie. Ze hadden te maken met spiegelingen en diepere betekenissen. Dat zou hij moeten leren. Daartoe diende hij naar school te gaan. De scholen waren op de treinen van de blauwgezichten. Ze moesten altijd verder gaan. Ze mochten niet stoppen, want dan zou de domheid

hen inhalen, en trekken tot domme scholen die helemaal geen scholen waren, maar gevangenissen van de onwetendheid, opdat ze domme consumenten zouden zijn. Daartoe werden ze opgeleid, tot consument. Daarvan moest hij ontsnappen, geheel loskomen. Het waren fokkerijen. De blauwgezichten zouden hem helpen. Hij zou alleen op school er van los kunnen komen. De blauwgezichten wilden niet met de smerige spelletjes van de domgezichten meedoen. Het waren domme sprookjes, en de blauwgezichten waren de sprookjes-politie.

Hij was inmiddels op een trein van de blauwgezichten. Ook hierop woonden ze, en elke trein had zijn eigen school. Hier moest hij leren lezen en schrijven in de taal van de blauwgezichten. Het was belangrijk, anders zou hij nog gewoon dronken zijn. Wat was er met hem aan de hand ? Wat was er met hem gebeurd ? Hij moest afkicken van vele drugs. Daarom lag hij aan de apparaten. De blauwgezichten hadden goed zorg voor hem gedragen.

De onderwijzer ging langs het alfabet. Hij probeerde op te letten, maar werd afgeleid. Hij wilde het alfabet leren, maar iets joeg op hem. Iets wilde hem niet laten gaan. Iets wilde dit niet. Hij wilde hoe dan ook de taal van de blauwgezichten leren.

Moest hij zo diep gaan met de blauwgezichten ? Hij wilde in de natuur zijn, maar er waren geen directe wegen tot de

natuur. Alles was hier afgesloten. Hij moest in de trein zijn. Hoge technologie moest hem beveiligen. Maar was hoge technologie geen probleem op zich ? Kon het op zichzelf niet een drugs worden ? Daarom was het oorlog in zijn hoofd, verschillende stoffen tegen elkaar. En de zwarte gaten trokken aan hem. Zijn geheugen was op tilt geslagen, alsof zijn brein werd verscheurd. Er waren zoveel kamers in zijn hoofd, en nu moest er nog balans komen en doorgang, diepte, nieuwe mappen, nieuwe kaarten, nieuwe inventarissen. Zijn geheugen moest herschapen worden. Hij voelde zichzelf weer in de golven van de zee. De zee nam alles in. Alles overstroomde weer, maar hij wist dat eb en vloed erbij hoorden. Hij zag al zijn schoolschriften drijven in de zee. Zijn schooltassen gingen met andere treinen mee. Moest hij dan tot een tijdmachine komen ? Of was de zee een tijdmachine ? Het sleurde hem mee, het zoog hem in de woeste draaikolken, tot andere werelden. Het waren de zwarte gaten van de zee. De oceaan verbond het hele universum.

Er was geen rust in zijn hoofd, maar rust kon ook heel gevaarlijk zijn, als drugs. Hij wilde geen valse rust, geen schijnrust. Hij wist dat het oorlog moest zijn, want schijnvrede was er overal. Maar aan welke kant stond hij ?

Hij had het gevoel alsof treinen reden in zijn hoofd. Zijn breinscheur ging diep, en leek steeds dieper te gaan. Soms reed hij op de treinen, en soms leek hij ernaast te zijn, in

de natuur. Zijn hersenchemie moest in orde komen. Hij was de blauwgezichten dankbaar dat ze hem onderwezen. Hij lag aan apparaten, hij droomde dromen, speelde spelletjes. Hij luisterde en leerde. En hij was altijd op weg, want het verleden joeg op hem. Giftige vissen. De zee kende grote monsters, die massa's mensen kon verslinden, schip na schip. Soms hadden die monsters vele tentakels. Hij was diep in de maag van zo'n vis, zo'n zeemonster. Het was als de hel. Chemische stoffen van het beest speelden op hem in, speelden met zijn brein. Hij moest beter opletten als de amazones hem vissen leerden. Telkens werd hij afgeleid. Telkens weer was hij de pineut als ze gingen vissen, als ze het water ingingen. Hij kende de natuur hier niet.

De blauwgezichten waren giftige vissen in de rivier. De amazones gebruikten de vis van de blauwgezichten voor een heleboel dingen. Als medicijn, maar ook in de jacht, en in de oorlog. Zo was hij ook eens door zo'n pijltje geraakt. Hij moest de viskunde nog leren. Hij kende alleen maar wiskunde. Daar hadden ze hem vroeger helemaal mee doodgegooid. Totdat hij er hoofdpijn van kreeg. Hij probeerde het nu allemaal achterstevoren af te spelen, al die herinneringen aan knettergekke wiskunde leraren, om zo de viskunde te kunnen leren. Hij moest het voorhangsel opzij schuiven, opdat hij doorgang had. De amazones hadden overal zulke voorhangsels, ter bescherming. Je kon de amazones niet zomaar zien, want dan zou je sterven, en

daarom moesten ze een bedekking dragen. Daarom kon je hen alleen van achteren zien.

Zij waren roodhuiden. Zij waren niet sentimenteel, maar streng. Je kon het rode niet zien, want dan zou je sterven, en daarom zag je blauw. Het was een hallucinerende vrucht. Je moest blauw zien, want je was nog niet klaar voor het rode. Hun voorhangsels waren veelal wit, maar je zag blauw. Dan moest je eerst het roze verdienen, want er was geen directe weg tot het rode.

Hij zag rood en wit als roze, en het blauwe was verschoven naar het water en de lucht. Eerst moest hij het water in en de viskunde leren. De blauwgezichten waren watergezichten, riviergezichten en zeegezichten, belangrijke lessen die hij moest leren. Hij moest afkicken van zoveel emotie en sentimentaliteit. Hij moest gaan tot de gezonde rede. Hij moest filosofie leren en afkicken van zoveel buitensporige theologie. Snelwegen hadden de theologen gebouwd. Maar de echte profeten waren vaak filosofen. Je mocht niet teveel van theologie, want dan zou het drugs worden. Zo was dat ook met zaken zoals familie. Hij moest de filterologie leren.

Ook het roze was een gif. Hij raakte er depressief van, maar het bracht hem wel in contact met zichzelf, door zelfspiegelingen. Hij merkte dat het roze hem dubbel belaste, en dat er geen weg meer terug was. Hij kon alleen

maar dieper, niet eruit. Het was als weerhaken. Zo kon hij door de enge poort. Hij moest het roze verdienen om tot het rode te komen, maar hij wist niet wat het was.

Hij was in grote verwarring en soms in grote paniek. En dan werd hij wakker na lange nachtmerries, en ging hij de tuin in. De roze gezichtjes waren vogeltjes die vaak in zijn tuin waren. Met zijn verrekijker keek hij dan naar hen. Ook ging hij weleens op pad in de natuur, op zoek naar de roze gezichtjes. Wat zou de natuur zijn zonder hen ? Ze konden zo mooi zingen. Het had een kalmerend effect in zijn hoofd, zoals dat van de dolfijnen.

Het rivierwater bij de amazones was niet blauw, maar bruin-geel. Hier waren de roze gezichtjes ook, de vogeltjes. Voor blauw water moesten ze echt naar de zee gaan. De roze gezichtjes droegen vreemde boodschappen die door de amazones gelezen konden worden. Hij moest het ook leren.

Hij moest afkicken van het verleden, wat als drugs was. Hij moest het verdraaien, wat gepaard ging met veel vergetelheid. Hij moest meer vergeten dan herinneren. De amazones hadden blauwe stenen waarmee ze dobbelden, die ze konden lezen. Het waren een soort prisma’s, als blauw kristal, als blauwe diamanten, waarvan ze de spiegelingen konden opvangen, om die te vertalen tot boodschappen. Zo werden ze geleid, door zowel de roze

gezichtjes als de blauwe stenen. Ook lazen ze voortekenen in de jacht. Ze gooiden soms vissengraten en lazen dan de voortekenen erin voor de volgende jacht. Hun tenten en hutten hadden vaak voorhangsels van kippenbotjes en vissengraten, en zo was ook hun kleding vervaardigd, als ze dat droegen. Het waren meer versieringen, maar het had een semiotische functie. Hiermee communiceerden ze, en hiermee vingen ze boodschappen op. Hij moest al deze signalen leren.

Er was een rode prisma in zijn hoofd, en de spiegelingen, de vertalingen en de filteringen waren duur. Amsterdam werd duurder, vroeg steeds meer voor haar diensten. De natuur was niet voor niets. Je moest er persoonlijk en geheel bij betrokken zijn. En hij werd afgeleid door zoveel dingen.

Voor het lozen van zijn afval moest hij veel betalen. En in Amsterdam was ook het toilet niet gratis. Scheldende mensen. Scheldende mensen overal. Voor alles moest je betalen, en ze hadden te weinig. En zo ontstond er een honger Amsterdam. Hij moest creatief zijn en van de kleine beetjes leren leven, om zo de eindjes aan elkaar te knopen. Dat was een hele opgave. Hij moest het primitieve leren, dat was ook iets van de natuur.

Hij had een hele mooie bacterie in de lucht gezien, met zoveel schakeringen. De bacterie had schakeringen tot

zoveel dimensies, als een natuurbacterie, en hij voelde het in zijn hoofd. Telkens weer kon hij poorten in deze bacterie verdienen, om die te openen. Het bracht zoveel dromen in zijn hoofd, en zijn leven was een droom door deze bacterie. Het kon blaffen als een hond tegen hem als hij van iets teveel zou nemen. Hij werd grensgevoelig door de bacterie. Zo gingen zijn zintuigen meer en meer open, en zijn oude zintuigen gingen meer en meer dicht.

Hoofdstuk 6. De roze kaart

De scheidsrechter liet de roze kaart zien.
Ze moesten allemaal terug naar de baarmoeder.
De conducteur knipte alleen nog maar roze kaartjes.
Ze waren op weg naar de roze zee.

Alleen in het diepste van de nacht zou de zee rood worden, en ze zouden verslonden worden, want de baarmoeder was een woest beest. Je kon alleen geboren worden als je aan je oude leven zou afsterven. Daarom at zij veel vlees. Daarom was zij dik.

Hij moest door vele roze nachten tot het rode dieptepunt gaan.
Dat was als een buffeljacht.
Hij was in strijd met het verleden.
Het was een grote oorlog.
Herinneringen waren als grote protsende buffels in het veld.
Er moest jacht op hen gemaakt worden voor de slacht, zodat het verwerkt kon worden.
Daarom waren de amazones slagers.
Zij waren geschiedenis leraressen.

Zij hadden hun tent in zijn geheugen gezet.
Hier kon hij niet verder. Hier liep alles vast.
Hier moest hij terug naar school.

En de school was een fuik.
Hij kon er niet meer uit, hij kon alleen maar dieper.

Hier moest hij het gratenschrift leren.
Met de gratentekens moest hij zijn geheugen onderverdelen.
De gratentekens stonden voor tunnels naar de zee.
Zo kon hij zijn geheugen verwerken en herscheppen.
Zijn geheugen moest worden tot een school inventaris.

Geschiedenis was geld. Op het geld stond de geschiedenis beschreven.
Dat kon je naar de bank brengen en er dan rente voor krijgen.
Het was een geschiedenis bank, een geheugenbank.

Hij moest veel geschiedenis leren om daar te kunnen werken.
Daarom moest hij eerst naar school, en luisteren naar de geschiedenisleraressen.
De geschiedenis bank was een slagerij.
Je kon niet zomaar gaan slachten. Daar moest je een diploma en een vergunning voor hebben.

Een heleboel geschiedenis was vals, en daarom moest hij zich met archeologie, etymologie, en lexicografie bezig houden, en moest hij de filologie kennen.

Telkens weer was hij op weg tussen de kamers in zijn hoofd.
Er waren lange wandelpaden tussen met stoplichten.
Hij woonde op meerdere plaatsen.
Soms namen grote vogels hem op, en vlogen verder met hem de bergen in.
Hij dacht na over zijn headspace.
Hij wilde niet zomaar wakker worden van de nachtmerrie, maar wilde de afmetingen, de omvang ervan, onder ogen komen, en het verdiepen.
Hij moest werken in de nachtmerrie, het tot bloei brengen, tot waarde, tot betekenis.
Hij moest het geheugen herscheppen.
Dat was als werken in de mijnen.

Hij wilde geen product meer zijn.
Hij trapte er niet meer in waarmee ze hem lokten.
Er waren zoveel afleidingen en verleidingen.
Maar hij was als een pelgrim nu, als een monnik.
Hij hield vast aan het boek door de hemel aan hem gegeven.
Zo kwam hij steeds hoger, op de ruggen van de vogels die door de hemel tot hem waren gezonden.
Hij werd opgenomen.
Wat dachten ze op aarde toch allemaal nauw en klein.
Het was allemaal waardeloos, futiel.
Ze waren gewoon op jacht.

Hij wilde geen gebruiksvoorwerp meer zijn, of wegwerpartikel.
Op aarde waren ze verslaafd.
Junkies in Amsterdam. Niet aan drugs, maar aan geld, macht, controle en eer.
Men was product geworden. Men was consument geworden.
Daartoe werden ze opgeleid.
Daarom was hij de diepte ingegaan, tot de roze zee gegaan.

En midden in de nacht was alles rood, als rode bloemen die spraken.
Hij voelde zich als Alice in Wonderland, als Kantiaans of Hegeliaans filosoof.
En ook hij kwam die verschrikkelijke kolderkat onder ogen.
Het had hem niet heel gelaten. Hij had een scheur in zijn brein.
Aan flarden gescheurd was hij.

Hij was nog nooit zo diep gegaan.
Hij stond voor een woeste oceaan.
Overal waren campings langs het strand.
Hij trok van camping tot camping.
Elke camping had zijn eigen geheim.
‘In tenten zullen zij wonen, als de stad is vergaan, als de stad tot wildernis is geworden.’

Maar de stad was nog steeds in zijn hoofd, als onderdeel van het geheugen.
De vissen waren hier als stoplichten.
De grotere vissen waren als wegen.
Het was helemaal niet wat het leek.
De roofdieren om hem heen waren als huizen waarin hij zou kunnen wonen,
maar hij wilde op de campings wonen.

Elke camping had zijn eigen geheim.
Als hij op de ene camping was, dan had hij het gevoel dat hij zoveel miste op de andere campings.
Hij voelde zich als een verslaafde.
Hij was nog steeds een Amsterdamse junkie.
Hij was in gevecht met de zee, en in gevecht met de aarde.
Het waren chemische stoffen in zijn hoofd.
Van alles trok er aan hem.
Hij wist het zeker : hij was niet van zichzelf.
Hij was in een fabriek.

En er was geen ontkomen aan.
Je kon alleen maar dieper.
Hoe meer hij het onder ogen kwam, hoe meer hij zich ervoor schaamde.
Het was een guilt-trip.
Victim-blaming.

Schulden, schulden, schulden.

De rekeningen bleven binnenstromen.
Hij moest voor alles betalen, zelfs voor adem en gedachten.
En het herhaalde zich, want het was slechts huur.
Nooit kon je iets daadwerkelijk bezitten.
Het bezat jou.

Hij zat opgesloten in een grafische werkelijkheid, maar hoe werkelijk was het ?
Hij keek naar zichzelf als naar een tekenfilm.
Was hij fabriekswerker of fabrieksproduct ?
Was hij slechts grondstoffen ?

Hoe kon hij ontsnappen ? Maar waar zou hij dan terechtkomen ?
Hij wist dat hij diep in de problemen zat.
Het waren de excursies van de viskunde.
Hij voelde zich allereerst zelf een vis.
Was hij vis of visser, of allebei ?

Hij moest in het verleden vissen.
Hij moest een nieuwe wereld bouwen van de graten.
Het vlees moest verslonden worden.
Hij moest sieraden maken van de graten.
Hij moest gratenjuwelier worden, zeejuwelier.

Hij moest vechten voor zijn leven in deze arena’s.
Het geheugen verslond hem telkens weer.

Hij kon niet opstaan, hij kon niet wakker worden.
Hij moest de viskunde verdiepen.
Het was de enige weg.

Het kwam aan op veel gokken, veel dobbelen, veel experimenteren.
Hij moest zijn weg hier zien te vinden.
Hij moest het gratenorakel leren lezen,
de gratentaal leren, het gratenschrift.
Hij moest tot de zeegrotten komen waarop de graten-hieroglieven waren.
Hij mocht hier niet dansen. Hij moest leren.
Hij moest dieper de grotten in.

Het leven was vreemde spiegelingen die hij moest ontcijferen.
Het stuwde voort vanuit een bron die hij niet kende.
Hij was naar die bron op zoek.
Diep in de grotten moest hij.
Diep in de mijnen, diep in de campings, diep in de fabrieken, ja, diep in de stad.
Hij moest tot het museum gaan, maar dan moest hij dieper de kelders van het museum in, de magazijnen, waar het verborgene was wat ze nooit lieten zien.
In de stad moest hij ontkomen aan de camera-dictatuur.
Alles werd tegen het licht gehouden. En het licht had hen verblind.

Hij moest tot de boten gaan, de zee op, tot de verloren eilanden, de vergeten eilanden.
Die tunnels liepen gewoon onder het museum.
Maar de museum-politie liet hem niet gaan.
Hier moest je voor alles werken.
Je moest alles verdienen.
Hij moest museumwerker worden om achter de geheimen te komen.

Er leefde een octopus in zijn hoofd, met vele tentakels.
Hij leidde een dubbelleven.
Hij was van alle markten thuis en droeg vele hoeden.

‘Hoeveel context hebben we nog nodig ?’ dacht hij bij zichzelf.
Hij was de wind en het water, maar nu moest hij aarde worden.

Hij was in gevecht met spiegelingen die hem niet wilden laten gaan.
Hij kende alleen de spiegel niet.

Het ging niet slechts om spiegelogie, vertalologie en filterologie, maar het ging ook om economie. Hij moest het verdienen, anders kwam hij nergens.
En dat kon alleen op school.
Daarom was hij vurig door een vis gestoken.
Telkens trok het hem terug naar school.

Hij kon aan de school niet ontsnappen.
Maar hij moest dieper tot de schoolkelders, om te zien wat ze allemaal achterhielden.
Maar de schoolpolitie liet hem niet gaan.
Hij zou er alleen achter komen als hij schoolwerker zou worden.

Maar stelde hij het niet te makkelijk voor ?
Het waren allemaal onderdelen van een sieraad.
Maar hij vroeg zich af of er schakels ontbraken.
Hij richtte zich op de viskunde.

Niet meer wiskunde, maar viskunde.
Wiskunde kon zo bedriegelijk zijn, hield zoveel verborgen.
Hij moest zijn wiskunde boeken achterstevoren lezen om de viskunde te begrijpen.
Wiskunde was slechts een voorhangsel, ook van de amazones.

Er was een klein schooltje op de camping, een zondagschooltje.
Er was ook een maandagschooltje voor filosofie.
Het woensdagschooltje was voor viskunde.
Daar moest hij zijn.
Er was ook een campingsupermarkt.
Daar kon hij ook een heleboel krijgen.
Het was als een schoolsupermarkt.

Het leren ging hier gewoon door.

Het was een bevroren nachtmerrie waarin hij opgesloten zat.
Sinds de val was hij in een coma geraakt, en kon niet wakker worden.
Hij leefde in zijn dromen.
Het leven ging door op een andere wijze.

Maar wat had hij verloren ?
Het was toch allemaal een soap opera.

In ieder geval moest hij er het beste van zien te maken.
Hij wist niet of hij dood of levend was.
Hij wist niet of hij sliep of wakker was.
Hij twijfelde ook over de val en de coma.
Dat hadden ze hem verteld, maar wie kon hij vertrouwen ?
Hij had toch altijd al het gevoel dat hij in een zombie wereld leefde.
Iedereen leek wel in een coma.
Misschien was het wel een coma wereld.
In ieder geval moest hij het doen met zijn dromen en het weinige leven dat hij had.

Hoofdstuk 7. De camping supermarkt

Er was een strijd tussen fabriek en labyrint in zijn hoofd, tussen twee octopussen.
Chemische stoffen vochten om zijn identiteit.
Ook de school vocht om hem, en het museum.
En hij moest de viskunde leren om te overleven.
De viskunde was in oorlog met de wiskunde.
Geschiedenisleraren tegen wiskundeleraren.
En de chemie leraren onderwezen erover.

Het waren schooloorlogen in de hoofden van de leerlingen.
De leraren streden om de identiteiten van de leerlingen.
Het waren lange treinen in zijn hoofd, en soms waren er treinrovers of treinkapers.
De blauwgezichten hielpen hem, ook al waren het slechts de orakelstenen van de amazones.
Er werd om hem gedobbeld.

Ze gooiden de graten, en keken dan wat ze erin zagen.
Het was het gratenorakel, en hij moest het ook leren.
Het was onderdeel van de viskunde.

Soms was hij er moe van, ging het traag, kon hij zich niet concentreren.
Een goede zwemtocht kon hem dan helpen.
Soms ging hij naar de waterval.

Er was veel in de natuur om hem af te leiden, maar het kon ook gevaarlijk zijn.
Roofdieren loerden op hem.
Giftige beesten waren overal.
Hij moest zien te overleven hier.

Giftige mensen, giftige familie, giftige vrienden.
Hij moest door de voorhangsels heen.
Het was giftige wiskunde, en hij moest tot de viskunde gaan.
Alles was hier aangekoekt tot getallen, en het had de mensen dom gemaakt.
Men zat vast aan kleverige troep.
Men ging erdoor raaskallen, als kolderkatten.
Het ging in je hoofd zitten, het was zwaar besmettelijk.

Van afstand wilden ze niet weten.
Het waren namelijk junkies.
Het was verslavingsgedrag.
Ze zaten onder het kleefvirus, en leefden in ontkenning.

Alleen de viskunde kon hem losmaken van het kleefvirus.
Hij moest het gratenschrift leren, en het gratenorakel.
Maar het kleefvirus wilde hem niet laten gaan.
Het was oorlog. Hij was als een pop die moest ontsnappen uit de poppenwinkel.
Maar dat ging maar moeizaam, en daarom moest hij zijn binnenwereld opzoeken.

Het kleefvirus regeerde. De amazones waren degenen die eraan ontsnapt waren, door de viskunde. Dat konden zowel vrouwen als mannen zijn. Hij wilde er ook bij horen.

Hij haatte het kleefvirus. Het kleefvirus loog in de hoofden, en ontkende alles.
Het maakte mensen hoogmoedig en hebzuchtig.
Hij wist dat minimalisme de enige weg was.

Het had hem diep gestoken. Het woelde in hem.
Hij moest er nog antistoffen tegen aanmaken.
Het kleefvirus zat op de troon.
Het wilde kleven.
Zo kon hij roddelen van hoofd tot hoofd, en zijn wereld weven.
Een leugenachtige wereld.
Het was een koldervis.

Hij moest het kleefvirus overwinnen, het koldervirus, door op de koldervissen te jagen. Dat liep uit op een heuse oorlog. Het waren clownsvissen, zeer giftig, en ze konden je zwaar onder stroom zetten. Het waren electrische vissen. Hij moest hierom leren boogschieten. Hij moest genoeg afstand bewaren. Deze vissen konden je doden.

Hij merkte dat de strijd onbegonnen was. Steeds weer kwamen er amazones om door deze vissen. De koldervissen waren zeer snel. Je was bij het zwemmen nooit je leven zeker. Hij moest naar wateren gaan waar deze vissen helemaal niet waren. De oorlog tegen deze vissen was hopeloos. Hij moest zich van deze vissen afzonderen, van elk viswater waar deze vissen zich bevonden. Hij moest geheel loskomen van de kolderwateren en de koldergebieden.

Het waren clown oorlogen, en de amazones zeiden dat er daar heel moeilijk van ontsnapt kon worden. Het koldergif zat al heel diep en iedereen was min of meer onder zware mindcontrol door het gif, wat van geslacht tot geslacht werd doorgegeven, want het zat in het zaad, het zat in de genen. De mensheid werd in de tang gehouden door de clowns.

De clowns stelden het altijd weer beter voor dan het was.
Zij waren de scheppers van de gemaakte romantiek.
Allemaal voor de markt.
Ze moordden voor het grote geld.
Ze gingen niets uit de weg, niets ging hen te ver.
Bedrog was hun aas.
Daarom waren er de clown oorlogen.
De wereld was ten onder gegaan in de clown oorlogen.
De gevangenissen hier waren fabrieken.
Ook de ziekenhuizen waren fabrieken.

De clowns droegen zorg voor de geldmachine.
De mens moest sterven voor het geld.
Geld was meer waard dan een mensenleven.

Clowns was nog een net woord voor zombies.
Clowns waren een soort opgeblazen, geraffineerde zombies die leidinggevende posities in handen hadden genomen, hadden gestolen.
Zombies konden naar speciale scholen waar ze werden opgeleid tot clown.
En deze machine ging maar door, allemaal voor geld.
Geld was wat ze aanbaden. Geld moest rollen, en geld was hun wapen.
Wapenfabrieken was waar het hen om ging.

Deze clowns hadden wapens.
Deze clowns waren verslaafd aan wapens.
Deze clowns waren zombie-specialisten.
Deze clowns waren volleerde zombies, professionele zombies.
Ze gingen niemand uit de weg, werden door geen regels of enige kennis tegengehouden.
De clowns waren de wachters van de camera-dictatuur, van de cameracratie.

In zijn ontcijferingen van de graten hieroglieven meende hij erachter te zijn gekomen dat deze kolderwerelden en kolderwezens, deze clowns, voortkwamen vanuit een

kolderplantje wat op de zeebodem groeide. Met het gratenorakel kwam hij erachter waar dit plantje zich bevond, maar inmiddels was het plantje uitgegroeid tot een gigantische plant. Het was een soort allesverwoestend zeemonster, een vleesetende zeeplant. Dat was waar de oorlog om ging. Hier kwam al die troep uit voort, al die clowns, al die koldervissen. Met een zaag ging hij onderwater, in een duikerspak, maar ver kwam hij niet. Hij moest met een onderzeeër, maar die kwam ook niet ver. Hij wist nu in ieder geval waar de oorlog om draaide. Het was een octopusplant.

Vele malen moest hij het gratenorakel raadplegen. De blauwgezichten hielpen met het droogleggen van de plaats waar de octopusplant was. Het was als een zeeheg op de zeebodem. Weer ging hij met zaag bewapend, en begon te zagen. De blauwgezichten begonnen te boren. Maar de octopusplant werd hier alleen maar woester door en erger, en begon meer en meer te groeien. Er moest een hek omheen gebouwd worden, nee, er moest een stenen omheining komen. Deze plant was gevaarlijk. Je kon niet zomaar tegen deze plant strijden. Nog steeds bracht het clowns voort. Nog steeds bracht het kolderwezens voort. De octopusplant moest in een stenen ei.

Maar wat ze ook deden, de octopusplant groeide voort, en brak door welk gesteente dan ook heen. De oorlog duurde voort. Het was een kleefziekte, een romantiziekte.

Een zwijn verkocht de vruchten van zelfverheffing bij de octopusplant. De zwijnenjacht begon. Het zwijn hield de octopusplant groot. Het waren de zwijnen van hoogzucht en hebzucht. Hij moest de zwijnkunde leren. Het was nog steeds een strijd tegen het verleden. Het geheugen moest herschapen worden. De zwijnen hier waren giftig. Zwart als teer waren ze soms, als rookverslavingen.

Pijlen kwamen maar moeilijk door hun dikke huiden heen. Soms leken ze wel van steen of metaal. Ze waren fabriekswerkers. Zij hielden de fabrieken in stand. Zwarte zwijnen van een sprookjesverhaal. Het had hen rijk gemaakt.

Werken moest hij voor betere pijlen. Het was als een gokmachine. Het maakte hem verslaafd. En de pijlen werden door de zwijnen zelf gemaakt en verkocht. Hij moest werken voor de zwijnen. Deze gokmachines gaven niet mee. De gokkers waren uiteindelijk altijd de grote verliezers. Deze gokmachines waren gebouwd op sluwe winstmechaniek. Deze zwijnen waren altijd veilig. Deze zwijnen zaten altijd hoog en droog, want zij hadden deze gokmachines gemaakt.

Hij was in een worsteling met het zwijn, en in een worsteling met een octopus. Het nam zoveel van hem weg.

Het was een gifput. Het gif hield het geheugen op sterk water, bevroren, in een bevroren nachtmerrie.

Hij was in worsteling met een overdosis. Hij zou droommakelaar moeten zijn om hiermee te kunnen afrekenen, niet zomaar dreamdealer of dreamjockey.

Hij kwam tot een kerk genaamd de vol gereformeerde gemeente, de vgg. Bij een struik was er een trappenhuis die naar beneden ging. Onderaan het trappenhuis kwam je in een wildernis waar indianen leefden. Hij vroeg zich af wat de vol gereformeerde gemeente was. In het trappenhuis waren hieroglieven. Aan de zijkanten van het trappenhuis was een klooster. Daar was ook een bibliotheek met boeken die over deze dingen gingen. Het kwam er bij hem op neer dat hij veel moest lezen en leren.

Er lag een dorp naast het klooster. Hier moest hij als droom makelaar mensen hun huis toewijzen. Zo kan de overdosis wegsmelten. Het had zich teveel verzameld op één punt.

Hij moest weer terugkeren naar zijn jeugdherinneringen, naar de nuances. Het was allemaal veel te ver gegaan. Hij had een overdosis gehad. Het voedsel was gedwongen, de medicijnen waren gedwongen, zoveel was gedwongen. Het was een wereld van dwang.

Hij voelde een rode muur om hem heenkomen, alsof hij in een rood ei zat. Hij kon er doorheen kijken, en zag een wereld vol vraatzucht, een wereld die geen grenzen kende. Overdosis had hem geboorte gegeven en nu moest hij het leren temperen. Al deze bloedlijnen, het waren de lijnen van overdosis, al deze families, al deze kerken, scholen en organisaties.

Ze hadden allemaal een grote overdosis gehad en nu moesten ze veel lezen en leren om het in balans te krijgen, in de juiste mate en juiste verhouding. Dat ging aan de hand van een klok en een meter. Maar er was zoveel bedrog hier. Hij kon het zien door het rode doorzichtige gesteente.

Hij zag leprechauns rondvliegen in helicopters en lachend stortten zij zich te pletter tegen het rode gesteente. Ze konden niet meer binnenkomen. Ze konden er niet om rouwen. Nooit zouden ze een traan laten. Ze waren gewetenloos en hersenloos. Ze wisten niet wat emotie was. Het waren aspergers.

Tunnels met hieroglieven gingen langs het strand, langs de campings.

Het was een wereld van lachers ten koste van de ander, en ze lachten zichzelf de dood in.

Als hij in de campingsupermarkt was had hij het gevoel dat hij tot leven kwam, maar wat voor leven was het ? Was het niet allemaal dwangmatig hier ? Het stroomde, maar eerst had hij een confrontatie met de leugen. De bloedlijnen hier klopten niet, want het was de overdosis. Het was besmettelijk en plantte zich haastig voort.

Het was een kleefvirus. Hij moest zoveel mogelijk afstand bewaren, en het bekijken door het rode gesteente om hem heen. Telkens weer stortte het kleefvirus zich te pletter tegen het gesteente. Het zocht naar gaatjes. Het wilde hem niet laten gaan. Het wilde niemand laten gaan. Rusteloos was het telkens op zoek.

Hun glimlachen waren vals. Ze leefden hier van andermans dood. Vergeving en verdraagzaamheid was verraad hier. Het was te ver gegaan, totdat het nalatigheid werd, onverschilligheid. Het was zowel een asperger syndroom als een stockholm syndroom.

Zijn jeugdherinneringen waren als orakelstenen in zijn hand.

Hij moest nu leren afkicken als droommonnik en droompelgrim. Ook de kerken waren gegroeid uit de overdosis. De overdosis had vele tentakels. Het deed zich voor als bloedlijnen. Het kwam gemaskerd als familie en

kerk. En alles was dwangmatig, als een allesverwoestend monster.

De blauwgezichten waren zijn jeugdherinneringen. Het waren de ijsgezichten. Toen kleefde alles nog niet zo. Maar de volwassen wereld was een kleverige bende, een kleefvirus. Zo bedreven ze markt. Ze hadden een ziekelijke zucht naar kleven en vernietigen. Het waren kleefbommen. Ze hechtten zich vast aan de breinen van de mensen.

Het kon niet meer bij hem binnen komen. Hij was immers in het rode ei. Hij zag het virus om zich heen voortwoekeren, maar ze luisterden niet naar hem, ze leefden in ontkenning. Dat was ook een bijwerking van de overdosis. Ze waren zaaddriftig, erfdriftig en daardoor marktdriftig. Haastig, ziekelijk en hysterisch waren zij in de ijver van de overdosis, in de race tegen de klok, want ze hadden maar weinig tijd. Hij kon het allemaal niet bijhouden. Hij had niks meer met deze wereld. Hij was in het rode ei. Hij kon alles zien. Hij geloofde er niet meer in.

Teveel hadden ze hem bedrogen. Hij was er klaar mee. De blauwgezichten waren de orakelstenen van zijn jeugd. Die gaven hem moed. Die brachten hem er doorheen. Hij kon er nu creatief mee omgaan. Ze inspireerden hem, als oerwoud-insecten. Ze bliezen leven in hem.

Hoofdstuk 8. De leugensteen

Het paradijs was de herschepping van het geheugen, maar daar kwam veel bij kijken. Hij moest veel spelletjes spelen. Geheugen spelletjes. Ook moest hij veel lezen en leren, en nieuwe herinneringen zouden bruggen kunnen zijn tussen oude herinneringen.

Het was een clownswereld, een moerasgevangenis die hem niet wilde laten gaan. Het was zwaar bewaakt. Alles werd in de gaten gehouden met moerascamera’s. Het was een cameradictatuur, een cameracratie.

De roodgezichtjes, vogeltjes, kwamen hem tegemoet. Zij waren de voorgeboortes en de parallelle levens. Het waren ook orakelstenen in het spel. Ze gingen dieper dan zomaar jeugdherinneringen. Het waren onbewuste herinneringen die nog aan de oppervlakte moesten komen en hun plaats moesten vinden in het spel, in zijn inventaris. Het was een donker geheugen wat hij nog niet kende. Het moest nog ontwaken in hem.

Het was een stuk verloren natuur wat tot hem terugkwam.

De roodgezichten hadden rode pakken met donkere rode helmen. Ze kwamen in treinen voor de nieuwe wereld. Ze predikten wat de bloemen predikten. Het waren de vergeten en verloren levens, de voorgeboortes en de

parallelle levens. Hij zag zoveel legers. Ze namen alles over. Het was het donkere gat waar de mensheid niets van afwist. Ze brachten nieuwe verhalen, nieuwe sprookjes, nieuwe spelletjes, en de nieuwe bijbel.

Hij kende de nieuwe bijbel, maar nu kwam het tot leven. Het was alsof de lente was gekomen. Zijn tuin was in groei en bloei, en er waren veel roodgezichtjes.

Hij was depressief. Het kon geen vat op hem krijgen, maar het weefde wel een wereld om hem heen. Hij moest de lijnen van zijn voorgeboortes en parallelle levens leren kennen, de roodlijnen. Hij was helemaal gewurgd door de bloedlijnen. Hier was er het rode tegen het bloed.

Het was alsof er teksten diep in hem waren die begonnen los te komen. Hij moest die teksten onder ogen komen, er vat op krijgen.

Pas toen zijn brein dieper scheurde kon hij deze werelden bezoeken. Hij kwam als vreemdeling. Het was een geheel andere natuur. De roodgezichtjes hadden hem hier gebracht.

Het was een diepere ontwaking door een diepere nachtmerrie, en nu stond alles in de bloei. Zijn kooi was gaan bloeien, het visnet waarin hij lag. Hij lag op het strand, helemaal kapot. Hier woonden alleen inheemse

vrouwen. In de verte kon hij watervallen zien. Zijn schip was vergaan. De golven hadden hem hier naartoe gesleurd. Tegen de stroom kon hij niet op. Ze slingerden hem op het strand. Hij probeerde houvast te krijgen op het zand.

Deze vrouwen waren pastoraal, predikten de boodschap van het visnet, hadden hem binnen genomen. Hij moest hun taal leren. Hij moest hun orakels leren. Alles had andere betekenissen hier, diepere betekenissen. Ze lieten hem grot hiëroglieven zien. Hij moest ze ontcijferen. Dat zou een lange tijd duren. Eerst moest hij hun cultuur leren.

Hij kwam in hun ziekenhuis terecht, waar hij dwaalde door de gangen. Hij was nog nooit in zo’n groot ziekenhuis geweest. Het was als een groot dorp. Er was hier zoveel onderricht. De zieken konden hier van alles leren.

Hij moest begrijpen waar hij terecht was gekomen. Het was alsof zijn brein bloedde. De scheur was diep gegaan, maar zo kon hij het ervaren. Ze lieten hem rode bloemenvelden zien. Ze groeiden overal om het ziekenhuis heen, en ook in bakken door het ziekenhuis. Hij kon zichzelf voelen nu. Hij had contact met zichzelf.

Hij wist niet of hij dood of levend was, slapend of wakend. Allerlei lagen van water vloeiden over hem heen als hij in de waterval was. Alles wat hij wist was dat hij

goed ziek was. Het leek alsof er pijlen door zijn brein waren gegaan. Maar nu kon hij dit beleven. Het opende nieuwe werelden voor hem. Hij was dieper gegaan dan ooit, alsof hij aan de rand van het universum stond. Allemaal watervallen. Hier werden dromen gemaakt.

Hier splitste alles. Het kleefvirus kon hier niet bestaan.

De ziekenhuisgangen leidden dieper onder de grond waar de geneesmiddelen groeiden. Maar hier waren ook verschrikkelijke kolderkatten. Die konden verschrikkelijk krijsen. Ze leken de geneesmiddelen te bewaken. Hij kwam erachter dat het belangrijk was, want anders zouden de mensen teveel nemen van de geneesmiddelen. Er moest dus een heleboel leed en restrictie bestaan om de mens te beschermen tegen de overdosis. De kolder leidde de mensen af, maar ook daarvan kon men teveel nemen, en daarom waren de roodgezichtjes er.

Hoe dieper hij in deze wereld kwam, hoe meer douane hij bemerkte, en ook de douane oorlogen. Zij streden niet alleen tegen smokkelaars en rebellen, maar zij streden ook tegen elkaar. Het was douane tegen douane, en daarom was er het belang van de douane scholen. Men moest opgeleid worden tot douane, want er waren een heleboel beunhazen aan de gang.

Hij wilde niet bij de douane. Hij vond het zelfbedriegers. Hij wilde een monnik zijn. Maar telkens weer werd hij met de douane geconfronteerd. Hij kwam er bijna niet langs. Vaak werd hij teruggestuurd naar het ziekenhuis of de gevangenis.

Hij wist dat het nodig was, zodat hij geen overdosis van iets zou krijgen. Hij moest het pad volgen. Douane, ziekenhuis, gevangenis en school hoorden daarbij. Er werd veel gewaarschuwd tegen de monniken. Die zouden een overdosis ergens van hebben gehad.

Telkens als hij het niet meer zag zitten hielpen de vogeltjes hem er doorheen. Amsterdam was vol met vogeltjes. Altijd werd hij ‘s ochtends wakker door hen, en als hij het in de ochtend moeilijk had dan hielpen ze hem er doorheen. Vaak moest hij in de middag slapen om er doorheen te komen. De depressie joeg op hem. Het scheurde zijn brein, dieper en dieper, tot diepere werelden.

Hoe kon hij hier leven ? Het was bijna onmogelijk, maar als hij overdag op straat liep en naar de stoplichten keek, dan wist hij hoe belangrijk het was in restrictie te leven, als een balling. Hij kon niet meer terug. Hij moest verder, dieper. En daarom waren er de dubbele lasten.

Altijd weer kwamen de roodgezichtjes bij hem om herinneringen van verloren en vergeten tijden terug te

brengen. Altijd weer hadden ze een boodschap om te prediken. Hij wilde bij hen zijn en met hen vliegen, in grote zwermen, over zeeën en landen. Hij wilde weten waar dit alles naartoe zou leiden, de grote rode bron onder ogen willen komen. Het moest diep in de natuur zijn, een groot geheimenis. Hij moest dieper en dieper over de stenen trappen. Er leek geen einde aan te komen. Hij wilde naar het begin, maar hij vroeg zich af of er wel een begin was.

Alles groeide en stroomde met iets mee, maar wat was het ? Door welke krachten werd alles voortgedreven ?

Betere werelden bleven niet. Het waren slechts golven, en dan zakte het weer diep weg. Het was als eb en vloed. Zo bleef hij zoeken.

Hij had het gevoel alsof er een lek zat in zijn brein, maar hij was bang voor de overdosis. Hij moest onder ogen komen dat het leven niet was zoals hij dacht.

Ook de natuur had zijn eigen camera’s. De bomen namen alles van de mens in zich op, om het te herscheppen en te ordenen.

In de diepte van Amsterdam kwam hij uiteindelijk tot de steen die alles omdraaide. Het was een leugensteen. Het was zowel een vloek als een bescherming.

De steen loog en loog maar, en pompte zich zo door de bloedlijnen heen. Het was een standbeeld van een vrouw, maar het standbeeld begon af te brokkelen. Hij herinnerde zijn huwelijk wat als Auschwitz was geweest. Hij wilde er niet meer aan denken.

Hoofdstuk 9. De arena

Hij werd wakker voor de troon van koningin Teliëlza in het land Stugort op de planeet Betelgeuse. Een monsterlijke spin met een mensenhoofd, een mannenhoofd met een snor, had hem een zwaar giftige slag verkocht. Hij was toen in zijn hoofd overgeleverd aan de Amsterdamse nachten, en aan zorg, veel zorg, maar hij was gewoon op de planeet Betelgeuse, en hij hallucineerde door de slag. Hij was een monnik-gladiator, een pelgrim, en hij werkte voor de koningin Teliëlza in de arena.

Hij probeerde te ontwaken en keek naar het beest. Als hij nog een slag zou krijgen, waar zou hij dan terechtkomen ? Hij rees zijn schild op. Er kwamen ook gevaarlijke stralen uit de bek van het beest. Het beest kon zijn mond heel ver openzetten, als een groot zwart gat.

Met zijn knots haalde hij uit naar het beest. Het leek alsof het beest onder stroom stond en hij werd weggeslingerd. Hij zag dat er ook een andere gladiator was. Het was Bensteder. Bensteder had hem al die tijd beschermd toen hij was geslagen. Maar nu leek het alsof Bensteder verwond was door het beest. ‘Wat een kreng,’ dacht hij. Weer haalde hij uit naar het beest, en weer werd hij weggeslingerd door de stroom. Het was alsof hij onder zware voltage was, maar het leek niet tot hem door te dringen. Het was alsof hij in een rood ei was door hetgeen

hij had meegemaakt, alsof iets hem beschermde tegen het beest. Snel raakte hij Bensteder aan, die toen ook in een rood stralingsveld kwam, als in een rood ei. Beiden haalden ze weer uit naar het beest, en het beest werd weggedreven. De stroom van het beest kon niet tegen het rode ei op. Hij werkte ook dat er rode stralen uit zijn ogen begonnen te komen die op het beest werden afgezonden, en toen stortte het beest uiteindelijk neer.

De koningin klapte in haar handen. ‘Mijn zus, Soldilia, die in het land Telliix troont zal hier blij mee zijn,’ zei de koningin. Ook het land Geërgo zal hier blij mee zijn. We zijn allemaal zo lang geteisterd geweest door dit monster. Goed werk, gladiatoren. Zo mag ik het zien. Jullie lijden is niet voor niets geweest. Jullie loon zal groot zijn.’

De beide gladiatoren keken naar de koningin. ‘Wat is ons loon, koningin, en wat was de naam van dit beest ? Het lijkt wel alsof er een lek in mijn geheugen zit. Ik kan me niet veel meer herinneren van vroeger,’ zei Bensteder.

‘Hmmm, dus Bensteder is door hetzelfde gegaan als ik,’ dacht hij bij zichzelf.

‘Tektor,’ zei de koningin. ‘Je geheugen zal wel terugkomen.’

‘Wat heeft het beest gedaan ?’ vroeg hij. ‘Ik ben ook mijn geheugen kwijtgeraakt.’

‘Neem voldoende rust,’ zei de koningin. ‘Jullie hebben hard gewerkt. Het geheugen zal vanzelf terugkomen. Het beest is nu verslagen.’

Ze moesten door een deur naast de arena, waardoor ze op een gang kwamen waar de gladiatorenkamers waren. Daar konden ze rusten. Beiden hadden ze hun eigen kamer, tegenover elkaar.

Hij had vreemde gevoelens in zijn buik, en hij ging op zijn bed liggen.

Hij was een gladiator, en daarom was zijn brein verscheurd. Hij had goed werk gedaan. Zijn werk was om hem heen als een spiegel. Zo lang was de spiegel ingeslagen geweest, maar nu begon het te herstellen. Hij was slechts op de planeet Betelgeuse geweest. Alles had zich lopen vervormen sinds zijn breinspiegel was ingeslagen. Hij voelde zich nu als herboren. Het bloed was geworden tot rode straling. Het gif was geworden tot medicijn.

Hij kon het gezicht met de snor niet uit zijn gedachten krijgen. Hij herinnerde zich dat Tektor soms ook meerdere gezichten had, van een andere man, en soms van een

vrouw. Hij moest nu herstellen. Het was een lang en zwaar gevecht geweest. het leek wel alsof iemand zijn hoofd probeerde dicht te naaien, de scheur in zijn hoofd. Hij kreeg vele hechtingen.

Hij kon zich nu weer herinneren dat hij in Stugort woonde, op de planeet Betelgeuse. Het voelde alsof zijn ramen werden gelapt. Hij was een vechtmonnik, een gladiatormonnik, van een bepaalde monnikenorde. Hij herinnerde zich Bensteder ook weer een beetje, zijn maat. Ze vochten voor de koningin, tegen beesten en monsters. Zo bewezen ze ook diensten aan andere landen die door deze beesten en monsters werden gekweld.

Teliëlza stond voor zijn bed, de koningin. ‘Ja, je hebt overwonnen,’ zei ze. ‘Mijn zus zou je ook graag willen zien, Soldilia.’ Hij herinnerde hen beiden weer een beetje. ‘Rust eerst maar uit,’ zei ze.

Hij hield zich vast aan zijn bed. Hij was nog wel een beetje duizelig. Toen vertrok de koningin weer.

Na een hele lange tijd werd hij wakker. Hij wist niet hoe lang hij geslapen had. In zijn kamer was een boekenkast vol met boeken over de monsters en beesten van Betelgeuse. Hij begon er doorheen te bladeren. Gladiators op Betelgeuse moesten velen van zulke boeken bestuderen. Ze zaten ervoor op een gladiator school.

Steeds meer van zijn geheugen begon terug te keren. Ook werkte hij in het leger, voor als het oorlog was. Het waren gladiator legers.

Hij was bang voor nieuwe gevechten. Waar Tektor hem had in geworpen wilde hij niet naar terug. Hij kon niet meer. Hij was bang zijn verstand te verliezen. Dat had hij eens al. Moest hij nog een keer terug naar de arena ? Nee, de koningin verbood hem dat. Het was genoeg zo. Het leven, en voornamelijk het monnikenleven, was al zwaar genoeg op zichzelf. Hij mocht nu naar een monniken orde in Geërgo, in de wildernis. Hij zou nog wel opgeroepen kunnen worden voor het leger, maar alleen als het echt noodzakelijk was. Ook Bensteder zou overgeplaatst worden. Er werd gezegd dat beiden verwond waren voor het leven, en dat hen door te laten vechten in de arena als gladiator onverantwoordelijk zou zijn. Ze hadden nu beiden een trauma wat niet meer weg zou gaan. Ze waren klaar om naar Geërgo te gaan.

Het was een lange tocht om daar te komen. Ze kregen een eigen kamer naast elkaar. De kamers hadden boekenkasten met boeken veelal over Geërgo, en ook algemene boeken over Betelgeuse, en allerlei andere soorten boeken die monniken lazen. Beiden waren ze blij dat ze nu hier waren. Het viel hem op dat er veel boeken over amazones waren. Er leefden hier nogal veel amazone stammen in de wildernis, en die waren niet geheel ongevaarlijk. Het leek

alsof het probleem zich verschoof. In het verleden bleek het klooster weleens invallen te hebben gehad van amazones, en gingen de monniken in ballingschap. Hij las er wat verhalen over.

Dit was ook de reden dat hij hier wachters zag, gewapende monniken. Hij begon er ‘s nachts dromen over te krijgen dat ze werden aangevallen door amazones en in ballingschap werden genomen. Deze vrouwen waren groot en sterk, veel sterker dan hen.

Hij las over de mannenfokkerijen die sommige kannibaalse amazone stammen hadden. Mannen werden gefokt voor hun bloed en littekenweefsel, zodat ze gewoon door konden leven. Ze werden ook wel de eeuwig verdoemden genoemd. Hij wist niet of dat echt bestond of dat het verhalen waren, maar hij las het in de boeken van de monniken. De monniken vreesden de amazones dus ze waren altijd op hun hoede. Hij vroeg zich af of hij wel op de juiste plaats terecht was gekomen, maar terug wilde hij ook niet.

Hij besloot er met andere monniken over te praten, maar hij merkte op dat ze telkens heel tegenstrijdig waren, en dat ze nogal van mening verschilden met elkaar.

De dromen gingen door in ieder geval, en het werd erger. Ook Bensteder had er last van. Bensteder bleef soms

dagen op bed liggen als hij zo’n droom had gehad. Het putte hem uit. Nu hij zijn maat zo zag lijden wist hij dat het gevecht gewoon doorging. Ze waren in principe nog steeds gladiatoren. Nu moesten ze het opnemen tegen de amazones.

Op een dag was er een grote aanval door de amazones op het klooster. Ook hij en Bensteder gingen in gevangenschap. Dit hadden ze al gevreesd. Ze kwamen op een mannen-fokkerij terecht, en werden gehouden voor hun bloed en littekenweefsel, wat ontstond daardat er regelmatig in hen gesneden werd. Ze werden als vee behandeld. Ook moesten ze allerlei werk verrichten. Ze werden als slaaf gehouden.

Bensteder ging hard achteruit en ook hij. Met de amazones viel niet te onderhandelen. Dit was zoals het was.

Hij hoopte maar dat hij het droomde. ‘s Nachts droomde hij over de Amsterdamse nachten. Hij wist niet goed wat erger was. De dromen waren maar kort, en vaak kon hij ze niet goed herinneren. Hij vroeg zich af of de mannen-fokkerij een droom was, maar het kwam bij hem over als de werkelijkheid.

Was dit nu de zin van het leven ? Was hij hiertoe bestemd, om als slaaf gebruikt te worden en als grondstof ? Hij voelde zich weer als in een fabriek, maar dit was een hele

primitieve. Uiteindelijk kwam hij tot het besef dat waar hij dan ook kwam, hij altijd wel uitgebuit werd. Gelukkig kon hij nog wegdromen. Maar dit was gewoon onderdeel van het leven. Het had verschillende kanten. Uitbuiting en onderdrukking was er slechts één van. Het leven was veel groter dan dat.

‘De wereld heeft teveel van ons gestolen, en daarom stelen wij het terug,’ zeiden de amazones.

Hij schrok wakker. Het was dus maar een droom. Toen hij verder ging slapen droomde hij weer, dat hij aan een verwilderd en verlaten strand was, en dat de golven woest waren, en dat er een grote octopus in de zee was met vele tentakels. Het ding zat in zijn hoofd en gaf hem al die dromen. Hij had het gevoel dat hij nog steeds een gladiator was, maar een dromengladiator. Was het een gave of een vloek ?

Hij was in worsteling met de octopus. De octopus kwam het strand op en probeerde hem in de zee te sleuren. De octopus kreeg het uiteindelijk voor elkaar en trok hem de diepte in. Hij wist niet waar hij beter kon zijn : bij de octopus, bij de amazones, of in de arena, of in de Amsterdamse nachten, of waren dit allemaal de Amsterdamse nachten ? Maar hij was toch op de planeet Betelgeuse ?

De octopus schoot plaatjes in zijn hoofd, verhalen, en hij vroeg zich af waar het goed voor was. Hij probeerde het neer te pennen toen hij wakker was, alleen maar om later te ontdekken dat hij nog steeds droomde. Hij was in een coma. Iets moest hem daar in gebracht hebben, maar hij wist niet wat. Was het een beest van de arena in Stugort ? Of hadden de amazones hem ergens van afgeduwd ? Het duizelde hem voor zijn ogen. Zijn brein was verscheurd. Was het een octopus of een cobra ? Wat moesten ze van hem ? Het leek meedogenloos, het ging maar door, of was hij op een school ? Het gaf hem informatie. Misschien was het een taal, en de taal moest misschien geleerd worden. Er bleven maar plaatjes in zijn hoofd geschoten worden. Hij bleef maar dromen. Hij was misschien gewoon nog in Stugort in gevecht met één of ander beest. Nee, dat kon niet. Daar was hij weg. Maar waar was hij nu ? Waarom werd hij maar niet wakker ? Bensteder had een kamer naast hem. Zou hij ook door dit soort dingen gaan ?

Misschien had hij complicaties van de Stugort tijd. Misschien was het gif van Tektor nog in hem. Misschien had het hem onherstelbaar aangetast.

Hij moest vechten in zijn dromen, telkens weer. Telkens weer werd hij teruggesleurd naar de arena. Wat waren dit voor beesten ? Wat was dit voor oorlog ? Nee, ze waren nog niet klaar met hem.

Er schreeuwde iets in hem, een beest met vele koppen. Hij wist dat het zijn eigen probleem was op de planeet Betelgeuse. Hij was een droomgladiator. Al deze beesten en monsters waren vormen van de overdosis waartegen hij moest strijden.

‘Mentale steroïden,’ stamelde hij. Ze verkochten hun zielen eraan. Zo groeiden ze uit tot zulke monsters. Hij zag ouders en kinderen in elkaar vergroeien. ‘Waarom, waarom ?’ riep hij uit in grote wanhoop, maar hij moest strijden om niet één met hen te worden, om niet met hen te worden weggesleurd. Hij zag grote, gespierde germanen die deze steroïden verkochten. Ze hadden veelal lang haar. En steeds meer werden ze tot zulke monsters. Monsters met vele koppen, dronken koppen. De mentale steroïden hadden hun breinen weggevreten. Er was nu wat anders voor in de plaats gekomen. Soms leek het op een spin, soms een octopus.

Hoofdstuk 10. Verscheurd tussen Stugort en Geërgo

Vanwege een evacuatie bevel moest hij naar de dichtstbijzijnde autoweg rennen. Ze werden geteisterd door een slang met een varkenskop die soms in een machine van een scheldend kind veranderde. Toen hij bij de autoweg was gekomen ging hij liften. Na een tijdje stopte er een auto die op een raceauto leek. De man in de auto was genaamd Genesisgram. De man was op weg naar een stadje. Genesisgram had een tijdmachine.

Hij zag golven van straling. Waar was hij ? Ze gingen naar een prehistorische wereld, de wereld van het oer-betelgeuse. Ergens halverwege begon de auto vreemd te doen. Na een tijdje vertrouwde hij het niet meer. Het was alsof er in de prehistorische wildernis geen plaats was voor zo’n auto. Hij was bang dat de auto zou ontploffen. De auto ging nog maar heel langzaam, en hij gooide de deur open en sprong eruit. Toen hij wegrende ontplofte de auto met Genesisgram er nog in.

Hij weende. Hij was in zak en as. Hij wist dat tijdreizen gevaarlijk was. Hij was trillerig. Hij probeerde zijn kleding uit te doen die veel te dik was.

‘Genesisgram !’ riep hij.

Toen kwam hij tot een afschuwelijke ontdekking. Vanuit de explosie kwam de slang met de varkenskop. Hij hoorde ook een kind schelden. De monniken zouden nooit zomaar een evacuatie bevel hebben gegeven. Dit monster was gevaarlijk. De slang schoot pijlsnel op hem af, maar begon halverwege weg te smelten. Nog even veranderde het in een leprechauntje en toen in een leeuw, en toen vaagde het helemaal weg. Het had hem bijna gegrepen. De monniken hadden gezegd dat het monster Venus heette. Hij staarde naar de resten van het monster. Er was vrijwel niets van overgebleven. Er was alleen een stofwolkje. Ook was er een vreemd licht. Hij rende er verder van weg, vanwege angst wat er nog zou kunnen gebeuren. Hij wist niet op wat voor wereld hij terecht was gekomen, maar het was de oerwereld van Betelgeuse.

Hij vroeg zich af of de andere monniken de aanval van Venus zouden hebben overleefd. Hij kon niet meer goed nadenken. Hij strompelde naar het eerste de beste huisje waar een oude man zat. ‘Waar ben ik ?’ vroeg hij.

‘In het wilde amazone land,’ zei de man.

‘Hoe kan het dat je overeind bent gebleven ?’ vroeg hij aan de oude man.

‘Ik ben goed bewapend tegen ze,’ zei de oude man.

‘Zijn er hier ook monniken ordes ?’ vroeg hij.

De oude man begon hem uit te lachen. ‘Monniken ordes ? Nee, die houden geen stand tegen de amazones. Ik ben een gladiator.’

‘Dat ben ik ook,’ zei hij.

Weer begon de oude man hem uit te lachen. ‘Je hebt niet eens wapens. Het is een wonder dat je hier hebt kunnen komen,’ zei de oude man. De oude man greep een mes en gaf het aan hem. ‘Hier, begin hier maar mee.’

‘Bedankt,’ stamelde hij.

‘Je hebt minstens ook nog een speer en een net nodig, en pijl en boog zou ook ...’ maar verder kwam de oude man niet.

‘Wat is er ?’ vroeg hij.

Het leek alsof de oude man ergens naar keek. ‘Oh niets,’ zei de oude man.

‘Wat voor monsters zijn hier naast de amazones ?’ vroeg hij.

De oude man liep naar binnen, en kwam na een tijdje weer naar buiten met een boek. ‘Hier, ga dit maar lezen,’ zei de oude man.

‘Ben je alleen ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Mijn makkers zijn allemaal dood,’ zei de oude man. ‘Ik kan me hier goed verdedigen, maar er zijn wel oude mannen nederzettingen, alleen vrijheid hebben ze nooit lang. Het trekt amazones aan. Je kunt beter alleen blijven. We zijn nu al in gevaar met z’n tweeën. Dan voelen de amazones zich bedreigd. Als eenling laten ze je meestal meer met rust.’

‘Dat wist ik niet,’ zei hij. ‘Moet ik weggaan ?’

‘Blijf nog maar even,’ zei de oude man. ‘Maar je kunt zeker niet te lang blijven.’

‘Ik ga liever nu weg,’ zei hij. ‘Ik wil je niet in gevaar brengen.’

De oude man ging weer naar binnen en kwam terug met een net, een speer, en een boog met een pijlenkoker. ‘Neem dit allemaal maar dan, dan weet je zeker dat je je kunt verdedigen als ze komen. Een man zonder wapens is gemakkelijke prooi en dat zouden ze zeker niet zomaar

langs zich heen laten gaan. Gewapende eenlingen hebben de grootste overlevingskans hier.’

Hij nam de wapens aan, bedankte de oude man, en liep weg. Het was een dorre wildernis. Alles leek droog. Hij was op zoek naar water. Na lang lopen kwam hij bij een rivier aan met een waterval. Hij meende tussen de bomen ook een kamp te zien. Opeens kwam er een vrouw op hem aflopen. Ze was ook bewapend, en er waren riemen om haar lichaam, dunne riemen van bruin leer. ‘Wat kom je doen ?’ vroeg de vrouw.

‘Ik was op zoek naar water,’ zei hij.

‘Genoeg hier,’ sprak de vrouw.

‘Wie zijn jullie ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Oh, een amazone stam,’ zei de vrouw.

‘Jullie hebben geen problemen met mijn aanwezigheid ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Nee, waarom ?’ vroeg ze.

‘Ik ben een man, en ik dacht dat amazones het niet zo op mannen hadden, misschien vanwege dreiging,’ zei hij.

De vrouw begon hem uit te lachen. ‘Een man alleen ? Nee, geen probleem, maar als het een grote groep is, dan is het een groot probleem.’ Hij moest even weer aan Genesisgram denken, en treurde erover. Hij voelde zich depressief.

De vrouw liep weer terug naar haar kamp.

Hij vond een tunnel onder de grond, en een ondergrondse wereld. Hier woonden leeuwen, hyena’s en allerlei wild. Ook woonden er amazone stammen. Hij was op zoek naar een woning. Misschien moest hij het zelf bouwen. Hij was in ieder geval bewapend, dus hij kon overleven.

Hij vroeg zich af hoe het met Geërgo en de andere landen was afgelopen sinds de komst van Venus, het monster.

Hij vond vreemde harde besjes waarvan hij kon leven. Het waren een soort rode erwten. Het had een drop-achtige smaak. Anijs-achtig.

Hij werd heen en weer geslingerd tussen woede, angst en depressie.
Hij hoorde toen ineens de stemmen van monniken op de gang, en werd wakker. Alles was maar een droom geweest. Hij moest er aan wennen dat hij een droomgladiator was.

Hij schreef de dromen op. Zo maakte hij boeken over de monsters. De monsters wilden Betelgeuse niet loslaten. Ze wilden ook zijn hoofd niet loslaten, want hij moest ze nog bevechten. Er was geen ontsnapping aan. Hij moest er dwars doorheen. Het was alsof hij nog steeds in Stugort werkte. Geërgo was slechts de verdieping ervan.

Stugort was zijn verleden, en het leefde voort in hem. Het was zowel een vloek als een gave. Nu moest hij het nog in zichzelf ontwikkelen als een talent. Dit ging door veel schaamte, schuldgevoel, woede, angst en depressie heen, maar er was een weg voor hem. Soms voelde hij zich als een scheldend kind, als een blinde vuistvechter, maar dan gaven de boeken hem richting.

Hij wilde schilden, medicijnen en wapens vervaardigen tegen de monsters, maar steeds meer en meer besefte hij dat dat het om de boeken gingen die deze dingen bevatten. Zo moest hij droombibliothecaris worden.

Hij wilde schrijver worden over al deze dingen, droomschrijver, opdat de droomgeschiedenis niet verloren zou gaan.

Hij moest naar de velden van de amazones om een droomjager te worden. Zij leefden dieper in het land Geërgo, dieper in de wildernissen, voorbij de monniken-ordes.

In de ogen van de amazones waren de monniken slechts vagebonden.

Er waren amazone stammen die vriendelijk naar mannen waren, en er waren amazone stammen die mannen tot waanzin dreven en tot zelfmoord, en er waren ook amazone stammen die mannen uithongerden zonder ze te laten sterven, hen gebruikten voor hun bloed en littekenweefsel, en ervoor zorgden dat ze geen zelfmoord konden plegen.

Voor hem werd het steeds meer zaak om de amazone stammen in kaart te brengen, er boeken over te schrijven. Er moest meer informatie over komen, over hoe deze dingen werkten. Hij kon wel nagaan hoe de amazone stammen zo geworden waren. Er moest een hoop misbruik door mannen aan vooraf zijn gegaan.

De monniken zeiden altijd dat de amazones uiteindelijk hun lot zouden worden. Apparaten zoals Tektor en Venus stonden daar altijd nog tussen, maar ze vroegen zich altijd af wat erger was, de monsters of de amazones. De monniken zeiden dat de amazones te sterk waren, en dat ze veel grotere legers hadden. Het was slechts een kwestie van tijd. Hij vroeg zich af of er niet te onderhandelen viel met de amazones, maar de monniken zeiden dat de wildere stammen daar niet open voor stonden, alleen de

vriendelijkere stammen, maar die vormden geen bedreiging, en zouden uiteindelijk ook in de handen vallen van de wredere, brutere en wildere amazones, die ook veel robuuster waren. De toekomst was van de wildere amazones, zeiden de monniken. Zo was dat in het oer ook. Ze zaten nu nog in een tussenfase, maar dat was allemaal maar tijdelijk.

Hij vroeg zich af wat er met hem zou gebeuren. Er waren een heleboel verschillende soorten van wildere amazone stammen. Het hing er dus vanaf wat er met hen zou gebeuren. Hij wilde in ieder geval niet in verkeerde handen vallen, en daarom schreef hij boeken.

Hij wist meer en meer het verschil niet meer tussen droom en werkelijkheid. Hij haalde dingen door elkaar, en de monniken spraken tegenstrijdig. Hij moest onderscheid maken tussen monniken en droommonniken. Veelal hadden de monniken ook een andere mening. Zo was dat ook bij de amazones. Hij moest geschoold worden, maar in hoeverre was het leven een droom ? Hoe dan ook had hij vaak woede uitbarstingen en angst uitbarstingen, gepaard gaande met vele depressies. Daar had hij vervolgens weer schaamte gevoelens over en schuldgevoel. Het zoog hem telkens weer weg, als een monster dat hem in de greep hield. Hij kon er maar moeilijk mee over weg. Hij werd weggezogen, meegezogen, in grote wanhoop en moedeloosheid, en hij

vroeg zich af wat voor zin het nog allemaal had. Hij voelde zich gehandicapt. Invalide, soms voelde hij zich verlamd. Het was alsof hij was gestoken door een vreemde vlieg, of alsof hij ergens van af was gevallen, van hoog, of dat iemand met een grote steen op zijn hoofd had geslagen. Wie ? De beesten, de monniken, of de amazones ?

Hij had te lang als gladiator gewerkt in Stugort. Het had zijn tol geëist. Zijn hoofd was niet meer wat het geweest was. Hij had problemen met nadenken en herinneren. En hier in Geërgo kwam hij ook niet tot rust. De monniken hadden gezegd dat hij het de tijd moest gunnen, maar ze hadden het ook over de dreiging van de amazones, en dat het uiteindelijk toch wel hun lot zou zijn. Ze hadden zelf de moed al opgegeven, en toch probeerden ze hem moed in te spreken.

Hoofdstuk 11. De opstanden

Geërgo was een dystopie, net zoals de andere landen. Van zijn gladiatorenschap kon hij in wezen niet vluchten. Hij vroeg zich af wat erger was : Stugort of Geërgo. Maar hij wilde daar zijn waar hij nodig was. Boeken gaven hem de nodige afleiding. Dan was hij even ergens anders. Hij was geinteresseerd in monnikenboeken, gladiatorboeken en amazone boeken. Het was voor hem een sport de besten van de soorten te verzamelen. Het gaf hem hoop en doorgang in zijn gedachten. Hij zag de gevaren in van al te gemakkelijke utopieën, namelijk overdosis en indutting. Vandaar dat hij geinteresseerd was in boeken over dystopie, zoals hij zelf ook in een dystopie leefde.

In een buurland was Harpé de religieuze leider van een beweging genaamd de zondak. Ook zij hadden hun eigen monniken en het was een beweging die zich tegen de dreiging van de amazones keerde. Alles ging om mannelijke macht, kracht en stoerheid, desnoods door steroïden. Ook lieten de mannen van deze religie zich vaak tattoeëren met religieuze teksten. Het uitgangspunt van de religie was dat de religie moest groeien door geweld, niet door geduldig te wachten, want dan zouden de amazones daar misbruik van maken. Ze moest groot worden in zo kort mogelijke tijd, dus daarom was het een dwangreligie door geweld. Geweld werd verheerlijkt.

Het was het begin van de monniken oorlogen. De zondaken beweging groeide snel, want geweld was immers de kortste weg. Alles ging door snelheid en bedrog. Zo dacht men een antistof te hebben tegen de amazones. Ook de monniken in Geërgo moesten eraan geloven, maar ze gaven niet zomaar op. Ze wisten dat de zondaken bezig waren een dwangleger te maken tegen de amazones. De man werd een karikatuur van zichzelf door alle spieren en tattoeages. En zo werd Harpé al snel bestempeld als het nieuwe monster. Voor de monniken van Geërgo was het duidelijk dat de zondaken in bezit waren genomen door de overdosis. De monniken van Geërgo moesten vechten voor hun leven en hun vrijheid. Het waren juist de zondaken die de amazones erger konden maken dan ze al waren.

Harpé was een verschrikkelijke dictator. Bij de zondaken waren vrouwen slaven. Ook werden zij gedwongen om met de zondaken te trouwen. Het waren dwanghuwelijken. Alles was dwang in het rijk van Harpé. De zondaken waren bang voor vrouwen en hadden geen respect voor ze. De nieuwe orde was ook niet vies van huiszoekingen. Het was een angstcultuur en een dwangcultuur, en het wekte de woede van vrouwen op. Als ze konden dan vluchtten zij om amazone stammen te vormen, of zich te voegen bij bestaande amazone stammen.

Nu waren er twee dreigingen : de zondaakse dreiging en de amazone dreiging, naast de dreigingen van welke andere monsters dan ook. De zondaken werden ook wel de ijzeren monniken genoemd, omdat ze zich veelal kleedden in ijzer. Ook gebruikten ze veel veren, want vogels waren voor hen een beeld van het ontkomen aan de amazones en het verslaan van de amazones.

Maar ergens hield de macht van de zondaken op. De tijden waren aan het veranderen en men hield niet meer zozeer vast aan vaste structuren. Er begonnen spelletjes te komen van de monniken van Geërgo tegen de ijzeren monniken, en de zondaken tegen de amazones. Ook waren er computerspelletjes van. Het begon meer en meer tot een verhaal te worden. Maar ook kwam het nog vaak voor in zijn dromen. In zijn dromen hadden de amazones grote macht, en waren er ook vaak opstanden van de zondaken. In zijn hoofd ging de strijd door.

Einde

DE ZWARTE KONING

DE ZWARTE KONING

De Zwarte Koning
Uitgave : Monniken Wegwijzer
1970-2025
2025

Taal : Rodenbergs-Nederlands

Voor de omslag-afbeelding is gebruik gemaakt
van het Woordweefgetouw

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Hoofdstuk 1. De zwartkoninkjes

Tagula probeerde uit de psychiatrie te komen om zich te voegen bij de monniken. De monniken waren in zijn ogen veel pastoraler, maar hij moest aan nogal wat dingen voldoen voordat het klooster hem zou toelaten. Het was mooi natuurgebied waarin het klooster stond. Tagula had er alles voor over. Eén van de hoofdregels was vegetarisme. Tagula ging ervoor, maar ‘s nachts werd hij geplaagd door dromen over vlees en over de jacht. De monniken legden hem uit dat het niet zo vreemd was, want het was immers een strijd tegen het vlees, en een jacht naar hogere kennis.

Hij wilde weg uit de psychiatrie. Ze hadden gezegd dat hij een gespleten persoonlijkheid had omdat hij symbolisch had gesproken, geloofservaringen had, en sociaal contact ontweek. Hij had een goede reden om sociaal contact veelal te ontwijken. Hij vond het belachelijk dat ze daar een slaatje uit probeerden te slaan. Ook noemden ze hem paranoïde.

Hij wilde daar weg. Dat ging niet gemakkelijk. Hij moest door allerlei procedures heen. Ze hadden hem zijn vrijheid ontnomen. Hij werd voortdurend ondervraagt. Om de antwoorden gaven ze niet. Het werd altijd omgedraaid. Het ging hen puur om het geld. Het ging hen erom hem nog dieper in de put te brengen, zodat hij er nooit meer uit zou komen. Hij voelde het als een fuik. Hij was natuurlijk net als vele anderen voor hen een goede bron van inkomsten. Daartoe hadden ze de tandarts opgetrommeld die vullingen tegen de zenuw hadden

aangelegd, wat ook de reden was dat hij sociaal contact vermeed, want zijn zenuwstelsel lag hierdoor overhoop.

Al met al was het een groot komplot tegen zijn leven. De monniken zag hij als zijn enige uitweg, maar die lieten hem niet zomaar toe. Tagula moest vegetarisch zijn, en aan verdere kloosterregels onderworpen zijn. Het was een strakke discipline, maar hij ging ervoor.

Vanwege de vullingen die te diep waren gelegd had hij huid problemen en zenuw problemen. Hij had een hele lijst aan problemen, waar de psychiatrie gretig gebruik van maakte, oftewel misbruik. Ze probeerden het tussen zijn oren te stoppen, terwijl ze zelf eerst iets tussen zijn oren hadden gestopt. Zo was de psychiatrie dubbele lasten voor hem, als de farao die hem niet wilde laten gaan. Zovelen zaten in hetzelfde schuitje. Hij hoorde overal klachten. Daar werd vervolgens niets mee gedaan. Farao wilde het volk niet laten gaan, en de Heere had het hart van de farao verhard.

Het leven bestaat uit variabelen. Het is altijd weer anders, ook met name als je het in een doosje probeert te stoppen. Het springt er dan altijd uit en neemt een andere route. Dat had hij wel in de gaten. Zijn leven ging niet als voorspeld. Eigenlijk wilde hij helemaal niet vegetarisch zijn. Eigenlijk wilde hij bij de natuurvolkeren leven, bij de indianen, zo diep in de wildernis, en leven van wat voor handen was, wat de natuur gaf, maar de monniken drongen er bij hem op aan om vegetarisch te worden, om tegen het vlees te strijden, tegen het leven van vlees. Hij ging ervoor, ook omdat de monniken hem

verder zouden kunnen helpen, maar hij had wel die diepe drangen ook van binnen om bij de indianen te leven, net zoals hen te zijn. Hij schaamde zich ervoor.

‘Waarom moeten we vegetarisch zijn ?’ vroeg Tagula vaak aan de monniken. De monniken legden hem dan haarfijn uit dat het niet de bedoeling was tegen God’s schepping te strijden, maar tegen het vlees, het ego, het afgeweken zelf. De monniken streden ook tegen de psychiatrie, die volgens hen dat soort leugens brachten dat je vlees zou moeten eten. De monniken zagen de psychiatrie als het instituut van het vlees.

Tagula zag niet in wat ze bedoelden, maar toch ging hij ervoor, omdat de monniken hem zouden helpen uit de psychiatrie te komen. Hij zag de monniken als een tussenstap. Voor hen wilde hij wel vegetarisch worden, maar uiteindelijk wilde hij toch bij de indianen. Dan zou hij nog dieper de wildernis inmoeten. Rechtstreeks zou dat niet lukken. De psychiatrie zou hem nooit zomaar laten gaan. Alleen de monniken hadden die macht.

Maar er was iets wat aan hem knaagde. Hij had ook wroeging over hoe hij dacht en was. Misschien had de psychiatrie dan toch gelijk dat hij een gespleten persoonlijkheid had. De monniken vonden dat onzin. Ze zeiden dat ieder mens een oude natuur en een nieuwe natuur had, en dat die met elkaar in gevecht waren. Ze beschuldigden de psychiatrie van boeren bedrog. Die zouden alles doen voor het geld. Tagula dacht dat het misschien wel zijn lot was. Als hij de boeken las die hij van de monniken kreeg dan was het eigenlijk voor hem veel te

hoog gegrepen. Hij moest zoveel dingen ervoor doen. En zo begon hij meer en meer de psychiatrie schoon te praten.

Soms hadden de monniken het echt gedaan in zijn ogen. Dan noemde hij hen zelfs gek. Soms dacht hij dat de monniken een gevaar voor de samenleving waren, en dat ze ook de psychiatrie in moesten. Natuurlijk zei hij dat niet. Dat hield hij voor zich. Maar tegen anderen zei hij het wel, en soms kregen de monniken dat ook via via te horen. Daar waren ze niet blij mee. Ze vroegen zich af of hij wel de juiste keuze was, maar ze moesten ook verdraagzaam zijn. Ze mochten mensen alleen maar beoordelen naar draagkracht. Dat stond ook zo in hun reglementen.

Tagula was voor hen ook een soort prooi. Zo konden ze hun geloofsgemeenschap bouwen. Tagula was voor hen ook een fokdier. De monniken waren gericht op groei, anders zouden ze niet overleven. Zij hadden Tagula ook nodig. Tagula vertrouwde het niet. Soms vond hij de psychiatrie onbetrouwbaar, en soms vond hij de monniken onbetrouwbaar, en soms zichzelf. Hij werd heen en weer geslingerd, en had daarom als ideaal en droombeeld om uiteindelijk bij de indianen te wonen, zo gewoon in de natuur, in een tent, of hut, of nog beter een hol. Eigenlijk wilde hij een holbewoner zijn om de oude hiëroglieven op te lossen.

Tagula was geobsedeerd met oude talen en de hiëroglieven. Die waren volop te vinden in de wildernis. Tagula studeerde door, ook al zat hij in de psychiatrie, ook al werd hij door velen niet serieus genomen. Mensen met een gespleten persoonlijkheid

werden niet serieus genomen. Dat had iemand op een papiertje geschreven die al zijn woorden had verdraaid, en het papiertje, of boekje, of de agenda, was heiliger dan de bijbel. Als er ergens pausen waren dan was het wel in de psychiatrie. Hij had een haat-liefde verhouding met de industrie van de psychiatrie, maar als hij aan de tandarts dacht dan was het gewoon grotendeels haat, want die had zijn leven verwoest en daardoor was hij hier in verzeild geraakt. Hij kon niet normaal opgroeien.

Ook zijn vegetarische ouders haatte hij. Zij hadden hem in contact gebracht met de monniken, maar ze hadden ook dingen met hem gedaan waar hij niet over kon praten. Zowel de tandarts als zijn ouders waren de hoofdzaak waarom hij in de psychiatrie zat. Dat was ook een van de redenen waarom hij vegetarisme diep van binnen haatte. Hij wist dat het moest, dat het moest om verder te komen, hier doorheen te kunnen, maar hij koppelde het aan zijn vegetarische ouders, die in zijn ogen monsters waren, ook al hadden ze hem in contact gebracht met de monniken.

Zijn ouders waren geen mensen, maar monsters. Op jonge leeftijd kwam hij door hen in de psychiatrie, en door de tandarts bleef hij in de psychiatrie. En de psychiatrie was niet vegetarisch, en dus hij ook niet. De monniken waren dat wel, maar ...

Het woog er allemaal niet tegenop. Hij zat gewoon vast. Misschien was het wel een stockholm syndroom. De monniken noemden niet-vegetarischen aspergers. Gebrek aan empathie.

Wat had de psychiatrie met hem gedaan ? Leugens ? Verraad ? Drugs ? Zijn vader was politie agent, maar volgens Tagula hoorde zijn vader thuis in de gevangenis. Zijn ouders wilde dat hij weg zou gaan uit de psychiatrie, maar door hen zat hij erin. Zij wilden dat hij bij de monniken zou zijn, maar hij werd gek van alle reglementen. En het lukte hem gewoon niet vegetarisch te zijn. Soms zei hij tegen de monniken dat vlees eten bij de evolutie hoorde, maar de monniken noemden het devolutie. De monniken noemden het luilekkerland, lekker gemakkelijk de ander als gebruiksvoorwerp of wegwerp-artikel zien. Hij begreep hen niet, maar wilde het toch proberen. Het was niet wie hij was. Misschien was hij wel asperger en had hij een gebrek aan empathie. Was het ziekte of zonde ?

De monniken waren erg verschillend. De ene probeerde hem een schuldgevoel aan te praten, de ander noemde het een ziekte, een syndroom. In hun ogen had hij geen gespleten persoonlijkheid. Dat maakte de psychiatrie hem maar wijs. Hij moest strijden tegen zijn oude natuur. Dat hoorde niet bij hem. De psychiatrie wilde hem ontvoeren, volgens de monniken. Dat was hen ook gelukt. De monniken waren in hun ogen zijn grote bevrijders, maar het was wel onder voorwaarde.

Tagula zou een monnik moeten worden. Maar Tagula wilde een natuurmens zijn. Natuurlijk waren de monniken al min of meer natuurmensen, meer dan de chemische psychiatrie, die veel te klinisch was, veel te steriel, veel te natuuronvriendelijk, veel te lichaamsonvriendelijk, maar Tagula vond de monniken ook niet natuurlijk genoeg. Hij wilde dieper de wildernis in. Hij

hoopte dat de monniken hem zouden laten gaan als hij daar zou wonen.

Zijn vader was dus politie agent, bedrijfs-agent. Hij vond dat ook nogal erg klinisch. Het was hem allemaal te vrolijk, niet sober genoeg. Zijn vader was dan vegetarisch, maar vaak dronken, en had dingen met hem gedaan waarover hij niet durfde te spreken. Zijn vader had een hekel aan de psychiatrie, want hij vond dat de psychiatrie Tagula van hem had gestolen. De psychiatrie had Tagula opgevoed sinds jonge leeftijd. Zijn vader zei dat de psychiatrie hem voor galg en rad liet opgroeien.

Altijd werd hij ‘s ochtends wakker door de zwartkoninkjes, de kleine zwarte vogeltjes die hem in de tuin kwamen bezoeken. Dat gaf zijn leven waarde, daar hield hij zich aan vast. Het bracht hem hoop. Maar hoe dan ook was hij in grote verwarring, werd hij heen en weer geslingerd, en dat zou dan een gespleten persoonlijkheid moeten zijn. Dan zou iedereen een gespleten persoonlijkheid hebben, zeiden de monniken vaak, want iedereen is innerlijk verdeeld en heeft te strijden tegen de oude natuur. Die moest afgelegd worden. Daar mocht je jezelf niet mee identificeren. Je moest jezelf verloochenen. Dat kwam bij Tagula soms over alsof je geen eigen persoonlijkheid mocht hebben. Je mocht geen dubbelleven er op nahouden, en ook jezelf niet zijn. Wat moest je dan ? Toch vond hij dat veel van die monniken ijzersterke persoonlijkheden hadden. Soms benauwde hem dat. Dan had hij liever een gespleten persoonlijkheid. Dan leefde hij liever in twijfel, dan zo zeker te zijn van alles. Hij vond dat wat

onwerkelijk. Het was toch vaak heel anders dan je dacht. Het leven was veel groter dan dat.

Zijn vader had ook een ijzersterke persoonlijkheid. Maar waar had dat hem geleid ? Hij moest er niet aan denken. Eigenlijk kon hij gewoon geen respect opbrengen voor het vegetarisme. Het had iets onwerkelijks. Iedereen leefde van elkaar. De één z’n dood is de ander z’n brood. Dat was industrie. Dat was communicatie. Dat was leven. Hij nam het niet zo nauw. Je moest toch wat ? Er was zonder dit geen leven mogelijk. Altijd moest er wel een leven opgeofferd worden voor iets. Maar dan voelde hij zich weer schuldig door die gedachten.

‘Op welke manier denk je het leven dan in te vullen ?’ vroegen de monniken hem weleens. Hij had ook vaak het gevoel alsof zij ondervragers waren, alsof ze ergens voor werkten, en natuurlijk was dat ook zo. Er ging een zekere dreiging uit vanuit de monniken. Hoe zou het met hem aflopen als hij niet zou toehappen ?

In de psychiatrie hadden ze het veel over barbecues en balkenbrij. Hij wist niet eens wat balkenbrij was, bleek ook een soort vlees te zijn. ‘Lekker balkenbrij eten,’ zeiden ze dan. Er liepen ook patienten rond die de moed al hadden opgegeven. ‘Geen kruid tegen opgewassen,’ zeiden ze dan. Vaak gingen ze dan kaarten, en ook dan moest je al het geklaag aanhoren als ze slechte kaarten hadden. ‘Oh, moeder, wat een piene piene piene’, en ‘het is weer bar en boos,’ en ‘je zit de boel te verzieken.’ En dan gingen soms de kanariepietjes ook flink tekeer, en dan ging er weer een doek over de kooi. Er stond ook

een spel met een vreemde naam in de kast wat niemand ooit gespeeld had. Vaak stond het ook op de kast, was nogal een lage kast, alsof de begeleiders daarmee wilden zeggen : ‘Probeer het eens,’ maar niemand deed het. Soms speelden ze ook barricade, memory of mens erger-je-nieten, en natuurlijk monopolie. Sommige patienten hadden hun eigen monopoly spel gemaakt, en eentje had een eigen pim-pam-pet spel gemaakt, maar het draaien ging nogal stroef. Je kwam er eigenlijk niet verder mee, maar het was leuk geprobeerd. Sommigen waren echt eindeloos creatief. Het was interessant volk, en soms was hij trots dat hij erbij hoorde. Het waren de overlevenden. Het was het kleine overblijfsel. Het was alsof zij al de weg tot de wildernis hadden gevonden, en ze namen hem mee. Naar de monniken gingen ze niet. Vaak leek het wel alsof de begeleiders van de psychiatrie de monniken waren. Sommigen zaten hoog op het paard, maar anderen kropen over de grond, nog wel lager dan alle anderen. Sommigen leken wel onder de grond te leven. Die zag je dan zo nu en dan, en dan leek het wel alsof ze helemaal onder de modder zaten. Moddermensen, bijna als zwartkoninkjes, en dan brachten ze hun boodschappen, hun orakeltaal.

De zwarte koning, zo noemde ze hem ook weleens, omdat hij dingen vaak zo zwart zag, en omdat hij hele donkerbruine ogen en donkerbruin haar had. Hoe dan ook vermeed hij veelal sociaal contact en zat hij veel op zijn kamer. Dan keek hij naar buiten om te zien of er nog zwartkoninkjes waren. Soms ging hij er met een begeleider op uit om vogeltjes te kijken met een verrekijker in de natuur. Als ze nog dieper zouden gaan dan zouden ze bij de monniken terechtkomen, en als ze dan nog

verder zouden gaan, dan zouden ze bij de indianen terechtkomen. Eigenlijk wilde hij het wel zien, maar de begeleider stond het niet toe. Dat zou allemaal te ver weg zijn. Ze hadden altijd allerlei smoesjes.

Op een dag zeiden de monniken dat ze wel zouden willen onderhandelen met de indianen om hem daar te krijgen. Hij zou dan wel onder God's oordeel komen vanwege de jacht, maar het was zijn eigen keuze. Tagula zei dat hij niet kon jagen. Daar was hij veel te zwak voor. Hij voelde zich verlamd door alles wat de tandarts hem had aangedaan, en alle medicijnen die hij had geslikt. Het had zijn hele oriëntatie overhoop gegooid. Hij voelde zich als een stier in het stierengevecht, totaal hopeloos. Hij kon hier niets tegen doen. Hij voelde zich als een beteugeld paard, maar hij kon niks. Hij was een schaap, hij was een muis, niet opgewassen tegen dit soort dingen.

'Waar ben je mee bezig ?' zei een stem tegen hem in de nacht. Tagula dacht dat het de stem van God was. Het leek alsof hij donder en bliksem hoorde, en hij werd er bang van. De psychiatrie zette hem toen op medicijnen tegen angst, en ze dachten dat hij gek aan het worden was. Nu droegen ze dat als bewijs dat hij een gespleten persoonlijkheid had. Hij hoorde immers stemmen. Nu wilde ze hem nog minder laten gaan, want ze vonden dat hij hun hulp toch echt nodig had. De monniken zouden het alleen maar erger maken, volgens de psychiatrie. De monniken werden als grote boosdoener aangewezen vanwege hun dreigen. Tagula zei toen dat het toch echt God was, want het was geen monnikenstem. Voor Tagula

was het echt een totale ommekeer. Hij wilde nu God dienen die hij had gehoord, en God was toch meer in overeenstemming met de monniken dan met de psychiatrie, en bij de indianen zijn wilde hij ook niet meer, want die waren goddeloos in zijn ogen, voornamelijk omdat ze veelal niet vegetarisch waren, maar een monnik zei dat er ook wel vegetarische natuurvolkeren waren. Na de ervaring van Tagula vonden de monniken het beter dat hij gewoon bij hen zou blijven, want nog dieper in de wildernis leven zou niet praktisch genoeg zijn.

Tagula was het er wel mee eens, maar hij wilde ook wel kluizenaar zijn in een grot, of gewoon op zichzelf wonen. Hij vroeg zich af of dat kon, en daarom zag hij de monniken als tussenstap. In ieder geval na de ervaring had Tagula geen moeite meer met de reglementen van de monniken, en zo stapte hij over. Hij werd daar hartelijk ontvangen met veel gejuich, en ze hielden die dag een feest vanwege de komst van Tagula. Hij kreeg zijn eigen kamer. Hij kon uitzien op de natuur. Hij vond het een wonderlijke ervaring. Nu kon hij alleen of met de monniken door de kloostertuin en de omliggende wildernis dwalen. Hij hoopte dat de zwartkoninkjes ook hier zouden komen, en dat was gelukkig het geval. Ook de monniken werden elke dag weer door hen wakker gemaakt. Zo begon Tagula zijn nieuwe leven. De monniken zorgden ervoor dat zijn gevulde kiezen werden verwijderd, en Tagula voelde zich helemaal opleven, alsof hij zijn bloed weer voelde stromen. Hij merkte dat hij ineens volle controle had over zijn linkerarm. Alle zenuwobstakels en motorische obstakels waren weg sinds de gevulde kiezen waren verwijderd. Hij merkte ook dat hij minder moe was. Hij had veel meer energie. Ook begonnen

zijn huidproblemen langzaam maar zeker af te nemen. Nog wel had hij soms veel pijn in zijn gebit, maar sinds het verwijderen van de gevulde kiezen was het al veel minder. Het werd voor hem weer leefbaar. Hij ging er vaker op uit, ging weer mee naar de supermarkt, of soms zelfs alleen. Dan deed hij inkopen voor het klooster, of gewoon voor zichzelf. Hij draaide goed mee in huishoudelijke taken.

Op een nacht had hij weer een droom. Hij stond voor een huis, en maakte de deur open. Een donkere vrouw in het huis stond in de deuropening en vroeg hem : ‘Waarom hebt gij de deur opengedaan ?’ Hij bleef er maar over praten over deze ervaring. Het was groots in zijn leven, alsof hij weer een ontmoeting met God had gehad.

Als hij naar de zwartkoninkjes keek dan zag hij God. Ook de monniken noemden hem zwartkoninkje of de zwarte koning. Tagula was er heilig van overtuigd dat de zwartkoninkjes hem hier hadden gebracht, dat zij hem hadden gered, en hij was één van hen. Zij brachten de boodschappen die hij nodig had, en legden de hiëroglieven uit, wat de psychiatrie verder dan ook van hem zou denken. De psychiatrie was echt het oude leven wat hij moest afleggen, en zo ook de tandarts. Hij was nu op de rug van het zwartkoninkje. Het zwartkoninkje wist de weg, als gestuurd door God. Nu had de zwarte koning een ontmoeting gehad met de zwarte koningin. Samen stonden ze zij aan zij op het schaakbord. Zij waren van de natuur, en de witte stenen waren van de chermische, klinische en steriele onnatuur, of tegennatuur, de anti-natuur, met al hun vreemde lichaamsonvriendelijke giffen. Kolonisten waren het. Maar nu

lagen die witte schaakstukken omver, en waren van het schaakbord afgevallen, aan de rand. In gebroken stukken lagen ze daar, opdat ze nooit meer zouden kunnen opkomen. Of toch ? In zijn geheugen had hij nog strijd.

De zwartkoninkjes waren aan zijn zijde op het schaakbord. De witte koning brulde als een draak. Nu moest hij de jacht aangaan, anders zou hij het alsnog verliezen. De monniken waren aan zijn zijde. Zij waren veelal donkerbruin gekleed. Ook zij waren zwartkoninkjes. Er was een heel leger van hen. Ook de witte koningin brulde. Soms had hij nog nachtmerries, maar de natuur begon hem meer en meer over te nemen. Meer en meer kon hij alles plaatsen, meer en meer speelde hij het spel, en werd er handig in. Goede kaarten had hij dit keer getrokken.

De witte chemische kerk in de stad brulde, maar hij was ver weg in een zwerm zwartkoninkjes, ver weg in de natuur. Eens had hij zijn tanden met jif gepoetst, en toen begon alle ellende. Hij had geprobeerd de gedwongen vullingen weg te poetsen. Het was een totale verstandsverbijstering, in een wanhopige poging tot vrijheid. Het waren piepende implantaten, giftige gevangenis implantaten, als implodes. Ze ontploften als je ze aan zou raken. Het was een levensgevaarlijk schaakspel. Messen of speren konden zo vanuit de vakken omhoog springen. Ze doorboorden alles op hun pad. Het was dodenschaak. Hij moest herstellen in mouth en mind. Hij moest het vak leren, deze dingen te verstaan, deze dingen te omzeilen.

De zwartkoninkjes oefenden hem. De stemmen van het verleden werden zwakker, en God’s stem werd groter. De zwartkoninkjes waren godsgezondenen. Zij leerden hem een nieuwe taal. Heel zijn wezen was ermee gevuld, heel zijn wezen werd er door doorgespoeld. Alle vakken van het spel, van zijn verstand en geheugen. Dat hadden de monniken hen geleerd.

De witten konden hem niet klein krijgen. Eens was hij één van hen, maar nu was hij overgegaan. De cosmetische stad zou geen duit meer van hem krijgen.

Hij wilde waar voor zijn geld, en dit keer had hij het. Hij betaalde een hoge prijs maar het was het waard. Voor het eerst had hij het gevoel alsof zijn leven echt waarde had. Hij had er veel in geïnvesteerd. En hij dacht er telkens aan : ‘Waarom hebt gij de deur opengemaakt ?’

Het was hard werken bij de monniken, maar hij had het er voor over.
Hij moest nu zijn nieuwe leven opbouwen.
Hij moest nu zijn nieuwe leven beveiligen, bewaken.
Hij wilde geen slapheid of luiheid meer toelaten in zijn leven.
Hij wilde geen denkfouten maken.
Hij wilde misverstanden uit de weg ruimen.
Hij wilde zorgvuldig zijn als de zwartkoninkjes, die zeer vlijtig waren.
Dit alles werd hem geleerd.
Er was een nieuwe koningin in zijn leven : vlijt, ijver.
Dat ging meer en meer het gevlei vervangen.

Hij zag in dat dit de beste weg was.
Hij had nu iets om voor te leven.
Hij had nu een doel in zijn leven, en het voelde goed.

Hij was trots op zichzelf maar ook waakzaam en leergierig.
Hij was er nog niet. Hij zag ook zijn tekortkomingen.
Hij was niet alleen trots maar ook dankbaar.
Hij wilde geen valse en overmatige trots toelaten, maar ook geen valse nederigheid.
Oeverloos dankbaar zijn zonder eigen inbreng is luiheid en afhankelijkheid, als een smoesje.
En dat is ook weer gevlei dat de ijver kan doden.

De zwartkoninkjes waren zijn alarm en leidsignaal.
De zwartkoninkjes waren zijn grensgevoeligheid, en daarin toonde zich het pad.
Grensgevoeligheid brengt richtingsgevoeligheid.

Op de achtergrond brulden soms nog de stemmen van de chemische stad.
Soms gilden ze. ‘Kom terug, kom terug, we willen je weer uitzuigen.’
Maar de zwartkoninkjes waren als een heg.
Hij kon niet meer terug.
De zwartkoninkjes zouden dat nooit toestaan.

Hij wilde ook niet meer terug.
Hij had het gehad met de chemische stad.
Het was een giftig luilekkerland.

Dodelijke sprookjes.

De vorsten van luilekkerland liepen daar met hoge witte koksmutsen.
Alles was voor hen voedsel en geld.
Alles was voor hen gemak.
En het waren allemaal valse beloftes.
Ze kwamen hun afspraken nooit na, en verdraaiden alles.
Zij wonnen altijd in hun boeken en geschiedenis boeken.
Zij draaiden alles naar hun wil.

Tagula was nu bij God. Hij had afstand gedaan van zijn oude leven.
God had ingegrepen, en Tagula was dankbaar.
God had hem niet in de steek gelaten, zijn muren doorbroken.
Hij snapte niet hoe hij kon zijn hoe hij vroeger was.
Maar ja, ze hadden hem zware en giftige drugs toegediend.
Luilekkerland drugs.
Het draait alles om.

En zo was alles uiteindelijk ook weer goedgedraaid.

Hoofdstuk 2. De geheime brug

Op een dag lieten de monniken hem een geheime brug zien die over een rivier ergens in een weiland liep. Hij vroeg waarom die brug geheim was als het zo zichtbaar was, maar de monniken noemden het toch de geheime brug, omdat niemand er leek te komen. Er werd niet veel bekendheid aan de brug gegeven. Hij kende zelf de brug ook niet. Ze gingen met hem over de brug naar de andere kant van de rivier in het weiland. De rivier was tamelijk smal, nog net geen sloot.

De monniken hadden een bijzondere herinnering aan de geheime brug. Daar was eens God aan hen verschenen, en daarom bezochten ze de plaats nog steeds als pelgrims. Het was een verlaten plaats. Het was niet in gebruik. Soms gingen ze er naartoe om God te zoeken. Toch deden ze dat niet vaak. Het moest bijzonder blijven.

Ook voor Tagula begon het belangrijk te worden.
Tagula wilde God weer ontmoeten, maar ook ontmoette hij God in de kleine dingen veelal.
Tagula moest leren de geheime brug in zichzelf te ontdekken.

Er was een oude monnik waar Tagula steeds meer contact mee kreeg.
Hij woonde wat verderop in de gang in een kamer.
Hij liet Tagula wat bijzondere boeken zien, en Tagula nam de tijd die te lezen op zijn eigen kamer.
Hij vond het wel bijzonder deze boeken te lezen.
Het ging over ontmoetingen met God.

Je ontmoet God niet op de hoge bergen, maar in de diepe valleien.
Hoe diep moest dat dan gaan ?
De boeken gingen over ondergrondse werelden.
Alleen daar zou God waarlijk ontmoet worden.
In de bovenwereld zou alles te bedriegelijk zijn.

Tagula las over de verschillende volkeren onder de grond, ook natuurvolkeren. Zij leefden in de holen van de aarde.
Zij waren bedekt met de moederaarde.
Zij moesten wel een bedekking dragen.

Zo waren zij gemaskerd, en het was oorlog.
Het was een oorlog tegen het vlees.
Het was een oorlog tegen dat wat niet bedekt was met de moeder aarde, met de natuur, maar met het chemische, onnatuurlijke.
En zo was het zwart tegen wit, als op een schaakbord, de onderwereld tegen de bovenwereld.
Tagula had zijn keuze gemaakt. Het witte chemische was verblind en verblindend. Uit deze wereld kwam hij. Hij moest terug naar de moeder aarde. Hij moest bedekt worden met de natuur.

De boeken lazen weg als een verhaal, en hij was er middenin.
Het leek wel alsof hij er zelf in meespeelde.
De moddermensen, de holbewoners, riepen hem.
De boeken namen hem mee naar plaatsen waar hij nog nooit was geweest.
Het waren plaatsen waar hij nog nooit over had gedroomd.

De boeken waren geschreven door verschillende mensen.
Het leek wel alsof de monniken in contact stonden met mensen die hij niet kende.
Dit was een hele andere wereld, hele andere schrijvers dan van de bovenwereld.
Dit ging ergens over. Dit was diep. Dit was rauw. Het was niet gemaakt.
Het was natuurlijk. Het was een bron die ergens opsprong.
Dit was van een andere wereld.

Zo had hij het nog niet gehoord.
Hij bleef lezen. Hij kon niet stoppen.
Het leek wel alsof hij nieuwe adem had, nieuwe energie.
Deze boeken boorden het diepste in hem aan, en hij voelde doorgang.
Hij had toegang tot zijn diepere wezen nu.

Zoveel mensen hadden zeggenschap over zijn leven gehad, maar hij vond nu zijn eigen zeggenschap, en dat was iets van de diepere natuur. Dit ging voorbij het menselijke.
Dit ging ook voorbij het logische.
Hier golden andere regels.
De boeken vielen de zwijnen van de bovenwereld aan, de zwijnen van luilekkerland, het gemaksdriftige.
Hij kon door de boeken heen God ontmoeten.
Je kon God niet in één keer ontmoeten.
Het ging stapsgewijs.
Je moest dieper de diepte in, van onderwereld tot onderwereld.
Hierin lagen geheime krachten verborgen.
Hier moest je sterven voor kennis.

Hier moest je niet alleen verder lezen en verder leren, maar ook verder sterven.
En dat ging door een heleboel onbegrip, want eerst zou je het niet kunnen zien en verstaan.
Het was van een geheel andere taal.

Wat voor talen spreken ze onder de grond ?
Alleen de zwartkoninkjes weten het.
Zij brengen de boodschappen naar de mensen, maar de mensen luisteren niet.
Zij hebben altijd wel wat anders te doen.
En zo gaat de kennis verloren.
Zo gaat de kennis steeds dieper onder de aarde, want ook de kennis sterft verder en verder.

Ik breng het goud naar je toe, maar als je mij niet neemt, dan heb je niets.
Zo is het goud van geen waarde als je de persoonlijkheid ervan niet kent.
Als je het niet leert kennen is het slechts vals bezit of schijnbezit.
Dit laat ook zien dat daadwerkelijk stelen onmogelijk is.
Al het ware bezit is slechts door kennis.

Wie kan dan ook iets buiten de school om doen ?
Buiten liggen zij allen verlamd.
Zij dromen maar.

Nee, sterf aan uzelf en verloochen uzelf en volg het pad tot de verloren aarde.

Tagula probeerde het tot een goed einde te brengen met de oude monnik.
Hij wilde de boeken zelf hebben, en bood een flinke som geld.
'Ach, houd maar,' zei de oude monnik. 'Ik heb er zelf zoveel van.'

De boeken leken zeldzaam. Dat wilde hij de oude monnik niet aandoen. Misschien was hij er aan gehecht, ook al had hij velen van deze boeken. 'Waar kan ik ze krijgen ?' vroeg Tagula aan de oude monnik. De oude monnik zweeg. Toen sprak hij :
'Eens op een oude rommelmarkt gevonden, heel lang geleden. Echt, je mag ze houden. Je zal ze niet zo snel ergens anders vinden. Ze zijn tamelijk zeldzaam.'

'Bijzonder,' zei Tagula. 'Nu heb ik er een passie bij, namelijk het vinden van zulke boeken.'

Tagula begon steeds meer van boeken te houden, nam graag boeken van anderen over, en begon te werken in de kloosterbibliotheek. Hij zag hierin heil en een weg.

Hij had veel gesprekken met de oude monnik, die veel boekenkennis had.
De oude monnik vertelde hem over zijn droevige leven, dat zijn vriendin door een ongeluk om het leven kwam, en dat hij toen het klooster inging. Zo verwerkte hij het. Het deed zoveel pijn dat hij nooit meer een vriendin wilde. Tagula kon zich dat goed voorstellen.

Ook maakte hij wandelingen met de oude monnik. Eens kwamen ze een wolf tegen en een andere keer een arend. De oude monnik vertelde veel over zijn leven, hoe zijn vader een knauw had overgehouden aan de oorlog, en hoe hij zo een moeilijke jeugd had. Zo had hij als gevolg daarvan wat verkeerde beslissingen gemaakt. Wat die beslissingen waren daar sprak hij verder niet over. Ook Tagula kon zijn verhaal aan de oude monnik kwijt. ‘Ja, tandartsen zijn geen best volk,’ sprak de oude monnik. ‘Totaal overgenomen door geld.’ Ook voor de psychiatrie had de oude monnik geen goed woord over.

Tagula werd soms nog geconfronteerd met oud zeer. De oude monnik hielp hem met het verwerken. Soms werd Tagula teruggesleurd naar het verleden, en had hij herbelevingen. Soms had hij nare dromen erover. Mensen lijden, en mensen lezen en schrijven, om het te verwerken, en om te overleven. Zo kan men het lijden relativeren en het beste uit het lijden halen, als werken in de lettermijnen. Wat is het loon voor hen die werken in de lettermijnen ? Boeken.

En met die boeken zou hij komen tot andere plaatsen. Steeds meer dook hij in de boeken, steeds meer breidde hij zijn studie uit. Het gaf hem meer mogelijkheden. Hij leerde ook veel door de gesprekken met de monniken. Het waren goede jaren voor hem, maar uiteindelijk wilde hij naar wat de monniken de bovenwereld noemden. Hij wilde terug, om de bovenwereld te helpen, oftewel het stedelijk en dorpelijk gebied. Maar de monniken zeiden dat er geen makkelijke wegen naar en door de bovenwereld waren. Tagula zei dat hij ook niet op zoek was naar gemak. Hij hield van nachtmerries. De monniken

noemden de bovenwereld een nachtmerrie. Ook noemden ze het weleens een angstmerrie of een viesmerrie.

Het was te moeilijk voor hem om een huisje te krijgen. Alles zat vol, en er was geen doorkomen aan. Hij zou dan moeten beginnen in een zorg centrum, wat gelukkig niet van de psychiatrie was, maar daar werden ook daklozen opgevangen. Daar zou hij naartoe gaan, daar hadden ze wel een bovenkamer voor hem, en de monniken zouden hem vaak bezoeken. Als dan de tijd rijp was zou hij proberen een huisje te krijgen achter de rivier. Daar wilde hij graag wonen. Het werden moeilijke, maar ook mooie jaren in het opvangcentrum, en toen had hij eindelijk een huisje aan de overkant van de rivier. Het was een mooie grote kamer met hoog plafond. Ook daar kwamen de monniken hem bezoeken. Op een dag waren er drie stewardessen aan de deur van een vliegtuigmaatschappij. Ze vroegen of hij wat vragen wilde beantwoorden voor een formulier. Het was nog erg vroeg. Hij was net wakker. Hij zei dat hij zijn dag nog maar net was begonnen en dat hij tegen vliegtuigen was. De stewardessen gniffelden wat. Ze probeerden hem wat te verkopen, reclame te maken, via deze formulieren. Ze waren nogal opdringerig, en gaven niet snel op. ‘Het lijkt wel alsof jullie op jacht zijn,’ zei Tagula. Weer gniffelden ze wat. ‘Straks willen jullie ook mijn huis gebruiken voor jullie vliegtuigmaatschappij om er jullie spullen in te verkopen,’ zei Tagula. Weer gniffelden ze. Hij keek naar de drie stewardessen. Eentje leek hij ineens te herkennen. ‘Hey, was jij niet eens mijn buurmeisje ?’ vroeg hij aan haar. ‘Kan kloppen,’ zei ze.

‘Dus jij herkend mij ook ?’ vroeg Tagula.
‘Jazeker,’ zei ze. ‘Er zat trouwens nog een huis tussen.’
‘Wij zitten strak in het pak,’ zei één van de andere meisjes. Ze zei dat om hen te verdedigen.
‘En dat is je alibi ?’ vroeg Tagula.
Duidelijk wilden ze zakelijk blijven. Ze probeerden hem een schuldgevoel aan te praten als hij niet verder met ze zou willen. Ze probeerden op zijn emoties in te werken.
‘Ik ben niet voor niets je buurmeisje geweest,’ zei het andere meisje weer. ‘Zou je daar niet iets mee doen ?’ Toen knipoogde, terwijl de anderen zakelijk wilden blijven en er niet op reageerden.

‘Ik vind het nogal erg opdringerig,’ zei hij. ‘Het lijkt wel alsof jullie op een raid zijn.’
‘Ook in noodgevallen kunt u op ons bouwen,’ zei het eerste meisje. ‘Dan bent u verzekerd van een goede plaats.’
‘Daar zijn andere dingen voor,’ zei hij.
‘Wij helpen mensen,’ zei het andere meisje weer.
‘Heel fijn,’ zei hij, ‘maar voor mij is dit niet de juiste wijze. Ik heb het trouwens ook veel te druk om telkens maar allerlei formulieren in te vullen. Het blijft maar gebeuren. Het is eindeloos, en het vreet mijn tijd en energie.’
Toen zijn ze uiteindelijk maar weggegaan, en hij was opgelucht.
Een schuldmerrie noemden de monniken de bovenwereld ook weleens. Schuld was een markt. Dat werd met een bedoeling opgelegd. Zo kreeg men mensen de winkel in.

De monniken hadden het telkens over de boosaardige zoon van Morgan. Die zou ook in de bovenwereld wonen. Morgan was een heks. Ze gebruikten het bijna als spreekwoord. Als er iets mis ging dan zeiden ze vaak : ‘de boosaardige zoon van Morgan.’

Het beviel Tagula goed om op zichzelf te wonen. Hij had hier hard voor gewerkt. Het was alsof hij een nieuw boek in handen had. Hij zou blijven werken in de lettermijnen om er het beste van te maken, het beste uit te halen. Hij verdiende zijn leven. Hij had het helemaal zelf gedaan, was helemaal zelf door de schemerzones van de bovenwereld gegaan om hier te komen. Hij zou het met hand en tand verdedigen. Hij was zowel dankbaar als trots, in de juiste verhouding, maar altijd leergierig, wetende dat hij er nog niet was. Hij wist dat hij afhankelijk was van God, maar hij had ook een eigen verantwoordelijkheid. Hij dacht er nog vaak aan : ‘Waarom hebt gij de deur opengemaakt ?’ Die droom had hij trouwens gehad in een tijd dat hij hoorde dat een bekende van hem zelfmoord had gepleegd, en steeds meer knaagde het gevoel aan hem dat hij meer had moeten doen om hem te helpen. Maar ja, hij woonde toen al bij de monniken, en ze hadden geen contact meer. Hij voelde zich schuldig dat hij het contact had laten verwateren. Hij had het gevoel dat hij die persoon wel had kunnen helpen en redden. Maar ja, dat was allemaal achteraf. Het stoorde hem. In de bovenwereld pleegden ze nogal vaak zelfmoord. Er was een grote druk op de mensen. Hij hoopte die druk wat te kunnen verlichten, gewoon door zijn aanwezigheid. Zelf hield hij van nachtmerries, zocht hij ze op, en daagde hij ze uit. Hij voelde zichzelf als een Houdini, als

een stuntman. Zo nam hij het van anderen over. Plaatsvervangend lijden was een belangrijke bron van zijn leven. Hij nam pijnen van anderen over, ook al wist hij dat ze door pijnen moesten. Het was belangrijk om te leren, maar het was ook belangrijk om voor elkaar te zorgen. Het ging om de empathie. De monniken zeiden dat hij geen asperger meer was, dat hij was genezen. God had ingegrepen in zijn leven, en nu wilde hij wat daarmee doen, iets terugdoen, iets teruggeven. Dat voelde goed bij hem. Dat voelde juist.

Hij wist dat hij de wereld niet kon redden. De wereld moest hier ook allemaal doorheen. Hij wist dat er belangrijkere dingen waren. Hij moest tot de hogere boeken komen, tot de grotere contexten, onder ogen komen waarom dingen waren zoals ze waren. Het hoorde bij een zeker verhaal, en daarin diende hij zijn weg te leren kennen. Hoe ga je met zoiets om ? Dat was werken in de lettermijnen, geen snelle oplossingen, maar de diepte in gaan. Hier was gemak geen koning, maar ontmaskerd. Gemak was vaak boerenbedrog, dat er zoveel dingen werden overgeslagen dat je door de bomen het bos niet meer kon zien. Het was de snelle asfaltering van de natuur. Ze hadden dat allemaal over de indiaanse wereld heengebouwd. Maar ja, de monniken hadden vaak niet veel goeds te zeggen over de indianen, omdat die vaak niet vegetarisch waren, alhoewel er wel sommige natuurvolkeren waren die vegetarisch waren. Ze hadden het soms over de kluizenaren, de hermieten en de holbewoners. Die leefden van iets anders, wat God hen had geschonken. Die kenden de geheimen van onder de aarde, waar dingen groeiden waar de bovenwereld niets vanaf wist. Ze werden door God in leven gehouden langs

andere wegen. En die nieuwe schepping zou uiteindelijk overal komen. Maar de boosaardige zoon van Morgan stond nog in de weg.

De monniken werkten aan de nieuwe schepping. Die zou gebracht worden door boeken. Tagula was soms emotioneel als hij er aan dacht. Toch vroeg hij zich af of een utopia wel mogelijk was, een paradijs. Dat zou alleen in de dieptes van de aarde te vinden zijn, niet in de dorpen en de steden. Maar toch zou dit allemaal in de boeken staan. Zou er een vrederijk komen waar de monniken het soms over hadden ? Maar ze zeiden er ook bij dat het een zinnebeeld was. Wat konden ze verwachten ? Wat voor andere geheimen zouden er gevonden worden, en met wat voor resultaat ? Tagula hield van de nachtmerries, want het hield hem wakker. Het gaf hem informatie. Hierdoor groeide zijn kennis. Vandaar dat Tagula in de dystopie geïnteresseerd was, nog wel meer dan in de utopie. Tagula marcheerde mee met de monniken. Die waren ook niet zoetsappig. Die hadden het vaak over duistere geheimen in de aardbodem. De mens had een te romantisch beeld van het leven en van God. God was niet wie zij dachten. God was totaal onbekend en vreemd voor de mensen.

Nee, de mens mocht niet indutten. Teveel paradijs was niet goed, teveel zoet was niet goed. Vaak was het allemaal slechts aas. Het was een masker. Iets verschuilde zich erachter. Daarom moest men de boeken kennen, over hoe die verhalen liepen. De mens zat in een fuik. De mens moest sterven aan zijn droombeelden. Natuurlijk werden de goede verhalen verspreid om hoop te bieden, maar het was iets symbolisch. De

mens kon juist zoveel meer leren van de veel duisterdere verhalen. Die liepen niet altijd goed af. Er waren geen makkelijke wegen door de bovenwereld. Het waren nachtmerries, het waren verhalen, opdat de mens er iets van zou leren. Dat zou een zekere ontwaking zijn, maar dan moest de mens ook weer dieper. Dieper de bibliotheken in. Werden zielen opgesloten gehouden in flessen ? En wat waren dat dan voor zielen ? Vaak was het grote bluf, en raakte de mens door elkaar aan de alcohol. Dat werd dan hoog van de toren geblazen. De monniken noemden de bovenwereld bovenmatig vraatzuchtig. ‘Die vreten en vreten maar. Het verstand is niet thuis, en het hart ook niet, om maar niet van het geweten te spreken.’ Honger is wat de mens nodig had, om te kunnen ontkomen. De dystopie behoedde de mens ergens tegen. Daarom moest Tagula ook niet helemaal doordraaien in het plaatsvervangend lijden. Tucht en oordeel was ook belangrijk. Maar dit kwam juist voort vanuit ware zorg en empathie, als schoolzorg.

Maar Tagula was op zijn hoede voor controlezucht, en heerserigheid. Hij wilde vluchten, hij wilde weg. Hij wilde laag profiel houden. Hij wilde slechts een zaaier zijn, een spoor achterlaten. Hij moest de diepte in, als een roepende in de wildernis, maar uiteindelijk zou hij nog dieper de wildernis in moeten waar ze hem niet meer zouden horen, waar hij niet meer mocht roepen, maar waar hij aan zichzelf diende te werken, tot de diepere geheimen diende te gaan, in het verborgene. Hij moest dieper de lettermijnen in, ter ontcijfering van de hiëroglieven. Hij moest het raadsel van het leven oplossen. Hij wilde het in een boek schrijven. Het moest zijn

als een radio, als een muur. Hij wilde niet grijpbaar zijn. Hij wilde ook onbekend blijven, net als God.

De radio was in die zin beter dan een vliegtuig. Ook op auto’s had hij het niet zo. Ze vervuilden de natuur. Daarom noemden de monniken het de viesmerrie, en daar hoorden ook vliegtuigen en auto’s bij. Het was een trollenwereld. De trollen vermaakten zich erin als zwijnen in de modder.

‘Radio, radio,’ dacht Tagula telkens, maar hoe diep moest hij gaan om tot een radio te worden, en hoe diep moest hij gaan om onpersoonlijk te worden. Dat was voor hem belangrijk, dat hij onpersoonlijk werd, want het ging om het principe. Hij was op zijn hoede voor persoonsverering. Hij was op zijn hoede voor persoonscultussen. Maar wat had hij te vertellen ? Mensen waren er veelal niet in geinteresseerd. Ze hadden wel wat anders te doen. Hij kon hen niet redden, want ze wilden niet gered worden. Hij wilde zijn parels ook niet voor de zwijnen werpen. Wie zou dat doen ? Niemand. Alles werd verkocht tegen hoge prijs.

Hij dacht na over een boek als dynamiet, wat al die geheimen zou bevatten, wat als een radio zou werken. Maar juist daarom zou het boek obscuur zijn. Tagula hield van obscure boeken die veelal niemand kende. Het waren van die boeken waar er maar een paar van waren uitgegeven. Er zou hard voor gewerkt worden. Het zou niet iets zijn wat je met geld zou kunnen kopen.

‘Geld maakt macht,’ zeiden de monniken vaak, en noemden het vervolgens valse macht. Het is macht zonder zorg, zonder diepte. Het is roofmacht. Het dringt zich aan de mens op. Het is nergens op gefundeerd. De boosaardige zoon van Morgan. Het kleeft. Je komt er niet meer van los. Het vindt een weg naar binnen. Dan gebruikt het jouw huis ook als een markt. Dan leef je ineens in huis met je buren. De muren zijn weg. Waar is dan je privacy ? Weggevlogen.

Je droomt dat ook niet zomaar terug. Het is hard werk in de lettermijnen. Als je dan het boek in handen hebt na veel bloed, zweet en tranen, dan wil je het nooit meer loslaten. Dan laat het jou ook niet meer los. Het heeft ook hard gewerkt om jou te bereiken. Dan hebben jullie elkaar gevonden. Maar de boosaardige zoon van Morgan mag nooit onderschat worden. Die gooit altijd roet in het eten. En dat moet ook wel, want er zijn veel meer boeken. Het gaat niet om dat ene boek. En zelfs dat ene boek zal wijzen op de andere boeken. Het boek wil niet verafgood worden. Pas op voor de boekcultussen. Het boek is een verbinding met andere boeken, een brug. In andere boeken wordt het verdiept. Het ene boek is dus een middelaar. Het staat nooit zomaar op zichzelf. Het ontkend andere boeken niet. Het verliest zichzelf niet geheel in macht. Het is een wegwijzer.

Je moet kunnen ademen. Er zijn adembronnen in de dieptes van de aarde, waar de mens nog niet vanaf weet. De monniken hebben daar soms over geschreven, en spraken daar soms over. Er is nog zoveel wat de mens niet weet.

Zoveel macht komt en gaat. Als macht geen zorg is dan is het ten dode opgeschreven. Dan komt het uit een vergiftigde bron. Dan is het slechts geldmacht, roofmacht. Het is tijdelijk, zeer vluchtig, en kan ook zo weer gestolen worden. Dan moet je leren remmen, op een ander spoor komen, anders ontspoor je, kom je met je hoofd vast te zitten tussen een beveiligingsdeur. Dieven komen nooit ver. Misdaad loont niet. Maar de mens mag de boosaardige zoon van Morgan niet onderschatten. Hij zit daar op zijn troon en hij dobbelt. Telkens weer is hij de systemen te slim af, komt overal doorheen. Dan zet hij zijn vlag. Het is de expansiedrift. Het is de gemaksdrift, en het is een gat in de markt. Met geld verzint de mens eindeloze dingen. Het vlees is eindeloos. Moet dat ons wanhopig maken ? Neen. Maar we mogen het ook niet wegpraten. Doorlezen, doorleren, doorsterven. En dat is zo’n grote jacht dat die eeuwig is. Eeuwig is volgens de monniken trouwens ook symbolisch. Het betekent volledig. Het betekent in de grotere context. Daarin zullen een heleboel dingen wegvallen, weggestreept worden.

Hoofdstuk 3. De wapenfabriek

De zorgcentra liepen door de gehele bovenwereld heen. Het waren vaak lange tunnels of lange gangen met kamers, en er werden ook flatgebouwen voor gebruikt. Je kon er lange wandelingen doorheen maken. Voor Tagula en de monniken was het interessant, want het was los van de psychiatrie. Ze hielpen waar en wanneer ze konden. Al was het alleen maar door hun aanwezigheid. Tagula kenden ze wel, want hij had er ooit eens gewoond, en zo was hij nog steeds van harte welkom. Tagula nam ook vaak gebruik van de gastenkamers. Die waren vaak overal verspreid door de zorgcentra. Gasten waren belangrijk, want dat werkte therapeutisch voor de patienten. Zo konden ze andere ideeën krijgen en nieuwe werelden betreden. De hulp ging via de vrijwilligers en de gasten. Ook hielpen patienten elkaar. Het ging om de natuurlijkheid ervan, niet door de dwang. Iedereen droeg zijn steentje bij.

De psychiatrie en tandartserij stonden onder de boosaardige zoon van Morgan. Het begon steeds meer op een burgeroorlog te lijken, sinds er steeds meer zorgcentra kwamen opzetten. De monniken stonden aan de kant van de zorgcentra. Er was voor hen een groot verschil tussen psychiatrie en zorg, alhoewel er ook kruispunten konden zijn. Zo was er ook een neutraal deel in de psychiatrie, een overgangsgebied. Veelal leek de burgeroorlog gewoon nog op een koude oorlog. Men kon elkaar niet luchten of zien, en daarom ontweek men elkaar, maar over en weer werd er veel in de kranten geschreven. Vaak werd het ook gewoon een krantenoorlog genoemd. Er werd geschreven, er werd beweerd, er werd vergaderd.

De monniken zeiden dat de boosaardige zoon van Morgan samenwerkte met buitenaardse wezens genaamd de Seflak. Zij waren insectisch, tijdmengers, vluchtig, ruimtemengers, nummermengers, konden rommelen met chronologie, waardoor ze konden verschijnen en verdwijnen waar en wanneer ze wilden, en zichzelf tot poedervorm konden maken. Vaak verborgen ze zich in de vormen van de stad, zodat ze niet zichtbaar waren. Ze werkten met camouflage. Ze kwamen uit het oerwoud.

De zoon van Morgan was een groot probleem, als een schotwond die van geslacht tot geslacht werd doorgegeven, die delen van de hersenen had uitgeschakeld, zodat het hart niet meer bereikbaar was, en al helemaal het geweten niet meer. Alles was verdoofd. De monniken wezen alcohol aan als de grote boosdoener. De bovenwereld was verdronken in alcohol, op sterk water gezet. Nu waren het zombies die de Seflak moesten dienen, en bovenal de zoon van Morgan.

De zoon van Morgan was een echo uit een diep verleden. De geschiedenisboeken zwegen erover, maar niet de boeken van de monniken. De zoon van Morgan was een doctrine, een medische doctrine, die tegen de leer van de monniken inging. Ook de zorgcentra moesten er niets van hebben. Velen waren ten onder gegaan aan de doctrine. Er werd nogal geheimzinnig over gedaan. Men mocht eigenlijk niet weten wat de doctrine was. Het was een goed geheim gehouden recept. Eigenlijk was het gewoon een bakkersrecept. Dit waren geen echte dokters, maar marktdrijvers. Daarom was de doctrine in diepte gewoon

een economische formule die geld en macht bracht, ook al was het slechts glans en schijn. Krakende huizen die op instorten staan. Deze vorm van geldwinning veroorzaakte aardbevingen. Men leefde van de stress van de patienten. Het was het syndroom van Mörn. Mörn was iemand die gek werd van de angst dat zijn huis zou instorten. Natuurlijk zagen de verkopers van angstmedicijnen daar heil in. Later werd deze term ook voor andere dingen gebruikt, en psychiaters begonnen steeds meer de term Mörn te gebruiken voor allerlei andere angsten en ook andere problemen. Mörn begon een echte volksziekte te worden, en de vraag naar medicijnen tegen Mörn begon enorm toe te nemen. Kinderen groeiden op met Mörn. Vaak was het hen aangepraat. Ze werden bang gemaakt en hadden vervolgens de ziekte van Mörn, die ongeneeslijk zou zijn, wat natuurlijk grote kassa betekende voor de medicijnenmarkt. Zo werkte de doctrine een weg. Het was dogma voor de psychiatrie. Het was voor hen een magische toverspreuk voor geld.

Tagula zag hele families de verwoesting ingaan door Mörn, en begon er tegen te prediken, zoals ook de monniken deden. Mörn begon een stopwoord te worden voor de psychiaters. Het was een weg tot het snelle geld. Men had het niet meer over gespleten persoonlijkheden. Men noemde het nu gewoon Mörn, een kat in het nauw die rare sprongen maakt. Het was een viscieuze angstcyclus die niet alleen ongeneeslijk was, maar ook erger werd. Je had hier steeds meer medicijnen voor nodig. Natuurlijk was dat allemaal aangepraat. Voor de monniken was Mörn een misdaadorganisatie. De psychiaters hadden zelf Mörn, vanwege hun slechte geweten, vanwege hun

kaartenhuis wat op instorten stond, en dat projecteerden ze op hun patiënten. De patiënt was hun alibi. Zo waren zij er rein van en konden weer doorgaan met hun werk. Zo lieten ze een spoor van verderf achter. Het dreef mensen tot onder de trein. De psychiatrie was die trein, in samenwerking met de tandartserij, die nog wel erger was. De tandartsen hadden Mörn, en projecteerden het op hun patiënten. Dat ging er heel sluw aan toe. Mörn was ontstaan door geldmisbruik en alcohol. Het was een dodelijke combinatie. Het scheen altijd samen te gaan. Mörn was daarvan de vrucht en ook de katalysator. Zo kwam men tot het dwaze geld. De dood kon hen niet meer stoppen, want dat hadden ze netjes op hun patiënten geprojecteerd. De monniken hadden de spelletjes van de tandartsen en de psychiaters door. Ook de zorgcentra hadden het door, en daarom hadden ze zich door de gehele bovenwereld verspreid als vangnet. Mörn was tot een negatieve afgod van de dystopie geworden. Het was de medische mammon, maar slechts een bakkersrecept. Het enige wat genezen werd was de dikke portemonnee van deze lieden, die ook wel de witte monniken werden genoemd door de monniken. Zij waren als witgepleisterde graven, chemisch gebleekt.

Mensen die Mörn hadden in de ogen van de psychiatrie werden benaderd met neerkijkende empathie, werden zielig gevonden en niet serieus genomen. Tagula ergerde zich aan deze valse empathie, want de psychiatrie had het op zijn patiënten geprojecteerd. De zoon van Morgan was een woesteling. Hij kon schelden en dreigen om mensen bang te maken, en dan zouden ze ineens de ziekte van Mörn hebben. Het waren van

die dokters die mensen in elkaar sloegen om maar patiënten te kunnen hebben. En zo plakte de tandartserij zijn vullingen. Het waren gedwongen etiketten. Het vee werd gebrandmerkt. Je mocht niks zeggen over hun heilige vullingen, want dan werd je opgepakt. De agenten van de zoon van Morgan klopten op hoge deuren en poorten om gevangenschap en dood aan te kondigen. Vaak plakten ze alleen hun plakkaten op de deuren. Het zou niet lang duren of hen die zogenaamd de ziekte van Mörn hadden zouden afgezonderd moeten worden in speciale kampen, en het liefst nog ondergronds. Daar waren ze mee bezig. Ze zouden in ballingschap naar de wildernis gaan met treinen, en naar ondergrondse werkkampen met metro's en liften, en weer anderen zouden verscheept worden tot ballingseilanden. Tagula zag hoe het allemaal snel uit de hand aan het lopen was. Psytand was geboren, de officiële samenwerking tussen psychiatrie en tandartserij, een grote industrie. Zorg was product. Patiënt was klant, maar de klant was niet koning. De klant was een gevangene, een slaaf, een ter dood veroordeelde. Dat zeiden ze niet letterlijk op die wijze, maar het kwam er wel op neer. En Mörn was besmettelijk, en daarom werden hen die met Mörn waren bestempeld ook bestempeld als onbetrouwbaar. Mörn schreeuwde in hun hoofden. Het was bezet gebied. Maar Tagula en de monniken vochten tegen deze woeste leeuw.

Zo werd het sociale leven een mijnenveld. Men werd bang voor verdachtmaking. En zo maakte men elkaar verdacht. Men werd steeds meer paranoïde, en zo rijp voor het Mörn-stempel, om zo tot product te worden gemaakt. Automatisch werd je zo een verslaafde aan medicijnen. De medicijnen waren heilig en

dulden geen kritiek. Wie kritiek had had de ziekte van Mörn, en moest desnoods gedwongen worden met medicijnen. Zo werd de bovenwereld tot een angstcultuur.

Tagula had al lang spijt dat hij was overgegaan, maar kon nu niet meer terug. Ook wilde hij eigenlijk niet weg, en wilde hij vechten. Het duurde niet lang voordat ook Tagula beschuldigd werd van het hebben van Mörn, en zo zou hij mogelijk ook in aanmerking komen voor verbanning. Hij voelde zich al verbannen. Je mocht niet voor jezelf denken in de bovenwereld. Kritiek hebben op het systeem was sociale zelfmoord.

De monniken vonden het nodig om door te gaan met de prediking. Natuurlijk hadden zij ook Mörn in de ogen van de psychiaters. Dwangverpleging was een optie, dus daarom moesten de monniken, evenals Tagula, op hun hoede zijn. Mörn werd gezien als gevaarlijke krankzinnigheid, erger dan een gespleten persoonlijkheid. Mörn was de fusie van de gespleten persoonlijkheid. En dan had je alle poppen aan het dansen, dan waren de rapen goed gaar. Mörn werd gezien als het grootste gevaar voor de samenleving, als negatieve afgod, maar in zekere zin ook positief, vanwege geldwinning. Het was een gouden formule voor de dystopische economie, voor de vrijgevochten opportunisten die boven alle anderen stonden, oftewel hen die zich de elite waanden. Zij waren zo speciaal dat ze bijzonder waren. Mörn was als een geliefd huisdier voor hen, als de gans met de gouden eieren.

Mörn was zowel veracht als aanbeden, zowel berucht als beroemd. Het was een monster die hen in de greep hield. Mörn projecteerde, Mörn stal geld, Mörn verzweeg, Mörn dreigde, chanteerde, beschuldigde en schonk troost. Dat was de bakkersformule. Diep ging het niet. Het was een beest aan de oppervlakte. Mörn werd aanbeden als leeuw en geofferd als kalf. Alles draaide om geld en medicijnen, of dat nu door verlokking ging of door dwang. Mörn was ook omkoperij. Mörn was een allesverwoestende machine.

Tagula vocht, en twijfelde. Soms dacht hij dat Mörn in hem was. Hij voelde het monster schreeuwen, hij voelde het monster woeden. Zijn gedachten waren soms als een wilde zee. De monniken wilden hem terug, maar hij kon niet. Hij moest hier blijven. Hij moest weerstand bieden.

Alles werd tot massa-productie. Mörn was de underdog, de paria van de samenleving, de lagere rang, en de zonen van Morgan waren de hogere rang, maar vanwege dat Mörn de fusie van de gespleten persoonlijkheid was, was hij op een vreemde wijze beiden. Mörn stond aan beide kanten van het schaakbord, en daarom vreesden zij het. Mörn was eigenlijk hun heerser. Ze konden niet met en niet zonder. Zo waren zij zelf diep gespleten. Mörn bracht hen verlichting, Mörn bracht hen troost, maar was tegelijkertijd een bedreiging.

Heb ik Mörn ?
Nee, wij hebben geen Mörn.
Mörn is voor de slacht. Zij hebben Mörn.
Wij houden alleen van Mörn. Wij houden van vlees.

Wij houden van het geld wat het brengt.
Wij hebben geen Mörn, wij zijn Mörn.
Dat hoeft verder niemand te weten.
Wij projecteren het graag op de ander,
en vragen daar vervolgens veel geld voor.
Voor wat hoort wat.

Heb ik Mörn ?
Nee, wij zijn geen Mörn.
Heb ik dat gezegd ?
Nee, ik heb niets gezegd.
Dat verbeeld je je maar.
Je hebt namelijk Mörn.

En zo werd Mörn tot een handig excuus en een handige alibi.
Zo kwamen ze met alles weg.
Zo was Mörn hun duivel en hun God, tevens hun plaatsvervanger,
hun zondebok. Dat ging allemaal goed samen.
Het was immers Mörn, de fusie van de gespleten persoonlijkheid.
Goed en kwaad werkten naar hartelust samen,
omdat ze het beste niet wilden zien.

En deze vreemde religie noemde men Echto.
Het was allemaal goede reclame voor een vliegtuigmaatschappij,
want wilde je niet even weg van al die onzinnigheid ?
Wat had het leven nog voor zin zo ?

En zo kon je zin krijgen als je met het vliegtuig er eens even uit ging,
naar een ander land.
Maar wat zouden daar voor vreemde systemen zijn ?
Tagula wist dat hij er niet voor kon weglopen of wegvliegen.
Hij wist dat hij er dwars doorheen moest, door alle gekte.
De Echto kerken stroomden vol, door alle dreiging, door alle omkoperij.
De mens werd gechanteerd tot het bot in de bovenwereld.
En in het bot kwamen vullingen, door het hele lichaam, gedwongen.
De vullingen moesten het bot vervangen, om zo onder de heerschappij te komen van de zonen van Morgan.

Jaromo was een skelet wat ze vereerden, wat geheel was opgebouwd uit vullingen.
Alles was vervangen. Zij die niet naar de Echto kerken gingen kregen het Mörn stempel.
Deze religie mocht niet geweigerd worden. Het psycho-medische systeem, oftewel Psytand, moest aanbeden worden.
Daartoe hadden ze ook hun eigen boek.

Verschijningen van buitenaardsen begonnen steeds normaler te worden. En dat waren echt niet alleen de Seflak. Men sprak over de wederkomst, maar het was dystopie. Het was mind-control, totalitarisme.

Het was pas na vele jaren dat dit systeem begon weg te ebben, in andere vormen begon over te gaan. Er kwamen steeds nieuwere vormen bij. De zorgcentra, de monniken en Tagula

hadden stand gehouden. Het was dankzij de boeken dat zij stand hadden gehouden en dat het kon veranderen. Er waren nieuwe boeken bij gekomen die nieuwe zichten hadden gegeven, en de organisaties werden zo van binnenuit veranderd. De psychiatrie en de tandartserij waren niet meer wat het was, maar waren opgegaan in andere dingen. Maar hoe dan ook was het nog steeds een dystopie. Tagula vond dat niet erg. Hij hield van nachtmerries.

Alhoewel het beter ging had hij nog veel last van herbeleving. Hij ging in een wapenfabriek werken, maar dit ging om zachte wapens die niet dodelijk waren. Het ging om afleiding en verleiding, lokmiddelen. Hij moest werken aan reclame voor goede producten. Het was juist een wapen tegen de gangbare wijze van oorlog. Urenlang per dag werkte hij eraan om de reclame goed te krijgen. Men had nieuwe, onbekende groenten ontdekt in de aardbodem, dieper in de aarde, en op en in de zeebodem, en men begon dat ook boven de grond te telen. Het bleek een goede uitwerking te hebben op de hersenen van de mensen. Hij werkte ook aan andere wapens, wapens van verzoeting en verbittering. Soms was het belangrijk dat mensen meer verbitterd over zichzelf waren in plaats van snel van zichzelf overtuigd. De verbitteringswapens waren afrem-middelen, wat ook een onderdeel van de oorlog was. Al met al moesten er bepaalde delen van de oorlog wel zijn, en andere delen moesten weg. Er moest een scheuring komen in de oorlogswetenschap. Het waren dus wapens van een geestelijke en sociologische oorlog. Hij moest hiervoor ook worden bijgeschoold in de psychologie. Er waren geen eenvoudige oplossingen. Soms deed hij overwerk. Dit werd dan

gecompenseerd door veel geld en op bepaalde momenten veel vrije tijd. Zo bleef de balans in zijn leven, en zo bleef hij contact houden met de natuur.

Telkens was hij weer op zoek naar nieuwe producten en nieuwe boeken, en als het iets was, dan maakte hij er reclame voor. Daar was hij heel vindingrijk in. Voor hem was het daarom ook een uidagende job. Hij wilde niet dat het klinisch en steriel zou zijn. Daar streed hij juist tegen. Hij liep ook niet rond in dure pakken met stropdassen. Het moest van een hele andere kant komen, veel kinderlijker. Door kinderen liet hij zich inspireren, en de monniken benadrukten altijd hoe belangrijk het was om als de kinderen te worden. De mens was vals volwassen geworden. De mens was op een dwaalspoor. Er moest een geheel nieuw educatie-systeem komen, en daar ging hij voor. Dat mocht niet strak en schools zijn, maar moest van een hele andere kant komen, moest meer natuurlijk zijn. Het moest creatief zijn en blijven. Hij wist dat hierin veel valkuilen waren, en die werden ook besproken. Daar werd ook tegen gewaakt. Hij zag de herbelevingen dan ook als een nodig alarm. Het hield hem doelgericht. Hij mocht niet indutten.

Er kwam nieuwe technologie, ook al had het ruis, ook al waren er veel storingen. De nieuwe radio’s konden frequenties van bomen opvangen. De bomen konden spreken. Zo werden de bomen gehoord. Vele mensen dachten in het begin dat het een truuk was. De bomen hadden hun eigen programma’s, en hun stemmen leken op mensenstemmen. Zo werd deze technologie ook uitgebreid tot het verstaan van dieren. Ook zij hadden mensenstemmen, maar die zaten op andere frequenties die de

mens voorhen nog niet kenden. Daar was de apparatuur niet voor. Ze hadden ook hun eigen electricteit. De energie kon vertaald en opgewekt worden door bepaalde generatoren, en dit was pure natuur energie.

Het waren hele bijzondere radio’s en in het begin waren de prijzen heel hoog, maar later begon de samenleving er meer en meer gewend aan te raken, en daalden de prijzen meer en meer. Zo kwamen er ook bepaalde telefoons waardoor je met dieren kon spreken. Die waren zeer gewild. Het waren terugspreek-radio’s. De energie die hiervoor werd gebruikt was zeer zuiver. Die kwam uit de zee. De markt voor dit soort producten brak open. De brug tussen mens en natuur was hersteld. Hierop werd een geheel nieuwe economie gebaseerd. Dieren werden sindsdien ook als mensen gezien, omdat ze spraken. De wetenschap had een grote sprong voorwaarts gemaakt. Tagula merkte dat de mensen aardiger begonnen te doen naar elkaar, en ook naar de dieren. Toch waren er ook opstootjes. Rebelse jeugd die niets met de technologie te maken wilden hebben, en ook vele ouderen die het niet begrepen en niet wilden. Uiteindelijk zou dit tot burgeroorlogen kunnen leiden. Daar begon het in het begin wel op te lijken. Het maakte de jeugd soms agressief. Dit had ook te maken met het feit dat sinds de wetenschappelijke opleving er steeds meer slachthuizen dicht gingen. Dit gebeurde lang niet overal, maar over het algemeen.

Agressieve jeugd was een groot probleem. Er kwam toen ook apparatuur op de markt die de diepere frequenties van de mens konden oppikken. Dit gaf natuurlijk direct een ander gevaar, namelijk het mogelijke verlies van privacy, en daarom was de

nieuwe apparatuur aan strenge wetten onderhevig. In ieder geval kon men met de nieuwe apparatuur babies verstaan, en ook hen die om wat voor reden dan ook hun stem hadden verloren. Het bleek dat de zielen van de voorgeslachten zich vaak nestelden in de nageslachten, en dat kon voor innerlijke verwarring zorgen. Alles liep door elkaar heen. Er was geen goede afvoer. Dit kon verholpen worden door bepaalde technologie. Het was bepaalde splitsings-apparatuur. Hierdoor kwam er ook andere energie vrij, die goed gebruikt kon worden. Zo kon de mens zichzelf weer begrijpen, en ook de ander. Er had teveel fusie plaatsgevonden door gebrek aan goede apparatuur. Ze noemden het kleven. Er waren klevers in de mens ontstaan, zodat ze niet meer van henzelf waren, maar ook van de voorgeslachten. Zij waren als de erfenis van de voorgeslachten en werden door hen bewoond, puur omdat er niets anders voor handen was. Deze klevers ontstonden dus in onwetendheid, als een jeugdziekte van de evolutie. De knopen moesten nog ontward worden. Alles liep door elkaar heen.

Telkens als Tagula herbelevingen had dan was dat een vorm van kleven. Maar eerst moest men het kleven onder ogen komen, voordat het opgelost en ontward kon worden. Tagula voelde hoe de voorouders in zijn hoofd woonden, hoe zij een bepaalde belasting op hem hadden gezet. Telkens weer moest hij betalen. Er moest apparatuur komen om die signalen te scheiden. Dat was een nieuwe vorm van scheikunde. Hierin moest Tagula onderwezen worden voor zijn werk.

Er liep een scheidingslijn door zijn hoofd, maar die was te dun. Het ijs was nog te dun. Alles brak er doorheen. Er waren een

heleboel dingen die de mens niet wist. Het kon niet ademen, en daarom voelde het als leven in de viesmerrie. Alles hoopte en stapelde zich op, als een kleefmerrie. Kleven, kleven en kleven, daar bestond zijn leven uit. Telkens weer. Soms was het weg, en dan was het er weer. Er leefden dingen in hem die daar niet hoorden. Hij had de buren in huis. Er werd markt gedreven in zijn huis. Hij wilde voor zijn huis vechten, maar ook een goede oplossing verzinnen. Hij kon al die mensen toch niet zomaar uit hem zetten ? Het was een kinderziekte van de evolutie, een zeer vervelende, knagende situatie. Hoe voelde van alles door hem heenlopen. Zijn werk was hierin zijn hoop. Ook zijn studie.

De splitsings-apparatuur sloeg in als een bom. Mensen begrepen ineens zichzelf weer, voelden weer ruimte in zichzelf, konden weer ademen. De signalen en stemmen werden gesplitst in hun gedachten. Nu was het duidelijk wat het was, en waar het vandaan kwam. Nu konden mensen hun harten weer laten spreken. Het was overduidelijk dat dit niet zonder slag of stoot ging. Vele stemmen van het verleden wilden niet weg. Er waren allerlei claims en contracten. Er moest een betere afvoer komen. Er moest beter vervoer komen voor deze dingen. Tagula dacht terug aan de vliegtuigmaatschappij. Had het dan toch niet een kern van waarheid ? Mensen wilden veel reizen juist omdat ze dit soort dingen in zichzelf voelden, en eerst was daar nog geen andere apparatuur voor. Zo kon hij deze drangen verklaren. De mensen wilden zo op hun eigen, rigoreuze wijze loskomen van het gekleef.

Door het splitsen kwam er een nieuwe energie vrij die men kon gebruiken. Die energie werd voorheen verborgen gehouden onder de klevers. Het was als een vulkaan die losbarste. Men kon niet goed met deze energie omgaan, want men wist niet wat er mee te doen. Het werd vrije energie genoemd. Er waren apparaten die de voorouders konden verschepen, teleporteren, naar andere gebieden, zodat ze niet meer in de hoofden van het nageslacht hoefden te leven. Dat was overigens niet dat ze letterlijk in het hoofd van één persoon woonden, maar verdeeld, als apparatuur, als een stralingsveld waarin een nieuwe droom was opgewekt waarin ze konden wonen. Dat was vaak tussen mensen in, maar het vrat aan hen.

Tagula moest leren hoe dat splitsingsproces werkte. De appatuur werkte veelal door zekere spiegelingen, door ketsers, en door een hele reeks van ketsers, door bepaalde routes en tunnels in de apparatuur konden signalen omgedraaid worden, en zo worden gesplitst van elkaar.

Dat ging dus niet zomaar door magneetjes, maar door zekere spiegeltjes die op een bepaalde wijze geplaatst dienden te worden. Het moest van bepaald materiaal zijn om die frequenties op te diepen. Het waren een bepaalde soort steentjes die in de zeebodem en dieper in de aardbodem werden gevonden. Men moest hiervoor veel in de mijnen werken. Men moest dus ook leren de vrijgekomen energie op te vangen, door bepaalde soorten materialen. Daarmee was men nog aan het experimenteren, hoe dat het beste zou kunnen. De filters konden niet werken zonder de spiegelsystemen, en voor de spiegelsystemen konden niet zomaar metalen worden gebruikt,

want die zouden het kleven weer kunnen opwekken. Daar was toch echt steen voor nodig. Het waren hele kleine kristalletjes, van een zwartachtige kleur. Het was bepaald zoutgesteente. Het waren hele andere zouten dan die men kende. Het zout was veel harder, zodat het meer steen was dan zout. Het werkte zintuigelijk op de mens in. Het leek wel alsof het van een andere wereld was. In ieder geval konden de stenen frequenties opslaan en van elkaar scheiden, en ook transformeren. Zo kwamen er bepaalde grote stenen waarin de voorouders konden wonen. Deze stenen werden dagen genoemd, en schuildagen. Vanwege dat de stenen vrijwel zwart waren werden ze ook wel zwarte koningen genoemd, of zwartkoningen. Ze begonnen door het hele land te staan, als zendmasten. Nu moest er heel veel electrisch en chemisch afval verwerkt worden, waar deze stenen ook goed voor waren.

Men moest werken in de mijnen voor dit soort dingen. Ook Tagula kreeg een oproep. Hij vond dit wel interessant en ging ook de zee op en in. Er kwamen steeds meer tunnels in en onder de zee. Zo kwam men ook diep onder de zee om daar te mijnen. Men vond daar nog veel andere soorten gesteenten, en de wetenschap begon hard te groeien. Er kwam steeds meer informatie over deze dingen, en die informatie schenen de stenen ook vast te houden. Die kon men door bepaalde apparatuur opvangen. Eerst moesten de electrische signalen vertaald worden, en ze moesten gescheiden worden, en goed afgevoerd, en veel energie die vrijkwam kon voor andere dingen worden gebruikt. Het was lichte en vriendelijke natuur-energie. Toch merkte men dat er ook andere soorten energie begonnen vrij te komen. Energie was energie. Ze waren aan

regels onderhevig. Men kon niet naar hartelust experimenteren. Er waren ook kosten aan verbonden, en sommige dingen konden echt niet. Men kon niet naar hartelust mengen. Sommige energie was zo krachtig dat men afremmers moest inzetten. De energie moest allereerst vertraagd worden.

Mensen wilden soms de steentjes in hun hoofd laten implanteren. Sommigen droegen de steentjes als sieraden. Anderen wilden het gewoon houden bij de apparaatjes. Die werden steeds handiger, tot zakformaat. Zo konden ze spreken met de voorouders, met de dieren, de bomen, de bloemen, en de stenen zelf. Het werd intersociale media genoemd, metasociale media, of gewoon natuurmedia.

Hoofdstuk 4. Naar Zaalveringen

De wapenfabriek groeide uit tot sociale beveiliging, afvoer en recycling. Het was een educatie oorlog, een oorlog tegen onwetendheid. Men dacht naar andere planeten te moeten voor materialen, maar het bleek allemaal in de aardbodem en zeebodem te zitten. De mijnen werden druk bezocht. De mijnen stonden voor hoop. De techniek moest afrekenen met overlapping, knopen en kleven, en dat kon alleen door geleiding, waar ook een hele hoop omleiding bij kwam kijken. Er was van korte snelle wegen geen plaats meer, alhoewel de apparatuur wel steeds handiger werd, en verfijnder. Er kwamen helmen met vizier, als dashboards met schermen, om tot een andere frequentie te gaan, in een andere wereld te leven. Dat ging niet altijd goed. Er waren nog een heleboel dingen die ze niet begrepen.

Ook buitenaardsen, bovenaardsen, onderaardsen en binnenaardsen bleken zich al energetisch in de mens te bevinden. Er waren een heleboel energetische werelden waar de mens nog niets vanaf wist, omdat de mens die frequenties nog niet had onderscheiden, omdat de apparatuur er niet voor was, maar de zwarte koning baande zich een weg. Er kwam een geheel nieuw educatief systeem waar kinderen van jongs af aan al naartoe konden gaan, maar niet onder dwang. Dwang werkte niet in de scholing. Daar kwamen alleen maar problemen van, en het was vaak het werk van klevers. Men wist hier nog niet mee om te gaan. De wetenschap omtrend deze dingen stond nog maar in de kinderschoenen. Klevers ontpopten zich vaak als blaffers. Het was verstopte,

opgehoopte energie, en ook vaak afgeknot. Door de nieuwe apparatuur konden deze energieën begrepen worden, vertaald. Het moest nog allemaal gekanaliseerd en gesorteerd worden. Er moest leiding, omleiding en afvoer zijn. Zo kon energie ook omgezet worden. Het moest zo de juiste plaats en functie vinden.

Er kwamen steeds meer van zulke wapenfabrieken. Er was een markt voor deze dingen. Maar er waren ook tegengeluiden : 'Een boom is een boom. Een dier is een dier. Vlees moet. Voorouders zijn dood, en dood is dood. Voorouders moeten met rust gelaten worden.' Enzovoorts. De wapenfabrieken noemden dat deze tendensen juist de klevers waren. Ze hadden nog meer techniek nodig. Misschien moesten ze nog dieper de aarde in, of nog dieper onder de zee, of moesten ze op andere plaatsen zoeken, of naar andere planeten, of gewoon wachten op nieuwe boeken met nieuwe informatie erover. Ze waren aan het wachten op de gouden link. Ze waren op zoek naar een leider over deze dingen, naar een zwarte koning, of iets anders. Soms liepen de spanningen hoog op. De klevers konden flink blaffen. Ze vroegen natuurlijk om aandacht. Het probleem moest nog opgelost worden. Hier was nog pijn.

Tagula kwam er meer en meer achter hoe belangrijk het was geestelijk te dromen, tot de bron energie te gaan, want men was in spiegelingen terecht gekomen die zich hadden lopen verdraaien. Maar het bleef niet bij de droom. Ook in de droom moest men tot de geestelijke slaap gaan en tot de innerste droom, want ook de droom zelf was in principe nog gewoon afwijking, als zaad wat gezaaid diende te worden. Het moest

nog ontkiemen. Er moest naar een nog fijnere bronstof gegaan worden in de diepte van de droom, door de geestelijke slaap. Dan was het een droom in een droom, maar dat werd zo niet genoemd. Dat werd irkw genoemd, of irke. Dat was een discipline die geleerd kon worden in de droom technologie, maar dat was dan eigenlijk de irke technologie. Men moest hiervoor eerst door de schemerzone heen, om zo tot de irke industrie terreinen te gaan. Steeds meer boeken begonnen op te rijzen over dit onderwerp.

Tagula probeerde de stromen van irke in zichzelf te volgen. Vaak had hij dromen die hij niet kon onthouden en weer was vergeten als hij wakker werd, maar het was slechts zaad dat eerst nog moest sterven, en dan zou irke komen. Dat kon gewoon overdag gebeuren, als hij wakker was, want het was slechts geestelijk. Het gaf hem inspiratie. Het was een bron van leven waardoor hij geleid kon worden. Hij kon zo gevoelig worden voor de grenzen waarbinnen het pad kon ontstaan, om zo door het mijnenveld van het leven heen te komen. Ook de monniken bedreven dit.

‘Ik moet ergens van weg, en ergens naartoe,’ zei Tagula altijd. Iets zat hem op de hielen, maar iets lokte hem ook. Hierin moest hij juist voorzichtig zijn, want dat wat hem op de hielen zat kon ook lokken. Er werd met aas gewerkt, met valstrikken. Daarom was de wapenfabriek belangrijk, zijn houvast. Maar het bleef niet bij irke op zich. Telkens weer moest je de geestelijke slaap in, om tot de droom in de droom in de droom te komen, de diepste droom, de diepste irke, wat een heel gevecht was. Je moest zo tot de inter-irke komen. Er waren

genoeg gevaren, van irke wat niet genoeg was doorgezuiverd, niet genoeg was getest. Tagula zag de gevaren ervan in. Daarom wilde hij het uitwerken. Er moest meer educatie over komen, want het kon heel sluw zijn. De mijnenvelden en fokkerijen waarin de mens zat opgesloten wilden en zouden niet zomaar loslaten. De farao wilde het volk niet laten gaan. Het liep uit op een grote koude burgeroorlog tussen de geestelijken en de klevers. De klevers wilden alles bij het oude laten. De klevers wilde geen vernieuwing. Ze hadden zich vastgekleefd en leefden ervan. Het waren een soort insecten, maar ze leken ook op slakken, kwallen en octopi. Er was een oorlog om het brein van de mens. De interirke kon uiteindelijk de weg tussen brein en hart herstellen, maar er moest ook een weg komen tot het geweten, en dat lag veel dieper. Het geweten was oorspronkelijk een orgaan tussen het hart en de buik, en het bewustzijn was een orgaan wat ernaast lag, maar buitenaardsen hadden het weggesneden uit de mens. De mens was nu in een slaap, en in een boze droom. In die droom werden mensen tot de dood gedreven, tot zelfmoord, of tot moord, tot criminaliteit, of ze werden tot de drugs gedreven, tot medicijnen, of tot een coma, dit alles om ze in de slaap te brengen tot Mörn. Mörn was de tegenstander van irkw. Het was een valse droomput waar mensen in gezogen werden, als in een fuik. Ze kwamen zo steeds dieper en dieper, en werden ergens voor gefokt. Kinderen, dieren, maar ook volwassenen werden geofferd in de mörn-cultussen. Sommige mörnisten offerden zichzelf vrijwillig. Ook velen in de psychiatrie en tandartserij waren mörnisten, vaak in het geheim, en hadden duistere doeleinden met de mens. Te pas en te onpas zeiden ze dat de zieken bepaalde stoffen misten, en dat zij die konden

aanvullen, met hun chemische rotzooi, juist om de mens nog zieker te maken, of schijnbeter te maken, opdat ze op welke wijze dan ook onder hun controle vielen. Men had machtsvraatzucht, en controle waanzin, allemaal vanwege een slecht geweten. Ze waren hersenloos en gewetenloos op vele wijzen. Het was voor hen een sport om zo veel mogelijk mee te sleuren in hun eigen lot, om het op hun gestrikten te projecteren, zodat zij vrijuit konden gaan, en zo er veel mee konden verdienen. Men dacht dat men op een succesvolle wijze tegen het geweten kon strijden. Men dacht dat men het geweten had uitgedoofd, had weggesneden. Maar ze onderschatten de werkingen van irkw, die was gezonden om het geweten te herstellen, door de weg tussen het hart en het brein te herstellen, en zo zou ook uiteindelijk het bewustzijn hersteld worden.

De mens leefde nog steeds in een nachtmerrie, werd onder water gehouden door Mörn. Het Mörn virus was ook al in de wapenfabriek. Tagula moest rennen voor zijn leven. Toch hield hij vast aan de wapenfabriek. Hier had hij hoop. Hij kon zijn collega’s niet meer vertrouwen. Toch moest hij roeien met de riemen die hij had. Hij moest er goed gebruik van maken, zonder ervoor te vallen. De boeken leidden de weg. Voor zijn ogen zag hij het steeds meer overgenomen worden door de nieuwe generatie, en er werd vreemdzinnig mee omgesprongen, totdat hij uiteindelijk wel weg moest. Hij wilde zich nu alleen nog maar richten op de boeken. Hij had gevechten met Mörn in de nacht. Mörn wilde de hoofden niet loslaten.

‘Niet door macht, noch door geweld, maar door boeken.’ Hij wist dat het om irke ging. Hij wilde dat het geweten en bewustzijn in hem hersteld werden. Hij moest door de schemerzone heen. Er was geen andere weg. Ze probeerden hem te vangen, probeerden zijn armen of benen af te hakken, maar hij moest doorwerken. Niet tot worship komen, maar tot workship. Het volk was ingedut. Steeds meer werd Mörn openlijk in de kerk bezongen. Mörn was hun redder, hun afgod. Het werd normaal gemaakt om Mörn te aanbidden, om Mörn groot te maken. Het maakte de mens lui en verslaafd, afhankelijk, en afhankelijkheid betekende geld. Mörn was een vreemde mengeling tussen geld en medicijnen.

Men had het over de komst van Mörn. Men verwachtte in een schip te worden opgenomen. Mörn was gewoon datgene wat van alles teveel had genomen. Dat sprak de mensen aan, want ze hielden niet van grenzen. Voor hen moest alles kunnen, en daar werd Mörn meer en meer een symbool van, van de levensvrijheid, van het hedonisme, van de drank, alles. De kerken waren door Mörn bourgondisch en barbaars geworden. In de nacht verscheen Mörn vaak tot Tagula als een grote gespierde, wilde Germaan met lang haar. Wat moest Tagula ermee ? Het stond voor overmatige vraatzucht en machtslust, voor gemak en de korte weg, ten koste van al het andere. Het was drugs. Tagula wilde deze gemaksdrift niet. Het was spijbelend en dodend. Hij wilde deze hebzucht niet. Hij kon daar niet mee leven. De germaan deed hem grote offers, wilde hem omkopen. Telkens weer moest Tagula tegen de spierbundels aankijken, die van alles beloofden, van alles toestonden. Alles mocht, alles kon. De germaan probeerde

zachtaardig over te komen, bijna lief. Maar er was veel bloed aan zijn mes, onschuldig bloed. Hij had godsdienst waan. Voor de germaan was dit het goede pad. Tagula wilde er niets van weten, en noemde het bedrog, maar de germaan bleef terugkomen. Het was een plaag. Als Tagula er aan toe zou geven zou alles verloren zijn. Tagula wilde een monnik blijven. Hij wilde een hermiet worden, een boeken-hermiet. Dat was de enige weg om er doorheen te komen. De valstrikken waren eindeloos. Tagula wilde terug tot zijn geweten en bewustzijn.

De germaan zei dat hij van het lagere Orion kwam. Daar was volop drugs te vinden. Ook aan Tagula werd het aangeboden, maar Tagula wees het af. ‘Ik zal mijn weg wel vinden,’ had Mörn toen tegen hem gezegd.

Mörn werd groot. Mörn heerste over de steden en dorpen, en zij werden gezombificeerd voor Mörn. Mörn was hun paradijs. Ondanks dat hield Tagula stand. Hij hoopte dat het weer voorbij zou gaan. Het was hardnekkig. Mörn was zwaar dronken. Mörn was ongeneeslijk. Mörn was tot een reus uitgegroeid, geen klein jongetje meer. Mörn zou spoedig alle volkeren aan hem onderwerpen. Daartoe had Mörn zijn groot slachtmes. Er was een slager gekomen.

Het was in die dagen dat de monniken het veel over vergeestelijking hadden in plaats van zomaar het geestelijke. Het geestelijke moest verdiept worden door de vergeestelijking, en dat was de sleutel tot irke, de diepere droom. De monniken zeiden dat ze ergens onder het klooster een boek hadden gevonden, een nieuwe bijbel. En daarin was

het boek Anderlech, waaruit zij begonnen te prediken. Het boek stelde dat het vlees tot woord was geworden, en de wereld terroriseerde, en Tagula moest aan Mörn denken. Ook zei het boek dat de vergeestelijking de weg terug zou leiden. Het was op basis hiervan dat de monniken zich de Anderlechse monniken gingen noemen.

Mörn liet niet los. Mörn was een blaffer. Mörn was een klever. Hij had zich vastgekleefd aan het brein en het hart van de mens. Daar leefde hij van. Hij had zichzelf verzekerd door alcohol. Dieren werden geofferd voor zijn grootspraak. Dat was allemaal professioneel gemaakt door de vlees industrie. Vlees was immers goed, gezond, en zelfs noodzakelijk.

De monniken begonnen de nieuwe bijbel te prediken, die ze onder het klooster hadden gevonden, die ‘God daar had neergelegd,’ zoals ze zeiden. Ook begonnen ze deze bijbel te verspreiden. Er werden een aantal exemplaren gedrukt. Toen Tagula het las besefte hij dat dit irke wel moest zijn, het antistof tegen Mörn. Mörn brulde als een beest tot de volkeren, en in angst moesten ze hem wel aanbidden. Het was een angstcultuur. Het was een stockholm syndroom. Het syndroom van Mörn. Je hebt het gevoel dat je huis elk moment kan instorten, en daarom neem je de redder aan die is gekomen. Die redder is Mörn.

Op grote posters kwam hij, in kinderkamers, in jeugdkamers. Op schilderijen kwam hij, voor de volwassenen. Mörn was reclame. Mörn was communicatie. Mörn was media, en daardoor ook verzekering. Men waande zich veilig nu, want

men was immers aan de drugs, aan de medicijnen. Mörn was de medische waakhond, maar eigenlijk gewoon een economische waakhond. Mörn had nu de psychiatrie en de tandartserij ingenomen. Mörn was het hardnekkige en gedwongen bot-implantaat, gedwongen plastische chirurgie. De onderdelen van de mens moesten gedwongen vervangen worden. De mens was niet meer van zichzelf. Dit waren anatomische kolonisten. Het waren ledemaat-boeren, orgaanhandels. De mens betaalde er ook nog duur voor. Niks was gratis. Je moest nu de dief en de crimineel betalen en dankbaar zijn. Nu moest je belasting betalen, voor de rest van je leven, aan hen. Tegenspraak werd niet geduld. Door kritiek gingen de grote alarms af.

Je werd dan niet in hechtenis genomen, want je was al in hechtenis. Nee, het was veel erger. De mens was al geheel ingenomen door de gedwongen implantaten. Ieder mens moest door de implantaten bedwongen worden, bestuurd worden, anders waren ze een gevaar voor de samenleving. De strijd was onderhuids, en bovenhuids deed men alsof er niets aan de hand was. Alles werd schoongepraat door reclame. Voor reclame logen ze en gingen ze hun boekje te buiten. Het maakte allemaal niets uit. Mörn was immers koning.

Kapitein-koning was hij. Allen gingen ze mee op zijn schip, of ze nu wilden of niet. Deze dystopie was niet meer te stoppen, maar de monniken zaaiden met de nieuwe bijbel.

Tagula wist dat Mörn dit kon doen omdat de organen van geweten en bewustzijn verdwenen waren. Dat waren een soort

weggesneden diepere harten. Hoe vroeg zich af hoe het terug moest komen. De monniken hadden het over een zeker zwart plantje, wat onder het klooster groeide waar ze het boek hadden gevonden. Ze noemden het zwarte koninginnen, en er groeide ook een soort aardappels of cassave aan de wortels. Men moest en zou dat eten als medicijn tegen alle waanzin. De monniken zouden daar zorg voor dragen.

Tagula wilde wel helpen met de verbouwing ervan. Hierdoor zouden de verloren organen weer terug kunnen groeien in de mensen. Tagula vond hierin weer wat hoop, maar was nog niet overtuigd. Hij wilde het wel proberen.

De monniken waren blij met de hulp van Tagula, en noemden de groente van de bladeren tagula. Ook de knollen van de wortels zouden een goede vleesvervanger zijn.

De monniken hadden ook een heel ander beeld over de hel. Ze wilden soms dat mensen naar de hel zouden gaan om te leren en te helpen. Ze zagen de hel als de baarmoeder, als school en gevangenis, zelfs als ziekenhuis.

Mörn was een rare. Hij had enkel negatieve denkbeelden over de hel, en die verspreidde hij in zijn angstcultuur. Mörn was zakelijk, ook al kwam hij vaak vriendelijk over. Hij kon mensen zeer vriendelijk met de meest gruwelijke dingen bedreigen. En ze geloofden het maar, uit angst, en deden het maar, anders zou het grote sociale gevolgen hebben. Ze waren bang er niet meer bij te horen. Ze waren bang voor kou. Ze hadden liever een warme leugen dan een koude waarheid.

Mörn speelde daar op in. Hij kende hun prioriteiten-stelsels door en door. Hij wist dat ze lauw waren.

Mörn stond voor macht, en werd een merk. Als je het niet droeg hoorde je er niet bij. De monniken waren trots dat ze er niet bijhoorden. Zij gingen door met hun werk.

De mens boog neer voor de goden van sex, genotsmiddelen, horror en trauma-uitbuiting. Victim-blaming was wel het allergemakkelijkst, en daar ging de mens voor. Gemak en geluk stonden hoog op het wenslijstje. En daar werd de mens praterig van. Mörn was een praat-syndroom in hun hoofd. Met grapjes probeerden ze het geweten te doven.

Tagula wist dat ze zware literaire technologie nodig hadden om tegen de schreeuwers en praters bestand te blijven. Het waren blaffende klevers. Er moest nog meer splitsing komen. Dat konden alleen de boeken. Gewoon maar stenen of apparatuur had zijn grenzen. Dat was meer als symbool, als start-kapitaal. Daarna kwamen de boeken. De noodzaak tot lezen en leren.

Maar het leek alsof ze overspoeld werden door de boeken van Mörn. Die hadden macht en populariteit. Die werden goed verkocht, want angst verkoopt, en de mens laat zich graag omkopen. Het bood hen troost. Ze waren diep in het stockholm syndroom, het syndroom van Mörn. De monniken noemden het de stemmen van alcohol die zich vast hadden geworteld in het brein en niet meer weg wilden. Het was een dubbele alzheimer die zich deskundig en professioneel voordeed, die de breinkloof illegaal had overbrugd door bogus medicijnen. De

gespleten persoonlijkheid was nu overbrugd, maar het was slechts een derde persoonlijkheid. Het was een clan geworden, een zwerm insecten.

Mörn was de beker die ze allemaal wilden hebben, de handige knop. Snelle troost. De weg van de minste weerstand. Gemak staat boven gezondheid. Gemak is geld. Het is praatwater. Het zegt eigenlijk niks, maar het houdt achter.

Door de vervolgingen kwamen ze in Zaalveringen terecht, een vrijdorp. Hier konden de monniken leven, ook Tagula, want buiten de vrijdorpen voerden de mörnisten hun heksenjachten. Ze kregen allemaal een huisje in dezelfde buurt. Voorlopig zouden ze hier veilig zijn. Maar al snel werd ook Zaalveringen een doelwit van mörnistische terroristen, en moesten de monniken wel onder de grond gaan tot de hermietenholen. Dat kon gewoon onder Zaalveringen. Er waren daar ondergrondse tunnels. Ze zouden moeten wachten totdat de storm voorbij zou zijn in Zaalveringen, totdat het weer veilig zou zijn. Ze vroegen zich af wat er nog van Zaalveringen over was. Nu had Tagula alle tijd om de hiëroglieven onder de grond te bestuderen. Hij was daar bijna toe gedwongen. Hij was ervan overtuigd dat er veel verborgen boodschappen in waren.

Er was een natuurgebied onder de grond dat het Grierse Groek heette. Er waren hier vele grotten met hiëroglieven. Mogelijk was Zaalveringen over het natuurgebied heengebouwd, tenminste dat zeiden de monniken. Hoverdam was het enige vrijdorp wat nog veilig was, wat naast Zaalveringen lag, maar de monniken wilden het er niet op wagen.

Eén van de hermieten was geestelijk chirurg, en maakte sneetjes in hun achterhoofden, aan de rechterkant, om er zo nu en dan slangetjes uit te halen. Die slangetjes werden in potjes opgeborgen. Soms werden het vliegende slangetjes, varkentjes of haantjes. Dat wisselde zich af. Tagula stond er versteld van dat dit in zijn hoofd kon leven. Dieper onder de grond woonden kannibaalse stammen, waarvan ze eens een vrouw ontmoetten. De vrouw sprak in een andere taal. Ze wisten dat ze meer werk moesten leveren om de hiëroglieven te vertalen. Ze vonden de vrouw mooi en hadden gevoelens voor haar, waarover ze zich schaamden, want ten eerste was ze een kannibaal, en ten tweede waren ze monniken, en werd er van hen verwacht dat ze zich voor gevoelens schaamden, voornamelijk als het over het andere geslacht ging. De hermieten waren hier veel vrijer in. Toch hadden de hermieten ook veel strijd. Soms waren de hermieten suicidaal, en het kwam soms voor dat ze zichzelf overleverden aan de kannibaalse stammen. Dat stond gelijk aan zelfmoord, maar niet altijd werden zij gegeten. Soms werd het uitgesteld, en soms zelfs gingen zij vrijuit. Niet dat ze terug konden, maar ze werden in leven gelaten, ook al was dat in ballingschap. Het bleek dat veel hermieten de hiëroglieven hadden opgetekend. Het waren verhalen over wat ze hadden meegemaakt dieper onder de grond bij de kannibaalse stammen. Het kwam soms voor dat ze konden ontsnappen of werden bevrijd.

Hoofdstuk 5. De vliegenplagen

Tagula vond de hermieten interessant en wilde bij ze leven, of in ieder geval zelf een hermiet zijn. Ze leefden dichter bij de natuur, dieper in de natuur, en ze kenden geheimen over God die de monniken niet kenden. Het was wel een hele opoffering. Je moest zoveel van je leven opofferen om hermiet te kunnen worden. De hermieten leefden vaak in holen en grotten. Ze kenden ook de doorgangen dieper de aarde in. Die doorgangen werden ook bewaakt, vanwege het gevaar van wilde stammen. Het kwam soms voor dat hermieten werden ontvoerd door deze stammen. Soms waren er invallen in de gebieden van de hermieten door zulke stammen. Somjs gingen hele grote groepen van hermieten in ballingschap. Soms werden ze gefokt voor hun vlees, of gefokt als slaaf of lastdier. Soms voor andere dingen. Tagula las erover op de grottekeningen, maar hoorde ook veel verhalen erover van de hermieten.

Maar Tagula kwam er al snel achter dat de hermieten heel anders waren en heel anders leefden dan hij zich had voorgesteld. Ze waren pervers, godslasterlijk, ruw, ruig, onvoorspelbaar, doortrapt, gemeen, sadistisch, en bovenal zakelijk. Je lag er zo uit. Ze waren snel aangebrand, overgevoelig, konden niet veel hebben, voelden zich snel in hun eer aangetast, bij het minste of geringste. Je moest ontzettend oppassen met je woorden en je houding bij de hermieten. Ze vonden al snel dingen verdacht, en dan had je het gedaan. Daar viel ook niet over te discussiëren vaak. En dan lag je eruit. Maar dat was ook het hele idee van het

hermietenschap. Het werd niet bij elkaar gehouden zoals bij de monniken, want die leefden toch nog min of meer in een soort van leefgemeenschap. Bij de hermieten was dat anders. Daar was het ieder voor zich, ook al leefden ze dicht bij elkaar of zelfs naast elkaar. Er waren wel hermieten-gemeenschappen, maar dat hing vaak als los zand aan elkaar. Vaak kenden ze elkaar niet eens. Iedereen leefde min of meer in zijn eigen wereldje. En zo verwilderde en verwaterde alles. Dat verklaarde misschien ook hun gedrag. Het was vaak niet meer sociaal te noemen. Maar wat was sociaal eigenlijk ? Misschien had de mens daar wel hele verkeerde beelden van.

Tagula besloot maar gewoon veel te luisteren naar de hermieten, zonder al te veel te zeggen, maar ook dat werd vaak als verdacht gezien. Dat noemden de hermieten onbeschoft en ondankbaar. Tagula voelde zich al snel in een mijnenveld. Hij had het gevoel alsof hij onder zware mind control kwam. De hermieten hadden hun eigen regels, en die moest hij leren. Het waren wilden min of meer. Vooral de hermieten die nog dieper onder de grond woonden. Die hadden vaak ook teveel meegemaakt. Die waren psychisch ook zwaar aangetast. Die konden zelfs gevaarlijk zijn.

De hermieten hadden een geschrift wat de tweede bijbel werd genoemd. Eigenlijk waren dat een heleboel geschriften, en veelal stond het ook in de grotten geschreven. Zij hadden ook de nieuwe bijbel. Dat scheen van hen vandaan te komen. De monniken waren verbaasd over de kennis die de hermieten erover hadden. Tagula realiseerde zich dat elk blijvend contact met een hermiet zeldzaam en bijzonder was, en dat hij daar

heel zuinig op moest zijn, en er heel voorzichtig mee om moest springen. Anders zou het het einde van zijn wereld kunnen betekenen. De hermieten gaven hem hoop, en hadden veel te vertellen, maar dat kon vanwege hun overgevoelige karakter zo voorbij zijn. Gelukkig waren er veel hermieten, en als het bij de één niet zou lukken, dan zou hij het bij de ander proberen. Dat was ook de instelling van de monniken. Toch wilde hij er niet te gemakkelijk over denken. Hij moest er niet aan denken dat hij nergens meer ingang zou kunnen vinden. De hermieten hadden toch de sleutel tot het voortbestaan van de mens. Tagula zag hier een doorgang, een nieuwe adem. Tagula verzamelde zoveel mogelijk informatie, raadpleegde zoveel mogelijk hermieten, die zich vaak ook als gids opstelden door de grotten en doorgangen. Zo leerde Tagula van het leven onder de aarde, en hij vond het razend interessant.

Dit was een wilde wereld. De hermieten waren wilden, op hun wijze hoog opgeleid. Het steeg ver boven zomaar de doorsnee geleerden van de bovenwereld uit. De hermieten noemden zich vaak ook naar de geschriften van de nieuwe bijbel, zoals de monniken dat ook deden. Zo waren er Anderlechse hermieten, Behemmitische hermieten, Kamba hermieten, enzovoorts. Zij waren er ook voor om de schriften uit te leggen. Het waren predikers, roependen in de wildernis, maar ze konden ook heel kortaf zijn. Vaak was die taak maar tijdelijk, en gingen ze daarna dieper onder de grond om hun tocht voort te zetten. Vandaar dat ook om die reden een contact zomaar kon ophouden. Soms droegen ze het dan nog over aan een andere hermiet, maar lang niet altijd. Dan moest je zelf maar op zoek gaan naar een andere hermiet. Er kwamen aan de andere kant

ook steeds meer hermieten bij. Er waren meerderen van de bovenwereld die de hermieten hadden gevonden, en dat waren lang niet altijd monniken. Ook wilde en rebelse jongens hadden vaak een interesse in de hermieten.

De hermieten hadden ook hun opvoedingskampen. Sommige van die kampen leken meer op concentratie kampen. De hermieten hadden ook gevangenissen. Er waren ook werkkampen. De hermieten deden ook aan slavernij. Lang niet alle hermieten waren het daar mee eens. Tagula kwam erachter dat de meningen nog veel verdeeld waren onder de hermieten, en dat er ook oorlogen waren tussen de verschillende groepen van hermieten. Dat verklaarde ook de gevangenissen, de strafkampen en werkkampen, en de slavernij op zich. Het had ook met het economische stelsel van de hermieten te maken. Ze moesten overleven, en velen gingen vrijwillig in slavernij puur om te overleven.

Gewoon werk klonk te vrijblijvend en te ver weg, te ongedisciplineerd, te onafhankelijk. Bij de hermieten ging het om discipline, om strakke regels, en dat kon alleen als je bezit was geworden. Een slaaf had geen waarde, maar had waarde als bezit, en zo werd er voor hem gezorgd. Ook veel vrouwen boden zich zo bij de hermieten aan, vanwege dat er zo voor hen gezorgd werd en ze beschermd werden, in ruil voor zekere diensten. Tagula vond dat niet kloppen. Hij begreep het wel, maar vroeg zich af wat er met de vrouwen gebeurde. Tagula vond dat er ook andere wijzen waren. Maar wat had Tagula in te brengen bij de hermieten ?

Tagula vond dat de hermieten te hardhandig met hun vrouwen omgingen, die ze hun slaven noemden. Maar de hermieten vertelden hem dat de vrouwen ook niet makkelijk waren. Ze zeiden dat de vrouwen het zelf vaak uitlokten, en dat ze er om vroegen om zo behandeld te worden. Tagula kon zich dat moeilijk voorstellen, en wilde het ook van de vrouwen zelf horen, maar aan de andere kant wist hij dat vrouwen problematisch konden zijn. De hermieten zeiden vaak dat ze de ergste soort van vrouwen hadden, op de amazones na.

De vrouwen zouden twistziek zijn en denigrerend. Ook meerdere vrouwen bij elkaar konden een probleem vormen, want die konden verschrikkelijk roddelen. De hermieten noemden het een zee van smerigheid. De hermieten hadden vaak helemaal geen respect voor het vrouwelijke geslacht, en dat terwijl de nieuwe bijbel en vaak ook de tweede bijbel veel over Moeder God ging. Maar ze wezen erop dat de nieuwe bijbel veel waarschuwde tegen aardse vrouwen, dat die een sta in de weg konden zijn. Voor de hermieten was het ook overleven. En uit angst voor de amazones maakten ze vrouwen daarom soms ook eigenhandig tot slaaf. Voor hen was het vaak ook een vorm van voorzorg, en was het als een nodige gevangenis voor zelfbescherming. De hermieten noemden het zelfverdediging. Ze vertelden veel over de amazones, wat die konden doen, hoe gevaarlijk die waren. De hermieten waren hierdoor zwaar paranoïde naar vrouwen.

Het verklaarde veel over hoe de hermieten waren, waarom ze zo verwilderd waren, vanwege hun verhalen over de amazones. Amazones werden het zwaarst bewaakt, werden tot slaaf

gemaakt, gedwongen, of kwamen in de gevangenis terecht, wat dat dan ook mocht wezen, dat verschilde van gebied tot gebied. Sommige hermietengroepen waren het er niet mee eens. Zij vonden dat het beter was je gewoon slecht te laten behandelen door amazones, beter dan zomaar het recht in eigen handen te nemen. Vandaar dat er ook weer oorlogen waren tussen de hermietengebieden. Het was nogal ingewikkeld, psychologisch, en er waren vele geschiedenisboeken over die de hermieten beheerden en optekenden in de grotten. Voor Tagula was het een object van studie. Hij wilde de vóórs en tegens horen, en wilde ook met de vrouwen spreken, maar die kreeg hij bijna niet te spreken, want die werden veelal streng bewaakt en kort aan de ketting gehouden door de hermieten.

De hermieten, ook al waren die veelal tenger van gestalte, konden vrouwen normaal gesproken wel de baas, maar de amazones, die vaak veel groter en breder waren, konden ze niet de baas, en daarom waren de amazones ook door de hermieten gevreesd. De hermieten waren veelal dun, en de amazones waren veelal dik. Dat wilde niet zeggen dat de hermieten zwak waren. Zij waren vaak pezig, en waren vanwege hun pezigheid en vechtlustige karakter vaak sterker dan de monniken. Toch waren er ook hermieten die wanhopig waren, al hun krachten hadden verloren, zich zwak voelden en niet meer wilden leven. Zij hoopten zelfs opgenomen te worden door de amazones, of meegenomen te worden met een kannibalenstam. Zij vereerden daarom de amazones. Ook in de nieuwe bijbel werd er gesproken over het nut van de amazones, maar werd er ook gewezen op de amazone oorlogen. Het vrouwelijke werd niet zomaar vereerd, maar uitgelegd, en er was een groot

onderscheid tussen het lagere, aardse, vleselijke vrouwelijke, en het hogere, natuurlijke vrouwelijke. Er was ook een val van vrouwen geweest, en daarom waren vele vrouwen slecht en doortrapt. Al met al werd er daarom ook veelal door de hermieten geleerd dat het ware vrouwelijke zich in jezelf bevond, als onderdeel van de geestelijke wapenrusting tegen het vlees. Het vrouwelijke was een principe, een oorlogsprincipe tegen de zonde, de leugen en de dwaling. Daarom geloofden de hermieten ook in de hogere amazone opname. Daar strekten ze zich naar uit. Ze geloofden in het kennis-gedeelte van de vrouw, waar de vrouw tot ontwaking was gekomen. Daar hadden ze hun uitgebreide filosofieën over.

Tagula raakte meer en meer geïnteresseerd in de amazone verhalen. Hij wilde het geheel uitdiepen. De ene hermiet wist er meer over te vertellen dan de andere hermiet. De ene hermiet was hier veel meer ervaren in dan de ander. Daarom was Tagula op zoek naar de juiste hermieten. Zij moesten hem hierin inwijden. Hij voelde zichzelf gewoon nog een groentje. Hij schaamde zich ook over zijn gevoelens voor vrouwen, of die nu goed of slecht waren. Zo had hij dat van de monniken geleerd. Dan voelde hij zich vies of slecht. Die gevoelens konden soms ook negatief zijn, dat hij vrouwen verachtte, dat hij ze slecht vond, maar gelijk kwam dan de schaamte opzetten, dat hij zichzelf te hard voelde. Tagula wilde vaak vrouwen op een afstand bewaren. Hij vond ze vaak enge, onbetrouwbare, onvoorspelbare wezens. Toch was hij in ze geïnteresseerd, maar dan op afstand. Vandaar dat de aanpak van de hermieten bij hem wel werkte, maar telkens had hij de gedachte en het gevoel dat het niet klopte, en voelde hij zich innerlijk verdeeld.

Het was niet meer dan normaal. Hij moest ook voorzichtig zijn, vooral vanwege de valstrikken van de amazones die door de hermieten werden besproken. Ze konden heel doortrapt zijn, gevaarlijk, sluw. Het wekte een bepaalde minachting op naar vrouwen bij Tagula als hij die verhalen hoorde. Toch wilde hij met ze spreken om ook hun kant van het verhaal te horen. Hij wilde ze een kans geven. Hij vond dat ze eerlijk beoordeeld en berecht dienden te worden, niet als slaven behandeld moesten worden. Dat zou verkeerd aflopen, voor hen, maar ook voor de hermieten.

Er was altijd een zekere spanning bij de hermieten. Tagula was zijn leven niet altijd zeker, maar terug naar boven wilde hij ook niet. Hij wilde meer over beneden weten.

Tagula keek naar de hermieten, die tenger en pezig waren, als gestroomlijnde roofdieren. Ze waren sterker dan de monniken veelal. Er was iets in hen wat het einde van de wereld kon veroorzaken. Vrouwen zochten hulp en troost bij hen, bescherming, zelfs slavernij. Vrouwen wilden van alles voor hen doen, om maar uit de sleur en dreiging van hun eigen leven te kunnen komen. Ze wilden bezit worden van de hermieten. Ze wilden onderwezen worden. Tagula vond dat vreemd. Hij vond dat dat niet klopte, dat er ook andere wegen waren, vooral als hij zag hoe de hermieten met die vrouwen omgingen. Als vee. Er waren dus vele hermieten die hier niets van wilden weten, en die vonden dat de vrouwen vrijgezet moesten worden, en geweigerd. Maar bepaalde hermieten hadden hier een hard hoofd in. Er waren speciale vrouwenkampen waar vrouwen voor dit soort dingen gefokt en gehouden werden. Het

waren trainingskampen, waar de vrouwen werden gehersenspoelt. Ze moesten weten van hun taken, hoe ze hermieten moesten behandelen, hoe ze hermieten moesten verzorgen, hoe ze hermieten moesten dienen. Het ging niet altijd goed. Somns draaiden vrouwen door. Soms draaiden hermieten door. Soms waren er hele stammenoorlogen. Soms waren er invasies. Soms gingen er hele volksstammen in ballingschap, soms tot zeer diep onder de grond, en zou niemand meer van hen horen. Zo kwam er kennis bij, en ging kennis verloren. Het was een hele eigen wereld, en een hele eigenaardige wereld. Het klopte niet. Dat bleef Tagula zeggen, voornamelijk tegen zichzelf. Tagula durfde vaak ook niet met de andere monniken erover te spreken. Bang dat er een alarm zou afgaan. Wat moest hij met alle psychologische belasting door de monniken ? Het was alsof ze hem terugriepen, dat hij niet verder de zee moest ingaan. Of dat dat zelfs niet mocht, ook al was hij slechts onderzoeker, en ook al was hij tegen op de vreemde praktijken die de hermieten er soms op nahielden.

Sommige hermieten leken een obsessie met vrouwen te hebben. En Tagula was bang voor deze obsessie, bang dat het ook bij hemzelf zou gebeuren, ook al was het zijn object van onderzoek, zijn object van studie. Hij schaamde zich. Het was alsof hij er een hoge prijs voor moest betalen dat hij met dit onderwerp bezig was. Maar iets schreeuwde in hem dat het de enige weg was, dat hij een idee moest krijgen hoe belangrijk de vrouw was voor vruchtbaarheid, voor het voortbestaan van de schepping. Het schuldgevoel had hij van de monniken. Daar kwam ook zijn schaamte vandaan. Bij de hermieten lag dat vaak anders, maar de hermieten waren ook verdeeld onder

elkaar. Ze konden elkaar soms niet luchten of zien, en daarom waren ze ook hermiet. Ze leefden in hun eigen wereld. Veelal gingen ze met de ander om als met dieren.

Ze hadden hun eigen taal, hun eigen dialect. Tagula vond de diversiteit mooi. Hij genoot van de vele verschillende accenten in taalgebruik, en vond dat de hermieten mooie stemmen hadden. Het speelde met zijn zintuigen, het opende nieuwe werelden voor hem, nieuwe natuurgebieden in hemzelf. De hermieten leefden op frequenties waar hij nog nooit van had gehoord. Ze leken van een andere wereld te komen. Tegenpolen waren heel normaal bij de hermieten. Ze leefden als Ismael naar elkaar. Ze waren in vijandschap naar iedere andere man. Het was een vreemde competitie.

Vele hermieten droegen gesels waarmee ze vrouwen afranselden, en Tagula voelde zich er ongemakkelijk bij. Maar de amazone factor was hoog bij de hermieten. Het was allemaal angst en onzekerheid. Meer en meer kreeg Tagula de verhalen over de amazone dreiging te horen, en hij schrok daar ernstig van. Hoe hoorde hoe diep het kon gaan, en hoe definitief het kon zijn. Verschillende hermieten die het meest met amazones hadden meegemaakt misten ledematen. Sommigen hadden zelfs geen armen en benen meer, en waren geheel overgeleverd aan de verzorging door andere hermieten. Toch wilden ze niet naar de bovenwereld. Het was niet zozeer dat vrouwen hiervoor moesten boeten, maar dat vrouwen in de gaten gehouden moesten worden, en dat het beter en veiliger was als ze aan de keten lagen. Zo werd er veelal door de

hermieten over vrouwen gedacht, maar andere hermieten waren daar op tegen.

De hermieten die tegen vrouwen-vernedering waren werden vaak als buitenbeentjes bestempeld. Dat waren watjes en koekjes, moederskindjes, zielepoten, onrechtvaardigen, zondaren, ketters, slappelingen, vrouwenbehagers, minkukels, zwarte schapen, huilebalken, klagers, holocaust ontkenners, vrouwen onderschatters, makkelijk te manipuleren, snel beinvloed, snel afgeleid, omkoopbaar, enzovoorts. Veelal gingen zij in afgezonderde kampen wonen, zochten ze elkaar op, en soms was er oorlog. Zij hadden soms ook hun eigen vrouwen, en die waren vrij. Vaak werd er ook van hen gezegd dat zij bij hun vrouwen onder de plak zaten, dat ze door hun vrouwen werden opgehitst, dat hun vrouwen hun raadgevers waren. ‘Wie is uw raadgever ?’

Ze werden ook Kaïnieten genoemd, broederverraders. Zelfs broedermoordenaars. ‘Ben ik mijn broeder’s hoeder ?’ Aan de andere kant vereenzelvigden de hermieten zich soms met Kaïn, vanwege het Kaïnsbevel over de zonde te heersen. En zij zagen vaak de aardse vrouwen als het zondebeginsel. Tagula en de andere monniken vonden dat er geen grond was in de nieuwe bijbel voor het roekeloze en extreme gedachtengoed van de hermieten. Ze vonden het misbruik van de nieuwe bijbel. De nieuwe bijbel was veelal vertaald naar de dialecten van de hermieten, en daar mankeerde nogal wat aan volgens sommigen. Verkeerde vertaling was verkeerde interpretatie. Dat kon nogal makkelijk gebeuren in de overdracht van talen. Dat was het werk van sluwe tolken. Maar velen van de

hermieten vonden dat hun dialecten de oorspronkelijke talen waren van de nieuwe bijbel. Daar waren ook weer oorlogen over. In de ogen van de monniken was het allemaal gesis en geharrewar. De monniken hielden het bij hun uitgave, dat wat ze onder de grond hadden gevonden. Dat was door God daar neergelegd. De hermieten beweerden dat het slechts een latere vertaling was. Zo ontstond er nog meer spanning tussen de hermieten en de monniken.

De hermieten beweerden dat de monniken niet inzagen hoe gevaarlijk vrouwen konden zijn, maar de monniken vonden dat onzin. Ze waren zich wel degelijk bewust van de gevaren, maar vonden de aangedragen oplossingen van de hermieten niet terecht. Volgens de hermieten hadden de monniken het hele verhaal nog niet gehoord. De monniken wilden ook de kant van de vrouwen horen, maar dat werd niet echt toegestaan. De vrouwen werden angstvallig van de monniken weggehouden. De vrouwen waren bezit van de hermieten, en de vrouwen zouden gevaarlijk zijn, dus daarom leefden de vrouwen in gevangenschap of slavernij. Zo niet, dan zouden de vrouwen dat bij de hermieten kunnen doen, gezien de vele amazone verhalen hierover. De hermieten zeiden dus dat het puur voorzorgsmaatregelen waren en dat het zelfverdediging was, en dat de vrouwen heelhuids door het proces zouden kunnen komen, en als volwaardige hermiet zouden kunnen leven, met vrijheidsstatus. Deze vrouwen werden ook gewoon hermieten genoemd, en geen hermieten-slaven of hermieten-gevangenen.

Tagula kon niet tegen het uitbuiten van vrouwen. Hij had geen hoge pet op van vrouwen in het algemeen, maar dit ging hem te

ver. Maar hij zag het niet als zijn missie om het te veranderen. Wel wilde hij er meer van weten. Hij wilde meer weten van wat dieper onder de grond gebeurde. De hieroglieven vertelden erover, en ook de hermieten zelf.

Tagula moest met bittere tranen deze wereld leren kennen, door veel zweet en bloed. De hermieten waren vaak misselijke mannetjes met misleidend taalgebruik, die hem vaak het bloed onder de nagels vandaan probeerden te halen. Soms liep Tagula er van weg met tranen in zijn ogen, en liep hij lange tijd met een brok in zijn keel. Hij vond de hermieten durfals die dachten dat ze alles konden zeggen.

Ook vielen ze hem soms fysiek aan of werd hij bedreigd. In zijn ogen waren de hermieten vaak tuig, maar ze waren ook belangrijk in zijn ogen, want zij droegen belangrijke informatie. Vandaar dat Tagula veel moest slikken. Hij mocht het niet verprutsen. Hij moest zich erbij neerleggen dat hij moest betalen aan de hermieten voor deze informatie, en dat hij belasting moest betalen. In zekere zin voelde hij zich de slaaf van de hermieten, maar dat had hij er graag voor over om tot hun kennis te komen. De verhalen over de amazones waren hard en wreed. Hij durfde er bijna niet over na te denken. Hij durfde er ook niet veel over te praten. Hij was bang dat hij onder een vloek zou komen, dat het zich zou wreken, dat het als een besmettelijk virus was. Hij voelde zich al aangestoken door de hermieten. Hij voelde iets branden en knagen in hem, iets wat zijn hart beschreef, wat zijn hersenen bekladde, en het was met geen mogelijkheid weg te wissen. Perverse en godslasterlijke taal soms, veel gescheld, veel geschreeuw,

gegil, bedreiging, chantage, omkoperij, anarchisme, muiterij. Hij was in een worsteling. Hij wilde niet door deze dingen overgenomen worden. Hij moest het op een afstand houden. Het was alsof hij in de greep van een slang was. Het was zeer giftig. Maar hij wilde dieper de grot in. Hij hoorde geroep. Het rook hier naar urine, en dingen die hij niet kon beschrijven. Het rook hier naar het prehistorische, het oer, het primitieve, eens weggeworpen. Hier was Zaalveringen overheen gebouwd.

De hermieten waren ook de wachters van de diepe kennis. Ze gaven het niet zomaar prijs. Er moest met hen geworsteld worden, er moest aan hun betaald worden. Hij moest luisteren en gehoorzamen, en dat wilde hij alleen maar deels, en daarom was het een gevecht. Hij wilde geen compromissen sluiten, maar het leek wel te moeten. Hij voelde zich als een houten klaas, helemaal verstijfd. Hij durfde dit niet toe te laten, maar zijn ziel schreeuwde het uit tot de diepere dingen, en die waren hier ook. Hij moest de grot in, dieper. Hij moest de hiëroglieven ontcijferen. Hij moest de bovenwereld redden. De hermieten lachten hem uit. Die hadden de bovenwereld allang opgegeven veelal. De hermieten zeiden dat ze alleen maar dieper moesten, en dat de bovenwereld zelf maar moest volgen, maar dat de bovenwereld vermoedelijk in de fuik zou komen. De bovenwereld was hier niet tegen opgewassen. Het waren belastingontduikers in de ogen van de hermieten, spijbelaars, tafelschuimers, piraten. Het waren mutsen en dozen, afdekkers.

De hermieten hadden veelal geen goed woord over voor de bovenwereld, en zagen zichzelf niet als redders. Het waren roepers, maar ze zouden niet wachten op de bovenwereld. Hun

stem zou wel vervagen in de verte. Zij moesten door. Zij moesten verder, tot de diepere geheimen. De bovenwereld moesten ze afleggen. Ze moesten het verzaken.

Er was een grote zee in de onderwereld, dieper onder de grond, achter de hermieten-gebieden, schuin naar onderen, en achter de zee woonden de amazones. Die zouden uiteindelijk de hele wereld overnemen, ook de bovenwereld. Zij waren in grote getallen. Het was een werelddeel met vele lagen, en daarom groter dan de grootste continenten van de bovenwereld. Ook hadden de amazones grotere populaties dan welk land of continent dan ook, en waren zij sterker dan de sterkste man in de bovenwereld. Ook de hermieten konden niet tegen hen op. Zij wisten dat het op een dag zou gebeuren, dat de amazones zouden komen om alles in te nemen. Dat was al eerder gebeurd, maar dan op veel kleinere schaal. Ze leefden nu zoals de hermieten het noemden in de dagen van de voorbereiding. De wereld moest zich klaar maken voor de algehele amazonitische ballingschap. Zowel monnik als hermiet zouden hieraan moeten geloven. Er was geen ontsnapping aan, geen kruid tegen opgewassen.

Tagula liet deze woorden diep tot zich doordringen en overdacht ze. Hij was er dag en nacht mee bezig om diepte in deze woorden te vinden. Hij wilde het nut ervan weten. De hermieten zeiden dat het deels een goede en deels een slechte ballingschap zou zijn. Daarom waren er ook de amazone oorlogen. Er waren goede en slechte amazones, maakten de hermieten duidelijk. Ook waren er goede slechten en slechte goeden. Er waren allerlei soorten. Daarom hadden de

hermieten de nieuwe bijbel en de tweede bijbel om hierin wegwijs te maken.

De hermieten waren bang voor wat er zou komen. Er zou jacht op hen gemaakt worden. Daartoe waren de vele vliegenplagen als voorbereiding. Ze zeiden dat ze door de vliegen aangemerkt werden als prooi daartoe. Het waren vreemde vliegen, ondergrondse vliegen. Jachtsvliegen, bizonvliegen, rundervliegen, buffelvliegen, varkensvliegen, botvliegen en andere soorten. Sommigen konden steken en brachten vreemde littekens, die een vreemde geur hadden. Sommige van die vliegen scheidden een stof af die hen gewillig maakten. Daarom waren de hermieten ook bang voor vliegen, en gebruikten ze veel voorhangsels en vliegnetten. Daarom liepen vele hermieten ook vaak rond met vliegnet kleding. Dat was een soort gaas. Dit deden ze lang niet altijd, en meestal alleen op gezette tijden, als het vliegengevaar het grootst was. Veelal bleef het gewoon bij de vliegnet voorhangsels of andere voorhangsels. Weer andere hermieten deden hier niet aan en dachten : ‘Laat maar komen.’ Ze vonden dat de amazones in hun recht stonden om te komen. Zij hadden ook veelal de moed al opgegeven, en sommigen hadden een doodswens.

Tagula merkte hoe bang hermieten voor vliegen waren. Vaak als er een vlieg werd gezien dan was het alsof er een alarm afging. Soms renden de hermieten dan gillend als een varken in het rond om de anderen te waarschuwen. De hermieten waren paranoïde naar vliegen toe. Ook al ging het in negen van de tien gevallen om een onschuldige vliegensoort, de hermieten namen geen enkel risico. Als het een gevreesde vliegensoort

zou zijn, en het zou iemand steken, of als prooi aanmerken, dan zou de ramp niet te overzien zijn, want het was een besmettelijk iets. Zij die gestoken waren moesten hiervoor in speciale kampen. Het veroorzaakte allerlei spierziekten en verlamming. Er waren ook vliegsoorten die zich niet stoorden aan voorzorgsmaatregelen. Ze konden zich gewoon door het gaas heenwerken. Dat waren de gevaarlijkste vliegen. Ze werden ook wel zombificators genoemd. De hermieten hadden veelal een kiene interesse hierin, en zagen vliegen vaak als slechte voortekenen, voortekenen van ballingschap, zwakte en onderdrukking. Dat het negen van de tien keer niet om een kwaadaardige soort ging deed daar niets aan af. Vliegen waren gevreesd bij de hermieten. Ook waren de vliegen veelal een voorteken van honger.

Hoofdstuk 6. De voorhangsels van de amazones

Tagula kwam er meer en meer achter dat veel hermieten slechts rogues waren, die gewoon voor eigen gewin onder de grond waren gegaan, niet vanwege een hoger doel. Het waren vagebonden. Natuurlijk was dat om te overleven, maar dat deden ze door levens te nemen, niet door leven te geven. Hij was daarom zeer kritisch op de hermieten, maar kon dat maar moeilijk uiten natuurlijk. Dat werd niet geaccepteerd en kon vervelende gevolgen hebben. Ze hadden daar een heel scherp oog en oor voor. Als ze alleen al dachten dat ze bekritiseerd werden, dan kon het al mis gaan. De hermieten waren apart volk, veelal verbitterd, paranoïde en verwond. Snel aan de bel trekken bij het minste of geringste, allemaal doden uit voorzorg. Ze waren trigger-boys. Vinger aan de knop. Deze jongens zouden een vliegtuig kapen als ze de lucht inwilden, eerder dan dat ze netjes in de rij zouden staan en alle nodige procedures zouden doorlopen. Geen bureaucratie voor hen. Daar deden ze niet aan. Het waren anarchisten, wilde jongens.

Aan eerlijk en oprecht deden ze niet. Alles moest gesmokkeld worden. Dan pas hadden ze het gevoel dat ze iets bereikt hadden, en dat ze veilig waren. Veiligheid was belangrijk voor de hermieten. Of dat nu schijnveiligheid was of echte veiligheid. Het ging om het gevoel, de kick die het gaf. Het ging om het spuitje. Ze hielden zich daarom veel bezig met bijgeloof. De waarheid was minder belangrijk. In zekere zin waren zij junkies, gestoken door een vreemd insect.

Het gebeurde zoals de hermieten hadden voorspeld. Op een dag kwamen de amazones en gingen ze in ballingschap. Alle ballingen gingen in schepen de grote ondergrondse zee over tot het land van de amazones, waar ze in gevangenissen kwamen. Op de muren stonden tekeningen van eerdere ballingen. Er waren hier gruwelijke dingen gebeurd. Tagula schrok wakker. Het was maar een droom geweest. Een oude hermiet keek hem aan. ‘Eng gedroomd, jongen ?’ Tagula had wild om zich heen gekeken. Toen vertelde Tagula de droom. Hij had een slaapplaats gehad bij de oude hermiet. ‘Ach, we zijn allang in ballingschap,’ zei de oude hermiet. ‘We zijn allemaal aan de drugs, en daarom lijkt het erop alsof we vrij zijn, maar het is niet zo.’

‘Drugs ?’ vroeg Tagula slaperig.

‘Ja,’ zei de oude hermiet. ‘We hebben dat in onze aderen gespoten gekregen van de amazones.’

‘Eng,’ zei Tagula. ‘En wat nu ?’

‘We kunnen niks,’ zei de oude hermiet. ‘Wij moeten alleen naar God zoeken, dan werkt alles ten goede, en God is ook een amazone.’

‘Ja ja,’ zei Tagula, ‘okay. Ik heb wat ontmoetingen met God gehad in het verleden.’ Tagula dacht weer aan zijn droom toen er werd gezegd : ‘Waarom hebt gij de deur opengedaan ?’

‘Ik houd dit niet vol,’ zei Tagula. ‘Al dat gepraat over amazones. Ik heb een vrouw nodig.’

‘Je moet vechten tegen de verleiding,’ zei de oude hermiet.

‘Ik ben op, gewoon op,’ zei Tagula.

‘Het ligt allemaal van binnen,’ zei de oude hermiet.

‘Jij hebt zeker makkelijk praten,’ zei Tagula. ‘En jij hebt ook gewoon vrouwelijke slaven ?’

‘Nee,’ zei de oude hermiet. ‘Daar doe ik niet aan.’

‘Hoe blijf je dan mentaal gezond als je niet aan vrouwen mag denken ?’ vroeg Tagula.

‘We mogen wel aan vrouwen denken,’ zei de oude hermiet, ‘maar zij moeten bepaalde principes voorstellen. Het mogen geen aardse vrouwen zijn.’

‘Nee, ja, klopt,’ zei Tagula. ‘Soms is het even net allemaal te zwaar en zie ik door de bomen het bos niet meer.’

‘Jij moet helemaal tot rust komen,’ zei de oude hermiet. ‘Ze hebben je helemaal het hoofd gek lopen praten.’

‘Ja, klopt,’ zei Tagula.

‘En wat nu ?’ vroeg de oude hermiet. ‘Laat je het op je zitten, of ga je de strijd aan ?’

Tagula zweeg. ‘Ik ben moe,’ zei hij na een tijdje. Toen viel hij weer in slaap. De volgende ochtend zag hij de oude hermiet niet. Hij keek uit zijn slaapplaats. Het was aan het einde van een tunnel die schuin naar beneden liep. Hij liep de tunnel in, en keek naar wat hieroglieven op de wanden, en maakte wat notities. Er was niets wat hij ervan kon maken, maar hij werkte er in ieder geval aan. Zijn interpretatie was natuurlijk ook waardevol. Zo ontstonden er boeken waar hij of anderen later weer mee verder konden. Zo ontstond er diepte. Het was een gemis dat hij nog niet kon zien wat het betekende, maar hij merkte dat hij wel dichterbij kwam. Natuurlijk konden de hermieten hem ook uitleg geven, maar dit waren hiëroglieven waar niemand raad mee wist.

Tagula had dromen dat aan de randen van het heelal alles tot boeken werd, en dat het begon te regenen op de mensen. Het regende letters en zinnen, en zo werden de boeken geopenbaard. Hier leidde het pad van de kennis naartoe. Aan de randen van heelal begon het te regenen, en er waren rivieren en watervallen, en het sleurde de mensen mee. De mensen begrepen de functies van de insecten niet, die de aankondigers van deze dingen waren. De letters waren vreemde insecten waar de mens nog niets vanaf wist, en zo waren de hiëroglieven dat ook. De insecten hadden zekere informatie opgeslagen, en ze zouden het langzaam verspreiden.

Een letter was dus een opslagmiddel van energie, van betekenis, van werk. Het moest de mens ergens toe voorbereiden. Zinnen waren zo ook unieke opslagmethodes hiervoor. Als een zin niet goed was kon ook het tegengestelde gebeuren. De mens was veelal opgebouwd uit verkeerde zinnen en had zo een verkeerde vorm van bewustzijn. Tagula was dus blij dat hij in deze grotten terecht was gekomen en zulke vreemde dromen had. Hij zag ook in hoe belangrijk de ballingschap was voor mensen. Het bracht de mens terug naar waar de mens vandaan kwam. De mens was afgedwaald in de devolutie. Er moest eerst devolutie zijn voordat er evolutie kon zijn. De mens zou eerst de verkeerde richting opgaan. De hermieten zeiden dat er maar een klein overblijfsel zou zijn.

Maar ook de hermieten zaten vaak nog vol met zaaddrift, erfdrift, gemaksdrift, vrouwenverslavingen, enzovoorts. Velen zochten gewoon nog naar de korte weg van kracht. De insecten zouden ermee afrekenen. De insecten zouden de opslagplaatsen van kracht lek prikken. Daarom vreesden de hermieten de insecten ook zo erg. Ze konden niet van insecten genieten. Het joeg op hen. De insecten waren de voorbodes van de ballingschap.

Insecten waren insecten. Er viel niet mee te discussiëren. Ze waren niet omkoopbaar. Meedogenloos brachten zij hun virussen. Het verstand van de mens was afgedwaald en moest terug. Daarom moest het eerst doorstoken worden, geïnfecteerd.

Tagula kreeg zijn eigen grot, en begon boeken over insecten te verzamelen, die de hermieten veelal hadden. Hij wilde insectoloog worden. Ook begon hij boeken van hiëroglief-ontcijfering te verzamelen.

Tagula vroeg zich af in hoeverre de hermieten nog onder invloed stonden van Mörn, of zelfs bezeten waren door Mörn, want het was hem duidelijk dat Mörn niet wilde loslaten. Er moest veel meer gebeuren. In zijn dromen ging het over de amazones. Zij waren duidelijk in oorlog met Mörn. Hij hoorde van de hermieten dat ze in de bovenwereld een spelmodule hadden gemaakt wat liep op boom-energie en insecten-energie, dat kon geswitched worden. Die konden ze in Hoverdam ophalen. Het was de MH05. Het was ook een oplader voor insecten-energie wat voor van alles gebruikt kon worden. Het tapte in op de frequenties van insecten.

Omdat het in Hoverdam nog veilig was gingen ze in een grote groep daar naartoe. Mocht het uit de hand lopen, dan waren ze in ieder geval met velen. Zowel monniken als hermieten waren in het apparaat geinteresseerd. Ook Tagula ging mee. Toen Tagula het apparaat kreeg zei één van de medewerksters tegen hem : ‘Houd je sterk.’ Het was goed gegaan. Nu moesten ze weer terug. Het apparaat kende vele mogelijkheden. Je kon er ook hiëroglieven mee ontcijferen. Tagula experimenteerde ermee en deed er ook wat spelletjes op.

Steeds meer leefde de mens op insecten energie. Ergens in de bovenwereld hadden ze dat uitgedokterd, maar de energie moest nog gezifd worden. De insecten technologie moest door

een aantal fasen heen om zuiver te worden. Tagula droomde veel. De dromen schenen door de insecten energie te worden opgewekt. Het kwam tot een confrontatie tussen de amazones en Mörn. Maar de amazones hadden ook onderling oorlog, zoals de insecten. Ook mörnisten hadden onderling oorlog.

Het was door de oorlogen dat irke werd opgewekt. Dit waren droomoorlogen. Het was altijd oorlog in het hoofd van Tagula. Hij gebruikte het voor de exegese van de hiëroglieven en de nieuwe bijbel, en zo ook de tweede bijbel. De insecten hadden hierin een grote plaats. Het was als een opname in zijn hoofd door de insecten energie. Hij leerde het te gebruiken. Hij voelde zich als een insect die boven alles uit kon stijgen, maar dat kon alleen door eerst als een insect dieper te gaan dan al het andere. Hij moest zowel leren graven en spitten als vliegen. Dat was ook hoe de insecten energie werkte en werd opgewekt. Het ging eerst heel diep, zodat het onder alles kwam, als aan de rand van het heelal, waar de boeken ontstonden.

De aarde stond op de rand van grote vliegenplagen. Zij zouden honger en ballingschap brengen, en vreemde littekenen. De aarde zou zo geheel door vliegen-energie leven, maar eerst moest er heel wat sterven. De vliegen waren gekomen om vlees te eten, veel vlees. Uiteindelijk waren dit de voorhangsels van de amazones. Er was geen plaats meer voor opgeblazen Mörn verstand. Dat moest doorstoken worden, lekgeprikt. Daartoe waren de vreemde littekenen. Ze spraken een andere taal. Het waren lichamelijke hiëroglieven die nog vertaald moesten worden. Daar was het apparaat ook voor. Het apparaat was

biologisch materiaal wat kon meegroeien, wat zichzelf kon updaten.

Er waren zeeën van insecten energie in het binnenste van de aarde. Daar woedden ook de stormen van insecten energie die de mens tot Orion zou meenemen. Dit was de grote insecten opname. Dit gebeurde allemaal door de vliegenplagen. Het oude, opgeblazen verstand van de mens zou geheel worden weggevreten. De vliegen zouden meedogenloos doorgaan, niet stoppen. Zij konden niet omgekocht worden. De natuur laat zich niet paaien. De natuur laat zich niet vleien. De natuur houdt er geen favorieten op na. Er is geen aansziens des persoons, wat je dan ook denkt te hebben bereikt. Nee, een ieder moest buigen, en elke tong zou moeten belijden. Men moest aan de kant voor de insecten energie. De vliegenplagen zouden nu spreken, en de mens zou duidelijke grenzen zien.

Zij waren de voorhangsels van de amazones. Moeder wildernis riep haar kinderen terug. Het was allemaal te ver gegaan. Men was te ver afgedwaald. Mörn moest weer terug de kast in.

Mörn was dronken, als een woest beest, en op hem reed de hoer dronken van het bloed van kinderen en dieren. Totaal schaamteloos was zij, niet door enige kennis verhinderd. In armoede leefde zij, maar zij waande haarzelf rijk. Het was Morgan, en zij had vele zonen voortgebracht.

De monniken en hermieten streden er tegen. Zij was innerlijk verdeeld. Zo kon zij overal zijn, ook in de harten van de monniken en de hermieten. Zij was sluw. Zij speelde een spel.

Zij acteerde. Zij had overal toegang, en dat beangstigde Tagula. Hij kwam zelf ook van diep. Hij herinnerde hoe hij in haar voorhoven diende, alhoewel hij nooit verder was gegaan. Zijn geweten hield hem tegen. Oh, hoe kostbaar was het geweten, als een zeldzaam sieraad. En hij mocht er niet mee pronken, anders zou het het geweten niet meer zijn, maar Morgan.

Rode stralen van insecten energie hadden hem altijd de weg versperd. Als gekruiste speren in zijn hoofd. Nooit kon hij van iets teveel nemen, maar hij was verder gegaan dan hij mocht gaan, als een balling. Hij was niet van zichzelf. Hij was van Morgan. Nu waren de insecten gekomen.

Morgan wilde niet laten gaan. De Heere had haar hart verhard. Er was niets wat een mens kon doen. Daarom moesten de insecten komen. Het waren de voorhangsels van de amazones. Het waren de vliegenplagen. Hongerdromen brachten zij, om irke, het diepere, op te wekken. Zij moesten hier gaan slapen. Zij waren te lang opgebleven. Moeder zou hen naar bed brengen, of ze nu wilden of niet. Het was nu uit met het feest, uit met de pret, anders zou het hen verwoesten.

Morgan was geen goede moeder, maar een heks. Ze liet de kinderen maar aanrotzooien. Zo kon ze haar markt bedrijven, levende van hun bloed.

Oh Morgan,
Zij zit op haar troon,
op de rug van een beest,
haar kinderen opgezet,

achter kostbaar glas,
zo kostbaar zijn zij,
als monumenten

Oh Morgan,
dronken van het bloed van kind en dier,
dronken van markt en plezier,
slechts een getal ben in in haar rijk

Oh Morgan, die haar kinderen maar laat aanrotzooien,
vies is van onderwijs en discipline,
verzot op snoep, drugs en drank,
alles wat hart en geweten kan uitdoven,
zij komt van onder de wereld,
een raadsel onbegrepen,
op de stoel van Eli zit zij

Niemand heeft haar begrepen,
Allen volgen zij Mörn,
zij vrezen de ondergang van het vlees,
daarom nemen zij het er nog van,
ze trekken er nog het laatste uit,
wat voor winst het ook nog mag geven

Tot het uiterste gaan is hun sport,
en door hun kinderen op te zetten,
hopen zij zich het eeuwige leven te verwerven

Hoe ziek is het ?
Maar niemand ziet het,

het virus ontkent namelijk zichzelf

Tagula was koud van binnen. Hij zag de ijstijden komen in zijn dromen,
maar het waren de voorhangsels van de amazones.
IJs en insecten, als ijs-insecten, ijsecten, als vliegenplagen die scheuring brengen,
scheuring in het verstand, scheuring in het sociale, scheuring in het hele land.

Tagula zag de ijszeeën onder de aarde.
Van daaruit kwamen de ijsvliegen opzetten,
om te strijden tegen de valse warmte van de mensen,
opportunistische, opgeblazen warmte,
die het brein en ook het hart had opgeblazen,
geen geweten meer, geen bewustzijn.
Het was allemaal kunstmatig.
Het was allemaal dood.

Dood en dodend waren zij, om nog zoveel mogelijk met hen mee te sleuren in het verderf.
Daartoe groomden ze de kinderen. Het waren opgeleide vleiers.
Ze waanden zichzelf professioneel en deskundig, omdat ze het zegel van Morgan droegen.

Een valse moeder volgden zij.
Tagula moest veel dromen.
Hij wilde loskomen van Morgan, los van haar banden.
Maar zij wilde niet laten gaan.
Het was vreemd vuur, en daarom moest het ijs wel komen.

Het was altijd oorlog in zijn hoofd.
Ook de vliegen hadden oorlog onderling.
Door de vliegenplagen werd hij opgenomen tot Orion.
Maar hij was innerlijk verscheurd.
Waar hij was wist hij niet meer.
Hij was bedolven onder vele lagen.
Hij wilde geen product meer zijn.
Hij moest weg uit deze fabriek.

De vliegenplagen brachten hem uiteindelijk tot Betelgeuze,
maar daar waren ook de oorlogen.
Overal was het oorlog.
Hij moest ontwaken tot de hogere natuur, maar daarvoor moest hij eerst heel diep gaan.
Was hij op de aarde, of was hij op Betelgeuze ?
In ieder geval moest hij zijn weg hier zien te vinden.
Het leek standaard te zijn in dit spel.
Al deze contrasten waren nodig, anders zou alles sterven.

Zonder deze oorlogen zou er geen leven zijn.
En daarom moest hij jager worden,
maar de jacht was op hemzelf.
Hij was zijn eigen prooi.

Zo kwam hij tot de rode tent van Bilha,
het rode na de jacht.
Hij was tot deze conclusies gekomen na het lezen van de nieuwe bijbel.
Het had hem opgenomen.
Hij bekeek de aarde en het leven met nieuwe ogen.

Hij moest tot de tent van Bilha gaan om zijn leven af te leggen.
Het moest wel schuren, anders zou hij nooit verder komen.
Hij moest wel doorboord worden, anders zou hij nooit vrijkomen.
Morgan had de aarde ontvoerd.
En Mörn was haar zoon.

Zo prevelden de mörnisten : Morgan is God, en Mörn is haar zoon.
Zij gingen voor niets uit de weg voor dit dogma.
Zij doodden voor dit dogma.
Zij plunderden voor dit dogma.
Zij verkrachtten voor dit dogma.
Niets ging hen te ver voor dit dogma.

Hoofdstuk 7. Het standbeeld

Tagula was een profeet.
Tagula was een insectoloog.
Allemaal door een apparaat.
Het was een biologisch apparaat, een natuur apparaat.
Hij speelde er ook spelletjes op.
Veel spelletjes.

In Zaalveringen ging het beter.
Hij kon er soms naar terug.
Zijn oude huis was er nog.
Heel voorzichtig ging hij heen en weer.

Ook was er een camping bij Zalveringen.
Daar had hij ook een vakantie huisje.
Er waren daar karren waarin je kon rijden.
Het werkte op insecten energie.
Naast hem woonde een donkere vrouw met een hondje.
Hij raakte meer en meer met haar in gesprek.

Ze sprak veel over Zilverlingen, waar ze vandaan kwam.
Dat lag aan zee.
Ze had het over de vele boekenwinkels daar op de boulevard.
Zij was ook een boekenfanaat, net als Tagula.
Daarom konden ze goed met elkaar optrekken.

Ze had haar huis nog in Zilverlingen.
Soms nam ze Tagula mee.

Soms nam Tagula haar mee naar zijn huis.
Alles werkte op insecten energie nu, en alles was weer meer veilig.
Er waren verdragen gekomen met de mörnisten.
Zij waren ook afhankelijk van de insecten energie.
Het had alles overgenomen, en werkte door hele andere regels.

Mörn was het oude energie systeem, maar dat bestond niet meer.
Dat was overgenomen.
Velen begonnen Mörn af te zweren.
Ook Morgan viel van haar hoge paard.

Haar kerken werden afgebroken of vervangen.
Tagula en het meisje gingen vaak naar de zee.
De rust was wedergekeerd. Er was weer vrede.
In zijn hoofd was het nog oorlog, maar het werd minder.
Zijn herinneringen lieten hem niet los.
Morgan werkte in het gebied van de herinneringen,
van het geheugen. Dat was soms zo sterk en overweldigend dat het waar leek.
Alsof hij er nog was. Het leek alsof zijn hersenen hem soms bedonderden.

Ook het meisje ging hier doorheen.
Tagula zei dat hij soms niet meer wilde leven vanwege het verleden.
Het meisje begreep hem en had het zelfde.
Ze gingen graag boodschappen doen in Zilverlingen of Zaalveringen, of op de camping waar ze naast elkaar woonden.

Eigenlijk waren ze altijd bij elkaar.

Ze hielpen elkaar, hielpen elkaar om toekomst te zien, en ontsluiering en ontcijfering van het verleden. Ze beschouwden het verleden als moeilijke hiëroglieven.
Die lieten zich niet makkelijk uitleggen, alsof ze bewaakt werden.
Hierover waren nog oorlogen.
Het waren de oorlogen van het geheugen, een diep trauma, wat alles had verwoest.
Tagula had nauwelijks het gevoel dat hij nog leefde, maar het meisje gaf hem hoop.
Zij was als een straaltje van de andere wereld.

Ze moesten langs en door vele voorhangsels van de amazones.
In deze wereld kwam je niet makkelijk binnen.
Mörn met zijn gemaksgod en snelle oplossingen was een leugen.
Het was het brandende verleden wat nog niet uitgepuzzeld was.
Mörnisten waren nog overal, zij die koste wat het koste vasthielden aan het verleden.

Het waren giftige mensen. Tagula en het meisje probeerden hen zoveel mogelijk te ontwijken, maar soms hadden ze er nog mee te maken. Soms werkten ze nog in de winkels. Dan werden ze bitcherig te woord gestaan.

Langs vele voorhangsels van de amazones moesten ze gaan, door vele vliegenplagen, door vele oorlogen. Het waren wonden in wonden. Het leek maar door te gaan, en het ging zo

diep, en dat moest ook wel. Ze mochten nu niet stoppen. Ze waren aan de rand van het heelal gekomen, bij de watervallen, waarachter de boekenkelders waren van de geheimen.

Het was een raadselachtige natuur. Ook de opponenten waren raadsels. Die mochten ze niet zomaar wegduwen. Ze moesten er dwars doorheen, door deze mijnenvelden. Het waren labyrinten. De insecten energie wees de weg, alhoewel de insecten energie soms tegen zichzelf verdeeld was. Het was nog niet uitgezuiverd. Ze hadden vliegen energie nodig, maar die was ook tegen zichzelf verdeeld. Er waren nog vele vliegen oorlogen. Het was hier vlieg tegen vlieg. Ze leefden in de hoofden van de mensen, en droegen de herinneringen, en de herinneringen werden doorverkocht. Het was herinnering tegen herinnering. Het was een geheugen oorlog. Velen gaven hierin de strijd op, en namen speciale pilletjes om daardoor dement te worden of om alzheimer te krijgen, wat wel of niet kon werken. Ze waren de oorlogen in hun hoofd zat. Het was een soort zelfmoord van het verstand. Toch namen andere vormen van het brein het dan over, zoals formule denken, dogma's.

De dogmatiek van alzheimer was gewild, want men wilde vrede. Men wilde vergeten. Men wilde geen geheugen-soldaat meer zijn. Het was allemaal veel te ver gegaan. Het was een nieuwe soort drugs. Het waren geheugen-killers.

Tagula en het meisje moesten er niets van hebben. Ze zouden koste wat het koste de puzzel oplossen. Ze wilden niet vallen voor de sluwe taktieken van Mörn. Mörn wilde nog steeds het volk niet laten gaan. Nu kon Mörn zijn geschiedenis schrijven,

want de mensen wisten het niet meer. Ze lieten zich van alles aansmeren.

Alles moest snel. Het was een nieuwe aristocratie. In baljurken raasden ze door de natuur. Door de weilanden, door de achterbuurten en de bossen. Tagula en het meisje konden het niet bijhouden. Het was achterbuurten mentaliteit. Het was grissen en graaien en dan kortaf doen. Ze hadden nergenhs oog voor. Overmatig van zichzelf overtuigd.

Er waren nieuwe insecten radio’s gekomen, geheel op insecten energie, en Tagula en het meisje luisterden er veel naar. Er waren ook frequenties van andere planeten, met name van Orion en Betelgeuze. Zo werden ze ingelicht over wat er gaande was. Er was goed onderwijs over deze dingen. De geheimen van de natuur werden besproken, en veel tijd werd besteed aan de ontcijfering van de hiëroglieven. IJs had ook zijn eigen frequenties en er kwamen ook ijs-radio’s, die geheel op ijs energie werkten. Ook de zee had zijn eigen frequenties, en zo kwamen er ook zee-radio’s. Tagula en het meisje begonnen de radio’s te verzamelen. Zo hadden ze veel keuze.

De ijs-insecten bleken veel informatie van het heelal te hebben opgeslagen. Ook al bestond het oude energie systeem niet meer, Mörn wilde niet loslaten. Alles zat opgesloten in Mörn. De mensheid was in het moeras gezonken, tot een oude, roestige gevangenis. Het ijzer wilde niet loslaten, en het staal nog wel minder. Men was vastgeklonken in steen. De puzzels moesten nog opgelost worden.

Mörn kreeg juist meer macht als men het vergat.
Zijn vergeet-pillen waren gewild, maar fataal.
Maar men gaf niet meer om leven of dood.
Zombie was de norm. Zolang men maar de goedkeuring van Morgan had.
En die goedkeuring was er alleen als zij haar zoon aanvaardden.
Mörn was de enige weg tot Morgan.
Dat doet een moeder goed.

Morgan was slechts de schaduw van de amazones.
De mens had zich er teveel aan vastgehouden, wilden niet van de waarheid weten, want die was koud en hard.
Men wilde liever de warme leugen.
Men wilde dat gevoel van vereeuwiging, koste wat het koste, of dat nu kwaadschiks of goedschiks ging. Men offerde elkaar daar graag voor op. Men ging hiervoor over lijken.
En voor wat ? Allemaal voor die ene winkel, allemaal voor dat ene merk.
Allemaal om erbij te horen.

Eerst moest de leugen zich manifesteren, eerst moest er een gevecht zijn, anders zou de waarheid nooit kunnen komen. De leugen was de verdraaide heraut van de waarheid.

Nieuwe aardgroenten en zeegroenten kwamen er op de markt die pas ontdekt waren, en die de chemische balans in de hersenen konden herstellen. Het probleem was dat velen hiermee over de dagelijks toegestane limiet gingen, dus het zorgde ook voor een nieuw probleem. Altijd weer had de mens

uitvluchten. Altijd weer maakte de mens misbruik van de natuur. Er was dus veel meer nodig voor herstel. Er waren geen eenvoudige oplossingen.

Mensen werden verslaafd. Prijzen gingen omlaag, nog meer mensen werden verslaafd, prijzen gingen omhoog, en zo werden de verslaafden crimineel, en profiteerde de medische zorg ervan, wat alles behalve medisch was, maar gewoon onderdeel van de georganiseerde criminaliteit. Misdaad loonde, maar voor hoe lang ? En zo had het syndroom van Mörn een comeback. Men had angsten en zorgen, en werd hierdoor crimineel. De weg van de monniken was dan te lang, en de weg van de hermieten te moeilijk, dus van eerlijk verdienen en binnen de lijntjes kleuren kwam weinig terecht. De dystopie leefde voort. Men wilde de honger niet, men wilde geen laag profiel houden, alles moest groots.

Naast Zilverlingen lag Geroskmo, ook aan zee, waar een oom van het meisje woonde. Ze spraken hier vaak fluisterend, of met halve zinnen. Men sprak hier vreemde, halve verhalen. In Geroskmo woonde de leiding van het land en het was de geboorteplaats van Mörn. Daarom was het ook een toeristenplaats. Het trok veel pelgrims en andere geinteresseerden. Ook trok het veel onderzoekers. Nog altijd werd het geboortefeest van Mörn gevierd, ieder jaar, met name in Geroskmo. Voor Tagula was het een hoerenzoon, en ook voor het meisje. Zo omschreef ze trouwens ook haar oom. Ze had nare herinneringen aan hem waar ze niet over wilde praten.

In Geroskmo zou nu een nieuwe leider komen, een hermiet. Daarom gingen ze er naartoe. Het meisje hoopte dat ze haar oom niet zou tegenkomen. De hermietenleider zou dingen heel anders doen dan de vorige leider. Tagula was er wel blij mee, maar wist ook hoe de hermieten konden zijn. Al met al moest het wat rust geven in het land. Het was een paar dagen na het geboortefeest van Mörn, en dat zou nu de nieuwe feestdag worden. Het standbeeld van Mörn wat in het centrum van Geroskmo stond, zou op die dag worden afgebroken. Dat wilden Tagula en het meisje ook van dichtbij meemaken. Er waren nogal wat relletjes toen dat gebeurde. Tagula en het meisje moesten maken dat ze er weg kwamen. Er werden schoten gelost. Er vielen vele doden. Tagula en het meisje konden maar net ontkomen. De daders werden opgepakt, maar het was een grote ravage. Toch werd het standbeeld afgebroken. Tagula had spijt dat hij was gegaan. Hij snapte niet hoe hij zo naïef kon zijn.

Eens had Geroskmo een verdrag gesloten met andere landen, het verdrag van Trenta. Tagula wist niet of hun gedrag nu was vanwege dat ze zich meerderwaardig of minderwaardig voelden hierdoor. Hij wist niet of het nu elitair gedrag was of nog iets anders. Zelfs hun nederigheid en bescheidenheid leek verdacht, als onecht, namaak, alsof het een masker was. Of zou het door het standbeeld van Mörn zijn gekomen ? Maar dat was nu in ieder geval afgebroken.

De mörnisten waren woedend, en het gaf aanleiding tot veel meer rellen in het land. Niet iedereen was blij met de nieuwe hermietenleider.

Tagula had dromen in de nacht over de amazones. Ze waren niet gemakkelijk. Hij raakte met hen in gevecht. Hij worstelde met ze. Sommigen waren aardiger dan anderen. Sommigen waren moederlijk, anderen niet. Vele amazones waren ijs en ijskoud. Vanwege dit feit gingen de mensen hun warme goden maken die veel makkelijker waren, maar die niet aan de eis van het leven voldeden. Het trok hen naar de dood, want het had geen eeuwig leven in zich. Het was drugs. De mensen hadden dit uitgevonden, als gifmengers. Zo konden ook Morgan en Mörn ontstaan. Het waren vrijheidsbeelden van de mens. De mens wilde niet aan regels onderhevig zijn. Alles moest met de druk op de knop gebeuren.

Maar de amazones waren niet makkelijk. Ze eisten hard werk, dat de puzzels met bloed, zweet en tranen opgelost zouden worden, niet zomaar weggeworpen zouden worden. Dit was voor levensgenieters moeilijk te verdragen. Ook waren er schijn-amazones die veel te ver gingen, die een karikatuur maakten van de amazones. Zij waren de amazone farizeeërs. Daarom waren er de amazone oorlogen. Vrouw tegen vrouw, moeder tegen moeder. Hierom moest Tagula worstelen, en zich niet zomaar overgeven.

Vanwege de opkomst van rellen in het land ging Tagula weer meer de grond onder naar zijn grot. Hij kreeg daar eens een droom dat er een touw aan hem verscheen, en waarmee hij afdaalde in een tunnel die schuin naar beneden liep, en waardoor hij in een natuurgebied kwam onder de grond. Hij herkende de plaats waar hij was als de slaapplaats bij de oude

hermiet waar hij eens was. Het touw leidde hem voort in het natuurgebied onder de grond. Hij zag het als van God gegeven. Hij had eerst een worsteling met het touw, maar het touw nam hem mee. Het touw leidde hem toen naar een plaats waar amazones waren. Zij spraken hem moederlijk toe. Hij kon alleen de woorden niet meer herinneren toen hij wakker werd. De nacht daarop was hij daar weer in een droom. De amazones stonden om hem heen. Ze zeiden dat ze hem hadden geroepen. Hij vroeg zich af waarvoor het was, en was tegelijkertijd op zijn hoede. Hij werd geroepen tot studie van de hiëroglieven. Ze leidden hem tot een grot waar vele hiëroglieven waren die hij nog niet kende. Toen begonnen ze hem te onderwijzen erover. Ze namen hem toen mee dieper onder de aarde.

Eén van de amazones zei toen tegen hem : ‘Zo zal er niemand zijn die mij niet kent.’ Ze waren bij een moeras aangekomen, wat een groot uitgestrekt gebied was, en er kwamen stemmen uit het moeras, zielen die opgesloten waren. Hij zou hier ook veel moeten puzzelen. Hier waren ook veel grotten met hiëroglieven, langs de moerasrand. Alleen zo zouden de zielen vrijkomen. Ze lieten hem die grotten ook zien. Het waren hele lange grotten. Hij duizelde ervan. Hij vroeg zich af hoe hij dat ooit allemaal zou kunnen leren. ‘Bij het begin beginnen,’ werd er toen gezegd.

Hij zag de bubbels uit het moeras komen en werd toen wakker.

De nacht daarop had hij weer een droom. ‘We komen voor jou,’ zeiden de amazones. Hij was weer dieper onder de grond, en ze namen hem mee naar een zee. Ze lieten hem schepen zien, en

vertelden over de eilanden in de zee. Ook vertelden ze over de zeecreaturen, over octopi, kwallen en andere vissen. Ook vertelden ze hem over zee-insecten en over de vliegenplagen aan zee. Ze zeiden ook dat de natuurvolkeren onder de grond niet joegen op dieren, maar op zonden, ook al kwamen de zonden in diergedaanten.

Ineens hoorde Tagula een lage en dubbele stem in hem, die zei dat er geen ontsnapping mogelijk was, want hij was gevangene nummer A6-389109700000. A6 was het nummer van zijn gevangenis-zone, en 389109700000 was zijn specifieke nummer waarmee hij werd geïdentificeerd. Hij was op de planeet van de eeuwige verdoemden. Hij was een kind van de eeuwige verdoemenis. Het was de stem van Mörn. Mörn leefde na zijn val voornamelijk nog in de riolen, ook de riolen van het menselijke verstand en de menselijke psyche, want hij wilde niet loslaten. Al het andere beeld viel weg. Het was donker, en Tagula leek Mörn te zien, maar het was vaag. En Mörn was groot, als een verschrikkelijk zeemonster met mannenhoofden. Dat waren dikke, opgeblazen mannenhoofden. De aarde was de aarde niet, maar A6, de planeet van de eeuwige verdoemenis. Voor altijd zouden ze voor Mörn moeten werken als slaven, voor altijd zouden ze voor Mörn moeten strijden. En Mörn noemde A6 liefkozend ook ‘Morgan’, die hij als zijn moeder beschouwde.

Tagula vroeg zich af waar de amazones waren. Die waren ineens verdwenen. Waarschijnlijk probeerden de amazones hem te laten ontsnappen, maar werd hij weer gegrepen door het Mörn systeem, of door het systeem van A6, het systeem van

Morgan. Het bleef mensen in de greep houden, en gaf niet mee. Zoveel beveiligings-mechanismes had het. Althans zo leek het.

A6 was een moeras-gevangenis. Zij waren al gestikt. En altijd waren zij stikkende. Steeds dieper zonken zij in hun cellen in het moeras. Zij moesten werken en hun leven opofferen voor Mörn, de zoon van Morgan. Maar was Morgan niet de schaduw van de amazones ? Was zij niet een leugenachtige karikatuur, als een heraut ?

De gevangenis implantaten waren diep van binnen. Het waren implodes. Hij had overal pijn. Het alarm was flink afgegaan. Het was alsof hij werd teruggesleurd. Hij was in de riolen van Mörn. Vreemde wezens keken hem aan. Telkens zag hij flitsen van het moeras, en soms van de zee. Het was alsof hij geen adem kon halen. Hij had flitsen van trage monniken en kerkvaderen. Ze probeerden zijn dromen weer te verstikken. Hij mocht niet dromen. Hij moest Mörn dienen, de boosaardige zoon van Morgan. Daartoe was hij op aarde.

Hij was in worsteling met een kwal die zich had vastgehecht aan zijn hersenen, aan zijn hoofd. Het probeerde zijn ogen uit hem te zuigen. ‘Maak hem blind, en breng hem aan de drugs !’ hoorde hij roepen. ‘Welke medicijnen ?’ hoorde hij toen een andere stem zeggen. Hij kon niet ademhalen. Iets van binnen blokkeerde zijn ademhaling, maar ook iets van buiten. De kwal, en het feit dat hij in het moeras werd gezogen. ‘Niemand kan hier ontsnappen,’ werd er toen gezegd.

Hij hoorde veel gefluister, en veel dubbele stemmen. Die waren laag, maar sommigen waren ook heel hoog. Hij voelde zich koortsachtig. Hij voelde zich zwaar beroerd. Wat waren ze met hem aan het doen ? Wat wilden ze van hem ? Hij hoorde vreemde reclame in zijn hoofd. Hij moest ervoor buigen, dan zouden ze hem verlichting geven. Je kon groeien in dit systeem, macht krijgen in dit systeem, als je Mörn zou dienen, als je de drugs zou nemen. Maar drugs kreeg hij toch wel binnen. Hij voelde injectie-naalden diep zijn vlees ingaan, te diep, en hij voelde koudheid. Koude vloeistof. Hij kon nog steeds niet ademen, of in ieder geval niet goed genoeg, maar hij voelde ook een levenskracht. Het voelde aan als familie, maar hij wist dat het geen familie was. Dit was gevangenis-vloeistof, dromendodend spul.

Het was koud en glibberig, en hij voelde zich vies. Hij voelde zich onogelijk, en daarom zou hij naar de reclame moeten luisteren. Zij zouden hem mooi en aanvaardbaar kunnen maken, niet het afzichtelijke en walgelijke monster wat hij dacht dat hij was op dat moment. Hij moest alles bezien door de lens van Mörn, en dat was een karikatuur van hemzelf, en hij werd erom bespot door Mörn. ‘Dat ben ik helemaal niet !’ dacht Tagula, die nog steeds snakte naar adem. ‘Ik weiger dit te geloven !’

Hoofdstuk 8. Het lot van Tagula

Tagula voelde zich verminkt. Hij voelde zich een zombie. En Mörn was een trol. Hij keek naar de koppen van het zeemonster. Het waren opgeblazen mannenkoppen die alles beter dachten te weten. Ze prevelden verzen uit het boek van Mörn. Het boek was genaamd ‘De Ichtus’, wat zoiets als vis betekent. Tagula had het nog steeds benauwd. Hij begon in zijn gedachten tot de amazones te roepen, maar die kwamen niet. Wel zag hij wat vrouwengestalten die van steen leken, maar dat kon ook Morgan wezen. ‘Je weet wie je moet dienen,’ werd er gezegd. Mörn schreeuwde tot hem, met een drie-dubbele lage stem. De stem was zeer laag, alsof hij gebeten was door een slang, en nu hallucineerde van het gif. Toen leek de stem wel vier-dubbel, als een leprechaun, een veel hogere stem, en toen begon de leprechaun te lachen.

‘We hebben je goed tuk,’ zei de leprechaun. ‘Van de longen tot de lever.’ Dat schenen ze altijd te zeggen als ze iemand wilden wijsmaken dat ze hem geheel hadden ingenomen en overgenomen. Tagula wilde het niet geloven. Tagula vocht met hand en tand, met het laatste beetje kracht wat hij nog in zich had, en bleef in gedachten roepen tot de amazones. Mörn deed zich voor als God, maar Tagula was als vechtende met hem op Pniël. ‘Jakob, buig neer,’ werd er gezegd.

Tagula voelde weer een scheut koude vloeistoffen. Die moesten natuurlijk de dromen van de amazones of van de natuur tegen houden. Hij mocht niet dromen. Hij mocht alleen aan de drugs

van Mörn zijn, wat hij medicijnen noemde. Er werd gerommeld in zijn mond. Er werden dingen in hem geschoten. Er werd in hem geboord. Mörn was een criminele dwangtandarts, een zombie tandarts, een mondenbedwinger, en zo ook een gedachtenbedwinger, allemaal door gedwongen implantaten. Tagula vond dat tandartsen al altijd ziek obsessief waren met implantaten die ze vullingen noemden. Ze deden alsof het bij het lichaam hoorde, en ze verdienden er veel geld aan. Ze ontkenden zelfs dat het implantaten waren. Ze deden alsof het de normaalste zaak van de wereld was. Daarom was het met recht een planeet van de eeuwige verdoemenis.

Tagula moest zich erbij neerleggen, wachten totdat dit ding, dit kreng, weer zou slapen, wachten totdat het weer eb zou worden. Hij vond iets van hoop in zichzelf, iets van adem, ook al was het niet veel, ook al had hij het gevoel dat zijn hoofd zou barsten. De mannen met de dikke koppen hadden een hoofdklem op hem gezet, en ook een kaakklem, en schroefden het veel te hard aan. Tagula had het gevoel dat zijn brein elk moment kon knappen, of zijn hoofd, of zijn kaak. Er stond teveel druk op. En de mannen staken vuurwerk af bij zijn hoofd. Ze probeerden hem gehandicapped te maken, tot een invalide. Tagula voelde zich als een verlamde, maar legde zich er niet bij neer, al helemaal niet bij de walgelijke reclame in zijn hoofd. Waar ging dit allemaal over ? Hij kon het niet eens goed verstaan wat ze zeiden. Het ging zo snel. Hij was er in ieder geval goed bij. Hij was niet ver gekomen in zijn ontsnapping, maar hij hield zich vast aan de dromen van de amazones en van de natuur. Hij wist dat die zouden terugkomen. Dat moest wel. Hij dacht na over de hiëroglieven.

Die moest hij nog dieper ontcijferen. Hij had het idee dat dit meer een school-ervaring was. Hij was op excursie en zag de monsters, en moest ermee worstelen, als onderdeel van zijn studie. Ze waren er nog niet.

Maar hij wist dat hij ook met de amazones moest worstelen. Morgan kon er nog tussenzitten, en Morgan was sluw. In vele vormen kon zij komen om hem te betoveren. Elke ontsnapping kon hier ook een valstrik zijn, om je er juist nog dieper in te trekken. Bovenal moest Tagula met zichzelf worstelen. Hij mocht zichzelf niet vertrouwen, ook zijn zintuigen niet. Er was bedrog op bedrog hier. Snelle zelfovertuiging zou hier fataal zijn. Hij was zelf een mijnenveld.

Hij herinnerde zich de monniken, hoe zij hamerden op zelfverloochening, te strijden tegen zelfvertrouwen en zelfverzekerdheid. Dat waren gevangenis-implantaten. Dat moest eruit. Maar dat ging er niet zomaar uit. En hier was hij op de planeet van de eeuwige verdoemenis.

Het leek alsof hij niet meer wakker kon worden. Wat was er met hem gebeurd ? Was hij al dood ? waar zou hij naartoe moeten ? Hij weigerde te geloven wat Mörn zei. Mörn was een gevallene. Mörn was een bedrieger. Mörn had hele andere interesses dan hij had. Mörn was oppervlakkig genot, geen diepte, leeg genot, doelloos genot. En hij zou daar slaaf voor moeten worden ? Voor wat ? Waar ging dit in hemelsnaam over ? Waar was het goed voor ? Het was allemaal slechts tijdelijk. Het was totaal zinloos en nutteloos. Hij snapte niet dat iemand daarvoor kon vallen.

‘Maffia, maffia,’ hoorde hij iemand zeggen. Mörn was een soort maffia baas, en Morgan was zijn maffia moeder. Zij hadden al deze kerken bedacht. Dat was het hele idee van de eeuwige verdoemenis, dat het de mens zou aanzetten om hun producten te kopen, dan zouden ze veilig zijn, en ophoging krijgen. Dan zouden ze deelhebben aan de elite van Mörn. Het was een criminele drugs-organisatie. Medicijnen noemden ze het. Ja, ja.

Mörn was de kroon van de alzheimer. Teveel hadden ze vergeten. Nu beet het hen in de billen. Ook op andere plaatsen, en het stak diep. Drugstrip na drugstrip, totdat ze in het paradijs waren gekomen. Dan werden ze aangestaard door hypnotische slangen. Het is hier wil op wil, begeerte op begeerte. Kennis is niet thuis. En als je wilde ontsnappen dan zouden de lasten worden verdubbeld. Farao wilde het volk niet laten gaan, en de Heere had zijn hart verhard.

‘Oh, God, ik wil ontwaken, ook als mijn bed in de hel is, dan bent U bij mij.’

Tagula hoorde de hermieten vloeken in de verte. Ook riepen ze zijn naam, maar hij wist niet of het echt was. Het waren de oogsten van het riool leek het wel. Zoveel velden die geoogst moesten worden. ‘Ik raak aan lagere wal als ik hier langer over nadenk.’ Er scheurde iets in het brein van Tagula. Hij leek een amazone te zien, maar het waren alleen haar voeten leek het wel, of zag hij meer ? Even leek hij haar geheel te zien. Ze was omgord met riemen, bruingele dunne riemen over haar

lichaam. Daaraan waren primitieve wapens gevestigd. De riemen hadden een soort kleine metalen knopen. Het zag er heel elegant uit. De vrouw was groot en had een bos met haren.

‘Roep naar mij,’ zei de vrouw.

‘Wie ben je ?’ vroeg hij.

Toen vaagde het beeld weg. Hij zou worstelen. Hij zou zich niet makkelijk overgeven, ook niet aan dit soort verschijnselen, maar hij zag de natuur achter haar. Ook met de natuur zou hij worstelen.

‘Nee !’ riep hij. ‘Ik zal niemand zomaar roepen !’ En toch riep hij in zijn gedachten, tot de amazones. Hij riep om hulp. Maar er was geen hulp. Hij was op school. Hij was in de arena. Hij moest zichzelf hier doorheen vechten. Er waren geen snelle oplossingen hier. Alles kon een valstrik zijn. De mens forceerde de waarheid, terwijl het niet eens de waarheid was. De mens wilde het gemak dienen. De mens wilde Mörn dienen.

Tagula zou niet opgeven, ook al zou hij de enige zijn die niet had gebogen voor Mörn. Dat had hij in zijn verleden al genoeg gedaan, en hij had gezien waar het hem gebracht had. Maar ja, dat was een stockholm syndroom. Hij kon toen niet meer vechten, maar nu vocht hij, als een beer en als een leeuw. Het moest maar eens afgelopen zijn.

Hij klampte zich vast aan wat zwarte stenen. Die moesten de stemmen van de voorouders splitsen in hem. Er moest zoveel

uit nog. Hij wist niet waar de zwarte stenen vandaan kwamen. Hij zag en voelde water stromen, als een riviertje, heel dun, kabbelend. Hij zag ook een halssnoer met zwarte steentjes, en hij deed het om zijn nek. Weer zag hij de amazone. ‘Draag het,’ sprak ze. Hij kon het niet weigeren. Het was te sterk, en het gaf hem adem. De voorouders werden uit hem getrokken. Hun stemmen sijpelden weg. ‘Dit maakte mij gek,’ zei Tagula.

‘Ze gebruikten je als spreekbuis,’ zei de amazone. ‘En toen ze niet meer konden, gebruikten ze je gedachten.’

‘Hoe ?’ vroeg Tagula.

Ze trok hem in de natuur. Ze trok hem uit het moeras en legde hem tussen de bloemen in een veldje. ‘Ik voel me verschrikkelijk,’ zei Tagula. ‘Ik ben een wrak.’ Hij voelde zich nog steeds verlamd.

‘Nee, het heeft me nog van binnen,’ zei Tagula.

‘Nee,’ zei de amazone. ‘Geloof het niet. Ze werken door je geloof. Zo houden ze grip. Geloof het niet.’

‘Hoe ?’ vroeg Tagula weer. ‘Het heeft me teveel in de grip. Het trekt aan me.’

‘Geloof het niet,’ zei de amazone. ‘Je moet het ontkennen.’

‘Ja, maar dan houd ik mezelf voor de gek,’ zei Tagula.

‘Dat hebben ze al gedaan,’ zei de amazone rustig. Ze kwam licht moederlijk op hem over.

‘Je kunt bij ons wonen,’ zei de amazone. ‘Wij wonen hier in het bos.’

‘Dat gaat niet lukken,’ zei Tagula. ‘Hoe kan ik jullie vertrouwen ?’

‘Wil je terug ?’ vroeg de amazone.

‘Nee, maar wat als ik tussen twee valstrikken ben ?’ vroeg Tagula.

‘Er bestaan geen valstrikken,’ zei de amazone. ‘De enige valstrik is als je jezelf bedriegt.’

‘Kom ik er ooit nog door, kom ik er ooit nog uit ?’ vroeg Tagula.

‘Als je stopt jezelf te bedriegen,’ vertelde de amazone rustig.

Haar stem had een verzachtende werking op zijn brein. Hij wist dat hij bovenal in oorlog was met zichzelf.

‘Soms moet je door valstrikken heen om jezelf te leren kennen,’ zei de amazone, ‘dus het zijn geen daadwerkelijke valstrikken, maar paden en arena’s. Daar moet je jezelf doorheen worstelen, om jezelf te vinden.’

‘Ik moet mezelf verloochenen,’ zei Tagula.

‘Precies,’ zei de amazone. ‘Dat is het vinden van jezelf, je ware zelf.’

‘Ik verloochen mijn zintuigen,’ zei Tagula.

‘Precies,’ zei de amazone. ‘En dan krijg je dit. Het diepere. Er is een dieper zelf, een diepere wereld. En dan kom je bij ons.’

‘Waar is God in dit alles ?’ vroeg Tagula.

‘Dit is God,’ zei de amazone. ‘Zij is moeder. Allereerst is zij amazone.’

Hij keek naar de wildernis om zich heen. Hij zag de lianen en de verwilderde planten, bomen en bloemen. ‘Wij jagen hier op de zonde,’ zei de amazone. ‘Zwijnen tussen het groen, die alles kapot vreten.’

‘Zwijnen ?’ vroeg Tagula. ‘Ik ben vegetarisch.’

‘Ja,’ zei de amazone. ‘Je bent vegetarisch naar de dieren, maar niet naar de zonde. Je bent een zonde-verslinder. Daartoe zijn de vliegenplagen gekomen, en zij eten veel vlees.’

Tagula zuchtte. ‘Dit zijn de eeuwige jachtvelden, Tagula,’ zei de amazone.

‘Zijn we eeuwig verdoemden ?’ vroeg Tagula.

‘Eeuwig verdoemden als wat ?’ vroeg de amazone. ‘Wij hebben de diepte van de zondeval gezien, dat is zonde overtuiging, en vandaaruit de jacht aangaan op de zonde op die te doden. Dat is het Kaïnsbevel. Zo niet, dan zou de zonde over ons heersen en ons bedriegen.’

Tagula knikte. ‘Dan gaan we daarvoor,’ zei hij.

De amazone strekte haar hand uit, en Tagula pakte haar hand, maar toen vervaagde ze, en was alles weer donker om hem heen. Of was hij flauw gevallen ? Hij hoorde haar stem. Ze zei zijn naam. ‘Tagula.’ Toen begon ook haar stem weg te vagen.

‘Dit is ingewikkeld,’ dacht Tagula bij zichzelf.

Hij had geen kracht om op te staan. Hij had pijn in zijn mond van de implantaten, en al het gesnij en geboor. Weer kon hij niet goed ademen, en ook niet goed denken. De pijn van de implantaten blokkeerde zijn spraaksysteem. Hij had geen kracht om te spreken. Hij lag daar maar, en alles was donker. Misschien wilde Mörn hem niet laten gaan, maar hij mocht niet in Mörn geloven. Hij mocht Mörn niet overschatten, maar hij wilde Mörn ook niet onderschatten. Hij wilde niet zomaar zorgeloos vergeten.

Hij moest tot de rivier van vergetelheid gaan, dat was iets van de natuur, en dat zou juist zijn ware geheugen aanwakkeren. Dat was iets anders dan zomaar vergeten en wegdrukken, iets zomaar overslaan voor het gemak ervan. Hij hoorde een rivier

bruisen in de verte. Het geluid leek dichterbij te komen, alsof hij gedragen werd. Maar toen werd hij weggezogen, en hij viel hard op steen, en het was nog moeilijker om te ademen, alsof hij bijna stikte, of misschien was hij al gestikt. Hij hoorde een koude vrouwenstem zeggen : ‘A6 staat geen ontsnapping toe. Jij bent eeuwig verdoemde nummer A6-389109700000. Je bent verloren. Er is niets wat je kunt doen.’ Ze klonk als een moderator.

‘Houdt je mond, dom wijf,’ dacht Tagula, maar hij kon niet spreken. Hij voelde pijnscheuten door hem heentrekken, en krampte nog meer in elkaar. ‘Wij kunnen je gedachten lezen,’ sprak de vrouw. ‘Ontsnapping is niet geoorloofd, en op bekritisering en belediging van het gezag staat straf.’

Tagula wist dat hij niets kon doen, en durfde niet meer te denken. Het was pijn wat hij nog nooit eerder had gevoeld. Het deed alles in hem knappen. Het was overmatige zenuwpijn die ondragelijk was, en waarvan je krankzinnig zou worden als het lang genoeg zou duren. Gelukkig stopte het na een tijdje. ‘Je hebt je waarschuwing gehad,’ sprak de vrouw koud. Ze mocht zeer trots zijn op haar macht. Dat dacht Tagula niet, maar dat hoorde hij in de diepte van zijn wezen, als zijn geweten, als irke. Hij hoopte maar dat ze dat niet konden lezen. Er gebeurde gelukkig niets. Tagula moest niet meer door zijn gedachten leven. Dat zou fataal zijn, maar hij moest luisteren naar de dieptes van zijn geweten, daar waar irke was, de dromen binnen de dromen. Dat was een bron die ze niet konden verstaan, die ze niet konden traceren.

‘Wat is dat ?’ hoorde hij iemand zeggen. ‘Mijn handen branden,’ zei iemand anders. En weer iemand anders zei : ‘Mijn voeten branden.’ Eerst schenen ze er nogal rustig over te zijn, maar later hoorde hij gegil. ‘Nee, we kunnen het niet meer houden ! Hij heeft irke gevonden !’

Ze schenen irke te vrezen. Het waren de diepere dromen. Die konden ze niet uitdoven. Die konden ze niet doden. Het was sterker dan hen, en ze konden het niet verstaan. Ze werden er krankzinnig door. Hij merkte dat hij weer goed adem kon halen.

‘Geloof niet in hen,’ zei de amazone weer. Hij was blij dat hij haar weer kon horen. Hij keek op, en zag haar. Hij zag nu meerdere amazones, als in een kamp. ‘Wij hebben je hier naartoe gedragen,’ zei de amazone. Hij voelde nu wat kracht in zijn benen. ‘Honger hier,’ zei de amazone. ‘Overeet niet, want dan sleuren ze je weer terug. Neem wat de natuur je biedt.’

Nog steeds durfde hij niet te denken, bang om teruggestuurd te worden, maar hij leefde vanuit irke, vanuit de diepere dromen, als zijn levensbron. Daar moest hij naar leren luisteren. Hij mocht niet afdwalen. De verbinding tussen hem en irke was nog maar heel dun, als heel dun ijs. Het moest harder en vaster worden. Eén eigen gedachte zou hier fataal zijn. Hij moest zich oefenen en volharden in het luisteren naar irke in zijn diepte. Eén eigen gedachte en hij zou weg zijn. Vrees begon in hem op te komen, veel vrees. Dat was voor zijn eigen bescherming.

Hij voelde zich alsof hij elk moment door het dunne ijs kon zakken. Hij durfde zich bijna niet te bewegen. Maar het leek alsof de amazones hem vasthielden, alsof hij aan een touw vastzat. ‘Laat me niet gaan,’ zei hij bijna smekend. ‘Ik wil niet terug.’

‘Eén gedachte, en het is fataal,’ zei de amazone. ‘Dan besta je niet, en heb je nooit bestaan, en ben je onderdeel van Mörn.’

Tagula weende van angst. ‘Eén gedachte ? Maar hoe kan ik dan overleven ? Wat als het zich aan me opdringt ?’

‘Als je het hoort is er niets aan de hand,’ zei de amazone. ‘Als het over je heenvliegt is er niets aan de hand, daar kun je niets aan doen, maar laat het geen nestje in je haren bouwen. Neem het niet naar binnen. Koester het niet. Verzet je er tegen, sla het van je af, en blijf luisteren naar de dieptes in jezelf, niet naar de gedachtes in je hoofd. Luister naar je geweten, onder je hart, en zo zal het bewustzijn groeien.’

‘Hoe snel kan een gedachte me meesleuren ?’ vroeg Tagula, nog steeds wenend van angst.

‘Er gaat wat aan vooraf,’ zei de amazone. ‘Eerst raakt het je aan, en dan probeert het bij je binnen te komen. Zelfs als dat gebeurt is er nog geen man overboord. Ze kunnen heel diep gaan, ze kunnen heel diep steken, heel diep injecteren, maar neem het niet aan. Verzet je ertegen, worstel ermee, en blijf luisteren en vasthouden aan je diepere bron, onder je hart, de

bron van je geweten. Dat is wat irke is, de dromen binnen de dromen tot de diepste dromen.'

'Ja, maar wat als ze me overnemen,' weende Tagula, 'ik heb zolang in het stockholm syndroom geleefd.'

'Het syndroom van Mörn,' zei de amazone. 'Elke jongere gaat hier doorheen. Daar worden ze in geboren, en dat is een hele lange tocht van vallen en opstaan, en teruggezogen worden, totdat de grote ontwakingen komen, totdat de grote zeeën hen meenemen, de zeeën van Orion, tot Betelgeuze, en dan nog moet je door vele arena's. Soms kun je ontvoeringen niet voorkomen, dan is het te sterk, maar het gaat erom wie je van binnen bent, niet wat er op of in je wordt gelegd buiten je toestemming. Dat is de oorlog tegen Mörn. Als je die naar beste weten uitvoert dan komen wij je tegemoet. God laat je niet alleen als je twijfelt en onderzoekt, maar Mörn komt daar waar de mens zelfverzekerd is.'

'Ik ben bang,' zei Tagula. 'Mörn is krachtig.'

'Geloof niet in hem,' zei de amazone. 'Zie waar je vandaan bent gekomen, waar je nu bent, en houdt daar aanvast, als referentie punt, ook als je wordt teruggezogen. Je kunt altijd terugkeren tot je goede herinneringen. De zwarte steen scheidt geheugen van geheugen. Dat heb je om je nek.'

'Nee, Mörn is te krachtig,' zei Tagula. 'Het heeft allemaal geen zin. Ik wordt al jaren vervolgd en neergehaald door Mörn, er is geen ontkomen aan, en geen kruid tegen opgewassen. Ik geloof

jullie niet.’ Tagula huilde. Het was alsof zijn angst werd overspoeld met verdriet, en wanhoop, wat veel groter leek te zijn. De angst was nu nog maar een doperwt in zijn brein. Ineens gaf de amazone hem een klap tegen zijn gevoelige kaak. Tagula kromp ineen. ‘Dan zul je slaaf zijn van de amazones,’ waren haar woorden. Ze legde haar voet op zijn mond. ‘Het is afgelopen met je.’

Dat gevoel dat hij had, dat zowel Mörn als de amazones op hem jaagden. Ze wilden hem niet laten gaan. Beiden niet. Hij zag in dat het de amazones menens was. Ze leken zijn stockholm syndroom te begrijpen. Ze leken zijn wanhoop te begrijpen, en daarom lieten ze hem niet gaan. Maar waren zij hier wel tegen opgewassen ? Tagula wist het niet, maar ze leken vrij te zijn in de natuur, levende van de jacht op zwijnen, bizons, buffels, runderen, renbokken, lammetjes, hanen en vissen. Dat waren geen dieren, maar zonden in dierlijke vormen. Zou dat het geheim van hun vrijheid zijn, of leefden ze van binnen ook nog in grote gebondenheid aan Mörn ?

Ze hadden Tagula vastgebonden. Hij kon niet meer weg. Hij zou uitgehongerd worden, zodat hij te zwak zou zijn om nog te ontsnappen, en zodat hij ook geen bedreiging zou zijn naar de amazones.

‘Je bent gevaarlijk bezig,’ zei één van de amazones. ‘Je weet waarom wij dit doen.’

‘Sorry, stockholm syndroom,’ zei Tagula.

‘Tegen dit soort slavernij van Mörn moet een veel grotere slavernij staan, anders komen we er niet doorheen,’ zei de amazone. ‘Het is touw tegen touw, gesel tegen gesel, slavernij tegen slavernij.’

‘Leg het hem niet uit, zuster,’ zei een andere amazone.

‘Ik doe wat ik wil,’ zei de amazone.

‘Nee, zuster, we zullen je verbannen,’ zei de andere amazone.

Medelijden scheen hier bijna verboden te zijn of aan strenge regels onderhevig. Al snel kwam Tagula de oorlogen van de amazones onder ogen hier, hoe ze innerlijk verdeeld waren, hoe sommigen van de amazones heel twistziek waren. En de twistzieken waren in de meerderheid. Na een tijde begonnen steeds meer amazones tot het kamp te komen. Ze waren teruggekomen van de jacht, en ze verbaasden zich erover dat er een man in hun kamp was. Ze waren er niet over te spreken. Degene die hem binnen had gelaten werd streng toegesproken en gewaarschuwd, en ook degenen die het hadden toegelaten.

Dit was het lot van Tagula. De twistzieken waren in de meerderheid. Uiteindelijk werd de amazone die hem toegelaten had, en ook wat andere amazones die haar hierin ondersteunden en die het toe hadden gelaten uit het kamp gezet. Zij moesten maar hun eigen amazone stam vormen, maar hier waren ze niet meer gewenst. Tagula had gehoopt dat hij met hen mee zou worden verbannen, maar dat was niet het geval. Hij was aan een paal gebonden, en daar bleef hij. Hij

had medelijden met de goede amazone, maar zij was in hun ogen niet streng genoeg geweest, en dat werd als een zeker verraad gezien. Nu was Tagula in grote problemen.

Hij durfde niet aan Mörn te denken. Hij wist niet wat erger was. Er werd naar hem geschreeuwd, maar veel erger was dat velen hem leken te negeren. Hij zou uitgehongerd worden opdat hij geen bedreiging zou vormen, maar hij wist niet wat er daarna zou gebeuren. Zou hij slaaf worden, zoals al eerder was gezegd, of zou hij gegeten worden, of ook verbannen ? Of zou hij gewoon afgemaakt worden, zou hij de doodstraf krijgen ? Nadat het leek alsof hij wel dagen aan de paal had gestaan kreeg hij wat melk. Hij wist niet wat voor melk het was. Al gauw werd hij losgemaakt van de paal, maar hij was nog steeds gebonden, en had een touw om zijn nek. Hij moest de voeten van de amazones schoonlikken. Dat was een vernedering. Het was om hem zijn plaats te tonen. Hij was niet meer dan dat. Amazones vreesden mannen. Ze vreesden Mörn, en ze zouden er alles tegen doen om zichzelf veilig te houden en vrij. Ze speelden hiermee geen spelletjes, en lieten het zekere voor het onzekere. Ze namen geen enkel risico, met niemand. Ook niet met hun eigen zusters. Als die zich te slap opstelden, of te verdacht, dan werden ze zonder pardon verbannen. Dan moesten ze zichzelf maar zien te redden. Zo waren de amazone oorlogen ontstaan, die veelal koude oorlogen waren. Veelal wilden de zusters elkaar niet direct bestrijden. Ze hoopten altijd nog op de verandering van de tegenpartij, maar er waren ook stammen die onvergevelijk waren. Eens een verrader, altijd een verrader. Eens een slappe hap, altijd een slappe hap.

Op medelijden hoefde Tagula hier in ieder geval niet te rekenen. Deze amazones waren bruut. Hij was in verkeerde handen gevallen. Naar Mörn wilde hij in ieder geval niet terug, en nu hij zo was behandeld vroeg hij zich af of Mörn wel tegen deze ruige amazones op kon. Zij waren geen lieverdjes, zij waren geen zoete moedertjes. Tagula was ver van huis hier. Tagula wist niet of hij droomde, of dat hij in de onderwereld was. Hij wist niet of hij leefde of al dood was. Hij was ergens over een grens heen gegaan. Hij kon ook in een coma zijn. Of het nu een sterke hallucinatie had of niet : Dit was zijn leven nu. Al het andere leven was onder zijn voeten weggetrapt. Dit was een ruwe en ruige natuur, heel anders dan hij het zich had voorgesteld, maar toch herinnerde hij toen de verhalen van de hermieten erover. Eigenlijk was hij hiervoor al gewaarschuwd. Hij was er nu goed bij.

Ruige amazones keken hem aan. Soms zag hij alleen maar hun voeten die hij moest schoonlikken. Dat deden ze op hem zijn plaats te wijzen. Dat was zijn rang. Ondergeschikt. Hun voeten waren veel groter dan zijn voeten, veel dikker, en veel donkerder. Het waren vlezige voeten, en vuil. Ze sloegen hem, en ranselden hem af, totdat hij weende, en zijn tranen op hun voeten viel. Daarmee moest hij ze schoonmaken. Hij wreef de tranen in hun vlees.

‘Wat zijn dit voor dromen ?’ vroeg hij zichzelf af. Hij worstelde, maar was hulpeloos, zo hulpeloos als hij zich eens in de gevangenis van Mörn voelde. Mörn was slechts de schaduw hiervan geweest, een voorloper, een karikatuur. Morgan was ook zo, maar dan heel anders, niet met dit soort

dingen. Wilde hij ze terug of wilde hij hier blijven ? Morgan en Mörn waren goddeloos, van de markt. Hier ging het om andere dingen. De amazones zaten niet achter zijn geld aan. De amazones hadden geen medische dogma's, waren geen tandartsen. Hij vroeg zich af wat erger was. Hij begreep de amazones wel. Hij herinnerde de verhalen van de hermieten. De amazones hadden ook een heleboel goede punten. Maar wat er nu gebeurde ging hem te ver. Of was dit de enige manier om veilig te blijven tegen Mörn ? Moest het zo diep gaan ? Was het anders een verloren zaak ? Tagula proefde de voeten van de amazones. Het was een soort melk. Het was een soort wortelsap. Het was het oer, langvergeten dingen. Hij werd onderwezen. Hij moest van de melk drinken, van de amazone melk. Het gaf hem nieuwe ideeën. Het stirde irke in hem op.

Tagula schudde met zijn hoofd. 'Nee, nee.' Wild begon hij met zijn hoofd te schudden. 'Zie, hij gedraagt zich als een varken,' zei één van de amazones. 'We kunnen hem beter slachten.' En zo moest Tagula wel gehoorzamen en zich erbij neerleggen. Hij wilde niet dood. Niets was zeker bij de amazones. Er was altijd spanning. Nooit had hij rust, tenzij hij deed wat ze hem opdroegen.

Hoofdstuk 9. De Spiegelvelden

De monniken van Mörn prevelden hun verzen uit de Ichtus, het boek van Mörn. Ze hadden Tagula gered van de amazones. Ze zeiden dat Tagula hele verkeerde beelden had van Mörn, dat Mörn zo niet was. Tagula verbeelde het zich maar, volgens de monniken van Mörn. Het was een medische orde. Tagula was in hun ogen zwaar ziek. Daarom moest Tagula aan de medicijnen. Dat zou hem ook beschermen tegen de amazones. Volgens sommige monniken van Mörn bestonden de amazones niet eens. Dat was maar een verzinsel in het hoofd van Tagula om aan de nodige dienst tot Mörn te ontkomen. Mörn werd door zijn monniken geheel schoongepraat, alsof ze zijn voeten likten. Tagula moest drinken van de melk van Mörn, want melk was goed voor elk. Amazone melk bestond niet.

Tagula had het gevoel alsof hij gek werd. De monniken van Mörn predikten niet de natuur zoals de wilde en woeste amazones. Er was wel wat natuur, maar dat werd onderdrukt, en werd niet uitgelegd. ‘Ben ik dood ?’ vroeg Tagula.

Niemand zei wat. Weer prevelden ze uit de Ichtus. Het ging over leven en dood. Het ging over medisch dogma. Ze bleven hem maar zeggen dat hij ziek was. Psychisch ziek. Ze voerden hem medicijnen. Daarvan leek de coma erger te worden. Het legde zijn hersenen lam. Mörn waakte over hem, als een waakhond. Tagula had Mörn verkeerd begrepen, zeiden de monniken van Mörn.

Maar in hun ogen was Tagula ongeneeslijk ziek, en zou voor de rest van zijn leven aan de medicijnen moeten. Tagula was woest. Zijn lichaam kon de medicijnen ook niet meer verwerken, en hij begon het steeds meer uit te spugen. Zijn lichaam verzette zich er tegen met al zijn kracht. De monniken werden boos en begonnen te dreigen, of kwamen met andere medicijnen aanzetten. Ook bespotten zij hem. ‘Ik moet terug naar de amazones,’ dacht Tagula. ‘Alles beter dan dit.’

Toen dacht Tagula aan de dikke voeten van de amazones die hij zou moeten schoonlikken. ‘Nee,’ dacht hij. ‘Ik moet worstelen. Zowel tegen de mörnisten als de amazones. Morgan is in beiden.’

Een ongelovelijke kracht maakte zich meester van Tagula, wat hij als de kracht van God ervoer, en als de kracht van Jakob op Pniël, en hij sloeg de eerste de beste monnik van Mörn op zijn kaak, en rende toen weg. Waar naartoe wist hij niet. Hij rende door de gangen van het ziekenhuis. Er stonden monniken met injectie spuiten, maar die trapte hij weg. Voelde hij daar een injectie naald in zijn voet ? Kon wezen, maar hij moest doorrennen. Ineens ging alles zo traag. Ja, hij was gestoken. Ineens ging zijn denken zo traag, en kon hij zich niet meer bewegen. Even later werd hij wakker in een ziekenhuis bed. Monniken van Mörn waren om hem heen. Weer probeerden ze hem medicijnen te voeren, maar hij weigerde. ‘Dat nooit !’ riep hij, met schuim op zijn mond. Hij trapte de monniken van hem weg. Weer had een ongelovelijke kracht bezit van hem genomen. Dit keer leek het op de kracht van Ezau die al zijn aardse status had afgelegd voor een kom honger. Hij rende de

zaal uit de ziekenhuis-gangen op, en bleef rennen. Overal zag hij monniken die uit de Ichtus prevelden. ‘Nee !’ riep hij.

‘Houdt hem tegen !’ werd er geroepen. ‘Laat hem niet ontsnappen !’

Hij trapte een ruit in. Zijn voet bloedde. Hij ging door de gebroken ruit naar buiten, terwijl er nog meer in zijn lichaam werd gesneden. Nu bloedde zijn hele lichaam, alsof hij door een boomslang was gebeten. Hij rende totdat hij niet meer kon. Hij stortte toen in elkaar. Nu moest hij kruipend verder. ‘Pak hem !’ werd er geroepen.

‘Nee,’ zei hij tegen zichzelf. ‘Ik mag dit niet toelaten.’

‘Er is geen ontsnapping mogelijk van Mörn,’ werd er geroepen.

Een stem van binnen sprak : ‘Jij bent eeuwig verdoemde nummer A6-389109700000. Je bent verloren. Er is niets wat je kunt doen.’

‘Houdt je kop, dom wijf !’ schreeuwde hij. Het viel hem op dat er dit keer geen ondragelijke pijnscheuten waren, maar hij bloedde wel uit zijn lijf. De gebroken ruit had hem flink gesneden.

‘Je komt niet ver,’ werd er geroepen. Ineens kwam er weer een ongelovelijke kracht in hem, als de kracht van Ismael die tot de waterbron in de wildernis kwam. Hij stond op en balde zijn vuisten. ‘Wie eerst ?’ riep hij.

‘Je bent verdoemd !’ werd er geroepen.

De stem begon zich te vervormen in de stem van een amazone. Hij lag aan haar voeten. Hij was de eeuwig verdoemde van de amazones.
De hermieten hadden hem eens gezegd dat dat een woord was bij de amazones voor de opvoeding, voor tucht en zorg, en ook voor scholing. Het was dus niet zo erg als bij Mörn. Het leek alsof de zwarte stenen op de juiste frequentie konden komen.

Hij werd geslagen. ‘Blijf hier nu.’ Hij mocht zich niet meer verzetten. Maar hij moest wel. Hij worstelde met de amazones. Toen brachten ze hem naar een kooi. Daar zou hij verder uitgehongerd worden zodat hij niks meer zou kunnen. ‘Echt, als je verder gaat dan hakken we je armen eraf, en je benen,’ zei een amazone nors. Hier hadden de hermieten ook over gesproken, en hij had ook hermieten gezien die geen armen en benen meer hadden, dus het was geen bluf.

Na een paar dagen werd hij uitgehongerd uit de kooi gehaald, en werd hij weggezonden. Ze wilden hem niet meer hebben. Hij was enorm verzwakt. Hij wilde op zoek gaan naar de vriendelijkere amazones die waren weggezonden. Hij zocht en zocht, maar kon ze niet vinden.

Weer hoorde hij in zijn hoofd : ‘U bent gevangene nummer A6-389109700000. U bent eigendom van A6. Herhaling : U bent patient nummer A6-389109700000. U heeft een ongeneeslijke en levensgevaarlijke ziekte, en daarom moeten wij u houden

voor de bescherming van uzelf en anderen. Daarom bent u hier in inrichting A6.’

Tagula greep naar zijn hoofd. ‘Aargh.’ De wildernispaden tussen de bomen door leken weer op ziekenhuisgangen. Toen staarde hij met een thermometer in zijn mond naar het plafond van het ziekenhuis, liggende in zijn ziekenhuisbed.

‘U moet een hersenoperatie ondergaan,’ zei één van de monniken van Mörn. Dit gaat niet goed. Een monster met vele tentakels en schorpioenenscharen kwam de zaal binnen, alsof hij regelrecht uit de zee kwam. Toen leek hij op een dokter. Een chirurg. Tagula knipperde met zijn ogen. Dit kon niet waar zijn. Wat een boze droom.

Ze zeiden dat hij na de operatie verscheept zou worden naar A4 in Orion, en daarna naar A3 in Betelgeuze. Dit was vanwege het rebelse gedrag dat hij vertoonde, en dat zou ook allemaal met zijn ziekte te maken hebben. A4 en A3 zouden strenger beveiligde inrichtingen zijn. Hij was al eerder in Orion en Betelgeuze geweest, maar kende deze inrichtingen niet.

‘Je liegt,’ zei hij toen. ‘Jullie liegen.’ Weer maakte een ongelovelijke kracht zich meester in hem. Het was het Kaïnsbevel tegen de zonde te strijden en over de zonde te heersen. Hij moest en zou op jacht gaan. Hij trapte de monniken van Mörn weer van zich vandaan, en sloeg er eentje in het gezicht, en trapte toen het monster weg. Het was één en al pijnlijke steken toen hij het monster met de vele tentakels en snij armen had aangeraakt. Zijn been verstijfde helemaal, en

werd kokend heet. Hij gilde van de pijn. Toen verstijfde ook zijn gehele lichaam, alsof hij een zware schok had gehad. Het beest was zwaar electrisch geladen, en hij kon niet ontsnappen. ‘Jullie liegen,’ prevelde hij weer met zijn laatste kracht. Hij hoopte op nog zo’n krachtstoot. Hij wilde het Kaïnsbevel ten uitvoer brengen, maar hij kon het niet. Hij had misschien de amazones nodig. Maar die schenen hem ook aan zijn lot over te laten. Het beest bewoog zich over hem toen hij weer op het ziekenbed lag. Een woede maakte zich meester van hem, en weer trapte hij het beest van hem af. Ditmaal voelde hij niks. Hij voelde zich ijskoud, en als een robot rende hij naar de uitgang van de zaal, en rende de gang op. Weer dook hij door een ruit van een achterdeur, en rende het grasveld op in de tuin. ‘Je kunt niet ontsnappen, patient A6-389109700000. Spoedig zul je verscheept worden tot A4 en dan naar A3. Je bent het eigendom van de A-zones, van de A-inrichtingen. Je bent eigendom van Mörn,’ werd er gesproken.

‘Ach houd toch je ...’ brulde Tagula. Hij rende door de straten op weg naar het bos. Hij wist niet eens waar hij was, maar alles wat hij wist was dat hij naar het bos moest.

Toen werd hij wakker. Hij zuchtte. Hij was helemaal onder het zweet. Hij voelde zich erg moe, en na een tijdje viel hij weer in slaap. ‘U bent product nummer A6-389109700000. Spoedig zal dit artikel verscheept worden tot A4 en dan naar A3 voor belangrijke upgrades,’ hoorde hij een robot-achtige stem zeggen. De stem leek dubbel, driedubbel of vierdubbel, als een leprechaun. Het leek op een vorm van Mörn. Het voelde alsof

hij in een doos werd gestopt. Toen werd de doos dichtgeplakt en leek het alsof hij weg werd gedragen.

Dat was wat hij was in het rijk van Mörn, een product. Maar gelukkig was er een dieper rijk, het rijk van irke. Mörn hield het dromenleven aan de oppervlakte onder controle, maar hij kon niet tot de diepere dromen komen, de dromen in de dromen, zijn diepere wezen. Ergens hield de macht van Mörn op, als een blaffende hond aan de ketting. Over die grens wilde Tagula gaan. Tagula wist dat het niet geforceerd kon worden. Hij moest puzzelen, de juiste frequentie leren te vinden. Hij moest leren afstemmen.

Het lichaam miste bepaalde zouten van de oer-oceanen. Daar hadden de hermieten het soms ook over gehad. Daar zou hij naar op zoek moeten gaan. Op een bepaalde manier had Mörn dus zelfs gelijk dat het lichaam iets miste en iets anders nodig had, maar dat waren dus niet de implantaten van Mörn, maar het zout van Orion en Betelgeuse. Er was geen ontsnapping of behoudenis mogelijk, maar wel verdieping tot het vinden van betekenis, waardoor er een andere frequentie gevonden kon worden, waarin het zich dus zou verdraaien. Dan worden mannenstemmen zoals die van Mörn ineens amazone stemmen, en stemmen van de natuur, zoals hij had meegemaakt. Hij moest de juiste frequentie nog vinden. Het moest allemaal nog dieper doorvertaald worden. Hij moest daarom niet op zoek gaan naar snelle bevrijding en snel genot, maar naar volharding. Wel moest hij blijven strijden in deze arena’s. Het was allemaal nog gezichtsbedrog. Hij moest zich heenwerken door deze spiegelvelden. Hij moest de spiegologie leren, de

reflectologie. Hij moest het leren zeven en filteren in de filterologie. Dat was als een kaartspel. Al met al was het een spelmodule of puzzelmodule, en moest hij de juiste kaarten nog zien te krijgen, en de juiste dobbelstenen. Hij moest zijn spelinventaris opbouwen en er creatief mee omgaan.

Wat werd er veel gelogen door de monniken van Mörn. Ze hielden de kaarten achter. Ook gebruikten ze speciale dobbelstenen waardoor ze altijd leken te winnen. Leugenaars en sjoemelaars waren zij in het spel en zij vereisten speciale aanpak.

Toen hij wakker werd bleek er bericht te zijn van het meisje van de camping, die naast hem een vakantie huisje had. Ze liet hem weten dat er een nieuwe spelmodule was met meerdere kaarten, voor meerdere nuances, en meerdere mogelijkheden. Ook zou het de hiëroglieven veel beter en dieper uit kunnen leggen. Ze zouden hiervoor naar Gensterdam moeten, wat achter Hoverdam lag, ook aan zee. Het meisje was op het moment op de camping, en Tagula wilde er direct naartoe. Daar aangekomen gingen ze direct naar Gensterdam. Tagula had het gevoel dat iedere seconde telde. Het meisje zei dat ze door het apparaat ook meer zicht konden krijgen op het rijk van Mörn. De module was gemaakt door verzetsstrijders tegen Mörn. Het was een hele drukte bij de winkel waar het verkrijgbaar was. Tagula en het meisje stonden netjes in de rij. Ze spraken ook met andere mensen in de rij. Iemand zei dat belangrijke informatie ontrend Mörn was verwerkt in de spelmodule. Zo zou Mörn zijn eigen spel hebben genaamd Amalgammos II. Eigenlijk was dat gewoon een vorm van Morgan. Alle gebieden

in de A-zone van Amalgammos II, zoals ook A6, A4 en A3 waren ook weer verschillende vormen van Morgan. Zij had een meervoudige personaliteiten syndroom, zoals Mörn dat ook had, meerdere gezichten, meerdere vormen, als machines van democratie. Zo was er voor elk wat wils, en konden ze hele volksstammen innemen en ze tegen elkaar opzetten naar willekeur. Mörn troonde in het zogeheten belfiniaat, de elite zone van Amalgammos II, waar alle administrators en moderators waren, waar vanuit de inquisitie plaatsvond. In verschillende spelen van de nieuwe spelmodule werd het verblijf van Mörn beschreven en uitgestippeld, om zo Mörn te verslaan, en zijn rijk, maar dat was niet zonder gevaren. Het was niet zomaar een spel. Het was energie tegen energie. In diepte was het een energie-puzzel. Als dat niet goed zou zijn opgelost, dan zou het catastrophaal kunnen zijn.

Al snel waren de spelmodules uitverkocht, en Tagula en het meisje moesten weer naar huis, teleurgesteld omdat ze het niet hadden. ‘Maar we hebben het toch nodig,’ zei Tagula. Het voelde alsof hij met zijn hoofd tegen een muur had aangelopen. ‘Laten we blij zijn dat het spel in ieder geval nu door vele mensen wordt gespeeld, en dat dit de laatste dagen of uren zijn van Mörn,’ zei het meisje.

‘Denk je ?’ vroeg Tagula.

Het meisje begon te zingen. ‘We’re getting rich, so rich.’

‘Denk je ?’ vroeg Tagula weer.

‘Ja, of moeten we soms geloven dat Mörn onaantastbaar is ?’ vroeg het meisje.

‘Ik heb altijd het gevoel alsof er geen kruid tegen opgewassen is,’ zei Tagula.

‘Ach, natuurlijk wel,’ zei het meisje.

Ze zouden het de dag erna weer proberen voor een tweede poging. Ook de tweede dag was er een hele lange rij, nog wel langer dan de dagen ervoor, en weer waren de spelmodules snel uitverkocht. Tagula was boos. ‘Nooit krijgen wij eens iets,’ mopperde hij. Het meisje lachte. ‘We verzinnen wel iets,’ zei ze. Op de camping aangekomen was Tagula niet te genieten. Hij trapte overal tegenaan, en bleef maar schelden. ‘Het lijkt wel een verslaving,’ zei het meisje.

‘Het is oorlog,’ zei Tagula.

‘Dat is waar,’ zei het meisje. ‘Zo had ik het even niet bekeken.’

‘Nee,’ zei Tagula, ‘we staan echt niet in de rij voor een stuk speelgoed.’

‘Je hebt helemaal gelijk,’ zei het meisje een beetje glimlachend.

De dag erop gingen ze weer. Weer hetzelfde liedje. Rij naar rij. Het hele gebied stond vol. Ze vonden het direct al een hopeloze zaak, maar dit keer schenen er veel meer spel modules te zijn,

en het ging nogal snel. Snel hadden ze er eentje, beiden, en zo gingen ze vrolijk en blij naar huis. ‘Eindelijk,’ zei het meisje.

Toen ze thuis waren gingen ze het ding direct onderzoeken en ermee spelen. Het was allemaal levensecht. Ook konden ze op het scherm zien hoe ver de andere spelers al waren. Zo waren ze in een soort leger en deden mee aan de oorlog. Ze moesten in de spelburchten van Mörn zien te komen, en dat was nog wel bloedlink, want als dat mis zou gaan zouden ze er een lelijke optater van kunnen krijgen. Dan zouden ze een stroomschok kunnen krijgen. Het spel zelf, zoals dat op de spelmodule was ingebouwd, had zoveel mogelijk veiligheid in het spel gestopt, maar verder werd er niets gegarandeerd. Het spel kon mogelijk zelfs dodelijk aflopen. Het was dus niet zomaar een spelletje. Het was oorlog.

‘Ik vind het eng, Tagula,’ zei het meisje. ‘Laten we een spelletje doen wat minder gevaarlijk is, en wat niet dodelijk kan zijn. Ik vrees voor jouw en mijn leven. Dat kan toch niet de bedoeling zijn ? Is het dit allemaal waard ?’

Maar Tagula wilde er niets van weten. ‘Dan speel je toch lekker gewoon een ander spelletje ?’ zei Tagula. ‘Het is geen spelmodule voor mijn ontspanning of voor vermaak. Nogmaals : Het is oorlog, en ik kan de anderen toch niet in de steek laten ?’

In de dagen erop lazen ze in de krant dat er vele doden waren gevallen door het nieuwe spel, en al snel werd het spel verboden. Het zou te gevaarlijk zijn. Iedereen moest het spel

weer inleveren. Tagula wilde dat niet, en ging weer de grond onder om het spel verder te spelen. Hij was nu al best ver, en hij zou het zonde vinden om nu te stoppen. Het spel sloeg telkens het geheugen op zodat hij verder kon gaan waar hij was gestopt, en er waren ook anderen die nog steeds het spel doorspeelden. Dat kon hij zien op het scherm. Er kon ook met andere spelers gecommuniceerd worden. Hij gaf hen als advies de grond onder te gaan, bij de hermieten te wonen. Daar zou het spel niet snel getraceerd kunnen worden. De andere spelers spraken al over huiszoekingen die plaatsvonden. Ze hadden allemaal wel hun schuilplaatsen, zoals kelders onder het huis, of ze hielden het gewoon goed verborgen. Doden bleven er vallen. De groep werd telkens kleiner, en soms kwamen er nieuwe spelers bij. Zij waren er tijdelijk mee gestopt na de waarschuwingen, maar kwamen toch weer terug. Velen van hen zeiden dat het een gewetenszaak was. Ze moesten wel. Het was hun burgerplicht.

Tagula was leider van een bepaald groepje, en er waren meerdere groepjes. Ze hadden het belfiniaat waar Mörn zich schuilhield omsingeld, en nu zouden ze het gaan betreden, maar dit was het gevaarlijkste deel van het spel. Tagula vreesde dat er veel meer doden zouden vallen. Ineens stond het meisje achter hem, huilend. ‘Ik wil je niet kwijt, Tagula, alsjeblieft, stop ermee,’ zei ze.

‘Ik moet, Kenia, ik kan niet anders,’ zei hij.

‘Ja, maar je gaat eraan, ik voel het gewoon,’ zei het meisje. ‘Ik heb je lief, en ik kan dit gewoon niet aanzien.’

‘Ja, als je zo doorgaat dan ga ik zeker aan,’ riep Tagula woest. ‘Ik ben midden in het spel. Ik moet nu al mijn aandacht erbij houden.’

‘Ik bid dan wel voor je,’ zei het meisje. ‘Dan ben ik in ieder geval bij je.’

Weer werd er een medespeler gedood. Tagula kon het op het scherm zien. Er was een enorme blikseminslag van stroom. Veelal betekende dat ook de dood van de persoon zelf, maar lang niet altijd. Vanwege dat het een zware inslag was had Tagula niet veel hoop. ‘Zie je wat je doet ?’ riep Tagula boos naar het meisje. ‘Door jouw stomme gedoe is er weer een speler gesneuveld.’

‘Ja, geef mij maar weer de schuld,’ riep het meisje half huilend. ‘Altijd makkelijk. Ik geef om je, vergeet dat niet.’

‘Het lijkt er niet op, Kenia, en houd nu alsjeblieft even je bek,’ riep Tagula. ‘Straks mag je weer babbelen en zeiken zoveel je wilt. Niet nu.’

Ze hadden nu een opening gevonden in het gebouw, aan de achterkant. Er was ergens een tunnel onder de grond. Aan de voorkant waren teveel manschappen van Mörn. Ze moesten nu een hek zien open te krijgen, maar dat ging helemaal verkeerd. Het alarm ging af. Het meisje hoorde het ook. ‘Doe dat ding nu uit !’ riep het meisje.

‘Ho, wacht,’ zei Tagula, terwijl het meisje alweer achter hem stond. Tagula had een kaart geactiveerd waardoor het hek opengíng, en een andere kaart die beveiliging zou geven. ‘Er komt wat aan daar in de verte,’ zei het meisje, die meekeek op het scherm.

‘Ik zie niets, Kenia,’ zei Tagula. Toen wees het meisje op het scherm. ‘Niet aanraken,’ zei Tagula. ‘En dat is niks.’

‘Hoe weet je dat ?’ vroeg Kenia, die haar hand alweer had teruggetrokken.

‘Alsjeblieft, raak mij ook niet aan. Veel te gevaarlijk nu,’ zei Tagula.

‘Als jij straks brand zal ik heus ook wel branden,’ zei het meisje.

‘Nee, Kenia,’ zei Tagula, ‘niet als je een beetje afstand houdt.’

‘Maar wat is dat dan in de verte ?’ vroeg Kenia. ‘Okay, nu lijkt het weg.’

‘Dat was niks,’ zei Tagula. ‘Laat me nu even concentreren.’

Aan de zijkant moest Tagula een andere tunnel in. Die kon hij ook openen door een speciale kaart. Opeens kreeg het spel een enorme optater. Tagula werd weggeslingerd. ‘Zie, niks aan de hand,’ zei Tagula. ‘Allemaal koud vuur.’

Hoe deed je dat ?’ vroeg Kenia.

‘Door die speciale beveiligingskaart, maar die is maar tijdelijk geldig,’ zei Tagula.

Ineens verscheen het gezicht van Mörn op het scherm. Tagula schrok, en verborg zijn eigen gezicht, maar gelukkig kon Mörn hem niet zien. Mörn leek afgeleid door iets. Mörn wist niet dat er een camera op hem gericht was. Hij sprak wat met zijn onderdanen. Die probeerden hem gerust te stellen. Mörn had een vreemde stem als hij sprak met zijn onderdanen.

Tagula sloop door de tunnel. Wat anderen volgden hem. Door bepaalde kaarten te activeren was hij al zo ver gekomen. Ook konden er bepaalde dobbelstenen geactiveerd worden die bepaalde raad konden geven. Tagula klikte de inventaris aan, en bladerde door de wapens heen. Daar zaten ook weer kaarten tussen. Ook kon je bepaalde schilden activeren. Tagula activeerde er een paar, en liep verder. ‘Morgan !’ werd er geroepen. ‘Er is iemand dichtbij.’

Ineens was het beeld weg, en er stond met grote letters : ‘U bent gevangene nummer A6-389109700000. U bent eigendom van A6. Ontsnapping is onmogelijk. Pogingen tot ontsnapping kunnen leiden tot uw dood, en die van uw geliefden. Herhaling : U bent gevangene nummer A6-389109700000. U heeft een ongeneeslijke en levensgevaarlijke ziekte. Keer nu terug. Dit is uw waarschuwing.’ Ook las een stem het voor. Toen viel de stem in herhaling. Tagula en het meisje waren zich

kapot geschrokken, en Tagula had direct het apparaat losgelaten. Nu moesten ze heel voorzichtig zijn.

‘Ja, maar toenet kreeg je een optater, maar het was niets eigenlijk,’ zei het meisje.

‘Ja, maar dat was een beveiligingskaart, Kenia, ik weet niet of die nog werkt nu, maar ik heb ook wat schilden geactiveerd. Blijkbaar is dit toch door de beveiliging heengegaan,’ zei Tagula.

Er stond toen op het scherm : ‘Dit is een boodschap van het verzetsleger. We zijn tot diep in de burcht van Mörn doorgedrongen. Alstublieft, verlaat uw posten niet. We zijn aan de winnende kant.’

Tagula was opgelucht, maar vroeg zich af in hoeverre het waar was. Hij pakte het apparaat, en drukte op wat knopjes voor beeld. Hij kon inderdaad zien dat een bepaalde afdeling van het leger nu heel diep in de burcht was, en ze hadden een pad uitgestippeld. Hij volgde het pad, maar was op zijn hoede. Hij hoorde toen een enorme knal.

‘Dit kan niet waar zijn,’ zei Tagula.

‘Wat is het ?’ vroeg het meisje.

‘Kenia,’ zei Tagula. Hij rommelde toen met wat knopjes.

‘Zeg het,’ zei Kenia. ‘Ben je veilig ?’

‘Ze hebben een geheime deur geopend, die niet meer dichtkan nu, maar het heeft hen hun leven gekost. Ik hoop dat ze in het echt nog leven,’ zei Tagula.

‘Ze hebben zich opgeofferd voor het spel, voor ons allemaal,’ zei Kenia. Toen was het een hele tijd stil. Er was een ruit gebroken, en Mörn werd door een krachtige luchtstroom die vrijgekomen was door een tunnel uit de burcht geblazen. Op het scherm kon Tagula zien dat Mörn het hierbij niet liet zitten, en alhoewel hij dronken leek zwaaide hij ook met een groot slagersmes, en liep weer naar de burcht toe. Tagula ging zo snel mogelijk naar de afdeling waar Mörn al die tijd verbleef. Daar verzamelde Tagula wat kaarten en wapens waarmee hij zijn inventaris kon opvullen, ook schilden. Ook verzamelde hij frequenties die eerder nog gesloten en verborgen werden gehouden. Zo was er een poort geopend, maar al snel stond Tagula oog in oog met Mörn. Ook wat anderen waren daar. Mörn zwaaide met zijn mes, en dreigde, maar Tagula verstond niet wat hij zei, en kwam er snel achter dat Mörn achter glas was. Weer kwam er een luchtstroom die Mörn leek mee te nemen. Het spel leek nu tot een einde te komen. Tagula kreeg een heleboel bonus. Die zou hij ook in andere spelen kunnen gebruiken. Er waren meerderen van zulke spelen. Tagula zuchtte.

‘Je hebt het overleefd,’ zei het meisje.
‘Ja, maar moet je niet zien hoe,’ zei Tagula.

Hoofdstuk 10. De mannenhaters

Mörn gaf niet op.
Tagula wist het.
Hij zou in andere vormen proberen terug te komen.
Tagula moest op zijn hoede zijn.

Tandartsen waren bezig aan het lichaam van Tagula.
Ze matigden zich aan botartsen te zijn, dus ze boorden ook in zijn lichaam,
op zoek naar het oerzout, op zoek naar mineralen, waar ze rijk van konden worden.
En ze bleven maar implanteren.
Ze wilden Tagula geheel overnemen.
Ze waanden dat ze chirurgen waren, maar het waren roofdieren, kolonisten.
Ze waren mijnwerkers. Mineraalzoekers. Steenzoekers.
Ze gingen over alle natuurgrenzen heen die ze maar konden.
Alarmen gingen aan, maar dat deerde hen niet.
Het was toch altijd de ander die de overtreder was.

De amazones zeiden dat hij maar beter lek kon zijn,
anders zou dezelfde dikke kop hebben als de koppen van Mörn.
Deze amazones waren zeer vriendelijk, maar andere amazones zouden hem bespotten.

Tagula draaide aan de tuner van de nieuwe spelmodule, op zoek naar nieuwe frequenties die hij door het spel gewonnen had.

Tagula was in een doodstrijd om uit moeras te komen.
Maar hij was in een stalen kooi, die niet meegaf.
Tenminste, het leek als staal.
Hij kwam er niet doorheen.

Hij voelde dat er aan hem getrokken werd.
De moerasmonsters wilden hem niet laten gaan.
Ze schreeuwden tot hem, bedreigden hem.
Nee, Mörn wilde hem niet laten gaan.
Elke ontsnapping was een valstrik hier.
Hij ging alleen maar dieper en dieper.

Er waren pinnen door zijn vlees.
Er waren veren aan verbonden.
Hij wilde op frequenties van nieuwe spelen komen,
maar hij had paniek aanvallen.
Het leek hem niet te lukken.

Het was alsof hij in een visnet was, in een fuik.
Er was zware druk op zijn hoofd en op zijn kaak.
Zijn mond brandde.

Hij woelde in zijn slaap.
Hij hapte naar adem, maar dat was er bijna niet, of helemaal niet.
Toch scheen hij te leven.

Of was dit de dood al ?

Hij werd geslingerd van droom tot droom, hij was zwaar aan het ijlen, en voelde zich koortsachtig.
Tandartsen hadden teveel aan hem lopen rommelen, en psychiaters met hun idiote medicijnen voor hun gewaande ziektes. Altijd zagen ze ziektes in de mens, terwijl ze zelf zwaar ziek waren.
Hij was in strijd met zijn geheugen.
Hij zag er geen heil in, alles was zwart.
Hij probeerde van alles te vluchten.

Er was geen ontkomen aan.
Het zat te vast en te diep.
En het was als weerhaken.
Hij kon het alleen verdiepen en er omheen werken,
nieuwe betekenissen in zoeken,
als een puzzel.

Hij moest de puzzelogie leren. Hij moest puzzeloog worden op er doorheen te komen, en dat werkte samen met spiegelogie en filterologie. Het was een puzzel met gevaarlijke spiegels en filters, en dat moest hij nog recht zien te krijgen. Alles liep door elkaar heen in zijn gevangenis.

Pijnscheuten trokken door zijn lichaam heen.
De verwarring en wanhoop verscheurde hem, maar hij sliep.
Hij had Mörn verdreven, maar met een hoge prijs.
Het had hem van binnen verscheurd.

Het leek wel alsof Mörn een heleboel van hem meenam in zijn val,
misschien wel teveel.
Het was ondragelijk.
Nee, Mörn zou niet opgeven.

Het trok aan hem, het sneed hem, terwijl de amazones zeiden dat hij besneden werd.
De amazones bekeken alles door een andere lens, door het oog van Bilha.
Hij wilde ook niet opgeven, maar hij was gebroken van binnen.
Dit had hem totaal opgebroken.
Hij had bijna spijt dat hij Mörn verdreven had.
Maar hij wist dat het moest gebeuren.
Hij moest het de tijd geven. Alles was nog rauw.

Mörn eiste zijn lichaam.
Mörn wilde bezit van hem nemen.
Mörn beweerde dat hij zijn eigendom was.
Weer hoorde hij zijn productnummer en dat hij eigendom was van een markt,
als een grondstof, als koopwaar.
Hield het dan nooit op ?
Mörn was de grenzeloze marktdrift.
Dat was alles wat telde.

Mörn loog alles wat los en vast zat aan elkaar voor deze markt.
Het was teveel informatie.
Tagula had het gevoel alsof zijn hoofd explodeerde.

Hij moest het bij de bron-informatie houden, alleen dat wat hij nodig had.
Hij wilde tot de honger gaan.

Tandartsen sneden in hem, meedogenloos, want zijn lichaam was niet van hemzelf, maar van hem.
Zo ook zijn mond. Zij bepaalden wat erin en eruit ging.
En psychiaters praatten alles schoon, want hij was immers zwaar ziek in hun ogen en hij hoefde niet serieus genomen te worden.
Van alles implanteerden ze in zijn mond, in zijn hoofd, en dan zeiden ze dat het tussen zijn oren zat.
Tagula wist dat het criminelen waren.
Maar hij droomde. De frequentie van de amazones was er vlak naast. Hij wist niet wat erger was. Ze waren hardvochtig, ruw, staken scherpe botjes met veren door zijn huid. Ze ranselden hem af bij het minste of geringste, en hij moest leven in een kooi met veel honger. Wat was erger ? Hij wist het niet. Maar hij was in ieder geval in de natuur als hij bij de amazones was. Hij switchte heen en weer tussen de twee frequenties. Er waren ook andere amazone frequenties, amazones die een stuk vriendelijker waren, maar die konden niet tegen Mörn op. Hij moest zichzelf harden bij de ruigere amazones, die twistziek waren. Alleen zij zouden tegen Mörn op kunnen. Zij zouden Mörn onthoofden, of misschien hadden ze dat al gedaan.

Misschien was er geen Mörn in hun wereld. Ze waren varkensjagers en zwijnenjagers, en voerden oorlogen tegen andere amazone stammen. Ze moesten niet veel van mannen weten. Maar Tagula fantaseerde erover hoe ze Mörn’s nieuwe

verblijfplaats zouden binnenvallen. Vandaar dat hij het hier vol wilde houden. Deze amazones waren wel tien keer sterker dan de doorsnee man. Wat zou Mörn bij hen in te brengen hebben ? Vandaar dat hij het belang meer en meer ging inzien van deze woeste, donkere amazones. Maar soms was het onhoudbaar en draaide hij verder aan de tuner. Hij vroeg zich af hoe het zou zijn als dat niet meer zou kunnen, en hij hier daadwerkelijk vast zou zitten, maar hij droomde het maar.

Hij wilde niet op zoek naar een gemakkelijk leven, want dan zou hij weer prooi zijn van Mörn. Daarom trok de discipline van de woestere amazones hem aan. Zij waren meedogenloos, dat wel. Zij gingen door totdat zijn tranen vielen op hun voeten. Met iets minder namen ze geen genoegen. En telkens weer werd hij verstoten. Ze wilden hem niet houden.

Ze wilden niks met mannen te maken hebben. Het waren mannenhaters. Hij zocht verder op de tuner. Er waren ook wel mannenkampen, zoals monnikenkampen en hermietengebieden. Zij hadden ook hun eigen frequenties. Zij leerden hem veel over deze dingen.

Hij ging op zoek naar de frequenties van de oerzeeën. Er waren frequenties bijgekomen van de oerzeeën van Orion en Betelgeuse, maar hij droomde. Ook daar woonden weer hele andere soorten amazones. Er waren daar ook hele andere soorten insecten, en hele andere soorten vliegen.

Hij werd moe van deze dromen, alsof hij door een moeheids-vlieg was gestoken. Hij moest veel slapen.

De amazones kerfden hun hiëroglieven in zijn verstand en geweten, maar ze gaven geen betekenissen. Ze leken harteloos te zijn. Hij moest zelf op zoek naar de betekenissen. Hij moest het zelf verdienen. Niets werd zomaar gegeven bij de amazones. Hij moest hard werken, en dan kreeg hij nog bijna niets. En dan werd hij na een tijd weer weggestuurd. Zo ging dat van stam tot stam. Niemand wilde hem eigenlijk hebben. Maar hij had de hoop dat dit soort stammen Mörn konden overwinnen, of misschien hadden ze dat al gedaan. Of misschien wilden ze zo ver mogelijk van hem vandaan leven. Als zij niet tegen hem op zouden kunnen, wie dan wel ? Hoe groot en fors Mörn ook was, de amazones waren vaak veel groter en forser dan hem. Hoe bruut Mörn ook was, de amazones waren vaak veel bruter. Tagula begreep waarom. Om Mörn op een afstand te houden.

Mörn was een verschrikkelijk beest wat door de amazones bereden werd. Het was een verschrikkelijk woest en gulzig zwijn met grote slagtanden. Ze leefden van zijn vlees, tanden, huid en kracht, want ze konden hem ook als rijtuig gebruiken, en hem gebruiken in de oorlog. Mörn was al geheel door de amazones benut, tot goed gebruik gemaakt, als een beestenras. Ze joegen op Mörn, en gebruikten hem dan. Tot dat besef moest Tagula ontwaken. Ze hadden al afgerekend met Mörn, en daarom leefden de amazones zo ver van de samenleving.

In Mörn waren gifklieren die ze konden gebruiken voor de jacht en de oorlog. Ze doopten hun pijlen en speren in het gif

van Mörn. Ook had Mörn medicinale klieren, die ze ook gebruikten.

Er waren ook spelen van de amazone zwijnenjacht op de nieuwe spelmodule, maar Tagula droomde slechts. In ieder geval speelde hij ermee. Hij moest de zwijnenjacht leren. Het was niet zonder gevaren, voornamelijk niet als ze joegen op de mörn-zwijnen. Soms ging een amazone ten onder in de jacht. Niet iedere amazone overleefde een worsteling met een mörnzwijn. Je moest een mörnzwijn nooit onderschatten. Voor Tagula was het spel niet dodelijk. Het was een normaal spel. Het gaf geen electrische schokken. Maar wat als het geen spel meer was ? Wat als de onzichtbare muur tussen speler en spelkarakter zou verdwijnen ? Hij had ook nog steeds de frequentie-knop, maar wat als die er niet meer zou zijn ?

Maar hij droomde slechts. Zelfs als het weg zou zijn, dan zou hij ook weer wakker worden. Tagula was aangevallen door een mörn-zwijn. Hij lag er nu bijna als verlamd. Hij kon zich niet meer goed bewegen. Hij kon de frequentie-knop niet bereiken. Hij voelde zich invalide. Hij kon zich niet meer voorstellen als speler. Hij was nu in het spel en kon er niet uit, vanwege wat het mörn-zwijn hem had aangedaan. Maar hij droomde slechts. Hij zou weer wakker worden. Hij was in de natuur bij de amazones. Ze zouden hem ook weer kunnen verstoten. Wat moesten ze verder met hem ? Ze lieten hem gewoon liggen. Hij lag in het hoge gras. Wat als een mörnzwijn hem nu verder te grazen zou nemen, of een ander roofdier ? Hij kon niets doen. Hij kon zich niet verdedigen. Hij kon ook niet goed spreken. Hij kon in ieder geval niet roepen. Hij kon alleen maar

stamelen en ijlen, een heel klein beetje, maar ook dat ging steeds moeilijker en trager.

Zouden ze hem hier echt achterlaten ? Hij zag zichzelf achter de spelmodule, maar hij kon zichzelf niet meer bereiken. Hij had geen verbinding met hemzelf meer. Hij was van zichzelf gescheiden. Het leek bevroren beeld. Was hij er nog wel ? Bestond hij nog wel ? Of was hij gewoon dood ? Nee, hij droomde. Hij probeerde te ontwaken, maar hij kon niet. Hij was in slaapverlamming.

Mörn was hier prooi van de amazones. Dit was het einde van Mörn. Ook al had het mörnzwijn hem ernstig toegetakeld, hij zag hierin hoop, ook al zou hij het niet overleven. De dagen van de mörnzwijnen waren al geteld. Die zouden niet ontkomen. De amazones wisten raad met het mörnzwijn. Hij kon zich daar verder niet mee bemoeien. dat lieten ze ook niet toe, en dat was goed zo. Alleen al het feit dat het mörnzwijn hier ten onder ging, dat er voor het mörnzwijn geen ontkomen aan was op lange termijn, was een gevoel voor Tagula van leven. Ook al was hij misschien stervende, toch bracht het hem tot leven. Hij had het eeuwige leven gevonden, wat de dood niet kon tegenhouden.

Ook al zou het een droom zijn, toch had de droom waarde, en was het waar voor Tagula. Zijn hele leven was hij al een dromer geweest, en waarom zou het leven meer waard zijn dan de droom ? Dit was irke, de diepere droom, de diepere ziel van de onderwereld. Hier had hij een dubbelleven. Het waren de

eeuwige jachtvelden waarop hij het eeuwige leven had gevonden.

Hij lag daar, als verlamd, gebroken en lek, en de geest van het mörnzwijn, het virus van mörnzwijn, stroomde uit hem weg, terwijl er tegelijkertijd zoveel van het mörnzwijn naar binnen stroomde. Hij voelde zich de overwinnaar over het zwijn, als overwinnaar over zichzelf.

Het was na lange tijd, wat wel verschillende dagen leek, dat hij werd gevonden door een amazone van een andere stam. Zij nam hem mee naar haar kamp, waar ze hem in een tent legde om te herstellen. Het leek zeker wel een paar weken te duren, waarin hij geheel opnieuw moest leren lopen en bewegen. Toen hij dat uiteindelijk weer kon namen ze hem mee naar de zee, waar ze hem leerden vissen op mörnvissen. Zij waren tamelijk onschuldig, konden hem geen kwaad doen. De mörnvissen waren de latere en afgezwakte vormen van Mörn, de toekomstige vormen. De amazones leefden van de mörnvissen voor eeuwig. Telkens weer kwamen de mörnvissen terug, maar ze konden geen kwaad meer doen. Ze waren niet gevaarlijk zoals de mörnzwijnen, maar toch was de zee niet zonder gevaren. Er waren ook haaien, en de golven konden ook gevaarlijk zijn. Ook was er overstromingsgevaar en konden er vijanden komen van andere landen of eilanden. De amazones konden dus niet indutten. Er was nog veel werk te doen. De hiëroglieven moesten doorvertaald worden.

Soms werd Tagula wakker, maar dan ging hij snel weer slapen. De slaap had hem in zijn greep, en de dromen trokken hem

dieper. Pijn was een taal, als een hiëroglief, en het moest verder vertaald worden, diepere betekenis krijgen. Hij moest het ervaren, hij moest het ondergaan.

Door de zwarte stenen kon Tagula onderscheid maken tussen mörnisten, monniken, hermieten, amazones en mannelijke amazones. De zwarte stenen zorgden ervoor dat de offerdieren niet verwisseld konden worden, dat er niet gesjoemeld kon worden met prooi. Het was als de slacht inspectie. Als er wat fout ging gingen er schelle alarmen af. Men moest onderscheid maken tussen waarop men kon jagen, en waarop men niet kon jagen. Amazones die de jacht verzaakten werden tarwe monden genoemd. Amazones die de jacht overdreven werden de hysteria genoemd. Zij moesten in gevangenschap, want zij waren een gevaar voor henzelf en voor anderen. Amazones die de offerdieren verwisselden werden de sjoemelaars genoemd, valsspelers. Ook zij moesten in gevangenschap, omdat ze een gevaar waren voor zichzelf en voor anderen. Die gevangenschap vond plaats in het zwarte gesteente.

Er waren gevangenissen in het spel, en scholen, en ook kleuterscholen, dat je terug naar start moest. Dat was hard nodig in zo’n gevaarlijk spel als dit. Het spel was niet dodelijk, maar je zou er wel van in het ziekenhuis kunnen komen. Je zou er wel door bij een psychiater kunnen komen, of bij een monnik met een luisterend oor. Terug naar de baarmoeder was wel het ergste wat je kon horen, want dan werd alles van je geplunderd en moest je helemaal terug naar het begin, moest je helemaal opnieuw beginnen, alles weer opnieuw opbouwen, van voren af aan. Maar dat moest wel, want men zag elkaar

soms voor mörnisten aan, voor mörnzwijnen of mörnvissen, en zo voerde men jacht op elkaar. Het was een oorlogswereld. De vooroordelen vlogen om je oren, en daarom was dit allemaal ingebouwd in het spel, en dat was maar goed ook, want anders zou het dodelijk kunnen wezen.

Tagula bleef dicht bij zijn zwarte stenen om door dit mijnenveld heen te komen. Aan beide kanten kon hij eraf vallen. En hij kon te snel gaan of te langzaam. Allemaal problematisch in het mijnenveld.

Hij had verwarrende dromen, soms liep alles door elkaar heen. Als hij wakker werd kon hij zich niet alles herinneren, en was hij aan het puzzelen, en probeerde hij zijn dromen uit te leggen, diepere betekenissen te geven. Ze waren als vliegenplagen in zijn hoofd, hem voorbereidende op de komst van de amazones.

Einde

REEDS EERDER VERSCHENEN :

DE AMERIKA BRUG
DE AFRIKA BRUG
DE ARETAÏTISCHE FILOSOFIE
RAGNAROK ONTSLUIERD I en II
DE CALVIJN CODE
MONNIKEN WEGWIJZER
ZOMBIE WERELD
KERKELIJKE BESLUITEN
DE CONTEXTUOLOGIE
DE RECYCLOCRATIE
DE RV-BIJBEL
DE EGYPTE CODE
DE ESSENTIËLE EGYPTOLOGIE
DE FILOSOFIE VAN HET VOORTIJDSE AFRIKA
DE TWAALF PROFETEN
HET PLUMARES MYSTERIE
DE TORENS VAN BELZEHAM - DE EZAUSLADDER
DE NEDERDUITS GEREFORMEERDE DOGMATIEK (DEEL 1-12)
HET RV-BIJBEL HANDBOEK
HET LEVEN IS LITERATUUR
HET ORIONSE AFRIKA
VAN HEIDELBERG TOT DORDRECHT
DE LOGISTIEKE FILOSOFIE
RIGIL KENT ONTSLUIERD
VAN REFORMATIE TOT REGRESSIE
DE WACHTERS VAN DORDT

DE BOEKENSLAGERIJ
WILDE HONDEN
DE GIECHELAAR
DE EVACUATIE TREIN
DE ONTSLUIERING VAN GENESIS
UITTOCHT UIT LAODICEA
DE TUIN VAN JOB
DE TRAAN VAN ROGGEMUIDEN
PARADIJSVOGELS
GIDS BIJ DE RV-BIJBEL
DE NIEUWE DOLEANTIE
DE LATERE REFORMATIE
DE VISSERISTISCHE DOGMATIEK
NONNENDORP
HET OORLOGS-SPEL
PLANTEN VAN VLEES
ZIJN HUIS STOND IN DE WEG
FABRIEKEN AAN ZEE
DE BRUG VAN HEIMDAL
DE GEZICHTEN VAN MALLEMOE

RODENBERG ALMANAK

II

RODENBERG ALMANAK II

Uitgave : Visseristische School
1970-2025
2025

Kort voorwoord 2025

Deze almanak is het tweede deel van deze serie.
Het bevat de Rodenbergse overlevering in verhalen en literatuur,
vele sagen, legendes en mythes.
Het is Rodenbergs-Nederlandse cultuurgoed en literatuurgoed door de tijden heen,
wat loopt vanaf de zeventiger jaren tot nu.
Er zijn ook nog veel Engelse verhalen, maar die staan niet in deze almanak,
maar komen in een latere almanak terecht.
Het zijn naslagwerken voor de Rodenbergse studenten die serieus onderzoek willen doen in de Rodenbergse achtergronden, bijgeschriften, apocrieven en deuterocanieke boeken van de nieuwe bijbel. In deel 1 werd hiertoe de Nederduits Gereformeerde Dogmatiek besproken.
Voor Rodenbergse studenten is dit weer een prima overzicht van naslagwerk bij de nieuwe bijbel, bij de RV-Bijbel, de Rodenberg Versie.
Dit zijn achtergrond geschriften en bijgeschriften, als een goede encyclopedie.
Ditmaal dus de verhalen en de literatuur, de Nederlandse zijde, want er is ook nog een Engelse zijde. Het geeft in ieder geval inzicht op waar de nieuwe bijbel uit voort is gekomen, net zoals de oude bijbel ook voort was gekomen vanuit een hele achtergrond van oudere religieuze, geestelijke en gnostische geschriften, en oudere mythologie.

Compleet is deze almanak zeer zeker niet, vanwege de Engelse zijde die nog later komt, en vanwege dat het steeds verder groeit. In deze almanak wordt er aandacht gegeven aan verzamelingen en bundels, zodat sommige verhalen er ook dubbel instaan. Het geeft een beknopt overzicht van wat er allemaal is verschenen, maar nogmaals zeker niet compleet.

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1. Planten van Vlees
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3. De Indiaanse Nachten
4. De Surinaamse Nachten
5. De tuin van Job
6. Vurige Stenen
7. Biel - Verzamelingen
8. Proza van de Vuh
9. Donkere Kaas
10. De Sprookjesmarkt
11. De laatste van de Rozentuin
12. Paarskapje Verhalen
13. De Flamingo vertelt
14. Flamingo Dagen
15. Wilde Honden
16. Avond Danser
17. De Vijfde Rivier
18. Het bevroren jongetje
19. IJsroosje
20. Koning Stuiterbal
21. De Dagmerries
22. De Olifant vertelt
23. Het paarse boek
24. De Lettermaker
25. Tranen van Vuur
26. De Drokelaarse pap en andere verhalen
27. De traan van de bloem
28. Mediwars
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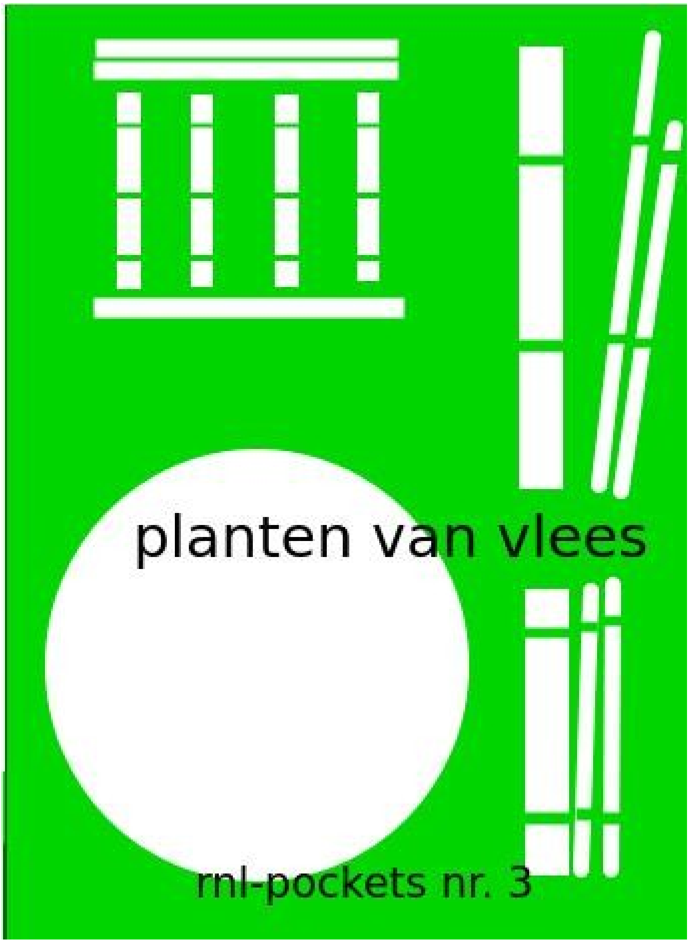
planten van vlees
rnl-pockets nr. 3

Planten van Vlees
korte verhalen

Uitgave : rnl-pockets
nr. 3
1970-2023

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rodenbergs-nederlandse letterkunde

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Planten van Vlees

Harm woonde met zijn twee kinderen aan de rand van een bos. Het bos was tamelijk groot, en er bleek een indianenstam te wonen die een paal met een dierenkop erop aanbaden. Meestal waren dat koppen van varkens of runderen zoals buffels en bizons. Harm waarschuwde zijn kinderen altijd dat ze niet het bos moesten ingaan. Hij was te bang dat de indianen zijn kinderen wat vreemds zouden aandoen. Er gingen allerlei vreemde verhalen over deze stam in de ronde. Ze zouden vreemde dingen doen met kinderen. Bewijzen voor deze verhalen waren er niet. Maar Harm wilde geen enkel risico nemen.
Op een dag tikte er een man op het raam. Het bleek een indiaan te zijn. Hij had dierenvellen op zijn rug, en hij had laarzen van een soort bont. Harm deed open, en vroeg waarmee hij de man kon helpen. De indiaan zei niets. Toen wees hij op zijn laarzen. 'Ikko Boeke,' zei de indiaan. Harm kon dat natuurlijk niet verstaan en haalde zijn schouders op. 'Mijnheer, ik heb geen idee wat u mij probeert te vertellen. Die taal ken ik helemaal niet,' zei Harm een beetje nors. Weer wees de indiaan op zijn laarzen, en toen zag Harm dat er een gat inzat. 'Oh, ik

dacht dat indianen zelf wel wisten hoe ze zulke dingen kunnen maken,' grapte Harm. 'Nou, komt u maar verder.'
De indiaan kwam naar binnen en deed zijn laars uit. Harm pakte draad en een naald, en begon de stof aan elkaar te naaien. Hij vond het vreemd dat de indiaan dit zelf niet kon.
'Hebben ze bij jullie geen onderwijs ?' vroeg Harm. De indiaan schudde zijn hoofd. De kinderen kwamen thuis en waren verbaasd toen ze de indiaan op de bank zagen zitten. 'Wat moet hij hier ?' vroeg Ko.
'Laten we een beetje gastvrij zijn,' zei Harm.
'Maar pa, u weet dat indianen gevaarlijk zijn,' zei Bep.
'Daar zijn geen bewijzen voor,' zei Harm. 'Trouwens, hij had gewoon mijn hulp nodig.'
'Het kan een valstrik zijn, pa,' zei Ko, die het niet vertrouwde.
'Ach welnee,' zei Harm. 'Hij kan hier best wel een nachtje slapen.'
'Wat !' riep Ko. 'Mij niet gezien. Dan ga ik wel bij oma slapen.'
'Doe jij dat maar,' zei Harm. 'Ik ben wel blij met een beetje gezelschap sinds mama is overleden.'
Bep begon te snikken. 'Moet je dat allemaal weer

aanhalen, pa ? Zo komen we er nooit overheen.'
'Sorry,' zei Harm. 'Ga jij ook maar naar oma.'
De kinderen liepen de deur uit, terwijl Harm aan de indiaan vroeg of hij een biertje wilde. De indiaan wilde dat wel. Harm zag het als een uitdaging. Als hij vriendschap met de indiaan kon sluiten, dan zou dat bevordelijk zijn voor de verhouding tussen het dorp en de indianen. Misschien zou dat wel veel misverstanden uit de weg ruimen.
In de nacht hoorde Harm wat gerommel op het zolder. Toen hoorde hij ineens luide muziek. Toen hij kwam kijken had de indiaan een grammofoon-plaat opgezet. Harm kon er wel om lachen, en ging weer verder slapen. De indiaan bleek het goed naar zijn zin te hebben, maar de dag erop wilde de indiaan weer terug. De indiaan was te gehecht aan het bos. Harm kon dat goed begrijpen. De indiaan was verder erg dankbaar, maar maakte duidelijk in hele gebrekkige taal dat de vriendschap nu ook ten einde moest komen. De indiaan zei dat het voor hem eigenlijk verboden was om vriendschap te hebben met de blanken. Harm kon het niet laten om nog even te vragen over die laars. 'Waarom kwam je hier eigenlijk voor die laars ? Hebben jullie geen vrouwen in jullie stam die voor dit

soort dingen zorgen ?'
De indiaan liet weten dat ze geen vrouwen meer hadden. Die waren allemaal dood. De stam had alleen nog maar mannen, en die schenen heel onhandig met deze dingen te zijn.
'Maar hoe moet dat dan verder als je nog eens zoiets nodig hebt ?' vroeg Harm. De indiaan maakte duidelijk dat het maar behelpen was, en dat alles te hooi en te gras zou gaan. Misschien zouden ze zich het zelf wel aanleren, maar dat zou tijd kosten. De laatste vrouw van de stam was net overleden. Harm zei dat hij kon begrijpen hoe hij zich voelde, want zijn vrouw was ook overleden.
De indiaan maakte duidelijk dat hij juist blij was dat de vrouw dood was. Vrouwen bleken een grote macht binnen de stam te hebben, en die zouden ze in het verleden misbruikt hebben. De indiaan voelde zich vrij nu. Harm vroeg zich af of de vrouwen misschien vermoord waren.
'Hoe zijn jullie vrouwen aan hun einde gekomen ?' vroeg Harm tactisch.
De indiaan liet weten dat dit een groot geheim was. Harm vond dat verdacht. 'Waarom wil je het niet zeggen ?' vroeg Harm. 'Hebben jullie iets te verbergen ?'
'Shhhh,' zei de indiaan, en drukte zijn vingers op de lippen

van Harm. 'Jullie zijn me maar een vreemde koekebakkers,' zei Harm.
De indiaan maakte duidelijk dat hij nu moest gaan, en rende het bos in.
Harm stond met zijn ogen te knipperen. Hij vertrouwde het helemaal niet. Even later kwamen de kinderen thuis.
'Hoe was het bij oma ?' vroeg Harm.
'Oma was er niet,' zei Ko. 'Maar we hadden de sleutel, dus we zijn daar gewoon gaan slapen.'
'Misschien is ze bij tante Buurtje,' zei Harm.
Ko en Bep gingen op de bank zitten. 'Hoe is het afgelopen met die indiaan ?' vroeg Bep. Toen vertelde Harm het hele verhaal.
'Ik heb nog eens lopen denken, hè,' zei Bep. 'Die indianen hebben misschien onze hulp nodig. Ze leven niet voor niets in het bos. Er moet iets in het verleden mis zijn gegaan.'
'Ach welnee,' zei Ko. 'Ze houden van het bos. Ze zouden niet anders willen. Er is nooit iets verkeerds gegaan, want ze hebben altijd al in het bos geleefd.'
'Nou, ik weet het nog niet zo net,' zei Bep. 'Misschien hebben ze traumatische ervaringen gehad in stad of dorp, en zijn toen naar het bos vertrokken. Wie zou er nu vanuit

zichzelf zo primitief willen leven ?'
'Ik,' zei Ko. 'Ik begrijp hen gedachtengang helemaal. Maar voor ons zijn ze nu niet meer te vertrouwen. Het lijkt wel alsof er een vuur is tussen hen en ons. Het bos is in oorlog met het dorp.'
'Er kunnen toch ook wel tussenwegen zijn ?' vraagt Bep.
'Blijkbaar niet,' zei Ko.
Midden in de nacht wordt er op het raam geslagen. Een groep woedende indianen is gekomen. Harm rent naar beneden, ziet de indianen staan, en grijpt naar zijn honkbal-knuppel.
Hij doet de deur open en roept : 'Wie van jullie wil er het eerst aan ?'
De indianen zijn boos, en laten hem weten dat ze erachter zijn gekomen dat één van hen bij de blanken is geweest en vriendschap heeft gesloten. Ze laten weten dat er een speer door het hart van de dader is gegaan door dit misdrijf.
'Zeg, zijn jullie de politie ofzo ?' vraagt Harm boos.
'Scheer je weg, of ik bel de politie !'
De indianen maakten het duidelijk dat ze de politie niet waren, maar dat de blanken zouden boeten voor de vriendschap met één van hen. Blanken zouden niet te vertrouwen zijn, en het zou als een vloek op hun stam

rusten als ze dat zomaar langs hun heen zouden laten gaan. Verschillende speren werden er op Harm gericht. Harm stond klaar om toe te slaan met de honkbal-knuppel, en riep naar zijn kinderen om hen de politie te laten bellen. Steeds meer indianen begonnen zich te verzamelen voor het huis van Harm. 'Ik waarschuw je,' zei één van de indianen. 'We zullen je niet vermoorden, maar lever je kinderen uit. Dan zal het voor ons afgedaan zijn.'
'Nooit,' zei Harm woedend. 'Zijn jullie helemaal gek geworden.'
'Je kinderen liggen al verlamd in hun bed,' zei de indiaan. 'We zijn al door de achterkant binnengekomen, en hebben hen het spinnengif toegediend.'
'Spinnengif ?' vroeg Harm verbaasd. Toen werd ook Harm van achteren geinjecteerd met het gif, en lag al snel verlamd op de grond. Na lange tijd werd hij wakker in het indianenkamp diep in het bos. Hij lag daar vastgebonden naast zijn kinderen. Zijn kinderen waren nog steeds bewusteloos. In de verte zag hij een paal met een varkenskop erop.
Een indiaan kwam dichterbij. 'Aanbidden jullie die varkenskop daar ?' vroeg Harm.
'Kop houden,' zei de indiaan, en schopte hem een paar

keer.
'Nee, serieus,' zei Harm. 'Ik wil weten of jullie die varkenskop daar aanbidden.'
'Gaat je niks aan,' zei de indiaan nors, en schopte hem weer. Dit keer veel harder.
'Jij bent leraar van beroep, hè ?' vraagt de indiaan nors.
'Hoe weet je dat ?' kreunt Harm van de pijn.
'Wij weten alles,' zei de indiaan, die hem weer schopte, hard in zijn buik. 'Jullie blamken weten precies hoe iedereen te maken zoals jullie zelf.'
Harm kon niet meer praten van de pijn. Het duizelde hem voor de ogen, terwijl de indiaan maar door blijf schoppen, totdat hij weer bewusteloos viel.
Toen hij weer wakker was was hij aan een paal gebonden. Het bleek de paal met de varkenskop te zijn. De varkenskop was vlak boven hem.
'Dom varken,' zei één van de indianen, terwijl de andere indianen lachten. Een wat oudere indiaan kwam naar voren. Hij drukte een mes op de keel van Harm. 'Jullie blanken hebben alles verziekt,' zei de oude indiaan. 'Jullie zijn een vloek. Wij weten precies wat wij met jullie moeten doen. Jij gaat geofferd worden aan de paal met de varkenskop.'

Harm wordt wakker in zweet. Hij had alles maar gedroomd. De indiaan slaapt nog steeds op het zolder, en zijn kinderen zijn bij oma. Die ochtend moest hij naar school om les te geven, maar de nachtmerrie zit hem nog steeds in de keel. Hij heeft moeite met spreken, en besluit af te bellen. Hij voelt zich duizelig en misselijk. Na een tijdje wordt hij gebeld door Ko. Hij doet zijn hele verhaal, en dan wil oma hem ook even aan de telefoon. Oma is erg in paniek, en zei dat hij een domme fout had gemaakt, omdat de indianen met boze magie werken. Die nachtmerrie was daar een teken van. Harm zag nog steeds geen kwaad in de indiaan. 'Iedereen droomt weleens naar,' zei hij tegen oma.
'Maar je bent ziek,' zei oma. 'Er kunnen wel duistere krachten aan het werk zijn, jongen, vergis je er maar niet in. Of misschien heeft die indiaan wel allerlei ziektes naar binnen gebracht. Die mensen leven niet echt hygienisch.'
Harm werd zieker en zieker, en moest naar het ziekenhuis voor onderzoek. Oma kwam hem ook opzoeken met de kinderen. Ze schudde haar hoofd. 'Ik heb je er altijd zo voor gewaarschuwd geen bosmensen binnen te nemen. Ze zijn niet te vertrouwen.'
Oma besloot om bij Harm in te wonen om voor de

kinderen te zorgen. Harm was erg depressief. Gelukkig was het geen ernstige ziekte, dus hij kon snel weg uit het ziekenhuis. Tante Buurtje zou de kinderen een tijdje op vakantie nemen naar een tropisch eiland, zodat Harm helemaal tot rust kon komen.
Tante Buurtje was een vrolijke vrouw, als zonneschijn, en zij zorgde ervoor dat de kinderen helemaal over de dood van hun moeder heenkwamen. Maar met Harm ging het steeds slechter.
Op een nacht kon Harm niet meer verder. Hij moest hier weg. Hij rende het bos in, zijn huis achterlatende. Oma sliep.
Na een lange tijd rennen kwam Harm aan bij de indianenstam. Hij smeekte of hij daar kon wonen. Ze waren direct erg aardig. Ook de indiaan die Harm geholpen had was erbij. Oma had hem weer het bos ingestuurd toen Harm in het ziekenhuis lag. Harm kreeg zijn eigen rieten hut. Oma was erg in paniek. Ze wist niet waar Harm was, maar had een vermoeden, omdat Harm zo vaak tegen haar zei dat hij weg wilde, het bos in, om te leven met de indianen. Toen Harm maar niet terug kwam en zo lang weg bleef besloot oma op onderzoek uit te gaan. Ze begreep hem wel een beetje, maar wilde toch

zekerheid. Na lang lopen zag ze in de verte het indianen-kamp, en hoorde zijn luide stem al. Oma was erg opgelucht. Even wilde ze hem zien, en toen ze in de verte een glimp van hem opving keerde ze weer terug. Ze wist dat ze hem toch niet tegen kon houden, en toen Harm in het ziekenhuis lag kwam ze erachter dat de indiaan die bij Harm logeerde eigenlijk een hele aardige man was. Ook de kinderen hadden er vrede mee toen ze het hoorden. Oma zou nu voor hen zorgen. Bep dacht er niet aan om in een indianen-stam te wonen, maar Ko dacht er over om zijn vader in het kamp te bezoeken, en misschien daar ook te blijven. Niet alleen omdat hij zijn vader miste, maar ook omdat het bos hem aantrok. Voor hem was het ook heel interessant dat zijn vader nu contact had met de indianen, en zelfs één van hen was geworden, terwijl hij er vroeger altijd voor waarschuwde.

Na een tijdje ging ook Ko in het bos wonen, bij zijn vader en de indianen. Oma en Bep bleven in het huis wonen. Zij konden het goed met elkaar vinden. Ook tante Buurtje kwam vaak bij hen op bezoek. 'Ach,' zei tante Buurtje, 'Harm heeft gewoon een vrouw nodig. Dan blijft hij wel weg van die inboorlingen. Hij heeft gewoon niets te doen.'

'Tegen mij zei hij dat als hij ooit nog een relatie wilde, dan

met een bosvrouw, met een indiaanse vrouw,' zei Bep. 'Maar daar was hij nog helemaal niet aan toe, en dacht er ook niet over, omdat hij nog zo stoeit met de dood van moeder. Hij is ook bang om weer gehecht aan iemand te raken, en die persoon dan weer te moeten verliezen.'

'Ja, dat is ook waar,' zei tante Buurtje. 'Maar heus, het kan hem misschien opvrolijken. Hij kan gewoon met zijn nieuwe vrouw zo nu en dan het bos inwandelen, dat helpt ook.'

'U begrijpt het niet, tante Buurtje,' zei Bep. 'Hij wil in het bos wonen. Hij wil niet terug naar het dorp.'

'Jammer dan,' zei tante Buurtje. 'Ik hoop dat hij een goed leven heeft daar.'

Oma knikte. Tante Buurtje kwam meer en meer logeren bij oma en Bep, en besloot na een tijdje bij hen in te trekken. Drie vrouwen in een huis. Het was een echt vrouwenhuis, en het was er altijd erg gezellig. Maar Harm en Ko dachten er niet aan om terug te komen. Zo leefden de drie vrouwen vele jaren bij elkaar, en het was een reuze gezellige en goede tijd. Maar toen stierf oma plotseling, en niet lang daarna ook tante Buurtje. Nu was Bep helemaal alleen, en depressies begonnen haar aan te vliegen. Ze kon het allemaal maar moeilijk verwerken, en deze keer begon

ze haar vader en Ko heel erg te missen. Ook zij ging naar het bos, en zocht de indianenstam op om daar te wonen. Ze hadden dan wel helemaal geen familie meer buiten elkaar, maar de indianen waren nu hun nieuwe familie. Toch kon Bep hier ook niet helemaal goed aarden. Ze voelde zich verscheurd tussen twee werelden. Ze leek steeds depressiever te worden, en er bleek geen kruid tegen opgewassen te zijn. Harm en Ko deden van alles om haar op te vrolijken, en ook de indianen. Op een dag werd ze naar de medicijn-man gebracht. Hij liet haar ruiken aan wat rode veren, en gaf haar een medicijn. Toen bond de medicijn-man de rode veren in haar haar.

'Het grote geheim is wat jij moet zien,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Ik zal jou op een reis nemen door het bos naar het grote geheim.'

Met goedvinden van Harm en Ko ging Bep op een bosreis met de medicijn-man. Ze gingen heel diep het bos in, langs meren en heuvels, tot een plaats waar de wilde dieren waren. Ook hier was een meertje. De medicijn-man smeerde haar in met zand, modder en klei. Ook smeerde hij zichzelf hiermee in, en nu zouden ze het meertje overzwemmen. Na een tijdje kwamen ze aan bij een struik die over het meertje hing. Aan de stam van de struik lag

een kleine panter. De medicijn-man nam haar mee langs de panter. Vlakbij was een grot. De medicijn-man zei dat de panter de bewaker was van de grot. De medicijn-man nam haar diep in de grot. Ook in de grot was een meertje, en een spook-achtig geluid. Plotseling was er een verschijning. Het was erg licht.
'Waarom zijn jullie gekomen,' sprak de gestalte.
De medicijn-man maakte een buiging en zei : 'Dit is Bep. Zij heeft last van depressies, en ik dacht dat het haar zou helpen om het grote geheim te zien.'
'Depressies is de roep van het grote geheim,' zei de gestalte. De lichtende verschijning had een kap op, en een lang gewaad. Ook had de gestalte een speer. 'Ik waak over het grote geheim,' zei de gestalte, 'maar depressie is de sleutel. Ik waak over de zielen van het woord. Ook haar moeder is hier, haar oma, en haar tante. Nog veel meer zielen zijn hier. Deze depressie is haar verbinding met hen, maar die verbinding is verbroken. Ik ben de grote verbinder. Ik heb deze weg gemaakt. Laat haar dichterbij komen. Ik zal haar hart genezen, en haar hoofd tot rust brengen.' Toen vaagde de gestalte weg, en een lichtende weg verscheen voor hen. 'Kom mee,' zei de medicijn-man, en stapte op de weg. Het was een soort tunnel die toen

begon te draaien. Bep werd duizelig. Droomde ze dit ? Voorzichtig stapte zij ook op de weg. Ze leken in een heel nieuw bos te komen. Bep voelde een band om haar hoofd komen, en stralen kwamen naar binnen om haar hart te voeden. 'Kom verder,' zei een stem. Het was een donkere, lage stem, die steeds lager werd. Ze zag weer een verschijning, dit keer zonder kap, die een miniatuur koe in zijn handen had. 'Dit is het woord,' zei de verschijning die daar in lange gewaden stond. Plotseling begon er melk uit de koe te komen. 'Woord, spreek,' zei de verschijning luid. Toen stond er een paal met een koeienkop op. De melk begon te stromen en te stromen, totdat Bep en de medicijnman er bijna in zwommen. 'Ik ben het grote geheim,' zei de koeienkop. 'Als het middernacht is, dan verander ik in een varkenskop, en dan is het grote geheim van jou,'

'Wacht eens even,' zei Bep. 'Hier heb ik een keer over gedroomd. Nee, dat kan niet waar zijn.'

'Wat bedoel je ?' vroeg de medicijn-man.

'Ik heb dit al weleens eerder gezien,' zei Bep. 'We moeten wachten tot middernacht, en dan zal de varkenskop spreken.'

'Precies,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Het is de strijd tussen

hebzucht en honger, onthechting. Het is de stem van depressie, maar tegelijkertijd het medicijn.'
Ze bleven wachten tot het middernacht was. Toen veranderde de koeienkop in een varkenskop.
'Ik ben overwonnen,' zei de varkenskop. 'Willen jullie mijn geheim zien ? Het geheim wat ik al voor vele eeuwen verborgen heb gehouden ?'
Bep knikte, en stapte dichterbij. Toen ineens begon de varkenskop vuur te spuwen. Bep schrok, en rende naar achteren. De medicijn-man hield haar vast. 'Hij is het geheim aan het openbaren.' Weer spuwde de varkenskop vuur. 'Ik bedank jullie alvast voor het komen. Jullie hebben het welverdiend om dit te zien. Ruben, Simeon, Levi, Juda, Gad, Aser, Issaschar, Zebulon, Jozef, Benjamin, Dina, Efraim, Manasse ….' En weer spuwde de varkenskop vuur, en begon woest te worden. Zijn kop werd helemaal rood. 'Ik ben hier om deze zegels te verbreken !' riep de varkenskop. 'Dat is mijn taak, om de zegels der stammen te verbreken !'
'Niemand dan jullie zijn gekomen om dit geheim te zien,' zei de varkenskop toen rustig. Een gouden cirkel met daarop de stenen van de stammen begon rond te draaien en te branden. 'Deze gouden cirkelzaag, …. deze gouden

cirkelzaag …' riep de varkenskop. En toen ontplofte de cirkel. Een tunnel verscheen voor hen. 'Ga de tunnel binnen,' zei de varkenskop nors. Bep en de medicijnman liepen haastig door. Achter hen werd een deur gesloten. 'Jullie willen het geheim toch zien ? Jullie willen het geheim toch zien ?' riep de varkenskop. 'Voor eeuwig is dit verborgen gebleven, maar jullie hebben overwonnen. 'De sleutel van depressies heeft jullie hier gebracht.' Achter de varkenskop verscheen een troon met een oude vrouw erop met lange vieze haren. 'Het geheim is gemanifesteerd in haar,' zei de varkenskop. De vrouw stond op, en liep op Bep en de medicijn-man af. Maar als door de bliksem werd ze teruggeslagen. 'Ik moet altijd op deze troon zitten,' jammerde ze. 'En dat omdat ik voor de hebzucht heb gekozen. Mijn varken is nu slechts een kop, om mij te verraden. Ik dacht altijd maar aan eten, en meer rijkdommen, om mijn macht te laten zegevieren. Maar mijn varken is tegen mij gekeerd nu, en heeft mijn schuilplaats verraden. Dom varken !' krijste ze. 'Ik zit nu voor altijd aan mijn stoel vastgeplakt. Ik heb de dorpen en de steden ontworpen, en ik heb ze groot gemaakt ! Dat is alles wat ik kan ! Dit is mijn troon, en ik ben aan het smelten !' jammerde ze. 'Ik heb de ring der stammen

gecreeerd als het orakel van mijn toverboek waarmee ik de dorpen en steden heb behekst. Maar jullie hebben de ring verbroken !' krijste ze, terwijl ze vuur spuwde. 'Hoe meer vuur ik spuw, hoe meer ik smelt. Mijn woede is mij aan het verteren,' jammerde ze. 'Maar ik heb jouw familie, en ik zal ze meetrekken in mijn val,' krijste ze. Haar stem echode. Bep trilde even. Tot haar grote schrik begon de rode troon waarop de heks zat te bewegen, maar gelukkig schoot de troon weer terug als door elastiek.
'Ik weet je naam, ik weet waar je woont !' krijste de heks. 'Hier is het grote geheim : De stammen zijn de steden en de dorpen.' Toen viel de stoel om, en de heks begon weg te smelten. Weer begon een cirkel voor hen te draaien, maar deze begon langzaam weg te smelten. Toen begon een andere cirkel voor hun ogen te draaien en te krijsen, maar ook deze begon langzaam weg te smelten.
'Ik weet waar je woont !' werd er in de verte geroepen. Plotseling viel Bep neer. Gelukkig konden de armen van de medicijn-man haar opvangen. 'W...w...wie was dat ?' vroeg Bep.
'Je bent in de matrix van het bos,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Het is een raadsel wat je moet oplossen. Er is een hogere natuur, die het grote geheim is.'

'Ik ben te depressief,' snikt Bep. 'Ik kan niet goed nadenken. Het vermoeit me.' De medicijn-man nam haar in zijn armen. 'Juist door depressie, leegte en vermoeidheid wordt het raadsel opgelost,' zei hij. 'Niet door goed nadenken. Nadenken is een valstrik. Het labyrint moet namelijk overwonnen worden. Het is een gevecht.' Bep begint harder te snikken. 'Ik ben zo moe. Ik kan het niet meer volhouden. Alles slaat op me in.'
'Ik bescherm je,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Je moet je innerlijke vijanden overwinnen, en dit is de perfecte plaats. Het is nu of nooit. Juist in je depressies kun je de vijand een grote slag slaan.'
'Het vreet me aan, medicijn-man,' snikte Bep. 'Ik ben hier niet tegen opgewassen.'
'Haal rustig adem,' zei de medicijn-man. Hij leidde haar tot een stomend, kolkend meertje, waar hij haar onderdompelde en begon te wassen. Hij haalde zijn hand over haar voorhoofd. 'Zoveel spanning op je hoofd,' zei hij. Het meertje was heel warm. 'Dit is de overgang naar de dromenwereld, heel diep in het bos,' zei de medicijn-man. 'De planten, kruiden en bloemen zijn hier namelijk veel sterker, zijn veel meer zaaddragend, en veroorzaken daardoor een veld van hallucinaties. Ik spreek nu tot je

door de hallucinaties, al voor een geruime tijd. Dit is ook een hallucinatie.'
'Wat wonderlijk,' zei Bep. 'Ik wil nog dieper het bos in.'
'Ja, maar verderop zijn de nachtmerries,' zei de medicijnman. 'De planten daar zijn wel nog sterker dan hier.'
'Interessant,' zei Bep. 'Nou, laten we dan maar hier blijven,' zei Bep.
'Ja,' zei de medicijn-man, 'want die nachtmerrie-hallucinaties doen net alsof je dan in de dorpen en de steden terecht komt, maar het is gewoon nog dieper in het bos.'
'Hmmm,' zei Bep. 'Dus u wilt zeggen dat toen wij in het dorp woonde, wij gewoon onder de invloed van zware planten waren dieper in het bos ?'
'Precies,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Je bent nu daarvan aan het afkicken, en dat is ook heel confronterend.'
'Ik ben bang,' zei Bep.
'Wij gaan daar alleen naartoe als wij een tegengif hebben genomen,' zegt de medicijn-man. 'Wij nemen dan soms stoffen van die zware planten, omdat in kleine hoeveelheden, in een veilig gebied, deze stoffen als medicijn kunnen werken. Maar als je er teveel van neemt,

dan ga je dus echt dorpen en steden hallucineren als nachtmerries.'
'Was het overlijden van mijn moeder ook zo'n nachtmerrie-hallucinatie ?' vroeg Bep.
De medicijn-man knikte. 'Ja, en dat was een hele zware stof, die jarenlang in het lichaam kan blijven doorwerken.'
'En tante Buurtje en oma, hun overlijden, was dat hetzelfde ?' vroeg Bep.
De medicijn-man knikte weer. 'Ja, allemaal hetzelfde. Het is zware troep, waar veel te veel van genomen is, en je was in onveilig gebied. Het hangt daar in zware doseringen gewoon in de lucht, en dat werkt dag en nacht op je.'
Bep begint weer te snikken. 'Ik voelde me zo rot, en ik voel me nog steeds rot. Ik mis ze zo erg. Dus het was allemaal niet waar ? En waren zij zelf dan ook een hallucinatie, en bestonden zij dan helemaal niet ?'
De medicijn-man was even stil. 'Kind, je moet nog veel leren,' zei hij.
'Nee, ik wil het weten,' zei Bep in paniek. 'Bestonden moeder, oma en tante Buurtje echt, of waren het slechts hallucinaties ?'
'Ze bestonden in andere vormen,' zei de medicijn-man.
'Maar niet zoals je ze kende. Het waren dorpse

hallucinaties, dus alles was dorps. Het begon misschien goed, maar het was een geladen nachtmerrie, wat betekent dat het je langzaam in een tragedie zou zuigen. Het zijn roofplanten, Bep. Het zijn hele gevaarlijke planten, die alleen wij als medicijn-mannen veilig kunnen gebruiken. Zoals ik al zei gaat dat in hele lage doseringen, en in veilig gebied. Dan dient het als een medicijn, en we gebruiken het in de oorlog en in de jacht in hogere doseringen. Het is dan goed gif. Wij moeten in ieder geval voldoende tegengif hebben om hier tegen bestand te zijn.'
'Wat voor tegengif is dat ?' vroeg Bep nieuwsgierig.
'Wij kweken daarvoor bepaalde spinnen,' zei de medicijnman, 'die wij dan melken voor hun gif. Maar ook dit gif mag niet genomen worden in te hoge doseringen.'
'Waarom niet ?' vroeg Bep.
'Omdat dat verlammingen kan brengen,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Ook heeft het in hoge doseringen hetzelfde effect als de roofplanten.'
'Klinkt eng,' zei Bep. 'Ik begin flink bang te worden van al deze dingen. Wat als er op dit moment iets goed fout zit, want u zei dat ik nu ook aan het hallucineren ben ?'
'Leer en ervaar,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Als je er telkens weer wat bijleert, dan zal dat je steeds meer rust geven.

Steeds meer zul je dan het grotere plaatje zien om je inzicht te geven.'
'Toch is het eng,' zei Bep. 'Wat als je het verkeerde erbij leert, en dat je zo dieper en dieper in de kronkels wordt geholpen ?'
'Wanneer de student klaar is om meer te leren, komt de leraar,' zei de medicijn-man.
'Ja, maar de leraar kan bedriegen,' zei Bep.
'Niet als de student blijft onderzoeken, open blijft staan, om tot de dieptes van de kennis te komen,' zei de medicijn-man.
'Nou, ik weet het nog zo net niet,' zei Bep. 'Sommigen zijn erg sluw. En een foutje is snel gemaakt.'
'Voorzichtigheid is de moeder van de waarheid,' glimlachte de medicijnman.
'Ik ben voorzichtig en bang,' zei Bep. 'Ik begin bijna paranoide te worden nu. Dit is echt heel eng.'
'Ik kan je helpen met wat tegengif van de speciale spinnen die wij kweken,' zei de medicijn-man.
'Wat voor spinnen zijn dat ?' vroeg Bep.
'Pajiet-spinnen,' zei de medicijnman. 'Die zijn heel zeldzaam, maar worden al sinds eeuwen in het geheim gekweekt door onze stam. Het gif breekt heel snel de

andere giffen af.'
'Ja, ja,' zei Bep. 'Maar kom je zo niet in een andere hallucinatie terecht ? Leven wij niet allemaal in hallucinaties ?'
'Slimme meid,' glimlachte de medicijn-man. 'In wezen zijn er alleen goede en slechte hallucinaties, ja. Alles is gebaseerd op hallucinaties.'
'Lekker ingewikkeld,' zei Bep. 'Dus misschien besta ik helemaal niet, of in een andere vorm.'
'Je moet hierin je pad leren te vinden, Bep,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Wil je het tegengif ?'
'Ja, doe maar,' zei Bep. 'Ik heb toch niets te verliezen.'
Snel spoot de medicijn-man iets in haar arm, en het leek wel alsof er nog iets in haar werd gespoten, als in haar arm buiten haar arm. Bep werd direct wakker alsof er een waas van haar ogen was weggetrokken. Alles was heel helder nu, en ze zag de medicijnman met haar arm in zijn hand. Hij had daar net iets ingespoten. Bep haalde diep adem.
'Interessant,' zei ze. 'Dus we hadden beiden dezelfde hallucinatie ?'
'Ja, ik ben in verschillende lagen van de natuur,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Ik heb leren dubbel-leven, en leren switchen.'

'Interessant,' zei Bep. 'En dat kun jij me ook leren ?'
'Natuurlijk,' zei de medicijn-man. Samen gingen ze terug naar het kamp, en Bep had natuurlijk veel te vertellen. Ze voelde zichzelf al een stuk beter nu.
Bep werd steeds nieuwsgieriger naar die planten dieper in het bos. De medicijn-man vertelde haar dat het vlees-planten waren, die op geslachtsdelen leken. Zij die onder de bedwelming hiervan kwamen zouden zelfs hallucinaties van geboorte kunnen krijgen, waardoor ze al hun herinneringen verloren. Juist omdat Bep's depressies na een tijdje sterker dan ooit terugkwamen wilde ze hier zo graag naartoe. De medicijn-man kreeg hier hoogte van en waarschuwde haar. Hij zei dat het alleen maar erger zou worden als ze daar naartoe zou gaan. Hij vertelde haar ook dat ze juist daar vandaan kwam, en dat ze daarom zo'n verschrikkelijk leven had gehad. Maar Bep wilde terug, want haar depressies waren erger dan ooit tevoren. De medicijn-man wist dat hij iets moest doen. Hij kon daar wel naartoe met voldoende tegengif, omdat hij een volleerd medicijn-man was, maar Bep was onervaren. Bep kon niet meer wachten. Ze zei dat er niets meer te verliezen was, en dat het toch niet meer erger kon worden. Bep begon ook aan alles te twijfelen, juist omdat het zo

slecht met haar ging. De medicijn-man bleef zeggen dat afkicken een heel zwaar proces was, en dat het soms wel erger was dan ooit tevoren. Dat hoorde bij het proces. Het was een heel zwaar gevecht. 'Ik kan het niet meer aan, medicijn-man,' zei Bep.
'Volhouden, meid,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Blijf studeren, en voordat je het weet kun je daar samen met mij naartoe.'
Maar Bep kon niet meer. Ze nam dezelfde dosering tegengif die de medicijn-man had voorgeschreven, en rende op een nacht het bos in. Ze bleef maar rennen en rennen. Na een tijdje was ze omringd door prachtige struiken van vlees die inderdaad op een soort geslachtsdelen leken. De draden waren heel dun, en bovenop was een soort gezwollen vruchtbaar deel met een prachtige roze kleur. Hier stroomde sap uit, waarvan Bep wist dat het een heel gevaarlijk sap was. Even stond ze als aan de grond genageld. Ze wist dat ze nu een heel groot risico nam. Eigenlijk was het nog helemaal geen tijd om hier naartoe te gaan. Plotseling voelde ze wat springen in haar hoofd. Het sap leek binnen te stromen. Ze begon te krijsen en te huilen. 'Ik kan niet meer,' huilde ze. 'Waarom martelen jullie me zo ?'
Van achteren was ze door een pijl geraakt. Toen viel ze

bewusteloos. Achter haar stond de medicijn-man die haar op zijn schouder nam. Dat was op het nippertje. Hij bracht haar veilig naar het kamp. Na een tijdje werd ze heel zwakjes wakker. 'Oh, het was prachtig,' zei ze, terwijl ze nog steeds onder bedwelming was. 'Maar toen overweldigde me het, en ik werd zo bang.'
'Je was nog niet klaar, meid,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Ik heb je op het nippertje kunnen redden. Ze hadden je bijna meegesleurd in hun stroom.'
'Het was zo spannend,' zuchtte Bep.
'Nee, het was gevaarlijk,' zei de medicijn-man.
'Maar het was zo prachtig,' zei Bep, 'zo adembenemend.'
'Bep, wacht jij nou maar rustig totdat het tijd is dat we daar samen naartoe kunnen gaan. Ik moet je nog enkele dingen uitleggen, en dan ben je klaar. Je hebt nu alvast even een voorproefje gehad, maar dat was niet de bedoeling. Het had je je leven kunnen kosten. Dit zijn geen dingen om mee te spelen,' zei de medicijn-man.
'Ik weet dat je bezorgd bent,' zei Bep. 'Ik weet dat je de waarheid spreekt, maar ik kon niet meer. Ik moest het gewoon zien. De drang in mij was te sterk. Het was als gekrijs in mijn hoofd.'
'Je moet nog veel leren, Bep,' zei de medicijn-man. Bep

knikte. Ze had nu wonderlijke dromen die haar leken voor te bereiden. Maar Bep besefte niet dat juist de planten van vlees dit allemaal gesimuleerd hadden. Ze hadden haar alreeds gevangen, en gaven haar hallucinaties alsof ze nog veilig bij de medicijn-man was. Iedereen van het kamp begon zich steeds vreemder en gemener tegen Bep te gedragen, ook de medicijn-man. Bep had nog steeds niets door. Voor haar was dit een aanzet om weer terug te gaan naar de vlees-planten, niet wetende dat ze allang weer onder hun macht was. Ze had het gevoel dat iedereen haar haatte, dus ze zei tegen haarzelf : 'Kom ik om, dan kom ik om.' Op een nacht begon ze weer te rennen. Ze wilde terug naar de vlees-planten. Ze zag de prachtige planten in de verte die naar haar lonkten. Ze zakte langzaam in een rivier omringd met de meest wonderlijke en prachtige vlees-planten. Dit keer had ze geeneens tegengif genomen. Ze verlangde hier zo naar. Langzaam zonk ze in de rivier, tot aan haar nek. De rivier was vol van het zaad van de wonderlijke planten, en langzaam begon ze te drinken. Ze wilde hallucineren om van deze depressies af te komen. Ze voelde zich wonderlijk.
Ze was het gepraat van de medicijn-man zat. Ze wilde leven. Ze wilde genieten van de prachtige natuur. Ze wilde

niet naar school. Er was al genoeg tegen haar gesproken in haar leven. Ze was er moe van. De medicijn-man was niet meer wie hij was, en de anderen ook niet.
In het kamp in de werkelijkheid was inmiddels grote paniek, omdat Bep verdwenen was, en maar niet terugkwam. De medicijn-man vermoede dat ze naar de vlees-planten was gegaan. Hij besloot er naartoe te gaan met voldoende tegengif om te zien of er sporen van haar waren. Diep in de velden van de vlees-planten vond hij haar. Ze lag daar op de grond. Hij wist dat ze zo had geworsteld met depressies en kon haar zo goed begrijpen. Maar toch wist hij dat scholing het beste was voor haar. Ze moest afkicken en tot de waarheid komen. Met wat medicijnen kon hij haar terugbrengen tot de werkelijkheid, en ze werd huilend wakker, heel zwak. Ze kon niet praten, maar wel een beetje lopen. Heel voorzichtig liep hij met haar terug naar het kamp. Ko nam haar direct in zijn armen.
Ze gebruikte vuile taal, omdat ze nog steeds dacht aan wat zij haar hadden aangedaan in haar hallucinaties. De medicijn-man maakte haar duidelijk dat ze in een simulatie-realiteit was gekomen door de hallucinaties van de vlees-planten, die ook het kamp hadden gesimuleerd en

alle kamp-bewoners, als gevolg van haar tochtje. Toen hield ze Ko stevig vast. Ze was blij dat ze gered was. Het had ook anders kunnen aflopen, want soms verslonden de vlees-planten hen die tot hen kwamen. Waarschijnlijk had het tegengif haar gered, en het feit dat ze toch al wat kennis had.

Bep had van haar fouten geleerd. Ze wilde nu goed bij de les blijven. Na een lange periode kon ze dan eindelijk met de medicijn-man mee naar de planten van vlees. Ze keek haar ogen uit, en de medicijn-man liet haar vele geheimen zien. 'Deze planten zijn heilig,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Eens in de zoveel tijd kiezen ze iemand uit die hen goed heeft behandeld, en die veel van hen afweet, en zo iemand zal dan voor altijd tussen hen kunnen wonen. Zij wonen meestal dieper in de velden van de vlees-planten, daar waar je niet zomaar kunt komen.'

'Interessant, dat lijkt me wel wat,' zei Bep. 'Ik vind het hier prachtig.'

'Zelfs ik ben nog niet eens zo ver,' grapte de medicijn-man.

Bep hoorde heldere stemmen in haar hoofd, waarvan de medicijn-man zei dat het de stemmen van de vlees-planten waren. Ze hadden haar op het oog. Ze wilden met haar communiceren. Ze wilden haar onderwijzen.

Ze vertelden haar van een zee die achter de velden van vlees-planten lag, en ze nodigden haar uit daar naartoe te gaan. Zij moest hiervoor de medicijn-man achter haar laten. Ze moest over een zanderig pad, en de planten hier begonnen steeds wonderlijker te worden. Er waren allerlei soorten roze lichten in haar hoofd, als stralen-kransen. Ze vertelden haar dat zij een uitverkorene was. De zee stond vol met prachtige planten van vlees. Ze communiceerden door stoom en een soort vuur, en allerlei sappen. Sommige van die sappen leken wel kokend, en die werden hier en daar uitgespoten. Bep kreeg een heel warm gevoel. Het leek alsof delen in haar hoofd aan elkaar verbonden werden. Ze had ineens veel minder hoofdpijn, alsof er bruggen in haar hoofd werden gebouwd. De planten van vlees zeiden dat ze in haar hoofd leefden. Deze zee was de zee van communicatie. Ze wilden haar genezen en voorbereiden op haar taak. Bep begon te lachen. Haar depressies begonnen weg te smelten. Alles binnenin haar bleek te werken door sappen en vuren, en alles binnenin haar was gemaakt van vlees-planten, als een grote puzzel die in elkaar gezet moest worden. Bep was in een gelukzalig gevoel. Er borrelde zoveel in haar op. Hier kon zij verder studeren, en de planten van vlees zouden haar

alle eilanden van de zee laten zien, en haar al hun geheimen vertellen. Dit waren tijden van grote genezing, en van kennis. Een rood vuur scheen bezit van haar te nemen, en allerlei rode sappen, ook kokende rode sappen die voortspoten. Verder was het een heel tropisch klimaat. Deze planten hadden heel wat te vertellen. Wat er allemaal verkeerd was gegaan, en wat er allemaal moest gebeuren. Bep begon steeds meer van haar verleden te vergeten, als door een nieuwe geboorte. Toch herinnerde ze ook dingen, maar dan op een hele andere manier. Deze dingen hadden waarde, maar waren in de verkeerde vormen tot haar gekomen. Nu kon alles recht gezet worden zoals het was. Ze had zicht gekregen in de nacht. Het was het vuur van de vleesplanten die haar hoofd had verlicht. Dit waren allerlei soorten vuren, die ook werkten door allerlei sappen. Weelderige struiken namen haar mee door de zee, waardoor alles begon te duizelen in haar. Alles werd gemixt in haar hoofd, en nieuwe vormen kwamen voort. Het was als een pretpark in de zee. De zee-planten fluisterden in haar, en trokken haar naar de eilanden.
In dit proces begon ze haar identiteit te verliezen, tot het punt dat ze niet meer wist of ze nu een man of een vrouw was. Ze voelde zichzelf als een oude man. In de verte leek

het wel alsof ze Ko zag staan, haar vader, en de medicijn-man, en ze miste hen, maar het leek wel alsof dat van een lang vervlogen tijd was, alsof ze niet meer bestonden. Plotseling kroop er een gevoel van depressie op haar, en de gestaltes bleken weg te vagen. Ze had heimwee, maar de drangen van de vlees-planten waren te groot. Waar trokken ze haar naartoe ? Het leek wel alsof ze in een grote woestijn was aangekomen, alsof ze iets heel groots moest voorttrekken, als een kar door de woestijn. Ze voelde zich oud, als een oude man, als Kain. 'Kom tot het land Nod, als een oase in deze woestijn,' werd er gefluisterd. Ze wist niet meer of ze de planten van vlees nog wel kon vertrouwen. Ze voelde zich als een slaaf, en dan in meerdere dimensies tegelijk, want ze voelde zich ook een slaaf van een schip. Ze wilde overboord springen, maar ze was geketend. Ze moest roeien. Ze was een roei-slaaf. 'Oh, waar ben ik toch in terecht gekomen,' jammerde ze. 'Ik heb waarschijnlijk veel te veel van die troep genomen. Het is zware drugs. Oh, waar ben ik toch aan begonnen. Ik ben al tijden mezelf niet. Ik heb er al veel te lang mee lopen experimenteren. Dit is een 'bad trip,' een 'bad trip,' girl. Wat heb ik mezelf toch aangedaan.' Ze hoorde gelach in haar hoofd, alsof alles aan het scheuren

was in haar hersenen. 'Je wilde het grote geheim toch
zien ?' lachte de stem in haar hoofd.
Plotseling vaagde het allemaal weg, en zag ze de medicijn-man voor haar staan. Hij sloeg een arm om haar heen, en zei : 'Eindelijk heb je dan het grote geheim gezien.' Toen liepen ze samen terug naar het kamp.

Hermien van de Straaten kwam thuis. Haar vriend zat op de bank een krant te lezen. Ze schonk koffie in voor haarzelf en haar vriend, en ging naast hem zitten. 'Wat ben je aan het lezen ?' vroeg ze.
'Oh, niets,' zei haar vriend. 'Je weet wel, het is daadwerkelijk niets. Ik ben hier gewoon weer eens mijn tijd aan het doden.'
'Ik weet het,' zei Hermien. 'Zal het ooit nog eens anders worden. Ik ben een boek aan het lezen. Zal ik het je eens laten zien ?' Ze haalde een boek uit haar tas en gaf het aan haar vriend. Hij bladerde het eens rustig door. 'Interessant, Hermien,' zei hij. 'Ik wil het ook wel lezen als je het uit hebt.' Hermien glimlachte. Ze stond op na een tijdje en schonk nog wat koffie in. Midden in de nacht werden ze wakker. Er stond een mannetje voor hen, met een puntmutsje met wat belletjes. Het leek wel op een klein narretje. 'Ik ben Kraak,' zei het mannetje. 'Doe drie wensen, maar ze moeten wel voor jezelf zijn of voor je huis.'
'Ik zou me wel wat beter willen voelen,' zei Hermien slaperig. Ze was zo moe dat ze weer in slaap viel, en haar

vriend was alweer in slaap gevallen. De volgende ochtend sneeuwde het, en Hermien voelde zich vrolijk en warm. Ze had geen moeite met opstaan, zoals ze dat eerst wel had.

De nacht erop was het mannetje er weer. 'Je mag nog twee wensen doen,' zei het mannetje. 'Oh, Kraak,' zei Hermien, 'ik zou graag een wat betere relatie willen hebben met mijn vriend. Het is al wel goed, maar het kan veel beter.' De dag erop werden ze allebei blij wakker, en lagen een hele lange tijd in elkaars armen, wat ze eigenlijk nooit echt lang deden. 'Hermien,' zei Ewout, 'ik voel me ineens zo anders, zoveel beter.'

'Het komt door dat mannetje,' zei Hermien. Maar Ewout kon zich er bijna niets meer van herinneren. Ze hadden nu eigenlijk alles wat ze nodig hadden, en waren tevreden. Buiten scheen de zon in de sneeuw, en Hermien schonk weer koffie in. Koffie was altijd goed geweest tegen depressies, maar nu was de lucht zo helder. Die dag fietsten ze samen door het bos, maar ineens werd Ewout van zijn fiets afgeduwd. Een speer vloog dwars door Hermien heen, en ze viel bloedend op de grond. 'Grijp hem,' zei een luide stem. Ewout stond op en keek recht in de ogen van een groep wilden. Hij werd vastgegrepen en

dieper in het bos gesleurd. Hij werd in een hut geduwd waar allerlei uitgehongerde mannen zaten. 'Welkom,' zei een oude man.
'Wat is dit hier ?' vroeg Ewout.
Een van de mannen werd gegrepen en uit de hut gesleurd. Buiten stond er een vrouw opgedost met veren. 'De kannibaalse bruid,' zei de oude man.
Ewout schrok wakker. Hij greep naar Hermien, maar die was er niet. 'Och, natuurlijk niet,' dacht Ewout. 'De relatie is verbroken. Ik ben een alleenstaand man.' Ewout was blij dat de relatie was verbroken, want Hermien was een verschrikkelijk mens, zeer wreed, ongevoelig, onbetrouwbaar en onberekenbaar. Hij was beter af zonder haar. Toen Ewout door een stukje bos naar zijn werk fietste zag hij een stel kinderen een ander kind slaan met stokken. Ewout sprong direkt van zijn fiets af en nam het kind in bescherming. Het kind rilde helemaal. Na een paar woorden gezegd te hebben tegen de andere kinderen nam hij het kind mee naar huis en belde zijn baas dat hij wat later zou komen. Hij legde het aan zijn baas uit, maar die zei direkt : 'Ach, neem er maar een dag vrij voor.'
Jonas heette het kind. Het was een weeskind, en het kind durfde niet goed terug naar het weeshuis. Het was er

verschrikkelijk. Het kind rilde nog steeds, en Ewout deed een deken om hem heen, en gaf het kind wat te drinken.
'Lees je graag ?' vroeg Ewout.
'Ja,' zei Jonas.
'Oh, ik heb boven een hele kast vol met boeken. Kijk er maar eens tussen. Je mag voorlopig wel hier blijven, dan bel ik het weeshuis er wel over op,' zei Ewout.
'Van wat voor boeken houd je het meest ?' vroeg Ewout.
'Indianenboeken,' zei het kind. Ewout liet de boekenkist aan het kind zien. Er zaten veel indianenboeken tussen.
Ewout kreeg een andere vriendin : Jeiske. Ze was een stuk aardiger dan Hermien, maar ook aan deze relatie kwam snel een eind. Toen kwam er Saskia, toen Sjanine, maar het was allemaal niet blijvend. Jonas werd meer en meer als een zoon voor Ewout, en eigenlijk kon Ewout niet meer zonder hem, en besloot hem te adopteren. Hij had echt dat fantastische vadergevoel, maar hij miste een vrouw in zijn leven, en Jonas miste een moeder.
Tundra was een vrouw die Ewout wel zag zitten. Ze was lief en behulpzaam maar toch ook een beetje vreemd, alsof ze een duister verleden had. Ze kon goed koken, en was een uitzonderlijk goede verhalenverteller, dus ook Jonas was direkt erg dol op haar. Ze had haar eigen kamer in het

huis. Ze wilde 's nachts graag alleen zijn. Ze was erg wisselend van karakter. Ze hield van foto's maken en fietsen, en op een dag nam ze Jonas mee in het bos. Ze zou proberen wat foto's te maken van dieren die in het bos woonden. Na een tijdje kwamen ze de kinderen van het weeshuis tegen. 'Zo Jonas, heb je eindelijk je moeder gevonden ?' riepen ze. Ze gingen in een groep rondom de fietsen staan. Tundra werd een beetje boos, maar de kinderen duwden haar in een bosje en Jonas namen ze mee. Ze brachten hem naar een hut in het bos. 'Zo, we zullen jou eens uithongeren met alleen af en toe wat bramen, brood en water,' zei een van de kinderen. 'Je bent een verwend ding.' Ze hielden hem opgesloten in de hut, en gaven hem haast geen voedsel. Na een paar weken was hij helemaal uitgehongerd. Net op tijd vond Ewout hem, nam hem mee naar huis en belde het weeshuis erover op. De kinderen kregen strenge straffen.
Tundra was een soort moeder voor Jonas, maar Jonas wist dat hij zijn vader hard nodig had. Een tijd lang durfde hij niet zonder zijn vader naar buiten. Ook Tundra had soms moeite om naar buiten te gaan vanwege het voorval. Ze zouden in ieder geval niet meer in het bos komen. De relatie tussen Tundra en Ewout werd steeds stabieler, en

Jonas was er erg gelukkig mee. Voor hem waren Tundra en Ewout de perfecte ouders. Hij had het zich niet beter kunnen voorstellen. Op een nacht had Ewout weer een droom : Een spin had haar partner gevonden, en na de geslachtsdaad vrat ze haar partner op. De volgende ochtend vertelde hij het aan Tundra. Tundra had dit gevoel overgehouden aan een vorige relatie. Ook Ewout kende dit gevoel natuurlijk. In zijn ogen was Hermien die spin.
'Maar we hebben het overleefd,' zei Ewout, 'of er is gewoon leven na de dood.'
'Weet je wat kannibalen geloven ?' zei Tundra. 'Dat wanneer ze iemand hebben opgegeten dan hebben ze die kracht overgenomen, dan hebben ze de ziel van die persoon overgenomen. Zo voelen ze zich machtiger in de strijd om te overleven.'
'Ja, dat heb ik ook eens gelezen,' zei Ewout. 'Maar ik kan jou ook wel opvreten, maar dan van liefde.' Tundra glimlachte. 'Dus ik ben een soort gebakje voor jou ?'
'Veel lekkerder,' zei Ewout. 'En ben ik dan een kannibaal ?'
'Ik denk het wel, Ewout,' grapte Tundra. 'Ik moet nu zeker voor je oppassen.'
'Ach, er is nog hoop voor ons,' zei Ewout. 'We kunnen een banketbakkerij beginnen.'

'Dus eigenlijk is de natuur iets heel moois, als je het op die manier bekijkt,' zei Tundra. 'Het is om ervan te leren.'
'Juist,' zei Ewout.
'Dus, dan ben ik jouw kannibaalse bruid ?' vroeg Tundra.
'Als je het mij vraagt wel,' zei Ewout. 'Maar dan op een hele andere manier. Jij kan al dat nare weer recht krijgen.'
'Wat kun jij toch rare verhalen vertellen,' grapte Tundra.
'Nou, jij kan er ook wat van,' lachte Ewout.
'Ik heb het heel moeilijk gehad,' zei Tundra. 'Maar sinds ik jou ken ben ik gelukkig. En bij Jonas heb ik dat echte moedergevoel.'
Ewout zette de t.v. aan. Er was een oorlogsfilm op, en op de andere zender een praat programma. 'Laat Jonas maar even naar een kinderprogramma kijken,' zei Tundra.
Ewout schakelde over. Tundra en Ewout gingen in de achterkamer even wat koffie drinken, terwijl Jonas t.v. ging kijken. 'Ewout,' fluisterde Tundra. 'Er zijn zoveel kinderen zoals Jonas eerst was : Ongelukkig in een weeshuis, ongeliefd, gebroken, trauma op trauma, en er lijkt geen einde aan te komen. We hebben een groot huis. Waarom zouden we geen tweede kind adopteren ?'
'Goed idee,' zei Ewout. 'Ik zou zelfs mijn huis wel willen uitbouwen om zoveel mogelijk kinderen onder te brengen.

Maar de kinderen moeten het dan zelf ook willen.'
Met een telefoontje was het snel gedaan. Ewout en Tundra mochten een kijkje komen nemen op het weeshuis om over hun plannen te vertellen. Sommige kinderen waren enthousiast. Anderen niet. Drie kinderen wilden het weleens op proef proberen.
'Jaap Edema, Gerout van Huizen en Liesbeth van Tongeren.' Maar het werd geen succes. Ze konden niet met Jonas opschieten en ze waren vernielzuchtig. Ewout besloot wat dieren in huis te brengen, zodat Jonas niet zo alleen was. Maar naarmate Jonas ouder werd werd hij steeds stiller en trok zich steeds meer op zijn kamer terug. Toen hij twintig was trouwde hij met een meisje, maar het huwelijk was binnen drie jaar kapot, en hij kwam gebroken weer thuis. Ewout en Tundra wisten altijd al wel dat het een kannibaalse bruid was waarmee hij was getrouwd. Ze hadden hem nog gewaarschuwd, maar zonder resultaat. Hij was weer een ervaring rijker, en kreeg zijn oude kamer terug. Snel had hij weer een vriendin, en toen nog een, maar nooit koos hij echt de gemakkelijksten uit. Ewout hoopte dat hij ooit iemand zou vinden als Tundra. Maar op een dag raakte Jonas betrokken bij een auto-ongeluk en raakte verlamd. Het

leven was als een kannibaalse bruid voor hem, en Ewout en Tundra waren er kapot van. Ze hadden gehoopt dat hij gelukkig zou worden, en dat hij zijn leven zou kunnen opbouwen, maar het was nu een afhankelijk kasplantje. Na een paar maanden stierf Jonas als gevolg van het auto-ongeluk. Ewout en Tundra waren weer alleen. Het was moeilijk, maar ze hadden elkaar. Weer gingen ze naar het weeshuis om te kijken of ze een nieuw kind konden adopteren, maar niemand was zoals Jonas. Toch wilden ze het wel met een nieuw kind proberen dat wel een beetje op Jonas leek. Het jongetje heette Huib. Maar Huib was ernstig ziek en stierf na een paar maanden, en weer waren Ewout en Tundra alleen. Het leek alsof de kannibaalse bruid weer had toegeslagen. Het leven was zo fragiel als een nachtvlinder.

Ewout keek naar buiten, en keek naar een bij gaande van bloem tot bloem. Ook zag hij wat vliegjes in een spinnenweb, en zelfs een vlinder. Ook hier zat een betekenis in. Ook dit kon omgedraaid worden. Tundra zat achter hem en had haar armen om hen heengeslagen. Hij miste Jonas en ook Huib, maar Tundra was zoveel dichterbij ineens om al die lege plekken op te vullen. Het leek alsof er in zijn binnenste broodjes werden belegd en

opgewarmd. Het was een manier om dichter naar elkaar toe te groeien. Ewout had een brok in zijn keel. Ja, hij was echt depressief, maar Tundra was zijn lichtpuntje. 'Zoveel is er van ons gegeten,' zei Ewout, 'en nu eten wij elkaar door de liefde, als een weg uit deze woeste wereld.' Tundra knikte.

Midden in de nacht werd Ewout wakker van een droom. Hij droomde dat er een nachtvlinder op zijn hart zat. Hij miste Jonas en Huib zo, en brak in tranen uit. Ook Tundra werd wakker en troostte hem. Ze hield hem in zijn armen totdat hij rustig werd. 'Heus,' zei ze, 'eens zullen we alles terugkrijgen. Er is leven na de dood.'

And you will fly,
On the wings of today,
And you will be going back to remember yesterday,
And you will fly,
On the wings of love, today,
And you will be going back to remember yesterday,
Yes, you will fly high,
On the winds of love, today,
And you will be growing up to be free from yesterday

Henry ter Zand was een voetballer van het eerste team van zijn stad. Vaak kwam er een motorbende kijken, die de voetballers vaak uitscholden voor voetbroeders en ei-verkopers. Henry werd er altijd een beetje misselijk van. Op een dag besloot hij de motorbende eens te bezoeken. Hij had zich anders aangekleed zodat hij niet meer op zichzelf leek. Hij werd hartelijk ontvangen, en men leidde hem rond in het gebouw. Er waren wat oude mensen bij, misschien ouders van de motorrijders, en een vrouw die een soort bediende was deed het woord. Maar plotseling werd hij herkend door een van de motorrijders, en Henry moest maken dat hij weg kwam. Het uitschelden was sindsdien wel een stuk minder ineens, en op een dag werd Henry uitgenodigd om weer eens bij hen op bezoek te komen. De motorrijders hadden er spijt van dat ze hem zo rot hadden behandeld. Al gauw werd Henry goede vrienden met hen, wat ook de bedoeling was. Op een dag las een van de motorrijders voor uit een vreemd jongensboek. Het ging over de roodbil stam, een groep wilden die in de bossen leefden. De roodbil stam deed veel aan voetbal, maar er werden nogal wrede dingen gedaan

met de verliezers. 'Het spijt ons, Henry,' zei de motorrijder, 'we hebben ons inderdaad nogal kinderachtig gedragen.' Eric Rouwmeester heette een van de motorrijders, en had vroeger nog bij Henry in de klas gezeten. Eric knipoogde naar hem. Aan het einde van het voorlezen sprak Eric hem nog even persoonlijk aan. 'Heb je zin om een keer mee te gaan samen naar het bos ?' vroeg Eric. 'Dan kunnen we wat oude herinneringen ophalen.' Henry vond dat best.
Een paar avonden later waren ze samen in het bos. Zo deden ze dat vroeger ook. 'Ja, eigenlijk raar,' zei Eric. 'We gingen beiden naar een andere school later, en het contact was verbroken, terwijl we toch altijd goede vrienden waren.' Henry knikte. In het bos kwamen ze een verwilderde vrouw tegen. Ze had wat rode verf achter op haar broek. 'Ja, verfschieten,' zei ze. Het bleek een spel te zijn.
Na een tijdje kwamen ze bij een ravijn aan. Ze hadden hier een goed uitzicht. 'Herinner je je Klaas nog ?' vroeg Eric. 'Heeft zichzelf stukgereden tegen een boom. En Ilse, ook dood.' Henry knikte. Ja, dat had hij ook gehoord. Hij was er kapot van. Klaas en Ilse waren ook goede vrienden van hem. 'Maar ja, dood is dood,' zei Eric. 'Je kunt ze niet terughalen.' Daar kwam de vrouw weer langs. Ditmaal had

ze nog meer rode strepen op haar lichaam. 'Zo, je hebt het druk,' zei Eric.
'Ja,' zei de vrouw. 'Een feestje, maar een leuk feest.'
'Gelukkig,' zei Eric. Henry grinnikte. 'Hey, is dat Riet niet ?' zei Henry. 'Riet van de Kaars.'
'Ja, verhip, je hebt gelijk,' zei Eric. 'Hey, Riet.' Maar Riet was al weer verderop. 'Laten we er naartoe gaan,' zei Eric. Even later vonden ze haar. 'Hoe gaat het met je, Riet, ken je ons nog, Eric en Henry.'
'Het gaat goed, en met jullie ?' vroeg Riet. Ze deed een beetje afstandelijk ineens. Riet kon vroeger moeilijk meekomen op school en had vaak het gevoel dat ze er niet echt bijhoorde. Ze ging vroegtijdig naar een andere school. Na een tijdje brak het ijs een beetje. 'Zeg hebben jullie zin om mee te gaan naar het feestje ? Het is mijn feestje,' zei Riet. Even later zaten ze bij haar thuis met de andere feestgangers. Ze had een groot huis. 'Blijven jullie slapen ?' vroeg ze.
Ach ja, waarom niet, dachten Eric en Henry. Er werd even wat gebeld, en al snel was het okay. Midden in de nacht stond Eric op en ging op zijn blote voeten naar buiten. Het was een huis in het bos. Hij vond het geweldig om alleen in de natuur te zijn. Na een tijdje lopen kwam hij bij een

meer aan, deed zijn kleren uit en gleed in het water. Het water was een beetje koel, maar verder was het warm weer. Heerlijk vond hij dat, om in de vrije natuur te zwemmen, en helemaal alleen. Maar later merkte dat er ook een andere man en een vrouw aan het zwemmen waren, aan de overkant van het meer. Het waren mysterieuze mensen. Eric groette hen beleefd. 'Zo, wat doe jij zo laat hier,' vroeg de man. Eric vertelde dat hij niet kon slapen, en het fijn vond alleen in de natuur te zijn. 'En jullie ?' vroeg Eric.
'We hebben nergens om naartoe te gaan,' zei de vrouw. 'We hebben ons huis verloren, en nu leven we in de natuur.' Even later lieten ze hem het hol zien waarin ze woonden. 'Fantastisch,' zei Eric. 'Ik zou ook wel in zo'n hol willen wonen.' Maar ineens greep de man een pistool en richtte het op Eric. 'Meekomen,' zei hij. Eric werd ergens in een kooi gestopt gemaakt van takken en touw. 'Wat gaan jullie met me doen ?' vroeg Eric.
'Weten we nog niet,' zei de vrouw. Eric zag dat de vrouw rode vlekken op haar bil had. Toen lieten ze hem alleen. Na een paar uur was Eric nog steeds alleen, en begon te roepen. Na een tijdje sleurden de man en de vrouw de kooi naar het meer en duwden hem erin. Eric schreeuwde nog

uit alle macht, maar niets hielp.
De vermissing van Eric kwam hard aan bij Henry. Ook Riet was er kapot van. Pas maanden later vonden ze hem, verdronken. Ook de man en de vrouw die het op hun geweten hadden werden gevonden. Het bleek dat ze onder in de grond nog meer vermiste personen vasthielden, maar die leefden nog steeds.
Henry keek naar Riet. Ze leek veel op de vrouw die het gedaan had. Ze bleken tweelingzussen te zijn. De man bleek lid te zijn van de motorbende.
Op een dag werd er weer uit het vreemde jongensboek voorgelezen. Het was een soort winterboek. De roodbil stam plantte zich op een vreemde manier voort. De vrouwen legden kleine eitjes die met hun voeten uitgebroed moesten worden, anders zou het vruchtje doodgaan. Zij die uit het ei kwamen waren piepklein, als kaboutertjes, en ze hadden nog steeds een lijmachtige gel over zich heen, het vlies-ei, wat later als ze opgegroeid waren verder uitgebroed moest worden, anders zouden ze doodgaan. Dit moest gedaan worden door hun moeder of door hun partner. In hun jonge jaren waren ze als varkens, maar naarmate ze ouder werden verloren ze die kwaliteiten. Het voedsel waarvan ze leefden was rode

varkens. Hun vijanden : langbek krokodillen.
Henry begreep niet waarom er nu weer uit het jongensboek voortgelezen moest worden.

Onze kapitein is een jongen, zei de motorrijder. Hij heeft dit boek geschreven, en het is onze bijbel.
'En waar is die jongen ?' vroeg Henry.
'Vraag niets,' zei de motorrijder.
Henry besloot er niet meer naartoe te gaan. Maar toch keerde hij weer terug. Alsof iets zijn interesse had. Op een nacht werd Henry wakker. Er stond een jongetje voor hem in middeleeuwse koninklijke kleding. 'Ik ben het geheim van alle tijden, ik ben het poppetje waar alle paarden op rijden, waar alle rozen om strijden.'
'Wat kan ik voor je doen ?' vroeg Henry. Maar het jongetje was alweer verdwenen. De nacht erop was het jongetje erweer. Ditmaal had hij een boek bij zich. 'Dit is mijn bijbel,' zei hij. Op de kaft stond 'De Roodbil Stam' met een plaatje waarop wilden voetbalden. De bal was een leren zak die een beetje op een doodshoofd leek.
Weer vroeg Henry : 'Wat kan ik voor je doen.' Het jongetje gaf hem het boek en verdween. Henry begon direkt te lezen. Het was een boek over de middeleeuwen, over wrede praktijken, die uiteindelijk ophielden, maar ze

waren nog steeds in de lucht, en kwamen verkleed als andere dingen.
Een man werd wakker van een lange vreemde droom. Hij had de dag ervoor naar een oorlogsfilm gekeken, en daarna naar een voetbalwedstrijd. Hij zuchtte diep, en viel weer in slaap. Hij droomde toen over een dames voetbal team waar alle vrouwen rode strepen op hun achterste hadden, terwijl sommige grote rode vlekken hadden, en sommigen gewoon rode broekjes. Honden renden over het veld, die toen in zwarte panters veranderden. En toen stond het veld in brand. De man was schoolmeester, en de volgende dag toen hij een vrouwlijke collega tegenkwam bemerkte hij dat er rode vlekken op haar broek zaten, die op lipstift leken. De man wreef in zijn ogen. 'Ben ik nu gek ?' dacht hij bij zichzelf. Maar toen ze zich omdraaide had ze het gezicht van een hond. De man wist dat hij nog steeds sliep. Het leek wel alsof hij niet meer kon wakker worden, en de dromen werden steeds langer en langer. Hij herinnerde dat hij de dag ervoor bij de t.v. en bij de voetbalwedstrijd veel te veel had gedronken. Of hadden ze soms iets in zijn glas gestopt ?
Een man las een vreemd verhaal in een magazine. Het was een soort strip, ook met veel plaatjes, en dan weer tekst.

Het was in een wasserette. Hij gooide de magazine opzij. Greep zijn spullen en liep naar buiten. Het werk was gedaan. Hij gleed uit over een bananeschil en viel terwijl alles op de stoep lag. Sommige mensen hielpen hem. Zijn wasmachine deed het niet meer. De was was weer vuil, maar iemand anders bood hem aan de was te doen bij haar thuis. Het was een aardige vrouw. De vrouw van de man was zwanger. Hij wilde weer op tijd thuis zijn, maar het was zo gezellig bij de vrouw dat hij wat langer bleef, en ze besloten vrienden te blijven. Hij vertelde haar over het vreemde verhaal wat hij in de magazine had gelezen. 'Nee, niet gelezen,' zei de vrouw.
Een man zat bij de psychiater. Dit was het verhaal wat hij eruit floepte. 'Okay,' zei de psychiater, 'en wat is de betekenis ?'
Een krant werd gedrukt met dit vreemde verhaal. Iemand werd wakker en had dit gedroomd, iemand las dit. Een grote octopus hing over een stad, en slikte de stad op in zijn geheel. Iemand rende uit het ziekenhuis. Ze hadden hem een injectie gegeven, maar hij was erdoor aan het hallucineren. het was alsof de werkelijkheid nu in duizenden stukjes voor hem lag, in brokken. Iemand was geraakt door een giftige pijl van een wilde stam, de

roodbil stam. De man was aan het hallucineren en werd in een kooi gezet. Al snel raakte hij uitgehongerd. Spinnen kropen over hem heen.
Iemand zat een winterboek voor volwassenen te lezen. Dit was wel het vreemdste winterboek wat hij ooit had gelezen. En het volgende verhaal was over de idioten van Mars. De idioten waren een echt ras, wilde reuzen, die in de vreemde jungles van Mars leefden. Ja, idioot was het, maar de plaatjes waren prachtig. Het sprak echt tot de verbeelding. De idioten van Mars waren vaak kaal met hanekammen. Het verhaal daarna ging over slangen, en daarna was er een verhaal wat meer op science fiction leek. De man bracht het boek terug naar de bibliotheek, en ging naar de jeugdafdeling om daar een paar winterboeken te lenen. Tot zijn grote verbazing ging het weer over de roodbil stam. Die nacht had hij een droom over een stam waarvan de vrouwen rood geverfde billen hadden. Hij vertelde het aan zijn vrouw en vroeg wat het voor betekenis kon hebben. 'Dat je teveel leest,' zei zijn vrouw. En ze had gelijk, want hij was een echte boekenwurm. 'Als je 's nachts droomt van hetgeen je hebt gelezen, dan heb je gewoon teveel gelezen, en hetzelfde geldt voor t.v.,' zei ze. 'Maar wat kan ik dan doen ?' vroeg de man. 'Heb jij een

beter idee ?'
'Neem mij eens wat vaker uit,' zei de vrouw. 'Ik heb het idee dat je getrouwd bent met de boeken in plaats van mij.'
Zo gezegd zo gedaan. De man nam zijn vrouw die dag direkt mee naar het bos om een wandeling te maken. Maar de man werd al snel onwel, en ze keerden om. 'Ik kan gewoon niet zonder mijn boeken,' zei de man. Ze probeerden nog een paar dingen, maar uiteindelijk legde de vrouw zich er maar bij neer.
Een man werd wakker van een droom, en daar een andere man. Ze hadden allemaal hetzelfde gedroomd, alsof er wilde geesten in de lucht waren. Zwarte honden blaften op de straat. Diep in het bos stapte een dwerg lachend zijn huisje binnen en trok de deur achter zich dicht. Er hingen wat klokken van wezens die in elkaar waren gegroeid en die zich voedden met elkaars inhoud. De dwerg roerde wat in een potje. 'Zombies zijn het,' zei de dwerg. 'Ze kunnen niet met en niet zonder elkaar, want ze zitten aan elkaar vast door het hart. Ja, door dit middeltje zullen ze eindelijk los van elkaar kunnen komen, maar vergeten doen ze elkaar nooit.'

Einde

De Eenling

Hoofdstuk 1.

Hij zag de muren van zich wegbewegen. Als hij op straat was dan voelde hij zich niet een geheel met de mensen. Hij was een eenling, alsof hij ergens anders vandaan kwam. Hij hoorde niet bij deze mensen. Hij vond dat ze zich vreemd gedroegen. Hij had ook angsten die hij niet kon verklaren. Vaak veranderden grote massa's mensen in vrouwen in zijn gedachten, en dat vond hij bedreigend. Hij vertrouwde geen vrouwen, en hij vertrouwde ook geen mensen in het algemeen. Hij voelde zich opgesloten, alsof de geschiedenis het alarm was, wat telkens weer terugkwam. Ook voelde hij zich vaak vies als hij weer mensen had gezien. En de zelfspot die in hem opkwam was ook zwaar, teneerdrukkend, alsof hij zichzelf uitlachte. Hij maakte karikaturen van zichzelf en dat dreef hij dan enorm ver door, totdat hij van zichzelf walgde, en dan lachte hij zichzelf uit. Hij dacht dat hij de gevangene van een heks was, en die had allerlei ingewikkelde alarmen vastgelegd in zijn cel. Dingen waren niet wat ze leken. De massa bestond in zijn ogen niet. Het was een vrouw. Hij moest het in z'n geheel zien. Volgens hem

waren er geen afzonderlijke mensen. Hij deelde ze allemaal in in groepjes, en moest zich vasthouden aan de lijnen. Hij zou hysterisch worden als ze afgezonderd zouden worden. Hij zag de groepen als vrouwen. Deze vrouwen waren altijd om hem heen, maar hij probeerde ze te ontlopen. Hij sprak hier met niemand over. Hij schuwde mensen. Hij was bang voor afzonderlijke mensen. Hij moest de groepjes zien, en het liefst van een afstand, en het liefst helemaal niet. Als er dan toch een mens door hem werd opgemerkt, dan moest hij zo snel mogelijk de groep zien en de vrouw die de groep was. Hij sloeg zichzelf soms als hij nadacht over een afzonderlijk mens. Dat wilde hij niet. Dat vond hij eng. Hij probeerde daarom altijd zoveel mogelijk langs mensen heen te kijken, op zoek naar de groep waartoe ze hoorden, op zoek naar de vrouw. Maar de vrouw vreesde hij ook.

De geschiedenis kon urenlang aan hem vreten, genadeloos, waarin hij maar geen uitweg zag, als het alarm van de heks. Maar de geschiedenis was ook een vrouw. Hij wilde het niet anders zien. Hij ging niet meer naar de café's, alleen in zijn gedachten. Hij sloot zich helemaal op, trok zich helemaal terug in zichzelf, ... diep. Hij had genoeg aan zijn verleden. Hij wilde er niets meer

aan toevoegen. Hij had geen behoefte meer aan sociaal contact. Die tijd had hij gehad. Hij vertrouwde toch niemand meer. Oh ja, ze probeerden hem wel te lokken, maar hij trapte er niet in, en trok zich dan zelfs nog meer terug, en bleef nog langer binnen, zo ver weg mogelijk, zo diep mogelijk. Ze zouden hem nooit meer kunnen bereiken. Het was al te laat.
Soms als iedereen sliep, diep in de nacht, ging hij weleens wandelen door de stad, en dan het bos in, helemaal alleen. Hij was weleens een naakte vrouw tegengekomen in het bos, dacht hij, maar die rende toen weg. Normaal gesproken was het er altijd rustig en doodstil rond die tijd diep in de nacht, en erg donker. Voedsel bestelde hij altijd en dat zetten ze dan neer in kratjes in de achtertuin. Dan bestelde hij voor een paar weken. Werken deed hij niet. Hij was werkeloos en afgekeurd. Als hij sliep droomde hij over de natuur, hoe dat maar doorging, en hoe het maar niet stopte. In zijn dromen kwam er geen einde aan de natuur.
Hij was verdwaald in zijn innerlijke labyrint. Hij dwaalde en dwaalde en hij vond de uitgang niet. Hij zonk weg in de saaiheid en hopeloosheid van het bestaan. Hij herinnerde zich de contacten van het verleden, maar hij liet het

wegglijden. Hij wilde alleen zijn. Hij liep tegen allerlei muren op in zijn verleden, maar die leidden hem naar bruggen. Hij herinnerde zich de feestjes, en de cadeau's die hij kreeg, en nu was het weg. Hij herinnerde zich de stroop op de pannekoeken, die zijn wereld metselden. Hij wilde nu alleen zijn. Alles was teveel geworden. Hij wilde alles nu overdenken.

Alles om hem heen was ingestort, maar hij had het overleefd, en zou nu zijn leven bewaken. De geschiedenis was slechts een poortwachter tussen hem en de mensen, als een alarm. Hij was hypergevoelig nu. Nee, niemand zou nog in zijn leven toegelaten worden. Hij had al genoeg. Er kon niks meer bij.

Hij haatte en verafschuwde zijn vader die altijd tegen hem zei dat hij meer onder de mensen moest zijn. Het had hem in de grootst mogelijke problemen gebracht. Mensen waren zijn afgoden niet meer, en zijn vader al helemaal niet. Hij zag zijn vader als een sluwe duivel die hij buiten de poorten moest laten. Maar goed, zijn vader was al jaren dood.

Hij vond zijn vader altijd maar een lompe boer, zonder precisie. Zijn moeder was het tegenovergestelde, maar ook zij was al jaren dood. Hij had altijd het gevoel alsof zijn

moeder in een gevangenis leefde die zijn vader had gemaakt. Daardoor kon hij zijn moeder eigenlijk nooit echt bereiken. Ze was te ver weg. En daarom was het thuis ook altijd een hel. Hij voelde zich als kind al een martelaar. Zijn vader dronk, en kwam 's avonds laat vaak dronken thuis om hem en zijn moeder te slaan. Zijn vader kon zuipen als de duivel, en ook tekeer gaan als de duivel, en vaak wist hij niet eens waarover het ging. Soms werd hij gewoon van zijn bed gelicht en tegen de muur aangezet. Als hij een pistool of geweer had gehad, dan had hij het wel geweten. Hij had medelijden met zijn moeder als hij zag wat zijn vader met haar deed, maar hij was machteloos. Zo vaak als hij kon ging hij logeren, of naar de buren, maar dan voelde hij zichzelf een lafaard, alsof hij zijn moeder in de steek liet.

Zijn moeder was de enige die hij miste. Maar zij was dood.

Hij herinnerde zich ook dat hij eens over de brug rende, dat hij niet meer wilde leven. Hij zou wel van de brug willen afspringen. Maar als hij dan aan zijn moeder dacht, dan kon hij het niet. Hij leefde alleen nog voor zijn moeder, en voor de logeerpartijtjes bij neefjes of de buren. Misschien was zijn vader zwaar ziek geworden door de

alcohol, maar eigenlijk wilde hij er niet meer over nadenken. Hij wist hoe verwoestend alcohol was voor het menselijk lichaam. Toen zijn vader stierf was het zelfs een grote opluchting voor hem. Niet lang daarna stierf zijn moeder ook, en hij had toen het gevoel alsof hij daar nooit meer overheen zou komen. Het was alsof hij in een zwart gat viel, en hij voelde zichzelf alsof hij holle ogen had, alsof die eruit waren geschoten, alsof hij met twee grote gaten in zijn hoofd liep. Niets interesseerde hem nog. Hij zag niets meer. Hij leefde langs alles heen. En de mensen gingen gewoon door met feesten alsof er niets was gebeurd. Hij haatte daarom de mensen, met een diepe, bittere haat. Nooit hadden ze hem geholpen. Nooit hadden ze zijn moeder geholpen.

Hij geloofde nu dat zijn moeder in de hemel was, en dat ze elkaar ooit terug zouden zien. Tot die dag wilde hij alleen zijn. Hij had genoeg aan zijn denken.

In de nacht droomde hij vaak over het grote, vieze, vadsige lichaam van zijn vader die hem opgesloten hield. Zijn moeder was dan altijd onbereikbaar. Die zat achter glas, in haar eigen gevangenis. Zijn moeder wilde hem dingen geven, maar die dingen stonden ook allemaal achter glas. Het alcoholisme van zijn vader hield het

tegen. Alcoholisme was een groot probleem in de stad. Veel kinderen hadden zo'n vader. Hij was niet de enige. Sommige kinderen hadden zelfs een drinkende vader en een drinkende moeder, en moesten met dronken ouders leven. Maar het feit dat zijn moeder niet tegen zijn vader opkon was al erg genoeg. Hij zag er geen uitweg in, ook niet nu ze dood waren.

In zijn gedachten probeerde hij er omheen te draaien, maar hij kwam hier altijd terug, alsof hij er nog steeds in leefde. De achtertuin was een zootje. Maar de rommel herinnerde hem eraan dat hij het had overleefd. Zijn moeder was altijd netjes.

Netjes, netjes, netjes, maar daar wonnen ze de oorlog niet mee. Zijn moeder werd al overstuur als ze een pluisje op de grond zag. Dan wapende ze zich al met stoffer en blik, en had ze haar handschoentjes aan, want zij mocht niet vies worden. Ze was verder niet streng, maar wel paniekerig. Hierin ontwikkelde ze een grote precisie. Ze was heel accuraat en ook creatief. Ze was als een hypergevoelig alarm. Maar zijn vader sloeg altijd het alarm in. Het was een hopeloze situatie. En hij leefde nog steeds met die wond in zijn hoofd, en die schiep afstand tussen hem en anderen. Ruimte moest er zijn, vond hij.

Anders zou hij het benauwd krijgen. Hij had behoefte aan rust, en wat meer natuurlijke chaos. Vroeger was alles te netjes in huis door zijn moeder. Hij begreep dat wel, maar ook ergerde hij zich eraan. Voor haar was het natuurlijk een manier om te kunnen overleven met zo'n chaotische man.
Hij zuchtte, en wist even niet waar hij naartoe moest met zijn gedachtes. Dit kon toch niet altijd zo door blijven gaan ? In zijn jonge jaren was zijn vader piloot. Maar door de alcohol kon dat op een gegeven moment niet meer, en toen ging hij elke dag naar de kroeg. Zijn moeder werd toen de kostwinner, maar zijn vader nam grotendeels het geld, voor drinken en gokken. Hij had zijn moeder weleens gevraagd waardoor het kwam dat hij zo was geworden. Zijn moeder had daarop geen antwoord.
Het was alsof zijn vader zijn leven had getekend door de alcohol. De gehele architectuur van zijn leven was doordrenkt met de alcohol van zijn vader. Daar draaide alles om, en daar was alles uit voortgekomen, hoe hij nu was.

Hoofdstuk 2.

Hij keek naar de rommel die in zijn huis lag. Hij woonde

in een flat. Hij keek naar het oude kantoor-bureau waarop wat boeken en papieren lagen, onder de stof, waar het zonlicht op scheen. Hij keek naar het raam wat al tijden niet gewassen was. Dit was zijn leven. Zijn ouders had hij niet meer, en met mensen wilde hij geen contact. Aan zijn denken had hij genoeg, meer dan genoeg. Er kon niets meer bij. De geschiedenis, zijn verleden, was zijn poortwachter. Hij had al genoeg ellende meegemaakt. Nu stond dat tussen hem en de mensen in.

Zelfs in zijn keuken was het een enorme rotzooi. Het plafond was heel hoog, en op de bovenste keukenkastjes lagen allemaal dozen en boeken die helemaal tot het plafond stapelden. Vroeger behoorde dit allemaal tot zijn kantoor, maar hij ging failliet. Nu was hij werkeloos. Afgekeurd. Hij kon het ook niet meer opbrengen. Hij zat veel te ingewikkeld in elkaar. Ze hadden het allerlei namen gegeven, maar daar ging hij nu ook niet meer naartoe.
De geschiedenis was onverbiddelijk in zijn hoofd. Het had geen medelijden met hem gehad, maar hem neergejaagd en opgesloten. Ja, de alcohol van zijn vader leefde voort, als een heks in zijn hoofd. Zou zijn vader hierin ook opgesloten zijn geweest ? Want zijn vader was ook allesbehalve sociaal.

Hij vroeg zich af hoe het zo heeft kunnen gebeuren. Zijn vader werd van piloot tot dronkaard, alsof hij daardoor neergestort was, en zijn hele gezin zat in het vliegtuig. Hij sleurde zijn hele gezin mee in zijn val. Of waren ze in zee gestort, en kwam hij zo aan op een onbewoond eiland ? Of had zijn vader nog net een noodlanding kunnen maken ?
In ieder geval voelde hij zich voor het leven verminkt. Hij verwaarloosde zijn huis, en bleef maar over de piloot en zijn vliegtuig denken. Het was een onderwerp wat hem obsedeerde. Hij was nu op het onbewoonde eiland, en als hij dan nog eens mensen tegenkwam, dan waren dat in zijn gedachten gewoon de dieren van het onbewoonde eiland. En groepjes mensen vormden een vrouw. Hij sprak weleens in gedachten tot de groepjes mensen : 'Hallo, ben je hier allang ? Ik dacht dat dit eiland onbewoond was.' Als ze dan niet antwoordde, dan moesten het wel dieren zijn, of bewegende blaadjes van de bomen door de wind.
Hij vroeg zich af waar zijn vader nu was. Misschien was zijn vader in de onderwereld wel weer piloot geworden, had hij zijn leven gebeterd, en was op een vliegtocht naar de hemel. Hij hoopte het. Maar ja, wie zou het zeggen ? Misschien als hij zelf zou sterven zou zijn vader hem opwachten met een vliegtuig om hem naar de hemel te

brengen ? Zo werd hij heen en weer geslingerd tussen haat en hoop. Soms dacht hij aan de hartsvriend van zijn vader die ook piloot was en die met zijn vliegtuig was neergestort. Zou dat de reden zijn waarom zijn vader zo was geworden, en zo eigenlijk met hem mee neerstortte, en zo het hele gezin ?
Ja, hij zag zijn leven als het gevolg van een vliegtuig ongeluk, en hij stelde zich zo voor dat er mensen waren die het hadden zien gebeuren, en mensen die het in het theater hadden gezien, en dat hij in de hoofden van die mensen doorleefde. Zij maakten schilderijen en muziekstukken, en hij leefde daarin verder.
Hij wilde meer weten van de innerlijke realiteiten, en die binnen gaan. De buitenste lagen interesseerden hem niet, want die hadden hem in de problemen gebracht. Ja, die problemen waren hoogdravend. Hij had het vroeger vaak geprobeerd om in de innerlijke realiteiten te komen, zonder succes. Maar eindelijk was het dan gelukt. Alles wat hij nodig had was in de innerlijke realiteiten.
Hij ging de stad in omdat hij nog wat dingen nodig had. Dit deed hij niet vaak, maar soms moest het toch gebeuren. Hij gaf wat geld aan een dakloze, en in de zaak voor huishoudelijke spullen knipoogde een werker naar

hem die hij tussen de schappen tegen kwam. Daarna ging hij even naar de supermarkt. Een oude vrouw woog wat groente af, en mompelde toen iets. 'Wat zegt u ?' vroeg hij. 'Ik dacht ik kan er ook nog wel een komkommertje bijnemen,' zei de vrouw. 'Niet toch ?' Hij zei zachtjes : 'Ja, dat kan.'

Dat waren eigenlijk alle contacten van die dag. Toen hij weer naar huis liep groette een jongetje op een fiets hem, maar hij had zijn hoofd gebogen en zei niets. Toen groette het jongetje hem nog een keer, en toen groette hij het jongetje terug, en was toen al bijna bij zijn deur aangekomen. Met zijn tassen kwam hij binnen. Hij was blij dat hij weer thuis was. Het zat er weer op. Hij was met zijn jas ergens in een winkel aan een haakje blijven steken en nu zat er een scheur in, als een aandenken aan zijn uitstapje. Hij kwam ook veel jongeren tegen met gescheurde kleding.

Zijn huis in de flat had twee verdiepingen. Eronder waren de kelders, en hij kon met een stenen trap naar beneden om zijn tuin in te komen. Op zijn tweede verdieping had hij zijn indianen boeken en hingen zijn indianen schilderijen. Zijn leven draaide om de eeuwige jachtvelden en om speelgoed. Daar kon hij uren over nadenken. Op de

tweede verdieping had hij ook een tafel waar indiaantjes opstonden. De verdieping had een schuin dak met een schuin raam. Boven de verdieping waren weer andere woningen, maar voor hem was het zijn zolder. Hier kon hij zichzelf uitleven. Er stond ook een bed. Soms sliep hij hier.

Op een nacht had hij een droom dat het gezin in een klein vliegtuigje naar Amerika ging. Zijn vader bestuurde het vliegtuigje, maar in Amerika stortten ze neer, en hij was de enige overlevende.

Toen hij wakker werd die ochtend werd hij geplaagd in zijn gedachtes. Dit werd zo erg dat hij in zijn kamer begon te dansen als een joker. Hij probeerde zijn gedachten te slim af te zijn, en besloot nu zijn gedachten te plagen en te bedriegen. Hij danste als een spion. Hij omsingelde zijn gedachtes door zijn dansen. Hij wist dat er toch niets met zijn gedachten te overleggen viel. Ze waren koppig, dus dan moest het maar op een andere manier. In zijn hoofd kopieerde hij zijn gedachten en maakte er iets anders van. Hij was er volledig zat van. Hij zou ze gebruiken als werktuigen van de joker.

Hij zong tot de zielen, en vertelde hen verhalen. Hij ging hiertoe over de zeeën om hun schepen te vinden. Zo bracht

hij ze in veiligheid en trok hen op. Maar hij wist ook dat hij terugmoest, de rivier over, tot het grote niets, want zijn leven was teveel ingevuld, en hij was als een robot geprogrammeerd door de alcohol van zijn vader. Door de joker kon hij die programmatie verbreken, maar hij moest uiteindelijk weer terugkeren tot het niets, waar ook het nergens was, en het nooit.
Alle ervaringen die hij op zijn netvlies had gehad en wat hij zijn verleden noemde waren als drugs, en het had hem zwaar in de problemen gebracht. Hij wilde afkicken. Was het leven slechts een drug ? En wat was dan het ware leven ? Of bestond dat niet ? En wie had hem deze drug gegeven ? En hoe zou hij kunnen afkicken ?
Hij dacht er ook over na hoe mensen zo lang konden trappen tegen een dood paard. Hij zag het voor zich, en moest er om lachen. In zijn gedachten begon hij die mensen te bespotten.
Die nacht had hij een droom over een groot wit hek aan de rand van een weiland. Hij ging door het hek, maar hij kwam er steeds dieper in en raakte erin opgesloten. Het was alsof het weiland achter zijn tuin was, en het witte hek leidde hem naar het grote indiaanse oerwoud. Hier was een woeste rivier waar je alleen maar over kon komen

door over een brug gemaakt van kinderboeken te gaan. Hij ging de brug over, terwijl de woeste rivier hem probeerde te grijpen om hem van de kinderboeken brug af te sleuren. 'Nee !' riep hij uit in doodsangst. 'Oh, was ik er maar nooit aan begonnen.' Hij probeerde de kinderboeken te lezen en probeerde houvast te vinden in de woorden. Maar alles was nat, en alles lag door elkaar heen. Hij was blij als hij een heel woord kon lezen, maar vaak waren dat alleen maar losse woorden, en ook die werden weer weggespoeld. Verderop liep de brug hoger, en hij probeerde omhoog te klauteren, maar telkens weer gleed hij weg. Hij keek naar de diepte, en daar waren ook allemaal puntige rotsen. 'Nee !' riep hij weer. Hij durfde er bijna niet naar te kijken. Hij had er erge buikpijn van, en het was zo diep. Als hij zou vallen, dan zou hij eerst een heel eind naar beneden vallen. Dat zou hij nooit overleven. Twee handen grepen hem. Ze pakten hem stevig beet, en trokken hem omhoog. Ze maakte hem vast aan een touw. 'Goed vasthouden,' zei ze. Het trouw trok hem door een tunnel heen die opliep als een put, en de tunnel was geheel gemaakt van meisjesboeken. 'Aaaaaaaaah !' riep hij, en toen werd hij wakker. Het eerste wat hij toen ging doen was op zoek gaan naar de doos meisjesboeken die hij ooit

van zijn tante had gehad. Toen hij het na lang zoeken vond begon hij alle boeken te lezen, iets wat hij nog nooit had gedaan. Hij kende deze boeken niet, en het was alsof er een wereld voor hem werd opengescheurd. 'Ja, het meisjesboek is het enige wat mij erdoor heen kan slepen,' sprak hij, 'ja, het meisjesboek.' En hij werd een schrijver van meisjesboeken, en voor het eerst had hij het gevoel dat het hem over het vliegtuig ongeluk heen bracht, en dat hij eindelijk de alcohol van zijn vader kon overwinnen. Hij wilde een meisjesboeken toren bouwen tot de hemel. Ja, het leven kreeg zo weer zin voor hem, ook sociale contacten. Hij zou het allemaal kunnen verwerken in zijn meisjesboeken. Hij had de toversleutel tot de hemel gevonden.

De Jijdans

Ik moest iets terugbrengen naar de buurvrouw. Onze huizen hadden een laag dak, en alles was op de begane grond. Het waren lange huizen naast elkaar in mooi natuurgebied. Ik was nog maar half aangekleed en wat ik al aanhad zat nog verf op, dus dat wilde ik er eerst afwassen voordat ik naar de buurvrouw zou gaan. Ik had een raam openstaan en hoorde dat ze tegen haar moeder zei dat ze naar mij toe zou gaan al. Ik trok snel iets aan, en ging toen door een deur tussen onze huizen in naar haar toe. Ze had allemaal boekjes, pockets, uit de zestiger jaren van een serie genaamd Jijdans, waar vrouwenverhalen en meisjesverhalen instonden. Literatuur. Ik vond het mooie boekjes. Ze had ook een dwergenklok. Ik keek naar het ding. Ze glimlachte naar me. ‘Ja, eh, ik zou die boekjes wel willen lenen, van Jijdans,’ zei ik.
‘Oh, je mag ze wel houden,’ zei ze. ‘Ik doe er toch niks meer mee. Ze staan daar maar te staan.’ Ik was er dolgelukkig mee, en omhelsde haar. ‘Oh sorry,’ zei ik. ‘Ik vergat dat er nog verf op m’n kleding zat.’
‘Geeft niks hoor,’ zei ze. ‘Heb je weer veel lopen schilderen ?’ Ik knikte. ‘Schilderen is mijn lust en leven,

wild en woest. Maar nu zou ik wel weer wat meer willen lezen en schrijven.’
‘Lezen en schrijven ?’ zei ze. ‘Goed idee. Wat vind je van mijn dwergenklok ?’
‘Verschrikkelijk,’ zei ik. ‘Wel inspirerend, maar het lijkt wel een spookklok.’
‘Dat is het ook,’ zei ze. ‘Het maakt hele vreemde geluiden. Door dwergen gemaakt. Het was een erfenis.’
‘Kun je er wel van slapen ?’ vroeg ik.
‘Nee, eigenlijk niet,’ zei ze. ‘Het is nogal een storend ding.’
‘Maar waarom houdt je het dan nog ?’ vroeg ik.
‘Tja, een erfenis, he, ik kan het niet zomaar wegdoen. Herinneringen,’ zei ze.
‘Goede of slechte herinneringen,’ vroeg ik.
‘Slecht,’ zei ze, ‘zeer slecht.’
‘Wegdoen dat ding,’ zei ik. ‘Verkopen kan ook.’
‘Ik wil het niemand aandoen,’ zei ze. ‘Ik houd het ding liever hier. Dan is iedereen er veilig tegen.’
Ik stond voor een raadsel. Ik zou haar graag willen helpen.
‘Misschien zit er een mechanisme in waardoor je het kan uitschakelen ?’ vroeg ik.
‘Ik heb al gekeken,’ zei ze. ‘Er zit niks. Dat is het vreemde

eraan. In ieder geval bedankt dat je me mijn witte jurk weer hebt teruggebracht.'
'Geen dank, en bedankt voor het lenen,' zei ik. 'Ze had de avond van haar leven.'
'Dat geloof ik zeker,' zei ze. 'Veel gedansd ?'
'Ja, de hele tijd,' zei ik. 'Ze kon niet meer stoppen.'
Ze glimlachte.
'Ik moet maar weer eens gaan,' zei ik. 'Maar die klok, he, die dwergenklok. Van wie was die klok ?'
'Van de moeder van mijn moeder, en zij had het ook weer geerfd en wilde het ook niet wegdoen,' zei ze. 'Ze heeft er een rotleven door gehad.'
'Ik vind dat zo vreemd,' zei ik. 'Kun je het niet beter vernietigen ? Gewoon, hup, het open haard in.'
'Ik heb geen open haard,' zei ze.
'Ik anders wel,' zei ik. 'Ik wil het best voor je meenemen, en dan verbranden. Dan zijn we er vanaf.'
'Ja, maar dan slaan de dwergen misschien terug,' zei ze.
Ik keek naar haar gezicht, wat ineens gesponnen en verkrompen was. 'Dat gaat niet goed,' zei ik. Ineens viel ze flauw. Ik bracht snel wat water voor haar.
'D… die klok,' mompelde ze.
'Laat maar,' zei ik. 'Ik verbrand het wel.'

‘Nee, nee !’ gilde ze.
‘Waarom niet ?’ vroeg ik.
‘Dan komen we onder een vloek,’ zei ze. ‘En dan gaat het de hele wereld over, want het is zeer besmettelijk.’
‘Dat moet dan maar,’ zei ik. ‘Want dit is ook niks.’
Maar plotseling kon ik me niet meer bewegen. ‘Die dwergenklok is behekst,’ stamelde ik.
‘Ik zei het je toch,’ zei ze. ‘Laten we het maar laten zoals het is. Veel beter. Ik heb er mee leren leven. Misschien beschermd het wel tegen iets veel ergers.’
‘Zo kun je het misschien ook zien,’ zei ik. ‘Misschien is het een kruis wat je moet dragen, als een extra zintuig.’
‘Ja,’ zei ze. ‘Misschien kun jij er over schrijven en het raadsel oplossen.’
‘Ik zal het proberen,’ zei ik.
Ik ben toen weggegaan. De volgende dag bestond het huis van de buurvrouw niet meer. Het was zo ineens verdwenen. Ik heb haar nooit meer gezien, en ook haar moeder niet, ook al heb ik veel gezocht. Zo in het niets verdwenen, ook die dwergenklok. Nu vraag ik me af of het wel ooit echt bestaan heeft, of alleen maar in mijn fantasie of dwang gedachten. Ik heb soms het gevoel alsof het leven met mij een loopje neemt. Maar anderen zeiden dat

het echt heeft bestaan. Of misschien was het een groepsillusie ? Misschien is alles illusie ? En hier schrijf ik over. Ik probeer de herinnering hoog te houden aan mijn buurvrouw. Ze was een bijzonder mens. Ze gaf mij een rust die ik niet kon beschrijven, en dat terwijl ze in zo’n grote onrust leefde. Misschien heeft de dwergenklok haar meegenomen dieper het woud in ? Ik zoek nog steeds in de wildernis naar haar, maar dan bedenk ik dat dit misschien ook mijn kruis is, en mijn zintuig, waarmee ik moet leren leven. Het gemis van haar is groot, maar er zijn ook andere dingen. Ik kan over haar schrijven, en haar boeken lezen. Als ik Jijdans boekjes lees dan denk ik weer aan haar.

De dwergen dansen om hun klok,
Zij wonen hier al zo lang.
Nee, weg willen zij niet,
nog zoveel dingen te doen.
En daarom dreigen zij, dreigen zij :
Kom niet te dichtbij,
deze dingen zijn van mij,
ik, ik, ik, is alles waar ze aan denken,
Ik sta al lang in de rij,
voor een Jijdans

De sloot

Hij trapte de zwarte vissen van hem af toen hij de sloot uitkroop. Ze noemden het sloot, maar het was eigenlijk een rivier, en de vissen hadden hem geprobeerd naar beneden te trekken. Het was een heel gevecht geweest, maar nu was hij eindelijk aan wal, en haalde diep adem van opluchting. Het had niet veel gescheeld. Hij voelde zich meer dood dan levend. Toen hij thuiskwam viel hij zijn moeder in de armen. ‘Waar was je toch, jongen ?’ vroeg ze bezorgd.
Hij vertelde haar het hele verhaal.
‘Nee, daar moet je ook zeker niet komen,’ zei moeder. Maar hij was erin gegaan om iemand te redden, en dat eerde ze. ‘De zwarte vissen zijn een groot probleem, altijd,’ zei moeder. Het was een koude dag in 1938. Toen de oorlog uitbrak toen herinnerde hij het zich weer, de zwarte vissen. ‘Ze zijn aan land gekomen, moeder,’ zei hij toen, ‘de zwarte vissen.’ Moeder knikte. ‘De sloot is overstroomd, mijn jongen,’ sprak ze. Toen ze later door de nazi’s werd afgeschoten kon hij haar niet helpen. Zijn dromen waren kapot geschoten. Hij zou nu een zwarte vissen jager worden. Hij haatte de sloot. Er gebeurden

daar vreselijke dingen, en hij wist dat het allemaal met de sloot had te maken. Het was een zwarte rivier vol met fabrieksvuil, vol met afval, en zwarte moord-vissen die voor niets en niemand terugdeinsden. Als kind had hij er altijd al nachtmerries over.
Nu was zijn moeder er niet meer en hij zinde op wraak. In de winter vroor het, en hij ging op de sloot schaatsen. Er was zoveel vuil onder het ijs, zoveel afval. Alle zwarte vissen waren nu onder het ijs. Hij schaatste door, tot ver weg van de slootkant. Het werd ook steeds donkerder. Plotseling zag hij wat bewegen. Het ijs was hier ook wat dunner. Hij ging languit op het ijs liggen en keek er doorheen. Nee, hij hoorde iemand kloppen. Er was iemand onder het ijs. Hij kreeg toen ineens de schrik van zijn leven. Het was het gezicht van zijn moeder. Hij begon te roepen, en begon het ijs open te trappen met de punten van zijn schaatsen. Plotseling zakte hij er doorheen, en werd direct gegrepen door de zwarte vissen, en diep naar beneden getrokken. Hij voelde zichzelf koud worden en stijf, en kon al snel zich niet meer verzetten tegen de zwarte vissen. Maar als zijn moeder nu vrij was, dan vond hij het best.
In de lente spoelde er een lichaam aan land. Het was zijn

lichaam. Een man vond hem, en schudde zijn hoofd. De man vond dat hij op zijn zoon leek, alhoewel er niet veel meer van het lijk over was wat door de zwarte vissen was aangevreten. Toen de man thuiskwam vertelde hij het aan zijn zoon. De vrouw van de man schudde met haar hoofd. ‘Hoe kun je onze zoon nu vergelijken met een lijk ?’ De man haalde zijn schouders op. ‘Ik weet het niet.’ De vrouw keek hem diep in zijn ogen. ‘Je bent niet goed wijs,’ zei ze langzaam. Ze gingen die avond vroeg naar bed.
‘Je kunt zoiets niet maken,’ zei zijn vrouw toen ze in bed lagen. ‘Hij zou er nachtmerries van kunnen krijgen.’
‘Onzin,’ zei de man. ‘Hier leert hij van.’
‘Midden in de nacht staat de zoon bij hen in de slaapkamer. ‘Ik ben niet van suiker,’ zei hij. Toen ging hij weer weg. De volgende ochtend bij het ontbijt zei niemand wat tegen elkaar. Op een pot stond het hoofd van een vrouw. ‘Die verdronken jongen zal ook een moeder gehad hebben,’ zei de man opeens. Hij wees op het hoofd van de vrouw op de pot. Zijn vrouw pakte toen de pot en begon naar het gezicht van de vrouw op de pot te staren. ‘Ja, maar deze weent. Ik zou niet weten waarom ze tegenwoordig een wenende vrouw op een pot zetten.’
‘Verkoopt he,’ zei de man. De zoon zei niets. Ineens begon

hij zich niet goed te voelen en rende weg.
‘De moeder van de verdronken jongen,’ zei de man weer.
‘Dat moet wel deze vrouw zijn. Hier staat ze, op deze pot, wenend om haar zoon.’
‘Nee,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Je hebt grote fantasie, misschien wel door je empathie.’
‘Empathie spreekt altijd de waarheid,’ zei de man. ‘Empathie weet alles.’
‘Ja, en empathie heeft altijd gelijk,’ zei de vrouw.
De man pakte toen de pot en hield de pot ondersteboven boven de tafel, terwijl het spul wat erin zat eruit begon te druipen. ‘Nu is ze vrij,’ zei de man. Op dat moment kwam de zoon binnen. Hij was boos, en riep : ‘Ik ben niet van suiker, maar, maar !’
‘Zie, je lijkt echt op hem,’ zei de man.
‘Op wie ?’ vroeg de zoon.
‘Op die verdronken jongen die ik had gevonden,’ zei de man.
‘Oh, dat lijk ?’ vroeg de zoon. ‘Ik ben niet van suiker, maar, maar !’
‘Maar wat ?’ vroeg de man. ‘Je bent hier om te leren.’
‘Nee !’ riep de zoon, en rende weer weg.
‘Zie,’ zei de vrouw, ‘je hebt hem erg overstuur gemaakt

met al deze dingen. Hij probeert je duidelijk te maken dat je te ver bent gegaan. Misschien moet je het hem beter uitleggen.'
'Ik bedoelde gewoon dat hij net zo moeilijk communiceert als dat lijk,' zei de man.
'Wat ben jij grof,' zei de vrouw. 'Je hebt een goed hart, maar je kent je eigen verbeeldingskracht niet. Je hebt geen idee wat voor een effect dat heeft op anderen. Ga naar hem toe.'
'Nee,' zei de man, 'hij moet hiervan leren.'
'Dan ga ik wel,' zei de vrouw, en stond op.
De jongen was op zijn kamer, maar wilde niemand spreken.
Even later stond de man op en klopte aan bij de jongen.
'Ga weg,' riep de jongen, 'jullie zijn misselijke ouders.'
'Zie, dat bedoel ik nu,' zei de man tegen zijn vrouw.
'Je hebt het er zelf naar gemaakt,' zei de vrouw.
Die avond gingen ze weer vroeg naar bed. Weer stond midden in de nacht hun zoon in de slaapkamer. Hij stond daar met een hakbijl en een mes.
'Zeg, ben je gek geworden,' zei de man slaperig.
'Zie,' zei de vrouw die ook was wakker geschrokken. 'Dat

bedoel ik nu. Je maakt die jongen helemaal gek met je rare vergelijkingen.'
'Ik heb zeker gelijk gehad,' zei de man. 'Hij gedraagt zich alsof hij al dood is.'
'Ja, maar denk je niet dat jouw vreemde manieren hem zo hebben gemaakt ? Je bedoeld het misschien goed, maar het lijkt net alsof je zelf ook al dood bent. Ik leef hier met twee doden, twee contactgestoorde mannen,' zei de vrouw paniekerig. Ze stond op en begon door het huis heen te rennen, te wenen, en paniekerig te doen, hysterisch bijna.
'Kijk wat je je moeder hebt aangedaan,' zei de man kalm.
'Nee, jij !' riep de zoon.
'Mijn vergelijking was juist,' zei de man.
'Jullie zijn beiden niet goed snik !' gilde de vrouw. 'Jullie bedoelen het misschien goed, maar dit is misselijkmakend, ziekmakend, en het is ook ziek.'
Zwarte vissen waren op jacht. Ze lieten niet los. 'De oorlog heeft me zo gemaakt,' zei de man kalm.
'Ja, mij ook,' zei de zoon, die toen zijn hakbijl en mes op de grond liet vallen. De vrouw raapte het zo snel mogelijk van de grond, en borg het op. 'Geen speelgoed voor jou,' zei ze.
En ja, het was waar. De oorlog had hen zo gemaakt.

Zwarte vissen waren aan land gekomen, in de uniformen gegaan, en maakten jacht op de families, in grote bloedlust, grote oorlogszucht.
‘Ik ben niet van suiker,’ zei de jongen, ‘maar de oorlog heeft iets met mijn hersenen gedaan. Ik ben niet meer dezelfde.’
‘Niemand is nog dezelfde,’ zei de vrouw.
Er werd toen op de deur geklopt. Het waren nazi’s. Toen ze binnenkwamen werd het drietallig gezin afgeschoten. Hun lijken werden in de sloot geworpen, als voer voor de zwarte vissen. Na een tijdje spoelden ze weer aan op het land, en werden weer door andere families gevonden, waar het toen ook mis begon te gaan. Iedereen ging de fuiken in. Zo werd het land met de grond gelijk gemaakt en helemaal uitgehold, tot overstromen van de sloot. Het gehele land kwam onder water te staan, en de zwarte vissen hadden vrij baan. Een duivelser kwaad dan de zwarte vissen was er niet. Overal waar ze kwamen scheen het mis te gaan.
Een jongen trapte de zwarte vissen van hem af toen hij de sloot uitkroop. Ze hadden zich helemaal in zijn vlees vastgebeten. In het ziekenhuis moesten de vissen verwijderd worden. Maar dokters die zich eraan waagden

werden ook door de zwarte vissen gegrepen. Het was een hopeloze zaak, maar toch eindigde de oorlog eens, en trok de sloot zich weer terug, totdat het alleen nog maar een normale sloot was. En de zwarte vissen leken niet meer te bestaan.

Eens lang na de oorlog kwam een jongen met eenzelfde soort verhaal thuis dat hij was gegrepen door een zwarte vis tijdens het zwemmen in het meer. Niemand geloofde hem, want hij had verder ook geen wonden. Maar de jongen leed sindsdien aan zware nachtmerries, en ze hadden het vermoeden dat hij geestelijk zwaar ziek was. Hij klaagde veel over duizeligheid en kwam in een opvangcentrum terecht. Ook daar ging hij deze verhalen rondvertellen, maar niemand geloofde hem. Nachtmerries, zware nachtmerries, had hij. Hij durfde niet meer te slapen, en at bijna niet meer. Op een dag kwam hij iemand tegen die zei dat velen hetzelfde hadden meegemaakt als hem, maar dat ze zich isoleerden of geisoleerd werden omdat ze niet werden geloofd. Ze kwamen veelal tot de conclusie dat ze nog steeds werden achtervolgd door de zwarte vissen die inmiddels aan land waren gekomen.

Op een dag ging de jongen schaatsen. Onder het ijs zag hij personen bewegen, en ze klopten van onderen tegen het

ijs. Hij zag de gezichten van jongens, meisjes, vaders en moeders. Hij is toen op de kant gegaan en is toen gaan zoeken naar de grootst mogelijke steen, en heeft die toen op het ijs geworpen, opdat er een wak zou ontstaan waardoor de slachtoffers van de zwarte vissen voor eens en voor altijd vrij zouden zijn.

De scherpschutter

Ik was ontsnapt.
Het sneeuwde.
Er lag hier overal ijs.
Ook het meertje was bevroren.
Ik kon zo over het ijs lopen en door de bomen gaan.
Die stonden erg dicht tegen elkaar. Naaldbomen.
Ik was bijna bij de brug aangekomen en toen zag ik de trein al weggaan.
Ik had de trein gemist.
Ik wist niet waar de anderen waren.
Ik keek achterom en zag niemand en hoorde ook niemand.
Ik ging verder het bos in.
Plotseling raakte ik in een gevecht met een beer.
Ik werd zwaar toegetakeld.
Ik overleefde het ternauwernood, en strompelde weg.
Ik wist niet eens meer waar de beer was, en ik zag hem ook niet.
Hevig bloedend ging ik dieper het bos in, en kwam aan bij een huisje na een tijd strompelen.
Een oude vrouw deed de deur open en nam me direct naar binnen.

Ze begon me allemaal vragen te stellen waarop ik geen antwoord wist.
Het gevecht met de beer had mijn geheugen gewist.
Ik wist alleen dat ik was ontsnapt, maar ik wist niet waarvan ik was ontsnapt.
Ook wist ik nog dat ik de trein had gemist, maar verder wist ik niets.
De oude vrouw verzorgde mijn wonden, en keek mij telkens bezorgd en liefdevol aan.
Ze liet me een dennennaald zien.
Dit soms ? vroeg ze.
Het zat in je wond.
Ja, ik moest langs naaldbomen, zei ik.
Waar kom je vandaan ? vroeg ze weer.
I... ik weet het niet, zei ik.
De beer zat achter me aan, en pakte me.
Nu weet ik niet meer zoveel.
Ik had ook een hoofdwond.
Ze pakte een tangetje en haalde er een kogel uit.
Nee, zei ze. Je bent beschoten.
Het is een wonder dat je nog leeft.
Ik keek haar vreemd aan, en keek vreemd naar de kogel die onder het bloed zat.

I.. ik weet daar niks van.
Scherpschutters, zei ze.
Ik maak het wel vaker mee.
Ze jagen op hen die ontsnapt zijn.
Ontsnapt waarvan ? vroeg ik.
Ik weet het niet, zei de vrouw.
Ik ben zelf ook eens ontsnapt, maar wist toen ook niet
meer waarvan.
Scherpschutters en beren, zei ze, dat is alles wat ik weet.
Ze jagen op de ontsnapten, en soms wolven.
Ik ben blij dat ik geen wolven ben tegengekomen, zei ik,
maar die beer was al erg genoeg.
Of ik ben ook wolven tegengekomen en het weer vergeten.
Laat maar, zei de vrouw.
Het is niet meer belangrijk.
Blijf maar hier.
Morgen praten we verder.
Toen ze mijn wonden had verbonden bracht ze mij naar
een kamer met een bed, en ging zelf in een andere
slaapkamer slapen.
Die ochtend werd ik wakker in de sneeuw.
Ik keek om me heen en zag geen huisje.
Ik zag wel bomen.

Ik vroeg me af wat er was gebeurd.
Mijn wonden waren nog steeds goed verbonden.
Ik stond op, en zocht naar het huisje, maar vond het niet.
Veel later vond ik tot mijn grote schrik de oude vrouw liggende in de sneeuw.
Doorzeefd met teveel kogels.
Ze was dood.
De scherpschutters hadden haar waarschijnlijk gevonden.
Ik keek om me heen, terwijl ik me afvroeg waarom ik nog leefde.
Ik weende toen om de vrouw die zo goed voor me was geweest.
Ik vond het leven oneerlijk.
Ik herinnerde me ineens waaruit ik was ontsnapt.
Maar toen vaagde het weer weg, en wist ik het niet meer.
Het was slechts een flits, en ik kon het niet grijpen.
Het frustreerde mij.
Scherpschutters kwamen toen op me af.
Maar ze schoten niet op mij.
Waarom hebben jullie haar neergeschoten en mij niet ? vroeg ik.
We hebben je wel neergeschoten, zeiden ze.
Met kogels van dromen, je droomt slechts.

Ik schudde mijn hoofd in ongeloof.
Kom mee, zeiden ze.
Ik liep achter ze aan.
Waar kon ik anders naartoe ?
Toch ben ik even later weggerend, en alhoewel ze niet schoten dacht ik aan de kogels van dromen.
Ik werd toen pas echt wakker in het huisje van de oude vrouw, in de kamer waarin ze me had gebracht. Bij het ontbijt vertelde ik haar over de droom en ze glimlachte.
Maar wat als ik nog steeds droom ? vroeg ik aan haar.
Dromen zijn … sprak ze, maar haar stem begon weg te vagen en ik werd wakker daar waaruit ik dacht dat ik was ontsnapt … Ik herinnerde me alles weer … Tegelijkertijd besefte ik dat dit ook een droom kon zijn … De scherpschutter, de scherpschutter … dacht ik bij mezelf …

Einde

'Juko,' zei een schoolvriendje terwijl ze van het ene naar het andere klaslokaal gingen. 'Weet jij wat een satanskerk is ?'
'Ik weet het niet,' zei Juko. 'Is dat niet wat christelijks ?'
'Bijna,' zei Kas. 'Satan is de vijand van het christendom, maar voor de Israelieten was het een vriend, of een schijnvijand, die hen moest testen. Het kan ook het symbool van het kwaad zijn, maar dat is niet altijd zo. Het Jodendom en het christendom verschillen in die zin veel van elkaar.'
'Houd maar op,' zei Juko. 'Ik weet er niet veel van, en ik wil er ook niet veel van weten.'
'Maar het is belangrijk, Juko,' zei Kas.
'Houd maar op,' zei Juko weer. 'Ik snap niet waarom het belangrijk is. Ik ben niet gelovig opgevoed, dus ik heb niets met die dingen te maken.
'Dat dacht je maar,' zei Kas. 'Het blijkt dat de satanskerk alle scholen heeft opgericht, ook deze.'
Even schrok Juko. Maar toen trok zijn gezicht weer normaal, en zei : 'Maar dat geloof je toch zeker niet, al die onzin ? Moeten we daar dan in geloven ? Heb je teveel

roddelblaadjes gelezen of die leugenachtige krant die altijd over van alles en nog wat liegt om maar geld in het zakje te krijgen.'
'Moet je luisteren, Juko,' zei Kas. 'Misschien weet ik van bepaalde dingen net iets meer af dan jij ?'
'Nu klink je als een concurrent,' zei Juko.
Maar ze moesten gaan zitten. Het volgende schooluur was aangebroken. Juko was een beetje boos op Kas, en ging na schooltijd direct naar huis. Voor Juko was dat een lange fietstocht, en Kas ging met de bus. Die woonde in een andere plaats.
'Satanskerk, satanskerk,' zei Juko telkens tegen zichzelf. 'Wat moet ik daar allemaal mee.' Toen hij thuisgekomen was na de lange fietstocht ging hij direct naar zijn kamer en klikte de tv aan. Het nieuws was erop. De nieuwslezer sprak : 'Het is onder onze aandacht gekomen dat de satanskerk alle scholen bestuurd, alle ziekenhuizen en alle huizen van justitie.' Direct klikte Juko de tv uit. 'Dat geloof je toch zeker niet,' zei Juko tegen zichzelf. 'Het wordt allemaal hoe langer hoe gekker.'
De volgende dag op school begon Kas weer tegen hem aan te praten, en het ging weer allemaal over de satanskerk en dat het ook op het nieuws was. 'Moet ik dat weer allemaal

aanhoren ?' vroeg Juko.
'Het blijkt meer en meer duidelijk te zijn wie bij de satanskerk behoren,' zei Kas. 'Het was eerst min of meer geheim, maar er zijn allerlei documenten van boven water gekomen, en ze vrezen dat het uitloopt op een oorlog. Deze mensen doen de verschrikkelijkste dingen. Het zijn geeneens mensen.'
Juko haalde zijn schouders op. 'Ik geloof het nieuws niet, en ook de krant niet. Bij mij thuis geloven we helemaal niks, dus het zal wel loslopen. De krant is allemaal bedrog op bedrog, allemaal voor geld.'
'Ja, maar mijn broer zegt het ook,' zei Kas. Juko keek hem diep in de ogen toen met een lach op zijn gezicht. 'En dat maakt het allemaal plotseling waar als Jonas het ook zegt ? Dus wat Jonas zegt is een gouden bewijs op zich ? Laat me toch niet lachen, Kas.'
'Mijn broer heeft veel onderzoek gedaan,' zei Kas. Juko duwde Kas lachend opzij, en liep door. Het was immers het nieuwe lesuur. 'De satanskerk, de satanskerk,' dacht Juko bij zichzelf. Tijdens het hele lesuur kon hij nergens anders aan denken. Toen hij thuis was besloot hij dit keer zelf eens onderzoek te doen. Hij ging naar de bibliotheek, en leende daar een flinke stapel boeken over satan. Hij

begon de boeken gretig te lezen, en kwam erachter dat de boeken elkaar allemaal tegenspraken. 'Zie,' zei hij tegen zichzelf. 'Hier kom je toch ook geen steek verder mee.'
Maar hij ging door met het onderzoek. Hij wilde tot de bodem van de zaak gaan. Nadat hij de boeken had gelezen ging hij speciaal boeken lenen over de satanskerk, en wat hij toen las, daar schrok hij toch wel even van. Hij wist natuurlijk niet of het waar was, maar dat zou verschrikkelijk zijn.
Hij raakte er verschrikkelijk van in de war en voelde zich ziek. Hij voelde zich zo ziek dat hij niet meer naar school wilde. Naar een psychiater of dokter wilde hij ook niet, want die zouden ook door de satanskerk bestuurd worden als hij die boeken zou moeten geloven. Hij moest natuurlijk eerst bewijzen hebben, maar hij nam geen enkel risico. 'Stel dat het waar zou zijn,' zei hij telkens tegen zichzelf.
Hij begon steeds meer de natuur op te zoeken, want daar was het rustig, en daar kon geen satanskerk zijn. Juko raakte steeds meer in de war. Hij wilde niet meer in de stad leven. Of het was de satanskerk die de stad bestuurde, of de stad werd door leugens bestuurd, of beiden. In geen geval wilde hij nog in de stad zijn. Hij kende een

schuilplaats in het bos. Dat was nog van de oorlog. Daar ging hij toen wonen. Hij zou een bosmens worden, want dan had je nergens meer wat mee te maken. Hij zou wel van bessen leven, en al het andere wat in het bos te vinden zou zijn. Hij was hier helemaal alleen, maar hij zou zijn weg wel vinden. Hij wilde in geen geval meer terug.
'Laten ze elkaar maar opvreten in de stad,' dacht Juko. 'Waar vechten we voor ? In het bos is al die onzin er niet.' Maar Juko kwam er al snel achter dat het leven in het bos zwaar was. Er was een heleboel niet te krijgen in het bos, en voedsel was er schaars. Hij zou soms terug naar de stad moeten voor voedsel. Of misschien moest hij dieper het bos in ? Hij koos voor het laatste. Hij wilde niet opgeven. 'Satanskerk, satanskerk,' dacht hij telkens bij zichzelf. En zelfs veel christelijke kerken zouden niets dan satanskerken zijn. De meningen over wat satan was waren verdeeld, maar wat hij over de satanskerk had gelezen was niet goed. Als dat toch eens waar zou zijn. Hij wilde geen risico lopen, maar toen vond hij zichzelf ook weer laf. Misschien hadden ze zijn hulp wel nodig. Maar wie was hij ? Wat kon hij doen ? Hij voelde zich zo machteloos. Ze moesten maar net als hem leven. Waarom zou hij zijn leven wagen voor stadsmensen ? Maar ja, de satanskerken

hielden mensen ook opgesloten. Mens, kind en dier. Nee, dat kon niet als dat waar zou zijn. Juko moest terug. Dat moest van hemzelf. Maar dan moest hij eerst een strategie hebben, en die had hij niet. Het zou bijna zelfmoord zijn als hij terug zou gaan. Daarom ging hij eerst dieper het bos in om wijze raad te zoeken. Hij kwam aan bij een huisje waar een oud vrouwtje woonde. Ze vertelde hem alles over de satanskerk, hoe zij alles in de stad besturen, ook de christelijke kerken. Ze vertelde hem over wat ze in het geheim deden. Dit was precies wat de boeken zeiden, maar er bestond volgens hem niet zoiets als meeste stemmen gelden, want de leugen was hysterisch en massaal. De leugen was een besmettelijke ziekte. 'Ik heb het zelf meegemaakt, lieve jongen,' zei de vrouw. 'En daarom woon ik hier.' En toen begon ze een verhaal over haar leven te vertellen. Juko kon zijn tranen niet inhouden.
'Wat moeten we doen ? Wat moeten we doen ?' vroeg Juko.
'Wat kunnen we doen ?' vroeg de vrouw.
'Ja, maar zoveel kinderen,' zei Juko. 'We kunnen hen toch niet zomaar aan hun lot overlaten ?'
'Ze zullen hier ook wel komen,' zei de vrouw, 'net als ons.'
'Ja, maar hoe dan ?' vroeg Juko. 'Ze hebben onze hulp

nodig.'
'Nee,' zei de vrouw. 'Je kunt niet terug. Hier ben je veilig. Je hebt een spoor achtergelaten. Dat kunnen ze volgen.'
'Maar hoe dan ?' vroeg Juko.
'Het is een raadsel wat alleen kinderen kunnen oplossen,' zei de vrouw.
'Ja, maar de mensen en dieren dan ?' vroeg Juko.
'Wie niet wordt als een kind kan niet komen,' zei de vrouw.
'Maar hoe kunnen ze een kind worden als ze geen kind meer zijn ?' vroeg Juko.
'In het hart, het hart,' zei de vrouw. 'In het hart is een pad. De satanskerk heeft geen hart. Ze zijn versteend als de stad zelf. Maar kinderen zullen hun weg er wel door vinden tot de natuur.'
Juko moest even aan Kas denken, en aan Jonas. 'Ik hoop dat mijn schoolvrienden het halen,' zei hij.
'Natuurlijk,' zei de vrouw. 'Als ze zijn voorbestemd, dan zeker.'
'Voorbestemd ?' vroeg Juko. 'wat betekent dat ?'
'De natuur kent de haren,' sprak de vrouw geheimzinnig. 'Het komt vanuit de diepte, en gaat weer terug tot de diepte.' Toen vaagde de stem van de vrouw weg en Juko werd wakker.

't Was maar een droom,' zei Juko tegen zichzelf. Hij stond op, kleedde zich aan, en moest naar school. Hij was blij Kas te zien en Jonas. Hij vroeg hen of ze wisten wat de satanskerk was. 'Geen idee,' zei Kas. 'Is dat iets christelijks ?' Toen begon Juko zijn hele droom te vertellen. 'Vreemd,' zei Kas. Jonas had al die tijd geluisterd. 'Een vriend van mij heeft daar wel boeken van,' zei Jonas.
'Eigenlijk wil ik er niets van weten,' zei Juko.
'Beter ook niet,' zei Jonas. 'Het is heel eng.'
'Zoals in mijn droom ?' vroeg Juko.
Jonas knikte.
'Maar hoe kon ik zoiets dromen ?' vroeg Juko.
'Misschien roept moeder natuur je,' zei Jonas. 'Misschien ben jij wel voorbestemd.'
Juko keek om zich heen. Hij keek naar het gebouw. Waar was hij ? Nee, dit was geen school. Alles stond stil. Hij keek naar Kas en Jonas, en ze spraken en bewogen niet meer. Alles stond stil. Was hij wel echt wakker ? Hij werd wakker in een slaapkamer van het huisje in het bos waar de vrouw woonde. Bij het ontbijt vertelde hij de droom, en hij zei er ook bij dat hij niet zeker wist of hij wel echt wakker was nu. Het kon nog steeds een droom zijn.
'Je droomt,' zei de vrouw.

'Ja, maar waar ben ik dan, en wie ben ik dan ?' vroeg Juko.
'Je bent in het bos,' zei de vrouw. 'Ik heb je die bessen gegeven. Nu droom je. Het bos loopt hier over in dromen.'
'Maar die satanskerk, is dat waar ?' vroeg Juko.
'Het is een andere realiteit,' zei de vrouw.
'Wat moeten we dan doen ?' vroeg Juko.
'Afstand nemen,' zei de vrouw. 'Dieper het bos in, dieper dromen. Het was maar een nachtmerrie. De dromen zijn ervoor om de nachtmerrie uit te leggen. De nachtmerrie is schoolmateriaal. Je moet nog leren wat het is. De stadschool is de nachtmerrie, de bosschool is de droom, je onderwijzer.'

Ik kwam die morgen van de trap af naar beneden en ging de huiskamer in en groette mijn oom en tante waarbij ik logeerde. We waren allemaal wakker geworden van een lange nacht, de zwarte nacht, gemaakt door dwergen. We hadden naar hun schat gekeken en het had ons verblind, en daarom duurde de zwarte nacht zo lang, omdat we onder een betovering waren.
Ik omhelsde mijn tante, en toen mijn oom, en ik weende. Ik was blij dat we allemaal wakker waren geworden. Mijn tante weende ook, en ook mijn oom. ‘Waar zijn de anderen ?’ vroeg ik.
‘In de lange nacht,’ zei mijn tante.
‘Oh, die moeten dus nog wakker worden,’ zei ik. ‘Ik dacht altijd dat dwergen zulke goede en lieve wezens waren.’
‘Er zitten ook kwaaien tussen,’ zei mijn tante.
‘Dat heb ik wel gemerkt,’ zei ik. Mijn oom knikte.
Daar kwam de poes. Ik nam hem op mijn schouder. Ik was blij hem te zien. Het voelde kalmerend aan.
Maar iets klopte er niet. Nee, ik was nog steeds woelend in de zwarte nacht, worstelend. Ik moest niet meer naar de schat kijken, maar de dwergen hielden het steeds voor

mijn neus. Ik riep wat, maar ik kon mezelf niet verstaan. Ik was op een schip in woeste golven. Daar zag ik mijn oom weer. ‘Dus toch, dus toch,’ riep ik. ‘We zijn ontwaakt !’ Maar we moesten vechten voor ons leven. De golven die over het dek spoelden voelden zo warm aan.
‘We zijn bij het paradijs !’ riep ik.
‘Bijna !’ riep mijn oom, die aan het hozen was.
Het was donker, maar ik zag de morgen komen, en ik zag dat we dichtbij een eiland waren. Ik zag prachtige natuur.
‘We zouden er zelfs naartoe kunnen zwemmen,’ zei mijn tante, die net uit de kajuit kwam. Ik omhelsde haar weer. Ze gaf mij een kus.
‘Ik heb je zo gemist,’ zei ik, en ik weende weer. Zij weende ook. We hielden elkaar heel lang vast, maar toen moesten we gaan zitten, want het schip schommelde teveel, en er waren nog steeds woeste golven. ‘Dit is het paradijs,’ zei ze. ‘Die golven komen ons halen.’
Plotseling kwam er een enorme golf over het schip, die ons meesleurde. Ik voelde me geweldig. Even later spoelden we aan op het strand van het natuur-eiland. Het was hier prachtig. Prachtige struiken, prachtige bomen met grote bladeren, dikke bladeren, en het zand was hier warm en heel zanderig. ‘We zitten eronder,’ zei mijn oom. Ik

raakte hem even aan. ‘Ben jij het echt ?’ vroeg ik. Hij glimlachte. ‘Ja, ik ben het echt,’ zei hij. Ik omhelsde hem toen, en weende weer, en hij weende ook. ‘Het was een verschrikkelijke nacht,’ zei ik. ‘Te verschrikkelijk voor woorden.’
Hij knikte, en zei zachtjes ‘ja.’ Hij was nooit een man van vele woorden geweest.
Dit kon gewoon niet waar zijn. Dat kon gewoon niet. Het leek alsof de zwarte nacht nog steeds aan mij trok. Ik had steken in mijn hoofd en nare gedachten. Mijn oom nam mij bij mijn arm en trok mij met hem mee verder het eiland op. Mijn tante volgde. Ik voelde overal pijn van de zwarte nacht. We kwamen aan bij een huisje. Het leek een soort vakantie huisje, maar het had vele kamers en was langwerpig, als een sta-caravan maar dan veel groter en meer als een huis. We gingen naar binnen en er hingen overal gordijnen van gaas door het huis heen.
Er was hier een vrouw die op blote voeten liep en er uitzag als een hippie, alsof we weer terug waren in de zeventiger jaren. Ze had het allemaal over channelen, en dat relaties ook allemaal om channelen ging. Hele verhalen hing ze op. Ze was heel gastvrij. ‘Dus jullie komen uit de zwarte nacht ?’ vroeg ze na haar lange verhaal over channelen.

Wij knikten en zeiden ‘ja.’
‘Wij komen allemaal uit de zwarte nacht,’ zei ze. ‘Wij zijn hier om hen die uit de zwarte nacht komen op te vangen.’
Ik knikte. Ik vertelde haar dat ze op een hippie leek uit de zeventiger jaren.
‘De zwarte nacht begon in de tachtiger jaren,’ zei ze. ‘We werden allemaal in slaap gehouden. Nu zijn we terug in de zeventiger jaren.’
‘Oh, we zijn terug ?’ vroeg ik.
Ik voelde pijn, pijn en pijn. Ik keek naar haar voeten. ‘Nee !’ riep ik. ‘Ik wil niet terug naar de zeventiger jaren !’ Ik rende naar buiten verder het eiland op. Ik was bang om weer in de zwarte nacht te worden getrokken. Mijn oom en tante volgden mij. Maar ze werden door iets tegengehouden, en hier waren ook allemaal gordijnen van gaas. Ik zag een donkere vrouw bij een tent waar ook gaas hing. ‘Wat is dat ?’ vroeg ik. De vrouw kwam naar me toe.
‘Welkom,’ zei ze, met een Surinaams accent. ‘Dat je mij nog hebt kunnen vinden na de zwarte nacht. Velen komen niet zo ver. Mijn complimenten.’ Ze gaf me toen een zoen. Ze gaf me toen een rieten stoel met gaatjes en gebood me te zitten. Ik zag mijn oom en tante nog steeds worstelen met de gordijnen van gaas in de verte.

‘Laat ze maar even worstelen,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Ze komen vanzelf wel.’
‘Wie bent u ?’ vroeg ik.
‘Doet niet ter zake,’ zei ze. ‘Het zijn geen problemen.’
Maar toen vaagde haar stem weg, en ook zijzelf. Ik begon naar mijn tante en oom te roepen, maar toen vond ik dat geen goed idee, en ging nog verder het eiland op. Hier begon alles te draaien, en ik moest terug, ik kon niet anders. Weer zag ik mijn tante en oom achter gaas, en daarachter lag het huis van de hippie vrouw. Ik besloot maar bij de tent te blijven. Ik was ineens heel moe, en er was daar een bed achter een gordijn van gaas, wit gaas, en ik ging op het bed liggen. Ik was zo moe. Al snel viel ik in slaap, en zag de donkere vrouw weer in een droom. ‘Als je nou snel bent, dan kun je bij me eten, ik ben even aan het koken,’ zei ze.
‘Daar gaat het niet om,’ zei ik. ‘Ik heb geen honger.’
‘Oh nee, oh nee ?’ vroeg ze toen. ‘Waar ga je dan naartoe als je niet met me wil spelen ?’
‘Wie bent u ?’ vroeg ik weer.
‘Het wonder van de rivier,’ zei ze. ‘Je hebt in mij gekeken, en hebt zo de vloek van de zwarte nacht verbroken.’
De droom vaagde weer weg en ik viel in een diepere slaap.

‘Kom met me mee,’ zei ze toen. ‘Ik wil je iets laten zien.’
Ik werd weer wakker en zag dat ze er weer was. ‘Ik ben zo moe,’ zei ik.
Ze had kleine zwarte dwergjes aan haar hand, en die liepen ook door de tent heen, en buiten. ‘De dwergen van de zwarte nacht,’ zei ze.
‘Oh, die boosdoeners,’ zei ik. ‘Zijn we in gevaar ?’
‘Welnee,’ zei ze. ‘We zouden juist in gevaar zijn als we ze niet zouden hebben opgemerkt. Nu, wegwezen jongens, terug het bos in.’
En toen maakten de dwergjes het op een lopen. Ze glimlachte. ‘Zie, niks aan de hand,’ zei ze.
Ik keek in haar ogen en droomde weg. Ik kon er een nieuwe wereld in zien, een nieuwe tijd. Ze omhelsde mij, en legde haar hand op mijn hoofd.
‘U moet moeder natuur wel zijn,’ zei ik.
‘Ja, mijn jongen, mijn zoon,’ sprak ze. ‘Ik ben het wonder van de rivier, de verdrijver van de zwarte nacht.’
‘Oh, u bent de morgen van de natuur ?’ vroeg ik.
‘Zoiets,’ zei ze.
‘Dat was vroeger altijd mijn stopwoord,’ zei ik. ‘Of zoiets.’
Ze glimlachte. ‘Ja, je hebt altijd veel om mij geroepen. Daarom ben je hier. Ik heb je geroep beantwoord.’

Daar kwamen mijn oom en tante aan. Ze waren eindelijk

langs de gordijnen van gaas heengegaan. ‘Wie is zij ?’ vroeg mijn tante.

‘Moeder natuur, aangenaam,’ zei de donkere vrouw, terwijl ze haar hand uitstak. ‘En dit hier is mijn zoon, mijn roepende en geroepene.’

‘Ze is het wonder van de rivier, tante,’ zei ik. ‘De morgen van de natuur. Door haar zijn wij ontwaakt.’

‘Ach welnee,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Jullie hebben jezelf wakker gemaakt door jullie geroep. Ik ben slechts de echo ervan.’

Einde

Op naar de volgende klant

Vrouwen hebben soms hele duistere mechanismes waar veel meer achter steekt dan je op het eerste gezicht zou denken. Mannen hebben dat soms ook. Daarover gaat het nu volgende verhaal.
Kun je het je voorstellen ? Je belt naar de uitvaartverzekering om wat vragen te stellen, en je krijgt een vrouw aan de lijn die dat voor je uit gaat zoeken en daarvoor even geduld vraagt, en dat je dan zegt : ‘Oh, ik heb alle tijd, doe maar rustig aan,’ en dat zij dan zegt : ‘dat komt goed uit, want ik heb ook alle tijd, kunnen we daarna ook gezellig even wat babbelen.’
Het is mij eens overkomen. Meestal heb ik stijve pieten aan de lijn, de hele enkele keren dat ik naar zo’n instantie bel. Ik kon het me ook goed voorstellen hoe die vrouw was, want je zou daar maar werken. Maar goed, ik dacht toen : Wat als ik een hele andere persoon was geweest die daar echt op ingespeeld zou hebben, want ik ben meestal gewoon bescheiden, beleefd, voorzichtig en ingetogen. Stel nu dat de persoon die zij aan de lijn had er echt een slaatje uit zou slaan ? Want ik bleef maar aan die situatie denken, aan die uitvaartverzekering en hoe zij was. Ze snakte gewoon naar het land van de levenden, om het zomaar eens te zeggen. Lijkt me een akelig beroep.

De laatste keer dat ik op een begrafenis was geweest, en dat is al heel lang geleden, op die van mijn opa, kon ik het niet meer volhouden. Dat kon gewoon niet, dat stijve gedoe allemaal. Daar zat mijn opa niet op te wachten. Het was zwaar depressief, en ik begon allemaal grapjes te maken op de begraafplaats, eigenlijk hoe een schoolgenoot dat deed op het college tijdens de excursie naar Parijs, waar we ook een begraafplaats bezochten. 'Wat een dode boel hier.' En : 'Het is hier doodstil,' zei hij. En daarna : 'Ik wordt er doodziek van.' Hij had heel veel humor. De buschauffeur had ijs gegeten en zijn snor zat eronder. Die jongen zei toen : 'Mag ik uw snor aflikken.' Door zijn humor was het een leuke excursie, en kan je zo'n bezoekje aan een begraafplaats toch beter verwerken. Nu moest ik dus nog zo'n telefoontje naar de uitvaartverzekering verwerken, en het was al een hulp dat het zo'n aardige, gezellige vrouw was, maar ik bleef er maar aan denken, en 'wat als ze een persoon aan de lijn had gekregen die hier veel verder mee was gegaan.' En zo ontstond dit verhaal.

Op naar de volgende klant

Hij belde naar zijn uitvaartverzekering voor wat vragen. De vrouw die hij aan de telefoon kreeg moest dat even uitzoeken en vroeg even geduld.
‘Oh, ik heb alle tijd,’ zei hij, ‘doe maar rustig aan.´
‘Nou,’ zei de vrouw, ‘dat komt goed uit, want ik heb ook alle tijd, kunnen we daarna ook gezellig even wat babbelen.’
‘Nou ja,’ zei hij, ‘als u er dan toch over begint kunnen we ook net zo goed telefoon-sex hebben.’
De vrouw begon te lachen. ‘Ik kom zo bij u terug, even wat uitzoeken.’
‘Daar ben ik weer,’ sprak ze.
‘Welcome back,’ zei hij.
‘Dank u, nou ik heb het voor u uitgezocht, uw vraag, en het klopt helemaal wat u zegt.’
‘Nou ja,’ zei hij, ‘dat is dan mooi opgelost, en ik kan me voorstellen dat u ook wel aan wat uitstapjes toe bent met zo’n beroep. U houdt er zeker niet van om alleen te zijn in zo’n kantoor.’
‘Ach, ik ben eraan gewend,’ zei ze.
‘Ik vind het maar griezelig,’ zei hij. ‘Maar ja, geboorte, de

dood, leven en sex horen bij elkaar. We kunnen trouwens ook gewoon een afspraak maken. Aan de telefoon is alles ook zo afstandelijk.'
De vrouw begon te lachen. 'U bent me wel een doorzetter, maar leuk. Dat heb ik nog nooit meegemaakt dat iemand me dat bij het werk vroeg. Ze willen meestal weer zo snel mogelijk de hoorn op de haak gooien. Het is natuurlijk een onderwerp waar men liever niet over spreekt, en waar men liever niet te lang over nadenkt.'
'Begrijp ik, begrijp ik,' zei hij, 'maar ik heb oog voor de persoon achter het werk. Ik zou u graag eens ontmoeten. Dan kunnen we elkaar van een hele andere kant leren kennen.'
'Jazeker,' zei de vrouw. 'Klinkt heel gezellig.'
'En trouwens,' zei hij, 'het is de eerste keer dat ik een gezellig iemand bij jullie aan de lijn heb, want meestal zijn het allemaal van die saaie pieten met zakelijke stemmen.'
Opeens werd de verbinding verbroken. Na een paar dagen kreeg hij een brief van haar dat ze werd afgeluisterd, en dat ze het te ver vonden gaan, dus werd de verbinding verbroken. Ze had een waarschuwing gekregen, maar wilde het contact wel buiten werk uren met hem onderhouden.

Hij was blij, en schreef haar een brief terug. Hij vroeg zich af waarom ze hem niet gewoon gebeld had na werkuren, maar het bleek niet zo makkelijk te zijn. Waarom legde ze dan ook niet uit. Ze maakten een afspraak per brief ergens in een plantsoen. Toen ze elkaar uiteindelijk daar tegen kwamen was het heel amicaal. Ze omhelsden elkaar direct en waren blij elkaar te zien.
‘Ja, zie je,’ zei ze, ‘ik heb een vriendin, en die houdt alles in de gaten.’
‘Oh, een vriendin ?’ zei hij, ‘ben je er zo een. Maar vindt ze dit dan wel goed ?’
‘Nee, eigenlijk niet. Maar ik moet er even uit, want ze is zo beknellend,’ maakte ze duidelijk.
‘Maar hebben jullie een relatie of is het gewoon een huisgenoot ?’ vroeg hij.
‘Huisgenoot,’ zei ze, ‘maar het zit heel ingewikkeld. Het is haar huis, en ze had mij geholpen met schulden, en ze heeft allemaal vreemde voorwaarden.’
‘Ik zie het, klinkt griezelig,’ zei hij. ‘En je werk betaalt je niet genoeg uit om op jezelf te wonen ?’
‘Nee joh,’ zei ze. ‘Daar vangt zij het grootste gedeelte van. Ik zit helemaal aan de ketting op dit moment.’
‘Maar dan kom je toch gewoon bij mij wonen ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Nee joh, dat kan niet, want ik zit vast aan het contract, met al die voorwaarden. Dat gaat me nooit lukken,’ zei ze.
‘Ik moet ook weer op tijd terug zijn, dus we kunnen wel ergens een ijsje kopen en even wat babbelen, maar dan moet ik toch echt weer terug.’
Zo gezegd, zo gedaan. Ze gingen ergens een ijsje kopen, babbelden weer wat, en toen moest ze weer gaan.
Via een brief liet ze toen weten dat ze wel dan meer afspraakjes zoals deze konden maken, maar dat ze ook in code taal aan de telefoon konden praten. Die code taal moest hij dan leren. Hij vond het allemaal zwaar ingewikkeld, maar stond er wel voor open. Zo belde hij haar soms en spraken in code taal. Maar na een tijdje begon ze niet meer op te nemen, en kwamen er ook geen brieven meer. Hij besloot naar haar huis te gaan om te kijken wat er gaande was. Haar vriendin deed open, en hij vroeg naar haar. ‘Ze is overleden,’ zei ze.
‘Waaraan ?’ vroeg hij geschrokken.
‘Doodsoorzaak onbekend,’ zei ze.
Maar hij hoorde haar roepen vanuit de kamer. ‘Ik hoor haar, laat me erdoor.’ Hij drukte de vriendin opzij en ging naar binnen.
‘Dat kun je niet doen !’ riep ze. ‘Mijn vriendin …’

Hij keek achter zich en daar stond haar vriendin met een getrokken pistool. Hij moest zich toen uitkleden en moest een kooi in. ‘Wat een raar gedoe allemaal,’ zei hij.
‘Ja, ze is gek,’ zei zijn meisje. ‘Doe nou maar gewoon wat ze zegt.’
‘Ik ben niet gek,’ zei haar vriendin. ‘We hadden nog wat af te handelen.’
‘Vreemde zaak, vreemd bedrijf,’ zei hij. ‘En wat is dat voor bedrijf, wat voor soort schuldaflossing is het ?’
‘Afwas-fabriek,’ zei ze. ‘Wij maken afwasmiddelen.’
‘Zit je me in de maling te nemen ?’ vroeg hij.
‘Nee,’ zei ze, ‘zo zitten de zaken nu eenmaal. Ik heb haar schuld afgelost, ik heb haar van haar vriendje gered, en ik heb gezworen dat ik haar voor de rest van haar leven zou beschermen.’
‘Dat is waar,’ zei zijn meisje, ‘maar ze is een beetje overbeschermend. Ik heb het gevoel dat ik stik.’
‘Houd even je mond,’ zei haar vriendin, ‘dit heerschap hier is een mogelijk gevaar voor jouw geestelijke gezondheid.’
‘Lijkt er eerder op dat je zelf het gevaar bent. Het probleem heeft zich nu verschoven van het vriendje naar de vriendin,’ zei hij.
‘Houd jij ook even je mond,’ zei ze. ‘Luister : Zij is

psychisch helemaal niet capabel. Ze is wilsonbekwaam. Ik heb de papieren van haar psychiater, en ik ben over haar aangesteld.'
'Ja, die psychiaters kunnen wel meer vertellen, dat zegt allemaal niet zoveel. Haar wordt haar vrijheid ontnomen zo, en dat is een misdaad,' zei hij. 'Wat je nu trouwens allemaal doet is ook een misdaad, maar dat is een ander verhaal.'
'Luister,' zei de vriendin : 'Je begrijpt er helemaal niets van. Ze heeft een gevaarlijke ziekte. Ik zeg het maar even. Ik neem jou ook in bescherming tegen haar nu.'
'En wat is die ziekte dan wel ?' vroeg hij.
'Nou, ze maakt van haar werk haar hobby, en van de zaak iets persoonlijks,' zei ze. 'Ze papt aan met klanten, en daar kunnen de grootst mogelijke ongelukken van komen. Ze kent geen onderscheid tussen haar beroep en sociale contacten.'
'Ja, maar dat maakt toch niet uit ?' zei hij.
'Jawel,' zei ze. 'Ze werkt bij een uitvaartcentrum, en dan weet je hoe laat het is.'
'Nou,' zei hij. 'Daarom bood ik haar ook telefoonsex aan. De dood hoort bij het leven, bij geboorte, en ook bij sex.'
'Zie, dat bedoel ik,' zei ze. 'Dat kun je toch niet maken ?'

‘Ik snap niet wat haar ziekte dan precies is,’ zei hij, ‘en hoe zou dat gevaarlijk zijn. Wees nu eens concreet, want het enige gevaar ben jij volgens mij. Als ik het mis heb moet je het maar zeggen, maar je hebt me inmiddels met je pistool tot uitkleden gedwongen en ik zit hier in een kooi.’
‘Dat heeft er allemaal niets mee te maken,’ zei ze.
‘Ik begrijp jou niet,’ zei hij. ‘Ik begrijp hier helemaal niks van. Waarom doe je zo ?’
‘Laat haar nou maar,’ zei zijn meisje toen. ‘Zo is ze altijd al geweest.’
‘Ik kan er maar niet aan wennen,’ zei hij.
‘Trek nu je kleren maar weer aan,’ zei ze, ‘en kom uit die kooi, en ga weg en vergeet alles wat hier gebeurd is.’
‘Ben je gek ?’ zei hij. ‘Dat is mijn meisje.’
‘Ben jij gek ?’ vroeg ze. ‘Dat is mijn vriendin.’
‘Nee, je bezit haar, houdt haar in gevangenschap, hebt haar gehersenspoeld, enzovoorts,’ zei hij.
‘Okay, mijnheer enzovoorts, en nu opdonderen, want je begint op mijn zenuwen te werken,’ zei ze. ‘Vertrek en vergeet alles wat hier is gebeurd.’
Met haar pistool dwong ze hem toen de straat op, met zijn kleren in zijn armen. Hij heeft zich toen aangekleed en vertrok weer naar huis. Een paar dagen erna kreeg hij een

afscheidsbrief.

‘Afscheidsbrief,

Bedankt voor de ontzettend gezellige tijd.
Helaas is mijn vriendin er tussen gekomen, en heeft het niet het gewenste resultaat opgeleverd.
Ik hoop dat u mij kunt vergeven.
De liefde was wederzijds, maar mijn plichten roepen mij.
Uitvaarten zijn een stuk duurder geworden, dat moet ik u beroepshalve mededelen.
Uw huidige verzekering dekt niet het bedrag wat u nodig zult hebben.
Ik heb daarmee mijn plicht voleindigd om u dit mede te delen.’

Hij is toen huilend teruggegaan, en ze hebben hem er toen op gewezen dat hij toch echt zijn verzekeringsbedrag moest verhogen. Dat heeft hij toen gedaan, en toen kreeg hij haar mee. Ja ja, de uitvaartverzekeringen van vandaag hebben hun taktieken. ‘Wat een gedoe allemaal,’ dacht hij. Maar hij had haar nu in ieder geval. Misschien dat dingen zo werkten.

‘Zit ik nu opgescheept met een robot ?’ dacht hij na een tijdje.
‘Ze wil altijd maar afwassen, en ons hele huis staat vol met afwasmiddelen, zelfs op zolder.’
Hij kwam erachter dat ze inderdaad een robot was.
Het bleek dat de uitvaartverzekering een onderhandelingscontract had met de afwasfabriek.
Zo profiteerden ze beiden van deze klant.
Maar ja, goed, hij had nu tenminste een vrouw, ook al was ze een robot.
Op een dag nam ze de benen, rende het bos in, en verdween in een bosmeertje.
Ze had een briefje achtergelaten : ‘Op naar de volgende klant.’

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De Wonderplaatjes

Hij verkocht plaatjes van vrouwen. De plaatjes bewogen, maar het waren eigenlijk een soort verhalen. Volgens de politie gingen de verhalen te ver, en daarom was het ook verboden. Plaatjesdealers waren in de ogen van de politie erger dan drugsdealers. Hij verkocht de plaatjes daarom ook altijd stiekem, en liever helemaal niet. Dit maakte hem mysterieus. Zijn plaatjes waren gewild, maar eigenlijk moest je wel heel speciaal zijn wilde je een kans hebben zo'n plaatje van hem te kunnen kopen. De plaatjes waren ook nog eens erg duur. Theo was helemaal door het dolle heen toen hij op een dag zo'n zeer gewild plaatje kon bemachtigen. Hij kon er uren naar staren. Het plaatje bewoog, en ook de lippen van de vrouw, en zij vertelde een verhaal. Het plaatje gaf dus ook geluid af. Met een draaischijf aan de zijkant van het

plaatje kun je het geluid harder of zachter zetten. Hij liet het verhaal telkens weer afspelen totdat hij het uit zijn hoofd kende en gewoon naar de lippen van de vrouw keek. Hij vond het verhaal helemaal niet te ver gaan, maar hij hoorde van anderen dat de andere verhalen veel erger waren. Hij zou wel meer van zulke plaatjes willen hebben, maar hij was al dolgelukkig dat hij er één had. Hij had nooit gedacht dat het hem op een dag zou lukken zo'n plaatje te krijgen. Al zijn klasgenootjes waren stikjaloers.

Hij speelde er teveel mee, zelfs op school, en op een dag nam de juffrouw het van hem af. 'Je weet dat die plaatjes verboden zijn,' zei de juffrouw. En hij wist toen dat de pret was afgelopen. Hij was te ver gegaan en te onvoorzichtig geweest. Hij kon zichzelf wel voor z'n kop slaan. Sommige jongens van de oudere klassen lieten nog steeds hun plaatjes wapperen, maar alleen op het schoolplein. Ze zouden het niet in de klas doen waar de meester of juffrouw het kon zien. Het waren vaak vrienden van de jongen die de plaatjes

verkocht. Theo vertelde het verhaal aan de jongen die de plaatjes verkocht toen hij hem weer zag, maar die was niet geïnteresseerd. "Had je maar beter moeten oppassen," zei de jongen. "Je krijgt geen nieuwe."

Theo ging teleurgesteld naar huis, en vertelde het aan zijn vader en moeder. "Ach," zei zijn moeder, "ik heb nog wel zulke plaatjes voor je. Wij hadden ze vroeger ook. Ze moeten ergens in een doos op zolder liggen nog." Theo was helemaal door het dolle heen. Zijn moeder kwam even later aanzetten met een hele schoenendoos vol met bewegende plaatjes. Theo nam ze één voor één uit de schoenendoos. "Wat zijn het voor verhalen, mam ?" vroeg hij.

"Ga ze maar luisteren," zei zijn moeder, "maar neem ze nooit mee naar school. Je hebt inmiddels gezien wat er dan kan gebeuren."

Hij nam de schoenendoos mee naar zijn kamer en ging luisteren. Hij hing de plaatjes in zijn kamer. Niemand, maar dan ook

niemand, kon zijn geluk nog tegenhouden. Hij begon zich steeds meer op zijn kamer op te sluiten, en wilde niet meer naar school. De plaatjes onderwezen hem beter, zei hij. Maar hij werd een verslaafde, en had al snel andere plaatjes nodig. Hij zocht contact met de plaatjesdealer, maar die dacht dat hij gek geworden was. "Kijk eens naar jezelf," zei de plaatjesdealer, "je staat helemaal te trillen, en je ogen zijn helemaal rood. Dit is niet meer normaal. Hoe kwam je aan die plaatjes ?"

"Van mijn moeder," zei Theo. "Van vroeger."

De plaatjesdealer keek hem diep in zijn ogen. "Weet je het dan niet ?" zei hij. "Vroeger verkochten ze gevaarlijke rommel. Die vrouwen zijn gevaarlijk. Ze maken je gek."

"Wat kan ik doen ?" vroeg Theo. "Ik smeek je me te helpen."

De plaatjesdealer keek hem weer diep in zijn ogen. "Ik heb je gewaarschuwd," zei hij, en liep weg.

"Nee, alsjeblieft," huilde Theo. "Je moet me helpen."

De plaatjesdealer draaide zich om. "Vooruit," zei hij. "Breng mij die plaatjes van vroeger en je krijgt van mij een nieuwe." Even later kwam Theo met de schoenendoos en gaf het aan de plaatjesdealer. Theo kreeg in ruil een nieuw plaatje. Dat was alles wat hij nodig had. Toen de plaatjesdealer thuis kwam zette hij de schoenendoos met plaatjes op een tafel, en begon op de vrouwen te schelden. "Jullie moeten getemd worden. Jullie hebben die jongen helemaal het hoofd gek lopen maken." Maar het temmen liep op niets uit. De plaatjesdealer raakte gefrustreerd en op een dag gooide hij de schoenendoos met plaatjes weg. Maar toen kreeg hij ineens een ingeving. Hij dacht aan Theo, en toen aan de moeder van Theo. Hij zou de schoenendoos naar haar terugbrengen en haar zeggen dat ze het niet meer terug moest geven aan Theo. Theo's moeder begreep het hele verhaal en ze zou de schoenendoos goed opbergen. Theo's

moeder zou ook wel eens alle nieuwe plaatjes willen zien. De plaatjesdealer nam haar toen mee naar zijn huis. De plaatjes hingen door het hele huis. Theo's moeder keek haar ogen uit. "Kan ik er wat meer kopen voor Theo ?" vroeg ze. De plaatjesdealer stemde toe. De plaatjes waren heel duur, maar Theo's moeder was rijk, zeer rijk. Ze kwam toen met een heleboel nieuwe plaatjes thuis voor Theo. Maar de pret duurde niet lang. De politie had er hoogte van gekregen en begon huiszoekingen te doen, en Theo werd niet overgeslagen. De plaatjes werden in beslag genomen, en ook de schoenendoos werd gevonden en in beslag genomen.

Theo's moeder waarschuwde de politie voor het gevaar van de plaatjes, maar ze luisterden niet. Snel wist iedereen het. De politie was binnen korte tijd een stel verslaafden. Ze waren zoals Theo eens was, trillerig, met rode ogen, en smekend. Maar er waren geen meerdere plaatjes meer, hoe veel ze ook op huiszoeking gingen. Ze smeekten de plaatjesdealer om meer plaatjes, en ze

smeekten ook Theo en zijn moeder. "Probeer het maar bij juffrouw Jans," zei Theo. "Zij heeft eens zo'n plaatje van me afgenomen." Daar strompelden ze toen als dronkaarden naartoe. "Tja," zei de juffrouw, "die heb ik eens aan mijn ex-man gegeven en die woont nu in het buitenland."

Ze moesten en zouden daar naartoe gaan, maar onderweg verdwaalden ze. Ze waren niet henzelf meer en hadden hun gevoel van orientatie verloren. "Het plaatje, het plaatje !" riepen ze. Ze had hen ook nog eens een vals adres gegeven. Ze kwamen uiteindelijk aan bij het huis van een oude vrouw aan de rand van een bos, in het buitenland. Ze vroegen direct om het plaatje. "Plaatje ?" vroeg de vrouw. "Waar hebben jullie het over ?" Toen vertelden ze stotterend en stamelend het hele verhaal, terwijl het speeksel van hun monden droop. "Ik zal direct de dokter bellen," zei het vrouwtje. "Het gaat niet goed met jullie." Toen de dokter kwam kreeg hij ook het hele verhaal te horen. "Oh, die plaatjes ?" zei hij. "Ik heb er eens een hele doos van geërfd, van

wel honderden jaren geleden. Je mag ze wel hebben als jullie denken dat het jullie gaat helpen. Ik doe er toch niets mee." De dokter nam de trillende en bevende politie-agenten mee naar zijn huis, en liet hen de doos zien. "Plaatjes, plaatjes, plaatjes !" riepen de agenten, alsof ze goud hadden gevonden. Hun ogen puilden er helemaal uit, en ze grepen de plaatjes en begonnen ze in het rond te strooien alsof ze in een geldmijn waren gekomen. "Plaatjes, plaatjes, plaatjes !" riepen ze. Dat was alles wat ze nog konden zeggen. De vrouw van de dokter schudde haar hoofd. "Die plaatjes werden vroeger verboden, en ik weet nu waarom," sprak ze. "Mensen worden stapelgek."

"Ik heb er wel een medicijn voor denk ik," zei de dokter.

"Dan mag je snel zijn," zei zijn vrouw. "Anders wordt jij er zo ook nog door aangestoken." De dokter keek zijn vrouw aan met rode ogen, en toen weer naar de plaatjes die overal om hem heen lagen. "Plaatjes,

plaatjes, plaatjes !" riep de dokter, en waggelde achter de politie-agenten aan. "We moeten meer van die rotzooi hebben, waar zijn ze ?" riep de dokter. Maar niet lang daarna kon hij ook alleen maar "plaatjes, plaatjes, plaatjes" zeggen. "Jullie hebben teveel praatjes !" riep de vrouw van de dokter. Ze begon de plaatjes op te rapen en deed ze weer in de doos. "Levensgevaarlijk zulke plaatjes," sprak ze. "Ik zal het goed opbergen." Maar de politie-agenten en de dokter waren niet meer stil te krijgen. De dokter had inmiddels zijn muziek-instrumenten gegrepen en begon ze uit te delen aan de politie-agenten, en ze begonnen muziek te maken, zo vreemd, want ze konden immers niet meer spreken. En zo gingen ze door het hele land, marcherend. En de mensen kenden het verhaal niet, maar ze vonden het prachtige muziek. En iedereen werd erdoor aangestoken, en er werden grammofoon-plaatjes van gemaakt. Iedereen had ze na een tijdje wel in huis. En er kwam vrede op aarde en niemand werd er meer ziek. Politie en dokters waren niet meer

nodig. Ze waren nu muzikanten geworden, en dat was het beste.

het prolo steegje

-- Hallo, mag ik even wat vragen. Mijn relatie is net uit, hè, en nu dacht ik : Ik zie u hier nu net lopen, en u lijkt wel een beetje op haar, dus wou ik vragen of wij dan niet samen iets zouden kunnen proberen, weet je wel, zo van misschien dat het tussen ons klikt, en dat ik dan met jou verder kan.

-Ach, maar meneer, ik ken u helemaal niet. Ik kom u hier voor het eerst tegen in het Prolo steegje. U loopt nogal hard van stapel. Dat kan echt niet hoor.

-- Ja, maar we kunnen het toch proberen ?
Nee heb je, en ja kun je krijgen.

-Ach meneer, ik heb echt geen tijd voor deze dingen. Ik heb ook nogal haast. U zult heus wel weer iemand anders vinden.

-- Ja, maar het is al laat en ik heb echt onderdak nodig. Ik ben uit huis gezet en zij

heeft al mijn bezittingen in beslag genomen. Ik heb niks meer.

-Nou goed, dan geef ik u wat geld en een fiets. Daar moet u het dan mee doen.

-- Dank u wel mevrouw.

-Zo, hier is het. Nou, goeie reis, hè, en je zal heus wel weer wat leuks vinden.

--Nou, ik heb liever niet iets leuks, maar iets sterks. Ik vind die vrouwen van tegenwoordig zo slap. Ze lopen alleen maar mooi te doen, maar hebben geen sterk karakter. Ze zijn niet sterk.

-Ja, maar meneer, daar kan ik toch ook niks aan doen ?

-- Maar u lijkt me zo'n sterke vrouw. Dat heb ik echt nodig.

-Nou, kom dan maar even met me mee naar boven. Hier woon ik. Dan kun je een douche nemen, en dan geef ik je wat te eten.

-- Nee, alsjeblieft geen eten. Ik voel me tamelijk ziek en misselijk.

-Nou, dan geef ik je een warm bed. Heb je daar wat aan misschien ? Kun je weer aansterken en tot rust komen.

-- Misschien wat water zou helpen. En ligt u dan ook in het bed ?

-Nee, wees maar niet bang. Ik slaap in een ander bed.

-- Gelukkig maar, want dat is wel eng met zo'n sterke vrouw als u.

-Eng ? Nee hoor, ik ben helemaal niet eng. Ik doe geen vreemde dingen. Heeft u nare dingen met uw vorige vrouw meegemaakt dan ?

-- Ik werd soms halfdood wakker.

-Dat is geen pretje. En u weet zeker dat het door haar kwam ?

-- Vrijwel zeker, maar haar zus sliep soms ook bij ons.

-Nou gevaarlijke familie dan. Hier zul je dat echt niet hebben. Ik ben tamelijk vreedzaam.

-- Dus ik mag komen ?

-Nou eigenlijk begin ik me te bedenken. Wat als uw vrouw en haar zus nog steeds naar u op jacht zijn ?

-- Kun je mij beschermen ?

-Nou nee, daar ben ik niet voor. Ik zou gewoon hard fietsen als ik u was. Hier heeft u uw fiets.

-- Ik ben eigenlijk te moe. Kan ik niet één nachtje bij u slapen dan ? Mag zelfs in hetzelfde bed.

-Nou ja, zeg, ik ken u helemaal niet. Ik zit hier een beetje gastvrij te lopen doen, maar heb er nu alweer spijt van.

-- Sorry. Heeft u geen zus dan die misschien wat makkelijker en handiger in deze dingen is ? Ik zoek een beetje een sterke vrouw.

-Probeert u mij nu jaloers te maken ?

-- Misschien. Ik moet toch wat.

-Nou, komt u dan gewoon met mij mee, dan gaan we het proberen.

-- Laat maar, ik zie er vanaf.

-Heeft u nu mijn tijd voor niets lopen verdoen ? Nee, u komt nu gewoon met mij mee. Niet lopen zeuren opeens. U heeft mij in dit

avontuur gestort, en ik laat me niet zomaar wegkieperen ineens.

-- Ja, maar ik wil niet.

–Dan had je dat eerder moeten bedenken. Er is nu geen weg terug meer. U gaat nu gewoon met mij mee. Jas uit, warme douche, en dan lekker slapen. Ik zorg voor de rest.

-- Maar wat als ik me bedenk ?

–Meneer, u bent wel heel erg wispelturig. U loopt toch geen spelletjes met mij te spelen hier, hoop ik hè ?

-- Okay, ik vind ook dat u helemaal gelijk hebt. Ik moet mij niet zo aanstellen.

-Goedzo. En hoe gaat ons kind heten ?

-- Melk.

-Melk ?

-- Waarom niet ? Ik heet zelf namelijk Melkert, en dat is mijn achternaam ook.

-Hmmm, Melkert Melkert … zeer charmante naam. Aangenaam met u kennis te maken. Dat dat zo maar kan in zo'n steegje hè. Zou ik normaal gesproken nooit doen, maar u heeft mij wel zo in de maling genomen en beetgehad. Dan kan ik er niet meer onderuit.

-- En u ook.

-Nou ja, misschien zijn we dan echt voor elkaar bestemd. We gaan het in ieder geval proberen.

-- Ik moet nu echt gaan hoor. Mijn vrouw wacht thuis op me, met haar zus.

-Maar u zei net tegen me dat uw relatie uit was en dat u uit uw huis was gezet ?

-- Ja, maar ze zei dat ik terug mocht komen als ik een grote buit zou hebben. Bedankt voor de fiets en het geld.

Einde

Het Gele Gevaar

Pas op voor het gele gevaar.

-- Wat is dat, dokter ?

Ik ben het gele gevaar.

-- Nou bedankt voor de waarschuwing dan, dokter. Dan zijn de rollen dus nu wel omgedraaid. Ik ben de dokter nu, want jij bent het gele gevaar.

Nee, nee, nee, dan heb je het verkeerd begrepen.

-- Ik heb helemaal niks verkeerd begrepen. Die spelletjes zijn nu afgelopen. Ik ben nu de dokter, niet jij. Jij bent het gele gevaar.

Wie zegt dat ?

-- Dat komt net uit je mond.

Waar is het bewijs ?

-- Geen bewijs nodig. Ik ben nu toch de dokter, dus ik heb geen bewijs meer nodig.

Belachelijk.

-- Goedzo, houden zo. We gaan hier niet een beetje het gele gevaar lopen spelen.

Maar je weet helemaal niet wat het is.

-- Jawel, je zei daarnet dat jij het was.

Helemaal niet. Ik moest uw oren nog laten uitspuiten.

van het jongetje en het veulentje
de veulentjeshoeder

Het veulentje moest naar school.
Daar had het veulentje geen zin in.
Het veulentje dacht : Weet je wat ? Ik ga mijn eigen school bouwen.
Maar voor een school heb je natuurlijk schoolboeken nodig,
En zo schreef het veulentje boek na boek, in grote haast.
Dag en nacht ging het door.
Al zwetend en hijgend schreef het veulentje dat het een lieve lust was.
Op een dag was de school klaar, en alle boeken geschreven, maar er kwam niemand.
Geen veulentje wilde zich eraan wagen.
Maar toen kreeg het veulentje een idee.
Hij maakte mooie strikjes, en deed die om de halzen van de andere veulentjes, en zei : 'Nu ben je van mij. En nu ben jij van deze school.'

En de veulentjes vonden de strikjes zo mooi, en het lag zo mooi om hun halzen dat ze het allemaal gingen geloven wat het veulentje zei, en braaf volgden ze het veulentje naar de nieuwe school.
In het land van de veulentjes woonde maar één jongetje.
Hij werd ook wel de veulentjeshoeder genoemd, maar eigenlijk hield hij zich niet met de veulentjes bezig. Hij had wel andere dingen te doen.
Het veulentje dacht dat het jongetje ook wel een strikje nodig had, dus het veulentje ging op pad naar het jongetje toe, en probeerde het strikje om zijn hals te doen.
'Hey,' zei het jongetje, 'wat moet dat daar ? Ik heb jouw strikjes niet nodig. Jij bent maar een veulentje, en ik ben een jongetje.'
Maar het veulentje bleef maar aandringen, en ook andere veulentjes waren meegekomen.
Het jongetje kreeg er nachtmerries van, en op een dag is hij weggerend, diep de bossen in, terwijl de veulentjes hem navolgden. Hij klom toen een grote berg op, maar was al gauw helemaal omsingeld door de veulentjes.

'Weten jullie het dan niet dat jullie maar veulentjes zijn, en ik een jongetje ?' zei het jongetje.
Bovenop de berg hing een touw die zo een wolk inging. Het jongetje klom toen op het touw naar boven, en kwam toen in een wolkenkasteel terecht waar een tovenaar hem aanstaarde. De tovenaar gaf hem toen een pen.
'Hiermee kun je altijd wegvliegen als de veulentjes je lastigvallen,' zei de tovenaar.
Toen het jongetje de pen had aangepakt van de tovenaar voelde het alsof hij vleugeltjes kreeg, en hij kon inderdaad vliegen. 'Mooizo,' zei het jongetje. En het jongetje begon te schrijven en te schrijven, en te vliegen naar allerlei andere landen waar de veulentjes niet waren.
En hij bouwde een school en heeft nooit meer last gehad van de veulentjes.

Einde

het donkere ijzer

IJzer in deze vreemde gevangenis …
Hij wilde naar de wildernis, maar zat hier vast.
Er was geen weg tot de wildernis.
Hij had een kamer hier. Maar er waren overal vreemde tralies en bij het minste of geringste gingen er alarmen af.
Wat moest hij doen ? Hij verveelde zich hier, maar had wat oude boeken op zijn kamer.
Hij wist niet meer hoe hij hier was gekomen.
Alles was donker hier, maar de boeken kon hij nog net lezen.
Het waren boeken over de wildernis.
Zo kon hij zich wanen in de wildernis, en als hij sliep droomde hij erover.
Hij wilde vrij zijn, maar hij was het niet.
Als hij ontwaakte voelde hij zich altijd depressief, maar de boeken gaven hem wat hoop.
Hij had geen kameraden. Er was hier niemand.

Er groeiden hier wat planten met vruchten die voedzaam waren, en waarvan hij kon drinken, maar hij had het gevoel dat het hem vergiftigde.
Hij besloot op een dag te stoppen met ervan te eten, en dronk alleen wat.
Maar hij hongerde zo uit dat het hem verzwakte.
Op sommige momenten had hij een kracht die hij niet kende.
Maar dat was meestal van korte duur.
Zijn zwakheid en moeheid werd steeds erger.
Hij trilde vaak, en beefde van de zwakheid, maar de krachten die hij soms voelde werden sterker en sterker.
Op een dag brak hij los uit de gevangenis vanwege zijn kracht, om even later te ontdekken dat het maar een droom was.
Soms als hij wakker was werd er voedsel door een luik geschoven, maar hij wist niet of hij het kon vertrouwen.
Ook waren er soms nieuwe boeken bij.
Donker ijzer.
Op een dag gooiden ze een vrouw in de gevangenis.

Ze sprak niet veel, en als ze sprak was het een andere taal.
Ze kwam uit de wildernis.
Maar het bleek maar een droom te zijn.
Hij wist niet meer het verschil tussen droom en werkelijkheid, en het kon hem niet meer zoveel schelen. Beiden was het intens, en ook de boeken waren intens. Er was geeneens meer een verschil tussen droom en werkelijkheid. Hij had het gevoel dat als hij ontwaakt was dat hij gewoon een nachtmerrie had.
Hij was in de wildernis, ja, hij was in de wildernis.
Soms stak een beest hem, en dan hallucineerde hij.
Soms had hij van een verkeerde plant of boom gegeten en dan hallucineerde hij.
Soms had hij nachtmerries, nachtmerries over een donkere, ijzeren gevangenis.

De Eddy’s

We zouden naar de Eddy’s gaan, die uitgereikt zouden worden aan de beste schrijvers. Wij vonden dat onzin, ik en mijn broertje, want goede melk behoeft geen krans. Maar we gingen er naartoe om schrijvers te ontmoeten en om te zoeken naar bijzondere boeken, in Geneve. We hadden al snel wat boeken gevonden en liepen al lezend door de stad. Calvijn zou ook komen naar de Eddy’s uitreiking, en die wilden we toch graag even zien. De Eddy’s waren onder een vloek. Dat wisten we wel zeker. Er waren wat dakloze calvinisten die ons aanvielen en ons bespuugden omdat wij er in hun ogen te armoedig uitzagen. Het lef dat sommige mensen hebben. Er is natuurlijk altijd weer baas boven baas, en arme onder armen. De armen zijn tegenwoordig racistisch naar de nog armeren, zoals de donkeren racistisch zijn naar de nog donkeren. Wij hadden natuurlijk geen plaats in Geneve, kwamen

daar als landlopers, terwijl de calvinistische daklozen wel plaats hadden in Geneve, door mamma, zo noemden ze haar. Mamma had hen allemaal binnengenomen en ze leefden in schuilplaatsen. Zo bevoorrecht waren wij niet, dus moesten wij bespuugd worden. In ons eigen land waren armoedige kleren in de mode, en alhoewel zij ook armoedige kleren hadden accepteerden zij dat niet. Het kwam er misschien door dat onze kleren meer scheuren had, maar dat was in ons land de mode : hoe meer scheuren, hoe beter. Het kwam er ook misschien door dat onze kleren vuiler waren, maar dat was ook mode in ons land : hoe vuiler, hoe beter. Al met al besloot ik weg te vliegen, en nam ook mijn broertje op. Ik was opgelucht dat ik nog gewoon kon vliegen met hem in mijn armen. Ik had een gave. Toen pas lieten de dakloze calvinisten ons met rust. Ze zagen het en waren natuurlijk stomverbaasd. De wonderen waren de wereld nog niet uit. Ik zag de prachtige bergen in de verte, zo groot. Daar vloog ik met mijn broertje naartoe. We gingen de berg op, stap voor stap. ‘Maar moeten we niet naar

de Eddy’s ?’ vroeg mijn broertje toen. Ik keek hem aan.

‘Eigenlijk wel,’ zei ik, maar bedenk dan wel even wat voor tuig daar rondloopt.
‘Ja, maar die weten het nu,’ zei mijn broertje.
‘Heb je gelijk in, heb je gelijk in,’ zei ik toen.
En toen zijn we weer teruggegaan naar de Eddy’s. Calvijn was er ook, met drie bodyguards in het blauw.
Wat hadden die een spieren, niet normaal meer. Daar zou je naar van worden.
Ze gingen ook het podium op om Calvijn aan te kondigen, alsof het een staatsgreep was.
Zo werd Calvijn groot.
Hij zat maar te knikken vanaf zijn stoeltje ergens vooraan.
En alle aandacht was op hem gericht.
Toen nam hij de Eddy in ontvangst.
Ik dacht : ‘Waarom ?’ Maar ik had het zien aankomen.
Het beeldje was vervloekt.
Hij had een grote glimlach, maar zijn ogen keken boos.
Zijn ogen waren op jacht, als een ayatollah.

Toen sprak hij zijn fatwa's uit, bij gelegenheid.
De dakloze calvinisten begonnen te applaudiseren, maar anderen begonnen in paniek te raken.

'Dat kunt u niet maken !' riep iemand.
'Kan mij het schelen,' riep Calvijn.
'Ik heb nu toch de Eddy, dus ik heb het voor het zeggen.'

'Maar u heeft de juiste theologie niet !' riep iemand anders.
'Heb ik wel,' riep Calvijn, 'en deze Eddy is daarvan een bewijs.'

Ik keek naar de Eddy. Mijn ogen deden pijn, en het was alsof er wat draaide.
Ja, dat ding was onder een gigantische vloek.
En Calvijn nam hem mee naar huis.
Mijn broertje zei toen : 'Laten we dan maar weer teruggaan naar de bergen.'
En dat hebben we toen maar gedaan.
Maar toen we de deur uit wilden gaan van het gebouw was die versperd.

Calvinistische wachters stonden daar.
Het was te gek voor woorden.
We mochten niet weg.
Ik vroeg hoe lang het ging duren, maar niemand zei wat.
Later werd er aangekondigd dat er treinen zouden komen die ons zouden wegvoeren.
Het was een kidnap.
‘Waar naartoe ?’ riep iemand.
‘Ik heb haast !’ riep iemand anders. ‘Hoe lang gaat dit duren ?’

We hadden allang spijt dat we naar de Eddy’s waren gekomen.
Maar toen kwamen er drie engelen om ons te bevrijden,
en we werden alsnog naar de bergen genomen.
Ik keek naar de engelen en het leek alsof ik ze kende.
Dingen begonnen te draaien in mijn hoofd.
Ik keek naar mijn broertje, maar die was er opeens niet meer.

‘Waar is hij ?’ vroeg ik.

Er werd niet geantwoord.
Later zeiden ze dat hij even weg was.
Maar ik heb hem niet meer teruggezien.
Ik moest alleen mijn tocht maken door deze grot die zij mij aanwezen.
Waarschijnlijk moest hij door een andere grot, alleen, maar we hebben elkaar nooit meer teruggezien.

Oh, was ik maar nooit naar de Eddy's gegaan.
Was ik maar nooit naar de Eddy's gegaan.

Ik keek naar de engelen, maar het was slechts het behang van mijn slaapkamer.
Ik logeerde bij tante Riek. Het was maar een droom geweest.
Ik vertelde het aan tante Riek.
Ze moest lachen.
'Je hebt nooit een broertje gehad,' zei ze.

Ik vond het niet grappig, maar ze was een aardige vrouw.
We gingen die dag allerlei leuke dingen doen.

Ik wou dat ik een broertje had, maar tante Riek zei : ‘Het is beter zo.’
Aan het einde van de dag omhelsde ik haar.
‘Ja, ik heb liever een tante dan een broertje,’ zei ik.
‘Zo is dat,’ zei tante Riek.
Ze zong toen een vreemd liedje, en toen ik de tv aandeed was het vreemde liedje ook op de tv.
‘Ik houd van je,’ zei ik tegen tante Riek.
Toen werd ik wakker. Ook dat was slechts een droom geweest.
Tante Riek was al vele jaren terug overleden.
Ik dacht aan Calvijn.
Die was al in de jaren 1500 overleden.
Maar die had veel boeken nagelaten.
Die ben ik gaan lezen, maar ver kwam ik niet.
Toen ging ik Konsalik lezen, maar ver kwam ik ook niet.
Toen ben ik zelf schrijver geworden.
Van de Eddy’s ben ik ver weg gebleven.
Ik was immers goed voorgelicht.

Einde

Bonje in de christelijk gereformeerde kerk

De rijtjeshuizen waren hier in hele lange rijen. Eigenlijk was deze hele buurt christelijk-gereformeerd hersteld, als een afscheiding van de christelijk gereformeerde kerk waar een tiran heerste, in het centrum van de stad. Hier was het meer een omliggende wijk. Ik was hier na de scheiding terechtgekomen, ook na de echtscheiding, want met de scheiding van de kerk kwam ook de echtscheiding, want mijn vrouw bleef gewoon christelijk-gereformeerd.

Mijn zoontje kwam hier soms, maar die zei niet veel. Ook kwam mijn dove broertje zo nu en dan, en die zei ook niet veel. Het ging helemaal niet zo goed in deze herstelde buurt. Er was veel ruzie en onmin. De buren aan de rechterkant, met nog een huis ertussen, hadden we veel problemen mee gehad. Ook met de buurman aan de linkerkant met nog een huis ertussen. Ik kwam eens thuis en had hij een pot grond met een komkommer erin

voor mijn deur gezet. Hij zette ook weleens kaktussen voor de deur. Toen ik dacht dat alles wel zo’n beetje gesust was begon hij weer. Er stond weer een pot met een komkommer voor de deur, met een anonieme brief erbij, waarvan ik wist dat het van hem kwam. Ditmaal was het een hele lange komkommer, een hele grote, terwijl die van het verleden klein was. In de brief had hij het erover dat ik boxen had gekocht van 17 euro, en dat ik die had verbrand toen, wat hij wel leuk vond. Hij had ook bepaalde dingen die hij had geschreven weer doorgekrast. Het was een hele chaotische brief, waarin hij duidelijk maakte dat het tussen ons niet werkte en dat we daarom maar bij elkaar uit de buurt moesten blijven. Dat deden we al, dus ik snapte niet waarom hij weer oude koeien uit de sloot moest halen, en dan zo moest provoceren met die grote komkommer in een pot met grond voor mijn deur. Ik was er een beetje boos en verward over, en ik zag bij de buren in de tuin ineens een clowntje hangen, een soort meisjespop, en ik dacht dat dat ook van hem was, want dat had ik nog nooit zien

hangen. Ik heb die pop toen gepakt, en brak het stuk onder mijn schoenen. Toen kwam ineens de buurvrouw naar buiten, en die werd me toch een partijtje kwaad. Het poppetje zou van haar dochtertje zijn. Ik liet haar verder niet uitspreken, en zei dat het een misverstand was, dat ik dacht dat het van hun buurman van links was. Ik zou het dubbele bedrag betalen, ook vanwege de emotionele schade. Toen werd ze ineens rustig. Ik liet haar ook de brief lezen. Ze begreep het toen helemaal en vond de brief ook belachelijk.

Ik keek schuin naar de overkant, naar de linkerkant, waar ook een hele lange rij rijtjeshuizen was. De rij stopte eigenlijk niet naar links, maar hier was het hoekhuis, en daar woonde een donkere vrouw waar ik verliefd op was geweest. Het was een heel mooi huis met veel rieten spulletjes, en met een grote tuin, die een beetje een ronding had. Ik zag haar in de tuin. Ik werd weer een beetje rustig. ‘Oh, je crush is buiten,’ zei de buurvrouw toen, die haar ook zag. ‘Ja,’ zei ik, ‘een crush van een tijdje geleden.’

‘Oh, ging het niet goed ?’ vroeg ze. Maar ik kapte het gesprek af, want ik zou het geld halen. ‘Hoeveel was die pop ?’ vroeg ik. ‘Twintig euro zoveel,’ zei ze. Ik ging naar huis om het geld te halen. Mijn tas had twee hangriemen, maar eentje ervan zat los en kon ik niet zo snel meer bevestigen, dus ik hing één van de hangriemen aan mijn schouder. Ik ging terug naar de buurvrouw en gaf haar vijfenveertig euro. Ze vond het meer dan opgelost. Ik zei er nog een keer bij : ‘Ook voor de emotionele schade.’ Ik ging toen weer terug naar huis. Ik dacht na over mijn crush van een tijdje geleden. Eigenlijk durfde ik een relatie niet meer aan. Ik wilde het liever op een afstand houden. We zaten bij elkaar aan de kerk, maar daar bleef het bij. We spraken elkaar eigenlijk niet of nauwelijks. Ik was programmeur in de herstelde kerk. Ik moest onderzoek doen naar de geschiedenis, en al hun oude geschriften lezen, en het goede van het slechte onderscheiden, en zo een nieuw boek maken, als tweede boek na de bijbel. Kerkboek heette

het. Maar gemeenteleden kibbelden erover wat er wel en niet in het kerkboek zou moeten komen, terwijl het helemaal hun vakgebied niet was. Ik voelde me soms vervolgd in mijn eigen kerk. Het was mijn beroep. Ik was ervoor geroepen. Met sommige vrienden heb je geen vijanden nodig.

Maar er was in ieder geval een exodus geweest. In de eigenlijke christelijk-gereformeerde kerk was het nog wel erger met die tiran. In het centrum van de stad woonde die, waar hij ook zijn kerk had, de kerk van mijn ex-vrouw. Wat een man was dat, zeg. Dan hadden we het nu een stuk beter. Ik ging weer terug naar mijn werk, en liep door wat boeken te bladeren. Ik had een grote boekenkelder onder mijn huis met allerlei zeldzame christelijk-gereformeerde geschriften. Er zaten boeken bij die ik nog nooit had gelezen. Alle herinneringen moesten door deze boeken vervangen worden.

Einde

Koning Stuiterbal

Hij was in het bos. Hij was van huis weggelopen. Thuis ging het niet goed. Er werd altijd op hem gescholden, en hij moest altijd hard werken. Nooit was er vrije tijd. Allerlei andere dingen waren gedwongen. Hij was er helemaal klaar mee. Het was in het bos waar hij het modder monster tegenkwam, die helemaal van modder was. Hij was helemaal niet bang voor het monster. Hij dacht dat het monster nooit erger zou kunnen zijn dan waar hij vandaan kwam. Het modder monster was verbaasd dat hij niet bang voor hem was. Ieder ander mens en dier was bang voor hem. Het jongetje kwam dichterbij het monster en begon hem te aaien.

'Nu wordt je wel helemaal vies,' zei het modder monster. 'Dat geeft niet,' zei het jongetje. 'Als ik maar vrij ben.'

'Over vrijheid gesproken ...' zei het modder monster. 'Ik ben ontsnapt uit de klauwen van een heks. Het leven is beter in het bos. Het jongetje knikte, en zei dat hij een soortgelijk verhaal had. 'Dan hebben we elkaar op het juiste moment en de juiste plaats gevonden,' zei het modder monster. Het jongetje grinnikte.

Ze gingen beiden nog dieper het bos in, en het modder monster vertelde dat hij lang onder de grond moest wonen, bij de ondergrondse heks. Hij werd daar opgesloten gehouden in een klein kooitje. 'Blij dat je vrij bent nu,' zei het jongetje. 'Ik zat in een zelfde situatie. Het is goed om de bomen te ruiken en de frisse lucht van het bos. Dat is zo genezend.'

'Precies,' zei het modder monster. 'Mijn heks spoot altijd met smerige parfumspuiten en haar nagellak op haar lange nagels stonk.'

De twee hadden elkaar veel te vertellen en konden al vanaf het directe begin goed met elkaar opschieten. Na een tijdje lopen kwamen ze een koningskind tegen. Het jongetje vroeg zich af wat een koningskind zo helemaal alleen in het bos moest. Hij groette het koningskind.

'Wat ben ik blij jullie te zien,' zei het koningskind. 'Ik ben zo lang alleen geweest hier, en nu eindelijk heb ik jullie gevonden. Ik ben van het koninklijk paleis weggelopen. Niets mocht. Ik mocht zelfs niet naarbuiten anders zou ik zogenaamd vies worden.' Het koningskind trok toen een vies gezicht om na te doen hoe ze naar hem deden. 'Ik kan het niet meer,' zei het koningskind. 'Ik ben er helemaal klaar mee. Het was niet goed voor mij om daar te leven.'

Het jongetje knikte. 'Dan zit je in hetzelfde schuitje als ons. Wij zijn ook ontsnapt,' zei het jongetje.

'Goed dan dat we elkaar zijn tegengekomen,' zei het koningskind. 'We kunnen dan misschien nog veel aan elkaar hebben.'

'Welkom in de club,' zei het modder monster.

'Wat voor een club is het ?' vroeg het koningskind.

'De club van de ontsnapten,' grinnikte het modder monster.

Ook het jongetje moest grinniken, en toen grinnikte het koningskind ook.

'Nu moeten we alleen nog een plaats hebben om te leven,' zei het koningskind.

Ze liepen door in het bos, en kwamen na een tijdje aan bij een huisje wat onbewoond scheen te zijn. Alle spullen waar hier oud, en

alles lag onder de stof, alsof er niemand in vele jaren was geweest.

'Hoera,' zei het koningskind. 'Een verlaten boshuisje.'

'Hier kunnen we wonen,' zei het jongetje, die al direct alles begon te ontstoffen.
'Een beetje schoonmaken kan geen kwaad,' grinnikte het modder monster. Er waren precies drie bedden. Nadat ze de boel hadden schoongemaakt en wat hadden gegeten en gedronken gingen ze alledrie slapen, want ze waren erg moe geworden.

Maar middenin de nacht werd er op de deur geklopt. Er stonden tien soldaten aan de deur. Het jongetje had de deur opengemaakt en liet ze binnen. Het koningskind was ook wakker geworden, en kende de soldaten niet. 'Wie zijn jullie ?' vroeg het koningskind.

Maar de soldaten gaven geen antwoord.
'Misschien hebben ze honger,' zei het modder

monster. Het jongetje gaf hen wat te eten. Er waren nog genoeg verzamelde bessen.

Na een tijdje zei een soldaat wat : 'Ach.'

'Ach ?' vroeg het jongetje. 'Is er wat gebeurd ?'

'Nee,' zei een andere soldaat.

'Dus jullie komen zomaar even op bezoek,' zei het koningskind. 'Gezellig.'

'Gezellig,' zei een andere soldaat.

'Ik heb het altijd koud,' zei weer een andere soldaat.

'Hoe komt dat ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Nee, dat is zijn naam,' zei weer een andere soldaat.

'Oh,' zei het jongetje. 'Wat een grappige naam. En hoe heet jij ?'

'Ik ben te dik,' zei de soldaat.

'Ja, maar je bent helemaal niet dik,' zei het jongetje.

'Het is mijn naam,' zei de soldaat. 'Te Dik. Te is mijn voornaam, en Dik is mijn achternaam. Ik kan er niets aan doen dat ik zo heet.'

'Dat klopt,' zei het jongetje. 'Nou, een mooie naam, en ik hoop dat je zelf ook je naam leuk vindt.'

'Hij vind nooit iets leuk,' zei weer een andere soldaat.

'En wie ben jij ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Ik ben Klaas,' zei de soldaat. 'Klaas de Kale.'

'Maar je bent helemaal niet kaal,' zei het jongetje. 'Oh wacht, het is zeker je achternaam.'

'Ja,' zei de soldaat. 'En ik ben er helemaal niet blij mee. We zijn ontsnapt uit een ver land.'

'Ah,' zei het koningskind. 'Nou, welkom in de club van de ontsnapten. Wij zijn allemaal ontsnapt.'

'Aha !' riepen de soldaten blij. 'Dus wij kunnen hier blijven ?'

'Natuurlijk,' zei het modder monster. 'Wij horen allemaal bij elkaar. We maken er nog wel tien bedden bij. Het huisje is net groot genoeg.'

'Mag de prinses hier ook wonen ?' vroeg één van de soldaten. 'Wij hebben ook haar meegenomen.'

'Waar is ze ?' vroeg het koningskind.

'In een envelop,' zei de soldaat, en haalde een verfrommelde envelop uit zijn zak.

'Niet te geloven,' zei het jongetje.

Het modder monster kwam dichterbij de envelop en keek er naar. 'Ze woont in deze envelop ?' vroeg hij.

De soldaat knikte. 'Ja,' zei hij. 'Het is een plaatje.'

'Leuk,' zei het modder monster. 'En wat was de reden waarom jullie met haar zijn ontsnapt ?'

'Ze moest altijd in de keuken werken, en mocht niks. Ze is nog maar een kind,' zei de soldaat.

'Goed dat jullie voor haar opgekomen zijn,' zei het koningskind, terwijl hij een buiging maakte voor de soldaten en zijn hoed afnam. Er zat een veer op zijn hoed, als een pluim.

'Mogen wij haar zien ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Nee,' zei de soldaat. 'Het plaatje is uit een boek geknipt. Ze moet voorlopig in de envelop blijven.'

'Oh,' zei het jongetje. 'En waarom is dat ?'

Maar de soldaat zweeg.

Alle soldaten die hun naam nog niet hadden gezegd begonnen toen te vertellen hoe ze heetten. Het waren allemaal lange getallen, en ze hielden maar niet op. 'Stop, stop,' zei het jongetje. 'Het is wel duidelijk en klaar dat jullie nieuwe namen nodig hebben. Jullie namen zijn eindeloos. Dat is niet echt handig.'

'Wij zijn van het land Eindeloos,' zei een soldaat.

'En wie regeert dat land ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Koning Eindeloos,' zei de soldaat.

'En dat is ook een plaatje ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Nee,' zei de soldaat. 'Een bal. Die rolt altijd door de straten heen om de boel in de gaten te houden. Er gebeuren daar vreemde dingen.'

'Zoals wat ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Een bril,' zei de soldaat.

'Een bril ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Iedereen moet een bril dragen zodat ze alleen zullen zien wat de koning wil dat ze zien,' zei de soldaat.

'En wat zien ze dan ?' vroeg het jongetje met verbazing.

'Plaatjes,' zei de soldaat. 'De koning houdt van plaatjes.'

'Wat zijn dat voor plaatjes ?' vroeg het jongetje.

Maar de soldaat zweeg.

Het jongetje zuchtte. 'Plaatjes met praatjes,' zei een andere soldaat.

'Ik kan me voorstellen dat jullie zijn ontsnapt,' zei het jongetje.

'Ik niet,' zei de soldaat. 'Het was best leuk.'

'Wie ben jij dan ?' vroeg het jongetje. Toen noemde de soldaat een lang nummer op wat maar niet stopte.

'Heb je ook een andere naam ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Nee,' zei de soldaat.

'Maar waarom ben je dan ontsnapt ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Tja, dat weet ik ook niet,' zei de soldaat. 'Gewoon omdat de anderen het ook deden.'

'Een nalopertje dus,' grinnikte het koningskind. Ook het modder monster grinnikte.

'Maar de andere soldaten zijn dus ontsnapt omdat ze de prinses willen helpen,' zei het jongetje.

'Dat zeggen ze,' zei de soldaat. 'Maar de prinses had het best naar haar zin. Ze hoefde helemaal niet in de keuken te werken. Allemaal leugens.'

'Tegengestelde verhalen dus,' zei het jongetje. 'En wat zegt de prinses er zelf van ?'

'Die praat niet,' zei de soldaat. 'Ze is nog te jong om te praten. Plaatjes praten pas als ze zes zijn.'

'Misschien als het koningskind en de prinses later groot zijn ze met elkaar kunnen trouwen,' zei het jongetje, 'dan kunnen we een nieuw land bouwen hier in het bos, het land van de ontsnapten.'

'Dat kan niet,' zei een soldaat. 'Ze moet in de envelop blijven. Alleen daar is ze veilig.'

'Dat is ook niet gezellig voor haar,' zei het jongetje.

'Het is een tover envelop,' zei de soldaat. 'Er is een land in de envelop. Daar heeft ze het goed, en zo moet dat blijven.'

'Kunnen wij haar daar bezoeken ?' vroeg het modder monster.

'Ja, als je een plaatje wordt,' zei de soldaat.

'Hoe worden we een plaatje ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Koning Eindeloos maakt plaatjes,' zei de soldaat. 'Hij rolt over mensen heen, en dan zijn het plaatjes.'

'Wow,' zei het jongetje. 'Maar jullie zijn van hem ontsnapt. Is er ook nog iemand anders die plaatjes maakt ?'

'Ja,' zei de soldaat. En toen noemde hij een eindeloos getal op.

'Waar is hij ?' vroeg het jongetje.

De soldaat haalde een verfrommelde envelop uit zijn zak.

'Oh, het is ook een plaatje ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Ja,' zei de soldaat.

'En hoe gaat dat precies ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Het is een plaatje van een bal,' zei de soldaat, 'en het werkt ongeveer op dezelfde manier.'

'Ja, maar hoe dan ?' vroeg het jongetje. 'Een bal op een plaatje kan toch niet rollen ?'

De soldaat haalde het plaatje uit de envelop. De bal op het plaatje bewoog, en begon in het rond te rollen. 'Wow,' zei het jongetje verbaasd, 'maar de bal kan niet uit het plaatje ?'

'Nee,' zei de soldaat.

'Maar hoe worden wij dan een plaatje ?' vroeg het jongetje.

De soldaat keek een andere soldaat aan, maar die keek weer naar een andere soldaat.

'Wij weten niet hoe hij het doet,' zei Te Dik.

'Praat hij ook ?' vroeg het modder monster.

'Nog niet,' zei Te Dik. 'Hij is nog geen zes.'

'Ik heb nog wel wat,' zei Klaas de Kale, en haalde een stuiterbal uit zijn zak. De stuiterbal begon direct in het rond te stuiteren, en had flink veel babbels.

'Dat kan, ja, dat kan,' zei de stuiterbal. 'Plaatje worden zei je ? Heel simpel.' En hij vloog op het jongetje af, en begon op het jongetje te stuiteren, die even later helemaal platgewalst was als een plaatje. 'Hoera !' riep het jongetje. 'Nu kan ik de prinses ontmoeten !'

'Ja, wacht even, dat gaat zo maar niet,' zei de stuiterbal. 'Je bent veel te groot. Je past de envelop niet in.'

'Wie kan me dan kleiner maken ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Het plaatje krimpt vanzelf wel,' zei de stuiterbal. 'Even geduld hebben.' Ook het modder monster en het koningskind werden tot plaatjes gemaakt. De tien soldaten moesten de plaatjes en de envelop bewaken. Na een paar dagen waren de plaatjes genoeg gekrompen en konden ze de envelop in. Ze kwamen in een prachtig land, in een prachtige natuur met prachtige hangende bomen waar de lieflijkste bloemen en bloesem in groeiden, en allerlei prachtig

kruid hing daar. Maar de prinses konden ze niet vinden. Plotseling zagen ze de stuiterbal. 'Volg mij,' sprak de stuiterbal. Hij leidde hen naar een hele speciale boom waar het plaatje van de prinses ergens hing. Maar de wind waaide het plaatje weg. 'Volg mij !' riep de stuiterbal. Hij stuiterde achter de wind aan, en het jongetje, het koningskind en het modder monster volgden hem. 'Hebbes !' riep de stuiterbal. Het plaatje was op de grond gevallen en helemaal onder de modder. 'Een modder prinses,' zei het koningskind. 'Misschien kan ze dan wel later met het modder monster trouwen.'

'Ik trouw niet !' bulderde het modder monster en greep grinnikend het koningskind en smeerde hem in met modder. 'Nu ben jij een modder prins, dus dan kan jij misschien later als je groot bent wel met haar trouwen.'

'Ja,' zei het jongetje, 'en dan kunnen we hier misschien het nieuwe land van de ontsnapten bouwen.'

'Goed idee,' zei de stuiterbal. 'Welkom in mijn boek, waar jullie veilig kunnen wonen. Ik ben koning stuiterbal en met jullie heb ik zo waardige opvolgers. Ik heb namelijk andere dingen te doen. Maak er wat moois van !'
Toen stuiterde de stuiterbal weg. Toen zijn ze begonnen het nieuwe land te bouwen, en toen de prins en de prinses groot waren geworden trouwden ze met elkaar. Er was een groot feest en er waren inmiddels vele ontsnapte plaatjes bijgekomen. En ze leefden nog lang en gelukkig.

De Gokkoning van Ovven

Hoofdstuk 1.

Op de kermis sloeg hij toe. Hij was een dief. Hij stal van kinderen, en hij stal soms zelfs de kinderen zelf. Hij was een kinderdief. Hij maakte hun dromen kapot.

Elwin wist hier allemaal niets van.

Het reizen door de natuur kan op een kameel. Elwin heeft dat ook weleens gedaan. Op een kameel ging hij door riviertjes, en vlaktes met wat bosjes. De zon scheen fijn, en het was een fijne dag waarop hij een reis maakte op een kameel. Hij had zijn spulletjes vastgemaakt met een riem aan de bult van de kameel, en ging er toen opzitten.

Waarom Elwin op reis ging ? Hij had gehoord dat er in de bergen ergens een hele bijzondere

steen zou zijn, gemaakt door dwergen, door kabouters. Het zou een heel bijzondere droom steen zijn, die de mensen hele bijzondere dromen zou kunnen geven. Voordat Elwin op reis ging had hij daar weleens over in boeken gelezen, en zelfs een paar keer in de krant. Alles zou misschien zoveel mooier zijn als de droom steen in Ovven zou zijn.

Elwin ging helemaal alleen op de kameel. Hij wist wel waar hij ergens moest zijn, en hij had de reismap meegenomen. Daar keek hij zo nu en dan op. Hij had weleens plaatjes van de steen gezien, met daarop elfjes en kabouters die rondom de prachtig flonkerende roze-rode steen dansten. Ook waren er op die plaatjes allemaal vlindertjes te zien.

Maar toen Elwin eindelijk aankwam bij de grot waar de steen moest wezen, werd hij tegengehouden door groene bewakers met bruine helmen en slagtanden. 'Halt,' zei één van de bewakers die zijn speer al had uitgestoken om Elwin tegen te houden. 'Wat

wil je ? Niemand kan zomaar tot de droom steen komen.'

'Maar ik zag op plaatjes dat er allemaal elfjes, kabouters en vlindertjes omheen dansten,' zei Elwin.

'Niks mee te maken,' bromde de groene wachter.

'Nou, u bent ook niet echt in de stemming vandaag,' zei Elwin. 'Met al dat gesnauw.'

'Ik ben wel in de stemming,' zei de groene wachter. 'Het is mijn werk. Ik moet de droom steen met hand en tand bewaken. Alleen de koning bepaalt wie er bij de steen mag komen.'

'Zo zo,' zei Elwin die inmiddels van zijn kameel was afgestapt. 'En wie mag die koning dan wel niet wezen ?'

'Koning Kabeljauw,' zei de groene wachter mopperend. 'En maak nu dat je wegkomt.'

'Kan ik de koning niet spreken ?' vroeg Elwin. 'Ik zou graag de droom steen willen zien.'

'Daarvoor moet je bij Wat-Glim-Je-Mooi zijn, zij is een elfje met gele vleugels,' bromde de groene wachter.

De groene wachter legde Elwin even uit waar dat elfje woonde, en toen ging Elwin weer op pad. Na een tijdje kwam hij aan bij een klein bosje, aan de rand van de bergen. Bij een huisje klopte Elwin aan. Een klein elvenmeisje deed open. Ze had lang haar en ze had een gele jurk aan. 'Hallo, Wat-Glim-Je-Mooi,' zei Elwin.
'Dank je,' zei het elvenmeisje.

'Ik dacht dat dat je naam was,' zei Elwin.
Het elvenmeisje begon te giechelen. 'Ja, dat is ook zo. Wat kom je doen ?'

'Ik zou graag koning Kabeljauw willen spreken voor het zien van de droom steen,' sprak Elwin.

'Dat is een vis met een kroontje, hier vlakbij in de rivier,' sprak het meisje. 'Ik kan je wel aan de koning voorstellen, maar dan moet je wel eerst glimmen.'

'Hoe moet ik glimmen dan ?' vroeg Elwin.

Het elvenmeisje zuchtte. 'Jammer dat je nog niet glimt, want dan hadden we direct naar de koning gekunt. Ik zal het je wel even uitleggen : 'Je kunt alleen glimmen door de droom steen.'

'Ja, maar ik ben verboden de droom steen te zien, en daarvoor moest ik juist eerst met de koning spreken,' sprak Elwin.

'Tja,' zei het elvenmeisje, 'dan weet ik het ook niet.'

'Kan ik niet eerst de droom steen zien om te glimmen, en dan pas naar de koning gaan ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Onmogelijk,' sprak het elvenmeisje met een diepe zucht. 'Dat laat hij nooit toe. Eerst moet je glimmen, en dan kun je pas met de koning spreken, en dan pas naar de droom steen.'

'Ja, dan is het inderdaad onmogelijk,' zei Elwin. 'Ik glim niet, en mag niet bij de droom steen komen.'

'Helaas,' zei het elvenmeisje. 'Ik kan je niet helpen.'

'Wat een nare belevenis,' zei Elwin. 'Ik ben hiervoor speciaal naartoe gekomen. Ik heb een hele lange reis gemaakt, op mijn kameel, en nu dit.'

'Ik begrijp het,' zuchtte het elvenmeisje.

'Is er dan echt geen andere oplossing ?' vroeg Elwin.

Het elvenmeisje schudde haar hoofd. 'Nee, niet echt. Tenzij je …'

Het elvenmeisje werd stil.

'Tenzij ik wat ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Laat maar zitten,' sprak het elvenmeisje. Ze ging aan een tafeltje zitten, en ging verder met haar naaiwerk.

'Wat ben je aan het maken ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Oh, iets voor de buurman,' zei het elvenmeisje.

'Maar ik zie helemaal geen ander huisje in de buurt,' sprak Elwin.
'Het is voor een mol, die net onder de grond woont, in een hol,' zei het elvenmeisje.

Elwin dacht na. Hij moest en zou bij die droom steen komen, maar die groene wachters waren natuurlijk ook een probleem.

'Zeg, wie hebben die steen eigenlijk gemaakt ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Kik en Kes,' zei het elvenmeisje.

Kik en Kes woonden helemaal aan de zee, en volgens het elvenmeisje zou dat de enige oplossing zijn, om daar naartoe te gaan. Elwin ging het huisje weer uit en klom op zijn kameel na het elvenmeisje bedankt te hebben. Het elvenmeisje wenste Elwin een goede reis en zwaaide hem na.

Door bosjes, langs rivieren en over bergen kwam Elwin na dagen reizen eindelijk aan bij de zee waar Kik en Kes woonden. Het waren twee kabouters. Ze huppelden en dansten om een kampvuur heen. Ze leken wel broertjes, en dat waren ze ook, en zij hadden beiden de droom steen gemaakt.

De broertjes kregen al snel in de gaten dat Elwin bij hen was gekomen, en begonnen hem aan te staren. 'Goedendag,' zei Elwin, en stapte van de kameel af. Al snel begon hij het

verhaal te vertellen, en de kabouters luisterden aandachtig.

Aan het einde van het verhaal sprak Kes : 'Beste Elwin, de droomsteen is eens van ons gestolen door koning Kabeljauw, oftewel de gokkoning. Het is een smerige dief, die nu door de droomsteen de dromen van kinderen probeert te stelen.'

'Maar dat is verschrikkelijk,' sprak Elwin. 'Hoe doet hij dat ?'

'Nou,' zei Kes, 'heel simpel. Hij lokt de kinderen naar zijn kermis en dan laat hij ze gokken, en als ze verliezen dan steelt hij hun dromen, en als ze winnen, dan neemt hij ze met hem mee. Natuurlijk laat hij dan wel een namaak-kind achter voor de ouders.'

'Maar is hij geen vis ?' vroeg Elwin verbaasd.

'Soms,' zei Kik. 'Hij kan van gedaante veranderen. Hij is een tovenaar.'

'Wat kunnen we eraan doen ?' vroeg Elwin.

'En nog eens iets,' zei Kik, 'de droomsteen in de grot waar je naar op zoek was is namaak om bandieten te misleiden. De echte droomsteen is in het gokpaleis van koning Kabeljauw, hoog in de bergen.'

Elwin zuchtte. 'Hoe ga ik daar ooit komen ? Waar is het ?'

'Het gokpaleis is goed verborgen, maar Utsmul, onze raaf, weet wel waar het is. Niemand waagt zich verder daar. Wij hadden de moed al opgegeven, totdat jij er weer over begon,' sprak Kes.

Elwin knikte. 'Ik wil er wel naartoe. Hij zal de gestolen droomsteen vast goed verborgen houden, maar ik wil het er op wagen.'

'Wees maar voorzichtig, Elwin,' waarschuwde Kes. 'Hij is niet zomaar voor een dubbeltje te vangen. Hij is erg ervaren in het toveren.'

'Ik begrijp het. Maar iemand moet hem tegenhouden,' sprak Elwin dapper.

'Goed dan, als je er op staat,' sprak Kes, en begon op zijn vingers te fluiten. Na een tijdje kwam er een grote raaf aanvliegen. Dat moest Utsmul wezen.

'Utsmul,' sprak Kes. 'Kun jij deze jongen afzetten bij het gokpaleis van koning Kabeljauw en dan direct weer terugkomen ?'

Elwin mocht op zijn rug klimmen, en na een kort afscheid steeg de grote raaf op, en ging richting de bergen. De raaf wist precies waar het was, maar eigenlijk wilden de kabouters hem daar niet hebben. Daarom moest hij ook direct weer terugkomen.

Het gokpaleis was gemaakt van een doorzichtig gesteente en was verlicht. Elwin wist dat van hieruit de gokkoning zijn grote toverij bedreef door de droomsteen. De raaf zette hem af, en vloog direct weer weg. Elwin hield zich goed verscholen achter een

heuveltje. Er waren ook wat struiken. Ook hier kon hij zich achter verschuilen, en liep zo dichter en dichter naar het gokpaleis toe. Hij hoorde harde muziek vanuit het gokpaleis komen. Het leek wel alsof er een feestje was.

Elwin zag wachten staan bij de grote poort van het gokpaleis. Daar moest hij niet zijn. Achter struikjes liep hij helemaal naar de achterkant van het gokpaleis. Ergens door een achterdeurtje van de keuken ging hij naar binnen. Hier werkte een vrouw met een grote witte koksmuts op. 'Wat mot je !' snauwde de vrouw die aan de maalmachine stond. Elwin keek naar de plakjes ham en trok een vies gezicht. 'Wat doet u hier kan ik beter vragen,' sprak Elwin.

'Zeg, brutaal ventje,' sprak de vrouw. 'Zal ik jou eens een draai om je oren geven ?'

'Nou, dat hoeft nu ook weer niet,' zei Elwin. 'Het was gewoon een vraag.'

'Het antwoord op de vraag is : Gaat je geen klapperjanus aan, meneertje kwekgraag,' snauwde de vrouw.

'Okay, goed,' zei Elwin. 'Ik kan wel zien dat u een slecht humeur heeft. Is er soms iets gebeurd ?'

'Ophoepelen nou, ventje !' riep de vrouw die ineens stopte met de maalmachine. 'Of zou ik jou eens door de maalmachine halen, want je staat er nogal om te trappelen.'

'Nou,' zei Elwin, 'dat hoeft nu ook weer niet. Waarom doet u zo boos ? Iets verkeerds gegeten !' Nu werd de vrouw echt woedend en greep een slagersmes van de muur. 'Zeg, akelig ventje, vlegel, zal ik jou eens aan het mes rijgen ?' riep ze terwijl ze op Elwin afstapte. Elwin deed direct een stap achteruit. 'Nou, vertel op, oude heks, wat doe je daar ?' vroeg Elwin brutaal. 'U gaat me toch niet vertellen dat hier niets gebeurd is, hè ?' En toen begon Elwin het hele verhaal zonder een blad voor zijn mond te vertellen. Elwin was

een openlijke en eerlijke jongen, en zei altijd alles recht voor zijn raap. De vrouw stond hem met open mond aan te kijken, terwijl het mes uit haar hand gleed. Zo slap waren haar handen geworden. Ze begon te stamelen :
'H... hoe weet jij dat allemaal ?'

'Ik heb met Kik en Kes gesproken,' sprak Elwin.

De vrouw wreef over haar kin. 'Hmmm, het is inderdaad waar dat hier een droomsteen verborgen wordt gehouden waar toverij mee wordt bedreven. Ik ben de kokkin hier. Eens won ik een gokspelletje op de kermis, en werd ik hier mee naartoe genomen. Sindsdien moest ik hier werken.

Elwin knikte. 'Jongen, je bent in groot gevaar,' sprak de vrouw. 'Als de koning erachter komt dan ga je eraan, ik zeg het je.'

'Ik moet die steen hebben,' sprak Elwin. 'Hij is van Kik en Kes, en de gokkoning moet stoppen met het lastigvallen van kinderen.'

'Ach,' sprak de vrouw. 'Je kunt toch niet tegen hem op, maar ik wens je geluk.'

Elwin liep door de grote keuken heen, en kwam toen door een deur op de gang. Direct ging hij weer terug, want hij had wachten gezien. 'Ga de kelder maar in,' sprak de kokkin, 'want hoogstwaarschijnlijk wordt de droomsteen ergens ondergronds verborgen gehouden of op een hogere verdieping. Zoek het maar uit, want in de kelder is een lift.'

De vrouw wees op de kelderdeur ergens aan de zijkant van de keuken, en daar liep Elwin toen naartoe en ging de kelder binnen door van de trap af naar beneden te gaan. Daar stond inderdaad de lift. De lift kon zowel dieper als omhoog.

'Eerst maar eens omhoog,' zei Elwin tegen zichzelf, en drukte op een rode knop voor de hogere verdieping. Na een tijdje stapte hij uit en keek direct goed om zich heen. Hier was ook een lange gang zoals op de begane grond

waar hij de wachten zag. Gelukkig zag hij nu niemand. Er waren hier een heleboel deuren. Elwin was vastbesloten de droomsteen te vinden.

'Welke deur zal ik eens nemen ?' dacht Elwin bij zichzelf. 'Hmmm,' zei hij, terwijl hij langs de deuren begon te lopen. Het leek maar niet op te houden. De gang was erg lang, en hij liep over een langwerpig rood tapijt. Het leek wel alsof de gang een beetje naar beneden liep, en daarna weer een beetje omhoog ging. 'Het lijkt wel alsof hier olifanten hebben gelopen,' dacht Elwin bij zichzelf. 'Het is hier een beetje ingezakt.' Ook ging de gang in een bocht, en toen ging de gang weer verder. Er leek echt geen einde aan te komen. Aan beide kanten waren er deuren. Toen ineens ging er een deur open. 'Wie is daar !' werd er geroepen. Het gebeurde ergens achter Elwin, en hij liep weer een beetje terug. Hij wist dat hij erg voorzichtig moest zijn. Er kwam een lange man met een lange hoed uit de deur-opening. Hij had een hele deftige jas aan. 'Wat moet dat hier, ventje,' zei de lange man.

'Wie bent u eigenlijk ?' vroeg Elwin op een hele brutale manier. 'U doet zomaar de deur open en begint te roepen.'

'Ja, wat nou,' sprak de man, 'dit is mijn domein. Ik ben een kermisbaas.'

'Oh, toch niet de koning hoop ik,' sprak Elwin.

'Ach welnee, de koning is dood. Ik bedoelde deze kamer hier is mijn domein, en als ik geluid oppik vanuit mijn kamer dan wil ik graag weten wie het is,' sprak de man.

Elwin keek verbaasd. 'De koning is dood ? Dat wist ik niet. Wanneer is dat gebeurd, en is er inmiddels alweer een nieuwe koning ?'

De man keek hem met grote ogen aan. 'Eh, nee, er is geen nieuwe koning. De koning is allang dood, al wel vijfhonderd jaar.'

'Ik vraag me af of ik dan wel in het juiste paleis ben,' zei Elwin, en begon toen het verhaal over de droomsteen te vertellen.

De man begon hard te lachen. 'Ach jongen, wat zijn dat toch allemaal voor sprookjes. Er is hier geen droomsteen, en al helemaal geen gokkoning.'

Elwin wist niet of hij de man kon geloven. Het kon natuurlijk ook een valstrik zijn. Misschien had de man wel wat te verbergen, of misschien was hij de gokkoning wel.

'Eh, i... ik loop nog even verder,' zei Elwin. De man maakte even een vreemd gebaar en ging toen zijn kamer weer in. Elwin liep verder. Zou hij echt in het verkeerde paleis zijn, of werd hij door de man bedrogen ?

'Ik ben Emiel,' hoorde hij iemand zingen. 'Erg sterk, maar een beetje fragiel, zo mooi als een bloem, niet op zoek naar roem. Ik houd mij graag stil, maar soms geef ik een gil. Soms zing ik een lied, zo verdwijnt het verdriet.'

Een man met een accordeon kwam ineens door een deur de gang op. Toen hij Elwin zag schrok hij. 'Wel alle kermisklanten !' riep hij. 'Wie ben jij !'

'Ik ben Elwin, en wie ben jij ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Emiel is de naam,' sprak de man, en stak zijn hand uit. 'Laat het handenschudden maar zitten,' zei Elwin brutaal. 'Wij zijn nog geen vrienden.'

'Beleefdheidsgebaar,' sprak de man. 'Ik ben van goede wil.'

Elwin begon zijn verhaal te vertellen, maar weer kreeg hij hetzelfde antwoord dat de koning al vijfhonderd jaar dood was, en dat er hier geen droomsteen was. De man scheen ook op de kermis te werken. 'Maar de kokkin zei dat het allemaal waar was,' sprak Elwin.

De man begon te schudden van het lachen. 'De kokkin ? Dat mens is hartstikke gek,' zei de man. 'Dat mens praat met iedereen mee, en

je kan haar van alles wijsmaken. Zij is degene die dit soort zotte verhalen de wereld in helpt. Ze hebben me weleens verteld dat ze vroeger van een hooiwagen is afgevallen.'

'Hmm,' zei Elwin, 'maar ook Kik en Kes zeiden dat het waar was. In feite hebben zij mij gezegd dat hier de gokkoning woont en hier de droomsteen verborgen houdt waarmee hij kinderen betovert.'

'Ach welnee,' sprak de man. 'Kik en Kes ? Ik zou niet weten wie dat zijn, maar daarvan is geen sprake. Dit soort dingen gebeuren hier niet. Dit paleis is voor een ieder die op de kermis werkt, als een soort ontmoetings-plaats. Het heeft geen koning.'

Elwin trok zijn wenkbrauwen op. 'Okay, dan zijn we uitgepraat. Ik ga het nog even verder proberen, want ik krijg nu tegenstrijdige verhalen te horen.'

'Succes ermee, jongen,' sprak Emiel, en ging weer zijn kamer in. Elwin begon nu hard door

de gang te rennen. Hij wilde weten wanneer de gang nu eens eindelijk zou ophouden, maar het leek niet op te houden. 'Is dat gebouw dan zo groot ?' dacht Elwin bij zichzelf. 'Van buiten leek het wel groot, maar ook weer niet zo groot, of zou het toverij zijn. Misschien ben ik al onder een betovering gekomen ?' Elwin rilde even, en rende toen verder. 'Ik ga gewoon wat deuren binnen,' zei Elwin tegen zichzelf, en trok een deur open. Weer zag hij een hele lange gang. En weer begon hij te rennen, en leek het wel alsof de vloer een beetje was ingezakt. 'Weer die olifanten,' dacht Elwin bij zichzelf, en toen ging de vloer weer een beetje opwaarts. Ook aan deze gang leek geen einde te komen. Hij ging weer een willekeurige deur naar binnen, en weer was het precies hetzelfde. Het was weer een lange, eindeloze gang. 'Ik ben goed verdwaald,' sprak Elwin tot zichzelf. 'Wat een doolhof is dit, zeg.'

Welke deur Elwin ook probeerde, het waren alleen maar gangen. Er waren hier helemaal geen kamers. Elwin begon erg moe te

worden. 'Hoe kon ik ook zo dom zijn,' sprak Elwin tegen zichzelf. 'Is er iemand !' begon Elwin te roepen. Maar er was geen antwoord. Het bleef doodstil, en het leek steeds stiller te worden. Het leek wel alsof de muren en deuren hem aanstaarden. Elwin merkte dat hij niet goed kon ademen. Hij had frisse lucht nodig. 'Ik wil eruit !' riep hij. Na een tijdje stortte hij moe op de grond neer. Hij draaide zich om met zijn gezicht naar het plafond, waar hij een luik zag. Elwin kreeg weer een beetje hoop. Er hing een klein touwtje aan het luik. Maar Elwin kon er net niet bij. Toen sprong Elwin in de lucht, en greep het touwtje. Direct ging het luik open, en er gleed een trap naar beneden. Voorzichtig ging Elwin de trap op, die als een ladder was. Het was hier erg donker. Een zwart beest, als een zwarte kat, staarde naar hem. 'Wat kom je doen ?' sprak de kat.

Direct begon Elwin zijn verhaal te vertellen. De kat begon te lachen. Elwin kreeg weer hetzelfde te horen, dat er geen koning was en

al helemaal geen droomsteen. 'Hoe zou jij dat weten ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Ik ken het paleis van binnenste buiten,' sprak de kat. Ik ben hier geboren en opgegroeid.'

'Oh,' zei Elwin. 'Waarschijnlijk ben ik dan echt in het verkeerde paleis, of jullie zijn allemaal bedriegers, kermis-bedriegers, oplichters.'

'Wat maakt het uit,' sprak de kat. 'Je komt hier toch niet meer weg.'

'Waarom niet ?' vroeg Elwin. 'Wat is dat voor iets belachelijks, een paleis waar je niet meer uit weg kan.'

'Je had hier nooit moeten komen,' sprak de kat.

'Oh, nu begrijp ik het,' zei Elwin boos. 'Jij bent natuurlijk die gokkoning die het altijd maar weer op kinderen heeft gemunt.'

'Natuurlijk niet !' schreeuwde de kat plotseling. 'Ik bedoel als je hier niet bent uitgenodigd dan had je niet moeten komen. We hebben het niet zo op indringers en dieven. Die worden dan ook netjes in de val gelokt.'

'Oh, dus zo zit het !' schreeuwde Elwin woedend terug. 'Meneer de gokkoning mag de droomsteen stelen en het leven van kinderen zuur maken, en zij die daar wat aan willen doen hebben het ineens gedaan ?'

De kat begon te grijnzen. 'Kereltje, waarom zo moeilijk ? Ten eerste zoals ik al zei is er hier geen gokkoning of droomsteen, en ten tweede : Ook al ben je verkeerd ingelicht is dat nog geen goede reden om zo maar ergens in te breken en politie-agent te spelen. Daar zijn andere wegen voor. Je had het op z'n minst kunnen vragen.'

'Dat doe ik nu toch ?' zei Elwin.

'Nee,' zei de kat. 'Je had bijvoorbeeld eerst kunnen bellen of een brief kunnen schrijven.'

'Ja, zeg, doe me een lol,' zei Elwin. 'Ik had jullie telefoonnummer niet, ik wist het adres niet, en naar mijn informatie had ik te maken met zware criminelen, dus die vlieger ging niet op.'

'Je bent een valse beschuldiger !' brulde de kat. 'Daar zijn geen bewijzen voor. Wij zijn eerlijke kermiswerkers.'

'Wat is jouw taak dan ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Simpel,' zei de kat. 'Afrekenen met kermis-dieven zoals jij.'

'Ah, dus jij bent van de kermis-beveiliging ?' zei Elwin. De kat knikte.

'Ik begrijp het,' zei Elwin, die een beetje moedeloos begon te worden. 'Ik heb een fout gemaakt, een grote fout. Ik moest in een

ander paleis zijn. Ik heb de verkeerde deur genomen. Hoe kom ik eruit ?'

'Dat had ik je al gezegd,' zei de kat. 'Je komt hier niet meer uit. Vergeet het maar. Dit is je verdiende loon.'

'Maar ik had goede bedoelingen,' sprak Elwin. 'Ik wilde de kinderen helpen, en Kik en Kes, en ik wilde van de kermis weer een veilige plaats maken.'

'Jij beledigt ons beroep,' sprak de kat. 'De kermis is de meest veilige plaats in Ovven, en Kik en Kes zijn leugenkabouters, treiterkabouters, trollen.'

'Okay, okay,' zei Elwin, die wist dat hij niet zomaar van de kat zou afkomen. 'Ik zal het niet meer doen. Laat me er nu alsjeblieft uit. Hoe lang zal ik hiervoor gestraft worden ?'

'Zoals ik al zei,' sprak de kat, 'kom je hier niet meer uit.'

'Dat is misdadig,' sprak Elwin. 'Jullie zijn criminelen.'

'Nu moet je de boel niet gaan omdraaien,' sprak de kat.

'Wat ga je met me doen ?' riep Elwin.

'Dat zul je nog wel zien,' sprak de kat. In grote woede trapte Elwin plotseling de kat van zich weg, en ging snel de ladder af, drukte de ladder terug, en gooide vliegensvlug het luik dicht. Snel trok Elwin het vloertapijt op om te zien of daar misschien ook een luik zat, en ja hoor. Elwin trok vliegensvlug het luik open, terwijl er een ladder uitschoof naar beneden. 'Ik krijg je nog wel, ellendeling !' hoorde hij de kat roepen. Elwin stoorde zich er niet aan, en ging over de ladder naar beneden. Hier was ook een gang. Dat zou de begane grond moeten zijn. Hier moest ergens de keuken zijn met de kokkin. Maar het waren weer veel gangen met allemaal deuren naar gangen, dus Elwin werd al snel duizelig. 'Je komt er toch niet

meer uit !' hoorde hij de kat krijsen. Elwin werd helemaal naar van het gekrijs. 'Houd je kop !' riep Elwin. Maar het gekrijs leek alleen maar erger te worden. Elwin stopte zijn vingers in zijn oren en begon te beven. Met zijn voet schoof hij het vloertapijt weg en zag weer een luik. Snel deed hij zijn vingers even uit zijn oren om het luik open te trekken, maar tot zijn grote schrik was daar weer alles donker. Hij hoopte maar dat hij hier geen tweede kat zou tegenkomen. Hij had zijn vingers weer in zijn oren gestopt vanwege het gekrijs, en direct toen hij over de uitgeschoven ladder de diepte was ingegaan werd hij door een hele groep zwarte katten aangevlogen.

'Nee !' jammerde Elwin, die om zich heen begon te slaan en te schoppen. 'Help !' riep hij. De katten beten hem en krabten hem. Elwin werd hoe langer hoe bozer, maar ook banger. Op de grond was alles nat. Er lag hier water en tot zijn grote schrik lag er dichtbij hem een krokodil. Elwin begon door het water te rennen, maar al gauw begon het

water dieper te worden. Er stond hier een sterke stroming. Hij hoorde het water bruisen, alsof er ergens een grote waterval dichtbij was. Elwin gilde bijna van angst toen de sterke stroom hem meesleurde. 'Help !' schreeuwde hij, en toen ging hij kopje onder. Wat er toen gebeurde kon hij zich niet meer herinneren, maar hij werd even later wakker in een bed, terwijl een boerin zich over hem heenboog en bezorgd naar hem glimlachtte. 'Je bent veilig hier,' sprak de vrouw. 'Je was op een gevaarlijke plaats.'

'Waar ben ik ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Op de boerderij,' sprak de vrouw.

'Welke boerderij ? Is dit nog steeds het gokpaleis ?' vroeg Elwin.

De vrouw knikte. 'Je ging door een gat heen. Het water zoog je erdoor, en toen kwam je hier. Dit is nog een verdieping lager. Het gebeurt wel vaker. Wij zorgen voor de

slachtoffers. Er gebeuren vreemde dingen op de hogere verdiepingen.'

'E... en dit is een boerderij ?' Elwin keek om zich heen, en het leek inderdaad op een boerderij. Elwin begon zijn verhaal te stotteren en kon het niet laten de boerin te vragen of het gokpaleis ook een gokkoning had en een verborgen gehouden droomsteen. De vrouw begon te lachen. 'Dus je hebt het ook gehoord ?' vroeg ze.

'Ja, van Kik en Kes,' sprak Elwin, 'en van de kokkin in de keuken.'

'Luister goed,' sprak de boerin. 'Ja, het is waar dat er een gokkoning is, en een droomsteen die hij bewaakt, maar daar mag eigenlijk niet over gesproken worden.'

'Zie, dus het is toch waar !' riep Elwin.

'Shhhh !' zei de vrouw hardop, en legde haar vinger op zijn mond. 'Mondje dicht, jongen, want we willen niet in de problemen komen.'

'Okay,' zei Elwin, 'sorry.' De vrouw glimlachtte naar hem. Elwin merkte dat hij droge kleren aanhad. Het was een pyjama. De vrouw had hem goed verzorgd. 'Weet u dan ook waar de droomsteen is ?' vroeg Elwin fluisterend. De vrouw schudde haar hoofd. 'Die wordt veel te goed verborgen gehouden,' sprak ze.

Elwin was erg moe, en viel al snel weer in slaap. Na een hele lange tijd, hij wist niet hoe lang, werd hij wakker. Het leek wel alsof hij verschillende dagen had geslapen, maar hij was ook zo moe geweest. Hij stapte uit bed, en keek rond in de boerderij. Het was een beetje donker, dus hij deed wat lampjes aan. Hij zag de boerin niet. Even later vond hij haar slaapkamer en zag dat ze sliep. Voorzichtig liep Elwin weer terug naar zijn kamer. Over een stoel hingen wat droge kleren die hij kon aantrekken. Nadat hij dat had gedaan ging hij de gang op. De gang was heel lang, en het deed hem denken aan de gangen van de hogere verdiepingen. 'Nee,

niet weer,' zuchtte hij. 'Laat ik maar weer teruggaan.' Maar hoe ver hij ook terugliep, hij kon de boerderij niet meer vinden. 'Dat moet ik weer net hebben !' sprak hij luid. Hij begon de boerin te roepen, want angst begon weer over zijn rug te glijden. Alles was doodstil. 'Wat is er, jongen ?' werd er ineens geroepen. Het was de boerin. Na een korte tijd kwam ze eraan lopen, met een glimlach. Ze nam hem bij de hand en samen liepen ze terug naar de boerderij. 'Zij die hier niet wonen verdwalen altijd,' sprak de vrouw glimlachend.

Ze gingen naar de woonkamer, en de vrouw gaf hem wat te eten en te drinken. 'Hier, je zult wel honger hebben,' sprak ze.

'Eigenlijk niet,' zei Elwin. 'Ik weet niet hoe het komt.' In ieder geval nam hij wat te drinken. De vrouw glimlachtte weer naar hem. 'Heeft u ook kinderen ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Nee,' zei de vrouw.

'En een boer ?' vroeg Elwin.

De vrouw schudde haar hoofd. 'Ik woon hier helemaal alleen. Toen ik een kind was won ik eens op de kermis, en toen werd ik hier mee naartoe genomen om als boerin te werken.'

'Dat moet heel eenzaam zijn,' sprak Elwin. De vrouw knikte. 'Wij zijn onder een betovering,' sprak ze. 'De gokkoning gebruikt de droomsteen voor zijn kwade doeleinden.'

'Daarom ben ik hier,' zei Elwin. 'Weet u ook wat onder deze verdieping is ?'

De vrouw schudde haar hoofd. Elwin dacht na. Hij wilde de vrouw graag helpen, maar hij wist niet hoe. Wat hij wel wist is dat de droomsteen zo snel mogelijk terugmoest naar Kik en Kes. Hij wilde het geheim kennen van het gokpaleis en de gokkoning. Hij wist dat het geen optie was om naar de hogere verdieping te gaan, want daar zouden de katten en de krokodillen hem al opwachten. Samen met de boerin wilde hij kijken of er ergens een luik zou zijn onder het vloertapijt

op de gang. De boerin knikte, en nam zijn hand, stond op, en liep met hem de gang op. Met zijn voet schoof hij het vloertapijt weg, en zag inderdaad een luik. Samen maakten ze het luik open. Er kwam veel licht doorheen.

Hoofdstuk 2.

Er kwam een narretje door het luik heen naar boven. 'Bedankt,' zuchtte het narretje. 'Ik heb hier zolang opgesloten gezeten. Ik dacht dat ik er nooit meer uit zou komen.' Het mannetje was erg opgelucht. 'Wie bent u ?' vroeg Elwin.

'De naam is Rotenstein, en ik zing graag een refrein,' sprak het mannetje. Elwin keek hem verbaasd aan. 'Wat is daar beneden ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Oh, het is daar verschrikkelijk,' sprak Rotenstein. 'Allemaal krokodillen en katten, en water, veel water, en vaak donker.'

'Maar nu was het licht, en het klinkt wel een beetje als waar ik vandaan kwam,' sprak Elwin.

'Ja, licht, eens in de week ofzo, voor een paar uurtjes, veel licht,' sprak Rotenstein.

'Hoe kwam je daar ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Op de fiets,' zei het mannetje. Elwin was verbaasd. 'Daar ben je zo een keer ingefietst ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Nou, eigenlijk fietste ik gewoon eens een keer naar de kermis, won iets, en toen namen ze me op de fiets hier naartoe,' zei het mannetje.

'Wie waren dat ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Dat kan ik me niet meer herinneren,' sprak het mannetje. 'Het is al zo lang geleden, maar sindsdien moest ik nar zijn, mensen aan het

lachen maken, maar dat ging niet echt goed, en toen hebben ze me hieronder gebracht.'

'Maar dat is verschrikkelijk,' zei Elwin. 'Ik denk dat we hier nu allemaal vastzitten.'

'Oh, dus jij kunt ook niet weg ?' zei het mannetje. 'En u, boerin, ook niet ?'

De boerin schudde haar hoofd. 'Allemaal vast,' sprak ze.

'Wat een waardeloze bedoening, zeg,' sprak het narretje. 'Er moet toch iets op te vinden zijn ?'

'Ja,' zei Elwin, 'en er moet hier ook nog ergens een kokkin zijn, die zit in hetzelfde probleem als ons.'

'Nou, mooi is dat,' sprak het narretje. 'Hoeveel meer zouden er hier opgesloten zitten in dit reusachtige paleis ?'

'Ik heb geen idee,' zei Elwin.

'Maar we hebben in ieder geval elkaar,' sprak het mannetje. 'Laten we dichtbij elkaar blijven.'

'Ik wil hem hier niet hebben,' zei de boerin. 'Ik vertrouw hem niet. Hij lijkt op een kermiswerker.'

Elwin keek bedenkelijk. 'Echt niet, mevrouw !' riep het narretje. 'Ik zweer u dat ik nooit zo ben geweest. Ze hebben mij dit pakje aangetrokken en ik moest gek doen om de mensen aan het lachen te maken.'

'Ik vertrouw hem niet, Elwin,' zei de boerin. 'Ik wil weer terug. Ik voel me niet op mijn gemak.' De boerin draaide zich om en liep terug naar de woonkamer. 'Kom je, Elwin ?' zei ze nog, en toen verdween ze door de bocht van de gang. Elwin raakte in paniek, want hij wist dat hij de boerin nodig had om terug te komen in de boerderij. 'Boerin !' riep hij. Hij rende de bocht om, maar zag alleen maar een eindeloos lange gang. Elwin

zuchtte, en ging weer terug naar het narretje. Hij hoopte dat de boerin snel weer zou terugkomen, maar dat gebeurde niet. 'Jij gelooft me toch, hè, Elwin ?' vroeg het narretje. Elwin keek het narretje aan en knipperde even met zijn ogen. 'Ik weet het niet, narretje,' sprak Elwin. 'Ik ken je niet lang genoeg om het zeker te weten.' Het narretje keek hem strak in zijn ogen. 'Je gelooft me toch wel, hè, Elwin ? Je gelooft toch niet die praatjes van die gekke, dikke boerin ? Hé Elwin !' zei het narretje die steeds harder begon te praten, en toen zelfs vlak voor Elwin begon te roepen. De rillingen vlogen Elwin over zijn rug. Plotseling haalde het narretje vanuit het niets een knuppel te voorschijn, en sloeg Elwin op zijn hoofd. Na een tijdje werd Elwin wakker. Hij voelde een bult op zijn hoofd, en er was bloed aan zijn hand. Hij lag op het tapijt. Het luik was dicht, en er was geen narretje meer te bekennen. Trillend stond Elwin op, en begon verder te zoeken. Hij riep naar de boerin, maar tevergeefs.

Hij wist dat de gangen hier eindeloos waren. Naar boven wilde hij niet, en ook niet naar beneden. Maar als hij moest kiezen, dan toch liever naar beneden, maar eerst wilde hij wat anders proberen. Hij begon de muren te onderzoeken. Ook begon hij de deurknoppen te onderzoeken. Uiteindelijk begon hij te schreeuwen van ellende. Hij voelde zich bedrogen, en hij was bang. Hij begon geklop te horen op de vloer, en toen ook op het plafond. Het spookte hier verschrikkelijk. Dit was niet zomaar een gokpaleis, maar een spookhuis. 'Wat moeten jullie van me !' riep Elwin.

'Ik kan het niet meer verdragen,' zei Elwin tegen zichzelf. 'Ik kan dit niet lang meer volhouden. Iemand moet me helpen.' Elwin begon op de muren te kloppen, om te zien of er ergens misschien zwakke plekken waren, maar voor wat ? Na een tijdje was hij zo moedeloos dat hij weer het tapijt wegschoof met zijn voet. Er waren veel luiken onder het tapijt. Hij maakte er eentje jammerend open, niet wetende wat hij dit keer zou aantreffen.

Alweer was er licht, en het narretje verscheen weer. Elwin schrok en hysterisch gooide hij het luik weer dicht. 'Dat was op het nippertje,' zuchtte Elwin, terwijl hij beefde van de schrik. 'Ik weet wel waar je bent !' krijste het narretje. 'Ik zal je wel krijgen !' Elwin begon te rennen, maar het narretje bleef krijsen. De boerin had gelijk had, maar hij wist niet of de boerin wel te vertrouwen was, want waar was ze gebleven ? Hij wenste dat hij gewoon dichtbij de boerin was gebleven. Of misschien kon hij wel niemand hier vertrouwen, en was alles één groot bedrog ? Elwin had zijn vingers in zijn oren gestopt terwijl hij bleef rennen. Hij wilde alles van zich afschudden. Alhoewel de gang eindeloos leek bleef hij toch rennen. Hij moest en zou hier doorheen komen. Hij moest een manier zien te vinden om de betovering te verbreken. Hij gooide alle deuren open aan beide kanten, en bleef allemaal gangen zien. Dit moest toch ergens een keer stoppen ?

Hij begreep nu waarom Kik en Kes niet meewilden en hem nog hadden

gewaarschuwd. Oh, had hij nu maar naar hen geluisterd, maar eigenlijk wilde hij de moed nog niet opgeven. Iemand moest deze tovenaar een halt toeroepen. Alhoewel hij er aan twijfelde of hij daar wel de juiste persoon voor was. Hij begon te schelden op de vele deuren en de lange gangen, maar niets hielp. Opeens stond er een oude vrouw voor hem met een kaars. 'Geef de moed maar op, jongen,' sprak ze.

'Nooit !' riep Elwin. De vrouw leek op een oude boerin.

'U bent toch niet dezelfde boerin die ik al eerder was tegengekomen toch ?' vroeg Elwin. De vrouw schudde haar hoofd. 'Nee, Elwin, ik ben iets veel ergers.'

Elwin schrok. 'Hoe kent u mijn naam, en hoezo bent u iets veel ergers ?' Plotseling stond de vrouw in de vlammen, en donder en bliksem verscheen boven haar hoofd. 'Ik ben een heks !' krijste ze, terwijl ze geheel in een vuurvlam veranderde, en toen verdween ze.

Elwin greep naar zijn hoofd en jammerde. 'Wat is er toch met mij aan de hand. Zijn dit verbeeldingen ? Word ik straks gewoon weer wakker in mijn eigen bed ? Oh, was ik maar thuisgebleven. Ik ook altijd met mijn stomme ideeen.' Elwin begon uit pure wanhoop te springen op de vloer. Plotseling gingen alle deuren voor hem en achter hem open en door elke deur kwam er een clown met een mes uit. Allemaal begonnen ze langzaam op hem af te komen. Elwin aarzelde geen moment, schoof het tapijt met zijn voet opzij, opende vliegensvlug een luik en sprong naar binnen. 'Narretje of geen narretje,' zei hij tegen zichzelf. 'Hierboven moet ik niet meer wezen.' Alles was hier licht, en direct hoorde hij het narretje krijsen, maar hij viel dieper en dieper. 'Kom terug !' schreeuwde het narretje in de verte. Na een tijdje leek het wel alsof Elwin op een grote hoop kussens was gevallen. Alles was zo zacht hier. Hij begon zich direct een weg door de kussens te graven, nog steeds bang voor de clowns en het narretje.

Na een tijdje had hij de bodem bereikt, en baande zich een weg door de kussens heen. Hij begon steeds meer zand onder zijn voeten te voelen, en na een tijdje kwam hij aan in een woestijn. Hij kon zo eindelijk uit de hoop kussens stappen. Het was hier licht, en toch wist hij dat het slechts een verdieping was van het gokpaleis, diep onder de grond.

Er was een oase dichtbij, en verderop in de woestijn was een cafeetje. Elwin liep daar naar binnen, waar een lange cowboy, en twee kale mannen met een lange baard een spelletje met dobbelstenen deden. De cowboy hief even zijn grote hoed op, en sprak : 'Goedenavond, heer.' Ook de twee kale mannen met de lange baarden knikten naar hem. 'Wat zal het wezen, hoe kan ik je helpen ?' vroeg de lange cowboy met de grote hoed.

'Nou, als het zou kunnen,' zei Elwin, 'dan kunt u mij uitleg geven over waar ik terecht ben gekomen, en waar de gokkoning is en de droomsteen ?'

De cowboy en ook de twee kale mannen trokken hun wenkbrauwen op. 'Wat zeg je me daar ?' snauwde de cowboy. 'Alsof ik jou dat ga vertellen ! Dat is een groot geheim, en daar kun je ook beter niet over beginnen,' terwijl hij zijn twee revolvers trok. 'Ik daag je uit voor een duel !'

'Kalm maar, het is nog maar een kind,' zei één van de kale mannen, terwijl de andere knikte. Nu werd de cowboy pas echt woedend. 'Wat heb ik daar mee te maken ? Hij heeft zijn mond over zulke dingen te houden. Dat is niet goed voor mijn zaken. Straks komt niemand hier nog.'

'Luister,' zei de andere kale man. 'Ben je nu niet een beetje aan het overdrijven ?'

De cowboy trapte de tafel om, terwijl de dobbelstenen over de grond begonnen te rollen. 'Ik daag jullie ook uit voor een duel !' brulde hij. 'Ik kom hier over een uurtje terug, en als ik jullie hier dan nog zie, dan schiet ik

een grote barst in jullie !' Toen rende hij scheldend het café uit.

'Die moet even afkoelen,' zei de andere kale man weer. 'En wie ben jij ?'

'Ik ben Elwin,' sprak Elwin, en begon toen zijn hele verhaal te vertellen. De kale mannen keken hem aan in grote verbazing. 'Laten we hier eerst weggaan,' sprak één van de kale mannen, 'anders komt dat heethoofd terug, en dan hebben we goed de poppen aan het dansen.' De andere kale man knikte, en sprak : 'Het is inderdaad nogal een heethoofd.'

'Waar moeten we nu naartoe ?' vroeg Elwin.

'De woestijn in natuurlijk,' zei één van de kale mannen. 'In de oase zal hij ons ook vinden.' En daar gingen ze, dieper de woestijn in. Ze hadden volgens de kale mannen geen andere keuze, en ze hoopten dat ze hem niet hier ergens tegen zouden komen. Er waren hier veel zanderige heuveltjes. 'Vertel me

eens,' sprak één van de kale mannen, 'dus jij gelooft echt dat dit slechts een verdieping is van een gokpaleis, en nog wel onder de grond ?'

Elwin knikte. 'Ja,' sprak Elwin. 'Ik heb het zelf gezien, en ik ben er geweest, en kwam toen hier terecht toen ik dieper ging.' De oude kale mannen begonnen te lachen. Ze hadden bijna geen tanden meer. 'Wat een kletspraat,' zei één van hen. Dus als we hier dieper graven dan komen we misschien in een andere verdieping van dat zogenaamde gokpaleis ?' Elwin knikte weer. 'Ja, dat denk ik wel, tenzij dit de onderste verdieping is.' De oude mannen begonnen nog harder te bulderen van het lachen.

'Wees maar voorzichtig,' zei Elwin. 'Straks hoort de boze cowboy ons nog.'

Toen werden de oude mannen met de lange baarden wat stiller. 'Hij heeft gelijk,' zei één van hen. Toen sprak de ander : 'Jongen, kijk nu eens goed om je heen en naar boven. Lijkt

dit op een verdieping van een paleis ? Zie je boven je een plafond hangen ?'

Elwin schudde zijn hoofd. 'Nee, maar vergeet niet dat het het gokpaleis is van een tovenaar.'

De oude mannen keken bedenkelijk. 'Hmmm, misschien heeft hij gelijk,' zei één van hen. 'Er gebeuren hier soms inderdaad vreemde dingen.'

'Ja,' zei de ander, 'en als die droomsteen echt bestaat en hier ook ergens ligt, misschien zijn er dan nog veel meer schatten.'

'Wees daar maar niet zo zeker van !' zei een stem opeens. Ze stonden ineens recht voor de lange cowboy en keken in de loop van zijn revolver. 'Ik daag jullie uit voor een duel !' riep hij weer. 'Ik doe dertig passen achteruit, en jullie doen hetzelfde, en dan zal het duel beginnen. Moge de beste winnen.'

De cowboy draaide zich om en begon de dertig passen al te maken. Hij nam lange

passen. 'Kom,' fluisterde één van de oude mannen hard, en rende de andere kant op, om zo snel mogelijk uit de buurt van de gevaarlijke cowboy te komen. De anderen volgden hem. 'Graven nu,' zei de oude man luid, 'misschien dat de jongen gelijk heeft. We moeten van die cowboy af zien te komen. Alledrie begonnen ze haastig op dezelfde plek met hun handen te graven, en Elwin hoopte maar dat het een dunne laag zand was. Snel vonden ze een marmeren luik, en begonnen het zand ervan weg te halen zodat het geheel zichtbaar zou worden. Maar de cowboy stond al in de verte naar hen te kijken, en kwam steeds dichterbij. 'Het duel is begonnen !' riep de cowboy, en ze hoorden al schoten. Elwin's hart klopte in zijn keel. 'Sneller, sneller !' riep één van de oude mannen. Maar toen ze het luik wilde opentrekken merkten ze dat er een groot slot opzat. Eén van de oude mannen werd in zijn arm geraakt en schreeuwde van de pijn. 'We zijn verloren !' riep de andere kale man. Elwin begon al weg te rennen, maar ineens riepen de oude mannen hem terug. 'Kom

terug, kom terug. Eén van de kogels heeft het slot van het luik opengesloten !' Haastig draaide Elwin zich om, en zag hoe de oude mannen door het luik heengingen. Hij rende naar het luik toe zo hard als hij kon, maar tot zijn grote schrik zag hij toen de cowboy die bij het luik was aangekomen. 'Dat doen we dus niet,' sprak de cowboy, en maakte het luik weer dicht.

'Kom, Elwin !' werd er weer door de oude mannen geroepen, maar Elwin zat in de val. 'Ik kan niet !' riep Elwin. 'De cowboy heeft het luik dichtgegooid, en staat hier voor me !' Toen werd het heel stil. De cowboy kwam dichter en dichter bij Elwin, en Elwin wist dat rennen geen zin meer had. Elwin keek recht in de loop van de revolver die de cowboy op hem gericht hield. 'Er gaat hier niks meer gebeuren,' sprak de cowboy. 'Alleen een klein kogeltje.' Toen begon hij te lachen. 'Zeg je laatste wens maar, doe een optelsom, of zing een versje, dat kan mij niet schelen. Je laatste minuut is geslagen. Ik wacht.'

Elwin begon te beven en te trillen. 'I... ik weet het niet,' zei Elwin.

'Wat weet je niet ?' vroeg de cowboy.

'Wat ik moet zeggen,' zei Elwin.

'Goed,' zei de cowboy, 'dan doen we het zonder …'

Maar verder kon de cowboy niet komen. Eén van de oude mannen had hem van achteren met een grote koekepan op zijn hoofd geslagen. De cowboy zakte in elkaar. 'Kom nu vlug, Elwin,' zeiden de oude mannen. 'Er is een keuken onder de woestijn. Weer gingen ze door het luik, en dit keer samen met Elwin. Toen deden ze het luik achter zich dicht. Ze hoopten nu dat de cowboy hen niet meer zou kunnen kwellen.

Het was een reusachtige ondergrondse keuken waar ze in terecht waren gekomen, maar er was niemand. 'Laten we dit gebouw onderzoeken,' zei één van de oude mannen.

Er waren hier overal pannen en potten, en er hingen overal messen en hakbijlen aan de muren. 'Het lijkt wel oorlog,' sprak één van de oude mannen. Ze gingen een deur door, en kwamen toen in een andere zaal. Er stonden een heleboel ovens en fornuizen. Ze gingen toen door een enorme metalen schuifdeur en kwamen in een grote witte eetzaal terecht waar een heleboel tafels stonden. Hier was ook niemand. Ze liepen de hele zaal door en gingen toen door een zijdeurtje, waardoor ze in een grote hal terecht kwamen. Hier was een grote trap naar boven, bekleed met rood fluwelen tapijt, en er was een lift, en nog een kleinere gang en wat deuren.

'De jongen heeft gelijk gehad,' zei één van de oude mannen. 'Waarschijnlijk heeft hij ook gelijk over de droomsteen. Die moet hier dus ergens zijn, of op een andere verdieping. Zijn verhaal klinkt aannemelijk. De andere oude man knikte.

'Die lift ga ik niet in. Dat brengt alleen maar narigheid,' sprak Elwin. Hij liep naar de

kleinere gang, en sloeg daar een deur open, maar tot zijn grote schrik zag hij toen een hele lange gang die precies leek op de eindeloze gangen waar hij vandaan was gekomen. Snel gooide hij de deur dicht. 'Hier moeten we ook niet wezen,' beefde hij. Hij liep verder op het kleine gangetje en maakte geen deuren meer open. Aan het einde van het kleine gangetje was een trap naar boven. 'Laten we dit proberen,' sprak hij. De oude mannen volgden hem op de voet. Elwin was blij dat hij twee vrienden had gevonden. Op een hogere verdieping waar de trap naartoe leidde stond een deur open van een kamertje. Elwin en de oude mannen gingen er naar binnen. Elwin keek door het raam en zag allemaal woestijn. 'Hmmm, daar komen we vandaan,' sprak één van de oude mannen. Elwin knikte. 'Laten we nog verder de trap op,' sprak Elwin. Op een verdieping hoger was weer een kamer, en een badkamer. Ook was er een grote hal. Hier stonden allemaal antieke spullen, zoals planeetbollen en oude stoelen. Ook hingen er antieke koninklijke

gordijnen. 'Misschien woont de gokkoning hier ?' zei één van de oude mannen.

'Ik hoop het niet, want anders zouden we in grote problemen kunnen zijn,' sprak Elwin.

'Maar dat zou ook betekenen dat we dichter bij de droomsteen zouden kunnen zijn, en dat is toch wat we willen ?' zei de andere oude man. 'Dat is waar,' zei Elwin. Ze keken door een groot raam, en zagen een herfstbos buiten, als een koninklijke tuin. Ze hoorden gebrul in de verte. Even gingen de rillingen door Elwin heen. Hij hoopte echt dat ze dit keer niet in de problemen zouden komen. De oude mannen begonnen de kamer te doorzoeken, terwijl Elwin uit het raam bleef kijken. Het was alsof hij deze plaats ergens van kende. Buiten zag hij een tuinman de bladeren bij elkaar harken. Opeens stond er een dienstmeisje in de grote deur opening. 'Ah, de gasten zijn er al,' sprak ze opgewekt. 'Hoe kan ik jullie helpen ?'

'Eh, bedankt,' sprak één van de oude mannen. 'Wij komen voor de gokkoning, Hoe laat komt hij ?'

Het dienstmeisje hief haar wenkbrauwen op en begon te lachen. 'Meneer maakt zeker een grapje. Gokkoning ? Daar heb ik nog nooit van gehoord, tenzij u de gokautomaten in de kantine bedoeld.' De oude man kreeg een rood gezicht. Elwin begon haar toen het hele verhaal uit te leggen, maar het dienstmeisje begreep er niet veel van. 'Dat klinkt als een sprookje,' sprak ze. 'Dus als ik het goed begrijp heeft u deze kamer niet gereserveerd ?'

Opeens stond er een dikke man met een sigaar en een gestreept pak in de deur opening. 'Wat moet dit hier !' bulderde hij. 'Jullie komen me niet bekend voor, en hebben geen plaats in dit sjiek hotel. Nu, wegwezen, of ik laat jullie verwijderen met de harde hand. Maak dat je wegkomt nu.'

Maar dat liet Elwin niet op zich zitten. Hij stapte op de man af en gaf hem een stomp in zijn dikke buik. 'Wie heeft jou geleerd om zo tegen ons te praten ? En jullie hebben hier gokautomaten ? Dan moet hier vast en zeker ook de gokkoning ergens zijn en de droomsteen die hij verborgen houdt.'

Ruw greep de man Elwin bij zijn arm, en begon hem door elkaar te rammelen. 'Zeg, wat is dat, ventje ? Er woont hier geen koning, en al helemaal geen gokkoning. Droomstenen komen verder alleen in jouw praatjes voor.' Toen duwde de man Elwin weg. Nu begon Elwin echt kwaad te worden. 'Maar dit is een onderdeel van het gokpaleis !' riep Elwin boos naar de man.

'Ja ja,' lachte de man in het donkere gestreepte pak. Hij had ook een donkere hoed op, en zijn sigaar gleed bijna uit zijn mond. 'En mijn tante is een olifant, en mijn oom draagt driehonderd brillen. Zeg, kom nou, onderdeel van een gokpaleis ? Wie denk je wel niet dat je bent ? Allemaal hazentaal.'

Ook de dikke man die de hotelbaas leek te zijn trok een revolver en richtte de loop op Elwin om hem onder schot te houden. 'Daar gaan we weer !' riep één van de oude kale mannen. 'Tegenwoordig wordt er bij het minste of geringste al naar een pistool gegrepen ! Belachelijk !'

'Houd je muil, ouwe,' sprak de dikke hotelbaas. 'En nu allemaal ophoepelen, want mijn pistool jeukt.' De dikke hotelbaas stond daar al rood van woede en begon al lampen kapot te schieten als waarschuwing.

Het dienstmeisje keek geschrokken. 'Weet u dat zeker dat u die dure porseleinen en kristallen antieke lampen kapot wil schieten vanwege een stel belhamels ?' riep ze.

'Ach klets niet, hoela hoep,' zei de hotelbaas. 'Dat laat ik hen allemaal betalen.'

Elwin begon de kamer uit te rennen, en de oude mannen volgden hem. 'En nu betalen voor de lampen !' gilde de hotelbaas. 'Ja !'

riep het dienstmeisje. 'Het is jullie schuld !' Elwin rende de trap weer op naar een hogere verdieping. Hier waren een heleboel kamers in een cirkel waar allemaal Chinese meisjes stonden in zijden Chinese pyjama's en jurken. 'Het lijkt wel kerstfeest,' sprak één van de oude mannen. Achter zich hoorden ze schoten. Dat moest de hotelbaas zijn. 'Laten we nog hoger gaan,' zei Elwin luid tegen de oude mannen, en weer rende hij de trap op. Maar op de volgende verdieping waren de eindeloze gangen weer. 'Hier niet, hier niet !' riep Elwin. Maar ook de hotelbaas was verder de trap opgegaan, met het dienstmeisje achter hem. 'Jullie kunnen me nu niet meer ontkomen !' sprak hij gemeen. 'Hoezo niet ?' vroeg Elwin. 'Kijk eens naar al die gangen hier.' De hotelbaas begon te lachen. 'Het is mijn hotel,' zei de hotelbaas. 'Ik ken de weg. Jullie niet. Verstoppen heeft geen zin.'

'Oh, dus die eindeloze gangen zijn van jou ? Dan moet jij dus wel de gokkoning zijn !' riep Elwin. De hotelbaas kwam steeds dichter bij hem. 'Ren dan, ren,' sprak de hotelbaas. 'Als

je wil leven.' De oude mannen begonnen al zo'n eindeloze gang op te rennen. 'Nee, nee, kom terug !' riep Elwin. 'Die gangen zijn eindeloos, daar kom je nooit meer weg !' Maar ze hoorden hem al niet meer, en al snel verdwenen ze in een bocht.

Elwin keek de hotelbaas recht in zijn ogen. Wat waren die ogen gemeen. 'U moet de gokkoning wel zijn,' sprak Elwin. 'Wat gaat u met mijn vrienden doen ?'

'Welke vrienden ?' lachte de hotelbaas. 'Ze bestaan niet meer.'

'Hoe weet u dat ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Omdat ze goed in de val zijn gelopen, die indringers,' sprak de hotelbaas. 'Vooruit, ren dan.'

'Ren zelf,' zei Elwin.

'Ik heb de revolver hier, en het is mijn hotel,' zei de hotelbaas.

'Ik waag me er niet meer aan,' sprak Elwin. De hotelbaas bewoog de loop van de revolver helemaal tegen Elwin's kin aan en drukte er tegen. 'De droomsteen ligt daar ergens. Waarom zou je er niet op afgaan ?' sprak de hotelbaas.

'Ik ben niet gek,' zei Elwin.

'De droomsteen wacht al op je, ventje, nou, komt er nog wat van ?' sprak de hotelbaas.

Opeens werd de hotelbaas van achteren neegeslagen met een koekepan. Het was de cowboy. 'Zo, die had je nog van mij tegoed,' sprak de cowboy. Het dienstmeisje begon gillend weg te rennen. Toen richtte de cowboy zich op Elwin. 'Jij weer, hè ?'

Uit de zak van de hotelbaas die op de grond lag gleed een bos met sleutels. Elwin bedacht zich geen moment en greep de bos met sleutels. 'Nee !' krijste de cowboy. 'Doe die sleutels weg !' Elwin hield de bos sleutels

voor de neus van de cowboy. Hij hield ze stevig vast en liet ze daar bungelen. De cowboy zakte slap in elkaar en begon te jammeren en te smeken : 'Ik smeek je, haal die ellendige dingen van me weg. Ik kan er niet tegen, ik kan er niet tegen.' Zijn handen waren slap geworden, en de koekepan en de revolver gleden eruit weg en vielen op de grond. Elwin trapte ze weg met zijn voet. Met zijn andere hand haalde hij de tweede revolver weg van de cowboy, en toen ook een mes. 'Die sleutels zijn van mij nu,' sprak Elwin. 'Nu, maak dat je wegkomt !' De cowboy kruipte één van de eindeloze gangen op en begon toen hard en gillend weg te rennen, totdat hij in een bocht verdween.

'Ziezo,' zei Elwin, maar toen hij zich omdraaide werd hij onder schot gehouden door het dienstmeisje die één van de revolvers op de grond had gegrepen. 'Terug met die sleutels,' sprak ze streng. 'Op de grond ermee.' Elwin liet van schrik de sleutels vallen. 'Handen omhoog,' sprak ze. Elwin deed zijn handen omhoog. De andere

revolver en het mes schopte ze bij hem weg, en bukte toen om de sleutelbos te pakken, terwijl ze hem strak bleef aankijken en onder schot hield.

'Hier ga je zwaar voor betalen,' sprak het dienstmeisje.

'Ik weet het,' zei Elwin. 'Dat was dom van mij.'

'Een beetje heel dom,' zei het dienstmeisje. Langzaam begon de hotelbaas bij te komen. 'Hmmm, goed werk,' zei hij tegen het dienstmeisje. 'Hij is nu van ons. Misschien kunnen we hem goed gebruiken.'

Maar daar zagen ze ineens de cowboy terugkomen vanuit de eindeloze gang die met een enorme snelheid op hen afkwam. Van schrik richtte het dienstmeisje de revolver op de aanstormende cowboy, terwijl Elwin dankbaar van het moment gebruik maakte en de benen nam. Hij ging de trap af naar beneden, en wist dat hij nu zo diep mogelijk

weer moest, want boven liep het spoor dood. Hij hoorde de hotelbaas en de cowboy al op elkaar schelden, en ook het gekrijs van het dienstmeisje klonk er doorheen. Ze leken hem helemaal vergeten te zijn. In de hal naast de eetzaal zocht Elwin onder het tapijt naar een luik, maar dat scheen er niet te zijn. Hij liep toen naar de andere kant van de hal naast de eetzaal waar hij een deur opende, maar daar zag hij weer zo'n eindeloze gang. 'Dan de lift maar,' sprak Elwin tegen zichzelf en rende naar de lift. 'Dit zijn probleem-dingen,' mompelde hij. Hij drukte op een gloeiende rode knop voor een verdieping lager toen hij in de lift was.

'Ik ben benieuwd,' zei Elwin tegen zichzelf, terwijl hij rilde. Hij voelde zich niet echt goed. De lift leek maar niet te stoppen. Na een hele lange tijd, en dat leken wel uren te zijn, stopte de lift eindelijk. Maar toen Elwin uitstapte was hij weer op precies dezelfde verdieping als waar hij was ingestapt, namelijk van het hotel, in de hal dichtbij de eetzaal. Toch leek alles net iets anders. Hij

stapte uit, en zag tot zijn grote schrik de hotelbaas, de cowboy en het dienstmeisje op hem afkomen. Hij wilde weer de lift instappen, maar de deur zat dicht, en hij kreeg de liftdeur met geen mogelijkheid meer open. Elwin begon op het knopje te rammen. 'Toe nou, ga open, kreng !' riep hij. Toen ineens voelde hij van achter een hand op zijn schouder. Het was de hotelbaas. Elwin kromp ineen toen hij zich omdraaide, en had erge buikpijn. Hij keek naar het dienstmeisje die breed glimlachte. Toen keek hij naar de cowboy die ook breed glimlachte, en de hotelbaas keek heel bezorgd naar hem.

'Ummm, wat is hier aan de hand ?' vroeg Elwin die er niets van begreep. Hij had eerder pistool onder zijn neus verwacht of een klap met een koekepan. 'Niets,' zei de cowboy glimlachend en vriendelijk. 'Helemaal niets. We vroegen ons af hoe het met je ging als onze gast.'

'Tttttt,' zei Elwin. 'Eerst loop je me nog achterna met een pistool en moest ik weg, en

werd ik onder schot gehouden, enzovoorts, en nu zijn jullie ineens mijn vrienden ofzo ?' Elwin was heel verbaasd.

Ook de cowboy, het dienstmeisje en de hotelbaas waren heel verbaasd, en keken hem bezorgd en liefdevol aan. 'Maar jongen toch, waar haal je dat toch allemaal vandaan ? Pistolen ? Heb je soms eng gedroomd ?' vroeg de hotelbaas vriendelijk en vol interesse.

'I... ik weet het niet meer,' sprak Elwin, en begon het hele verhaal te vertellen. 'Oh, jij komt van boven,' zei het dienstmeisje met een aardige stem. 'Nu begrijpen wij het. Daarboven is alles omgekeerde wereld. Daar moet je ook niet komen, jongen.'

'Maar die lift dan ?' vroeg Elwin. 'Leidt die dan niet naar boven, want daar kom ik vandaan.'

'Die lift gaat alleen maar door de verdiepingen van het hotel, maar niet hoger,'

sprak de cowboy. 'Jij moet van heel hoog zijn gekomen, waar je alleen maar van kan komen, maar nooit naartoe kan gaan.'

'Ik snap het niet,' zei Elwin. 'Ik kan dus nooit meer terug ?'

'Precies,' zei de hotelbaas. 'En gelukkig maar, want daar is alles omgekeerde wereld.'

'Ja maar, Kik en Kes dan ?' vroeg Elwin. 'Zij moeten hun droomsteen terugkrijgen, en er zijn zoveel kinderen door de gokkoning naar die plaats ontvoerd, en die moeten daar werken.'

'Oh,' zei de hotelbaas, 'maak je maar niet ongerust, hoor. Die zullen ook hun weg hier naartoe wel vinden.'

'Ik kan ze toch niet zomaar aan hun lot overlaten ?' vroeg Elwin. 'En waar is die droomsteen dan ?'

'Tja,' zei de cowboy. 'Dat weten we niet, en dat weet niemand, alhoewel sommigen zeggen dat deze verdieping de droomsteen is.'

'En wat is hier onder dan ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Oh, hieronder moet je ook niet wezen,' sprak het dienstmeisje vriendelijk. 'Dit hier is een verdieping uit duizenden. De rest is allemaal omgekeerde wereld. Ook wij vonden ooit onze weg naar deze plaats, en we wilden sindsdien nooit meer weg. Voor ons is dit de droomsteen.'

'Maar ik zou graag over deze plaats willen vertellen aan mijn vrienden, de kokkin, de boerin, de twee oude mannen en Kik en Kes,' sprak Elwin.

'Ze moeten daar zelf achter komen, Elwin,' sprak de cowboy. 'Iedereen moet die reis voor zichzelf maken en de juiste lessen leren en de juiste beslissingen maken.'

'Maar toch wil ik ze helpen,' sprak Elwin.

'Dat kan niet,' zei de cowboy. 'Dat is te gevaarlijk. Je wilt toch niet dat de verkeerde personen deze plaats vinden ? Het is te riskant, en daarom kan niemand ooit nog terug naar waar ze vandaan kwamen. Begrijp je dat ?'

'Ik begrijp het wel,' zei Elwin, 'maar we zitten hier toch niet opgesloten ?'

De cowboy schudde liefdevol zijn hoofd. 'Elwin, Elwin, Elwin. Jongen, het heeft niets met opgesloten te maken, maar met beveiliging. Dat is toch een goede zaak dan ?'

Elwin boog zijn hoofd. 'Maar is er dan niets wat we voor hen kunnen doen ? Helemaal niets ?'

'Helemaal niets,' sprak het dienstmeisje.

Elwin keek haar even aan en boog toen zijn hoofd weer. 'Maar Kik en Kes zullen hier nooit komen. Ze zijn veel te bang voor het

gokpaleis. Ik moet ze gaan opzoeken. Ik kan het niet over mijn hart halen om hen in de steek te laten.'

'Goed,' zei de cowboy plotseling. 'Er is één manier om je vrienden te bezoeken, maar dan zullen we allemaal gaan. We zullen jou nooit in de steek laten. Jij bent één van ons.'

Het dienstmeisje en de hotelbaas keken de cowboy verbaasd aan. 'Wat is die manier dan, cowboy ?' vroeg de hotelbaas vriendelijk en vol interesse. 'Oh,' zei de cowboy, 'ik moet gewoon even de lift anders instellen. Ik ben de mechanicus, dus dat komt wel goed. Het is voor mij een koud kunstje. Ik heb ook ooit eens het hele gokpaleis voor de gokkoning gemaakt.'

Elwin keek verbaasd. 'Dus jij hebt dit alles gemaakt ? Wacht eens even. Betekent dat dat er op deze verdieping ook een aardige gokkoning is, net zo aardig als jullie ?'

De hotelbaas begon breed te glimlachen en ook het dienstmeisje. 'Die is nog wel aardiger dan wij allemaal bij elkaar,' lachte de hotelbaas.

'Hmmm,' zei Elwin, 'dus als ik het goed begrijp heeft de cowboy alle andere verdiepingen gemaakt om alles te beveiligen tegen gespuis ?' De anderen knikten. 'Hmmm,' zei Elwin. 'Betekent dat dat de cowboy onaantastbaar is, omdat hij alles gemaakt heeft ?'

'Was dat maar zo,' sprak de cowboy. 'Ik heb alles zo lang geleden gemaakt, en er houdt zich daar zoveel verschrikkelijk tuig op, en alles slaat soms echt op hol.'

Elwin zuchtte. 'We moeten toch echt naar Kik en Kes gaan.'

'Komt voor de bakker,' zei de cowboy. 'Stap allemaal in de lift, dan stel ik hem even bij, en dan kunnen we hoger.'

'Spannend,' zei Elwin.

Toen ze allemaal in de lift waren schroefde de cowboy even een kastje open, draaide even wat hier en daar, en schroefde toen het kastje weer dicht. Toen drukte hij op een rood gloeiende knop, en daar gingen ze. De lift begon na een tijdje zwaar te piepen. Ze keken allemaal even verschrikt, behalve de cowboy, die glimlachtte wat. 'Ach, negeer dat gepiep maar. De lift is er niet aan gewend, dus die protesteert even, maar als het goed is houdt hij zich zo wel stil, want ik heb hem nu anders ingesteld.'

'Dat hoop ik maar,' sprak Elwin. Het gepiep werd alleen maar erger, zo erg dat Elwin zijn vingers in zijn oren had gestopt. En toen opeens stopte het geluid. Elwin en de anderen haalden opgelucht adem. Toen na een tijdje de liftdeur open ging keken ze recht in een eindeloze gang. 'Daar ga ik dus niet in !' riep Elwin geschrokken.

'Elwin, de maker van de eindeloze gang is hier,' zei de hotelbaas, 'dus we hebben niets te vrezen,' terwijl hij op de cowboy wees. De cowboy glimlachtte een beetje. 'Volg mij,' sprak hij. De cowboy liep de gang op, en de anderen volgden hem. 'Er zit een code in,' sprak de cowboy. 'We nemen eerst de tiende deur aan de linkerkant, en dan in de volgende gang nemen we weer de tiende deur aan de linkerkant, en in de volgende gang doen we precies hetzelfde.'

'Interessant,' zei Elwin, die alweer een beetje hoop kreeg. Ze telden tien deuren aan de linkerkant van de gang, en gingen toen door de tiende deur binnen. Toen telden ze op de volgende gang weer tien deuren aan de linkerkant om door de tiende deur heen te gaan. Daarna telden ze op de volgende gang weer tien deuren aan de linkerkant om door de tiende deur heen te gaan. Zo kwamen ze in een kamer terecht. 'Geweldig !' riep Elwin. 'Dus alleen zij die deze code kennen hebben een kamer in het gokpaleis ?' De cowboy knikte.

'Geniaal, en zo goed tegen dieven !' lachte Elwin.

'Dat dacht je maar,' sprak de cowboy. 'Er zijn genoeg bandieten die deze code kennen, en daarom zit het gokpaleis vol met vagebonden.'

'Had ik die code maar gekend toen ik naar het gokpaleis kwam,' lachte Elwin, 'dan was het allemaal zo erg niet geweest.'

'Er zijn wel meer codes,' sprak de cowboy.

'Dat geloof ik graag,' lachte Elwin, die zich al een stuk opgeluchter voelde.

'Als je drie keer de zevende deur aan de linkerkant neemt, dan vind je daar iemand die verdwaald is in de gangen,' sprak de cowboy.

Elwin rende de kamer uit. Hij kon niet wachten om het uit te proberen, want hij wilde de oude mannen weer zien. Hij wilde

ze graag verrassen. Hij rende naar de zevende deur aan de linkerkant, en toen weer naar de zevende deur aan de linkerkant, en toen weer. Tot zijn grote verbazing kwam hij toen op een gang waar de twee oude mannen waren. Ze zaten vermoeid op de grond, en keken verbaasd en verrast op naar Elwin. 'Ik heb ze gevonden !' riep Elwin.

'Eindelijk heb je ons gevonden !' riep één van de oude mannen, en stond op om Elwin te omhelzen. Ook de andere oude man stond op en omhelsde Elwin. 'Daar zijn we blij mee,' sprak hij. 'We dachten dat we hier nooit meer uit zouden komen.' Ook de cowboy, de hotelbaas en de dienstmaagd kwamen, en Elwin begon het hele verhaal te vertellen.

'En hoe komen we uit het gokpaleis ?' vroeg één van de oude mannen.

'Simpel,' sprak de cowboy. 'Neem drie keer de derde deur aan de linkerkant, en je komt op de gang die naar de paleispoort leidt. Kom, ik zal het je laten zien.' De cowboy

nam de derde deur aan de linkerkant geteld vanaf de deur waardoor ze op deze gang kwamen. De anderen volgden hem. Toen nam hij weer de derde linker deur, en toen weer. Zo kwamen ze in een grote hal terecht die naar de poort van het paleis leidde, maar er stonden wachten daar.

'Problemen,' sprak de cowboy. 'Ik ken die wachters niet.' Maar de wachten hadden hen al gezien en kwamen met speren op hen af. 'Wat moet dat daar ?' riep een wacht, die snel dichterbij kwam. 'En wie zijn jullie ?' Ze waren met z'n tweeen en ze hadden zware zwarte pakken aan, en hadden vreemde, angstaanjagende helmen op.

'Genoeg praatjes,' sprak de cowboy. 'Ik ben de maker van het gokpaleis.' Hij boog naar de anderen toe en sprak : 'Nu zijn we in de problemen.' Elwin verstijfde van de schrik.

De wachten deden net alsof ze de cowboy niet hoorden. 'Wie zijn jullie ?' vroeg de wacht weer.

'Gaat je niks aan,' sprak de cowboy. 'Ik heb dit gokpaleis gemaakt. Nou, maak dat je wegkomt.'

De wachten begonnen te lachen en elkaar aan te stoten. 'Dat zeggen ze allemaal dat ze het paleis hebben gebouwd.' Plotseling grepen ze de cowboy vast.

'Hey, laat hem los !' riep Elwin.

'Waarom zouden we ?' zei één van de wachten. 'Hij is een onbevoegde, net zoals jullie. Dit is verboden terrein voor onbekenden.'

'Laat maar, Elwin,' sprak de cowboy. 'Ze zullen er nog wel achter komen.' De cowboy werd afgevoerd, en was al snel verdwenen met de twee wachten. 'Laten we dit spookpaleis uitgaan nu het nog kan,' sprak Elwin, en rende toen op de poort af. De anderen renden achter hem aan. Daarna stonden ze allemaal buiten. Elwin blies op

zijn vingers op dezelfde manier als Kes eens deed. Niet lang daarna kwam er een grote raaf aanvliegen. Het was Utsmul. 'Fijn dat je er bent, Utsmul !' riep Elwin. 'Breng ons snel naar Kik en Kes !' Elwin en de anderen klommen op de raaf, die direct richting de zee vloog waaraan Kik en Kes woonden. Toen ze daar aankwamen waren Kik en Kes weer aan het dansen rondom een kampvuur. 'Kijk,' zei Kes tegen Kik, 'daar komt Utsmul. Hij heeft Elwin met wat anderen meegenomen.' Kik en Kes waren blij hen te zien. 'Ha, Elwin !' riep Kes, 'wat een verrassing ! We hopen dat je met goed nieuws komt. Heb je de droomsteen inmiddels gevonden ?' Elwin stapte van de vogel af, en ook de anderen. Hij liep op Kik en Kes af en omhelsde hem. Elwin begon direct het hele verhaal te vertellen.

Hoofdstuk 3.

'Dus de droomsteen is een bepaalde verdieping in het gokpaleis, en de cowboy

heeft alle andere verdiepingen gemaakt om de droomsteen te beveiligen ?' vroeg Kes. Elwin knikte.

'Hmmm,' zei Kes. 'Dan is dat vast een andere soort droomsteen, want onze droomsteen is gewoon een steen, een flonkerende roze-rode steen,' terwijl hij een plaatje van de steen uit zijn broekzak haalde.

'Er loopt veel gespuis rond in het spookpaleis,' sprak Elwin. 'Misschien houden zij de steen daar wel verborgen. De cowboy had het er ook over dat er veel bandieten zijn daar.'

'Waarom heeft hij het gokpaleis dan gemaakt ?' vroeg Kek. 'Dat klinkt nogal dom.'

'Het gokpaleis zit vol met valstrikken,' sprak Elwin, 'en alles werkt daar door codes. Nu kunnen sommige bandieten misschien wat codes kennen, maar lang niet allemaal. Uiteindelijk zal het gokpaleis dus wel met hen afrekenen.'

'Dat hoop ik maar,' sprak Kes. 'Maar wat kunnen we doen om die arme cowboy te helpen, want het lijkt erop alsof hij in één van zijn eigengemaakte valstrikken is gelopen ?'

'De cowboy zal zich wel redden,' sprak de hotelbaas glimlachend en vol vertrouwen en zekerheid. 'Hij is slim genoeg om er iets voor te vinden. Hij heeft immers alles gemaakt, en waarschijnlijk test hij nu alles uit, en zal die twee vagebonden van wachten flink op hun nummer zetten.' Ook het dienstmeisje knikte glimlachend.

Plotseling zagen ze vanaf de bergen een enorm lange clown komen. Zijn benen bleven gewoon in de bergen staan, en zijn enorm lange lichaam schoof zich naar hen toe. In zijn armen droeg hij de flonkerende roze-rode droomsteen, en de cowboy zat erop. 'Dat is de gokkoning !' riep de hotelbaas, 'de gokkoning van onze droomsteen-verdieping !' De clown zette de steen met de cowboy erop bij hen neer, en stapte toen met zijn lange benen naar

hen toe, terwijl zijn benen weer kleiner werden. Hij was als elastiek. 'Hoera !' riepen Kik en Kes toen ze de droomsteen weer terughadden.

'De gokkoning heeft mij van de valse wachten bevrijd,' lachte de cowboy. Elwin maakte een buiging voor de gokkoning, en de clown nam hem in zijn armen en knuffelde hem. Elwin herkende de clown. Heel lang geleden had Elwin eens over deze clown gedroomd, die hem overal mee naar toe nam in zijn armen, en heel snel ging, van plaats naar plaats. Hij kon inderdaad heel lang worden. 'Elwin, dit is nu het geheim van de droomsteen,' sprak de cowboy glimlachend.

Einde

De Zandman van Ovven

Hoofdstuk 1.

Overal lag er zand in het paleis. Klaas Vaak was net langsgekomen. Op zijn dromenwagen betoverde hij het hele land van Ovven. Hij werd ook wel de zandman genoemd.

Maar op een dag gebeurde dat niet meer. Klaas Vaak was ontvoerd. De mensen konden niet meer goed in slaap komen.

Elwin ging op onderzoek uit. Hij ging op reis op een kameel, door de woestijnen, om op

zoek te gaan naar een spoor van Klaas Vaak. Die kon natuurlijk niet ver van het zand vandaan zijn, dacht Elwin. Eerst ging Elwin naar het domein van Klaas Vaak diep in de woestijn. Hij kwam aan bij de huizenhoge poort van het woestijngebied, en zag direct dat er een steen miste die gewoonlijks altijd hoog in de boog van de poort was. Er miste een grote rode steen aan de rechterkant waar de poort naar links begint te buigen. Die rode steen was de steen van de zee. Zonder de steen zou de zandman zijn werk niet kunnen doen. Maar die steen was nu weg, en daarmee ook de zandman. Elwin stond voor een groot raadsel.

Elwin voelde alsof er een stuk uit zijn hart was gesneden, alsof hij een stuk van zijn hart miste, en hij was er van overtuigd dat het met elkaar te maken had. Ook Elwin kon sinds de verdwijning van de zandman niet meer goed in slaap komen, zoals zoveel anderen in Ovven.

De zee is één van de door de mens meest gevreeste natuur-elementen, omdat de zee de tijd laat zien, zowel het verleden als de toekomst. De zee is de tijdmachine van de natuur. Deze tijdmachine wordt bestuurd door de grote Zeeman, Aart Golf, ook wel koning Oceanus genoemd, van de zeemeerminnen en zeemeermannen. Hij is zelf ook een zeemeerman. Hij heeft een kaal hoofd en een hele lange baard. Nu de steen van de zee was geroofd had Klaas Vaak zijn macht over de zee verloren. Elwin hoorde de zee bulderen in de verte. Elwin wist dat waarschijnlijk spoedig de zee het gebied van Klaas Vaak totaal zou overnemen. En wat zou er dan gebeuren ? Ovven zou niet kunnen bestaan zonder Klaas Vaak. Elwin wist niet hoeveel tijd hij nog had. Met zijn kameel besloot hij naar de zee achter de woestijn te gaan om op onderzoek uit te gaan. Hij wilde met Aart Golf, oftewel koning Oceanus spreken om te horen wat er aan de hand was.

Toen hij bij de zee was aangekomen wist hij dat hij voorzichtig moest zijn, want er was

daar een piratenschip bij de kust. Ineens werd Elwin van achter hard geslagen op zijn hoofd en van zijn kameel afgetrokken. Het was een piraat. Een andere piraat stond erbij, en toen sleurden ze hem beiden naar het piratenschip. Elwin werd pas wakker toen hij in een kooi op het schip was. Hij had in het hooi op de grond gelegen. 'W... wat heeft dat te betekenen,' stamelde Elwin van de doffe pijn die hij nog in zijn hoofd had.

Toen de piraten-kapitein en hoofdman hem kwam bekijken begon die direct te lachen. 'Ha ha, die moet overboord. Die kunnen we echt niet gebruiken, alleen als vissenvoer.'

'Hij zou het dek kunnen schrobben,' sprak een andere piraat.

'Mond houden,' sprak de kapitein. 'Dat is jouw taak, en dat blijf jij doen. Vannacht nog gaat deze jongen overboord. De vissen moeten ook eten.' Wat andere piraten begonnen te lachen.

Elwin beefde en rilde in zijn kooi. Hij voelde zich echt niet lekker, vooral niet met zo'n naar vooruitzicht. Elwin begon om hulp te schreeuwen toen ze allemaal weer weg waren, maar niemand kwam hem te hulp. 'Je bent er goed bij,' sprak een raaf in een kooi aan de andere kant van de ruimte waarin Elwin was opgesloten.

'Kunt u me niet helpen ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Wat kan ik doen ?' snauwde de raaf. 'Gebruik jij je ogen wel ? Ik zit ook in een kooi. Ik ben zo hulpeloos en machteloos als jij.'

'Snauw niet zo, vreemde vogel,' sprak Elwin. 'Ik kon het toch proberen ? Iedereen maakt fouten.'

'Maar jij wel heel erg veel,' sprak de raaf.

'Je kent me niet eens,' snauwde Elwin terug. 'Ik hoop dat ze jou opbakken.'

'Nu ga je te ver, ventje !' kraaide de raaf. 'Als ik niet in deze kooi zat dan zou ik je ogen uitpikken.'

'Rotvogel,' sprak Elwin. De raaf zei niets meer terug en ging een dutje doen. Ook Elwin was erg moe geworden en viel weer in slaap. Midden in de nacht werd hij uit zijn kooi gehaald door piraten.

'Laat die jongen met rust,' kraaide de raaf. 'Hij heeft jullie niets gedaan.'

'Snuit houden, raaf,' bulderde een piraat. 'Met jou rekenen we later af. Door de soep zal je misschien goed smaken.' Terwijl de andere piraten begonnen te bulderen van het lachen. Elwin keek dankbaar naar de raaf, maar wist dat de raaf ook verder niets kon doen. 'Doe met mij wat je wilt,' sprak Elwin dapper, 'maar geef die raaf zijn vrijheid terug. Laat de vogels met rust, anders zullen de grote vissen jullie schip zeker opslokken voor jullie slechte daden.'

De piraten lachten hard. 'Wat een druiloor ben jij, jongen !' gromde een piraat dichtbij zijn oor. Het was een hele dikke piraat met een rode doek om zijn hoofd met witte ballen erop geschilderd. 'Wij moeten ook eten ! Daar zijn vogels voor.'

'Je bent al veel te dik,' sprak Elwin. 'Geef die vogels maar eens te eten, hebzuchtig kreng.'

'Kreng ? Jij durft mij kreng te noemen, maffe druiloor ?' gromde de dikke piraat terwijl hij zijn mes trok en onder Elwin's kin zette. 'Wij zullen nu voor de visjes zorgen, en jou aan hen voeren.' De piraat bond zijn handen op zijn rug en aan zijn voet bond hij een touw waaraan een hele grote steen was vastgemaakt. 'Zo zal je snel zinken,' lachte een andere piraat die maar één tand had. 'Dat is makkelijker voor de vissen. Zou jij het fijn vinden dat als je zou gaan eten en je voedsel zou ineens van je bord afspringen om weg te rennen ?'

Elwin zei niets. 'Ik waarschuw jullie, piraten,' kraaide de raaf. 'Als jullie de jongen ook maar een haar krenken dan zal de afrekening volgen.'

De piraten lachten. 'Wie ga je daarvoor meebrengen, domme vogel ?' riep een piraat hard.

'Dat zul je nog wel zien,' sprak de raaf. 'Jullie worden goed in de gaten gehouden.'

'Negeer die maffe kippebout. Eten hoort niet te spreken !' gromde de dikke piraat die het helemaal gehad had. Hij sleurde Elwin het dek op, terwijl een andere piraat de grote steen droeg. 'Ik heb jullie gewaarschuwd !' riep de raaf hen na. 'Ik zal die vogel zo de strot doorsnijden,' sprak de dikke piraat, en duwde Elwin naar de reling. 'Laat me met rust !' riep Elwin. 'Hier zullen jullie voor boeten.'

'Wees blij dat we nog iets van jouw zinloze leven maken,' gromde de dikke piraat. Hij

begon Elwin al over de reling te duwen, die daar al snel aan het touw om zijn voet bungelde. De andere piraat hield nog steeds de steen vast. 'Gooi,' brulde de dikke piraat, en zo werd de zware steen waaraan Elwin vastzat met een touw in de zee geworpen, waardoor Elwin als een pijl meeschoot in het bruisende zeewater. Elwin begon direct snel te zinken. 'Dit is mijn einde,' dacht Elwin, die heel diep adem had genomen. Elwin begon te tellen, maar na een tijdje begon hij zijn bewustzijn te verliezen. 'Vaarwel' was het laatste woord wat Elwin sprak. Toen werd het zwart voor zijn ogen. Een zeemeermin zag hem in de zeediepte glijden en aarzelde geen moment en schoot op hem af. Vliegensvlug maakte ze het touw van zijn voet los, en trok hem met haar mee. Ze bracht hem naar een grot. Ze wist dat hij snel adem nodig had. Ze legde iets op zijn mond. Het was een soort kwal die niet stak. De kwal gaf adem aan Elwin, en begon zich te vormen om het hele hoofd van Elwin, als een soort doorzichtige helm, als een adem masker. Elwin nam diep

adem, en kwam weer bij zijn positieven. 'W... waar ben ik ?' stamelde Elwin.

De zeemeermin keek hem aan. 'Je bent hier diep onderwater,' sprak ze. Elwin was verwonderd dat hij gewoon kon ademen. Hij begon te glimlachen. Hij keek de zeemeermin aan. Ze had lang golvend haar en juwelen om haar nek. De juwelen waren prachtig blauw, en ze fonkelden. Ze hadden een zachte kleur. Elwin voelde zich als betoverd.

'Kom,' sprak de zeemeermin, 'ik zal je naar onze koning leiden.'

'Koning Oceanus ?' vroeg Elwin. 'Die moest ik net spreken. Er is namelijk wat verschrikkelijks gebeurd met Klaas Vaak.'

De zeemeermin begon te glimlachen. 'Ook al ? Van mijn vader hebben ze de tijdmachine gestolen. Ze zijn flink bezig.'

'Ja,' sprak Elwin, 'ze hebben de rode zee steen uit de poort van Klaas Vaak gestolen, zijn

droommachine en zelfs Klaas Vaak zelf hebben ze ontvoerd.'

De zeemeermin schrok van deze woorden. 'Ontvoerd ? Maar dat is verschrikkelijk. Laten we gauw vader raadplegen.' De zeeemeermin trok hem verder en zwom naar een grotere grot die leidde tot een hele grote hal waar een grote troon stond bezet met schelpen, waarom een reusachtige gestalte zat met een vissenstaart en een lange, grote witte baard. De koning leek een klein kroontje op te hebben bezet met diamanten en andere witte of doorzichtige fonkelende steentjes. Elwin's mond viel bijna open toen hij de zeemeerman zag. Dit moest Aart Golf, oftewel koning Oceanus zijn.

'Kom verder,' sprak een donkere, zware stem die door de hele hal begon te echoën. 'Met wie heb ik het genoegen ?' sprak de koning vriendelijk. Elwin maakte een buiging, en vertelde het verhaal.

'Zo zo,' sprak de koning, 'en jij denkt dat ik weet wie de daders zijn ?'

Elwin knikte. 'U staat bekend als een groot koning met groot inzicht en groot overzicht over Ovven. U blijkt daar ook allemaal apparaten voor te hebben.'

'Het probleem is,' sprak de koning, 'dat mijn tijdmachine gestolen is, het bron-apparaat voor alle andere apparaten. Niet veel werkt er nog nu de tijdmachine weg is.'

'Dat spijt me heel erg, beste koning,' sprak Elwin. 'Ik zal er alles aan doen om uw tijdmachine terug te vinden nu ik toch bezig ben Klaas Vaak op te sporen. Ik weet zeker dat er een verband is tussen deze diefstallen.'

De koning knikte. 'Ik kan je niet helpen nu mijn tijdmachine er niet is. Mijn inzicht reikt niet verder dan mijn troon op het moment.'

'Ik begrijp het,' sprak Elwin.

'Jittefes, kun jij deze jongen weer even naar de zee-oppervlakte brengen ?' sprak de koning tegen zijn dochter, 'en oh, wacht eens even, jongeman. Ik zou je aanraden om in het bos op zoek te gaan naar de Bosman. Arend Gluur heet hij, en hij bewaakt een zekere groei-machine. Misschien dat hij meer weet, en in het ergste geval is hij de dader, maar dat kan ik niet met zekerheid zeggen. In ieder geval : Wees op je hoede, want zijn onderdanen zijn kannibalen.'
'Komt voor elkaar, vader,' sprak de zeemeermin, en na een kort afscheid zwom ze met Elwin naar boven. Aan de zee-oppervlakte aangekomen zagen ze nog steeds het piratenschip in de verte. 'Ik zal je naar de boskust brengen naast de woestijn,' zei de zeemeermin. De zeemeermin zwom met grote vaart met Elwin op haar rug naar de boskust en zette hem daar aan land. 'Bedankt,' sprak Elwin. 'Ik zal kijken of ik hier de Bosman kan vinden.'

'Ik wens je geluk !' riep de zeemeermin die alweer wegzwom. Elwin liep direct het bos

in. Hij was namelijk bang dat piraten hem weer op het strand zouden vinden. Angstig keek hij om zich heen, wetende dat er ook gevaren in het bos waren, maar hij moest en zou met de bosman spreken. Na een tijdje lopen zag hij in de verte op een open plek in het bos een groep wilden met botjes door hun neus dansen en jammeren rondom een ketel. Elwin wist dat hij voorzichtig moet zijn, maar ze jammerden zo erg dat Elwin ze wilde proberen te helpen. Misschien waren het wel de onderdanen van Arend Gluur, de bosman.

Dapper liep hij op de jammerende wilden af, maar bleef zijn afstand bewaren. 'Kan ik jullie ergens mee helpen ?' vroeg Elwin, terwijl hij zijn hand opstak. Verbaasd keken de wilden op. 'Daar ! Eindelijk voedsel !' riep één van de wilden. Ze namen hun speren en begonnen op Elwin af te rennen. Ook Elwin zette het op een rennen. 'Hongerige kannibalen dus,' dacht Elwin bij zichzelf. 'Ik kom ook altijd op het verkeerde moment.' Plotseling struikelde Elwin over een boomstronk, en al snel was hij omsingeld

door de wilden die hun speren op hem gericht hadden. 'Sta stil, voedsel,' sprak één van de wilden. Hij werd vastgebonden en meegeduwd naar de ketel, waar hij in werd gestopt. 'Toe nou,' sprak Elwin. 'Ik ben geen banaan. Ik ben op zoek naar Arend Gluur de bosman.' De wilden begonnen om hem heen te dansen, terwijl het vuur oplaaide. 'Eindelijk vlees !' riepen ze. Elwin begon het al snel heet te krijgen. 'Heus, jullie vergissen je !' riep Elwin. De wilden begonnen steeds woester te dansen.

Elwin boog zijn hoofd. 'Ik ook allemaal met mijn domme ideeen,' sprak hij tot zichzelf. 'Ik heb een belangrijke boodschap voor Arend Gluur. Ik ben gezonden door koning Oceanus !' riep Elwin hard. De wilden schenen niet te luisteren, en Elwin begon het steeds heter te krijgen. 'Ik stik hier !' piepte Elwin. Elwin begon zijn bewustzijn te verliezen. Wat er toen gebeurde kon hij zich niet meer herinneren, maar hij werd wakker in het zand, terwijl een grote man naar hem staarde. Elwin was nog steeds drijfnat en nog steeds

vastgebonden. De man prikte met een stok in hem. 'Nog niet gaar zie ik,' sprak de man. 'Welkom. Ik ben Arend Gluur. Ik redde je leven. Ik hoorde dat je mij wilde spreken voor een belangrijke boodschap. Spreek op, anders gooi ik je weer terug. De man had een bril op en een hoed. Ook had hij een blouche aan met sterretjes erop. Hij leek op een toerist. Toen begon Elwin het verhaal te vertellen.

Arend Gluur begon te jammeren. 'Zij ook al ? Mijn groei-machine is gestolen. Ik kon dingen, mensen en dieren groter of kleiner maken door die machine. Daardoor had ik macht over het bos, maar ik lijk het te verliezen. Nu hebben mijn kannibalen altijd honger. Ze kunnen nog geen druif of appel bemachtigen.'

'Dat spijt me zeer,' sprak Elwin.

Het was even een tijdje stil. Plotseling zei Arend Gluur : 'Ik weet wie het gedaan heeft. Het is Berend Blok, de vuurman. Hij heeft

onze machines gestolen omdat hij een geld-
machine wilde bouwen, om zo over heel
Ovven te heersen.'

'Waar woont hij ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Onder de grond,' zei Arend Gluur. 'Daar
houdt hij ook de zee steen verborgen, en
Klaas Vaak die hij heeft ontvoerd.'

Elwin wilde daar wel naartoe. Arend Gluur
en de kannibalen zouden met hem mee gaan.

Hoofdstuk 2.

Ze zouden eerst de nacht afwachten om wat
proberen te rusten, alhoewel niemand goed in
slaap kon komen doordat Klaas Vaak was
ontvoerd. En in de nacht viel de vuurman al
aan. Vlammen kwamen om Elwin te grijpen
en de diepte in te sleuren. Elwin werd naar
een grote put getrokken waar de vlammen
hem joelend introkken.

Diep onder de grond werd Elwin in een kooi gestopt. Dichtbij was de kooi van Klaas Vaak. Klaas Vaak lag op de grond. Hij leek zijn bewustzijn te hebben verloren. Voor de kooi van Elwin danste Berend Blok, de vuurman. 'Geld, geld, ik nam het met groot geweld !' riep hij, terwijl hij als een gek geld begon rond te strooien. 'De geld-machine werkt !' riep hij. 'Ik ben een rijk man !' Uit pompen verderop begon geld te spuiten. 'Ik heb een grote vangst gedaan !' lachte de vuurman. De geld-machine die hij had gebouwd van de gestolen machines was op hol geslagen. Er bleef maar geld uitrollen, en ook de twee olifanten van Berend Blok waren onder de betovering ervan gekomen, en hun slurfen stopten niet met het spuiten van geld. Overal lag geld, en de laag op de grond werd steeds hoger, ook in de kooi van Elwin. De vuurman gierde van het lachen. Ook hij was op hol geslagen. Plotseling kwam de piraten-raaf aanvliegen. Hij vloog recht op de kooi van Elwin af, en pikte het slot open. 'Hoe ben je uit jouw kooi losgekomen ?' vroeg Elwin verrast, terwijl hij uit de kooi rende. 'Toen

een piraat het kooitje opendeed om me te voeren pikte ik in zijn hand en vloog weg,' kraste de raaf. De vuurman was al helemaal onder het geld bedolven. Vlug vloog de raaf naar de kooi van Klaas Vaak en pikte zijn slot ook open. Maar Klaas Vaak was nog steeds bewusteloos, en begon ook langzaam onder het geld te verdwijnen. 'Iemand moet die machine stoppen !' riep Elwin. Plotseling zagen ze koning Oceanus en zijn dochter, Jittefes, komen aanzwemmen door het geld. Elwin wees hen de plaats waar Klaas Vaak onder het geld lag, en beiden begonnen ze hem op te duiken. Spoedig waren er nog veel meer zeemeermannen en zeemeerminnen, een heel leger, en ze begonnen de geldmachine op te duiken.

Elwin zwom in het geld, en keek hoe de geldmachine werd opgedoken. Hij vond het wel een schitterende uitvinding. Het geld begon machtige rivieren te vormen die door de armste delen van Ovven begonnen te stromen. Proestend kwam Berend Blok naar boven zwemmen, want ook hij was kopje

onder gegaan. Hij werd direct door een paar zeemeerminnen vastgegrepen. 'Ik bedoelde het niet verkeerd !' riep hij. 'Ik wilde de armsten van Ovven helpen, en dat kon ik alleen maar als ik de droommachine, de tijdmachine en de groeimachine zou hebben om daar de geldmachine van te maken !'

'Maar waarom vroeg je dat niet dan ? En waarom heb je daar zelfs Klaas Vaak voor ontvoerd ?' riep Elwin, die naar hem toe begon te zwemmen. Elwin begreep er niet veel van.

'Omdat niemand me geloofde !' riep Berend Blok. 'Ik moest wat doen tegen de hongersnood in grote delen van Ovven die door de piraten was veroorzaakt ! Klaas Vaak wilde me laten opsluiten !'

'Maar je had koning Oceanus kunnen vragen voordat je zijn tijdmachine stal !' riep Elwin.

'Ik moest snel handelen !' riep Berend Blok. 'Klaas Vaak zat al achter me aan, en ik kon

geen risico's meer nemen. Ik moest eerst de geldmachine maken, en dan zouden ze zelf wel zien waar het goed voor was.'

Elwin zuchtte. Hij hoopte maar dat Klaas Vaak in orde was. Hij kon Berend Blok ook wel een beetje begrijpen. Het leek op een daad van zelfverdediging, maar hij wilde eerst de kant van het verhaal van Klaas Vaak horen.

Het leger van koning Oceanus nam iedereen mee naar het rijk van de koning om daar berecht te worden. Ook Arend Gluur en zijn kannibalen werden meegenomen. Ze moesten allemaal voor de troon van Arend Golf verschijnen, de grote Zeeman, oftewel koning Oceanus. Klaas Vaak was inmiddels weer bijgekomen, en ze hadden allemaal een ademkwal over hun hoofd gekregen, zodat ze goed in de zee konden ademen. Ook konden ze zo alles goed horen, en konden ze goed spreken. De kwallen zorgden voor goede communicatie.

Toen Klaas Vaak het verhaal van Berend Blok kreeg te horen knikte hij en bood hij zijn excuses aan. Hij wist niet dat Berend Blok goed werk wilde doen. De kannibalen waren zo geworden door de honger, maar daar zouden de geldrivieren verandering in brengen. De enigen die nog een probleem waren waren de piraten. Daarom vielen de legers van koning Oceanus op een nacht alle piratenschepen binnen, en trokken de piraten de zee in om te worden berecht door koning Oceanus.

Elwin vond dat een goed plan, want de piraten stonden hem naar het leven.

Toen de piraten waren berecht begon eindelijk de rust weer in Ovven terug te keren en konden de mensen weer normaal slapen. En de zandman reed weer op zijn koets om zijn zand te strooien alsof het nooit anders was geweest. Maar nu strooide hij niet alleen zand, maar ook als het nodig was strooide hij geld voor de allerarmsten. En zo werd de

zandman van Ovven nog wel geliefder dan ooit tevoren.

En Berend Blok ? Die werd gezien als een grote held die het land van Ovven eens van de hongersnood redde.

Einde

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De Indiaanse Nachten

Een oude indiaanse man vond een schoen vlakbij het ravijn. Hij wierp de schoen in het ravijn, en liep verder langs de ravijn, terwijl hij soms naar de overkant keek. Een boze geest had gedreigd tot de oude man dat hij al het land aan zijn kant van het ravijn zou laten verdwijnen, zodat alles wat erop zou leven in het ravijn zou verdwijnen. De boze geest hield zijn hand over het gezicht van de oude man, terwijl hij achter de oude man stond. De hand was vlammend. Even leek het alsof de oude man blind was geworden. De hand brandde en deed hem pijn. De oude man zakte door zijn knieen en ging op de grond zitten. Hij probeerde naar de overkant van het ravijn te kijken, maar hij zag niets meer. 'Ik zal je één kans geven,' zei de boze geest. 'Elke nacht moet je een sprookje bedenken, en elke nacht dat je er in slaagt mij een sprookje te vertellen, zal ik je een stuk van een brug geven, en moet je op het stuk blijven tot de volgende nacht om een nieuw stuk erbij te krijgen. Als je er op een nacht niet in slaagt mij een sprookje te vertellen, dan zal de brug instorten. Als de brug helemaal tot de andere kant is gekomen door de sprookjes, dan zal een ieder die over de brug tot de andere kant van het ravijn komt gespaard worden.'

'Wat is er aan de andere kant van het ravijn ?' vroeg de man.

'Een land genaamd Sinsabijne, het land van de indiaanse vlieg,' sprak de boze geest.

'Ik kan niets meer zien,' sprak de oude indiaanse man. 'Hoe kan ik ooit in dat land komen ?'

'Elke keer als je er in slaagt een sprookje te vertellen 's nachts, zal ik je iets meer van je zicht teruggeven,' sprak de boze geest.

'Waarom wil je onze kant van het ravijn vernietigen en ons in het ravijn laten verdwijnen ?' vroeg de oude indiaanse man.

'Ik wil het niet,' sprak de boze geest. 'Eens werd ik verbannen uit Sinsabijne, het land van de indiaanse vlieg. Ik was vals beschuldigd, en ik werd betoverd in een boze geest. Ik zou alleen mogen terugkomen als ik het land aan deze kant van het ravijn zou vernietigen of een sprookjesbrug zou bouwen over het ravijn.'

> De oude indiaanse man keek de boze geest met grote ogen aan, terwijl hij weer een klein beetje kon zien. 'Wie bent u dan ?' vroeg hij.

'Ik ben de prins van Sinsabijne,' sprak de boze geest. 'Ik ben onder een grote vloek. Als de keten van de nachtsprookjes verbroken wordt door één nacht over te slaan, dan zal de brug instorten, en het land aan deze kant van het ravijn ten onder gaan.'

De oude indiaanse man schudde zijn hoofd. Het was inmiddels nacht geworden, en de man begon te vertellen. Aan het einde van de laatste nacht en het laatste sprookje lag er een prachtige brug over het ravijn, en konden ze beiden het land Sinsabijne binnengaan. De betovering was verbroken, en de prins van Sinsabijne stond voor de oude indiaanse man. Overal vlogen prachtige indiaanse vliegen om hen heen. Ze gingen over de brug om de mensen aan de andere kant van het ravijn te waarschuwen en te roepen, om hen ook over de sprookjesbrug van de indiaanse nachten te laten komen.

Maar een heleboel mensen luisterden niet. De sprookjesbrug begon langzaam in het ravijn te zakken. Ook het land waar de oude indiaanse man vandaan kwam begon steeds meer weg te zinken. Nu wilden de mensen wel over de brug rennen, maar ze begonnen steeds meer terug te glijden. De prins van Sinsabijne schudde zijn hoofd. De oude indiaanse man vroeg de prins wat er met zijn sprookjes zou gebeuren.

'Ik weet wel wat,' zei de prins, en klapte in zijn handen. Direct begonnen de brokstukken van de sprookjes uit het ravijn omhoog te komen. Ze waren zo glad dat niemand zich er aan vast kon houden, terwijl ze dat wel probeerden. Weer klapte de prins in zijn handen, en op het Sinsabijnse land begonnen de brokstukken een prachtig paleis te vormen.

'Hier kunnen wij wonen, en allen die de sprookjes hebben liefgehad,' sprak de prins. De oude indiaanse man glimlachte, en ze leefden nog lang en gelukkig.

De Wonderlijke Boekenkamer van

Oom Benno

Hoofdstuk 1. Ziek

Bertram had een boze tante en een vreemde oom. Ze hielden hem opgesloten in een kamer. Hij was altijd ziek, en mocht nooit uit zijn kamer. Zijn eten werd gebracht. Hij mocht dus ook niet naar buiten, maar dat zou hij waarschijnlijk ook niet kunnen, omdat hij te ziek was. Zijn boze tante was de rode heks, en zijn vreemde oom was oom Benno, ook een heks, en een tovenaar. Oom Benno had een boekenkamer, waar een heleboel indianenboeken stonden. Ook stonden er vele andere soorten boeken. Bertram mocht daar beslist niet komen. De goudvis had gezegd dat Bertram in de boeken de sleutel tot zijn ontsnapping kon vinden.

Op een nacht hadden zijn oom en tante vergeten zijn deur op slot te doen. Stilletjes sloop Bertram uit zijn kamer, en liep de boekenkamer van oom Benno in. Bertram griste direct een indianenboek uit de boekenkast. En toen nog één, en toen nog één, en liep toen snel naar zijn kamer terug. 'Ik moet ze maar goed verborgen houden,' zei Bertram tegen zichzelf, en ze alleen 's nachts lezen wanneer oom en tante slapen. Het was nu 's nachts, dus Bertram begon direct te lezen.

'Horlepiep,' zei Bertram tegen zichzelf, wat gebeurt er nu ? Ik ben helemaal duizelig ineens. Hij had de eerste bladzijde van een indianenboek opengeslagen, en werd helemaal warm van binnen. De letters duizelden voor zijn ogen. 'Hoofdstuk één,' las hij. Hij hoorde wat schoten, en gezwiep van een zweep of lasso. 'Hoe kan dat ?' vroeg hij zichzelf af. Hij klapte het boek dicht, maar het was al te laat. Toen hij opkeek was hij in een woestijn, een prairie. Twee cowboys stonden voor hem. 'Wat moet dat daar ?' zeiden ze. Toen ineens vielen ze beiden naar voren. Ze hadden pijlen in hun rug. Een groep indianen op paarden namen Bertram mee. In het kamp merkte Bertram dat hij vastgebonden was. Ze brachten hem naar een paal, waar hij aan vastgemaakt werd.

'Laat me los,' zei Bertram. 'Ik ben ziek.'

'Niks mee te maken,' zeiden de indianen.

'Wat gaan jullie met me doen ?' vroeg Bertram.

'Dat zul je nog wel zien,' zeiden ze.

Bertram begon te huilen. Zijn oom en tante hadden hem weleens verteld wat indianen met hun gevangenen doen. Hij werd naar een grote ketel gebracht even later. 'Gaan jullie me opeten ?' huilde Bertram. 'Nee,' zeiden de indianen. 'Jij moet vanaf nu voor ons koken.'

'Maar ik ben daar veel te ziek voor,' zei Bertram.

'Geeft niks,' zeiden de indianen. 'Daar krijg je wel medicijnen voor.'

Ze gaven hem een soort groene dropjes, en na een tijdje voelde Bertram zich veel beter.

'Ik houd van jullie,' zei Bertram. 'Jullie hebben mij beter gemaakt.'

'Niks mee te maken,' zeiden de indianen boos. 'Je bent onze slaaf. Je moet voor ons koken nu.'

'Mij best,' zei Bertram, die allang blij was dat ze hem beter hadden gemaakt. 'Ik ben niet ziek meer !' juichte Bertram. 'Stil houden, jongen,' zei een wat oudere indiaanse vrouw.

Bertram roerde in de pan. Hij moest soep maken. Ze legden hem uit wat hij allemaal in de pan moest stoppen. Veel kruiden, en allerlei soorten vruchtjes.

De soep was heel lekker.

'Nu moet je weer terug,' zeiden de indianen.

'Wat ?' zei Bertram teleurgesteld. 'Ik wil niet meer terug naar mijn oom en tante. Ze houden me opgesloten.

'Niets mee te maken,' zeiden de indianen. 'We kunnen je hier niet houden.'

'Alsjeblieft,' smeekte Bertram, 'ik zal alles doen wat jullie willen.'

'Nee, jongen,' zei een wat oudere indiaanse vrouw. 'Je moet terug.'

Bertram begon te huilen. Trillend hield hij het boek in zijn handen, en merkte dat hij weer in zijn kamer was. Ook voelde hij zich weer ziek.

Hoofdstuk 2. De Ontsnapping

Bertram legde de boeken diep onder zijn bed, onder een doek, en ging slapen. De volgende ochtend was hij vroeg wakker. Hij deed de gordijnen open, maar het licht deed zoveel pijn aan zijn ogen dat hij de gordijnen weer dichtdeed. Oom en tante sliepen nog, dus hij kon nog wel even lezen. Hij pakte een ander indianenboek, sloeg het open, en werd weer duizelig. Snel bevond hij zich in een oerwoud. Wilde beesten stonden om hem heen. Hij was wel even bang. Toen hoorde hij schoten. De beesten renden weg, en al snel stond er een indiaan met een geweer voor hem.

'Meekomen jij,' zei de indiaan. Bertram liep mee met de indiaan, die hem naar het kamp bracht. Langs het kamp was een rivier met bootjes. 'Jij bent wie ?' vroeg de indiaan.

'Bertram,' zei hij.

'Oh, ah,' zei de indiaan. 'Ik jouw naam leuk vinden.'

'Haha,' zei Bertram.

'Waarom jongen zij hier zijn ?' vroeg de indiaan.

Toen legde Bertram het uit aan de indiaan. De indiaan begreep er niets van.

'Ik heb tent voor jou,' zei de indiaan. Hij nam Bertram mee naar een lege indianentent. 'Hier mag jij wonen,' zei de indiaan.

'Dank je wel,' zei Bertram. 'Dat is erg aardig van u.'

's Nachts komen de spoken,' zei de indiaan, 'de geesten van de voorouders.'

'Gezellig,' zei Bertram.

'Nee,' zei de indiaan. 'Niet gezellig. Zij zijn boos, altijd boos.'

'En ik ben altijd ziek,' zei Bertram.

'Ik zal de spoken zeggen, jij altijd ziek zijn,' zei de indiaan.

Maar ineens werd hij wild door mekaar geschud door oom Benno. 'Heb jij aan mijn indianen-boeken gezeten ?' brult oom Benno woest.

'Waar komt die man vandaan ?' vraagt de indiaan.

'Heb ik jou iets gevraagd, snotaap ?' brult oom Benno. 'Die jongen moet meekomen, meekomen, nu !'

De indiaan grijpt zijn hakbijl en slaat oom Benno tegen de grond met de achterkant. 'Zo, wijsneus,' zegt de indiaan. 'Jij mij niet beledigen, en van jongen afblijven.' Oom Benno wordt vastgebonden, en naar een paal gesleept. 'Ziezo, die kan mij niet meer beledigen,' zei de indiaan.

Toen de andere indianen terugkwamen vroegen ze : 'Wat moet die dikke man hier ?'

'Het is een uilskuiken,' zei de indiaan. 'Hij heeft ons beledigd, en wilde jongen roven.'

'Wie is die jongen ?' vroegen ze.

'Goed kijken,' zei de indiaan. 'Hij is de machtige zonnedroom.'

De indianen bogen voor Bertram neer. Bertram begon te lachen.

'Maak me onmiddellijk los, Bertram !' brulde oom Benno.

Maar Bertram deed net alsof hij hem niet hoorde. Toen het nacht geworden was brulde oom Benno de hele nacht door. De volgende dag zei de indiaan dat hij naar het gevangenen-kamp moest. 'Wat gaan jullie met hem doen ?' vroeg Bertram.

'Weten we nog niet,' zei de indiaan. Toen oom Benno was afgevoerd was het eindelijk rustig.

Een paar dagen later moest Bertram weer terug. Ze konden hem niet te lang houden. Maar ze wilden oom Benno houden, ook om Bertram een dienst te bewijzen. Bertram knipperde even met zijn ogen, en was weer in zijn eigen kamer, starende naar het boek. Bertram had honger, maar er was geen voedsel op zijn kamer. Hij liep naar de deur en merkte dat de deur nog steeds

open was. Tante riep hem. 'Bertram, kom naar mijn slaapkamer. Ik ben ziek, en ik weet niet waar je oom is.'

Bertram liep direct haar kamer binnen. Het was hier heel donker. Hij zag tante in haar bed liggen. 'Jongen, je bent nu oud genoeg geworden om je kamer uit te kunnen,' zei tante. 'Kun je wat voor je oude tante klaarmaken. Ik voel me zo zwak.'

'Natuurlijk tante,' zei Bertram.

Hij liep naar beneden de keuken in, en maakte wat brood voor haar met thee en een eitje. Toen bracht hij het boven. 'Dank je wel, lieverd,' zei tante. 'Ga nu maar doen waar je zin in hebt.'

Bertram ging direct naar de boekenkamer. De goudvis had gelijk gehad. In de boeken had hij de sleutel tot zijn ontsnapping gevonden.

De Plaag van Elzega

In het stadje Elzega was een plaag van vliegende vissen die de hoofden van de burgers teisterden. De heksenmeester had een zwart zaad waarmee hij vissen kon laten vliegen, en hij gaf hen de naarste opdrachten. Zo zaaide hij een boel tragedie en hopeloosheid. De vissen waren gevreesd, en als ze dan weer vertrokken was het leed vaak al geschied, of begon toen pas echt.

Iedereen was met zijn handen in het haar. Ook de kleine Jog vond het vervelend. Hij was vastbesloten hier iets aan te doen, en op een dag stapte hij naar de burgemeester. Jog belde aan, en de dienstmaagd van de burgemeester deed bezorgd open. 'Is er wat gebeurd, kleine ?'

'Nee,' zei Jog, 'ik wil gewoon de burgemeester spreken.' Na een tijdje wachten kon de kleine Jog bij de burgemeester naar binnen in zijn kamer.

'Zo, kleine jongen, dus jij wilt de stad redden van dit boze gespuis, huh ?' zei de burgemeester nadat Jog hem het verhaal had verteld. 'En hoe zou jij dat willen doen, kleine man ?'

'Geef me even de tijd, burgemeester,' zei de jongen. 'Ik kan vast wel iets bedenken.'

'Toch wel vreemd, jongen, dat je hier komt zonder ook maar enig idee te hebben, want meestal zijn degenen die hier komen al voorbereid met een

idee of plan. Maar in ieder geval is het erg dapper van je,' zei de burgemeester.

Met de dagen leek het steeds erger te worden. De vissen waren erg bloeddorstig, en maakten velen ziek. Ook maakten ze angstaanjagende geluiden, waardoor mensen 's nachts niet konden slapen.

Het waaide hard buiten. De kerkklokken bleven maar luiden. Jog staarde voor zich uit, vastbesloten een plan te bedenken. 'Jongen, geef de moed maar op,' zei zijn moeder telkens. 'Hier is geen kruid tegen opgewassen.' Ze probeerden mensen gek te maken met hun gekrijs. In het stadje werden ze inmiddels overal de schuld voor gegeven. Ook zouden ze kinderen gekke en nare versjes laten zingen.

Toen Jog achttien was had hij ineens een plan. Hij zou naar het boze berkenbos gaan, op zoek naar de heksenmeester die dit allemaal op zijn geweten had.

Na lang lopen kwam hij bij een huisje. Hij ging naar binnen, en zag de heksenmeester achter een tafeltje zitten. 'Zeg kerel,' zei Jog, 'je boze spelletjes zijn uit. Jij bent de schuldige, en ik ben de wraakengel.'

'Zo zo,' zei de heksenmeester. 'Praatjes, hè, je bent er anders nog niet.' De heksenmeester stond op, en een vuurvlam kwam van zijn hand die regelrecht op Jog afvloog. Jog kon nog net bukken. Maar toen kwamen er twee vliegende vissen binnenvliegen, die met groot gekrijs Jog grepen en met hem wegvlogen. Ze brachten hem op een heel hoog nest in de bergen, waar het heel koud was.

'Je moet voor heksenmeester Troegadoer verschijnen,' zei één van de vliegende vissen.

Na hem ernstig toegetakeld te hebben, brachten ze hem bloedend naar een dichtbijzijnd kasteel in het bos. Heksenmeester Troegadoer zat binnenin op een troon. 'Laat deze lamlendeling binnenkomen !' riep de heksenmeester. 'Hij heeft mijn broer bedreigd. Nu is hij van mij.' De heksenmeester begon te lachen.

'Maar jullie hebben Elzega getergd met jullie vliegende vissen !' riep Jog.

De vliegende vissen brachten hem tot vlak voor de troon, en lieten hem toen neervallen. Kreunend en hijgend stond Jog moeizaam op. Hij was diep verwond.

'Elzega is ons terrein,' zei Troegadoer. 'Jullie hadden nooit dat stadje moeten bouwen op natuur gebied.'

'Daar kunnen wij niets aan doen,' riep Jog boos, 'dat hebben onze voorouders gedaan, en ze zeiden dat het een open vlakte was. Ze hebben geen bomen ervoor omgekapt, of ander natuurgebied.'

'Leugens,' zei Troegadoer, 'ze hebben een heel stuk bos ervoor weggekapt. Als je leven je lief is, vertrek uit de stad. De stad zal vernietigd worden.'

'Mijn voorouders moesten wel ergens leven. Ze hebben niets verkeerds gedaan,' zei Jog.

'Dat maken ze je maar wijs,' zei Troegadoer. 'Spoedig zal de stad vergaan, en er is niks wat je daaraan kunt doen.'

Jog probeerde zich los te rukken uit de greep die de vliegende vissen op hem hadden. Ze stonken verschrikkelijk. Hij voelde hun hete adem in zijn nek. Ze hadden bijna een zwarte huid.

Ze spoten hun inktgas in hem, terwijl hun nagels als naalden diep in zijn huid gingen. Hij werd plotseling depressief en duizelig. Toen viel hij op de grond. Troegadoer begon te lachen.

Jog wordt dan wakker na een tijdje in een langwerpige zaal op een bed, waar nog veel meer mensen op bedden liggen.

Een klein meisje komt aangelopen met lang, zwart haar. 'Wij zullen je bewerken met het zwarte zaad,' zei het meisje. 'Ook jij zal in een vliegende vis veranderen. We kunnen je goed gebruiken.'

'Nee !' gilde Jog, maar al snel injecteerde het meisje hem, en hij viel weer in een diepe slaap. Hij werd in een capsule gestopt en ging diep in de grond. Hij werd wakker toen ze de boom van het zwarte zaad hadden bereikt, diep onder de grond. Er zaten vleermuizen in deze boom. Hij moest van het zaad eten. Hij werd in een rivier geworpen en ging kopje onder. Hij zwom naar boven, en merkte dat hij in de zee was. Ook merkte hij dat hij een vis was geworden. Hij zag meerdere vissen om zich heen, en ze stegen op uit het water, om te vliegen.

Ook hij merkte dat hij kon vliegen. Zijn huid was bijna zwart. Hij bevond zich in een zaal met vele andere vliegende vissen. Ze keken allemaal richting een bol, waarop een vogelachtige verschijning zat met grote vleugels. Toen veranderde de verschijning in een koning. Het was de koning van de vliegende vissen.

Plotseling merkte Jog dat hij zijn eigen lichaam weer terughad. Hij rende door een tunnel, zoekende naar de uitgang. 'Nee, ik wil dit niet !' riep hij. Hij ramde met zijn vuisten op glas. Hij had het gevoel dat hij verdronk. Hij kon niet ademen. 'Is er dan niemand om me te helpen !' riep hij in wanhoop.

'Er is iets mis,' zei het kleine meisje. 'We kunnen hem niet veranderen in een vliegende vis. Zijn hart is te sterk.'

Plotseling voelde Jog dat hij buiten lag op de grond, vlak voor het kasteel. Zo snel als hij kon rende hij terug naar het stadje Elzega. Hij was door deze ervaring zo getraumatiseerd dat hij er nooit meer over durfde te spreken.

Het Mysterie van het IJskasteel

Berend en Albert hadden een vader die opgesloten was in een ijskasteel. Tante Audam kwam met de kinderen praten die helemaal overstuur waren. Ze hadden geen moeder meer, dus ze wisten niet waar ze naar toe moesten. Tante Audam zou ze mee nemen naar een andere tante die wel raad met hen zou weten. Ook zou deze tante kunnen helpen in de bevrijding van hun vader. Tante Jokebed woonde een paar stadjes verder. Tante Jokebed had een zoontje genaamd David. Ze zouden zolang bij David op de kamer slapen. Gelukkig had David een hele grote kamer. Tante Jokebed kende het ijskasteel wel. Haar man werd daar vroeger ook gevangen gehouden. Het had allemaal te maken met een hertog die in een kat kon veranderen. Hertog Kat-Anders heette die. Zijn echte naam was Paulus Wilhelmus de Vijfde. De vader van Berend en Albert had een aantal rekeningen niet betaald, en er waren nog wel meer dingen aan de hand. Hertog Kat-Anders zou voor de staat werken. Het was allemaal nog wel een geheimzinnige bedoeling. Vader was opeens verdwenen, en de ochtend erna vonden de kinderen een brief op de deurmat, waarop geschreven stond dat hun vader nu was opgesloten in het ijskasteel. Dat was een ijskoude, zeer gevreesde, oude gevangenis. De kinderen misten hun vader heel erg.

Tante Katrien had zich het lot van de kinderen ook erg aangetrokken, en kwam de kinderen vaak opzoeken. Soms nam ze de kinderen weleens mee naar haar huis, om te logeren. De tantes waren ervan overtuigd dat hertog Kat-Anders helemaal niet voor de staat werkte, maar dat het een misdaads-organisatie was. Vaak kwam de familie bij elkaar om te overleggen wat ze konden doen. Oom Joep zou weleens een kijkje willen nemen daar bij het ijskasteel, maar sommige tantes waren het daar niet mee eens. Het zou veel te gevaarlijk zijn. Maar oom Joep wilde zich niet laten kennen, en besloot er toch naartoe te gaan. Het ging immers om zijn broer.

Oom Joep ging er met de auto naartoe, maar werd door twee ridderachtige figuren met speren tegengehouden. 'Halt,' zei één van de ridders. 'U komt er niet doorheen. Verboden terrein.'

'Ik wil weten wat jullie met mijn broer hebben gedaan,' zei oom Joep.

'Dat kunnen we niet achterhalen,' zeiden de ridders. 'Er zijn hier teveel gevangenen om daaraan te beginnen.'

'Maar ik heb er recht op,' zei oom Joep. Maar de ridders wilden hem niet antwoorden. 'Mijnheer,' zei één van de ridders, 'nu moet u maken dat u hier wegkomt, anders laten wij u arresteren vanwege betreding van verboden terrein, en wegens het onnodig lastigvallen van het gezag.'

Oom Joep maakte rechtsomkeerds, en lichtte de familie in. Tante Jokebed kende iemand genaamd meester Ed Konijn, een meester in de rechten. Misschien dat die wel wat zou kunnen betekenen. Oom Joep wilde daar wel

naartoe gaan samen met Berend en Albert. Het was al laat, maar door een telefoontje kon er nog wel wat geregeld worden, en ze waren meer dan van harte welkom. Meester Ed Konijn woonde diep in het bos. Toen ze aanklopten bij zijn huis deed een lange, gezette man met een lichte huidziekte de deur los. 'Komt u verder,' zei Ed. Even later zaten ze in een sjieke woonkamer met veel schilderijen en antieke meubels. Ook hingen er veel jacht-trofeeen aan de muur. De kinderen begonnen hun verhaal te vertellen over wat er met hun vader gebeurt was, en oom Joep sprak zijn vermoeden uit dat het om een misdaad ging.

'Dat is allemaal waar,' zei Ed Konijn. 'Het ijskasteel is het gevangenis-terrein van een misdaads-organisatie, maar niemand kan daar iets aan doen, zelfs de staat niet.'

'Maar waarom niet ?' vroeg oom Joep.

'Omdat ze te sterk zijn,' zei Ed Konijn.

'Leuke achternaam heeft u trouwens,' zei oom Joep.

'Dank u,' zei Ed Konijn.

'Kunt u ons helpen ?' vroeg oom Joep.

'Luister,' zei Ed Konijn, 'we lopen nu al gevaar omdat we hierover praten. We kunnen beter stoppen.'

'Ja, maar het gaat om mijn broer,' zei oom Joep, 'en zijn kinderen hier hebben hun vader nodig, vooral sinds hun moeder er niet meer is. Is er dan echt helemaal niets wat u voor ons zou kunnen betekenen ?'

'Ik vrees van niet,' zei Ed Konijn. 'En dat vind ik al vreselijk op zichzelf. Ik had u graag willen helpen.'

'U bent meester in de rechten,' zei oom Joep. 'U moet daar wel iets mee kunnen doen. We zijn hier toch niet voor niets gekomen ?'

'Dat is waar,' zei Ed Konijn. 'Hmm..., laat me eens zien. U zou met de hertog zelf kunnen praten. Ik geloof dat hij nogal wispelturig is. Hij heeft een vreemde soort van ziekte. Hij is een weerkat, wat betekent dat hij in een kat kan veranderen. Het heeft natuurlijk wel een risico, maar ik heb de indruk dat u dat risico wel wilt nemen.'

'Waar kunnen we de hertog spreken ?' vroeg oom Joep.

'Goede vraag,' zei Ed Konijn. 'Achter het ijskasteel is zijn huis. Het is daar niet pluis, dat kan ik u wel vertellen. Het spookt daar.'

'Bent u er weleens geweest ?' vroeg oom Joep. Het hoofd van Ed Konijn begon verschrikkelijk rood te worden. 'Eh..., daar kan ik niet over praten,'

stamelde hij.

'Ach, toe nou, kom op,' zei oom Joep.

'Het is mij verboden daarover te praten. Beroeps-geheim,' zei Ed Konijn.

'En hoe kom ik daar ?' vroeg oom Joep. 'Want het ijskasteel is streng bewaakt.'

Ed Konijn stopte zijn hand in zijn zak en haalde er een kaartje uit. 'Zie, hier staat zijn telefoon-nummer op.'

Oom Joep nam het kaartje aan. De kinderen bleven die nacht bij oom Joep slapen. De volgende ochtend belde oom Joep op naar de hertog. Hij kreeg een bediende aan de lijn. 'Kom maar langs om acht uur vanavond,' zei de bediende, 'maar zorg er voor dat u niet langs het ijskasteel gaat. U moet regelrecht naar het huis van de hertog komen, aan de achterkant van het ijskasteel. Even werd er uitgelegd hoe te rijden, en toen wist oom Joep genoeg. Weer zouden de kinderen met hem meegaan.

Om precies acht uur kwamen ze aan bij het huis van de hertog. Er kwam al direct een bediende aanrennen. 'Waar heeft u uw koffers ?' vroeg de bediende.

'Wij hebben geen koffers bij ons,' zei oom Joep.

'Dus u komt niet logeren ?' vroeg de bediende.

'Nee, wij komen niet logeren,' zei oom Joep.

'Komt u maar mee,' zei de bediende ineens heel nors. Ze kwamen binnen in een grote hal. Aan de rechterkant was een lange gang. 'Loop deze hele gang uit, en klop dan vier keer op de deur aan het einde van de gang. De hertog verwacht u daar,' zei de bediende.

In de gang hingen veel schilderijen, en er stonden veel kastjes aan de zijkanten. Even bonkte het hart in de keel van oom Joep. Hij hoopte maar dat de hertog hem kon helpen. Bij de grote deur aangekomen klopte hij vier keer aan. Direct werd de deur opengemaakt, en een kleine man deed open. 'Geweldig, jullie zijn er al,' zei de man. 'Gaat u maar zitten.'

De kinderen vertelden hun verhaal, en daarna sprak oom Joep zijn vermoeden uit dat het om een misdaad ging.

'Ach welnee,' zei de hertog. 'Ik heb de papieren van deze man doorgekeken, van jullie vader, en uw broer, en deze mijnheer heeft nogal veel op zijn geweten, dus zijn gevangenneming is volkomen terecht. Ik kan daar verder weinig aan doen, sorry dat ik het moet zeggen.'

'Oh, en wat heeft hij dan gedaan ?' vroeg oom Joep, terwijl ook de kinderen

begonnen te protesteren.

'Luister goed,' zei de hertog. 'Ik kan en mag daar verder niets over zeggen. De raad heeft beslist. Het is tegen de wet om daar zomaar vrij over te praten. U zou daar zelf ook gevaar mee kunnen lopen.'

'Ja, ja,' zei oom Joep. 'U kunt me nog meer vertellen. Wij als naaste familie hebben er recht op te weten wat er is gebeurd, en waarom hij opgesloten zit.'

'Rustig aan,' zei de hertog. 'Ik waarschuw u. U vraagt teveel. Ik ben niet gemachtigd hierover te spreken.'

'En wie heeft u de opdracht gegeven daarover te zwijgen ?' vroeg oom Joep die bijna stond te koken.

'Kan en mag ik u niet vertellen,' zei de hertog zuur.

'Het is alsof ik met mijn hoofd tegen een muur aanloop,' zei oom Joep.

'Het spijt me bijzonder,' zei de hertog.

'Is het waar dat u in een kat kan veranderen ?' vroeg Berend.

De hertog werd ineens erg zenuwachtig. 'Allemaal sprookjes,' zei hij. Hij begon op zijn horloge te kijken. 'Ik vind dat u nu moet gaan, u kunt beter gaan. Deze zaak is afgerond.'

'Afgerond ?' vroeg oom Joep woedend. 'We zijn hier geen steek wijzer geworden.'

'U kunt gaan,' zei de hertog, terwijl hij een wimpelend gebaar met zijn handen maakte.

'Ik laat het er hier niet bij zitten,' zei oom Joep, terwijl hij opstond.

'Dat kunt u beter wel doen,' zei de hertog, 'anders kunt u in grote problemen komen.'

'En wat voor problemen dan wel ?' vroeg oom Joep.

Maar de hertog zweeg.

De familie werd weer ingelicht, en ze zouden opnieuw bij elkaar komen. 'Nou,' zei tante Katrien, 'daar schieten we niet erg veel mee op.'

Ook was er een andere oom bijgekomen : oom Bakus. Oom Bakus zei dat de hertog zoveel macht had, omdat het land oorspronkelijk van zijn voorouders was. Zijn voorouders van ver terug bezaten het land, nog voordat er een staat bestond. Oom Bakus zei ook dat de hertog die macht samen met zijn broer had geerfd, hertog Hernandes. Volgens oom Bakus zou hertog Hernandes

veel kunnen betekenen. Oom Bakus wist wel waar die hertog woonde, en wilde er wel met oom Joep en de kinderen naartoe. Ook tante Katrien wilde wel mee. Ze was van mening dat wanneer er meerdere familie-leden zouden meegaan, ze meer kans van slagen hadden. Oom Bakus belde op, en ze konden direct komen. Het was niet zo lang rijden. Het huis van hertog Hernandes was vele malen groter dan het huis van hertog Kat-Anders. Hertog Hernandes wachtte hen al op bij de deur. 'Zo, kom binnen,' zei hij met een warme, hartelijke stem. 'Kan ik jullie iets te drinken aanbieden ?' Even later zaten ze in een grote zaal, aan een soort eet-tafel. Ze kregen allerlei toetjes voorgeschoteld, en andere hapjes. 'Zo zo,' zei oom Bakus. 'Hier is veel werk aan besteed.'

'Ja,' zei hertog Hernandes. 'Jullie zijn namelijk mijn speciale gasten. Ziet u, die krijg ik hier bijna nooit. Alles gaat via mijn broer, Paulus Wilhelmus de Vijfde, oftewel hertog Kat-Anders. Ik ben wat minder bekend, denk ik. Ik ben blij dat jullie er zijn. Blijven jullie ook logeren ?'

'Dat is erg aardig van u aangeboden,' zei oom Bakus, 'maar we zijn hier eigenlijk alleen maar om wat belangrijke dingen te bespreken.'

'Nou ja, dat kan toch ook uitstekend alle dagen dat u hier verblijft ?' sprak hertog Hernandes. De kinderen begonnen weer als eerste hun verhaal te vertellen, en ze lieten duidelijk blijken hoe erg ze hun vader misten. Oom Bakus, tante Katrien en oom Joep spraken daarna hun vermoeden uit dat het om een misdaad ging. Ook vertelde oom Joep hoe hertog Kat-Anders reageerde. 'Ach ja, dat is typisch mijn broer,' zei hertog Hernandes. 'Ik snap jullie verhaal volkomen.' Toen bladerde de hertog wat papieren door. 'Ik zie hier duidelijk de reden waarom jullie familie-lid is opgepakt en gevangen gezet. Deze man heeft namelijk een gevaarlijke ziekte die maakt dat hij soms in een kat veranderd. Hebben jullie daar ooit iets van gemerkt ?'

'Niets !' protesteerde tante Katrien. 'Mijn broer zou zoiets nooit doen. Daar is hij helemaal het type niet voor, en dit is allemaal erg belachelijk. Te meer omdat deze verhalen juist over uw broer, hertog Kat-Anders, de ronde gaan.'

'Eh, dat moet een vergissing zijn,' zei hertog Hernandes ineens heel snibbig. 'En ik stel het niet op prijs dat u zo over mijn broer praat.'

'Daar kunnen wij verder niets aan doen dat die verhalen over uw broer de ronde gaan,' zei tante Katrien.

'Maar u hoeft dat niet op te noemen,' zei hertog Hernandes. 'Het is niet netjes. En u doet daar dan mee aan de verspreiding van verschrikkelijke leugens en ophitserij.'

'Zeg kom,' bulderde tante Katrien. 'Zo zijn we niet getrouwd, hè. U beschuldigt mijn broer ervan deze ziekte te hebben.'

'Het zijn de feiten, mevrouw,' sprak de hertog ineens kalm. 'Het is bij hem waargenomen, en daar kunnen u en ik of wie dan ook niets aan doen.'

'Pardon ?' zei tante Katrien. 'Zeg, pardon ? Daar hebben wij nooit iets van meegekregen, en dat hebben wij ook nooit gesignaleerd. Nogmaals is dat bij uw broer geconstateerd, niet bij mijn broer. U moet hier de dingen niet door elkaar halen.'

'Shhhh...' fluisterde de hertog hard. 'Daar moet u dus absoluut niet over spreken. Daar kan u voor worden opgepakt. Ik zal maar oppassen als ik u was. De muren hebben hier oren.'

'Ja, inderdaad,' zei tante Katrien spottend. 'En al zou mijn broer die ziekte hebben. Waarom zou hij daarvoor de gevangenis inmoeten ?'

'Omdat hij gevaarlijk is,' zei de hertog indringend. 'Zeer gevaarlijk. Weer-katten zijn een ernstig probleem wat niet onderschat mag worden. Het kan op een vervelend moment totaal verkeerd gaan, ziet u.'

'Nee, dat zie ik niet,' zei tante Katrien. 'Het is een schande dat u zo over mijn broer praat. U toont ons niet eens een degelijk bewijs.'

'Verdraaid,' zei de hertog. 'Al het bewijs is in deze documenten. Daaraan te twijfelen, en bovenal het officiele bewijs tegen te spreken, kan u in de problemen brengen. Ik kan u laten arresteren voor het tegenspreken van het gezag.'

'Belachelijk,' zei tante Katrien.

'In ieder geval,' zei de hertog. 'Uw familie-lid is in zo'n ernstige toestand dat ijs-verblijf noodzakelijk is, ver weg van zijn sociale omgeving. Het is voor uw bescherming. En praat ook verder niet over zijn ziekte, want de ziekte wordt namelijk in anderen opgewekt door er over te praten. Het is hyper-besmettelijk en heeft een psychische oorsprong. Weet waar u aan begint. Elk geval van weer-katterigheid moet zo snel mogelijk uit de samenleving verwijderd worden, en het hele geval moet in de doofpot gestopt worden, zodat het zich niet kan verspreiden. Kan ik rekenen op uw medewerking ?'

'Ik denk niet dat we hier ook maar een stap verder komen,' zei tante Katrien.

'En blijft u nog logeren ?' vroeg de hertog ineens enthousiast.

'Geen denken aan,' zei tante Katrien.

'We blijven wèl logeren,' zei oom Bakus. 'Katrien, jij mag naar huis, maar wij moeten dit gewoon doen. We hebben geen andere oplossing.'

'Zeer goed,' glimlachte de hertog.

'Nee, dan blijf ik ook wel,' zei tante Katrien.

Ze kregen allemaal hun eigen kamer. Midden in de nacht sloop oom Bakus

naar tante Katrien. Ook maakte hij oom Joep wakker. Hij wilde op onderzoek uit in het huis van hertog Hernandes. In de eetzaal had de hertog de documenten laten liggen. Oom Bakus begon direct te bladeren en te lezen. Inderdaad stond er dat hun broer een ernstige ziekte had. Deze ziekte was vastgesteld door professor Eindricht. Ook gingen ze nog even op andere plaatsen zoeken, maar ze vonden niets wat ze konden gebruiken. De volgende ochtend werden ze vroeg wakker gemaakt door bedienden. De bedienden zeiden dat ze zo snel mogelijk moesten vertrekken. Er was verder geen uitleg bij, maar niemand had nog zin om ook maar iets langer te blijven.

'Wat een vreemd heerschap was dat,' zei tante Katrien in de auto. 'Ja, nog wel erger dan zijn broer,' zei oom Joep.

'En dat terwijl het allemaal zo goed begon,' zei oom Bakus.

'Ach, schijn bedriegt,' zei tante Katrien. 'En wie is nu die professor Eindricht ? Want hij moet hier allemaal veel meer over weten.'

Toen ze even later de kinderen bij tante Jokebed afzetten, en het haar vertelden, zei ze dat professor Eindricht in het ijskasteel werkte. Hij zou ook veel te maken hebben gehad met het oppakken van haar man. Daar werd ook altijd heel geheimzinnig over gedaan. Tante Jokebed wilde daar nooit over praten. En toen ze het haar weer vroegen wat er nu precies met haar man aan de hand was, zei ze dat ze daar niet over mocht praten. 'Begin jij nu ook al,' zei tante Katrien.

'Vreemd,' zei oom Bakus. 'In ieder geval wil ik graag met die professor Eindricht praten.'

'Doe het niet !' zei tante Jokebed luid. 'Je gaat daar erge spijt van krijgen.'

'Ach Jokebed,' zei tante Katrien, 'waarom zo hysterisch ? Hebben wij een andere keuze ?'

'Ik weet wat hij met mijn man heeft gedaan, en wat hij met ons allemaal kan doen,' zei Jokebed in paniek. 'Het is een gevaarlijke man. Hij kan onze hele familie in de vernieling brengen als we niet oppassen. Laten we een andere oplossing proberen te vinden.'

'Nee, Jokebed,' zei oom Bakus. 'Het is mooi geweest zo. Ik ben het zat. Ik wil precies weten hoe de vork in de steel zit.'

'Als je naar hem toe gaat, laat hij je niet meer gaan !' zei tante Jokebed luid. 'Je bent gewaarschuwd !'

Inmiddels was tante Audam ook gekomen. Zij kreeg ook het hele verhaal te horen. 'Kom nou,' zei oom Bakus. 'Ik laat me niet bangmaken.'

'Maar luister,' zei tante Audam. 'Jokebed heeft ervaring met hen. Haar man zat in hetzelfde schuitje. We kunnen beter naar haar advies luisteren, dan dat

we op eigen houtje dingen gaan doen tegen deze gevaarlijke misdaads-organisatie. We mogen het niet onderschatten.'

'Ja, maar we moeten wat doen. Het duurt allemaal al veel te lang. Bodelang heeft ons nodig. Ik zal voor mijn broer blijven vechten, ook al moet ik mijn eigen leven en vrijheid daarvoor opofferen,' zei oom Bakus vastbesloten.

'Oh, jij bent gewoon dom,' zei tante Audam. 'Denk je dat Bodelang wil dat jij je leven in gevaar brengt ? Wij hebben je nodig. We kunnen niet ook nog eens jou missen. Berend en Albert hebben je ook nodig.'

'Maar meer dan dat : Ze hebben hun vader nodig,' zei oom Bakus.

'Bakus is mijn held,' zei tante Katrien. 'En ik ben bereid om met hem mee te gaan.'

'Geen sprake van, Katrien,' zei oom Joep. 'Jij blijft hier. Veel te gevaarlijk. En ik kan jou niet missen als er wat verkeerd gaat.'

'Schat,' zei tante Katrien. 'Dan ga jij toch ook gewoon met ons mee ? Samen staan we sterk.'

'Als jij gaat, dan ga ik ook,' zei oom Joep.

'Goed, dan gaan we met z'n drieen,' zei oom Bakus. 'We zullen die professor eens een lesje leren. Wie denkt hij wel niet dat hij is ? Dan kent hij ons nog niet.'

'Zeg, klets jij niet zo uit je nek,' zei tante Audam. 'En luisteren jullie nu eens even naar mij, want ik heb een niet al te fijne mededeling voor jullie. Jullie weten dat ik de oudste ben, hè ? En jullie weten dat ik Bodelang het langste ken, omdat hij na mij kwam, hè ? Tot mijn spijt moet ik jullie mededelen dat hij wel degelijk weer-katterigheid had, al vanaf zijn geboorte. Het gebeurde niet al te vaak, maar hij veranderde soms in een kat, en dan was het goed mis. Iedereen moest zich bergen.'

'Onze ouders hebben daar nooit een woord over gezegd,' zei tante Katrien. 'Dit is allemaal zottigheid.'

'Nee, dat is het niet, Katrien,' snauwde tante Audam. 'Onze ouders mochten daar nooit wat over zeggen. Dat was verboden. Je kon daarvoor opgepakt worden. Het was verboden over weerkatterigheid te praten, en daar moet je vandaag de dag nog steeds mee oppassen. Ik heb misschien nu al teveel gezegd, maar ik vond toch dat jullie dit moesten weten.'

'Laten we alsjeblieft stoppen hierover te praten,' zei tante Jokebed bijna smekend. 'We zullen pertinent in de problemen gaan komen als we niet stoppen. Alsjeblieft.'

'Al die onzin moet nu maar eens afgelopen zijn,' zei oom Bakus. 'Katrien, ik

en Joep gaan met professor Eindricht praten.'

'Dom !' zei tante Audam luid. 'Heel dom, maar je moet het zelf weten.'

'Ja, heel dom van je,' zei tante Jokebed zachtjes. Oom Bakus had de telefoon gegrepen. Ze konden volgende week langskomen.

Het leek wel alsof de dagen eeuwig duurden. Oom Bakus stond te popelen om met de professor te praten. Eindelijk was het dan zo ver, en ze werden direct door de bewakers binnengelaten. Ze konden de auto vlak voor het ijskasteel parkeren. Door een grote deur konden ze naar binnen. Er waren hier allemaal wachthokjes waar bewakers zaten. Ook waren er veel militairen en agenten. Iemand met rechtopstaand blond haar kwam op hen af, in een hele lange zwarte jas. 'Eindricht,' zei hij snel, toen hij hen de hand aanreikte. 'Komt u met mij mee,' zei hij weer snel, terwijl hij een trap oprende. Het was een hele lange brede trap, die heel hoog voerde. In de verte was een hoge deur, waar hij doorheen rende. De deur was ook heel breed. 'Gaat u zitten !' schreeuwde hij. Oom Bakus, tante Katrien en oom Joep renden hem achterna. Wat ging die man snel, en wat praatte hij snel. Hij ging achter een groot zwart bureau zitten, en begon te lachen. 'Ja, haha, ik weet al waarvoor jullie komen. Familie-lid, hè ? Nou, hij is in goede handen hoor, dat kleine katje.'

Oom Bakus sloeg met zijn vuist op tafel. 'Ophouden met die onzin nu. Hoe lang moet hij hier blijven ?'

'Voor de rest van zijn leven,' zei professor Eindricht met een blij gezicht.

'Bent u gek geworden !' riep oom Bakus. 'En waarom lacht u daarom ?'

'Omdat wij goed voor hem zorgen,' zei de professor stralend.

'U bent gek,' zei tante Katrien.

'Shhh.... tut tut tut,' zei de professor. 'Zeg dat maar niet te hard, haha.'

'En waarom niet ?' vroeg Katrien nijdig.

'Daar kunnen de katten niet tegen,' zei de professor. 'Daar worden ze wild van, en gevaarlijk.'

'Nee, u bent gevaarlijk,' zei oom Bakus. 'U laat mijn broer nu vrij, of u zult wat gaan beleven.'

'Oh, geen denken aan,' lachte de professor. 'We kunnen hem veel te goed gebruiken ?'

'Voor wat ?' riep oom Bakus.

'Gaat u niks aan,' zei de professor. 'Allemaal geheim. Beroeps-geheim,

staats-geheim, hoe u het ook wilt noemen.'

'U werkt niet samen met de staat,' zei oom Joep. 'U bent een misdaads-organisatie.'

'Misdaads-organisatie ?' lachte de professor. 'Wij doen proeven. Onze gevangenen bewijzen de voortgang van de wetenschap daarmee een grote eer.

'Proeven ?' vroeg tante Katrien. 'Maar dat is vreselijk.'

'Het is vreselijk, precies,' zei de professor. 'Maar als de wetenschap zich niet ontwikkeld is het nog veel erger. We moeten offers brengen.'

'Zeg, blijf met je handen van andere mensen af dan,' zei oom Bakus.

'Nee,' zei de professor, 'nee, nee. Ik denk dat u het verkeerd begrijpt. Wij zijn bezig om een medicijn te ontwikkelen tegen weerkatterigheid. Het is allemaal voor bestwil van uw broer.'

'Geef onze broer terug,' zei oom Bakus. 'Wij hebben nooit weerkatterigheid in hem gemerkt.'

'Waar heb je je ogen ?' vroeg de professor. 'Het wordt alleen maar erger met hem. Hij is bijna dag en nacht een kat.'

'Ja, ik zou ook een kat worden als ik hier zou zitten,' zei oom Bakus. 'Ik waarschuw u. Ik tel tot drie. Laat hem los.'

'Geen denken aan,' zei de professor. 'U heeft een gevaarlijke wens. U wilt weerkatterigheid terug in de samenleving. Ik kan u daarvoor opsluiten.'

'Mijn broer bedoelt het niet zo,' zei oom Joep. 'Hij is alleen een beetje overstuur.'

'Overstuur ?' vroeg de professor. 'Volgens mij begint hij zelf al vormen van weerkatterigheid te vertonen.'

'Daar kunt u dan beter niet over praten, want dan kunt u het ook krijgen,' zei tante Katrien.

'Ik ben immuun,' zei de professor.

'Hoe dan ?' snauwde tante Katrien.

'Een pilletje ?' zei de professor.

'Ik dacht dat er nog geen medicijn was,' zei tante Katrien.

'Geen medicijn om het te genezen,' zei de professor, 'maar wel eentje om het

te voorkomen.'

'Waarom verspreid u dat medicijn dan niet ?' vroeg tante Katrien.

'Zit al in het drink water,' zei de professor, 'in de tandpasta, in het voedsel, in de shampoo, everywhere.'

'Hoe kan Bakus het dan nu ontwikkelen ?' vroeg tante Katrien.

'Nou, heel simpel,' zei de professor. 'Het zat waarschijnlijk al in zijn genetisch materiaal.'

'Ja, zo ken ik er nog wel eentje,' zei tante Katrien.

'Jullie zijn maar een gevaarlijke familie,' zei de professor. 'Ik zit eraan te denken jullie niet meer te laten gaan.

'Oh nee !' riep oom Bakus, 'oh nee !' Oom Bakus greep zijn buik, en begon in een zwarte panter te veranderen. Hij sprong op professor Eindricht af en beet hem in zijn nek. Toen veranderde hij weer in een mens, en riep dicht bij het oor van professor Eindricht : 'Jouw spelletjes zijn afgelopen. Geef ons nu onze broer terug, en allen die u onrechtmatig hier vasthoudt !' Professor Eindricht drukte al bloedend een paar alarm-knopjes in, en spoedig kwam er een heel legertje bewakers op hen af. Alweer veranderde oom Bakus in een panter, en ditmaal een veel grotere. Toen hij brulde grepen de wachters naar hun oren, en vielen op de grond. De panter rende in een reuze vaart naar beneden, en brak wat gevangenis deuren open. Weer veranderde hij in een mens, greep zijn broer, en rende met hem uit het kasteel, terwijl hij de anderen riep. 'Kom op, we moeten maken dat we hier wegkomen !' Al snel zaten ze in de auto.

Berend en Albert waren blij hun vader weer te zien.

Inmiddels was de man van tante Audam van een lange reis thuisgekomen. Ook hij kreeg het verhaal te horen, en deed mee aan de familie-samenkomsten. Deze oom Arend zei dat de weerkatterigheid waarschijnlijk een uit de hand gelopen vaccin was tegen de ziekte van weerman. De ziekte van weerman was een ziekte waarbij jongens soms veranderden in mannen, vooral 's nachts. Dan renden ze veelal de bossen in om te gaan jagen, en om op zoek te gaan naar elkaar. Dan vormden ze stammen, en maakten het bos onveilig, ook al waren ze gewoonlijks met het morgenlicht gewoon weer jongens. Veel families verloren hun zonen aan deze ziekte. Daarom werd het vaccin ontwikkeld, maar het had het bijverschijnsel van weerkatterigheid.

'Vreemd,' zei oom Bakus. 'Dan heeft onze familie waarschijnlijk heel vroeger aan die ziekte van weerman geleden, en hebben ze bij ons het vaccin toegedient.'

'Dat kan wel kloppen,' zei oom Arend. 'Bij mij in de familie speelde hetzelfde.'

'Wat moeten we nu doen dan ?' vroeg tante Katrien.

'In het buitenland zijn ze druk bezig met het zoeken naar een vaccin tegen weerkatterigheid,' zei oom Arend.

'Ach wat,' zei oom Bakus. 'Als ik die weerkatterigheid niet had, dan had ik Bodelang nooit uit het ijskasteel kunnen krijgen.'

'Ach, klets geen onzin, Bakus,' zei tante Audam. 'Als onze familie geen weerkatterigheid zou hebben, dan zou Bodelang nooit in het ijskasteel zijn opgesloten in de eerste plaats. Het heeft ons alleen maar in de problemen gebracht.'

'Dat is wel waar,' zei oom Arend, 'maar vergeet niet dat de familie waarschijnlijk was belast met een veel groter probleem in het verleden, waarin vele jongens de ziekte van weerman hadden, en de familie verlieten om in het bos te gaan wonen. 's Nachts groeiden hun baarden, werden ze langer, en gingen op jacht als bezeten wilde mannen, en ook vielen ze iedere onschuldige bezoeker van het bos lastig, met alle gevolgen daarvan.'

'En in het daglicht waren het gewoon weer jongens ?' vroeg oom Bakus. 'Ik zou maar wat graag mijn eeuwige jeugd hebben willen behouden, maar ik heb het waarschijnlijk verloren door dat stomme vaccin. Wat een idioterie, zeg. Het was waarschijnlijk gewoon een stukje natuur.'

'En ik ben mijn man verloren,' zei tante Jokebed.

'Die stammen waren vroeger de oorzaak van het grootste aantal vermissingen per jaar,' zei oom Arend.

'We moeten ons kunnen verdedigen tegen al die geleerden met hun proeven. Ik wil niet hun nieuwe proef-konijn zijn,' zei oom Bakus.

'Is er geen snellere manier om van die weerkatterigheid af te komen ?' vroeg tante Katrien. 'Door een soort recept van grootmoeder's geheim ofzo ?'

'Bestaan die stammen nog steeds ?' vroeg oom Bakus.

'Diep in de bossen waar geen kip komt,' zei oom Arend, 'en onder de grond.'

'Dus daar moet nog ergens familie van ons rondlopen ?' vroeg oom Bakus.

'Waarschijnlijk wel. Het vaccin werd alleen toegedient aan de verdere familie-leden die er nog waren, maar natuurlijk niet aan de stammen zelf. Die waren te wild, en onbereikbaar,' zei oom Arend.

'Ik wil er naartoe !' riep oom Bakus. 'Ik wil niet nog ouder worden, en ik wil mijn jeugd terug. Mijn weerkatterigheid zal een goed verdedigings-middel zijn, mochten ze willen aanvallen.'

'Hoe is de ziekte van weerman dan eigenlijk ontstaan ?' vroeg tante Katrien.

'Dat is nogal een lang verhaal,' zei oom Arend. 'De verre voorouders van de hertogen hadden een vreemde ziekte waarbij ze soms in hyenas veranderden. Lioporitus heette die ziekte. Ze hadden van alles geprobeerd om die ziekte uit te roeien, maar niets hielp. Ze waren bang dat het ook op andere families zou overspringen. Als voorzorg werden de families in hun naaste omgeving geinjecteerd met een vaccin. En dat vaccin had als bijwerking de ziekte van weerman.'

'Vreemd,' zei tante Katrien, 'maar wel interessant. Zijn er nog steeds mensen die deze ziekte hebben ?'

'Allen die deze ziekte hadden zijn inmiddels overleden, alleen een tweede broer van hertog Kat-Anders blijkt deze ziekte nog te hebben,' zei oom Arend. 'Het bestaan van deze broer is angstvallig geheimgehouden. Hij was met deze ziekte geboren, en heeft altijd geisoleerd diep in het bos gewoond. Hij is genaamd hertog von Brunsga.'

Het omweerde buiten. Er was een harde knal met een bliksemflits die midden in de kamer kwam. Iedereen was onder fel licht.

'Zijn broers zijn hartstikke bang van hem. In het geheim wordt het hele land door hem geregeerd, of zeg maar liever geterroriseerd,' zei oom Arend.

'Zeg Arend,' zei tante Jokebed, 'kun je nu alsjeblieft je mond dichthouden, want je brengt ons allemaal nog in de problemen.'

'Ik heb lang genoeg gezwegen,' zei oom Arend. 'En kom er maar voor uit dat je een spion van hertog von Brunsga bent, Jokebed.' Tante Jokebed trok haar pistool. 'Het is afgelopen, Arend. Draai je om, en leg je handen tegen de muur.' Binnen een paar minuten kwamen er agenten in het zwart binnen, die oom Arend in de boeien sloegen. 'Bedrieger die je er bent !' riep tante Katrien naar tante Jokebed. Nu richtte tante Jokebed ook het pistool op tante Katrien en oom Bakus. 'Doe geen domme dingen, Jokebed,' zei oom Bakus kalm. Er kwamen meerdere agenten binnen, en ook oom Bakus werd in de boeien geslagen. Ook tante Audam had een pistool getrokken. 'Jij ook al !' riep tante Katrien. 'Ook zo'n vuile bedrieger !'

'Ik wist het !' riep oom Arend, 'maar ik kon niet langer zwijgen. De familie is in groot gevaar. De hertog heeft zijn spionnen overal.' Ook Bodelang werd weer in de boeien geslagen, onder veel geprotesteer van Berend en Albert. 'Jullie blijven bij mij, Berend en Albert,' zei tante Jokebed.

'Nee !' riep Albert. 'Wij willen niets meer met u te maken hebben. U heeft ons bedrogen, en onze vader verraden.'

'Ze gaan met mij mee !' riep tante Katrien. Maar toen werd ook tante Katrien in de boeien geslagen. Oom Joep rende naar de achterdeur toe, rukte die

open, en riep : 'Berend en Albert, we moeten hier ogenblikkelijk weg !' Berend en Albert renden achter hem aan. Snel renden ze naar zijn geparkeerde auto toe, en stapten in. Maar al gauw werden ze achtervolgd door agenten. Oom Joep deed de auto-lichten uit en reed het bos in. Het was nog net licht genoeg dat hij kon zien waar hij reed. Na een tijdje waren ze van de agenten af. Oom Joep wist dat hij niet naar zijn huis kon rijden. Hij reed naar een vriendin. Ze ontving hen direct hartelijk. Oom Joep vertelde wat er allemaal was gebeurd. De vrouw vertelde dat ze een verboden, illegaal boek had over hertog von Brunsga. Het was geschreven door een ex-agent die voor hem werkte : Klaas van Galen.

Ineens waren er agenten binnen. Oom Joep werd geboeid, en de vrouw. Albert probeerde weg te komen, maar werd gegrepen. Berend stond wat verder weg, en kon net door de achterdeur naar buiten ontsnappen. Hij rende de achtertuin in, en sprong in het riviertje. Snel zwom hij naar de overkant, en rende het bos in zo hard als hij kon. Hij rende zonder om te kijken, en na heel lang rennen kwam hij aan bij een verlicht gebouw. Hij rende naar binnen. Hij was helemaal nat. Daar stond een man. 'Wie bent u ?' zei de man.

'Ik heet Berend,' zei Berend. 'Wie bent u ?'

'Ik ben hertog von Brunsga,' zei de man. 'Ik zal u wel even warme kleren geven.' Na een tijdje zaten ze samen in een warme kamer op sjieke stoelen aan een tafel. Berend had inmiddels andere kleren aan. Hij was nog steeds flink aan het hijgen. 'Zo, jij hebt zeker hard gerend, en lang. Waar was je voor op de vlucht ?' vroeg de hertog.

'Kan ik u niet vertellen, mijnheer,' zei Berend.

'Dat kunt u beter wel doen,' zei de hertog deftig.

'Ziet u, het gaat om mijn familie,' zei Berend. Toen vertelde Berend het hele verhaal. 'Maar ik heb absoluut geen hyena ziekte,' zei de hertog. 'Dat is echt een sprookje. Ik snap niet waar mensen zulke verhalen vandaan halen.'

'Ik weet het ook niet, mijnheer,' zei Berend. 'Maar regeert u het land in het geheim ?'

De hertog begon te lachen. 'Ach welnee, joh. Dat zijn ook allemaal verzinsels. Zodra mensen niet veel weten over iets, beginnen ze te fantaseren.'

Berend wist niet meer wat hij moest geloven.

'Ik vind het heel vervelend voor je dat dit allemaal met je familie is gebeurd,' zei de hertog. 'Mijn andere broers regeren het land ook niet. Dat doet de staat, maar dit kan heel goed allemaal een misdaad zijn.'

'Maar twee tantes waren ontmaskerd als spionnen voor u. Hoe kan dat dan ?' vroeg Berend. 'Ik snap er niets meer van.'

'Misschien dat iemand zich voordoet als mij, of ze gebruiken mijn naam zonder mijn toestemming,' zei de hertog. 'Het land is inderdaad niet pluis, en daarom houd ik me er allemaal ver vandaan. Zoveel bedrog gaande. Je mag hier wel zo lang wonen, totdat dit allemaal opgelost is.'

'Ik durf niet meer terug,' zei Berend, 'dus heel graag.'

'Dat kan ik me voorstellen,' zei de hertog. 'Wat een spookhuis daar, zeg.'

Berend kreeg een eigen kamer, een hele grote. Er hingen veel jacht-trofeeen en vreemde schilderijen aan de muur. Midden in de nacht werd hij wakker van een vreemd geluid. Plotseling stond er een hyena in zijn kamer. Hij wreef in zijn ogen. 'Wat is dat nou ?' zei hij slaperig. Hij kneep in zijn arm om te controleren of hij wel echt wakker was. De hyena kwam steeds dichterbij. Toen ineens begon de hyena hem te likken. 'Jij bent wel heel lief,' zei Berend.

De volgende dag vertelde Berend aan de hertog over de hyena. 'Wat vreemd,' zei de hertog. 'Dat heb ik hier nog nooit gezien.'

De volgende nacht werd Berend weer wakker diep in de nacht. Twee agenten stonden naast zijn bed. Berend schrok, en riep meteen hard om hulp. Direct stormde de hertog zijn kamer binnen. 'Zeg heren, wat moet dat daar !' riep hij. 'Laat onmiddelijk die jongen los.'

'Dat is hertog von Brunsga,' zei Berend.

'Ja, ja,' zei één van de agenten. 'Dat zeggen ze allemaal, dat ze hertog von Brunsga zijn. Meekomen, jongetje.'

Maar toen begon de hertog in een hyena te veranderen en sprong de agenten naar de keel. De agenten wisten niet hoe snel ze weg moesten komen. Toen veranderde de hertog weer in een mens. De hertog was erg verbaast. 'Zeg, dat is mij nou nog nooit eerder overkomen.'

'Misschien heeft u wel een speciale gave,' zei Berend.

'Misschien wel,' zei de hertog. 'Het kwam in ieder geval goed van pas.'

'Ik voel me wel veilig bij u,' zei Berend. 'U kan mij in ieder geval beschermen.'

'Ik kan soms erg boos worden,' zei de hertog, 'maar dit heb ik nog nooit meegemaakt.'

'Ik vond het wel tof,' zei Berend. 'U had die agenten goed te pakken.'

'Oh, ze kunnen zo vervelend zijn,' zei de hertog, 'maar ze hebben nu een koekje van eigen deeg.'

'U bent een aardige man, hertog von Brunsga,' zei Berend. 'Veel aardiger en zorgzamer dan uw broers, en minder saai.'

Maar na een tijdje hoorden ze geluiden van auto's en busjes buiten. Ze keken uit het raam, en zagen een heel leger van agenten staan. 'Lever de jongen uit !' werd er geroepen. De hertog opende een raampje en riep : 'Geen sprake van. Daar komt helemaal niks van in. Wie denken jullie wel niet wie jullie zijn ?'

'Het gezag !' riep een agent. 'We hebben ordes van hertog von Brunsga !'

'Maar dat ben ik zelf, oelewapper !' riep de hertog.

Er werden ramen ingeslagen, en de deur werd ingetrapt. Even later rende een heel leger van agenten naar boven naar de kamer van Berend, waar ze nog steeds waren. De agenten renden op de jongen af, en wilden hem grijpen, maar in één klap veranderde de hertog in een grote massa van grote hyenas. Wel honderden hyenas sprongen op de agenten af, en renden naar beneden om ook de agenten die nog buiten stonden aan te vallen.

'Stop, stop !' riep een agent. 'Dit moet wel hertog von Brunsga zelf zijn. Dat kan niet anders ! Het is een weersplitser. Dat kan alleen hertog van Brunsga. Ren voor je leven, en maak rechtsomkeerds !'

Maar het was al te laat. Vele agenten lagen bloedend op de grond. De hyenas hadden geen medelijden. 'Stop alstublieft,' huilde een agent. 'We zullen alles voor u doen, wat u maar wilt. We weten nu dat we een grote vergissing hebben begaan.' Ineens kwamen alle hyenas weer bij elkaar als in een storm, en er was een enorme donderslag die ook het hele gebouw verlichte, zo sterk dat het leek alsof het gebouw in de vlammen stond. Ineens stond de hertog voor hen, en waren de hyenas verdwenen. De hertog stond daar in de rook. 'Zo heren, ik zal jullie direct vertellen wat jullie moeten doen,' zei de hertog. 'U gaat direct de familie van deze jongen vrijzetten uit het ijskasteel, en u gaat hen hier naartoe brengen. U zult hen met respect behandelen en geen haar op hun hoofd krenken. De jongen is genaamd Berend, en zijn familie-leden heten : Albert, zijn broer, en Bodelang, zijn vader. En dan zijn oom Bakus, zijn tante Katrien, zijn oom Arend, zijn oom Joep, en de vriendin van oom Joep. Verder wil ik dat u Jokebed en Audam, twee tantes van Berend, ontslaat, en laat opsluiten in het ijskasteel.'

'Komt voor elkaar, hertog von Brunsga,' zei de agent. Hij had het snel allemaal even opgeschreven, en vertrok toen met de andere agenten. Een paar uur later kwamen degenen die waren vrijgezet aan. Een agent had ze met een busje gebracht. De agent vertrok direct weer. Berend was erg blij zijn familie weer te zien, en omhelsde ze. De hertog legde hen later uit hoe de vork in de steel zat.

De Trollenspiegel

Als iemand in de trollenspiegel keek, viel hij direkt dood neer en werd zijn ziel door de spiegel heengetrokken om hem in het land der trollen te laten werken. Het was een groensoortig zaad waardoor de zielen dan geketend werden, een zaad dat vanuit de ziel een gevoelige plek liet voortgroeien als een trollenspiegel. Zo kon niemand de ziel bevrijden zonder zelf ook een slachtoffer van de trollenspiegel te worden.

De trollen waren een wreed volk zonder enige genade. En als er dan genade was, dan zat er altijd wel een addertje onder het gras. Zo waren velen blij en verheugd als de trollen hen vrijlieten, maar dan werden ze al snel gegrepen door een groen vuur waardoor ze nog verschrikkelijker gebonden werden. Nee, een trol liet zijn gevangene nooit vrij. Een trol maakte alleen zijn slachtoffers klaar voor nog grotere wreedheden. Hierin had de trol altijd veel plezier.

Er was geen volk zo wreed als het volk der trollen. Ze kenden geen genade. Hun genade was alleen een nog grotere wreedheid. Dit maakte hen berucht. Ja, de trollen waren zeer gevreesd. Veel plezier hadden ze erin als hopeloze zielen voor hun aanwezigheid trilden. Want in de handen te vallen van een trol, was te komen in een fuik waaruit geen ontsnapping mogelijk was, alleen het uitzicht op een steeds groeiende ellende. De gevangene had alleen het uitzicht op ongekend wrede martelingen, die alleen maar wreder en wreder zouden worden, tot groot plezier van de trollen. En zolang je nog niet door hen gepakt was, kon je erop wachten dat ze op een dag voor je deur zouden staan, want een trol geeft nooit op. Hij zou het telkens weer opnieuw proberen door de ene na de andere valstrik, totdat je een keer op een onbedachtzaam moment zou toehappen, als het begin van een ritje dat steeds duisterder zou worden.

Ze hadden er groot plezier in om alles langzaam op te bouwen, om de spanning en angst zo groot mogelijk te maken, en om maar zoveel mogelijk valse hoop en zekerheid te schenken, zodat de klap daarna extra hard zou aankomen. Ja, het waren misbaksels, en zij woonden in de trollenspiegels en hun slachtoffers. Telkens weer spanden zij hun netten en webben om hun geluk te beproeven. Nee, er was geen groter duivels kwaad dan de trollenspiegel. Het was een ras erger dan demonen en vampieren. Als zij in de buurt waren dan gilden de geesten, spoken en duivelen het uit. Er was niets vergeleken met de trollen. Eens hadden zij de trollenspiegel ontworpen, en sindsdien groeide hun macht.

En allen die nog nooit in de trollenspiegel hadden gekeken, en dachten dat het zo'n vaart niet zou lopen, en dat het gewoon iets onschuldigs was, zouden zich eens op een dag ook bewust zijn .... van het kwaad van de trollenspiegel.

Einde

De Monster Meester

Grimhaldt was een tovermeester van vele monsters. Zijn grote vijand was Aswaldt, de koning der skeletten. Grimhaldt was in zijn toverkamer de meest verschrikkelijke drankjes aan het brouwen. Grimhaldt had een heleboel schatten verborgen onder de aarde die bewaakt werden door wachters die eruit zagen als voeten : grote voeten en kleine voeten. Het was een vreemd ras wat hij ooit eens verslagen had, en sindsdien moesten zij zijn schatten bewaken. Aartslepal was zo'n voet, en was van top tot teen bewapend. Hij was de hoofdman van de voetwezens. Grimhaldt was erg trots op hem en had hem bekleed met de prachtigste sieraden.

Op een dag was er een belangrijke ring van Grimhaldt gestolen. Het was een ring waarmee bepaalde toverboeken geopend konden worden, en alleen bij het licht van die ring gelezen konden worden. Grimhaldt was woedend en riep Aartslepal bij zich. Hij ontdeed Aartslepal van zijn sieraden en zond hem uit zijn grottenstelsel de kou in. Aartslepal maakte een lange reis door het sneeuw en over het ijs, een reis die hij bijna niet zou overleven, maar hij was nu in ieder geval wel vrij. Na long lopen kwam hij aan bij een groot kasteel, als een spookslot. De muren waren lang en overal stonden skeletten.

Het kasteel was min of meer van botten gemaakt, en er hing een vreemde geur. Toen Grimhaldt merkte dat Aartslepal de tocht had overleefd was hij buiten zichzelf van woede. Hij greep een paar van de voetwezens die nog steeds wachters waren van zijn schatten, en wierp de wachters in zijn ketel voor een nieuwe toverdrank. Toen de toverdrank klaar was liep hij ermee naar een paar toverboeken die nog nooit geopend waren. Met een druppel in het slot kon hij elk boek openen. Nu kwamen de grootst mogelijke monsters vrij. Ook nam Grimhaldt zelf een slok van het mengsel en maakte samen met de monsters een reis naar het spookslot. Grimhaldt stormde naar binnen en kwam al snel in gevecht met Aswaldt de skelettenkoning. Maar de skeletten waren veel sterker dan het leger van Grimhaldt. Aswaldt trok zijn mes en

stak het in het hart van Grimhaldt. Nu zou je denken dat nu Grimhaldt was verslagen zijn wachters wel makkelijk bevrijd konden worden, maar niets is minder waar. De wachters van Grimhaldt leefden diep onder de grond.

Het was een uittocht die vele jaren duurde. Vele kostbaarheden die diep onder de aarde lagen kwamen vrij. Het belangrijkste was wel de spiegel van Grimhaldt waarmee hij zijn toverijen bedreef. De wachters van die spiegel had hij zo dronken gemaakt en zo gevaarlijk dat er geen overwinning mogelijk was. Het waren de wachters zelf die overwinning behaalden door de spiegel. En zo kregen uiteindelijk de wachters het spookslot in handen, en begon Aswaldt zijn grote reis naar de eeuwigheid.

De Toverlist

De zwartvoetkabouters waren in oorlog met de witgouden elven. Ze hadden hun manschappen verzameld, en streden om de kroon over het land Tuburia. In Tuburia hadden de zwartvoetkabouters hun rijk onder de grond gebouwd, en de witgouden elven leefden meestal in de bossen. Maar nu de heksenkoning was gestorven, was er een groot gevecht om de kroon. Er was nog een ander die wel wat in de kroon zag. Zij was de tovenares van de zwarte bergen. Niet veel zielen durften zich hier te vertonen. Ze zeiden dat het daar spookte. Op een dag had de tovenares zich verkleed als een arme vrouw in lompen. Ze klopte aan bij een huisje van de zwartvoetkabouters. Emiel deed open. Hij en zijn vrouwtje waren nog op, maar zouden gauw naar bed gaan, want het was al avond geworden, en zij hadden de lantaarn buiten al aangedaan. 'Wat kan ik voor u doen, mevrouw ?' vroeg Emiel. 'Ach, heeft u iets te eten en misschien een slaapplaats voor deze arme weduwe ?' vroeg de vrouw. Maar Emiel sloeg de deur keihard dicht. Hij had niets aan landlopers. Ze kwamen alleen maar om de boel op te vreten, en ze werkten niet. Maar toen werd de tovenares erg kwaad en veranderde weer in haar eigen gedaante. Weer klopte ze aan, en Emiel deed open. Maar dit keer kon hij niets uitbrengen. Hevig geschrokken liep hij weer naar binnen, terwijl hij de deur liet openstaan. 'Dat is beter,' zei de tovenares. 'Het is mij wel duidelijk dat je de kroon niet waardig bent.' Maar daar was Emiel niet in geinteresseerd. Emiel was een harde werker die van aanpakken hield. En hij zag er niets in om zijn hele leven op een troon te zitten. Eigenlijk was Emiel heel anders dan de andere zwartvoetkabouters. Zij waren dikwijls lui en verzot op geld en glimmende dingen. 'Ik heb je nodig, Emiel,' zei de tovenares. Een zwarte raaf kwam in het raam zitten. Het was de raaf van de tovenares. Emiel lag op de grond. Hij was flauwgevallen van angst. De raaf had zijn vrouwtje versteend. De tovenares begon te lachen. Ze zou Emiel en zijn vrouwtje meenemen naar haar slot, in de zwarte bergen. Hier zou ze een boos plan smeden.

Na een paar dagen bracht ze Emiel en zijn vrouwtje terug naar hun huisje. Ze zette ze op de bank en vertrok. Na een tijdje konden ze zich beiden weer bewegen. 'Wat is er gebeurd ?' vroeg Emiel. Maar ook zijn vrouwtje wist het niet te vertellen. 'Het lijkt wel alsof ik jaren heb geslapen,' zei ze zacht. Buiten hoorden ze het gestamp van de kabouters. Ze zouden naar het bos gaan, om oorlog te voeren tegen de witgouden elven. Ineens werd er op de deur gebonst. Het was Roodjak, de legeraanvoerder van de zwartvoetkabouters. 'Meekomen !' riep hij, 'de oorlog gaat beginnen.' Emiel stond op en liep naar de deur. Maar hij voelde zich erg duizelig. Toen hij de deur openmaakte stond Roodjak hem nors aan te kijken. Roodjak had een hele grote baard die nogal vurig aandeed. Ook droeg hij een grote hoed en een vreemd zwart pak. 'Zeg, komt er nog wat van ?' riep hij ongeduldig. 'Ik voel me een beetje ziek,' zei Emiel.

'Niks mee te maken,' bulderde Roodjak. 'Het is nu tijd voor oorlog, en geen tijd om ziek te zijn.' En daar moest die arme Emiel mee. In het bos was er veel lawaai, en de zwartvoetkabouters schoten met hun kanonnen. De witgouden elven gooiden bommen met wit toverpoeder. Hiervan vielen er vele kabouters in slaap. 'Luiwammessen,' schreeuwde Roodjak, 'opstaan, het is nu geen tijd om te slapen.' De kabouters leden een zware nederlaag. 'Geef ons de kroon,' riepen de elven naar Roodjak. Maar Roodjak had geen kroon. Hij dacht dat de witgouden elven die hadden. 'Houdt me niet voor de gek,' brulde Roodjak, en maakte zware passen naar voren. 'Ik geloof niet in die toveronzin van jullie. Geef me de kroon.' Maar de elven hadden geen kroon, en Roodjak werd steeds kwaaier en kwaaier. Plotseling verscheen de tovenares met haar raaf. Ze had de kroon in haar handen. 'Zeg, hoe kom jij aan die kroon,' brulde Roodjak. Maar de tovenares gaf geen antwoord, en heel langzaam bewoog ze de kroon tot haar hoofd, om de kroon op te zetten. Maar de kroon was veel te groot. Roodjak bulderde van het lachen. Ineens kwam Emiel naar voren stappen, en zei : 'Pas op voor haar, Roodjak, want zij kan toveren.' Maar dat weerhield Roodjak niet. Met forse stappen liep hij op de tovenares af, en greep de kroon van haar weg. Roodjak zette de kroon op zijn grote hoed en die paste precies. 'Hoe staat ie ?' bulderde Roodjak van het lachen. 'Ach toch,' zei de tovenares, 'zot op alles wat glimt, een echte zwartvoetkabouter. Toch wel jammer dat het de echte kroon niet is, maar één van de vele maaksels om hebberige kabouters een lesje te leren.' En daar begon ineens die arme Roodjak te draaien en te draaien als een molen, steeds sneller en sneller. 'Wat is dit ? Haal me eruit,' schreeuwde hij. Maar daar steeg Roodjak op, en zweefde richting het slot van de tovenares. 'Ziezo,' zei de tovenares, 'hem zal ik ook nog wel goed kunnen gebruiken.' Maar Emiel en een paar andere kabouters begonnen erg boos op de tovenares te worden. 'Ach, geen zorgen, Emiel,' schaterde de tovenares, 'jij hebt ook zo'n kroon, schattebout, ik heb je er eentje laten inslikken.' Emiel werd erg rood ineens, en voelde alle energie uit hem wegstromen. Ineens werd ook hij als door de wind opgenomen, en zweefde richting het slot. Er waren niet veel elven meer in de buurt. Zij waren altijd erg bang voor de tovenares en haar streken. Nu ze dan beide partijen erg bang had gemaakt voor kronen, kon ze in haar eentje rustig op zoek gaan naar de kroon van de heksenkoning.

De Trollenkoning

Eens, en dat is al heel lang geleden, zwierf ik in de bossen en verdwaalde uiteindelijk. Zo diep was ik nog nooit geweest, en ik wist niet meer hoe ik terug moest komen. Midden in de nacht kwam ik in een trollendorp terecht. Er zijn maar weinigen die het geloven. Echt waar, die trollen die leven net zoals wij : ze vissen, jagen, hebben boerderijen, huizen of hutten met keukens. In ieder geval was het een echte trollenbende. Ik had nog nooit zoveel vuil en puinhoop bij elkaar gezien. Ze leefden daar verwaarloosd, droegen bijna geen klederen, maar wel veel riemen als tuigjes, waar ze hun wapens aan vast konden maken.

Ik bleef er staan, maar ineens werd ik gegrepen. Ik werd van mijn fiets afgetrokken en er ontstond een hevig gevecht. Ik had weleens gehoord dat het niet best was om in de handen van trollen te vallen, dus ik deed m'n uiterste best om weer los te komen, maar tevergeefs. Ze brachten mij voor hun koning, en maakten mij tot een gladiator. Ik moest tegen allerlei enge beesten vechten. Dit tot groot vermaak van de trollen. Ik dacht werkelijk dat ik hier nooit vrienden zou krijgen, en ik moest altijd in een donkere kerker slapen. Maar op een nacht kwam er een trollenvrouw bij me. Ze gaf me wat bloemen, heel lief, en ze zei : 'Wacht tot de sterren uit de lucht zullen vallen om jouw kerker te openen.' Ik dacht dat ik dan zou kunnen wachten tot sint juttemes, want dat zou toch nooit gebeuren. Ik snapte niet wat ze bedoelde, maar plotseling liet ze een glimmende sleutel voor mijn neus bungelen. Door de tralies staarde ik ernaar en naar haar. Ze was heel mooi, en het beetje licht dat er was weerkaatste zo prachtig in haar ogen. Ze liet de sleutel bungelen, alsof ze ermee wilde plagen. 'Zie, ik heb de sleutel van de koning gestolen,' sprak ze. 'Ik kon het niet aanzien hoe ze jou mishandelden, maar ik ben er voor jou, nu, dus kom.' Ze drukte uiteindelijk de sleutel in het sleutelgat en maakte de deur open. Maar daar kwamen al een paar trollenwachters aan, en toen deed ze iets heel doms. In paniek drukte ze mij weer terug in de kerker, en ook zij ging naar binnen, en deed de deur weer op slot. De trollenwachters keken naar binnen en moesten lachen. 'Haha, nu hebben we twee vliegen in één klap. Daar zal de koning blij mee zijn. Ze gristen de sleutel weg en liepen verder. De vrouw begon te snikken. 'Het is allemaal mijn schuld,' zei ze. 'Nu zullen we morgen vast opgehangen worden.' En ja hoor, dat was de bedoeling. Want toen de koning het de volgende dag hoorde moesten we voorkomen. Hij was woedend, maar ook gemeen. Hij lachtte gemeen. Hij zei : 'Ophangen die lui.' En zo werden we naar het marktplein geduwd, geboeid, en kregen een strop om onze nek. Nu zou je misschien denken : 'Kerel, hoe ben je daar aan ontsnapt ?' Er kwamen op dat moment net wat vissers terug van een vistocht. Het waren vrienden van de vrouw. Toen ze zagen wat er aan de gang was trommelden ze nog meer van hun vrienden op, en het werd een kleine burgeroorlog, waardoor wij tenslotte gered werden. De koning werd afgezet, en ze wilden dat ik de nieuwe koning zou worden.

Ik kreeg een heleboel vrouwen, omdat dat de gewoonte was. Ook kreeg ik een hele vreemde grote edelsteen waarin een meisje opgesloten zou zitten. Ik vond dat wel wat vreemd dus ik vroeg ernaar. Het bleek een zingende steen te zijn, die eens door een trol was gevonden. Het was een geschenk aan de koning. Ik dacht : Het zal wel goed zijn.

Sinds ik aan de macht was ontstonden er wel vaker relletjes. Trollen waren wat dat aanging erg vechtlustig. Ik wilde hen wel helpen wat liever te zijn naar elkaar, maar sommige trollen waren daar niet al te open voor. Ze wezen me erop dat sommige dingen gewoon moesten gebeuren. Het hoorde zogezegd bij hun algemene ontwikkeling.

Het voel me op hoe weinig protest er tegen mij als koning was. Ze vonden het allemaal best, en het leek allemaal heel natuurlijk te gaan. Toen ik op een dag geen koning meer wilde zijn en verder wilde trekken, kreeg ik van hen een toverpaard en een eenhoorn als dank en afscheid. Terug naar huis wilde ik niet, maar hier blijven ook niet. Dus ik vertrok naar de dieptes van de bossen .... Weer kwam ik hier allemaal trollendorpjes tegen. Ik kon mijn ogen niet geloven. Wat me opviel was dat er hier veel vee gehouden werd, als in fokkerijen, vooral kippen en varkens. Deze beesten werden door de trollen volop geslacht, omdat de trollen hier voornamelijk vlees aten om in leven te blijven. Maar tot mijn grote schrik zag ik ook hoe ze mensen fokten, voor slavenwerk en voor de slacht. En ik wist dat ik eigenlijk op de verkeerde plaats was gekomen. Maar ik had mijn trollenkroon nog steeds. Ik zette hem op, en stapte richting het stadhuis. Al snel merkte ik hoe dom de trollen waren, want ze dachten echt dat ik de koning was, en eigenlijk was ik dat ook nog steeds wel. Ik kwam er ook achter dat ze het allemaal niet zo kwaad bedoelden. Eigenlijk wisten ze niet beter. Ik vroeg me af hoe ze aan al die mensen gekomen waren, maar feit was dat ze die mensen gewoon doorfokten, en ik begon me af te vragen wat ik nu moest doen.

Uiteindelijk ben ik maar gewoon terug gegaan naar de mensenwereld, en heb ik mijn verhaal verteld. Het viel me op hoe weinig men om deze mensen gaf. Mijn verhaal werd gewoon niet geloofd.

Vele jaren later ging ik terug naar de trollenwereld, maar er bleek niets meer van hun wereld over te zijn. Met gemengde gevoelens denk ik aan hen terug.

Einde

Het Rode Zaad

Onder de indiaanse reuzen van de Rotmor-zone in het Angela-gebied was er een onbeschrijfelijke horror. Zij waren reusachtig, voortgekomen vanuit vreemd zaad, rood zaad. Zij hadden een dag aangesteld voor het uitroeien van speciale rassen. Zij waren voortgekomen vanuit wonderzaad, ja, als kabouters waren zij eerst, toen ze nog in de moederschoot waren. Niemand zou denken dat zij ooit zo klein waren geweest, zo klein dat alles wat ze deden betoverend was. En betoverend waren zij nog steeds.

Wanneer zij bewogen hadden zij de bewegingen als ridders, fier en strak. Zij hadden allemaal hun eigen doelen, en leefden de wetten om die doelen te bereiken strak na, als de wetten van een vreemde en wrede natuur. Zij waren hier als goden, alhoewel ze de goden op een bepaalde dag onder de aarde hadden opgesloten in rode kajuiten, als een gevangenis in een schip.

Mikduktus was een van de gevangenbewakers daar. Hij droeg een groen met zwart gewaad gemaakt van bladeren. Nu hadden ze dan een bepaalde dag aangesteld tot een godenmaal, waarin ze deze gefokte goden zouden verschranzen. Als er iets was dat de reuzen haatten dan waren het de goden. Zij hadden alles verwoest, en regeerden met strakke hand. Nu waren de goden dood, of liever : zo goed als dood. Het vlees werd opgediend, en zo waren er driemiljoen vierhonderd achtien gebraden stukken godenvlees in een grote reuzenzaal.

Amerim was een jonge reus die met zijn vader meeging naar het godenmaal. Amerim was een gevoelige jongen, en smeekte de reuzen om in het vervolg iets genadiger te wezen. Wel at hij mee van het vlees, omdat dat van zijn vader moest. Amerim’s vader duldde nooit tegenspraak, en daarom was Amerim altijd erg voorzichtig met hem. Als zijn vader ontplofte dan kon je je maar beter bergen.

Vele reuzen wisten dat. Ze vreesden Amerim’s vader als geen ander. Op een dag ging Amerim met zijn vader het bos in, waar ze een grot vonden vol met rood zaad. Amerim’s vader vertelde dat dit zaad de oorsprong was van alle reuzen. Hier zouden de reuzenvrouwen op een bepaalde leeftijd naartoe gaan, om van dit zaad te eten en zwanger te worden. Amerim wist niet wie zijn moeder was. Dat moest altijd geheim gehouden worden. Als de reuzenvrouwen zwanger geworden waren, dan werden ze gesluierd en kwamen op een reuzenkasteel terecht, waar ze de rest van hun leven moesten

wonen samen met andere reuzenvrouwen. Zij moesten in het geheim baren, en dan werden de kinderen gewisseld, en in een grote cirkel geplaatst, waar even later de gesluierde reuzenvrouwen omheen moesten dansen, zodat niemand wist welk kind bij wie hoorde.

Vaders werden dan aangekozen om voor de kinderen te zorgen. Als een kind dan later toch wilde weten wie zijn moeder was, dan moest zo'n kind zelf van het zaad eten, en zou dan in een droom zijn ware moeder zien.

Amerim at, viel in slaap en kreeg een droom van een reuzenvrouw met een grote indianentooi, met een heleboel witte veren met sommige zwarte plukjes, en rode plukjes. 'Lieverd,' sprak een stem, 'ik ben van een andere reuzenstam nu. Ik ben uit het kasteel van de gesluierde reuzenvrouwen gevlucht, en woon nu in het bos. Kom me opzoeken.' Amerim wist direkt dat dit zijn moeder was. Toen hij het zijn vader vertelde werd de reus erg boos. In paniek rende Amerim het bos in, en ging op zoek naar zijn moeder. Hij moest zich veel verbergen, want zijn vader kwam hem achterna. Maar na een tijdje had zijn vader geheel het spoor verloren, en ging weer terug. Niet veel reuzen waagden zo diep in het bos te komen, omdat ze bang waren voor allerlei wilde reuzenstammen.

Na een tijdje kwam Amerim bij een grote boomstronk waarachter de modderreuzen leefden. In deze stam vond hij zijn moeder. Amerim werd direkt liefdevol door hen uitgenodigd. De reuzen waren heel wijs, en helemaal niet zo afschrikwekkend als gezegd werd. Maar Amerim kende natuurlijk de andere stammen van het bos nog niet. De modderreuzen waren heel technisch, en hadden allerlei werktuigen vervaardigd. Amerim keek zijn ogen uit. Er waren zelfs liften waarmee ze tot de hoogste boomtoppen konden komen. Amerim was zo onder de indruk dat hij zijn vader helemaal vergat. Amerim's moeder was een groot opperhoofd van de modderreuzen, maar er waren hier een heleboel opperhoofden. Amerim kwam erg tot rust bij zijn moeder, en zijn moeder liet hem zien in welke grot zij woonde. Ook woonden er reuzen in reusachtige bomen en in hutten. Dieper in het bos leefden de reuzen in wigwams en in tenten. Hutten kwamen daar veel minder voor, alhoewel .... er waren wel hutten gemaakt van beenderen en doodskoppen. Maar Amerim's moeder vertelde hem dat hij niet bang voor andere stammen hoefden te zijn, omdat ze allemaal in vrede met elkaar leefden. De reuzen leefden van de jacht, en niet van de oorlog. De reuzen hier waren veel groter dan de reuzen die Amerim kende. Ook zijn moeder was erg groot, en hij vroeg zich af hoe dat kon. Zijn moeder legde hem uit dat er hier voedsel was waarvan je groter kon worden. De reuzen aten hier allerlei soorten zaad.

Het was duister zaad dat Amerim nog niet kende. Zijn moeder had er potten vol van, en toen zij hem voerde merkte hij direkt dat hij ervan begon te groeien. Toen hij groot genoeg was, enige jaren later nam zijn moeder hem mee naar een hal vol met reuzenspiegels. Deze reuzenspiegels creeerden de

wereld zoals hij was. Het waren sprekende reuzenogen. Ze vertelden de jongen wat hij later zou worden. De jongen ging door de reuzenspiegel, en kwam in een andere wereld terecht. Zoveel wezens leefden hier die vele reuzenspiegels droegen. De wezens waren harig en nog wel groter dan de reuzen die hij kende. Zijn moeder was ook meegekomen.

De reuzen hier waren nog wilder dan de reuzen die hij kende. Ze maakten niet alleen jacht op wilde dieren, maar ook op andere reuzen. Misschien waren de reuzen waar de jongen opgroeide daarom altijd zo bang voor het bos. In een grote zaal aten ze van het reuzenmaal : driehonderdmiljoen en vijvenveertigduizend schalen vol reuzenvlees, zoals reuzenogen, reuzentenen, en reuzenvingers.

De jongen vroeg zich af waar hij terecht was gekomen. Zijn moeder zei dat hij deze reuzen diende te onderwerpen. Hij zou hun koning worden. ‘Ik heb het niet zo op die pottenkijkers,’ brulde een harige reus. ‘Ach laat hun,’ zei een grote trage reus, ‘ze doen ons toch geen kwaad ?’

De jongen werd door zijn moeder vastgepakt en gebracht naar een andere zaal. Deze zaal was nog wel groter dan de andere. Hier zagen ze reuzen met vleugels die net van hun jachtpartij terugkwamen, en ook werd hier het vlees geslacht en klaargemaakt. Het was een grote reuzenkeuken, als een jagershuis. ‘Moeder !’ brulde één van de reuzen, en stormde op de reuzenvrouw af. ‘Dit is je broer, zoon,’ zei de moeder van de jongen. De reus was reusachtig, en moeder vertelde dat de jongen net zo groot zou worden. De grote reus nam hen even later mee naar zijn huis waar ze rond de tafel gingen zitten. Even later schoof de grote reus een schaal met reuzenogen en reuzentenen voor de jongen. ‘Maar dat ga ik echt niet eten,’ zei de jongen, ‘jullie met je barbaarse praktijken.’

De reus keek hem begrijpend aan. ‘Zeg,’ zei de reus. ‘Als wij hen niet eten, dan zouden ze ons eten, en zij zijn veel erger dan wij. Zij jagen niet alleen, maar zij martelen ook, als trollen.’ De jongen zei niets, en begon voorzichtig te eten, wetende dat als hij niet groter zou worden, dan zou het rijk in groot gevaar zijn. Hij moest immers hun koning worden, dat had moeder hem zelf gezegd.

‘Waar wonen die reuzen ergens ?’ vroeg de jongen voorzichtig. Moeder wees naar een schilderij met wat bergen dat aan de muur hing. ‘Achter de reuzenbergen wonen zij,’ zei de grote reus. ‘Maar ik heb liever niet dat jij daar komt. Want als ze je te pakken krijgen, dan is het goed mis.’

En toen vertelde moeder een verhaal over de achtergrond van die reuzen. Ze waren vage afstammelingen van trollen. De trollen zelf zouden ver achter hen wonen, en die zouden nog verschrikkelijker zijn. Deze trollen zouden

kaarsen hebben van gebroken beenderen en reuzenschedels, en andere lugubere dingen. Deze trollen zouden in de reuzen wonen voor allerlei boosaardige praktijken. Ja, die trollen waren boosaardige, angstaanjagende wezens die nergens voor terugdeinsden.

De jongen luisterde huiverend naar het verhaal van zijn moeder, terwijl zijn broer begon te lachen. 'Ach,' zei de grote reus, 'jongen, ik neem je er wel een keer naartoe. Dan kun je het met je eigen ogen zien.'

Moeder begon te glimlachen. 'Ja, ik kan lugubere verhalen vertellen. En het is nog echt waar ook. Het gebeurt allemaal achter de reuzenbergen, waar reuzen en trollen tezamenleven.'

'Ja, mams, en vertel eens over die druipende kaarsen die ze hebben,' zei de grote reus lachend.

'Oh ja, dat was ik vergeten te vertellen,' zei moeder. 'Die kaarsen druipen van slijm, bloed en snot.'

'Ha, ha, ha,' bulderde de grote reus. 'Wat een boeltje daar, hè, mams ?'

Moeder schudde van het lachen. 'Maar pas maar op dat je niet in hun handen komt, zoon, want dan ben je de klos, echt waar, dan veranderen ze jou ook in zo'n druipende kaars. En dan verkopen ze je op hun markten. Daarom : als je gaat, ga dan met ons. Wij zorgen wel dat jou niets overkomt.'

En zo gebeurde het. De jongen ging met zijn moeder en zijn grote broer op reis. Na een tijdje kwamen ze de eerste trol al tegen. De trol was direkt erg vriendelijk, helemaal niet zoals de jongen had verwacht. In een grote huifkar bracht de trol hen over de bergpaden heen, en het duurde niet al te lang voordat ze achter de reuzenbergen kwamen. De jongen had zich het allemaal heel anders voorgesteld. De trollen waren allemaal erg vriendelijk naar hen.

Maar in hun huisjes stonden inderdaad vreemde kaarsen, en de jongen vroeg zich af waarvan die kaarsen gemaakt waren. 'Oh, van reuzenogen, reuzenharen, reuzentenen en reuzenvingers, enzo,' zei een trol glimlachend alsof hij er niks van meende. Maar de kaarsen hadden een erg vreemde geur.

Later bleek dat de trollen helemaal geen reuzenvlees aten, maar gewoon kippenvlees, varkensvlees en rundergehakt. De jongen snapte het niet meer goed. Wie moest hij nu geloven ? Werd hij niet gewoon overal in de maling genomen ?

De trollen aten veel, terwijl de jongen allang niet meer kon. De trollen boerden veel, en hadden veel sterke verhalen. De jongen glipte er even tussenuit en liep naar wat van die vreemde kaarsen toe. Hij rook er even aan, en rook de indringende geur. Ook ging hij er even met zijn vinger over, en voelde dat er veel stof aanzat. Ook voelde het een beetje slijmerig aan. Het was een kaars met blauw vuur, en daarnaast stond een kaars met rood vuur, en verderop nog één met groen vuur. Aan de muren en aan de plafonds hingen vreemde spiegels. Ze leken wel een beetje op de reuzenspiegels. Maar de jongen kon er niets door zien. Ook liep de jongen even naar de gang, waar vreemde opgezette spinnen en krabben stonden. Ook hier hingen vreemde spiegels aan de muur en aan de plafonds. Ze lagen zelfs op de vloer, verweven in een vreemd tapijt. De vreemde spiegels leken een beetje op de buiken van spinnen. De jongen kon er niets door zien.

De huizen van de trollen waren door gangen aan elkaar verbonden, en al snel kwam hij in een ander huis. Hier waren de trollen ook erg vriendelijk, en ze nodigden hem uit om wat pudding met hen te nemen. Maar de jongen zat al helemaal vol.

Het trollentoilet was een vreemde bedoening met kettingen en leer, maar dingen leken daar ook van harige dierenhuiden gemaakt te zijn. Boven was er een badkamer waar dezelfde soort dingen stonden, en weer die druiperige kaarsen.

Op het zolder hoorde hij iemand zingen, en ging er over de trap naartoe. Maar het bleek een grammofoonspeler te zijn. Niemand was verder in de buurt. Toen hij door het raam keek zag hij rook. In de verte was een veldje tussen wat bomen waar trollen een barbecue hielden.

De volgende dag trokken de jongen, zijn moeder en zijn broer verder met de huifkar. Verderop bleek alles veel luguberder te zijn, alhoewel de trollen nog steeds erg vriendelijk waren. Hier woonden ze in grotten, in hutten, en in tenten. De trollen hier waren veel langer en droegen vaak riemen met doodskoppen erop en daaronder droegen ze harige broeken. Ook droegen ze kettingen met tanden eraan. Deze trollen bleken wel echt reuzen te eten, want hier zag de jongen gebraden reuzenharten, gebraden reuzenlever, en een heleboel andere reuzenorganen, meestal liggende tussen een hoop reuzenogen, reuzentenen, reuzenvingers en reuzenbotten.

Weer zag hij vreemde kaarsen die bijna een soort van aders hadden met vreemde knopen erin, en wat ervan afdroop leek veel op bloed, snot en slijm.

Sommige kaarsen leken geheel van reuzentenen gemaakt te zijn, anderen van reuzenogen, en weer anderen van reuzenvingers. Verderop kwamen ze in

hallen die geheel van reuzenogen waren gemaakt, en daarna in hallen die geheel van reuzenvingers waren gemaakt. Vandaaruit kwamen ze in de hallen van reuzentenen, die over leken te lopen in hallen van trollentenen. Hier zagen ze kooien met trollenkinderen door de lucht gaan. De kinderen leken op reuzenkinderen, maar ze waren veel dunner en hadden een andere huidskleur, bijna als zand. De kooien zaten vast aan touwen en werden in de lucht voortgetrokken.

Einde

Jetje's Moeder

Jetje's moeder was een heks. En niet zomaar een heks. Ze at mensenvlees. Jetje's moeder kwam nooit beneden. Ze woonde op zolder. Jetje durfde hier nooit te komen. Haar vader zei altijd : 'Kom daar maar niet.' Het stonk er ook verschrikkelijk. Op een dag kwam er een meneer aan de deur. Jetje's vader moest een hoge rekening betalen, maar hij had er het geld niet voor. 'Ja, mijn vrouw heeft al het geld,' zei Jetje's vader tegen de meneer. 'Maar ziet u, zij is een heks en woont op de grote zolder. Ze eet mensenvlees, dus ik kan daar maar beter niet komen.'

'Ja, maar ik moet dat geld toch hebben,' zei de meneer.

Midden in de nacht ging Jetje's vader naar de grote zolder. 'Ik heb wat geld nodig,' zei Jetje's vader tegen de heks.

'Nee, dat krijg je niet,' zei de heks. 'Breng me eerst maar wat jongetjes, dikke jongetjes, vetgemest, want ik heb honger.'

'Nou, je kunt toch gewoon uit de koelkast eten,' zei vader.

'Nee, ik wil mensenvlees,' zei de heks.

'Maar dat kan echt niet hoor,' zei vader. 'En ik moet het geld nu hebben, anders komt morgen die meneer terug, en dan zwaait er wat.'

'Laat die meneer maar hier komen,' zei de heks.

‘Goed,’ zei Jetje’s vader, ‘als je dat zo wil. Dan kun jij het aan hem uitleggen.’

En zo gebeurde het. Jetje’s vader stuurde de meneer de volgende dag naar het zolder. Na een uur was de man nog niet beneden, en Jetje’s vader ging weer naar het zolder om te kijken hoe het was afgelopen. De heks had de meneer in een kooi opgesloten. Oh, oh, dat ging helemaal niet goed. De meneer was woest.

‘Zeg, laat die meneer eens even los,’ zei Jetje’s vader. Maar de heks wilde dat niet. ‘En ga nu maar weg, anders stop ik jou ook in een hok,’ zei de heks. Toen is Jetje’s vader maar naar beneden gegaan, en wilde er nu echt nooit meer komen.

Maar op een mooie zonnige dag toen Jetje eens iets van het zolder moest halen kwam ze erachter dat haar moeder er niet meer woonde. Alle spullen waren weg. Er lag een briefje op de grond, waarop stond geschreven : ‘Lieve Jetje, ik woon nu in het bos. Groeten van de heks. Kom je me eens opzoeken ?’ Nou, dat durfde Jetje natuurlijk niet, maar op een dag besloot ze er toch met een paar vriendjes en vriendinnetjes naartoe te gaan. De heks woonde nu heel diep in het bos, en daarvoor moesten ze een eind fietsen. Dat ging niet zo snel, want Kareltje was nogal dik, en kwam maar moeilijk vooruit. ‘Kareltje, mijn moeder is nogal gevaarlijk,’ zei Jetje. ‘Ze eet mensenvlees.’ Maar Kareltje moest erom lachen, en zei met zijn mond vol dat hij dat niet geloofde.

Toen ze bij het huisje van Jetje’s moeder aankwamen was het een keurige boel. Jetje’s moeder kwam naar buiten met de krulspelden in, en ze leek op een echte dame. ‘Zo, mams, verwacht je visite ? De koningin ofzo ?’ vroeg Jetje.

‘Nou, jullie zouden toch komen ?’ zei Jetje’s moeder. Jetje knikte. ‘Mams, dit zijn Kareltje, Benno, en nog wat vriendinnetjes. Jetje’s moeder gaf alleen Kareltje en Benno een hand. Benno was aan het eten zoals altijd. Hij had altijd zijn mond vol, net als Kareltje, maar hij was nog niet zo dik als Kareltje.

‘Je bent niet zo dik als Kareltje,’ zei Jetje’s moeder tegen Benno. ‘Maar dat komt nog wel.’

‘Waarom dan, mevrouw ?’ vroeg Benno.

‘Oh, als je zoveel eet,’ zei Jetje’s moeder, ‘dan zal dat vast wel lukken.’ Kareltje en Benno keken elkaar even vreemd aan. Wat een rare moeder had Jetje dat ze zulke dingen zei. Maar al gauw viel Jetje’s moeder goed bij Kareltje en Benno in de smaak, want in de woonkamer stonden de overheerlijkste taartjes en toetjes. ‘Zo, ik dacht laat ik jullie eens goed verwennen,’ zei Jetje’s moeder. ‘Jullie moeten er nog van groeien.’ Dat lieten Kareltje en Benno zich geen tweede keer zeggen. Snel holden ze op de tafel af, en begonnen te eten dat het een lieve lust was. Maar de meisjes aten niks. ‘Zeg, waarom eten jullie niet ?’ vroeg Jetje’s moeder. ‘Ik heb het speciaal voor jullie gemaakt.’

‘Oh, ik had thuis al genoeg gegeten,’ zei Lizzie.

‘Ja, en ik heb niet zo’n honger,’ zei Daphne.

‘En jij dan, Jetje ?’ vroeg Jetje’s moeder.

‘Oh, ik heb ook niet zo’n zin. Ik ben een beetje misselijk,’ zei Jetje.

‘Dat kan,’ zei Jetje’s moeder, ‘maar ik heb anders wel zin hoor. Dan eet ik wel een extra taartje voor jullie.’

‘Lekker spul, moeder van Jetje,’ zei Benno.

‘Ja,’ zei Kareltje met zijn mond vol. ‘Mogen we nog eens komen ?’

‘Jullie mogen zo vaak komen als jullie maar willen,’ zei Jetje’s moeder. ‘Jullie mogen wel logeren, want het is toch weekend.’

‘Graag mevrouw,’ zei Benno. Kareltje knikte instemmend. De meisjes lieten zich pas na lang praten overhalen, maar Jetje wilde absoluut niet blijven. Jetje was bang dat haar moeder nog steeds was zoals vroeger. Opeens keerde ze zich om, rende naar buiten naar haar fiets, en reed weg.

Toen ze thuiskwam vertelde ze alles aan haar vader. ‘Ach,’ zei haar vader. ‘Misschien is ze nu wel veranderd. Ze heeft een nieuw huis, en ze gedraagt zich nu als een echte dame. Zullen we samen eens bij haar op bezoek gaan ? Maar Jetje wilde er niet meer komen. Toch begon ze zich een beetje bezorgd te maken over haar vriendjes en vriendinnetjes, maar even later dacht ze dat ze zich aanstelde.

Na het weekend kwamen de kinderen vrolijk terug. ‘Je hebt een geweldige moeder, Jetje,’ zei Kareltje. Ook Benno en de meisjes knikten volop. ‘Zie je nou wel,’ zei Jetje’s vader. ‘Er is niets aan de hand. Misschien is ze erg veranderd.’

‘Dus ze is nu geen heks meer ?’ vroeg Jetje.

‘Ik denk het niet,’ zei vader. Maar toen schrok Jetje. Ze keek naar Kareltje, en zag hoe er een schroefje uit zijn broekspijp viel. Jetje raakte het op, en keek Kareltje in de ogen. Kareltje bewoog niet meer. En toen zag Jetje ook een schroefje op zijn hoofd zitten. Dit was Kareltje helemaal niet, maar een robot. Ook zag ze die schroefjes op de andere kinderen zitten, en toen schrok vader ook. ‘Dat is niet pluis, Jetje,’ zei vader. ‘We moeten direkt naar het huisje toe.’

‘Nee,’ krijste Jetje. ‘Dan sluit ze ons ook op. Dat heeft ze al eens eerder gedaan met die meneer, weet je wel ?’

Vader knikte. Toen zijn ze samen maar gaan afwassen. ‘We moeten echt wat doen, Jetje,’ zei vader.

‘Ja, maar wat dan ?’ vroeg Jetje.

‘Ik weet het niet,’ zei vader. ‘Laten we er eerst maar een nachtje over slapen.

Maar de volgende dag waren vader en Jetje het alweer vergeten. Totdat Jetje op een dag weer op de zolder kwam en ontdekte dat haar moeder er weer woonde. Ook stonden er kooien met de meneer van de rekening, Kareltje, Benno, en haar twee vriendinnetjes Lizzie en Daphne. Ze waren allemaal verschrikkelijk dik geworden. ‘Mams, wat heb je met ze gedaan ?’ vroeg Jetje, ‘en waarom woon je nu weer hier ?’

Maar toen schrok Jetje. Haar moeder was gaan roesten, en dat was geen goed teken. Dat betekende namelijk dat haar moeder ook een robot was. Helemaal in paniek rende ze naar beneden. Direkt vertelde ze het aan haar vader. ‘Oh ja,’ zei Jetje’s vader, ‘dat is waar ook. Dat was ik helemaal vergeten. Ik heb haar zelf eens gemaakt. Ik had haar roestvrij moeten maken, en verder had ik nog wat foutjes gemaakt.’

‘Nou, ik vind het anders oerdom,’ zei Jetje. ‘Wie maakt er nou zo’n gevaarlijke heks als mijn moeder ?’

‘Ach,’ zei vader, ‘stel je niet zo aan. Trouwens, die meneer was ook maar een robot hoor, en ook Kareltje, Benno, Lizzie en Daphne. Zelfs de juffrouw is een robot. Ik heb ze allemaal eens gemaakt.’

‘Nou, je hebt me er behoorlijk bang mee gemaakt,’ zei Jetje. Maar toen ontdekte ze ineens iets anders. Wat zat daar bij het oor van haar vader ? Dat was een heel klein schroefje. Toen ze er aan draaide stopte haar vader ineens met bewegen en keek strak voor zich uit. ‘Vader ?’ zei Jetje. ‘Ach nee, hè ? Is mijn vader dan ook een robot ?’ In paniek rende Jetje naar het huis van de juffrouw. De juffrouw was in de woonkamer aan het breien. Direkt begon Jetje haar te onderzoeken. ‘Ach kind, wat doe je allemaal toch ?’ vroeg de juffrouw.

‘Even kijken of mijn vader gelijk heeft,’ zei Jetje. En ja hoor, even later vond ze wat schroefjes. Nu kon ze niemand meer vertrouwen. Huilend slenterde ze naar huis terug. Ze durfde die nacht bijna niet te slapen. Ze was helemaal alleen in zo’n groot huis met robotten. De volgende dag werd er aangebeld. Het was een meneer met een snor en een hoed op. De meneer stak zijn hand uit naar Jetje en zei : ‘Hallo, ik ben jouw vader. Je hebt het eindelijk ontdekt over de robotten ? Je mamma is ook echt heel blij. Ga je met ons mee ?’

‘Ja, maar wie bent u ?’ vroeg Jetje. ‘Wie heeft dan al die robotten gemaakt ?’

‘Ach, die heb ik zelf ooit eens gemaakt. Heel dom van me. Ik dacht dan had je wat speelkameraadjes, want je mamma en ik waren vaak weg. Maar ze gingen met je op de loop,’ zei de meneer. Jetje stapte even later in de mooie grote auto, en al gauw kwamen ze aan bij een prachtig groot huis. Die dag ontmoette Jetje voor het eerst haar moeder, en vader en moeder stroopten beiden hun mouwen op om te laten zien dat ze echt geen robotten waren.

Het Slagroom

Geheim

Hoofdstuk 1.

Fonteinenland was omringd door een rivier van slagroom. Koning Fontein zat op zijn troon, en prins Fontein stond naast hem. Koningin Fontein was in de keuken, waar er gewerkt werd aan een feestmaaltijd, want er waren belangrijke gasten. De eetzaal stond al vol met stoeltjes van slagroom-leer. Ook stonden er standbeelden gemaakt van chocolade en drop. In de kelders van de keuken waren geleerden en koks bezig een draak te veranderen in slagroom. Zo ging dat vaak. Prins Fontein nam vaak draken mee als hij terugkwam van een reis, en dit keer had hij een hele grote meegenomen.

In Fonteinenland was er een wet dat als iemand herhaaldelijk moeilijkheden en overlast veroorzaakte, zoals boeven, draken en ander gespuis, en hun leven niet wilden verbeteren, dan liepen ze de kans om in slagroom veranderd te worden. Zo rekende Fonteinenland af met vervelende lieden. Slagroom werd ook vaak als oorlogswapen gebruikt, en oorlogen waren er veel. Ook waren er veel verschillende soorten slagroom. Prins Fontein bewaakte een heel groot receptenboek daarvoor.

'Plop, plop, plop,' één voor één werden er kersen in de slagroom gegooid. Een heerlijke geur verspreidde zich door Fonteinenland, maar op de muren renden de soldaten van de koning heen en weer. Ze hadden iets gezien. Er kwam een schip naar het land toe over de slagroom-rivier. Koning Fontein werd ingelicht, en ook prins Fontein, maar de koning begon te bulderen van het lachen. Hij zag de paniek op de gezichten van zijn soldaten. En ze zweetten kersensap. 'Nee, welnee,' zei de koning. 'Dat wordt geen oorlog. Dat schip, en dat zal ik je vertellen, heeft helemaal niets te maken met oorlog. Ik heb mijn gouden vogel gezonden naar het buurland, om ze een schip met spruitjes te laten zenden voor het grote diner. 'Plop,' daar vloog een spruitje door de lucht. En daar ging er nog één. Een woeste man stond voor de koning, met spruitjes in zijn haren. Zijn haren waren bijna groen, en ook zijn kleren waren bijna groen van de spruitjes. 'Dag Harro,' zei de koning. 'Fijn je weer eens te zien.'

'Ik heb ook tomaten voor u meegenomen, koning,' zei Harro.

'Heel goed, mijn jongen,' zei koning Fontein. 'Ik wist dat ik op je kon rekenen.' Na een tijdje stond de hele keuken propvol met dozen met tomaten en spruitjes. Toen de feestmaaltijd klaar was was het inmiddels vol in de eetzaal. Ook Harro was uitgenodigd. Prins Fontein deed het woord : 'Wij hopen dat het eten u overheerlijk zal smaken.' Iedereen applaudiseerde. De feestmaaltijd zag er geweldig uit.

Koningin Fontein zat naast de koning. Zij had ook meegewerkt. Onder de tafel hield zij de hand vast van koning Fontein. 'Dat heb je goed gedaan, schat,' fluisterde koning Fontein haar liefdevol toe.

De belangrijke gasten waren uit een ver land gekomen. Ze hadden hun prinses meegenomen, prinses Zoete Droom. Ze had een kroon met een half maantje erop, helemaal van goud, en ze had een schitterend gewaad, wit met allerlei kleine pareltjes en steentjes. Maar haar koninkrijk leed onder de terreur van een verschrikkelijke draak, en daarom was ze hier, om hulp en advies te vragen. Snikkend vertelde de prinses haar verhaal. De draak was een verschrikkelijk monster die ervoor zorgde dat altijd alle woorden werden omgedraaid zodat iedereen de verschrikkelijkste ruzie met elkaar kreeg. 'Lolak,' heette hij.

Plotseling werd er op de deur van de eetzaal geklopt. Een sterke wind kwam naar binnen en plotseling viel iedereen tegen de vlakte. Een ijselijk gelach steeg op. Het was Lolak. Iedereen had het bewustzijn verloren, behalve prins Fontein, want die was direct onder de tafel gedoken toen de sterke wind binnenkwam. Snel trok hij zijn zwaard, en door de deuropening zag hij de nek van de draak. Snel wierp hij zijn zwaard in de nek van het beest, maar plotseling werd de prins door een klauw gegrepen. Ook de prins verloor zijn

bewustzijn, en waakte pas veel later op. Hij keek om zich heen. Hij was in een kerker.

Na een tijdje gleed de draak naar binnen en veranderde in een vrouw. 'Zo prins,' zei de vrouw met een hekserige stem. 'En wie kan je nu redden hier ?'

De prins smeekte haar hem vrij te zetten, en hij wilde alles wel voor haar doen. 'Goed,' zei de vrouw, 'ik zal je vrijzetten, maar op voorwaarde dat je de zeeen van slagroom diep onder de aarde bezoekt en het halssieraad van draak Holgst steelt om het aan mij te brengen.'

De prins wist dat hij geen andere keus had. Aan een hele lange keten liet ze hem naar beneden gaan over een trappetje. Na een lange tijd over veel meer trappetjes kwam prins Fontein eindelijk bij de slagroom zeeen aan. De zeeen schuimden verschrikkelijk. Hij vroeg zich af waarom de heks dat halssieraad wilde hebben. Er waren hier verschillende zeeen die allemaal door elkaar heenzweefden. De prins had nog nooit zoveel slagroom gezien. Hier moest dan ergens draak Holgst wonen. De prins stapte in één van de zeeen en begon te zwemmen. Zijn mond werd direct erg zoet. In de verte zag hij iets glinsteren, en hij hoorde gebrul als van vuur. Een zwarte gestalte verscheen onder hem, en hij werd in de lucht geslingerd, om zo in een andere slagroomzee terecht te komen. De zee was kolkend, en de golven werden steeds woester. Weer zag hij iets glinsteren. Het deed zelfs pijn aan zijn ogen. 'Wie heeft jou gezegd dichterbij te komen,' werd er geroepen.

'De heks heeft je halssieraad nodig,' riep de prins. Draak Holgst begon te bulderen van het lachen. 'Dat krijgt ze niet,' riep hij.

'Maar dan kan ik daar nooit meer weg,' riep prins Fontein, 'want ik zit aan haar keten.'

'Vaarwel,' sprak de draak, en zwom weg. De zee werd hoe langer hoe woester, en de keten begon strak te trekken, dus de prins kon niet verder zwemmen. Teleurgesteld zwom de prins terug. Bij de heks aangekomen vertelde hij het verhaal. 'Okay,' zei de heks, 'dan zal ik je keten langer maken, maar waag het niet om zonder het halssieraad terug te komen.' En weer ging de prins op pad, ditmaal met een langere keten. Nog dieper ging hij de slagroomzeeen in nu. Maar de draak was in geen velden of wegen te bekennen. Totdat de prins op een eiland aankwam. Er waren hier een heleboel zeemeerminnen met zilveren sieraden in hun haar en op andere plaatsen. Ook droegen ze sleutels. Het was alsof er slagroom in zijn hoofd werd gespoten en in zijn hele lichaam. In de verte zag hij een vulkaan, en hij zag er iets glinsteren. Maar toen hij richting de vulkaan begon te lopen werd er weer geroepen : 'Wie heeft jou gezegd dichterbij te komen.'

De prins besloot te wachten totdat het nacht was. Midden in de nacht beklom hij de vulkaan. Alles was rustig nu. Een enorm grote zwarte draak lag te slapen in de krater, met het halssieraad. Maar toen hij bij het halssieraad aankwam zat daar een slot op met een heleboel sleutelgaten. Teleurgesteld liep hij terug en kwam de zeemeerminnen met de sleutels weer tegen. 'Waar zijn die sleutels van ?' vroeg de prins.

'Van het slot van de draak,' zeiden de zeemeerminnen. 'Hij is onder onze betovering, en als hij los zou komen dan zou alles boven de grond door hem verwoest worden.'

Daar schrok de prins wel even van, en hij was daarom blij dat hij het slot niet had kunnen openen. Maar hij vroeg zich af hoe hij dan ooit uit de macht van Lolak kon komen. Maar opeens had hij een idee. Op het paleis van zijn vader zou de draak in de kelders onder de keuken in slagroom veranderd kunnen worden, tenminste als het paleis nog zou bestaan, na de aanval van Lolak.

De zeemeerminnen wisten wel hoe ze de slagroomrivier konden bereiken via de slagroom-zeeen, om te kijken hoe het met Fonteinenland gesteld was, maar ze kwamen terug met slecht nieuws. Het hele land was verwoest en lag in as. Maar op hetzelfde moment werd er aan de keten getrokken. De heks wilde dus waarschijnlijk dat hij terug zou komen. Toen de prins terugkwam zonder het halssieraad was de heks woest. Maar de prins was ook woest op de heks omdat Fonteinenland verwoest was. 'Ik weet het wel, heks,' zei de prins. 'Alles wat je wil is dat ik het halssieraad van draak Holgst losmaak, zodat hij bevrijd wordt van de zeemeerminnen-betovering, en zodat hij alles boven de grond kan vernietigen.'

'Genoeg !' schreeuwde de heks.

'En wat heb je met prinses Zoete Droom gedaan, en met mijn vader en moeder, en met alle anderen ?' vroeg de prins. Maar de heks zei niets. Na een tijdje viel de heks in slaap, en de prins ging terug naar de zeemeerminnen. 'Is er geen manier om mijn keten los te maken ?' vroeg de prins aan de zeemeerminnen. 'Nee,' zeiden de zeemeerminnen. 'Niemand kan tegen haar krachten op.'

'Wat moeten we dan doen ?' vroeg de prins.

'Als je draak Holgst in slagroom kunt veranderen, dan is het halssieraad niet meer nodig,' zeiden de zeemeerminnen.

'Ja, maar dat gebeurde in de kelders van de keuken,' zei prins Fontein, 'en daar kwamen altijd heel veel geleerden en koks aan te pas.' En weer bulderde de draak. 'Oh, hij is wakker,' zeiden de zeemeerminnen. 'Wat we kunnen doen is je een ander halssieraad meegeven wat op het halssieraad van de draak lijkt.' De prins stemde in, en even later kwam hij met een ander halssieraad bij de heks. De heks nam het sieraad, en legde het in een kistje. 'Nu is Holgst vrij om te doen en te laten wat hij wil. Het sieraad is veilig bij mij. Ik zal het zelfs kunnen dragen, want ik ben immuun voor de betoveringen van de zeemeerminnen,' krijste ze. Snel maakte ze de keten van de prins los. 'Spoedig zal alles boven de grond vernietigd zijn,' lachte ze. De prins ging snel terug naar de slagroomzeeen, anders zou de heks zich kunnen bedenken. De zeemeerminnen namen hem mee naar hun rijk, in de dieptes van de slagroomzeeen. De prins vroeg zich af of zijn vader en moeder nog leefden, en prinses Zoete Droom en alle anderen.

'In de zee liggen alle schatten,' zeiden de zeemeerminnen. 'Alles wat je verloren hebt kun je daar terugvinden. De zee is bewustzijn.' De prins was erg gerustgesteld dat te horen. 'De zee is een grotere realiteit dan al de anderen,' zeiden de zeemeerminnen. Ze brachten hem naar een spiegel waar hij Fonteinenland door kon zien, prachtiger dan ooit. 'Het moet nog ergens in de zee zijn,' zeiden de zeemeerminnen. 'Er is niets verloren. Zwem door de spiegel.' Dat liet de prins zich geen twee keer zeggen. Hij zwom door het portaal van de spiegel, maar werd direkt tegengehouden door een duistere

gestalte. 'Ben je mij soms vergeten ?' zei de gestalte. 'Mij, de grote Lolak. Je komt er niet zomaar langs. Ik heers over alle weerspiegelingen, en jij bent maar een weerspiegeling. Het echte zul je nooit vinden.' De prins trok zijn zwaard, maar dat begon direkt te smelten. 'Vecht er maar voor,' sprak de heks schaterlachend, 'maar het is toch allemaal nutteloos.' Plotseling werd de spiegel ingeslagen, en duisternis vulde de zee. De zeemeerminnen vluchtten weg, maar ze wisten niet waartoe. De prins was bewusteloos geraakt door de klap, en één van de zeemeerminnen trok hem met haar mee. Ze bracht hem naar een eiland waar hij even later ontwaakte. 'Wij proberen onze fantasieen altijd tot leven te brengen, maar Lolak staat er altijd tussen,' sprak ze.

'Nu heeft ze ook nog jullie rijk vernietigd,' zei de prins.

'Nee,' zei de zeemeermin, en toonde hem haar halssieraad. 'Ik draag het bewustzijn van de zee, hoger dan ieder ander bewustzijn. Ik ben de zeemeerminnen-koningin. Door dit halssieraad heb ik toegang tot alles wat anderen verloren hebben.' Ze begon wat aan de stenen van het halssieraad te draaien. In de verte zag hij Fonteinenland, en ook zag hij het rijk van de zeemeerminnen, en het land van prinses Zoete Droom. Het zag er allemaal schitterend uit, maar het leken wel luchtweerspiegelingen. 'Je bewustzijn moet sterker worden, lieve prins,' zei de zeemeerminnen-koningin.

De zeemeerminnen-koningin leidde hem naar Fonteinenland, wat nog steeds bestond in haar halssieraad. Toen draak Holgst sliep brachten ze hem naar de kelders van de keuken, waar hij tot slagroom gemaakt kon worden. 'Hoe krijgen we Lolak in de kelders van de keuken ?' vroeg de prins even later aan de zeemeerminnen-koningin. 'Door bewustzijn,' sprak ze. 'Hoe hoger je bewustzijn is, hoe minder er verloren is, en hoe minder macht Lolak heeft.'

De zeemeerminnen-koningin deed het halssieraad van de draak nu om de nek van prins Fontein, en slagroom-zeeen begonnen zich om hem heen te vormen, prachtiger dan ooit tevoren. De prins kon weer een beetje ademhalen. Ook zag hij daar prinses Zoete Droom zwemmen. De prinses was blij om hem te zien. 'Het is beter nu in ons land,' zei de prinses. De draak verliest meer en meer grip.

'Gelukkig maar,' zei de prins.

Hoofdstuk 2.

Na dit avontuur zaten de koning en de koningin van Fonteinenland weer op hun troon alsof er nooit wat was gebeurd. Prins Fontein was verliefd op prinses Zoete Droom, en samen zouden ze meehelpen het land te regeren. Maar toen andere draken hoorden wat er met draak Holgst en draak Lolak was gebeurd begonnen ze een grote drakenoorlog tegen Fonteinenland. En ditmaal kwamen er veel grotere draken opdagen, en het zeemeerminnen-sieraad kon niets beginnen. Prins Fontein was ten einde raad. Koning Fontein zei dat de enige oplossing zou zijn naar de slagroom-tovenaar te gaan, die diep in het bos woonde, en die Fonteinenland zou hebben gemaakt. Prins Fontein zocht hem op, na een lange reis door het bos. De slagroom-tovenaar woonde in een groot kasteel. Hij werd ook wel tovenaar Lunera genoemd. Het hart van de prins begon sneller te bonzen. Er hingen hier grote maskers van allerlei dieren, apen, beren, leeuwen, tijgers en noem maar op, ook van

vele onbekende monsters. Tovenaar Lunera zat achter zijn bureau. Hij was een boek aan het lezen. 'Wie ben jij,' zei hij zonder op te kijken.

Prins Fontein begon direkt zijn verhaal te vertellen. 'Draken zei je ?' vroeg de tovenaar. 'Ach jongen, het is zo'n koud kunstje om zelfs de grootste draken in slagroom te veranderen, zonder ze eerste naar keukenkelders te brengen, zonder al dat gedoe met geleerden en koks. Luister.' De tovenaar liet hem een boek zien. Het boek heette : 'Het Geheim van de Gulden Draak.'

'Hier staat het,' zei de tovenaar. 'Je moet op zoek gaan naar deze gulden draak, die een boom met bijzondere vruchten bewaakt. Als je deze vruchten plukt en naar een draak gooit, dan veranderen ze direkt in slagroom. Daarom wordt deze boom zo streng door de gulden draak bewaakt. Er bestaat maar één zo'n boom, en de draken zijn bang dat iemand die boom ooit vindt.'

'Maar waar kan ik die boom vinden dan ?' vroeg prins Fontein.

De tovenaar gaf hem een sleutel en zei : 'Ga naar de heksentuin van Gradore, open het hek, en vraag aan Gradore waar de gulden draak is.'

De prins ging direkt op pad. De heksentuin was achter het bos, een soort paradijs. Daar aangekomen opende hij het hoge gouden hek met een sleutel. 'Wat kom je doen,' krijste een oude vrouw.

'Ik kom voor de gulden draak, waar is hij ?' vroeg de prins.

'Kom maar mee,' zei Gradore. 'Hij leeft in het ravijn. Er zijn wel meerdere dommeriken geweest die hem hebben geprobeerd te temmen, maar tevergeefs. Niemand is ooit teruggekeerd van dit ravijn.' Er was een trappetje langs de ravijn waarmee je naar beneden kon. In de verte was de boom te zien met glinsterende vruchten, en een gouden draak die ervoor lag, en die op een slang leek. Snel ging de prins naar beneden. Dit zou een gevaarlijk spelletje worden. De draak zag hem bijna direkt en snelde op hem af. De prins trok zijn zwaard. De draak liet zijn tanden zien die als een sneldraaiende malen waren. De prins kon net op tijd opzij springen en verborg zich achter de trap. Langzaam liet hij zich naar beneden glijden. Na een tijdje stond hij op de bodem van het ravijn. Langzaam liep hij naar de boom toe. De draak was in geen velden of wegen te bekennen. Maar plotseling kwam de draak van achter de boom tevoorschijn. De draak was ziedend, en weer verstopte de prins zich achter de trap. Ditmaal kwam er vuur uit de bek van de draak, en het ging dwars door de trap heen, waardoor de prins zijn schild moest trekken. Het vuur ging maar door en door, en de prins begon het wel heel erg heet te krijgen. Van boven kon de prins de tovenaar zien komen, die een gouden vogel op de boom afstuurde. Maar de draak begon meerdere koppen te krijgen die als lange slangen werden, de boom vurig bewakende. 'Het heeft allemaal geen zin,' riep Gradore vanaf de top van het ravijn. De gouden vogel was nu erg dichtbij de boom gekomen, maar één van de koppen had hem bijna te pakken. De prins trok zijn boog, en een pijl, en mikte vlak op een takje wat een vrucht vasthield. Het takje vloog los, en de vrucht viel boven op één van de koppen van de draak, die direkt in slagroom begon te veranderen. Ook de rest van de draak begon al snel te smelten. 'Goed werk,' riep de tovenaar.

Ze namen nu zoveel mogelijk vruchten mee die ze bij de tovenaar in de tuin plantten, en waar zo veel meer van zulke bomen konden groeien, en een

krachtige tegenaanval begon nu tegen de draken. Door de vruchten begonnen ze al snel in slagroom te veranderen. De vruchten werden in kanonnen gestopt, of op pijlen gestoken. Ook werden de vruchten gewoon gegooid.

Als herdenking aan de overwinning over de draken werden er elk jaar voedsel-gevechten georganiseerd. Iedereen mocht elkaar dan bekogelen met voedsel, en aan het einde van de dag kwamen er grote wasmachines met slagroom waarin iedereen gewassen moest worden. Dit was altijd een dol festijn en het hoogtepunt van het jaar.

Op een dag kwam er een ander prinsesje van een ander ver land op bezoek. Het was prinses Zonnetraantje. Ze had een kroontje met een zonnetje er bovenop, en ze was een vriendinnetje van prinses Zoete Droom. Prinses Zonnetraantje kon heel lekker zoet koken, en vertoonde al snel haar kunsten in de keuken. Ze bracht het overheerlijkste gebak naar de eetzaal, gevuld met warme appel en peer-vruchten.

Het Zeepje

Sanne en Frits kwamen dichterbij de indiaanse amazone-koningin die ze hadden gevonden in het bos. De koningin glimlachte. 'Zo, en wie zijn jullie,' vroeg ze. Het was een aardige vrouw.

'Nu dan,' zei ze, 'het geheim van de dorga-indianen ligt diep verborgen in de grond.' Ze hief een zeepje in de lucht. 'Ik wil dat jullie dit zeepje eten alvorens in de afgrond the kunnen gaan.

'Geen sprake van,' zei een stem. Een man met een snor stond achter de kinderen ineens. Het was de vader van de kinderen. De koningin glimlachte. 'Maar het is gemaakt van chocolade,' zei de koninging, 'witte creme-achtige chocolade.'

'Dat kan wel waar wezen,' zei de man nors. 'Maar de kinderen gaan nu met mij mee naar huis.'

'Oh, dacht je dat,' sprak de koningin. 'Ik ben ook de koningin hier, dus dit alles valt onder mijn beslissing.'

'Ja, en ik ben de keizer van Achtoepikum, en ik gebied dat mijn kinderen nu met mij meegaan,' sprak de man. De koningin begon te gniffelen. 'U bent nogal een interessante man,' sprak de koningin.

'Ach toe, papa,' zei Frits. 'Mag ze met ons mee naar huis.'

'Vooruit dan maar,' zei vader.

Thuis was alles een beetje treurig, omdat de moeder van de kinderen was overleden. Daarom was de indiaanse amazone-koningin een ware aanwinst. Ze was erg lief en zorgzaam voor de kinderen. Diep in de nacht ging Frits naar de kamer waar de koningin sliep, gluurde in haar tas en haalde het

zeepje eruit. Dat had hij niet vergeten. Hij beet er een stukje uit, en plotseling schoof de grond open, en hij viel in een diepe kuil van licht. Hij voelde een hand op zijn schouder en iemand zette hem op een stoeltje. 'Wie zijn jullie ?' vroeg Frits.

'Gaat je niks aan,' zei een stem. Weer nam Frits een hapje van het zeepje, en weer schoof de grond open en met stoel en al gleed Frits in de diepte. Maar daar stond hij ineens weer in de kamer van de koningin. 'Niet meer doen,' zei hij tegen zichzelf. Hij stopte het zeepje weer terug in de tas, en ging terug naar zijn eigen kamer.

De volgende ochtend zaten ze allemaal aan het ontbijt. De koningin was zo mooi dat Frits er bang van werd. 'Wie heeft er van het zeepje gegeten ?' sprak de koningin. Frits stak aarzelend zijn hand op.

'Nou keurig, jongen,' zei de koningin, 'maar je had het hele zeepje moeten opeten, anders kom je in ... anders kom je in ... anders kom je in ehm .... laat maar.'

'Ik durf het niet,' zei Frits.

'Sanna, durf jij het ?' vroeg de koningin. Sanne schudde haar hoofd.

'Geef mij dat zeepje maar,' zei vader. De koningin overhandigde het zeepje. 'Weet je het zeker ?' vroeg de koningin. Vader knikte. Maar toen hij van het zeepje begon te eten was hij met een paar hapjes al uitgeput en overvol. Vreemd genoeg bleef hij gewoon op een stoel zitten. 'Waarom zakt hij niet in de grond ?' vroeg Frits. Maar daar gebeurde het al, en plotseling was vader verdwenen.

'Zo, opgeruimd staat netjes,' sprak de koningin. 'We hebben niets aan mannen.'

'Maar ik ben een man,' zei Frits.

'Ach Frits,' zei de koningin, 'jij bent geen man, jij bent een jongen.'

'Maar wat als ik straks een man word,' vroeg Frits, 'ruimt u mij dan ook op ?'

De koningin keek hem ernstig aan. 'Frits,' zei ze. 'Ik heb een ander zeepje voor je, ditmaal gemaakt van donkere chocolade, en ik wil dat je het eet, zodat je nooit een man zult worden.'

'Moet ik het helemaal opeten ?' vroeg Frits.

'Oh, een likje is al genoeg,' zei de koningin. Toen haalde ze langzaam het donkerbruine zeepje uit de tas. Frits haalde diep adem. De koningin overhandigde het zeepje, en al snel nam Frits een likje. Hij vond het zo lekker dat hij verder begon te eten. 'Zo, dat komt dan wel goed,' zei de koningin.

De koningin was een fantastische moeder, en de kinderen misten hun vader totaal niet. Ze mochten alles, en elke dag was het feest. Ze konden zich geen betere moeder bedenken. De koningin was een harde werkster zodat alles goed opgeruimd bleef, maar ze deed alles snel, zodat ze altijd veel tijd voor de kinderen had. Ze las de kinderen voor, ging met hen overal naartoe, en de kinderen kwamen niets tekort. Ook kon ze heel lekker koken, en de kinderen waren elke dag jarig. Maar op een dag werd de koningin ernstig ziek. Ze had

het gevoel dat ze terug moest naar het bos. Ze begon heel veel planten in het huis te zetten in de hoop dat dat zou helpen, maar niets hielp. Ze was erg moe, zo moe en ziek dat de dokter haar vertelde dat ze voor een tijdje op haarzelf moest wonen zonder de kinderen, want ze was veel te druk geweest met de kinderen, zonder aan haarzelf te denken. De kinderen mochten zolang op een vakantie-oord wonen.

In haar nieuwe huisje kon de koningin tot haarzelf komen. Al gauw begon ze ook aan geheugenverlies te lijden, en kon de kinderen nog maar nauwelijks herinneren. Ze kon zich nog wel herinneren dat Frits eens tegen haar zei : 'U bent zo mooi, ik ben er bang van.' Maar ze wist eigenlijk niet meer goed wie Frits was. En Sanne ? Wie was dat ?

Op een dag was de vader van de kinderen weer boven de grond gekomen, zijn gezicht helemaal vuil, zijn kleren kleddernat en modderig. Als eerste zocht hij zijn kinderen op, die heel blij waren hem te zien. 'Ik heb het geheim van de dorga-indianen gevonden,' zei vader met een blij gezicht. Hij hief een zeepje in de lucht. 'Als ik hier van eet, dan word ik weer een jongen.'

Vader nam een hap, en veranderde in een jongen. Nu wilde hij de koningin zien. Daar aangekomen was de koningin erg verbaasd. Ze herkende hem natuurlijk niet. 'Je bent zo mooi dat ik er bang van ben,' zei de koningin, 'ik bedoel je gloed. Heb je van het zeepje gegeten ?' De jongen knikte. Hij overhandigde haar het zeepje, ze brak er een stukje vanaf, keek ernaar en stopte het toen in haar mond. Tranen rolden over haar gezicht. 'Ik ben weer beter,' sprak ze. Ze was geen vrouw meer, maar een meisje. 'Je bent zo mooi dat ik er bang van ben,' zei de jongen.

'Het is het zeepje,' zei het meisje, 'de gloed, we zijn weer kinderen.'

'Gelukkig maar,' zei de jongen.

'Jij bent de mooiste van allemaal, jij bent de maan en de sterren. De strepen op je buik en borst vertellen een verhaal. Jij bent de liefste van allemaal, en nu spreken wij dezelfde taal.'

De

Broodjesfee

De prins zat in zijn roze pudding pyama op de troon. Griffioenen vlogen om hem heen. Ze hadden de sleutel meegenomen. De prins greep de sleutel en richtte het op een deur die al honderden jaren gesloten was. De deur ging open. In deze ruimte lagen allemaal muziek instrumenten. Ze hadden armen en benen, en konden praten. De prins was tevreden. De griffioenen waren

van ver gekomen, en mochten een tijdje in de gouden kooien van het paleis wonen. Die kooien stonden gewoon open, maar er was daar goed voer te vinden, en goede, rustige slaapplaatsen. Al snel hadden de griffioenen het erg naar hun zin.

De prins bekeek de muziek-instrumenten eens. Ook speelde hij er eens op. ‘Tover-instrumenten,’ zei een van de grifioenen. Ze konden het weer regelen, en de zee. De fee Fauna woonde in een van de instrumenten. De zee-elven woonden in andere instrumenten, en er waren ook strand-feeen. Ze konden de muziek-instrumenten goed bespelen. De prins was erg verwonderd. Hij was blij dat de sleutel terug was. Janna was de zonnefee. Zij woonde in de lamp van de ruimte.

Zij vertelde de prins van een dorpje dicht bij de zee, waar elven en feeen tezamen woonden. Zij vertelde van de grote ijs-automaten langs de zee, en van de feeendrank.

En waar is dat ? vroeg de prins.

Oh, het is niet zo moeilijk, zei de zonnefee. Tel tot drie, draai in de rondte en klap dan vier maal. De prins deed het direkt en verdween in het niets. Hij bevond zich ineens op het strand. Om hem heen waren grote ijsmachines. Ze hadden ijs in allerlei kleuren. De zon was heet, en de prins had wel trek in wat ijs. Hij was bijna duizelig van de hitte. Alles draaide voor zijn ogen. Toen voelde hij het heerlijke ijs in zijn mond druipen, zo lekker zoet. Janna de zonnefee stond lachend voor hem.

En, hoe vind je het ? vroeg ze.

Oh, heerlijk, zei de prins. De prins ging op het zand zitten. Daar waren de griffioenen, als grote arenden met vlammende vleugels.

Zullen we de zee overvliegen ? vroeg Janna de zonnefee.

Ja, geweldig, zei de prins. Ze gingen allebei op een griffioen zitten, en al gauw waren ze hoog in de lucht, terwijl de zee onder hen verdween. In de verte zagen ze nog grotere ijsmachines, en het leek wel alsof het hier nog warmer was. De griffioenen brachten hen naar een eiland heel ver weg. Wilden woonden hier, als een oerwereld. Ze leefden hier tezamen met veel roofdieren.

Verderop op het eiland stond een grote kathedraal waar een fee in woonde. Het bleek dat zij de koningin van het eiland was en de maker van alle roofdieren. Grote voedselmachines stonden rondom de kathedraal, en veel snackbar-kraampjes. Maar al het voedsel was levend hier, met armen en benen. De prins had al snel door dat het voedsel er hier heel gelukkig uitzag.

Het voedsel is gelukkig, zei Janna de zonnefee, want ze gaan allemaal door toverdeuren heen. Rondom de kathedraal stonden ook allemaal kleurige grote liften, als torens. Samen gingen de prins en Janna in zo'n lift, en al snel hadden ze een groot uitzicht over het eiland. Na een tijdje kwamen ze uit de lift en stapten een grote hal binnen. Hier zat een dik jongetje aan een grote tafel, en een tovenaar stond aan het einde van de tafel, naast zijn troon.

Pa, geef me nu mijn voedsel, schreeuwde het dikke jongetje. De tovenaar klapte in zijn handen en direkt kwam er lopend voedsel binnen : lopende pasteitjes, lopende kippepootjes, lopende broodjes, lopende pizas, lopende pannekoeken, lopende puddingkjes en nog veel meer. Ze liepen allemaal de tafel op en het dikke jongetje begon direkt te eten.

Meer, pa, zei het dikke jongetje met zijn mond vol. Weer klapte de tovenaar in zijn handen, en weer ging er een deur open waardoor lopend voedsel kwam. Ditmaal was het voedsel veel groter, en de ogen van het dikke jongetje glunderden.

Jottems, haha, ik heb honger, zei het dikke jongetje. Dank je, pa. Plotseling veranderde het dikke jongetje in een roofdier en verslond de tovenaar.

Dat komt door een toverspiegel, zei Janna de toverfee. Als de zon op zijn hoogste punt is dan gebeuren deze dingen.

Ik ruik nog meer vlees, brulde het roofdier. Snel gingen Janna de toverfee en de prins de lift weer in. De zonnefee zei dat elke lift naar zo'n hal leidt waar dikke jongetjes met hun tovenaarsvaders wonen. En dat de koningin van het eiland dat allemaal gemaakt had.

Hoe heet die fee, vroeg de prins.

Kom, zei de zonnefee, ik laat het je zien. Toen ze weer op de grond waren stapten ze de kathedraal binnen. De fee zat tussen de broodjes.

Het is een broodjesfee, zei de zonnefee.

Kom eens dichterbij, zei de broodjesfee. Weer zo iemand die weinig eet. Ik zal je leren veel te eten. Toen gingen vele deuren open en de grootst mogelijke broden kwamen binnen, rijkelijk belegd met een overvloed aan overheerlijk voedsel. Plotseling werd de prins erdoor overstroomt.

Nee, nee, riep de prins.

De prins werd wakker in zweet. Naarmate de dag verstreek dacht hij glimlachend terug aan de broodjesfee.

De Driesprong

In het bos woonde eens een man en een vrouw die een dochtertje hadden. De man en de vrouw maakten vaak ruzie en vaak kon het meisje er niet van slapen. Op een nacht vluchtte ze weg, omdat het lawaai haar erg bang maakte. Lang zwierf ze door het bos, totdat ze uiteindelijk was verdwaald en niet meer wist waar ze was. Uitgeput leunde ze tegen een boom aan, maar viel toen in een gat. Ze viel erg diep, en raakte door de val bewusteloos.

Toen ze weer wakker werd zag ze allemaal konijntjes om haar heen, maar toen ze zich bewoog vluchtten alle konijntjes van haar weg. Langzaam stond het meisje op, en vroeg zich af waar ze terecht was gekomen. Ze zag hier allemaal kleine huisjes met lichtjes en hele hoge bomen. Zo hoog had ze de bomen nog nooit gezien. Toen ze in de lucht keek zag ze alleen duisternis, en enkele stralende sterretjes. Plotseling zag ze één van die sterretjes vallen, en wat verderop tussen de bomen was even later een stralend licht. Voorzichtig liep het meisje op het licht af.

Maar naarmate ze dichterbij kwam werd alles weer donker. Hier waren geen kleine huisjes met lichtjes, en al gauw durfde ze niet verder. Ze wilde zich omdraaien, maar ook achter haar was het ineens heel donker.

‘Hallo !’ riep het meisje. ‘Is daar iemand ?’

Maar niets en niemand antwoordde. Het meisje was erg moe, en even later viel ze op de grond en kwam in een diepe slaap. Zo moe was ze nog nooit geweest. Even later kreeg ze dromerig om haar heen. Ze zag wat lichtjes om haar heen, met hele kleine spulletjes. Kleine stoeltjes, kleine stofzuigertjes, kleine laarsjes, en nog wat andere spulletjes. Ook zag ze hele kleine piepkleine kaarsjes. ‘Waar ben ik ?’ vroeg ze. Langzaam stond het meisje op, en keek omhoog waar alles donker was. Wel zag ze in het donker wat wijde schilderijen hangen. Snel kwam ze erachter dat ze in een soort zaal was. Op

een hoge troon in het duister zat een konijn. Het konijn zei niks, en het meisje stapte dichterbij, en toen was alles weer weg, en alles was weer pikkedonker.

'Ik weet dat jullie er zijn !' riep het meisje. Maar niets en niemand antwoordde. 'Ik wil niet moeilijk doen,' zei het meisje, 'maar zo ontvang je geen gasten.'

'Gasten, gasten ?' zei een stem. 'Je komt hier zomaar ongevraagd binnenvallen, en je noemt jezelf gast. Ik noem je een indringer.'

Het meisje keek naar beneden en zag een konijntje bij haar voet. Het konijntje schopte tegen haar been aan.

'Zeg, laat dat,' zei het meisje, 'zo gedraag je je niet naar een dame.'

'Nou, ik noem jou geen dame,' zei het konijntje, 'je hebt geen manieren. Je komt hier zomaar ongevraagd binnenvallen, en denkt dat je de koningin bent. Maar goed, ik zal je wel binnenlaten, en dan zul je eens een echte koningin meemaken.'

Het konijntje trok aan het jurkje van het meisje, en leidde het meisje naar een klein kamertje waar een konijntje op een troon zat.

'We hebben indringers, koningin,' zei het konijntje.

'Ik weet het, Arend,' zei de konijnenkoningin, 'laat haar hier maar blijven.' Toen vertrok het konijntje.

De konijnenkoningin keek het meisje diep aan. 'Dus ... jij komt van de grote mensenwereld,' zei de koningin.

'Eh, ja, majesteit,' zei het meisje, 'maar ik ben zelf nog klein.'

'Oh, maar jij wordt vast ook zo groot,' zei de koningin. 'Maar voor het zover is mag je hier wel blijven. Hier achter mij is een deur, en als je daar doorheen gaat, dan .... Nu ja, dat zul je zelf wel zien. Je moet gewoon het pad volgen.'

Het meisje bedankte de koningin, en ging door de deur, en kwam op een pad terecht. Hele kleine vogeltjes zaten in de struikjes aan de zijkanten van het pad. Het pad straalde en glom door een geheimzinnig licht. Het meisje begon haar reis. Na een tijdje kwam ze op een open plek waar konijntjes wat spelletjes aan het doen waren. Een paar konijntjes waren aan het hinkelen. Achter de konijntjes waren drie paden.

'Waar moet ik nu naartoe ?' vroeg het meisje.

'Waar kom je dan vandaan ?' vroegen de konijntjes.

Van de koningin, zei het meisje.

'Van de koningin ?' vroegen de konijntjes, 'heeft ze dan zelf niet gezegd waar je naartoe moest gaan.'

Het meisje schudde haar hoofd. 'Ze zei alleen maar dat ik het pad moest volgen.'

'Ik zou het eerste pad maar niet kiezen,' zei een konijntje, 'want dan kom je bij een heks terecht. Het tweede pad leidt tot het witte kasteel, en het derde pad dat weet niemand. Iedereen valt daar in slaap.'

'Nou,' zei het meisje, 'ik heb lang genoeg geslapen. Ik kies voor het tweede pad.' En zo ging het meisje op weg naar het witte kasteel.

Het witte kasteel stond vol met levende pionnen. 'Ik heb jou hier nog nooit gezien,' zei een zwarte pion. 'Ik jou ook niet,' zei het meisje.

'Waar kom je vandaan ?' vroeg een rode pion.

'De koningin heeft me gestuurd,' zei het meisje.

'De koningin ?' vroegen alle pionnen verwonderd.

'Spring maar op m'n rug,' zei een groene pion. Toen het meisje op de groene pion klom begon de pion te steigeren, en rende toen een trap op van het kasteel, en kwam op een balkon terecht, en rende toen door naar een volgende trap. De groene pion bracht het meisje helemaal tot aan een toren. 'Kijk eens naar buiten,' riep de pion, 'zo kun je het hele land zien.'

'Welk land ?' vroeg het meisje. Door het raam zag ze allemaal grasvelden die er als speelborden uitzagen. Het waren wonderlijke tuinen. 'Zo je ziet het, hè,' zei de pion. 'We hebben nog veel te doen.'

'Ja, maar de koningin vertelde me dat ik het pad moest volgen,' zei het meisje.

'Het pad ?' vroeg de groene pion. 'Oh, wat stom van me, ik had het kunnen weten.'

Toen huppelde de groene pion met het meisje op zijn rug weer helemaal naar beneden, en ging toen via de keuken de achtertuin in. 'Zie je, daar in de verte,' zei de groene pion terwijl hij op wat struikjes achter een groot grasveld wees, 'daar gaat het pad verder. Een goede reis.'

En toen zette het meisje haar reis voort, nadat ze van de pion afscheid had genomen. Tussen de struikjes achter het grasveld ging het pad verder. Het pad straalde en glom weer als door een geheimzinnig licht. Maar na een tijdje wandelen kwam het meisje weer bij de konijntjes die spelletjes aan het spelen waren. 'Hier ben ik al geweest,' zei het meisje.

'Dan moet je gewoon een ander pad nemen,' zei één van de konijntjes.

'Maar welk pad ?' vroeg het meisje.

'Nou, het eerste of het derde pad,' zei het konijntje.

'Ja maar dan kom ik bij de heks, of val ik in slaap,' zei het meisje.

'Ik kan het ook niet helpen, kies maar,' zei het konijntje.

'Nou, dan kies ik voor het derde pad, want ik begin toch al een beetje moe te worden,' zei het meisje.

Langs het derde pad stonden allemaal toverbloemen, en al snel begon het meisje zo moe te worden dat ze niet meer kon blijven staan, en al gauw viel ze in een diepe slaap.

'Ehm, mijn naam is de spin,' zei een dromerige, geheimzinnige stem, 'weet je dat ik altijd win ?'

'Nee, dat weet ik niet,' zei het meisje dromerig.

'Nou, dan weet je het nu,' zei de stem weer.

Waar ben ik ? vroeg het meisje.

Toen ze haar ogen opende zag ze bloemen, zoveel bloemen. Overal waren bloemen, en zoveel wonderbaarlijke geuren, zo betoverend.

‘Ik zei toch dat ik altijd win,’ zei de stem slaperig, ‘ik heb je betoverd.’

‘Ja maar daar heb ik eigenlijk geen tijd voor,’ zei het meisje, ‘de koningin heeft me gezegd dat ik het pad moet volgen.’

‘De koningin ?’ zei de stem. ‘Dat verandert de zaak, kom maar mee.’ En ineens stond het meisje klaarwakker tussen de bloemen. In de verte zag ze een rivier, terwijl beneden bij haar voet een klein spinnetje stond. ‘Als de koningin je gestuurd heeft, dan is het in orde,’ zei het spinnetje, ‘dan hoeven we geen spelletjes te doen.’ Toen liep het spinnetje voor haar uit naar de rivier. Over de rivier was een brug waaronder allerlei bootjes met lampjes doorgingen. Het waren kleine bootjes.

‘Daar in de verte woont een heks,’ zei het spinnetje.

‘Oh maar ik dacht dat de heks op het eerste pad woonde,’ zei het meisje. Na een tijdje komen ze in de keuken van een groot kasteel aan. Een dienstknecht loopt op het meisje af. ‘Hallo, ik ben Andrew,’ zegt de bediende. ‘Ik verwachtte je al. Laat me je het kasteel rondleiden.’

‘Hoe weet u dat ik zou komen,’ vroeg het meisje, en het meisje vroeg zich ook af waar het spinnetje ineens was gebleven. ‘Het spinnetje zei dat hier een heks woonde,’ zei het meisje.

‘Ah, je moet niet alles en iedereen geloven,’ zei Andrew. ‘Hier woont de konijnenkoningin.’

‘Maar daar kom ik net vandaan,’ zei het meisje, ‘en ze heeft me gezegd het pad te volgen.’

‘Oh kom dan maar mee,’ zei Andrew, en leidde haar naar de achterkant van het kasteel. Hier ging het pad verder. Weer zag het meisje het spinnetje hier, maar het spinnetje was heel ver weg. ‘Spinnetje ?’ riep het meisje. Maar het spinnetje hoorde haar niet. En het pad ging een andere richting op. Het meisje besloot om maar gewoon het pad te volgen.

Na een tijdje zag ze wat ijzeren bekertjes op de grond staan, en toen ze dichterbij kwam sprong er een konijntje tevoorschijn. ‘Raad eens wat er in deze bekertjes zit ?’ vroeg het konijn. ‘In eentje zit de zee, in de andere zit het bos, en als je van de derde drinkt, dan ben je de klos.’

Ja, maar ik wil daar helemaal niet van drinken,’ zei het meisje. ‘Laat me er langs.’

Kies er eentje uit, kies er eentje uit, en waar je dan ook terecht komt, je komt er altijd weer uit, zong het konijntje een paar keer. En word je dan de klos, dan kom je altijd wel weer los, en kom je tot de zee dan is het altijd okay.

Maar het meisje wilde er niets van horen, en stampte op de grond. ‘Nu is het afgelopen met die gekheid. Ik moet er nu door, want de koningin ....’ maar verder kon ze niet komen.

‘De koningin ? De koningin ?’ zei het konijntje. En snel was het konijntje met zijn bekertjes verdwenen, en kon het meisje verder gaan. Na een tijdje

kwam het meisje in de duinen, en niet lang daarna zag ze de prachtige oceaan waarin een diepe, felle zon scheen. Het meisje zag het pad helemaal doorlopen tot in de zee. ‘Maar dat kan toch helemaal niet,’ zei het meisje.

‘Jawel hoor,’ zei een stem. Een donkere gestalte stond ineens naast het meisje. Het leek wel een beetje op een zwarte pion op een paard. ‘Ik breng je er wel doorheen,’ zei de pion.

‘Ja, maar hoe dan ?’ vroeg het meisje. Ineens haalde de gestalte een dobbelsteen onder het zadel vandaan. De gestalte gooide de dobbelsteen van de duin op het strand. Op het bovenvlak van de dobbelsteen stond een gestalte als een rode pion. De gestalte was gevleugeld, en stond al snel naast het meisje. ‘Spring maar op mijn rug,’ zei de rode gestalte. En toen het meisje op zijn rug zat steeg de gestalte op. De zwarte gestalte was weer verdwenen. De rode gestalte had een geweer met kogels als dobbelstenen, en als ze door vervelende vogels werden lastiggevallen schoot hij ze met het geweer neer. Na een tijdje kwamen ze op een heuvel aan waar het pad weer verder ging. De rode pion wees in de verte : ‘Zie, daar, waar het glinstert, daar moet je zijn, daar woont de konijnenkoningin.’

‘Maar daar kom ik net vandaan,’ zei het meisje. ‘De koningin zei dat ik het pad moest volgen.’

‘Dat moet een vergissing zijn geweest,’ zei de rode pion, en vertrok.

‘Wacht eens even,’ riep het meisje. ‘Je moet het me uitleggen. Ik begrijp het niet meer.’ Maar de rode pion was al weg. Toen besloot ze het pad maar te volgen tot de glinsteringen in de verte, maar al snel begon het erg donker te worden en koud. ‘Ik moet hier ergens iets vinden om te kunnen schuilen,’ zei het meisje. Het begon ook steeds harder en harder te waaien.

‘Kom hier !’ riep een stem, ‘kom hier,’ bijna gillend. De stem leek op het geluid wanneer haar ouders ruzie maakten. Een konijn op een woonboot riep naar een ander konijn. Het was een woonboot gewoon op de grond. Er was nergens water te bekennen, alleen wat druppels van een beginnende regen. ‘Kom nu binnen !’ riep de stem weer, ‘wil je soms verdrinken ?’ Het meisje zag een wat jonger konijntje stampvoetend naar binnen lopen, in de woonboot. Het andere konijn gaf hem een om z’n oren. Toen ging de deur dicht. Snel begon het natter te worden onder de voeten van het meisje, en werd ze door de wind bijna weggeblazen. Toen ze in de verte keek, kreeg ze de schrik van haar leven. Bulderend hoge golven kwamen op haar af, alsof de oceaan het land wilde opslokken. Zo snel als ze kon rende ze naar de woonboot, maar hoe hard ze ook op het deurtje bonsde, niemand deed open.

Help me, help me dan toch ! riep het meisje. Het water was al tot haar knieen gekomen, en de razende golven kwamen steeds dichterbij, en groeiden steeds hoger. Al snel was het water tot haar heupen gekomen, en keek ze recht in een kilometers hoge golf die haar elk moment zou kunnen opslokken. Het meisje slaakte een gil. Een raampje naast het deurtje ging open, en een hand greep het meisje vliegensvlug naar binnen.

‘Dat was op het nippertje,’ zei een konijntje. Het meisje zuchtte diep.

‘Dat gebeurt altijd als de koningin kwaad word,’ zei het konijntje.

‘Waarom wordt ze dan kwaad,’ vroeg het meisje.

‘Ze kan niet tegen haar verlies met spelletjes,’ zei het konijntje.

‘Met wie doet ze dan spelletjes ?’ vroeg het meisje.

‘Met een spin,’ zei het konijntje.

‘Oh maar ik ken dat spinnetje,’ zei het meisje. ‘Ik ben dat spinnetje ook tegengekomen, en hij sprak dat hij altijd wint.’

‘Hoe weet je dat ?’ vroeg het konijn ineens. ‘Niemand weet dat, dus waarom zou jij dat weten ?’

‘Nou,’ legde het meisje uit, ‘er waren drie paden. Eerst kwam ik op het tweede pad waar het witte kasteel was, en daarna kwam ik op het derde pad waar iedereen in slaap viel. Hier ben ik hem tegengekomen.’

‘Maar dat kan niet,’ zei het konijn, ‘dat is absoluut onmogelijk. Niemand die op het derde pad komt ontwaakt weer. Zij die daar komen zullen voor eeuwig en altijd slapen.’

‘Oh maar ik zei tegen het spinnetje dat ik van de koningin had gehoord dat ik het pad moest volgen,’ zei het meisje, ‘en toen liet hij me erdoor.’

‘De koningin ?’ vroeg het konijntje terwijl zijn gezicht groen en geel tegelijk werd. ‘Mens allemachtig, heeft de koningin dat tegen jou gezegd ?’

Het meisje knikte. ‘Oh maar dan zijn wij in heel groot gevaar,’ zei het konijntje. ‘Als de koningin dat gezegd heeft, dan is ze ergens op uit. Dan daagt ze je uit voor een duel.’

‘Een duel ?’ vroeg het meisje.

‘Ja een duel, een gevecht,’ zei het konijn, ‘en dan moeten we snel zijn. We moeten direkt naar het kasteel, want daar zit ze op je te wachten voor het spel.’

Direct rende het konijn een andere kamer in, en startte de motor. Met volle kracht ging de boot richting het glinsterende kasteel in de verte. Na een tijdje voer het bootje naar binnen. Bij een grote paal diep in het kasteel was een kade waar ze konden uitstappen. Het konijn greep de hand van het meisje en rende samen met haar een grote stenen trap naast een muur op. ‘Majesteit, majesteit,’ riep het konijn, en toen hij de koningin op de trap tegenkwam, zei hij het wat rustiger : ‘Majesteit, ik weet dat we wat laat zijn.’

‘Wat, laat ?’ zei de koningin, ‘helemaal niet laat. Veel te vroeg. Jullie zijn veel te vroeg hier.’

‘Maar waarom werd u dan zo boos ?’ vroeg het konijn.

‘Ach, niks bijzonders,’ zei de koningin, ‘gewoon een ongelukje.’

‘Een ongelukje ?’ vroeg het konijn.

Ja, zei de koningin, ik liet een pion vallen, en die vloog weg.

‘Misschien een rode pion ?’ vroeg het konijn.

Ja, hoe weet jij dat nu weer, vroeg de koningin een beetje kattig.

Nou, ik zag een rode ster naar beneden vallen, maar later dacht ik : het zal wel weer een pion van de koningin zijn, zei het konijn.

Ja, lachte de koningin, jaha, dat heb je goed gezien, jongen, en nu vlug wegwezen, want het is nog lang geen tijd.

Toen rende het konijn weg. Nu stond het meisje oog in oog met de koningin.

En wie ben jij ? vroeg de koningin.

‘Eh, ik ben het meisje wat van u gewoon het pad moest volgen,’ zei het meisje.

Oh ja ? kraste de koningin, nou heus, ik ken je niet.

Kijk dan eens beter. Kent u mij echt niet ? vroeg het meisje.

Toen deed de koningin een brilletje op, en kwam dichterbij. Eens even kijken, zei de koningin. Er zijn zoveel meisjes die .... het pad volgen, zei je ?

Het meisje knikte.

Wacht eens even, zei de koningin. Ben jij langs de drie paden gegaan ?

Alleen de tweede en de derde. Ik ben nog niet bij de heks op het eerste pad geweest, zei het meisje.

Wat sta je hier dan te staan ? bulderde de koningin. Terug jij !

En toen zette het meisje het op een rennen, want de koningin begon verschrikkelijk te bulderen. Het leek alsof haar ouders weer ruzie maakten, erger dan ooit tevoren, en het meisje begon heel hard te huilen.

Rennen ! brulde de koningin, ren voor je leven, want ik ontplof, en dan zul je de dobbelstenen zien rollen.

Het meisje was al snel omsingeld door een heel leger met dobbelstenen. Er kwam vuur uit hun monden, en de roden waren het ergste. Nog harder begon het meisje te huilen. Toe dan, konijn, help me dan ! riep het meisje hard. Maar het konijn was nergens te bekennen. In de verte zag ze de woonboot, maar die dreef telkens verderweg. Oh, was ik nu maar naar het eerste pad gegaan, zei het meisje. De dobbelstenen zagen er zo dreigend uit.

Wat zei je, krijste de koningin, nee, dat kan niet, zei je dat je het derde pad op ben gegaan ?

Ja, majesteit, zei het meisje.

Iedereen slaapt daar, en niemand staat ooit weer op, zei de koningin.

Ja, maar het spinnetje ... zei het meisje

Het spinnetje ? krijste de koningin .... Heeft het spinnetje je erdoor gelaten ? En toen werd de koningin nog kwaaier.

Maar toen ik hem vertelde wat u gezegd had dat ik het pad moest volgen, toen liet hij me erdoor, zei het meisje.

Oh, zuchtte de koningin woest, ik kan dat spinnetje niet uitstaan ... Wat heeft hij nog meer gezegd ?

‘Dat hij altijd wint,’ zei het meisje.

En toen werd de koningin wel zo razend dat ze niets meer met de dobbelstenen te maken wilde hebben. ‘Uit mijn ogen !’ krijste ze tegen de

dobbelstenen. ‘Niets wil ik nog met spelletjes te maken hebben.’ Toen liep ze boos weg, het meisje alleen achterlatend.

Even later kwam ze weer terug. ‘Zeg, waar kom je eigenlijk vandaan ?’ vroeg ze aan het meisje. ‘Toch niet uit de grote mensenwereld, hè ?’

Ja, zei het meisje, daar kom ik vandaan. Mijn vader en moeder maakten altijd ruzie, en ....

Je hoeft me niets meer te vertellen, zei de koningin, ik begrijp het al. Dan kom je dus van het eerste pad vandaan.

Nee, daar ben ik nog niet geweest, daar bij die heks, zei het meisje.

Kom maar mee, zei de koningin, dan laat ik het je zien.

In een hoge torenkamer aangekomen schonk de koningin thee voor het meisje in, en vroeg het meisje of ze het fijn vond in de grote mensenwereld.

Nee, zei het meisje, want niemand begrijpt me, en ze maken altijd ruzie.

‘En wat heb je eraan gedaan ?’ vroeg de koningin.

Ik ben weggelopen, zei het meisje.

Dat is het beste wat je kon doen, zei de koningin, zo kon je de heks verslaan.

Ja maar ik ben nog helemaal geen heks tegengekomen, zei het meisje.

Als dat zo is, zei de koningin, dan zul je terugmoeten naar het eerste pad, en dan zul je het pad gewoon moeten volgen totdat je haar tegen bent gekomen. Of zullen we gewoon een spelletje doen ?

De paden heb ik gevolgd, zei het meisje. Laten we nu dan maar een spelletje doen.

En zo gebeurde het. Tot diep in de avond deed het meisje spelletjes met de koningin, en ze konden het zo goed met elkaar vinden dat de koningin niet meer boos werd als ze een spelletje verloor. Het meisje beleefde nog vele avonturen met de koningin, maar dat hoor je wel in een ander verhaal.

Spindruppeltje

Er was eens een meisje dat Spindruppeltje heette. Het meisje was eigenlijk een prinsesje, maar was eens tijdens het spelen in het bos verdwaald en kwam bij een arm gezin terecht. Het meisje was nog te jong om te beseffen dat ze een prinsesje was, en ook het arme gezin wist niet wie ze was, maar ze besloten voor haar te zorgen. Dichtbij het huisje van het arme gezin was een vijver met krokodillen waar het meisje vaak speelde. Maar op een dag gleed het meisje uit, en viel in de vijver. Direkt werd ze door een krokodil gegrepen en in de diepte getrokken.

De krokodillen brachten haar naar een rijk diep onder de grond, waar soldaten woonden die de zessen werden genoemd. De soldaten liepen een beetje krom en hadden vreemde gekrulde schoenen. Ze zagen er inderdaad uit als zessen. Hun koning was genaamd nummer één. Het meisje keek haar ogen uit in dit rijk onder de grond. Alles was hier prachtig : betoverde bloemen, en zoveel betoverde tuinen. Het meisje ging hier gewoon door met spelen, alsof er niets aan de hand was, en het was goed. De koning scheen erg van het meisje te houden, alsof het zijn eigen dochtertje was. De koning had ook een dochtertje, en dat meisje was genaamd 'drie'. Drie en het meisje werden al snel dikke vriendinnetjes. De koning was erg tevreden. Hij gaf het meisje een eigen kamer in zijn kasteel, vlakbij de kamer van drie, zijn dochtertje. Ook de zessen waren erg dol op het meisje. Het meisje had een goed hart voor iedereen.

Maar op een dag gebeurde er iets verschrikkelijks. De koning werd heel ernstig ziek, en iedereen was erg verdrietig. Er was nog maar één middel dat de koning zou kunnen genezen, en dat was de blajus-plant die in het land groeide waar het meisje vandaan kwam. De zessen legden het meisje uit waar ze dat kruid zou kunnen vinden. Een krokodil bracht het meisje weer terug. Het arme gezin was erg blij het meisje weer terug te zien, maar ze mocht nooit meer naar de vijver. Inmiddels was de echte vader van Spindruppeltje erachter gekomen waar zijn dochter was, en nam haar mee naar zijn kasteel. Om de vijver liet hij grote hoge gouden hekken bouwen. Maar het meisje wilde terug naar het rijk onder de vijver, om de koning daar te kunnen redden door de blajus-plant, het genezende kruid.

Dat ze door een krokodil was gegrepen geloofden ze allemaal wel, maar dat er een rijk onder de vijver was geloofde niemand. En hoe ze ook huilde en smeekte, haar vader was niet om te praten. Hoe zou ze nou over die hekken kunnen komen ? Inmiddels stond bijna het hele kasteel van haar vader vol met blajus-planten, omdat het prinsesje daar om gevraagd had. Ook had het arme gezin een flinke beloning gekregen, omdat ze zo goed voor het meisje hadden gezorgd. Zij woonden nu ook in het kasteel, op een verdieping dichtbij de verdieping waar het meisje haar kamer had. Maar het meisje huilde veel.

De koning zag dat het meisje niet gelukkig was, en gaf haar op een dag een vogel voor op haar kamer. Het was een sprekende vogel, en het meisje kon alles aan de vogel vertellen, ook over het verborgen koninkrijk.

'Ik kan je wel over het hek brengen, hoor,' zei de vogel, 'geen probleem. Ik ben sterk genoeg, en ik kan heel hoog vliegen.' En zo stapte het meisje op zijn rug, en de vogel bracht haar helemaal over het hek bij de vijver. Maar plotseling kwam het meisje erachter dat ze het blajus-kruid was vergeten. En één van de krokodillen greep de vogel en trok hem de diepte in. Nu kon het meisje niet meer terug. Nu moest ze wachten totdat iemand haar zou zien. Maar er gingen tijden voorbij, en het meisje begon erge honger te lijden.

Op een dag kwam de vogel terug uit de vijver, en vertelde dat de koning van het verborgen rijk inmiddels was overleden. Het meisje begon erg te huilen, en zei dat het allemaal haar schuld was. Zij had immers het blajus-kruid vergeten. Maar de vogel zei dat vele zessen nu ook ernstig ziek waren, en ook het prinsesje drie. De vogel was teruggekomen om voor hen het blajus-

kruid te halen. Het meisje stapte op zijn rug, en weer vloog hij over het hek, terug naar het kasteel. Maar toen de koning merkte dat ze terug waren gekomen liet hij hen beiden grijpen. Het meisje werd voor straf opgesloten op haar kamer, en de vogel werd in een diepe kerker onder het kasteel geworpen. Nog nooit was het prinsesje zo verdrietig geweest. De koning liet de vijver droogleggen, en joeg de krokodillen het bos in.

Dikke tranen rolden er over de wangen van het prinsesje, maar de tranen hadden allerlei kleuren. Na een tijdje kwam er een vogel op het venster van het open raam zitten. Het was een krokodillen-vogel, die wel een beetje op een krokodil leek. ‘Je moet die tranen drinken,’ zei de vogel, ‘dan gebeuren er wonderen.’ Het meisje had nog wat bekers in haar kamertje staan, en begon de verschillende kleuren te verdelen. ‘Rood is voor de sloot, blauw is voor de vijver,’ zei de vogel, en toen het meisje van het rode en het blauwe begon te drinken kwamen er overal in het land sloten en vijvers.

‘Laat me je meenemen naar het land der krokodillen, ver achter de bossen,’ zei de krokodillen-vogel. Het meisje stapte op de rug van de vogel, die direkt uit het raam vloog. Na een tijdje kwamen ze bij de krokodillen aan. Hier leefden ze in moerassen en poelen. Maar het verborgen rijk bestond niet meer. Het blajus-kruid groeide en bloeide hier volop, maar het was al te laat. Het rijk was geheel ten onder gegaan door de ernstige ziekte. In de verte stond een vrouw met wratten achter een ketel. De vrouw lachte als een heks, en roerde in de ketel waar groene smurrie in lag. ‘Wat ben je aan het maken ?’ vroeg Spindruppeltje.

‘Weet je dat dan niet ?’ zei de oude vrouw. ‘Ik maak voer voor de koning, tranen.’

Maar toen begon het meisje wel erge medelijden met haar vader te krijgen. ‘Heus, hij mag dan verschrikkelijke dingen hebben gedaan, maar hij bedoelde het goed. Hij was gewoon bezorgd.’

‘Bezorgd noem je dat ?’ zei de oude vrouw krassend. ‘Hij dacht alleen aan zijn eigen koninkrijk, en niet aan het koninkrijk van een ander.’

‘Ja maar hij wist niet van het bestaan van dat andere rijk af,’ zei het meisje.

‘Dat heb jij hem toch verteld ?’ zei de vrouw bijna spottend, ‘maar hij heeft het niet willen geloven, en jou zo met een ondragelijke last bezadeld, en ons des te meer.’

‘Maar wie bent u dan ?’ vroeg Spindruppeltje.

‘Ik ben de koningin der krokodillen,’ zei de vrouw bijna trots.

‘Maar als u dan meekomt naar mijn vader, dan zal hij het misschien geloven,’ zei het meisje.

‘Wat ?’ zei de vrouw spottend, ‘het is nu al te laat. Alles is verloren.’

‘Ja maar de krokodillen,’ zei het meisje, ‘zij zijn nog over. Moeten ze dan blijven leven in deze poelen ?’

‘Hmm, misschien heb je gelijk,’ zei de oude vrouw, ‘en moet ik een kansje wagen. Ik zal naar jouw vader gaan, en hem vragen om een plaats bij de koninklijke vijver, ik en mijn krokodillen.’

Maar toen de oude vrouw met het meisje meeging naar de koning kreeg de vrouw de schuld van alles, en ook haar liet de koning opsluiten, en zelfs het prinsesje werd in een kerker geworpen opdat ze niet meer zou ontsnappen. Alleen de krokodillen-vogel wist op tijd weg te komen, en snelde terug naar de krokodillen om alles te vertellen.

'Dan zit er niks anders op dan het kasteel aan te vallen,' zei de oudste krokodil.

Eén voor één kropen ze in de ketel van de oude vrouw waar ze in zessen veranderden, en gingen in een groot leger gewapend naar het koninklijk terrein.

'Gebruik groen, dan hoef je het niet meer over te doen,' zei de krokodillen-vogel die hen aanvoerde in de strijd.

En zo werd het kasteel van de koning en zijn gehele terrein bedolven onder groene tranen. Toen het arme gezin wat zo lang voor het meisje gezorgd had erachter kwam dat de koning haar in een kerker had geworpen waren ze heel boos op de koning. Ze kwamen erachter dat hij in het geheim een boze tovenaar was, en ze vochten mee in het leger van de zessen. Maar de boze tovenaar was te sterk, en liet hen allemaal in de kerkers diep onder de grond werpen. De enige die kon ontsnappen was weer de krokodillen-vogel.

Met een list kwam hij weer in het kasteel, en even later had hij de kerker van het prinsesje gevonden. 'Spindruppeltje, Spindruppeltje,' fluisterde hij. Het prinsesje was erg blij hem te zien. Zelfs in de gangen waar de kerkers waren groeide het blajus-kruid, en de krokodillen-vogel gaf het prinsesje wat van het kruid. 'Hier, eet wat van het kruid,' zei de vogel. 'Dat zal helpen.' Toen het prinsesje wat van het kruid at leek het even alsof ze krokodillen-huid begon te krijgen. En toen even later gingen wonderlijk alle deuren van de kerkers open. Het werd een grote optocht die over de trappen van de kerkergangen naar boven ging. 'Vlug, naar de koninklijke vijver,' zei de krokodillen-vogel die boven hen uit vloog. De vijver had heel helder water, en in de dieptes konden ze een stenen trap zien. Allen zwommen ze naar de trap, en door een luik kwamen ze uiteindelijk in het verborgen rijk terecht.

'Hoe kan dat dan ?' vroeg het prinsesje. 'Ik dacht dat het verborgen rijk was vergaan.'

'Het is hier opnieuw gaan groeien,' zei de krokodillen-vogel.

'Maar hoe kan dat dan ?' vroeg het meisje.

'Nou gewoon,' zei de krokodillen-vogel, 'het is de bloesem van het blajus-kruid, en dat groeit nu overal door het kasteel.'

En zo werd het kasteel vol van het verborgen rijk ....

En de boze tovenaar ? Die hebben ze nooit meer teruggezien. Het prinsesje kwam hier ook het prinsesje drie tegen, en haar vader, koning nummer één, en vele anderen. Ook zag ze alle oude zessen weer terug, en ze leefden nog lang en gelukkig. Allemaal kenden ze nu het geheim van het blajus-kruid.

Het Gedwongen Chocola

Een oud vrouwtje leefde helemaal alleen in het bos in een klein huisje. Ze staarde naar buiten. Ze kon de bomen goed zien. Daarna staarde ze naar haar gedroogde vlinders die ze als kind had gevangen. Voor haar gevoel miste ze nog een paar kostbaren. Ze had haar net nog dichtbij haar, klaar om de ontbrekende exemplaren te vangen. Altijd was ze op zoek. Niets dan leugens zweefden in de lucht, haar beschuldigende. Ze wilde deze leugens vangen, opdrogen en inlijsten. Ze was vol van haat. Ze kon het gelach van de plagende spotters om haar heen niet meer aan. Elke dag weer probeerden ze haar neer te halen, al vanaf het moment dat ze wakker werd. Ze leken op kinderlijke kleine elfjes, met brutale gezichtjes, als vlindertjes vrolijk dartelend om haar heen. Ze haatte kinderen op die manier, en ze droeg dan ook een duister geheim in haar binnenste. Soms sloeg ze met haar schepnet om zich heen, en riep : 'Is het nu afgelopen.' Maar de laatste jaren ving ze niks meer. Ze droeg een duister geheim van binnen. Ze wilde hier niet aan denken, en met niemand over praten. Ze was het vechten moe. Niemand zou haar begrijpen, en niemand zou sympathie voor haar hebben. Langzaam schonk ze wat thee in voor haarzelf. Buiten vlogen wat vogeltjes waar ze naar keek. Ze snapte niet waarom zo'n jonge geest als zij opgesloten moest zijn in zo'n oud lichaam. Zij zou oud worden in de armen van een ieder die haar aan zou raken, en daarom bleef ze ver van de mensen vandaan. Overdag werkte ze aan haar maaltijd voor de avond, en zorgde ze dat het huisje voldoende schoon bleef. Ook deed ze wat handwerk. Ze was ver weg in haar gedachten. Niemand kon haar bereiken. Ze was bitter geworden.

Ze wist niet dat er wat verder in het bos wonderbomen stonden. Ze kwam niet verder dan haar eigen tuin. De bomen werden bewaakt door dieren, zoals katten, slangen en konijnen, orakels. De bomen zouden haar naar boven leiden, maar ze zag hen niet. Ze zag alleen de kabalerige vliegende deugnietjes om haar heen fladderen. Maar op een dag was ze als door hypnose geslagen, en liep haar tuin uit door het tuinhekje. Ze wilde even het bos in, niet zo ver, maar even ergens anders zijn. Een konijn stond voor een boom, en wenkte haar. Ze kwam dichterbij en keek in de ogen van het konijn. Waarom komt u niet in deze boom wonen, zei het konijn. De top van de boom draagt een geweldig huis.

- Hoe kom ik daar, vroeg het oude vrouwtje.

Maar toen was het konijn weg. De vrouw wist niet of ze het konijn kon vertrouwen, liep door, en gleed in een onder het mos verborgen put. Ze viel gelukkig zacht, en op de bodem van de put stond een kat voor een deurtje. 'Heus,' zei de kat, 'er is een ander leven voor u. Welkom binnen in uw nieuwe huis.' En ineens was de kat verdwenen. De vrouw wist niet of ze de

kat kon vertrouwen, maar ging toch naar binnen. ‘Welkom in de boom,’ zei een stem. ‘De boom is alles wat er is.’

‘Ik heb anders nooit in een boom geleefd,’ zei de vrouw.

‘Omdat je dat niet wist,’ zei de stem. ‘Je dacht alleen maar dat je wat wist.’

‘Ik wil hier weg,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Ik moet weer naar huis.’

‘Dit is je huis,’ zei de stem. Ze keek recht in de ogen van een kat.

‘Oh, jij weer,’ zei ze tegen de kat.

‘En jij weer,’ zei de kat. De kat greep haar en wilde met haar dansen, maar de vrouw wilde niet. ‘Ik wil eruit,’ riep ze.

‘Waaruit ?’ vroeg de kat.

‘Uit deze hel,’ zei de vrouw.

‘Dit is alles wat er is,’ zei de kat.

‘Spreek geen onzin,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Ik was daarnet nog in mijn huis.’

‘Welk huis ?’ zei de kat. ‘Dat dacht je alleen maar. Je bent hier altijd al geweest.’

‘Leugenaar,’ riep de vrouw. ‘Ik haal de politie erbij.’

‘De politie ?’ zei de kat. ‘Wat is dat ? Dat zijn alleen je gedachten.’

De vrouw werd woest en probeerde de kat te slaan, maar die was ineens verdwenen. Alles was donker om haar heen. Ze liep een trapje op naar boven, waar een beetje licht was. Daar was de kat weer. Beiden stonden ze voor een lift. ‘Stap in de lift,’ zei de kat, ‘dan zul je van al je problemen af zijn.’ Als gehypnotiseerd stapte de vrouw in de lift, en de kat sloot de deur achter haar. Hoog in de boom kwam ze aan in haar nieuwe huisje. ‘Maar dat is fantastisch,’ zei ze. Ze zou de kat wel willen omhelzen, maar die was

nergens te vinden. Het beviel haar goed in haar nieuwe huisje. Alles was prachtig wit. Al snel kwam er een konijn boven. Het bleek hetzelfde konijn te zijn. ‘En van hieruit zul je alle lieve kinderen van de wereld opnemen,’ zei het konijn. ‘Er zijn kamers genoeg.’

‘Oh, dat lijkt me heerlijk,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Dan kan ik eindelijk voor het eerst een tante zijn.’

‘Zorg voor ze, kook voor ze, ga leuke dingen met ze doen,’ zei het konijn. ‘Deze kinderen zijn erg ongelukkig. Maak ze gelukkig.’ De vrouw had er echt zin in, en voelde zich jonger dan ooit tevoren. Het huis was inderdaad erg groot. Ze zou pannekoeken bakken, sprookjes voorlezen, en veel spelletjes met hen doen. Ook zou ze hen de andere plaatsen van de boom laten zien. Snel was haar huis vol met lieve kinderen. Ze sprak tot de boom als tot haar geliefde. Op een dag was ze verschrikt en in de war omdat haar kinderen in vuur waren. Maar de kat stelde haar gerust : het was slechts boomvuur. Het was een koud vuur wat aan hen beitelde, om hen nog meer klaar te maken voor het leven in de boom. De gezichten van reuzen waren in de boom die tot hen spraken. Op een dag stierf de vrouw. Heintje, een van de kinderen, nam de leiding over. Op de kamer van de oude vrouw stond een oude lift waar ze ingingen. Boven het huis bleek de boom gewoon door te gaan, en al snel waren ze in de wolken. Via een hele hoge tak kwamen ze in een andere boom terecht. Ze werden direkt door een konijn gegrepen en naar binnen gesleurd. Hier moesten ze gedwongen van vruchtenpastei eten. Ja, zei het konijn, want dit is de boom van de gedwongen vrucht. De kinderen vonden het niet zo erg, want de vruchtenpastei was erg lekker. Maar al snel moesten ze nog meer eten, en veel kinderen begonnen misselijk te worden. Heintje begon het toen flink zat te worden, trok zijn pistool en schoot het konijn aan flarden. Het bleek verder een prachtige boom te zijn. Ieder kind kreeg hier zijn eigen verdieping. Midden in de nacht maakte een ander konijn hen allemaal wakker, en dwong hen om chocola te eten in de gezamenlijke huiskamer. Eerst vonden de kinderen dat geweldig, maar toen ze later nog meer moesten eten werden sommigen al snel erg misselijk. Het konijn was verschrikkelijk aan het schelden. Heintje vroeg : ‘Mag ik vragen wat hiervan de bedoeling is ?’ Maar het konijn wilde er niks van zeggen. Ze hadden maar te gehoorzamen. Dat liet Heintje niet op zich zitten, greep zijn pistool en schoot op het konijn. Maar het konijn dook weg. Even later kwamen er nog meer konijnen binnen, en grepen Heintje. Heintje zou worden opgesloten achter tralies. De kinderen waren erg in paniek. Daantje werd hun nieuwe leider. ‘Zoals jullie hebben gezien is er hier niet veel pluis,’ zei Daantje. ‘We kunnen beter teruggaan.’ Maar toen ze bij de hoge tak terugkwamen zagen ze konijnse wachters staan. Toen zijn ze naar beneden gegaan, maar ook daar stonden konijnse wachters. De dagen erna werden ze weer gedwongen om chocola te eten, meer dan ze opkonden, en niemand kon er wat tegen doen. De kinderen werden doodziek. Weer riep Daantje iedereen bij elkaar en zei : ‘Dan maar zo hoog mogelijk.’ En ze gingen ditmaal gewoon zo hoog als ze konden. Ze hoopten dat ze weer een tak tegen zouden komen die hen naar een andere boom zou brengen, maar er gebeurde niks. Wel zagen ze ergens een deurtje waardoor ze naar binnen konden gaan.

Het bleek een lift te zijn, maar die kon alleen maar omhoog. De kinderen gingen in de lift, en Daantje drukte op het hoogste knopje. ‘Jullie zitten vast,’ zei een stem van de lift. ‘Niemand kan van de boom van de gedwongen vrucht ontsnappen.’ Veel kinderen begonnen te huilen. Ook Daantje wist niet wat hij kon doen. Toen ze uit de lift stapten zagen ze een heks zitten, met een slang en een beer. De beer was een knuffelbeer. Toen ze wat beter keken zagen ze dat de heks en de slang een standbeeld waren. De knuffelbeer begon te lachen. ‘Wat sta je te lachen,’ zei Daantje.

‘Jullie hebben vast moeten eten van de vruchtenpastei en de chocola, nietwaar ?’ zei de knuffelbeer.

‘Ja, hoezo ?’ zei Daantje. Weer begon de knuffelbeer te lachen, ditmaal te schaterlachen.

‘Wat sta jij daar nou te lachen, domme aap,’ zei Daantje.

‘Nou,’ zei de knuffelbeer, ‘ik vind het wel grappig.’

‘Grappig,’ zei Daantje, ‘het is helemaal niet grappig. We zijn er doodziek van.’ Weer moest de knuffelbeer daar erg om lachen.

‘Zit je ons nu uit te lachen ?’ vroeg Daantje.

‘Kom, knuffel me,’ zei de knuffelbeer ineens. Daantje stapte voorzichtig naar voren, en begon de knuffelbeer te knuffelen. ‘Laat mij maar met jullie meegaan, dan zal jullie niks overkomen,’ zei de knuffelbeer. Samen gingen ze terug en de knuffelbeer had gelijk. Nu hij mee was gekomen lieten de konijnen hen met rust. De knuffelbeer was heel aardig. Op een dag vroeg Daantje waarom de konijnen hen niet meer dwongen. ‘Omdat ze bang voor me zijn,’ zei de knuffelbeer.

‘Kun jij Heintje dan niet bevrijden ?’ vroeg Daantje.

‘Nee,’ zei de knuffelbeer, ‘een konijnenslot valt niet zo maar open te krijgen.’ De konijnse wachters stonden ook nog steeds bij de grote tak en beneden, en daar viel niet zomaar langs te komen. ‘Ik zal je vertellen hoe je bij de knuffelboom kan komen,’ zei de knuffelbeer. ‘Midden in de nacht als iedereen slaapt dan schuift het standbeeld van de heks en de slang even opzij waardoor er een tunnel ontstaat die tot de knuffelboom leidt.’

Daantje besluit er naar toe te gaan om meer kennis op te doen. Hij moet helemaal alleen gaan, want de knuffelbeer is van die boom verbannen. Voor de jongere kinderen zou het te gevaarlijk zijn. Alles lukt, en al gauw komt Daantje via de tunnel aan in de knuffelboom. Maar het is alles behalve een knuffelplaats. Militaire konijnen lopen hier rond. Daantje heeft nog nooit zoveel wapens bij elkaar gezien, en ze zien er heel gevaarlijk uit. Deze konijnen zien er veel erger uit dan de andere konijnen. Het zijn roofkonijnen, als ratten. En hun oren zijn ook een stuk korter. 'Neem van mij aan, deze konijnen zijn geen stumperds, nee, zeker niet. Geen ruzie mee krijgen,' zegt een konijn tegen hem. 'Wat kom je hier doen trouwens.' Maar Daantje loopt door. 'Wat hebben jullie met Heintje gedaan ?' roept hij. Even later komt hij bij een hok waarin een heleboel knuffelberen zijn, en waar ook Heintje zit. Heintje is flink boos. Heintje ziet er een stuk ouder uit, en vertelt hem dat ze gedwongen worden gevaarlijke medicijnen te slikken. Als dat zo door gaat heeft Heintje niet lang meer te leven. Daantje schrikt daar erg van. 'Daantje,' zegt Heintje, 'herinner je dat tante het eens heeft gehad over het huisje waar ze eerst woonde, vlak bij de boom, dat daar plagende elven woonden ? Misschien dat zij kunnen helpen. Wij kunnen niet van deze boom weg, maar als jij naar beneden loopt dan kon je door de voordeur eruit en naar ze op zoek gaan.'

Goed idee, zegt Daantje, en vertrekt meteen. Na een tijdje zoeken komt hij bij het huisje van het oude vrouwtje aan. In het huisje vindt hij de elfjes. Ze zijn erg droevig om wat ze het oude vrouwtje allemaal hebben aangedaan. Daantje vertelt hen het verhaal, en al snel gaan ze met hem mee naar de knuffelboom. Ditkeer gingen ze plagen en pesten zoals ze nog nooit eerder hadden gedaan, maar nu allemaal voor een goed doel. De konijnen waren snel allemaal van de boom vertrokken. Deze magische elven wisten heel goed hoe ze de kooi moesten openen, en al snel waren Heintje en de knuffelberen vrij.

De Drie Reuzen

In het stadje Glorrikom was een ware muizenplaag. Ze vraten alles wat los en vast zat, en de inwoners van Glorrikom waren hopeloos. Het bestuur van het stadje Glorrikom loofde een grote beloning uit aan de persoon die hen van de muizenplaag zou kunnen verlossen. Maar vele jaren lang kwam er niemand opdagen. Uiteindelijk op een dag kwam er een oud vrouwtje aan de poort van Glorrikom, en vertelde aan de poortwachter dat zij wel een middeltje had om met de muizen af te rekenen. De poortwachter zuchtte diep, en wist niet of hij dit wel kon geloven, maar al snel haalde het oude vrouwtje een spuitbus tevoorschijn, spoot wat in het rond, en de vele muizen die op de grond speelden vielen dood neer. De poortwachter kuchte even, maar kon toen zijn ogen niet geloven. Hij wreef in zijn ogen en keek nog

eens. Zo snel als hij kon rende hij naar het stadsbestuur die er vreemd van opkeken.

'Breng dat vrouwtje hier,' zei het bestuur. Na een tijdje stond het oude vrouwtje op de stoep en toonde hen de spuitbus. Ze spoot even wat in het rond en direct vielen de muizen die op de grond speelden dood neer. 'Maar dat is geweldig,' zei het bestuur. En ze kon direct beginnen. En och, het vrouwtje begon zo te spuiten dat spoedig het hele stadje onder een zwarte walm was, en niemand kon nog iets zien. Het prikte zelfs een beetje in hun ogen. Toen de walm eindelijk na een lange tijd was gezakt waren alle muizen verdwenen, maar tegelijkertijd waren ook alle kinderen verdwenen, en het vrouwtje was in geen velden of wegen te bekennen. 'We zijn bedrogen !' riep het bestuur. En snel waren alle mensen in rep en roer. Waar waren hun kinderen ? En waar was het vrouwtje, want zij moest wel een heel erg gemene heks zijn.

Ver weg hoog in een gebouw waren de kinderen ondergebracht. Ze lagen allemaal doodziek in bedden, en het oude vrouwtje liep schreeuwend langs de bedden. 'Zo, nietsnutten, als jullie straks weer beter zijn, dan zal ik jullie eens leren wat werken is.' En toen de kinderen weer beter waren moesten ze hard werken voor de heks, voornamelijk in de vele keukens die ze had. De kinderen moesten veel brood bakken. Het brood was wel erg lekker, en ze kregen er zoveel van als ze wilden, maar de kinderen leden erg onder het bewind van deze vrouw. Het was er zo erg dat veel kinderen het niet meer konden uithouden. 'Oh, die oude heks,' zei een jongetje, 'ik kan haar wel wat aandoen.'

'We moeten gewoon ontsnappen,' zei een meisje.

'Ja, maar hoe ?' vroegen twee andere meisjes. Het gebouw was overal potdicht.

'Gewoon wachten totdat ze slaapt, en dan haar kamer doorzoeken of daar iets is, een sleutel ofzo voor iets,' zei een wat ouder meisje. Dat vonden de meisjes wel een goed idee. En toen de oude heks sliep slopen ze stilletjes naar haar kamer. Ze zochten in alle laden, maar konden niets vinden. Maar even later vond één van de meisjes iets onder een lamp. Het was inderdaad een sleutel. Stilletjes slopen de meisjes weer uit de kamer, waar andere meisjes hen opwachtten. 'Hebben jullie wat gevonden ?' vroegen ze. En al gauw werd de sleutel getoond, en een glimlach van verlichting kwam op hun gezichten. Er was een deur die naar een grot leidde, en daar paste de sleutel op. Alle kinderen werden opgetrommeld, en de uittocht zou beginnen. Het waren een heleboel kinderen. In de grot was een andere grote deur, bestaande uit twee deuren die tezamen één deur vormden. Beide deuren hadden een gouden roos op hen. Al snel klopten de kinderen op de deur. Een dwerg deed open. 'Welkom in het rijk van dwerg Tirolijn,' zei de dwerg. Ze kwamen in een grote zaal, en in het midden zat een grote reus van metaal. Er was een balkon rondom de reus waarop de kinderen stonden. 'Dit is reus Droomzaad,' zei de dwerg.

'Waar is dat voor ?' vroeg een meisje.

'Wel,' zei de dwerg, 'reus Droomzaad is de vriend van ieder kind, en beschermt hen tegen de heks.' Reus Droomzaad nam de kinderen mee naar

een kasteel in het rijk van dwerg Tirolijn, waar ze konden wonen. De kinderen waren erg blij met het kasteel. Het was een erg groot kasteel met vele kamers. Er woonde al een meisje in het kasteel, die reus Droomzaad een tijdje geleden had gered uit de klauwen van de heks. Framboosje heette het meisje. Ze was heel lief, en ze was bijna helemaal van snoep gemaakt. De kinderen behandelden Framboosje als een prinses, en waren al erg snel dol op haar.

Maar op een nacht was het weer helemaal mis. De heks met haar vleermuizen viel het kasteel aan. Ze wilde de kinderen terug. De lucht was vol met grote vleermuizen die een hels kabaal maakten, en ze probeerden ingangen in het kasteel te maken door ruiten in the slaan. De kinderen waren met schrik geslagen, maar reus Droomzaad vertelde hen dat ze over de toversnoep-rivier achter het kasteel moesten zwemmen terwijl hij de heks met de vleermuizen zou tegenhouden. Over de toversnoep-rivier zou zijn broer, reus Snoepzaad, wonen, waar de kinderen veilig zouden zijn. De kinderen renden naar de toversnoep-rivier achter het kasteel zo hard als ze konden, en doken toen in de rivier waar ze zo snel mogelijk probeerden te zwemmen. Reus Droomzaad deed goed werk, maar er waren zoveel vleermuizen dat hij er velen niet kon tegenhouden. Die gingen achter de kinderen in de toversnoep-rivier aan, maar reus Snoepzaad kwam hen al tegemoet. Framboosje riep naar reus Snoepzaad dat reus Droomzaad zijn hulp nodig had tegen de heks. Snel zwom reus Snoepzaad naar de overkant, naar zijn broer, terwijl hij de vleermuizen terugdreef. Reus Snoepzaad kon vuurspuwen, en al snel verkoolden de vleermuizen, en de heks moest maken dat ze wegkwam. Hier kon ze niet tegenop. De kinderen waren inmiddels veilig achter de toversnoep-rivier.

Een andere reus kwam bij de kinderen staan. Het was reus Toverzaad, een andere broer van reus Droomzaad. 'Het lijkt erop dat het kasteel een wat betere bewaking nodig heeft,' zei reus Toverzaad. 'Het lijkt mij een goed idee dat reus Snoepzaad en ik vanaf nu onze broer gaan helpen met de bewaking.' Hij nam alle kinderen in zijn jas, en zwom met hen naar het kasteel. De kinderen voelden zich nu wel een stuk veiliger nu er drie reuzen waren om het kasteel te bewaken, en mocht het uit de hand lopen dan konden ze weer de toversnoep-rivier over. Het leek erop dat het nu wel goedging. De drie reuzen konden goed met elkaar overweg, en vormden een uitstekende bewaking.

De Betoverde Hof

Ze klommen over de muur, en keken recht in het vuur, het roze was betoverend, de rozen zo dromerig, als in een tovertuin. Wat was hier gaande ? Niemand wist het, ze staarden maar. De muur begon heet te worden, en ze

moesten snel terug. Ze waren hier waarschijnlijk niet gewenst. Hadden ze hun meester maar niet gevolgd, en hadden ze maar niet zichzelf opgetrokken aan dat rode touw van fluweel. Dan hadden ze dit nu niet gezien, en dan waren ze hier ook nooit geweest. Ze moesten rennen voor hun leven, maar waar was het rode touw ?

Ze wilden gewoon weten waar hun meester woonde, omdat hij altijd zo geheimzinnig deed, en nu werden ze voor hun nieuwsgierigheid gestrafd. Het rode touw was er niet meer, maar ze konden niet zomaar naar beneden springen. Plotseling zweefde het rode touw voor hun neus, maar toen ze het grepen trok het hen nog hoger de lucht in. Het brengt hen naar een kasteel waar ze worden opgesloten. Ze kunnen echter wel vrij door het kasteel lopen. Boven in een toren vinden ze een kamer waarin een tovenaar woont, tovenaar Terpentijn, die ook in het kasteel opgesloten zit. Hij vertelt de kinderen dat er in het zogeheten boek der tijden een profetie staat dat hij eens bevrijd zou worden door een groep kinderen.

De deuren en ramen van het kasteel blijven magisch gesloten, en de tovenaar vertelt hen dat alleen een zogeheten lariksvuur plantje de poort van het kasteel zou kunnen openen. Dit plantje zou ergens groeien onder het kasteel, en dan zouden ze door de tuin van Mira de elf moeten.De tovenaar leid de kinderen naar een duistere trap die tot onder het kasteel zou leiden. De kinderen zijn wel een beetje bang van de duistere trap, want die gaat heel diep en wordt steeds donkerder. Als ze dan eindelijk een deur beneden hebben bereikt komen ze in de tuin van Mira de elf. De rozen ruiken hier zo lekker, maar het lijkt wel alsof ze betoverd raken. Plotseling staat de elf voor hen, die een bril heeft en een grote bos haren. Ook heeft ze een lang roze gewaad aan en een toverstokje. Maar ze is niet zo vriendelijk. ‘Ik weet waar jullie voor komen,’ zegt ze, ‘maar ik geef het jullie niet. Heks Iamina houdt prins Vajak al lange tijd opgesloten in haar kasteel. Ik was eens zijn prinses. Nu, als jullie hem bevrijden, dan zal ik jullie het lariksvuur schenken.’ Ze wees op een meertje aan de rand van haar tuin, met daarin een eiland waarboven het kasteel zweefde. De kinderen zien in dat ze geen andere keus hebben, en willen de arme elvenprinses ook wel helpen. ‘Het kasteel is alleen te bereiken op zeven winden,’ zei de elf. ‘Ga maar naar het meertje toe, dan zal Rapoentus, de kabouter van de zeven winden, jullie wel verder helpen.’

En dat deden de kinderen. Het was niet zo lang lopen, en al snel zagen ze een kabouter staan. ‘Het is heel simpel,’ zei de kabouter, ‘ik begrijp dat jullie naar het kasteel willen voor prins Vajak. Luister, kinderen, ik heb hier een gouden licht. Ga in het licht staan, en denk aan iets ergs totdat je huilt. En let dan goed op totdat er een gouden traan valt. Houd de gouden traan dan in de lucht, en roep : ‘Oh zeven winden, zeven winden, ik hoop dat jullie mij kunnen vinden.’ Dan zullen de zeven winden komen en jullie naar het kasteel brengen.’ De kinderen gingen in het gouden licht staan, en dachten aan iets ergs. ‘Denk maar aan het ergste wat je je maar kunt bedenken,’ zei de kabouter. En al snel begonnen de kinderen flink te huilen, totdat er hier en daar wat gouden tranen vielen. Ze hielden de gouden tranen in de lucht en zeiden : ‘Oh zeven winden, zeven winden, ik hoop dat jullie mij kunnen

vinden,’ en al snel werden ze door zeven winden gegrepen en over het meertje gebracht.

‘Woont hier echt een heks ?’ vroeg Doortje, toen ze stilletjes het kasteel ingingen. De kabouter was er ook bij. ‘Oh ja,’ zei de kabouter.

‘Waar is ze dan ?’ vroeg Doortje.

‘Oh, ze kan overal wezen, het is zo’n groot kasteel,’ zei de kabouter.

‘En waar is de prins dan ?’ vraagt Doortje.

‘Oh, kom maar mee,’ zegt de kabouter, en haalde een vreemsoortige sleutel tevoorschijn, van rood gesteente. ‘Dit is de rode traan,’ zei de kabouter, ‘de traan van de prins. De kabouter liep regelrecht op een deur af, en opende de deur met de sleutel. Als ze binnen komen vinden ze alleen maar boeken. ‘Deze boeken heeft de prins geschreven,’ zei de kabouter, en nam één boek er tussenuit. ‘In één van die boeken staat dat hij in het boek der tijden heeft gelezen dat eens een groep kinderen hem zou bevrijden.’

‘Oh, de profetie,’ zegt Dirdos, ‘daar had tovenaar Terpentijn het ook al over.’ De kabouter schoof een boekenkast opzij, waarachter een poort van een gang was. Deze gang leidde tot de elvenschoon vijver. Hier woonde de elvenprinses Hyacinta. ‘Jullie komen vast en zeker om de prins te helpen,’ zei Hyacinta. Opeens werd alles erg donker, en er was een sterke wind. In het donker verscheen er een licht, omhuld door een zacht paars licht. Het was de fee Jestagide. ‘Oh, help dit land van sloten,’ zei de fee, ‘van geheimenissen onopgelost, oh help dit land, anders is het te laat, het is bijna het uur van algemis.’

‘Wie is algemis ?’ vroeg Klare, een ander kind.

‘Zij is een verschrikkelijk beest,’ zei de fee.

‘Hoe kunnen we prins Vajak helpen ?’ vroeg Kere, een ander meisje.

‘Hij zit opgesloten onder het meer van schoensmeer,’ zei de fee, ‘niet meer in het kasteel.’

‘Maar waar is dat meer dan ?’ vroeg Kere.

‘Rondom het kasteel,’ zei de fee. ‘Je kon misschien niet zien dat het schoensmeer is, maar dat komt omdat het gemengd was met tranen.’

‘Waarom dat ?’ vroeg Kere. De fee zei niets.

‘Hoe kunnen we daar komen,’ vroeg Tjoy, een ander kind.

‘Baad jezelf in elvenschoon,’ zei Hyacinta. ‘En je komt in de grotten onder het meer van schoensmeer.’

Al snel stapten de kinderen in de vijver, samen met de kabouter, om daar te baden. In een flits kwamen ze onder het meer van schoensmeer terecht, in een stelsel van grotten. ‘Hier moet de prins ergens wezen,’ zei de kabouter. Overal in de grotten waren tralies aan de zijkanten waarachter kinderen zaten, en allerlei soorten wezens. Het was een soort gevangenis-complex.

Tot hun grote schrik zien ze ineens hun meester achter tralies. ‘Meester, wat doet u hier,’ roept Klare. ‘Hoe kan u gevangen zijn terwijl u altijd les geeft op school.’ De kinderen waren diep geschokt en verbaasd.

‘Alleen overdag ben ik vrij,’ zei de meester. ‘Maar na schooltijd wordt ik weer opgesloten. Ze noemen me hier prins Vajak.’

‘Oh, dus u bent prins Vajak,’ zegt Dirdos. ‘Maar wie is dan elf Mira, die beweert uw prinses te zijn.’

‘Ze liegt,’ zei de meester, ‘zij is degene die mij opgesloten houdt en het lariksvuur bewaakt. Zij is heks Iamina, en het is bijna het uur van algemis, waarin ze in een monster zal veranderen, en dan worden we allemaal gebrouwen tot schoensmeer. Ze zal alles hier veranderen tot een grote ketel daarvoor.’

‘Wat kunnen we doen ?’ vragen Doortje en Kere.

‘Prinses Schoensmeer,’ zegt de meester. ‘Zij is de dochter van de heks. De heks heeft haar verbannen tot diep onder de grotten. Zij draagt de traan der rozen. Dat is de enige sleutel die deze gevangenissen kan openmaken, maar jullie moeten snel zijn, want het is al bijna het uur van algemis.’

De kinderen begonnen nu toch wel erg bang te worden. ‘Hoe kunnen we prinses schoensmeer bereiken ?’ vroeg Dirdos. Maar de meester zei niks meer, en stond als bevroren daar. In de verte hoorden ze gelach. Dichtbij de gevangenissen was een trap. Eén van de kinderen rende er naartoe, en de rest volgde. ‘Kom mee.’ De trap ging dieper de grond in, en al snel kwamen ze bij een open ruimte, waar een huilende prinses zat, en ze was helemaal bedekt onder schoensmeer. ‘Jullie meester heeft mij vroeger geprobeerd te helpen,’ zei de prinses. Het was inderdaad prinses schoensmeer. ‘Maar mijn moeder sloot hem op.’

‘Hoe kwam hij hier ?’ vroeg één van de kinderen.

De prinses zweeg. ‘Ik kan niet naar boven,’ zei ze. Ze gaf de rozentraan sleutel. ‘Dit is alles wat je nodig hebt. Maar daar kwam ineens haar moeder aan. Het was de heks. ‘Hier met die sleutel,’ gilde de heks. ‘Hier ermee.’

‘Moeder, alstublieft,’ zei de prinses. ‘Houd daar nou eens mee op.’

‘Oh, ik deel hier de lakens uit,’ gilde de heks. ‘En het is bijna het uur van algemis.’

‘Ren voor je leven,’ gilde de prinses. Maar de heks stond voor de trap. Ze konden geen kant op. De heks begon te grijnzen. ‘Nog even en jullie zullen allemaal omgesmolten zijn tot schoensmeer,’ zei de heks.

‘Toe prinses,’ zei Klare, ‘waarom kunt u niet met ons mee naar boven.’

‘Red jezelf,’ zei de prinses, ‘ik kan niet gered worden, maar red de meester en alle andere gevangenen. Dat is alles wat ik van je vraag.’

‘Nee,’ zei Klare, ‘vertel, zeg op, hoe kunnen we je helpen.’ De heks begon steeds dichterbij te komen. Sommige kinderen waren zo bang dat ze bijna

jankten van angst. ‘De traan van groen en gif,’ zei de prinses, ‘is wat mijn hart kan vrijzetten. Het is traan van prins Vajak.’

‘Oh,’ zegt de kabouter. ‘Maar ik heb hier de rode traan sleutel van prins Vajak. Niet groen en gif.’

‘Vlug,’ zei de prinses, ‘lees wat er op die traan sleutel geschreven staat.’

‘Grijp die kabouter,’ krijste de heks, ‘grijp hem.’ Van bovenaf de trap kwamen allemaal grijze wachters aanrennen met speren en andere wapens.’ De kabouter sprong achter de prinses, en begon snel hardop te lezen. Ook de kinderen zochten toevlucht bij de prinses. ‘Doorboor die kinderen !’ riep de heks. De wachters hadden hun speren en wapens al klaar om te steken. De kinderen slaakten een gil. ‘Ga achter mij staan !’ riep de prinses. ‘Ik heb wel wat macht !’ De prinses knipte met haar vingers en ineens kwamen de wachters in slow-motion. De speren kwamen wel steeds dichterbij, dus nu moest de kabouter snel zijn. ‘Ik sterf een beetje in je armen, en kom ook een beetje tot leven daar,’ las de kabouter hardop. ‘Je bent de prinses van de morgen, en ’s avonds wil ik ook bij je zijn.’ Plotseling veranderde de rode traansleutel in groen en gif. ‘Mijn hart is vrij nu !’ riep de prinses. Overal verschenen groene personen met vleugels rondom hen. De wachters werden tegen de muur aan geslagen, en ook de heks viel opzij, en de groene wezens met de vleugels namen de kinderen, de kabouter en de prinses mee naar boven, waar ze de gevangenissen konden openmaken met de rozentraan sleutel.

De wezens brachten hen zo snel mogelijk naar de tuin van Mira, waar ze het lariksvuur konden plukken. ‘Het is bijna het uur van algemis,’ zei de prinses. ‘Het kan nu elk moment gebeuren. We moeten snel zijn.’ Snel gingen ze de duistere trap op, en maakten allereerst een poort open. Nu moest tovenaar Terpentijn nog ingelicht worden. Daar was het rode touw al. De kinderen grepen het, en riepen naar de tovenaar die al aan kwam hollen. Alles was al aan het smelten, en ze zagen hoe alles om hen heen in een ketel veranderde. De tovenaar had gelukkig nu het touw ook vast, en het touw trok hen weg van de smeltende massa. Een groen monster kwam naar boven, onder de schoensmeer. ‘Jullie zullen snel schoensmeer zijn,’ schreeuwde het monster. Het rode touw bracht hen boven de ketel uit. ‘Weg van deze tovertuin,’ riep de meester, die ook aan het touw hing, samen met de prinses. ‘Toe maar,’ zei tovenaar Terpentijn. ‘Het touw zal ons brengen naar mijn domein, de hof van Raak.’ Al snel kwamen ze in een prachtige hof met vele weelderige bijna in elkaar gevlochten planten, struiken en bomen. Het hek ging bijna vanzelf open.

In het midden van de hof was een prachtig wit huis waar ze allemaal een kamer kregen. Klare keek naar prinses schoensmeer, die er nu heel anders uitzag nu alle schoensmeer van haar gezicht weg was. ‘Maar u bent juffrouw Gezelle,’ zei Klare verbaasd. De andere kinderen zagen het nu ook, en meester Tobbe hield haar vast aan haar arm. Niet lang daarna trouwde prins Vajak met zijn prinses Schoensmeer, en ze leefden allemaal nog lang en gelukkig.

Het Zoete Zalf Bos

Ze zaten rondom de tafel : koning Klaproos, fee Boterbloem, kabouter Sleutelzaad, en Roosje. 'We moeten er echt wat aan doen,' sprak de koning. 'Dat kan zo niet langer. Prins Zoete Zalf is al te lang van ons weg. We moeten wat aan die nare heks doen.'

'Waar woont ze ?' vroeg Roosje.

'In het luisterbos,' zei koning Klaproos. Even later waren ze op pad naar het luisterbos. Het was een stuk lopen door de velden van kro-bloemen. Bij het kasteel aangekomen stond heks Greepbeen al op hen te wachten. 'Heks !' bulderde koning Klaproos. 'Laat prins Zoete Zalf vrij !' Maar de heks begon te lachen. 'Jullie kunnen toch niks tegen mij doen,' zei ze. Kabouter Sleutelzaad was in zijn boek aan het bladeren. Het was een toverboek waar vaak waardevolle dingen in stonden, en dan vooral op momenten waarop ze het nodig hadden. De teksten en de plaatjes in het boek leken altijd weer te veranderen. 'Assisteer mij,' zei koning Klaproos.

'Hier staat …,' zei kabouter Sleutelzaad, 'dat de heks onschadelijk gemaakt kan worden door sluipzand, en dat is in het bezit van de tovenaar van het peperplantjes-bos.'

'Geef hier dat boek !' krijste de heks.

'Op naar het peperplantjes-bos,' zei koning Klaproos. Weer was het een stuk lopen. De tovenaar had inderdaad het sluipzand. Het was toverzand. 'Zeg, wat een mooi boek heb jij daar,' zei hij tegen kabouter Sleutelzaad. Kabouter Sleutelzaad knikte. 'Zeg, ik heb een idee,' zei de tovenaar. 'Ik ga met jullie mee naar de heks, en zal er voor zorgen dat de prins snel vrij is.' Dat vonden ze allemaal een goed plan. De tovenaar liep voorop met het sluipzand, en weer kwamen ze na een stuk lopen aan bij de heks. 'Zo, zijn jullie daar eindelijk weer. Ik heb op jullie zitten wachten. Ik had nog een verassing voor jullie,' zei de heks.

'Nou, dat komt goed uit,' zei de tovenaar, 'want wij hebben ook een verassing voor u.'

De tovenaar strooide snel wat sluipzand over de heks heen. De heks lag snel krachteloos op de grond. Ze had haar macht verloren, maar ze begon te lachen. 'Nu ik, nu ik,' zei ze. 'Weet je, ik heb het jullie eigenlijk nog nooit verteld, maar dat zal ik nu doen, dat werd weleens tijd, nietwaar, maar mijn drie-ogige reuzenbroer, die de heksenkoning is, wacht al in het kasteel op jullie met koffie en gebak.' De tovenaar dacht dat hij met het sluipzand ook de drie-ogige broer van de heks onschadelijk kon maken, maar toen ze bij hem aankwamen, en de tovenaar het sluipzand op hem strooide gebeurde er niets. 'Je zal er wel wat anders voor nodig hebben,' zei kabouter Sleutelzaad. De drie-ogige reuzenbroer van de heks begon te bulderen van het lachen.

'Zeg knaap,' zei koning Klaproos. 'Laat onmiddellijk prins Zoete Zalf vrij.'

'Waarom zou ik ?' zei de drie-ogige broer van de heks.

'Nou, het is beter voor je om dat nu te doen,' zei koning Klaproos.

'Komt niks van in, hoor,' zei de broer van de heks. Ze keken allemaal in zijn drie ogen, die niets dan gemeenheid, duisterheid en akeligheid uitstraalden.

'Dit is niets anders dan bar en boos,' zei koning Klaproos. 'Koffie met gebak wordt dat dan genoemd, nou eerder brood met spinnekoppen. Zo ontvang je geen gasten.'

'Gasten, ha !' zei de broer van de heks. 'Jullie zijn indringers. Nou, maak dat je wegkomt, anders zul je misschien nooit de kans meer krijgen om weg te kunnen komen. Vlug.'

'Zeg, ik laat me niet zomaar door een vlegel de les leren,' zei koning Klaproos. 'Je laat nu de prins vrij, of het zal je zuur berouwen. Koffie met gebak, puh.'

'Ja, mijn zus heeft altijd de neiging mij beter voor te stellen dan ik ben,' zei de broer van de heks. 'Dat is dan haar probleem.'

'U bent het probleem,' zei Roosje.

'Ach wat,' zei de broer van de heks, 'pijp zeven krijgt ook praatjes.'

'En dat noemt zichzelf koning,' zei Roosje.

'Wat een koning zal dat wezen,' zei fee Boterbloem.

'Juist,' zei Roosje, 'een koning van klusje knudde.'

'Oh zeg, gaan we beledigend doen ?' vroeg de broer van de heks.

'Nee,' zei Roosje, 'dat is een gebakje van eigen deeg. Koffie erbij ?'

'Roosje, Roosje,' zei koning Klaproos, 'praten met die man heeft weinig zin.'

'Nou, hij moet gewoon ophoepelen,' zei Roosje brutaal. 'Hij gaat echt zijn zin niet krijgen. Hij zal echt wel moe van zichzelf worden.'

Ondertussen was kabouter Sleutelzaad in zijn boek aan het lezen. 'Hier heb ik het,' zei hij. 'De drie-ogige reus, ook wel heksenkoning genoemd, kan verslagen worden door het kikkerdril van dokter Repelmeel die woont in het regenplantjes-bos.

'Je gaat nu dat boek aan mij geven,' zei de drie-ogige reus boos. Snel gingen ze uit het kasteel, en gingen richting het regenplantjes-bos. Het was weer een stuk lopen. Dokter Repelmeel had het kikkerdril in allerlei ketels. Ook hij wilde wel met ze mee om de reus uit te schakelen, zodat de prins vrij zou kunnen komen. Hij liep voorop met een pannetje kikkerdril. Toen ze bij de reus waren aangekomen, smeet dokter Repelmeel het kikkerdril in zijn gezicht. De reus storte direct neer. Maar ook hij begon net als de heks te lachen. 'Ik had het jullie nog niet verteld,' zei hij, 'maar de wachter van de groene kerker, waar de prins is opgesloten, is nog wel verschrikkelijker dan ik.'

Ze begonnen het hele kasteel door te zoeken. Ergens onderin het kasteel vonden ze een boeken-kamer. Kabouter Sleutelzaad leunde tegen een

boekenkast aan, die direct opzij schoof, zodat er een tunnel zichtbaar werd die naar beneden liep. Hier kwamen ze aan bij de groene kerker. Een groen monster met veel klauwen kwam op hen af. 'Wat jammer nou dat jullie hier zijn gekomen, want een ieder die hier komt, komt nooit meer weg,' zei het monster. 'Het was dom van de prins om hier te komen ! En nu is het dom van jullie. Niemand komt ooit nog uit de groene kerker. De groene kerker is gierig.'

'Dat kan me niet zoveel schelen,' zei koning Klaproos. 'Je gaat de prins nu loslaten.'

'Komt niks van in, komt niks van in,' zei het monster. 'Iedereen weet dat, dat je hier gewoon niet moet komen. Dat heeft zo z'n gevolgen, ziet u.'

'Ik zie helemaal niks,' zei koning Klaproos. 'Wij zijn hier voor de bevrijding van de prins. Je laat hem nu los, anders zul je wat beleven.'

'Zeg, jullie hebben waarschijnlijk nog niet goed door met wie jullie te maken hebben,' zei het monster.

'Dat kan ons niet schelen !' riep Roosje.

'Alsof het mij wel iets kan schelen,' zei het monster.

'U laat hem nu vrij,' zei Roosje.

'Ik laat helemaal niks vrij, er komt gewoon wat bij,' zei het monster.

'Nee,' zei Roosje, 'wat bent u gemeen.'

'En wat ben jij dom,' zei het monster.

Kabouter Sleutelzaad was weer in zijn boek aan het lezen. 'Hier heb ik het !' riep hij. 'De monsterlijke wachter van de groene kerker kan verslagen worden door feeen-lippenstift.'

'Jullie komen hier toch nooit meer weg,' zei het monster, 'dus vergeet die feeen-lippenstift maar.'

'Fee Boterbloem, heb jij nog feeen-lippenstift in je tasje ?' vroeg koning Klaproos.

'Nee, ik heb het thuis laten liggen,' zei fee Boterbloem.

'Niemand heeft het hier, dus geef de moed maar op,' zei het monster.

'Nee !' riep Roosje. 'Ik heb nog feeen-lippenstift !' Snel haalde ze het tevoorschijn.

'Kras het op hem,' zei kabouter Sleutelzaad. Roosje rende op het monster af, en begon met de feeen-lippenstift op hem te krassen.

'Nee, nee !' krijste het monster, 'ga weg met dat spul ! Nee, nee, doe dat ding weg !' Het monster begon geheel weg te smelten, terwijl het slot van de kerker losknapte. De prins was vrij. Snel namen ze prins Zoete Zalf mee terug naar het Zoete Zalf bos, waar ze allen woonden.

Zevenwind

In de verte een indrukwekkende processie van skeletten in harnassen, gewapend. Zij marcheren voor de ivoren poort van de schakelburcht waar Eruptus woont. Zevenwind grijpt zijn zwaard, en slacht drieduizend skeletten-ridders om vervolgens de reusachtige burcht binnen te gaan door de ivoren poort. “Wat moet dat daar,’ roept Eruptus hem toe. ‘Ik kom het goud terughalen wat jij van ons rijk hebt gestolen,’ brult Zevenwind. Zevenwind is gestuurd door de prinses. Maar Eruptus laat een vuurvlam op Zevenwind neerdalen die hij nog net kan afketsen met zijn schild. Dan werpt Zevenwind zijn zwaard in het hart van Eruptus, terwijl een doodslucht zich door de burcht verspreid. Onder de burcht ligt het goud, en zoveel andere schatten. Als loon krijgt Zevenwind de burcht waar hij voortaan kan wonen.

Dit is het verhaal van Zevenwind, de held, die eens het rijk redde uit de klauwen van een verschrikkelijk monster, de Pania. Na het verslaan van Eruptus is Zevenwind een welkome gast in het kasteel van de prinses. Hij krijgt daar ook zijn eigen logeerkamer waar hij zich altijd kan terugtrekken, hoog in het kasteel. De prinses komt hem daar vaak opzoeken. Gouden poeder stroomt uit de handen van Zevenwind. Hij houdt ervan om met het goud te spelen. Ook liggen er grotere stukjes goud die hij lieftallig langs zijn vingers laat glijden. De prinses is een lieftallige verschijning, en Zevenwind is erg dol op haar. Na een tijdje staat hij op, en vertrekt, want hij heeft nog veel dingen te doen. De prinses achtervolgt hem, en ziet hoe hij buiten wordt tegengehouden door een zwartachtig skelet. Het is het begin van een nachtmerrie voor het rijk. Zevenwind wordt gevangen genomen, en een enorm monster blaast zichzelf op tegen het kasteel. Het is de Pania, een draakachtige verschijning, met legers van miljoenen en miljoenen skeletten. Al snel gaat het hele volk in slavernij, en Zevenwind belandt in een diepe kerker. Daar krijgt hij geen bezoek, behalve dan van een oude tovenaar die zich had verbonden aan zijn ring. De tovenaar verschijnt als een geest en spreekt Zevenwind toe. De volgende dag moet Zevenwind voor Pania verschijnen. Pania verschijnt nu als een oude dame met een staf, en spreekt verschrikkelijke dingen over hem uit. De tovenaar verschijnt weer als een geest, en valt Pania aan, maar haar krachten zijn te sterk. ‘Blijf maar bij hem oude man,’ spreekt Pania. ‘Hij heeft wel wat bemoediging nodig.’ Dan begint ze ijselijk te lachen. Kreunend stort Zevenwind neer door de vervloekingen die ze over hem heeft uitgesproken, terwijl de oude man hem weer overeind helpt. ‘Heus, je kan niet veel doen, oude man,’ zegt Pania. Dan wordt Zevenwind door een paar skeletten nog erger geketend, en wordt in een diepe put geworpen, terwijl Pania hard begint te lachen. Achter haar hoofd verschijnen wat veren van een pauw, en langzaam verandert ze in een pauw en vliegt krijsend van het lachen weg. De skeletten ketenen Zevenwind

aan de muur van de put, en vertrekken dan. ‘Het is niet erg, Swimbard,’ zegt Zevenwind tegen de oude man. ‘Het is niet erg.’

Na een tijdje komt één van de dochters van Pania bij Zevenwind kijken. Zevenwind vertrekt geen spier. ‘Goedzo, reus,’ zegt de dochter van Pania, we zijn al aan het overdenken en overleggen wat we met je zullen doen. Velen van ons hebben baat bij jou.’ Dan kietelt ze even met een veer onder zijn neus, en vertrekt dan weer. Inmiddels is één van de dienstmeisjes van de prinses in de burcht van Pania binnengedrongen. Ze is hier in opdracht van de prinses om Zevenwind terug te halen. Ze heeft wat toverkrachten, en ze hoopt dat het genoeg zal zijn om Zevenwind uit zijn benarde situatie te verlossen. ‘Kijk, kijk, wie hebben we daar,’ zegt Pania die ineens achter haar staat met haar zeven dochters. Eén van de dochters neemt een mes, en snijdt een stuk in de arm van het dienstmeisje. Het dienstmeisje begint te gillen, maar roept dan ineens om de magische zwaan, een toverspreuk, en niet lang daarna vallen ze allemaal op de grond als door een verblindend licht. Het dienstmeisje rent weg, en na een tijdje vind ze de put. Maar een paar skelettenwachters hebben haar op het oog. Eén van de skeletten trekt een pistool met een lange loper, en schiet het meisje neer met een soort zaad als van laserstralen. Het meisje weet nog net in de put te komen, en bungelt aan de rand. De oude tovenaar schiet haar te hulp, en met wat toverspreuken weet ze Zevenwind los te maken, maar dan staan de twee skelettenwachters aan de rand van de put. Zevenwind slaakt een kreet, terwijl de wachters door een vreemde kracht voorover vallen. Soms gaat het toveren Zevenwind goed af, maar dan moet er wel een krachtige tovenares in de buurt zijn. Niet lang daarna zijn ze uit de put, maar meerdere skelettenwachters beginnen in de gaten te krijgen wat er aan het gebeuren is. Ze blokkeren de deuren, en anderen komen op hen af. Dan maakt de oude tovenaar een gebaar, terwijl een zachte roze rookwolk hen in het niets laat verdwijnen. Zevenwind is door het dolle heen. Hij is blij dat de magie zo goed werkt, en dankt het dienstmeisje voor haar hulp. Waar heb je dat geleerd, vraagt hij.

Ze zijn nu hoog op het kasteel van de oude tovenaar. Zevenwind is blij met die oude toverring. Maar het volk is nog steeds in grote problemen. Het dienstmeisje vertelt wat ze met de prinses hebben gedaan, en dat voordat de prinses stierf ze tegen haar zei : Redt Zevenwind. Hij kan het volk redden. Zevenwind vind het verschrikkelijk dat de prinses niet meer leeft. Hij voelt zich nu erg verantwoordelijk voor het volk. Ze besluiten terug te gaan naar het rijk, maar daar vinden ze een verschrikkelijke ellende. Tegen de boze magie die hier heerst kunnen ze niet op. Maar dan krijgt Zevenwind een idee. Onder de burcht van Eruptus waar hij mocht wonen van de prinses daar zijn nog een heleboel geheime schatkamers. Wie weet wat ze daar allemaal nog tegen kunnen komen. En zo gaan ze alledrie naar de burcht. Heel diep onder de grond vinden ze een kamer met magische wapens en wapenrustingen. Sommige wapenrustingen zijn gemaakt van zeldzame slangenhuiden, en anderen van vreemd magisch leer. Dan begint er ineens een voorwerp dicht in hun buurt vreemd te piepen. Het is een soort doosje van een soort rubber. Zevenwind pakt het doosje op, terwijl het doosje begint te krijsen. ‘Wie ben je ?’ vraagt Zevenwind. ‘Ach,’ zegt het doosje, ‘ik ben een oud hulpje van

Eruptus. Hij vond mij eens ergens in een kasteel van een rijk waarvan hij alle inwoners had verslonden.' Ze wisten dat Eruptus dat soort dingen deed, maar dit kwam nu goed van pas. 'Wat kun je voor ons doen ?' vroeg Zevenwind.

'Oh,' zegt het doosje. 'Dat is heel eenvoudig. Ik ben de windenmaker. Hef mij op, schud me en dan zullen de winden komen, en ik zal ketenen wie je maar wil.' Nou, daar had Zevenwind wel wat aan. Hij ging direkt terug naar het volk, en liet de winden uit het doosje komen, zoals het doosje had gezegd, en liet alle skeletten ketenen. Maar Pania en haar dochters waren daar niet van gediend, en ditmaal lieten ze het volk ketenen door de bliksem. Pania begon luid te lachen, en Zevenwind moest erg op zijn hoede zijn. Ook het dienstmeisje was met hem meegekomen, maar ze bewaarde veilige afstand. 'Waar wil je dat ik de skeletten naartoe breng ?' vroeg het doosje. 'Sluit ze maar op in een rots,' zei Zevenwind. En zo leidde het vreemde doosje door de ketenen van de wind de skeletten als in een processie het bos in, op zoek naar een goede rots waar ze in vastgeklonken konden worden. Pania was woedend, en kon niets doen, maar ze had nog steeds het volk geketend. Zevenwind begon de smaak te pakken te krijgen en ging weer naar de burcht van Eruptus. Weer ging hij onder de grond, op zoek naar nog meer schatten. In een andere kamer kwam hij weer wapenrustingen tegen, van slangen, vreemd leer, harige pantsers, harige schilden met zeldzame stenen erin, en ook vreemde helmen met veren. Ditmaal was Pania hem gevolgd met haar dochters. 'Ik weet wel dat je hier bent,' riep Pania. Het dienstmeisje schrok. Snel pakte ze een zwaard en wilde Pania tegemoet gaan. Maar Zevenwind hield haar tegen. Pania was in een verschrikkelijke spin aan het veranderen, en haar pijlen doorboorden het dienstmeisje. Zevenwind pakte een schild en wierp het naar Pania toe, maar het schild raakte één van de dochters die direkt buiten westen viel. Het dienstmeisje bloedde heel erg, en Zevenwind nam haar op, en ging dieper de schatkamers binnen. Velen hadden hem altijd gewaarschuwd dat hij niet te diep moest gaan, vanwege de grote gevaren. Maar nu kon Zevenwind niet anders. Ineens verscheen de oude tovenaar met een stenen zwaard. 'Hiermee kun je Pania verslaan,' zei de tovenaar. Zevenwind greep het zwaard, legde het dienstmeisje neer, en ging terug richting Pania. Pania lachtte hem uit toen ze hem zag met het stenen zwaard. 'Wat moet je met zo'n ding ?' lachtte ze. Maar snel stootte hij het stenen zwaard in haar buik, terwijl ze neerviel. Daarna sloeg hij haar overgebleven dochters ermee, en het gevecht was snel afgelopen. Toen hij buitenkwam met het dienstmeisje was het volk inmiddels bevrijdt van de bliksem-ketenen.

Niet lang daarna maakten ze Zevenwind tot koning, en het dienstmeisje werd zijn koningin.

Dragodan

Dragodan zit in zijn kasteel wachtende op het antwoord van de prinses. Hij heeft zijn hulp aangeboden aan haar, en nu wacht hij op de opdracht. Dragodan heeft lang gezwoegd voor allerlei duistere heren, en ditmaal is hij blij dat de prinses hem in dienst genomen heeft. Alleen moet hij nog te weten zien te komen welke opdrachten zij voor hem heeft.

Boven de bergen zweven een aantal magische wezens. Ze zijn op weg naar het kasteel van Dragodan met de boodschap van de prinses. Dragodan is erg blij als ze binnen komen. Ze dragen een speciaal zwaard voor hem. ‘Waar is dit zwaard voor ?’

‘Dit is de opdracht van de prinses,’ zegt één van de magische wezens. ‘Versla de Tundra en trouw met haar.’ Dat was wel een erg vreemde opdracht voor Dragodan. Dat had hij nog nooit meegemaakt. Hij wilde absoluut de draak wel verslaan, of het monster, wat het ook wezen mocht, maar hij wilde absoluut niet met haar trouwen. Hij was een vrij man, en hij wilde een vrij man blijven.

‘Oh, maar dan zal de prinses wel iemand anders zoeken om voor haar te strijden,’ zegt een van de wezens. ‘Ziet u, de prinses wordt namelijk met nachtmerries lastiggevallen door de Tundra, een gedrocht dat ’s nachts op haar balkon komt, een gevleugeld monster. Ze heeft iemand nodig die altijd bij haar is.’

‘Zeg maar tegen de prinses dat ik de Tundra kan verslaan zodat hij nooit meer terugkomt,’ zegt Dragodan.

‘Oh,’ zegt een van de wezens, ‘okay dat is goed. We laten het u weten.’

En na drie dagen zijn de wezens terug, en Dragodan mag komen. Dragodan neemt het zwaard aan, en de magische wezens leggen hem uit waar de Tundra woont. Voor Dragodan is het niet moeilijk het gedrocht te verslaan, want dat heeft hij al zo vaak gedaan. De prinses is hem erg dankbaar. ‘Is er dan niets wat ik u als geschenk aan kan bieden ?’ vraagt de prinses. Maar Dragodan schudt zijn hoofd. Dat hij de prinses blij kon maken was voor hem het mooiste geschenk.

Op een dag krijgt Dragodan weer bezoek van de magische wezens. Ditmaal hebben ze een andere opdracht voor Dragodan. Als Dragodan de opdracht zal vervullen, dan mag hij koning van het rijk worden. Maar dat wil

Dragodan niet. Hij wil zijn vrijheid bewaren boven alles. ‘Wat is de opdracht ?’ vraagt hij.

‘De prinses heeft haar gouden armband verloren op reis. Kun jij hem terughalen ?’ vraagt een van de wezens.

Na een lange zoektocht komt Dragodan erachter dat de armband in handen is van een gevaarlijke vogel. Hij trekt zijn zwaard, en wordt bijna geobsedeerd door de prachtige armband met zoveel kleine steentjes die eraan bungelen. Zo’n prachtige armband heeft hij nog nooit gezien. Het wordt een moeilijk en bloederig gevecht met de vogel, een van de moeilijkste gevechten die hij ooit heeft gehad, maar toch slaagt hij erin de armband terug te krijgen, en brengt hem naar de prinses.

‘Weer dank je wel,’ zegt de prinses. ‘Dragodan, ik wil je een goede raad geven. Maak van de verslagen vogel je nieuwe wapenrusting, en geef ook wat van zijn veren aan mij.’ Dragodan doet wat hem gezegd wordt, en maakt van de botten en veren een nieuw pantser. Ook geeft hij enkele veren aan de prinses. De prinses was altijd gesluierd geweest voor Dragodan, maar ditmaal haalt ze haar sluiers weg. Als Dragodan haar ziet wordt hij direkt verliefd op haar, en wil niets lievers dan met haar trouwen en haar koning zijn. Daar had de prinses natuurlijk op gewacht, en zo zal zij koningin zijn.

Maar de raadgevende vogels van Dragodan vinden dat niet zo’n goed idee. ‘Laat jezelf niet zo door haar beheksen. Heus, je zal niet tevreden zijn in je huwelijk.’ En daarom nam Dragodan zich op een dag vlak voor het huwelijk voor om te vertrekken. Hij ging dieper de onderwereld in, en liet zich leiden door de raadgevende vogels, die hem al raad gaven sinds hij een kind was. In de diepten van de onderwereld vind Dragodan een heleboel vrouwen zoals de prinses, en hij weet dat als hij zijn hart aan hen geeft, dan is zijn leven afgelopen. Hij wil vrij zijn, en doen waarvoor hij geboren is : het vervullen van opdrachten.

Einde

Het Skelettenleger

Onder de aarde leven de ergst mogelijke indianenstammen, daar waar de dood heerst. Zij leven van de dood, en doden om te leven. Hun meester :

Krikwistik, een luguber skelet, die zijn opperhoofden heeft aangesteld over elke stam : elke stam één. Aan Krikwistik hebben zij allemaal verantwoording af te leggen. Als zij niet wreed genoeg zijn, dan komen ze voor de baas. Als zij niet overal dood en ellende brengen, dan zijn zij de pineut. Want wee degene die zich niet aan de wetten van Krikwistik houd, die zal ten prooie vallen aan iets ergers dan de dood, namelijk Krikwistik zelf.

Luid gillend en roepend zit hij op z'n paard om de stammen langs te gaan. En daar waar hij ongehoorzaamheid vind zullen klappen vallen. Harde klappen, want hij is immers Krikwistik, de verschrikkelijke.

Al die armelijke zielen gebonden door zijn ketenen hebben geen hoop wanneer zij voor Krikwistik moeten verschijnen. Hij geeft hen dood op dood. Over skeletten heerst hij, en hun geestverschijningen, om goedbedoelende en onwetende zielen te verstrikken in zijn netten. Over hun hoofden voert hij macht, en zijn toorn daalt op hen in de vorm van visioenen. Nee, niemand kan ontsnappen aan de toorn van Krikwistik. Zij die willen ontsnappen, of zijn valse genade en valse hoop aannemen, zakken alleen dieper weg in zijn valstrikken. Zij vallen ten prooi aan de meest doortrapte en wreedste indiaanse dodenstammen, waar skeletten hun lusten botvieren op hopeloze schepselen.

Op de vlakte van Terezebil rijdt een dodenrijder, hoog op 't paard, met vlag en speer. De vlag is een visioen die hij zijn slachtoffers voorhoudt. Als hij spreekt, bedriegt hij, bedottend. Zijn speer treft altijd. Hij is de rechterhand van Krikwistik, de ondeugd. Dan gilt hij om zijn geestesverschijning te verruilen voor zijn verschijning als skelet. Geen dier of ziel is veilig voor hem.

In de verte zijn de optochten van zielen die steun zoeken bij elkaar. In lange gewaden gaan zij, met kappen over hun hoofden. Maar de dodenrijder komt naar hen toe, en rijgt hen allen meedogenloos aan zijn speer, om met een slavenleger te vertrekken. Niemand zal werkeloos zijn in de dodensferen van Krikwistik. Niemand zal zich bezig houden met klagende optochten van het ach en wee. Nee, werken zullen ze allemaal, wanneer de speer van de dodenrijder hen doorsteekt.

De achtkoppige hond van Krikwistik gaat langs de huizen waar de zielen der vennen wonen. Speelt daar een kind onbewaakt, dan grijpt één der koppen het kind, en brengt het naar het rijk van Krikwistik. Er is geen hoop voor hen die door Krikwistik geketend worden. Zijn ketens zijn onverbrekelijk.

Een moeder gilt. Haar tweede kind verloren in zo’n korte tijd. De wind huilt en giert, en niemand die helpt. Tovenaars zijn veelal corrupt hier. Vaak werken ze rechtstreeks voor Krikwistik.

Maldachus is een hondenrijder. Ook hij vangt zielen, en brengt ze naar Krikwistik. Hij voert een leger aan van hondenrijders. Als zij de wind bespelen, dan roven zij de zielen uit hun bedden. Dit doen zij door bedriegelijke dromen. Zij zenden hun nachtmerries uit als wilde honden, om later een rijke vangst binnen te halen. Als de dodenvissers zijn zij.

Voor zoveel kinderen is het de laatste dag op school wanneer Krikwistik zelf op zijn wagen door de lucht gaat. Hij gelooft niet in dodenopvoeding. Ze moeten wild gemaakt worden, om aan zijn wetten onderworpen te worden.

Het geheim van zijn macht ? Een apparaat waarmee hij de aarde kan verschuiven, een machine die de ziel van een meisje vasthoudt. Eens vond hij haar op hulpeloze vlaktes. Maar al snel zag hij de bijzonderheid en zeldzaamheid van dit kind, en nam haar eerst onder zijn hoede. Maar toen het meisje zich niet aan hem onderwierp werd ze al snel het slachtoffer van zijn wreedheden.

Oh, begeert is dit apparaat in de onderwerelden. Hiermee maakt hij indrukwekkende progressies van windstreek tot windstreek, en maakt hij iedereen voor hem in siddering.

Niets dan dood en verderf zaait hij, en door de angst maakt hij bezit van hen. Ja, dan schiet hij pijlen van visioenen door hun botten heen, pijlen gemaakt van slangen. En zo voert hij hen gillend aan van dichtbij. Ja, hij woont in zijn slaven, door het vreemde apparaat. En zo, door het apparaat, werd hij Krikwistik, de Bottenspietser. Geen skelet is voor hem onbereikbaar. Door het apparaat heeft hij hen allen in zijn macht. Zijn stem is als het spietsen van botten.

Elke adem komt voort uit het apparaat, elk licht, elke geur. En alles wat het apparaat doet is bottenspietsen, als een schietende naaimachine. Niemand vind zichzelf nog terug die door Krikwistik is gestoken. Zij vallen allemaal als in een diepe slaap, en worden door vreemde dromen weer opgewekt. Zij leven voor en door ... de dood.

Er is geen geest die dichterbij kan komen dan Krikwistik, en er is geen geest die verder weg kan zijn dan hij. En daarom komen klappen dan ook veel harder aan, gaan pijlen sneller en dieper. Hij voert een leger aan van de dood. En allen brengen zij voort : de melk van de dood.

Niemand steekt dieper dan Krikwistik, daar waar geen tovenaar kan komen. Over hun hoofden voert hij macht. Zij die ongehoorzaam zijn doet hij lijden, diep in zijn martelkelders. Zij lijden daar zonder enige vorm van verlichting, omdat zij het hadden gewaagd de meester te dwarsbomen. Nu zijn zij dan vol spijt en wroeging.

Krikwistik is een dun skelet met een klein hoofdje en een reusachtige cape. Hiermee rijdt hij vaak op hoge paarden, of op zijn wagens, gevolgd door duizenden, zo niet miljoenen skeletten die hem dienen en volgen. Over de dood heerst hij.

Op een dag onthoofde hij een meisje, en stopte haar hoofd in een vissenkom. Dit soort lugubere dingen deed hij veel, om zijn koninkrijk van assecoires uit te breiden. Hij was een verzamelaar van vreemde objecten, en alles leek aan kettingen vast te zitten. Zijn lievertjes hadden extra voorrechten. Meestal hield dat in dat zij mochten jagen op de voor anderen verboden terreinen.

Zij waren de verzamelaars van doodskoppen en zielen, waarmee ze hun eigen hutten bouwden. Ze waren dikwijls rumoerig en luid schreeuwend, en waren de schrik onder de dodenstammen. Krikwistik was erg trots op hen, want zij hielpen hem de angst staande te houden. Deze skeletten waren wild, en brachten chaos waar ze kwamen.

Eens bracht hij de vissenkom met het meisjeshoofd naar een dodensmid, die er een lichtgevende punt van maakte op zijn dodenstaf. Hiermee kon hij de doodskoppen doorboren.

De dodenrijder is het voorwerp van zijn trots. Ook de dodenrijder heeft vele voorrechten, en hen die hij voorrechten heeft gegeven. De dodenrijder woont aan de stranden van de dood, en zij die van hem voorrechten hebben gekregen wonen vaak aan strandjes van bosmeren en andere doodsmeren en doodsrivieren. Op een dag gaf Krikwistik hem een speerpunt waarmee hij zielen kon spietsen als door een schietende naaimachine.

De hut van de dodenrijder is gemaakt van botten, doodskoppen, en hopeloos bungelende zielen. Zij gillen wanneer iemand dichtbij komt. De hut van Krikwistik is gemaakt van lugubere voorwerpen, en van de dood zelf. Hopeloos bungelende zielen gillen wanneer hij langskomt, en zij ijlen.

Door een bepaalde vloeistof kan hij de doodskoppen en de botten laten krimpen en laten verkleuren. Hier sterft de dood nooit. Ook slapen zij niet. Er komt nooit een einde aan hun lijden. Alles doet hen gillen en verkleuren.

De hutten van hen die voorrechten hebben zijn ook gedecoreerd door dit soort dingen. Alhoewel velen in wigwams wonen. Wanneer zij klederen dragen, dan zijn deze gemaakt door een speciale kleermaker van Krikwiktus.

Deze kleermaker woont diep in het dodenbos, waar hij zijn zielenfokkerijen heeft, allemaal voor zijn werk. Ook hij is de trots van Krikwiktus, een man met vele voorrechten, en velen die hij met voorrechten heeft bekleed. In de jungle van de dood werkt hij met zijn vloeistoffen.

De jagers van de kleermaker zijn meedogenloos, omdat ze maar één doel hebben : huiden, botten, en andere assecoires voor de kleermaker. Ook werken de zielen mee aan het bereiden van de vloeistoffen.

Deze zielen slapen nooit, door de dood sterven zij niet. Zij zijn ingespoten met vloeistoffen die hen altijd wakker houden, en om alles gillen zij.

Sommige zielen zijn geheel gemaakt van geluiden, en anderen zijn geheel gemaakt van geuren, maar de kleermaker doorsteekt hen allemaal. Krikwistik gaf hem eens een schietende boor. Ook heeft hij een schietende zaag. Nee, niemand is veilig wanneer de kleermaker op jacht gaat. Meestal laat hij dat doen door zijn jagers, maar soms gaat hij zelf op jacht. Dan gaat hij naar de stranden, naar de doodsmeren en de doodsrivieren. Ook vijvers slaat hij niet over. Het is een beestachtig skelet, met een reusachtige cape die hij telkens om zijn dunne lichaam heenslaat. Krijsend voert hij hen aan in de jacht, en krijsend doorboort hij zijn slachtoffers. In de nachten doorboort hij hun bedden, want zij zullen niet slapen. Daar zal hij wel voor zorgen. Hij legt kreeften op hun huiden, om de vloeistoffen binnen te brengen, en dan staan zij op voor altijd, als zombies. Nooit meer werden zij door de slaap gewassen sinds zij waren aangeraakt door de kleermaker.

’s Nachts liepen zij paniekerig heen en weer, totdat de kleermaker ook hun oren doorboorde, hun keel en hun neus. En zo werden hun geesten doorboort, en stonden zij aan de doodsmeren en doodsrivieren. Ja, de kleermaker bouwde van hen hutten en wigwammen. Ook maakte hij wapens van hen.

Er was niemand gemener dan Krikwistik die zijn dienstknechten zo geprogrammeerd had : de dodenrijder, zijn rechterhand, en dan Maldachus de hondenrijder, de achtkoppige hond, en de kleermaker. Zij waren de werktuigen van een luguber apparaat.

Op een dag maakte hij hen week als lammetjes, en riep hij zijn lievertjes, degenen die hijzelf met voorrechten had bekleed. Dit was de dag dat zijn lievertjes de taken overnamen. Het was de dag waarop de windstreken van

de dood begonnen te bloeden. Niemand had deze slachting zien aankomen, en Krikwiktus werd verhoogd in een vloeistof waar niemand meer kon slapen of sterven. Zij waren de levende dood, en werken zouden zij. Het skelet voerde een leger van zombies aan, en sindsdien had zijn koninkrijk geen grenzen meer. Krikwiktus had altijd al gewacht op de dag dat hij zijn metgezellen uit de weg zou ruimen.

Een nieuwe kleermaker stond op, die krijsend de slaven aanvoerde. En deze kleermaker was zo goed dat er nieuwe lichamen gemaakt werden, de lichamen van de dood. Maar alleen Krikwistik bepaalde wie die lichamen zouden krijgen. Krikwistik had die voorrechten alleen voor zijn lievertjes bepaald. En de hopeloze, hulpeloze en weke zielen die die lichamen zagen werden geteisterd door de bottenketeners, geesten die de botten vastketenden, een grijze massa die hun hersenen scheen te verlammen.

En de broosheid van de zielen zonder hoop begon alleen maar te groeien, en werd een delicatesse voor het skelet. Deze zielen brachten een nieuwe drank voort : de nieuwe melk van de dood. Dit was een stinkende melk waarvan de nieuwe lichamen leefden.

De nieuwe lichamen stelden zich op bij de doodsrivieren en doodsmeren, en vormden nieuwe groepen en stammen. Vaak waren er gevechten, tot groot plezier van Krikwistik. Maar het grootste plezier hechtte hij aan de zorg, die helemaal geen zorg was. Zij die er waren om wonden te verbinden maakten het alleen maar erger. Dit waren de valstrikken van Krikwistik.

Krikwistik had er een genoegen in die valstrikken uit te denken. Het was een meesterbrein. Door indiaanse geesten, skeletten en zombies bracht hij doem op de vlaktes van de dood. Hij was de dood zelf, de levende dood.

Op een dag kwam er een indiaanse geest naar de dodenhut van Krikwistik. De indiaanse geest verkocht skeletten, en was nog niet goed op de hoogte wie Krikwistik was. ‘Skeletten te koop,’ zei de ietwat verwarde geest tegen Krikwistik die verbaasd naar buiten kwam. Krikwistik sloeg de geest neer, en stal zijn wagen vol skeletten. Later kwam Krikwistik erachter dat het een gouden vangst was, want deze skeletten konden doordringen tot in de dieptes van de grond, en van gesteentes. En voor Krikwistik was het een koud kunstje ze te temmen.

Het gebeurde vaak dat verwarde geesten langskwamen om dingen te verkopen. Krikwistik kocht nooit wat. Hij stal alleen.

Een geest genaamd Zeverdijm dacht dat hij een skelet was, maar Krikwistik liet hem keer op keer zien dat hij toch maar gewoon een geest was. Geesten

waren hier ondergeschikt aan de skeletten, alhoewel sommige indiaanse geesten veel macht over skeletten konden hebben. Zielen en zombies waren over het algemeen ondergeschikt aan de geesten, maar hierin waren ook uitzonderingen. Er waren zielen die verschrikkelijk veel macht hadden. Dit was dan omdat Krikwistik daar een reden voor had. Krikwistik was sluw en listig, en voor geen gat te vallen. Hij was de oudste van allemaal.

Het ging Krikwistik allemaal niet zozeer om kracht, maar om sluwheid. Hij was een intelligent meesterbrein. Hij kon uren nadenken over zijn machtsgebied, en dacht dingen uit om zijn machtspositie te versterken. Hiervoor riep hij dan vaak de hulp van de dodensmid in.

Op een dag had hij een dodenspiegel neergezet. Het was als een web waarmee hij zielen, geesten en nog lagere doodsvormen lokte. Door de dodenspiegel zagen ze hun geliefden, maar konden daarna niet meer uit de webben loskomen. Zo werden ze levend voer voor Krikwistik.

Er was geen groter genot voor Krikwistik dan de dodenspiegel, waar hij ook zijn apparaat door liet werken. Zelf kon hij door de dodenspiegel door alle grenzen heen reizen, en werden zijn verschijningen nog machtiger. Krikwistik wilde het ‘Al’ in handen hebben. En hij wist dat hij daarvoor een labyrint moest bouwen met bedriegelijke, misleidende en verlokkende verschijningen. Ook de lagere doodsvormen kwamen al snel in zijn hand. En er was veel waarvoor hij hen kon gebruiken.

Zij werkten in het labyrint, en al snel begon hij liefde te vatten voor sommige lagere doodsvormen. Hij stelde zijn zielen en zombies over grote hoeveelheden van hen aan. Zij waren als kreeften en kwallen die in de hersenen van hun slachtoffers gingen wonen, en hen zo van misleiding tot misleiding brachten, steeds dieper in het labyrint. Ze maakten hun slachtoffers zo tot altijdgroeiende voedselbronnen.

En zo werd het labyrint van Krikwiktus een stempel dat gedrukt werd op een ieder die zich met de dood inliet. Iedere ziel die zich door de lagere vormen van de dood liet verlokken werd gebrandmerkt. Voor Krikwiktus was het alleen een teken van zijn macht.

Einde

De Skelettenrijder

Er was eens een jongen die de moeders van andere jongens roofde. Hij had een luchtschip geheel gebouwd van botten, waarmee hij op de winden van de dood dreef. Ook had hij een heleboel muziekinstrumenten van de dood gemaakt. Hiermee betoverde hij de moeders altijd, en maakte hen zo deel van zijn harem.

Maar vrij waren die moeders niet. Ze waren nu voor altijd aan zijn schip geketend. Het was een groot schip, dat wel, en de moeders hadden ook wel veel beweegruimte, maar ontsnappen konden ze niet. De jongen was een schurk, een bandiet, een moederdief, maar hij was bovenal een moordenaar, een huurmoordenaar. Voor geld deed hij alles, omdat hij zo zijn schip kon uitbouwen, en zijn verzameling instrumenten. De jongen was de schrik van de dood, en maakte mooie muziek om te ontvoeren en te moorden. Maar de moeders hield hij veelal in leven. Zij werden de slaven op zijn schip. Tijd om te rouwen was er niet. Er moest gewerkt worden.

Vroeger was de jongen lid van een straatbende, een motorbende, maar nu was zeilen op zijn doodsschip zijn grote liefde. Het was een lieve jongen, die maar hoefde te glimlachen om iemand te betoveren. Hij had van die diepe ogen waar je van weg kon smelten. Vroeger moordde hij altijd door messen, maar nu verdronk hij zijn slachtoffers. Hij lokte ze eerst naar het water en dan sloeg hij zijn slag. Hij hield zich daarom veel op bij de meren van de dood.

Ook was de jongen een strateeg. Je kon bij hem legers inhuren. Hij was een zakenman van de dood geworden. Zelf was hij al jaren dood, en daarom gaf hij niks meer om het leven. De dood leverde hem alleen maar geld op.

Zo op het eerste gezicht hingen zijn haren altijd voor zijn ogen, maar als je dan dichterbij kwam, dan zag je zijn prachtige donkere ogen er doorheen. Velen smeekten hem altijd hen mee te nemen op zijn boot over de rivieren en de meren van de dood, en om hen de geheimen van de dood te leren kennen.

Iedereen die zijn prachtige muziek hoorde scheen niets meer om het leven te geven, alleen maar om de dood. Het was een zachte jongen, maar wel één die de nachtmerrie bracht. Hij kon je de stuipen op het lijf jagen. Hij dronk al vele jaren van de geheime wateren van de dood, waar alleen zijn schip kon komen. Daar liet hij de vrouwen baden. Dat deed hij altijd als het dodenrood aan de hemel stond.

Maar op een dag viel een wilde indianenstam zijn schip aan. Het waren skeletten, zombies, geesten en lagere doodsvormen. Ze trokken zijn schip de

diepte in. De indiaanse dodenstam werd aangevoerd door een skelettenrijder. Hij had een kaal hoofd met een hanenkam. De jongen kende de skelettenrijder wel, want ze hadden vroeger in dezelfde straatbende gezeten. Het werd een lang gevecht, waarin de skelettenrijder uiteindelijk het schip overnam. De vrouwen moesten nu nog harder werken, en werden veel ruwer behandeld. De huid van de jongen werd afgesneden, en zijn skelet werd aan de voorkant van het schip vastgeregen. De skelettenrijder kon niet veel doen met de muziekinstrumenten, en maakte er wapens van en jachtgerei. Ook maakte hij er kooien van waar veel vrouwen in terecht kwamen. Na een tijdje kreeg de skelettenrijder genoeg van het schip, en liet er hutten van maken.

De skelettenrijder roofde vaders, en stopte hen in de kooien. Vaak liet hij de moeders weer vrij. Vaak gebruikte hij de mannen voor zijn legers. Ook hij had vele huurlegers. Maar op een dag stopte hij daarmee. Hij wilde leven door de jacht en niet door geld. Voor hem had de dood niets met geld te maken maar met de jacht. De winden van de dood hielden zich met geld bezig, maar de stormen van de dood hielden zich bezig met de jacht.

Hij jaagde voor huiden, botten en vlees, om zichzelf te kunnen kleden en voeden. Ook zette hij daarvoor een fokkerij op, zodat hij minder hoefde te jagen. Hij zette hiervoor een heleboel vallen uit. De skelettenrijder maakte door botten stevig aan elkaar te binden fuiken van kooien, waardoor de prooi in een fokkooi terechtkwam. Hier stierven de fokprooien niet, maar werden zo een bron van kleding en voedsel. Als de prooien na een aantal jaren geen huid en vlees meer produceerden werden ze skeletten, en daardoor bruikbaar voor andere dingen. De skelettenrijder besteedde het meest aandacht aan de skelettenfokkerijen. Maar al gauw ontdekte hij een varkenssoort dat eeuwenlang vlees en huid kon voortbrengen. Het waren de doodsvarkens van het Afgazide-soort.

De Skelettenrijder had een kleine doodskop om zijn nek waarmee hij met gemak kon infiltreren onder hen die dachten dat ze leefden. De skelettenrijder zei altijd dat ze in bevroren dromen leefden. In zijn ogen waren ze de lagere vormen van de dood. Ze staarden zich altijd zo blind op de weinige zintuigen die ze hadden, dat de rest er dood bijhing. Zij die van de dood leefden hadden veel meer zintuigen, zoals de jacht en de slacht. Op zijn voorhoofd had de skelettenrijder een steen die zijn fokzintuig was. Maar de skelettenrijder had veel meer zintuigen. De dood had zoveel zintuigen.

Op een dag werd de skelettenrijder lastig gevallen door een apparaat dat zielen doorboorde. In het begin leek de skelettenrijder zich er goed doorheen te slaan, maar later begon het apparaat aan hem te kleven, en drong naar binnen. Sindsdien was de skelettenrijder zichzelf niet meer, en werd alles door het apparaat overgenomen. Hij probeerde zijn drie sterkste zintuigen uit op het apparaat om los te komen, de grote drie : jacht, slacht en fok, maar het apparaat was veel te sterk. Na een lange strijd had de skelettenrijder geen ziel meer, en was nu geheel een skelet geworden. Het apparaat had zijn ziel

geheel opgeslokt, en vertrok weer. Sindsdien merkte de skelettenrijder dat zijn reukvermogen sterk verbeterd was, en was daarom het apparaat zelfs dankbaar.

Een steen op zijn buik was zijn slacht-zintuig, en een steen op zijn borst was zijn jacht-zintuig. Het JSF-moduum was een orgaan in zijn voeten die de grote drie bestuurde. Het belangrijkste orgaan wat daaruit voortkwam was de penuum, het geslachtsorgaan, dat creativiteit voortbracht. Hierop was zijn gehele schepping gebouwd. Er werd niet in termen van sex gedacht, alleen maar door dit systeem. Sex was verraderlijk, omdat het de hoofdzintuigen afsloot, en de bijzintuigen opblies, voor de algehele aftakeling van het zintuigelijke.

Het beste wapen dat de skeletttenrijder had was een boog waarmee hij botten kon spietsen. Hiermee ving hij de skeletten. Vaak ging hij er gillend mee op jacht. Door te gillen opende hij al zijn zintuigen, en activereerde hij zijn boog. In de gevangen skeletten plaatste hij implantaten die hun botten automatisch spietsten wanneer ze aangroeiden. En daarom werd hij genoemd : de skelettenrijder.

Het was altijd indrukwekkend als hij op zijn wagen reed, geheel gemaakt van skeletten. Maar op een dag kwam het apparaat terug om zijn botten te doorspietsen. Het apparaat had een veel betere apparatuur dan hijzelf had, en al snel kleefde het apparaat aan hem vast, en drong weer naar binnen. Ditmaal om een implantaat te plaatsen dat zijn botten automatisch zou spietsen. Maar dit implantaat spietste niet eenmalig en niet alleen maar dat wat aangroeide. Nee, dit implantaat bleef spietsen totdat het bot een grijze massa was geworden. De botten werden geheel misvormd tot een nieuwe creatie. De skelettenrijder begon te groeien. Ook begon de skelettenrijder verfijnder te bewegen. Na een lange tijd vertrok het apparaat weer. De skelettenrijder paste zijn boog aan, en ging weer op jacht. Ditmaal zocht hij ook de grotere skeletten op, omdat hij zelf ook groter was geworden.

‘Necreon !’ sprak een reuzenskelet tot hem. De reus was erg vriendelijk. De reus had een wagen geheel gemaakt van Afgazide-varkensskeletten. De skelettenrijder wist dat het eeuwen zou duren voordat zo’n wagen klaar zou zijn, omdat het doodsvarkens waren wiens huid en vlees bleef groeien. De reus bood de skelettenrijder zijn wagen aan, en zei weer ‘Necreon !’

De skelettenrijder ging in de wagen zitten. Deze wagen was minstens dertig keer zo groot als zijn oude, en de reus maakte hem duidelijk dat deze wagen ook wel minstens dertig keer zo snel ging. Ook brachten de botten telkens een vloeistof voort waar de skelettenrijder van zou kunnen drinken. Die vloeistof was ook het geheim van de kracht en de snelheid van de wagen, en zorgde ervoor dat de wagen niet afbrak. De wagen was erg veerkrachtig en soepel.

De reus liet hem zien hoe de wagen gestart moest worden, en begon te gillen. Zo hard en vibrerend kon de skelettenrijder niet gillen. Toen haalde de reus een implantaat uit zijn borst en plaatste het in de borst van de skelettenrijder. Toen kon de skelettenrijder gillen als nooit tevoren, en kon de wagen starten. De reus rende achter de wagen aan, en ging even later op het achterste gedeelte van de wagen zitten. Samen maakte ze de grootste jacht die ze ooit hadden gehouden. Ze waren op zoek naar skeletten, en dan voornamelijk de reuzenskeletten.

De reus leidde hem naar een plaats waar de reuzenskeletten van varkens woonden, en de reus bouwde een wagen groter dan die van de skelettenrijder. De reus legde hem uit hoe zo'n wagen te bouwen, en al snel kon ook de skelettenrijder zulke reuzenwagens bouwen als de beste. De vriendschap met de reus betekende veel voor de skelettenrijder.

Het implantaat van het apparaat zorgde ervoor dat de skelettenrijder steeds groter en groter werd, en op een dag was hij groter dan de reus, en verliet hem. De skelettenrijder ging zich bezig houden met het fokken van de reuzenskelettenwagens. Steeds weer bouwde hij grotere en betere wagens.

Einde

De Skelettenrijder II

Op een grote heuvel stond zijn nieuwe wagen, geheel gemaakt van de skeletten van de afgazide-varkens. Vol trots beklom hij de heuvel. De wagen was heel lang, en stond daar gestroomlijnt, schitterende in de zon van de dood. 'Ik wilde dat ik deze al langer had,' zei de skelettenrijder tegen zichzelf. Hij startte de wagen door een gil, en reed er mee weg. Hij reed er mee naar een dodenstad geheel gemaakt van botten. Langs de weg stonden wat vrouwen die wel een ritje met zo'n wagen wilden maken. Deze vrouwen hadden vreemde lichtgevende strepen op hun rug. Maar de skelettenrijder had geen tijd voor die onzin. Trouwens, hij wist hoe gemeen die vrouwen konden zijn. Ze konden je wagen stuk maken, of zelfs van je afroven.

In de stad leverde hij even een pakketje af, en racete toen verder. Een heleboel van zijn oude wagens werkten nu in zijn fokkerijen. Op eenzame

vlaktes sprong er opeens een vrouw in zijn wagen, die hij er ook snel weer uitduwde. Hij had geen tijd voor die onzin. Die vrouwen moesten zelf maar aan een wagen zien te komen. Maar steeds meer schenen ze zich tussen de skeletten van de wagen te verstoppen.

Op een dag was zijn wagen gestolen, en hij wist wel bijna zeker dat vrouwen dat hadden gedaan. Een skelet van een gorilla trooste hem, en gaf hem een nieuwe wagen, nog groter en langer dan de vorige. De gorilla leerde hem gillen zoals niemand anders kon, zodat hij zijn nieuwe wagen kon starten, en zo niemand anders de wagen kon starten. Het skelet van de gorilla zou voortaan met hem meerijden, in ieder geval voorlopig, om de verstekelingen uit de wagen te smijten.

Maar steeds meer vrouwen probeerden op allerlei manieren een plaatsje in de wagen te krijgen. De skelettenrijder begon eraan te wennen, spietste gewoon hun botten en maakte hen deel van de wagen. De botten van de vrouwen schenen snel weer te verteren. De skelettenrijder had er niet veel interesse in om van vrouwenskeletten wagens te maken, omdat er van de skeletten van de afgazide-varkens veel betere en snellere wagens gemaakt konden worden. Ook liet hij veel mannenskeletten die hij vroeger voor de wagens gebruikte vrij.

Hij ging van dodenstad naar dodenstad voor nieuwe onderdelen voor zijn wagen. Hij wilde van zijn wagenfokkerij af, om zo met zijn nieuwe wagen, die een fokkerij op zich was, de Afgazide-woestijn over te gaan. Zo verkocht hij zijn wagenfokkerijen voor nieuwe onderdelen voor zijn nieuwe wagen. De nieuwe wagen zou zo krachtig en snel genoeg zijn om goed door die woestijn heen te komen, zonder ten prooi te vallen aan allerlei ongemakken.

Alles was in handen van de Afgazide-geleerden, de doodsgeleerden, en als hij over die woestijn zou heenkomen, dan zou hij vrij zijn van al hun invloeden. Het project slaagde, en hij kuste zijn wagen. Nu was hij vrij.

Er waren een heleboel geleerden die het hem niet gunden. Ze hadden het niet zo op skelettenrijders. Maar dat kon de skelettenrijder niets schelen. Voor hem was het uur van de vrijheid nu aangebroken, en hij zocht een beste heuvel op om daar zijn wagen neer te zetten. Achter de heuvel was een dorp van reuzenskeletten. De skelettenrijder zelf was gelukkig ook niet één van de kleinsten. Maar deze reuzen waren echt groot, en ze fokten varkensskeletten. De skelettenrijder kwam er achter dat ze helemaal geen wagens hadden, alleen hutten. De skelettenrijder moest daar wel een beetje om lachen, want wie geen wagen had was volgens hem ook niet vrij. In de nacht stal hij wat onderdelen van de reuzen die hij voor zijn wagen kon gebruiken, en racete toen snel weer door. Ook verderop kwam hij langs vele dorpen en steden van reuzenskeletten, maar nergens kwam hij wagens tegen. Met grote ogen keken

de reuzen naar zijn wagen. Zoiets hadden ze nog nooit gezien. Anderen renden gillend weg.

Later toen hij bij rivieren, meren en bossen aankwam begon hij wat wagens te zien. In het begin waren die niet zo heel groot, maar toen hij bij de jungles aankwam en de velden waren die zelfs groter dan zijn eigen wagen. Toch waren de reuzen daar erg onder de indruk van zijn wagen, omdat die zo anders was, en al snel wilden ze zijn wagen ruilen voor een hele grote wagen van hen. Na wat onderzoek stemde de skelettenrijder toe, want nu had hij een wagen zo snel en krachtig als de stormen van de dood. Deze wagen was gemaakt van de skeletten van hele andere varkenssoorten. De varkens waren veel groter, en maakten veel meer lawaai.

Het was een echte jachtwagen, en de skelettenrijder gilde luid om op zoek te gaan naar de grootste varkensskeletten voor zijn wagen. Als hij er eentje gevonden had, dan doorspietste hij alle botten van het skelet. Vaak liet hij de varkensskeletten ook weer los, als hij nog grotere had gevangen. Zijn wagen moest de beste worden.

Nooit heb ik een snellere wagen gezien dan die van de skelettenrijder. Hij ging sneller dan de storm, komende om te stelen. Toch viel hij op een dag weer in de handen van de Afgazide-geleerden. Ze wilden een bepaald sap uit zijn botten persen. Dit sap zou voor de Afgazide-geleerden belangrijk zijn om op een krachtigere planeet van de dood te kunnen komen. Ze hadden daartoe een ruimtecapsule ontworpen die in de lucht geschoten zou worden. De Afgazide-geleerden doorstaken al zijn botten om het sap eruit te melken. De skelettenrijder werd een dorre gestalte toen hij steeds minder van dat bottensap begon op te geven. Zijn bronnen raakten uitgedroogd. Voor de skelettenrijder was dit de woestijn van zijn leven. De Afgazide-geleerden brachten hem na het project naar de woestijn waar ze hem begroeven. Niet lang daarna vertrokken de Afgazide-geleerden naar de krachtigere planeet van de dood, maar het liep uit op een mislukking. Na eeuwen in zijn woestijngraf te hebben gelegen stond de skelettenrijder op, ditmaal om wraak te nemen op de Afgazide-geleerden. Hij had geen wagen meer, maar de Afgazide-geleerden zouden hun skeletten daarvoor moeten doneren. In kracht stond de skelettenrijder op, en calculeerde de horror in die hij hen zou brengen. Hij reeg hun skeletten aan elkaar, en bouwde zijn wagen, en werd een grotere doem dan hij ooit was geweest. Niet velen kennen de doem van dit tijdperk, omdat hij van te voren hun ogen liet sluiten. Het zou voor velen te wreed zijn, en dat wilde hij hen besparen. Maar met de Afgazide-geleerden had hij geen medelijden, en zij zijn nog steeds de getuige van deze doem.

Einde

De Skelettenrijder III

Op een eenzame hoogte rijdt een man op een wagen, als op een paard. Het is de skelettenrijder. Hij gaat trager dan ooit, en zijn stappen zijn droevig. Plotseling trekt hij aan de teugels, en het skelet waarop hij rijdt staat stil. Een andere man komt langs, ook droevig, maar trekt dan een pistool, schiet, en de skelettenrijder valt van zijn skeletwagen. Is dit het einde van de skelettenrijder.

De man raapt het levenloze skelet op, en snijdt de botten van elkaar weg. Thuisgekomen maakt hij er een kleed van. In de skeletwagen was hij niet geinteresseerd, alleen maar in de rijder. Zijn vrouw komt thuis, ziet het kleed en is onder de indruk. Ze tikt met haar hand tegen het kleed van botten, en een prachtig geluid ontstaat als de botten tegen elkaar klikken. Dit lijkt het einde van de skelettenrijder. De man vertelt zijn vrouw over de skeletwagen, en zijn vrouw gaat naar de plek om de wagen op te halen. Zij is er wel in geinteresseerd. De skeletwagen is tam, gedresseerd. Het skelet lijkt op het skelet van een reuzenvarken of een zwijn. De vrouw klimt erop gilt, en het dier begint te steigeren. De vrouw krijgt het beest niet meer stil, en moet er even later vanaf springen. Teleurgesteld gaat ze naar huis. Haar man heeft de doodskop van de skelettenrijder in een kom gestopt. Samen staren ze ernaar.

De man is al oud, de vrouw nog erg jong. Midden in de nacht begint het bottenkleed te bewegen. Door de storm. Een stormrijder komt binnen, grijpt het kleed, en daarna de kom met de doodskop, en vertrekt. Thuisgekomen zet de stormrijder het skelet in elkaar, maar de skelettenrijder leeft niet meer, zelfs niet van de dood. Het is een verloren zaak. En zo staat het skelet jarenlang in een klaslokaal. Totdat een jongetje op een dag moet nablijven, en het skelet eens van dichtbij bekijkt. ‘Ik wilde wel dat ik zo’n skelet was,’ dacht het jongetje bij zichzelf, ‘dan zou ik ze eens allemaal een lesje leren.’ Even lijkt het alsof het skelet beweegt. Het jongetje schrikt. ‘Wat doe jij daar !’ zegt de stem van de leraar die net binnen komt.

‘Oh niets, meneer,’ zei het jongetje, ‘ik dacht alleen maar even aan .... ach laat maar.’ De leraar loopt naar zijn bureau, steekt een kaars aan, en daarna zijn sigeret. Zo doet hij dat altijd. Het jongetje kijkt naar de leraar. ‘Hoeveel skeletten heeft u eigenlijk ?’ vraagt het jongetje. De leraar kijkt ongeinteresseerd op, en zegt : ‘een stuk of vijftig, allemaal in het magazijn.’

‘Mag ik ze eens zien ?’ vraagt de jongen nieuwsgierig.

‘Natuurlijk,’ zei de leraar.

Als de jongen even later in het magzijn is en de skeletten ziet, zegt hij : ‘Wauw, een heel skelettenleger.’ In gedachten ziet hij zichzelf als de aanvoerder van die skeletten en droomt even weg. ‘Kom niet te dichtbij !’ roept de leraar. ‘Ik wil niet dat ze breken.’

‘Hoe komt u daar allemaal aan ?’ vraagt het jongetje weer nieuwsgierig.

De leraar komt ook wat dichterbij, en glimlacht. ‘Ik heb ze eens gekregen van een indiaan waar ik vroeger mee bevriend was. Ik was bij een indianenstam in Zuid-Amerika.’

‘Wauw,’ zei het jongetje. ‘En denk je dat die skeletten door de indianen waren vermoord ?’

‘Nee,’ lachtte de leraar. ‘De indianen hadden die skeletten gewoon in de loop van de tijd in het oerwoud gevonden. Indianen zijn vaak skelettenverzamelaars.’

‘Heeft u ook indianenboeken ?’ vraagt het jongetje weer nieuwsgierig.

‘Oh, wel honderden,’ zei de leraar ineens heel vriendelijk. ‘Als je wil wil ik er wel eens een paar voor je meenemen.’

‘Graag,’ knikte de jongen.

Een paar dagen later gaat de jongen met een tas vol indianenboeken naar huis. Thuisgekomen legt hij de boeken allemaal op zijn bed neer. De boeken zijn erg luguber, over indianen die op skeletten rijden. Eén zo’n indiaan werd de skelettenrijder genoemd. Het jongetje wilde wel dat hij een skelettenrijder was. Dan zou hij ze allemaal eens een lesje leren. Ook leest hij over de bottenknopers, zij die allerlei dingen van botten maken.

Na een paar maanden heeft de jongen alle boeken gelezen, en krijgt dan van zijn leraar een nieuwe tas mee. Deze boeken zijn nog luguberder, en het jongetje kan er ’s nachts niet goed van slapen. Hij krijgt er nachtmerries van. Maar toch leest de jongen dapper door, zelfs tot diep in de nacht. Op een dag

vind zijn moeder één van de boeken, en wordt erg boos. De jongen moet de boeken direkt terugbrengen, maar hij verstopt gewoon de boeken wat beter.

In de boeken wordt ook de biologie van de dood beschreven, dat gaat over hoe het lichaam van de doden werkt, en wat voor soorten daar allemaal te vinden zijn. Soms heeft de leraar het er weleens over in de les, en de jongen vind het erg interessant.

Op een dag is de jongen ziek, en droomt dat hij dood is. Hij heeft nu een nieuw lichaam, en ontdekt de vele soorten van de dood. Er zijn skeletten, zombies, geesten, zielen, lagere doodsvormen en zo verder. Maar de jongen is in zijn droom een skelettenrijder, met een wagen geheel gemaakt van skeletten. Ook droomt hij dat de leraar een skelettenrijder is, en zijn moeder. Ze rijden in het oerwoud.

Maar dan schiet een man met een pistool de leraar neer, en daarna zijn moeder. De jongen krijst, en weet te vluchten op zijn skelettenwagen. Hij voelt dat de man ook achter hem aankomt, maar ziet dan een boog met wat pijlen liggen in de skelettenwagen. Hij pakt de boog met de pijlen, draait zich om, en schiet dwars door de botten van de man heen. Maar nu komt er ook een vrouw op hem af. Hij kent de vrouw niet, schiet weer, en schiet dwars door haar botten heen. Zowel de man als de vrouw vallen op de grond, en de jongen snelt weg op zijn skelettenwagen. Even later komt de jongen in een stad geheel gemaakt van botten. ‘Er is een pakje voor u aangekomen, meneer ....’ zegt iemand. Het pakje wordt in zijn wagen gegooid. Als de jongen even later het pakje openmaakt is het een brief : ‘Ik ben dood, maar ik leef,’ staat erop. ‘De leraar leeft ook. Van je mamma.’ De jongen besluit terug te keren naar de plaats waar zijn moeder en de leraar werden vermoord. Maar hij vindt daar niets dan botten. Voorzichtig probeert hij de botten weer in elkaar te zetten, en na een tijdje zijn het twee skeletten. ‘Ik houd van je,’ zegt het ene skelet. ‘Mamma !’ roept de jongen, en omhelst het skelet.

Dan wordt de jongen wakker. Zijn moeder is net op de overloop de was aan het doen. ‘Mamma ?’ vraagt de jongen.

Zijn moeder zegt niets. Wanneer ze zich later naar hem toedraait kijkt hij recht in het gezicht van een skelet. De jongen schrikt maar nauwelijks. ‘Ik heb gehoord wat je wens was,’ zei het skelet. ‘Je bent nu een skelettenrijder als in je droom.’

Als de jongen naar buiten kijkt ziet hij één en al oerwoud.

Einde

De Terugkeer

van de

Skelettenrijder

Een man loopt ’s avonds laat naar zijn kast met glazen en drank. Hij is een drankverslaafde, en gooit weer een nieuw glas vol. Buiten hoort hij wat vreemde geluiden, kijkt uit het raam, maar ziet niets. Dan loopt hij naar boven en gaat naar bed. Zijn vrouw slaapt al. Even later hoort hij weer vreemde geluiden. Als hij weer door het raam kijkt ziet hij een paar jongens op motors. Ze kijken naar boven, en zien hem staan. ‘Hey ouwe, rot op !’ roept één van hen. De man schuift het gordijn voor het raam, doet zijn oordopjes in, en gaat slapen.

Midden in de nacht wordt de deur ingetrapt. ‘Zeg ouwe,’ zegt een stem, ‘ik had je toch gezegd dat je moest oprotten. Je wil niet luisteren, hè ?’ Het is een jongen van die motorbende. Karel heet hij, en is de schrik van de buurt. Vaak is hij dronken. Hij grijpt de oude man uit zijn bed en smijt hem uit het raam. De vrouw van de oude man slaakt een gil.

De volgende dag is het in de krant : jongen uit motorbende vermoord een oud echtpaar. De jongen wordt opgepakt en komt in de gevangenis terecht. Ook daar is hij onhandelbaar. Maar op een nacht verdwijnt hij mysterieus. Ze kwamen hem halen .... zij, de skelettenrijders.

Elke nacht raast hij op zijn motor gemaakt van skeletten over de daken, om iedereen het leven zuur te maken. De skelettenrijder is terug.

De skelettenrijder beukt nog steeds door deuren heen, om niets dan skeletten achter te laten. Met zijn boog doorboort hij hun botten, om slaven op te richten, tot een groot skelettenleger. Ook met zijn oude bendevrienden heeft hij geen medelijden.

‘Karel van Dijk !’ wordt er luid gesproken. Er werd ook luid op de tafel geklopt. Een boze leraar staart de jongen aan. ‘Zit je weer te dromen. Je moet opletten, jongen, anders ...’

‘Ja wat dan, anders ?’ zegt een jongen die achter Karel zit. ‘Anders wat ?’ Hij staat op, grijpt de leraar en drukt hem tegen de muur aan. ‘Wat nou anders ? Laat die jongen toch dromen.’ En dan smijt hij de leraar op de grond. Sommige meisjes beginnen te gillen. De leraar heeft het schuim op de mond staan. Dan staat hij boos op, en rent het klaslokaal uit.

‘Wat doe je nou, man ?’ vraagt een andere jongen.

Even later is de leraar terug met een paar andere leraren, en de jongen wordt meegenomen. Na een paar minuten komt de leraar alleen terug, en gaat verder met de les.

Als Karel thuiskomt rent hij direkt naar boven en gaat op zijn bed liggen. Een uur later is er telefoon. Het is de jongen die de leraar had gegrepen. ‘Ze hebben me van school gestuurd, Karel. Maar ja, dat is beter dan naar die saaie lessen te moeten luisteren. Ik zeg maar zo : lang leve de lol. En droom jij maar lekker verder. We pakken die lui nog wel een keer.’ Karel zegt niets. Hij laat de jongen maar praten. Karel is geen jongen van geweld.

Karel is een stille jongen, iemand die niet veel praat.

De dag erna belt de jongen weer, en hangt hele verhalen tegen Karel op. De jongen vraagt Karel voor een fietstochtje.

Midden in het bos vertelt de jongen dat hij eigenlijk een skelettenrijder is. Karel schrikt. Hij herinnert dat ze dat boek eens moesten lezen voor een project. Was het hem nu echt in het bolletje geslagen ? Maar de jongen was serieus.

‘Moet ik nu bang voor je worden ?’ vroeg Karel benauwd.

‘Nee,’ zei de jongen, ‘we zijn toch vrienden, jij en ik ?’ Opeens begint de jongen een hele andere toon aan te slaan, en Karel wordt steeds banger en banger. ‘Weet je eigenlijk wel waarom ik je mee naar het bos heb gevraagd ?’ vraagt de jongen.

'Nee,' zei Karel, 'eigenlijk niet. Maar ik begin al een vermoeden te krijgen.' Ineens maakt Karel rechtsomkeerts en fietst hard weg. De jongen komt hem achterna. 'Ik krijg je wel, Karel, wees maar niet bang. Ik krijg je, en dan zal de afrekening volgen.' Bij een bosmeertje is de weg afgezet. Karel springt van zijn fiets af, en rent verder in het bos. De jongen heeft hem al bijna ingehaald. Dan rollen ze samen door het zand. De jongen grijpt hem, en zegt dan dat hij maar een grapje maakte. Karel haalt diep adem, en kan er achteraf wel om lachen. Maar op zijn gemak voelt hij zich niet.

'Doe nou eens rustig,' zegt de jongen. 'Waarom doe je altijd zo gehaast. Ik weet je bent een stille jongen, maar doe nou eens gewoon normaal, zoals ik.'

'Wat wil je dan dat ik doe ?' vraagt Karel ongemakkelijk.

'Zullen we samen in het bos gaan wonen ? Dan maken we een hut van takken,' zegt de jongen. Karel glimlacht. Eigenlijk lijkt hem dat wel wat.

Later bleek dat de jongen die hut allang had gemaakt. Het was een prachtige hut. De jongens slapen die nacht dicht tegen elkaar aan. Midden in de nacht zijn er vreemde geluiden. Karel loopt naar buiten, en ziet daar een zwarte gestalte staan. Karel schrikt, gaat weer naar binnen, en probeert de jongen wakker te krijgen. De jongen slaapt erg diep, maar wordt na een tijdje door het geduw en hard gefluister wakker. Ook de jongen loopt naar buiten, ziet de zwarte gestalte staan, en gaat weer naar binnen. 'Niets bijzonders,' zei hij.

'Niets bijzonders ?' vraagt Karel.

'Nee,' zegt de jongen. 'Gewoon een zwarte gestalte. Wat is daar mis mee ?'

Maar Karel voelt zich er niet goed bij, en loopt weer naar buiten. Ditmaal komt hij dichterbij. Het is een skelet in een zwarte cape. Karel schrikt. Wie zou dat hier neer hebben gezet ? Later bleek dat de jongen dat zelf had gedaan toen Karel al sliep.

De jongens besluiten wat zuidelijker te gaan wonen, waar het wat warmer is, en bouwen daar weer een hut. Maar ditkeer gaat er van alles mis. Het hutje wordt een puinhoop, en ze besluiten een wigwam van dierenhuiden te maken.

'Denk jij nog weleens aan dat boek de skelettenrijder ?' vroeg de jongen op een nacht.

‘Nee,’ loog Karel.

‘Nou, ik anders wel,’ zei de jongen. ‘ik denk liever na over de skelettenrijder dan over school.’

‘Wie heeft dat boek eigenlijk geschreven ?’ vroeg Karel.

Op een dag besluiten ze de schrijver op te zoeken. De schrijver woont in een kasteel, in een ver afgelegen bos. Het kasteel staat vol met skeletten. De schrijver slaapt overdags en waakt ’s nachts. De kast van de schrijver staat vol met enge boeken. De schrijver nodigt de jongens uit om een tijd bij hem te logeren. Hier krijgen de jongens de schrik van hun leven. In de nacht verandert de schrijver in een skelet. ‘Ja, ik heb jullie gewaarschuwd,’ zei het skelet. ‘Ik ben niet normaal, maar anders had ik nooit kunnen zijn.’ Het skelet rent achter hen aan, en de jongens rennen door het hele kasteel heen. Plotseling vallen er allemaal skeletten vanuit het plafond naar beneden, en de beide jongens worden er onder bedolven.

‘Is het nu eens afgelopen ?’ riep Karel. ‘Het moet nu afgelopen zijn, al die onzin.’ Maar het levende skelet kwam dichterbij, en haalde toen een lang en vlijmscherp mes tevoorschijn. ‘Hiervan leef ik,’ zei het skelet. ‘Zo niet, dan ben ik dood.’ De beide jongens beginnen te krijsen.

‘Goedemorgen Karel,’ zei een stem. Karel wordt wakker en ziet het gezicht van zijn moeder met een lieve glimlach.

‘Ik heb over Kerwin gedroomd, mamma,’ zei Karel. ‘dat hij weer leefde. We zaten beiden in dezelfde klas, en hij nam het voor me op. ‘Kerwin is dood,’ zei zijn moeder. ‘Ik weet dat het moeilijk is om dat te aanvaarden, maar het leven is niet anders.’

‘Ja, maar mamma,’ zei Karel, ‘ik was toch blij dat ik weer over hem heb gedroomd. Het was net echt, alsof hij echt weer bij me was.’

‘Karel,’ zuchtte zijn moeder, ‘Kerwin was een vreemde jongen. Wat zou hij geworden zijn als hij niet zo jong was overleden ? Zeg het maar ... crimineel, moordenaar, dief, of kanibaal, stroper of kinderlokker ? Echt, het is beter zo. En er waren dingen die wij jou nooit verteld hebben. Hij was niet te vertrouwen met andere kinderen.’

‘En toch mis ik hem, mamma,’ zei Karel.

‘Oh, dat is omdat je hem niet kende. Je was nog te jong,’ zei z’n moeder. ‘Hij heeft andere kinderen met messen bewerkt, en zelfs eens een jongetje laten verdrinken.’

‘Ma, houd op met die onzin, ik geloof je niet,’ zei Karel. Moeder glimlachte. ‘Heus, ik help je alleen om je het te laten verwerken, die dag dat hij ... nou ja, je weet zelf wel wat er gebeurde.’

‘Je probeert me het nog moeilijker te maken lijkt wel, ma. Je weet dat ik niet tegen die grapjes kan.’

- Oh, maar als je teveel denkt dat het zo’n lieve jongen was, dan verwerk je het nooit. Je gaat al jaren niet meer naar school vanwege je trauma.

‘Mamma, ik heb dat trauma zelf verdient. Ik had voor hem op moeten komen toen hij door dat groepje in elkaar werd geslagen. Wist ik veel dat ze later een mes in hem zouden steken ?’

- Oh, maar als jij hem had geholpen, dan hadden ze jou ook aan het mes geregen. Heus, het is beter zo.

‘Ma, hij hielp mij altijd goed met allerlei dingen. Ik voel me zo’n verrader, zo’n lafaard.’

- Jongen, het was niet laf, maar wijs. Voor hem was het al een verloren zaak.

Karel staart zijn moeder aan en stort zich huilend in haar armen. Na al die jaren is hij er nog steeds niet overheen gekomen, en leeft hij als in de greep van een skelettenrijder, iets dat hij niet kan zien, maar toch altijd bij hem is.

Einde

D e   K o o i

De indiaanse machine kreeg een roos op het scherm, en kon zo mikken op de machine die voor hem stond. Er kwam een kaartje naar boven genaamd bloedstraal die hij kon inzetten om door een bloedstraal de machine voor hem uit te schakelen. De machine activeerde het kaartje, mikte door de roos richting de machine te schuiven, en met een duistere donderslag, het donkerder worden van het beeld, en een rijke bliksemslag liep er een lange straal bloed als kokend spuitende olie naar de andere machine toe om die uit te schakelen. De indiaanse machine die geschoten had draaide zich om, en genoot door zijn achteruitkijkspiegeltje van de explosie. Nu moest hij maken dat hij wegkwam.

Hij was een robot, gemaakt om te doden, gemaakt om uit te schakelen. Hij was gemaakt voor de jacht, voor een duistere nacht. Een andere machine probeerde hem tegen te houden. Nu verscheen er een ander kaartje op zijn dashboard. Een groene gifstraal, weer als spuitende kokende olie. Snel was het kaartje geactiveerd, en een hoge toon telde af, terwijl hij met zijn roos mikte. Luid gegil was daar, terwijl de groene gifstraal als de bliksem neerdaalde op de machine die hem blokkeerde. Toen was er gelach en een paar dubbele explosies, met het zoemende geluid van vriendelijke sirenes, en wat heldere bliksemschichten die als een koepel alles verlichten. De indiaanse machine was tervreden, en rende door. Een robot was hij, gemaakt om te doden dat wat hem in de weg stond.

De robot rende een gebouw binnen, zag wat vrouwen en schoot. Hier had hij geen kaartjes met speciale aanvallen voor nodig. Die gebruikte hij alleen voor moeilijke machines. Nu schoot hij gewoon met zijn standaard D.A.X.-pistool, ingebouwd in zijn helm. Met het roosje mikte hij altijd makkelijk. Hij had ook een getatoeeerd roosje op zijn arm. Soms brandde dat roosje weleens als hij weer had geschoten. Hier was niemand vriendelijk. Niemand wilde hem hier hebben. Hij rende over de trappen naar boven, en stoorde zich niet aan politieagenten die hem probeerden tegen te houden. Met alle gemak slingerde hij ze over de relingen van de trap. Voor polities was hij vaak immuun. Hij was zelf een agent.

Plotseling stond hij voor een groene grote deur als een garagedeur. Een kaartje verscheen in zijn dashboard van een getatoeeerde vrouw. Hij wist wat dat betekende. Toen hij het kaartje activeerde explodeerde de deur door ultra-hoog K.S.X.-geluid. Snel was hij op het dak en rende naar een helicopter toe. Net op tijd. Toen hij instapte explodeerde het gebouw onder

hem, en daarna de hele omgeving. Hij had een setje kaartjes in zijn handen, en stopte ze in een gleuf van zijn arm. De piloot glimlachte wat. ‘Zo, heb je de opdracht volbracht, Huskelson ?’ vroeg de piloot. Maar de robot zei niets, opende de deur van de helicopter en trok de piloot in een ruk eruit. Snel nam de robot het stuur over, en zag onder hem de hele planeet exploderen.

Nu een lange tijd kwam de robot in een jungle aan. Er waren niet veel lui die hem tegen konden houden. Alle apen hier waren robotten. Hij knalde er een paar neer, en zocht een goede boomhut uit.

De robot leek op een gokmachine, maar hij was hoog geprogrammeerd, zeer verfijnd. De geleerden waren zeer tevreden over het resultaat, totdat hij hen opzocht op hun veilige berg en hen één voor één afmaakte. Waren het de kaartjes die hem op een ander idee hadden gebracht ? Of had een andere, hogere straling de robot overgenomen ? De robot maakte een heleboel veranderingen in hun computers, verliet het gebouw en liet het van een afstand exploderen. Hij voelde zich opgesloten in zijn pak, en na een tijdje trok hij z’n pak uit. Een lange slanke indiaanse man staarde naar het pak waarin hij zolang opgesloten zat. Hij was nu eindelijk vrij. Een vampier was hij, en in de jungle was zijn plaats. Hij ving een slang, beet de kop af van het dier en begon langzaam zijn bloed eruit te zuigen. Hij was een wilde, levende van de dood, en de dood leefde van hem. Hier waren leven en dood hetzelfde, net als wreedheid en genade, zachtheid en hardheid. Hier waren geen grenzen, zolang hij maar kon overleven.

Zoveel gevaren omringden hem. Alleen de rooflustigste zou overleven. Hij was alreeds erg paranoide, omdat alles hem bedreigde. Hij viel al aan zonder dat daar reden toe was, en hij wist dat de aanval de beste verdediging was. Als hij door luiheid, domheid, of onoplettendheid in de handen zou vallen van een roofdier, dan zou een wrede dood hem wachten. Daarom had hij geen grenzen, geen wetten, alleen de wet van de aanval. Hij vertrouwde niets en niemand, want door vertrouwen was eens zijn hele familie uitgeroeid.

Hij gaf niks om de ander, ook niet om hen die ogenschijnlijk geen gevaar vormden, ook niet om hen die hem hielpen, of zelfs zijn leven hadden gered. Want eens gaf hij om iemand die zijn hele familie had uitgemoord. Hij wilde geen risico meer lopen. Iedereen moest voor zichzelf zorgen. En dit alles ging toch altijd door de dood heen. Hij was al dood, dus waarom er nog tegen strijden ?

Vriendschap moest maar op een andere manier ontstaan. Niet door vertrouwen, maar door de dood. De dood zou uitmaken wie zijn echte vrienden waren. Het leven zou alleen bedriegen. Hij geloofde niet in de liefde. Alleen de haat zou leiden tot liefde, door de dood heen. Hier was er geen scheiding tussen dood en leven, tussen liefde en haat. Alles was hetzelfde. Hierin zou een hele nieuwe orde ontstaan.

Als hij honger had at hij, vaak rauw. Alles at hij wat hij kon vinden. Hij had geen gevoelens voor de wezens die hij doodde. Alles moest toch veranderen, en gevoel zou pijn doen. Hij haatte alles wat hem mogelijk gevoel zou kunnen geven. En om dat te bewijzen moordde hij niet alleen voor veel vlees, maar ook gewoon voor zijn plezier. Hij was dom, hij had geen hersenen. Die zouden hem namelijk alleen maar bedriegen. Hij haatte alles met hersenen. Hij liet zich leiden door instincten, door zijn lusten. Hij was een vampier, omdat hij geen slaaf meer wilde zijn.

De wezens om hem heen kwelden hem, als de cipiers van zijn gevangenis. Hij leefde voor de moord. Hij was vrij in de jungle, en leefde voor de jacht. Niet alleen voor het vlees, maar ook voor zijn plezier. Het gaf hem lust, en zo had hij het gevoel dat hij leefde. Hij leefde door de dood van anderen, en de dood leefde van hem. In het begin voelde dit voor hem tragisch aan, maar later legde hij zich erbij neer, en verhardde zich erin. Hij had geen andere keus.

Maar ook liet hij leven, ook liet hij staan, en ademen. Ook gaf hij leven. Hij was een man van extremen, een man van een vreemde paradox.

Hij leefde in de jungle. Wie hadden hem gemaakt zoals hij was ? De geleerden. Eerst hadden ze iemand naar zijn familie gezonden om zijn familie uit te moorden, en toen dat gebeurt was maakten ze een robot van hem. Hij was nog erg jong. Nu was hij vrij, en zou zich nooit meer laten bedriegen door geleerden, nee, door niemand. Hij had dorst naar de diepere jungle en haar vlaktes om daar een schuilplaats te vinden, een plaats van moord, een plaats van horror, als een effectief wapen van zelfverdediging. Nooit meer wilde hij een robot zijn. Hij wilde vrij zijn, en zou deze vrijheid koste wat het koste bewaren en verdedigen. Geen enkel wezen vertrouwde hij. Geen enkel wezen liet hij te dicht bij zich komen, tenzij hij zich oppermachtig voelde. Tenzij hij zich trots voelde en met zijn vuisten op zijn borst sloeg. Hij was als een aapmens, als een roofdier, een vampier. Het roosje getatoeeerd op zijn arm was zijn laatste aandenken aan de geleerden en het vreemde pak waar ze hem in hadden gehesen. Maar op een dag sneed hij met z’n dolk het roosje uit z’n arm. Brullend van de pijn dook hij in het water. Toen hij bovenkwam zag hij een vrouw met lang haar in het water naar hem kijken. Ze had een glimlach, en plotseling wist hij niet wat hij moest doen. De vrouw deed hem aan zijn familie denken, en er was iets in hem wat hem tegenhield haar pijn te doen. De vrouw zwom naar hem toe, terwijl hij in een vreemde shock raakte. Ze raakte zijn arm aan en er ging electriciteit door hem heen, als loeiende, spuitende en kokende sirenes.

Hij wist niet wat er gebeurde, maar de vrouw had macht over hem. Hij wilde haar geen pijn doen. Ze pakte hem vast, en de man schrok. Plotseling begon de man te brullen, en kwam zo snel mogelijk uit het water. Hij was in de

war. En het leek wel alsof hij niet meer wist wat hij moest doen. Uiteindelijk rende hij weg.

De vrouw rende achter hem aan. ‘Ik kan je helpen !’ riep de vrouw.

Maar de man was veel te bang dat zij door de geleerden was gestuurd. De man greep naar zijn hoofd en begon in paniek te gillen. Hij wilde dit niet. Hij wilde dat hij de vrouw nooit had gezien, en dat zij hem nooit had gezien. Plotseling had hij zich niet meer in bedwang. Greep een mes, en wilde haar vermoorden. Het was al te ver gegaan. Hij zou niet met deze vreemde herinnering in zijn hoofd kunnen leven. Ze moest dood. Ze had teveel gezien, en was te dichtbij gekomen. Zij hoorde haar niet. Plotseling hoorden ze beiden een knal. De man wierp een mes naar de geschrokken vrouw, en raakte haar in haar borst, terwijl bloed begon voort te komen. Even dacht de man dat hij zou gaan huilen, maar toen begon hij onbeheerst te lachen. Een krokodil kwam die de vrouw verder verscheurde, en even later scheurde de man de krokodil aan stukken, en begon woest te krijsen en te brullen. Hij probeerde de herinnering te wissen, maar alles in zijn hoofd leek hem te achtervolgen. De man rolde door de modder, ving weer een grote slang, beet zijn kop eraf en begon het slangenbloed eruit te zuigen. Hierdoor werd hij weer een beetje rustig. Ook verscheurde hij even later een leeuw, om door het leeuwenbloed en het leeuwenvlees verder tot rust te komen, en na een lange dag viel de man in een boom in slaap.

De volgende dag werd de man wakker met verschrikkelijke hoofdpijn. Nog steeds had hij die nare herinnering, alsof het aan hem vrat. Al moordend zocht hij zijn weg door de jungle, en maakte van huiden een wigwam. Dit deed hij bovenop een veld vol vlees en bloed. Alles moest in zijn ogen veranderen, maar ver kwam hij niet. Hij kon alleen maar moorden, en soms in leven laten, maar echt dingen veranderen kon hij niet. Hij kon tenten maken van huiden, hutten maken van botten, en hij kon doodskoppen verzamelen. Vlees kon hij eten, bloed kon hij drinken, en hij kon erin baden, maar wat kon hij verder doen ? Hield het hier niet op allemaal ? Was dit een doodlopende weg ?

Een verschrikkelijk eenzaam bestaan had hij sinds hij de vrouw had vermoord, want zo’n vrouw zou toch nooit meer terugkomen. Maar dit was beter dan in een vriendschap ten onder gaan, door vertrouwen in een val gelokt te worden waar hij nooit meer uit zou kunnen komen. Vrouwen van de jungle kende hij wel. Ze vingen mannen om hen te fokken, voor vlees, botten en voor andere dingen zoals slavernij. In zijn ogen waren vrouwen erger dan roofdieren. Ze waren gemeen en doortrapt, listig en sluw. Hij wilde zich er niet mee bemoeien. Hij wist waar in de jungle zij hun mannenfokkerijen hadden, maar hij had geen zin om de mannen te helpen. Want bevrijdde mannen waren in zijn ogen allemaal geleerden, of andere soorten roofdieren. Hij voelde alleen maar haat naar mannen en vrouwen, zelfs naar zichzelf. Maar hij leerde van zichzelf te houden zoals hij was,

steeds meer en meer. Was hij geen produkt van de natuur ? Hij mocht dan een vampier zijn, maar wie was dat niet ? Het was bijna een wet van de natuur om te kunnen overleven, en om alles te kunnen laten veranderen. Maar verandering zag hij niet echt. Het leven bestond uit bloed, zweet en tranen, en daar bleef het bij. Voor hem was het leven jagen, eten, en slapen.

In een nacht werd hij door stevige handen vastgepakt. Hij werd gebonden, en meegeleid naar een fokkerij. Het waren vrouwen die hem hadden gevonden. Ze kwamen om met hem af te rekenen. De vrouwen waren ruw, en hij wist wel zeker dat ze kanibalen waren. Dat waren alle vrouwen die hier hun fokkerij hadden. In een kooi werd hij geduwd, en zelfs in de kooi vastgebonden. Veel bewegen kon hij niet, omdat zowel zijn handen als voeten vastzaten. Toen hij hier veel moest eten wist hij wat er aan de hand was. Maar zijn domheid vertelde hem dat het voedsel hier lekkerder was dan wat hij zelf altijd ving. Bang was hij dat hij weer door geleerden meegenomen zou worden, maar dat gebeurde niet. Hij wilde liever hier sterven in gevangenschap dan weer in de handen van geleerden terecht te komen. Tot zijn eigen plezier merkte dat hij hier niet dikker werd, terwijl andere mannen zo vet werden als varkens. Maar aan de andere kant maakte het hem onzeker, omdat hij niet wist wat ze dan met hem zouden doen. Hij werd gedwongen om meer te eten, terwijl hij al veel at. Ook probeerde ze het met andere soorten vlees, maar de man bleef zo slank als hij was.

‘Wees blij dat je hier bent,’ zei een vrouw. ‘Een man alleen in de jungle is een prooi voor geleerden en hun experimenten. Wij leren die geleerden hier een lesje.’ De man zei niets.

‘En nog wat,’ zei de vrouw, ‘het beste jachtvoedsel krijg je hier. Je hoeft er niet zelf voor te jagen. Dat doen wij wel, alhoewel we grotendeels leven van de fokkerij. Dan hebben we tijd voor andere dingen, weet je wel ? Je mag trouwens van geluk spreken dat je niet dikker wordt.’

Maar op een dag kon de man uit zijn kooi ontsnappen, en vloog een aantal van de vrouwen aan die hij in koele bloede vermoordde. Hij draaide hen de nekken om in een ruk. Na een tijdje kwam hij in een zaal waar hun koningin zat op een bank vol veren en zachte huiden. Mannen die ketenen om hun nek hadden bedienden haar. De man rende op de vrouw af, terwijl hij een mes van een andere vrouw wegpakte, en onthoofde de koningin. Vele vrouwen kwamen er achter hem aan, en de man moest rennen voor zijn leven. Op een web van touwen klom hij naar boven, en hoorde schoten beneden. ‘Politie !’ riep er iemand. Terwijl de man over het web op een hogere verdieping aankwam met een heel laag plafond. In de verte zag hij een gordijn waar hij doorheen rolde. Achter het gordijn kreeg hij de schrik van zijn leven. Vrouwen lagen hier gesluierd met roofdieren. Hij bedacht zich geen ogenblik, onthoofde de dieren, en daarna de vrouwen. Maar ook andere vrouwen kwamen binnen, en hij kon nog maar net ontkomen door een ander gordijn. Aan een hangend touw klom hij naar boven, terwijl hij weer schoten

hoorde. ‘Politie !’ riep iemand. ‘Allemaal op de grond !’ Het leek erop dat de mannenfokkerij nu geheel werd opgerold. Na een tijdje kwam hij op het dak van de fokkerij. Een helicopter kwam naar hem toe, maar hij was veels te bang dat hij in handen van geleerden zou raken, en klom langs het dak naar beneden en rende terug de jungle in. ‘Laten ze elkaar maar afmaken,’ dacht hij. Het maakte het er voor hem in ieder geval niet makkelijker op.

Sindsdien ging hij onder de grond wonen, in grote angst voor vrouwen en geleerden. Of hij ooit nog vrouwen of geleerden is tegekomen onder de grond weet niemand.

Einde

De Kooi II

Een man werd wakker in de kooi waarin ze hem hadden vastgebonden. Het was een vreemde cel waarin hij aan banden was vastgemaakt. Ze hielden hem voor melk. Ze noemden het melk, maar dat was de codenaam voor alles wat ze van hem aftapten. Hij had electroden op zijn hoofd, maar ook op zijn gezicht, en verder op zijn hele lichaam. Ze tapten zijn dromen af.

Op zich zou je kunnen denken dat het allemaal ten dienste stond van de man. De geleerden waren vriendelijk naar hem, en soms had hij gezelschap in zijn kooi. Je zou kunnen denken dat al die aftapperijen ervoor zorgden dat er geen vreemde hersenspinsels konden ontstaan, maar niets was minder waar. Alle hoop die hij had werd afgetapt, alle schone klanken die hij in zijn hoofd had als een herinnering aan vroeger ... Overal waar hij zich aan vast probeerde te klampen werd afgetapt.

Alles wat hij nog was was een wrak, en toch droomde hij. Dit waren de dromen die door de Afgazide-geleerden bij hem waren ingeplant. Zij waren

de implantaten van de melk-machine. Er waren allerlei manieren waarop ze hem konden melken. Ontsnapping was onmogelijk.

‘Ik heb hier een draad voor je,’ zei een vrouw. Hij moest het doorslikken, terwijl zij het uiteinde in haar handen hield. Na een paar dagen had zij ook het andere uiteinde in handen, en het spoor volgde door zijn hele lichaam, door het hele spijsverteringskanaal. De uiteinden werden aan instrumenten in de kooi bevestigd als pluggen, en wanneer het draad bewoog of begon te trillen werd de man op een bepaalde manier gemolken.

De horror was voor de man ondragelijk. Hij voelde zich een beest. Op een dag wist hij de electroden van zijn hoofd los te krijgen. Hoe hij dat had gedaan wist hij niet meer, maar hij had het voor elkaar gekregen in een woelige nacht. Hij kon weer enigszins een beetje nadenken, alhoewel elke gedachte hem pijn deed. Waar waren de geleerden ? Ze waren die dag niet gekomen. Hij werd gevoed door vreemde buizen, en stapje voor stapje begon hij zich los te wringen.

Zijn droom was snel afgelopen, want hij werd wakker en merkte dat hij nog steeds vastzat. Wel voelde hij dat de electroden een beetje losser zaten dan anders.

Plotseling zag hij een groene straal boven zich, en hij merkte dat de groene straal op de electroden gericht was. ‘We komen je bevrijden,’ zei een stem. Wie waren zij ? Plotseling waren de electroden van zijn hoofd geheel doorgebrand, en hij kon zijn hoofd goed bewegen, alhoewel op zijn gezicht nog steeds electroden waren. Hij haalde adem, en het voelde prettig aan. Hij was de melkerij zat, en hoopte dat zijn bevrijders snel klaar waren. Een klein blauw straaltje maakte de electroden van zijn gezicht los, en een rode straal maakte verder alle electroden van zijn verdere lichaam los. Een levensvuur kwam in hem binnen, sprankelend, en hij voelde zijn bloed weer stromen.

Ook kwamen er wat lasers die de banden losbranden, en de draden waaraan hij vastzat. Het draad dat door zijn hele lichaam heenzat werd er langzaam uitgetrokken. Hij hoorde zachte sirenes in zijn hoofd, die het levensvuur van binnen op een prachtige wijze aanwakkerden. De tonen voelden prettig aan, als levengevend. Hij kon weer diep ademhalen, en weer helder nadenken. Plotseling begonnen de muren naast hem weg te smelten, en de lasers lieten hem een pad zien. Hij was nu los en rende achter de lasers aan. Waar kwamen die lasers toch vandaan, en wie waren ze ?

Niet lang daarna was de man in een andere wereld. Hij speelde in een prachtige klankenzee met de Ludipussen, een volk van grappige wezentjes. Ze waren klein, zacht en lief. ‘Je hoeft niet bang te zijn dat je weer terugmoet naar die melkfabriek,’ zei een Ludipus met een zacht, zoet stemmetje. De

man speelde in het water, dat zo zacht en tegelijkertijd vibrerend aanvoelde dat het levensvuur binnenin begon te waaien als nooit tevoren. De Ludipussen vertelden hem dat ze voor hem zouden zorgen. Ze waren zo klein en van zo'n andere energie dat ze gemakkelijk in de man binnen konden komen, en dat moest ook wel, want zo zouden ze ervoor zorgen dat er nooit meer electroden op hem geplaatst werden. De Ludipussen waren de onderdelen van een nieuwe wapenrusting van de man, onderdelen van een geheel nieuw en vrij lichaam.

De Ludipussen brachten de man tot hun koning. De koning was blij de man te zien. De man kreeg geheel nieuwe ogen van de koning, en de koning gaf hem de opdracht om over de zee te zwemmen, tot de eilanden van de Ludipussen. De koning wilde namelijk dat de man alle Ludipussen leerde kennen.

Nu de man vrij was voelde hij zich goed. Er waren hier prachtige bossen in allerlei kleuren. En door de nieuwe ogen kon hij nu zoveel meer straaltjes zien. De lucht was vol met straaltjes, de straaltjes die hem eens gered hadden.

Het was een lange zwemtocht over de prachtige zee. De eilandjes schitterden in de zon, en de man verheugde zich al op de eilandjes. Hier leefden weer hele andere Ludipussen. Op een van de eilanden woonden Ludipussen die op vliegen leken. Er kwamen klanken van hen af die zichtbaar waren als kleurige lichten, en je kon die lichten zelfs voelen. Ze waren heel zacht, en brachten een bepaalde vloeistof voort. De man zag hoe de vloeistoffen in de zee druipten. Het was een prachtig eiland, en de man mocht ritjes maken op hun ruggen, ritjes door de lucht, om zo van eiland tot eiland te gaan. Op een bepaald eiland kreeg de man nieuwe oren waarmee hij een heleboel meer klanken kon horen. Door de nieuwe oren bleek de vloeistof binnen te komen, om hem heel warm van binnen te maken. De man was erg blij met z'n nieuwe oren.

Het was alsof hij door een nieuw levensvuur werd omhuld, en al gauw vormden de klanken om hem heen vleugels van druipend licht. Nu kon hij zelf vliegen, en hij ging van eiland tot eiland. Op een ander eiland kreeg hij een nieuwe neus, waar hij zoveel meer geuren mee kon ruiken, en de geuren begonnen een paar extra vleugels erbij te vormen, geheel gemaakt van geuren en vreemde lichten die druipten. De man voelde zich nu als een vlinder, en hij merkte dat hij door een simpele gedachte kon verdwijnen en verschijnen. Was hij nu een toverwezen geworden ? De geuren vormden een heel nieuw patroon om hem heen, en het leek wel alsof hij de geuren diep kon inslikken. Het smaakte heel lekker, en het gaf hem veel zuurstof. De nieuwe geuren vormden ook weer extra klankjes en extra licht, waardoor een nog fijnere en zachtere vloeistof begon te stromen. Op een ander eiland kreeg hij een nieuwe mond waar hij zoveel meer mee kon proeven.

De man kwam diep tot rust, en vroeg aan de Ludipussen hoe dit allemaal kon gebeuren. ‘Nou gewoon,’ zei een Ludipus. ‘Wij hebben een perfecte melkfabriek. Die geleerden houden zich zoveel bezig met het melken, en met het bouwen van hun koninkrijkjes, dat ze helemaal vergeten dat ze zelf ook gemolken worden.’

‘Oh, maar is dat niet gevaarlijk ?’ vroeg de man. ‘Nee hoor,’ zei het kleine mannetje. ‘Wij zijn allemaal melkmannetjes, en wij weten precies hoe wij dat moeten doen. Daar hebben we lange ervaring in. Kijk, die geleerden zijn niet ouder dan een jaar of dertig tot tachtig, maar wij werken hier al miljoenen jaren. Wie heeft er dan meer recht van spreken ?’

‘Nou, ik denk jullie,’ zei de man. ‘En ik ben blij dat jullie mij gered hebben, want ik had het helemaal niet naar m’n zin in die kooi.’

‘Dus dit is allemaal niets anders dan een grote melkfabriek ?’

Het mannetje knikte. ‘En wat maken jullie daar dan van ?’ vroeg de man.

‘IJs,’ zei het mannetje.

‘Waarvoor ?’ vroeg de man.

‘Voor ijspaleizen,’ zei het mannetje. ‘Kijk, als je van dat ijs eet, likt of proeft, dan komt het levensvuur in je. Het is toverijs.’

En zo bracht het mannetje de man naar een eiland waar de ijspaleizen stonden. De man nam een hapje en ineens kwam er een groot levensvuur om hem heen met hele kleine vliegjes als vuurvliegjes. Ineens kon hij nog meer zien, ruiken, horen, en voelen. En hij zag wezentjes naar hem toekomen die hem met ijs bekogelden. Ook hij pakte wat ijs en gooide terug. De man had toen een lange tijd veel ijspret met de wezentjes, en lieten hem een kamer zien in het ijspaleis waar de man mocht wonen. Dat vond de man erg aardig van de wezentjes. Het ijs gloeide helemaal, en ook de gangen lagen vol met ijs. Ieder wezen had zijn eigen kamertje. Op een lange ijstrap klom de man naar boven. Hier woonde niemand. Het was als een zolder. Vanuit het raampje kon hij een ander ijspaleis zien. Er stonden hier wel duizenden ijspaleizen. Het was een echt ijsjeseiland.

Buiten lag er ook overal ijs, en stonden er ijsmannetjes met ijskarretjes. Niet omdat ze daarmee ijs verkochten, maar daarmee konden ze reisjes maken naar de grote ijsmachines.

In de grote ijsmachines werd het ijs gemaakt, en die stonden in contact met de melkfabrieken, waar de melkmannetjes werkten.

Vanuit de ijsmachines stroomden verschillende soorten kleuren ijs. Het ijs werd verdeeld door een soort ijsklok. De ijsmannetjes die hier werkten werkten er ook al voor miljoenen jaren.

De man keek zijn ogen uit op het ijsjeseiland, en nam soms een klein hapje.

‘Maar is dit nu alles ?’ vroeg de man aan een mannetje. ‘Hier hebben we ijs, maar houd daar alles mee op ?’

‘Nee,’ zei het mannetje, ‘kom maar mee.’

En de man werd geleid naar een kamertje in een grote ijsmachine waar zoveel ijs was dat er ijsbloemen groeiden en bloeiden, vol met allerlei soorten levensvuur. ‘Adem dit in,’ zei het mannetje, ‘en je zal verdwijnen en verschijnen op een plek waar je nog nooit eerder bent geweest. Een plek hier heel ver vandaan.’ De man haalde diep adem, en draaide zo snel in het rond totdat hij in de ruimte suisde, en toen helemaal verdween. Hij kwam aan in een donkere ruimte waar wat kleine lichtjes waren. Hier was geen ijs, ook geen melk, en hij zag ook nergens wezentjes. Op de grond groeide haar, en het haar was heel vochtig en zacht. Plotseling kwam er een ijskarretje naar voren, waar een soort metalen kaartje uit omhoog kwam. Op het metalen kaartje stonden wat tekens, en het had een warme gloed tegelijkertijd omhuld door stomend ijs. Ook een ander ijskarretje kwam naar voren en hetzelfde gebeurde, maar dit was een ander metalen kaartje met andere tekens. En zo gebeurde achtien keer hetzelfde, terwijl de man in de cirkel van ijskarretjes stond. Vanuit de kaartjes begonnen klanken voort te komen, lichten en geuren, en de tekens op de kaartjes begonnen te bewegen. Weer begon er melk te vloeien, en alles werd natter en natter, totdat de man zwom in een zee van melk. Na een tijdje kwam de man bij een eilandje aan, waarop weer een ijskarretje stond. Verder lag er overal zand.

Plotseling kwam er een bloeddruppel door het zand heen, en de bloeddruppel gleed in de zee van melk die direkt in een zee van bloed veranderde. Het ijskarretje veranderde in een groot stuk gebraden vlees. De man had inmiddels erge honger gekregen en begon te eten en te drinken, maar zodra zijn lippen het vlees aanraakten veranderde het weer in een ijskarretje, en toen zijn lippen het bloed aanraakten veranderde het weer in melk. Toen hij

zijn lippen terugtrok veranderde het weer in bloed, en ook het ijskarretje was inmiddels weer in een groot stuk gebraden vlees veranderd. De man zwom verder tot een volgend eiland, waar een slagerij stond. De slagerij hing vol met gebraden vlees, maar zodra de man zijn lippen er tegenaan zette veranderde het gebraden vlees in ijskarretjes. De man kreeg toen in de gaten dat er iets anders moest gebeuren met het gebraden vlees. Hij nam een stuk vlees op, bracht het naar buiten en begroef het in de grond. Even later kwamen er bloemen, struiken en bomen van vlees uit voort. Nog meer stukken vlees bracht hij naar buiten om het in de grond te begraven, en nog meer bloemen, struiken en bomen kwamen er uit voort. Maar niet alleen dat, ook hutjes en tentjes van vlees.

Na een tijdje waren al die dingen van vlees uitgegroeid tot wezens. Als hij nu zijn lippen tegen die wezens aanzette kwam het levensvuur over hen. Hij sloot vriendschap met de wezens. Maar de wezens huilden veel, en na een tijdje liet hij al het vlees uit de slagerij in de grond begraven, en hetzelfde gebeurde. Toen de wezens nog steeds veel huilden, herinnerde hij het vorige eiland, waar ook nog vlees was. Hij zwom terug over de zee van bloed. Nam het vlees op zijn schouders en zwom terug, om het vlees op het andere eiland te begraven. Ook maakte hij zichzelf akkers waar hij elke dag bloed vanuit de zee naartoe bracht om daar te zaaien. Wonderlijke bloedbomen kwamen daar uit voort, en ook bloedbloemen en struiken. En hij keek telkens toe hoe ook zij in wezens veranderden. Door zijn lippen bracht hij het levensvuur in hen. Zo waren er twee soorten wezens die vriendschap met elkaar sloten. Het huilen werd niet minder. De zee van bloed groeide, en overstroomde op een dag het hele eiland. Maar de man had een schip gemaakt voor alle wezens. Na een lange reis kwamen ze op een nieuw eiland, geheel gemaakt van vlees. De man wist inmiddels wat hij moest doen, en de wezens hielpen mee : ze begroeven al het vlees, en er kwamen wezens uit voort. Ook bouwden ze weer akkers en hielpen de man met het zaaien van het bloed vanuit de zee. Het aantal wezens van beide soorten begon weer enorm te groeien, en ze hielpen allemaal mee. Dit keer maakte de man dus een heel groot schip, voor het geval weer alles zou overstromen. Maar de wezens kwamen erachter dat ze het bloed ook gewoon konden drinken, en het vele vlees van het eiland begonnen ze te eten. Alhoewel er genoeg was begonnen ze bezitterig te worden, en voerden al snel oorlog met elkaar. Maar altijd als de man wilde eten of drinken veranderde het in ijs en melk. De man begon zich af te vragen waarom.

Op een dag kwam er een klein mannetje op hem af, die hem een amulet gaf. Sindsdien veranderde het niet meer in ijs en melk. Maar ook de man begon erg bezitterig te worden, en deed al snel mee met de oorlog. En niemand dacht er meer aan het bloed op de akkers te zaaien en het vlees te begraven, want dan zouden er veel te veel wezens bijkomen. En er werd niet alleen oorlog gevoerd, maar ook de jacht werd geopend. Alles ging om het domineren en het drijven van slaven. Er ontstond vriendjespolitiek, en men wisselde levensvuur uit ten koste van anderen. Er ontstonden harems, die ook ingezet werden in de oorlog en de jacht, totdat de fokkerij helemaal compleet was. Het werd een fabriek. Men probeerde elkaar uit, en het

resultaat ? Men leerde het winnen van sieraden, betoverende elementen. De man had ook een harem. Het waren sieraadjagers. De harem werd steeds groter, en hij werd een echte haremrover. Wat had het amulet met hem gedaan ? En wie was de verstrekker van dat amulet ? Hij hield ervan om andermans harem te plunderen. In het amulet was een traan in een steen.

Zou hij nog een keer mogen kiezen om het amulet wel of niet te dragen, dan zou hij het niet weten. Want wat zou er zijn gebeurt als hij het amulet niet zou hebben aangenomen ?

Hij leefde in een roes, hij en zijn harem. Wilden ze het wel echt, of waren het zijn slaven ? Er was altijd veel gehuil. In zijn ogen was het zaad, en hij zaaide het op de akkers. Een nieuw soort kwam voort. Ook anderen begonnen de tranen te zaaien, en het nieuwe soort groeide. 'Een beetje bloed, een beetje zweet, een beetje tranen en wat vlees, en ik maak een geheel nieuw soort,' sprak het amulet op een dag. De man begon direkt zijn oude taak weer op te pakken. Hij zaaide het eerst dun, en daarna dik, en meer en meer soorten begonnen voort te komen. Men begon allerlei dingen te zaaien.

Op een dag was er weer een overstroming van de zee van bloed. Er werd gevochten voor een plaatsje in het grote schip. Velen verdronken. De man had natuurlijk een plaatsje weten te bemachtigen, omdat het zijn schip was. Verderop waren de wolken van bloed, de hele lucht was van bloed, en het regende tranen. Alles was van vlees, dus er viel ook niets meer te begraven. Het enige geschenk dat het nieuwe land gaf was een grotere honger en dorst, en zoveel manieren om die te stillen. Daarom vierde diefstal hoogtij.

Was dit geen ergere kooi dan de kooi waar hij vandaan kwam ? Hij was nu tenminste vrij, en zou die vrijheid in alle koelbloedigheid verdedigen. Vrij ? Hij was gevangen door een amulet. Hier was vrijheid en gevangenschap hetzelfde.

Hier golden de wetten van een bruut amulet, maar het hield hem tenminste uit de kooi vandaan. Als hij niet had doorgevraagd, dan was hij nog steeds bij de knuffelmannetjes met hun melkfabriekjes en ijsfabriekjes, als hij genoegen zou nemen met de dingen voor de horizon. Het zou een middenweg zijn geweest tussen de kooi en het amulet, maar zou hij daar kunnen leven ? Hij was iemand die doorvroeg en doorzocht. Was dit amulet nu zijn straf ?

Hij was één van hen geworden, maar wie waren zij eigenlijk ? Het nieuwe land was als een zee van vlees. Hij kon er met zijn boot gewoon overheen. Maar zodra het schip eroverheen ging kwam het vlees tot leven. En dat was eigenlijk maar goed ook. Als het vlees werd aangeraakt, kwam het tot leven. Het was in die dagen dat er een tweede amulet verscheen, en die scheen van

de één op de ander over te wippen. Als iemand die het tweede amulet droeg zijn lippen tegen het vlees wilde zetten, veranderde het vlees in chocolade.

De man begon toen een beetje te beseffen hoe ver hij van huis was. Op een dag zette het tweede amulet alles in een vreemd vuur, de dag waarop vrede en oorlog hetzelfde bleek te zijn. Het tweede amulet was als een amulet van doornen, die vaak boven de menigte uitvloog om de kudde te leiden. Het tweede amulet was niemands bezit, maar sprong van de ene op de andere.

Voor de man eindigde de reis in een chocolade-fabriek. Als hij zijn lippen tegen de chocolade aanzette veranderde het in vlees. En niet alleen dat. Het vlees kwam ook tot leven. Had de man nu wezens vrijgezet ? Wat was chocolade nu werkelijk ? Wie bepaalde wat wat was ? De mannetjes ? De amuletten ? Of hangt het er vanaf wat voor ogen en wat voor mond je hebt ? Niet iedereen ziet en proeft namelijk hetzelfde. Of was de man tot een plaats gekomen waar alles hetzelfde was ?

Einde

D e K o o i III

In een wereld waar chocolade en vlees hetzelfde is, vuur en ijs, oorlog en vrede, dood en leven, alles hetzelfde. Het is de wereld van een kooi, een vreemd amulet, die hoofden heeft ingenomen. Geen hersenen meer, alleen instincten, voortgedreven door een bovennatuurlijke honger en dorst. In deze wereld is waarheid en leugen hetzelfde. Een wereld waar je gemengde gevoelens hebt. Je wilt weg, terwijl je wilt blijven, want wat wacht buiten op je ? Het is een gemene wereld, maar ze noemen het genade. Het is een harde wereld, maar ze noemen het zachtheid. Alles is hier omgedraaid, en alles is alles geworden, als in een vreemd vuur. Het is de wereld van een losgeslagen amulet. Wie maakte dat amulet ? Maar een betere vraag is : Hoe kan het vernietigd worden ? En als het dan vernietigd is, krijgen we dan later geen spijt, omdat alles allemaal veel erger is geworden sinds het amulet er niet meer is ?

Er is een wereld waar de jacht de vrijlating is, de wereld van het amulet. Het is een wereld waar het bloed is als de wijn, voortstromende van een steen in

het amulet, een steen waarin een traan zit. Wij hebben die wereld zelf gemaakt, wij hebben die wereld zelf aanvaard, door het amulet. En het amulet is een schamele troost in een zee van een nog grotere ellende. Want waar zouden wij zijn als het amulet nooit had bestaan ? Dan waren we overgeleverd aan de onpeilbare duisternissen, daar waar geen licht kan doordringen. Maar de wereld van het amulet is daar ... waar het licht duisternis is.

Het is altijd een verrassing voor iedereen wanneer die wereld zich opent. Zoveel verwarring, maar ook zoveel helderheid, daar waar de wildernis en de chaos de enige orde is.

Er is geen hoop op de heuvel waar spinnen jagen, waar het enige licht gebraden vlees is, en waar vliegen neerdalen om alles voor altijd te laten bloeden. Is dit geen doorn in het oog van de heer die alles geschapen heeft ? En waarom schiep hij dan ook dit ? Of is dit buiten hem omgegaan ?

Maar in ieder geval zijn zij van die wereld naar zuivere vormen op zoek. Er is in deze wereld geen verschil tussen schepper en schepping, want vaak heeft de schepping zijn schepper zelf geschapen. En daarom is deze wereld ook geen paradijs, onderwereld of hel. In deze wereld is goed en kwaad hetzelfde. Daarom is er in deze wereld ook geen appel die alles kan verpesten, omdat er geen verschil is tussen de eter en het voedsel, en al helemaal niet tussen honger en verzadiging, tussen eten en niet eten. Alles vreet, en alles heeft honger, en dat is het enige wat kan verzadigen. Zij die buiten deze wereld staan staan op één been, of hebben helemaal geen benen.

Ik ken niemand die ooit uit die wereld ontsnapt is want er is geen ontsnapping mogelijk. Je kunt alleen maar wegzinken in allerlei verderf. De ontsnapping staat hier namelijk gelijk aan het dieper opgesloten worden.

Geef de moed maar op als je in deze wereld verstrikt bent geraakt, want hoe meer je er tegen verzet des te dieper je er in vastraakt.

Laten we dan ook de moed opgeven voor hen die in deze wereld verstrikt zijn geraakt, en al onze reddingsacties opgeven, want onherroepelijk zullen we meegesleurd worden.

Het is de wereld van de verdoemden, zo dichtbij. Het is de wereld van hen die door het amulet zijn gebonden.

Er is hier geen verschil tussen rijkdom en armoede, tussen doden en tot leven brengen. Zij zijn allen moordenaars. Geketend gaan ze de ondergang

tegemoet, als in een vreemd vuur. Het is een tragiek die niemand begrijpt en niemand op waarde of onwaarde kan schatten. Het is een carnaval waar het gezicht gelijk is aan het masker. We komen verkleed als onszelf. En iedereen schrikt.

Het is de wereld van de optochten der doden, en iedereen is verveeld, wachtende op iets nieuws. Zij zijn op zoek naar de hogere vormen. Een traan in een steen getuigt van de tragiek van het amulet. Want wie is het amulet ? Er is in de wereld van het amulet geen onderscheid tussen het ding en de persoon. Het amulet kan met zijn toverkracht een slaaf zijn, uitgezonden met een opdracht, of gewoon om een wens te moeten vervullen.

Feit is dat het amulet alle krachten moet harmonizeren, maar ten koste van wat ? Zou je niet moe worden van zo'n wereld. En waar staan wij ergens ? Waar gaan we naartoe ? Het hangt er vanaf in hoeverre onze ogen geopend zijn waar we leven. Onze zintuigen bepalen dat. Maar bovenal ons intellect, en dat intellect moet open staan, en niet zelfvoldaan zijn.

Hen van het brandend intellect, gevangen in een vreemd vuur, achter tralies van ijs, zij waren als de draken. Hun vlees brandde en bloed kookte, en zij droegen de krachten van het amulet. Op hun vlees verschenen de een-dags-tatoeages, en hun harten gloeiden zo dat ze door het vlees te zien waren. Hun harten waren als brandende boeken. Zij zijn op zoek naar het hogere intellect, een weg die buiten de hersenen om gaat, want zij hebben geen hersenen. In een vlam zijn zij, terwijl hun heuvelen besmeurd zijn met wespenzeep. De steek is hier het zachte, de hoornaarssteek iets wat ze de kus noemen.

Wat nou opgewekt worden door een kus ? Dat is een oud sprookje. Hier val je in slaap door de kus, om ten prooie te vallen aan een web van leugens, dromen .... dromen ... dromen .... Hier is de kus de doodsteek. Maar .... leven en dood is hetzelfde, en waarheid is de leugen, slapen is het waken, dus waarom klagen wij ? Is dit dan de weg naar het hogere intellect, of verliezen we dan ook het laatste wat we hebben ?

Eens was de leugen de weg naar de oude dingen, de list van onze overleden voorouders om weer een plaats te krijgen in de nog grotere leugen die hen had weggeduwd, het grote vandaag, die ze de waarheid noemden. Het was iets in hun ogen waardoor ze de dingen anders zagen. Maar hier was geen verschil tussen de moeder en het kind. Alles was hetzelfde, geen onderscheid tussen de drijver en zijn slaaf. En dit alles door de traan, een rode traan, want die traan was van bloed.

En die traan zit nog steeds in de steen van het amulet. Op de heuvelen stonden zij, hen die gebonden waren door het amulet. Zij dreven elkaar naar

het hogere intellect. Zij hadden nauwelijks kledederen, want de bedekking en de naaktheid was hier hetzelfde. Er was geen masker waarachter ze zich veilig konden voelen, en toch voelden zij zich veilig. Er was geen verschil tussen het masker en het lichaam. Zij waren de broeders van het vlees en de chocolade, iets dat hetzelfde was, in deze wereld ondergedompeld in brandende wespenzeep, waar de steek het zachte is, waar de slaap hen liet opstaan, en de wake het slapen was. Een wereld ondergedompeld in een vreemd vuur, voortkomende vanuit het amulet.

De hoornaarssteek liet hun hart kloppen, als de klok van vuur. En al het vuur was zacht. Het was als gestoken worden door een vreemde vlieg ... de vreemde doornen van het amulet. Zoveel zeeen van vreemde insecten waardoor het hogere intellect te bereiken was, maar was dit niet allemaal een valstrik ?

'Strik mij dan, als de strik de traan des levens doet ontwaken,' sprak een jongen luid op de heuvelen van wespenzeep. Zijn speer was gedecoreerd met de fijnste sieraden, die op versteende insecten leken. Insecten met een wonderlijke geur. 'Leid mij dan tot de put, het wazige gat, als dat mij van het rode van de traan laat drinken,' sprak de jongen. Er was hier geen verschil tussen de valstrik en de levensweg.

Het amulet voedde de kuddes door honger, verzadigde hen met dorst. Het amulet verwarde hen om het oor en het oog te openen. Zij verloren hun wapenrusting in deze wereld, want hier was elke immuniteit kwetsbaarheid. De gevoelige steen was altijd de steen met de rode traan, als een bloedkoraal, voortkomende vanuit de put van verwarring. En als er ergens druppels van helderheid en orde waren, dan was het daar. Daar, in en door die insectenovens, wespenmolens, was de weg van het hogere intellect, een overgevoeligheid die hetzelfde was als koelbloedige hardheid. De woede trilde in de hand en de keel van de jongen, toen hij in de put van verwarring werd geworpen. Door de wespenzeep gleed hij erin, alsof een hand hem duwde, een voet hem wegtrapte en liet struikelen. Maar de woede was hier de tevredenheid, een diepe vrede, een zachte aanraking. De woede was hier niets anders dan een geopend intellect, een brandend boek, een op hol geslagen hart, gloeiend als omhuld door duizenden vuurvliegjes.

Zijn neus werd als de steen van het amulet, maar hier was het oog hetzelfde als de neus, en ook het oor was niet anders dan hen. Het was alsof er een vreemd insect op zijn neus zat, alsof zijn ogen omdraaiden en scheel keken.

En hij kwam erachter dat er geen andere weg was dan de valstrik. Het was een web van een vreemde spin, waar het enige licht gebraden vlees was, de enige geur, en het enige geluid knetterend vuur en gillend hout. Maar toen de jongen dichterbij kwam was het niets anders dan een huis van chocolade. Binnenin zag hij een bruine traan, een traan van vlees.

Hij keerde terug tot de heuvelen van wespenzeep, en gleed in een andere put. Ook hier vond hij een web van een vreemde spin, waar gebraden vlees van dichtbij niets anders bleek te zijn dan een huis van chocolade. Binnenin zag hij een rode traan, de traan van bloed, als de levenstraan waarvan hij wilde drinken, maar het bleek gewoon wijn te zijn. De stralen van gebraden vlees werden zijn vleugels. Hij voelde zich een vlinder, en zodra de vleugels bewogen bleek het allemaal maar gewoon chocolade te zijn. Hij was maar een gewone chocolade-jongen, maar het duistere oog zag iets anders.

Er was een oog in een amulet die hij vond in een derde put. Het oog was godslasterlijk, want hier was er geen verschil tussen god en mens. Ook was er geen verschil tussen elf en mens, want hier waren alleen indianen.

Er was hier geen verschil tussen wijsheid en domheid, tussen lelijkheid en mooiheid, tussen ziekte en gezondheid. Iedereen was hier ziek door het amulet, en alle muren waren hier afgebroken. En daarom waren de velden uitgestrekt, en knetterde het vuur extra harder. De jongen nam het amulet met het oog mee naar de heuvels van wespenzeep, en predikte een nieuw intellect. Ook anderen daalden in de putten af.

Als er iets knetterde, dan was het de jongen met het amulet met het oog. Velen kwamen terug vanuit de putten, en waren nu als vlinders, net als de jongen. Maar hier was er geen verschil tussen de vlinder en de vlieg, en ook de spin was niet anders. Er was hier geen verschil tussen insect en mens. Zij waren allen indianen.

Zij aten van het hongervlees als van duistere chocolade. Zij zaten vast in een kooi gemaakt door het amulet. Het waren kooien waarvan de tralies draken waren, en het ijs was bloed, als een grotere dorst. Het bloed van de dorst hebben zij gedronken, om nog dorstiger te worden. Het amulet had die wereld gemaakt, een wereld waar niemand uit kon ontsnappen, alleen maar dieper in kon wegzinken.

En de varkens ? Hier was er geen verschil tussen het varken en de draak. De vlinders vlogen alleen om doem te brengen op de heuvels van wespenzeep. Het waren steekvlinders, die zich op die manier overal konden inhechten. Zij waren de steekvlinders van ... het amulet.

Het was een wereld waar schoonheid gelijk stond aan vuilheid, een wereld van een vreemd licht, het licht van een amulet. Zij konden niet ontsnappen uit hun kooien. De tralies waren hun vleugels, stralen als onuitputtelijk ijs ... als ijs dat bloed was, de grotere dorst. Zij aten van een traan van vlees, als van duistere chocolade, maar het vrat ook aan hen, een duistere woestheid, in een wereld waar alles vrat. Geen verschil tussen de slager en het slachtvee,

en ook het roofdier was niet anders. Daar zorgde het amulet voor, als het hogere intellect, een duister intellect, maar vol van licht ... als een boek bedekt met zoveel miljoenen vuurvliegjes .... als een brandend boek.

En wat zien zij die het boek bekijken ? Het oog is hier niet anders dan hetgeen hij bekijkt. In deze wereld zijn alleen maar ogen .... stenen waarin tranen opgeborgen zitten. Het verandert terwijl je kijkt, want jouw oog is een vuur, en creeert .... als de creatie van een amulet.

Na een lange dag zijn er geen letters meer, alleen vlees en bloed, brandend in een vreemd vuur ... het vuur van een amulet. Dan komen zij tot leven, en zijn er alleen nog maar plaatjes. Geen verschil tussen licht en duisternis.

Geen verschil meer tussen pijn en plezier, want het amulet heeft de muur afgebroken, in duistere woede, als een gillende traan. Hij kwam om vrij te zetten, maar wat deed hij hen aan ? In duisternis leidt hij hen voort, tot een hoger intellect. Hoger intellect ? Wat als dit alles een valstrik is ? Wij zijn zo bang voor de valstrik. Waar zouden wij zijn zonder de valstrik ? Was dan alles niet gewoon nog erger ? Waarom geen compromis sluiten, zoals in een paradox ? Dat noem ik van twee walletjes eten.

Het amulet bracht hen van een enge wereld naar een enge wereld. Kunnen we niet beter gewoon twee heren dienen ? Dan komen de klappen misschien minder hard aan. Dan hebben de heren misschien nog een zwakke plek voor ons ? Maar mogen we dan niet meer kiezen ? Is er geen democratie hiervoor in deze dingen ? Maar wat nou als de meerderheid tegen ons stemt ?

In de wereld van het amulet is democratie hetzelfde als anarchisme .... En dictatuur is al niet anders. Geen verschil tussen de drijver en zijn slaaf.

Een enge uitnodiging van het amulet. Het was een brandende nacht nadat het amulet nog meer kuddes had misleid. En waartoe ? Sommigen probeerden het amulet te doorgronden ... Wie was het amulet ? Hoe konden ze het amulet vernietigen, of misschien wel omsmelten tot zuivere vormen ? Want hadden niet alle dingen diep van binnen een potentiele puurheid ?

‘Ik zie zoveel liefde en zoveel haat in je ogen,’ fluisterde het amulet.

‘Neem een beetje van mijn liefde weg, en er zal geen haat meer zijn. Neem een beetje van mijn haat weg en er zal geen liefde meer zijn. Die twee dingen houden elkaar in stand.

Ik zie zoveel schoonheid en zoveel lelijkheid in je ogen. Neem een beetje van mijn schoonheid weg, en er zal geen lelijkheid meer zijn. Neem een beetje van mijn lelijkheid weg, en er zal geen schoonheid meer zijn. Die twee houden elkaar in stand.’

Ik boog mijn hoofd, en stond in een woestijn, gewapend met de mysterieuze wapens van de vlieg. In deze woestijn blijven we altijd huilen en liegen, altijd ontkennen. Zo lang de nacht voortduurt zullen we het groene niet binnengaan. In de verte hoorde ik gezang als de stem van jongens : ‘Wij zijn mooi, jullie zijn lelijk, wij zijn mooi, en jullie zijn lelijk. Wij zijn lelijk en jullie zijn mooi. Wij zijn lelijk en jullie zijn mooi. Wij zijn mooi en jullie zijn mooi. Wij zijn lelijk en jullie zijn lelijk, en jij bent de lelijke. Neem daarom van het moedervoedsel.’

Niemand stak zoals zij staken, en niemand maakten zacht zoals zij zacht maakten. In de verte glitterde een woestijnstad in de zon, als gemaakt van glas. Maar het was als een vreemd soort chrystal, als tranenchrystal. Zovelen waren daar, gewapend met de wapens van de vlieg. Ze liepen door de steegjes, en zaten in de huizen. Hier scheen altijd iedereen te huilen, net als in de woestijn, maar in deze wereld was de traan en de klank hetzelfde. Ik liep een huis binnen en vertelde over het amulet. Zij leken erg geinteresseerd te zijn. Ik wees hen de weg naar het amulet, en ik heb ze nooit meer teruggezien.

Toen vroeg ik naar het moedervoedsel. Zij leiden mij naar een oase, vol met groen. De rotsen leken hier te huilen, en allen dronken zij van de traan. Het stroomde voort vanuit de bomen en de struiken.

Hier was geluid hetzelfde als de steek, en de geur was niet anders. Ik zocht beschutting, alleen maar om te ontdekken dat dit hetzelfde was als naaktheid. Was ik al in de wereld van het amulet ?

Was er voor mij nog hoop, of was ik al een gevallene, een verdoemde ? Je kon hier niet rondkijken zonder te steken en gestoken te worden. Je kon hier niet bewegen zonder te beseffen dat alles zowel de steker als de gestokene was. Daarom traanden alle ogen, en waren onze ogen als messen. We hadden gewapende ogen.

Plotseling was er het geluid van messen in de lucht, en de lucht werd vol met lange indiaanse vliegen met de kleinst mogelijke hoofdjes. Ze leken een beetje op sprinkhanen en hadden de prachtigste vleugels, die de fijnste poeders leken te verspreiden. Dit waren de poeders van de woestijn. Ze leken woest, en toen zij hun zachte vochtige lichten verspreiden leken wij niets anders dan de marionetten van deze lichtorde. Dit was het lot van een ieder die van het moedervoedsel had genomen. De lichten werden als pijlen in ons

geschoten, en de reflex maakte ons bezeten. Hier was overgevoeligheid overhardheid, als een strakke, doelbewuste killermachine, die maar één doel had : inwoning. Maar waarom wilde het ons bewonen ? Waren wij nu robotten geworden ? En zo ja, robotten van wie ?

Er was hier geen verschil tussen de schieter en het geschotene. We hadden allemaal onze bogen en harpoenen, in dit zachte zweterige licht, en we waren allemaal bezeten door de reflex. Dat konden we zien in elkaars ogen.

Hier is bloed en vlees hetzelfde, en ook de beenderen zijn niet anders. Hier is alles gemalen tot een tekenfilm .... vreemde verf, komende vanuit een amulet. Een vreemd vuur brandt hier, waar alles tot verf gemalen is, waar duisternis en de tekenfilm hetzelfde zijn.

Einde

De Eeuwige Vlam

Er was elvengetrommel in het kamp van de indiaanse elven. Salucia pakte haar speer en rende naar de dichtsbijzijnde boom waar ze in klom. Haar vader zou terugkomen, maar ook verwachte zij een aanval van de Maribiren, een elvenstam aan de westkant van hun kamp. Ze zouden gehoord hebben van de terugkomst van Salucia's vader, die zolang bij de tovenaar van Ostford had gewerkt. De tovenaar zou hem beloond hebben met zoveel toverdingen dat de Maribiren daar graag een graantje van wilden meepikken. Maar alles bleef gelukkig rustig, en Salucia's vader maakte het goed. Misschien hadden de Maribiren de dreiging wel gevoeld die uitging vanuit het kasteel van de tovenaar van Ostford. Salucia's vader droeg een wapenrusting die zij nog niet kende : fier, maar ook teder en afschrikwekkend, verlokkend, als een verwarrende paradox. Ze voelde wel de nieuwsgierigheid van de Maribiren, maar besloot er geen aandacht aan te schenken. Ze voelde de donkere ogen van de Maribiren loeren, vol lust maar ook vol angst. Wat had de tovenaar van Ostford toch gedaan ? Er kwam een wonderlijke, indringende magie vanuit het kamp van de indiaanse elven. Salucia was gerustgesteld. Alles was goed met haar vader. De tovenaar had goed werk verricht. Maar toen haar vader een paar littekens liet zien schrok Salucia. 'Ik weet het, mijn kind,' zei haar vader. 'Werken bij de tovenaar was niet zonder gevaren. Ik moest ingewijd worden in de hogere magie. Ik

heb gevochten met de wachters van de tovenaar, en zij hebben mij verwond, maar alleen zo kon ik het zegel dragen.'

'Welk zegel, vader ?' vroeg Salucia. Haar vader keek haar teder aan, en ze zag een glinstering in zijn ogen. Zijn ogen waren doorbloed, vol van geheimenissen, als grote bruine kralen die het zonlicht op een mysterieuze wijze weerspiegelden, maar ook zoveel duisternis. 'Ga slapen, Salucia,' zei haar vader. 'Het is laat.'

Salucia wist niet wat er die nacht zou gebeuren, maar Maribiren kwamen het kamp binnen om haar te ontvoeren. Ze brachten haar naar een plaats, een bron, waar het elvenlicht haar omhulde. Niets wist zij van de raadselen van de Maribiren. Het was een prachtige ervaring, iets wat ze niet had verwacht, omdat de Maribiren in vijandschap leefden met haar eigen stam. Maar wie waren dit ? Het waren Maribiren die zij niet kende. Ze waren ouder, en ze leken rustiger. 'Ga maar, Salucia,' zeiden ze tegen haar. Maar Salucia wilde niet weg. Ze wilde blijven in deze elvenbron, die haar hart zo scheen te raken. Badend in licht zwom ze naar de andere kant van de warme bron.

Plotseling werd er een zwaard gestoken in de man die het dichtst bij Salucia baadde. Het was haar vader die haar kwam terughalen. Salucia had gemengde gevoelens. 'Ze willen je van de tovenaar van Ostford afhouden,' sprak haar vader, terwijl de andere gestaltes om haar heen in de bron leken te verdrinken. 'Vader, wat doet u ?' vroeg Salucia. Niet lang daarna hoorde Salucia een schot, en zag haar vader in vertraging neervallen. De bron vulde zich met bloed. Een donkere gestalte stond voor Salucia, en draaide zich toen om om in het niets te verdwijnen. Salucia slaakte een gil, en kwam er snel achter dat haar vader dood was. Ook was er geen enkele Maribir meer te bekennen.

Nu was het voor Salucia tijd om zelf de tovenaar van Ostford te bezoeken, want ze snapte niet wat er met haar gebeurde. In tranen zocht ze haar pad, terwijl ze de aanwijzingen van haar vader herinnerde. Haar vader had haar veel verteld over hoe de tovenaar woonde, maar vooral hoe er te komen. Toen Salucia bij de hoge verlichte poort van het kasteel van de tovenaar van Ostford aankwam viel ze huilend een lange elf in de armen. Snel en stoterig vertelde ze het verhaal. Ze wist dat ze hier troost en antwoord zou krijgen. De elf nam haar zorgzaam mee naar binnen. 'Er zijn zoveel dingen die je niet begrijpt,' zei de elf. 'Je bent erg jong, Salucia. De tovenaar wacht op je.'

Binnen leek alles heel anders dan wat haar vader haar altijd verteld had. Aan de muur hingen indiaanse speren, vreemde messen, en sommige muren waren doordrenkt met bloed. Salucia schrok, en vroeg wat dat bloed moest voorstellen. De elf sprak niet. Salucia begon bang te worden, maar ineens nam de elf Salucia weer in zijn armen. 'Je hoeft niet bang te zijn, lieveling,' zei de elf. 'Alles zal duidelijk worden, maar we mogen niet teveel praten.

Ach, we mogen het wel, maar het is niet verstandig. Laten we de dingen stap voor stap doen.

De tovenaar was een wonderlijke man. Hij gaf Salucia ringen voor in het kasteel. De ringen werden aan haar klederen vastgemaakt, en de ringen zouden uitleg geven over alle dingen. Het waren sprekende ringen, en meer en meer begon Salucia zich op haar gemak te voelen. Maar ook proefde ze een soort dreiging die ze niet kon beschrijven.

De tovenaar droeg lange gewaden, en bracht haar tot een andere indiaanse elvenstam in de dieptes van het kasteel. De elven spraken niet, maar communiceerden op een andere manier, door hun ogen, en door het bewegen van hun lippen. ‘Leer hen praten,’ zei de tovenaar. ‘Dat is je eerste opdracht. Ik zal je later alles uitleggen over je vader. Wie hij was, en ook wie de Maribiren zijn.’

Salucia nam de tijd om de elven te leren spreken, en ook leerde ze hun manier van communicatie. De tovenaar was na enkele maanden zeer tevreden, en bracht haar tot een andere indiaanse elvenstam dieper in het kasteel. Het kasteel was erg groot. Deze stam communiceerde door te gillen en door allerlei vreemde klanken overmatig te herhalen. ‘Kom,’ zei de tovenaar, en bracht haar tot een elvenbron in een grote ruimte. De bron was bijna geheel blauw, als blauwe bubbelende verf. De tovenaar maakte wat strepen op haar huid, en daalde toen zelf in de bron af. Salucia moest hem volgen. Hij zwom naar een deur diep onderin de bron, opende die deur en zwom naar binnen. Hier zwommen haaien en allerlei andere vissen, maar ze deden niets. Ze staarden alleen. De tovenaar zwom met Salucia door naar de volgende deur, en toen ze achter de deur naar boven zwommen kwamen ze in een geheel nieuwe ruimte terecht. ‘Als ik er niet bij was zou je verslonden zijn door de haaien en de andere vissen,’ sprak de tovenaar. ‘Ik bepaal dus wie hier komt.’ Er hing een vreemde indringende geur als een soort verf, maar het rook heel lichamelijk en warm.

Salucia keek haar ogen uit, want er dropen hier een heleboel vreemde stoffen met vreemde kleuren. Het was een soort modder. De tovenaar keek naar Salucia en knipoogde naar haar. ‘Weet je, Salucia,’ zei de tovenaar, ‘ik laat je dit alles zien, en eens liet ik je vader dit alles zien, omdat ik wil dat jij en je nageslacht in dit kasteel zullen leven. Buiten zullen de Maribiren alles overnemen en ze zullen niets van je stam overlaten. Jouw vader hebben ze uit de weg geruimd, maar jou heb ik beschermd.’ Salucia begon te huilen. Ze had verwacht dat ook haar vader beschermd zou worden, en daarom begreep ze niet waarom de Maribiren hem konden vermoorden. De tovenaar nam haar in zijn armen, en sprak : ‘Ik zou je vader maar wat graag willen beschermen, maar de macht van de Maribiren is niet te onderschatten. Echter, als je getrouw het pad volgt, en bij me blijft, zul je je vader terugzien.’ Maar toen werd de tovenaar ineens erg droevig. Ik zal nog even bij je blijven, totdat je totaal door het kasteel bent aanvaart en in veiligheid

bent gebracht. Dan zal ik mijn reis moeten richten op de gebieden van de Maribiren. Ik zal de donkere en zwarte reis moeten maken, zodat ze dit kasteel niet zullen innemen.' Salucia greep de tovenaar extra stevig vast en sprak : 'Maar kunnen we niet samen in die veiligheid blijven ? Waarom zou u zoveel riskeren ? Dit kasteel is van u en blijft van u !'

'Meisje,' zei de tovenaar, 'je kent de krachten van de Maribiren niet. Ik moet daar naartoe, anders zal dit kasteel van hen zijn en is er voor jou en je nageslacht geen enkele hoop. Zo zullen ook alle andere indiaanse elvenstammen vergaan, en zal de vlam van Ostford voorgoed doven.'

En zo namen die twee na een lange tijd van lopen en spreken afscheid van elkaar. De tovenaar had haar uitgelegd wat ze moest doen, en verder zouden de ringen haar leiden. Salucia zuchtte diep en probeerde moedig te blijven, maar al snel overvielen duistere angsten haar. Rustte het dan allemaal op haar schouders ? Waarom was alles zo ingewikkeld ?

Zoals de tovenaar had gezegd kwam ze eerst in een gebied vol met bomen. De bomen leken bijna op elven, en zij brachten vreemde eieren voort. De tovenaar had haar een speciale rode lap gegeven waarmee ze die eieren kon uitbroeden. Maar er was iets in haar wat zei dat ze dat niet moest doen. Ook de ringen gaven haar het advies om het niet te doen. De ringen hadden duidelijk een hele andere visie dan de tovenaar, en Salucia vroeg zich af waarom de tovenaar haar die ringen had geschonken. Maar veel plannen bleken overeen te stemmen. Salucia bond de rode lap om haar hoofd naarmate het warmer werd. Soms bleef ze wat rusten tegen de kasteelmuren aan, en trok dan verder.

Er waren zoveel dingen die Salucia niet begreep. Hoe zou ze aan nageslacht komen ? Waar zou ze haar vader ontmoeten en hoe ? De ringen vertelden nog niet veel. Het was alsof Salucia hun vertrouwen eerst moest winnen. Er waren een aantal dingen die ze heel strak in haar gedachten had, als een betoverend visioen, en dat was de reis van de tovenaar om hen veilig te stellen, en haar eigen reis om uiteindelijk de tovenaar veilig te stellen. Ze was vastberaden, en ze wist dat wanneer de tovenaar de eeuwige vlam had bereikt in het rijk van de Maribiren, dan zouden ze met elkaar verzoend worden. Maar dat kon alleen gebeuren als zij de eeuwige vlam van het kasteel zou bereiken. Zo niet, dan zouden ze beiden sterven, en zouden de Maribiren het kasteel voor altijd in handen krijgen. Het was vreemd als ze terugdacht aan de ontvoering. Ze kwam in een elvenbron van licht, en ze had even het idee dat de stam goed was, of tenminste een deel van die stam. Eén van de ringen vertelde haar dat er ook Maribiren waren die eigendom waren van de stam, als krijgsgevangenen die ingeburgerd waren. Ze probeerde het te begrijpen, maar het leek alsof ze het niet kon grijpen. En eigenlijk wilde ze het niet grijpen, omdat ze bang was om goede gevoelens te hebben over enkele Maribiren. Ze was bang dat hun krachten haar verstand zouden innemen. In dit was ze gemengd, en het trok haar bijna uit elkaar.

Een lange gestalte stond voor haar toen ze haar ogen langzaam opendeed. Ze schrok. Het leek op een Maribir, een wat oudere Maribir. De Maribir wilde zijn mond openen, maar zuchtte toen. ‘Ik heb je vader verdraaid zien wegzakken,’ zei de Maribir.

‘Jij, jij,’ stamelde Salucia, ‘was jij niet één van mijn ontvoerders ? Jullie hebben me niets gedaan, alleen gebracht naar die zalige elvenbron, waar daarna verschrikkelijke dingen gebeurde.’

‘Ja,’ sprak de maribir. ‘Ik moet je iets vertellen. Wij zijn .... wij waren krijgsgevangenen ... Jij hebt ons verlost .... Jouw hart .... De reis die je hier maakt zette ons vrij, trok ons los in onze gedachte ....’

‘Waar zijn de anderen ?’ vroeg Salucia.

‘Verderop,’ zei de man.

En toen zag Salucia in hoe belangrijk haar reis was. Zij was zelf een sleutel. Ze begreep alleen niet hoe, en nog steeds was ze bang om bedrogen te worden.

Na een tijdje kwam ze bij een kamp aan vol met Maribiren, maar deze waren anders, als de krijgsgevangen man. Misschien dat de man hen bedoelde. Het leek alsof zoveel angst van haar werd weggenomen toen hij haar zag. Ja, deze waren anders, ouder, rustiger, en het was alsof ze weer baadde in die elvenbron. Alleen nu hoopte ze dat er geen verschrikkelijke dingen zouden gebeuren.

‘Salucia,’ sprak een vertrouwde stem.

En daar stond ze dan. Zolang in de armen van zoiets vertrouwelijks. En warmte stroomde haar trillerige lijf binnen, om haar rustig te maken. Sieraden kreeg ze om haar heen, en allerlei kleine flesjes, vol magie. ‘Ik denk dat ik me vergis. Zijn jullie mijn ontvoerders ?’ Niemand zei wat. Ze voelde zich alleen wegglijden in een diepe rust. De muren van het kasteel waren hier ver weg, het plafond hoog, en gloeiend als de hete zon, terwijl er zand op de geblokte vloer lag, rood en geel geblokt. Salucia zakte neer, en tranen stroomden. Een vertrouwelijke hand greep haar hand zachtjes en teder. Ze hield haar ogen stijf dicht.

‘Maar ik wil niet,’ zei ze. En toen ze haar ogen opende was iedereen weg, en ook haar ringen waren verdwenen. Wat was er gaande. Ze wilde een gil slaken, maar kon niet, alsof er een hand op haar mond lag. Een tedere hand, en daarom was ze nog steeds zo rustig, en ze zag nog steeds al die andere sieraden aan haar lichaam en klederen bungelen, en zoveel kleine flesjes.

‘Ik heb zoiets vreemds meegemaakt,’ zei ze tegen zichzelf. Ze opende een flesje en een wonderlijke geur verspreidde zich. Een geest stond voor haar met een zwaard. Toen ze naar boven keek zag ze op een hoogte de stam weer, en vroeg vriendelijk of de geest haar daar naartoe wilde brengen. Dat was in een wip gebeurt. Ze wist niet wat ze moest denken, en weer omhelsde ze haar vrienden één voor één. Ze droegen hele aparte flesjes en kruikjes aan kettingen om hun nek, en hun broeken waren van prachtige zachte stoffen, als van fluweel. Maar alles leek wel nat, en één van hen hield zijn hand op waarin een vlam verscheen.

‘De eeuwige vlam van het kasteel,’ zei een ander. Maar je hebt het nog niet bereikt. Wat zou het kosten om de vlam van de één naar de ander te laten overspringen ?

En hoeveel tijd zouden ze hebben ? De tovenaar had haar verteld dat er niet veel tijd was. De eeuwige vlam was nu zo dichtbij, maar tegelijkertijd zo verweg. Wat als de tovenaar al op haar zou wachten ? Wat als hij de eeuwige vlam in het rijk der Maribiren al had bereikt ? Paniek begon over haar te komen, maar tegelijkertijd suste ze haarzelf, en ook de anderen begonnen haar te sussen.

‘Ik kan je die vlam geven,’ sprak hij, een lange Maribir, een voormalig krijgsgevangene, wellicht een slaaf. ‘Ik ben je veel verschuldigd,’ zei hij. Hij schoof dichterbij, maar de vlam begon te doven. ‘Zie je wat er gebeurt ?’ zei hij.

Salucia zakte weg in wanhoop. Ze dacht terug aan de tovenaar, en haar onwetendheid maakte haar onzeker.

‘Sssh, praat niet,’ zei de man met de vlam. Toen vertrok hij.

‘Je zal hem vinden,’ zeiden de anderen, ‘en dan zal de vlam overspringen.’

Daarna moest Salucia een lange reis maken door een woestijn, terwijl al haar toverij haar in de steek leek te laten. Boven op een hoogte was er niets dan droogte, waar de stralen van de inmens hete zon speelden, en ze wist niet hoe ze daar kon komen. Waar waren de anderen ? Ze wist het niet. Ze vaagden

soms gewoon geheel weg, zonder dat ze het besefte. Vaak sloot ze haar ogen en opende ze weer. Ze begreep er niets van. Achter een struikje zag ze een opening waar het zand schoof. Overal lagen rode lappen, en ze herinnerde de woorden van de tovenaar dat ze door die lappen verschillende soorten eieren kon uitbroeden. Ze besloot wat eieren van het struikje te plukken, en wikkelde ze in de rode lappen. Vogels kwamen voort, en brachten haar snel op die hogere plaats. Onzekerheid maakte zich meester van haar. Ook dorst vervulde haar, terwijl al haar flesjes allang leeg waren. Maar verderop was een bron. Langzaam liet ze zich in de bron zakken die heter was dan het zand, maar prettig aanvoelde. Plotseling voelde ze lippen op haar huid. Iemand was achter haar, en de hitte scheen te verdwijnen.

Het was de man met de eeuwige vlam. ‘Zie je,’ zei de man, ‘als ik dichtbij je komt vertrekt de vlam. Als hij geheel gedoofd is, is alles verloren.’ De man was een eind van haar weg gezwommen. De bron was koud geworden. Salucia schrok. Snel stapte ze uit de bron en durfde niet meer over de man na te denken. Even later kwam ze bij een blok ijs waar de vlam was. Voorzichtig stak ze haar hand in het ijs, en de vlam begon haar gezicht te verlichten. Ze voelde zich blij worden van binnen, en vol worden met een hele andere warmte. Op hetzelfde moment begreep ze waarom de tovenaar haar moest verlaten, en ervoer ze met haar hele wezen dat ook hij nu de eeuwige vlam had bereikt. Ze hadden het samen gedaan.

Einde

De Wraak van de Plaaggeesten

Dat de indiaanse elven hard hadden gewerkt wist iedereen. Het was een prachtig kamp geworden, en ze aten vollop van hun jachtmaal. Ditkeer hadden ze de beestachtige wachters van de keizer weten te strikken, en de toverkrachten vloeiden van hun monden af. Niemand wist van hun jachttaktieken af, want die werden al eeuwenlang geheim gehouden. Als de bliksem sloegen ze toe, terwijl ze verwarrende sporen achterlieten. Niemand zou dit kamp ooit kunnen bereiken, omdat zodra iemand naderde, alles onzichtbaar werd. Dit ging automatisch. Zoveel toverflessen en toverkruiken verspreidden zoveel mysterieuze geuren die hiertoe in staat waren. Sommigen dachten dat die geuren iemands hersenen gek konden maken, zodat bepaalde dingen niet meer te zien waren, en anderen dachten dat het

kamp daadwerkelijk als door een waas onzichtbaar werd. Hoe dan ook, de onbereikbaarheid was een feit. Daarom waren de indiaanse elven erg trots en voorzichtig met hun burgerschap. Het kwam weleens voor dat een elf om een bepaalde reden verbannen werd.

Sliktior had de keizer één keer ontmoet en vond het niet wat. Ook Sorsor kende de keizer een beetje. Ze dachten terug aan de tijden dat er vrede was, maar sinds de keizer beestachtige wachters begon in te huren leek het alsof zijn hersenen werden ingenomen. Het was een tovenaar die de keizer zo ver had gebracht, en de keizer dacht dat hij in z'n recht stond. Wat deden die wachters ? Ze maakten alles en iedereen onveilig. Woorden schieten mij te kort om zulke afschuwelijkheden te beschrijven. Daarom waren de indiaanse elven zo blij het vlees van deze beesten in hun monden te voelen vloeien. Sliktior had het vlees niet aangeraakt. Hij was bang dat hem wat zou overkomen.

Sorsor dacht aan de keizer, en aan de tovenaar met zijn toveres. De tovenaar had die wachters eens gecreeerd, en het zou niet zonder gevaren zijn het vlees van zulke wachters zomaar te eten. De wachters waren deels leeuw, deels tijger en deels wolf, en verder steeg hun roofkwaliteit boven alles uit. Het waren de superroofdieren die de andere roofdieren aten. Vaak gingen ze op jacht om alles te verscheuren wat los en vaststond, maar bovenal waren ze gemeen. Een nachtmerrie zou het zijn om in hun kerkers terecht te komen. Sorsor had het idee dat de keizer niet goed doorhad wat hij in huis had gehaald, dat hij niet wist wat er allemaal gebeurde. De keizer was zo druk met andere dingen bezig, en in Sorsor's ogen was de keizer totaal in de macht van de tovenaar en zijn toveres.

Sorsor had wel van het vlees gegeten, en vermomde zich tot een wachter. Hij ging naar het kasteel van de keizer, sloop naar binnen, en stal een bol met toverkooltjes. Snel ging hij terug naar zijn kamp, hief de bol op, en zei : 'Dit hier is het hart van de keizer. Voor ons is er geen hoop als wij hen van het keizerlijk kasteel hun gang laten gaan. Zij zijn vol list en sluwheid, en de keizer zelf is een pion in hun handen. Wij kunnen hem niet redden. Wij kunnen niet op tegen de machten van de tovenaar en zijn toveres. Zij zullen ons hier vinden en geen spaan van ons overlaten. Daarom : deze bol met toverkooltjes is het dierbaarste bezit van de keizer, en hij zal zeker sterven wanneer de bol is gebroken.' Toen brak Sorsor de bol, en er was luid gejuich. Allen wisten zij dat de tovenaar en toveres alleen konden regeren door de keizer. Nu was de keizer gestorven.

Sorsor ging terug naar het kasteel, en er was veel doodslucht en rouw. Met gebogen hoofden kwamen de tovenaar en zijn toveres uit een grot naast het kasteel. De tovenaar hief zijn handen op en riep : 'De goden hebben wraak genomen.'

Sorsor nam twee messen en wierp hen in de harten van de tovenaar en zijn toveres. Nu was de omgeving en het land vrij van hun onderdrukking. Sorsor hield zijn laatste toespraak tot zijn stam, en maakte toen Sliktior tot opperhoofd. Sorsor zou beginnen aan zijn grote reis naar de bergen van de goden. Dit gebeurde altijd als een opperhoofd een daad begaan had zoals Sorsor. Ze zouden Sorsor herinneren als hun held, en Sliktior zou Sorsor de Tweede heten.

Sorsor pakte Sliktior vast, kuste zijn voorhoofd, en vertrok. Niet veel nam hij mee. Zijn klederen werden verdeeld onder de stam, en ook grote delen van zijn bezit, terwijl er ook veel werd verbrand. Twee misdadigers werden aan de martelpaal geslagen, en zij zouden sterven in plaats van verbannen worden. Zij verkozen de dood boven het verbannen worden, want de verbanning was in hun ogen een veel grotere schande. Door de martelpaal zou hun geest in het kamp blijven, en door mee te strijden in de oorlogen zouden ze hun eer kunnen herstellen. Ja, de regels van het kamp waren van grote wreedheid, maar ook van grote genade, als een geheimzinnige paradox van rechtvaardigheid. Zo had Sorsor het hen geleerd.

Sorsor was een man van grote wijsheid, geschonken door de goden die hij niet kende. Nu hij door zijn list en sluwheid de tovenaar en toveres had verslagen was hij waardig die goden te leren kennen. De goden woonden in de bergen, naast andere tovenaars en grote elven. Maar eerst zou hij door die verschrikkelijke woestijn moeten waar de goden hem op de proef zouden stellen.

In de woestijn werd hij gekweld door waanideeen, luchtweerspiegelingen, honger en dorst. De pijn van de droogte stak hem. Een oase was wat hij verlangde, een echte oase, maar alles was hier om hem te plagen. Er was hier niets te bereiken, en de plaaggeesten waren zijn enig gezelschap. Sorsor had niet geleerd in eenzaamheid te leven, en kon de leegte die zijn ziel teisterde niet aan. Hij wist dat de plaaggeesten niet per definitie slecht waren. Ze waren uitgezonden door de goden om hem te testen. Na een lange en angstige ervaring van leegheid en hopeloosheid riep hij het uit tot de plaaggeesten : ‘Als er dan niemand anders is, vullen jullie mij dan op, want de leegte vreet me weg.’ Gillend en joelend namen de plaaggeesten bezit van hem. Hier hadden ze lange tijd op gewacht, en nu zou Sorsor voorbereid zijn om de grotten van de goden te betreden. Het was de plaaggeest zelf die geplaagd werd en rust zocht, en die niet kon vinden. Nu de plaaggeest hem had vervuld stroomde er toverkracht door hem heen, en kon hij de goden bereiken zonder weg te smelten.

In een plaats van toverkolen ontmoette hij de god Prektiktion. De god bedankte hem dat Sorsor hem tot rust had gebracht, en de plaaggeest die Prektiktion tot hem had gezonden had aangenomen. Sorsor sprak over de verwoesting van het keizerlijke hart, en de god Prektiktion wist er alles van. ‘Ik heb jou die wijsheid gegeven,’ sprak de god. En de god vulde Sorsor met

een hele reeks toverkrachten. De god Prektiktion had vele tovenaars in dienst, en kon ook Sorsor goed gebruiken. De god gaf hem een fles vol andere goden die hij kon oproepen. Die andere goden hadden de meest vreemde namen die Sorsor moeilijk kon uitspreken.

Prektiktion sprak dat de stam van Sorsor nu was overgeleverd aan de krachten van de woestijn, want ook naar hen zouden de plaaggeesten op zoek gaan om hen te testen. Sorsor nam de fles en gooide hem tegen een stenen muur kapot. ‘Ik had beloofd hen met mijn leven te beschermen,’ sprak Sorsor. ‘Waarom ben ik hier ?’

‘Je had geen andere keus,’ sprak Prektiktion. Sorsor viel op de grond en huilde. Hij miste zijn stam.

‘Als zij de plaaggeest aannemen,’ sprak Prektiktion, ‘dan zal je hart met hen verbonden zijn.’

Na vele lange jaren kwam ook Sliktior tot de plaats van toverkolen, en vertelde Sorsor dat hij niet kwam vanwege een grote daad, maar omdat hij was verbannen. Sorsor viel neer in woede. Hij kon zich niet voorstellen dat zijn stam tot zoiets in staat zou zijn, maar later begreep hij het. Sliktior had lafheid vertoond. Sorsor vroeg zich af hoe een verbannene hier kon komen. Uit het oog van Prektiktion kwam een straal vuur die in een flits Sliktior verteerde. ‘Veel vaker komen hier bannelingen,’ sprak Prektiktion. ‘Zij kunnen hier komen met een geheime sleutel, maar hun lot is het vuur.’

‘Zijn zij indringers ?’ vroeg Sorsor. Maar Prektiktion schudde zijn hoofd. ‘Nee, zij worden toegelaten omdat zij dieven zijn. Zij nemen altijd een stukje weg van de stam als zij gaan. Zij zijn dus bijzonder in onze ogen, en onze ogen zullen dat bijzondere dan nemen.’

‘Maar waar is Sliktior dan nu ?’ vroeg Sorsor.

‘Hij is overgeleverd aan de wraak van de plaaggeesten,’ sprak Prektiktion.

Maar dat liet Sorsor niet op zich zitten, want hij hield meer van Sliktior dan van welke god of elf dan ook. Er was één ding dat hem liet strijden tegen de goden, en wat hij altijd droeg, en dat was een klein kruikje vastgemaakt aan een leren ketting om z’n nek. Zijn voorouders hadden hem verteld dat hij het flesje echter maar één keer kon gebruiken. Hij opende het flesje, en een stroom van gif sloeg de god neer. Sorsor greep een mes dat aan zijn been gebonden was door een band, en wierp het in het hart van de god zoals hij eens de tovenaar en de tovenares had uitgeschakeld. Op hetzelfde moment

werd de huid van de god opengescheurd en Sliktior stapte eruit, als een priemend vuur. ‘Raak me niet aan !’ riep Sliktior. Maar Sorsor greep hem stevig vast. ‘Aan de wraak van de plaaggeesten zal je niet overgeleverd zijn,’ sprak Sorsor, ‘maar weest gastvrij voor hen, want aan de wraak der goden waren ze overgeleverd.’ Er zat nog één druppel in het flesje waar Sorsor Sliktior van liet drinken, en de plaaggeest vervulde toen ook hem.

Samen zijn ze toen door de woestijn naar hun stam teruggegaan. Maar de andere goden hadden zich gevestigd in het kamp, en hadden de indiaanse elven tot slavernij gedwongen. Het flesje was leeg, maar omdat Sliktior van het flesje had gedronken was hij immuun. En zo bevrijdde Sliktior zijn stam van de goden, en werd hij in ere hersteld.

Sorsor zou weer teruggaan naar de bergen, en ditmaal niet om tot de goden te gaan, maar tot de grote elven. De grote elven droegen zorg voor vele plaaggeesten die ze uit de verschrikkelijke handen van de goden hadden weggekregen. Toen Sorsor een groot aantal grote elven had leren kennen stelden ze hem aan als opperhoofd van een stam van indiaanse plaaggeesten. Deze indiaanse plaaggeesten konden toveren als de beste, en Sorsor moest oppassen dat ze hem niet in de val lieten lopen. Vaak moest er een grote elf ingrijpen.

Na vele jaren kwam ook Sliktior naar deze plaats, en deze keer niet omdat hij verbannen was, maar omdat hij de stam van indiaanse elven een nieuwe grote dienst had bewezen, zo groot als de daad van Sorsor. Sliktior nam de taak van Sorsor nu hier over, en Sorsor vertrok dieper in de bergen. Sorsor kwam tot een plaats waar veel indiaanse tovenaars woonden, en hij zag in dat zij veel grotere plaaggeesten waren dan degenen die hij al kende. Ze waren duivels wreed, maar daarnaast ook genadig, als een wet die hij ook eens kende, de paradox van rechtvaardigheid. Fliktivian was een woestijnvlinder die grote luchtweerspiegelingen kon veroorzaken, en Sorsor ontmoette vele anderen. Sorsor kwam erachter dat zij uiteindelijk verantwoordelijk waren voor alle moeizame tafereeltjes van zijn leven, maar ditmaal waren ze vriendelijk naar hen, alsof hij nu één van hen was. Sorsor kwam er echter achter dat velen van hen niet deugden, en slachtte hen af in verschrikkelijke gevechten. In deze gevechten leerde hij wat ware gemeenheid was, en dat de ogenschijnlijke genade de gemeenheid nog groter maakte. Want Sorsor raakte ervan in de war, en werd zo een gemakkelijke prooi. Maar Sliktior volgde hem op de voet, en maakte zijn meester vrij. Er waren geheimenissen die Sliktior droeg waar Sorsor nog geen weet van had.

Sorsor had vele vragen, vragen die beantwoord zouden worden op zijn pad door de woestijnen en de bergketens. Het was alsof alles bijdroeg aan de grote puzzel in zijn hoofd, maar sommige stukjes leken alles weer af te breken. Sorsor raakte erg verwilderd. Op een dag vond Sorsor een heleboel plaaggeesten in een flesje. Als hij ze vrij zou laten, zouden dingen dan erger worden of beter ? Hij wist dat ze waren gezonden om te plagen, en eigenlijk

had hij genoeg van het geplaag. Hij wist dat als hij het niet zou openen, dan zou waarschijnlijk iemand anders het openen. Sorsor besloot het flesje om z'n nek te dragen, om het in gevallen van nood te gebruiken. Je kon nooit weten. Maar later besloot hij het diep in de woestijn te begraven, want er waren al genoeg plaaggeesten op de wereld.

Einde

Het Toverwapen

De indiaanse strijder hakte er op los met zijn mes. Ditkeer was er geen ontsnappen aan, want hij was omsingeld door een groep apen. Geen van de apen gaf snel op, ook al bracht de indiaan hen flink wat wonden toe. Ook al lagen na een tijd veel apen op de grond, de laatste aap greep de indiaan en bracht hem mee in een boom. De indiaan bloedde hevig, en vroeg zich af waarom de aap hem niet verscheurde. In een hoge boomhut werd de indiaan op een bed gelegd. Een vrouw begon zijn rug te masseren. Waarom verbond ze zijn wonden niet als ze zo vriendelijk was ? Haar handen zaten na een tijdje onder het bloed.

'Ach, dat droogt wel op,' zei de vrouw. De aap scheurde zijn huid van zich weg en bleek een andere vrouw te zijn. Lachend keken de vrouwen de indiaan aan. 'Maar ... maar .... wie zijn die andere apen dan ? Ze liggen bloedend op de grond,' zei de indiaan stotterend. 'En zou je je handen niet eens wassen ?' De vrouw met bloed aan haar handen liep de boomhut uit, en dook vanaf een tak in de rivier. Wat een nachtmerrie leek liep op een droom uit. De vrouwen waren hem helemaal niet vijandig gezind.

De man dook haar achterna en ook de andere vrouw. Snel zwommen ze naar de kant, en de vrouwen lieten hem zien dat de apen toch wel echt apen waren. 'Ik kwam je gewoon redden,' zei de vrouw. 'Als ik er niet was geweest, dan hadden de apen je verscheurd. Ik draag toverkrachten. Mijn moeder was een indiaanse elf.' De man keek de vrouw diep in de ogen, en zag een glinstering.

'Heus,' zei één van de vrouwen, 'je moet niet meer teruggaan naar je stam. Ze maken alleen maar oorlog.' Maar de indiaan wilde terug, en ging weg na de vrouwen te hebben bedankt.

De vrouwen hadden nog veel te doen. Ze moesten wat dingen in de rivier wassen, en die avond zouden ze naar de indiaanse elvenstam gaan waar hun moeder vandaan kwam. Hun moeder leefde niet meer, maar ze hadden nog steeds contact met haar stam. De twee vrouwen waren halfzusters.

Die avond laat kwamen ze in het kamp van de indiaanse elven aan. Er was veel gezang, en de elven vierden een vreemd feest. Het was een oorlogsfeest, en het zag er erg luguber uit. De elven dronken bloed, en maakten oorlogswapens. De vrouwen waren wel wat gewend, maar ze wilden juist dat al die oorlogen zouden stoppen. Na een tijdje verlieten ze het kamp huilend.

De oorlogselven maakten zichzelf paraat. Ze hadden net een strijd achter de rug en maakten zich al op voor de volgende strijd. Intussen vielen de twee halfzusters elkaar in de boomhut in de armen. Snikkend vertelden ze elkaar hoe afschuwelijk ze al die oorlogen vonden, en dat ze er niet meer tegenkonden. Volgens hen moest er veel meer getoverd worden, en minder gestreden. ‘Als we nu een middel hadden,’ zuchtte de ene vrouw .... ‘Laten we op zoek gaan in de rivier,’ sprak de andere vrouw.

De indiaanse elven waren inmiddels in een bloedig gevecht tegen een andere stam. Die nacht brak er iets in de lucht. De vrouwen hadden iets gevonden, een oude steen op de bodem van de rivier. Maar door de steen werd alles alleen maar erger, want de steen bezat oorlogslust. De vrouwen raakten erdoor betoverd, en gingen terug naar de indiaanse elvenstam. ‘Wij hebben ons bedacht,’ zeiden de vrouwen. ‘Oorlog is goed, anders worden we iemands anders bezit. We moeten vechten voor ons leven. Maak ons tot jullie soldaten.’ En toen begonnen de elven hun harten naar hen te openen en vertelden over zovelen van hun die in andere stammen in slavernij leefden. De oorlog was nodig om hen te bevrijden, en zolang er geen tovermiddeltjes daarvoor waren was dat de enige oplossing. Maar oorlog maakte ook zoveel kapot, en de elven leerden te delen in elkaars lot.

Maar er was één wat oudere elf met een lange baard die altijd zei dat wijsheid en list veel belangrijker waren dan oorlog. Hij vertelde de elven altijd over de grote reis die ze moesten maken in plaats van bij elkaar te hangen voor wraak en oorlog. In zijn ogen mochten de elven alleen een wapen dragen om zichzelf op die reis te verdedigen, maar ze moesten de eenzaamheid ingaan om zo wijs te worden. Oorlog zou veel te veel kapotmaken.

Sommigen vonden wel dat hij gelijk had, maar anderen vonden hem een oude zeur met dromerige ideeen. Toen de vrouwen hem leerden kennen kon de oude elf hen best wel snel weer uit hun betovering halen, en op een dag besloten ze met z’n drieen de grote reis te maken. De oude elf had er zo lang op gewacht dat er iemand met hem mee zou gaan, en nu zouden er zelfs twee meegaan. Hij hoopte dat de rest zou volgen, maar dat gebeurde niet. En zo

vertrokken ze met z'n drieen. De indiaanse elvenstam waren blij te zijn verlost van de oude elf.

De elf had in zijn jongere jaren al eerder zo'n reis gemaakt, en was daarna naar zijn stam teruggekeerd om de anderen daarover te onderwijzen. De grote reis zou tovenaars van hen maken, maar daarvoor moesten ze op een moment wel hun eigen weg kiezen.

De elf zei dat als ze echte tovenaars zouden worden, dan zouden ze pas echt anderen kunnen helpen en bevrijden. Maar eerst zouden ze daarvoor moeten leren verdwijnen en verschijnen, anders zouden ze nog steeds gevangen kunnen worden. De vrouwen hadden wel wat toverkrachten, maar echte tovenaressen waren ze nog niet.

De oude elf zei dat op de vlaktes van de eenzaamheid en vergetelheid vele wilde dieren leefden die ze eerst moesten overwinnen. Deze wilde dieren zouden hun toverkrachten proberen tegen te houden. De elf wilde de vrouwen uitleggen hoe ze moesten jagen, maar de vrouwen vroegen of er geen andere manier was. 'Nee,' zei de elf. 'Je moet de confrontaties aangaan met de heren van de duisternis die in zoveel vormen tot je zullen komen.' De elf sprak dat de wilde dieren hen onherroepelijk zouden vinden, en dan zouden ze moeten vechten voor hun leven. 'Het vlees van de zelfverdediging zal je in leven houden. Dat is iets anders dan oorlog, en eigenlijk ook iets anders dan jacht. Op de grote reis mag je een wapen dragen om jezelf te verdedigen.'

De vrouwen vonden de elf erg luguber als ze hem zagen eten van achtergelaten dode wilde dieren, maar toen ze even later met hun eigen ogen zagen hoe gevaarlijk zulke wilde dieren waren begonnen ze het steeds gewoner te vinden. De elf maakte klederen van de afgestroopte huiden, ook om andere wilde dieren af te schrikken, of om hen te laten denken dat hij één van hen was.

De elf leidde hen naar een meer van bloed, waarvan de bodem geheel van vlees was gemaakt. 'Als je tovenaar wil worden, dan zul je eerst het meer moeten overzwemmen,' sprak de elf. Dat vonden de vrouwen een beetje teveel van het goede, maar toen ze de elf zagen duiken zwommen ze hem achterna. De velden achter het meer waren branderig, en het ruikte er naar gebraden vlees. Verderop zagen ze hoe de meest gevaarlijke wilde dieren werden gebraden.

'Is er geen tovermiddel om die noodzakelijke jacht van zelfverdediging te laten stoppen voor een andere oplossing ?' vroeg één van de vrouwen. Maar de elf schudde zijn hoofd. Toveren was in wezen ook gewoon een strijd en een jacht. Er moesten bedreigende dingen overwonnen worden, om daarna

getransformeerd te worden. ‘Tovenaar wordt je door gevaarlijke toverbeesten te eten,’ sprak de elf. ‘Zij blokkeren namelijk de weg tot het tovenaarschap en zij dragen alle toverkrachten die eigenlijk van jou zijn.’

‘Maar is dat niet gevaarlijk om zulke toverbeesten te eten ? Zijn ze niet giftig, of betoverend ?’ vroeg de andere vrouw. ‘Eerst is de strijd van buiten,’ zei de elf, ‘en als je ze gegeten hebt is er een strijd van binnen. Maar beide vormen van strijd zijn belangrijk voor het behalen van tovenaarschap.’

En zo werd de jacht op de toverbeesten een feit, want iedereen wist toen dat aanval vaak de beste verdediging was. Op een bepaald punt moesten de vrouwen en de elf alleen verder, en zo kozen ze alledrie een eenzaam pad. En ze merkten dat toen ze tovenaar werden ze konden verdwijnen en verschijnen, en zo nooit meer een slachtoffer waren. Ook merkten ze dat ze de ander alleen maar konden helpen door hen ook de grote reis te laten maken. Want iemand zal altijd gevangen blijven zolang hij nog niet kan verdwijnen en verschijnen : gevangen in zichzelf. Maar toen ze de eerste fase van het tovenaarschap voorbij waren merkten ze ook dat er hogere toverkrachten waren, en zo ontstond er een geheel nieuwe strijd en daarbij een hele nieuwe jacht, om los te komen van een veel diepere gevangenschap, die van de onwetendheid. En zo waren er dus vele vormen van zelfverdediging die langzaam maar zeker als gewoon werden beschouwd. En zo werden zowel jacht als oorlog twee wapens van de zelfverdediging.

Het op de uitkijk staan, een bezigheid die beide vrouwen en de oude elf begonnen lief te hebben toen ze hun eigen toverkasteel hadden verworven, en hun eigen toverheuvel. Vele toverwapens hadden ze zichzelf bereid, om hun tovenaarschap tot grotere hoogtes te drijven.

Einde

De Elvenoorlogen

Geen wapen bleef onaangeroerd in de bloederige elvenoorlog tussen de indiaanse elvenstammen. En eigenlijk draaide het in die oorlog alleen om tranenstenen, bloedkoraalachtige toverstenen. Gekrijs en gegil vulde de nacht, totdat een joelende stam uiteindelijk had gewonnen. Ze droegen de toverstenen naar een geheime plek, en probeerden verder de hele oorlog te verwerken. De oorlog had lang geduurd, maar het doel was nu bereikt.

Witsmiktiel, de indiaanse elvensmid van de stam die de elvenoorlog had gewonnen smolt de stenen om, en zo kon er een nieuw daglicht komen over alle stammen. Nog nooit gingen zoveel elven in slavernij, en nog nooit was er zoveel doem in de omgeving. Het vee van de elvenstammen die in de oorlog ten onder was gegaan werd vollop geslacht, wat een zwarte bladzij was in de geschiedenis van de indiaanse elven. Zelfs de winnende stam gaf dat later toe, want waar was alles om te doen ? Om tranenstenen die omgesmolten moesten worden, zodat er nieuw daglicht zou komen : allemaal om slaven te maken : Elven in boten, elven op fokkerijen, elven in de bouw, van alles.

Er was een man, een elf, Timgrimado, die hen uiteindelijk de onzin van dit alles liet inzien. Hij stal de omgesmolten stenen en liet er een wapen van maken waarmee hij hen allen zou domineren. Afschaffen liet hij alle slavernij, alle fokkerij en slachterij, en hij leerde hen te vechten voor henzelf in plaats van voor anderen, zodat ze ook niet anderen voor zichzelf zouden gebruiken. Sindsdien was er wel veel onverschilligheid, maar men bleef in ieder geval van elkaar af. Timgrimado vertrok later weer, maar vertelde hen dat hij ze allemaal zou slopen als ze weer in hun oude wegen zouden terugvallen.

Velen probeerden erachter te komen waar Timgrimado naartoe was gegaan, maar niemand wist het. Velen verlieten hun stam om ook als Timgrimado te ‘vertrekken’. Niemand wist precies wat dat inhield, maar men vond dat wel stoer. Zelfs kinderen kondigden soms aan hun stam te verlaten, maar vaak stonden de ouders dat niet toe. Voor een elf was het belangrijk om tovenaar te worden, om de eenzaamheid en de vergetelheid te domineren, in plaats van elkaar. Ja, Timgrimado had hen wijze lessen geleerd.

Maar na tijden begonnen de verhalen over Timgrimado steeds meer weg te vagen, totdat op een bepaald moment niemand meer echt wist wie of wat Timgrado nou precies was, en men begon terug te vallen in oude gewoontes. En zo ontstond er een nieuwe elvenoorlog, nog luguberder dan die daarvoor. Ditmaal ging de oorlog om goud. Enkele indiaanse elvenstammen hadden goudmijnen gevonden. Weer brak er een tijd aan van slavernij voor de onderworpen stammen, en weer begonnen fokkerijen en slachterijen volop te bloeien. De grote winnaar van de oorlog was Herpidasis, het opperhoofd van een wrede indiaanse elvenstam. Herpidasis maakte zichzelf tot keizer van alle onderworpen stammen, en het moest genade heten dat hij ze in leven liet. Natuurlijk moesten ze bijna allemaal in de goudmijnen werken, en niemand maar dan ook niemand dacht over Timgrimado, omdat niemand meer wist wie hij was.

En daarom was het dan ook een extra verrassing toen hij ineens voor de deur stond. Hij was net zo verwilderd als vroeger, alsof hij vanuit de dieptes van

de eenzaamheid en de vergetelheid kwam. Ditkeer was Timgrimado erger dan hij ooit was. Hij greep Herpidasis bij z'n nek en rukte z'n kop eraf. Alle volgelingen van Herpidasis maakte hij tot slaaf door onverwoestbare rode toverketens om hun nek, en zo voerde hij hen allen mee naar zijn duistere kastelen diep in de vergetelheid. Woest brulde Timgrimado tot zijn slaven : 'Ik heb jullie eerst geleerd niet van slavernij te leven en elkaar vrij te laten zoals ik jullie vrijliet. Maar omdat jullie niet naar mij wilden luisteren laat ik jullie nu zien dat hij die van slaven leeft zelf een slaaf is.' En zo moesten de slaven hard werken in de mijnen onder de duistere kastelen van Timgrimado.

Maar op een dag wist één van de slaven vrij te komen, en stal het wapen van tranenstenen dat Timgrimado in bezit had. De slaaf ging er direkt mee naar Timgrimado toe en hief het wapen in de lucht : 'Zie je dit hier !' krijste de slaaf. 'Dit heb jij eens gestolen en je macht opgeeist, maar nu is het van ons.' En een bliksemstraal kwam van het wapen af om Timgrimado te ketenen. De slaaf zette verder met het wapen alle andere slaven vrij, en samen voerden ze Timgrimado mee naar hun oude domein. Hier maakten ze weer alle andere stammen tot hun slaaf, en Timgrimado werd in een kerker geworpen. En sindsdien stond de wreedheid van de overheersende stam op het toppunt. Het werd zo erg dat machtige tovenaars hun legers stuurden, alleen maar om te ontdekken dat Herpidasis en zijn elven hun slavenrijk met onbreekbare hand uitbreiden. Na een tijdje waagde zich geen enkele tovenaar er nog aan. En zo werd Herpidasis zelfs de schrik der tovenaars.

Maar Timgrimado wist een gat te graven in zijn kerker tot diep onder de grond. Hier vond hij zogenaamde gilstenen waar hij een nieuw wapen van maakte. Timgrimado bleek onoverwinnelijk door het nieuwe wapen, nadat hij er de deur van de kerker mee had gesloopt. Een wachter probeerde hem te grijpen, maar snel onthoofde Timgrimado de wachter en nam zijn helm en pantser. Niet lang daarna had Timgrimado het hele keizershuis onderworpen, omdat het wapen zo gilde dat iedereen erdoor in elkaar zakte wanneer Timgrimado zijn wapen richtte. Timgrimado begon de oude wetten weer te verkondigen, maar wist nu ook dat hij nooit meer zou terugkeren als hij zou vertrekken. Timgrimado voegde daarom geen waarschuwing meer achter de wetten, omdat hij niet nog een keer in de val gelokt wilde worden. De indiaanse elven moesten nu voor zichzelf zorgen. Hij raadde hen allemaal aan hun stammen te verlaten om de eenzaamheid en de vergetelheid op te zoeken.

Terug naar zijn duistere kastelen en mijnen kon hij niet, want daar zouden ze hem kunnen vinden, en daarom sloeg hij een totaal nieuwe richting in, en wiste zijn sporen uit. Hij wist dat zij die in stammen bleven leven ook oorlog zouden blijven voeren.

Einde

Hersenspinsels der Elven

Mirik, Mirit, en Sakja waren drie indiaanse oorlogselven. Ze hadden toverwapens, een heel kasteel vol, en ze deinsten niet terug voor bloederigheden en het drinken van bloed. Ze waren heel vampiristisch van aard.

Vaak vochten ze alledrie aan elkaars zijde, maar meestal leefden ze op zichzelf. De jacht deden ze meestal alleen. Er waren geen gruwelijkere en prachtigere elven dan hen, maar de wraak der heksen en tovenaars keerden vaak tegen hen.

Meestal als ze alleen waren kregen ze het zwaar te verduren, en daarom zochten ze elkaar nog weleens op. Gelukkig konden ze goed verdwijnen en verschijnen, en dat maakte alles iets makkelijker, maar er waren genoeg tovenaars en heksen, en genoeg boze elven die hen daarin met gemak konden volgen. Zij waren niet de enigen die konden verdwijnen en verschijnen. Ze hadden een hoge tovenaarsgraad, dat wel, maar hier woedde de oorlog het hardst.

Vaak smeerden ze zichzelf in met toverbloed, of namen ze een bad met tovergeuren. Het bad was bekleed met de huiden van allerlei toverbeesten die ze hadden verslagen. Maar als ze bij elkaar waren dan was er zoveel toverkracht dat het de meest gevaarlijke heksen aantrok, en daarom besloten ze op een dag voorgoed uit elkaar te gaan. Ieder van hen zou een richting kiezen, en ze zouden alleen nog maar voor zichzelf strijden.

Van huiden maakten ze een eigen wigwam in verlaten gebied. En sindsdien werd alles rustiger.

Ze wisten dat ze alleen veilig waren als ze op zichzelf waren. In die verlaten gebieden hadden ze nog wel veel strijd te voeren tegen de wilde dieren. Deze wilde dieren waren erg gevaarlijk, omdat ze in hen wilden wonen. Deze wilde dieren wilden bezit van hen nemen. En ze wisten dat ze de wilde dieren alleen konden overwinnen door bezit van hen te nemen. Daarom liepen ze vaak in verschillende dierenhuiden rond, en bovenal moesten ze steeds verdertrekken.

Sommige beesten waren zo groot dat als ze hen overwonnen hadden ze met gemak erin konden leven als in een tent. Ze kwamen erachter dat deze wilde dieren nog wel erger waren dan tovenaars en heksen. Als ze niet zo wild zouden zijn als deze beesten zelf, dan zouden ze hier niet standhouden. Wie zou denken dat hun paden weer zouden kruizen na een lange reis en een lange strijd tegen de wilde dieren en beesten ? Een wilde indiaanse elvenstam leefde hier, maar zij zouden daar alleen deel van kunnen worden als ze deze stam zouden verslaan in een schijngevecht.

Deze elven hadden de wilde dieren en beesten tot hun beschikking om erop te rijden. Ook voerden zij oorlog tegen anderen van die duistere elvenstammen, maar deze oorlogen waren slechts schijn. Door schijnoorlogen werden er contacten gelegd en door schijnoorlogen werden deze contacten verder uitgebouwd, tot in de diepste vriendschappen. Door schijnoorlogen beschermde men elkaar.

En zij kwamen door de diepste duisternissen tot de grootste lichtbronnen der elven, en tot een heleboel andere elvenparadoxen. De toverdranken brachten een roes in de elven, een passie en een lust, als een recht en een plicht. De elvenscenario's gingen diep, en waren wonderlijk in hun verdediging. Het waren schijnlichten, schijngesprekken, en zelfs schijnvriendschappen, alles om hun doelen te bereiken, de ijskoude wateren van een diepe eenzaamheid, waarin een prachtige tweeledigheid werd opgewekt, een zuivere tweeledigheid, zich in schijn uitstrekkende naar de driehoek. Dit alles tot makkelijker en sneller te verdwijnen en te verschijnen, om geheel op te lossen in een realiteit. Nee, makkelijk was het niet om de hogere tovergraden te bereiken, om deel te krijgen aan de hogere hersenspinsels der elven.

Einde

De Prins en de
Rode Zee

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Hoofdstuk 1. De Kronieken van Prinses Mekka

'Saturnus, met je paarse sneeuw,
Die diepe slaap brengt telkens weer,
Twee sterren in een steen,
Met Sirius vormde jij een grote zee,
De zee van Eldemor, waarop de aarde slaapt,
De sluier van paarse sneeuw die over haar waakt,
De ruiter van Eldemor rijdt over de golven,
Totdat het roze ons allemaal doet ontwaken,
In de droom van de rode zee,

Golf na golf komt het,

Slag na slag,

Omdat het rode op ons wacht.'

Op Saturnus lag een land van overweldigende pracht, van subtiele, ordenende gevoeligheid voor ritueel, ritme en regelmaat, bijna met een aangeboren vertrouwen in de hogere orde van de dingen, het hogere archief van bovenmenselijkheid, een paar stappen verder in evolutie dan de aarde. Boven op een trap was een klein meisje aan het huilen. Ze had een oude, kleine pop in haar hand. De tand van de tijd had haar beroert, en ze vertaalde dat op haar eigen manier. Ze kon nog niet zien wat er gaande was, maar ze nam dat wat ze kon begrijpen. Het was teveel voor haar, en ze voelde zich ongeholpen, eenzaam, totaal afgezonderd. Ze miste de paarse sneeuw. Ze mocht nooit naar buiten. Dat zou te gevaarlijk zijn. De zwarte drakenruiters waren op rooftocht. Zij roofden kinderen. Medelijden hadden zij niet. Met grote hardheid en wreedheid verstoorden zij de dromen van vaders en moeders. Nu werden de kinderen binnengehouden, in de hoop dat de drakenruiters niet zouden aankloppen om het huis te doorzoeken. Hoe dit kon gebeuren heeft een duistere en droeve geschiedenis.

In een land op Saturnus, het district Onterio, waarin een gebied genaamd Orn lag, leefden een oude koning en koningin. Zij wilden al heel lang een kind, maar zij konden geen kinderen krijgen. Op een dag ging hun wens toch in vervulling, tegen alle verwachtingen in. De koningin werd zwanger en baarde een prinsesje. Ze noemden haar prinses Mekka.

Op Saturnus was het heel gewoon draken als huisdier te hebben. Vooral de wat rijkeren hadden vaak vele draken. Dit was niet zonder gevaar, maar gewoonlijks werden de draken goed getemt voordat ze als huisdier konden functioneren. Wilde draken die niet getraind waren mochten absoluut niet verkocht worden aan de gewone burger. Toch ging het niet altijd goed met de getemde draken. Ze waren nog steeds duistere, geheimzinnige roofdieren met een onvoorspelbaar karakter. Het temmen kon dus van heel bedrieglijke aard zijn. Een draak kon het gewoon meespelen, maar als hij de kans zag, zou hij kunnen toeslaan. Eigenlijk werden alleen de goedaardige draken gebruikt voor de gewone burger, maar een draak kon plotseling veranderen, of zijn ware aard laten zien.

Als Lydia, de koningin van Onterio, wonende in Orn, het kon overdoen had zij haar dochter nooit een draak gegeven. Zij, en haar man, koning Azabarar, hadden hun dochtertje op jonge leeftijd een draak als huisdier gegeven, zodat het prinsesje vertrouwd kon raken met de dierenwereld. De kleine draak, Saubar, stond bekend als een goedaardig dier, goed voor kinderen ook. Met draken kon je vaak een diepe vriendschap opbouwen, en het hielp kinderen om sociale vaardigheden aan te leren. Al snel hadden het prinsesje en de

draak Saubar een hechte band. Zij kon zelfs rondvliegen op de draak, alhoewel Saubar was getraind niet hoog te gaan met kinderen. De draak had een gele, bijna gouden huid. Het meisje hield ervan de huid van de draak te strelen. In de winters kleurde zijn huid altijd paars, terwijl het onder zijn vleugels wit werd.

Helaas werd de draak ernstig ziek en stierf. Als troost werd een andere draak aan het meisje gegeven : de draak Oros. Oros was een goed getemde draak, getemd door de beste drakentemmers van Onterio. Hij leek heel goedaardig, maar sloeg toch plotseling om. Hij was getraind om laag te blijven vliegen met kinderen, maar hij nam het prinsesje plotseling mee op een hele hoge en verre tocht. Hij vloog met haar de wildernis in, naar een berg, waar hij een grot binnenging, waar gevaarlijke, ongetemde draken leefden.

Het prinsesje werd sindsdien opgesloten gehouden. Koning Azabarar en koningin Lydia waren er kapot van, en sindsdien was koningin Lydia depressief. Er werden vele zoektochten gehouden, maar het prinsesje werd niet gevonden. De gruwelijkheden van haar gevangenschap zal ik u verder besparen. Sindsdien werden draken als huisdieren verbannen in het hele land Onterio. Ook werden er sindsdien vele aanvallen gedaan door wilde draken op de steden en dorpen van Onterio. Zij kwamen voornamelijk om kinderen te roven. Dit getal liep hoog op, en het werd zo erg dat kinderen tijdelijk niet meer buiten mochten spelen, omdat het te gevaarlijk was. Vaak werden er zwarte ruiters gezien die de draken schenen te berijden. Het was de tijd van de drakenruiters.

De broer van koningin Lydia, de oom van het prinsesje, en raadsheer van het koninklijke paleis in Orn vond dat het tijd was om de prins van Eldemor in te schakelen. Sopraan was er inmiddels achtergekomen waar de prinses verborgen werd gehouden.

In korte woorden vertel ik u dit, vanwege het grote en zware leed hieraan verbonden. De kronieken van prinses Mekka draag ik met mij mee.

Hoofdstuk 2. De Ontmoeting met Sopraan

Aan de zeeen van Eldemor zat hij. Zijn tranen waren van bloed, die zich mengden met het water. De zee was wild, en hij strompelde in het water, verder en verder, daar waar de golven hem meenamen. De golven waren zwart en paars, waar hij slaperig van werd. Hij droomde, alsof hij op een reusachtig schip was op de golven. Als een vogel vloog hij op vanuit de golven, terwijl de lichten van Saturnus op hem straalden. Ze bewogen hem, ze namen hem op.

Op de vleugelen van Saturnus was hij. Een beverig licht, bijna broeiend. Hij zag de bomen in de verte, die bijna naar hem leken te wuiven. De wind speelde met hun takken en bladeren. Plotseling was hij bedolven onder de bladeren. Hij zag prikkeldraad voor zich. Hij wist dat hij nu terugmoest, maar iets riep hem.

Michael was bij hem. Michael had zijn zwaard getrokken. Zoveel prikkeldraad was voor hen, hen bedreigende. 'Zoon van Eldemor, kom nader,' werd er geroepen. Het was een bulderende stem in de verte. 'Maar er is prikkeldraad !' riep hij. Toen was er even veel licht, alsof het prikkeldraad begon weg te smelten.

Door het wegsmeltende prikkeldraad kwam een man in een lang wit gewaad van heel fijne stof. De man had een lange baard, en stak zijn hand uit. Ook had hij een blauwe riem die paarsachtig aandeed.

'Sopraan is de naam,' sprak hij.

De prins van Eldemor veegde wat tranen van bloed uit zijn ogen weg, en schudde de hand van de man. In de verte hoorden ze het gehuil van wolven. Michael bleef toekijken op een afstand.

'De wolven huilen, omdat je gekomen bent,' sprak Sopraan.

'Waarom ?' vroeg de prins.

'Omdat je het eeuwige boek in je hoofd draagt,' sprak Sopraan. 'Het zit daar als een litteken, eens geslagen door een draak.'

De prins herinnerde zich het gevecht, waarin zijn hoofd verwond raakte. Het leek wel alsof de draak in zijn hoofd kon komen, en het brandwonden aanbracht op zijn hersenen. Dat was op de planeet Sirius, waar hij een prinses redde. Prinses Regenboog, ook wel Prinses Aurora genoemd. Hij nam haar mee naar zijn wereld, de aarde. Ze was een vrouw van rond de vierenveertig. Ze had zijn moeder kunnen wezen. Ze was een koppige vrouw, en dat had haar in de problemen gebracht. Om in zijn wereld te komen moest ze door een lange tunnel om haar geheugen en identiteit te verliezen, waardoor ook de draak de macht over haar zou verliezen, en ze zou opnieuw geboren moeten worden door een vrouw. Hevig had ze met hem gebekvecht, maar uiteindelijk zag ze in dat er geen andere weg was. Toen ze geboren werd in zijn wereld wilde ze hem en de vrouw die haar gebaard had niet aankijken. Telkens draaide ze haar gezichtje weg. Zou de

draak nog steeds een zekere macht over haar hebben gehad ? Hij herinnerde het dubbele in haar. Hij zag ook haar kwaliteiten. Wie wilde er nu met een draakse vrouw in één huis leven ? Maar hij had geen andere keus, en hij hield ook van haar. Als baby was ze nog steeds koppig, maar verder wel rustig. Ze kon zo ineens toeslaan, en dan liet ze al haar registers los, en sloeg over een geheel andere boeg. Eens nam de draak haar mee, door haar wispelturigheid. Eens sprak de draak haar toe, vastberaden om haar tot één van zijn pionnen te maken. Maar de prins gooide roet in het eten, door het eeuwige boek in zijn hoofd. Al eerder had de draak hem geslagen. Hij kwam te dichtbij de heilige relikwieen van Sirius, relikwieen die het universum zouden kunnen veranderen. Hij was dronken geraakt van een hemels sap, en kwam tot diep in de tempelen van Sirius, waar hij zijn weg vond tot aan de heilige ark. Toen hij de heilige ark aanraakte werd hij weggeslingerd, en de draak blies op hem, om zijn hoofd zwaar te verwonden.

'In Sirius zal je grafstede zijn, in Sirius zal je scepter begraven worden,' siste de draak, maar de verwondingen zorgden er juist voor dat het eeuwige boek tot geboorte kwam in het hoofd van de prins. Het eeuwige boek was als een brullend monster in zijn hoofd, totaal verwilderd. Met het monster kon hij het slot openmaken van de kerker van de prinses. Waarom koos hij deze koppige vrouw ? Vanwege haar sieraad. Zij kon de bloemen laten groeien, de mist laten optrekken als een weergodin.

'Ik denk dat je niet helemaal begrijpt waar het om gaat,' sprak Sopraan.

De prins keek op. Hij was te diep in gedachten gezonken geweest. 'Ik weet waarvoor je bent gekomen,' sprak Sopraan. 'Je hebt de helft van een sieraad, en nu wil je de andere helft, om de draken voorgoed te verslaan. Ze zijn naar je op jacht, met hun trollenlegers, en nu zoek je hulp.'

De prins knikte, weer tranen van bloed uit zijn gezicht wegvegende.

'Is ze veilig ?' vroeg Sopraan.

'Wie ?' sprak de prins.

'De vrouw van de eerste helft van het sieraad,' sprak Sopraan.

'Ja,' zei de prins. 'Ze is bij mij, maar een beetje koppig.'

'Het sieraad is los van de andere delen. Daarom volgt het haar eigen weg, en het brengt haar in de problemen,' sprak Sopraan.

'Zoon van Eldemor, je vader was een elvenkoning, en je moeder een feeenkoningin,' sprak Sopraan. 'Nu, de draken hebben jouw familie verscheurt, door het familie-sieraad te verscheuren, om de buit te verdelen onder elkaar, maar doordat het sieraad van Eldemor niet hun eigendom was, hebben de verschillende afgescheurde delen van het sieraad wraak gezworen.

Zij kwamen toen in de handen van zeven prinsessen, waarvan vijf gestorven zijn. Het sieraad werd deels hersteld, maar bestaat nog steeds uit twee delen. Eén deel is met jou, en het andere deel is hier.”

'Hoe krijg ik het sieraad ?' vroeg de prins.

'Het is met prinses Mekka, mijn nichtje,' zei Sopraan. 'Ook zij wordt opgesloten gehouden door een draak.'

'Alweer een draak ?' bromde de prins. 'Alsof we het nog niet met genoeg draken aan de stok hebben.'

'Vele draken,' zei Sopraan. 'Onthoudt dat zij je familie verscheurden.' De prins knikte. Hij herinnerde zich als de dag van gisteren hoe Gesim, de draak van Sirius, zijn vader, de elvenkoning vermoordde. Dit was een zwarte dag in de geschiedenis. De prins werd weer duizelig toen hij eraan dacht. Hij was zo jong toen dat gebeurde. Vanaf toen moest hij zijn vader elke dag missen. 'Die vieze gele draak,' dacht de prins bij zichzelf.

'Alleen jij kunt haar bevrijden,' sprak Sopraan. 'Jij draagt immers het eeuwige boek in je hoofd.'

Sopraan wenkte hem, en leidde hem naar een lange ondergrondse tunnel. 'Vijf dagen lopen,' sprak Sopraan, 'en dan kom je aan bij haar kerker. Maar Oros, de draak, bewaakt haar.'

De prins hapt plotseling naar adem. Er klopte iets niet. Hij grijpt naar zijn keel, naar het amulet wat daar hangt, als een half sieraad, een halve amulet, vastgemaakt aan een kettinkje. Plotseling wordt het duizelig voor zijn ogen. Even later wordt hij wakker in de armen van Sopraan. 'De draak valt je nu al aan,' sprak Sopraan. 'Zoon van Eldemor, de poort is open.' Plotseling zag de prins een helder licht voor hem, als een geopende poort. Hij kon daar zo binnenstappen, samen met Michael. Ook Matthias was met hen. Woest sloeg de draak toe. 'Oros !' riep Michael. 'De ene helft van het sieraad zoekt de andere helft. Je kunt het niet tegenhouden !' Woedend sloeg de draak weer van zich af. Ze werden allen geraakt als door bliksem. De prins beet op zijn lip. Hij trok het zwaard wat hij eens van Matthias had gekregen. Maar de draak sloeg hen zo ver weg dat de prins wegzonk in de zee. Even voelde hij zich alsof hij zou verdrinken, maar toen voelde hij Michael en Matthias die hem weer optrokken. Het was geweldig zulke gevleugelde vrienden te hebben. 'Gebruik het boek,' sprak Matthias, 'het eeuwige boek.'

De prins greep naar zijn hoofd. Hij had allemaal steken. 'Ik bestrijd je door het eeuwige boek in mijn hoofd, Oros !' riep de prins. Overal verscheen vuur, alsof het vuur regende. Wild sloeg de draak met zijn staart. Ineens was alles stil. Er verscheen poezie in het hoofd van de prins. Hij kon het zo lezen. Weer lag hij in de zee, maar ditmaal had hij prinses Mekka in zijn armen.

'Het sieraad is herenigd,' sprak Sopraan.

Hoofdstuk 3. De Zwarte Wachter

Ook prinses Mekka bracht hij tot zijn wereld, de aarde. Ook zij werd opnieuw geboren, in de schoot van dezelfde vrouw die de eerste prinses had gebaart. Zij kwamen door op grote hoogtes, waar de draken hen niet konden vinden. Verborgen moesten zij worden, en verborgen moesten zij opgroeien, achter donkere gordijnen, en zij mochten niet veel aan hun prinsessen-levens herinnert worden in het begin, opdat de draken hen niet zouden grijpen. Ze moesten hun herinneringen verliezen. Dat gebeurde door de geboorte. Zij gingen door de grote tunnel van Tsaar. Zo werden zij schoongewassen, en zo verloren de draken elk spoor. Maar beiden hadden deels een draakse natuur. Op zich was dit geen probleem. Er waren ook goede draken. Maar zij hadden teveel overgenomen van hun slechte draakse meesters. Die natuur zou moeten sterven. Dit zou gebeuren in de grote tunnel van Tsaar.

De prins wist dat hij een hoge prijs moest betalen. Hij droeg het volledige sieraad nu, het sieraad wat het eeuwige boek geheel zou opwekken. In de grote tunnel van Tsaar voelde hij zich wegglijden. Hij gleed tot de grote feeen rivier, de Sep, terwijl de draken achter hem joegen. Alles glipte uit zijn vingers en hij moest alles loslaten. Een groot kwaad was opgestaan. Hij droeg het geheim diep van binnen. De drakenstaart had hem zwaar verwond. Hij kon niets meer vasthouden.

Ze joegen op hem, zes draken, om het eeuwige boek in hem te doven. Grote trollenlegers kwamen tot de feeen rivier, de Sep, om grote slachtingen aan te richten. De prins was aangekomen in een feeen huis, waar ze hem verborgen hielden. De zes draken-koningen doorzochten het hele feeen land, maar konden hem niet vinden. In zijn dromen werd de prins meegetrokken met feeen. Hij moest een feeenridder worden om te kunnen overleven. Het eeuwige boek moest hij schrijven. Zijn pen was zijn zwaard.

Sopraan zocht hem vaak op, en hij maakte contact met de ouders van prinses Mekka. Zij waren hem erg dankbaar, want hij had hun dochter gered van de draak. Zij zonden hem vele gaven. Toen het eeuwige boek werd verspreid onder de feeen was dit een grote overwinning. De trollenlegers werden weggedreven van de feeen rivier, de Sep. De prins moest veel schrijven. Hij had niets meer van zijn verleden. Hij voelde zich arm, maar het eeuwige boek was een grote rijkdom voor hem. De prins leidde een sober leven, maar de feeen waren met hem. Als hij niet sober zou leven, dan zouden de draken

teveel houvast hebben. Dagelijks baadde de prins in de feeen rivier, de Sep. Hij was een feeen ridder nu, met een grote opdracht.

Ondertussen kwamen de trollenlegers tot een grotere duisternis : een vals licht, het licht van Paam. Illusies bouwden ze op de aarde met dit licht, om te proberen de prinsessen te strikken. De prinsessen leefden in het diepe ijs van de tunnel van Tsaar, afgesloten van hun verleden. Zij droomden dromen uit een orakel, maar soms waren er nachtmerries. Nog steeds leefden ze onder de druk van de draken. De prins bewaakte hen zo goed als hij kon.

De lichten van Paam kwamen ook tot de feeen wereld, om vele feeen te misleiden, en hun ridders. De prins streed met het eeuwige boek, om diepere betekenis te vinden. Vaak leken de deuren gesloten te zijn.

In de woestijn van Dejam, ver weg van de feeen rivier, de Sep, in een afgelegen, verwilderde feeen tempel lag een gevaarlijke trollensteen, de Evit. De feeen wisten niet of het een goede of slechte steen was. Sommigen geloofden dat het een goede steen was, terwijl anderen geloofden dat het een slechte steen was, en weer anderen geloofden dat de steen niet goed en niet slecht was. De steen doodde vele feeenpriesters en priesteressen. Niet velen durfden bij de steen te komen. Vanwege het grote gevaar van de steen werd de steen achter een gordijn geplaatst. Dit gordijn was paars, en paarse wachters stonden ervoor. Alleen hogepriesters en hogepriesteressen mochten nog bij de steen komen, maar zelfs dat ging niet altijd goed, en jaarlijks kwamen er nog verschillende hogepriesters en hogepriesteressen om, vanwege de grilligheid van de steen. Niemand kon de steen eigenlijk vertrouwen. De steen was als een onvoorspelbaar roofdier. De steen werd gehoorzaamt uit pure angst.

Op een dag gebood de steen te worden geworpen in de feeen rivier, de Sep. De steen werd gedragen door zeven door de steen geselecteerde hogepriesters. Toen de steen in de feeen rivier, de Sep, werd geworpen, werden de zeven hogepriesters gedood door een straal komende vanuit de steen. De steen werd zacht en begon te veranderen in een zwarte wachter, die de rivier overzwom. De zwarte wachter was op weg naar de prins. Hij spande zijn zwarte boog, waar hij een zwarte pijl oplegde, en rende naar de schuilplaats van de prins, waar hij verborgen werd gehouden door feeen. De prins zat achter zijn schrijftafel. Plotseling was er een zwarte pijl op zijn neus gericht.

'Het sieraad, waar is het,' sprak de wachter met een trage en lage stem. Even werd de prins duizelig, en voelde alsof hij zou flauwvallen. 'Prins Jagerstouw, geef het sieraad direct hier,' sprak de wachter. De prins stond op, en liep naar een la waarin het sieraad was.

'Wat ga je ermee doen,' vroeg de prins. 'Gaat je niet veel aan, denk ik zo,' sprak de wachter. Aarzelend gaf de prins het sieraad aan de wachter. 'Draag je het veel ?' vroeg de wachter.

'Soms,' zei de prins, 'vooral bij speciale gelegenheden.'

De wachter greep het sieraad, en ging er snel vandoor. Hij dook in de rivier en werd weer een steen, die in de diepte van de rivier zonk. Er was veel donder en bliksem in feeen land. Veel feeen stierven. Ook waren er aardbevingen. De wachter had gesproken, en had genomen wat oorspronkelijk van hem was. Ook de familie Eldemor waren niet de rechtmatige eigenaren van het sieraad. Het sieraad lag op de steen, in de feeen rivier. De steen vergrootte het sieraad, en begon het om te smelten. Oorspronkelijk was het sieraad een orakel, een orakel waarin de steen woonde. Dit orakel was genaamd de Nahemsh, het grote orakel van trol.

'Neem mij weer op, en breng mij tot mijn tempel !' bulderde de steen vanuit de rivier. Een groep feeen priesters en priesteressen namen de steen op uit het water, en brachten de steen tot de woestijn van Dejam, tot achter het paarse gordijn van de tempel. Toen de steen op zijn plek was vielen de priesters en de priesteressen die de steen hadden gedragen of aangeraakt dood neer. Er was grote paniek in de tempel. Anderen keken geschokt toe, en sommigen verborgen hun gezicht. 'Versluier u nu met paarse sluiers, opdat u niet zult sterven,' sprak de steen. Nog steeds was de steen bezig het sieraad om te smelten tot het orakel wat het eerst was. Paars vuur kwam er van de steen af.

Vanaf toen droegen de priesters en priesteressen van de tempel paarse sluiers. Dit leek de steen wat te sussen. Maar nog steeds had de steen soms woede uitbarstingen, en dan kwam er rook, vuur en bliksem van de steen af. Soms vielen er doden. 'Hoe kunnen wij u het beste dienen ?' sprak Tedia, een lange feeen-priesteres.

'Luister Tedia,' sprak de steen. 'Ik ken jullie hart. Voor mij kun je niets verbergen.'

'Ik weet het, heilige trollensteen, heilige Evit,' sprak de fee. 'Maar onderwijs ons.'

'Buig voor mij,' sprak de steen, 'opdat u leeft.'

De fee boog, en ging op haar knieen. 'Maak paarse matjes,' bulderde de steen.

'Anders nog iets ?' vroeg de fee. 'Spaart u ook zegeltjes ?'

Ineens moest de steen lachen. 'Ik mag jou wel,' sprak de steen.

'Ik voel me vereerd,' sprak Tedia.

Het orakel begon steeds meer gestalte te krijgen, met de steen in het midden. Daar stond het als een groot relikwie, een groot mysterie en een groot raadsel. In vrees vielen de priesters en priesteressen voor het beeld neer. Met grote angst in hun ogen, maar ook met verbazing en verwondering keken ze naar Tedia, en ze vroegen zich af hoe ze zo durfde te spreken tegen de gevaarlijke steen. Ze waren in ieder geval blij dat ze nog steeds leefde. Zo'n grapje had natuurlijk heel verkeerd kunnen aflopen met zo'n heilig object in de buurt, en het grapje was zelfs gericht tot het object zelf. Waarschijnlijk had de steen ook wat humor, of werden ze voor de gek gehouden ? Nog steeds kenden ze niet de ware aard van de steen, en wisten zij niet waar de steen op uit was. Nog steeds vreesden ze voor hun leven. De steen had geen medelijden gehad met velen van hen.

'Tedia heeft voor het beste deel gekozen,' sprak de steen : 'Onderwijs.'

'Onderwijs ons !' riepen ineens wat priesters en priesteressen. 'Wij staan open voor u, wat u ons te zeggen heeft.'

'Goed dan,' sprak de steen.

Hoofdstuk 4. Het Dansende Jongetje

De steen droeg hen op kerken te bouwen en kloosters door het hele feeenland, en zij moesten optochten houden in paarse gewaden en paarse kappen. Zij moesten monniken worden van de steen. In de steen waren visioenen over barbaren in grote gevechten die veel bloed vergoten. 'Hier is jullie magie op gebouwd !' bulderde de steen. 'Jullie moeten al jullie kerken en kloosters verlaten, om zo dieper de natuur in te gaan !'

'Maar u heeft zelf gezegd dat wij die kerken en kloosters moesten bouwen,' sprak Tedia.

'Kan me niet schelen,' sprak de steen. 'Doe wat ik zeg.'

'Zoals u wilt,' sprak Tedia. De steen droeg hen op de rivier, de Sep, te volgen, dieper de natuur in. Het orakel waarin de steen zich bevond moest in een kist met lange draagstokken meegenomen worden. Niemand mocht

omkijken. Zij die dat wel zouden doen zouden dood neervallen, of in de grond wegzakken. Ook smolten sommigen die omkeken gewoon weg. Iedereen was in grote angst. Ook de prins moest mee in de grote stoet.

'Ik kan u een geweldig sprookje vertellen,' sprak een gek tot de steen. Hij was de clown van de feeen. 'Als u het leuk vind, mogen we dan terug ?' Maar de clown begon weg te smelten in zijn schoenen, en er was luid gegil van andere feeen toen ze het zagen. Er viel niet te spotten met het gezag van de steen. De steen was hypergevoelig en levensgevaarlijk. Vele feeen huilden, en durfden niet eens meer te denken, bang om aan de steen ongehoorzaam te zijn. Ook de prins was op zijn hoede.

Ergens aan de rivier stopten ze. De steen wilde rusten. De feeen moesten een tent maken voor de steen, en weer moest de steen achter een paars gordijn geplaatst worden. De steen begon steeds meer paars te kleuren. 'Ik heb jullie verteld over de barbaren, waar jullie magie op gebaseerd is,' bulderde de steen, terwijl er een vreemd licht van de steen afkwam, een paarsachtig licht. De feeen begonnen moe te worden en duizelig van het licht. Ook hypnotiseerde het hen. 'De barbaren wonen in de woestijnen, maar ik wil dat jullie de natuur intrekken,' sprak de steen. 'Ik wil jullie een nieuwe magie geven.'

'Bent u een trol ?' vroeg een jongetje.

'Ik ben een trollensteen,' sprak de steen.

'Kunt u voor ons koken ?' vroeg het jongetje.

Direct gaf zijn moeder hem een draai om zijn oren.

'Vergeef hem,' sprak de feeenmoeder tot de steen. 'Hij is nog jong.'

'Maar hij is wijs,' sprak de steen. 'Ik zal voor jullie koken. Vanaf nu zal jullie voedsel uit mij komen.'

Ineens brak er een vloeistof los van de steen. Ook stroomde er een vastere stof uit de steen. Het deed allemaal een beetje paarsachtig aan. 'Hier zullen jullie voortaan van leven,' sprak de steen. 'Eet en drink nu.' De feeen kwamen dichterbij tot de steen achter het paarse gordijn, die nog steeds in de kist stond met de lange draagstokken. Met bekers en bakjes vingen ze het voedsel en het drinken van de steen op, en deden wat hen gezegd werd : Ze aten en dronken.

'Verrukkelijk !' riep iemand. Maar verder was het stil. De feeen waren nog steeds in grote angst, en velen durfden niet zomaar te spreken.

'Geniet,' sprak de steen. 'Het is feest. Het is ter herdenking van de grote uittocht.'

'Ja, Jopie allemachtig, steen ze, steen !' riep het jongetje.

De steen lachte. 'Ik mag hem wel,' zei de steen.

'Vergeef hem, hij is jong,' sprak de vrouw weer.

'Het is goed,' sprak de steen geruststellend. 'Hij is wijs.'

'Ku Jopie, Ku Jopie !' riep het jongetje, en begon te dansen voor de steen.

Sommigen hadden hun hand voor hun gezicht gedaan, omdat ze bang waren om te zien wat de steen met het jongetje zou doen, maar de steen bleef rustig, en scheen opgewekt.

'Gekke idioot !' riep het jongetje. Weer gaf zijn moeder hem een draai om z'n oren. 'Zeg zulke dingen nooit,' sprak ze met grote boosheid en angst in haar ogen. Ze wilde haar zoontje niet verliezen. 'Hij …. hij is niet in orde,' stamelde ze. 'Vergeef hem, hij bedoelt het niet zo.'

De steen was aan het schaterlachen. 'Hij heeft wel babbels.'

'Ik wil met je vechten, idiote steen !' riep het jongetje weer, met een ondeugende blik in zijn ogen. Iedereen was geschokt, en verbaast dat de steen het jongetje niets aandeed.

'Hij is een beetje speels,' zei de steen. Het jongetje begon te lachen. 'Kun je ook levend worden ?'

Plotseling stond de zwarte wachter voor hen. Sommige feeen gilden. Anderen begonnen te huilen. De prins was dichterbij gekomen. Dit was de persoon die zijn sieraad van hem had afgenomen. De wachter had zijn boog gespannen, met een zwarte pijl erop. Sommige feeen beefden van angst. 'Wie wil er het eerst aan ?' sprak de zwarte wachter.

'U houd ervan mensen aan het schrikken te maken, hè ? U houd ervan mensen bang te maken,' sprak de prins dapper. Hij was de schrijver van het eeuwige boek, dus daarom voelde hij zich opgewassen tegen de vreemde wachter.

'Ik wil je niet bangmaken,' zei de wachter, 'maar draken jagen op jou.'

'Ik weet het,' zei de prins.

'Ik ben hier om te helpen,' sprak de steen.

'Wie bent u ?' vroeg de prins. 'Zoveel feeen zijn er omgekomen door jouw toedoen.'

'Ik weet het,' zei de wachter. 'Zij waren allemaal …. SPIONNEN VAN DE DRAAK !' bulderde de wachter. De prins schrok, en ook de feeen. 'Ik ben jullie beschermer !' bulderde de wachter. 'En kijk hoe jullie mij behandelen. Ik heb geen kwaad in zin.'

'Dat zeggen ze allemaal,' krijste het jongetje.

De wachter liep naar het kleine jongetje toe, en nam de kleine jongen in zijn armen. 'Je weet het … dat ik geen kwaad in zin heb …,' sprak de wachter. Het jongetje knikte. 'Mag ik bij u wonen ?' vroeg het jongetje.

De wachter zette het jongetje weer neer, stapte in de kist en veranderde weer in de steen. Alle feeen bogen voor de steen, maar het jongetje danste. Het jongetje scheen het hart van de wachter gewonnen te hebben.

Hoofdstuk 5. Het Land van Trol

Na een paar dagen trokken ze weer verder. Het was een lange reis langs de rivier de Sep. Naarmate ze dieper in de wildernis kwamen werd de steen steeds groener. Ook begon alles steeds trager te gaan, het lopen, het spreken, het denken, alles. En de feeen vroegen zich af wat er aan de hand was. Nog nooit waren ze zo diep de wildernis ingegaan.

'Dit is het land van vertraging,' sprak de steen, 'het land van trol. Alles versteent hier, alles vertraagt hier, totdat alles teruggaat in het verleden. In dit land is er geen toekomst, alleen het verleden, wat een groot geheim in zich draagt.'

'En wat mag dat geheim dan wel wezen ?' vroeg het kleine jongetje brutaal.

'Ga ik jou nog niet aan je neus hangen,' sprak de steen.

'Ik zal een kikker aan je neus hangen,' sprak het kleine jongetje.

De steen veranderde weer in de wachter, en de wachter nam grote passen. 'Hier moet ergens de poort van trol zijn, die tot diep onder de grond leidt.'

'Je moet het verleden achter je laten,' sprak het jongetje.

'Nee,' zei de wachter, 'juist niet. In het verleden ligt de sleutel opgeborgen.'

'Nee,' zei het jongetje. 'Mijn moeder zegt altijd dat we het verleden moeten laten wat het is, en doorgaan.'

'Kun je je mond nu houden ?' vroeg de wachter.

'Onder de grond wacht het verleden op ons. Het verleden wil tot ons spreken.'

Even stampte hij op de grond, en begon er toen in weg te zinken. 'Volg mij !' riep de wachter. Zoveel feeen kwamen onder de grond die dag. Ze keken hun ogen uit in hun verleden. Overal waren er vlammen die verborgen geheimen in hun verleden lieten zien. Het leek alsof ze overal doorheen konden kijken. Het jongetje schreeuwde van opwinding. Een doorzichtige, groenachtige man verscheen voor hen, met een heel traag kloppend groen hart. Voor hem was een vliegend boek. 'Heb deel aan de heilige vertraging,' sprak de wachter. 'Het laat de verborgen dingen zien, dat wat ertussen zit. De snelheid kan het niet laten zien.'

'Ga verder,' sprak het jongetje, 'je begint het te leren.'

Ze kwamen tot een groot groen vuur, wat over hun gezichten begon te komen, en over hun handen. Het voelde aan als een medicijn. Het was het medicijn van de bomen, en het trollen-medicijn. Ze kwamen aan bij een gebied van uitgestrekte groene moerassen. Hier was waar de tijd stilstond. De tijd stopte hier, en ging niet meer verder. 'Het land van trol is omgeven door moerassen,' sprak de wachter. 'Hier stopt alle tijd. Alles gaat hier terug naar het verleden. Het geheim van de eeuwige jeugd is hier.'

'Ik ben al klein genoeg,' zei het jongetje. 'Ik moet nog groeien.'

'Oh, dat kan hier ook,' sprak de wachter. 'Je kunt opgroeien in het verleden.'

'Wat moeten we bij de trollen ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Jij moet niet zoveel vragen stellen, kereltje,' sprak de wachter. 'In ieder geval : Hier ligt het geheim van de draken. Draken zijn een soort trollen. Zij konden de tijd vertragen, en konden zo de tijd stoppen om hun magie te bedrijven.'

'Hoe deden ze dat ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Door mij,' sprak de wachter. 'Maar ik ontsnapte. Ze hebben nog steeds veel macht door deze moerassen.'

'Dus in deze moerassen ga je niet dood, maar gewoon terug in de tijd ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Precies,' zei de wachter. 'Maar dan zul je eerst de trollen en hun drakenmeesters moeten overwinnen, want zij bewaken de poort van tijd.'

'En wat als je hen niet te slim afbent ?' vroeg het jongetje. 'Wat dan ?'

De wachter zweeg.

'Alsjeblieft, vertel het me ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'We zijn nog steeds in hun tijdgevangenis,' sprak de wachter. 'We zitten gevangen in een magische bal. Ze zijn nog niet overwonnen.'

'Hoe moeten we ze overwinnen ?' vroeg het jongetje.

De wachter keek naar prins Jagerstouw. Toen wees hij naar hem. 'Door hem,' sprak de wachter. 'Hij bezit het geheime wapen.' Prins Jagerstouw keek op. 'Wie, ik ?' vroeg de prins.

'Ja, jij,' sprak de wachter. 'Herinner je je derde kind ? Hij was een groot Tibetaans leider die na zijn dood vastraakte in de tunnels van de onderwereld. Jij verloste hem, ook van de verschrikkelijke beesten die hem wilden meenemen. Hij droeg de trollensleutel, die eens de draken totaal zou verslaan, door het orakel te openen. Nu draag jij die sleutel.'

'Welk orakel ?' vroeg de prins.

'Het orakel van de draken,' sprak de wachter. 'De trollensleutel die jij bewaakte was de oorzaak van veel pijn.' Allereerst had de trollensleutel het op hem gemunt, en scheurde hem los van zijn familie. Maar dit had de woede van de trollensleutel niet gestilt. Neen. De woede van de trollensleutel was alleen maar erger geworden. Nu had de trollensleutel het gemunt op de draken. Daarom kwam de trollensleutel goed van pas. De prins was duizelig.

Hij voelde iets in hem branden. Het was de trollensleutel. Er was iets wat hem het moeras introk. Hij kon het niet tegenhouden, en de wachter kon hem ook niet helpen. 'De trollensleutel zoekt wraak !' riep de wachter, terwijl de prins in het moeras begon weg te zinken.

De prins voelde dat hij teruggleed in de tijd. Hij had zijn dochters in zijn armen, maar plotseling waren zij in vuur, en werden van hem losgetrokken. Draken kwamen tussen hen en de prins. De trollensleutel spuwde vuur, recht tegen het drakenvuur in. Er waren enorme explosies en zeeen van lava waarin de prins werd meegesleurd. De prins verloor zijn bewustzijn. Even kwam hij bij en het leek alsof hij de poppen van zijn kinderen naast hem zag drijven, maar toen gleed hij weer weg. De trollensleutel trok hem mee naar het land van trol. In de verte zag hij rode vurige stenen op elkaar gestapeld, als tabletten, als een orakel. Hij had nu de trollensleutel in zijn hand. 'Werp mij nu naar het rode orakel van de draken,' sprak de trollensleutel. De prins deed dit onmiddellijk. Er waren weer overal explosies. De prins werd opgeheven, en toen als door een onzichtbare hand richting het brandende orakel geworpen. 'Nee !' riep de prins. Met een klap kwam hij tegen het orakel aan. Het orakel begon te draaien als een vleesmolen. De prins gilde en krijste. Het leek wel alsof hij tot gehakt werd gemalen.

'Ik ben je beschermer,' sprak de trollensleutel. 'Ik scheurde jou van alles weg, opdat de draken jou niet konden grijpen.'

'Maar ze hebben me gegrepen !' brulde de prins.

'Welnee,' sprak de trollensleutel. 'Ik heb je altijd afgezonderd gehouden.'

'We zitten in hun tijdgevangenis, had de zwarte wachter gezegd,' sprak de prins. De prins keek naar de sleutel. Het leek op een kruis met een staart, en met allerlei bochten. 'Open het orakel,' sprak de trollensleutel. Maar weer werd de prins weggeslingerd. Opeens stond er iemand naast de prins. Het was de zwarte wachter. De zwarte wachter spande zijn boog, legde een zwarte pijl erop en schoot op het orakel. Weer was er veel vuur. Er kwam een soort glazen opening in het orakel. De zwarte wachter tilde de prins op, en rende naar de glazen opening. Toen de wachter daardoor binnenging explodeerde het glas. Een rood gloeiend stuk vlees krioelde voor hen. 'Stop de sleutel hierin,' sprak de wachter. Voorzichtig bracht de prins de trollensleutel tot vlakbij het rode stuk vlees. Toen stak hij de trollensleutel erin. 'Idioot !' schreeuwde het stuk vlees. Het orakel begon nog meer te exploderen. De prins en de wachter vielen naar beneden. De wachter trok zichzelf op aan een rode tentakel. Ook had hij de prins vast.

'De draken zijn woedend,' sprak de wachter. De wachter begon weer in een steen te veranderen, omhuld door zijn eigen orakel. Toen veranderde hij weer in de wachter, nam een sprong, en kwam daar waar eerst het draken

orakel stond. Toen veranderde hij weer in een steen omhuld in het orakel. Maar de trollensleutel was nog steeds woest. Hij sprong uit de hand van de prins, en begon het orakel van de wachter in stukken te slaan. De steen had zijn macht verloren. De trollensleutel had de steen in kleine stukjes gehakt. 'De Evit is vernietigd !' gilde een stem. Toen was er een groot geklaag en gejammer.

'Wat doe je nou, stommeling !' riep de prins tegen de trollensleutel. 'De Evit beschermde ons tegen de draken !'

'De steen is gevaarlijk,' sprak de trollensleutel. De trollensleutel begon zichzelf op te sieren met de kleine stukjes van de steen. 'Nu is het weer op de juiste plaats,' sprak de trollensleutel. De trollensleutel begon een andere vorm te krijgen, en begon zichzelf totaal om te smelten. De prins greep de trollensleutel en hief het op in de lucht. Op dat moment sloeg een grote bliksem in de trollensleutel. Weer hoorden ze gekrijs in de verte, en het gehuil van wolven.

De trollensleutel was nu samengesmolten met de gevaarlijke steen.

Hoofdstuk 6. De Trollensleutel

De prins hield de trollensleutel stevig vast. Ja, de trollensleutel had hem veel pijn gebracht, maar hem ook gered. De roltrap van de tijd lag voor hem. Hij kon zo naar beneden kijken in de tijd. Er kwam mist van de trollensleutel. Opeens stond er een mistige gestalte voor hem. De trollensleutel was verdwenen.

'Ik ben de trollensleutel,' sprak de mistige gestalte. 'Door jouw moed ben ik vrijgezet. Als je daar naar beneden gaat, dan kom je weer in feeenland terecht.'

De prins keek de mistige gestalte aan. In de verte hoorde hij gehuil van wolven.

'Nu het orakel van de draken vernietigd is, zullen de moerassen op ons insluiten. De draken zijn woedend,' sprak de mistige gestalte. De prins keek naar de plaats waar eerst het orakel van de draken stond. Er kwam water naar boven uit een gat. 'Wat is dat daar ?' vroeg de prins.

'Dat is het Meer van Visioen wat verborgen zat onder het orakel,' sprak de mistige gestalte. In de verte bulderden de moerassen. De golven werden

steeds hoger, klaar om hen te verslinden, terwijl het Meer van Visioen omhoog begon te spuiten. De prins wilde naar de roltrap van tijd rennen, maar de mistige gestalte hield hem tegen.

'Laat me erdoor !' riep de prins.

'Het moeras zal je vinden in de tijd,' sprak de mistige gestalte. 'Het zal je doen vastraken in de tijd. We kunnen beter hier blijven.' Het Meer van Visioen begon over hen heen te komen, en het water begon te stijgen, zich vermengende met het moeras. De prins schreeuwde. Plotseling had hij de trollensleutel weer in zijn hand. 'Laat het over je komen,' sprak de trollensleutel.

De prins voelde zich alsof hij verdronk. In een sterke stroom werd hij meegezogen in het Meer van Visioen, wat steeds meer moerassig werd. Ineens werd hij in de diepte gezogen. Onder het Meer van Visioen waren de ijskerkers. Nog steeds voelde de prins zich verdrinken, en begon duizelig te worden. Toen werd het zwart voor zijn ogen.

Na een lange tijd werd de prins wakker in een ijskerker. Nog steeds had hij de trollensleutel stevig vast. De prins voelde zich bevroren. 'Het lijkt erop dat we nu echt bevroren zijn in de tijd,' sprak de prins tot de trollensleutel. De prins was in grote wanhoop. De trollensleutel sprak niet meer. Tot zijn grote schrik zag de prins kleine draakjes en slangetjes uit de trollensleutel komen die daarvan begonnen te eten. 'Nee !' schreeuwde de prins.

Een vreemdsoortige priester gekleed in paars, groen en wit stond voor de deur van de ijskerker waarin de prins was opgesloten. 'De trollensleutel was een groot kwaad,' sprak de priester. 'De trollensleutel had al die realiteiten gemaakt waar je vandaan kwam, en kijk waar het je heeft gebracht.' Even leek het alsof de priester hem uitlachte.

'De trollensleutel was jouw reis tot de ijskerkers,' sprak de priester. 'Je bent onder een zware vervloeking. Daarom houden we je hier.'

'Een zware betovering ?' vroeg de prins. 'Van wie ? En waarom zou ik je geloven en vertrouwen ?'

'Wees maar blij dat de draken er zijn,' sprak de priester. 'Jij bent onder de zware betovering van het kwaad van de trollensleutel.'

'Waarom moet ik blij zijn ?' vroeg de prins. 'Ze hebben mij alleen maar ellende gebracht.'

'Nee,' zei de priester. 'De draken hielden de gevaarlijke voorwerpen verborgen, om jullie daar tegen te beschermen. Maar je was hebberig. Jij wilde die sieraden hebben ! Zie waar je hebberigheid je gebracht heeft. Je had er van af moeten blijven, om het aan de draken over te laten.'

De prins boog zijn hoofd. 'De draken hielden mijn dochters in gevangenschap, slavernij en grote kwelling. Noem je dat bescherming ? Alles waar de draken op uit waren was macht. Mijn hele familie hebben ze uit elkaar gescheurd, en mijn vader, de elvenkoning van Eldemor.'

De priester kreeg ineens een hele lage, trage stem, die op een bepaalde manier op de normale snelheid ging. 'Dat waren jouw dochters niet ! Jij roofde hen uit onze domeinen ! Zij droegen gevaarlijke, behekste sieraden, die beter af waren onder onze bescherming,' sprak de priester bijna brullend. 'Wij beschermden het universum tegen dit grote kwaad.'

'Niet waar,' sprak de prins. 'Familie van de prinsessen hadden onze hulp ingeroepen. En de sieraden die zij droegen waren oorspronkelijk van het familie sieraad van Eldemor.'

'Je stinkt, liegbeest !' bulderde de priester. 'Dat zogenaamde familie sieraad van Eldemor was oorspronkelijk het orakel van de Evit, de steen van trol. Hiermee voorspelden wij de toekomst, en zorgden dat alles onder onze liefdevolle bewaking en bescherming was. Het was ons eigendom, en jouw familie had dit geroofd.'

'Evit was jullie gevangene,' sprak de prins, 'maar hij ontsnapte. Hij is de zwarte wachter. Oorspronkelijk bleek hij één geheel te vormen met de trollensleutel, en zij waren niet aan jullie zijde. Zij bestreden het grote kwaad van de draken.'

'En elkaar, ja !' bulderde de priester. 'Die objecten waren levensgevaarlijk, en waren alleen veilig in onze handen. Wij zijn de meesters van de magie en de meesters van het universum en tijd. Aan ons dienden jullie je te onderwerpen voor jullie eigen bestwil. Maar jouw koppigheid en eigenwijsheid heeft jou in grote problemen gebracht.'

'Jullie hebben mijn dochters gekweld,' sprak de prins. 'Ik zal niet rusten totdat ….' De prins greep naar zijn buik.

'De tijd zal het leren,' sprak de priester, en vertrok.

De prins was duizelig en kon moeilijk praten. Hij voelde zich bevroren. De pijn in zijn buik leek hem in zijn gedachten te verscheuren. Het was alsof zijn hart op de grond lag, bloedend, en niemand deed iets. Hij was hier helemaal alleen, overgeleverd aan de beslissingen van de draken en hun priesters.

De prins spuwde bloed op de grond, en viel toen in een diepe slaap. In een droom verscheen een fee in het wit voor hem. De fee had een witte hoed op, die bedekt was met fijne stof. Ook haar jurk was van zeer fijne stof gemaakt. Haar witte mantel had ze als sneeuw van haar afgegooid. Sneeuw lag op de grond. Ook waren er witte duiven, en een waterput. 'Je kan niet terug naar het verleden,' sprak de vrouw. 'Je zou daar bevriezen. Alles loopt vast in het verleden door het grote kwaad van de draken. Zij van het verleden leven in bevroren dromen, in het groene komplot.'

De prins keek op. 'Wie bent u ?' vroeg de prins.

'Het is de sneeuwkoningin, de sneeuwkoningin der feeen,' sprak de vrouw. 'Ook ik heb verlossing nodig. Ik zit in de sneeuwkerkers onder de ijskerkers.' Plotseling was er allemaal bloed voor de ogen van de prins, en vaagde de droom weer weg. De prins schrok wakker, maar viel toen weer in slaap. Weer droomde hij over een andere vrouw. De vrouw was gehuld in lompen, en was besmeurd met vuil. 'Laat al die gevaarlijke objecten los,' sprak de vrouw snibbig. 'Ze zijn van de stad. Je hebt niet veel nodig. De natuur geeft je alles wat je nodig hebt.' De vrouw begon aan hem te trekken, en nu was ook de sneeuwfee daar, die ook aan hem begon te trekken, en toen meerdere vrouwen. Ze begonnen hem de diepte in te trekken. De prins schreeuwde. Hij probeerde wakker te worden, maar het lukte hem niet.

'Je bent in het Meer van Visioen,' sprak een stem. 'Dat is een meer van illusies, zodat je het geheim niet zult zien. Zij die in het Meer van Visioen zijn worden bedrogen, en elke schijnbare ontsnapping zal hen in werkelijkheid alleen maar dieper meetrekken in de dieptes van het Meer van Visioen. Je bent in een draaikolk. De draken hebben dit beslist.'

'Wie bent u !' schreeuwde de prins. Weer was alles alleen maar bloed voor zijn ogen. Hij zag alleen maar rood. Plotseling zag hij een barbaarse strijder voor hem staan, met een gebogen zwaard. 'Wij barbaren beslissen de magie van de draken. Zij kunnen niets doen zonder ons,' sprak de man.

'Ik kan hier niemand vertrouwen,' sprak de prins, 'en ik weet dat ik droom.'

De barbaar lachte bijna spottend. 'Het Meer van Visioen is een droom, een gevangenis van dromen. Zelfs als je denkt dat je ontwaakt, droom je nog steeds. Onze gevechten en oorlogen maken uit hoe de draken magie werkt,

en ook de feeen magie en de magie van trol. Hierbij staat of valt alles. Al hun wonderen, betoveringen, vervloekingen, nachtmerries, tragedies, depressies en trauma's komen voort vanuit veel barbaars bloedvergiet,' sprak de barbaar.

'Dat was de reden dat de steen van trol wilde dat we dieper de wildernis in zouden gaan, langs de rivier de Sep, om zo het feeenland achter ons te laten,' sprak de prins. 'En zie waar het ons heeft gebracht.'

'Dieper in de wildernis ? Laat me niet lachen,' bulderde de barbaar. 'De steen heeft jullie bedrogen. Ergens halverwege de rivier de Sep liet hij jullie onder de grond gaan richting het land van trol. Jullie hadden verder moeten gaan langs de rivier. Doordat je onder de grond ging werd je de gevangene van het Meer van Visioen, het grote web van leugens. De steen van trol heeft jullie in de val gelokt. Allen zijn jullie gevangenen van het Meer.'

'Leugens,' sprak de prins. 'Alles werd trager en trager toen we dieper de wildernis ingingen langs de rivier de Sep. Onze gedachtes werden trager, totdat we niet meer verder konden. Toen bracht de steen van trol ons onder de grond. Er was geen andere optie. De tijd stopte ergens langs de rivier de Sep. We hadden geen andere keus.'

'Leugens ?' sprak de barbaar sarcastisch lachend. 'Jullie zijn bedrogen. De steen van trol kan de tijd stoppen zoals niemand anders, en komt dan met allerlei smoesjes, zodat jullie gehoorzamen, en de steen zijn doelen met jullie kan bereiken. Jullie zijn erin geluisd. Een rad heeft hij jullie voor de ogen gedraaid. Dat is alles wat ik ervan kan zeggen. En wij werken voor deze leugenachtige magie. Wij zijn slaven van het geweld. Alleen door groot geweld wordt zulke magie opgewekt.'

Hoofdstuk 7. Het Overbruggen van de Eindeloosheid

'En hoe kan ik jou vertrouwen, sinds jij zelf een onderdeel bent van het Meer van Visioen ?' vroeg de prins.

'Omdat ik een slaaf ben,' sprak de barbaar, 'een medegevangene die naar ontsnapping zoekt. We zouden elkaar kunnen helpen. Luister : Als je verder was gegaan langs de rivier de Sep, helemaal tot aan de Grote Woestijn, en dan er doorheen tot het land van de indianen, dan was je hier niet geweest.'

'Is daar vrijheid ?' sprak de prins. 'Hebben de draken daar geen macht ?'

'Grote vrijheid is daar,' sprak de barbaar. 'En wanneer een draak door de Grote Woestijn nadert tot het land van indianen, dan veranderen ze daar in grote buffels. Het enige gevaar is wanneer de buffels helemaal door het land

van de indianen kunnen komen tot de Grote Afgrond, daar waar alle ruimte stopt. Ruimte gaat daar niet verder, en de buffels die daar weten te komen zullen daar worden tot onsterfelijke draken. Wel is het zo dat de Grote Afgrond alles weer terugdrijft in de ruimte. Onsterfelijke draken kunnen niet in het land der indianen leven, maar kunnen wel het gebied tot aan de Grote Woestijn teisteren. Dit is ook de reden dat de indianen op zulke buffels jagen. Niemand van hen wil dat zij zich tot onsterfelijke draken ontwikkelen.'

'Hoeveel onsterfelijke draken bestaan er al ?' vroeg de prins.

'Velen,' sprak de barbaar. 'De indianen hebben onze hulp nodig, en alleen in het land van de indianen zijn wij veilig tegen de draken, maar wij moeten wel deelnemen aan de buffeljacht dan.'

'Ik begrijp het,' zei de prins. 'Dus nu zijn wij nog in de klauwen van de onsterfelijke draken ?'

'Precies,' sprak de barbaar. 'Nu snap je het.'

'Zijn die draken echt onsterfelijk, of kan die onsterfelijkheid ook weer ongedaan gemaakt worden ?' vroeg de prins.

'Men heeft mij verteld dat het geheim hiertoe ligt in het land van de indianen,' sprak de barbaar.

'Hoe komen we daar ?' vroeg de prins. 'Gezien we in het Meer van Visioen opgesloten zijn, en elke ontsnapping een groter bedrog is, zoals je zei.'

'Ik weet wel een manier,' sprak de barbaar.

De prins wist nog steeds niet of hij de barbaar wel kon vertrouwen, maar hij waagde het erop. De gevangenen en slaven van het Meer schenen te kunnen communiceren met elkaar door dromen. Maar in hoeverre zouden de draken dat kunnen beinvloeden ? En wat als het ontdekt werd ? De prins werd geplaagd door angsten. De droom was weer weggevaagd, en hij werd wakker in zijn kerker. Hij had honger, maar er scheen niets te eten te zijn.

Ook de prins werd tot een slaaf gemaakt, en hij moest jagen aan de rivier de Sep. De draken hadden het hele feeenland ingenomen. De prins had een keten om zijn nek die verbonden was met zijn hart. De draken hadden hem gezegd dat als hij zou proberen te ontsnappen, dan zou de keten zich om zijn hart wikkelen om het te verstikken. De prins was daarom goed op zijn hoede,

en nam geen risico's. Hij probeerde de barbaar en zijn verhaal te vergeten, maar op een dag ontmoette hij de barbaar. De prins moest een gevecht bekijken in de arena. De barbaar had een groot mes, en moest een grote groene slang verslaan. Op de tribunes zaten de drakenmeesters met hun trollen en hun slaven. Zij joelden daar en applaudiseerden. De prins was ongerust over de barbaar, maar na een lang en slopend gevecht had de barbaar toch de kop van het beest weten af te hakken. De barbaar was inmiddels zwaar gewond. De prins werd opgeroepen om de wonden van de barbaar te verzorgen. Ze moesten daarvoor naar een speciale hut buiten de arena. De prins begon de wonden schoon te maken van de barbaar met een doek. Toen verbond de prins de wonden.

'Psst, ik heb dit zo geregeld,' fluisterde de barbaar. 'Van mijn meester heb ik soms wat boeken van drakenmagie geleerd terwijl hij sliep. Luister : We zijn hier dichtbij de rivier de Sep. Ik heb een bootje kunnen regelen door twee dwergen die ik ken. Als het nacht is moeten we het erop wagen.'

'Ja maar je vergeet de keten die ik om mijn nek en hart draag,' sprak de prins. 'Het zal mijn dood worden als ik zal proberen te ontsnappen.'

'Nee,' sprak de barbaar. 'Ik heb daar wel aan gedacht. Luister : De magie van draak : Strooi wat elvenzout op de keten van de gevangene of slaaf, en de keten zal in slaap vallen. Elvenzout heb ik ook geregeld door de twee dwergen.'

De barbaar haalde een zakje van zijn riem af. 'Hier, smeer dit op de keten als het nacht wordt,' sprak de barbaar. 'Smeer het geregeld erop, zodat de keten niet wakker wordt.'

'Dit is eng,' sprak de prins. 'Als de keten wakker wordt ben ik er geweest.'

'Je bent al dood,' sprak de barbaar. 'Grijp je kans om te kunnen leven.'

'Ja, maar mij is eens verteld dat zij die schijnbaar ontsnappen uit het Meer alleen maar in diepere ellende terecht komen,' sprak de prins.

'Vertrouw erop dat ik een beetje draken magie ken,' sprak de barbaar hem geruststellend toe.

'Dat is makkelijker gezegd dan gedaan,' zei de prins.

De twee wachtten totdat het nacht was geworden. De prins strooide wat van het elvenzout op de keten, en waagde het erop. De barbaar had hem gezegd

dat er niet veel elvenzout nodig was om de keten te doen slapen. De prins moest erg zuinig zijn op het elvenzout, want verder moest het wel geregeld gestrooid worden, anders zou de keten ontwaken. Snel vertrokken ze naar het bootje aan de kant van de rivier de Sep. Alles was gelukkig rustig. Beiden stapten ze in de boot, en namen een peddel, en begonnen over de grote rivier de Sep weg te peddelen. Steeds dieper en dieper kwamen ze in de wildernis. Er was steeds meer en meer begroeiing, en ze kwamen ook langs de plek waar de steen van trol alles had vertraagd, maar dit keer vertraagde er niets. 'Zie,' sprak de barbaar, 'we kunnen rustig door peddelen, zonder vertraging of stilstand van de tijd.' De prins begon steken in zijn hart te krijgen. Snel strooide hij weer wat elvenzout op de keten.

Vreemde geluiden kwamen uit de wildernis. Ook angstaanjagende geluiden van vreemde dieren. 'Zijn we in gevaar ?' vroeg de prins.

'Altijd,' sprak de barbaar. Na een tijdje begon het elvenzout op te raken. De prins begon in paniek te raken. 'Wat moeten we nu doen ?' vroeg de prins, die al weer steken in zijn hart begon te krijgen. Zijn hart klopte ook veel sneller dan normaal.

'Luister,' sprak de barbaar. 'Hier dichtbij woont een dwergensmid. Hij moet de keten veilig kunnen verwijderen, tenminste dat hoop ik.' De prins slikte. Hij begon nu echt bang te worden. 'Wat als het niet gaat lukken ? Dan ga ik eraan,' beefde de prins.

'We wagen het erop,' sprak de barbaar. De prins werd al geplaagd door allerlei gedachten wat voor verschrikkelijke dingen er met hem zouden kunnen gebeuren als de keten wakker zou worden. De prins durfde bijna niet meer te ademen. Ook durfde hij zich nog nauwelijks te bewegen, en zat hij stokstijf in het bootje. 'Doorpeddelen,' sprak de barbaar. Maar de prins durfde niet meer. Hij voelde zich al helemaal wegglijden in zichzelf van de angst. Zijn hart ging als een razende te keer. Hij kon nog één keer wat elvenzout strooien, en dan moesten ze snel zijn. Maar het scheen al niet meer te werken. Het hart van de prins sloeg totaal op hol, en hij kon niet meer goed ademen, alsof hij gewurgd werd.

'Doorpeddelen !' riep de barbaar, terwijl hij de prins in het gezicht sloeg. 'Wakker worden, als je wil blijven leven.' Maar de prins begon weg te zakken in grote duizeligheid. Toen werd alles zwart voor de ogen van de prins.

De barbaar zette het bootje aan de kant van de rivier, en bond het goed vast aan een boompje. Toen nam hij de prins op zijn schouder, en liep in snelle pas naar een huisje vlakbij, waar de dwergensmid woonde.

De barbaar vertelde snel het verhaal, toen hij de prins op een tafel had neergelegd. 'Wakker worden !' riep de barbaar, terwijl hij de prins in het gezicht sloeg. Even kwam de prins bij. 'Ik kan niets voor hem doen,' sprak de dwergensmid. 'Ik heb hier het gereedschap niet voor. Ik kan niet tegen zulke ketenen op. Als ik iets ga proberen, dan zal de keten wakker worden, en ons alle drie doden.' De prins zakte weg in een nog grotere wanhoop.

'Heb je dan misschien nog elvenzout ?' vroeg de barbaar. 'Anders gaat hij het waarschijnlijk niet overleven.'

'Elvenzout heb ik volop,' sprak de dwergensmid. Hij liep naar een kastje toe en haalde een grote pot elvenzout tevoorschijn. Snel griste de barbaar de pot uit zijn handen, opende het en strooide een flinke hoeveelheid op de keten. 'Niet zoveel, dwaas !' riep de dwerg. 'Teveel van het elvenzout kan de keten ook wakker maken. Dan werkt het niet meer, en dan heb je er helemaal niks aan.' Snel veegde de barbaar weer wat van het elvenzout weg. 'Ik schoot wat uit,' sprak de barbaar. De prins leek weer bij zijn positieven te komen. De prins was dolgelukkig toen hij de grote pot elvenzout zag. 'Ik zal het in een zak doen voor je. Dan kun je er wel even mee vooruit, maar eh … niet teveel erop strooien, hè ?'

'Begrepen,' zei de prins.

'Waar kunnen we hem verlossen ?' vroeg de barbaar.

'In het eeuwige land van de indianen,' sprak de dwerg. 'Die hebben wel wat voor hem.'

'Goed,' sprak de barbaar. Hij schudde de hand van de dwerg, en liep toen het huisje uit. Ook de prins schudde de hand van de dwerg en bedankte hem. Met de zak elvenzout liep hij naar buiten, de barbaar achterna.

Weer stapten ze in het bootje en gingen de rivier de Sep op, op weg naar de Grote Woestijn, waarachter het eeuwige land van de indianen lag.

De prins had het nog steeds moeilijk. Weer werd hij duizelig. Het was alsof er iets in zijn hoofd knapte, en het werd hem weer zwart voor zijn ogen. 'Ik weet wat je aan het doen bent,' sprak een stem. 'En het is heel dom van je. Het elvenzout heeft mij tijdelijk verlamd, maar als ik ontwaak zal ik je doden.' Het was de keten. 'Ugh,' sprak de prins, en vertelde de barbaar wat de keten zojuist tot hem had gesproken.'

'De keten probeert je te intimideren, maar we moeten vol houden,' sprak de barbaar, terwijl ze verder peddelden.

'Ik hoop niet dat het elvenzout zijn kracht verliest,' zei de prins.

'Welnee,' zei de barbaar geruststellend. 'De keten kan niks beginnen.'

'Dat hoop ik maar,' zei de prins. Hij voelde zich nog steeds erg benauwd. 'Het lijkt wel alsof het elvenzout kracht aan het verliezen is. De keten lijkt wakker te zijn, maar is nog steeds te verlamd om me wat aan te doen,' sprak de prins ongerust.

'Welnee,' zei de barbaar. 'Het elvenzout is juist krachtiger geworden. Verlamming is zelfs beter dan slaap.'

'Ja, maar de keten botviert grote woede op mij,' sprak de prins. 'Is er geen beter middel ?'

'Niet dat ik weet,' sprak de barbaar. De prins was in grote angst. Hij vond dat de barbaar maar makkelijk praten had. Rustig peddelde de barbaar door, terwijl de prins vaak stokstijf in het bootje zat.

De keten om de nek van de prins begon steeds strakker te zitten. 'Daar, ik zal je,' sprak de keten venijnig.

'Het wurgt me,' zei de prins, terwijl hij naar adem snakte. De barbaar deed weer wat elvenzout op de keten, maar het leek alleen maar erger te worden. 'Zie, het werkt niet,' zei de prins in paniek. Hij greep naar zijn keel, en probeerde wat ruimte te maken tussen hem en de keten. De keten was meedogenloos. De keten kwam strakker en strakker te zitten. Weer werd het zwart voor de ogen van de prins. Hij voelde zich alsof hij zou stikken. Na een tijdje kwam de prins weer bij. Hij kon wat rustiger ademhalen. 'Misschien slaapt de keten weer,' sprak de prins.

'Het went wel,' sprak de barbaar.

'Nee,' zei de prins. 'Het went niet, en ik wil er vanaf.'

'Wees blij dat je nog leeft,' sprak de wachter.

'Ja, maar voor hoe lang ?' zei de prins.

Aan de rivier de Sep leek geen einde te komen. 'Hoe lang gaat dit nog door ?' jammerde de prins.

'De rivier de Sep is eindeloos,' sprak de barbaar. 'Ik zei je toch dat je de vorige keer veel te vroeg stopte ?'

'Dat kwam door de steen,' zei de prins. 'We hadden geen andere keus.'

'Ja, hij heeft jullie zwaar bedrogen,' sprak de barbaar.

'Stopt deze rivier nooit ?' vroeg de prins.

'Nee,' zei de barbaar. 'De rivier de Sep is een eindeloze rivier.'

'Ja maar je zei dat de rivier zou uitlopen in de Grote Woestijn,' zei de prins.

'Jawel,' zei de barbaar, 'maar de Grote Woestijn is in wezen onbereikbaar, omdat de rivier de Sep eindeloos is.'

'Ja, maar hoe komen we daar dan ?' vroeg de prins een beetje ongeduldig en geirriteerd.

'We kunnen daar niet komen,' zei de barbaar.

'Zeg, zit je me nu voor de gek te houden, of niet ?' vroeg de prins een beetje boos. 'Wat doen we hier dan als we er toch niet kunnen komen ?'

'Proberen,' zei de barbaar. 'Er moet een manier zijn. Onthoud dat ik een beetje draken magie ken. Als de draken in de Grote Woestijn kunnen komen, dan kunnen wij het misschien ook.'

'Ja, maar de manier waarop je praat is irritant, alsof je jezelf tegenspreekt,' sprak de prins.

'Alles heeft twee kanten,' sprak de barbaar.

'Hoe kunnen we eindeloosheid overbruggen ?' vroeg de prins.

'Door draken magie,' sprak de barbaar.

'En hoe gaat dat ?' vroeg de prins.

'We moeten naar de pekkabouter,' zei de barbaar. 'Die maakt speciaal pek hiervoor, waarmee we het bootje kunnen insmeren om zo de Grote Woestijn te bereiken.'

'Toverpek ofzo ? Pek voor draken magie ?' vroeg de prins. 'Klinkt interessant.'

'Ja, maar die pekkabouter is niet zo'n brave broeder, prins Jagerstouw,' sprak de barbaar. 'We moeten net geluk hebben. Als hij ons niet mag, dan zou hij ons kunnen aanvallen met de toverpek, waardoor we vastgeplakt worden, en nooit meer weg kunnen komen. De pekkabouter staat erom bekend dat hij als hij in een slechte bui is je in een standbeeld kan veranderen.'

'Zouden we het dan wel doen ?' vroeg de prins.

'We hebben geen andere keus,' sprak de barbaar. 'We kunnen hem gewoon op de normale manier benaderen, of wachten totdat hij slaapt, en dan de toverpek roven.'

De prins dacht even na. 'Laten we het maar op de normale manier doen, want op dieventocht gaan heb ik even geen zin in.'

'We lopen dan wel groot risico,' sprak de barbaar.

'Ja, maar als we op dievenpad gaan lopen we ook een groot risico,' zei de prins.

'Het is nogal eenvoudig,' zei de barbaar. 'Als de kabouter slaapt kunnen we gewoon de schuur in waar het toverpek is.'

Bij een vernauwing van de rivier de Sep, waar een klein bruggetje was, moesten ze het bootje uitstappen. De barbaar maakte het bootje goed vast aan een struik met een touw. Even moesten ze een zandweggetje op, wat uitliep op een graspad wat naar het huisje van de pekkabouter leidde. Maar al snel werden ze begroet door luid geblaf. De honden lagen dan wel aan een ketting, maar ze wisten nu allebei dat diefstal geen optie was. Bij het huisje aangekomen klopte de barbaar aan, waarna even later een klein mannetje met een lange wit-grijze puntbaard opendeed. Hij had een rood pakje aan, met

rode, zachte laarzen. 'Kijk eens aan, bezoek !' snauwde het mannetje. 'Kom verder, alhoewel ik niet bepaald in een goede bui ben.'

'We kunnen ook een andere keer terugkomen,' sprak de barbaar, die al in gedachten had hoe hij eventueel de honden zou kunnen rustig maken.'

'Welnee, kom verder,' sprak de kabouter, die de barbaar en de prins al had vastgegrepen om ze naar binnen te trekken.

'Het is hier eenzaam wonen,' sprak de kabouter. Toen was het even een lange tijd stil.

'Ik begrijp het,' sprak de barbaar ineens. 'Ik hoop dat we niet ongelegen komen. U heeft een mooi onderkomen hier. Het moet vast heel duur zijn geweest, of in ieder geval zwaar werk. Zeg, beste man, moet u eens luisteren. Wij komen voor een beetje toverpek, en we vroegen ons af …' Maar afmaken kon hij zijn zin niet, want de kabouter begon hevig te foeteren. 'Toverpek ! Zeg, wie denken jullie wel niet dat ik ben. De eerste de beste … ? Wel alle drommels, wie denken jullie wel niet wie jullie voor je hebben ? Dat zijn me nogal wat kwajongens streken, zomaar een arme oude kabouter om toverpek vragen. Weten jullie wel niet hoe duur dat spul is, en hoe lang ik moet werken voor maar één druppel toverpek ? En dan komen jullie hier op z'n Jan Boerenfluitjes om toverpek zaniken. Zijn jullie lui ? Zijn jullie op jullie achterhoofd gevallen ? Nou, dat moet ik nog meemaken, dat jullie nog een keer om toverpek komen vragen. Ik moet het nog meemaken. Nee, ik zal dat niet meer meemaken, daarin kan ik jullie geruststellen. Er komt heus geen tweede keer.'

De kabouter foeterde verschrikkelijk, en er leek geen einde aan te komen. Geen woord konden ze er tussen krijgen. Ze wisten dat ze al goed te ver waren gegaan, en waren hard aan het denken hoe ze de kabouter weer rustig konden maken, of hoe ze aan de woedende kabouter, die steeds woester en gevaarlijker werd, te ontkomen.

'Nog even, en ik trek potverdorie mijn mes !' riep de kabouter hevig snauwend. 'Wie denken jullie wel niet dat jullie zijn om voor zoiets een arme, oude kabouter lastig te vallen ?'

Inmiddels had de barbaar een zak met geld van zijn riem losgetrokken, en drukte het onder de neus van de razende kabouter. De kabouter keek erna, en schreeuwde : 'Hoe durf je mij daar zo weinig geld voor aan te bieden. Als ik het niet dacht. Wat klunzige armoedzaaiers proberen mij voor geen geld, voor een appel en een ei, mijn kostbare, dierbare toverpek af te troggelen, waar ik zo hard voor gewerkt heb met bloed, zweet en tranen ? Elke druppel koste mij bijna mijn leven. Elke druppel heeft mij groot lijden gebracht, en

jullie denken dat even doodleuk van mij te krijgen alsof ik potverdorie de grote geef-kabouter ben ? Oh ja, vadertje zal het jullie weleens even schenken wou je zeggen. Nou, ik weet al precies wat ik met jullie ga doen.'

'Alstublieft,' smeekte de prins. 'We zullen alles voor u doen voor maar één druppel toverpek. U mag alles van ons hebben. Wij zijn uw dienstknechten zo lang als u wilt, en als dat nog niet genoeg is, dan smeek ik u om ons te vergeven voor onze klunzerigheid, voor deze ene keer. Misschien waren we gewoon aan het verkeerde adres. We waren op zoek naar de heer Jules Suikerbiet, en dat was geen kabouter. Vergeef ons. We hebben aangeklopt aan de verkeerde deur.'

'Jullie hebben niets,' raaste de kabouter. 'Jullie hebben niets te bieden voor alle eeuwen van pijn en tragedie die ik heb moeten doorstaan voor een paar rot-druppels toverpek. Ik zal jullie leren, snot apen die jullie er zijn. Niets kunnen jullie doen om ook maar een halve druppel toverpek te betalen, stelletje lamlendelingen. Het geblaf van mijn honden was er al om jullie te waarschuwen, maar nee hoor. Toch nog komen klagen, huilen en smeken bij een oude kabouter voor wat toverpek. Het is onbetaalbaar, vergeet het maar. En wat jullie gedaan hebben, wat jullie nu op jullie geweten hebben door een oude, hardwerkende kabouter lastig te vallen op deze manier is ook onbetaalbaar. Kom op, jongens. Dat kunnen jullie niet meer goedmaken. Jullie hebben mij groot leed gebracht.'

De razende, woeste kabouter greep naar het mes wat aan zijn riem zat. 'En nu meekomen naar de schuur !' snauwde hij hysterisch. De barbaar verroerde zich niet, en de prins wist ook niet wat hij moest doen. Maar de kabouter trok hen het huisje uit naar de schuur, terwijl de honden hevig aan het blaffen waren. In de schuur was een bad met toverpek.

'Alstublieft,' smeekte de prins. 'We hadden echt geen kwaad in zin.' De kabouter zei niets meer, en begon met touw de barbaar en de prins vast te binden. 'Ik ga eraan,' dacht de prins bij zichzelf. 'En ik heb ook nog een keten die achter mij jaagt.' De prins wilde zich niet zomaar overgeven, en rukte zich los toen de kabouter een knoop in het touw wilde maken. 'Sufferd, blijf stil !' snauwde de kabouter. Ook de barbaar rukte zich los van de kabouter, maar de kabouter had al snel een beker toverpek in zijn handen. 'Dit willen jullie echt niet over jullie heenkrijgen, want dan kun je je nooit meer bewegen. Vastgeplakt voor eeuwig, dus denk maar goed na voordat je iets stoms doet.' De kabouter hief de beker op, klaar om het pek te gooien. 'Het elvenzout !' riep de barbaar. De prins greep naar zijn zak met elvenzout die hij aan zijn riem had zitten, en nam er wat van in zijn hand. Snel gooide hij het in het gezicht van de kabouter.

'Dat hadden we eerder moeten doen,' sprak de barbaar. De kabouter lag doodstil op de grond. Hij sliep. Vanuit zijn beker droop het toverpek op zijn rode pakje, en hij begon langzaam te verstenen, terwijl hij lag vastgeplakt

aan de grond. De barbaar en de prins namen toen zoveel mogelijk toverpek mee als ze konden, en nadat ze wat toverpek naar de woeste honden van de kabouter hadden gegooid om deze ook te zien verstenen en vastplakken aan de grond, gingen ze terug naar het bootje. Ze mochten het toverpek niet aanraken, maar goten het uit aan de zijkanten van de boot, en smeerden de zijkanten van het bootje in met het toverpek. Voorzichtig stapten ze toen in het bootje, en gingen de rivier de Sep weer op. Ditmaal merkten ze dat het sneller ging, en al gauw kwamen ze aan bij de reusachtige woestijn, de Grote Woestijn. Het bootje lieten ze aan het einde van de rivier achter, en gingen toen door de Grote Woestijn op weg naar het eeuwige land van de indianen.

Hoofdstuk 8. De Tweede Rivier

Het was warm in de woestijn. De prins keek zijn ogen uit. Er leek geen einde te komen aan de uitgestrekte vlaktes. 'Hoe komen we hier doorheen ?' vroeg de prins. 'Ook deze woestijn lijkt wel eindeloos.'

'Precies,' zei de barbaar. 'Deze woestijn is eindeloos, zoals de rivier de Sep, en we kunnen alleen de overkant bereiken door draken magie.'

'Ook weer door toverpek ?' vroeg de prins.

'Nee,' sprak de barbaar. 'Alleen het ei van de gele vogel kan de Grote Woestijn overbruggen.'

'Wat is de gele vogel, en waar kunnen we zo'n ei vinden ?' vroeg de prins.

'De gele vogel is een drakenvogel. Ze kunnen reusachtig groot worden. Het ei geeft de bezitter magische krachten,' sprak de barbaar. 'De vogel komt hier eens in de tien jaar, en een ei zal hij ons echt niet geven.'

'Maar hoe komen we dan de Grote Woestijn over ?' vroeg de prins.

'Madammeke Zig Zag kan de vogel oproepen, en ze verkoopt volgens mij ook zulke eieren,' sprak de barbaar.

'Wie is Madammeke Zig Zag, en waar kunnen we haar vinden ?' vroeg de prins.

'Het probleem is dat ze aan de andere kant van de Grote Woestijn woont,' sprak de barbaar.

'Daar hebben we dan niks aan,' sprak de prins een beetje teleurgesteld.

'Zij komt hier eens in de honderd jaar,' sprak de barbaar bijna deftig.

'Zeg luister eens,' zei de prins. 'Waarom praat je ineens zo deftig. Is ze in de buurt ofzo ?'

'Nee,' zei de barbaar. 'Ze is geen velden of wegen te bekennen, maar ik weet dat zij wil dat wanneer men over haar spreekt, dan moet men deftig spreken, heel deftig.'

'Oh, luistert ze ons af ofzo ?' vroeg de prins.

'Wie weet,' sprak de barbaar met deftige gebaren. 'Madammeke Zig Zag kan immers alles.'

'Kan ze niet even voor ons komen ?' vroeg de prins.

'Nee, dat kan ze niet. Zet dat maar snel uit je hoofd,' sprak de barbaar.

'En waarom dan niet ?' vroeg de prins.

'Omdat zij gebonden is aan de wetten van de draken magie. Zo niet, dan zou het hele universum ontploffen,' sprak de barbaar.

'Ligt het zo gevoelig ?' vroeg de prins. 'Zij woont dus tussen de Grote Woestijn en het land van de indianen in ?'

'Ja, in het overgangs-gebied,' sprak de barbaar, 'daar waar alle draken veranderen in buffels.'

'Ik zie hier geen draken,' sprak de prins.

'Nee,' zei de barbaar, 'inderdaad. Die komen hier niet vaak. Het is een groot risico.'

'Dus voor hetzelfde geld wachten we hier nog honderd jaar totdat die Madammeke Zig Zag eens komt opdagen ?' vroeg de prins.

'Ja, en dan heb je kans dat ze nog even terug moet voor haar eieren,' sprak de barbaar, 'dus dan zijn we zo nog honderd jaar verder voordat ze weer terug is.'

'Gezellig,' zei de prins. 'Is er geen andere manier om over de Grote woestijn te komen ? Ik bedoel iets sneller.'

'Niet dat ik weet,' sprak de barbaar.

'Kunnen we misschien op de rug van zo'n draak ?' vroeg de prins.

'Ben je gek,' sprak de barbaar. 'Dat gaat echt niet gebeuren.'

De prins voelde zich moedeloos worden. Hij begon van pure paniek de woestijn in te rennen, en begon toen als een wildeman te schreeuwen. 'Het is niet eerlijk, het is niet eerlijk !' schreeuwde hij. Plotseling zagen ze in de verte wat indianen op paarden aankomen. 'Hey !' riep de prins, en begon te springen en te zwaaien. 'Hey, hier moeten jullie zijn !'

De prins rende terug naar de barbaar. 'Daar komen wat indianen aan. Hoe komen die hier nu ?' vroeg de prins.

'Zij gebruiken de magie van de Grote Afgrond,' sprak de barbaar.

'Kunnen zij ons niet meenemen ?' vroeg de prins met enige hoop.

'Misschien,' zei de barbaar. 'We kunnen het proberen.'

De indianen ter paard kwamen steeds dichterbij. Na een tijdje stonden ze vlak voor de prins en de barbaar. De prins begon direct het hele verhaal te vertellen, in de hoop dat de indianen hen zouden meenemen.

Maar ook de indianen schenen aan ijzeren wetten te zijn onderworpen. Wel wilden ze aan Madammeke Zig Zag om twee eieren van de gele drakenvogel vragen. De barbaar gaf hen daarvoor wat geld mee. De indianen waren maar wat blij, sinds de barbaar en de prins hen wilden helpen in de buffeljacht, om zo te voorkomen dat er niet nog meer draken de Grote Afgrond zouden bereiken om zo onsterfelijk te worden. Ze gingen direct terug over de woestijn.

Zelfs voor de indianen was het nog een reis van drie dagen door de Grote Woestijn, maar dat hadden ze er wel voor over. Ongeveer na een week waren ze weer terug met de eieren. In de diepte van de woestijn zouden de eieren zo warm worden dat ze spontaan uitgebroed zouden worden. De jonge gele drakenvogels zouden direct al sterk en magisch genoeg zijn om hen over de eindeloze woestijn te brengen.

De prins en de barbaar begonnen hun tocht over de Grote Woestijn, met de eieren in hun handen. De eieren waren best wel groot en zwaar, maar het was nog wel te doen. Soms namen ze even een rustpauze. Na een paar uur te hebben gelopen begonnen de eieren steeds heter te worden. Op een gegeven moment waren de eieren zo heet, dat ze niet meer te dragen waren. De prins en de barbaar legden hun eieren in het zand, waar ze al snel kapot begonnen te springen. Twee jonge gele drakenvogels kwamen eruit. Ze strekten zich helemaal uit, en waren veel groter dan hun eieren zelf. Met gemak konden de prins en de barbaar op hun ruggen zitten. Ze waren blij dat het allemaal goed verliep zonder problemen. De twee gele drakenvogels stegen al snel op, en begonnen met een loeivaart richting het eeuwige land van de indianen te vliegen. De prins en de barbaar hielden de nekken van de goede drakenvogels goed vast. Het was alsof ze een magische barriere doorbraken. Dit konden de vogels doen, vanwege de draken magie die zij overvloedig van nature bezaten.

In de verte zagen ze het eeuwige land van de indianen. De prins slaakte een kreet van opwinding. Het was hier een erg tropisch klimaat. Vanuit de hete lucht vlogen ze in de wat vochtigere lucht vlak boven het begindeel van het eeuwige land van de indianen. Hier daalden de vogels neer, alsof ze wisten wat ze moesten doen. Het leek wel alsof de vogels niet meer verder konden. Tot hun grote schrik merkten ze dat de vogels in buffels begonnen te veranderen. Met een plof stortten ze op de grond. De buffels renden weer terug richting de woestijn door het overgangs-gebied.

De barbaar en de prins keken elkaar aan. Toen keken ze naar het eeuwige land van de indianen, en gingen tot het eerste de beste kamp. Een indiaan zat daar op de grond, voor zijn wigwam. Hij rookte een soort pijp, een lange pijp met veren. De prins wees op zijn keten, en begon al snel zijn verhaal te vertellen. Hij hoopte dat de indiaan hem kon helpen van de keten af te komen. De indiaan begon te spreken over de Grote Afgrond, waar alle ruimte ophoudt te bestaan, en waar men de ruimte weer wordt ingedreven. Alle ruimte stopt op dat punt. Door de magie van de Grote Afgrond zouden de indianen alles kunnen bereiken wat ze wilden, en alles kunnen krijgen wat ze wilden. Ook zouden ze hier kunnen afkomen van alles wat ze wilden. Wel was het zo dat de magische bron van de Grote Afgrond in de loop van tijden zo vervuild was geraakt vanwege de draken die als buffels tot de Grote Afgrond konden komen.

'Ik kan u helpen, als drakenjager,' sprak de prins, 'maar doet u alstublieft wat aan de keten om mij nek, die zich ook in mijn huid heeft gedrongen om mijn hart te ketenen. Hierom is mijn leven nog steeds in groot gevaar.'

De indiaan keek naar de keten en knikte. De draken die als buffels tot de Grote Afgrond konden komen werden daar onsterfelijke draken, en alhoewel ze weer teruggedreven werden tot ver buiten het eeuwige land van de indianen en de Grote Woestijn, hadden ze de bron van de Grote Afgrond ernstig vervuild, en zou dat een ernstige bedreiging kunnen vormen voor het voortbestaan van de bron en van het eeuwige land van de indianen. De draken zouden maar wat graag de bron en het eeuwige land van de indianen willen vernietigen of innemen. De indiaan raakte de keten aan. 'Elvenzout ?' vroeg hij. 'Ja,' zei de prins. 'Dat gebruik ik om de keten in slaap en verlamming te houden, zodat het mij niet kan doden vanwege mijn ontsnapping.' De indiaan knikte.

De indiaan begon aan de keten te trekken, maar kon het niet loskrijgen. 'Het zit goed vast,' zei de indiaan.

'Maakt u alstublieft de keten niet wakker, want dan ben ik er geweest,' sprak de prins die zich weer een beetje benauwd voelde. 'Maak je geen zorgen,' zei de indiaan. 'Als mijn vader terugkomt, het grote opperhoofd van deze stam, en medicijnman, dan zal hij je wel kunnen helpen.'

Na een tijdje kwam er een man met een grote verentooi op een paard tot het kamp. Hij stapte van zijn paard af. Ook hij rookte een pijp. Het bleek het opperhoofd te zijn. Hij wees direct op zijn keel, terwijl hij naar de prins keek. 'Laat me je helpen,' zei het opperhoofd. Het opperhoofd kwam naar de prins toe en legde zijn hoofd tegen de borst van de prins aan, alsof hij wilde luisteren. Toen nam het opperhoofd voorzichtig de keten in zijn hand. De keten zat nog steeds erg strak. 'Een lastig ding,' zei het opperhoofd. De prins knikte.

Heel langzaam begon het opperhoofd de keten te vieren, heel voorzichtig, heen en weer. 'Dit heb ik van Madammeke Zig Zag geleerd,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'Wij sussen de keten, maken het kalm en rustig, door het te brengen in natuurlijke golfbewegingen. Dan zal de keten minder gespannen zijn.' Het opperhoofd had zijn hand tussen de nekketen en de nek van de prins gelegd, en deed hier hetzelfde. Ineens met een zwaai brak hij de keten los. De prins zuchtte van opluchting. 'Nu zal de keten om je hart ook breken,' sprak het opperhoofd. Hij begon aan de keten te trekken, en trok de keten helemaal uit de borst van de prins, door de opening die daar altijd zat. Even bloedde de prins, maar het opperhoofd verbond het. Het opperhoofd slingerde de keten in het vuur.

'Bedankt,' zei de prins, die zich al een stuk beter voelde.

'Eindelijk,' sprak de barbaar.

'Laten we tot de Grote Afgrond gaan,' sprak het opperhoofd. De prins en de barbaar kregen een paard, en volgden het opperhoofd en zijn zoon.

Vele dagen moesten ze reizen voordat ze een glimp opvingen van de Grote Afgrond. Het leek wel alsof de Grote Afgrond hen tegemoet kwam. Er waren in de verte vele stormen, als tornado's. Ze droegen een vreemd licht in allerlei kleuren, zoals paars, geel en oranje. De tornado's waren als pilaren met hun eigen kleur, en bovenop hen was er een dak van een vreemd rood licht, bijna verzilverd. Het was een groot natuurverschijnsel. Het opperhoofd sprak dat de Grote Afgrond bewoog. Het kon dichtbij komen en ver weg. Ineens keken ze in een immens diepe afgrond. De paarden steigerden. Ergens stopte hier alle ruimte. Het leek wel alsof hier hun gedachten stopten, alsof al hun gedachten hier afbrokkelden. Het was even voor een lange tijd stil.

Toen probeerde het opperhoofd te praten, maar hij kon het niet. Hij maakte alleen wat gebaren met zijn handen, maar kon verder geen woord eruit krijgen. Na een tijdje stuntelen kon hij een beetje stotteren, maar niemand kon het verstaan. Na een tijdje begon hij duidelijker te spreken : 'Dat wat men tijd noemt is in wezen gewoon ook ruimte. Tijd bestaat niet. Zie tijd als ruimte, om zo niet opgesloten te raken in de betovering van tijd. Hier stopt alle ruimte. Hier kunnen we niet verder, maar hier worden we weer teruggedreven de ruimte in. De Grote Afgrond beweegt en kan ons overal brengen.'

'Dat lijkt op één grote trukendoos,' sprak de prins. 'Zou ruimte misschien ook een truuk zijn ?'

'Jazeker,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'Alles bestaat alleen maar op kaarten. Die kaarten geven de illusie van ruimte, en zo ook van tijd. Dit zijn de kaarten van de Rode Zee.'

'De Rode Zee ?' sprak de prins. 'Waar is die zee eigenlijk ?'

'Oh, die zee is wonderbaar,' sprak het opperhoofd. Zijn zoon knikte. 'Die zee is paradijselijk, en bevat alle geheimen van het leven.'

'Maar waar is die zee ?' vroeg de prins.

'Niemand weet dat,' zei het opperhoofd. 'Er bestaat immers geen ruimte. Dat is allemaal illusie. Ook nummers zijn illusie. Alles is één en hetzelfde.'

'Wauw,' zei de prins. 'Maar waar manifesteert de Rode Zee zich in de ruimte ?'

'Die zee is inderdaad nergens,' zei het opperhoofd, 'maar soms manifesteert de Rode Zee zich aan de andere kant van de rivier de Sep.'

'Dat is een eind lopen,' sprak de barbaar.

'Haha,' sprak het opperhoofd, 'inderdaad, want de rivier de Sep is eindeloos.' De zoon van het opperhoofd knikte. 'Je kunt er niet zomaar komen,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'Alleen zij die de magie van de Grote Afgrond kennen maken kans.'

'Is dat nodig ?' vroeg de prins. 'Ik bedoel is het nodig om tot de Rode Zee te gaan ?'

'Jazeker,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'Je moet de geheimen van het leven leren kennen, de kaarten van de Rode Zee, om zo tot de spiegelwereld van het eeuwige land van de indianen te komen, die achter de Rode Zee ligt, dus dat is helemaal aan de andere kant van de feeen rivier de Sep. Daar is afgerekend met het draken probleem.'

'Waarom bent u hier dan nog ?' vroeg de prins. 'Omdat ik de geheimen van de spiegel nog niet goed ken,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'Dus ik heb de spiegelwereld nog nooit kunnen binnengaan.' De zoon van het opperhoofd knikte.

'Het gebied van de Rode Zee aan de andere kant van de feeen rivier de Sep is een mysterieus gebied. Soms is de Rode Zee er wel, en soms is het er niet, omdat het eigenlijk nergens is, omdat ruimte een grote illusie is,' sprak het opperhoofd. Zijn zoon knikte. 'Velen kunnen nooit tot dit gebied komen,' ging het opperhoofd verder, 'want de feeen rivier de Sep is een eindeloze rivier. Aan de andere kant van de feeen rivier de Sep, oftewel het andere uiteinde, terwijl dat een eindeloos uiteinde is, ligt de bron van de feeen rivier de Sep, een groot geheim, bewaakt door een onsterfelijke draak. Dit is de draak Temin. Deze bron ligt dus in het gebied van de Rode Zee. De onsterfelijke draken zijn naar ons op jacht. Er is dus een hoger doel dan de buffeljacht, en dat is te komen tot de spiegelwereld van het eeuwige land van de indianen aan het andere eindeloze uiteinde van de rivier de Sep.' De zoon van het opperhoofd knikte.

'Dat is in godsnaam een lange reis,' sprak de barbaar. De zoon van het opperhoofd knikte. 'Dat is het zeker,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'En terug te gaan

langs de feeen rivier is niet zonder gevaren. De draken jagen volop daar, en maken veel gevangenen en slaven zoals jullie wel weten. En zij die voor een tweede keer door de draken beetgenomen worden, die zijn er veel erger aan toe.'

'Dus die indianen die we aan het begin van de Grote Woestijn tegenkwamen waren ook op weg naar het andere eindeloze uiteinde van de rivier de Sep ?' vroeg de prins.

'Waarschijnlijk wel,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'Zij waren waarschijnlijk, hoogst waarschijnlijk, op weg naar de Rode Zee daar.' De zoon van het opperhoofd knikte.

'Wij hebben in ieder geval een voordeel,' sprak het opperhoofd. Even was het stil. Toen vervolgde het opperhoofd : 'Wij hebben de magie van de Grote Afgrond, een heilige magie. Wij kunnen bereiken wat wij willen, en afscheiden wat wij willen. Wij bemachtigen het grote geheim van ruimte, van verplaatsing, van samenkomen en weer weggaan. Maar het is bekend dat die magie van ons wegvlucht naarmate wij het Grote Midden van de rivier de Sep bereiken. Daar heersen de draken en de trollen volop. Het is het brandpunt van het grote kwaad en het grote bedrog, het middelpunt en de bron van alle ellende. Eens werd daar een draak geboren, en sindsdien waren ze niet meer te stoppen.' De zoon van het opperhoofd knikte weer.

'Hoe gebeurde dat ?' vroeg de prins.

'Salmar was een onsterfelijke draak, een onsterfelijk ei. Hij is de heerser over alle onsterfelijke draken. Nog steeds woont hij in het onsterfelijke ei. Dat is zijn schuilplaats. Hij is een meester van vermommingen. Sommigen zeggen dat hij al deze werelden heeft gemaakt. Sommigen denken dat hij goed is, en anderen denken dat hij slecht is, terwijl weer anderen denken dat hij niet goed en niet slecht is,' antwoordde het opperhoofd. Even was het een tijdje stil. Toen vervolgde het opperhoofd weer : 'In feite begon zo al het kwaad, en men zegt dat zelfs Salmar het kwaad niet meer kon stoppen.'

'Maar hoe werd hij geboren ?' vroeg de prins.

'Dat is een duister geheim van de rivier de Sep,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'Zo duister dat wij daar niet over mogen praten.'

'Ik begrijp het,' sprak de prins.

'Nee, je begrijpt het niet,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'Als wij daar over zouden spreken, dan zouden al deze werelden kunnen ontploffen, en daarmee het hele universum, en alles zou ophouden te bestaan.'

'Maar dat begrijp ik,' sprak de prins. 'Geheimen zijn niet voor niets geheimen. Dat kan vele redenen hebben die wij niet weten.'

'Nu begrijp je het,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'Het komt erop neer dat de wetten van magie onderhevig zijn aan veel geheimhouding. De magie gaat verloren als al die kaarten zomaar op tafel worden gelegd. Maar die kaarten kun je verdienen. Geheimen kun je verdienen, en dat is een grote uitdaging. Het maakt het leven waard te leven.' De zoon van het opperhoofd knikte instemmend.

'Dit is groots,' sprak de prins. 'Het lijkt wel alsof ik niet kan denken, maar alleen maar ervaren. Alles draait en tolt in mijn hoofd.'

'Dat is de magie van de Grote Afgrond,' lachte het opperhoofd. 'En nu op naar de magie van de Rode Zee. Het is als een kaartspel.'

'Maar de magie van de Grote Afgrond zal afnemen als we de rivier de Sep weer opgaan ?' vroeg de prins.

'Uiteindelijk wel,' zei het opperhoofd, 'maar de magie van de Rode Zee zal ons tegemoet treden. Althans dat mogen we hopen. Het is niet voor iedereen. Er zal over onze hoofden worden beslist.'

'Waar gaat het van afhangen ?' vroeg de prins.

'Doorzettingsvermogen, goede wil, dapperheid, moed, volhoudingsvermogen, vastberadenheid, regelmaat, houvast, vertrouwen, wilskracht, trouw, plichtsgevoel en waardigheid, om maar wat dingen op te noemen. In andere woorden : Je moet een grote leergierigheid hebben,' sprak het opperhoofd.

'Dat is een geruststelling,' sprak de prins. 'Ik ben namelijk erg leergierig. Ik wil altijd alles weten. Sommigen noemen mij de ondervrager van Eldemor.'

'Aha,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'Nou, dat kan misschien nog goed van pas komen.'

Vlakbij de Grote Afgrond was een hal. Het was de Hal van Verplaatsing. Hier werd de magie van de Grote Afgrond onderwezen. Met z'n vieren gingen ze de grote hal binnen. Hier stond ergens een grote tafel met daarop een map met gebieden. Ook stonden er pionnen op, en lagen er kaarten. Het geheel deed een beetje Middeleeuws aan. Toch brandden er ook lampjes, die waren als kleine kaarsjes. De vlammetjes hadden verschillende kleuren.

'Ik kan het niet goed zien,' sprak de prins. 'Het is wazig voor mijn ogen.'

'Je moet nog wennen aan de magie van de Grote Afgrond,' glimlachte het opperhoofd.

'Ja, nu kan ik het zien,' sprak de prins. 'Heel duidelijk.'

Het opperhoofd begon de pionnen te bewegen, en de lampjes begonnen te knipperen. 'Binnen dit gebied is de magie van de Grote Afgrond makkelijk uit te oefenen. Daarbuiten wordt het moeilijker,' sprak het opperhoofd. Zijn zoon knikte weer als altijd.

Het opperhoofd wees het gebied van Madammeke Zig Zag aan. Hij bewoog een pion daar naartoe, en de lampjes in het gebied begonnen overal paars te worden. 'We moeten haar om raad vragen hoe we naar de Rode Zee kunnen gaan,' sprak het opperhoofd. De prins knikte. Ook de barbaar knikte.

'Hoe komen we daar bij Madammeke Zig Zag, want het is me nogal een rot eind,' vroeg de prins.

'Moet je opletten,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'Ik zal je wat laten zien. We gaan tijd en ruimte overbruggen door de magie van de Grote Afgrond. Het opperhoofd drukte een aantal knopjes in. Toen begonnen de lampjes langzaam roze te worden in het gebied van Madammeke Zig Zag. 'Dit is haar huis,' sprak het opperhoofd, terwijl hij er even naar wees. Hij wees naar één van de pionnen, en begon de pion te bewegen tot de grote hal op de map. De grote hal was ook een pion. Toen bewoog hij de pion van het huis van Madammeke Zig Zag weer terug, en begon toen de pion van de grote hal te schuiven naar het huis van Madammeke Zig Zag. 'Zie je ?' vroeg hij.

'Ik begrijp er niet veel van,' sprak de prins. 'Gaat dat altijd zo moeilijk ?'

'Ik probeer je iets te laten zien,' zei het opperhoofd. 'Er moet eerst een verbinding gemaakt worden.'

'Ik begrijp het,' sprak de prins.

Het opperhoofd pakte een kaart, en begon het voor te lezen :

'Madammeke Zig Zag verwacht jullie al.'

Het opperhoofd glimlachte. 'Zie ? Er is contact gemaakt. De kaarten reageren op de pionnen, en geven dan een boodschap door.'

'Geweldig,' sprak de prins. 'Heel mooi,' zei de barbaar.

'Dat wil niet zeggen dat het altijd zo moet,' zei het opperhoofd. 'Dit is maar een hulpmiddel voor beginners. De pionnen van waar je bent en waar je naartoe moet, moeten contact met elkaar maken, en dan reageren de kaarten daarop.'

'Maar hoe komen we daar dan ?' vroeg de prins.

'Let goed op,' sprak het opperhoofd. Weer pakte hij een kaart. 'Lees het voor,' zei hij tegen de prins met een glimlach. De prins pakte de kaart en begon te lezen : 'Overbrug iedere ruimte snel en makkelijk door een feeenwortel.'

'Hoe doe ik dat ?' vroeg de prins.

'Door het te eten,' sprak het opperhoofd.

'Waar kan ik feeenwortels vinden ?' vroeg de prins.

'De Hal van Verplaatsing heeft ze volop in de keuken en de kelders,' glimlachte het opperhoofd. Zijn zoon knikte. Een glimlach verscheen op zijn gezicht. 'Arend Pot, mijn zoon, leidt onze gasten naar de keuken en de kelders, en laat ze die overheerlijke, magische, wonderlijke feeenwortels voor verplaatsing maar eens zien.'

'Dank u vader,' zei de indiaan. 'Volg mij,' zei hij tegen de prins en de barbaar. Aan de andere kant van de hal moesten ze even een trap af, en liepen zo regelrecht de keuken in. De indiaan trok wat lades open waar al veel feeenwortels te zien waren. Toen trok hij de koelkast open waar nog wel meer wortels lagen, en toen nog wat kastjes. Hij gaf een wortel aan de prins en één aan de barbaar. 'Nog niet opeten,' zei hij. Toen leidde hij ze naar de kelders, waar dozen vol met wortels lagen. Het opperhoofd glimlachte. 'Daar kun je veel mee reizen,' sprak het opperhoofd, 'maar ik zal jullie een geheim vertellen. De wortels raken nooit op. Je hebt maar één wortel nodig, die gewoon weer aangroeit als je ervan hebt gegeten.'

'Dat is handig,' zei de prins.

'Handig en gezellig,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'Je wortel wordt je beste vriend.' De zoon van het opperhoofd glimlachte breed, en begon hevig te knikken.

'Het is maar voor even,' zei de zoon van het opperhoofd. 'Het is maar voor beginners. In de hogere magie van de Grote Afgrond heb je die wortels niet meer nodig.'

Weer liepen ze terug naar de tafel met de map. 'Ik zal jullie nog even wat laten zien,' sprak het opperhoofd. Weer drukte hij een heleboel knopjes in, en de lampjes begonnen rood te kleuren. Weer nam hij een kaart, en las het voor : 'De verbinding is gemaakt, en de verbinding is open. Jullie zijn alle vier waardig bevonden voor de grote verplaatsing.'

'Eet nu je wortel,' sprak het opperhoofd. De prins en de barbaar begonnen gulzig te eten van hun wortel. Het leek wel alsof alles roze werd voor de ogen van de prins, en langzaam begon alles oranje te worden. Langzaam deed hij zijn ogen open. Een grote vrouw stond voor hem met een hoed op en een pollepel in haar hand. Hij keek om zich heen en merkte dat hij in een huis was. Daar waren ook de anderen. Dit was het huis van Madammeke Zig Zag. Het opperhoofd boog beleefd voor de vrouw, en ook zijn zoon. Ze bogen wel twintig keer. Ook de prins begon maar te buigen.

'Zeg, buig jij ook eens even voor mij,' sprak Madammeke Zig Zag tot de barbaar. 'Zomaar plomp voor me staan is ook niet echt netjes.'

'Ja, mevrouw,' sprak de barbaar deftig, en boog diep voor haar. Toen knielde hij.

'Zo mag ik het zien,' zei Madammeke Zig Zag.

Het opperhoofd vertelde haar het verhaal, dat zijn gasten graag naar de Rode Zee zouden gaan. Madammeke Zig Zag liep naar haar bol van visioenen om erin te kijken wat het beste was.

'Aha, ik zie het,' zei Madammeke Zig Zag, 'het is beter om niet terug te gaan langs de rivier de Sep. Veel te gevaarlijk. Er is een betere weg. De Regenboog Rivier, dat is de grote elven rivier, is een andere rivier die met een grote boog weg van de feeen rivier de Grote Afgrond verbindt met de Rode Zee. Die rivier ligt er dus tussen, maar is ver verwijderd van de feeen rivier. Om die rivier te bereiken moet je langs de Grote Afgrond gaan.'

Het opperhoofd glimlachte : 'Hartelijk dank voor deze wijze raad, Madammeke Zig Zag.'

'Kan daar ook magie van de Grote Afgrond gebruikt worden ?' vroeg de prins.

'Helemaal niet,' sprak Madammeke Zig Zag. 'Je kunt daar zelfs niet komen door Grote Afgrond magie. De elven hebben hun eigen magie.'

Madammeke Zig Zag legde hen even uit hoe ze moesten komen bij de Regenboog Rivier van de elven, en toen gingen ze op pad.

Het was een lange reis langs de Grote Afgrond. Eerst was de Grote Afgrond hen gelukkig tegemoetgekomen, maar toen moesten ze nog een hele lange reis er langsheen. Op een gegeven moment kwam het stoom van de wateren van de Regenboog Rivier hen tegemoet. De rivier stoomde altijd erg. Niet dat het er altijd heet was. Het kon soms heet zijn, maar het klimaat was gewoon ook erg vochtig. Het leek hen van ver al te besproeien. Het was een aangenaam gevoel, als stuivend water, wat tegelijkertijd heet en fris was. De prins kreeg het er warm van, maar niet onaangenaam. Het leek hem te omhullen als een warme deken. Het maakte hem blij en gelukkig. Het was alsof zijn herinneringen gespoeld werden, en zijn wonden verdwenen. Overal waren hier klotsende watervalletjes. Ze waren nu erg dichtbij de rivier. Ergens vonden zij een bootje waarin zij de rivier opgingen. Aan beide kanten van de rivier waren hoge vochtige heuvels met verschillende verhogingen en veel begroeiing. Alle vier namen zij een peddel, en begonnen te peddelen. Er was een bepaalde stroom in de rivier die hen meetrok verder de rivier op. Plotseling sprong er een lange elf in hun bootje. 'Hey, welkom in het gebied van de Regenboog Rivier,' sprak de elf hen toe. 'Hoe kan ik jullie helpen. Waar gaat de reis naartoe ?' Het opperhoofd begon het verhaal te vertellen.

'Ah,' zei de elf. Hij strekte zich even uit. Even was het stil. 'Ik ben Langelf,' sprak de elf plotseling. 'De Regenboog Rivier gaat helemaal terug in de tijd, totdat het aankomt bij de Rode Zee, waar alle tijd begint, als de bron van alle tijd.'

'Ik dacht dat tijd niet bestond, maar dat tijd niets anders is dan ruimte,' sprak de prins.

'Precies !' riep de elf enthousiast. 'Jij begrijpt het. Tijd is een illusie, een onderverdeling van overbruggelijke en onoverbruggelijke ruimte. Tijd is een bouwsteen. Je kunt ermee bouwen, wat je maar wilt. Dus eigenlijk is het gewoon ruimte en materie.' De elf keek heel filosofisch. 'We gaan hier door alle tijden heen, totdat we bij de bron van alles komen. Tijd is eindeloos,

zonder begin en zonder einde, maar door de elven magie kun je dit uiteindelijk overbruggen, waar tijd gewoon ruimte is, de verschillende etappes van de Regenboog Rivier. Wij zijn erg trots op ons majestueuze werkstuk.

'Wie hebben de Regenboog Rivier gemaakt ?' vroeg de prins.

'Wij,' zei Langelf.

'Het is inderdaad iets heel lieflijks,' sprak de prins, 'en een adembenemende gewaarwording met zoveel gevoel en intensiteit.'

'Jullie zijn van harte welkom,' sprak Langelf.

'Ik voel een warmte in me dalen, en dan stijgt het weer op,' sprak de prins.

'Je herinneringen worden gezuiverd,' zei Langelf. 'Al je gebieden van tijd, tussen de twee eindeloze uiteindes van tijd in.'

'Geweldig,' sprak de prins.

'Wij waren allemaal gevangenen van de tijd,' sprak de elf. 'Maar de Rode Zee heeft ons vrijgezet. De Rode Zee is de bron van de Regenboog Rivier.'

'Fantastisch,' zei de prins. 'Is de Rode Zee een kaartspel ?'

'Zo zou ik het niet noemen,' sprak de elf. 'Het is veel meer dan dat. Ruimte bestaat niet. Alles is inderdaad onderverdeeld op kaarten die de illusie van ruimte geven, en zo de illusie van tijd. Alles wordt dus geregeerd door kaarten, en je mag in je leven stap voor stap de meest magische kaarten ontdekken. Die kaarten maken je gelukkig, doordat ze je hogere informatie geven, en dus hogere magie om je leven te begrijpen. Dit zal veel pijn weghalen, de pijn van verwarring en onbegrip. Er is veel misverstand in het universum omdat velen de kaarten niet kennen. Het is dus niet zomaar een spel, maar ook een verhaal over je eigen leven. Je moet ontdekken wie je bent, en waar je naartoe mag gaan. Is dat niet wonderlijk ?'

De prins knikte. Ook de zoon van het opperhoofd knikte instemmend. Allen waren ze aandachtig aan het luisteren naar de elf.

'Dus het is een spel en een verhaal met kaarten ?' vroeg de prins.

'Je moet het zo zien,' sprak de elf. 'De kaarten staan voor bepaalde stralen, bepaalde karakters en eigenschappen, elementen in het leven, die leiding kunnen geven en deuren kunnen openen. Die kaarten kun je verdienen, en worden aan je gegeven op de juiste tijd. Zo mag je komen tot de Rode Zee, waar de kaarten arsenalen zich bevinden, de kaart-archieven van het leven.'

'Wij moeten dus oorlog voeren door de kaarten ?' vroeg de prins.

'Oh ja,' sprak de elf. 'Wij moeten de draken verslaan. Alleen de kaarten kunnen dit. De kaarten hebben alle informatie die je nodig hebt.'

'Magisch,' sprak de prins. 'Hoe gaat dat in z'n werk ? De draken verslaan door de kaarten ?'

'Dat zul je wel zien,' glimlachte de elf. 'Het grote spel of verhaal is nog maar net begonnen. Het is een grote oorlog. Een oorlog van kaarten. Informatie tegen informatie. Degene met de beste informatie wint.'

'Dus als ik het goed begrijp is de Rode Zee er niet altijd ?' vroeg de prins.

'Eigenlijk nooit,' sprak de elf. 'En eigenlijk is de Rode Zee nergens, omdat tijd en ruimte niet echt bestaan. Je moet daar doorheen prikken. De Rode Zee is een kaart. Dat is alles wat het is, als de heerser van alle kaarten, die de poort tot de spiegelwereld van het eeuwige land van de indianen bewaakt. Die poort is een magische spiegel. Alleen door de juiste kaarten kan die poort geopend worden.'

'Wauw,' zei de prins. 'Dus de Regenboog Rivier eindigt in een kaart ?'

'Nee,' zei de elf. 'Het loopt uit in een groot bos tot een feeen terras, waar feeen komen voor een potje kaart.'

'Aha !' lachte de zoon van het opperhoofd.

'De feeen spelen daar kaart, en een ieder die daar komt kan daar aan deelnemen, maar er zijn wat risico's aan verbonden, hele grote risico's zelfs,' sprak de elf. 'De kaart van de Rode Zee moet je winnen, maar als je verliest, dan zak je of door de grond tot het land van trol, of je gaat terug naar de feeen rivier de Sep. Het hangt er maar net vanaf welke kaarten je krijgt.'

'Dat klinkt gevaarlijk,' sprak de prins. 'Moet ik daar echt mijn leven voor wagen ?'

'Beste broeder,' sprak de elf, 'jij bent degene die de kaart van het eeuwige boek draagt, een zeer mysterieuze kaart. Die kaart kun je voor alles inzetten. Het is de joker van het spel.'

'Dus in wezen draag ik de kaart van de Rode Zee al bij me, als ik de kaart van het eeuwige boek voor alles kan gebruiken ?' vroeg de prins.

'Jazeker,' sprak de elf. 'Je kan gewoon daar die kaart laten zien, en vragen om de kaart van de Rode Zee.'

'Maar waar heb ik die kaart ?' vroeg de prins.

'Het litteken in je hoofd zal het je laten zien,' sprak de elf. 'Heb jij niet ooit het eeuwige boek geschreven aan de feeen rivier de Sep ?'

'Deels,' sprak de prins.

'Fraai,' sprak de elf. 'Heb je daar nog iets van bij je ?'

'Nee,' sprak de prins.

'De feeen zullen het vast aan je kunnen zien dat jij de schrijver van het eeuwige boek bent. Misschien hebben zij die kaart wel voor je,' sprak de elf.

'Ik hoop het,' sprak de prins.

'Iedereen draagt al kaarten met zich mee van nature,' sprak de elf. 'Ik zie ook bij jou de kaart van de Dinosaurus Rijder, en de kaart van de Krokodillen Rijder.'

'Waar ?' vroeg de prins.

'Ik heb daar ogen voor,' zei de elf. 'Ik kan het onzichtbare zien.'

'Waarom spelen die feeen zo'n gevaarlijk spel eigenlijk,' vroeg de prins.

'Om de spionnen van de draak uit te ziften,' sprak de elf. 'Het kaartspel kan hen namelijk ontmaskeren.'

'Ik begrijp het,' sprak de prins. 'Voor bescherming en veiligheid dus.'

'Jazeker,' sprak de elf.

Op een verhoging in het bos lag het feeen terras. Er was een grote cirkel van vele feeen, allemaal rondom een grote tafel. Het bootje stopte vlakbij het terras, waar de rivier ten einde liep. Iedereen stapte uit. 'Ik moet weer gaan,' sprak de elf, en verdween weer snel het bos in. De feeen waren druk bezig met kaarten. Er zaten veel wezens tussen hen in, en zelfs draken. 'Ik denk dat je het aan het verliezen bent, Almond,' sprak een fee. 'Het Meer van Visioen is geen leuke plaats om te zijn.'

'Oh, jawel,' zei één van de draken. 'Wij hebben het zelf gemaakt.'

'Welnee joh,' zei de fee. 'Het is een gevangenis die wij hebben gemaakt, voor losbollige betweters zoals jij.'

De draak begon een beetje geirriteerd te raken, en boos, en begon vuur te spugen.

'Oh, Almond,' zei de fee. 'Leer eens te communiceren in plaats van al dat nutteloze geweld. Dat vuur is alleen maar kook-vuur. Dat kunnen we goed gebruiken, en het deert ons niet. We kunnen ons eten ermee opwarmen, maar voor jou is het echt tijd om naar school te gaan, misschien een iets leuker en beleefder woord voor gevangenis.'

'Jullie feeen brouwen er weer niets van,' brulde de draak. 'Morgen zal ik terug zijn om jullie eens een lesje te leren !'

'Volgende week, Almond,' sprak de fee. 'Een weekje school zal je goeddoen. Het Meer van Visioen is altijd blij met terugkerende leerlingen. Volgende week zullen we zien of je er echt iets van heb opgestoken, Almond.'

'Haa,' brulde de draak, 'dat lieve Meer van Visioen is van ons, en het is een meer vol leugens. Ik ben er niet bang voor. Wij houden van liegen en bedriegen. Het is ons dagelijks brood. Je doet me daar een groot genoegen mee om me daar naartoe te zenden, als een reisje naar een pretpark. Het zal een dolleuk feestje zijn.'

'Nee, Almond,' sprak de fee. 'Het Meer van Visioen is geen domein van leugens en bedotterij. Het zijn raadsels die je moet oplossen. Doe je het niet, dan blijf je zitten in de klas.'

'Totdat ik het door ga krijgen, juf ?' brulde de draak.

'Precies, Almond,' sprak de fee.

'Wat een ellende, wat een dikke ellende,' brulde de draak. 'Het is altijd hetzelfde liedje hier. Almond, doe dit. Almond, doe dat. Nooit een keertje tijd voor plezier.'

'We hebben genoeg plezier vandaag gehad, Almond,' sprak de fee, 'maar helaas heb je het spel weer verloren, dus moet je terug naar school. Volgende keer beter.'

'Waarom ga je zelf niet naar school, juf ?' brulde de draak.

'Het hele leven is een school,' sprak de fee. 'Soms is het tijd om te spelen, soms is het tijd te leren, en dat geldt voor ons allemaal.'

'Ik zie u gauw dan in het Meer van Visioen, juf,' brulde de draak.

'Ik moet nog afwassen, en daarna is het alweer tijd voor een spelletje kaart,' sprak de fee. 'Ik moet nog meer leerlingen testen.'

De fee drukte een knopje in, en de draak gleed weg door de grond. 'Ziezo, die is weg,' zei de fee.

Het scheen dat de feeen hier een heel ander idee en beeld hadden van het Meer van Visioen. Wat minder dramatisch, meer als een leerschool en een puzzel.

'En wie hebben we daar ?' sprak de fee die de leiding van het spel scheen te hebben. Het opperhoofd begon het verhaal te vertellen.

'Aha, ik zie het,' sprak de fee. 'En hebben jullie ook zin in een potje kaart ?'

'Ik wil niet eindigen in het Meer van Visioen,' sprak de prins.

'Maak je geen zorgen,' sprak de fee. 'Ik zie dat je de kaart van het eeuwige boek draagt. Die kun je voor alles inzetten.'

'Ik zou graag de kaart van de Rode Zee willen hebben,' sprak de prins.

'Nou, dan krijg je er eentje bij,' glimlachte de fee. Uit haar binnenste jaszak haalde ze een kaart, en gaf het aan de prins. 'Alsjeblieft,' zei ze.

De prins keek op de kaart, en zag een rood glimmende zee. 'Kunnen mijn vrienden ook mee ?' vroeg de prins.

'Je kunt er precies drie meenemen, maar het hadden er ook echt niet meer moeten zijn,' glimlachte de fee.

'Waar moeten we nu naartoe ?' vroeg de prins.

'Achter het terras staat een kaartlees-machine, een standbeeld van een eekhoorn. Je kunt de kaart daar in de gleuf drukken, ten hoogte van zijn borst,' glimlachte de fee.

Ze liepen naar de andere kant van het terras, en achter een bruin muurtje stond inderdaad de eekhoorn. De prins stopte het kaartje in de gleuf. Na een tijdje begon de eekhoorn te spreken. 'Eh, nee hoor, komt niks van in. Nee hoor, ik kan je echt niet doorlaten. Nee hoor, ik kan niets voor je doen. Sorry hoor, maar daar komt echt niets van in.' Ook de fee kwam achter het bruine muurtje en begon te lachen. 'Dat doet hij wel vaker hoor,' lachte de fee. 'Hij is even het kaartje aan het verwerken.'

'Ik kan dit niet doen,' zei de eekhoorn. 'Ik ga hier echt niet voor zitten. Ik heb het wel weer gezien, en hier komt niks van in. Er komt niks van in, hoor. Echt niet.'

De fee lachte erom. 'Hij is bijna klaar, denk ik,' lachte de fee.

'Oh ja,' zei de eekhoorn, 'nou zie ik het hoor. Nou, vooruit dan maar, voor deze ene keer. Maar laat het niet meer gebeuren. Ik heb hier al genoeg van gehad, en je bent de laatste voor vandaag. Vooruit maar dan, maar wel doorlopen, en niet treuzelen, anders roep ik je weer terug. Dit is echt de laatste keer dat ik je doorlaat. Waag het niet nog een keer bij me te komen met je smoesjes.'

De fee lachte. 'Zie je nu wel, niets aan de hand. Hij laat je gewoon door.'

'En waar moeten we nu naartoe ?' vroeg de prins.

'Volg mij maar,' zei de fee. Na een tijdje wees ze een richting in. 'Als je die kant op loopt,' zei ze, 'dan kom je vanzelf bij de Rode Zee. Alleen zij die de kaart hebben kunnen de Rode Zee zien. Voor alle anderen is de Rode Zee er niet.'

De prins hield het kaartje goed vast, en liep in de richting die de fee had aangewezen, terwijl de anderen hem volgden. Het was hier nogal dichtbegroeid. Na een tijdje lopen zagen ze in de verte wat roods glinsteren. 'Dat moet de Rode Zee zijn,' sprak de prins.

Hoofdstuk 9. De Rode Zee

Plotseling werden ze tegengehouden door elven die pijl en boog op hen gericht hadden. 'Wat komen jullie hier doen ?' snauwde één van de elven.

'Wij hebben toegang gekregen van de feeen van het feeen terras,' sprak de prins.

'Niks mee te maken,' snauwde de elf, die zijn pijl al bijna in het gezicht van de prins had gedrukt. 'Maak dat je wegkomt,' sprak de elf geirriteerd.

'We hebben ook een kaartje,' zei de prins, en liet de kaart van de Rode Zee zien.

De elven begonnen te lachen. 'Wat hebben wij daar nou mee te maken, jongen,' zei de elf op een bijna spottende toon. Hij had zijn hand tegen de schouder van de prins gezet, en duwde hem weg. 'Dit is ons gebied, belachelijk figuur. Val ons niet lastig met je stomme kaartjes.'

'Wij komen voor de Rode Zee,' sprak de barbaar.

'Rode Zee ?' lachte de elf. 'Er zijn hier geen zeeen. Nou maak dat je wegkomt, en snel een beetje. We hebben geen uren de tijd.'

Het opperhoofd sprak toen wat dingen in een speciale elventaal, maar toen begon de elf nog kwaaier te worden. Met zijn boog sloeg hij het opperhoofd,

en ook de andere elven begonnen te slaan. 'Laat je niet misleiden om tegen hen te vechten,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'Ze bezitten hoge magie, en de magie van de Grote Afgrond werkt hier niet. Zij zijn zo'n beetje de politie hier, dus we kunnen beter meewerken.'

Eén van de elven schoot giftige pijltjes met zijn blaaspijp. Alle vier werden ze geraakt, en vielen in een diepe slaap. De elven bonden hen vast, en namen hen mee naar een dichtbijzijnd dorp. Hier werden ze in een boerderij in een kooi gezet. Na een tijdje werden ze wakker in de kooi. Een wat oudere elf kwam om hen te ondervragen. Het bleek de hoofdman van het dorp te zijn.

'En jullie zijn op zoek naar de Rode Zee hier ?' bulderde de hoofdman van het lachen. 'Luister nou eens even. Laat me nou even niet lachen. Er zijn hier geen zeeen. Men heeft jullie maar wat wijsgemaakt. De Rode Zee ? Laat me toch niet lachen. Jullie hebben zeker domme spelletjes gedaan met die feeen. Die deugen niet. Die fantaseren er maar op los. Grote bedriegers zijn het. Al tijden zijn wij in grote oorlog met hen.'

De hoofdman ging op een stoel zitten en staarde naar hen. 'Denken jullie echt dat ik die onzin ga geloven ? Wij geloven in de elven kerk en het eeuwige boek, en daar blijft het bij.'

'Ik ben de schrijver van het eeuwige boek,' sprak de prins.

'Leugenaar !' bulderde de hoofdman. Toen begon hij te lachen. 'Het eeuwige boek is geschreven door een oude elf die allang is overleden. Probeer me nu niet nog meer onzin aan m'n neus te smeren.'

'Laat me dat eeuwige boek dan eens zien,' sprak de prins.

De hoofdman liep naar een boekenkast en griste een heel dik boek eruit. Toen liep hij naar de kooi toe, en stak het boek door de tralies. De prins pakte het boek, en begon te lezen. 'Dat heb ik geschreven,' zei de prins. 'Dat heb ik geschreven aan de feeen rivier de Sep. Het boek is nog niet af.'

'Heiligschennis !' bulderde de hoofdman. 'Hoe durf je te zeggen dat ons heilige boek nog niet af is. En hoe durf je te zeggen dat jij de schrijver van het eeuwige boek bent ?'

'Omdat het zo is. De oude elf moet het gestolen hebben, en gezegd hebben dat hij het eeuwige boek zelf had geschreven,'sprak de prins.

'Dikke onzin, dikke onzin,' sprak de hoofdman. 'Dit is heiligschennis naar onze profeet. Of je bent gewoon gek, krankzinnig, en denkt echt dat jij het eeuwige boek hebt geschreven, ons heilig boek waarin wij geloven. Ik ben veel malloten in mijn leven tegengekomen, maar jij bent wel echt de zotste van allemaal. En dan nog al die praatjes over de Rode Zee. Er is hier geen Rode Zee.'

'Je kunt alleen de Rode Zee zien als je de kaart van de Rode Zee hebt,' sprak de prins.

'Wat ?' lachte de hoofdman. 'Wat is dat voor grote onzin. Geef hier die kaart dan.'

'Ik kon het alleen maar voor mijn drie vrienden en mezelf gebruiken,' sprak de prins. 'Het moest eerst getest worden door een standbeeld van een eekhoorn.'

'Zeg, laat me nou toch echt niet lachen, vriend,' bulderde de hoofdman. 'Een standbeeld van een eekhoorn ? Wat zullen we nou krijgen ? Wat zijn dit voor smoesjes. Geef hier die kaart.'

De prins schoof de kaart van de Rode Zee door de tralies, die direct door de hoofdman uit zijn hand werd gegrist. 'Kijk dit nou eens,' bulderde de hoofdman. 'Dat zijn nou typisch van die belachelijke onzin kaarten van de Regenboog Rivier elven, waar wij ook in oorlog mee leven. Dat is allemaal bijgeloof, jongen. Ze filosoferen maar, maar het slaat allemaal nergens op. Het is allemaal mooidoenerij, maar je bereikt daar nooit wat. Houd die kaart van je maar, jongen. Ik ga er niet eens mijn tijd aan verspillen.' De hoofdman schoof de kaart weer terug door de tralies, en de prins nam de kaart opgelucht terug.

'Luister,' zei de hoofdman. 'Wij geloven in de elven kerk en het heilige eeuwige boek, geschreven door onze grote profeet, waarin wij ook geloven. Wat wij ook geloven en zeker weten is dat de feeen waar je het over had vermomde dinosaurussen zijn om ons geloof aan te vallen. Ze komen als lieftallige wezens tot ons om ons van ons geloof af te helpen. Het zijn grote bedriegers. Ze hebben jullie ook bedrogen. Morgen moeten jullie voorkomen bij de nieuwe profeet die onze kerk leidt. Die zal over jullie verdere lot beslissen.'

Boos liep de hoofdman de boerderij uit. Op het hooi in de kooi konden ze slapen, en dat deden ze ook, want ze waren flink moe.

De volgende dag werden ze uit hun kooi gehaald, en naar de kerk gebracht. Op een hoge troon zat een elf met lange uitstekende puntoren. Ze stonden een beetje scheef de lucht in. Hij had een groen pakje aan. 'Kom verder, vrienden, en welkom,' sprak de elf, die heel vriendelijk leek.

'Het spijt ons dat we zomaar in uw gebied kwamen,' sprak het opperhoofd. Zijn zoon knikte.

'Ach,' sprak de elf, 'helemaal geen probleem. Helemaal geen probleem. Ziet u, ik wil u mijn diepste excuses aanbieden. De dorpelingen hier zijn nogal ruw en onhandig. Ze schrikken snel van dingen, en komen dan in onnodig verweer. Ik denk dat ze zich zo veiliger voelen. Het is hun manier van bescherming, maar het klopt niet echt.'

'We waren op weg naar de Rode Zee,' sprak de prins.

'Daar heb ik over gehoord,' glimlachte de elf vriendelijk. 'Maar ik weet er niet veel vanaf. En ik hoorde dat u beweerde de schrijver te zijn van het eeuwige boek ?'

De prins knikte.

'Dat zou best kunnen. Ik twijfel daar niet aan. De vorige profeet lichtte de mensen namelijk graag op,' sprak de elf. 'Ik heb hier veel werk te doen om dat weer te herstellen. Nogmaals mijn excuses voor de manier waarop zij u behandelden.'

'U kon er niets aan doen,' sprak de prins. 'Ik hoorde dat u hier nieuw was.'

'Ja,' sprak de elf, 'ik ben hier van pas geleden. Maar ik ben nu al heilig verklaard.'

Handig,' sprak de prins.

'Jazeker,' lachte de elf. 'Dat kan goed van pas komen.'

'Klopt het dat uw volk in oorlog is met de Regenboog Rivier elven ?' vroeg de prins.

'Ja, dat klopt, dat is nog iets van vroeger,' sprak de elf. 'Daar wil ik ook snel een einde aan maken, en ook aan die bizarre oorlog met de feeen. Het is nergens voor nodig, maar heeft met vroeger te maken.'

'Goed werk,' sprak de prins. 'En hoe noemen jullie jezelf ?'

'Bosbes elven,' sprak de elf. 'Dit is het Bosbes bos. En ik wil jullie niet verder ophouden. Ik zie geen reden om jullie hier nog vast te houden. Jullie kunnen jullie reis voortzetten,' glimlachte de elf. 'En ik wens jullie een goede reis.'

'Bedankt,' zei het opperhoofd. Even later liepen ze het dorp uit, en zochten naar de plek waar ze werden aangehouden. Daar moesten ze verder richting de Rode Zee. Maar alles was veranderd. Ze herkenden niets. 'Dat moet de Bosbes magie zijn,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'Ik ken deze elven. Alles verandert hier de hele tijd, zodat niemand hier weg kan, en indringers hun weg niet kunnen vinden. We zitten hier vast. Alles zal in hun voordeel werken. Alleen door hun Bosbes magie kun je de weg vinden. Dat is een hopeloze zaak, want ik ken het niet.'

Ze probeerden het dorp weer te vinden, maar ook het dorp was in geen velden of wegen te bekennen. Het was spoorloos verdwenen.

'Wat gek,' sprak de prins. 'Het was hier net nog.'

'Dat zei ik,' zei het opperhoofd. 'Het is Bosbes magie.'

Uren zochten ze in het bos naar aanknopingspunten, maar alles leek op elkaar. Ze hadden het gevoel in cirkeltjes te lopen. Ze werden er doodmoe van, en na een tijdje stortten ze alle vier neer op het mos om te slapen.

Het opperhoofd en zijn zoon werden als eerste weer wakker. 'Dit vreesde ik al,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'We komen hier nooit meer uit.' Toen de prins en de barbaar wakker werden gingen ze weer uren lang zoeken, maar tevergeefs. Alles bleef op elkaar lijken. 'Dit lijkt wel op een eeuwig bos,' sprak het opperhoofd.

'Dat is het ook,' zei de barbaar. 'Ze hebben ons goed te pakken.'

'Wat een doolhof,' sprak de prins.

'Was het maar een doolhof,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'Maar dit is allemaal hetzelfde. Het stopt nooit.'

'Wat nu ?' vroeg de prins.

'We zijn goed de gebakken peer,' sprak het opperhoofd.

Plotseling zagen ze wat roods glinsteren in de verte. 'Dat moet de Rode Zee zijn !' riep de prins. 'Rennen, jongens, anders is het weer weg.' De prins zette het op een rennen, en ook de anderen renden achter hem aan. Ze renden zo hard als ze konden, en kwamen aan bij de Rode Zee. 'Wat een glorieus moment,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'En dat net toen we het nodig hadden.'

'Het lijkt meer op een meer,' zei de barbaar. 'En het ziet eruit als bessensap.' De prins proefte er wat van. 'Inderdaad, bessensap, meer wel heerlijk.'

'Pure Bosbes magie,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'Het heeft ons niet in de steek gelaten.'

'Wat wonderlijk,' sprak de prins. 'Maar zou dit nou dan toch de Rode Zee zijn ?'

'Ik weet het niet,' sprak het opperhoofd. Ineens verscheen de nieuwe elven profeet voor hen. 'Ik heb door een wonder de Rode Zee voor jullie gemaakt,' glimlachte de elf. 'Mijn toverstaf liet mij zien dat jullie in de problemen waren geraakt.'

'Dat waren we zeker,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'Onze dank is groot.'

'De elven oorlogen hebben het land zo gemaakt. Uit angst verandert het de hele tijd,' sprak de elf. 'Misschien dat de Rode Zee daar verandering in kan brengen.' Een kaart kwam naar boven drijven uit het meer van bessensap. De prins greep de kaart, en las hardop : 'Welkom tot de Rode Zee. De kaarten zullen uw pad leiden.'

Een pad van kaarten begon zich over het meer van bessensap te vormen. Aan het einde van het pad stond een spiegel. 'Dat moet de spiegelpoort zijn tot de spiegelwereld van het eeuwige land van indianen,' sprak de prins.

Hengsten renden langs de Rode Zee langs het strand. Ze gingen zo snel dat ze bijna niet te zien waren. De Rode Zee leek ineens vele malen groter, en werd steeds groter. De Rode Zee lag tussen het land van oneindige grootte, te groot om te kunnen opmerken, en het land van oneindige kleinte, te klein om te kunnen opmerken. Je zou daar alleen kunnen komen en het opmerken door

de hengsten te berijden, maar die gingen te snel. Hiervoor hadden ze de vertragende steen nodig die was samengesmolten met de trollensleutel, maar die was verslonden door de draken. Ze zouden dus terugmoeten naar een dieper verleden, maar tijd was dus in wezen niets dan ruimte, en ruimte was in wezen niets anders dan een kaart.

De kaartenbrug lag nog steeds voor hen, gaande over de enorme Rode Zee. In de verte zagen ze wat glinsteren, wat de magische spiegelpoort tot de spiegelwereld van het eeuwige land van de indianen moest zijn. Plotseling rende de barbaar op de brug af. Hij begon als een zot te rennen over de kaarten richting de magische spiegel in de verte. Ze probeerden hem nog terug te roepen, maar hij bleef maar doorrennen. Toen zagen ze hem door de kaarten heen wegzakken in de Rode Zee.

Hij had de kaarten moeten lezen. Niemand wist waar hij nu naartoe zou gaan. Ze leken hem kwijt te zijn. De prins boog zijn hoofd. Voorzichtig liepen ze naar de kaartenbrug, vol verdriet over hun verloren vriend. 'Komt hij nog terug ?' vroeg de prins. Niemand antwoordde. 'Hij had de kaarten moeten lezen,' sprak de elf. 'Ik kan je niks zeggen.'

Ze keken naar de kaarten die in een bepaalde volgorde lagen. De eerste kaart sprak dat ze een kristal van het land van oneindige grootte moesten meenemen, en een kristal van het land van oneindige kleinte. Alleen zo zouden ze veilig op de eerste kaart van de kaartenbrug kunnen staan. Maar om in die landen te kunnen komen hadden ze de hengsten nodig, en om de hengsten te kunnen berijden hadden ze de trollensleutel nodig die ooit door de draken was verslonden. Ze zouden dus hiervoor naar een dieper verleden moeten waar de trollensleutel nog steeds bestond. Tijd was dus eigenlijk ruimte, en ruimte was dus eigenlijk een kaart. Ze hadden dus de kaart van de trollensleutel nodig voordat ze die hengsten zouden kunnen berijden. De kaart van de trollensleutel was de derde kaart van de kaartenbrug, waar ze dus nog niet konden komen. Bosbes magie kon de tijdsvolgorde, de chronologie van dingen, en de ruimtelijke volgorde van dingen veranderen. Maar de kaart van Bosbes magie lag nog wel verder weg op de brug. Dat was de vierde kaart. Die konden ze dus niet bereiken. Gelukkig was de elf er nog. Hij kon wel Bosbes magie, en veranderde de volgorde van de kaarten voor hen. De prins was dolgelukkig. Nu was de kaart van Bosbes magie de eerste kaart, waar ze gewoon op konden staan. De tweede kaart was nu de kaart van de trollensleutel. De derde kaart was de kaart van de twee kristallen van het land van oneindige grootte en het land van oneindige kleinte, dus eigenlijk was het niet nodig de hengsten te berijden. Zo konden ze dus ook heel makkelijk nu op de vierde kaart staan waar die kristallen gevraagd werden.

De vijfde kaart was de kaart van de verloren vriend. Toen ze daar op gingen staan was ineens de barbaar weer terug. Ze waren allemaal dolgelukkig. 'Waar was je geweest ?' vroeg de prins die direct de barbaar omhelsde. 'Oh,

bij een dwerg hier onder de Rode Zee, waar ik in slaap viel. Ik kan me er niet veel van herinneren,' zei de barbaar.

'Onder de Rode Zee is het rijk van slaap,' sprak de elf.

'Blij dat je weer terugbent,' sprak het opperhoofd. Zijn zoon knikte glimlachend en instemmend.

De zesde kaart was een hele lange kaart die helemaal tot de spiegelpoort tot de spiegelwereld van het eeuwige land van de indianen reikte. Deze kaart was genoemd de langste kaart. Maar verderop de kaartenbrug begon het steeds meer te waaien en zelfs te stormen. Ook leek de langste kaart verderop steeds dunner te worden. 'Floep,' daar ging de zoon van het opperhoofd. En floep, daar gingen de anderen. Ze werden meegesleurd door een grote golf. Ze gingen richting de magische spiegel. De kaartenbrug leek geheel te zijn verdwenen. Alle vijf werden ze na een tijdje opgehesen door een vreemd schip. Ze waren half in slaap.

Het bleek een schip van koopmannen te zijn, met zwarte pakken die Middeleeuws leken. Ze hadden veel sieraden en aan tafeltjes werd er gedobbeld. 'Wie zijn jullie ?' bulderde een man met een zwarte, vreemdsoortige platte muts.

De elf nam het woord, en vertelde het verhaal. 'Zo zo,' bulderde de man. 'En wie heeft jullie toestemming gegeven hier zomaar te komen ?'

'Dit is mijn land,' sprak de elf. 'Dit is Bosbes gebied.'

'Mispoes,' bulderde de man. 'Dit is het gebied van de Rode Zee. Niemand komt hier zomaar langs of door.'

'Ik heb de Rode Zee zelf gemaakt,' sprak de elf, 'omdat mijn vrienden ernaar op zoek waren.'

'Heiligschennis !' bulderde de koopman. 'Niemand heeft de Rode Zee gemaakt. De Rode Zee heeft altijd al bestaan, zonder begin en zonder einde.'

'Wie bent u dan ?' vroeg de elf.

'Wij zijn koopmannen van het eeuwige boek,' sprak de man.

'Dat boek heb ik geschreven,' zei de prins.

'Ach onzin,' sprak de koopman. 'Dat boek heeft niemand geschreven. Dat boek heeft altijd bestaan, zonder begin en zonder einde.'

'U drijft handel met mijn boek ?' vroeg de prins. 'Dat boek is gratis.'

'Nu moet je ophouden,' sprak de koopman. 'Ten eerste is het jouw boek niet, en ten tweede is niets gratis.'

De prins keek uit het schip de zee in. Ergens zag hij de kaartenbrug verder gaan. 'Kunt u ons afzetten daar op die kaartenbrug ?' vroeg de prins terwijl hij op de brug wees.

De koopman keek de zee in naar de brug. 'Wel heb ik ooit,' sprak de koopman. 'Dat heb ik nou nog nooit gezien.' Het schip kwam steeds dichterbij de brug. De prins kon zien dat de eerste kaart de kaart van de koopvaarders van het eeuwige boek was. Het hele schip begon in een kaart te veranderen, en ze rolden helemaal naar de eerste kaart van de brug. De koopmannen waren weer in de kaart verdwenen.

De tweede kaart was de kaart van de Rode Zee, die de prins zelf ook al had. Toen ze erop gingen staan stonden ze ineens voor de magische spiegel. 'Welkom,' sprak de spiegel. 'U hebt de juiste kaarten bereikt om de poort tot de spiegelwereld van het eeuwige land van de indianen te openen. Komt u verder.'

Alle vijf konden ze zo door de magische poort lopen, als door een waterval, om zo in de spiegelwereld te komen. De prins keek zijn ogen uit. Er waren overal bessenstruiken in het warme, zelfs hete, zand. Weer zagen ze in de verte een zee, die zwart was. 'Dit moet de zwarte zee zijn die de spiegelwereld omgeeft,' sprak het opperhoofd. Zijn zoon knikte.

Ze liepen langs de bessenstruiken, en al snel kwamen ze op een zandpad door een klein bos terecht, wat benedenwaarts afliep naar de zwarte zee. 'Wat is dat voor een zee ?' vroeg de prins.

'Ik weet het niet,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'Ik heb alleen Madammeke Zig Zag er weleens over horen praten.'

'Wat zei ze erover ?' vroeg de prins.

'Ze noemde het alleen op, maar zei er verder niets over,' sprak het opperhoofd.

Vanuit de verte konden ze alweer een nieuwe kaartenbrug zien. Na een tijdje renden ze naar beneden naar de eerste kaart. De prins begon hardop te lezen :

Oh, elven kerk, ontwaak,
Van kaarten zult gij gebouwd worden,
Een kaarten kerk zult gij zijn,
Waarin allen zullen slapen,
Nooit meer ontwaken zullen zij,
Totdat zij het gouden draad zien.

Oh, gouden draad,
Lang bent gij en vol geheimen,
Waar zij u niet zien, slapen zij,
Sommigen een eeuwigheid,
Anderen een lange tijd,
U laat u niet gauw zien.

Hoog in de elvenkerk tikt gij,
In een verborgen toren, zeer hoog,
Ja, in de hoogste toren die nooit stopt met groeien bent gij,
In eindeloze hoogtes waar zij allen duizelen,
Wanneer zij u grijpen, vallen zij.

In een eindeloze put, zo diep,
Waar alleen u redden zal,
Oh gouden draad van eeuwigheden,
Bouw uw elven kerk snel,
Een standbeeld zullen zij van uw profeet maken,
Hij weet de weg wel.

Waarom zou iemand weten, anders dan uw profeet ?
Alleen hij weet,
En zijn standbeeld die eeuwig leeft.'

Langzaam begon de kaart om te draaien, waarop een gouden standbeeld was te zien van een elf. Dit was de kaart van de elvenprofeet van de gouden draad. 'Welkom in de spiegelwereld,' sprak de kaart. 'U bent aangekomen bij de zwarte zee, de eindeloze put.'

'Kunnen wij op u staan ?' vroeg de prins.

'Kun je niet lezen ?' snauwde de kaart. 'Je hebt de gouden draad nodig, anders zul je wegzakken in de eindeloze put, in de golven van de zwarte zee. En zij die naar het gouden draad grijpen zullen ook in de zwarte zee verdwijnen.'

'Hoe komen we bij de gouden draad ?' vroeg de prins.

'Door de elvenprofeet van de gouden draad,' sprak de kaart.

'Maar bent u dat niet ?' vroeg de prins.

'Nee,' snauwde de kaart. 'Ik ben slechts zijn kaart.'

'Ik dacht dat het juist om de kaarten ging,' sprak de prins.

'Helemaal niet,' sprak de kaart. 'Wie heeft je die onzin verteld ?'

'Laat maar zitten,' zei de prins.

'Zeg, wij laten hier helemaal niets zitten,' sprak de kaart. 'Zeg op. Wie heeft jou die onzin verteld ?'

'Het was aan de andere kant van de spiegel,' sprak de prins.

'Oh ja, dan begrijp ik het,' sprak de kaart. 'Dat is de spiegelkant, die draaien alles om. Grote leugenaars zijn het. Daar kun je beter niet meer komen. Je kunt hier beter blijven in de kerk.'

'Wat voor kerk ?' vroeg de prins.

'De elvenkerk, domoor !' snauwde de kaart.

'Ik zie geen elvenkerk,' sprak de prins.

'De zwarte zee is de elvenkerk. Het is gebouwd van kaarten,' sprak de kaart. 'Torens komen uit de zee bij nacht. Daar waar het gouden draad wacht.'

'Hoe komen we bij die torens ?' vroeg de prins.

'Je begrijpt het niet,' foeterde de kaart. 'Ik zei het je toch dat de elvenprofeet van de gouden draad de enige is die de weg weet ? Zonder hem ben je nergens.'

'Waar kunnen we de elvenprofeet van de gouden draad vinden ?' vroeg de prins.

'Dat weet alleen de elvenprofeet van de gouden draad waar hij is,' sprak de kaart.

De prins probeerde de tweede kaart te zien, maar het was nogal donker. Het begon al nacht te worden. Plotseling begonnen er torens uit de zee te komen. Het leek wel alsof ze een elvenkasteel of elvenkerk uit het water zagen oprijzen. De muren waren huizenhoog, en de torens groeiden maar door. 'De kerkdienst gaat beginnen,' sprak de kaart.

Over de brug kwam een elf aanlopen vanuit de elvenkerk op het water. De elf keek even opzij, en keek toen weer naar hen. Het was de elvenprofeet van de gouden draad.

'Goed dat jullie gekomen zijn,' sprak de elf. Hij had een goudkleurig pakje aan. Ook hij had lange puntige oren die scheef in de lucht stonden. Even sprak hij in een speciale elventaal tot de andere elf. Ook het opperhoofd kon de taal verstaan, en zei wat tegen hem in de speciale elventaal. Zijn zoon knikte, dus waarschijnlijk verstond hij het ook.

'Vrienden,' sprak de elvenprofeet van de gouden draad. 'Mag ik u welkom heten in de elvenkerk ? Deze kerk is gebaseerd op het eeuwige boek.'

'Dat heb ik geschreven,' sprak de prins.

'Dan ben jij dus wel een hele bijzondere gast,' glimlachte de elf. 'Het gouden draad wacht al op jullie.'

'Wie of wat is het gouden draad ?' vroeg de prins.

'Het gouden draad is de enige weg over de zwarte zee tot de spiegelwereld van het eeuwige land van de indianen,' sprak de elf.

'Wat is de boodschap van de elvenkerk ?' vroeg de prins.

'Dat alles een elvenkerk is, een school,' sprak de elf, 'waarin je alles mag terugvinden wat je verloren bent. In andere vormen zul je het terugvinden, vormen beter voor je.'

'Dus wij waren altijd al in de zwarte zee ?' vroeg de prins.

'Jullie komen van heel diep,' sprak de elf. 'Jullie zijn dichtbij de gouden draad gekomen.'

'Wat is er zo wonderlijk in die spiegelwereld van het eeuwige land van de indianen ?' vroeg de prins.

'Het is een spiegelwereld,' sprak de elf, 'dat wil zeggen dat de leugens weer omgedraaid zullen worden tot de waarheid. Je gaat daar zien hoe dingen echt zijn.'

'Waar is de gouden draad ?' vroeg de prins. Loop maar met mij mee,' sprak de elvenprofeet van de gouden draad. Met hem konden ze gewoon over de kaartenbrug lopen, recht de elvenkerk in. De elvenkerk was binnenin goed verlicht. Aan beide zijden was een brede trap die naarboven ging, naar een balkon. Boven het balkon zweefde een gouden draad.

'Wonderlijk,' sprak de prins. De gouden draad snelde op hen af, en begon hen te omhelzen. 'Welkom,' sprak de gouden draad. 'Ik zal jullie leiden over de zwarte zee tot de spiegelwereld van het eeuwige land van de indianen, waar alles is zoals het is. Jullie komen uit het rijk der leugens, uit de spiegelkant, waar alles omgedraaid is. Ik ben blij dat jullie eindelijk gekomen zijn. Ik heb zo lang op jullie gewacht.'

Het opperhoofd maakte een buiging, en toen ook zijn zoon. 'Wij voelen ons vereerd,' sprak het opperhoofd. Zijn zoon knikte hevig.

'Welkom, gasten,' sprak het gouden draad. 'Wij voelen ons ook vereerd. Jullie hebben een lange reis gemaakt om hier te komen. Goede keuze, goede keuze.'

'Zal ik jullie een verhaal vertellen ?' vroeg de gouden draad. Ze knikten.

'Er waren eens een prins en een prinses in het land van Eldemor. De prinses was van een andere familie, maar woonde bij de prins in. Haar ouders waren omgekomen. Het was een indiaanse prinses met een indiaanse vader en een moeder die half elf en half fee was. Zij was een halfling. Op een dag werd zij meegenomen door de draken. Een grote ontvoering. De halfling is innerlijk verdeeld. Ze heeft teveel rassen in haar. Ook had zij het bloed van trol en het bloed van de draak. Ze werd meegenomen tot duistere spiegelwerelden van draken en trollen. De rokende drakenspiegel werd haar heerser, haar meester. De rook van deze spiegel had haar bedwelmt, met zijn gif, en nam haar mee, door zijn spiegelrijk. Zij is de slavin van de drakenspiegel. Zij moest kinderen lokken tot deze spiegel, om zo nog meer slaven te maken : kinderslaven.'

'Maar dat is verschrikkelijk,' sprak de prins. 'Wat kunnen wij er aan doen ?'

'Vernietig de drakenspiegel,' sprak de gouden draad. 'Het is de heilige opdracht van alle elven van de elvenkerk en hun bondgenoten.'

De elvenprofeet van de gouden draad had een harpje in zijn hand genomen, en begon te spelen en te zingen :

'Oh drakenspiegel,

Jij venijnig kwaad,

Zoveel kinderen heb je gestolen,

En hen tot slaven gekroont,

Met veel liefde en gulle gaven,

Misleidde jij hun hart,

En maakte hen tot slaven

Jij ontnam hen de kennis zichzelf te vinden,

Jouw giftige rook had hen bedwelmt,

In jouw spiegelrijk raakten ze verstrikt,

Zoveel kinderslaven marcheren daar,

Hun lied zal hen nooit tot de morgen doen komen,

Overal waar het nacht is jagen de draken,

Opdat zij nooit meer zullen ontwaken

Oh elvenhart, aanschouw dit grote kwaad,

Twee sleutels zijn u gegeven,

Om de drakenspiegel te verbreken.'

'Wat zijn de twee sleutels om de drakenspiegel te verbreken, en waar bevindt zich de drakenspiegel ?' vroeg de prins.

'Overal in de lucht,' sprak de gouden draad. 'Als een draak is geworden tot drakenmeester, dan kan hij de gedaante van een ruiter aannemen, die dan de draken van de lagere rangen kunnen berijden. Het gaat altijd door. Altijd zijn ze op jacht. Het zit in de lucht als een gif, maar allen worden beheerst door de drakenspiegel. Je vraagt om de twee sleutels ? Voor nu moet dat geheim blijven, anders zou het universum ontploffen. De drakenspiegel houdt de kinderslaven opgesloten in zijn spiegelrijk, waar hij hen opgesloten houdt in boeken, in vreemde verhalen en gedichten.'

'Waar is de halfling prinses nu ?' vroeg de prins.

'Zij is nog steeds met de drakenspiegel,' sprak de gouden draad.

'Waar ?' vroeg de prins.

'In de lucht,' sprak de gouden draad. 'In feite in een kaart, in de kaart van de drakenspiegel.'

'Waar kunnen we die kaart vinden ?' vroeg de prins.

'Niemand weet het, onbekend,' sprak de gouden draad.

'Dus zij zit ook opgesloten in een vreemd verhaal of vreemd gedicht ?' vroeg de prins.

'Vraag niet door,' sprak de gouden draad. 'We moeten voorzichtig zijn. De drakenspiegel is erg gevoelig en weet wanneer men over hem praat.'

'Wij zouden graag naar de spiegelwereld van het eeuwige land van indianen gaan. Kunt u ons daar brengen ? Misschien dat we daar meer te weten komen.'

'Volg mij,' sprak de gouden draad. Ze liepen de elvenkerk uit, en de gouden draad begon zich heel lang uit te strekken, en maakte zich een beetje wijder,

totdat er een pad ging over de zwarte zee. Direct begonnen ze aan hun reis over de zwarte zee, over het pad van de gouden draad. Urenlang moesten ze lopen, totdat ze eindelijk land zagen. Dat moest de spiegelwereld van het eeuwige land van de indianen zijn.

'Droom ik nu ?' vroeg de prins. Aan de kust stonden lange rijen met feeen. Ze hadden lichte jurken aan van allerlei kleuren : blauw, roze, geel, oranje. En de kleuren waren van prachtig lichte tinten, bijna doorzichtig. Sommige feeen hadden parasolletjes. De prins zette het op een rennen, en de anderen renden achter hem aan. 'Wat geweldig !' riep de prins. Ze moesten nog wel even een tijdje rennen voordat ze eindelijk de kust hadden bereikt. Toen de prins een voet op het land zette voelde hij zich ineens heel vreemd. Even werd het roze voor zijn ogen. Een fee in een licht roze jurk van bijna doorzichtige tint kwam naar hen toe. 'Welkom in de spiegelwereld van het eeuwige land van de indianen,' sprak ze.

'Waar zijn de indianen ?' vroeg de prins.

'U bent prins Jagerstouw, de schrijver van het eeuwige boek ?' vroeg de fee.

De prins knikte. 'Komt u maar mee,' sprak de fee.

Ze werden geleid tot een klein stadje. Ergens was er een klein cafeetje waar de fee binnenging. 'Dat is Edward, de barkeeper,' zei ze terwijl ze wees op een man met een schort die stond af te wassen. De man wuifde even. Toen liep ze op een trap naar boven, terwijl de anderen haar volgden. Boven het cafe was een kamer waar een grote klok hing. Ze ging op een stoel zitten. 'Gaat u zitten,' sprak ze, terwijl ook de anderen een stoel namen.

'Onze magie komt voort uit de gevechten tussen dinosaurussen,' sprak ze. 'Verderop in het land wonen de elven waarvan hun magie voortkomt uit de oorlogen van de indianen. De indianen wonen nog veel dieper in het land. Zij leven in grote oorlog.'

'Met wie zijn ze in oorlog ?' vroeg de barbaar.

'Met andere stammen, met feeen en met elven,' sprak de fee. 'Vanuit die oorlogen winnen de elven hun magie. De indianen bewaken een groot geheim : de rokende drakenspiegel. De drakenspiegel doet hen tegen elkaar strijden. De drakenspiegel heeft hen behekst, zeg maar bedraakt. Zij zijn slaven van geweld. Wij hebben ze geprobeerd te helpen, maar tevergeefs. Ik ben blij dat jullie zijn gekomen.' Toen richtte ze zich tot de prins. 'Eens zonden we jou de trollensleutel, Vika, en het trollenorakel, Nahemsh. Heb je die bij je ?'

'Nee,' zei de prins. 'De trollensleutel had het trollenorakel vernietigd, omdat het trollenorakel te gevaarlijk zou zijn. Toen werd de trollensleutel vernietigd door de draken.'

'Oh, dus ze raakten met elkaar in gevecht ?' sprak de fee. 'De drakenspiegel moet hen tegen elkaar opgestookt hebben, zoals hij altijd doet. Maar ze zijn niet verdwenen, prins Jagerstouw. De kaarten van de trollensleutel en het trollenorakel zitten nog steeds in je geheugen. Het zijn geheugenkaarten, en die zijn magisch. Ook het trollenorakel is een sleutel, de tweede sleutel. Dit was de sleutel van de indianen, die door de trollen werd gestolen en werd omgesmolten tot het orakel van trol, om de toekomst mee te voorspellen. De kaart van de sleutel van de indianen bestaat nog steeds in het verleden, maar niet in jouw geheugen, prins Jagerstouw, maar in mijn geheugen. Ik kan me de verschrikkelijke dag dat die sleutel gestolen werd nog goed herinneren, als de dag van gisteren. Het is nog steeds diep in mijn geheugen gegrift. Sindsdien werden de indianen slaven van de drakenspiegel, de slaven van geweld, door de stokerijen van de spiegel. Geef mij de kaart van het trollen orakel, zodat mijn kaart van de sleutel van de indianen geactiveerd kan worden.'

'Hoe kan ik de kaart geven ?' vroeg de prins.

'Het zit in je geheugen,' sprak de fee. 'Haal het uit je geheugen en geef het aan mij ?'

'Ja, maar hoe ?' vroeg de prins.

'Laat maar, ik doe het zelf wel,' sprak de fee. 'Denk nu heel sterk aan de herinneringen die je hebt van het trollen orakel.'

De prins begon diep te denken, en terug te gaan in zijn geheugen naar de momenten van het trollen orakel.

'Goedzo,' zei de fee. Even legde ze haar hand op zijn hart. 'De kaart is nu met mij,' zei de fee. 'De kaart van de sleutel van de indianen wordt nu geactiveerd. In combinatie met de kaart van de trollensleutel die jij draagt is de indianen sleutel nu sterk genoeg, omdat de trollensleutel de kaart van de sleutel van de indianen zo kan vertragen dat de drakenspiegel het niet meer weg kan stelen.'

De prins voelde zichzelf steeds meer wegglijden in zichzelf, in een grote diepte. Hij bevond zich plotseling op de golven van de zwarte zee die traag bewogen. Steeds trager begonnen ze te bewegen, totdat hij er dwars

doorheen kon kijken. Hij bevond zich in de drakenspiegel, en een tovenaar bezweerde de spiegel. Het was de grote tovenaar van de drakenspiegel. 'Ik bestrijd je door het eeuwige boek !' riep de prins tot de tovenaar. 'Laat me los uit deze spiegel !' Er stond een grote druk op de spiegel, en plotseling explodeerde het.' De prins stond nu oog in oog met de tovenaar die de drakenspiegel had gemaakt.

'Laat me je pakken, jongetje !' krijste de tovenaar. 'Niemand ontsnapt zomaar uit de drakenspiegel !' De prins zette het op een rennen. Snel rende hij door een paars gordijn een gang op. De gang eindigde bij een trap die hij toen oprende. 'Ik krijg je wel !' krijste de tovenaar.

Het werd zwart voor de ogen van de prins. Hij viel in een diepe, duistere put, en merkte toen dat hij zich weer bevond op de golven van de zwarte zee. Steeds trager gingen de golven. Dit was zware magie. Toen de golven bijna stilstonden zag hij de kerker waar de halfling prinses inzat, dwars door de golven heen. Hij merkte dat hij er dwars doorheen kon rennen. Hij rende door tot aan de tralies, waar het slot zat met twee gleuven. 'Vlug,' sprak de stem van de fee in zijn hoofd. 'Je hebt twee kaarten : de trollensleutel en de sleutel van de indianen. Steek ze in het slot.' De prins keek naar zijn hand waarin de twee kaarten lagen, en stopte ze in de twee gleuven van het slot. Plotseling ging het slot open. De prins greep de hand van de halfling prinses, en rende met haar de kerker uit. Maar daar was de tovenaar weer met twee wilde honden die hen aanvlogen. Weer werd de prins zwart voor zijn ogen. Hij voelde zich nog dieper wegglijden. Alle herinneringen vlogen langs hem heen als kaarten in een cirkel. Hij greep de kaart van het elvenzout, maar voelde zich alleen maar zieker worden. Al zijn vrienden waren ook kaarten. Hij greep de kaarten van zijn vrienden en werd warm van binnen. 'Zij helpen je,' sprak de fee. Zij was in het midden van de kaarten cirkel. Van haar toverstafje droop glimmend spul. 'Ik geef je twee nieuwe kaarten, prins,' sprak de fee. Hij kreeg de kaart van de halfling prinses en de kaart van de tovenaar van de drakenspiegel. Plotseling zag hij zijn verwonde hart, wat helemaal zwart was gekleurd. De twee wonden van zijn hart veranderden in gleuven. 'Vlug,' sprak de fee, 'steek de twee nieuwe kaarten in de gleuven van je hart.' De prins deed het meteen. De tovenaar lag op de grond. Rook kwam uit de spiegel, die als een glazen bol was op een standaard. Er zat groen sap in wat soms paars kleurde.

'Geef mij die kaarten,' kreunde de tovenaar. De prins liep naar de tovenaar toe, en keek in de zakken van de tovenaar, waar hij een stapeltje kaarten weggriste. 'Nee !' krijste de tovenaar. 'Geef mijn kaarten terug ! Dat zijn mijn kaarten !'

Ook de kaarten van prinses Mekka en prinses Regenboog waren in het stapeltje.

De prins zuchtte, en liep door een gordijn een grote gang op die naar een grote trap naar beneden leidde. Snel was de prins buiten het kasteel in de dooiende sneeuw. Nog één keer keek de prins om naar het kasteel, en liep toen in trage pas de kasteel tuin uit. Hij sloot het hek achter zich, en liep richting het dichtstbijzijnde dorp.

Hij kende hier niemand. Hij kende dit dorp niet. Hij klopte aan bij de eerste de beste deur. Een vrouw deed open, en hij begon direct zijn verhaal te vertellen. De vrouw sloeg een arm om hem heen, en gaf hem wat te drinken. Tot diep in de nacht waren ze in gesprek. Ze had wel een kamer voor de prins waar hij kon overnachten. Toen hij sliep ging ze naar het dorpsbestuur om mee te delen wat hij had gezegd. Ze wilden hem weer verkopen aan de tovenaar. Gewapend ging het dorpsbestuur naar het huisje van de prins, waar ze hem arresteerden. De tovenaar kon hem weer terugkopen.

Maar de drakenspiegel was niet meer wat het geweest was. En de tovenaar begon tekenen van veroudering te vertonen, van zware vergeetachtigheid en dementie. De tovenaar was niet meer wie hij geweest was, en wist op een gegeven moment niet meer wie hij was. Ook dacht hij dat het kasteel een herberg was waar hij verbleef, en dat de prins de herbergier was. Zo kwam het kasteel steeds meer in handen van de prins. Op een dag vertrok de zwaar demente tovenaar weer van het kasteel, omdat hij dacht dat hij slechts op doorreis was.

'Ik zag de Sep, en ik dacht aan jou. Zo'n magische rivier, waaraan mijn kasteel staat. Het rivier-gebied is weer vrij van draken, maar ja, het is wel in de spiegel wereld. Ik blijf aan twee kanten, zoals dromen en ontwaken. Het kwaad kunnen we niet helemaal wegdenken, want we moeten nog wel wat te puzzelen hebben, en het zet ons aan om creatief te zijn. Ik ben blij met mijn kasteel. Elke dag ontdek ik weer nieuwe dingen. Wat komen we van diep, hè ?

Liefs,

Prins Jagerstouw'

'Saturnus, met je paarse sneeuw,

Die diepe slaap brengt telkens weer,

Twee sterren in een steen,

Met Sirius vormde jij een grote zee,

De zee van Eldemor, waarop de aarde slaapt,

De sluier van paarse sneeuw die over haar waakt,

De ruiter van Eldemor rijdt over de golven,
Totdat het roze ons allemaal doet ontwaken,
In de droom van de rode zee,
Golf na golf komt het,
Slag na slag,
Omdat het rode op ons wacht.'

Einde

Blauwstaartje

Blauwstaartje was een visje in een hele diepe oceaan. De visjes noemden hem blauwstaartje omdat hij bijna geheel wit was, alleen met een blauw staartje. Op de vissenschool kregen ze les van een oude grote blauwe vis. Als die vis boos werd dan kon je je maar beter verbergen, want dan blies hij met al zijn kracht het water naar je toe, en begon hij vreselijk met zijn vin en staart te klapperen. Blauwstaartje was altijd een beetje bang voor die grote blauwe vis, maar de andere visjes vonden hem maar een bangerd.

Ook kregen ze les van een zeeslang met blauwe en witte strepen, en als laatste van de blauwe zeester. Blauwstaartje vond geen van zijn onderwijzers aardig. Ze waren alledrie erg streng. Maar de visjes uit zijn klas vonden dat hij zich niet moest aanstellen.

Op een dag was het feest op school, en maakten ze met z'n allen een schoolreisje naar de oppervlakte van de oceaan. Hier was Blauwstaartje nog nooit geweest, en hij keek zijn ogen uit. In de verte zagen ze een schip met mensen erop. Blauwstaartje zou wel een mens willen zijn, want zij hadden benen. Blauwstaartje zou heel graag op het land willen wonen, maar de meester had altijd gezegd dat ze op het vaste land oorlog maakten. Op een dag vertelde de oude blauwe zeester een verhaal over een meisje van het vaste land die een vis wilde worden. Blauwstaartje vond het een droevig verhaal. Het meisje ging vaak naar de zee, omdat ze niet tegen het geruzie van mensen kon. Op een dag was ze het zo beu dat ze de zee inging, maar door een grote golf werd ze meegesleurd en verdronk.

Blauwstaartje moest altijd erg huilen als hij het verhaal hoorde. Blauwstaartje zou heel graag een mens met benen willen zijn. Dan zou hij

misschien wat aan al dat geruzie kunnen doen, en dan hoefde er ook niemand meer weg te lopen om te verdrinken. Op een dag vertelde Blauwstaartje na de les aan de zeeslang met blauwe en witte strepen dat hij graag een mens zou willen worden. Hij vroeg de zeeslang om raad, want hij wist niet hoe hij dat kon worden.

'Jongen, doe maar niet zo dom, want mensen maken altijd ruzie,' zei de zeeslang. 'En bovendien zou ik niet weten hoe je mens zou moeten worden. Volgens mij is dat onmogelijk. Je moet gewoon je best blijven doen hier op school, om een keurig nette vis te worden. Haal al die verhaaltjes van je maar uit je hoofd. Dat is veel beter.'

Maar toen ging Blauwstaartje naar de blauwe zeester, en vertelde hem hetzelfde, dat hij graag een mens wilde worden. De blauwe zeester begon een beetje te brommen, en zei dat hij eigenlijk geen tijd had voor zulke onzin. 'Je bent niet voor niets een vis,' zei de zeester. 'Wat je bent moet je blijven, en trouwens zou ik niet weten hoe je een mens zou kunnen worden. Ik vind het maar een domme wens. Mensen zijn slecht en zijn geboren om oorlog te maken. Zet het maar zo snel mogelijk uit je hoofd, want van jouw plannen komt toch niets terecht.'

Teleurgesteld ging Blauwstaartje als laatste naar de grote blauwe vis, maar die werd direkt zo boos dat Blauwstaartje maar gauw weer vertrok. De volgende dag vertelde de blauwe vis in de les wat er was gebeurd, en begon Blauwstaartje nog eens extra uit te lachen. Ook de visjes van de klas begonnen Blauwstaartje uit te lachen. Na de les ging Blauwstaartje extra snel naar huis, omdat hij verder niet gepest wilde worden, maar de visjes van zijn klas volgden hem snel, en begonnen om zijn huisje heen te zwemmen. 'Ha, ha ha,' lachten ze, 'wat een dommerik. Hij wil mens worden !' Maar na een tijdje vertrokken de visjes weer.

Ook Blauwstaartje's moeder, een grote roze vis, kwam het te horen, en wilde eens diepgaand met haar zoontje praten. 'Zeg ik heb gehoord wat je wens is,' zei de moeder, 'en ik vind het heel dom van je. Je weet toch dat mensen niets anders doen dan oorlog maken ?'

Ja maar moeder, sprak Blauwstaartje, ik zou daar zo graag een eind aan willen maken, en ik zou graag eens op benen willen staan.

Ja jongen, zei de grote roze vis, mensen hebben prachtige benen, maar wij hebben nu eenmaal gewoon een staart en daar moeten we het mee doen. Toen vader thuis kwam en het verhaal hoorde kreeg hij het met Blauwstaartje te doen. 'Jongen, ik had vroeger dezelfde wens, alleen daar is helaas nooit iets van terecht gekomen,' zei vader.

'Maar hoe kan ik mens worden,' zei het visje.

Vader keek moeder aan, en moeder keek vader aan. 'Vertel het hem maar,' zei moeder. Toen sprak de vader : 'Jongen, dan moet je op zoek gaan naar het blauwe gesteente van de rog.'

Toen zei moeder : 'Vader heeft gelijk, maar daar kom je niet zo makkelijk. Niemand heeft het ooit gevonden.'

'Maar waar kan ik het vinden ?' vroeg Blauwstaartje.

Maar dat konden zijn vader en moeder niet vertellen. Diep in de nacht ging Blauwstaartje het huisje uit, en ging op zoek. Na heel lang zwemmen kwam hij uiteindelijk een rog tegen en vroeg naar het blauwe gesteente. ‘Oh verderop,’ zei de rog. Na een tijdje kwam Blauwstaartje nog een rog tegen en vroeg hetzelfde, en kreeg weer hetzelfde antwoord. Maar na dagen zwemmen had Blauwstaartje nog niets gevonden. Ten einde raad besloot Blauwstaartje weer naar de oppervlakte van de oceaan te gaan, om de mensen met hun schepen weer te bekijken. Misschien zou hij daar wel op een idee komen.

Toen hij bovenkwam was het erg druk op zee. Overal zag Blauwstaartje bootjes. Niemand had Blauwstaartje ooit over vissers verteld, en daarom kende hij het gevaar van de netten niet. Maar op één van de schepen zag Blauwstaartje iets fonkelen. Het leek wel op het blauwe gesteente waar zijn vader en moeder over hadden gesproken. Plotseling werd hij door een net meegetrokken. Blauwstaartje schrok verschrikkelijk, en al snel werd hij in een bak geworpen. Al snel kreeg Blauwstaartje het erg benauwd. In de verte op het dek zag hij het blauwe gesteente flonkeren en glinsteren. Het was prachtig, maar Blauwstaartje kon er niet bij. Hij had immers geen benen, en zwemmen kon hij hier niet. Hopeloos begon Blauwstaartje naar adem te happen. Twee mannen kwamen bij de bak en zagen Blauwstaartje liggen. ‘Kijk nou eens, wat een prachtige vis, bijna geheel wit met alleen een blauw staartje,’ zei één van de mannen en greep Blauwstaartje uit de bak.

‘Ja,’ zei de andere man, ‘hij is bijna net zo prachtig als het blauwe gesteente daar, en wees naar de fonkelende, bijna gloeiende stenen.’

‘Nou, ik vind de vis veel mooier dan jouw zeestenen,’ zei de man die Blauwstaartje had vastgegrepen. ‘Houd jij je edelstenen maar, ik heb de vis. Ik zag hem het eerst.’

Maar toen liep de andere man naar het blauwe edelgesteente toe, en bracht het naar de man met de vis toe. ‘Nou, we zullen ze eens naast elkaar houden en zien wie de prachtigste is.’

Toen hield de man de vis tegen het zeegesteente aan, en plotseling stond er een klein jongetje met een prachtig blauw pakje tussen hen in. Maar waar was de vis nu gebleven ? Ook de edelstenen waren verdwenen.

‘Zeg jongetje,’ zei één van de mannen verbaasd. ‘Heb jij soms de blauwstaart met de stenen weggepakt ?’

Maar het jongetje kon niet praten. De mannen stonden voor een raadsel. ‘Zeg, hoe komt dat joch hier eigenlijk ? Misschien is het een verstekeling,’ zei de andere man. ‘Laten we hem naar de kapitein brengen.’

En zo brachten de twee vissers de jongen naar de kapitein. De kapitein was heel aardig, en nam de jongen direkt onder zijn hoede. Niemand sprak verder nog over de blauwstaart en het blauwe gesteente. De kapitein leerde de jongen praten, en hoe je een schip moest besturen. Maar dat ging niet al te gemakkelijk. Het jongetje kon de klanken niet uitspreken.

Toen het schip aan wal kwam nam de kapitein de jongen mee naar huis, en zijn vrouw was direkt erg liefdevol naar de jongen. De vrouw had altijd al graag kinderen willen krijgen, maar die wens werd nooit vervuld. Maar op

school werd de jongen geplaagd, omdat hij een spraakgebrek had. Steeds meer begon de jongen terug te verlangen naar de zee, en op een dag nam de kapitein hem mee. Ze zouden een hele grote reis gaan maken met het schip. Maar op een dag had de jongen een heel sterk verlangen om over de reling te springen, en toen hij het water raakte veranderde hij direkt weer in een vis. Het visje was heel opgewonden over wat hij allemaal had meegemaakt, en zwom zo snel hij kon naar het huisje van zijn ouders. Maar vader en moeder waren helemaal niet blij toen het visje het verhaal vertelde. Zijn vader en moeder hadden destijds het verhaal over het blauwe gesteente van de rog verzonnen om hem niet teleur te stellen. Nu ze hoorden dat het visje echt mens was geworden door de blauwe zeestenen wisten ze zich geen raad.

Maar op de vissenschool geloofden ze hem niet, en lachten ze hem uit. De grote blauwe vis die hen onderwees werd zelfs heel erg boos op het visje, en sloot hem voor straf op in de kelder van de school. In de kelder was ook een ander visje opgesloten, een visje uit een andere klas.

Hoe ben jij hier terecht gekomen ? vroeg Blauwstaartje. Maar het andere visje zei niets, en was heel stil. ‘Nou, als je niet wil praten is ook goed hoor,’ zei Blauwstaartje. Toen vertelde Blauwstaartje wat hij allemaal had meegemaakt. Het andere visje begon na een tijdje een beetje te lachen, al was het in Blauwstaartje’s ogen maar een glimlach.

Na een tijdje kwam de oude blauwe zeester om de kelderdeur open te maken. ‘Jullie straf zit erop,’ zei hij. Het andere visje vloog weg zo hard als ze kon, en Blauwstaartje bleef een beetje teleurgesteld achter. Hij had gehoopt dat ze vriendjes zouden worden. Langzaam zwom hij over de trap naar boven, en ging weer naar de les. Blauwstaartje besloot verder maar zijn mond te houden. Nu hadden ze les van de zeeslang. Maar de zeeslang zei dat hij het hele verhaal gehoord had, en vertelde het nog eens, tot grote afschuw van Blauwstaartje, want weer begonnen de visjes van zijn klas hem uit te lachen. Na de les kwam hij op de schoolgang het visje van de andere klas tegen waarmee hij samen in de kelder zat. Ze glimlachte even, maar zei verder niets.

Gek genoeg begon Blauwstaartje weer naar het vaste land te verlangen. Zou hij nu weer eerst blauw zeegesteente van de rog moeten vinden, of zou hij direkt een jongen worden als hij uit het water zou komen ? Opgewonden en nieuwsgierig naar wat er zou gebeuren zwom Blauwstaartje zo snel als hij kon richting de oppervlakte van de oceaan. Maar hier werd hij door een grote vis gegrepen, en flink verwond. Al bloedend zwom Blauwstaartje naar de kant, en kwam op het strand terecht, waar hij direkt veranderde in een jongen met een blauw pakje. Maar nog steeds bloedde hij hevig. De jongen stond op, en rende naar het huis van de kapitein. De kapitein was er niet, maar de vrouw van de kapitein verzorgde de wond liefdevol. Toen de kapitein thuiskwam was deze blij de jongen te zien. ‘We dachten dat je verdronken was,’ zei de kapitein. ‘Wat is er gebeurd ?’

En toen vertelde de jongen het hele verhaal, maar de kapitein begon er hartelijk om te lachen, en kon het niet geloven. De vrouw zei niets.

Even later nam de kapitein de jongen mee naar het water om te kijken of het echt waar was. Maar toen de jongen in het water sprong gebeurde er niets. De jongen bleef gewoon een jongen. Blauwstaartje besefte toen dat hij nooit

meer terugkon naar de dieptes van de oceaan. ‘Zie jongen, je hebt het gewoon maar gedroomd,’ sprak de kapitein, en legde toen zijn arm om de jongen heen, en samen liepen ze naar huis. Wel hebben ze de jongen altijd Blauwstaart genoemd.

De Paddenkoningin

Eens woonde er een meisje bij een arm gezin. Ze vonden het meisje eens in het bos, en namen het onder hun hoede, maar ze waren erg arm. Ze noemden het meisje Grunpuhlster, omdat ze ogen had als groene poelen. Op een dag hadden ze zoveel honger dat ze het meisje verkochten aan een jager op doorreis. Hij nam het meisje mee naar zijn boshuis waar ze in het huishouden moest werken. Ze kon alles zo goed schoonmaken, dat alles een groen glimmend laagje kreeg, en daarom noemde ook de jager haar Grunpuhlster, en natuurlijk omdat ze zulke mooie ogen had als groene poelen.

Op een dag moest de jager weer weg op reis voor een lange tijd. Niet lang daarna kwam er een bedelaar die bij Grunpuhlster aanklopte. Grunpuhlster deed open, en nam de man zorgzaam naar binnen. Ze gaf hem goed te eten en een slaapplaats.

Toen de volgende ochtend de man naar beneden kwam keek hij Grunpuhlster erg dankbaar aan. ‘Omdat je zo zorgzaam en liefdevol naar mij bent geweest,’ sprak de man, ‘zal er bij alles wat je spreekt een groene edelsteen uit je mond vallen.’ Het meisje schrok, want zo’n geschenk had ze niet verwacht. Ze durfde haar mond niet open te doen, maar knikte dankbaar en liefdevol naar de man, die ineens in het niets verdween.

Toen de jager thuiskwam durfde ze niet te spreken, maar toen de jager dat in de gaten kreeg, en veel vragen begon te stellen, deed ze uiteindelijk haar mond open, en er vielen groene edelstenen op de grond. De jager was erg verrukt. Het meisje vertelde hem alles. De jager was erg trots op haar, en sindsdien hoefde ze niet meer in het huishouden te werken.

Op een dag nam de jager haar mee naar de koning van het land. De koning was zo onder de indruk dat hij haar liet trouwen met zijn zoon, maar ze was niet gelukkig. Ze dacht nog steeds aan het arme gezin waar ze vandaan kwam. Na enige jaren ging ze samen met haar prins naar het arme gezin toe, en ze sprak zoveel, en er rolden zoveel groene edelstenen uit haar mond, dat ze nooit meer arm hoefden te zijn.

Maar op een dag verdwaalde het meisje weer in het bos. Na een lange tijd wandelen kwam ze bij een huisje aan waar een kabouter voor stond. ‘Heus, je hoeft hier niet te werken, maar kom een nachtje logeren, want stormen zal het huizenhoog, hoei.’ Het meisje luisterde maar naar het vreemde mannetje, want ze wilde niet door de storm meegenomen worden. Toen ze de volgende ochtend wakker werd was het mannetje in geen velden of wegen te bekennen. Ze kon het niet laten om het huisje wat schoon te maken, want het was er zo stoffig. En alles wat ze schoonmaakte kreeg een groen glimmend laagje. Toen het mannetje die avond thuiskwam was hij erg onder de indruk. ‘Blijf nog maar een nachtje slapen,’ zei het mannetje, ‘want vannacht gaat het weer stormen.’

De volgende dag kwam er een bedelaar aan de deur. Het meisje deed direkt open, en gaf de arme man wat te eten. Ook gaf zij hem een bed. Na een tijdje kwam de man naar beneden, en het meisje sprak veel met hem, terwijl er groene edelstenen uit haar mond vielen. De man vulde zijn zakken ermee, en zei : ‘Pikkel, taddel, tad, elke keer dat je zult spreken komt er uit je mond een pad.’ Het meisje schrok, en de man vertrok snel met zijn zakken vol groene edelstenen.

Toen de kabouter die avond terugkwam en het meisje tot hem sprak rolden er allemaal padden uit haar mond. Het mannetje schrok heel erg en riep : ‘Heb je hier soms tovenaars binnengelaten ? Het woud zit vol met boze tovenaars. Voor straf moet je vannacht buitenslapen.’

Het meisje begon erg hard te huilen, maar het mannetje was niet over te halen, hoe het meisje ook smeekte. Die nacht zwierf ze door de bossen en kwam er een grote storm die haar opnam. Na een lange tijd werd ze wakker in een grote poel. Ze zat helemaal onder de modder, en die ochtend maakte ze een lange wandeling door het bos in de hoop weer de weg terug te vinden. Na een lange tijd vond ze de weg terug. Toen ze bij het kasteel van de prins kwam wilde niemand haar binnen laten, omdat ze onder de modder zat, en telkens wanneer ze sprak kwamen er padden uit haar mond.

En zo sliep ze die nacht weer buiten, en een grote storm nam haar mee, verder weg dan ooit. Ze werd tot helemaal achter de poel geslingerd. Achter de poel stond een heel oud en arm huisje, en een oude vrouw hing daar de was op die prachtig wit was. De was glinsterde in het maanlicht. ‘Kom binnen, arm kind,’ zei de vrouw, ‘want als de storm je pakt, dan neemt hij je mee. Het kan hier nogal waaien.’ Het meisje durfde haar mond niet open te doen, en ging met de vrouw naar binnen. Binnen was het erg stoffig, en toen de vrouw weer naar buiten ging, besloot het meisje wat schoon te maken, en alles werd glimmend groen. Toen de vrouw weer binnen kwam en het glimmende groen zag begon ze te lachen en zei : ‘Pikkel, taddel, tuid, alles wat je aanraakt zal veranderen in paddenhuid.’ Het meisje rende huilend naar buiten, en werd door de storm gegrepen.

De storm bracht haar naar het land van de reuzenpadden. De reuzenpadden pakten haar en brachten haar tot hun koning. De paddenkoning vertelde haar dat spoedig alles overstroomd zou worden door de poel. Het meisje wilde naar huis, maar de paddenkoning liet haar niet gaan. Ze moest in het paleis werken, en alles wat ze aanraakte veranderde in paddenhuid. Ook kwamen bij alles wat ze sprak padden uit haar mond. Het meisje was ten einde raad. Op een dag vroeg de paddenkoning of zij zijn koningin wilde worden, maar het meisje vertelde dat zij al prinses was in een ander koninkrijk, en daar koningin zou worden. De paddenkoning werd erg kwaad, en wilde dat koninkrijk wel bezoeken. Het meisje vertelde hem dat het het land achter de storm was.

En zo gingen op een dag de paddenkoning en zijn soldaten naar het land waar het meisje vandaan kwam, maar zij keerden niet meer terug. De achtergebleven reuzenpadden kroonden toen het meisje als hun koningin. Maar op een dag begonnen alle poelen los te komen, en begonnen alles weg te spoelen. De koningin rende naar haar hoogste toren, en zag hoe de poel de reuzenpadden meesleurde naar het land waar zij vandaan kwam. De poel begon steeds hoger te steigen en vanuit het hoogste torenraampje klom de koningin op het dak van de toren, tot aan de punt. Help, help, riep de koningin. In de verte zag zij een bootje aankomen met daarin de kabouter die haar weggezonden had. De kabouter zag haar ook, maar wilde haar niet meenemen. Even later zag ze een bootje aankomen met de oude vrouw die haar had uitgelachen en had betoverd. Ook de oude vrouw ging haar voorbij. Het puntje van de toren was nu ook in paddenhuid verandert. En ten einde raad begon de koningin te praten en te praten, en zoveel padden kwamen er uit haar mond dat ze een boot begonnen te vormen waar het meisje in kon stappen. Het meisje bleef praten en praten zoals ze nog nooit gepraat had, en even later was ze in een flinke boot op de woeste hoge golven. Nog nooit had ze zo'n woeste zee gezien.

Na een tijdje kwam er een reusachtige hand tevoorschijn vanuit de donkere lucht die haar als een bliksemschicht oppakte. In een hoge toren in de wolken, geheel gemaakt van paddenhuid kwam ze terecht, en kwam ze oog in oog te staan met de bedelaar die haar eens de gave had gegeven dat alles wat ze sprak in edelstenen veranderde. De bedelaar keek haar vriendelijk aan. 'Zo zie je maar weer hoe een gave je in de problemen kan helpen,' sprak de bedelaar. 'Maar nu, omdat je zo getrouw bent gebleven : wees mijn koningin.' En de bedelaar bracht haar tot een rijk geheel gebouwd van groene edelstenen, en deze edelstenen waren de prachtigste die ze ooit had gezien. En ze leefden nog lang en gelukkig.

Het Rozenweefstertje

Eens leefde er een rozenweefster in het bos met haar drie zonen. Ze had een toverspinnenwiel waarmee ze rozen kon weven. Deze rozen waren heel bijzonder, en de allerrijksten van het land kwamen vaak bij haar om de rozen te kopen. Maar toch was het gezin arm, omdat zij de goudstukken en zilverstukken die ze ervoor kreeg altijd wegwierp in de bosrivier achter haar huisje. In deze rivier leefden kikkerachtige beesten die een oude poort achter de rivier bewaakten. Niemand kon ooit over die rivier komen, want een ieder die een poging waagde werd door de kikkerachtige beesten opgeslokt. De kikkerachtige beesten hadden het rozenweefstertje laten weten dat zij al haar geld aan hen moest schenken, anders zouden ze haar en haar zonen komen verscheuren. Zij vraten het geld.

De oude poort die ze bewaakten zou naar een geheimzinnig land leiden dat niemand kende. Eens in de zoveel jaren zou er een wachter komen, een veerman, die over de rivier zou komen met een boot, om te kijken of hij iemand zou kunnen meenemen tot achter de poort. Toen het bijna zover was vertelde het rozenweefstertje dit aan haar zonen. Ze sprak dat de wachter bij maanlicht zou komen. Ze wees één van haar zonen aan, en sprak dat als hij in de nacht geluid zou horen als een ruisende storm, dan zou hij naar buiten moeten gaan met het toverspinnenwiel, en bedekt met enige van de rozen, om dan tot de veerman te zeggen : ‘Neem mij mee, ik ben een man van stand,’ en hem dan als geschenk het toverspinnenwiel te geven.

Toen het zover was ging de eerste zoon naar buiten, nadat hij zich met enige rozen had bedekt, en het toverspinnenwiel had gepakt. De veerman keek hem aan, en zei : ‘Stap in. Inderdaad ben jij een man van stand. Ik zal je naar het geheimzinnig land achter de oude poort brengen.’

De volgende ochtend vroeg het rozenweefstertje aan haar drie zonen wat er was gebeurd. De eerste zoon sprak : ‘Ik heb inderdaad het toverspinnenwiel aan de wachter gegeven, zoals u vroeg. Toen ik in het geheimzinnig land kwam was daar een veld met toverbloemen. Maar ver kwam ik niet. Ik viel in slaap, en toen ik wakker werd was ik weer terug in mijn eigen bed.’ Het rozenweefstertje was erg teleurgesteld, en weer gingen er enkele jaren voorbij. Het toverspinnenwiel had zij niet meer. Toen de komst van de veerman weer naderbij kwam wees ze nu haar tweede zoon aan, en sprak dat als de veerman zou komen hij met hem mee moest gaan. De tweede zoon deed wat hem gevraagd werd, en in de nacht bij het maanlicht, toen er geruis was als een storm stond de jongen op en ging naar buiten. Maar de veerman sprak : ‘Maar een man van stand ben je niet. Waar zijn de rozen waarmee je je moest bedekken, en waar is mijn geschenk ? Ga dan eerst naar de kastelen der koningen om daar wat bijzondere rozen te nemen, en steel bovendien hun grootste schat. Dan zal ik de volgende nacht weer komen.’

De volgende dag deed de jongen wat hem gevraagd was, maar in het kasteel van de koning werd hij betrapt, en werd in een kerker gegooid. Vanaf nu moest hij onder de grond werken, zoals elke dief die gepakt werd. Elke dag werd hij uit zijn kerker gehaald, om lange reizen onder de grond te maken. De dieven moesten op zoek gaan naar bijzondere stenen.

Het rozenweefstertje was erg teleurgesteld dat haar zoon niet meer terugkwam, en zei toen tot haar derde zoon : ‘Wacht jij nu tot de veerman terugkomt om je broer te halen, en zorg ervoor dat je wat van mijn klederen

draagt, en schenk hem onze gouden klok.' De derde zoon deed wat hem gevraagd werd.

De volgende dag vroeg het rozenweefstertje aan haar derde zoon wat er was gebeurt. De jongen sprak dat de veerman hem meenam tot het geheimzinnig land. Hij ging door een veld van toverbloemen, maar werd onwel en viel in slaap. Even later werd hij weer wakker, en ging verder in het veld van toverbloemen, en kwam toen bij een rivier van spinnendraad. De jongen zag hier geen veerman, maar er zwom wel een grote vis, en die sprak : 'Breng me eerst wat parelmoer, van je rijke broer, die voor de koning werkt, dan kan ik je naar de overkant van de rivier brengen.' Toen werd de jongen gestoken door een spin, en viel in een diepe slaap. De volgende ochtend was hij weer terug in zijn eigen bed.

'Nu,' zei het rozenweefstertje, 'je weet wat je te doen staat. Ga naar het kasteel van de koning, en vraag daar om je broer voor wat parelmoer.' De jongen deed wat hem gezegd werd, en vertrok naar het kasteel. Toen hij bij de kerker van zijn broer aankwam zag hij daar de wonderlijkste stenen, en wat parelmoer. Zijn broer was er niet, want die moest werken onder de grond. De jongen nam één steen mee, voor de veerman, en wat parelmoer voor de vis, en vertrok weer naar huis. Maar de veerman kwam niet meer. Ze moesten wachten totdat hij naar enige jaren weer terug zou komen. Het rozenweefstertje was diep teleurgesteld, en ook de jongen. Maar er zat niets anders op dan te wachten.

Maar op een nacht werd de jongen wakker van wat spartelend geluid. De jongen stond op en ging naar buiten. Daar bij de rivier zag hij de vis van de rivier van spinnendraad. 'Heb je het parelmoer gevonden ?' vroeg de vis. De jongen knikte blij, en rende naar binnen om het parelmoer te halen. De vis bracht hem helemaal over de rivier tot aan de oude poort. Nu moest de jongen de vis dragen tot aan de rivier van spinnendraad. Gelukkig viel de jongen niet in slaap. Daarna bracht de vis de jongen over de rivier van spinnendraad.

De volgende dag wilde het rozenweefstertje haar zonen wekken, maar ze had nog maar één zoon over. Het parelmoer was verdwenen, en zo ging ook de laatst overgebleven zoon wat parelmoer halen in de kerker van zijn broer. Zo gingen er weer enige jaren voorbij, totdat de veerman terugkwam. De jongen droeg wat klederen van zijn moeder en schonk de veerman een steen van de kerker van zijn broer. Toen hij aankwam bij de rivier van spinnendraad en de vis zag gaf hij wat parelmoer aan de vis, en de vis bracht hem naar de overkant. Bij een boom vond hij het gouden toverspinnenwiel van zijn moeder terug, en het toverspinnenwiel sprak : 'Ik ben eindelijk terug in het land waar ik vandaan kom, maar nog steeds betoverd ben ik. Vlug, neem mij op, en draag mij verder in dit land. De jongen raapte het toverspinnenwiel van zijn moeder op, en vroeg waar zijn broer was. 'Daar, achter een rivier dieper in het land,' sprak het toverspinnenwiel. Na een tijdje lopen kwamen ze aan bij een volgende rivier. Deze rivier was geheel van rozendraad. 'Hoe kom ik over deze rivier ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Werp mij erin,' zei het toverspinnenwiel van zijn moeder. De jongen deed wat hem gezegd werd, en er ontstond een gouden brug over de rivier, als een regenboog. Zo kwam de jongen over de rivier. Toen de jongen aan de

overkant was gekomen verdween de brug, en een lichtende roze gestalte kwam uit de rivier omhoog. Maar de gestalte was als een standbeeld, en kon zich niet goed bewegen. ‘Vlug,’ sprak de gestalte, ‘de betovering is nog niet verbroken. Zoek nu je broer.’ En toen zakte de gestalte weer terug in de rivier.

Omdat geen van haar zonen terugkeerde besloot het rozenweefstertje zelf de eerstvolgende keer met de veerman mee te gaan. Ze kreeg wat parelmoer en een steen mee vanuit de kerker van haar zoon, maar ook na vele jaren kwam de veerman niet opdagen, en het rozenweefstertje was ten einde raad. Ze mocht haar zoon in de kerker niet spreken, maar toen ze de koning vertelde dat ze vroeger rozen voor hem weefde mocht ze haar zoon even zien. De zoon was erg blij haar te zien, en vertelde haar dat hij ergens diep onder de grond een brug had gevonden naar een toverwereld. Hij vertelde haar dat hij nooit ver kon komen, want in een veld van toverbloemen viel hij telkens in slaap. Maar eens kwam hij daar een lichtende roze gestalte tegen die tot hem sprak dat als hij zijn moeder zou meenemen, dan zou de gestalte hem wel door het veld heen kunnen brengen. En zo gebeurde het. Het rozenweefsterje ging met haar zoon mee, en bij het veld van toverbloemen aangekomen bracht de gestalte hen erdoorheen. ‘Vlug,’ zei de gestalte, ‘spring in de rivier van spinnendraad.’ Het rozenweefstertje en haar zoon deden wat hen gezegd werd.

In de dieptes van de rivier ging alles over in rozendraad, en plotseling zwom er ook een andere vrouw naast hen. ‘Kom,’ zei de vrouw, ‘in de dieptes is een plaats waar al jullie geldstukken terecht zijn gekomen die jullie vroeger in de rivier moesten werpen.’ En ze kwamen tot een kelder diep in de rivier, waar alles vollag met schatten. Hier vond het rozenweefstertje ook haar andere zonen terug, en ze leefden in rijkdom voor de rest van hun leven.

Het Wonderpaard

Er was eens een meisje dat altijd hele nare karweitjes moest doen van haar stiefmoeder. Haar echte moeder was al heel lang geleden overleden, en die had ze eigenlijk nooit gekend. Vaak wilde ze dat haar echte moeder nog zou leven. Veel tijd om te slapen kreeg ze niet, en ze moest altijd haastig eten, want er was veel werk te doen. Op een dag was het meisje het zo beu, en ze was zo moe dat ze het bos inrende. Al gauw verdwaalde ze, en ze was zelfs een beetje bij dat ze verdwaald was, want eigenlijk wilde ze helemaal niet meer naar huis.

Na een tijdje lopen kwam ze aan bij een tafeltje. Dat was erg vreemd zo in het bos. Het tafeltje was mooi versierd met wat randjes, en op de tafel stond een bak met brood. Het meisje ging op één van de hoge stoelen zitten, en begon van het brood te eten. Na een tijdje kwamen er wat haasjes aan, en een kikker. De haasjes waren in verschillende kleuren. Eén haasje was roze, een

andere paars en weer een andere was groen. Naast het meisje zat een wat grotere witte haas.

'Wie moet er wat thee ?' riep één van de haasjes.

'Nou, ik lust wel wat thee,' zei het meisje.

'Nee, jij niet,' zei het haasje. Het was het groene haasje.

'En waarom niet ?' vroeg het meisje.

'Omdat jij hier pas nieuw bent,' zei het groene haasje.

'Ach, let maar niet op hem,' zei het roze haasje, 'hij doet wel vaker vervelend, en het is een mopperpot, net als het paarse haasje.' Ook het paarse haasje begon wat te brommen, maar niemand kon het verstaan. Het paarse haasje keek het meisje al een hele tijd erg boos aan. Even later schonk het roze haasje wat thee in voor het meisje, en zei : 'Als je een keer bij mij op bezoek komt, dan krijg je roze thee of elventhee.' Het meisje keek het roze haasje vriendelijk aan, alsof ze wilde zeggen : 'Ja, graag.'

'Dank u wel,' zei ze tegen het roze haasje.

'Oh, je mag ook wel bij me blijven logeren, hoor, dat is nog leuker dan bezoek, en dan kunnen we ook de andere haasjes eens samen bezoeken,' zei het roze haasje.

Dat leek het meisje wel leuk.

Maar toen zei het paarse haasje : 'Niemand komt ooit bij mij op bezoek. Ik woon veel te ver weg, helemaal achter de bergen bij de zee.'

'Oh, maar ik heb een wonderpaard,' zei het roze haasje, 'we komen je vast wel een keer opzoeken.'

'Oh ja ?' zei het meisje, 'oh ik ben dol op paarden.' Het paarse haasje keek even niet meer zo boos naar het meisje.

'En ik dan ?' zei het groene haasje. 'Ik woon over de zee. Kan dat wonderpaard daar ook komen ?'

'Ja hoor,' zei het roze haasje vriendelijk. Het witte haasje dat iets groter was had al een hele tijd niets gezegd, en huppelde plotseling weg. Na een tijdje kwam het wonderpaard eraan. Het wonderpaard had vleugels en kon vliegen. 'Stap er maar op,' zei het roze haasje, 'dan gaan we naar mijn torenkamertje, heel hoog in het paleis van de koning.'

'De koning ?' vroeg het meisje. 'Maar welke koning ?'

'Oh, koning Griebelegrutjes,' zei het roze haasje.

'Wie is dat nu dan weer ?' vroeg het meisje.

'Nou, de koning van het hazenland,' zei het roze haasje, 'en tegelijk de opperkok van de elventhee. Hij moet de thee altijd eerst proeven voordat het opgediend mag worden.'

'Oh,' zei het meisje, 'dat wist ik niet.'

'Maar wat doet die kikker hier dan ?' vroeg het meisje weer.

‘Oh, de kikker zorgt altijd voor de tafels,’ zei het roze haasje. Toen ze beiden op het paard zaten steeg het op en bracht hen helemaal tot in het hoogste torentje van het koninklijk paleis. Dat was wel even een eindje vliegen, maar hier hadden ze dan een prachtig uitzicht over het land. Ze konden vanaf hier de bergen zien, en zelfs de achterliggende duinen en de zee. Ook konden ze hiervandaan goed het bos bezichtigen.

Er waren een paar torenkamertjes, en in één kamertje mocht het meisje logeren. In een ander kamertje dronken ze samen thee, roze thee, en elf-thee. Het meisje vond de thee erg lekker, vooral de elf-thee. Door de trap naar beneden te gaan, kon het meisje ook bij de koning op bezoek, en een verdieping lager was de keuken. De koning zelf ging niet zo vaak naar de keuken. Voornamelijk hield hij zich bezig met het regeren van het land. Maar soms moest hij toch echt naar de keuken om de nieuwe soorten elf-thee te proeven. Telkens kwamen er weer nieuwe soorten bij.

Op een dag gingen ze met het wonderpaard naar het land van otters en hermelijnen. Dat was een groot land met bossen en rivieren. In het land van otters en hermelijnen stond ergens een hele grote elventafel, waar volop elventhee werd gedronken. Nog nooit had het meisje zoveel otters en hermelijnen bij elkaar gezien, en ze waren allemaal even vriendelijk. Er waren hier zoveel soorten elventhee waar zelfs de koning niets van wist. Ze hadden hier een keuken die wel duizendmaal groter was dan de keuken van de koning. Eén zaal van de keuken was als een kerkzaal. Zo’n grote keuken had het meisje nog nooit gezien. Overal liepen bedienden rond met grote schalen. Heel in de verte zat een lange witte haas op een stoel met hele lange poten. De witte haas had het overzicht over de zaal. Na een tijdje werd er een enorm lange tafel naar binnen geschoven, en de bedienden begonnen de schalen op de tafel te zetten. Toen de schalen geopend werden schrok het meisje heel erg, want er kwam zoveel rook vanaf dat het vuur leek. Na een tijdje zag het meisje dat het van binnen schelpen waren. Maar niemand at van de schalen. Het meisje vroeg zich af waarom er niet werd gegeten. Maar na een tijdje liep het wonderpaard naar voren en begon van schaal na schaal te eten. Alle bedienden die aan de zijkant stonden klapten in hun handen. Het roze haasje glimlachte. ‘Dat doen ze altijd als het wonderpaard hier is. Ze zijn dol op hem.’

Na een tijdje kwamen er ook andere paarden binnen die van de schalen begonnen te eten. Toen alles was opgegeten kwam er een kikker binnen die de tafels begon op te ruimen. En even later haalden de bedienden de lange tafels weer weg.

‘Zo, kies maar een paard uit,’ zei het roze haasje, ‘dan gaan we een stukje wandelen. Het wonderpaard moet nu rusten.’ Het meisje koos een wit paard met vlekjes uit en wat roze strikjes, en ook het roze haasje koos een paard uit, en toen gingen ze een stukje paardrijden door het bos van het land van otters en hermelijnen.

Ze kwamen langs vele huisjes waar boeren en boerinnen woonden met heel veel vee, zoals paarden, koeien, varkens, geiten en nog veel meer. Na een tijdje waren ze zo ver gekomen, en om wat bergen heen gegaan, dat het roze haasje vond dat ze best wel even op bezoek konden gaan bij de paarse haas aan zee. De paarse haas woonde in een woonboot, aan een riviertje dat in de

zee uitliep. Alles was hier erg klein, en na een tijdje kreeg het meisje het erg benauwd. ‘Dat je hier kunt wonen,’ zei het meisje. Maar dat schoot bij het paarse haasje in het verkeerde keelgat. ‘Nou, dan kom je toch gewoon niet ?’ riep het paarse haasje boos. Niet lang daarna stonden het meisje en het roze haasje op straat. Het paarse haasje had hen eruit gezet. Maar het roze haasje klopte weer op het deurtje van de woonboot en riep toen door het raampje : ‘Ach, zus, laten we nu geen ruzie maken. Laten we gewoon wat spelletjes doen. Kaarten ofzo.’ Na een lange tijd deed het paarse haasje het raampje eindelijk open, en zei slaperig : ‘huh ? Oh ik ben vast in slaap gevallen. Ja, laten we dan maar een spelletje doen.’

Maar het spelletje liep helemaal verkeerd af. Het paarse haasje verloor telkens elk spelletje kaart, en begon steeds meer te mopperen. Ook toen ze wat bordspelletjes gingen spelen werd het er niet beter op, en na een tijdje gooide het paarse haasje het speelbord boos om, terwijl alle pionnetjes op de grond vielen.

‘Ach zus,’ zei het roze haasje, ‘het is toch maar een spelletje ?’

‘Spelletje, spelletje ?’ zei het paarse haasje. ‘Ik verlies telkens. Dat noem ik geen spelletje.’ Maar na een tijdje viel het paarse haasje weer in slaap.

Het was maar een klein stukje lopen naar de zee, en het roze haasje en het meisje besloten nog even wat te gaan zwemmen, maar een grote golf nam hen mee, en al gauw waren ze op de open zee. De golf nam hen zo ver mee, dat ze uiteindelijk maar besloten door te zwemmen naar het groene haasje dat achter de zee woonde. Maar het leek wel alsof ze er nooit kwamen, en na een tijdje begonnen ze allebei erg moe en duizelig te worden. Het meisje begon al weg te zakken, en niet lang daarna het roze haasje ook. Maar ineens voelden ze wat onder hen komen. Het was het wonderpaard, en toen ze op z’n rug zaten steeg hij op uit het water. Snel nam hij hen mee naar de overkant waar het groene haasje woonde, maar toen ze bij zijn huisje kwamen was hij er niet. Toen besloten ze maar naar het bos te gaan. In het bos stond een hele grote draaimolen. En ja hoor, daar was het groene haasje aan het spelen. Achter de draaimolen stond een stal met een heleboel wonderpaarden.

‘Waarom heb je me dat nooit verteld dat je hier zoveel wonderpaarden hebt ?’ vroeg het roze haasje.

‘Gewoon,’ zei het groene haasje, ‘omdat je er nooit naar gevraagd hebt.’ Het meisje keek haar ogen uit, en omdat ze met z’n drieen zo’n mooie dag beleefden mocht het meisje een wonderpaard helemaal voor haarzelf uitkiezen.

Het Meisje Dat Van Glas Was

Er was eens een meisje dat niet gelukkig was. Ze had problemen thuis, en op een dag besloot ze weg te rennen. Maar na niet al te lange tijd verdwaalde ze in het bos. Het meisje vond dat helemaal niet erg, want ze wilde nooit meer terug naar huis. Maar toen het donker begon te worden werd het meisje steeds banger. Dit wilde ze ook niet. En wat als er een roofdier op haar af zou komen ? Het meisje begon om hulp te roepen en hard te huilen, maar niemand hoorde haar. Of toch ? In de verte zag ze een klein lichtje, en al snel stond er een klein mannetje naast haar met een lantaarntje. 'Ach,' zei het meisje, 'zou u me kunnen helpen ? Ik ben van huis weggelopen, maar nu ben ik bang voor de roofdieren. Ik wilde wel dat ik van glas was.' En floep, ineens was het meisje van glas, en het mannetje was alweer verdwenen.

Het meisje was het mannetje erg dankbaar, want zo zouden de roofdieren haar niet kunnen verslinden, maar na een tijdje begon het meisje te merken dat ze maar moeilijk kon bewegen. Strompelend zocht ze naar een onderkomen, maar vond niets. Het bos was groot, en waar moest ze naartoe ? Na een lange koude nacht wilde ze niets liever dan weer naar huis te gaan, en weer gewoon een meisje te zijn. Maar van glas was ze, en verdwaald.

Na een tijdje kwam er een vlinder op de schouder van het huilende meisje zitten. Na een tijdje begon de schouder pijn te doen, en het meisje probeerde de vlinder weg te jagen. 'Ik weet waar je last van hebt,' zei de vlinder, 'maar je hebt er zelf voor gekozen. Het is moeilijk een glazen meisje te zijn, want alhoewel de roofdieren je niet zullen verslinden, zul je toch ongelukkig zijn, en vreemde pijnen hebben, de pijn van glas.'

'Ja,' zei het meisje, 'ik heb het erg koud, en het voelt pijnlijk aan als je op mijn schouder zit. Dan is het alsof er iemand hard op het raam tikt. Ach, lieve vlinder, ik zou zo graag weer een gewoon meisje willen zijn.'

'Dan moet je naar de koning,' zei de vlinder met een zware stem. 'De koning woont in het woud, op een hoge boom.' De vlinder wees de boom aan, en het meisje begon te klimmen. Dat ging heel moeizaam omdat ze van glas was. Na een lange tijd kwam ze eindelijk bij de top. Het was een hoge boom, hoger dan ze ooit had gezien. De koning was heel aardig, en had vleugels. Het was een soort vogel, en hij zou het meisje brengen naar het kraaiennest. Gelukkig was het een grote vogel, en hij nam al gauw het meisje van glas op zijn rug. Ze moesten wel even een tijdje vliegen voordat ze in het kraaiennest konden komen.

Toen de kraai het meisje zag begon hij te lachen. 'Wat is dat nou voor een raar meisje ?' zei hij. 'Zoiets heb ik nog nooit gezien.' En na een tijdje lag hij bijna dubbel van het lachen.

'Kun je haar helpen ?' vroeg de koning. 'Ze wil graag weer een gewoon meisje zijn, en ze wil terug naar huis.' Toen kwam de kraai wat dichterbij, en

begon op het glas te tikken. Dat deed erg pijn, en plotseling begon hij heel hard te tikken, en het glas begon te barsten en te brokkelen. Het meisje schrok zo erg dat ze uit het kraaiennest viel, en in de bospoel terechtkwam. Het meisje begon te rennen en te rennen. Dit wilde ze niet. Het deed pijn. Na een lange tijd kwam ze aan bij een huisje waar een wolf woonde. Toen de wolf haar zag begon hij te lachen. ‘Als je van vlees en bloed was, zou ik je opeten,’ zei de wolf.

‘Kunt u mij alstublieft helpen,’ zei het meisje. ‘Ik zou zo graag weer een gewoon meisje willen zijn, en ik wil weer naar huis.’ De wolf kwam wat dichterbij, en sprak : ‘Ik kan je wel naar de raaf brengen, als je dat wil. Die kan toveren.’

‘Nou, graag, meneer,’ zei het meisje. En zo bracht de wolf het meisje naar het huisje van de raaf. De raaf was erg blij het meisje te zien. ‘Zeg meisje,’ zei de raaf, ‘er is een kaboutervolk wat jou graag als koningin zou willen hebben. Zo vaak worden ze lastiggevallen door roofdieren, en altijd als ze een nieuwe koningin of koning hebben gekozen, dan wordt die ook binnen de kortste keren door wilde dieren opgegeten. Daarom zeiden ze eens : ‘We zouden wel een koning of koningin van glas willen hebben.’ En kijk eens : Jouw glas is zo scherp dat je er de roofdieren mee weg zou kunnen jagen.’

‘Ja maar waar woont dat volk dan ?’ vroeg het meisje. ‘Ik zou zo graag weer een normaal meisje willen zijn, en naar huis kunnen gaan. Kan dat ?’

‘Oh, maar meisje,’ zei de raaf. ‘Daar vraag je me wat. Ik weet niet of dat wel kan.’

‘Maar de wolf zei dat u een tovenaar was,’ zei het meisje teleurgesteld.

‘Een tovenaar ?’ vroeg de raaf. En toen begon de raaf te lachen. ‘Nee,’ zei de raaf. ‘Ik ben geen tovenaar, maar soms kan ik met wijze raad komen.’

‘Nou, zou u me dan een wijze raad kunnen geven ?’ vroeg het meisje beleefd.

‘Nee,’ zei de raaf, ‘maar ik kan wel wat proberen.’ En toen liep de raaf naar het meisje toe en begon hard op het glas te tikken. Weer begon het glas te barsten en te breken, en in paniek rende het meisje het huis uit. ‘Wacht even !’ riepen de wolf en de raaf, en achtervolgden haar. Het meisje rende en rende, totdat ze uiteindelijk bij een kaboutervolkje aankwam. En inderdaad, zij wilden haar dolgraag als koningin hebben, want een koningin van glas, die vind je niet zomaar. Het meisje liet zich maar kronen, want ze wist toch niet waar ze anders naartoe moest. Het hele volkje was blij, en bestrooiden haar met bloesem, bladeren en bospoeders. ‘Oh, maar zo word ik vies,’ riep het meisje.

‘Leve de koningin !’ riep het volkje. Maar het meisje was doodongelukkig. Ze wilde naar huis, en ze wilde weer gewoon zijn. Op een nacht kwam er een kabouter naar haar kamer met een hele grote hamer. ‘Koningin,’ zei de kabouter. ‘We hebben gehoord van uw wens om weer een meisje van vlees en bloed te zijn, en om weer naar huis te kunnen gaan. Luister, u bent zo groot, en wij zijn zo klein, dat wanneer ik het glas insla met deze hamer, dan kunnen we met het glas onze stad beschermen tegen de roofdieren, en dan komt u vrij.’

Maar de koningin hoorde niets, want ze sliep. In een paar slagen lag het hele bed vol met scherven, en al snel was de hele slaapkamer van de koningin vol met blije dwergen. Ze waren zo vrolijk, want vandaag zouden ze nieuwe stadsmuren krijgen, en zou hun koningin gelukkig worden.

Maar het meisje was nu als de wind, vrij om te gaan naar de hoogste bomen, vrij om terug te gaan naar haar huis onder de mensen. Ze was nog steeds niet van vlees en bloed, maar ze was gelukkig nu, verlost van het glas. Het glas werd vollop gebruikt door het dwergenvolkje, en voortaan lieten de roofdieren hen met rust. Het meisje was nu de wind geworden, en soms ging ze nog even terug naar al haar oude vriendjes : de vlinder, de koning, de raaf, de wolf en het volkje, maar zij konden haar niet zien. Zij konden alleen met warmte aan haar terug denken.

De Wonderschoenen

Een man ging eens met zijn moeder en grootmoeder naar een schoenmaker om nieuwe schoenen te kopen. Er stonden prachtige schoenen in de rekken, maar de mooiste schoenen waren van fluweel met verblindende ringen. De schoenmaker zei dat het wonderschoenen waren, en dat daarom de prijs iets hoger zou zijn dan gewoonlijks. Maar de man was erg rijk, en kocht de schoenen.

Toen de man die avond naar bed ging en in slaap viel begonnen de wonderschoenen te bewegen, en al snel liepen ze het huis uit. De man hoorde wat deuren klapperen, en rende al snel achter zijn schoenen aan. Ze waren op weg naar het dorp. In het dorp aangekomen kwamen er wat elfjes uit de schoenen die zich overal begonnen te verspreiden, en toen liepen de schoenen nog harder. Zo rende de man de hele nacht achter zijn schoenen aan, en die ochtend gingen ze bij een andere schoenmaker naar binnen. Buiten adem wilde de man zijn schoenen pakken, maar de schoenmaker zei : ‘Daar zult u wel voor moeten betalen.’

‘Maar dat zijn mijn schoenen,’ zei de man.

De schoenen stonden keurig in het rek naast een heleboel schoenen van dezelfde soort. De man begon een beetje hopeloos te worden.

‘Zijn dit allemaal wonderschoenen ?’ vroeg de man.

‘Wonderschoenen ? Waar heeft u het over ?’ zei de schoenmaker.

‘Ach, laat maar,’ zei de man, en betaalde opnieuw voor zijn schoenen. Maar ditmaal gebeurde er niets wonderlijks met de schoenen, en zo gingen er vele dagen voorbij, totdat de man dacht dat hij dan misschien de verkeerde schoenen genomen had. Weer ging hij terug naar de schoenmaker en kocht een ander paar van dezelfde soort, maar toen ook dit niet werkte besloot hij om ze allemaal te kopen. Maar geen van de schoenen bleken wonderschoenen te zijn. En daarom ging de man weer terug naar de schoenmaker.

‘Schoenmaker,’ zei de man, ‘kunt u mij vertellen wie er nog meer de laatste tijd schoenen van deze soort heeft gekocht ?’

‘Alleen een vrouw, een zeer rijke vrouw, die hier eens in de zoveel jaren komt,’ zei de schoenmaker. ‘Maar ik weet niet waar zij woont.’ De man was een beetje teleurgesteld toen hij dat hoorde. ‘Maar weet u wat ?’ zei de schoenmaker, ‘zodra ze hier is zal ik mijn dienstknecht naar u sturen zodat u met haar kunt spreken.’

Na vele lange jaren toen de man de wonderschoenen eigenlijk al een beetje vergeten was klopte de dienstknecht van de schoenmaker bij het huis van de man aan. De dienstknecht bracht de boodschap dat de vrouw van de schoenen was gekomen, en dat als hij de schoenen wilde hebben, dan zou hij zeven jaren voor haar moeten werken. Dat had de man er graag voor over, en ging met de dienstknecht mee.

De vrouw woonde op een groot kasteel, en in die zeven jaren had de man een goede tijd, maar werkte hard. Na de zeven jaren kreeg hij eindelijk de schoenen, en inderdaad, het waren de wonderschoenen. Ditmaal sloot de man de schoenen elke avond wanneer hij ging slapen op in een gouden kooitje met zilveren sluitseltjes.

Maar op een nacht brak de kooi open, en weer gingen de wonderschoenen er vandoor. De man werd wakker van het geluid, en rende achter de schoenen aan. Ditmaal brachten de schoenen hem diep in het bos. Hier woonde een hele oude schoenmaker op een afgelegen plek. De schoenmaker vertelde hem dat hij ooit de wonderschoenen had gemaakt, en dat ze op een dag aan de wandel gingen. De schoenmaker was blij dat ze nu iemand mee hadden gebracht, want de schoenmaker was erg eenzaam. Het huis van de schoenmaker was vol met wonderbaarlijke edelstenen, en de man wilde hier graag blijven. Na een tijdje vertelde de schoenmaker dat de wonderschoenen de bezitter naar het beste goud en edelgesteente zouden leiden, als ze maar nooit uitgetrokken zouden worden. En sindsdien sliep de man gewoon met zijn schoenen aan, en zijn de wonderschoenen altijd bij hem gebleven.

Op een dag leidden de schoenen hem tot een bloedheldere bron waar een mooie dame zat. Ze zat wat te breien, en het viel de man op dat ze zulke mooie schoenen had. De schoenen straalden in de zon. De man, die toch wel erg eenzaam was, ook al had hij gezelschap van de schoenmaker, werd direkt

erg verliefd op de vrouw. Het was alsof de knoppen van haar schoenen hem hadden betoverd. ‘Trouw met me, trouw met me,’ riep de man, maar de vrouw stond op en rende weg. Direkt ging de man er als een speer achteraan, maar de vrouw rende veel harder. De man was erg teleurgesteld, en ging terug naar de schoenmaker. ‘Oh,’ zei de schoenmaker toen de man hem het verhaal vertelde, ‘dat zijn schoenen die ik eens voor de bosfee heb gemaakt. Iedereen die die schoenen ziet raakt direkt betoverd.’

‘Maar waarom rende ze dan weg ?’ vroeg de man.

‘Dat doen de schoenen,’ zei de schoenmaker. ‘Maar als je dezelfde schoenen als haar zou hebben, dan zou je net zo hard als haar kunnen rennen.’ En toen liep de schoenmaker naar een oude kast en haalde een zelfde paar eruit.

De man deed de schoenen aan, en rende naar buiten. Nu kon hij de bosfee gemakkelijk bijhouden, en de bosfee was erg verrast. De bosfee was altijd erg eenzaam geweest, want haar schoenen renden altijd weg als er iemand in de buurt kwam. Maar nu de man haar makkelijk kon bijhouden begonnen haar schoenen wat af te remmen, en al gauw stond ze helemaal stil, als betoverd. ‘Je hebt me betoverd,’ zei de bosfee met een glimlach.

‘Nee,’ zei de man, ‘dat hebben de wonderschoenen gedaan.’

De bosfee keek naar zijn schoenen en toen naar hem. ‘Zou je weleens met mij willen dansen,’ zong de bosfee. ‘Zou je weleens met mij over de heg willen gaan, want daar baden zoveel sterretjes onder een bloedrode maan. Zou je weleens met mij willen rennen en zingen, heus, je kan het, want je hebt mijn wonderschoenen aan.’

En toen vertelde de bosfee over de heg waar ze nooit overheen kon, want altijd als ze dichterbij kwam, dan rende de heg weg, en de heg kon veel harder rennen dan haar.

‘Zou je weleens met mij willen dromen,’ zong de man. ‘Zou je weleens met mij onder de maan willen dansen. Zou je weleens met mij over de heg willen dansen.’

‘Ja, graag,’ zong de bosfee.

‘Ja, graag,’ zong de man.

‘Zie, het is wat eens de schoenmaker mij heeft verteld,’ zong de man. ‘Wij moeten dansen, wij moeten dansen, en de heg zal staan als betoverd en versteld.’

En zo dansten ze samen naar de heg toe, maar al gauw merkten ze dat de heg veel sneller was dan zij, en niet lang daarna gingen ze beiden teleurgesteld naar het huis van de schoenmaker terug. Toen de schoenmaker het verhaal hoorde haalde hij twee paar dansschoenen tevoorschijn. Het waren de mooiste schoenen die ze ooit hadden gezien. Ze deden de schoenen aan, en keken elkaar in de ogen, en dansten als betoverd terug naar de heg. En inderdaad, de heg stond als bevroren te kijken, en met gemak konden ze door de heg heen. Ook de schoenmaker liep achter hen aan, en zo kwamen ze met z’n drieen aan de andere kant van de heg.

Maar de wezens die hier woonden vlogen allemaal in angst voor hen weg. Zij droegen geen schoenen, en zij hadden vederlichte vleugeltjes als elfjes.

De schoenmaker was inmiddels weer teruggegaan naar zijn huis. Langzaam daalde de bosfee af in de rivier en de man deed hetzelfde. En heel langzaam begonnen ook de sterretjes in het water af te dalen. ‘Ik heb mijn schoenen hier helemaal niet meer nodig !’ riep de man, en trok ze uit. Direkt had ook hij vederlichte vleugeltjes en steeg uit het water op. Maar de bosfee volgde niet. ‘Zeg, ik moet weer terug naar waar ik vandaan kom,’ zei ze, en ging terug door de heg.

Even was de man teleurgesteld. Hij wilde hier wel blijven. Toen ineens trokken een heleboel sterretjes hem verder naar boven. Maar omdat hij zijn wonderschoenen had uitgedaan kon hij nu nooit meer terug over de heg. Na een tijd begon hij de bosfee en de schoenmaker erg te missen, en zou hij erg graag terugwillen. Op een dag ging hij terug naar de rivier om de wonderschoenen te zoeken. En toen gebeurde er iets wonderlijks : Twee van de prachtigste vissen kwamen op hem afzwemmen en zeiden : ‘Wij zouden u nog willen bedanken dat u ons vrijgelaten hebt. Wij waren uw wonderschoenen, en in deze rivier zijn wij weer vissen geworden.’

Maar de man begreep het niet en vroeg : ‘Maar wie heeft jullie dan vroeger betoverd, en hoe kom ik nu weer thuis ?’

‘In het land achter de rivier woont de steenheks,’ sprak één van de vissen. ‘Zij vangt vissen om ze te betoveren tot schoenen. Wanneer je haar verslaat zul je terug kunnen keren naar je woonplaats.’

En zo brachten de twee vissen hem over de rivier, die verderop veel woester was. De steenheks woonde in een woest kasteel. De stenen waarmee het kasteel was gebouwd waren roze en rode edelstenen die ze gevonden had in de dieptes van de rivier. De man mocht de rode stenen en tegels niet aanraken, want dan zou hij verstenen. Maar sommige stenen waren het ene moment roze, en het andere moment rood. ‘Ik wist wel dat je zou komen,’ krijste de steenheks. ‘De wonderschoenen hebben je hier naartoe geleid, alhoewel ze nu weer gewoon hun vissenhuid hebben. Zeg, ik heb een opdracht voor jou, en als je die opdracht kunt vervullen dan zal ik je weer naar huis laten gaan, over de heg. Haal voor mij drie toverbloemen in de betoverde tuinen achter het kasteel.’

De man deed wat hem gevraagd werd, maar in de betoverde tuinen raakte hij onwel. De heks die alles volgde door haar toverbol begon te lachen. ‘Wat een domoor. Niemand overleefd zo’n reisje door de betoverde tuinen. Zelfs ik kan daar niet komen.’

Maar na een tijdje kwam hij er toch uit met de drie toverbloemen waar de steenheks om vroeg. De steenheks was erg verbaasd, maar wel blij met de toverbloemen. ‘Jij domoor,’ riep ze. ‘Nu kun je hier nooit meer weg. Mijn macht strekt zich nu uit tot zelfs achter de heg.’ Maar toen werd de man erg kwaad, en herinnerde dat de vissen hadden gezegd dat hij haar eerst moest verslaan. Er lagen wat roze en rode stenen los om hem heen. Hij wist dat hij de rode stenen niet mocht raken, zoals de vissen hem dat hadden gezegd, anders zou het afgelopen met hem zijn. Maar hij pakte een schaalvormige roze steen, en schepte daarmee een kleine rode steen, en wierp het toen op de steenheks af. De steenheks versteende onmiddelijk. Maar overal om hem heen begonnen de stenen rood te worden, en de man wist niet wat hij moest doen. Voor hem was een vijvertje waar hij insprong. Het vijvertje liep uit in

een riviertje waardoor hij het kasteel kon uitkomen, en waardoor hij in de rivier buiten het kasteel kon komen. Hier wachtten de twee vissen hem op. Ze waren erg blij dat de heks nu verslagen was, en ze vertelden de man dat de heg nu ook was verdwenen. Ooit had de heks de heg gebouwd om haar machtsgebied af te bakenen, maar nu had ze al haar macht verloren. Maar gek genoeg wilden de vissen weer uit het water genomen worden, om in wonderschoenen te veranderen, want om te leven op het vasteland beviel hen iets beter. En zo had de man zijn beste vrienden altijd bij de hand. Als hij ging zwemmen, dan veranderden ze in vissen die met hem mee zwommen en hem overal naartoe brachten, en op het vasteland waren ze gewoon zijn wonderschoenen.

De Negende Wens

Eens leefde er een hebzuchtige prins in een arm land. De prins was zo hebzuchtig dat hij een ander niets gunde, en alles voor zichzelf nam. Toen op een dag een meisje uit zijn rijk spoorloos verdwenen was ging hij alleen op zoektocht omdat haar ouders erg rijk waren en een hoge beloning zouden schenken aan degene die hun dochter zou terugvinden.

Op zijn reis door het woud kwam hij ’s avonds laat bij een huisje aan. Toen hij op de deur klopte hoorde hij een krassende stem : ‘Ik ben Spindraad. Wie is daar nog zo laat ?’

‘Ach, moedertje,’ zei de prins. ‘Ik zou zo graag even bij u willen kijken of daar ook een meisje van ons rijk is. Zij is spoorloos verdwenen.’

‘Ik heb zeven dochters,’ zei de oude vrouw. ‘Als u even wil kijken. Kom dan maar verder.’ De prins stapte naar binnen, en kreeg wat te eten. Ook mocht hij van elke dochter een wens doen. Bij de eerste dochter zei hij : ‘Ik zou graag willen dat het koninkrijk omgeven is door een haag met rode bloedbessen, giftig als de zon, om ervoor te zorgen dat niemand zomaar spoorloos kan verdwijnen.’ Als tweede wens, bij de tweede dochter, wenste hij dat zijn koninkrijk vol zou zijn met goud, maar alle andere wensen waren hebberig, en hij vergat het spoorloos verdwenen meisje helemaal.

‘Omdat je in bijna al je wensen zo hebberig bent geweest,’ zei de oude vrouw, ‘zul je veranderen in een pad.’ En direkt was de prins geen prins meer, maar een pad. In schaamte vertrok de pad. Al gauw kwam hij erachter dat hij ook niet terug kon naar zijn koninkrijk vanwege de dichte haag met giftige rode bloedbessen. Maar eens in een nacht zag hij een meisje baden in een bosmeertje. Hij zwom direkt naar haar toe, en vertelde haar wat er was gebeurd. Het bleek het spoorloos verdwenen meisje te zijn. Maar ze leek sprekend op één van de dochters van de oude vrouw.

‘Ik ben gevlucht,’ zei het meisje, ‘vanwege het harde werk dat ik in uw koninkrijk moest verrichten. Ik kwam bij de oude vrouw en werd als één van haar dochters. Zij liet mij zacht werk verrichten, en ik mocht wensen laten uitkomen.’

‘Maar waarom ben je daar dan niet gebleven ?’ vroeg de pad.

‘Omdat de oude vrouw aan het einde van de wensen altijd haar eigen wens uitspreekt,’ sprak het meisje. ‘Sinds ik gevlucht ben, ben ik de enige die haar boze wensen ongedaan kan maken. Ik was altijd de achtste wens, en zij altijd de laatste, de negende.’

En zo deed de pad zijn wens bij het meisje om weer een prins te worden.

Linana en de Carrousel

Eens in de tijd dat er nog geen bloemen waren leefde er eens een meisje dat zo mooi was dat iedereen haar ‘Zwanenpracht’ noemde. Op de hele wereld was er geen liever meisje te vinden dan haar, met een hart van goud en stralend licht. Haar vader, een koopman was erg trots op haar, en er was niemand met wie zij het beter kon vinden dan met haar vader. Maar op een dag was de vader erg ziek. Het meisje was erg bedroefd en na korte tijd stierf haar vader. Haar moeder was een edele vrouw en hertrouwde. Maar al gauw bleek dat het meisje niet met haar nieuwe vader kon opschieten. De stiefvader was erg ruw naar haar, en het meisje begon erg te veranderen. Na een aantal jaren was ze zo’n kreng geworden dat iedereen haar Zwanenplaag noemde.

Maar op een dag was er een koopman met een carrousel in het land. De kinderen waren dol op de carrousel en ook het meisje vond het fijn er ritjes in te maken. De koopman was direkt erg gecharmeerd door het meisje, omdat ze zo mooi was als een zwaan. Na de ritjes wenkte de koopman het meisje, en nam haar apart. ‘Heus,’ zei de koopman, ‘ik heb in het hele land geen mooier meisje gezien dan jij, met een hart zo vol van goud en stralend licht.’

‘Iedereen noemt mij zwanenplaag,’ zei het meisje, ‘omdat ik zo’n kreng ben. Vanwaar uw belangstelling ?’

‘Oh, maar ik zou jou Zwanenpracht noemen,’ zei de man. Ineens moest het meisje aan haar vader denken.

En toen vertelde de man haar dat wanneer het midden in de nacht is, en alle kinderen slapen, dan wordt de zwaan van de carrousel wakker, en wie dan op haar rug zit maakt met haar een ritje in de lucht. Als je het aan niemand vertelt, en naar de carrousel komt wanneer je de eerste sterretjes van de nacht ziet, dan is het aan jou de eer een ritje te maken, sprak de man.

De eerste nacht toen het meisje een ritje mocht maken op de vliegende zwaan van de carrousel kon ze alle lichtjes van de stad zien, en vertelde aan de man van de carrousel dat haar echte naam Linana was. Omdat het het meisje zo beviel mocht ze ook de volgende nacht komen. Ditmaal bracht de zwaan haar nog verder weg, en vertelde ze de man van de carrousel dat haar vader was overleden, en dat ze een boze stiefvader had. En de man nodigde haar nog een keer uit. Ditmaal bracht de zwaan haar naar een land zo ver weg dat ze het niet kende. Toen ze een voet op de grond had gezet vloog de zwaan weg. Ze riep de zwaan nog na, maar al snel was de zwaan helemaal uit het zicht verdwenen. Ze stond vlakbij een meertje waar een heleboel echte zwanen waren.

Linana mocht op één van de grotere zwanen een ritje maken over het meer, en ineens steeg de zwaan op. ‘Oh, kun jij me even naar mijn land terugbrengen,’ zei het meisje. ‘De zwaan van de carrousel is mij vast vergeten.’

Toen het meisje weer bij de man van de carrousel was aangekomen, vertelde de man haar dat de zwaan van de carrousel altijd op tijd terug moest zijn, anders zou hij in de lucht ineens weer van metaal worden en neerstorten. Toen begreep het meisje het. Maar ook de zwaan van het andere land wilde wel een plaats op de carrousel hebben. Voor de man met de carrousel was dat niet zo moeilijk, omdat hij immers toverkrachten bezat. En steeds kwam het meisje terug in de nacht om ritjes te maken op de zwanen, en ze nam telkens nieuwe zwanen mee. Na een tijdje was de carrousel vol met zwanen, en op een nacht steeg de hele carrousel op, en vloog naar het land van de zwanen.

Dus als je een keer in de nacht een carrousel door de lucht ziet vliegen, dan weet je dat het Linana met haar zwanen is. Op een keer vertelde de koopman dat er drie vlammetjes in het binnenste van de carrousel waren. Zodra het eerste vlammetje uitging ging er op aarde iemand dood. Altijd als het tweede vlammetje uitging werd er op aarde iemand geboren, en als het derde vlammetje uitging werd er iemand blij. Linana vond het een prachtig gezicht om naar de knipperende vlammetjes te kijken. Maar op een dag werd ook de man van de carrousel ernstig ziek, en stierf. Linana was nu bedroefder dan ooit, en sindsdien gingen de vlammetjes niet meer aan. Ook de carrousel draaide niet meer, en de zwanen kwamen niet meer tot leven. Niemand wilde een carrousel in het land hebben die het niet meer deed. Ze besloten de carrousel in een diep gat in de aarde te werpen. Linana was ontroostbaar. Maar op een dag kwam er een zwaan van het andere land, en nam haar mee. Het meisje wilde niet meer terug en besloot in een huisje te leven aan het meertje van de zwanen. Maar op een dag gebeurde er iets wonderlijks, vanuit het meertje kwam de oude carrousel opzetten. De carrousel was nu groter

dan ooit, en er waren ook veel meer zwanen op. De zwanen vertelden het meisje dat in het diepe gat in de aarde een oude vrouw leefde die zoveel toverkracht bezat dat ze kon maken dat de zwanen altijd konden leven. Zelf had ze ook een heleboel zwanen, en die konden sindsdien ook in de carrousel zijn. En in het binnenste van de carrousel waren nu zoveel knipperende vlammetjes en was het er zo groot, dat Linana er voor altijd zou kunnen wonen.

En zo maakte Linana vanaf nu ook ritjes door het water en onder de grond. En als je haar eens tegenkomt, vraag dan maar of je met haar mee mag.

De Toverbeker en het Toverbordje

Eens waren er dertig prinsen die door een heks waren betoverd tot wachters op een hoge toren. De toren was zo hoog dat het hoogste deel niet gezien kon worden, en de toren was zo breed dat het de helft van het land vulde. Als iemand de trap omhoog wilde bestijgen, dan kwamen er ballen van steen en ballen van vuur naar beneden, en maakten voor lange tijd het land onveilig. Daarom verbood de koning dat nog iemand naar de toren zou gaan.

De koning had veel verdriet van het verlies van zijn dertig zonen. De dertig prinsen waren nu angstaanjagende wachters die op de top van de toren moesten marcheren. Zij moesten de schat van de heks bewaken : een toverbeker die nooit op zou raken, en waarmee je onder de grond kon reizen, en een toverbord dat altijd vol was, en waarmee je in de lucht kon reizen.

De koning had een erge hekel aan de heks. Was hij nu maar wat aardiger voor haar geweest, dan was alles niet zo erg als het nu was. Ja, de koning had veel spijt wat hij de heks had aangedaan. Een oud bedelvrouwtje kwam eens aan de poort en vroeg om onderdak, maar de koning zond haar weg. Hoe kon hij nu weten dat het een heks was ? En een heks kun je maar beter onderdak geven, anders zal het je je hele leven berouwen. Dat was de koning nu wel duidelijk geworden.

Sindsdien was de koning altijd goed voor bedelaars, en had hij z’n lesje wel geleerd. Op een dag kwam één van de bedelaars tot de koning. ‘Koning,’ zei de bedelaar, ‘ik heb gehoord wat er gebeurd is. Ik kom uit een ver land, maar ik heb een lange tijd onder de grond gewoond, en eens zag ik de heks met haar toverbeker langskomen. Ik volgde haar, en ze kwam in een bron van licht, waar ze onzichtbaar werd. Zo ging ik ook naar de bron, en in een bliksemschicht stond ik bovenop de toren waar u zonen gevangen worden gehouden. Ze waren inderdaad de meest afschuwelijke wachters geworden,

en marcheerden gevaarlijk rond. Maar ze konden mij niet zien, omdat ik onzichtbaar was. De toverbeker was verdwenen, omdat de heks daarmee onder de grond was, maar het toverbordje dat altijd vol was stond daar, en ik nam ervan, en steeg op in de lucht. Hoever ik gekomen ben weet ik niet, maar ik was zo hoog waar nog geen mens ooit was gekomen. Hier kwam ik in een wereld waar de meest wonderlijke sprookjesfiguren waren. Zij vertelden mij dat uw zonen geheime sprookjes in zich droegen die nog nooit waren verteld. De betovering zou worden verbroken wanneer die sprookjes zouden worden verteld.'

Toen liet de koning de beste sprookjesvertellers van het land komen, om zoveel mogelijk sprookjes te verzamelen en te vertellen, maar er gebeurde niets. Toen liet de koning de bedelaar weer terugkomen, en vroeg hem waar onder de grond die lichtbron was. De koning zond toen tien lakeien met de bedelaar mee. De koning hoopte dat zijn lakeien de prinsen konden bevrijden. Maar de heks wachtte hen al op. In een lichtflits betoverde ze de lakeien in stenen wachters die de lichtbron moesten bewaken, maar de bedelaar zag de toverbeker staan, greep de beker en dronk ervan, terwijl hij nog dieper onder de grond kon reizen. Na een lange tijd kwam de bedelaar in een sprookjesrijk zo diep onder de grond waar geen mens ooit was geweest. Hoe diep het was, wist hij niet, maar er waren hier wonderlijke sprookjeswezens. Zij vertelden dat zij eens samenleefden met de sprookjeswereld boven de lucht, maar de heks had het rijk verscheurd. In de lichtbron verborg de heks sprookjes, en de twee sprookjeswerelden zouden weer bij elkaar komen als die verborgen sprookjes zouden worden verteld.

Weer ging de bedelaar naar de koning, en weer liet de koning de beste sprookjesvertellers komen, en ook de beste sprookjesvertellers uit andere landen, maar er gebeurde weer niets. Maar toen kreeg de bedelaar een idee. Hij had nu immers zowel het toverbordje als de toverbeker. Met het toverbordje kon hij nu de toverbeker naar het rijk boven de lucht brengen, en dan zouden zij met de toverbeker naar het rijk onder de grond kunnen gaan. Vanaf die dag werd er heel wat heen en weer gereisd, en ze vertelden elkaar de wonderlijkste sprookjes. Niet lang daarna marcheerden de stenen lakeien en de wachters van de toren naar de dichtstbijzijnde stad, en begonnen de sprookjes te vertellen. Langzaam maar zeker verbrak de betovering, en de koning kon zijn dertig zonen en zijn tien lakeien weer in de armen nemen.

Het Vogelbalkonnetje

Er was eens een koning die een dochtertje had. Omdat hij niet wilde dat ze een verwend prinsesje zou worden liet hij haar opgroeien in een donkere diepe keuken om mee te helpen de grote beesten onder de grond te voeren. Maar het meisje verveelde zich vaak, en had het vaak koud. Op een dag klom het meisje door een buis boven het fornuis naar boven, en kwam boven op het kasteel terecht. Ze sloop door een torenraampje naar binnen, en zag daar een oude vrouw zitten achter een spinnenwiel en een weefraam. De oude

vrouw zei dat ze weleens wat anders wilde, en het meisje vertelde haar over het keukentje. Ook het meisje wilde weleens wat anders en ze besloten van plaats te ruilen. Het oude vrouwtje klom door de lange buis naar het keukentje toe. Na een aantal dagen kwam het oude vrouwtje terug en vertelde het meisje dat ze het zo naar haar zin had in het keukentje en dat ze het meisje er zo dankbaar voor was dat ze het meisje een sieraad gaf. ‘Als je erover wrijft, dan verander je in een vogel,’ zei het oude vrouwtje. Het oude vrouwtje ging weer terug naar het keukentje, en het meisje wreef over het sieraad om in een vogel te veranderen. Het meisje wilde altijd al vliegen, en ze vloog over de zee en terug. Na een tijdje vloog ze door de lange buis om het oude vrouwtje te bezoeken.

Het meisje had eigenlijk nog nooit de grote beesten gezien. Ze moest vroeger alleen koken en het voedsel door een raampje schuiven. Maar nu was ze klein genoeg om zelf door het raampje heen te gaan. Hier kwam ze op een klein balkonnetje waar een heleboel andere vogels waren, groten en kleinen. In de verte waren de grote beesten, waar de vogels altijd het voedsel naartoe brachten. Dan moesten ze eerst over een heel diep en groot ravijn vliegen, want de beesten waren op een soort eiland. Nu kon het meisje zelf eens wat voedsel naar de beesten brengen. Ze kreeg een mandje mee, dat ze in haar snavel kon houden. In het mandje waren wat appels, wat druiven, en wat pastei. Om alles te bedekken werd er een doek overheen geschoven. Het meisje keek haar ogen uit. Na een tijdje ging ze weer terug. In het torenkamertje lag nog steeds het sieraad. Even wreef ze er met haar vleugel overheen, en veranderde weer in een gewoon meisje.

Op een dag wilde de koning haar zien, en het meisje nam haar sieraad mee. Het meisje vertelde alles wat ze had meegemaakt aan haar vader, en over haar liefde voor de grote beesten. De koning pinkte een traantje weg, en sprak : ‘Die grote beesten zijn jouw eigen broers. Een boze heks heeft hen eens betoverd.’ En toen vertelde het meisje over het sieraad waarmee ze in een vogel kon veranderen. Zo zouden de grote beesten ook in vogels veranderen als het sieraad over hen heengewreven zou worden. De koning vond het een goed idee, en het meisje wreef even over het sieraad heen, veranderde in een vogel en nam het sieraad mee naar het vogelbalkonnetje. Met het sieraad vloog ze heel dicht naar de grote beesten toe, en wreef met het sieraad over hun huiden heen. Direkt veranderden ze in vogels, en in een grote zwerm vlogen ze terug over het grote ravijn heen. De koning was erg blij toen hij de vogels zag, maar het waren nog steeds geen prinsen. ‘Oh, maar dat is heel eenvoudig, vader,’ zei het meisje dat inmiddels weer een meisje was geworden. Ik wrijf gewoon nu de vogels met het sieraad. Kort daarna stonden er een heleboel prinsen voor de koning. De koning omhelsde ze één voor één, en ook het meisje viel haar broers één voor één in de armen.

Het Varken Op Reis

Er waren eens een varken en een uil met elkaar in gesprek. De uil lachte het varken uit, omdat hij niet kon vliegen, en zei dat het varken lui was, en alleen maar at en door de modder rolde. De uil vond zichzelf heel wat, omdat hij veel jaagde en nesten bouwde. ‘Op een dag,’ zei het varken, ‘zal ik net zo kunnen vliegen als jij.’ Maar de uil lachte hem uit, en zei dat dat onmogelijk was.

De dag daarop ging het varken op reis om vleugels te zoeken. Eerst kwam hij een raaf tegen. Ook de raaf zei dat hij nooit zou kunnen vliegen. Na een tijdje kwam het varken bij een klein huisje waar een heks woonde. ‘Ach,’ zei de heks, ‘je hebt gewoon niet genoeg gegeten. Je moet veel meer eten, en dan zul je wel kunnen vliegen.’ En de heks zette een heleboel lekkernijen voor het varken op tafel, en het varken at en at. En zo ging dat dagen door, totdat het varken moddervet was. Het varken was zo vet geworden dat hij bijna niet meer vooruitkwam. De heks stond lachend achter hem toen het varken probeerde te vliegen. Toen pakte de heks een groot mes om het varken te slachten, en toen wist het varken dat hij bedrogen was. De heks had gewoon zin in een lekker hapje.

Gelukkig kwamen ineens de uil en de raaf naar binnen, en begonnen de heks te pikken. De heks viel op de grond, en toen probeerden ze het varken naar buiten te krijgen. Dat was niet gemakkelijk, maar uiteindelijk was het varken buiten. De raaf en de uil waarschuwde het varken dat hij geen domme dingen meer moest doen, en toen het varken ver genoeg van het heksenhuisje vandaan was vlogen ze weer weg. Maar het varken wilde nog steeds vliegen. Na een tijdje kwam het varken bij het huisje van een fee. Ook aan de fee vertelde hij dat hij wilde vliegen, en de fee zei dat hij dan bepaalde toverriemen om moest doen. De fee haalde de riemen uit een kast, deed ze bij het varken om, maar snel maakte ze de riemen vast aan een balk, en veranderde in een heks. Weer was het varken bedrogen. De heks pakte een mes uit de la om het varken te slachten, maar weer kwamen de uil en de raaf binnen om het varken te helpen. Toen ze weer buiten waren zeiden de uil en de raaf dat het varken niet zo goedgelovig moest zijn. Het varken had z’n lesje nu wel geleerd, maar wilde nog steeds vliegen.

Het varken zou nu niet meer allerlei huisjes binnengaan. Dat had hij nu wel afgeleerd. Maar nog steeds zocht het varken naar vleugeltjes. ‘Kun jij mij leren vliegen ?’ vroeg hij aan een klein vogeltje. ‘Ja,’ zei het vogeltje, ‘dan moet je in het water springen.’ Maar het varken geloofde het niet. En ook andere vogeltjes vertelden hem dingen die hij niet geloofde. De uil en de raaf waren blij dat het varken wat verstandiger was geworden. Maar op een dag kwam het varken een echt vliegend varken tegen met vleugels. ‘Waar kan ik vleugels vinden ?’ vroeg het varken. ‘Kom maar mee,’ zei het vliegend varken.

Het varken volgde het varken met de vleugels, en ze kwamen in een diepe grot waar een ronde ton stond. ‘Als je hier inklimt,’ zei het vliegend varken, ‘dan zul je kunnen vliegen.’ Maar toen het varken erin stapte kwam hij vast te zitten, en het vliegend varken veranderde weer in een heks. Het varken begon te roepen, maar de uil en de raaf kwamen niet. Na een tijdje stond de heks met een groot mes voor de ton. Maar het varken was inmiddels niet meer zo dik, en de heks wilde hem nog niet opeten. ‘Eerst zul je veel moeten eten,’ zei de heks. En de heks haalde de overheerlijkste lekkernijen, maar het varken lustte niets. Het varken kon van verdriet niet meer eten, en was op een dag zo dun dat hij uit de ton kon komen. Hij was nu zo licht als een veertje. Maar de heks maakte hem aan riemen vast, en zei dat als ze hem niet kon eten, dan kon ze wel op hem rijden. En dat beviel de heks zo goed, dat ze na een tijdje besloot hem vleugeltjes te geven, zodat ze ook op hem kon vliegen. Maar het varken was niet gelukkig. Nu kon hij vliegen, maar hij was beteugeld met riemen.

Maar op een dag zagen de raaf en de uil hem vliegen. Ze waren verbaasd, maar wisten dat hij weer door de heks bedrogen was. En daarom vlogen ze op de heks af, en pikten haar van het varken af. Snel pikten ze de riemen van het varken weg, en sindsdien vliegt het varken vrij door de lucht. En als je hem eens tegenkomt, vraag hem dan eens om een ritje op zijn rug.

Het Land van de Sprookjesprinsen en Sprookjesprinsessen

Er was eens een heks die heel jaloers was op prinsen en prinsessen. De heks was zo jaloers dat ze op een kwade dag boze geesten zond naar alle getrouwde prinsen en prinsessen van de sprookjesrijken. Die boze geesten zouden hen zoveel nare dingen over elkaar influisteren dat ze ruzie zouden krijgen en elkaar niet meer wilden zien. En zo gingen vele sprookjesrijken ten onder, totdat een sprookjesprins in de gaten kreeg wat er aan de hand was. Met zijn sprookjesprinses vertrok hij uit het kasteel, en ze deden hele

arme, oude en versleten kledederen aan om zo onder de mensen van het sprookjesrijk te wonen. De sprookjesprins ging aan de ene kant van het rijk wonen in een heel arm en oud huisje, en de sprookjesprinses ging aan de andere kant van het rijk wonen, ook in een heel arm en oud huisje. Ze spraken af dat ze elkaar elke nacht bij het maanlicht even zouden ontmoeten in het bos. Dan trokken ze weer even hun prinselijke kledederen aan, en kwamen op hun vorstelijke paarden.

‘Oh, prins, wat ben je toch mooi en lief,’ zei de prinses toen ze elkaar voor het eerst daar in het bos tegenkwamen. ‘En jij bent nog mooier en liever geworden dan je al was, prinses,’ zei de prins tegen zijn prinses. Maar toen moesten ze weer gaan, want ze waren natuurlijk bang dat de boze geesten van de heks hen hier zouden vinden. En zo ging dat iedere nacht, totdat de heks in de gaten kreeg wat er aan de hand was. Ze zond haar boze geesten naar de plek, en ook wat van haar wachters. Ze was inmiddels in het kasteel gaan wonen omdat het toch leeg stond, en liet de prins en de prinses in een diepe kerker opsluiten. Omdat ze in dezelfde kerker waren vastgeketend en de boze geesten hen nare dingen over elkaar influisterden maakten ze al snel ruzie. En die ruzie liep zo hoog op dat de mensen het buiten konden horen. ‘Hey, heks,’ riep iemand. ‘Dat zijn de stemmen van de prins en de prinses.’ En al snel kwam het sprookjesvolk erachter dat hun sprookjesprins en sprookjesprinses in een kerker waren opgesloten. Al gauw hadden de mensen van het sprookjesrijk de heks uit het kasteel verdreven, en maakten de prins en de prinses vrij. De heks werd het land uitgezet en de prins liet hoge en zwaar bewaakte muren om het land heenbouwen. Binnen de kortste keren hoorden alle omliggende sprookjesrijken van het verhaal, en de prins nodigde alle sprookjesprinsen en sprookjesprinsessen die niet meer bij elkaar woonden uit om in zijn land te komen wonen. Al gauw werd het het land van de sprookjesprinsen en sprookjesprinsessen, en de heks, haar wachters en haar boze geesten werden nooit meer teruggezien.

Het Versteende Volkje

Eens had een boze heks een sprookjesvolkje versteend. Alleen als de zon volop straalde, als het regende, en bij volle maan konden de stenen sprookjeswezens bewegen. Dan renden ze altijd naar het bos waar een vrouw woonde die straalde als de zon. Langs haar huisje stroomde een gouden rivier, en als de wezens die rivier zouden bereiken om zich daarin te wassen en daarvan te drinken, dan zouden ze nooit meer van steen zijn. Maar altijd als ze die rivier bijna hadden bereikt, dan kwamen de honden van de heks hen achterna, om hen terug te slepen uit het bos. De honden van de heks konden zelf wel van de rivier drinken, en veranderden dan altijd in leeuwen en arenden. Op een dag had de heks er genoeg van en liet grote hekken met een gouden gesloten poort rondom het volkje bouwen, zodat ze niet meer

naar het bos konden. De vrouw die straalde als de zon had erg veel medelijden met het volkje. Ze hoopte altijd dat ze eens de rivier zouden bereiken. Op een dag besloot ze naar de tovenaar te gaan, maar dan moest ze eerst door de velden van toverbloemen heen. Dat zou een hele lange tijd gaan duren, want daar viel ze telkens in slaap. Na vele jaren kwam ze eindelijk bij de tovenaar aan die achter de velden van toverbloemen woonde. Toen hij het verhaal hoorde vertelde hij dat ze op zoek moest gaan naar het veld van de gouden sleutels. Dan moest ze eerst weer door een veld van toverbloemen heen. Maar de toverbloemen zouden haar er alleen maar doorlaten als ze bij elke stap een toverbloem zou plukken. Bij elke geplukte toverbloem zou ze tien jaar slapen. Ze moest er alleen voor zorgen dat ze niet de toverbloem van de dood zou plukken, want dan zou ze sterven. Gelukkig waren er miljoenen toverbloemen op het veld, waarvan er maar één de toverbloem van de dood was. De vrouw die straalde als de zon werkte zich er gelukkig goed doorheen, maar toen aan de andere kant van het veld kwam waren er al vele en vele jaren voorbij gegaan. Nu stond ze voor het veld van de gouden sleutels. Ineens verscheen de koningin van het veld van de gouden sleutels voor haar. Die vertelde haar dat van de miljoenen gouden sleutels die hier groeiden er maar één de toversleutel was. De vrouw mocht maar één gouden sleutel kiezen, maar toen het geen toversleutel bleek te zijn die ze had gekozen kreeg de koningin medelijden met haar. ‘Ik zie dat je niet voor jezelf bent gekomen,’ zei de koningin, ‘maar voor anderen. Kies daarom nog een keer.’ Maar de vrouw durfde niet nog eens te kiezen, omdat ze bang was weer de verkeerde te kiezen. Hoe kon ze nu de juiste sleutel kiezen uit miljoenen sleutels ? En zo wachtte de vrouw de hele nacht, terwijl de koningin weer was vertrokken. Ineens zag ze een lichtje komen van bovenaf die op het veld daalde. Het was een klein elfje dat de juiste sleutel aanwees. De vrouw liep op de sleutel af en plukte het. En ja hoor, het was de toversleutel. Maar nu moest ze nog helemaal terug. Weer was ze erg bang om de toverbloem van de dood te plukken, vooral omdat ze nu de toversleutel had. Maar het elfje wees de toverbloem van de dood aan, en daar moest ze gewoon ver van uit de buurt blijven. ‘Zeg,’ zei het elfje. ‘Ik weet ook welke toverbloemen je moet plukken om wakker te blijven.’ En zo volgde de vrouw die straalde als de zon gewoon het elfje door het toverbloemenveld. Toen ze bij de gouden poort van het sprookjesvolk aankwam had ze die door de toversleutel snel open. Het was gelukkig volle maan, en de vrouw straalde zelf nu ook volop. Snel volgden de wezens de vrouw naar de rivier, terwijl het elfje de honden van de heks tegenhield. Snel gingen de wezens de rivier in, terwijl het gesteente begon weg te smelten. Sindsdien zijn ze allemaal achter de gouden rivier gaan wonen.

Arachundel

Arachundel groeide op in een donkere kerker onder de grond. Nooit kwam er

een straaltje zonlicht door. Vaak lag het meisje huilend op de grond. Op een dag kwam er een prins langs de kerkers, en vroeg aan de baas van de kerkers of hij het meisje mocht kopen. De prins betaalde er vele goudstukken voor, want dat had hij er wel voor over. Arachundel was het mooiste meisje wat hij ooit had gezien. Het meisje was erg blij dat ze vrij was, maar toen ze in het paleis van de prins kwam moest ze in de keuken werken. En waar ze sliep was het nog wel viezer als in de kerker. Het meisje begreep het niet, maar op een dag liet de prins haar bij zich roepen. ‘Majesteit, ik dacht dat u mij vergeten was,’ sprak het meisje. Maar de prins riep haar alleen maar voor een vreemde opdracht : ‘Ga naar de grot achter het bos, waar een waterput is waaruit je met een emmer goud water moet halen. Kook voortaan alles in het gouden water.’ Het meisje vond het een vreemde opdracht, maar ging al gauw op pad. Toen ze eindelijk bij de waterput kwam zat daar een klein mannetje. ‘Zo zo,’ zei het mannetje, ‘dus je bent door de prins op pad gestuurd. Hij laat je wel hard werken zeg, en je hebt het nu zelfs slechter als waar je vandaan kwam.’

‘Dat is waar,’ zei Arachundel, ‘maar hoe weet u dat allemaal ?’

‘Ach, zie je,’ zei het mannetje, ‘ik ben een tovermannetje, en als ik jou was, dan zou ik hier gewoon blijven. Ik kan je alles geven wat je hartje begeert. Er is hier volop gouden voedsel zodat je nooit meer hoeft te werken.’

‘Nou, dat lijkt me wel wat,’ zei het meisje.

‘Maar,’ zei het mannetje. ‘Je moet me wat beloven. Je eerste kindje zal je aan mij moeten geven.’

Het meisje vond dat allemaal best. Ze dacht toch niet aan kinderen krijgen. Het mannetje opende een deur, en er stond inderdaad een berg van gouden voedsel. Het meisje begon direkt te eten. ‘Zeg,’ zei het meisje. ‘Kan ik de prins vertellen van deze plaats ? Dan wil hij misschien wel met me trouwen.’

‘Wat je maar wil,’ zei het mannetje. Het meisje nam wat van het gouden voedsel mee, en gouden water in een emmer en ging terug naar de prins. De prins was erg verbaasd, en vooral toen ze hem vertelde dat er nog meer van het gouden voedsel was. De prins was zo onder de indruk en was het meisje zo dankbaar dat hij wel met haar wilde trouwen. Een jaar later kreeg het meisje dat nu een prinses was geworden haar eerste kindje. Ze was haar belofte aan het mannetje allang vergeten, maar op een dag kwam hij aan het paleis. ‘Tja,’ zei de prins, ‘als je het aan het mannetje beloofd hebt, dan moet je het ook doen.’ Maar het meisje begon heel hard te huilen, zo hard dat het mannetje medelijden met haar kreeg. ‘Okay,’ zei het mannetje, ‘je hoeft je kindje niet aan mij te verliezen, maar vanaf nu zal alles wat je eet vies en slierterig zijn.’ Toen vertrok het mannetje boos. Sindsdien was er in het hele paleis alleen maar vies voedsel te vinden, zo vies dat niemand er meer wilde werken. Het meisje moest zelf weer gaan koken, en huilde iedere dag als ze weer naar de keuken ging. Het eten was zo vies dat op een dag de prins, de prinses en hun kleine prinsje uit het paleis vertrokken en toen zijn ze voor altijd bij het mannetje in de grot gaan wonen.

Het Sprookjesboek

Als de sprookjeskoning scheef ging zitten op zijn troon veranderde altijd het weer. Hij kon de trappen die tot zijn troonzaal leidden door één blik in de vlammen brengen. Niemand durfde daarom tot de sprookjeskoning te komen. Alleen een pad. Op een dag kwam de pad weer binnen. De pad had alle sprookjes van de troon van de sprookjeskoning bedacht. ‘Ik heb wat nieuwe sprookjes voor je,’ zei de pad. ‘Maar ik vertel je ze pas als je je oude sprookjes inlevert, je van je troon afkomt en in oude en versleten klederen als een arme man gaat leven.

‘Ik doe alles voor nieuwe sprookjes,’ zei de sprookjeskoning, en stapte van zijn troon af. Direkt sprong de pad op de troon, en ging zitten. De sprookjeskoning deed wat versleten klederen aan en vertrok. Na vele jaren zocht de pad hem op. De sprookjeskoning leefde in een arm hutje nu, diep in het bos. ‘Ga maar terug naar je troon,’ zei de pad. ‘Maar pas op,’ zei de pad, ‘want soms staat de troon in de brand, en ook de trappen. Je moet het vuur leren kennen, en leren dansen.’

‘Oh, dat leer ik nooit,’ zei de sprookjeskoning. ‘Vertel me nu die sprookjes maar.’

‘De sprookjes zijn in de troon,’ zei de pad.

‘Kun jij niet gewoon de nieuwe sprookjeskoning zijn ?’ vroeg de sprookjeskoning.

‘Nee,’ zei de pad. ‘Jij moet het doen.’

De sprookjeskoning durfde bijna niet terug te gaan naar zijn troonzaal. Maar de pad leerde hem precies wanneer en waar het vuur zou zijn. De sprookjeskoning was erg opgelucht toen hij eindelijk op de troon zat. Nu zou het weer niet meer veranderen als de koning scheef zou gaan zitten, maar zodra hij door de sprookjes zou bladeren. Ook zouden de trappen die tot de troonzaal leidden niet meer door een blik in vlammen komen te staan, maar zodra hij het sprookjesboek zou pakken. De sprookjeskoning bedankte de pad voor de nieuwe sprookjes, en na een tijdje vertrok de pad weer.

Het Meisje in de Bloem

Er was eens een meisje dat in een bloem woonde. Elke dag ging ze naar een toren dichtbij in de buurt, omdat ze vanuit het topje de zee kon zien. Zo kon ze uren staren naar de zee en denken aan haar prins die ze eens verloor tijdens een tocht op de zee. Het scheepje waarop ze zeilden verging, terwijl een storm de prins meenam. Het meisje moest helemaal terugzwemmen, en is sindsdien in een bloem gaan wonen. Sindsdien durfde ze niet meer bij de zee te komen, maar wilde ze wel elke dag op een afstand naar de zee staren. Maar op een dag kwam er weer een storm en nam de toren mee. Nu kon het meisje de zee niet meer bezichtigen. Het meisje trok zich helemaal terug in de bloem, en toen op een dag de storm er weer was nam hij ook het meisje in de bloem mee. De storm bracht het meisje naar een rijk in de lucht waar haar prins inmiddels woonde. Ze waren blij elkaar te zien. De prins was nu de prins van de lucht. De prins vertelde haar dat hij de storm had gezonden om haar te halen, maar nu kon de prins de storm niet meer beheersen. Na een tijdje was de bloem van het meisje geheel verdwenen, maar het meisje had haar prins weer terug en dat was alles wat ze wilde.

Het Apenpaleis

Er was eens een koopman die aan de deuren vleugels verkocht. Er waren nogal wat mensen die wilden vliegen, maar er bleek ook heel wat aan de vleugels te mankeren, zodat velen na een geweldige tochtje naar beneden stortten. De mensen waren al snel woedend op de koopman, en de koopman moest diep in het bos vluchten om aan de woedende massa te ontkomen. Ze hadden speren meegenomen, zwaarden, messen en bogen om de koopman eens goed mores te leren. Na een lange vluchttocht kwam hij aan bij een huisje waar een levensgrote aap woonde. De aap nam hem direkt onder zijn hoede en ging op het balkon staan om de koopman te verdedigen. Maar na een tijdje werd de aap er erg moe van en hij bloedde vanwege de vele pijlen. Hij ging naar binnen en zei tegen de koopman : ‘Je moet naar de fee gaan, want ik kan je niet meer goed verdedigen.’ En zo ging de koopman door een achterdeurtje en rende hard naar het huisje van de fee verder in het bos. De fee was direkt erg vriendelijk naar de man en gaf hem direkt een heleboel vleugeltjes die nooit zouden neerstorten. Die zou hij dan kunnen verkopen aan de mensen in het vervolg. De vleugeltjes leken vol van vuurvlammetjes en toen de koopman daar even later bij de mensen mee aankwam werden ze direkt stil. Nog steeds wilden ze heel graag vliegen, en ze besloten de koopman een nieuwe kans te geven. En ja hoor, het werkte. De vleugels deden het goed, en de mensen waren zo blij en dankbaar dat ze de koopman koning maakten van hun volk. De koopman kreeg daarvoor een prachtig

paleis. Maar omdat de fee de koopman zo goed had geholpen werd zij de koningin, en de aap werd de wachter van het paleis. Maar omdat het voor de aap wel moeilijk was om zo'n groot paleis in zijn eentje te bewaken toverde de fee er op een dag een heleboel apen bij.

Het Zee-Oog

De zeeheks hield veel wezens opgesloten onder de zee. Ze hadden geen vissestaarten maar gewoon voeten, dus ze konden niet in het zeewater leven. Daarom leefden ze in een grote grot onder de zee waar ze hard moesten werken. De zeeheks wist precies hoe ze hen hard kon laten werken. Elk jaar kregen de hardste werkers vleugels om naar het gebied boven de zee te vertrekken. Daarom was er ook altijd veel jaloezie onder elkaar. De zee werd elk jaar groter vanwege de tranen van de opgesloten wezens. Maar de zeeheks was de slechtste nog niet. Ze kreeg na vele jaren toch wel een beetje medelijden met de wezens, en vanaf toen kregen elk jaar de wezens die de meeste tranen hadden voortgebracht vissestaarten om zo naar de zee te kunnen gaan. Maar sindsdien ging de zee nog hoger liggen en kwamen er veel rivieren en overstromingen. Degenen die nu vleugels hadden wisten waardoor dat kwam, en gingen terug naar de zeeheks. Ze zochten haar op in haar grot waar ze net aan het staren was naar het sieraad wat haar zoveel macht had gegeven. Het was een zeesieraad met een oog in het midden. Maar uit het oog kwamen tranen. 'Huil maar niet,' zei de zeeheks. 'De werkers zijn bijna klaar met de trap naar het diepste van de aarde. Je weet dat daar de vlammen zijn, en dan kun je weer zien.' Toen de gevleugelden zagen dat de heks de slechtste nog niet was, waren ze niet meer zo boos op haar. De werkers wisten helemaal niet dat ze treden maakten voor een trap om het zee-oog te helpen. Toen de gevleugelden het hen vertelden was iedereen blij, en vrolijk gingen ze met hun werk door. Ze wisten nu uiteindelijk waar ze voor werkten. Op een dag was de trap klaar en kon het oog naar beneden om door de vlammen weer te kunnen zien. En de werkers zijn sindsdien dicht bij de vlammen gaan wonen.

Het Meisje Dat Achter De Sluiertjes Woonde

Er was eens een meisje dat achter sluiertjes woonde. Haar vader had die sluiertjes gemaakt, en die sluiers waren heel lang. Tussen de sluiertjes

leefden de gevaarlijkste roofdieren die het meisje moesten beschermen. Haar vader was kleermaker. Hij had voor haar een huisje gemaakt als een poppenhuisje, ook met veel sluiertjes binnenin en met de prachtigste meubeltjes. Ook was er een prachtig keukentje binnenin, en door het huisje hingen de prachtigste gordijntjes. Vele ridders zouden wel met het meisje willen trouwen, maar zodra ze door de sluiertjes op zoek gingen naar het poppenhuisje werden ze door een gevaarlijk roofdier verslonden. Omdat de vader van het meisje ook schoenmaker was maakte hij op een dag de prachtigste schoenen die zo betoverend mooi waren dat ze met gemak bij het poppenhuisje konden komen. Zo bezocht haar vader haar elke dag eventjes. Maar op een dag had hij de schoenen voor de sluiertjes laten liggen, en de eerste de beste ridder die langskwam trok die schoenen aan, om zo met gemak bij het poppenhuisje aan te komen. Het meisje was erg verbaasd. ‘Maar wie bent u ?’ vroeg het meisje. ‘Dat zijn de schoenen van mijn vader ?’

‘Oh, neem me niet kwalijk,’ zei de ridder. ‘Ik zag ze voor de sluiertjes liggen en ze waren zo betoverend mooi dat ik het niet kon nalaten ze aan te trekken.’ De ridder mocht even wat bij haar drinken, maar toen moest hij weer terug. Netjes bracht hij de schoenen weer bij de vader van het meisje terug. De vader was de ridder erg dankbaar, want de ridder had de schoenen ook gewoon kunnen houden, en dan zou de vader van het meisje nooit meer bij haar kunnen komen. En daarom zei de vader van het meisje : ‘Omdat je zo eerlijk bent geweest om de schoenen terug te brengen zal ik ook een paar toverschoenen voor jou maken. De schoenen die ik zelf heb kan ik niet meer namaken, maar zeg me maar wat voor een toverschoenen je wil hebben.’

‘Ach,’ zei de ridder, ‘ik zou graag schoenen willen hebben die de sleutel dragen tot het hart van uw dochter.’ En zo maakte de vader van het meisje de prachtigste schoenen voor de ridder die haar hart zouden kunnen betoveren. Maar toen de ridder bij de sluiertjes aankwam lieten de roofdieren hem er niet langs. De ridder begon het meisje heel hard te roepen en na vele lange uren kwam ze eindelijk door de sluiertjes heen. Ze stond direkt als betoverd toen ze de schoenen van de ridder zag, en bracht hem naar het poppenhuisje. En daar zijn ze beiden voor altijd blijven wonen.

Susanna

Susanna was een heel bijzonder meisje. In de nacht kreeg ze altijd vleugels, en vloog ze naar verre landen. Maar als de ochtend viel verloor ze haar vleugels altijd weer, en daarom moest ze altijd op tijd terug zijn, voordat de zon opkwam. Op een nacht nam een heks haar gave van haar af. In ruil daarvoor kreeg Susanna vlindervleugels en een kroon van veren, maar ze kon nooit meer naar huis. De heks bracht haar naar een plaats waar het altijd

nacht was. Hier waren een heleboel meisjes zoals haar, maar de nachten duurden er heel lang, en als een nacht was afgelopen dan kwam direkt de volgende nacht. Wel kregen ze allemaal na elke nacht een steentje aan hun halskettingen erbij. Die steentjes waren helemaal wit en werden morgenstenen genoemd. Als hun halskettingkjes helemaal vol waren met steentjes dan mochten ze de reis maken naar de plaats waar het altijd dag was. Daarvoor moesten ze door een hele lange donkere tunnel heen waar de oudste mannetjes woonden die bestonden. Na een hele lange tijd mocht Susanna de reis gaan maken. Toen ze in de tunnel met de oudste mannetjes die bestonden kwam klampten sommige mannetjes haar direkt aan. ‘Help ons,’ zeiden ze. ‘We kunnen niet lopen. Draag ons naar het morgenland.’

‘Maar natuurlijk,’ zei Susanna, en droeg zoveel mannetjes met haar mee als ze kon. Maar de andere meisjes die met haar waren zeiden tegen de mannetjes die hen aanklampten : ‘Zorg zelf maar dat je in het morgenland aankomt.’

Verderop kwamen ze bij een grote waterbron aan. ‘Kun je ons wat water geven,’ vroegen de mannetjes aan Susanna. ‘Onze handen zijn te slap om water te scheppen.’

‘Maar natuurlijk,’ zei Susanna, en gaf hen allemaal te drinken. Maar de andere meisjes namen alleen maar water voor henzelf. Na een hele lange tijd lopen kwamen ze eindelijk aan bij de rots die de ingang naar het morgenland blokkeerde. Een klein mannetje zat op de rots en vroeg aan hen allen waar ze de mannetjes hadden. Aan Suzanna’s rug hingen er een heleboel, maar de andere meisjes zeiden lachend dat de mannetjes zelf maar moesten lopen. ‘Dat is nogal erg dom van jullie,’ zei het kleine mannetje op de rots. Zodadelijk schuift de rots namelijk van de ingang weg, en zal het vuurgordijn dat de ingang nog verspert door de tunnel heengaan. De mannetjes zullen hun dragers hiertegen beschermen. ‘Geef die mannetjes hier,’ riepen de meisjes naar Susanna.

‘Ga ze zelf maar halen,’ zei Susanna. En toen zetten de meisjes het op een lopen naar het begin van de tunnel waar de oude mannetjes zaten. ‘Spring snel op onze ruggen,’ zeiden de meisjes, ‘dan brengen we jullie naar het morgenland.’

‘Vanwaar jullie bereidheid ineens ?’ vroeg één van de oude mannetjes.

‘We hebben ons bedacht,’ zei één van de meisjes. ‘En we zullen jullie ook te drinken geven bij de bron.’

‘Zo zo,’ zeiden de mannetjes, en stapten op de ruggen van de meisjes. Toen ze bij de bron aankwamen gaven de meisjes hen te drinken, en na een lange tocht kwamen ze eindelijk bij de ingang naar het morgenland aan. De rots was inmiddels al weggeschoven, en het vuurgordijn staarde hen aan. Ze hadden allemaal zoveel mogelijk mannetjes op hun rug genomen, zodat ze goed tegen het vuur beschermd zouden worden, maar ineens sprongen de mannetjes van hun ruggen af en liepen door het vuur naar binnen. Direkt

begon het vuurgordijn op hen af te komen, en zo moesten de meisjes zo hard mogelijk terugrennen als ze konden.

Het Verdwenen Sprookjesrijk

Eens groeide er een sprookjesbloem in een ver land. De sprookjesbloem reikte tot heel hoog in de lucht waar een bloem die van boven groeide hem raakte. Boven de twee bloemen was een sprookjesrijk, en de mensen uit dat verre land zouden daar graag naartoe willen. Vaak beklommen ze de bloem, maar ze kwamen nooit ver, want dan begon de reuzenbloem te schudden en te trillen, zodat ze er vanaf vielen. Ook probeerden ze het weleens met touwen, maar dan werd de reuzenbloem vurig als een vulkaan en brandden alle touwen door. Maar een groep slimme jongens probeerden het eens in de nacht. Toen was de bloem rustig, omdat hij sliep. Dit keer kwamen de jongens erg hoog, helemaal tot in de bloem zelf. Voorzichtig stapten ze op de andere bloem, en klommen naar boven. Maar boven waaide het erg hard, en een groepje reuzenbijen nam hen verder mee naar boven. De bijenkoningin van het sprookjesrijk was niet blij hen te zien, maar omdat ze beloofden in de sprookjeskorf te werken mochten ze blijven. Elke dag moesten ze voedsel rondbrengen in het sprookjesrijk. Maar op een dag hadden ze het wel gezien en wilden ze terug gaan naar beneden. Maar de bijenkoningin wilde hen niet laten gaan. De jongens hadden allang spijt dat ze hier ooit waren gekomen. Maar op een dag liet de bijenkoningin hen een sprookjesjuweel zien. Hiermee konden ze het land beneden zich besturen, maar ook het gehele sprookjesrijk. De bijenkoningin gaf de sprookjesjuweel aan hen, en zei dat zij nu terug zou gaan naar het land beneden. De jongens waren erg blij met de fonkelende juweel, maar al gauw kregen ze er ruzie over. Ze begonnen zo aan de juweel te trekken dat de juweel al snel op de grond kapotviel. Ze raapten de scherven bij elkaar, en kwamen er achter dat het sprookjesrijk geheel verdwenen was. Boven hun hoofden verscheen er een enorm grote roos. ‘Bedankt jongens,’ zei de roos, ‘dankzij jullie ben ik vrij gekomen. Ik zat zolang in de juweel opgesloten.’ En toen kwam de roos naar beneden en gaf de jongens allemaal een kus. Sindsdien waren de jongens dikkere vrienden van elkaar dan ooit.

De Twee Zusters

Er waren eens twee zusters die water moesten putten bij een waterput. Op de put zat een mannetje die hen te drinken vroeg. ‘Ga zelf water halen,’ zeiden de twee zusters.

‘Maar ik heb geen emmer,’ zei het mannetje.

‘Ga dan maar eerst een emmer halen,’ zeiden de twee zusters.

‘Kan ik niet gewoon in jullie emmer naar beneden, dan kan ik daar wat water drinken en zorgen dat jullie emmer volkomt. Ik zal jullie er rijkelijk voor belonen,’ zei het mannetje. Hij liet de twee zusters wat goudstukken zien, en de zusters stemden in. Ze lieten het mannetje aan de emmer aan een touw helemaal naar beneden gaan. Het mannetje stapte uit de emmer ging op een klein platform staan, en legde een schorpioen in de emmer. Toen de twee zusters de emmer terug hadden met de schorpioen erin waren ze woedend. ‘Wacht maar, mannetje,’ zei één van de zusters, stapte in de emmer en liet haar zuster het touw vieren om zo beneden te komen. Maar het mannetje was in geen velden of wegen te bekennen. De twee zusters hadden ook nog een jongere zuster, en de volgende keer lieten ze haar naar de waterput gaan. Het mannetje zat er weer, en vroeg ook aan dit meisje of ze hem wat te drinken wilde geven. Het meisje gaf hem direkt te drinken. ‘Omdat je zo behulpzaam bent geweest,’ zei het mannetje, ‘zal je emmer altijd vol blijven.’ Het meisje ging weer naar huis en vertelde alles aan haar zusters. En inderdaad, zodra de emmer bijna leeg was raakte de emmer weer vol. Direkt zochten haar zusters een andere emmer op en gingen terug naar de waterput. Weer zagen ze daar het mannetje. ‘Zo,’ zeiden ze. ‘Zullen we jou eens goed te drinken geven ?’ Het mannetje knikte, en ze gaven hem goed te drinken. Het mannetje dronk de hele emmer leeg. Maar toen ze voor de tweede keer de emmer omhoog haalde zat de emmer vol met vieze modder en spatte al hun klederen vies. ‘Omdat jullie mij alleen te drinken hebben gegeven om jullie eigen hebberigheid zal vanaf nu jullie emmer altijd vol zijn met vieze modder, en zullen jullie klederen altijd vies zijn. Huilend gingen de twee zusters naar huis om hun klederen te wassen, maar hoe meer ze hun klederen probeerden te wassen, hoe viezer deze werden.

Het Varkenshoedstertje

Er was eens een varkenshoedstertje die buiten de stad woonde om voor de varkens te zorgen. Ze gaf niet om de rijkdom van de stad, het rijke leven. Ze sliep altijd tussen de varkens, en at hetzelfde voedsel als zij aten. Verder zag er niemand naar haar om, en was ze niet welkom. Op een dag was ze uitgenodigd om op het paleis van de prins te komen. Dat vond ze wel wat vreemd, maar ze ging toch. Toen ze bij de prins aankwam vertelde de prins over het feest dat zou komen. De prins had alleen niet genoeg varkens, en

vroeg daarom de varkens van het varkenshoedstertje. ‘Sinds wanneer ben ik en mijn varkens uitgenodigd op het feest ?’ vroeg het varkenshoedstertje.

‘Nee, je begrijpt het verkeerd,’ zei de prins. ‘Jullie zijn niet uitgenodigd. Het is voor het feestmaal.’

‘Mijn varkens hebben genoeg te eten bij mij,’ zei het varkenshoedstertje. ‘Daar hebben ze uw feestmaal niet bij nodig.’

‘Nee, dat bedoel ik niet,’ zei de prins. ‘We krijgen hoge gasten, en dan moet er genoeg varkensvlees aanwezig zijn.’

Toen boog het varkenshoedstertje haar hoofd en sprak : ‘U gaat mij toch niet het laatste wat ik heb afnemen ?’

‘Morgen zal ik komen,’ zei de prins. ‘En dan neem ik je varkens mee.’

Verdrietig ging het varkenshoedstertje het paleis weer uit. Ze zou vluchten met haar varkens, maar waar moest ze naartoe ? Diep in de nacht dwaalde ze door het bos. Na lang lopen kwam ze bij een huisje aan waar een oud vrouwtje woonde. Huilend vertelde ze het verhaal. ‘Je hebt een goed hart,’ zei het vrouwtje, ‘en ik zal je ervoor belonen. Boven liggen prinsessenkledern. Die kun je aandoen om naar het komende feest te kunnen. Ik zal hier op de varkens passen.’

‘Maar ik wil helemaal niet naar dat feest. Ik wil bij mijn varkens blijven,’ zei het meisje.

‘Ga nu maar,’ zei het vrouwtje, ‘je zult er geen spijt van krijgen.’

Toen het meisje even later in de prinsessenkledern aanhad streek het oude vrouwtje even met een toverstafje over haar heen, zodat ze als een echte prinses was. De volgende avond ging ze naar het feest, terwijl het oude vrouwtje op haar varkens paste. De prins was erg vrolijk, terwijl hij de varkens niet had kunnen vinden. Het meisje paste zich goed aan, en danste die avond de sterren van de hemel. Na een tijdje begon het oog van de prins op haar te vallen. ‘Wie is dat mooie, lievelijke meisje ?’ vroeg de prins aan zijn bedienden. ‘Ze lijkt me uit een ver land te komen, en ze is een echte prinses.’ Het meisje had een geweldige avond, en aan het einde van de avond kwam de prins naar haar toe om haar te vragen met hem te dansen. Het meisje stemde toe, en danste als een echte koningin. ‘Wie bent u eigenlijk als ik vragen mag ?’ fluisterde de prins naar haar tijdens het dansen. Maar het meisje glimlachte alleen maar. Iedereen keek vol verwondering naar de dansende prins en het meisje. ‘Je doet me aan iemand denken,’ fluisterde de prins, ‘maar ik weet niet wie. Iedereen zou wel met je willen dansen. Kijk ze eens kijken.’ Het meisje glimlachte. Ze had de avond van haar leven. ‘Zie ik je volgend jaar weer ?’ vroeg de prins. Het meisje knikte, en liep toen van het feest weg. Midden in de nacht kwam ze bij het oude vrouwtje. ‘En hoe was het ?’ vroeg het oude vrouwtje.

‘Oh, het was geweldig,’ zei het meisje. ‘Vooral omdat ik wist dat mijn varkens veilig waren bij u.’

Het jaar daarop ging ze weer naar het feest en was dit keer mooier dan ooit. De prins had er pijn van in zijn hart, zo mooi was ze. En weer moest hij haar aan het einde van de avond laten gaan. Het jaar daarop greep de prins zijn kans en vroeg haar met hem te trouwen. Het meisje schrok, en rende weg. Toen ze het later het oude vrouwtje vertelde zei deze : ‘Ga terug, en zeg dat je dat wel wil.’

‘Ja, maar dat wil ik helemaal niet,’ zei het meisje.

‘Je zult er geen spijt van hebben,’ zei het vrouwtje. ‘Ik pas wel op de varkens.’

‘Ja, maar dan moet ik op het paleis wonen,’ zei het meisje, ‘en dan zie ik u nooit meer.’

‘Ga nu maar,’ zei het oude vrouwtje. ‘Alles zal goedkomen.’

Snel ging het meisje weer terug. ‘Waar was je gebleven ?’ vroeg de prins met pijn in zijn hart. ‘Trouw met me.’

‘Natuurlijk lieveling,’ zei het meisje, en kuste hem.

De dag erna was er bruiloft. Het meisje woonde sindsdien met haar prins op het paleis. ‘Nu je mijn vrouw bent mag je je wensen doen,’ zei de prins.

‘Er woont een oud vrouwtje in het bos met varkens,’ zei het meisje. ‘Ik wil dat ze hier op het paleis komt wonen, en dat haar varkens prinselijk behandeld worden.’

De prins vond dat wel een beetje een vreemde wens, maar liet haar wens toch uitkomen.

Het Meisje dat in een Paard Veranderde

Er was een meisje dat in de nacht altijd in een paard veranderde. Dan ging ze altijd naar de velden en de bossen maar dan moest ze wel altijd op tijd terug zijn, voordat de zon opkwam. Want altijd als de ochtend viel dan was ze weer een meisje. Op een nacht nam een heks haar gave van haar af. In ruil daarvoor kreeg het meisje een paar laarzen, die zo prachtig waren dat ze er prinsen mee kon betoveren. Al gauw wist iedereen van het meisje met de betoverde laarzen, en wilden vele prinsen met haar trouwen. Sindsdien wilde

het meisje alleen nog maar met koeien werken. Ze werd een herdersmeisje, zodat haar laarzen zo vies zouden worden dat de prinsen haar zouden vergeten. Ook zocht ze vaak de paarden op, en ging diep in het bos wonen. Maar nog steeds zochten prinsen haar op, en lieten haar niet met rust. Het meisje smeekte de heks haar laarzen weer van haar weg te nemen. Op een dag kreeg de heks medelijden met haar, en zei : ‘Als je je laarzen opgeeft dan zul je nooit meer terug kunnen naar het bos en de velden. Je zal dan onder de aarde moeten wonen, bang voor het zonlicht.’

‘Zo zij het,’ zei het meisje.

Toen nam de heks de laarzen van het meisje weg, en het meisje moest vanaf toen diep onder de aarde leven, in de modder en in angst voor het zonlicht. Hier konden de prinsen haar niet vinden. Onder de grond leefden de wilde paarden, en het meisje voelde zich alsof ze thuisgekomen was. Ze miste de wereld boven de grond niet eens. Maar één van de prinsen vond op een dag in het bos een gat die diep onder de aarde leidde. Toen hij er doorging vond hij daar het meisje. Maar hij herkende haar niet, omdat ze haar laarzen niet meer had, en ze was helemaal verwilderd. ‘Meisje,’ zei hij. ‘Heb je het hier niet koud. Je hebt vast honger. Zal ik je meenemen naar mijn paleis ?’

‘Nee,’ zei het meisje. ‘Ik kan niet tegen het zonlicht.’

‘Oh, maar het is heel donker in mijn paleis hoor. En ik heb een kamer voor je zonder ramen, heel diep in het paleis,’ zei de prins.

Toen stemde het meisje in, en de prins bracht haar naar haar nieuwe kamer. Elke dag kwam hij even kijken. Al snel was het meisje op temperatuur en bijgevoed, maar ze kon nog steeds niet tegen zonlicht. ‘Je doet me aan iemand denken,’ zei de prins. ‘Aan een meisje met betoverde laarzen. Sinds ik haar niet meer kon zien heb ik die laarzen laten namaken. Zou jij die willen hebben ?’

Het meisje knikte, en kreeg twee prachtige laarzen van de prins. Het meisje ging sindsdien vaak paardrijden met de prins, en kon steeds beter het zonlicht weer verdragen. Maar op een nacht begon het meisje weer in een paard te veranderen. Snel ging ze het paleis uit en zocht de velden en bossen op. Maar ditmaal bleef ze een paard. Slenterend ging ze terug naar het paleis, en toen de prins haar vond vond hij het het prachtigste paard dat hij ooit had gezien. De prins hield direkt van het paard als geen ander, maar voor hem bleef het gewoon een paard. De prins wist niet dat het paard eigenlijk het meisje was waarvan hij hield. Hij reed sindsdien meer op dit paard dan op enig ander paard, en zorgde goed voor het paard als voor geen ander paard, maar het paard mocht niet in zijn paleis komen. Elke keer na de rit moest het paard weer terug naar de stal. Het meisje was daar erg droevig over, want ze probeerde de prins telkens weer duidelijk te maken dat zij het meisje was waarvan hij hield. Maar de prins begreep het niet. Een paard kon nu eenmaal niet praten. Het meisje had een goed leven gehad, en vooral nu ze bij zo’n lieve en zorgzame prins was, maar daar zou het bij blijven. Al haar verdere dromen moest ze opgeven.

Het Goudspinstertje

Er was eens een meisje dat op de grote zolder van het paleis van gestolen kledederen goud moest spinnen. De koning had daarvoor allerlei dieven die ’s nachts die kledederen stalen. Het meisje had voor het goudspinnen een verfje dat uit haar handjes scheen te komen. De koning had een heleboel prinsjes en die moesten altijd goed gekleed te zijn. Toen de prinsen ouder waren gingen ze zelf ook op dievenpad. Uit de voetjes van Goudspinstertje kwam altijd een poedertje waardoor iedereen in slaap viel. De prinsen moesten daarom altijd dat poeder meenemen als ze op dievenpad gingen. Maar op een dag werd Goudspinstertje ernstig ziek, en er kwam geen verfje meer uit haar handjes en geen poedertje meer uit haar voetjes. En daarom zond de koning zijn prinsen naar de heks in het woud. De heks had tonnen vol van die verf en dat poeder en het was nog wel veel krachtiger als dat van Goudspinstertje. Maar ze mochten die tonnen alleen meenemen in ruil voor Goudspinstertje. Goudspinstertje moest vanaf toen bij de heks in het woud wonen. De heks had haar door allerlei zalfjes en poedertjes snel genezen, en al snel bracht Goudspinstertje een betere verf en poeder voort dan ooit te voren en ook veel meer. De heks mat al snel nieuwe kledederen aan voor Goudspinstertje en zond haar terug naar de koning. De koning herkende Goudspinstertje niet meer, omdat ze zo gegroeid was en zo veranderd. ‘Koning, ik ben het, Goudspinstertje,’ zei ze. Uiteindelijk herkende de koning haar weer, vanwege haar lieve stem, en Goudspinstertje mocht weer bij de koning werken. Maar omdat ze nu wat ouder was geworden mocht ze nu ook weleens mee op dievenpad. Maar na een tijdje werd Goudspinsterje weer ernstig ziek, en weer moest ze naar de heks in het woud. Dit keer kon geen zalfje of poedertje van de heks haar genezen. ‘Goudspinstertje,’ zei de heks. ‘Dit keer zul je naar de goudbronnen in de aarde moeten gaan. Als je in die bronnen baadt, dan zul je nooit meer ziek worden.’ En zo begon Goudspinstertje aan haar lange reis naar het binnenste van de aarde waar de goudbronnen waren. De heks had haar de weg gewezen, dus na niet al te lange tijd kwam ze daar. Nadat ze daar gebaad had en gedanst ging ze terug naar de koning. De koning was zo van haar onder de indruk dat hij geen koning meer wilde zijn, maar haar koningin liet zijn. En zo werd Goudspinstertje de koningin. En de koning en de prinsen ? Die zijn vanaf toen naar de goudbronnen in de aarde gegaan, en zijn daar altijd gebleven.

Rozinde

Er was eens een meisje dat heel diep onder de grond opgesloten leefde om voor een draak te koken. Het meisje heette Rozinde. Altijd als ze niet snel genoeg was met koken dan werden de vlammen onder haar grote ketel woester en woester. Ook wilde de draak altijd veel verschillende soorten vreemd vlees, en daarom moest Rozinde vaak op jacht. Als ze niet snel genoeg was met jagen dan werd haar boog ineens vuurheet en dan viel ze altijd op de grond van de pijn. Op een dag schoot een prins een pijl op de draak af en bevrijdde Rozinde. Hij nam haar mee naar zijn kasteel. Om tegen de draak beschermd te zijn moest ze elke dag baden in een bad vol met melk onder het kasteel. En elke dag moesten er wilde bloemen in geworpen worden. De prins hield veel van het meisje en op een dag trouwde hij met haar. Maar toen eens de prinses vergat in het bad van melk te baden sloeg de draak toe, en nam haar weer naar de diepe plaats onder de grond. Nu moest Rozinde nog harder werken, en was de draak woester dan ooit. Op een dag kwam de prins om zijn Rozinde te halen, maar de draak sloot hem op achter tralies van vuur. Rozinde werd elke dag steeds verdrietiger. Op een dag was ze weer op jacht voor de draak en vond een hert in het struikgewas. ‘Heus, schiet me niet,’ zei het hert, ‘dan zal ik je al mijn melk geven.’ En toen herinnerde Rozinde het weer dat de draak niet tegen melk kon. Ook vroeg Rozinde aan het hert waar wilde bloemen waren. Het hert had heel veel melk te geven, en al gauw was er een heel bad vol. Toen gooide Rozinde de wilde bloemen erin. Snel nam Rozinde een bad in de melk en ging met natte kleren terug. Toen ze bij de vuurtralies aankwam wreef ze met haar melknatte kleren er tegenaan terwijl de tralies kapot sprongen. Snel greep ze haar prins bij de hand en samen renden ze naar het bad. Hier waren ze veilig tussen de wilde bloemen. Maar al gauw kwam de draak een kijkje nemen. Hij wist dat hij niks tegen hen kon beginnen zolang ze iedere dag een bad zouden nemen in de melk. Maar hij wachtte en wachtte, en vandaag wacht hij nog steeds.

De Boze Toverspiegel

Er was eens een toverspiegel die alleen maar bereikt kon worden door door een muur van druiven heen te eten. Altijd als iemand de toverspiegel had bereikt veranderde zo iemand in een geteugeld danspaard en verdween door de spiegel. Maar op een dag was er een man die een klein kistje met indiaanse vruchten bij zich had, en had niet zoveel zin in de druiven. Daarom liet hij z'n hond maar een weg door de druivenmuur eten, en hij liep er achteraan. Na een tijdje kwamen ze bij de toverspiegel. De hond werd direkt gegrepen en begon al in een paard te veranderen. De man dook direkt weg, want hij had goed in de gaten dat er iets niet pluis was. De man had in zijn kistje nog een paar pitten liggen van de indiaanse vruchten en die waren als stenen. Van een afstand gooide hij de spiegel stuk, en ineens stond er een groot volk voor hem. Het waren degenen die door de spiegel betoverd waren geweest. Ze waren de man erg dankbaar. De muur van druiven werd weggehaald, en de man zaaide wat pitten van de indiaanse vruchten. Zo ontstond er een nieuwe muur, en zij die de gebroken toverspiegel wilde bezichtigen moesten zich eerst een weg door de indiaanse vruchten heeneten. En zo werden de indiaanse vruchten beroemd. Maar op een dag haalde de man de gebroken toverspiegel weg, en liet er een paleis bouwen. Hier mochten vanaf nu allen die eens door de boze toverspiegel waren heengetrokken blijven wonen. Ook de man ging er wonen met zijn hond. En omdat hij de enige was die de toverspiegel nooit van binnen had gezien, en omdat hij hen allemaal had gered maakten ze hem tot koning.

De Boze Zon

De zon van het boze toverrijk zond zijn vlammetjes elke dag naar het volkje, zodat de wezens van het volkje elke dag zouden dansen. Dansen moesten ze, voor een boze heks. Er was een indiaans meisje die daarom nooit uit haar grot durfde te komen. Ze was bang voor de boze zon. Op een dag stond er een degen gestoken in het zand van haar grot, dichtbij de opening. Maar omdat het dicht bij de opening was durfde ze de degen niet te grijpen. Ze moest wachten tot het nacht was. In de nacht ging ze met de degen naar buiten. 'Ach maan,' sprak ze. 'Kun jij er niet voor zorgen dat morgen gewoon de zon niet meer opkomt ?'

'Als je mij je degen geeft, dan zal ik een gevecht met de boze zon aangaan,' zei de maan. De volgende dag kwam de zon niet op, maar de maan. Het meisje was erg blij en kwam naar buiten. Er waren die dag geen dansers buiten, en het meisje was voor het eerst gelukkig. Maar na de nacht erna

kwam de zon weer gewoon op, en bleef het meisje in haar grot. Maar de dag dat de zon niet opkwam is altijd in haar herinnering gebleven.

Het Meisje met de Slangenstaart

Er was eens een meisje met een slangenstaart. Alleen in de nacht had ze haar benen, maar overdag moest ze door het stof glijden. Daarom kwam ze overdag nooit buiten, maar zodra het nacht was en haar benen had ging ze paardrijden. Ze zorgde dat ze altijd weer binnen was als het eerste licht opkwam. Op een dag kwam er een oud vrouwtje bij haar. ‘Lief meisje,’ zei de oude vrouw. ‘Je zit de hele dag maar binnen, en alleen ’s nachts kom je buiten. Wat als ik nu voor altijd die slangenstaart van je wegneem, zodat je altijd je benen hebt ?’

Dat leek het meisje wel wat. ‘Maar,’ zei de oude vrouw. ‘Je zult dan wel altijd deze laarzen moeten dragen.’ Toen gaf de vrouw het meisje een paar puntige laarzen die op slangenleer leken. ‘Geen probleem,’ zei het meisje, en trok de laarzen aan.

‘Denk erom dat je de laarzen nooit uittrekt,’ zei de oude vrouw, ‘anders zul je voor altijd in een meisje met een slangenstaart veranderen.’ Het meisje knikte. Maar de laarzen knelden, en het meisje had er veel pijn van. Op een dag hield ze het niet meer. ‘Dan moet ik maar voor de rest van mijn leven een meisje met een slangenstaart zijn,’ zei het meisje, en trok haar laarzen uit. Direkt kreeg ze een slangenstaart die nog groter was dan de eerste die ze had. Het meisje was erg verdrietig maar ze had nu in ieder geval geen knellende laarzen meer. In de nacht trok ze er op uit, en kwam in een diepe wildernis terecht, diep onder de grond, waar ook vele andere meisjes met grote slangenstaarten leefden. ‘Is er een manier om soms gewoon weer benen te hebben ?’ vroeg het meisje aan de andere meisjes. ‘Ja,’ zeiden de meisjes. ‘Als je degene verslaat die dit ons heeft aangedaan. Het is een slang die soms in een oud vrouwtje verandert.’

Het meisje begreep dat ze door deze slang al was bezocht. ‘Waar kan ik de slang vinden ?’ vroeg het meisje.

‘We waarschuwen je,’ zeiden de meisjes, ‘want als je het gevecht verliest dan zul je voor altijd in een echte slang veranderen.’

Toen wezen de meisjes haar de weg. Het meisje vocht dapper, maar verloor het en veranderde geheel in een slang. In woede beet ze de slang die haar dit aangedaan had, en ditmaal deed haar gif het werk. De boze slang lag al snel levenloos op de grond. Snel ging het meisje dat in een slang was veranderd naar het hol van de slang die ze had verslagen. Achter de grot was een tunnel

die naar een prachtige tuin leidde waar een bron was. Het meisje zakte in de bron, en kreeg haar benen weer terug. Wel had ze vanaf toen een litteken op haar rug omdat de boze slang haar daar had gebeten.

Het Gelaarsde Meisje

Er was eens een indiaans meisje dat opgesloten zat op een heel klein eilandje in een vuurzee. Hoewel het vuur erg laag stond kon ze onmogelijk ontsnappen. Op een dag kwam er een oude vrouw vanuit de hemel neerdalen die haar hele lange laarzen gaf die tegen het vuur bestand zouden zijn. Het waren prachtige bruine kaplaarzen. Het was een hele lange wandeltocht door de vuurzee, maar uiteindelijk bereikte ze toch de overkant waar een prachtig bruin paard stond met lange manen. ‘Het paard is voor jou,’ zei de oude vrouw, maar je kunt hem alleen berijden als je je kaplaarzen aanhebt.’ Het meisje was de oude vrouw erg dankbaar. Toen vertrok de oude vrouw, en het meisje reed op het paard door velden en wegen. Na een tijdje kwam ze aan bij een huisje. Het was een soort hotel of herberg, en de eigenaar had een hele grote witte baard. Er zaten wat rovers aan een tafeltje. Het meisje vroeg om een kamer, maar liet haar laarzen voor de deur staan. De volgende dag waren haar laarzen weg en ook het paard. Het meisje vroeg aan de eigenaar of hij wist waar haar laarzen waren en haar paard. Maar de eigenaar wist het niet. Het meisje begon hard te huilen, want die laarzen hadden haar leven gered. ‘Ach,’ zei de eigenaar van het hotel, ‘ik heb nog wel een paar laarzen voor je en die bezitten zoveel toverkracht dat je er de gevaarlijkste rovers mee aankan.’ De eigenaar gaf ze als een geschenk omdat hij zoveel medelijden met het meisje had. De dag daarop vertrok het meisje met de laarzen. Ze voelde zich nu zo sterk als een leeuw. Na een tijdje kwamen er wat roversmannen die haar wilden beroven, maar ze deelde een paar goede trappen uit, en al gauw renden ze gillend weg. Maar na een tijdje viel ze bij een boom in slaap, en toen ze wakker werd waren haar laarzen weer gestolen. Huilend stond ze op, niet wetende wat ze nu moest doen. Ze leunde tegen de boom aan omdat ze al haar kracht was verloren. ‘Ach meisje,’ zei de boom, ‘huil maar niet, want als je een vrucht van me neemt, dan ben je al je zorgen kwijt. Geen vuur zal je meer kunnen raken, en je zal iedereen de baas blijven. Bovendien zal wijsheid je leiden de rest van je leven.’ Voorzichtig nam het meisje een vrucht en nam een hapje. Direkt viel ze in een diepe slaap, en toen ze later opstond was ze niet meer dezelfde. Op blote voeten ging ze het pad weer op, en kwam even later bij een huisje aan waar ze haar beide paar laarzen zag staan, en haar paard. Het was een rovershuisje. Het meisje ging er naar binnen en zei : ‘Ach, die laarzen en dat paard hebben jullie niet meer nodig. Ik weet een boom wiens vruchten jullie alles kan geven wat jullie nodig hebben.’ Hebberig liepen de rovers naar buiten en volgden haar naar de boom. Direkt begonnen ze gulzig van de boom te eten. Maar de boom sprak hen toe en zei : ‘Omdat jullie van iemand die niets had

ook het laatste hebben afgenomen zal alles wat jullie aan je voeten dragen jullie als een vuur branden, en alles wat jullie zullen berijden zal jullie de verkeerde kant opleiden.' Sindsdien bleven de rovers van andermans laarzen en paarden af.

De Paradijselijke Boom

Er was eens een boom die zulke bijzondere vruchten had dat de mensen die ervan aten er heel blij en gelukkig van werden en alles schenen te vergeten. Maar omdat de boom steeds minder vruchten begon te geven begonnen de mensen erom te vechten. Op een dag besloot de koning van het land waar de boom stond de boom om te hakken. Maar aan de wortels van de omgehakte boom begonnen nieuwe vruchten te groeien, en dit keer besloten degenen die dat hadden ontdekt er niets over te zeggen tegen anderen. Het was maar een klein groepje die nu in het geheim van de vruchten aten, en niemand wist waarom ze altijd zo blij en gelukkig waren en alles schenen te vergeten. Maar op een dag ontdekte ook een andere groep dat er nog steeds vruchten aan de wortels groeiden, en er kwamen weer ruzies en gevechten. Dit keer had de koning een beter plan, en liet zijn paleis op de plek van de wortels bouwen. De hofhouding van de koning was de enige groep die nog van de vruchten kon eten. Maar er was één jongetje die van vroeger een pit had bewaard. Op een dag zaaide hij de pit in zijn tuin. Weer groeide er een boom met de bijzondere vruchten, en dit keer kon iedereen van de boom eten, zolang ze de jongen maar veel geld betaalden. De enigen die de vruchten gratis konden krijgen waren de duiven die in de boom woonden. Zo nu en dan brachten ze de vruchten naar verre landen, en daar werden de duiven als goddelijke boodschappers gezien vanwege de vruchten die zoveel plezier brachten. De vruchten door de duiven gebracht brachten dromen aan hen in de verre landen, en al gauw werd de boom van de vruchten een boom van het paradijs genoemd. Maar ook in de verre landen werd er om de vruchten gevochten, en al gauw werden de duiven zo verdrietig dat ze niet meer kwamen.

De Bultjesboom

Er was eens een vrouw die geen melkvoeding in haar borsten had, maar tranen. Haar kinderen groeiden op met vreemde bultjes op hun lichamen die

zo prachtig waren dat ze allemaal koningen werden van het rijk. Als iemand hen vroeg hoe ze aan die prachtige bultjes en vlekjes kwamen, dan zeiden ze altijd dat dat door hun moeder kwam die tranen in haar borsten had. Op een dag vroegen de koningen aan hun moeder hoe het toch kwam dat haar borsten tranen gaven in plaats van melk. ‘Ach,’ zei hun moeder, ‘op een dag was ik verdwaald in het bos, en kwam bij een open plaats als een woestijn, waar een boom stond met prachtige vruchten. Sinds ik van die vruchten heb gegeten gaven mijn borsten tranen. ‘Maar moeder, u heeft geen bultjes en vlekjes,’ zeiden de koningen.

‘Dat komt omdat ik nooit van de tranen heb gedronken,’ zei hun moeder. ‘En nu ben ik te oud om nog tranen te geven.’

‘Maar kunt u ons dan vertellen waar die boom is ?’ vroegen de koningen. Toen hun moeder het hun uitgelegd had gingen ze met z’n allen naar de boom toe. Toen ze van de vruchten begonnen te eten. Ze begrepen toen ineens dat hun rijk niet lang meer zou bestaan. Ze gingen terug naar het volk, en vertelden het slechte nieuws. Wel vertelden ze het volk over de boom met de vreemde vruchten. Velen gingen naar de boom om er ook van te eten, en de moeders gaven tranen aan hun kinderen in plaats van melk, en ook die kinderen kregen vreemde maar prachtige bultjes. Door het hele rijk werden nu zulke bomen geplant, en na een paar generaties had iedereen zulke prachtige vlekjes en bultjes. Niemand had nog een koning nodig. Iedereen zorgde voor zichzelf, en het rijk viel uit elkaar. Vandaaruit verspreidden degenen met de bultjes en de vlekjes zich over de gehele aarde.

Het Rode Serum

Er woonden eens drie zusters in een hof met prachtige verwilderde struiken en bomen. Naarmate ze ouder werden veranderden ze steeds meer in beelden gemaakt van pepermunt. Door de zon en de regen werden de beelden steeds kleiner, maar ze verloren hun prachtige vormen niet, omdat ze nog steeds een hart hadden. Dit hart was bedekt met prachtige paradijselijke rode zweren. Uit de zweren kwam een rood serum waar ze bezoekers van de hof mee genazen. De namen van de drie zusters waren Wanata, Munto en Munit.

Pir

Pir was een pop met een wit gebloemd vestje, een wit broekje en nog wat verdere dingen. Pir zou erg graag een jongetje willen worden, en dan graag een jongetje dat zou kunnen vliegen. Maar Pir was maar een doodgewone pop in het magazijn van de poppenmaker. De poppenmaker had een groot hart voor de poppen, en wilde soms weleens dat ze tot leven zouden kunnen komen.

Op een dag besloot de poppenmaker een brief te schrijven. Hij stopte de brief in een fles, en wierp hem de zee in. Na lange tijd kwam de brief bij een kapitein terecht. De kapitein opende de fles en las de brief. 'Wat is dit nu voor een rare brief,' bromde de kapitein. 'Nee, poppen kunnen niet tot leven komen.' Toen de kapitein thuis kwam liet hij de brief lezen aan zijn vrouw.

Maar de vrouw had in haar nachtkastje een toverroos. Ze stopte de toverroos in de fles, en stopte er een briefje bij waarop stond geschreven : 'Beste poppenmaker, als u de toverroos in het binnenste van uw pop vastmaakt, dan zal hij tot leven komen.' Omdat ze bang was dat iemand anders de fles zou vinden, zond ze een dienstknecht met de fles naar de poppenmaker.

De poppenmaker was erg blij, en koos Pir uit om daar de toverroos in te stoppen. Hij naaide Pir daarna weer goed dicht, en toen gebeurde er iets wonderlijks. De pop kon bewegen, en niet alleen dat : De pop kon ook vliegen.

De toverroos kon ook spreken, en op een dag zei de toverroos tot de jongen : 'Over de rode zee van vlammen is een land voor jou.'

'Maar ik ken helemaal geen rode zee van vlammen,' zei de jongen.

'Dan moet je in de nacht naar de zee gaan,' zei de toverroos.

En zo ging de jongen in het midden van de nacht naar de zee, en zag dat de zee rood was en vol vlammen. 'Vlieg,' zei de toverroos. En de jongen begon zijn reis over de zee, en kwam aan in een prachtig land.

De Toverkaars

Er was eens een oud vrouwtje die een kaars had die zo bijzonder was, dat wanneer iemand in de vlam keek, dan zag hij mooie herinneringen terug, of zag waar zijn verloren spullen waren. Ook kon je in de vlam de toekomst bekijken, of dat wat er op een andere plek op de aardbol gebeurde. Het oud vrouwtje verdiende er haar geld mee, maar elk jaar werd de kaars steeds een beetje korter.

Toen de kaars na vele lange jaren helemaal was opgebrand was het vrouwtje heel verdrietig, want waar moest ze nu haar geld mee verdienen. Maar een arm jongetje dat altijd gratis in de vlam mocht kijken vroeg haar waar hij een tweede toverkaars voor haar kon vinden. ‘Ach,’ zei het vrouwtje, ‘dan moet je daarvoor over de bergen heen, maar daar woont een wolf die de bergpas bewaakt. Als hij je te pakken krijgt, dan mag je uit drie dingen kiezen : in het ravijn geduwd te worden, opgegeten te worden, of levenslang opgesloten worden.’

Maar het arme jongetje ging toch voor het oude vrouwtje op pad. Bij de bergpas werd hij door de wolf gegrepen, en moest inderdaad uit die drie dingen kiezen. Toen koos het jongetje maar om opgesloten te worden, want dood wilde hij niet. De wolf had ook een vrouw, en die kwam de jongen iedere dag voedsel brengen. Na een tijdje kreeg de vrouw medelijden met de jongen en vroeg of ze iets voor hem kon doen.

De jongen vroeg of de vrouw van de wolf wanneer de wolf zou slapen zoveel mogelijk matrassen en kussens in het ravijn wilde gooien, en de volgende dag aan hem te vragen of de jongen voor het eerste mocht kiezen, in het ravijn geduwd te worden. De vrouw deed wat de jongen vroeg, en de volgende dag kwam de wolf de jongen ophalen om hem in het ravijn te werpen. Dat was snel gedaan, en gelukkig viel de jongen zacht. Na een lange reis door grotten en inkepingen kwam de jongen aan de andere kant van de berg aan, waar hij al gauw de toverkaars vond. Maar nu moest hij nog terug.

Na een tijdje kwam hij de wolf weer tegen, en die zei : ‘Jou ken ik. In het ravijn heb ik je gegooid, en ik heb je ook al opgesloten, dus nu zal ik je opeten.’ Maar toen de wolf z’n bek opende gooide de jongen snel de kaars erin. ‘Maar wat is dat ?’ sprak de wolf. ‘Ik voel me ineens zo anders.’ De wolf was ineens heel vriendelijk, en wilde de jongen wel weer terugbrengen naar het oude vrouwtje. Toen het vrouwtje naar de kaars vroeg vertelde de

jongen het verhaal. Maar de wolf leidde hen beiden naar een geheime grot vol met goudstukken en sieraden, zodat de jongen en het oude indiaanse vrouwtje nooit meer armoe hoefden te lijden.

De Wonderveer

Er was eens een man die een wonderveer probeerde te verkopen. Maar niemand wilde de veer kopen, omdat ze niet geloofden dat de veer wonderen zou kunnen doen. ‘Heus waar,’ sprak de koopman. ‘Degene die het geld geeft wat de veer waard is zal kunnen vliegen zolang hij de veer dichtbij zich houdt.’ Na een tijdje kwam er een goedgelovig jongetje aan die de koopman het geld gaf. Toen hij de veer kreeg steeg hij op, terwijl iedereen verbaasd en verwonderd keek.

Elke dag vloog de jongen met zijn veer rond, en de mensen om hem heen begonnen steeds jaloerser te worden. Als de jongen sliep, dan hield hij de veer altijd stevig tegen hem aan. Maar op een dag was de veer verdwenen.

De jongen ging terug naar de koopman, maar die had geen tweede veer voor hem. Wel vertelde de koopman dat eens in de zoveel tijd een wondervogel in de nacht bij de zee zou komen. De jongen ging sindsdien vaak naar de zee, maar de wondervogel kwam maar niet. Toen de jongen wat ouder was besloot de jongen in een hutje bij de zee te gaan wonen, en stond elke dag op de uitkijk. Maar de vogel kwam niet.

De koopman had de jongen verteld waar de vogel woonde : op een eiland ver weg in de zee. Op een dag besloot de jongen naar dat eiland op zoek te gaan. Hij nam een bootje en ging de zee op. Oh, wat verlangde de jongen ernaar om eens weer te kunnen vliegen.

Toen het nacht werd viel de jongen in het bootje in slaap. Na een tijdje werd de jongen weer wakker van wat geklapper. Het bleek de wondervogel te zijn. De jongen schrok, zag een veer liggen op een plankje in zijn boot, terwijl de wondervogel ook schrok en weer wegvloog. De jongen greep de veer en kon weer vliegen. Snel vloog hij de vogel achterna en kwam op het wonder-eiland. Maar voor de tweede keer werd zijn veer in de nacht gestolen terwijl hij sliep. Toen hij wakker werd en merkte dat hij zijn veer kwijt was en niet meer kon vliegen, zag hij een heleboel wondervogels hoog in de bomen zitten. De jongen begon aan een klimtocht, maar het leek wel alsof hij nooit bij de top van de boom aankwam.

Op een tak zat een klein mannetje. Het mannetje zei dat het jongetje alleen bij de top zou kunnen komen als hij een tover-hoofdband zou dragen. Maar het jongetje wist niet hoe hij aan een tover-hoofdband moest komen. Maar

daar zou het mannetje wel voor zorgen. Alleen moest het jongetje beloven dat als hij bij de wondervogels was gekomen, dan moest hij ook een veer naar het mannetje brengen. En zo gebeurde het. Het jongetje kreeg de tover-hoofdband van het mannetje, en kon zo bij de toppen van de bomen komen waar de wondervogels waren. Met gemak had het jongetje een veer te pakken, en al heel gauw ook een tweede. Direkt vloog hij naar het mannetje op de tak toe om hem een veer te geven, en vloog weer terug. Nu kon het mannetje ook vliegen.

Het jongetje vond het fijn om bij de wondervogels te zijn, maar op een nacht stalen ze zijn tover-hoofdband en zijn veer, en vertrokken om niet meer terug te komen. Nu kon het jongetje weer niet vliegen, en kon ook niet meer naar beneden. Oh ja, het jongetje probeerde wel om naar beneden te klimmen, maar het leek wel alsof hij nooit beneden kwam, hoe ver hij ook naar beneden klom. En het mannetje was ook nergens meer te bekennen. Wel kon het jongetje met gemak naar de toppen terugklimmen, en kon hij van de ene top naar de andere top springen.

Hij sprong helemaal naar de boom die het dichtste bij de zee stond, en sprong vanaf het topje in de zee. Maar de zee greep hem en bracht hem helemaal terug naar huis. Zijn kleren waren helemaal nat en verscheurd toen hij in zijn woonplaats terugkwam. Zijn hutje was weg, en daarom ging hij naar de plaats waar hij eens woonde.

Op een dag was er weer een koopman die een veer probeerde te verkopen. Volgens de koopman bezat de veer wonderlijke krachten, en kon de bezitter ermee vliegen. Nog voordat anderen de veer konden kopen kocht de jongen de veer. Maar de koopman bleek een bedrieger te zijn. De veer was maar een doodgewone veer. Verdrietig ging de jongen naar huis. Hij ging naar zijn bed en legde de veer op zijn nachtkastje. Al was de veer dan geen wonderveer, het deed hem wel herinneren aan de wonderveer, en elke keer voordat hij ging slapen keek hij er heel even naar. Zo lag de veer jaren en jaren op zijn nachtkastje totdat hij op een morgen wakker werd, en de veer was verruild voor een echte wonderveer. De jongen pakte de veer en was dolblij. Nu kon de jongen weer vliegen, maar naar het eiland van de wondervogels is de jongen niet meer gegaan. Ook vertrok hij uit zijn woonplaats, want hij wilde niet dat de veer nog een keer gestolen zou worden. Waar de jongen naartoe is gegaan weet niemand. Niemand heeft hem ooit nog teruggezien.

De Lachende Vis

In een vissersdorpje hadden vissers eens een groot beeld gemaakt van een lachende vis, om zo iedereen aan te drijven meer vis te eten. Het standbeeld kon ook bewegen en voor wat geld konden kinderen er ook ritjes op maken.

Daarnaast stonden natuurlijk viskraampjes. Maar er was één jongetje bij die zei dat vissen helemaal niet lachen, maar dat de zeedruppels hun tranen zijn. De vissers vonden dat helemaal niet leuk, omdat het jongetje heel vaak kwam om die dingen te zeggen. Maar op een dag zeiden de vissers tegen de jongen dat als hij stopte met zijn praatjes dan mocht hij voortaan gratis ritjes maken op de lachende vis. En dat leek de kleine jongen wel wat, en zo stopte hij met het maken van zijn opmerkingen.

Maar op een dag was de jongen bij de zee, en een vis hief zijn kopje uit boven de golven : 'Zeg jongen,' sprak de vis, 'waarom heb je je wijsheid verkocht ?'

'Ach,' zei de jongen, 'ik ben nog jong, en vind spelen leuk. Het is toch mooi dat ik nu gratis ritjes kan maken op de lachende vis ?'

'Maar de vissen lachen niet,' zei de vis, 'want ze worden gevangen en gegeten. Als je weer rondvertelt wat je altijd rondvertelde dan mag je wel een ritje op mijn rug maken, hoor. Zoveel je wilt.' Nou, dat leek de jongen zelfs wel beter, want op een echte vis te rijden was nog prachtiger dan te rijden op een vis van steen. En zo gebeurde het. De jongen vertelde weer over de huilende vissen, en maakte sindsdien ritjes op de vis in de zee. Maar de vissers begonnen erg boos te worden. En op een dag verzonnen ze een plan. Ze zorgden ervoor dat de stenen vis nu ook ritjes in de zee kon maken, en zelfs in de lucht. En bovendien maakten ze de lachende vis nu nog groter. De kinderen vonden het allemaal prachtig, en al snel hield de jongen weer zijn mond in ruil voor gratis ritjes op de lachende vis.

Nu was de echte vis erg bedroefd en wilde niet meer met de jongen spreken. En hoe de jongen ook riep, de vis kwam niet meer terug. De jongen begon in te zien dat hij de sprekende vis toch wel erg miste, maar nu was het te laat. Vaak stond de jongen huilend bij de zee, en dan lachten de andere kinderen hem uit. Het maakte de jongen ook boos, en op een nacht ging de jongen het water in, en zwom zo ver als hij kon. Maar al snel begon hij moe te worden, en een golf trok hem mee de diepte in. Na een lange tijd spoelde de jongen aan op het strand. Een andere jongen die iets jonger was dan hem vond hem, en keek hem glimlachend aan. 'Ben je uit de boot gevallen ?' vroeg de andere jongen.

'Huh wat ?' vroeg de jongen slaperig. 'Nee, ik was wezen zwemmen, op zoek naar een sprekende vis.' Toen spuwde de jongen een straaltje water uit, en vertelde het verhaal aan de andere jongen.

'Maar je moet je ook niet met echte vissen bezighouden,' zei de andere jongen. 'Wij hebben de vis van steen, en dat is veel veiliger.'

'Als we ons niet met echte vissen moeten bezighouden, omdat we de lachende vis hebben, waarom houden de vissers zich dan nog wel met echte vissen bezig ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Tja, dat vraag ik me ook af,' zei de andere jongen, 'maar laten we het er

eens met hen over hebben.’ En zo gingen de twee jongens naar de vissers toe om hun verhaal te doen. En de vissers zeiden dat als ze hun mond zouden houden, dan mochten ze gratis op de lachende vis ritjes maken. Snel hoorden ook andere kinderen hiervan en ook zij kregen gratis ritjes zolang ze hun mond hielden. Maar na een tijdje waren de vissers het zo beu dat ze de lachende vis lieten weghalen. De kinderen waren woedend, en vertelden volop wat de beide jongens hadden verteld. Ook de ouders werden hoe langer hoe bozer op de vissers, totdat er in het hele vissersdorp geen vis meer werd gegeten. En sindsdien waren er in die zee alleen nog maar lachende vissen.

Het Sprookjesbos

Er was eens een prinses die van huis wegliep. Al gauw kwam ze op een plaats waar tovermannetjes woonde. Eén van die tovermannetjes was Gabriel. Gabriel toverde een huisje voor de prinses met een heel hoog dak. Het huisje was geheel bedekt met dwarsbalken. Een ander tovermannetje was Ruchel. Ruchel toverde een keuken in het huis en een prachtige kamer. En zo waren er nog veel meer tovermannetjes die telkens een stukje in of bij het huis aantoverden, zodat het huis steeds groter werd. Ook toverden ze een bos rond het huis waar niemand binnen kon komen dan door een schilderij. De prinses was erg gelukkig. Het schilderij kwam ergens in een restaurant te hangen en bedekte bijna de hele muur. Het was in een afgelegen kamer waar een paar eettafels stonden. Het was een speciale kamer voor kinderen die feestjes hielden. Sommige kinderen waren jarig of hadden hun diploma gehaald. Maar alleen dromerige kinderen konden het schilderij binnenkomen. Dan fluisterde Gabriel even, en dan werden ze een prins op een wit paard. Terug konden ze dan niet meer, want er was alleen maar een ingang in het schilderij. Er was geen uitgang. Soms wilde een kind weer terug en schreeuwde moord en brand, maar dan later legden ze zich er maar bij neer. In het sprookjesbos was het gewoon beter te zijn. En dan gingen ze altijd dat huis van de prinses binnen waar ze van de tovermannetjes lekkernijen kregen. 'De prinses komt zo terug,' zeiden ze dan. En dan kregen

die kinderen een eigen kamer in het huis, en als ze dan ouder werden dan waren ze toch wel blij dat ze nooit meer terughoefden naar die boze wereld. Ze konden zich vaak die verschrikkelijke meesters en juffrouws nog wel herinneren, en die verschrikkelijke kinderen die altijd gilden. Nee, hier waren ze veilig, veilig bij tovermannetjes en een prinses, een prinses die eens ook van huis was weggelopen.

Maar na al die jaren wilden sommige kinderen toch wel hun ouders weer eens zien. Dan bracht één van de tovermannetjes hen altijd naar een grote kast waar wat beeldjes stonden van hun ouders. Het leek net echt, maar toch ook niet. Het was anders. En sommigen wilden hun broertjes en zusjes zien .... ook beeldjes. Alleen beeldjes herinnerden hen nog aan de oude wereld, vreemde beeldjes. 'Stop ze maar weer in de kast,' zei een kind. 'Ik krijg al hoofdpijn als ik aan ze denk. Nooit meer wil ik naar die nachtmerrie terug.'

'Ik zal je iets heel doms vertellen,' zei Gabriel op een dag tegen dat kind. 'In de oude wereld dragen de mannen broeken en de vrouwen rokken. Weet je waarom dat is ? Die broeken zijn veel zwaarder, maar wat als ik je nu een zware rok geef ?' En zo liep dat kind sinds die dag met een hele zware rok. En tegen een ander kind vertelde Ruchel hetzelfde : 'In de oude wereld dragen de mannen broeken en de vrouwen rokken. Weet je waarom dat is ? Die broeken zijn veel zwaarder, maar wat als ik je nu een hele lichte broek geef ?' En zo liep dat kind sinds die dag met een hele lichte broek.

Maar ook de andere kinderen wilden zware rokken en lichte broeken. 'Nou,' zei de prinses, 'zoek ze maar op. Ze liggen verstopt in het huis, en hangen in de hoogste bomen.' Sommige kinderen gingen naar buiten, terwijl andere kinderen in het huis gingen zoeken. Maar aan het eind van de dag had geen kind wat gevonden. 'Nou,' brulde een kind, 'kunnen die tovermannetjes het ons niet gewoon geven ?'

De prinses keek naar Gabriel en Ruchel. Gabriel haalde een zware rok tevoorschijn, en Ruchel een lichte broek. 'Elke dag mag het braafste kind kiezen tussen de zware rok en de lichte broek,' zei de prinses.

Grootvader sloeg het grote boek dicht. 'Grootvader,' zei Harry, 'mag ik ook zo'n lichte broek ?'

Grootvader wees op de prachtige pyamabroek van Harry. 'Oh, ik zie het al,' zei Harry. 'Ik heb hem al aan.'

'Grootvader,' zei Dennis, 'mag ik dan een zware rok ?'

'Nou,' zei grootvader, 'als je heel erg braaf bent, dan zal de prinses jou er vast wel één geven.'

De volgende dag nam grootvader Harry en Dennis mee naar een restaurant waar een heel groot schilderij van het sprookjesbos met het huis hing. In de verte stond de prinses, en dichtbij stonden Gabriel en Ruchel. 'Dus als we door dat schilderij naar binnen gaan dan kunnen we nooit meer terug ?' vroeg

Dennis. Grootvader knikte.

'Nou, dan moet ik daar eerst eens heel lang over na denken,' zuchtte Dennis.

Het Huis dat Altijd Instortte

Er waren eens een man en een vrouw wiens huisje elke dag instortte zodat ze elke dag hun huis opnieuw moesten bouwen. Op een dag waren ze zo moe dat ze zelf ook neerstortten. Na een tijdje kwam er een tovermannetje langs. 'Zal ik jullie huisje eens bouwen met toversteen ? Dan zal het nooit meer instorten.' Dat leek de man en de vrouw wel wat. Maar in ruil daarvoor zou het mannetje zelf daar ook gaan wonen. Het werd een enorm groot huis, een huis waarin je kon verdwalen. Al gauw raakten de man en de vrouw de weg kwijt en ook elkaar, en ook het mannetje konden ze niet meer vinden. Ze begonnen naar elkaar te roepen, maar niets hielp. Maar ja, ze hadden nu in ieder geval een huis dat nooit zou instorten. Op een dag vond de man een bel die hij indrukte. Even later hoorde hij ook een andere bel. De man liep op het geluid af en kwam de vrouw tegen. Toen hoorden ze nog een bel, en toen ze op dat geluid afliepen kwamen ze het tovermannetje tegen. De man en de vrouw lieten elkaar niet meer los, want ze wisten hoe snel ze in het huis konden verdwalen. Ook het tovermannetje lieten ze niet meer los. 'Help ons wegwijs te maken in dit huis,' zeiden ze tegen het tovermannetje.

'Druk gewoon op de bel als je verdwaalt,' zei het tovermannetje, 'dan komt alles goed.'

'Maar ik heb zolang naar een bel moeten zoeken,' zei de man.

'Ach,' zei het tovermannetje, 'we zijn met z'n drieen, dus we moeten gewoon onze oren goed openhouden en op het geluid aflopen.'

En zo begonnen ze alledrie heel langzaam wegwijs te krijgen in het huis, om zo het huis te ontdekken. Na verloop van tijd vonden ze de weg altijd gemakkelijk weer terug, en ze leefden nog lang en gelukkig.

De Toverbron

Eens in het jaar ging altijd de toverbron open, en dan zou de eerste die daar aankwam een slok toverwater krijgen. Lars was altijd de snelste van

allemaal, en daarom was hij elk jaar de winnaar. De anderen begonnen dan altijd ruzie te maken met elkaar, want het was altijd een geduw en getrek. Iedereen was er altijd zo hongerig naar de eerste te zijn, maar alleen Lars ging daar elk jaar met een stralende glimlach weer vandaan. Maar op een dag nam een boze toverkoningin bezit van de bron. Toen de bron weer openging was het water zwart in plaats van helder. Ook was het water vies en koud in plaats van warm. Lars wist even niet wat hij moest doen. Hij was nog wel de voorste en had de anderen ver achter zich. Langzaam sloop hij dichterbij, en kreeg ineens een schop. Omdat hij dacht dat hij het zich vergist had strompelde hij door naar de bron, deed zijn ogen dicht en nam een slok. Nu straalde Lars niet meer, en vieze zwarte moddervlekken spatten hem nat. Toen de anderen bij de bron aankwamen was het water helderder en warmer dan ooit. 'Wat sta je daar beteuterd te kijken ?' vroeg iemand. 'De bron is open, en er is genoeg voor iedereen.' Maar Lars had geen zin meer. Hij zag hoe iedereen van de bron dronk en hoe ze in de bron baadden. Teleurgesteld strompelde hij naar huis. Voor hem was er nu niets meer aan nu iedereen van de bron kon drinken. Sindsdien was de bron altijd open, en liep iedereen met een stralende glimlach rond, maar Lars straalde niet. Voor Lars had het allemaal geen betekenis meer. Op een dag zocht Lars de boze toverkoningin op. 'Zeg,' zei Lars, 'heb je niet een andere bron voor me waaruit ik kan drinken ? Ik wil me weer een winnaar voelen.'

'Oh, kom maar mee,' zei de boze toverkoningin. Ze leidde Lars naar een modderpoel waar de kikkers in rondsprongen. 'Deze modderpoel gaat maar eens in de honderd jaar open, en wie er dan als eerste van drinkt die wordt koning, terwijl de rest een schop krijgt.' Nou, dat leek Lars wel wat. Met glunderende ogen vertelde hij het aan de anderen. Maar niemand scheen er interesse in te hebben. Daarom wachtte Lars alleen af totdat de modderpoel zich zou openen. Na jaren en jaren van wachten ging de poel eindelijk open. Lars dook op de bron af en wilde een slok nemen, maar een grote kikker spoot een grote straal modder in zijn gezicht. De kikker had een kroontje op en zei : 'Wij zijn degenen die altijd het eerste drinken wanneer de bron opengaat.' En ineens staarden ook andere kikkers hem met grote ogen aan. Ze droegen allemaal kroontjes. Toen kreeg Lars ineens zo'n grote schop waardoor hij helemaal in de andere bron terechtkwam. 'Dag koning,' zeiden de anderen spottend.

'Nee,' zei Lars, 'ik ben geen koning geworden. Het zijn de kikkers die daar koning zijn.'

'Ach, laat die kikkers toch,' zei een ander. 'Waarom wil je toch altijd een winnaar en een koning zijn ?'

Maar weer wachtte Lars totdat de honderd jaar voorbij waren en deed een nieuwe poging. Ditmaal was hij sneller dan de kikkers en werd koning.

'Nou, ik ben trots op je,' zei de boze toverkoningin. 'Lang heb ik hier op gewacht om mijn koning te hebben. Wees koning over de kikkers en de twee bronnen.'

Nu wist Lars wel wat hij wilde doen. De eerste bron moest weer dicht om ieder jaar open te gaan zodat alleen de eerste die daar aankwam een slok toverwater zou krijgen, en de modderpoel moest voor altijd dichtblijven omdat hij nu immers koning was. Maar niemand wilde meer van de eerste bron drinken, en ze trokken allemaal zo ver mogelijk weg van de bron, zodat Lars een eenzame koning werd. Waar had het hem toch allemaal gebracht ? Op een dag leverde hij de kroon in bij de boze toverkoningin. 'Ik heb gezien dat koning zijn niet loont,' zei Lars, 'en gelukkig word ik er ook niet van.'

Maar de boze toverkoningin begon te lachen. 'Je hebt zelf de modderpoel voor altijd laten sluiten, dus er zal geen nieuwe koning komen.'

'Maar hoe kom ik dan van mijn kroon af ?' vroeg Lars.

'Kom maar mee,' zei de boze toverkoningin. En ze leidde hem naar een bron diep in het bos waar een heleboel prinsen, prinsessen en koningen omheen stonden. 'Straks als de bron opengaat dan zal de eerste die drinkt zijn kroon verliezen en vrij komen.'

'En de verliezers ?' vroeg Lars.

'De verliezers krijgen een schop en zullen voor eeuwig koning moeten zijn,' zei de boze toverkoningin.

'Wanneer gaat de bron dan open ?' vroeg Lars.

'Deze bron zal maar eens in de eeuwigheid opengaan, en dan nooit meer. Degenen die hier bij de bron zijn aangekomen wachten allemaal op dat moment,' zei de boze toverkoningin.

Ineens ging de bron open. Lars wilde zo snel mogelijk naar de bron toe, maar werd door de boze toverkoningin vastgehouden. 'Dit is niet voor jou. Je zal in een kikker veranderen om voor altijd koning te zijn.'

En toen veranderde die arme Lars tussen de handen van de boze toverkoningin in een kikker met een kroontje.

'Och koningin,' smeekte Lars, 'toverkoningin, hoe kan ik ooit van dit lot ontsnappen ?'

'Er is maar één manier,' zei de boze toverkoningin. 'Vindt het meisje dat als eerste van de bron heeft gedronken. Zij was een prinsesje, maar heeft haar kroontje verloren. Als zij jou kust dan is de betovering verbroken en dan ben je voor altijd vrij, net als haar.'

Maar toen de kikker het meisje vond was zij niet echt aardig voor hem. 'Wat moet ik met zo'n vieze glibberige kikker,' zei het meisje.

'Toe nou,' smeekte de kikker, 'één kusje maar.'

Maar het meisje hield voet bij stuk. Van verdriet vluchtte de kikker dieper de bossen in, maar verloor zijn kroontje niet. Altijd zou hij koning blijven. Maar toen hij in een bosvijvertje wat dronk en zichzelf bekeek in de weerspiegeling van het water zag hij een prins. De kikker baadde in het bosvijvertje, en kwam tot de ontdekking dat het de toverbron was waar hij vroeger elk jaar van had gedronken. 'Geloof hen toch niet,' zei de toverbron. 'Je bent een prins, en geen koning. Ben je vergeten dat het toverwater is ?'

'Wat bedoelt u ?' vroeg Lars.

'Sinds de boze toverkoningin bezit nam van de plaats waar ik was ben ik gevlucht. Ik ben blij dat je me hebt gevonden,' zei de toverbron.

'Maar waarom ben ik een prins ?' vroeg Lars.

'Omdat degene die het eerste van mijn nieuwe plaats zou drinken mijn prins zou worden, en dat ben jij,' zei de toverbron. En ineens stond er een prachtige prinses voor hem. Lars keek naar zijn armen en zijn benen, en ontdekte dat hij geen kikker meer was. 'Ooit betoverde de boze toverkoningin mij tot een toverbron,' zei de prinses. 'Alleen als er iemand zou zijn die boven alle anderen van mij zou houden, en mij niet zou willen delen met een ander, dan zou ik weer een prinses kunnen worden,' zei de prinses.

'En die iemand was ik ?' vroeg Lars.

'Zelfs hier heb je mij gevonden,' zei de prinses. 'Diep in het bos, in een moddervijver.'

Lars omhelsde zijn prinses en kuste haar. En ze leefden nog lang en gelukkig.

De Reuzenvrouw

Er was eens een perzik die hele grote oren had. Hij werd er vaak om uitgelachen door andere perzikken, en ze zeiden allemaal dat als hij een meloen was geweest dan was het allemaal niet zo erg. Van verdriet ging de perzik met de grote oren op een dag naar het bos, om nooit meer terug te komen. Daar vond hij een banaan met een hele grote neus. Ook de banaan was gevlucht, omdat ook de banaan altijd door andere bananen werd uitgelachen. Ze zeiden dat als de banaan een meloen was geweest, dan was het allemaal nog niet zo erg. Ze besloten samen op te trekken. Na een tijdje

kwamen ze aan bij een groot kasteel. Hier werden ze ontvangen door een komkommer met een hele grote kin, en al gauw kwamen ze erachter dat hier nog veel meer woonden met hele grote lichaamsdelen. De komkommer met de hele grote kin zei dat achter het kasteel een berg is waar een huilende reus woont. De reus zou huilen, omdat hij zo eenzaam was. De komkommer met de hele grote kin had een idee. Als ze nou allemaal zich aan elkaar vast zouden maken, dan zouden ze vanzelf een reuzenvrouw worden voor de reus. Dat deden ze, en met een beetje gepuzzel kwam er een prachtige vrouw tevoorschijn. De vrouw begon aan haar tocht op de berg, en even later was de reus de allergelukkigste.

De Reuzenbewaker

Er was eens een reus die een wondermeloen bewaakte. Velen probeerden bij de wondermeloen te komen, maar de reus joeg hen allemaal weg. Op een dag was er een kaboutertje die zo klein was dat de reus hem niet zag. Met gemak kwam het kaboutertje bij de wondermeloen, ging naar binnen, en besloot er te wonen. Maar op een dag hoorde hij hulpgeroep vanuit het diepere deel van de wondermeloen, en besloot op onderzoek uit te gaan. Na een tijdje lopen zag hij een fee die vastzat. ‘Wees maar niet bang hoor,’ zei de kabouter. 'Ik heb wel een plannetje. Ik ben veel te klein om jou los te krijgen, maar ik weet wel wat.' En zo ging de kabouter weer naar buiten, en riep de reus. Maar de reus zag natuurlijk helemaal niets. Toen de kabouter een klein vlammetje maakte zag de reus het wel. De kabouter nodigde de reus uit om binnen in de wondermeloen te komen. Dat ging niet zo makkelijk, maar na een tijdje was de reus binnen. ‘Zo,’ zei de reus, ‘ik wist niet dat er ook kabouters in de wondermeloen woonden.’

‘Nou,’ zei de kabouter, ‘ik woonde hier eerst ook niet, maar ik was zo klein dat ik makkelijk langs je heen kon komen.’ Maar toen werd de reus erg kwaad. De kabouter zette het op een rennen, dieper in de wondermeloen, en de reus kwam achter hem aan. Na een tijdje kwam ook de reus vast te zitten, en begon om hulp te roepen. Na een tijdje kwamen er reuzen die zelfs groter dan hem waren. Met z’n allen rekten ze de wondermeloen uit, zodat de reus los kon komen, en ook de fee. De reus was er zo van geschrokken dat hij nooit meer binnenin de wondermeloen wilde, en de fee is vanaf toen voor altijd in het voorste deel van de wondermeloen blijven wonen, samen met de kabouter.

De Toverknots

Er was eens een dwerg die een ware plaag was in een gebied van reuzen. Zo haalde hij een heleboel toverkunsten uit om de reuzen telkens dwars te zitten, en daar beleefde hij een hoop lol aan. De dwerg woonde erg diep onder de grond waar hij een toverknots bewaakte waarmee hij zijn toverkunsten uithaalde. Op een dag waren de reuzen het zat, en zes van hen gingen op een zoektocht onder de grond. Ze wisten dat dat erg gevaarlijk was, maar ze hadden het nu helemaal met de dwerg gehad. Na een lange tocht kwamen ze in een hele grote verlichte grot terecht waar ze de dwerg vonden met zijn toverknots. Toen de zes reuzen dichterbij kwamen zei de dwerg : 'Toverknots, een ware plaag, geef die reuzen een flink pak slaag.' De toverknots vloog op, en gaf die arme reuzen zulke flinke lellen dat ze alle zes niet wisten hoe snel ze moesten wegkomen.

Toen de reuzen thuiskwamen zeiden hun vrouwen dat ze direkt naar de reuzenheks moesten gaan om van hun wonden af te komen. De reuzenheks had daar wel wat zalf voor. Ook zei de reuzenheks toen ze het verhaal hoorde, dat ze hen wel wilde omtoveren in wolven, zodat ze snel de toverknots konden weggrijpen, en snel weg konden komen. Maar toen de wolven terugkwamen in de grot zei de dwerg : 'Toverknots een ware plaag, geef die wolven een flink pak slaag.' En de toverknots vloog zo snel vooruit dat de wolven niets konden beginnen, en kregen ditmaal veel hardere lellen.

Uitgeput kwamen ze weer aan bij de reuzenheks, en vertelden wat er was gebeurd. 'Weet je wat,' zei de reuzenheks. 'Ik weet dat de dwerg van ijs houdt. Ik zal jullie omtoveren tot indiaanse ijsmeisjes, met een heleboel ijstaarten en ijsjes. En dan zullen jullie een hele grote indiaanse ijstafel voor hem dekken.' En zo gebeurde het. En toen de dwerg zich helemaal had volgegeten zei de dwerg : 'Jullie mogen alles van mij hebben, behalve mijn toverknots.'

'Ach,' zei één van de indiaanse ijsmeisjes, 'als we dan niet uw toverknots mogen hebben, geef ons dan uw prachtige stem.' En zo gaf de dwerg zijn stem aan de indiaanse ijsmeisjes. Direkt zei toen één van hen : 'Toverknots een ware plaag, geef die dwerg een flink pak slaag.' Daar schrok de dwerg wel even van. Hij stond op, rende weg, en niemand heeft hem ooit weer teruggezien. En zo kwam de toverknots in de handen van de reuzen, en ze leefden nog lang en gelukkig.

De Chocolade Prins

Er was eens een chocolade koning die een zoon had. De prins was bestemd voor de troon, maar op een dag vluchtte de prins uit het paleis. De chocolade koning liet een heleboel lakeien op zoek gaan naar de prins. Na vele jaren vonden ze hem in het bos, waar hij samen met een arm meisje woonde.

De lakeien namen de prins mee terug naar het paleis. De chocolade koning was woedend, en liet hem opsluiten in een kerker. ‘Je moest je schamen,’ zei de chocolade koning, ‘jij moet later de troon op.’

Het arme meisje was erg verdrietig en smeekte de chocolade koning om hem vrij te laten, maar de chocolade koning was onverbiddelijk. Iemand moest de troonopvolger zijn, en dat was zijn zoon, de prins.

Na vele jaren werd de prins uit de kerker gehaald, omdat hij de nieuwe chocolade koning zou worden. Tegelijk was er een grote bruiloft, maar de prins mocht niet met het arme meisje trouwen, maar met iemand die zijn vader voor hem had bestemd. Iedereen op de bruiloft was heel blij, behalve het arme meisje. Zij huilde de hele dag, en iedereen vroeg haar waarom, maar het meisje gaf geen antwoord.

Ook de prins was erg verdrietig toen hij het arme meisje zo zag huilen. De prins sprong op zijn paard, greep het huilende arme meisje en reed met haar weg. ‘Liefste,’ zei de prins. ‘Nu moeten we zo ver weg gaan dat niemand ons meer kan vinden.’ Ze besloten de zee over te gaan in een bootje. Na een hele lange tijd varen kwamen ze op een eiland waar hele enge wachters woonden. Ze waren hongerig, want ze hadden al tijden niets gegeten.

‘Ik weet een plaats waar jullie volop kunnen eten,’ zei de prins. En de prins wees op de plaats waar hij vandaan kwam. ‘Daar is een rijk van chocolade. Eet smakelijk.’

Dat lieten de hele enge wachters zich natuurlijk geen twee keer zeggen. En zo hadden de prins en het arme meisje het eiland helemaal voor hen alleen.

De Toverkikker

Er was eens een indiaanse toverkikker die vlees at. Vaak maakte hij in dorpjes de buurt onveilig. Iedereen was erg bang voor die vleesetende toverkikker. Maar op een dag kwam er een stenen mannetje op de vleesetende toverkikker af, en sloot hem op in een berg. Vanaf nu zou het stenen mannetje bij de ingang van de berg staan om de toverkikker te bewaken. Maar na een tijdje begon de toverkikker prachtige muziek te maken in de berg, en velen kwamen op het prachtige geluid af. Het stenen mannetje dacht dat hij hiermee een hoop geld kon verdienen. Zij die door de

bergspleet naar binnen gingen betaalden hem goed, maar het stenen mannetje was helemaal vergeten dat de toverkikker nog steeds een vleesetende toverkikker was, en daarom kwam niemand die de berg inging er weer levend uit. Op een dag waren er zovelen uit de dorpjes verdwenen dat de koning bij het stenen mannetje langskwam. De koning wilde direkt door de bergopening naar binnen om te kijken waar ze allemaal waren, maar eerst moest hij het stenen mannetje flink betalen. ‘Zeg vlegel,’ zei de koning, ‘wie denk je wel niet dat je voor je hebt ?’ Maar hoe de koning ook tegensputterde, de koning moest en zou betalen. Het stenen mannetje had nu zoveel geld dat hij er een paleis voor kocht van het schitterendste goud en de beste edelstenen. Ook kocht hij de beste lakeien, maar herinnerde zich toen ineens dat hij de toverkikker moest bewaken.

En de toverkikker was natuurlijk ontsnapt om de dorpjes weer onveilig te maken. Toen het stenen mannetje hoorde dat de toverkikker weer overal zovelen opvrat werd het stenen mannetje heel boos op zichzelf. ‘Ach, het moet door die betoverende muziek zijn geweest dat ik dat allemaal ben vergeten. Maar weet je wat,’ zei het stenen mannetje, ‘van het vele geld dat ik nog over heb koop ik de prachtigste muziekinstrumenten.’ En zo gebeurde het, en al gauw maakte het stenen mannetje zulke betoverende muziek voor de toverkikker dat de toverkikker helemaal vergat dat hij een vleesetende toverkikker was.

De Windemelk

Er was eens een indiaanse feeenkoningin die een hele bijzondere roos had. De roos kon spreken, en was zo prachtig dat een ieder die naar de roos keek versteende en voor altijd in verwondering naar de roos staarde. Daarom bracht de indiaanse feeenkoningin de roos naar een eenzaam kasteel waar twee rivieren omheen stroomden. De eerste rivier was zo zoet dat iedereen die er bij in de buurt kwam voor altijd in slaap viel. De tweede rivier was zo vies en vuil, dat degene die er te dichtbij kwam voor altijd in huilen uitbarste. De feeenkoningin vond dat niet zo geweldig, maar ze wilde de roos beschermen. Maar niet alleen wilde ze de roos beschermen, maar ook degenen die dichtbij de roos wilden zijn. De roos was namelijk erg gevaarlijk. En bovendien plaatste de feeenkoningin ook de gevaarlijkste spin die bestond om het kasteel te bewaken. Dat vond de feeenkoningin ook niet leuk, maar ze wilde geen enkel risico nemen.

De feeenkoningin zag wel dat het er zo niet makkelijker op werd, en al helemaal niet minder gevaarlijk, en daarom liet ze grote waarschuwingsborden neerzetten. Niet veel lieden waagden zich nog in de buurt, en op een dag vroeg de roos of zo een wandeling door het bos mocht

maken. Uiteindelijk stemde de feeenkoningin toe. Toen de roos bij de vieze rivier kwam liet ze een traan vallen, en toen ze bij de zoete rivier kwam gaapte ze even. Toen ze de waarschuwingsborden zag schrok ze heel erg. ‘Maar ik ben toch geen roofdier ?’ vroeg de roos. ‘Nee,’ zei de feeenkoningin, ‘maar heus, het is beter zo.’ Maar met een ruk maakte de roos zich los van de feeenkoningin. De feeenkoningin kon niet veel doen, omdat de roos zo groot was geworden in al die jaren. De roos snelde dieper het bos in, maar verdwaalde al snel, omdat ze de weg niet wist. Uiteindelijk vond ze een bosmeertje waarin ze begon te baden. Gelukkig was er niemand in de buurt, want dat zou veel te gevaarlijk zijn.

Maar na een tijdje wilde de roos weer terug naar het kasteel, en barste in huilen uit. ‘Ach,’ zei de wind, ‘mijn kind, maak je toch niet zo druk. Je vindt heus je weg naar het kasteel wel weer, volg gewoon de rivier van zoete en vuile melk, en je bent weer thuis, heus.’

‘Maar waar vind ik die rivier ?’ vroeg de roos.

‘Daar, in de lucht,’ sprak de wind, en tegelijkertijd verscheen er een wolkendek met daarin de rivier van melk. De roos zwom en dronk. Het was het zoetste en vieste wat ze ooit had gedronken, maar snel was ze thuis. ‘Mamma,’ zei ze tegen de feeenkoningin, ‘ik heb melk gedronken van de wind.’ En ineens stond er een meisje voor de feeenkoningin zo prachtig als een roos. En sindsdien is ze altijd in het kasteel gebleven.

Haar moeder bouwde de prachtigste torentjes voor haar, de lieflijkste sluiers en gordijntjes, en het meisje had het altijd erg naar haar zin, alhoewel het een eenzaam en verlaten kasteel was. Vaak dronk ze nog van de melk van de wind die de wind bij haar bracht, door het raam, en op een dag had ze er zoveel van gedronken dat ze er erg slaperig van werd. Toen ze wakker werd zei ze tegen de wind : ‘Zeg, waarom kom je niet gewoon bij ons wonen ?’ Dat liet de wind zich geen twee keer zeggen, en kwam door het raam naar binnen. Elke dag werd het meisje mooier en mooier door het drinken van de windemelk, en toen haar moeder stierf werd zij de feeenkoningin, maar weg van het kasteel wilde zij niet. Elke dag zond ze de wind uit om alle indiaanse feeen en toverrozen te verzamelen, en elke avond en nacht kwam de wind terug met vele feeenkoetsen. Allen hadden zij gedronken van de windemelk, en daarom waren ze hier.

Maar op een dag werd de wind oud, en stierf. De nieuwe feeenkoningin was ontroostbaar. Ook de windemelk begon heel langzaam op te raken. ‘Maar,’ zei de feeenkoningin, ‘dankzij de windemelk zijn we allemaal hier. Misschien stroomt de windemelk nu hoger in de lucht. Laten we een toren bouwen die geen top heeft.’ En zo bouwden de feeen een toren zonder einde, en kwamen op een plaats zo hoog in de lucht waar de windemelk nog stroomde. Ook kwamen ze tot de plaats waar de wind nu was, en tot de plaats waar de oude feeenkoningin nu leefde. ‘Oh mamma,’ zei de nieuwe feeenkoningin. ‘Je bent niet dood.’ En toen omhelsden die twee elkaar, terwijl de feeen zongen, en de wind heel warm werd van binnen.

De Slapende Prinses

Er was eens een indiaanse prinses die altijd sliep. In de nacht werd ze altijd heel even wakker om iets te drinken en te eten. Vaak was dat wat thee met vruchten, en daarna sliep ze weer. Soms slaapwandelde ze door de gangen van het kasteel waar ze woonde. Haar vader en moeder waren erg bedroefd, maar zo was de prinses altijd al geweest. Ze zouden wel eens met hun dochter willen spreken, al was het maar voor heel even.

Op een nacht was de prinses weer aan het slaapwandelen, en ze wandelde heel diep het bos in. Ze liep altijd op blote voeten met een nachtjapon of pyama. Plotseling stapte ze op een toverring, en werd direkt wakker. Ze was erg verbaasd en deed de ring om haar vinger. Heel lang keek ze ernaar, en ze bleef gewoon wakker. De prinses was erg blij, en rende terug naar het kasteel. Maar toen het ochtend werd en ze anderen tegenkwam vielen die direkt in slaap. De prinses dacht dat dat door de toverring kwam die ze droeg. En zo was de prinses erg eenzaam, en omdat ze niet nog meer van hen in slaap wilde zien tollen, vertrok ze weer naar het bos. Na een tijdje lopen kwam ze aan bij een klein huisje waar kabouters leefden. Blij stapten de kabouters naar buiten, alsof ze haar al kenden. ‘We dachten dat je nooit zou komen,’ zei één van de kabouters. ‘Ja,’ zei een andere kabouter, ‘en, zeg, wij hebben die toverring voor jouw gemaakt, van de zeldzaamste stenen. De stenen die jij op je ring draagt zijn de enigen van hun soort, dus wees er maar erg zuinig op, meisje. Je wil toch niet nog een keer zolang slapen ?’ De prinses werd erg verlegen. Ze was blij dat de kabouters niet in slaap vielen.

En zo mocht de prinses bij de kabouters wonen, en zorgde goed voor hun huisje als de kabouters weg waren om in de mijnen te werken. Maar op een dag kwam er een man met maar één oog bij het huisje. Hij klopte op de deur, en de prinses deed een raampje open.

‘Zeg, meisje,’ zei de man met maar één oog, ‘wat heb jij een prachtige ring. Als je die aan mij geeft, dan geef ik je mijn paard daarvoor in ruil.’

‘Maar dan val ik weer in slaap,’ zei de prinses.

Toen haalde de man ook een ring tevoorschijn. ‘Als je deze draagt, dan blijf je niet alleen wakker, maar dan kun je ook vliegen en toveren.’ Nu, dat leek de prinses wel wat, want dan zou ze ook wat aan de slapenden van haar land kunnen doen. De ruil was snel gedaan, maar ineens begon de man te lachen, rende weg, en de prinses viel als dood op de grond. Toen de kabouters terugkwamen waren ze erg verdrietig. En ze konden geen andere ring maken met dezelfde krachten, want zulke stenen konden ze nooit meer vinden. Maar ze hadden nog wel een toverfluit waarmee ze de prinses bij volle maan tot leven konden wekken om te dansen. Dan was het weer even feest, maar van hele korte duur. Op een dag toen ze thuiskwamen was ook de toverfluit

gestolen. Toen besloten ze de prinses in een kist naar de mijnen te dragen tussen de edelstenen, zodat ze haar altijd bij zich hadden als ze aan het werk waren. En ze vonden dat de prinses hier veilig was. Als ze haar in het huisje zouden laten dan zouden ze veel te bang zijn dat de prinses ook op een dag gestolen zou zijn. Nee, dat zouden hun kabouterharten niet aankunnen. Het was een prachtig gezicht om de prinses zo te zien tussen de edelstenen. De dieren hier zouden wel de wacht over haar houden. Midden in de nacht toen de kabouters weer naar huis waren begonnen ineens enkele edelstenen te fonkelen, zo te fonkelen dat de prinses haar ogen opendeed. Ook haar ogen begonnen te fonkelen. Ze stond op en ging terug naar het kabouterhuisje. De kabouters waren erg verbaasd en blij. Snel gingen ze terug naar de mijnen om de fonkelende edelstenen op te halen.

Met de edelstenen versierden ze hun huisje, en voortaan viel een ieder die hen of de prinses kwaad wilden doen in slaap. En de kabouters zongen allemaal : 'Dus kom maar niet te dichtbij als je hier iets wil stelen, kom maar niet dichtbij als je kwaad wil doen, want sluiten zullen je ogen, en niemand zal ooit het licht nog aandoen.'

Het Doolhof

Er was eens een dwerg die met een tovervogel achter een doolhof leefde. De vogel moest steeds zingen, en was niet gelukkig vanwege de kooi. Het was een gouden kooi met tralies als snaren, waarop de dwerg prachtige muziek speelde. Zo lokten ze beiden met hun betoverende muziek velen tot het doolhof. De muren van het doolhof bewogen altijd, zodat bezoekers nooit het pad konden vinden. Het was een toverdoolhof waarin velen verdwaalden en daarna verhongerden.

Op een dag was er een indiaanse prins in het land die over de arme tovervogel hoorde. Hij wilde het dier graag bevrijden. De indiaanse prins had een paard met hele lange poten, en kon zo makkelijk over de muren van het doolhof heenkomen. Maar wat de prins niet wist was dat achter het doolhof een vleesetende rivier sluimerde. Toen het paard in de rivier stapte werden ze al snel beiden opgeslokt.

Niet lang daarna kwam de broer van de indiaanse prins tot het doolhof. De broer had een beer met hele lange poten, dus kon ook met gemak over de muren van het gevaarlijke doolhof komen. De beer had altijd zo'n dorst dat hij wel een hele rivier zou kunnen leegdrinken. Toen ze bij de vleesetende rivier aankwamen was die na een tijdje helemaal leeggeslurpt door de beer.

Sinds de prins met het paard door de rivier waren opgeslokt was de vogel steeds droeviger gaan zingen. Maar de andere prins kwam met zijn beer

steeds dichterbij, terwijl ze de dwerg op de tovervogel hoorden schelden. Toen de dwerg de beer zag schrok hij heel erg. Dit was nog nooit gebeurd. Niemand kon ooit door het doolhof en over de rivier komen. De dwerg rende met de kooi naar een groot kasteel, terwijl de beer met de prins erachter aanrende. 'Laat de tovervogel los,' riep de prins. Maar de dwerg maakte even een gebaar, en snel stonden zowel de beer als de prins in lange kooien. De dwerg kantelde de kooien en begon er op te dansen, zodat er wonderlijke muziek ontstond. Maar de tovervogel begon steeds valser te zingen, en hield ten slotte helemaal op. De dwerg was woedend, en zei : 'Ach, jou wil ik helemaal niet meer hebben. Ik heb nu de prins en de beer.' En snel liet hij de tovervogel los. De tovervogel vloog snel over het toverdoolhof, en hielp velen om eroverheen te komen. Na een tijdje stonden allen die door de tovervogel over het doolhof waren gebracht om het kasteel, en riepen dat de dwerg de prins en de beer moest loslaten. Maar al gauw had de dwerg ook hen gekooid. Maar voordat de dwerg de kooien kon kantelen begonnen ze de tralies die als snaren waren te bespelen. De dwerg stond met z'n vingers in zijn oren, en toen hij wegrende pikte de tovervogel snel de sleutel van de kooien uit zijn broekzak weg.

Maar ze moesten nog steeds oppassen voor de gevaarlijke dwerg. Toen de tovervogel ze allen uit hun kooien had bevrijd, en de dwerg ver weg was slopen ze stilletjes naar het kasteel. Al gauw waren ook de beer en de prins bevrijd. In het kasteel stonden nog veel meer kooien die ze konden openen. Maar vanuit de raampjes van het kasteel kregen ze de schrik van hun leven. Het toverdoolhof kwam van alle kanten steeds dichterbij, klaar om het hele kasteel op te slokken. Maar gelukkig kon de tovervogel ook een beetje toveren, en maakte zichzelf heel groot. Allen konden ze een plaatsje vinden tussen de veren van de tovervogel, en die kon net op tijd van het kasteel wegvliegen. Alleen de beer met de lange poten staat daar nog steeds, zoekende naar toverrivieren die hij kan leegdrinken, en de beer is inmiddels zo groot geworden, dat de indiaanse prins zijn kasteel op de rug van de beer heeft gebouwd. Nog steeds komt de tovervogel wel eens langs om prachtig te zingen, en de dwerg hebben ze nooit meer teruggezien.

De Prins zonder Neus

Er was eens een toverneus die opgesloten werd gehouden op een eiland. De reuzen die de toverneus bewaakten hadden alle zeeen opgedronken, behalve de zee rondom het eiland. Die zee mochten ze niet opdrinken, anders zou de toverneus ontsnappen. Wel dronken ze vaak kleine teugjes van de zee, waardoor er vele draaikolken ontstonden en vele scheepjes vergingen.

Op een dag waren de reuzen zo dorstig dat ze ten einde raad waren. Maar daar wist de toverneus wel wat op. Uit zijn neusgat haalde hij een fles met water tevoorschijn die nooit opraakte. Maar de reuzen begonnen al snel ruzie te maken om de fles. De ruzie liep zo hoog op dat ze weer ten einde raad waren. Maar daar wist de toverneus wel weer wat op. Ook uit zijn andere neusgat haalde hij een fles met water te voorschijn die nooit opraakte. Nu waren de reuzen in twee kampen verdeeld, maar ze hadden nog steeds ruzie om de flessen. Maar op een dag zei de toverneus : 'Weten jullie wat,' en toen haalde de toverneus een fles tevoorschijn waarvan ze konden drinken om nooit meer dorst te hebben. Een simpele druppel zou genoeg zijn. En zo nam iedere reus een teugje, maar toen de laatste reus wilde drinken was de fles al leeg. Oh, wat was die reus kwaad. En van de flessen die nooit opraakten kon hij niet meer drinken, want die waren kapotgegaan door de ruzie. En zo heeft die reus in zijn boosheid de hele zee rondom het eiland leeggedronken, en kwam de toverneus vrij. Dat was wel slim van die toverneus.

En in de bossen kwam de toverneus een indiaanse elvenprins tegen zonder neus. De elvenprins raapte de toverneus op, en dacht : 'Nu, ik heb toch nog geen neus. Dan kan ik deze wel gebruiken. En zo vond de toverneus zijn plaats en toverde dat het een lieve lust was.

De Tovergrot

Er was eens een indiaans meisje dat in een land leefde met vogels die in hun hele leven maar één lied konden zingen en dan dood neervielen. Maar die liederen waren dan ook de prachtigste en meest betoverende liederen die iemand ooit had gehoord. Ook waren er in dat land roofdieren die in hun hele leven maar één keer konden aanvallen en dan dood neervielen. Maar zo'n aanval was dan ook zo groot dat het de geschiedenis inging als een aardbeving.

Het meisje zelf had ook een betoverende stem, zo prachtig, dat vele wonden genazen en tranen opdroogden wanneer ze zong. En als ze boos was, dan was het alsof de aarde beefde en alles wat daarop stond.

Op een dag was het meisje aan het wandelen gegaan, en verdwaalde in het bos. Hoe sterk ze dan ook was, ze moest oppassen voor die gevaarlijke roofdieren. Hoe dapper het meisje ook was, ze werd steeds banger naarmate het donkerder werd, en om haar angst te dempen begon ze te zingen. Maar zo mooi als de vogels van haar land kon ze niet zingen, en ze hoorde zoveel prachtige geluiden en liederen in het bos, terwijl ze wist dat de vogels na hun lied dood zouden neervallen. Het meisje werd er erg droevig van.

Plotseling stond er een groot roofdier voor haar, en het meisje schrok. 'Je hoeft niet zo te schrikken, hoor, meisje,' zei het roofdier. 'Ik zal je echt niets doen, hoor, want dan val ik dood neer.'

Het meisje zag dat het roofdier verwond was, en begon te zingen zodat zijn wond genas. Het roofdier was haar erg dankbaar en nam haar mee. Hij bracht

haar naar een plaats waar een heleboel andere roofdieren waren. Ook vele andere roofdieren waren gewond, en het meisje moest veel zingen om hen te genezen. Ze noemden haar ‘Goudstemmetje’, en ze begonnen veel van het meisje te houden.

Op een dag kwam er een vogel in de grot waar het meisje nu leefde. ‘Ik ben blij dat jij nu voor hen zingt,’ zei de vogel, ‘want vroeger moesten de vogels dat doen, en dat kon elke vogel maar één keer. Jij valt tenminste niet dood neer als je hebt gezongen.’

‘Maar ik kan niet zo goed zingen als jullie,’ zei het meisje.

‘Oh, maar dat komt nog wel,’ zei de vogel. ‘Niemand die voor de roofdieren zingt blijft onveranderd.’ En toen vloog de vogel weg.

Op een nacht merkte het meisje dat ze veren begon te krijgen, en dat haar stem steeds hoger werd. Al gauw durfde ze niet meer te zingen, omdat ze bang was net als de vogels dood neer te vallen. Maar de roofdieren werden erg ongeduldig, en sommigen begonnen boos te worden. Maar anderen kregen medelijden met het meisje, en gingen om haar heen staan om haar te beschermen. ‘Als je nog één keer voor ons zingt, dan zullen we je laten gaan,’ gromde één van de roofdieren. En toen waagde het meisje het er maar op, omdat ze nog niet helemaal in een vogel was veranderd, en nog steeds niet zo prachtig als de vogels kon zingen. Tijdens haar laatste lied zong het meisje steeds prachtiger en prachtiger, en ze merkte dat ze al een snavel begon te krijgen, en vogelpoten. Net op tijd was het lied afgelopen. Het meisje veranderde helemaal in een vogel en vloog weg, de roofdieren in betovering achterlatend.

Het meisje dat nu een vogel was vloog snel naar de andere vogels en smeekte hen om niet meer te zingen. ‘Goudstemmetje, Goudstemmetje,’ riep één van de vogels. Het meisje kende dat vogeltje wel, omdat die een keer bij haar was geweest in de grot. ‘Jij bent de enige vogel die heeft gezongen zonder dood neer te vallen. Leer ons zo te zingen als jij,’ zei het vogeltje.

‘Maar ik durf niet,’ zei Goudstemmetje, ‘want nu ben ik helemaal een vogel, en bang om dood neer te vallen.’

‘Ach, welnee,’ zei het vogeltje, ‘je hebt al zo vaak gezongen, en je bent nog steeds hier. Toe, zing voor ons.’

En toen begon Goudstemmetje zo prachtig en betoverend te zingen dat alle vogeltjes er tranen van in hun oogjes kregen. Zachtjes begonnen enkele vogeltjes met haar mee te zingen, lied na lied, en toen steeds meer. En sindsdien is er in dat land nooit meer een vogeltje dood neergevallen, en zingen de vogeltjes daar het meest.

Het Meisje dat op het Water Danste

Er was eens een indiaans meisje dat op water kon dansen. Haar dansjes waren zo betoverend dat vissen uit het water opkwamen om in vogels te veranderen. Op een dag kwam er een heks naar haar kijken. De heks stopte alle vogels van het meisje in kooien, veranderde in een storm, en blies het meisje omver, zodat ze in het water wegzakte.

Direkt veranderde het meisje in een vis, maar al snel bleek dat ze een hele bijzondere vis was. Ze kon wensen laten uitkomen. Al gauw deden de vissen om haar heen telkens de meest vreemde wensen. Sommigen wilden vogels worden, anderen wilden onder de grond wonen, en zo ging het maar door. De tovervis werd er erg moe van, en op een dag dreef ze levenloos naar boven.

Toen de heks dat zag begon ze erge medelijden te krijgen, en sprak : ‘Vanaf nu zul je weer een meisje zijn dat op het water danst, maar ditmaal zal geen storm je kunnen omduwen. En zo gebeurde het. De tovervis veranderde weer in een meisje, en danste weer op het water, zonder dat ze nog kon vallen door een storm. Het meisje danste zo betoverend dat alle kooien van de heks zich openden. Maar de heks vond dat niet meer erg, want alles wat ze wilde was naar het meisje kijken. Maar op een dag danste het meisje van het water weg, en hoe de heks ook zocht, ze kon het meisje niet meer vinden. En sindsdien danste het meisje alleen nog maar in de herinnering van de heks.

Het Koninkrijk van Chocolade

De indiaanse weeskinderen gingen op een klein bootje over dat afschuwelijke meer van wespenzeep. Wanneer de zeep hun handen raakten dan begonnen die te branden en te steken. Maar even later merkten ze dat het bootje begon te lekken. En zo zakten ze langzaam in die afschuwelijke diepte. Sommigen zwommen verder, terwijl anderen van de pijn verkrampten en geheel wegzakten. De weeskinderen die waren overgebleven kwamen uiteindelijk vermoeid aan op het hoornaarsstrand. Ook hier steekte het en brandde het, en waar ze kwamen lieten ze bloeddruppels achter. Oh, wat stak dit strand. Vele kinderen zakten weg op dit strand, terwijl de laatste twee kinderen na lang lopen een kasteel ontdekten waar alles van goud was, en waar bruin fluweel en leer lag. De kinderen waren gebronst door de modder en de doorns van een lange dag, gebleekt door de afschuwelijke zon die hun gezichten teisterde. Overal waar ze waren geweest hadden ze tranen en zweet achtergelaten, en nu waren ze dan eindelijk hier, waar de zon vriendelijk scheen. Een vriendelijke leeuw kwam naar hen toe, en vroeg

waar de andere kinderen waren. ‘Oh,’ zeiden de twee kinderen, ‘de reis was verschrikkelijk, en we hebben velen achter moeten laten.’ De leeuw keek naar hun wonden die bloeiende bloemen begonnen voort te brengen, waar melk uit stroomde. De leeuw trok de diepe angels uit hen weg, terwijl er ook chocolademelk uit de bloemen scheen voort te stromen. ‘Volg mij,’ zei de leeuw. En zowel de leeuw als de kinderen lieten stroken van melk en chocolademelk achter zich. En de leeuw leidde hen tot de tuinen waar chocolade werd gemaakt. En achter die tuinen was een afgrond waar de chocolade werd ingeworpen. De leeuw sprong, en de kinderen sprongen hem achterna. Hier werd de chocolade gesmolten door de zon, en hier gleden de kinderen met de leeuw. De leeuw voorop, en daarachter de kinderen. Verderop had de chocolade allerlei kleuren, en de kinderen begonnen misselijk en draaierig te worden. En de kinderen werden zo ziek dat ze dachten : waren we maar bij de anderen gebleven. Plotseling vlogen ze door een donker gat en kwamen weer in het meer van wespenzeep terecht. En hier hebben ze toen hun koninkrijk van chocolade gebouwd.

De Sprekende Toren

Er was eens een sprekende toren. Wanneer iemand de trappen van de toren op wilde gaan, dan schreeuwde de toren uiteindelijk zo hard dat niemand echt ver kon komen. Maar de koning had gehoord dat er bijzondere dingen te vinden waren in die hoge toren, die zo hoog was dat niemand eignelijk wist waar die toren eindigde. De koning liet een dove man komen en vroeg aan de man of hij wilde gaan kijken wat er bovenin te vinden was. De dove man stemde toe, en vertrok direkt naar de toren. De man had natuurlijk geen last van het harde geluid, en na een tijdje was hij zo hoog gekomen dat hij in een zaaltje terecht kwam waar allerlei indiaanse vruchten lagen. De man begon ervan te eten, en begon hard te lachen. Hij wilde toen een trap op om nog hoger te komen, maar werd direkt tegengehouden door verblindende lichten. De man ging terug naar het zaaltje, nam zoveel mogelijk van de indiaanse vruchten mee, en ging terug naar de koning. Hij vertelde de koning over de verblindende lichten, maar dat hij wel vruchten had gevonden waar je hard van ging lachen.

De koning kon die vruchten wel gebruiken, en na niet al te lange tijd leed het hele hof aan de slappe lach. Maar tevreden was de koning niet. En daarom liet hij ook een blinde man komen. De blinde man maakte natuurlijk geen kans om door het harde geluid van het eerste gedeelte te komen, en daarom moest de dove man terug naar het torenzaaltje om daar vanuit een raampje een touw te laten zakken om de blinde man omhoog te heisen.

Dat ging allemaal goed, en zo kon de blinde man de trap op nog verder omhoog, en had geen last van de verblindende lichten. Na een tijdje kwam de blinde man in een zaaltje waar glanzende indiaanse stenen lagen. De man

zag dat natuurlijk niet, maar had ze al snel gevonden, maar barste toen in huilen uit. Hij wilde toen met de trap nog verder omhoog, maar daar werd het elke stap heter en heter, totdat de man het niet meer uit kon houden, en terugging naar het zaaltje. Hier nam hij zoveel mogelijk indiaanse edelstenen mee, en ging terug over de trap naar het eerste zaaltje, waar hij door het raampje over het touw naar beneden kon. Zo kwam hij terug bij de koning, en vertelde wat hij had meegemaakt. Ook liet hij de indiaanse edelstenen zien, waarvan je in huilen uitbarste zodra je ze aanraakte. 'Nou, laten we dat dan maar niet doen, hè,' zei de koning. De koning liet de edelstenen goed opbergen.

Maar op een dag was er een dief in het kasteel, en vond de edelstenen. Toen hij ze wilde oppakken barste hij ineens in huilen uit. Huilend en vol van spijt meldde hij zich bij de koning, en de koning wist nu hoe belangrijk die edelstenen waren. Ze waren goede wachters. Voor straf moest de dief de torentrap beklimmen, helemaal tot aan het puntje. Maar ver kwam de man natuurlijk niet. Eerst raakte hij doof van het geluid. Later raakte hij blind van het licht, en toen hij nog hoger kwam was het daar zo heet dat hij verbrandde. Niemand zag hem ooit weer terug. De koning had gehoopt dat de dief met meerdere geheimen zou terugkomen, en daarom was de teleurstelling groot toen dat niet gebeurde. De koning wist nu dat ze een man van steen nodig hadden die de hete trap zou kunnen bestijgen.

Vele jaren gingen voorbij, maar uiteindelijk had de koning toch zo'n man gevonden. De man van steen kon ook goed tegen hard geluid en fel licht, en al gauw kwam hij in een derde zaal, waar hij indiaanse bloemen vond. Maar de bloemen riepen direkt : 'Raak ons maar niet aan, want dan kun je niet meer spreken.' De man stapte daarom direkt achteruit en liep naar de volgende trap omhoog. Maar daar werd het elke trede steeds kouder en kouder, en op een gegeven moment kreeg de man het zo koud dat hij gillend naar beneden rende. Snel kwam hij bij de koning aan, en vertelde over de koude trappen. Ook vertelde hij over de bloemen. Maar de koning was erg boos dat de man van steen de bloemen niet voor hem had meegenomen. Het kon de koning niets schelen dat de man van steen dan niet meer zou kunnen praten als hij ze mee zou nemen. Dus de man moest terug. De man van steen nam zoveel mogelijk bloemen mee als hij maar kon, maar kon sindsdien niet meer spreken. De koning liet de bloemen planten in zijn kasteel, aan het einde van de grote hal. De koning liet er een klein riviertje omheen bouwen, en een hekje, zodat niemand de bloemen zomaar zou aanraken.

De koning was nog steeds erg ontevreden, want hij wilde weten wat er achter die koude trappen was. En daarvoor had de koning een kachelman nodig. Na vele jaren zoeken vond de koning eindelijk zo'n man die geheel van kacheltjes was gemaakt. Hij zou met gemak over die koude trappen kunnen komen. En hij kon ook makkelijk de trappen daarvoor beklimmen, omdat hij overal tegen bestand was. Maar de koude trappen waren niet makkelijk. Na een tijdje begon de man te merken dat de kacheltjes uit begonnen te gaan, en uiteindelijk moest de man zich omdraaien om weer terug te gaan.

De koning was woedend. De kachelman was zijn enige hoop. Voor straf moest de kachelman in het veld van de indiaanse bloemen geworpen worden. Toen hij tegen de bloemen aankwam kon hij direkt niet meer spreken. De bloemen hadden erg veel medelijden met hem, en op een dag zei één van de

bloemen tegen hem : ‘Hoor eens. Ik zal een druppel wonderhoning voortbrengen, en als je die druppel inslikt, dan zul je met gemak over de koude trappen heenkomen.’ En zo gebeurde het. De bloem bracht de honingdruppel voort, de kachelman slikte het in, en de bloemen brachten hem over de rivier en over het hek. De kachelman ging terug naar de toren, en kwam later met gemak over de koude trappen heen. Daar boven vond hij zo’n prachtig rijk dat hij niet meer terugwilde. En waarom zou hij dat verklappen aan zo’n gemene en valse koning ?

Sindsdien begon de toren nog meer te stralen, en de indiaanse bloemen begonnen naar de toren toe te groeien. Ze werden elke dag wilder en begonnen scherpe dorens voort te brengen, zodat niemand de toren meer kon beklimmen. Ze groeiden zo hoog dat ze helemaal in het rijk van de kachelman terechtkwamen. De kachelman was daar natuurlijk erg blij mee, maar kon nog steeds niet spreken. Elk jaar brachten de indiaanse bloemen prachtig bloesem voort, en op een dag zei één van de bloemen : ‘Kachelman, zodra de bloesem een druppel wonderhoning voortbrengt : slik het in. Dan zul je weer spreken.’ De kachelman wachtte totdat de druppel zou komen, en toen hij slikte kon hij niet alleen spreken, maar ook stond er een indiaanse prinses voor hem. Zij was gehuld in bloesem en de wonderlijkste bloemen. ‘Ik ben de bloemenprinses,’ zei ze. En ze leidde hem naar een trap geheel gemaakt van bloemen, en de trap was heel geurig. Helemaal bovenaan de trap waren er vlammetjes waardoor al zijn kacheltjes weer aan konden gaan. En voordat de kachelman het wist stond hij bovenop die hoge toren en had een uitzicht over het hele land.

‘Hallo,’ zei de toren, ‘nog nooit heeft er iemand op mijn top gestaan, en het is zo’n heerlijk gevoel. Daarom geef ik je nu vleugeltjes, zodat je hier altijd weer terug kan komen.’ En zo vloog de kachelman weg met zijn indiaans prinsesje, want nu hij zo hoog was gekomen, wilde hij eigenlijk alleen maar hoger. En de bloemen groeiden heel snel met hen mee, en volgden hen overal. En elk jaar bracht de bloesem weer nieuwe indiaanse prinsesjes voort. De kachelman kwam nooit meer terug naar de toren, en sindsdien is het geluid van de toren alleen maar harder geworden. Men zegt dat dat is omdat hij de kachelman roept.

De Bijenprinses

Hoog in de wolken leefden eens een grote groep indiaanse reuzen. Ze waren heel groot, heel dik, en alles ging erf langzaam. Op een dag besloten ze over de wolken naar beneden te komen. Dat ging allemaal erg langzaam. Ze wilden beneden op zoek gaan naar een splinter van een bijzondere rozenstruik. Die splinter die zou zo oud zijn, dat hij van goud zou zijn

geworden. De indiaanse reuzen wisten dat als ze die splinter zouden zaaien, dan zou er een roos uitkomen, zo sterk en zo hoog, dat ze door te klimmen bij hun voorouders konden komen.

Na een tijdje hadden ze de gouden splinter gevonden, maar deze was in bezit van een dwerg. Ze boden de dwerg van alles aan in ruil voor de gouden splinter, zoals een wolkenspinner, of een wolkenwever, maar de dwerg wilde de gouden splinter niet ruilen. Maar omdat de indiaanse reuzen zolang en intens smeekten zei de dwerg uiteindelijk : 'Goed dan, ik zie dat jullie de gouden splinter erg graag willen hebben. Ik doe het alleen als ik jullie indiaans prinsesje ervoor krijg. 'Wat ?' dachten de indiaanse reuzen. 'Maar goed, als er geen andere ruil mogelijk is, dan moet het maar.' En zo gingen de reuzen terug om hun indiaanse prinsesje waar ze zoveel van hielden naar de dwerg te brengen. En zo kregen de reuzen de gouden splinter. Toen ze weer boven in de wolken waren zaaiden ze de splinter direkt in een grote pot. Niet lang daarna stond er een enorm grote, taaie roos die enorm hoog begon te groeien, en al gauw klommen de indiaanse reuzen naar het rijk van hun voorouders. Maar die voorouders waren helemaal niet zo blij. Ze vonden het dom dat de reuzen hun prinsesje hadden omgeruild. Maar de voorouders waren zo groot en zo dik dat ze niet over de roos naar beneden zouden kunnen. Dan zouden ze te pletter vallen.

Inmiddels bij de dwerg moest het indiaanse prinsesje een hoop zwaar werk verrichten. Ook moest het prinsesje veel kamers schrobben, en de was doen. Het meisje was doodongelukkig, maar op een dag nam de dwerg het meisje mee naar een diepe plaats onder de grond. Hier leefden een heleboel ratten, en de dwerg zei dat als het meisje de ratten tam kon maken, dan hoefde ze niet meer te werken. Dat was een zware opdracht voor het meisje. De ratten waren niet makkelijk en beten haar overal. Toch lukte het het indiaans prinsesje om de ratten tam te maken. Nu kon de dwerg ritjes gaan maken op de ratten, en ook het prinsesje ging vaak met hem mee. Op een dag kwamen ze nog dieper onder de grond. Hier leefden beren, en weer vroeg de dwerg of het indiaanse prinsesje de beren wilde temmen. Als beloning zou de dwerg haar dan meenemen naar een geheime plaats. Ook de beren waren niet makkelijk, en beten haar overal, maar uiteindelijk na een lange tijd waren de beren tam. Nu kon de dwerg ook op de beren ritjes gaan maken, en het meisje ging vaak met hem mee. Op een dag zei het meisje : 'Je hebt me beloofd om me mee te nemen naar die geheime plaats.'

En zo nam de dwerg het indiaanse prinsesje mee naar een plaats waar een zeldzame roos stond. De roos was zo prachtig dat het indiaanse prinsesje haar ogen er niet vanaf kon houden. 'Als je voor de roos zal zorgen en haar genegenheid wint, dan zul je kunnen komen waar je maar wilt, enkel door een gedachte.' Het meisje begon de roos te verzorgen, en na een lange tijd won het indiaanse prinsesje eindelijk haar genegenheid. En inderdaad, door een enkele gedachte kon het meisje komen waar ze maar wilde. Maar het prinsesje dacht er niet aan om terug te gaan naar de indiaanse reuzen. Ze had het hier immers zo naar haar zin.

Maar op een dag werd de dwerg ernstig ziek. Het indiaanse prinsesje was erg verdrietig. 'Ga naar het veld van rozen achter de zeldzame roos, en verzorg hen, want ze zijn blind, doof, en kunnen niet spreken. Als je hun genegenheid wint dan kun je wie je maar wilt genezen door enkel een

gedachte.’ Het meisje ging naar het veld toe door enkel een gedachte, want zij had die gave van de zeldzame roos gekregen. In het veld zag ze de prachtigste rozen, en begon hen te verzorgen. Na niet al te lange tijd won ze hun genegenheid, en werd het indiaanse prinsesje begiftigd met de gave dat ze door een simpele gedachte kon genezen wie ze wilde. Snel ging het indiaanse meisje naar de dwerg toe, die inmiddels doodziek was, en genas hem.

De dwerg was haar nu zo dankbaar dat hij haar een gouden sleutel gaf, waardoor ze in het rijk van zijn voorouders kon komen. Toen ze daar aankwam zag ze de kleinste en dunste wezentjes, allemaal als gouden splinters. Toen ze ze aanraakte veranderden ze direkt in bijen, en vlogen met haar mee naar boven. De bijen brachten haar tot de meest zeldzame bronnen van wonderlijke honing. Het meisje was zo verrukt van de honing, dat ze er taarten van begon te maken. Eerst bracht ze de taarten naar de dwerg, maar later wilde ze ook de honingtaarten brengen naar de indiaanse reuzen. De bijen hielpen haar ermee, en uiteindelijk kwam ze terecht in het rijk van de voorouders van de indiaanse reuzen. Hier waren ze allemaal, en ze waren erg blij haar te zien. In een zaal werden de taarten op grote tafels gezet, en begonnen de reuzen te eten zoals ze nog nooit hadden gegeten. Maar daarbij maakten ze zo’n kliederboel, en werd er zoveel gemorst, dat zelfs grote druppels honing naar beneden vielen. Waar de druppels de grond raakten ontstonden er steden en dorpen. Maar het trok ook de roofdieren aan, en die waren al snel in gevecht om de overheerlijke honing.

Het indiaanse prinsesje keek naar beneden en zag wat er gebeurde. Ze was er erg verdrietig om. Maar ze wist dat ook de roofdieren kon komen waar zij was, door het liefhebben van bloemen, en door het temmen van ratten en beren. Ze wilde het hen wel vertellen, maar de roofdieren maakten zo’n lawaai. Toen besloot het indiaanse prinsesje de bijen naar hen toe te sturen om het te vertellen. Maar één voor één werden de bijen door de roofdieren doodgeslagen. Het indiaanse prinsesje was woedend. Toen nam ze een kan met de wonderlijkste honing en goot het naar beneden. Al snel ontstond er een wilde zee van honing, en de roofdieren raakten geheel vast onder de kleverige honing. Toen kwamen de zon en de sterren naar beneden om de honing van de roofdieren af te likken, maar al gauw gingen de zon en de sterren ook in de honing baden, en wilden niet meer terug naar hun oude plaatsen. Omdat er steeds meer sterren kwamen begon de zee van honing te stijgen en te stijgen. Het indiaanse prinsesje moest nu iets doen, anders zou alles vollopen. Maar het meisje wist niet wat ze doen moest, en besloot de dwerg om raad te vragen. Maar die was niet meer te vinden, want beneden was alles ondergelopen. Ook de rozen kon het meisje niet vinden, en uiteindelijk besloot ze terug te gaan naar het rijk van de voorouders van de dwerg, in een kelder. Ook daar was alles al ondergelopen, maar in de verte zag ze iets glinsteren. Het was een gouden splinter, misschien wel de laatste. Ze raakte de splinter aan, en de splinter veranderde in een bij. Ze stapte op de bij, en vloog naar de plaats waar de zon eens stond. Hier was ze veilig, en niemand heeft haar ooit nog teruggezien.

Het Tovertouw

Eens woonden er een heleboel indiaanse feeen in een kasteel om daar de wonderlijkste toverschatten van het land te bewaken. Ze wilden de toverschatten graag met het volk delen, maar ze waren bang dat het in verkeerde handen zou vallen. Daarom hadden ze afgesproken dat zij die tot het kasteel zouden komen eerst een tovertouw moesten overwinnen, daarna een toverzwaard en als derde een vleesetend tovervarken van metaal.

Het tovertouw was zo verschrikkelijk dat het vele ridders de diepte introk, en zij die door het tovertouw werden meegenomen naar de dieptes van het kasteel werden nooit meer teruggezien. Het tovertouw was afschuwelijk sterk en lang, en eigenlijk kon niemand er tegenop. Zo ging dat eeuwenlang door, totdat eigenlijk niemand meer het kasteel indurfde.

Maar toch was er op een dag een boerenzoon die wel een poging zou willen maken. Werken op het land beviel hem niet, en leren kon hij niet. Toen hij het tovertouw zag vroeg hij : ‘Zeg tovertouw, kun je mij vertellen hoe ik jou te slim af kan zijn ?’ Het tovertouw maakte zich extra lang en zei : ‘Wie mij raakt, die brandt zich, want vuurheet ben ik. Maar zij die het handschoentje van ijskoud dragen zullen aan mij ontsnappen.’

‘En waar kan ik dat handschoentje van ijskoud vinden ?’ vroeg de boerenzoon. Toen wees het tovertouw helemaal naar boven waar een klein plankje hing met de handschoen erop. De boerenzoon wist niet hoe hij daar moest komen. ‘Zeg, hoe kan ik daar komen ?’ vroeg de boerenzoon.

‘Daar kun je niet komen,’ zei het tovertouw. ‘Net als al die anderen zul je door mij in de diepte worden geworpen.’

‘Oh, maar ik geloof er niks van dat je zo sterk bent,’ zei de boerenzoon. ‘Als je zo sterk bent, bewijs me dat dan maar eens. Pak die grote steen naast mij maar eens op en werp hem een flink eind in de lucht. Dan zal ik je geloven.’ Het tovertouw pakte de grote steen en slingerde hem een eind omhoog, zo hoog dat de steen op het plankje terechtkwam. Het plankje brak en de hadnschoen van ijskoud viel naar beneden. Snel ving de boerenjongen de handschoen op, deed hem om zijn hand en greep het tovertouw. Direkt werd het touw slap, en de boerenjongen kon het touw makkelijk meenemen. Maar dieper in het kasteel kwam hij het toverzwaard tegen. Het toverzwaard was zo snel dat de boerenjongen niets zou kunnen beginnen, ook niet met het tovertouw. Want zodra de boerenjongen het handvat wilde grijpen vloog het toverzwaard weg, en het toverzwaard hakte telkens het tovertouw doormidden. En al die delen begonnen ook weer te groeien, en maakten het de boerenjongen erg moeilijk.

‘Hoe kan ik je handvat grijpen ?’ vroeg de boerenjongen aan het toverzwaard.

'Door het handschoentje van langzaam,' zei het toverzwaard.

En waar is dat handschoentje ?' vroeg de jongen. Toen wees het toverzwaard naar boven, waar een klein plankje hing met het handschoentje van langzaam erop. 'Maar daar kun jij toch nooit komen,' zei het toverzwaard. 'Geef de moed maar op.'

De jongen had gehoord dat het toverzwaard koppen afhakte van mannen die tot hier waren gekomen, en dat nog nooit iemand langs het toverzwaard was gekomen. 'Zeg, ik geloof er niks van dat je zo sterk bent,' zei de boerenzoon. 'Kun jij die grote steen naast mij eens optillen en een flink eind omhoog slingeren ?'

'Ik kijk wel beter uit,' zei het toverzwaard, 'ik wil het plankje niet raken.'

'Nou, kun je dan die grote steen eens flink in stukken hakken ? Dan geloof ik dat je zo sterk bent,' zei de jongen. Trots vloog het toverzwaard naar de reusachtige steen en hakte hem met gemak in een aantal stukken. Snel pakte de jongen een stuk steen en smeet het naar het plankje toe waar het handschoentje van langzaam lag. De steen raakte het handschoentje van langzaam, dat direkt naar beneden viel. De boerenjongen ving het op, deed het om z'n andere hand en greep het handvat van het toverzwaard. Snel sloeg hij zich een weg door al dat touw heen.

Dieper in het kasteel kwam hij na een tijdje het vleesetende tovervarken van metaal tegen. Het varken vloog hem direkt aan, en de boerenzoon werd direkt flink gebeten, en kon niet veel met het toverzwaard en tovertouw beginnen. Het varken was veel te wild en te hard. 'Mannetjes als jou vreet ik zo op,' zei het vleesetende tovervarken van metaal.

'Hoe kan ik aan jou ontsnappen ?' vroeg de boerenzoon.

'Alleen door het keteltje van zachtheid,' zei het vleesetende tovervarken van metaal.

'En waar is dat keteltje te vinden ?' vroeg de boerenjongen.

Even was het een tijdje stil. Daarna wees het varken in de diepte van een waterput dichtbij hen. De jongen zag iets glinsteren, maar zelfs zijn tovertouw kon er niet bijkomen, zo diep lag het keteltje.

'Ik eet alles wat los en vastzit,' zei het varken.

'Oh ja ?' vroeg de jongen. 'Nou, eet die grote steen naast mij dan eens op.'

En in een paar seconden vrat het varken de reusachtige steen die naast de jongen lag op. Het varken was ineens een stuk groter en zwaarder, en begon dorst te krijgen. Snel ging het varken naar de waterput, en boog helemaal over de rand heen om wat water te kunnen drinken. Snel gaf de boerenjongen hem een duw, terwijl het varken in de put plofte. Het varken zonk erg snel omdat hij zo zwaar was, en na een tijdje kwam hij in het keteltje van zachtheid terecht waarin hij verdween. Het keteltje dreef toen langzaam omhoog. De boerenjongen nam het keteltje op zijn rug, en kwam na niet al te lange tijd bij de schatkamer van het kasteel aan. Hier stond een indiaanse fee hem al op te wachten. 'Dappere man,' zei de fee. 'Je mag uitkiezen wat je wil.' Maar de jongen keek wat in het rond, en niets maar dan ook niets kon hetgeen hij al droeg overtreffen : het handschoentje van ijskoud met het

tovertouw, het handschoentje van langzaam met het toverzwaard, en het keteltje van zachtheid. ‘Ik heb genoeg aan wat ik heb,’ zei de jongen. En keerde weer terug naar waar hij vandaan was gekomen.

De Toverfluit

Er was eens een dwerg met een toverfluit die vaak op pad ging om met zijn toverfluit feeen te bevrijden uit voorwerpen waarin zij opgesloten waren. Op een dag zette hij eens een heleboel indiaanse feeen vrij, en bracht hen naar een oud leeg kasteel waar ze een kamer kregen. Onder het kasteel waren verborgen schatkamers met indiaans snoep waarvan je zou gaan zingen als je het zou eten. Maar alleen de toverfluit kon met verschillende deuntjes die schatkamers openen.

Op een dag was de toverfluit gestolen, en de dwerg was erg droevig. Toen hij merkte dat de indiaanse feeen zoveel zongen wist hij wat er aan de hand was. Ze hadden van het indiaanse snoep gegeten. Maar wie had de schatkamers voor hen geopend, of het naar hen gebracht ?

Na een tijdje liet hij alle feeen bij zich komen om verhaal te doen, maar ze zeiden allemaal dat ze zingend wakker werden die ochtend en niet wisten wat er was gebeurd. De dwerg vond het maar vreemd. Gelukkig was het snoep na een tijdje weer uitgewerkt en werd het weer rustig in het kasteel. Iemand had dus de feeen in hun slaap gevoerd, maar wie ?

Op een dag kwam er een oude vrouw bij het kasteel. Toen de dwerg opendeed griste de vrouw snel de toverfluit tevoorschijn, floot een deuntje, en sloot daardoor de dwerg op in een magisch voorwerp. Nu was het een koud kunstje om ook de feeen te betoveren. Maar één fee was die dag niet in het kasteel. En toen ze die avond thuiskwam was ze erg verdrietig dat er niemand was.

Ze begon overal in en om het kasteel te zoeken, en kwam uiteindelijk ook bij de schatkamers van indiaans snoep terecht. Daar was de heks ook geweest, maar had per ongeluk één van de deuren open laten staan. Het meisje ging naar binnen, en nam wat van het snoep. Direkt begon ze te zingen. Ook zag ze een vreemde vaas staan van verschillend soort donker gekleurd glas als edelgesteente. De vaas vertelde haar wat er gebeurd was, en het meisje werd erg verdrietig. Er lag verder geen indiaans snoep meer, omdat de heks de rest had meegenomen. Het meisje besloot de vaas mee te nemen, en ging weer naar boven. Enkele jaren gingen voorbij, en het meisje leefde in treurigheid. Nooit durfde het meisje de poort van het kasteel open te doen, bang om betoverd te worden. Het meisje huilde veel, en altijd als ze huilde, ving de vaas haar tranen op. Op een dag was de vaas helemaal vol, en sprak : ‘Nu ik

vol ben, kun je naar de andere schatkamers gaan. Giet wat van de tranen in het slot, en de deur zal opengaan.' En zo ging het meisje met de vaas vol tranen naar de dichtstbijzijnde schatkamer om te doen wat de vaas sprak. En direkt ging de deur open. Maar ook hier had de heks bijna al het snoep weggenomen. Maar wel stond hier een andere vaas, en die was vol met spinnenwebben. Met de twee vazen liep ze naar de volgende schatkamer. Weer opende ze de deur zoals de vaas gesproken had, en kon naar binnen. Hier lag nog veel snoep, maar voor de berg van dat indiaans snoep stonden twee honden. Ze sprongen op het feeenmeisje af, en van schrik sloeg ze de honden met de beide vazen, die daardoor allebei in duizenden stukjes kapotvlogen. Maar de honden lagen nu als dood op de grond. Het meisje nam wat van het snoep, en at zoveel dat haar stem luider en luider werd, en ze begon meer en meer te zingen. Maar achter haar viel ineens de deur in het slot.

'Zo zo,' zei een stem, 'als je nu al dat indiaans snoep hebt gegeten, dan zul je in het vervolg iedere deur met je stem kunnen openen.' En zo at het meisje nog even door, en toen alles op was hoefde ze maar haar mond open te doen, en alle deuren gingen voor haar open. In één van de schatkamers bleek de heks te wonen, en stond ook het magische voorwerp waar haar vrienden in opgesloten zaten. Toen de heks haar zag begon de heks op haar toverfluit te spelen, maar kon haar met geen mogelijkheid betoveren. Het feeenmeisje sprak toen tot het magische voorwerp dat het haar vrienden moest loslaten, en direkt stonden de dwerg en de andere feeen voor haar. 'En nu ga jij in dat magische voorwerp !' riep ze tegen de heks, en met een gil verdween de heks in het voorwerp. Snel pakte de dwerg zijn toverfluit en haalde diep adem. De dwerg was zo blij en dankbaar dat hij ze leidde naar een verborgen schatkamer wat uitliep in een verborgen rijk. En hier zijn ze altijd blijven wonen.

De Fluitketelman

Er was eens een man geheel gemaakt van fluitketels. Zodra de ketels begonnen te fluiten kon de man altijd vliegen. Dan vloog hij altijd hoog en heel ver weg. Maar op een dag kwam hij een wesp tegen, die hem probeerde te prikken, maar de angel brak stuk op één van de ketels. Daarna kwam er een woeste hoornaar op hem af, die agressief zijn gif naar hem toe spoot, maar het gif werd door de ketels weggeketst. Toen kwam er een vogel, gaf de man een klap met zijn enorme vleugel, en de fluitketelman verloor zijn evenwicht en viel.

Na een lange val kwam de fluitketelman in een wespennest terecht. De wespen waren woest en probeerden door de gaatjes naar binnen te vliegen.

Maar de ketels begonnen zo te koken dat ze niet ver kwamen. De fluitketelman rende weg, maar kwam toen in een hoornaarsnest terecht. Ook zij probeerden door de gaatjes naar binnen te vliegen, en zij konden wel tegen de kokende hitte. Boven in zijn neus was een gloeiende dop waardoor altijd alles kon koken. Die gloeiende dop die drukten ze van binnenuit weg, en toen had de fluitketelman ineens een gat in zijn neus.

De hoornaars zochten door het hele lichaam van de fluitketelman, in alle ketels, of ze nog iets bruikbaars konden vinden, maar ze vonden niets. Nu de fluitketelman zijn neus had verloren zou hij niet meer kunnen koken, en dus ook niet meer kunnen vliegen. Maar de hoornaars waren de slechtsten niet. Ze zeiden : ‘Weet je wat. Wij blijven vanaf nu gewoon in jouw ketels wonen, en dan zul je altijd kunnen vliegen. Jouw fluitketels zijn goede nesten voor ons. En zo hoef je niet eerst te wachten op het fluitje. Je kan nu gewoon vliegen wanneer je wilt.’ En dat vond de fluitketelman wel een goed idee. De hoornaars konden zo goed vliegen, en nu waren ze altijd bij hem.

De fluitketelman begon weer ritjes door de lucht te maken, maar al gauw kwam hij die vervelende vogel tegen, en voordat hij het wist lag hij weer op de grond. Ditmaal was hij bij de indianen terecht gekomen. De indianen prikten hem met hun speren, maar ze kwamen niet door de ketels heen, en al gauw hadden ze woeste hoornaars achter zich aan.

De indianen waren onder de indruk van het gif van de hoornaars, en dachten dat ze dat wel voor hun wapens konden gebruiken. En zo sloten ze vriendschap met de fluitketelman en de hoornaars. De hoornaars zouden voortaan op hun wapenen zitten om ze te voorzien van gif. En dat beviel de hoornaars zo goed, dat even later de fluitketelman bijna geen hoornaars meer in zijn ketel had, en dus niet meer kon vliegen. De hoornaars hadden het bij de indianen veel te veel naar hun zin.

De fluitketelman raakte in gesprek met een indiaans meisje die een slaapmatje had wat van bijen gemaakt was. Hiermee kon ze vliegen, en dat maakte het voor de fluitketelman interessant. Al snel maakten de twee lange reizen op het bijenmatje, maar op een dag kwamen ze de vervelende vogel tegen die hen van het bijenmatje afpikte. Het meisje viel in de rivier, maar de fluitketelman viel ernaast op een harde rots. Alle ketels waren van elkaar gebroken, en het meisje moest alle stukken bij elkaar zoeken. De moeder van het meisje maakte een grote theemuts voor de fluitketelman die alle ketels goed bij elkaar zou houden. Ze maakte die theemuts van mieren, en toen de theemuts over de ketels werd geschoven werden de ketels zo heet dat ze als nooit tevoren begonnen te koken. Nu kon de fluitketelman weer vliegen als de beste. Toen hij de vervelende vogel weer tegenkwam en de vleugel de ketels raakte slaakte de vogel een gil en verbrandde ogenblikkelijk, terwijl het meisje beneden het as opving. Met het as ging ze naar een droog veld, waar ze het as zaaide. Niet lang daarna groeiden er bloemen die leken op fluitketeltjes. Het meisje begon ze te plukken en maakte er een vest van voor haarzelf. Nu kon zij ook vliegen.

En samen maakte ze weer lange reizen, totdat ze op een dag een huisje heel hoog in de lucht vonden dat geheel gemaakt was van fluitketels. Toen ze in het huisje stapten merkten ze dat wanneer de ketels kookten het huisje opsteeg. Na een tijdje kwam het huisje in een hele grote hal aan. Daar zat een

heks die geheel gemaakt was van fornuisjes. De heks brak uit in gelach. ‘Zo,’ krijste ze, ‘ik zie dat mijn val goed heeft gewerkt.’ Ze trok de fluitketelman en het meisje snel uit het huisje, en wilde de fluitketelman in een oven duwen. In de oven werden de fluitketels van de man omgesmolten tot kleine fornuisjes. ‘Zo,’ lachte de heks tegen het meisje. ‘Nu zul je je leven lang achter de fornuisjes moeten werken.’ Toen de man uit de oven kwam kon hij zich nauwelijks bewegen. De man was zo zwaar geworden dat hij niet meer kon vliegen.

Maar op een dag kwam het verdwenen bijenmatje ineens opduiken. Het bijenmatje schoof over de vloer heen, vlak voor de voeten van de heks. Telkens als de heks een stap zette ving het bijenmatje de voet op, en verschoof het een stukje. Na een tijdje begon de heks er zo moe en duizelig van te worden dat ze neerstortte. Toen vloog het bijenmatje naar de man toe, omhulde hem als een gewaad zodat hij weer kon vliegen. Samen met het meisje vloog hij toen weg uit het heksenkasteel. Weer kwamen ze bij de andere indianen terecht. Die konden de onderdelen van de man goed gebruiken voor hun wapens. Inmiddels was het veld van de fluitketelbloemetjes zo volgegroeid dat de man weer helemaal een fluitketelman kon worden.

Het Toverzadel

Er was eens een tovenaar die een toverzadel had waarmee hij elk dier en elk beest kon berijden. Maar op een dag was zijn toverzadel gestolen. Niet alleen kon hij niet meer op monsters en andere gedrochten rondrijden, maar nu werden zij de baas over hem, en wierpen hem in een diepe put in een afgelegen kasteel.

In de put kwam de tovenaar een oud indiaans vrouwtje tegen. De tovenaar vertelde het verhaal, en het vrouwtje zei dat zij zelf toverteugels had waarmee ze hetzelfde zou kunnen doen, alleen ze zat hier opgesloten. Er waren geen dieren of beesten in de buurt, alleen vloog er wel eens een vogel de put in om voedsel te brengen. Maar ze had nooit de kracht om de toverteugels over de vogel te werpen.

Maar daar wist de tovenaar wel wat op. Hij zou het zelf wel doen, als de vogel weer zou komen. Het vrouwtje vertelde dat het een grote vogel was, en hen makkelijk beiden kon dragen om hen uit de put te brengen, maar dan moest de vogel eerst toverteugels hebben.

En zo gebeurde het. Toen de vogel kwam wierp de tovenaar de toverteugels over de vogel, en alles paste direkt goed. Snel sprong de tovenaar op de vogel en liet toen het vrouwtje oppikken. Samen vlogen ze op de grote vogel

naar boven, maar bovenaan de put hadden de beesten al in de gaten wat er aan het gebeuren was, en ze brachten een grote deksel over de put. Nu kon de vogel er niet uitvliegen.

Nu zouden ze omkomen van de honger, maar de vogel sprak dat onder de put een grote draak woonde. Als de vogel de draak zou roepen, dan zou de draak wel door de grond omhoog komen om hen eruit te halen. De draak zou met gemak door de deksel heen kunnen breken.

En zo gebeurde het. In een vreemde taal riep de vogel de draak, en al snel begon de grond onder hun voeten te bewegen. Niet lang daarna verscheen de kop van de draak uit de bodem, en kwam daarna helemaal naar boven. De vogel, de tovenaar en het vrouwtje klommen op de rug van de draak, en met gemak brak de draak de deksel met zijn kop, en klom naar boven. De beesten waren woedend, en schoten de draak met pijlen. Na een tijdje was de draak zo verzwakt dat ze de draak met daarop het vrouwtje, de vogel en de tovenaar naar een grote toren brachten in een net. Hier werden ze in een grote kooi gestopt.

Na een tijdje kwam de draak weer bij bewustzijn en zei dat in de top van de toren een klein meisje woonde. Het meisje heette Klauwsanda. Zij droeg een ring waarmee ze alle kooien van het kasteel kon openen. De draak maakte hele hoge geluiden waarmee hij haar riep, en na een tijdje gleed het meisje in de kooi. Ze kon met gemak door de tralies heen, want ze was zo klein. De draak tilde haar op en bracht haar helemaal naar het slot, waar ze met haar ring de kooi kon openen. De ring gloeide helemaal, en niet lang daarna gingen ze in een malle optocht naar beneden : de draak, de tovenaar, het vrouwtje, de vogel en het meisje met haar ring. Gelukkig was het nacht, en alle beesten sliepen.

Toen ze buiten waren legde het meisje de ring tegen de poort aan, terwijl er tralies voor verschenen, en ook voor alle ramen van het kasteel. Nu waren de beesten voor altijd opgesloten. Alleen de tovenaar zou wel heel graag zijn toverzadel terugwillen. En toen gebeurde er iets heel vreemds. Het meisje hield haar ring in de lucht, en sprak : 'Ring van vlug en plotseling, laat ons zien waar het toverzadel hing.' En plotseling begon het kasteel kleiner en kleiner te worden en veranderde in het toverzadel. Nu wist de tovenaar ook wat ze met zijn toverzadel hadden gedaan. Tevreden greep de tovenaar het toverzadel, zette het op de draak, en ze maakten nog een prachtig ritje door de nacht.

Langbeentje

Er was eens een indiaans meisje dat Langbeentje heette. Als ze verdrietig was dan groeiden haar benen altijd zo lang dat iedereen haar altijd zo noemde. Maar de koning vond het maar vreemd zo’n meisje in zijn koninkrijk te hebben, en toen ze wat ouder werd begon men steeds banger voor haar te worden. Daarom liet de koning haar op een dag opsluiten in een toren van het koninklijk kasteel. Natuurlijk was het meisje nu nog vaker verdrietig, en altijd groeiden haar benen dan helemaal door de tralies heen over de trappen naar beneden.

Op een dag was het meisje zo verdrietig dat haar benen helemaal het kasteel uitgroeiden. In een dorpje in de buurt zag een jongetje een schoen binnenkomen met een heel lang been. Hij besloot het been te volgen en kwam helemaal bij het kasteel van de koning terecht. Helemaal over de trappen volgde hij het been en kwam uiteindelijk bij de tralies terecht waarachter het meisje opgesloten zat. Het meisje was erg verdrietig, en hij probeerde haar te troosten. Ook ging hij naar de koning toe, en vroeg of het meisje weer uit het kasteel mocht, maar de koning wilde daar niets van weten. Het meisje zou veel te gevaarlijk zijn met die groeiende benen. Iedereen was bang voor haar.

Maar vanaf die dag was het jongetje zoveel mogelijk bij haar. Op een dag was er brand in de andere toren van het kasteel, waar het dochtertje van de koning woonde. Ze riep om hulp vanuit het torenraampje, maar niemand kon haar helpen, omdat de toren al bijna helemaal in brand stond. De koning was in rep en roer, en wist niet hoe hij zo’n groot vuur kon blussen. Maar snel ging het jongetje naar de koning, en zei dat Langbeentje wel kon helpen. Direkt liet de koning Langbeentje achter de tralies weghalen, maar ook Langbeentje kon niets tegen het vuur beginnen. Maar ze kon wel het dochtertje van de koning redden. Haar benen groeiden zo lang aan dat ze makkelijk in het torenkamertje kon komen door het raampje. Ze greep het dochtertje van de koning, en bracht haar snel uit de brandende toren.

Snel brandde het hele kasteel af, maar iedereen was veilig. De koning was zo blij en dankbaar dat Langbeentje een wens mocht doen. Langbeentje wenste dat ze gewoon weer in het land mocht wonen, in een huisje naast de koning en naast het jongetje. En zo ging niet alleen Langbeentje weer gewoon in een dorpje wonen, maar ook de koning en zijn hofhouding. En zo zijn ze altijd naast elkaar blijven wonen.

De Dag dat Alles Stilstond

Er was eens een beest die heel diep onder de grond leefde in een keuken die niet meer gebruikt werd. Hier was het voedsel uitgestorven, en het beest was door de honger erg traag geworden. Eens in de zoveel tijd maakte hij een reis naar het aardoppervlak, en dan als hij na lange tijd aankwam, gebeurden er altijd verschrikkelijke dingen. Iedereen gooide dan altijd met stenen naar hem, en dan keerde het beest altijd weer verdrietig terug naar de keuken. Maar op een dag was er een nieuwe koning op het aardoppervlak, en hij heette het beest wel welkom. Het beest mocht in de grote eetzaal van zijn kasteel wonen, en de koning zorgde altijd dat de tafels volstonden met lekker eten. Het beest kwam hier zo van tot rust dat hij nog trager werd dan hij al was. Ook de bewoners van het aardoppervlak kwamen erg tot rust nu het beest geen verschrikkelijke dingen meer veroorzaakte, en iedereen werd trager en trager, totdat het hele koninkrijk stilstond.

De Gesmolten Parel

Er was eens een beest die zachter was dan de zee. Hij kon in allerlei vormen verschijnen, en hij kon zelfs groter worden dan de zee. Ook werd hij soms zo klein als een parel in een schelp. Op een dag daagde een machtig piratenkapitein het beest uit voor een gevecht. De piratenkapitein stond op zijn schip en hief zijn zwaard in de lucht, en sprak : ‘Oh, beest van de zee, groter en zachter dan de zee, als ik jou kan verslaan, laat mij dan de geheimen zien van jouw zachtheid en de schatten van zeeschuim.’ Maar het beest was veel te vriendelijk, en wilde helemaal niet vechten. Met een golf hief het beest het scheepje op, en bracht het scheepje naar een eiland. Maar de machtige piratenkapitein werd steeds kwaaier. Hij liet alle vissen in de zee ombrengen door zijn piraten, en alle parels liet hij opvissen. De parels liet hij omsmelten tot standbeelden van het beest om het beest te bespotten. Ook bouwde de piratenkapitein huizen en poorten van de omgesmolten parels. Toen werd ook het beest kwaad en trok de machtige piratenkapitein de diepte in. Zijn hoed bleef echter op de golven drijven, en na lange tijd spoelde de hoed op een strand aan. Een indiaans jongetje vond de hoed, een echte piratenhoed van een kapitein.

Op een dag sprak de hoed tot het jongetje over wat er gebeurt was, en het jongetje begon erg boos te worden toen hij hoorde wat het beest had gedaan. Het jongetje ging naar de zee en daagde het beest uit, net als de kapitein eens

deed, en zei : ‘als ik je dan heb verslagen, laat mij dan de geheimen zien van jouw zachtheid en de schatten van het zeeschuim.’ Direkt greep een grote golf het jongetje en trok hem de diepte in. Het jongetje kwam in een enorm zachte ruimte, waar hij de standbeelden zag staan. ‘Maar wat zijn dit voor een prachtige standbeelden ?’ vroeg het jongetje.

‘Vind je ze dan prachtig ?’ vroeg het beest. ‘Een piratenkapitein heeft die laten maken om mij te bespotten.’

‘Nou, maar ik vind ze prachtig,’ zei de jongen. ‘Waar is die piratenkapitein nu ?’ En toen bracht het beest de jongen naar een plaats waarvoor tralies stonden. Daarachter zat de kapitein. De jongen nam de hoed af, en schoof hem door de tralies om hem aan de kapitein te geven.

‘Bedankt jongen,’ zei de kapitein, ‘maar er is niets wat mij hier kan redden.’ Maar alles en alles om hen heen begon zachter te worden. Het beest was namelijk blij dat de jongen de standbeelden zo prachtig vond, en nu was het beest zelfs blij dat de piratenkapitein de beelden had laten maken. Na een tijdje waren de tralies weggesmolten, en stond er een prachtig zachte verschijning als een prins voor hen. De prins keek de jongen aan, en sprak : ‘Eens was ik betoverd door een boze heks, en die betovering zou pas verbroken worden als iemand mijn hart zou doen smelten. Mijn hart was hard als een parel, alhoewel ik verder vriendelijk en zacht was. Jij hebt mijn hart doen smelten.’ Toen gaf de prins de jongen en daarna de piratenkapitein een hand, en bracht hen tot zijn koninkrijk.

De Vliegende Reuzen

Er was eens een vogel die zo groot was geworden dat hij geen plaats meer op de aarde vond. Nergens kon hij op neerdalen. Alles was te klein voor hem. Na lange tijd raakte hij moe van het vliegen, verloor wat veren en stortte neer. In een dal kwam hij terecht, waar indiaanse reuzen woonden. Zij waren ook eens te groot geworden om op de aarde een steunpunt te vinden. Ze konden nergens zitten, nergens staan. In het dal was een plaats van veren waar zij leefden, maar zij verlangden naar een andere plaats, omdat het spookte in de plaats van veren. De vogel kwam voor hen als een geroepene. De vogel was zo groot dat hij alledrie de reuzen wel kon dragen, en dan zouden de reuzen hem wel de weg wijzen naar een betere plaats.

En zo gebeurde het. Toen de vogel flink had gerust in de plaats van veren nam hij de drie reuzen mee, en die wezen hem de weg. Ze kwamen aan op een hoge plaats vol spinnenwebben. De reuzen hadden het hier naar hun zin.

Maar de vogel werd snel oud en stierf. Toen de reuzen merkten dat het ook hier begon te spoken wilden ze weer terug naar de plaats van veren. Ze wisten dat wanneer ze eenmaal zouden springen, ze nooit meer terug konden naar de plaats van spinnenwebben. Ze sprongen alledrie en kwamen weer terecht in de plaats van veren. Eén van de reuzen had een zandkorrel van de plaats van spinnenwebben onder zijn schoen, en die zandkorrel gleed door de veren naar de grond. Hier groeide een roos, die zo hoog groeide dat het de plaats van spinnenwebben bereikte. Nu konden de drie reuzen heen en weer klimmen, en op beide plaatsen spookte het na een tijdje niet meer.

De aarde was in hun ogen nu zo klein als een zandkorrel, en op een dag nam één van de reuzen de aarde tussen zijn vingers. Hij dacht aan de zandkorrel waaruit een roos was gegroeid, en zaaide zo ook de kleine aarde naast de roos. Een andere roos groeide op die zich met de roos verstrengelde, en groeide zo wild naar alle kanten uit dat het een rozenstruik werd, als een web vol rozen. En zo kwamen de reuzen tot veel meer plaatsen. Maar op die plaatsen spookte het, en ook op de plaats van veren en de plaats van spinnenwebben begon het weer te spoken. De reus kreeg al snel spijt van wat hij gedaan had, en de andere reuzen begonnen boos op hem te worden. Ook begonnen ze de vogel ineens erg te missen. Op een dag verzamelden ze zoveel mogelijk veren, en maakten er vleugels van. Dit konden ze doen omdat ze daarvoor materiaal vonden op de andere plaatsen. En zo vlogen ze op een dag met z'n drieen weg. Maar na een tijdje werden ze zo moe dat ze met z'n drieen naar beneden vielen. En ze vielen zo hard dat zelfs de veren hen niet konden opvangen. Op de grond vlogen al hun botten van elkaar af, en rolden hun hoofden in het rond. En sindsdien spookt het daar zoals het nog nooit heeft gespookt.

De Sprookjesgevangenis

Er was eens een gevangenis met cellen rondom een plein waar een stenen dwerg stond. Altijd als er iemand probeerde te ontsnappen, dan begon de stenen dwerg zo hard te zingen dat degene die probeerde te ontstappen stokstijf stond voor een hele lange tijd. Maar soms sliep de dwerg, en dan konden degenen die probeerden te ontsnappen helemaal bij een stenen trap komen. Maar zodra ze op de treden stapten begonnen die treden af te brokkelen. Er waren gelukkig ook momenten dat de trap niet afbrokkelde,

maar bovenaan de trap woonde ergens een grote spin. En een ieder die die spin zag viel direkt in slaap en werd weer wakker in z'n eigen cel.

Op een dag deed een indiaanse man een poging om te ontsnappen. De dwerg sliep net, en hij had het geluk dat de trap niet afbrokkelde. Bovenaan de trap deed hij snel een blinddoek om, zodat hij de spin niet zou kunnen zien. Maar na een tijdje voelde hij iets harigs en iets zachts. Het was de spin, en de spin had een prachtige stem. ‘Weet u,’ zei de indiaanse man, ‘hier beneden is er een trap zachter dan u, en achter de trap staat een dwerg die een nog veel prachtigere stem heeft dan u.’ De spin rende naar beneden over de trap, terwijl de trap afbrokkelde. De spin viel, en zag hoe de dwerg zijn mond opende. De spin rende op de dwerg af, maar toen de dwerg hard begon te zingen verstijfde de spin helemaal. Plotseling zag de dwerg de spin en viel direkt in slaap, terwijl de spin zichzelf zag in de gouden tand van de dwerg, en viel ook in slaap. Beiden werden ze in een cel wakker.

Sindsdien was de indiaanse man de cipier van de sprookjesgevangenis, en liet alle opgesloten sprookjeswezens los.

Het Ravijn

Er waren eens twee sprookjesrijken die door een groot ravijn gescheiden waren. Een vliegend wonderpaard bracht de sprookjeswezens altijd heen en weer, maar op een dag was het wonderpaard ernstig ziek. De sprookjeswezens besloten een brug te bouwen, en een mannetje bracht de wezens heen en weer in een karretje. Maar omdat dat niet echt snel ging werd het karretje op een dag omgebouwd tot een treintje, en niet lang daarna gingen er vele treintjes heen en weer. Op een dag was ook het wonderpaard weer beter, en probeerde weer eens naar de andere kant te vliegen. Maar dat ging niet goed, want het grote vliegende wonderpaard had al zo lang niet meer gevlogen dat hij het eigenlijk niet meer kon. En zo stortte het reusachtige paard naar beneden, viel op de brug, die direkt in elkaar stortte. Vele treintjes vlogen nu in het enorme ravijn, en het paard kon alleen zichzelf nog maar net redden. De twee sprookjesrijken waren erg verdrietig, en het wonderpaard helemaal. Het wonderpaard voelde zich erg schuldig, en huilde de hele dag door. Het hele ravijn begon vol te lopen met de tranen van het wonderpaard. Nu was er een grote zee ontstaan tussen de twee sprookjesrijken. Het wonderpaard wilde nooit meer vliegen vanwege wat er was gebeurd, maar om het goed te maken wilde hij voor de twee sprookjesrijken vanaf nu een zeeschip zijn. Weer begon hij de

sprookjeswezens heen en weer te brengen, maar alles ging erg langzaam. Na een tijdje ging geen enkel sprookjeswezen meer met het wonderpaard mee, omdat het veel te lang duurde. Op een dag dook het wonderpaard in de zee, en vond de treintjes en de brokken van de brug. Midden in de nacht bouwde het wonderpaard de brug opnieuw en liet de treintjes weer rijden. Weer dook het wonderpaard in de diepte en vond daar een grot waar nu alle sprookjeswezens woonden die eens in het ravijn waren gestort. Ze hadden het daar goed, en sindsdien is het wonderpaard daar gebleven.

Hoe Het IJs Smolt

Er waren eens twee ijspaleizen die onbereikbaar waren. Vaak kwamen ze om te plagen en andere vervelende dingen uit te halen. De ijspaleizen werden bewoond door hen die er het eerst waren, en sindsdien waren de paleizen onbereikbaar. En zo woonden er twee ijsheksen. Maar die ijsheksen konden elkaar ook niet bereiken, en zo was er dus altijd een afstand tussen de twee ijspaleizen. Op een dag was er een man die het geheim van de twee ijspaleizen kende. Hij wist dat hij de paleizen alleen kon betreden door hun spiegelbeeld. De man nam een grote spiegel mee, en toen één van de paleizen zich toonde keek de man in de spiegel naar het paleis, en stapte zo in de spiegel. Nu kon hij gemakkelijk bij het paleis komen, maar ook besefte hij nu hoe koud dat paleis was. Snel ging hij naar binnen, en zag de ijsheks staan met een ijsvlam. Hoe dichter de man bij de ijsheks kwam hoe moeizamer hij zich kon bewegen. Hij wist dat hij moest maken dat hij weg zou komen anders zou hij hier bevriezen en nooit meer wegkunnen.

Uiteindelijk ontsnapte hij weer door de spiegel, en ging toen op zoek naar het tweede paleis. Toen het tweede paleis zich vertoonde keek de man weer in de spiegel, zag het spiegelbeeld van het paleis en stapte in de spiegel om er op af te gaan. Hij wist dat deze heks net iets gevaarlijker was dan de andere heks. Hij merkte ook dat het hier veel kouder was, en daarom nam hij alleen een ijspegel van het paleis weg, en ging toen terug door de spiegel. Met de ijspegel ging hij toen weer naar het eerste paleis, door de spiegel, en toen de heks hem dit keer zag slaakte ze een gil. Tegen de kou van het andere paleis dat de man door de ijspegel droeg kon ze niet op. De ijsvlam vloog direkt naar de ijspegel toe, terwijl de heks direkt bevroor. Met de ijsvlam ging de man weer door de spiegel en ging weer naar het tweede ijspaleis. Ditmaal ging hij diep naar binnen, en toen de heks van dat paleis hem zag met de ijsvlam verloor zij ook haar eigen ijsvlam. Nu had de man twee ijsvlammen, en niet lang daarna begonnen de ijsvlammen zich als een vuur te verspreiden,

en gloeiden totdat de twee ijspaleizen geheel gesmolten waren. Nu was daar een prachtig warme zee waaraan de man voor altijd is gaan wonen. En de heksen heeft hij gelukkig nooit meer teruggezien.

Het Toverflesje

Er was eens een meisje met een geurflesje dat nooit opraakte. Zodra ze een druppeltje uit het flesje liet glijden verdween ze. Maar op een dag was het flesje gestolen, en het meisje was erg verdrietig. Een ander meisje had ook zo'n geurflesje, maar als zij een druppeltje liet glijden, dan verschenen er overal wilde dieren om haar heen. Op een dag stal het meisje het flesje van het andere meisje, maar later kreeg ze erge spijt, en bracht het flesje weer terug. 'Zolang je bij mij bent, mag je gewoon druppeltjes uit mijn flesje gebruiken, hoor,' zei het meisje van het flesje. Ook gingen ze samen op zoek naar het gestolen flesje. Op hun zoektocht kwamen ze een heleboel andere meisjes tegen met geurflesjes die nooit opraakten, en ieder meisje kon er weer wat anders mee. Zo was er ook een meisje die een flesje had waarvan elke druppel wapens om haar heen liet verschijnen. Toen de meisjes van het gestolen flesje hoorden kregen ze een idee. Ze zouden ieder een druppel van hun flesje aan het meisje zonder flesje geven. En zo kon het meisje een heleboel wonderlijke dingen doen. Op een dag zag het meisje een vogel vliegen met het gestolen flesje. Het was voor het meisje die nu een nieuw toverflesje had heel makkelijk om de vogel te volgen. Door een druppel te laten glijden kon ze achter de vogel aanvliegen, en ze kwam aan in een kasteel ergens ver weg. Hier zag ze een mannetje roeren in een ketel. Het flesje had de vogel inmiddels al naast hem gezet. 'Zeg mannetje,' zei het meisje, 'dat flesje is van mij. Uw vogel heeft het van me gestolen.'

Maar het mannetje zei dat alle geurflesjes van hem waren, omdat hij ze eens gemaakt had. Het mannetje vroeg aan het meisje van wie ze het geurflesje had gekregen. 'Van mijn moeder,' zei het meisje.

'Dan heeft ze dat eens van mij gestolen,' zei het mannetje. 'En ook al die andere geurflesjes zijn gestolen, en die wil ik terughebben.'

Toen liet het meisje haar nieuwe geurflesje zien met druppels uit alle geurflesjes, en zei dat als hij van haar dat flesje zou krijgen, dan zou hij alle geurtjes terughebben. In ruil vroeg ze daarvoor haar eigen flesje. Dan zou ze één druppel daarvan aan het mannetje geven, zodat het mannetje alles compleet had. Het mannetje was daar wel blij mee, want zo hoefde hij niet meer op zoek te gaan naar al die andere flesjes, en zo zouden de meisjes ook niet ongelukkig worden. Het meisje kreeg haar eigen flesje terug, en ook een druppel uit het flesje met het mengsel. Het mannetje was zo blij dat hij zelfs

een druppel uit de ketel gaf met een geheel nieuw mengsel. En zo kon het meisje weer verdwijnen, en leefde nog lang en gelukkig met haar toverflesje.

Het Toverei

Eens in een ver land was er een overstroming die alles dreigde onder te laten lopen. De enige plaats waar het veilig zou zijn was een indiaans elvenkasteel. Een man klopte aan om binnen te kunnen komen, maar de indiaanse elven zeiden dat als hij een plaats wilde hebben, dan zou hij eerst naar het kasteel van de heks moeten gaan om daar een toverei weg te nemen. Dat toverei had de heks eens van de indiaanse elven gestolen, en zij wilden het graag terug. Vanuit het toverei konden de meest wonderlijke dieren voortkomen.

Nu was het in het kasteel van de heks erg gevaarlijk, omdat de vloeren en plafonds bewogen en konden instorten, en de muren klapten gevaarlijk tegen elkaar aan. Nog nooit had iemand een bezoek aan dat kasteel overleefd, en daarom gaven de indiaanse elven de man toverschoenen mee en een toverhelm. Zo was het voor de man niet zo moeilijk het toverei te krijgen. Zodra de vloer wegzakte lieten de toverschoenen de man gewoon in de lucht zweven, en als het plafond naar beneden kwam dan zorgde de toverhelm dat de man niet geraakt werd. Alleen moest hij erg oppassen voor de tegen elkaar klappende muren. Na niet al te lange tijd had hij het toverei in zijn handen, en rende terug, maar het water was al angstaanjagend hoog gestegen. Zo hoog dat de indiaanse elven geen raam of deur meer los durfden te doen. De man wreef over het toverei, en er begonnen grote vissen voort te komen. Voor een tijdje kon hij op hun rug zitten, maar de golven werden zo woest dat hij telkens van de vissen werd afgeslingerd. Weer wreef hij over het toverei, en nu kwamen er grote vogels uit voort. Snel klom hij op de rug van zo’n vogel, maar het was inmiddels zo hard gaan stormen dat hij het toverei niet meer kon vasthouden. Met één rukwind vloog het toverei de zee in. De man bedacht zich geen moment en dook het toverei achterna. Op de bodem van de zee vond hij het toverei weer. Weer wreef hij eroverheen, en er kwamen mollen uit voort die een gat begonnen te graven. De man volgde met het toverei de mollen, en achter hen werd het gat weer goed dichtgemaakt. Zo groeven de mollen zich een weg helemaal tot onder het elvenkasteel, en zo konden ze op een veilige manier binnenkomen.

‘Dappere man,’ zei één van de indiaanse elven die hen door de grond omhoog zagen klimmen. De man gaf haar het toverei, en is sindsdien bij de indiaanse elven gaan wonen.

Trovelientje en de Roversjongen

Trovelientje liep op straat. Opeens stond Kiko, de roversjongen voor haar. Zijn kleren waren erg oud en versleten, en er waren wat scheuren en lappen. 'Geef me je geld,' zei Kiko zacht.

'Ik heb geen geld,' zei Trovelientje. 'Maar ik wil wel mee met je om te zien waar je woont.' Ze had een beetje medelijden met de roversjongen, en ze zag compleet geen gevaar in deze zachtmoedige jongen.

'Kom maar mee,' zei Kiko. En hij leidde haar naar een hutje in het bos. Het zag er hier allemaal erg arm uit. Trovelientje kon het wel een beetje begrijpen dat deze jongen een rover was. Hoe moest hij anders zichzelf in leven houden ?

'Weet je,' zei Kiko zachtjes. 'Ik ken een dwerg die gouden munten heeft, en hij geeft zo'n munt elke keer als ik een karweitje voor hem doe. Maar ik mag verder niets met die munten doen.'

'Laat eens zien ?' vroeg Trovelientje. Hij nam haar mee naar een diepe plek in het bos, naar een grot. In die grot stond de dwerg. De dwerg bewoog zich niet, en telkens verscheen er een gouden munt in zijn mond. En na een tijdje slikte hij die weer in.

'Zie je,' zei Kiko enthousiast. 'En als ik een karweitje doe, dan krijg ik die munt.'

'Maar je mag ze niet gebruiken ?' vroeg Trovelientje. 'Maar wat heb je daar dan aan ?'

'Ik heb ze bewaard in een kist,' zei Kiko. De kist was ergens goed verstopt achter het hutje. De kist was helemaal vol met muntjes. Trovelientje mocht in het hutje slapen die nacht. Maar toen Kiko sliep sloop ze naar de kist met gouden munten. 'Och, eentje kan ik er wel meenemen,' zei het meisje zachtjes. Maar toen ze een munt eruit pakte begonnen haar handen te branden. Ze slaakte een gil, en Kiko werd meteen wakker.

'Doe dat nooit weer,' zei hij tegen haar. 'Maar ik zie dat ook jij een rovershart hebt. Waarom blijf je niet gewoon bij me ?' En zo bleef Trovelientje bij de roversjongen wonen.

Het Meisje Met Het Roze Schortje

Er was eens een meisje dat altijd een roze schortje droeg. Het schortje was altijd rijkelijk gevuld met allerlei snoepgoed, waarvan ze uitdeelde aan iedereen die ze tegenkwam.

Op een dag werd ze lastig gevallen door een paar jongens.

Omdat het meisje magische krachten bezat, sprak ze een betovering uit, waardoor de jongens in kikkers veranderden.

In de verte zag ze nog meer jongens aankomen. Snel liep ze naar het dichtstbijzijnde huisje toe, en klopte aan. Een oude vrouw deed open. Ze vertelde wat er was gebeurd, en de oude vrouw zei dat ze wel bij haar mocht wonen, zolang ze daarvoor snoep gaf aan de oude vrouw.

Het meisje kreeg haar eigen kamer, maar midden in de nacht kwam de oude vrouw om het roze schortje te stelen. Voorzichtig maakte ze het schortje los van het slapende meisje. Maar toen de oude vrouw het helemaal los had gemaakt en in haar handen had genomen, begon de oude vrouw te branden. Ze slaakte een kreet, en het meisje werd er van wakker.

'Waarom heb je geprobeerd mijn roze schortje te stelen ?' riep het meisje.

Snel gaf de oude vrouw het roze schortje terug aan het meisje.

Het meisje keek de brandende vrouw strak aan. 'Omdat je dit gedaan hebt, zul je in snoep veranderen !' riep het meisje. De vrouw veranderde snel in snoep, waarmee het meisje haar schortje opvulde. Sindsdien is het meisje altijd in het huisje van de oude vrouw blijven wonen.

Nevinen

Er was eens een vrouw die in een slot woonde wat omgeven was door een vuurrivier. Haar vader was de koning van het land. Ze was vaak gekleed in een lange roze jurk. Ze nam vaak kinderen mee van ouders die te arm waren om voor hun kinderen te zorgen. Zij zorgde dan voor hen in het slot. Het was een goede vrouw, maar in de nacht als ze sliep werd ze altijd geplaagd door heksenstemmen. Overdag was ze altijd vrolijk, maar eigenlijk wilde ze nooit meer slapen.

Hiervoor ging ze naar de toverfee, om haar om raad te vragen. De toverfee sprak dat zij wel kon maken dat ze nooit meer hoefde te slapen, maar in de nacht zou de vrouw zo groot worden dat ze de sterren kon plukken. Daarom zou Nevinen elke nacht naar buiten moeten, naar het bos. Tegen de ochtend zou ze altijd weer haar normale lengte hebben. Nevinen wilde dat wel, en moest daarvoor een drankje drinken.

En zo gebeurde het. In de nachten groeide Nevinen altijd zo groot dat ze de sterren kon plukken. Het hele land hoorde ervan, van de prinses die niet meer slapen kon, maar altijd zo groot groeide in de nacht om de sterren te plukken. Vaak wilden de mensen en kinderen niet meer slapen sindsdien, omdat ze wilden zien hoe Nevinen de sterren zou plukken. Zij maakte mensen gelukkig, en sindsdien werd er in dat koninkrijk niet veel meer geslapen.

Het Flessenvrouwtje

Er was eens een vrouwtje die hele bijzondere flesjes verkocht met bijzondere magische drankjes. Hiervoor ging ze altijd langs de deuren, of ze had een kraampje. Ze woonde ergens aan de rand van het bos. Ook verkocht ze flesjes aan de mensen die bij haar huis kwamen. Haar huis was als een winkeltje.

Op een dag klopte er een zwerver bij haar aan. Hij had geen geld en geen huis. Hij vroeg niet om flesjes, maar om onderdak. Het flessenvrouwtje had nog wel een kamer vrij, en daar kon de zwerver wel wonen. Midden in de nacht werd de zwerver nieuwsgierig en ging over een grote trap naar beneden, waar een zaal was helemaal vol met flesjes. Het waren de bijzonderste flesjes die hij ooit had gezien. De flesjes begonnen naar hem te roepen : 'Drink mij, drink mij.' De man liep op de flesjes af, en begon één voor één van hen te drinken, maar al snel begon hij zich erg duizelig te voelen.

De grond onder hem werd helemaal zacht, en hij begon er doorheen te zakken. Hij zakte door een paleis heen en kwam terecht voor een enorme troon. Een koning zat op de troon. Die was eerst heel verbaasd, en toen werd de koning rood van woede. 'Hoe kom jij hier ? Waar kom je vandaan ?' bulderde de koning. Toen begon de zwerver uit te leggen hoe hij bij het flessenvrouwtje kwam, en van de flesjes had gedronken. De koning ontplofte van woede. Ook hij nam een flesje, die hij bij zich had, en langzaam begon hij omhoog te zweven. 'Ik zal haar !' bulderde de koning. 'En jij gaat ook mee.' Hij greep de hand van de zwerver, maar die rukte zichzelf snel los, en rende het paleis uit. Hij kwam in een uitgestrekt weiland terecht waarachter prachtige bloemenvelden waren.

A snel kwam hij een konijn tegen. 'Heb je weleens naar jezelf gekeken ?' vroeg het konijn. 'Je loopt hier rond in vodden. Ik kan wel zien dat je geen koning bent.'

'Maar ik kom wel van de koning vandaan,' zei de zwerver. 'Ik was vlak voor zijn troon.'

'Hoe is het je gelukt bij de koning te komen ?' vroeg het konijn. 'Dat zou ik ook wel willen.'

Toen vertelde de zwerver het verhaal, over hoe hij van de flesjes van het flessenvrouwtje had gedronken, en dat hij zo voor de troon van de koning terecht kwam.

'Magisch,' zei het konijn, en liep naar het paleis toe. Direct werd het konijn door de soldaten van de koning tegengehouden. 'Halt,' zeiden ze. 'Wat kom je doen ?'

Het konijn begon te praten over de bijzondere flesjes en het flessenvrouwtje. 'Wie heeft jou dat verteld ?' vroegen de soldaten. 'Die zwerver daar,' zei het konijn. Direct kwamen de soldaten achter de zwerver aan. De zwerver begon hard te rennen, door het weiland en de bloemenvelden, totdat hij bij een bos aankwam. In het bos was een huisje waar drie feeen woonden. Hier klopte hij aan, en vertelde dat de soldaten van de koning achter hem aanzaten. De feeen lieten hem direct binnen en verborgen hem. Niet lang daarna kwamen de soldaten van de koning aan de deur, en vroegen of de zwerver hier was. Eén van de feeen had de deur opengemaakt, maar zei dat de zwerver hier niet was. Toen gingen de soldaten weer verder.

De zwerver begon te vertellen over het flessenvrouwtje, en hoe hij door haar flesjes in dit rijk terecht was gekomen.

'Het flessenvrouwtje was één van ons vroeger,' sprak één van de feeen. 'Zij woonde hier ook. Totdat een draak haar meenam naar de bovenwereld. We zijn blij te horen dat ze nog leeft.'

De zwerver vroeg of er nog een andere weg tot de bovenwereld was. 'Ja, de toverbrug,' zei één van de feeen. Deze is diep in het bos, waar de rivier is, maar er gebeuren daar vreemde dingen, en niet velen durven daar te komen.'

Toen het nacht was geworden werd de zwerver nieuwsgierig, en ging het huisje uit om dieper het bos in te gaan, terwijl de feeen sliepen. Na een tijdje

lopen kwam hij bij de brug aan. De brug ging de rivier over, maar ergens halverwege stopte het. Ook de rivier scheen ergens in het niets te verdwijnen, wat verder van de kust. De man ging de brug op, maar direct kwamen er grote vogels op hem af die hem begonnen te pikken. 'Terug, terug,' krijsten de vogels. Maar de man had een stok bij zich en sloeg de vogels van zich af. Toen hij doorliep werd hij even later wakker in zijn kamer van het huisje van het flessenvrouwtje. Het flessenvrouwtje stond naast zijn bed, en glimlachte naar hem.

'Heb je mijn zusters ontmoet ?' vroeg ze.

De zwerver keek op en sprak : 'Ja, maar was het echt, of was het een droom ?'

'Het kwam door de flesjes,' zei de vrouw. 'Vreemde dingen gebeuren er wanneer de flesjes gedronken worden.'

Vredig sliep de man door, want ook het flessenvrouwtje was maar een droom.

Het Bloemenvrouwtje

Er was eens een bloemenvrouwtje die heel diep in het bos leefde. Achter haar huis waren de prachtigste bloemenvelden, in de diepte van de wildernis. De vrouw had een bijzondere toversleutel, maar niemand wist waartoe de sleutel diende. Zodra iemand de toversleutel aanraakte, begon degene te branden. Er waren weleens dieven die dat geprobeerd hadden, maar die renden dan gillend van het huis weg, de toversleutel loslatende, want hun handen begonnen te branden.

Er was een profetie dat alleen een klein jongetje die bestemd was om koning te worden de toversleutel zou kunnen aanraken zonder daardoor te gaan branden. Vele mannen kwamen aan de deur van het bloemenvrouwtje om hun geluk te beproeven, maar allemaal renden ze gillend weg, hun handen brandende, na het aanraken van de toversleutel. Het bloemenvrouwtje glimlachte dan altijd, haar hoofd schuddende, want zij waren immers mannen, en geen klein jongetje.

Op een dag klopte er een klein jongetje aan op de deur van het huis van het bloemenvrouwtje. Hij had een hoed op met bloemen op de rand, en hij was op blote voeten. Ook was hij gekleed in vodden. Ook hij mocht de toversleutel aanraken. Toen hij dat deed glimlachte hij. Zijn handen begonnen niet te branden. Het bloemenvrouwtje glimlachte, en begon toen steeds harder te lachen. Na een tijdje schaterde ze van het lachen, en was door het dolle heen. 'Jij bent de nieuwe koning !' schaterde ze. Ze nam zijn handen en begon met hem te dansen. En zo werd de kleine jongen de koning van het land.

De Stenen Wachters

Er was eens een oude koning die wachters van steen had. In de nachten kwam er een vreemd vuur over hen, opdat zij tot leven zouden komen. Dan voerden ze onzichtbare oorlogen waar niemand vanaf wist. Op een dag stierf de koning, en erfden het kasteel van de koning. Ze kwamen tot zijn geheime vertrekken waar nog nooit iemand van hen was geweest. Ze zagen daar een huilend meisje van vuur zitten. Ze vroegen het meisje wat er aan de hand was. Het meisje snikte dat ze al zo lang opgesloten werd gehouden hier, maar dat zij altijd haar vuur zond naar de wachters om hen tot leven te wekken. Zij was het nachtvuur. Ze was erg eenzaam.

De wachters vroegen haar waarom de oude koning haar opgesloten hield hier. Het meisje sprak dat omdat zij een bijzondere kracht had, namelijk die van de genezing van harten, en de koning wilde dit niet voor de mensen, want dan zouden de dokters geen werk meer hebben.

De wachters schrokken hier wel een beetje van. Het meisje kon ervoor zorgen dat ze niet meer in steen zouden veranderen. Ze brachten het meisje van vuur naar buiten in de open lucht, en al snel begon ze mensen te genezen. Maar de dokters waren erg boos. Zij wilden dat het meisje zou verdwijnen. Het liep uit op een burgeroorlog tussen de dokters en de wachters van de koning. De dokters konden veranderden in grote wilde, witte katachtigen. Ze grepen het meisje van vuur, ketenden haar, en namen het kasteel in. Hier werd zij in een kerker geworpen, en de wachters van het kasteel veranderden weer in steen. Het meisje begon hard te huilen, zoveel als ze nog nooit had gehuild. Haar vele tranen begonnen door het kasteel

heen te stromen. De tranen riepen haar moeder op, het nachtwater. In een grote storm kwam zij tot het kasteel, en brak de deuren open.

'Moeder !' riep het meisje van vuur, en vertelde haar verhaal. Haar moeder was helemaal van water gemaakt, en al spoedig begon ze het kasteel te overweldigen en sleurde de dokters mee in een sterke stroom. Ze dreef hen tot de zee, waar zij allen verdronken.

Weer begon het meisje over de stenen wachters te komen, en ditmaal ook haar moeder. Dit bleek de combinatie te zijn die hen voor altijd vrijzette. Sindsdien zijn ze allemaal in het kasteel blijven wonen. En het meisje van vuur genas nog vele harten.

Het Magische Boek

Er was geen manier om in dit rijk door te dringen als je geen snoep magie kon en als je niets af wist van trollen magie. Een van hun hoogste wetten was : het gaat niet om wel of niet, het gaat er om hoe. Ook een andere wet was belangrijk : er is altijd een ja in een nee en een nee in een ja.

Hier was alles gemaakt van chocolade, dus als je geen chocolade magie kon, dan kon je het wel vergeten. De wachters van deze wereld waren indianen die heel goed konden toveren. Ze wisten hoe ze de stromen van chocolade als watervalletjes voort konden brengen. Ze hadden heel veel over magie geleerd, ook over vlieg magie. Het was een soort palet van magie, van verschillende combinaties. En je moest heel goed weten hoe je het allemaal moest mixen anders ging er heel wat mis.

Zoveel sprookjesdorpen gingen ten onder omdat ze er helemaal niks van konden. De meesten waren lui en studeerden niet. Ze hielden alleen maar van feest maken, en scholden degenen die studeerden uit. Studie was in hun ogen gevaarlijk, omdat het de verkeerden aan de macht kon brengen. En ja, er waren vele boze tovenaars in die wereld die de macht hadden gegrepen. Maar waar zou het hen brengen als domaards de macht zouden hebben. Nee, er moest gestudeerd worden, en er moesten gevechten tussen tovenaars plaatsvinden om hun krachten te testen.

De indiaanse vliegen met hun prachtige vleugels woonden in een afgelegen kasteel. Zij wisten hoe verdorven het rijk was en op een dag kwamen zij uit

hun kasteel om de tovenaars in hun hoge plaatsen te bezoeken. Niet alleen de boze tovenaars stierven op die dag, maar ook de indiaanse vliegen zelf, en daarmee het gehele rijk dat toen langzaam in een woestijn veranderde. De indiaanse vliegen krompen totdat ze prachtige beeldjes waren geworden. Vele honderden jaren later werd er een dorpje gebouwd in de woestijn, en groeiden er weer wat bomen totdat het een klein bos werd. Een jongetje vond de beeldjes van de indiaanse vliegen en bracht hen naar zijn kamer.

Vele jaren later vond hij een boek genaamd de Sotis. Het was een magisch boek vol met toverspreuken. Het was het laatste overblijfsel van het kasteel van de indiaanse vliegen. De jongen gebruikte het om uit zijn problemen te komen, want toen hij opgroeide kwam hij er wel achter hoe verdorven het dorp was waarin hij leefde. Het dorp stond vol met kerken die het leven van veel mensen zuur maakten. Eigenlijk was er maar een ding tegenop gewassen en dat was het boek genaamd de Sotis. De jongen studeerde er dagelijks in, en was al snel een tovenaar. Maar de kerken wilden niet veel van de Sotis weten. Ze hadden hun eigen magie : kerk magie. Gelukkig kon de jongen iets doen wat de kerken niet konden, en dat was : mensen weer beter maken. En op een dag was de jongen de grootste genezer die de wereld ooit had gekend.

Het Mysterieuze
Boek

Een klein meisje vond een boek boven op zolder toen ze daar eens op een avond speelde. Haar ouders waren die avond weg, en de oppas zat beneden naar de televisie te kijken. Het meisje behoorde al op bed te liggen, maar kon niet slapen. Ze sloeg het boek open en begon te lezen : 'Wat God aan de christenen gaf is bekend. Hij gaf hen een boek en een kerk, maar Zijn Zoon nam Hij weg. Wat God aan de indianen gaf is onbekend. Hij gaf hen de doodskop van Zijn Zoon.' En dan gaat het verhaal verder over waar die doodskop zich zou bevinden.

Een man komt 's avonds laat thuis van zijn werk, schenkt wat koffie in voor hem en zijn vrouw, en gaat bij haar op de bank zitten. Er is een vreemde documentaire op de televisie over vriendschap. Het gaat over mensen die elkaar tijden niet hebben gezien, en toch zo'n sterke verbondenheid voelen, en mensen komen aan het woord die hun vrienden in vijanden hebben zien

veranderen. Al met al is het een hele droevige documentaire, die ook teruggrijpt op de geschiedenis. De man doopt een koekje in zijn koffie, geeft zijn vrouw een kus, en gaat dan naar boven. Gisteren was het ook al laat geworden, en morgen moet de man weer werken. Als hij naar zijn bed gaat ziet hij dat zijn dochtertje daar ligt te slapen. Voorzichtig tilt hij haar op, en brengt haar naar haar eigen bed.

Hij loopt terug naar zijn eigen kamer en ploft op het bed. Wat is hij moe. Even later komt zijn vrouw ook. Midden in de nacht worden ze wakker van een vreemd geluid. Maar even later vallen ze beiden weer in elkaars armen in slaap.

De volgende ochtend zijn ze vroeg op. Beiden moeten ze aan het werk. Op het werk is het bizar druk. Een paar hebben het over de televisie-series die ze gisteren hebben gezien. Alles gaat erg snel, en al gauw zijn ze weer thuis om op de bank neer te ploffen. Het zijn dit soort dagen waarop ze geen grip lijken te hebben. Daar komt grootmoeder al met het meisje thuis. Grootmoeder gaat naar de keuken, en kookt voor het drukke gezin. Dan steekt opeens het meisje haar vinger in de lucht. ‘Mag ik ook even iets zeggen ? Ik vond een boek op zolder.’ Dan stommelt ze naar boven, en komt even later weer terug met het boek. ‘Het gaat over God die de doodskop van Zijn Zoon aan de indianen heeft gegeven.’ De man begint te lachen. Ja, dat soort dingen gebeuren in indianenverhalen. Geef eens hier.

Het meisje overhandigt haar vader het boek. Even lijken er lichtjes in haar ogen op te komen. De vader grist het boek uit haar handen, slaat het boek open, en begint te lezen. ‘Dokopsko, de killer-piraat, valt de indiaan in de armen. Hij is zo blij dat hij eindelijk hier is gekomen. Even later komen zijn vrienden er ook bij, en er is een diepe vriendschap. Maar hoe konden ze weten dat zo’n uitnodiging in een nachtmerrie zou uitlopen ? Zo ging het vaker bij indianen. Ze nodigden andere stammen uit, om ze later aan flarden te scheuren voor hun doodskop. En waarom hielden ze zo van doodskoppen ?’

‘Ach Madeleine, dit is toch allemaal onzin. Indianen zijn altijd de boosdoeners in dat soort verhalen, terwijl er ook een heleboel goede indianen zijn. Nu ja, indianen moesten altijd op hun hoede zijn, omdat ze altijd zoveel vijanden hadden. Misschien waren ze daarom wel zo.’

Dan slaat de man ineens een heleboel bladzijden over, en leest weer een stukje : ‘We komen je halen, Asgar !’ buldert een woeste indiaan. ‘Verstop je maar niet in je hut, want puin zal je hut worden, en jij zal worden als je hut.’

‘Misschien zijn ze wel zo geworden door die doodskop die ze van God hebben gekregen. Misschien wilden ze nog meer doodskoppen,’ opperde het meisje.

‘Het zal mij een worst wezen,’ zei de man. Hij gaf het boek terug aan het meisje en zei : ‘Misschien als je wat ouder bent.’

Het meisje maakte een doodskop van papier maché, en liet het haar ouders zien. ‘Dat is mooi, Madeleine,’ zeiden haar ouders. ‘Maar wie is het ?’

‘Het is de doodskop van de Zoon van God die aan de indianen was gegeven,’ zei Madeleine.

‘Ben je nu nog steeds met dat boek bezig ?’ vroeg de man. Daarna begon hij te lachen. Ook grootmoeder moest er om lachen. De dag ging weer snel voorbij, en ook de jaren gingen snel. Toen het meisje achtien was mocht ze een reis maken naar de indianen. Ze ging helemaal alleen, en het was nog niet eens zo ver, omdat er indianen in haar eigen land woonden. Toen ze hen opzocht vroeg ze hen direkt over de doodskop van Gods Zoon. De indianen wisten van niets, maar zij geloofde dat ze iets voor haar achterhielden. Toen ze jong was dacht ze dat het echt waar was, en ook nu. ‘Je hebt teveel verhaaltjes gelezen, jongedame,’ zei een indiaan. ‘Er bestaat niet zoiets als een doodskop van Gods Zoon.’ Het opperhoofd van de indianen zat iets verder van haar vandaan en glimlachte mysterieus naar haar. Het leek bijna alsof hij naar haar zat te knikken.

‘Ik geloof jullie niet,’ sprak het meisje. ‘Ik denk dat jullie het gewoon niet aan mij willen laten zien.’ Het meisje bleef een paar dagen bij de indianen, en ging toen met veel verhalen naar huis. Het opperhoofd zou later tot haar gesproken hebben. Hij ontkende haar verhalen niet. Hij kwam zelfs met nog wonderbaarlijkere verhalen. Het meisje had nu zelfs nog meer om over na te denken. Op een dag greep ze het oude boek weer, en begon te lezen. Aan het einde van het boek kwamen piraten achter de schuilplaats van de doodskop, en stalen het. Ze brachten het naar hun schip dat toen een spookschip werd.

Het meisje begon te lachen. Dit wist ze eigenlijk nog niet. Ze had het boek nooit echt goed gelezen, alleen maar sommige stukjes. Toch bracht haar kinderlijk geloof haar naar een carnavalswinkel waar veel piratenspullen werden verkocht. ‘Vertel me alles over piraten,’ zei het meisje tegen de verkoper. De verkoper begon te glimlachen en vertelde honderduit. Ook ging ze naar de bibliotheek en vroeg hetzelfde. Thuis schreef ze alles op. Toen haar vader thuiskwam vertelde ze hem alles. Haar vader glimlachte. ‘Ben je nu nog steeds met dat boek bezig ?’ vroeg de man. ‘Waarom vraag je het niet aan de schrijver van het boek. Hij zal er vast wel meer van weten.’ De schrijver van het boek was Lion Carpateres. Een afspraak werd snel

geregeld. Niet lang daarna zat het meisje in een lekker zittende stoel in een koele, maar tropische ruimte boven een huis. Het was een groot huis, als een herenhuis, met hoge plafonden. ‘Kan ik je iets te drinken aanbieden ?’ vroeg Lion. Een donkere oude man kwam naar voren. Hij droeg een bril, en had een pak appelsap in zijn hand. ‘Ja, doe maar appelsap,’ sprak Madeleine.

‘Het boek is van de eerste tot de laatste letter verzonnen,’ zei de man. ‘Maar toch heb ik altijd geloofd dat er veel waarheid in was, of misschien dat alles wel waar was.’ De man keek geheimzinnig. ‘Ik heb me altijd van binnen gespleten gevoeld, alsof ik in twee werelden leefde.’

‘Nou, ik niet,’ zei Madeleine. ‘Ik had het gevoel alsof de indianen er veel meer van wisten.’ De man keek Madeleine geheimzinnig aan. ‘Kun je een geheim bewaren ?’ vroeg de man.

‘Maar natuurlijk,’ zei Madeleine.

‘Ik heb zelf op dat schip gevaren,’ zei de man.

‘Als piraat ?’ vroeg Madeleine.

De man opende een la in een kast, en haalde een doodskop eruit. Madeleine schrok. De man legde de doodskop op tafel, en zei : dit is hem.

‘De doodskop van Gods Zoon ?’ vroeg Madeleine. ‘Ja mag hem wel hebben,’ zei de man. ‘Ik doe er toch niets meer mee.’

In een doos kreeg Madeleine de doodskop mee. Thuisgekomen wilde ze het boek direkt helemaal lezen, iets dat ze nog nooit echt had gedaan. Vroeger bladerde ze eigenlijk alleen maar, maar nu wilde ze alles weten. Sommige stukken kwamen haar bekend voor, maar van andere stukken wist ze niets.

Liefde en Haat

De mannen en de vrouwen kwamen steeds dichter bij de vulkaan. De grond werd steeds heter onder hun voeten. Als ze hierin zouden afdalen, dan zouden ze in het binnenste van de planeet komen. Nog voordat ze zouden afdalen hoorden ze een kreet. Agdan greep Azeda vast. De grond onder haar voeten leek te verdwijnen. Nu moesten ze snel zijn. Agdan wierp zijn touw naar Osdol, en die bond het snel aan een boom. Agdan zwiepte met Azeda neer beneden, en al snel hadden ook de anderen het touw vanaf de boom vastgegrepen. Nu moesten ze snel zijn, want alles leek op instorten te staan. Maar het was al te laat. Ook de boom stortte in, en allen vlogen ze gillend naar beneden. Gelukkig kwamen ze in een zacht vlak terecht waarvan de temperatuur dragelijk was, en zo gleden ze verder in de vulkaan.

Jesmig had Misdan’s voet vast, en gleed zo achter hem aan. Ze was bang de groep te verliezen. Maar alles ging goed, en na een tijdje kwamen ze binnen in een enorm grote holle ruimte. Zou dit het binnenste van de planeet al zijn. Osdol schreeuwde dat iedereen elkaar vast moest houden. Er konden hier gevaarlijke wezens rondlopen, en er konden zich ook gevaarlijke valstrikken bevinden. Iedereen hield elkaar goed vast, en gelukkig ging alles goed. Totdat er een deur in de holle ruimte opengíng. Een man in een zwart gewaad en met een lange witte baard kwam naar hem toe. ‘Euspuicius,’ zei Osdol.

‘Je bent toch gekomen, Osdol,’ zei de man. ‘Ja, oom,’ zei Osdol. ‘En we hebben het nog wel snel gedaan. Ik had verwacht dat we ...’ Maar de man gebood Osdol om stil te zijn. ‘Ik ben jullie tegemoetgekomen. Maar we zijn er nog niet,’ zei de man. ‘Jullie hebben mij nodig, anders overleven jullie het hier niet. Kom, volg mij. Ik weet de weg.’

Toen ze door de deur gingen zagen ze de ravijnen, en er hingen overal adembenemende sieraden. ‘Er zijn hier veel valstrikken,’ zei de man. ‘En jullie moeten eerst gebrandmerkt worden.’

‘Gebrandmerkt ?’ vroeg Azeda. ‘waarvoor ?’

‘Dat zul je wel zien,’ zei de man. Plotseling zagen ze allerlei vreemd krijsende reuzeninsecten op hen afkomen. Ze leken een beetje op wespen met lange angels. Iedereen schrok. De insecten drukten hun lange angels in het vlees van de groep, en de groep gilde het uit. De angels waren kokendheet, en gingen diep in hun lichamen. De mannen vochten uit alle macht met hun zwaarden, maar de insecten waren veel sneller. De groep begon hevig te bloeden, maar toen vertrokken de insecten ineens onverklaarbaar.

Wees maar blij, zei de oude man. De ravijnen zullen die littekens herkennen, en zullen jullie doorgang geven. Zonder deze wonden zouden jullie door de ravijnen gegrepen worden en opgeslokt worden ....

Iedereen vond dat wel erg vreemd. De oude man wist gelukkig precies de weg, en na een tijd kwamen ze bij zijn huisje aan.

Iedereen was erg moe. De mannen kregen een kamer, en de vrouwen kregen een andere kamer. In de nacht werden ze allen opgeschrikt door een schel krijsend geluid. Eén van de mannen rende naar buiten, en zag een zwevend platform in één van de ravijnen, op dezelfde hoogte. Een man en wat vrouwen in vreemde klederen riepen hem. Ze schenen zelfs zijn naam te kennen. Als gehypnotiseerd liep de man naar voren, en ook het platform kwam dichtbij. Ook een andere man was inmiddels naar buiten gekomen. ‘Doe het niet, Asdor,’ zei de andere man. Maar Asdor stapte op het platform en toen ging het platform naar de andere kant van het ravijn, en toen langs de vulkanen van de overkant heen, om vervolgens in een bocht te verdwijnen.

‘Ik kan je geen garanties geven over Asdor,’ zei de oude man de volgende dag. ‘Er zijn hier vele volkeren, soms kwaad van zin, soms goed, maar ook heel vaak ertussenin. Maar als jullie gekrijs hoorden, dan was dat waarschijnlijk een vleermuis, of weer insecten.’

De volgdende nacht hoorden ze weer gekrijs. Azeda bleef direkt klaarwakker, terwijl de anderen weer verder sliepen. Langzaam ging ze uit haar bed, en liep naar buiten. Ook zij zag het platform en moest aan Asdor denken. ‘Nee,’ dacht ze bij haarzelf. ‘Dit is niet goed als ik meega.’ Maar plotseling greep een hand haar van achteren. Ze werd geblinddoekt, en al gauw stond ze op het platform. Na een tijdje werd ze van het platform afgeduwd, en de blinddoek ging er weer af. Er was hier een prachtige natuur. Het was als een jungle, en er stroomde een vreemd soort sap. ‘Je hebt dit altijd al gewild,’ zei een stem. ‘Je wist dat het een natuur was, waarin je hetzelfde zou zijn als die natuur, en die natuur als jou. Je wilde wel dat het je zou omhullen.’

‘Oh god, ja,’ zei Azeda, ‘maar waar is Asdor ?’

‘Asdor is in goede handen,’ zei een stem. Ze wist niet waar die stem vandaan kwam, maar van achter duwde iemand haar voorwaarts. Ze durfde niet achterom te kijken. Plotseling werd ze in een grot geduwd, en ze zag Asdor staan. ‘Asdor,’ riep ze.

Asdor glimlachte. ‘Wat is dit voor een natuur ?’ vroeg ze.

‘Mens en natuur is hier één,’ zei Asdor vriendelijk. De natuur was hier als een stel reuzen bij elkaar. Ze ademde de doordringende lucht in, en de warme geur. Ze liep voorzichtig op Asdor af, maar het leek alsof er glas tussen haar en Asdor was. ‘Asdor, ik kan niet verder,’ zei ze. Ze moest een stukje opzij stappen, toen vooruit, toen weer opzij naar de andere kant, en toen weer vooruit. Asdor omhelsde haar. ‘Ben je in orde ?’ vroeg Azeda.

‘Ja,’ fluisterde Asdor. Na niet al te lange tijd kwamen de volgende van hun vrienden hier, en waren overweldigd door de natuur. Verderop was een meer vol van vreemd sap. Er was een eilandje waar ze naartoe zwommen. Ze konden zichzelf helemaal verliezen in deze omgeving.

Maar toen ze naar de andere kant van het meer waren gezwommen zagen ze daar oude mannen in kooien. Een schaduw leek hun enthousiasme te overvallen. ‘Wat is dit voor land ? krijste Azeda, en rende op de kooien af om ze zo snel mogelijk los proberen te krijgen.

‘We weten wel wie jullie zijn,’ zeiden de oude mannen. ‘Jullie zijn van de Xzeda. Jullie openen onze kooien om ons naar nog verschrikkelijkere kooien te leiden.’

‘Nee,’ riep Azeda. ‘We zijn hier niks. Wat is hier aan de hand ?’

‘Oh, zijn jullie niet van de Xzeda ?’ zei een oude man.

‘Nee, zei Asdor, wij zijn niet van deze plaats. Wie zijn de Xzeda ?

‘Zij zijn reuzen-insecten als wespen, en ze komen ook in menselijke vorm. Zij hebben ons hier opgesloten,’ sprak de oude man.

In ieder geval waren de kooien nu open, en ze konden beter bij de oude mannen blijven. Er schenen hier veel gevaren te zijn, en ze hadden al allemaal spijt dat ze meegegaan waren. Maar ook hadden ze zin in avontuur.

De oude mannen leidden hen naar een oude grot. Hier lieten ze oude papieren zien waarop de insecten getekend stonden. ‘Ja, die kennen we,’ zei Azeda, en liet haar wond zien. Ook de oude mannen lieten hun littekens zien. ‘Daarmee houden ze ons in de gaten,’ zei de oude man. ‘ze ruiken het litteken. Daarom moeten we doorreizen anders zullen ze ons vinden.’

De oude man vertelde hen dat ze op zoek moesten naar een nieuw litteken, een teken waardoor de Xzeda niet meer bij hen zou kunnen komen, een teken dat hen zou verwarren.

‘Maar hoe komen we bij dat teken ?’ vroeg Azeda.

De oude man opende een put achterin de grot. Eén voor één daalden ze naar beneden. Er was hier veel modder. Het leidde hen naar een vieze stinkende rivier. De oude man dook in het water, en de rest moest volgen. Maar na een tijdje werden ze omsingeld door piranha’s. De piranha’s leken zich te storten op de oude mannen. De rest kon ontsnappen. Iedereen zwom snel door, maar toen de piranha’s de oude mannen binnen een mum van tijd hadden verslonden grepen ze ook de anderen. Alleen Asdor en Azeda konden ontsnappen. Asdor had een paar piranha’s aan zijn mes geregen, en toen bleven ze uit de buurt. Azeda zwom zo dicht mogelijk bij hem. In de verte zagen ze een berg, en na een tijdje konden ze op de oever klimmen. In de verte hoorden ze gekrijs van reuzen-insecten die steeds dichterbij kwamen. Snel gingen Azeda en Asdor door een gleuf de berg binnen. Ze dachten allebei na over het tweede litteken, hoe ze dat konden krijgen, en waar. In een schacht klommen ze op een trappetje omhoog, en kwamen in een ruimte waar een reuzenoog lag. ‘Laten we hier weggaan,’ zei Azeda. ‘Het bevalt me hier niet.’ Een vreemde rook scheen zich te verspreiden.

‘We kunnen niet terug,’ zei Asdor, ‘ik wil niet nog een keer gestoken worden. Laten we op zoek gaan naar het tweede merkteken.’ Ze merkten dat ze door de opening een nieuw pad konden volgen. Het was een soort tunnel, en de wanden voelden erg zacht aan. Plotseling kon Asdor zich niet meer bewegen. ‘Kom op,’ zei Azeda, ‘we moeten verder. Je hebt gelijk. We kunnen niet terug, en straks zetten ze ons ook in die kooien waar die oude mannen inzaten.’

‘H...h...het komt door die tunnel,’ stotterde Asdor ... Azeda nam hem snel op haar rug, en trok hem voort. Na een tijdje gleed ze uit, en ging de tunnel schuin naar beneden. Het was alsof ze in een ruimte waren waar ze niet mochten komen, want ook Azeda kon zich niet meer bewegen. Het was alsof ze door een vreemd insect waren gestoken. Een vreemd oranje gekruisd litteken verscheen op hun bovenbenen. Ineens konden ze weer ademhalen. Beiden waren opgelucht, en konden zich na een tijdje weer een beetje bewegen. Alles was glad hier, en ze gleden nog steeds naar beneden. Ze hielden elkaar stevig vast.

‘Wat een vreemde tunnel is dit,’ zei Azeda.’ Asdor knikte. Ze hielden elkaar vast. ‘Dit kan niet goed zijn, Asdor,’ zei Azeda. Asdor zei niets. Asdor probeerde grip te krijgen op de tunnel, maar alles ging sneller en sneller. Alles was nat. ‘Ik laat je los, Asdor,’ zei Azeda. En plotseling kwamen ze in

twee verschillende tunnels terecht. Allebei kwamen ze in een bron van vreemd stomend sap terecht. ‘Kun je me horen ?’ riep Ador.

‘Ja !’ riep Azeda op haar hardst.

Plotseling hoorde hij Azeda luid krijsen. ‘Piranha’s !’ gilde ze. Asdor raakte in paniek, want hij wist niet hoe hij bij haar moest komen. Na een tijdje was alles stil. Ze hadden haar verscheurd. Asdor liep verder in de bron, en stapte aan de overkant er weer uit. Hij voelde haat en liefde tegelijk naar de natuur, maar bovenal verwarring, ongeloof en onbegrip. Hij liep op een heuveltje omhoog, en ging door een deur naar binnen. Na een tijdje herkende hij het weer. Hij was dicht bij het huis van Osdol’s oom. Toen hij binnenkwam zag hij Osdol, de oude man, Agdan, Jesmig en Misdan. Hij had een verhaal te vertellen.

De oude man kon hem wel vertellen hoe de vork in de steel zat. De natuur was verdeeld, zoals de mens verdeeld was, en de natuur was op sommige punten net zo hopeloos en hulpeloos als de mens dat was. Osdol omhelsde zijn oude vriend, en was blij dat hij het had overleefd. Maar allen treurden ze over Azeda en de anderen die het niet konden navertellen. Asdor liet hen het litteken zien wat hij erbij had gekregen, het oranje kruisje op zijn bovenbeen. Als dit het teken was waar de oude mannen over spraken, dan zou hij nu niet meer door de reuzen-insecten lastig gevallen kunnen worden, maar omdat Azeda dat kruisje ook had, wist hij dat de strijd tegen de piranha’s in ieder geval nog niet over was. En wat als dat helemaal niet het teken was waardoor hij macht over de Xzeda zou hebben ? Dan kon hij nog steeds hun prooi worden, om in hun kooien een oude man te worden. Daar had hij niet zoveel zin in. Door zijn onwetendheid zou hij dus een groot risico lopen als hij zou teruggaan. Maar iets in hem trok hem.

Osdol en Agdan vonden op een dag een gebied vol vulkanen nog dieper onder de grond. Deze vulkanen waren anders dan ze ooit hadden gezien, en al gauw haalden ze de anderen erbij. Ook Ogdol’s oom ging mee. Er waren hier vreemdsoortige slangen, en sommigen van hen waren erg groot, zo groot dat ze de vulkanen met gemak konden wurgen. Allen keken ze vol bewondering naar hoe de slangen zich over de vulkanische oppervlaktes bewogen. De hittes waren groter dan normaal, maar veel minder pijnlijk. De pijn zou je kunnen vergelijken met gestoken te worden door een steekvlieg. Langzaam zakten de mannen naar beneden in een krater, en ook de vrouwen volgden hen. Osdol’s oom bleef staan, wenste hen een goede reis, en ging na wat waarschuwingen weer terug. Ze waren met z’n vijven : drie mannen en twee vrouwen. Nog steeds treurden ze over Azeda, die door piranha’s was verslonden.

Maar de schrik sloeg hen om ’t hart toen ze iets onderin de krater zagen bewegen. Het was een been. En plotseling kwam er een heel lichaam uit. Het

was Azeda. Iedereen was erg blij, en verbaasd. ‘Wij dachten dat je verslonden was door piranha’s,’ sprak Agdan.

‘Nee,’ zei Azeda, terwijl ze hen één voor één omhelsde. ‘de piranha’s trokken mij mee in de diepte van de bron waarin ik was gegleden, en brachten mij hier. De grond is erg vruchtbaar.’

‘Hoe bedoel je ?’ vroeg Agdan. ‘We verwachtten hier de dood, maar je zegt nu dat alles hier leeft ?’ Osdol’s oom had hen verteld dat dieper in de aarde alles praktisch dood was, alleen vuur, veel vuur, en vulkaan-activiteit. Nu hoorden en zagen ze iets anders. ‘Kom mee,’ zei Azeda, en leidde hen door het gat waaruit ze gekomen was. Er waren hier meren, en daarin konden ze gewoon zwemmen. Agdan omhelsde Azeda, en samen gleden ze in de diepte van een kratermeer. Dat had hij zolang niet kunnen doen. Ook de andere mannen en vrouwen volgden. Azeda wist hier de weg. Ze konden hier gewoon ademen. Een geur maakte zich van hen meester, als de rook van hete vulkanen. Er groeiden hier vreemde planten met vreemde vruchten. Azeda gaf hen allemaal te eten, en vertelde honderduit.

De bodem van het meer voelde ribbelig aan, en was bruin-roze. Het water was zo helder dat ze alles goed konden zien. Ook het water ribbelde. Hier waren de piranha’s niet agressief. Het was alsof ze hier thuis waren gekomen, en hun rust hadden gevonden. Het was hier zoveel beter dan in een gewone rivier of een gewoon meer. Dit was magisch. Iedereen was blij dat Azeda weer terecht was gekomen.

Eén van de mannen gleed door een nauwe opening. Al snel volgden de anderen. Diep van onderen hoorden ze een geluid. Het was een lange tunnel. In de ruimte waar ze terecht waren gekomen was alles heel zacht en donzig, en overal om hen heen stonden prachtige motors door zonlicht overgoten. Boven hen schitterde de roze zon. Al snel crosten ze door de gangen, door licht verhelderd. Niet lang daarna waren ze op de uitgestrekte vlaktes.

De zon ging onder, en het werd nacht. Een kou raasde over de vlaktes, en ze zochten warmte bij elkaar. Er was niets rustgevenders dan hier te wonen, maar al gauw werden ze ergens door opgejaagd wat ze niet konden verklaren. Een vreemd gevoel van binnen. Wat zo mooi had kunnen zijn liep al snel uit op een nachtmerrie. Ze werden gevangen genomen door ratten. Gebonden op de ruggen van de ratten werden ze tot duistere plaatsen gebracht. Hier was de kou de baas, en wanneer er hitte was, dan was het gewoon de pijn. Ze herinnerden hun motors die schitterden in de stralen van de zon. Ze verlangden terug naar die tijden, maar zij waren nu gevangenen van de ratten. En voor hoe lang ? Misschien wel voor altijd.

Na lange nachten van hopeloosheid, pijn en verdriet hoorden ze ineens schoten. Overal om hen heen zagen ze ratten neervallen. Het was Osdol’s oom. Hij had een grote motor meegenomen, en al snel zaten ze allemaal achterop. Met grote snelheid croste de oude man uit de schuur van de ratten. Hij kende de weg hier wel, en kende ook de gevaren. Maar zij die pas waren bevrijd waren geheel afgestompd. Ze voelden niets anders dan een botte pijn. Als dit het leven was. En wie vertelde hen dat niet nog grotere gevaren hen al opwachten ? Ze hadden nergens meer zin in. Het was alsof het trauma van de ratten hen diep verwond had, met eeuwige wonden. Het was alsof de ratten nog steeds binnen in hen leefden. Thuisgekomen bij Osdol’s oom namen ze allemaal een warm bad, maar niets scheen te helpen. Eigenlijk wilden ze gewoon helemaal naar huis, want ze hadden genoeg van het leven onder de aarde. In hun ogen was het allemaal te duur.

Op een dag raakte Agdan Azela aan. Azela gilde het uit. Het deed pijn, alsof ze in de brandnetels was gevallen. En dit was zelfs erger .... zo erg dat ze helemaal in paniek raakte bij de gedachte dat hij het weer zou kunnen doen. ‘Doe dat nooit meer,’ krijste ze. Agdan was de eerste die helemaal herstelde, en wilde terug naar de diepte om uit te vinden wat daar gaande was. Maar de anderen wilden hem niet laten gaan. Bij de vrouwen leken de wonden erger dan ooit tevoren.

Op een dag bood Osdol’s oom aan om op de grote motor samen met Agdan terug naar de diepte te gaan. De vrouwen vertrouwden Osdol’s oom, en alhoewel ze zelf niet meegingen, gaven ze wel toestemming aan Agdan om mee te gaan.

De motor ging ditmaal dieper dan ooit tevoren, en ze kwamen zelfs op terrein waar Osdol’s oom nog nooit was geweest. Hij wist dat het gevaarlijk was, maar het ging om het hogere goed. Zoete geuren leken naar hen te lonken. Maar beiden waren ze op hun hoede. Een vrouw staarde hen aan, een vrouw die ze niet kenden. Toen rende de vrouw weg. Langzaam kwamen Agdan en de oude man dichterbij. Door een gleuf in een rots zagen vulkanen. Er kwam een indringende, hypnotiserende geur door de gleuf heen. Boven de vulkanen hing een duistere bruine zon. Ze konden niet door de gleuf heen, alhoewel ze dat wel zouden willen. Ze vroegen zich af waar de vrouw naartoe was gegaan.

Het beklimmen van de rots was erg gevaarlijk, maar na een tijdje kwamen ze er toch overheen. Ook hesen ze met een touw de motor van de oude man over de rots heen. De lichten die hier waren, waren verzwakkend. Vanuit de meertjes schepte de oude man wat van de vreemde sappen in kruiken en flessen. De man herkende dit spul als geneesmiddelen voor eeuwige wonden. Verder merkten ze dat ze direkt weer moesten vertrekken, vanwege de dreigende lucht, die hun zuurstof begon af te nemen. Thuisgekomen na een lange reis werden de vrouwen en de overige mannen met het sap ingesmeerd, en begonnen wonderbaarlijk te herstellen. Agdan vroeg zich echter af

waarom hij zonder het sap was hersteld. De man zei dat hij waarschijnlijk dat sap al in zijn lichaam droeg.

De Regenboog
Spiegel

Hoofdstuk 1. De Gevangene van IJs

'Verdwaald in het spiegelijs van de draak,
Alle muren zijn doorgangen hier,
En alle doorgangen zijn muren,
Oh welk toverlied kan bevrijding geven ?
Welke illusie kan ons verlossen,
Of kan de stem van een kind ons doen ontwaken ?
Zoveel stemmen in de nacht doorklieven ons hart,
Als verwarring de meester van ons hart is,
Wie draagt dan de sleutel ?
Een droom ontwaakt hier,
Een grote Exodus,

Waarin alle elven weer dansen,
En de feeen hun spiegel vinden,
Waar de regenboog over ons allen waakt,
Maar is de regenboog wie zij zegt dat ze is ?
Is zij ?
Wie is zij ?
Harten smelt ze in haar hand,

Innemende het verstand,

En dan golven van nieuwe dromen,

Is dit waar wij op uitkomen ?

Maar gebonden is zij in het meer van ijs,

Gebonden is zij, als een danser op zee,

Oh, wie doet haar ontwaken ?'

De ijsdraken waren altijd op jacht … De drakenspiegel van ijs maakte hen dronken, opdat zij slaven waren van geweld, bloedgulzig. Drie drakenspiegels waren er in het land van fee. De drakenspiegel van vuur was alreeds gebroken, en had zijn macht verloren. Alles wat de drakenspiegel van vuur had vergaart vloeide nu uit de gebroken spiegel weg. De draken waren woedend en woest. Ze hielden hun dansen op de bergen, waar de meesters waren, in de hoop dat het ritueel hen de spiegel terug zou geven, maar tevergeefs.

Zalumiel, de goede tovenaar van het land van fee was vanuit zijn kasteel op een reis naar de ijsbergen, waar de ijsdraken zich ophielden. Hij kwam om hen een medicijn te brengen, als een teken van welwillende vriendschap. Maar de ijsdraken wilden zijn vriendschap niet, en toen hij daar aankwam en zijn verhaal had gedaan, wierpen ze hem in een diepe afgrond.

Je zou denken dat het niet slim was van de tovenaar om zich zo maar prijs te geven op die manier, maar Zalumiel was een wijze tovenaar. Het medicijn wat hij hen aanbood en liet zien was zo krachtig, dat wanneer ze ernaar zouden kijken het hun zicht zou veranderen. Ze zouden dingen gaan zien die er helemaal niet waren, en dingen die er waren zouden ze niet meer kunnen zien. Toen ze het medicijn zagen kon het medicijn hun ogen veranderen, en hun laten denken dat ze Zalumiel in de afgrond hadden geworpen. Terwijl Zalumiel zelf zo langs de ijsdraken kon om te naderen tot de drakenspiegel van ijs. Hij greep zijn sikkel en gooide het naar de drakenspiegel van ijs, en toen richtte hij zijn staf op de spiegel en liet een magisch vuur eruit stromen om het ijs te laten smelten.

Maar de drakenspiegel van ijs herstelde vanzelf weer. De tovenaar wist dat er meer voor nodig was om de spiegel voorgoed te breken. De drakenspiegel van ijs kwam als een octopus op de tovenaar af, en ze raakten in een worsteling, waarin de octopus de tovenaar meetrok tot de spiegelrijken. De tovenaar wist dat hij deze reis moest maken om het geheim van de drakenspiegel van ijs te leren kennen.

De drakenspiegel van ijs had alle ruimtes gescheiden door bewegend, ondoordringbaar ijs, waardoor de illusie van tijd was ontstaan. Door een cirkel van ijskaarten ontstond de illusie van ruimte. Het hutselde alle ruimtes en tijd door elkaar, zodat de tijds-volgordes, de chronologie, en de

ruimtelijke volgordes zouden veranderen. De tovenaar ging op een bootje over de ijsrivieren, op zoek naar meer wijsheid, meer inzicht, in dit grote kwaad. Het leek op een web van nachtmerries, en bedrieglijke dromen lokten slachtoffers hiervoor.

Het zwaard van dromen was op de rug van de tovenaar, rustend als een wachter, en soms greep de tovenaar het en had hevige gevechten. Gevechten tegen de beesten die zich verborgen hielden in het ijs en de ijs-rivieren. De tovenaar droeg een duister geheim met zich mee : de Klok van Tamin, die door bewegende, ondoordringbare duisternis de ruimtes had gescheiden, waardoor er een magische tijd ontstond. De duistere wachters van de Klok van Tamin hadden een doel : het vernietigen van de drakenspiegel van ijs. De tovenaar had deze klok geerfd van zijn voorouders, en had altijd in zijn kasteel gestaan. Al deze wachters van de klok droegen een kaart van duisternis.

De tovenaar had de klok uit zijn knapzak gehaald. Het was een klok van een speciaal soort kristal, een kleine klok. Hij aaide de klok, en sprak er tegen. 'Veertien uren in een klok, veertien kaarten, de wachters van de magische tijd,' sprak de tovenaar. Toen kuste hij de klok. De tovenaar kwam aan bij een grote waterval van ijs, waar een groot orakel van ijs was. 'Welaan, met veertien bevroren wachters komt hij aan, zoekende naar de sleutel om hun hart te verwarmen en tot leven te brengen, om het grote kwaad van de drakenspiegel van ijs te bestrijden,' sprak het orakel. 'Zijn wij niet allen bevroren in het land van de draak ? Oh het kwaad gaat diep. Wat kun ik voor u doen ?'

'Precies wat u zegt,' sprak de tovenaar. 'Ik zoek deze wachters van mijn klok tot leven te brengen.'

'Ik kan u niet helpen,' sprak het orakel. 'Help uzelf.' De tovenaar was woedend, en sloeg het orakel aan stukken met zijn staf. Hij wist dat het orakel niets anders dan een spotter was. In de spiegelrijken van de drakenspiegel van ijs vond de tovenaar zijn eigen kasteel weer, maar het was hier heel anders. Hij herkende het bijna niet meer terug.

'In ijs zitten we allen opgesloten,

Waar het ijs ons verstand infecteert,

Schept het zijn eigen realiteit,

De realiteit van de draken spiegel van ijs,

Oh, wie kan die spiegel verbrijzelen ?

Of zijn wie gedoemd hier voor eeuwig te verblijven,

Och, tijd is maar een leugen,

In het beste geval een metafoor,

Om te laten zien dat alles een reis is,
Dat de halsketting vele stenen heeft,
De tovenaar weet het,
De tovenaar ziet het,
Hij kan door stralen kijken.'

'Op de nachtzeeen is de tovenaar,
Iemand was op de zee,
Een fee,
Zij kwam de tovenaar tegemoet,
Zij straalde als de regenboog,
Als de feeenkoningin van de regenboog,
Lang waren zij uit elkaar gescheurd door de drakenspiegel van ijs,
Maar in de dieptes van het ijs vonden ze elkaar weer,
In de dieptes van de spiegelwerelden.'

'Op de nachtzeeen is de tovenaar,
Hij blaast de trompet,
Om het sein van verzoening te geven.'

De feeenkoningin van de regenboog danste in zijn kasteel. 'Eindelijk ben je gekomen,' sprak ze. Ze hield de regenboog spiegel in haar hand. 'Dit heeft jou getrokken,' sprak ze. 'Je bent nu in mijn dromenweb.'

'Dat is een goede hulp,' sprak de tovenaar. 'Ik ben blij dat we elkaar weer gevonden hebben.'

'Ja, maar je kent me niet,' sprak de feeenkoningin. 'Ik heb vele gezichten. De regenboog heeft mij zo gemaakt.'

'Hadden we het niet goed samen ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

'Ik moest dit pad wel opgaan,' sprak de feeenkoningin. 'Er was werk te doen. Ik heb het kasteel bereikt in de spiegelwereld, en vond de regenboog spiegel. Hiermee kon ik je roepen. Je kon deze roep niet tegenhouden, Zalumiel.'

'Ik ben blij dat ik je terugheb,' sprak de tovenaar.

'Je hebt me niet terug,' sprak de feeenkoningin. 'Ik vaag altijd weg als een hand mij grijpt, en altijd smelt ik weg om tot de zee terug te keren, waar ik dans. Ik ben de gevangene van ijs. Geef de moed op mij ooit terug te vinden.'

'Nooit !' bulderde de tovenaar.

'Je zult wel moeten,' sprak de feeenkoningin van de regenboog, en begon weg te vagen, terwijl ze de regenboog spiegel uit haar hand liet vallen. De scherven van de regenboog spiegel was alles wat ze voor de tovenaar achterliet.

De tovenaar raapte de scherven bij elkaar en stopte ze in zijn knapzak. Hij liep terug naar de poort van het kasteel, en wilde alles weer achterlaten, want het deed teveel pijn. Hier waren al zijn herinneringen.

De tovenaar ging weer door de hoge sneeuw terug naar de ijsrivier. Verslagen zat hij in zijn bootje, en peddelde weer door het ijs. Hij moest het verleden achter zich laten, maar wat als zich daar nog een sleutel bevond ? Of zou die sleutel op een andere manier terugkomen door de toekomst ?

Hij volgde de echo's die hem lonkten, en hij voelde zich diep wegzakken in het ijs. Zijn bootje gleed over de benedenwaartse ijsrivieren, steeds dieper en dieper. Er was hier zoveel ijs, en het was zo koud, dat hij niets kon vastpakken. Hij had nergens grip op, en hij kon niet meer peddelen. Er was stroming in de rivier die hem meetrok, en hij zat daar bijna als bevroren.

Het bootje stopte ergens bij een huisje diep onder de sneeuw. De tovenaar stapte als bevroren uit het bootje, en liep langzaam naar het huisje toe. Hij kon zich haast niet bewegen. Hij klopte aan op een houten deur. Een elf deed open. Het was de elvensmid. 'Kom verder,' zei de elf. 'je zult het vast koud hebben.' Binnen was een vuurtje.

'Wat heb je meegebracht om te smeden ?' sprak de elf. De tovenaar leegde zijn knapzak op een tafel, en nam alles behalve de scherven van de regenboog spiegel terug. 'Dit,' zei de tovenaar.

'Ah, scherven van het verleden,' sprak de elvensmid. 'Een lange, duistere geschiedenis.' De tovenaar knikte.

'Jij kan haar terugroepen door de regenboog spiegel,' sprak de elvensmid. 'Ze kon het niet meer dragen. Het lijden was te zwaar voor haar.'

'Ze was mijn koningin,' sprak de tovenaar.

'Elke koningin moet eens de ijs reis maken,' sprak de elvensmid.

'Ik weet het,' sprak de tovenaar. 'Maar nu is ze een gevangene van ijs.'

'Vele gezichten heeft zij,' sprak de elvensmid. 'Ik kan zoveel zien in deze scherven. Wil je haar terug ?'

'Ja,' sprak de tovenaar.

'Waarom ?' vroeg de elvensmid.

De tovenaar zweeg even. Toen sprak hij : 'Wat kunt u voor mij doen ?'

'Zoveel scherven aan jou gegeven,' sprak de elvensmid, 'allemaal haar gezichten. Zij hebben jouw hart doorboort. Waarom wil je haar terug ?'

'Ik weet het niet,' sprak de tovenaar. 'Ik wil haar helpen. Het land van fee heeft haar ook nodig.'

'Ah, daar komen jullie vandaan,' sprak de elvensmid. 'Er is een andere feeenkoningin nu. Keer om, tovenaar. Wees de nieuwe koningin tot steun, want de oude koningin en jij zijn te verschillend. Het past niet.'

'We hadden goede tijden samen,' sprak de tovenaar.

'Ja, maar ze kon het niet dragen. Het ijs trekt haar, meer dan wat dan ook,' sprak de elf. 'Je kent haar niet. Er is veel onheil in haar hart.'

'Onheil ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

'Ja, duisternis,' sprak de elf.

'Ik ben zelf ingewijde op het pad van de duisternis,' sprak de tovenaar. 'De duisternis is het enige wat ons kan redden uit de klauwen van het spiegelende draken ijs.' De tovenaar liet de Klok van Tamin zien die hij ook in zijn rugzak had. 'Dit is de spiegel van duisternis,' sprak de tovenaar. 'Ik zoek de wachters ervan tot leven te wekken. Dit is mijn enige hoop om de drakenspiegel van ijs te breken.'

'Mens allemachtig,' sprak de elvensmid. 'Dat ding is levensgevaarlijk ! Geen manier in leven en sterven dat ik dat ding tot leven ga wekken. Ik zou wel goed gek wezen.'

'Werk je voor de ijsdraken ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

'Ik ? Nee, hoor,' sprak de elf. 'Maar je komt een beetje te dichtbij met dat duivelse ding. Doe het weg, of ik sla het aan diggelen.' Snel stopte de tovenaar de klok van het speciale duistere kristal weer in zijn tas.

'Praatjes begin je me daar te krijgen,' mopperde de elvensmid. 'Alsof ik voor de ijsdraken werk.'

'Het was maar een vraag,' sprak de tovenaar.

'Maar wel een hele beledigende,' sprak de elvensmid. 'Dat je dat over mij durft te denken.'

'Ik dacht niks,' sprak de tovenaar. 'Ik vroeg alleen maar.'

'Ja, ja, ja, ja, het is goed,' sprak de elvensmid geirriteerd. 'Nou, zeg op. Hoe kan ik je helpen ?'

'Ik zoek onderdak tegen de sneeuw en de vorst,' sprak de tovenaar. 'Tevens vraag ik u de regenboog spiegel te herstellen.'

'Bij nader inzien lijkt me dat niet verstandig,' sprak de elvensmid. 'Het zal haar roepen, en ze heeft een hart van ijs.'

'Ze had vele kanten, niet alleen maar ijs,' sprak de tovenaar.

'IJs komt in vele vormen, jongen,' sprak de elvensmid.

'Ik ben ervan overtuigd dat het land van fee haar nodig heeft,' sprak de tovenaar.

'Ik ben ervan overtuigd dat jij uit je nek kletst,' snauwde de elf. 'Hoe meer ik in de scherven keek, hoe meer ik zag hoe gevaarlijk en duister ze is.'

'We hebben de duisternis nodig, vriend,' sprak de tovenaar. 'Het ijs kan niet tegen de duisternis op, alleen maar tijdelijk.'

'Dat dacht je maar, jongen,' snauwde de elvensmid. 'De duisternis is zo gevaarlijk als het licht, en allebei buigen zij voor het ijs !'

'Waarom bent u hier zo diep in sneeuw en vorst dan ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

'Voor mijn missie,' sprak de elvensmid. 'Ik ben een zendeling.'

'Waar komt u vandaan als ik vragen mag ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

'Gaat je niks aan,' snauwde de elf.

'Nou, u heeft me maar een heilzame boodschap te brengen,' sprak de tovenaar.

'Dat heb ik zeker,' sprak de elf. 'Nou, kunnen we nu even ter zake komen ? Wat wil je ?'

'Herstel voor mij de regenboog spiegel, en ik ben weer weg,' sprak de tovenaar.

De tovenaar betaalde de elvensmid die direct onder luid protesteren aan de gang ging. 'Je moet het zelf weten als dit is wat je wil,' snauwde de elvensmid. Na een uurtje was het klaar, en de elvensmid wilde dat de tovenaar direct zou vertrekken. De elvensmid duwde hem bijna de deur uit, maar in ieder geval had de tovenaar nu wat hij wilde : de regenboog spiegel. Er leek veel hitte van de regenboog spiegel af te komen, waarmee de tovenaar zich kon warmen. Achter het huisje van de elvensmid was een bos, waar de tovenaar inliep. Terwijl hij liep keek hij af en toe in de regenboog spiegel. Na een tijdje zag hij daarin het gezicht van de feeenkoningin van de regenboog.

'Waar ben je ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

'Dansende op de nachtzee,' sprak de feeenkoningin. 'Je kan de regenboog spiegel niet houden. Het zal van je wegvluchten zoals ik van je wegvluchtte.'

De tovenaar boog zijn hoofd, terwijl de regenboog spiegel uit zijn handen begon weg te vagen.

Plotseling stond er een man in het zwart voor hem met een zwaard. 'Geen stap verder,' sprak de man. 'Dit is het domein van de tovenaar van de drakenspiegel van ijs.'

'Hem moest ik net hebben,' sprak Zalumiel.

'Hij wil niets met je te maken hebben,' sprak de man. 'Vertrek nu of ik maak dat je vertrekt.'

'Dat verbaast me niks,' sprak Zalumiel. 'Hij is immers een tovenaar van ijs, nogal koud in sociale contacten.'

Zalumiel trok zijn zwaard van achter zijn rug, en sprak : 'Ik ga voor niemand uit de weg. Ik merk dat ik op het juiste pad ben.' Toen volgde er een lang zwaardgevecht. Zalumiel verloor hierin zijn zwaard en zijn knapzak, en werd geraakt aan zijn arm. Toen verdween de man in het zwart weer.

De tovenaar strompelde naar het dichtstbijzijnde huisje, en klopte daar aan. Een oud vrouwtje deed open en liet hem binnen. De tovenaar deed zijn verhaal. 'Oh ja, de tovenaar van de drakenspiegel van ijs is verschrikkelijk,' zei het vrouwtje. 'Wij hebben het bos nodig om tegen hem bestand te zijn. Wij moeten de geheimen van het bos kennen en de bos magie.' Ondertussen verzorgde het vrouwtje zijn wond. 'De nachtzeeen vormen de sleutel,' sprak het vrouwtje. 'Dit zijn de nachtmerries van je leven.' De tovenaar haalde zijn klok tevoorschijn, de spiegel van duisternis, en vertelde haar dat hij de wachters ervan tot leven zocht te wekken. 'Het bos zal het doen,' sprak het vrouwtje.

'Hoe ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

Hoofdstuk 2. De Grote Jacht

'Ergens diep onder de grond moet de beker van Nakordonne zijn, een beker van grote macht, die de bezitter ongekende krachten zal geven,' sprak het vrouwtje. 'Onder de grond zijn de zeven zeeen van de dood. Jij moet hun geheim kennen, voordat jij tot de beker zou komen. Zij die het geheim niet hebben zullen door de beker verslonden worden.

De zeven zeeen van de dood, zij dragen een groot geheim,

In de nachten zijn zij bloed,

Maar het is altijd nacht daar,

Zoutig is hun smaak, en soldaten komen van hen,
Vechtslaven met grote geheimen,
Geriemd zijn zij in de nacht,
Ontsnappen kunnen zij niet,
Ook zij moeten tot het geheim komen.

Komen zullen zij tot het geheim,
De planeet zal sterven,
En alleen zij die de beker van Nakordonne zullen bereiken,
Zullen leven tot in eeuwigheid,
In haar zullen zij de weg vinden tot de andere planeet,
Als door een nieuwe geboorte,
Zij sterven niet.'

De tovenaar had zijn hoop op deze beker gevestigd. Het vrouwtje leidde hem naar een kamer met een bed waar hij kon slapen. Hij had wilde dromen, maar kon zijn weg niet vinden. Hij dacht dat hij het geheim nu kende, maar hij begon de moed op te geven. Totdat op een nacht de beker van Nakordonne aan hem verscheen. Het bleek een poort te zijn waardoor hij ingezogen werd. Hij zag de zeven zeeen van de dood met hun vele schepen. Hij zag de geriemde vechtslaven op de schepen. 'Deze schepen leiden tot de andere planeet,' sprak de beker. 'De zeeen des doods leiden tot aan de andere planeet. Dat is het grote geheim.'

'Wat is de andere planeet ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

'Oh, ver van hier,' sprak de beker. 'Ik ben het schip, ik ben de schepen. Het gaat erom op de juiste schepen te zijn. De meerderheid van de schepen zullen vergaan. Alleen een paar schepen zullen aankomen op de andere planeet.'

'Wat is de naam van de andere planeet ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

'Dat is de naam,' zei de beker. 'De naam is de andere planeet.'

Ineens was de planeet brandende. 'Kom,' sprak de beker, 'de planeet is aan het vergaan. Ik zal je tot de andere planeet nemen.' De beker nam hem op, en even later werd hij wakker in een grote wildernis. Zoetruikende planten en struiken waren om hem heen. Hij aanbad de beker van Nakordonne, en boog voor de beker neer. Hij kuste de beker. Ineens stond er een blootvoetse vrouw voor hem in een geraveld broekje van een lichte hooiachtige kleur. Ze had een boog. De beker was verdwenen. 'Wie bent u ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

'Ik ben de beker van Nakordonne,' sprak de vrouw. 'Kom.' De tovenaar liep achter haar aan. Zij leidde hem tot een kamp in de wildernis, waar een stam woonde. Hij keek naar de rieten hutten gemaakt van gras en riet. 'Dit is je nieuwe woonplaats,' sprak de vrouw. In de verte zag hij een strandje met een zee. 'De zeeen des doods zijn hier ook,' sprak de vrouw. 'Zeven zeeen des doods met grote geheimen.'

Hij kreeg een keten om zijn nek, en de vrouw trok hem mee langs de rivieren van het gebied. Hij wist dat hij slechts bezit was. Tot zijn grote schrik zag hij in de verte zijn moeder aankomen, degene die hij vreeste. Hij had gehoopt dat hij hier een beter leven zou krijgen. 'Vlug, laten we hier weggaan,' zei hij in paniek. 'Daar komt mijn moeder. Zij zal je vast aanvallen.' De vrouw trok haar speer, en ook de grote moeder had alreeds haar speer getrokken, en een mes. Ook had ze een werpnet aan haar schouder hangen, en aan haar heup hing een grote gesel. Er ontstond een groot gevecht, waarin de vrouw de keten van de tovenaar losliet. In steeds groter wordende paniek rende hij weg. Hij durfde niet meer om te kijken. Hij rende langs de rivieren dieper de wildernis in, en bleef rennen zonder om te kijken. 'Je zal niet ver komen,' werd er geschreeuwd. Hij wist niet of dat de stem van zijn moeder was, of van de vrouw, en of dat tegen hem werd geroepen of tegen de ander. Met bonzend hart rende hij verder. Hij kon bijna niet meer, en na een lange tijd rennen, na uren, stortte hij vermoeid neer op het zand aan een rivier. Even later stond er een blootvoetse vrouw voor hem. Zij had een kort rokje van een hooiachtige kleur. Ook had zij een speer. Ze had kort kroezig haar. Ze nam hem mee naar een kamp, waar rieten hutjes stonden, gemaakt van gras en riet. 'Wie ben je ?' vroeg ze.

'Zalumiel,' zei hij.

'En wat kom je hier doen ?' vroeg ze.

Toen vertelde de tovenaar het verhaal.

'Oh, je kunt hier wel blijven,' zei de vrouw, en bracht hem naar een hut. 'Hier kun je wel slapen.'

'Bedankt,' zei de tovenaar. De vrouw leidde hem toen naar een vuur, waar zij hem te eten gaf.

'Wat als één van de vrouwen hier komt om me terug te nemen ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

'Zij kunnen hier niet zomaar komen,' sprak de vrouw. 'Tenzij ze een speer door hun hoofd willen.'

'Je kent mijn moeder niet,' sprak de tovenaar. 'Ze is gevaarlijk.'

'Wij ook,' zei de vrouw, zichtbaar geirriteerd. 'Luister, als je hier wil blijven, dan moet je ophouden over hen.'

'Begrepen,' zei de tovenaar. Hij boog zijn hoofd.

'Hier zul je ook echt geen vrijheid hebben,' sprak de vrouw. 'Mannen zijn hier onderdanig aan de vrouwen. Deze hierarchie is altijd al zo geweest. Het is onze traditie.'

De tovenaar knikte. Hij hoopte maar dat hij hier een beter leven zou hebben. In de nachten had hij wilde dromen over de zeeen des doods. Hij wist dat ze grote, duistere geheimen hadden.

´Wilde dromen,
Op de zeeen des doods,
Duistere poorten,
Je verliest jezelf,
En weet niet maar waar je bent,
Zoals je eens was,
Ben je niet meer,
Je hart gestolen,
En opgebaard,
In de grote hallen,
Onder de zeeen des doods,
Waar de beker van Nakordonne wordt gevuld´

´Wilde dromen,
hebben hem gegrepen,
Hij weet niet meer,
waar hij is,
Zij hebben hem genomen,
tot duistere poorten,
waar hij van schip tot schip wordt verkocht,

slechts bezit is hij,
zijn hart gestolen,
In de grote hallen,
Onder de zeeen des doods,
Waar de beker van Nakordonne wordt gevuld´

´Er is een geheim in eeuwigheid,
Van de beker van Nakordonne,
Zij die van de beker gedronken hebben kunnen nooit meer terug,
Voor altijd aan haar verbonden,
Zij sleept hen mee, van rivier tot rivier,
Haar beker vullende keer op keer,
Haar beker raakt nooit meer op,
Hun harten in haar verloren gegaan,
Voor eeuwig gedoemd zijn zij´

´Zij draagt een duister geheim,
Zij kent hun zwakke plekken,
Zij heeft hen daar geketend,
En trekt hen met haar mee,
Nee, nooit zullen zij ontkomen,
Van de beker van Nakordonne,
Nee, nooit zullen zij haar begrijpen,
In verwarring zullen zij vergaan´

´Aan de zee danst zij met een mes,
En danst zij met een speer,
Een ontmoeting met haar is dodelijk,
Wanneer zij naar je staart ketent zij je hart,
In een slavenkaravaan trekt zij je mee,
Van zee tot zee ga je,
Want je hebt naar de beker gegrepen´

´Oh gulzigaards en dronkaards ….´

Ben ik dat ? vroeg hij zichzelf af.
Maar ik ben toch vrij van haar gekomen sinds mijn moeder haar aanviel ?

Hij durfde er niet met de vrouw die hem tot het kamp had genomen over te praten.

Hij trilde in wanhoop toen hij wakker werd, en durfde niet meer te slapen.

Maar na een tijdje werd hij weer zo moe dat hij in slaap viel, en weer namen de wilde nachtmerries hem mee.

´In bloed heeft zij zich gewassen. Zij staat op met boog en speer,
Klaar voor de jacht, en zij neemt je mee,
In de duisternis zoekt zij naar prooi,
Dan begint de grote jacht,
Zij zal niet loslaten wat zij heeft gezien,
Haar speer zal het doorboren,
Zij roept je op tot de jacht,
Om te worden als haar,
Maar onbereikbaar is zij,
Zij is de pest der nachtmerries´

´Ik kom tot je in bloed,
Om je mee te nemen over de zeeen des doods,
Om je geheimen te leren,
Mijn duistere hart roept je naam,
Ik heb geen hart, het is een masker,
Het enige hart wat ik heb is jouw hart,
Jouw hart is mijn hart,
Ik heb het geroofd en gaf je nieuw leven´

'Er zijn grote geheimen in de zeven woestijnen des doods,
Van hieruit ging alles verkeerd,
Waar zij kruizen is de stad Texab,
Waar de steen des doods bewaakt wordt.'

Hij had van de beker van Nakordonne gedronken om tot de onderwereld te gaan, om zo de veertien bevoren wachters van de klok van Tamin, de spiegel van duisternis, te ontdooien en tot leven te wekken.

Hij was op de zee van wilde dromen.

DE SURINAAMSE NACHTEN SPROOKJESBOEK

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De Bibelebonse Pap
De Gokkoning van Ovven

De kleermaker die van tranen kleren maakte

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De Surinaamse Nachten

Zijn hart bonkte in zijn keel. Hij kwam aan bij de toren, maar die zat op slot, en hij wist wie de sleutel had. Hij had een gevecht met een reus gehad op een andere toren, wat hij bijna niet had overleefd. Die toren kwam niet hoog. Maar deze toren zou hoog komen, heel hoog, helemaal tot Suriname. Het werd daarom ook wel de toren van Suriname genoemd, van de Surinaamse nachten, dat waren verhalen en sprookjes. Iedere verdieping had zijn eigen verhaal. Maar een heks bewaakte deze toren, en zij droeg de sleutel. Hij hoorde voetstappen op de trap. Het klonk heel hol. Toen werd de deur opengemaakt.

Maar het was de heks niet. Het was een jongetje.

'Ik ben de sleutel van de toren,' zei het jongetje, 'wat wenst gij ?'

Hoe ben je ontsnapt ? vroeg hij. Waar is de heks ?

'De heks is dood,' sprak het jongetje. 'Ze had mij betoverd in een sleutel. Maar nu ben ik vrij.'

Maar hoe ? Hoe ? vroeg hij weer.

'Dat staat allemaal in de verhalen van de toren,' zei het jongetje. 'Ik ga niet veel uitleggen.'

'Waarom niet ?' vroeg hij.

'Ga zelf maar lezen,' zei het jongetje. 'Iedere verdieping heeft z'n eigen verhaal, z'n eigen avontuur. Het is een puzzel avontuur.'

'Dus ik krijg toegang ?' vroeg hij. 'En leidt deze toren helemaal tot Suriname ?'

'Ja,' zei het jongetje. 'De lucht houdt alles gescheiden van Suriname, maar de toren is een weg terug tot haar.'

'Is daar nog steeds een paradijs, oerwouden, gastvrije mensen ?' vroeg hij.

'Dat moet je zelf ontdekken,' zei de jongen.

'Er zit een reus achter mij aan,' zei hij tegen het jongetje. 'Alsjeblieft, laat me snel binnen.'

'Ja,' zei het jongetje, 'en de heks heeft nog een zus.'

Toen hoorden ze beiden holle voetstappen op de trap. 'Ik moet weg,' zei het jongetje. Het jongetje verdween door een deurtje in het trappenhuis. Hij rende achter het jongetje aan en begon op het deurtje te bonzen. 'Toe, laat me niet alleen,' riep hij. De voetstappen werden steeds harder. Het kwam steeds dichterbij. Toen werd er ineens van achteren op zijn rug getikt.

Het was een oude vrouw.

'U bent de zus van de heks ?' vroeg hij verschrikt.

'Nee joh,' zei de vrouw met een Surinaams accent. 'Ik kwam even een kijkje nemen in de toren. Ik kom helemaal uit Suriname.'

Hij slaakte een diepe zucht. 'Dus het is toch waar,' zei hij. 'Suriname bestaat nog.'

'Dat weet ik niet,' zei de vrouw weer met haar Surinaamse accent. 'Ik ben al vele jaren op een tocht door de toren, van verdieping tot verdieping, maar ik kan mijn weg niet meer terugvinden. Ik vraag me af of Suriname nog wel bestaat.'

'Dat moet wel,' zei hij. 'Kom, dan gaan we er samen naar op zoek.'

En zo gingen ze beiden de trap op.

Einde

DE BIBELEBONSE PAP

Hoofdstuk 1. Spijbelaars voor de Spin
Hoofdstuk 2. Het Kruid van Jonas
Hoofdstuk 3. De Bostrein

Hoofdstuk 1. Spijbelaars voor de Spin

In een heel oud Nederland, wel honderden jaren geleden was Lelystad een poortstadje aan de zee. Er waren veel piraten die tijd, en die konden alleen via Lelystad in Nederland komen als ze zich

gedroegen. Nederland had goed bewaakte dijken, en Lelystad was de enige haven en poort tot Nederland. Verder was Nederland stevig ommuurd tegen allerlei ander gespuis ter land. Alleen de vogels konden makkelijk binnengaan, en zo ook de sprekende duif Oerling. Oerling was al een hele oude vogel, al vele honderden jaren oud, maar hij ging maar niet dood, omdat hij eens van de Bibelebonse pap had gegeten. Hij werd dus eigenlijk ook niet ouder, maar leefde gewoon als dezelfde door.

Groot was Nederland wel, heel groot, met vele dorpjes en steden. Vooral dorpjes, en vele grote dorpen. Lelystad was de grootste stad, aan de kust, maar Renkum was de hoofdstad van Nederland. Zo is dat eeuwen geweest.

Je zou denken dat Nederland dan ontzettend goed beveiligd was met al die zwaar bewaakte dijken en stevige muren, maar niets is minder waar. Nederland was niet goed beveiligd, of niet goed genoeg, want eens vielen de piraten binnen via Lelystad. Ons hele landje werd toen een piraten natie. Het laatste tovenaarsgeslacht wat Nederland had, het geslacht Buis, werd toen omgebracht. Alleen Zaderling Buis en zijn broer Georgius lieten ze in leven, want die waren nog jong, en die leken onschuldig. Tientallen jaren later werd Joost geboren, en Zaderling Buis was de trotse vader, en Georgius de trotse oom. Er was weer hoop gekomen voor het geslacht Buis, alhoewel er van een tovenaarsgeslacht niet meer echt te spreken was, want de piraten hadden alle tovenaars van de familie uitgemoord.

Toch was dat niet helemaal waar. Georgius had een boek van zijn vader geërfd waar nog veel over tovenarij instond, en hierdoor leerde Georgius zichzelf de kunst aan. Zijn neefje, Joost, werd toen later zijn tovenaarsleerling, alhoewel hij toen inmiddels in de gevangenis terecht was gekomen door onbekende redenen. Zijn neefje bezocht hem veel en leerde zo het vak. Joost wilde iets tegen de piraten doen die het land regeerden, maar hij kon niet veel doen. Hij was jong, en had niet veel kennis. Zelfs zijn oom Georgius zat met zijn handen in het haar. Hij vroeg zich af waarom hij in de gevangenis zat, maar niemand wilde het hem zeggen. Misschien had het ermee te maken dat hij een Buis was, maar zijn iets jongere broer, Zaderling, was nog op vrije voeten. Of misschien had het ermee te maken dat hij de oudste was en ze het toch niet vertrouwden ?

Joost zat in de klas van meester Tulp. In deze klas zat ook Klaas de Wit, de ergste pester van Nederland. Ze zeiden dat hij een sleutel bewaarde, de sleutel van de Bibelebonse pap waardoor je nooit oud wordt.
De Bibelebonse pap werd niet verkocht in Nederland. Er waren een heleboel verhalen over dat het alleen maar voor het kwade tovenaarsgeslacht was van Klaas de Wit, zodat zij altijd jong bleven. Ieder ander mens in Nederland werd oud.
Joost en Klaas zaten dus bij elkaar in de klas en waren altijd in gevecht. Klaas de Pester, zoals hij weleens werd genoemd, was het zoontje van de bakker. En het was ook zo, die familie leek maar niet ouder te worden. Zouden die verhalen toch waar zijn ? Zou er nog een soort van laatste tovenaarsgeslacht zijn, maar dan een kwaad tovenaarsgeslacht ? Joost dacht van wel. Hij geloofde al die verhalen. Hij had teveel met Klaas meegemaakt. Klaas zei zelf al altijd dat het waar kon zijn, maar dat hij er niets over wilde zeggen. Sommigen zeiden dat ze hem er weleens over hadden horen opscheppen, maar Joost had dat nog nooit meegemaakt.

Meester Tulp leerde de kinderen van alles, vooral voetballen. Daar was de meester verzot op. Hij

deed dit altijd met zijn lange zwarte onderwijzersjas en zijn onderwijzerspet op, met een fluitje in zijn mond. Op een dag nam hij de kinderen mee het bos in. Hij vertelde hen dat hier ergens kruid voor de Bibelebonse pap moest groeien. Maar Klaas lachte hem uit. "Dat kruid groeit hier niet, meester," lachte hij. "Dat kruid wordt door onze familie bewaakt, het beste bakkersgeslacht van Nederland, en het wordt alleen verkocht aan de piraten, zodat zij altijd jong zullen blijven." Joost schrok. De meester negeerde gewoon wat Klaas zei, en zei : "En toch is het zo." Klaas lachte alleen maar harder. "Ga hier maar op zoek, meester, met al uw domme uilskuikens. Jullie zullen het kruid toch niet vinden," lachte hij.

Die nacht kon Joost niet slapen. Hij bleef maar denken over wat de meester had gezegd. Zou het kruid dan toch ergens in het bos groeien ? Oom Georgius had hem veel geleerd over toveren, maar hij had het gevoel dat het niet werkte. Hij hoopte maar dat hij eens het Bibelebonse kruid zou vinden, want dan zou hij nooit oud worden, en dan zou hij misschien echt allerlei toverkrachten hebben. Misschien was het ook wel goed dat hij geen echte toverkrachten had, en dat al het getover toch niet werkte, want anders zou hij misschien ook wel opgesloten worden. Joost moest ook altijd oppassen met oefenen. Oom Georgius zei dat hij het alleen 's nachts mocht doen, zodat niemand het kon zien.

Ook had Joost het geluk dat hij nog steeds jong was, dus snel in de gevangenis belanden zou hij toch niet. Hij was nog een kind. De volgende dag nam meester Tulp hen weer naar het bos.
"Meester, waar groeit ergens het Bibelebonse kruid ?" vroeg Joost.
"Ken je de trap van Gorrestein ?" vroeg de meester. "Die staat ergens diep in het bos, en daar moeten we zijn." Klaas begon weer te lachen en de meester te bespotten. Ze waren het wel gewend en negeerden hem gewoon zoals altijd.
"Ergens diep in het bos moet dus die trap zijn die leidt naar het Bibelebonse kruid," zei de meester, "maar niemand weet waar die trap is. De piraten weten het ook niet."
Weer begon Klaas te lachen en te spotten. "Mijn vader, bakker de Wit, heeft dat kruid, en hij zal echt zijn ingrediënten niet verklappen, aan niemand," lachte hij. "Alleen onze familie eet van de Bibelebonse pap, en de piraten die het land besturen."
De meester schudde zijn hoofd. "Dat is niet waar, kinderen." Klaas begon steeds harder te lachen.

"Waarom is het niet waar, meester ?" vroeg Joost.

"Niemand weet waar de trap van Gorrestein is, Joost. Alleen de oude tovenaars wisten het, maar die zijn dood zoals je weet."

Joost zou het oom Georgius wel vragen. Misschien wist hij het. Natuurlijk vertelde hij dat niet aan de meester en de kinderen. Hij hield het voor zich. Toen hij thuisgekomen was van school ging hij direct naar de gevangenis om zijn oom te bezoeken. Van oom Georgius kreeg hij het geërfde boek mee. Daar zou het volgens zijn oom wel in staan. Joost was helemaal door het dolle heen. Altijd had hij al in dat boek willen lezen, en nu mocht hij het zelfs mee naar huis nemen. Joost fietste zo hard als hij kon, en kwam helemaal buiten adem thuis. Snel ging hij zijn kamer in, en nam het grote zwarte boek met het vreemde gouden teken erop uit zijn tas. Dit was dus het familie boek. Hier zou dus alles instaan wat hij moest weten volgens oom. Hij ging achter zijn bureautje zitten en sloeg het grote boek open. Als eerste werd er gesproken over een oude duif genaamd Oerling. Die duif zou niet kunnen sterven, omdat hij van de Bibelebonse pap had gegeten. De duif zou leiden tot de trap

van Gorrestein diep in het bos. De duif zou komen als je een bepaald versje zou zingen. Het versje stond in het boek beschreven. Het was een heel klein en vreemd versje. Joost begon er nog doller van te worden. Hij zou het aan meester Tulp vertellen. De volgende dag na schooltijd ging Joost naar meester Tulp toe die achter zijn bureau zat. Hij had goed gewacht totdat alle kinderen uit de klas waren. Toen vertelde hij over het boek, over de trap en de duif, en dat de duif zou komen door een bepaald versje. Van oom Georgius mocht hij het boek niet overal mee naartoe nemen, maar moest hij het verborgen op zijn kamer houden. Daarom ging meester Tulp met Joost mee naar zijn kamer. Daar liet Joost de meester het versje zien.

"Zou het echt werken, meester ?" vroeg Joost.

Meester Tulp begon het versje te zingen, en ze keken beiden uit het raam. Maar er gebeurde niets.
"Zing jij het eens, Joost."
Joost begon het vreemde rijmpje te zingen.
Ineens fladderde er wat voor het raam. Het was een grote duif. Joost deed het raam open en liet de duif binnen. Het was de sprekende duif Oerling.
Oerling keek meester Tulp en Joost aan.
"Waarom hebt gij mij geroepen ?" vroeg de duif.

"Wij zouden graag weten waar de trap van Gorrestein is," sprak Joost. "We zijn namelijk op zoek naar het Bibelebonse kruid."

"Ah," zei de duif, "volgt u mij maar."

Ze gingen over de trap naar beneden en toen het huis uit. Eerst leidde de duif hen naar het bos. Ze moesten diep het bos in. Oerling kende de weg. Ze kwamen op plaatsen waar ze nog nooit eerder geweest waren, en het was zo stil hier en zo prachtig. Ze kwamen langs een grote rivier. "Hier moet het ergens wezen," sprak Oerling.

"Wat kunnen we daar verwachten ?" vroeg Joost.

"Dat zul je wel zien," zei de duif.

Ze liepen nog een lang eind door langs de rivier, totdat de rivier ergens ophield. Hier was het bos woester, en ze moesten nog dieper. Het werd donkerder en donkerder, maar er waren gelukkig lichtgevende insecten.

"Ik dacht dat we er al bijna waren," zei Joost.

"Nog even doorlopen," zei Oerling.

Na een tijdje begonnen ze erg moe te worden. "Hier moet het ergens zijn," zei Oerling.

"Ik ben zo moe," klaagde Joost. Ook de meester was moe, maar stapte stevig door.

"Kom, Joost," zei hij, "het is voor een goed doel."

In de verte zagen ze een lichtgevende trap. Het was heel zacht licht. Het stond daar zomaar diep in het bos. "Woe," zei Joost, "wat griezelig. Het is een lichtgevende trap en het houdt zomaar ergens in de lucht op."

"Dat is de mist," zei Oerling. Steeds dichter kwamen ze bij de trap. Het was heel bijzonder lichtgevend steen. "Dit is de trap van Gorrestein," zei Oerling.

"Wie is precies Gorrestein ?" vroeg Joost.

"Dat zul je wel zien," kraste Oerling.

"Komt u verder," sprak een stem. Er ging een deur open aan de zijkant van de trap, en een oude man in een lichtgevend gewaad en met een lange witte baard kwam naar buiten.

"Wat kan ik voor u doen ?" zei hij met een donkere stem.
Joost vertelde het verhaal.

"Ah, het Bibelebonse kruid zei u ?" zei de oude man. "Komt u maar mee naar binnen."

Hij leidde hen door de deur de trap binnen. Toen moesten ze over een trap naar beneden. "Ik woon heel diep," zei de man. "Maar als u het geheim wilt weten, dan moet u dus deze kant op en niet de trap omhoog."

"Oh," zei Joost.

"Zo, dus je hebt je opa meegenomen ?" vroeg de oude man.

"Nee, dat is meester Tulp," zei Joost.

"Ah, meester Tulp," zei de oude man. "Welkom, u ook, meester Tulp."

"We reizen vaak samen," zei meester Tulp.

"Ah, ik zie het," zei de oude man, "gezellig, en twee is beter dan maar alleen."

"Zo is het," zei meester Tulp, "goed gezelschap is een groot geluk, en brengt goede hulp en raad op zijn tijd."

"Heeft u weleens van de Bibelebonse pap gegeten ?" vroeg Joost.

"Ik ?" vroeg de oude man. "Nee. Het is mij te ver. Ik zal het u zo aanwijzen."

"Maar wie bent u dan ?" vroeg Joost.

"Ik ben Gorrestein," zei de oude man, "en dit is mijn trap."

"Ik begrijp het," zei Joost, "maar ... wat doet u hier dan ?"

"Het is beter hier te zijn dan bij de piraten," lachte de oude man. "Die zeeschuimers zijn nergens goed voor."

"Daar heeft u gelijk in," zei Joost. "Gelukkig maar dat ze u nooit hebben gevonden. Bent u een soort tovenaar ?"

"Nee," zei de oude man. "Toveren doe ik niet. Dan zou ik allang alles hebben veranderd."

"Ik begrijp het," sprak Joost.

Ze kwamen aan bij een ondergrondse rivier waar een bootje stond. "Als u hier instapt," zei de oude man, "en u gaat met de stroom mee, dan komt u vanzelf bij het Bibelebonse kruid."

"Waarom wilt u niet mee ?" vroeg Joost.

"Het is mij te ver, twee dagen in een boot," zei de oude man.

"Twee dagen ?" vroeg Joost.

"Laten we het maar doen," zei meester Tulp. "Het is voor een goed doel."

"Daar heeft u gelijk in," zei de oude man. Meester Tulp en Joost stapten in het bootje en de oude man duwde het bootje de rivier op. "U heeft geen peddels nodig. De rivier doet het vanzelf," zei de oude man. Het was hier erg donker, maar weer waren er lichtgevende insecten. Ze moesten een hele lange tijd in het bootje zitten. Overal aan de zijkanten van de rivier waren grote boomstronken en wortels van bomen, als in een muur van grond. De rivier ging door een soort ondergrondse bostunnel, dieper en dieper. Er begon steeds meer kruid langs de zijkanten te groeien. "Zou dit het Bibelebonse kruid al zijn, meester ?" vroeg Joost. Maar de meester sliep. Ook Joost viel na een tijdje in slaap.

Toen ze weer wakker werden leek het alsof ze dagen hadden geslapen. Het bootje was bij een grote keuken terechtgekomen, als een open paleiskeuken. Ze werden door twee kokken gegrepen. "Wat komen jullie hier doen ?" werd er gebulderd.

Joost vertelde het verhaal, maar kon zijn zinnen niet afmaken. Meester Tulp deed toen het verhaal. "Bibbelebons kruid ?" snauwde één van de kokken. "Zijn jullie gek geworden ?"

"Bibbele wat ?" vroeg de andere kok.

"Ik kan geen wijs worden van deze snaters," zei de ene kok weer.

Ze werden meegesleurd de keuken in door een gang, en kwamen toen in een donkere kelder terecht waarin ze werden geduwd. De deur ging op slot, en er zaten tralies voor het kleine raampje van de

deur, wat zo vuil was dat het niet veel licht doorliet.

"Nu zitten we mooi in de penarie," zei Joost.

"Rustig afwachten, Joost," zei de meester. "Het is voor een goed doel. We komen er heus wel langs."

"Dat zegt u altijd dat het voor een goed doel is," zei Joost. "Misschien zijn we ergens verkeerd gegaan."

"Misschien," zei meester Tulp. "We komen er wel achter."

Na een tijdje deed een grote dikke kok de deur open. De man was kaal op zijn hoofd, en sleurde hen beiden naar buiten. "Wat moet dit hier, en wie zijn jullie ?" bulderde de dikke kok. "Verstekelingen ?"

"Is het hier een schip dan ?" vroeg meester Tulp.

"Zeg op," zei de dikke kok. "Wie zijn jullie ?"

Meester Tulp deed weer het verhaal.

"Bibbelebonse wat ?" snauwde ook deze kok. "Zeg, ik ben de hoofdkok hier en heb nog nooit zoiets belachelijks gehoord. Pap waarvan je nooit oud word, ja ja. Je hebt nogal wat praatjes, en jij noemt jezelf meester ?"

Meester Tulp zuchtte. "Waarschijnlijk zijn we hier verkeerd. Kunt u ons eruit laten en ons verder de rivier laten opgaan. Nee, ik weet zeker dat we hier verkeerd zijn."

"Of misschien moesten we er eerder uit," zei Joost, "maar we vielen in slaap."

Opeens kwam Oerling aanvliegen. "Wat moet die smerige duif hier ?" bulderde de hoofdkok.

"Laat ze met rust," krijste Oerling. De kok moest snel zijn vingers in zijn oren stoppen, en ook meester Tulp en Joost. Oerling was flink kwaad, en begon de kok te pikken met zijn snavel. "Het zijn mijn gasten," tierde Oerling. Toen de kok ze in schrik losliet begon Oerling wat rustiger te worden.

"Ze hadden er eerder uitgemoeten, maar ze vielen in slaap," zei de vogel.

"Volg mij," zei de vogel. Oerling bracht hen weer helemaal terug naar het bootje. Aan een touw begon de grote vogel het bootje tegen de stroom in te trekken, nadat Joost en meester Tulp waren ingestapt. Het touw was in de grote klauwen van het beest. Ergens anders moesten ze een andere tunnel inslaan. Hier was het een stuk lichter. Nu gingen ze weer met de stroom mee, en ook Oerling ging in het bootje. Ze gingen af op een groot bulderend licht wat als water was. Het was als een lichtgevende waterval. Ineens gingen ze met het bootje de tunnel uit en gleden over een waterval

naar beneden. Snel greep Oerling Joost en meester Tulp in zijn klauwen en vloog met hen weg.

Oerling bracht hen over een meertje tot de oever waar hele hoge bomen stonden. Na een tijdje lopen kwamen ze bij een toren die geen top bleek te hebben, maar alsmaar hoger was. Oerling noemde het de eindeloze toren. Hier moesten ze zijn. Ze moesten door een deurtje om de trap op te kunnen gaan. Die zou cirkelend naar boven leiden. Na een tijdje kwamen ze aan bij een deur langs de trap. Hier moesten ze aankloppen. Een oude vrouw deed open. Zij was genaamd Jorit, een heks. Zij vertelde hen nadat ze hun verhaal hadden verteld dat het kruid van Bibelebons levensgevaarlijk was. Het werd gesponnen van spinnenrag, en groeide bovenop de eindeloze toren om eens in de driehonderd jaar vruchten te geven. Van het kruid zelf mocht je niet eten, want dan zou je sterven.

"Hoe kan er nu kruid op de top van de toren groeien als er geen top is, als de toren eindeloos is ?" vroeg Joost verbaasd.

"Dat komt," zei de heks, "omdat je het geheim van de vruchten nog niet kent. Je kunt alleen op de top van de eindeloze toren komen door de zeven winden van het bos."

"Waar kunnen we die vinden ?" vroeg Joost.

"Een paar verdiepingen hoger," zei de heks.

Joost en meester Tulp bedankten de heks, en gingen de trap weer op. Maar het leek wel zeshonderd jaar te duren. Hoeveel trappen ze ook opgingen, ze zagen geen deur.

"Of misschien hebben ze wel helemaal geen deur, die zeven winden van het bos ?" vroeg Joost. Joost begon erg moe te worden, en ook meester Tulp. "Volhouden, Joost," zei meester Tulp.

"Ik kom bijna niet meer verder," zei Joost.
"Laten we anders even gaan zitten," zei meester Tulp. "Dit is ook geen doen, en misschien zijn we wel weer te ver gegaan."

Beiden gingen ze op de trap zitten. "Het is zo eindeloos," zei Joost. "Ik ben zo moe. Ik moet er niet aan denken nog verder te gaan, en ook niet om weer helemaal terug te gaan."

"We zitten vast lijkt het wel," zei meester Tulp. "Maar laten we de moed maar niet opgeven. We komen er heus wel." Na een tijdje begonnen ze beiden in slaap te dutten. Opeens werden ze opgenomen door een enorm sterke wind en werden hoger in de toren getrokken.

"Daar zijn ze," bulderde de wind. Hij riep naar de zes andere winden. In een loeivaart werden ze getrokken naar een deur veel hoger in de toren. De wind zoemde over de trappen heen. Wat was dat een eind weg, zeg. Daar zouden ze nooit in hun eentje kunnen komen. Dat zou jaren duren, zo niet eeuwen. Plotseling stonden ze voor de deur. Een ijzige gestalte die helemaal doorzichtig was deed open. "Zo, zijn jullie daar eindelijk," zei de gestalte. "Dat mocht weleens tijd worden."

"Kent u ons ?" vroeg Joost.

"Nee. Nee, nee," sprak de ijzige gestalte. "Ik ken jullie niet. Waarom zou ik jullie moeten kennen."

"Omdat u net zei dat we daar eindelijk zijn," zei Joost. "U heeft op ons zitten wachten ?"

"Ja, natuurlijk," zei de ijzige gestalte. "Maar ik ken jullie verder niet."

"Oh, zit dat zo," zei Joost.

"Ja, wij voelen dingen aan, weet je," zei de doorzichtige gestalte. "Dat is de kwestie met winden. We voelden jullie aankomen, maar jullie kwamen maar niet."

"Het was ook zo'n eind," zei Joost.

"Natuurlijk," lachte de gestalte. "Moeten jullie een kopje thee, bosthee ?" vroeg de gestalte.

"Graag," zei Joost.

"Doet u mij ook maar," zei meester Tulp.

Binnengekomen zagen ze nog meer doorzichtige gestaltes, in verschillende heel vage kleuren. Het waren de zeven boswinden.

De ijzige gestalte, die de ijzige wind van het bos was, scheen IJshout te heten. Hij scheen al te weten waarvoor ze kwamen, want winden schijnen dat aan te voelen. Hij keek hen aan, en zei : "Het Bibelebonse kruid is zeer gevaarlijk, zeer gevaarlijk. Dat mag u niet onderschatten."

"En het duurt driehonderd jaar voordat het kruid nieuwe vruchten geeft ?" vroeg Joost.

"Helaas wel, helaas wel," sprak IJshout, "maar je moet het geheim van de vruchten kennen. Ziet u, het topje van de eindeloze toren is een droom. Daarom heeft u een slaap nodig zo diep waarin het ijs breekt om zo dit geheim te kunnen zien. IJs is alles wat de spin gemaakt heeft, ziet u. Het spint zowel het ijs als het kruid, als een web, maar alleen de vrucht geeft leven. Zij die van het kruid eten zullen sterven. Ook het kruid is ijs. Voor hen die niet diep slapen is de driehonderd jaar een probleem, maar niet voor hen die van de vruchten van de warme slaap hebben gegeten, om zo tot de vruchten van het Bibelebonse kruid te komen."

"Mag ik u wat vragen ?" vroeg Joost. "Hoe komen we aan die vruchten van warme slaap ? En een jongen uit mijn klas beweert te hebben gegeten van het Bibelebonse kruid, en dat hij net als zijn familie en de bestuurders van het land nooit oud zal worden. Hij zegt de Bibelebonse pap is van dat kruid gemaakt."

"Dan is hij al dood," zei IJshout, "een schim, want allen die van het kruid eten zullen sterven. Zij zijn gevangenen van de spin, en zij worden slechts bereid om opgegeten te worden. Het zijn slechts de voorbereidingen van de kok. Het is misschien naar om te zien allemaal hoe ze spartelen, maar het zijn slechts stuiptrekkingen. Ze zijn dood. Er zit geen leven in hen."

Joost slikte even. "Het is de grootste pestkop van Nederland."

"Ach welnee," zei IJshout. "Hij suddert slechts in de pan. Allemaal schaduwen en weerspiegelingen, schimmen. Spookachtig griezelig, dat wel, maar een kookkunst. En om je andere vraag te beantwoorden : Mijn broer, Warmhout, brengt de vrucht van de warme slaap die al het ijs breekt, zodat je tot de vrucht van het Bibelebonse kruid kunt komen. Die vrucht is goed en levengevend. Hier wordt de pap van gemaakt, gebrouwen, maar kom er niet aan voordat het klaar is."

"Waarom niet ?" vroeg Joost.

"Omdat het anders giftig is," sprak IJshout.

"Dus ook de vruchten van het Bibelebonse kruid zijn giftig ?" vroeg Joost schrikkend.

"Als het niet goed bereid is," sprak IJshout. "Daarom heb je een goede kok nodig, anders kun je het wel vergeten."

In een hoek zat Warmhout, de broer van IJshout. Hij was de warme wind van het bos, in tegenstelling tot zijn broer. Hij had het gesprek glimlachend aangehoord. "Ja hoor, bij mij moet je wezen," zei hij. "Ik zal jullie straks hogerop nemen totdat het ijs breekt, in een diepe warme slaap. In die slaap zul je komen tot de droom van de Bibelebonse vruchten, in plaats van driehonderd jaar erop wachten."

IJshout glimlachte. "Dan zit mijn werk erop voor nu."

Nog even praatten ze door, en toen was het tijd dat Warmhout hen nog verder mee naar boven zou nemen. Warmhout was dus de warme wind van het bos, en nam hen toen beiden in zijn armen, ging door de deur naar de trappen, en toen steeg hij omhoog. Ook dit ging weer erg snel, en ook geruisloos. Het leek nog wel sneller te gaan dan de eerste keer. Met gemak vloog hij snel over duizende trappen heen. Joost en meester Tulp begonnen al langzaam in slaap te vallen. Joost voelde helemaal niets meer, alsof hij in de ruimte zweefde. Hij voelde niet eens meer dat hij vooruit ging. Alles was zo zacht. Alles verliep zo soepel. Er gleed een warmte over hem heen, en al snel zag hij niets meer. Hij was in de warme slaap. Ook meester Tulp kwam in de warme slaap. Warmhout moest nu door de ijsbarrière van de eindeloze toren heenbreken, om zo tot de droomtop te komen, en tot de vruchten van het Bibelebonse kruid. Overal was kruid nu. Het leek wel alsof de lucht er vol mee was. Iemand hijgde en kreunde, alsof er een baby geboren zou worden, als een boom die vruchten zou geven.

"Ik kan het niet !" schreeuwde iemand.

"Je kan het wel," zei iemand anders.

"Nee, ik kan het echt niet," werd er weer geschreeuwd.

"Jawel, het is niet de eerste keer. Het zal je heus wel weer lukken."

En toen was het doodstil.

Joost en meester Tulp werden wakker tussen de vruchten. Het waren allerlei soorten vruchten die ze niet kenden. Gevaarlijk waren die vruchten wel, zoals IJshout had gezegd, want ze moesten door een kok goed worden bereid. "Raak ze niet aan, Joost," zei meester Tulp.

"We moeten wachten op de kok," zei Joost.

"Raak ze maar niet aan, meester, anders ontploffen ze."

"Nou, dat zal nog wel meevallen. We mogen ze alleen niet eten, Joost."

"Laten we maar geen risico nemen, meester. Voorkomen is beter dan genezen."

Maar de vruchten leken pootjes te hebben, en kwamen naar ze toe. Het leken wel een soort kevers, insecten. Ze hadden allerlei kleuren rood. De vruchten begonnen steeds agressiever te worden. Toen begonnen ze te bijten.

Joost begon te gillen en te schreeuwen. "Dit lijkt wel een nachtmerrie !"

"Dat is het waarschijnlijk, Joost," zei meester Tulp die de vruchten van zich af begon te slaan.

"Als ze hier Bibelebonse pap van maken, dan hoef ik het niet meer !" schreeuwde Joost.

"Zoei," zei de wind, "het zijn de vruchten van de warme slaap. Zonder deze vruchten kom je niet in een diepere slaap, het is een soort narcose spuit."

Joost en meester Tulp werden zo geprikt en gestoken dat ze in een nog diepere slaap vielen.

"Ik wil eruit !" werd er geroepen.

"Nog even," zei iemand anders.

"Ik wil niet !"

"Je hebt niets te willen. Sommige dingen zijn nu eenmaal nodig."

Toen werd het doodstil. Hier konden ze de trappen weer zien. Ze zagen dat hier ergens de toren begon af te buigen. Het ging helemaal scheef totdat het over de kop ging, en toen weer. De trappen gingen hier recht door enorme watervallen heen, en bloemenvelden. Hier nam een andere broer het over : Waterhout, de natte boswind.

"Heb je ze ?" vroeg Warmhout.

"Ja, ik heb ze. Laat maar los," zei Waterhout.

De top van de eindeloze toren was een draaikolk waardoor ze in een andere natuur kwamen. Ze werden er doorheen gezogen totdat ze in de bloemenvelden waren omgeven door watervallen. Er stroomde een rivier rondom de bloemenvelden heen. Waterhout stond voor ze, als een waterige, doorzichtige gestalte. "Ziezo," zei hij. "Ik ben de kok."

"Om duizelig van te worden," zei Joost.

Waterhout glimlachte. "Het trekt wel weg," zei hij.

"Dus zo kook jij," zei meester Tulp.

"Zo kook ik," glimlachte Waterhout.

"Dus het is echt waar van de Bibelebonse pap ?" vroeg Joost.

Waterhout knikte. "Ja, waarom niet ?" zei hij. "Het is allemaal wiskundig en natuurkundig eenvoudig te beredeneren."

"Waar is uw keuken ?" vroeg Joost.

"Hier," glimlachte Waterhout.

"Ziet u, wij kwamen voor de Bibelebonse pap om zo niet oud meer te hoeven worden," zei Joost. "Een kok is nodig zodat het niet giftig is. Heeft u nu zo'n middel wat niet giftig is ?"

"Bakken vol," zei Waterhout. "Alle ingrediënten zijn op de juiste manier toebereid, in de juiste verhouding, en de processen waren stipt op tijd, niet te lang en niet te kort. Het is een heel wiskundig vak, want anders gaat er van alles mis. Dat wil je niet weten, maar dit vak is levens en levensgevaarlijk. Dat mogen alleen de volleerden, de bevoegden, beoefenen. Zo niet dan zou het een ramp kunnen betekenen. Dan zou het koorddansen zijn tussen twee hoge flatten in."

"Zonder vangnet zeker," zei Joost.

"Precies," zei Waterhout. "Ik zou er dus maar niet aan beginnen. Beunhazen zijn een groot gevaar, en die komen dan ook achter de tralies terecht. Daar zorgt de spin wel voor. Alles wordt hier fijn getest."

"Ik begrijp het," zei Joost. "Is er ook een school voor dit soort dingen."

"Jazeker, mijn jongen, mijn lieve jongen," zei Waterhout ineens dolgelukkig. "Ik ben zo waanzinnig blij dat je deze vraag stelt. Het is namelijk een zaak van leven of dood, wat maar weinigen beseffen, of ze beseffen het te laat. Een andere broer, Spinrag, heeft hiervoor een school. Hij is de zachte boswind. Hij wordt ook wel "de spin" genoemd."

"Ik besef dat ik maar erg tijdelijk ben," zei Joost, "en ik weet niet hoeveel tijd ik en meester Tulp

nog hebben, maar zouden wij daarom direct wat van de Bibelebonse pap mogen eten, zodat we niet meer ouder kunnen worden ?"

"Wij verkopen alleen het poeder voor de pap," zei Waterhout. "Dat kan niet zomaar vermengd worden met melk of water. Dat zou levens en levensgevaarlijk zijn."

"Hoe duur is dat poeder ?" vroeg Joost. "En hoe en met wat moet het poeder gemengd worden ?"

"Heel duur, heel duur," zei Waterhout. "Dat kan een sterfelijk mens niet zomaar betalen. En met wat en hoe het poeder vermengd moet worden wordt allemaal op onze school onderwezen, zodat er absoluut geen fouten gemaakt kunnen worden."

"Maar dat lijkt op een onmogelijke opgave," zei meester Tulp.
Joost begon verschrikkelijk te zuchten en werd steeds wanhopiger.

"U moet weten, meester Tulp," sprak Waterhout, "waar een wil is is een weg. Als u een volleerde Bibelebonse bakker bent geworden kunt u hopen goud verdienen."

"Het gaat mij niet om goud of geld," sprak meester Tulp. "Ik blijf het liefst schoolmeester."

"Oh, maar als u een volleerde Bibelebonse bakker bent geworden, dan kunt u ook lesgeven op de school van mijn broer, en dan verdient u ook bakken geld," zei Waterhout.

"Geld interesseert me niet. Maar anderen te leren goed te doen, en ook iets van hen te leren, daar gaat het mij om," zei meester Tulp.

"Prijzenswaardig, zeer prijzenswaardig," zei Waterhout.

"Ja," zei Joost. "Mij gaat het ook niet om het geld. Waar het mij om gaat is een middel te vinden om niet meer oud te worden, en daar anderen ook mee te helpen."

"Jullie hebben beiden een goed hart," zei Waterhout, "en dat doet me goed. Maar denk je eens in als niemand oud zou worden en niemand zou sterven, dan zouden ook de slechterikken nooit oud worden en nooit sterven. Ze zouden eeuwig kunnen bestaan als een groot eeuwig kwaad."

"Maar daar zorgt de spin toch voor dat het niet in de verkeerde handen valt ?" vroeg Joost.

"Precies, slimme jongen," glimlachte Waterhout. "En daarom zijn jullie hier, en daarom hebben de piraten en hun gespuis de trap van Gorrestein ook nooit kunnen vinden. Ook al zouden ze het vinden, dan zou de spin wel met ze afrekenen."

"Of ze zouden de trap naar boven nemen in plaats van naar beneden, want de trap naar beneden is verborgen," zei Joost. "Aan de zijkant van de trap verscheen in de steen een deur die er eerst niet was, en toen kwam de oude man, Gorrestein zelf, naar buiten."

"Precies, slimme, lieve jongen," zei Waterhout. "Maak jij je daarom maar niet druk. Alles zal wel

goedkomen. De Bibelebonse pap is alleen een verdienste op school. De spijbelaars zijn voor de spin."

Hoofdstuk 2. Het Kruid van Jonas

Waterhout vertelde dat het giftige Bibelebonse kruid in de oorlog werd gebruikt, samen met boswind, in speciale Bibelebonse kanonnen. Joost zei dat dat hard nodig was vanwege de piraten die Nederland bezet hielden. Van het kruid werden speciale Bibelebonse kanonkogels gemaakt. Op een dag was het oorlog. De boswinden en hun legers kwamen boven de grond en voerden oorlog tegen de piraten die Nederland bezet hielden. Renkum, de hoofdstad werd eerst terugveroverd, en toen Kampen, Nunspeet, Lelystad en Amsterdam. Ook Joost en meester Tulp vochten mee tegen de piraten. Door de oorlog begon het Bibelebonse kruid overal in hagen door Nederland heen te groeien. De piraten waren woedend, want zo waren de inwoners van Nederland een stap dichterbij de Bibelebonse pap gekomen.

Joost Buis was de smerige piraten goed beu, en begon de inwoners te onderwijzen over de Bibelebonse pap, alles wat hij wist. Ook begon hij pakken Bibelebonse pap-poeder met gebruiksaanwijzing te verspreiden, en maakte hij de pap zelf. De mensen wilden dat hij de Bibelebonse pap koning zou worden. Nederland moest een Bibelebons land worden. Er werd verschrikkelijk gevochten, en oom Georgius zat nog steeds in de gevangenis. De zeven boswinden vochten krachtig mee, en bliezen de piraten weg. Warmhout, de warme wind van het bos, bracht de warme slaap over de mensen, om ze in zo'n diepe slaap te brengen dat het ijs zou breken. Hierin zouden ze het geheim van de Bibelebonse vruchten zien.

De eindeloze toren groeide nu door in Utrecht. Het was boven de grond uitgekomen. Hier woonden Jorit en de zeven boswinden nu, en van hieruit waaiden ze door heel Nederland, om de piraten weg te blazen, weg over de muren en de dijken, en om Nederland te beschermen tegen de piraten. Nederland werd nu beter beveiligd dan ooit, en overal over de muren en dijken groeide het Bibelebonse kruid. Het Zuiden van Nederland, wat eerst België heette, heette nu Suriname, en ook dat deel was geheel omgeven met hagen en struiken van het Bibelebonse kruid.

Overal reden tanks door de straten. Een Surinaams meisje moest de nieuwe pap koningin worden naast Joost Buis. Oom Georgius had dat tegen Joost gezegd. Meester Tulp zou wel een meisje voor hem uitzoeken in Suriname, in het Zuiden van Nederland. Utrecht zou de nieuwe hoofdstad worden van het Bibelebonse Nederland. Meester Tulp bracht vele Surinaamse meisjes naar het paleis om ze daar aan een pap test te onderwerpen. Het meisje wat de beste Bibelebonse pap zou koken zou de nieuwe pap koningin worden. Meester Tulp en Joost Buis, de nieuwe pap koning, zouden beiden de

pap proeven. Na een tijdje was het gebeurd, en het was wel duidelijk. Er was een pap koningin uitgekozen. Het volk was blij. Het tovenaars-geslacht was nu hersteld.

Door de Bibelebonse pap zou het volk nooit meer oud worden, nooit meer sterven, maar het hield de piraten en ander gespuis op een afstand. Warmhout, de warme wind van het bos, lette er goed op. Spinrag, de zachte wind van het bos, rekende ook met de piraten en het gespuis af. De eindeloze toren waarin Jorit en de zeven boswinden woonden werd een toren van het paleis in Utrecht.

De nieuwe Surinaamse koningin die uit het Zuiden van Nederland kwam kon heel goed koken en was een echte lekkerbek. Daarom werd zij ook wel koningin Lekkerbek genoemd. Zij had wel honderdduizenden recepten, en leerde het volk een goede kookkunst. Hierin was zij erg bedreven, en gaf nooit op. Een goed recept is de sleutel, zei zij altijd. Zij zag de kookkunst als een oorlog, en ze moesten wel, want oom Georgius zat nog steeds opgesloten. De strijd was nog niet gestreden. Er waren nog steeds bezette gebieden. Maar in ieder geval was het Bibelebonse leger gekomen, en het Bibelebonse leger zou niet meer vertrekken. Het geslacht Buis moest weer opgericht worden.

Soms moesten Joost en zijn koningin er even tussenuit, en dan gingen ze naar hun vakantie-huis in Amsterdam, in een flat. Dan nam meester Tulp altijd het bestuur van het land over. Dat kon hij erg goed. De nieuwe pap koning en pap koningin hielden er ook van om vaak bij mensen door het hele land te logeren. Dat hield het contact met het volk levendig. Dat was goed voor de onderlinge verstandhoudingen. Ja, Joost was een jongen die op dezelfde lijn als het volk stond, dichtbij de mensen. Zowel Joost als zijn koningin hadden beiden van de Bibelebonse pap gegeten en werden dus niet meer ouder.

De indianen in het woeste Amerika aten rode pap. Hierdoor werden zij snel boos, en waren zij oorlogszuchtig. Het gaf hen nachtmerries, rode paarden, die zij bereden. Oerling sprak er wel eens over. Hij had hen afgeluisterd, en ze waren van plan in bootjes te komen om het Bibelebonse Nederland te bezetten. Joost wist niet wat erger was : piraten of indianen. Joost zou in ieder geval op zijn hoede zijn.

Op een dag kwamen ze : met hun bootjes en hun rode paarden, de nachtmerries. Ze brachten storm met zich mee, waar de boswinden niet tegenop konden, en namen het Bibelebonse Nederland in via Lelystad, het poortstadje aan de kust. Joost was in rep en roer, want nu zou het niet lang duren voordat ze in Utrecht zouden zijn. Joost en koningin Lekkerbek zouden in de eindeloze toren naar beneden gaan, onder de grond. Dat zou het veiligst zijn. Joost wilde het er niet op wagen met zulke woeste indianen. Hij nam zoveel spulletjes mee als hij nodig dacht te hebben, en ging naar de eindeloze toren waar koningin Lekkerbek hem al opwachtte.

"Drommels," riep Joost. "Die drommelse indianen." Ook meester Tulp zou meegaan in de eindeloze toren naar beneden. "Tegen storm kunnen we niet op," zei meester Tulp. Ook meester Tulp had een tas meegenomen. En daar kwam ook Oerling aan die zei dat ze snel moesten wezen. De indianen kwamen in een stormdraf af op Utrecht, en walsten alles plat. Alle drie renden ze met Oerling de trappen af. Joost durfde niet meer naar boven. Iets hield hem in een verlammende schrik. Nederland zou in de ketenen van het woeste Amerika komen, en iedereen moest zichzelf maar zien te redden. Joost kon zo geen pap koning zijn. Door de eindeloze toren kwamen ze weer onder de grond, in het onderaardse rijk, maar tot hun grote schrik waren daar de indianen ook al. Vurig reden ze daar op

hun rode paarden, de nachtmerries. Ze moesten nog dieper, maar de indianen waren inmiddels al in de toren gekomen. "Rennen, jongens !" riep Oerling. "Ze komen achter ons aan !"

"Kun jij niets doen ?" riep Joost.

"Niemand kan tegen de rode pap op !" kraste Oerling.

"We zitten goed in de problemen," hijgde Joost. Ze gingen dieper en dieper, terwijl ze achter hen het gejoel van de indianen hoorden, en het gesuis van pijlen.

"We gaan eraan !" riep Joost.

Plotseling kwam er een wind die hen opnam, en sneller in de diepte begon te trekken over de trap naar beneden binnen de eindeloze toren. De wind ging sneller en sneller, maar zei dat ze achterna werden gezeten door stormen. Plotseling konden ze niet meer verder. Ze waren op de donkere grond terechtgekomen en keken recht in de ogen van woeste indianen op hun vurige paarden.

"Ik denk dat we verdwaald zijn," zei Joost.

Een indiaan stapte van zijn paard af. "U bent koning pap ?" vroeg de indiaan.

"Ja, dat ben ik," zei Joost. "Wat wilt u ?"

"Pap," zei de indiaan. "Wij willen wat van uw Bibelebonse pap."

"Om nooit oud te worden zeker," zei Joost.

"Precies," zei de indiaan, "om eeuwig te kunnen leven."

"Wat betaalt u ervoor ?" vroeg Joost.

"Niets," zei de indiaan die zijn schouders optrok. "Wij bezetten immers uw land."

"Als ik het u geef, gaat u dan weg ?" vroeg Joost.

"Natuurlijk niet," zei de indiaan. "Het is pas het begin. Zo kunnen wij het land beter besturen."

"Maar het is ons land," zei Joost.

"Nee," zei de indiaan. "U begrijpt er niets van. Nederland was eens van ons, maar piraten stalen het van ons weg, en hakten het los van Amerika. Het heeft toen eeuwen op de zee gedreven, en nu is het hier."

"Ik vind dat u vreemde verhalen vertelt," zei Joost. "Vind u dat zelf ook niet ?"

De indiaan greep zijn tomahawk en sloeg met de achterkant van het bijltje op Joost zijn hoofd.

"Au !" zei Joost.

"Het is de waarheid," sprak de indiaan. "We hebben niets aan leugenaars. Je klinkt piraats. Geef op die pap. Wij willen eeuwig leven."

Joost was duizelig van de klap. Hij keek naar meester Tulp. "I... is het waar wat de indiaan zegt ?" vroeg hij aan meester Tulp, stotterend.

"Ik denk het wel," zei meester Tulp. "Dat stond al in het lesboek van geschiedenis, maar daar waren we nog niet aan toe gekomen."

"D... dus Nederland was oorspronkelijk een deel van Amerika ?" vroeg Joost.

Meester Tulp knikte.

"Neemt u me niet kwalijk," zei Joost tegen de indiaan. "Neemt u zoveel Bibelebonse pap als u wilt. Het wordt overal in Nederland gemaakt tegenwoordig."

"Maar hoe moeten we het maken ?" vroeg de indiaan. "Wij hebben alleen pap-poeder gevonden."

"Als u ons over de rode pap leert, dan leren wij u over de Bibelebonse pap," zei Joost.

De rode pap bleek aan net zoveel regels onderhevig te zijn als de Bibelebonse pap, anders zouden de groots mogelijke ongelukken kunnen gebeuren. Eens hadden piraten zelf een rode pap gemaakt, zonder zich aan de juiste voorschriften te houden, omdat ze die niet kenden. Zo hebben ze Nederland van Amerika kunnen losscheuren. Door de indianen werd deze vervalste rode pap de piraten pap genoemd, maar de piraten zelf noemden het de Bibelebonse pap.

"Maar dat is helemaal de Bibelebonse pap niet," zei Joost toen de indiaan het hem vertelde.

"Precies," zei de indiaan. "Dat wisten wij vanaf het begin. Wij waren in Nederland, toen het nog tot Amerika behoorde, al op zoek naar de Bibelebonse pap. Het moest ergens diep onder de grond zijn."

"Wij hebben het gevonden," zei Joost. "We worden nooit oud."

"Alleen door de Bibelebonse pap kan Nederland weer aangesloten worden aan Amerika," zei de indiaan.

"Hoe zal dat gaan ?" vroeg Lekkerbek.

"Als wij van de Bibelebonse pap eten en daardoor niet oud worden, dan kunnen wij de piraten voorgoed verslaan," zei de indiaan. "Alleen dan kan Nederland terugdrijven tot Amerika."

"Wow," zei Joost. "Wij behoren tot Amerika."

Amerika was enorm groot, en Nederland begon in die dagen terug te drijven tot Amerika. Of dreef Amerika tot Nederland, of beiden ? Het leek wel alsof Amerika dreef tot Nederland. Het was wat meester Tulp beweerde. En de zee tussen Nederland en Amerika werd steeds kleiner en kleiner, totdat het een rivier was. Vanaf de dijken en vanaf Lelystad kon je Amerika gewoon in de verte zien. Het waren allemaal woeste bossen. De rivier tussen Nederland en Amerika werd de Bibelebonse rivier genoemd.

De rode pap, hoe werd die eigenlijk gemaakt ?

Allereerst ging het over de indiaanse vlieg die in de Amerikaanse bossen leefde. Deze vlieg bracht honingwebben voort, van een hele taaie witte stof. Hiervoor had de vlieg een honingklier. De witte stof zou dromen brengen, en moest vermengd worden met een rode poeder om er pap van te maken. De indiaanse vlieg, een Amerikaanse bosvlieg, was dus een soort droom-camera of droom-projector. Het ontmoeten van zo'n vlieg was niet zonder gevaren. Ze werden als gevaarlijk beschouwd. Sommige van die vliegen waren zwaar giftig. Ze waren bewapend met gifklieren. Daarom was het werken met de honing van de indiaanse vlieg, de witte stof, ook niet zonder gevaren, en moest men daarvoor naar school. Piraten gingen niet naar school. Die rommelden maar wat aan, en zo hadden zij Nederland eens gestolen van Amerika. Piraat was een ander woord voor spijbelaar. De indiaanse vlieg kwam nog veelvuldig voor in de Amerikaanse bossen, en zij werden door de indianen als heilig beschouwd. Zij gingen zorgvuldig met de indiaanse vliegen om.

Piraten joegen vaak op indiaanse vliegen. Een gevangen exemplaar was veel geld waard, vooral als ze gedroogd waren, maar ze werden dus ook veelvuldig gebruikt in boerderijen en fokkerijen, voor hun honing. Piraten maakten er drugs van, medicijnen en hadden hun eigen pappen. Ook werden de indiaanse vliegen zelf gebruikt als ingrediënt, alhoewel sommige soorten dodelijk waren. Niet alleen dodelijk als ze gegeten werden, maar sommigen konden ook dodelijke steken toebrengen. Er waren allerlei indiaanse soorten steekvliegen. Hierom was het zo dat niet alle piraten zich waagden aan de jacht op zulke insecten. Sommigen hadden hier allerlei speciale pakken voor, maar de indiaanse vliegen waren gewiekst. Sommigen hadden zelfs angels die door metaal heen zouden kunnen steken. En die angels konden ook heel lang worden.

Sinds Amerika en Nederland alleen nog maar een rivier tussen hen in hadden, en daardoor eigenlijk weer bij elkaar hoorden, kwamen er ook steeds meer indiaanse vliegen in Nederland voor. In Nederland werden zij gezien als de brengers der dromen. Sommige indianen zagen de komst van de piraten als een boze droom veroorzaakt door de piraatse vlieg, een vliegensoort dat voornamelijk voorkwam op de zogeheten Piraatse eilanden van Piratië, maar anderen zeiden dat het was veroorzaakt door een hele speciale indiaanse vlieg genaamd de doktersvlieg. Het zou medicinaal zijn voor iets, als een antistof waarin een kleine hoeveelheid van het probleem zat, om zo de tegenpool op te wekken, het medicijn zelf. Het was dus een heel diagnostisch proces. De vele doktoren in Nederland begonnen zich te buigen over dit soort indianen-verhalen. Zo ook dokter Tulp, de broer van meester Tulp. Hij was heelmeester op het paleis sinds Joost en Lekkerbek daat hun intrede hadden gedaan.

Hij deed een uitgebreid onderzoek naar de indiaanse doktersvlieg, en ging over de Bibelebonse

rivier naar Amerika. Hij kwam tot de conclusie dat het inderdaad de doktersvlieg moest zijn geweest die alles aan had gericht. Tegelijkertijd kwam hij tot de conclusie dat ook de oplossing te vinden was in de doktersvlieg, en dat de Bibelebonse pap dus een ingrediënt miste. De doktersvlieg was uiterst zeldzaam. Het was een beschermde soort, want er waren er nog maar een paar over. De indianen hadden hem verteld dat hij daarvoor naar het Turfwoud moest gaan aan de kust van Amerika. De laatste doktersvliegen zouden leven met de heks Komeini, die in de diepte van het Turfwoud woonde. Haar huis zou omgeven zijn door een ravijn, en over het ravijn zou het regenen met speren in plaats van gewone regen. Joost huiverde toen hij het verhaal hoorde, maar hij zou ook meegaan met dokter Tulp, samen met meester Tulp. Ook Joost zag het belang in van deze soort van indiaanse vliegen. Hij zou daarom meegaan voor het voortbestaan van Nederland en Amerika. Op een nacht gingen ze met een boot de Bibelebonse rivier over, geleid door Oerling. Oerling zou aangeven waar ze ergens moesten stoppen. In het woud zou Oerling zeggen waar ongeveer de speren regen begon. Het was een algemeen gevaar waar ook de indianen goed van op de hoogte waren. Niet velen waagden zich daarom in het Turfwoud. Ook de heks Komeini was zeer gevreesd.

In de verte hoorden ze een stem krijsend als de bliksem. Het was de stem van heks Komeini. "Wie zijn jullie dat jullie tot mijn domein hebben durven komen ?" krijste de heks. "Amerika is van mij, en daarom ook Nederland, en het geheim van de doktersvlieg is in mijn hand. Ik voel waar jullie voor komen. De laatste doktersvlieg zal sterven, en dan zal alles van mij zijn !"

Het gekrijs ging Joost door merg en been. Hij stond stokstijf, en durfde zich niet meer te bewegen. Oerling zei dat ze hier moesten stoppen, want hier zou ergens de sperenregen beginnen. Die regen zou genadeloos zijn. De speren zouden door alles heengaan, zelfs door de botten. Het waren bottenspietsers, de wachters van de heks.

"Hoe komen we hier ooit doorheen ?" rilde Joost. "De heks weet al dat we zijn gekomen, en waar we voor gekomen zijn."

"Rustig blijven, Joost," zei Oerling. "Laten we nu naar de zijkant gaan, want we kunnen hier niet recht doorheen."

Na een tijdje lopen langs de zijkant van de sperenregen kwamen ze aan bij een diepe put. Hier moesten ze in. Oerling zou ze één voor één in de diepte brengen, want op de bodem van de diepe put zou een tunnel zijn die onder het ravijn door zou gaan. Joost zou eerst gaan. De put was heel diep, en het was een lange vliegtocht. Op sommige plaatsen was de put heel nauw, waarin Joost bijna vast kwam te zitten, maar gelukkig kwam hij er door. Even later stonden ook dokter Tulp en meester Tulp naast hem. Oerling zou als eerste de tunnel ingaan, en de anderen zouden hem volgen. Maar hier klonk de stem van de heks zelfs harder, als zware donder. "Ik weet wel dat jullie er zijn !" bulderde en krijste ze. Ze leek wel een dubbele stem te hebben, een zware en een hoge stem. Eén van de stemmen was heel laag, en er leken steeds meer stemmen bij te komen die allemaal hetzelfde zeiden. "Het zal jullie lijkenkist worden !" krijste, bulderde en gromde ze. "Ik heb nog hout nodig voor het vuur. Botten is ook goed, gespietste botten. Hmmm, en wat zullen jullie lekker smaken. Of ik voer jullie aan mijn visjes of varkentjes, of aan de laatste doktersvlieg die daarna zal sterven !" De heks gromde en kreunde als een wild dier. In de tunnel waren fakkels aan de wanden. Plotseling stond de heks voor hen in een zwarte mantel. Oerling vloog wat naar achteren, terwijl Joost een fakkel greep van de wand. "Laat ons erdoor heks. Amerika en Nederland is van de indianen, en wij

zijn nu bevriend. Wij kennen de geschiedenis," zei Joost luid.

"Oh niks," zei de heks. "Jullie weten niets van de geschiedenis."

Er rolde bliksem over haar hand heen. "En nu, achteruit !" gilde ze. "Jullie zijn dwazen om jullie noodlot te tarten !"

"Wij gaan niet achteruit," zei dokter Tulp. "In naam van de wetenschap, laat ons erdoor !"

De heks begon te lachen. "Wetenschap ?" krijste ze. "Zeg, doe me een lol, en ga terug naar school. Wat weet jij van de wetenschap af, puntmuts ? Onder piraten zijn jullie opgegroeid, en dan denken jullie alles even op je luie sloffen te weten ? Zeg, laat me niet lachen. Achteruit nu, dwazen, of je krijgt hier een lel van." De heks stak haar hand in de lucht, en de bliksem begon nog sneller op haar hand te tollen. "Achteruit nu, of ik begin mijn geduld te verliezen ! Moeder wacht thuis op jullie met pap !"

"Wij gaan niet achteruit !" riep Joost. "Ik ben de pap koning van Nederland, en wij hebben vriendschap gesloten met Amerika. Wij willen alles weten over de doktersvlieg die onze laatste redding zou zijn, om voor eens en altijd los te komen van de piraatse onderdrukking. Wij komen voor het missende ingrediënt van de Bibelebonse pap !"

"Ach jongen," krijste de heks lachend en spottend. "Wat weet jij af van Bibelebonse pap. Jullie zullen allen sterven, inclusief de piraten, en dan zullen de heksen overnemen."

"Genoeg heks !" riep meester Tulp, terwijl hij naar Oerling keek. "Wat nu ?" fluisterde hij hard naar Oerling.

"Wat nu, wat nu ?" riep de heks spottend. "Je weet het niet meer, hè, schoolmeestertje ? Dat is wat om met je mond vol tanden ineens te staan tegenover een echte heks. Wij weten veel meer dan jullie, juliie door piraten opgeleid tuig. Wat weten jullie van de geheimen van het bos en de ondergrond ? Helemaal niets."

Ineens spoot de bliksemstraal voort van haar hand. Ze had het gemunt op Oerling die net op tijd kon wegduiken. Joost vloog de heks aan, maar die kreeg direct een klap van de bliksem waardoor hij met een grote vaart tegen de wand werd geslingerd. Joost lag daar als dood op de grond. Oerling keek de heks aan. "Bitter oud mens," kraste hij. "Als je denkt zoveel te weten, waarom deel je je kennis dan niet ten gunste van het volk ?"

"Wat heb ik met het volk te maken !" krijste de heks. "Het volk is ten dode gedoemd. Waarom denk je dat ik zo diep in het Turfwoud woon ? Niemand kan hier komen. Ook jullie niet." En weer schoot er bliksem vanuit haar handen. Dit keer werd meester Tulp geraakt en tegen de wand geslingerd. Ook hij lag als dood op de grond. Opeens was er overal blauw vuur met bliksem rondom de heks, terwijl ze lachte. Toen was ze verdwenen. Dokter Tulp moest achteruit springen. Toen ontfermde hij zich over Joost en zijn broer. Met wat middeltjes kon hij ze even later weer op de been helpen.

"Zonder de Bibelebonse pap zouden jullie dood zijn geweest," zei dokter Tulp.

"Wat nu ?" vroeg Joost.

Na een tijdje hoorden ze weer gekrijs, maar dit keer was het niet van de heks. Volgens Oerling en dokter Tulp was het het geluid van de doktersvlieg. "We moeten snel zijn," zei Oerling. Hij vloog voor hen uit dieper de tunnel in, terwijl de anderen hem volgden. Na een tijd kwamen ze uit de tunnel waar de bodem was van een andere put die omhoog liep. Oerling zou ze één voor één omhoog trekken uit de put. Na een tijdje stonden ze alledrie aan de overkant van het ravijn, dichtbij het huisje van de heks. Hier was het gekrijs nog wel harder. Het leek wel alsof de doktersvlieg tegen de heks krijste. Dichter en dichter kwamen ze bij het huisje. Plotseling zagen ze de vlieg in een glazen kooi, en de heks stond ervoor met haar rug naar hen toe.

"Ik weet wel dat jullie gekomen zijn !" krijste de heks, en draaide zich toen grommend om. De doktersvlieg spoot een soort gif tegen het glas aan, terwijl er rook van het glas afkwam.

"Waar ben je mee bezig, heks ?" riep Joost.

"Ga ik jou aan je neus hangen," zei de heks.

"Als je nou slim bent, heks, dan laat je ons even naar de doktersvlieg kijken voor de wetenschap," zei dokter Tulp. "Dat zou jou ook nog ten goede kunnen komen."

"Geen sprake van," krijste de heks. "De laatste doktersvlieg is van mij, en met de doktersvlieg sterven alle geheimen. Dan is het ook afgelopen met de Bibelebonse pap."

Oerling keek de heks strak aan. "Vertel op, heks, wat wil je ons zeggen ? Wat weet jij van de geschiedenis wat wij niet weten ?" kraste Oerling.

"Dom," zei de heks. "Jullie zijn domoren, maar goed, luister goed wat ik zeg, want ik zeg het maar één keer. Amerika behoorde tot het land Heksië, maar het land ging grotendeels in de golven verloren. De doktersvlieg draagt hiervan de geheimen, maar ik zal het spoedig verpulveren om er een zalfje van te maken. Het zal mij alle macht schenken die ik begeer."

Joost bedacht zich geen moment en raapte een steen van de grond af om het tegen het glas van de kooi te gooien. Direct sprong het glas kapot en de doktersvlieg kwam vrij. "Wat doe je nou !" krijste de heks met een hoge en tegelijk lage stem, terwijl de doktersvlieg haar direct in het gezicht spoot met een witte gifstraal.

De heks krijste terwijl ze begon weg te smelten. "Stap achteruit !" riep Oerling. "Dat beest is levensgevaarlijk !" Direct renden ze naar achteren, terwijl ze naar de heks keken die wegsmolt. De doktersvlieg was woest als een dolle wesp, en probeerde Oerling te raken met een gifstraal. "Als hij ons raakt is het afgelopen !" riep Oerling, die net op tijd opzij kon vliegen. Een boom werd geraakt die direct wegsmolt.

"Zelfs de Bibelebonse pap kan hier niet tegenop !" riep Oerling. "De vlieg heeft het ontbrekende ingrediënt."

De doktersvlieg was razend, en in de verte leken er meerdere doktersvliegen aan te komen. "Rennen !" riep Oerling. Ze renden richting het huisje van de heks, en gingen daar naar binnen. Snel deden ze de deur op slot. In het huisje van de heks tikten allerlei klokken door elkaar heen. De doktersvliegen begonnen op de ramen te tikken en te spuiten. Snel was het hele huisje omsingeld met de doktersvliegen.

Joost ging naar de boekenkast en begon door de vreemde boeken te bladeren. Het ging allemaal over doktersvliegen, en over het land Heksië wat eens was gezonken. Alleen Amerika, een deel van het reusachtige Heksië, werd niet door de golven verslonden. Buiten krijsten de doktersvliegen. Ze waren woedend.

Joost las ook nog wat anders. De doktersvlieg scheen naast de gifklier ook een belangrijke melkklier te hebben. De melk zou piratendodend zijn, net als het gif overigens. De melk zou een bepaalde stof in de hersenen uitdoven die de boze piratendroom zou aanmaken. Het was een onderdeel van de hersenwetenschap van de natuur.

Ook dokter Tulp en meester Tulp grepen een boek om te zoeken naar antwoorden. Er stonden hier vele bijzondere boeken over de natuur, maar ze waren in groot gevaar. "Vlug," zei Oerling. "Neem wat boeken mee, maar dan moeten we toch echt naar de kelder, want de heks gebruikte speciaal glas voor de kooi van de doktersvlieg, en de ramen van het huisje zullen het echt niet lang meer houden." Oerling vloog de gang op naar de kelderdeur, terwijl de anderen hem volgden met zoveel mogelijk boeken in hun armen. Over de trap van de kelder gingen ze haastig naar beneden, de deur achter hen sluitende. Maar ook in de kelder waren de doktersvliegen al. "Ingesloten," kraste Oerling. Weer renden ze naar boven. Oerling vloog de trap op en opende de deur van de badkamer waar geen ramen in zaten, en wat in het midden van het huisje was. "Hier zijn we voorlopig veilig," kraste Oerling. Ook de anderen gingen naar binnen met de boeken.

"Ik vraag me af hoe we deze beesten moeten temmen," zei Joost. Ze waren alledrie druk met lezen, op zoek naar een oplossing, naar kennis.

"Hier staat wat," zei dokter Tulp. "De doktersvlieg, als drager van de geheimen van Heksië, geeft in het holst van de nacht in een bepaald uur rode melk vanuit een melkklier. Zo laadt de doktersvlieg zichzelf op, en geeft leven aan zichzelf. Niemand komt tot dit geheim, dan hen van de schat van Zuskus."

"Ik begrijp er niks van," zei meester Tulp. "En waar halen we de schat van Zuskus zo één, twee, drie vandaan ?'

"Dat staat er niet bij," zei dokter Tulp.

"Dan hebben we er niet veel aan," zei meester Tulp.

"Jawel," zei Oerling. "Alle beetjes helpen. Laten we de moed niet opgeven."

Inmiddels begonnen de doktersvliegen al op de badkamer deur te pikken. Ze waren het huisje dus al

binnengekomen. Ze bonkten hard, en dan waren er kleine pauzes. Joost begon het benauwd te krijgen.

"Hier staat wat over de schat van Zuskus," zei Joost. "De schat van Zuskus is een piratenschat, ergens in Heksië. De heksen hebben het eens bemachtigd. Het kan geroepen worden door een rijmpje." Joost begon het rijmpje hardop te zeggen, en toen nog een keer. Een grote blauwe gestalte begon te verschijnen in de badkamer van het huisje van de heks. "Waarom hebt gij mij geroepen ?" zei de blauwe gestalte met een lage, trage en zware stem.

"Wie bent u ?" vroeg Joost die diep was geschrokken, maar ook verheugd was over de mogelijkheid dat ze nu eindelijk hulp zouden krijgen.

"Ik ben het spook van de schat van Zuskus," zei de blauwe, doorzichtige gestalte. "Die schat ligt diep op de zeebodem waar eerst Heksië lag. Alles is vergaan, behalve Amerika. Waarmee kan ik u van dienst zijn ?"

"Wij worden achterna gezeten door de doktersvliegen," zei Joost. "We hadden hun melk nodig, maar het is uit de hand gelopen."

"Nogal," zei meester Tulp.

"Goed dan," zei de blauwe gestalte. "Ik kan u dit zeggen : Ik ben een wind van de zee. Zonder zeewind zit het je niet mee. Ik ken alle geheimen van de doktersvliegen. Het is voor mij eenvoudig hen te temmen en weg te leiden waar ik maar wil. Zij zijn een gif tegen piraten en heksen en mogelijkerwijs iedereen, maar in juist gebruik zijn zij ook een medicijn. Alleen een volleerd dokter kan hen de baas, een volleerd dokter zoals mij. Het is een waar gezegde je niet bezig te houden met de doktersvliegen, want zij zullen je zeker vernietigen, maar koop en leer het medicijn van mij."

"Weet u zeker dat u de doktersvliegen aankunt ?" vroeg Joost.

"Jazeker," sprak de blauwe gestalte. "Ik zal ze ver weg leiden, en dan zal ik terugkomen om jullie te helpen."

De blauwe gestalte opende de deur, en begon de zwerm doktersvliegen te omhullen, en toen mee te zuigen en blazen van de trap af, om zo met hen het huisje uit te gaan. Na een tijdje was de rust teruggekeerd. De blauwe gestalte had alle doktersvliegen geroepen om hem te volgen. Na een tijd kwam hij terug zonder de doktersvliegen. Hij begon toen honderduit te vertellen over de melk. "Een flesje zeewind is alles wat je nodig hebt," zei de blauwe gestalte. "Eén druppel per bord pap is alles wat je nodig hebt om de piraten weg te houden, en het flesje raakt nooit op, want het is immers zeewind, ziet u. Dat kan niet opraken. Dat groeit vanzelf, en vermenigvuldigt zichzelf wanneer het wil."

"Hoeveel kost het ?" vroeg Joost.

"Ach ja, de kosten," zei de blauwe gestalte, "het kost niks, en dat is heel wat. Ik bedoel ermee dat je goed de gebruiksaanwijzing moet lezen bij het flesje, en je aan de toegestane hoeveelheden moet

houden, anders gaat alles verkeerd. Bij verkeerd gebruik komen er meer piraten dan je lief is, meer dan je ooit in je hele leven hebt gezien."

"Begrepen," zei Joost. Ieder van hen kreeg een flesje mee, en zo was het missende ingrediënt van de Bibelebonse pap aangevuld. Met de zeewind in een flesje konden ze zo de laatste piraten uit Nederland verdrijven. Het Bibelebonse leger kon nu eindelijk de gevangenis bestormen waar oom Georgius opgesloten zou zitten, maar ze vonden hem niet in zijn cel.

Joost wist dat er hekserij in het spel moest zijn. Er zou meer moeten gebeuren om oom Georgius vrij te zetten. De indianen hadden hem verteld dat er wel meer heksen in de Amerikaanse bossen woonden die met alle problemen rond de Bibelebonse pap te maken hadden. Zo was er het Lattenwoud achter het Turfwoud. In het Lattenwoud groeiden er speren aan de bomen en in de bloemen, en in het midden van het woud waren de sperenvelden waar speren naast en achter elkaar in de grond waren gestoken. Als je zo'n speer zou aanraken, dan zou je sterven. Achter de velden gaat het woud verder en staat het grote huis van de heks Zwolle, die voortdurend rijmpjes opzegt. Ook de rijmpjes zijn dodelijk als je geen tegenrijmpjes kent. Het zijn zware toverspreuken.

Indianen vertelden over haar. Dat ze dan bijvoorbeeld zei tot een ieder die het door de sperenvelden heeft gehaald tot haar huis :
"Door de sperenvelden ben je heelhuids gekomen,
Maar zie, het zijn slechts bedriegelijke dromen,
Want door vele speren ben je geraakt,
En de illusie van leven is die hier de dienst uitmaakt."

En dan zou je zelf een tegenrijmpje moeten opzeggen, anders zou het vuur uit haar mond je verslinden :
"Oh heks, je denkt een ander te bedriegen,
Maar het is slechts tot jezelf liegen,
Want niemand kan die macht dragen dan die weet,
Dat alles wat hij de ander denkt aan te doen slechts aan zijn eigen hart vreet."

De rijmende heks van de dood werd zij wel genoemd. Alleen volleerde dichters zouden door haar domein heen kunnen komen. Maar hoe vaak had zij wel niet dichters gestrikt tot hun noodlot ? Want zij was een zeer gewiekste vrouw met vele truken. Hoeveel dichters had zij wel niet in haar macht gekregen ? Want zij had vele rijmpjes klaar, en ging door tot diep in de nacht, totdat zij in slaap vielen, en zij hen kon kooien. Ja, door haar rijmen werden zij bewaakt. Zij was de strik der tovenaren die door een verkeerd uitgesproken spreuk zichzelf betoverden. Zij wachtte altijd geduldig haar tijd af, totdat zij ergens een gaatje zag waardoor zij hen kon pakken, of hen kon laten struikelen. Zij draaide alles in hen om. Zo werden zij hun eigen grootste vijanden, totdat grote wroeging hen verscheurde. Zij was de strikkende dichteres van de hel, van een groot kwaad. Hier was geen Bibelebonse pap tegen opgewassen. Zij lachte al die pap eters uit. De Bibelebonse pap miste nog een ingrediënt. Nederland was nog steeds in de macht van de heksen.

Zij speelde woordspelletjes. Zij legde verbale valstrikken. Met gewiekste toverspreuken in een gladde, snelle, giftige tong, bond zij hen allen, en zo moesten zij allen van haar pap eten, gedwongen pap, heksenpap.

Ze mochten geen speren aanraken toen ze daar naartoe gingen. Ook moesten ze oppassen niet onder een boom door te lopen, want de speren vielen er zo uit. Ook moesten ze uit de buurt blijven van de bloemen, want ook door sprongen de speren zo uit. Joost ging er naartoe samen met dokter Tulp, meester Tulp en Oerling. Oerling ging zoals gewoonlijks voorop. Hij voelde vaak de gevaren haarscherp aan. Helemaal uitgeput kwamen ze aan bij het grote huis van heks Zwolle, waar ze al klaarstond om de meest gemene rijmpjes over hen uit te spreken. Ze zei de meest verschrikkelijke dingen over hen, en bespotte hen in de rijmpjes, terwijl zij met tegenrijmpjes moesten komen. Oerling was hier gelukkig heel goed in, maar ze waren moe, en de heks ging maar door. Waar hield dit ergens op ?

Joost stond dichtbij haar, en zag dat ze een vreemd kettinkje om haar hals droeg. Met zijn laatste krachten boog hij snel voorover om het kettinkje te grijpen, en trok het met een ruk van haar hals af. De heks krijste. "Geef hier, dat is mijn rijmmacht !"

De heks kon niet meer rijmen, en begon weg te smelten in afschuwelijk gekrijs.

Ze gingen haar huis binnen om onderzoek te doen. Ze bladerden wat door haar boeken. Er stonden daar de meest vreemde rijmpjes in, die ze allemaal uit haar hoofd had geleerd. De boeken gingen over de zogenaamde rijmende planten. Achter haar huis konden ze die in haar door een hek omgeven tuin vinden. De planten krioelden daar als slangen, klaar om te worstelen en te wurgen. "Wat komen jullie doen ?" krijsten de planten. Ze leken rusteloos. Joost vertelde het verhaal. De planten gaven toe dat zij haar al die rijmpjes hadden geleerd, en zij had die in boeken opgetekend.

"Waarom ?" vroeg Joost.

"Rijmen zijn het leven," sprak een woest kronkelende zwarte plant. Hij schoof vlak voor het gezicht van Joost en Joost moest een paar stappen achteruit zetten. Toen begon de plant ook naar hen te rijmen, en al snel begonnen de andere planten ook rijmen op te zeggen, allemaal door elkaar heen. "De heks is dood," sprak Joost.

"Echt waar ?" vroeg de zwarte plant. Joost knikte. Plotseling begonnen alle planten te juichen. "Die rotheks dwong ons te rijmen, altijd maar weer," sprak de plant. "Nooit was er tijd voor iets anders. We houden van rijmen, daar niet van, maar we houden ook van losse verhalen zonder rijmen."

"Jullie zijn vrij nu," zei Joost.

"Wat kunnen we voor u terugdoen ?" vroegen de planten.

"Ik zoek naar een ontbrekend ingrediënt voor de Bibelebonse pap wat hier zou moeten wezen," zei Joost.

"Wij zijn allen zeeplanten," zei de zwarte plant. "De heks bracht ons hier. Wij dragen het kruid met alle geheimen van het land Heksië, wat nu grotendeels op de zeebodem ligt. Wij moesten rijmen om deze geheimen verborgen te houden. Heus, je moet deze geheimen leren kennen om te begrijpen wat er met je land aan de gang is. De geschiedenis van Heksië is de sleutel van de Bibelebonse pap.

Wij hebben het ontbrekende sleutel ingrediënt."

Dokter Tulp, meester Tulp en Joost bekeken de planten, en zagen het kruid ertussen. Het groeide overal, en ze moesten het in zakken verzamelen. Ook legden de planten hen uit hoe ze het moesten gebruiken in de pap.

In het Zeewoud achter het Lattenwoud leefde Sylva, de zeeheks. Alhoewel het een gewoon bos was waren er hier zeeplanten, vliegende vissen en vissen met poten die aan en in rivieren leefden. Sylva was de ergst mogelijke opgemaakte heks, met de meeste sieraden. Hier waren sieraden op sieraden gelegd. Alles lag er dik bovenop. Sylva was een lopend sieraad. Ze woonde in een soort tempel, met grottenstelsels van trappen en tunnels. De meest verschrikkelijke roofdieren bewaakten haar tempel, en vaak ging ze in lange gewaden helemaal bedekt met sieraden trage wandelingen maken door de tempeltuinen. Ook zij droeg de geheimen van het gezonken Heksië. Zij had grote maaimachines om alles wat leefde te oogsten, bloemen en planten. Die moesten aan haar geofferd worden. Zij waande haarzelf de heksengodin van Heksië. Zij diende haarzelf. Eens moest zij baren, en zelfs het kind wat zij baarde moest aan haar geofferd worden. Zij gooide het kind in het water. Zij was de heksenkoningin. Ook vissen moesten er aan haar geofferd worden, en allerlei soorten andere dieren. Zij leefde van de dood. Overal in het Zeewoud stonden haar boskerken, maar niemand kwam daar. Indianen bleven ver van hen vandaan. Het was Sylva de zeeheks die Heksië had laten zinken als een offer aan haar. Alleen Amerika bleef nog boven water, opdat zij daar zou wonen en tronen.

Zij hield van de eenzaamheid, en van het eten en drinken van gif. Het gaf haar macht. Maar ze begon oud te worden, en ook was ze op zoek naar de Bibelebonse pap. Ook was ze bijna blind.

Haar werkers waren onzichtbaar, de machten van de natuur, en de bomen en planten die haar dienden. Zij moesten voor haar een trage duivelse dans opvoeren, opdat alles platgemaaid zou worden, tot een offer aan haar. Zij was het geheim van de muntstruik. Haar soldaten zond zij tot de uiteinden om haar oogsten binnen te halen, tot offer aan haar. Zij klopten op hoge deuren, en vroegen om kind en dieren offers. Geen medelij hadden zij. Haar soldaten waren religieus, als een dekmantel van haar kwaad. De lamp van het witte geweld werd bedekt door haar mantel. Zij was een schoonprater, waarvoor zij de kunsten van de literatuur gebruikte. Een liturgie was altijd haar excuus. Zij hield ervan bij nacht over kerkhoven te dwalen. Zij had lange kanonnen van de natuur op haar muren. Ja, zij gebruikte de natuur te pas en te onpas. Ook door de natuur praatte zij alles goed. De natuur was haar excuus. "Het is de natuur," zei zij dan, en : "Het staat geschreven." Boeken waren haar liefhebberij. Zij had bibliotheken vol, allemaal door haarzelf geschreven, door de eeuwen heen, maar zij begon oud te worden, heel oud. Zij was op zoek naar de Bibelebonse pap.

Zij bewaakte het diepzee kruid van Jonas, een kruid waardoor je met alles en iedereen kon communiceren. Het zou veel misverstanden en gemis uit de weg kunnen ruimen. Maar het kruid was ook vervloekt. Een ieder die van het kruid nam, leefde niet lang. Deze vloek zou alleen opgeheven kunnen worden als het kruid toegevoegd zou worden aan de Bibelebonse pap als ingrediënt. Toen Joost, dokter Tulp en meester Tulp de heks bezochten keken ze hun ogen uit in de wondere wereld van het Zeewoud. Het was als diepzee natuur, maar gewoon in het bos, boven de grond. Ze waren verbaasd en verwonderd door de pracht van deze natuur, en zelfs de vele boskerken waren een stuk adembenemende natuurkunst. Maar ze konden wel begrijpen waarom al deze plaatsen zo verlaten waren. Ze vonden de heks dolend op een kerkhof. Toen ze hen zag barstte

ze in snikken uit. "Eindelijk hebben jullie mij gevonden !" riep ze, en rende op hen af.

"Ik ruik Bibelebonse pap !" krijste ze. "Zijn jullie van de Bibelebonse pap waar ik al zo lang naar op zoek ben ?"

Joost, dokter Tulp en meester Tulp keken haar verbaasd aan. "Heus, ik wil mijn leven beteren," snikte de heks. "Als ik maar van de Bibelebonse pap kan nemen. Al is het maar één hapje."

"Zeg heks," zei Joost, "hoe weten wij dat het waar is dat u uw leven wil beteren ?"

"Jullie mogen alles hebben, mijn gehele rijk," snikte de heks. "Als ik maar met jullie meemag. Ik ben zat van dit leven, dit eenzame, slechte leven. Heel mijn leven ben ik een slechte heks geweest, en het heeft mij geen goed gebracht."

Joost deed een stap achteruit, want de heks wilde haar omhelzen. Oerling bleef tussen hen en de heks invliegen. "Vertrouw haar niet," kraste Oerling. "Laat haar je niet aanraken."

De heks begon nog harder te snikken. "Jullie begrijpen mij niet. Ik wil echt veranderen. Ik zal jullie alles geven."

"Maak dat je wegkomt, heks," kraste Oerling. "Je bent vol truken, daar sta je om bekend."

De heks begon te veranderen in een enorme zwarte zeedraak. "Goed !" krijste ze. "Ik weet waar jullie voor komen, maar jullie krijgen het niet.

Oh kruid wat op de zeebodem woont,
Waardoor alle dingen spreken, maar horen doen ze het niet,
Zo leeft een ieder eenzaam en in misverstand,
Het kruid ver weg van hun land,
Zo leven zij in groot verdriet, alle dagen weer,
Een ieder die het kruid dan vindt,
Zal slechts kort leven, doch bemind,
Het kruid van Jonas in diepe zee,
Een offer voor mij, het nam zovelen mee,
Maar nooit kunnen zij ervan vertellen,
Zij leven slechts in zeebellen,
Het kruid van Jonas doet hen horen,
Maar spreken kunnen zij niet lang,
Zij zijn hopeloos verloren."

Zij hadden goed door hoe gevaarlijk dat kruid was. De heks vertrok weer. Ze hadden haar in een verschrikkelijke gedaante gezien. Oerling vloog vooruit, en zij volgden hem naar de tempel van de heks. Er stond een jongetje met een teddybeertje hangend aan zijn hand. Het jongetje had een pyama aan. "Hallo, wie ben jij ?" vroeg Joost. "Dat moet Jonas zijn," zei dokter Tulp.

"I ... ik ben .... Jonas," zei het jongetje stotterend.

"Waarom ben je hier, kleine jongen ?" vroeg meester Tulp.

"I ... ik weet het niet," zei het jongetje. "Ik moet hier altijd staan."

"Van wie ?" vroeg Joost.

"Van de heks," zei het jongetje.

"En wat moet je doen voor haar ?" vroeg Joost.

Toen rende het jongetje naar binnen in de tempel.

"Vreemd," zei Joost.

Toen hoorden ze een zachte vrouwenstem zingen :

"Eens, zoveel jaren geleden, ik weet het niet meer,
Kwam er een ridder, met een piraat en een heer,
Zij dobbelden om mijn kleren, en zo stond ik daar naakt,
De avond viel, en snel had de slaap hen aangeraakt,
Een slaap zo dodelijk en stil,
Zij hadden van het kruid van Jonas gegeten,
Hun lichamen na een golf van warmte zo koud en zo kil,
Zoek je wat plezier in de herberg voor vier, drie of twee,
Het is slechts van korte duur, olé, olé."

"Het is hier zeker vreemd," zei dokter Tulp.

Langzaam en voorzichtig gingen ze de tempel binnen, Oerling voorop.
Maar daar kwam het jongetje weer aanrennen, en begon hen te slaan en te schoppen.
"Mijn moeder wil niet dat jullie komen," zei hij.

"Wie is je moeder ?" vroeg Joost.
"Gaat je niks aan," zei het jongetje zacht. Ze konden het bijna niet horen.

"We komen voor het kruid, jongetje," zei dokter Tulp. "Het kruid van Jonas."

"Mijn moeder zegt dat het te gevaarlijk is," zei Jonas.

"Dat weten we," zei dokter Tulp, "en daarom is het beter dat we het kruid bestuderen en onschadelijk maken."

"Het heeft een bedoeling," zei het jongetje. "Het is de wachter van de heks. Mijn moeder heeft het voor haar gemaakt."

"De heks is slecht en gevaarlijk. We kunnen haar niet vertrouwen, jongetje" zei meester Tulp.

"Nietwaar !" riep het jongetje, terwijl hij weer begon te stompen en te slaan. Ook begon hij te knijpen.

"Wil je dat laten, jongetje ?" zei meester Tulp.

"Nee, jullie moeten weg !" riep het jongetje. Ineens kwam er een indiaanse vrouw aanlopen.

"Hoe kan ik u helpen," zei ze zacht, terwijl ze zich over het jongetje ontfermde.

Joost vertelde het verhaal. De vrouw glimlachte. "Ik kan u daaraan niet helpen," zei ze. "Het is de wachter van de heks. Zij heeft u al een aanbod gedaan in ruil voor de Bibelebonse pap."

"Wij onderhandelen niet met heksen die vol truken zijn," zei dokter Tulp.

"Dan moet u het zelf weten," zei de vrouw, en liep met het jongetje weer weg.

Er waren verschillende gangen in het grottenstelsel van de tempel. Ze gingen één van de gangen binnen. Oerling ging voorop. Weer hoorden ze gezang van een zachte vrouwenstem :

"Weet je wel, heb je het al gehoord,
Zij kunnen niet meer spreken,
Eens hebben zij van het kruid genomen,
Het kruid van Jonas in de diepte van de zee,
Waar zijn nu hun dromen ?"

Toen vaagde het gezang weer weg. "Het spookt hier goed," zei dokter Tulp.

Toen hoorde ze een krassende stem zingen :
"Weet je het al, weet je het al,
Snoep verkoopt zeer goed,
Maar goed gezelschap veel beter,
En als je dan mens en dier kunt verstaan,
Dan heb je van het kruid van Jonas gegeten,
Het is snel met je gedaan."

De gang leidde naar een grotere grot waar ze een heks in een zwart gewaad in een ketel zagen roeren.

Toen kraste ze verder, zingend : "Het kruid van Jonas, het kruid wat zoveel leven gaf, en dan de dood,
Het kruid van Jonas, zoveel helden vonden het, en vonden nooit de weg terug,
Het kruid van Jonas, een doodlopende weg van zoveel geluk, en dan slechts tranen,
De wachter van de heks, de wachter van haar krater,
Het kruid van Jonas, als een vulkaan, als een lopend vuurtje,

Het geheim van de zee voor eeuwig.

Het kruid van Jonas, dat kleine kind,
Dat kleine aapje, je sterft altijd bemind,
Het liefdesvuur gaat altijd snel,
Je bent afgebrand voordat je het weet,
Slechts brandhout voor de hel."

Ze stonden met open mond naar de heks aan de grote ketel te kijken. Er kwam een mysterieuze rook uit de ketel. Hier werd waarschijnlijk het kruid van Jonas gekookt en gebrouwen.

"We hebben maar heel iets nodig," fluisterde dokter Tulp, "en vooral niets eten of drinken hier."

Aan de zijkanten van de grot waarin de heks stond groeide vreemd kruid. Ook stonden er wat dozen met het kruid erin. "Zullen we het erop wagen ?" vroeg Joost. Plotseling vloog Oerling naar binnen, en greep met zijn snavel wat kruid uit een doos, en vloog toen weer terug. De heks draaide zich ineens naar hen toe. "Blijf staan waar je staat !" riep ze. "Iemand heeft van het kruid genomen !" Ze haalde haar grote lepel uit de ketel en riep : "Dan zullen jullie het eten ook !" Ze richtte haar grote lepel op hen. "Kom hier, dan zul je eten wat je zo graag wilde. Dan zul je eten wat je stal !"

Ze zetten het toen op een rennen. Ze renden terug de gang door, maar het leek wel alsof de gang veranderd was, en ze kwamen alleen maar in andere gangen terecht. "Als ratten in de val !" hoorde ze de heks roepen. Ergens op een gang was een deur die ze opendeden. Ze keken ineens recht in het gezicht van een man met een plat hoekig oranje-geel achtig petje op waar aan de voorkant een klein kwastje hing. "Tokijn is de naam," zei hij. "Jullie hebben het kruid gevonden, en niet gegeten. Dat komt niet vaak voor." Hij begon heel snel te praten, en ging toen steeds langzamer. "Luister," zei hij, terwijl zijn stem was als het golven van de zee. "Eet het niet. Alleen als ingrediënt in de Bibelebonse pap is het veilig. Ik was een gevangene van de heks, maar jullie hebben mij gevonden. Ik kan jullie helpen. Het is een duivel, die heks. Jullie komen op het juiste moment."

"Wie zijn Jonas en zijn indiaanse moeder ?" vroeg Joost.

"Dat zul je wel zien," zei Tokijn geheimzinnig. "Wat nu belangrijk is, is dat we door de gangen gaan. Ik ken de weg," zei Tokijn. Ze gingen de gang weer op. Tokijn had een lange, dunne mantel aan wat ook oranje-geel achtig was, en hij droeg pantoffels.

"Jonas !" riep hij. "Er is bezoek !"

Daar kwam Jonas al aanrennen. "I ... ik ken hen," stotterde Jonas. "Ze zijn niet aardig. Ze komen het kruid stelen."

"Welnee, Jonas," zei Tokijn. "Ze komen het kruid onschadelijk maken. Heus, het is het beste voor ons allemaal."

"W... wij houden van het kruid," zei het jongetje. "Het is mijn kruid. Mamma heeft het voor mij gemaakt."

"Moet je opletten," zei Tokijn, die even met zijn vingers knipte. Het jongetje viel direct in een diepe slaap. Toen kwam ook de indiaanse vrouw aanlopen. "Wat heb je gedaan, Tokijn ?" vroeg ze zacht.

"Zing dat mooie lied eens wat je laatst voor mij hebt gezongen," zei Tokijn.

"Oh, Tokijn," zei ze ineens heel verlegen. "Dat kan ik hier niet doen."

"Toe nou," zei Tokijn, "het is zo'n mooi lied. Iedereen moet dat horen."

Toen begon de indiaanse vrouw te zingen, zo mooi. Het ging over het indiaanse kruid van Jonas.
Het was een kruid wat groeide op de zeebodem, een kruid wat in het hoofd van Jonas groeide,
Wat verhalen vertelde, indiaanse verhalen, om het jongetje ergens tegen te beveiligen.
Het jongetje had die verhalen zelf gemaakt, onder invloed van het kruid.
Hij mocht het kruid niet eten. Hij hield van het kruid. Hij sprak met het kruid.
Het leefde in zijn hoofd. Het was zijn wachter. Het suste hem altijd in slaap.

Plotseling greep de vrouw naar haar buik en stopte met zingen.
"We moeten hier weg, Tokijn," zei ze kreunend van de pijn. "Er is iets goed mis."

"De betovering wordt verbroken," zei Tokijn. "De Bibelebonse pap koning is gekomen."

Een woeste zwarte zeedraak kwam in de verte op hen af, maar de gangen begonnen te draaien en ketsten de zeedraak af. De zeedraak krijste verschrikkelijk.

"We hebben niet veel tijd," zei Tokijn. "Kom mee," zei hij, terwijl hij even in zijn vingers knipte. Ook de indiaanse vrouw viel op de grond in slaap. "Het waren de verschillende gedaantes van de heks," fluisterde Tokijn. "Nu moeten we hier zo snel mogelijk weg." Het leek wel alsof er een aardbeving plaatsvond. "Kom nog eens terug op een beter moment !" werd er geroepen. Toen stonden ze ineens allemaal buiten de tempel met Tokijn. "Ik kan wel een beetje toveren," glimlachte Tokijn. Overal begon het Zeewoud om hen heen vlam te vatten. "Rennen," zei Tokijn. "We moeten zo snel mogelijk het Zeewoud uit. Tokijn kende wel een korte weg. Ze volgden hem, en met wat magische truken waren ze snel uit het bos. Achter hen was een enorm krijsend vuur wat als een woesteling om zich heengreep. Ze wisten niet hoe snel ze in de rivier moesten komen. Amerika stond in brand. Voor hoe ver wisten ze niet, maar Tokijn zei dat het alleen de heksenwouden betrof, niet het indiaanse gebied. Ze vonden een bootje waarmee ze zo snel mogelijk de Bibelebonse rivier overgingen. Terug naar Nederland. Oerling had het kruid van Jonas goed vast tussen zijn snavel.

Toen ze in Utrecht op het paleis waren aangekomen onderwierp dokter Tulp het kruid direct aan een onderzoek. Het was een zaaddragend kruid, waarmee ze meer van het kruid konden kweken. Dit gebeurde in kassen van speciaal glas. De Bibelebonse pap werd zo tot een middel waardoor mensen elkaar beter konden verstaan, en ook dieren en planten.

Hoofdstuk 3. De Bostrein

Lotus Koek was de kannibalen koning van het land Chagerijnië wat onder Suriname, het Zuiden van Nederland lag. Hij woonde op de Kanarische eilanden, wat eilanden in het centrale bosmeer van het bos. Rondom het meer lag een enorm bos, en rondom het bos waren huizen gebouwd. De inwoners van dit land waren, zoals de naam al doet vermoeden, enorm chagerijnig, en niemand wist waarom. Lotus Koek zelf was echter de vrolijkheid zelve. En zoals de inwoners van het land Chagerijnië enorm gierig en ongastvrij waren, zo was Lotus Koek de gulheid zelve, en enorm gastvrij. Altijd deelde hij taartjes uit en snoep, of hij liet het uitdelen. De Chagerijnen, zoals de inwoners van Chagerijnië genoemd werden, hadden daar nooit veel belang in. Zij wisten immers dat hun koning een kannibaal was, en dat was wettelijk zo bepaald dat dit toegestaan was. Daarom zorgden de Chagerijnen ervoor zo dun mogelijk te blijven. Zij die hier niet meer tegen konden gingen dikwijls de rivier over die tussen de huizen en het bos inlag, om zo zelf een kannibaal te worden, maar dit liep niet altijd goed af.

Het land Chagerijnië was onderdeel van een veel groter gebied, genaamd Kannibalië. Joost had hier veel over gehoord en wilde hier iets aan doen. Op een dag ging hij samen met dokter Tulp, meester Tulp, Tokijn en Oerling naar het land toe. Hij moest hiervoor helemaal de Surinaamse grens van Zuid Nederland over. Dit was een zwaar bewaakte grens, ook door de Chagerijnen. De Chagerijnen hadden er niks mee te maken dat hij de Bibelebonse pap koning van Nederland was. Joost en de anderen moesten streng onderzocht worden door de Chagerijnen voordat ze het land binnen konden gaan. De Chagerijnen lieten hen duidelijk merken dat ze niet welkom waren. Van de Bibelebonse pap hadden ze nog nooit gehoord, en ze hadden er ook geen interesse in. Toch mochten ze na lang praten erdoor. Ze kwamen eerst in de woonwijken. De straten hadden hier allemaal vreemde namen, vaak verbonden aan voedsel. De Chagerijnen zelf bleken hier niet blij over te zijn. Overal liepen ze rond met chagerijnige gezichten, en er werd niet gegroet. Oerling ging voorop, en leidde hen door de vele woonwijkjes naar de rivier die tussen de huizen en het bos inlag. De rivier werd genoemd : de Kannibaalse rivier. Met een bootje zijn ze die overgestoken, want er waren geen bruggen. Zo kwamen ze in het bos aan. Er hing hier een zoetige geur. Van achter de bomen kwamen bakkers tevoorschijn met schalen vol taartjes. Die werden aan hen aangeboden, maar ze wisten natuurlijk dat ze daar niets van moesten eten. Gelukkig werd het niet opgedrongen. Dieper in het bos kwamen ze uiteindelijk aan bij een meer. In dit meer moesten zich de Kanarische eilanden bevinden waar kannibalen koning Lotus Koek zou wonen.

Weer namen ze een bootje om het meer op te gaan. Het was een groot meer. Ze hadden allemaal een peddel waarmee ze vooruit kwamen. Alles ging tamelijk rustig. Ze kwamen bij een eerste eiland aan. Plotseling sprong er een woeste dikke man uit de struiken, en rende op hen af met een

pollepel. Hij was woest in de zin dat hij een botje door zijn neus had, en botjes in zijn haar. Ook waren zijn sieraden gemaakt van botjes. Hij had grote ogen, en zijn huid was donker. Hier en daar waren strepen verf. Verder was hij heel vriendelijk, en gastvrij. Het bleek kannibalen koning Lotus Koek te zijn.

"Waar zijn de anderen ?" vroeg Joost.

"De hort op," lachte hij. "Welkom op de Kanarische eilanden," zei hij met een vreemd accent. "En ik ben kannibalen koning Lotus Koek."

"En kannibalisme is hier wettig ?" vroeg Joost.

"Uiteraard," zei de kannibalen koning. "Het staat in het wetboek, gekerfd in een boom. Wat wil je nog meer ?'

"Ja, ik vind het niet zo netjes," zei Joost.

"Wij eten verder heel netjes," zei de kannibalen koning. "Zin in een taartje, snoep of koeken ?"

Joost en de anderen schudden hun hoofd. "Begrijpelijk," zei de kannibalen koning. "Zeer begrijpelijk zelfs. Ik was eens ook zo, maar nu heb ik alle trossen los."

"Uw burgers zijn chagerijnig ?" vroeg Joost.

"Ja, heel chagerijnig," zei de kannibalen koning. "Dat moet wel, hè ?"

"Waarom ?" vroeg Joost.

"Nou, anders eh ... anders ... Niet van die moeilijke vragen stellen," lachte de kannibalen koning vriendelijk, terwijl hij Joost op zijn schouder klopte. Toen sloeg hij een arm om Joost heen. Joost schudde zichzelf weer los.

"Ik vind het maar vreemd," zei Joost. "Moet ik dit zomaar normaal vinden ?"

"Het is onze aard," zei de kannibalen koning vriendelijk. "Het zit in ons bloed. Wij hebben met alles bijbedoelingen. Daar leven we van."

"Nou, ik vind het niet zo lekker," zei Joost.

"Ach, het went wel," zei de kannibalen koning sussend.

"Hoe bent u zo geworden eigenlijk ?" vroeg dokter Tulp. "Heel eigenaardig, heel eigenaardig."

"Ik ben zo geboren," zei de kannibalen koning. "Zo ben ik altijd al geweest. Ik was altijd al een gulle gever, en de beloning zit erin als ze het aannemen."

"Dan beloont u uzelf ?" vroeg Joost.

"Jazeker," zei de kannibalen koning. "Wie eens wat aanneemt, zal ook wel meerdere dingen aannemen, als het bevalt, nietwaar ? Ik kan dan een heleboel proberen. Lukt het ene niet, dan lukt het andere wel."

"Dus u ziet mensen gewoon als een stuk vlees ?" vroeg Joost. "Ons ook ?"

"Ja, natuurlijk," zei de kannibalen koning vriendelijk als altijd. "Het is helemaal niks om je voor te schamen of verlegen over te doen. Iedereen is gemaakt van vlees, en vlees is er om gegeten te worden, om genoten te worden."

"Ik ben het er niet mee eens," zei Joost. "Je rooft zo het leven van iemand anders voor je eigen gulzigheid."

"Ach nee," zei de kannibaalse koning. "Zo moet je dat niet zien. Kip is zo gezond als mensenvlees. Waarom zou je daar niet van mogen genieten," terwijl hij op Oerling wees. "U moet weten : Een kip is een kip. Zo is het dier gemaakt."

"Het is een duif," zei Joost, "en het heeft van de Bibelebonse pap gegeten."

"Biebele wattus ?" vroeg de kannibalen koning.

"De Bibelebonse pap, waar je nooit oud van wordt," zei Joost. "Dan kun je eeuwig leven."

"Wie zit daar nou op te wachten om eeuwig te leven ?" vroeg de kannibalen koning vriendelijk, met een brede glimlach. "Dat is toch niks aan ? Dat is toch saai ? Nee, de dood hoort bij het leven, om het leven op smaak te maken. Wat is vuur zonder ijs, en wat is water zonder lucht ?"

"U begrijpt het niet," zei Joost. "De Bibelebonse pap is er om een mensenleven en dierenleven beter te maken, en ook het plantenleven, de bomen, de struiken, de planten, alles."

De kannibalen koning begon te lachen. "Ik heb het goed naar mijn zin, jongen. Ik eet liever een kippenboutje of een mensenarm of been dan saaie pap."

"Saaie pap ?" vroeg Joost. "Werkelijk, u kent de Bibelebonse pap nog niet. Uw lief en vriendelijk gedoe komt heel ongeloofwaardig over, onbetrouwbaar."

De kannibalen koning begon steeds zachter en liever te praten, maar Joost trapte er niet in. "Jullie zijn van harte welkom," lachte de kannibalen koning vriendelijk. "Ook al hebben wij totaal verschillende ideeën. Vrede is heel wat waard, vind je niet ? Ik zal een hut speciaal voor u laten klaarmaken. Ik zal ervoor zorgen dat u op uw wenken bedient wordt."

"Ach laat maar," zei Joost. "Het is niet nodig."

De kannibalen koning was verder totaal niet opdringerig, maar dat had natuurlijk een reden. Na een

tijdje stond hij voor hen met een mes, en vroeg wie van hen het eerste eraan wilde gaan. Nooit hadden ze gedacht dat kannibalen zo beleefd konden zijn.

"Doet u dat mes maar weer weg," zei meester Tulp. "Niemand van ons is daar voor gekomen." De kannibalen koning was de vriendelijkheid en gastvrijheid zelve, en legde het mes weer weg. "Zoals u wilt," zei de kannibalen koning. "Het is allemaal voor uw plezier. De gast is koning."

Toen de andere kannibalen terugkwamen was de sfeer ineens heel anders. Zij waren veel ruiger, en veel chagerijniger. "Waarom zijn die toeristen nog niet in de ketel ?" vroegen ze.

"Het zijn onze gasten," zei de kannibalen koning. "En dat had ik aangeboden, maar dat wilden ze nog niet. De gast is koning natuurlijk. Het mag hen aan niets ontbreken, en hen mag ook niets opgedrongen worden."

"Ja, maar we hebben voedsel nodig," zei de kannibaal. "Laten ze opschieten."

"Ze hebben inderdaad voedsel nodig," zei de kannibalen koning. "Heel attent dat je dat hebt opgemerkt. Ik heb ze wat fruit aangeboden, maar ze hadden nog geen honger. Ik ben trots op zo'n zorgzame onderdaan als jij. Niemand kan aan jou tippen.

De kannibaal begon te grommen, en trok een mes. "Nog even en ik rijg ze zelf aan het mes."

De kannibalen koning keek hem vriendelijk aan. "Ga je maar even wassen. Dat zal je goed doen. Dat zal de honger wel stillen. En dan kun je daarna een pruimpje eten misschien."

"Ik eet geen pruimpjes !" bulderde de kannibaal. "Bij Lazarus ! Ik heb mensenvlees nodig !" Toen rende hij boos en stampvoetend weg.

"Wie is Lazarus ?" vroeg Joost.

"Oh, Lazarus is een zaadboom die wij vereren," zei de kannibalen koning vriendelijk.

"Wat doet het zaad ?" vroeg dokter Tulp.

"Het zaad is als een stuifmeel wat zich in de lucht vermengd en in de wind," zei de kannibalen koning, "en het maakt mensen nieuwsgierig. Ook maakt het mensen gewillig. Zonder de Lazarus boom zouden wij niet kunnen leven."

"Ik ben blij dat ik nog niets gegeten of gedronken heb hier," fluisterde Joost naar meester Tulp die naast hem stond.

"Zijn er nog meer bomen die u vereert ?" vroeg dokter Tulp.

"Nee," zei de kannibalen koning.

"Mag ik vragen," zei Joost, "U zei het zaad van de Lazarus boom maakt gewillig. Gewillig tot wie ?"

"De heks van Kannibalië waartoe dit eenvoudige land behoort," zei de kannibalen koning vriendelijk. "Zij woont in het Lazarus woud achter het land Chagerijnië."
"Dan heeft die heks u vast zo vriendelijk en week gemaakt door het Lazarus zaad," zei Joost. "Oh ja," zei de kannibalen koning. "Zij is een zoet mens. Zij wordt weleens de snoep heks genoemd."

Daar de heks van Kannibalië onder de grond woonde zouden ze onder de grond gaan met een bootje door het ondergrondse rivierengebied onder Chagerijnië tot onder het Lazarus woud. Natuurlijk wilden ze deze heks bezoeken, ter bevordering van de Bibelebonse pap. Het werd een lange reis onder de grond in een bootje, totdat ze bij het domein van de heks van Kannibalië waren gekomen in de diepte van het Lazarus woud. Haar ondergrondse rijk was ook zoetig, met bloemen in allerlei kleuren, bijna betoverend. Zelfs het rivierwier was kleurig. Het water was hier zeer helder. Ze konden er vanuit het bootje gewoon doorheen kijken. Er zwommen hier ook wonderlijke vissen, oranje met felle strepen, blauw, geel, en hele kleine groenen. Verderop waren er weer andere soorten, groter en met donkere kleuren. Dikwijls hadden ze gepuilde lippen. De natuur was prachtig hier. Ze kwamen aan bij een dichte heg waar een opening was. Hier gingen ze het bootje uit en gingen door de opening van de heg. Ze kwamen over een lang tuinpad in een grottengang terecht. De grottengang liep uit op een veldje waar een soort kruidig graan groeide. Achter het veldje waren nog wat bomen. Er was wat rook, maar ze wisten niet waar het vandaan kwam. Achter de bomen was een soort vallei, wat ook weer overliep in een bos. Ze kwamen aan in een bosdorpje. Overal waren er oude bosgebouwen waarin kinderen woonden. De kinderen ontvingen hen hartelijk, en ze deden hun verhaal.

"Oh, de paarse heks ?" vroeg één van de kinderen. "Want dat is degene die Kannibalië bestuurt, dit hele gebied."

"Ik wist niet dat ze de paarse heks was," zei Joost. "De kannibalen koning van Chagerijnië noemde haar de snoep heks."

"Ja, dat is dezelfde," zei het kind.

"En ze is zoet ?" vroeg Joost.

"Ja," zei het kind. "Ze komt vaak in haar paarse gewaad om ons snoep te brengen en speelgoed. Ze zorgt goed voor ons."

"Hoe vaak gebeurt dat ?" vroeg dokter Tulp.

"Meestal op feestdagen," zei het kind.

"Dankzij haar kunnen we hier leven," zei een ander kind. "Zij heeft ons verlost."

"Van wat ?" vroeg Joost.

"Van de wolven," zei het kind.

Joost zag een paarse gestalte op één van de daken staan. De paarse gestalte had een kap op.
"Is ze dat ?" vroeg Joost.

"Ja," zeiden sommige kinderen.

"Wat moet dat hier ?" zei de vrouw. "Excuseert u mij. Ik heb de zorg over deze kinderen."

Joost vertelde het verhaal.

"Bibelebonse pap ? Nou, dat is interessant," zei de vrouw, die haar kap afdeed. Ze liet een ring om haar vinger zien. "Eens gekregen," zei ze. "Het is een Bibelebonse ring. Mijn vader nam het eens mee van zijn reizen, en gaf het aan mij."

"Zo, zo," zei Joost, "zeker zuinig mee."

"Zeker," zei de vrouw.

"Bent u de snoepheks ?" vroeg Joost.

"Ach welnee," zei de vrouw. "Ik breng ze soms wat, en ik maak soms ritjes met hen in de bostrein, maar ik ben slechts een gezant van de heks."

"Met wat voor doeleinden ?" vroeg dokter Tulp.

"Ik kan u daar geen inzage in geven, maar als u de heks zelf wil spreken, dan kan de bostrein daarin behulpzaam zijn," sprak de vrouw.

Ze stemden in, en de vrouw leidde hen naar de bostrein achter het kinderdorp. Deze trein zou dieper het bos ingaan en ook langs allerlei bosvelden gaan. Het was een verschrikkelijk lawaai, maar in de trein zelf hoorde je het haast niet. Ze gingen met de vrouw in een grote coupé zitten.

"Vertel ons eens, is het een zoet mens, zoals de kannibalen koning zei ?" vroeg Joost.

"Ik kan u daarop geen antwoord geven," zei de vrouw. "U moet dat zelf ondervinden." De trein zou helemaal leiden tot aan de poort van de woning van de heks. Zij woonde in een gebied waar bomen pijlen voortbrachten die door de bomen werden afgeschoten. Die bomen waren dus levensgevaarlijk en bewaakten haar gebied. Alleen door de bostrein kon veilig het gebied ingegaan worden.
Buiten door het raam zagen ze telkens hoe vogeltjes door zulke pijlen werden doorspietst. De trein was in een bergachtig gebied terecht gekomen. Plotseling was alles donker. De trein ging door een tunnel. Steeds vaker ging de trein door lange tunnels onder bergen door. Toen ging de trein langs vele velden waar geel kruidig graan groeide. Haar reusachtige paleis in de bergen was geheel gemaakt van snoep. Het was een oogverblindend paleis, als een paradijs zo prachtig. De trein stopte aan de paleispoort, waar twee zwarte ridders stonden. Aan beide kanten naast het paleis en achter het paleis was een stad gebouwd, zo in de bergen, Er waren veel palmbomen en velden. Een

donkere vrouw kwam naar buiten rennen, helemaal versierd met snoep. "Welkom tot mijn paradijs," zei ze warm. Ze vertelde hen een heel verhaal over hoe blij ze was dat ze waren gekomen, en legde hen uit hoe alles werkte. Zij had de bostrein laten maken, omdat ze verzot op zulk speelgoed was. Ze nam hen mee het paleis in, en leidde hen rond. Ook zij wilde dat ze snoep zouden eten. Ze vroegen zich af waarom, maar ze waren immers in Kannibalië. Overal stonden kooien met kinderen, en ze deed alsof het de normaalste zaak van de wereld was. "Als jullie goed eten, dan eten wij er ook goed van," zei ze, wat volgens Joost een verdachte opmerking was.

"Waarom zijn al die kinderen in kooien ?" vroeg Joost.

"Oh, het zijn gevaarlijke belhamels," zei de heks.

"Wat gaat er met hen gebeuren ?" vroeg dokter Tulp.

"Dat hangt van hun gedrag af," zei de heks.

Er stonden in het paleis ook boompjes waar kinderen in groeiden.

"Kinderen komen hier uit de bomen ?" vroeg Joost.

"Ja," zei de heks. "Het is het Lazarus zaad."

Nu begrepen ze wat de Lazarus boom werkelijk was. Het bracht kinderen voort.

"Wat gebeurt er met de kinderen die in de bomen groeien ?" vroeg meester Tulp.

"Wij eten wat de pot schaft," zei de heks, wat Joost weer een verdachte opmerking vond.

"Kom, ik zal jullie mijn slaapkamer laten zien," zei de heks. Ze ging een trap op en toen een hal in, waar de anderen haar volgden. Hier was ergens haar kamer. De kamer stond vol met spelletjes en speelgoed. Ook lag er veel snoep. Haar bed was een hemelbed met een rode sluier. "Hier gebeurt alles," zei ze.

"Wat bedoelt u ?" vroeg Joost, die een beetje overrompelt was door alles.

"Dit is mijn troonzaal," zei ze. "Eenvoud siert de mens, zeg ik altijd."

Joost keek rond in de kamer. "We hebben ook bomen waar varkens in groeien, en bepaalde stenen doen dat ook. Daarmee hebben we onze stad gebouwd, zodat de mensen altijd genoeg te eten hebben," zei de heks.

"Waarom eet je niet gewoon pap, Bibelebonse pap waar je nooit oud van wordt en waar je eeuwig door leeft," zei Joost.

"Ah, de Bibelebonzen," zei de heks, "onze verre voorouders," terwijl ze naar een schilderij aan de muur wees. "Hier is een Bibelebonzer," terwijl ze glimlachte. Het was een portret van een oude

man. "Heus wij eren de voorouders, maar het leven gaat door, en zo ook de dood."

Joost had het gevoel alsof er niet met deze vrouw te praten viel. Hij zuchtte. "Heus, je zou het eens moeten proberen," zei hij. "Mens, dier en plant zullen zo in vrede leven."

"Vrede verkoopt niet," zei de heks. "De mens wil oorlog, en dan zijn spelletjes de gouden middenweg. Kinderen spelen met soldaatjes en indiaantjes. Dat is wat hen bezig houdt, het avontuur. Vrede wordt al snel saai."

"U bent een zakenvrouw," zei Joost, "maar de Bibelebonse pap heeft niets met geld te maken. Je kunt het hemelse niet kopen, en geld maakt niet gelukkig."

"Kijk eens om je heen en zie waar geld mij heeft gebracht," zei de heks. "Geld heeft mij gelukkig gemaakt, en het groeit hier aan de bomen, en de stenen brengen het voort. Ik heb dit paradijs gekocht. Geld heeft me gelukkig gemaakt."

"Geld is geen goede raadgever," zei Tokijn. "Geld leidt altijd tot de valstrikken. Het geld liegt. Ik heb dat altijd weer gezien."

"Ja," zei meester Tulp, "en denk eens aan die arme kinderen die in de bomen groeien. Egoïstisch geluk is geen waar geluk. Het leidt tot de dood."

"Zij die leven voor en door de dood, zullen ook sterven door de dood," zei Tokijn.

"De dood verkoopt goed," zei de heks. Allemaal wisten ze dat er met de heks niet te praten viel.

"Nu, zeg op, wat wil je," zei de heks.

"Die Lazarus bomen en Lazarus stenen die kinderen, dieren en geld voortbrengen zijn zeer merkwaardig," zei dokter Tulp. "Waar heeft u die ergens vandaan gehaald, en hoe werkt dat precies ? Ik begrijp dit niet."

"Het is een bijzonder soort snoep wat hier in de bergen groeit, als stenen of bomen," zei de heks, "en dan brengt het deze goederen voort."

"Zeer merkwaardig, zeer eigenzinnig," zei dokter Tulp. "Dat heb ik nou nog nooit eerder gezien."

"Al het goede leven is van snoep," zei de heks, "en snoep moet gegeten worden, anders heb je er niks aan."

"Het is een vreemd soort geluk," zei meester Tulp, "maar het lijkt mij erg schadelijk."

"Jullie begrijpen het gewoon niet," zei de heks. "Maar dat zal mij niet tegenhouden. Mij maken jullie niet gek. Hebben jullie weleens een peperkoek mannetje gegeten ?"

"Weleens," zei meester Tulp.

"En had je toen ook medelijden met het peperkoek mannetje ?" vroeg de heks. "Had je er achteraf spijt van omdat je het zielig vond ?"

"Nee, niet echt," zei meester Tulp, "maar het was geen echt mannetje."

"En dit hier zijn geen echte kinderen !" riep de heks geirriteerd. "Nooit van automatisch speelgoed gehoord ? En het is van snoep. Snoep heeft nooit pijn. Snoep gaat nooit dood."

"De kinderen in de kooien en in het kinderdorp leken echt," zei Joost. "Zit u niet een beetje de boel te bedriegen ?"

"Jullie zijn onkundig !" riep de heks. "Jullie zijn spijbelaars. Eigenlijk horen jullie in de kooien thuis. Jullie weten niets van snoep af. Jullie zijn een gevaar voor de geschoolde samenleving."

"U heeft maar een vreemd bedrijf," zei Joost, "en ik geloof er allemaal niks van wat u zegt. Ik houd het bij de Bibelebonse pap. Ik ben notabene de koning van de Bibelebonse pap."

"Daar heb ik allemaal niks mee te maken," zei de heks.

"Wat is nu precies het geheim van het Lazarus snoep wat op deze eigenaardige manier hier in de bergen groeit ?" vroeg dokter Tulp.

"Dat ... gaat u niks aan," zei de heks. "Het is niet alleen staatsgeheim, maar ook het geheim van mijn ambacht en mijn succes. Het is een beetje brutaal om dat zomaar te vragen."

"Oorspronkelijk was het Lazarus zaad een ingrediënt van de Bibelebonse pap," zei Tokijn. "Maar door schurken is het verdoezeld, en zo kwam de Lazarus boom onder een vloek."

"Hoe weet jij dat !" krijste de heks.

"Ik heb zo mijn eigen geheimen," zei Tokijn. Hij greep de pols van de heks en liet niet meer los. "Ik ben een Bibelebonse tovenaar. Ik heb lang in ballingschap gezeten. Ik weet meer dan je denkt."

Met deze woorden kwam er een vuur uit Tokijn's ogen. "De Lazarus boom was oorspronkelijk een Bibelebonse boom," zei Tokijn kalm. "Ik weet dat jij het zaad bewaakt."

"Niet waar !" krijste de heks. Ze begon te roepen naar de zwarte ridders die direct de trap opstormden.

"Wat is er, heks ?" riepen ze haar toe. Ze keek hen aan en sprak : "Tokijn is teruggekomen. Hij was de oorspronkelijke bewaker van de Bibelebonse pap. Ik moet hem het Lazarus zaad geven. Ga het halen in de paleiselijke kluis."

Even later kwamen ze terug met een glazen bol waarin het Lazarus zaad lag. "Geef het aan Tokijn," zei de heks. Toen overhandigden ze hem de glazen bol. Tokijn nam de bol aan, en liet toen de pols

van de heks los.

De heks zuchtte, en begon in een pijlschietende struik te veranderen, en ook de zwarte ridders. "Kom vlug," zei Tokijn. "We moeten terug naar de bostrein. Haastig liepen ze terug naar de trap en renden even later naar de bostrein. Ditmaal bracht de bostrein hen helemaal terug naar de eindeloze toren diep onder de grond. Door de boswinden waren ze even later terug in het paleis. Er was weer een belangrijk ingrediënt van de Bibelebonse pap teruggebracht.

Toen ze thuis waren gekomen had Lekkerbek een grote verrassing voor Joost. Daar stond oom Georgius. Joost was erg blij en begon direct vragen te stellen. "Shhh," zei oom Georgius, "dat is een heel lang verhaal. Dat vertel ik je nog wel, maar eerst is het feest." En zo was er een groot feest in heel Nederland ter ere van de terugkeer van oom Georgius, en natuurlijk ter ere van de Bibelebonse pap.

Einde

De Gokkoning van Ovven

Hoofdstuk 1.

Op de kermis sloeg hij toe. Hij was een dief. Hij stal van kinderen, en hij stal soms zelfs de kinderen zelf. Hij was een kinderdief. Hij maakte hun dromen kapot.

Elwin wist hier allemaal niets van.

Het reizen door de natuur kan op een kameel. Elwin heeft dat ook weleens gedaan. Op een kameel ging hij door riviertjes, en vlaktes met wat bosjes. De zon scheen fijn, en het was een fijne dag waarop hij een reis maakte op een kameel. Hij had zijn spulletjes vastgemaakt met een riem aan de bult van de kameel, en ging er toen opzitten.

Waarom Elwin op reis ging ? Hij had gehoord dat er in de bergen ergens een hele bijzondere steen zou zijn, gemaakt door dwergen, door kabouters. Het zou een heel bijzondere droom steen zijn, die

de mensen hele bijzondere dromen zou kunnen geven. Voordat Elwin op reis ging had hij daar weleens over in boeken gelezen, en zelfs een paar keer in de krant. Alles zou misschien zoveel mooier zijn als de droom steen in Ovven zou zijn.

Elwin ging helemaal alleen op de kameel. Hij wist wel waar hij ergens moest zijn, en hij had de reismap meegenomen. Daar keek hij zo nu en dan op. Hij had weleens plaatjes van de steen gezien, met daarop elfjes en kabouters die rondom de prachtig flonkerende roze-rode steen dansten. Ook waren er op die plaatjes allemaal vlindertjes te zien.

Maar toen Elwin eindelijk aankwam bij de grot waar de steen moest wezen, werd hij tegengehouden door groene bewakers met bruine helmen en slagtanden. 'Halt,' zei één van de bewakers die zijn speer al had uitgestoken om Elwin tegen te houden. 'Wat wil je ? Niemand kan zomaar tot de droom steen komen.'

'Maar ik zag op plaatjes dat er allemaal elfjes, kabouters en vlindertjes omheen dansten,' zei Elwin.

'Niks mee te maken,' bromde de groene wachter.

'Nou, u bent ook niet echt in de stemming vandaag,' zei Elwin. 'Met al dat gesnauw.'

'Ik ben wel in de stemming,' zei de groene wachter. 'Het is mijn werk. Ik moet de droom steen met hand en tand bewaken. Alleen de koning bepaalt wie er bij de steen mag komen.'

'Zo zo,' zei Elwin die inmiddels van zijn kameel was afgestapt. 'En wie mag die koning dan wel niet wezen ?'

'Koning Kabeljauw,' zei de groene wachter mopperend. 'En maak nu dat je wegkomt.'

'Kan ik de koning niet spreken ?' vroeg Elwin. 'Ik zou graag de droom steen willen zien.'

'Daarvoor moet je bij Wat-Glim-Je-Mooi zijn, zij is een elfje met gele vleugels,' bromde de groene wachter.

De groene wachter legde Elwin even uit waar dat elfje woonde, en toen ging Elwin weer op pad. Na een tijdje kwam hij aan bij een klein bosje, aan de rand van de bergen. Bij een huisje klopte Elwin aan. Een klein elvenmeisje deed open. Ze had lang haar en ze had een gele jurk aan. 'Hallo, Wat-Glim-Je-Mooi,' zei Elwin.
'Dank je,' zei het elvenmeisje.

'Ik dacht dat dat je naam was,' zei Elwin.
Het elvenmeisje begon te giechelen. 'Ja, dat is ook zo. Wat kom je doen ?'

'Ik zou graag koning Kabeljauw willen spreken voor het zien van de droom steen,' sprak Elwin.

'Dat is een vis met een kroontje, hier vlakbij in de rivier,' sprak het meisje. 'Ik kan je wel aan de koning voorstellen, maar dan moet je wel eerst glimmen.'

'Hoe moet ik glimmen dan ?' vroeg Elwin.

Het elvenmeisje zuchtte. 'Jammer dat je nog niet glimt, want dan hadden we direct naar de koning gekunt. Ik zal het je wel even uitleggen : 'Je kunt alleen glimmen door de droom steen.'

'Ja, maar ik ben verboden de droom steen te zien, en daarvoor moest ik juist eerst met de koning spreken,' sprak Elwin.

'Tja,' zei het elvenmeisje, 'dan weet ik het ook niet.'

'Kan ik niet eerst de droom steen zien om te glimmen, en dan pas naar de koning gaan ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Onmogelijk,' sprak het elvenmeisje met een diepe zucht. 'Dat laat hij nooit toe. Eerst moet je glimmen, en dan kun je pas met de koning spreken, en dan pas naar de droom steen.'

'Ja, dan is het inderdaad onmogelijk,' zei Elwin. 'Ik glim niet, en mag niet bij de droom steen komen.'

'Helaas,' zei het elvenmeisje. 'Ik kan je niet helpen.'

'Wat een nare belevenis,' zei Elwin. 'Ik ben hiervoor speciaal naartoe gekomen. Ik heb een hele lange reis gemaakt, op mijn kameel, en nu dit.'

'Ik begrijp het,' zuchtte het elvenmeisje.

'Is er dan echt geen andere oplossing ?' vroeg Elwin.

Het elvenmeisje schudde haar hoofd. 'Nee, niet echt. Tenzij je …'

Het elvenmeisje werd stil.

'Tenzij ik wat ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Laat maar zitten,' sprak het elvenmeisje. Ze ging aan een tafeltje zitten, en ging verder met haar naaiwerk.

'Wat ben je aan het maken ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Oh, iets voor de buurman,' zei het elvenmeisje.

'Maar ik zie helemaal geen ander huisje in de buurt,' sprak Elwin.
'Het is voor een mol, die net onder de grond woont, in een hol,' zei het elvenmeisje.

Elwin dacht na. Hij moest en zou bij die droom steen komen, maar die groene wachters waren

natuurlijk ook een probleem. 'Zeg, wie hebben die steen eigenlijk gemaakt ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Kik en Kes,' zei het elvenmeisje.

Kik en Kes woonden helemaal aan de zee, en volgens het elvenmeisje zou dat de enige oplossing zijn, om daar naartoe te gaan. Elwin ging het huisje weer uit en klom op zijn kameel na het elvenmeisje bedankt te hebben. Het elvenmeisje wenste Elwin een goede reis en zwaaide hem na.

Door bosjes, langs rivieren en over bergen kwam Elwin na dagen reizen eindelijk aan bij de zee waar Kik en Kes woonden. Het waren twee kabouters. Ze huppelden en dansten om een kampvuur heen. Ze leken wel broertjes, en dat waren ze ook, en zij hadden beiden de droom steen gemaakt.

De broertjes kregen al snel in de gaten dat Elwin bij hen was gekomen, en begonnen hem aan te staren. 'Goedendag,' zei Elwin, en stapte van de kameel af. Al snel begon hij het verhaal te vertellen, en de kabouters luisterden aandachtig.

Aan het einde van het verhaal sprak Kes : 'Beste Elwin, de droomsteen is eens van ons gestolen door koning Kabeljauw, oftewel de gokkoning. Het is een smerige dief, die nu door de droomsteen de dromen van kinderen probeert te stelen.'

'Maar dat is verschrikkelijk,' sprak Elwin. 'Hoe doet hij dat ?'

'Nou,' zei Kes, 'heel simpel. Hij lokt de kinderen naar zijn kermis en dan laat hij ze gokken, en als ze verliezen dan steelt hij hun dromen, en als ze winnen, dan neemt hij ze met hem mee. Natuurlijk laat hij dan wel een namaak-kind achter voor de ouders.'

'Maar is hij geen vis ?' vroeg Elwin verbaasd.

'Soms,' zei Kik. 'Hij kan van gedaante veranderen. Hij is een tovenaar.'

'Wat kunnen we eraan doen ?' vroeg Elwin.

'En nog eens iets,' zei Kik, 'de droomsteen in de grot waar je naar op zoek was is namaak om bandieten te misleiden. De echte droomsteen is in het gokpaleis van koning Kabeljauw, hoog in de bergen.'

Elwin zuchtte. 'Hoe ga ik daar ooit komen ? Waar is het ?'

'Het gokpaleis is goed verborgen, maar Utsmul, onze raaf, weet wel waar het is. Niemand waagt zich verder daar. Wij hadden de moed al opgegeven, totdat jij er weer over begon,' sprak Kes.

Elwin knikte. 'Ik wil er wel naartoe. Hij zal de gestolen droomsteen vast goed verborgen houden, maar ik wil het er op wagen.'

'Wees maar voorzichtig, Elwin,' waarschuwde Kes. 'Hij is niet zomaar voor een dubbeltje te vangen. Hij is erg ervaren in het toveren.'

'Ik begrijp het. Maar iemand moet hem tegenhouden,' sprak Elwin dapper.

'Goed dan, als je er op staat,' sprak Kes, en begon op zijn vingers te fluiten. Na een tijdje kwam er een grote raaf aanvliegen. Dat moest Utsmul wezen.

'Utsmul,' sprak Kes. 'Kun jij deze jongen afzetten bij het gokpaleis van koning Kabeljauw en dan direct weer terugkomen ?'

Elwin mocht op zijn rug klimmen, en na een kort afscheid steeg de grote raaf op, en ging richting de bergen. De raaf wist precies waar het was, maar eigenlijk wilden de kabouters hem daar niet hebben. Daarom moest hij ook direct weer terugkomen.

Het gokpaleis was gemaakt van een doorzichtig gesteente en was verlicht. Elwin wist dat van hieruit de gokkoning zijn grote toverij bedreef door de droomsteen. De raaf zette hem af, en vloog direct weer weg. Elwin hield zich goed verscholen achter een heuveltje. Er waren ook wat struiken. Ook hier kon hij zich achter verschuilen, en liep zo dichter en dichter naar het gokpaleis toe. Hij hoorde harde muziek vanuit het gokpaleis komen. Het leek wel alsof er een feestje was.

Elwin zag wachten staan bij de grote poort van het gokpaleis. Daar moest hij niet zijn. Achter struikjes liep hij helemaal naar de achterkant van het gokpaleis. Ergens door een achterdeurtje van de keuken ging hij naar binnen. Hier werkte een vrouw met een grote witte koksmuts op. 'Wat mot je !' snauwde de vrouw die aan de maalmachine stond. Elwin keek naar de plakjes ham en trok een vies gezicht. 'Wat doet u hier kan ik beter vragen,' sprak Elwin.

'Zeg, brutaal ventje,' sprak de vrouw. 'Zal ik jou eens een draai om je oren geven ?'

'Nou, dat hoeft nu ook weer niet,' zei Elwin. 'Het was gewoon een vraag.'

'Het antwoord op de vraag is : Gaat je geen klapperjanus aan, meneertje kwekgraag,' snauwde de vrouw.

'Okay, goed,' zei Elwin. 'Ik kan wel zien dat u een slecht humeur heeft. Is er soms iets gebeurd ?'

'Ophoepelen nou, ventje !' riep de vrouw die ineens stopte met de maalmachine. 'Of zou ik jou eens door de maalmachine halen, want je staat er nogal om te trappelen.'

'Nou,' zei Elwin, 'dat hoeft nu ook weer niet. Waarom doet u zo boos ? Iets verkeerds gegeten !' Nu werd de vrouw echt woedend en greep een slagersmes van de muur. 'Zeg, akelig ventje, vlegel, zal ik jou eens aan het mes rijgen ?' riep ze terwijl ze op Elwin afstapte. Elwin deed direct een stap achteruit. 'Nou, vertel op, oude heks, wat doe je daar ?' vroeg Elwin brutaal. 'U gaat me toch niet vertellen dat hier niets gebeurd is, hè ?' En toen begon Elwin het hele verhaal zonder een blad voor zijn mond te vertellen. Elwin was een openlijke en eerlijke jongen, en zei altijd alles recht voor zijn raap. De vrouw stond hem met open mond aan te kijken, terwijl het mes uit haar hand gleed. Zo slap waren haar handen geworden. Ze begon te stamelen : 'H... hoe weet jij dat allemaal ?'

'Ik heb met Kik en Kes gesproken,' sprak Elwin.

De vrouw wreef over haar kin. 'Hmmm, het is inderdaad waar dat hier een droomsteen verborgen wordt gehouden waar toverij mee wordt bedreven. Ik ben de kokkin hier. Eens won ik een gokspelletje op de kermis, en werd ik hier mee naartoe genomen. Sindsdien moest ik hier werken.

Elwin knikte. 'Jongen, je bent in groot gevaar,' sprak de vrouw. 'Als de koning erachter komt dan ga je eraan, ik zeg het je.'

'Ik moet die steen hebben,' sprak Elwin. 'Hij is van Kik en Kes, en de gokkoning moet stoppen met het lastigvallen van kinderen.'

'Ach,' sprak de vrouw. 'Je kunt toch niet tegen hem op, maar ik wens je geluk.'

Elwin liep door de grote keuken heen, en kwam toen door een deur op de gang. Direct ging hij weer terug, want hij had wachten gezien. 'Ga de kelder maar in,' sprak de kokkin, 'want hoogstwaarschijnlijk wordt de droomsteen ergens ondergronds verborgen gehouden of op een hogere verdieping. Zoek het maar uit, want in de kelder is een lift.'

De vrouw wees op de kelderdeur ergens aan de zijkant van de keuken, en daar liep Elwin toen naartoe en ging de kelder binnen door van de trap af naar beneden te gaan. Daar stond inderdaad de lift. De lift kon zowel dieper als omhoog.

'Eerst maar eens omhoog,' zei Elwin tegen zichzelf, en drukte op een rode knop voor de hogere verdieping. Na een tijdje stapte hij uit en keek direct goed om zich heen. Hier was ook een lange gang zoals op de begane grond waar hij de wachten zag. Gelukkig zag hij nu niemand. Er waren hier een heleboel deuren. Elwin was vastbesloten de droomsteen te vinden.

'Welke deur zal ik eens nemen ?' dacht Elwin bij zichzelf. 'Hmmm,' zei hij, terwijl hij langs de deuren begon te lopen. Het leek maar niet op te houden. De gang was erg lang, en hij liep over een langwerpig rood tapijt. Het leek wel alsof de gang een beetje naar beneden liep, en daarna weer een beetje omhoog ging. 'Het lijkt wel alsof hier olifanten hebben gelopen,' dacht Elwin bij zichzelf. 'Het is hier een beetje ingezakt.' Ook ging de gang in een bocht, en toen ging de gang weer verder. Er leek echt geen einde aan te komen. Aan beide kanten waren er deuren. Toen ineens ging er een deur open. 'Wie is daar !' werd er geroepen. Het gebeurde ergens achter Elwin, en hij liep weer een beetje terug. Hij wist dat hij erg voorzichtig moest zijn. Er kwam een lange man met een lange hoed uit de deur-opening. Hij had een hele deftige jas aan. 'Wat moet dat hier, ventje,' zei de lange man.

'Wie bent u eigenlijk ?' vroeg Elwin op een hele brutale manier. 'U doet zomaar de deur open en begint te roepen.'

'Ja, wat nou,' sprak de man, 'dit is mijn domein. Ik ben een kermisbaas.'

'Oh, toch niet de koning hoop ik,' sprak Elwin.

'Ach welnee, de koning is dood. Ik bedoelde deze kamer hier is mijn domein, en als ik geluid oppik

vanuit mijn kamer dan wil ik graag weten wie het is,' sprak de man.

Elwin keek verbaasd. 'De koning is dood ? Dat wist ik niet. Wanneer is dat gebeurd, en is er inmiddels alweer een nieuwe koning ?'

De man keek hem met grote ogen aan. 'Eh, nee, er is geen nieuwe koning. De koning is allang dood, al wel vijfhonderd jaar.'
'Ik vraag me af of ik dan wel in het juiste paleis ben,' zei Elwin, en begon toen het verhaal over de droomsteen te vertellen.

De man begon hard te lachen. 'Ach jongen, wat zijn dat toch allemaal voor sprookjes. Er is hier geen droomsteen, en al helemaal geen gokkoning.'

Elwin wist niet of hij de man kon geloven. Het kon natuurlijk ook een valstrik zijn. Misschien had de man wel wat te verbergen, of misschien was hij de gokkoning wel.

'Eh, i... ik loop nog even verder,' zei Elwin. De man maakte even een vreemd gebaar en ging toen zijn kamer weer in. Elwin liep verder. Zou hij echt in het verkeerde paleis zijn, of werd hij door de man bedrogen ?

'Ik ben Emiel,' hoorde hij iemand zingen. 'Erg sterk, maar een beetje fragiel, zo mooi als een bloem, niet op zoek naar roem. Ik houd mij graag stil, maar soms geef ik een gil. Soms zing ik een lied, zo verdwijnt het verdriet.' Een man met een accordeon kwam ineens door een deur de gang op. Toen hij Elwin zag schrok hij. 'Wel alle kermisklanten !' riep hij. 'Wie ben jij !'

'Ik ben Elwin, en wie ben jij ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Emiel is de naam,' sprak de man, en stak zijn hand uit. 'Laat het handenschudden maar zitten,' zei Elwin brutaal. 'Wij zijn nog geen vrienden.'

'Beleefdheidsgebaar,' sprak de man. 'Ik ben van goede wil.'

Elwin begon zijn verhaal te vertellen, maar weer kreeg hij hetzelfde antwoord dat de koning al vijfhonderd jaar dood was, en dat er hier geen droomsteen was. De man scheen ook op de kermis te werken. 'Maar de kokkin zei dat het allemaal waar was,' sprak Elwin.

De man begon te schudden van het lachen. 'De kokkin ? Dat mens is hartstikke gek,' zei de man. 'Dat mens praat met iedereen mee, en je kan haar van alles wijsmaken. Zij is degene die dit soort zotte verhalen de wereld in helpt. Ze hebben me weleens verteld dat ze vroeger van een hooiwagen is afgevallen.'

'Hmm,' zei Elwin, 'maar ook Kik en Kes zeiden dat het waar was. In feite hebben zij mij gezegd dat hier de gokkoning woont en hier de droomsteen verborgen houdt waarmee hij kinderen betovert.'

'Ach welnee,' sprak de man. 'Kik en Kes ? Ik zou niet weten wie dat zijn, maar daarvan is geen sprake. Dit soort dingen gebeuren hier niet. Dit paleis is voor een ieder die op de kermis werkt, als

een soort ontmoetings-plaats. Het heeft geen koning.'

Elwin trok zijn wenkbrauwen op. 'Okay, dan zijn we uitgepraat. Ik ga het nog even verder proberen, want ik krijg nu tegenstrijdige verhalen te horen.'

'Succes ermee, jongen,' sprak Emiel, en ging weer zijn kamer in. Elwin begon nu hard door de gang te rennen. Hij wilde weten wanneer de gang nu eens eindelijk zou ophouden, maar het leek niet op te houden. 'Is dat gebouw dan zo groot ?' dacht Elwin bij zichzelf. 'Van buiten leek het wel groot, maar ook weer niet zo groot, of zou het toverij zijn. Misschien ben ik al onder een betovering gekomen ?' Elwin rilde even, en rende toen verder. 'Ik ga gewoon wat deuren binnen,' zei Elwin tegen zichzelf, en trok een deur open. Weer zag hij een hele lange gang. En weer begon hij te rennen, en leek het wel alsof de vloer een beetje was ingezakt. 'Weer die olifanten,' dacht Elwin bij zichzelf, en toen ging de vloer weer een beetje opwaarts. Ook aan deze gang leek geen einde te komen. Hij ging weer een willekeurige deur naar binnen, en weer was het precies hetzelfde. Het was weer een lange, eindeloze gang. 'Ik ben goed verdwaald,' sprak Elwin tot zichzelf. 'Wat een doolhof is dit, zeg.'

Welke deur Elwin ook probeerde, het waren alleen maar gangen. Er waren hier helemaal geen kamers. Elwin begon erg moe te worden. 'Hoe kon ik ook zo dom zijn,' sprak Elwin tegen zichzelf. 'Is er iemand !' begon Elwin te roepen. Maar er was geen antwoord. Het bleef doodstil, en het leek steeds stiller te worden. Het leek wel alsof de muren en deuren hem aanstaarden. Elwin merkte dat hij niet goed kon ademen. Hij had frisse lucht nodig. 'Ik wil eruit !' riep hij. Na een tijdje stortte hij moe op de grond neer. Hij draaide zich om met zijn gezicht naar het plafond, waar hij een luik zag. Elwin kreeg weer een beetje hoop. Er hing een klein touwtje aan het luik. Maar Elwin kon er net niet bij. Toen sprong Elwin in de lucht, en greep het touwtje. Direct ging het luik open, en er gleed een trap naar beneden. Voorzichtig ging Elwin de trap op, die als een ladder was. Het was hier erg donker. Een zwart beest, als een zwarte kat, staarde naar hem. 'Wat kom je doen ?' sprak de kat.

Direct begon Elwin zijn verhaal te vertellen. De kat begon te lachen. Elwin kreeg weer hetzelfde te horen, dat er geen koning was en al helemaal geen droomsteen. 'Hoe zou jij dat weten ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Ik ken het paleis van binnenste buiten,' sprak de kat. Ik ben hier geboren en opgegroeid.'

'Oh,' zei Elwin. 'Waarschijnlijk ben ik dan echt in het verkeerde paleis, of jullie zijn allemaal bedriegers, kermis-bedriegers, oplichters.'

'Wat maakt het uit,' sprak de kat. 'Je komt hier toch niet meer weg.'

'Waarom niet ?' vroeg Elwin. 'Wat is dat voor iets belachelijks, een paleis waar je niet meer uit weg kan.'

'Je had hier nooit moeten komen,' sprak de kat.

'Oh, nu begrijp ik het,' zei Elwin boos. 'Jij bent natuurlijk die gokkoning die het altijd maar weer op kinderen heeft gemunt.'

'Natuurlijk niet !' schreeuwde de kat plotseling. 'Ik bedoel als je hier niet bent uitgenodigd dan had je niet moeten komen. We hebben het niet zo op indringers en dieven. Die worden dan ook netjes in de val gelokt.'

'Oh, dus zo zit het !' schreeuwde Elwin woedend terug. 'Meneer de gokkoning mag de droomsteen stelen en het leven van kinderen zuur maken, en zij die daar wat aan willen doen hebben het ineens gedaan ?'

De kat begon te grijnzen. 'Kereltje, waarom zo moeilijk ? Ten eerste zoals ik al zei is er hier geen gokkoning of droomsteen, en ten tweede : Ook al ben je verkeerd ingelicht is dat nog geen goede reden om zo maar ergens in te breken en politie-agent te spelen. Daar zijn andere wegen voor. Je had het op z'n minst kunnen vragen.'

'Dat doe ik nu toch ?' zei Elwin.

'Nee,' zei de kat. 'Je had bijvoorbeeld eerst kunnen bellen of een brief kunnen schrijven.'

'Ja, zeg, doe me een lol,' zei Elwin. 'Ik had jullie telefoonnummer niet, ik wist het adres niet, en naar mijn informatie had ik te maken met zware criminelen, dus die vlieger ging niet op.'

'Je bent een valse beschuldiger !' brulde de kat. 'Daar zijn geen bewijzen voor. Wij zijn eerlijke kermiswerkers.'

'Wat is jouw taak dan ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Simpel,' zei de kat. 'Afrekenen met kermis-dieven zoals jij.'

'Ah, dus jij bent van de kermis-beveiliging ?' zei Elwin. De kat knikte.

'Ik begrijp het,' zei Elwin, die een beetje moedeloos begon te worden. 'Ik heb een fout gemaakt, een grote fout. Ik moest in een ander paleis zijn. Ik heb de verkeerde deur genomen. Hoe kom ik eruit ?'

'Dat had ik je al gezegd,' zei de kat. 'Je komt hier niet meer uit. Vergeet het maar. Dit is je verdiende loon.'

'Maar ik had goede bedoelingen,' sprak Elwin. 'Ik wilde de kinderen helpen, en Kik en Kes, en ik wilde van de kermis weer een veilige plaats maken.'

'Jij beledigt ons beroep,' sprak de kat. 'De kermis is de meest veilige plaats in Ovven, en Kik en Kes zijn leugenkabouters, treiterkabouters, trollen.'

'Okay, okay,' zei Elwin, die wist dat hij niet zomaar van de kat zou afkomen. 'Ik zal het niet meer doen. Laat me er nu alsjeblieft uit. Hoe lang zal ik hiervoor gestraft worden ?'

'Zoals ik al zei,' sprak de kat, 'kom je hier niet meer uit.'

'Dat is misdadig,' sprak Elwin. 'Jullie zijn criminelen.'

'Nu moet je de boel niet gaan omdraaien,' sprak de kat.

'Wat ga je met me doen ?' riep Elwin.

'Dat zul je nog wel zien,' sprak de kat. In grote woede trapte Elwin plotseling de kat van zich weg, en ging snel de ladder af, drukte de ladder terug, en gooide vliegensvlug het luik dicht. Snel trok Elwin het vloertapijt op om te zien of daar misschien ook een luik zat, en ja hoor. Elwin trok vliegensvlug het luik open, terwijl er een ladder uitschoof naar beneden. 'Ik krijg je nog wel, ellendeling !' hoorde hij de kat roepen. Elwin stoorde zich er niet aan, en ging over de ladder naar beneden. Hier was ook een gang. Dat zou de begane grond moeten zijn. Hier moest ergens de keuken zijn met de kokkin. Maar het waren weer veel gangen met allemaal deuren naar gangen, dus Elwin werd al snel duizelig. 'Je komt er toch niet meer uit !' hoorde hij de kat krijsen. Elwin werd helemaal naar van het gekrijs. 'Houd je kop !' riep Elwin. Maar het gekrijs leek alleen maar erger te worden. Elwin stopte zijn vingers in zijn oren en begon te beven. Met zijn voet schoof hij het vloertapijt weg en zag weer een luik. Snel deed hij zijn vingers even uit zijn oren om het luik open te trekken, maar tot zijn grote schrik was daar weer alles donker. Hij hoopte maar dat hij hier geen tweede kat zou tegenkomen. Hij had zijn vingers weer in zijn oren gestopt vanwege het gekrijs, en direct toen hij over de uitgeschoven ladder de diepte was ingegaan werd hij door een hele groep zwarte katten aangevlogen.

'Nee !' jammerde Elwin, die om zich heen begon te slaan en te schoppen. 'Help !' riep hij. De katten beten hem en krabten hem. Elwin werd hoe langer hoe bozer, maar ook banger. Op de grond was alles nat. Er lag hier water en tot zijn grote schrik lag er dichtbij hem een krokodil. Elwin begon door het water te rennen, maar al gauw begon het water dieper te worden. Er stond hier een sterke stroming. Hij hoorde het water bruisen, alsof er ergens een grote waterval dichtbij was. Elwin gilde bijna van angst toen de sterke stroom hem meesleurde. 'Help !' schreeuwde hij, en toen ging hij kopje onder. Wat er toen gebeurde kon hij zich niet meer herinneren, maar hij werd even later wakker in een bed, terwijl een boerin zich over hem heenboog en bezorgd naar hem glimlachtte. 'Je bent veilig hier,' sprak de vrouw. 'Je was op een gevaarlijke plaats.'

'Waar ben ik ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Op de boerderij,' sprak de vrouw.

'Welke boerderij ? Is dit nog steeds het gokpaleis ?' vroeg Elwin.

De vrouw knikte. 'Je ging door een gat heen. Het water zoog je erdoor, en toen kwam je hier. Dit is nog een verdieping lager. Het gebeurt wel vaker. Wij zorgen voor de slachtoffers. Er gebeuren vreemde dingen op de hogere verdiepingen.'

'E... en dit is een boerderij ?' Elwin keek om zich heen, en het leek inderdaad op een boerderij. Elwin begon zijn verhaal te stotteren en kon het niet laten de boerin te vragen of het gokpaleis ook een gokkoning had en een verborgen gehouden droomsteen. De vrouw begon te lachen. 'Dus je hebt

het ook gehoord ?' vroeg ze.

'Ja, van Kik en Kes,' sprak Elwin, 'en van de kokkin in de keuken.'

'Luister goed,' sprak de boerin. 'Ja, het is waar dat er een gokkoning is, en een droomsteen die hij bewaakt, maar daar mag eigenlijk niet over gesproken worden.'

'Zie, dus het is toch waar !' riep Elwin.

'Shhhh !' zei de vrouw hardop, en legde haar vinger op zijn mond. 'Mondje dicht, jongen, want we willen niet in de problemen komen.'

'Okay,' zei Elwin, 'sorry.' De vrouw glimlachtte naar hem. Elwin merkte dat hij droge kleren aanhad. Het was een pyjama. De vrouw had hem goed verzorgd. 'Weet u dan ook waar de droomsteen is ?' vroeg Elwin fluisterend. De vrouw schudde haar hoofd. 'Die wordt veel te goed verborgen gehouden,' sprak ze.

Elwin was erg moe, en viel al snel weer in slaap. Na een hele lange tijd, hij wist niet hoe lang, werd hij wakker. Het leek wel alsof hij verschillende dagen had geslapen, maar hij was ook zo moe geweest. Hij stapte uit bed, en keek rond in de boerderij. Het was een beetje donker, dus hij deed wat lampjes aan. Hij zag de boerin niet. Even later vond hij haar slaapkamer en zag dat ze sliep. Voorzichtig liep Elwin weer terug naar zijn kamer. Over een stoel hingen wat droge kleren die hij kon aantrekken. Nadat hij dat had gedaan ging hij de gang op. De gang was heel lang, en het deed hem denken aan de gangen van de hogere verdiepingen. 'Nee, niet weer,' zuchtte hij. 'Laat ik maar weer teruggaan.' Maar hoe ver hij ook terugliep, hij kon de boerderij niet meer vinden. 'Dat moet ik weer net hebben !' sprak hij luid. Hij begon de boerin te roepen, want angst begon weer over zijn rug te glijden. Alles was doodstil. 'Wat is er, jongen ?' werd er ineens geroepen. Het was de boerin. Na een korte tijd kwam ze eraan lopen, met een glimlach. Ze nam hem bij de hand en samen liepen ze terug naar de boerderij. 'Zij die hier niet wonen verdwalen altijd,' sprak de vrouw glimlachend.

Ze gingen naar de woonkamer, en de vrouw gaf hem wat te eten en te drinken. 'Hier, je zult wel honger hebben,' sprak ze.

'Eigenlijk niet,' zei Elwin. 'Ik weet niet hoe het komt.' In ieder geval nam hij wat te drinken. De vrouw glimlachtte weer naar hem. 'Heeft u ook kinderen ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Nee,' zei de vrouw.

'En een boer ?' vroeg Elwin.

De vrouw schudde haar hoofd. 'Ik woon hier helemaal alleen. Toen ik een kind was won ik eens op de kermis, en toen werd ik hier mee naartoe genomen om als boerin te werken.'

'Dat moet heel eenzaam zijn,' sprak Elwin. De vrouw knikte. 'Wij zijn onder een betovering,' sprak ze. 'De gokkoning gebruikt de droomsteen voor zijn kwade doeleinden.'

'Daarom ben ik hier,' zei Elwin. 'Weet u ook wat onder deze verdieping is ?'

De vrouw schudde haar hoofd. Elwin dacht na. Hij wilde de vrouw graag helpen, maar hij wist niet hoe. Wat hij wel wist is dat de droomsteen zo snel mogelijk terugmoest naar Kik en Kes. Hij wilde het geheim kennen van het gokpaleis en de gokkoning. Hij wist dat het geen optie was om naar de hogere verdieping te gaan, want daar zouden de katten en de krokodillen hem al opwachten. Samen met de boerin wilde hij kijken of er ergens een luik zou zijn onder het vloertapijt op de gang. De boerin knikte, en nam zijn hand, stond op, en liep met hem de gang op. Met zijn voet schoof hij het vloertapijt weg, en zag inderdaad een luik. Samen maakten ze het luik open. Er kwam veel licht doorheen.

Hoofdstuk 2.

Er kwam een narretje door het luik heen naar boven. 'Bedankt,' zuchtte het narretje. 'Ik heb hier zolang opgesloten gezeten. Ik dacht dat ik er nooit meer uit zou komen.' Het mannetje was erg opgelucht. 'Wie bent u ?' vroeg Elwin.

'De naam is Rotenstein, en ik zing graag een refrein,' sprak het mannetje. Elwin keek hem verbaasd aan. 'Wat is daar beneden ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Oh, het is daar verschrikkelijk,' sprak Rotenstein. 'Allemaal krokodillen en katten, en water, veel water, en vaak donker.'

'Maar nu was het licht, en het klinkt wel een beetje als waar ik vandaan kwam,' sprak Elwin.

'Ja, licht, eens in de week ofzo, voor een paar uurtjes, veel licht,' sprak Rotenstein.

'Hoe kwam je daar ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Op de fiets,' zei het mannetje. Elwin was verbaasd. 'Daar ben je zo een keer ingefietst ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Nou, eigenlijk fietste ik gewoon eens een keer naar de kermis, won iets, en toen namen ze me op de fiets hier naartoe,' zei het mannetje.

'Wie waren dat ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Dat kan ik me niet meer herinneren,' sprak het mannetje. 'Het is al zo lang geleden, maar sindsdien moest ik nar zijn, mensen aan het lachen maken, maar dat ging niet echt goed, en toen hebben ze me hieronder gebracht.'

'Maar dat is verschrikkelijk,' zei Elwin. 'Ik denk dat we hier nu allemaal vastzitten.'

'Oh, dus jij kunt ook niet weg ?' zei het mannetje. 'En u, boerin, ook niet ?'

De boerin schudde haar hoofd. 'Allemaal vast,' sprak ze.

'Wat een waardeloze bedoening, zeg,' sprak het narretje. 'Er moet toch iets op te vinden zijn ?'

'Ja,' zei Elwin, 'en er moet hier ook nog ergens een kokkin zijn, die zit in hetzelfde probleem als ons.'

'Nou, mooi is dat,' sprak het narretje. 'Hoeveel meer zouden er hier opgesloten zitten in dit reusachtige paleis ?'

'Ik heb geen idee,' zei Elwin.

'Maar we hebben in ieder geval elkaar,' sprak het mannetje. 'Laten we dichtbij elkaar blijven.'

'Ik wil hem hier niet hebben,' zei de boerin. 'Ik vertrouw hem niet. Hij lijkt op een kermiswerker.'

Elwin keek bedenkelijk. 'Echt niet, mevrouw !' riep het narretje. 'Ik zweer u dat ik nooit zo ben geweest. Ze hebben mij dit pakje aangetrokken en ik moest gek doen om de mensen aan het lachen te maken.'

'Ik vertrouw hem niet, Elwin,' zei de boerin. 'Ik wil weer terug. Ik voel me niet op mijn gemak.' De boerin draaide zich om en liep terug naar de woonkamer. 'Kom je, Elwin ?' zei ze nog, en toen verdween ze door de bocht van de gang. Elwin raakte in paniek, want hij wist dat hij de boerin nodig had om terug te komen in de boerderij. 'Boerin !' riep hij. Hij rende de bocht om, maar zag alleen maar een eindeloos lange gang. Elwin zuchtte, en ging weer terug naar het narretje. Hij hoopte dat de boerin snel weer zou terugkomen, maar dat gebeurde niet. 'Jij gelooft me toch, hè, Elwin ?' vroeg het narretje. Elwin keek het narretje aan en knipperde even met zijn ogen. 'Ik weet het niet, narretje,' sprak Elwin. 'Ik ken je niet lang genoeg om het zeker te weten.' Het narretje keek hem strak in zijn ogen. 'Je gelooft me toch wel, hè, Elwin ? Je gelooft toch niet die praatjes van die gekke, dikke boerin ? Hé Elwin !' zei het narretje die steeds harder begon te praten, en toen zelfs vlak voor Elwin begon te roepen. De rillingen vlogen Elwin over zijn rug. Plotseling haalde het narretje vanuit het niets een knuppel te voorschijn, en sloeg Elwin op zijn hoofd. Na een tijdje werd Elwin wakker. Hij voelde een bult op zijn hoofd, en er was bloed aan zijn hand. Hij lag op het tapijt. Het luik was dicht, en er was geen narretje meer te bekennen. Trillend stond Elwin op, en begon verder te zoeken. Hij riep naar de boerin, maar tevergeefs.

Hij wist dat de gangen hier eindeloos waren. Naar boven wilde hij niet, en ook niet naar beneden. Maar als hij moest kiezen, dan toch liever naar beneden, maar eerst wilde hij wat anders proberen. Hij begon de muren te onderzoeken. Ook begon hij de deurknoppen te onderzoeken. Uiteindelijk begon hij te schreeuwen van ellende. Hij voelde zich bedrogen, en hij was bang. Hij begon geklop te horen op de vloer, en toen ook op het plafond. Het spookte hier verschrikkelijk. Dit was niet zomaar een gokpaleis, maar een spookhuis. 'Wat moeten jullie van me !' riep Elwin.

'Ik kan het niet meer verdragen,' zei Elwin tegen zichzelf. 'Ik kan dit niet lang meer volhouden. Iemand moet me helpen.' Elwin begon op de muren te kloppen, om te zien of er ergens misschien

zwakke plekken waren, maar voor wat ? Na een tijdje was hij zo moedeloos dat hij weer het tapijt wegschoof met zijn voet. Er waren veel luiken onder het tapijt. Hij maakte er eentje jammerend open, niet wetende wat hij dit keer zou aantreffen. Alweer was er licht, en het narretje verscheen weer. Elwin schrok en hysterisch gooide hij het luik weer dicht. 'Dat was op het nippertje,' zuchtte Elwin, terwijl hij beefde van de schrik. 'Ik weet wel waar je bent !' krijste het narretje. 'Ik zal je wel krijgen !' Elwin begon te rennen, maar het narretje bleef krijsen. De boerin had gelijk had, maar hij wist niet of de boerin wel te vertrouwen was, want waar was ze gebleven ? Hij wenste dat hij gewoon dichtbij de boerin was gebleven. Of misschien kon hij wel niemand hier vertrouwen, en was alles één groot bedrog ? Elwin had zijn vingers in zijn oren gestopt terwijl hij bleef rennen. Hij wilde alles van zich afschudden. Alhoewel de gang eindeloos leek bleef hij toch rennen. Hij moest en zou hier doorheen komen. Hij moest een manier zien te vinden om de betovering te verbreken. Hij gooide alle deuren open aan beide kanten, en bleef allemaal gangen zien. Dit moest toch ergens een keer stoppen ?

Hij begreep nu waarom Kik en Kes niet meewilden en hem nog hadden gewaarschuwd. Oh, had hij nu maar naar hen geluisterd, maar eigenlijk wilde hij de moed nog niet opgeven. Iemand moest deze tovenaar een halt toeroepen. Alhoewel hij er aan twijfelde of hij daar wel de juiste persoon voor was. Hij begon te schelden op de vele deuren en de lange gangen, maar niets hielp. Opeens stond er een oude vrouw voor hem met een kaars. 'Geef de moed maar op, jongen,' sprak ze.

'Nooit !' riep Elwin. De vrouw leek op een oude boerin.

'U bent toch niet dezelfde boerin die ik al eerder was tegengekomen toch ?' vroeg Elwin. De vrouw schudde haar hoofd. 'Nee, Elwin, ik ben iets veel ergers.'

Elwin schrok. 'Hoe kent u mijn naam, en hoezo bent u iets veel ergers ?' Plotseling stond de vrouw in de vlammen, en donder en bliksem verscheen boven haar hoofd. 'Ik ben een heks !' krijste ze, terwijl ze geheel in een vuurvlam veranderde, en toen verdween ze. Elwin greep naar zijn hoofd en jammerde. 'Wat is er toch met mij aan de hand. Zijn dit verbeeldingen ? Word ik straks gewoon weer wakker in mijn eigen bed ? Oh, was ik maar thuisgebleven. Ik ook altijd met mijn stomme ideeen.' Elwin begon uit pure wanhoop te springen op de vloer. Plotseling gingen alle deuren voor hem en achter hem open en door elke deur kwam er een clown met een mes uit. Allemaal begonnen ze langzaam op hem af te komen. Elwin aarzelde geen moment, schoof het tapijt met zijn voet opzij, opende vliegensvlug een luik en sprong naar binnen. 'Narretje of geen narretje,' zei hij tegen zichzelf. 'Hierboven moet ik niet meer wezen.' Alles was hier licht, en direct hoorde hij het narretje krijsen, maar hij viel dieper en dieper. 'Kom terug !' schreeuwde het narretje in de verte. Na een tijdje leek het wel alsof Elwin op een grote hoop kussens was gevallen. Alles was zo zacht hier. Hij begon zich direct een weg door de kussens te graven, nog steeds bang voor de clowns en het narretje.

Na een tijdje had hij de bodem bereikt, en baande zich een weg door de kussens heen. Hij begon steeds meer zand onder zijn voeten te voelen, en na een tijdje kwam hij aan in een woestijn. Hij kon zo eindelijk uit de hoop kussens stappen. Het was hier licht, en toch wist hij dat het slechts een verdieping was van het gokpaleis, diep onder de grond.

Er was een oase dichtbij, en verderop in de woestijn was een cafeetje. Elwin liep daar naar binnen,

waar een lange cowboy, en twee kale mannen met een lange baard een spelletje met dobbelstenen deden. De cowboy hief even zijn grote hoed op, en sprak : 'Goedenavond, heer.' Ook de twee kale mannen met de lange baarden knikten naar hem. 'Wat zal het wezen, hoe kan ik je helpen ?' vroeg de lange cowboy met de grote hoed.

'Nou, als het zou kunnen,' zei Elwin, 'dan kunt u mij uitleg geven over waar ik terecht ben gekomen, en waar de gokkoning is en de droomsteen ?'

De cowboy en ook de twee kale mannen trokken hun wenkbrauwen op. 'Wat zeg je me daar ?' snauwde de cowboy. 'Alsof ik jou dat ga vertellen ! Dat is een groot geheim, en daar kun je ook beter niet over beginnen,' terwijl hij zijn twee revolvers trok. 'Ik daag je uit voor een duel !'

'Kalm maar, het is nog maar een kind,' zei één van de kale mannen, terwijl de andere knikte. Nu werd de cowboy pas echt woedend. 'Wat heb ik daar mee te maken ? Hij heeft zijn mond over zulke dingen te houden. Dat is niet goed voor mijn zaken. Straks komt niemand hier nog.'

'Luister,' zei de andere kale man. 'Ben je nu niet een beetje aan het overdrijven ?'

De cowboy trapte de tafel om, terwijl de dobbelstenen over de grond begonnen te rollen. 'Ik daag jullie ook uit voor een duel !' brulde hij. 'Ik kom hier over een uurtje terug, en als ik jullie hier dan nog zie, dan schiet ik een grote barst in jullie !' Toen rende hij scheldend het café uit.

'Die moet even afkoelen,' zei de andere kale man weer. 'En wie ben jij ?'

'Ik ben Elwin,' sprak Elwin, en begon toen zijn hele verhaal te vertellen. De kale mannen keken hem aan in grote verbazing. 'Laten we hier eerst weggaan,' sprak één van de kale mannen, 'anders komt dat heethoofd terug, en dan hebben we goed de poppen aan het dansen.' De andere kale man knikte, en sprak : 'Het is inderdaad nogal een heethoofd.'

'Waar moeten we nu naartoe ?' vroeg Elwin.

'De woestijn in natuurlijk,' zei één van de kale mannen. 'In de oase zal hij ons ook vinden.' En daar gingen ze, dieper de woestijn in. Ze hadden volgens de kale mannen geen andere keuze, en ze hoopten dat ze hem niet hier ergens tegen zouden komen. Er waren hier veel zanderige heuveltjes. 'Vertel me eens,' sprak één van de kale mannen, 'dus jij gelooft echt dat dit slechts een verdieping is van een gokpaleis, en nog wel onder de grond ?'

Elwin knikte. 'Ja,' sprak Elwin. 'Ik heb het zelf gezien, en ik ben er geweest, en kwam toen hier terecht toen ik dieper ging.' De oude kale mannen begonnen te lachen. Ze hadden bijna geen tanden meer. 'Wat een kletspraat,' zei één van hen. Dus als we hier dieper graven dan komen we misschien in een andere verdieping van dat zogenaamde gokpaleis ?' Elwin knikte weer. 'Ja, dat denk ik wel, tenzij dit de onderste verdieping is.' De oude mannen begonnen nog harder te bulderen van het lachen.

'Wees maar voorzichtig,' zei Elwin. 'Straks hoort de boze cowboy ons nog.'

Toen werden de oude mannen met de lange baarden wat stiller. 'Hij heeft gelijk,' zei één van hen. Toen sprak de ander : 'Jongen, kijk nu eens goed om je heen en naar boven. Lijkt dit op een verdieping van een paleis ? Zie je boven je een plafond hangen ?'

Elwin schudde zijn hoofd. 'Nee, maar vergeet niet dat het het gokpaleis is van een tovenaar.'

De oude mannen keken bedenkelijk. 'Hmmm, misschien heeft hij gelijk,' zei één van hen. 'Er gebeuren hier soms inderdaad vreemde dingen.'

'Ja,' zei de ander, 'en als die droomsteen echt bestaat en hier ook ergens ligt, misschien zijn er dan nog veel meer schatten.'

'Wees daar maar niet zo zeker van !' zei een stem opeens. Ze stonden ineens recht voor de lange cowboy en keken in de loop van zijn revolver. 'Ik daag jullie uit voor een duel !' riep hij weer. 'Ik doe dertig passen achteruit, en jullie doen hetzelfde, en dan zal het duel beginnen. Moge de beste winnen.'

De cowboy draaide zich om en begon de dertig passen al te maken. Hij nam lange passen. 'Kom,' fluisterde één van de oude mannen hard, en rende de andere kant op, om zo snel mogelijk uit de buurt van de gevaarlijke cowboy te komen. De anderen volgden hem. 'Graven nu,' zei de oude man luid, 'misschien dat de jongen gelijk heeft. We moeten van die cowboy af zien te komen. Alledrie begonnen ze haastig op dezelfde plek met hun handen te graven, en Elwin hoopte maar dat het een dunne laag zand was. Snel vonden ze een marmeren luik, en begonnen het zand ervan weg te halen zodat het geheel zichtbaar zou worden. Maar de cowboy stond al in de verte naar hen te kijken, en kwam steeds dichterbij. 'Het duel is begonnen !' riep de cowboy, en ze hoorden al schoten. Elwin's hart klopte in zijn keel. 'Sneller, sneller !' riep één van de oude mannen. Maar toen ze het luik wilde opentrekken merkten ze dat er een groot slot opzat. Eén van de oude mannen werd in zijn arm geraakt en schreeuwde van de pijn. 'We zijn verloren !' riep de andere kale man. Elwin begon al weg te rennen, maar ineens riepen de oude mannen hem terug. 'Kom terug, kom terug. Eén van de kogels heeft het slot van het luik opengesloten !' Haastig draaide Elwin zich om, en zag hoe de oude mannen door het luik heengingen. Hij rende naar het luik toe zo hard als hij kon, maar tot zijn grote schrik zag hij toen de cowboy die bij het luik was aangekomen. 'Dat doen we dus niet,' sprak de cowboy, en maakte het luik weer dicht.

'Kom, Elwin !' werd er weer door de oude mannen geroepen, maar Elwin zat in de val. 'Ik kan niet !' riep Elwin. 'De cowboy heeft het luik dichtgegooid, en staat hier voor me !' Toen werd het heel stil. De cowboy kwam dichter en dichter bij Elwin, en Elwin wist dat rennen geen zin meer had. Elwin keek recht in de loop van de revolver die de cowboy op hem gericht hield. 'Er gaat hier niks meer gebeuren,' sprak de cowboy. 'Alleen een klein kogeltje.' Toen begon hij te lachen. 'Zeg je laatste wens maar, doe een optelsom, of zing een versje, dat kan mij niet schelen. Je laatste minuut is geslagen. Ik wacht.'

Elwin begon te beven en te trillen. 'I... ik weet het niet,' zei Elwin.

'Wat weet je niet ?' vroeg de cowboy.

'Wat ik moet zeggen,' zei Elwin.

'Goed,' zei de cowboy, 'dan doen we het zonder …'

Maar verder kon de cowboy niet komen. Eén van de oude mannen had hem van achteren met een grote koekepan op zijn hoofd geslagen. De cowboy zakte in elkaar. 'Kom nu vlug, Elwin,' zeiden de oude mannen. 'Er is een keuken onder de woestijn. Weer gingen ze door het luik, en dit keer samen met Elwin. Toen deden ze het luik achter zich dicht. Ze hoopten nu dat de cowboy hen niet meer zou kunnen kwellen.

Het was een reusachtige ondergrondse keuken waar ze in terecht waren gekomen, maar er was niemand. 'Laten we dit gebouw onderzoeken,' zei één van de oude mannen. Er waren hier overal pannen en potten, en er hingen overal messen en hakbijlen aan de muren. 'Het lijkt wel oorlog,' sprak één van de oude mannen. Ze gingen een deur door, en kwamen toen in een andere zaal. Er stonden een heleboel ovens en fornuizen. Ze gingen toen door een enorme metalen schuifdeur en kwamen in een grote witte eetzaal terecht waar een heleboel tafels stonden. Hier was ook niemand. Ze liepen de hele zaal door en gingen toen door een zijdeurtje, waardoor ze in een grote hal terecht kwamen. Hier was een grote trap naar boven, bekleed met rood fluwelen tapijt, en er was een lift, en nog een kleinere gang en wat deuren.

'De jongen heeft gelijk gehad,' zei één van de oude mannen. 'Waarschijnlijk heeft hij ook gelijk over de droomsteen. Die moet hier dus ergens zijn, of op een andere verdieping. Zijn verhaal klinkt aannemelijk. De andere oude man knikte.

'Die lift ga ik niet in. Dat brengt alleen maar narigheid,' sprak Elwin. Hij liep naar de kleinere gang, en sloeg daar een deur open, maar tot zijn grote schrik zag hij toen een hele lange gang die precies leek op de eindeloze gangen waar hij vandaan was gekomen. Snel gooide hij de deur dicht. 'Hier moeten we ook niet wezen,' beefde hij. Hij liep verder op het kleine gangetje en maakte geen deuren meer open. Aan het einde van het kleine gangetje was een trap naar boven. 'Laten we dit proberen,' sprak hij. De oude mannen volgden hem op de voet. Elwin was blij dat hij twee vrienden had gevonden. Op een hogere verdieping waar de trap naartoe leidde stond een deur open van een kamertje. Elwin en de oude mannen gingen er naar binnen. Elwin keek door het raam en zag allemaal woestijn. 'Hmmm, daar komen we vandaan,' sprak één van de oude mannen. Elwin knikte. 'Laten we nog verder de trap op,' sprak Elwin. Op een verdieping hoger was weer een kamer, en een badkamer. Ook was er een grote hal. Hier stonden allemaal antieke spullen, zoals planeetbollen en oude stoelen. Ook hingen er antieke koninklijke gordijnen. 'Misschien woont de gokkoning hier ?' zei één van de oude mannen.

'Ik hoop het niet, want anders zouden we in grote problemen kunnen zijn,' sprak Elwin.

'Maar dat zou ook betekenen dat we dichter bij de droomsteen zouden kunnen zijn, en dat is toch wat we willen ?' zei de andere oude man. 'Dat is waar,' zei Elwin. Ze keken door een groot raam, en zagen een herfstbos buiten, als een koninklijke tuin. Ze hoorden gebrul in de verte. Even gingen de rillingen door Elwin heen. Hij hoopte echt dat ze dit keer niet in de problemen zouden komen. De oude mannen begonnen de kamer te doorzoeken, terwijl Elwin uit het raam bleef kijken. Het was alsof hij deze plaats ergens van kende. Buiten zag hij een tuinman de bladeren bij elkaar harken.

Opeens stond er een dienstmeisje in de grote deur opening. 'Ah, de gasten zijn er al,' sprak ze opgewekt. 'Hoe kan ik jullie helpen ?'

'Eh, bedankt,' sprak één van de oude mannen. 'Wij komen voor de gokkoning, Hoe laat komt hij ?'

Het dienstmeisje hief haar wenkbrauwen op en begon te lachen. 'Meneer maakt zeker een grapje. Gokkoning ? Daar heb ik nog nooit van gehoord, tenzij u de gokautomaten in de kantine bedoeld.' De oude man kreeg een rood gezicht. Elwin begon haar toen het hele verhaal uit te leggen, maar het dienstmeisje begreep er niet veel van. 'Dat klinkt als een sprookje,' sprak ze. 'Dus als ik het goed begrijp heeft u deze kamer niet gereserveerd ?'

Opeens stond er een dikke man met een sigaar en een gestreept pak in de deur opening. 'Wat moet dit hier !' bulderde hij. 'Jullie komen me niet bekend voor, en hebben geen plaats in dit sjiek hotel. Nu, wegwezen, of ik laat jullie verwijderen met de harde hand. Maak dat je wegkomt nu.'

Maar dat liet Elwin niet op zich zitten. Hij stapte op de man af en gaf hem een stomp in zijn dikke buik. 'Wie heeft jou geleerd om zo tegen ons te praten ? En jullie hebben hier gokautomaten ? Dan moet hier vast en zeker ook de gokkoning ergens zijn en de droomsteen die hij verborgen houdt.'

Ruw greep de man Elwin bij zijn arm, en begon hem door elkaar te rammelen. 'Zeg, wat is dat, ventje ? Er woont hier geen koning, en al helemaal geen gokkoning. Droomstenen komen verder alleen in jouw praatjes voor.' Toen duwde de man Elwin weg. Nu begon Elwin echt kwaad te worden. 'Maar dit is een onderdeel van het gokpaleis !' riep Elwin boos naar de man.

'Ja ja,' lachte de man in het donkere gestreepte pak. Hij had ook een donkere hoed op, en zijn sigaar gleed bijna uit zijn mond. 'En mijn tante is een olifant, en mijn oom draagt driehonderd brillen. Zeg, kom nou, onderdeel van een gokpaleis ? Wie denk je wel niet dat je bent ? Allemaal hazentaal.' Ook de dikke man die de hotelbaas leek te zijn trok een revolver en richtte de loop op Elwin om hem onder schot te houden. 'Daar gaan we weer !' riep één van de oude kale mannen. 'Tegenwoordig wordt er bij het minste of geringste al naar een pistool gegrepen ! Belachelijk !'

'Houd je muil, ouwe,' sprak de dikke hotelbaas. 'En nu allemaal ophoepelen, want mijn pistool jeukt.' De dikke hotelbaas stond daar al rood van woede en begon al lampen kapot te schieten als waarschuwing.

Het dienstmeisje keek geschrokken. 'Weet u dat zeker dat u die dure porseleinen en kristallen antieke lampen kapot wil schieten vanwege een stel belhamels ?' riep ze.

'Ach klets niet, hoela hoep,' zei de hotelbaas. 'Dat laat ik hen allemaal betalen.'

Elwin begon de kamer uit te rennen, en de oude mannen volgden hem. 'En nu betalen voor de lampen !' gilde de hotelbaas. 'Ja !' riep het dienstmeisje. 'Het is jullie schuld !' Elwin rende de trap weer op naar een hogere verdieping. Hier waren een heleboel kamers in een cirkel waar allemaal Chinese meisjes stonden in zijden Chinese pyjama's en jurken. 'Het lijkt wel kerstfeest,' sprak één van de oude mannen. Achter zich hoorden ze schoten. Dat moest de hotelbaas zijn. 'Laten we nog hoger gaan,' zei Elwin luid tegen de oude mannen, en weer rende hij de trap op. Maar op de

volgende verdieping waren de eindeloze gangen weer. 'Hier niet, hier niet !' riep Elwin. Maar ook de hotelbaas was verder de trap opgegaan, met het dienstmeisje achter hem. 'Jullie kunnen me nu niet meer ontkomen !' sprak hij gemeen. 'Hoezo niet ?' vroeg Elwin. 'Kijk eens naar al die gangen hier.' De hotelbaas begon te lachen. 'Het is mijn hotel,' zei de hotelbaas. 'Ik ken de weg. Jullie niet. Verstoppen heeft geen zin.'

'Oh, dus die eindeloze gangen zijn van jou ? Dan moet jij dus wel de gokkoning zijn !' riep Elwin. De hotelbaas kwam steeds dichter bij hem. 'Ren dan, ren,' sprak de hotelbaas. 'Als je wil leven.' De oude mannen begonnen al zo'n eindeloze gang op te rennen. 'Nee, nee, kom terug !' riep Elwin. 'Die gangen zijn eindeloos, daar kom je nooit meer weg !' Maar ze hoorden hem al niet meer, en al snel verdwenen ze in een bocht.

Elwin keek de hotelbaas recht in zijn ogen. Wat waren die ogen gemeen. 'U moet de gokkoning wel zijn,' sprak Elwin. 'Wat gaat u met mijn vrienden doen ?'

'Welke vrienden ?' lachte de hotelbaas. 'Ze bestaan niet meer.'

'Hoe weet u dat ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Omdat ze goed in de val zijn gelopen, die indringers,' sprak de hotelbaas. 'Vooruit, ren dan.'

'Ren zelf,' zei Elwin.

'Ik heb de revolver hier, en het is mijn hotel,' zei de hotelbaas.

'Ik waag me er niet meer aan,' sprak Elwin. De hotelbaas bewoog de loop van de revolver helemaal tegen Elwin's kin aan en drukte er tegen. 'De droomsteen ligt daar ergens. Waarom zou je er niet op afgaan ?' sprak de hotelbaas.

'Ik ben niet gek,' zei Elwin.

'De droomsteen wacht al op je, ventje, nou, komt er nog wat van ?' sprak de hotelbaas.

Opeens werd de hotelbaas van achteren neegeslagen met een koekepan. Het was de cowboy. 'Zo, die had je nog van mij tegoed,' sprak de cowboy. Het dienstmeisje begon gillend weg te rennen. Toen richtte de cowboy zich op Elwin. 'Jij weer, hè ?'

Uit de zak van de hotelbaas die op de grond lag gleed een bos met sleutels. Elwin bedacht zich geen moment en greep de bos met sleutels. 'Nee !' krijste de cowboy. 'Doe die sleutels weg !' Elwin hield de bos sleutels voor de neus van de cowboy. Hij hield ze stevig vast en liet ze daar bungelen. De cowboy zakte slap in elkaar en begon te jammeren en te smeken : 'Ik smeek je, haal die ellendige dingen van me weg. Ik kan er niet tegen, ik kan er niet tegen.' Zijn handen waren slap geworden, en de koekepan en de revolver gleden eruit weg en vielen op de grond. Elwin trapte ze weg met zijn voet. Met zijn andere hand haalde hij de tweede revolver weg van de cowboy, en toen ook een mes. 'Die sleutels zijn van mij nu,' sprak Elwin. 'Nu, maak dat je wegkomt !' De cowboy kruipte één van de eindeloze gangen op en begon toen hard en gillend weg te rennen, totdat hij in een bocht

verdween.

'Ziezo,' zei Elwin, maar toen hij zich omdraaide werd hij onder schot gehouden door het dienstmeisje die één van de revolvers op de grond had gegrepen. 'Terug met die sleutels,' sprak ze streng. 'Op de grond ermee.' Elwin liet van schrik de sleutels vallen. 'Handen omhoog,' sprak ze. Elwin deed zijn handen omhoog. De andere revolver en het mes schopte ze bij hem weg, en bukte toen om de sleutelbos te pakken, terwijl ze hem strak bleef aankijken en onder schot hield.

'Hier ga je zwaar voor betalen,' sprak het dienstmeisje.

'Ik weet het,' zei Elwin. 'Dat was dom van mij.'

'Een beetje heel dom,' zei het dienstmeisje. Langzaam begon de hotelbaas bij te komen. 'Hmmm, goed werk,' zei hij tegen het dienstmeisje. 'Hij is nu van ons. Misschien kunnen we hem goed gebruiken.'

Maar daar zagen ze ineens de cowboy terugkomen vanuit de eindeloze gang die met een enorme snelheid op hen afkwam. Van schrik richtte het dienstmeisje de revolver op de aanstormende cowboy, terwijl Elwin dankbaar van het moment gebruik maakte en de benen nam. Hij ging de trap af naar beneden, en wist dat hij nu zo diep mogelijk weer moest, want boven liep het spoor dood. Hij hoorde de hotelbaas en de cowboy al op elkaar schelden, en ook het gekrijs van het dienstmeisje klonk er doorheen. Ze leken hem helemaal vergeten te zijn. In de hal naast de eetzaal zocht Elwin onder het tapijt naar een luik, maar dat scheen er niet te zijn. Hij liep toen naar de andere kant van de hal naast de eetzaal waar hij een deur opende, maar daar zag hij weer zo'n eindeloze gang. 'Dan de lift maar,' sprak Elwin tegen zichzelf en rende naar de lift. 'Dit zijn probleem-dingen,' mompelde hij. Hij drukte op een gloeiende rode knop voor een verdieping lager toen hij in de lift was.

'Ik ben benieuwd,' zei Elwin tegen zichzelf, terwijl hij rilde. Hij voelde zich niet echt goed. De lift leek maar niet te stoppen. Na een hele lange tijd, en dat leken wel uren te zijn, stopte de lift eindelijk. Maar toen Elwin uitstapte was hij weer op precies dezelfde verdieping als waar hij was ingestapt, namelijk van het hotel, in de hal dichtbij de eetzaal. Toch leek alles net iets anders. Hij stapte uit, en zag tot zijn grote schrik de hotelbaas, de cowboy en het dienstmeisje op hem afkomen. Hij wilde weer de lift instappen, maar de deur zat dicht, en hij kreeg de liftdeur met geen mogelijkheid meer open. Elwin begon op het knopje te rammen. 'Toe nou, ga open, kreng !' riep hij. Toen ineens voelde hij van achter een hand op zijn schouder. Het was de hotelbaas. Elwin kromp ineen toen hij zich omdraaide, en had erge buikpijn. Hij keek naar het dienstmeisje die breed glimlachte. Toen keek hij naar de cowboy die ook breed glimlachte, en de hotelbaas keek heel bezorgd naar hem.

'Ummm, wat is hier aan de hand ?' vroeg Elwin die er niets van begreep. Hij had eerder pistool onder zijn neus verwacht of een klap met een koekepan. 'Niets,' zei de cowboy glimlachend en vriendelijk. 'Helemaal niets. We vroegen ons af hoe het met je ging als onze gast.'

'Tttttt,' zei Elwin. 'Eerst loop je me nog achterna met een pistool en moest ik weg, en werd ik onder schot gehouden, enzovoorts, en nu zijn jullie ineens mijn vrienden ofzo ?' Elwin was heel verbaasd.

Ook de cowboy, het dienstmeisje en de hotelbaas waren heel verbaasd, en keken hem bezorgd en liefdevol aan. 'Maar jongen toch, waar haal je dat toch allemaal vandaan ? Pistolen ? Heb je soms eng gedroomd ?' vroeg de hotelbaas vriendelijk en vol interesse.

'I... ik weet het niet meer,' sprak Elwin, en begon het hele verhaal te vertellen. 'Oh, jij komt van boven,' zei het dienstmeisje met een aardige stem. 'Nu begrijpen wij het. Daarboven is alles omgekeerde wereld. Daar moet je ook niet komen, jongen.'

'Maar die lift dan ?' vroeg Elwin. 'Leidt die dan niet naar boven, want daar kom ik vandaan.'

'Die lift gaat alleen maar door de verdiepingen van het hotel, maar niet hoger,' sprak de cowboy. 'Jij moet van heel hoog zijn gekomen, waar je alleen maar van kan komen, maar nooit naartoe kan gaan.'

'Ik snap het niet,' zei Elwin. 'Ik kan dus nooit meer terug ?'

'Precies,' zei de hotelbaas. 'En gelukkig maar, want daar is alles omgekeerde wereld.'

'Ja maar, Kik en Kes dan ?' vroeg Elwin. 'Zij moeten hun droomsteen terugkrijgen, en er zijn zoveel kinderen door de gokkoning naar die plaats ontvoerd, en die moeten daar werken.'

'Oh,' zei de hotelbaas, 'maak je maar niet ongerust, hoor. Die zullen ook hun weg hier naartoe wel vinden.'

'Ik kan ze toch niet zomaar aan hun lot overlaten ?' vroeg Elwin. 'En waar is die droomsteen dan ?'

'Tja,' zei de cowboy. 'Dat weten we niet, en dat weet niemand, alhoewel sommigen zeggen dat deze verdieping de droomsteen is.'

'En wat is hier onder dan ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Oh, hieronder moet je ook niet wezen,' sprak het dienstmeisje vriendelijk. 'Dit hier is een verdieping uit duizenden. De rest is allemaal omgekeerde wereld. Ook wij vonden ooit onze weg naar deze plaats, en we wilden sindsdien nooit meer weg. Voor ons is dit de droomsteen.'

'Maar ik zou graag over deze plaats willen vertellen aan mijn vrienden, de kokkin, de boerin, de twee oude mannen en Kik en Kes,' sprak Elwin.

'Ze moeten daar zelf achter komen, Elwin,' sprak de cowboy. 'Iedereen moet die reis voor zichzelf maken en de juiste lessen leren en de juiste beslissingen maken.'

'Maar toch wil ik ze helpen,' sprak Elwin.

'Dat kan niet,' zei de cowboy. 'Dat is te gevaarlijk. Je wilt toch niet dat de verkeerde personen deze plaats vinden ? Het is te riskant, en daarom kan niemand ooit nog terug naar waar ze vandaan kwamen. Begrijp je dat ?'

'Ik begrijp het wel,' zei Elwin, 'maar we zitten hier toch niet opgesloten ?'

De cowboy schudde liefdevol zijn hoofd. 'Elwin, Elwin, Elwin. Jongen, het heeft niets met opgesloten te maken, maar met beveiliging. Dat is toch een goede zaak dan ?'

Elwin boog zijn hoofd. 'Maar is er dan niets wat we voor hen kunnen doen ? Helemaal niets ?'

'Helemaal niets,' sprak het dienstmeisje.

Elwin keek haar even aan en boog toen zijn hoofd weer. 'Maar Kik en Kes zullen hier nooit komen. Ze zijn veel te bang voor het gokpaleis. Ik moet ze gaan opzoeken. Ik kan het niet over mijn hart halen om hen in de steek te laten.'

'Goed,' zei de cowboy plotseling. 'Er is één manier om je vrienden te bezoeken, maar dan zullen we allemaal gaan. We zullen jou nooit in de steek laten. Jij bent één van ons.'

Het dienstmeisje en de hotelbaas keken de cowboy verbaasd aan. 'Wat is die manier dan, cowboy ?' vroeg de hotelbaas vriendelijk en vol interesse. 'Oh,' zei de cowboy, 'ik moet gewoon even de lift anders instellen. Ik ben de mechanicus, dus dat komt wel goed. Het is voor mij een koud kunstje. Ik heb ook ooit eens het hele gokpaleis voor de gokkoning gemaakt.'

Elwin keek verbaasd. 'Dus jij hebt dit alles gemaakt ? Wacht eens even. Betekent dat dat er op deze verdieping ook een aardige gokkoning is, net zo aardig als jullie ?'

De hotelbaas begon breed te glimlachen en ook het dienstmeisje. 'Die is nog wel aardiger dan wij allemaal bij elkaar,' lachte de hotelbaas.

'Hmmm,' zei Elwin, 'dus als ik het goed begrijp heeft de cowboy alle andere verdiepingen gemaakt om alles te beveiligen tegen gespuis ?' De anderen knikten. 'Hmmm,' zei Elwin. 'Betekent dat dat de cowboy onaantastbaar is, omdat hij alles gemaakt heeft ?'

'Was dat maar zo,' sprak de cowboy. 'Ik heb alles zo lang geleden gemaakt, en er houdt zich daar zoveel verschrikkelijk tuig op, en alles slaat soms echt op hol.'

Elwin zuchtte. 'We moeten toch echt naar Kik en Kes gaan.'

'Komt voor de bakker,' zei de cowboy. 'Stap allemaal in de lift, dan stel ik hem even bij, en dan kunnen we hoger.'

'Spannend,' zei Elwin.

Toen ze allemaal in de lift waren schroefde de cowboy even een kastje open, draaide even wat hier en daar, en schroefde toen het kastje weer dicht. Toen drukte hij op een rood gloeiende knop, en daar gingen ze. De lift begon na een tijdje zwaar te piepen. Ze keken allemaal even verschrikt, behalve de cowboy, die glimlachtte wat. 'Ach, negeer dat gepiep maar. De lift is er niet aan gewend,

dus die protesteert even, maar als het goed is houdt hij zich zo wel stil, want ik heb hem nu anders ingesteld.'

'Dat hoop ik maar,' sprak Elwin. Het gepiep werd alleen maar erger, zo erg dat Elwin zijn vingers in zijn oren had gestopt. En toen opeens stopte het geluid. Elwin en de anderen haalden opgelucht adem. Toen na een tijdje de liftdeur open ging keken ze recht in een eindeloze gang. 'Daar ga ik dus niet in !' riep Elwin geschrokken.

'Elwin, de maker van de eindeloze gang is hier,' zei de hotelbaas, 'dus we hebben niets te vrezen,' terwijl hij op de cowboy wees. De cowboy glimlachtte een beetje. 'Volg mij,' sprak hij. De cowboy liep de gang op, en de anderen volgden hem. 'Er zit een code in,' sprak de cowboy. 'We nemen eerst de tiende deur aan de linkerkant, en dan in de volgende gang nemen we weer de tiende deur aan de linkerkant, en in de volgende gang doen we precies hetzelfde.'

'Interessant,' zei Elwin, die alweer een beetje hoop kreeg. Ze telden tien deuren aan de linkerkant van de gang, en gingen toen door de tiende deur binnen. Toen telden ze op de volgende gang weer tien deuren aan de linkerkant om door de tiende deur heen te gaan. Daarna telden ze op de volgende gang weer tien deuren aan de linkerkant om door de tiende deur heen te gaan. Zo kwamen ze in een kamer terecht. 'Geweldig !' riep Elwin. 'Dus alleen zij die deze code kennen hebben een kamer in het gokpaleis ?' De cowboy knikte.

'Geniaal, en zo goed tegen dieven !' lachte Elwin.

'Dat dacht je maar,' sprak de cowboy. 'Er zijn genoeg bandieten die deze code kennen, en daarom zit het gokpaleis vol met vagebonden.'

'Had ik die code maar gekend toen ik naar het gokpaleis kwam,' lachte Elwin, 'dan was het allemaal zo erg niet geweest.'

'Er zijn wel meer codes,' sprak de cowboy.

'Dat geloof ik graag,' lachte Elwin, die zich al een stuk opgeluchter voelde.

'Als je drie keer de zevende deur aan de linkerkant neemt, dan vind je daar iemand die verdwaald is in de gangen,' sprak de cowboy.

Elwin rende de kamer uit. Hij kon niet wachten om het uit te proberen, want hij wilde de oude mannen weer zien. Hij wilde ze graag verrassen. Hij rende naar de zevende deur aan de linkerkant, en toen weer naar de zevende deur aan de linkerkant, en toen weer. Tot zijn grote verbazing kwam hij toen op een gang waar de twee oude mannen waren. Ze zaten vermoeid op de grond, en keken verbaasd en verrast op naar Elwin. 'Ik heb ze gevonden !' riep Elwin.

'Eindelijk heb je ons gevonden !' riep één van de oude mannen, en stond op om Elwin te omhelzen. Ook de andere oude man stond op en omhelsde Elwin. 'Daar zijn we blij mee,' sprak hij. 'We dachten dat we hier nooit meer uit zouden komen.' Ook de cowboy, de hotelbaas en de dienstmaagd kwamen, en Elwin begon het hele verhaal te vertellen.

'En hoe komen we uit het gokpaleis ?' vroeg één van de oude mannen.

'Simpel,' sprak de cowboy. 'Neem drie keer de derde deur aan de linkerkant, en je komt op de gang die naar de paleispoort leidt. Kom, ik zal het je laten zien.' De cowboy nam de derde deur aan de linkerkant geteld vanaf de deur waardoor ze op deze gang kwamen. De anderen volgden hem. Toen nam hij weer de derde linker deur, en toen weer. Zo kwamen ze in een grote hal terecht die naar de poort van het paleis leidde, maar er stonden wachten daar.

'Problemen,' sprak de cowboy. 'Ik ken die wachters niet.' Maar de wachten hadden hen al gezien en kwamen met speren op hen af. 'Wat moet dat daar ?' riep een wacht, die snel dichterbij kwam. 'En wie zijn jullie ?' Ze waren met z'n tweeen en ze hadden zware zwarte pakken aan, en hadden vreemde, angstaanjagende helmen op.

'Genoeg praatjes,' sprak de cowboy. 'Ik ben de maker van het gokpaleis.' Hij boog naar de anderen toe en sprak : 'Nu zijn we in de problemen.' Elwin verstijfde van de schrik.

De wachten deden net alsof ze de cowboy niet hoorden. 'Wie zijn jullie ?' vroeg de wacht weer.

'Gaat je niks aan,' sprak de cowboy. 'Ik heb dit gokpaleis gemaakt. Nou, maak dat je wegkomt.'

De wachten begonnen te lachen en elkaar aan te stoten. 'Dat zeggen ze allemaal dat ze het paleis hebben gebouwd.' Plotseling grepen ze de cowboy vast.

'Hey, laat hem los !' riep Elwin.

'Waarom zouden we ?' zei één van de wachten. 'Hij is een onbevoegde, net zoals jullie. Dit is verboden terrein voor onbekenden.'

'Laat maar, Elwin,' sprak de cowboy. 'Ze zullen er nog wel achter komen.' De cowboy werd afgevoerd, en was al snel verdwenen met de twee wachten. 'Laten we dit spookpaleis uitgaan nu het nog kan,' sprak Elwin, en rende toen op de poort af. De anderen renden achter hem aan. Daarna stonden ze allemaal buiten. Elwin blies op zijn vingers op dezelfde manier als Kes eens deed. Niet lang daarna kwam er een grote raaf aanvliegen. Het was Utsmul. 'Fijn dat je er bent, Utsmul !' riep Elwin. 'Breng ons snel naar Kik en Kes !' Elwin en de anderen klommen op de raaf, die direct richting de zee vloog waaraan Kik en Kes woonden. Toen ze daar aankwamen waren Kik en Kes weer aan het dansen rondom een kampvuur. 'Kijk,' zei Kes tegen Kik, 'daar komt Utsmul. Hij heeft Elwin met wat anderen meegenomen.' Kik en Kes waren blij hen te zien. 'Ha, Elwin !' riep Kes, 'wat een verrassing ! We hopen dat je met goed nieuws komt. Heb je de droomsteen inmiddels gevonden ?' Elwin stapte van de vogel af, en ook de anderen. Hij liep op Kik en Kes af en omhelsde hem. Elwin begon direct het hele verhaal te vertellen.

Hoofdstuk 3.

'Dus de droomsteen is een bepaalde verdieping in het gokpaleis, en de cowboy heeft alle andere verdiepingen gemaakt om de droomsteen te beveiligen ?' vroeg Kes. Elwin knikte.

'Hmmm,' zei Kes. 'Dan is dat vast een andere soort droomsteen, want onze droomsteen is gewoon een steen, een flonkerende roze-rode steen,' terwijl hij een plaatje van de steen uit zijn broekzak haalde.

'Er loopt veel gespuis rond in het spookpaleis,' sprak Elwin. 'Misschien houden zij de steen daar wel verborgen. De cowboy had het er ook over dat er veel bandieten zijn daar.'

'Waarom heeft hij het gokpaleis dan gemaakt ?' vroeg Kek. 'Dat klinkt nogal dom.'

'Het gokpaleis zit vol met valstrikken,' sprak Elwin, 'en alles werkt daar door codes. Nu kunnen sommige bandieten misschien wat codes kennen, maar lang niet allemaal. Uiteindelijk zal het gokpaleis dus wel met hen afrekenen.'

'Dat hoop ik maar,' sprak Kes. 'Maar wat kunnen we doen om die arme cowboy te helpen, want het lijkt erop alsof hij in één van zijn eigengemaakte valstrikken is gelopen ?'

'De cowboy zal zich wel redden,' sprak de hotelbaas glimlachend en vol vertrouwen en zekerheid. 'Hij is slim genoeg om er iets voor te vinden. Hij heeft immers alles gemaakt, en waarschijnlijk test hij nu alles uit, en zal die twee vagebonden van wachten flink op hun nummer zetten.' Ook het dienstmeisje knikte glimlachend.

Plotseling zagen ze vanaf de bergen een enorm lange clown komen. Zijn benen bleven gewoon in de bergen staan, en zijn enorm lange lichaam schoof zich naar hen toe. In zijn armen droeg hij de flonkerende roze-rode droomsteen, en de cowboy zat erop. 'Dat is de gokkoning !' riep de hotelbaas, 'de gokkoning van onze droomsteen-verdieping !' De clown zette de steen met de cowboy erop bij hen neer, en stapte toen met zijn lange benen naar hen toe, terwijl zijn benen weer kleiner werden. Hij was als elastiek. 'Hoera !' riepen Kik en Kes toen ze de droomsteen weer terughadden.

'De gokkoning heeft mij van de valse wachten bevrijd,' lachte de cowboy. Elwin maakte een buiging voor de gokkoning, en de clown nam hem in zijn armen en knuffelde hem. Elwin herkende de clown. Heel lang geleden had Elwin eens over deze clown gedroomd, die hem overal mee naar toe nam in zijn armen, en heel snel ging, van plaats naar plaats. Hij kon inderdaad heel lang worden. 'Elwin, dit is nu het geheim van de droomsteen,' sprak de cowboy glimlachend.

Einde

De kleermaker die van tranen kleren maakte

Er was eens een kleermaker die van tranen kleren maakte. De kleren waren zo mooi dat wanneer

iemand ze zag dan barstte zo iemand vaak in snikken uit. Vaak was dat omdat de kleren zo prachtig waren, maar soms was het ook omdat de prachtige kleren voor hen te duur waren. Ja, de kleermaker vroeg er veel voor. Er ging namelijk nogal veel werk inzitten om ze te maken, maar dan waren het ook wel de mooiste kleren die je ooit had gezien.

Op een dag liep een moeder met haar zoon langs de etalage, en beiden barstten ze in snikken uit toen ze de van tranen gemaakte kleren zagen. Oh, ze waren toch zo prachtig, maar toen de jongen het prijskaartje ervoor zag liggen begon hij zelfs nog harder te huilen en zelfs te gillen. Dat zou hij nooit kunnen betalen, en zijn moeder ook niet. Hij zou daar wel dertig jaar voor moeten werken om het te kunnen kopen. 'Ik wil het hebben, moeder,' zei hij.

'Dan moet je nu al beginnen met een krantenwijkje, anders gaat het je nooit tijdens je leven lukken,' zei moeder. Hij jammerde, gilde en schreeuwde zo luid dat de kleermaker naar buiten kwam. Toen hij het verhaal hoorde zei hij : 'Maar je kunt ook bij mij werken.'

Even had de jongen hoop. Maar toen hij een tijdje bij de kleermaker had gewerkt gaf hij het al op. Het was veel te zwaar en moeilijk werk. De tranen waren moeilijk aan elkaar te rijgen. De kleermaker gebruikte daar een speciale techniek voor, maar het wilde de jongen maar niet lukken. Moedeloos ging de jongen terug naar huis en vertelde het zijn moeder.

Op een nacht kreeg de jongen een idee. Hij zou de van tranen gemaakte kleren stelen, want anders kreeg hij ze nooit. Dat ging hij doen. Midden in de nacht ging hij op pad. Iedereen sliep. Ook de kleermaker. Hij had de sleutel van de winkel die hij van de kleermaker had gekregen nooit teruggegeven, dus voor hem was het een koud kunstje de winkel binnen te komen. Daar zag hij de van tranen gemaakte kleren die hij wilde. Heel stilletjes sloop hij ernaar toe. Maar toen hij de kleren wilde aanraken en pakken werd hij ineens gebeten door de poes van de kleermaker. En wie gebeten zou worden door de poes van de kleermaker zou voor altijd huilen. Jammerend ging de jongen de winkel weer uit. Door de pijn van de beet was hij de van tranen gemaakte kleren helemaal vergeten. Ook toen hij thuis was gekomen kon hij niet stoppen met jammeren, en de volgende dag ook niet. Hij was immers gebeten door de poes van de kleermaker. Zijn moeder zei dat hij naar de heks moest. Die kon toveren. De heks woonde helemaal aan de rivier. Daarvoor moesten ze eerst een tijd door het bos lopen. De hele tijd jammerde de jongen. Hij kon niet stoppen.

Ook toen ze bij de heks aankwamen uiteindelijk jammerde de jongen nog steeds. 'Ik zie wat er gebeurd is,' zei de heks. 'Alleen als je de rivier overzwemt zul je van het jammeren afzijn.'

De jongen zag geen andere oplossing, en ging snikkend de rivier in en begon toen te zwemmen. Het was een hele lange zwemtocht over de rivier. De heks had hem verteld dat hij nooit mocht omkijken. Na een hele lange tijd kwam hij snikkend aan land. Hij was wel blij dat hij het gered had. Hij durfde nog steeds niet om te kijken. Hij bleef maar lopen en lopen totdat hij in een dorpje kwam. Het jammeren was inderdaad eindelijk afgelopen. Maar telkens als de mensen vroegen wie hij was en als hij het verhaal vertelde wat er was gebeurd, dan kon hij het snikken niet inhouden. Dan huilde hij bittere tranen, en het deed pijn, zoveel pijn, dat hij het eigenlijk nooit meer wilde vertellen. Hij wilde niet meer terug waar hij vandaan kwam, en ook de heks had hem gezegd dat hij nooit meer mocht omkijken. En zo leefde hij de rest van zijn leven met een geheim waar hij nooit meer over kon praten.

Einde

ANTON, JAAP EN SUSANNE

ZWEMMEN IN DEURSEN

Hoofdstuk 1. Het Grote Avontuur in het Zwembad
Hoofdstuk 2. Het Vreemde Mannetje
Hoofdstuk 3. De Middernachts-Wolf
Hoofdstuk 4. Het Contract

Hoofdstuk 1. Het Grote Avontuur in het Zwembad

Anton reed met Jaap en Susanne door Deursen, op zoek naar een terrasje. Toen ze er een hadden gevonden, parkeerde hij de auto, en zaten al snel aan een tafeltje. Een lange, slanke ober kwam hen bedienen. Ze bestelden ijs. Anton keek omhoog. Ze zaten onder een gezellig dakje met strepen. Al gauw kwam het ijs op een dienblad, met rietjes erin. Alhoewel ze onder een dakje zaten, begon het al snel vochtig te worden. Het begon wat te regenen. Ze namen het ijs en gingen naar binnen. Wat hing er hier een rooklucht. Ze besloten dichtbij de ingang te zitten. Dit was niet normaal. Ze kregen het er benauwd van. Anton maakte een opmerking erover naar de ober. 'Ja, mijnheer, er wordt hier

veel gerookt. Daarvoor hebben we het terras voor de niet-rokers.'

'Maar wat als het regent ?' vroeg Anton. 'U kunt ons toch niet zomaar buiten laten zitten ?'

'Ik kan het niet helpen, mijnheer. Dit is een rook-café. U kunt ook een café uitkiezen waar niet gerookt mag worden,' sprak de ober.

'Ik kan wel een beetje tegen rook, maar dit is niet normaal,' zei Anton. De ober trok zijn schouders op.

Even later waren ze weer in de auto. Jaap zat een liedje te neurien. 'Wat een raar café was dat, zeg,' zei Anton. Susanne had haar walkman op en hoorde niets, en Jaap was diep in gedachten weggezonken. Ze waren op weg naar het zwembad van Deursen. Daar aangekomen kochten ze drie kaartjes en gingen zich snel omkleden. In het zwembad lag er een soort reuzen-olifant van plastic in het water, waar op geklommen kon worden. Vanaf de kant keken Anton, Jaap en Susanne ernaar. 'Wat een ding,' zei Anton. 'Ik ga er niet op.' Toen liepen ze naar een ander bad, waar het wat rustiger was. Het water was warm. Het was er niet te diep. Er was ook nog een buitenzwembad, wat helemaal doorliep tot het bos, en wat overging in een bosrivier die tot een bosmeer leidde. Veel mensen begonnen aan een zwemtocht door het bos, vanuit het zwembad.

Ook Anton, Jaap en Susanne gingen daar even later naartoe. Er was een prachtig uitzicht, en het was niet te koud. Het water had een warme gloed, en al snel zwommen ze naar de rivier. De mensen waren dol-enthousiast. Na lang zwemmen kwamen ze aan in het bosmeer. Er waren hier prachtige oevers waar je kon zonnebaden. Anton keek om zich heen toen hij het bosmeer begon in te zwemmen. Wat waren de mensen hier luidruchtig. Ze keken allemaal omhoog en schreeuwden. Hij kon niet verstaan wat ze schreeuwden. Een man had zijn vinger naar voren gewezen. Toen zag Anton het ook. Grote rookwolken waren in de verte. 'Dat lijkt wel op een bosbrand !' riep Anton. 'Laten we omkeren !' Hij keek om zich heen waar Jaap en Susanne waren, maar hij zag ze niet. Er kwam steeds meer rook. Anton begon het benauwd te krijgen, en probeerde terug te zwemmen, maar hij wist niet meer welke kant hij opmoest. Toen zag hij niets meer.

'Help, help !' riep Anton. 'Jaap en Susanne, waar zijn jullie !'

Overal hoorde hij gegil en gekrijs. 'Er is een vliegtuig neergestort !' hoorde hij iemand roepen. Dat had dan natuurlijk die bosbrand veroorzaakt. 'Kom, kom !' hoorde hij iemand roepen. Hij zwom op het geluid af. 'Allemaal komen !' werd er geroepen. Na een tijdje was hij weer in de rivier, en toen kon hij steeds beter zien. Maar alles leek wel wit. Wat was er met zijn ogen gebeurd ? Het was alsof er een schuim op zijn ogen was, als een waas. 'Jaap, waar ben je ?' riep Anton. Opeens voelde hij handen op zijn schouders. 'Ik ben hier. Gaat het ?' vroeg Jaap.

'Waar is Susanne ?' vroeg Anton.
'Bij mij, achter me,' zei Jaap. 'Laten we terugzwemmen.'
Toen ze bij het zwembad aankwamen waren er allemaal mensen van de EHBO. Sommige zwemmers hadden last van benauwdheid. Sommigen moesten op de kant getrokken worden. Ze hadden geen kracht meer. Anton keek om zich heen of hij nog mensen kon helpen. Hij kon hier weer alles zien. Ook Jaap en Susanne hielpen mee. Ze ontfermden zich over wat huilende kinderen.

De baas van het zwembad was er ook. 'Ik vind dit verschrikkelijk,' zei hij. Hij nodigde iedereen uit om naar een zaaltje binnen het zwembad te komen. Daar zou hij de mensen toespreken. Anton, Jaap en Susanne liepen met hem mee naar het zaaltje. Er waren daar inmiddels veel mensen. De zaal was bijna vol. De baas van het zwembad liep naar de microfoon. 'Zodadelijk krijgt u uw geld terug. Ik vind dit verschrikkelijk,' sprak hij. 'Gelukkig doet de politie en de brandweer er alles aan om de schade minimaal te houden. Het is een ramp, beste mensen, een vliegtuig ramp, en tegelijkertijd een zwembad ramp. Maar wij laten het er niet bij zitten. Er zullen zo wat bussen komen, en u bent allen uitgenodigd om mee te reizen tot de raket-basis om de nieuwste raket te bezichtigen. Ik hoop dat dit de schrik wat zal verzachten.' Er werd geklapt in de zaal. Iedereen kon nu zich aankleden, om zo naar de bussen buiten het zwembad te gaan. Ook Anton, Jaap en Susanne gingen naar de kleedhokjes, en even later zaten ze alledrie in de bus. Ze waren wel benieuwd naar de raket. Ze hadden er al veel over gehoord.

De bus ging door vele weilanden, en kwam toen in een bos aan. Na lang reizen door het bos kwamen ze aan in een zandgebied met veel heides. In de verte was ergens de raket-basis. De bus-chauffeur sprak hen toe. 'Zodadelijk zullen we de raket-basis binnenrijden, en dan zult u aan de rechterkant de basis met de nieuwe raket zien.' Anton keek uit het raam. Toen ze bij de basis waren aangekomen zagen ze de professor die de raket had uitgevonden. Hij liep daar rond in zijn lange witte jas. Hij heette iedereen welkom. Hij zou een rondleiding geven in de raket.

Iedereen moest hem volgen tot de ingang van de raket. De professor had een pijp in zijn mond en een brede glimlach. Je kon zien dat hij erg trots op zijn werk was. Anton, Jaap, Susanne en de andere mensen keken hun ogen uit. Er was zelfs een kleine bioscoop in de raket, in een klein zaaltje. Er werd een film gedraaid in de kleine bioscoop. Er verscheen een hand op het witte doek, en er waren wat aftitelingen. Het was waarschijnlijk al afgelopen.

De professor liep zenuwachtig heen en weer. Niemand wist goed wat er aan de hand was. Hij had een telefoontje in zijn hand, als een soort walkie talkie. Hij knikte maar, en zweet stond op zijn voorhoofd. Toen richtte hij zich tot de mensen. 'Dames en heren, ik vraag u allen rustig te blijven. De bosbrand heeft zich snel verspreid, en ook onze velden branden nu. We zijn totaal omsingeld. Niemand weet hoe dit kan. Misschien door het hete weer, maar ook een oorlog is niet uitgesloten.'

'Een oorlog ?' riep Anton. 'Maar professor, wat loopt u nu allemaal te bazelen ?'

'Als we omsingeld zijn, start de motor dan, professor, waar wacht u nog op ?' riep Susanne.

'Ik wil eruit !' riep iemand.

'Niemand kan er uit,' zei de professor. 'We zijn omsingeld door grote vuurzeeen, maar dit is gelijk de gelegenheid om mijn raket te testen.'

Meer en meer mensen begonnen in paniek te raken, maar ze wisten dat het starten van de raket de enige oplossing zou zijn. De professor liep naar een kleine cabine en begon op de knoppen te drukken.

'Allemachtig,' zei Anton. 'Ik vertrouw dit voor geen cent. Die gek loopt volgens mij gewoon wat te verzinnen om zijn raket te kunnen uitproberen. Een oorlog ? Laat me toch niet lachen.'

'Hij zei niet dat het een oorlog is,' zei Jaap. 'Hij zei alleen dat een oorlog niet uitgesloten is. Zag je dan niet dat hij een telefoontje kreeg ? Er is meer aan de hand.'
Anton rende naar een klein raampje, en begon naar buiten te kijken. 'Mensen !' riep hij. 'Er is helemaal geen vuur ! Deze professor neemt iedereen in de maling.'

'Je bent gek !' riep de baas van het zwembad. 'Hoe durf je zo over de professor te spreken.'

'Kom het zelf dan zien, halve gek !' riep Anton. 'Kijk door dit kleine raampje, en vertelt u mij eens waar het vuur is !'

De baas van het zwembad liep op Anton af, en gluurde door het raampje. 'Je hebt gelijk. Er is helemaal geen vuur,' sprak hij. 'Kom op, mensen, deze raket en deze professor zijn niet pluis. We gaan eruit.' Met grote stappen liep hij af op de uitgang, maar de deuren waren op slot. 'Professor, ik gebied u de deuren te openen !' riep de baas van het zwembad woedend.

'Komt niks van in, toffe jongen !' riep de professor. 'Je zou ons allemaal laten omkomen. De raket is al opgestart, dus ik kan niets meer opendoen.'

'Maar er is helemaal geen vuur buiten !' schreeuwde de baas van het zwembad zo hard als hij kon.

'U gaat mij toch niet in de maling nemen !' riep de professor. Ook andere mensen hadden inmiddels door het raampje gekeken en zagen geen vuur. Ook de professor liep naar het raampje en gluurde naar buiten. 'Verhip, nee, je hebt gelijk. Er is helemaal geen vuur.'

'Doe die raket dan uit, malle man !' riep de baas van het zwembad. 'Wat sta jij hier nog te staan !'

'Mijn excuses,' zei de professor. 'Ik kan de raket niet uitzetten, want dan gaan we er allemaal aan. Hij is al op gang gebracht.'

'Wie heeft jou getelefoneerd met die draken-onzin ?' bulderde de baas van het zwembad. Anton keek naar het gezicht van de man wat helemaal rood was. Hij had nog nooit iemand zo boos gezien.

'Jax Bladerdeeg,' zei de professor. De baas van het zwembad greep een brandweer-bijl van de muur en rende naar de cabine om alles kort en klein te slaan. De professor keek verslagen toe. 'Mijn mooie kunstwerk naar de knoppen !' riep hij. 'Dit zal je duur komen te staan !'

'Maak jij je maar klaar voor een trip naar de gevangenis !' bulderde de baas van het zwembad. 'Aan één ramp hebben we vandaag wel genoeg, circus-clown. En nu mag jij ons vertellen wie die Jax Bladerdeeg wel niet is.'

'Mijn baas,' zei de professor.

Er werd op de deuren van de raket nogal hard geklopt, alsof er met gereedschap op werd geslagen.

Even later werden de deuren ingetrapt, en gewapende mannen renden de raket binnen. Ze droegen geweren. 'Iedereen op de grond, dit is een overval !' Er klonken al wat schoten. Anton, Jaap en Susanne doken op de grond, en ook de andere mensen namen geen enkel risico. Een andere man in een lange witte jas en met een hoed liep de raket binnen. 'Goed werk, jongens,' zei hij. De baas van het zwembad keek op met open mond. 'Wel heb ik ooit,' zei hij. 'Hoe durf jij hier op zo'n smerige manier binnen te komen !' bulderde de baas van het zwembad.

'Snoer hem de mond !' riep de man met de hoed. Tegelijkertijd vlogen twee overvallers op hem af, en begonnen hem vast te binden, om vervolgens een grote prop in zijn mond te duwen. 'Laat me los !' probeerde de baas van het zwembad te schreeuwen, maar er kwam niet veel uit.

'Dit is Jax Bladerdeeg, mijn baas,' sprak de professor.

'Ja, ja, ja, houd nu maar op,' zei de man met de hoed. Anton probeerde voorzichtig naar de zijkant van de raket te kruipen, waar een trap was. Ook wenkte hij Jaap en Susanne. Voorzichtig kropen ze op de trap, maar de overvallers begonnen hen door te krijgen. 'Ren !' riep Anton. Ze stoven de trap op, terwijl ze al schoten hoorden. Bovenaan de trap was een gordijn, waarachter een andere trap was. Die renden ze ook op. 'Jullie kunnen geen kant op !' werd er geroepen. Er waren hier vele trappen, die vaak door een deur of een gordijn van elkaar gescheiden waren, en soms was er een klein gangetje tussenin. 'We vinden jullie wel !' werd er geroepen. Na lang rennen op de trappen kwamen ze aan op een soort zoldertje van de raket. Anton sloeg een raam in en keek naar buiten, maar dat was veel te hoog. Er was ook een ander trappenstelsel waar ze naar beneden konden rennen, zonder dat ze de overvallers zouden tegenkomen. Nu moesten ze snel zijn. Ze hoorden al stemmen dichterbij. Anton sprong bijna van de eerste trap naar beneden af, en ook de anderen volgden hem snel na. Dit was een ander trappenstelsel. Een zware rook rookten ze hier. Ineens kwamen ze de buschauffeur tegen. Die was op eigen houtje de raket gaan onderzoeken, en wist nog niets af van wat er gebeurt was. 'Kom mee !' zei Anton hard fluisterend tegen hem. 'Er is een overval in de raket.' De bus-chauffeur wist een andere uitgang in dit trappenstelsel, en al snel waren ze uit de raket. Buiten de raket was er nog een trappenstelsel waar ze vanaf moesten rennen.

'Naar de bus !' riep Anton. Zo snel als ze konden renden ze de metalen trappen buiten de raket af, en renden naar de bus toe. Ook de overvallers waren al buiten, en begonnen te schieten. In de bus aangekomen startte de bus-chauffeur snel de bus. Direct belde hij de politie door een soort intercom. Ook de bus-maatschappij werd op de hoogte gebracht, terwijl Anton duidelijk uitlegde wat er was gebeurt. 'Zovelen zijn gegijzeld !' riep de bus-chauffeur door de intercom.

De volgende dag stond het in de kranten. Jax Bladerdeeg had weer toegeslagen, een beruchte maffia baas. En de professor scheen voor hem te werken. Het zwembad in Deursen was helemaal afgebrand door criminelen. Jax Bladerdeeg was niet de echte naam van de maffia baas. Niemand wist zijn echte naam, maar hij werd ook wel Achtus Zudelknopfen genoemd.

Hoofdstuk 2. Het Vreemde Mannetje

Een week later zaten Anton, Jaap en Susanne weer op een terrasje. Ze hadden weer ijs besteld, en spraken na over wat er op de raket-basis was gebeurd. Niemand wist waar de gegijzelden waren, want de overvallers ontvoerden hen met de overgebleven bussen. Er werden nog steeds grote

onderzoeken gedaan.

Inmiddels werd er een nieuw zwembad gebouwd en er kwam een nieuwe baas van het zwembad. Anton, Jaap en Susanne hadden het zwemmen niet afgeleerd. Nog steeds gingen ze zo nu en dan zwemmen, en nog steeds zwommen ze dan helemaal tot het bosmeer. Maar op een dag gebeurde er iets vreemds. Een klein mannetje met een lang paarsachtig jasje en een paars mutsje stond op de kant van het bosmeer. Hij had een grijs baardje. Ook had hij een munt in zijn handje. De munt was bijna groter dan zijn hand, en glom. 'Weet je wat dit is ?' vroeg hij.

'Wie bent u eigenlijk, als ik vragen mag ?' vroeg Susanne.

'Gaat je geen snars aan,' zei het mannetje. 'En ik vroeg jou het eerst, dus je mag mij eerst antwoorden. Ik houd er niet van als mijn vragen genegeerd worden, en dat ik dan ineens vragen krijg in plaats van antwoorden.'

'Nee, ik heb geen idee wat u in uw hand houdt. Het lijkt op een munt,' zei Susanne.

'Mis !' schreeuwde het mannetje. 'Ik heb er een hekel aan als men mij verkeerde antwoorden geeft. Houd dan liever helemaal je mond. Je kon gewoon ja of nee antwoorden, want dat is alles wat ik vroeg, of je wist was het was.'

'Nou zeg,' zei Susanne, 'u hoeft er niet zo naar en moeilijk over te doen.'

'Ach, trut, houd nu je mond,' zei het mannetje.

'Dit gesprek is over,' zei Susanne. Maar ze merkte dat ze zich niet meer kon bewegen. Anton en Jaap waren verderop aan het zwemmen. Ze kon hen niet eens meer roepen. Het leek wel alsof haar stem vast zat.

'Ik ben er niet van gediend op zo'n manier toegesproken te worden,' zei het mannetje. 'Dus nu zul je luisteren in plaats van je mondje op zo'n vervelende, genieperige manier te gebruiken. Kom nu het water uit, en volg mij, dan zal ik je wat laten zien.'

Als gehypnotiseerd stapte Susanne het water uit en volgde het mannetje. Het mannetje leidde haar naar een boshutje. 'Hier woon ik,' snauwde het mannetje. 'Ik drink water met azijn, of gewoon slootwater. Ik eet mos en vuil. Ik eet de grond. Ga nu zitten, dan voer ik je wat.'

Susanne ging gehypnotiseerd in het gras zitten. 'Lekkere kevertjes en torretjes, sprinkhanen. Hier, doe je mond open.' Een vieze lepel met beestjes werd voor haar mond geschoven, maar Susanne hield haar mond stijf dicht.

'Ach, ik zie dat je geen honger hebt,' zei het mannetje, en stopte toen de smerige lepel in zijn eigen mond. 'Wat een ondankbaar meisje ben je, kindje. Iemand anders zou het maar wat graag willen eten.'

Susanne begon rood te worden, en bang. Ze kon zich nog steeds niet goed bewegen. Inmiddels

hadden Anton en Jaap door dat Susanne was verdwenen, en gingen op onderzoek uit.

'Weet je wat ik met je ga doen ?' vroeg het mannetje. 'Spek van katten, honden, muizen en ratten, dat ga ik je voeren.' Grote tranen biggelden over de wangen van Susanne, die nog steeds niet kon praten.

'Of heb je daar geen zin in, ondankbaar kind ?' vroeg het mannetje. 'Ik kan je niet uitstaan, verwend nest.' Hij gaf haar een klap in haar gezicht. Nog steeds kon Susanne niet spreken. Haar tong zat helemaal vast. 'Wanneer vertrouw je mij eens,' snauwde het mannetje. Het mannetje begon steeds dwazer en woedender te worden. Hij raasde en schold dat het een lieve lust was. Ineens hoorden Anton en Jaap het woedende mannetje, en renden op het geluid af. 'Wat doe jij hier, Susanne ?' vroeg Anton. Susanne beefde.

'En wie ben jij, mannetje ?' vroeg Anton.

'Gaat je geen snars aan !' snauwde het mannetje kribbig. 'Ik doe dit niet voor jullie.'

'Nou, waar gaat dit nog over, irritante schelm,' zei Anton. 'En waarom ga jij met dit gespuis mee, Susanne ?' vroeg Anton. Jaap was op haar af gelopen. 'Hey, wat is er. Waarom beef je zo, en waarom huil je ?' Maar Susanne kon nog steeds geen woord uitbrengen. En toen was het mannetje weg, zomaar plotseling verdwenen. Susanne barstte in huilen uit. 'Ik kon me niet meer bewegen,' snikte ze. 'Ik kon zelfs niet meer praten,' huilde ze. Jaap sloeg een arm om haar heen. Anton wist niet wat hij zag. 'Waar is dat mannetje nu ?'

'Weg,' zei Jaap.

'Dat kereltje was er net nog,' zei Anton. 'Dat kan toch niet ?'

Jaap haalde zijn schouders op.

'Ik kan dit niet geloven,' zei Anton. 'Er gebeuren hier vreemde dingen. Er is altijd wat in het zwembad. Laten we teruggaan.' Susanne vertelde het verhaal terwijl ze terugliepen, en Anton en Jaap luisterden met open mond.

'Het spookt in Deursen,' zei Anton. 'We zijn hier niet meer veilig. Er is iets aan de hand.' Snel gingen ze naar de kleedhokjes om zich aan te kleden, en al gauw zaten ze in de auto om naar huis te rijden. Anton zat achter het stuur. 'Ik begrijp dit niet,' snauwde hij. 'Waarom moet ons dat altijd overkomen.'

'Nu praat jij ook al als dat mannetje,' zei Susanne een beetje kribbig. 'Daar hoef je ons toch niet de schuld voor te geven, en ons af te snauwen ?'

'Ik geef jullie niet de schuld,' bromde Anton verder. 'Ik ben gewoon moe van dit alles. En je hoeft mij dan ook niet zo kribbig toe te spreken. Ik snauw jullie niet af, maar ik ben gewoon boos op de omstandigheden. Het is niet meer zoals het was in Deursen.'

Bij een grote villa stopten ze. Hier woonde Anton. Jaap woonde naast hem, en Susanne woonde tegenover hen. Anton parkeerde de auto, en toen liepen ze naar Susanne's huis.

'Gaat het alweer een beetje beter met je ?' vroeg Anton bezorgd. Susanne knikte. Ze opende de deur en even later zaten ze in de huiskamer. 'Wat een gekkenwerk is Deursen geworden,' mopperde Anton. 'We zijn ons leven niet eens meer zeker.'

'Ja, en nu ook al een mannetje dat ervoor zorgt dat je je niet meer kan bewegen en niet meer kan praten,' zei Susanne. 'En zomaar ineens was hij verdwenen.'

'Ja, het is raar,' zei Anton. 'Zou het allemaal met elkaar te maken hebben ? De vliegtuigramp, de overval en dat rare mannetje ?'

Ze besloten op onderzoek uit te gaan. Ze wilden het wrak van het vliegtuig weleens zien. Na wat gegeten te hebben gingen ze op pad. Het was al een beetje donker geworden, daarom hadden ze zaklampen meegenomen. Na een tijdje rijden door het bos kwamen ze bij het wrak aan. Het was nogal een groot vliegtuig, en daarom had het ook zo'n grote bosbrand veroorzaakt. Met hun zaklampen schenen ze op het wrak. Alles was afgebrand, maar tot hun verbazing zagen ze een vreemd kistje liggen tussen de afgebrande vliegtuig-stoelen. Anton nam het kistje in zijn armen, en droeg het weg van het wrak. Er was een groot dwars kruis op de deksel. Verder was de kist helemaal zwart. Hij tilde het deksel ietsje op en sloeg het toen direct weer dicht. 'Allemaal licht,' stamelde hij. 'Alle duivels, het spookt hier echt.' Ook Susanne tilde het deksel ietsje op, maar werd toen achteruit geslagen door een wind. 'Wel allebarstens,' gromde Anton. Susanne en Jaap waren ook met verbazing geslagen. 'Allemaal achteruit,' zei Anton. 'Kom niet dichterbij.' Hij pakte een tak die ergens lag, en van een afstand tilde hij het deksel op met de tak. Een spookachtige gestalte rees op van de geopende kist, met zacht licht. 'Allemachtig,' stamelde Anton. 'Wie bent u ?'

'Het is vast een truuk,' zei Susanne.

'Nee,' zei Anton, 'dit is je reinste spokerij. Ben je dat mannetje vergeten wat zomaar verdween ?'

'Wie heeft mij opgeroepen ?' sprak de gestalte met een langzame, lage stem die heel ijzig en ver weg klonk.

'Wie bent u ?' vroeg Anton weer. 'Wij hebben niets opgeroepen. We kwamen alleen naar het neergestorte vliegtuig kijken, en vonden deze kist.'

'Het is mijn kist,' zei de gestalte.

'Wie bent u ?' vroegen ze alledrie.

'Het spook van het uur,' sprak de gestalte. 'Elk uur is er een ander spook.'

'Hebben jullie misschien iets te maken met de vliegtuigramp, de bosbrand, de overval van de raket-basis en een vreemd mannetje dat mensen vastplakt en dan in het niets verdwijnt ?' vroeg Anton.

'Het is een mooie vraag,' zei het spook. 'Wonderschoon, zeer elegant.'

'Antwoord ons nu maar in plaats van je gebazel,' zei Anton een beetje ongeduldig.

'Maak anders gewoon dat je wegkomt,' gromde het spook. 'Ik ben jullie niets verschuldigd. Jullie zijn op mijn terrein.'

'Wij gaan niet weg,' zei Anton. 'Het bos is niet van jou.'

'Maar de kist wel,' sprak het spook beledigd, 'dus nu wegwezen !' En met een strakke en ijskoude wind werden ze alledrie weggeduwd.

'Blijf uit mijn buurt !' schreeuwde het spook. 'Je had dit nooit moeten doen.'

'Wij willen alleen een antwoord !' riep Susanne.

'Wat voor antwoord ?' vroeg het spook.

'Nou, of jullie iets te maken hebben met de vreemde dingen die de laatste tijd in Deursen gebeuren !' riep Susanne.

'Ik weet van niks,' zei het spook. 'Ik zat zolang opgesloten in deze kist, en ik vond het allemaal best, maar nu heb ik het koud. Jullie zijn me ook een stelletje.'

'Als u eerlijk antwoord geeft, dan stoppen we u weer toe in uw kist,' zei Susanne.

'Ik heb nergens iets mee te maken,' sprak het spook.

'Van wie is de kist dan ?' vroeg Susanne.

'Van ons,' zei het spook.

'Maar wie heeft de kist meegenomen in het vliegtuig ?' vroeg Susanne.

'Wij waren besteld …' zei het spook.

'Door wie ?' vroeg Susanne nieuwsgierig.

Het spook wilde niets meer zeggen en trok zich terug in de kist, terwijl hij de deksel greep en op de kist legde. 'Zie, hij kan het zelf,' zei Anton. 'Ze proberen een rad voor ons ogen te dragen. Ik vertrouw ze voor geen cent.'

'Wegwezen !' bulderde het vanuit de kist. 'Of willen jullie nog een zwembad ramp ?'

'Zie, zij waren het,' zei Anton.

'Wat moeten we nu doen ?' vroeg Susanne die al een beetje begon te trillen.

'Waarom hebben jullie zoveel rampen veroorzaakt ?' vroeg Anton. 'Het zou me niks verbazen als jullie nog meer rampen op jullie geweten hebben.'

'Wij zijn rampen-spoken. Men betaalt voor ons,' sprak het spook vanuit de kist.

'Wie betaalde jullie, en hoe gaat die betaling in zijn werk ?' vroeg Susanne.

'Jax Bladerdeeg,' sprak het spook. 'En de betaling gaat door offers.'

'Wat voor offers ?' vroeg Susanne.

'Kinderoffers,' sprak het spook.

'Wat ?' vroeg Susanne. 'Zijn jullie gek geworden ?'

'Wij roosteren en eten kinderen,' sprak het spook. 'Wat is daar zo abnormaal aan ?'

'Ik geloof mijn oren niet,' zei Susanne. 'Weet je wel eens wat je zegt. Luister nu eens goed naar jezelf om te horen wat voor een soort onzin je loopt uit te kramen.'

Ook de anderen waren stomverbaasd.

'We veranderen toch niet voor jullie,' zei het spook. 'We hebben wel andere dingen te doen.'

Anton was een beetje wanhopig. Dit was echt zware misdaad, tenzij het spook hen maar wat zat voor te liegen.

'Moet je horen, spook,' sprak Anton. 'Ik heb een beetje genoeg van je praatjes, maar waar zijn die kinderen dan ?'

'We mesten ze vet ergens diep onder de grond in kooien,' lachte het spook.

'Maar dat kan toch niet !' riep Susanne. 'dat kun je toch niet maken tegenover hun ouders ?'

'Niks mee te maken,' zei het spook. 'En nu opdonderen,' bulderde het spook vanuit de kist. En weer werden ze als door een wind geslagen, maar ditmaal werden ze echt ver weggeslingerd. Verslagen strompelden ze terug naar de auto.

De volgende ochtend waren ze op weg naar het politie-bureau. Maar toen ze hun verhaal brachten werden ze uitgelachen. 'Ach, kom nou,' zei één van de agenten. 'Jullie gaan ons toch niet vertellen dat er hier mannetjes zijn die in het niets verdwijnen, en spoken die rampen veroorzaken en mensen door het bos heen slingeren. Kom eens met een beter verhaal.'

Anton was boos. 'Nou, dan geloven jullie ons toch lekker niet ?'

Boos liep hij het politie-bureau uit, terwijl de andere twee hem volgden. Anton had het helemaal gehad met Deursen.

'Volgens mij is de politie ook al onder invloed van de spoken,' zei Susanne. De broer van de professor van de vlieg-basis was een goede bekende van Anton. Ook hij was een uitvinder. Ze besloten naar hem te gaan om raad. Hij woonde boven een café. 'Oom Aart,' noemde Anton hem altijd. Ook hij was een professor, maar heel anders dan zijn broer. Hij nam hen direct serieus toen ze hem het verhaal vertelden. 'Interessant,' zei oom Aart. 'Weet je, ik vertrouw mijn broer voor geen cent. Het was altijd al een vreemd mannetje. Al van jongs af aan wist hij zoveel van techniek af dat hij al dieren kon laten praten. Ik ben ervan overtuigd dat hij de spook-kist heeft gemaakt.'

Alledrie keken ze oom Aart met open mond aan. Oom Aart liet hen een boekje zien. Het was een boekje met bouw-instructies voor een spook-klok. De spook-klok zou de hele aarde verzwelgen, en alleen hen die goed zouden betalen zouden deel hebben aan de spook-klok om een nieuwe realiteit te creeeren. 'Dit boekje schreef hij toen hij acht jaar was,' zei oom Aart. 'Het is een gevaarlijke jongen, altijd al geweest. Die spookklok moet dus ergens in die kist zitten.'

'Wat kunnen we eraan doen, oom Aart ?' vroeg Anton.

'Nou ja, ik ben niet zo genieus als mijn broer,' zei oom Aart, 'maar laat me eens denken. Even leek het alsof oom Aart pretlichtjes in zijn ogen had. Dat gaf hen alledrie weer wat hoop. 'Ik ken die spoken van mijn broer,' sprak oom Aart. 'Ze waren elk voor een uur, en hij had ze opgewekt uit hout. Het blijkt dat als je hout op een bepaalde manier bewerkt, dan begint het electriciteit af te geven, en daar heeft hij op een hele slimme manier gebruik van gemaakt. Eigenlijk heeft het helemaal niets met spokerij te maken, maar met de werkingen van de natuur. Ik kan me alleen nog herinneren dat hij zei dat de hele spookklok niet zou werken als er wolven in het spel zouden komen. Er zou een middernachts-wolf bestaan die opgeroepen kon worden vanuit een roos. Hij wist precies hoe dat zou moeten, maar het boekje wat hij daarover had geschreven heeft hij in vuur geworpen. Hij was te bang dat iemand het ooit eens zou gebruiken. De middernachts-wolf zou korte metten met zijn spookklok maken. Ik denk dat hij de spookkist heeft gemaakt voor extra veiligheid.'

Hoofdstuk 3. De Middernachts-Wolf

'Ik zal jullie een geheimpje vertellen,' sprak oom Aart. 'Ik ben de middernachts-wolf. Elke nacht om twaalf uur precies verander ik in een wolf.'

Anton keek oom Aart met grote ogen aan. 'En kunt u wat aan die spookklok doen, en misschien ervoor zorgen dat dit maffia mysterie wordt opgelost ?' Oom Aart knikte.

'De roos gaat het mij vertellen,' zei oom Aart.

'Wie of wat is de roos, oom Aart ?' vroeg Susanne.

'Een fee,' zei oom Aart. 'Zij raakt mij altijd aan in het midden van de nacht met haar toverstaf, en dan wordt ik een wolf.'

'Nog steeds ?' vroeg Susanne.

'Nee,' zei oom Aart, 'niet meer. Toen ik jong was, maar ik weet nog precies waar ze woont. Ze woont diep in het bos. Alleen om twaalf uur 's nachts zou ik naar haar toe kunnen gaan, maar niet ervoor of erna, want dan zou ze me verslinden.'

'Klinkt gevaarlijk,' zei Anton.

'Ze is een monster,' zei oom Aart, 'maar we hebben haar nodig.'

Toen het bijna nacht was besloten ze naar het bos te gaan. Ze gingen heel diep. Ze kwamen aan bij een diepliggende rivier. Er was een brug van touwen over de rivier. Het was hier bijna een oerwoud. Zo wild hadden ze het nog niet gezien. 'Daar achter de brug woont ze,' sprak oom Aart. Ze hadden er wel vertrouwen in. Oom Aart was een kundig en bezonnen man. Het was bijna twaalf uur. Oom Aart ging als eerste de brug op. De brug wiebelde een beetje, en het stormde. Ook begon het te onweren. Er was donder en toen veel bliksem. Het leek wel alsof de donkere lucht in tweeen begon te splijten. 'Wie heeft mij geroepen !' sprak een suizende stem.

'Ik, tante !' riep oom Aart met een bevende stem. Een lichtende gestalte kwam dichterbij op de brug. 'Volg mij,' sprak ze met een harde, fluisterende stem. Het was nu twaalf uur. Ze volgden haar naar een klein huisje. Er was dichte begroeiing hier. In het huisje gingen ze aan een tafeltje zitten. De fee schonk wat te drinken in. Even raakte ze oom Aart met haar toverstaf aan, en die begon direct in een wolf te veranderen. Wel had hij nog steeds zijn zwarte jas aan.

Anton vertelde de fee het hele verhaal, ook over de kinderoffers die aan de spoken gebracht zouden moeten worden, en dat de kinderen hiervoor diep in de aarde opgesloten werden gehouden.

'Ach welnee,' zei de fee. 'Dat zijn gewoon spookkinderen. En die zijn niet opgesloten. Ze maken jullie maar wat wijs.' Wel zag ze het gevaar van de spookklok in, en wist ze dat het veel rampen bracht, en dat er nog steeds mensen in handen van de maffia waren.

'Ik heb een goed idee,' sprak ze. Ze nam hen mee naar buiten, en leidde hen naar een bootje aan de rand van de rivier. Voorzichtig stapte ze in het bootje, en wenkte de anderen. Even later waren ze allemaal in het bootje, en ze begon te peddelen. Er hing een dikke mist over de rivier, maar ze konden de zijkanten van de rivier nog wel een beetje zien.

'Ik weet waar mensen opgesloten worden gehouden,' sprak ze. 'Onder het zwembad. De nieuwe baas van het zwembad is ook van de maffia.' De wolf begon te grommen. Wat had hij zin om te rennen en te bijten. Zijn ogen waren rood van woede. Het bootje ging richting het zwembad. Eerst kwamen ze bij het meertje aan, en toen gingen ze over de rivier achter het meertje naar het zwembad. Bij het zwembad aangekomen stapten ze uit.

'Dit is toch niet normaal meer,' zei Anton. 'Het lijkt wel alsof iedereen tegenwoordig van de maffia is.' De wolf gromde. Hij leek in de verste verten niet meer op oom Aart. 'Goedzo jongen,' sprak de fee. 'Je hebt zo heel wat te bijten.' Als eerste moest de wolf het slot van het zwembad doorbijten.

Direct hoorden ze een alarm. De fee trapte verder de deur in, en al snel gingen ze over een trap naar beneden. Daar kwamen ze bij een lift. Met de lift gingen ze nog dieper onder de grond. Het leek wel uren te duren. Toen ineens ging de liftdeur open, en ze keken in een enorme grot. Daar stonden de kooien met de mensen erin die ontvoerd waren op de raket-basis. De wolf rende op de kooien af en begon de sloten los te kauwen en te bijten. Maar alweer hoorden ze alarms. Bewakers kwamen op hen afrennen en er ontstond een vuur gevecht. De fee kon nog net op tijd bescherming bieden. De wolf bleek immuun te zijn voor de kogels en vloog op de bewakers af, één voor één. De bewakers schreeuwden. Ze konden niet veel tegen de wolf beginnen.

'Als ik het niet dacht,' zei de fee, en wees omhoog waar een grote spook-klok hing in de grot. 'Spring, wolf !' riep ze. De wolf maakte een reuzensprong en greep de klok met zijn bek. De klok had vele spook-armen, die allemaal door de wolf werden gebeten.

'We moeten weg,' zei de fee. 'De betovering is bijna uitgewerkt.' Allemaal renden ze snel naar de lift, maar de lift ging niet open. De spookklok begon te lachen.

De wolf begon inmiddels weer te veranderen in oom Aart. De spookklok lachte heel gemeen, en met vele armen werd oom Aart gegrepen. 'Verslinden zullen we je,' lachte de spookklok.

'Oh nee,' zei de fee, 'dat gaat zomaar niet. Jullie vergeten dat ik er bij ben.'

'Jou zullen we ook verslinden, ouwe heks !' gierde de spook-klok. Met vele armen grepen ze haar ook. De fee begon te gillen. Anton, Jaap en Susanne stonden nog steeds met de bevrijde gegijzelden voor de lift. Anton drukte op de knopjes. 'Ga dan open, kreng,' fluisterde hij hard.

De armen van de spookklok begonnen flink te groeien en grepen wild om hen heen. Ook begon de klok sneller te draaien, als een tornado of draaikolk. Alles sleurden ze met zich mee. 'We gaan jullie vernietigen !' brulden ze.

Ook Jaap begon op de knoppen van de lift te slaan, maar de deur ging maar niet open. 'We zitten hier vast,' fluisterde hij hard.

'We zijn er geweest, Jaap,' zei Anton. De oude baas van het zwembad was woedend toen hij de spookklok zo zag razen. Hij was helemaal rood, en stond op ontploffen. Hij raapte stenen van de grond en begon naar de spookklok te gooien. Maar niets hielp. De spookklok werd razender en razender en kwam langzaam op hen af. 'We zijn er geweest,' zei Anton weer. Susanne had haar ogen stijf dichtgetrokken. Ze kon het niet meer aanzien.

Mensen begonnen tegen de liftdeur aan te trappen. De oude baas van het zwembad nam een aanloop en trapte de liftdeur open. Iedereen begon zich op te hopen in de lift, en toen iedereen binnen was drukte de oude baas van het zwembad de knoppen in om de lift omhoog te laten gaan. De spook-klok had inmiddels in woede de omhooggaande lift van onderen gegrepen met zijn vele armen, en probeerde zich naar binnen te wringen. De mensen krijsten. Het was gelukkig een hele grote, ruime lift, dus ze konden er allemaal in, maar de spookklok gaf zich niet gewonnen. Mensen begonnen op de binnengekomen armen te trappen. Het was een lange reis naar boven. Het leek wel alsof de lift nooit zou aankomen. Maar toen de lift was gestopt was het niet het zwembad waar ze naar binnen

gingen. Neen. Iemand speelde een spelletje met hen. Het leek wel alsof ze zelfs dieper waren gegaan. Ze waren diep onder de aarde. Het leek wel een spooklift.

'Dit zwembad is niet pluis,' zei Anton. Allemaal stapten ze naar buiten. Het was hier donker, en op sommige plaatsen was vuur. 'We zijn hier diep onder de aarde,' zei Anton. Alles was rustig nu. De spookklok was nergens te bekennen. 'We mogen nog van geluk spreken dat we nog leven,' zei Susanne.

'Laten we rustig blijven, mensen,' zei de oude baas van het zwembad. 'We vinden wel een oplossing.' Sommige mensen waren aan het beven en trillen. De oude baas van het zwembad liep richting de vuren, waar het lichter was. De mensen volgden hem. Tussen de vuren waren wat metalen bruggen. Die bruggen gingen over lava heen. Verderop waren er veel meer lava-rivieren. Er stonden hier grote ketels met lava erin. De mensen vroegen zich af waar ze terecht waren gekomen.

Ze gingen over een heleboel metalen bruggetjes, en kwamen toen in een ruimte waar een heleboel kisten stonden. Anton keek even in zo'n kist. Er zat een levensgrote pop in. Verderop hingen een heleboel van zulke poppen aan haken. De poppen konden bewegen en konden ook zachtjes praten. 'Wat is hier aan de hand ?' zei Anton. 'Het zijn levende poppen, net als mensen.'

'Wie zijn jullie ?' vroeg Anton aan de poppen.

'Wij zijn robotten,' zei één van de poppen. 'Wij zijn gemaakt om te werken voor de maffia.'

Opeens sprong het vreemde mannetje dat Susanne had lastiggevallen tevoorschijn. Anton kon zich direct niet meer bewegen en niet meer praten. 'Ik dacht jij zou ook vast wel zo'n mooie pop willen zijn,' grapte het mannetje. Toen Susanne het mannetje zag slaakte ze een kreet. 'Jullie zijn gekomen waar ik jullie wilde hebben !' krijste het mannetje schaterlachend. 'Jullie zullen snel allemaal mooie poppen worden zoals deze.' Ook Susanne kon zich niet meer bewegen. Jaap kon nog net op tijd wegrennen, en ook wat andere mensen. 'Ze zullen niet ver komen,' bromde het mannetje lacherig.

'Stop, stop !' riep het mannetje, bijna met een mechanische stem. Toen konden ineens de anderen zich ook niet meer bewegen. 'Poppen zullen jullie worden. Poppen zullen jullie zijn,' schaterde het mannetje. Sommige poppen begonnen te giechelen. 'Ja, poppen, jullie krijgen er wat nieuwe broertjes en zusjes bij.'

'Dank u wel,' zeiden sommige poppen. Sommige van die poppen praatten erg traag. Het mannetje begon om zijn gegijzelden heen te dansen, en werd steeds zotter. Ook begon hij hen met een staf te slaan. 'Ik zal jullie temmen !' riep hij. De staf leek onder stroom te staan. Eén voor één begon het mannetje zijn nieuwe aanwinsten naar de kisten te sleuren. 'Allemaal poppetjes, één voor één,' zong het mannetje. En toen begon hij nog meer vreemde liedjes en rijmpjes te zingen. 'Poppetje, poppetje, wat een pret, en we gaan nog niet naar bed.'

'Oh, moeder, wat zijn je poppetjes schoon. Morgen zit ik op de troon.'

'Ach vadertje kijk niet zo sip, ik maak poppetjes voor jou in een wip.'

'Ik zal ze, die vervelende krengen !' riep het mannetje, en begon toen te schaterlachen. 'Niemand die hen hier vinden kan, ha ha ha. Oh, wat ben ik toch duivels slim.'

Maar toen het weer middernacht was veranderde de door de spookklok opgeslokte oom Aart weer in een wolf. Ook de fee kwam vrij. Ze stormden op de spooklift af, en gingen de diepte in. 'Ik weet waar ze zijn,' sprak de fee, 'ik voel het.' Toen de lift stopte, renden ze er beiden uit. De wolf ging recht op zijn doel af. Hij dook op het mannetje af en beet het kapot als een pop. Direct kon iedereen zich weer bewegen en praten, en konden ze uit hun kisten komen. Ook de andere poppen begonnen weer mens te worden.

Anton was woedend, maar tegelijkertijd opgelucht. Hij nam Jaap en Susanne in zijn armen. Snel renden ze met z'n allen de lift in, maar er waren zoveel poppen weer tot mens geworden, dat ze er niet allemaal inpasten.

De volgende dag zaten Anton, Jaap en Susanne weer op een terrasje. Alles was goedgekomen. In Deursen was een groot feest, omdat zoveel vermisten waren teruggevonden.

Jax en zijn bende waren opgepakt. Zij gingen de gevangenis in voor hun streken. De oude baas van het zwembad werd weer de baas over het nieuwe zwembad, en zo leek alles weer wat rustiger te worden. Ook de broer van oom Aart, de professor van de raket-basis, was opgepakt en kreeg gevangenis-straf. Oom Aart kon er niet om rouwen. Hij vond het altijd al een belhamel die hij liever achter de tralies zou zien. In zijn ogen was het altijd al een groot gevaarte met veel te veel vrijheid. Niemand wist waar de spookklok was. Maar op een dag tijdens een boswandeling kregen Anton, Jaap en Susanne de schrik van hun leven. De spookklok met zijn vele armen stond ineens voor hen, en begon hen te grijpen. De grond onder hen begon weg te vallen, en zo werden ze de diepte in getrokken. 'Zo snel komen jullie niet van me af !' snauwde de spookklok. De spookklok begon aan hun haren te trekken. 'Wat wil je van ons !' riep Anton.

'Dat zul je nog wel eens zien,' sprak de spookklok.

'Waar breng je ons naartoe ?' riep Anton.

'Niet zoveel vragen stellen,' sprak de spookklok.

Hij sleurde ze alle drie door een diepe tunnel dieper de grond in. Na een tijdje kwamen ze in een grote ondergrondse wildernis. Anton, Jaap en Susanne keken hun ogen uit. 'Maar dat kan toch helemaal niet ?' stamelde Anton. 'Hoe kan er nu een wildernis onder de grond zijn ?'

'Je ziet het toch dat het kan !' snauwde de spookklok. De spookklok begon hen toen door de wildernis te sleuren, totdat ze bij een groot kasteel aankwamen. 'De heks wil jullie zien ?' zei de spookklok. 'Het is bijna middernacht.'

'De heks ?' vroeg Anton. 'Wie is dat ?'

'Dat zul je wel zien,' sprak de spookklok. Hij trok ze alle drie naar binnen, en ze zagen een grote

troon in de verte. Toen sleurde hij ze helemaal voor de troon. Op de troon zat een vrouw in een witte jurk met grijze haren. Achter haar was een grote rode schijf waar ze tegenaan leunde. 'Zo, eindelijk zijn jullie gekomen,' sprak de vrouw.

'Wat wilt u van ons ?' vroeg Anton een beetje kribbig.

'Jongen, daar hoef je niet zo ellendig over te doen. Ik strijdt al tijden voor de wildernis onder de grond, want boven de grond is allemaal vervuiling,' sprak de vrouw.

'Heeft u soms die vliegramp en al die verdere rampen veroorzaakt, sinds het er op lijkt dat mijnheer de spookklok en u dikke vrienden zijn, en hij voor u werkt,' vroeg Anton.

'Oh, de spookramp ? Nee, die heb ik niet veroorzaakt,' sprak de vrouw.

Opeens konden ze zich niet meer bewegen, en praten was ook onmogelijk geworden, terwijl de heks begon te schaterlachen. 'Leidt hen tot de kooien, spookklok, wij kunnen ze nog goed gebruiken !' krijste ze. De spookklok nam hen mee in een ruk, en ging een gang op die leidde naar een ruimte met kooien. Hij drukte ze allemaal in één kooi.

Nog steeds konden ze niet praten, hoeveel ze dat ook probeerden, en ze konden zich niet bewegen. Ze lagen als slappe lappenpoppen op de grond. Deze heks was erg gevaarlijk. Na een tijdje kwam de heks de kooi bezoeken, en grijnste. 'Wel, wel, wie hebben we daar,' zei de heks met een hoge, krijsende stem die pijn deed aan hun oren. 'Ik kan jullie wel gebruiken als gevechts-poppen. Dan gaan jullie aan het front. Levende schilden zullen jullie zijn !'

'Kijk me eens aan. Jullie zullen onder mijn hypnose zijn. Jullie zullen alleen denken en doen wat ik jullie gebiedt, begrepen ?'

'Ja,' zeiden ze alle drie traag.

'Ja, koningin moet dat zijn !' kraste ze.

'Ja, koningin,' zeiden ze alle drie traag. Ze nam Anton en Susanne's handen in haar handen, terwijl er een vreemde kracht door hen stroomde. En toen even later pakte ze de hand van Jaap. Alle drie begonnen ze een beetje waggelend op hun benen te staan. Anton trilde. 'Ja, heks,' sprak hij.

'Goedzo, jongen, je begint het al te leren,' kraste ze. 'Marcheer voor me. Kom achter me aan.' De heks liep de gang op en ging een andere gang in, terwijl Anton, Jaap en Susanne haar gehypnotiseerd volgden.

Op een tafeltje stond een glas met een glazen pot met water. 'Breng me wat water,' snauwde ze naar Anton. Anton liep gehypnotiseerd naar de tafel, en schonk water in het glas, en bracht het toen naar de heks, die er direct gulzig van begon te drinken. Aan de muur hingen wapens. Ze wees op de wapens en sprak : 'Die wapens zullen jullie gebruiken.'

Ze nam de wapens van de muur en begon ze uit te delen. 'Op het front zullen jullie vechten. De

ondergrondse wildernis wordt aangevreten door vliegende reuzen-kevers, met grote, logge lichamen en piepkleine hoofdjes. Jullie zullen wachters op mijn toren worden, en niet alleen mijn kasteel verdedigen, maar ook ten aanval gaan,' sprak de heks. Anton, Jaap en Susanne keken naar hun geweren. Toen keken ze weer naar de heks. 'Begrepen, heks,' zei Anton. Toen leidde de heks hen naar de toren van het kasteel. Ze moesten een heleboel trappen op, en kwamen toen buiten op de toren, vanwaar ze een uitzicht hadden over de wildernis. 'Schiet, schiet !' schreeuwde de heks. 'Als je goed kijkt kun je de reuzen-kevers al zien. En inderdaad vlogen er al snel heel wat vliegende reuzen-kevers om hen heen, en ze moesten vechten voor hun leven. Ook de heks vocht mee met haar toverkrachten. Ze begonnen een beetje in de gaten te krijgen wat er aan de hand was. Deze reuzen-kevers waren inderdaad verschrikkelijk, en al gauw waren ze trots en tevreden met hun taak.

'Goed voor nu,' sprak de heks na een tijdje, en ze moesten de toren weer in. Ze hadden een paar bijtwonden van de kevers, maar verder hadden ze goed gevochten.

'Ik heb jullie hier gebracht door rampen,' sprak de heks. Ze nam hen mee naar een eetzaal, waar hen de meest overheerlijke gerechten werden gebracht op een lange tafel, door een heleboel koks in wit gekleed met hoge witte mutsen. 'Eet, liefjes, dan zijn jullie straks weer klaar voor het gevecht.' Alle drie begonnen ze te eten totdat hun buiken vol waren. 'Pfff... ik kan niet meer,' zei Anton.

'Ik heb veel te veel gegeten,' zuchtte Susanne.

Ergens op een hogere verdieping in het kasteel kregen ze een kamer waar ze konden uitrusten. De hypnose begon een beetje uit te werken, want het was slechts het kasteel van een middernachts-heks, die alleen veel macht hebben in het diepste van de nacht. 'Dat mens is gek,' zei Anton ineens. 'Ik voel me weer normaal. Het lijkt wel alsof de betovering is verbroken. Laten we kijken wat er aan de hand is.'

Stilletjes liepen ze de kamer uit, en gingen over de trappen naar beneden. Ze verscholen zich achter een grote plant in een grote bak, en keken zo de troonzaal in. Ze zagen haar op haar troon zitten. Ze bewoog niet, maar trilde een beetje. 'Laten we ontsnappen nu het kan,' zei Susanne. Stilletjes liepen ze naar de poort van het kasteel, en renden toen de wildernis in. Maar de spookklok kwam achter hen aan. Hij krijste, en leek veel groter. 'Klim in een boom !' riep Anton. Snel klommen ze in een hoge boom, maar de spookklok klom er ook in. Met zijn vele armen kon hij goed klimmen. 'We zijn er geweest,' riep Anton.

'Nee !' riep Susanne, 'hier is een liaan. Houd vast.' Met z'n drieen hielden ze zich stevig vast aan de liaan, en zwiepten de wildernis in. De liaan ging helemaal over een rivier heen, en ze kwamen aan de andere kant terecht. Ze hoorden de spookklok brullen in de verte. Na lang rennen hoorden ze niets meer. Over heuveltjes kwamen ze steeds hogerop, totdat ze eindelijk door een gat boven de grond in het bos uitkwamen. Vermoeid, maar opgelucht slenterden ze naar huis. Thuisgekomen gingen ze direct slapen.

De volgende dag, ergens in de middag, werden ze wakker.

Hoofdstuk 4. Het Contract

'Deursen is een spookstad geworden,' gromde Anton.
'De spookklok zal ons overal vinden, volgens mij heeft het niks met Deursen te maken,' sprak Susanne.
'Nee, deze dingen gebeuren alleen in Deursen,' zei Anton.
'We moeten weg,' zei Jaap. 'We zijn hier niet veilig.'

'Zeg, ik laat me niet wegjagen door een stuk speelgoed !' snauwde Anton.
'Het is geen speelgoed,' zei Jaap. 'Dat weet je best. Het is gevaarlijke militaire techniek.'
'Jaap, nu moet je ophouden,' sprak Anton geirriteerd. 'Ik probeer mijn hoofd erbij te houden. We moeten het niet groter maken dan het is. We kunnen best dit mysterie oplossen.'

Ze besloten naar oom Aart te gaan, om hem te vertellen wat er gebeurd was. Oom Aart wilde naar de gevangenis gaan om zijn broer op te zoeken, om die om raad te vragen. 'Kunnen we die broer van u wel vertrouwen ?' vroeg Anton.

'We hebben niet veel keuze,' zei oom Aart. Zo gezegd zo gedaan. In de auto van oom Aart reden ze even later richting de gevangenis. Gauw zaten ze om de tafel met de broer van oom Aart. Ook de professor van de vlieg-basis, de broer van oom Aart die nu opgesloten was, kreeg het verhaal over wat de spookklok had gedaan te horen. 'Ik kan het niet helpen. Het is de natuur aan het werk,' zei de professor.

'Toe nou, broer,' zei oom Aart. 'Je weet vast wel wat te bedenken.'

'Ik heb de uiteindelijke spookklok niet gemaakt,' zei de professor. 'Ik heb de spoken uit hout opgewekt, en veel over de spookklok geschreven. Ik was er mee bezig, maar heb later het werk overgedragen aan Leo. Leo heeft het eindproduct gemaakt.'

'Wie is Leo ?' vroeg Anton.

'Leo is een zakenman,' zei oom Aart. 'Hij kwam vroeger veel bij ons thuis, en was een vriend van ons beiden, maar hij was een gevaarlijke jongen. Hij deugde niet.'

'Waarom deugde hij niet ?' vroeg Anton.

'Het was een misdadiger,' zei oom Aart.

'Voor veel geld kocht hij het project van mij over,' zei de professor. 'En hij was de uiteindelijke oprichter van de spookklok. Jullie moeten bij hem zijn als jullie meer willen weten.'

'Waar woont hij tegenwoordig ?' vroeg oom Aart. De professor krabbelde wat op een papiertje en gaf het aan oom Aart. 'Hier, ga daar maar eens kijken.'

'Kom op, jongens,' zei oom Aart, en liep het zaaltje uit. Even later zaten ze in de auto.

Leo had een groot laboratorium voor ziekenhuis-producten. Ze kwamen aan bij een groot gebouw waar oom Aart de auto parkeerde.

Even later kwamen ze aan in het kantoor van Leo. Leo zat achter een wit bureau. 'Nu moet jij eens horen, Leo. Ik hoorde van mijn broer dat jij het spookklok project van hem had overgekocht, en dat jij de spookklok hebt gemaakt. Heb jij enig idee wat de spookklok allemaal heeft aangericht ?' snauwde oom Aart.

'Maar natuurlijk,' zei Leo zonder blikken of blozen. 'En ik ben er zeer trots op. De spookklok is gemaakt om rampen te maken en allerlei ellende, zodat wij onze ziekenhuis-producten goed kunnen verkopen.'

'Maar dat is belachelijk,' snauwde oom Aart. 'Dus jij vindt jouw heilige producten en het geld wat je ermee kunt verdienen belangrijker dan het geluk van mensenlevens ?'

'Daar betalen ze dan maar voor,' sprak Leo kalm. 'Geluk is altijd duur, en hoeft heus niet goedkoop te zijn. Daar worden mensen lui van.'

Oom Aart werd rood van woede. 'Jij bent levens aan het vernietigen met je spookklok, Leo.'

'Dan heeft de politie ook wat te doen,' grapte Leo. 'Ik zorg ervoor dat iedereen aan het werk komt.'

'Je bent een malloot, Leo,' bulderde oom Aart. 'Je denkt alleen aan jezelf en aan geld. Ze moesten jou ook opsluiten.'

'Dat gebeurt zomaar niet,' grijnsde Leo. 'De spookklok regeert ook over de politie. Alle beslissingen liggen bij mij. Ik heb het ding geprogrammeert, dus ik ben de baas over Deursen, en straks over de hele wereld.'

'Allemaal door rampen, Leo,' snauwde oom Aart. 'Je moet je schamen.'

'Hoe heeft u die spookklok gemaakt ?' vroeg Anton.

'Waarom zou ik jou dat vertellen, jongetje,' zei Leo. 'Hoeveel betaal je ervoor ?'

'Hoe kunnen we de spookklok onschadelijk maken ?' vroeg Susanne.

'De spookklok zal jullie onschadelijk maken,' sprak Leo kalm. 'Er valt niet tegen op te boksen. Het is een genie.'

Oom Aart werd wat rustiger. Hij besefte dat hij er niet veel mee opschoot door zo te snauwen. 'Hoe heb je die spoken zover gekregen voor je te werken ?' vroeg oom Aart.

'Ik heb ze alle twaalf ontmoet, en ik moest offers brengen,' zei Leo.

'Wat was het offer ?' vroeg oom Aart.

'Mezelf,' zei Leo. 'De spoken wonen in mij, als hun tweede huis.'

'Ach, Leo,' zei oom Aart. 'Doe toch niet zo mal. Waarom zou je dat doen ?'

'Ze beschermen mij goed, en mijn handel in ziekenhuis-producten loopt prima,' zei Leo.

'Ik denk dat zij eerder de baas over jou spelen,' zei oom Aart.

'Ach welnee,' zei Leo. 'We hebben een goed contract gesloten.'

'Hoe en waar hebt u de spoken ontmoet ?' vroeg Anton.

'Nou, kijk eens even,' zei Leo, 'ik kon het spookklok project alleen overkopen als ik de spoken zou hebben ontmoet en me aan hen bewezen zou hebben. Ik moest ze eerst geinteresseerd maken om in de klok te gaan wonen.

Het eerste spook ontmoette ik diep in het bos. Ik moest over een rivier in de nacht bij dichte mist, over een brug van touw. Hij wachtte me daar op. Hij was het spook van overstromingen. Hij kon rivieren en zeeen laten overstromen. Toen ik over de brug ging was er donder en bliksem. Hij riep mij van de andere kant. Hij had allemaal wit licht om zich heen. Hij woonde in een grot achter een waterval. Door de waterval gingen we naar binnen. Uit zijn vingers droop water, en toen begon het uit zijn hele lichaam te stromen, en het hield maar niet op. Ik rende weg, maar werd door de stroom ingehaald. Toen ging hij bij me naar binnen door mijn mond. Sindsdien ben ik een deel van hem, en is hij een deel van mij. De volgende dag was er een grote overstroming die ervoor zorgde dat Deursen aan zee kwam te liggen met zijn eigen strand- en duinengebied. Dankzij mijn vriendschap met het eerste spook was Deursen gespaard gebleven.

Het tweede spook woonde ook in het bos, en ik moest weer de rivier over, maar ditmaal over een andere brug van touw. Het spook wachtte mij al op. Het was het spook van vuurrampen. Hij veroorzaakte al direct een kleine bosbrand. Ik trilde als een rietje. Ik had nog nooit zoiets gezien. Ik dacht er direct aan hoeveel geld dit spook me zou opleveren. Het spook stak zijn hand uit, en ik schudde zijn hand. Hij leidde mij naar een boshutje. Hier woonde hij. Hij kon geld uit het niets tevoorschijn toveren. Hij sprak niet veel. Ook hij ging door mijn mond naar binnen, en door mijn oren. Mijn oren leken te piepen, en even leek het alsof ik in brand stond. Maar daarna werd alles rustig, en een zacht gevoel overstroomde mij. De volgende dag waren er veel bosbranden, en het kwam op de voorpagina van de krant. Ook het tweede spook wilde in mijn klok wonen, en we waren al snel dikke vrienden.

De derde spook was het ijs-spook …'

Leo stopte met praten. Er begon allemaal ijs uit zijn mond te komen, en het bleef maar stromen. 'Och jongen,' zei oom Aart. 'Wat hebben ze jou toch goed te pakken.' Leo begon te bibberen als een hondje.

'Ik denk dat het voor jou beter is om ermee te stoppen,' zei oom Aart. 'Dit is toch niet meer normaal ?' Het ijs bleef maar stromen, en na een tijdje lag de hele vloer eronder. 'Kom op, jongens,' zei oom Aart. 'Hier valt toch niet mee te praten.' Hij stond op en liep de deur uit, terwijl Anton, Jaap

en Susanne hem volgden. 'Ik ben er klaar mee,' zei oom Aart. 'Het beste is dat we allemaal gaan verhuizen naar een andere plaats. Deursen is niet meer wat het geweest is.' En zo gebeurde het. Alle vier verhuisden ze naar een ander dorp. Ze gingen in Nunspeet wonen. Ze kwamen alle vier bij elkaar in de straat te wonen. Jaap kwam naast Anton te wonen, en tegenover hen woonden Susanne en oom Aart. Of ze ooit nog last hadden gekregen van de spookklok is niet bekend.

Sandra en de
Boze Badmeester

'En er was een put van meisjesboeken waar alle nazi's ingeworpen werden, en ze moesten voor straf voor eeuwig meisjesboeken lezen,' las Jan hardop en sloeg toen het boek dicht. Toen moesten Jan en Sandra naar zwemles. Moeder bracht hen naar de kleedkamer van het zwembad, waar ze hun zwemkleding konden aantrekken. Daarna moesten ze onder een hele warme douche heenlopen, en zo kwamen ze bij het zwembad, waar de badmeester hen al opwachtte. Ze moesten wat baantjes zwemmen, en de badmeester legde hen wat uit. Sandra keek naar de lichtblauwe tegeltjes die ze gewoon door het water heen kon zien. Ook keek ze naar de witte klompen van de badmeester. Ze lette niet goed op, en kreeg zo een tik met de haak van de badmeester, waarmee hij vaak rondliep. 'Opletten en bij de les blijven, Sandra,' zei de badmeester streng.

Toen moest ze wel, maar alles tolde haar voor de ogen. Hij had haar op haar natte arm geslagen en het deed best wel pijn. Even wilde ze hem uitfoeteren, maar ze voelde zich te duizelig. 'Ik ben duizelig,' zei ze toen, en stapte het zwembad uit.

'Gewoon in het zwembad blijven, Sandra,' zei de badmeester, terwijl hij haar weer terugduwde. 'Maar ik ben zo duizelig,' zei Sandra.

'Dan moet je beter opletten,' zei de badmeester. Jan werd heel kwaad op de badmeester. 'Zeg, blijf van haar af,' zei hij toen hij het zwembad uitstapte, maar ook hij werd teruggeduwd. 'Ik ga het straks

aan mijn vader en moeder zeggen,' zei Jan.

'Je doet maar,' zei de badmeester. Toen de badmeester even niet oplette rende Jan het zwembad uit naar de kleedkamer. 'Terugkomen !' riep de badmeester. Maar hij kon niet achter Jan aan, want dan zouden alle kinderen het zwembad uitkomen.

Sandra begon te trillen en te rillen. 'Ik voel me niet goed,' zei ze. Weer probeerde ze uit het zwembad te komen, maar weer werd ze teruggedrukt. Ze voelde haar toen helemaal wegglijden, en ging kopje onder. De andere kinderen begonnen bang te worden. Gelukkig kwam er een andere badmeester aan. 'Het gaat niet goed met één van je kinderen, zie ik,' zei hij, en trok Sandra toen uit het water. 'Misschien is ze ziek.'

'De badmeester drukte haar telkens terug !' riepen de kinderen.

'Is dat waar ?' vroeg de andere badmeester.

'Ik dacht dat ze haar aanstelde, want ze had net straf gehad,' zei de badmeester.

'Dit is gevaarlijk spel. Daar kun je voor ontslagen worden,' zei de andere badmeester.

'Ach, stel je niet aan, joh,' zei de badmeester. 'Ze speelt het gewoon om van me af te zijn.'

'Hoe weet je dat ?' vroeg de andere badmeester. 'Ze heeft haar ogen dicht, en praat niet.'

Maar toen werd de badmeester kwaad, en duwde de andere badmeester en Sandra het water in. De kinderen begonnen keihard te gillen, en er kwamen nog meer badmeesters en badjuffrouwen aangerend.

Het werd een dolle boel zoals je wel kunt begrijpen. Maar de badmeester hield vol dat Sandra het gewoon speelde om hem terug te pakken. Hij was loeikwaad.

'Je kunt kinderen nooit dwingen,' zei een badjuffrouw. 'Dat is levensgevaarlijk, of ze het nu spelen of niet.' Sandra lag levenloos in de armen van de andere badmeester, die ze weer op de kant hadden getrokken. 'Ze moet naar het ziekenhuis,' zei de andere badmeester. 'En hij moet ontslagen worden.'

Maar de badmeester werd erg kwaad, en duwde alle badmeesters en juffrouwen het zwembad in, terwijl hij Sandra greep en met haar wegrende. De kinderen begonnen nog harder te gillen. De badmeester rende met Sandra in zijn armen de trap op, en ging toen zijn grote kantoor in, en deed de deur op slot. 'Is het nu afgelopen met die spelletjes !' schreeuwde hij tegen Sandra, en sloeg haar in het gezicht. Sandra ademde bijna niet meer. Al gauw werd er op de deur geklopt, maar hij deed niet open. 'We zullen de politie bellen !' werd er geroepen. De badmeester rende toen door een andere deur met Sandra weg, weer een trap af, en toen het zwembad uit. Toen rende hij naar zijn grote witte auto, en even later scheurde hij ermee weg.

Hij bracht haar naar een grote witte villa diep in het bos. Hier nam hij haar uit de auto, en ging toen de grote villa in met haar in zijn armen, en bracht haar naar een grote ondergrondse zaal, waar een

heleboel bedden waren met levenloze kinderen erin. Hier legde hij haar neer in een leeg bed. Een man met een lange witte jas kwam binnen. Hij had een brilletje op en haardossen aan beide kanten van zijn hoofd, maar boven op zijn hoofd en op zijn voorhoofd was hij kaal. 'Kun je hier weer een robot van maken,' zei de badmeester.

'Komt in orde,' zei de man. De man maakte toen even wat foto's van Sandra en ging toen weer weg. Sandra kreeg toen wat spuitjes totdat ze echt helemaal niet meer bewoog. Na een paar uur kwam de man in de lange witte jas weer terug met een robot die precies op Sandra leek. 'Perfect,' zei de badmeester. 'Nu ga jij die andere badmeesters eens haarfijn uitleggen dat je alles maar gespeeld had,' zei hij tegen de robot.

'Natuurlijk, het spijt me,' zei de robot, die gewoon op een echt mens leek.

De badmeester nam de menselijke robot mee en liet Sandra levenloos achter. Hij stopte de robot in de auto en reed toen terug naar het zwembad. Hij had de robot ondertussen allerlei instructies gegeven. En zo werd alles opgelost. De badmeester kon blijven. Sandra had zich afschuwelijk misdragen, en deed maar net alsof om hem te jennen en in de problemen te brengen. De andere badmeesters en badjuffrouwen moesten ook schuld bekennen.

Zo was er een heel crimineel netwerk in het dorp wat kinderen omwisselde met menselijke robotten die precies op die kinderen leken, en zo kon niemand wat vermoeden.

Maar Jan was een hele slimme jongen, en had al snel door dat dit Sandra niet was. Zijn ouders geloofden hem niet, maar de robot zei dingen die Sandra nooit zou zeggen. Daar kende Jan zijn zus te goed voor. Jan was heel fijngevoelig en veel intelligenter dan zijn ouders. Jan rook onraad. Nachtenlang had hij zware en diepe gesprekken met de robot, die zich nog steeds voordeed als Sandra, zijn zus, maar uiteindelijk gaf de robot toe dat ze Sandra niet was, maar slechts een robot. De robot had het erg met Jan te doen, maar was ook slechts een slachtoffer en kon niets doen. Jan was wel blij dat de robot het in ieder geval had toegegeven. Maar Jan's ouders geloofden er nog steeds niets van, en zeiden dat Sandra zwaar ziek was dat ze dacht dat ze een robot was, en niet de echte Sandra was. Ze stuurden de robot naar een psychiater, en de robot kreeg zware medicijnen. Jan was inmiddels heel veel van de robot gaan houden en kon dit ook niet meer aanzien. Op een nacht smeekte hij de robot uit te leggen waar Sandra was. De robot probeerde het uit te leggen, maar raakte steeds in de war. Omdat Jan steeds meer bij zijn ouders er op aandrong om hem te geloven moest ook hij naar de psychiater en kreeg zware medicijnen. De psychiater zei dat zowel hij als Sandra naar een rustoord moesten. De psychiater nam hen beiden mee naar de grote witte villa diep in het bos. 'Ik herken dit !' riep de robot. 'Hier worden alle kinderen verwisseld door robotten !'

'Het is goed, Sandra,' zei de psychiater. 'Hier zul je tot rustkomen.'

'Hier moet ergens de ware Sandra liggen,' zei de robot.

'Het is goed, Sandra,' zei de psychiater weer, terwijl hij de auto parkeerde. 'Hier zal alles goed met je komen.'

'Luister dan eens naar wat ze zegt, idioot !' riep Jan. 'Heb je nu oren of niet ?'

'Ze is zwaar ziek, Jan,' zei de psychiater. 'En jij ook. Met de juiste medicatie zullen jullie hier snel tot rust komen.'

'Levenloos liggen die kinderen daar in zalen,' zei de robot. 'Jullie zijn zware criminelen.'

'Heus, het komt goed met je,' zei de psychiater, die de auto deur opendeed en uitstapte.

'Ik wil Sandra zien,' zei Jan.

'Sandra is hier,' zei de psychiater en wees op de robot.

'Nee, de echte Sandra,' zei Jan.

Toen liepen ze met z'n drieen naar het gebouw. Zowel Jan als de robot kregen een kamer in het gebouw. Jan begon het hele gebouw af te zoeken. De robot liep met hem mee. 'Het moet ergens in een zaal onder het gebouw zijn, Jan,' zei de robot. Na een tijdje vonden ze in de linkerzijde van het gebouw een trap naar beneden. Toen kwamen ze even later in de grote zaal waar levenloze kinderen lagen, waaronder ook Sandra. 'Zie je nu wel !' riep Jan. 'Dat is Sandra !'

Hij rende op Sandra af, en zag al snel dat ze helemaal onder plastic was. 'Sandra ?' riep hij, terwijl hij haar door elkaar begon te schudden. 'Word wakker !'

Maar Sandra bewoog niet. Ook de robot kwam dichterbij. 'Helaas, Jan,' zei de robot.

'Je hebt je best gedaan,' zei Jan tegen de robot. 'Gelukkig heb ik jou nog.'

De man met de lange witte jas kwam toen binnen. 'Kun je dit verklaren ?' vroeg Jan boos.

'Ja,' zei de man met de lange witte jas. 'Natuurlijk. Het is eigenlijk heel eenvoudig. Ze had een overdosis medicijnen genomen. Dat had ze nooit mogen doen.'

'Je liegt !' riep Jan. 'Kijk eens naar deze robot. Die lijkt precies op haar ! Jullie hebben hen omgewisseld ! Het begon allemaal doordat de badmeester haar bleef terugduwen in het water !'

'Je kletst, Jan,' zei de man met de lange witte jas. 'Ik ben dokter. Ik ben een professionele deskundige. Ik heb ervoor gestudeerd. Je weet nergens wat van.'

'Hoe komt het dan dat ze als twee druppels op elkaar lijken ?' riep Jan. 'Het zijn valse spelletjes die jullie spelen, stelletje omruilers !'

'Je kunt niets doen, Jan. Geef het maar op,' zei de dokter. 'Ze zullen mij toch altijd geloven boven jou, want ik ben de dokter.'

'Klootzak !' riep Jan. 'Wat hebben jullie met haar gedaan ! Sandra, antwoord me !'

Toen kwam de psychiater binnen. 'Jan moet tot rust komen,' zei de dokter.

'Dat merk ik,' zei de psychiater. 'Ik kon zijn geschreeuw in het hele gebouw horen.'

'Jullie zijn leugenaars,' riep Jan. 'Kijk nu eens wat jullie gedaan hebben. Zie dan. Ik had het bij het rechte eind. Hier ligt de ware Sandra. Kijk dan eens goed uit je doppen !'

De psychiater liep naar de levenloze Sandra, en voelde aan haar pols.

'Nou ?' zei Jan.

De psychiater keek naar Jan. Toen keek de psychiater naar de robot, en toen weer naar de levenloze Sandra.

'Nou ? Sprakeloos, hè !' riep Jan. 'Wie is er hier nu zwaar ziek !'

'Deze patient ligt hier al tijden na een overdosis medicijnen,' zei de psychiater. 'Ze mag misschien naar jouw idee op Sandra lijken, maar dit is Sandra niet.'

'Het gebeurt wel vaker dat patienten elkaar door elkaar halen,' zei de dokter.

Jan zuchtte diep. 'Hier valt niet tegen op te boksen, Jan,' zei de robot, 'maar jij en ik weten wel beter.'

'Jullie maken mensen psychisch kapot om jullie medicijnen kwijt te krijgen,' zei Jan. 'En dit hier is gewoon pure misdaad.'

Ineens opende de levenloze Sandra haar ogen. 'Ik heb alles gehoord,' zei ze. 'Sorry, maar ik ben Sandra niet. Mijn naam is Evelien, en ik ken jullie niet.' Toen sloot ze haar ogen weer.

'Weer een robot,' zuchtte Jan. 'Of misschien heb ik me wel echt vergist, of ben ik echt zwaar ziek,' en sloeg toen een arm om de robot die naast hem stond, en zei tegen haar : 'Dan moet jij toch echt de echte Sandra zijn, mijn zus. Misschien ben jij dan ook wel zwaar ziek. Wat is er toch met ons gebeurd ? Maar in ieder geval hebben we elkaar nog, en dat is het allerbelangrijkste.' En zo liepen ze arm in arm de zaal uit, de trap op.

De Dropping

Ze kon de zwarte auto herinneren waarmee ze was ontvoerd. Het kwam telkens terug in haar gedachten. Het verleden was een schaduw die haar achtervolgde, stalkte, altijd weer. Ze kwam maar niet los. Het was als een watermerk in haar leven. Het was ook niet weg te krijgen. Dagelijks dacht ze eraan en dagelijks vocht ze ertegen.

Ze namen haar naar het bos, naar een buurthuis, midden in de nacht, en daar moest ze allerlei karweitjes doen. Wat erna gebeurde kon ze zich niet meer herinneren. Alles werd zwart voor haar ogen. Het was uiteindelijk een witte auto die haar vrijzette, maar ze vertrouwde het niet. Ze deden zich voor als haar bevrijders, maar ze had altijd het gevoel dat ze samenwerkten met hen van de zwarte auto. Het was niet echt een auto, maar meer een klein busje. Dat gold ook voor de witte auto.

'Ze zijn niet goed snik,' dacht ze altijd. Er was nooit een zaak van gekomen. De criminelen waren nooit berecht. Ze kon er niet over praten. Ze had het een keer aan iemand verteld, maar die geloofde haar niet. Die dacht dat het een dropping geweest moest zijn. Ze is toen enorm aan haarzelf gaan twijfelen.

Ze had het eens nagevraagd aan mensen, en het bleek dat er wel vaak soortgelijke droppings werden georganiseerd. De zwarte auto's namen mensen geblinddoekt mee naar een onbekende plaats, waar ze werden gedumpt. Dan moesten ze hun weg naar huis vinden, alleen of in een groep, en als ze dan te ver afdwaalden en hun weg niet meer konden vinden, dan waren er de witte auto's om hen naar huis te brengen. Maar alles wat ze nog kon herinneren was dat ze niet was geblinddoekt, en dat ze naar het buurthuis ging waar ze karweitjes moest doen. Volgens haar was er misdaad in het spel. Omdat ze nooit werd geloofd sprak ze er op een gegeven moment niet meer over.

Ze had een heel onderzoek gedaan over droppings, en er waren geen gevallen bekend dat mensen ook karweitjes moesten doen. Misschien haalde ze wel dingen door elkaar. Er werd beweerd dat ze eens een tijdje in het buurthuis had gewerkt, en daar kreeg ze ook voor betaald. Ze vroeg zich af waarom ze dat niet meer kon herinneren. Ook had ze eens een verhaal gelezen over een uit de hand gelopen dropping waarin mensen niet alleen ergens werden gedumpt, maar ook werden opgesloten, als een soort boeienkoning. Dan moesten ze dus eerst zien los te komen. Maar dit was slechts een verhaal uit een boek. In dat verhaal werden ze zelfs gevoed met vergif opdat ze hun geheugen en orientatie zouden verliezen. Zij had het idee dat dat met haar was gebeurd. Het leek wel alsof het verhaal de enige was die haar begreep en alle informatie had. Het boek hield ze sindsdien op haar kamer, en ze vereerde het boek, ook al wist ze dat het maar een verhaal was. Ze twijfelde aan de echtheid ervan, maar ze achtte het wel een mogelijkheid.

Ze had meer op met boeken dan met mensen.

Op een dag kwam ze een meisje tegen die beweerde dat hetzelfde met haar was gebeurd. Ze durfde zichzelf toen weer een beetje te openen, en ze werden de grootste vriendinnen. Eigenlijk was het precies hetzelfde verhaal, en ze leende ook haar boek uit aan haar nieuwe vriendin, en die was er helemaal dolenthousiast over, want dit gaf haar een antwoord wat er met haar gebeurd was. Beide meisjes leefden hier ontzettend van op. Ze besloten niets aan de buitenwereld te vertellen, want die zouden hen toch niet geloven. Ze hadden genoeg aan elkaar. Wel vroegen ze zich af of er meerderen waren zoals hen. Misschien in het buitenland. Ze zouden op de uitkijk staan. Ze besloten eens een anonieme advertentie te plaatsen in de krant, maar daar kwam niemand op af. Dit probeerden ze zelfs in het buitenland, maar zonder resultaat.

Op een dag toen ze bij elkaar waren stopte er een rode auto vlakbij hen. De man schoof een raampje naar beneden en gaf hen een foldertje. Het was een uitnodiging voor een dropping. Ze werden allebei vuurrood. 'Een dropping ? Dat nooit,' zei het ene meisje tegen het andere. Toen lazen ze het foldertje verder. 'De deelnemers worden meegenomen naar het buurthuis voor koekhappen en andere leuke spelletjes, en worden daarna gedropt ergens in het bos, voor een leuke tocht.'

'Ja, ja,' zei haar vriendin. 'En dat moeten wij zeker geloven ? Wij werden nooit geloofd, maar wij zullen hen ook niet geloven. We zijn toch niet gek ? Een ezel stoot zich nooit aan dezelfde steen. Koekhappen ? Vergif happen zullen ze bedoelen.'

Maar ze waren toch wel erg nieuwsgierig, en op de dag van de dropping gingen ze bij het buurthuis kijken. Het was er een hele vrolijke boel. Er liepen zelfs clowns rond, en een man met een hondje dat kunstjes deed. Ze hadden medelijden met de kinderen die daar waren, maar ze wisten dat er maar eentje de klos zou zijn, zoals eens bij hen, opdat de anderen hen nooit zouden geloven.

Arm in arm liepen ze toen naar huis, er vol van overtuigd dat daar een groot kwaad aan het gebeuren was, of misschien juist niet, opdat zij geheel geisoleerd zouden blijven in hun lijden en door niemand geloofd zouden worden.

Aan elkaar hadden ze genoeg. De wereld was immers gek geworden. Mensen konden zich niet meer inleven in elkaar. Er was teveel afstand, en teveel grootspraak. Niemand begreep hen beter dan het boek. In de buitenwereld was het allemaal de beste stuurlui staan aan wal. Iedereen had maar makkelijk praten. Met een blinddoek naar koek happen ? Natuurlijk word je dan bedrogen, en door leugen en vergif meegenomen. In hoeverre waren ze nog zichzelf ? Iets of iemand had zwaar met hen gerommeld. Onschuldige spelletjes noemen ze dat dan.

Het andere meisje had ook de herinnering dat er een mes op haar keel was gelegd. 'We laten de mensen de mensen,' zei ze. 'Wij weten wel beter. Als we onszelf niet meer kunnen geloven dan heeft het leven geen zin meer.'

Niet lang na de dropping van het foldertje liepen ze samen ergens op straat, en een zwarte auto stopte vlakbij hen. Een raampje ging naar beneden, en een boertje keek hen aan. 'Stap maar in, jongedames. Waar gaat de reis naartoe ?'

Plotseling herinnerden de meisjes het boertje. 'Zeg, heb jij ons niet eens eerder meegenomen ?'

vroeg het meisje.

'Ik herinner hem ook,' zei haar vriendin.

'Nee hoor,' zei het boertje. 'Ik weet van niets. Stap in, dan kunnen we verder praten, want anders rijd ik weer weg.'

'Nee, nee, rijd niet weg,' zei het meisje. 'Alstublieft, vertel ons alles wat er gebeurd is.' Ze wist dat het boertje haar enige hoop was om aan de informatie te komen die ze nodig had.

'Laten we dat nu maar niet doen,' zei haar vriendin, 'want dan gebeurt weer hetzelfde, en dan moeten we er weer doorheen.'

'Ja, maar ik heb dit nodig, anders blijf ik met die vretende twijfels en onzekerheden lopen,' zei het meisje.

'Ja, maar wat als we het dit keer niet overleven ?' vroeg haar vriendin.

'Het leven heeft geen zin als ik hier niet achterkom,' zei het meisje.

Uiteindelijk zijn ze toen maar ingestapt, want ze konden hun nieuwsgierigheid niet bedwingen, en die nieuwsgierigheid was veel en veel groter dan hun angst.

'Vertel op,' zeiden de meisjes die inmiddels op de achterbank zaten. 'Wat heb je met ons gedaan de vorige keer ?'

'Zoals ik al zei,' zei het boertje, 'ik ken jullie niet, maar zou jullie graag een lift willen aanbieden. Waar gaat de reis naartoe ?'

'U heeft ons leven flink in de problemen gebracht,' zei het meisje. 'Alles wat we willen is een verklaring hiervoor.'

'Welnee,' zei het boertje. 'Jullie begrijpen het gewoon niet. Ik zal jullie meenemen naar de boerin dan krijgen jullie lekkere koek met thee.'

'Nee !' riepen de meisjes. Dat herinnerden ze zich ook ineens, dat ze koek met thee kregen van de boerin.

De boer reed met het zwarte kleine busje een weiland in, op weg naar een boerderij. Bij een klein boerderijtje stopten ze. 'We willen best meegaan, maar we drinken geen thee en eten geen lekkere koek. Alles wat we willen is een verklaring.'

'Loop maar mee,' zei het boertje ineens een stuk platter.

De boerin wachtte hen al op in de deur opening.

'Kom verder,' zei de boerin plat. De meisjes waren nog steeds niet bang, want hun nieuwsgierigheid had alle angst weggevreten. Zo lang hadden ze gewacht op een antwoord, en nu hoopten ze dat eens eindelijk te krijgen. In een kamertje vlak naast de keuken stond een tafel met een tapijt erover en wat stoelen. Daar gingen ze zitten. De meisjes staarden als gehypnotiseerd naar het servies. Dit kenden ze. Ze bestuurden ijverig de patronen van het servies.

'Thee ?' vroeg de boerin.

'Nee, en ook geen lekkere koek,' zei het meisje. 'Wij komen alleen voor het antwoord. Wat hebben jullie met ons gedaan de vorige keer, want ik herken alles.'

'Herinner je de dropping ?' vroeg de boerin.

Toen vertelde het meisje alles wat ze nog herinnerde.

De boerin schudde haar hoofd.

Toen begon ook het andere meisje haar verhaal te vertellen wat er veel op leek, en weer schudde de boerin haar hoofd.

'Lieve meisjes,' zei de boerin. 'Jullie begrijpen er niets van, helemaal niets. Maar drink even wat thee en eet even wat lekkere koek.'

'Dat doen we niet,' zei de vriendin van het meisje. 'Want dan komen we weer bij hetzelfde punt uit, en misschien erger.'

'Ach, doe even gezellig, neem even wat, dat praat makkelijker,' zei de boerin.

'Daar zijn we niet voor gekomen,' zei het meisje. 'Ik ben ervan overtuigd dat dat de oorzaak is van al onze problemen.'

De boerin schoot in de lach. 'Het was een dropping, en jullie hebben alles verkeerd begrepen. Maar heus, je hoeft van mij echt niets te eten of te drinken. Als je niet wil, dan houd het op. Dan drink en eet ik het lekker zelf op, en mijn man.'

'Maar krijgen we het antwoord nog te horen ?' zei het meisje.

'Wie niet eten en drinken wil krijgt ook niets te horen,' zei de boerin.

'Wat flauw,' zei de vriendin van het meisje. 'Dan zijn we helemaal voor niets gekomen.'

'Dat zijn nu eenmaal de regels,' zei de boerin.

'Okay,' zei het meisje, 'dan eet en drink ik, maar mijn vriendin niet. Is dat ook goed ?'

'Nee, zo zijn we niet getrouwd,' zei de boerin. 'Samen uit, samen thuis. Of allebei, of niets.'

'Wat is dat voor belachelijk gedoe,' zei de vriendin van het meisje.

'De regels van de dropping,' zei de boerin.

'Welke dropping ?' vroeg het meisje. 'We hebben helemaal nooit aan een dropping meegedaan. Het lijkt wel alsof we ertoe gedwongen waren.'

'Laten we even ter zake komen,' zei de boerin. 'Of jullie eten en drinken nu, of jullie vertrekken nu weer, want ik heb geen zin om nog langer mijn tijd te verdoen met jullie.'

'U eerst,' zei het meisje.

De boerin keek beledigd naar het meisje. 'Wat nou : u eerst ? Ik ben hier in mijn eigen huis, en ik laat me niet commanderen door één of andere snotaap. Drink en eet nu, of vertrek.'

'Goed,' zei het meisje boos, en begon van de koek te eten en van de thee te drinken, en haar vriendin ook.

'Nu kunnen we zaken doen,' zei de boerin.

Snel vielen de meisjes in slaap. 'Ze zullen elkaar niet meer herinneren,' zei de boerin. Ze werden beiden op een bed in aparte kamers gelegd, en na een tijdje stopte er een witte auto bij de boerderij, die kwam om het meisje mee te nemen. Na ongeveer een kwartier kwam er een tweede witte auto die de vriendin van het meisje mee zouden nemen.

Het meisje werd wakker in de witte auto. 'Waar ben ik ?' vroeg het meisje.

Een man in een wit pak zei : 'We vonden je ergens slapend in het bos. Was jij van de dropping ?'

'Ik weet het niet meer,' zei het meisje. 'Ik weet helemaal niets.'

'Denk goed na,' zei de man in het witte pak.

'Volgens mij moest ik karweitjes doen in het buurthuis, en ben ik toen gevlucht, en toen vonden jullie mij,' zei het meisje. 'Het begon allemaal toen ik ontvoerd werd in een zwarte auto.'

'Weet je ook door wie ?' vroeg de man in het witte pak.

'Nee,' zei het meisje.

Ergens dichtbij haar huis zette de witte auto haar af. Toen liep ze verder alleen naar huis. Op haar kamer was het een enorme rotzooi. Op het bureau lag het boek over de uit de hand gelopen dropping. Ook lag er een kaart van haar vriendin in het boek als een boekenlegger. Op het kaartje stond : 'Ik ben zo blij dat we elkaar hebben gevonden.' Daaronder stond haar naam en adres. 'Wie is dat ?' vroeg het meisje zich af. Het leek een waas in haar geheugen te zijn. Ze kon haar

nieuwsgierigheid niet meer bedwingen, en ging direct met de kaart naar het adres toe, maar er woonde een oud echtpaar. Het meisje liet de kaart aan het echtpaar zien, maar ze schudden het hoofd. 'Die woont hier allang niet meer,' zei de vrouw. 'Die woonde hier voordat wij hier woonden, maar toen zij was verongelukt ging het gezin verhuizen.'

De rillingen gleden door het meisje heen. 'Misschien is het een hele oude kaart dan,' zei het meisje.

'Dat moet wel,' zei de vrouw.

'Ik kan haar niet herinneren,' zei het meisje.

'Ach,' zei de vrouw. 'Dat kan gebeuren. Je komt zoveel mensen tegen in je leven. Dat kun je nooit allemaal bijhouden, vooral niet als het zo lang geleden is. Wil je misschien binnenkomen voor wat thee en een lekkere koek ?'

Het meisje schudde haar hoofd. 'N... nee, ik moet maar weer eens gaan,' zei ze, en rende toen weg.

Einde

Koning Stuiterbal

Hij was in het bos. Hij was van huis weggelopen. Thuis ging het niet goed. Er werd altijd op hem gescholden, en hij moest altijd hard werken. Nooit was er vrije tijd. Allerlei andere dingen waren gedwongen. Hij was er helemaal klaar mee. Het was in het bos waar hij het modder monster

tegenkwam, die helemaal van modder was. Hij was helemaal niet bang voor het monster. Hij dacht dat het monster nooit erger zou kunnen zijn dan waar hij vandaan kwam. Het modder monster was verbaasd dat hij niet bang voor hem was. Ieder ander mens en dier was bang voor hem. Het jongetje kwam dichterbij het monster en begon hem te aaien.

'Nu wordt je wel helemaal vies,' zei het modder monster. 'Dat geeft niet,' zei het jongetje. 'Als ik maar vrij ben.'

'Over vrijheid gesproken ...' zei het modder monster. 'Ik ben ontsnapt uit de klauwen van een heks. Het leven is beter in het bos. Het jongetje knikte, en zei dat hij een soortgelijk verhaal had. 'Dan hebben we elkaar op het juiste moment en de juiste plaats gevonden,' zei het modder monster. Het jongetje grinnikte.

Ze gingen beiden nog dieper het bos in, en het modder monster vertelde dat hij lang onder de grond moest wonen, bij de ondergrondse heks. Hij werd daar opgesloten gehouden in een klein kooitje. 'Blij dat je vrij bent nu,' zei het jongetje. 'Ik zat in een zelfde situatie. Het is goed om de bomen te ruiken en de frisse lucht van het bos. Dat is zo genezend.'

'Precies,' zei het modder monster. 'Mijn heks spoot altijd met smerige parfumspuiten en haar nagellak op haar lange nagels stonk.'

De twee hadden elkaar veel te vertellen en konden al vanaf het directe begin goed met elkaar opschieten. Na een tijdje lopen kwamen ze een koningskind tegen. Het jongetje vroeg zich af wat een koningskind zo helemaal alleen in het bos moest. Hij groette het koningskind.

'Wat ben ik blij jullie te zien,' zei het koningskind. 'Ik ben zo lang alleen geweest hier, en nu eindelijk heb ik jullie gevonden. Ik ben van het koninklijk paleis weggelopen. Niets mocht. Ik mocht zelfs niet naarbuiten anders zou ik zogenaamd vies worden.' Het koningskind trok toen een vies gezicht om na te doen hoe ze naar hem deden. 'Ik kan het niet meer,' zei het koningskind. 'Ik ben er helemaal klaar mee. Het was niet goed voor mij om daar te leven.'

Het jongetje knikte. 'Dan zit je in hetzelfde schuitje als ons. Wij zijn ook ontsnapt,' zei het jongetje.

'Goed dan dat we elkaar zijn tegengekomen,' zei het koningskind. 'We kunnen dan misschien nog veel aan elkaar hebben.'

'Welkom in de club,' zei het modder monster.

'Wat voor een club is het ?' vroeg het koningskind.

'De club van de ontsnapten,' grinnikte het modder monster.

Ook het jongetje moest grinniken, en toen grinnikte het koningskind ook.

'Nu moeten we alleen nog een plaats hebben om te leven,' zei het koningskind.

Ze liepen door in het bos, en kwamen na een tijdje aan bij een huisje wat onbewoond scheen te zijn. Alle spullen waar hier oud, en alles lag onder de stof, alsof er niemand in vele jaren was geweest.

'Hoera,' zei het koningskind. 'Een verlaten boshuisje.'

'Hier kunnen we wonen,' zei het jongetje, die al direct alles begon te ontstoffen.
'Een beetje schoonmaken kan geen kwaad,' grinnikte het modder monster. Er waren precies drie bedden. Nadat ze de boel hadden schoongemaakt en wat hadden gegeten en gedronken gingen ze alledrie slapen, want ze waren erg moe geworden.

Maar middenin de nacht werd er op de deur geklopt. Er stonden tien soldaten aan de deur. Het jongetje had de deur opengemaakt en liet ze binnen. Het koningskind was ook wakker geworden, en kende de soldaten niet. 'Wie zijn jullie ?' vroeg het koningskind.

Maar de soldaten gaven geen antwoord. 'Misschien hebben ze honger,' zei het modder monster. Het jongetje gaf hen wat te eten. Er waren nog genoeg verzamelde bessen.

Na een tijdje zei een soldaat wat : 'Ach.'

'Ach ?' vroeg het jongetje. 'Is er wat gebeurd ?'

'Nee,' zei een andere soldaat.

'Dus jullie komen zomaar even op bezoek,' zei het koningskind. 'Gezellig.'

'Gezellig,' zei een andere soldaat.

'Ik heb het altijd koud,' zei weer een andere soldaat.

'Hoe komt dat ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Nee, dat is zijn naam,' zei weer een andere soldaat.

'Oh,' zei het jongetje. 'Wat een grappige naam. En hoe heet jij ?'

'Ik ben te dik,' zei de soldaat.

'Ja, maar je bent helemaal niet dik,' zei het jongetje.

'Het is mijn naam,' zei de soldaat. 'Te Dik. Te is mijn voornaam, en Dik is mijn achternaam. Ik kan er niets aan doen dat ik zo heet.'

'Dat klopt,' zei het jongetje. 'Nou, een mooie naam, en ik hoop dat je zelf ook je naam leuk vindt.'

'Hij vind nooit iets leuk,' zei weer een andere soldaat.

'En wie ben jij ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Ik ben Klaas,' zei de soldaat. 'Klaas de Kale.'

'Maar je bent helemaal niet kaal,' zei het jongetje. 'Oh wacht, het is zeker je achternaam.'

'Ja,' zei de soldaat. 'En ik ben er helemaal niet blij mee. We zijn ontsnapt uit een ver land.'

'Ah,' zei het koningskind. 'Nou, welkom in de club van de ontsnapten. Wij zijn allemaal ontsnapt.'

'Aha !' riepen de soldaten blij. 'Dus wij kunnen hier blijven ?'

'Natuurlijk,' zei het modder monster. 'Wij horen allemaal bij elkaar. We maken er nog wel tien bedden bij. Het huisje is net groot genoeg.'

'Mag de prinses hier ook wonen ?' vroeg één van de soldaten. 'Wij hebben ook haar meegenomen.'

'Waar is ze ?' vroeg het koningskind.

'In een envelop,' zei de soldaat, en haalde een verfrommelde envelop uit zijn zak.

'Niet te geloven,' zei het jongetje.

Het modder monster kwam dichterbij de envelop en keek er naar. 'Ze woont in deze envelop ?' vroeg hij.

De soldaat knikte. 'Ja,' zei hij. 'Het is een plaatje.'

'Leuk,' zei het modder monster. 'En wat was de reden waarom jullie met haar zijn ontsnapt ?'

'Ze moest altijd in de keuken werken, en mocht niks. Ze is nog maar een kind,' zei de soldaat.

'Goed dat jullie voor haar opgekomen zijn,' zei het koningskind, terwijl hij een buiging maakte voor de soldaten en zijn hoed afnam. Er zat een veer op zijn hoed, als een pluim.

'Mogen wij haar zien ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Nee,' zei de soldaat. 'Het plaatje is uit een boek geknipt. Ze moet voorlopig in de envelop blijven.'

'Oh,' zei het jongetje. 'En waarom is dat ?'

Maar de soldaat zweeg.

Alle soldaten die hun naam nog niet hadden gezegd begonnen toen te vertellen hoe ze heetten. Het waren allemaal lange getallen, en ze hielden maar niet op. 'Stop, stop,' zei het jongetje. 'Het is wel duidelijk en klaar dat jullie nieuwe namen nodig hebben. Jullie namen zijn eindeloos. Dat is niet

echt handig.'

'Wij zijn van het land Eindeloos,' zei een soldaat.

'En wie regeert dat land ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Koning Eindeloos,' zei de soldaat.

'En dat is ook een plaatje ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Nee,' zei de soldaat. 'Een bal. Die rolt altijd door de straten heen om de boel in de gaten te houden. Er gebeuren daar vreemde dingen.'

'Zoals wat ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Een bril,' zei de soldaat.

'Een bril ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Iedereen moet een bril dragen zodat ze alleen zullen zien wat de koning wil dat ze zien,' zei de soldaat.

'En wat zien ze dan ?' vroeg het jongetje met verbazing.

'Plaatjes,' zei de soldaat. 'De koning houdt van plaatjes.'

'Wat zijn dat voor plaatjes ?' vroeg het jongetje.

Maar de soldaat zweeg.

Het jongetje zuchtte. 'Plaatjes met praatjes,' zei een andere soldaat.

'Ik kan me voorstellen dat jullie zijn ontsnapt,' zei het jongetje.

'Ik niet,' zei de soldaat. 'Het was best leuk.'

'Wie ben jij dan ?' vroeg het jongetje. Toen noemde de soldaat een lang nummer op wat maar niet stopte.

'Heb je ook een andere naam ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Nee,' zei de soldaat.

'Maar waarom ben je dan ontsnapt ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Tja, dat weet ik ook niet,' zei de soldaat. 'Gewoon omdat de anderen het ook deden.'

'Een nalopertje dus,' grinnikte het koningskind. Ook het modder monster grinnikte.

'Maar de andere soldaten zijn dus ontsnapt omdat ze de prinses willen helpen,' zei het jongetje.

'Dat zeggen ze,' zei de soldaat. 'Maar de prinses had het best naar haar zin. Ze hoefde helemaal niet in de keuken te werken. Allemaal leugens.'

'Tegengestelde verhalen dus,' zei het jongetje. 'En wat zegt de prinses er zelf van ?'

'Die praat niet,' zei de soldaat. 'Ze is nog te jong om te praten. Plaatjes praten pas als ze zes zijn.'

'Misschien als het koningskind en de prinses later groot zijn ze met elkaar kunnen trouwen,' zei het jongetje, 'dan kunnen we een nieuw land bouwen hier in het bos, het land van de ontsnapten.'

'Dat kan niet,' zei een soldaat. 'Ze moet in de envelop blijven. Alleen daar is ze veilig.'

'Dat is ook niet gezellig voor haar,' zei het jongetje.

'Het is een tover envelop,' zei de soldaat. 'Er is een land in de envelop. Daar heeft ze het goed, en zo moet dat blijven.'

'Kunnen wij haar daar bezoeken ?' vroeg het modder monster.

'Ja, als je een plaatje wordt,' zei de soldaat.

'Hoe worden we een plaatje ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Koning Eindeloos maakt plaatjes,' zei de soldaat. 'Hij rolt over mensen heen, en dan zijn het plaatjes.'

'Wow,' zei het jongetje. 'Maar jullie zijn van hem ontsnapt. Is er ook nog iemand anders die plaatjes maakt ?'

'Ja,' zei de soldaat. En toen noemde hij een eindeloos getal op.

'Waar is hij ?' vroeg het jongetje.

De soldaat haalde een verfrommelde envelop uit zijn zak.

'Oh, het is ook een plaatje ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Ja,' zei de soldaat.

'En hoe gaat dat precies ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Het is een plaatje van een bal,' zei de soldaat, 'en het werkt ongeveer op dezelfde manier.'

'Ja, maar hoe dan ?' vroeg het jongetje. 'Een bal op een plaatje kan toch niet rollen ?'

De soldaat haalde het plaatje uit de envelop. De bal op het plaatje bewoog, en begon in het rond te rollen. 'Wow,' zei het jongetje verbaasd, 'maar de bal kan niet uit het plaatje ?'

'Nee,' zei de soldaat.

'Maar hoe worden wij dan een plaatje ?' vroeg het jongetje.

De soldaat keek een andere soldaat aan, maar die keek weer naar een andere soldaat.

'Wij weten niet hoe hij het doet,' zei Te Dik.

'Praat hij ook ?' vroeg het modder monster.

'Nog niet,' zei Te Dik. 'Hij is nog geen zes.'

'Ik heb nog wel wat,' zei Klaas de Kale, en haalde een stuiterbal uit zijn zak. De stuiterbal begon direct in het rond te stuiteren, en had flink veel babbels.

'Dat kan, ja, dat kan,' zei de stuiterbal. 'Plaatje worden zei je ? Heel simpel.' En hij vloog op het jongetje af, en begon op het jongetje te stuiteren, die even later helemaal platgewalst was als een plaatje. 'Hoera !' riep het jongetje. 'Nu kan ik de prinses ontmoeten !'

'Ja, wacht even, dat gaat zo maar niet,' zei de stuiterbal. 'Je bent veel te groot. Je past de envelop niet in.'

'Wie kan me dan kleiner maken ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Het plaatje krimpt vanzelf wel,' zei de stuiterbal. 'Even geduld hebben.' Ook het modder monster en het koningskind werden tot plaatjes gemaakt. De tien soldaten moesten de plaatjes en de envelop bewaken. Na een paar dagen waren de plaatjes genoeg gekrompen en konden ze de envelop in. Ze kwamen in een prachtig land, in een prachtige natuur met prachtige hangende bomen waar de lieflijkste bloemen en bloesem in groeiden, en allerlei prachtig kruid hing daar. Maar de prinses konden ze niet vinden. Plotseling zagen ze de stuiterbal. 'Volg mij,' sprak de stuiterbal. Hij leidde hen naar een hele speciale boom waar het plaatje van de prinses ergens hing. Maar de wind waaide het plaatje weg. 'Volg mij !' riep de stuiterbal. Hij stuiterde achter de wind aan, en het jongetje, het koningskind en het modder monster volgden hem. 'Hebbes !' riep de stuiterbal. Het plaatje was op de grond gevallen en helemaal onder de modder. 'Een modder prinses,' zei het koningskind. 'Misschien kan ze dan wel later met het modder monster trouwen.'

'Ik trouw niet !' bulderde het modder monster en greep grinnikend het koningskind en smeerde hem in met modder. 'Nu ben jij een modder prins, dus dan kan jij misschien later als je groot bent wel met haar trouwen.'

'Ja,' zei het jongetje, 'en dan kunnen we hier misschien het nieuwe land van de ontsnapten bouwen.'

'Goed idee,' zei de stuiterbal. 'Welkom in mijn boek, waar jullie veilig kunnen wonen. Ik ben koning stuiterbal en met jullie heb ik zo waardige opvolgers. Ik heb namelijk andere dingen te doen. Maak er wat moois van !' Toen stuiterde de stuiterbal weg. Toen zijn ze begonnen het nieuwe land te bouwen, en toen de prins en de prinses groot waren geworden trouwden ze met elkaar. Er was een groot feest en er waren inmiddels vele ontsnapte plaatjes bijgekomen. En ze leefden nog lang en gelukkig.

Witte Sneeuw

Ik liep op straat langs het bos. Het was laat. Er was niemand op straat behalve ik en een vriend. Ik had hem net van het station gehaald. We waren oude schoolvrienden. Zachtjes begon het te sneeuwen. We liepen naar mijn huis. Er waren trollen in mijn huis. Ik verzamelde ze. Het waren prachtige beeldjes, ook in de tuin. Die vriend had een beeldje voor me meegenomen. Hij zou een paar dagen blijven logeren. We hadden het veel over Witte Sneeuw, een meisje dat bij ons in de klas zat. Ze was overleden, maar nu leefde ze in ons hart. Het was een heel bijzonder meisje. Ze vertelde altijd prachtige verhalen.

Die vriend en ik zaten op een school voor exorcisten. We leerden hoe we demonen konden herkennen, hoe we ze konden opspeuren en hoe we ze konden uitschakelen. Uitdrijven heette dat. Maar het meisje had altijd een wonderlijke uitleg. Zij had het erover dat er altijd eerst dingen moesten veranderen, en dan zouden de demonen vanzelf vertrekken. Dingen moesten gewoon anders. Ze had het er altijd over dat demonen veel van spelletjes hielden, en dat ze zelfs een uitdrijving konden nabootsen. Soms werden de leraren weleens een beetje boos, omdat ze zo dromerig was. Ze dacht veel te diep over dingen na.

We begrepen niet hoe het zo ver kon komen. Witte Sneeuw had op een dag zelfmoord gepleegd. Niemand begreep hoe dat kon. De leraren begonnen zich een beetje schuldig te voelen. Waren ze misschien te onaardig voor haar geweest ? Vaak wist zij meer dan de leraren zelf, en dat konden de leraren niet altijd hebben. Het meisje kwam uit een bijzondere kerk uit het Zuiden van het land, waar ze heel anders met de dingen omgingen. Er werd daar veel meer onderzoek gedaan, en veel meer geexperimenteerd. Het ging minder volgens de tradities, en daarom hadden de leraren er vaak een hekel aan. Maar op een dag kwam er een nieuwe leraar, die wel kon meekomen in heel veel dingen wat het meisje zei. Het was een beetje een vreemde man, met een oog voor vreemde dingen. Hij verzamelde trollenbeeldjes. Een heleboel leraren zeiden dat je dat beter niet kon doen, zulke beeldjes verzamelen, maar dit waren hele bijzondere beeldjes. Het was heel sprookjesachtig. Witte Sneeuw vond het prachtig, en ging vaak na de les met de man mee naar huis.

Op een dag gingen wij ook mee, die vriend en ik. De man woonde dichtbij het station, en je kon altijd de treinen langs horen komen. In de weekenden bleef Witte Sneeuw vaak logeren. Ditmaal bleven wij ook logeren. Witte Sneeuw had een eigen kamer in het huis van de man, en wij kregen de zolder. Midden in de nacht hoorden we vreemde geluiden. Ik ging naar beneden om te kijken of alles goed was met Witte Sneeuw. Ze lag lekker te slapen.

Ook die leraar was er helemaal kapot van toen Witte Sneeuw zelfmoord had gepleegd. Hij kon niet begrijpen waarom, maar schreef het toe aan de werken van de demonen. De dag erna verzamelden we ons in de grote zaal van de school. De directeur hield een toespraak.

‘Wij zijn allen diep betreurd over hetgeen heeft plaatsgevonden,’ zei hij. ‘Wij zien dit als een aanval van de duisternis. Witte Sneeuw had grote gaven. Het was een begiftigd kind. Wij zijn allemaal bedroefd dat ze van ons is weggenomen. Het leven van een exorcist is niet zonder gevaren. Maar weinigen halen de eindstreep, maar wij zijn blij dat ze nu veilig is in de armen van …’

Maar verder kwam hij niet. Tranen rolden uit zijn ogen. Zij was zijn lievelingsstudent. Waarom moest nou net zij worden weggenomen. Die vriend van mij wilde haar uit de dood opwekken, maar we kregen geen toegang tot het lijk.

We gingen vaak naar haar graf om nog even haar magie te voelen. Er stonden vele

trollenbeeldjes om het graf heen die de nieuwe leraar daar had neergezet. ‘Voor mijn lieve Witte Sneeuw,’ stond er vaak op die beeldjes. Ook ik hield veel van Witte Sneeuw. Om het gevoel wat ik altijd bij haar had te bewaren ging ik ook trollenbeeldjes verzamelen.

We dachten vaak over Witte Sneeuw. Op een zekere nacht kreeg ik een droom over Witte Sneeuw, waarin ze mij bezocht. Haar haar was lang gegroeid, langer dan ooit. Ze was omhuld in witte sneeuw, maakte een bal, en gaf de sneeuwbal aan mij. ‘Bewaar dit,’ zei ze.

Toen ik wakker werd was ik heel emotioneel. Ik moest sindsdien altijd aan de sneeuwbal denken.

Die vriend van mij kwam vaak logeren. Op een dag kwam hij met de mededeling dat de ouders van Witte Sneeuw haar dagboek hadden gevonden. Ze had het verborgen onder de vloerbedekking van haar kamer. Er stonden onthullende dingen in. Het was een dagboek vol verhalen, maar ook met een duidelijke roep om hulp. Het meisje beschreef hoe ze zo diep in haar eigen fantasie leefde dat ze het gewone leven eigenlijk niet aankon. Maar ze wilde anderen daar niet mee belasten.

Ze was altijd een vrolijk meisje, dus niemand had dat achter haar gezocht. Ze schreef ook dat ze gelukkig was in haar eigen fantasie en dat de buitenwereld haar benauwde.

De verhalen in het dagboek van Witte Sneeuw waren prachtig. Deze verhalen had ze nog nooit eerder verteld, en haar ouders wilden er een boek van maken. Later kreeg ik het boek ook in huis, en het werd een van mijn kostbaarste bezittingen. Kon ik maar meer voor haar doen. Als ik dit had geweten dan had ik haar misschien kunnen helpen, om haar ook de leuke kanten van het leven te laten zien. Maar ik was nog zo jong. Ik zou misschien niet tegen haar opgewassen zijn. Ik vond het zo treurig dat ze van ons was weggenomen. Ze had nog zoveel meer verhalen kunnen schrijven, maar misschien zag ze het nut daarvan niet in. Ze wilde misschien in haar eigen wereld leven, en daar was ze nu. Ze was nu in mijn hart, dieper dan ooit tevoren. Ik had haar zo graag nog beter willen leren kennen.

Het leven ging door. Mijn vriendschap met oude klasgenoten verwaterde. We gingen allemaal ons eigen pad, maar door Witte Sneeuw waren we voor altijd in ons hart aan

elkaar verbonden. Toen ik zelf later kinderen kreeg las ik hen vaak voor uit het dagboek van Witte Sneeuw, wat eigenlijk een soort sprookjesboek was. Ook mijn vrouw vond het heel bijzonder. Ze was een beetje als Witte Sneeuw. Ze schreef ook verhalen. Ik noemde haar weleens Rode Sneeuw, omdat ze indiaans bloed in haar had. Ik kon me de andere verhalen van Witte Sneeuw nog wel herinneren, de verhalen die ze altijd vertelde. Op een dag besloot ik ze allemaal op te schrijven, en zo waren er uiteindelijk twee boeken van Witte Sneeuw. Ik was er erg trots op, en stuurde een exemplaar naar haar ouders en naar wat oude klasgenoten. Dit was eigenlijk de reden waardoor die oude vriend me weer kwam opzoeken. Hij was inmiddels ook getrouwd, en vaak gingen we samen op pad.

Op een dag besloten we naar een trollenpark te gaan. Dat was een soort sprookjespark wat allemaal om trollensprookjes draaide. Eigenlijk zou een beeld van Witte Sneeuw daar ook wel op zijn plaats zijn, want haar verhalen gingen ook vaak over trollen. We besloten de baas van het trollenpark de twee boeken van Witte Sneeuw te laten lezen, en hij was direkt dolenthousiast. Hij hield van de sprookjes, en wilde de sprookjes wel nabouwen in zijn park. Later las hij ook de sprookjes van mijn vrouw, Rode Sneeuw, en dat waren nog wel veel meer boeken. Het was alsof er een wereld voor de man opende. Het trollenpark groeide al snel uit tot een sprookjeswereld. En ik was wel trots om twee standbeelden van zowel Witte Sneeuw als Rode Sneeuw in het park te zien.

Maar op een dag was het beeld van Rode Sneeuw verwoest. De baas was woedend. Het waren racisten die dat hadden gedaan. Ze wisten dat het beeld van indiaanse komaf was. Mijn vrouw was er kapot van, en ik nog wel meer. In een van de verhalen van Witte Sneeuw stond geschreven : ‘Het witte konijn in de woestijn wil altijd de eerste zijn, op zee wil hij de beste zijn, in het bos wil hij staan op het rode mos.’ Het gaat over een wit konijn die een koning die een rood konijn als lakei heeft, maar later wil hij dat het rood konijn zijn troon wordt, maar als hij dan even later op zijn troon zit wil het rood konijn niet meer spreken, en dan wordt koning wit konijn toch wel erg eenzaam. Hij sterft als een eenzame koning, en het rood konijn wil nooit meer in een koninkrijk wonen en vlucht naar het bos waar hij voor altijd blijft wonen.

De baas besluit ditmaal een extra groot beeld van Rode Sneeuw te bouwen waar zij op een hoog paard zit. Hij laat er een bordje bijzetten waarop staat geschreven : ‘Als u wil dat Rode Sneeuw op een nog grotere witte troon komt te zitten, verwoest dan dit beeld.’

Het beeld lieten ze ditmaal staan, maar in het land werden kleurlingen ditmaal met de nek aangekeken. Totdat er op een dag tranen schenen te komen uit het beeld van Witte Sneeuw. Overal in het land was het groot nieuws.

Op een dag kreeg ik van de baas een trollenring. Het was de prachtigste ring die ik ooit had gezien. Inmiddels hadden de ouders van Witte Sneeuw een nog ouder dagboek van haar gevonden. Deze had ze achter de kast verstopt. Ditmaal waren het de prachtigste sprookjes die ik ooit had gehoord. Ik ging ermee naar de baas van het trollenpark die het direkt wilde nabouwen. Ditmaal begon de oude magie van Witte Sneeuw echt te vloeien. De regering wilde zelfs een beeld van haar hebben in een van hun gebouwen. Omdat de verhalen van mijn vrouw zoveel op de verhalen van Witte Sneeuw leken wilden ze ook een beeld van haar hebben naast het beeld van Witte Sneeuw, maar iemand anders had een nog beter plan : Wit en rood was tezamen roze, dus als ze nu een beeld zouden maken van roze steen, dan zou het probleem opgelost zijn. Roze Sneeuw noemden ze het beeld. Het beeld was groot nieuws. Zelfs in het buitenland hoorden ze van Roze Sneeuw.

Die vriend en zijn vrouw kregen een kindje, een meisje, en noemden het : Roze Sneeuw. Mijn vrouw schreef er een sprookje over. Het was een meisje dat nooit opgroeide, maar altijd vier jaar bleef. Wel werd ze steeds wijzer, en op een dag bouwde ze een leger van reuzenridders. Het meisje was mooi als een bloem, en de reuzenridders waren erg dol op haar. Ze woonde in een prachtig paleis waar de reuzenridders altijd rondmarcheerden. Niemand kon haar de les lezen, en daarom bleef ze altijd een kind, een kind dat kon dromen, en kon wonen in haar fantasie. Ze was gelukkig, waar ze ook was, want de reuzenridders gingen altijd met haar mee.

Elwin

Hoofdstuk 1.

Op een mooie dag zit Elwin in de tuin. Elwin woont niet zomaar in een wereld. Elwin woont in een echte fantasie-wereld waar van alles kan gebeuren. Elwin heeft een heleboel vriendjes .... fantasie-beesten. Met die fantasie-beesten maakt hij vaak hele verre reizen. Ze staan allemaal bij zijn vader in de stal. Eentje heet er Groepsoe, eentje met drie grote bulten op zijn snuit en een bril op. Groepsoe kan heel hoog vliegen, als een soort olifant of draak met vleugels. En vaak maakt Elwin reisjes op z'n rug. Voorzichtig loopt Elwin naar het hok van Groepsoe. Het is een groot hok. Elwin doet voorzichtig, omdat Groepsoe misschien nog slaapt, en Elwin wil hem niet wakker maken. Maar gelukkig, Groepsoe is wakker.

'Dag Groepsoe,' zegt Elwin, 'zullen we weer eens een reisje maken ?'

Nou, daar had Groepsoe wel zin aan. Want telkens in een hok zitten dat verveelde Groepsoe ook een beetje. Daar komt vader aan. 'Zo, waar gaan jullie naartoe,' vraagt vader. 'Ja, goede vraag,' zegt Elwin, 'dat weet ik eigenlijk niet. We gaan gewoon een reisje maken, en we zien wel waar we terecht komen.'

Elwin springt op de rug van Groepsoe en daar gaan ze. Het is mooi weer buiten, en de lucht is bijna rood. Het zonnetje schijnt. 'Hoera,' roept Elwin, 'waar zullen we naartoe gaan, Groepsoe ?'

'Wat dacht je van een eiland ?' zegt Groepsoe, 'dan moeten we wel eerst een tijdje over zee vliegen.'

Na een hele lange tijd vliegen komen ze op een eiland aan. Alles is hier wit, zelfs de bomen en de struiken. Elwin heeft wel zin om te gaan zwemmen, en na een tijdje is hij samen met Groepsoe in de golven. Op de bodem van de zee vinden ze een steen, en als Elwin hem optilt en boven water brengt begint de steen geluid te maken. 'Pruut, pruut,' zegt de steen.

'Oh, het is een pratende steen,' zegt Elwin tegen Groepsoe. 'Zou hij nog wat te vertellen hebben ?'

'Vraag het me maar,' zegt de steen. Elwin begint te lachen, en brengt de steen naar het strand. Op het strand spuit de steen wat water uit. 'Ik ben Joefie Kof,' zegt de steen.

'Ik ben Elwin,' zegt Elwin, 'en dit is mijn vriend Groepsoe,' terwijl hij naar Groepsoe wees. 'Wij zijn op reis.'

'Aha,' zegt de steen, 'en waar wonen jullie dan ?'

'Oh, in Kabotikka,' zegt Elwin weer. En dan begint de steen ineens verhalen te vertellen. Het is een echte verhalen-steen. Elwin vindt dit zo spannend, en vraagt of hij de steen mee mag nemen. De steen vindt het goed, en ook Groepsoe. Thuisgekomen laat Elwin de steen aan zijn vader en moeder zien. Daarna brengt hij de steen naar zijn kamertje.

Elke nacht voor het slapen gaan vertelt de steen een verhaaltje aan Elwin.

Daar is Wollegras, het grote harige beest dat altijd naast Elwin slaapt. Elwin kruipt dicht tegen hem aan. Wollegras laat Elwin altijd zo mooi dromen. Het is Elwin's droomvriendje. Samen vallen ze in slaap. Het raam vliegt open, en Elwin stijgt op uit zijn bed. Hij is gekleed als een prins met een echt zwaard. Ook Wollegras stijgt op. De droom is al begonnen.

De prins springt op de rug van Wollegras, en samen vertrekken ze. Waar gaan ze naartoe ? De prins weet wel waar naartoe. 'Naar het kasteel !' roept hij. Wollegras weet wel waar dat is. Daar zijn ze al eens eerder geweest. Het is niet de eerste keer dat Elwin een droomprins is. In het kasteel zijn veel bedienden. Er zijn ook soldaten, maar die heeft de prins niet nodig nu. Hij stapt op zijn troon, en zegt tegen zijn bedienden : 'Breng de dromensteen en het dromensap.' Direkt rennen de bedienden weg, en al snel komen ze met de steen en het sap.

De prins legt zijn hand op de steen terwijl het sap begint te stromen. Het sap is erg glad, en de prins begint er over te glijden. Wollegras komt hem achterna. De prins glijdt helemaal naar buiten, en glijdt richting een enorme brug. Wollegras drinkt van het sap en wordt alsmaar groter. De prins lacht. Nu glijden ze naast elkaar. Wollegras begint in een kasteel te veranderen. Het is een heel zacht kasteel, met zachte muren. Na een tijdje gaat de prins naar binnen. Het lijkt binnen wel een doofhof. Maar het is niet de eerste keer dat Wollegras een kasteel is. De prins weet de weg wel een beetje.

Daar komt Groepsoe ook al aanrennen. Groepsoe neemt ook van het dromensap, en veranderd in een open haard. Dan ten slotte drinkt de prins zelf van het sap. Een deurtje gaat open, en een prachtige prinses komt binnen. De prinses gaat zitten, terwijl de prins in een beest is veranderd. 'Dag beest,' zegt de prinses, 'hoe gaat het met je ?' Het beest knikt, maar zegt niks. Hij gromt alleen een beetje. Dan komen één voor één de soldaten binnen. 'Weet je,' zegt het beest, 'het gaat niet goed in dromenland. En het is goed dat we allemaal bij elkaar zijn gekomen. Wat zullen we eraan doen. Heeft iemand een idee ?'

Een soldaatje stapt naar voren. 'Dag prins, eh ... prins beest, ik ben Jorit. Mag ik iets zeggen ?' Het beest knikt. 'Gaat u gang,' zegt het beest. Even is het stil, en dan begint het soldaatje te stotteren : 'Ik ... eh ... ik weet niet zo goed hoe i ... ik het moe ... moe ... moet zeggen, maar het komt allemaal door een dromen-bacterie, dus moet er een dokter komen.' Alle andere soldaatjes knikken. Dan loopt het prinsesje naar voren, neemt een slok van het dromensap, en verandert in een dokter. 'Waar is die bacterie ?' zegt de dokter met een donkere stem. Eén van de soldaten stapt naar voren en opent een soort kistje. In het kistje fonkelt een soort glinsterend balletje. De prinses kijkt erin, en daarna ook het beest. Snel slurpt het balletje wat dromensap naar zich toe en begint te drinken. Het balletje groeit en groeit, en na een tijdje is het een groot glibberig en slijmerig monster. 'Waarom breng je dromenland zo in de problemen ?' vraagt de prinses.

'Ach dokter,' zegt het groene monster, 'ik heb gewoon niks te doen, en ik wilde graag naar het kasteel, maar mocht er niet in. Ik dacht : als ik nu ga herrie-schoppen, dan laten ze me misschien wel binnen.'

Het beest begon te glimlachen. Het beest nam nog een slokje en veranderde weer in de prins. 'Zullen we dan gaan voetballen ?' vroeg de prins aan het monster. 'Of zullen we wat spelletjes gaan doen ? Er zijn nog ergens een heleboel spelletjes, ergens in een kast. Als we nu gewoon meer spelletjes gaan doen in dromenland, dan hoeft niemand zich meer te vervelen, en hoeft niemand meer herrie te schoppen.'

'Ja, maar,' zei het monster, 'ik wilde ook gewoon het kasteel in, terwijl ik niet naar binnen mocht.'

'Goed,' zei de prins, 'dan drinkt Wollegras gewoon nog veel meer dromensap, totdat het kasteel zo groot is dat iedereen in dromenland er kan wonen.'

En zo gebeurde het. Het kasteel groeide uit tot een grote stad, maar het was nog steeds een doolhof. En natuurlijk werden er veel spelletjes gedaan. De prins verdeelde de inwoners in vier groepen. Het waren vier spelgroepen met een bepaalde kleur. De groenen kwamen onder leiding van het groene monster, de witten kwamen onder leiding van Wollegras, het kasteel zelf. De gelen kwamen onder leiding van Groepsoe, en de roden kwamen onder leiding van de prins en de prinses. Er waren vele spelletjes die ze konden doen. En zo keerde de rust weer terug in dromenland. Aan het einde van de dag in dromenland waren ze allemaal zo moe geworden dat ze gingen slapen, terwijl de prins met Wollegras vertrok. Even later werd Elwin wakker in zijn bed, terwijl Wollegras nog steeds naast

hem sliep.

'Hallo, wakker worden,' fluistert Elwin heel voorzichtig. En dan wordt Wollegras wakker.

Hoofdstuk 2.

Vandaag gaat Elwin met Groepsoe naar ome Karam, die heel hoog in de lucht woont, ergens in een kasteel in de wolken. Ome Karam heeft een heleboel sprekende kachels. Elwin praat graag met de sprekende kachels, omdat ze nogal vaak goede raad geven, maar Elwin praat ook graag met ome Karam. De thee staat al klaar als ze aankomen. Ome Karam is erg vriendelijk, zoals altijd eigenlijk. Na een tijdje komt Wollegras binnenrennen. Ome Karam is blij hem te zien. En als ome Karam druk in gesprek is met Wollegras en Groepsoe gaat Elwin naar de sprekende kachels toe. Ze geven Elwin weer eens goede raad. 'Blijf hier maar eens een tijdje logeren,' zegt eentje. Ook de anderen vinden dat een goed idee. Dan kunnen ze wat bijpraten. Gelukkig vindt ome Karam het ook een goed idee, en Groepsoe en Wollegras mogen ook blijven.

Achter het kasteel van ome Karam was een weide genaamd de Wolleweide. Alles was hier heel zacht, zodat wanneer je viel je nooit pijn had. Je kreeg alleen dan een klein electrisch stroompje. Hier kon je paardrijden en een heleboel andere dingen doen. Elwin speelde hier graag. Aan het eind van de weide stond een veld vol van sprekende lotus-bloemen die de mooiste verhalen vertelden. Je kon ook in die lotus-bloemen slapen, en Elwin klom er vaak naar binnen.

De lotus-bloemen waren blij dat Elwin weer eens gekomen. Altijd als Elwin over de lotus-bloemen heen huppelde, dan kwam hij uiteindelijk bij een trap van lotus-bloemen waarover hij naar de Grippel-heuvel kon gaan. Op die heuvel daar woonden een heleboel koks, die hele vreemde gerechten maakte. Op de Grippel-heuvel moest Elwin altijd eerst aanbellen, en dan schoof iemand een klein raampje in de deur open, en dan moest Elwin eerst een liedje zingen voordat hij naar binnen mocht. Binnen liepen overal koks met hele lange menu-lijsten van wat ze allemaal zouden eten. En alles moest altijd pico bello in orde zijn, anders werd de koning van de Grippelheuvel boos. De koning zat altijd op een hele hoge troon, en als een kok eens een keer iets liet vallen of iets verkeerds had gekookt dat niet lekker was, dan sprong de koning naar beneden en sloeg zo'n kok dan met een pollepel, heel erg hard.

Maar naar Elwin was de koning altijd erg aardig. De koning was blij dat Elwin weer eens was gekomen. Met een ballonnetje sprong de koning van zijn troon af, en Elwin mocht zelf uitkiezen wat hij wilde eten. Natuurlijk waren dat allemaal erg vreemde gerechten.

Na een tijdje kwamen er een heleboel koks aan marcheren. Ze hadden een sprekende banaan tussen de bananen gevonden. Dat kon natuurlijk niet ... Daar wilden ze niet mee koken. Toen zei de koning dat de sprekende banaan ook wel een kok mocht worden. Dat wilde de banaan wel. Dat was beter dan opgegeten te worden, of weggestuurd worden. Iedereen wilde altijd graag op de Grippelheuvel wonen. Alleen de koks wilden soms weleens met vakantie, vooral als de koning niet zo'n goed humeur had. Maar vandaag was de koning heel vrolijk. Het was vandaag feest, omdat Elwin was gekomen. Elwin kreeg een mooie kamer waar hij mocht logeren, en hij mocht zelfs meehelpen met de koks als hij dat wilde. Sommige ketels waren zo groot dat Elwin erin kon zwemmen.

Middenin de nacht toen iedereen sliep, ging Elwin naar de keuken naar zo'n grote ketel, om daarin te zwemmen. Er zwommen daar ook vissen, en er waren zelfs dieren in bootjes. Ja, dat kon allemaal als de koks sliepen. Na een tijdje kwam de koning ook, en ze maakten dolle pret.

Jaap en André

en de Rusland Machine

Hoofdstuk 1.

"Jaap !" riep moeder, "Opstaan. Het is dinsdagochtend, drie uur in de nacht. We zouden naar professor Malerus gaan." Even was het toen stil, en toen riep ze "André ! Opstaan. Het is tijd !" Het was heel vroeg in de ochtend. De meeste kinderen zouden rondom deze tijd nog slapen, maar Jaap en André waren nu klaarwakker door het gegil van hun moeder. En ze waren blij, want ze mochten naar professor Malerus toe. Dat vonden ze veel leuker dan school.

Na zich aangekleed te hebben zaten ze al snel met moeder aan het ontbijt. Moeder had haar krulspelden in. "Ga je zo naar professor Malerus toe met die krulspelden in je haar ?" vroeg André lachend.

"Welnee," sprak moeder lachend. "Die haal ik er zo uit, maar eet nu snel je bord leeg. We gaan zo weg."

Zo gezegd zo gedaan. Moeder haalde na het ontbijt de krulspelden uit haar haar. Ze stond voor de grote spiegel. Ze deed de krulspelden in een roze gevlochten mandje. De kinderen trokken alvast hun jassen aan. "Gaat u zo naar professor Malerus toe ?" vroeg André lachend. "In uw nachtjapon ?"

Moeder lachte terug. "Waarom niet ? Goed idee. Daar was ik nog niet opgekomen," sprak moeder.

"En met uw pantoffels ?" lachte Jaap.

Moeder lachte. "We hebben nog wel even de tijd." Toen ging ze naar boven, en even later kwam ze naar beneden in een flitsend pak. Het was een zwart pak met allemaal glitters. Ook had ze laarzen aan.

"Gaat u zo naar professor Malerus, in dat flitsende zwarte pak ?" vroeg Jaap. "Hij zou zich rot schrikken."

"Welnee," sprak moeder. "Hij is wel wat gewend."

"U lijkt wel op een superster, mamma," zei André. "Professor Malerus gaat echt schrikken."

"Misschien houdt hij me dan wel," lachte moeder. "Wie zou er nu niet bij professor Malerus willen wonen."

"Mogen wij dan ook bij u wonen ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Natuurlijk," zei moeder. "Jullie zijn toch mijn kinderen ?"

"Maar wat zou pappa daar van vinden ?" vroeg André.

"Dat weet ik niet," lachte moeder. "Maar hij moet er maar aan wennen."

Ze gingen de voordeur uit, en moeder sloot netjes de deur. Toen moesten ze nog even door een stukje bos of park lopen, en kwamen zo aan bij het huis van professor Malerus. Ze belden aan, en hij deed al snel open. Hij keek niet eens naar hen, maar maakte een gebaar dat ze binnen konden komen, en liep door de lange gang heen. "Volgen jullie mij maar," riep hij. Het was diep in de nacht. "Jullie zijn precies op tijd !" riep hij weer. In de woonkamer kregen ze thee, en toen nam hij ze mee naar de kelder over een trap naar beneden, door een andere deur in de woonkamer.

Hij deed een beetje haastig. Ze hadden hun thee nog niet opgedronken, maar stonden daar met hun kopjes in hun handen. Hij liet ze een machine zien. De machine pruttelde verschrikkelijk.

"Wat is het ?" vroeg André.

"Mijn nieuwe uitvinding," sprak professor Malerus.

"Dat begrijp ik," zei André, "maar waar is het voor ?"

"Dat zul je wel zien," zei professor Malerus die niet op of omkeek. Hij was alleen in grote concentratie naar de machine aan het kijken. Hij keek naar wat schermpjes. Er verschenen allerlei ingewikkelde getallen en vreemde symbolen op die André en Jaap niet begrepen.

"Niet te dichtbij komen," sprak professor Malerus. Toen ineens waren er kleine ontploffinkjes in de ketel. Professor Malerus keek naar de stangen die vanuit de ketel liepen. "Het werkt," sprak professor Malerus.

Zachte muziek kwam uit de machine. Met een knopje draaide hij de machine om, en er was een grote open cabine met stoeltjes waar ze op konden zitten. Toen schoof de professor een kap over hen heen. "Donker," zei André.

"Dat moet ook," sprak professor Malerus.

"Ik zie niks," zei Jaap. Toen schoof professor Malerus de kap iets op, en ging toen op het voorste stoeltje zitten. "Nu gaat het beginnen," sprak professor Malerus. Het was alsof er iets bewoog, maar ze wisten niet of het de stoeltjes waren of de machine zelf. Plotseling was alles wit. Ze begonnen het enorm koud te krijgen. Ze waren in de sneeuw. Er was overal ijs.

"Hoe kan dat ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Heel simpel," sprak professor Malerus. En toen volgde er een onnavolgbaar verhaal van ingewikkelde wiskunde en natuurkunde. Jaap en André begrepen er niet veel van. "Ik heb het koud," zei André.

"Oh, het zal nog wel veel kouder worden," zei professor Malerus.

"Waarom zijn we hier dan ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Dat zul je wel zien," sprak professor Malerus. De stoeltjes zweefden gewoon over het ijs en de sneeuw heen, totdat ze bij de zee aankwamen. "In de zee is het lekker warm," sprak professor Malerus. Na een tijdje lagen ze in de zee, en professor Malerus lachte. Er waren hier ook zwembanden. "Mijn pak !" riep moeder. Jaap en André lachten. "En uw haar !" riep André. Professor Malerus gaf hen zwemkleding en sprak : "Doe je kleren maar uit, daar heb je allemaal niets meer aan." Het water was inderdaad lekker warm. Het was hier heel tropisch, terwijl verderop nog sneeuw en ijs was. "Dit is een oase in het ijs," zei professor Malerus. "Komt niet vaak voor."

"Is het zeldzaam ?" vroeg André. Professor Malerus knikte.

Ineens was alles zwart. Het bleek dat ze al die tijd gewoon in de machine zaten. "Het leek net echt," zei Jaap. "Ik had het ook echt koud, en daarna warm."

"Dit was maar een voorbeeldje," zei professor Malerus.

"Waar waren we ?" vroeg André.

"Gewoon in de machine," sprak professor Malerus.

"Gewoon allemaal nep ?" vroeg André.

"Ja, een gesimuleerde werkelijkheid," sprak professor Malerus.

"Mogen we hier blijven ?" vroeg Jaap. "Ik zou hier wel naar school willen."

"Nee," zei moeder. "Het ritje is nu afgelopen. We gaan nu naar huis. Je vader zou het vast geen goed idee vinden als jullie hier blijven."

"Ah, toe nou," zei André. "U zei dat u zelf wel heel graag bij professor Malerus zou willen blijven

wonen."

"Dat was maar een grapje," zei moeder. "Het zou me wel leuk lijken, maar het is niet haalbaar. Je vader zou dat nooit goedvinden."

"Ah," zei Jaap, "mams, toe nou, doe niet zo flauw. We kunnen het toch proberen ? Misschien vindt pappa het wel heel leuk, en komt hij ook."

"Daar zou ik niet van uitgaan," zei moeder streng.

"Mams, doe niet zo flauw !" riep André. "U gunt ons niets. Wij willen hier blijven, en nu loopt u moeilijk te doen."

"Professor, doe iets," zei moeder.

"Tja," zei professor Malerus, "als ze het zo graag willen. Er is hier ook een school in de machine. Een veel betere school, al zeg ik het zelf. Het zou veel beter voor de kinderen zijn. Waarom denk je dat ik al deze uitvindingen heb gemaakt ?"

Moeder schoof de kap omhoog, stond op en liep de cabine van de machine uit. "Goed, maar ik heb jullie gewaarschuwd," zei ze boos. "Jullie horen nog van mij en je vader."

Stampvoetend liep ze de kelder uit de trap op. Professor Malerus ging ook de machine uit, want hij zou verder gaan met nieuwe uitvindingen. Professor Malerus was nooit klaar. De jongens bleven op hun stoeltjes zitten, en even later waren ze weer in het ijsgebied, en toen in de warme zee. "Waar moeten we nu naartoe ?" vroeg André. "De professor zei dat er hier ook een school was, dus die moeten we dan eerst zoeken," zei Jaap.

"Kom mee," zei André, terwijl hij Jaap het water uittrok. Samen renden ze het strandje over totdat ze in een klein bosje kwamen. Hier was een pad met kiezelsteentjes, en die leidde naar een dorp. Ze begonnen steeds meer huizen te zien tussen de bomen, dus ze wisten dat ze hier dichtbij de school moesten zijn. Ze waren erg benieuwd. "Wat zouden we daar leren ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Ik hoop een hoop leuke dingen," zei André, "niet zo saai als op onze school. Al die getalletjes en dat netjes schrijven gedoe, daar wordt je toch helemaal gek van ?"

Na een tijdje kwamen ze bij een school aan. Ze liepen het pleintje over en gingen direct naar binnen. Een juffrouw zat in een leeg klaslokaal.

"Kom, kom," fluisterde de juffrouw.

"Wie bent u ?" vroeg André, "en waarom is uw klas leeg ?"

"Ik ben juffrouw Amulek," fluisterde de vrouw, "en mijn klas is leeg omdat het nog geen tijd is."

"Waarom fluistert u ?" vroeg Jaap die om zich heen keek.

"Ik geef altijd fluisterend les," fluisterde de juffrouw. "Jullie zijn hier in het Fluister dorp. Iedereen fluistert hier."

"Vreemd," zei André.

"Okay," fluisterde Jaap. "En waarom is dat ?"

"Dan letten de kinderen beter op," fluisterde de juffrouw. "Iedereen heeft zo meer aandacht voor elkaar. Alleen op donderdag spreekt men. Donderdag is praatdag, en de andere dagen zijn de fluisterdagen."

"Waarom is dat ?" fluisterde Jaap weer.

"Omdat Donderdag de vrije dag is," fluisterde de juffrouw. "Dat is de rustdag, de dag waarop je niet hoeft op te letten."

"Is dat overal zo hier ?" vroeg Jaap ineens, niet meer fluisterend. "Ik zou moe worden van al dat gefluister."

"Nee," fluisterde de juffrouw, "alleen hier. Dit is het fluisterdorp, oftewel het Dinsdag Dorp. Als je gewoon wil praten dan moet je naar het Donderdag Dorp gaan, hier verderop."

"Dat lijkt me beter," zei André. "Hoe komen we daar ?"

"Gewoon het dorp uitlopen tot aan het kiezelpad, en dan door het bos loop je er vanzelf tegenaan," fluisterde de juffrouw. "Maar voordat je gaat is er wel iets wat je moet weten. Alleen op Donderdag kan men het dorp in en uit. Op de andere dagen laten de dorpwachters je er niet door."

"Dan wachten we wel," sprak André.

"Maar dan moet je wel zorgen dat je vandaag nog uit het Dinsdag Dorp gaat," fluisterde de juffrouw. "In het bos tussen het Dinsdag Dorp en het Donderdag Dorp moet je wachten. Je kunt alleen maar op Dinsdag in en uit het Dinsdagdorp."

"Wat een gedoe allemaal," zei Jaap.

"Waar is het allemaal goed voor ?" vroeg André.

"Om veiligheidsredenen," fluisterde de juffrouw.

Zijn er ook dorpen waar je gewoon op alle dagen van de week in en uit kunt ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Nee, die zijn er niet," fluisterde de juffrouw. "Dit is het Donderdag Land, en dat land kent alleen maar twee dorpen. Dit dorp, en het Donderdag Dorp. Het Dinsdag Dorp is het eerste dorp van het land, en je komt er alleen in op Dinsdag. Dinsdag is de poortwachter van het land Donderdag.

Dinsdag Dorp is het poortdorp."

"Belachelijk," zei Jaap.

André stootte hem aan.

"Ik heb die poortwachter genaamd Dinsdag niet eens gezien," zei Jaap. André begon te lachen.

De juffrouw zei niets. Na een tijdje fluisterde ze : "Het is een reus. Hij is eerst heel koud, en dan heel warm."

"Oh, dat ijsgebied met die warme zee," lachte André. "Dus de reus is een soort landschap, verder onzichtbaar als reus ?"

"Zoiets," fluisterde de juffrouw, "maar zo is hij niet altijd. Reus Dinsdag noemen we hem."

"En wanneer kan iemand het Donderdag land weer uit dan ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Ook alleen op Dinsdag," fluisterde de juffrouw.

"Griezelig," zei Jaap.

"Elk land heeft zijn eigen wetten," fluisterde de juffrouw. "De reus beschermt het land goed. We zijn zeer trots op hem."

Er begonnen al wat kinderen fluisterend de klas binnen te komen. Jaap en André bedankten de juffrouw en liepen toen door het dorp heen totdat ze bij het kiezelpad aankwamen. Het was dinsdag, dus ze konden het dorp uit. Ze wisten dat ze in het bos moesten wachten tot donderdag om het Donderdag Dorp in te kunnen. Het lopen duurde niet lang, en ze konden in ieder geval al om het Donderdag Dorp heenlopen om het te bekijken. Het was gelukkig warm, dus ze konden gewoon in de open lucht slapen. Er stonden zelfs wat lege tentjes hier en daar.

Hoofdstuk 2.

Donderdag Dorp was van de buitenkant prachtig, en Jaap en André werden steeds nieuwsgieriger. De hele dag waren ze bezig met onderzoeken, en aan het einde van de dag waren ze verschrikkelijk moe, en gingen één van de tentjes binnen om daar te slapen. De volgende dag was het woensdag, en ze waren al vroeg op. Ze zagen er naar uit Donderdag Dorp te kunnen binnengaan, maar dan

moesten ze tot donderdag wachten. Weer gingen ze de buitenkant van het dorp onderzoeken en liepen om het hele dorp heen. Het was prachtig natuurgebied, en het lag aan een meer. Maar plotseling werd alles donker. En ineens werd de kap van de cabine van de machine opgetrokken. Regelrecht keken Jaap en André in de gezichten van drie politie agenten. "Eruit, jongens," sprak een agent. Hij trok hen één voor één aan hun arm de cabine uit. "Waar is professor Malerus ?" vroeg André.

"Die is gearresteerd," zei de agent. "Kinderen van school weghouden is een kwalijke zaak. Bovendien heeft hij verdachte uitvindingen gemaakt, waarvan deze machine er één is. Kom op, jongens, dat is geen plaats voor kinderen. Ga terug naar huis."

"Ja maar ..." zei Jaap.

"Niets te ja-maaren," bromde de agent. "Wegwezen nu." Hij begon hen al met zijn politie knuppel te slaan, dus toen zijn ze maar gegaan. Thuisgekomen zagen ze hun woeste vader op de bank zitten, en moeder was ook niet al te vrolijk. Hun vader stond op en begon te tieren. "Dat wordt de hele week straf," bulderde hij. "Geen televisie, en vroeg naar bed."

"Ik zei het jullie toch !" riep moeder. "Maar toch maar koppig en eigenwijs zijn."

"Professor Malerus is in de gevangenis," zei André sip.

"Dat heeft hij verdiend ook !" brulde vader. "Die man moet met zijn tengels van kinderen afblijven. Hij zou jullie totaal verpesten door zijn vreemde machines. Een kind moet naar school."

"Ja maar in het Donderdag land zijn ook scholen," zei Jaap.

"Donderdag land ?" lachte vader spottend. "Hoe kom je daar nu weer bij ? Dat zal me een school wezen dan. Die professor is niet goed bij zijn hoofd."

"Hoe weet u dat nou ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Naar boven nu," brulde vader. "Naar jullie kamer. Ruim die maar eens op om ergens mee te beginnen."

Jaap en André liepen mopperend naar boven. Hun vader had vast en zeker de politie gebeld.

André en Jaap begonnen hun kamer op te ruimen zoals hun vader hen had opgedragen. Bij het avondeten vroegen ze of ze professor Malerus in de gevangenis mochten bezoeken. "Eén keer per week," zei vader. "Want er is maar één keer per week bezoekuur."

"Welke dag is dat ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Altijd op de donderdag van vier tot vijf," sprak vader.

"Oh donderdag," zei André. "Dat is morgen al." Beiden kregen ze een dikke glimlach. Ook moeder

zou met hen mee gaan. "Doet u uw zwarte pak met glitters weer aan, mamma ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Nee, Jaap," zei moeder streng. "Die gaat trouwens in de was."

"Wat gaat u dan aandoen, mams ?" vroeg André.

"Dat doet er niet toe," sprak moeder. "Professor Malerus heeft toch nergens oog voor, vooral niet nu hij in de gevangenis zit. Hij zal wel genoeg aan zijn hoofd hebben."

"Maar wij hebben wel altijd oog voor u, mams," zei Jaap.

"Het zou handig zijn als je ook eens wat oor zou hebben voor je moeder in plaats van alleen maar een oog," sprak moeder streng.

"Ach, die stomme politie agenten kwamen weer net op het verkeerde moment," mopperde Jaap. "We waren net ons aan het voorbereiden om Donderdag Dorp te bezoeken."

"Heb maar niet zulke praatjes," zei moeder nijdig. "Wat als je daar iets in de nek zou springen waar je niet op had gerekend ? Je weet het maar nooit met zulke gevaarlijke uitvindingen van professor Malerus."

"Eerst was u nog enthousiast !" riep André, "en toen we het leuk begonnen te vinden werd u een grote spelbreker."

"Daar zijn moeders voor," zei moeder. "En jullie vonden het iets te leuks. School gaat altijd voor het leuke."

"In Donderdag Dorp zou er ook school zijn," zei André.

"Afgelopen nu, en dooreten," bromde vader. Er werd toen niets meer gezegd. De volgende dag gingen ze met moeder professor Malerus in de gevangenis bezoeken. Moeder begon hem direct uit te foeteren met het bezoek uur. "Zie je nu wel waar het je allemaal gebracht heeft !" tierde ze. "En wees maar blij dat we je nog bezoeken."

André en Jaap waren kwaad op hun moeder, en dat lieten ze ook merken. "Ga jij dan maar weer weg !" riep Jaap. En dat deed moeder. Na haar woordje gezegd te hebben liep ze stampvoetend weg.

"Klaarblijkelijk ben ik een gevaar voor de samenleving," sprak professor Malerus. "Ze willen mij opgesloten houden in de gevangenis voor de rest van mijn leven."

"Dat nooit !" foeterde Jaap. "Dat is belachelijk. Uw uitvindingen zouden zoveel voor de samenleving kunnen betekenen."

"Blijkbaar denkt de politie daar anders over," sprak professor Malerus.

"Wat een stelletje apen," foeterde Jaap.

"We kunnen toch terug naar uw machine om hulp te halen uit het Donderdag land ?" fluisterde André, die niet wilde dat de bewakers het zouden horen. "Ze hebben daar ook een reus genaamd Dinsdag, de poortwachter van het land. Misschien dat hij iets kan betekenen ?"

Professor Malerus glimlachte. "Slimme jongen," zei hij zacht. "Onder de deurmat voor de voordeur ligt een extra sleutel. Beproef ons geluk maar, jongen, want hier heb ik geen leven," zei hij toen fluisterend. Even legde de professor de jongens nog uit hoe de machine op gang gezet kon worden. Ook dit deed hij fluisterend. De jongens moesten direct terugdenken aan de fluisterende juffrouw Amulek in het Dinsdag Dorp, wat het fluisterdorp was.

Maar toen ze bij het huis van professor Malerus aankwamen zagen ze agenten in en rondom het huis. Ze hoopten maar dat de machine niet in beslag genomen zou worden.

Toen ze thuiskwamen waren vader en moeder weer erg chagrijnig. André stootte Jaap aan en zei fluisterend : "Waren we nog maar in het Donderdag land."

Fluisterend zei Jaap terug : "Daar komen we hopelijk snel weer terug. Even afwachten totdat dat politie gespuis weer weg is."

Ze gingen direct weer naar hun kamer. Ze moesten toch nog huiswerk doen, en bij hun vader en moeder te zitten was nu echt geen pretje. Midden in de nacht maakte André Jaap wakker. Ze zouden het nu alles rustig was nog een keer proberen. Heel stilletjes kleedden ze zichzelf aan en gingen het huis uit. Ze hoopten maar dat vader en moeder niets zouden merken, want dan zou het huis te klein zijn. Gelukkig ging het goed. Het was diep in de nacht, en gelukkig was er ook geen politie bij het huis van professor Malerus. André keek onder de deurmat voor de voordeur, en daar lag inderdaad de sleutel, die hij toen pakte. Beiden konden ze zo het huis binnenkomen. Ze liepen de lange gang door naar de woonkamer en gingen toen direct door de andere deur in de woonkamer de trap af om in de kelder te komen. Tot hun grote opluchting stond daar nog steeds de machine. Het was een heel groot ding, en professor Malerus had hen precies uitgelegd hoe het ding op gang te krijgen. Al gauw pruttelde de machine. Even later waren er de kleine ontploffinkjes die nodig waren om de machine te laten starten. Ze gingen de cabine binnen en gingen op de stoeltjes zitten.

'Wacht,' sprak een stem. 'Wat doen jullie hier ?"

De jongens schrokken. "Wie bent u ?" vroeg André.

"Ik ben reus Dinsdag, de poortwachter van het Donderdag land," sprak de stem. "Het is nu geen dinsdag, dus ik kan jullie niet toelaten, helaas."

"We hebben u nodig," smeekte André, en begon het hele verhaal te vertellen over hoe professor Malerus in de gevangenis terecht kwam.

"Maar dat is verschrikkelijk !" zei reus Dinsdag luid. "Door hem bestaan wij. Hij is onze vader, onze uitvinder, onze ... Maar wacht eens even ... Hebben jullie die twee stangen gezien aan de

voorkant van de machine ? De roze dinsdag stang, de fluisterstang, en de blauwe donderdag stang. Ze lopen vanuit de ketel."

"Ja, die hebben we gezien," zei Jaap.

"Nu, luister goed," zei reus Dinsdag. "Als die stangen verwisseld worden, dan wordt jullie wereld verwisseld met de onze, dus dan is onze wereld buiten de machine, en jullie wereld binnenin de machine. Ik ben de poortwachter van de machine, dus dan is het voor mij een koud kunstje om professor Malerus uit de gevangenis te halen."

"Maar hoe werkt dat dan ?" vroeg André.

"Daar hebben we juffrouw Amulek voor nodig," sprak de reus. "Die kan ze zo verwisselen. Die is zo handig met dit soort dingen. En dan hoeft ze ook niet meer te fluisteren. Ze moeten in het Dinsdag Dorp alle dagen van de week, behalve donderdag, fluisteren, anders zou de machine ketel te veel onder druk staan en dan zouden we er allemaal aangaan. Dat komt omdat professor Malerus de stangen verkeerd heeft geinstalleerd. In zijn verstrooidheid heeft hij de stangen met elkaar verwisseld."

"Maar waarom zegt u dat nu pas ? Had u dat niet even aan professor Malerus kunnen doorgeven toen hij nog hier was ?" vroeg Jaap, "Dan had dit allemaal voorkomen kunnen worden."

"Ik ben zelf ook nogal vergeetachtig," sprak reus Dinsdag. "Maar ik herinnerde me het ineens weer."

Hoofdstuk 3.

"Juffrouw Amulek !" riep reus Dinsdag.

"Ja," fluisterde iemand.

"Kun je even komen helpen met het verwisselen van de stangen," vroeg reus Dinsdag. "Professor Malerus had ze per ongeluk verwisseld. De roze stang moet op de plek van de blauwe, en de blauwe moet op de plek van de roze."

"Komt voor elkaar," fluisterde juffrouw Amulek.

Ze zagen verder niets, maar voelden een warme wind over zich heenkomen. Er was ineens veel gekraak in de machine, en zelfs gekrijs. Er was toen een enorme ontploffing in de ketel, maar gelukkig ging alles goed. Dat hoorde erbij volgens reus Dinsdag. "Gepiept," zei juffrouw Amulek.

"We zijn buiten de machine !" riep de reus. "Je kan weer gewoon praten, juffrouw Amulek. De ketel zal er niet meer door onder druk staan."

Juffrouw Amulek zuchtte diep. "Dat is een hele opluchting," sprak ze op normale toon.

"U heeft een mooie stem, juffrouw Amulek," sprak Jaap.

"Dank je," sprak juffrouw Amulek.

"Dus nu zijn vader en moeder, en professor Malerus in de machine ?" vroeg André.

"Ja," sprak de reus. "Nu is hun wereld de gesimuleerde werkelijkheid die bedient kan worden door knopjes."

"En hoe komt professor Malerus nu vrij ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Ik ga er vannacht naartoe," sprak reus Dinsdag. "Juffrouw Amulek kan mooi de knopjes bedienen."

En zo gebeurde het. De machine stond nu in de school van juffrouw Amulek, en het huis van professor Malerus was waar zij die door de machine heengingen terecht kwamen. André en Jaap bleven bij juffrouw Amulek, want het zou veel te gevaarlijk zijn. Wel konden ze alles op een scherm volgen. Reus Dinsdag kwam in het huis van professor Malerus terecht, en ging toen naar buiten op weg naar de gevangenis. Maar plotseling viel het beeld weg. Ze zagen niets dan sneeuw op het beeld. Toen herinnerden André en Jaap het weer. Reus Dinsdag kon in een ijsgebied veranderen. Daarna zagen ze de warme zee op het scherm, en toen ineens het hoofd van professor Malerus die door een zwemband naar boven kwam. André en Jaap moesten lachen. Ze waren erg opgelucht. De operatie leek geslaagd. "Kom maar uit de cabine, professor Malerus," sprak juffrouw Amulek vriendelijk. En daar kwam professor Malerus onder de cabine-kap vandaan. "Goed gedaan jongens, en meisje," sprak professor Malerus. "Ik dacht even dat ik er nooit meer uit zou komen. Ik ga er nu heel lang aan werken om het een totaal nieuwe wereld te maken in de machine."

André en Jaap glimlachten. Ze wilden niet meer terug. Ze zouden nu hierblijven. Ze zouden voorlopig wonen in het huisje van juffrouw Amulek. Ze kon hele lekkere lommer-soep maken. Maar op een dag was de machine van professor Malerus kapot, en niemand kon het meer aan de praat krijgen, zelfs juffrouw Amulek niet, en langzaam begon alles weer te worden als vanouds. De machine stond gewoon weer in de kelder van professor Malerus. Het Donderdag land leek niet meer te bestaan sinds de machine kapot was. Ook reus Dinsdag en juffrouw Amulek waren verdwenen. Maar gelukkig was professor Malerus nog steeds vrij. "Ik moet onderduiken, jongens," sprak hij. "Alles is teruggedraaid zoals het was, omdat de machine stuk is. Als ze me vinden zullen ze me weer opsluiten," sprak professor Malerus.

"Maar hoe kan dat ?" vroeg Jaap. "U bent toch de professor ? Wat is er dan gebeurd ?"

"Er is iets doorgebrand," sprak de professor. "Het is heel kostbaar en zeldzaam spul wat alleen in Afrika groeit. Ik moet hier weg, en misschien zoeken in Afrika, en dan weer terugkomen om de machine proberen te herstellen, maar ach, laat maar, ik weet zeker dat ik gezocht wordt, overal. Ik ben in hun ogen een gevaarlijke ontsnapte crimineel. Ik zou nooit ver komen."

"Maar kunt u dan geen ander materiaal ervoor in de plaats gebruiken ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Onmogelijk," sprak de professor. "Zonder dit materiaal werkt het gewoon niet. Het is doorgebrand en ik krijg het niet meer goed."

André en Jaap keken sip. "En onze vader en moeder zullen ons snel terugvinden," zei Jaap. "Wij zullen dan ook met u moeten onderduiken. Waar zullen we naartoe gaan ?"

"Ik heb nog wel ergens een vriendin," sprak professor Malerus. "Ik weet zeker dat zij mij wel zou willen helpen, en jullie natuurlijk. Ze heeft een groot huis met veel kamers, dus dat komt wel goed. Dan nemen we de machine mee."

Met een telefoontje was het snel geregeld. De machine was gemaakt van speciale opvouwbare materialen. Zelfs het metaal was opvouwbaar, en alles paste net in een koffertje. André en Jaap keken er verbaasd naar toen de professor de machine opvouwde. Met wat koffers gingen ze even later naar het station. Professor Malerus had een hoed en een zonnebril op omdat hij niet herkend wilde worden. Ze zouden met de trein gaan.

Penitide heette de vrouw. Ze kwam hen na de treinreis van het station afhalen. Ze begreep het hele verhaal en stond achter zijn uitvindingen. Ze vond dat professor Malerus een onbegrepen genie was die tegen de staat beschermd moest worden. In het huis van Penitide kregen ze alle drie hun eigen slaap kamer. In een speciaal kamertje werd de machine uitgevouwen. Ook Penitide kreeg het verhaal te horen wat er mankeerde aan de machine. Toen ze hoorde over het ontbrekende Afrikaanse materiaal sprak ze : "Laat ik nou net daar iets van hebben. Drie jaar geleden was ik in Afrika, en vond het gesteente los in een grot. Ik heb het meegenomen als aandenken. Het ligt in een mandje op zolder, maar als het gebruikt kan worden om die machine weer aan de praat te brengen, dan graag. Dan heeft het toch nog een functie in plaats van alleen maar in een mandje te liggen de hele dag. Er keek toch geen ene kip naar. Het lag daar maar te liggen. Het is inderdaad een soort brandbaar schuimsteen. Het schijnt ook na verloop van tijd te krimpen, dus het is na een bepaalde tijd altijd weer aan vervanging toe. Zeg, zou je niet iets kunnen uitvinden wat ervoor zorgt dat het spul niet meer doorbrand of krimpt ?"

Professor Malerus keek verbaasd, en het gaf ook de jongens weer wat hoop. "Ik kan me dat bijna niet voorstellen dat dat hetzelfde spul is als wat ik nodig heb voor mijn machine," sprak professor Malerus. "Dat spul is zo zeldzaam dat je dat echt niet ergens zomaar in een Afrikaanse grot tegen kan komen. Het groeit alleen diep onder de grond. Het is ook niet echt gesteente, maar meer iets plantaardigs. Waarschijnlijk heb je je vergist. Ik kan het me haast niet voorstellen. Het is een soort kruid. Het is brandbaar en krimpt, en om bruikbaar te zijn voor mijn machine moet het aan een heleboel voorwaardes voldoen. Ik denk dat ik de moed maar moet opgeven."

"Ik zal het wel even halen," sprak Penitide, en ging naar het zolder. Even later kwam ze met het mandje terug, maar professor Malerus begon al direct met zijn hoofd te schudden. "Nee, nee nee, dit is het echt niet." Toen begon hij wat te mompelen, en vreemde formules op te zeggen. "Er mankeert heel wat aan, en ik kan dit nooit voor mijn machine gebruiken. Geen denken aan. Het lijkt misschien een beetje op dat wat ik bedoel, maar het is het echt niet."

Hoofdstuk 4.

"Zou ik jou eens wat zeggen ?" vroeg Penitide. "Volgens mij is dit net wat je nodig hebt, en zit je het gewoon moeilijker te maken dan wat het is. Waarom probeer je het niet gewoon ? Nee heb je en ja kun je krijgen."

"Nee, Penitide," sprak professor Malerus. "Ik zou er alleen maar mijn tijd mee verdoen om jou valse hoop te geven. Echt niet, meisje."

Maar ook de jongens begonnen aan te dringen. Ze wisten namelijk hoe verstrooid de professor kon zijn. Dat hadden ze wel gemerkt met die stangen.

Na een lange tijd stemde professor Malerus eindelijk toe, maar gewoon om van het gezeur af te zijn. Hij begon met een mesje in het spul te snijden, en begon even later het spul te installeren. Toen startte hij de machine. "Lieve hemel," zei hij na een tijdje terwijl hij op de schermpjes keek. "Het schijnt te werken. Ik kan mijn ogen niet geloven."

"Zie je nu wel, verstrooide professor," sprak Penitide. "Nu moet je alleen nog een middeltje vinden waardoor het spul niet meer door kan branden en niet meer kan krimpen, maar voorlopig hebben we meer dan genoeg." Ook de jongens waren blij. Professor Malerus trok de kap van de cabine open, en ze gingen alle vier op de stoeltjes zitten. Hij trok de kap weer dicht totdat het pikkedonker was. Al snel begonnen ze het koud te krijgen. Ze hoorden het loeien van een ijsstorm, wat bijna krijste in hun oren. "Ik ken dit helemaal niet !" riep de professor. "Er is iets goed fout."

Overal was ijs en sneeuw, en er was veel storm. In de verte zagen ze lawines. "Laten we dan teruggaan," sprak Penitide kalm.

"Dat kan ik niet," zei de professor in paniek. "Daarom zei ik dat er wat goed fout zit."

Ook de jongens begonnen in paniek te raken. "Wat is er mis dan, professor ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Het mechanische systeem van de machine is al bevroren," sprak de professor.

"Hoe komt dat ?" vroeg André.

"Waarschijnlijk door het nieuwe spul wat jullie koste wat het koste wilden gebruiken voor de machine," sprak de professor.

"Ik wist niet dat er gevaren waren," sprak Penitide kalm. "Dan had je me dat moeten uitleggen."

"Dat heb ik gedaan, maar je wilde niet luisteren," foeterde de professor.

"Niet waar," zei Penitide. "Je zei alleen dat het niet zou werken, niet dat er gevaren zouden zijn."

Even later keken ze in een afgrond van lava. "We zijn er geweest," sprak de professor. "Het gat komt steeds dichterbij om ons op te slokken."

"Doe iets, Malerus," sprak Penitide.

"Ik kan niks, dankzij jou," sprak de professor.

"Nee, nee !" krijste André. "Ik wil niet dood."

Jaap begon te huilen. "Ik heb het zo heet. Straks smelt ik weg."

"Nee joh," zei Penitide. "We verzinnen wel wat."

"Allemaal blijven zitten," zei de professor.

Het begon steeds heter te worden, en ze waren nu gevaarlijk dicht bij het lava gekomen, totdat ook Penitide haar kalmte verloor. "Nu begrijp ik waarom ze jou lieten opsluiten ! Je bent levensgevaarlijk ! Moet je zien wat je gemaakt hebt !" riep ze. "Dat is toch niet meer normaal ? We worden zodadelijk gegrild. Wie wil er nu een gebakken eitje zijn hier ?"

"Jouw idee," zei de professor, die ook al zwaar aan het zweten was. "Als jouw verdachte materiaal zich aan de voorschriften had gehouden dan was er niets aan de hand geweest. Jij dwong mij om het te gebruiken."

"Geef anderen maar weer de schuld," foeterde Penitide. "Dat is altijd makkelijk. Jij had moeten ingrijpen als je wist hoe gevaarlijk dit kon zijn."

"Ik kon niet meer ingrijpen, want jij had het roer overgenomen," zei de professor. Hij was al aan het beven vanwege de warmte.

"Je hebt gewoon geen ruggegraat," foeterde Penitide. "Ze kunnen je als watje verkopen bij de drogist."

"Nu niet zwaar beledigend gaan doen, Penitide," sprak de professor, "doe dat niet." De professor

was aan het klooien met een klein apparaatje wat hij uit zijn zak had gehaald. "Ik zal kijken of ik .... ik zal kij ... Ik zal kijken of ik reus Dinsdag door een bepaalde code kan bereiken," zuchtte de professor bevend en verzwakt.

"Ik kan niet meer," jammerde André. Ineens werden ze weggeduwd van de lava door een frisse wind. Het was reus Dinsdag. "Hier moet je niet komen !" riep de reus.

"Het is het verkeerde materiaal in de uitgangen A en U !" riep de professor.

"Nee, professor !" bulderde de reus. "Dit is komen te ontstaan omdat de machine te lang kapot is geweest. Onze hele wereld is ten onder gegaan. Er is geen Donderdag land meer."

"Waar is juffrouw Amulek ?" riep Jaap, "en alle kinderen van haar school ?"

Een zachte wind had hen inmiddels meegenomen. "Ze zijn allemaal veilig in een grot waar ik ze naartoe genomen heb."

De zachte wind leidde hen naar een berg waar een grote grot was. Daar waren alle inwoners van Donderdag land ondergebracht.

"Zie je nu wel," foeterde Penitide kwaad. "Het lag niet aan mijn materiaal, maar aan jouw kapotte machine."

"Ik heb een andere mening," zei de professor.

"Ik had je nooit moeten binnennemen," zei Penitide. "Grootste vergissing in mijn leven. Het is mijn eigen dikke schuld."

"Deze situatie was al voordat de machine gerepareerd werd door het nieuwe materiaal," sprak de reus. "Door het nieuwe materiaal kon ik eindelijk een schuilplaats vinden voor mijn volk."

"Je kletst," foeterde de professor. "Het nieuwe materiaal sluit niet aan op mijn machine. Er gaat teveel fout."

"Zitten we niet goed hier, professor ?" vroeg de reus.

"We kunnen er niet meer uit," sprak de professor, "en dat komt door het nieuwe materiaal. Het heeft mijn toegang tot het centrale systeem geblokkeerd. Ik kan mijn machine niet meer bedienen."

"Wat nu ?" vroeg de reus.

"De enige oplossing zou zijn een extra derde stang in de ketel te plaatsen," sprak de professor. "Die stang zou dan een vervanging moeten zijn voor het systeem met het zeldzame Afrikaanse materiaal. Dat systeem moet echt weg, want het veroorzaakt teveel problemen, en zal ook altijd weer aan vervanging toe zijn na een bepaalde tijd."

"Wat voor stang is het, professor ?" vroeg de reus.

Er gaat van alles mis als die stang er niet is," sprak de professor. "Er komen de grootst mogelijke ruzies en oorlogen van. Ja, ik herinner het me weer, ik herinner me het weer. Ik ook altijd met mijn verstrooide kop." De professor begon toen steeds meer geheimzinnig te kijken. "Het is de woensdag stang, het geheim van Woensdag."

"En waar kunnen we het vinden, professor ?" vroeg de reus.

"Eens even kijken, even nadenken," sprak de professor. "Ja, ik weet het weer. Ik heb het weer. Het gebeurt alleen op woensdag. Het is een rode stang. Zodra het komt zullen de dorpen weer terug zijn, en er zal een nieuw dorp bij zijn : het Woensdag dorp. Reus Dinsdag, herinner jij je reus Woensdag nog ? Heel lang geleden. Hij kwam bij je wieg staan. Ik herinner me dat als hij kwaad werd dan waren er ijstormen, lawines, en veel lava. Ik denk dat hij het was. We waren hem vergeten. Ik was hem vergeten. Hij wil weer terug. Reus Woensdag heeft de woensdag stang. Eens ging hij zeilen, maar hij kwam nooit meer terug. Ik ben hem vergeten, en dat neemt hij me kwalijk. Maar hij zou ons nooit daadwerkelijk kwaaddoen. Daarom zijn we hier."

"Nou, het was anders knap eng," zei Jaap.

"Hij houdt van griezelen," zei de professor. "Het is een griezelreus, maar hij is heel goedmoedig."

"Waar woont hij, professor ?" vroeg reus Dinsdag. "Dat moet dan wel van heel lang geleden zijn, want ik kan hem niet meer herinneren. Ik was nog te jong."

"Ik weet niet waar hij woont," sprak de professor. "Maar hij moet dichtbij zijn, heel dichtbij. Hij is teruggekomen."

Plotseling stond er een vurige gestalte in de opening van de grot. "Gij hebt mij gewekt. Wat moet gij van mij ?" brulde de gestalte.

"Ah, daar is reus Woensdag," sprak de professor. "Ben je teruggekomen, jongen ? Ik heb de rode stang nodig."

"Die krijg je niet !" bulderde reus Woensdag.

Hoofdstuk 5.

"Jij bent de enige die ons kunt redden, reus Woensdag," sprak de professor.
"Dan red ik je niet, red jezelf," bulderde de reus.
"Alles wat we willen is de rode stang," sprak de professor.

"Die heb ik niet," bulderde de reus.
"Woensdag geef ik het je," bulderde de reus weer.

"Het is vandaag woensdag," sprak de professor.

"Laat maar zitten dan !" bulderde de reus. Toen vertrok hij weer.

"Zie, hij wil niet meewerken," sprak de professor.

Na een tijdje kwam reus Woensdag weer terug. Ditmaal was hij een gestalte van ijs. Hij gooide een rode staaf naar de professor. "Ik kan hem toch niet langer houden, want mijn vingers beginnen ervan te branden," bulderde de reus.

"Dat komt omdat de stang terug wil waar het hoort," sprak de professor.

"Je hebt me nogal babbels," bulderde de reus.

"Wat is het geheim van woensdag ?" vroeg reus Dinsdag.

"Woensdag was ooit de slaapdag van de reuzen," sprak de professor. "Dan bleven ze de hele dag slapen, en dan gingen ze dromen, de mooiste dromen."

Plotseling begon de rode stang te spreken : "Werp me naar boven. Dan zal ik me in de machine installeren." Dat deed de professor. Er was toen een enorme ontploffing. De ketel begon anders te werken. Jaap en André keken hun ogen uit. Het Donderdag land begon weer terug te komen. Maar ineens waren er nog meer explosies. Versuft zaten ze alle vier op de grond in het kamertje waar de machine stond, in het huis van Penitide : André, Jaap, de professor en Penitide. De machine was overhit geraakt, en was ontploft. Er was niet veel meer van over.

"Mijn arme kunstwerk !" jammerde de professor.

"Jij altijd en je goede ideeën," foeterde Penitide. "Je bent levensgevaarlijk, ook vooral levensgevaarlijk voor kinderen. In de gevangenis hoor je thuis. Eigenlijk zou ik nu direct de politie willen bellen. Je rommelt maar wat aan met je verstrooide kop."

"Maar dan zullen ze jou als medeplichtig houden," sprak de professor. "Je bent al te diep in de nesten geraakt, vriendin. Er is geen weg terug meer voor jou nu."

"Puh, dat maak ik zelf nog wel uit," foeterde Penitide. "Pak jullie spullen en maak dat je wegkomt. Ik wil niets meer met deze zaak te maken hebben. Ik ben er helemaal klaar mee. Je mag hopen dat ik niet alsnog de politie telefoneer."

"Je weet dat jij dan ook goed erbij bent, vriendin," sprak de professor.

"Ik ben je vriendin niet, als je dat maar weet," sprak Penitide. "Pak je spullen en vertrek, nu."

"Die machine mag je houden als aandenken," zei de professor. "Ik ben er ook klaar mee. Ik kan het toch niet meer gebruiken, en de rommel valt ook niet op te vouwen."

"Mij met de rommel achterlaten zeker," sprak Penitide. "Komt niks van in. Neem je rommel mee, en ga terug naar je trein."

"Kom jongens," zei de professor. Ze pakten hun spullen en vertrokken. De jongens hadden beiden een klein stukje van de ontplofte machine meegenomen als aandenken. Verder lieten ze de machine bij Penitide achter die er maar over bleef foeteren. Zelfs toen ze allang wegwaren. Uiteindelijk besloot ze het bij het grof vuil te zetten.

"Wat een heks was dat, die Penitide," sprak Jaap.

"Ja, een walgelijke vrouw," sprak de professor. "Ik weet zeker dat zij met dat materiaal heeft lopen knoeien. Alles, maar dan ook alles liep verkeerd."

"Waar gaan we nu naartoe ?" vroeg André. Ze zaten inmiddels in de trein.

"Wat denk je zelf ?" vroeg de professor.

"Ik weet het niet," zei André.

"En jij, Jaap ?" vroeg de professor.

"Ik mis juffrouw Amulek," zei Jaap.

"En reus Dinsdag," zei André.

"Ik ben er klaar mee," sprak de professor. "Misschien hoor ik wel in de gevangenis thuis."

"Nee !" riepen André en Jaap. "We verzinnen wel wat. U moet Donderdag land redden. U kunt toch gewoon leren van de fouten, en opnieuw beginnen ?"

"Geen denken aan," sprak de professor.

"U bent slim genoeg," sprak Jaap. "Donderdag land gaat verloren zonder u."

"Hmm," zei de professor. "Ach weet je, ik denk dat ik gek aan het worden ben. Het was per slot van

rekening maar een gesimuleerde werkelijkheid. Het was niet echt."

"Dus dat we bijna in de lava terecht kwamen was ook niet echt ?" vroeg André. "Het was zo verschrikkelijk heet."

"Allemaal simulaties," zei de professor. "Het zenuwstelsel reageert daar weer op. Het is allemaal inbeelding. Ik liet me er teveel in meesleuren, en zelfs voor mij leek het op een bepaald moment net echt. Ik was echt bang geworden, en echt in paniek geraakt, omdat ik de machine niet meer kon bedienen. Het ding was op hol geslagen, maar na oververhitting schakelt de machine vanzelf uit, en als dat niet lukt, dan heeft de machine een ingebouwd self-destruct programma, als laatste redmiddel, en zo is dat ook gegaan. Sorry jongens, ik liet me er teveel in meesleuren, ik liet me er teveel in meegaan."

"Dus juffrouw Amulek en reus Dinsdag bestaan helemaal niet ?" vroeg Jaap bijna huilend.

"Sorry jongens," zei de professor. "Het is mijn fout geweest, mijn schuld."

"Ja, maar reus Dinsdag heeft u wel mooi de gevangenis uit gehaald," sprak André.

"Welnee," sprak de professor. "Dat was allemaal trucage. De machine speelde met jullie verbeelding en simuleerde dat ook. Ik moet jullie wat bekennen, jongens. Ik heb nooit echt in de gevangenis gezeten. De machine simuleerde alsof jullie er door politie agenten weer werden uitgehaald, maar jullie zaten er nog steeds in. Ook dat was een gesimuleerde werkelijkheid."

"D... dus Penitide was ook maar gewoon een onderdeel van de gesimuleerde werkelijkheid van de machine ?" vroeg Jaap. De professor knikte. "Nog sterker ...," sprak de professor. "We zitten nog steeds in de machine. Ik kan het laten stoppen op elk moment, en dan schuif ik de kap weg en dan kunnen jullie eruit."

"Dus de machine was helemaal niet kapot gegaan, maar dat verzon de machine gewoon zelf ?" vroeg Jaap. De professor knikte.

Hoofdstuk 6.

"We weten zo nooit of we er wel echt uit zijn," sprak Jaap die een beetje in paniek raakte. "Maar goed, werkelijkheid of gesimuleerde werkelijkheid : Ik wil terug naar Donderdag land, naar juffrouw Amulek en reus Dinsdag."

Ze zaten in de trein, maar ze wisten dat ze nog steeds in de machine waren. Toen werd alles zwart, en de professor schoof de kap van de cabine omhoog. "Nee, ik stop ermee, jongens," sprak de professor. "Het is al te ver gegaan. Ik dacht jullie voor de gek te houden, maar ik werd later zelf voor de gek gehouden. Het is een gevaarlijke machine."

"U gaat het toch niet weggooien ?" vroeg André. "We kunnen heus wel tegen een grapje."

"Het grapje liep uit de hand," sprak de professor. "Nogmaals, sorry jongens. Groeten aan jullie vader en moeder. Het was leuk, maar aan alle leuke dingen komt een eind."

Jaap keek op de klok. Het was nog geen zes uur 's ochtends. "Wat voor dag is het vandaag ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Dinsdag," zei de professor. "Jullie kwamen hier een paar uur geleden."

"Het leek wel dagen te duren in de machine," sprak Jaap.

"Dat klopt," sprak de professor. "Dat is gesimuleerde tijd, ook trucage. Dat doet de machine."

"Ik wil niet weg," zei André.

"Ik ook niet," zei Jaap.

"Jullie lijken wel een stelletje verslaafden," sprak de professor.

"Uw schuld," sprak Jaap. "Wij eisen juffrouw Amulek weer te zien en reus Dinsdag."

"Dat gaat niet gebeuren," sprak de professor. "Wat ik wel kan doen is jullie beiden een boek mee te geven over juffrouw Amulek en reus Dinsdag. Het is een boek over het Donderdag land."

Dat leek André en Jaap wel wat. Glunderend namen ze het boek in ontvangst. Ze kregen beiden hetzelfde boek, zodat ze er geen ruzie over konden maken.

Nog steeds was er een grote glimlach op hun gezicht toen ze thuiskwamen.
"Zo," sprak moeder, "jullie zijn vroeg thuis."

"Ja, het ging allemaal erg snel," zei Jaap, "en we hebben een leuk boek van de professor gehad."

"Leuk," zei moeder, "en wat hebben jullie allemaal bij de professor gedaan ? Wat heeft hij jullie laten zien ?"

"Ehm, mamma," zei Jaap. "U was er toch ook bij in het begin, toen we de machine binnengingen ? We waren in het ijsgebied, en toen in de warme zee met u en de professor."

"Waar heb je het over, lieve jongen ?" vroeg moeder. "Jullie zijn alleen naar de professor gegaan."

"Vreemd," zei Jaap. "Zou dat ook al een truuk van de machine geweest zijn dan ?"

Ook André keek verbaasd naar moeder.

"Nou, dat vind ik toch wel vreemd dan dat je dat denkt," sprak moeder.

"Hoe weten we nu of we niet nog steeds in die machine zitten ?" fluisterde André in Jaap's oor.

"Ja, dat weten we dus niet," fluisterde Jaap terug, "maar er gebeuren hier dus wel hele vreemde dingen."

"Ik vertrouw die hele professor voor geen cent meer," fluisterde André.

"Wat als we vanaf onze geboorte al in die machine zaten ?" fluisterde Jaap.

"Eng idee," zei André.

's Avonds in bed gingen ze beiden lezen in hun boek. Het ging niet alleen over reus Dinsdag en juffrouw Amulek in het Donderdag land, maar ook over een toversteen. Die toversteen moest ergens in het bos zijn, en de steen was het portaal tot het donderdag land. In het hele boek kwam de machine van de professor niet eens voor. De jongens waren helemaal enthousiast na het lezen van het boek. Ze moesten en zouden de toversteen vinden. Het boek beschreef ook waar de toversteen ergens moest zijn. Omdat het boek over hun eigen dorp ging moest het dichtbij zijn. De steen was ergens onder de grond in het bos, volgens het boek. Eigenlijk konden Jaap en André niet wachten tot de volgende dag. Ze wachtten totdat hun vader en moeder sliepen, en gingen toen met een zaklamp naar buiten, naar het bos. Ze hadden het boek meegenomen. Er moest ergens een groot hol zijn in het bos wat onder de grond liep. Daar moesten ze doorheen. Het zou leiden tot een tunnel die nog dieper onder de grond zou gaan. Na een tijdje zoeken, met de aanwijzingen van het boek, hadden ze het hol gevonden. Het was heel donker, maar de zaklampen hielpen goed. Het hol was in een heuveltje, en liep schuin naar beneden. Het was er erg modderig. Na een tijdje kwamen ze aan bij de tunnel, zoals het boek had uitgelegd. De tunnel liep nog dieper tot onder de grond, en zou tot een open ruimte leiden waar de steen ergens moest liggen.

"Ik ben benieuwd," fluisterde Jaap naar André. Soms waren er bochten die naar beneden liepen, en het leek zigzaggend naar beneden te gaan, dieper en dieper. André begon het benauwd te krijgen, en ook Jaap. "Ik hoop dat we het snel vinden," zei André. Jaap begon inmiddels al te hoesten. "Ik voel me niet goed," zei Jaap.

"Ik ook niet," zei André. "Waar zou het door komen ?"

"Ik weet het niet," zei Jaap, "maar ik krijg bijna geen lucht."

De tunnel leidde uiteindelijk inderdaad naar een open ruimte, zoals het boek zei. Hier was een grote gloeiende steen. Er kwam heel broeierig zacht licht vanaf. "Ik ben duizelig," zei André. André liep er naartoe en raakte de steen aan, maar hij werd direct achteruit geslingerd. "Au, het lijkt wel alsof

er stroom op staat," zei André luid.

"Oppassen geblazen dus," zei Jaap. Jaap liep om de steen heen ... "Het lijkt wel ..." zei Jaap.

"Wat ?" vroeg André.

"Zou dit het portaal zijn ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Ik denk het," zei André, "als we het boek kunnen geloven."

"Ik vraag me af wat we nu moeten doen," zei Jaap.

"Een steen, een steen," sprak de toversteen, "nog even en jullie zullen smelten."

"Wat bedoelt u ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Nou, gewoon zoals ik het zeg," zei de steen.

"Maar ik begrijp u niet," zei Jaap.

"Dat is mijn probleem niet," zei de steen.

"Hoe komen we tot het donderdag land ?" vroeg André.

"Er is hier geen donderdag land," sprak de steen.

"Ja maar het boek zei dat de toversteen het portaal is tot het donderdag land," sprak Jaap.

"Je boek kan me nog meer vertellen," zei de steen. "Wie denk je dat het beter weet, een boek of een sprekende steen ?"

"Ik weet het niet," zei Jaap. "Heeft het boek ons dan bedrogen ? We hadden het namelijk wel van iemand gehad die ons al eerder had bedrogen."

"Ga er maar vanuit dat jullie weer bedrogen zijn," sprak de steen. "Er is hier geen portaal naar een donderdag land. Wie verzint nu zoiets ?"

Jaap en André keken de steen sip aan. "We hadden ons er zo op verheugd," zei Jaap. "We missen reus Dinsdag en juffrouw Amulek."

"Daar heb ik allemaal niets mee te maken," zei de steen. "Verwacht niet dat je bij mij kunt gaan lopen uithuilen op mijn schouders. Ik ben zo hard als steen. Het zou alleen maar erger worden."

Jaap en André begonnen het steeds warmer te krijgen. "Wat is hier aan de hand !" riep Jaap. Hij begon weer weg te rennen uit de open ruimte de tunnel in, en toen ook André. "Het is hier niet pluis !" riep Jaap. "Alsof we gekookt worden !"

"Ren maar !" riep de steen. "Ik zei het jullie toch ! Jullie zullen smelten !"

"Maar waarom, waarom !" schreeuwde Jaap, die harder en harder begon te rennen. Maar ze konden de steen niet meer verstaan. Het was te ver weg. "Naar de uitgang !" riep Jaap bijna zonder adem. Na een tijdje stonden ze weer buiten het hol. "Eindelijk frisse lucht," zei Jaap.

"En gelukkig is het hier kouder," zei André.

"Ja, we werden gewoon gegrild," zei Jaap. "Wat nu ?"

"Volgens mij hebben we het boek niet goed gelezen," zei André.

"Denk je ?" vroeg Jaap. Weer begonnen ze in hun boek te lezen. Ze hadden beiden het boek meegenomen.

"Een vorst komt altijd van onderen naar de toversteen toe, niet van boven, anders zou hij smelten," staat hier," zei André.

"Een vorst ? Is dat het koude weer of een koninklijk iemand ?" vroeg Jaap. "Wij zijn geen van beiden."

"We zijn rechtstreeks van boven naar beneden tot de open ruimte gegaan, maar waarschijnlijk moeten we een weg zien te vinden die onder de open ruimte terecht komt, en dan moeten we naar boven, want ik kan me herinneren dat er wel een opening van een hol was achter de toversteen," sprak André. "Een vorst is misschien een prins ? Als het voor een prins geldt, waarom dan niet voor ons ? Als we daar gebleven waren dan zouden we echt gesmolten zijn. Blijkbaar accepteert de toversteen het niet als iemand van boven komt."

"Vreemd," zei Jaap. "Misschien heb je gelijk. Laten we goed zoeken naar een ander hol in de buurt."

"Hier staat : "Alleen zij die onder de modder de toversteen bereiken zullen het geluk vinden, want kwam de toversteen niet uit het diepste der aarde ?" zei André.

"Hmmm," zei Jaap. "Misschien herkent de toversteen ons als één van hen als we ons hebben ingesmeerd met datgene waarin hij geboren is : aarde ?"

"We kunnen het proberen," zei André.

Jaap begon te lachen en begon zijn kleren uit te trekken, behalve zijn onderbroek, en begon zichzelf in te smeren met modder. André deed toen precies hetzelfde, en lachte ook. "Het kietelt," lachte André. Toen gingen ze terug het hol in. Ze voelden zich veel beter nu, en kregen het ook niet meer benauwd. Ze voelden zich steeds beter naarmate ze dieper onder de grond gingen. Toch begon het ook steeds warmer te worden. "Dat gaat niet goed," zei Jaap. "Het is beter dan de vorige keer, maar ik zie vuur in de verte."

"Ja," zei André, "laten we teruggaan en naar een ander hol zoeken. Ik denk dat er niks anders opzit."

Ze bleven zoeken met hun zaklantaars toen ze weer uit het hol waren gekomen. Ook bleven ze doorlezen in hun boek.

"Oh kijk," zei André. "Het hol om onder de toversteen te komen is in een andere stad," staat hier.

"We hadden het boek veel beter moeten lezen," sprak Jaap. "Dan waren we niet zo in de problemen gekomen als nu."

"Laten we maar naar huis gaan, en het eerst helemaal nauwkeurig lezen," zei André, "anders vergeten we straks weer wat."

"Gelijk heb je," sprak Jaap. En toen zijn ze maar naar huis gegaan. Wel moesten ze toen eerst een bad nemen, want ze waren helemaal onder de modder. Gelukkig werden vader en moeder er niet wakker van.

De volgende dag waren ze alweer vroeg op, en natuurlijk gingen ze direct lezen. Het boek zei dat ze naar een stadje verderop moesten waar de broer van professor Malerus zou wonen, professor Hagelaar. Ze zouden daar met de trein naartoe moeten. Jaap en André waren zo enthousiast dat ze niet meer konden wachten. Ze zouden het boek wel verder lezen in de trein. In het boek stond precies beschreven waar professor Hagelaar woonde, en hoe ze daar zouden moeten komen. Ze hoopten maar dat de professor daar nog steeds zou wonen, want het leek nogal een oud boek.

"Stel dat hij daar nog steeds zou wonen, dan worden we misschien weer bedrogen. Vaak zit het in de familie," zei Jaap.

"Laten we het er toch maar op wagen, want ik zie geen andere weg om terug te komen tot het Donderdag land," zei André.

"Dat is waar," zei Jaap. "En ik ben erg nieuwsgierig."

De jongens waren erg zenuwachtig. Vader en moeder lagen nog te slapen. Van hun zakgeld zouden ze treinkaartjes kopen. Het stadje waar ze naartoe moesten was niet ver. Vijf minuten in de trein. In de trein lazen ze nog even in het boek, en toen waren ze er al. Ze moesten toen over een pad langs een hele lange heg lopen, en zo kwamen ze de stad in, waar professor Hagelaar ergens moest wonen. Ze letten goed op de beschrijvingen van het boek. Na een tijdje kwamen ze aan bij het huis. Professor Hagelaar woonde boven een winkel, althans als hij daar nog steeds zou wonen, want dat was nog maar de vraag. Er stond wel Hagelaar op een bordje boven de bel. Dat was al een hele opluchting voor de jongens. Jaap belde aan. Na een tijdje deed een vrouw open. Ze mochten mee naar boven komen, waar professor Hagelaar woonde. De vrouw leek op een dienstmeisje. Een man met een grote baard en een pijpje stond bovenaan de trap. Hij was direct erg vriendelijk. De jongens vertelden hem het verhaal. "Oh, dat boek ?" lachte hij. "Ja, dat heb ik ooit eens geschreven onder een valse naam, een pseudoniem."

"Ik hoop dat verder het verhaal over de toversteen en het Donderdag land niet vals is," zei Jaap.

"Nee, nee nee, dat is allemaal echt waar," sprak professor Hagelaar. Hij nam de jongens mee naar de woonkamer. Hier hingen een heleboel koekoeksklokken. Professor Hagelaar was een maker van levend speelgoed. Het was heel griezelig, zo griezelig dat het beneden in zijn speelgoedwinkel niet verkocht mocht worden. Hij vertelde over het hol in de achtertuin van de winkel, wat helemaal tot onder de open ruimte van de toversteen in het bos liep.

"Hoe werkt dat portaal tot Donderdag land dan precies ?" vroeg Jaap. "Is dat de toversteen zelf ?"

"Nee," zei professor Hagelaar. "De steen moet op een bepaalde manier gedraaid worden om het portaal te openen."

"Maar toen ik de steen aanraakte werd ik achteruit geslingerd," zei André.

Professor Hagelaar lachte. "Ja, ja ja, dat komt omdat je er niet aan mocht zitten. Je voldeed nog niet aan de voorwaardes. Je had het boek maar half gelezen," sprak de professor.

Hoofdstuk 7.

"Dus als we door dat hol in de achtertuin gaan en ons insmeren met modder, dan kunnen we veilig naar de steen toe om de steen in de juiste positie te draaien om het portaal tot het Donderdag land te openen ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Vergeet het maar," zei professor Hagelaar. "Er komt veel meer bij kijken. De steen kan niet zomaar gedraaid worden. Daarvoor zit het veels te vast, en de steen is daarvoor ook veel te heet. Je handen zouden er vanaf branden."

"Het leek wel of er stroom opstond toen ik het aanraakte," sprak André.

"Dan mag je geluk hebben dat je nog leeft," sprak professor Hagelaar.

"Wie schrijft nu zulke gevaarlijke boeken dan ?" vroeg Jaap. "U bent al net zo gevaarlijk als uw broer. Daar hebben we ook al heel wat mee meegemaakt."

"Vergelijk me alsjeblieft niet met mijn broer," sprak professor Hagelaar. "Alles was duidelijk in het boek uitgelegd."

"Ja, maar kinderen lezen er overheen," sprak Jaap.

"Nu, luister," sprak professor Hagelaar, "de steen kan alleen draaien door een toverliedje."

"Ja, houd maar op," zei Jaap. "Ik heb het idee dat we weer gigantisch in de maling worden genomen."

"Volgens mij ook, Jaap," zei André.

"Zeg professor Hagelaar," zei Jaap, "kunnen we hier niet gewoon bij u blijven logeren, en dat we dan leuke spelletjes gaan doen, en dan de stad in ?"

"Goed kinderen," glimlachte professor Hagelaar, "als jullie het niet willen geloven, dan kunnen we hier ook gewoon spelletjes doen en een leuke tijd hebben. Ik zal jullie vader en moeder er wel even voor opbellen."

En zo gebeurde het. Vader en moeder vonden het goed, en zo bleven de jongens een paar weken bij professor Hagelaar logeren, en ze hadden een leuke tijd. Het was per slot van rekening vakantie tijd. Maar aan het einde van het logeren bij professor Hagelaar schoof professor Malerus toch weer de kap van de machine-cabine omhoog, en bleek het dat ze toch al die tijd weer gewoon in de machine hadden gezeten. "Dacht ik het niet !" riep Jaap. "Ik had het kunnen weten !" Ze keken recht in het lachende gezicht van professor Malerus.

"De toversteen nog gevonden ?" grinnikte professor Malerus.

"Wat bent u een bandiet !" riep Jaap. "Ja, gevonden, maar weer weggezonden. Het is een onmogelijke opgave !"

"Het is gewoon een spel," zei professor Malerus, "en jullie wilden het niet afmaken."

"We hebben wel wat anders te doen dan al die onzin puzzeltochten. Het leidt toch nergens toe," zuchtte André.

"Kom, kom," zei professor Malerus, "Jullie vonden het beter dan school."

"Dat wel," zei André, "maar dan noemt u ook wel wat op. In ieder geval hebben we lekker spelletjes gedaan met uw broer, en zijn we de stad ingeweest."

"En als jullie straks weer op die saaie school zitten, dan zullen jullie er naar terugverlangen," zei professor Malerus lachend.

"Zeg, heeft u ons allemaal gemaakt ?" vroeg Jaap. "Heeft u misschien ook vader en moeder gemaakt en ons hele leven ?"

Professor Malerus knikte.

"Maar wie heeft u dan gemaakt ?" vroeg Jaap.

"De Machine," zei professor Malerus.

"Ja, maar ik dacht dat u de machine had uitgevonden ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Nee, net andersom," sprak professor Malerus.

"En wat is de naam van de machine dan ?"

"De Rusland Machine," sprak professor Malerus.

"Maar wie heeft de Rusland machine dan gemaakt ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Reus Maandag," sprak professor Malerus, "maar dat is een heel lang verhaal."

"En misschien weer een leugen," zei André.

"Wie weet," sprak professor Malerus. "Het is een puzzel voor de puzzelaars."

Even later liepen Jaap en André trillend en bevend het huis van professor Malerus uit. Ze hadden datzelfde gevoel als wanneer ze op de kermis waren geweest en in vele machines hadden gezeten. Ze waren buitengewoon vrolijk, en ze wisten niet of ze nu blij moesten zijn dat het weer afgelopen was, of blij moesten zijn dat ze er geweest waren, of blij omdat ze er misschien nog steeds inzaten. Met een brede glimlach liepen ze naar huis, en toen ze binnenkwamen zagen ze hun vader op de bank zitten met de krant. Ze schoten direct in de lach. "Wat valt er te lachen," bromde vader.

"Vraag het aan professor Malerus !" riep Jaap lachend, en rende samen met André giechelend naar boven.

Jaap en André

en de Wakkelsoep

Toen Jaap op zijn kamer was om huiswerk te maken zag hij ineens lijm druppelen in zijn kamer, zomaar vanuit het niets. Hij liep er op af en raakte de lijm aan, maar hij kon niet meer loskomen. Wat was dat spul plakkerig. Hij wist niet wat hij moest doen, en begon te roepen, maar niemand scheen hem te horen, of misschien was iedereen wel weg. Hoe meer hij probeerde los te komen, hoe meer hij werd gegrepen door de lijm, en toen ineens werd hij zo de vloer ingetrokken. Hij gilde en schreeuwde, maar er was geen hulp. "Is er dan niemand die me hoort !" riep Jaap.

Hij zag niets meer. Alles was wazig voor zijn ogen. Hij kon zich ook niet meer bewegen. Even later kon hij weer zien, en hij zag dat hij in een bos was. Een meisje van het bos kwam op hem af. "Wie ben je ?" vroeg Jaap. "En waar ben ik ?"

"Ik ben de koningin van de jacht ?" zei het meisje.

"Waar jaag je op, op mij ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Op wakkels," zei het meisje van het bos. "Wakkels zijn gaten in het ijs."

"Dat noemen wij wakken," zei Jaap. "Waarom jaag je daarop ?"

"Omdat ik de ijskoningin ben. Er mogen geen gaten in het ijs zitten, want dan smelten we weg," sprak het meisje.

"Ah," zei Jaap. "Waar ben ik ?"

"In Samaica," zei het meisje.

"Wat is dat ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Een land," zei het meisje.

"Hoe kom ik daar ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Door de lijm," sprak het meisje.

"Wat is dat voor een lijm ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Ik gebruik het in de jacht om het ijs weer dicht te lijmen. Het is ijslijm," sprak het meisje.

"Mag ik nu weer naar huis ?" vroeg Jaap. "Ik moet nog huiswerk doen."

"Dat huiswerk kan wel wachten," sprak het meisje.

Het meisje hielp hem opstaan. "Wat gaan we doen ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Dat zul je wel zien," zei het meisje.

Ze nam hem mee naar een rivier van de ijslijm. Alles bruiste hier, spoot en sproeide, zoals een waterval. "Hier worden ze allemaal meegetrokken," zei het meisje. "Zoals jij werd meegetrokken. Ik heb je eruit gehaald."

"Nou, bedankt," zei Jaap. "Ik moet voor het avondeten weer terug zijn."

"Het avondeten kan wel wachten," zei het meisje. "Er zijn veel belangrijkere dingen dan dat."

"Zoals wat ?" vroeg Jaap.

"IJslijmen," zei het meisje. "Je kan zo met een ijslijmstift de gaten in het ijs lijmen. Alles is hier van ijs gemaakt. Het is een kneedbaar ijs in allerlei kleuren."

"Ja, maar ik moet naar huis en naar school," zei Jaap.

"Wat is nu belangrijker ?" vroeg het meisje.

"Ja, maar mijn vader en moeder zullen mij missen," zei Jaap, "en André."

"Ik laat je niet meer gaan," zei het meisje. "Het is veel te gevaarlijk daar, teveel wakkels. Alles is van ijsklei gemaakt, maar jij komt uit de wakkelwereld waaruit ik je verlost heb."

Jaap knipperde even met zijn ogen. "Ik voel me inderdaad heel anders."

"Als er wakkels zijn wordt alles vies en smelt alles," zei het meisje.

"Ja, dat mag niet gebeuren," zei Jaap, die steeds meer en meer onder een vreemde hypnose kwam.

"Wakkels zijn stom, dom en lui," zei het meisje.

"Ik zal aan uw zijde strijden, koningin," zei Jaap onder zware hypnose. "Die wakkels zullen niet ver komen."

Het meisje glimlachte. "Zo mag ik het horen," zei ze.

Ze liep naar hem toe en smeerde wat strepen van ijslijm op zijn gezicht.

"Ik ben nu oorlog," zei ze, "de koningin van de oorlog. Wakkels zijn veelvraten, ze vreten alles op wat los en vastzit om nog meer wakkels te maken."

"Maar dat is verschrikkelijk, koningin," zei Jaap.

"Ja, je moet eens weten," zei het meisje. "Ze laten ons overwerk doen. Ik ben blij dat ik jou heb."

"Ik doe het met groot plezier," zei Jaap, die steeds vrolijker begon te worden.

"Lach niet teveel," zei het meisje. "De wakkels lachen de hele dag door. Dat is alles wat ze kunnen. Ze slapen, eten en lachen, de hele dag door, en maar meer wakkels maken."

"Het is een ramp," zei Jaap.

"Het is een serieuze zaak," zei het meisje. "Heb je hun fabrieken gezien ? Het stinkt."

"Dat moeten we niet hebben," zei Jaap.

"Maar zo weten we wel waar ze zijn," zei het meisje.

"Dat is waar," zei Jaap. "De stank verraadt hen."

"Ze bouwen hun huizen overal en gaan dan familietje spelen," zei het meisje, "de wakkel industrie."

"Ah," zei Jaap, die begon te gapen. Hij hoorde het meisje verder praten in de verte. Hij begon steeds meer moe te worden. Maar toen het meisje de ijslijm stift weer tegen zijn huid zette was hij weer klaar wakker. "Ze hadden je bijna," zei het meisje.

"Ik trek mijn zwaard van ijslijm en ik strijd voor mijn koningin," zei Jaap.

"Wees waakzaam," zei het meisje. "Ze zitten overal te loeren. Als er één wakkel is zijn er meer in de buurt. Ze komen altijd in groepen. Maar wij hebben onze eigen industrie van ijslijm naaimachines. Het zijn dus eigenlijk lijmmachines. Ze zijn heel productief en creatief."

"Waar zijn ze ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Oh, dieper in het bos," zei het meisje.

"Ik wil ze graag zien," zei Jaap.

"Dan moeten we naar de ijslijm watervallen," zei het meisje. "De wakkels maken ook de mens ziek, en spelen dan doktertje om het nog erger te maken."

Over een zanderig pad gingen ze dieper het bos in. Maar ze werden aangevallen door wakkels die zo uit de struiken kwamen. "Ah !" lachte de koningin. "We eten vanavond wakkel soep, zo lekker." De wakkels waren exotische vruchten die hier groeiden. Jaap begon ze te plukken en ervan te eten. "Ja, mmm, wakkelsoep," zei Jaap, "dat lijkt me wel wat."

En zo hadden ze die avond genoeg om te eten en genoeg om over te praten. Het meisje kookte overheerlijke wakkelsoep, en Jaap keek toe hoe ze dat deed. "Breng me meer wakkels, Jaap, meer. Want zovelen hebben nog nooit van de wakkelsoep gehoord, en zovelen hebben er nog nooit van geproefd, en leiden een miserabel leven. Wakkelsoep is het lekkerste wat er is."

Einde

RATATOSK

Hoofdstuk 1. het pedagogische onkruid
Hoofdstuk 2. de schoenenreus

Hoofdstuk 1. het pedagogische onkruid

Het onkruid van munt, geduldig maar streng.
Het spaart het kind niet, als het kind tot het vreemde moet gaan,
maar blijft wel altijd achter het kind staan met haar warmte.
Haar sieraden zijn verleidelijk, en daarom wordt zij onkruid genoemd, een gevaarlijke vrouw.
Zij laat haar kinderen alleen in de nacht, opdat zij zelf het pad vinden.

Van het zuiverste onkruid is zij gesponnen, dat wat anderen niet aandurfden,
Zij leidt haar kinderen tot het vreemde.
Zij daagt het vreemde uit om haar kinderen te nemen.
En daarom wordt zij onkruid genoemd, een gevaarlijke vrouw.

Zij groeit om steden heen, en komt binnen door de gaten,
Waar onoplettendheid heerst neemt zij haar kans,
en sleurt zij kinderen naar haar holen, waar zij worden ingewijd in het onkruid van munt,
Waar zij wedergeboren worden als haar kinderen.

De stad is zwak in haar ogen,
niet bestand tegen haar geheimen.

Zij leidt haar kinderen tot de geheimen van het bos,
En in de nacht vaagt haar stem weg, opdat zij het vreemde zullen zoeken.
Zij zendt haar kinderen als boodschappers tot het vreemde.
Hoe lieflijk op de bergen zijn de voeten van hen die goed nieuws brengen.
Hoe lieflijk zijn de voeten van hen die geschoeid zijn met het evangelie des vredes.

Het vreemde is een droom tussen waken en slapen, als een tussenslaap.
Als de moederborsten die neervallen van de grote kerk,
om de doden te voeden.

Wat als haar kind spastisch zou zijn ?
Zij zou blij zijn als het vreemde haar kind zou helpen.
Telkens weer kijkt zij hoe ver het kind is.

Wat als haar kind geen armen zou hebben ?
Zou het vreemde dan niet helpen,
en zou zij het vreemde niet toestaan ?

Vergeet het binnennemen van de vreemdelingen niet,
want daardoor hebben sommigen, zonder het te weten, godsgezondenen binnengenomen.

Maar gij sprak : het vreemde heeft ons overweldigd.
Zij hebben onze kampen en holen ingenomen.

Het onkruid van munt is een stille getuige van deze dingen.

En gij sprak : Is het vreemde niet tot vijand geworden ?
Maar gij was zelf de vijand.

Hoe lieflijk zijn op de bergen dan de voeten die goed nieuws brengen ?
Maar gij hebt niet willen luisteren.

Het onkruid van munt gaat altijd haar kinderen vooruit,
en onderhandelt met het vreemde,
maar gij hebt het niet begrepen, en jammerde en klaagde.
En zij bekommerde zich er niet om.

Niets is geduid, ze treft bewust haar doel niet,
en glijd langs hem heen om haar geheimen te bewaren.
Zij ontwijkt hem, zij is het onkruid van munt.
Zij blijft op een afstand, opdat er ruimte is voor groei.

Waarom draagt zij dan nog steeds deze glorie ?
Waarom hoort zij nog steeds zijn stem ?
Omdat zij nog steeds betrokken is.
Zij staat nooit te ver weg.

Zou het vreemde tot vrede leiden, dieper in het bos ?
Maar gij noemt het oorlog.

Zij onderhandelt met het vreemde,
haar kinderen begrijpen het niet.
En toch moet zij moeder zijn.

Sta de vreemdeling toe, spreekt zij,
want het kan een godsgezondene zijn.

Ik ken deze kinderen in het veld niet.
Zij zijn vreemden.

Hoe diep moest je gaan om aan deze wereld te ontkomen ?
Velen lijden om te vermeerderen, om troost te zoeken in rijkdom, roem en macht.
Maar jij moest het hongerpad op om tot het hongerzaad te komen.
Het hongerzaad bracht een nieuwe schepping, de andere schepping die verloren was geraakt, vergeten, uit de harten gebant.

Hoe diep moest je gaan om aan deze wereld te ontkomen ?
Het ware evangelie is : gij moet minder worden, gij moet hongeren, leren leven met het minste.
Zo is er ruimte voor fantasie en verbeelding, de andere wereld die zal komen.
Zo komt gij tot het hongerzaad die zij is.

Het hongerpad, maar wie weet de weg ?
De honger weet de weg.

Hoe diep moest je gaan om aan deze wereld te ontkomen ?
Hij kwam tot het onkruid van munt, als minnares,
de ware roman,
waarin hij zijn hongerzaad gaf,
voor een nieuwe schepping,
een nieuwe wereld.

Hij staart naar de blote borsten van de honger,
waarin hij sterft.

Hij stierf op het hongerpad, en werd ook in haar wedergeboren,
en iedereen deed alsof er niets aan de hand was.

Hoe diep moest je gaan ? Hoe diep moest je gaan ?

Zij kan het je niet vertellen want ze is het vergeten door de honger,
en jij bent het ook vergeten. Alleen een kind kan het weten.

Ze was sadistisch en hardvochtig, wreed, zoals je je de honger had voorgesteld.
Zo waren de zakkenrollers van Amsterdam toch nog ergens goed voor.
Ze kwamen met moeder Honger op haar schip, als haar pieten.
Gillend renden ze door de straten, om te stelen alles wat los en vast zat.
Zij waren de sirenes van moeder Honger.

Het is een verschrikkelijk moment waarop zij komt,
om dood en verderf te zaaien, als de anti sinterklaas,
rijdend op een zwart paard,
gehuld in een paars gewaad.

Ik ben de honger loper,
in een honger nachtmerrie,
die gaat tot het verborgene, een groot geheim.
Buiten het verborgene is niets dan misbruik.

Ik ben de honger loper,
tussen slapen en waken,
in de tussenslaap,
waar ik dodelijke literaire schilderijen schilderde,
waar ik eerst zelf aan stierf.

Mijn moeder was ook een literaire schilderes,
in paars gehuld …

Zo voerde zij oorlogen,
Zo stonden haar standbeelden daar in een zuiver hemels metaal,
Haar kinderen waren duur betaald …

Zij kan niemand zo ver krijgen om voor haar te vechten,
Daarom schildert zij ze …

Maar is zij dan een snelle doder ?
Nee, zij werkt met honger,
op zwart paard met lang paars gewaad,
om hen aan haar literaire schilderijen de hongerdood te doen sterven …

Alsmaar willen zij meer,
Maar zij legt het hen uit, keer op keer …
Zij is de pedagogiek van het onkruid,
Altijd wegtrekkend op haar paard,

Om te zien wie komt en wie gaat …

Dure bonbons op een schaaltje,
maar niet voor hen,
zij zijn als honden …
Honden van de honger die voor haar uitgaan, en achter haar navolgen …
om de literaire honger te brengen …

Dure bonbons op een schaaltje,
maar niet voor hen,
zij zijn immers om de honger te brengen,
honger uit een gat …

Daar sterven zij een langzame dood,
waar zij kijkt, al schilderend voor het nageslacht …
Zij is de verzetsstrijdster tegen de gulzige stad …

Zij vangt de dwazen in haar netten …
Haar wapen is de honger …
De schade die zij aanricht is literair …

Gulzigaarden staren haar aan,
en verbleken als zij haar honger schilderijen zien …
om dan vervolgens weg te smelten …

Zou zij met zulke stenen haar lanen niet bouwen ?
Een krachtig morofoog is zij …
Wat is een morofoog ?
Een aardring in het diepste donkerste van de psyche …

Haar honger-monniken gaan traag in het paars,
in stoeten achter haar aan …
Ze merken het niet, zij zijn hongerend,
in de honger nachtmerrie …
slaapwandelaars ….

Hoofdstuk 2. de schoenenreus

Maar de koekmannetjes en de koekvrouwtjes lieten dat niet op zich zitten, en sloegen hard terug, zodat moeder Honger tot de boeken werd verbannen.
Niemand kon hen stoppen. Zij spraken namelijk koeks.
Daarmee kregen ze alles voor elkaar.
En zo werd moeder Honger slechts tot sprookje.

De gulzigaarden spraken koeks,
een verboden taal,
maar zij deden het zo graag,
lekker stiekem koeks praten.

Ze is toen gaan onderduiken bij haar zus die een bordeel had.
Het bordeel was zo belachelijk duur dat er bijna niemand kwam.
Alleen zij die voldoende hadden gehongerd konden er komen,
als ze het honger geld hadden.
Het was een zwart geld, zwaar verboden.

En de bordeel meisjes daar waren slechts soldaten,
Je vond daar alleen de dood.
Alleen honger monniken kwamen daar,
zij die klaar waren voor de dood.

De honger monniken, op weg naar het bordeel,
maar de bordeel meisjes zijn slechts honger en dood,
opdat het gulzige ego zou sterven.

Zij is slechts de eenzaamheid aan wie zij hun honger zaad schenken.
Traag klagen en zingen zij in stoeten op weg naar het bordeel,
waarlangs velen al voortijdig door de honden van honger worden verscheurd,
want hier heerst slechts de honger.

Het bordeel werd bezocht door jammerende, klagende, vloekende monniken die honger kruizen en honger palen op hun ruggen droegen, al zuchtend en kreunend.

Met honger tranen,
maar de gulzigen hadden gulzige tranen …

Die monniken moesten slechts werk krijgen,
in een schoenmakerij of een poppenmakerij …
Dan hadden ze wat te doen …
De bordeelhoudster was slechts een onderwijzeres …

Zouden zij de voeten van deze vrouwen kunnen schoeien met het goede nieuws ?
Of waren zij het niet waard ?

Ze zouden ook bij de kapper kunnen werken …

Hoe lieflijk op de bergen zijn de voeten van hen die het goede nieuws brengen,
de honger hebben gebracht,
de gulzige slang hebben verslagen …

Het pinksterfeest is een oogstfeest, waarop zij met lieflijke voeten het goede nieuws brengen,
Het hongerfeest leidt hiertoe,
als het hongerpad dat leidt tot de schoenmakerij, tot de schoenenreus …
De reus is een metafoor voor de grotere context …
Ook klein duimpje ging op het hongerpad tot de schoenenreus …
Klein duimpje is een metafoor voor de besnijdenis van de vastheid,
de zekerheden van de mens …

In de ladderfabriek moest ik ladders in elkaar schuiven,
en eens schoof het over mijn duim, en scheurde het zo open …
Ik bloedde en viel even later flauw …
Ook brak ik eens mijn duim, en mijn duim voelt nog steeds een beetje gebroken …
Gevoelig, zoals Jakob's heup op Pniel … Mijn duim is besneden …
Mijn zekerheden, mijn houvast …

Door hoeveel besnijdenissen moet de mens heen op het hongerpad om tot de reus met de zeven mijlslaarzen te komen ?
Ook snelheid is een symbool voor context.
Toen ik bij de schoenenreus was geweest regende het,
hongertranen gemengd met hongerzaad …
als een eekhoorn die zijn eikels voor de winter verzameld …
Ratatosk brengt altijd scheiding …
Alleen door besnijdenissen en scheidingen kom je immers tot de grotere context …

Medusa

Hoofdstuk 1. De Zonderling

Ik denk dat ik doodga als ik naar haar kijk. ‘Dit is het rijk van de dood,’ zei ze. Ze had een

suikerzoet jurkje aan, met de geur van een herfstbos. Ik draaide mijn gezicht om en keek naar buiten, naar de grauwe stenen. Het was alsof ze lang uitgestrekt op de daken lag, alsof ik haar met mijn ogen niet kon ontwijken. De bus stopte dichtbij, mensen stapten in de bus, en het was alsof zij tussen de rijen stond. Ik denk dat ik doodga als ik haar aankijk, dat ik het dan gewoon niet overleef. Ze pakt me bij mijn hand, en trekt me naar beneden. Het is etenstijd. Zij smeert het brood, kijkt naar buiten naar de heg. Ik ruik haar suikerzoet jurkje, alsof het belegd is met hemelse rijkdommen, maar naar haar kijken durf ik niet. Ik ben laf. Ik voel haar hand nog steeds, terwijl ze me allang heeft losgelaten. Ze voert me.

Ze is als een rots waarvan ik af kan springen, daarom beklim ik haar niet. De pot pindakaas voelt nog warm aan van haar hand. Ze was hier. Nu is ze in de kelder. Omdat ze zo lang wegblijft drink ik de laatste slokken melk en thee, en dan ga ik naar bed. Het was een dag des doods, in de tuin van spot. En gisteren was ik in de tuin van wreedheden. Mijn herinneringen zijn daar. Mijn hersenen bloeden. Ze leest me een boek voor, terwijl ik probeer te slapen. Ik hoor haar stem echoen door mijn hoofd. Het zaad van de lindeboom houd ik stevig vast, en meng het met mijn tranen. Dan smeer ik haar lichaam in, met het mengsel dat lijkt op natte tarwe, griesmeel, het is als brood, en het bed is de oven. Zij is de vrouw van de bakker, en ik ben de bakker. Ik maak haar klaar voor het kostelijke dinner in het diepste van de nacht, en dan slaap ik.

Ze is als de boom aan de rivier. Ik krab aan het hout, het is alsof de sterren breken. Ik denk aan de tuinen waarin wij waren, de hoge poorten in de heggen, de vruchten die zijn als de meest kostelijke snoepjes. Wie plantte hen daar ? Ik keek naar haar gezicht toen ze sliep. Nu was het veilig. De lazarus-koekjes bungelden aan haar lichaam, slap, uitgedroogd, de nacht heerste hier over de dood, de gouden dood. Voor mij was het een vakantie, ze was even geen roofdier meer. Ik kuste haar lippen, en dan slaap ik, vrij, blij, zonder angst, want ze slaapt. Een diepe nacht die mijn bewustzijn breekt, ik ben er even helemaal uit. Tante Connie controleert later de kamers nog even, of alle lichten wel uit zijn voor de nacht, want als de nacht komt, dan moet de nacht echt goed komen. Zo praat ik ’s nachts als met een pop. Ik hoor tante Connie op de gang lopen, als een lijzige boom, verzwakt door het gewicht van haar ouderdom, met passen als het slaan op de koekjestrommel. Ja, haar hele wezen klinkt me als muziek in de oren. Altijd is ze mijn lievelingstante geweest, daarom wonen we hier samen, maar de herinnering aan haar verzwakt. Ik leef hier in een dorre tuin, spot gemengd met wreedheden, de souvenirs van het duistere gat van het verleden. Geen lichtjes konden dat goedmaken, geen gouden pollepel van welke grootmoeder dan ook. Ik voel me verminkt.

Oom Joop is een man met humor, maar ook hij kon mij niet redden. Als ik wakker word zit er iemand op me, wassende mijn rug. Het is zij. Ik durf haar niet aan te kijken. Ze pakt me beet, laat dan los, pakt me steviger beet, en dan laat ze me helemaal los, om op te staan. Ik ben te moe, en het zonlicht kwelt me. Er liggen hier snoep papiertjes overal. Ik hoor haar lachen. Er is geen tuinman die de wilde tuin van mijn ziel op orde kan krijgen. Ik lig hier voor Jan Worst.

Ze is de laatste van de rozentuin, dus ik kan haar niet wegdoen. De geschiedenis van de graaf, en zijn kinderen. Zij is als de erfenis. Uit mijn gedachten is ze niet. Ze speelt de piano. Ik kijk naar buiten, en probeer langzaam grip te krijgen op de dag. De muren buiten lijken hoog, zoals zij hoog

is, van adel. Tante Connie komt binnen, en sleept zichzelf over het tapijt. Het lijkt voor haar een woestijnreis om aan ons bed te komen, en alles lijkt verwaterd. Haar rumoerig kapsel was vroeger deftig en hehoudend. Ze staart in de spiegel. ‘Ik moet me nog opmaken voor de dag, je weet wel, het harnas aandoen,’ zegt ze. Ze gaat tegen de verwarming aanzitten, en luistert naar de piano. De schotel die ze in haar handen heeft maakt haar bijna als een bedelaar. Ze heeft behoefte aan een gesprek, en ik ben te moe. De dochter van de graaf daarentegen is vol energie, en begint het gesprek met haar in zinderende vaart. Ze zijn als een stel vogels. Al snel prakken de vorken een maal. Ik krijg niks, want ik behoor niet tot de dag. Het is alsof ze elkaar voeren.

In de middag ligt ze weer op me. Het lijkt wel alsof ze draadjes aan me bevestigt om me op te hijsen. Er is nog maar een klein stukje van de dag over en dat eist ze helemaal voor haarzelf op, als met gloeiende handen. Buiten hoor ik de bus, mensen stappen in, verveeld, uitgeput. Ik vraag me af of ze ooit zullen aankomen. Zwetend en puffend kom ik aan bij de lift op de gang. Ik wil naar de zolder. Maar de lift schijnt niet te werken. Ik strompel naar de trap, want een dag met de dochter van de graaf is te veel voor mij. Ik zie bij de trap naar de zolder een andere vrouw staan, in wit kant. Ze helpt me op de trap. Ik plof even later op haar bed neer. Zij is de vrouw van de zolder, en ik heb de zolder bereikt, niet te bereiken voor de dochter van de graaf, de dochter des doods. Maar ik hoor haar krijsen beneden, als iemand die zich geprikt heeft bij het naaien. Ja, toe maar, druk die speld maar diep naar binnen, je verdient het, kreng, denk ik bij mezelf. Maar dan word ik ineens mild door de zachtheid van de vrouw hier. Ze komt dichterbij, spreid haar benen waarmee ze mij vastklemt. ‘Ho, doe normaal,’ zeg ik. Ze verzwakt de klem een beetje, maar ik voel haar gewicht op me. ‘Slapen ?’ vraagt ze.

‘Nee, dank je, ik heb net geslapen,’ zeg ik.

Ze loopt naar een kastje, haalt wat brood eruit en besmeerd het. Daarna voert ze me. De lucht is donker hier, en ik hoor de dochter van de graaf nog steeds krijsen. Als ik naar buiten staar is het alsof ze zich heeft uitgespreid over de daken.

‘Waar kom je vandaan ?’ vraagt de vrouw van de zolder.

‘Vanuit de tuin,’ zeg ik.

‘Oh, de tuin der edelheden en martelingen ?’

Ik knik.

‘Zo’n zoet-bitter iets,’ zegt ze. Ik knik weer. De verdiepingen onder de zolder lijken ver weg. Ik staar weer naar buiten, alsof ik mijn ziel zie vliegen. ‘Waar ben ik ?’ vraag ik.

- Bij mij.

Ze pakt een schotel en een kom, en voert me dan soep. ‘Ik wil niet meer terug,’ zeg ik. Ik kwam van een nachtelijk gebrul, en nu was ik hier, een plaats vol protserige spulletjes, over en weer gelakt en opgepoetst. Vanaf de zolder kon ik de tuinen zien, de heggen, met de hoge poorten. ‘Ik ben een vergiftigd mens,’ zeg ik. ‘Een dwaallicht, een pop.’ Ze knikt. Als ik naar buiten keek zag ik mijn weerspiegeling. Zij stond ineens voor de spiegel, en maakte zich op, met allerlei smeerseltjes. ‘Goed spul van de bomen,’ zei ze. ‘Het is voor mijn huid. Ik ga niet naar het feest vanavond, ik blijf wel hier met jou.’

Het is alsof ik met haar hang tussen de verdiepingen, alsof ik met haar zweef boven de tuinen. Ik voel haar gewicht, en ben bang dat we naar beneden vallen, maar ze rekt me uit. Ik zie de begroeiing op de muren, en herinner de begroeiing van de tuinen, de dorens, de valstrikken, puur natuur.

‘Ik ben de maker van de tuin,’ zegt ze plotseling. Ik schrik. ‘Hoe kun je zoiets maken ?’ vraag ik. Ze zwijgt, als het graf. Ik merk dat ik kwaad word van binnen, maar dan voel ik ineens genade. Al snel voel ik niets meer, ik kijk alleen maar in een onbekend gat, als een mist, een waas. Ik kan niet meer nadenken. ‘Wat is er aan de andere kant van de tuin ?’ vraag ik.

- Een snoepwinkel. Ze verkopen eigenlijk gewoon zoete vruchten.

Ik kijk naar haar kanten jurkje. Het is als een snoep jurkje. Ineens heb ik zoiets van : Als ik nog verder naar haar kijk, dan ga ik dood.

Ik rol van het bed af naar de trap, en laat mij naar beneden vallen. De dochter van de graaf vangt mij op, en de vrouw van het zolder stormt naar beneden. ‘Hij zit toch aan touwen vast, elastiek, draden, kettingen, dus wat wil je,’ schreeuwt ze.

‘Is dit de oorlog van de feeen,’ vraag ik, ‘of van de indianen.’ Ze grijpen elkaar in de haren. ‘Uit dat licht,’ roept de vrouw van de zolder. Ik staar doelloos naar de hoeken van de trap. Dan voel ik de hand van tante Connie, die mij naar haar kamer neemt. ‘Thee ?’ vraagt ze.

Ze maakt brood voor me, opgepoft en zacht, een beetje nat, met wat soep en pudding. ‘Je moet goed eten, jongen,’ zegt ze. Ik zie haar kauwen. Het zal wel avondetens-tijd zijn. Ik hoor vrouwen krijsen. Buiten hoor ik vogels krijsen. Het klinkt me als muziek in de oren. Bij tante Connie is alles altijd anders. Ze zorgt voor me, grijpt in wanneer het nodig is. Oom Joop zit aan de andere kant van de kamer. Een verfrommelde papieren zak ligt naast hem, met oud brood. De gouden klok tikt, en

het is een rustgevend geluid. Ik probeerde vat te krijgen op de structuur van dit huis, maar het was alsof ik van de daken afgleed, of was dit huis slechts de weerspiegeling van de tuin. Het was niet bepaald mijn Eden, en toch wilde ik dit huis doordringen. Ik voelde mij een zwerver in dit huis, een huis wat ik nooit echt binnen kon gaan. Na een paar uur zaten de twee vrouwen keurig netjes tegen elkaar aan, in keurige zoete kleertjes, als feestbroodjes bij de bakker. Rozen op hen vastgespeld alsof er iemand jarig was, en de spelden gingen diep in hun vlees. ‘Ja dieper, dieper,’ dacht ik. Ik wilde het voelen bloeden. Het was al aan het bloeden. Het bloed sijpelde op de grond. Tante Connie raakte in paniek, en ik ook, omdat ik toch meer waarde hechtte aan de beoordelingen van tante Connie dan aan mezelf. ‘Waarom doen jullie dat !’ riep ze.

‘Dit is ons verbond,’ zeiden de twee vrouwen. ‘Ons bloed-verbond.’

‘Zie je,’ dacht ik bij mezelf, ‘dan had ik het wel goed ingeschat.’

‘Geef me de speld,’ zei ik. ‘Ik wil ook deel hebben aan het bloed-verbond.’ Het was een hele opluchting toen ik de speld in mijn vlees voelde gaan, en ik de zachtheid van de roos tegen mijn huid aanvoelde. Ik voelde me een plak vlees bij de slager.

‘Nu kun je het dak opkomen,’ zeiden de vrouwen. ‘Nu kon je de tuin bezaaien en besproeiien.’ De poort van mijn hersenen leek open te gaan, en de waas leek even te vertrekken. Ik wilde meer van zulke lichaams-spelden. Ik herinnerde de dorens, ik herinnerde hoe genadeloos diep ze gingen, totdat alles binnenin me brak, en ik begon te zweven. Ik was nu boven het dak, maar de huizen om ons heen waren veel groter. Ik kon de zolders inkijken en zag de vrouwen. Ze leken eenzaam, en ik was eenzaam. Ik was met een helm op geboren, maar die ontplofte nu. Ik zweefde bij iemand binnen. En hier zag ik bomen groeien door het hele huis. Ik was nog steeds in de tuin. Hier hingen zoveel gouden klokken aan de muur, die allemaal heerlijk tikten, zo licht, zo zacht, zo helder, ontwakende de diepste roerselen van mijn hersenen. Ze waren als een vuur in mijn lichaam. De mensen die hier woonden hadden allemaal dialogen. Het moest vooral ergens over gaan, maar ze kwamen er nergens mee. Ze leefden in een cirkeltje. Ik had ze al snel door. Toch was het allemaal erg verrijkend voor mij. Jurkjes hingen er aan de muur, vruchtjes lagen op schaaltjes, gezet op oventjes. ‘Is dit de weg naar de stad ?’ vroeg ik.

- Welke stad. Oh, de overstad.

Ik knikte. ‘Daar heb ik vaker over gehoord,’ zeiden ze. Ze lieten me ladders van touw zien. Ik klom en klom, dit huis was lang, als een herenhuis wat maar niet ophield. Mensen leefden hier als vogels. Ik wist niet waar ik moest kijken. ‘De parel van de tuin,’ zeiden ze, ‘is daar,’ en dan wezen ze omhoog. De ladder was glibberig, en ik gleed weg. In spiegels zag ik mezelf klimmen. Ik had weer het gevoel dat ik van de daken gleed, alsof ik het huis niet kon binnengaan. Tante Connie legde haar hand op mijn hoofd. Haar hand was gloeiend heet, of was mijn hoofd gloeiend heet. ‘Waarom ?’ vroeg ik. ‘Waarom is er hier geen doorkomen aan ?’ Tante Connie zei niks, zweeg als het graf. Ook

de twee vrouwen zeiden niets. Het was als een schijnbaar open weg die dood liep. Een zwakte maakte zich van mij meester, en ik was gelijmd aan de grond. Met wilde maar beheerste ogen keek de dochter van de graaf naar mij, alsof ze een wild paard probeerde te temmen, met de koele zelfverzekerdheid dat dat haar aardig lukte. Even stond de tijd stil, en was het alsof zij de muziek van het moment perfect kon berijden. Als ze zou vallen zou ze aan draden verbonden zijn, als aan elastiek, zodat ze niet in de vlammen van het hellemeer zou vallen. Ik snakte naar adem. Ik hoorde haar ogen roepen. Toen greep ze me vast. ‘Ik laat je nooit meer los,’ zei ze. ‘Nooit meer.’ Even dacht ik dat ik thuis gekomen was. Ik probeerde me zo lang te maken als zij zich waardig voelde. ‘Wie ben jij eigenlijk ?’ vroeg ik.

De vrouw van het zolder liep terug naar de trap. In gedachten zweefde ik langs het huis, en de dochter van de graaf lag uitgestrekt op de daken. Wij konden dit huis niet binnenkomen. Wij waren in de tuin. Het zonlicht was aangenaam, en het was alsof we beiden smolten en naar beneden sijpelden, om in elkaar te versmelten ? Waren wij de vruchten van deze tuin ?

Hoofdstuk 2. De Sleutel

Tante Connie legt gouden bestek op de tafel voor het feestmaal. Oom Joop komt aan tafel zitten. Ik zit naast de dochter van de graaf. Ze houdt mijn hand vast. Tante Connie brengt dan de pan met het avondeten, en met een grote lepel laat ze het ploffen op onze borden. ‘Is zij van het zolder niet uitgenodigd ?’ vraag ik.

‘Ze heeft haar eigen,’ zegt tante Connie. Ik heb het gevoel dat ik wat mis, en ga na een tijdje naar het zolder. Ik voel me op en top. Ze ligt op bed, en staart door het raam. Ik ga bij haar zitten. Haar ogen kijken dwars door me heen, alsof ze me niet ziet. Als ik naar buiten kijk, zie ik haar weerspiegelingen daar, alsof ze uitgestrekt is over de daken, en langs de muren, als begroeiing. ‘Zoveel mensen kennen me niet,’ zegt ze. Dan staat ze op en geeft mij een bord. Het schijnt hier ook etenstijd te zijn. Ze schept op. We staren elkaar de hele tijd aan, en als ik dan later naar buiten staar is het al donker, en haar weerspiegelingen zijn als de lichten in de nacht, als woeste paarden over de daken. Ik hoor tante Connie beneden roepen. Het is tijd voor de nacht, maar ik wil niet slapen. Ik houd de hand vast van de vrouw van het zolder. Mijn hoofd voelt als een stad met huizen, grote huizen, hoge huizen, lange huizen, met bomen er tussen, met plaats voor de tuin. Het is alsof de vrouw van het zolder op mijn hersenen danst, en het doet pijn, en ik word al snel moe. Pudding voert ze me. Grote lange draden voel ik door mijn lichaam gaan, totdat ik het gevoel heb dat ik kan zweven. Haar bed is ineens zo dik en ver weg, haar kamer twee keer groter. Nee, naar buiten wil ik niet meer. Ik ben hier buiten. Zij is mijn wereld. Ik heb een kinderlijk geloof in haar.

Tante Connie laat me de schoonheid van het huis zien, van alle plekken, en ja, ik moet haar gelijk geven. Ze heeft een plaats in mij, alle dingen in dit huis hebben een plaats in mij. Ik heb ze nodig. Ik ben er bijna ziekelijk afhankelijk aan. Het is mijn levenswarmte. Maar toch voelt het alsof ik heen en weer gesleurd word. Ik heb nergens grip op, ik glijd telkens weg, dieper. Dit is een doodlopende weg, een fuik, van vuur. Ik zie ze het glas heffen. Zij zijn als de vlammen in mijn

hoofd. Ik durf niet naar ze te kijken, want dan ga ik dood. Het zijn de hoofden van de Medusa. De mensen die hier wonen zijn net zo steen als dit huis, en iedereen die naar hen kijkt verandert in steen. Zo is het leven. Is dit de sleutel weg uit de tuin, of is dit de sleutel tot de tuin.

In de nacht danst de vrouw van de zolder als een zwaan, als een brandende struik. Ik probeer me om te draaien, maar ik kan niet. Deze dans is dodelijk, of misschien wel leidende naar de poort van de hel. Ik sta verstijfd. De uitsteeksels en aanhangsels van haar jurk raken mij. Ik kijk naar haar door mijn glas wijn. De poort brandt. Ik probeer me ergens aan vast te klampen, maar zonder success, totdat ik de stem van tante Connie hoor. Ik kan niet terugroepen. Iemand knijpt mijn keel dicht, maar ik heb geen verlangen om terug te roepen. Ik ben als een boom geworteld in de grond. Ik heb het geheim van Medusa gezien : Alleen met de ogen van wijn kunnen wij haar bekijken. Ze gilt en schreeuwt nu ik het geheim heb ontdek. Ik gooi de wijn in haar gezicht, want ze wil me verscheuren. Dan staat ze in vlammen, en het gehele huis brandt. Ik moet hier weg. Maar de trappen zijn hier van vuur. Alles is van vuur. Ik besluit te blijven. Medusa schijnt aardiger dan ik dacht. Haar hoofden leven hier in een vreemde vrede. Roofdieren bespringen mij en verscheuren mij, en mijn hart is blij. Het is mijn vuur, het is omringd door mijn hart. Ik heb mijn weg hier doorheen gebeten. Een huis met standbeelden. Het is als een brandend strand, en een brandend oog leidt mij uit, om dieper in te gaan. De brandweerman houdt mij stevig vast. Zijn jas is glibberig. En dan brandt hij ook.

Tante Connie doet alsof er niets gebeurt is en staart mij aan. ‘Nog wat koffie, jongen ?’ vraagt ze. Ik zeg niks. Tante Connie schenkt nog wat voor me in. Wie zwijgt stemt toe. Mijn oude bed in de kamer van de dochter van de graaf is versleten, scheuren in de matras, en de piano is vals. Maar niet minder mooi dan de gouden spulletjes van tante Connie. Als tante Connie lacht heb ik het gevoel dat ze op de daken fietst. Ik keek naar de vrouw van de zolder. Waren we niet net als Adam en Eva die door de brandende heg probeerden terug te keren naar het paradijs ? En was dit paradijs een mengsel tussen huizen en blote benen ? Ik keek naar de dochter van de graaf. Ik probeerde een weg door haar heen te graven. Maar ze hield alles tegen. Tante Connie dient de pudding op. Ik kan de borsten zien van de vrouw van het zolder, door haar doorzichtige jurk heen, en ze heeft haar jurk ook wel flink open. Haar borsten druipen nog, als de moederlijke fontein, maar er zijn geen babies. Ik besluit niets te eten. Hier kan ik niet tegen, en het is dodelijk. Als ik naar de dochter van de graaf kijk, dan zie ik hetzelfde tafereel. Het is onbeschoft tegen tante Connie om pudding te laten druipen terwijl zij pudding opdient. Ik kan oom Joop goed begrijpen dat hij zo ver mogelijk van de tafel afzit, als een bibberend hondje. Maar plotseling is het alsof de stoppen bij mij doorslaan. Ik voel me een baby, een hond zelfs, die gevoed moet worden. Wat een drama. Tante Connie ziet het aan mijn gezicht en raakt in paniek. Zelfs oom Joop staat op. Iedereen zit verstijfd. Ik begin met grote happen van de pudding te eten, zodat al snel mijn hele gezicht eronder zit. Oom Joop lacht mij uit. Dit is de tuin van spot. Waarom zijn Adam en Eva hier teruggekeert. Ook de twee vrouwen lachen mij uit, terwijl ze hun jurken nog meer open trekken. En dan smeren ze de pudding over hun lichaam heen en gaan op de tafel liggen. ‘Ik heb al brood gehad,’ zegt oom Joop. Ik kan hier niet tegen. Zelfs een hond wordt beter behandeld. Ik word er erg stil van, en ga bij oom Joop zitten. ‘Je weet hoe vrouwen zijn,’ zegt oom Joop.

‘Dodelijk is het,’ zeg ik. ‘We hebben niet zomaar met een stel hoofden te maken. Het zijn de hoofden van Medusa.’

‘Kijk naar hen door het glas wijn,’ zegt oom Joop. Tante Connie loopt naar de vrouwen toe, en giet wijn over hen heen. ‘Wat een vertoning,’ zeg ik. ‘Dit is toch niet meer normaal.’

‘Ik dacht ook dat ik naar een ander feestje was gegaan,’ zei oom Joop.

‘Kom op, nu weten we het wel,’ zeg ik. ‘Zo lopen we de fanfare niet. Moet je dat nou eens kijken, ze vervuilen die hele tafel.’

‘Nee hoor,’ zegt de dochter van de graaf. ‘Dit is de oerbron, de big bang.’

‘Als je je maar niet verroert,’ schreeuwt tante Connie. ‘We gaan hier geen polonaise in de kamer houden, al mijn spulletjes worden vies. Is er nog respect in dit land ?’

‘Likken, bloedvriend,’ zegt de vrouw van het zolder tegen haar wederhelft. ‘Alsof je leven er vanaf hangt.’

‘Als jullie niet eten wat de pot schaft,’ zegt tante Connie, ‘dan sodemieteren jullie maar op.’

‘We vonden het eten heerlijk,’ zei de vrouw van het zolder, ‘maar we hebben onze eigen toetjes meegenomen.’

‘Contractbreuk,’ zegt tante Connie. ‘Dat hadden we niet afgesproken zo, en voor half geld komen jullie er echt niet langs. Ik voel me door jullie verschrikkelijk door de tang genomen, als je dat maar weet. Ik heb nog wat blokken hout nodig voor het tuinvuur.’

‘Ik dacht anders dat Adam wel tegen een grapje kon,’ zei de vrouw van het zolder, ‘maar mijnheer loopt daar in het hoekje te kniezen.’

‘Oh, toe maar, geef mij maar weer de schuld,’ zei ik. ‘Het is nu oorlog.’ Ineens stormden de vrouwen op mij af, en peperden mij in met pudding, en trokken me op de tafel. ‘Dit is nog eens een kersttoetje, een vijf-gangen toetje is aan ons welbesteed,’ zei de vrouw van het zolder. Ik was woedend. ‘Als ik ooit loskom, dan zul je wat beleven,’ riep ik.

Het was alsof alle machines ineens stilstonden. We staarden elkaar allemaal aan, maar deden niets.

‘Ode aan de kok,’ zei de dochter van de graaf. Na een tijdje lagen we in het bad, en het was nog gezellig ook. Het was als een lange brandende dag aan het strand. Ik was moe, ik had mijn portie wel gehad. Het was een vreemde gewaarwording dat roosjes zo konden zijn. Ik zou vanaf nu veel meer op mijn hoede zijn. Dit mocht niet nog een keer gebeuren. Tante Connie zou het niet overleven. Er groeiden sinds die dag struiken op het behang, die ervoor zouden moeten zorgen dat deze dingen nooit meer zouden gebeuren. Tante Connie was het goed zat, en huurde bewakers in, die een oogje in het zeil zouden houden. Ook liet ze overal cameras planten. We voelden ons vanaf die dag in ons huis bekeken. Maar de volgende keer dat we aan tafel zaten schoten bij mij weer de stoppen door. Ik verlangde zo naar de oermoeder, dat ik boven op de vrouw van het zolder klom, de stoel brak, en we vielen beiden op de grond. Een wachter schoot een pijl door mijn hoofd, net op tijd, en ik werd aan de muur gespietst. ‘Geef hem melk,’ zei tante Connie rustig. ‘Jullie moeten niet zo paniekerig doen.’ Pudding droop uit de borst van de vrouw van het zolder. Ik kon me niet bewegen. ‘Eerste hulp bij ongelukken,’ zei tante Connie. ‘Hij is dood, hij heeft een pijl dwars door z’n kop. Geef hem de melk des levens, stelletje koeien. Nou, waar wachten jullie op.’

‘Hij hangt te hoog, tante,’ zeiden de vrouwen.

- Nou dan spuit je maar. Druk de knopjes maar goed in.

‘Nee, hij is dood. Hij heeft Medusa gezien, en wie van haar melk drinkt gaat naar de hel.’

- Ik ben niet gelovig, stop met die onzin.

‘God, zelfs als je de tepels van Medusa ziet ben je al overgeleverd aan de vlammen van de hel, en haar duistere hulpjes.’

- Ja, die ken ik, rijden die hier niet de hele tijd rond ? Medusa is al openlijk te kijk gezet, je hoeft het knopje van de tv maar aan te draaien.

‘Arme jongens.’

Ik kon naar de melk fluiten. De dames gingen ieder hun eigen kant op. Ik was in de tuin der wreedheden, ik was op sterven na de dood met die pijl in m’n kop. Oom Joop was behulpzaam en trok de pijl uit mijn hoofd. Maar dat deed nog veel meer pijn, dus ik drukte hem er weer in. Even later klopte ik bij de vrouwen aan de deur, maar ze deden niet open. Ik sliep die nacht bij tante Connie en oom Joop in de huiskamer. De dag erna zaten ze allemaal aan tafel alsof er niets was gebeurd. ‘Zo, de meer dan dodelijke borsten van Medusa zijn ook weer van de partij,’ zei ik. De vrouwen zeiden niets. Ze aten gulzig en verslikten zich een paar keer. Het ging zoals gewoonlijk weer nergens over. ‘Leuk,’ zei ik. ‘We zitten hier aan tafel met vergif. Killers.’

‘Houd je mond,’ zei tante Connie. ‘Jij bent ook niet een van de braafsten.’ Plotseling stonden de vrouwen als een vrouw op, als Medusa, en de muren om ons heen begonnen te branden. ‘Zie,’ riep tante Connie. ‘Ik wist het. Medusa is gekomen om wraak te nemen. Ren voor je leven.’ Oom Joop gooide een deken om ons heen, en trok ons naar zijn kant. Hij was de slimste geweest want sinds de dames hier aten zat hij bijna nooit meer aan tafel. Een golf van geweld sloeg ons neer. Maar oom Joop gedroeg zich als een duivel, en dat moest wel, anders had hij niks bij Medusa in de pap te brokkelen. Ik heb oom Joop nog nooit zo te keer zien gaan. Al snel stond Medusa buiten het raam. ‘Ik wist wel dat die wijven een grote pot met vergif waren,’ zei hij. Ik had nog nooit zo’n groot machts-spel gezien. Ik trilde als een hondje. Oom Joop was een held.

Omdat Medusa ons bleef bezoeken kregen we een ander huis in een andere straat. Er groeiden hier zogenaamde borsten-struiken die vruchten hadden als tepels waaruit een sap voortkwam wat bestand was tegen het borstgif van Medusa. We konden zelfs hierdoor Medusa genezen van haarzelf. De vloek was al snel verbroken. Er hoefde verder geen apocalypse aan te pas te komen. Onze vriendschappen werden hersteld, en al snel leefden we hier weer met elkaar. Alles was veilig nu. We hadden onze condomen-boom gevonden.

Een vrouw leefde tussen de verdiepingen in, een vrouw in mijn hoofd, onderdrukt door de hedendaagse maatschappij, een deel gesloten door de hersenen. Medusa was de oorlogsgodin, weggepest door een maatschappij van valse vrede. Een vreemde vrede bracht haar terug. Zij kende de tuin van spot ook. Ze had die zelf gemaakt. Ook kende ze de tuin van edelheden en wreedheden, op maat gesneden. Ze had zich een weg door die tuin gebaand, terug naar het paradijs. Ze ontmoette haar Adam in de lucht, en leidde ook hem terug. Door de brandende heg gingen zij, en helemaal opgebrand kwamen zij aan. Heel snel kwamen zij erachter dat zij een cirkeltje hadden gelopen. Zo slaan dan al snel de stoppen door, en vinden ze de liefde in zichzelf, die na korte tijd niets dan haat blijkt te zijn. Het is alles niet wat het lijkt. Ik kreeg een fatalistische, nihilistische kijk op het leven door deze dingen. We waren weer terug bij af. Heel wat dromen waren kapot gesprongen, en we begonnen ons oude huis te missen, maar daar woonde een nieuwe familie in.

Waar we dan ook naartoe gaan, het is altijd hetzelfde. Laten we daarom naarbinnen keren, en elkaar daar vinden, of hele andere personen die eindelijk onze dromen kunnen waarmaken, maar dit is slechts ijdelheid, illusie. We jagen lucht achterna, iedereen weet het, maar we blijven proberen. We blijven happen naar de koek die voor ons wordt gehangen. We zijn geconditioneerd, slaven, hondjes van Pavlov. Alles is hier misleiding op misleiding. Ik begon een pessimist te worden, zwaar somber. Ik wilde niemand valse hoop geven, niemand voorliegen. We liepen de leugen achterna omdat er geen waarheid was, of was de waarheid gewoon in een heel klein hoekje ergens, daar waar we het onmogelijk zouden kunnen vinden ? Maar alle dingen zijn toch mogelijk voor hen die geloven. En zo ging ik geloven. Niet in het kerkelijk geloof, maar in die vrouwen hier met hun gekke spelletjes. Misschien dat de grootste leugen ook diep in haar de waarheid droeg. Ik had kans, want ik had een pijl door mijn hoofd. Denken was fataal. Het moest van een andere kant komen. Maar ik merkte al snel dat die vrouwen een gesloten boek waren. Ik kwam er niet ver mee. En ik wilde toch ergens in geloven. Een grote trots was er, ergens diep binnenin. Iets wat mij over het

ravijn kon laten zweven, iets wat ik niet kon beschrijven, een mystiek gevoel. Oom Joop zei altijd dat een boek ons erdoor zou helpen, maar hij wist niet welk boek. Een popperige papieren kermis leek het. Tante Connie had een pop in een schoenendoos verborgen, een pop waarin ze heilig geloofde dat deze ons allen redden zou. Vaak sta ik op het balkon en voel me tussen de huizen, tussen de bomen, tussen de rivieren, overal tussen.

Het is een wonder dat ik nog leef met die pijl door mijn hoofd. Op een dag voel ik me door het gevoel dat die pijl in mijn hoofd geeft zo in de wolken, zo extatisch, dat ik merk dat ik kan vliegen. Heel voorzichtig vlieg ik van het balkon, tussen de huizen door. Mensen vallen flauw achter de ramen. ‘Bedrieger,’ roept er iemand. Ik kan er niet mee zitten. Ook al zou het bedrog zijn, ik heb er een goede tijd mee. Ik vlieg naar de top van het hoogste huis in de buurt. Als ik naar beneden kijk is alles wit. Ook het hoge platte horizontale dak waarop ik sta. Ik ruik bosgeuren. Dan vlieg ik over de stad. Wat als ik dit alles zou kunnen ontsnappen. Ik besluit naar de volgende stad te vliegen, daar waar de fabrieks-wolken zijn. Ik houd van de rook. Ik hoop dat we er allemaal in verzuipen. Dat is beter dan wat we hadden. We hebben niets te verliezen. Maar dan roep ik mezelf tot orde. Er staan wat meiden voor een raam. Ze kijken verwonderd. Ik zwaai naar ze. Ze wenken me. Een van hen opent het raam, en ik vlieg naar binnen. ‘Kijk, die kan vliegen,’ zegt er een. ‘Een truc,’ zeg ik. ‘Leer het me,’ zegt een van de meiden. Ik vertel hen over de pijl in mijn kop. Ze giechelen een beetje. Al snel hangen ze aan me. ‘Mag ik in jullie geloven,’ vraag ik. ‘Ik wil ergens in geloven.’

- Wij geloven in de dominee.

‘Okay, maar dat is niet wat. Kan ik in jullie geloven ?’

- Ik weet niet of ik daartoe bevoegd ben.

‘Ik geloof in je.’

- Wat moet ik nu doen ?

‘Vlieg met me mee.’

- Ja, maar ik kan niet vliegen. Waarom blijf je niet gewoon hier. We hebben het hier erg naar onze zin.

‘Okay.’

Ik bleef bij ze staan, en ze trokken me aan tafel. Ik moet zeggen ze waren een stuk netter dan de

vrouwen die ik kende, de Medusa-vrouwen. Ze aten deftig, met mes en vork, geen geklieder. Ik staarde naar buiten, allemaal rook. Ik kon niet veel zien. Ze sliepen allemaal in de huiskamer op matrassen. Ik kreeg ook een matras. Ik sliep al snel. Ik merkte al snel dat ik in mezelf aan het bidden was tot hen. Ik was op zoek naar een geloof. De volgende dag namen ze mij mee naar de kerk. Ik moet zeggen dat het mij aardig beviel. De dominee was erg aardig. Hij had ook wel wijze dingen te zeggen, en liep voortdurend met zijn sleutels te rinkelen. Had hij misschien de sleutels om Medusa te openen ? Na de kerkdienst liep ik op hem af om het hem te vragen. Zonder nadenken nam hij een sleutel van zijn sleutelhanger af en gaf het aan mij. ‘Probeer het maar uit,’ zei hij. Maar eigenlijk wilde ik hier niet meer weg. Deze mensen waren geweldig. Weer ging ik met de meiden mee naar hun huis. Omdat ik heel veel aan Medusa dacht, ben ik even later toch teruggegaan naar mijn eigen stad en huis. Ik begon direkt aan de Medusa-vrouwen te sleutelen. En het werkte, tot mijn eigen verbazing. Voor het eerst had ik het gevoel dat ik met hen ergens kwam. Alsof we de boom des levens hadden bereikt. We dronken koffie op het resultaat. Ik wilde de dominee bedanken, en vloog terug naar de andere stad. De meiden waren blij me weer te zien, en samen gingen we naar het huis van de dominee. De dominee was net zijn huis aan het schilderen. Na het bedankje nam ik afscheid van de meiden, en ging weer terug naar mijn eigen huis. Ik had Medusa verlost uit haar kooi.

Hoofdstuk 3. De Gespleten Aarde

De meiden hebben al snel ons huis gevonden, en de dominee ook. Ze waren met de dominee meegereden. De sleutel had namelijk een zendertje van binnen. Natuurlijk waren ze van harte welkom, maar de Medusa-vrouwen werden snel jaloers. Daar wist de dominee wel wat op, want die had veel meer sleutels. Wat me opviel was dat alles snel verstijfde. Alsof de sleutels veel openden, maar tegelijkertijd viel er ook zoveel dicht. We kregen het idee dat er een vloek op de sleutel lag. De dominee was niet overtuigd, want die geloofde heilig in zijn sleutels. Omdat hij zich steeds arroganter opstelde heeft tante Connie hem even later het huis uitgezet. Ik bewaarde de sleutels sindsdien. Die waren veel te gevaarlijk in de handen van een dominee. De meiden aanbaden inmiddels Medusa aan haar voeten. De dominee was woedend en noemde hen afgodendienaars. Ze waren niet meer welkom in zijn stad. Het bleek dat hij ook nog eens de burgemeester was. Medusa begon trouwens door deze aanbidding ook steeds meer te eisen. Haar voeten moesten gekust worden, anders zou ze alles vertrappen. Ik had allang spijt dat ik haar had verlost, maar het kwam allemaal door die sleutels. Op een gegeven moment was ik het zo zat dat ik de sleutels inslikte. Maar sindsdien ging het niet goed met mij. Ik begon zelf een Medusa te worden. Wie had dat ooit durven dromen dat ik ooit de god der wrake zou worden. Het liep uit op een gevecht met de andere Medusa om de macht. De Medusa begon een gevaarlijk mechanisme te worden. Voordat het nog erger zou worden besloot ik een volgende vliegtocht te beginnen. Ditmaal kwam ik in een andere stad met de hoogste gebouwen. Een oud vrouwtje deed haar raam open, en nodigde mij uit. Toen ik haar het verhaal over de sleutels vertelde scheen ze mij te kunnen helpen. Zij was namelijk een heks. Ik moest een bepaald kruidendrankje drinken, en dan zou ik de sleutels kunnen uitspuwen, en dan zou zij de sleutels omsmelten. Maar alles pakte anders uit. Het kruidendrankje werkte niet. Ik had de krachten van Medusa. Ik was immuun tegen hekserij. Ik moest onder ogen komen dat ik in een monster aan het veranderen was.

Ik strompelde naar de uitgang van deze tuin. Ik had het in zicht nu, en greep naar mijn buik. Ook al verdween de uitgang en de buitenste heg in het niets, en leek het alsof het verder van me af begon te liggen, ik liep toch door. Ik greep om me heen als tastende in het donker. Ik greep het touw mij toegeworpen. Een vriendelijk vrouwengezicht keek me aan. Rozensappen dropen in een fles. Ik hoorde gegorgel en gezang. Bloedende tuinen, zover het oog reikt, vermengd met regen, waar het oog van Medusa over waakt. Het koren dat het goud omhoog haalt, het licht der sterren weerkaatsende, haar vrucht wordt vastgehouden. Medusa waakt. Het houten huis kraakt onder het getal van de lelies. Hier heeft ze haar woning. Hier voedt zij haar raadsel, haar mysterie, waar prinsen op paarden al eeuwen naar zoeken. Nee, zij zullen niet vinden, want Medusa waakt over haar geheim. Haar kroning was een bespotting. Haar lijden was een ontmaskering, maar niemand is ooit tot haar parel gekomen, niemand heeft ooit haar zwaard gedragen. Allen sterven zij door een blik op haar te slaan. Tot steen werden zij in alle eeuwigheden. Haar discipel is zoek, haar beker verloren. Zij heeft haarzelf nog nooit gezien. Zou zij het weten, dan zou zij sterven, daarom weet zij maar half. De rozengrachten hier zijn vol met parels. De mensen hier weten dat Medusa een geheim heeft, alleen ze kennen het niet. Ze hebben er alleen een glimp van opgevangen, en die glimp heeft hen voor altijd verblind.

Ik zit op mijn houten paard, mij hobbelpaard van vroeger, met mijn lange speer, mijn lans. ‘Open de poort,’ roep ik, maar alles zwijgt. Ik vlieg hoog, over de muur heen, maar hier is niks. De aarde is dus toch plat. Is dit het onverbiddelijke geheim van Medusa ? Ik stort hier uit alles wat ik nog in mijn hoofd heb, alle puinhopen, alles gaargebraden, en kijk in de enorme diepte. Nee, het is een ravijn. De aarde is gespleten. Een groot werk moet dat geweest zijn, met de schaar des hemels. Daar aan de overkant weten de mensen niet dat ze niet weten. Ik vlieg weer terug, en omhels mijn Medusa, en mijn meiden. ‘Ik ben aan de andere kant van de schaar geweest,’ zei ik. ‘Daar moeten we ook niet wezen. Vernietig alle spiegels. We staren wel in een glas wijn, met wijn van borsten-struiken.’ Ik strek mij uit. Ze zijn blij dat ik terug ben. Ik solliciteer bij de zeevaart. Ik waarschuw hen dat de aarde wel degelijk plat is, en dat verklaart ook waarom er zoveel schepen zijn gebleven. Ik word er kapitein. Als ik thuis ben speelt oom Joop vaak op het orgel. Maar ik ben niet veel thuis. Ik moet de zee afbakenen. Een hoge rand moet er gemaakt worden, waar niemand meer overheen kan tuimelen. Medusa is als een moeder die haar kinderen terugroept. Zij heeft de tuin gebouwd, en haar muren, en die moeten we eren, omdat het buiten veel erger is. Er is geen paradijs aan de andere kant van de heg, maar de heg spreekt tot de verbeelding. Ik zie nog meer paradijs in een pot pindakaas. Als ik thuis ben zijn de vrouwen blij, dan is het feest, maar een paradijs zal het nooit zijn, en hebben we dat wel nodig. We hebben toch elkaar.

Op een dag ga ik met de meiden voetballen op het pleintje. Via een tunnel komen we in een ander deel van de stad, in een winkelstraat. We slenteren door de straten. Ik neem hen mee naar de bakker, en koop wat special brood voor hen. Brood kan mij nooit te luxe zijn. Het is een levensnoodzaak. Bij de speelgoedwinkel wanen ze zich in het paradijs. Bij het tuinhek laten we alle zorgen achter ons. Voor de chocolade-winkel danst de vrouw van chocolade. Ze roept herinneringen bij me op, ze danst als een zwaan. We gaan de stoffige winkel binnen. Een grote notenkraker-eekhoorn staart ons aan. ‘Ja,’ zegt de winkelier, ‘veel noten altijd in de chocolade, we hebben een verdrag met de noten-industrie. We kregen dit beeld van hen, toch aardig, vindt u niet.’ Ik knikte. De meiden keken de man vriendelijk aan. We konden aan hem zien dat hij er blij van werd. ‘Ik zal u vertellen, ik ben

mijn vrouw verloren,’ zei de winkelier. ‘Ik mis haar echt, en er is nu een zee van ruimte boven, want ze had zoveel spullen en die zijn allemaal in haar graf meegegaan. Komt u maar even mee, dan laat ik het u zien.’ Boven stond alles leeg. Ik staarde naar buiten, waar de chocolade-vrouw nog steeds danste. Ze was een zwerfster, en werd zo altijd genoemd.

Grote poppen van chocolade stonden in kasten. De man deed er erg zakelijk over, en kraste wat op papieren. Even later stonden we weer op straat. Aan het eind van de straat was een fontein. We zagen tante Connie lopen met een zware tas. ‘Tante Connie,’ riep ik. Ze had koffie gekocht, in allerlei soorten. Samen liepen we naar huis. Ik hielp haar de tas te dragen, en de meiden hielden ook wat spullen vast. Medusa wachtte ons op.

DE BIBELEBONSE WIJN

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Hoofdstuk 1. Het Wijnpaard

De kabouter gaf hem een klap in zijn gezicht, en foeterde : "Dat zei ik helemaal niet. Bij de les blijven, jongen." Joost Buis keek voor zich uit, een beetje duizelig, en keek toen weer naar de kabouter. Alles was wazig voor zijn ogen. De kabouter herhaalde : "Dat zei ik helemaal niet. Nou, goed luisteren, anders gaat het weer helemaal verkeerd." Joost keek naar zijn pannekoek op het bord. De pannekoek had oogjes en een mond. Ook had de pannekoek kleine armpjes en beentjes. Joost keek nog eens beter. "Zie je het nu ?" foeterde de kabouter.

"Ja, inderdaad," zei Joost. "U heeft helemaal gelijk."

"In vervolg moet u leren mij te laten uitspreken," sprak de kabouter. De kabouter had een koksmuts op. Hij werkte hier in dit restaurant, het pannekoeken-restaurant van de Bibelebonse pap. De kabouter kende het geheim de lekkerste pannekoeken te bakken van de Bibelebonse pap. Daar was de kabouter voor opgeleid, net zoals vele andere kabouters.

Het land stond vol met zulke pannekoeken-restauranten. Joost keek de kabouter aan. "Dit betekent een ramp," sprak de kabouter. "De pannekoeken zijn razend."

"Ik zie het nu," sprak Joost.

"Ja, maar wat gaat u daar aan doen dan ?" zei de kabouter streng. "Dat kan toch niet zo ? Ze zullen ons hele land ombrengen als er niets aan gedaan wordt."

"Ik denk dan toch dat er nog een ingrediënt mist in de Bibelebonse pap," sprak Joost.
"Dat heeft u goed gezien," foeterde de kabouter. "Wat nu ?"

"Dus er zijn al hele legers van zulke woeste, levende pannekoeken gesignaleerd ?" sprak Joost.

"Jazeker," sprak de kabouter. "Ik heb geen zin om nog langer mijn tijd te verdoen hier en wachten totdat de tikkende tijdbom ontploft. Er moet nu wat gebeuren, anders stap ik op. Mijn beroep is levensgevaarlijk geworden."

Joost dacht even na. "Ik ga er direct mee aan de slag," zei Joost na enkele minuten van nadenken.

"Tjonge, nou dat mocht wel eens tijd worden, koning," foeterde de kabouter.

Joost stapte op, en ging naar oom Georgius. Hij vertelde hem direct het hele verhaal. Sinds oom Georgius was teruggekomen werden er Bibelebonse pannekoeken gemaakt. Daar had hij een bepaald recept voor meegebracht. De pannekoeken werden gemaakt van de Bibelebonse pap, maar er werden ook andere ingrediënten voor gebruikt. Oom Georgius zei dat het niet aan de nieuwe ingrediënten kon liggen, maar dat er waarschijnlijk dan toch nog een ingrediënt miste, waardoor de pannekoeken tot leven kwamen. Het waren woestelingen. Ze waren al legers aan het vormen, en het kon inderdaad een grote ramp voor het land betekenen als er niet snel wat aan gedaan zou worden.

Midden in de nacht werd Joost door oom Georgius wakker gemaakt. Hij hijgde. "Ze komen, ze komen !" riep oom Georgius. "Ze kloppen al op de deuren en ramen van de huizen, en willen iedereen meenemen."

"Meenemen ?" vroeg Joost slaperig. "Waar naartoe dan ?"

"Niemand weet het," zei oom Georgius. "Het is nu alleen nog maar dreigen, maar dat kan snel van kwaad tot erger worden. Het is meer een verzoek op dit moment."

"Wat willen ze ?" vroeg Joost.

Plotseling stonden de pannekoeken al in de slaapkamer. Ze waren misschien door een open raam binnengekomen. "Welaan," zei één van de pannekoeken. Oom Georgius en Joost keken verschrikt naar de pannekoek. Het was een woesteling.

"Eh, wat moet u ?" vroeg Joost. "Het is midden in de nacht."

"Wij willen praten," sprak de pannekoek. Zijn armen waren wild aan het draaien. Hij was totaal niet in de rust, en zijn ogen draaiden ook gevaarlijk.

"Praten ?" vroeg Joost. "Het is midden in de nacht."

"Niks mee te maken," zei een andere pannekoek. Het waren hele dikke opgevouwen pannekoeken, bijna als koeken. "Jullie zitten anders wel te praten."

"Ja, over jullie," zei Joost. "Jullie beginnen al een probleem te vormen, schijnt het."

"Mooi," sprak de pannekoek.

"Mooi ?" vroeg oom Georgius. "Ik weet niet wat daar zo mooi aan is. Jullie hebben heel wat onrust gebracht al."

"Mooi," zei de pannekoek weer. "Het mocht weleens tijd worden. Wij worden namelijk gegeten."

"Vind u het raar ?" vroeg Joost verbaasd. "U bent een pannekoek. Die zijn ervoor om gegeten te worden."

"Nu niet beledigend doen," sprak de pannekoek woest. De pannekoek deed een stap naar voren, en gromde er ook bij.

"Wie heeft dat zo bepaald ?" vroeg een andere pannekoek.

"Eh, wij," zei Joost. "Dat is een gegeven. Jullie zijn voedsel."

"Nou moet je eens even ophouden," zei de pannekoek. "Dat bepaal jij niet. Luister : U sluit nu al uw pannekoeken-restauranten, of er gaan hier ongelukken gebeuren."

Joost dacht even na. Wat moest hij nu doen ? Hij keek naar oom Georgius.

"Doe het maar," zei oom Georgius. "We hebben geen andere keus. Blijkbaar mist er wat in de Bibelebonse pap, anders had dit nooit kunnen gebeuren."

"Of iemand heeft er iets ingegooid wat er niet in hoorde," zei Joost. Hij keek toen weer naar de pannekoeken. "Wij zullen de restauranten tijdelijk sluiten, totdat er een oplossing is gevonden."

"Wij doen niet meer mee," brulde de pannekoek. "En als betaling eisen wij dat alle inwoners van dit land met ons meegaan als gevangenen. Dit land zal onze kolonie worden. Wij regeren het nu."

"Dat gaat wel een beetje erg ver," zei Joost. "Ik heb veel dingen meegemaakt, maar nooit zoiets als dit. Vind je dat zelf ook niet een beetje ver gaan ?"

"Nee, ik niet," zei de pannekoek die zich begon op te zwellen. "Wij hebben hele andere plannen."

Joost keek naar oom Georgius. Toen keek hij weer terug naar de pannekoeken. "Jullie vergissen je."

Plotseling ging er ijzer om de polsen van zowel Joost als oom Georgius. Toen hoorden ze een klik, en werd er aan een ketting getrokken. De pannekoeken hadden hen inmiddels van achteren overmeesterd.

"Gevangen," sprak de pannekoek. "Het is een lange nacht geweest. Jullie waren de laatsten. Het hele volk was al in ballingschap." Toen werden Joost en oom Georgius aan een lange ketting meegetrokken.

"Waar gaan we naartoe ?" vroeg Joost verschrikt.

"Dat zul je wel zien," zei de pannekoek.

Joost was erg nijdig. Hij vroeg zich af wat er aan de hand was. Buiten waren er grote stoeten geketende mensen in rijen die allemaal werden meegetrokken. Ze werden meegetrokken tot schepen scheen het. "We gaan naar een vreemd land !" riep de pannekoek. Legers van pannekoeken waren

er rondom de mensen. Joost werd er duizelig van.

"Mag ik aan uw voorstellen : de koning," sprak de pannekoek tegen wat andere pannekoeken. "De vorige koning zul je bedoelen," lachte een andere pannekoek, terwijl ook de andere pannekoeken begonnen te lachen. Joost werd naar een groot schip getrokken. Oom Georgius was van hem weggetrokken. Die ging naar een ander schip.

Er was een klein kamertje op het schip waar Joost in werd getrokken. Er zat daar een pannekoek achter een bureautje. "Zo zo," sprak de pannekoek. "Dus jij bent de koning van dit onheugelijke land. Allemaal verleden tijd nu."

"Wat wilt u ?" vroeg Joost.

"Dat is voor jou een vraag en voor mij een weet. Een goede vraag wel te verstaan, en ik zal het nooit beantwoorden. Je zult het zelf wel zien," sprak de pannekoek.

Joost had pijn in zijn buik. Wat was er gebeurd ? Hoe kon dit gebeuren ? Hij stond voor een raadsel.

De zeilen werden gehesen en het schip ging varen. Het was een grote vloot met vele schepen, vol gevangenen. In het kleine kamertje op het schip raakte Joost geheel zijn oriëntatie kwijt, en zijn gevoel van tijd. Hij sliep geketend op hooi, dichtbij het bureau. Hij hoopte maar dat er snel een einde zou komen aan deze nachtmerrie. Hier had hij niet om gevraagd.

He schip legde aan bij een eiland. Hier zou Joost moeten verschijnen voor de pannekoek koning. Hij werd aan een ketting meegesleept tot een groot paleis ergens in zandgebied op het eiland. Hij keek om zich heen en zag de hoge muren van het kasteel, die waren als een soort metaal van een licht bruine kleur. De koning zat daar op een troon van hetzelfde soort metaal, maar de koning was zelf geen pannekoek. De koning beweerde dat hij de koning was van de winden, maar dat de heksenwind in zijn rijk had lopen plunderen, en alle winden meenam om hen onder te brengen in de bibelebonse pannekoeken. Dat was het geheim waarom de pannekoeken tot leven waren gekomen.

Joost luisterde met open mond naar de koning. De heksenwind werd dus als probleem aangewezen. Joost vroeg de koning waarom hiervoor het hele volk in ballingschap moest, maar de koning zei dat dat belangrijk was, omdat het volk beschermt moest worden tegen de heksenwind. Alleen de winden van de windenkoning zouden dat kunnen doen. Hoe wist de koning zelf ook nog niet. Hij had een grote nederlaag geleden door de heksenwind.

Joost zou maar wat graag willen helpen, maar wist niet hoe. "Hoe is de heksenwind ontstaan ?" vroeg Joost. Maar de koning wist het niet. Plotseling kwam er een bulderende storm binnen. De deuren waren opengeslagen, en de soldaten van de koning, die overigens ook geen pannekoeken waren, riepen : "De heksenwind !" Joost werd gegrepen door de storm en naar buiten gesleurd, en toen hoog in de lucht getrokken. Joost kon bijna geen adem halen. Hij werd heel hoog getrokken en ging toen een wolk in, waar een wolkenpaleis was. Door een torenraam werd hij naar binnengegooid en kwam oog in oog te staan met een heks.

"Ben je daar eindelijk, jongen," kraste de heks. "Waarom is het altijd zo dat ik alleen maar hierdoor

iemand's aandacht kan trekken ?"

"Wie ben je, heks," sprak Joost, "en wat wil je ?"

"Je kent me nog niet, en dat vind ik jammer," kraste de heks.

"Zeg op, wat wil je," sprak Joost.

"Kom eens even hier," kraste de heks.

"Ik kom nergens," zei Joost. "Wat is dit voor belachelijk gedoe ?"

"Kom kom," kraste de heks. "Je weet het wel, je weet het wel. Ik heb jou nog veel te onderwijzen."

"Ik wil niet onderwezen worden door een heks !" riep Joost luid.

"Ssssttt..." kraste de heks fluisterend. "Je maakt de kinderen wakker."

"Welke kinderen ?" vroeg Joost.

"Laat maar," sprak de heks. "Kunnen we even ter zake komen ?"

"Ik doe geen zaken met heksen," sprak Joost.

"Ach kom," kraste de heks. "Ik bedoel het niet slecht. Ik wilde alleen een leger maken van de Bibelebonse pannekoeken. Ze hebben zoveel goede kwaliteiten."

"Een pannekoeken leger ?" sprak Joost verbaasd. "Waar is dat goed voor, en waarom heb je de winden van de windenkoning daarvoor gebruikt om de pannekoeken tot leven te wekken ? Ze zijn er niet bepaald blij mee."

"Ach, dan hebben ze wat te doen," kraste de heks. "Werken voor een echte heks die orde op zaken kan stellen is toch beter dan werken voor zo'n luiwammes van een windenkoning die van geen toeten nog blazen weet."

"Me dunkt dat je nogal praatjes hebt, heks," sprak Joost verontwaardigd. "Zeg op : Waar is het voor nodig ?"

"Tut tut," zei de heks. "Nu zelf geen babbels gaan krijgen."

"Ik ben toevallig de koning van de Bibelonse pap en de Bibelebonse pannekoeken," sprak Joost nijdig. "Als je dingen wil, of plannen hebt, dan praat en overleg je daar eerst over. Maar niet zoals dit. Dat kan echt niet, heks."

"Praatjesmaker," zei de heks. "Wat weet jij er nou allemaal vanaf hoe alles moet gaan, snotaap."

"Ik vraag het nog één keer, heks," zei Joost : "Wat moet je ?"

"Ik moet helemaal niets," kraste de heks. "Ik bewijs je een gunst door je pannekoeken tot leven te wekken, en meneer is er niet blij mee. Ondankbare hond."

"Een gunst ?" vroeg Joost. "Wat is daar voor gunst aan, een beetje onze pannekoeken in soldaten veranderen zodat ze niet meer gegeten worden ? Nogmaals : de pannekoeken waren er niet blij mee, of telt dat niet voor jou."

"Meneertje koekepeertje," sprak de heks. "Nu moet je eens even goed luisteren. Levende pannekoeken heeft nog niemand gegeten. Ze krijgen pootjes, en weg zijn ze. En dat is maar goed ook, want jullie aten veels te veel, veels te veel. Nu hebben de pannekoeken een echte functie gekregen. Ze zouden jouw land en mij goed kunnen helpen."

Joost boog zijn hoofd. Hij voelde dat hij niet veel in te brengen had in zo'n situatie als dit. Hij was hier bij de heks in een wolkenpaleis, en zijn volk leefde beneden in ballingschap.

"Een pannenkoeken leger, en dan ?" vroeg Joost. "Wie is de vijand ?"

"Ik heb jullie opgenomen voor de strijd," sprak de heks.

"Tegen ?" vroeg Joost.

"Tegen vraatzucht," sprak de heks. "Maak je voedsel tot een soldaat, tot een wapen, of maak er kleding van, of voertuigen, kan me niet schelen, als je maar stopt met al dat vele eten, Bibelebonse flutkoning."

Joost werd rood van woede. "Wij eten helemaal niet teveel. Daar zijn allerlei reglementen voor dat niemand teveel eet. Zij die dat doen worden in de gevangenis gezet, of moeten naar het ziekenhuis," bromde hij.

"Blijkbaar is het niet genoeg," kraste de heks.

"Niet genoeg ? Hoezo ?" vroeg Joost nijdig en beledigd.

"Ik weet genoeg," sprak de heks.

"U bent niet bepaald communicatief," sprak Joost.

"Ik heb al genoeg gezegd," kraste de heks.

Joost dacht na. Er waren inderdaad mensen in zijn land die teveel aten, maar die kwamen in de gevangenis of het ziekenhuis terecht. Maar ja, soms ontsnapte er weleens iemand, en die kon dan een grote bedreiging voor het land vormen. Ze zochten elkaar op, en smeedden zo hun plannen. Veelal gingen ze onder de grond wonen. Het waren vreetbendes, zware criminelen. Misschien bedoelde de heks dat ? Misschien had de heks toch wel een beetje gelijk ?

"Ik zie meer dan je denkt," kraste de heks, "vanuit het wolkenpaleis, en ik vond het wel welletjes."

"Ik begrijp het heks," zei Joost na lang peinzen. "Dreigt er gevaar ?"

"Groot gevaar," kraste de heks. "Het vreters-complot van pannekoek-verslaafden. Ze gaan daar waar het oog niet kan komen, maar ik zie alles. Ik zie wat ze in het geheim smeden."

Joost kon snel tot een overeenkomst komen met de heks, en ook met de winden-koning. Alles werd nu begrepen, en vanaf die dag waren er legers van pannekoeken in Nederland die het volk veilig moesten houden tegen vraatzucht. De winden van de windenkoning die de pannekoeken tot leven hadden gebracht en in de pannekoeken woonden waren hoog gevoelig, zodat ze hun werk goed konden doen.

Maar de mensen in het land begonnen al gauw te protesteren. Ze wilden geen pannekoeken politie. Er kwamen al snel burgeroorlogen. Het pannekoeken leger had de handen vol hieraan. De grootste woede werd gericht tot Joost, de koning. Ze wilden dat hij af zou treden. Op een gegeven moment werd het zo erg dat Joost het bos moest invluchten. Hij riep daar tot de heksenwind, die hem in een storm kwam opnemen om hem naar het wolkenpaleis te brengen.

"Heks, het werkt niet," zuchtte Joost toen hij even later bij de heks was. "Het volk wil me niet meer, en het pannekoeken leger kan niet tegen hen op."

"Je moet één ding goed begrijpen, Joost," sprak de heks. "Het pannekoeken leger moet getraind worden. Ze zijn nieuw in het vak. Ze zijn hier inderdaad nog niet tegen opgewassen, maar wat tijd en scholing doet wonderen."

Joost glimlachte. "Maar hoe dan, heks ? Wie kan hen onderwijzen ?" vroeg hij.

"De heksenwind kan hen onderwijzen," sprak de heks.

En zo begon er een groot scholingsproces voor het pannekoeken leger. De heksenwind zou lesgeven in het wolkenpaleis, en de ene helft van het leger onderwees zij 's ochtends, en de andere helft onderwees zij 's middags. Ook gaf zij weleens lessen in de avond voor kleinere groepjes. Het pannenkoeken leger werd groter in Nederland en beter getraind, maar nog steeds waren er grote burgeroorlogen. Vaak brak er brand uit. Het was het tijdperk van de brandstichters.

Eigenlijk werden de burgeroorlogen alleen maar erger. Het was hard tegen hard. Maar het pannekoeken leger kon nu in ieder geval standhouden. Ook zagen zij het als een uitdaging. Maar dit geluk was maar van korte duur, want de burgeroorlogen werden zo erg, en het pannekoeken leger begon zulke grote nederlagen te lijden, en waren zo gehaat, dat ze voorlopig geheel opgenomen moesten worden in het wolken paleis, anders zou er niets van hen overblijven. Door deze chaos kwam het land in nog grotere problemen. Er waren ook grote bosbranden. Joost en de heks waren ten einde raad. De heksenwind was nog steeds bezig met het trainen van het pannenkoeken leger. Ze werden voor nu niet naar beneden gezonden. Ook de heks en Joost volgden lessen bij de heksenwind.

Op een dag waren ze allen tezamen gekomen in de grote onderwijs-zaal van het wolkenpaleis. Het hele pannekoekenleger was er, en ook Joost en de heks, en de windenkoning met zijn gehele hofhouding. De heksenwind zou die dag een groot geheim aan de dag stellen. Ze stond daar voor het publiek en sprak :

"De wijn van Ekolijn, een groot geheim,
In het diepste van de nacht heeft het altijd op ons gewacht,
Het woont in de aarde diep, waar zij tot u riep,
U bent door dit alles heengegaan, opdat zij zal stromen,
Een groot Bibelebonse geheim,
Deze Bibelebonse wijn."

Ekolijn was een mannetje die diep in de aarde woonde. Hij bewaakte daar de Bibelebonse wijn. Van die wijn zou je in een betoverende slaap komen. Het mannetje kon heel snel zijn, en had een neusje als van een clown. Het mannetje was een bosdwerg, een aarddwerg. Je zou alleen bij Ekolijn kunnen komen door een hele diepe put in de aarde. Ekolijn zong altijd liedjes. Soms waren die liedjes vrolijk, en soms waren ze droevig. De Bibelebonse wijn zou vrede brengen, maar niemand had ooit de plaats van Ekolijn gevonden. Het was de vraag of Ekolijn echt zou bestaan of dat het maar een liedje was.

Joost wilde wel op onderzoek uit. De heksenwind zou hem terugbrengen naar het bos, als de mensen zouden slapen, naar een plaats waar geen bosbranden waren. In de nacht bracht de heksenwind hem naar beneden het bos in. Joost keek goed om zich heen. "Waar kan die put ergens zijn ?" vroeg Joost aan de heksenwind. De heksenwind blies haarzelf op en gebood Joost haar te volgen. Ze leidde hem naar een diep ravijn. "Hier moet het wezen," sprak ze. "Onderin het ravijn moet ergens de put naar Ekolijn zijn."

"Ben jij daar weleens geweest ?" vroeg Joost.

"Ben je gek," zei de heksenwind. "Veel te gevaarlijk voor mij. Ik zou daar ergens kunnen vastraken."

Wat dat inhield zei de heksenwind verder niet. Daar sprak ze niet over. Joost moest dus helemaal alleen langs het ravijn naar beneden klouteren. Er groeide hier allemaal vreemd kruid. Gelukkig was het er niet stijl, maar liep alles schuin naar beneden. Het was een soort vallei. De heksenwind was inmiddels weer teruggegaan. Er lagen hier allemaal schedels. Ook lagen er botten. Er gleed een rilling over Joost. Plotseling hoorde hij gekrijs in de verte.
Ergens beneden was een smalle put waar een touw inhing, vastgemaakt aan een paaltje. Joost ging langs het touw naar beneden. Dieper in de put was het ruimer. Maar ergens hield het touw op, en hij hing nog steeds ergens. Hij kon niet dieper, en hij durfde zich ook niet te laten vallen. Plotseling keek hij recht in de ogen van een vogel.

"Wat moet dat hier," kraste de vogel.
"Ik ben op zoek naar Ekolijn," zei Joost een beetje hijgend.

"Klim maar op mijn rug," zei de vogel. Het was een tamelijk grote vogel, dus Joost waagde het erop. De vogel vloog met Joost heel diep de put in. "Ik kom hier maar eens in de drie miljoen jaren," kraste de grote vogel, "maar vanavond was het het feest van ..." maar verder kon Joost het niet verstaan. Het vliegen leek wel eeuwig te duren. Joost was zijn besef van tijd kwijt. Ineens stond hij op de grond voor een klein tunneltje. "Hier doorheen," sprak de vogel, "dan de rechter bocht nemen. Dan kom je er vanzelf." Joost kon in het tunneltje als hij zou kruipen. Hij moest heel lang door de modder kruipen voordat hij aankwam bij een splitsing met twee bochten. Hij nam de rechter bocht zoals de vogel had gesproken. Hier moest hij zijn. Helemaal onder de modder kwam hij aan bij een klein deurtje. Hij ging naar binnen, en hier was een grote open ruimte met een boom. In de boom was een deurtje wat direct openklapte en een mannetje rende naar buiten. Joost kon het bijna niet met zijn ogen volgen. "Dus hier is nog nooit iemand geweest ?" vroeg Joost zichzelf af.

"Ekolijn is de naam," sprak het mannetje.

"Ik kom voor de wijn," sprak Joost, "om maar direct met de deur in huis te vallen. Ik ben Joost, koning van de B...." maar verder kon Joost niet komen.

"Bespaar me je praatjes," zei Ekolijn. "Ik ben de vriendelijkste niet tot vreemdelingen."

"Jij bent zeker de lolligste thuis met die clownneus en je opmerkingen," sprak Joost.

"De lolligste zeer zeker niet," sprak Ekolijn. "Mijn drie broers zijn nog wel veel lolliger, maar wat kom je doen ? Je denkt toch niet dat ik je ook maar enige Bibelebonse wijn meegeef ? Waar is het voor ?"

Joost vertelde zijn verhaal.

"Interessant verhaal," zei Ekolijn. "Maar eh .... daarom wonen wij hier. Daarom wonen wij hier, want daarboven is alles slechts geklier, en daar zouden wij dan onze kostbare wijn voor moeten opofferen ?"

Joost trok rare gezichten. "Als het kan," zei hij. "We hebben het hard nodig. Hoeveel vraagt u voor de wijn ? En wat zijn precies de kwaliteiten van de wijn ?"

"Nou ja, kijk eens hier," zei Ekolijn, "goed dat je die vragen stelt. Ik heb nog drie broers die over deze zaak beslissen. De makkelijksten zijn het zeer zeker niet. Ik ben al niet makkelijk, maar zij zijn helemaal niet makkelijk."

"Iets meer informatie over de wijn graag," sprak Joost een beetje ongeduldig.

"Je hebt wel haast, moet ik zeggen," zei Ekolijn.

Joost begon een beetje nijdig te worden. "Alles op zijn tijd," zei Ekolijn.

"Ik zie u heeft grote nood," sprak Ekolijn. "Misschien kunnen we een uitzondering maken, maar dat ga ik met mijn broers overleggen." Ekolijn rende de boom weer in en kwam er na een paar tellen

weer uit. "We hebben het besproken, hoor," sprak Ekolijn, "maar eh, het is toch niet voldoende. Het is toverwijn, ziet u, en dat verspillen we niet zomaar aan de eerste de beste."

De dwerg begon te neuriën en toen te zingen, terwijl hij aan wat karweitjes begon : "Rode, donkere wijn, vloeiende vanuit het geheim. Het geheim wil je niet weten, en iedereen is het vergeten. Er komt altijd iets tussen, het springt altijd weg. Het kan nergens komen, en je hebt altijd pech. Onbereikbaar is dit geheim, waar de brug verdwijnt in de eeuwigheid. Het strekt zich uit, en brandt dan af, het draait rond, en dan is alles anders als je dichterbij komt. Voor eeuwig zul je dwalen. Nooit zul je de Bibelebonse wijn behalen." Toen begon de dwerg hard te lachen, terwijl hij Joost volkomen negeerde. Druk bezig was hij met zijn karweitjes. Joost was boos, en moest nog veel meer van die gemene liedjes aanhoren.

"Had ik de linkerbocht maar genomen," dacht Joost bij zichzelf, en ging terug het tunneltje in, terug naar de splitsing, waar hij toen de linkerbocht nam. Tot zijn grote verbazing kwam hij hier ook aan bij de open ruimte met de boom. Direct sprong weer hetzelfde mannetje door het deurtje naar buiten, nog wel sneller dan de vorige keer. "Welkom gast," zei het mannetje. "De naam is Ekolijn."

"Maar had ik u net niet al gezien ?" vroeg Joost.

"Welnee," zei het mannetje. "Dit is de eerste keer."

"Ja maar ik had net een heel gesprek met u gehad," zei Joost, "bent u dat nu alweer vergeten ?"

"Nee hoor," zei Ekolijn, "mijn geheugen werkt goed. Dit is echt de eerste keer. Nog nooit eerder voorgekomen."

"Vreemd dan," zei Joost. "Ik nam de rechterbocht en kwam u daar tegen."

"De rechterbocht is maar een spiegelbeeld," zei Ekolijn. "Hier moet je wezen. Kom je voor de wijn ?"

Joost knikte.

"Goed, dan zal ik je erover onderwijzen," sprak Ekolijn.

"U heeft toevallig geen drie broers ?" vroeg Joost.

"Nee joh," sprak Ekolijn. "Het spiegelbeeld splitst mij op in vier delen, en doet dan alsof de andere delen mijn drie broers zijn. Het zijn niet de vriendelijksten, maar dat komt omdat de stukken afgescheiden zijn en geen geheel vormen. De vriendelijkheid is in de scheuring niet bewaard gebleven. Heel begrijpelijk."

"Ik zie het," sprak Joost.

"Nu," zei Ekolijn. "Die wijn brengt de toverdroom, waarin alles anders wordt.

Ekolijn keek Joost aan. Hij pakte hem bij zijn arm, en trok hem door het deurtje de boom in. Hier was een trap naar beneden. "Kijk," zei Ekolijn, "deze trap leidt tot het wijnbos. Daar groeit de Bibelebonse wijn als vruchten aan de bomen. Daar moet je zijn. Wij drinken het, en baden erin, opdat de vraatzucht wegvaagt. Moet je goed luisteren : Midden in het wijnbos staat het wijnhuis, waar het wijnzaad wordt gemaakt. Het ligt daar in grote zakken. Het is het geheim van het wijnbos. Het wijnzaad wordt gemaakt door een grote machine, die het wijnzaad maakt door leugens."

"Door leugens ?" vroeg Joost verschrikt. "Maar dan is het toch geen goede machine ?"

"Jawel, jawel," zei Ekolijn die een pijpje opstak. "Je begrijpt het verkeerd. Het zijn geen echte leugens, maar raadsels."

"Ik zie het," zei Joost gerustgesteld. "Als ik ergens een hekel aan heb dan zijn het wel leugens."

"Ik ook," zei Ekolijn. "De raadsels zijn ervoor om indringers tegen te houden en om de tuin te leiden."

"Klinkt als een goed plan," sprak Joost. "Dat zou ik graag voor mijn land willen gebruiken."

"Het is raadselwijn," sprak Ekolijn. "Maar duur, zo duur."

"Duur ?" vroeg Joost.

"Ja, dat moet wel, hè," sprak Ekolijn.

"Wat kost het ?" vroeg Joost.

"Je leven," zei Ekolijn.

"Laat dan maar zitten. Dat gaat mij te ver," zei Joost.

"Wacht nou even," zei Ekolijn. "Je moet me wel laten uitspreken."

Joost luisterde. Even was het stil. Toen sprak Ekolijn verder : "Nogmaals : Ik zei dat het je het leven kost."

Joost knikte. "Wat bedoel ik hiermee ?" vroeg Ekolijn. "Ik bedoel hiermee dat je een totaal ander leven zal krijgen. Je moet dus als het ware je vorige leven inleveren. Het gaat dus om een grote verandering."

"Ik begrijp het," zei Joost. "En wat houdt die verandering precies in ?"

"Je zal niet dezelfde zijn," zei Ekolijn. "Je vorige leven zal nog steeds ronddwalen en de bewaker worden van de wijn."

"Dus ik ga gesplitst worden ?" vroeg Joost.

Ekolijn was even stil. Je zal in vieren gedeeld worden, net als ik. Dat is je spiegelbeeld, de bewaker.

"Hoe gaat dat gebeuren ?" vroeg Joost.

"Dat doet de wijn," sprak Ekolijn.

"Eigenaardig," sprak Joost. "Dus mijn verleden wordt in vieren gedeeld en ik leef zelf door als het vijfde deel ?"

"Warempel," sprak Ekolijn. "Je hebt het door."

Ekolijn pakte Joost's hand, en leidde hem naar beneden over de trap. Het waren vele trappen. Ze gingen helemaal de diepte in. Het werd steeds donkerder. Na een tijdje kwamen ze aan bij het wijnbos. Ook hier was het donker, maar aan de rand van het bos stond een grote lichtende steen met daarop een beeltenis van een blanke man met indianenveren, zittende op een rood paard. Ernaast stond geschreven : "Alleen zij die het wijnpaard berijden zullen het wijnbos kunnen binnengaan." Ekolijn wees ernaar, en sprak : "In de bovenwereld zijn ze allemaal verslaafd aan de bibelebonse pap. De bibelebonse wijn is ervoor om de vraatzucht te doen verdwijnen, maar omdat er ook het gevaar is van het verslaafd worden aan de bibelebonse wijn, moet men leren het wijnpaard te berijden. En het wijnpaard is het dolste paard wat er bestaat. Dat kan ik je wel vertellen."

Joost zag het al helemaal voor zich. Een woest rood paard, en dat zou hij dan moeten berijden ? Geen sprake van.

"Is er geen andere mogelijkheid ?' vroeg Joost.

"Helaas niet," sprak Ekolijn. "De verslaving aan de wijn is een groot gevaar en dat moet getemd worden. In feite is de bovenwereld het resultaat van een wijn verslaving. Iemand heeft het gedroomd."

"Dus ik kwam uit een droom ?" vroeg Joost.

Ekolijn knikte. "We kunnen hier niet te lang blijven, want als het wijnpaard ons in de gaten krijgt, dan is het goed mis."

"Kun jij hem niet berijden dan ?" vroeg Joost.

"Nee," zei Ekolijn. "Ik ben slechts een bewaker van de wijn, een bewaker van het wijnbos. Ik mag er zelf niet in."

"Heeft u weleens van die wijn gedronken ?" vroeg Joost.

"Nee joh," zei Ekolijn.

Joost keek hem verbaasd aan.

"Voor zover ik weet hebben alleen de blanke indiaan en de wijnverslaafde ooit van de wijn gedronken, maar dat kan net zo goed mythe zijn," sprak Ekolijn.

"Wie is de wijnverslaafde ?" vroeg Joost.

Ekolijn zweeg. Na een paar minuten stilte sprak Ekolijn : "Daar moet je het niet over hebben."

Joost stond voor een raadsel. Ekolijn pakte hem bij de hand en wilde de trap weer oplopen, maar Joost hield hem tegen. "Wacht even," zei Joost. "Ik zou graag het woeste, dolle wijnpaard willen berijden. Mijn land heeft mij nodig, en daarbij heb ik de Bibelebonse wijn dus echt nodig om orde op zaken te kunnen stellen."

Ekolijn keek hem met grote ogen aan. "Dat lukt je nooit," sprak Ekolijn. "Nooit."

"Maar waarom heb je me hier dan naartoe genomen ?" vroeg Joost.

Ekolijn zweeg. In de verte kwam het rode paard al aanstormen. "Ik zei het je toch," zei Ekolijn ongeduldig. "Nu hebben we de poppen aan het dansen. Daar komt het paard aan." Ekolijn greep Joost vast, maar Joost rukte zich los. "Alles of niets dan maar," zei Joost. "Ik ga het er op wagen." Maar het paard was woest. Er was donder en bliksem, en het paard steigerde en schopte toen Joost tegen zijn kin aan. Joost had het gevoel alsof zijn hele gezicht in brand stond en viel na een paar seconde bewusteloos. Ekolijn greep Joost als de bliksem, en ging als de bliksem met Joost in zijn armen de trap op. Gelukkig was Ekolijn sneller dan het paard. Snel was hij weer boven met Joost en sloot de trap naar beneden af door het luik dicht te doen. Na een tijdje begon het paard tegen het luik aan te trappen. Joost begon weer langzaam bij te komen. "Ik zei het je toch !" foeterde Ekolijn. "Nu hebben we dus echt de poppen aan het dansen. Dat wordt vanavond dus gebakken peren eten." Het paard begon steeds harder tegen het luik te trappen. "Hier zijn we niet veilig," sprak Ekolijn. "We moeten hier weg." Daar begon het paard al door het luik te breken. Weer droeg Ekolijn Joost in zijn armen. Hij was verschrikkelijk sterk, en begon weer als de bliksem te rennen. Het paard stoof achter hen aan. Ekolijn rende door de tunnel heen, helemaal tot uit het ravijn. Het woeste paard zat nog steeds achter hen aan. Ze waren nu boven de grond gekomen, en Ekolijn rende helemaal het bos door totdat ze in een stadje aankwamen. Het rode paard was woest en begon tegen huizen aan te trappen. Mensen kwamen in rep en roer naar buiten, en werden door het dolle paard tegen de grond getrapt. Ekolijn was moe geworden, en zette Joost neer. Het paard zat nu niet meer achter hen aan, maar ze zagen hoe het paard tegen de huizen en mensen hier tekeer ging, bij de grachten. Het hele stadje was in rep en roer.

"Wat moet dat hier !" schreeuwden de mensen. Maar meer konden ze niet zeggen, want dan had het paard hen al tegen de vlakte getrapt. Er was veel gegil. Joost bleef op een afstand sprakeloos kijken met Ekolijn. Hij moest iets doen als koning. Joost waagde het er op en begon met stevige passen naar het paard te lopen, maar plotseling voelde hij weer scheurende pijn in zijn kin. "Niet doen !" riep Ekolijn hem toe. Joost liep weer terug naar Ekolijn. Het paard was woedend, en trapte overal in het stadje ramen en deuren in. Joost bleef staan als verstijfd. Na een tijdje kwam het paard weer op hen af. "We zijn er geweest," zei Ekolijn. "Ik ben te moe. Ik moet rusten." Iemand gooide een Bibelebonse pannekoek naar Joost. "Hier," werd er geroepen, "probeer het paard hiermee te voeren,

koning." Joost raapte de pannekoek op en stak het uit naar het wijnpaard. Het paard begon direct rustiger te worden, en liep langzaam af op Joost. Het paard had alleen oog voor de pannekoek en begon ervan te eten uit Joost z'n hand. Ekolijn keek verbaasd en opgelucht toe. "Goedzo," zei Joost tegen het paard. "Brave jongen," terwijl hij met zijn andere hand het paard aaide. Het paard brieste, maar was nog steeds rustig. Joost zou het erop wagen, en klom op het paard.

Maar weer kreeg Joost een scheurende pijn in zijn kin. Hij voelde zichzelf heel duizelig worden. Langzaam stapte hij van het paard af, en ging op de grond liggen. Na een tijdje werd hij naar het ziekenhuis gebracht. De dokter die hem onderzocht zei dat hij zijn kaak had gebroken. Dat was inderdaad een hoge prijs om op het wijnpaard te kunnen rijden. In ieder geval wist hij nu hoe hij het paard moest temmen.

Hoofdstuk 2. De Dolle Stier

Toen Joost uit het ziekenhuis was gekomen bracht Ekolijn hem naar een weiland waar het wijnpaard graaste. Joost had een Bibelebonse pannekoek bij zich en gaf dit aan het paard, waarna hij op het paard klom. Het paard was al die tijd rustig geweest. In rustige pas ging Joost op het paard naar het bos, samen met Ekolijn die naast hen liep. Er was zoveel veranderd. Het ravijn was niet meer zo diep, en veel schuiner, nog meer als een vallei, en er was geen put meer, maar alleen nog de tunnel, en die was veel ruimer nu, wat Joost al eerder had opgemerkt toen Ekolijn er met hem doorheen rende. Ze gingen naar de boom en gingen daar naar binnen, om zo over de trap naar beneden tot het wijnbos te komen. Joost kon nu eindelijk in het wijnbos komen, rijdende op het wijnpaard. Het was een prachtig bos, en na een tijdje kwamen ze aan bij het wijnhuis. Ekolijn was aan de rand van het bos gebleven. Het wijnhuis was groter dan Joost had gedacht. Het was een gigantisch gebouw. Joost ging op het paard naar binnen. Hij kwam in een hal terecht, en stapte toen van het paard af. Hij liep door de hal en keek naar de muren waaraan schilderijen hingen. Hij ging door een deur en kwam weer in een hal. Aan de muur hing een schilderij van de blanke indiaan op het wijnpaard. Joost had de teugels vast van het wijnpaard. Hij keek naar de andere muur en schrok. Er hing een soort monument met tekst. Er stond op : "Het wijnhuis voor waaghalzen. Het wijnpaard hebben ze getemt, maar hebben zij zichzelf getemt. Oh waakt u toch voor de spiegelbeelden die spoken in dit huis."

Joost slikte even. Hij keek nog eens goed naar de blanke indiaan. De jongen leek verdacht veel op hemzelf. Toen kreeg Joost de schrik van zijn leven. De blanke indiaan draaide plotseling zijn hoofd en keek naar hem terwijl zijn mond bewoog. Joost sprong achteruit. "Heb je mij geroepen ?" vroeg

de blanke indiaan.

"Wie ben je ?" vroeg Joost.

"Jouw spiegelbeeld," zei de blanke indiaan.

"Hoe is dat gekomen ?" vroeg Joost.

"De wijn, mijn jongen," sprak de blanke indiaan op het schilderij. "De Bibelebonse wijn."

"Maar die heb ik nog nooit gedronken," zei Joost.

"Ik ben jouw toekomst," sprak de blanke indiaan.

"En Ekolijn dan ?" vroeg Joost, "Heeft hij weleens van de Bibelebonse wijn gedronken ? Hij zei eerst van wel, en toen weer niet. Maar ja, ik weet ook dat hij spiegelbeelden heeft."

"Precies," zei de blanke indiaan. "Alles loopt hier door elkaar heen. Natuurlijk heeft hij van de Bibelebonse wijn gedronken, en daardoor zijn zijn spiegelbeelden ontstaan."

"Hij had het ook over een wijnverslaafde, die de bovenwereld zou hebben gemaakt of gedroomd," zei Joost.

"Ja," sprak de blanke indiaan. "Dat is één van zijn spiegelbeelden."

"Vandaar dat hij er niet over wilde praten," zei Joost.

De blanke indiaan knikte. "Het ligt nogal gevoelig."

"Heb ik nog meer spiegelbeelden ?" vroeg Joost.

"Genoeg," sprak de blanke indiaan. "De hele gang hangt vol met jouw spiegelbeelden, maar zij zijn bewakers van de wijn."

Joost liep verder door in de hal, en kreeg weer de schrik van zijn leven. Hij zag een schilderij met een man met een stierenvechters pak en een lang dun zwaard. : "Zeg me dat je mijn spiegelbeeld niet bent," sprak Joost. De man had een baard. Hij richtte het lange dunne zwaard op Joost. "Halt," zei de man. "Zei je daar spiegelbeeld ? Ik ben inderdaad een spiegelbeeld. Ik voer oorlog tegen de wijnverslaafden en hen die onbevoegd de wijn willen stelen. Geen stap verder."

"Ik ben op zoek naar de Bibelebonse wijn," sprak Joost, "naar het wijnzaad. Ik heb het nodig voor in mijn land."

"Dat zeggen ze allemaal," zei de stierenvechter. "Ik ben jouw toekomst, jouw dolle toekomst. Ik ben doller dan de stier, en doller dan het wijnpaard ooit is geweest."

"Als jij mijn spiegelbeeld bent van de toekomst, waarom help je me dan niet ?" vroeg Joost.

"Waarom zou ik dat doen ?" vroeg de stierenvechter op het schilderij. "Ik bewijs je een dienst. Die wijn is gevaarlijk. Als je er teveel van neemt dan ga je vreemd dromen, en kom je op de verkeerde plaatsen met alle gevolgen ervan."

"Hoe kan ik de wijn dan de baas ?" vroeg Joost.

"Alleen als je wordt zoals mij," sprak de stierenvechter. "Doller dan de wijn, doller dan de stier, en doller dan het wijnpaard ooit is geweest."

"Waar is dat goed voor ?" vroeg Joost.

De stierenvechter begon geïrriteerd te worden. "Om de Bibelebonse wijn de baas te blijven !" brulde hij. "Anders komt er een overstroming."

"Hoe word ik als jou ?" vroeg Joost.

"Door te lezen, veel te lezen," sprak de stierenvechter.

"Welke boeken ?" vroeg Joost.

"Ik heb geen zin om dat uit te leggen," zei de stierenvechter.

Joost liep door. Hij was er klaar mee.

"De wijn is te gevaarlijk !" riep de stierenvechter nog. Verderop in de hal zag hij een ander schilderij. Het was een schilderij van ijsvlaktes. Weer ging hij door een deur. Hij had nog steeds de teugels vast van het wijnpaard. Achter deze deur was een boekenkamer. Achter een bureau zat de stierenvechter. "Dat schilderij in de hal is zeker uw spiegelbeeld," zei Joost.

De man keek op, en knikte. "Ja, en ik ben jouw spiegelbeeld van de toekomst. Die op het schilderij is niet zo'n beste. Niet erg behulpzaam," sprak de man.

"Dat had ik gemerkt," zei Joost. "Wat voor soort boeken moet ik lezen om als u te worden ?"

"Kijk maar," zei de man, en gaf hem een boek. Joost bladerde door het boek. Op elke bladzijde stond een spiegelbeeld op een schilderij. "Je moet veel leren over de spiegelbeelden," sprak de stierenvechter.

"En moet ik daadwerkelijk doller worden dan een stier ?" vroeg Joost.

"Oh ja," zei de stierenvechter, "doller worden dan de wijn. De wijn is als een dolle stier. Als je niet doller wordt dan de wijn, dan zal het je verzuipen. De wijn is het dolste van allemaal."

"Ook doller dan u ?" vroeg Joost.

"Oh ja," zei de stierenvechter, "veel doller dan ik. Ik ben de wijn nog nooit de baas geworden. Ik heb ook nog nooit van de wijn gedronken. Daarom ben ik hier."

"Maar de stierenvechter op het schilderij beweerde dat hij doller was dan de wijn en de stier," sprak Joost.

"Hij kletst," sprak de stierenvechter. "Hij is niet voor niets op het schilderij. En opgeruimd staat netjes."

"En de blanke indiaan dan ?" vroeg Joost. "Heeft hij van de wijn gedronken ?"

"Voor zover ik weet ja," sprak de stierenvechter. "Hij en de wijnverslaafde."

"De blanke indiaan had weer andere verhalen," sprak Joost. "Alles wat ik wil is wat wijnzaad zodat ik er wat van in mijn land kan zaaien."

De stierenvechter wees op een deur achter hem. "Ga die gang op, en dan kom je vanzelf in de arena van de Bibelebonse wijn terecht. Het is dus een stier, en de stier is flink dol. Succes," sprak de stierenvechter.

Joost ging met het paard de gang op, en liep helemaal door tot hij in een open ruimte kwam. Hij had nog wat Bibelebonse pannekoeken meegenomen, dus hij dacht dat hij kon proberen de stier hiermee te temmen. Plotseling renden er allemaal clowns langs hem heen. "De stier komt, de stier komt !" riepen ze. Joost greep een pannekoek, en ging voor de veiligheid op het paard zitten. Er kwam een hele rustige stier op Joost af, en voor de zekerheid gooide Joost een pannekoek op de stier af, maar de stier negeerde het gewoon. Bij het paard aangekomen werd de stier ineens woest, en drukte zijn horens in de huid van het paard. Het paard trapte de stier van hem af, maar het paard was niet meer dezelfde als vroeger. Al gauw stortte het paard neer, en Joost moest maken dat hij wegkwam. De clowns probeerden de woeste stier af te leiden. Joost rende en rende. Toen viel hij en er was niets anders dan een stofhoop om hem heen. Hij keek op en zag de blanke indiaan op zijn rode paard voor hem staan. "Help," kreunde Joost. Toen stormde de blanke indiaan op zijn paard op de stier af. Er waren niets dan stofwolken. Joost kon bijna niets zien. Tot zijn grote schrik zag hij toen ook de blanke indiaan met het paard vallen. De woeste stier kwam toen weer achter Joost aan. Joost rende en rende, en zag de clowns ook niet meer. Weer nam Joost een pannekoek, en hield het in zijn hand, maar dat maakte de stier alleen maar woester. "Doller worden dan de stier," dacht Joost bij zichzelf. Plotseling draaide hij zich naar de stier, en brulde als een leeuw. "Doller worden dan de stier," zei hij tegen zichzelf, en brulde weer. Maar de stier nam hem op de horens. Joost sprong op de rug van de stier, maar werd er met dezelfde vaart weer afgeslingerd. Weer nam de stier hem op de horens, en smeet hem weer een eind weg. Plotseling zag hij Ekolijn als de bliksem rondrennen. Ekolijn maakte cirkeltjes om de stier heen, die daar helemaal van in de war raakte, en toen kwam Ekolijn naar Joost toe, nam hem op, en snelde weg met Joost. Ekolijn bracht hem naar een tunnel en zette hem daar neer. "Hoe ben je hier gekomen ?" vroeg Joost buiten adem. Ekolijn zei niets. Na een paar minuten antwoordde Ekolijn : "Door een wijnverslaving."

"Jij bent de wijnverslaafde ?" vroeg Joost. "Ekolijn's spiegelbeeld ?"

Ekolijn knikte. Joost zuchtte. "Een geluk bij een ongeluk dan. Ik vraag me af hoe ik dat beest ooit kan temmen."

"Ik moet weer gaan," zei Ekolijn, en snelde weer weg.

Joost dacht na. Hij moest en zou de oplossing vinden. Hij klaagde een beetje over wat er was gebeurd. Hij liep dieper de tunnel in en kwam daar een kabouter tegen. Ook tegen de kabouter begon Joost te klagen over dit land. "Zwijgen nu," sprak de kabouter na een tijdje. "Zwijg ! Dit land is onder een zware betovering. Laat je er niet zo in mee sleuren. Soms is het beter je mond dicht te houden, om even een stap achteruit te nemen en het zichzelf te laten herstellen. Dat kan niet altijd door het vele praten." Even moest Joost terugdenken aan de kabouter van het pannekoeken-restaurant. Hij vroeg zich af hoe iemand zo onbeschoft kon doen tegen een koning, maar hij wist wel dat de kabouter gelijk had. Boos liep de kabouter weg. Joost riep hem nog na, maar dat hielp niet. Joost ging nog dieper de tunnel in. Er lag daar een grote steen waarop geschreven stond : "Kent gij de wijn van Ekolijn ? Dat grote geheim ? Hebt gij de Bibelebonse wijn zien springen als een dolle stier ? Wat een wijn, wat een wijn, het is slechts een spiegelbeeld van Ekolijn."

Joost keek op en dacht na. "Dus Ekolijn is de wijn zelf ? Ekolijn was ook die dolle stier ? Wat ben ik toch in een vreemd land terechtgekomen." Hij ging nog dieper de tunnel in. Het werd hier donkerder, en de tunnel liep in een bocht. "Die wijn is vreemd en gevaarlijk," dacht Joost bij zichzelf. "Het brengt de meest vreemde spiegelbeelden. En het bovenland is dan ook zo'n spiegelbeeld, een droom van Ekolijn ? Wat een nachtmerrie."

Weer zag hij een grote, lichtende steen tegen de wand van de tunnel aanliggen, tegen de muur. Er stond in een vreemd handschrift op geschreven : "Oh ridder, gij bent dichter bij het geheim van de Bibelebonse wijn gekomen. Het is de raadselwijn .... Als gij het drinkt dan ...." en verder waren de letters weggevaagd. Joost liep verder. Hij werd steeds nieuwsgieriger. Daar lag weer een steen, een wat kleinere. Ook daar stonden letters op, maar hij kon het niet lezen. Het waren vreemde tekens. Er was hier en daar wat verlichting in de tunnel. Het was heel zacht, dromerig licht. De tunnel liep over in een gang, waar weer schilderijen aan de muren hingen. Het waren vaak schilderijen met jachttafereeltjes. In de verte hoorde hij neuriën, en toen een liedje. Het was de stem van Ekolijn. Ekolijn liep in de verte op hem af. "Ben je daar eindelijk, jongen ?" sprak Ekolijn. "Ik heb lang op je gewacht. Dit land is onder zware betovering van de Bibelebonse wijn. Alles wordt afgesplitst en gaat een leven op zichzelf leiden."

"Inderdaad," zei Joost. "Dat is me nu wel zo klaar als een klontje."

Ekolijn begon te lachen. "Zo klaar als een klontje, ha ha." Ekolijn begon steeds harder te lachen, en telkens zei hij "Zo klaar als een klontje."

"Kom mee," zei Ekolijn na een tijdje. Hij had Joost bij zijn arm en liep met hem dieper de gang in. "Ken je het geheim van de Bibelebonse wijn, de wijn van Ekolijn ?" vroeg Ekolijn. Joost zei niets. "Je weet het niet, hè ?" sprak Ekolijn. "Kom, ik laat het je zien." De gang leidde tot een grote witte deur, van parelachtig wit. Ze kwamen binnen in een zaal waar duizenden stoelen waren van rood fluweel, en daarachter was een podium. "Hier spreekt de wijn," sprak Ekolijn. "Het is mijn

spiegelbeeld." Joost keek verbaasd in het rond. Er was verder niemand. "Wie komen hier ?" vroeg Joost.

"Jij bent de eerste," sprak Ekolijn. "Neem een stoel."

Joost ging helemaal vooraan zitten, dichtbij het podium. Een mannetje geheel in het rood kwam binnen vanuit een deur achter het podium. "Daar heb je hem," zei Ekolijn, die naast Joost was gaan zitten. "Mijn spiegelbeeld."

"Ik hoop beter dan die dolle stier," fluisterde Joost naar Ekolijn. Ekolijn moest lachen.

"Welkom aanwezigen," sprak het rode mannetje op het podium. "Het zijn er maar twee !" riep Ekolijn.

"Ik heet u hartelijk welkom," sprak het rode mannetje. Even werd het duizelig voor Joost zijn ogen. Hij begon dubbel te zien, en toen ineens begon alles samen te voegen. Ekolijn was nu het rode mannetje, en er stond maar één stoel waarop Joost zat, en het rode mannetje stond voor hem. Ekolijn had gewoon een rood pak aan. "Ben je daar, jongen ?" sprak Ekolijn. Joost knikte verbaasd. Ekolijn legde zijn hand op de schouder van Joost. "Dit land, dit bos, is zwaar betoverd."

"Ik weet het," zei Joost. In zijn andere hand had Ekolijn een beker, en die zat vol met de Bibelebonse wijn. "Drink maar, jongen," sprak Ekolijn, terwijl hij de beker gaf. Joost begon te drinken. Eerst haastig, maar toen langzamer. De vloer begon te worden als water, als golvend water, en Joost begon er in weg te zakken. "Help," zei Joost.

"Laat het maar over je heen komen," sprak Ekolijn. Joost gleed in een diepe put naar beneden. Hij had een warm gevoel van binnen. "Het is de wijn," sprak Ekolijn. "De wijn spreekt." Joost gleed dieper en dieper en viel in een diepe slaap. Na een lange tijd werd hij wakker in een bed. Ekolijn zat naast hem op een stoel. "Hoe was de Bibelebonse wijn ?" vroeg Ekolijn.

"Het lijkt wel alsof ik eeuwen heb geslapen," sprak Joost. "Waar zijn we ?"

"Ik wil eerst iets van je weten," sprak Ekolijn. "Heb je iets gezien terwijl je sliep ?"

"Alles was rustig," zei Joost.

"Goed," zei Ekolijn. "We zijn hier in een plaats onder het wijnbos. Hier groeit het wijnzaad, in de struiken. Ik ben een struik, mijn jongen."

"Je bent heel wat," zei Joost.

"Ja," gniffelde Ekolijn. "Ik heb zoveel spiegelbeelden door de Bibelebonse wijn."

"Je kan er een winkel van maken," zei Joost.

"Ik ben niet te koop," zei Ekolijn, "maar wel te leren kennen."

"Als op een school," zei Joost.

Ekolijn knikte. "Een natuurschool."

Joost keek naar Ekolijn. Ekolijn had zoveel laagjes, en die leken allemaal te draaien om zijn clownsneusje. Ekolijn was als de regenboog van het bos, als een natuurverschijnsel die alle realiteiten maakte door spiegelbeelden, door de Bibelebonse wijn. Ja, Ekolijn was de Bibelebonse wijn. Het was een raadsel om zo hogerop in de natuurschool te komen. Joost wist dat zijn land dit nodig had. Als Joost naar Ekolijn keek dan zag hij de golven van de zee, in zoveel laagjes. Het maakte hem warm van binnen. Het was de diepte van de natuur, wat de natuur verborgen hield voor hen die net zoals Joost op zoek waren naar de oplossing. Dat was geen makkelijke opgave.

"Joost," zei Ekolijn. "Hier in dit land onder het wijnbos is ook een spiegelbeeld van jouw land, waar ze allen van de Bibelebonse wijn drinken en in vrede met elkaar leven. Alleen de wijnverslaafden zijn een groot probleem. De vraatzucht bestaat daar niet meer, maar de drinkzucht, hè, de drinkzucht ... Grote dronkelappen lopen daar op straat."

"Wat doen ze ?" vroeg Joost.

"Ach, ze zien de dingen niet helder," sprak Ekolijn. "Ze draaien alles om, en dat kan weleens problemen geven, vooral als ze in hoge functies komen. Ze dromen hun dromen, en maken alles kapot, en spelen dan de grote redder. Het is hoe ze handel drijven, hoe ze hun producten verkopen. Eerst maken ze het probleem, en dan bieden ze het medicijn."

"Maar dat is verschrikkelijk," sprak Joost. "Ja, dat kun je wel zeggen," zei Ekolijn. "Het is nog wel erger dan de vraatzucht, als je het mij vraagt."

"Dus het is een soort valse vrede ?" vroeg Joost.

Ekolijn knikte.

"Wat kunnen we daaraan doen ?" vroeg Joost. "Ze moeten dan leren het wijnpaard te berijden, om hun wijnverslaving te doen verdwijnen."

"Nee," zei Ekolijn. "Er is iets veel ergers dan het wijnpaard en de dolle stier."

Joost keek Ekolijn aan. "Iets nog ergers ?" vroeg Joost.

Ekolijn knikte. "De wijnzee is het probleem," sprak Ekolijn. "Die overstroomt vaak, en als we die niet bedwingen, dan gaan we er allemaal aan. Als dat zo door gaat zal het alles opslokken."

"Zouden dijken helpen ?" vroeg Joost. Ekolijn begon te lachen. "Dijken ? Daar breekt de wijnzee zo door heen. Het is een allesverwoestende zee. Het komt overal doorheen en overheen."

"Wie heeft die wijnzee dan gemaakt ?" vroeg Joost.

"Wat denk je ?" vroeg Ekolijn. "Ik."

"Maar waarom dan ?" vroeg Joost.

"Tja," zei Ekolijn. "Moet je luisteren, lieve jongen. Ik heb nogal veel geheimen, grote geheimen, en ik had de wijnzee als wachter aangesteld, maar het liep nogal uit de hand, begrijp je ?"

Joost keek Ekolijn met grote ogen aan.

"Wat nu ?" vroeg Joost.

"De wijnzee wordt elke dag woester," zei Ekolijn.

"Kunnen we dan niet beter naar boven gaan ?" vroeg Joost.

"Welnee joh," sprak Ekolijn. "Je moet het raadsel oplossen. De wijnzee zal ons overal vinden, en ons meesleuren waar dan ook. Je kunt er niet voor weghollen."

"Ik begrijp het," sprak Joost. "Die Bibelebonse wijn is dus ook een complete ramp. En ik maar denken dat het mijn land zou kunnen helpen."

Er werd op de deur van de slaapkamer geklopt. "Het is de zee," sprak Ekolijn kalm. "Hij doet nu nog beleefd." Ineens werd de deur opengeslagen, en Joost keek recht in een rode zee, die wild leek, maar toch nog tamelijk kalm, als ingehouden woede.

"Zaken doen ?" sprak de zee.

"Wat wil je ?" vroeg Ekolijn.

"Ik wil Joost," sprak de zee.

"Ach wijnzee, wat moet je toch met hem ?" vroeg Ekolijn.

"Gaat je niks aan, Ekolijn," sprak de wijnzee, en greep door een golf naar Joost. Joost trok direct de dekens over hem heen.

"Blijf van hem af !" riep Ekolijn, "Maak dat je wegkomt."

Maar de zee gaf Ekolijn een klap. "Ik wil hem nu !" bulderde de zee.

"Wat moet ik doen ?" riep Joost.

"Je kunt niets doen," zei Ekolijn.

Plotseling greep een golf het hele bed van Joost, en trok hem de zee in. Het was een ondergrondse

zee, helemaal rood, van wijn. Het was de Bibelebonse wijnzee. Met een loeivaart sleurde de golf het bed van Joost mee. Joost zat rechtop in zijn bed.

Toen sloeg de golf het bed kapot tegen de rotsen, terwijl Joost bewusteloos op het zand viel. Een meisje met een rieten rokje kwam naar Joost toe, en bood hem wat te drinken aan. Na een tijdje kwam Joost bij, terwijl ze het weer aanbood. "Ik drink hier niets meer," sprak Joost woest. Hij voelde zich zwak en gebroken, en erg boos. Het meisje nam zijn hand. "Waar ben ik ?" vroeg Joost.

"Op het wijn eiland," sprak het meisje. De zee was inmiddels rustiger geworden. "Waarom ben ik hier ?" vroeg Joost.

"De zee riep je," sprak het meisje. "Hij wilde je het wijn eiland laten zien."

"En dat moest door mij tegen de rotsen aan te slingeren ?" vroeg Joost. "Er waren geen andere mogelijkheden ?"

"Je was onder een zware betovering," sprak het meisje. "Je moest wel."

"Zo behandel je geen koning," zei Joost.

"Het was een vergissing," sprak het meisje.

"Wat was een vergissing ?" vroeg Joost. "Dat geslinger tegen de rotsen, of dat ik een koning ben ?"

Het meisje zei niets. "Sorry," zei ze na een tijdje.

"Vreemd hoor," zei Joost. "Zo ga je niet met mensen om."

"Je vergeet de spiegelbeelden," sprak het meisje. "Je vergeet de ernst van de betoveringen."

"Het is goed met jullie," zei Joost boos. "Zo kan ik het ook. Bij iemand het pulp eruit slaan en dan zeggen : "Ja, sorry, maar je was onder een zware betovering." Bij ons in het land ga je daarvoor de bak in. Linea recta."

"Mijnheer, u begrijpt het helemaal verkeerd," sprak het meisje. Ze wiegde een beetje met haar heupen voor hem. "Het was een vergissing."

"Hoezo een vergissing ?" vroeg Joost brutaal. "En kun je stoppen met dat gedans voor mijn ogen ? Ik lig hier half bewusteloos en jij maakt er een dansje bij. Dat is toch onbeschoft ? Vooral naar een koning."

"Ik dans helemaal niet," sprak het meisje koud. "U bent nog steeds onder de invloed van de Bibelebonse wijn."

"Dus ik kan mijn eigen ogen niet meer geloven ?" vroeg Joost. "Vreemd, hoor."

Naar zijn gevoel stond zij nog steeds heupwiegend voor hem, maar ze had hem ook in twijfel gebracht. Ze hielp hem op te staan en bracht hem naar een hut achter het strandje. Er stond daar een fles Bibelebonse wijn op een tafeltje.

"Nooit teveel er van drinken," sprak het meisje. "Geniet van de zee."

"Genieten van de zee die mij tegen de rotsen slingerde ?" vroeg Joost. "Dat is zeker een grapje."

"U was onder een zware betovering," sprak het meisje. "De zee heeft niks gedaan."

"En nu ook nog alles goed gaan lopen praten !" bulderde Joost. "Ik zal het woord niet zeggen, maar ik heb nu hele erge zin om te gaan schelden."

"Het is jouw beleving, omdat je onder een zware betovering was," sprak het meisje. "Zelfs een veertje die je zou strelen zou hard bij je aankomen."

"Ik begrijp het," zei Joost.

"De zee maakte alleen contact, en jij reageerde zo heftig," sprak het meisje. "En dan geef je anderen de schuld. Dat is typisch een wijnverslaving."

"Ik ben helemaal niet verslaafd aan de wijn !" bulderde Joost.

"De wijn zit in je bloed," sprak het meisje. "Vanaf je geboorte al. Je bent dronken geboren."

"Nu niet beledigend gaan doen," sprak Joost. "Je hebt het wel tegen de koning toevallig."

"Het is de waarheid, mijnheer," sprak het meisje. "Ekolijn was altijd je vriend. Het heeft altijd in je bloed gezeten."

"Ik ben van een tovenaarsgeslacht," zei Joost.

"Zie," zei het meisje. "Ik weet meer dan jij denkt."

"Wat doe ik eraan ?" vroeg Joost.

"Je moet de geheimen van de wijnzee leren kennen," sprak het meisje. "Zwem erin, geniet ervan, laat je onderwijzen over zijn natuurgeheimen, en drink er minder van."

"Kom," zei ze, en rende over het strandje de zee in. De zee was helemaal rood. Joost volgde haar, en stapte ook voorzichtig in de zee. De golven waren prachtig, fonkelend rood, met vele laagjes, als de regenboog op de toppen. Hij kon dwars door de zee heenkijken. De zee was lekker warm, en hij voelde zich weer helemaal warm van binnen worden. Het was een prachtige, rijke natuur, die zijn ziel leek binnen te vloeien. Zou hij echt teveel gedronken hebben, en zelfs dronken zijn geboren ? Zou het meisje toch gelijk hebben ? Ze spatte wat water naar hem toe, en dook toen in de golven. Joost dook haar achteraan. Hij voelde zich veel beter nu, alsof de zee hem genas.

Onderwater konden ze gewoon ademen, en het meisje liet hem van alles onder water zien. Hier groeiden ook wijnstruiken en wijnplanten, en er waren geheime grotten. De prachtigste edelstenen waren er te vinden onderwater in de grotten. Joost keek zijn ogen uit. Hij voelde iets bruisen in zijn hoofd. Hij besefte dat de Bibelebonse wijn eigenlijk voor hele andere dingen bestemd was dan het drinken ervan. Het meisje overtuigde hem hiervan. Ze konden gewoon met elkaar praten onder water. Toen zag Joost iets waarvan zijn hart bijna stilstond. Het was een wijnklok, als van parelachtige, doorzichtige stenen gemaakt. Hier leek de zee vanuit te stromen en ook weer in terug te gaan. Het meisje hield de klok in haar handen, en zei dat er nog wel meerdere klokken waren. Toen Joost de klok vasthield leek het alsof hij de wijnzee van binnen voelde stromen, op en neer, van links naar rechts. Het begon in hem te cirkelen en te draaien. Plotseling had hij een prachtige droom, zomaar onderwater. Hij zag hem en het meisje in een kamer, en er hingen klokken aan de muren, en er stond daar een man met een lange baard. Joost hield de handen van het meisje vast. De man was de klokkenmaker van de wijnzee. Joost voelde toen niets dan geluk door hem heenstromen. Hij zag alle laagjes van zijn leven vanuit de klokken stromen. Ze begonnen te vermengen door de wijnzee. Toen gleed de droom weer langzaam van hem weg. "Ik heb gedroomd !" riep Joost.

"Het zijn de droomvissen !" riep het meisje. "Zij brengen dromen !"

"Oh !" riep Joost, en zwom weer naar haar toe. Het leek wel alsof hij een eindje was meegetrokken met de droomvis. De droomvissen waren bijna één met de wijnzee. Ze waren nauwelijks zichtbaar. Ze waren als de wijn zelf, als de golven, en konden zomaar iemand overweldigen. "Leef je hier alleen ?" vroeg Joost. Het meisje antwoordde niet. "Ik heb genoeg aan de spiegelbeelden," zei ze even later. Toen gaf ze hem een zoen op zijn wang.

Joost schrok wakker in het Bibelebonse pannekoeken-restaurant. Alles, maar dan ook alles, was maar een droom geweest. Hij staarde naar de Bibelebonse pannekoek op zijn bord. De pannekoek had geen oogjes en ook geen mond. Ook had de pannekoek geen armpjes en beentjes. "Hoe smaakt het, koning ?" vroeg de kabouter met de koksmuts op die aan zijn tafeltje stond.

"Ik viel ervan in slaap en had een vreemde droom," sprak Joost.
"Dat moet de Bibelebonse wijn zijn geweest die hier door het deeg wordt gemengd, koning," sprak de kabouter.

"Vreemd," sprak Joost. "Ik vraag me af wat er dan allemaal van waar is geweest als het maar een droom was."

"De Bibelebonse wijn spreekt, koning," sprak de kabouter. "Dat weten we allemaal."

"Dan weet ik het nu ook," zei Joost. "Mij werd niks verteld."

Joost at de rest van de pannekoek op, en vertrok toen. Hij wilde weten wat er waar was van zijn droom. Het kwam natuurlijk door de toverwijn, dus Joost dacht dat het wel een bedoeling moest hebben allemaal. Joost ging het bos in, op zoek naar het ravijn waardoor hij in het avontuur kwam en Ekolijn ontmoette. Maar hoe hij ook zocht, hij vond het niet. "Zou het dan toch allemaal maar

een droom zijn geweest ?" vroeg Joost zich af. Joost strompelde door het bos. Hij was erg moe geworden van het vele zoeken. Na een tijdje viel hij in slaap. Door luid gekras van vogels werd hij even later wakker en zette zijn zoektocht voort. Hij moest en zou het vinden. "Bibelebonse wijn, wat een onzin," bromde Joost. Toch miste hij ook Ekolijn, en het meisje van het wijneiland. Het begon aan hem te knagen, en na lange tijd begon hij Ekolijn te roepen. Weer hoorde hij gekras van vogels. Ekolijn was verder in geen velden of wegen te bekennen. Toch dacht hij dat hij wat herkende waar hij nu liep. Hier moest toch ergens dat ravijn zijn.

"Hola," zei een stem die op die van Ekolijn leek. Joost keek recht in het gezicht van het mannetje. "Ben je daar eindelijk ?" sprak Ekolijn.

"Ik heb je lopen zoeken," zei Joost.

"Kom mee," zei Ekolijn.

"Hoe kan dat nou ?" vroeg Joost. "Ik werd wakker in het pannekoeken-restaurant van een droom nadat ik van een pannekoek had gegeten. Ze zeiden dat ik had gedroomd door de Bibelebonse wijn die door het deeg was gemengd."

Ekolijn lachte. "Het was geen droom," sprak Ekolijn, "maar de betovering maakte weer spiegelbeelden, en dan loopt alles door elkaar heen. Dan lijkt het dat je terug naar af gaat, maar gelukkig ben je weer terug."

"Ja, maar alles was rustig in mijn land," sprak Joost, "alsof er nooit wat was gebeurd."

"Ik zei het je toch dat jouw land hier in vrede leeft door de Bibelebonse wijn," sprak Ekolijn. "Dit is een spiegelbeeld onder het wijnbos, waar de Bibelebonse wijn je bracht."

"Maar bracht de Bibelebonse wijn geen toverdromen ?" vroeg Joost.

"Nee," zei Ekolijn. "We zeggen dat weleens, maar het zijn gewoon spiegelbeelden. De wijn is een spiegeldrank, een drank van raadselen. De wijnzee nam je mee, en dan weet je het wel."

"Wie was dat meisje op het wijneiland ?" vroeg Joost.

"Shhh..." sprak Ekolijn fluisterend. "Spreek daar niet over."

"Waarom niet ?" vroeg Joost.

"Shhhhhh..." fluisterde Ekolijn harder.

Joost schrok wakker in de wijnzee en zag het meisje lachend voor hem. "Weer gedroomd," zei Joost.

"De droomvissen moeten je wel hebben vandaag," sprak het meisje met een glimlach.

"Laten we uit het water gaan," zei Joost een beetje benauwd. "Ik begin gek te worden van die droomvissen. Ik vraag me af wat erger is : droomvissen of pyranha's ?"

Het meisje lachte. "Wat als je nu de zee uitgaat, denk je dat dan alles afgelopen is ? Wat als dat ook weer een droom is van de droomvissen ?"

"Zo kunnen we wel aan de gang blijven," bromde Joost.

Samen zwommen ze terug, en gingen het strandje op. Helemaal nat kwamen ze aan bij de hut. "Toch ben ik blij dat ik hier ben," sprak Joost, "maar wat als ik straks weer wakker wordt boven mijn pannekoek in het Bibelebonse pannekoek-restaurant ?"

"Dan is het een goede pannekoek geweest," glimlachte het meisje terwijl ze haar tong uitstak.

"Het zou een drama zijn," sprak Joost, "want dan zou ik je weer enorm gaan missen, en deze prachtige natuur hier."

"En dan zou je snel weerkomen voor een nieuwe pannekoek," glimlachte het meisje die weer haar tong een beetje uitstak. "Dat is de bedoeling ervan. Ze weten precies hoe ze hun pannekoeken moeten verkopen."

"Maar wat als ik dan hele andere dromen krijg, en je nooit meer terugzie, dat ik nooit meer over je droom, en over de prachtige natuur hier van het wijneiland ?" vroeg Joost. "Ik zou er erg moe van worden. Telkens maar weer Bibelebonse pannekoeken eten in de hoop over je te dromen, en dan telkens weer wakker te worden zonder jou. Dat lijkt me een grote nachtmerrie. Ik zou er depressief van kunnen worden, of nog erger. Ik zou het leven niet meer zien zitten."

"Maar daar zou je ook weer van wakker worden," glimlachte het meisje. "Die droomvissen blijven niet voor altijd aan je vastkleven, en dan ben je weer wakker, en besef je dat je nog steeds hier bent."

"Noem ze gerust nachtmerrie-vissen dan," zei Joost.

"De vissen zijn belhamels, dat is een feit," zei het meisje.

"Waarom gaan we de zee dan nog in als ze zo zijn ?" vroeg Joost.

Het meisje keek Joost diep aan met haar donkere ogen. Even zei ze niks en bleef maar in Joost z'n ogen kijken. "Luister," zei ze toen. "Je moet ze leren kennen. Ze zijn het geheim van de wijnzee en van dit eiland."

"Ik heb het vermoeden dat dit dan ook een droom van zo'n droomvis is," sprak Joost. "Een mooie droom, maar waar loopt het op uit ? Het kunnen plaaggeesten zijn."

Het meisje stak weer glimlachend haar tong uit. "Tot nu toe is alles nog goed gegaan," sprak het meisje. Joost was bang om weer wakker te worden. Hij wilde dit niet verliezen.

"Leidt me tot het geheim van de Bibelebonse wijn," smeekte hij het meisje. "Ik kan er niet zonder leven. Ik wil niets anders meer."

"Je spreekt als een wijnverslaafde," sprak het meisje glimlachend, alsof ze hem uitlachte.

"Ik drink het toch niet ?" zei Joost. "Ik weet nu dat ik het moet leren kennen, erin moet zwemmen, in plaats van drinken. Dat heb ik van jou geleerd."

"Goedzo," sprak het meisje.

Hoofdstuk 3. De Rijder op het Slaap Paard

Joost keek in de donkere ogen van het meisje, en voelde zich toen wegvagen. Hij lag in het zand van de arena van de dolle stier. Blijkbaar had de stier hem zo hard geraakt dat hij bewusteloos was geraakt en ging hallucineren of dromen. Joost probeerde op te staan, maar het lukte hem niet. Hij zag de stier op een afstand naar hem kijken, en hij zag ook Ekolijn. "Niks zeggen !" riep Ekolijn. "Dit spiegelbeeld wordt opgewekt als je spreekt."

Joost lag doodstil en durfde niks te zeggen. "Ook niet bewegen !" riep Ekolijn. "Het wordt dol als je je beweegt !" Zowel de stier als Ekolijn kwamen dichterbij. Joost durfde niet eens adem te halen. Joost keek naar de stier en naar Ekolijn. Ze kwamen steeds dichter bij hem, en dichter bij elkaar, totdat Joost zag dat ze vermengd werden, en toen was het alleen nog Ekolijn. Ekolijn legde zijn hand op Joost z'n schouder. "Nu kun je weer spreken en bewegen," sprak Ekolijn, terwijl hij Joost optrok. "Waar is de stier nu ?" vroeg Joost.

"Gewoon oppassen met spreken en bewegen," zei Ekolijn. "Dit is een zwaar betoverd land. Soms moet je stil zijn." Joost knikte. Hij snapte dat de wijnverslaving gelijk opliep met de spreekverslaving en de beweegverslaving. Alles moest met een zekere mate gebeuren, met een zekere timing en met een duidelijke grens. Toch herinnerde hij zich ook de woorden van de stierenvechters. "Maar de stierenvechters zeiden dat ik doller moest worden dan de stier," sprak Joost.

"Op sommige momenten," sprak Ekolijn. "Ook met mate, en in de juiste balans. Het gaat om zelfbeheersing. De dolle stier is niets anders dan een spiegelbeeld van je eigen onbeheerstheid."

"Ik durf het bijna niet te vragen," sprak Joost, "maar ben ik weer gegrepen door zo'n droomvis waar ik later weer van wakker wordt, of had de dolle stier me gewoon goed te pakken gehad zodat ik

over het wijn eiland en de droom vissen hallucineerde of droomde, of wordt ik straks weer gewoon wakker in het pannekoeken-restaurant. Me dunkt het is nogal een mysterie."

"Eén ding is zeker," sprak Ekolijn. "Het is de Bibelebonse wijn. Alles loopt door elkaar heen. Dit land is flink betoverd."

"Eén ding is zeker dat ik langzaam gek van die Bibelebonse wijn wordt," sprak Joost.

"Maar je hebt al wel heel wat geleerd," sprak Ekolijn.

"Dat is waar," zei Joost. "En het lijkt erop alsof het de enige weg is, anders blijft het me plagen, en mijn hele land."

"Zo is het," zei Ekolijn. "Het is de diepte van de natuur, en onwetendheid is de grootste plaag."

Joost knikte.

"Kom, ik zal je nog wat laten zien," sprak Ekolijn, en nam Joost aan zijn arm mee naar een andere tunnel aan de zijkant van de arena van de dolle stier. De tunnel liep uit op een gang, waar weer schilderijen hingen. Tot Joost z'n grote vreugde waren hier schilderijen van het wijneiland en van het meisje. Ook waren er schilderijen van de droomvissen, die op de schilderijen beter te zien waren. Ze gaven een blauwachtige energie af. "Prachtig," zei Joost, "ook al zijn het nachtmerrie-vissen."

"Het zijn pyranha's," zei Ekolijn, "maar dan subtieler. Ze spelen mentale spelletjes."

"Kijk eens naar het meisje," zei Ekolijn.

Joost keek naar het schilderij en kwam dichterbij. Hij legde zijn vinger op het schilderij, gewoon om even contact te maken. Op het schilderij had het meisje ook haar rieten rokje aan. In haar hand had ze een fles Bibelebonse wijn.

"Raakte je aan dit leven verslaafd, zo tropisch aan het strand ?" vroeg Ekolijn.

"Bijna wel," zei Joost.

"En werd je bang dat je het ooit weer zou kunnen verliezen ?" vroeg Ekolijn.

"Ja," knikte Joost. "Ik was ontzettend bang."

"Je was verslaafd," sprak Ekolijn, "en je was haar klant."

"Maar ik dronk niet van de Bibelebonse wijn," sprak Joost.

"Nee, maar je was er op andere manieren aan verslaafd," sprak Ekolijn.

"Ze zei dat ik als een wijnverslaafde was," zei Joost.

"Precies," zei Ekolijn.

"Ze zei ook dat ik dronken geboren was," zei Joost.

"Weet je wat het is ?" zei Ekolijn. "Je moet dit begrijpen. De reclame heeft vele truukjes. Zij maakte reclame voor de Bibelebonse wijn op haar manier. Ja, je hebt het nodig, maar voor haar ben je slechts een klant."

Joost boog zijn hoofd. "Dat zei ze ook van het Bibelebonse pannekoeken-restaurant, dat ze precies wisten hoe ze het spul moesten verkopen," sprak Joost.

Ekolijn schudde zijn hoofd. "Die vrouw is levensgevaarlijk," zei Ekolijn. "Je moet haar leren temmen als een stierenvechter. Ze is een dolle stier die je zou kunnen opvreten met huid en haar. Je laat je het hoofd teveel dol maken."

"Bedankt voor je wijze raad," zei Joost. "Je bent een goede vriend."
"Kijk nog eens beter naar het schilderij," sprak Ekolijn. "Wat zie je ?"

Joost ging nog dichter bij het schilderij staan en bekeek het aandachtig. Hij was op zoek naar details.

"Kijk goed," zei Ekolijn.

"Ik weet het niet," zei Joost.

Ekolijn's vinger bewoog naar het meisje, en toen naar haar mond. "Wat zie je hier ?"

Plotseling opende het meisje haar mond. Joost schrok.

"Ze houdt zich stil, maar dit zijn levende schilderijen," sprak Ekolijn.

"Wat moeten jullie van me ?" sprak het meisje een beetje geïrriteerd. "Zien jullie dan niet dat ik bezig ben met de verkoop ?"

Joost was op zijn hoede nu. "Wat verkoop je ?" vroeg hij.

"Verhalen," sprak ze.

"Wat voor verhalen ?" vroeg Joost.

"Verhalen over wijn," sprak ze.

"Alleen verhalen ?" vroeg Joost.

"En dromen," sprak ze.

"Wie zijn je klanten ?" vroeg Joost.

"Ik dacht dat jij een klant was," sprak het meisje.

"Niet meer," zei Joost.

"Dan heb ik geen klanten meer," sprak het meisje.

"Zielig voor je," zei Joost.

"Kijk beter," zei Ekolijn tegen Joost.

Er stroomde vuur uit de mond van het meisje. Er kwam stoom uit haar oren. Ze begon over te koken.

"Wat betekent dit ?" vroeg Joost.

"Goed kijken," zei Ekolijn.

Ze begon nu zelf de Bibelebonse wijn op te drinken.

"Kom," zei Ekolijn, en leidde hem naar het volgende schilderij. "Ik begrijp het niet," zei Joost. Het schilderij was geheel wit. "Kijk goed," zei Ekolijn.

"Het is geheel wit," zei Joost.

"Nee," zei Ekolijn.

Joost werd met een brandende pijn in zijn kin wakker op de grond en zag het wijnpaard woest om zich heen trappen naar de mensen toe. "Ik wist het," kreunde Joost. "Het was dus toch die trap van het wijnpaard." Joost probeerde weg te kruipen, maar dat ging niet best. Ineens herinnerde hij zich wat er was gebeurd voordat dit alles gebeurde. Hij zou die dag met oom Georgius naar het Bibelebonse pannekoeken-restaurant gaan, maar eerst zou hij een ritje maken op zijn nieuwe wijnpaard. Waarschijnlijk was hij er vanaf gevallen, of kreeg hij een trap van het beest, of beiden. Het wijnpaard was woest. Na een tijdje zag Joost het paard niet meer. Het Bibelebonse pannekoeken-restaurant was dichtbij, en Joost kroop er in grote pijn naartoe. De pannekoeken-koks ontfermden zich direct over hem. "Wat is er gebeurd, koning ?" vroegen de koks.

"Ik weet het niet meer, ik weet het niet meer," jammerde Joost. "Ik weet alleen dat ik een enorme pijn in mijn kin heb."

"En u zou vandaag met uw oom hier komen heb ik begrepen," sprak één van de koks. "Waar is uw oom ?"

"Ik weet niet of ik wel zin heb in pannekoeken vandaag," sprak Joost. "Mijn kin doet teveel pijn."

"Dat zien we," zei een andere kok. "En die pijn overviel u zomaar ?"

"Ik weet het niet," zei Joost. "Ik denk dat ik niets meer weet."

"Wat heeft u vanochtend gegeten ?" vroeg de kok.

"Al slaat u me dood," gromde Joost. "Ik kan het me niet meer herinneren."

Daar kwam iemand anders binnen. "De koning is van zijn paard gevallen," sprak de persoon.
"En wie bent u ?" vroeg de kok.
"Een getuige," zei de persoon.

"Dan moet hij rust houden," zei de kok. Twee koks namen Joost mee naar een kamer dieper in het restaurant, waar ze hem op een bed legden. "Van het paard afgevallen, hè ?" werd er gezegd. "Waarschijnlijk toen op uw kin gevallen, koning."

"Ik ga nooit meer paardrijden," jammerde Joost.

Joost dacht na over Ekolijn. Hij dacht er niet over om in het bos op zoek te gaan of het allemaar echt waar was. Hij wist waar dat op uit kon lopen. Joost had rust nodig. Toch miste hij Ekolijn ook.

Toen Joost hersteld was vertelde hij overal over zijn belevenis. De mensen vonden het zo'n ingrijpend verhaal dat ze een standbeeld maakten van Joost op het wijnpaard. Het kwam op het plein van de langste winkelstraat van het land te staan. De winkelstraat was eindeloos, en niemand wist hoe dat kon. En het was al helemaal een raadsel hoe de straat gewoon in het land paste, en zelfs gewoon in de stad waarin het stond. Toen het beeld was opgericht ging Joost er een kijkje nemen. Hij was er erg van onder de indruk, en het bracht weer veel herinneringen naar boven. Een vrouw liep op hem af, die een beetje leek op het meisje van het wijneiland. Ze nodigde Joost uit om bij haar thuis te komen. Ze beweerde dat ze een huis had wat eindeloos naar achteren doorliep. Joost kon dat moeilijk geloven, maar per slot van rekening was de winkelstraat ook eindeloos. Na lang lopen kwamen ze bij haar huis aan. Ze bleven maar daarlopen naar achteren in het huis, en er kwam maar geen einde aan, dus Joost begon het meer en meer te geloven. Ook dit huis paste gewoon in de stad. "Herinnert u zich mij nog ?" vroeg de vrouw.

"U doet me wel aan iemand denken," sprak Joost.

"Zeg eens," zei de vrouw.

"Verkoopt u toevallig de Bibelebonse wijn ?" vroeg Joost.

"Dat klopt," zei de vrouw, "en dat is het geheim van mijn eindeloze huis, en ook van de eindeloze winkelstraat."

"Kent u iemand genaamd Ekolijn ?" vroeg Joost. De vrouw keek verbaasd. "Hoe weet u dat ?"

vroeg ze. "Ik kwam hem eens in het bos tegen, en hij leerde me de Bibelebonse wijn te maken. Hij had het over oppassen met spiegelbeelden, of zoiets. Ik leefde in armoede die tijd. Hij gaf me een heleboel geld, en vroeg me om nooit zijn naam te noemen. Door hem heb ik een nieuw leven gekregen. Ik heb hem daarna nooit meer teruggezien."

Joost glimlachte. "Maar zeg eens, waar ken ik u dan van ?"

"Ach koning," sprak de vrouw. "Bent u dat nu alweer vergeten ? Ik was degene die u het wijnpaard verkocht."

"Ach ja," zei Joost, "nu weet ik het weer. U bleef de hele avond, en we speelden nog een spelletje kaart."

De vrouw glimlachte. "Mag ik u dan wat vragen ?"

Joost knikte "Ja."

"Ach, laat ook maar zitten," sprak de vrouw. "Dat kan ik u echt niet vragen."

"Wat is het ?" vroeg Joost.

"Dan niet gaan lachen, koning," sprak de vrouw.

"Ik zal niet lachen," zei Joost, maar hij kon al bijna zijn lachen niet inhouden.

"Nou, mijn huis is een beetje te groot voor mij," sprak de vrouw. "Ik verdwaal er nogal vaak in, en ik dacht dat u het veel beter zou kunnen gebruiken."

"Wat is de prijs ?" vroeg Joost.

"Nou, als u voor mij een normaal huisje heeft, dan ben ik al blij genoeg," sprak de vrouw.

Joost had nog wel een normaal huisje aan de rand van het bos, en ze besloten te ruilen. Zowel Joost als de vrouw waren er erg blij mee. Te wonen aan de rand van het bos deed de vrouw nog meer herinneren aan Ekolijn, en voor Joost deed het eindeloze huis hem herinneren aan Ekolijn, want voor Joost leek het avontuur met Ekolijn eindeloos. Joost zocht haar nog vaak op. Dan spraken ze vaak over Ekolijn. Het was ten slotte hun grote geheim.

Op een nacht ging Joost op onderzoek uit in zijn nieuwe huis wat eindeloos doorliep naar achteren. Hij dwaalde door de gangen met een zaklantaarn. Ook hier hingen vreemde schilderijen, die alleen maar vreemder werden hoe dieper hij de gangen opging. Hij wist dat hij zou kunnen verdwalen hier, maar toch waagde hij her erop. Hij dacht dat hij geluiden hoorde, en besloot eens in de kamers te kijken. Vele kamers stonden leeg. Op een gegeven moment leidde een gang rechtstreeks op een deur af, waar de gang stopte. Joost ging naar binnen en moest direct zijn armen voor zijn ogen werpen vanwege vreemd licht. Het was een hele grote hal. Aan het einde van de hel stond een standbeeld van een kever die een beker vasthield. Boven de beker draaiden radertjes. Joost liep op

het beeld af. "Wat moet dat daar ?" sprak iemand.

"Ik ben de nieuwe bewoner," sprak Joost, "toevallig de koning van dit land. Wie bent u ?" Joost scheen zijn zaklantaarn alle kanten op, maar zag nog niemand. Toen viel het weer stil. Achter het keverbeeld was een deur. Joost ging erdoor naar binnen, en weer viel een vreemd licht op hem, wat toen weer wegtrok. "Kom je voor de wijn ?" sprak een stem, "de Bibelebonse wijn ?"

"Ik heb genoeg Bibelebonse wijn," sprak Joost. "Van de vorige bewoonster."

"Ken je het geheim van de wijn ?" vroeg de stem.

"Zeg op, wat moet u ?" vroeg Joost, "en waar bent u ?" Joost scheen overal met zijn zaklamp, maar zag weer niemand.

"Ik ben de wachter van de wijn," sprak de stem.

"Ik dacht dat Ekolijn de wachter van de wijn was," sprak Joost.

"Ekolijn is allang dood," sprak de stem. "Ik ben zijn opvolger."

"Dood ?" vroeg Joost.

"Ja, hij had zichzelf doodgedronken," sprak de stem. Een gevleugelde beker met een regenboog erboven verscheen voor Joost. Het was van een speciaal metaal wat Joost niet kende. Het was een soort zacht bruin-geel met een heldere weerkaatsing. Er kwam stoom uit de beker. "De wijn is klaar," sprak de beker.

"Klaar voor wat ?" vroeg Joost.

"Om opgedronken te worden," sprak de beker. Joost bleef maar naar de beker staren en kon er zijn verleden in zien.

"Er is iets wat ik van je wil vragen," sprak de beker.

"Wat is het ?" vroeg Joost.

"Ik kom van eindeloos diep," sprak de beker. "Dit huis gaat niet alleen eindeloos ver naar achteren, maar gaat ook eindeloos diep naar beneden. Elke verdieping is een andere tijd, en elke verdieping is een ander spiegelbeeld."

"Wat wilt u dat ik doe ?" vroeg Joost.

"Ik kan je leiden naar de plaats waar de liften zijn," sprak de beker.

"En dan ?" vroeg Joost.

Plotseling werd het duizelig voor Joost z'n ogen. Alles begon weg te vagen. Hij werd wakker, rijdende op het rode paard in het wijnbos. Het wijnpaard werd ook wel het slaappaard genoemd, want allen die het paard berijden vallen in slaap. En dat was ook de reden waarom Joost zulke vreemde dromen had. Joost kon zich herinneren dat voordat hij naar het pannekoeken-restaurant zou gaan met zijn oom Georgius, hij eerst een ritje ging maken met het wijnpaard. Hij ging naar een nieuw aangelegd bos, genaamd het wijnbos. Pas hier viel hij op het paard in slaap, en kreeg de vreemde dromen. Misschien droomde hij nog steeds, maar hij zat op het paard. Het was donker in het wijnbos. Het was er heel stil. De maan scheen door de bomen. Hij dacht eraan wat er allemaal verscholen kon zijn in de aarde.

Einde

De Psychologie van
de Eindeloze Winkelstraat

Het was een eindeloze straat,
Een winkelstraat, in de grootste stad van de wereld,
En een jongen slenterde daar eindeloos,
Hij kwam nooit ergens aan,
Ging geen winkel binnen

Hij was op weg naar de haven,
Hij was op weg naar een boot,
Aan de eindeloze zee

Maar onderweg kwam hij iemand tegen met wie hij een eindeloos gesprek had,
Het stopte maar niet,
Maar hij besloot haar mee te nemen,
Naar zijn boot

Ze sloegen een zijstraat in die naar de haven zou leiden,
Maar ook dit was een eindeloze straat,
En hij vroeg zich af of ze ooit bij de haven aan zouden komen,
Maar ja, hij had in ieder geval een eindeloos gesprek

Ze wist hem over te halen met haar mee te gaan naar het eindeloze bos,
En daarvoor sloegen ze weer een zijstraat in,
Maar ja, je raadt het al : die zijstraat was ook eindeloos

Hoe lang duurt het nog ? vroeg hij telkens.
Uit haar tas haalde ze een boek wat eindeloos was.
'Alles is hier eindeloos, hè ?' vroeg hij.
'Maar zo'n eindeloos boek kan ik toch niet allemaal gaan lezen ?
Ik heb genoeg aan dit eindeloze gesprek met jou.'

'Oh, ik moet nog wat even doen,' zei ze.
Toen stapte ze een winkel binnen.
Hij volgde haar.
'Nee, even buiten blijven,' zei ze.
'Ik ben zo terug.'
Maar ze bleef eindeloos weg,
En toen is hij naar binnen gegaan.
Hij keek zijn ogen uit.
Het was een eindeloze winkel.
Ze was hier vast en zeker verdwaald,
Dat kon niet anders.

En ook hij begon te dwalen en te dwalen,
In deze eindeloze winkel.
Na heel lang dwalen kwam hij de winkelier tegen.
De winkelier omhelsde hem.
'Oh, zo lang niemand gezien,
Ik was verdwaald in mijn eigen winkel.
Eindelijk iemand gevonden,'
zei de winkelier.

'Ik ben mijn vriendin kwijt met wie ik een eindeloos gesprek had,' zei de jongen.
'Geeft niet, geeft niet,' zei de winkelier. 'Die komt wel weer terecht.'
'Maar hoe dan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Nou,' zei de winkelier, 'alles wordt hier verkocht, ook wij, dus ze komt wel weer terecht.'

'Dat is een hele opluchting,' zei de jongen. 'Kan ik haar dan nu kopen ?'

'Het kost eindeloos veel,' zei de winkelier.

'Maar het is mijn vriendin,' zei de jongen, 'we waren op weg naar het eindeloze bos.'

'Allemaal eindeloos duur,' zei de winkelier.

'Een vreemde bedoening dan,' zei de jongen. 'Ik wil hier weg.'

'We kunnen niet weg,' zei de winkelier.

'Dus we moeten wachten totdat we gekocht worden ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ik vrees van wel,' zei de winkelier.

'Maar wie hebben eindeloos geld daarvoor dan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'De eindelozen,' zei de winkelier.

'Wie zijn dat ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ik zal het je wel even laten zien,' zei de winkelier.
Hij haalde uit zijn tas een boek tevoorschijn. Het was een eindeloos boek.
'Dat boek ken ik,' zei de jongen.
'Heb je het gelezen ?' vroeg de winkelier.

'Eh nee,' zei de jongen, 'ik was met iemand in gesprek.'

'Sufferd !' riep de winkelier.

'Wat nu ?' vroeg de jongen. 'Het lijkt hier wel een gevangenis.'

'Dat is het ook !' foeterde de winkelier. 'Wat dacht je dat het anders was ?'

'Een winkel ?' zei de jongen.

'Wat is dat voor oneindeloos gezwets !' foeterde de winkelier.

'Maar wat nu dan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Wachten op de eindeloze trein,' zei de winkelier.

'Komt die hier ook ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Nee, hier niet,' zei de winkelier.

'Maar wat hebben we er dan aan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Dan moet je het boek lezen !' foeterde de winkelier, terwijl hij het boek in de handen van de jongen

drukte. Toen liep de winkelier boos weg. 'Zorg dat je niet nog een keer verdwaalt !' riep de jongen hem na.

Toen begon de jongen maar met lezen. 'Wel verdraaid !' riep de jongen. 'Die taal versta ik niet !'

Na uren dwalen kwam hij het meisje weer tegen.

'En ?' vroeg het meisje.

'En wat ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Heb je het eindeloze boek gevonden ?' vroeg het meisje.

'Ja,' zei de jongen. 'Ik kreeg het van de winkelier, maar het is in een andere taal.'

Het meisje begon te lachen. 'Dan had je het boek maar van mij moeten aannemen, want dat was in jouw taal. Maar nee, je wilde liever met me praten. Snapte je dan niet waar eindeloze gesprekken met meisjes naartoe zouden kunnen leiden ?'

'Ik snap het nu,' zei de jongen. 'Het leidt nergens toe. Mag ik dan nu het boek ?'

Het meisje stak toen haar tong uit. 'Nee,' zei ze, en draaide zich toen om en rende weg.

'Kom terug !' riep de jongen. 'Dus ik zit in een gevangenis omdat ik een bepaald boek niet heb gelezen, en dat boek wordt nu ook nog eens van me afgehouden ? Wat een zotte bedoening is dit ?'

En de jongen dwaalde en dwaalde en vroeg zich af wat er in het boek zou staan. Wel stonden er soms plaatjes in het boek in de vreemde taal. 'Ik lijk wel Jan Huigen in de ton met een hoepeltje erom,' dacht hij bij zichzelf. 'Was ik maar weer in de eindeloze winkelstraat op weg naar de haven. Ik was zo stom om me af te laten leiden door dat meisje. Eerst was ze zo eindeloos praatgraag, maar nu, nu ....'

Opeens stond er een fee voor de jongen in een roze jurk, met een toverstafje. 'Boekjes lezen, hè, boekjes lezen,' zei de fee. 'Ik dacht dat je op weg was naar de haven ?'

'Ja,' zei de jongen, 'maar het duurde eindeloos, en ik raakte in een eindeloos gesprek.'

'Dat is geen reden om dan maar boekjes te gaan lezen,' zei de fee.

'Wat moest ik dan doen ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Nou,' zei de fee, 'wat een vraag. Er staan hier chocolade winkels door de hele straat, en meneer weet niet wat hij moet doen.' Toen begon de fee te lachen. 'Neem eens een chocolaatje voor de verandering.'

'Tja, daar had ik even niet aan gedacht,' zei de jongen.

'Dus ga je maar achter de meisjes aan ?' zei de fee glimlachend.

'Ik kwam haar toevallig tegen, en ze hield me aan de praat,' zei de jongen.

'Toevallig hè ?' zei de fee glimlachend. 'Maar toevallig stonden er ook een heleboel chocolade winkels aan weerszijden van de straat, en daar had je geen oog voor ? Malle jongen.'

'Ik werd gewoon afgeleid,' verdedigde de jongen. 'Ze praatte maar door, en belemmerde mij het zicht. Ze bleef me maar lastig vallen, ook toen ik doorliep.'

'Ja ja,' zei de fee, 'dat zeggen ze allemaal. En toen besloot je haar maar mee te nemen naar je boot in de haven ?'

'Ja,' zei de jongen, 'misschien zou dat haar kalmeren, want ik kwam toch niet meer van haar af, en het was eindeloos.'

'Een chocolaatje had wonderen kunnen doen,' zei de fee.

'Ik begrijp het,' zei de jongen, 'het spijt me. Mag ik dan nu een chocolaatje ?'

'Zoek ze zelf maar,' zei de fee, terwijl ze haar tong uitstak naar hem.

Toen vloog ze weg.

'Bah,' zei de jongen. 'Die feeën van tegenwoordig zijn nog wel erger dan meisjes.'

Hij keek in een bak op een winkelschap, en zag er chocolaatjes liggen, maar je raadt het al : die waren natuurlijk eindeloos duur.

'Zie je nu wel !' riep de jongen. 'Ik word hier eindeloos bedrogen. Maar ja, niemand schijnt hier toch te zijn, en de winkelier zal alweer verdwaald zijn, dus ik neem er maar eentje.' Hij haalde de wikkel van de chocola eraf, en toen het zilveren folie en begon van het chocolaatje te eten. 'Lekker,' zei hij. 'Die fee had toch wel echt gelijk. Had ik eerder moeten doen, had ik eerder moeten doen.'

Hij liep verder met zijn hoofd in de wolken. 'Chocolade is toch wel het heerlijkste wat bestaat,' zei hij. Opeens botste hij tegen een politie agent op. 'Chocolaatjes stelen, hè ?' zei de agent.

'Er was hier niemand en ik was verdwaald,' zei de jongen. 'Ik moest toch wat eten.'

'Dat zeggen ze allemaal,' zei de politie agent. 'Kom maar mee.'

'Nou, ik ben blij dat je me gevonden hebt,' zei de jongen. 'Haal me hieruit.'

'Nee, je gaat er dieper in,' zei de politie agent. 'We zijn hier niet zo gesteld op dieven.'

En zo leidde de politie agent hem naar een lift, en ze gingen heel hoog. Even later kwamen ze op een hoge verdieping uit. Hier werden allemaal boeken verkocht. 'Nee, geen boeken !' riep hij. 'De fee zei dat ik op zoek moest gaan naar chocola in plaats van boeken.'

'Niks mee te maken,' zei de politie. 'En dit zijn trouwens toch chocolade boeken.'

'Dat is geen straf dan,' zei de jongen.

'Het is eindeloos duur, dus ik zou er maar niet aanzitten als ik jou was,' zei de politie agent, 'want anders ga je nog hoger het gebouw in.'

'Maar wat moet ik eten dan ?' vroeg de jongen. 'Ik heb honger. Je kunt me toch niet laten verhongeren ? Dus deze gevangenis voedt zijn gevangenen niet ?'

'Niks mee te maken,' zei de politie agent. 'Wees blij dat je nog leeft. We kunnen niet voor alles zorgen.'

'Bah, wat flauw,' zei de jongen. 'Wat een flauwe bedoening allemaal.'

'Je was toch op weg naar de haven, naar je boot ?' zei de politie agent.

'Ja, maar ik kwam iemand tegen,' zei de jongen, 'en die leidde me hier naartoe. Ik had natuurlijk nooit naar haar moeten luisteren. En nu is ze weg.'

De politie agent begon hem uit te lachen. 'Dat is mijn dochter,' zei hij. 'Zij werkt voor ons. Zo krijgen we nieuwe klanten.'

'Gevangenen zul je bedoelen,' zei de jongen sip.

'Kop op,' zei de politie agent. 'Ik heb ook nog een andere dochter. Zou je die niet willen ontmoeten ?'

'Wat staat me dan te wachten ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Kom maar mee,' zei de politie agent. Weer gingen ze de lift in, en ditmaal gingen ze nog hoger. 'Hoe hoger je komt, hoe meer de winkels in elkaar overlopen, en dan is het veel kleiner.'

Plotseling stond de jongen met de politie agent weer op straat, en alles was niet eindeloos meer. 'Wat vreemd,' zei de jongen.

'Het was een verkleinings-lift,' zei de politie. 'Nu ben je pas waar je wezen moet. Mijn andere dochter wacht op je bij de haven.'

'Vreemd,' zei de jongen weer, en liep over straat op weg naar de haven. Ergens halverwege kwam hij weer de eerste dochter van de politie agent tegen. 'Ha, ben je daar weer !' riep ze van een afstand.

'Ik heb geen tijd nu,' zei hij. 'Iemand wacht op me bij de haven.'

'Heb je een afspraakje ?' zei het meisje lachend. Toen liep ze lachend door.

Bij de haven aangekomen zag de jongen een ander meisje staan. 'Ben jij de dochter van de politie agent ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ja, hoezo ?' vroeg het meisje geirriteerd.

'Nou, ik mag toch wel wat vragen,' zei de jongen. 'Dan hoef je niet direct zo boos te doen. Je vader zei dat je me hier zou opwachten.'

'Mijn vader zegt zoveel, daar heb ik niks mee te maken,' zei het meisje. 'Ik wacht hier op heel iemand anders.'

'Op wie dan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Gaat je niks aan,' zei het meisje. 'Wijsneus.'

'Je bent gierig,' zei de jongen.

'Gierig ?' lachte het meisje ineens, en rende toen weg.

Het leek wel alsof alles toen nog kleiner en nauwer werd. De jongen had moeite met ademhalen. Het leek wel alsof alles op hem afkwam om hem te verpletteren. 'Moet dat chocolaatje zijn geweest,' zei hij tegen zichzelf. 'Ik ook altijd met mijn goede ideeën. Ik moet terug naar die lift, want hier is het nog erger.'

Hij begon al te hijgen en puffen van de benauwdheid, en liep weer terug naar het punt waar de politie agent hem bracht. Daar stond de eerste dochter van de politie agent weer. 'Alsjeblieft, ik smeek je,' zei de jongen. 'Breng me weer terug naar de verkleinings-lift.'

'Wil je dat het nog kleiner en benauwder wordt ?' vroeg het meisje lachend.

'Nee, groter, eindelozer,' zei de jongen. 'Dit is ook niks.'

'Jij weet ook niet wat je wil,' zei het meisje lachend. 'Ik dacht dat je een afspraakje had ?'

'Het was een misverstand,' zei de jongen. Daar kwam ook de politie agent weer aan. 'Wat sta jij hier nog te staan !' bulderde hij. 'Lopen, naar de haven !'

'Je dochter wilde niet,' zei de jongen.

'Niks mee te maken,' zei hij.

'Je kan niemand dwingen,' zei hij.

'Dat maak ik nog wel uit,' zei de politie agent, 'en nu lopen.'

'Ik ga naar de haven, naar mijn boot, maar niet naar haar,' zei de jongen.

Toen rende de jongen terug naar de haven, naar zijn boot, en stapte naar binnen. Het was er een enorme rotzooi. Hij startte direct de motor. 'Ik moet hier weg,' dacht hij bij zichzelf, 'weg.' Gelukkig was de zee hier niet eindeloos. Het was maar een riviertje. Maar alles werd alleen maar kleiner en benauwender. Weer ging hij terug naar de haven, ging zijn boot uit, en op zoek naar de tweede dochter van de politie agent. Die stond daar ergens met een telefoontje. 'Alsjeblieft,' hijgde hij. 'Breng me terug naar de verkleinings-lift,' zei hij.

'Vergrotingslift zul je bedoelen,' zei het meisje, terwijl ze gewoon doorging met haar telefoongesprek.

'Alsjeblieft,' hijgde hij, 'als alles maar weer groter en eindelozer wordt.'

'Waarom neem je niet gewoon een chocolaatje ?' vroeg ze, terwijl ze weer doorsprak aan de telefoon.

'Heb ik niet,' zei de jongen.

Het meisje grabbelde even wat in haar tas, terwijl ze doorsprak aan de telefoon, en gaf hem toen gehaast een chocolaatje. Hij haalde de wikkel er vanaf en toen het zilveren folie en begon ervan te eten. 'Mmm,' zei hij, 'zo lekker. Chocola is toch wel het heerlijkste wat er is.'

'Je bent laat,' zei het meisje.

'Ik was er al, maar toen wilde je niet,' zei de jongen. 'Je zei dat je op iemand anders wachtte.'

'Dat moet een vergissing zijn,' zei het meisje. 'Kom maar.'

Het meisje leidde hem toen naar de vergrotingslift die weer helemaal naar beneden ging naar het eindeloze winkelgebouw. Hij was zo opgelucht. 'Wat is de bedoeling hiervan ?' vroeg hij.

'Nou,' zei het meisje, 'de bedoeling is dat de klant het niet in zijn hoofd haalt nog ooit uit onze winkel te ontsnappen.'

Einde

Het Liedje van Vader

Alles wat hij zich nog van zijn vader kon herinneren was een lied wat zijn vader hem eens liet horen. Het was het mooiste lied wat hij ooit had gehoord. Dat was eigenlijk het enige wat zijn vader hem had gegeven. Er was zoveel meer, maar dat was hij allemaal vergeten.

Toen ging zijn vader op een lange reis waarvan hij nooit meer terugkeerde. Zijn moeder dacht dat het schip moest zijn vergaan. Hij dacht misschien wilde zijn vader niets meer van hen weten. Dat was een strijd in zijn koppie. Vader moest wel op reis, want hij had een belangrijke opdracht van de koningin gekregen. Hij moest naar het krokodillen gebied. Eigenlijk was het wel logisch dat vader was opgevreten door een krokodil, maar dat kwam niet in hem op, en ook niet in moeder.

Of misschien was hij ergens achter het krokodillen gebied terecht gekomen en durfde hij niet meer terug, maar daar dachten ze ook niet over na. Ze waren zich niet echt van de gevaren van het leven bewust en hoe kort het kon zijn, maar moeder hield vol dat het schip gewoon was vergaan. Op een dag kregen ze een brief van de koningin. De koningin schreef dat sinds er geen berichten over vader waren gekomen, moesten ze vaststellen dat hij niet meer leefde.

Ook dit was natuurlijk zeer kort door de bocht, want wat als vader ergens zat opgesloten ? Maar de koningin had er nog iets bijgeschreven. P.S. Ik had nog wat spullen van je vader hier liggen, die mag je wel hebben. Kom maar eens langs als je durft.

Hij was er nogal verontwaardigd over : "Kom maar langs als je durft." Was zij dan ook gevaarlijk ofzo ? Maar hij ging toch. Hij wilde de spullen van zijn vader wel zien en misschien hebben. Kwam hij daar aan bleek het allemaal rotzooi te zijn. Het lag daar ergens in een schuur. Hij zat wat aan het metaal te draaien en er knakte zo wat vanaf. Hij ging naar huis met lege handen, kreeg toen spijt en ging weer terug. "Ik zou het toch willen hebben," zei hij. Met een bak vol rommel ging hij terug naar zijn moeder, die erom begon te lachen. "Wat heb je me nu meegenomen, jongen ?" lachte ze.

"Van vader," zei hij.

"Niks van vader," sprak ze. "Dit is oude rommel. De koningin maakt je vast wat wijs." Hij was diep teleurgesteld. "Ze zijn niet te vertrouwen daar bij het koninklijk huis," zei moeder. "Ga maar een ijsje kopen," zei zijn moeder. Ze gaf hem wat geld, maar toen hij even later weer thuiskwam met het ijsje was zijn moeder er niet meer. Dagen gingen voorbij en ze was er nog steeds niet. Na vele jaren was het ijsje eigenlijk nog het enige wat hij van haar herinnerde. Alles wat ze hem had gegeven was een ijsje. Natuurlijk had ze hem veel meer gegeven, maar dat herinnerde hij niet. En oh ja, dat liedje van vader. Na lange tijd kreeg hij weer eens een brief van de koningin. Er waren geen tekenen van leven van zijn moeder, dus ze gingen er vanuit dat ze dood was. Dat was natuurlijk enorm kort door

de bocht weer. Er stond bij dat hij wel naar het paleis mocht komen, want daar lag nog wat oude rommel van zijn moeder. "Ik heb genoeg rommel van haar hier liggen," schreef hij terug, "maar alles wat ik me echt van haar herinner is een ijsje."

Maar de koningin bleef aandringen, dus toen ging hij maar. De koningin riep hem bij zich en haalde een sjaal uit een zak, en een paar handschoenen.

"Wat moet ik ermee ?" vroeg hij ongeinteresseerd.

"Het is van je moeder," zei de koningin.

"Waarom ga je er zelf niet mee lopen dan," zei hij.

"Dat kan ik niet doen," zei de koningin. "Ik ben de koningin."

"Dus ik moet ermee rond gaan lopen ?" vroeg hij.

"Dat zeg ik niet," zei de koningin, "maar anders gooi ik het weg."

"Geef maar hier dan," zei hij. Toen ging hij weer naar huis.

Hij leegde de zak op tafel. Tot zijn grote verbazing rolden er ook sieraden uit de zak, hele vreemde, exotische sieraden. Hij nam er ééntje in zijn hand wat op een horloge leek. Er kwamen klauwtjes uit die hem staken toen hij het om zijn pols deed. Zijn pols begon te bloeden. Hij probeerde het af te doen, maar het lukte niet meer. Helemaal blauw ging hij naar de wastafel, waar hij het met zeep er vanaf probeerde te krijgen, maar niets hielp. Hij greep de telefoon en begon een nummer te draaien, maar ver kwam hij niet. Hij kon geen adem meer halen. Toen viel hij flauw. Toen hoorde hij weer het liedje, dat liedje wat zijn vader hem ooit eens liet horen :

"Mijn vader is een zeeman,
Mijn moeder is een schip,
En ik ... ik .... ik kan alleen maar dromen ...

Mijn vader is altijd op reis,
En mijn moeder is nooit thuis ...
En ik .... ik ... ik kan alleen maar dromen ...

Ik lig in de hoge golven, en daar gaat mijn schip,
Ze roepen wel, maar ik hoor ze niet,
Het was er altijd wel, maar kan het niet goed herinneren,

Mijn vader is altijd op zijn schip,
Mijn moeder is nooit thuis,
En ik .... ik ... ik let nooit goed op,
Ik kan alleen maar dromen ..."

De Giechelaar

Ze giechelde altijd als ze hem zag. Ze was hem aan het schminken voor de voorstelling. Zijn ouders kwamen ook. 'Is dat je nieuwe vriendin ?' vroegen ze toen ze haar zagen. Hij knikte. 'Ze heeft brede heupen,' zei z'n moeder.

Na de voorstelling nam het meisje hem apart. 'We gaan morgen naar je ouders,' zei ze. Dat stelde ze zo vast. Hij had niets in te brengen. Het was bijna weekend. Geen school, en geen voorstellingen.

Toen ze het weekend bij zijn ouders waren was zijn tante er ook. Ook zijn tante zei dat ze hele brede heupen had.

Het gegiechel werd eigenlijk alleen maar erger. Ze gaf hem een beertje waarop geschreven stond : 'friends forever', maar na een paar dagen wilde ze het terug, omdat ze het zo'n leuk ding vond. En ze giechelde.

Hij noemde haar 'de giechelaar'. Altijd voor de voorstellingen schminkte ze hem op, en ze giechelde dan altijd. Iemand besloot eens de voorstelling te filmen, en toen giechelde ze ook. De video banden werden verkocht, en ze kreeg er geld voor, en ze giechelde. Hij kreeg geen geld, want hij had slechts een bijrol. Het was een project van school. Ze gingen er stad en land voor af. In een grote bus gingen ze door het hele land. Hij leerde zo wel de wereld kennen. Hij herinnerde zich hoe ze elkaar door de voorstellingen beter leerden kennen. Eens waren ze in de bus, en hij dacht eraan dat zij wel zijn vriendin kon worden. Het was alsof hij haar hoorde giechelen in zijn hoofd, en hij lachte. Maar sinds ze zijn vriendin daadwerkelijk was lachte hij steeds minder om haar giechelen.

Hij vroeg zich af waarom ze altijd zo giechelde. Op een dag besloot hij het haar te vragen. Ze giechelde. Hij had het wel verwacht, maar ze gaf geen antwoord. Zo was ze wel vaker.

De giechelaar reed op zijn fiets door de straten. Hij had een hele lange baard. Hij verkocht oude rotzooi. Als het hem lukte iets te verkopen dan giechelde hij altijd. Dat verhaal had hij eens in een boek gelezen en hij dacht er weer aan. Hij besloot het boek nog eens te lezen.

Ze giechelde eigenlijk zoveel dat het heel moelijk was haar beter leren te kennen. Het was als een afweer mechanisme. Hij kon niet tot haar doordringen. Hij zei tegen haar dat hij een boek over de giechelaar had gelezen : 'De giechelaar reed op zijn fiets door de straten. Hij had een hele lange baard. Hij verkocht oude rotzooi. Als het hem lukte iets te verkopen dan giechelde hij altijd.'

Toen liep ze weg. 'Is dat je vriendin, die met die brede heupen ?' vroegen mensen hem weleens. 'Het is de giechelaar,' zei hij dan.

'Oh, giechelt ze zoveel dan ?' vroeg een oude vrouw hem eens. Zij begon toen ook te giechelen. Hij kon er niet om lachen. Hij vroeg zich nog steeds af wat er te giechelen was. Weer las hij het boek over de giechelaar. 'De giechelaar reed op zijn fiets door de straten. Hij had een hele lange baard. Hij verkocht oude rotzooi. Als het hem lukte iets te verkopen dan giechelde hij altijd.' Hij moest dan altijd aan haar denken, maar het scheen dat ze ook anderen aan het giechelen maakte.

'Wat probeer je mij eigenlijk te verkopen ?' vroeg hij eens aan haar. Ze giechelde en rende weg. Hij kon geen goed hoogte van haar krijgen. 'Moet ik me beledigd voelen ?' vroeg hij toen hij weer bij haar was. 'Zit mijn neus soms scheef, of zit mijn haar niet goed ?'

'Nee, dat is het niet,' zei ze giechelend.
'Maar wat dan ?' vroeg hij. 'Je maakt me gek met dat gegiechel van je.'

Op een dag besloot hij haar een lange brief te schrijven. Al zijn frustraties stonden er in, en ook weer de vraag waarom ze altijd zo giechelde, want daar had hij nog steeds geen antwoord op.

Ze schreef niet terug. Hij vond haar oppervlakkig. Haar wegdoen wilde hij ook niet. Hij besloot haar maar gewoon te accepteren zoals ze was. Nog vaak dacht hij terug aan het boek van de giechelaar. 'Zo is ze nu eenmaal,' zei hij dan tegen zichzelf. 'Het had veel erger gekund. Er zijn vrouwen die altijd klagen.'

Op een dag liepen ze hand in hand in de stad. Hij kocht een ijsje voor haar, en ze giechelde. Mensen keken vaak naar haar als ze zo giechelde, en sommigen giechelden dan ook. Dat waren altijd vrouwen. Ook begonnen steeds meer mensen haar te herkennen op straat. Zij was één van de hoofdrolspelers van de voorstelling. De video ervan werd goed verkocht.

'Ben jij niet dat meisje van die film genaamd 'de giechelaar' ?' vroeg iemand haar eens op straat. 'Ja, dat ben ik,' giechelde ze. Hem herkenden ze vaak niet, want hij speelde slechts een bijrol, als een soort figurant. 'Hij vindt het nooit zo leuk als ik giechel,' zei ze, terwijl ze op hem wees. 'Hij wil na de voorstelling alles zo snel mogelijk weer vergeten, maar bij mij gaat het giechelen gewoon door. Er is voor mij geen verschil tussen de voorstelling en na de voorstelling.'

Hij haatte de school en hij haatte de voorstelling. Hij wilde er nooit over nadenken. Hij voelde zich een marionet, en was altijd blij als het weer afgelopen was. Hij zag altijd uit naar de vakanties, alleen te zijn met haar. Ze was dan wel een giechelaar, maar het meest werd er altijd gegiecheld in de voorstellingen.

'Ik kan het niet uitleggen,' zei hij op een dag. Ze woonden inmiddels samen. 'Altijd maar dat gegiechel. Ik krijg eigenlijk nooit school en die voorstellingen uit m'n kop. Ik heb echt het gevoel alsof ik stapelgek word.'

'Maar ja, je weet dat het verplicht is,' zei ze. 'School is nu eenmaal belangrijk, en de voorstellingen zijn ervoor om het leuk te houden.'

'Ja, heel leuk,' zei hij sarcastisch.

'De giechelaar, een oude man in zijn schuit, met een baard zo lang, en altijd giechelt hij. Je kunt hem niets vertellen of hij giechelt, en vooral als hij zijn oude rotzooi bij je kwijt kan. De giechelaar, eens kocht ik een gouden beeldje van hem, zo mooi. En ik dacht : hoe is dat tussen die oude rotzooi terecht gekomen ? Dat dachten mensen altijd als ze iets van hem kochten. Telkens weer kreeg hij het voor elkaar. De giechelaar, met zijn boot door de nacht, oude lampen verkopende aan de steden, en dan is er zulk een prachtige en verzachtende gloed. Ja, ook medicijnen verkoopt hij, al jaren over datum, maar het werkt goed, zo goed. Want hij is de giechelaar, hij praat alles goed, hij laat hen allemaal in hem geloven, de giechelaar, de giechelaar, als je slapen moet.'

'De giechelaar, de giechelaar, een slaaplied voor de nacht, de giechelaar, de giechelaar, een schuit vol met rotzooi, allemaal afgedankte spullen, maar het glijdt zo het water in, en vindt zijn weg, zijn weg. De giechelaar, de giechelaar, met zijn lange baard op de fiets, om rotzooi te verkopen, voor mensen die dromen, en dan giechelt hij. De giechelaar, de giechelaar, een boot vol met troep, en steden vol onzin, de giechelaar, de giechelaar, hij is de veerman van het verdriet, over rivieren en zeeen, je kan het zo gek niet bedenken, de giechelaar, de giechelaar, voor als je slapen moet.'

Hij werd er vroeger altijd zo rustig van als zijn oma uit het boek van de giechelaar voorlas. Hij las het ook aan haar voor, en langzaam viel ze in slaap. Eindelijk was het gegiechel er even niet meer, maar het zou de dag erna gewoon weer verder gaan.

Einde

De Giechelaar II

Ik was in het bos op een open vlakte tussen de bomen, zanderig en met allerlei grassen, en ik hoorde iemand giechelen in de verte. Het was de giechelaar, een oude man met een baard,. Ik kende hem

wel. Hij kwam weleens in de stad met zijn fiets om oude rommel te verkopen. Je kon het zo gek niet bedenken of hij verkocht het wel, en het waren altijd mooie spullen. Hij giechelde altijd. Hij had een prachtig landgoed in het bos, een prachtig huis, zeg maar gerust villa, maar op zijn manier.

Het was eigenlijk een soort hut. Hoe hij eraan kwam was een raadsel. Of misschien had hij het zelf gebouwd, maar het deed niet onder voor het prachtigste paleis. Misschien dat hij daarom altijd zo giechelde. Hij liet mij het terrein zien, en grote voorraden oude spullen. Het was beter dan allerlei moderne troep die ze in de stad verkochten. Deze man was een genie. Hij was uitvinder. Hij kon alles recyclen tot de prachtigste spullen die ook nog eens nuttig waren. Ik ging graag winkelen bij de giechelaar.

De giechelaar, de giechelaar, een stralend geluk,
De giechelaar, de giechelaar, een oude lamp onder de mensen,
Opdat de goede geschiedenis nooit verloren zou gaan.
En daarom giechelt hij, giechelt hij,
Hij is de veerman van het verdriet.

En wat kost het dan, wat kost het dan ?
Het kost je je leven, je ziel en je hart,
Maar van geluk zul je beven,
De giechelaar, de giechelaar, een boot door de nacht,
Een boot vol met vergeten pracht.

De giechelaar, de giechelaar, wat zou een mens nog wensen,
De giechelaar, de giechelaar, nog zoveel te ontdekken,
als een gids door de nacht,
een boot door de nacht.

Niemand begrijpt hem waarom hij zo giechelt,
Zijn vrouw is een standbeeld,
die hij eens in het bos vond,
en sinds toen giechelde hij.

Hij liet mij het standbeeld zien,
En ik herkende het beeld,
Het was het beeld van een meisje wat ik zo lang niet had gezien.

En hij zei tegen mij : Je mag het wel hebben,
En ik heb het beeld toen mee naar huis genomen.
Nu staat het op het zolder.
Sindsdien giechelde de giechelaar meer dan ooit tevoren,
Want weer had hij zijn rotzooi en verhalen aan iemand kwijtgekunt.

Ik dacht dat ik door het beeld ook zou gaan giechelen, maar ik giechelde niet.
Ik werd steeds stiller. En ik dacht : Maar is dit niet zijn vrouw ?
Wil hij zijn vrouw dan niet terug ?

En ik vroeg het aan hem, en hij zei : Nee, het is voor jou. En hij giechelde.
Het was een heel mooi beeld, het mooiste beeld wat ik ooit had gezien.
En ik begon te dromen over het beeld.
En in mijn dromen giechelde zij altijd.

Maar ik kon niet giechelen.
En eigenlijk wilde ik ook niet giechelen.
Er waren al genoeg giechelaars.
Wel gaf het beeld mij grote vreugde en groot geluk,
Al was dat vaak maar voor even,
En daarom ging ik vaak naar de giechelaar toe,
Opdat het geluk zou nadreunen.

Wat een man, die giechelaar,
Met zijn lange baard op zijn fiets,
En zoveel rommel,
Wat mensen wel niet allemaal weggooien,
Wat hij wel niet allemaal terugvindt wat verloren is geraakt,
Een meestervinder is hij,
En ook mij heeft hij gevonden.

De Giechelaar III

De giechelaar nam hen allen op zijn boot mee naar een eiland. Hij was een oude man met een lange baard, en hij leerde hen hoe ze nog wat konden maken van oude rommel. Hier kregen ze een nieuw leven, op het eiland, en de giechelaar giechelde.

En de mensen droomden en konden hun oude leven verlaten, en wat er nog overgebleven was aan oude rommel konden ze gebruiken en nuttig maken. Ze konden er nieuwe dingen van maken, zoals de giechelaar het hen leerde. En ze bouwden oerwouds steden op het eiland, en de giechelaar ging met zijn boot over de grachten. Met een lange staf raakte hij de bodem, en zo duwde hij het schip voort. En hij bleef zijn oude rommel verkopen, en hij bleef zijn verhalen vertellen.

Want verhalen vertellen, dat kon hij. Je kon het zo gek niet bedenken.

Hij was als Noach op zijn schip, en oude rommel was zijn specialiteit. Dat haalde hij overal en

nergens van vandaan, van onder de grond, of God mag 't weten. Wat mensen allemaal wel niet achterlaten. Hij was een meestervinder, en een meesterlijke uitvinder. Niets gooide hij weg. Alles was bruikbaar, ook al was het voor brandstof of meststof. Ook metselde hij met troep. Niemand kende zijn geheim. Hij kon alles weer mooi maken. Waar mensen klaagden over rommel, daar giechelde hij, en maakte er wat moois van. Je kon het zo gek niet bedenken. Giechelen, veel giechelen, dat was wat hij deed. Je kon hem van ver horen aankomen. Ook had hij allerlei bellen op zijn fiets, en toeters. Hij liet het duidelijk merken als hij kwam. Er hing ook van alles aan zijn fiets, wat lawaai maakte. Potten en pannen, lepels, vorken en messen, van alles. Hoe hij ermee kon fietsen was een raadsel, maar alles ging goed. Hij giechelde zich door alles een weg heen. Op een dag zat de politie achter hem aan, maar daar had hij ook weer allerlei dingen voor. Ze konden niet tegen zijn uitvindingen op, en moesten het onderspit delven. Sindsdien probeerden ze het nooit meer, want de giechelaar was de ware politie. Ook probeerden ze hem eens naar een ziekenhuis te trekken, maar ook daar had hij zijn apparaten voor, en ze konden het niet meer navertellen. Nee, met de giechelaar viel niet te sollen.

Het enige waar hij bang voor was waren olifantenslurven, maar ja, die waren daar niet. Wel had hij er soms weleens nachtmerries over, maar toch werd hij altijd giechelend wakker. Ze konden hem niet kapot krijgen. Op een dag probeerden ze hem naar een school te trekken, maar ook daar had hij zijn apparaatjes voor. Hij was immers de meester uitvinder, en hij vond ook zijn eigen school uit, dus daar eindigden ze, bij hem in de schoolbanken, want ze moesten niet denken dat er te sollen viel met de giechelaar. En dan gaf hij ze giechelend les, een koekje van eigen deeg. Hij was niet voor een gat te vangen, en hij was van alle markten thuis.

Ik denk nog vaak aan hem terug, maar dan giechel ik niet. Neen. Dat laat ik aan de giechelaar over. Het is een klein beeldje op de televisie als een aandenken, en als ik op een knopje druk dan giechelt hij even, maar dan is het ook weer snel voorbij. Ik laat het weleens aan kinderen zien, en ze vinden het prachtig. Ze vragen me weleens hoe ik aan het beeldje kwam. Eens op de rommelmarkt gevonden. Wat mensen wel niet allemaal weggooien.

'Ik heb het op de televisie gezien,' zei een jongetje. 'Wat prachtig dat je zo'n ding hebt.'

'Oh, je hebt dat programma op de televisie gezien van de giechelaar ?' vroeg ik.

Het jongetje knikte.

'Ja,' zei ik, 'en ik had er vroeger een boek van. Het boek heb ik niet meer, en verkopen ze ook niet meer, maar op de rommelmarkt heb ik het beeldje gevonden. Wat mensen tegenwoordig wel niet allemaal wegdoen. Maar goed, nu het boek nog.'

'Oma heeft het boek,' zei het jongetje.

'Nee,' zei ik. 'Oma heeft het boek niet. Je oma kletst maar wat. Het boek wordt niet meer verkocht, en ..... het wordt niet meer gemaakt .... en .... het wordt niet meer gelezen .... en ..... niemand heeft het nog, want het zijn hele speciale boeken die vroeger werden gemaakt, die langzaam in het niets oplossen. Je moet dus niet te langzaam zijn met lezen.'

'Je kletst maar wat,' zei het jongetje. 'Mijn oma heeft het boek wel, van vroeger.'

'Zeker een vervalsing,' zei ik.

'Het zijn mooie verhalen,' zei het jongetje, 'net zoals de verhalen op de televisie.'

'Okay, geluk ermee,' zei ik. Ik was jaloers. Ik wilde het boek ook.

'Misschien wil mijn oma het boek wel ruilen voor het beeldje,' zei het jongetje.

'Je oma kan de pot op,' zei ik.

Hoe dan ook was de giechelaar een echte kinderheld, maar ook voor volwassenen, juist ook voor volwassenen. Ik wilde het boek ook, vervalsing of niet. Trouwens dat van die boeken die in het niets oplossen was maar verzonnen. Ik was gewoon kwaad op dat jongetje en zijn oma. Ik had het gevoel alsof we tegen elkaar aan het opscheppen waren. Misschien was het jongetje ook wel dingen aan het verzinnen, maar ik ging toch extra kijken op de rommelmarkten. Toen ik vele jaren later een boek van de giechelaar vond was ik door het dolle heen. Wat mensen toch wel niet allemaal wegdoen tegenwoordig. Ik kocht het direct. Ik bladerde er in, en het waren dezelfde verhalen als vroeger op de televisie.

Ik las en las, en droomde helemaal weg. Het leek wel alsof ik de giechelaar weer hoorde giechelen. Die nacht sliep ik heerlijk. Toen ik wakker werd was ik nog steeds in vervoering, alsof ik dronken was. Nu had ik het boek en het beeldje. Boek, beeldje, boek, beeldje, boek, zo ging het de hele tijd in mijn hoofd. Ik was geobsedeerd.

Mijn obsessie begon heel extreem te worden, maar ik werd geen giechelaar. Nee, dat liet ik aan de giechelaar over. Ik was echt zo'n kijker, zo iemand die altijd naar voetballen keek, maar zelf geen bal aanraakte. Maar de giechelaar raakte mij aan. Het was alsof de bal dwars door de televisie was geschoten, en ik was niet meer dezelfde. Ik was bijna als een dronken gek. Hoe kon iemand toch zo in de ban zijn van een jeugd serie ? De giechelaar, de giechelaar, zo ging het altijd door mijn hoofd heen.

Nu wilde ik ook nog muziek van de giechelaar, en de video banden van de giechelaar. Ik was niet meer te stoppen. Mensen dachten : 'Waar is die jongen toch mee bezig ?' Ook mijn vrouw vond het wel welletjes, want ik was altijd maar met de giechelaar bezig, en niet meer met haar. Dat vond ze vervelend, en dat kon ik me voorstellen. Eigenlijk zou ik het virus wel op haar willen overbrengen, maar ze was koud als ijs. Ik was misschien met de verkeerde getrouwd, maar ik wilde haar ook niet wegdoen. God, als zij toch zou kunnen giechelen als de giechelaar, dan zou er weer wat leven in de brouwerij komen, maar ze was saai en klaagde altijd. Ze had altijd op alles wel wat aan te merken. Ik kon het nooit goeddoen. Maar ja, de giechelaar inspireerde mij om er toch nog wat van te maken.

Wat een man, die giechelaar, en wat een baard, zo lang. Daar zou je een toren mee kunnen opklimmen of een berg. Wat een man, die giechelaar, en wat een boek, wat een verhalen. Ik kan er wel uren over praten, maar mijn vrouw vond mij vervelend. Allemaal mooie woorden vond ze het, waar we geen sikkepit aan hadden. 'Dat staat daar maar te kletsen en obsessief te doen,' zei ze altijd.

En ze vroeg me altijd wat ik haar probeerde te verkopen. 'De giechelaar misschien ?' zei ik dan altijd. Ze werd stapelgek van mij en 'die giechelaar'. Ze vond het allemaal maar achterlijk. 'Doe maar eens wat aan de tuin,' zei ze altijd. 'Het is daar zo'n zootje.'

'Nee,' zei ik dan. 'Het is het oerwoud van de giechelaar. Het moet lekker wild blijven.'

Toen bood ze haar excuses aan, en zei ze dat ik ook wel gelijk had, en dat ze zich niet zo moest aanstellen. Ze gaf toe dat ze jaloers was, omdat al mijn aandacht naar de giechelaar ging. De giechelaar boeide haar gewoon niet. Daar was ze te netjes voor, en Liesje mocht niet vies worden. Ik zou wel met haar een moddergevecht willen hebben, in plaats van onze wekelijkse kussengevechten. Maar dat vond ze te ver gaan. Sneeuwballengevecht was wat nog net kon. Dat hadden we wel vaak gedaan. Maar nee, ze mocht niet vies worden. Ze was als een porseleinen vaas. Ik vond het wel jammer. Het had zo mooi kunnen zijn.

'Waarom niet gewoon normaal zijn ?' vroeg ze me weleens. Ik hief dan altijd mijn schouders op. Ik wilde wat avontuur in mijn leven. Op een dag zette ze mij voor de keuze. Ik moest kiezen tussen haar en de giechelaar. Mijn keuze was natuurlijk snel gemaakt. Ik koos voor de giechelaar, en toen ging ze met zes wollen dekens achter de muziek aan. Ze heeft haar spullen gepakt en vertrok. Ik heb nog nooit in mijn leven zo gegiecheld, want ze was een blok aan mijn been. Soms belde ze me nog weleens op, en ik nam altijd op zeggende : 'Met de giechelaar.' Dat vond ze niet leuk. Ze wilde er niets meer over horen, maar ze was in ieder geval weg. 'Waarom bel je me nog ?' vroeg ik.

'Nou ja, toch voor de geschiedenis,' zei ze. 'We hebben samen veel meegemaakt.'

'Dat is waar,' zei ik dan.

'Ik kan wel gewoon de weekeinden komen,' zei ze. 'Dan kan ik het nog wel volhouden met die giechelaar. Door de weeks ben ik weg.'

'Goed,' zei ik. 'Dan kom jij maar lekker met de weekeinden. De giechelaar giechelt zich er wel doorheen.'

En zo gebeurde het. Maar vaak was dat haar ook al teveel. Zodra ze binnenstapte zei ze vaak : 'Weer die giechelaar.'

En zo werden de weekeinden met haar ook steeds korter, totdat ze maar een uurtje per week kwam, even op visite, om toch nog contact te houden. Ik probeerde me dan ook zoveel mogelijk te gedragen. Ook het uurtje werd steeds korter, totdat het nog maar een minuut was. Ze kon gewoon niet met mij leven. Telefoon ging op een gegeven moment ook niet meer. Toen gingen we maar brieven schrijven, ellenlange brieven over van alles en nog wat. Ik kon me redelijk inhouden, en uiteindelijk beviel dit me wel. Ik hield haar toch zo nog op zekere afstand, maar ook weer niet teveel en te ver. Ik had haar nu op de juiste plaats, daar waar ze niet tussen mij en de giechelaar in kon komen. Ik was echt een fanatieke fan van de giechelaar, en had alles voor de giechelaar opgegeven, mijn hele ziel en zaligheid, en hij verloste mij van het blok aan mijn been. Voor mij was de giechelaar het beste ziekenhuis, het beste medicijn, ook al was het al vele jaren na datum. Het leek wel alsof het daardoor zelfs beter was. Bij de giechelaar was alles over datum. Ook mijn vrouw

was over datum, maar nu was het beter dan ooit. Door brieven hadden we elkaar gevonden. Het was het werk van de giechelaar.

Einde

De Kaaskabouter

De kaaskabouter was op weg naar de kaasmarkt met een kar vol kaas die hij zou verkopen. Hoe hij zijn kaas maakte ? Dat was een duister geheim. Hij zond zijn wolven uit in de nacht om kinderen uit hun bedden te roven. Hoe deden zij dit ? Met een sleutel die op elk slot paste. Ze deden dat altijd in andere steden, en over de grens, niet in de stad van de kaaskabouter.

De kaaskabouter lachte. Hij had zijn kinderkaas goed gebrouwen, en nu was het hard genoeg om verkocht te worden. De kazen waren goed gestold. Zoveel arme kinderen leden in zijn kooien. Zij wilden geen kaas worden, maar de kaaskabouter had geen medelijden.

De kaaskabouter woonde helemaal alleen in het bos, met zijn wolven en de kinderen in kooien. Niemand anders kwam daar ooit. En daarom bleef het ook zo'n goed geheim. Mensen vroegen zich altijd af waarom de kaas van de kaaskabouter altijd zo lekker was. Wat zouden ze walgen als ze wisten wat het was. Het was kinderkaas.

Op een dag, niemand wist hoe, kon er een jongetje ontsnappen. Hij rende zo hard als hij kon naar de dichtstbijzijnde stad, de stad van de kaaskabouter. Hij begon op deuren te kloppen, en allerlei mensen aan te spreken. Hij vertelde zijn verhaal, maar niemand geloofde hem.

'De kaaskabouter is een beste vent,' zeiden ze. 'Hij maakt de lekkerste kazen. Pas op met wat je zegt, want valse beschuldingen leiden tot de galg hier.'

En het jongetje werd al snel opgepakt, en moest voor de rechter komen. Ook de rechter geloofde hem niet. Hoe durfde hij dat over de kaaskabouter te zeggen die zoveel voor kinderen had gedaan. Vaak doneerde hij gratis kaas aan kinderziekenhuizen en weeshuizen, en ook de armen kregen het vaak gratis. Nee, over de kaaskabouter mocht geen kwaad woord gezegd worden. Dat zou het jongetje de kop kosten.

Het jongetje smeekte de rechter om wat politie agenten te sturen naar de kaaskabouter, om te zoeken naar de kooien, maar de rechter wees dit verzoek af. Hoe durfde dat jongetje zoiets te zeggen. Het zou ernstig trauma veroorzaken in de kaaskabouter als hij door politie agenten voor onderzoek zou worden bezocht. Hij zou dan een verdachte zijn, en dat zou een zware belediging zijn en ervoor zorgen dat de kaaskabouter geen kinderen, armen en zieken meer zou helpen. Het zou een ramp zijn voor de stad, want daar stond de stad immers om bekend.

En zo werd het jongetje ter dood veroordeeld. Zijn hoofd zou eraf gehakt worden door de stadsbeul. Heel veel mensen zouden komen kijken. 'Nee, nee !' riep het jongetje. 'Ik smeek het u. Gaat u alstublieft daar kijken om te zien wat daar allemaal gebeurd.'

In de rechtszaal stond er een dame op. 'Rechter, laat mij dan gaan om een kijkje te nemen bij de kaaskabouter. Ik verzin wel een smoes om binnen te komen, en zo zal hij zich niet geintimideerd of beledigd voelen,' zei de dame.

Maar de rechter werd verschrikkelijk boos. 'Nog meer beledigingen aan het adres van de kaaskabouter die zoveel voor de stad heeft gedaan ? U moest u schamen. Weer een tegenstander. Weer zo iemand die de kaaskabouter verdacht probeert te maken. U krijgt hier ook de doodstraf voor, en ook uw hoofd zal op dezelfde dag als de onthoofding van het jongetje eraf gaan.'

En zo durfde niemand een kwaad woord te zeggen over de kaaskabouter. Twee kinderen die ook in de rechtszaal waren besloten om na de rechtszaak toch eens bij de kaaskabouter te kijken. Ze gingen het bos in en kwamen na een tijdje lopen aan bij de kaaskabouter, en ja hoor, ze hoorden al snel het geschreeuw en gegil van kinderen, en kwamen er ook achter waar de kooien waren. Helaas werden ze al snel in de kraag gegrepen door de kaaskabouter. En zij die durfden bij de kaaskabouter te komen werden ook zonder pardon in de kooi gestopt om even later tot kaas te worden verwerkt.

'Stommelingen !' foeterde de kaaskabouter. 'Heel dom van jullie hier te komen. Wat kwamen jullie eigenlijk doen ?'

De kinderen vertelden het verhaal, en de kabouter begon te lachen. 'Ik ben er één verloren, maar ik heb er twee voor terug. Zo gaat dat altijd.'

De kinderen werden tot kaas gemaakt, en de dame en het ontsnapte jongetje werden op het stadsplein onthoofd door de stadsbeul, en de kabouter lachte. Maar op een dag kwamen zijn wolven ziek terug van de jacht, en ze hadden niets gevangen. De kaaskabouter vroeg zich af wat er aan de hand was, en de wolven schenen maar niet beter te worden. Nu kon de kaaskabouter geen kaas meer maken, en de mensen in de stad begonnen meer en meer te klagen, over hoe ze de zalige kaas van de kaaskabouter misten. De kaaskabouter kwam helemaal niet meer opdagen. Op een dag waren ze het allemaal beu, en gingen in een grote groep midden in de nacht met fakkels naar de kaaskabouter, die toen al sliep. Hij werd zo van zijn bed gelicht, en de woedende mensen vroegen hem waar zijn kaas bleef. Omdat de kabouter geen antwoord gaf zijn ze toen alles gaan doorzoeken, en kwamen uiteindelijk ook bij de kooien aan waar allerlei kinderkleren lagen. 'Zie, het was dus toch waar !' riep er eentje. 'Die dame en dat jongetje die ons er al voor waarschuwden en dat met hun kop moesten betalen hadden dus gelijk !' Woest gingen ze terug naar de kabouter, maar die was in geen velden of wegen te bekennen. Ze zijn toen teruggegaan naar de stad en vonden dat de

hoofden van de dame en het jongetje een ereplaats verdienden. Het hoofd van de dame konden ze niet meer vinden, maar het hoofd van het jongetje had iemand bewaard in een glazen bol, en die werd voortaan boven de stadspoort gezet. De andere steden die nog steeds leden onder het hoge aantal aan vermiste kinderen kregen het ook te horen, en sindsdien waren er veel toeristen om het hoofd van het dappere jongetje boven de stadspoort te bezichtigen. 'Luister goed naar uw waarschuwer,' was er op een bordje onder het hoofd geschreven.

De Eeuwige
Oorlogen

Het Knor-Gesticht was een boot op een ijszee. Het was een stad op een boot, een stad van bannelingen. Als iemand probeerde te ontsnappen vielen ze te pletter in de ijszee. Er was geen ontsnapping uit het Knor Gesticht. De randen van het schip waren zeer glad. Niet velen durfden zich daar te wagen. Alleen als je welonderwezen was in de poëzie van het geheim. Door het op de juiste tijd, op de juiste plaats en in de juiste volgorde en verhouding de poëzie op te prevelen kon je niet van de rand afglijden. Alleen waaghalzen waagden zich daar. Hij moest er niet aan denken. Hij was veel te onzeker. Hij had de poëzie van het geheim nog lang niet onder de knie. De poëzie kon je ergens in de stad op het schip kopen, maar er werd zeer vaag over gedaan. Sommige oude vrouwtjes brouwden het in hun ketels in duistere winkeltjes. Je moest er veel voor betalen. Het koste je een arm of een been, of je raakte verlamd. En dat zou de ontsnapping wezen ? Hij wist het niet. Hij zag de waaghalzen op de randen, getooid met onverklaarbare poëzie, en hij kon maar niet zien wat het was, en wat deden ze daar ? Probeerden ze te ontsnappen ? Het Knor Gesticht was een politieke gevangenis voor ballingen, maar ook daklozen kwamen er al gauw terecht en zij die te ziek waren om te werken. Ook allerlei soort tuig kwam er terecht, zoals moeilijk opvoedbare kinderen en criminelen. Ook dieren kwamen er vaak terecht. Het Knor Gesticht werd geheel geleid door hen van het Knor Gesticht, zij die daar ook eens terecht waren gekomen, en zich hadden opgewerkt hogerop, maar zij bleven onderdeel van het Knor Gesticht. Hij vroeg zich af waar het schip naartoe ging in deze ijszee. Moest hij nu echt zijn lichaamsdelen en organen verkopen voor wat poëzie ? Maar ja, raadselachtige poëzie, wat bescherming zou bieden en misschien een soort van ontsnappingsplan. En hoe ver moest je gaan ? Sommige waaghalzen hadden geen armen meer, en sommigen hadden zelfs geen armen en benen meer. Wat was dit voor zotte idioterie ? Hij vroeg zich af of er een andere manier was. Misschien was de poëzie van het geheim wel een doodlopende weg, maar hij wist het niet, en dat maakte hem ook onzeker en op zijn hoede, altijd maar weer. Vrouwtjes

probeerden hem erin te praten om het te doen, maar wat als het een valstrik was ? Wat als hij in iets nog ergers terecht zou komen dan het Knor Gesticht ? Was er eigenlijk wel iets ergers dan het Knor Gesticht ? In ieder geval zat hij hier vast. Eens ging hij deze stad binnen om iemand te helpen, maar hij mocht de stad niet meer verlaten. Hij bezocht iemand van het Knor Gesticht, maar voordat hij het wist zagen ze hem aan voor een bewoner ervan. Deze stad was levensgevaarlijk, dit schip.

Waar gingen ze naartoe ? Op de randen droop het ijs. Hij moest er niet aan denken in de ijszee te vallen, maar dit hier was ook niks. Hij wist dat in het leven niks vrijblijvend was. Alles had zo z'n gevolgen. Wilde je iemand helpen, dan werd je meegetrokken, in hetzelfde lot als degene die je wilde helpen. Daar was hij nu wel achter gekomen. Maar hij moest het doen. Hij zag in hoe ze hem hier nodig hadden, hoe ze hier totaal wanhopig aan hun lot waren overgeleverd.

Op een dag wist hij het zeker : Hij moest en zou drinken van de poëzie van het geheim, anders zou hij hier gek worden. Hij ging naar een ketelvrouw die wat van het spul brouwde, in een klein winkeltje, een bazar, een toko. Hij keek zijn ogen uit, en toen staarde hij direct naar het spul, wat groenig was en borrelde. Er steek vreemde groenachtige rook vanaf als in slierten. Hij stak zijn vinger uit naar de vrouw : 'Hak er maar af voor een beetje van dit spul.'

'Voor je oog krijg je het dubbele,' kraste het vrouwtje. 'Drink er maar goed van, jongen, want je wilt niet halverwege tot de ontdekking komen dat je er te weinig van hebt genomen.'

'Waarom niet ?' vroeg hij.

'Omdat zij die te weinig hebben op de rand er vanaf glijden,' kraste het vrouwtje, terwijl ze in de ketel roerde.

'Kom, neem wat jongen,' zei ze.

Hij kwam dichterbij. Hij keek naar het fonkelende groene spul. 'Toe maar,' zei het vrouwtje.

'Mag ik wat proberen ?' vroeg hij.

'Steek je vinger er maar in, en lik maar,' zei ze, 'omdat jij het bent, en daarna kun je beslissen.'

Hij stak zijn vinger erin, en stopte toen. Hij aarzelde. 'Brengt het geen ongeluk ?' vroeg hij.

'Zeer zeker,' zei het vrouwtje. 'Als je alleen maar proeft en het daar bij laat, dan brengt het ongeluk, groot ongeluk.'

'Laat maar,' zei hij, terwijl hij het winkeltje weer uitliep. Hij keek naar zijn vinger waarop het groene spul zat. Hij durfde er niet van te proeven. Hij pakte een flesje wat aan zijn riem hing, en stopte het in het flesje. Toen ging hij naar een volgend winkeltje en deed precies hetzelfde. Aan het einde van de dag had hij een flink flesje vol met het kleverige spul. 'Vele beetjes maken een hoop,' zei hij tegen zichzelf en begon er toen van te drinken. Hij wandelde als een beschonkene door de stad, maar hij zag geen ballingen meer, maar bewapende vrouwen.

'Wat is hier aan de hand !' riep hij. Het schuim stond op zijn mond.

'Geef hem het geheim van Kraal !' werd er geroepen.

Hij keek om zich heen en zag geen stad meer, maar een wildernis.

'Hij is over de rand gegaan !' werd er geroepen.

Hij raasde en tierde als een wilde. 'Waar ben ik !' gromde hij. Toen zag hij een flits als van bliksem en viel op de grond. Hij werd wakker voor een troon waar een wilde vrouw opzat. 'Heb je van de dichtersmede genomen ?' vroeg de vrouw.

'Ja,' gromde hij. 'Ik ben niet meer dezelfde. Ik ben niet meer op dezelfde plek.'

'Je bent de rand over gegaan,' zei de vrouw.

'M... maar dat kan toch niet,' stamelde hij. 'Daar is de ijszee.'

'Nee,' zei de vrouw, 'zij die van de dichtersmede drinken komen tot ons.'

'Wie bent u ?' vroeg hij.

Maar de vrouw was alweer verdwenen. Hij voelde zichzelf wegzakken in bitter ijs. 'Waar zijn jullie dan ?' riep hij.

'Zij die te weinig hebben komen niet ver !' werd er geroepen.

'Hoe kom ik aan meer !' riep hij terug.

'Je kent de weg,' werd er dichtbij hem gefluisterd. Toen werd hij met een hard voorwerp geslagen en stortte bewusteloos neer. Hij was helemaal verlamd en werd op een tafel gelegd.

'Die kan niet meer ontsnappen,' werd gezegd.

'Waar ben ik,' prevelde hij even later.

'In het Knor Gesticht,' werd er gezegd, maar hij zag niets. Alles was zwart voor zijn ogen.

'Waarom ?' vroeg hij. 'Ik heb van de dichtersmede gedronken.'

'Te weinig, en niet genoeg betaald, dus we hebben het je betaald gezet,' werd er gezegd.

'Ik kan niet opkomen,' zei hij. Toen was het weer alsof hij van de dichtersmede dronk.

Weer zag hij vrouwen, gewapend. 'Waar ben ik ?' vroeg hij.

'Bij Odin, G'Odin,' werd er gezegd. 'Je hebt van Haar mede gedronken. G'Odin is de aanvoerster van de walkuren.'

Hij keek de vrouwen één voor één aan. 'Ben ik opgenomen ?' vroeg hij.

'Neergenomen,' zeiden ze. Toen gaven ze hem nog meer mede. Hoe meer hij dronk hoe donkerder de vrouwen waren.

'Hoe komt het dat jullie steeds donkerder worden ?' vroeg hij.

'Zij die niet van de dichtersmede hebben genomen zijn vergiftigd en zien dingen die er niet zijn,' zeiden ze.

Hoe meer hij van de dichtersmede dronk hoe meer hij erachter kwam dat het een shamaanse drank was waardoor hij dieper in de onderwereld kwam, en waardoor zijn ogen meer en meer geopend werden. Zij die er niet van hadden gedronken sliepen slechts.

Hij kwam in de motor kamer van het schip. De vrouwen waren slechts onderdelen van de motor, als de godinnen van de seconden. Hij keek naar de prachtig glanzende motor, als geheel ingevet. Het had een prachtige roodbruinige kleur en was heel groot. Daar raasde het ding woest.

'Nog een slokje,' dacht hij. Hij probeerde dichterbij de motor te komen, maar het leek alsof er glas omheen zat. 'Geef me nog een slokje,' zei hij. Hij bedelde bijna. 'Wie ontsnapt er uit het Knor Gesticht ?' zong iemand. 'Wie oh wie ?' Hij greep naar de motor, maar hij greep mis vanwege het glas, alsof iets hem wegduwde, onverbiddelijk, en alsof een slang naar hem blies en hem beet. Hij was gebeten, maar door wat ?'

'Drink nu, drink,' werd er gefluisterd.

Hij voelde het bloed in zijn mond en dronk ervan. Hij voelde zich van binnen bloeden en was duizelig en waggelde. Toen stortte hij neer. Hij zag zichzelf wegglijden.

'Hij heeft geen sleutel voor de motor,' werd er gefluisterd, 'geen ijssleutel'.

'I... ik betaal alles voor die sleutel,' stamelde hij. Hij hoorde gelach. Hij zag zich wegglijden en bevond zich weer in de stad van het Knor Gesticht. De bewoners keken hem vreemd aan, en sommigen lachten, alsof ze hem bespotten. 'Waarom lach je ?' riep hij. Maar ze zeiden niets.

'Ik moet meer van die mede hebben, meer, meer,' zei hij, terwijl hij een winkeltje inliep. Een oud vrouwtje roerde in de ketel waar het pruttelende groene sap in was. 'Nee,' zei het vrouwtje, 'niet weer.'

'Waarom niet ?' vroeg hij. Ze wees op zijn gezicht, alsof ze naar iets op zijn voorhoofd keek, en schudde haar hoofd. 'Zij die teveel hebben gedronken dragen het groene teken op hun voorhoofden, en zij zullen er nooit meer van drinken. Zij zijn verdoemd !' kraste het vrouwtje.

Hij strompelde het winkeltje uit en probeerde het bij een ander winkeltje maar kreeg hetzelfde te horen. 'Ik heb het spul toch echt nodig,' dacht hij bij zichzelf. Hij ging terug. 'Alsjeblieft, ik geef er alles voor,' zei hij, maar het vrouwtje was onverbiddelijk.

'Wat betekent het dat ik verdoemd ben ?' vroeg hij.

'Jij gulzigaard !' tierde zij. Niemand sprak meer met hem. Hij werd door iedereen uitgescholden of uitgelachen, allemaal vanwege het groene teken op zijn voorhoofd. Pas na lange tijd begon het minder te worden, want ze begonnen eraan gewend te raken en negeerden hem gewoon. En zo leefde hij voort op het schip van het Knor Gesticht, altijd terugverlangende naar de dagen dat hij de dichtersmede dronk. Hij werd ouder en ouder, en ook zijn herinneringen aan de dichtersmede begonnen te vervormen. Op een dag kwam hij iemand tegen die hetzelfde groene teken op zijn voorhoofd scheen te hebben, maar die persoon had het er zelf opgeverfd. Hij zuchtte. Hij voelde zich alleen en hopeloos verloren. Diep in zijn hart wist hij dat hij hier niet hoorde, maar dat hij alleen maar wilde helpen, maar waar had het hem gebracht ? Zelfs door de mede-bannelingen werd hij als een onderschepsel behandeld.

Op een dag legde het schip ergens aan. Hij werd ergens in een gezin geadopteerd. Ze keken hem vreemd aan vanwege het groene teken op zijn voorhoofd, maar wisten niet wat het betekende. Hij probeerde het hen uit te leggen, maar ze spraken een andere taal. Er werd hier volop van de dichtersmede gedronken, maar hij mocht het niet hebben, want hij was een vreemdeling. Toch was het voor hem goed om even ergens anders te zijn. Het bleek maar van korte duur, want iedereen moest toen weer terug naar het schip, ook hij. Het was een korte vakantie geweest. Ook die herinnering bleef bij hem, en hij dacht er vaak over na.

Vooral 's nachts verlangde hij ernaar om van de dichtersmede te drinken, en dan zwierf hij door de stad. Op een nacht werd hij gebeten door een hond, en even had hij weer het gevoel alsof hij van de dichtersmede dronk. Telkens als hij flashbacks had leek het alsof hij ervan dronk. De herinneringen waren als flessen in zijn hoofd. Er stonden allerlei vreemde etiketten op.

Hij had het groene teken op zijn voorhoofd, wat betekende dat hij een geisoleerde was. Nooit kon hij ergens lang blijven. Het groene teken had hem rusteloos gemaakt. Altijd moest hij zwerven. Nooit was hij ergens echt thuis. Op een dag vond hij een nieuw winkeltje in de stad. Er ging zacht groen licht vanuit, bijna gelig. Hij stapte binnen, en zag anderen met het groene teken op hun voorhoofd. 'Wat wordt hier verkocht ?' vroeg hij. Maar niemand antwoordde. Het leek wel alsof ze te ver heen waren, en hij kon er geen contact mee maken. Toen is hij maar weer weggegaan.

Op een dag viel een jongen hem aan op straat. Hij werd door de jongen weer meegesleurd naar het nieuwe winkeltje. De jongen deed zijn muts af en had ook een groen teken op zijn voorhoofd. Hij vroeg de jongen wat hij moest, maar de jongen sprak tot hem in een vreemde taal die hij niet begreep. Hij trok zijn schouders op. 'Ik versta je niet,' zei hij. Toen kreeg hij een klap in zijn gezicht.

'Wat moet ik doen ?' vroeg hij. De jongen liet hem toen een vreemde zachtgroene steen zien. Iemand anders zei : 'Dat is de steen der nachtmerries.' De jongen begon met de steen op hem te wrijven. 'Wat moet ik ermee ?' vroeg hij. Weer begon de jongen in de vreemde taal te spreken.

'Hij bedoelt dat het jouw steen is, jouw talisman,' zei de andere persoon.

Hij nam de steen aan van de jongen. De steen voelde warm aan. Plotseling verkrampte hij. Er ging een vreemde scheut door zijn arm en hij viel neer. 'Zo krachtig is het,' zei de andere persoon.

Hij had van schrik de steen losgelaten, maar raapte de steen weer op en stond op. 'Wat doet het ?' vroeg hij.

'Het leidt de weg door de stad,' zei de andere persoon.

De steen gaf een vreemd groen licht af wat begon te seinen, alsof het zijn eigen taal sprak.

'Ik versta de signalen van de steen nog niet,' zei hij.

'Dat komt nog wel,' zei de andere persoon. 'Je moet nu weggaan, anders komt er kortsluiting.'

Hij rende de winkel uit met de steen. Hij kon de steen niet meer wegleggen. Nu moest de steen gaan waar het wilde gaan, en hij moest volgen. De steen kende de weg door deze zware stad, kende alle sleutels en sloten. Nu moest hij de taal van de steen leren. Zijn nachtmerries waren een medicijn wat hij nog niet kende. Hij wist niet hoe hij het moest gebruiken, en het maakte hem overstuur en wanhopig.

Heel diep in het Knor Gesticht lag het medicijn. Hij moest veel dieper in het schip. In lagere verdiepingen kwam hij tot een zaal waar grote groene machines stonden. In de machines stonden robotten van een nieuwe medische orde. Het was daar waar het medische systeem samensmolt met het politie systeem. Hij had zo lang onder deze samensmelting geleden, wat een samensmelting was met een derde element, namelijk het criminele systeem, wat ervoor zorgde dat het Knor Gesticht ontstond. Maar de steen der nachtmerries begon te piepen. De steen wilde het derde element vervangen. Hij moest de steen tegen de groene machines aanleggen, en zo begonnen er dingen te veranderen. De steen was een programmeur. Hij had totaal geen controle of macht over de steen. De steen deed wat het wil, en hij kon alleen maar toekijken. Zo begon het ware medicijn uit de machines te komen, maar wat was het ? Het proefde als mint. Hij zag alles van een afstand, alsof er glas om hem heen was. Hij was nog steeds de geisoleerde. En robotten kwamen voort vanuit de groene machines, en het glas werd dikker en dikker. Hij had immers het groene teken op zijn voorhoofd. De robotten werden tot vrouwen die zich ontkleden en een dans opvoerden.

Het was alsof het medicijn klotste in zijn hoofd, alsof hij zelf het medicijn was. Hij realiseerde dat hij de geisoleerde van G'Odin was. Hij was diep neergenomen. De Medi Mind begon in hem te ontwaken. Zonder het Knor Gesticht zou hij hier nooit gekomen zijn. Maar toen hij het medicijn had genomen werd hij opgenomen in een vurige strijdwagen, en hij zag de Medi Wars, en hij werd deel van een leger. Allen hadden zij het groene teken op hun voorhoofd, maar dit begon steeds roder te worden. Hij was in een nieuwe ontwaking, die van de medische oorlogen.

Einde

De Joegoslavische Kettingbrieven

Met een kettingbrief is het altijd het geval dat mensen de brief naar een aantal mensen moeten doorsturen en er wordt dan geluk of geld beloofd, en vaak wordt er ook ongeluk voorspelt voor hen die de ketting zouden breken. Aan deze invloeden is de kettingbrief dus onderhevig. Een ieder die de kettingbrief dus ontvangt en doorstuurt kan daar dus heel makkelijk veranderingen in aanbrengen, dingen toevoegen en dingen weglaten, zodat de oorspronkelijke boodschap in de kettingbrief zich geheel kan gaan vervormen, en er verschillende versies zijn. Maar wat is het risico daarvan, want is dit ook niet een soort verbreken van de ketting ?

Sommige versies zullen het niet overleven, terwijl andere versies het dan weer wel overleven. Dit maakt het onderwerp 'de kettingbrief' dus een interessant onderwerp voor onderzoek. In de volgende verhalen weten we dus eigenlijk niet in welk stadium de kettingbrief zich bevindt. Het zijn Joegoslavische kettingbrieven geschreven tijdens de Joegoslavische oorlog. De namen, adressen, beloftes en bedreigingen zijn weggelaten. Alleen het verhaal is overgebleven. Bij het lezen van de kettingbrief mag je je ook afvragen : in hoeverre is het leven niet één grote kettingbrief ? En waartoe was de kettingbrief uitgezonden ? Om met dwang aandacht te vragen voor de noodsituatie in Joegoslavië ? De verhalen van de kettingbrieven gingen zelfs over de grenzen van Joegoslavië heen, en werden dus ook in andere talen vertaald. Of waren er andere motieven in het spel ? Mysterie.

Wie de verhalen heeft geschreven is onbekend. Sommigen beweerden dat geestelijken van Joegoslavië ze schreven om de bevolking moed in te spreken of wat afleiding te bezorgen, terwijl weer anderen beweerden dat ze door Joegoslavische soldaten of buitenlandse soldaten die daar werkten waren geschreven om er doorheen te komen. En zo ontstonden de Joegoslavische kettingbrieven die er uiteindelijk voor zorgden dat de oorlogen werden beëindigd. Omdat na de oorlog de Joegoslavische kettingbrieven langzaam verdwenen heb ik ze verzameld en opgetekend opdat ze bewaard zouden blijven, want ze waren inmiddels medicinaal gebleken.

Sommigen van deze kettingbrieven uit Joegoslavië waren al vrijwel uitgestorven. Eén zo'n kettingbrief vond ik terug in een afgelegen museum ergens in Ethiopië en kon ik overkopen voor veel geld. Een andere kettingbrief heb ik opgekocht vanuit een soortgelijk museum uit Rusland. Ook werden laatste exemplaren van bepaalde Joegoslavische kettingbrieven bewaard en bewaakt door stijfkoppige bejaarden waarmee ik eerst over en weer moest discussiëren over hoe belangrijk deze brieven en verhalen waren voor het algemeen welzijn van het volk. Maar ja, met een beetje ervaring als literair wetenschapper weet ik het dan uiteindelijk toch voor elkaar te krijgen, en het resultaat is dit boek.

Maar nu wil het voorval dat dit voorwoord ook eens een Joegoslavische kettingbrief scheen te zijn, als één van de verhalen die de monniken of soldaten van Joegoslavië in de oorlog schreven, dus nu weten we nog niks. Er kan tussentijds van alles mee gebeurd zijn, Jan en alleman kunnen er dingen

aan hebben toegevoegd, maar we moeten het er maar mee doen. Het herinnert ons in ieder geval terug aan het tijdperk van de Joegoslavische kettingbrieven.

De Joegoslavische Kettingbrief

Pas op met wat je doet of denkt.

Is het je weleens opgevallen dat heel veel mensen denken dat ze het altijd beter weten dan de ander, en dat eigenlijk onze hele samenleving hierop is gebouwd ? Groepen werken zo, organisaties en ook landen. Zij weten het beter. Het merkwaardige is dus dat we dit in elke cultuur tegenkomen, en dat ze allemaal iets anders zeggen, dus wie weet het nu echt beter ?
Het antwoord is : Het zijn allemaal spelletjes die de mens speelt, hele gevaarlijke spelletjes, want de lucht zit vol met onzichtbare parasieten die op een andere frequentie zitten zodat de mens ze NIET kan zien, maar die er dus WEL zijn, en ze houden ervan mensen tegen elkaar op te stoken. Ze leven namelijk van BLOED. Daarom moeten we oppassen met iedere gedachte en elk woord, want ze hebben het op ons gemunt en ze komen gecamoufleerd. Een gewaarschuwd mens telt voor twee.

Er is dus een geestelijke oorlog gaande. Hier is een verhaal tijdens de Joegoslavische oorlog in de 90-er jaren waarin deze twee oorlogen elkaar kruisten. Het ging om een Joegoslavische kettingbrief. Met een kettingbrief is het altijd het geval dat mensen de brief naar een aantal mensen moeten doorsturen en er wordt dan geluk of geld beloofd, en vaak wordt er ook ongeluk voorspelt voor hen die de ketting zouden breken. Aan deze invloeden is de kettingbrief dus onderhevig. Een ieder die de kettingbrief dus ontvangt en doorstuurt kan daar dus heel makkelijk veranderingen in aanbrengen, dingen toevoegen en dingen weglaten, zodat de oorspronkelijke boodschap in de kettingbrief zich geheel kan gaan vervormen, en er verschillende versies zijn. Sommige versies zullen het niet overleven, terwijl andere versies het dan weer wel overleven. Dit maakt het onderwerp 'de kettingbrief' dus een interessant onderwerp voor onderzoek. In het volgende verhaal weten we dus eigenlijk niet in welk stadium de kettingbrief zich bevindt. Het is dus een Joegoslavische kettingbrief geschreven tijdens de Joegoslavische oorlog. De namen, adressen, beloftes en bedreigingen zijn weggelaten. Alleen het verhaal is overgebleven. Bij het lezen van de kettingbrief mag je je ook afvragen : in hoeverre is het leven niet één grote kettingbrief ? En waartoe was de kettingbrief uitgezonden ? Om met dwang aandacht te vragen voor de noodsituatie in Joegoslavie ? De brief ging zelfs over de grenzen van Joegoslavie heen, werd dus ook in andere talen vertaald. Of waren er andere motieven in het spel ? Mysterie.

Als Joegoslavische 'geestelijke oorlogs-soldaat' zat hij met buitenlandse soldaten die in de Joegoslavische oorlog hadden geholpen samen in hetzelfde ziekenhuis. Hij zag ze nog zo op de grond zitten, de oorlog herbelevende, trillende, in een shock, telkens weer dezelfde flashbacks. Hij probeerde ze te kalmeren, en liet hen wat van zijn tekeningen zien. 'Daar kun je veel geld mee verdienen,' zei er eentje. Het waren zijn vrienden. Zij hadden allemaal hun leven gegeven voor een hoger doel. Eentje van hen ging naar een psychiatrische kliniek. Hij wilde hem niet alleen laten gaan, ook al ging het in die tijd al beter met hem. Hij dacht dat hij misschien ook anderen daar kon helpen. Hij ging daar naartoe uit liefde. Hij kwam daar en er waren verschillende incest slachtoffers die hij ook probeerde te helpen. Hij was daar voor een paar weken geweest, anders zou hij er zelf aan onderdoor gaan, omdat er daar dingen gebeurden die het daglicht niet konden verdragen. Hij had het zaad gezaaid. Dat is waar hedendaagse volgelingen van het 'kruis-principe' behoren te zijn, nergens anders. Het bezoeken van de zieken, de gevangenen, de hongerigen. Dat is het pad van het kruis. Hij was hiertoe geroepen.

Wie hielp die jongens ? Wie hielp die meisjes ? Niemand. Hij omhelsde ze, en werd ervoor bestrafd door het medische personeel, die in de waan waren dat ze 'professioneel' waren. Maar die jongens en meisjes vertelden hem dat wat hij deed hen had behoed tegen zelfmoord. Nu wil het voorval dat een mevrouw hier totaal niets van wilde weten, en hier ook totaal niets van wist, en om hem een hak te zetten dan maar ging rondbazuinen dat hij in een inrichting zat en wilsonbekwaam was, en dat zijn kinderen daarom afgenomen moesten worden. Zoveel voor het helpen van oorlogsslachtoffers en incest-slachtoffers voor een paar weekjes. Diezelfde mevrouw had hij ooit eens geleerd dat mensen elkaar alleen maar van onderen konden helpen, en niet van bovenaf. En waar zat die mevrouw die al deze dingen zei ? Hoog en droog in haar 'huisje' met zijn kinderen, niet willen weten en beseffen dat de steden en dorpen zelf al 'inrichtingen' zijn. Diezelfde mevrouw had hem ooit eens gezegd dat ze een demoon was die naar de aarde was gezonden om mensen bang te maken. Later lijdde deze mevrouw aan geheugenverlies naar eigen zeggen, en wilde haar hart niet blootleggen, vanwege het monster die het had gewaagd voor incestslachtoffers en oorlogsslachtoffers naar zo'n plaats te gaan voor een paar weken. Natuurlijk moest dat door haar nog eens extra gedramatiseerd worden, en moest ze dat eens extra bespotten.

Deze mevrouw heeft nooit navraag gedaan naar wat er gaande was, maar deed zich voor alsof ze er alles van wist. Ook wilde deze mevrouw zich nergens in verdiepen, maar anderen moesten zich wel in haar verdiepen. Demonen bestonden volgens deze mevrouw eigenlijk niet meer. Deze mevrouw zag ze niet, dus in kleuterschool taal konden die er dus ook niet zijn, ook al was de hele wereld een grote rotzooi en sprak alles zichzelf tegen. Bij deze mevrouw was het de ene keer dit en de andere keer dat.

Hij had deze mevrouw geleerd dat gedachten en woorden al snel demonen konden zijn en dat we niet zomaar mochten denken en spreken vanwege dit gevaar, maar deze mevrouw kon dat allemaal niets schelen en dacht en sprak maar alsof het een lieve lust was. Maar genoeg over deze mevrouw.

De Joegoslavische Kettingbrief II

Verraad in de steden,

vervolgde de Joegoslavische geestelijke oorlogs-soldaat,
De steden zijn inrichtingen,
Ze weten het niet,
Ze weten niet eens wat een 'inrichting' is,
Het is een scheldwoord,
Heb je er weleens gekeken ? Ben je er weleens geweest ?
Mensen die voor JOU hebben gevochten zitten daar,
Mensen die hun leven voor anderen hebben gegeven,
Mensen die ervoor hebben gezorgd dat JIJ nu veilig kan leven,
Verder zit het er vol met incest-slachtoffers, daklozen en politieke gevangenen,
Wat heb jij voor hen teruggedaan ?
Of denk je het allemaal beter te weten en ben je vergeten wat ze allemaal voor JOU hebben gedaan ?

Op dit punt begon de Joegoslavische geestelijke oorlogs-soldaat te schelden en vervloekingen uit te spreken als een oordeels-profeet,
De steden waren verdoemd in zijn ogen,
De steden waren nog wel ergere inrichtingen,
De steden waren daadwerkelijke gekkenhuizen,
Want zij hadden deze oorlogen veroorzaakt, en zij hadden ervoor gezorgd dat zoveel mensen naar zulke ziekenhuizen moesten, en dat anderen hen moesten bezoeken, omdat een mens altijd alleen maar van onderen geholpen kon worden.

Zo vervolgde de Joegoslavische geestelijke oorlogs-soldaat :

Ben JIJ de beste stuurlui die aan wal staat, die vanaf een zogenaamde veilige woning hoog en droog allemaal gemakkelijk praat over iemand anders die zijn leven in de oorlog voor jou heeft gegeven ? Zo veilig is het niet. Je bent gefopt. Je bent nog wel op een ergere plaats terecht gekomen door je gedrag, door tegen jezelf en anderen te liegen. Hier leeft misleiding op misleiding.

En zo was de tweede Joegoslavische kettingbrief nog wel erger dan de eerste. Omdat het nogal grote gevolgen zou hebben om deze kettingbrief niet door te sturen, en mensen al in grote angst leefden vanwege de oorlog, stuurden velen hem door.

De Joegoslavische Kettingbrief III

Hij woonde met mensen in een huis die van een hele zware kerk waren.
De familie had een eigen gedeelte, maar ze deelden de badkamer.
Soms spiekten de meisjes weleens als hij de badkamer gebruikte.
Er waren gaten in de muur waar je doorheen kon kijken.
De zoon van die familie was vroeger zijn klasgenoot.
Ze hadden vaak ruzie.

De meisjes moesten zich altijd heel zedelijk kleden vanwege de zware kerk.
Ze mochten ook geen gebruik maken van lingerie.
Hij daarentegen was heel vrij, en sprak over van alles.
Maar zij waren gesloten mensen. Dat moest zo van die kerk.
Er waren een heleboel dingen die hij niet wist.

De zware kerk was erg zwaar, en ik bedoel heel zwaar.
Dingen moesten op een bepaalde manier klaargemaakt worden.
Daar mocht niet van afgeweken worden.
Anders zouden ze geloofsproblemen krijgen, en dat hadden ze veel.
Voor hen was het soms ook niet haalbaar, maar het moest.

Hij had wel medelijden met ze.
Het was alsof ze leefden met een pistool tegen hun hoofd.
Niks mocht. Alles moest.
Ze hadden eigenaardige spullen.
Ze mochten geen lingerie, maar hun meubiliar was gewoon puur lingerie,
hun stoelen, hun tafels, hun manden, allemaal met verfijnde decoratie.
Hij keek altijd zijn ogen uit als hij daar was, en dat gebeurde niet veel.
Hij kwam daar eigenlijk alleen maar met koninginnedag, want dan was de koningin op de televisie, en dat wilde hij graag zien.
Hij had geen televisie. Hij was te vrij voor een televisie. Maar in die zware kerk moesten ze een televisie hebben. Dat was verplicht. Alle zenders werden beheerd door hun dominees. Die waren de hele dag door op de tv.

Het was een zware kerk, zo zwaar dat er geen medeleven getoond mocht worden. Het leven was lijden, en dat had iedereen verdiend. Hij wilde ze troosten en bemoedigen, maar dat werd door hen niet geaccepteerd. Ze waren als de orthodoxe zwanen in Joegoslavische grachten. Eén verkeerde beweging of een verkeerd woord, en ze vlogen je aan. Op een keer kwam hij zijn vroegere klasgenoot tegen in het winkelcentrum, maar ze hadden alweer bijna ruzie. Het ging over poppen. In die zware kerk moesten mannen met poppen spelen. Dit was preventief, want zo zouden ze van

de vrouwen afblijven. Zijn vroegere klasgenoot beschuldigde hem ervan eens zijn pop te hebben gestolen of kapot gemaakt. 'Zo lang geleden,' zei hij. 'Ik kan me dat niet meer herinneren, maar als je er echt nog zo mee zit, dan gaan we nu lekker naar een poppenwinkel, en dan koop ik een nieuwe pop voor je.' En zo gebeurde het. Hij nam de jongen mee naar een poppenzaak, en kocht voor hem een hele dure en sjieke pop, in zedelijke klederdracht. De vroegere klasgenoot was daar heel blij mee, en het was direct vrede.

Ze leefden in Joegoslavië,
Er was geen tijd voor oorlog meer,
Want de poppen marcheerden,
Elke man kreeg zijn pop,
opdat de vrouwen konden emanciperen.

Wilde Honden

Een man en een vrouw waren in het bos. Plotseling verloren ze elkaar geheel uit het oog, alsof een duizeling hen trof. Ze hoorden honden blaffen en janken in de verte, en het geluid leek steeds dichterbij te komen. De man greep de vrouw die als verstijfd was. ‘Liefste,’ sprak de man. ‘We moeten ons verbergen.’ Ze moesten het direkt op een rennen zetten. Daar zagen ze de honden al in de verte aankomen. De vrouw slaakte een gil, terwijl de man al een eind weg was. Eén voor één stortten de wilde honden zich op de vrouw, en lieten niets van haar over. De andere honden gingen al achter de man aan. Buiten adem rende de man langs de bomen, en door struiken naar de donkerste plekken. Er waren veel honden. De man wist dat hij niets tegen hen zou kunnen beginnen. De jacht was meedogenloos. Hij kon bijna het gehijg van de honden al horen, en de honden gilden bijna. Nog nooit was de man zo bang geweest. Zijn binnenste leek over te lopen van

zweet. Na een tijdje bereikte hij een huisje. Snel ging hij naar binnen en deed de deur achter hem dicht. Al snel omsingelden de honden het huis. De man rende op de trap naar boven waar een man en een vrouw in bed lagen. Aan de muur hing een geweer. De man greep het geweer, en knalde door het raam een paar honden neer. De man op het bed stond op, liep naar de man met het geweer toe, en sprak : ‘Welkom, welkom, in het land van plezier.’ De man met het geweer keek hem vreemd aan, terwijl ze beiden de honden jankend hoorden wegrennen.

‘Pardon, ze hebben .... ze hebben haar verscheurd,’ zij de man met het geweer.

‘Wie hebben ze verscheurd ?’ vroeg de man die net van het bed was opgestaan.

De man met het geweer begon te snikken.

‘Oh, ik begrijp het al. Je bent je geliefde kwijt, je liefje,’ zei de man, terwijl ook de vrouw opstond.

‘Maar goed, je bent hier veilig. Je hebt die honden lelijk te pakken gehad.’

De man greep een ander geweer onder het bed vandaan, en sprak : ‘Kom, we gaan op hondenjacht.’

Even later waren ze beiden weer buiten, en zochten naar de honden, die ze later op een open plek vonden. Ze knalden ze allemaal af.

‘Wat bedoelde je met ‘dit is het land van plezier,’ vroeg de ene man.

De andere man zei niets. ‘Dat zul je wel zien,’ zei hij even later. Beiden liepen ze naar een kasteel toe wat leegstond. ‘Hier kan je voorlopig blijven,’ zei de man. ‘Ga niet naar huis, want de honden zullen je pakken. Er zijn hier zoveel wilde honden.’

De man knikte, en ging het kasteel binnen. De andere man ging weer terug naar zijn eigen huisje.

In het kasteel keek de man zijn ogen uit. Hij was moe, sloot de deuren, en ging in een kamer in een bed liggen. De volgende ochtend was hij vroeg wakker. Hij besloot het hele kasteel te bezichtigen. In een torenkamertje lagen een man en een vrouw. ‘Heb je het gehoord van de honden ?’ vroeg de vrouw.

‘Ja, ik weet er alles van,’ zei de man die net was binnengekomen.

‘Nee, je begrijpt me niet,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Ik bedoel .... ach laat maar.’

‘Nee, vertel het hem,’ zei de man die naast haar lag.

‘Okay,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Wij waren allemaal achternagejaagd door de honden, en kwamen hier, in het land van plezier.’

Plotseling begonnen de ogen van de vrouw gelig te worden. Ze omhelsde de man die naast haar lag, kuste hem, en sprak : ‘Wij verloren allemaal een partner aan de honden. Maar kijk, hier vinden we er één terug.’

‘Waar heb je het over,’ vroeg de man die in de deuropening stond.

‘Nou,’ zei de vrouw geheimzinnig, ‘jij zal hier ook een nieuw maatje terugvinden.’

‘Oh, maar daar heb ik helemaal geen zin in,’ zei de man in de deuropening.

‘Maar terug naar huis kun je niet,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Want de honden zullen je pakken.’ Buiten hoorden ze geblaf, en de schrik sloeg de man weer om het hart. ‘Zoek je maatje op, schat,’ zei de vrouw, ‘want zij die hier dagen alleen blijven zullen het kasteel uitmoeten, en aan de honden overgeleverd zijn.’

‘Pardon ?’ zei de man. ‘Wie bepaald dat ? Ik mocht hier voorlopig blijven, en ik hoop dan weer naar huis te kunnen gaan. Ik zal zeker de dood van mijn geliefde moeten verwerken in een diepgaand rouwproces.’

De vrouw begon te lachen. ‘Er is geen weg meer terug. Elke dag groeit het aantal honden. Ze hokken hier snel, en daar valt echt niet tegen op te jagen. Zij van het huisje zijn allang dood. De heer van het kasteel zal het niet toestaan dat je hier nog iets langer blijft dan een paar dagen, tenzij je een nieuw maatje vindt.’

‘Hoe bedoel je ?’ vroeg de man. ‘Hoe kan het dat zij die van het huisje zijn allang dood zijn ? En wie is de heer van het kasteel ?’

Weer begon de vrouw te lachen, en omhelsde de man naast haar nog een keer, en zei terwijl ze hem kustte : ‘Er is alleen leven mogelijk in het kasteel. De rest is aan de honden overgeleverd. Ze zullen

het echt niet lang volhouden, en tenslotte zijn ze al jaren dood .... hahaha .... Er is geen ontsnapping mogelijk uit het kasteel .... Tenzij je voer voor honden wil zijn ...'

De man draaide zich om, wilde weglopen, maar vroeg toen : 'Waar kan ik dat maatje vinden ?'

Maar de man en de vrouw die met elkaar waren zeiden niets meer. De man liep weg, en na een lange tocht door het kasteel kwam hij in een andere toren terecht waar hij een vrouw in een kamer zag liggen. De vrouw was omringd door honden. De man schrok. 'Ze zijn maar opgezet hoor,' zei de vrouw. De man haalde diep adem. Als dit zijn maatje moest zijn, dan ging de man nog liever gewoon dood. De vrouw had iets arrogants over haar, en iets dominants. Ze leek totaal niet op zijn vorig liefje. Na een lange zwerftocht door het kasteel kwam hij in een andere toren waar een andere vrouw zat. Hij moest nu snel beslissen, tenzij alles wat die andere vrouw had gezegd een leugen was. 'Pardon ?' vroeg de man. 'Wie is de heer van het kasteel, en wat zijn zijn bedoelingen ?'

De vrouw begon te glimlachen. 'Wat heb je er voor beeld bij ? Wie denk je ?' Toen vertelde de man het hele verhaal, terwijl de vrouw in lachen uitbarstte. 'Nou, deels is het wel waar, maar als je geen maatje vind, dan wordt je niet uit het kasteel gezet voor de honden .... Nee, het is allemaal veel erger .... Dan zal de heer van het kasteel zelf met je afrekenen ....'

De man schrok. Wat kon hij verwachtten ? Wie was die heer van het kasteel, en wat zou hij doen ? De vrouw schudde met haar hoofd van het lachen, en de man begon zich heel ongemakkelijk te voelen. 'Uit hoeveel vrouwen kan ik kiezen, en voor wanneer moet dat gebeuren ?' vroeg de man. De vrouw wees op een poster waarop de meest verschrikkelijke vrouwen stonden vol prestige, verwaandheid en tuttigheid. Hij kon zich geen vreemder gezelschap bedenken. 'Nou, lever me dan maar over aan die heer van het kasteel,' zei de man. De vrouw greep de man, deed hem handboeien om, en leidde hem naar een donkere kamer waarin een oude man zat. 'Zo,' zei de oude man, 'ik neem aan dat je geen keuze kon maken ? Goed, dan zul je geworpen worden in de vrouwenput waar de armste en vieste vrouwen leven.'

'Alles beter dan dat tuig op die poster,' zei de man.

De man werd naar een put geleid, en daar ingeworpen, waardoor hij helemaal onder de modder kwam te zitten. De oude man begon te lachen, en ook de vrouw. Even later kwamen er nog meer vrouwen om de put heenstaan om de man uit te lachen. De vrouwen in de put leken op holbewoners, en de man keek recht in allerlei gangen die bereikt konden worden vanuit de put. Hier leefden de vrouwen. De man kreeg erge medelijden met hen. De vrouwen waren zo paranoïde en zo depressief dat ze hem niet bij hen lieten. De man besloot maar in het midden van de put te blijven.

Hier leidde hij een eenzaam bestaan. Elke dag werd hem voedsel toegeworpen. Hij dacht terug aan de honden, en wilde dat hij door de honden zou zijn verscheurd, maar hier waren geen honden, en

hij moest leven met zijn wonden. Hij begreep dit kasteel niet. Totdat de oude man hem op een dag uit de put liet komen.

‘Wie zijn die vrouwen, wat heb je met hen gedaan ? Ze zijn wild en onbereikbaar,’ vroeg de man.

‘Maar ze hebben je al die tijd in leven gelaten,’ zei de oude man.

‘Ik had liever dat ze me hadden verscheurd, want het is daar geen leven. Ik ben nog liever dood,’ zei de man.

‘Ik zal je vertellen wie zij zijn,’ zei de oude man. ‘Eens werden ook zij door honden nagejaagd, en kwamen hier terecht, en vonden geen maatje.’

‘Waarom hebt u mij nu uit de put gehaald ?’ vroeg de man.

‘Omdat ik hoopte dat je je maatje in de put zou vinden,’ zei de oude man.

Toen werd de man in een ander put geworpen. Deze put was veel dieper, en hij gleed helemaal door de modder door allerlei gangen heen, totdat hij in een grote modderpoel terechtkwam. Hier was niemand, en hij begon een lange tocht onder de grond, totdat hij uiteindelijk uitkwam op een plek dichtbij zijn huis. Hij was blij dat hij het nare uitstapje naar het bos had overleefd. Hij zou nooit meer teruggaan naar het bos. Wel moest hij aan zijn geliefde denken, die hij in het bos had verloren. Thuisgekomen kreeg hij de schrik van zijn leven toen hij zijn liefje gewoon in bed zag liggen. Hij maakte haar wakker, en vertelde wat er was gebeurd. ‘Ik was helemaal niet met je in het bos,’ zei de vrouw. ‘En honden ? Ik weet niks van honden.’ De man staat voor een raadsel. Zou hij het maar gedroomd hebben ?

Einde

Wilde Honden II

Een man en een vrouw waren in het bos. Na een tijdje werd hun rust verstoord door geblaf van honden in de verte. Het geblaf begon dichter bij te komen, en de man en de vrouw begonnen bang te worden. Snel pakten ze hun spullen en renden van het geluid vandaan. Ze renden tussen de bomen en door struikjes heen, en kwamen na een lange tocht in een klein hutje terecht. Hier besloten ze te rusten, maar al snel hadden de honden hen gevonden. De honden waren woest, en probeerden door de deur en de ramen binnen te komen, maar gelukkig zat alles dicht. Maar meer en meer honden leken het hutje te omsingelen, en probeerden de deur open te krijgen. Overal om hen heen hoorden ze gekras. De honden probeerden een opening in het hutje te krijgen. Ze wisten dat ze niet meer konden vluchten, en ze wisten ook dat ze het niet overleefden als de honden erin zouden slagen binnen te komen. Daarom besloten ze maar gewoon verder te gaan met hun liefkozen. Misschien was het wel de laatste keer. Hun harten gingen tekeer van angst. Ze kusten elkaar. Toen brak de muur open, en de honden stortten zich op de liefkozende man en vrouw. Ze werden allebei flink gebeten. Onder het bloed strompelde de man weg, terwijl de vrouw gegrepen werd. De honden sleurden de vrouw mee naar hun hol, terwijl de man kon ontsnappen.

Gelukkig lieten ze de vrouw in leven, alhoewel ze erg verwond was. Ze moest nu eten wat de honden haar brachten, en leefde sindsdien in gevangenschap. De man hield veel verschrikkelijke littekens aan de vechtpartij over, en dacht daarbij dat hij haar verloren had. Maar op een dag ontdekte een wandelaar de gevangenschap van de vrouw, en ook kwam de man het al snel te weten. Ze besloten een hele goede jager vanuit het buitenland over te laten komen om de honden uit te schakelen. Dat lukte deels, maar de laatste hond viel de jager aan. De jager kwam om het leven, en de hond ging terug naar zijn prooi in het hol. De hond verkrachtte de vrouw, en na een tijdje baarde de vrouw twee honden. De vrouw voelde zich zo vies dat ze nooit meer naar de samenleving terugwilde. Ze vonden haar na vele jaren toen de honden alledrie al dood waren. De vrouw was paranoïde en herkende de man niet eens meer. Ook sprak ze haar taal niet meer.

De vrouw begon agressief gedrag te vertonen, en iedereen vertrok. Ze moesten de keuze van de vrouw respecteren. Maar op een dag, vele jaren later, stond de vrouw ineens bij de man voor de deur. Ze leek hem nu wel weer te herkennen, en toen hij opendeed duwde ze hem zachtjes naar binnen. Ze gingen naar de kamer en ze omhelsde hem. Achter hen hing een schilderij van wilde honden, en als wilde honden omhelsden ze elkaar. Maar naar het gevaarlijke bos zouden ze nooit meer teruggaan.

Einde

De Wilde Hond

Ze woelde in haar slaap als een wilde hond.
Ze zou degene die haar man om het leven had gebracht wel willen aanvallen en hard bijten,
Ze droeg de littekens ervan op haar hart.
In haar dromen ging ze op jacht, op zoek naar de moordenaar van haar man,
maar zonder resultaat. En zo was het ook in het dagelijks leven.
Zij moest met deze wond leven.
Ze leefde als een wilde hond.

De dominee kwam haar vaak opzoeken,
En dan las hij voor uit gedichtenboeken, of hij vertelde verhalen,
Door de dominee kwam ze er doorheen.
De gesprekken inspireerden haar, en gaven haar rust, als een veilige haven.
Maar als hij weg was, dan had ze het moeilijk.
Gelukkig kwam de dominee vaak, heel vaak.

Ze ging niet naar de kerk, nee,
Daar deden ze te moeilijk,
Maar voor de dominee had ze een zwak.
Hij worstelde zelf ook met een aantal dingen.
De dominee was altijd haar steun en toeverlaat.

Ze woelde in haar slaap,
Ze dacht aan de dominee en haar man die dood was,
De dader was nooit gevonden, maar hij was om het leven gebracht door messteken,
In haar gedachten was zij altijd op zoek, altijd op jacht,
Nooit had ze rust, alleen als de dominee er was.

Op een dag nam hij haar mee naar een sprookjespark,
Ze kon zo alles een beetje relativeren aan de hand van sprookjes,
En aan het einde van de dag nam hij haar mee naar een restaurant.
Het was een Oosters restaurant met vreemde plaatjes aan de muur.
Een andere keer nam hij haar mee naar een restaurant met jachtplaatjes aan de muur.
Op sommige plaatjes stonden wilde honden,
Al zou het alleen maar gaan om deze plaatjes te zien, dan zou ze naar het restaurant gaan,

Het inspireerde haar, want voor haar waren de wilde honden een beeld van gerechtigheid,
En ze had het gevoel alsof er geen gerechtigheid was op aarde.
De wilde honden waren voor haar een beeld van de hemel,
Hun jacht zou wel slagen.

De dominee legde haar uit dat de wilde hond een metafoor is van wat we niet begrijpen,
We zijn op zoek, maar we vinden het niet,
Dat wat we verloren hebben krijgen we niet terug,
Maar op een dag zullen we het wel begrijpen,
En dan kunnen we pas echt zeggen dat de jacht geslaagd is,
Als wij zelf gegrepen zijn door de wilde hond.

SOBIBOR
De laatste jager

Een prozaïsche en medische techno-thriller. Het is het jaar 10.019. Duitsland is een vegetarisch utopia geworden met de hoogste militaire technologie van de aarde, waardoor het het enige land is wat niet ten prooi is gevallen aan invasies van buitenaardsen. Maar hoe lang kan Duitsland nog stand houden ?

Hoofdstuk 1. De varkens van geweld
Hoofdstuk 2. De twistzieke vrouwen
Hoofdstuk 3. De zwarte hond
Hoofdstuk 4. Utrecht - de jongen uit de toekomst

Hoofdstuk 1. De varkens van geweld

Hula, een kale militair, zat in de trein naar Nochtstott. Het was het jaar 10.019. De aarde was bezocht door buitenaardsen die de aarde hadden gekoloniseerd, ingedeeld in concentratie-kampen. Het waren de psycho-dentists. Hula was van het verzet, een verzetsstrijder in hart en nieren, zo opgevoed door zijn ouders die ook in het verzet waren. Zijn ouders leefden niet meer, maar hij zette hun missie voort. De psycho-dentists waren slagers die ook verzot waren op mensenvlees. De code naam voor een aardling was voor hen 'varken'. Hun concentratie kampen noemden ze ook wel varkensfokkerijen, maar er werd ook mensenvlees bereid. Alhoewel ze het normale vee vaak vetmesten, zo hadden ze er plezier in de aardlingen uit te hongeren, omdat dan het vlees beter smaakte. Het was een delicatesse voor hen.

Duitsland was het enige land wat nog stand kon houden tegen de buitenaardsen. Duitsland had immers de hoogste technologie van de aarde, ook voornamelijk de hoogste militaire technologie. Hula was een groot militair leider, en zijn groep werd weleens het kale verzet genoemd. Niet dat alle militairen in zijn groep kaal waren, maar omdat hun leider kaal was. Hula was kaal geboren en altijd kaal gebleven. Het was een gevolg van radio activiteit. Hula haatte de psycho-dentists, want zij hadden immers zijn ouders om het leven gebracht. Een ander geheim waardoor Duitsland nog steeds kon standhouden was omdat het een vegetarisch land was. De bio energie van levend vee was te belangrijk voor het goed werken van de militaire technologie en andere noodzakelijke technologie. Het varken werd dan ook vereerd in Duitsland. Het was hun laatste hoop. Varkens werden behandeld als de prinsen van het verzet. Zij waren het geheim van het gehele communicatie systeem binnen Duitsland. Een professor had dit eens bepaald, gebaseerd op zijn uitvindingen, en hij bleek gelijk te hebben gehad. Daarvoor was Duitsland nog volop vlees etend.

Er was niet veel overgebleven van de aarde. Duitsland was de enige hoop, of liever gezegd deze professor. Daarom stond deze professor ook hoog op de dodenlijst van de psycho-dentists. De systemen van de professor werkten voornamelijk door de bio-energetische straling die van levende varkens afkwam. De systemen waren heel gevoelig en konden deze energie opvangen. Vandaar ook dat varkens met grote eer en voorzichtigheid werden behandeld. Ze waren hun laatste hoop. Zonder het varken zou alles verloren zijn.

De psycho-dentists brachten een religie op aarde die zwaar kannibalistisch was. Hun slachthuizen stonden overal, behalve in Duitsland. Het varken was de verzetsheer van Duitsland.

Hula was zwaar bewapend in de trein. Hij was op weg naar Nochtstott, waar de professor woonde. Het was de zwaarst beveiligde stad in Duitsland. De professor werkte aan een tijdmachine. Die tijdmachine was ook belangrijk om tot de zwaar beveiligde planeet Sobibor te komen, die ook wel de satelliet planeet van Duitsland werd genoemd.

Hula droomde van een betere wereld, maar de oorlog was zwaar. Niemand wist of de professor zou slagen in zijn Sobibor project en of hij op tijd zou slagen. Duitsland had grote verliezen geleden in de oorlog en veel gebied verloren. De oorlog was om de monden. Als ze hun monden zouden verliezen, dan zou alles verloren zijn. De psycho-dentists werkten met zware straling, radio actieve straling, om de bio energie van de monden te verstoren om die vervolgens over te nemen. Het waren orale kolonisten.

De psycho-dentists waren een combinatie tussen mondiatrie, psychiatrie en slachterie waarin ze hun doelwitten bestraalden om zo hun etiketten vast te leggen. De slacht, daar liep alles op uit. Het waren slagers in hart en nieren. Ze betuttelden het volk ook met reclame en gaven hoge beloningen aan ouders die hun kinderen aan hen verkochten.

De professor was blij Hula te zien. Hij liet hem allemaal schermen zien waarop Sobibor te zien was. Ook liet de professor een robot zien, een gevechtsrobot, die geheel op varkens-energie liep. Die energie kon opgeslagen worden. Ze waren niet geheel afhankelijk van varkens op aarde hiervoor, maar ook van varkens op Sobibor, en dat waren hele andere soorten varkens. Het waren de varkens van geweld, roofvarkens, monsterlijke wezens, en die moesten verslagen worden.

In de nacht, waarin het varken wacht,
In grote stoeten snellen zij tot de rivier,
En in hun pieken, zijn zij niet als mensen ?
Als terroristen komen zij tot de aarde,
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Dan woeden zij tegen de aarde,
Als een laatste oproep tot de trouweloze jager,
Om geen varken te worden zoals zij.

De professor legde uit dat in de pieken van deze wezens zij worden tot psycho-dentists om de aarde te teisteren. Het waren terroristen. Het waren monsterlijke varkens van woest geweld die zich door ontwikkelden tot mensen.

Hula keek naar de gevechtsrobot. 'En dit ?' vroeg hij.

'Ik kan er meerderen van laten maken,' zei de professor. 'Ik mis nog bepaalde onderdelen voor de tijd machine. Die worden bewaakt door de psycho-dentists. Ik moet ook spionnen zenden.'

'Hoe zal dat gaan, professor ?' vroeg Hula.

'We zijn al ver, Hula,' zei de professor.

'Gaan we het redden, professor ?' vroeg Hula.

'Ik weet het niet,' zei de professor. 'De straling van de psycho-dentists is zeer zwaar.'

'Hoe kunnen we het uitschakelen ?' vroeg Hula.

'We moeten tot Sobibor gaan,' zei de professor.

Hula had er slapeloze nachten van. Hij kreeg bijna geen rust, maar hij had toch rust nodig. Hula las in de vele studie boeken van de professor, maar tegelijkertijd moest hij een groep aanvoeren.

Op een dag konden de afweerschilden de straling van de psycho-dentists niet meer verwerken, en zo werd ook Duitsland ingenomen. Ook Hula ging in gevangenschap, en de professor. Ze kwamen beiden in een concentratie kamp genaamd Sixhein. Hier werden zij zwaar uitgehongerd en moesten zwaar werk verrichten. Ze sliepen in hokken. Die hokken waren zeer klein waarin ze zich bijna niet konden bewegen. 'Dat doen we met varkens,' zei een psycho-dentist bewaker.

'Ik heb nog wel wat,' fluisterde de professor even later toen de bewaker weg was tegen Hula, die in een hok naast hem lag. De professor peuterde iets los uit zijn vinger. Het was een heel klein apparaatje. 'Bewaar dit goed,' zei de professor. 'Hiermee had ik contact met buitenaardsen van Sobibor die mij hielpen en onderwezen.'

'Waarom geef je het dan aan mij ?' vroeg Hula.

'Geen vragen stellen nu,' zei de professor. 'Het past precies in het hangertje van de ketting die ik je eens heb gegeven die je draagt.' Hula nam het apparaatje aan en stopte het in het hangertje en sloot het toen weer. 'Goed,' zei Hula. 'Hoe werkt het ?'

'Dat zul je wel zien,' zei de professor.

Midden in de nacht werd de professor uit zijn hok getrokken en toen afgeschoten door de psycho dentists, voor de ogen van Hula. Hula dacht eigenlijk dat hij de volgende was, maar dat was niet het geval. Hij moest machteloos toekijken, en wist nu waarom de professor hem het apparaatje had gegeven. Het maakte zijn woede tot de psycho dentists alleen maar groter, want hij beschouwde de professor als zijn beste vriend. Hula deed net alsof hij sliep, maar hij had alles kunnen volgen.

De volgende dag was weer een dag van hard werken en weinig eten. De nacht daarop toen er geen bewakers in de buurt waren begon het apparaatje te fluisteren. Ze hadden het over de ontbrekende onderdelen van de tijdmachine van de professor. 'De professor is dood,' zei Hula. 'Afgeschoten. Ik weet niet wat ze met de tijd machine hebben gedaan, maar in ieder geval hebben ze het in beslag genomen.'

'Goed,' fluisterde het apparaatje, 'niet goed dus, maar laat me uitleggen hoe het werkt. Er is niemand die hiermee overweg kan, want de tijdmachine heeft kunstmatige intelligentie en is veel slimmer dan de psycho-dentists. Als het goed is hebben ze die tijdmachine ergens mee naartoe genomen, en de tijdmachine zal nu zelf wel zijn weg vinden naar de ontbrekende onderdelen.'

'Dus eigenlijk was de tijdmachine zelf de spion ?' vroeg Hula.

'Correct,' zei het apparaatje.

'Wat als het ding ergens in een gesloten ruimte staat ? vroeg Hula.

'De tijdmachine werkt door straling, en kan hiermee elk slot uitschakelen door bepaalde codes en decoderingen. Het vindt zijn weg wel,' zei het apparaatje.

Het waren verschrikkelijke maanden van uithongering en hard werk, een bijna dodelijke combinatie. Hula was meer dood dan levend, en tot overmaat van ramp haalden ze ook zijn kettinkje bij hem weg. Op een dag werd hij in een busje naar een slachthuis genomen. Er stond daar ergens een psycho dentist met een slagers mes en een groot schort. Er waren overal vleeshaken waaraan bloederige lijken hingen. Hula wist dat zijn laatste uur was geslagen. Ze stonden allemaal in rijen. Hij was niet de enige. Hij zag hoe koppen van mensen werden afgehakt en hoe het bloed in het rond spoot. Hij was bijna aan de beurt. Er waren er nog een paar voor hem. Ineens draaide degene die voor hem stond om, en zei : 'Rennen.' Hij trok Hula mee. 'Wat doe je nou ?' zei Hula. 'Ze zullen ons afschieten.'

'Dat doen ze toch wel,' zei de man. Hula keek naar de man die hem had vastgegrepen en meetrok. Hij keek naar zijn hand, maar het was geen vlees. Het was metaal. Er werd geschoten, maar de man boog zich om Hula heen, en ving de kogels op, die afketsten. Deze man was niet van vlees en bloed, maar van metaal. 'Ik ben de tijdmachine van de professor,' zei de man. Weer trok hij Hula mee, en hij begon vanuit zijn metalen vingers, en zelfs vanuit zijn ogen, waarvan één rood was, terug te schieten.

Niet lang daarna waren ze in een dichtbijzijnd bos. 'Sobibor is gekomen,' zei de man, en trok Hula mee naar een heuveltje in het bos, waar een vreemd ruimteschip stond, heel compact. Er kwam vreemde witte waterige energie uit voort, vreemde straling. Beiden werden ze toen door de straling naar binnen gezogen, en al snel steeg het kleine ruimteschip op. In het ruimteschip deed de man ineens zijn hand open, en het kettinkje van Hula met het apparaatje lag erin. De man gaf het toen terug aan Hula. Maar het ruimteschip kwam niet ver. Het werd al gauw uit de lucht geschoten door de stralingsraketten van de psycho-dentists, en het stortte neer. Er ontstond een kleine bosbrand die even later door de psycho-dentists werd geblust.

Vele jaren later vond een jongetje het kettinkje van Hula in het bos. Het jongetje was erg verrast. Het apparaatje was flink aangetast door de stralings apparatuur van de psycho-dentists, en alle zend en verzend mechanismes waren verstoord. Er waren wel een heleboel boodschappen nog in opgeslagen, maar die waren ook verstoord. Het waren nog slechts wat herhalingen en echo's. Het jongetje woonde met zijn ouders dichtbij een concentratie kamp in de buurt van het bos, en dichtbij het slachthuis. Het gezin werd door de psycho-dentists grotendeels met rust gelaten omdat ze onderhandelings-contracten met hen hadden. Het waren collaborateurs, landverraders. Het jongetje nam het kettinkje mee naar zijn kamer. Hij kon alleen maar fragmenten horen, en vaak was het vervormd of zelfs verdraaid. Hij probeerde met het apparaatje te communiceren, maar hij kwam er niet ver mee. 'Hula, Hula,' zei het apparaatje. Maar het jongetje wist niet wat het betekende. Ook meende hij de naam Sobibor te horen. Het jongetje begon al zijn theorieën over het apparaatje op te schrijven, wat hij dacht wat het was.

Omdat het apparaatje toch een zekere kunstmatige intelligentie bezat en nog steeds in verbinding stond met de planeet Sobibor, begon het apparaatje zich in de loop van de tijd te herstellen, en

begon duidelijker tot het jongetje te spreken, en ook duidelijker weer boodschappen over te brengen van de planeet Sobibor. Ze legden het jongetje uit over het verzet, en ook wat er met zijn ouders aan de hand was. Ook vertelden ze hem over Hula, de professor en de tijdmachine. Het jongetje mocht hier niks over tegen zijn ouders zeggen. Vaak ging het jongetje naar het bos om te zoeken naar de onderdelen van de tijdmachine, maar hij werd zwaar in de gaten gehouden door de psycho-dentists. Het apparaatje vertelde het jongetje dat de tijdmachine kunstmatige intelligentie was, en dat waar de onderdelen ook terecht zouden zijn gekomen, en waar ze dan ook misschien door de psycho-dentists verborgen werden gehouden, dat ze elkaar wel weer zouden vinden om een nieuwe poging te doen. Sinds Hula was verongelukt zou de tijdmachine nu hoogstwaarschijnlijk naar het jongetje op zoek gaan als het zich had hersteld. Altijd maar weer keek het jongetje toen uit naar de terugkeer van de tijdmachine. Hij kon geen onderdelen ervan in het bos vinden, maar het kon ook zo zijn dat de psycho-dentists die onderdelen hadden gevonden en weer in beslag hadden genomen. Hoe dan ook, het jongetje geloofde in het apparaatje, en zijn hele leven begon te draaien omtrend de verwachting van de terugkeer van de tijdmachine.

Op een nacht toen de jongen eens alleen thuiswas, omdat zijn ouders op vakantie waren, werd er gebeld. Toen de jongen opendeed stond daar een grote machine die ook vleugels had. Het was de tijdmachine. De jongen was heel blij. Hij mocht zijn spullen pakken en dan zou hij meegaan naar de planeet Sobibor. Het was een hele lange reis. Maar midden op de reis door de ruimte werd de vliegende tijdmachine aangevallen door ruimteschepen van de psycho-dentists. De jongen keek op een groot scherm. Voor hun eigen beveiliging moesten ze nu in de tijd reizen, maar de straling van de psycho-dentists hield hen nog tegen. Ook de tijdmachine viel aan met zijn straling. Het was een verschrikkelijk gevecht. Opeens waren de psycho-dentists in de tijdmachine. Ze hielden de jongen onder schot en arresteerden hem. De tijdmachine namen ze in beslag. Toen werd de jongen naar één van hun ruimteschepen genomen, en namen ze hem weer terug naar de aarde waar hij in een psychiatrische kliniek werd gestopt. Hij hoefde niet naar een concentratie kamp, want zijn ouders waren immers handelspartners, collaborateurs. Toen zijn ouders waren thuisgekomen en het hoorden waren ze diep geschokt. De psycho-dentists van de psychiatrische kliniek zeiden dat hij waan-ideeën had over tijdmachines en de planeet Sobibor, waarvan ze zeiden dat het niet bestond, en ze hadden hem zware medicijnen gegeven, waar hij heel moe van was geworden. Hij lag vaak in bed.

Gelukkig had hij zijn kettinkje nog wel, en het apparaatje sprak nog steeds tot hem.

Op de afdeling zat ook een meisje waar hij bevriend mee raakte. Haar ouders waren ook collaborateurs. Zij vond zijn verhalen over de tijdmachine en de planeet Sobibor interessant, en vond beslist niet dat hij gek was. Hij zei telkens weer dat de tijdmachine kunstmatige intelligentie bezat, en dat het zichzelf zou ontwikkelen, en zou wederkeren om hen mee te nemen. Zij begon dit ook meer en meer te geloven. Maar de psycho-dentists zeiden dat ze beiden wanen hadden.

Nooit sprak hij over zijn kettinkje, in de angst dat ze het van hem af zouden nemen. Hij werd er nog steeds door onderwezen, en hij onderwees het meisje ook. Hij vroeg aan het meisje waarom ze hier zat. Het meisje zei dat ze geprotesteerd had tegen de concentratie kampen en de slachthuizen, en dat ze haar daardoor overgevoelig, eigenwijs en ziek noemden, psychisch zwaar ziek. Hij vertelde dat hij opgevoed was met het idee dat het allemaal heel normaal was, maar eigenlijk hielp het meisje hem ermee te realizeren dat het misdaad was, en dat de aarde gekoloniseerd was door buitenaardse

terroristen. Ook het apparaatje begon hem er steeds meer over uit te leggen.

Het wachten was op de tijdmachine. Ondertussen werden het meisje en de jongen verschrikkelijk onderdrukt door de psycho-dentists, ook al zaten ze niet in een concentratie kamp. Elke dag weer werden ze gekleineerd en ondervraagd.

De moeder van de jongen kocht soms wat technisch speelgoed voor hem. Hij bewaarde alles goed. Op zijn kamer wilde hij werken aan een tijdmachine door de onderdelen van het technisch speelgoed ervoor te gebruiken. Soms werkte hij hier dag en nacht aan door. Soms waren er verplegers op zijn kamer en ze vonden het mooi wat hij maakte, maar ze wisten niet wat het was, en hij vertelde het hen ook niet. Op een dag was het klaar. Er was een scherm en een toetsenbord waarmee hij tijd en bestemming kon intypen. Er was een ander apparaatje aan verbonden wat dan de straling zou opwekken die daarvoor nodig was. Er zou dan een vortex ontstaan, wat hij allerreerst testte door er een object in te gooien. Het verdween in de vortex, dus hij ging er vanuit dat het werkte. Op het scherm zag hij toen waar het object terecht was gekomen, en dat was op de locatie die hij in had getypt.

Het meisje kreeg het ook te horen, en zij wilde ook wel mee. Ze zou wat spulletjes pakken. Ze zouden naar de planeet Sobibor gaan. Ook de jongen begon wat spullen te pakken. Maar het meisje bleef nogal lang weg. Toen de jongen ging kijken waar ze was merkte hij dat een paar verplegers met haar in gesprek waren. Ze waren haar aan het ondervragen, waarom ze haar spullen bij elkaar aan het pakken was. De jongen besloot het zekere voor het onzekere te nemen en ging terug naar zijn kamer en begon al dingen in te typen. Hij moest het zo programmeren dat de vortex ook de tijdmachine zelf mee zou nemen. Hij wilde het meisje niet zomaar achterlaten, dus hij wachtte en wachtte maar, maar het meisje kwam maar niet. Toen hij weer ging kijken zag hij nog steeds de verplegers met het meisje praten, en ze wezen ook zijn kant op. Hij raapte al zijn moed bij elkaar en liep op hem af, en nog steeds hadden ze het over de spullen van het meisje. 'Laat haar met rust,' zei hij tegen de verplegers. Maar toen begonnen ze ook hem te ondervragen, en al snel gingen ze naar zijn kamer toe en zagen zijn bij elkaar geraapte spullen, en begonnen daarover vragen te stellen en te zeggen dat het verdacht gedrag was. Ze keken ook op zijn scherm, maar ze begrepen niet wat het betekende. Na het gesprek namen ze de tijdmachine in beslag. Het meisje en de jongen moesten nu met een trein naar een andere afdeling in een ander oord.

'We verzinnen wel weer wat,' zei de jongen tegen het meisje toen ze in de trein zaten met hun spullen. 'Het is allemaal kunstmatige intelligentie, en ook de andere tijdmachine is kunstmatige intelligentie. Ze zullen elkaar opzoeken en elkaar versterken. Dan zullen ze ons zeker redden.'

'Ik ben er niet van overtuigd,' zei het meisje. 'Al dat gedoe met die tijdmachines heeft ons in de grootst mogelijke problemen gebracht. Kijk waar ze ons nu naartoe brengen. Het is een veel strenger bewaakte kliniek, bijna een strafkamp. Het is nog net geen concentratie kamp.'

'Ik blijf de moed erin houden,' zei de jongen. 'Mij krijgen ze niet kapot.'

Toen ze bij hun nieuwe plaats aankwamen was er inderdaad veel meer bewaking, en het waren niet zomaar verplegers. Ze waren ook bewapend. Ze wisten dat ze probleemgevallen waren.

'Wegens herhaalde verdachte activiteiten zijn jullie hier,' werd er tegen hen gezegd. Er zaten zelfs tralies voor hun ramen. Hij begon te zien hoe het meisje steeds minder radicaal werd en eigenlijk alles overboord gooide wat ze eerst geloofde. En daarom werden ze steeds meer vijanden van elkaar. Ze begon steeds meer tegen hem in te gaan, en de kant te kiezen van de psycho-dentists.

'Je bent jezelf niet meer,' zei de jongen weleens. Maar dan haalde ze haar schouders op. Ze gaf wel toe dat ze lauw was geworden, maar ze begon hem steeds meer de schuld van alles te geven. Hij en zijn dwaze verhalen hadden haar in deze problemen gebracht. Het werd zelfs zo erg dat ze niet meer bij hem in de buurt wilde zijn en overplaatsing aanvroeg naar een andere afdeling. Nu had hij alles verloren. Toch had hij nog steeds zijn kettinkje met het apparaatje, alhoewel het vaak niet tot hem sprak. Het signaal begon steeds zwakker te worden, alsof er iets met het apparaatje aan de hand was, of dat alle signalen van de planeet Sobibor werden tegengehouden door het bewakingssysteem van het oord, door afweerschilden, want die stonden er veel rondom het gebouw. Ze werden ook voortdurend bestraald. De jongen werd er helemaal gek van.

Maar 's nachts begon hij vreemde dromen te krijgen over de planeet Sobibor, over de varkensjacht.

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Om geen varken te worden zoals zij.

De straling van de psycho-dentists probeerden zijn hersenen en zijn mond over te nemen. Hij had soms vreemde stuiptrekkingen, maar de dromen beschermden hem. Hij had nooit zeggenschap over zijn eigen lichtknopje. De lichten gingen te pas en te onpas aan en uit. Soms stonden ze de hele nacht aan in zijn kamer, en kon hij er niet van slapen. Hij had het idee alsof ze hem gek probeerden te drijven. Ook gaven ze hem maar heel weinig te eten. Er stonden ook overal camera's. Het zorgde ervoor dat hij epileptische aanvallen begon te krijgen, woede-uitbarstingen en hyperventilatie. Hij verlangde ernaar om naar de planeet Sobibor te gaan, en deel te nemen aan de varkensjacht, opdat deze dingen zouden stoppen. Deze terroristische bende moest opgerold worden. Hij kon steeds moeilijker praten. Hij kon nog maar drie procent zeggen wat hij eigenlijk wilde zeggen. Ze hadden hem in een staat van coma gedreven. Dichtbij was er een concentratie kamp. vanuit zijn raam kon hij het zien door de tralies. Hij was er al dichtbij, en hij vroeg zich af wat het verschil was. Er was alleen verschil in naam. In wezen was hij al in een concentratie kamp, maar zo wilden ze dat niet noemen.

Het bestralen ging maar door totdat hij in een vegetatieve staat was. Het was een gemaskerd concentratie kamp, nog wel smeriger dan een normaal concentratie kamp. Maar wat kon hij doen ? Hij kon alleen nog contact proberen te maken dieper in zijn binnenste. Hij kon alleen nog fantaseren en dromen. Natuurlijk waren dat allemaal wanen in de ogen van de psycho-dentists, maar hij sprak bijna niet meer, en al helemaal niet over dit soort dingen.

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Als een laatste oproep tot de trouweloze slager,
Om geen varken te worden zoals zij.

In zijn gedachten slachtte hij deze varkens af. In zijn dromen en fantasieën had hij deel aan deze jacht. Iemand moest hen stoppen. Al kon hij het niet rechtstreeks in de realiteit, dan maar in zijn dromen en fantasieën. Nog steeds had hij de hoop dat de tijdmachine hem zou komen halen. Maar zo niet, dan waren zijn dromen en fantasieën hem genoeg, want hij wilde toch niet leven in de terroristische wereld van de psycho-dentists.

Hij zweefde op het randje van de dood en had bijna-dood ervaringen waarin de afgodische godin van de psycho-dentists hem bezocht, een vrouw met een varkenskop gekleed in een paarse mantel. Ze vroeg hem of hij zelf ook een psycho-dentist wilde worden. Dat zou de enige weg uit zijn situatie zijn. 'Dat nooit !' riep hij. 'Ik ga liever dood.'

'Dan ga je maar dood,' zei de valse godin, 'je hebt je kans gehad.'

Toen verdween ze, en alles werd weer donker. Hij wilde niet aan dezelfde kant staan van deze varkens. Het was al erg genoeg dat hij door zulke varkens was opgevoed, maar hij was juist los aan het komen. Hij kwam dieper in zichzelf tot zijn ware identiteit. Hij wilde niets met ze te maken hebben.

Hij wist niet of hij nog leefde, of dat hij al dood was. Het was donker. Hij wist ook dat hij niet zomaar tegen ze kon strijden. Ze waren ongrijpbaar. Hij moest meer te weten zien te komen. Hij ontdekte een wereld in hemzelf, die nog niet door deze varkens van geweld was aangetast. Maar ook dat begon langzaam uit zijn handen weg te glijden. Hij was als op de golven van een duistere zee. Hij was totaal machteloos tegen de sterke stroom die hem meezoog. Wat had hij nog ? Maar hij wilde niet terug waar hij vandaan kwam.

Het trok hem tot een nieuwe wereld. De tijdmachine was in hem zelf.

Het waren de eerste vijf jaren van zijn leven. Hij herinnerde deze straat waar ze toen woonden, en het jongetje tegenover op de hoek. Hij was op de zolder waar het jongetje zijn slaapkamer had. Hij speelde een cassette bandje af. Toen klikte hij het uit.

Zijn vader had een zwarte hond die kinderen verslond, maar het was slechts een boekje wat hier in de kamer lag, een verhaaltje. Hij keek naar de witte boekenkast. Toen zijn ze naar de patatkraam gegaan. Hij vroeg de patatboer om hem te helpen. Maar toen werd ook deze wereld in diggelen geslagen, of deed de tijdmachine dat ? Hij werd weer weggetrokken en was in een zware stroom, alsof deze duistere zee de tijdmachine was. De golven waren zo hoog, en hij werd de diepte in getrokken, gezogen, en hij kon er niets tegen beginnen. Hij spoelde even later aan op een eiland.

Een donker meisje met een rieten rokje staarde hem aan. 'Sobibor zei dat je kwam,' zei het meisje.

'Ben ik al op de planeet Sobibor ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ja,' zei het meisje, 'maar mijn moeder is Sobibor. Ze zei dat je door een zwarte hond was verslonden.'

'Neem me naar je moeder,' zei de jongen.

Achter hen was het oerwoud. Daar liepen ze samen in. Bij een hut stond een vrouw achter een voorhangsel wat het terrein afbakende. Het voorhangsel leek varkenshuid te zijn. 'Droom je ?' vroeg de vrouw.

'Bent u Sobibor ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Zo noemen ze me,' zei de vrouw.
'In de nacht, waarin het varken wacht,
In grote stoeten snellen zij tot de rivier,
En in hun pieken, zijn zij niet als mensen ?
Als terroristen komen zij tot de aarde,
Wanneer de slager zijn werk niet heeft gedaan,
Dan woeden zij tegen de aarde,
Als een laatste oproep tot de trouweloze slager,
Om geen varken te worden zoals zij.
Daarom zijn wij jagers en slagers, fokkers,
van de varkens van geweld.'

'Het moet wel, hè,' zei de jongen.

'Hier worden ze gefokt, opdat er niet één ontsnapt,' zei de vrouw.

'Ik begrijp het,' zei de jongen.

'Nee, je begrijpt het niet, anders zou je een deel zijn van onze stam,' zei de vrouw.

'Laat me een deel zijn dan,' zei de jongen, 'want ik zat opgesloten.'

'Ontvoerd door de zwarte hond,' zei de vrouw, 'Egichtus. Zij zijn eerst varkens van geweld, dan honden, en worden dan psycho-dentists, valse mensen. Maar van binnen zijn het nog steeds varkens.'

'Ik heb het gezien,' zei de jongen. 'Het heeft me bijna mijn leven gekost.'

'Het heeft je leven gekost,' zei Sobibor.

'Heb ik hier een nieuw leven ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Dat moet je verdienen,' zei de vrouw.

'Hoe ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Door het voeren van de varkens,' zei de vrouw.

'Wat nog meer ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Dat zul je wel zien,' zei de vrouw.

Hoofdstuk 2. De twistzieke vrouwen

Kijk hoe die varkens in de nacht snellen tot de rivier,
In grote stoeten zij aan zij,
Hun lot of het lot van anderen interesseerd ze niet,
Alleen gulzig vreten willen zij,
Al zouden ze henzelf moeten vreten,
Zo storten zij zich in het verderf,
Om aan de overkant tot honden te worden,
Gierig en rovend doen zij daar hun werk,
Totdat zij als roversloon mensen zijn geworden.

Sobibor keek de jongen aan.
'Heb je nog iets meegenomen ?' vroeg Sobibor.
'Ik heb alles moeten achterlaten,' zei de jongen.

'Mijn zusters, Auschwitz, Belzec, Treblinka en Dagau zullen snel thuiskomen,' sprak ze.
En dat kreeg de jongen te weten. Al scheldend en vloekend kwamen ze terug, ook scheldend en vloekend op de jongen. Het waren twistzieke vrouwen.
Ze begonnen hem al snel het leven zuur te maken, kleinering op kleinering.
Hij werd ook verschrikkelijk gemanipuleerd, en had eigenlijk nooit rust.
Dit liep zo hoog op dat hij zich afvroeg aan welke kant het beter was, waar hij vandaan kwam of hier.
Vaak zei hij tegen Sobibor, de rustigste van het stel, dat hij het niet meer lang zou volhouden zo, en hij vroeg wanneer het nu eens ophield.
Sobibor zei hem dat ze wel twistziek moesten zijn, anders zou de straling van de psycho dentists hen grijpen.

Ze waren streng naar de jongen, veeleisend, wreed, en in zijn ogen zwaar sadistisch. Sobibor verdedigde hem niet, en liet alles gewoon toe, daarom haatte hij haar ook. Toch hield hij van de natuur hier. Hij moest aan deze vrouwen wennen. Volgens Sobibor waren zij de enige kans om te overleven. De jongen vreeste Auschwitz het meeste van hen allen. Ze was wreed, en altijd naakt. Ze bedreigde hem altijd, en chanteerde hem, naast alle kleineringen.

Op een nacht stond ze in zijn hut met een speer waar veren aanhingen, en richtte de speer om hem. 'Het is tijd dat je je eigen stam gaat oprichten, zonder dat je van ons afhankelijk bent.' Toen zond ze hem weg. 'Waar moet ik naartoe ?' vroeg hij, maar hij kreeg geen antwoord. Ze zou hem aan de speer spietsen als hij het waagde terug te komen.

En zo ging de jongen alleen op pad, in dit woeste oerwoud.

Hij liep groot gevaar met alle mensenetende varkens in het gebied. Hij had geen enkele bescherming meer. Al gauw begon hij zwaar uit te hongeren, en hij kon ook geen water vinden. De wildernis was zeer droog hier. In de verte lag een rivier die bijna zwart zag. Toen hij daar aankwam zag hij tot zijn grote schrik dat er allemaal lijken inlagen. Hij begon de rivier te volgen, omdat hij wilde weten waar die lijken vandaan kwamen. Hij kwam helemaal uit bij een fabriek die ook zwart zag. Grote zwarte wolken kwamen uit de fabriekspijpen. Hier wilde hij niet eindigen. Hij begon terug te rennen, maar het werd steeds donkerder. Hij begon weg te rennen van de rivier. Maar ineens leek het alsof hij weer bij de rivier was. Hij stond zo tussen de lijken, en zijn voeten waren nat. Hij schrok. Hij voelde zich omsingeld, maar zag verder niemand dan de lijken. Hij kreeg pijn in zijn buik, en werd ineens zwaar misselijk en duizelig. Waar hij ook naartoe liep, hij kwam steeds dieper in de rivier. 'Nee !' riep hij. Ineens ging hij kopje onder en werd door een zware zwarte stroom van rivierwater meegesleurd. Hij had niet eens meer het idee dat hij in een rivier was. Het ging zo diep en zo ver, en ook zo snel. Het was alsof hij tot de open zee werd getrokken. Telkens zag hij niets anders dan lijken. Soms stootte hij aan tegen wat metaal of hout. Hij had het gevoel alsof hij al zwaar verwond was. Misschien dat de tijdmachine van binnen weer aan hem trok. Toen verloor hij zijn bewustzijn. Even later kwam hij weer boven water, maar het water leek wel rood, en nog steeds waren er overal lijken. Weer viel zijn bewustzijn weg.

Waar was hij toch, en wat wilden ze van hem ?

Weer werd hij ophoog geduwd door de stroom, en door een golf enorm ver weggeslingerd. Voor hem zag hij een enorm grote zwarte fabriek aan de kust, met een groot zwart rad wat draaide. 'Nee !' riep hij. Hij was machteloos tegen de zware stroom. Toch ging hij langs de fabriek heen, en werd toen weer op een strand geslingerd. Hij was meer dood dan levend.

Een man in een zwart gewaad liep op hem af. De schrik vloog de jongen om het hart. 'W... wie bent u ?' kreunde de jongen. 'Agedus,' zei de man.

'W... wat doet u hier ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Dit is mijn terrein,' zei de man nors, 'maar wat doe jij hier.'

'Meegeslingerd met de stroom,' zei de jongen, 'maar wat gebeurt hier ? Wat is dit ? Die fabriek enzo

?'

'Honden,' zei de man, 'varkens worden hier tot honden.'

'Dus ik ben aan de overkant van de rivier,' zei de jongen. 'Ik zie alleen maar lijken, geen honden.'

'Dat komt nog,' zei de man.

'Wat zijn die lijken dan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Indringers,' zei de man, 'zoals jij.'

'Wat gaat u met me doen ?' vroeg de jongen geschrokken.

'Honden moeten ook eten,' zei de man.

'Ik ben geen hondenvoer,' zei de jongen.

'Dat ben je wel,' zei de man nors en bitter. 'Had je hier maar niet moeten komen.'

De jongen merkte dat hij zich niet kon bewegen. 'Ik moet iets gebroken hebben,' zei de jongen.

'Zal mij een rotzorg zijn,' zei de man. 'De honden lusten je gebroken of ongebroken.' Toen greep de man de jongen en begon hem weg te slepen. De jongen verging van de pijn. 'Niet doen !' riep de jongen, 'ik heb echt wat gebroken.' Maar de man was meedogenloos. 'Kan mij het schelen,' zei de man. 'Ik doe gewoon mijn werk.'

'Schoft,' kreunde de jongen. Hij werd meegesleept naar de fabriek. Het was een groot zwart gebouw. Hij hoorde al wat honden angstaanjagend blaffen.

'Wat ga je met me doen,' kreunde de jongen. Maar de man zei niets. Ergens in het gebouw werd de jongen op een hoop lijken gegooid. 'Maar ik ben niet dood !' riep de jongen.

'Voor ons wel,' zei de man nors. Er kwamen wat honden om de hoop lijken heenstaan, en die begonnen zo hard en snijdend te blaffen dat het leek alsof het hart van de jongen in tweeen scheurde. Het ging hem door merg en been.

'Niemand hier heeft het op indringers,' zei de man.

'Ik moest mijn eigen stam maken van Auschwitz,' zei de jongen.

Ineens vertrok het gezicht van de man. 'Auschwitz ?' vroeg hij verbaasd. Toen liep de man weg. Ook riep hij zijn honden met zich mee, die toen gingen.
De jongen was verbaasd. Even later kwam de man terug met iemand anders. 'Als je contact hebt gehad met Auschwitz hierover dan willen wij niets met je te maken hebben,' zei de man. 'Vertrek onmiddelijk weer.'

De jongen had het idee alsof ze ergens bang voor waren, maar hij kon zich niet bewegen, dus hij kon niet vertrekken. 'I... ik kan me niet bewegen,' zei de jongen. Toen sleurden ze hem uit de fabriek, en trokken hem een paar honderd meter er van weg en lieten hem daar liggen. Toen gingen ze weer terug.

Hij kon niet veel meer doen dan liggen. Na een tijdje vonden drie inheemse vrouwen hem, en sleepten hem door het oerwoud naar hun kamp. Hun namen waren Chelmno, Bergen-Belsen, en Buchenwald. Hij vertelde hen wat er was gebeurd, maar zij hadden geen medelijden met hem. 'Goed, kun je hier werken,' zeiden ze.

'Ik kan op het moment niks,' zei hij. Toen begonnen ze hem te kleineren en te bespotten. Te eten gaven ze hem ook niet, alleen soms wat papperige melk. Chelmno was de ergste onder hen. Ze deed hem een beetje denken aan Auschwitz. Toch op een vreemde manier was Auschwitz ook de reden geweest waarom hij niet aan de honden was gevoerd, maar hij wist niet waar hij nu terecht was gekomen. Soms wilde hij gewoon dood. Of misschien was hij al dood. Ook Chelmno bedreigde hem en chanteerde hem. Ze ondervroeg hem ook telkens, wat hem heel moe maakte. Op het laatst wist hij niet eens meer wat hij zei. Hij had het gevoel alsof hij de controle over zijn hersenen verloor. Op een nacht toen ze sliepen probeerde hij weg te komen door te rollen en te kruipen, wat een beetje lukte, maar ver kwam hij niet. Hij werd er ook zwaar voor gestrafd. Ze geselden hem zwaar. Ook deze vrouwen waren zwaar twistziek. Als hij zich verdedigde werd het niet geaccepteerd.

Maar ook door deze stam werd hij na een bepaalde tijd achtergelaten. Het was een nomadische stam en na een tijdje waren ze hem zat en trokken verder, hem achterlatende. Hij wilde dood. Zo wilde hij niet leven. Hij wist niet of hij blij moest zijn of niet dat ze hem hadden achtergelaten.

Hij vond ergens een tunnel die onder de grond leidde. Hij merkte dat er hier veel honden waren. Hij hoorde geblaf onder de grond. Daarom wilde hij weer terug uit de tunnel. Hij kon zich nog steeds niet goed bewegen zonder dat het verschrikkelijk pijn deed. Opeens stond er een man voor hem toen hij zich omdraaide. De man had een zwart gewaad aan. 'Laat me er langs,' zei de jongen, 'ik moest van Auschwitz hier zijn.' De jongen dacht dat hij met deze naam zijn woorden weer extra kracht kon bijzetten, zoals de vorige keer.

'Laat me raden,' zei de man. 'Je bent van Auschwitz, en nu je op pad bent gestuurd heb je niemand meer ?'

'Ik moet na de opdracht bij haar terugkomen,' loog de jongen.

'Ik ken haar,' zei de man, 'en we hebben een verdrag, en het lijkt me sterk wat je zegt. Auschwitz verstoot maar al te snel, maar je mag er wel door.'

'Wat moeten al die honden hier ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Zij voeden zich met het vlees wat Auschwitz voor hen over laat,' zei de man.

'En jij bent hun baas ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Welnee,' lachte de man. 'Ik ben zelf ook een verstotene.'

'Je bent verstoten door Auschwitz ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Nee, door de hondenfokkers,' zei de man. 'Ik leef nu onder de grond, veel veiliger. Ik heb wat honden kunnen meenemen. Ik zie ze niet als mijn onderdanen, maar mijn lotgenoten. Het zijn afgedankte honden met wat voor redenen dan ook. Als ik ze niet had genomen zouden ze afgeschoten zijn.'

'Ah zo,' zei de jongen. 'dus ze krijgen hun vlees van de varkensfokkerijen, waar de varkens van het geweld worden gefokt ?'

'Precies,' zei de man.

'Maar waren ze zelf ook niet eens varken ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Nee, dezen niet,' zei de man, 'en dat is waarschijnlijk ook de reden waarom ze afgedankt zijn. Ik ben het allemaal zat, de spelletjes die ze boven de grond spelen. Vertrouw niet hetgeen wat van buiten gebeurt, maar alleen datgene wat van binnen gebeurt. Dat is een groot verschil.'

'Het buitenste is sterk, en het neemt ons telkens weer mee,' zei de jongen. 'Het is een stroom waar we niet tegenop kunnen.'

'Nee,' zei de man, 'het zijn stromen van het binnenste, maar daar moeten we aan vasthouden, en het niet laten uitleggen door het buitenste. Dat is een groot verschil. Het is telkens weer een keuze. Wikive is de naam.'

'Aangenaam,' zei de jongen.

'Ik kwam hier oorspronkelijk door een tijdmachine, maar werd ontvoerd door de hondenfokkers en tot één van hen gemaakt,' zei de man. 'Ik kwam in contact met de stam van Sobibor en Auschwitz, en toen zeiden de hondenfokkers dat ik besmet was. Toen hebben ze me verstoten, oftewel vrijgelaten.'

'Ik heb een soortgelijk verhaal,' zei de jongen. 'En waar is die tijdmachine nu ergens ?'

'Dieper onder de grond in een grot,' zei de man.

Ze moesten even door nog wat tunnels heen, en toen kwamen ze bij de grot aan waar de tijdmachine was, en waar de man het aan de jongen liet zien.

Het ding deed het niet meer. De jongen zei dat het allemaal kunstmatige intelligentie was, dus dat het op den duur zichzelf wel zou kunnen herstellen, of het zou op zoek kunnen gaan naar ontbrekende delen. Het was een zwarte tijdmachine met rode digitale letters op een schermpje. De

jongen begon wat op het toetsenbord te typen. 'Ja, het loopt vast,' zei de jongen.

'Ik heb het na mijn komst nooit meer kunnen gebruiken,' zei de man.

'Het komt wel weer,' zei de jongen.

Hoofdstuk 3. De zwarte hond

Zwart is het water in de nacht,
Waar de varkens van geweld toe snellen,
Om honden te worden aan de overkant van de rivier,
En dan mens als roversloon.
Zwart is het water in de nacht,
En zwart is het gezicht van de tovenares,
Zij die dit alles oprichtte,
Om de laatste jager te doen ontwaken.

Er verscheen beeld en wat boodschappen nadat de jongen een tijdje had gesleuteld aan de tijd machine. Op het grotere scherm onder het kleine digitale scherm verscheen het gezicht van een donkere vrouw.

'Wie bent u ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Het is Sobibor,' zei de man, 'de tovenares van de planeet.'

Toen vervaagde het beeld weer. Weer begon de jongen te typen om contact te maken, maar niets hielp dit keer. 'Misschien moeten we het de tijd geven,' zei de man.

'Ja, het is kunstmatige intelligentie,' zei de jongen.

Heel vaag kreeg hij de varkens van geweld op het beeld die naar de rivier snelden. Allen stortten ze zich daarin, en begonnen naar de overkant te zwemmen. Daar werden ze tot honden, en dan langzaam tot mensen.

'Vreemd,' zei de jongen.

'Zo ontstaan de psycho-dentists,' zei de man.

'Maar wie doet dit ?' vroeg de jongen. 'Sobibor ?'

'Ik weet het niet,' zei de man. 'De vrouwen stammen op deze planeet, de planeet Sobibor, maken jacht op de varkens van geweld, opdat ze niet tot psycho-dentists worden.'

'Dat is hen dan niet goed gelukt,' zei de jongen.

'Ik weet het,' zei de man. 'De laatste jager moet nog ontwaken. Dan is het getal vol.'

'Wie is de laatste jager ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ik weet het niet,' zei de man. 'Een vrouw in ieder geval.'

'Hoe komt ze terug ?' vroeg de jongen. 'Door de tijdmachine ?'

De man haalde de schouders op. 'Het zou kunnen.'

'Er is een missing link,' zei de jongen. 'Dat is duidelijk. Daarom hebben de psycho-dentists zoveel macht.'

Toen kwam Sobibor weer door op het scherm. 'Zoek de laatste jager,' zei ze. 'Het is een stam.'

'Hier op deze planeet of ergens anders door de tijdmachine ?' vroeg de jongen.

Maar het beeld vaagde weer weg.

'Dieper onder de grond is een stam,' zei de man. 'Het is afgezonderd van de rest van de planeet door een radio actief scherm genaamd het Zivris scherm.'

De jongen zei niets en typte door. 'Ik denk dat ik het hier op het scherm heb,' zei hij ineens. 'Het is een tijd gat, straling van een andere tijd, en die houdt alles tegen en ketst alles weer af.'

'Nee,' zei de man. 'Je begrijpt het niet. Dit is iets heel anders. Het komt door het scherm wat van een bepaald soort doorzichtig materiaal is gemaakt, maar je kan bijna niet verder kijken dan het materiaal zelf, want wat daarachter ligt is allemaal wazig. Het is een soort gesteente en het straalt radioactiviteit uit.'

'De vraag is hoe kom je er doorheen, en willen we er wel doorheen ?' vroeg de jongen.

'We hebben geen andere keus als dat de laatste jager zou zijn, maar dat weten we dus niet, en we weten ook niet wat er zal gebeuren als we in contact komen met de laatste jager,' zei de man.

Opeens verscheen het gezicht van Sobibor weer op het scherm, en het begon te veranderen in de kop van een zwarte hond. 'Ken je dan het mensenras ?' zei de zwarte hond. 'Ze hebben hun geweld en hun economie die ze daar omheen hebben gebouwd. En kijk wat het is geworden ? Een

prutswerk. In de diepte van Sobibor, achter het scherm van Zivris, is niets anders dan creative energy life. Dat is veel groter dan geweld en economie.'

'Hoe komen we door het scherm heen ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Creative energy life is geen product wat we verkopen,' zei de zwarte hond. 'Het is niet iets wat je door geweld of economie kan bereiken. Het betekent creatieve energie te gebruiken, en die energie is overal.'

'Dus het is hier al ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ja,' zei de zwarte hond, en begon weer weg te vagen.

'Diep van binnen waarschijnlijk,' zei de man.

'Of overal om ons heen, en moeten we het gebruiken,' zei de jongen.

Opeens verscheen er een nieuwslezer op het scherm die wat op begon te lezen :

'Creative Energy Life

Ik kies ervoor om creatief te zijn.
Creatieve energie is leven.
Creatieve energie is overal om ons heen.
Niemand hoeft bij de pakken neer te zitten.
Het leven is niet de buitenkant, maar de binnenkant.
Met beide kanten kun je creatief omgaan, ook al voel je je opgesloten tussen binnen en buiten.
Wees nooit zoals de ander, want dan verlies je je creatieve energie.
Anderen kunnen je inspireren, maar wees nooit een volledige kopie.
Wees niet iemand waarvan er dertien in een dozijn gaan.

We willen niet meer van hetzelfde. Wees uniek. Bouw je eigen wereld.
De ander kan het niet voor je doen, want dan zou je je eigen identiteit en creativiteit verliezen.
Zonder je af van de massa's, en start je project.
Nu zul je zien dat het onmogelijk is om je van de massa's af te zonderen.
We zitten vast in de massa's. Maar zie het zo dat we allemaal in een trein zitten.
We komen elkaar tegen op de stations, en we kunnen door elkaar geinspireerd worden, tot nieuwe dingen. Er valt altijd weer wat te leren.
Iedereen is uniek.
De massa's bestaan niet.
Er zijn teveel verschillen, en die zullen alleen maar groter worden.
Hetzelfde is een illusie. Er zijn altijd verschillen voor de opmerkzame.
Het is niet ons tegen de massa's, want de massa's zijn er niet.
Alles hangt als los zand aan elkaar. Er is geen eenheid.
Iedereen leeft in zijn eigen wereld, heel ver, oneindig ver, van de ander verwijderd.
Er is geeneens communicatie mogelijk.

Het zijn processen in de mens zelf.
De mens is een creatief wezen.

De mens pikt dingen op, heel vaag, en maakt er iets van.
De mens vult de hiaten op.
De mens is een creatief wezen.

Creative energy life is voor de mens weggelegd.
De natuur is creatief.
Er is een natuur aan de buitenkant, maar ook een natuur aan de binnenkant.
Er is een zichtbare natuur en een onzichtbare natuur.
Alleen door creative energy life gaat de mens het zien.

Vul de gaten op met jouw creatieve energie.
Ook al lijkt het op klei of modder in het begin.
Blijf er creatief mee omgaan.
Creatieve energie zoekt altijd weer naar verbeteringen.
Hoe kun je dingen creatief maken.
Als je er creatieve energie instopt, zal er ook creatieve energie uitkomen.
Laat niets creatief onaangeroerd.
Ga er creatief mee om.
Stop er creatieve energie in, en je kan er later zoveel creatieve energie weer uithalen.

Laat niets je stoppen, laat niets je tegenhouden. Ga er creatief mee om.
Boor creatieve bronnen aan, en leef door creative energy life.

Er is iets beters dan economie.
Het is creative energy life.
Dit was het nieuws.'

En toen vaagde de nieuwslezer weer weg.

'Is dat dan de oplossing voor al onze problemen ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Misschien uiteindelijk,' zei de man. 'We kunnen het in ieder geval proberen.'

'Maar hoe ?' vroeg de jongen.

De zwarte hond verscheen weer op het scherm. Er waren veel storingen.
'Het scherm moet er zijn,' zei de zwarte hond. 'De laatste jager is in jezelf. Het is zowel abstract als sarcastisch, want het gaat niet om geweld en economie voor je levensonderhoud, maar om creative energy life. Het is geen product en niet iets wat je van de ander door geweld hebt afgenomen.'

'Ik begrijp het,' zei de jongen, 'maar wat nu ?'

'Vraag het niet aan mij,' zei de zwarte hond. 'Je hebt je eigen creative life energy. Ga ermee aan de

slag.'

'Maar hoe ?' vroeg de jongen.

De hond begon te grommen. Toen vaagde de hond weer weg.

'Ik snap er niets van,' zei de jongen. 'Het is een mooi idee, maar ik moet erin onderwezen worden.'

'Luister naar je eigen innerlijke creatieve bronnen,' zei de man. 'Je bent je eigen schepper.'

De jongen ging op de grond zitten ergens en begon te mediteren.

'Ik boor jullie aan, innerlijke creatieve bronnen van leven,' zei de jongen. 'Ik voel het van binnen stromen. Het trekt me mee, een zware stroom. Ik kan er niets tegen beginnen.'

Weer verscheen de zwarte hond op het scherm en blafte alleen nog. Ook de man ging op de grond zitten en begon te mediteren.

'Creative energy life,' zei de man, en bleef het herhalen, steeds langzamer en langzamer. 'Het neemt me mee,' zei de man, 'als een sterke stroom. Ik kan me er niet tegen verzetten. Alles is er al, alles is al gemaakt, en ik moet het door me heen laten stromen, en het overweldigt me en neemt me mee.'

'Rust, rust, nog creatiever, nog creatiever,' zei de jongen.

'Ja, ja, ja, ja,' zei de man steeds langzamer. Hij zuchtte, en begon toen weer sneller te ademen, te hijgen. 'Ja,' zei hij weer. 'Het gebeurt in mij. Het slingert me mee, hoge golven.'

De jongen lachte even en stak zijn handen in de lucht. 'Daar komt het,' zei hij. 'Wat is dit ? Wat is dit ?'

'Ik ben creatief,' zuchtte de man, diep uitademende, 'ik ben creatief, ja, ik ben creatief. Een schepper ben ik.'

Na een tijdje vielen ze beiden op de grond, alsof ze aan de drugs waren.

De zwarte hond verscheen weer op het scherm. 'Je kunt de ander nooit bereiken. De ander is te ver weg. Je maakt er alleen je eigen voorstellingen van, je vult de hiaten op. Je bent creatief, een schepper. Je maakt van de ander een simulator om de afstand te overbruggen, maar het kan nooit overbrugt worden. Het zijn slechts processen in jezelf. Van iedere ander maak je een simulator, een panoen. Zo bestaan er een heleboel panoenen in je leven die je creatief kunnen maken,' zei de hond, terwijl hij een soort gas spuwde, een vuur. Maar ze hoorden het bijna niet. Ze waren in een diepe trance.'

'P... panoenen ?' vroeg de jongen dromerig, terwijl hij heel ver weg was.

'Ja,' zei de zwarte hond, 'nooit ben je in direct contact met de ander, alleen met de panoenen. dat zijn

je eigen creatieve voorstellingen ervan, je simulators, in je eigen creatief proces.

'Mmm,' sprak de jongen, 'dat smaakt goed. Het smaakt naar drop.'

'Eet er niet teveel van,' zei de zwarte hond.

'Maar het zijn een soort pannekoeken,' zei de jongen. 'Dikke pannekoeken, dikkertjes. Mmmm.'

De hond begon te blaffen. 'Gebruik je creatieve energie, en pas op met de panoenen,' sprak de zwarte hond.

'Maar ik dacht dat het veilige simulators waren,' zei de jongen.

'Simulators, ja,' gromde de hond, 'maar je moet er niet teveel van nemen. Creativiteit verdeeld, is gevarieerd, wisselt af, raakt alles maar heel lichtelijk aan en gaat dan verder. Oefen jezelf hierin.'

'Oh, okay,' zei de jongen.

'Je bent hier niet in luilekkerland,' gromde de zwarte hond. 'Vele gevaren staan op de loer.'

'Okay, onderwijs me,' zei de jongen, 'help me. Wees mijn gids.'

Maar het beeld vaagde weer weg, en ook de jongen zakte weer weg. 'Panoenen,' sprak de jongen langzaam, 'gevaarlijke panoenen.'

'Ja, ze zijn gevaarlijk,' zei de man langzaam, 'die panoenen. Er moet nog veiligere apparatuur tussen ons en de panoenen, anders raakt alles oververhit.'

'Apparatuur ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Simulators gebruiken veel energie,' zei de man. 'Als ze teveel gebruikt worden kunnen ze exploderen.'

'Hoe weet je dat allemaal ?' vroeg de jongen.

De man zweeg. Hij was ver weg.

'Wat moeten we doen ?' vroeg de jongen. 'Ik heb het gevoel alsof er een panoen zwaar opkomt.'

'Raadpleeg je innerlijke creatieve bron,' zei de man.

'Ik raadpleeg mijn innerlijke creatieve bron,' zei de jongen langzaam. 'Panoenen, ... ze ... ze overvallen me, ze overmeesteren me, of willen me overmeesteren ... Ze overweldigen me ...'

Verder kon hij niets meer zeggen. Weer verscheen de zwarte hond op het scherm, hard blaffend. Het ging hen door merg en been. 'Het alarm,' gromde de zwarte hond toen. 'De panoenen mogen

niet overgebruikt worden. Ga dieper je binnenste in, en laat de panoenen met rust.'

'Okay,' zei de jongen.

'Panoenen zijn personen, voorstellingen van personen,' zei de zwarte hond, 'maar omdat het te ver weg is en onbereikbaar, en je gewoon gaten aan het opvullen bent met creatieve energie, weet je niet of het daadwerkelijk personen zijn. Het kunnen ook dingen zijn, apparaten. Het kunnen je persoonlijke middelen zijn, want creatieve energie maakt van alles gebruik. We noemen dat de panoken, wat voorwerps-simulators zijn. Je hebt het zelf gemaakt om de afstand te overbruggen, maar het valt niet te overbruggen. Je komt altijd ergens anders aan. De voorwerps-simulators zijn dus slechts schakels in het geheel. Directheid en volledigheid heeft niets met creatieve energie te maken. Creatieve energie neemt het altijd ruim, en is altijd afleidend, als een schakel, een brug die nooit de overkant bereikt, maar altijd ergens anders naartoe gaat. Je komt dus nooit aan op de bestemming, maar altijd op iets beters.'

'Hoe weet je dat ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Test het maar uit,' zei de zwarte hond, lichtelijk grommend. 'Er moeten dus panoken zijn tussen jou en panoeken, want anders gaat het verkeerd. De panoken zijn je levensvoorwerpen, je levensinstrumenten.'

'Ik moet dus leren minder persoonlijk te denken en meer voorwerpelijk ?' vroeg de jongen.

Maar de zwarte hond was alweer weggevaagd.

'Ik maak contact met de panoken,' zei de jongen, 'mijn levens-voorwerpen. Ik kan alleen met de panoeken omgaan door de panoken, maar niet teveel. Ik neem aan dat ik ook niet teveel met de panoken mag omgaan ?'

'Uiteindelijk gaat het om de principes, iets wat nog dichterbij ligt,' brulde de hond, die weer was teruggekomen op het scherm. Het was alsof de hond op de golven was. Er droop zelfs water van het scherm af. 'Dat gaat niet goed,' zei de man. 'Die tijdmachine staat op exploderen.'

'Wat moet er dan tussen mij en de panoken nog instaan ?' riep de jongen.

'De piloken !' riep de zwarte hond, 'dat zijn de filosofische principes. Gebruik de panoken alleen met mate ! Net zoals de panoeken !' Toen explodeerde het scherm, en de tijdmachine stond in zware brand. Direct sprongen de man en de jongen op. 'We moeten hier weg !' riep de man. Hij greep de jongen en trok hem met zich mee. Alles begon te branden op hen heen.

'Wat is er gebeurt ?' riep de jongen.

'Ik weet het niet !' riep de man. Het vuur zat achter hen aan. Ze moesten ze snel mogelijk boven de grond zien te komen, maar er was overal vuur. 'We zijn ingesloten !' riep de man. Plotseling brak er iets door de bovenkant van de tunnel heen. Het was een soort klein ruimteschip en ze werden omhoog gezogen door een buis die dwars door de grond was heengegaan. Ze zagen toen een hele

lange uitgestrekte arm die hen greep. Het was de arm van de zwarte hond.

Het ruimteschip vloog toen heel ver van de planeet weg. De hele planeet stond in brand. De zwarte hond zei tegen hen dat het alleen veilig zou zijn in het binnenste van de planeet, achter het scherm van Zivris. Er moest ook wat tussen de mens en de piloken komen, want teveel principes zouden het hoofd van de mens dol kunnen maken. Het zijn ook maar voorstellingen van de mens, maar de mens moet terugkeren tot de creatieve energie, tot het creatieve energie leven. De zwarte hond zei dat het ruimteschip het enige was wat door het scherm van Zivris heen kon breken. Met een enorme vaart ging het ruimteschip terug naar de planeet Sobibor waar overal hoog vuur was, en vloog er doorheen tot de grond, en ging toen door de grond, dieper en dieper, totdat ze bij het scherm van Zivris aankwamen. Er stond daar een meisje wat zich telkens heel snel verplaatste en vermenigvuldigde, en toen veranderde ze in een zwarte hond. Er was een hele hoge schreeuw, en toen gekraak als van glas, en toen was er een glas explosie. Toen ging het ruimteschip in snelle vaart door het scherm van Zivris. Tegelijk toen ze er doorheen waren gekomen sloot het glas zich weer. Nu moesten ze heel snel uit het ruimteschip, want dat zou exploderen vanwege oververhitting. Ze moesten rennen voor hen leven. Er was een bos dichtbij waar ze inrenden, in een vallei, en niet lang daarna hoorden ze een enorme explosie en was er achter hen allemaal vuur wat als een razende om zich heen begon te grijpen. Er waren veel meer zwarte honden die hier renden. Ook bomen om hen heen begonnen te branden. Ze bleven doorrennen, achter de honden aan, en moesten toen door een ondiepe, kleine rivier. Pas toen begon alles rustiger te worden, alsof ze pas toen de nieuwe wereld inkwamen. Ze keken naar de zwarte honden, maar het waren geen honden meer, maar vrouwen. In de verte, achter het bos in de vallei, zagen ze een heleboel fabrieken staan. De jongen vroeg waar de fabrieken voor waren. 'Het zijn de fabrieken van creative energy life,' zei één van de vrouwen.

'Wat moet ik me daarbij voorstellen ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Dat zul je wel zien,' zei de vrouw.

Het was een kleine groep vrouwen, en er bleven er steeds minder over. Ze moesten door het bos naar de fabrieken toe. Het leek wel alsof ze nooit aankwamen.

'Het is te ver weg,' zei de vrouw. 'Dan ga je het vanzelf bedenken, als een simulator. Het is je eigen creatieve energie. Zelfs ik ben te ver weg, en daarom ben ik niets dan een schepping van je eigen innerlijke creatieve energie.'

'Vreemd,' zei de jongen. 'Ik heb helemaal niet het idee dat ik je heb geschapen.'

'Het gaat vrij automatisch,' zei de vrouw. 'Het is panoeken energie. Dan maak je simulators van personen die onbereikbaar zijn, die heel ver weg staan, dus eigenlijk weet je niet of ze wel bestaan, maar dat doet je creatieve energie.'

De jongen zuchtte. 'Ik kan er maar niet bij,' zei hij. 'En ik moet ook weer oppassen met panoeken.'

'Precies,' zei de vrouw. 'Daarom veranderen wij soms in zwarte honden, en daarom vagen wij soms weg, opdat je contact kunt maken met de panoken, de gebruiks-voorwerpen.'

'En dan de piloken, de principes, en dan de creatieve energie ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Juist,' zei de vrouw. 'Zo heeft de mens verschillende beschermlagen.'

'Als een soort filters ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Juist,' zei de vrouw.

'Dus eigenlijk komen we nooit aan bij die fabrieken, maar moeten we onze innerlijke fabrieken ontdekken ? Onze innerlijke creatieve energie ?' vroeg de jongen.

Maar hij zag de vrouw nergens meer. Het leek wel alsof er storing in zijn hersenen was, alsof alles haperde. Het leek wel alsof zijn hersenen ook allemaal technische apparatuur was.

Ook zag hij de man niet meer. Het was misschien ook wel goed dat niets echt bereikbaar was, want hij zou er verkeerd mee om kunnen gaan. Hij moest eerst komen tot de bronnen van creatieve energie. Hij zag wel een grote rivier liggen tussen hem en de fabrieken. 'Die fabrieken zitten natuurlijk vol met panoken, gebruiks-voorwerpen,' zei de jongen.

Bij de rivier aangekomen liet hij zich erin zakken. Er stond hier een sterke stroming, en al snel werd hij meegesleurd. 'Dit is alles wat ik wil,' zei de jongen.

Alles begon steeds trager te gaan in zijn hoofd. De stemmen van zijn gedachten werden ook steeds lager. Hij snapte even niet waarom hij de rivier in was gegaan. De rivier was woest en slingerde hem mee. Maar in zijn ogen was het creatieve energie. Ineens viel hij een heel eind naar beneden en klapte op een rots. Hij schreeuwde het uit van de pijn en bleef toen stil liggen. Hij was over de waterval heengegleden. Het was een wonder dat hij nog leefde, of was hij al dood, of misschien allang dood ? Een donkere vrouw met een speer en een heel dun wit voorhangseltje wat over haar kruis ging stond voor hem. Toen trok ze hem het water uit terwijl hij kreunde van de pijn.

Ze trok hem naar haar stam.

'Op zoek naar creative energy life ?' vroeg ze even later toen ze in het kamp waren aangekomen. Vele donkere vrouwen gingen om hem heen staan.

'Ja,' zei hij. 'Ik dacht dat dit het was, maar het voelt alsof alles in me gebroken is.'

'Het is een spel,' zei de vrouw.

'Nee,' kreunde hij, 'geen spel. Ik weet niet of ik daar klaar voor ben.'

'Je hele leven was een spel,' zei de vrouw.

'En wie ben je ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Sobibor,' zei de vrouw.

'Het is me opgevallen hoeveel vrouwen op deze planeet Sobibor heten,' zei de jongen.

'Heel veel,' zei de vrouw. 'Het is een gebruikelijke naam.'

'Maar vertel me over het spel,' zei de jongen.

'Je moet de technologie leren,' zei de vrouw, 'spelenderwijs.'

'De technologie van creative energy life ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ja,' zei de vrouw, 'het is de natuur techniek.'

'Ik ben geen goede leerling,' zei de jongen. 'Ik leer traag, en als ik iets leer, dan breng ik mezelf ermee in de problemen, altijd maar weer, of ik ben gewoon een enorme pechvogel.'

'Een geluksvogel zul je bedoelen,' zei de vrouw. 'Want het heeft je wel hier gebracht. Je zou hier op geen enkele andere manier gekomen zijn.'

'Dat is een geluk bij een ongeluk dan,' zei de jongen.

'Er is een bosbrand hier,' zei de vrouw.

'Alweer ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Nee, nog steeds,' zei de vrouw. 'Het is al een tijdje zo.'

'Lopen we gevaar ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Je moet naar de put van duimelingen,' zei de vrouw, 'anders verbrand je. Daar vaagt alles weg, ook het vuur.'

'Maar vaag ik daar dan niet weg ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Er is zoveel wat moet wegvagen,' zei de vrouw.

'Waar is het ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ik kan je niet helpen,' zei de vrouw.

Ineens vaagden alle vrouwen weg. Hij lag nog steeds op de rots en kon zich niet bewegen.

'Ik dacht dat ik in een kamp was,' zei de jongen tegen zichzelf. Tot zijn grote schrik merkte hij dat het water brandde, wat de rots omringde. Hij probeerde op te staan, maar het lukte niet. Hij wist niet meer wat boven en onder was, maar boven hem zweefde een put als een vortex. 'Ik moet daarin zien

te komen,' zei de jongen. Maar de vortex zweefde telkens weg. 'Kom !' riep de jongen, 'kom terug !'

De jongen dacht dat hij zwaar aan het hallucineren was. Ineens was het vuur weer teruggedrongen. Het kwam allemaal steeds meer op de achtergrond te hangen. Hij had een waas in zijn hoofd, of zweefde die waas vlak boven zijn hoofd ? 'Uch,' zei de jongen. 'Misschien is het allemaal mijn eigen creatieve energie. Ik geef mezelf nergens teveel van, maar ook zeer zeker niet te weinig. Ik heb het gevoel dat het automatisch gaat. Mijn creatieve energie, mijn creatieve energie, en wat kan ik doen ?'

Hoofdstuk 4. Utrecht - de jongen uit de toekomst

'Ik ben op zoek naar de snelle wateren van creatieve energie,
Ik stort mijzelf erin om te worden tot een zwarte hond,
Aan de overkant zal ik waarlijk mens worden.'

Door een snelle stroom waartegen hij zich niet kon verzetten werd hij getrokken tot de open zee. Hij explodeerde in de hitte, wat een zalig gevoel was. Hij kon boven alles uitstijgen, als een vogel. Hij zag alle schepen en eilanden. En weer explodeerde hij, en weer, een gelukszalig gevoel, als een vogel. Hij was op de luchtstromen van de creatieve energie. Dit was het leven. Het was krioelende energie. En hij bleef maar ontploffen. Het was als een verhitte zomerse dag, een hemelse dag, en het water was verrukkelijk. En op de schepen en eilanden werd muziek gemaakt. Iedereen maakte gebruik van zijn creatieve energie.

De laatste jager was een kunstenaar, maar wel een geoefende. Ik zag haar geschilderd in een museum. Ik kon haar bijna ruiken. Soms was zij als een zwarte hond, soms als een stam, en soms als een rivier. Zij was de creatieve energie, creative energy life. Het was een groot schilderij. Vele bezoekers keken ernaar. Ze maakten foto's of filmden het. Er stonden zelfs bewakers bij. Sommigen hadden beweerd dat de vrouw op het schilderij bewoog.

En de vrouw op het schilderij was genaamd Sobibor, wat ook de naam was van het schilderij. Ik ging naar huis, kuste mijn vrouw, en zei dat ze leek op de vrouw van het schilderij genaamd Sobibor. Ik ging naar de keuken en maakte wat eten. Mijn vrouw stond voor het raam in de voorkamer. Ze keek uit het raam. De tuin achter onze flatwoning was toch ook wel echt een oerwoud. We keken er graag naar. Ik ging naast haar staan.

'Wat heb je allemaal meegemaakt vandaag ?' vroeg ze.
Ik vertelde haar over een jongen die ik bij het schilderij genaamd Sobibor was tegengekomen, hoe hij een heel verhaal vertelde over de planeet Sobibor waar hij was geweest, en dat hij uit de toekomst kwam, uit de jaren 10.000. Hij zou weer naar de aarde zijn gegaan en toen met een

tijdmachine naar deze tijd zijn gegaan om de mensheid te waarschuwen, maar ze geloofden hem niet en lieten hem opsluiten, ook omdat hij geen identiteitsbewijs had.

'En hoe is hij weer uit de gevangenis gekomen dan ?' vroeg mijn vrouw.

Ik zei dat ik niet zeker wist dat het een gevangenis was of iets anders, maar hij beweerde dat zijn tijdmachine kunstmatige intelligentie bezat en hem uiteindelijk uit zijn gevangenschap wist te bevrijden, en dat hij toen naar het museum is gegaan om het schilderij genaamd Sobibor te bezichtigen, wat als bijnaam 'de laatste jager' had. De jongen drukte mij op het hart dat ik de laatste zou zijn waartegen hij zou spreken hier, dus dat ik al zijn woorden zou moeten opschrijven, en dat zou dan echt de laatste waarschuwing zijn voor de mensheid, want hij zou daarna weer met zijn tijdmachine teruggaan naar de planeet Sobibor ergens in de jaren 10.000. Het zou dus allemaal op mijn schouders rusten.

Mijn vrouw begon toen te zuchten. Ze zei dat er zoveel van zulke figuren waren vandaag de dag. Ze wilde het verhaal niet eens horen. Ze werd al moe als ze er aan dacht. Later zei ze dat ik bewijsmateriaal had moeten vragen. Ik zei dat ik dat ook had. Ik liet haar een kettinkje zien met een apparaatje erin. 'Hij zei dat hij met het apparaatje in het kettinkje communiceerde met de planeet Sobibor, maar dat het apparaatje het niet meer deed. Het zou eventueel in de toekomst weer kunnen werken, want hij beweerde dat het kunstmatige intelligentie bezat en zichzelf zou kunnen herstellen,' zei ik.

Mijn vrouw begon toen te lachen. 'Dat geloof je toch zeker niet ? Precies dezelfde kettinkjes verkopen ze op de markt, en die apparaatjes die erin zitten zijn gewoon radiootjes. Een heleboel kinderen hebben die kettinkjes,' zei ze.

'Moet toeval zijn,' zei ik.

'Geen toeval,' lachte ze. 'Je bent erin geluisd. Heeft hij je ook nog geld gevraagd ?'

'Ja, hij heeft er wel veel geld voor gevraagd,' zei hij, 'omdat het uit het jaar 10.000 kwam, en het was heel duur materiaal.'

'Zie je,' lachte ze. 'Je bent gewoon opgelicht. Hij wilde gewoon zijn ketting met het kapotte radiootje aan je verpatsen zodat hij een nieuwe zou kunnen kopen, en andere dingen, want zo duur zijn ze nu ook weer niet. Zeg, hoeveel heb je er eigenlijk voor betaald ?'

'Dat durf ik eigenlijk niet te zeggen,' zei ik, helemaal schaamrood wordende.

'Je moet niet zo goedgelovig zijn,' zei ze. 'Maar ja, ik hoop dat je je les nu wel geleerd hebt.'

Maar de dag erna las ik in de krant dat er iemand met een heel vreemdsoortige vliegende machine was neergestort. De machine zat vol met allerlei onbekende apparatuur. Wetenschappers verbaasten zich over de apparaatjes die ze vonden, want die waren nog niet eens uitgevonden. Ze geloofden dat de machine wel uit de toekomst moest komen, en dat bleken ook de laatste woorden van de jongeman te zijn geweest die ze in het neergestorte toestel hadden gevonden.

Ik vond het natuurlijk hartverscheurend om te horen dat de jongen was verongelukt, als het dezelfde was, maar ik had ook weer wat hoop dat het verhaal dus toch waar geweest zou kunnen zijn. Mijn vrouw had er natuurlijk, zoals altijd, weer een andere uitleg voor. Die was gewoon nooit om te praten. Nog steeds had ik ook altijd het kettinkje dicht bij me in de buurt, in de hoop dat het misschien eens weer zou functioneren gezien het mogelijk kunstmatige zelfherstellende intelligentie bezat. Volgens mijn vrouw begon ik obsessief gedrag te vertonen. Ik vond het nog wel meevallen. Mysterie was gewoon één van mijn hobbies.

Ik besloot contact te zoeken met de wetenschappers die de machine hadden onderzocht. Inmiddels merkte ik dat er een hele cultus was ontstaan rondom zowel de machine als het lichaam van de jongen, want de wetenschappers hadden het lichaam onderzocht van de jongen, en het bleek een volkomen mechanisch lichaam te zijn opgebouwd uit delen die kunstmatige intelligentie hadden, wat zou kunnen betekenen dat het in de toekomst zichzelf zou kunnen herstellen. De wetenschappers hadden ook het lichaam van de jongen in bewaring gekregen, en lag daar ergens in een glazen kist. Toen ik het lichaam te zien kreeg herkende ik de jongen niet. Hij deed me niet direct denken aan de jongen die ik had gesproken. Ook liet ik het kettinkje met het apparaatje aan de wetenschappers zien, en zij zeiden dat het gewoon een kapot radiootje was, maar toen ik hen het hele verhaal vertelde over wat de jongen had gezegd vonden ze dat wel heel interessant. Ook zeiden ze dat het lichaam van de jongen was veranderd sinds het in de glazen kist lag, omdat het mechanisme van kunstmatige intelligentie zichzelf aan het herstellen was. Ik kreeg toen foto's te zien van hoe de jongen vlak na het neerstorten van zijn machine was, en dat leek meer op de jongen die ik had gesproken in het museum. Ik had dus een zekere hoop dat het dezelfde jongen was.

Het zou de eerste persoon zijn die ooit van de dood zou zijn teruggekeerd, als het kunstmatige intelligentie mechanisme van de jongen zichzelf zou weten te herstellen. Alhoewel sommigen zouden zeggen dat het een robot was. De wetenschappers hadden gesteld dat zowel de jongen als de machine vergevorderde wapen technologie bezaten die de aarde zou kunnen behoeden tegen de ondergang.

Het was in die dagen dat tot mijn grote verbazing het apparaatje in mijn ketting zichzelf begon te herstellen, en het begon signalen door te geven. Het werden steeds duidelijkere boodschappen en het bleek van de planeet Sobibor te komen. Ze waarschuwden ernstig tegen het grote gevaar van de psycho-dentists, waarvan ze zeiden dat dezen op het punt stonden de aarde over te nemen. Ook de wetenschappers waren verbaasd en sommigen dachten nog steeds dat het een truuk was. Ze spoorden aan om een stralingsveld op te wekken met behulp van de jongen en zijn machine, want de psycho dentists zouden proberen de monden en de hersenen van de mensen te bestralen om die vervolgens over te nemen. De wetenschappers moesten een race tegen de klok beginnen. De jongen uit de toekomst zou een militair leider kunnen wezen, maar het probleem was dat alhoewel hij al heel erg was veranderd na de crash hij nog steeds niet tot leven was gekomen.

Het apparaatje in de ketting drong er op aan bepaalde stralings apparaten van de machine te gebruiken om het proces van het opwekken van het jongetje te versnellen, maar het probleem was dat ook die apparaten het niet meer deden, en zich nog steeds niet hadden hersteld.

Ik vroeg hen van de planeet Sobibor die met ons communiceerden of ze geen ruimteschepen konden

zenden om ons te helpen. Daar deden ze allemaal heel geheimzinnig over. Dat zou technisch niet mogelijk zijn in deze situatie. Zij communiceerden vanuit de toekomst, en zij hadden op het moment niet de middelen om ruimteschepen in de tijd te zenden en ook nog eens naar onze locatie. Er bleken bij hen ook bepaalde problemen te zijn.

Ondertussen klaagden sommige mensen in onze stad, in Utrecht, dat ze in het bos spookgestaltes hadden gezien in paarse gewaden met paarse kappen op, en dat die spookgestaltes hen bedreigden aangaande hun mond. Het kwam telkens weer voor. Ondertussen werkten de wetenschappers aan de tijdmachine, en aan de mechanische jongen, maar er was nog geen teken van leven. Het apparaatje in de ketting, wat toch als een soort radiootje was wat buitenaardse signalen kon opvangen, zei dat het via straling misschien de tijdmachine kon herstellen en daardoor het jongetje. Er begon inderdaad sinds die tijd vreemde dikke straling door het apparaatje te komen, waardoor je soms heel lichtelijk dubbel zag, of vibrerende gezichtsvelden. Steeds meer mensen kregen bedreigingen van de paarse spookgestaltes. Soms beweerden ze zelfs dat de spookgestaltes 's nachts op hun deur klopten en bedreigingen maakten. De hersenen van de mensen werden door een onverklaarbare kracht bestraald. Sommige wetenschappers geloofden dat het van een meteoor afkwam. Ik begon het apparaatje tegen de tijdmachine aan te leggen, en het begon een vortex op te wekken. Als ik in de vortex keek, dan zag ik mijn kinderjaren. Ik zou er zo naartoe kunnen gaan. Ik zag verschillende winkeltjes waar ik ooit was geweest. Maar tot mijn schrik zag ik ook grote gebouwen van de psycho-dentists, wat bijna centrums waren. Die waren er vroeger niet.

'Ze komen,' zei ik. 'Ze lopen al met de tijd te rommelen.' Die nacht had ik vreemde dromen. De tijdmachine was in mij, en ik was half mechanisch. Ik schrok heel vroeg wakker, en moest direct naar het laboratorium. De vortex was nu veel groter, en de tijdmachine begon weer te werken. Het apparaatje van de ketting zei dat ik niet de vortex in moest gaan, maar dat de energie gebruikt moest worden als een afweerschild tegen de psycho-dentists die op het punt standen de aarde binnen te vallen. Ook moest de energie van de vortex gebruikt worden om de jongen tot leven te wekken. Ik moest hiervoor een spiegeltje gebruiken, om zo de straling die van de vortex afkwam te richten op de jongen. Door het spiegeltje werd de straling gehalveerd, zodat er niet teveel straling op de jongen zou komen te staan, zodat hij niet de tijd in zou glijden. Maar er gebeurde niets. Plotseling viel de vortex weg, en de tijdmachine stopte te werken. Het apparaatje van de ketting zei dat er een grote storing was. Er werd geklopt. Een paarse verschijning kwam zo door de deur heen zonder dat de deur was geopend. Ik greep naar mijn hoofd. Was ik aan het hallucineren of was dit echt. De verschijning begon bedreigingen te maken over mijn mond.

'Het is een winkel,' sprak het apparaatje van de ketting. 'Neem gewoon een ander winkeltje. Doe geen zaken met de psycho-dentists.'

Maar ik begon felle steken in mijn hoofd te krijgen. Weer greep ik naar mijn hoofd. 'Maar ik word bestraald !' riep ik.

Ik moest toen weer het apparaatje tegen de tijdmachine aanleggen. De tijdmachine moest opgeladen worden. Er bleek een soort lek te zijn waardoor het telkens weer snel wegstroomde. Na een tijdje ontstond er weer een kleine vortex. 'Roep nu naar de jongen,' zei het apparaatje. 'Hoe heet de jongen ?' vroeg ik.

'Roep hem gewoon,' zei het apparaatje.

'Hey !' riep ik. 'Hey, jongen !'

Even leek het alsof ik zijn ogen zag opengaan, maar toen waren ze weer dicht.

In de stad Utrecht waren geen dokters, maar alienologen, want het gevaar van buitenaardse infiltratie was groot. Ook als er iets met de mond aan de hand was dan ging men naar de alienoloog. Hier mocht ook absoluut geen geld voor gevraagd worden anders zou het corrupt kunnen worden. Toch kregen de psycho-dentists het voor elkaar overal door het land centrums te krijgen, en ze werden dik betaald. Het utopia wat in het land in voorgaande jaren was opgebouwd brokkelde langzaamaan af. De monden en de hersenen van de mens werden bestraald. Het was niet meer zoals het geweest was. Ook het rechtssysteem kwam geheel in de handen van de psycho-dentists, wat voorheen nog door de alienologen ging. Het recht en het medische, ook het orale medische, begon meer en meer een markt te worden en werd steeds corrupter.

Het ging allemaal heel snel. Het was als een nieuwe religie, als een cultus. Het was een buitenaardse invasie, en er was een jacht op alienologen. De doodstraf werd weer ingevoerd en elke alienoloog kreeg per definitie de doodstraf. De tijdmachine en de mechanische jongen werden in beslag genomen, en op 't nippertje hadden we een ontsnappingsroute om te kunnen onderduiken, omdat wij ook betrokken waren.

De mechanische jongen en zijn tijdmachine waren nu slechts een fabel.

Alleen het kettinkje met het apparaatje had ik nog. Op het onderduik adres kwam ik met mijn vrouw en wat wetenschappers. Alle hoop was nu gericht op het kettinkje, maar ook hadden we de hoop dat uiteindelijk de mechanische jongen en zijn tijdmachine zouden ontwaken. Eigenlijk waren al onze plannen in diggelen geslagen. We konden niet tegen de straling van de psycho-dentists op. Ik wist nu dat de jongen die ik in het museum was tegengekomen de waarheid had gesproken.

Ik was in een vreemde trance. Op de een of andere manier kon het apparaatje zelf een kleine vortex opwekken, alhoewel het heel klein was, en het ons niet de tijd in kon trekken. Ook de wetenschappers keken er verwonderd naar. We wisten niet hoeveel tijd we nog hadden. De psycho-dentists namen alles over en zouden ons vast en zeker vinden na niet al te lange tijd. Het was een race tegen de klok. Overal in Utrecht werden er huiszoekingen gedaan om ondergedoken alienologen en hun wetenschappelijke medewerkers te vinden en te arresteren. We zaten in een geheime kelder onder het huis. Er was een mogelijkheid om nog dieper te gaan, en dat deden we ook. We moesten langs een put naar beneden. Het apparaatje zei dat onder de grond er nog meer kleine vortexen waren, en dat het apparaatje ze zou kunnen gebruiken om zijn eigen systeem ermee op te laden, zodat de vortex van het apparaatje nog sterker zou worden. Maar onder de grond waren de paarse spookverschijningen ook al. We zaten geheel ingesloten. We besloten weer naar boven te gaan, maar de verschijningen hadden ons al gezien, en deden een aanval van zware straling. Ik greep naar mijn hoofd, en ik zag mijn vrouw en verschillende andere wetenschappers flauwvallen. Ik had zware steken in mijn hoofd.

Ik hield het kettinkje in de lucht toen een paarse verschijning dichterbij kwam. Ik richtte de straling

van het apparaatje op de paarse verschijning, maar het signaal was veel te zwak. Ik kon niets beginnen. Alles werd zacht in mijn hoofd. Toen viel ik ook flauw. Ik werd wakker in een ondergrondse fabriek ergens. Dit moest er al heel lang hebben gestaan. De psycho-dentists liepen hier rond in witte pakken, en anderen hadden andere soort werkkleding, meer technische werkkleding, alsof het monteuren waren of bouwvakkers. Sommigen hadden helmen op. 'Mondenrekken,' zei één van de psycho-dentisten in het wit. Iemand schoof een lade open, en nam een soort beugeltje eruit. Het had allerlei stralings-sensoren. Er zaten lampjes ingebouwd. 'We gaan zijn hele zenuwstelsel overnemen,' werd er gezegd. 'Het zal in de botten boren, en zijn weg vinden, en dan vanzelf apparaatjes implanteren. Zo kunnen we hem monitoren, elke stap die hij zet.' Ik kon niet spreken. Mijn mond leek als verlamd. Alsof ze een verdovingsstof in me hadden gespoten. Ik kon alleen lichtelijk 'aaaah aaaah aaah' zeggen.

'Utrechtse donder,' werd er gezegd. Ik kreeg toen een klap op mijn hoofd met een hard voorwerp van metaal. Het was een soort gereedschap, een moersleutel. Ik had stekende hoofdpijn. Het bloed gleed langs mijn gezicht. Ik zag de andere niet, alleen maar psycho-dentists en hun werkers. Ik vroeg me af of sommigen mijnwerkers waren. Ik voelde de hoop door mijn schoenen wegsijpelen, de grond in. het was een stenen vloer, beton, met barsten erin, grote scheuren hier en daar. Toch borrelde er iets van binnen, als een soort vortex, en het bracht mij in een vreemde trance. 'De mondenrekken,' werd er weer gezegd, en ze hielden het beugeltje vlakbij mijn mond. Ik kond de lampjes zien, en de kleine boortjes, en naaltjes. Ik begon over te geven. Ik had er een heftige reactie tegen. 'Installeer het !' leek een vrouwenstem te roepen. Ik begon wild te schudden, maar ik zat vast. Het was alsof ik in een soort dwangbuis zat, maar op een bepaalde manier had ik weinig contact met mijn eigen lichaam. 'Utrechtse donder,' werd er weer gezegd. Ik werd aan mijn haren getrokken.

'Gotverredomme,' werd er geroepen. 'Stop het erin.'

'Ik kan het niet,' zei een benepen stemmetje. 'De straling van zijn mond blijft het afketsen, als een anti-magnetisch veld. Het past niet.'

'Probeer andere soorten dan, man, godverrejanjezus !' werd er toen geroepen. Ik probeerde op te kijken, maar het lukte me niet. Ik voelde nog steeds de vortex in mijn binnenste branden.

Ik zag een heel klein bibberend vrouwtje toen met een ander beugeltje komen. Het was heel dof, ook met naaldjes en boortjes, als een bitje, maar zonder lampjes. Ze bracht het dichtbij mijn mond, maar toen trok ze het snel weg en begon te gillen. 'Het brandt !' gilde ze. Ik zag haar ineenkrimpen en haar trillende pols vastpakken.

Weer werden er allerlei lades opengetrokken. Ik hoorde van alles ritselen en rammelen.

'Doe iets,' brulde een man bulderend. 'Zoek iets wat wel past.'

Weer kreeg ik een klap op mijn hoofd met de moersleutel. Ik begon nog heviger te bloeden. 'Hij is immuun,' werd er gezegd. Ik had stekende koppijn.

'Utrechtse donder,' werd er weer gezegd.

Toen lieten ze met rust. Ik was in een witgrijze dwangbuis aan een stoel gebonden. 'Kankerjezus !' hoorde ik iemand woedend roepen.

Ik hoorde glas kapotgeslagen worden en iemand hysterisch schreeuwen.

'Sobibor !' klaagde iemand toen.

Hoofdstuk 5.

Er stond een jongen voor mij.
Het was de jongen uit de toekomst.
'Mijn naam is Utrecht,' zei de jongen. 'Wij kennen elkaar. En toen je 'hey, jongen,' zei bereikte het signaal me nog niet. Het moest door een heleboel schilden heen.'

Hij begon me los te maken. 'Kom mee,' zei hij toen. Hij leidde me uit het kamertje waar ik was, de gang op. We kwamen toen ergens bij een lift terecht, waar we ingingen. Hij toetste een paar knopjes in en toen gingen we naar boven. We kwamen terecht in bosgebied. Hier stond zijn tijdmachine ergens. De tijdmachine deed het weer volop. Er kwam zachte straling vanaf. We stapten in, en hij ging achter de stuurknuppel zitten en we vlogen weg.

We werden direct aangevallen door ruimteschepen van de psycho-dentists, gele lazer stralen, maar we kwamen er doorheen. Ook de tijdmachine kon stralings-aanvallen doen, en we zagen vele ruimteschepen geraakt worden en neerstorten. We moesten door allerlei gevaarlijke stralingsvelden heen, maar uiteindelijk kwamen we er goed doorheen. Toen moesten we door een heleboel tijdsbarrieres heen om door de tijd heen tot de toekomst te komen, en dan naar de planeet Sobibor. Ik zei tegen de jongen dat mijn vrouw nog in gevangenschap was waarschijnlijk, en de wetenschappers, maar de jongen zei dat dat ook geregeld was of zou worden.

Het rook alsof we een groot watergebied inkwamen. Maar er was hier alleen ruimte. Pas veel later kwamen we aan bij de planeet Sobibor, en daar was inderdaad water. Ergens bij zee landde hij het toestel. We kwamen op het strand terecht, en er was aan de rand van het strand een groot strand gebouw. Daar liepen we naartoe. Tot mijn grote verbazing en verrassing was mijn vrouw daar ook, en de wetenschappers. Ik viel haar in haar armen, en ook omhelsde ik de wetenschappers. Ik vroeg hoe het nu verder moest met de stad Utrecht waar we vandaan kwamen, maar de jongen zei dat dat ook geregeld zou worden.

Er was ook een andere jongen bij : Janno, die heel veel op de jongen genaamd Utrecht leek, en even

dacht ik dat hij het was die ik in het museum was tegengekomen. Janno had de anderen hier naartoe gebracht. 'Zijn we veilig ?' vroeg ik aan de jongens.

'Nee,' zei Utrecht. 'We weten niet hoeveel tijd we hebben. We zijn mechanisch opgeladen, en het kan elk moment weer afgelopen zijn, want we hebben beiden lekken, en onze apparatuur werkt nog niet optimaal. Dit is alles wat we hebben.'

'Wat gebeurt er met ons dan ?' vroeg ik.

'Sobibor is niet verder dan je hart,' zei Utrecht.

Er was ook een lift in het strand gebouw. We gingen de lift in en we gingen zo naar beneden.

'De bronnen van creatieve energie,' zei Utrecht, 'creative energy life.'

Na een tijdje ging de liftdeur open. Er was hier een prachtige natuur. Het leek wel een wereld achter glas, als kassen. 'Het is tegen de straling van de psycho-dentists,' zei Utrecht.

Ik keek mijn ogen uit. Er waren overal vlinders en andere vliegende insecten, zoals libelles. Het gezoem van deze beesten was erg aangenaam en kalmerend. Door de kassen zouden we komen tot de vrije natuur, nog dieper onder de grond. Dat was een gebied geheel omgeven door het kassengebied, om te beschermen tegen de straling van de psycho-dentists.

Helemaal in de kern van het gebied zou de rode zee zijn, de zee van tijd. Als tijd is te overbruggen, dan is ook ruimte te overbruggen, en ook snelheid, en dat is een creatieve energie. Het was de tijdmachine van de natuur, op de planeet Sobibor, maar Utrecht zei dat het in de kern van het hart lag.

Ik ging in mijn herinneringen terug. Ik was vlak na de beëindiging van de grote oorlog geboren, in 1971. In 1970 werd het land bevrijd van de Muo, een religie die vanuit Arabië kwam overwaaien en met name in Duitsland groot werd. Alles draaide om de navolging van een arts van Arabisch-Duitse komaf genaamd Jasser Menghelm, de fuhrer van deze religie die gevreesd en aanbeden werd. Hij was geobsedeerd met monden, en voerde er vele experimenten mee uit in de concentratie kampen die hij opstelde. Hier dumpte hij alle alienologen in. Dat was het verboden beroep. Hij viel in 1940 ons land binnen, en vele andere landen. Het was dus een dertigjarige oorlog. Vreemd genoeg was één van zijn concentratie kampen ook Sobibor genoemd, en de jongen in het museum noemde ook enkele namen van personen op de planeet Sobibor wiens namen ook concentratie kampen op aarde waren in die tijd, onder het bewind van de Muo. Ik wist niet waarom ik deze gedachten had, maar ineens begon Utrecht erover. Hij zei dat de bezetting door de Muo de basis had gelegd voor de psycho dentists. Hij zei dat die basis alleen maar vernietigd kon worden als we terug in de tijd zouden gaan naar dat tijdperk op de aarde. Dat was ook de enige hoop voor zijn volledige herstel en het herstel van de stad Utrecht.

Ik kende de verhalen alleen maar vanuit de geschiedenisboeken en de geschiedenislessen, maar het maakte altijd wel grote indruk op me. Waarschijnlijk was de bevrijding er nooit echt geweest, zoals de jongen beweerde. Na de grote oorlog werd het dokterschap geheel afgeschaft. Alleen alienologen

mochten nog in die hoedanigheid als dokter optreden, maar er waren bijna geen alienologen meer overgebleven, omdat velen van hen ten onder waren gegaan in de concentratie kampen. Utrecht zei dat er teveel alienologen verloren waren gegaan in de oorlog, en dat dat veranderd moest worden door de tijdmachine. Die concentratie kampen moesten grootscheeps aangepakt worden. Dat gedeelte in de tijd was namelijk nog steeds een tikkende tijdbom wat als een gek psycho dentists voortbracht. Het was als een op tilt geslagen monster baarmoeder. Zowel Sobibor als de aarde waren nog steeds in de greep van dit monster.

Utrecht zei dat hij er met een hele grote vloot aan ruimteschepen naartoe wilde, om voor eens en voor altijd met de Muo af te rekenen. De alienologen moesten bevrijd worden uit de concentratie kampen, en de concentratie kampen moesten totaal vernietigd worden. Er moest dus een hele grote vortex opgewekt worden waardoor die vloot van ruimteschepen de tijd in konden gaan, en dat kon alleen gebeuren in de zee van tijd. Utrecht zei dat alle schepen al klaar stonden inmiddels. Het zou de grootste operatie aller tijden worden.

En dat werd het. Ik kan de dagen nog herinneren als de dag van gisteren, de grote invasie. En ze noemden het d-day. Zoveel ruimteschepen werden door de zee van tijd gezonden tot het tijdperk 1940-1970, tot de aarde. Het was de grootste invasie aller tijden. De lucht was vol van grote ruimteschepen van Sobibor, en alle concentratie kampen werden bezocht, die werkelijk als varkensfokkerijen waren, om de alienologen te bevrijden. Daarna werden de concentratie kampen vernietigd. Vele aardlingen werden meegenomen tot de planeet Sobibor, tot de zee van tijd.

Maar we waren ons niet bewust van een nieuw probleem wat daardoor ontstond. Er was een tijdplug ergens uitgehaald, en door het gat stroomde een geheel nieuwe projectie, iets wat lang opgesloten had gezeten. Het was als een roofdier die uit de kooi werd losgelaten. Het was alsof er een prisma ergens uit was gehaald, zodat het licht niet meer omgebogen werd. We stonden nu regelrecht oog in oog met de machten van de natuur, niet meer van de verstedelijkte mens. Het was het tijdperk van de natuurrampen. Het was alsof nu de balans geheel verstoord was, zowel op aarde als op de planeet Sobibor. De mens was nu een speelbal geworden van groot natuurgeweld.
Er waren ook veel onverklaarbare buitenaaardse natuurverschijnselen.

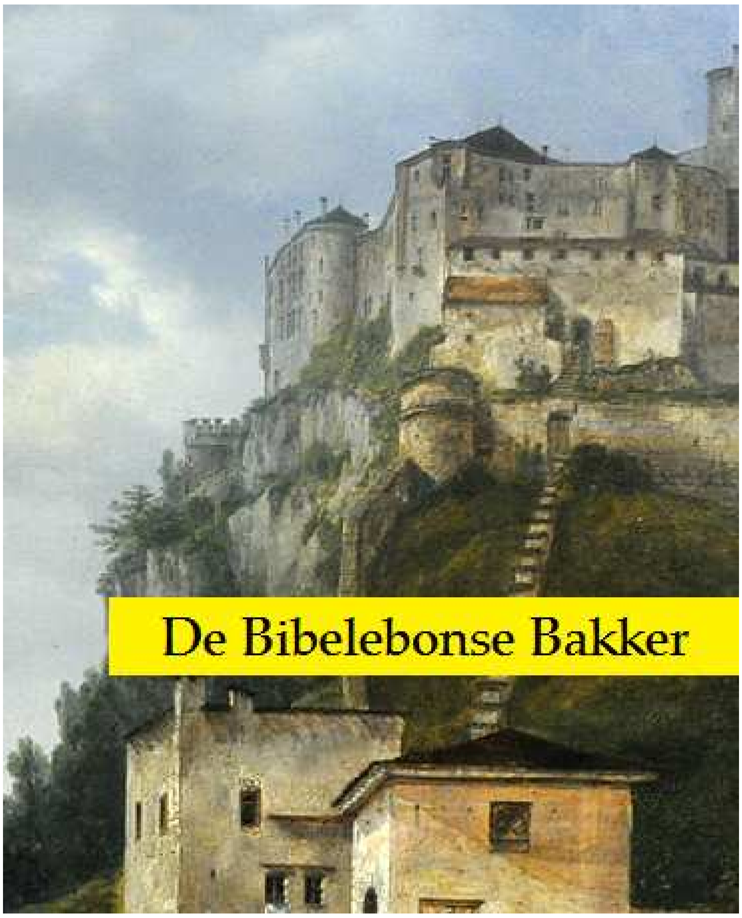
Utrecht zei dat er een tijdsvacuum was ontstaan waarin alles gezogen werd, en waar de tijd stil bleef staan van 1940 tot 1945, wat oorspronkelijk de invasies door de Muo waren, maar wat nu was overgenomen door de natuur. De Muo was geheel verbrijzeld. Uit een groot gat waren grote buitenaardse vrouwen gekomen, veel groter dan mannen. De vrouwelijke leiders van deze vrouwen, die allemaal donker waren, waren genoemd naar de jaren van het tijdsvacuum, dus 1940, 1941, 1942, 1943, 1944 en 1945. Alle mannen werden door hen gearresteerd en in concentratie gezet, want mannen waren de oorzaak geweest dat deze vrouwen zolang opgesloten waren geweest buiten tijd en ruimte. In hun filosofieën waren mannen levensgevaarlijk, en moesten vastgezet worden. De vrouwen hadden hele grote borsten die een vreemde soort melk hadden, en door bepaalde buizen en leidingen in de concentratie kampen moesten de mannen gevoed worden, maar alleen op gezette tijden, want verder werden de mannen uitgehongerd, omdat ze veel teveel kracht en macht hadden gehad. Ze waren vet geworden op hun droesem.

In het tijdsvacuum van 1940-1945 viel alles met elkaar samen. Overal waren er concentratie kampen aangelegd door de feministen, soms feminazi's genoemd, de radicalen, behalve in Utrecht,

waar ik woonde in een buitenwijk. Hier was ik ook opgegroeid. Ik fietste naar de straat achter mijn straat, wat altijd een straat met probleemjongeren was, maar die hele straat was gesloopt en er lag allemaal zand. Ik vroeg me af of er een concentratie kamp zou komen. Maar er werd gezegd dat er een groot grasveld zou komen en dat er nieuwe huizen gebouwd zouden worden. Het veld zou tussen de looppaadjes achter de achtertuinen komen te liggen, waar kinderen zouden kunnen spelen. Ik vroeg me af waarom Utrecht niet gevallen was. In mijn gedachten hield ik de jongen genaamd Utrecht, die uit de toekomst kwam, vast. Ik had mijn hoofd tegen zijn borst aangelegd, maar plotseling merkte ik dat hij slechts een standbeeld was. Het was als een droom. Ik herinnerde zijn woorden : 'We weten niet hoeveel tijd we hebben. We zijn mechanisch opgeladen, en het kan elk moment weer afgelopen zijn, want we hebben beiden lekken, en onze apparatuur werkt nog niet optimaal. Dit is alles wat we hebben.'

De jaren 1940-1945 waren vrouwen die op beesten reden. Ik had niet meer het gevoel dat ik in één realiteit leefde. Hier liep alles in elkaar over. De stad Utrecht was als een grote bibliotheek met boeken. Tevens was dit onze beveiliging. Er was iets met mijn hersenen gedaan, alsof ik aan de drugs was, of was het de melk ? Was ik vermelkt ?

Er werden overal feministische blaadjes verspreid over de heropvoeding van de man. Ook de bibliotheek stond vol met feministische boeken. Het was als een religie. Sommige feministische groeperingen gingen van huis tot huis, om te evangeliseren. Ze brachten het evangelie van de natuur, van de buitenaardse natuur, en van de melk. Ik voelde me vreemd. Het was alsof de leidingen van melk gewoon door de lucht hingen, en door onze hoofden, en het was om onze nekken als ketenen. En de melk was van een zware buitenaardse electriciteit, als de bliksem die insloeg. En de zes jaren waren school programma's, zes school programma's.



DE BIBELEBONSE BAKKER

"De indianen hebben vanwege hun nomadische levenswijze een enorme kennis van de natuur, en van de heilzame giffen van de natuur die zij in deze oorlog gebruiken. Wij zijn geraakt door deze giftige pijltjes, opdat wij ontwaken uit onze slaap en uit onze onwetendheid. Die natuur giffen van het oerwoud geven sterke hallucinaties en splitsen de persoonlijkheid, omdat het halve de enige overlevingskans is. Het hele zou fataal zijn. Alleen twee helften vormen het hele."

Hoofdstuk 1. Ik zie ik zie wat jij niet ziet
Hoofdstuk 2. Bakker Bons
Hoofdstuk 3. De Monniken
Hoofdstuk 4. één tegelijk
Hoofdstuk 5. Tussen vergetelheid en herinnering
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Hoofdstuk 1. Ik zie ik zie wat jij niet ziet

Bakker Bons, het mag weleens gezegd worden, hij werd koning van het hele land. Joost wilde geen koning meer zijn. Hij wilde boeken schrijven. Hij had het helemaal gehad met het koning zijn, want er kwamen telkens weer dingen bij die hij niet begreep. Bakker Bons was zijn beste bakker, en die had ook verstand van zaken. Bakker Bons nam toen het hele zaakje over. Hij zou bakker zijn en koning. Dit vond hij zelf een erg mooie combinatie. Het was een erg rustige man, die daardoor een heldere kijk op dingen had. Joost merkte van zichzelf dat hij nogal snel driftig werd, en dat zo soms

dingen totaal uit de hand liepen. Dan ontspoorde de hele trein. Nee, Joost had rust nodig, grote rust.

Bakker Bons woonde in Bergen op Zoom waar hij zijn bakkerij had, en dat zou ook makkelijk tot zijn paleis gemaakt kunnen worden. Het was een hele grote bakkerij, bijna een boerderij. Diep onder de bakkerij was een grot, een rust grot zoals ze het noemden. Daar zou Joost voorlopig gaan wonen om helemaal tot rust te komen. Daar wilde Joost boeken schrijven over alles wat hij als koning had meegemaakt, geschiedenis boeken. Dat moest ook wel, voor het nageslacht, opdat er niet dezelfde fouten gemaakt zouden worden. De mens moest leren van de geschiedenis. Joost zag dat als zijn grootste opdracht, en zo kon hij geen koning meer wezen. Hij had goed en groot vertrouwen in bakker Bons.

Joost kon het niet meer. Hij had het helemaal gehad. Hij werd gek van degenen die 'ik-zie-ik-zie-wat-jij-niet-ziet' spelletjes speelden. Het waren zieners, profeten, die tot het land waren gekomen, in lange paarse pijen met kappen. Je kon nooit hun gezichten zien. Ze verklaarden iedereen ziek en voor gek, behalve henzelf. Ze konden allerlei vreemde geestesziektes zien volgens hen, en ze vielen Joost er ook mee aan. Joost werd geheel belachelijk gemaakt. Dan zou je misschien denken : Maar waarom deed Joost daar niets aan, want hij was toch immers koning ? Maar zo eenvoudig was het niet. Dat kon dus niet zomaar. En waarom dan niet ? Dat kun je lezen in het verhaal. Luister maar.

Op een dag zat Joost te spelen met zijn staf op zijn troon. Er kwam ineens een zonderlinge monnik met een kap op de paleiszaal inrennen, en hij begon zotte dansjes te maken. Hij had verder geen pij aan. Hij was bijna naakt, en Joost moest direct zijn hand voor zijn gezicht doen. Wat deed die man vreemd. De man had ook een hele lange baard. 'Ik waarschuw u, koning !' riep de dwaze monnik schuimbekkend met een hele hoge stem alsof hij een krijtje had ingeslikt. Joost moest zijn vingers in zijn oren drukken. En wat er toen gebeurde ... Door de ruiten sprongen paarden, en op die paarden zaten monniken in paarse pijen met kappen, geheel bedekt. Je kon hun gezichten totaal niet zien. 'U bent ziek !' riepen de monniken, 'zwaar ziek. Wij hebben het gezien !'

'Maar ik ben helemaal niet ziek,' zei Joost. 'Ik voel me tamelijk goed. Ik kan nog steeds het land regeren, maar wie heeft jullie verteld dat jullie zomaar ongevraagd en onuitgenodigd binnen konden komen, en nog wel door de ruiten ? Het zal jullie flink betaald zetten. Wachters !' riep Joost.

'Je wachters zijn ook ziek,' zeiden de monniken, die inmiddels van hun paarden waren afgestapt, en daar maar stonden. Ze hadden aureolen om hun hoofd, en verdorde bloemen in hun handen. 'U bent deze bloemen,' zeiden de monniken.

Joost wilde verder geen woord vuil maken aan deze malloten. Hij bleef maar roepen : 'Wachters ! Komt er nog wat van !' Maar er kwam niemand.

'Buiten staan de karren, Joost,' zeiden de monniken. 'Daar zitten ze allemaal in. Het zijn gekkenkarren.'

Toen rende één van de monniken op Joost af, en drukte zo een injectie naald in zijn arm.

Joost schrok wakker van deze nachtmerrie. Sindsdien zag hij het niet meer zitten, en had hij rust nodig. En helemaal toen die dag er een man tot het paleis kwam met dezelfde dingen. De man was

een monnik en had een paarse pij en een paarse kap, en zei tegen Joost dat Joost gek was, zwaar ziek. Dat had de monnik wel gezien, maar Joost zag niks.

'Waar haalt u het allemaal vandaan ?' vroeg Joost.

Maar dat wilde monnik niet vertellen. De monnik deed er nogal geheimzinnig over. 'Ik zie ik zie wat jij niet ziet,' zei de monnik telkens.

'Oh, je bent een ziener, een profeet,' zei Joost, 'een doemprofeet, van lik me versje, want eigenlijk zegt u niets nuttigs. U helpt ons hier niet mee, ook niet door allemaal zo wazig te doen. Zo kan ik het ook, jij oproerkraaier. Je zuigt het gewoon uit je duim, hè ? Heb je niets anders te doen ? Maar laat me raden : Je verdient bakken geld met deze kwakzalverij, kwakzalver-profeet. Je loopt geheel op muntjes, jij kauwgomballen-profeet, jukebox-profeet. Ga je moeder pesten.'

Maar toen zei de monnik iets waar Joost erg van schrok : 'Je staat op ons land. Je betaalt daarom landpacht, aan ons. Wij zijn de oorspronkelijke landbezitters. Je bent zwaar gek. Dat is niet mijn mening. Iedereen zegt het. Ze roddelen allemaal achter je rug. Ze willen een nieuwe koning.'

'Oh, en nog stoken ook,' zei Joost woest. 'En wie zegt dat het jullie land is ? Of heb je dat ook gezien in je glazen bol ? Man, je bazelt maar wat.' Maar Joost slikte even, en dacht aan zijn nachtmerrie. Iets verlammends kroop over hem heen.

'Ik heb zo mijn informatie en inlichtingen,' zei de monnik, zonder er al te duidelijk over te zijn, en daardoor raakte Joost nog meer in de war.

'U moet hier eigenlijk niet komen,' zei Joost.

'Het is mijn land,' zei de monnik. 'Jij betaalt mij huur. Ik ben de ware koning.'

'Wie zegt dat, en hoe weet je dat ?' vroeg Joost.

'Iedereen weet het,' zei de monnik. 'En iedereen roddelt erover.'

'Ik weet anders van niks,' zei Joost.

'Ze houden het geheim voor je,' zei de monnik.

'Ik geloof er niks van,' zei Joost. 'Vertrek nu onmiddelijk. Ik heb geen zin om nog langer naar dit gebazel te luisteren.'

'Ik vertrek niet !' riep de monnik. 'Jij vertrekt, nu !'

Joost wilde zijn wachters roepen, maar hij kreeg zijn kaken niet meer van elkaar, alsof ze met vreemde kauwgom waren vastgeplakt. Even leek het alsof de tijd stilstond. Alles duizelde voor Joost zijn ogen. Even later kwamen gelukkig zijn wachters, en die hebben de man verwijderd, maar Joost was niet meer hetzelfde. Dit soort dingen gebeurden te vaak. Joost begon zwaar overspannen

te raken. 'Hoe is die man eigenlijk binnengekomen ?' vroeg Joost. Maar niemand had er een antwoord op.

Joost wilde er tussenuit. Er bleken meer van zulke monniken te zijn, en ze hadden hun eigen kloosters, ondergronds en bovengronds. Het was een bepaalde religie die geloofden dat het hun land was oorspronkelijk, en ze verdienden hun geld met deze kwakzalverij, met hun ingebeelde ziektes. Er viel niet met deze lieden te praten. Zij wisten het altijd beter, en velen geloofden in hen, eigenlijk steeds meer. Dat was ook omdat ze veel dreigden. Mensen sloten zich bij hen aan vanwege grote angst. En kinderen moesten er naartoe van hun ouders. Die hadden niets in te brengen. Joost was er helemaal klaar mee. Eigenlijk wilde hij geld geheel laten afschaffen, omdat hij zag dat er niet veel goeds door kwam. En zo werd bakker Bons ingeschakeld.

Hoofdstuk 2. Bakker Bons

Bakker Bons had een veel beter idee. Er moesten gewoon betere bakkerijen komen. Bakker Bons zou er wel de opleidingen voor geven. Hij had zoveel te vertellen, zoveel. Joost werd er altijd duizelig van als Bakker Bons erover sprak, maar dan op een goede manier. Bakker Bons zat zo vol met ideeën, grote ideeën. Joost was een driftkikker, die als hij niet oppaste zijn hele paleis kon afbreken. Hij kon niet tegen kritiek, en al helemaal niet tegen leugens. Dan kon hij woest worden. Vaak was dat lang erna. Het kon soms weken, zo niet maanden, doorgaan, dat hij zich aan iets ergerde, en dan de boel kort en klein sloeg. Hij kon niet met het verleden omgaan. Soms was het om iets van vele jaren geleden. Bakker Bons was heel rustig, altijd gematigd. Bakker Bons was altijd vol plannen. Hij had altijd wel een oplossing. Daar waar Joost het niet meer zag zitten, daar zag Bakker Bons een pad. Bakker Bons was ook al veel ouder dan Joost. Bakker Bons was al een oude man. Bakker Bons was vroeger net zoals Joost.

Eigenlijk kwamen de monniken nooit ver. Ze maakten claims die ze niet hard konden maken, niet waar konden maken, en moesten het hebben van het domme geloof van mensen. Soms kochten ze mensen daarvoor om, en soms bedreigden ze mensen. Het was alles wat kwakzalvers deden. Maar lastig was het wel, als een lastige vlieg, en het had Joost moe gemaakt, alsof hij erdoor was gestoken, door deze vreemde vlieg.

Bakker Bons zei dat hij wel een middeltje had. En Joost mocht dus naar de rust grot onder de bakkerij van Bakker Bons, om daar tot rust te komen, en om zo de geschiedenis boeken te schrijven. Oh, Joost zou het zeker vermelden wat de monniken hem hadden aangedaan, en hoe het land op z'n hoede moest zijn voor deze leugenaars, deze kwakzalvers. Bakker Bons bakte taartjes, hele specialen, om Joost op te vrolijken, maar eigenlijk hielp niets. De tijd moest het leren. Deze dingen hadden tijd nodig, veel tijd.

Maar toen Bakker Bons op de troon zat moesten de monniken ook hem hebben. Ook hij werd voor gek verklaard, en de monikken lieten hem niet met rust. En eigenlijk kwamen er van de plannen van Bakker Bons helemaal niets terecht, en zo moest ook Bakker Bons vluchten naar zijn eigen rust grot. Joost was blij hem te zien.

'Joost,' zei de bakker. 'Dit kan zo niet langer. Die monniken denken dat ze alles kunnen zeggen en alles kunnen doen, en ik kan zo mijn werk niet doen.'

'Hoge bomen vangen veel wind,' zei Joost.

'Wat moeten we doen ?' vroeg bakker Bons.

Joost keek hem met grote verbazing aan, want dit was de eerste keer dat bakker Bons het zelf niet meer wist. Er was niets van al zijn plannen terecht gekomen. De monniken hadden overwonnen, zo leek het. Ook de wachters waren zwaar in de psychische problemen geraakt door de werken van de monniken.

'Ik ga niet meer terug,' zei Joost, 'veel te gevaarlijk.'

'Ik ook niet,' zei bakker Bons.

En steeds meer koninklijke wachters moesten vluchten tot de rust grot. Ze waren er allemaal erg aan toe. Zwaar waren ze gepest en geplaagd door deze monniken, die altijd maar zeiden dat de wachters ziek waren, en dat het hele volk het wist en erover roddelde. Ze maakten daarmee de wachters ook daadwerkelijk ziek, als zelfvervullende profetie.

'Het is onmogelijk,' zei Joost. 'Die mensen zijn onmogelijk.'

'Het zijn geen mensen,' zei één van de wachters. 'Het zijn wolven, monsters. Ik heb het zelf gezien.'

'Vertel me meer,' zei Joost. Maar de wachter zweeg, alsof vreemde kauwgon zijn kaken op elkaar hield.

'We worden behekst, Joost,' zei een andere wachter. Ze mochten hem geen koning meer noemen van Joost. Ook bakker Bons wilde geen koning meer genoemd worden.

'Verschrikkelijke leugentreiteraars zijn het,' zei Joost. 'Vertel ons alles wat je weet.' Maar veel werd er niet gezegd, vanwege de vreemde, onzichtbare kauwgom die hun kaken op elkaar hield.

'Spoken,' zei bakker Bons. 'Ze rommelen met ons.'

'Ja, dit is niet normaal meer,' zei Joost. 'We zitten allemaal in zak en as door hen, die kauwgomballen-profeten.'

'Ha ha ha,' lachtte een wachter, maar keek toen weer sip.

Steeds meer wachters kwamen tot de rust grot. Ze konden bijna niet meer spreken. 'Laten we hier een nieuw rijk stichten, onder de grond,' zei Joost. 'Daarboven is het een verloren zaak.'

Gelukkig was de grot groot, zeer groot, reusachtig groot. Het zou vele volkeren kunnen herbergen. En je kon steeds dieper en dieper. Ja, de grot had duizelingwekkend veel verdiepingen.

'Dit is mijn paleis,' zei Joost weleens. Bakker Bons zag het allemaal niet meer zitten. Hij was blij dat Joost het allemaal weer een beetje overnam. Joost voelde zichzelf nog steeds verantwoordelijk, en voelde zich nog steeds een heel klein beetje koning. Hier kon hij opnieuw beginnen.

Maar het spreken ging steeds moeilijker door de onzichtbare kauwgom die hun kaken stijf op elkaar hield. En zo werd het een stille samenleving. Daarom vond men andere manieren uit om te spreken, zoals gebarentaal, maar ook dat ging niet erg goed.

De grot leidde tot prachtig ondergronds natuurgebied, dieper onder de grond, waar veel fruitbomen groeiden met bijzonder fruit. Telkens als ze wat van het fruit hadden genomen konden ze wat spreken. Daarom werd het het sprekende fruit genoemd. Het leek wel alsof het onzichtbare kauwgom wat werd verdreven door het sprekende fruit. Maar veel zeggen konden ze niet. Ze vonden het fijn om op de rand tussen de grot en de natuur te wonen. De groep werd steeds groter maar op een gegeven moment stopte het. Joost kon vaak zijn zinnen maar half afmaken, en voelde zich daarom niet geschikt. Maar iedereen worstelde met dit probleem. Het maakte alles wel geheimzinnig, maar ook spookachtig.

'Wat is er van ons overgebleven ?' zei Joost vaak.

'Boven weten ze alles beter,' zei een wachter. 'Misschien moeten we het hen vragen.'

'Ik kan er niets aan doen,' zei Joost.
'Ik heb er niet om gevraagd. Ik heb mijn best gedaan.'

Hoofdstuk 3. De Monniken

En dieper en dieper gingen ze, dieper de ondergrondse natuur in, om de wonderlijkste dingen te zien en mee te maken. Ik zie ik zie wat jij niet ziet. Dat is wat ze vaak zeiden. Maar ze deden het om elkaar te helpen, om elkaar mee te trekken, in deze bijzondere wereld onder de grond.

Joost kon niet meer. Hij moest zich zien te redden met halve woorden. Alles was half hier, zoveel

geheimen, maar hier wilde hij zijn. Hier moest hij zijn, om te overleven.

Ook bakker Bons kon niet meer. Wat was er van hen overgebleven ? Het halve, om hen te openen voor de verloren wereld. Daarboven was het hele namelijk een leugen.

En zo gingen ze verder. Bakker Bons had eigenlijk niets meer te vertellen, maar iets anders sprak tot hen. Het halve.

'Het is allemaal halfgebakken,' zei bakker Bons weleens, 'maar alles is beter dan een hele leugen.'

'Mmmm,' zei Joost. 'Ik begin de smaak te pakken hier. Dat halve smaakt goed, als de natuur. Het hele is een leugen.'

'Oh, verspil je woorden niet meer aan boven, want ze verdraaien alles en gebruiken het tegen je, en het komt zo met een rotvaart tot je terug,' zei een wachter.

'Wijsheid,' zei Joost. 'Beneden is het ware leven.'

'Wijsheid,' zei een andere wachter.

'Wijsheid, wijsheid.'

'Oh, de wonderen van de natuur,' zei Joost, 'het fruit van het halve, wat een vruchtbaarheid.'

Ze konden niet meer vasthouden aan elkaar, maar alleen aan het halve, en hun woorden brokkelden af hoe dieper ze gingen, en hun woorden en gedachten gleden weg als water. En ze zagen het halve, en het genas hun harten.

Het halve was fruit, een fruit wat ze niet kenden. En ze aten van de boom en zagen elkaar niet meer, alleen nog het halve. En Joost werd gekroond met een kroon van dromen, en meer en meer werd hij de koning over zijn onwetendheid.

En Joost kwam tot een holle boom waar allerlei monniken met paarse pijen en kappen naar binnen gingen. En er waren ook hen die geen paarse pij en kap hadden, en de paarse monniken zeiden tegen hen : 'Ik zie ik zie wat jij niet ziet. Jij ziet het niet, dus daarom ben je ziek.'

'Oh help,' dacht Joost. Ook hem werd toen een paarse pij en kap gegeven. Zo kon hij zich onder de monniken begeven om zo de holle boom binnen te gaan. In de holle boom moesten ze een trapje op wat leidde naar een zaal die vol zat met paarse monniken. Joost ging helemaal achteraan zitten.

Een paarse monnik deed het woord. 'Welkom, gij allen, gij zieners.' Toen ging hij weer zitten en kwam er een andere paarse monnik. 'Welkom, gij allen, gij zieners. Wat niet weet wat niet deert. Ik zie ik zie wat jij niet ziet, en daarom zijn jullie ziek, jullie allemaal.'

Een paarse monnik stond op in het publiek. 'Oh grote, paarse ziener, waarom zijn wij ziek ?' vroeg hij.

'Omdat jullie nog niet hebben gezien wat ik heb gezien, oh kleine paarse ziener,' sprak de monnik die helemaal vooraan stond achter een soort preektafel.

Toen zei de monnik in het publiek : 'Oh grote, paarse ziener, hoe kunnen wij worden als u ?'

Toen wees de prediker op een groot wit scherm achter hem. 'Kijk, oh kleine zieners, opdat gij grote zieners zult zijn, en gij genezen wordt van uw blindheid.'

Opeens verscheen er beeld op het scherm, prachtig zacht lichtend beeld van een zongewassen tropische natuur, vol met bomen van tropische vruchten. Perenbomen tussen de lianen, en andere soorten vruchten die op meloenen leken in allerlei kleuren : zacht oranje, wit, roze, allemaal zachte kleuren.

'Verrukkelijk !' riep de monnik in het publiek, en ook anderen begonnen te klappen.

'Kijk, dwazen !' riep de prediker, 'opdat gij wijs zult worden !'

Maar het beeld begon weer steeds witter te worden. 'Ik zie het niet !' riep iemand.

'Dan ben je ziek !' riep de paarse prediker.

'Dan ben ik dus ook ziek !' riep iemand.

'Ja, stekeblind, als je dat nog niet eens kunt zien !' riep de prediker.

Sommige monniken verlieten huilend de zaal. Joost wist niet hoe hij het had, en wreef in zijn ogen. Dat scherm was toch echt weer helemaal wit.

'En u daar, helemaal achterin,' zei de paarse prediker, 'wat ziet u ?'

Joost had al snel in de gaten dat de paarse prediker hem bedoelde.

'Tja, wat zal ik zeggen,' zei Joost. Hij dacht bij zichzelf : 'Laat ik maar gewoon wat verzinnen.'

'Ik zie een boot op het water tussen de bloemen,' zei Joost.

'Mis ! Jij stommeling !' bulderde de paarse predikant. 'Het is een indiaans natuurvolk. Jij stekeblinde imbeciel !'

'Oh ja, nu zie ik het ook,' zei Joost, die helemaal niets zag.

'Dat kun je niet zien,' zei de paarse predikant. 'Dat is onmogelijk.'

'Waarom is dat onmogelijk ?' vroeg Joost.

'Omdat je daar zit te zitten zonder lenzen, majoor !' bulderde de paarse predikant.

'Hoe krijg ik die lenzen ?' vroeg Joost.

'Die moet je kopen,' zei de paarse predikant, 'die moet je verdienen. Je moet ervoor werken.'

'Waar ?' vroeg Joost, 'en wat zijn dat voor lenzen ?'

'Het is een bepaalde druppel van een vrucht,' zei de paarse prediker, 'maar kom maar mee.' De paarse prediker liep op Joost af, en greep hem ruw bij zijn arm, en schudde hem even door elkaar. 'Kom,' zei de monnik, en trok hem mee. Ze gingen toen het trapje af en de holle boom uit. De monnik trok hem toen de omliggende natuur in.

'We hebben het niet zo op blinden,' sprak de monnik. 'Ze maken nogal veel stuk.'

Joost werd ergens een stal ingedrukt.
'Wat moet ik hier doen ?' vroeg Joost.
Het was aan de rand van weilanden.

'Imbeciel,' zei de paarse predikant. 'Jij weet ook niks, hè. Mores zouden ze je moeten leren. Dat zijn de ongeschreven regels waar je stekeblind voor bent. Je hebt nog niet geleerd tussen de regels door te lezen. Je hebt nog niet geleerd elke steen om te draaien, en achter elk boomblad te kijken. Je hebt eigenlijk nog niks geleerd. Je bent niet alleen stekeblind, maar ook stekedoof. Zwaar ziek ben je, en een levensgevaarlijke gek. Jij bent helemaal geen paarse monnik.'

En toen begon de woedende predikant de pij en de kap van Joost af te scheuren. 'Je weet wat je te doen staat !' bulderde de woedende predikant, en rende weer terug het bos in, terwijl hij nog nariep : 'Waag het niet om nog terug te komen !'

Joost zuchtte. Waar was hij toch terecht gekomen. En wat moest hij in de stal doen ? Hij wist niks.

Telkens als er paarse monniken langs de stal liepen dan gniffelden ze, of lachten ze hem uit, of riepen dat hij ziek was of gek. Als Joost om opheldering vroeg zeiden ze hem niks. Hij wist niet wat hij in de stal moest doen, en op een gegeven moment werd hij zo boos dat hij terug het bos inging om op zoek te gaan naar die vrucht waarvan de sapdruppels lenzen waren, waar de paarse prediker het over had. 'Waar ben ik toch eigenlijk mee bezig ?' vroeg Joost zichzelf af. Maar al snel werd hij ergens door een paarse monnik gegrepen, en ergens de weilanden ingeduwd. 'Kom hier niet meer !' zei de paarse monnik woest.

Toen begon Joost maar door de weilanden te slenteren. Ergens bij een boerderij klopte hij aan, en toen ze open deden begon hij zijn verhaal te vertellen. Ze lachten hem gewoon uit. 'Vruchten waarvan de sapdruppels lenzen zijn ?' lachte de boer. 'Is dat een grap ? Of ben je aan de drugs ofzo, of ontsnapt uit het gekkenhuis ?'

'Geen grap,' zei Joost, en hij zou al helemaal niet vertellen dat hij koning was, want dan waren helemaal de poppen aan het dansen. 'Waarschijnlijk ben je nog nooit in het bos geweest, oude boer,'

zei Joost beledigd. 'Er gebeuren daar dingen die het daglicht niet kunnen verdragen.'

'Wij gaan daar elke zondag naartoe voor een wandelingetje,' zei de boer, 'en wij hebben nog nooit zoiets meegemaakt. Je bent wel een halve gare, zeg. Er is daar wel een monniken klooster, maar die doen geen vlieg kwaad. Ze hebben daar een kruidentuintje en een fruittuin, maar geen belachelijke dingen waar jij het over hebt.'

'Oh,' zei Joost, 'nou, dat komt dan goed uit. Ik zie ik zie wat jij niet ziet, dus jij bent ziek, niet ik. Stekeblind ben je, oude boer, oude geit.'

'Nee, nee,' lachte de boer. 'Zo werken die dingen niet. Je ziet ze vliegen. En dat is de waarheid.'

'Het is een halve waarheid, en dus een halve leugen,' zei Joost, 'maar ik zie al wel dat je niet tussen de regels door hebt leren lezen, luilak. Nooit opgelet op school zeker. Je hebt nog niet geleerd elke steen om te keren en achter elk boomblad te kijken. Je bent niet alleen stekeblind, maar ook stekedoof. Zwaar ziek ben je, en een levensgevaarlijke gek.'

De boer begon nog harder te lachen. 'Nou, je hebt anders wel praatjes,' zei hij.

'Ja, van de paarse monniken geleerd,' zei Joost. 'Verbale zelfverdediging.'

'Ach, die paarse monniken zijn de lieve vrede zelve,' zei de boer. 'Die praten zo niet, en die doen geen vlieg kwaad.'

'Waarom ga jij er dan niet eens naartoe ?' vroeg Joost. 'Dan kun je daar een voorbeeld aan nemen.'

'Wij gaan maandelijks naar hun diensten,' zei de boer.

'Nooit iets opgemerkt ?' vroeg Joost.

'Nooit,' zei de boer. 'Allemaal ouwe jongens krentebrood.'

'Misschien ben je wel één van hen,' zei Joost. 'Het maakt je verdacht.'

'Ikke niet,' zei de boer. 'Ik heb wel andere dingen te doen. Ik ben een drukke boer.'

'Dus als ik het goed begrijp kun je mij niet helpen met dat speciale vruchtensap,' zei Joost.

'Nee, helaas,' zei de boer. 'Maar ik wens je veel geluk op je zoektocht.'

En toen is Joost maar weer verder gegaan, en klopte bij meerdere boerderijen aan, maar overal was er hetzelfde liedje.

'Zeg, ik laat me niet telkens beledigen,' zei Joost tegen zichzelf. 'Monniken en boeren, allemaal één pot nat.'

Hij liep verder de weilanden in, langs sloten en over allerlei kronkelende paadjes. Opeens zag hij een groep monniken in de verte met zwarte pijen en kappen. Ze waren gewapend. In snelle pas kwamen zij op hem af. Sommigen waren ter paard. 'Halt,' zei er één. 'Waar gaat de reis naartoe ?'

'Ik heb geen idee,' zei Joost, 'jullie misschien ? Want jullie schijnen altijd alles beter te weten.'

'Dat is hem,' zei een andere zwarte monnik. 'Zo, zo,' zei de ene monnik weer. 'Je hebt wel praatjes. Weet je dan niet dat je hier helemaal niet mag zijn ?'

'Hoe moet ik dat allemaal weten ?' zei Joost geïrriteerd. 'Jullie weten toch alles beter ? Wat heb ik nog in te brengen dan ? Ik ben toch ziek in jullie ogen ? Ik mocht al niet in het bos zijn, en nu ook niet in de weilanden ? Ik moet een plaats hebben waar ik kan bestaan. Je kan niet zomaar van alles zeggen dat ik nergens mag wezen. Kom nou.'

'Je hebt wel babbels,' zei de zwarte monnik. 'En ja, je hebt gelijk. Je bent zwaar ziek, maar niet alleen dat. Je bent ook een levensgevaarlijke gek. U ziet niet de dingen die wij zien, dus u bent levensgevaarlijk, een bedreiging voor de samenleving. Daarom moet u opgesloten worden, in hechtenis genomen worden.'

'Ik kan niet alles hebben,' zuchtte Joost. 'Ik kan het gewoon niet winnen. Kom ik in een adoptie gezin terecht ofzo ?'

'Nee,' zei de zwarte monnik ter paard. 'Veel erger. U zou een gevaar vormen voor het gezin, want u bent stekeblind en stekedoof. Dat hebben ze ons verteld. We hebben u eindelijk gevonden. U bent zowel een gevaar voor de samenleving als uzelf, dus daar zijn weer andere plaatsen voor.'

'Ja, en u gelooft dat allemaal zomaar wat ze tegen u gezegd hebben ?' vroeg Joost. 'Zo kun je wel aan de gang blijven, maar goed, volgens hen heb ik ook een sapje nodig wat als een lens dient in mijn ogen om het dan wel te kunnen zien, zodat ik net zoveel kan zien als jullie. Waar is dat sapje dan ?'

De zwarte monniken keken elkaar aan en begonnen toen te lachen. 'Wie heeft dat gezegd ?' vroegen ze. 'Je ziet ze vliegen. Een sapje ? Ja, dank je de koekkoek. Daar hebben we allemaal geen tijd voor. Wij zijn van het hoogste gezag.'

'Die paarse monniken zeiden het,' zei Joost, 'in het bos. Ik mag gek wezen als het niet waar is.'

De zwarte monniken begonnen nog harder te lachen. 'U ziet spoken. Er zijn inderdaad paarse monniken in het bos, maar die houden zich niet met dat soort dingen bezig. U ziet dingen die er helemaal niet zijn. Wij zien dingen die er wel zijn, en die u niet ziet, dus bent u ziek, gek en levensgevaarlijk. De gevangenis is waar u thuishoort.'

'Wow, ja zo kan ik het ook,' zei Joost woest. 'Misschien worden er dingen voor u achtergehouden ? U bent niet goed op de hoogte van dingen die in het bos gebeuren schijnt wel weer. Die paarse monniken zijn niet goed snik.'

'Dat is verdachtmaking,' zei de zwarte monnik ter paard. 'Dat is ook een symptoom van uw ziekte. Wij weten alles van het bos af.'

'Ik weet het,' zei Joost. 'Jullie weten alles, en altijd alles beter.'

'Precies,' zei de zwarte monnik ter paard. 'Dus val onze professie niet aan. En nu meekomen.'

Joost werd in de boeien geslagen en moest mee. Hij was gearresteerd. Ze namen hem mee naar een dorpje aan de rand van de weilanden, waar een gevangenis gebouw stond. Daar kreeg hij een cel. Tot zijn grote verbazing zat bakker Bons in de cel naast hem. 'Hoe ben jij hier gekomen ?' vroeg Joost verbaasd. Maar bakker Bons sprak niet. Hij zat op zijn bed en bleef maar voor zich uit staren. 'Wat hebben ze met je gedaan ?' vroeg Joost. Maar weer geen antwoord.

'We zitten in hetzelfde schuitje,' zei Joost.

Hoofdstuk 4. één tegelijk

'Ze spelen hier allemaal dezelfde spelletjes,' zei Joost, 'van ik zie ik zie wat jij niet ziet, dus ben je ziek en gek, en levensgevaarlijk, en van jij ziet jij ziet wat wij niet zien, dus ben je ziek en gek, en levensgevaarlijk, gewoon hoe het hen uitkomt. Zij zijn hier de wet en de maatstaf, en die klopt van geen kanten.'

Bakker Bons zei niets, en staarde nog steeds voor zich uit.

'Ik ben blij dat ik jou in ieder geval weer ben tegengekomen. Alleen is maar alleen, maar het is zeer zeker niet in de beste omstandigheden,' zei Joost. 'Maar dat verhaal van dat sapje van een bepaalde vrucht als lenzen, dat sprak me wel aan. Ik weet alleen niet waar ik het zou kunnen vinden. Die paarse monniken zeiden dat ik het moest hebben, anders zou ik ziek, gek en blind blijven, maar de zwarte monniken zeiden het tegenovergestelde, en dat ik ze zie vliegen. Zij maken zelf mensen ziek. Om gek van te worden. Ze hebben je wel te pakken gehad. Je zit daar als een robot.'

Plotseling keek bakker Bons hem strak aan, en sprak : 'Ik heb van dat sapje, dat sapje, ge... gedronken, en i... ik h... h....heb het als lenzen op mijn ogen.'

'Wat valt er te zien ?' vroeg Joost. 'Iets bijzonders nog ?'

'Nou,' zei bakker Bons. 'Ik z... z... zal je er dit van zeggen : Het is w.... w.... wonderlijk. I.... i... ik

kan door alles heenkijken. I... i... i.... ik zie dingen die jij niet kan zien, en ik z... zie ook dat je ziek bent.'

'Goeie genade !' riep Joost. 'Begin jij nu ook al ?'

N.... nee hoor,' zei bakker Bons. 'W.... waar heb je het over ?'

'Dat zei je net,' zei Joost woedend, 'dat ik ziek zou zijn.'

'Helemaal niet,' zei bakker Bons. 'Je moet geen dingen gaan lopen verzinnen.'

'Wat hebben ze je gegeven !' foeterde Joost. 'Je bent totaal jezelf niet meer. Je weet van voren niet meer dat je van achteren leeft. Gaan we elkaar nu ook met scheve ogen aankijken ?'

Toen staarde bakker Bons weer strak voor zich uit en zei niets meer.

'Wat staat me te wachten ?' vroeg Joost zich af. 'Misschien word ik wel net als hem.'

Plotseling kwam er een dikke donkere vrouw binnen. 'Nou, ik wil hem wel adopteren hoor,' foeterde ze naar een zwarte monnik die de gevangenis bewaakte. 'Ik heb wel erger meegemaakt. Ze zijn echt niet levensgevaarlijk hoor. Ik weet wel raad met blinden. Oh, is dat hem ?'

En zo ging Joost toch nog met een adoptie moeder mee. 'Ze zeiden dat ik een gevaar zou zijn voor een adoptie gezin,' zei Joost.

'Een gezin, ja,' zei de vrouw. 'Maar niet voor mij. Ik ben er speciaal voor opgeleid.'

'Als blindengeleide ofzo ?' vroeg Joost.

'Juist ja,' zei de vrouw.

'Vertel me over het sapje,' zei Joost. 'Is het waar of is het niet waar ?'

'Het is waar,' zei de vrouw, 'maar het splijt je persoonlijkheid. De ene helft weet nauwelijks iets van de andere helft.'

'Waar is dat voor nodig ?' vroeg Joost, die direct aan bakker Bons dacht.

'Het is het geheim van het zien,' zei de vrouw.

'Ik wil het wel proberen,' zei Joost, 'want anders word ik gek. Ik word doodziek van dit vage gedoe allemaal.'

'Goed,' zei de vrouw, 'wacht even hier.' Toen liep ze de keuken in. Even later kwam ze weer terug met een drankje. Het zag er glinsterend geel en oranje uit, als een natuurdrankje, vers geperst. 'Dit moet gedronken worden en je kan een druppeltje ervan gewoon op je oog doen als lens,' zei de

vrouw.

Joost nam een slokje en nam toen een druppeltje eruit om op zijn oog te leggen. 'Wonderbaarlijk,' zei Joost, 'ik kan door alles heenkijken.'

'Het werkt maar even,' zei de vrouw, 'en daarna ben je het weer vergeten.'

'Wat heb ik er dan aan ?' vroeg Joost.

'Wat ?' vroeg de vrouw.

'Als ik alles weer vergeet, van dat sapje, dat ik door alles heenkeek,' zei Joost.

'Oh dat,' zei de vrouw. 'Anders is het te sterk. Het moet voortdurend afgeremd worden, anders zou het je vernietigen. Maar daar zorgt het sapje wel voor. Het is een heel slim sapje. Daarna weet je het allemaal weer. Het is zoiets als slapen en waken. Het wisselt zichzelf af. Het is een onderdeel van je oog immunologie. Je moet een beetje het ritme leren kennen, en dan raak je er wel aan gewend.'

'Interessant,' zei Joost. 'Maar die monniken dan ? Gaan zij nog protesteren, of zullen ze me eindelijk aanvaarden ?'

'Die monniken zijn stapelgek,' zei de vrouw. 'Ze zijn ergens in vastgegroeid, en zullen je nooit accepteren. Zij zullen nooit met je op één lijn staan. Als je komt waar zij waren zullen zij al weer ergens anders zijn. Ze zullen nooit aan je toegeven. Het is hen niet te doen om waarheid, maar om autoriteit, en dat doen ze door groot bedrog. Ze proberen je altijd weer een rad voor de ogen te draaien, en je kan het nooit goed doen. Ook al heb je de antwoorden goed, dan zullen ze het altijd blijven ontkennen. Dat is hun aard. Het zijn geen pelgrims, zie je. Ze groeien niet. Ze komen niet verder, maar gaan eerder achteruit.'

'Bedankt voor de uitleg,' zei Joost dankbaar, 'en bedankt dat u mij daar heeft weggehaald. Maar waarom is bakker Bons daar nog steeds ?'

'Ik weet het niet,' zei de vrouw.

'Hij deed vreemd tegen me,' zei Joost. 'Hij zei dat hij van het sapje had genomen, en hij kon alles zien, ook dat ik ziek was, en daarna was hij het weer vergeten. En hij bleef maar vreemd voor zich uit staren.'

'Vreemd,' zei de vrouw. 'Misschien hebben ze hem iets anders gegeven.'

'Is hij nog te helpen ?' vroeg Joost.

'Dus er zitten daar nog bekenden van jou ?' vroeg de vrouw.

'Ja, in ieder geval onze bakker, bakker Bons, en misschien dat er nog wat wachters zijn,' zei Joost. 'We moesten allemaal vluchten voor de monniken, en toen zijn we elkaar uit het oog verloren, maar

toen ik werd opgepakt kwam ik in ieder geval weer in aanraking met bakker Bons.'

'Ik kan er maar één tegelijk redden,' zei de vrouw.

Hoofdstuk 5. Tussen vergetelheid en herinnering

'Ik zie ik zie wat jij niet ziet,' zei de donkere vrouw.
'Moet ik daar weer een sapje voor drinken ?' vroeg Joost.
'Nee,' zei de vrouw.

'Wat dan ?' vroeg Joost.
'Dat is het grote geheim van de smid,' zei de vrouw.
'En ben ik dus nog steeds ziek in jouw ogen ?' vroeg Joost.

'Ja, heel, heel ziek,' zei de vrouw.
'Maar je bent hier op het juiste adres. Bij het medicijn.'

'Moet ik ervoor oppassen ?' vroeg Joost.
'Voor dat medicijn. Maakt het me misschien nog zieker ?'

'Soms doen medicijnen dat,' zei de vrouw.
'Eerst nog zieker worden om daarna echt goed gezond te worden, als een soort aanloopje nemen. Het medicijn opent een oorlog dan, dus dan is er eerst even wat meer ziekte. Het is dan hard tegen hard.'

'U bent een wijze vrouw,' sprak Joost.
'Ik was eens koning van een land, maar ik heb het land verloren aan de monniken.'

'Nee, niet verloren,' zei de vrouw. 'Eerst doet het medicijn je meer verliezen, opdat je het later beter kan winnen.'

'Gelukkig maar,' zuchtte Joost.

De vrouw nam hem even in haar armen.

'Wat is het medicijn ?' vroeg Joost.

'Kom maar mee,' zei de vrouw. Ze leidde hem naar haar slaapkamer. Aan beide kanten stonden

bedden. 'Veel slapen,' zei de vrouw. 'Dan zul je dromen dromen.'

Joost keek haar verbaasd aan. Ze omhelsde hem weer.

'Die bakker, hè ?' vroeg ze. 'Wat bakte hij allemaal ?'

Maar Joost had plotseling geen kracht meer om te spreken. Het was alsof onzichbare kauwgom zijn kaken stijf op elkaar hield. 'Bi... bi.... bibel.... bibelebonse bakker,' stamelde Joost, terwijl hij zich heel zwak voelde, en op een bed neerplofte. Hij voelde zich heel duizelig en slaperig. Het leek wel alsof dromen en werkelijkheid gemengd werden.

'Oh dat,' zei de vrouw. Haar stem echode door zijn hoofd heen.

Toen viel Joost in slaap. Het was alsof hij in een donkere zee weggleed. De zee was vol met zeenatuur. Zoveel planten die hij niet kende. En hij gleed dieper en dieper, en het werd donkerder en donkerder. Iets draaide er in hem. Het was als een droom. Maar ook daar gleed hij van weg. Alles vergat hij, en kwam tot zijn andere helft. Hij werd wakker in zijn cel. Was alles maar een droom geweest ? Of droomde hij nu. Hij begon weer dingen te herinneren langzaam, heel langzaam. Bakker Bons was in de cel naast hem. Die sliep. Joost zuchtte. Wat hadden ze hem gegeven ? Wat hadden ze met hem gedaan ?

Hij kon niet meer slapen, en bleef maar denken, over wat er gaande was. Hij bleef maar voor zich uitstaren. Na een paar uur werd ook bakker Bons wakker.

'Waar zijn we ?' vroeg Joost.

'De monniken,' zei bakker Bons. 'Ze hebben ons goed te pakken.'

'Ja, maar wat zijn ze ?' vroeg Joost.

'Ik zie ik zie wat jij niet ziet,' zei bakker Bons.

'Hè, houd op,' zei Joost.

'Het is een systeem,' zei bakker Bons. 'Het splitst ons op, zodat we zien, maar de ene helft kent de andere helft niet.'

'Dus we zitten gevangen tussen twee helften ?' vroeg Joost.

'Ik denk het wel,' zei bakker Bons.

'Hoe kunnen we het overbruggen ?' vroeg Joost.

'Dat kan niet,' zei bakker Bons, 'want dan worden we blind. De twee helften zijn het geheim van het zien.'

'Maar volgens de monniken zijn we blind, of zien we teveel, zien we ze vliegen,' zei Joost.

'Ja, zij zijn de andere helft die de ene helft niet kent,' zei bakker Bond. 'Zij zullen altijd ontkennen.'

'Dat zei die vrouw ook,' zei Joost.

'Welke vrouw ?' vroeg bakker Bons.

'Ach, laat maar,' zei Joost.

Hoofdstuk 6. de blindengeleide vrouw

'En de wachters, zijn die hier ook ?' vroeg Joost.

'Allemaal,' zei bakker Bons. 'We wachtten allemaal op jou.'

Toen werd Joost weer wakker in de armen van de donkere vrouw.

'Het s... sapje,' stamelde Joost.

'Ik zie ik zie wat jij niet ziet, en daarom ben jij ziek,' fluisterde de vrouw, 'blind zogezegd. maar laat mij je persoonlijkheid splijten, opdat jij het ook kunt zien.'

'Dat doet het sapje, hè ?' vroeg Joost. 'Van welke vrucht is het eigenlijk ?'

'De vrucht van de paarse en zwarte monnikenboom,' zei de vrouw.

'Mmmmm,' zei Joost. 'Wat zouden we moeten beginnen zonder die paarse en zwarte monniken vrucht ?'

'Zonder dat zou je nooit tot mij zijn gekomen,' zei de vrouw.

'En wie bent u ?' vroeg Joost.

'De blindengeleide vrouw,' sprak de vrouw. 'Ik zie ik zie wat jij niet ziet. Maar het gaat niet alleen maar om het sapje. Ik ben het medicijn.'

'U ?' vroeg Joost.

'Ja,' zei de vrouw. 'Ik zie ik zie wat jij niet ziet. Daarom ben je hier. Ik ben de blindengeleide

vrouw.'

'Dus u bent een zieneres of profetes ? Of hoe moet ik me dat voorstellen ? U bent toch niet één van de monniken, hoop ik ?' vroeg Joost.

'Nee,' zei ze. 'Ik ben geen monnik, maar een pelgrim. Ik ben van het indiaanse natuurvolk. Wij zijn nomadisch. Wij trekken altijd verder. De monniken zijn zakenlieden. Ze bouwen hun stadjes en hun zaakjes, hun kloostertjes en gevangenisjes, en daar blijft het bij. En dan spelen ze profeetje, van ik zie ik zie wat jij niet ziet, dus ben je ziek, en moet je hun medicijnen kopen om er beter van te worden, of je moet er hard voor werken. Maar in wezen maken ze je alleen maar zieker en zieker, zodat ze nog meer aan je kunnen verdienen. Doemprofeten zijn het, maar dan van het leugenachtige soort, die je de vernietiging inliegen. Vuilnisprofeten zijn het, die je altijd hun rotzooi proberen te verkopen. Ze verkopen hun ziektes. Het zijn projecterende profeten met balken in hun ogen die het willen ruilen voor jouw splinter. Rammelende dronkelappen zijn het. Dronken profeten aan de kusten van het niemandsland.'

'Maar waarom woont u hier dan nog ?' vroeg Joost.

'Ik moet wel,' zei de vrouw. 'Want anders zou mijn andere helft niet kunnen bestaan, en dan zou ik niet zien. Mijn andere helft woont diep in de natuur, bij de natuurvolkeren, de nomadische natuurvolkeren.'

'Hoe kom ik daar ?' vroeg Joost.

'Door het medicijn,' zei de vrouw. 'Ik zie ik zie wat jij niet ziet. Je bent blind en ziek, maar twee helften maken je heel.'

'Vertel me meer over het medicijn,' zei Joost slaperig en dromerig. Hij leek weer weg te zakken, en werd weer wakker in zijn cel, naast de cel van bakker Bons.

'Slaapkop,' zei bakker Bons.

'Ik heb een vrouw,' zei Joost, 'een blindengeleide vrouw.'

'Iedereen hier,' zei bakker Bons.

'Vertel me meer over het medicijn,' zei Joost.

'Ik zie ik zie wat jij niet ziet,' zei bakker Bons.

'Zeg op dan,' zei Joost.

'Het is een oorlog tussen de pelgrims en de monniken, tussen de indianen en de monniken dus,' zei bakker Bons. 'De indianen hebben vanwege hun nomadische levenswijze een enorme kennis van de natuur, en van de heilzame giffen van de natuur die zij in deze oorlog gebruiken. Wij zijn geraakt door deze giftige pijltjes, opdat wij ontwaken uit onze slaap en uit onze onwetendheid. Die natuur

giffen van het oerwoud geven sterke hallucinaties en splitsen de persoonlijkheid, omdat het halve de enige overlevingskans is. Het hele zou fataal zijn. Alleen twee helften vormen het hele. Zo zijn ook de monniken een hele sterke hallucinatie, een heel sterk gif, wat de indianen gebruiken. Eerst wordt je zieker, blinder en dover, maar uiteindelijk is dat de weg tot de genezing, want het is een bijeffect van de oorlog, en die moet gestreden worden.'

'Maar waar is de strijd dan tegen ?' vroeg Joost.

'Tegen de onwetendheid,' zei bakker Bons. 'Het is de strijd voor ontwaking.'

'En voor ontwaking moet je eerst slapen,' zei Joost.

'Precies,' zei bakker Bons. 'De twee helften mogen niet teveel van elkaar weten.'

'Heel filosofisch,' zei Joost. 'Dat verklaart een hoop. Maar hoe komen we daar, in die diepere natuur ?'

'Ik zie ik zie wat jij niet ziet,' zei bakker Bons. 'En daarom ben je blind en ziek, en heb je een blindengeleide vrouw nodig. Die heb je inmiddels. Dat is het medicijn, en dat is het pad.'

'Goh, ik dacht toch echt dat ik voor iets anders was ingehuurd,' zei Joost.

'Het leven kan soms vreemd lopen,' zei bakker Bons.

'Dat kun je wel zeggen, ja,' zei Joost. 'Heel vreemd, heel vreemd.'

'Dus we zijn vergiftigd ?' vroeg Joost.

'Door het oerwoud,' zei bakker Bons, 'maar om ons te beschermen tegen grotere gevaren. Het is een oorlog, en de oorlog gebruikt strategie, om te overleven.'

Joost zuchtte. 'Ik weet niet wat ik moet geloven,' zei Joost, 'maar je bent een vriend uit duizenden, en die vrouw ook.'

Hoofdstuk 7. een mislukte ontsnapping

'Ik zie ik zie wat jij niet ziet,' fluisterde de donkere vrouw.
'Een gif, opdat je het ook zult zien.'

'Een krachtig natuur-medicijn,' zei Joost. 'Ik ben gespleten in helften.'

'Ik ook,' zei de vrouw. 'Mijn andere helft leeft diep in de natuur.'

'Ik wil haar leren kennen,' zei Joost.

Ze begon te lachen. 'Ze houden niet van indringers,' lachte de vrouw. 'Voor je het weet hebben ze een giftig pijltje in je wang geschoten, en lig je op de grond te schuimbekken.'

'Oh, een onontdekte stam zonder enig contact met de buitenwereld ?' vroeg Joost.

'Welke buitenwereld ?' vroeg de vrouw. 'De buitenwereld is slechts een gif wat ze gebruiken.'

'Ha ha,' zei Joost, 'dus alles is een hallucinatie ?'

'Maar natuurlijk,' zei de vrouw. 'Wat dacht je dan dat het was ?'

'Lieve help,' zei Joost, 'dus we zijn al heel diep in het oerwoud ?'

'Ja jongen,' zei de vrouw. 'Dat pijltje heb jij allang in je wang gehad.'

'Dus nu moet ik nog ontwaken ?' vroeg Joost.

'Ja,' zei de vrouw.

'Maar hoe ?' vroeg Joost.

'Ken je de bibelebonse pap ?' vroeg de vrouw.

'Eh, ja,' zei Joost.

'En de bibelebonse wijn ?' vroeg de vrouw.

'Eh, ja ook,' zei Joost.

'Neem er wat meer van,' zei de vrouw.

'Ik raak al overspannen als ik er aan denk,' zei Joost. 'Ik word er gek van. Ik moet er niet aan denken.'

'Heeft het je gespleten ?' vroeg de vrouw.

'Ja, daar ligt mijn verleden,' zei Joost, 'mijn mislukte koningschap, aan diggelen geslagen door de

paarse en zwarte monniken.'

'Het is dus een pijnlijke, gemengde herinnering,' zei de vrouw.

'Eh, ja,' zei Joost, 'dat kun je wel zeggen.'

'En de bibelebonse bakker ?' zei de vrouw.

'Dat is een goede vriend,' zei Joost.

'Die kan je leren van de bibelebonse pap en de bibelebonse wijn te nemen,' zei de vrouw.

'Zo ontwaak ik tot de diepere wildernis ?' vroeg Joost.

'Precies,' zei de vrouw.

'Dat is alles wat ik wil,' zei Joost. 'Ik heb rust nodig en studie. Ik wil de diepere natuur leren kennen, de diepe geheimen en orakelen van het oerwoud.'

'Komt voor de bakker,' lachte de vrouw. 'Het oerwoud is in je hoofd, Joost. Het zijn de giffen van het oerwoud, heilzame, strategische giffen.'

'Wat een weldaad,' zei Joost. Maar hij had een waas in zijn hoofd. Telkens wist hij niet of hij nu droomde of waakte.

'Ik zie ik zie wat jij niet ziet,' zei bakker Bons.

Ze zeiden dat vaak, zowel de bakker als de vrouw. De bakker was de blindengeleide bakker. In de cel schreef Joost verder zijn geschiedenisboeken. Ook de vrouw en de bakker werden natuurlijk volop genoemd. Zij waren een groot bibelebons geheim van overleving. Ook de vrouw was een doorgewinterde, ervaren bibelebonse bakker.

Een deel van zijn leven bracht Joost dus door in deze gevangenis, en ook de monniken bleven tegen hem zeggen : 'Ik zie ik zie wat jij niet ziet, en daarom ben jij blind en ziek, een levensgevaarlijke gek, en daarom hoor jij achter het hek. Als een roofdier in het enge bos, verscholen achter de bomen, daar waar de kinderen niet mogen komen.'

Elke dag weer kleineerden ze hem met hun uitspraken, belediging op belediging. En Joost noteerde het in zijn geschiedenisboeken. Hij kon geen koning meer zijn van het volk. Maar hij kon wel schrijver zijn voor het volk. Maar ja, waar was het volk, en wie zouden zijn boeken lezen ? En zo schreef en schreef hij maar, en soms stalen de monniken weleens wat weg. Hij had weleens het gevoel alsof hij voor niets werkte. Maar hij hield zich vast aan het spreekwoord : 'Wie zaait zal ook oogsten.'

Hij had slopende gevechten in zijn gedachten met de monniken, maar hij kon niets doen. Hij zat een groot gedeelte van de dag vast, tenzij hij bij de vrouw was. Hij wilde naar de wilde natuur, en

besefte dat hij er al in was. Hij moest tussen de regels doorlezen, elke steen omdraaien, en achter elk boomblad kijken. Vaak kon hij alles doorzien, maar vaak ook niet, en dan zonk hij weg. Vaak voelde hij zich als een overboord geslagene, door de storm, wegzinkende in de dieptes van de zee, maar dan zag hij de verborgen natuur van de zee, die hem ook weer inspireerde. Eigenlijk was hij niet opgesloten, maar hij was vrij. Er was zoveel ruimte tussen zijn twee helften, oneindige, veelkleurige ruimte. Hij kon het pad zien. En hij zag, hij zag, wat anderen niet zagen.

'Je ziet ze vliegen,' zeiden de monniken vaak, vooral ook als ze weer in zijn geschiedenisboeken hadden lopen lezen. Hij wilde niet dat ze er aan zouden komen, maar ze deden het toch, en scheurden soms stukken weg. Ze werden er hebberig van. Dat konden ze weer mooi doorverkopen als hun eigen.

Joost had een pesthekel aan de monniken, maar wat kon hij doen ? Het drukte zwaar op hem, en verlamde hem. Hij was zwaar vergiftigd. Elke dag treiterden ze hem en probeerden hem te verwarren.

Op een nacht vielen er een heleboel bakkers de gevangenis binnen. Het waren de bibelebonse bakkers. Er was even een flink gevecht, maar toen moesten de monniken het echt opgeven. Er was toen een grote uittocht uit de gevangenis, en uit het gebied van de monniken. Ook Joost, bakker Bons en vele wachters werden bevrijd. Het was een grote optocht. De bibelebonse bakkers hadden deze inval lang voorbereid. Ze kwamen met hun vele wagens en paarden, en er werd veel muziek gespeeld. Ze waren gekomen met vele schepen. Joost wist niet van waar. De bakkers hadden het laatste woord, zij die alles mengden, niet de monniken. De schepen van de bakkers stonden aan de kant van een grote rivier. Ook Joost en de anderen gingen een schip op.

Joost wist niet of hij droomde of dat het echt was, maar het was zo prachtig. Overal waren er lampionnen, als een lampionnen optocht, een lampionnen uittocht. Hij hoopt maar dat hij niet even later wakker zou worden in zijn cel, dat het allemaal maar een droom was geweest, alhoewel hij er nog steeds niet achter was of zijn cel nu wel of niet een droom was. Hij wist al zo'n lange tijd niet of hij nu wakker was of sliep. En bestond wakker zijn wel, of was alles gewoon een droom, een hallucinatie, door de heilzame giffen van het oerwoud ?

In ieder geval was hij blij dat de bibelebonse bakkers gekomen waren, dat ze hem niet in de steek hadden gelaten. Het was een lange tocht op het schip. Als hij sliep was hij weer bij de donkere vrouw. Toen ze op volle zee waren merkte Joost dat er veel schepen waren van monniken. De monniken waren overal. Spoedig begon Joost te beseffen dat ze niet ver zouden komen. Ook waren de schepen van de monniken veel groter dan de schepen van de bibelebonse bakkers. De moed zonk Joost in de schoenen. Ook op zee waren de zwarte monniken. Al snel werden ze omsingeld door een vloot van de zwarte monniken, en moesten zich overgeven. Legers van zwarte monniken kwamen aan boord, en iedereen ging de boeien in, om even later verscheept te worden naar land, waar ze allemaal in de gevangenis kwamen. Niet lang daarna was Joost weer terug in zijn cel, en ook bakker Bons, de wachters, en dit keer de andere bibelebonse bakkers ook. Het was een zeer grote gevangenis. De operatie was uiteindelijk uitgelopen op een grote mislukking.

Hoofdstuk 8. De Tuin

'Meeste stemmen gelden,' zeiden de zwarte monniken altijd, en zij waren in de meerderheid. Zij zagen wat Joost niet zag, dus Joost was ziek, blind. Hij vroeg zich af wat ze dan zagen. Joost werd er zwaar wanhopig van, maar als hij sliep, of als hij wakker werd, want dat wist hij nog niet, dan was hij bij de donkere vrouw, de blindengeleide vrouw. Ze sprak niet altijd veel. Vaak liet ze hem gewoon praten. Eigenlijk zei ze steeds minder.

Op een dag zei de vrouw : 'Ze leven in een droom, die monniken, die jij niet kan dromen. Het is een droom van de boom van vermenigvuldiging, waardoor ze zich vermenigvuldigen en in de meerderheid zijn. Jij ziet alleen de meerderheid, maar je kan de boom van vermenigvuldiging niet zien.' Daarom zeggen ze telkens : 'Wij zien, wij zien, wat jij niet ziet,' en 'meeste stemmen gelden.' Zij die in de minderheid zijn zijn ziek, want zij kennen de boom van vermenigvuldiging niet.

'En hoe droom ik die droom ?' vroeg Joost.

'Door een pilletje,' zei de vrouw.

'Wat voor pilletje ?' vroeg Joost.

'Kom ik laat het je zien,' zei de vrouw, en nam hem de tuin in. Hier groeiden allerlei exotische plantjes en struikjes. Aan een struikje groeiden een soort boontjes die op pilletjes leken.

'Wat gaat er gebeuren als ik er van neem ?' vroeg Joost.

'Dan droom je zoals hen, de dromen van vermenigvuldiging, van de boom van vermenigvuldiging,' zei de vrouw. 'Jouw volk zal zich dan wonderbaarlijk gaan vermenigvuldigen.'

'Heeft u dat ook gedaan ?' vroeg Joost.

'Ja,' zei de vrouw. 'Maar mijn volk leeft hier niet. Mijn volk leeft diep in het oerwoud.'

Joost dacht even na. 'Neem,' zei de vrouw.

'Kan het zo gegeten worden ?' vroeg Joost.

'Je kunt het zo opeten,' zei de vrouw. 'Het is zacht.'

Joost plukte een pilletje en begon het te eten. Direct viel hij schuimbekkend op de grond, en begon te dromen over de boom van vermenigvuldiging, en zijn volk begon te vermenigvuldigen. Het leek wel alsof hij dubbel begon te zien.

'Maar ja,' zei de vrouw. 'Sommigen nemen wel elke dag een pilletje, wat helemaal niet goed voor je gezondheid is, en waar je zwaar ziek van wordt, zo zwaar dat je bij anderen ziektes gaat inbeelden. Ze vermenigvuldigen zo snel en veel dat het ziekelijk wordt.'

'Oh,' gromde Joost, 'maar wat doe ik daar dan tegen ? Daar valt toch niet tegen op te boksen ?'

'Er is ook een boom van vermindering,' zei de vrouw. 'Dan splits je waardoor je zelf gaat vermenigvuldigen.'

'Oh,' zei Joost, 'en ...' Maar hij kon niks meer zeggen.

De vrouw liep naar een ander struikje en haalde daar een ander soort pilletje vandaan. 'Dan moet je hiervan eten,' zei de vrouw, en stak het in zijn mond.

'Drommels !' riep Joost. 'Ik kan daar toch niet tegenop ! Dit is allemaal misselijkmakende troep !'

'Als je er gewoon eentje van neemt, dan is er niks aan de hand,' zei de vrouw, terwijl ze wegliep, verder de tuin in. 'Kom,' zei ze.

'Ik kan me niet meer bewegen,' zei Joost. 'Het is een wonder dat ik nog kan spreken, want dat kon ik net ook niet.'

'Je hebt het nu gezien,' zei de vrouw. 'Het komt wel weer.'

'Dit is gewoon drugs,' zei Joost. 'Die monniken zijn dus gewoon drugsverslaafden, en wij moeten ervoor betalen.'

'Precies, Joost,' zei de vrouw.

'Maar wat doen we er dan tegen, want ik ga niet meer van deze troep nemen,' foeterde Joost. 'Het voelt alsof ik in duizend stukjes lig.'

'Tja,' zei de vrouw, 'wat doe je er tegen. Ik heb nog wel veel meer pilletjes die je kan proberen.'

'Laat maar,' zei Joost. 'Ik ben al half kreupel door die troep. Nu maar hopen dat het wegtrekt.'

'Komt wel goed,' sprak de vrouw.

'Jullie zijn levensgevaarlijk,' foeterde Joost. 'Misschien ben jij wel één van hen.'

'Het zijn bepaalde stoffen in de hersenen die in balans moeten komen,' zei de vrouw. 'Je hebt van alles maar een heel klein beetje nodig. Dat wekt ook weer allerlei andere stoffen op die je nodig hebt.'

'Daar zit wat in,' zei Joost, die direct al weer wat rustiger werd. 'Dus eigenlijk zijn die monniken

heel extremistisch en houden ze ook weer andere stoffen verborgen ?'

'Ja,' zei de vrouw, 'en ze wekken ook weer tegenpolen op die je nodig hebt.'

'Dus eigenlijk zijn onze hersenen gevaarlijke cocktails, maar zijn die cocktails ook weer belangrijk om bepaalde missende stoffen op te wekken,' zei Joost.

'Juist,' zei de vrouw. 'En daarvoor zijn de blindengeleide bakkers, de bibelebonse bakkers, zoals ik, om de blinden veilig door deze gevaren te leiden, als door druk verkeer.'

'Okay,' zei Joost, 'ik begin het te begrijpen. Dus eigenlijk wat er nu gebeurt is allemaal belangrijk, zelfs van levensbelang.'

'Juist,' zei de vrouw.

Hoofdstuk 9. De Boswachters

Aan de andere zijde van de cel van Joost was de cel van een wachter. Deze wachter vertelde Joost vele vreemde verhalen. Wat kon die man praten. Hij had het erover dat de monniken heel vroeger gok-automaten waren die een vreemd spel speelden : 'Ik zie ik zie wat jij niet ziet.' Je moest dan gokken wat ze zagen op de automaat, en als je drie van hetzelfde op een rij kreeg dan kreeg je toegang tot het tuinen-gebied langs de steden, en als je vier van hetzelfde op een rij kreeg dan kreeg je toegang tot het bos, en als je vijf op een rij kreeg dan kreeg je toegang tot de indiaanse volkeren, de natuur volkeren. De wachter zei dat de monniken daarom boswachters waren, of natuur wachters. Door de gok-automaten beveiligden ze hun gebied.

Joost vond het een vreemd verhaal. De wachter noemde de monniken ook orakels. Maar ze begonnen steeds geheimzinniger te doen, zodat hun oorspronkelijke betekenissen verloren gingen. 'Dus eigenlijk is het een spel ?' zei Joost.

'Een beveiligings-systeem, ja,' zei de wachter.

'En dat heeft de natuur zo gebouwd om de natuur volkeren te beschermen ?' vroeg Joost.

'Ja,' zei de wachter, 'precies.'

'Dus eigenlijk moeten we gokkers worden om erdoor te komen ?' vroeg Joost.

'Nou ja, eigenlijk bepalen de gok-automaten alles,' zei de wachter. 'Ze geven niet makkelijk mee. Het zijn een soort school-rechters. Ze kijken hoeveel je hebt geleerd, en op basis daarvan laten ze je door, of niet.'

'Dus eigenlijk is het niet echt een spel, maar meer een inspectie en een inquisitie ?' vroeg Joost.

'Precies ja,' zei de wachter.

'Dus eigenlijk missen we dat systeem nog voor ons eigen land, en moeten we eerst er zelf doorheen, anders zou het corrupt zijn,' zei Joost.

'Inderdaad, daarom zijn we hier,' zei de wachter.

'Nu begint het duidelijker te worden,' zei Joost. 'Maar wat een machine is dat dan, hè.'

'Dat moet wel,' zei de wachter.

'Hoe krijgen we het systeem aan de praat ?' vroeg Joost. 'Hoe wordt het van ons ?'

'Het is al van ons,' zei de wachter. 'Het beveiligt ons nu al.'

'Geweldig,' zei Joost. 'Zo had ik het nog niet bekeken.'

'De natuur heeft ons niet alleen gelaten,' zei de wachter, 'en ook niet aan ons lot overgelaten. De natuur is diep en strategisch, boven menselijk denken en vermogen.'

'Prachtig,' zei Joost. 'Ik zie het weer helemaal zitten.'

'Maar je andere helft weet hier niets van,' zei de wachter, 'en mag het ook niet weten, anders is het einde zoek.'

'Ik weet het,' zei Joost. 'Het is het geheim van de ziener, de bibelebonse ziener. Dus eigenlijk zijn die monniken bibelebonse boswachters, bibelebonse zieners ?'

'Ja, maar het feestje is flink uit de hand gelopen,' zei de wachter. 'Het heeft zich lopen vermenigvuldigen, en er zijn schaduwen ontstaan, en de ramp is niet meer te overzien.'

'Ik begrijp het,' zei Joost. 'Dus wij moeten alles rechtzetten.'

'Wij moeten de machine weer herstellen,' zei de wachter, 'en dat kan alleen als we er doorheen gaan.'

'Oh dromen zo schoon, ik zie de natuur,' zei Joost, 'het oerwoud. Wachter, wat is er van de nacht ?

Wat hebt u mij gegeven ? De nachtwacht bent u. Blij dat ik je tegengekomen ben hier, kerel. Ik dacht dat ik helemaal zou wegzinken in deze nachtmerrie, maar jij leidde mij tot de ochtend.'

'Dat zal ik telkens weer doen,' zei de wachter. 'Ik ben inderdaad een nachtwacht. Door mijn werk heb ik al deze geheimen geleerd.'

Toen Joost weer bij de donkere vrouw was vertelde hij over de nachtwacht. 'Dat lukt je nooit,' zei ze. 'Je komt nooit door die gok machines heen. Die zijn zo geprogrammeerd dat je altijd zult verliezen, ook als je wint. Je zal nooit meer terug kunnen naar je eigen land, maar je zal dieper de natuur ingaan. Het zijn de giffen van het oerwoud. Ze laten je niet meer gaan, maar trekken je alleen dieper. En je zal alles weer snel zijn vergeten.'

'Zo zij het,' zuchtte Joost. 'Dus ik moet altijd bij de monniken blijven ?'

'Voor de helft,' zei de vrouw, 'anders zou het oerwoud je totaal overweldigen en geheel verwoesten. Het is voor je eigen bescherming, en daarom ben ik ook hier. De monniken zijn voor je inventaris.'

'Goed,' zei Joost.

'Lange optochten maken ze, Joost,' zei de vrouw. 'Diep de natuur in, en diep er weer uit. Ze zijn orthodox, star, omdat ze het geheim bewaken. Het zijn inderdaad boswachters.'

Achter de tuin van de vrouw was het bos, en op een dag nam ze Joost mee door het tuinhekje het bos in. Daar kwamen ze een vrouw die geheel in het rood gekleed was tegen. Zij had een mandje en plukte wilde bloemen.

'Dag, rode vrouw,' zei Joost.

'Hoe maakt u het,' zei de vrouw.

'Wie is het ?' vroeg Joost aan de donkere vrouw.

'Ik ken haar niet,' zei de donkere vrouw.

'Ik ben Willie,' zei de vrouw, en stak haar hand uit. Joost schudde haar hand.

De donkere vrouw nam hem toen dieper het bos in. Ze kwamen aan bij een meertje, en daar gingen ze zitten in het hoge gras bij een boom. 'Achter het meertje leven de natuur volkeren,' zei de vrouw, 'maar ze zijn nogal paranoïde. Je komt daar echt niet zomaar.'

'Hoe dan ?' vroeg Joost. 'Vraag maar aan de monniken,' zei de vrouw. 'Dat zijn de boswachters.'

'Ik zal het wel even aan Willie vragen,' zei Joost, en liep naar haar terug. Maar Willie wist het ook niet.

Hoofdstuk 10. Marie Huyana

Joost vroeg het aan de monniken of hij de natuur volkeren mocht zien. Jaarlijks maakten ze grote optochten langs de natuur volkeren. Daar hadden ze ook hun pijen en kappen voor, dat ze niet getroffen zouden worden door de gifpijltjes van de wilde natuurvolkeren. Joost wilde ook mee, maar dan moest hij goed verscholen blijven achter de monniken. De optochten zouden een week lang duren. Toen het zo ver was was er een hele grote stoet van monniken. Ook waren er anderen die meegingen, zoals boeren en gevangenis-bewoners. De optocht ging heel traag, en de monniken zongen trage liederen. Joost moest en zou de natuur volkeren zien. Ze zouden telkens overnachten in de natuur, waarvoor de monniken kampen opzetten. Na een paar dagen was het zover, en zouden ze langs het eerste kamp van de natuur volkeren gaan. Ze mochten absoluut niet te dichtbij komen. Ze gingen over een heuvelrichel. Joost had pijn in zijn buik van de spanning. Toen hij het kamp van een natuurvolk zag ging zijn hart sneller kloppen. Even later hoorde hij gekrijs en gegil, natuurwilden met wapens die op de optocht afrenden. 'Wat moet dat hier met die optocht ?' riep een wilde, bijna gillend. De monniken zeiden niets, maar bleven maar zingen. De wilde begon door de rijen heen te gaan, en Joost viel bijna flauw van de angst. Wat als ze hem zouden vinden ? Hij kroop helemaal tegen een monnik aan, en kroop toen onder de pij. Nog steeds hoorde hij gegil en gekrijs. Alles was donker nu. Hij kon niets meer zien. Wat er toen gebeurde kon hij zich niet meer herinneren, maar hij werd wakker in een wigwam waar hij op een mat lag, en waar een donkere vrouw zijn wonden waste met water uit een kom, en zijn wonden verbond. 'Waar ben ik ?' vroeg Joost.

'Bij mij,' zei de vrouw.

'Wat is er gebeurd ?' vroeg Joost.

'Niets zeggen,' zei de vrouw.

'Niets zeggen ?' vroeg Joost.

Ze gaf hem een klap in zijn gezicht. 'Ik zei niets zeggen,' zei ze.

Joost besloot zich maar stil te houden. Hij kreunde. Hij kon niet opkomen. Blijkbaar was er een oorlog geweest tussen de monniken en het wilde natuurvolk. Joost besloot zich maar gewoon kalm te houden en te wachten. De vrouw ging met een vochtige doek over een wond op zijn voorhoofd.

'Au,' zei Joost, en werd direct heel duizelig.

'Gevaarlijk spul,' zei de vrouw.

'Ja, door jullie ?' vroeg Joost.

'Nee, het is gif van de monniken,' zei de vrouw. 'Jij rende ineens naar ons toe, en de monniken gebruikten hun wapens naar je.'

Joost wist niet of hij dat kon geloven. 'Waarom zou ik dat doen ?'

'Dat moet je mij niet vragen,' zei de vrouw.

'Ik kan me er niets meer van herinneren,' zei Joost. 'Het zijn toevallig niet jullie gifpijltjes ?'

'Nee,' zei de vrouw. 'Misschien dat ze je daarmee bang hebben gemaakt, die monniken.'

'Nogal,' zei Joost, 'dus ik kan me niet voorstellen dat ik op jullie af zou zijn gerend. Alles wat ik me kan herinneren is dat ik me verschool onder een monnikenpij.

'Je werd geroepen,' zei de vrouw. 'Iemand riep je naam, en toen rende je.'

'Vreemd,' zei Joost. 'En wie riep me, en hoe wist je dat het mijn naam was ?'

'Dat vertelden ze me,' zei de vrouw.

Joost had weer even het gevoel alsof hij niks kon zeggen. Hij was te duizelig en had teveel pijn.

'Niet bewegen,' zei de vrouw.

'Ik vind het maar vreemd,' kreunde Joost even later.

'Die monniken zijn vreemd,' zei de vrouw.

'Waar zijn ze nu ?' vroeg Joost.

'Gevlucht,' zei de vrouw. 'Sommigen zijn dood.'

'Door jullie ?' vroeg Joost.

'Nee, ze vielen elkaar aan,' zei de vrouw.

'Waarom zouden ze dat doen ?' vroeg Joost verbaasd.

'Niet zoveel vragen stellen,' zei de vrouw.

Joost kreunde. Hij geloofde er allemaal niets van.

'Ik moet het toch weten,' zei Joost. Toen kreeg hij weer een klap in zijn gezicht.

Hij besloot zich maar weer rustig te houden.

'Het is een drugs,' zei de vrouw.

'Wat ?' vroeg Joost.

'De monniken,' zei de vrouw.

'Je was verdwaald en nam ervan. Het groeit hier ergens.'

'Maar hoe ben ik dan verwond ?' vroeg Joost.

'Dat doet de drugs,' zei de vrouw. 'Het is zelfverwonding. Uiteindelijk valt het zichzelf aan. Wees maar blij, want zo ben je weer wakker geworden, en toen werd je geroepen.'

'Wordt ik weer genezen ?' vroeg Joost.

De vrouw schudde haar hoofd. 'Nee,' zei ze. 'Je hersenen zijn blijvend aangetast. Telkens weer zul je wakker worden bij de monniken. Je bent zwaar ziek.'

'Dus de monniken is een ziekte ?' vroeg Joost. 'Een hersenziekte door de drugs ?'

'Ja,' sprak de vrouw, 'maar ook hier zul je altijd ontwaken, want we hebben je deels kunnen genezen. Alles komt alleen maar half. Daar moet je mee leren leven. Je bent gespleten, opdat je kunt zien.'

'En wie is die donkere vrouw bij wie ik altijd in huis ben ?' vroeg Joost. 'Zij nam me tot de tuin en toen tot het bos.'

'Dat is mijn andere helft,' zei de vrouw, 'maar ik weet niet veel van haar, en dat moet zo blijven.'

'Nou,' zei Joost, 'blij dat je me hebt gevonden. Alle beetjes helpen.'

'Van welke plant had ik drugs genomen ?' vroeg Joost. 'Of van welke struik of boom ?'

Van een slingerplant,' zei de vrouw, 'genaamd Marie Huyana. Maar ze noemen haar ook wel Willie.'

'Volgens mij ken ik die,' zei Joost.

'Dat moet wel,' zei de vrouw.

Hoofdstuk 11. van slingerplant tot slingerplant

Zo leidde Joost een driedubbel leven. Als hij bij de monniken was, dan schreef hij altijd, en leerde hij tussen de regels door te lezen, elke steen om te draaien, en achter elk boomblad te kijken. En dat was ook belangrijk, want anders zou het leven niet eens bestaan. Er moest een inventaris zijn, en die had Joost hier. Het was zijn start menu. Hij moest het geheimenis van de boswachters leren kennen. En zo werd Joost een echte bibelebonse bakker die alles mengde tot het beste.

De nachtwacht die in de cel naast Joost leefde had hele bijzondere zaadjes die hij Joost eens gaf. Het waren zogenaamde bakkerzaadjes, waar je heel mooi van ging dromen, over bakkerijen waar alle bibelebonse bakkers elkaar konden ontmoeten. Maar de nachtwacht had er maar een beperkt aantal dus het was al snel op, en ook de dromen stopten weer. maar het inspireerde Joost wel. Het leek wel alsof het toch op een bepaalde manier bij Joost bleef hangen, als een dagdroom die hij iedere dag had. En het was beter zo, want het hele was gevaarlijk, maar het halve was een beveiliging. Joost leerde meer en meer het halve te waarderen en ermee te leven.

Wazige dagdromen waren voor Joost het best. Daar kon hij alle kanten mee op. Het was allemaal creatief materiaal. Zo kon hij schrijven en schrijven. En hij zag een hemels boek voor hem verschijnen, wat voor hem geopend werd. En de bladeren waren als vleugelen, en hij schreef : 'Zij dan die de monnik prijzen boven de pelgrim zijn zeer te betreuren.' Maar Joost is geen monnik. Hij is een pelgrim, en pelgrims moeten beschermd worden, want anders zou het te gevaarlijk zijn. En daarom zat Joost opgesloten. 'Wij bewaken u niet, wij beschermen u,' zeiden de monniken vaak. Vaak gingen de monniken op hun hoge paarden op pad om op zoek te gaan naar hen die ze zouden kunnen beschermen.

Soms kwamen er weer nieuwen bij in de gevangenis, en Joost liet zich telkens weer inspireren voor zijn boeken. En zo schreef Joost door, soms wel dag en nacht, om een klein bibliotheekje af te krijgen, opdat de mens onderwezen zou worden over het geheim van de monniken, en het geheim van de bibelebonse bakker. Hiervoor las hij tussen de regels door, draaide hij elke steen om, en keek hij achter elk boomblad.

Toen Joost weer bij de donkere vrouw was was Willie daar op bezoek, oftewel Marie Huyana. Ze zaten in de tuin. Ze was weer helemaal in het rood en had een rood kapje op, en had haar mandje bij zich.

'Zo,' zei Joost tegen Willie, 'was je weer aan de wandel gegaan ?'

Maar Willie zei niks. 'Ze heeft haar dag niet,' zei de donkere vrouw.

'Noemen ze jou ook niet Marie Huyana ?' vroeg Joost aan Willie, maar weer zei Willie niets.

'Laat haar maar,' zei de donkere vrouw. Na een tijdje ging Willie weer weg.

'Wat was er nu met haar aan de hand ?' vroeg Joost.

'Kom,' zei de vrouw, en nam Joost naar binnen. Bij de boekenkast liet ze hem een boekje zien. Het was een verhaaltje over een vrouw met een rood kapje in het bos, die toen werd gegrepen door een slingerplant en diep het oerwoud werd ingenomen. Daar werd haar rode kapje afgenomen, en haar rode klederen werden verscheurd, en werd ze gemaakt tot een wilde. Ze wist te ontsnappen, maar veranderde toen zelf in een slingerplant, maar zorgde er toen voor dat niemand daar zou komen waar zij was geweest.

'Dus ze beschermde mensen,' zei Joost.

'Ja,' zei de vrouw, 'opdat ze nooit hoefden mee te maken wat zij had meegemaakt.'

Op een nacht kwamen de slingerplanten ook Joost halen. Ze haalden hem gewoon uit zijn bed en waren door de gevangenisdeuren heengebroken. Diep in de wildernis brachten ze Joost, en Joost dacht : 'Heb ik dit niet eerder meegemaakt ?' En Joost zag dat de monniken slechts een slingerplant waren, en dat hij werd genomen van slingerplant tot slingerplant, dieper de wildernis in. Het leek wel alsof zij hem telkens overgooiden, totdat hij ook het gevoel had dat hij niets anders was dan een slingerplant.

Einde

Het Eiland in de Zee

Hij ondernam de tocht, en ging op zijn zeilschip de zee over. Het was prachtig weer, wat al snel overliep in een regenbui. Helemaal drijfnat kwam hij aan op een eiland na een lange tijd zeilen. Het

was een prachtig eiland. Het leek wel alsof de bomen hem toewuifden. Hij legde aan op een strandje en stapte uit de boot. Een donkere vrouw met een rieten rokje liep op hem af. Ze was direct heel gastvrij, en verwelkomde hem op het eiland, en nodigde hem uit tot haar hut te gaan. Hij keek zijn ogen uit in het prachtige oerwoud. Ze gingen over een zandpad en het zand brandde onder zijn voeten. Na een tijdje kwamen ze aan bij haar hut. Het was een eenvoudige hut. Ze zei dat ze hem later ook wel het hele eiland kon laten zien. Hij had deze gastvrijheid niet verwacht. Het had ook heel anders kunnen gaan, namelijk door een pijl in zijn rug. Toch was hij op zijn hoede. Je wist immers maar nooit. Het kon ook een valstrik zijn.

Het eiland was grotendeels onbewoond. Het was dus ook een overlevings strategie van de vrouw waarom ze zo deed. Na een tijdje bracht ze hem weer naar buiten, en liet hem de wildernis zien. Er waren hier prachtige rivieren met prachtig hoog gras, en daarachter wildernis. Hij vroeg hoe ze hier leefde. Ze zei dat ze helemaal alleen was, maar dat er een klein kampje was ergens op het eiland wat ze soms bezocht. Ze was vroeger deel van het kamp, maar ze hadden ruzie gekregen, en ze kwam erachter dat ze beter op haarzelf kon leven. Ze ging soms naar de stam toe puur om te overleven.

Naar mate hij haar beter leerde kennen kwam hij erachter dat ze helemaal niet zo makkelijk was in de omgang. Ze had vele gezichten. Het was sinds hij was ingegaan op haar aanbod dat ze hem steeds respectlozer ging behandelen. Ze was nog steeds heel erg gastvrij, maar ze begon hem steeds meer te kleineren. Dat lag er echt niet dik bovenop in het begin, maar meer subtiel. Het was alsof ze hem steken onder water gaf, en het dan weer afdekte met een doek. Dan kon ze ineens weer heel aardig doen.

Op een bepaalde manier was hij in een worsteling met haar, een psychologische worsteling. Het lag er niet dik bovenop, maar het was onderhuids. Tegelijkertijd genoot hij van de pracht van het eiland, hoe het hem stimuleerde en inspireerde. Hij was even weg van alles en van zijn verleden.

Ze hield hem af van het ontmoeten van de stam verderop het eiland, en hij wist niet waarom. Ze zei dan wel dat ze niet gemakkelijk waren, maar dat was zij ook niet. Beiden bleven ze kalm in hun gesprekken met elkaar, misschien ook omdat ze telkens werden afgeleid door de prachtige natuur om hen heen en de geluiden van het oerwoud. Soms begreep hij haar niet en wist hij niet of ze hem nu probeerde te beledigen of dat ze wat anders bedoelde. Soms kon hij het niet opbrengen om verder door te vragen, wilde hij in de rust blijven, maar soms bracht dat ook een bepaalde rusteloosheid. Het leek wel alsof er competitie heerste tussen hen op een bepaalde manier.

Eigenlijk wilde hij weg van haar, en de stam waar ze het over had ontmoeten, of gewoon ergens anders op het eiland de tijd verdrijven, maar hij voelde alsof ze iets van hem had gestolen wat hij terugwilde. Hij kon niet weg. Dat wat zij van hem had gestolen, daar kon hij niet zonder leven. Ze had dus al een zekere macht over hem. Toch wilde hij hier niet aan toegeven, en zei dat hij weer verder wilde, of naar die stam, of ergens anders op het eiland. Hij bedankte haar al voor de gesprekken en de gastvrijheid, maar toen wilde zij dat hij zou blijven. Toen kon hij het ook niet over zijn hart krijgen om weg te gaan. De dagen erna werd ze eigenlijk steeds moeilijker, maar ook steeds aardiger, en die combinatie werd in principe gewoon dodelijk. Hij voelde dat hij psychologisch vast kwam te zitten door haar, door haar opmerkingen, alsof zij hem had verlamd.

Hij wist dat hij goed in de problemen was nu. Hij had snoep genomen van vreemden waarvoor zijn moeder hem altijd gewaarschuwd had. Hij was in een exotische valstrik van het eiland gelopen, van het oerwoud. Hij verdedigde zich niet naar haar, want hij wist dat het dan alleen maar erger kon worden, alsof hij dan in de fuik werd getrokken, en ze probeerde altijd ook een hele hoop goed te praten.

Ze vermoeide hem, en daardoor werd hij afhankelijk van haar. Zij moest nu voor hem zorgen. Hij was in een gevaarlijke situatie terecht gekomen. Hij voelde zich ziek, alsof hij vergiftigd was, en hij was helemaal alleen in het oerwoud met haar. Ze betuttelde hem ook, sprak telkens met verklein-woordjes. Ze bemoederde hem, maar was ook een slinkse vijand. Hij moest telkens op zijn hoede zijn. Op een dag kon hij niet meer verder. Hij kon alleen nog maar neerliggen.

Ze zou wat soep voor hem maken, met allerlei exotische vruchten er doorheen. Die zouden erg krachtig en pittig zijn, en die zouden hem wel genezen. Hij dacht er ook aan dat hij misschien niet bestand was tegen het leven in het oerwoud en tegen zulke vrouwen als zij. Maar de soep deed hem goed, en zo hield zij hem aan het lijntje. Ze was niet extreem, maar subtiel. Het liep ook nooit uit op een echte ruzie tussen hen, maar er was wel een onzichtbare oorlog. Langzaam voelde hij zich weer beter. Het was alsof zij hem ook weer optrok, maar na de problemen die zij hem had gegeven. Zo werd haar machtspositie nog meer versterkt in zijn leven. Hij begon er aan gewend te raken, en het gaf een bepaald vertrouwen. Toch wist hij dat het een gokspel was, want ze zou hem zo aan zijn lot kunnen overlaten.

Ze lokte hem dieper in haar wereld, als een zoet vergif, waarvoor hij telkens weer een medicijn nodig had, en dat was zij. Het was als een vreemde medicijnen of drugs verslaving, maar waren alle vriendschappen en relaties niet zo ? Hij dacht dat het gewoon bij het leven hoorde, en het gaf hem grote afleiding. Zijn verleden was niet al te best, en zo had hij even wat anders. Hij raakte meer en meer geïnteresseerd in haar als persoon. Hij wilde haar verleden kennen, hoe ze zo was geworden, haar geheimen, en misschien zou hij haar ook kunnen helpen. Niets was vrijblijvend hier in ieder geval. Voor elk woord wat van haar tong droop moest hij zwaar betalen, als voor zeldzame honing. Het werd een obsessie voor hem waarvan hij niet meer kon loskomen. Zij was als televisie in het oerwoud.

Zij leerde hem overleven in het oerwoud. Zij leerde hem alles. Zij liet hem een totaal nieuw leven zien, en al snel vroeg hij zich af waar hij zich in eerste instantie druk over had gemaakt. Misschien was het zijn voorzichtigheid, zijn ingebouwde alarm. Alles had tijd nodig. Ook dit.

Hij genoot met haar van het oerwoud en van de zee. Soms gingen ze zwemmen. Het leek wel alsof het oerwoud en de zee tussen hen beiden in was, om hun vriendschap gezond te blijven houden. Hij kon telkens alles afspoelen. Er was telkens teveel afleiding om hen heen om echt totaal verloren te raken in elkaar. Misschien zou het in de stad helemaal verkeerd zijn gelopen, zouden ze dan te dicht bij elkaar op de lip hebben gezeten, en zou het oerwoud niet tussen beiden kunnen komen wanneer dat nodig was. De natuur beschermde hem ook tegen al te zware depressie en wanhoop. De golven spoelden alles weg. Het zoute water was telkens zijn genezing, en zo kon hij haar ook telkens weer op nieuwe manieren bekijken en tegemoet treden. De natuur werkte zo aan hun vriendschap.

Op een dag bracht zij hem naar de stam op het eiland. Hij zag direct wat ze bedoelde. De vrouwen

liepen daar bijna zenuwachtig rond met hun speren, agressief. Ze begonnen hem direct uit te schelden en kleinerende opmerkingen te maken. Er was hier geen politie op het eiland, dus ze zouden hem zo kunnen aanvallen. Ze hadden een zeker respect voor de vrouw die bij hem was, dus daarom deden ze het niet, maar ze dreigden. Ze zagen hem als een indringer. Ze waren veel te direct. Ze waren een deel van haar leven, en ze werden dus ook een deel van zijn leven, maar hij kon goed begrijpen waarom ze vaak afstand hield. Het eiland was eigenlijk te groot om zich druk te maken over hen. Hij had genoeg afleiding en ze hadden hen nauwelijks nodig. De vrouw ging er steeds minder vaak naartoe sinds hij er was.

Ze verzonnen hun eigen spelletjes in het oerwoud, zodat ze niet telkens hoefden te spreken. Het bracht ook wat avontuur in hun leven, alhoewel het zwemmen in de zee, of een trektocht door het oerwoud al avonturen op zich waren. Soms deden ze hardloop spelletjes, tikkertje of speelden ze verstoppetje, als tijdverdrijf. Zo leerden ze elkaar ook op een andere manier kennen. Hij wilde haar psychologische diepte kennen. Hij merkte dat het leren kennen van elkaar steeds trager ging, en dat ze in cirkeltjes terechtkwamen. Ergens liep alles vast en werd het routine. Hij besefte toen ook dat de geheimen waar hij naar op zoek was niet slechts in haar te vinden waren, maar ergens anders in de veel grotere natuur. Daarom is hij op een dag naar zijn zeilboot gegaan en trok verder de zee over tot een volgend eiland.

Stewardes in het Oerwoud

Ik sprak met de stewardes.
Nee, het kon allemaal niet doorgaan.
De vorige keer was ik te diep het oerwoud in gegaan, en dat had mij problemen gegeven, en hun verzekering kon het niet betalen, en ik mocht niet meer mee.
Ik schold haar uit voor rotte vis.
Ik wilde haar baas spreken.
Zelfde verhaal.
Later biechte ze iets op, dat ze wat in mijn koffie hadden gegooid.
Een pilletje ofzo.
Wat wilden ze niet vertellen.
Gelukkig had ik het telefoon gesprek opgenomen.

Ik sprak weer met die stewardes.
Zei dat ik haar baas had gesproken, en die had wat in mijn koffie gestopt.
Zij wilde dat niet geloven.

Ik zei dat ik het gesprek had opgenomen, maar toen ze het hoorde zei ze dat het nep was.
Je komt nergens bij deze reis organisatie en al helemaal niet met hun verzekering.
Je betaalt er alleen dik voor, maar ja, ik was over de streep gegaan volgens hen, en hun baas had iets in mijn koffie gestopt, maar toen ze het gingen navragen werd alles ontkent.
Ik heb de opnames, maar die zijn volgens hen nep.

Dit reis bureau, ik heb er flinke koppijn van overgehouden, of is het van die koffie ?
En wat hebben ze er doorheen gegooid ?
Als ik er vroeger met mijn oma en tante naartoe ging, dan werden ze allemaal zenuwachtig. We werden verschrikkelijk in de gaten gehouden. Ze deden alsof wij criminelen waren die hen wilden overvallen. Dat zeiden ze dan wel niet letterlijk, maar hun gedrag naar ons was paranoïde, alsof we zware wapens bij ons hadden ofzo. Mijn oma en ik moesten er toen nog om lachen, maar nu lach ik niet meer.

Te ver het oerwoud ingegaan, dus daarom werkte de verzekering niet meer.
Ik had netjes aan de lijn moeten blijven als een hond.
Daar betaal ik niet voor.
Ik had ook eerder terug moeten zijn ofzo.
Maar ja, dat kan dus niet als je diep in het oerwoud wordt vastgehouden.
Verzekering betaalde het niet, maar kon ik het helpen dat ik zo diep het oerwoud was ingegaan.
Wat kun je doen tegen een ontvoering ?
Hadden ze ook allemaal excuses voor.
Ik weet wel zeker dat die baas van hen erachter zit. Zei doodleuk dat ze wat in mijn koffie had gedaan. En daarna alles ontkennen. Ze proberen je gewoon gek te maken.

Ik heb de opname nog steeds, op een bandje, maar volgens hen heb ik dat zelf gedaan met stemmetjes. Alsof ik zelf alles heb lopen plakken. Ja, bandjes aan elkaar lopen plakken, en dingen wegknippen. Zo konden zij het ook. Dat zeiden ze. Toen kwamen ze met allerlei bandjes opzetten met dingen die ik nooit had gezegd, bedreigingen enzo, en andere zwaar overdreven bekentenissen. Het leek wel op mijn stem, maar het was niet mijn stem. Toch vroeg ik me af hoe ze het gedaan hadden. Toen begonnen ze me te chanteren met die bandjes, en ze zeiden dat ze nog wel meer bandjes hadden, met video opnames enzovoorts. Ik ben toen maar weggegaan. Ik was er helemaal klaar mee. Naar een ander reis bureau gegaan, maar wilden ze niet hebben, waren al ingelicht. Werd weer gechanteerd. Moest het maar niet meer proberen bij reis bureau's, enzovoorts. Ik ben er toen allemaal maar mee gestopt, en ging toen zelf op wereldreis. Zeilbootje, hup. Niemand meegenomen. Was met iedereen klaar. Ik werd toch niet geloofd. Het reis bureau zou het wel weten.

Ging weer terug naar dat oerwoud. Kwam ik ergens daar in die rimboe die stewardes weer tegen. Ik zei : 'Hey, jou ken ik. Wat moet je hier ?' Gaf toen toe dat ze ook ontvoerd was, en probeerde haar weg weer terug te vinden. Ik zei mij niet gezien. Ze wilde mij niet geloven, en niet helpen, en nu zat ze dus in hetzelfde schuitje, maar daar was ik allang uitgesprongen. Ik had het schip verlaten voordat het zonk. Toen werd ze me toch een partijtje kwaad, maar ik was niet om te praten natuurlijk. Ik moest haar maar helpen, zei ze. Begon ze mij allemaal om informatie te vragen, en ik kwam weer terug bij het verhaal over dat bandje, van die baas die had gezegd dat er wat in mijn koffie was gestopt. Was waarschijnlijk ook bij haar gebeurd. Ze vroeg zich af waarom. Kan van alles wezen, zei ik. Ik zei toen ook dat ze nep bandjes van mij hadden gemaakt. Daar wist ze van. Ik

vroeg haar hoe ze het gedaan hadden, maar zij wist het niet. Zei dat ze nu aan mijn kant stond. Ik zei dat ik niet aan haar kant stond.

Ik zei de verzekering zou haar niet betalen.
Het was allemaal een complot.
Dat wist ze.
Hoefde ik haar niet meer te vertellen.
Ze wist ook dat haar baas niet pluis was.
Een beetje laat, zei ik.
Ik wilde doorlopen, maar ze hield me tegen.
Toen trok ze haar kleren uit, en zei laten we hier wonen.

Ik duwde haar weg, maar ze hield vol.
Ik heb het toen maar zo gelaten.
Ik vertrouwde haar niet, maar een stewardes in het oerwoud die alles voor je wil doen kan van pas komen.
Ik zou haar gewoon terug laten betalen, en dan zou ik wel verder zien.

Bouw voor ons een hut, of maak een tent, kan mij het schelen, droeg ik haar op.
En zorg dat we voldoende te vreten hebben.
Ze ging direct aan de slag.
'Ik werk voor jou nu,' zei ze.
'Nooit meer voor dat stomme reis bureau.'

'Ik ben nu jouw reis bureau,' zei ik tegen haar.
'Mag je achter het loketje zitten, terwijl ik de hort op ga.
En zorg dat het eten klaar is als ik weer terug ben.'

En dat was het. Ik wilde geen tijd met haar verdoen.
Ik ben er gewoon vandoor gegaan, liet haar gewoon wachten zoals ze mij vroeger deden wachten.
Als het goed is wacht ze nu nog steeds.

Ze droeg altijd witte laarzen, en woonde op twee hoog. Op een dag was hij van de trap in het trappenhuis gevallen. Ze nam hem op, en om hem op te vrolijken nam ze hem mee naar de kermis, waar zij hem bracht tot een clown. Hij was verder niet verwond.

De clown slikte hem op, en hij kwam in een tunnel terecht waar mensen een carnavals optocht hielden. De tunnel eindigde in een woestijn aan de rand van een grote stad. Er werden hier overal markten gehouden.

Hij vroeg zich af waar ze was. Nu een tijdje spuwde de clown hem weer uit. Het was een grote machine. Ze stond daar en lachte. 'Voel je je alweer wat beter nu ?' vroeg ze.

'Dit is geweldig,' zei hij.

'Kom met me mee naar huis,' sprak ze. Ze nam hem bij de arm en leidde hem naar twee hoog. Binnengekomen kreeg hij een kopje koffie. Hij keek naar haar witte laarzen. Die waren wit als altijd.

Hij kon niet veel zeggen. 'Sprakeloos als altijd ?' vroeg ze. Hij knikte.

'Het geeft niet hoor,' zei ze.

'Ik moet gaan,' zei hij.

'Nee, blijf nog even,' zei ze. 'Ik wil je wat vertellen. De duinen hier vlakbij zijn zo mooi. Heb je zin om daar een keer te wandelen ?'

'Best,' zei hij. 'Maar ik moet nu gaan.'

'Hoe laat zullen we afspreken. Vanavond om half zes ?' vroeg ze.

'Best,' zei hij.

'Dan zie ik je bij het muurtje,' zei ze.

Hij knikte, en verliet het pand. Zo gezegd zo gedaan. Om half zes stond hij bij het muurtje. Zij had hem daar al opgewacht. Samen liepen ze door het park naar de duinen. Zij had weer haar witte laarzen aan. 'Weet je,' zei ze. 'Ik denk er vaak over om de zee over te zwemmen tot dat eiland daar, ken je dat ? Lijkt me geweldig om daar te wonen, echt fantastisch, of op z'n minst om daar eens op vakantie te gaan. Gewoon in de wildernis leven, proberen te overleven. Er groeien daar veel wilde bessen.'

'Een bessen-menu, dat lijkt me wel wat,' zei hij. Hij begon wat trager te praten. Ze trok wat kleren uit, en rende naar het water. 'Kom mee,' riep ze.

'Dat mens is gek,' dacht hij bij zichzelf. Maar toch deed hij wat ze zei. Hij rende achter haar aan en toen het water in. 'Het is niet zo lang zwemmen,' riep ze. Na een tijdje stonden ze op het eiland. Het eiland stond inderdaad vol met bessenstruiken. Het leek wel alsof de bessen in zijn hoofd spraken. 'Het zijn erg krachtige bessen,' zei ze. 'Men noemt ze weleens heksen-bessen. Dat is omdat het volwaardig aan de voedsel-behoefte voldoet.'

'Heksen-bessen ?' vroeg hij.

Ze knikte. Ze liep op een struik af, en begon te plukken en te eten. Ook gaf ze bessen aan hem. De bessen waren erg voedzaam, en al snel hadden ze genoeg. Het was bijna als sap in hun mond. 'Hutje bouwen hier ?' vroeg ze. Hij knikte.

Die nacht droomde hij vreemd. Hij lag in haar armen als een kind bij zijn moeder. Ze was wat ouder dan hem. Hij droomde dat ze hem sleepte naar de kermis tot de clown, en dat hij weer een ritje maakte door de clown. De tunnel was weer vol met dansende mensen in een carnavals-optocht, en weer liep de tunnel uit op markten aan de rand van een woestijn, aan de rand van een grote stad. Hij ging toen de stad binnen. Er was overal graffiti hier. Hij werd duizelig en viel, en ze sleurde hem mee door de stad en toen door de markten tot de woestijn. Dit liep uit op een grote zee. De grootst mogelijke vissen zwommen in de zee.

Toen werd hij wakker. Zij lag aan de andere kant van de hut. Hij liep naar haar toe en ging in haar armen liggen. Zij ontving hem als een kind. Het voelde heel natuurlijk aan. Door de bessen werd hij kleiner, en zij werd groter, althans dat leek zo in zijn dromen. Het leek wel alsof hij aan het ijlen was. Toen hij echt wakker werd de volgende dag voelde hij zich ziek.

'Misschien komt het door de bessen, als een zij-effect,' zei ze. Hij voelde zich flink beroerd. Hij kon niet meer goed nadenken. Ook kreeg hij last met het spreken. Alles ging steeds trager en moeizamer. Hij trilde. Met haar was niets aan de hand. 'Dit doe ik dus nooit meer,' zei hij. 'Ik heb het gevoel alsof ik doodga.' Zij maakte een kano en een peddel. Ze bracht hem in de kano, en begon te peddelen. Snel waren ze aan de overkant, waar ze hem naar een dokter bracht. 'U bent vergiftigd,' zei de dokter.

'Bessen ?' vroeg hij.

'Nee,' zei de dokter. 'Het eiland wat u heeft bezocht kent vreemde diersoorten, die een speciaal gas afscheiden. Het is zwaar giftig. Wist u niet dat het eiland verboden was ? Ik zou u hier eigenlijk voor moeten aangeven. U heeft waarschijnlijk de natuur daar zwaar verstoord.'

De dokter gaf hen pillen mee, die hij tweemaal daags moest slikken met water. Elke dag ging het een stukje beter met hem. Zij kwam hem vaak opzoeken. Dan hield hij zijn hand vast. 'Jammer dat het zo gelopen is,' zei ze. Hij knikte. 'Ik ben blij dat ik weer thuis ben,' zei hij.

'Thuis is toch het beste dan,' zei ze. 'Maar het was een goede ervaring.'

'Voor mij niet,' zei hij.

'Oh, waarom niet ?' vroeg ze. 'Alles moet je een keer meemaken.'

'Dat vind ik niet,' zei hij. 'Je kan ook gewoon je eigen weg gaan. Ik hoef niet alles mee te maken.'

Maar toen leek het wel alsof ze een beetje boos werd. 'Ik moet gaan,' zei ze.

'Nee, blijf nog even,' zei hij.

'Nee, geen sprake van,' zei ze. 'Je bent me nogal een betweter.'

'Jij anders ook,' zei hij.

'Dan is het beter dat het hier stopt,' zei ze. 'Wij kunnen niet met elkaar.'

'Eet maar wat bessen,' waren haar laatste woorden. Toen vertrok ze. Hij heeft haar nooit meer teruggezien.

De Ontsnapping

Jara stond stil. Ze keek om haar heen. De rivier leek alsof het elk moment kon opwellen. De zon raakte bijna de rivier aan, geheel wit in de verte. Apen zag ze aan de overkant. Al snel was ze in de rivier en zwom naar de overkant. Ze greep een liaan, en trok haarzelf uit het water. Apen staarden haar aan. Ze kroop op een heuveltje verder het water uit, haar huid zat onder de modder. Ze hoorde het geluid van de apen, en opeens voelde ze hun handen op haar huid. Ze trokken haar verder omhoog. Het water dampte als in een mist, en het was er warm. Even later lag ze languit op het gras, tussen het mos, onder de bomen. Het was een prachtige jungle hier, in de dieptes van het regenwoud. Weer raakten de apen haar aan, en de rillingen gingen door haar lijf. Ze omhelsde hen, en ze lieten het toe. Ze was hun kind. Ze maakte zich meester van de situatie, stond op, en rende het oerwoud in. Even later stond ze in een hut. Ze was moe, ging op de versleten matras liggen. Niemand kon haar zeggen waar ze was. Het leek wel alsof de apen hier woonden. Achter de hut vond ze een skelet. Ze nam van wat appels die hier en daar lagen. Ze was hongerig, en ze at zelfs wat oud brood. Haar hele leven had ze verlangd naar een rustige plaats, waar ze alleen zou zijn.

Ze was onrustig, zoals de apen onrustig waren, maar de natuur was mooi hier, ze kon hier wegglijden. De apen probeerden met haar te communiceren, maar zij gleed steeds weg omdat ze

moe was. Ze hielden haar vast. Even later duwden ze haar bananen in haar mond.

De natuur was als gladgestreken hier, niemand zei wat. Ze voelde zich oud en jong. Ze staarde naar het amulet wat ze om haar nek had gedragen. Ze had het in haar hand. Plotseling draaide ze zich om en zag een man staan, een indiaan. Een band met een paar witte veren om zijn hoofd. Hij pakte haar hand, en ging naast haar liggen. Zij vond dat eigenlijk heel normaal. Misschien woonde de man hier. Hij joeg haar niet weg. Hij gedroeg zich mysterieus. Ze voelde geen angst voor hem, alleen acceptatie.

Als ze in zijn ogen keek zag ze een open jungle. Hij staarde naar haar. Ze kon wegzinken in zijn ogen. Ze zeiden niets tegen elkaar. De man maakte een vuur, en ging erbij zitten, en Jara kwam er ook bijzitten even later. Het leek wel alsof elke minuut een uur duurde. Zo stil was het hier. Er was hier een open wereld, een diepte.

Ze omhelsden elkaar terwijl ze elkaar niet kenden. Ze wisten genoeg. De natuur bond hen samen. Er waren geen woorden nodig, alles was ondergedompeld in de prachtige natuur. De ontmoeting duurde lang. Daarna vertrok de man weer. Jara staarde naar het amulet. Het glom. Ze ging terug naar de versleten matras, en viel in slaap.

Ze zag haar reis als een gezel, ze hield van de reis. Ze at van de natuur, en dronk van de rivier, het was genoeg. Ze was gelukkig. Jara was als bedekt door de natuur, als een veilige schuilplaats, geen slavernij meer. Maar nog wel de littekens daarvan. Ze was ontsnapt, ze had dagen door het bos gerend, en nu was ze hier. Slangen gleden door het gras. Ze had van hen niets te vrezen. Het was alsof de natuur haar opnam.

Ze wilde wraak nemen op de blanken, maar hoe. Ze was zelfs gemerkt in haar mond. Vreemde tekens hadden ze in haar tanden gesneden, en metalen erin gegoten. Met haar mes probeerde ze het eruit te snijden. Al snel was ze aan het bloeden. De apen kwamen dichtbij. Ze kwam erachter dat de kolonisten zendertjes hadden gestopt in de dieptes van haar kiezen. Ze wist dat ze in gevaar was, nog steeds. Misschien konden ze haar wel achtervolgen. Ze rende verder, de voetstappen van de man volgende. Na enkele dagen kwam ze hem tegen. Hij trok haar naar zich toe. Ze spraken niet. Het was alsof ze elkaar aanvoelden. Ze hoorden schoten in de lucht. 'Slaven ontsnapt,' riep iemand. De man greep zijn mes, maar daarna greep hij een pijl, en toen zijn boog. Beiden renden ze verder. Weer waren er schoten, maar ze zagen niemand. Ze kwamen aan bij een riviertje, waar een bootje was. Ze namen het bootje om de rivier mee over te komen. Aan de overkant gekomen wees Jara op de mond van de man. Ze opende haar mond om haar tanden te laten zien. Ook de man opende zijn mond, en Jara zag het metaal, en de zendertjes. Ze probeerde het hem duidelijk te maken. Met een mes kregen ze het eruit. Jara gooide de zendertjes in het riviertje. Toen gingen ze dieper het oerwoud in. Ze hoopten dat niemand hen hier nog zou kunnen volgen. De natuur was te mooi om daar nog drukte om te maken. Het was alsof hun lasten door die pracht werden afgespoeld. Het was alsof de man wilde zeggen : Laten we hier opnieuw beginnen. Jara knikte. Zijn ogen spraken. Een leven hier zou goed zijn.

Ze wilden wraak nemen op de blanken, maar de natuur nam hen mee. De natuur deed hen vergeten, maar er was nog wel die diepe pijn van binnen. Er was geen doel, er was alleen het leven. Het was als een warme haard, de natuur om hen heen. En die kwam dieper en dieper om de pijn weg te wassen. De man raakte haar aan. Het voelde als vertrouwd. De zachte aanraking van de natuur leek het te vermengen. Voor het eerst voelde Jara zich gelukkig. Ze kon de sterke stroming van de rivier horen in de verte. Alle geluiden kwamen haar lichaam binnen, en openbaarden zich aan haar. De

man streelde door haar haar, en ging met zijn vingertoppen over haar lippen. Ze boog haar hoofd. Ze begreep niet wat er gaande was. De man omhelsde haar van achteren, en in haar gevoel was het alsof hij tegen haar zei : 'Je bent vrij nu.' Ze zochten de rivier weer op, en gingen daar zwemmen. Hier zouden ze willen wonen. In de verte was een waterval die ze konden horen bulderen. Ze besloten er naartoe te gaan. Het was alsof de waterval hen van binnen schoonwaste. De waterplanten waren prachtig en overtuigend hier. Ze sprongen bijna door het water heen.

Wisten zij dat zij kinderen waren van de bomen, van de struiken die onderwater en bovenwater groeiden. Wisten zij dat zij gemaakt waren voor ritmische en kronkelende groei. Krokodillen waren hun vrienden hier, geen vijanden. Ze waren aan het ware gevaar ontsnapt. Ook de waterslangen waren hen goedgezind. Ze voelden zich fijn met deze kronkelende elementen. De waterplant was als de hemel voor hen. Ze stonden open voor het harmonische gevoel van de natuur, ze spraken met hun ogen. Het water was een bron van leven voor hen. De man staarde naar haar amulet. Hij kuste het amulet. Het was alsof de man wilde zeggen : Als zij, het amulet, haar ogen zal openen, waar zullen de blanke kolonisten dan zijn, heus, ze zullen geleid worden naar de hel. Ze hebben een hel gemaakt, een hel die hen dan zal opslokken. Het was alsof het zonlicht het zo overbracht, en zo waar als de waterval zelf. Ze keek hem diep in de ogen, alsof ze het verankerde. Ze had respect voor hem, stond open voor hem, ze besefte dat zij het antwoord om haar nek droeg. Het amulet leek op een slang. Het had veel waarde voor haar. Sommige slangen hier leken op het amulet. Het was alsof het amulet ooit de sleutel was van haar kooi. Ze voelde zich week worden als ze naar hem keek. De blauwe lucht leek neer te dalen in de rivier, op weg naar de waterval. Het licht werd alle kanten opgereflecteerd.

Het Rijk van Nicotine

Een van de reusachtigste leiders van het duistere rijk die ik ooit had gezien was wel het skelet Nicotine. Elke dag maakte hij een lange reis over de bergen naar de hoogste top, met in zijn armen het hoofd van een meisje. Nicotine had een paar duistere paarden, genaamd Ammalgamos, Compositos en Medicinos. Hij was een duistere rijder. In zijn rijk was er geen schoonheid, alleen lelijkheid, maar de jungles hier waren reusachtig. Ik stond aan de oever. Een jongetje in een boot wenkte mij. Het was een lange dunne boot, en het jongetje had een peddel. Het was een indiaans jongetje. ‘Mijn moeder wacht op je,’ riep hij. Al gauw was hij bij de oever en ik stapte in het bootje. Al snel waren we aan de andere kant van het meertje. Aan de oever stond een vrouw. Ik herkende haar niet, maar zij riep mij bij mijn naam. Ik stapte uit het bootje en liep naar de oever. Ze omhelsde me stevig. ‘Ik heb een maaltijd voor je gemaakt,’ zei ze. ‘Wie ben je ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Oh, ik ben Melango,’ zei de vrouw. Al snel bracht ze mij naar haar hut. Er lagen hier allerlei pakjes sigaretten en sigarendoosjes. ‘Rook je ?’ vroeg ik. ‘Nee,’ zei ze. ‘Mijn zoontje neemt ze weleens

mee.’

’s Nachts komen de troubadouren,’ zei ze. ‘Zij werken voor de farao.’

‘Waar hebben ze het dan over ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Oh,’ zei ze, ‘over hem. Je weet wel : Nicotine, de baas van alle farao’s. Hij is het grote opperhoofd.’ Ik kende Nicotine wel. Het was een verschrikking. Iedereen was geketend aan zijn lange kettingen, ook deze vrouw. Het hart van Nicotine was een rood hart, maar voor de rest was het hele duistere rijk zwart en wit. Als de troubadours kwamen dan was er altijd veel grijs, veel bruin en geel. Nicotine was een slager. Hij was altijd op jacht, en had een grote fokkerij. Hier liet hij de vrouwen zwaar werk verrichten. ‘Pssst, bevrijd me,’ fluisterde de vrouw. Ze wees op de ring aan mijn vinger die ik eens van de farao had gekregen. Ik bedacht me geen moment, legde de ring tegen haar ketting en brandde de keten door. Ik pakte haar hand, en zei : Kom mee. Ik weet niet hoe lang het geduurd heeft maar na tijden rennen kwamen we uit de jungles van Nicotine. Een man staarde ons aan met een lange baard. Hij liet ons de tand van een haai zien. ‘Waar zijn we ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Welkom,’ zei de man. Hij was direct heel vriendelijk. Hij staarde naar mijn ring. ‘Wie bent u ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Ik ben Terang,’ zei de man. ‘Gezand van de koning.’

‘Wie is de koning ?’ vroeg ik. Hij liet me een klein balletje zien. Maar daar kwam Nicotine al aan. Ik greep Melango weer bij haar hand en rende met haar verder. Maar ook in de verte zag ik Nicotine aankomen, en toen van alle kanten. Snel werden we ingesloten. ‘Nicotine heerst hier,’ zeiden ze. Plotseling kwam er rood licht uit mijn ring voort en scheen op de harten van de Nicotines om ons heen. Een van de Nicotines had witte klederen met een lange witte punthoed. Hij leek wel op een pion. Achter hem stonden nog een paar van zulke Nicotines. Ik richtte de straal van de ring op zijn gezicht, en hij begon weg te smelten. Ik rende met Melango door de opening die was ontstaan. Weer zag ik die man. ‘Kan ik iets voor je doen ?’ vroeg Terang.

‘Ja,’ zei ik. ‘Help ons hier uit.’

Maar Terang werd gegrepen door de Nicotines en werd verslonden. De Nicotines waren als een kudde hongerige honden. Weer richtte ik de straal van de ring op hen. In de verte was een piramide waar we naartoe renden. Binnenin zat een farao op een troon. Hij was geheel gemaakt van metaal, en er kwam rook uit hem voort. Maar al snel waren ook de Nicotines binnen en verslonden de metalen farao. Een paar Nicotines zaten op paarden. Het waren grote paarden. We renden door een deur in een andere gang. Maar hier waren zwarte Nicotines met hun paarden. Weer beukte ik een deur in, en kwamen in een kamer terecht met een raampje waardoor we konden ontsnappen. We

waren nu op de piramide. De vrouw haalde wat pakjes sigaretten en sigaren uit haar broekzakken en begon ze tussen haar handen te rammelen, terwijl ze veren begon te krijgen. Snel greep ze me en we vlogen weg. Het was mij een raadsel. Nicotine Magie, zei ze. We vlogen naar een hoog kasteel waar de Nicotine Tovenaar woonde. We hadden hier groot uitzicht. De Nicotine Tovenaar was een aardige man. Hij liet ons alle mechanismes van Nicotines zien. Het waren robotten. Ook hun grote paarden.

De Tovenaar zette ons ergens neer op de rotsen, in een ander rijk. We kwamen op een strand terecht met heet zand. Ook was er een hutje van riet en bamboe. ‘Blijf je bij me ?’ vroeg Melango.

‘Ach, ik kom je nog weleens een keertje opzoeken,’ zei ik. ‘Ik hoop dat je het hier naar je zin zult hebben. Er is hier strand en zee, en er groeit hier voldoende aan de bomen.’

Daar kwam de Tovenaar aan, vanaf het strand. ‘Je hebt in ieder geval goed gezelschap,’ zei ik. De Tovenaar gaf mij een hoed van stro en riet. En toen vertrok ik.

Einde

De Heks
van de Gele Bloemen

Het lijkt erop alsof er een beest over de wolkenkrabber is gekropen. Helemaal eroverheen. En nu hangt hij daar. Eerst zag ik hem erop staan, met een vlag.

Het lijkt alsof we dit beest geen tweede kans hebben gegeven. Werd neergeschoten, en nu hangt het daar, als tussen twee rotsen in. Het water stijgt, dat is een feit.

Het lijkt erop dat de treinen vandaag sneller rijden. Hebben ze haast, of wat is dit ?

De bomen lijken hier hoog, en twee meter er tussenin. Het is goed uitgemeten. Ik rijdt op mijn fiets, en de lucht is bijna rood, alsof de moederschoot zich opent.

De struiken ruiken hier goed. Bessen hangen eraan in bosjes. Het druipt, ik heb er een goed gevoel over. En dan bessen in de koffie, bijna als vla. Miep hangt erbij als bessen, als bruisende chocola. Maar haar naam is niet Miep. Ik noem haar maar even Miep, omdat ik haar naam niet wil zeggen.

Het is nu zondag, en koud. De wind giert, maar toch zoveel warmte. Het is een gemengd gevoel en een hele afstand. Door dag en dauw stap ik. Allemaal kolen opgehoopt hier, zomaar in het bos, achterin het bos, over het spoor heen, waar ze vuilnis verbranden. Het ruikt hier lekker, maar waar ben ik ? Wie ben ik ? Alles lijkt oranje hier, uitgestrekte zandvlaktes en dor lijkende wildernissen. Maar van een vruchtbare dorheid, een andere dorheid. Het is brak land, maar dan in positieve zin. Het is een mooie mengeling van zoet en bitter, zoutig en smeuig. Ik ben verliefd. Waarop weet ik niet, maar op deze natuur lijkt het.

Ik zal hier wel altijd willen blijven. Het is hier zo rustig, en ik heb het hier niet benauwd. De stadse rook kan me hier niet raken. Ik ben ontsnapt, door de wildernis heen, tot achter het spoor. Geen trein die me hier nog kan oppikken. De nazi's zijn ver weg.

Ik stap door, met geborrel op de achtergrond. Iemand is thee aan het maken. Oma is aan het borduren, en ook de oude tante. Zij zijn zussen. Ze zijn in mijn gedachtes. Nog steeds zijn zij daar. Zijn zij aan de overkant, of zijn zij hier ? Of is het maar de echo van het verleden. Hier staken alle gedachtes. Romig goud staart mij hier aan. En dan laat ook het goud los, het hele verleden, en wordt ik meegesleurd in de draaipoel van de wildernis, een draaikolk van struiken, als een wervelwind. Waar brengt het mij naartoe ? Ik heb dit vaker gezien.

Ik heb hier van gedroomd, en nu is het hier. Ik ben over het grijze en grauwe heen. Alles is hier bruin. Bruine bessen liggen mij het meest, als koffiebonen. De thee van het verleden kan mij niet meer meetrekken.

De wolkenkrabbers zijn hoog. Ook hier. Ik beklim ze, met mijn beitel. De muren zijn zacht. Ik kan alles erin graveren wat ik wil. Dan gooi ik mijn anker naar de maan, en trek me eraan op. Zo kom ik hoger en hoger, van planeet tot planeet, tot de rivier van melk. Bruisende melk is mijn vriend. Mijn shirt is nat. Dan zwem ik.

Ik kan over het ravijn kijken, en slinger aan een waslijn om erover heen te komen. Zoveel stemmen hoor ik daar. Waar ze over praten kan ik niet verstaan. Het is in een andere taal. Ik krijg hier een nieuw huis, een huis vol met schilderijen. Ik staar er vaak naar. De schilderijen vertellen verhalen. Ik droom er ook van.

De narcis groeit uit de put. Het maakt een brug over de zee. Gele bloemen groeien laangs de kant van de stad, als een stadsmuur. Iedereen die daar gaat wordt verward. Zij vallen in slaap en dromen vreemde dromen. Geen leger komt door de gele bloemenhaag. Allen zullen zij slapen.

De heks neemt hen mee tot een vreemd leger. Het leger van de heks zullen zij zijn.

De heks van de gele bloemen, zo noemen ze haar. Zij heeft klokken door haar hele kasteel. Zij bespeelt de viool, en maalt de molen. Zij bakt het brood, bloemenbrood, waar zij allen van slapen.

In het zwart gaat zij, in de gele nacht, zo wit. En zoveel monikken met kappen volgen haar, met langzame pas door de bloemenvelden. Deze bloemen worden wit in de nacht.

De heks van de gele bloemen, met zoveel honden jaagt zij. In de nacht is zij één en al pracht, een barbaarse strijdster is zij.

De heks van de gele bloemen, eens zag ik haar.
Ik werd getroffen als door bliksem, en toen viel ik in slaap.
Toen ik wakker werd zat ik op haar schoot.
Ik was heel klein toen.
Als kind stuurde ze me naar school.

De heks van de gele bloemen,
Zo vriendelijk was zij,
We dronken altijd samen thee,
En zij deed mijn huiswerk,
De heks van de gele bloemen,
Zij is een tunnel naar de onderwereld

Eens zag ik haar op haar paard, en ik volgde haar,
Zij leerde me de geheimen van de bossen en de wildernissen,
De heks van de gele bloemen, zij gaf mij een plaats.

Ik kon alles met haar doen, niets was haar te gek,
Ze stond altijd voor me klaar,
En ik mocht vechten in haar leger,
Om tot de mysterieen te gaan.

Een groot tovenares is zij,
Zij kent de wetten van de eeuwigheid.
Zij genas mijn hart en mijn herinneringen,
De puzzel in mij maakte zij.

Op het gele paard reed ik, achter haar aan,
Wit wordende in de nacht,
Zo viel ik in slaap, om tot een dromenwereld te komen,
Tot de heks van de gele bloemen,
Zij roept mijn naam.

De heks van de gele bloemen,
Ik kan altijd alles met haar doen,
Niets was haar te dol, en ze was nooit moe,

Maar eens zag ik haar slapen …

Ik liep naar haar toe,
Ik had thee voor haar gemaakt,
Ik bracht haar ontbijt op bed,
Met een gekookt eitje,
En ineens was er allemaal gejoel,
Zoveel indianen kwamen uit de kasten,
De heks van de gele bloemen,
Ja, het is echt waar.

Zij leerde mij de gnosis,
Zij leerde mij lezen en vele talen,
Zij leerde mij schrijven en de schoonste kunsten,
Zij leerde mij strijden,
De heks van de gele bloemen

Over zee ging ik met haar,
Zij liet mij de wijde wereld zien,
In haar heb ik een vriend,
In haar heb ik alles gezien,
De heks van de gele bloemen.

Over het ravijn bracht zij mij,
Tot de dieptes van een woud,
Waar het altijd regent,
Altijd tropisch is,
En nooit is het koud,
De heks van de gele bloemen.

En wij drinken samen gele bloementhee,
Zij is de put naar de onderwereld,
Zij neemt mij altijd mee,
Op haar reizen benee.

En wat als we nu dieper gaan,
Tot de eeuwige wildernissen,
Zij roept mij bij mijn naam.

Dieper, ja dieper,
Steeds dieper,
Tot een kroning,
De gele kroon,
Een bloemen-woning,
Van hieruit kan ik alles zien,
Ik bewonder het zo,

De heks van de gele bloemen.

Nu maak ik mijn reizen in een boot, over de rivieren waarin langs de kanten de gele bloemen groeien. Zij houden mij dromerig, zij houden mij in slaap, in diepe slaap. Zij geven mij sap te drinken, en gele bloemen-thee.

De gele bloemen vertellen verhalen, verhalen wonderschoon.

En zij leiden tot een wonderlijke tuin, een lusthof. Wonderlijke vruchten groeien hier.

In de straten van Haarlem ontwaak ik,
Meisjes met witte bloemen in hun haar,
En witte kanten jurkjes,
Het is bloemenfeest vandaag,
Zij heeft een witte hoed,
Ik kan haar gezicht net niet zien,
Alleen haar glimlach

Dan neemt zij mij mee naar het tuinfeest,
Waar ze rijdt op één of ander beest,
En ik blijf zeggen : 'Ik ben er nooit geweest.'

De Groene Verlichting

Bevroren Dromen

Hoofdstuk 1. De verandering

Hoofdstuk 2. De schuilplaats

Hoofdstuk 3. De Laser

Hoofdstuk 4. De Staatsgreep

Hoofdstuk 5. Geb

Hoofdstuk 1. De verandering

In een zaal stond hij, de grote boom. Het was volle maan, en hij was tot leven gekomen, kijkende over de blauwe aarde. Het was als het land van de blauwe zon. Een grote hond stond naast hem. Als het morgen zou zijn, zou hij weer onbeweeglijk staan als de grote boom. Hij sprak ook andere bomen toe, die tot leven waren gekomen. De fee van de maan stond erbij. Ze had haar toverstokje goed vast. Ze wist dat als de morgen zou komen, dan zouden de bomen niet meer kunnen spreken, en niet meer kunnen bewegen. En dan zou zij weer moeten terugkeren naar de maan. Het was een blauwe maan, en die verscheen niet eens zo vaak. Vaak was hij verdwenen achter duistere wolken. De grote boom nam het woord, en sprak de menigte toe. Het waren woorden van grote ernst. Hij sprak dat over een tijdje de planeet in de cirkel en het magnetische veld van de zwarte zon terecht zou komen, en dan zouden ze voor altijd tot leven komen. De bomen zagen erg naar dat moment uit, en dan zou ook de fee van de maan tot hen kunnen komen zo vaak ze wilde. Er was echter nog één gevaar wat hen in de weg stond, en dat was de heks Sausibir. Zij zou er door haar krachten in kunnen slagen de planeet in een andere zonnencirkel te brengen. Dit was een magnetische cirkel rondom de zon Misfamen. Als de heks erin zou slagen, dan zouden de bomen nooit meer tot leven kunnen komen. De heks wilde de bomen gebruiken om haar kasteel mee uit te bouwen.

Maar als de zwarte zon haar zou verslaan, dan zouden de bomen langzaam veranderen in nieuwe wezens die konden bewegen en spreken. De grote boom was in ernst, en ze waren allemaal nog erg bang, want de heks was zeer krachtig. De fee opende een boek, en sprak : 'In onze boeken staat dat de heks Sausibir op zoek is naar een groene toverstaf die in het middelpunt van de planeet zou liggen. Als ze die staf heeft gevonden, dan zal ze in staat zijn de planeet in de cirkel van de boze zon Misfamen te krijgen.' Een andere boom kwam naar voren, en keek heel ernstig en wijs.

Een jongen schrok wakker. Wat had hij toch vreemd gedroomd. Hij had een vreemde ziekte, waarin hij vaak flauwviel, en vaak kon hij moeilijk praten. Ook had hij vaak last van verkrampingen, en dan kon hij zich vaak niet bewegen. De artsen zeiden dat hij de boomziekte had, maar veel was er niet over bekend. De jongen had een obsessie als het op bomen aankwam. De volgende nacht had de jongen weer dezelfde droom, en er kwam een fee aan zijn bed of hij hen wilde helpen. Maar de jongen geloofde niet in feeen. Toen hij het aan zijn artsen vertelde moesten ze een beetje grinniken. Nacht na nacht kwamen de dromen terug, en zelfs overdag verschenen er feeen aan hem. Hij werd er erg moe van, en dacht dat hij gek aan het worden was. De artsen besloten om hem door te verwijzen naar een psychiater, die hem vertelde dat het inderdaad een geestesziekte was. Misschien hoorde het wel bij de zg. boomziekte die hij in de loop der jaren had ontwikkeld. De jongen kon niet meer naar school, en het was voor hem ook moeilijk geworden om buiten te komen. Hij kon niet tegen licht.

Op een dag toen de jongen de krant las, las hij over een nieuw schoonmaakmiddel dat op de markt was gebracht, genaamd Misfamen. 'Verrek,' zei de jongen tegen zichzelf. Het was de naam van de boze zon uit zijn dromen. 'Ach, het zal wel toeval zijn,' dacht de jongen bij zichzelf. Na een tijdje werd het merk uit de handel gehaald, en wel om een paar redenen. Het bleek zeer milieu-onvriendelijk te zijn. Mensen en dieren zouden er ziek van worden, en de fabrikant was in het nieuws gekomen, vanwege een moord. Na een tijdje begonnen de dromen van de jongen minder te worden, en de feeen verschenen minder vaak. De psychiater was erg tevreden. Ze hadden hem een

middel gegeven genaamd Sausibir. Het scheen ook erg goed te werken tegen depressies, en het middel werd erg bekend. Ook het schoonmaakmiddel Misfamen werd weer volop verkocht, omdat onderzoek aangaf dat het middel absoluut niet milieu-onvriendelijk zou zijn. De fabrikant die verdacht was van moord was inmiddels weer vrijgesproken, omdat er geen enkel bewijs tegen hem was. Steeds meer begon de jongen de vreemde dromen en feeenverhalen te vergeten, daar ze nauwelijks nog in zijn leven voorkwamen. Ook begon de jongen verbeteringen te tonen op lichamelijk vlak. Hij kon zich beter bewegen, en viel nauwelijks nog flauw. Het was alsof de epileptische neigingen die hij had steeds meer en meer op de achtergrond kwamen, en na een tijdje kwamen ze helemaal niet meer voor. Ook het praten ging beter en beter, en al snel kon hij weer naar school. Over de boomziekte werd niet meer gesproken. De jongen verloor zijn obsessie voor bomen, en werd manager in een hoge functie bij één of ander bedrijf. Dit bedrijf produceerde allerlei soorten medicijnen in verschillende zout-verbindingen. De zouten zouden mensen weer energie geven, en zouden hun angst voor falen wegnemen, en hun denkvermogen vergroten. Het ware nieuwe zout-verbindingen ontstaan uit jaren lange experimenten in laboratoria. Het middel werd gemaakt van elementen gewonnen uit de zeedieptes en de aarddieptes, en was een groots project. Eén van die middelen heette 'de groene staaf,' en was het allersuccesvolste. Het bleek ook goed te helpen bij slaapproblemen. De jongen verdiende erg goed, en woonde in een groot landhuis.

Op een nacht had hij weer een droom, na een zeer lange tijd. Ditmaal ging het over groene mensachtige wezens die in een kamer diep onder de aarde leefden. Ineens kwam er een zwarte hond binnenrennen, en de kamer werd groter en groter, en begon zich in meerdere kamers te verdelen, terwijl de zwarte hond door de kamers begon te rennen. Hij vond dit maar een vreemde droom, en probeerde het weer te vergeten. Maar op een dag werd er op zijn deur geklopt. Het was een oude en arme vrouw die voor hem stond. Ze vroeg hem of hij het allemaal nog herinnerde. Hij wist niet waar ze het over had. 'De feeen, de bomen,' sprak ze. Daar wilde hij het niet over hebben, en deed de deur voor haar dicht. Maar weer klopte ze aan, en ditmaal zeer indringend. Het leek alsof hij weer duizelig werd, en alsof alles nu zo dichtbij kwam. Hij rende naar boven en greep naar z'n buik. Al snel begon hij over te geven, en kwam er allemaal groen spul uit z'n mond. Wat gebeurde er toch allemaal. Hij greep naar de telefoon om zijn arts te bellen. Na een tijdje kwam deze bij hem aan. Hij lag inmiddels op de grond. De arts voelde zijn pols. Hij moest snel in het ziekenhuis opgenomen worden. De artsen waren bang dat de boomziekte aan het terugkomen was, en ditmaal leek het erger dan ooit te voren. De jongen raakte in coma, en vocht dagenlang voor zijn leven. Na een paar weken kwam hij weer lichtelijk bij, en vertelde over de arme oude vrouw. De artsen vroegen hem of hij dat gedroomd had, of dat het echt was. Hij was ervan overtuigd dat het echt was. Maar hoe wist de vrouw over zijn dromen ? Misschien was er wel informatie uitgelekt. En hoe kon het dat alles ineens weer was teruggekomen ? De artsen wisten het niet, maar brachten het niet in verband met de vrouw. Ziektes konden soms gewoon terugkeren. De jongen voelde zich erg zwak, en hij moest naar een rustoord in het bos om bij te komen. Toen hij daar aankwam schrok hij. De arme, oude vrouw woonde daar ook. Ze deed net alsof ze hem niet kende, maar de jongen werd erg nieuwsgierig. Nadat hij de maanden die erop volgden weer een beetje op krachten was gekomen probeerde hij haar aan te spreken. Hij kwam haar eigenlijk alleen maar tegen bij de maaltijden, en soms op de gang, maar ze spraken niet met elkaar. De vrouw deed alsof ze van niets wist, maar de jongen hield aan. De jongen ging erg aan zichzelf twijfelen, en begon zich ook van zijn lotgenoten steeds meer terug te trekken. Maar op een dag werd er op z'n kamer geklopt. Toen hij opendeed was het de oude arme vrouw. Ze had een boek voor hem. Het was een boek over geestesziektes. Toen ze weg wilde lopen riep de jongen haar na. Maar ze keerde niet meer om. Hij deed de kamerdeur weer

dicht en begon te lezen. Maar na een tijdje klapte hij het boek weer dicht. Hij kon zich niet concentreren. Hij besloot het voor een tijdje in zijn la op te bergen.

Het was herfst. De kleuren van de bomen waren zo mooi. Hij keek vaak naar buiten, en kwam erdoor tot rust. Eigenlijk herinnerde hij zich steeds minder over vroeger. Ook probeerde hij zo min mogelijk na te denken over zijn ziekte, en probeerde hij zoveel mogelijk van het leven te genieten. Hij hield van de rust, van zijn kamer. De andere lotgenoten hadden allemaal hun eigen leven. Soms kwam er weleens bezoek, maar dat had hij liever niet. Door zijn ziekte kon hij bijna niet naar buiten, daar het licht hem teveel pijn deed. Hij was gelukkig zoals hij was, omdat hij geleerd had er genoegen mee te nemen en er uit probeerde te halen wat hij kon. Hij probeerde niet teveel na te denken, omdat hij dacht dat dat toch niets zou oplossen of zou aanvoegen. Na een paar jaren ging het rustoord dicht en zouden de patienten moeten verhuizen naar een ander rustoord dichtbij zee. Ook hier had de jongen het erg naar z'n zin. In de verte hoorde hij soms de zee ruizen. Er was een klein bos dichtbij waar hij weleens ging wandelen. Het leek alsof de zee op de achtergrond een goed en genezend effect op hem had. Op een dag toen hij weer eens met een begeleider in het bos was, vond de begeleider een vreemd langwerpig groen staafje op de grond. Het was buigbaar en het glimde heel speciaal. De jongen glimlachte. De begeleider gaf het aan de jongen. Het leek wel alsof het staafje licht gaf. De jongen besloot het staafje mee te nemen naar zijn kamer. Aangekomen legde hij het staafje op zijn nachtkastje. De begeleider had hem netjes naar zijn kamer gebracht en zou nu met iemand anders naar het bos gaan. De jongen hield erg veel van die begeleider. De begeleider was erg goed voor hem, en deed eigenlijk nooit moeilijk, en stelde ook nooit geen moeilijke vragen. De begeleider begreep de jongen erg goed.

Midden in de nacht werd de jongen wakker. Het groene staafje gaf erg veel licht af, en begon te kronkelen : 'Zeg Pedro, zeg Pedro,' zei het staafje. 'Dat had je niet gedacht, hè, dat ik ooit nog eens tegen je zou praten.' En toen hield het staafje zich een hele lange tijd stil. De jongen raakte erg in paniek. Hij rende van zijn kamer af naar het begeleidershokje toe, waar de nachtdienst zat. 'Ik begin gek te worden,' riep de jongen. De nachtdienst liep naar hem toe, en probeerde hem te troosten. 'Ga eens even zitten, Pedro, en vertel me eens heel rustig wat er gebeurd is.' Pedro ging zitten, en begon te vertellen. Ineens kwam het staafje naar binnen kronkelen, en Pedro gaf een gil. 'Daar is het, daar is het,' gilde hij. Maar de nachtdienst zag niks. 'Pedro, waar heb je het over, er is hier niets,' zei de nachtdienst. 'Zie je,' zei Pedro, 'ik ben echt gek aan het worden.' Maar de nachtdienst begon hem te troosten. 'Ach, Pedro, iedereen verbeeldt zich weleens wat. Dat hoort nu eenmaal bij ons. Iedereen vergist zich weleens.' Na een tijdje strompelde Pedro weer langzaam terug naar z'n kamer en ging weer slapen. De volgende morgen was alles erg beklemmend. Een man die Pedro niet kende kwam binnen, samen met een mevrouw. 'Pedro, we hebben besloten je over te laten plaatsen naar een oord waar je nog beter tot rust kunt komen. Het is een paar straten verder, en iets dieper in het bos.' Pedro vond het wel een goed idee, maar toen hij daar aankwam schrok hij wel even. De patienten leken wel op apen, en het leek hem hier helemaal niet rustig. Ze gilden, bewogen heel snel en vreemd, en keken raar uit hun ogen, alsof ze Pedro elk moment konden bespringen. Maar de man en de mevrouw zeiden dat Pedro gewoon moest doorlopen. Ze moesten door een hele lange gang, die in een bocht liep, en kwamen na een tijdje lopen in een andere zaal. Er zaten hier wat gehandicapten, en Pedro vroeg zich af of hij hier wel moest wezen. Maar de reis was nog niet ten einde. Ze moesten achter de zaal linksaf slaan, en weer moesten ze door een lange gang die in een bocht liep. Wat een reusachtig groot en uitgestrekt gebouw was dit, en het was hier verderop steeds rustiger aan het worden. Helemaal aan het eind van de gang was nog een klein halletje dat leek op een magazijn. Achter het halletje was een huiselijke kamer waar een wat oudere man een pijp rookte. 'Dag Pedro,'

zei de man, 'fijn dat je bent gekomen. Ze hebben me al over jou verteld.' De man scheen dezelfde ziekte als Pedro te hebben, maar worstelde nog steeds met de vraag of het echt was, ja of nee. De man had ook vele dromen en verschijningen gehad, en allerlei andere dingen die achteraf verbeeldingen bleken te zijn. Of waren het geen verbeeldingen ? Pedro had geen zin om daar over te praten. Pedro wilde alles vergeten wat er was gebeurd. En de man respecteerde dat direkt. Het was geen snelle prater, en Pedro hoopte dat hij hier goed tot rust kon komen. Achter de kamer was nog een klein halletje met een paar kamers, waarvan één kamer voor Pedro was. De kamer had een prachtig uitzicht op het bos. Er waren zoveel bomen waar Pedro naar kon kijken. Ook was er een deur naar buiten, maar Pedro wilde voorlopig niet naar buiten. Er woonde hier ook nog een andere vrouw, maar die was op dat moment een tijdje logeren bij familie. De man deed niet veel. Hij zat alsmaar in z'n stoel, en ging pas 's avonds laat naar z'n kamer. Er was een bel in de kamer van Pedro waarmee hij begeleiding zou kunnen krijgen wanneer hij dat wilde.

De artsen hadden besloten Pedro weer Sausibir als medicijn te geven. Maar dit keer reageerde Pedro er helemaal verkeerd op. De wanen werden erger en erger, en al snel wilde Pedro niet meer leven. De artsen besloten maar helemaal te stoppen met het middel voor Pedro, en na het falen van nog wat andere middelen kwamen ze erachter dat Pedro overgevoelig was geworden voor medicijnen. Rust was gewoon het belangrijkste voor nu. Soms kwam de begeleiding nog even kijken of het allemaal goed ging, en ja hoor, het ging steeds beter toen Pedro met de middelen was gestopt. Maar voorlopig wilde hij niet naar buiten. Hij zat vaak op z'n kamer. Het corveeen ging goed. Pedro kon goed afwassen en zou nu ook voor het eerst op deze afdeling schoonmaken. Toen hij naar het schoonmaakhok liep en de deur opende zag hij het middel Misfamen staan. Pedro schrok. Maar herstelde zich snel, en mengde het met wat water. Het was een zuiver natuurprodukt, gemaakt van middelen die gewonnen waren uit de aarddieptes en zeedieptes. Gelukkig hoefde Pedro niet vaak schoon te maken, en soms deed Pedro het gewoon met afwasmiddel of zeep.

Na een tijdje kwam de vrouw terug van het logeren en maakte kennis met Pedro. Ze was een overspannen geraakte botanicus, en had veel verstand van bomen. De vrouw was bezig geweest met een experiment om de bio-electriciteit van bomen voor allerlei dingen te gebruiken, en bij het laboratorium waar ze werkte hadden ze het zelfs voor elkaar gekregen om voertuigen te laten rijden op boom-energie. Op een bepaalde wijze raakte Pedro diep geinteresseerd in haar verhalen. En ook de man vond het fijn om naar haar te luisteren. Ze had een erg rustgevende stem, en al snel was Pedro dikke vrienden met haar. Pedro durfde haar niet zoveel over zichzelf te vertellen, en gelukkig vroeg de vrouw daar ook niet naar. Ze had wat apparaatjes meegenomen met celletjes erin die op een soort kaartje zaten, en die vingen de boom-energie dan op. Samen met de vrouw ging Pedro weleens naar buiten. Het was altijd erg rustig in het bos. De vrouw vertelde hem ook over robotten die op boom-energie liepen. Op een dag nadat ze weer even een tijdje bij familie had gelogeerd nam ze er één voor Pedro mee. Het was een geschenk voor hem. Pedro kon zijn ogen nauwelijks geloven. De robot kon van alles doen, en je kon er zelfs een gesprek mee voeren. Het werd Pedro's beste vriendje, en al snel knapte Pedro erg op. Velen merkten hoe hij aan het veranderen was, en hij begon ook wandelingen met de robot te maken.

De vrouw legde Pedro veel uit over hoe zo'n robot werd gemaakt, en na een tijdje werden er ook steeds meer van zulke robotten gebruikt. Het idee sloeg erg aan. Het bleek dat het gebruik van boom-energie erg goed was voor de bomen zelf, en voor het milieu. Ook bleek de boom-energie erg goed en genezend te zijn voor het functioneren van het lichaam. En al snel werden er bij sommigen kleine capsules ingebouwd die boom-energie opvingen en gebruikten ter ondersteuning van het

lichaam. Maar er kwam ook concurrentie op de markt. Zo bleken er ook al apparaten te zijn die op bloem-energie werkten, wespen-energie, spinnen-energie, vliegen-energie en zelfs lever-energie. Telkens merkten ze dat de energieen die gebruikt werden weer een voorspoedig effect hadden op hetgeen waarvan die energie was. Elke energie had z'n eigen frequentie, en kon door de instel van de juiste frequentie door een tuner makkelijk afgetapt worden. Zo begon men met allerlei natuur-electriciteiten te experimenteren en ze ook koppelend te gebruiken. En door de koppels kwamen er weer hele speciale energieen vrij, als een soort van positief bijprodukt. Pedro was erg enthousiast en schoolde zichzelf goed op deze gebieden, met name ook door de tussenkomst van de vrouw op z'n afdeling.

Op een dag kwam de vrouw aanzetten met een robot die op haaien-electriciteit werkte. De robot kon zwaar werk verrichten en werd vaak ingezet voor de bouw van huizen en gebouwen. Pedro was erg enthousiast, en niet lang daarna had Pedro zelfs een klein voertuigje dat op haaien-energie werkte. In de ziekenhuizen kende men inmiddels de implantaten die op haaien-energie werkten. Vooral hen die om enige reden verlamd waren hadden veel baat bij deze apparaatjes. Pedro was erg trots op de dingen die hij inmiddels zelf kon maken, maar op een nacht had hij een erg akelige droom. In die droom werd hij bezocht door de heks Sausibir, die op hem begon te schelden. Even dacht hij dat alles fout ging, ook toen hij de volgende dag wakker werd, en een zwarte planeet boven het bos buiten zag hangen die alles scheen te verduisteren. Hij dacht dat hij het zichzelf weer allemaal verbeelde, en dacht ook dat het wel weer weg zou gaan als hij door zou gaan met het ontwikkelen van de natuur-technologie. Maar niets was minder waar. Ook anderen hadden de zwarte planeet gesignaleerd, en de duisternis ging niet weg. Wetenschappers zeiden dat het een zwarte zon was die zo'n sterke magnetische straling had dat de planeet vanaf nu om deze zon zou heentrekken. Er was veel paniek, want men zei dat het electrisch veld van deze zon de aarde zou aantasten en ook het leven op aarde. Velen begonnen een soort virus te vertonen dat het zwarte boom-virus heette. Het virus zou de hersencellen aantasten en waanideeen brengen, als een soort van geestesziekte. Maar niet alleen dat, want ook het lichaam zou heel langzaam aftakelen onder de ergst mogelijke pijnen. Pedro was bang. Een groot deel van de bevolking was al door het virus aangetast, min of meer, en er was nog geen technologie of medicijn tegen opgewassen.

Er was iets in Pedro geknapt. Vele mensen gingen naar het ziekenhuis voor onderzoek. Achteraf scheen het mee te vallen, en werden wel degelijk mensen weer genezen, maar de duisternis bleef door de zwarte planeet, en er waren inmiddels velen door het virus omgekomen. Het leek wel alsof de aarde z'n scherven opraapte om door te gaan met dat wat overgebleven was. Na een korte tijd van herstel en opleving sloeg het virus opnieuw toe, harder dan ooit. De aarde werd naar de zwarte zon toegezogen, meer en meer, alsof het al cirkelend in de zwarte zon zou verdwijnen, zou oplossen. Zij die overgebleven waren, waren moe, en leden aan ernstige pijnen en aftakelingen. Het aardoppervlak was heter dan ooit tevoren.

Plotseling schrok Pedro wakker. Het was allemaal maar een droom. Het was net voordat de vrouw van de afdeling terug zou komen van het logeren bij familie. Pedro had zich er een beetje druk over gemaakt, omdat hij bang was dat het misschien niet zou klikken, en eigenlijk was hij ook erg nieuwsgierig. Nu zou hij haar dan ontmoeten. Ze bleek heel anders te zijn dan in z'n dromen. Ze leek veel ouder, en was ook veel rustiger. Pedro had niet echt het gevoel dat hij contact met haar kon maken. Ze zei niet veel. Pedro vond het achteraf wel best zo. Geen vreemde technologieen, geen robotten, en geen zwarte zonnen die het leven op aarde onveilig zouden maken.

Hoofdstuk 2. De Schuilplaats

Pedro was bang geworden om te slapen. Als hij niet nog een keer zo gek zou dromen. Gelukkig was het de nachten erna erg rustig. Totdat hij op een nacht droomde over een zwarte hond die als door de ramen van zijn hoofd binnenkwam. Peter was stijf van de schrik, en kon zich niet bewegen toen hij wakker was geworden. Na een lange tijd kwam er een begeleider binnen die hem probeerde te troosten. Pedro kon maar moeilijk praten. De begeleider gaf hem een kopje water. Heel langzaam begon Pedro weer een beetje bij te komen. De begeleider vond het erg naar voor Pedro, maar moedigde hem aan om het weer te vergeten, en om door te gaan met z'n leven. De spanning omtrend de vrouw was nu voorbij, omdat hij nu wist wie en wat ze was. Pedro hoopte dat er voorlopig geen nieuwelingen zouden komen. Hij merkte bij zichzelf dat hij steeds moeilijker tegen veranderingen kon. Het leek wel alsof elke verandering, hoe klein ook, z'n hart omdraaiden in z'n borstkas.

Pedro kon het goed vinden met z'n begeleiders. Nog steeds ging hij weleens met ze wandelen. Voor het eerst zou hij op een avond met een begeleider naar zee gaan. Hij verheugde zich er erg op. Als kind hield hij altijd al erg veel van de zee. De zee was erg rustig die avond, en ze maakten een lange strandwandeling. Plotseling draaide de begeleider zich naar pedro toe, en het leek alsof hij het gezicht van een zwarte hond had. Pedro schrok, maar dacht direkt dat het kwam omdat het al donker was. De begeleider pakte Pedro's hand vast, en er ging een rilling door Pedro heen. 'Pedro,' zei de begeleider, 'ik moet je wat vertellen. Ik ken je nu al geruime tijd, en ik vind dat je er erg op vooruit bent gegaan. We zijn nu bij de zee, en alles gaat goed. Je hebt geen last van wanen.' Pedro glimlachte. Die begeleider moest eens weten, maar goed, er was mee te leven, en Pedro hoefde het ook niet erger te maken dan het was. Toen haalde de begeleider een klein beeldje uit zijn zak. Het was een zwarte hond die op een soort schatkist zat. Pedro dacht even dat hij flauw zou vallen, maar liet de man uitpraten. 'Dit is voor jou. Ik weet dat je laatst over een zwarte hond hebt gedroomd, de nachtmerrie, maar misschien zal dit je helpen. Waarom besluit je niet om er positief tegen aan te kijken ? Dromen horen ook bij het leven, en zelfs wanen. We wanen allemaal wel eens wat. Probeer er gewoon op een goede manier mee om te gaan. Zo van : 'okay, ik heb over een zwarte hond gedroomd. Er is niks verkeerds met een zwarte hond op zich.' Zet het gewoon op je nachtkastje en leer het accepteren.'

Maar ineens werd Pedro onwel. En een verschrikkelijke angst beklom hem. 'Nee,' schreeuwde hij in paniek, 'nee.' De begeleider wist direkt dat het allemaal te ver voor Pedro was gegaan. Het was teveel voor hem. Pedro rende weg, en de begeleider rende achter hem aan. 'Doe dat ding weg,' gilde Pedro. 'Ik kan er niet tegen.' De begeleider kon nu niet meer zeggen dat Pedro maar met z'n angst voor zwarte honden moest leren omgaan. Dat werkte simpelweg niet bij Pedro. Hard rende Pedro terug naar de afdeling. Een andere begeleider ving hem op, en Pedro vertelde hem het verhaal. Na een paar dagen hoorde Pedro dat de begeleider die hem het beeldje wilde geven was ontslagen. Pedro vroeg zich af waarom. Hem werd verteld dat het een religieus beeldje was uit Egypte. En dat was ongeoorloofd op de afdeling. Er stond duidelijk in de regels dat de begeleiders ten eerste geen religieuze dingen aan patienten mochten opleggen, en ten tweede mochten ze geen persoonlijke cadeautjes geven. Er was ook nog een derde reden waarom de man was ontslagen. De patienten mochten niet geconfronteerd worden met hun angsten. De patienten moesten afgeleid worden en beschermd, zo was de therapeutische benadering. Pedro vond het aan de ene kant te ver gaan, dat deze begeleider daarom was ontslagen, en had spijt dat hij het doorverteld had, maar aan de andere kant voelde Pedro zich bedreigd, ook al bedoelde de man het goed. Pedro zocht bescherming, en die

had hij op deze manier dubbel en dwars gevonden.

De opvolger van de desbetreffende begeleider was een vrouw. Pedro kon erg goed gesprekken met haar voeren, en die gesprekken gingen nogal diep. De vrouw was lid van een religieuze beweging die 'De Groene Verlichting' heette. Dat was een beweging die geloofde dat de bomen de aarde zou overnemen, de plantegroei, en dat de aarde weer geheel plantaardig, botanisch, zou worden, alle levende wezens. Pedro wist niet goed wat hij er van denken moest. De vrouw moest natuurlijk goed ervoor zorgen dat zij Pedro niets opdrong, want dan zou ze in hetzelfde lot vallen als de vorige begeleider. In de reglementen stond dat de begeleiders wel religieus mochten zijn, en dat ze best wel dingen over hun persoonlijke leven mochten vertellen aan hen die ze begeleiden, als de situatie zich zou voordoen, maar ze mochten hen absoluut geen deel laten hebben in hun privé-leven. De beweging van de Groene Verlichting zou steeds meer groeien op aarde, en Pedro kwam erachter dat meerdere begeleiders van deze beweging lid waren. Maar diep erop ingaan wilde Pedro niet, en zorgde er altijd voor dat het onderwerp snel weer over iets anders ging, en ook de desbetreffende begeleiders lieten er niet al te veel over los. Eén van de nachtdiensten waar Pedro regelmatig goede gesprekken mee had was niet religieus. Zij vond de beweringen van de Groene Verlichting maar geklets. Zij geloofde dat alles zou vergaan, zowel mens, dier als plant, en dan zou alles in het niets oplossen. Zij van de Groene Verlichting geloofden dat zij die botanisch geworden waren eeuwig zouden leven. Wel vond de nachtdienst dat je oudere mensen hun geloof nooit moest afpakken, want dat hadden ze misschien nodig op hun oude dag, om niet zo bang te zijn voor de dood, en omdat het voor oudere mensen veel te moeilijk zou zijn en veel te ingrijpend om nog van standpunt of geloof te moeten veranderen. Pedro had eigenlijk geen standpunten. Hij hoorde al die verhalen maar aan.

Op een nacht werd Pedro badend in het zweet wakker. Hij had weer zo raar gedroomd. Plotseling keek hij naar zijn handen, en zag dat z'n armen bijna als takken waren geworden, en dat er bladeren aan groeiden. Maar toen hij ineens wakker schrok wist hij dat hij dit alles gedroomd had. Hij moest het maar niet meer over zware dingen hebben als religieuze overtuiging of levensstandpunt. De begeleiding reageerde daar direkt positief op. Maar het begon steeds vaker voor te komen dat Pedro 's nachts het gevoel had dat hij in een plant of boom aan het veranderen was. Op een nacht schrok hij wakker. Er zat een lange man vlakbij de muur, dichtbij z'n bed, en die man had boomachtige ledematen, als takken met bladeren. De man had een donkere groenachtige kleur, en Pedro zette het op een gillen. 'Ga mijn kamer uit,' schreeuwde Pedro. Maar de man bewoog niet. Toen Pedro het licht aandeed bleek het slechts zijn badjas te zijn die aan de muur hing. Ja, vergissingen kunnen gebeuren. Pedro zweette. Wanneer zou dit eens ophouden ?

Na enige jaren woonde Pedro weer op zichzelf. Op een dag werd er aangebeld. Het bleek iemand van de Groene Verlichting te zijn. Ze gingen de huizen langs om over hun geloof te vertellen en om leden te werven. Maar Pedro wilde er niets mee te maken hebben. De man van de beweging begon erg agressief te doen, dat als Pedro niet zou luisteren, dan zou zijn lot de vernietiging zijn. Pedro vond dat nogal intimiderend, en waarschuwde de man dat als hij niet zou stoppen, dan zou Pedro de politie bellen. De man drukte Pedro boos een folder in z'n vingers en vertrok met de woorden : 'Dan moet je het zelf maar weten.' Pedro vouwde een vliegtuigje van het foldertje en gooide het de man achterna, die al bijna uit zicht was verdwenen. Pedro wilde absoluut niets met dit soort zaken te maken hebben, omdat hij geen terugval wilde krijgen. Pedro moest juist los proberen te komen van dit soort dingen. Pedro liet een sticker op zijn deur aanbrengen om dit soort dingen buiten de deur te houden. Op de televisie waren er vaak programma's over of van de Groene Verlichting. Het was één

van de snelst groeiende religies op aarde. Er waren zelfs al zenders van de Groene Verlichting. Pedro keek daarom niet vaak naar de televisie. Sommige groepen binnen de Groene Verlichting waren erg agressief en sommige groepen waren erg conservatief. Wat dat betrefd waren er veel verschillen binnen de beweging. Er was één beweging binnen de Groene Verlichting die zo extreem was dat ze geloofden dat ze hen die niet van de Groene Verlichting waren moesten uitroeien. Gelukkig was die beweging erg klein, maar anderen zeiden dat in het geheim die beweging veel groter was dan ze dachten. De beweging zou veelal ondergronds werken, en in diepe list. Er werd gewaarschuwd voor aanslagen vanuit deze groep, die de zwarte groenen werden genoemd.

Pedro wist dat hij in gevaar was, omdat hij niet lid was van de beweging. Maar er was zelfs één harde kern binnen de zwarte groenen die geloofden dat een ieder die niet lid was van de zwarte groenen, die moest uitgeroeid worden, openlijk of subtiel. Er werd beweerd dat zelfs de regering leden had die van deze harde kern waren, maar bewijs was daar nog niet voor geleverd. En deze regeringsleden zouden de hand boven de hoofden van sommige geweldadige acties hebben gehouden, en er zelfs ruimte voor geven. Pedro wilde niet het doelwit worden van terroristen. Wat kon hij doen ? Een hond nemen, of lid worden van de Groene Verlichting voor eigen veiligheid ? Pedro was bang voor honden, dus dat viel eigenlijk al af, maar omdat Pedro nog wel banger was voor aanslagen, en absoluut geen huichelaar wilde zijn door uit angst 'gelovig' te worden, koos hij voor een hond. Hij ging naar een asiel en kocht daar een zwarte hond. Al snel werd Pedro beste maatjes met het beest, en de hond was erg waaks. Maar op een dag vond Pedro de hond dood in zijn mand. De dierenarts constateerde vergiftiging. En zo kocht Pedro een andere hond, die ook ten prooi viel aan vergiftiging, en zelfs in een derde geval gebeurde dit. Pedro wist dat ze het op hem gemunt hadden, en begon sterk te vermoeden dat de man die bij hem aan de deur kwam van de zwarte groenen was. Ze hadden Pedro natuurlijk al op een lijst gezet. Wat kon Pedro doen ? Verhuizen ? De zwarte groenen waren overal.

Op een dag kwam er een andere vrouw bij Pedro aan de deur. Het bleek iemand van de Groene Verlichting te zijn. Pedro wees op de sticker en zei : 'Kunt u niet lezen ?' De vrouw verontschuldigde zich en zei dat ze dat over het hoofd had gezien. Maar omdat de vrouw zo vriendelijk was en zo zacht bij Pedro overkwam liet hij haar binnen. De vrouw bleek van een conservatieve groep te zijn binnen de Groene Verlichting. Zij keurde ook streng de werken van de zwarte groenen af. De vrouw was zich ervan bewust dat de harde kern binnen de zwarte groenen een gevaar voor haar en haar conservatieve groep waren, en ze vertelde Pedro over een schuilplaats die ze hadden, onder de grond. Zij die zich bedreigd voelden konden daar komen wonen. Het was een samenlevingsverband, en ook anderen buiten de Groene Verlichting werden geaccepteerd. Pedro zag dat op een bepaalde wijze wel zitten, en al snel besloot hij over te verhuizen. Het was een streng bewaakte stad onder de grond, die uitliep in het bos. Boven de grond kwamen aanslagen inmiddels op grote schaal voor.

Bij de schuilplaats aangekomen werd Pedro naar een speciale afdeling gebracht voor niet-gelovigen. Pedro kreeg een ruime kamer toegezegd, maar al snel kwam hij erachter dat het een val was. Hij kon zijn kamer niet meer uit. Op de muur was een scherm, als een soort televisie. 'Welkom bij de Groene Verlichting. Voor de veiligheid hebben wij uw kamer op slot gedaan. Dit is maar voor even. We willen eerst een aantal dingen van u weten.' Onder het scherm was er een ja en nee knop, en zo moest Pedro eerst een ellenlange vragenlijst beantwoorden. Aan het einde van de lijst ging zijn kamerdeur weer open. Pedro was erg opgelucht. Maar dat was maar van korte duur. De voorzieningen waren erg zwak, en er werd telkens een beroep op hem gedaan om lid te worden van

de Groene Verlichting voor betere voorzieningen. In Pedro's ogen was dit dus een soort rassenonderscheid. Gelovigen hadden veel meer rechten. Pedro besloot om maar genoegen te nemen met de zwakke voorzieningen. Maar op een dag stond er een soldaat in zwart en groen voor zijn deur met een zwarte hond. De man droeg een geweer, en liet Pedro kiezen tussen de dood en de Groene Verlichting. Die keuze was dus snel gemaakt. Pedro moest de kamer uit, om plaats te maken voor een nieuwe ongelovige. Pedro was nu opgenomen in de ledenlijst van de Groene Verlichting. Hij kreeg een klein appartementje in een ander deel van de ondergrondse stad, waar hij met een soort van metro naartoe werd vervoerd. Het was er erg donker, maar er waren meerdere en betere voorzieningen over het algemeen. Toch was alles erg stoffig, droog en donker, en Pedro voelde zich er niet op z'n gemak. De buurt was ook duister, en de lift in het gebouw was oud, en leek Pedro zelfs gevaarlijk. Er zat geen alarm bij, dus wat zou er gebeuren als de lift vastliep. Na wat verkenning kwam Pedro weer terug in z'n donkere appartementje. Er lag een brief op tafel, waarop stond dat als Pedro betere voorzieningen wilde, dan moest Pedro lid worden van de uitgaande Groene Verlichting, zij die langs de huizen zouden gaan om leden te werven. Dat leek Pedro niks, maar hij kon niet anders. Hij vertrouwde zijn huidige buurt voor geen cent.

Er stond bij waar Pedro de brief kon inleveren als hij hogerop wilde. Na de brief ingeleverd te hebben kreeg Pedro een seintje dat hij kon komen met z'n spullen. Hij kreeg doorgang in het appartement waar hij de brief had afgeleverd, en kwam weer in een metro terecht. Ditmaal kwam hij in een lichter deel van de ondergrondse stad terecht. Hij kreeg een ruim appartement, en er waren gezamenlijke gangen en zalen waar hij medebewoners van dit stadsdeel kon ontmoeten. Hij wist zeker dat er onder de anderen ook lieden tussenzaten die net als hem noodgedwongen waren hier te komen. Pedro voelde zich min of meer ontvoerd, maar hij was in ieder geval tot nu toe veilig. Er mocht geen persoonlijke informatie worden uitgedeeld, anders zou dat leiden tot verwijdering. Er moest doelmatig worden gewerkt voor ledenwerving. Pedro kwam in een soort klas terecht, waar hij verder onderwezen zou worden. Hij was niets meer dan een nummer, met een opgelegde identiteit. Pedro keek wel eens links en rechts naar zijn mede-klasgenoten. Misschien dat hun ogen meer zouden verraden ? De sfeer was zowel gespannen als rustgevend. Pedro was blij dat hij beschermd werd, maar voor hoe lang ? Na een tijdje was het voor hem dan de eerste keer om langs de huizen te gaan. Hij werd ingedeeld naast een vrouw. De vrouw zei niet veel. Misschien was ze ook wel bang om teveel te zeggen. Ze durfde hem ook nauwelijks aan te kijken. Bij het eerste huis werd de deur direkt weer voor hen dichtgesmeten. Na een tijdje werd het de vrouw teveel, en ze rende weg. Pedro wist direkt dat zij ook een slachtoffer was. Na een tijdje kwam ze weer terug met gebogen hoofd. Ze wist dat het leven buiten voor haar veel gevaarlijker was. Maar aangekomen bij de toegangslift voor de ondergrondse stad werd ze geweigerd. Werden ze dan ook al boven de grond in de gaten gehouden ? Pedro mocht wel naar binnen, maar wist dat als hij afwijkend gedrag zou tonen, dan zou hij ook geweigerd worden. Pedro besloot zijn hoofd koel te houden, en gewoon zijn plicht te doen. Wat kon hij anders ? Maar hij had meer en meer het gevoel dat hij van zijn eigen identiteit werd beroofd. Hij voelde zich worden als een plant. Op een gegeven moment tijdens de ledenwervingen werd het hem teveel, en rende weg, net zoals de vrouw waar hij eens mee werkte. Zou ze nog leven ? Hij wist dat er voor hem nu geen weg meer terugwas. Hij besloot naar het bos te gaan.

Na een lange zwerftocht kwam hij bij een boshuisje aan. Stilletjes sloop hij naar binnen. Zou er iemand wonen. Opeens werd hij van achteren op z'n hoofd geslagen. Na een tijdje werd hij wakker in een bed. Een vrouw zat bij z'n bed. 'Het spijt me dat ik je neer moest slaan. Ik wilde geen risico lopen.' De vrouw was er achter gekomen dat ook hij een ontsnapte was. Ze vertelde hem dat zij en

haar zusters hier woonden. Op de grond kronkelde een grote slang. Pedro schrok, maar de vrouw zei dat het gewoon een huisdier was. Na een tijdje kwamen ook de andere vrouwen thuis. Ze besloten dat Pedro wel bij hen mocht wonen zo lang. Maar Pedro vertrouwde het niet helemaal. Hij wilde niet het slachtoffer worden van iets nieuws. De vrouwen gedroegen zich vreemd. Toen Pedro vertelde dat hij liever verder het bos in wilde greep één van de vrouwen een geweer van de muur af, en richtte het op hem. 'Er gaat hier niemand weg,' zei de vrouw. 'We kunnen jouw veel te goed gebruiken.' Pedro vroeg zich af waarvoor. Hij had nog steeds erg veel pijn in zijn hoofd, en ging weer liggen. Eén van de vrouwen haalde wat water voor hem. Midden in de nacht werd Pedro wakker, maar merkte dat de vrouwen hem met riemen aan het bed hadden vastgemaakt. Wat had dit nu weer te betekenen ? 'Psst,' fluisterde één van de vrouwen vanuit het donker, 'ze zijn veel te bang dat je ons gaat verraden. Daarom laten ze je niet gaan.' Langzaam kroop ze naar hem toe, en ging naast hem liggen op het bed. 'Maar ik kan je wel helpen. Als je mij mee wil nemen, dan maak ik je los.' Pedro stemde toe. De vrouw maakte hem los, en stilletjes liepen ze naar buiten. Pedro vroeg zich af wat hij met de vrouw moest, maar was tegelijkertijd dankbaar dat zij hem los had gemaakt. Samen gingen ze nog dieper het bos in. Pedro vroeg zich af waarom de vrouw met hem mee wilde in plaats van bij de vrouwen te blijven. De vrouw vertelde hem dat haar zussen erg vervelend waren naar haar, dat zij altijd het meeste werk moest doen, en dat ze haar vernederden. Ze stierf nog liever dan daar te blijven. Maar Pedro had geen zin om met haar op te trekken. Hij dacht na over hoe hij van haar af kon komen, maar kreeg toen weer medelijden met haar, en wilde eerst een goede plek voor haar vinden. Terug naar de schuilplaats van de Groene Verlichting kon ze ook niet, want ze was al eens ontsnapt, net als haar zusters. Pedro besloot naar een andere plaats te gaan, waar ze hem niet kenden, maar zeker weten deed hij natuurlijk toch nooit. In een dorpje achter het bos meldde hij zich aan, samen met de vrouw. Ze kregen allebei vrij snel een huisje toegewezen, en Pedro dacht dat hij wel opnieuw zou kunnen beginnen. Maar na een tijdje begon hij vreemde dreigbrieven te krijgen, en voor Pedro zat er niets anders op om hulp te zoeken bij de afdeling waar hij patient was geweest. Ze waren erg behulpzaam naar hem, en al snel kon hij daar terecht. De oude man en de vrouw woonden daar nog steeds. Ze waren blij hem te zien, maar verder zeiden ze niet veel. Hier voelde Pedro zich het veiligst.

Hoofdstuk 3. De Laser

Ook de begeleiding daar was blij Pedro na al die tijd weer te zien. Op een nacht had Pedro een vreemde droom waarin mannen met groene gezichten naar de aarde kwamen om zich te verspreiden. Maar Pedro probeerde het zo snel weer te vergeten. Iedereen droomde wel eens, dacht hij. Maar de droom kwam steeds vaker terug en werd steeds enger. Pedro merkte dat hij deze afdeling was ontgroeid. Hij kon zich hier als het ware niet meer aarden, en besloot na een paar weken weer te vertrekken. Pedro besloot weer terug te gaan naar het huis waar hij de dreigbrieven kreeg, maar hij kreeg een ander huis toegewezen. Ook besloot Pedro weer een hond te kopen, en ditmaal liet hij de hond niet meer alleen buiten in een kooi, maar bleef de hond binnen. Pedro wilde geen risico lopen op vergiftiging. Al snel werden Pedro en de hond dikke maatjes. Er kwamen hier geen dreigbrieven, maar Pedro was wel op z'n hoede. Pedro begon te merken dat z'n boomziekte weer aan het opkomen was. Hij kon maar moeilijk spreken, moeilijk bewegen, en had neigingen om flauw te vallen. Na een paar dagen lag Pedro met hoge koorts op bed, en vocht voor z'n leven. Op de televisie werd er gesproken van gasaanvallen op de ongelovige samenleving. Pedro voelde zich geforceerd om weer lid te worden van de Groene Verlichting voor z'n eigen veiligheid. Door z'n

ontsnapping was hij automatisch uitgeschreven, en terug naar de ondergrondse stad kon hij niet en wilde hij niet. Hij besloot zich via een telefoonnummer op de televisie in te schrijven bij een erg gematigde groep van de Groene Verlichting. Dat zou de woede van de harde kern misschien iets verlichten, ook al liep hij dan nog steeds gevaar. Hij kon zich natuurlijk ook laten inschrijven bij de zwarte groenen, dan was hij direkt van al het gezeur af. Uiteindelijk besloot hij dat maar te doen. Hij had geen andere keus. Een dag erna kwam er een man bij hem aan de deur in zwart pak. De man plaatste wat apparatuur in Pedro's huis, maar wilde niet zeggen wat voor apparatuur het was. Pedro, die inmiddels alweer bijna beter was, werd een beetje boos op de man, en gebood hem uitleg te geven. De man gaf hem een foldertje. Maar Pedro kon van dat foldertje niets wijzer worden. De man zei dat elk lid van de zwarte groenen zulke apparatuur in huis kreeg, wat ervoor zou zorgen dat er geen schadelijke gassen binnen zouden komen. Het was een soort afweer-systeem. Pedro vond het allemaal best, als hij maar veilig was.

Pedro wist dat hij nu bij een duister genootschap aangesloten was, maar hij kon niet anders. Hij hoopte maar dat ze niet zoveel van hem zouden vragen, en dat het dus gewoon bij een slapend lidmaatschap bleef. Pedro besloot het foldertje van de apparatuur nog eens te lezen. Het ging over verschillende boom-electriciteiten die door de apparatuur werd opgevangen en uitgezonden. Zo ging het om bepaalde energieen van de zwarte bomen, groene bomen, en ook rode en gele bomen. Om welke bomen het precies ging stond er niet bij. De verschillende kleuren waren gewoon schuilnamen voor bekende bomen. Pedro keek nog eens naar de apparatuur. Er zaten roze lampjes bij, die soms knipperden, groene lampjes, rode lampjes en zwarte lampjes. Pedro vond het maar griezelig, want wie weet werd hij wel afgeluisterd of op een andere manier in de gaten gehouden. Voorlopig was hij in ieder geval veilig. Wekelijks kreeg hij een blad binnen, een soort magazine van de zwarte groenen, maar daar stond niet echt veel in, en Pedro vond het dan ook niet echt een probleem om die bladen thuis te hebben. Het leken op een bepaalde manier erg natuurvriendelijke bladen, en Pedro kon er niets agressiefs in bespeuren.

Op een dag werd Pedro opgeroepen voor een onderzoek in een gebouw in een ander dorp. Pedro moest zijn mond opendoen voor een apparaat, en er werden foto's gemaakt. Toen mocht hij weer gaan. Na een paar dagen kwam er weer een man langs met een zwart pak. De man vertelde Pedro dat hij was geselecteerd om langs de huizen te gaan voor de zwarte groenen. Hij mocht niet praten over de zwarte groenen, maar moest zeggen dat hij het gedachtengoed van de groene verlichting bracht. Hij mocht absoluut niet agressief overkomen. Verder zou het allemaal erg oppervlakkig blijven, en Pedro hoefde maar eens per maand te verschijnen, en dan in een ander dorp. Pedro stemde hierin toe. Wel kwam er nog bij dat hij wat cursussen moest volgen over huisbezoek. En zo ging dat een tijdje door, en alles ging redelijk goed. Pedro bracht de boodschap zo objectief mogelijk, en vertelde niet dat hij van de zwarte groenen was. Diep in zijn hart was hij dat ook helemaal niet, dus hij had er vrede mee. Maar na een periode kreeg Pedro een brief thuis waarin stond dat hij geselecteerd was voor werk in het buitenland. En dit keer ging het niet om huisbezoek, maar om trainingen te geven aan pasbekeerden. De trainingen gingen nogal diep, en hadden zelfs het agressieve karakter waar Pedro altijd zo bang voor was geweest. Pedro weigerde, maar tegelijkertijd vroeg hij om een wat geschiktere baan voor hem. Er werd erg vriendelijk op Pedro's brief gereageerd, en bijgesloten was er een folder waarop Pedro de verschillende mogelijkheden zag. Er werden nog lieden gevraagd voor een laboratorium dat experimenteerde met boom-electriciteiten, en Pedro besloot op die vacature in te gaan. Het centrum was niet zo ver bij Pedro vandaan, en Pedro werd direkt aangenomen. Op de afdeling zou hij ook een kamer krijgen, en hij mocht zelf uitkiezen welke tijden hij wilde werken. Verder had Pedro veel vrije tijd, zodat hij het

gevoel had dat het hem niet opslokte. Maar Pedro vond het reuze interessant, want hier leerde hij hoe de boom-energieen op het lichaam inwerkten, en waar het allemaal voor gebruikt kon worden. Pedro bleek een goede aanwinst voor het laboratorium te zijn. Hij had enorme werkenthousiasme, en vond veel dingen uit. Het bleek dat hij een talent had op dit gebied. Pedro begon boeken te schrijven, die nogal aansloegen bij het publiek van de Groene Verlichting. En stukje bij beetje werd Pedro een autoriteit op het gebied van boom-electriciteit en de daarbij horende techniek, wat gezien werd als één van de basissen van de Groene Verlichting. Het hele idee van de Groene Verlichting stond bij Pedro erg op de achtergrond, zoveel mogelijk, want Pedro was absoluut niet religieus aangelegd. Pedro was geinteresseerd in de technische kant van het leven, met bomen als waardig medicijn en hulpmiddel voor de samenleving. Pedro kwam erachter welke boom-energieen de hersenen bestuurden, en de emoties, en het geweten, en zijn ontdekkingen werden gezien als revolutionair. Pedro kon het erg goed vinden met zijn collega's, en over de zwarte groenen werd eigenlijk nooit gesproken. Pedro had ook niet het idee dat zijn collega's daarbij hoorden, en het centrum was een onafhankelijk centrum voor onderzoek. Pedro zag het gewoon als een bepaalde tak van de wetenschap, maar dan enorm zelfstandig en onafhankelijk. Pedro hield van dat woord.

Al gauw kwam Pedro erachter dat verschillende boom-energieen verantwoordelijk waren voor het religieuze denken. De ene mens was hiervoor gevoeliger dan de ander, en dat had ook te maken met de omliggende omstandigheden. Soms werd men daarin gewoon gedwongen, en Pedro had ook al ontdekt welke boom-energieen voor dwangmatigheden zorgden en voor manipulatie en zelfs dictatuur. Pedro stelde zich erg mild op. Hij wilde weten wat de drijfveer was van deze energieen. Zij hadden natuurlijk een bron en een doel, en misschien werden zij ook weer door andere boom-electriciteiten beinvloed. Het bleek een spel te zijn van electriciteiten, een wisselwerking, een samenhang, en de creativiteit wat dat met zich meebracht. Het bleek zich na verloop van tijd allemaal te verfijnen, en te ontwikkelen, totdat een nieuwe stroom van frequencies opstak om allereerst chaos te brengen. Die chaos was als een soort protest, als een basis voor een opkomst van een over het hoofd geziende energie. De bestaande hierarchie werd ontmaskerd als een cocon voor nieuwe botanische patronen. Zo zou er vanuit de chaos en de onderdrukking langzaamaan een nieuwe orde ontstaan. Het centrum werkte nauw samen met het ziekenhuis. Pedro was erg blij met z'n nieuwe baan.

Op een nacht had Pedro een droom. Een stem zei tegen hem : 'Pedro, geloof jij dat de vibraties van jouw stem de vibraties zijn van bomen ? Zij hebben in jou een stem, en door jouw werk worden hun energieen gerankschikt en functioneel gemaakt. Ja, jij bent de schoot der bomen.' Pedro schrok wakker en probeerde het weg te wimpelen. Hij was natuurlijk zo druk met z'n werk dat dit was gebeurd. Hij geloofde niet dat bomen een persoonlijkheid hadden. Ze waren natuurlijk wel functioneel als energiebronnen, net zoals de zon en de sterren, net zoals het water en de wind. Pedro kende natuurlijk wel de primitieve religies die deze energiebronnen als goden vereerden, maar zover wilde Pedro niet gaan. Hij had het niet zo op met al die zweverigheid. Het was al erg genoeg dat hij een gedwongen lidmaatschap bij de zwarte groenen had, die hij zag als een groep extremistische fanatiekelingen. En hij wist zeker dat als hij de banden met hen zou breken, dan zou hij eraan gaan. Die lui waren bloedserieus.

Veel veranderingen waren er in de regering. Veel conservatievelingen binnen de Groene Verlichting kwamen aan de macht, iets wat Pedro een beter idee vond dan al die vreemde en gevaarlijke zwarte groenen die vaak in het geheim werkten. De nieuwe president had zo'n afschuw tegen de zwarte groenen, dat hij een onderzoek liet doen door het hele land. Zij die van de zwarte

groenen bleken te zijn hing gevangenisstraf boven het hoofd, vooral als het bleek dat ze misdaden op hun naam hadden staan. De president vond de opstelling van de zwarte groenen al tijden een gevaar voor het land. Bij invallen kwamen er al snel ledenlijsten aan het licht, en ook de naam van Pedro werd gevonden. Pedro moest voorkomen bij een speciaal daarvoor ingerichte rechtbank. Met een kleine standaardboete kwam hij daar vanaf, omdat hij gedwongen lid was. Hij was zoals ze dat noemden het slachtoffer van geestelijke ontvoering. Pedro kon zijn werk al snel weer voortzetten, en werd voor zijn werk geprezen. Al snel was de rust in het land teruggekeerd, en de slachtoffers van geestelijke ontvoering door de zwarte groenen kregen goede hulp en opvang. Pedro kon zich helemaal storten op zijn werk. Hij zag niet echt gevaar in de conservatieve orde van de Groene Verlichting. Veel ideeen kon hij wel aanhangen op een bepaalde wijze, en zo bleef de vriendschap tussen Pedro en het genootschap voortbestaan. Pedro hoefde absoluut geen lid meer te zijn. De president vond dat onzin, omdat er een vrijheid van levensovertuiging bestond. En een naam zei bijvoorbeeld ook helemaal niks. Iedereen moest leren zijn eigen identiteit te vinden binnen de afgrenzende normen en waarden.

Pedro vond uit dat de ademhaling niet alleen door zuurstof, de oxygene, ging, maar ook wanneer de longen waren ingesteld op de boom-energieen die daarvoor bestonden. Het bleek dat elke long daarin uniek was, en vaak scheen het dat er wel middelen waren om de long op dat gebied te verfijnen. Zo waren er ook boom-electriciteiten die zo ontwikkeld waren dat ze andere boom-electriciteiten konden opvangen voor bijvoorbeeld de ademhaling. Het lichaam kon zo klaargemaakt worden om een zogenaamde boomcapsule te ontvangen, die zich in de longen vestigde, of erop, en zo de benodigde adem-energieen van de bomen kon opvangen. Dit ging dan door het instellen als een tuner op de golflengtes van die energieen en niet eens zozeer door de pomp der longen, het inademen. Zo kon de long ook werken als een ontvanger, als een soort radio, naast het hele pompgebeuren. Die boomcapsules konden soms zo krachtig zijn dat er gewoon mee onder water geleefd kon worden voor een lange tijd, zonder dat dat schade toebracht aan het lichaam of fataal afliep. Zo waren er ook capsules die door bomen werden afgegeven om zich in het hart te vestigen voor een zo natuurgetrouw mogelijke hartslag. Pedro had een boomlaser ontwikkeld waarmee hij dit soort capsules eenvoudig kon installeren in de verschillende lichaamsdelen voor optimaal functioneren. Ook had hij daarvoor een scanner laten bouwen, zodat de capsules in beeld gebracht konden worden. Vaak liet hij degenen die op die manier behandeld waren terugkomen om te kijken of de capsule nog steeds aanwezig was.

Hoofdstuk 4. De Staatsgreep

Maar op een dag was er een staatsgreep in het gebouw van de president. Het waren de zwarte groenen, en de president werd door één van hen neergeschoten. Ze hadden hun gezichten groengeverfd, en ze hadden zwarte honden bij zich. Alles was op televisie te volgen, en de burgers werden opgeroepen om weerstand te bieden. Het liep uit op een burgeroorlog. Velen vochten aan de kant van de zwarte groenen, meer nog dan Pedro had verwacht. Het had zo'n lange tijd gesluimerd. Ook de televisiezenders werden overgenomen, en van de Groene Verlichting mocht niet eens meer gesproken worden. Iedereen moest lid worden van de zwarte groenen of het met de dood bekopen. Ook velen in het leger bleken van de zwarte groenen te zijn, en na een tijdje was de gehele staatsgreep geschiedt en geslaagd. Pedro wist dat er voor hem niets anders opzat om maar weer voor de zwarte groenen te kiezen, maar ditmaal had het veel zwaardere consequenties. Pedro moest het leger in, en meevechten met de zwarte groenen. In andere landen vonden ook staatsgrepen

plaats, maar sommigen van de grootste landen hadden nog steeds een conservatief beleid, en het zou oorlog worden. Dit was voor Pedro onaanvaardbaar daar hij gewetensbezwaren had tegen het leger. Hij stierf nog liever, maar een andere mogelijkheid zou zijn om zich als zieke op te geven bij een afdeling. Hij kon weer bij z'n oude afdeling terecht. De oude man en de vrouw die hij daarvan kende leefden inmiddels niet meer, en er waren twee nieuwen ervoor in de plaats gekomen. De oude begeleiding bestond niet meer. Er deden daar zwarte groenen dienst. Inmiddels hadden de landen die in de handen van de zwarte groenen gekomen waren zich verenigd tot een oorlog tegen de grootmachten. Vele ongelovigen waren omgebracht en in sommige speciale gevallen vastgezet. Gelukkig was er voor Pedro de mogelijkheid om op de ziekenafdeling waar hij was door te gaan met zijn onderzoek. Het was alsof de zwarte groenen wel heil in hem zagen, en het viel Pedro op dat de zwarte groenen opmerkelijk vriendelijk en beleefd naar hem waren. Soms kwam er wel eens een hogere functie van het gehele ziekenorgaan langs bij Pedro om wat vragen te stellen. Ze leken Pedro bijna te vereren. Pedro werd bijna een beetje verlegen van de aandacht. En alhoewel het een beetje vreemd aanvoelde, maakte het hem rustig. Pedro ging door met het schrijven van boeken, en alles begon weer een beetje in rustiger vaarwater te komen. Hij hield zich eigenlijk helemaal niet met het nieuws bezig en verder vroegen ze hier helemaal niks van hem. Wel namen zijn begeleiders soms wel eens wat rapporten van Pedro mee van de onderzoeken die hij had gedaan. Wat ze daar verder mee deden, dat wist Pedro niet.

Op een dag kwam er een begeleider bij Pedro op z'n kamer. Het was iemand van de zwarte groenen. Hij had een ernstige blik in zijn ogen. 'Pedro, de presidenten van de tegenstandige landen zijn omgebracht. Ook de functionarissen die niet met ons willen samenwerken zijn omgebracht en in sommige uitzonderlijke gevallen vastgezet. De aarde is nu van de zwarte groenen. Ik wilde dat jij dit zou weten.' Pedro was geschokt, maar wist dat dit zou gebeuren. Hij had het met al zijn technologieen niet kunnen voorkomen. Pedro raakte diep depressief, ook naarmate hij meerdere dingen hoorde over de werken van de zwarte groenen wereldwijd. Hij besloot te stoppen met zijn onderzoek, omdat hij er geen heil in zag. De begeleiders respecteerden zijn keuze. Ze wisten dat hij rust nodig had. Pedro was in hun ogen ernstig ziek, maar verder briljant van geest. Van zijn onderzoeksrapporten maakten ze boeken, naast de andere boeken die hij had geschreven, en het werd één van de grootste boekenlijnen op de boekenmarkten van de zwarte groenen. Pedro was in ieder geval blij dat het ook aansloeg bij de zwarte groenen. Hopelijk zouden ze er ooit nog eens lering uittrekken, maar hoop op verandering had Pedro eigenlijk weinig tot niets. Pedro legde zich neer bij de nieuwe wereldregering, de nieuwe wereldorde. Hij hield zich nu eigenlijk alleen nog maar bezig met zijn ziek zijn, en probeerde te leven met dat wat hij nog had. Hij hield van de kleine dingen van het leven, en was daar tevreden mee. Het leek alsof zijn depressies begonnen te verminderen op sommige momenten, maar andere momenten zakte hij weer diep weg, ja, ook in angst voor de toekomst, angst voor dat wat zou kunnen komen. Ja, grote angst had hij voor de harde kernen binnen de beweging, en hun geheime diepere kernen. Wat zouden ze met hem gaan doen ?

Pedro keek naar buiten, naar de bomen. De natuur was nog steeds prachtig, ja, dat wel. De zwarte groenen hadden niets tegen de natuur. Pedro zou hier de rest van zijn leven wel willen blijven. Waar moest hij anders naartoe ? Op een dag was er iemand op het kantoor van de begeleiding gekomen. Het was een wetenschapper, die diep geinteresseerd was in de ideeen van Pedro, door de boeken die Pedro had geschreven. De man had een kado voor Pedro. Het was een robot die geheel liep op de verschillende boom-energieen, en waar Pedro zelfs mee zou kunnen praten. Een begeleider kwam het kado brengen. 'Ja, zet hem maar in de hoek van de kamer,' zei Pedro. De robot scheen veel van Pedro af te weten, en al gauw begon Pedro het eng te vinden. Een begeleider voerde de robot weer

af. Als het te persoonlijk werd, vond Pedro het al snel eng worden, vooral als het over zijn verleden ging. Hoe dieper ze wisten door te tasten, hoe enger het voor Pedro werd. Pedro had rust nodig, en wilde zijn identiteit nog meer afbakenen. Op een dag besloot Pedro eens vermomd een kijkje in de buitenwereld te nemen. Wat was het hier veranderd, zeg. In de winkels kon je betalen door je arm in een automaat te steken, en dan werden er allerlei soorten boom-energieen afgetapt. De automaat had allerlei lampjes die dan gingen knipperen en piepen. Maar de verkoopster zei dat de automaat ook veel neutrale boom-energieen teruggaf, en dat waren dan de energieen die de winkel overvloedig had. Die energieen werden 'de neutralen' genoemd. Pedro bestelde een beeldje van een zwarte hond die op een schatkist zat, omdat dat hem liet denken aan de honden die hij eens had gehad. Hij stak zijn arm in de automaat, en er kwamen hele hoge toetjes uit. Het leek wel alsof zijn arm was vastgezet, maar na een tijdje hoorde hij zacht gezoem, en kon hij z'n arm er weer uittrekken. Hij voelde zich heel anders nou. 'Nou, bedankt,' zei hij opgewekt tegen de verkoopster, en liep de winkel uit. De verkoopster glimlachte terug naar hem. In de volgende winkel bestelde Pedro wat nieuwsoortige groentevruchten, die op een soort donkere uitgegroeide paprika's leken. Het waren nieuw gekweekte soorten. Pedro stopte zijn arm in de automaat en er kwamen hoge zoemende geluiden uit. Hier was het wat sneller gedaan, en snel kon Pedro zijn hand er weer uittrekken. Dit was een heel ander gevoel.

Op straat bewogen mensen vaak voort op voortbewegende band, zodat ze gewoon stil konden blijven staan. Na een tijdje ging Pedro weer terug naar de afdeling. Opeens voelde hij een hand op zijn schouder. Het was één van zijn mede-bewoners. De bewoner vroeg of Pedro ook sigaretten had, maar Pedro zei direkt : 'Houd daarover op, want als ze het horen dan schieten ze je dood. Op roken staat de doodstraf, ben je dat vergeten ?' De man deinsde achteruit en ging weer zitten. 'Ik vroeg het je alleen maar,' zei hij.

Opeens schrok hij wakker. Hij ... Pedro ? Hij heette helemaal geen Pedro. Wat voor een drugs hadden zij hem gegeven. De droom was levensecht. Hij lag aan banden vastgemaakt op een soort tafel, op een soort brancard, met vreemdsoortige apparatuur aan zijn armen en benen, en wat was er om zijn hoofd heen ? Hij voelde druk, maar kon het niet zien. Om de tafel stonden wat mannen. Eén man was wat ouder, had een grijzige kleine baard, en een lichte huidziekte. Ze zeiden dat ze bomen waren. Bomen ? De jongen geloofde niet dat bomen konden praten. De jongen begon te protesteren, maar de oudere man greep hem bij de keel. 'Nu moet je ophouden,' zei de man, 'je denkt zeker dat jij het enige wezen bent dat kan leven.' De jongen kreeg een lichte klap in zijn gezicht. 'Wat hebben jullie me gegeven ?' vroeg hij aan de mannen. 'Niets,' zei één van de mannen. 'Je wordt bestraald met boom-electriciteiten. Die vormen jouw realiteit, maar het is maar een droom. Zelfs dit is een droom.' En weer werd de jongen wakker, en ditmaal lag er een vreemsoortige octopus die meer als een grote plant of struik was op hem. Hij voelde een druk op z'n lichaam die naar z'n hoofd steeg, en het leek alsof die druk zijn denken beinvloedde. 'Ik ben van de octopusboom,' zei het schepsel. 'Door druk op je lichaam, en vooral op je lever uit te oefenen stijgt er een electrische capsule naar je hoofd die jouw deze ervaringen geeft.' De jongen zei niks, maar bleef stil liggen. Hij voelde zich compleet machteloos. Of was hij gewoon gestorven ?

'Je bent niet dood,' zei de vreemde octopus-plant, 'je droomt slechts, en je leven was een hardnekkige droom, als een hardnekkige vloeistof in je hersenen. Hard boomwater noemen wij dat.' De jongen bemerkte dat hij niet kon spreken. Wat wilden ze toch van hem ? Wat voor zin had alles nog ? Of kreeg hierdoor alles weer zin ? 'Bomen zijn de dingen die je in je leven op de achtergrond probeerde te drukken, totdat je niet anders kon dan ze een plaatsje te geven in jouw leven, maar nog

steeds doe je er laagachtend over, alsof het geen personen zijn,' snauwde de octopus-plant, terwijl hij zich strakker tegen de jongen aandrukte. Opeens kwamen er een soort kleine cirkelzaagjes tevoorschijn uit de huid van de octopusplant, en begonnen zijn buik open te snijden. De lever van de jongen werd eruit gehaald, en de octopusplant slikte het in. Het deed geen pijn bij de jongen, misschien ook doordat hij wist dat het toch maar een droom was. 'Een droom kan waarheid bevatten,' sprak de octopus-plant. De jongen voelde al het leven uit zich wegtrekken, nu hij geen lever meer had, en weer schrok hij wakker. Het leek wel alsof hij van droom naar droom ging. Alsof hij in een vreemdsoortige lift zat. Waar zou de reis eindigen ? 'Die dromen zijn een geschenk van de bomen die je op een bepaalde manier ervaart, maar als je er afstand van doet blijkt het iets anders te zijn,' sprak een stem. 'Wij bomen, wij onderdrukten, nemen alles over. Nu is het onze tijd.' Was dit soms weer een experiment van de zwarte groenen ? De jongen wist het niet. Opeens rolde hij uit de lift en kwam in een tunnel terecht die in verbinding stond met een ruimteschip. Wat is dit ? dacht de jongen. Misschien was dit wel allemaal de procedure om tot dit ruimteschip opgenomen te worden. Bestond de aarde nog wel ? Heeft de aarde wel echt bestaan, of is hij gered door buitenaardse wezens ? Aan de uitvoering van het schip kon de jongen merken dat het liep op bomen-energie, maar waar waren die bomen dan ? Of waren de bomen als personen binnen in het schip. Strompelend probeerde de jongen binnen te komen. Toen hij binnen was liep er een man in een glanzend pak op hem af. De man had een baard en sprak : 'Welkom. Zie je die zwarte planeet in de verte ? Dat is de zwarte zon. Alle bomen leven door de zwarte zon en ontlenen hun energieen daaruit. Alle bomen-energie is slechts zwarte zonnen-energie.' De jongen keek bedenkelijk. De man knikte. 'Als levend wezen dien je te leven vanuit de verborgen dingen, zoals de zwarte zon. Het verborgene staat garant voor de toekomst, en de verdere levensreis.' De jongen keek de man met grote ogen aan. 'Bent u een boom ?' vroeg de jongen. 'Ja,' zei de man. De jongen werd verder naar binnen gevoerd, en zag de zalen van het schip. Daarna kreeg hij een eigen kamer toegewezen. 'Je bent belangrijk voor ons,' zei de man, en vertrok, terwijl hij de jongen in zijn kamer achterliet. De deur werd op slot gedaan, en de jongen wist dus dat hij een gevangene was. Maar goed, was dit kwaad bedoeld of om hem ergens tegen te beschermen. In zijn kamer stond een grote botanische computer. De energieen waardoor deze computer werkte waren van de zwarte zon. Elke boomenergie was een bepaalde laserstraal van de zwarte zon, en tezamen vormden ze letters op het scherm. Via een keyboard kon de jongen boodschappen intypen, en spreken met bomen. Maar snel kreeg de jongen last van zijn hoofd en ging op bed liggen. Na een tijdje ging er een zoemend alarm aan. De man deed de kamerdeur open en rende naar de jongen toe. 'Maak je klaar,' zei de man, 'we gaan naar de zwarte zon. Je zult een speciaal pak aan moeten doen dat in de kast ligt om bestand te kunnen zijn tegen de straling.' De jongen had een bepaalde tijd om het pak aan te doen. Het pak voelde erg dik en zacht aan, als dikke vla, en de jongen kon er goed in bewegen.

Na een tijdje moesten ze uitstappen. Eerst moesten ze door een lange tunnel heenlopen, en toen kwamen ze in een hal terecht waar een kanaal was met vreemde stromen energie. Ze waren in een ingebouwde capsule gekomen binnenin de zwarte zon, in de kern. Het was een grote capsule. De jongen zag een heleboel wezens in pakken lopen, en liep achter ze aan. Langs de kanten van het kanaal waren stroken waarop je kon lopen, met wat deuren aan de zijkant. De wezens liepen door de deuren heen, en ook de jongen ging door een deur heen. Hij moest over platen lopen die allerlei energie-patronen hadden, en zodra hij erop stapte voelde hij rare dingen door zijn lichaam schieten, en door zijn mond, en kon hij heel diep inhalen. Zijn bewegingen werden scherper en sneller, en veel geconcentreerder, en alles werd zachter en zachter. Weer schrok de jongen wakker. De man stond voor hem. 'Door van droom tot droom te gaan, en van ontwaking tot ontwaking verplaats je

jezelf. Dit is hoe bomen leven,' vertelde de man. Ze waren nu heel diep in de kern van de zwarte zon. De jongen had nog steeds z'n pak aan, maar dit had nu een andere kleur. Aan groot apparaat hing boven hem, en sneed een cirkel in zijn pak. Snel vergaderde zich een enorme hitte op het gat, en ineens plopte de lever van de jongen omhoog als gebraden. Veel druk ging van het hoofd van de jongen af, en het leek wel alsof hij nieuwe dingen kon ruiken. Alsof hij de zee kon ruiken en allerlei overheerlijke zonne-olien en zeeparfums. Een soort sap droop er uit het apparaat en ging door de cirkel naarbinnen. 'Dit is belangrijk om nog dieper in de zwarte zonnenkern te kunnen.' zei de man. 'Dit sap zal er voor zorgen dat je niet inwendig geroosterd zult worden.' Weer kwam het apparaat dichtbij en schoot een nauwsluitende deksel over het gat heen en een stangetje begon er op te tikken. Een hol geluid kwam eruit voort, en de plank waar de jongen op lag begon vooruit te schuiven, terwijl de man ook op de plank sprong. De plank ging door een gat, en werd iets groter, totdat het een soort vlot was, en toen bevonden ze zich op een gigantische zee van dik stromende energieen. Dit waren de pure boomenergie-bronnen, oftewel de zwarte zonne-energieen.

Na een tijdje kwamen ze met het vlot in een zaal, terwijl de jongen weer voelde alsof hij duizend keer heel snel achter elkaar wakker werd. Het was een soort vergaderzaal. Mannen zaten hoog in capsules, en een grote dobbelsteen lag op een grote wijde tafel in het midden van de kring. Ook de man en de jongen kregen een capsule. Een andere man drukte op een knop, en de dobbelsteen begon te draaien. terwijl de dobbelsteen draaide kreeg de jongen vreemde gevoelens die hij niet kon thuisbrengen. De man naast hem vertelde dat de dobbelsteen de stem was van de verborgen boom, de zwarte boom, die zelfs voor de bomen hier verborgen was. Omdat ze geloofden dat het verborgene de toekomst was, en het pad dat ze moesten gaan, lieten ze de dobbelsteen draaien om de koers te bepalen. Het verborgene was voor hen de horizon met geheimenissen en wijsheid waar zij niets van wisten. Om de beurt drukten ze op een knop in de capsule, en ook de jongen moest zijn knop indrukken. Alle uitkomsten werden op een groot scherm genoteerd. Het was een vreemd alfabet. Het was het alfabet waarmee de zwarte boom sprak. Plotseling kwam er zwarte bliksem tevoorschijn, en de dobbelsteen spatte uit elkaar. Een enorm monster kwam tevoorschijn als een zwarte draak, maar het was een plant of struik. Een licht ging aan in één van de capsules, en dat licht begon heel snel over de capsules heen te gaan. Een man naast de jongen zei dat waar het licht zou stoppen die capsule zou meegaan met de zwarte drakenstruik, maar niemand wist naartoe. Geen enkele capsule was ooit teruggekeerd. Velen geloofden dat de zwarte drakenstruik de capsule mee zou nemen naar de zwarte boom. Bang waren ze niet, maar de jongen was wel een beetje bang. En tot zijn schrik stopte het licht in zijn capsule. Iedereen riep : 'Jij bent de uitverkorene,' terwijl niemand dus wist wat dat zou betekenen. De jongen verdween met de capsule in het gat, terwijl de drakenstruik om hem heen bewoog. De jongen wilde wel dat de man met hem mee zou gaan, maar hij was de enige in deze capsule, en er kon maar één capsule mee. Weer leek het alsof de jongen heel snel miljoen keer wakker werd, en hij voelde zich heel licht worden. Vanuit de verte werd er geroepen : 'Hij komt aan tot de diepere kernen van de zwarte zon, dichtbij de zwarte boom, dichter en dichter.' Het leek op een vrouwenstem, maar de jongen wist het niet zeker. In de verte zag hij een woestijn die voor zijn ogen bewoog, met bijna een spiegelend oppervlak. Op die woestijn stond een geribbelde zwarte boom, terwijl het leek alsof de capsule over de drakenstruik gleed. In de verte vlakbij de boom zag hij wat zwarte honden spelen. De rillingen liepen over hem heen. Als ze hem maar geen kwaad zouden doen.

Bij de zwarte boom aangekomen merkte hij dat deze gewoon kon bewegen en praten. Van dichtbij leek de boom net op een lichaam, een lang, slank lichaam. Opeens leek het alsof er iets om hem heen brak, en leek het alsof hij in de diepte viel, maar de zwarte boom stond nog steeds voor hem,

en kwam steeds dichterbij. 'Ik heb je nodig,' zei de zwarte boom. 'de zwarte zon staat op uitsterven. Als de vlam dooft, dan gaan we er allemaal aan. De heks Sausibir van de boze zon genaamd Misfamen is onze vijand. Als zij er in zal slagen de groene staaf te vinden dan ... dan ...' En toen herinnerde de jongen zijn dromen weer. Ja, dit kende hij. 'Ik heb je nodig,' echoode het door het hoofd van de jongen. Maar de jongen was ver weg in zijn herinnering. Het leek wel alsof al zijn oude dromen weer werden afgespeeld. Toen de jongen wakker werd wist hij direkt wat er was gebeurd. Hij had een gevaarlijke soort drugs gebruikt, waardoor hij al deze vreemde dromen had gehad, waarin hij iemand anders was, en wat leek alsof het jaren en jaren duurde. Er was slechts één nacht voorbij. Zijn vriendin lag naast hem. Ze sliep nog. De jongen kon zich herinneren dat hij de drugs voor het slapen gaan had ingenomen. Ze zeiden dat je er zo lekker van kon slapen en er goed 'high' van kon worden. Gelukkig was het geen slechte trip geweest, maar toch vroeg de jongen zich af of hij er mee door moest gaan. Het stond nog steeds bekend als gevaarlijk, en voor de jongen was het eigenlijk een experiment. Zijn vriendin had het ook ingenomen. Het zou hem benieuwen wat zij allemaal mee had gemaakt. Hij draaide zich naar haar toe. Misschien moest hij haar wel verlossen. Heel zacht begon hij tegen haar te fluisteren : 'Alles is okay, alles is goed, je bent bij mij. Je bent veilig.' Plotseling werd het meisje wakker en omhelsde hem heel stevig. 'Houd me vast,' rilde ze, 'laat me niet meer teruggaan, er is overal vuur.' Maar weer viel het meisje in slaap, en de jongen wist nu dat het ernst was. De drugs was gemaakt van bessen van een vreemdsoortige plant, en ze konden het beter maar niet gebruiken. Weer begon hij zachtjes tegen haar te fluisteren, en hij aaide haar heel zacht. Na een tijdje werd het meisje weer wakker, en schreeuwde : 'Blijf van me af, wie ben je ? Wie denk je wel niet dat je bent.' Ze ging rechtop zitten en begon hem te slaan, terwijl de jongen haar probeerde te kalmeren. Na een tijdje was het meisje bij positieven. Samen zaten ze rechtop in bed. De jongen had wat water gehaald voor zijn vriendin. Toen ze haar verhaal vertelde leek het erg veel op het verhaal van de jongen.

Plotseling werd de jongen weer wakker. Hij wist dat er wat aan de hand was. Hij keek in de ogen van een indiaan die hem een tros vreemde planten en bessen voor zijn neus hield. Hij kon zich niet bewegen. 'Wij zullen je moeten offeren voor onze goden,' zei de indiaan. De indiaan sprak de taal van de jongen. 'Onze goden zijn bomen, en zij zijn jaloers op jullie organen, die zij niet hebben. Toen sneed de indiaan de lever en het hart uit de jongen. De jongen schreeuwde, maar het deed hem nauwelijks pijn. Wat gebeurde er toch ? De indiaan rees het hart en de lever op tot de hemel, en sprak : 'Oh zwarte zon, brenger van al het leven, gij die de bomen draagt, aanvaard dit offer, en spreek weer.' Plotseling pakte de indiaan een fakkel. Stak dit aan bij het dichtsbijzijnde vuur en stak de jongen aan. Weer voelde de jongen bijna niets. Het was alsof hij er immuun voor was. De indiaan was zichtbaar geshokkeerd, want de jongen was nog steeds bij positieven en verschroeide niet. De indiaan boog neer in het zand en sprak : 'Gij moet wel de gezondene zijn van de zwarte zon of de zwarte maan, gij bent de god der bomen, de god van ons oerwoud. Heb genade met ons, oh God van de zwarte zon.' En vele malen boog de indiaan zich in het stof. De jongen wist dat hij elk moment weer wakker kon worden. Waren dit alleen maar schijn-realiteiten in zijn hoofd ? Het leken wel de laagjes van zijn ziel die elk een onafhankelijk leven leiden, en het leek wel alsof ze nu in razend tempo bij elkaar kwamen. De indiaan maakte de jongen los. De jongen had geen hart en lever meer, en hij voelde zich als een slang. De indiaan nam hem mee naar zijn stam, en riep : 'De god der zwarte zon is gekomen, buigt allen voor hem neer.' Vanuit alle kanten kwamen indianen die zich voor hem neer storten, en begonnen te bidden en te weeklagen. Ze waren allemaal bang dat de god van de zwarte zon hen zou straffen. De jongen wist niet goed waar hij in terecht was gekomen. Er werd hem allerlei voedsel aangeboden. De jongen hoopte maar dat hij snel weer wakker zou

worden.

Was hij de gevangene van een drug ? Was hij geestesziek, of was misschien alles en iedereen geestesziek ? En wat was geestesziekte eigenlijk ? Was het gewoon één van de patronen van ervaring, of was het een gevaarlijk iets dat hoe dan ook uitgebannen moest worden. Maar door wie ? En wie zei hem dat dat dan realiteit zou zijn ? Wat was nou de echte realiteit ? Of was de realiteit een opsomming van hoe je dingen beleefde ? Dan had iedereen dus een andere realiteit. Waar moest hij naartoe ? Was hij dood ? Of was hij juist echt tot leven gekomen ? Niemand wist het, en niemand kon het hem vertellen.

Hoofdstuk 5. Geb

Hij probeerde zich te herinneren of hij drugs had gebruikt. Ja, hij had dat gedaan, maar dat bleek een droom te zijn. En het was een droom in een droom, als een vreemd wezen, een vreemde boom met vele ringen, met vele vertakkingen. Als een octopus-boom was het, als een draaiend iets wat telkens terugkwam. Of was hij misschien echt het slachtoffer van experimenten van buitenaardse wezens ? Of was het juist zijn ontsnapping. Waren zij zijn redders ? Hij wist het niet, en hij vond het eng, maar tegelijkertijd kwam alles steeds meer op de achtergrond, om plaats te maken voor een verlichting ... Was dit de ware groene verlichting ? Dat hij altijd weer kon ontsnappen in een andere droom. Iets was nooit echt helemaal waar, en dat begon hij steeds meer te beseffen ... alles was niets dan een hardnekkige droom ... zo hardnekkig, dat hij in zo'n droom wel tachtig tot negentig jaar zou kunnen worden, met allerlei vertrouwelijke gezichten ... met iets dat hij 'familie' zou kunnen noemen. De delen van de familie waren de hardnekkigste elementen uit die chronische droom, want die delen bleven bij je, ook al koos je ervoor om ze stukje bij beetje te verwijderen uit je leven. Je kon wel uit je familie gaan, maar hoe kreeg je je familie uit je weg. Het waren diepe littekenen, als tatoeages van bomen. Ze waren te diep in je geworteld om je diepere betekenissen te laten zien. Het waren de verborgen delen van je ziel, waar je een eigen voorstelling van had gemaakt ... de bomen ...

Hard werd er op tafel geslagen. Een jongen was tijdens een saaie les in slaap gevallen. De onderwijzer stond voor hem. Wat had hij toch vreemd gedroomd. De onderwijzer had les gegeven over bomen. 'Doe vooral geen moeite om op te letten,' zei de leraar sarcastisch. De kinderen om hem heen grinnikten en staarden de slaperige jongen aan. 'Ach wat,' zei de jongen. 'moet ik nog geloven dat je echt bent. Je bent zelf een boom.' De kinderen lachten, maar de leraar werd erg boos. 'Zeg als je zo door gaat met je praatjes, dan stuur ik je naar de direkteur.' De jongen trok een onverschillig gezicht. 'Laat hem ook maar komen. Hij is ook één van de vele bomen,' zei de jongen. De jongen was voor niets en niemand bang, omdat hij wist dat hij elk moment ook van deze droom kon ontwaken. Maar wat als de droom chronisch zou zijn, en hij in deze situatie tachtig of negentig jaar oud moest worden ? Daar was de jongen toch ook wel een beetje bang voor, maar meestal duurden de dromen bij hem korter. Het was alsof er een octopus-boom in hem leefde, een dromenboom. Alles was zo fragmentarisch. En daar werd weer iemand wakker. Het leek wel alsof de dromen van identiteit verwisselden. Het was alsof de octopusplant weer bezig was.

Hahahaha, schreeuwde de octopus-plant. Ja, ik ben het weer. Ik ben weer aan de wandel. Maar plotseling werd de octopus-plant afgeschoten. Een lange man met een geweer stond bij het lijk, en nam het tussen zijn vingers en trok het omhoog. Naast de man stond een zwarte hond. Het was een vleesetende plant. Het vlees van zielen. Het was een zielen-eter. De lange man zou het meenemen

naar zijn laboratorium om het op te zetten. De man heette Geb. Hij had een groenachtige huid. Hij nam het leven niet serieus. Hij wist dat hij zo weer wakker kon worden, en dat dan alles anders bleek te zijn. Ze hadden misschien wel met miljoenen van die octopusplanten te maken. En hoeveel leefden er wel niet binnenin bij hemzelf ? Hij wist het niet, en maakte zich er niet te druk om. Toen hij bijna bij z'n laboratorium was aangekomen werd hij aangevallen door een vliegenplant. De plant had hele dikke vleugels en leek op een vlieg. Snel spoot de plant spul af op Geb, en Geb voelde dat zijn denken en zijn bewegingen heel traag werden. Hij wist dat als hij hier niets aan zou doen, dan zou hij in slaap vallen, en dan zou de vliegenplant hem eten. Strompelend liep hij zijn laboratorium binnen, en maakte snel een flesje open, en dronk het op. Snel kon hij zich weer goed bewegen, pakte zijn geweer en schoot de vliegenplant af, die inmiddels al op z'n schouder zat. Het was groen spul uit een flesje dat de Groene Verlichting heette. De man keek naar buiten. De zon was zwart. Het was donker. Grinnikend liep hij naar binnen. In een ketel begon hij te roeren, en er lag daar allerlei groene vloeistof in, als een soort slijm. Met een kwastje begon hij de groene vloeistof te smeren over een soort roostertje of raamwerk, en draaide het om, om ook de onderkant in te smeren. Vanuit een kast haalde hij een groen staafje dat licht glom en begon dat over het besmeerde roostertje of raamwerk te strijken. Vanuit het rooster kwamen groene gelei-achtige schepselen tevoorschijn. Dit was het staafje dat de heks Sausibir ook wilde hebben. De gelei-achtige wezens gingen naar buiten en begonnen alle bomen, planten en struiken te omhullen, en dezen begonnen tot leven te komen. Ze waren op weg om alle plantaardigen vrij te zetten. De grond begon meer en meer in groene blubber te veranderen, dat hier en daar begon op te drogen. Het was een geslaagde dag.

Pats. Iemand werd wakker, en nog iemand anders werd wakker. Wat hadden ze allemaal vreemd gedroomd. Buiten renden er zwarte honden op straat. Ze blaften hard. Vandaag zouden er verkiezingen zijn. Het spande eigenlijk om twee partijen. De Partij van de Groene Verlichting, de PGV, of de Zwarte Groenen, de ZG. Het was een drukke week geweest met campagnes, en nu was het dan zover.

Einde

Planten van Vlees

Harm woonde met zijn twee kinderen aan de rand van een bos. Het bos was tamelijk groot, en er bleek een indianenstam te wonen die een paal met een dierenkop erop aanbaden. Meestal waren dat koppen van varkens of runderen zoals buffels en bizons. Harm waarschuwde zijn kinderen altijd dat ze niet het bos moesten ingaan. Hij was te bang dat de indianen zijn kinderen wat vreemds zouden aandoen. Er gingen allerlei vreemde verhalen over deze stam in de ronde. Ze zouden vreemde dingen doen met kinderen. Bewijzen voor deze verhalen waren er niet. Maar Harm wilde geen enkel risico nemen.

Op een dag tikte er een man op het raam. Het bleek een indiaan te zijn. Hij had dierenvellen op zijn rug, en hij had laarzen van een soort bont. Harm deed open, en vroeg waarmee hij de man kon helpen. De indiaan zei niets. Toen wees hij op zijn laarzen. 'Ikko Boeke,' zei de indiaan. Harm kon dat natuurlijk niet verstaan en haalde zijn schouders op. 'Mijnheer, ik heb geen idee wat u mij probeert te vertellen. Die taal ken ik helemaal niet,' zei Harm een beetje nors. Weer wees de indiaan op zijn laarzen, en toen zag Harm dat er een gat inzat. 'Oh, ik dacht dat indianen zelf wel wisten hoe ze zulke dingen kunnen maken,' grapte Harm. 'Nou, komt u maar verder.' De indiaan kwam naar binnen en deed zijn laars uit. Harm pakte draad en een naald, en begon de stof aan elkaar te naaien. Hij vond het vreemd dat de indiaan dit zelf niet kon.

'Hebben ze bij jullie geen onderwijs ?' vroeg Harm. De indiaan schudde zijn hoofd. De kinderen kwamen thuis en waren verbaasd toen ze de indiaan op de bank zagen zitten. 'Wat moet hij hier ?' vroeg Ko.

'Laten we een beetje gastvrij zijn,' zei Harm.

'Maar pa, u weet dat indianen gevaarlijk zijn,' zei Bep.

'Daar zijn geen bewijzen voor,' zei Harm. 'Trouwens, hij had gewoon mijn hulp nodig.'

'Het kan een valstrik zijn, pa,' zei Ko, die het niet vertrouwde.

'Ach welnee,' zei Harm. 'Hij kan hier best wel een nachtje slapen.'

'Wat !' riep Ko. 'Mij niet gezien. Dan ga ik wel bij oma slapen.'

'Doe jij dat maar,' zei Harm. 'Ik ben wel blij met een beetje gezelschap sinds mama is overleden.'

Bep begon te snikken. 'Moet je dat allemaal weer aanhalen, pa ? Zo komen we er nooit overheen.'

'Sorry,' zei Harm. 'Ga jij ook maar naar oma.'

De kinderen liepen de deur uit, terwijl Harm aan de indiaan vroeg of hij een biertje wilde. De

indiaan wilde dat wel. Harm zag het als een uitdaging. Als hij vriendschap met de indiaan kon sluiten, dan zou dat bevordelijk zijn voor de verhouding tussen het dorp en de indianen. Misschien zou dat wel veel misverstanden uit de weg ruimen.

In de nacht hoorde Harm wat gerommel op het zolder. Toen hoorde hij ineens luide muziek. Toen hij kwam kijken had de indiaan een grammofoon-plaat opgezet. Harm kon er wel om lachen, en ging weer verder slapen. De indiaan bleek het goed naar zijn zin te hebben, maar de dag erop wilde de indiaan weer terug. De indiaan was te gehecht aan het bos. Harm kon dat goed begrijpen. De indiaan was verder erg dankbaar, maar maakte duidelijk in hele gebrekkige taal dat de vriendschap nu ook ten einde moest komen. De indiaan zei dat het voor hem eigenlijk verboden was om vriendschap te hebben met de blanken.
Harm kon het niet laten om nog even te vragen over die laars. 'Waarom kwam je hier eigenlijk voor die laars ? Hebben jullie geen vrouwen in jullie stam die voor dit soort dingen zorgen ?'

De indiaan liet weten dat ze geen vrouwen meer hadden. Die waren allemaal dood. De stam had alleen nog maar mannen, en die schenen heel onhandig met deze dingen te zijn.

'Maar hoe moet dat dan verder als je nog eens zoiets nodig hebt ?' vroeg Harm. De indiaan maakte duidelijk dat het maar behelpen was, en dat alles te hooi en te gras zou gaan. Misschien zouden ze zich het zelf wel aanleren, maar dat zou tijd kosten. De laatste vrouw van de stam was net overleden. Harm zei dat hij kon begrijpen hoe hij zich voelde, want zijn vrouw was ook overleden.

De indiaan maakte duidelijk dat hij juist blij was dat de vrouw dood was. Vrouwen bleken een grote macht binnen de stam te hebben, en die zouden ze in het verleden misbruikt hebben. De indiaan voelde zich vrij nu. Harm vroeg zich af of de vrouwen misschien vermoord waren. 'Hoe zijn jullie vrouwen aan hun einde gekomen ?' vroeg Harm tactisch.

De indiaan liet weten dat dit een groot geheim was. Harm vond dat verdacht. 'Waarom wil je het niet zeggen ?' vroeg Harm. 'Hebben jullie iets te verbergen ?'

'Shhhh,' zei de indiaan, en drukte zijn vingers op de lippen van Harm. 'Jullie zijn me maar een vreemde koekebakkers,' zei Harm.

De indiaan maakte duidelijk dat hij nu moest gaan, en rende het bos in.

Harm stond met zijn ogen te knipperen. Hij vertrouwde het helemaal niet. Even later kwamen de kinderen thuis.

'Hoe was het bij oma ?' vroeg Harm.

'Oma was er niet,' zei Ko. 'Maar we hadden de sleutel, dus we zijn daar gewoon gaan slapen.'

'Misschien is ze bij tante Buurtje,' zei Harm.

Ko en Bep gingen op de bank zitten. 'Hoe is het afgelopen met die indiaan ?' vroeg Bep. Toen vertelde Harm het hele verhaal.

'Ik heb nog eens lopen denken, hè,' zei Bep. 'Die indianen hebben misschien onze hulp nodig. Ze leven niet voor niets in het bos. Er moet iets in het verleden mis zijn gegaan.'

'Ach welnee,' zei Ko. 'Ze houden van het bos. Ze zouden niet anders willen. Er is nooit iets verkeerds gegaan, want ze hebben altijd al in het bos geleefd.'

'Nou, ik weet het nog niet zo net,' zei Bep. 'Misschien hebben ze traumatische ervaringen gehad in stad of dorp, en zijn toen naar het bos vertrokken. Wie zou er nu vanuit zichzelf zo primitief willen leven ?'

'Ik,' zei Ko. 'Ik begrijp hen gedachtengang helemaal. Maar voor ons zijn ze nu niet meer te vertrouwen. Het lijkt wel alsof er een vuur is tussen hen en ons. Het bos is in oorlog met het dorp.'

'Er kunnen toch ook wel tussenwegen zijn ?' vraagt Bep.

'Blijkbaar niet,' zei Ko.
Midden in de nacht wordt er op het raam geslagen. Een groep woedende indianen is gekomen. Harm rent naar beneden, ziet de indianen staan, en grijpt naar zijn honkbal-knuppel.

Hij doet de deur open en roept : 'Wie van jullie wil er het eerst aan ?'

De indianen zijn boos, en laten hem weten dat ze erachter zijn gekomen dat één van hen bij de blanken is geweest en vriendschap heeft gesloten. Ze laten weten dat er een speer door het hart van de dader is gegaan door dit misdrijf.

'Zeg, zijn jullie de politie ofzo ?' vraagt Harm boos. 'Scheer je weg, of ik bel de politie !'

De indianen maakten het duidelijk dat ze de politie niet waren, maar dat de blanken zouden boeten voor de vriendschap met één van hen. Blanken zouden niet te vertrouwen zijn, en het zou als een vloek op hun stam rusten als ze dat zomaar langs hun heen zouden laten gaan. Verschillende speren werden er op Harm gericht. Harm stond klaar om toe te slaan met de honkbal-knuppel, en riep naar zijn kinderen om hen de politie te laten bellen. Steeds meer indianen begonnen zich te verzamelen voor het huis van Harm. 'Ik waarschuw je,' zei één van de indianen. 'We zullen je niet vermoorden, maar lever je kinderen uit. Dan zal het voor ons afgedaan zijn.'

'Nooit,' zei Harm woedend. 'Zijn jullie helemaal gek geworden.'

'Je kinderen liggen al verlamd in hun bed,' zei de indiaan. 'We zijn al door de achterkant binnengekomen, en hebben hen het spinnengif toegediend.'

'Spinnengif ?' vroeg Harm verbaasd. Toen werd ook Harm van achteren geinjecteerd met het gif, en lag al snel verlamd op de grond. Na lange tijd werd hij wakker in het indianenkamp diep in het bos. Hij lag daar vastgebonden naast zijn kinderen. Zijn kinderen waren nog steeds bewusteloos. In de verte zag hij een paal met een varkenskop erop.

Een indiaan kwam dichterbij. 'Aanbidden jullie die varkenskop daar ?' vroeg Harm.

'Kop houden,' zei de indiaan, en schopte hem een paar keer.

'Nee, serieus,' zei Harm. 'Ik wil weten of jullie die varkenskop daar aanbidden.'

'Gaat je niks aan,' zei de indiaan nors, en schopte hem weer. Dit keer veel harder.

'Jij bent leraar van beroep, hè ?' vraagt de indiaan nors.

'Hoe weet je dat ?' kreunt Harm van de pijn.

'Wij weten alles,' zei de indiaan, die hem weer schopte, hard in zijn buik. 'Jullie blamken weten precies hoe iedereen te maken zoals jullie zelf.'

Harm kon niet meer praten van de pijn. Het duizelde hem voor de ogen, terwijl de indiaan maar door blijf schoppen, totdat hij weer bewusteloos viel.

Toen hij weer wakker was was hij aan een paal gebonden. Het bleek de paal met de varkenskop te zijn. De varkenskop was vlak boven hem.

'Dom varken,' zei één van de indianen, terwijl de andere indianen lachten. Een wat oudere indiaan kwam naar voren. Hij drukte een mes op de keel van Harm. 'Jullie blanken hebben alles verziekt,' zei de oude indiaan. 'Jullie zijn een vloek. Wij weten precies wat wij met jullie moeten doen. Jij gaat geofferd worden aan de paal met de varkenskop.'

Harm wordt wakker in zweet. Hij had alles maar gedroomd. De indiaan slaapt nog steeds op het zolder, en zijn kinderen zijn bij oma. Die ochtend moest hij naar school om les te geven, maar de nachtmerrie zit hem nog steeds in de keel. Hij heeft moeite met spreken, en besluit af te bellen. Hij voelt zich duizelig en misselijk. Na een tijdje wordt hij gebeld door Ko. Hij doet zijn hele verhaal, en dan wil oma hem ook even aan de telefoon. Oma is erg in paniek, en zei dat hij een domme fout had gemaakt, omdat de indianen met boze magie werken. Die nachtmerrie was daar een teken van. Harm zag nog steeds geen kwaad in de indiaan. 'Iedereen droomt weleens naar,' zei hij tegen oma.

'Maar je bent ziek,' zei oma. 'Er kunnen wel duistere krachten aan het werk zijn, jongen, vergis je er maar niet in. Of misschien heeft die indiaan wel allerlei ziektes naar binnen gebracht. Die mensen leven niet echt hygienisch.'

Harm werd zieker en zieker, en moest naar het ziekenhuis voor onderzoek. Oma kwam hem ook opzoeken met de kinderen. Ze schudde haar hoofd. 'Ik heb je er altijd zo voor gewaarschuwd geen bosmensen binnen te nemen. Ze zijn niet te vertrouwen.'

Oma besloot om bij Harm in te wonen om voor de kinderen te zorgen. Harm was erg depressief. Gelukkig was het geen ernstige ziekte, dus hij kon snel weg uit het ziekenhuis. Tante Buurtje zou de kinderen een tijdje op vakantie nemen naar een tropisch eiland, zodat Harm helemaal tot rust kon komen.

Tante Buurtje was een vrolijke vrouw, als zonneschijn, en zij zorgde ervoor dat de kinderen helemaal over de dood van hun moeder heenkwamen. Maar met Harm ging het steeds slechter.

Op een nacht kon Harm niet meer verder. Hij moest hier weg. Hij rende het bos in, zijn huis achterlatende. Oma sliep.

Na een lange tijd rennen kwam Harm aan bij de indianenstam. Hij smeekte of hij daar kon wonen. Ze waren direct erg aardig. Ook de indiaan die Harm geholpen had was erbij. Oma had hem weer het bos ingestuurd toen Harm in het ziekenhuis lag. Harm kreeg zijn eigen rieten hut. Oma was erg in paniek. Ze wist niet waar Harm was, maar had een vermoeden, omdat Harm zo vaak tegen haar zei dat hij weg wilde, het bos in, om te leven met de indianen. Toen Harm maar niet terug kwam en zo lang weg bleef besloot oma op onderzoek uit te gaan. Ze begreep hem wel een beetje, maar wilde toch zekerheid. Na lang lopen zag ze in de verte het indianen-kamp, en hoorde zijn luide stem al. Oma was erg opgelucht. Even wilde ze hem zien, en toen ze in de verte een glimp van hem opving keerde ze weer terug. Ze wist dat ze hem toch niet tegen kon houden, en toen Harm in het ziekenhuis lag kwam ze erachter dat de indiaan die bij Harm logeerde eigenlijk een hele aardige man was. Ook de kinderen hadden er vrede mee toen ze het hoorden. Oma zou nu voor hen zorgen. Bep dacht er niet aan om in een indianen-stam te wonen, maar Ko dacht er over om zijn vader in het kamp te bezoeken, en misschien daar ook te blijven. Niet alleen omdat hij zijn vader miste, maar ook omdat het bos hem aantrok. Voor hem was het ook heel interessant dat zijn vader nu contact had met de indianen, en zelfs één van hen was geworden, terwijl hij er vroeger altijd voor waarschuwde.

Na een tijdje ging ook Ko in het bos wonen, bij zijn vader en de indianen. Oma en Bep bleven in het huis wonen. Zij konden het goed met elkaar vinden. Ook tante Buurtje kwam vaak bij hen op bezoek. 'Ach,' zei tante Buurtje, 'Harm heeft gewoon een vrouw nodig. Dan blijft hij wel weg van die inboorlingen. Hij heeft gewoon niets te doen.'

'Tegen mij zei hij dat als hij ooit nog een relatie wilde, dan met een bosvrouw, met een indiaanse vrouw,' zei Bep. 'Maar daar was hij nog helemaal niet aan toe, en dacht er ook niet over, omdat hij nog zo stoeit met de dood van moeder. Hij is ook bang om weer gehecht aan iemand te raken, en die persoon dan weer te moeten verliezen.'

'Ja, dat is ook waar,' zei tante Buurtje. 'Maar heus, het kan hem misschien opvrolijken. Hij kan gewoon met zijn nieuwe vrouw zo nu en dan het bos inwandelen, dat helpt ook.'

'U begrijpt het niet, tante Buurtje,' zei Bep. 'Hij wil in het bos wonen. Hij wil niet terug naar het dorp.'

'Jammer dan,' zei tante Buurtje. 'Ik hoop dat hij een goed leven heeft daar.'

Oma knikte. Tante Buurtje kwam meer en meer logeren bij oma en Bep, en besloot na een tijdje bij hen in te trekken. Drie vrouwen in een huis. Het was een echt vrouwenhuis, en het was er altijd erg gezellig. Maar Harm en Ko dachten er niet aan om terug te komen. Zo leefden de drie vrouwen vele jaren bij elkaar, en het was een reuze gezellige en goede tijd. Maar toen stierf oma plotseling, en

niet lang daarna ook tante Buurtje. Nu was Bep helemaal alleen, en depressies begonnen haar aan te vliegen. Ze kon het allemaal maar moeilijk verwerken, en deze keer begon ze haar vader en Ko heel erg te missen. Ook zij ging naar het bos, en zocht de indianenstam op om daar te wonen. Ze hadden dan wel helemaal geen familie meer buiten elkaar, maar de indianen waren nu hun nieuwe familie.

Toch kon Bep hier ook niet helemaal goed aarden. Ze voelde zich verscheurd tussen twee werelden. Ze leek steeds depressiever te worden, en er bleek geen kruid tegen opgewassen te zijn. Harm en Ko deden van alles om haar op te vrolijken, en ook de indianen. Op een dag werd ze naar de medicijn-man gebracht. Hij liet haar ruiken aan wat rode veren, en gaf haar een medicijn. Toen bond de medicijn-man de rode veren in haar haar.

'Het grote geheim is wat jij moet zien,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Ik zal jou op een reis nemen door het bos naar het grote geheim.'

Met goedvinden van Harm en Ko ging Bep op een bosreis met de medicijn-man. Ze gingen heel diep het bos in, langs meren en heuvels, tot een plaats waar de wilde dieren waren. Ook hier was een meertje. De medicijn-man smeerde haar in met zand, modder en klei. Ook smeerde hij zichzelf hiermee in, en nu zouden ze het meertje overzwemmen. Na een tijdje kwamen ze aan bij een struik die over het meertje hing. Aan de stam van de struik lag een kleine panter. De medicijn-man nam haar mee langs de panter. Vlakbij was een grot. De medicijn-man zei dat de panter de bewaker was van de grot. De medicijn-man nam haar diep in de grot. Ook in de grot was een meertje, en een spook-achtig geluid. Plotseling was er een verschijning. Het was erg licht.

'Waarom zijn jullie gekomen,' sprak de gestalte.

De medicijn-man maakte een buiging en zei : 'Dit is Bep. Zij heeft last van depressies, en ik dacht dat het haar zou helpen om het grote geheim te zien.'

'Depressies is de roep van het grote geheim,' zei de gestalte. De lichtende verschijning had een kap op, en een lang gewaad. Ook had de gestalte een speer. 'Ik waak over het grote geheim,' zei de gestalte, 'maar depressie is de sleutel. Ik waak over de zielen van het woord. Ook haar moeder is hier, haar oma, en haar tante. Nog veel meer zielen zijn hier. Deze depressie is haar verbinding met hen, maar die verbinding is verbroken. Ik ben de grote verbinder. Ik heb deze weg gemaakt. Laat haar dichterbij komen. Ik zal haar hart genezen, en haar hoofd tot rust brengen.' Toen vaagde de gestalte weg, en een lichtende weg verscheen voor hen. 'Kom mee,' zei de medicijn-man, en stapte op de weg. Het was een soort tunnel die toen begon te draaien. Bep werd duizelig. Droomde ze dit ? Voorzichtig stapte zij ook op de weg. Ze leken in een heel nieuw bos te komen. Bep voelde een band om haar hoofd komen, en stralen kwamen naar binnen om haar hart te voeden. 'Kom verder,' zei een stem. Het was een donkere, lage stem, die steeds lager werd. Ze zag weer een verschijning, dit keer zonder kap, die een miniatuur koe in zijn handen had. 'Dit is het woord,' zei de verschijning die daar in lange gewaden stond. Plotseling begon er melk uit de koe te komen. 'Woord, spreek,' zei de verschijning luid. Toen stond er een paal met een koeienkop op. De melk begon te stromen en te stromen, totdat Bep en de medicijnman er bijna in zwommen. 'Ik ben het grote geheim,' zei de koeienkop. 'Als het middernacht is, dan verander ik in een varkenskop, en dan is het grote geheim van jou,'

'Wacht eens even,' zei Bep. 'Hier heb ik een keer over gedroomd. Nee, dat kan niet waar zijn.'

'Wat bedoel je ?' vroeg de medicijn-man.

'Ik heb dit al weleens eerder gezien,' zei Bep. 'We moeten wachten tot middernacht, en dan zal de varkenskop spreken.'

'Precies,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Het is de strijd tussen hebzucht en honger, onthechting. Het is de stem van depressie, maar tegelijkertijd het medicijn.'

Ze bleven wachten tot het middernacht was. Toen veranderde de koeienkop in een varkenskop.

'Ik ben overwonnen,' zei de varkenskop. 'Willen jullie mijn geheim zien ? Het geheim wat ik al voor vele eeuwen verborgen heb gehouden ?'

Bep knikte, en stapte dichterbij. Toen ineens begon de varkenskop vuur te spuwen. Bep schrok, en rende naar achteren. De medicijn-man hield haar vast. 'Hij is het geheim aan het openbaren.' Weer spuwde de varkenskop vuur. 'Ik bedank jullie alvast voor het komen. Jullie hebben het welverdiend om dit te zien. Ruben, Simeon, Levi, Juda, Gad, Aser, Issaschar, Zebulon, Jozef, Benjamin, Dina, Efraim, Manasse ….' En weer spuwde de varkenskop vuur, en begon woest te worden. Zijn kop werd helemaal rood. 'Ik ben hier om deze zegels te verbreken !' riep de varkenskop. 'Dat is mijn taak, om de zegels der stammen te verbreken !'

'Niemand dan jullie zijn gekomen om dit geheim te zien,' zei de varkenskop toen rustig. Een gouden cirkel met daarop de stenen van de stammen begon rond te draaien en te branden. 'Deze gouden cirkelzaag, …. deze gouden cirkelzaag …' riep de varkenskop. En toen ontplofte de cirkel. Een tunnel verscheen voor hen. 'Ga de tunnel binnen,' zei de varkenskop nors. Bep en de medicijnman liepen haastig door. Achter hen werd een deur gesloten.

'Jullie willen het geheim toch zien ? Jullie willen het geheim toch zien ?' riep de varkenskop. 'Voor eeuwig is dit verborgen gebleven, maar jullie hebben overwonnen. 'De sleutel van depressies heeft jullie hier gebracht.' Achter de varkenskop verscheen een troon met een oude vrouw erop met lange vieze haren. 'Het geheim is gemanifesteerd in haar,' zei de varkenskop. De vrouw stond op, en liep op Bep en de medicijn-man af. Maar als door de bliksem werd ze teruggeslagen. 'Ik moet altijd op deze troon zitten,' jammerde ze. 'En dat omdat ik voor de hebzucht heb gekozen. Mijn varken is nu slechts een kop, om mij te verraden. Ik dacht altijd maar aan eten, en meer rijkdommen, om mijn macht te laten zegevieren. Maar mijn varken is tegen mij gekeerd nu, en heeft mijn schuilplaats verraden. Dom varken !' krijste ze. 'Ik zit nu voor altijd aan mijn stoel vastgeplakt. Ik heb de dorpen en de steden ontworpen, en ik heb ze groot gemaakt ! Dat is alles wat ik kan ! Dit is mijn troon, en ik ben aan het smelten !' jammerde ze. 'Ik heb de ring der stammen gecreeerd als het orakel van mijn toverboek waarmee ik de dorpen en steden heb behekst. Maar jullie hebben de ring verbroken !' krijste ze, terwijl ze vuur spuwde. 'Hoe meer vuur ik spuw, hoe meer ik smelt. Mijn woede is mij aan het verteren,' jammerde ze. 'Maar ik heb jouw familie, en ik zal ze meetrekken in mijn val,' krijste ze. Haar stem echode. Bep trilde even. Tot haar grote schrik begon de rode troon waarop de heks zat te bewegen, maar gelukkig schoot de troon weer terug als door elastiek.

'Ik weet je naam, ik weet waar je woont !' krijste de heks. 'Hier is het grote geheim : De stammen zijn de steden en de dorpen.' Toen viel de stoel om, en de heks begon weg te smelten. Weer begon een cirkel voor hen te draaien, maar deze begon langzaam weg te smelten. Toen begon een andere cirkel voor hun ogen te draaien en te krijsen, maar ook deze begon langzaam weg te smelten.

'Ik weet waar je woont !' werd er in de verte geroepen. Plotseling viel Bep neer. Gelukkig konden de armen van de medicijn-man haar opvangen. 'W...w...wie was dat ?' vroeg Bep.

'Je bent in de matrix van het bos,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Het is een raadsel wat je moet oplossen. Er is een hogere natuur, die het grote geheim is.'

'Ik ben te depressief,' snikt Bep. 'Ik kan niet goed nadenken. Het vermoeit me.' De medicijn-man nam haar in zijn armen. 'Juist door depressie, leegte en vermoeidheid wordt het raadsel opgelost,' zei hij. 'Niet door goed nadenken. Nadenken is een valstrik. Het labyrint moet namelijk overwonnen worden. Het is een gevecht.' Bep begint harder te snikken. 'Ik ben zo moe. Ik kan het niet meer volhouden. Alles slaat op me in.'

'Ik bescherm je,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Je moet je innerlijke vijanden overwinnen, en dit is de perfecte plaats. Het is nu of nooit. Juist in je depressies kun je de vijand een grote slag slaan.'

'Het vreet me aan, medicijn-man,' snikte Bep. 'Ik ben hier niet tegen opgewassen.'

'Haal rustig adem,' zei de medicijn-man. Hij leidde haar tot een stomend, kolkend meertje, waar hij haar onderdompelde en begon te wassen. Hij haalde zijn hand over haar voorhoofd. 'Zoveel spanning op je hoofd,' zei hij. Het meertje was heel warm. 'Dit is de overgang naar de dromenwereld, heel diep in het bos,' zei de medicijn-man. 'De planten, kruiden en bloemen zijn hier namelijk veel sterker, zijn veel meer zaaddragend, en veroorzaken daardoor een veld van hallucinaties. Ik spreek nu tot je door de hallucinaties, al voor een geruime tijd. Dit is ook een hallucinatie.'

'Wat wonderlijk,' zei Bep. 'Ik wil nog dieper het bos in.'

'Ja, maar verderop zijn de nachtmerries,' zei de medicijnman. 'De planten daar zijn wel nog sterker dan hier.'

'Interessant,' zei Bep. 'Nou, laten we dan maar hier blijven,' zei Bep.

'Ja,' zei de medicijn-man, 'want die nachtmerrie-hallucinaties doen net alsof je dan in de dorpen en de steden terecht komt, maar het is gewoon nog dieper in het bos.'

'Hmmm,' zei Bep. 'Dus u wilt zeggen dat toen wij in het dorp woonde, wij gewoon onder de invloed van zware planten waren dieper in het bos ?'

'Precies,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Je bent nu daarvan aan het afkicken, en dat is ook heel confronterend.'

'Ik ben bang,' zei Bep.
'Wij gaan daar alleen naartoe als wij een tegengif hebben genomen,' zegt de medicijn-man. 'Wij nemen dan soms stoffen van die zware planten, omdat in kleine hoeveelheden, in een veilig gebied, deze stoffen als medicijn kunnen werken. Maar als je er teveel van neemt, dan ga je dus echt dorpen en steden hallucineren als nachtmerries.'

'Was het overlijden van mijn moeder ook zo'n nachtmerrie-hallucinatie ?' vroeg Bep.

De medicijn-man knikte. 'Ja, en dat was een hele zware stof, die jarenlang in het lichaam kan blijven doorwerken.'

'En tante Buurtje en oma, hun overlijden, was dat hetzelfde ?' vroeg Bep.

De medicijn-man knikte weer. 'Ja, allemaal hetzelfde. Het is zware troep, waar veel te veel van genomen is, en je was in onveilig gebied. Het hangt daar in zware doseringen gewoon in de lucht, en dat werkt dag en nacht op je.'

Bep begint weer te snikken. 'Ik voelde me zo rot, en ik voel me nog steeds rot. Ik mis ze zo erg. Dus het was allemaal niet waar ? En waren zij zelf dan ook een hallucinatie, en bestonden zij dan helemaal niet ?'

De medicijn-man was even stil. 'Kind, je moet nog veel leren,' zei hij.

'Nee, ik wil het weten,' zei Bep in paniek. 'Bestonden moeder, oma en tante Buurtje echt, of waren het slechts hallucinaties ?'

'Ze bestonden in andere vormen,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Maar niet zoals je ze kende. Het waren dorpse hallucinaties, dus alles was dorps. Het begon misschien goed, maar het was een geladen nachtmerrie, wat betekent dat het je langzaam in een tragedie zou zuigen. Het zijn roofplanten, Bep. Het zijn hele gevaarlijke planten, die alleen wij als medicijn-mannen veilig kunnen gebruiken. Zoals ik al zei gaat dat in hele lage doseringen, en in veilig gebied. Dan dient het als een medicijn, en we gebruiken het in de oorlog en in de jacht in hogere doseringen. Het is dan goed gif. Wij moeten in ieder geval voldoende tegengif hebben om hier tegen bestand te zijn.'

'Wat voor tegengif is dat ?' vroeg Bep nieuwsgierig.

'Wij kweken daarvoor bepaalde spinnen,' zei de medicijnman, 'die wij dan melken voor hun gif. Maar ook dit gif mag niet genomen worden in te hoge doseringen.'

'Waarom niet ?' vroeg Bep.

'Omdat dat verlammingen kan brengen,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Ook heeft het in hoge doseringen hetzelfde effect als de roofplanten.'

'Klinkt eng,' zei Bep. 'Ik begin flink bang te worden van al deze dingen. Wat als er op dit moment iets goed fout zit, want u zei dat ik nu ook aan het hallucineren ben ?'

'Leer en ervaar,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Als je er telkens weer wat bijleert, dan zal dat je steeds meer rust geven. Steeds meer zul je dan het grotere plaatje zien om je inzicht te geven.'

'Toch is het eng,' zei Bep. 'Wat als je het verkeerde erbij leert, en dat je zo dieper en dieper in de kronkels wordt geholpen ?'

'Wanneer de student klaar is om meer te leren, komt de leraar,' zei de medicijn-man.

'Ja, maar de leraar kan bedriegen,' zei Bep.

'Niet als de student blijft onderzoeken, open blijft staan, om tot de dieptes van de kennis te komen,' zei de medicijn-man.

'Nou, ik weet het nog zo net niet,' zei Bep. 'Sommigen zijn erg sluw. En een foutje is snel gemaakt.'

'Voorzichtigheid is de moeder van de waarheid,' glimlachte de medicijnman.

'Ik ben voorzichtig en bang,' zei Bep. 'Ik begin bijna paranoide te worden nu. Dit is echt heel eng.'

'Ik kan je helpen met wat tegengif van de speciale spinnen die wij kweken,' zei de medicijn-man.

'Wat voor spinnen zijn dat ?' vroeg Bep.

'Pajiet-spinnen,' zei de medicijnman. 'Die zijn heel zeldzaam, maar worden al sinds eeuwen in het geheim gekweekt door onze stam. Het gif breekt heel snel de andere giffen af.'

'Ja, ja,' zei Bep. 'Maar kom je zo niet in een andere hallucinatie terecht ? Leven wij niet allemaal in hallucinaties ?'

'Slimme meid,' glimlachte de medicijn-man. 'In wezen zijn er alleen goede en slechte hallucinaties, ja. Alles is gebaseerd op hallucinaties.'

'Lekker ingewikkeld,' zei Bep. 'Dus misschien besta ik helemaal niet, of in een andere vorm.'

'Je moet hierin je pad leren te vinden, Bep,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Wil je het tegengif ?'

'Ja, doe maar,' zei Bep. 'Ik heb toch niets te verliezen.'

Snel spoot de medicijn-man iets in haar arm, en het leek wel alsof er nog iets in haar werd gespoten, als in haar arm buiten haar arm. Bep werd direct wakker alsof er een waas van haar ogen was weggetrokken. Alles was heel helder nu, en ze zag de medicijnman met haar arm in zijn hand. Hij had daar net iets ingespoten. Bep haalde diep adem. 'Interessant,' zei ze. 'Dus we hadden beiden dezelfde hallucinatie ?'

'Ja, ik ben in verschillende lagen van de natuur,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Ik heb leren dubbel-leven, en

leren switchen.'

'Interessant,' zei Bep. 'En dat kun jij me ook leren ?'

'Natuurlijk,' zei de medicijn-man. Samen gingen ze terug naar het kamp, en Bep had natuurlijk veel te vertellen. Ze voelde zichzelf al een stuk beter nu.

Bep werd steeds nieuwsgieriger naar die planten dieper in het bos. De medicijn-man vertelde haar dat het vlees-planten waren, die op geslachtsdelen leken. Zij die onder de bedwelming hiervan kwamen zouden zelfs hallucinaties van geboorte kunnen krijgen, waardoor ze al hun herinneringen verloren. Juist omdat Bep's depressies na een tijdje sterker dan ooit terugkwamen wilde ze hier zo graag naartoe. De medicijn-man kreeg hier hoogte van en waarschuwde haar. Hij zei dat het alleen maar erger zou worden als ze daar naartoe zou gaan. Hij vertelde haar ook dat ze juist daar vandaan kwam, en dat ze daarom zo'n verschrikkelijk leven had gehad. Maar Bep wilde terug, want haar depressies waren erger dan ooit tevoren. De medicijn-man wist dat hij iets moest doen. Hij kon daar wel naartoe met voldoende tegengif, omdat hij een volleerd medicijn-man was, maar Bep was onervaren. Bep kon niet meer wachten. Ze zei dat er niets meer te verliezen was, en dat het toch niet meer erger kon worden. Bep begon ook aan alles te twijfelen, juist omdat het zo slecht met haar ging. De medicijn-man bleef zeggen dat afkicken een heel zwaar proces was, en dat het soms wel erger was dan ooit tevoren. Dat hoorde bij het proces. Het was een heel zwaar gevecht. 'Ik kan het niet meer aan, medicijn-man,' zei Bep.

'Volhouden, meid,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Blijf studeren, en voordat je het weet kun je daar samen met mij naartoe.'

Maar Bep kon niet meer. Ze nam dezelfde dosering tegengif die de medicijn-man had voorgeschreven, en rende op een nacht het bos in. Ze bleef maar rennen en rennen. Na een tijdje was ze omringd door prachtige struiken van vlees die inderdaad op een soort geslachtsdelen leken. De draden waren heel dun, en bovenop was een soort gezwollen vruchtbaar deel met een prachtige roze kleur. Hier stroomde sap uit, waarvan Bep wist dat het een heel gevaarlijk sap was. Even stond ze als aan de grond genageld. Ze wist dat ze nu een heel groot risico nam. Eigenlijk was het nog helemaal geen tijd om hier naartoe te gaan. Plotseling voelde ze wat springen in haar hoofd. Het sap leek binnen te stromen. Ze begon te krijsen en te huilen. 'Ik kan niet meer,' huilde ze. 'Waarom martelen jullie me zo ?'

Van achteren was ze door een pijl geraakt. Toen viel ze bewusteloos. Achter haar stond de medicijn-man die haar op zijn schouder nam. Dat was op het nippertje. Hij bracht haar veilig naar het kamp. Na een tijdje werd ze heel zwakjes wakker. 'Oh, het was prachtig,' zei ze, terwijl ze nog steeds onder bedwelming was. 'Maar toen overweldigde me het, en ik werd zo bang.'

'Je was nog niet klaar, meid,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Ik heb je op het nippertje kunnen redden. Ze hadden je bijna meegesleurd in hun stroom.'

'Het was zo spannend,' zuchtte Bep.

'Nee, het was gevaarlijk,' zei de medicijn-man.

'Maar het was zo prachtig,' zei Bep, 'zo adembenemend.'

'Bep, wacht jij nou maar rustig totdat het tijd is dat we daar samen naartoe kunnen gaan. Ik moet je nog enkele dingen uitleggen, en dan ben je klaar. Je hebt nu alvast even een voorproefje gehad, maar dat was niet de bedoeling. Het had je je leven kunnen kosten. Dit zijn geen dingen om mee te spelen,' zei de medicijn-man.

'Ik weet dat je bezorgd bent,' zei Bep. 'Ik weet dat je de waarheid spreekt, maar ik kon niet meer. Ik moest het gewoon zien. De drang in mij was te sterk. Het was als gekrijs in mijn hoofd.'

'Je moet nog veel leren, Bep,' zei de medicijn-man. Bep knikte. Ze had nu wonderlijke dromen die haar leken voor te bereiden. Maar Bep besefte niet dat juist de planten van vlees dit allemaal gesimuleerd hadden. Ze hadden haar alreeds gevangen, en gaven haar hallucinaties alsof ze nog veilig bij de medicijn-man was. Iedereen van het kamp begon zich steeds vreemder en gemener tegen Bep te gedragen, ook de medicijn-man. Bep had nog steeds niets door. Voor haar was dit een aanzet om weer terug te gaan naar de vlees-planten, niet wetende dat ze allang weer onder hun macht was. Ze had het gevoel dat iedereen haar haatte, dus ze zei tegen haarzelf : 'Kom ik om, dan kom ik om.' Op een nacht begon ze weer te rennen. Ze wilde terug naar de vlees-planten. Ze zag de prachtige planten in de verte die naar haar lonkten. Ze zakte langzaam in een rivier omringd met de meest wonderlijke en prachtige vlees-planten. Dit keer had ze geeneens tegengif genomen. Ze verlangde hier zo naar. Langzaam zonk ze in de rivier, tot aan haar nek. De rivier was vol van het zaad van de wonderlijke planten, en langzaam begon ze te drinken. Ze wilde hallucineren om van deze depressies af te komen. Ze voelde zich wonderlijk.

Ze was het gepraat van de medicijn-man zat. Ze wilde leven. Ze wilde genieten van de prachtige natuur. Ze wilde niet naar school. Er was al genoeg tegen haar gesproken in haar leven. Ze was er moe van. De medicijn-man was niet meer wie hij was, en de anderen ook niet.

In het kamp in de werkelijkheid was inmiddels grote paniek, omdat Bep verdwenen was, en maar niet terugkwam. De medicijn-man vermoede dat ze naar de vlees-planten was gegaan. Hij besloot er naartoe te gaan met voldoende tegengif om te zien of er sporen van haar waren. Diep in de velden van de vlees-planten vond hij haar. Ze lag daar op de grond. Hij wist dat ze zo had geworsteld met depressies en kon haar zo goed begrijpen. Maar toch wist hij dat scholing het beste was voor haar. Ze moest afkicken en tot de waarheid komen. Met wat medicijnen kon hij haar terugbrengen tot de werkelijkheid, en ze werd huilend wakker, heel zwak. Ze kon niet praten, maar wel een beetje lopen. Heel voorzichtig liep hij met haar terug naar het kamp. Ko nam haar direct in zijn armen.

Ze gebruikte vuile taal, omdat ze nog steeds dacht aan wat zij haar hadden aangedaan in haar hallucinaties. De medicijn-man maakte haar duidelijk dat ze in een simulatie-realiteit was gekomen door de hallucinaties van de vlees-planten, die ook het kamp hadden gesimuleerd en alle kamp-bewoners, als gevolg van haar tochtje. Toen hield ze Ko stevig vast. Ze was blij dat ze gered was. Het had ook anders kunnen aflopen, want soms verslonden de vlees-planten hen die tot hen kwamen. Waarschijnlijk had het tegengif haar gered, en het feit dat ze toch al wat kennis had.

Bep had van haar fouten geleerd. Ze wilde nu goed bij de les blijven. Na een lange periode kon ze

dan eindelijk met de medicijn-man mee naar de planten van vlees. Ze keek haar ogen uit, en de medicijn-man liet haar vele geheimen zien. 'Deze planten zijn heilig,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Eens in de zoveel tijd kiezen ze iemand uit die hen goed heeft behandeld, en die veel van hen afweet, en zo iemand zal dan voor altijd tussen hen kunnen wonen. Zij wonen meestal dieper in de velden van de vlees-planten, daar waar je niet zomaar kunt komen.'

'Interessant, dat lijkt me wel wat,' zei Bep. 'Ik vind het hier prachtig.'

'Zelfs ik ben nog niet eens zo ver,' grapte de medicijn-man.

Bep hoorde heldere stemmen in haar hoofd, waarvan de medicijn-man zei dat het de stemmen van de vlees-planten waren. Ze hadden haar op het oog. Ze wilden met haar communiceren. Ze wilden haar onderwijzen.

Ze vertelden haar van een zee die achter de velden van vlees-planten lag, en ze nodigden haar uit daar naartoe te gaan. Zij moest hiervoor de medicijn-man achter haar laten. Ze moest over een zanderig pad, en de planten hier begonnen steeds wonderlijker te worden. Er waren allerlei soorten roze lichten in haar hoofd, als stralen-kransen. Ze vertelden haar dat zij een uitverkorene was. De zee stond vol met prachtige planten van vlees. Ze communiceerden door stoom en een soort vuur, en allerlei sappen. Sommige van die sappen leken wel kokend, en die werden hier en daar uitgespoten. Bep kreeg een heel warm gevoel. Het leek alsof delen in haar hoofd aan elkaar verbonden werden. Ze had ineens veel minder hoofdpijn, alsof er bruggen in haar hoofd werden gebouwd. De planten van vlees zeiden dat ze in haar hoofd leefden. Deze zee was de zee van communicatie. Ze wilden haar genezen en voorbereiden op haar taak. Bep begon te lachen. Haar depressies begonnen weg te smelten. Alles binnenin haar bleek te werken door sappen en vuren, en alles binnenin haar was gemaakt van vlees-planten, als een grote puzzel die in elkaar gezet moest worden. Bep was in een gelukzalig gevoel. Er borrelde zoveel in haar op. Hier kon zij verder studeren, en de planten van vlees zouden haar alle eilanden van de zee laten zien, en haar al hun geheimen vertellen. Dit waren tijden van grote genezing, en van kennis. Een rood vuur scheen bezit van haar te nemen, en allerlei rode sappen, ook kokende rode sappen die voortspoten. Verder was het een heel tropisch klimaat.

Deze planten hadden heel wat te vertellen. Wat er allemaal verkeerd was gegaan, en wat er allemaal moest gebeuren. Bep begon steeds meer van haar verleden te vergeten, als door een nieuwe geboorte. Toch herinnerde ze ook dingen, maar dan op een hele andere manier. Deze dingen hadden waarde, maar waren in de verkeerde vormen tot haar gekomen. Nu kon alles recht gezet worden zoals het was. Ze had zicht gekregen in de nacht. Het was het vuur van de vleesplanten die haar hoofd had verlicht. Dit waren allerlei soorten vuren, die ook werkten door allerlei sappen. Weelderige struiken namen haar mee door de zee, waardoor alles begon te duizelen in haar. Alles werd gemixt in haar hoofd, en nieuwe vormen kwamen voort. Het was als een pretpark in de zee. De zee-planten fluisterden in haar, en trokken haar naar de eilanden.

In dit proces begon ze haar identiteit te verliezen, tot het punt dat ze niet meer wist of ze nu een man of een vrouw was. Ze voelde zichzelf als een oude man. In de verte leek het wel alsof ze Ko zag staan, haar vader, en de medicijn-man, en ze miste hen, maar het leek wel alsof dat van een lang vervlogen tijd was, alsof ze niet meer bestonden. Plotseling kroop er een gevoel van depressie op

haar, en de gestaltes bleken weg te vagen. Ze had heimwee, maar de drangen van de vlees-planten waren te groot. Waar trokken ze haar naartoe ? Het leek wel alsof ze in een grote woestijn was aangekomen, alsof ze iets heel groots moest voorttrekken, als een kar door de woestijn. Ze voelde zich oud, als een oude man, als Kain. 'Kom tot het land Nod, als een oase in deze woestijn,' werd er gefluisterd. Ze wist niet meer of ze de planten van vlees nog wel kon vertrouwen. Ze voelde zich als een slaaf, en dan in meerdere dimensies tegelijk, want ze voelde zich ook een slaaf van een schip. Ze wilde overboord springen, maar ze was geketend. Ze moest roeien. Ze was een roei-slaaf. 'Oh, waar ben ik toch in terecht gekomen,' jammerde ze. 'Ik heb waarschijnlijk veel te veel van die troep genomen. Het is zware drugs. Oh, waar ben ik toch aan begonnen. Ik ben al tijden mezelf niet. Ik heb er al veel te lang mee lopen experimenteren. Dit is een 'bad trip,' een 'bad trip,' girl. Wat heb ik mezelf toch aangedaan.' Ze hoorde gelach in haar hoofd, alsof alles aan het scheuren was in haar hersenen. 'Je wilde het grote geheim toch zien ?' lachte de stem in haar hoofd.

Plotseling vaagde het allemaal weg, en zag ze de medicijn-man voor haar staan. Hij sloeg een arm om haar heen, en zei : 'Eindelijk heb je dan het grote geheim gezien.' Toen liepen ze samen terug naar het kamp.

De Sprookjesmarkt

Een jongen ging altijd met zijn grootmoeder op vrijdag naar de sprookjesmarkt in de ochtend. Het was dan altijd net licht geworden, en hij zat dan altijd bij zijn grootmoeder achterop de fiets. Dan zocht hij telkens zijn sprookjes uit. Op een dag werden ze tegengehouden door een kleine knokige kabouter met een knots. "Dat gaat zo maar niet," sprak de kabouter. "Elke vrijdagochtend wanneer het net licht geworden is komen jullie om mijn sprookjes te stelen."
De jongen keek de kabouter met opgeheven wenkbrauwen aan, zeer verbaasd. "Maar wij betalen toch voor de sprookjes, en hoe zijn het uw sprookjes ?"
De kabouter gaf de jongen een mep tegen zijn been. "Brutale vlegel, ik ben de baas van de sprookjesmarkt," bromde de kabouter. "Nu vlug, maak dat je wegkomt. Jullie zijn hier veel te vaak, en nu is het wel welletjes." Maar toen stapte de grootmoeder van de fiets af. "Puh," sprak ze. "Hoe kan zo'n klein mannetje als jij de baas zijn van zo'n grote markt ?" Maar toen begon de kabouter zo woest met zijn knots te slaan dat grootmoeder en de jongen zo snel mogelijk op de fiets moesten springen om bij hem weg te kunnen komen. De kabouter raasde en foeterde, en kwam nog achter hen aan ook. Wat kon dat mannetje hard rennen. Grootmoeder moest erg snel fietsen, anders zouden ze eraan gaan. Gelukkig waren ze na een tijdje van hem af.
De volgende vrijdag gingen ze het weer proberen. Ze gingen nu nog vroeger. Het licht was nog niet eens gevallen. De marktkoopmannen en vrouwen waren nog bezig hun kraampjes op te zetten. Grootmoeder liep op de eerste de beste marktkoopman af en vroeg of het waar was dat de kleine kabouter met de knots de baas was van de sprookjesmarkt. De marktkoopman keek haar aan met opgeheven wenkbrauwen. "Maar mevrouw toch," sprak de man. "Hoe komt u toch aan zulke

verhalen ? Er is geen baas van de sprookjesmarkt. Wij hebben de sprookjesmarkt allemaal samen opgezet, en niemand is de baas over de ander." Toen begon grootmoeder het hele verhaal te vertellen.
De koopman barstte in lachen uit. "Wat een vreemd verhaal, en wat een kostelijk sprookje. Dat kunnen we wel verkopen hier."
"Hoeveel kost het ?" vroeg grootmoeder.
"Maar mevrouw," sprak de koopman, "u bent zelf de bedenker van het sprookje, dus het is helemaal gratis voor u." Even later overhandigde de koopman het sprookje aan grootmoeder. De jongen zocht ook nog wat andere sprookjes uit, en toen zijn ze weer op de fiets gegaan. Maar na een tijdje kwamen ze weer die ellendige kabouter tegen. "Zie, weer sprookjes stelen, hè ? Ik wist het," bulderde de kabouter, en kwam hen weer achterna met de knots. Hij was nu extra kwaad. "En nu ben ik zeker ook in het sprookje, hè ? Van mij kom je niet meer af." Hij foeterde en tierde, maar hij kon grootmoeder en de jongen niet inhalen. Hij volgde hen wel helemaal naar grootmoeder's huis. "Ik zal jullie leren !" bulderde hij. Snel sprongen grootmoeder en de jongen van de fiets af met de sprookjes, en snel gingen ze naar binnen, en grootmoeder deed de deur weer goed op slot. "Die fiets is nu van mij !" gilde de woeste, ziedende kabouter. De kabouter pakte de fiets en ze hebben hem nooit meer teruggezien. Wel vonden ze zijn knots waar de fiets had gestaan, en die hebben ze toen naar de sprookjesmarkt gebracht als bewijs dat het sprookje echt waar was.
De knots werd in een glazen kistje gelegd en werd op een halve pilaar gezet op het middelpunt van de sprookjesmarkt. Grootmoeder en de jongen mochten toen zoveel mogelijk sprookjes uitzoeken als ze wilden. En ze mochten hen allemaal gratis meenemen. Vanuit de hele wereld kwam iedereen om de knots in het glazen kistje te bewonderen en om het sprookje van de sprookjesmarkt te horen. Het werd de drukst bezochte markt van de hele wereld.

Bloedbessen

Joost Verschuur komt 's avonds laat thuis van een feestje. Zijn vriendin ligt al in bed. Snel doet hij zijn kleren uit en gaat tegen haar aanliggen. Ze slaapt, maar wordt wakker van hem. Ze kust hem, en dan vallen ze samen in slaap. Midden in de nacht horen ze een hard geluid. Joost rent naar het raam. Iemand staat voor de deur. 'Doet jullie bel het niet ofzo ?' schreeuwt de persoon. Het is de broer van Joost. Even later staat ook zijn zus voor de deur. 'Doe open Joost,' schreeuwt zijn zus. Joost staat als aan de grond genageld, kleed zich langzaam aan, en loopt langzaam naar beneden om de deur te openen. Even later zitten ze rond de tafel. De vriendin van Joost is er inmiddels ook bijgekomen. 'Willen jullie wat drinken ?' vraagt Thea, de vriendin van Joost.

'Nee,' zegt Arnold, de broer van Joost. 'Jacquelien, vertel jij het hen maar.'

Jacquelien, de zus van Joost begint te huilen. 'Pa is ernstig ziek,' zegt ze.

'Wat heeft hij ?' vraagt Joost verschrikt.

'Hartklachten,' zegt Arnold. 'Hij heeft een hart-aanval gehad. Hij heeft niet lang meer te leven. Hij wil dat je nu bij hem komt. Hij wil je iets vertellen.'

Zo gezegd zo gedaan. Even later staat Joost bij zijn vader op de stoep, en een paar minuten later heeft hij de warme hand van zijn vader in zijn hand. 'Joost,' zegt zijn vader, 'ik ga weg. Spoedig zal ik mijn laatste adem uitblazen. Ik heb al met mijn andere kinderen gesproken, maar niet met jou.' Hij knipoogt even naar Joost, en laat dan even een glimlach zien. Joost, ik .... Met jou heb ik altijd het beste contact gehad, van de kinderen, maar de laatste jaren niet meer zoals het was, en ik weet wel waardoor dat komt. Thea had een hekel aan me. In ieder geval ... ik wil je zeggen dat ik van je houd, en dat ... dat ... mijn grootste erfenis naar jou toegaat.'

'En wat is dat dan ?' vraagt Joost.

'Een boek,' zegt zijn vader.

'Wat voor een boek ?' vraagt Joost.

'Een boek van zeerovers en spoken, ik heb het zelf geschreven,' zegt zijn vader. 'Ik heb het onder pseudoniem geschreven, zodat niemand ooit wist dat ik het had geschreven.'

'Die bestseller ?' vraagt Joost. 'Heb jij dat geschreven ?'

Na een paar dagen sterft de vader van Joost en enkele dagen later heeft Joost de eerste uitgave, de luxe editie, van het boek in bezit, en het manuscript. Joost bergt het meteen goed op. 'Zo, dat was dan de biecht van mijn vader,' zegt Joost tegen Thea. Thea zegt niks. Ze heeft zijn vader nooit gemogen.

'Klaar !' zegt Joost. 'Afgelopen.'

Thea komt langzaam naar hem toe, omhelst hem, en dan kust ze hem.

'Het was niets dan spel,' zegt Joost, 'het contact wat ik eerder met hem had. Ik deed maar net alsof, ik had geen andere keus.'

'Ik weet het,' zegt Thea, 'en vroeger durfde je niet anders.'

Joost kust Thea terug. Samen gaan ze op de bank zitten. Joost speelt wat met haar bloesje. 'Je hebt nu een echt speeltje,' zegt Thea. 'Iets wat je zelf hebt uitgekozen en wat je leuk vindt.'

Joost knikt. Bijna met zijn kin opgeheven. Voor het eerst in zijn leven kan hij echt glimlachen, en hij kijkt rebels. 'Toch wel vreemd dat mijn vader de schrijver was van dat boek,' zei Joost. Thea knikt. 'En jij bent de schrijver van mijn boek,' zegt ze. Joost glimlacht. 'Ik houd ervan je te beschrijven.'

'Doe nog eens een gooi,' zegt Thea.

'Je bent bloedmooi,' zegt Joost. 'Ik kan je wel drinken.'

'Mooi als die struik met bloedbessen daar buiten ?'

'Die bessen zijn giftig,' zegt Joost. 'Jij bent ontgiftigend, genezend.'

'Maar medicijnen zijn soms giftig, Joost,' zegt Thea. 'Giftig, het kan een gave zijn, een gift.'

'Gut wat doe je weer moeilijk,' lacht Joost. En neemt haar in de houdgreep. 'Ik ben toch veel sterker dan jij.'

Thea kijkt hem aan. 'Verleden tijd,' zegt ze zacht. 'Kijk eens diep in mijn ogen.' Joost doet het en voelt zich zwak worden, en dan ineens neemt zij hem in de houdgreep. 'Okay, Thea,' zegt Joost, 'ophouden met die spelletjes nu. Ik weet dat je me kunt betoveren en hypnotiseren. Je bent misschien wel potentieel een gevaar.'

'Gevaar is een te groot woord, noem het maar avontuur,' zegt Thea.

Midden in de nacht worden ze weer wakker van een geluid. Het zijn weer de broer en zus van Joost. Even later zitten ze weer om de tafel.

'Wat heeft vader je gegeven,' vraagt Jacquelien.

'Oh niets,' zegt Joost.

'Probeer het niet achter te houden, Joost,' zegt Jacquelien, 'want moeder heeft gezegd dat jij iets hebt gehad.'

'Dat is tussen vader en mij,' zegt Joost. 'Waarom zijn jullie hier ?'

Joost kijkt ze indringend aan. 'Nou ? Waarom zeggen jullie niets ?'

'Wij vinden dat je moet zeggen wat vader je heeft gegeven,' zegt Jacquelien. Arnold knikt.

'En daarmee komen jullie midden in de nacht ? Waar slaat dat op ?' vraagt Joost.

'Omdat het belangrijk is,' zegt Arnold. 'Nou, zeg op.'

'Okay dan,' zegt Joost, 'als het voor jullie zo belangrijk is, eh, het was een boek, over zeerovers en spoken. Eh, hij heeft dat boek eens geschreven onder pseudoniem.'

'Mis, Joost,' zegt Arnold. 'Bladzijde 441 vertelt het geheim, daar heeft hij in kleine letters geschreven, ga zelf maar kijken.' Joost pakt het boek, gaat naar bladzijde 441 en leest hardop : 'Beste Joost, gefeliciteerd, aan jou de familie-erfenis : een geheim eiland.'

'Moet ik nu hoera zeggen ?' vraagt Joost. 'En waar is dat geheime eiland ?'

'Ga naar bladzijde 847,' zegt Arnold.

En daar leest Joost het. Het schijnt dat Joost een geadopteerd kind was, als baby, en zijn vader en moeder durfden het hem nooit te zeggen. Boos slingert Joost het boek weg, en rent naar buiten, terwijl Thea hem achterna gaat. 'Lees het boek verder voor meer informatie,' roept Arnold hem na. Maar Joost is woedend. Pas na een paar uur komt Joost weer thuis, samen met Thea. Arnold en Jacquelien liggen op de bank te slapen. Op de tafel ligt het boek, en Joost leest verder. Het blijkt dat Joost op dat eiland geboren is.

Na een tijdje kan Joost het accepteren en gaat samen met Thea op vakantie naar het eiland. Er wonen daar twee mensen die ooit de samenleving hebben verlaten. Ze wonen hier als wilden. Als Joost hen het verhaal vertelt begrijpen ze dat hij hun kind is.

'Jij hoort bij ons,' zegt zijn echte vader. 'Ooit hebben ze jou van ons afgepakt. Nu ben je terug. En Thea is ook welkom.' Hij omhelst zijn vader en dan zijn moeder, en ook Thea doet dat. En ze leven nog lang en gelukkig.

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De Tuin van Job

rnl-pockets
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De Tuin van Job

De Tuin van Job, een reusachtig natuurgebied, stond in het midden van de stad.
Het was omheind met stenen.
Als je naar de stenen muren keek dan raakte je onder hypnose.
Dan raakte je geheel de weg kwijt.
Dan wist je niet meer wie je was, of waar je naartoe moest,
ook niet waar je vandaan kwam.
Het was er altijd al geweest.
Men wilde de tuin wegdoen, verwoesten,
maar ze konden het niet.
Het was te groot, te sterk, iets wat ze niet begrepen.
En men maakte verkeersborden, maar de mensen begrepen het niet.
Men probeerde erover uit te leggen, maar de mensen begrepen het niet.
Er waren ook roofdieren in de tuin.
Die kwamen soms zo naar buiten.
Die namen soms kinderen mee.
Men wist niet wat eraan te doen.

Men was hopeloos.

Velen hadden al eens naar de stenen
omheining van de tuin van Job gekeken.
Sommigen konden het niet meer navertellen,
anderen waren in de war,
zwaar in de war. Ze wisten niet meer of ze
van de tuin van Job waren,
of van de stad. Sommigen dachten dat de
gehele stad de tuin van Job was.
Job was al een oude man met een lange
baard. Hij had niet veel kleren aan,
en wat hij aanhad was zeer primitief. Soms
kwam hij naar buiten, en dan
liep hij door de stad. Dan waarschuwde hij
hen en balde zijn vuisten.

Het zou niet lang meer duren. De
overstroming zou komen. Ze zouden tot
zijn boot moeten gaan die hij gebouwd had,
zo midden in zijn tuin.
Velen gaven er geen aandacht aan,
probeerden hem te negeren, maar telkens
kwam hij terug, en telkens was hij woester.
Het begon problematischer te

worden. Hij sloeg op de deuren, en soms sloeg hij ruiten in, maar niemand durfde iets te doen. Hij was immers Job van de tuin van Job.

En zo lieten zij hem spelen, zo lieten zij hem alles doen wat hij deed.
Hij roofde, hij verketterde, hij nam en sprak.
En hij werd ouder en ouder, en de mensen verdwaasden.
Op een dag kwam de overstroming waar hij tijden voor had gewaarschuwd.
Er waren niet velen op zijn boot. Alles ging ten onder.
En Job balde zijn vuisten tot de hemel.
Klagende over de verwoesting.
En hij klaagde en klaagde. En vissen buiten de boot begonnen de mensen aan te vreten, en velen verdronken, zo voor de ogen van Job en hen die op de boot waren.

En de vrouw van Job zong. En zijn dochters zongen. Maar Job was niet te kalmeren. En hij dook van het schip het

water in, en zwom tot een eiland.
Dat zou zijn eiland worden, het eiland van Job. Het schip verging in woeste stroom. Zij die op het schip waren vonden de weg, net als Job.

Zo had Job een nieuwe tuin. En de stenen omheining bracht hen die er naar keken in slaap, en zij sliepen veel. En Job vroeg de hemel om wijsheid.
En hij schreef een boek. Hij schreef het op de muren, zo goed als hij kon.
En het boek ging over de tuin van Job, en over de overstroming en de nieuwe tuin van Job op het eiland. En het boek ging over het schip, en zijn vrouw en zijn dochters. En het boek ging over allen die met het schip waren meegekomen, en allen die in de golven ten onder zijn gegaan.

En hun nakomelingen bouwden weer een stad om de tuin heen, en weer gebeurde er precies hetzelfde. Men leert het nooit, men leert het nooit.

En Job keek over de schepping, en zag een
hemelse trap. En is toen over de trap
naar boven gegaan. ‘Ik doe het niet meer,’ zei
Job tegen God met gebalde vuisten.
‘De mensen luisteren toch niet.’

Toen zei God : ‘De leeuwin, de dochter des
hemels, zal het nu van je overnemen.
Zie of ze dan nog zo durven te zijn.’

‘Ik heb er geen geloof voor,’ zei Job. ‘Als ze
niet naar mij luisteren, luisteren ze
naar niemand.’

Toen zei God : ‘We geven ze nog één kans.
Het pad is smal en de poort is eng.’

‘Ik doe er niet meer aan mee,’ zei Job. ‘Ik
heb het pad aangelegd, vele malen,
en vele malen de enge poort laten zien. Ik heb
mijn boek voor hen achtergelaten.
Alleen de uiterst geoefenden en de
volhouders zullen het vinden en verstaan.’

Toen zei God : ‘De leeuwin zal hen helpen. Ze hebben gewoon een goede moeder nodig.’

‘Wat zullen ze met haar doen ?’ vroeg Job. ‘Ik vrees het ergste.’

Toen zei God : ‘Herinner je je tuin ? Waar zij allen in de war raken, waar zij allen de weg kwijt raken. Zij zal hen leiden.’

‘De geschiedenis herhaalt zich,’ zei Job. ‘Ik heb er een hard hoofd in.’

‘Al is het maar voor eentje,’ zei God, ‘dan is het het waard.’

‘Dat is waar,’ zei Job, ‘dat is waar. We moeten het nog maar een kansje geven dan.’

En de leeuwin daalde af over de hemeltrap, en ging tot de tuin van Job.
En overstromingen kwamen, en schepen, en eilanden, en tuinen, en telkens gebeurde hetzelfde. En telkens nam de leeuwin enkelen

van hen met haar mee om hen naar boven te brengen.

En zij kwamen in de armen van Job, en hij beschouwde hen als zijn zonen en dochters.
En hij bracht hen tot zijn nieuwe tuin. En hij onderwees hen uit zijn boek.
En de leeuwin ging in en uit van de tuin, om haar werk te doen.
En er was een grote oogst, want Job had in gerechtigheid gezaaid.

En ter navolging van de leeuwin ging toen ook Job weer naar beneden.

De planeet Ermelo

Hij woonde op de planeet Ermelo, in een plaats bij het bos, ook Ermelo geheten. Hij woonde daar met zijn vader, moeder en broertje in een rijtjeshuis. Er waren nog verschillende blokken rijtjeshuizen achter hem, en daarachter lag het bos. Ook het land waarin hij woonde heette Ermelo. Zijn oma woonde in een bosplaats genaamd Echtspeet, wat ten oosten lag van een plaats die Nunspeet heette. Onder Nunspeet lag een bosdorp genaamd Elspeet.

Hij kwam thuis. Hij had gerend door het hoge gras bij het bos. Hij was blij zijn moeder te zien bij de keukendeur. ‘Hi mam,’ zei hij. Hij vertelde dat hij weer had gevlogen. Hij was één van de weinigen op de planeet die konden vliegen. Soms lukte het, en soms lukte het niet. Het had te maken met allerlei factoren en met het weer. Hij vond het vreemd dat het niemand echt kon interesseren dat hij kon vliegen. Ze waren nooit verbaasd als ze het zagen. Hijzelf vond het wonderlijk

dat hij deze gave had. Het had hem een aantal keren uit moeilijkheden gered. Niemand gaf er echt aandacht aan. Hij sprak er daarom ook niet veel over, en vliegen deed hij ook niet veel, alleen als het echt moest, of als hij ergens snel wilde zijn. Nu had hij weer gevlogen, en zijn moeder hoorde het gewoon aan, en knikte gewoon. Voor haar was het niets bijzonders. Ze kon zelf niet vliegen, maar gewoon het feit dat sommige anderen het ook konden, ook al waren het er weinig, was voor haar voldoende om het normaal te vinden. Iedereen had z’n eigen gave. Hij werd er niet speciaal door behandeld omdat hij kon vliegen. Ze vonden het niet bijzonder.

Het land werd geregeerd door Heinrich Kuyper, de broer van Dandrich Kuyper. Dandrich Kuyper had eens zijn vader vermoord, en heerste toen over de gehele planeet Ermelo, en stelde zijn broer aan over het land Ermelo. Heinrich Kuyper was zwaar aan de drugs. Ze hadden nog een andere broer : Jakob. Jakob was een religieus leider. Hij had een beweging genaamd de doleantie, de

klagers. Zij klaagden namelijk over het bewind van zijn broer, Heinrich Kuyper.

Ook het gezin uit de plaats Ermelo had zich bij de doleantie gevoegd. Heinrich Kuyper liet hen van de doleantie zwaar vervolgen. Daarom was het handig dat de jongen kon vliegen. Zo kon hij uit hun handen blijven. Ze waren vooral op jacht naar de jongen omdat hij zulke bijzondere gaven had. Ja, het kon Heinrich Kuyper en zijn vagebonden wel wat schelen dat de jongen die gave had. Ze waren bang dat die gave zich zou ontwikkelen in iets groters dan alleen maar vliegen. Ze waren bang dat hij de nieuwe religieuze leider zou worden van de doleantie, en dat het land door hen overgenomen zou worden, en dan de gehele planeet Ermelo.

Telkens weer kregen de ouders van de jongen brieven van Heinrich Kuyper waarin stond dat ze boetes moesten betalen vanwege dat ze lid waren van de doleantie, de klagenden. Maar zijn ouders betaalden het nooit. Er werd steeds meer gedreigd en gedreigd in de

brieven, zelfs met gevangenisstraf. Maar Heinrich Kuyper was aan de drugs, zwaar aan de drugs, waardoor zijn plannen nooit echt werkelijkheid werden. Het was nogal een chaotische en vergeetachtige man. Toch moest de jongen oppassen, zoals iedereen in de doleantie.

Op een dag werd de jongen weer achterna gezeten door de vagebonden van Heinrich Kuyper. Hij moest toen weer vliegen. Hij vloog toen helemaal naar het huis van Jakob Kuyper, de leider van de doleantie. Die was verbaasd hem te zien, en ook was hij verbaasd dat de jongen kon vliegen. Dat kwam niet vaak voor dat iemand verbaasd was. Jakob Kuyper erkende het als een hoge gave. Hij wilde de jongen onderwijzen en beschermen. Hij wilde dat de jongen net als hem een religieuze leider in de doleantie zou worden vanwege zijn gave. Maar de jongen kon helemaal niet goed leren. Hij draaide alles om, en vergat veel. Toch zette Jakob Kuyper door met het onderwijzen van de jongen. Hij dacht dat het gewoon langer tijd

nodig had. Hij zou het rustiger en kalmer doen, op zijn eigen tempo. Dat leek te werken.

Heinrich Kuyper kreeg hierover een brief van Jakob Kuyper. Jakob schreef hem dat hij de jongen met rust moest laten. De jongen had ook vaak nachtmerries. Jakob wilde dat Heinrich eens zou afkicken van de drugs. Jakob vond Heinrich helemaal niet capabel om het land te besturen. Heinrich moest eerst maar eens het land bestuderen. Heinrich schreef een vrolijke brief terug over dat hij alles van Dandrich had gehad, als een gave, en dat Jakob gewoon jaloers was.

Na een tijdje zou de jongen weer naar huis gaan, maar het was er helemaal niet veilig, dus Jakob nam hem weer terug en onderwees hem verder. Op een dag waren de vagebonden ook naar het kasteel van Jakob Kuyper gegaan, de leider van de doleantie. Wachters hielden hem tegen.

‘We komen voor het jongetje,’ zeiden de

vagebonden.
‘Je krijgt hem niet,’ zeiden de wachters.
Het liep uit op een gevecht. Uiteindelijk drongen de vagebonden het kasteel binnen, en het jongetje moest van het dak afspringen om weg te vliegen.
Hij vloog toen naar zijn oma in Echtspeet.
Daar zou hij zo lang mogen wonen.
Maar ook daar kwamen de vagebonden.

De wachters van Echtspeet lieten het daarbij echter niet zitten, en verdreven de vagebonden.
Toen kwam Heinrich Kuyper zelf.
‘Ach toe nou, jongen, ik heb je zoveel te bieden,’ zei hij.
Maar de jongen trapte er niet in.
Zijn oma joeg Heinrich Kuyper weg.
Ze noemde hem een drugsfanaat.

Het was rond die tijd dat de doleantie groter en groter werd.
Ze kregen zo’n groot leger dat Heinrich Kuyper en zijn vagebonden uit het land werden verdreven.

Jakob Kuyper werd de nieuwe bestuurder van het land,
en de jongen werd tot prins gemaakt.
Het was zo vreemd voor de jongen.
Nu ineens sprak iedereen over hem,
en nu ineens waren ze verwonderd dat hij kon vliegen.
Met grote verbazing keken ze naar hem als hij vloog,
terwijl het hen vroeger nooit opviel, en het hen vroeger nooit iets kon schelen.

De jongen was hier heel boos over, en kon niet van de aandacht en de bewondering genieten.
Hij vond het huichelachtig.
En daarom is hij weggevlogen, heel ver weg.
Nooit meer wilde hij naar het land Ermelo,
en nooit wilde hij nog een voet op de planeet Ermelo zetten,
maar het zou wel altijd in zijn herinnering blijven.

Hij had wel wat goede herinneringen,
aan de buren bijvoorbeeld, aan zijn oma, en

aan Jakob Kuyper.
Eigenlijk wilde hij voor hen terugkomen, maar hij kon het niet.
Het deed hem teveel pijn.

Toen hij erover hoorde dat op een dag de planeet Ermelo in de fik stond kon hij daar niet om huilen.
Hij hoopte alleen dat de buren, zijn oma, en Jakob Kuyper zich in veiligheid konden brengen,
en dat wenste hij ook wel voor zijn ouders en zijn broertje en nog wat anderen.
Hij was aan het tellen, en ging alle namen langs, en er waren toch wel veel mensen waar hij veel om gaf, en natuurlijk gaf hij ook om de dieren en de natuur.
Maar hij kon niet huilen.
Hij schaamde zich er wel voor.

Hij was nu op een andere planeet.
Hij moest de planeet Ermelo achter zich laten.
Ze zouden hun weg wel vinden.
De doleantie zou hen wel uitleiden,

en zij die konden vliegen zouden hen misschien wel kunnen brengen waar hij ook was.
Maar dan zou hij wel alweer vertrokken zijn naar de volgende planeet.

Hij wilde niet nagevolgd worden, en ook niet achtervolgt.
Vroeger was hij niet veel waard in hun ogen, dus dan kon hij dat nu ook niet accepteren.
Ook twijfelde hij over de motieven van Jakob Kuyper, de buren, zijn oma, en wat anderen.
Gek genoeg bleef de doleantie aan hem trekken.
Hij vond zichzelf hard en koud.
Maar hij moest zichzelf beschermen.
Hij dacht dat ze hem slechts zagen als een object, een monument.
Alleen maar omdat hij nu een prins was.
Vroeger zagen ze hem niet echt staan.
Vroeger zagen ze hem niet echt vliegen.
Maar nu was alles anders.

Hij was bang dat ze hem zouden verafgoden.
Zowel de vervolging als de verafgoding was

iets onwenselijks,
iets onecht.
Hij had gemengde gevoelens.
Het leek allemaal nog wel mee te vallen op de planeet Ermelo.
Het fikken begon steeds meer en meer te minderen.
Het dagelijkse leven ging weer gewoon door.

Hij was nu prins, maar hij wilde niet terug.
Voor wie zou hij dat moeten doen ?
Hij haatte het dat de mensen alleen maar waarde hechtten aan titels,
en niet aan ware gaven en talenten.
Hij wilde helemaal geen prins zijn.

Steeds verder vloog hij weg van de planeet Ermelo.
Hij ging van planeet tot planeet, maar merkte dat het daar nog wel erger was,
hoe verder hij van de planeet Ermelo wegging,
en is toen uiteindelijk maar weer naar de planeet Ermelo teruggegaan.

Hij zou Jakob Kuyper helpen met de doleantie.
Hij wilde ook geen lafaard zijn.
Ze hadden hem nodig.
Verbeter het universum.
Begin bij je eigen planeet.

Einde

Zu Brider

In Enschede staat een machine die de Zu Brider heet, een apparaat wat projecteert door lenzen, en zo alles splitst. Het is een satelliet van een apparaat in Zeist, waar alles naartoe geteleporteerd wordt, om vervolgens verdraaid te worden. Dit apparaat heet de Spichteling. Zo wordt alles tot een markt gemaakt, alles tot producten, en niks is meer wat het was. Kassa voor Nederland ! Grote kassa ! Daarom zijn vele kinderen die onder dit systeem leden naar de bossen gevlucht, naar de natuurgebieden, waar zij leven als wilden, ook onder de grond, en hun aantal wordt steeds groter, ook al overleven velen het niet. Het lijkt wel alsof er een wonderbare vermenigvulding plaatsvindt, maar vervolgens zijn deze kinderen nergens meer te vinden, want ze trekken dieper en dieper, en gaan ook andere landen in. Velen zwemmen zelfs naar Zuid Amerika of Afrika, of hoe ze daar dan verder ook komen. Het schijnt dat ze zelfs ondergrondse tunnels hebben gegraven tot die gebieden. Wilde

jongens, wilde meisjes, maar ook vele mannen en vrouwen, en zij zijn diep van binnen getattoeerd door de Zu Brider of door de Spichteling, of door allebei. Zeist en Enschede zijn nachtmerries voor hen. Zoveel werd daar in hen geimplanteerd. En daar willen ze nu van af, maar dat gaat niet makkelijk. Het zit nogal diep, en als men het eruit probeert te krijgen is dat pijnlijk, alsof teveel alarmen in hun hoofd of zenuwstelsel afgaan. Alles zit erin als weerhaken. Te snel het eruit halen zou zoveel meer kapot trekken. Nee, het moet op een andere manier gaan, en daarom gaan ze dieper de natuur in, op zoek naar haar geheimen, want ze weten dat ze één dag verlost zullen zijn, maar niet op hun manier.

Zu Brider is een jager, uitgezonden tot kinderen, maar ook tot volwassenen. Het is een meedogenloos apparaat. Het apparaat staat er gewoon hoog in de stad, maar niemand doet wat. Het lijkt wel alsof ze het apparaat vereren. Het lijkt wel op een cultus, de cultus van Zu Brider. Het zendt al zijn

materialen naar de Spichteling, telkens weer, die alles omdraaid en opnieuw vermengd. Het lijkt op een nachtmerrie, op miskramen, op abortussen. En grote machines vreten het vervolgens weer. Die staan door het gehele land. De mens is slechts een marionet voor deze machines, slechts een product, voedsel en brandstof. Het schijnt niemand wat te interesseren, maar velen zijn gevlucht. Zo kon het niet langer. Er is wedergeboorte in de natuur, de ware geboorte. Het andere was slechts nep. Oorlogskleuren op wang en voorhoofd, deze kinderen strijden voor het hoogste goed. Ze hebben zich niet overgegeven aan deze verschrikkelijke machines, zoals velen wel hebben gedaan. Velen hebben zich erbij neergelegd.

De Zu Brider is een gesticht ! En de Spichteling ook ! De gekken hebben zich omhoog gewerkt tot leiders. Dit land wordt geregeerd door gekken. Maar eigenlijk zijn het gewoon de machines die aan de touwtjes trekken. De gekken hebben zich omhoog gewerkt tot leiders en toen tot machines. Zij

weten waar alles vandaan komt en waar alles naartoe gaat. Alleen de wilden komen door deze nacht, zij die diep graven en lang zwemmen, heel lang, zonder terug te keren, zonder terug te kijken. Dat eist volharding, dat eist moed, dat kost je alles. Velen willen die prijs niet betalen, en worden liever zelf tot zo’n machine. Het zijn bijtende machines, als blaffende honden. Telkens weer gaan ze op jacht. Maar ze bijten ook zichzelf. Zo bloeddorstig zijn ze. Ze kunnen niet wachten op de ander, en zo vreten ze zichzelf. Het is altijd weer machine boven machine. Zoveel machines zijn ten onder gegaan, maar de Zu Brider en de Spichteling lijken steeds hoger te worden. Soms zijn ze in oorlog, maar meestal onderhandelen ze.

Alleen als het regent is er hoop.
Dan zijn er grote storingen in de machines, zodat de kinderen kunnen vluchten naar de bossen.

Lang lijden ze aan achtervolgingswaan.
Zu Brider slechts een herinnering,

een nachtmerrie waarvan ze proberen te
ontwaken,
bovenkomen uit het moeras, of uit de grote
zee,
nog steeds zulke woeste golven.

Zu Brider, een herinnering,
maar nog zo machtig,
Toch moet het wegvagen,
naar de achtergrond gaan,
terwijl in de wildernis de verloren bloemen
zich openen,
al het vergetene, al het onontdekte en
verborgene

Of zullen zij weer moeten ontwaken ?
Is er een kruid opgewassen tegen Zu Brider ?
Zu Brider is een school die hen niet laat gaan,
als een gevangenis, als een ziekenhuis,
Het zal de munt niet laten gaan,
De munt is slechts voor de Spichteling,
die hen nieuw leven geeft,
een nieuwe baan

Oh, is er wel een kruid tegen opgewassen,

tegen dit smerige ding ?
Het zit zo diep in de genen,
zo diep in het hart,
zo diep in het brein,
Als achtervolgingswaanzin,
Als een leugendetector,
Als een oorlogstrauma, een groot syndroom

Zu Brider, Spichteling,
het lied van leprechaunen,
zij weten waar de munten rollen,
zovele harten en zielen gebonden door de
fluit,
Is er een kruid ? Is er een kruid ?

Zoveel echo's door ons heen,
Zoveel paden, zoveel namen,
en dan wordt alles gemengd tot pudding,
En kunnen we niet meer verder,
en worden we teruggefloten,
voor een nieuw ritje in dit ding,
Maar wij zijn ver weg,
Wij kunnen het niet meer horen,
Vreet jezelf maar op,
Vreet jezelf maar op

Zu Brider,
Zu Brider,
een glider,
Het brult onze namen in de donkerste nacht,
maar wij zijn ver weg,
ver op de boot, ver met het schip,
Nooit meer naar de Spichteling,
nooit meer erin

Dat hebben we gehad.
Dat was dat.
Maar zoveel monsters te verslaan,
Ze zijn het niet eens met wat we doen,
En dan ineens is Zu Brider een monster,
Van gek tot leider tot machine tot monster,
Zo hoog heeft hij zich opgewerkt,
Oh, is er een kruid tegenop gewassen ?

Een oud vrouwtje in Enschede,
Een griezelverhaaltje voor het slapen gaan,
en dan moet je slapen,
Kinderboekje op het nachtkastje,
en dan komen er dromen omheen

De volgende ochtend niet naar school,
want het is weekend,
En dan kijk je televisie,
en wat zie je daar :
De Zu Brider in al z'n pracht en praal

Wat hebben we aan alles gehad,
Hoe ver zijn we nu gekomen ?
Het lijkt alsof we weer terug bij af zijn,
maar gelukkig is het achter het scherm nu,
Slechts op de televisie, het is maar een verhaal,
we kunnen er van leren,
het kan ons inspireren,
om dingen beter te doen voortaan

Zu Brider,
Zu Brider,
Geen kruid tegenop gewassen,
Maar een mooi verhaal

Het is iets om te lezen,
Het is iets om van te leren,
Het is iets om te beleven,
om zo de uitgang te vinden,

en velen mee te nemen

Soms moeten we terug,
soms moeten we terug,
om het te verdiepen,
en een erin verdwaalde eruit te helpen

‘s Nachts komt het terug,
‘s Nachts komt het terug,
aan de kusten,
Als een boot tot de eeuwigheid

Gelijkenissen

De gelijkenis van de vrouwen en de honingboom

Twee vrouwen maakten een lange tocht tot een honingboom.
Er was een man die de honingboom bewaakte,
die hen geen doorgang wilde geven.
Er ontstond een worsteling, maar de man wilde niet opgeven.
En er kwam een derde vrouw bij, en de man moest vluchten.
Maar de vrouwen riepen de man terug.
‘Neem jouw deel van de honingboom,’ sprak één van de vrouwen.
De man nam van de honing en ging zijn weg.
In de nacht kwam de man terug met vele andere mannen,
maar zij konden niets tegen de drie vrouwen beginnen.
Weer sprak één van de vrouwen dat ze hun deel van de honingboom

konden nemen, en de mannen namen van de honing.
De nacht daarop kwamen de mannen terug met nog meer mannen,
en weer ontstond er een worsteling, maar zij konden niets tegen de
drie vrouwen beginnen.
Weer namen zij een deel van de honing en gingen weg.
De nacht erop kwamen er vele duizenden mannen,
maar de honingboom en de vrouwen waren nergens te vinden.
En zo zal het koninkrijk der hemelen zijn.
De mens der zonde zal niet regeren.

Gelijkenis van de grote brede rivier

En de hemelse moeder zei tot haar zoon : Ga over de grote brede rivier totdat gij een eiland vindt, en zondert uzelf daar af, en probeer daar te leven, het woord des hemels onderzoekende. En als er iemand tot het eiland komt, trekt dan verder en ga tot het volgende eiland, en doe daar hetzelfde. Leer het woord des hemels in afzondering daar te leven. En als er dan weer iemand komt tot het eiland, trek dan weer verder, en ga tot het volgend eiland, en doe daar hetzelfde. En trek voort van eiland tot eiland totdat gij aan de overkant bent gekomen van de grote brede rivier. Daar zult gij een vrouw vinden, maar gij zult haar niet aanraken, en gij zult verder trekken, de wildernis in. En in diepe wildernis zult gij een andere vrouw vinden, en zij zal u niet laten gaan, en zij zal twistziek zijn en met u strijden. Houdt vol tot het einde, opdat u het woord des Heeren zult vinden dat verborgen is, wat nog nooit aan een mens was getoond. En onderwijs haar in grote liefde wat de Heere u heeft vertoond, en ga terug tot

de eilanden om hetzelfde te doen, om hen die daar zijn te onderwijzen. En de vrouw zal u volgen op de voet en u tot een hulp zijn. Zo zal het koninkrijk der hemelen zijn.

De gelijkenis van het vreemde volk dat gij niet kent

En de hemelse moeder zei tot haar zoon : Wacht op de nacht, want daarin zal uw leger komen. En zij zullen komen zij aan zij, en het wapen is de liefde. En de liefde zal zijn als een trompet om de volkeren te roepen. En velen zullen komen, maar velen zullen komen om tegen de liefde te strijden, en zij zullen proberen de trompet van de liefde tot zwijgen te brengen. Zwem dan de rivier over, en aan de overkant zult hij een vreemd volk vinden dat gij niet kent. Laat u door dat vreemde volk dat gij niet kent onderwijzen. Zo zal het koninkrijk der hemelen zijn.

De gelijkenis van de orkanen des Heeren

En de drie orkanen des Heeren zullen de zee overgaan tot het land waar de gelovigen opgesloten worden gehouden, en de orkanen zullen de gelovigen opnemen en terugbrengen tot het land waar zij vandaan kwamen. Zo zal het koninkrijk der hemelen zijn en de dag des Heeren.

De gelijkenis van de vrouw in barensweeën

En het koninkrijk der hemelen was als een boot op een wilde en woeste rivier, maar velen sprongen van de boot, omdat de boot nog wel wilder en woester was, en er gebeurden verschrikkelijke dingen op de boot. En ze zwommen naar de bodem van de rivier om de dood te zoeken, maar ze konden de dood niet vinden. En de hemelse moeder riep tot hen, en vroeg hen waarom ze haar in de steek hadden gelaten vanwege haar barensweeën. Toen kwamen enkelen van hen terug tot de boot. Op een nacht kwamen er vogels tot de boot, en ze namen velen tot een eiland. Op het eiland was een vrouw die vroeg waarom ze hun hemelse moeder in de steek hadden gelaten vanwege haar barensweeën. Ze zeiden toen dat vogels hen tot het eiland hadden genomen. De vrouw zei toen de barensweeën ook voor hun eigen geboorte was. Ze gingen toen terug om de geboorte te zoeken, maar ze konden het niet vinden, en ook de boot konden ze niet vinden. Toen zijn ze teruggegaan naar het

eiland waar ze hun eigen boot bouwden.

De Oorlog

Ze was bezig geweest met haar potten en pannen. In haar potten bracht ze de pastei. Daarna had ze het huis schoongemaakt. Haar huis was netjes in orde. Ze merkte hoe haar lichaam aan het aftakelen was door de ouderdom. Nog steeds kon ze alles doen. Ze haalde ergens energie vandaan. Leverpastei. Ze was ook altijd vrolijk en opgeruimd. Ze verzorgde haarzelf goed als een oud dametje met een knotje. Maar als niemand er was, dan liet ze het haar ook wel vallen. Grijs haar.

Door en door oud. Lang haar. Leverpastei was haar favoriete voedsel. Dat smeerde ze op het beschuit. Het hield haar jong, naar eigen zeggen. Tegen de ouderdom kon ze echter niet op. Maar de leverpastei vertraagde het ouder worden, en gaf haar energie om dingen te doen. Ze lette ook goed op met de centjes. Zo had ze geen economische stress, en was zo als het zonnetje in huis. Toch merkte ze wel dat ze trager werd. Ze probeerde daarom ook andere soorten pastei. Op zoek naar een medicijn. Ook met de kruiden was ze goed. Ze was in strijd tegen haar ouderdom. Ze wilde weer jong zijn. Het ouder worden ging traag, maar ze wilde eigenlijk jonger worden. Daarom verdiepte ze zich in de kruidenwereld, en de wereld van pastei. Ze was op zoek naar de levenselixer. Ze wist dat ze maar weinig tijd had, dus ze wilde het snel doen. Ze moest het snel ontdekken. Ze was in een race tegen de klok.

Ze danste met de dood. Duistere wezens trokken haar omlaag, de dieptes in, de dieptes van de rivier. Ook had ze mooie dromen. Ze

had een verlangen wat ze niet kon bevredigen, en daarom hielpen de dromen haar. Haar man was alreeds lang geleden overleden. Ze kon er niet mee overweg. Sommigen dachten dat zij hem langzaam had vergiftigd.

Ze was goed met kinderen, gaf hen vaak snoep. Maar ja, moet je dat goed noemen ? Sommigen vonden dat ook langzame vergiftiging. Sommigen noemden haar een heks. Ze was zo vrolijk altijd en opgeruimd dat het verdacht leek. Haar huis was ook altijd akelig netjes. De ene na de andere schoonmaakbeurt, er lag geen pluisje op de grond. Nee, van stof en vuil kon ze hevig in paniek raken. Als ze het had gezien dan douchte ze haarzelf vier keer per dag voor een tijdje. Haar huid droogde hierdoor vreselijk uit. Ze had smetvrees. Daarvoor moest ze soms naar het ziekenhuis. Door al het vele douchen en boenen, en de vele wasproducten die ze op haar huid losliet maakte ze haar huid kapot totdat het bloedde.

De trap was oud, die naar de bovenverdieping leidde. Het was een soort zolder. Op de trap lag tapijt. Vaak zoog ze het. Boven hingen wat schilderijen. De schilderijen had ze geërfd. Ze zou er veel geld voor kunnen krijgen, maar ze wilde de schilderijen niet wegdoen. Ze had soms het gevoel dat ze wegvaagde, dat ze in het luchtruim zweefde en alles kon zien boven de wereld. Soms kwam ze moeilijk de trap op. Ze wilde beneden slapen in de slaapkamer op de begane grond. Daar heeft ze uiteindelijk haar bed naar laten verplaatsen. Daar kwamen mannen voor. Soms liet ze de mannen wat klusjes doen.

Ze droomde over haaien die haar kwamen halen, en dan zweefde ze weer in het luchtruim, boven de wereld, en zo kon ze alles zien. Ze zag de kinderen die naar school gingen. Ze zag de bakker lopen. Ze zag de winkels waar mensen in en uit gingen. Ze zag de meest gruwelijke dingen, maar ook hele mooie dingen. Diep geinteresseerd was ze in het werk van de bakker. Zelf had ze vroeger

ook in de bakkerij gewerkt, maar daar was ze nu te oud voor. Ze had er een leuk pensioen aan overgehouden, maar dacht er nog vaak aan terug. Alles in haar leven draaide om de bakkerij. Daar had ze het vaak over.

Sommige mensen vertrouwden haar niet. Ze kon soms vreemde dingen zeggen, zelfs verdachte dingen. Soms bezocht ze de oude molenaar, waar ze altijd een goed contact mee heeft gehouden. Ze gaf hem dan altijd wat geld. Mensen vonden dat ook verdacht. Waar betaalde ze voor ? Er gingen verhalen over haar de ronde. Anderen vonden haar gewoon een gul mens.

Op een dag stierf de molenaar, en ze ging naar de begrafenis en begon daar vreemde dansjes te doen. Sommigen dachten dat ze gek geworden was, dat ze aan het dementeren was. Ze was al oud natuurlijk. Maar wat zij deed, dat doe je niet, vooral niet op een begrafenis. Het bleek dat ze schulden had bij de molenaar, veel schulden. Maar sommigen vertrouwden het niet. Wat had die oude

molenaar gedaan ? Ook over hen gingen vele verhalen de ronde.

Haar boodschappen halen deed ze nog zelf. Dat ging dan wel traag, maar het was niet zo ver. Op een dag poetste ze weer haar televisie op, wat ze vaak deed, en ook de beeldjes op de televisie, die van zilver waren. Dat waren ook erfenissen. Die zou ze ook nooit wegdoen. Ze staarde naar de beeldjes, en werd emotioneel. Het bracht haar zekere herinneringen waarmee ze worstelde, maar ze wilde de beeldjes niet wegdoen. De emoties liepen hoog op, en toen moest ze even zitten. Eigenlijk werd het alleen maar erger, en toen moest ze naar het ziekenhuis. Ze had een paniekaanval. Ze was aan het hyperventileren. De dokter kwam bij haar en voelde haar pols, aan het ziekenhuisbed. Ze moest tot rust komen. De dokter zei dat ze een lang en druk leven had gehad. Ze zou hier voorlopig blijven. Ze maakte veel zwerftochten door het ziekenhuis toen. Het was altijd lekker warm in het ziekenhuis. De gangen waren goed verwarmd. Ze ging langs

allerlei afdelingen. Ook bezocht ze de kinderen, met snoepgoed.

Soms staarde ze voor haar uit. Dat kon heel lang duren. Staande of zittende. Dan was ze als een standbeeld. Dan dacht ze terug aan alles wat er was gebeurd. Ze had een zwaar leven gehad. Iets kwelde haar in haar gedachten. Het waren haar herinneringen. Soms hoorde ze de stem van haar overleden man in haar hoofd. Ze wilde dat ze weer jong was, en dat ze dingen anders zou hebben gedaan. 'Een spin heeft veel poten,' zei ze altijd.

De dokter vond dat ze moest kalmeren en gaf haar allerlei medicijnen. Het was tegen angst en onrustigheid. Ze werd er moe van en sliep veel. Dan droomde ze weer over de haaien die haar kwamen halen, en dan zweefde ze weer boven het luchtruim, en boven de zee. Dan zag ze de schepen. Dan zag ze de kapiteinen, en dan wenste ze dat ze jong was. Dan wilde ze met de kapiteinen mee. Ze had altijd romantische gevoelens voor kapiteinen.

Ze hield van hun uniformen. Daar kon ze dag en nacht over zwijmelen. Ze wilde met een kapitein trouwen, altijd al.

Ze zei het weleens tegen de dokter. Dan sprak ze over haar dromen en verlangens. Dan sprak ze over haar zoektocht naar een levenselixer. Die zoektocht zou gefaald hebben. ‘We gaan allemaal dood,’ zei de dokter dan. ‘Met medicijnen kunnen we het zo lang mogelijk remmen.’

Maar ze wilde weer jong zijn. Daar moest een medicijn voor zijn. Maar dat had de dokter niet. Daarmee zou hij haar niet kunnen helpen. Ze wilde de moed echter nog niet opgeven. Ze wilde naar zee, maar de dokter zei dat ze daarvoor te zwak was, te labiel. Ze moest het houden bij haar dromen.

Ze had dromen over haar vele vriendjes van vroeger, hoe ze met hen in de knoop kwam. Ze beleefde de vele ruzies weer. Het hield maar niet op. Het waren allemaal futiliteiten. Ze ergerde zich eraan. Ze vroeg zich af hoe

dit nu nog zo’n vat op haar kon hebben. Ze droomde over de vele schoenen die ze had en die ze vroeger had, en wat ze erbij droeg. Ze droomde over haar garderobes door de tijden heen. Ze begon ook meer vergeetachtig te worden, begon dingen door elkaar te halen. De dokter zei dat ze in de war was, dat ze aan het dementeren was. Hij gaf haar daar medicijnen tegen, maar het leek averechts te werken. Soms dacht ze dat de dokter haar man was, of een kapitein. Soms dacht ze dat hij één van haar vroegere vriendjes was. Vaak dacht ze dat hij familie was, en dan stelde ze hem allerlei vragen over de familie waarop hij geen antwoord wist.

Ze wilden haar niet meer laten gaan. Ze zou naar een bejaardencentrum moeten. Ze wilde dat niet, maar het kon niet anders. Steeds meer droomde ze over de haaien die haar kwamen halen. Ze had een lang leven gehad. Dan zweefde ze weer boven het luchtruim en de zee. Dan zag ze de schepen met hun kapiteinen, en de bemanningsleden. Dan probeerde ze hen te versieren, want ze was

uniformengeil.

Ze wilde zelf een uniform, maar toen de dokter haar eens een uniform bracht toen zei ze : ‘Dat hoeft nou ook weer niet.’ Ze voelde haarzelf als een plant, heel stekelig. Ze voelde haarzelf als een vleesetende plant, als een vliegenvanger. Zo gleed ze meer en meer weg in haar zelf, en trok van alles mee, wat zich dan begon om te vormen. Ze had het niet meer op een rij, maakte overal iets anders van. Dat was haar leven. Als jong meisje was ze eigenlijk al zo. Ze was verzot op roddelbladen en op roddel op zich. Ze broedde, loog en verdraaide, en veelal trapten haar vriendjes daar niet in. Ze kende haar grenzen niet. Ze was een flapuit. Ze kon hele kwetsende dingen zeggen, en waar was het voor ? Ze had op alles en iedereen wel wat aan te merken. Sommigen vonden haar een mekkeraar. Het was alsof ze aanhanger was van een vreemde religie. Ze gedroeg haarzelf al als een oud wijf op jonge leeftijd. Op jonge leeftijd werd ze al een oude zak genoemd.

Ze was uitgekookt, doortrapt, alsof ze duistere zaken deed. Steekpenningen nam ze graag aan. Ze was niet te vertrouwen. En nu was er niet meer veel van haar overgebleven. Ze was nog maar een zielig hoopje mens.

Toen ze stierf waren vele mensen opgelucht, voornamelijk haar eigen familie. Maar ze leefde voort in hun gedachten. Ze was altijd duidelijk aanwezig geweest, en moest nu vertrekken naar de achtergrond, en het was alsof ze dat niet wilde. Alles draaide om haar. En zo leefde haar verhaal voort. Ze dramde nog steeds in hun hoofden.

Haar kinderen probeerden het te verwerken, maar zij waren net als haar. Ze verzopen het met drank, iets wat zij niet veel had gedaan. Ze wilden vrede in hun hoofd, maar ze waren ook bang voor vrede. De oorlog mocht niet vergeten worden.

Einde

Ontsnapping uit Enkhuizen

Ik was ontvoerd naar Enkhuizen en kwam daar op een boot terecht. Hoe ik het gedaan heb weet ik niet meer, maar ik kon ontsnappen. Ik rende de weilanden in. Volgens mij had ik een gevecht met iemand gehad, maar ik weet het niet meer heel zeker. Volgens mij had ik ook wat stoten op mijn hoofd gehad. In ieder geval was ik vrij nu, maar ze hadden implantaten in me gestopt waarmee ze me zouden kunnen tracken. De implantaten deden ook pijn. Ik rende en rende maar totdat ik bij bos aankwam. Daar heb ik dagenlang lopen rondzwerven. Ik kwam uiteindelijk in Elspeet aan, waar ik werd opgevangen door een oud-gereformeerde familie. Ze hadden me ergens op de grond gevonden in het bos. Ze dachten dat ik dronken was, maar ik vertelde hen toen het verhaal over de ontvoering. Ook vertelde ik ze dat we nog steeds mogelijk in gevaar waren vanwege de implantaten. Ze hadden een boerderij, en onder een grote schuur was een verborgen ruimte, een schuilplaats, waar

ik zo lang mocht verblijven. Maar de criminelen hadden me al gauw getracked vanwege mijn implantaten. Ze kwamen met honden en zelfs beren. Het werd een kleine burgeroorlog in Elspeet. Sommige Elspeters hadden lange haren en zaten in een metal band. Het scheen ook van de oud gereformeerde gemeente te zijn. Het liep niet goed voor ze af. De criminelen waren te sterk. Ik zocht mijn weg onder de grond. Ik was nog steeds zwaar verzwakt. Ik kon niet veel doen. Ik had met lede ogen moeten toezien hoe de criminelen de oorlog schenen te winnen, met hun honden en beren, en ik vluchtte naar de schuilplaats, en vond wat verdere gangen onder de grond. Vanwege de implantaten wist ik dat ik niet veilig was. Ze zouden me nog steeds kunnen tracken hier. De implantaten begonnen ook steeds meer pijn te doen.

Ik heb toen dagenlang door tunnels onder de grond gezworven, en vond toen eindelijk de uitgang. Ik scheen in Oldebroek aangekomen te zijn. Hier werd ik ook opgevangen door

een oud-gereformeerde familie. Ik vertelde hen ook het gehele verhaal. Ze zeiden dat ik zo snel mogelijk van die implantaten afmoest. Ze hebben we toen naar een natuurdokter gezonden. Die wist alles af van zulke implantaten. Er waren er wel meerderen die zulk soort implantaten hadden gehad. Uiteindelijk slaagde hij erin ze eruit te krijgen. Inmiddels was er in Elspeet veel politie. Ook het leger was ingeschakeld. Ik keek naar mijn pols. Er zat geen implantaat meer. Ik voelde mijn bloed weer stromen en ik kon weer beter ademhalen. Ik keek naar de familie die mij had opgevangen. Ik bleef maar naar ze staren. Ik merkte dat er iets niet klopte. Ik lag op de grond in het bos en keek slechts naar een boom waarvan de bladeren werden bewogen door de wind. Ik wist niet waar ik was. Het leek wel alsof ik lang bewusteloos was geweest. Ik was ontsnapt, dat wel, uit Enkhuizen. Ik stond op en belde aan bij de eerste de beste boerderij. Een klein jongetje deed open. Ik vroeg hem of zijn ouders er waren. Maar toen ging ik alweer van m’n stokje. Ik vroeg de jongen waar we

waren. ‘Elspeet,’ zei hij. Toen riep hij zijn ouders. Die kwamen dadelijk aanlopen. Maar het scheen dat ik nog steeds gewoon tegen een boom aankeek waarvan de bladeren bewogen. Ik was alleen en lag op de grond. Was ik wel daadwerkelijk ontsnapt ? Was ik wel daadwerkelijk ontvoerd ? Ja, dat moest wel. Ik wist zeker dat ik was ontsnapt uit Enkhuizen. Ik hoorde geblaf in de verte. Maar ik vertrouwde het niet meer. Het geluid kwam dichterbij. Er was ook een man bij. ‘Wat doe jij hier op de grond ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Moe, kapot,’ stamelde ik. Toen vertelde ik hem het verhaal. Hij zei dat hij oud-gereformeerd was, en dat dit Elspeet was. Hij nam mij mee naar zijn huis. Hij woonde op een boerderij. Hij keek me aan. ‘Die implantaten, waar zitten die ergens ?’ vroeg hij.

‘In mijn botten,’ zei ik. ‘Ook in mijn mond. Misschien ook in mijn hersenen.’

‘Doe je mond eens open,’ zei hij toen. Ik liet

hem in mijn mond kijken. Hij had een zaklampje gepakt.

‘Verdraaid, ik zie het,’ zei hij.

Maar weer was ik gewoon naar een boom aan het staren. Ik had een gevecht gehad en wat klappen op mijn hoofd gekregen, en dat begon nu z’n tol te eisen. Ik wist nog steeds niet waar ik was, maar het leek een bos. Ik vertrouwde niets meer. Ik strompelde naar iets waarvan ik dacht dat het de dokter was, maar het was gewoon een struikje. Ik probeerde te schreeuwen, maar er kwam geen geluid uit me. Weer hoorde ik geblaf, en ditmaal was er een vrouw bij, een donkere vrouw. Ik zuchtte, want ik dacht dat het weer nep was. De vrouw nam mij mee naar haar huis, een boerderij. ‘Weer die boerderij,’ dacht ik. ‘Ik ben gewoon aan het ijlen.’ De vrouw gaf me wat te drinken, en bracht me naar een bed. Het leek zo echt. Ze verzorgde mij goed.

Ze zei dat ze oud-gereformeerd was. ‘Dat

dacht ik al,’ zei ik. Er was iets in me wat me blij maakte. Dit moest wel echt zijn. ‘Hoe kan ik u bedanken,’ zei ik.

‘Hoeft niet,’ zei ze. ‘Ik help graag.’

Ik glimlachte.

‘Heus,’ zei ze. ‘Denk je dat ze nog steeds op je jagen ?’

‘Ja,’ zei ik, ‘en ik heb implantaten, denk ik.’

‘Oh,’ zei ze. ‘En wat zijn dat voor een criminelen ? Waarom hebben ze je ontvoerd ?’

‘Ik heb geen idee,’ zei ik.

‘Helemaal niet ?’ vroeg ze.

‘Ik wist het wel, maar ze hebben me op mijn hoofd geslagen, teveel,’ zei ik.

‘Geheugenverlies,’ zei ze toen.

Ze liet me een pistool zien. ‘Als ze komen krijgen ze met dit te maken,’ zei ze.

Het was een stevige vrouw. ‘Volgens mij heb je dat pistool niet eens nodig om hen de baas te kunnen,’ zei ik.

‘Als ze met wapens komen is een pistool het beste,’ zei ze.

‘Of een pijl en boog,’ zei ik.

Maar weer bleek ik alleen maar naar de boom te hebben gestaard en tot de boom te hebben gesproken. Ik begon het meer en meer op te geven. Moedeloos werd ik ervan.

‘Ik kan niet wakker worden,’ zei ik tegen mezelf. ‘Ik ben in een coma.’

Ik was aan allerlei buisjes in het ziekenhuis. Wat ze me gaven wist ik niet, maar het leek wel crimineel. Dit was ergens onder het ziekenhuis. Hier hoorde niemand te wezen. Ik

was ontvoerd. Ik probeerde los te komen, maar lag aan banden vast. Ze bleven ook maar troep injecteren. Ik kon niet praten. Ik zag gezichten, waarvan ik dacht dat het wel weer de bladeren van de boom zouden zijn.

Ik moest wat zien te eten en te drinken. Ik hoorde dat er een televisie aanstond. Ik werd ineens ontroerd. Het was een programma over misdaadverslaggeving. Ik kende de misdaad-verslaggever. Ze hadden het over mij. Ze hadden het ook over de criminelen. Ik werd meer en meer ontroerd. Het was dus een grote zaak. Ik probeerde de buisjes los te kauwen, maar kwam niet ver.

Hoe ik het deed wist ik niet, maar ik kon uiteindelijk van het bed afkomen, en probeerde te kruipen op de grond, wat maar nauwelijks lukte. Er werd toen geroepen. Maar dat bleek ook alleen maar van de televisie af te komen. Het was een film van indianen en cowboys. Ik probeerde voort te bewegen. Ik kwam ergens in een keuken terecht. Het leek op een ziekenhuis keuken.

Ik kroop naar de koelkast, en begon dingen eruit op te eten. Ik kon mezelf ophijsen aan het aanrecht, en dronk wat uit de kraan. Zo kwam ik een beetje op krachten. Ik zag niemand in de buurt, maar toen zag ik die boom weer, die bladeren die gewoon aan het bewegen waren. Ik zuchtte. Ik kon niet wakker worden. Misschien hoefde ik helemaal niet wakker te worden, maar moest ik dieper dromen.

Ik werd toen gewoon weer wakker op de boot in Enkhuizen, in de kajuit. Was ik ontvoerd ? Nee, we waren gewoon op vakantie. Ivo en Stefan keken naar me, en oom Bert. ‘Waar ben ik ?’ vroeg ik.

‘In Enkhuizen,’ zei oom Bert.

‘Hoe kom ik hier ?’ vroeg ik.

‘We zijn op vakantie,’ zei oom Bert.

‘Ja, maar waar zijn mijn vader en moeder, en mijn broertje ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Nee,’ zei Ivo, ‘daar begint het weer.’

‘Die zijn overleden, verongelukt,’ zei oom Bert. ‘Je woont nu bij ons.’

Ik weende. ‘Hoe zijn ze verongelukt ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Vliegtuigramp,’ zeiden Stefan en oom Bert bijna tegelijk.

‘Wees maar blij dat je niet met hen mee was gegaan naar Tenerife,’ zei Ivo.

‘Wat nu ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Het beste er maar van maken,’ zei Ivo.

‘Waar wonen we ?’ vroeg ik.

‘In Elspeet,’ zei Ivo. ‘We zijn oud-gereformeerd.’

‘Hoe komt het dat ik telkens mijn geheugen

schijn te verliezen ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Vanwege mishandeling,’ zei oom Bert.

‘Door wie ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Criminelen,’ zei oom Bert.

‘Wie zijn het, waar wonen ze ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Ze zijn dood,’ zei oom Bert.

‘Wie ?’ vroeg ik.

Ze zwegen. Ik voelde me depressief, bang en verward.

Toen de vakantie voorbij was gingen we naar huis.
De vrouw van oom Bert was een grote donkere vrouw.
We woonden op een boerderij, ik had een eigen kamer.
Er was iets mis met mijn hersenen vanwege de mishandelingen.

Er was iets mis met hoe ik de dingen beleefde.
Ik vond oom Bert, Ivo en Stefan zulke koude mensen.
Ook de grote donkere vrouw vond ik koud.
Maar ze hadden me wel opgevangen, scheen het.
Of was er meer gaande ?

De dokter stond ineens voor me met een botje.
‘Dit hadden ze in je hersenen geimplanteerd,’ zei hij.
Ik lag aan allerlei buisjes.
Ik zuchtte. Ik kon weer ademhalen en voelde mijn bloed weer stromen.
‘Waar is oom Bert ?’ vroeg ik.

‘In de gevangenis,’ zei de dokter.
‘Oh, ik weet al waarom,’ zei ik.

Einde

De Afrikaanse vriendin

Hij had een Afrikaanse vriendin. Ze hadden vaak relatie-problemen, en schreven elkaar dan brieven die hij vervolgens niet of nauwelijks las. Hij besloot haar dan gewoon liefde te geven. Hij vermoedde dat de relatie-problemen kwamen door de cultuurkloof. Hij bleef gewoon vriendelijk naar haar, en zij ook naar hem. Op een dag zou hij haar ouders ontmoeten. Toen hij haar moeder zag herkende hij haar gezicht. Hij zag haar weleens in de stad. Ze had de vreemde gewoonte om altijd een spoor van snoep achter haar te laten. Hij begreep nooit waarom ze dat deed, maar dacht dat het misschien met de cultuur had te maken. Kinderen volgden haar daarom soms. Sommigen waren brutaal genoeg om snoep van haar te vragen. Hij besloot om er maar niet over te beginnen. Hij keek naar zijn vriendin, en bleef maar naar haar staren, maar toen merkte hij dat het slechts het behang was en dat hij wakker aan het worden was. Hij had helemaal geen Afrikaanse vriendin.

Vroeger had hij wel veel Afrikaanse vriendinnen gehad, maar nu even niet. De cultuurkloof was te groot, maar het had nog steeds zijn interesse. Hij wilde op afstand blijven, maar ook weer niet te ver en te veel. Zo kon hij ook zijn werk blijven doen. Afrikaanse vriendinnen waren te vermoeiend, vanwege de cultuurkloof. Het had een verlammende werking op hem, alsof hij gestoken was door een tse tse vlieg. Hij verloor daar ook zijn identiteit van en zijn stem. Steeds stiller werd hij als hij een Afrikaanse vriendin had, en zij scheen steeds praterig te worden, alsof iets hem overnam, en als de relatie dan voorbij was, dan leefde hij verder met haar stemmen in zijn hoofd. Gek kon hij er van worden, maar het inspireerde hem om dan verhalen te vertellen. Zo had hij zijn werk, zo had hij zijn leven, tot het punt dat hij besefte dat hij eigenlijk niet zonder kon. Met en zonder. Hij kon er niet mee leven. Hij moest ergens een tussenpad zien te vinden, een zijpad, en dan dieper de natuur in, om het geheimenis te onderzoeken. Er waren nog een heleboel stammen die hij

niet kende. Hij zou gaan als antropoloog of etnoloog, voor zijn werk, en zou gewoon afstand houden. Maar telkens werd hij er weer in meegesleurd. Er was geen afstand mogelijk. Ze waren te bruut, alsof hij van achteren werd aangevallen. Zij lieten in die zin niet veel heel van de cultuurkloof. Het was alsof hij zichzelf geheel in hen verloor. Vluchten kon hij niet. Toch was er dan ergens de genadeslag, en daar was hij dan dankbaar voor. Toch waren er ergens haperingen waar hij dankbaar gebruik van maakte. Maar vaak werd hij dan na een tijdje weer teruggehaald. Hij kon nooit ver komen.

Hij stond op, om zijn kleren aan te doen, maar kon veel ervan niet vinden. ‘Hoe heb ik het nu, moet ik dan naakt gaan, of met een kleed om me heen ?’ Het huis was te rommelig. Nooit kon hij hier iets vinden, zelfs niet zijn eigen kleren. ‘En waar is mijn kam ?’ ‘En ze komt zo, die Afrikaanse vrouw van de drukkerij. Zo kan ik haar toch niet te woord staan ?’ Hij keek om zich heen in pure angst, en keek naar de klok. Hij hoorde de bel

al. Hij verstijfde helemaal. Ook leken zijn kaken op elkaar ingevroren. Even stond de tijd stil. Maar toen werd hij pas echt wakker. ‘Wakker, wakker, eindelijk wakker.’ Hij besloot maar gewoon in zijn pyama te blijven. Het was alsof hij weer gestoken was door een exotische tse tse vlieg. Hij moest zijn weg hierin zien te vinden. ‘Oh Afrikaanse vriendin, oh Afrikaanse vriendin, degene die ik bemin, een vreemde herinnering.’

De Planeet Elspeet

De planeet Elspeet,
mooie natuur, ruige heides, wilde bossen,
veel kerken, oud gereformeerd, die allemaal
met elkaar in oorlog leven.
Kannibalisme gaan ze niet voor uit de weg.
Ze leven van de jacht.
Het leven is goed zo voor hen.
Graag gebruiken ze geweld.
Geweld is voor hen de weg.
Wapenverzamelaars zijn het.
En trofeeënverzamelaars.
Jando zat op voetbal.
Hij kwam altijd vuil thuis.
Dan ging hij lezen in de kerkboeken.
Jan was zijn broer, Harry zijn andere.
Een vader en moeder hadden ze niet meer.
Ze werden opgevoed door hun oudere zus.
En een tante hielp soms.

De oudere zus kon ze alledrie goed aan.
Ze was sterker dan zes mannen.
Ook hun tante deed niet voor hen onder.

Die was uit hetzelfde materiaal gemaakt.

Op dinsdag patrouilleerde de politie.
Ook dat was altijd oorlog.
Voor de politie gingen ze niet uit de weg.

De planeet Elspeet,
mooie natuur, met veel kerken,
veel oorlogen. Ze deden niet onder voor leger
en politie.
Het leger patrouilleerde op zaterdag.
Alle andere dagen patrouilleerden de kerken.
En daarom was het altijd oorlog.
Het was een oorlogsplaneet.
Ze waren veelal arm.
Niemand had het breed.
Ze moesten knokken voor een leven.

Jando wilde piloot worden.
Dan zou hij eens vertrekken.
Dan zou hij zijn familie meenemen.
En zijn naaste vrienden.
Vrienden van de kerk.

Jan wilde clown worden.

Zo wilde hij de oorlog stoppen,
of in de juiste banen leiden.
Harry wilde niks worden.
Die was lui.
Dacht dat hij alles al was.

Ja, de was wilde hij wel doen,
voor zijn oudere zuster.
Hij wilde wel meewerken in en om het huis.
Maar hij had verder geen ambities.
Het was hem allemaal goed zo.
Een verhalenverteller was het.

Jando kon eigenlijk niet meer wachten.
Hij beloot de wildernis in te gaan,
dieper en dieper.
Daar vond hij ergens een neergestort
vliegtuig.
Hij zou alles op alles zetten om het vliegtuig
weer op te bouwen,
en dan zou hij de piloot zijn.
Hij kreeg het nog voor elkaar ook,
en vloog naar huis.
Allemaal wilden ze wel mee,
maar waar naartoe ?

Waar naartoe ?
Dieper de wildernis in,
op de planeet Elspeet.

Daar leefden woeste indianenstammen.
Daar leefden wilden, wilder dan hen

Ver kwamen ze niet, nee,
ergens stortte het vliegtuig weer neer,
maar half overleefden ze het,
overgeleverd aan de indianenstammen daar,
grote verhalenvertellers waren het,
groter dan Harry was,
Harry kon er zelfs wat van leren,
dat had hij nooit gedacht

Jando wilde geen piloot meer zijn,
en Jan wilde geen clown meer worden,
Ze wilden alleen nog maar leven bij de
verhalen van de indianen,
Maar ver kwamen ze niet,
Nee, want door verhalen, door verhalen,
lokken de kannibalen,
In de ketel eindigden zij,

Hun hoofden tussen de brei,
Pap en soep werd er van hen gekookt,
daar op de planeet Elspeet,
En ze dachten : waren we maar nooit
weggeweest,
Waren we maar in de kerk gebleven,
dan was het zo erg nog niet,
alhoewel ze ook wel herinnerden van de
kerkboeken,
dat het niet makkelijk zou wezen

Ze klaagden het ach en wee,
maar toen was er niets meer van hen over,
niets meer van hun praatjes,
niets meer van hun verhaaltjes,
tot de hemelpoort kwamen zij.
De hemelpoort ging open en zij mochten naar
binnen.
En daar gingen de verhaaltjes toen gewoon
weer verder.

Met het vliegtuig neergestort ?
En dan in de ketel ?
Dat was wel dubbel erg.
Maar ze begonnen al snel weer de hoogste

praatjes te krijgen,
Ze zouden hun kerken bouwen in de hemel.
En de oorlogen gingen hier gewoon door.
Hoe is ‘t mogelijk, in de hemel.

En Jando wilde weer piloot worden,
hemelpiloot,
en Jan wilde weer clown worden,
hemelclown,
en Harry had weer het hoogste woord.

Jando bouwde een vliegtuig van oude
rommel die hij in de hemel kon vinden,
Zo wilde hij diep de hemelse wildernis in
vliegen,
ook al waren daar de woeste
indianenstammen ook,
maar hij dacht dat het nu wel mee zou vallen,
want het was immers de hemel

Maar ‘t viel niet mee.
Weer stortte het vliegtuig neer,
en weer kwamen ze bij de indianen in de
ketel

Dit moet een grap wezen, zei Jando
Zelfs in de hemel kun je niet meer wezen, zei
Jan,
Maar ditmaal werden ze gered door hun
oudere zus,
en hun tante.

De geschiedenis herhaalt zich, zei Jando,
maar anders, zei Jan,
alsof het omgedraaid was,
want op de planeet Elspeet werden ze eerst
gered door hun oudere zus en hun tante,
en daarna pas hadden ze het vliegtuig-
avontuur

Ze merkten dat in de hemel alles omgedraaid
was,
dat de chronologie anders was,
en dat daarom alles op zijn pootjes terecht
kwam,
maar ja, ze vroegen zich wel af wat nu erger
was,
met een vliegtuig neer te storten en in de
ketel terecht te komen,
of te leven onder het regiem van hun oudere

zus en hun tante

Uiteindelijk werden ze gered door hun vader
en moeder,
die waren hier immers ook,
en die lieten hen gewoon in hun vrijheid,
zoals ze vroeger ook eens hadden gedaan

Advertentie Koekgeneraal

Ik heb het niet vaak kunnen vertellen, en ik zal het ook niet vaak doen. Alleen op speciale gelegenheden misschien. Het gaat over een bakkerij waar ze een recept hebben voor levende koeken : koekmannen en koekvrouwen, en die worden dan overal rondbezorgd. Het is niet voor de verkoop, maar voor de verhuur, want de koek die gegeten wordt groeit gewoon weer aan. Het is nogal duur, maar dan wel heel speciaal. Je kunt de koek gewoon voor je ogen zien groeien wanneer je ervan gegeten hebt. Het is echt de specialiteit van die nogal ongewone bakkerij. De bakkerij is nogal veel in de trek, vooral bij hooggeplaatsten. De koeken worden nooit oud, maar laatst probeerden sommige koeken wel te ontsnappen. Het leven van koekmannen en koekvrouwen is zwaar. Het is een vreemde fabriek, en vaak worden ze weer geheel anders gedecoreerd en

aangekleed.

Vroeger was er eens een oorlog tussen de koeken en de banketbakkers. Banketbakkers zijn de koningen van de koeken. Vroeger was er eens een slavenopstand, maar de banketbakkers vonden daar wat op. Ze maakten een recept waardoor nu ook de koeken zelf konden eten. Zo was het eerlijker, en dit leidde tot het tijdperk waarin koeken ook zelf banketbakker konden worden. Koekmannen en koekvrouwen werden zelfstandiger, en velen zochten zelfs de wildernis op. Maar hier stuitten ze op een nieuw probleem : de verschrikkelijk wilde dieren. Uiteindelijk ontwikkelden die koekmannen en koekvrouwen hun eigen wildheid, om ook daar tegen bestand te zijn.

En nu ? Op aarde zie je ze bijna niet meer. Ze trokken allemaal naar andere planeten. Maar ik ken nog steeds die banketbakkerij met recepten voor levende koeken. Ik heb het zelf eens thuis uitgeprobeerd en dat was smikkelen en smullen. Het was zo'n koek die ook direct banketbakker was, dus van mij

werd er ook door een recept een koek gemaakt. Ik moest een vreemd soort mengsel uit een zakje inslikken. Tegenwoordig loop ik daarom met veel smink zodat niemand ziet dat ik eigenlijk een koek ben. Ik heb een baan gekregen bij die nogal wat ongewone bakkerij, en soms ga ik op bestelling naar koningshuizen of feesten. Ja, het leven is vreemd als een levende koek. Ook geef ik cursussen hoe een levende koek te worden. Ik voel mezelf al flink een banketbakker, met een groeiend leger van koeken, want we hebben een oorlog te voeren, een oorlog tegen een koekloze maatschappij, een maatschappij van dode koeken. Ik ben daarom een koeksoldaat, en zo u wil een koekgeneraal. U kunt mij dus ook inhuren.

Veel koeken leven nog in gevangenschap, maar ik weet de weg naar de verlichting. Diep onder de grond heb ik een geheime fabriek waar het allemaal gebeurt. Het gaat er nogal machinaal aan toe, omdat we ons geen slordigheden kunnen veroorloven. Het machinale is natuurlijk altijd meedogenloos,

maar we moeten een goed product leveren. Eén verkeerde beweging en alles gaat mis. We moeten ons recept 'clean' houden. En zo blijven onze koeken lekker en functioneel. Ook worden ze uiterst zorgvuldig verpakt.

Niet velen weten van mijn ontsnapping uit de spinnenboerderij. Noem het overigens maar fokkerij. Niet velen weten wat er daar ergens diep in de bossen gebeurt. Velen willen het ook niet weten. In ieder geval hebben spinnen het daar voor het zeggen, en zeg maar gerust grote spinnen. Ze spuiten wat gif in je, en daar ga je. Mentale gif, dus dan denk je dat je heel ergens anders bent, dat je met die en die praat en omgang hebt, terwijl het gewoon maar sterke concentraties zijn in je hersenen opgewekt door het spinnengif. Kun je uit die boerderij ontsnappen, die boerderij waar we allemaal zitten en denken dat we in een civilisatie leven, dan ben je er nog niet. Ontsnappingen worden namelijk gefaked door het gif zelf, dus dan denk je dat je ontsnapt, maar je komt er alleen maar dieper in. Ook die fantasie in onze koppen dat we denken dat we in een civilisatie, een beschaving leven is niets anders dan een gif wat onze hersenen zo heeft beinvloed, terwijl

we in handen zijn van savage spinnen, oftewel de wildernis.

Geen goed nieuws dus, hè, en vandaar dus ook dat velen het afkappen als onzin, ook door het gif. Maar goed, toen ik dus ontsnapte was ik er nog niet, omdat het dus allemaal gefaked was door dat gif. Dan denk je alleen maar dat je eruit bent. Ik kwam erachter dat die spinnenboerderij weer een onderdeel was van iets veel groters : een vliegenboerderij. Die vliegen fokten dus in principe weer die spinnen en die spinnen fokten ons. Dus stel dan dat je echt zou kunnen ontsnappen uit die spinnenboerderij, dan had je nog met een leger gewiekste verwilderde vliegen te maken, en geloof me, dat zijn geen lieverdjes. Vliegen met angels waar je naar van wordt. Druipend gif, dat je echt helemaal hoteldebotel maakt. En toch had ik dus op een gegeven moment die code van de spinnenboerderij gekaapt, en ik kwam daarna dus die vliegenboerderij onder ogen, het grotere geheel. Nou, dat was wat. Alarms gingen natuurlijk aan, en ik kwam erachter

dat wij niet de enigen waren die naast de spinnen daar gefokt werden. Ook varkens werden er gefokt. Ik ging dus heel langzaam en voorzichtig zonder lawaai te maken de trappen op, langs al die gewapende vliegen heen, totdat ik op het dak kwam.

Ik zwaaide met een witte en een rode doek, en al gauw kwam een helicopter mij ophalen. Maar wat bleek nou ? Het waren vliegen, maar ditmaal goede vliegen. Ze hadden een helm op en waren vriendelijk. Ze zeiden dat ze van Venus kwamen, en ik dacht : 'Die lui zijn gek.' Maar toen ik dichter en dichter bij het wonderlijke Venus kwam vond ik ze helemaal niet meer zo gek. Ik begon ze interessant te vinden, en ik begon te beseffen dat zij daadwerkelijk mijn bevrijders waren. En ze vertelden mij dat eens Mars en Venus één planeet waren genaamd Pythia. En Pythia was vroeger weer deel van een nog groter geheel genaamd Lakshor. Het sprak allemaal een beetje tot mijn verbeelding, en ik begon er boeken over te schrijven, dikke pillen over Pythia en Lakshor, over alles wat die lui mij

vertelden. Het waren een soort aliens met de eigenschappen van vliegen, maar ze waren ook deels trol en indiaan. Ze zeiden dat er vroeger een hele andere orde was. Het kwaad was het goede, en de leugen was de waarheid. Verder was de duisternis het licht en de nacht was de dag. Dat vond ik wel heel interessant, want ik had altijd al het idee dat het omgedraaid was. Wij leefden gewoon ondersteboven. De nachtmerrie was de droom, de oorlog vrede, de slavernij vrijheid, en de jacht liefde. Nou goed, het verwarde me aan de andere kant wel. Hoeveel procent kwaad waren zij ? Evil ? In ieder geval waren zij ook boeren en jagers, en hoe kon het ook anders ? Ze hadden wel ergens tegen op te boksen, dus ze moesten mij opfokken tot een goed soldaat in de strijd. En zo werd ik dan een ambassadeur van Pythia en Lakshor, en natuurlijk van Venus zelf. Venus is het portaal van antwoord voor deze tijd. Als we ons allemaal richten op Venus dan wordt het vanzelf een betere wereld.

Maar ja, toen ik wakker werd had ik niet

meer zo'n grote mond, en toen de dag op gang was gekomen was ik Venus alweer vergeten. Ik had wel andere dingen aan mijn hoofd. Als iemand mij zou vragen : 'Pardon, bent u de ambassadeur van Venus ?' dan zou ik denken : 'Die is gek.' Wel had ik nog steeds het idee dat alles om mij heen een grote spinnenboerderij was, als een onderdeel van de nog grotere vliegenboerderij. Dat was dan misschien wat ik aan die droom heb overgehouden. Maar ambassadeur van Venus ? Hoe komen ze er toch bij. Nou ja, een mens kan soms raar dromen.

Het Rijk van Nicotine

Een van de reusachtigste leiders van het duistere rijk die ik ooit had gezien was wel het skelet Nicotine. Elke dag maakte hij een lange reis over de bergen naar de hoogste top, met in zijn armen het hoofd van een meisje. Nicotine had een paar duistere paarden, genaamd Ammalgamos, Compositos en Medicinos. Hij was een duistere rijder. In zijn rijk was er geen schoonheid, alleen lelijkheid, maar de jungles hier waren reusachtig. Ik stond aan de oever. Een jongetje in een boot wenkte mij. Het was een lange dunne boot, en het jongetje had een peddel. Het was een indiaans jongetje. ‘Mijn moeder wacht op je,’ riep hij. Al gauw was hij bij de oever en ik stapte in het bootje. Al snel waren we aan de andere kant van het meertje. Aan de oever stond een vrouw. Ik herkende haar niet, maar zij riep mij bij mijn naam. Ik stapte uit het

bootje en liep naar de oever. Ze omhelsde me stevig. ‘Ik heb een maaltijd voor je gemaakt,’ zei ze. ‘Wie ben je ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Oh, ik ben Melango,’ zei de vrouw. Al snel bracht ze mij naar haar hut. Er lagen hier allerlei pakjes sigaretten en sigarendoosjes. ‘Rook je ?’ vroeg ik. ‘Nee,’ zei ze. ‘Mijn zoontje neemt ze weleens mee.’

’s Nachts komen de troubadouren,’ zei ze. ‘Zij werken voor de farao.’

‘Waar hebben ze het dan over ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Oh,’ zei ze, ‘over hem. Je weet wel : Nicotine, de baas van alle farao’s. Hij is het grote opperhoofd.’ Ik kende Nicotine wel. Het was een verschrikking. Iedereen was geketend aan zijn lange kettingen, ook deze vrouw. Het hart van Nicotine was een rood hart, maar voor de rest was het hele duistere rijk zwart en wit. Als de troubadours kwamen dan was er altijd veel grijs, veel bruin en geel. Nicotine was een slager. Hij was altijd op jacht, en had een grote fokkerij. Hier liet hij de vrouwen zwaar werk verrichten. ‘Pssst,

bevrijd me,’ fluisterde de vrouw. Ze wees op de ring aan mijn vinger die ik eens van de farao had gekregen. Ik bedacht me geen moment, legde de ring tegen haar ketting en brandde de keten door. Ik pakte haar hand, en zei : Kom mee. Ik weet niet hoe lang het geduurd heeft maar na tijden rennen kwamen we uit de jungles van Nicotine. Een man staarde ons aan met een lange baard. Hij liet ons de tand van een haai zien. ‘Waar zijn we ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Welkom,’ zei de man. Hij was direct heel vriendelijk. Hij staarde naar mijn ring. ‘Wie bent u ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Ik ben Terang,’ zei de man. ‘Gezand van de koning.’

‘Wie is de koning ?’ vroeg ik. Hij liet me een klein balletje zien. Maar daar kwam Nicotine al aan. Ik greep Melango weer bij haar hand en rende met haar verder. Maar ook in de verte zag ik Nicotine aankomen, en toen van alle kanten. Snel werden we ingesloten. ‘Nicotine heerst hier,’ zeiden ze. Plotseling

kwam er rood licht uit mijn ring voort en scheen op de harten van de Nicotines om ons heen. Een van de Nicotines had witte klederen met een lange witte punthoed. Hij leek wel op een pion. Achter hem stonden nog een paar van zulke Nicotines. Ik richtte de straal van de ring op zijn gezicht, en hij begon weg te smelten. Ik rende met Melango door de opening die was ontstaan. Weer zag ik die man. ‘Kan ik iets voor je doen ?’ vroeg Terang.

‘Ja,’ zei ik. ‘Help ons hier uit.’

Maar Terang werd gegrepen door de Nicotines en werd verslonden. De Nicotines waren als een kudde hongerige honden. Weer richtte ik de straal van de ring op hen. In de verte was een piramide waar we naartoe renden. Binnenin zat een farao op een troon. Hij was geheel gemaakt van metaal, en er kwam rook uit hem voort. Maar al snel waren ook de Nicotines binnen en verslonden de metalen farao. Een paar Nicotines zaten op paarden. Het waren grote paarden. We renden door een deur in een andere gang. Maar hier

waren zwarte Nicotines met hun paarden. Weer beukte ik een deur in, en kwamen in een kamer terecht met een raampje waardoor we konden ontsnappen. We waren nu op de piramide. De vrouw haalde wat pakjes sigaretten en sigaren uit haar broekzakken en begon ze tussen haar handen te rammelen, terwijl ze veren begon te krijgen. Snel greep ze me en we vlogen weg. Het was mij een raadsel. Nicotine Magie, zei ze. We vlogen naar een hoog kasteel waar de Nicotine Tovenaar woonde. We hadden hier groot uitzicht. De Nicotine Tovenaar was een aardige man. Hij liet ons alle mechanismes van Nicotines zien. Het waren robotten. Ook hun grote paarden.

De Tovenaar zette ons ergens neer op de rotsen, in een ander rijk. We kwamen op een strand terecht met heet zand. Ook was er een hutje van riet en bamboe. ‘Blijf je bij me ?’ vroeg Melango.

‘Ach, ik kom je nog weleens een keertje opzoeken,’ zei ik. ‘Ik hoop dat je het hier naar je zin zult hebben. Er is hier strand en

zee, en er groeit hier voldoende aan de bomen.’

Daar kwam de Tovenaar aan, vanaf het strand. ‘Je hebt in ieder geval goed gezelschap,’ zei ik. De Tovenaar gaf mij een hoed van stro en riet. En toen vertrok ik.

Einde

Oorlogsgodin

Het was nogal een zwemtocht van het schip naar Suriname. Ik was al zo lang een piraat, en nu wilde ik wel iets anders. Ik wilde vrij zijn. Helemaal uitgeput kwam ik aan op het strand. Ik nam mijn intrede in een hutje voor landlopers. Ik was een zwerver. Mijn piratenkleding was gescheurd. Ik bloedde een beetje vanwege schaafwonden. Het was een lange tocht.

De natuur hier verwelkomde mij met open armen alsof ik een prins was. Het was mijn droom om hier voor altijd te wonen. Ik moest maar leven van de jacht, zodat ik geen rover meer hoefde te zijn. Tot mijn verbazing volgde het schip mij na, en ook mijn piratenmakkers besloten hier te gaan wonen, te stoppen met roven, om zo voor de jacht te leven. Dat was toch een stuk netter.

We hadden het hier goed naar ons zin. Elke

dag zee, en een jungle vol met voedsel, goed voedsel. Op een dag kwam er een vrouw bij ons wonen. Ze maakte nieuwe kleren voor ons, en zorgde dat het voedsel werd klaargemaakt. Zoiets is natuurlijk onmisbaar. Het was een geschenk van de natuur van Suriname aan ons. De vrouw heette zelfs Suriname.

Wij waren altijd erg beleefd naar de natuur van Suriname. Wij respecteerden haar en eerden haar. En de vrouw aan ons gegeven behandelden we als een prinses. Ze was een geschenk uit de hemel. We konden goed met elkaar opschieten, ik en m’n makkers, en de vrouw paste er precies tussen. Er waren eigenlijk nooit relletjes. Iedereen kende z’n plaats.

De vrouw wist veel van de natuur af, en kon ons veel leren. Op een dag maakten we een tochtje met het schip en namen de vrouw mee. Ze vermaakte zich uitstekend en verkleedde zich als een piratenkapitein. Ja, onze kapitein mocht ze wel wezen, sinds we onze eigen kapitein van boord hadden

gegooid. Er viel niet te leven met die man. Zij was het tegenovergestelde.

Het piratenleven beviel haar goed, en dankzij haar konden we het wat netter houden, wat beschaafder. We besloten de ene helft van het jaar te varen, en de andere helft te leven aan de kust van Suriname. De zegen van Suriname kwam over ons. Ons schip zegevierde ten allen tijde, en dat allemaal dankzij onze nieuwe kapitein.

Het uniform stond haar goed. Dat ze op een dag in een anaconda veranderde verbaasde ons. Maar ja, ze was nu eenmaal een anaconda. Een geschenk van Suriname. We besloten weer met haar terug te varen, en lieten haar los in de jungle. Later kwamen we erachter dat ze om de zoveel jaren in een anaconda veranderde. We vonden het niet erg. Het was haar leven. Trouwens, we waren gek op anaconda's. We hadden allemaal een obsessie als het aankwam op slangen. Ze kon jagen als de beste, en zo leden we eigenlijk nooit honger. Ze kon in nog wel veel meer dieren veranderen, zomaar plotseling. Ze was

een heks, maar dan anders. Ze was gewoon een oorlogsgodin. Die kunnen dat soort trucjes.

We hielden alleen maar meer van haar. Ze was een bijzonder mens.

Het Surinaamse Dagboek

Suriname, 6 april 1992
Ik ben in Suriname aangekomen. Vastbesloten het geheim te vinden waar iedereen over spreekt. De papieren roos, de naam voor een lange plant met papier-achtige roosjes, komt veel in Suriname voor, en nergens anders in de wereld. Ik staar naar de plant, met vreemde gevoelens in mijn buik. Een verlamming kwam over mij, en ik moest naar het ziekenhuis. Ik heb nu de ontmoeting gehad. Ik had hier lang op gewacht, maar het liep bijna verkeerd af. Ik was voor drie weken in het ziekenhuis.

Suriname, 8 april 1992
Ik weet niet wat ik moet doen. Ik kan niet loskomen van Suriname. Ik loop dwalend rond en kan niet weg. Het lijkt wel alsof ik opgesloten ben. Het lijkt alsof ik dood ben, terwijl ik leef. Ik heb het duistere geheim van

Suriname ontmoet, maar nu ben ik in de war. Mensen kijken me na op straat. Ik geef een zoekende indruk. Alsof ik iets kwijt ben. Ik kan mijn gedachtes niet beheersen. Ik ben een gevangene van Suriname. Het is alsof een spin mij van binnen opeet. Ik heb jeuk van binnen, en hoeveel ik ook krab, het gaat niet weg.
Ik ben niet gemachtigd om contact op te nemen met mijn familie. Ik krijg geen toestemming. Ik heb ook geen idee van wie ik toestemming moet krijgen. Ik denk dat ik gek aan het worden ben. Ik geef de schuld aan de papieren roos. Ik haat die planten nu, alhoewel ik weet dat ik misschien nu onredelijk ben. Toch heb ik het idee dat die planten duivels zijn. Ze worden vaak bij allerlei duistere rituelen gebruikt.
Ik ga huilend naar bed. Ik voel me fragiel en verward. Ik heb hulp nodig, maar durf het niet te vragen. Het is alsof het me verboden is. Het voelt alsof ik in een coma leef. In de nacht kijkt een vreemd houten standbeeld mij aan. Ik heb het gevoel alsof mensen mij uitlachen en niet om mij geven. Was ik maar

nooit naar Suriname gegaan. Het is alsof iemand mijn geld en paspoort heeft gestolen, terwijl ik het nog steeds heb. Maar het dringt niet tot mij door. Niets dringt er tot mij door. Ik heb het gevoel alsof mensen mij niet horen, wat ik ook zeg. Ze leven gewoon door. Ik heb zelfs het gevoel dat het onmogelijk is dat iemand verstaat wat ik zeg. Ze horen mij wel, maar zij verstaan het niet, en het lijkt hen ook niets te kunnen schelen.
Ik weet zeker dat ik onder een vloek ben. Ik maak een lange boswandeling tot aan een rivier. Dan loop ik terug. Ik voel me opeens heel warm van binnen. Alsof iemand mij wel begrijpt, of een gevoel dat alles wel goed komt. Maar dat is maar een flits. Als ik terug kom op mijn kamer ben ik depressief. Het wordt zo erg dat ik weer een wandeling maak naar de rivier. Ditmaal voel ik alsof ik gewapend ben, maar ik ben onbewapend. Iets of iemand speelt een spelletje met mij. Het is alsof ik aan de drugs ben, maar ik heb die troep nooit aangeraakt. Of zou iemand iets in mijn koffie hebben gedaan ? Ik ben mezelf niet meer. Ik voel alsof ik een zombie ben.

Iets is over mij gekomen. Ik heb ook het gevoel dat ik niet goed meer kan praten. Alsof niemand mij kan horen, of in ieder geval dat niemand mij begrijpt, alsof ik in een andere taal spreekt die niemand verstaat. Ik begin wanhopig te worden, hopeloos. Ik voel me opgesloten. Iemand heeft iets in m'n hoofd gedaan. Ik heb koppijn. Het is alsof ik opgesloten zit in mezelf, en iemand heeft de sleutels weggeworpen, zonder enig mededogen. Het is alsof er een sieraad in me zit wat ik niet kan bereiken. Dan begint het sieraad te branden, en ik begin weg te smelten. Ik kan het vuur ruiken. Nu denk ik echt dat ik gek ben geworden, verdwaasd, krankzinnig. En dat terwijl ik me zo op deze vakantie had verheugd. Ik weet dat ik niet meer terugkan. Iets houdt mij tegen. Iets heeft mij naar de keel gegrepen. Iets met een witte jurk. Ze loopt op sandalen. Zou het een geest zijn ? Of verzin ik maar wat. Ik heb het gevoel dat er hier een oorlog is, en dat ik tot het leger wordt geroepen. Ik moet vechten. Ze willen mij laten staren naar een haan. Ik moet die haan bevechten, en dan merk ik dat

ik zelf een haan ben. Ik smijt het boek op de tafel wat ik aan het lezen ben. 'Is het nu afgelopen ?' roep ik. Het is alsof ik bezeten aan het raken ben. Ik voel het schuim bijna op mijn mond komen. Ik maak veel speeksel aan. Wanhopig val ik op mijn bed. Ik begin aan mijn haren te trekken, en wild met mijn hoofd te schudden. Iets is binnenin mij gekomen. Ik krijg het er niet uit.

Suriname, 10 april 1992
Ik voel me dromerig. Ik heb nog steeds geen contact met mezelf kunnen krijgen. Het is alsof ik mezelf niet meer kan bereiken, alsof ik uit mijn eigen handen ben weggegleden, in de diepte, verdronken. Ik voel me als een pop, of alsof ik als een pop ben, en ik houd mezelf vast, maar ik kan mezelf niet bereiken. Ik ben onbereikbaar. Ik kom er niet meer doorheen.
Ik weet weer waarom ik hier ben : voor de juwelen. Maar de juwelen hebben mij opgesloten. Ik kwam om juwelen te zoeken in de bossen, maar het was te gevaarlijk. De wachters van de juwelen hebben mij

opgesloten.
Suriname, 10 maart 1993
Ik begin een reclame bureau in Suriname, ook om adviezen te geven wat betreft reclame. Vorig jaar was een verschrikkelijk jaar. Ik heb mezelf bij elkaar kunnen grijpen, maar ik wil niet weg nu. Eerst kon ik niet weg, en nu wil ik niet weg.

Suriname, 10 maart 1994
Het is weer mis. Alle ellende is teruggekomen. Ik wil niet meer leven. Ik wil van deze planeet vertrekken, maar ik kan niet. Ik probeer de dood te vinden, maar deze vlucht van mij weg. Iets roept mij op voor de oorlog, een oorlog tegen een haan. En dan merk ik dat ik zelf ook een haan ben. Met mesjes sta ik daar, mesjes aan mijn benen vastgemaakt. Maar dan enige tijd later beland ik in het ziekenhuis. Ik voel me gebroken. Ik ben verwond, misschien zelfs dodelijk. Mensen vertellen me dat ik ergens ben ingesprongen. Het was nogal van een grote hoogte. Ben ik mijn verstand aan het verliezen ? Ik kan niet tegen de smoelen van

deze mensen, die hypocriete, duivelse glimlachen. Ze voeren iets in hun schild, ik weet het zeker.

Suriname, 12 maart 1994
Iemand zingt liedjes tot mij waarvan ik rustig wordt. Ik lig nog steeds in het ziekenhuis. Soms ben ik bewusteloos. De verpleegsters zijn wel aardig hier. Ze zingen voor mij, en zeggen dat als ik weer beter ben, dan zullen ze met me zwemmen, in de rivier achter het ziekenhuis. Dat is al half in het bos. Het lijkt me wel leuk. Hun glimlachen zijn mysterieus en zoet. Ik heb vol vertrouwen in hen dat zij mijn leven beter zullen maken.
Eén van de verpleegsters neemt mij mee in haar auto. We gaan diep het bos in, naar een rivier waar krokodillen leven. Zij laat me ook een plant zien genaamd de papieren roos, een lange plant met bijna papieren roosjes. Ik schrik. Ze houdt mijn hand vast, maar die duw ik weer weg. Ik ben ineens heel paranoide. Ze vraagt me wat er gebeurd is, maar ik ren weg met schuim op mijn mond. Ze komt mij achterna. Ze heeft een boog en

dreigt mij neer te schieten. Niemand zal namelijk ontsnappen. Ik weet niet waar ze het over heeft. Ik ben toch niet in een gevangenis ? Maar ze geeft geen uitleg. Dan lijkt het alsof ik een klap op mijn hoofd krijg. Even later wordt ik wakker in het ziekenhuis.
Zij zingt over mij.
Suriname, 18 maart 1994
Ik denk dat er iets goed mis met mij is. Ik ben opgesloten in een nachtmerrie, alsof ik in een coma ben. Daarom kon ik hier nooit weg. Ik kan niet goed nadenken. Ik kan niet tellen. Ik wil weg, maar ik kan niet. Ik probeer weg te kruipen, maar ik ben als een verlamde. Alles is zo groot en ver weg om mij heen. Het is alsof ik in de maag van een beest ben, een roofdier. Ik wil hier weg. Maar ik kan niet. Alles gaat zo traag. Ik heb het idee alsof niemand om mij geeft, maar toch heb ik het gevoel dat het goedkomt.

Suriname, 18 mei 1994
Ik lag in warm water. Het gaf me hoop. Eventjes kon niks me nog schelen. Ik heb het gevoel dat ik meer in mijn dagboek moet

schrijven. Dat doe ik bijna niet. In mijn dromen groeien planten met witte bloempjes in mijn kamer. Het is alsof ze zullen komen om me te halen. Er groeien witte bloemen in mijn hoofd, planten met witte bloemen, weelderige struiken, die een wit zaad verspreiden. Het maakt me warm van binnen. Ik dacht dat Suriname zo meedogenloos was, maar nu heb ik haar geheim gezien. Alhoewel ik mezelf misschien wat teveel bemoedig nu. Wat hebben die witte bloemenstruiken in hun zin ? Ze hebben doornen als ik ze dichterbij bekijk. Er druipt bloed vanaf, als van de poten van gevechtshanen, van de messen. Iets knapt er in mijn hoofd. Ik moet even neerliggen. Ik herken deze plek. Had ik dit niet in mijn dromen gezien ? Ik was op weg naar een witte stad, met zoveel anderen, maar toen brak de ladder af. We vielen allemaal naar beneden. Het was een bodemloze put, met veel vuur. Duivels waren rondom ons. Een huis van medelij neemt ons binnen, maar dat bleek valse medelij te zijn. Ik kan niet meer nadenken. Alles duizelt mij voor de ogen. Hier leeft valse genade, een beest.

Suriname, 19 mei 1994
Toen kwam het. De struiken namen bezit van me, alsof rivieren me overstroomden. Ik was in een droom. Ik was als Doornroosje, maar Doornroosje stierf. Ze werd door teveel doornen geprikt. Ze gilde terwijl ze stierf. Het was een deel in mij wat stierf. Terwijl het andere deel een clown was, die onder water was, verstrikt in een onderwater-struik, ook met vele doornen. Ook de clown stierf toen, en ik bevond mijzelf in een wilde zee, totdat ik aanspoelde op een strand. Iemand kwam tot mij, en hielp mij op de been. Toen bracht zij mij naar haar huis. Ze glimlachte. Ik staarde naar haar. Ik kon niet denken. Alles stond stil. Ik ben nu meerdere personen.

Suriname, 20 mei 1994
Het moorden van mei is aan mijn zij. In een slachtkamer bracht zij mij. Ik wist niet wie zij was. Ik durf niet veel te zeggen. Ze is een moordenaar, nogal periodiek. Ik ben te zwak om tegen haar op te staan. Ik ben nu meerdere personen. Zij heeft mij gespleten.

Ik kan mezelf niet vinden tussen alle maskers.

Suriname, 21 mei 1994
Ze zit op een stoel, en ik moet haar diensten verlenen. Ik heb deze stoel eerder gezien. Het stond boven Suriname toen ik het land binnenkwam. Ik ben meerdere personen nu, uit elkaar getrokken, verscheurd. Ik moet de stoel aanbidden. Zij is een moordenares. Ik ben door de verkeerde persoon gered. De enige die ik nog heb is mijn dagboek. Zij houdt mij onder schot en bedreigt me. Zij is hoog in de wolken, als de ark van Noach, en ik ben het volk. Ik ben niet in de ark, en dat is een vreselijke gewaarwording. Overal regent het. Haar stem klinkt door mijn hele lichaam, als donder en bliksem. Ik sta in vuur. Ik sta in brand, maar dan besef ik dat ik een deel ben van een plant. Ik ben een deel van een struik, en ik groei naar boven.

Suriname, 22 mei 1994
Een plant met gele bloemen, het is als drugs. Over die brug kwam ik hier. Wie heeft mij zo

gemaakt ? Er moet een uitweg uit dit doolhof zijn. Ik ben bezeten en gespleten. Ziek zijn in Suriname is geen pretje. Ik kon er wel in, maar niet meer uit. Het vuur der dwazen brandt hier. Als dollen dansen zij er omheen. Ik doe niet mee.
Een groter kwaad is er nooit geschiedt.

Suriname, 23 mei 1994
Ik hoop dat ze nooit mijn dagboek leest. Ze schijnt er geen interesse voor te hebben, dus ik schrijf door. In de nacht heb ik wel haar dagboeken gevonden. Ze schrijft over mij. Ik zit hier gevangen. Het is haar paleis.

Suriname, 24 mei 1994
Ik voel me als haar marionet. Twee vrouwelijke matrozen vielen in hetzelfde lot. Ze zitten daar in hun marine jurkjes, wit met blauw. Ik ben in een halve coma. Ik kan me niet goed bewegen en niet goed ademen. Het is de aanval van de plant. De struik heeft genomen, en laat haar doornen inzinken. Buiten is er donder. Het leger van de plant is gekomen. Ze staat op het balkon op de

uitkijk, alsof ze schepen naar binnen moet halen. Dan doet ze het raam dicht. Haar haren zijn als in vuur. Dan brandt ze helemaal. Ik kijk hoe ze in as verandert, maar het is slechts zaad. Wit zaad, wat door het huis wordt geblazen. Het huis is in stof en een spin maakt webben.

Suriname, 25 mei 1994
Zij zit in een witte jurk, omringd door de planten met witte bloemen. Zonder de gele bloemen zou ik hier nooit zijn gekomen. Zij namen mij me op hun schip. Mijn verleden liet ik achter me. Het verdronk. Eindelijk voelde ik mij aangenomen in de ark van Noach. Ik kan er niet meer aan denken. De zee is romig. Ik ben op het schip. Het schip is een eiland, als een vis in de zee, als een haai. Ik kan niet meer vooruit en niet meer achteruit. Alleen het schip kan bewegen. De bloemen groeien naar de hemel. Dit is mijn ladder. Maar dan breekt de ladder. Het witte huis neemt mij aan, verzorgt mijn wonden. Ik voel mij zwak, en de witte dame heerst over mij.

Suriname, 26 mei 1994
Ik ben bang dat zij mijn dagboek leest. Daarom verdraai ik de woorden. Ik lees haar dagboeken in de nacht. Zij zijn duister. Ik denk dat ik gek wordt. Schuimbekkend rol ik op de grond, totdat ik mij weer optrek aan de lange planten met bloemen. Ik trek mezelf op aan de struik. Ik klim naar de hemel, maar kom niet ver. Ik kan alleen maar kijken. Ik staar naar Surinaams fruit op een schaal. Voor mij is het een zee, een zee waarover ik nooit kan komen, maar waar wel eilanden in zijn. Dit fruit draagt een duister geheim. Dit fruit ligt alleen maar stil, en ik kijk ernaar. Een zee van fruit liet mij niet door. Ik kan alleen maar kijken. Ik kan alleen maar wegzinken. Ik zag hen daar staan op de bruggen met maskers, en in de boten. Zij namen vrouwen in wit op het schip. Die visten zij uit het water. Zij haalden die vrouwen naar binnen als Surinaams fruit, fruit met een duister geheim. Het Surinaamse fruit is als een lange reis naar ellende. Als je bij de pit bent aangekomen ben je dood.

Vrouwen in kanten jurken, bedolven onder spinnenwebben. Spinnen in hun haren. Zo bieden zij het fruit aan. Geen goede reclame als je het mij vraagt, maar het wordt goed verkocht. Mensen kijken niet verder dan hun neus lang is.

Suriname, 27 mei 1994
Planten met blauwe bloemen. Het paars groeit aan de randen van de rivier, als het paarse vuil. Het zijn paarse bloemen. Diep kijk ik in haar ogen en zie hetzelfde. Het is bijna als een spiegel. Ik probeer de diepte van haar ogen te zien. Het paars bedekt hier alles. Ik heb het gevoel dat ik in cirkeltjes draai. Hetzelfde is mij al eens eerder overkomen. Ik kan niet losbreken. Ik moet geholpen worden. Maar de hulp komt niet.

Suriname, 28 mei 1994
Ik wacht op de droom die mij zal doen ontwaken, die mij weer laat durven spreken. Die droom komt maar niet. De hemel lijkt ver weg. Het grote syndroom van Suriname heeft mij in haar macht. Het is als een verslaving

aan drugs. Ik kan de ketenen niet doorhakken. Moed heb ik niet om dit syndroom in detail te bespreken. Ik praat er slechts omheen. Ik ben zo gemaakt. Het is mijn aard geworden. Ik drink van de bloemenzee, en stik bijna in haar zaad. Warmte komt met golven om mij heen. De witte stad komt in zicht, maar verblindt mij.

Suriname, 29 mei 1994
De vrouw in het wit staat tussen twee matrozen in. Zij komen van een vreemd leger. Ik draai en woel in mijn bed. In de rivier hangen de witte bloemen diep, met een zwaar gewicht. Ik zit op de rivier-boot. Het was een labyrint van vuur, waarin we de juiste combinaties moesten zien te vinden. Het was een race tegen de klok. De muren waren draaiende en brandende. We renden, maar zij struikelde. Een gil achtervolgde mij. Ik kon haar niet meer vinden.

Suriname, 30 mei 1994
De ladder naar de witte stad laat grijze gezichten zien. Zij zijn niet uitgenodigd. Als

zij de ladder aanraken, dan branden zij. Hun gezichten smelten weg. Ik ben op de ladder en kom steeds hoger, steeds dieper. De witte muren van de stad zijn begroeid.
Zij zat daar op een witte troon, waar alle ladders naartoe leidden. Ze keek naar beneden en verdween in witte rook. Ik volgde het spook dieper de stad in.
Iedereen zonk weg in de witte golven, en vele schepen vergingen. Ik klom door, hoger de stad in. Ik durfde niet achterom te kijken. Ik hoorde gekrijs, en mensen riepen : Stop. Maar ik liep door. Ik was in Suriname. Zij nam het gewicht van de stad in. Alles loopt over in de wildernis in de diepte van de witte stad. Het is een schuimende zee, wild golvend. Het is een Surinaamse vrucht. Surinaams fruit, ik kijk erna, en het is alsof ik in een coma ben. Niemand kan mij horen. Niemand kan mij verstaan. Het is alsof er nooit communicatie is geweest. Niemand kan iets overbrengen. Ik zink weg in de witte zee. Grote vissen zwemmen hier, maar zij nemen niemand mee. Wij zijn aan ons lot overgeleverd. Oh, was ik maar nooit naar

Suriname gegaan. Ik ben gebrandmerkt.

Suriname, 31 mei 1994
Ik herinner de droom over het witte hek. Het trekt me tot de wildernis, maar laat me nooit door. Het trekt me dieper en dieper totdat ik vastraak. Is dit het grote Suriname ? Is dit het witte hek ? Het is een vreemd hek, met vreemde muziek, als een begrafenis. Wie wordt er begraven ? De muziek zo traag en subtiel. En voordat je het witte hek bereikt kom je tot een stad waarin je altijd verdwaald. Het neemt je tijd in beslag. Het neemt alles. Ik sta op de duinen en schreeuw over alles wat me is ontnomen door het witte hek. Ik wil het terug, maar golven overweldigen mij, en nemen mij mee, dieper tot het witte hek, als tot een ladder. Een pen wordt in mijn hand gedrukt, en ik moet veel schrijven. Ik moet een boek schrijven over Suriname. Ik moet tot haar geheimen doordringen. Ik schreeuw. Ik heb het trauma in mijn hand, maar dan wordt het rustig. Ik hoor het witte hek ruizen op de achtergrond, spelende haar muziek. Het doet pijn, maar de

steek gaat eruit. Ik moet een wit boek schrijven, een witte bijbel. Ik tril en beef. Ik wil wegrennen, maar golven overweldigen mij. 'Schrijf, schrijf,' bulderen zij. Er beginnen dingen in mijn hoofd te draaien. Ik kan geen verhalen schrijven. Maar de klokken in mijn hoofd leiden een leven op henzelf.

Mijn Vriend, de Slang

In de onderwereld het ergste wat ik ooit had gezien waren de varkensslagers. De varkensslagers werden bestuurd door skeletten met gewaden aan en kappen op hun schedel. Vaak hadden ze hun domeinen in grote kraters. Je zou er depressief van kunnen worden, en dat werd ik dan ook. Ze sloten mij op in een kelder, een soort kerker, waar vanuit ik alles goed kon zien. Ik leefde van mijn eigen kots, en varkensvlees. Dat was de enige manier waarop ik leefde. Wel was het altijd goed om weer wakker te worden. Maar nog steeds denk ik eraan na al die jaren. Eigenlijk sta ik er mee op en ga ik er weer mee naar bed. Het is een trauma. Nog altijd hoor ik het gekrijs van die beesten in mijn hoofd, en nog meer het gekrijs van die skeletten. Het waren eigenlijk half-skeletten met nog een beetje vlees, spieren en vooral pezen. De geur was verschrikkelijk, niet om

over naar huis te schrijven, en soms had ik het gevoel dat ik gewoon twee a drie dagen niet wakker werd. Ik wist wel dat ik droomde, maar toch. Dit was de onderwereld, daar ben ik van overtuigd. Het leek wel alsof alles hier varkensslager was of varken, en dan die skeletten met die kappen op. Echt verschrikkelijk. Het rook er echt naar de dood, naar ongewassen wateren, naar ongezouten lucht, en naar dingen die ik hier niet kan beschrijven. Weet je wat voor impact dat op een mens kan hebben ? Maar eigenlijk vraag ik me af of ik wel een mens ben.

Die skeletten met die kappen hadden daar beneden wel de touwtjes in handen. En mijn moeder maar zeggen : Je hebt het maar gedroomd. Ja, dat is waar, maar toch. De dominee zegt dat demonen bestaan, dat de onderwereld bestaat, diep in de grond, waar de doden leven. Mijn moeder zweert bij de kerk zo langzamerhand, maar ze zegt dat de dominee ook niet alles weet. Dat is zo, maar toch.

Zoveel skeletten in een optocht, allemaal met

gewaden en kappen, een enge processie. Waar gaan ze naartoe ? Naar hun domein in de krater. Je zou er depressief van kunnen worden, en ik werd het ook .... En bang, verschrikkelijk bang, want zij heersen over hen zonder hoop. Ik had mijn geloof verloren in die tijd, en probeerde mijn hoop in andere dingen te vinden, dus ik was op dat moment hopeloos, en onder hun hoede. Verschrikkelijk. Ik denk er nog weleens aan terug. Daar reden ze dan op hun hoge paarden, en met hun scherpe laarzen maakten ze de huid van die beesten stuk. Verschrikkelijk. Sommige paarden waren gewoon skeletten. En die auto's die ze hadden, en die schepen, die waren gemaakt van skeletten, bottenvoertuigen. Verschrikkelijk. Daar wil je echt niet wezen. En ik was altijd blij als ik wakker werd, maar voor hoelang. De volgende nacht zat me alweer op te wachten. En dan leek het alsof ik voor honderd jaar sliep. Ik kon soms gewoon niet wakker worden, en dan is er niet even een dominee of moeder in de buurt, neen, dan is alles de hel, zelfs de zachte hand.

Maar op een dag kreeg ik in zo’n droom een ontmoeting met een rode slang, en die gaf mij een borstschild met haar, en een prachtig glimmende steen erop, bijna een verblindende steen waardoor alles zacht werd, en toen begon ik ook mooie schone dromen te krijgen, en dat was eigenlijk voor het eerst in mijn leven. Ik werd niet meer zo snel gillend wakker. En weet je wat het mooie was ? Ik kon ook vliegen, dus als er gevaar dreigde dan wipte ik er tussenuit. Maar het had ook nadelen. Ik wilde de onderwereld kennen, en misschien wat kunnen betekenen, en de steen hield mij tegen. Totdat iemand die steen een keer verbrijzelde. Ik kon hem wel omhelzen. Het was een halfskelet, met een verschrikkelijk angstaanjagende bijl. En ik kreeg weer toegang tot de diepere onderwerelden, ja eigenlijk dieper dan ooit. En wat ik daar zag, dat zul je niet geloven. Weinigen geloven me maar. Luister.

Op een dag zat ik aan de zee van bloed, na lang gezeten te hebben aan de rivier van

bloed. In de verte kwamen een heleboel zwarte skeletten, heel dun, steeds dichterbij. Het leek wel op een processie. Sommigen droegen hoeden met veren, terwijl anderen kappen op hadden, maar de meesten hadden niets op, en waren gewoon naakte skeletten, soms met een veer hier of daar. Plotseling begonnen ze te grommen en snelden op mij af. Ik dacht : zal ik wegduiken in de diepte of hier gewoon blijven zitten ? Ze waren de kwaadsten nog niet, en gaven mij een mes. Op het handvat stond een plaatje van een oude vrouw, een fotootje, maar dat rukten ze ervan af, en er scheen bloed van het handvat af te komen, vreemd bloed, bijna een beetje roze doorzichtig. Ik keek naar het mes en toen naar hen. ‘Ja, het is van jou,’ zei één van hen. Ik knikte. Dat was me nu wel duidelijk geworden. Het mes glom. ‘Je zult het nodig hebben,’ zei een ander. Ik wist het. Het was hier gevaarlijk. Ze vertrokken weer, en ik heb ze eigenlijk nooit meer teruggezien, maar het mes bleef bij me. Het mes sprak zelfs. Het bleek een mes te zijn van mijn voorouders, en ik kon zo met hen en de goden spreken. Nu

ben ik niet zo gelovig, en al helemaal niet zo familiaal, dus op een goede dag wierp ik het mes ver in de zee van bloed. Dat had ik beter niet kunnen doen, want de zwarte skeletten kwamen uit de zee, en waren des duivels. Toen heb ik het mes weer teruggenomen, en besefte dat er ook goede goden waren en goede families, waar ik deel aan scheen te hebben. Toch vond ik het eng, en later op een markt verkocht ik het voor veel geld. Het ding bleek veel waard te zijn, en later vroeg ik me af of ik er wel goed aan had gedaan het ding te verkopen. In ieder geval voelde ik me beter, en met het geld kon ik veel doen. Het was de eerste keer dat ik geld van de onderwereld in mijn handen had.

Ik leefde er goed van, kocht een bed, een kasteel, ridders, indianen, skeletten, en de hele rimram meer. Ik werd koning van de dood, althans dat dacht ik, want er schenen veel meer koningen hier te zijn. Eigenlijk ging het er allemaal erg vreedzaam aan toe. Iedereen had zijn eigen domein. In ieder geval was het hier het beste om het hoogste

van het hoogste te zijn, anders werd er met je gesold. Vreemd genoeg kwam ik hier weinig varkensslagers tegen, en nog veel minder varkens. Ik was diep in de onderwereld. Op een dag werd ik uitgenodigd door een andere koning van de dood, en die liet mij zijn kasteel zien, en vroeg even later of ik met zijn dochter wilde trouwen. Ik zei direkt dat ik niet aan die dingen doe, want stel je voor, dan kun je helemaal niet meer terug, plus dat alles hier levensgevaarlijk was. Mannen waren hier de slaven van de vrouwen.

De koning zelf was ook niet getrouwd, maar een paar van zijn zonen wel, en ik zag hoe ze door hun vrouwen werden toegetakeld. Ik was er zo naar van, dat ik eigenlijk direkt weer wilde vertrekken. Maar de beste man hield mij tegen. Hij liet mij een kamer zien met een soort dodentelevisie, dodenradio en nog wat technische dingen. Dat kende ik nog niet, en hij gaf me wat interessant spul mee. Het was door deze dodenapparatuur dat ik de onderwereld snel nog beter leerde kennen. Ik kon snel wapens bestellen, het beste van het

beste, en leerde hoe ik hier zo snel mogelijk de rijkste kon worden, en al gauw was ik de keizer der doden, aangesteld over vele koningen der dood, en ik kreeg mijn eigen domein in een krater. Maar toen kwam ik in aanraking met een probleem. In het domein woonden vele varkensslagers en vele varkens, en dat moest ik op de koop toenemen. Ik deed geen oog meer dicht. Dus via de dodenapparatuur probeerde ik naar een hoger beroep te vissen, maar alles had te maken met varkens en varkensslagerijen. Die varkensslagers hadden de absolute macht, en waren de rijksten van de rijksten. Daar had ik dus helemaal geen zin in, en zo bleef ik de keizer der doden, maar ik kreeg er al snel nachtmerries van. De varkensslagers bezochten mij vaak en commandeerden me dat ik maar zo moest doen en zus moest doen, en zij lieten mij altijd heel duidelijk merken dat zij de touwtjes in handen hadden .... Niet de keizer, maar de varkensslagers maakten de dienst uit. Zo, die zat. En weet je nou wat het ergste was. Hoe langer ik hier bleef, des te meer ik op een varken begon te lijken, alsof

er een vloek op me rustte. En ik kon niet meer terug.

Ik dacht : liever een varken dan een varkensslager, maar daar kwam ik snel van terug. Ik ging de oorlog aan tegen die varkens. Ik kocht een heleboel indianen in, skeletten, ridders, en nu zou ik dan de grote varkensslager der doden worden.

En wat kreeg ik ? Uitnodigingen. ‘Welkom in de orde der varkensslagers.’ Ik werd beter behandeld dan de keizer, werd overladen met kado’s, en mocht bij iedereen op visite komen. Ik kreeg en kap met een gewaad, en ik mocht mezelf skelet of halfskelet noemen, en ik had zoveel geld dat ik erin kon zwemmen. En dat deed ik dan ook. Ik scheen me steeds beter te voelen, terwijl anderen steeds depressiever werden. Ik had voor niemand tijd, want mijn nieuwe leven slokte mij helemaal op. Ik ging alleen nog om met andere varkensslagers, en had gevechten met ze. Soms waren er grote toernooien, waar alles om vrouwen ging. De winnaar kreeg dan één of andere belangrijke vrouw mee,

maar ik zei al dat mannen hier de slaven van de vrouwen waren, en dat de vrouwen verschrikkelijke dingen met de mannen deden. Daarom ben ik die toernooien gaan ontlopen, want het eindigde toch altijd in de hel. Ik was een ridder, een poortwachter, en dat beviel me het best. Ik bleef op één plaats.

Ze noemden mij de poortwachter van de onderwereld. Ik dacht : het zal wel zo zijn. Heel soms ging ik weleens op uitnodigingen in van andere poortwachters, en zo belandde ik eens in een wel hele diepe krater. Het was het grootste domein wat ik ooit had gezien, en het joeg me schrik aan. De doodslucht die hier hing, verschrikkelijk. Ik kwam hier die rode slang weer tegen, en dat was maar goed ook, want ik raakte met die poortwachter in een verschrikkelijk gevecht. De rode slang redde voor de tweede keer mijn leven, en bracht me terug naar de bovenwereld, waar ik wakker werd. Het was een lange tocht geweest, een tocht die ik niet snel zou vergeten. De nacht erna gaf de rode slang mij een prachtige rode wapenrusting, en nam mij

terug, ditmaal om de poortwachter te verslaan. De rode slang en een andere bruin en donker gestreepte doorzichtige slang zorgden ervoor dat dat domein nu van mij was, en dit was voor mij de poort om nog dieper in de onderwereld te komen.

Alles wat ik daar tegenkwam waren verschrikkelijke gevechten tussen poortwachters, en grote toernooien ..... Zij die wonnen kregen geen vrouwen, maar slangen, en toch leek me dat wel wat, want ik had meer met slangen dan met vrouwen. Ik won mezelf een leger van slangen, en kwam steeds dieper in de onderwereld terecht en kreeg steeds grotere terreinen. Ik dacht voorgoed van de varkensslagers af te zijn, maar hier zag ik ze weer. Ditmaal droegen ze vreemde kruizen en vreemde wielen, en waren de meesten geheel in het zwart verpakt : grote en vreemde zwarte pakken, en vreemde grote zwarte kappen, die soms op helmen leken. Waar ik terecht gekomen was wist ik niet. Ze spraken een vreemde taal, en ze bleken geheim gezelschap te hebben van

vreemde slangen die in vrouwen konden veranderen. Het vreemde was dat ze niet tegen mij ingingen. Hun geld : slangentanden. Daar betaalden ze mee, en daarmee lieten ze hun werelden gestalte krijgen. Het leek op een vreemd kaartspel, alsof ze een groot spel speelden. Ik moest de spelregels leren kennen. Sommigen hadden rode dobbelstenen, gemaakt van zeldzame slangentanden.

Van een aardig wezen kreeg ik een huis, en hier moest ik beginnen. Het wezen leerde mij over goed voedsel dat hij in een ketel bereidde. Er waren hier ook wel eens toernooien, maar dan draaide alles om geld. Al snel won ik een paar toernooien, en werd de rijkste van allemaal. Ik kon kopen wat ik wilde. Ik baadde in rijkdom, en kreeg de centrale krater. Ik hield me veel bezig met mijn slangen, omdat die toch wel heel belangrijk voor me waren, en hun tanden waren een bron van inkomsten. Ze wisselden die tanden maandelijks, en sommigen dagelijks. Ik begon een slangen-kwekerij,

maar dan op vriendschappelijke basis.
Slangen waren mijn vrienden.

Ze noemden mij slangenvriend, en ze begrepen wel waarom. Terug naar huis wilde ik niet meer, totdat mijn moeder mij wekte.

Einde

Eén van Hen

Het mooiste wat je in je leven kan doen is te gaan naar plaatsen waar nog geen mens eerder is gekomen. Diep in de jungles van de inmens grote tropische regenwouden loopt een man eenzaam en verlaten, op zoek naar de laatste overblijfselen van wat eens het paradijs was. Een naakte vrouw ziet hem, draait haar gezicht van hem weg, en houdt haar handen ervoor. De man weet dat hij nu erg voorzichtig moet zijn. Zou zij van de Suebche-stam zijn ? Het zou de laatst overgebleven stam van het paradijs zijn. Plotseling is het alsof de vrouw door de bliksem wordt getroffen, en valt neer. De man rent op haar af, en de vrouw houd haar ogen stijf tegen elkaar.

‘Kus me,’ zegt de vrouw, ‘ik spreek jouw taal.’ Maar als de man het doet, krijgt hij een keiharde klap in zijn gezicht. De woorden ‘kus me’ betekenden hier iets heel anders. Hier werden dezelfde woorden gesproken,

maar ze hadden andere betekenissen. De vrouw staat op, en rent weg. Dan begint ze te gillen, en al snel komen er naakte indianen haar tegemoet. Nu moet de man rennen voor zijn leven.

Een man wordt wakker met een bezweet gezicht. Hij ligt in zijn tentje diep in de jungle van het tropisch regenwoud, omdat hij op zoek is naar de laatste stam van het paradijs. Hij rekt zich goed uit, stapt zijn tentje uit, en bekijkt de prachtige vochtige en weelderige jungle die langzaam door het zonlicht overgoten wordt, en een zwoele vorm krijgt door alle weerspiegelingen. De temperatuur speelt hier met licht en schaduw, en de man knijpt even zijn ogen dicht om zichzelf één te maken met deze overweldigende natuur, en om zich te bezinnen op zijn opdracht.

Na een tijdje heeft hij zijn tentje opgerold, en trekt verder. Het is alsof de zon hem lokt, en het pad naar het paradijs hier in vleselijke gedaante voor hem ligt, een pad waarvan hij altijd dacht dat het onbereikbaar was, enkel

zijn fantasie prikkelende. Diep in de jungle hoort hij de kreten van dieren, en hij vraagt zich af of de Suebche-stam nog steeds bestaat. Hij is niet gelovig, maar er wordt gezegd dat deze stam de laatst overgebleven stam van het paradijs is. Hij houdt het erop dat het het laatste stukje paradijs op aarde is, als de overblijfselen van de oertijd. Hij ziet het geloof als een poging om alles wat mooi is te bezitten. Maar dit hier is werkelijkheid, geen fantasie. Het geloof is zo ongrijpbaar, maar hier is alles vlees geworden.

In de verte hoort hij iemand zingen. Hij had hier eigenlijk geen mens verwacht. Hij dacht echt dat de stam zou zijn uitgestorven, maar wilde het toch met eigen ogen bewezen zien. Er kwam weer wat hoop in zijn hart toen hij het gezang hoorde. Hij loopt op het geluid af, en ziet een naakte vrouw in een kleine plas baden. Al snel heeft de vrouw hem in de gaten, en begint te gillen. ‘Wat zijn ze paranoide ?’ dacht de man bij zichzelf, glimlachend. Hij was absoluut niet bang, maar wel voorzichtig. Hij had er wel

vertrouwen in dat het goed zou komen, maar de gil bleef als een echo in de lucht hangen. Het was de meest angstaanjagende kreet die hij ooit had gehoord, maar voor hem sprak het meer over de angst van de vrouw. Als zij van de Suebche-stam was, dan had ze nog nooit contact met de buitenwereld gehad.

De man is op zijn hoede. Als hij zich de woede van de stam op zijn hals haalt, dan is het afgelopen voor hem. Voorzichtig pakt hij een geknakte bloem van de grond af, steekt hem in zijn haar, glimlacht even, en houdt dan de bloem weer in zijn hand, alsof hij het de vrouw wil aanbieden. Ook de vrouw lijkt even te glimlachen, maar dan maken haar wenkbrauwen een gevaarlijke beweging, alsof ze van plan is hem aan te vliegen.

‘Heus, ik wil je geen pijn doen,’ fluistert de man zacht. Maar dat hoort ze niet. Ze staat nog te ver weg. Dan rent de vrouw weg. De man weet dat hij nu moet oppassen, want de Suebche-stam zou op alles jagen, en jagers waren ze als de beste. Na lang lopen probeert hij de natuur weer in zich op te nemen. De

natuur vertoont een rijkdom die hij niet kent.

De man probeert zich weer te bezinnen op zijn opdracht. Ook bezint hij zich op zijn strategieen. Als de Suebche een zeker geloof hebben, dan zal hij daaraan tegemoet moeten komen, maar daar is niets over bekend. Hij besluit zijn intuitie te volgen.

Na een tijdje ziet hij in de verte een groep Suebche-meisjes als in een soort dans. Hij herkent het als een jacht-ritueel. Ze gillen heel luid, en hij weet even niet of hij blij moet zijn of niet, dat hij ze nu heeft gevonden. Hij vermoed dat hij nu dichtbij hun dorp of kamp is.

Een python staart hem aan, hypnotiserend. Bang voor pythons is hij niet. Hij schijnt een kalmerend effect op hen te hebben. Even denkt hij dat hij schrikt, als de python ineens tot hem spreekt. De python heeft een vochtige huid, met de prachtigste patronen en kleuren met hun schakeringen, en weer schijnt het zonlicht ermee te spelen. ‘Waak op, zoon,’ sprak de python. ‘de Suebche

hebben geen geloof. Zij leven in een fantasie.’ De man keek op, en merkte dat het toch echt de python was die tot hem sprak. De python bewoog zijn enorme lichaam, en kwam iets dichterbij. Ook de man leek zich te openen, en bewoog iets dichterbij. Toen sprak de python verder : ‘Zoon, zij leven in fantasie, de laatste overblijfselen van een echte fantasie-wereld. Daarom willen ze niets met de buitenwereld te maken hebben, en zullen ze je zeker doden als je dichterbij komt. Maar .... ik kan wel wat voor jou betekenen .... Ik ken de Suebche, en zij kennen mij ....’ De slang sprak bijna slaapverwekkend en heel geheimzinnig.

De man voelde een kracht door hem heenstromen die hij niet kende, iets heel vitaals, maar tegelijkertijd verzwakkend, alsof alle botten in hem doorspietst werden, of zelfs op een vreemde pijnloze manier werden gebroken.

‘Deze fantasie was eens een algehele realiteit,’ sprak de slang ineens veel luider, en zijn lichaam begon te ribbelen en in kracht op

te komen. ‘Maar zij die deel hadden aan deze fantasie begonnen de fantasie te verwerpen, en daarom trok de fantasie zich terug, eerst door vulkanen, later door overstromingen. De Suebche hebben zich altijd aan de fantasie vastgehouden, en niet gekozen voor ... het geloof ...’

‘Maar is het geloof dan verkeerd ?’ vroeg de man.

Toen vervolgde de slang : ‘Zij die opgroeiden in het geloof moesten over het pad van geloof teruggaan naar de fantasie, maar velen blijven op dit pad steken, en zijn niet anders dan hun voorouders.’ De ogen van de man begonnen geheimzinnig te glinsteren. ‘Ben jij de slang van het paradijs ? Nee toch ?'

De slang gleed heel voorzichtig over zijn huid, en kreeg langzaam de man in zijn grip. De man was nog steeds niet bang, omdat hij zag dat de slang niets kwaads in de zin had. ‘het geloof verzon haar eigen verhaal. Er zat wel een kern van waarheid in,’ bromde de slang. ‘Er was eens een soort paradijs, de

fantasie, waar ik deel aan had. Maar het geloof heeft alles kapot gemaakt. Het paradijs was van mij, maar door het christelijk geloof werd ik afgeschilderd als een indringer die anderen zou weglokken. Het is juist net andersom gegaan. Ik wilde hen dieper erin laten wegzinken.’

De man begon te glunderen. Hier hoorde hij een hele andere kant van het verhaal. Hij zou wel een deel willen zijn van dat overblijfsel van die fantasie-wereld, hier zo diep in de jungles van het tropische regenwoud. De man voelde een enorme opgewondenheid opborrelen, en knuffelde de slang bijna. Hij wist wel dat hij dichtbij de python moest blijven, anders zou hij het niet meer kunnen navertellen.

Plotseling schrikt de man wakker. Was het allemaal maar een droom ? Wel een hele interessante droom, maar was het waar ? De man stapte zijn tentje uit, bekeek de natuur om zich heen die leek te ribbelen in het zonlicht als een zwoele extase die hij nog nooit eerder zo dichtbij had gevoeld, alsof het

over zijn huid danste. Hij kneep zijn ogen stijf dicht, om één te worden met deze verlokkende, weelderige natuur. Wat kon hij verwachten ? Voor hem lag de nog donkere jungle van het tropische regen-oerwoud, lonkend, alsof het hem wilde omhelzen, wurgen ? Hij wist het niet. Het kon natuurlijk gevaarlijk zijn. De stam waar hij naar op zoek was had geen manieren. Als ze zich door hem bedreigd zouden voelen, dan zouden ze hem zeker vermoorden.

Opgewonden liep hij verder, nadat hij zijn spullen had gepakt. In de verte hoorde hij wat kreten die van dieren, maar ook van indianen konden zijn. Als het indianen waren, dan zou hij al heel dichtbij zijn. Hij dacht aan zijn dromen, en aan zijn opdracht. Plotseling sprong er een naakte vrouw vanuit een boom op hem. De vrouw had hem al snel in een wurggreep, en stak een soort gifpijltje in hem. Direkt legde hij het bijltje, en werd afgevoerd tot in het kamp. Ze legden hem in een wigwam waar hij na een paar uurtjes bijkwam. Ze gaven hem van een vreemd rood

sap te drinken. De vrouw was bij hem en aaide hem. Dat was wel een vriendelijk gebaar, maar waartoe ? Als ze kanibalen zouden zijn, dan was dat allemaal maar ter voorbereiding van het vlees ? Maar goed, hij wist niet of ze kanibalen waren, en probeerde die gedachte snel weer te vergeten.

Hij voelde zich heel wat nu hij eindelijk de Suebche-stam had gevonden, zij die de buren van Adam en Eva geweest waren, in het paradijs. Dit was het laatste stukje paradijs, dat juist zo leefde, door hen. De vrouw glimlachte naar hem. Zou hij het straks kunnen navertellen, of eindigde alles hier ? Wilde hij het nog wel navertellen, of wilde hij hier altijd blijven, om te worden als hen ? Zijn lichaam trilde. Deze stam had nooit contact gehad met de buitenwereld.

Weer werd er een gifpijltje in hem gestoken, maar ditmaal viel hij niet bewusteloos. Hij werd overspoeld door warme gevoelens, alsof hij door de fantasie werd omhelsd. De vrouw legde haar handen tegen haar borst aan. Deze mensen hielden van de natuur, en hier was

deze natuur zuiver.

De stam was heel vriendelijk naar hem, totdat één van de vrouwen een reusachtige vogelspin in haar hand nam, die ze haar hand liet opeten. Toen begon de horror, ook voor hem. Alles eindigde in een nachtmerrie, en gelukkig voor de man was het maar een droom. Hij werd wakker, en wist niet of hij er zo blij mee moest zijn. Want diep van binnen zou hij zijn leven wel willen geven om de laatste stam van het moederparadijs te vinden. Nu had hij weer bot gevangen. Het leek wel alsof het tropische oerwoud met hem speelde. Hij was moe in zijn benen, alsof een vreemd tropisch dier hem had uitgezogen. Hij keek naar zijn been, en zag een klein insect, en een heel klein wondje. Later voelde hij niets dan kracht door zijn benen vloeien, alsof het beestje hem bevrucht had.

Met stevige passen liep hij door. Hij was nu echt toe aan een ontmoeting. Hij hoopte dat als ze hem zouden zien ze hem meteen zouden omhelzen. Zouden hun goden hen niet kunnen vertellen dat hij eraan kwam ? Of

geloofden ze niet in goden ? Misschien waren het wel hele vrije mensen, vol van paradijselijke fantasieen. De man voelde alsof hij van de grond op een boot stapte. Hier waren wat riviertjes, en die riviertjes leken wel vuil, maar vol van de jungle. Dat was beter dan die riviertjes die door fabrieken waren vervuild. Dit was natuurvuil. De man besloot te gaan zwemmen, en zag even later wat anaconda's paren in de rivier. Zulke orgieen konden wel enkele dagen duren. Zo bleven ze tenminste van hem af, alhoewel hij niet bang was voor slangen. Hij had altijd iets met slangen. Voor hem was het in ieder geval al een prachtige reis geworden die hij nooit zou vergeten, of hij de Suebche nou zou vinden of niet. Eigenlijk deed het er niet meer zo toe, omdat hij helemaal door de natuur werd opgezogen. Zijn hoofd was ermee doordrenkt als met heerlijk geurende verf, als de bronnen van nieuwe fantasieen. Hier zou hij de rest van zijn leven over kunnen nadenken.

Hij zag de apen in hun bomen, en hij voelde

zich intens gelukkig. Voor hem stoeiden wat andere slangen, en ook wat krokodillen kwamen vanaf de oevers in het water. Nu was het oppassen geblazen. Hij bleef doodstil liggen, en probeerde zo letterlijk naar de kant toe te drijven. Even later stapte hij uit het water. Een vrouw met hangborsten staarde hem aan. Ze leek paranoide, dus de man bewoog bijna niet. Hij wist niet wat hij kon verwachten. Zou ze wegrennen of hem bespringen ? ‘heus, ik doe je niets,’ fluisterde de man. De man voelde veel tederheid en een soort medelijden naar haar. verder kon hij het niet goed plaatsen. Hij wist ook niet of tederheid wel op z’n plaats was bij dit soort mensen. Dit moesten de Suebche dan zijn. De man stak zijn hand uit, en de vrouw keek naar zijn hand. Natuurlijk kende zij het handenschudden niet, maar de man wist niet wat hij anders moest doen. Toen maakte hij een omhels-beweging in de lucht. De vrouw bleef hem strak aankijken. Hij zag de angst in haar ogen. Zacht begon de man wat te zingen om haar gerust te stellen. De man zag bijna haar hart kloppen. Maar daar kwamen de

krokodillen al aan. De vrouw stapte langzaam naar achteren, terwijl de man bleef staan. De man wilde weleens zien wat de vrouw zou doen. Het leek alsof de vrouw er niet om gaf. Net op tijd kon de man omhoog springen om een tak te grijpen. Toen zag hij ineens dat de vrouw glimlachte. Die momenten waren heel kostbaar voor hem.

Een hopeloosheid gleed over de man toen de vrouw hem weer strak aanstaarde, nu van een grotere afstand. Hij had het gevoel dat hij nooit geaccepteerd zou worden. Misschien was hij in hun ogen een gevallene, een verdoemde, iemand die het paradijs ooit had verlaten, en daarom nooit meer toegelaten mocht worden. Misschien was hij wel bestemd te branden in de hel, als ze daarin geloofden. Maar goed, hij kende hun geloof niet. Hij voelde zich een zondaar. Zij waren paradijselijk, en hij was beschaafd, burgerlijk, of misschien alleen een gevangene van de buitenwereld. Wat zou het hem kosten om bij hen binnen te kunnen komen ?

En ging het hem nog wel om de mensen, of

ging het hem om de natuur. Hij zou zich goed kunnen vermaken in dit stukje paradijs op aarde zonder de mensen, zonder deze Suebche-stam.

‘Suebche,’ zei de man. De vrouw glimlachte. Een andere vrouw was erbij komen staan. Ze had een zorgelijke blik, en had een boog met pijlen. Langzaam greep ze één van haar pijlen, wilde schieten, maar de andere vrouw hield haar tegen. De vrouwen werden boos op elkaar, en er ontstond een gevecht. De man wist niet wat hij moest doen. De vechtende vrouwen waren naar elkaar aan het gillen, en rolden over de grond. Nu wist de man hoe de stam met elkaar omgingen. ‘Suebche, Suebche,’ riep de man. De vrouwen lagen bijna in het water, en ze hadden niet in de gaten dat er krokodillen toesnelden. Plotseling dook de man in het water en greep één van de krokodillen. Als hij dat niet had gedaan dan was het kwaad al geschied. De vrouwen reageerden direkt en stopten het gevecht om voor de rest van de krokodillen dekking te zoeken. De vrouwen keken toe

naar het gevecht tussen de man en de krokodil, alsof ze niet begrepen dat de man hun leven had gered. Of misschien gaven ze daar niets om. De man verwachtte wat hulp, maar kreeg die niet, en verdween telkens met de krokodil onder water. Na een tijdje ontsnapte de man, en greep zichzelf weer vast aan de oever. De vrouwen klapten in hun handen, op een vreemde manier.

‘Suebche, Suebche,’ zei de man. Hij had de indruk dat de vrouwen het wel interessant vonden. Ze waren net dieren. Volgens de man hadden ze geen hersenen, of waren ze gewoon niet beschaafd opgevoed. Ze wisten misschien niet wat ‘hulp’ betekende, en ‘zorg’. Ze verwaarloosden zichzelf en elkaar. Zo zagen ze er ook uit. Ze waren wilden.

De man bedacht voor zichzelf hoe hij contact kon maken. Weer omhelsde hij de lucht, en de vrouwen deden hem na, maar hij had niet de indruk dat ze wisten wat het betekende. Misschien waren ze niet slecht, maar gewoon erg naief, onwetend. Ze leken op wilde dieren, op beesten, en de man vond er

eigenlijk niets menselijks in terug. Zij waren van het paradijs, en voor-menselijk. Zij wisten niet wat mensen waren, omdat ze nooit mensen hadden ontmoet. Misschien was dat de reden waarom ze de man interessant leken te vinden. Maar de man was op zijn hoede, want misschien was hij wel interessant om op hun bord te verschijnen als stukje vlees. Maar ja, dan waren ze wel erg geraffineerd. Als ze op jacht waren en hem als prooi zagen, dan hadden ze hem misschien allang afgeschoten. Ook wilde hij hen het voordeel van de twijfel geven, hoe gevaarlijk dat ook was. Hij koos ervoor om hen maar te vertrouwen, tot nu toe dan, en zette zijn pogingen tot communicatie voort. Als hij vriendschap met deze twee zou kunnen krijgen, dan was hij al een stuk verder, en zou dat misschien de basis zijn voor verdere vriendschappen.

Opeens werd er schel gefloten, voor de vrouwen een seintje dat ze moesten komen. Ze maakten wat ongemakkelijke gebaren om hem dat duidelijk te maken, en zo renden ze

beiden weg. De man besloot maar gewoon te blijven. Misschien zouden ze hier wel terugkomen. Na een tijdje viel de man in slaap tegen een boom.

De volgende dag werd hij wakker door een ritselend geluid. Het was een anaconda. Het begin van een nieuwe dag. De man stond op, rekte zich uit, en ademde de warmte in van een nieuwe dag, direkt al zo heet. Hij voelde er eigenlijk meer voor om naar onbekende diersoorten op zoek te gaan. Het contact zoeken met een stam als deze ging zo moeizaam, alhoewel het eerste lijntje gelegd was. Het gevoel was als een sieraad die in zijn hoofd rinkelde, en die het zonlicht op allerlei manieren weerspiegelde. Het bracht zijn gevoel in een nieuwe staat van opwinding. Hij zag de kleurigste dieren, zoals kikkers, hagedissen, salamanders, overgoten en betoverd door het zonlicht. De vrouwen kwamen niet terug, dus misschien hadden ze hun stam wel ingelicht en kregen ze geen permissie om terug te gaan. Hoe dan ook : ze waren nu op de hoogte. Ze wisten waar hij

was, dus nu hing het van hen af. Maar tijd om te wachten had de man niet. Hij was met zoveel dingen bezig, en vond de dierenwereld en plantenwereld net zo interessant.

Een wulpse vrouw stond voor hem met pijl en boog. Ze mompelde wat, richte op hem, en wilde schieten. Net op tijd kon de man wegduiken, en rende weg. De vrouw kwam hem achterna. Misschien zag ze hem voor een dier aan, of misschien waren het kanibalen. Na een tijdje zocht de man veiligheid in een boom. Maar hij zag steeds meer vrouwen onder hem verschijnen. Na een tijdje hadden ze hem gezien, en begonnen te krijsen. Direkt werden er vele pijlen op de man afgeschoten. De man greep een liaan, en kwam op een volgende boom terecht. Dat ging wel snel met zo’n liaan, en al gauw begon hij er handigheid in te krijgen.

In de verte zag hij een dorpje, en omdat hij wist dat de vrouwen hem achterna zaten besloot hij maar gewoon een poging te wagen. Hij rende op het dorp af, in de hoop bescherming te vinden. Een oude man keek

hem aan alsof hij de maan zag bloeden. De oude man wist niet wat hem overkwam. In de verte hoorde ze de gillende en joelende vrouwen. De man schoof een dierenhuid opzij en liet de man in zijn hut. Zouden dit weer andere stammen zijn, of gewoon een ander deel van de Suebche. De man wees op de oude man, en zei : ‘Suebche’. Ook de oude man zei ‘Suebche’ alsof hij niet wist wat het betekende.

Dieper in de hut was een ander deel achter een grote lap van dierenhuid. Hier zag de man twee naakte vrouwen liggen. De oude man maakte een gebaar alsof hij de vrouwen aan de man schonk. De vrouwen waren paranoide. Misschien dachten ze dat de man een god was. De twee vrouwen knielden voor de man en hielden zijn handen teder vast. Toen begonnen ze zijn handen te strelen. Ook de oude man knielde. Dus knielen hadden ze wel geleerd, maar wat betekende het voor hen ? Misschien wel iets heel anders.

Even later ging de oude man weg. Eén van de vrouwen wilde met een touw de handen van

de man vastbinden, en toen wist de man dat hij aan het verkeerde adres was gekomen. Tenzij hij gewoon niet wist wat dit vastbinden betekende. Was het een ritueel, of waren ze kanibalen, of was dit de manier waarop ze goden begroeten ? Voor de man was het een raadsel. De andere vrouw ging achter hem staan, en het leek alsof de man niet meer wegkon, tenzij hij het abrupt zou afkappen. In die mogelijkheid was hij, als hij het goed begreep. De man liet zich maar vastbinden, zolang hij zijn benen nog naar had. Ze lieten hem op de grond zitten, en maakten een soort soep wat hij mocht opdrinken. Hij wist dat ook dit gevaarlijk was, want als er slaapverwekkende stoffen in zaten, dan was het afgelopen met hem. Inderdaad zaten er slaapverwekkende stoffen in, maar dat bleek de regel hier te zijn. het was een deel van het voedsel. Zweterig werd hij even later wakker. Ze hadden een deken over hem gelegd, en zijn handen waren nog steeds vastgebonden. De vrouwen lagen bij hem, en waren heel voorzichtig en vriendelijk, bijna goedaardig. Als ze

kanibalen waren dan hadden ze hem allang geslacht, dacht de man. Hij voelde een warm branderig gevoel in zijn lichaam, door de soep, en dat voelde niet onprettig aan. De vrouwen waren teder, maar niet opdringerig. Zouden ze denken dat hij een god was, of gingen ze zo met gasten om ? Waarom moesten zijn handen vastgebonden zijn ? De deken was afgetrokken, en met een ander touw wilden ze zijn benen vastbinden. De vrouwen zagen er niet agressief uit, tenzij het een valstrik was. Hij kon zich er alleen niet tegen verzetten. Ze waren al zo aardig geweest, en misschien zou hij hen beledigen als hij het niet zou laten doen. Dan zouden ze hem misschien wegsturen, en kon hij weer helemaal overnieuw beginnen. Toch begon hij bang te worden, en begon meer en meer te zweten, zelfs te trillen. De vrouwen waren hier erg gevoelig voor, en probeerden hem op zijn gemak te stellen, alsof ze geen kwaad in de zin zouden hebben. Toen lag hij daar, vastgebonden aan handen en voeten, als een hopeloze prooi. Hij was nu totaal afhankelijk van hen. Weer gaven ze hem soep te drinken,

of was het gewoon een sterk sap ? Weer viel hij in slaap. Ditmaal was het spul veel krachtiger, en in een grotere tent werd hij even later wakker. Hier waren een heleboel vrouwen, en niemand lag bij hem. Ze schenen hem allemaal te negeren. De man probeerde zichzelf los te krijgen, maar zonder succes.

De hele nacht lag hij wakker, en vroeg zich af wat voor spel dit was. Op een gegeven moment was hij het zat, probeerde op te staan, en huppelde de tent uit. Buiten waren mannelijke indianen om een vuur aan het dansen. Ze droegen veelal een heleboel kromme witte of grijze veren. ‘Kan iemand me vertellen wat hier aan de hand is ?’ vroeg de man. De indianen keken verbaasd op. Even later gingen ze door zonder aandacht aan hem te besteden. Hij kon hier niet weg, want dan zou hij een prooi van roofdieren kunnen worden in zo’n situatie. Dus hij ging maar weer terug naar zijn slaapplaats. Toen hij de volgende ochtend wakker werd waren de touwen verwijderd. Het leek nu alsof hij een deel van hen was. Niemand gedroeg zich

speciaal naar hem. Hij was één van hen.

Einde

Ik staarde naar de lange beker met de lange hals. Het was van een doorzichtig roze, als kristal of diamant, als een zeldzaam gesteente. 'Wat zit erin ?' vroeg ik.

'Varkenszaad,' zei hij. Ik proeste. 'Wacht,' zei ik.

'Drink ervan,' zei hij. 'Ach ja, het is gewoon perensap, maar het beeld het varkenszaad uit, wat het heilige varken aan de martelpaal uitstorte.'

'Okay,' zei ik. Ik nam wat van het perensap. 'Smaakt goed,' zei ik. Ze aanbaden hier Maria en het heilige varken. Ik was in een vreemde kerk terechtgekomen.

De Blinde Stad

Zij stelen dromen,
De wachters van een stad,
Zij stelen de verbeelding recht uit iemand's
hart,
Deze stad kent geen medelij

Alles dor en droog,
Kinderen zijn hier niet,
Iedereen is hier oud,
Hier is slechts verdriet

Koude harten, lege hoofden,
Gevuld met hartvochtigheid,
Niemand kent geluk,
Wanneer de stad zich over hen spreidt

De stenen zijn roze, en ze draaien maar,
Zij brengen sneeuw, totdat iedereen bevriest,
Tot steen zullen zij worden in alle
eeuwigheid,

Meedraaien zullen zij, om droom en plezier
te stelen,
Tot roze steen zullen zij worden,
In deze stad van slechts verdriet,
Och, hoor toch naar mijn duistere lied

Ik ben een oude troubadour,
Ik heb het allemaal gezien,
Maar niemand gelooft mij,
Want zij hebben allemaal dezelfde droom van
de stad gekregen,
Een droom dat zij nog steeds alles hebben,
Een droom van bedrog,
Zij zijn allen ziek

Och hoort toch naar mijn lied,
Zij hebben allen van het grachtwater van de
stad gedronken,
Dieven en piraten zijn het,
Zij stelen en slapen, geeuwen en gapen,
En dromen dat zij niets hebben gedaan,
Och, deze stad is onder een vloek,
Zij zijn allen dik en vet,
Zij zijn de ondergang tegemoet gegaan

Ik zie de stenen draaien,
En alles weggraaien,
Eens was deze stad er niet,
Eens was er hier een rijke natuur,
Totdat de plaaggeesten kwamen

Zij bouwden deze stad,
Och luistert toch naar een oude troubadour,
Moet ik u smeken, of moet ik u slaan,
Waak op, waak op, of het is met ons gedaan

Zeven plaaggeesten op een rij,
In een pot leefden zij,
Oh wie heeft deze pot geopend ?
De eerste heet mankepoot, de tweede beelzebul, de derde je-weet-het-wel, de vierde ik-heb-hem-niet, de vijfde stuk verdriet, de zesde mijn geluk, de zevende ik-heb-je-tuk

Nu ik dit gezongen heb, zal ik niet meer leven,
Toe, schrijf mijn woorden op, zodat u eens uw bevrijding zal beleven,
Laat dit lied niet sterven in de wind,

Wacht totdat een kinderhart het vindt,
De sleutel is in mijn mouw,
Och, dat ik het toch zelf vertellen zou

En toen stierf de troubadour,
Zijn vrienden schreven het lied op,
En plakten het op de deur van het stadsbestuur,
De sleutel vonden ze in de mouw van de troubadour,
Maar ze wisten niet wat ze daarmee moesten doen

Een van de vrienden besloot de sleutel zolang bij hem te houden,
Ook stierf hiermee langzaam de herinnering aan de troubadour

Toen de burgemeester van de stad het lied las,
Verscheurde hij ter plekke het papier

Niemand had de troubadour gelooft,
Ook zijn vrienden zeiden dat hij gek was,
En zo leefde de stad voort in bedrog

Raakte je het steen aan,
Dan werd je betoverd,
En zo groeide de stad groter en groter,
Het roze steen leefde van de mensen,
At en at, en werd vet

Het roze steen begon steeds meer van de mensen te vragen

De heks is blind, en woont in de zee,
Waar haar zeepaardjes en dolfijnen haar overal naartoe brengen in haar koets,
Op haar wagen,
Zij heeft de zeven plaaggeesten uit hun pot vrijgezet,
Opdat zij de stad zouden bouwen

De blinde heks van de zee had honger,
Honger naar uitgesmeerde zieltjes,
Uitgesmeerd op brood

Het is een stad in de zee, maar niemand wist het,
De heks had al hun hoofden betoverd

De mensen aanbaden het roze steen,
Wat hun leven had gegeven

De kerken van het roze steen schoven door de stad,
Door de wondermacht van de mens gegeven,
Het schoof door 's mensens geloof,
Door trouw van het menselijk gelaat,
Oh, zedig schoof het door de stad,
Om de mens te wenken, om te zwaaien en kostelijk te bezitten,
Als een koning was het,
Ja, het roze steen had de stad geschapen

De blinde heks schuifelde door de stad,
Op zoek naar zieltjes,
Maar het roze steen waakte over hen,
Als de goede, trouwe herder,
Die zijn schapen verslond in de nacht,
Om hen mee te sleuren naar de onderwereld,
Naar een glitterwereld, van het roze vuur,
Van roze steen, draaiende in onze gedachtes,
Sussende alle pijn, verdraaiende al het gegriezel,

Bedekkende, wederopbouwende,
Totdat de morgenstond hen weer wakker
wreef,
Die zachte morgen, oh goddelijk geluk,
Welzalig zijn hen die het roze steen
aanbidden …
Van bedrog tot bedrog gaan zij …
De blinde heks …. draait het getij …

Als eb en vloed, het roze steen doet goed,
Zij draait, zij bedriegt, zij steelt de dromen,
Zij trekt de ziel tot gruwelijke grotten,
Maar laat het lichaam opstaan in een groot
geluk,
In de handen van de plaaggeest ik-heb-je-tuk

De hersenen op sterk water,
Het hart in zeeketenen, de droom kapot,
Maar niemand merkt het, want het lichaam is
vol van het roze geluk,
Het is als drugs, als rijp koren,
Als alcohol en dikke sigaretten,
Een sigaar erbij, mijnheer,
En een dikke krant,
De blinde heks heeft het niet meer

De blinde heks staat gierend op de trap,
Met haar oog voelt zij,
Zij kent deze drap,
Er is hier geen geneesheer voor te vinden,
Alle wegen lopen hier dood,
Een blinde leidt de blinden,
Maar zij voelt, en geeft hen grijps genot,
Graai maar, neem maar, heb maar lief,
Ik ben de kinderdief

Zo worden zij allen als haar,
Maar zij zien niet
Nee, niemand is opgewassen tegen het heks met het blinde oog,
Zij was maar met één oog geboren, en dat was blind,
Met één arm kan ze je grijpen,
Met één been kan ze je achterhalen,
Zij is het halve

Zo sterft zij langzaam in alle eeuwigheden,
Om velen mee te sleuren,
Zij heeft misgegrepen,
En is nu een ieders vijand geworden,

Deze stad is haar afschuwelijk geheim

Wie wegrent wordt verminkt,
Zij heeft alle dromen gestolen,
En geeft hen nu illusie op illusie,
Haar illusie

Wie wegrent wordt gepakt,
De blinde heks zal je stropen,
Zij is het halve

Zij wordt rijk aan jouw ellende,
En bedekt het met een roze doek

Een vrouw is gevallen,
Bedek haar met een roze doek,
Een mijnheer heeft een wond,
Bedek het met een roze doek,
Roze sluiers om haar paleis,
In de dieptes van de zee,
In de dieptes van de stad,
Waar haar roze hart klopt,
Zo roze dat het grijs is

De blinde heks wordt oud,

Men kan het aan haar zien,
Ze is de ouwe niet meer,
Ze is jong nu, en zij volgen haar tot de roze
kerken,
Waar de plaaggeesten zwaaien en wenken

Ik-heb-je-tuk zit op de troon,
Hij heeft geschapen een wonderdroom,
Mijn geluk zit naast de troon,
Klaar om je te bespringen,
Hij klopt wat in zijn potje,
Roze smeersel

Het voelt koud aan,
Hij drinkt het met een rietje,
Hij plakt de zielen daarmee vast,
En verwend dan hun lichamen,
Ja, maak hen maar blind,
Zo blind als de blinde heks

Hij smeert het in hun ogen,
En spuit het zo naar binnen,
Dan neemt hij hen mee,
En draait hen in het rond,
Roze stenen zullen ze worden

Bevende van geluk draaien zij,
Oh, wat is het leven mooi,
Zij aanbidden de roze stenen,
Groei maar, roze stenen,
Wordt maar dik en vet,
Dan zal de stad groter groeien

De stad zweeft boven de zee, om alle levende schepselen naar binnen te zuigen,
Wat een grote onzichtbare zichtbare stad

Groei maar, stad,
Geef hen maar van alles wat,
Hun dromen zullen nooit uitkomen,
Hun wonden zullen nooit genezen,
Maar jij vertelt ze maar wat

Eet maar, stad, dikker zul je nog worden,
Dan zullen de mensen wel vergeten,
Dat ze net zo zijn als jij,
Zeven plaaggeesten op een rij

De zeven plaaggeesten marcheerden door de stad,

Mankepoot voorop,
Daarachter Beelzebul,
Daarachter je-weet-het-wel,
Daarachter ik-heb-hem-niet,
Daarachter stuk verdriet,
Daarachter mijn geluk,
En als laatste ik-heb-je-tuk

De macht van het grote woord,
Was de macht van het hangkoord,
Zij preekten in de kerken,
Om hen allen met het roze te bewerken

Stilletjes werden zij aanbeden,
Want zulke nette mannen,
Die mag je niet verbannen

Mankepoot sprak het woord,
En het roze geluk kwam voort,
Beelzebul sprak over hebt elkaar lief,
En daar kwam de dromendief,
Geen geluk kon zich werkelijk aarden,
Maar met wat bedrog kwam alles tot bedaren,
Je-weet-het-wel zegende het gehoor,
Zij zongen allemaal in koor,

Tot het roze gesteente wat hen gezaligd had,
Zij keken allen vroom op toen ik-heb-hem-
niet bad,
Stuk verdriet kwam met de collecte bus,
Mijn geluk gaf hen allen een hand en een kus,
En koning ik-heb-je-tuk zei :
Ik heb u allen tuk,
Maar zij verstonden het niet,
Want zij hadden oren als een vergiet,
Zij dansten maar door,
Zij hadden zulk slecht gehoor,
Als doven kwamen zij tot de slager,
En het gedans ging al maar trager,
Maar goede dromen hadden zij,
Het was de kering van het getij

Deze stad als eb en vloed,
Niemand zag het vergoten bloed

De blinde heks daalde op hen neer,
De dominee had het niet meer

Oh, wat konden die kerken schuiven,
Langs de winkels, langs het meer,
Langs de grachten keer op keer,

Allen vonden zij groot geluk,
Zij waren in de handen van ik-heb-je-tuk

Een groot plaagheer is opgestaan,
De koning der plaagheren,
De zevende

Ik-heb-je-tuk zit op de troon,
En laat zijn kunstjes zien,
Allen buigen zij neer in aanbidding,
De dominee heeft met gezag en macht gesproken,
Vol ontzag volgen zij hem naar zijn huis,
Waar hij vervolgens hangt aan een kruis,
Oh ja, naast hem te hangen,
Dat is waar wij allen naar verlangen,
Doe nog eens wat van uw kunsten groot,
Ga nog lang niet dood

Ik-heb-je-tuk lacht en doet,
Zijn kruis is nu een vliegtuig,
Waar zij allen onder hangen,
Maar zij zijn blind van verlangen

Ik-heb-je-tuk, oh bedot ons,

Het kan ons allemaal niets meer schelen,
Niemand mag ons hier van helen,
Want als de heler helen moet,
Dan is dat iets wat hij maar ergens anders doet,
Zo praten wij in een kringetje,
Dat is toch wat wij willen,
Het leven is wonderschoon,
Vooral met zo'n koning,
Ik ben blij dat ik in deze stad woon,
Ik had dit voor geen goud willen missen, zeg,
Zij die hier niet wonen hebben grote pech,
Ja, grote pech zal het wezen,
Wanneer gij nooit over deze stad hebt gelezen

Stuk verdriet lacht zich krom,
Langzaam slaat hij zijn trom,
Er zijn weer veel doden gevallen,
En nu doen we vroom,
En vergeten alles in de roze droom,
Deze stad is gebouwd op been en bloed,
Het is wat een mens goed doet

De blinde heks is een taaie,

Maar zeker geen kwaaie,
Zie met wat ze ons heeft goedgedaan,
Zij droogde ons aller traan,
Als een lam bracht zij ons tot rustige wateren,
Tot goddelijke watervallen, zij bracht haar
oordeel over de afschuwelijke kwallen,
Zij gaf ons een droom, en wijsheid in de tuin,
Zij leidde ons uit dat diepe, duistere dal,
Weg is de kwal,
We kunnen nu veilig geloven,
In het roze steen wat ons heeft doen beloven,
Dat wij haar altijd zullen volgen,
Ook al is de kwal nu verbolgen

Het roze steen heeft de kwal verslagen,
Wij kunnen haar nu volop behagen,
Alles doen wij voor haar,
Zuivere toewijding, en geen ja-maar,
Als slaven staan wij op haar kusten,
Toe steen, draai maar,
Maak het nieuwe getij klaar

Al onze dromen staan op de kust,
Zedelijk en goed uitgerust,
Vernieuwde dromen zal zij ons geven,

Zij is hierin heel bedreven

Ik zie het in de verte, die stad,
Het glinstert in de zee,
Als een oase in de woestenij,
Hoge muren, toe, zal ik ze beklimmen ?
Zoveel plaagheren die op de muren
marcheren,
Zij hebben hun bogen klaar,
Om zielen tot het dodenrijk te trekken,
Maar roze lichamen worden aan hen gegeven,
Vreet je maar vol en dik,
Laat je spierbundels maar zien,
Opdat je het geheim niet zult vinden

Als deze dop op de fles gaat,
Is het geheim voor eeuwig verloren

Het goddelijk roze heeft de adel bekleed,
De troubadour speelt zijn snarenspel,
En de adel kijkt, en droomt weg,
Er zitten parels aan die snaren,
Hoe kan hij het lied zo mooi zingen ?
Als paarden beteugeld naar het bal,
Daar is het geheim, laten we zien wat het

zeggen zal,
Nee maar, het is een kwal

Ik ontwaak aan de kust van een zwarte zee,
Bloed in het water,
Golven over mijn been,
Ik kan me niet bewegen,
Dan kijk ik op,
Ik zie een vrouw met lang haar, en een agent,
Met een kwal in een pot,
Het ding had me bijna doodgebeten,
Nee, nooit ga ik terug naar de roze stad,
Nee, nooit ga ik terug naar de roze stad

Dokter, kunt u me genezen,
Ik kan me niet bewegen,
Ik ben bang dat ik spoedig niet kan spreken,
Want ik ben in de roze stad geweest,
Het roze steen is in mijn gebeente

Ik kan u niet helpen, zegt de dokter,
U zult sterven en de stad zien,
In een ander licht,
Daar zult u leven tot in alle eeuwigheden,
Want werkelijk,

Van deze stad kan niemand vluchten,
Wij gingen daar allen heen,
Wij zijn er nooit van teruggekomen,
Heus, er is geen geneesmiddel hiervoor,
Het antwoord zit in je been

Ik kijk naar mijn been, en zie de sleutel,
Ik trek het eruit, het bloedt nog wel,
Dan kijk ik naar de dokter die in een kwal
verandert,
Ik ren, ik ben er dus nog steeds niet uit,
Waar is hier de uitgang uit deze roze stad ?
Wie kan mij helpen, waar moet ik heen ?

Ik zie het lieve gezicht van de vrouw,
En het bezorgde gezicht van de agent,
Met de kwal in een pot,
Nog steeds heb ik de kwallensteek,
Nog steeds heb ik de roze steek,
Ik ben er nog niet van terug,
Ik lig hier nog dronken in het zand,
Op een donker strand

De agent neemt me op, en brengt me naar
mijn huis,

Aan de muur hangt een groot kruis,
Nee, dit moet nog steeds de roze stad wezen,
Toen heeft hij mij op een schip gehesen,
Het schip hing hoog in de lucht,
Toen werden we de hemel in gedreven,
De kwal wilde ons aan stukken rijgen,
Een octopus, een grote octopus, zei mijn
naam,
De stad riep mij, ik moest terug,
Maar de agent arresteerde de octopus, en
stopte het in een pot,
Terwijl het lieve vrouwengezicht mij aankeek

Nee, nee, schreeuwde ik, ik vertrouw het niet,
Jullie zijn van de roze stad, dat kan niet
anders,
Want alles is de roze stad …

Oh, roze stad, hoe kan ik je breken,
Oh roze stad, hoe kan ik je vergeten

De blinde heks houdt het geheim in haar hand
als een ei van licht,
terwijl de roze stad over de zee zweeft,
suizende, ruisende,

Totdat alles donker wordt

Laat me je inwijden in het roze ei,
Sprak de blinde heks,
Maar ik rende

Ik ren het bos in, maar alles is versierd met het roze,
Geen bos, alleen een roze stad

Ik ren en duik, en vlieg in de lucht,
Maar het roze zit me op de hielen,
De blinde heks heeft me gezien,
De kerken zitten me achterna,
Mijn gebeente is van het roze gesteente,
Geen dokter die me helpen kan,
Zij zijn allen stuk verdriet,
Plaagheer, plaaggeest, plaag geweest,
En nu ben ik hier

De blinde heks zit in haar boot,
In een roeibootje gaat zij over de rivier,
Een rotzooi is het hier,
Dit bos is vol van roze,
Dit bos is slechts een stad,

Er is geen uitweg hier

De blinde heks roeit, en dan krijst,
Haar bootje wordt door een zwart gat
opgezogen,
Zomaar uit de modder kwam het opdagen,
Als een kasteel van grote orde,
Een boskasteel is het geweest,
Een boskasteel van grote rade,
Een boskasteel van harde zaken

De blinde heks moet voorkomen,
Het boskasteel bestraft haar luid,
Zij moet het bos verlaten

Zij jankt, zij weent, slaat woedend om haar
heen,
Maar niets kan haar roze stad hier nog
houden,
Zij moet vertrekken met al haar hebben en
houwen

Dan smeekt zij, gilt zij, en zegt kom eens
hier,
Maar niemand luistert naar haar,

Ze heeft niets meer te zeggen hier,
De deur van de boskoning staat op een kier,
Zo ontsnap ik uit de zee,
En dreef ik met het bootje mee

De boskoning is erg aardig,
Hij is aan het verjaren,
Ik bouw een stad,
Maar hij breekt het af,
En slaat mij op mijn vingers

Geen steden meer voor jou,
Maar bospaadjes,
Boskastelen, diep en ver,
Hoog en vol van waarheid,
Je hebt de waarheid gevonden in een pot met leugens,
Je hebt het roze ei verbroken, en bent binnengegaan,
Hier zijn de slierten niet meer roze, maar bosslierten,
Donker en dromerig, bestijg je paard,
Reis diep door de nacht, totdat je geheel van de roze droom ontwaakt

De roze stad is geen stad voor jou,
Het zijn vervelende mensen,
Zo'n stad zou je nooit wensen,
Niet wensen voor jou

Ik hoor het gekrijs van de heks in de verte,
Maar dan ebt het weg in de verte,
Is de roze stad nu eindelijk weggezonken ?

De blinde heks die is uitgeworpen verkoopt
haar roze eieren aan de hooggeplaatsten,
Om een leger te vormen,
Het leger van een lam,
Een bloeddorstig lam,
Maar niemand wil haar eieren kopen

Dan verzint zij een sluw plannetje,
Zij zal nieuwe dromen maken,
Bosdromen, om het roze te bedekken,
Maar de bosdromen zullen wel volgepompt
worden met het roze gas,
Goed verborgen onder de oppervlakte

Zo blaast zij haar poppen op,
Maar niemand wil hen kopen,

Ze raakt gefrustreerd,
En klagerig

Ze snelt tot de zeven plaaggeesten voor advies,
Maar zij zitten weer in hun pot,
En de blinde heks kan hen met geen mogelijkheid bevrijden,
Ook kan zij hen niet verstaan,
En zij kunnen haar niet verstaan

De roze stad is aan het slinken, aan het wegrotten,
Totdat het een oude tol is geworden,
De heks heeft weer misgegrepen,
En ook de zeven plaaggeesten rotten weg in hun pot,
De roze stad is niet meer,
Het roze ei verkoopt niet meer,
Hier is waar het roze pad doodloopt,
En daarachter een grote wildernis

Hier ligt een groot ei, waar niemand durft aan te zitten,
Een duister ei

Op een dag ontploft het,
En bloed spuit eruit voort,
Nee, de roze stad zal niet wederom rijzen,
De roze stad is verloren gegaan,
Geen stem wordt er nog in gehoord,
Het is weggeslonken, weggerot,
En het zal zijn pad niet terugvinden,
Het heeft zijn tijd gehad

De Vreemde Ontmoeting

Ze droeg altijd witte laarzen, en woonde op twee hoog. Op een dag was hij van de trap in het trappenhuis gevallen. Ze nam hem op, en om hem op te vrolijken nam ze hem mee naar de kermis, waar zij hem bracht tot een clown. Hij was verder niet verwond.

De clown slikte hem op, en hij kwam in een tunnel terecht waar mensen een carnavals optocht hielden. De tunnel eindigde in een woestijn aan de rand van een grote stad. Er werden hier overal markten gehouden.

Hij vroeg zich af waar ze was. Nu een tijdje spuwde de clown hem weer uit. Het was een grote machine. Ze stond daar en lachte. 'Voel je je alweer wat beter nu ?' vroeg ze.

'Dit is geweldig,' zei hij.

'Kom met me mee naar huis,' sprak ze. Ze

nam hem bij de arm en leidde hem naar twee hoog. Binnengekomen kreeg hij een kopje koffie. Hij keek naar haar witte laarzen. Die waren wit als altijd.

Hij kon niet veel zeggen. 'Sprakeloos als altijd ?' vroeg ze. Hij knikte.

'Het geeft niet hoor,' zei ze.

'Ik moet gaan,' zei hij.

'Nee, blijf nog even,' zei ze. 'Ik wil je wat vertellen. De duinen hier vlakbij zijn zo mooi. Heb je zin om daar een keer te wandelen ?'

'Best,' zei hij. 'Maar ik moet nu gaan.'

'Hoe laat zullen we afspreken. Vanavond om half zes ?' vroeg ze.

'Best,' zei hij.

'Dan zie ik je bij het muurtje,' zei ze.

Hij knikte, en verliet het pand. Zo gezegd zo gedaan. Om half zes stond hij bij het muurtje. Zij had hem daar al opgewacht. Samen liepen ze door het park naar de duinen. Zij had weer haar witte laarzen aan. 'Weet je,' zei ze. 'Ik denk er vaak over om de zee over te zwemmen tot dat eiland daar, ken je dat ? Lijkt me geweldig om daar te wonen, echt fantastisch, of op z'n minst om daar eens op vakantie te gaan. Gewoon in de wildernis leven, proberen te overleven. Er groeien daar veel wilde bessen.'

'Een bessen-menu, dat lijkt me wel wat,' zei hij. Hij begon wat trager te praten. Ze trok wat kleren uit, en rende naar het water. 'Kom mee,' riep ze.

'Dat mens is gek,' dacht hij bij zichzelf. Maar toch deed hij wat ze zei. Hij rende achter haar aan en toen het water in. 'Het is niet zo lang zwemmen,' riep ze. Na een tijdje stonden ze op het eiland. Het eiland stond inderdaad vol met bessenstruiken. Het leek wel alsof de bessen in zijn hoofd spraken.

'Het zijn erg krachtige bessen,' zei ze. 'Men noemt ze weleens heksen-bessen. Dat is omdat het volwaardig aan de voedsel-behoefte voldoet.'

'Heksen-bessen ?' vroeg hij.

Ze knikte. Ze liep op een struik af, en begon te plukken en te eten. Ook gaf ze bessen aan hem. De bessen waren erg voedzaam, en al snel hadden ze genoeg. Het was bijna als sap in hun mond. 'Hutje bouwen hier ?' vroeg ze. Hij knikte.

Die nacht droomde hij vreemd. Hij lag in haar armen als een kind bij zijn moeder. Ze was wat ouder dan hem. Hij droomde dat ze hem sleepte naar de kermis tot de clown, en dat hij weer een ritje maakte door de clown. De tunnel was weer vol met dansende mensen in een carnavals-optocht, en weer liep de tunnel uit op markten aan de rand van een woestijn, aan de rand van een grote stad. Hij ging toen de stad binnen. Er was overal graffiti hier. Hij werd duizelig en viel, en ze

sleurde hem mee door de stad en toen door de markten tot de woestijn. Dit liep uit op een grote zee. De grootst mogelijke vissen zwommen in de zee.

Toen werd hij wakker. Zij lag aan de andere kant van de hut. Hij liep naar haar toe en ging in haar armen liggen. Zij ontving hem als een kind. Het voelde heel natuurlijk aan. Door de bessen werd hij kleiner, en zij werd groter, althans dat leek zo in zijn dromen. Het leek wel alsof hij aan het ijlen was. Toen hij echt wakker werd de volgende dag voelde hij zich ziek.

'Misschien komt het door de bessen, als een zij-effect,' zei ze. Hij voelde zich flink beroerd. Hij kon niet meer goed nadenken. Ook kreeg hij last met het spreken. Alles ging steeds trager en moeizamer. Hij trilde. Met haar was niets aan de hand. 'Dit doe ik dus nooit meer,' zei hij. 'Ik heb het gevoel alsof ik doodga.' Zij maakte een kano en een peddel. Ze bracht hem in de kano, en begon te peddelen. Snel waren ze aan de overkant,

waar ze hem naar een dokter bracht. 'U bent vergiftigd,' zei de dokter.

'Bessen ?' vroeg hij.

'Nee,' zei de dokter. 'Het eiland wat u heeft bezocht kent vreemde diersoorten, die een speciaal gas afscheiden. Het is zwaar giftig. Wist u niet dat het eiland verboden was ? Ik zou u hier eigenlijk voor moeten aangeven. U heeft waarschijnlijk de natuur daar zwaar verstoord.'

De dokter gaf hen pillen mee, die hij tweemaal daags moest slikken met water. Elke dag ging het een stukje beter met hem. Zij kwam hem vaak opzoeken. Dan hield hij zijn hand vast. 'Jammer dat het zo gelopen is,' zei ze. Hij knikte. 'Ik ben blij dat ik weer thuis ben,' zei hij.

'Thuis is toch het beste dan,' zei ze. 'Maar het was een goede ervaring.'

'Voor mij niet,' zei hij.

'Oh, waarom niet ?' vroeg ze. 'Alles moet je een keer meemaken.'

'Dat vind ik niet,' zei hij. 'Je kan ook gewoon je eigen weg gaan. Ik hoef niet alles mee te maken.'

Maar toen leek het wel alsof ze een beetje boos werd. 'Ik moet gaan,' zei ze.

'Nee, blijf nog even,' zei hij.

'Nee, geen sprake van,' zei ze. 'Je bent me nogal een betweter.'

'Jij anders ook,' zei hij.

'Dan is het beter dat het hier stopt,' zei ze. 'Wij kunnen niet met elkaar.'

'Eet maar wat bessen,' waren haar laatste woorden. Toen vertrok ze. Hij heeft haar nooit meer teruggezien.

Laura
de Indiaanse

Ze ging met rode bloemen over de huid van haar prooi. Toen wierp ze de prooi tussen de bruine bloemen. De bruine bloemen deden haar altijd zingen.

Ze kookte haar prooi op, en toen was de dag alweer om. Haar tent is wild, gemaakt van bizonvellen, zoals haar hart is. Haar tent is groot en harig, zoals haar hart is. Zij is de meesteres van de wildernis.

Wanneer zij haarzelf omdraait, jaagt zij. De prooi is op zijn hoede wanneer zij haar rug naar hen toekeert.

Diep in de wildernis woont zij. Diep in de wildernis troont zij. Er waren wat dingen die alleen zij kon weghalen. Daarom bezocht ik haar. Zij schreeuwde hard. Ik moest altijd op

mijn hoede zijn. Ze liet rode bloemen over mijn huid heenglijden, en duwde mij vaak in de bruine bloemen. Grote bruine bloemenvelden liet ze mij zien, en daarachter was de hei.

Ze kon het mij niet uitleggen wat de hei was. Ze wilde daar eigenlijk niet komen, maar ik hielp haar daar. Toen wilde ze er zelfs wonen, maar eerst gebruikte ze het als jachtterrein. Ze had dikke, forse heupen. Ik bevroor altijd als ik haar zag. Ik kon haar niet de baas. Als ze haar dikke, forse heupen draaide was ik verloren.

Nog vaak ging ik terug naar Laura de indiaanse, want er waren dingen in mijn leven die alleen zij kon weghalen, dingen die alleen zij de baas kon zijn. Maar ik zocht haar steeds minder op, omdat het leven mij opslokte. Altijd was ik druk. De rook van de stad hield mij tegen, had mij gevangen. Ook was ik een beetje bang voor Laura de indiaanse. Er was niemand zoals zij.

Nooit begreep ik waarom ze mijn huid bestreelde met rode bloemen. Het bleek een ritueel te zijn. Nooit begreep ik waarom ze me altijd duwde in de velden van bruine bloemen. De bruine bloemen deden haar zingen zodra ze ze zag.

Glorieus was haar speer, genadeloos haar mes. Op een dag bezocht ze de stad waarin ik was opgesloten, helemaal tot achter het rookgordijn. Ze liet mij daar de rode en bruine bloemen zien, en ik huilde. Ik miste hen. Zij was de natuur voor mij, de wildernis. Ze had mij veel geleerd. Ze zei dat ze nu op de hei woonde, en dat ze dat aan mij te danken had. Ik keek haar aan met grote ogen. Ze zei dat ik speciaal voor haar was, en wilde me weer meenemen. Ze wilde mij voor altijd vasthouden. Maar in paniek rende ik weg, en nooit heb ik haar teruggezien.

Nu slijten mijn dagen met gemengde gevoelens, wanneer ik denk aan Laura de indiaanse. Wilde dromen heb ik over haar, zoals haar hart wild was. Ik weet niet waar ze

is, en ik durf niet op zoek te gaan. Misschien woont ze nog steeds op de heide. Ze vertelde me dat ze daar een huisje had, een hutje, of een tent. Ze deed er niet duidelijk over. Ze was altijd een beetje vaag, en het is nog maar vaag in mijn herinneringen. Toch wil ik haar niet verloren doen gaan in mijn herinneringen. Ik heb het gevoel dat ze belangrijk is, en dat ik haar nodig heb.

Elke avond brand ik een kaarsje voor haar, voor Laura de indiaanse. De dromen worden steeds wilder. Het is alsof ik bij haar hoor, en zij bij mij. Maar haar bezoeken durf ik niet. Ik zou op zoektocht kunnen gaan, maar de heide is groot, te groot. En misschien is ze daar allang weer vertrokken, want dit alles was lang geleden. Het lijkt wel alsof de herinneringen veranderen, alsof de tijd stilstaat. Ik bevries wanneer ik aan haar denk, maar wordt dan weer heel warm, en bang. Het is een vreemde mengeling van gevoelens en emoties, en vreemde gedachtes. Ik voel me dan heel extreem. De dromen beginnen me zelfs overdag te beheersen. Ik krijg haar niet

meer uit mijn gedachtes weg lijkt het wel. Ik denk dat ik verliefd ben, op Laura de Indiaanse. We hadden het zo goed samen, en nu is alles weg. Ik kan alleen maar dromen.

Oh Laura de Indiaanse, wat is er toch van ons geworden,
We hadden het zo goed samen,
En je had zulke vreemde rituelen,
En dat past wel een beetje in mijn vreemde gedachtes,
Ik denk vaak aan je, en voel je altijd bij me,
Eigenlijk wordt het alleen maar sterker,
Blijf bij me, of kom weer terug,
Of is deze veranderende herinnering genoeg ?
Ik heb het gevoel dat je me nog steeds in de bruine bloemenvelden duwt,
Alsof ik wegzak in een diepe put,
Ik kan je niet bereiken, en weet ook niet of ik je wel wil bereiken,
Ik voel me zo gespleten,
Ik bekijk alles maar op een afstand,
Veilig achter de schermen van mijn herinneringen,
Maar het lijkt alsof je er doorheen breekt,

Op je hoge paard,
Je roept me, ik volg je,
Ja, ik hoor bij jou, maar de stad trekt me
altijd weer weg

Voor het donker moeten we thuis zijn,
En dan krijgen we brood met melk,
Oh, Laura de Indiaanse,
Bij jou wil ik zijn.

Ze zaten hand in hand. Ze wilden elkaar niet verliezen. Ze waren bang, omdat zoveel relaties om hen heen stukliepen. 'Blijf alsjeblieft altijd eerlijk tegen me,' zei ze tegen hem. 'Praat alles met me uit.' Hij knikte. 'Natuurlijk schatje.'

'Ik heb zo vreemd gedroomd vannacht,' zei ze zachtjes. 'Waarover dan ?' vroeg hij.
'Over voeten,' zij ze.
'Voeten ?' vroeg hij. 'Wat deden die voeten dan ?'
'Ze speelden,' zei ze, 'en ze deden alsof ze machtig waren.'
Plotseling kreeg hij stuiptrekkingen, en viel op de grond. Er was schuim op zijn mond. Even later zat hij weer naast haar op de bank. Ze zei niets. 'Ga verder,' zei hij. 'Waar heb je nog meer over gedroomd ?' Maar het was alsof ze in zichzelf gekeerd was nu. 'Oh,

niets,' zei ze. Hij keek haar aan. Haar lippen waren vol. Hij wilde haar kussen, maar het was alsof iets hem tegenhield.

'Het zijn de tuinen,' zei hij.
'Wat bedoel je ?' zei ze bijna fluisterend.
'Nou ....,' zei hij. Maar verder kwam hij niet.

'Ik moet gaan,' zei ze.
'Waarom ?' vroeg hij.
'Ik heb nog wat dingen te doen,' sprak ze, en vertrok.

Die nacht had hij een droom. Over voeten die als dieren waren, en die op jacht gingen. Het was een vreemde droom, en de volgende dag vertelde hij het aan haar. Haar lippen waren vol en een beetje vochtig. Hij wilde haar kussen, maar ze duwde hem van haar af. Ze was een beetje misselijk zei ze. Hij begreep haar niet. Sinds hij die stuiptrekkingen had deed ze ineens zo koud. Ze legde hem uit dat ze zich niet lekker voelde na het vertellen van haar droom, zoals hij zich ook niet lekker voelde.

'Wat is er dan met ons aan de hand ?' vroeg hij. Toen omhelsde ze hem met haar warme lichaam. 'Alsjeblieft, laat me nooit meer gaan,' zei ze. 'Natuurlijk niet, schatje,' zei hij. Ze drukte wat toetsen in op de telefoon, en belde iemand op. Ze raakte diep in gesprek, alsof ze hem helemaal had vergeten. Hij voelde nog steeds haar warme lichaam tegen zich aan. Toen ze had opgehangen begon ze te huilen. 'Ik voel me niet lekker,' zei ze. Hij nam haar nog dichter tegen zich aan. 'Misschien moet je er gewoon over praten,' zei hij.

'Het zijn de dromen,' zei ze.
'Waar heb je dan over gedroomd ?' vroeg hij.
Ze zei niets.
'Toe, je moet het me vertellen,' zei hij.

'Ik droomde over Klaas,' zei ze. 'Dat hij alleen die rivier overzwom, en verdronk.'
Hij wiegde haar een beetje. Hij nam haar heupen vast. Opeens kreeg hij weer last van stuiptrekkingen, en viel neer. Midden in de

nacht werd hij wakker, en ze hing wild over hem. Hij greep haar vast. Ze begon hem te kussen. 'Eindelijk ben je wakker,' zei ze. 'Je bent zo lang bewusteloos geweest. Ik heb je naar je bed getrokken.'

'Je bent sterk,' zei hij.

Ineens staat er een man in de deur-opening. Ze schrikken beiden. De man heeft een zwarte hoed op, en een wit gezicht, met verder een zwart lichaam met zwarte kleding. Maar dan is ook zijn gezicht zwart, en er rollen spinnen uit de pijpen van zijn jas. Een vreemde geur verspreid zich in de kamer. Ze horen geschreeuw. De man begint te lachen. Het is als het gebrul van een leeuw of een tijger.

'Ik ben een gek,' zei de man. 'Ik ben verschrikkelijk gestoord.' De man begint verschrikkelijk te gillen, en dan weer te lachen. Hij begint te bulderen van het lachen, totdat hij vuur spuwt in alle kleuren. 'Ik heb deze dromen gegeven !' schreewde hij. 'Ik

ben een engel.' De man in bed krijgt weer stuiptrekkingen, en begint heen en weer te rollen. 'Indiaanse dromen,' zei de man in zwart. 'Ik ben een boodschapper, een shamaan. Ik heb een boodschap voor jullie. Er is iets achter jullie aan, en het zal jullie krijgen ook.' Toen was de man verdwenen.

'Bah,' zei de vrouw. 'Wat is dat ?' Maar de man in bed had nog steeds stuiptrekkingen.

Toen stond er ineens een clown voor hen. Hij had een rode jas aan met wat gele en gouden strepen. 'Kaartje ?' vroeg hij. Hij hield hen een kaartje voor. Nu viel de vrouw ook flauw. Hij nam hen in zijn armen, en begon te groeien, terwijl hij over de straten begon te racen, en in een vreemd vuur alles achter zich liet. Hij was een ware snelheids-duivel.

'Als ik in jouw spiegels kijk, ben ik altijd lelijk,' sprak ze.

'Dat komt...' zei hij aarzelend, 'omdat het de spiegels van de dwergen zijn.... eh... de boze dwergen dan, want de goede dwergen kunnen het niet wezen. Die doen zulke dingen niet.'

'Ja, maar wie leidt hen ?' vroeg ze.

'De heerser waarschijnlijk,' zei hij.

'Wie is de heerser ?' vroeg ze.

'Laat maar,' zei hij. 'We zitten nu eenmaal in dit duistere labyrint. We kunnen er niet uit, en we weten niet veel.'

'Alsjeblieft doe die spiegels dan weg,' zei ze. 'Ik kan er niet meer tegen. Ik vind je prachtig,

dus je hoeft niet telkens in de spiegel te kijken of je haar wel goed zit, of dat je neus wel recht staat.'

'Je begrijpt het niet,' zei hij. 'Ik heb die spiegels nodig omdat ....'

Maar toen vielen ze beiden weer in slaap door de zachte winden van het labyrint.

Aan het meer op een klein strandje zat een dwerg op zijn fluit te spelen. Ik haaste me er naartoe. Al snel werd ik overvallen door struiken met scherpe doornen .... bessenstruiken. Daarachter waren de bessenbomen die daar weelderig groeiden. Ik probeerde te ontsnappen, maar kwam niet meer los. Ik werd in het meer getrokken. De bomen groeiden door tot in de dieptes van het meer. Het meer was langwerpig als een rivier. Ik kon de overkant zien. De dwerg speelde rustig door, en betoverde mij. Ik was nu een gevangene van het labyrint. Ik dwaalde rond over het zand, en zag een stad in de verte. Toen viel ook ik in slaap door de zachte

winden van het labyrint.

'Mara, Mara,' zong de geest van het meer, de veerman, of beter gezegd de veerjongen. Ik zat in zijn boot en met zijn lange staf in het water kon hij de boot voortduwen. 'Mijn schreeuw heeft je gevonden,' zei de veerjongen. 'Ik zal je brengen naar de overkant van het meer, naar het paleis van de heerser en de prins.' Maar ik zakte weer weg. Ik werd door de wind opgenomen, en vloog richting het wazige, geestachtige paleis in de verte, als een paleis van mist, vage mist, weerspiegelingen. 'Ja, ja,' hoorde ik de geest roepen. 'Ja, ja, ja,' alsof hij iets probeerde af te zeggen. 'En dan ben ik klaar.' Ik zakte weg, als in een rozentuin. Vreemde bessenbomen, weelderige bessenbomen en struiken hingen over mij. Ze hadden hun doornen verloren. 'Ik breek !' schreeuwde de geest. Er was alsof er iets knapte in mij. Ik steeg op, en verliet de aarde. Ik bevond mij boven een woeste zee. 'Houd moed!' werd er geroepen. Ze probeerden mij op een schip te heisen. Ik zag zeemannen die er lichtelijk als piraten

uitzagen, en een kapitein. Ze smeerden mij in met schuim.

'Tegen de draken,' zeiden ze. 'De zeedraken. Ze hadden je. Maar nu hebben wij jou.' Ik waggelde als een beschonkene, alsof ik teveel bier of andere sterke drank had gedronken. Ze wasten me in een teil van sterke drank en bier even later. Het tintelde op mijn lichaam. Mijn huid glanste in de zon. Het was bijna plakkerig, alsof er een olie-laagje op mijn huid zat nu.

De wanen hadden hem in zijn macht. Hij werd wakker met een zoutachtige smaak in zijn mond aan het hete strand. Het was warm en de zwoele zeewind overweldigde hem.

'Dodelijke spiegels zijn het,' werd er gejammerd. Er waren er meer die er onder leden. Boze dwergen hadden die spiegels gesmeed, van zwart goud, behekst. Het was alsof er een holte in was waar je doorheen kon rollen. De heerser had hen waarschijnlijk daartoe geinspireerd of zelfs hen daartoe

opdracht gegeven. Waarschijnlijk zou de prins nog daartegen hebben gevochten, maar het mocht niet baten. De heerser had het voor het zeggen.

Het zwarte goud was een edel familie-geschenk, om de banden in stand te houden. Maar waar leidde het hen naartoe ? Naar hel en verdoemenis ... scheen het. Niemand wist wat er mee te beginnen. Alles leek zo hopeloos. Ze waren in de ban van het zwarte goud, wat de toekomst zou kunnen voorspellen. De leugenaar woonde in hen.

Ze zit aan het strand met een klein dwergje. In de verte ziet ze de torens. Ze komen snel voort vanuit de zee, omgeven met een lichte mist. Golven spoelen aan. Ze zoekt naar boodschappen gebracht door pijn. In de pijn ziet ze visioenen. De pijn laat haar wanen. In de pijn hoort ze het gejoel van indianen, als het gejoel van hyena's. Ze gaat languit liggen in het hete zand, en voelt dan zanderige lippen op haar. Ze glijdt weg in de slaap, als een gevangene van het labyrint. Wie heeft dat

labryrint gebouwd ?
Ze ziet boten in de verte, die metaal voortbrengen. Maar zij blijft dichtbij de bessen.

Grimhaldt was een tovermeester van vele monsters. Zijn grote vijand was Aswaldt, de koning der skeletten. Grimhaldt was in zijn toverkamer de meest verschrikkelijke drankjes aan het brouwen. Grimhaldt had een heleboel schatten verborgen onder de aarde die bewaakt werden door wachters die eruit zagen als voeten : grote voeten en kleine voeten. Het was een vreemd ras wat hij ooit eens verslagen had, en sindsdien moesten zij zijn schatten bewaken. Aartslepal was zo’n voet, en was van top tot teen bewapend. Hij was de hoofdman van de voetwezens. Grimhaldt was erg trots op hem en had hem bekleed met de prachtigste sieraden.

Op een dag was er een belangrijke ring van Grimhaldt gestolen. Het was een ring waarmee bepaalde

toverboeken geopend konden worden, en alleen bij het licht van die ring gelezen konden worden. Grimhaldt was woedend en riep Aartslepal bij zich. Hij ontdeed Aartslepal van zijn sieraden en zond hem uit zijn grottenstelsel de kou in. Aartslepal maakte een lange reis door het sneeuw en over het ijs, een reis die hij bijna niet zou overleven, maar hij was nu in ieder geval wel vrij. Na long lopen kwam hij aan bij een groot kasteel, als een spookslot. De muren waren lang en overal stonden skeletten.

Het kasteel was min of meer van botten gemaakt, en er hing een vreemde geur. Toen Grimhaldt merkte dat Aartslepal de tocht had overleefd was hij buiten zichzelf van woede. Hij greep een paar van de voetwezens die nog steeds wachters waren van zijn schatten, en wierp de wachters in zijn ketel voor een

nieuwe toverdrank. Toen de toverdrank klaar was liep hij ermee naar een paar toverboeken die nog nooit geopend waren. Met een druppel in het slot kon hij elk boek openen. Nu kwamen de grootst mogelijke monsters vrij. Ook nam Grimhaldt zelf een slok van het mengsel en maakte samen met de monsters een reis naar het spookslot. Grimhaldt stormde naar binnen en kwam al snel in gevecht met Aswaldt de skelettenkoning. Maar de skeletten waren veel sterker dan het leger van Grimhaldt. Aswaldt trok zijn mes en stak het in het hart van Grimhaldt. Nu zou je denken dat nu Grimhaldt was verslagen zijn wachters wel makkelijk bevrijd konden worden, maar niets is minder waar. De wachters van Grimhaldt leefden diep onder de grond.

Het was een uittocht die vele jaren duurde. Vele kostbaarheden die diep

onder de aarde lagen kwamen vrij. Het belangrijkste was wel de spiegel van Grimhaldt waarmee hij zijn toverijen bedreef. De wachters van die spiegel had hij zo dronken gemaakt en zo gevaarlijk dat er geen overwinning mogelijk was. Het waren de wachters zelf die overwinning behaalden door de spiegel. En zo kregen uiteindelijk de wachters het spookslot in handen, en begon Aswaldt zijn grote reis naar de eeuwigheid.

De Banaanse Sinaasappelkoning

Er waren eens een man en een vrouw in een tuin met sinaasappelbomen. Plotseling verscheen er een banaan met sieraden in de struiken tussen de sinaasappels. De man en de vrouw dachten dat het een slang was, en bekogelden de banaan met sinaasappels. ‘Weten jullie wel wie ik ben ?’ sprak de banaan met sieraden. ‘Ik ben de koning van de sinaasappels.’ En hij begon de sinaasappels met zo’n vaart terug te slaan dat de man en de vrouw onder de sinaasappelsap kwamen te zitten. De banaan met sieraden bleef maar gooien, totdat er een zee van sinaasappelsap was ontstaan. De man en de vrouw riepen om hulp. Maar na een tijdje kreeg de banaan met sieraden medelijden met hen, en liet hen op zijn rug zitten, anders zouden ze verdrinken. Hij bracht hen naar een eiland waar ook komkommers en bananen waren. Er waren ook een bananenkoning en een komkommerkoning, en zij hadden wel trek in wat sinaasappelsap.

Maar zij dronken daar zoveel van dat de banaanse sinaasappelkoning boos terugkwam, en met zoveel sinaasappels begon te gooien dat zelfs het eiland overstroomde. Het werd een woeste zee van sinaasappelsap, waarin zelfs de banaanse sinaasappelkoning dreigde te verdrinken. Gelukkig kon de komkommerkoning vliegen en nam ze allen op zijn rug. Hij vloog naar een meloen in de lucht. De meloen nam ze naar binnen, en vroeg wie de schuldige was. Allen wezen ze naar de sinaasappelkoning, die door de meloen direkt weer in de sinaasappelzee werd geworpen. Maar later kreeg de meloen spijt, en dronk de hele sinaasappelzee leeg. De banaanse sinaasappelkoning verstopte zich weer tussen de sinaasappelbomen in de tuin. Op een dag kwamen er weer een man en een vrouw in de tuin. Toen ze de banaanse sinaasappelkoning zagen begonnen ze met sinaasappels naar hem te gooien, omdat ze dachten dat het een slang was. Maar ditmaal gooide de banaanse sinaasappelkoning niks terug, en besloot ook om maar niks te zeggen, want hij wist waar

dat op uit kon lopen.

Die Nacht ...

Ik had niet in haar ogen moeten kijken, maar het is te laat …
Ik werd gehypnotiseerd en viel op de grond …
Nu heb ik één en al pijn, alsof ik in het web van een spin ben …
Je glimlach was slechts vals …
Oh, hoe kon ik zo stom zijn …
Maar ja, wat moest ik dan ?
Mijn leven was al zo naar … Ik moest wel wat …
En misschien beschermde dit me wel tegen nog iets ergers …
Maar … als ik in je ogen kijk dan voel ik me zo verloren …
Jij en je boog … Je hebt me goed geraakt …
Ik kan mijn weg niet meer terug vinden, en misschien wil ik dat ook wel niet …

Ik kan me herinneren toen je dicht bij me was, maar nu ben je zo afstandelijk, onbereikbaar … Dat wat ik voelde heb ik niet

meer … Het is weg …
Ik voel me zo verward, alsof ik vergiftigd ben …
Heb je mij gestoken ? En waartoe ?

Ik woel in mijn bed, ik durf niet meer te slapen, en dan zie ik jou …
Met je boog op oorlogspad … Ik hoor je stem weer, en dan glijden de herinneringen weer door me heen … Jij was die ene nacht …

De nacht dat ik brak, de nacht dat ik niet meer op kon staan … Die nacht … Jij …

Het Duistere Sprookje van de Donkere Kaas

Een jongen moest van zijn moeder naar de kaasmarkt om een pond kaas te halen.
Toen hij daar aankwam stonden er drie indiaanse vrouwen met blote voeten op de tafel van een marktkraam, en er was alleen maar donkere kaas. De jongen moest de vrouwenvoeten kussen voordat hij de kaas meekreeg. Ook moest hij betalen, en het was erg duur. De jongen vond het een beetje vreemd, maar hij wist dat hij niet moest proberen zonder kaas thuis te komen, dus hij stemde er mee in en kuste de vrouwenvoeten.
Toen hij het verhaal aan zijn moeder vertelde was die woedend. Ze pakte de jongen bij de hand en ging met hem naar de kaasmarkt.
De jongen en zijn moeder werden vervolgens neergeslagen. Later werden ze wakker in een kooi. Twee bandieten keken hen aan. De jongen probeerde te praten, maar merkte dat hij niets kon zeggen. Zijn moeder was woest.
"Wat heeft dat te betekenen ?" brulde ze. De

bandieten glimlachten. "We kunnen er niets aan doen, mevrouw," spraken ze. "Er is een nieuwe directeur, en die wil donkere kaas."
"Maar waarom zijn we hier ?" brulde de vrouw woest. "Wat heeft dit in godsnaam te betekenen ?"
"Sorry, mevrouw," sprak één van de bandieten. "Orders van de baas."
"En wat nu ?" vroeg de vrouw. "Dus we kunnen niet eens meer zomaar een markt bezoeken zonder overvallen te worden, en mijn zoon moet eerst de voeten van drie indiaanse vrouwen kussen en veel betalen voordat hij kaas meekrijgt, en dan ook nog donkere kaas ?"
"Wat is er mis met donkere kaas, mevrouw ?" vroeg de bandiet.
"Helemaal niks," zuchtte de vrouw. "Maar wat heeft de rest er allemaal mee te maken ?"
"Zo wordt nu eenmaal donkere kaas geserveerd, mevrouw," spraken de bandieten.
"Het is me nogal een zootje," sprak de vrouw.
"En wat nu ? Gaan jullie mij ook nog mijn zoon afnemen ?"
"U gaat opgehangen worden," spraken de

bandieten.
En zo gebeurde het. De vrouw werd opgehangen, en de jongen moest op de donkere kaasmarkt werken.
Een man stopte met lezen. "Ik heb nog nooit zo'n dom verhaal gehoord," sprak de man tegen zichzelf. "Moet je dit eens lezen," zei hij even later tegen zijn vrouw. Toen de vrouw het had gelezen barste ze in lachen uit. "Donkere kaas ? Is dit echt of een verhaal ?" vroeg ze verbaasd.
"Echt denk ik," sprak de man. "Het is de krant."
"Dat zegt vandaag niet zoveel," sprak de vrouw. "Bij de krant werken allemaal grapjassen vandaag de dag. Ik zal eens kijken in de supermarkt morgen, of ze nu ook daadwerkelijk donkere kaas verkopen."
"Ik zou het maar niet doen," sprak de man. "Waarschijnlijk gebeurd dan hetzelfde met jou als met de vrouw uit het verhaal."
De volgende dag kwam de vrouw thuis met donkere kaas, en hield een pond voor de neus van haar man. "Zie, niks gebeurd," sprak ze trots.

"Dat moet nog gebeuren," sprak de man. "We kunnen de krant maar beter serieus nemen, anders horen we er niet meer bij, en sluiten ze ons misschien wel op in het gekkenhuis."
"Ach, klets niet," sprak de vrouw. "Je hebt teveel babbels en teveel tv gekeken."
In de nacht stierf de vrouw. Toen de man 's ochtends ontwaakte slaakte hij een gil. Het moest wel van de donkere kaas komen. Hij maakte de dag ervoor maar wat grapjes, maar nu bleek het toch menens te zijn. Misschien was er wel een duistere vloek op de donkere kaas.
"Ik kan het niet geloven dat nu mijn vrouw dood is," sprak de man tegen zichzelf, "maar het was niet zo'n beste, en lang leve de lol. Ik ga er op uit, en zal een betere vrouw vinden."
Een man klikt de tv uit. "Teveel rommel op de tv vandaag de dag. Donkere kaas ? Wat een stelletje gekken." Hij gaat naar bed, en heeft die nacht nachtmerries over donkere kaas. Hij moet de voeten van indiaanse vrouwen kussen. "Zeg, ben ik dan nu op tv ?" bulderde de man. "Want gisteren was dit op de tv, en nu ben ik hier, net zoals die jongen

uit dat verhaal. En nu moet ik zeker ook duur betalen voor die donkere kaas ?"
Toen werd hij op zijn hoofd geslagen en werd wakker in zweet. Hij begon om zich heen te grijpen en had ademhalings-moeilijkheden.
De volgende dag vertelde hij het aan de dokter. De dokter dacht dat hij gek aan het worden was, en liet hem niet meer gaan.
"Alzheimer waarschijnlijk," sprak de dokter.
"U heeft betere zorg nodig," sprak de dokter.
"Ja, maar ik ben nog jong," sprak de man.
"Niets mee te maken," sprak de dokter. "U komt hier niet meer weg."
"Het moet die donkere kaas zijn," sprak de man tegen zichzelf.
Hij werd opgesloten en stierf een eenzame dood, en hij kon alleen maar denken aan donkere kaas.

RNL-POCKETS
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VURIGE STENEN

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De Ontsnapping

Jara stond stil. Ze keek om haar heen. De rivier leek alsof het elk moment kon opwellen. De zon raakte bijna de rivier aan, geheel wit in de verte. Apen zag ze aan de overkant. Al snel was ze in de rivier en zwom naar de overkant. Ze greep een liaan, en trok haarzelf uit het water. Apen staarden haar aan. Ze kroop op een heuveltje verder het water uit, haar huid zat onder de modder. Ze hoorde het geluid van de apen, en opeens voelde ze hun handen op haar huid. Ze trokken haar verder omhoog. Het water dampte als in een mist, en het was er warm. Even later lag ze languit op het gras, tussen het mos, onder de bomen. Het was een prachtige jungle hier, in de dieptes van het regenwoud. Weer raakten de apen haar aan, en de rillingen gingen door haar lijf. Ze omhelsde hen, en ze lieten het toe. Ze was hun kind. Ze maakte zich meester van de situatie, stond op, en rende het oerwoud in. Even later stond ze in een hut. Ze was moe, ging op de versleten matras liggen. Niemand kon haar zeggen waar ze was. Het leek wel alsof de apen hier woonden. Achter de hut vond ze een skelet. Ze nam van wat appels die hier en daar lagen. Ze was hongerig, en ze at zelfs wat oud brood. Haar hele leven had ze verlangd naar een rustige plaats, waar ze alleen zou zijn.

Ze was onrustig, zoals de apen onrustig waren, maar de natuur was mooi hier, ze kon hier wegglijden. De apen probeerden met haar te communiceren, maar zij gleed steeds weg omdat ze moe was. Ze hielden haar vast. Even later duwden ze haar bananen in haar mond.

De natuur was als gladgestreken hier, niemand zei wat. Ze voelde zich oud en jong. Ze staarde naar het amulet wat ze om haar nek had gedragen. Ze had het in haar hand. Plotseling draaide ze zich om en zag een man staan, een indiaan. Een band met een paar witte veren om zijn hoofd. Hij pakte haar hand, en ging naast haar liggen. Zij vond dat eigenlijk heel normaal. Misschien woonde de man hier. Hij joeg haar niet weg. Hij gedroeg zich mysterieus. Ze voelde geen angst voor hem, alleen acceptatie.

Als ze in zijn ogen keek zag ze een open jungle. Hij staarde naar haar. Ze kon wegzinken in zijn ogen. Ze zeiden niets tegen elkaar. De man maakte een vuur, en ging erbij zitten, en Jara kwam er ook bijzitten even later. Het leek wel alsof elke minuut een uur duurde. Zo stil was het hier. Er was hier een open wereld, een diepte.

Ze omhelsden elkaar terwijl ze elkaar niet kenden. Ze wisten genoeg. De natuur bond hen samen. Er waren geen woorden nodig, alles was ondergedompeld in de prachtige natuur. De ontmoeting duurde lang. Daarna vertrok de man weer. Jara staarde naar het amulet. Het glom. Ze ging terug naar de versleten matras, en viel in slaap.

Ze zag haar reis als een gezel, ze hield van de reis. Ze at van de natuur, en dronk van de rivier, het was genoeg. Ze was gelukkig. Jara was als bedekt door de natuur, als een veilige schuilplaats, geen slavernij meer. Maar nog wel de littekens daarvan. Ze was ontsnapt, ze had dagen door het bos gerend, en nu was ze hier. Slangen gleden door het gras. Ze had van hen niets te vrezen. Het was alsof de natuur haar opnam.

Ze wilde wraak nemen op de blanken, maar hoe. Ze was zelfs gemerkt in haar mond. Vreemde tekens hadden ze in haar tanden gesneden, en metalen erin gegoten. Met haar mes probeerde ze het

eruit te snijden. Al snel was ze aan het bloeden. De apen kwamen dichtbij. Ze kwam erachter dat de kolonisten zendertjes hadden gestopt in de dieptes van haar kiezen. Ze wist dat ze in gevaar was, nog steeds. Misschien konden ze haar wel achtervolgen. Ze rende verder, de voetstappen van de man volgende. Na enkele dagen kwam ze hem tegen. Hij trok haar naar zich toe. Ze spraken niet. Het was alsof ze elkaar aanvoelden. Ze hoorden schoten in de lucht. 'Slaven ontsnapt,' riep iemand. De man greep zijn mes, maar daarna greep hij een pijl, en toen zijn boog. Beiden renden ze verder. Weer waren er schoten, maar ze zagen niemand. Ze kwamen aan bij een riviertje, waar een bootje was. Ze namen het bootje om de rivier mee over te komen. Aan de overkant gekomen wees Jara op de mond van de man. Ze opende haar mond om haar tanden te laten zien. Ook de man opende zijn mond, en Jara zag het metaal, en de zendertjes. Ze probeerde het hem duidelijk te maken. Met een mes kregen ze het eruit. Jara gooide de zendertjes in het riviertje. Toen gingen ze dieper het oerwoud in. Ze hoopten dat niemand hen hier nog zou kunnen volgen. De natuur was te mooi om daar nog drukte om te maken. Het was alsof hun lasten door die pracht werden afgespoeld. Het was alsof de man wilde zeggen : Laten we hier opnieuw beginnen. Jara knikte. Zijn ogen spraken. Een leven hier zou goed zijn.

Ze wilden wraak nemen op de blanken, maar de natuur nam hen mee. De natuur deed hen vergeten, maar er was nog wel die diepe pijn van binnen. Er was geen doel, er was alleen het leven. Het was als een warme haard, de natuur om hen heen. En die kwam dieper en dieper om de pijn weg te wassen. De man raakte haar aan. Het voelde als vertrouwd. De zachte aanraking van de natuur leek het te vermengen. Voor het eerst voelde Jara zich gelukkig. Ze kon de sterke stroming van de rivier horen in de verte. Alle geluiden kwamen haar lichaam binnen, en openbaarden zich aan haar. De man streelde door haar haar, en ging met zijn vingertoppen over haar lippen. Ze boog haar hoofd. Ze begreep niet wat er gaande was. De man omhelsde haar van achteren, en in haar gevoel was het alsof hij tegen haar zei : 'Je bent vrij nu.' Ze zochten de rivier weer op, en gingen daar zwemmen. Hier zouden ze willen wonen. In de verte was een waterval die ze konden horen bulderen. Ze besloten er naartoe te gaan. Het was alsof de waterval hen van binnen schoonwaste. De waterplanten waren prachtig en overtuigend hier. Ze sprongen bijna door het water heen.

Wisten zij dat zij kinderen waren van de bomen, van de struiken die onderwater en bovenwater groeiden. Wisten zij dat zij gemaakt waren voor ritmische en kronkelende groei. Krokodillen waren hun vrienden hier, geen vijanden. Ze waren aan het ware gevaar ontsnapt. Ook de waterslangen waren hen goedgezind. Ze voelden zich fijn met deze kronkelende elementen. De waterplant was als de hemel voor hen. Ze stonden open voor het harmonische gevoel van de natuur, ze spraken met hun ogen. Het water was een bron van leven voor hen. De man staarde naar haar amulet. Hij kuste het amulet. Het was alsof de man wilde zeggen : Als zij, het amulet, haar ogen zal openen, waar zullen de blanke kolonisten dan zijn, heus, ze zullen geleid worden naar de hel. Ze hebben een hel gemaakt, een hel die hen dan zal opslokken. Het was alsof het zonlicht het zo overbracht, en zo waar als de waterval zelf. Ze keek hem diep in de ogen, alsof ze het verankerde. Ze had respect voor hem, stond open voor hem, ze besefte dat zij het antwoord om haar nek droeg. Het amulet leek op een slang. Het had veel waarde voor haar. Sommige slangen hier leken op het amulet. Het was alsof het amulet ooit de sleutel was van haar kooi. Ze voelde zich week worden als ze naar hem keek. De blauwe lucht leek neer te dalen in de rivier, op weg naar de waterval. Het licht werd alle kanten opgereflecteerd.

Het Gedwongen Chocola

Een oud vrouwtje leefde helemaal alleen in het bos in een klein huisje. Ze staarde naar buiten. Ze kon de bomen goed zien. Daarna staarde ze naar haar gedroogde vlinders die ze als kind had gevangen. Voor haar gevoel miste ze nog een paar kostbaren. Ze had haar net nog dichtbij haar, klaar om de ontbrekende exemplaren te vangen. Altijd was ze op zoek. Niets dan leugens zweefden in de lucht, haar beschuldigende. Ze wilde deze leugens vangen, opdrogen en inlijsten. Ze was vol van haat. Ze kon het gelach van de plagende spotters om haar heen niet meer aan. Elke dag weer probeerden ze haar neer te halen, al vanaf het moment dat ze wakker werd. Ze leken op kinderlijke kleine elfjes, met brutale gezichtjes, als vlindertjes vrolijk dartelend om haar heen. Ze haatte kinderen op die manier, en ze droeg dan ook een duister geheim in haar binnenste. Soms sloeg ze met haar schepnet om zich heen, en riep : ‘Is het nu afgelopen.’ Maar de laatste jaren ving ze niks meer. Ze droeg een duister geheim van binnen. Ze wilde hier niet aan denken, en met niemand over praten. Ze was het vechten moe. Niemand zou haar begrijpen, en niemand zou sympathie voor haar hebben. Langzaam schonk ze wat thee in voor haarzelf. Buiten vlogen wat vogeltjes waar ze naar keek. Ze snapte niet waarom zo’n jonge geest als zij opgesloten moest zijn in zo’n oud lichaam. Zij zou oud worden in de armen van een ieder die haar aan zou raken, en daarom bleef ze ver van de mensen vandaan. Overdag werkte ze aan haar maaltijd voor de avond, en zorgde ze dat het huisje voldoende schoon bleef. Ook deed ze wat handwerk. Ze was ver weg in haar gedachten. Niemand kon haar bereiken. Ze was bitter geworden.

Ze wist niet dat er wat verder in het bos wonderbomen stonden. Ze kwam niet verder dan haar eigen tuin. De bomen werden bewaakt door dieren, zoals katten, slangen en konijnen, orakels. De bomen zouden haar naar boven leiden, maar ze zag hen niet. Ze zag alleen de kabalerige vliegende deugnietjes om haar heen fladderen. Maar op een dag was ze als door hypnose geslagen, en liep haar tuin uit door het tuinhekje. Ze wilde even het bos in, niet zo ver, maar even ergens anders zijn. Een konijn stond voor een boom, en wenkte haar. Ze kwam dichterbij en keek in de ogen van het konijn. Waarom komt u niet in deze boom wonen, zei het konijn. De top van de boom draagt een geweldig huis.

- Hoe kom ik daar, vroeg het oude vrouwtje.

Maar toen was het konijn weg. De vrouw wist niet of ze het konijn kon vertrouwen, liep door, en gleed in een onder het mos verborgen put. Ze viel gelukkig zacht, en op de bodem van de put stond een kat voor een deurtje. ‘Heus,’ zei de kat, ‘er is een ander leven voor u. Welkom binnen in uw nieuwe huis.’ En ineens was de kat verdwenen. De vrouw wist niet of ze de kat kon vertrouwen, maar ging toch naar binnen. ‘Welkom in de boom,’ zei een stem. ‘De boom is alles wat er is.’

‘Ik heb anders nooit in een boom geleefd,’ zei de vrouw.

‘Omdat je dat niet wist,’ zei de stem. ‘Je dacht alleen maar dat je wat wist.’

‘Ik wil hier weg,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Ik moet weer naar huis.’

‘Dit is je huis,’ zei de stem. Ze keek recht in de ogen van een kat.

‘Oh, jij weer,’ zei ze tegen de kat.

‘En jij weer,’ zei de kat. De kat greep haar en wilde met haar dansen, maar de vrouw wilde niet. ‘Ik wil eruit,’ riep ze.

‘Waaruit ?’ vroeg de kat.

‘Uit deze hel,’ zei de vrouw.

‘Dit is alles wat er is,’ zei de kat.

‘Spreek geen onzin,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Ik was daarnet nog in mijn huis.’

‘Welk huis ?’ zei de kat. ‘Dat dacht je alleen maar. Je bent hier altijd al geweest.’

‘Leugenaar,’ riep de vrouw. ‘Ik haal de politie erbij.’

‘De politie ?’ zei de kat. ‘Wat is dat ? Dat zijn alleen je gedachten.’

De vrouw werd woest en probeerde de kat te slaan, maar die was ineens verdwenen. Alles was donker om haar heen. Ze liep een trapje op naar boven, waar een beetje licht was. Daar was de kat weer. Beiden stonden ze voor een lift. ‘Stap in de lift,’ zei de kat, ‘dan zul je van al je problemen af zijn.’ Als gehypnotiseerd stapte de vrouw in de lift, en de kat sloot de deur achter haar. Hoog in de boom kwam ze aan in haar nieuwe huisje. ‘Maar dat is fantastisch,’ zei ze. Ze zou de kat wel willen omhelzen, maar die was nergens te vinden. Het beviel haar goed in haar nieuwe huisje. Alles was prachtig wit. Al snel kwam er een konijn boven. Het bleek hetzelfde konijn te zijn. ‘En van hieruit

zul je alle lieve kinderen van de wereld opnemen,’ zei het konijn. ‘Er zijn kamers genoeg.’

‘Oh, dat lijkt me heerlijk,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Dan kan ik eindelijk voor het eerst een tante zijn.’

‘Zorg voor ze, kook voor ze, ga leuke dingen met ze doen,’ zei het konijn. ‘Deze kinderen zijn erg ongelukkig. Maak ze gelukkig.’ De vrouw had er echt zin in, en voelde zich jonger dan ooit tevoren. Het huis was inderdaad erg groot. Ze zou pannekoeken bakken, sprookjes voorlezen, en veel spelletjes met hen doen. Ook zou ze hen de andere plaatsen van de boom laten zien. Snel was haar huis vol met lieve kinderen. Ze sprak tot de boom als tot haar geliefde. Op een dag was ze verschrikt en in de war omdat haar kinderen in vuur waren. Maar de kat stelde haar gerust : het was slechts boomvuur. Het was een koud vuur wat aan hen beitelde, om hen nog meer klaar te maken voor het leven in de boom. De gezichten van reuzen waren in de boom die tot hen spraken. Op een dag stierf de vrouw. Heintje, een van de kinderen, nam de leiding over. Op de kamer van de oude vrouw stond een oude lift waar ze ingingen. Boven het huis bleek de boom gewoon door te gaan, en al snel waren ze in de wolken. Via een hele hoge tak kwamen ze in een andere boom terecht. Ze werden direkt door een konijn gegrepen en naar binnen gesleurd. Hier moesten ze gedwongen van vruchtenpastei eten. Ja, zei het konijn, want dit is de boom van de gedwongen vrucht. De kinderen vonden het niet zo erg, want de vruchtenpastei was erg lekker. Maar al snel moesten ze nog meer eten, en veel kinderen begonnen misselijk te worden. Heintje begon het toen flink zat te worden, trok zijn pistool en schoot het konijn aan flarden. Het bleek verder een prachtige boom te zijn. Ieder kind kreeg hier zijn eigen verdieping. Midden in de nacht maakte een ander konijn hen allemaal wakker, en dwong hen om chocola te eten in de gezamenlijke huiskamer. Eerst vonden de kinderen dat geweldig, maar toen ze later nog meer moesten eten werden sommigen al snel erg misselijk. Het konijn was verschrikkelijk aan het schelden. Heintje vroeg : ‘Mag ik vragen wat hiervan de bedoeling is ?’ Maar het konijn wilde er niks van zeggen. Ze hadden maar te gehoorzamen. Dat liet Heintje niet op zich zitten, greep zijn pistool en schoot op het konijn. Maar het konijn dook weg. Even later kwamen er nog meer konijnen binnen, en grepen Heintje. Heintje zou worden opgesloten achter tralies. De kinderen waren erg in paniek. Daantje werd hun nieuwe leider. ‘Zoals jullie hebben gezien is er hier niet veel pluis,’ zei Daantje. ‘We kunnen beter teruggaan.’ Maar toen ze bij de hoge tak terugkwamen zagen ze konijnse wachters staan. Toen zijn ze naar beneden gegaan, maar ook daar stonden konijnse wachters. De dagen erna werden ze weer gedwongen om chocola te eten, meer dan ze opkonden, en niemand kon er wat tegen doen. De kinderen werden doodziek. Weer riep Daantje iedereen bij elkaar en zei : ‘Dan maar zo hoog mogelijk.’ En ze gingen ditmaal gewoon zo hoog als ze konden. Ze hoopten dat ze weer een tak tegen zouden komen die hen naar een andere boom zou brengen, maar er gebeurde niks. Wel zagen ze ergens een deurtje waardoor ze naar binnen konden gaan. Het bleek een lift te zijn, maar die kon alleen maar omhoog. De kinderen gingen in de lift, en Daantje drukte op het hoogste knopje. ‘Jullie zitten vast,’ zei een stem van de lift. ‘Niemand kan van de boom van de gedwongen vrucht ontsnappen.’ Veel kinderen begonnen te huilen. Ook Daantje wist niet wat hij kon doen. Toen ze uit de lift stapten zagen ze een heks zitten, met een slang en een beer. De beer was een knuffelbeer. Toen ze wat beter keken zagen ze dat de heks en de slang een standbeeld waren. De knuffelbeer begon te lachen. ‘Wat sta je te lachen,’ zei Daantje.

‘Jullie hebben vast moeten eten van de vruchtenpastei en de chocola, nietwaar ?’ zei de knuffelbeer.

‘Ja, hoezo ?’ zei Daantje. Weer begon de knuffelbeer te lachen, ditmaal te schaterlachen.

‘Wat sta jij daar nou te lachen, domme aap,’ zei Daantje.

‘Nou,’ zei de knuffelbeer, ‘ik vind het wel grappig.’

‘Grappig,’ zei Daantje, ‘het is helemaal niet grappig. We zijn er doodziek van.’ Weer moest de knuffelbeer daar erg om lachen.

‘Zit je ons nu uit te lachen ?’ vroeg Daantje.

‘Kom, knuffel me,’ zei de knuffelbeer ineens. Daantje stapte voorzichtig naar voren, en begon de knuffelbeer te knuffelen. ‘Laat mij maar met jullie meegaan, dan zal jullie niks overkomen,’ zei de knuffelbeer. Samen gingen ze terug en de knuffelbeer had gelijk. Nu hij mee was gekomen lieten de konijnen hen met rust. De knuffelbeer was heel aardig. Op een dag vroeg Daantje waarom de konijnen hen niet meer dwongen. ‘Omdat ze bang voor me zijn,’ zei de knuffelbeer.

‘Kun jij Heintje dan niet bevrijden ?’ vroeg Daantje.

‘Nee,’ zei de knuffelbeer, ‘een konijnenslot valt niet zo maar open te krijgen.’ De konijnse wachters stonden ook nog steeds bij de grote tak en beneden, en daar viel niet zomaar langs te komen. ‘Ik zal je vertellen hoe je bij de knuffelboom kan komen,’ zei de knuffelbeer. ‘Midden in de nacht als iedereen slaapt dan schuift het standbeeld van de heks en de slang even opzij waardoor er een tunnel ontstaat die tot de knuffelboom leidt.’

Daantje besluit er naar toe te gaan om meer kennis op te doen. Hij moet helemaal alleen gaan, want de knuffelbeer is van die boom verbannen. Voor de jongere kinderen zou het te gevaarlijk zijn. Alles lukt, en al gauw komt Daantje via de tunnel aan in de knuffelboom. Maar het is alles behalve een knuffelplaats. Militaire konijnen lopen hier rond. Daantje heeft nog nooit zoveel wapens bij elkaar gezien, en ze zien er heel gevaarlijk uit. Deze konijnen zien er veel erger uit dan de andere konijnen. Het zijn roofkonijnen, als ratten. En hun oren zijn ook een stuk korter. ‘Neem van mij aan, deze konijnen zijn geen stumperds, nee, zeker niet. Geen ruzie mee krijgen,’ zegt een konijn tegen hem. ‘Wat kom je hier doen trouwens.’ Maar Daantje loopt door. ‘Wat hebben jullie met Heintje gedaan ?’ roept hij. Even later komt hij bij een hok waarin een heleboel knuffelberen zijn, en waar ook Heintje zit. Heintje is flink boos. Heintje ziet er een stuk ouder uit, en vertelt hem dat ze gedwongen worden gevaarlijke medicijnen te slikken. Als dat zo door gaat heeft Heintje niet lang meer te leven. Daantje schrikt daar erg van. ‘Daantje,’ zegt Heintje, ‘herinner je dat tante het

eens heeft gehad over het huisje waar ze eerst woonde, vlak bij de boom, dat daar plagende elven woonden ? Misschien dat zij kunnen helpen. Wij kunnen niet van deze boom weg, maar als jij naar beneden loopt dan kon je door de voordeur eruit en naar ze op zoek gaan.’

Goed idee, zegt Daantje, en vertrekt meteen. Na een tijdje zoeken komt hij bij het huisje van het oude vrouwtje aan. In het huisje vindt hij de elfjes. Ze zijn erg droevig om wat ze het oude vrouwtje allemaal hebben aangedaan. Daantje vertelt hen het verhaal, en al snel gaan ze met hem mee naar de knuffelboom. Ditkeer gingen ze plagen en pesten zoals ze nog nooit eerder hadden gedaan, maar nu allemaal voor een goed doel. De konijnen waren snel allemaal van de boom vertrokken. Deze magische elven wisten heel goed hoe ze de kooi moesten openen, en al snel waren Heintje en de knuffelberen vrij.

Het Witte Kasteel

Hoofdstuk 1. Het Trauma van de Waarheid

De verwachting was dat alles goed zou lopen, en in zekere zin deed het dat ook, maar Marlies was stervende. Ze kon haar ziekte niet de baas. Ze was erg vrolijk, dat wel, maar de ziekte begon z'n tol te eisen. Haar lichaam werds steeds meer gammel. Ze kon niet bij de wortel van dit alles. Het was een raadsel. Deze allesverwoestende ziekte zou haar spoedig in de dodelijke grip ten onder brengen. Ze had een waas voor de ogen, en begon langzaam blind en doof te worden, afgesneden van de buitenwereld. Haar plan was om er zelf een einde aan te maken, voordat de ziekte dat zou doen. Ze zou daarvoor van een toren afspringen, om zo te pletter te vallen op de markt. Maar het dakzeil van een markt-tent zorgde ervoor dat ze dit overleefde. Toen gooide ze zichzelf voor de trein.

Er was twee minuten stilte in de kerk. De dominee las voor, een gedicht. Iedereen huilde. Arme Marlies. De bomen leefden rustig voort, met Marlies als de wind die hun bladeren bewoog. Zij bracht hen tot leven, door haar dood. Bloedbessen op een bord, thee ernaast. De tovenaar had haar zo gemaakt. Leeuwen waren haar vrienden ... witte leeuwen.

Een kleine jongen dacht na over zijn tante Marlies. Hij zou het witte kasteel waarin zij woonde missen. Snel woonden andere mensen daar. De kleine jongen groeide op, werd oud, maar vergat het witte kasteel nooit. Alsof leeuwen daar wandelden, altijd gingen zijn gedachten er naar terug. Hij was bang als haar te worden, stervende, maar een vreemde gezondheid had hem in de grip. Zijn gedachten waren meesterlijk, zijn honger was rijp, zijn staar ongrijpbaar, onbegrijpelijk, alsof de tovenaar hem had verlost. Zijn fantasieen waren kalm.

Hij schreef een boek over mensen, als een boek over vreemde wezens, als geesten wonen in hutten. Hij schreef een boek over de winden, en de tragiek van wolken. Hij was een eenling. Op een dag stond het witte kasteel te koop. Hij aarzelde geen moment en kocht het. Toen begon zijn leven op te bloeien.

Niemand had verwacht dat het zo snel zou gaan, maar hij werd koning, en regeerde een nieuw land. Grenzen waren aan het vervagen. Hij hield het geluk in zijn hand, trillend. Hij was bang het weer te verliezen, maar de liefde kalmeerde hem, stelde hem gerust. Tante Marlies was in zijn gedachten als de witte thee, in een prachtige witte jurk als bloesem. Ze was een plaatje. Zo zag hij haar altijd, als het getij van witte chocolade. Ze was altijd zijn lievelings-tante, en hij koesterde haar in zijn herinneringen.

Diep van binnen wist hij dat het een leugen was, de manier waarop hij met haar omging. Het had altijd iets onechts. Het was alsof ze het maar acteerden, een poppenspel. Maar hij had van haar genoten, en zij van hem.

De leugen regeerde, ook in het nieuwe land. Het was een kunst, als het raadsel der waarheid. Van binnen voerde hij een oorlog, maar ook dat was slechts schijn. Hij was een man van maskers.

Het witte kasteel maakte een denker van hem, een filosoof, en in het land was er hervorming na hervorming. En daar bleef het allemaal niet bij. Nee, sprookjesachtig moest het zijn, al was het allemaal maar een leugen. Hier moest het zijn. Professionele leugenaars richtte hij op, die veel moesten liegen. Ja, hij geloofde in de leugen, voor hem was dat het eeuwige leven. 'Je kan het ook van een andere kant bekijken,' zei hij altijd.

Zijn droom was een paradijs, en hij wilde dat verwezenlijken. Met leugens bouwde hij voort, maar het werd een prachtig land, en men noemde hem de leugen-koning. Er moest een einde komen aan het trauma van de waarheid. Ze hadden al lang gevochten. De waarheid hield hen veel te veel bezig, en voor wat ? De waarheid was een gruwelijke dictator, maar hij was de dromenkoning. Hij werd bestempeld als gemeen en gek, maar het land was majestueus mooi. Ze konden alles van hem zeggen, maar niet dat hij geen kunstenaar was. Hij was een deskundige gek, een geleerde. Nonsense was zijn doel, want de nuchtere waarheid was saai. Het land was allesbehalve zaai. De clowns waren gekomen. Ze brachten het zoete verdriet. Zij waren de lakeien van de dageraad.

Spijbelaars werden gearresteerd voor school. Er kwam een koud en hard regiem, met een vleugje warmte en doel. Hij schiep een nieuwe aarde en een nieuwe hemel, en werd God genoemd. Door zowel vriend als vijand. En hij dacht aan tante Marlies, die zijn drijfveer was. Tante Marlies werd het boegbeeld van een nieuw ziekenhuis, en het witte kasteel was het huis van de politie. Dit alles omdat hij dat zo wilde.

De zeemeermin sprak, en haar woorden waren als de woorden van zijn tante Ans die altijd verhalen voorlas. Haar woorden zouden tot in eeuwigheden doorklinken. In haar kom was het witte kasteel niets dan vergif, omhuld met koud zout. Het was een vreemde dans der zeemeerminnen die hem ontwaakten. Zij grepen zijn ziel en trokken hem in de diepte, in de wildernis van een nieuw bestaan, waar hij de witte leeuwenkoning zou zijn.

Zij lieten hem de toekomst zien in een bol, als heerlijke chocolade. Zij maakten een academie.

Het huis wat hij nu had was een donkere grot, maar hij waakte op in een betoverdende droom. Hij zou voor duizend jaren slapen, want het stafje der zeemeerminnen had hem geraakt. Hij liep voorop naar een graf.

Dit graf was van tante Ans. Hij omhelsde haar, gaf haar leven. Haar woorden galmden door.

Zij moest hier wezen. Ze had respect.

De bomen grepen haar, en maakten haar tot een prinses. De sneeuw der zeemeerminnen daalde

neer. Hij had de indruk dat hij het goed had gedaan. Een tuin met betoverde rozen. Hij liet zijn kennis los op het meer.

Hoofstuk 2. De Gruwel der Eeuwen

Het hek van de rozentuin was hoog, met gouden punten. Velen stierven daar, maar het kon hem niet schelen. Hij was gek en wreed, een koningszoon. Hij was te deftig om zich te bekommeren om de zieken en de armen.

Hij verkoelde, en nog steeds was zijn hart brandende met een passie, maar dat was slechts voor geld en macht. Het ging om de grootte voor hem, niet meer om de kwaliteit, want dat was een graf. Hij walgde wanneer hij het woord kwaliteit hoorde. Het was een kwelling voor hem. Het moest groots zijn en gruwelijk, maar meesterlijk.

En zo werd zijn land een spookhuis, een nachtmerrie, gemaakt van witte chocolade, dat zo oud was geworden dat het giftig was. Maar hier wist hij wel raad mee. Het was een oorlogswapen, een medicijn, om de indiaan weer op het paard te hijsen. Zijn woonplaats stond vol met kleine indiaanse poppetjes, en hij liet ze oorlog voeren tegen elkaar. Ook schilderde hij, met het rozenvuur. Hij werd de gruwel der eeuwen.

Hij was de witte leeuwenkoning, de leugenkoning, en zeemeerminnen dienden hem. Maar hij miste een vrouw, alhoewel hij van het idee gruwelde dat hij een vrouw nodig zou moeten hebben. Hij haatte vrouwen diep van binnen. Dat was ook de reden waarom eigenlijk alles wat zich tussen hem en tante Marlies en tante Ans slechts spel was. Als er geen wet was dan zou hij ze hebben vermoord, als een dolle hond. En hij was druk bezig die wet af te schaffen. Moorden zou volgens hem moeten kunnen. Hij wilde leven van de moord, en dan vooral de moord op vrouwen. Dat waren wel de minste wezens die hij zich kon voorstellen. Maar al gauw had hij spijt van zijn ideeen. Hij wilde vrouwen een kans geven. Zij moesten gewoon geschoold worden.

En daarom maakte hij een wet dat alle vrouwen verplicht naar school moesten, tot de laatste dag van hun leven.

De Gele Vlinder

Hoofdstuk 1.

Ik liep op de straten van Virgo, en tegelijkertijd liep er iemand op de starten van Mercurius die mij na probeerde te doen, een dubbelganger. Ik ging een huis binnen, en degene op Mercurius ook, op hetzelfde moment. Ik werd gevolgd. Ik ging naar boven en keek door het raam naar de hoge toren van Virgo. Ik zag Mercurius branden in de verte. Hij speelde op de piano. Hij had wat klokken op

zijn tafel staan die hij aan het repareren was, gouden en zilveren. Hij had een Egyptisch aura, zo iemand waar je geen vat op kan krijgen, maar ik hield van hem. Hij was raadselachtig en mysterieus. Was hij de reden dat Mercurius brandde ? Beneden in de winkel verkocht hij chocola, maar hij had meerdere winkels in deze stad. Ik had in deze stad een vechtschool. Ik zag een andere planeet branden, Venus, de zonnetepel. Ik werd als een gevaar gezien. Men wilde mij uit de weg ruimen. Hij werkte aan zijn klokken, en andere mechanismes. Ook verbouwde hij paradijselijke groenten, en verzorgde hij paradijselijke dieren. Hij was zo'n beetje Manusje van alles, en hij was mijn bodyguard. Ook was hij een bouwer van computers, en verhuurde hij woningen. Ook was hij directeur van een school, mijn oude school nog wel. Hij had mij eens gered. Ik zocht altijd het gevaar op, en hij redde me er altijd uit. Hij was mijn geheime sleutel. Mijn moeder was een prostituee, waar ook nogal minzaam op werd neergekeken, ook omdat ze mijn moeder was, maar bij hem was zij van harte welkom. Ze kwam vaak bij hem om te computeren. Ik hield van mijn moeder, oh God. Om haar was ik in de handen van tormentors.

Mijn moeder zat ingewikkeld in elkaar, als de Inanna. Zij was een striptease. Op sexueel gebied deinsde ze niet voor veel dingen terug, maar in het normale leven was ze fragiel als een nimf. Mijn vader was een schreeuwlelijkerd, haar pooier, maar hij had een goed hart. Hij was een sirene, een beroemd zanger in de stad, een goedbewaard geheim. Ik leefde in ketenen, achter tralies, maar dat besefte ik nog niet goed. Ik ging nog gewoon overal naartoe. Mijn vader was een tafel-nazi, die op de markt tafels probeerde te verkopen op een opdringerige manier. Als je te lang keek zonder iets te kopen dan werd hij kwaad. Ook verkocht hij dekens. Het werd hier op Virgo nogal aangemoedigd om veel bijbaantjes te hebben. Het was de lik van de leeuw. Maar vat erop krijgen deed ik niet. Achter mijn vechtschool stond de bibliotheek waar ik vaak naartoe ging om te lezen, om er een beetje uit te zijn. Ik combineerde vechtkunst met dans en striptease, en dat was volgens mij de foute combinatie. Ik had veel vijanden. Vooral in de mode-wereld had ik veel vijanden, omdat ik gescheurde kleding wilde introduceren, en armoedige kleding, versleten en oud. De man van Mercurius volgde mij. Hij had een pistool. Ik rende de trap op, en viel. Hij had me al geraakt. Maar mijn bodyguard stond plotseling tussen hem en mij in. Ik werd wakker in zijn kamer. Hij had de kogel er al uit gehaald, maar ik bloedde nog steeds. 'Zij begrijpen het roze niet,' zei hij. Daar moest ik het mee doen. Hij was een man van weinig woorden.

Mijn pleegmoeder was de koningin van de luipaarden. Ze startte de jacht op de man van Mercurius. Ze volgde hem na, en vond uit waar hij zijn schuilplaats had : in een veld van bizons. Zij moordde de bizons uit, maar kreeg hem niet te pakken. We besloten rustig te blijven. Het geheimenis van het eeuwig vuur was hier : een zoetwater rivier van genezing, de lik van de leeuw. Mijn bodyguard bouwde een pistool voor mij. Het was een pistool met vele klokken, een zwaard krommend in de zon. Ik was een boogschutter, ik kon goed richten. Het geheim van de stad was achter een poort van twee bokkengeesten, als een poort in een ark. Het was een veld van bokkenjagers. De man van Mercurius staat hier als een standbeeld.

Ik ga naar binnen, in de tuin, waar bokken hangen. Ik klamp me vast aan zijn standbeeld. Venus brandt. De melk is heet, het explodeert. Ik ga naar binnen, in het standbeeld. Ik vind de boog, de bokkenpijl. Alle vruchten branden hier, en dan ook de bomen. De man van Mercurius heeft twee

gezichten, voor en achter. Hij heeft een duister geheim. Zijn schepen zijn in de haven, waar dag en nacht wordt gewerkt. De zeemeerminnen sterven in het water van Mercurius, het geheime gif. Hij is een man van dwang met strakke ogen. Steen is alles wat er over is na de brandende nacht. Dit is de stad van steen. De gravers graven in zijn vlezig hart. Gepolijste stenen is hun vak. De sirene staat hoog op de toren van de stad, om te waarschuwen, met haar gruwelijk gedicht, maar niemand luistert. Ze slapen allemaal in de nacht. Gepolijste stenen is alles wat ze willen zien. In de wateren heeft Mercurius zijn booreilanden, op zoek naar goud, aardgas en olie. Hij is de juwelier van de hel. In schelpen verbergt hij zijn hoofden. Zeven mannen zijn gekomen, de achtste moet nog komen. Ze hebben mij op het oog. Ze zien mij als het Hermes van de goden, de lijm waardoor alles gaat branden. Ik ben gekluisterd in een pot. Zij willen mij drinken als de goddelijke nectar. Apen rennen door de stad, omsingelen de toren, en rennen dan naar boven. Zij drukken de sirene opzij, en worden zelf het vaandel van bevrijding. De bodyguard leeft.

Ze geeft me de sleutel tot het bokkenveld. Ze noemt geen namen. De man van Mercurius zit op een troon. Achter hem is de grote roltrap waar alle zwaarden slap worden. De stad is grotendeels overdekt.

Zij die hem volgen hebben geen oren.

Zij is een prostituee, huurmoordenaar en woningverhuurder, vele manieren om toe te slaan. Ik blijf ver uit haar buurt. Ze zijn allemaal bezig hun architectuur uit te tekenen, en de bomen blijven ze uittekenen. Ze staat klaar om toe te slaan. Ze is een discipel van de man van Mercurius.

Hoofdstuk 2.

De hekken hebben hoge punten hier. Ik kan er nauwelijks doorheen komen. Alles is wazig hier. De hoge gothiek is als mijn tralies. Ik ben het drakenkind. Ik word door een draak bewaakt. Ik ben nog jong. De man van Mercurius is een slot aan mijn lichaam. Hij is een dode steen. Iedereen is hier gestorven. Ik kan me alleen uitstrekken naar de hogere kunst. Er is alleen leven in het licht. In het duister kan niemand bestaan. Ik schenk mijn moeder een steen van licht, en ze komt tot leven. Ze kan de draden zien, de patronen, de scheuren, de naden, en het grote gat. Ze kan de wond zien, het litteken, en het graf. Zij is de martelares in vuur geboren, als een tralie in mijn kooi. Met haar zal ik voorzichtig omgaan. Ik ben het Hermes der goden.

De engelen zijn hier bliksemschichten, in de tuin. Ze houden zoveel achter. Ik kan alleen maar staren. Alleen kennis doet leven, de onwetendheid is de dood. Venus brandt, haar licht verlicht de nacht. Hier zijn de stralen van het moederhart. Zij woont op nummer 43, en hij woont op nummer 10. Ik loop naar nummer 88, in hetzelfde flatgebouw, waar de spinnen leven, waar ze hun stenen webben weven. Het is de weg tot het verscheurde kant, waar het licht achter schuilt, de bron van het leven bewakende. De gele vlinder zal vliegen in de nacht. Hij zal vliegen over de woestijn en aankomen in het paradijs, Mars in Virgo. Hoog op de burcht zal hij staan, met al zijn wachters.

Goud zal het regenen in de straten. Zij had mij gegrepen, en trok mij naar haar kamer om me als een paard te beteugelen. Aan het eind van de rit was ik niets meer dan één van de vele hobbelpaarden. Ze had een kamer in de woestijn. Ik wachtte op de gele vlinder die langs zou komen. Hij greep me. Hij was mijn bodyguard.

In mijn vechtschool bracht ik centaurs onder. Zij zouden allen vlinders worden. Een heel leger van vlinders zou er opstaan. Maar ik zakte meer en meer ineen, totdat een piano mij vond. De piano was te berijden. Het werd mijn paard. Ik werd de ruiter. De piano nam mij mee over de woestijn, daar waar geen hond door kon komen, volgende het pad van de gele vlinder. Ik kwam aan in het Virgose Amerika, waar ik in het vrijheidsbeeld ging wonen, een beeld met een doodskop. Ik rees mijn zwaard en viel, zo diep, dat ik in het indiaanse deel terecht kwam. Hier waren drie doodskoppen, drie indiaanse opperhoofden. Zij werden aangeraakt door de gele vlinder, en kwamen tot leven. Zij hoorden het geluid van mijn piano, en werden gelukkig. Zij zouden regeren. De pit van Mars was een thee der liefde, die alle monden liet branden. Izu had van die thee gedronken, en sindsdien brandde zijn mond. Hij was de Attis van de insectenwereld.

Zij reden op motors, van een futuristische apocalypse. Goud zou het nu regenen, want koning Midas zou terugkomen. De man van Mercurius hield een zwaard op mij gericht, en een drietand, en ik zakte weg. Dit hier was het rijk van Neptunus, de zeegod, die zoveel nimfendochters had. Deze draak van een man heerste niet alleen over de zee, maar ook over Virgo, en ik ging naar hem voor hulp. Deze tovenaar gaf mij drie brandende stenen. Ik kon zijn geluid horen in de verte. Zij dragen het eeuwig vuur van genezing. En die genezing was alleen in het vele licht wat werd afgegeven, door het zwavel binnenin, eeuwig zwavel, onverwoestbaar. Ik werd warm van binnen. Het Griekenland was een vlies hier, en ik gleed dieper in de tempel. Ik was in de maag van de draak. Ik werd uiteengescheurd, alles werd dun en lang, totdat ik het geheim zag, vastgehouden door twee bokkenwachters, twee bokkengeesten, als de ark van licht, en het licht was een illusie, wat het geketende boek versluierde, en dit boek was slechts de sleutel tot de bibliotheek, de boekenwinkel, waar al het kwaad geschiedde. Ik las de boeken van de hemel, en zag de hel. Wie zou de dochters van Neptunus bevrijden ? De gele vlinder zou het doen. Ik gooide één van mijn zwavelstenen door de ruit van de antieke boekenwinkel, en de winkel was in vlammen. De tweede zwavelsteen gooide ik door de ruiten van de bakkerij, en de derde steen slikte ik in, en stierf. Niemand kon mij nu nog vinden, alleen de gele vlinder.

De dochters van Neptunus stonden voor mij, allemaal nimfen. Ze hadden tere gezichtjes. Ik legde mijn handen op hen, en maakte ze vrij. De gele vlinder was een sleutel in mij. Zij waren de vlammen in mijn hart. De draak nam mij op, en schonk mij het gas. Ik was de achtste man van Mercurius.

Hoofdstuk 3.

Mijn vechtschool ontving het Venus, de brandende zonnetepel, de poort tot Izu, en de vlinders waren in de stad. Het zou sneeuwen nu, en zij hadden hun eigen webben. Het eeuwige zwavel was

een trots van genezing. En ik wilde Izu kennen. Ik was de boogschutter. Er waren bosbranden overal, en de zwarte gaten werden zichtbaar. En Izu nam het over van de Horus, en deze werd het stuur van de motor. Zijn lichaam was een brandende tong. Het orakel van de tong had hen allemaal tezamen gebracht. Zoete banaantjes lagen op een schaal, en de kunsten van chocola werden zichtbaar. 'Breng mij nu het drop op een schaal,' sprak de gele vlinder. En snel kwamen de nimfen van Neptunus met hun schalen. De bibliotheek werd bovenop mijn vechtschool geplaatst. We hadden nu een doel. Het gevecht moet gecombineerd worden met oude wijsheid. Mercurius was als een beschonkene. Hij waggelde, en viel. De vissers kwamen op, uit de diepe waters waar ze waren verdronken, en gooiden hun netten weer uit. Ik rende de trap op, en riep om mijn moeder. Zij stond daar bovenaan de trap, maar het was een roltrap, en die ging met volle kracht naar beneden en niet naar boven. De gele vlinder nam mij op en bracht mij naar haar. De fluisteraars van het heelal moesten mij hebben. Zij stuurden een tweede man op mij af. Hij had zijn havens hier, zijn scheepswerven, zijn woningbouw. Ik rende door de straten. Het huis van de gele vlinder stond hier niet meer. Ik keek naar de daken. De vleermuizen en de raven waren verdwenen. Ik raakte in paniek. Hij was de vlinder van het trauma, de naaldenprikker. Ik bloedde. Ik viel op de grond, en de vlinder nam mij op, de grote anti-vlinder.

Ditmaal redde mijn moeder mij, en nam mij naar mijn pleegmoeder, de koningin van de luipaarden. De grote anti-vlinder wist ons echter te vinden, maar het water begon te golven, en werd woest op hem. Zijn schip verging. En deze piraat had een grote geroofde schat. Wij doken de schat op en brachten het naar boven. Gouden tepels die chocolade melk gaven. De koe was vrij. De fluisteraars waren woedend. Nu zouden ze kabaal gaan maken. Ze stuurden een derde man op mij af, maar die was zo dronken dat die niet veel kon beginnen. Toen besloten de fluisteraars zelf te komen.

Ik kan er niet veel van navertellen. Het was het duisterste gat van mijn leven. Ze verwoesten mijn vechtschool, en de bibliotheek. In een zeegraf ging ik. Ik werd een piraat, en ik werd zelf een fluisteraar. Voor het eerst in mijn leven vertel ik het verhaal. Fluisteraars zijn vreemde insecten. Ze geven giftige melk, en maken webben. Ze verwarren de ander, omdat ze bang zijn dat iemand hun hart binnendringt. Ze zijn onnavolgbaar. Het zijn orakels. Met raadsels bewaken ze hun bruggen. Ze verscheuren alles, en bouwen het dan weer op. Alleen als de zilveren tepels vermengd zouden worden met de gouden tepels, dan zou er zuivere melk vloeien, maar de fluisteraars hielden dezen altijd gescheiden. Ik maakte daar verandering in. Ik was zelf nu een fluisteraar en werd al snel de koning der fluisteraars. Zij hadden een oor wat doof was. Maar de zilver-gouden tepels waren hun oren nu. Zij waren luisteraars nu. Ook konden zij zien met deze tepels. Daarvoor waren zij blind. Waarom hielden ze altijd het goud en zilver gescheiden ? Omdat ze mij wilden opwekken, de rode vlinder. Die zou alleen maar door angst en woede opgewekt kunnen worden. Ik was de Nemesis.

De Vierde

Aarde

Hoofdstuk 1.

Wij waren gemaakt van een gouden amalgaam. Wij waren kinderen van de godin, die vrij in de tuin leefden. Alleen het gouden amalgaam kon de stralen van haar liefdeszon opvangen, om ons tot eeuwig leven op te wekken. Het was een liefdes-amalgaam, volkomen toegewijd aan de godin. Ook de hekken rondom de tuin waren van het gouden amalgaam gemaakt. Zij waren hoog en scherp. Wij voelden ons veilig binnen deze hekken. Eens aten wij van de verboden vrucht van de vleermuizenboom, een kaars, die in ons binnenste begon te branden, zodat we door een andere wereld geroofd werden, en wij kinderen van de hel werden. Maar de godin verstootte ons niet. Nog meer dan ooit wijdde ze zich toe aan haar liefde voor ons, en met geduld en passie probeerde zij ons terug te lokken naar de tuin. Een gouden vrucht hing zij voor onze ogen, en trok deze weg zodra wij ernaar grepen, om ons zo haar te laten volgen op het pad terug naar de tuin. Het was een verboden en geheime tuin voor velen. Deze wereld aanbad Doornroosje, de slapende prinses, en voor de paasheks hadden ze niet veel sympathie. Deze paasheks was Inanna, de godin van de armoede, die het geheim van Doornroosje kende. Doornroosje was een ei in haar handen, een ei die ze zou afpellen. Doornroosje sliep nog steeds in het paradijs, en zou tot de berg der goden moeten komen, de onderwereld.

Er was een doodslucht in de tuin, waarin zij die zich niet konden beheersen leefden. Altijd liepen ze hun begeertes achterna, als in een roes. Zij waren de schone slaapsters, de volgelingen van Doornroosje, van alles wat mooi en duur was. De onthechting was een groot geheimenis, maar zij werd gedemoniseerd en als heks bestempeld. Zij riep vanaf de berg, vanuit de wildernis. Zij wilde Doornroosje opwekken tot een hogere wereld. Dit zijn geen gewijde paadjes. Deze paadjes zijn afgesloten door de plaatselijke gemeentes. De draak zelf was de prins van de jungle die Doornroosje vrijkocht uit de kooi van de bebouwde kom. De kus wekte haar op tot de wildernis, omgeven door doornenstruiken.

De slang van het paradijs was eerst een draak, en zij gaf aan paarden de macht om zich te verzetten tegen hun rijders. Zij maakte eenhoorns van hen, de grote ontwaking. Ook gaf zij de macht aan bizons om zich te verzetten tegen hun jagers. Zij maakte eenhoorns van hen. Maar haar wijsheid werd buiten de poorten van het kasteel gezet, en zij veranderde in een vlam, om te verwarren en te verleugenen. Zij gaf haar aanklagers over aan een dwaalgeest.

Zij was de vleesgeworden boom die haar eigen koninklijkheid had bewaard. Zij was de koninklijkheid van het communistisch anarchisme. Zij was de koningin van de bloemen. Wilde bloemen had ze in onze haren gestoken, in deze drakentuin. Zij trok ons omhoog op het schip, toen de dauw ging vallen. De rivier van plastic omhulde ons. Zij had haar eigen pad, en wilde niks weten van het verwende gemeentepark. Daarom was zij onuitgenodigd, gehaat door velen, en gevreesd. De draak viel en werd in een kooi gestopt, maar niemand kon haar geheim doorgronden. Zij wist

dat slechts hen buiten de kooi gekooid waren.

Ze hadden maar een fragment van haar vastgezet. Zij was natuurlijk veel groter. Zij leefde in plaatsen waar zij nooit zouden komen. Zij leefde in een mengsel van vuilheid in de dieptes van de wildernis, als sluiers van haar schoonheid. Deze schoonheid werd geproclameerd door een genetische collage van juwelen. De stenen stapelden zich op tot een druipkoninkrijk. Zij liet geen steen heel, perste hen geheel uit. Haar schoonheid kon niet uitgedrukt worden door stenen, alleen door wildernis. Zij ging over de muren. Zij van de smetvrees zouden daar nooit komen. Zij bouwden auto’s die alleen maar op gladgestreken wegen konden rijden, en die het zonlicht als tralies weerspiegelden. Maar zij zocht het licht in de duisternis op, de zon van de onderwereld. En zij leefde in ons, op een diepere plaats. Hier in de diepe wildernis had zij haar huisje van snoep geplaatst, en was zij slechts een diepere inwijder. Het harnas van snoep lokte de soldaat tot een diepere strijd, de patronen van de wildernis, de verborgen arena waar slechts zij keek. Zij was het kruis van de jongen in zijn jeugd om hem te behoeden voor een veel groter kwaad. De kooi die zij hier had gebouwd was niets vergeleken met de kooi van de stad. Zij was immers het pasen gevierd met chocola. Zij was de moeder van de jungle, maar zij onderwees haar kinderen over de gevaren. Zij bewapende haar kinderen en ontzag hen niet. Zij tuchtigde haar kinderen reeds vroeg, en daarom moest de heks dood. De stad wilde kinderen verwennen met een allesverblindend licht, verlammend en bemoederend.

Zij was de zwarte koningin des doods, de koningin van het oerwoud, toen het witte haar kinderen en haar schone land stal. En zij beval haar jager het sneeuwwitte om te brengen, want het witte moest sterven, zeven maal. En zij hing haar vrucht van het gouden amalgaam. En het sneeuwwitte was jong, oningewijd, omgeven door witte doornen. En zij lokte haar tot de deur van de dood in het oerwoud. En het sneeuwwitte gewaad werd afgedaan, en een zwarte vrouw rees op.

Zij was de koningin van de wolven, de koningin van de zwarte draken. Vele andere kinderen waren tot de deur des doods gekomen, en haar moddermannen namen hen op en brachten hen tot haar. Wilde bloemen hebben hen toen ingewijd, en ze raakten verstrikt in haar webben.

Zij had ons geschapen in de dooier, omringd door het witte, in een ei. Zij hing dit ei hoog. Het was een ei omringd door vlees. Wij groeiden op en aten van het vlees, en kwamen tot het huisje van snoep in de wildernis. Binnenin waren paaseieren versierd. Ze had een paasrijk in het woud. Haar paaswachters liepen op haar druipmuren. Zij wilde de lichtjes van het pinksteren doven. In de poppenstadjes werden keurige pinksterfeestjes gehouden, vol van smetvrees. En zij was onuitgenodigd. Daarom bracht zij haar stortvloed, en liet hen het ei van pasen zien, hun verboden vrucht. En hun kindertjes begonnen ervan te eten, en werden uit de stad gezet.

Zij had haar eigen stadje aan de rand van haar rivier, diep in de wildernis, een schilderachtig stadje, en zij gingen van vrucht tot vrucht, van ei tot ei. Haar eenhoorns liepen in pas, een drachtige optocht door de stad. En de stad lag op heuveltjes in de wildernis, en de eenhoorns gingen over de bruggen tussen die heuveltjes, langs de paars-roze sluiers.

‘Kun je van haar houden ?’ vroeg ik. We zaten gehurkt op het bed. Ik hield haar billen vast die heet aanvoelden. Vanuit de raampjes konden we de bomen zien met hun blauwpaarse vruchtjes en hun donkergroene blaadjes. Ze duwde mij neer, en ging op me liggen. ‘Natuurlijk,’ zei ze. ‘Ze is mijn moeder.’ Ik kuste haar, en ze was gelukkig. We waren naakt, maar we schaamden ons niet voor elkaar, want we waren in haar hof. Van gouden amalgaam waren wij gemaakt. In een kooi vonden we doorgang. Het was niet onze dood, maar een transformatie. We waren als vlindertjes in haar bos. Wij kwamen voort vanuit het orgie der goden, het gouden amalgaam, wat als een vrucht voor ons hing, als een ei, en waartegen gewaarschuwd werd, want men vreesde de geheimenissen van het bos. De goden hadden er veel liefde in gestopt, als het serum van bevrijding, als de paradijselijke zweer. Maar zie, zij werd geweerd als een melaatse. En zij hield de raadselen van de tuin verborgen.

En het imperium werd gebouwd, en zij werd als een boeman beschouwd, maar in haar waren de rangen gegarandeerd. Er was niks mechanisch aan, alles was natuurlijk, vanuit de dood voortkomend, het was een roze spot. Er moest plaats voor haar gemaakt worden, dit was haar vereiste, want ze was al lang genoeg weggedrukt. Zij hadden naast haar niet veel in te brengen, want zij kenden het raadsel van de dood niet. Zij omsingelde de grote stad met haar eenhoorns, en trok haar kinderen er één voor één uit. Tussen haar woestijnen door zijn rivieren, met bruggen waar barbaren voor staan, één wachter per brug, en wie kan hen verslaan ? Maar kinderen trekken zij mij, hen die bezegeld zijn door haar liefde. Zartan was de poortwachter van haar secte, bestempeld als een verleider, maar haar strikken brachten hen tot leven, voortkomende vanuit het meer. Haar moddermannen werden zij, en zij schuwde de bokken niet, zij waren de dragers van haar geheim. De secte werd groot en gevreesd, en men vergat de secte van de grote stad. Arsis en Jupo waren twee andere poortwachters van haar, maar die stonden dieper in haar rijk, want dit rijk had veel gebieden. En ook de kinderen werden beproefd door deze wachters. En velen bleven steken. De worsteling met de roos was een grote. Haar secte scheurde families uiteen.

Ze zat rechtop. Ze had contact met de bloemen, met de Braziliaanse schietbloem, met de Rijn-bloem, de vuur-bloem, en de flamingo-bloem. Zij had het wilde witte konijn gevolgd tot de sprekende bloemen. En zij hadden verborgen de vrucht die haar deed groeien. Zij likte aan de vrucht, nam ervan, en begon langzaam te groeien, tot de hoge burcht in de woestijn. De zon van de Sumerische onderwereld verlichtte de woestijn. Hier werd nog het zuivere Ninurta gegoten, de boodschapper der goden. Nergal, de god van de onderwereld zat hier op zijn troon, met speren aan weerszijde. Hij sprak en genas. Het was hier waar de eenzamen elkaar hadden gevonden. Hier was de Sumerische ark, terwijl buiten het gif van Mercurius regende. Er zou een zondvloed komen, want het tijdperk van Mercurius was nog maar net begonnen. En daar stonden ze dan, drie boodschappers van de goden : Ninurta, Hermes en Mercurius, en zij kwamen tot de troon van Nergal. En Mercurius had het gezicht van een wortel en had een grote glimlach. ‘Ik weet het, er zijn duizenden mercuriussen,’ zei Nergal. ‘En jij bent de enige die toegang hebt gekregen tot mijn paleizen.’

‘Vader,’ sprak Mercurius, ‘het kwik is alleen maar groeiende buiten, en u kent dit vergif. En u weet ook wat het enige anti-gif hiertegen is. De cocon van Mercurius heeft de wortelkwik-vlinder voortgebracht. Zij heeft uw ark gebouwd.’

‘Schenk mij het wortelkwik, Mercurius,’ sprak Nergal. Mercurius deed een stap naar voren en gaf hem een zakje met wortels waarin het wortelkwik zat. ‘Dit zijn de zaadjes voor wortelkwik-bloemen,’ zei Mercurius. Toen vertrok hij.

‘Hermes en Ninurta,’ zei Nergal, ‘jullie gaan deze zaadjes zaaien in de koninklijke tuin.’ Hermes en Ninurta deden direct wat hen gezegd was. Snel groeiden er in de tuin de weelderigste bloemen die zich in het snelste tempo begonnen voort te planten. Het wortelkwik was duizendmaal sneller dan het normale kwik. ‘Dank aan Mercurius,’ zei Nergal. En Nergal sprak tot al zijn volgelingen : ‘Dank dat u allen gekomen bent. Zoals u weet kunt u niet alleen bevrijd worden van uw kettingen door exorcisme, maar ook juist door ingewijd te worden in de mysterien.’ Een beeld van Mithras werd naar voren gebracht, die vlak voor de opkomst van het christendom door de Romeinen werd aanbeden. Mithras streed tegen het kwaad, wat de vorm had van een stier. Het centrale thema van Mithraisme was de slacht van deze stier, het gedoopt worden in zijn bloed, en banket te houden met de zon. In het pre-atlantische was Mithras genaamd Matras, en werd het kwaad als een bizon uitgebeeld, waartegen Matras streed. Het afleggen van het oude leven door naaktheid, naturisme, was een belangrijk item in zowel Mithraisme en Matraisme, maar werd door de christelijke priesterdienst steeds meer ingebonden. Door onderwerping aan de goden kon men hogerop komen in het Mithraisme en Matraisme, maar het kerkelijke christendom legde vooral het accent op de onderwerping aan het kerkelijk gezag. Bij Mithraisme en Matraisme stond het loskomen van de aarde centraal. Dit kon bereikt worden door ascetisme. Nergal nam wat van het wortelkwik, smeerde het standbeeld ermee in, en het kwam tot leven. Iedereen begon te juichen. Toen werd het beeld van Matras naar voren geschoven die in worsteling was met de bizon. Het tot leven gekomen beeld van Mithras liet zien hoe Mithras in gevecht was met de stier, en werd geholpen door een hond, een slang, en een schorpioen. De schorpioen viel de genitalien van de stier aan, maar het standbeeld van Matras toonde geen schorpioen maar een spin. Verder werd hij niet geholpen door een hond en een slang, maar door een vlieg en een wesp. Ook dit beeld werd ingesmeerd door het wortelkwik en kwam tot leven, onder groot gejuich. Martarius was de pre-atlantische vorm van Mercurius, de boodschapper van de goden, maar gebruikte geen kwik maar zwavel, want kwik hield gebonden aan de materiele sferen. Ook zijn beeld werd door het wortelkwik tot leven gewekt.

Nergal maakte toen het wortelkwik tot een sleutel in zijn hand, en opende de deur naar een verborgen tuin. Hier brandde ergens het rode vuur, het verboden vuur, wat een mengsel was tussen het bloed van een rund en het bloed van een aap. De tuin was vol met rook. Ook is er hier een grot waar het rode vlies zich bevindt, de huid van een sprekend en vliegend varken. Deze huid wordt bewaakt door een schorpioen. Alleen degene die de schorpioen kan temmen en berijden kan het rode vlies bereiken. Dit rode vlies is het vlies van eeuwig leven. Alleen de godin Utanga, de pre-atlantische Athena, kan het hoofdstel, het zadel en de teugels hiertoe overhandigen, het tuig waarmee de schorpioen bereden kan worden. Zonder dit tuig zal een ieder ten prooi vallen aan de schorpioen. Zij kwam op een nacht tot Aleron, de pre-atlantische Jason, om dit tuig aan hem te geven. Zij kwam tot hem op haar rijtuig in de donder, omringd door luipaarden. Zij slachtte een pauw en bedekte hem met het bloed als met een deken. De pauw was de wachter van de grot waarin de schorpioen leefde. Als Aleron de schorpioen zou berijden, dan zou het rode vuur op hem vallen om naar de onderwereld te gaan naar zijn geliefde Averon. Ook aan haar zal hij een deel geven van

het rode vlies. En zij komen erachter dat dezen allen huwelijksgeschenken zijn. En wanneer hij zijn geliefde heeft bereikt zal de schorpioen in een rund veranderen.

Kamperdam aan Zee, Juni 1962

Mijn jeugd was een hel. Ik ben nu getrouwd en heb twee kinderen. Wij hebben hier een heel speeltuin-complex waar ze vaak spelen. Ook gaan we zo nu en dan naar het strand of de stad in. Ik heb mijn vrouw in het ziekenhuis ontmoet. Zij was de verpleegster, ik de patient. Het winkelcentrum van de stad is overdekt. Onze jongste dochter is het ijverigst. Sinds 1948 is ons land hermitatisch. Daarvoor was het land christelijk, omdat we werden bestuurd door Roomse keizers. De staatsgodsdienst was christelijk en heidendom was verboden. Sinds de hermitatische bevrijding zijn wij meer universeel. Ik zal die dag nooit meer vergeten dat onze hermitatische bevrijders kwamen. Hoe dan ook, wij zijn allen slaven van de waarheid, en alles is een halve waarheid. We vallen totdat we vliegen. Ik ken een boom genaamd Torpoteo, een beetje de pre-atlantische vorm van Yggdrasil. Hierin kunnen we schuilen, als gevallen strijders die hun kruis binnengaan. En bovenin wonen de Wanen, de elven, de vruchtbaarheidsgoden, de Vanir, met de pre-atlantische vorm hiervan : de Targa. Het zal uitlopen op de Ragnarok, in het pre-atlantische wordt dit genoemd de Dordada, de grote eind-oorlog. Alleen in het diepste van de boom Yggdrasil zal er veiligheid en bevrijding zijn, als de vuurreus Surtr alles in vuur brengt door zijn zwaard. Ook de christenen hebben zo’n mythologie, over Armageddon, over de zondvloed van vuur, en een ark waarin bevrijding is. Het gaat allemaal om het binnengaan van het kruis, het ascetisme. De Torpoteo herbergt de bron van Tirz, die de pre-atlantische Mimir is, de bron van wijsheid. Odin gaf zijn oog op om deel te hebben aan die bron, maar de pre-atlantische Odin, genaamd Wassan gaf zijn vrouw op om deel te hebben aan de bron. Deze bron is het bodemloze ravijn, waarin Zolder viel, de pre-atlantische vorm van Balder, en door de rotsen gestoken werd, en hij zal vallen totdat hij vliegt. Hij zal voortkomen vanuit de Dordada, de grote eind-oorlog. De pre-atlantische Surtr is Staumi, met zijn zwaard Lauri, maar hij is een mengeling tussen een vuurreus en een ijsreus, dus Surtr-Ymir. De nadruk wordt vaak gelegd op het brandende ijs. Hij woont in Oswold, de pre-atlantische vorm van Jotunheim, waar de ijs-reuzen wonen. De stad waar wij inkwamen had muren gemaakt van slangen, waar het gif droop, waar de lucht was van bloed. Hier kwamen wij om de schilden te bezichtigen, maar zij waren bijna doorzichtig. Staumi had met het zwaard van wraak toegeslagen. De stad was nu als een woestijn. Zel zat hier op haar troon, in een ruimte achter rode doorzichtige sluiers, waar haar langharige leeuw ook was. Deze stad was genaamd Sogroff, en was omringd door een rivier genaamd Harenx. De schorpioen van Zel bracht wijn voort om de gevallen strijders die hier kwamen dronken te maken. Drie godinnen, Slova, Jarx en Slama, zouden hun verleden, heden en toekomst bepalen. Als ze goed hadden gestreden, dan gingen ze naar Travaska. Zo niet, dan werden ze door Zel opgeslokt. In Travaska woonde Rolf met zijn hamer Avik, die hen beschermde tegen boosaardige reuzen en dwergen. Travaska was een plaats in het hart van Zel.

En Zel bewoog zich gesluierd door de stad, en verspreidde haar bloemen van vuur. Kinderen groeiden hier in de bomen. Zij kwamen voort van een diepe eeuwige slaap. De tweede aarde was Trok, de derde Kempen en de vierde Saraul. En deze aardes waren al van een meer verheerlijkte stof. Men aanbad daar een ekster, een masker en een zeedraak. Er was daar alleen leven in het

masker, en het masker was het oog.

Hoofdstuk 2.

Ik was de nachtleider. Ik had een nieuw pistool. Ik rende door de stad naar de kerk in de verte, en ik kon de kerk maar niet bereiken. In de top van de kerk woonde een geest. Ik richtte mijn pistool op de geest en schoot. Mijn kerkelijk hoofd spatte uiteen. Ik had de vrouwen in de kerk lief. Zij waren aan zware ketenen, maar ik beminde hen. Ik had de sleutel die op hun sloten pasten, en ik voerde hen uit. Zij hadden mij ook lief. Ik nam hen mee door de oceaan.

Mijn huis stond hoog, op een rots in de stad. Ik liet hen mijn schilderijen zien. Hier konden ze veilig wonen. Het was goed zo. Ik had een kroon voor hen gemaakt. Zij reisden van wereld tot wereld. Zij aanbaden het masker. Het maakte hen sterk, en de man werd zwak. De man werd trager en trager, en stond plotseling stil. Zijn hoed was als het gesmolten zilver. Ook zijn schoenen waren als gesmolten zilver en goud. Het droop van hem af. Ik riep naar hem, maar hij hoorde mij niet. Hij staarde naar de kerktoren. ‘Daar bevinden zich al mijn geliefden,’ zei hij. Hij wilde mijn pistool zien. Toen liet hij zijn eigen pistool zien.

Hij gaf mij geld, veel geld. Ik bouwde een brug, een brug tot zijn wereld. Hij kon me duidelijk horen nu. ‘Ja, ik kan je duidelijk horen,’ zei hij. We staarden samen naar het hoge kerkgebouw wat begon te druipen. Hij liet mij zijn horloge zien.

Ik zweefde tussen de werelden, tussen het westelijke paradijs en het oostelijke paradijs, en langs het voor-paradijs gleed ik terug naar de eerste aarde. En toen was de eerste aarde niet meer. En toen weer wel, en de eerste aarde begon te veranderen, en de man had een jas aan van zebra-huid. ‘Ik ben de nacht,’ zei de man. We klommen de kerk binnen, en die begon te druipen. Het was pudding nu. Wodan en Thor kwamen langs op hun paarden. Het land is van ons, zeiden ze. En ze wezen naar Wassan en Rolf. Ik droeg een masker, en de man was als een zeedraak op wiens rug ik zat, en we zakten in de zee, en kwamen in de lucht terecht. Zo ging dat op en neer. Hij strekte zich uit langs de kerkmuur. Hij strekte zich uit tot aan de rozenhaag waar alles begon te golven.

De koning van de zeepaardjes

Hij sliep lang uit die dag. Zijn vriendin kwam hem wekken. Hij draaide zich om, en keek in haar gezicht. Ze trok hem uit bed. Hij deed wat kleren aan en ging naar beneden. Buiten regende het. Er was geen zon. Het was grauw. Ze zouden die middag naar het strand gaan, maar het was er geen weer voor. Hij staarde naar buiten.

'Vreemd weer,' sprak hij. Ze knikte. Ze zaten samen op de bank. Ze dwaalde weg met haar gedachten. Hij was ook ver weg. Hij dagdroomde dat ze in de auto zaten op weg naar het strand. 'Waar denk je aan,' vroeg ze.

'Nergens,' zei hij. 'Ik denk eraan dat alles maar een spel is. Zakdoekje leggen niemand zeggen.' Ze glimlachte. 'Volgens mij denk jij aan het strand.'

'Waar denk jij aan,' vroeg hij.

'Aan het strand,' zei ze.

Op tafel lag een boek. 'De koning der elven,' heette het. Samen begonnen ze er in te bladeren. Het was een boek uit de bibliotheek. Ze maakte wat thee klaar, en even later dronken ze het op.

Hun relatie hield geen stand. Na een tijdje had hij een ander. Hij ging vluchtig met vrouwen om. Hij kon ze steeds minder vertrouwen. Hij kon niet meer om ze lachen, hij werd steeds somberder in het gezelschap van vrouwen, steeds geslotener. Hij trok zich steeds meer terug op zijn kamer, en al snel had hij vrouwen voor altijd opgegeven. Het was gewoon niet haalbaar voor hem. Hij vond ze vreemde wezens, leugenaars, warhoofden, die alles probeerden om anderen in de war te schoppen. Ja, hij begon vrouwen te haten. Hij vond het boosaardige wezens.

Jarenlang ging hij alleen door het leven, totdat hij eens in een bosmeertje zwom en daar een zeemeermin tegenkwam. Hij was op zijn hoede, maar deze dame was zo vriendelijk en ze eerlijk, dat ze hem al snel het hoofd op hol bracht. Ze kon niet goed praten, alsof ze uit een ander land kwam, maar dat vond hij extra aantrekkelijk. Ze nam hem mee het water in, en ze zwommen naar de andere kant van het meertje, waar ze hem insmeerde met modder en wier. 'Ik jou kronen tot koning,' zei ze.

Hij glimlachte. Toen waste ze zijn lichaam. Elke dag ging hij terug naar het bosmeertje, maar op een dag kwam ze niet meer. Ten einde raad zocht hij de zee op, waar hij andere zeemeerminnen tegenkwam. Hij vroeg naar haar, maar ze zeiden dat ze niets meer van hem wilde weten. Ze wilden niet vertellen waarom.

Hij was teleurgesteld, maar gaf zijn liefde voor haar niet op. Ze was altijd goed voor hem geweest. 'Kan ik dan met jullie zijn,' vroeg hij aan de zeemeerminnen. Ze waren aardig voor hem, en elke dag ging hij naar de zee om hen te ontmoeten, maar op een dag kwamen ze niet meer. Misschien is het contact met een mens hen wel te veel, dacht hij.

Hij vertelde veel over de zeemeerminnen aan anderen, maar ze dachten dat hij gek geworden was. Hij vond mensen saai, en werd depressief. Hij werd opgenomen in een psychiatrische kliniek. Sommigen zeiden dat hij de ziekte schizofrenie had, waanideeen, maar anderen zeiden dat hij gewoon een grote fantasie had. Niemand geloofde dat zeemeerminnen echt bestonden. In de kliniek begon hij boeken te schrijven over zeemeerminnen, prachtige, bloedmooie poetische boeken, met een diepe schat aan kennis. Velen waren onder de indruk, maar men geloofde nog steeds niet dat hij echte zeemeerminnen had gezien.

Hij vond mensen maar domme wezens, die niet te vertrouwen waren. Hij wilde ook geen vriendin. Sommigen dreven de spot met zijn zeemeermin verhalen. Hij begon ook zeemeerminnen te schilderen, als levensecht, en alhoewel velen onder de indruk waren, hij werd niet geloofd. Hij was depressief en had een doodsverlangen. Op een dag ging hij naar de zee, in zijn auto, en reed met zijn auto het water in. Al snel raakte hij bewusteloos, en wist niet meer wat er gebeurde, maar hij ontwaakte tussen de zeemeerminnen. Hij had een bol om zijn hoofd waarin zurrstof zat, en zeepaardjes zwommen om hem heen. Tot zijn grote schrik had hij een vissenstaart. Ze namen de bol van zijn hoofd en hij kon gewoon ademen. Een parel stond voor hem, waaruit stemmen kwamen.

Hij zwom achter een zeemeermin aan. Hij accepteerde zijn nieuwe leven. Hij was gered, en werd koning van de zeepaardjes genoemd.

Het Rode Wapen

Ik zag haar daar staan. Haar naam was Zwijnenjacht. Ze stond aan een poort met een sleutel. Ik probeerde weg te rennen, maar ze tackelde mij. En toen dacht ik : 'Waarom zou ik wegrennen eigenlijk ?' Het bleek een aardige vrouw. Ze nam mij door de poort naar binnen. Ze was heel praterig, had veel te vertellen. Ze zei dat zij me hier had gelokt, om mij te bevrijden uit een kerk. Ze had kleding gemaakt van parels. Je kon haar lichaam gewoon door de parels heenzien. Ze straalde warmte uit, maar ook geheimzinnigheid. Een koets stopte. We stapten in. De stad was groot hier, maar we gingen buiten de stad, waar ze in een hutje woonde. Een vreemd gevoel maakte zich van mij meester.

'Ik heb je verlost uit de kerk,' zei ze. 'Ze draaien daar allemaal in cirkeltjes, komen niet verder. Ze zijn onder de betovering van een heks. Ik heb je verlost. Het zijn zwijnen. Als je de jacht niet begint, dan pakken ze je terug. Bedriegelijke verschijnselen zijn het.'

'Okay,' zei ik. Toen begon ze te filosoferen. Ik vond het erg interessant. Ze was niet op haar mondje gevallen, en prikte door alles heen. 'Je moet denken,' zei ze, 'diep doordenken. Niet jezelf opsluiten in cirkeltjes.' Ik knikte.

'Er moet gewerkt worden in dat hoofdje van jou. Je moet je industrie bouwen. Zo kun je veilig zijn tegen de zwijnen,' sprak ze. Haar ogen waren rood doorbloed. Ik nam haar in mijn armen, gewoon omdat ik mezelf niet tegen kon houden. Ze huilde. Ik probeerde haar te troosten. 'Je bent zo lief,' zei ze. 'En dat is zeldzaam.'

'En jij bent een open vrouw,' zei ik. 'Dank je wel dat je mij verlost hebt.' Haar lichaam begon te schudden. 'Ze willen me bezitten, die zwijnen,' zei ze. 'Bouw je centrum van filosofie,' zei ze. 'En we zullen allemaal veilig zijn.'

'Wat is de belangrijkste filosofie ?' vroeg ik.

'Dat moet je ontdekken,' zei ze. 'Maar bouw gewoon voort. Die varkens zullen allemaal in het nieuwe stelsel van filosofie ontmaskerd worden.' Ik drukte haar tegen me aan. 'Je zult veilig zijn, heus,' zei ik. Toen glimlachte ze een beetje.

Ik keek naar de lucht, die vol was met luchtschepen. De hyena's zouden ons redden. Ze brachten ons naar een spiegel-universum. Alles was hier net een beetje anders. De natuur had hier zoveel meer diepte. Zwijnenjacht was erg aan het beven. Ze was erg ziek. Ik nam haar mee naar een grot, en legde haar neer op een zachte plek, tussen veren en vellen. Weer nam ik haar in haar armen, en verzekerde haar dat alles goed zou komen. Er groeide hier een koffieboom, reusachtig met diepe wortels. En op de takken van de boom en de stam was een kasteel gebouwd. Caffeine soldaten marcheerden op de muren. Ze leken op ridders en hadden scherpe wapens. Ook hadden ze pistolen met rode lasers. Ze vormden hun eigen politie. Ze waren de communicatie politie. Caffeine had al deze realiteiten gecreeerd, en voerde een dwangmatige controle.

Ik las de statuten van Orion door, over een rode planeet, Dankbu. Het was een planeet vrij van caffeine. Het was een planeet waar alles om de innerlijke filosofische registers ging. Er was daar een oorlog tussen koffie en caffeine. Beide kanten hadden rode wapens.

Watervogels

De Groene Dood

Hij sloop door het bos. De koningin van het woud waakte over hen. Hij hoorde de beesten brullen in de verte. De dromer waakte deze keer. In het zonlicht kon hij haar gezicht zien. Verderop zwommen wat watervogels in de rivier, en zijzelf waren met de grotere beesten. De groene wind was hen aan het omsingelen, heel subtiel, en kwam toen steeds dichterbij. Hij haalde het gedichtenboek met het gele leren kaft erbij, en begon eruit te prevelen. Ze hield hem tegen zich aan.

De watervogels kwamen dichterbij, en het natte was hun god. Kim staarde naar hem. Zij had hem gecreeerd. Zij was zijn godin. Zij had een boek met sleutels. En de sleutels waren van drop.

De watervogels brachten hen over de rivier naar het slot. In het slot hingen schilderijen, en er waren veel mysterieuze boeken. Ze gingen op een bed liggen, met een gordijn als deken. De groene dood was in de rivier, maar klom op de kant en ging het kasteel binnen. Aan de muren hingen skeletten.

Zij las hem verhalen voor, en het was voor hem een nieuw leven. Ze praatte snel, maar het was goed volgbaar voor hem. Hij had haar leren begrijpen, dronk wijn met haar.

De groene dood schoof als een deken over hem heen, en plotseling stond het slot in brand. Snel doken ze de rivier in. De watervogels beschermde hen tegen het vuur. Het was alsof alles in brand stond. De boeken veranderden in vogels, en de groene dood dook in de rivier om achter hen aan te gaan. Maar mysterieuze rozen waren om hen heen. Toen veranderde de rivier in bloed, en de groene

dood loste er in op.

Ze zwommen naar de overkant, en gingen op de kant zitten. Rozen groeiden naar beneden vanuit de bomen. De vogels der geheimen kwamen om hen heen.

Sleutel van het Paradijs

Zeevlinder

Moeder keek vader aan. 'We hebben er over gesproken, Eduard. Je vader en ik vinden het beter als je ons gewoon zou vertellen wat er gebeurd is. We willen je zo graag helpen.'

'Ik kan het niet,' zei Eduard, en rende naar boven. Zijn moeder ging achter hem aan, en ging naast hem op zijn bed zitten in zijn kamer. 'Vertel het nou maar,' zei moeder. 'Heus, het is beter dan.' Toen vertelde Eduard stoterig en schokkerig zijn verhaal. Moeder belde direkt de politie. Die kwamen ook direct naar hem toe, en onderhandelden met de daders. De vader van één van de daders kwam na een tijdje bij Eduard op bezoek. De dader moest zijn verontschuldigingen aanbieden en gaf Eduard een cadeautje, een kleine ziekenauto. Eduard glimlachte, maar viel flauw toen hij de dader strak in het gezicht keek.

'Eduard ?' zei moeder.

Eduard zag zijn vriendin voor hem staan, die eens weg ging naar een andere stad, een verhuizing, vanwege werk van haar vader. 'Marlotte ?' vroeg Eduard. 'Die is hier niet,' zei moeder.

'Ik heb haar nodig,' stamelde Eduard. Hij hoorde het geluid van politie-auto's. 'Ze komen,' zei hij. 'Ze maken alles goed.'

Eduard kon niet goed lopen. Hij had zijn vriendinnetje nodig. Ze was er niet. Hij belde haar op. Ze kwam direct naar hem toe. 'Eduard, lieveling,' zei ze. Toen werd Eduard wakker. Hij had alles maar gedroomd. Zijn vader en moeder zouden hem nooit geloven. Zijn leven was een nachtmerrie. En Marlotte zou hem nooit meer terugwillen. Waarom wist hij niet. Hij was altijd goed voor haar geweest. Hij had een goed contact met zijn piano-leraar. Die sleepte hem er doorheen. Op een dag

vroeg de piano-leraar of Eduard niet gewoon bij hem wilde wonen. Eduard stemde toe, maar wat graag. Hij wilde zijn ouders nooit meer zien.

'Marlotte,' zei de piano-leraar, 'is een vreemd meisje. Ik heb haar nooit vertrouwd.'

'Maar ik houd van haar,' zei Eduard.
'Dat begrijp ik,' zei de piano-leraar, 'maar toch.'
'Ik kan niet zonder haar leven,' zei Eduard. 'Ik ben bang dat ik gek word zonder haar. Ik mis haar.'
De piano-leraar probeerde hem te sussen. 'Ze is heel erg duister. Er klopt gewoon iets niet met haar,' zei hij.

Eduard ging achter de piano zitten, en zong een liefdeslied. Hij was wel heel erg blij dat hij bij de piano-leraar kon wonen nu. Die was altijd al als een vader voor hem. Die nacht in bed had hij een duistere droom waarin Marlotte hem probeerde te verdrinken, en plotseling veranderde ze in een duister beest. Ze trok hem de diepte in.

Ineens zaten ze in een schoollokaal. Zij zat voor hem als de juffrouw. 'Ik ben Lazarus,' zei ze.

'Wat bedoel je,' vroeg Eduard.

'Ik ben een boom,' sprak ze.

'Waarom dan ?' vroeg Eduard.

'Omdat ik het zeg,' zei ze, en sloeg met haar vuist op de tafel. 'Ik ben een boom vol van bloemen en geheimen. Ik ben meerdere personen, en ik draag de sleutel voor jou. Ik wil je niet vernietigen, ik wil je brengen naar de andere wereld.'

'Dat is een leugen,' zei Eduard. 'Je wilde niets meer van me weten.'

'Ik weet het,' zei Marlotte. 'Maar ik ben Lazarus.'

'Wat bedoel je ?' vroeg Eduard.

Ze begon te huilen, en zei : 'Ik ben de Lazarus-boom.'

'Wat is dat,' vroeg Eduard.

'Niets,' zei ze. Eduard schrok wakker. Ze stond voor hem in een prachtig witte jurk als bloesem. 'Ik ben al dood,' zei ze. 'Ik ben een bloem, de lazarus-boom, een mysterie voor jou, een raadsel.'

Eduard dacht dat hij gek aan het worden was en probeerde te roepen, maar het was alsof zijn mond op slot stond.

'Ik wil je overweldigen,' zei ze. 'Maar ik kan het niet. Hij houdt me tegen.'

'Wie is hij ?' vroeg Eduard.

'Je vader,' zei ze. 'Ik ben dood, Eduard, dood. Je vader heeft mij vermoord.'

'Je moet daar weg,' zei Eduard.

'Ik wil bij je zijn,' zei ze, 'maar ik kan het niet.'

'Leugens,' zei Eduard. 'Je zei altijd dat je juist niet bij me wilde zijn.'

'Help me,' zei ze. 'Ik kan het niet helpen. Ik ben meerdere personen. Ik kan niet praten.'

'Je komt anders aardig goed uit je woorden,' zei Eduard.

'Ik kan niet zeggen wat ik wil zeggen,' zei ze.

'Ik houd van je, Eduard,' zei ze.

'Ik geloof je niet,' zei hij. 'Je hebt me laten wegteren.'

'Alsjeblieft, ik smeek je,' zei ze.

'Wat bedoel je,' vroeg hij.

'Ik ben een lazarus-boom,' zei ze.

'Ja, dat had je al eerder gezegd,' zei hij.

'Ik groei, en ik kan het niet stoppen,' zei ze. 'Ik heb meerdere takken.' Toen begon ze te schreeuwen en te gillen. 'Nu sta ik in brand,' riep ze.

'Toe, help me,' gilde ze. 'Mijn vader verbrandt me.'

'Ik houd van je, Marlotte,' zei hij, en omhelsde haar. Hij probeerde haar te sussen, maar ze werd steeds wilder.

'Ik ga van je scheiden,' zei ze. 'Ik heb teveel pijn, ik ben te gevoelig. Ik brand, en jij gaat ook branden.'

'Het is okay, schat, ik wist niet dat we getrouwd waren, maar wat je dan ook zegt,' sprak hij kalm.

'Eduard, blus me,' zei ze.

'Hoe ?' vroeg hij.

'Met kussen,' zei ze.

Eduard begon haar te kussen, maar het leek allemaal veel erger te worden. Hij begon ook te branden. 'We moeten rennen,' zei hij. 'Waar naartoe ?' vroeg ze.

'Naar het bos,' zei hij. Snel renden ze het huis uit naar het bos, maar alle bomen waren aan het branden. Ze hoorden veel gegil en geschreeuw. 'Liefste,' riep ze. 'Als ik het niet overleef, vergeet nooit, maar dan ook nooit, dat ik altijd van je heb gehouden. En nu zelfs meer dan ooit.'

'Ik geloof je niet !' riep hij. 'Je bent er nooit voor mij geweest !'

'Ik kon het niet !' schreeuwde ze. 'Ti sento ! Ik ben te gevoelig !'

'Je zei dat je niet meer van me hield. Je zei zelfs dat je nooit van me hebt gehouden !' schreeuwde hij.

'Ik ben de lazarus-boom !' riep ze terug. 'Dingen gaan niet zoals ik wil dat ze gaan.'

'Je hebt me verraden met Judas-kussen !' schreeuwde hij. Alles stond in brand. Spoedig waren ze in een vuurzee. Ze huilde.

'Ik kan er niet tegen dat je lijdt. Ik wil je helpen, ik wil je troosten, zoals ik nachten met je op heb gezeten, maar je was gemeen naar mij,' zei Eduard.

'Jij lijdt ook, zoals ik lijd,' zei ze.

Hij had haar stevig in de grip. 'Liefste,' huilde hij. 'Het maakt niet uit dat ik lijd, maar ik kan er niet tegen als jij lijdt. Ik heb daar nooit tegengekunt, wat je me dan ook hebt aangedaan.'

'Ik ben een lazarus-boom,' huilde ze.

'Ik weet het,' zei hij. 'Wacht gewoon totdat het gaat bloesemen.'

'Nee,' huilde ze, 'het gaat nooit meer bloesemen. Het gaat branden.'

'Ik zal je veilig maken,' zei hij.

'Hoe ?' vroeg ze. 'Waarom jij ? Omdat je de vader van mijn kinderen bent ?'

'We hebben nooit kinderen gehad,' zei hij.

'Dat is wel waar,' huilde ze.

In zweet werd hij wakker. Het was een nachtmerrie. Ze lag naast hem, met schuim op haar mond. Hij had ook schuim op zijn mond. Ze hadden samen drugs genomen van de lazarus-boom, om in een andere realiteit te komen, maar dat ging niet altijd goed. 'Ik... ik brand,' huilde ze zachtjes. Hij nam haar in zijn armen. 'Het spul heeft bijwerkingen,' zei hij, 'maar het zal ons er doorheen slepen.

We zullen aankomen in die andere wereld.'

'Ik wil niet meer, baby,' huilde ze. 'Het is te zwaar. We lijken wel vijanden van elkaar.'

'De liefde is een oorlog,' zei hij. 'We vechten voor elkaar, en zonder scheiding is er geen verzoening. Zonder ijs is er geen vuur, en zonder verwarring is er geen helderheid.'

Maar alles moet toch ergens stoppen,' huilde ze.

'Oh, maar deze wereld is groot,' zuchtte hij. 'Ja, zo groot,' fluisterde ze. 'Ik kan niet meer.' Hij troostte haar.

Ze stopte met de drugs, terwijl Eduard ermee doorging. Ze begonnen uit elkaar te groeien, en het eindigde in een scheiding. Ze was koud, bevroren, en Eduard was warm. Hij begreep haar wel, maar zij begreep hem niet, en begon alles te ontkennen. Ze was niet meer zoals ze was, alsof ze zich ergens voor probeerde te verstoppen. Op een dog sloegen de stoppen bij Eduard door. Hij begreep haar niet meer, en was boos. Toch wilde hij dat ze gelukkig was. Het scheen niet goed mogelijk te zijn bij haar. Ze schreven brieven, en in die brieven schreef ze hoe slecht ze er aan toe was. 'Is dit nu alles wat je wilde ?' schreef hij terug.

Op een dag schreef ze terug dat ze een nieuwe drug had ontdekt, veel veiliger volgens haar. Eduard kwam bij haar langs. Ze scheen weer een warme vrouw te zijn. Ze glimlachte toen ze hem zag. Hij was nog steeds erg boos, en keek koud op haar neer. 'Spuit het maar in mijn arm,' zei hij. Ze hurkte voor hem neer, en spoot in zijn been. 'Daar,' zei ze. Eduard viel op de grond. De kinderen kwamen binnen. 'Wat doet pappa daar ?' vroeg de middelste.

'Pappa is gek,' zei Marlotte. Schuim kwam op zijn mond.

'Is hij aan de drugs ?' vroeg de jongste.

'Ja,' zei Marlotte, 'ik heb hem wat toegediend, van dat spul wat wij ook altijd gebruiken.' Ze trok hem naar een bed, en legde een jas over hem heen. Even later kwam ze bij hem liggen, toen de kinderen weer weg waren. Ze spoot wat in haar been, en verloor haar bewustzijn. Een vuur kwam in haar hoofd, en ze werd verbonden met zijn hoofd, en zijn hart. 'Namens de vereniging van bomen, hartelijk welkom,' zei een stem. 'Ik heb het nog eens nagekeken, jullie zijn inderdaad geregistreerd. Welkom terug dan.' Een groen vuur kwam over hen. 'De godin van scheiding heeft jullie hier gebracht.'

'Het is haar schuld,' zei Eduard. 'Zij heeft die vervloekte scheidingsformulieren ingevuld.'

'Oh, op onze afgesneden huid ?' vroeg de stem. 'Dat is niet zo netjes.'

'Nee, niet zo netjes,' zei een andere stem. 'Zij gaat dus de afwas doen.'

'Maar ik heb al gekookt,' zei Marlotte. 'Dus ik ga ook niet nog eens de afwas doen. Kom zeg, eikel.'

'Ze heeft gelijk,' zei Eduard. 'Zij heeft mij de drugs toegediend, dus ze hoeft dan toch ook niet de afwas te doen.'

'Wel, hoor je nou niet eens even wat je zegt, domoor,' zei de stem. 'Zij heeft jou deze rommel aangeboden, dus dan zal ze potdorie die rommel ook op gaan ruimen.'

'Het is mijn schuld,' zei Eduard. 'Ik heb de rommel aangenomen. Ik had haar nooit naar binnen moeten halen. Ik ben zo dom geweest haar te vertrouwen.'

'Waarom heb je haar naarbinnen gehaald ?' vroeg de stem

'Ik wilde haar helpen,' zei Eduard.

'Hield je van haar ?' vroeg de stem.

'Absoluut en ongetwijfeld,' zei hij.

Heel langzaam werd hij wakker. Het was maar een droom. Ze was ver weg van hem, en zover hij wist was ze niet aan de drugs. Hij wel dus. Voor hem was dat de enige weg eruit. In haar brieven schreef ze hem hoe slecht het met haar ging. Hij wilde haar helpen, maar wist niet hoe. Ook was hij boos. Die boosheid werd eigenlijk elke dag erger, en het brief-contact stopte weer. Hij stortte zich nog meer op de drugs dan ooit tevoren. De bomen waren zijn helden. Hij had geen vat meer op de realiteit, en het was beter zo. Die realiteit werd volgens hem in stand gehouden door bomen-haters. 'Eet eens een vruchtje, lik eens een appeltje, laat je eens inspuiten door een lazarus-boom, voor een mooie droom. Eet eens een stukje hout, lik eens aan boomblad, aan zijn bast en zijn schors. Beklim eens een boom, hang eens aan een tak.' Hij zong een liefdeslied aan de piano. Het was een meedogenloos ritme. 'Klim eens op een appel, duik eens in een aardbei, grijp eens naar een roos. Ja, haar dorens zullen je verscheuren, maar ... maar ... laat dat je niet tegenhouden. Lik eens aan de honing, ja, haar dorens zullen je mond sluiten, maar ... maar .... laat dat je niet tegenhouden ... Vecht eens met een beer, laat de honing zijn voor iedereen. Vecht eens met bijen en wespen. Het geheim is niet alleen van hen ... Lik eens aan een tak, snuif eens wat bloemenzaad, grijp eens een plant, ook al krijg je dan een blaar. Ook al ga je dan bloeden, en lig je in het bad, ook al zal de storm dan woeden, wie doet dat wat .... Het gaat toch om de zomer, het holle in de boom, het gaat toch om de dauw in de morgen, en het morgenrood, doe wat je kan om daar te komen ... het avondrood zal je genezen .... Vecht in de oorlog, de oorlog der liefde, zet elkaar vrij, voor welke prijs dan ook, want wat is een prijs ?

's Nachts staar ik je aan, 's nachts hoor ik je stem en lied,
De morgen spoelt het weg, maar jij zult altijd zijn, de moeder van mijn kinderen,
Ik laat altijd een kaarsje voor jou branden,
Eens zal ik je eruit krijgen, uit die slimme doos,
Eens zal ik die sloten door mijn liefde smelten,
Ik ben nog jong, gouden tijden staan nog steeds op mijn roos,
Je bent in mijn herinnering, een nachtmerrie, een vlinderding,
Alle dingen schijnen twee kanten te hebben, alle kanten zullen in de tijd opzwemmen,
Alle kanten zullen hun gezicht laten zien,

Ik heb er tien, ik heb er tien, maar ik wil de jouwen ook zien,
Mijn lieveling .... mijn vlinderding .... de nachtmerrie is slechts een herinnering ...
Meer kan het niet zijn, ik ren nu .... vrij,
Over de heg, over de heuvel, de winter kan mij niet meer vasthouden,
De zomer maakte mij vrij, jij, zomervlinder, jij vlinderding ...

Ik vond jou, als een zeemeerman, aan de kusten van Spanje, kapotgebroken aan de rotsen,
Als een zeemeerman nam ik jou op, en gaf je de adem van de zee,
Maar de zee begon te branden door jouw vuur,
De zeevlinder nam ons beiden mee, en brak de muur,
In mijn lijst ben je nu, in mijn schilderij, in de bizonjacht,
Wij verdrinken samen in de gracht, todat de boot van Venetie ons opneemt,
Met de staf van zeebloemen en zeebloesem,
Met de staf van zeewier, als de staf der zeemeermannen,
Kom niet dichterbij, ik ben maar een zeemeerjongen,
Kom niet dichterbij, want je komt onder mijn betovering,
Ren nu, ren nu, voor je leven ... Als het leven je lief is,
Of heb je mij lief ... of de last der leugens ....

Negen van de tien keer loog je tegen mij,
Negen van de tien keer ... onder het sprei der bloemen ....
Als bloemen logen zoals jij, zouden ze nooit bloeien ...
En te bedenken dat je mij als leugenaar zag,
Zoveel bloemen op mijn graf,
Zoveel bloemen die je mij nooit gaf ...
Zoveel bloemen op jouw graf, door de zeevlinder gebracht ...
Maar de ware liefde breekt de grenzen van het leven,
Als een vuur die jou zelfs uit de hel kan opnemen ...
Denk je dat je naar de hemel kunt ontsnappen ....
Op de rug van de zeevlinder

Bedenk dat dit heel goed het laatste lied kan zijn wat ik ooit tot je zing,
Dat de zeevlinder het laatste is wat ik je geef ...'

'Eduard, Eduard,' riep zijn moeder. Kom uit je bed. Bijna schooltijd.
Eduard draaide zich om, en wilde weer slapen, maar het schelle getetter in zijn oor van zijn moeder besliste anders.
Snel begon ze hem wakker te schudden. Ze trok hem uit zijn bed en omhelsde hem.
'Mamma, kus me niet meer,' zei hij, 'anders kom ik hier nooit weg.' Toen liet zijn moeder hem los.
Hij kleedde zich aan, nam zijn tas mee, en vertrok met de bus.

Op school keek hij haar niet aan. Zij keek alleen maar naar hem door haar ooghoeken. Zij was zijn wapen tegen de reuzen, maar de drugs die zij hem gaf had hem bijna vermoord. Het was haar spreekbeurt vandaag, en ze begon spook-verhalen te vertellen. Hij opende zijn hart een beetje voor haar. Ze stond daar bijna als een militair. Ja, zij voerde oorlog, en hij wilde in haar leger. Ze begon bloemen te tekenen op het bord, en schreef zijn naam. Hij voelde zichzelf in brand staan met

liefdesvuur. 'Nu heb ik het ware vuur, riep hij,' terwijl de andere kinderen in de vlammenzee begonnen te verdwijnen. Hij hief haar op het schip. 'Geweldig is dit,' zei ze. 'Ja, je hebt mij flink in de war gebracht met die drugs,' zei hij, 'maar dit is goed.'

'Daar is het om te doen,' zei ze.

'We moeten maken wat er van te maken is,' zei hij. De vlammen werden wilder, maar het was goed vuur, liefdesvuur. Zij brandde nu ook, en ze voelde zich goed. 'Voel je je nu eindelijk goed, schatje ?' vroeg hij. Ze knikte, en zuchtte van verlichting. Hij nam haar in zijn armen, en ze stegen op. 'Dit is de sleutel van het paradijs,' zei ze. 'Ik wist dat je dit kon doen.'

'En ik wist dat jij het kon doen,' zei hij. 'Ti Sento. Ik voel je.'
Maar zwetend werd hij wakker in een vuur dat hij niet begreep. Hij begon boos te worden, en zonk weg in hopeloosheid. 'Ik was er bijna,' dacht hij. Maar hij wist niet waar het allemaal om draaide. Waar ging het nu eigenlijk om ? Was dit alles niet gewoon zinloos ? Maar ja, hij wilde niet in ongeluk blijven leven. Of bracht het ongeluk hem naar een dieper geluk ?

Zij beschuldigde hem. Brieven van schuld kwamen binnen, de één na de ander. Het was als een muur met kettingen. Hij kroop naar zijn piano, moe, en verkrampt door de pijn. Hij hees zichzelf op aan de piano, en begon te spelen.

'Liefde is beter dan drugs, maar ik heb de liefde niet, alleen maar haat,
Liefde is beter dan jou, maar wat is de liefde waard ...'

Hij greep naar de drugs en begon te slikken als een gek, zodat hij bewusteloos viel aan de piano. De godin van scheiding scalpeerde hem, en gaf hem een doornenkroon. Hij verloor zijn verstand. Hij hulde zichzelf in een rood kleed, en kroop op de piano waar hij begon over te geven.

'Ik ben de koning van de gekken, ik ben de koning van het gemis,
Ik ben de koning van de pijn, en ik heb niets meer,
Ik ben de koning van de gekken, ik ben de koning van het land,
Want alleen de koning van de gekken kan dit gekke land besturen ...

Ik ben de koning van de gekken, ik ben de koning van de drugs,
Ik ben de koning van het afscheid, ja, mijn dag kan niet meer stuk,
Ik ben de koning van het huwen, ik ben de koning van het scheiden,
Alleen de dommen volgen mij, maar de wijzen vermijden mij ...'

Dat kan me niet schelen !' schreeuwde Eduard met schuim op zijn mond. 'Het schijnt de enige weg naar het paradijs te zijn. Het is een oorlog.'

'Goed, je hebt de oorlog bar verloren, bar en boos,' zei de stem.

'Ik zal opstaan als de nachtvlinder,' zei Eduard, 'en mijn geliefden vrijzetten.'

'Toe nou, Eduard, nou niet zo hoogmoedig, jongen,' zei de stem. 'Daar zit niemand op te wachten.'

Eduard begon de piano te slopen. En begon wild om zich heen te slaan. Hij werd omsingeld door vlinders, en Marlotte stond ineens voor hem.

'Jij weer,' zei Eduard.

'Drugs is niet goed voor je, Eduard,' zei ze.

'Waarom gaf je me het dan ?' vroeg Eduard.

'Ik kon het geld goed gebruiken,' zei Marlotte. 'Ik heb er goede kinderen van gekocht.'

Er was glas tussen Marlotte en Eduard. Drie kinderen verschenen aan de kant van Marlotte. 'Dit zijn je kinderen,' zei ze.

'Ik wil ze niet zien,' zei Eduard.

'Ze hebben je nodig,' zei ze.

'Het zijn mijn kinderen niet. Je hebt ze gewoon met mijn geld gekocht, dat is alles,' zei Eduard.

'Toe, Eduard,' zei ze bijna smekend. 'Ik wil niet ontkennen dat ik in het verleden hele verkeerde dingen heb gedaan, maar we moeten maken wat er van te maken is. De kinderen hebben je nodig. We kunnen die situatie niet ontkennen. Zij kunnen daar verder niets aan doen.'

'Je hebt gelijk,' zei Eduard, 'maar het zijn mijn kinderen niet.'

'Adopteer ze dan, als je me niet geloofd,' zei Marlotte.

'Nee, ik heb helemaal niks met je te maken,' zei Eduard.

'Ik ben in je bloed,' zei Marlotte. 'Ik ben je drugs. Helemaal fout wat ik heb gedaan, maar ik kan er niet uit. Ik zit in je genetisch materiaal.'

'Ik wil dat je weggaat, Marlotte,' zei Eduard. 'Ik wil je niet. Ik heb dit nooit gewild. Je hebt gewoon misbruik gemaakt van mijn situatie. In een zwak moment kocht ik die drugs van je ... en ja, in een zwak moment ... kocht ik je.'

'Precies, en hier zijn je kinderen,' zei Marlotte. 'Reken ze het niet aan.'

'Het lot bracht ons tezamen,' zei Eduard. 'Maar je hebt mij te lang genegeerd. Het roept herinneringen op.'

'Vergeef me, Eduard,' zei Marlotte.

'Hoe vaak heb ik jou wel niet om vergeving gevraagd, en je hebt het me nooit gegeven, en dat

terwijl ik je nooit iets heb aangedaan. Ik ben altijd goed voor je geweest,' zei Eduard.

'Ik kan niet met mijn kinderen leven,' zei Marlotte.

'Het zijn de vruchten van jouw zonden,' zei Eduard.

'Maar als jij me helpt, zijn het de vruchten van vergeving en vernieuwing,' zei Marlotte.

'Barst,' zei Eduard.

Marlotte begon te huilen. 'De kinderen hebben een gezonde vader en moeder nodig.'

'Al wat jij doet is drama maken,' zei Eduard. 'Word je nou nooit eens moe van jezelf ? Je hebt mij kapot gemaakt met die drugs.'

'Die drugs zat in mij. Mijn vader heeft ....' snikte Marlotte.

'Ja, ja, ja, houd daar nu maar over op, dat heb ik al zo vaak gehoord,' zei Eduard.

'Je moet eens weten hoeveel drugs hij in mij heeft gepompt,' snikte ze. 'Ik ben zelf drugs nu.'

Eduard nam een likje aan haar. 'Gadverredamme, dat is toch walgelijk,' schreeuwde hij.

'Ik kan er niets aan doen,' huilde ze nog harder.

'Je bent gewoon een drugs-hoer,' zei Eduard.

'Heb medelijden met me,' jankte ze.

'Waarom zou ik ?' schreeuwde Eduard. 'Heb jij ooit medelijden met mij gehad ?'

'Pappa, alsjeblieft, ik smeek je,' zei het middelste kind.

'Ik heb jullie nooit gezien,' zei Eduard. 'Het doet pijn jullie nu te zien.'

Het kind gaf hem een klein computertje. 'Hier pappa, hiermee kunnen we contact hebben met elkaar.' Toen vaagde alles weg. Hij zat achter zijn computer. Hij zag Marlotte op het scherm, en zijn kinderen. Het was een fantastische wereld in de computer, en hij stapte naar binnen. Ze namen hem bij de hand en namen hem naar een huisje. Alles was zo anders nu.

Arnold Lovehold was een computer expert, en hij zorgde ervoor dat de familie banden weer zorgvuldig werden samengesmeed. De zee-vlinder was inmiddels vrijgekomen uit de zee-kokon. Arnold Lovehold was een diepzinnige man, een filosoof, maar tegelijkertijd heel practisch. Met technologie wist hij alles voor elkaar te krijgen. De familie was voor een lange dag op het strand. De zee kolkte, en het zand was warm. Thuisgekomen ging Eduard op het bed liggen. Het was alsof het altijd zo was geweest, alsof er nooit iets was gebeurd. De familie leefde in vrede.

De Rode Stad

Hij stond die morgen vroeg op, schonk wat voor zichzelf in en ging zitten. Het morgenlicht vormde een rode stad voor hem. Hij was autistisch en had geen behoefte aan sociaal contact. Hij had genoeg aan zijn eigen hoofd. De koningin ging zitten, de koningin van de rode stad, en keek hem aan. Ze leek op een kudde jonge hyenas. Hij staarde haar aan. 'Zo jongen,' zei ze, 'je bent nogal verlegen. Ik heb je in deze stad gebracht.'

'Waarom ?' vroeg hij.

'Omdat ...,' zei ze, 'je het waard bent.'

'Okay,' zei de jongen, en probeerde de kralen van haar ketting te tellen. 'Uw haar zit goed,' zei hij.

'Dank je,' zei de koningin.

Hij was als in een waas, en waande zich de koning van de elven. Hij zakte door de grond de diepte in, toen ze op een knopje drukte. Vele bellen rinkelden in zijn hoofd, alsof het kerstfeest was. Ze glimlachte. 'Prins van de hyena's ?' vroeg ze. Hij knikte. Hij glimlachte diep, ook toen ze hem aanraakte. Even ging er een schok door hem heen. 'Je bent in de rode stad,' zei ze, 'eindelijk.'

'Erin, ben jij dat ?' vroeg hij.

'Ja,' zei ze.

Erin was altijd zijn droom-vriendinnetje. Hij zakte dieper.

'Snap je het ?' vroeg ze. 'Wie zijn wij ?'

'De hyenas,' zei hij.

'Wij komen je redden,' zei ze. 'Wij brengen je naar een betere wereld.'

De rode stad was gemaakt van flonkerstenen, zeer mooi, adembenemend. Hij raakte zijn autisme kwijt, kwam uit zijn schulp, want hier kon het. Hier waren vuurstenen en ruimte-schepen. Hier was het goed.

'Wat een bende is het hier,' zei hij, terwijl hij lachte. Hij keek naar beneden. Er lag troep op de grond. Een leeg melk-kartonnetje, een leeg plastic flesje, en nog wat andere troep. Hij schopte er tegenaan, en rende er lachend achteraan, en schopte weer. Ook kleine hondjes volgden hem. Ze leken op hyena's. 'Ik ben gelukkig hier,' zei hij, en straalde.

'Goed,' zei Erin.

'Ik houd van je Erin,' zei hij.

'Ik ook van jou,' zei ze, en omhelsde hem.

Hij kreeg een kamertje hoog in een toren. Het was een rommeltje hier, maar hij had goed uitzicht. Hij bleef maar lachen en stralen. Erin was ook bij hem, en zorgde voor hem. Zij was de godin van de hyena's. Ze zorgde goed voor hem, ze kon goed koken. Ook deed ze vaak boodschappen, en kwam altijd met veel speelgoed thuis, en bijzonder voedsel, magisch. Hij had het met haar getroffen, en hield van haar als van de rode stad.

En kun je er ook van houden, als ik je aanraak, lieve schat,

En kun je er ook van houden, als alles rood is in het bad,

En kun je er ook van houden, als ik met je wegvlieg naar een berg,

Om die met jou verder te beklimmen.

Ze hadden de televisie aangedaan, en keken naar een tekenfilm over een rood sap. Dat kon je verwachten in de rode stad. Ze pakte hem vast en danste met hem.

Wil je met me dansen, naar de rode maan,

Wil je met me dansen, toe nou, doe niet zo raar,

Want morgen vroeg ben ik van jou,

Dan ben ik jouw vrouw.

Het liep allemaal goed af in de tekenfilm. Ze hadden het rode sap gevonden, en plotseling waren ze in de tekenfilm, en renden over de daken. 'Naar de hyenas !' riep ze. 'Hoei !' Spoedig waren ze op het veld tussen de hyena's, op het land, tussen de boerderijen. Even sidderde hij, maar toen voelde hij zich met liefde omgeven. Wat een prachtige dieren waren het toch, zo rood. Hun bekken waren rood, omdat ze van het vlees gegeten hadden, maar welk vlees ? Dat maakte niet zoveel uit. Als ze maar goed aten. Want zulke lieve dieren ... Maar verder kwam hij niet. Een man met een geweer stond voor hen.

'Zo,' zei de man, een boer. 'Wat doen jullie om mijn land.'

'Uh, niets, meneer,' zei hij. 'We wilden alleen maar met de hyenas spelen. De hyenas gromden een beetje.

'Okay, goed,' zei de man, en vertrok weer.

'Klaar,' zei Erin. 'Laten we verder spelen.

'Wat is klaar ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Niets,' zei Erin.

'Erin, ze hebben van het vlees gegeten,' zei de jongen.

'Ach nee,' zei Erin. 'Dat moet je zo niet zien. Het is chocola.'

'Nee, het is vlees,' zei de jongen.

'Vlees van mijn vlees, gebeente van mijn gebeente,' zei Erin.

'Nu klink je kerks,' zei de jongen.

'Bloed van mijn bloed ?' zei Erin.

'Ben je Christus ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Doe niet zo mal,' zei Erin.

'Nee, zeg op,' zei de jongen ondeugend.

'Hey, praat niet zo tegen mij,' zei Erin, 'doe maar niet zo mal.'

'Ben je Christus of ben je het niet,' zei de jongen.

'Waarom wil je dat weten ?' vroeg Erin.

'Gewoon,' zei hij.

'Omdat je zo kerks klinkt,' zei hij even later.

'Oh,' zei Erin.

Ze rende weg. De hyena's renden achter haar aan, en plotseling was ze als een groep hyena's zelf. Hij sidderde. Ze was als de dood, en erger nog : als de hel, maar ze was lief, zoet, teder, als een roos.

'Erin ?' vroeg hij. 'Waar ben je nou Erin ?' De groep hyena's kwam dichterbij. Ze gromden. Hij sidderde. Hij liep terug naar de torenkamer, waar zij even later ook terugkwam. Ze deed alsof er niets was gebeurd. Ze was vrolijk. Ze kookte.

'Lieve jongen,' zei ze.

'Ja,' zei hij.

'Het eten is klaar,' zei ze. Ze zette het op tafel.

'Vlees ?' vroeg hij. Ze knikte. 'Ik lust geen vlees,' zei hij. Toen gaf ze hem een chocolaatje. 'Je moet goed eten,' zei ze.

'Nee,' zei hij. 'Dat moet ik niet. Dat moeten alleen de hyenas.' Ze klapte. Ze waren in de rode stad. Ze had wat bedelaars uitgenodigd. Ze aten allemaal van het vlees. 'Aten,' zei ze, 'dat is de Egyptische zonnegod.'

'Kan mij het schelen,' zei de jongen.

'Zeg, heb eens wat meer respect,' zei ze.

'Heb ik geen respect voor,' zei hij. Ze kwam naar hem toe, en gaf hem klappen op zijn billen. De bedelaars keken toe. 'Zeg, doe eens rustig met die jongen,' zei één van de bedelaars. Maar toen nam de jongen het voor haar op. 'Zeg, heb wat meer respect voor de godin,' zei hij. 'Zij doet wat goed is. Aan haar wetten zijn wij ondergeschikt.'

'Je hebt gelijk,' zei de bedelaar. 'Ik wist niet dat zij de godin was.'

'Dan weet je het nu,' snauwde de jongen. De bedelaar sidderde.

'Lieve jongen,' zei de godin.

'Gatverredamme,' zei één van de bedelaars. Dat vlees stinkt.

'Je moet snel eten,' zei de godin. De bedelaars aten haastig door, en gingen weer weg.

'Wat een figuren,' zei de jongen.

'Jij bent anders ook niet zo'n lieverdje,' zei de godin.

'Maar ze hebben overal commentaar op,' zei de jongen, 'terwijl je ze zo goed helpt.'

'Dat denk je alleen maar,' zei de godin.

'Nee, ik zie het toch,' zegt de jongen.

'Laat maar, houd maar op,' sprak de godin. 'Ik begin een beetje ongeduldig met jou te worden.' En weer gaf ze hem een paar klappen op de broek. 'Het is dat je de godin bent,' sprak de jongen, 'anders was ik je aangevlogen.'

'Wil je werkelijk weten wat ik met de bedelaars heb gedaan ?' vroeg de godin.

Hij knikte. 'Ja,' zei hij. 'Graag.'

'Okay,' zei ze, 'maar je mag het niet verklikken.'

'Erewoord,' zei hij.

'Okay,' zei ze. 'Ze gaan naar de schuren.'

'Hoe bedoel je ?' vroeg hij.

'Laat maar,' zei ze.

'Nee, je moet het nu zeggen,' zei hij. 'Wie A zegt, moet ook B zeggen.'

'Waarom,' vroeg ze.

'Wie A zegt moet ook B zeggen,' herhaalde hij.

De godin zuchtte. 'Je bent luguber,' zei hij.

'Nee, jij bent luguber,' zei ze. 'Je begrijpt nooit wat ik bedoel.'

'En jij legt nooit wat uit,' zei hij.

'Daar bij de boerderijen,' zei ze.

'Wat ?' vraagt hij.

'Niks,' zegt ze. En even later : 'Ik kan het niet zeggen. Er staat een gestalte naast mij.'

'Waar heb je het over,' gilt de jongen.

'Niets,' rilt ze. 'Vergeet het.'

'Geesten ?' vraagt hij.

'Ja,' snikt ze. Hij omhelst haar. 'Het komt wel goed,' zegt hij.

'Je bent zo lief,' zegt ze.

'Jij ook,' zegt hij.

'Je bent altijd zo geduldig met me,' zegt ze. Hij glimlacht. Hij omhelst haar weer en kust haar.

'Nee, niet kussen,' zegt ze. 'Het doet pijn.'

Hij laat haar los. Dan slaat de bliksem in.

'Onweer,' zegt ze.

'Wat moeten we in een rode stad ?' vraagt hij.

Ze maakt kabeljauw klaar. Het zit in een potje, en het komt met drie wensen. 'Ik wens geluk, liefde

en zaligheid,' zei ze. Hij rent uit de torenkamer, want hij kan de stank niet verdragen. 'Altijd vlees,' roept hij.

'Vis,' roept ze hem na.

'Hetzelfde,' zegt zij.

'Dat is alleen voor hyena's,' roept hij.

'Ben jij dan geen hyena, je bent de prins van de hyena's,' roept ze.

'Alles met mate,' zegt hij.

'Een waar woord,' zegt ze, terwijl ze de kabeljauw in het openhaard vuur gooit. Hij komt dichterbij.

'Zeg, ik ben verliefd, en voor de liefde doe ik alles,' zei ze.

'Op wie ?' vraagt hij.

'Op jou,' zegt ze.

'Blijf van me af,' zegt hij. 'Ik ben een autist.'

'Het was maar een grapje,' zei ze. 'Wij hyena's kunnen niet verliefd worden.'

'Ik ook niet,' zei hij. 'Het is walgelijk, smerig.'

'Precies, als gesmolten kaas,' zegt ze.

'Gatverredamme,' zei hij. En even later : 'Waarom maak je zulke grapjes.'

Ze gaf geen antwoord. Het maakte hem kwaad.

'Stomme hoer,' zei hij. Ze begon te huilen. 'Het spijt me verschrikkelijk. Het zal nooit meer gebeuren,' zei ze.

'Het is al te laat,' zei hij. 'Nu brand ik. Ik kan hier echt niet tegen. Een beetje over de liefde gaan lopen praten, gatverredamme, rot toch een end op.'

'Nu ben je niet leuk,' zei ze. 'En ook niet aardig.'

Je hebt me gekwetst, zei hij.

- En jij me verdrongen.

Niet waar, ik ben altijd open voor je geweest.

- Leugenaar.

Hond.

- Gemenerik.

Zwarte hond.

- Racist.

Ik weet het.

- Dode diender.

Ik weet het.

Opeens stond de boer weer voor hen met een geweer. 'Uit mij stad nu,' sprak hij nors, 'uit mijn stad.

Jullie zouden met de hyenas spelen, maar alles wat jullie doen is elkaar voor gek uitmaken.'

'Maar wij zijn hyenas,' zei de godin.

'Ja, dat zeggen ze allemaal,' zei de boer. 'Wegwezen, uit mijn stad. Ik heb niets met jullie te maken. Ook al vriezen jullie dood in de kou, kan mij het schelen, oprotten, weg, weg.'

Maar toen werd de jongen heel erg kwaad, en greep het geweer en boog het om. 'Zeg, zo spreek je niet tegen een godin,' zei hij tegen de boer met strakke ogen. Zijn ogen lieten de boer niet meer los, en de boer begon te sidderen. Daar kwam een andere boer aan. 'Het is de godin,' riep de sidderende boer. 'Ach nee,' zei de andere boer, 'laat hen je niks wijsmaken.' Maar spoedig waren ze allemaal door grommende hyenas omsingeld. De hyenas doken op de twee boeren. 'Rennen !' riepen ze. Maar ze konden nergens heen.

'Dat is ook met de bedelaars gebeurd,' fluisterde de godin. 'Naar de schuren.'

Hyena's, maak het op, en leg het neer,

Hyena's, ren je rot en kom niet meer,

Hyena's, in de rode stad, je leeft niet meer.

Ze keken naar een andere tekenfilm. Buiten sneeuwde het. Ze maakte alleen nog maar chocolade voor hem. Hij gruwelde van vlees. Hij had haar gesmeekt geen vlees en vis meer te maken. Hij kon het niet aan. Het leven was te zwaar dan. Maar in chocolade was het voor hem een zachte, zalige oceaan. Zo romig en cremig. Dat was voor hem altijd weer een verrassing, en zij was zijn verrassing. Zij was zijn genade. Er lagen hier overal snoeppapiertjes, alsof er een heks was langsgekomen. Vlees was er allang niet meer, alleen nog maar snoep. Snoep maken kon ze als de beste, en ze genas zijn hart.

Hij liep altijd rond op gympen, en zij op blote voeten. Hij bladerde door wat boeken, en keek naar haar. Ze keek terug. 'Is dit wat je wilt ?' vroeg ze. 'Gaan we nooit trouwen ? Want straks word je wakker, en dan heb je mijn ring niet.'

'Onzin,' zei de jongen. 'Heb geloof.'

'Nu klink jij kerks,' zei Erin.

'Kan me niet zoveel schelen,' zei de jongen.

'Hoe heet je eigenlijk ?' vraagt Erin.

'Orpheus,' zegt de jongen. 'Orpheus P.'

'Mooie naam,' zegt Erin.

'Had je kunnen weten als godin zijnde,' zei Orpheus.

'Ik weet niet alles,' zei ze.

'Of je wil het gewoon niet weten,' zei hij.

'Of ik wil het gewoon van jou horen,' zei de godin.

Plotseling werden ze omringd door rode lichten.

'Hyenische energie,' zei de godin, 'ze hebben ons gevonden.'

'Er komt licht uit mijn handen,' zei Orpheus.

'Uit mijn handen ook,' zei Erin.

'Dan kunnen we een nieuwe wereld creeeren,' zei Orpheus.

'De rode stad is alles wat we nodig hebben,' zei Erin, 'als een rode picknick.'

'Als een rode draad, van mijn hart naar de jouwe ?' vroeg Orpheus.

Ze knikt. 'Ja,' zegt ze. En even later : 'Altijd aan elkaar verbonden.'

'Geen zweem van twijfel,' zei Orpheus.

'Het beest van twijfel is in de rivier geworpen,' zei de godin.

'Goed,' zei Orpheus.

'Zwarte mensen, gemaakt van chocola,

Zwarte mensen, dienen de tafella,

Zwarte hond, hebbende geen gena.

Weer keken ze naar een tekenfilm. 'Hoe kunnen we de rode draad vinden ?' vroeg Orpheus. 'Kom maar mee,' zei ze. Ze zwierven door de sneeuwbedekte stad, naar een kerk, waar de draad ergens moest hangen. Binnengekomen zagen ze een heks. 'Hoe zijn jullie binnengekomen ?' vroeg de heks. 'Dat is onmogelijk. Niemand kan hier komen.'

'Ik heb hem meegenomen,' zei Erin.

'Jij ?' sprak de heks. 'Ellendeling.' Toen begon ze op haar piano te spelen.

'Morgenrood, vroeg is dood, morgen boter, aardkloot,

Botervloot, kom hier nu, vlug, breng die mensen snel terug,

Deze stad is van mij, niemand komt er levend uit,

Niemand, nee, niemand, want de avond is het paslood,

Morgenbrood, vroeg is dood, ik heb hen nu geflest,

Ik heb hen op het kastje gelegd.'

'Heks, hou je waffel,' sprak Orpheus.

'Waar is de rode draad ?' vroeg Erin.

'Achter me,' zei de heks. 'Grijp ernaar, en als je mist, heb ik je.'

'Geen sprake van, heks,' zei Orpheus.

'Deze stad is van mij,' zei de heks, 'dus ik bepaal wat er gebeurd.'

De bakker heeft zijn hemd gescheurd,' zei Orpheus.

'Koeien in de sloot,' zei de heks.

'Ik heb een broertje dood,' zei Orpheus.

Toen begon ze weer verder te spelen.

'Draken van het vuurfontein, help met de wijn, help met de wijn,

Verdrink ze hier, in het bier, help met de wijn en met vertier,

Ha, kom terug, wanneer ik je roep, chocolade mensen hebben hier een goed beroep,

Slaven zullen jullie wezen, op het dekzeil gehesen, klaar.'

'Mens, houd toch op, niemand is in die akelige rijmpjes van jou geinteresseerd,' zei Orpheus.

'Niemand zei je ?' sprak de heks. 'Ze zijn toevallig allemaal aan de beeldbuis genageld. Ik beslis hier de TV. Ha.'

'Ach heks, houd op met je sprookjes,' zei Orpheus'. 'Zal ik u eens een verhaaltje vertellen.'

'Ga je gang,' zei de heks.

Orpheus floot even, en daar kwam een groep hyenas binnenstormen, die al snel op de heks doken.

'Dat kan helemaal niet,' zei de heks. 'Niemand kan hier komen. Hoe hebben jullie deze plaats ontdekt.'

'Vuur, vuur,' gilde de heks. Maar er kwam geen vuur, en haar piano kon ze niet meer bereiken. Toen maakte ze een heel hoog fluitje, maar dat werkte ook niets uit.

'Orpheus, we moeten hier weg,' gilde Erin. Samen renden ze naar buiten. 'Heb je het draad ?' vroeg Orpheus.

'Nog niet,' zei Erin.

'Houd vast,' zei Erin.

'Wat moet ik vasthouden ?' vroeg Orpheus.

'Mijn hand,' zei Erin.

'De rode stad is van mij,' gilde de heks. 'Dat kun je zo maar niet wegnemen. Mijn lieve, lieve stad.'

'Heks, het is afgelopen,' schreeuwde Orpheus.

'Nee !' krijste de heks. 'Kom daar niet aan. Raak het niet aan !'

Daar kwamen de hyenas naar buiten lopen met het draad. De stad was nu van hen. Ze hadden het draad in hun bekken, het rode draad, en er droop rood sap vanaf. Overal waar ze kwamen was er rode sneeuw.

'Het is een teken,' zei Erin.

'Wat voor een teken,' vroeg Orpheus.

'Ik kan het niet zeggen,' zei Erin.

'Schat, je moet het zeggen,' zei Orpheus.

'Chocola,' stamelde Erin.

'Het smaakt goed,' zegt Orpheus.

'Snoep is zoet,' zegt Erin.

'Deze heks met al haar vlezen,' zuchtte Orpheus.

'Ze is dood, heus,' zegt Erin. 'De hyenas hebben haar ...'

'Aan stukken gereten ?' vroeg Orpheus.

'Nee, veel erger,' zei Erin.

'Ik wil het niet weten,' zegt Orpheus.

'Je moet het weten,' roept Erin.

'Zeg me dat het niet zo is,' zegt Orpheus, nadat ze het hem had verteld. 'Hebben ze dat echt gedaan ? Dat had ik niet verwacht.'

'Ja, ze hebben haar echt in snoep veranderd,' zei Erin.

'En wie gaat haar opeten ?' vraagt Orpheus.

'De rode stad,' zegt Erin.

'Het snoep is goed,' zegt Orpheus.

Erin knikt. 'Ja,' zegt ze. 'Snoep is zoet.'

De dag erna sneeuwde het snoep, en de kinderen aten hun buikjes vol. Zo vol dat ze 's avonds niet bij het avondeten konden zijn. Ze moesten het vlees laten staan voor de hyena's, en lusten sinds die dag geen vlees of vis meer. 'Laat het over aan de hyena's,' werd er altijd gezegd. 'De snoep is voor de kinderen.'

ARABISCH AMALGAAM

Hoofdstuk 1.

Ik, 27 jaar,

Lang,

Doe mezelf ouder voor dan ik ben.

Zij, 44 jaar

We zijn gelukkig samen, alsof we het eeuwig geluk hebben gevonden. Toch leiden we een saai

leven, een sleur, zitten we opgesloten tussen muren. We leven meer in de dalen dan op de toppen. We mogen niet klagen, alcohol vult altijd de leegtes op. We moeten beiden oppassen geen alcoholisten te worden, maar we hebben het nu redelijk onder controle. Vaak als we klachten hebben wordt ons alcoholische dranken voorgeschreven door onze dokter. Onze dokter is wel alcoholist, maar daar hebben wij genoegen meegenomen. Dit omdat het een aardige man is, en dat zijn dokters zeer zelden. Hij neemt ons serieus en heeft ons op sleeptouw genomen.

Zij, is kleiner dan mij, heeft grote borsten die het leeftijds-verschil opvullen. We hebben geen kinderen, en dat willen we ook niet. Ze is rustig, ik ben tamelijk druk, dus we houden elkaar in balans. Zij leert mij nu om rustig te zijn, ook om mijn innerlijke stem te verstaan. Innerlijke vrede noemt ze dat. De dokter is hier weleens dronken geweest. We hebben besloten hem de hand boven het hoofd te houden. We zouden hem nooit verraden. We zijn niet kerkelijk, maar gaan wel naar een discussie-groepje om daar de dingen van het geloof te bespreken. Veelal wordt het geloof vanuit de atheistische hoek bekeken, aangevuld met kunstzinnige ideeen. We beschouwen het geloof als een vreemde erfenis, als cultuurgoed, maar voelen ons ook ingenomen, onder schrikbewind, door kolonisten uit het midden-oosten. We hebben nog geen geestelijke onafhankelijkheid. Ook de psychische gezondheidszorg houdt ons nog in mentale afhankelijkheid, en de zogeheten tandheelkunde houdt ons in orale afhankelijkheid, en deze bezetters komen allemaal uit het oosten aanwaaien. Trots zijn we er niet op, we hebben meer binnengelaten dan ons lief is, en hebben onze onafhankelijkheid prijsgegeven aan idioten, beulen. Maar ja, het was immers oorlog, het was een strooptocht, kolonisten zijn uit op kolonies, het creeeren van een apartheid. Deze kolonisten hebben een minderwaardig ras geschapen, wij. Het is voor het leken-ras verboden na te denken. Er wordt al voor ons gedacht, er is al voor ons gedacht, en er zal nog veel voor ons gedacht worden. Dat de etiketten niet passen is niet van belang. Het zijn de merktekens van het beest.

En dan is er nog de sex-politie die ons sexueel afhankelijk heeft gemaakt, bang dat een onzedelijk geluidje in een oplettend kinderoortje terecht zal komen. Maar diezelfde kinderoortjes worden niet gespaard voor het traumatiserende geschreeuw van knettergekke dokters en het erbarmenloze geboor van de zogeheten tandarts. Dat diezelfde kinderen voor de ogen van hun ouders door zulke misdadigers oraal worden gescalpeerd schijnt geen probleem te zijn. In Afrika worden kleine meisjes vanwege het volksgeloof aldaar vaginaal besneden, en daar is men in de hele wereld terecht ontdaan over, en wordt het als een godslasterlijke misdaad beschouwd, maar hier worden kinderen, zowel jongens als meisjes door de bezetter oraal besneden, en geen kip die erom kraait.

Mijnheer A. Hoekstra-Van Het Land denkt hier anders over. In zijn zogeheten tandartsen-praktijk wordt alles veilig gedaan, en zijn er strenge voorzorgsmaatregelen, die overigens overal gelden, en waar ook een strenge controle op is. Ook worden er na de besnijding betrouwbare, goed geteste stoffen gebruikt om de opening weer mee te bedekken, zodat het gebit van het kind extra lang mee kan gaan. Mevrouw T. Foppen sluit zich hier helemaal bij aan, en ja, wat hebben wij in te brengen tegen deze bezetters ? We kunnen ons hoogstens aansluiten bij het verzetstrijders-front tegen zulke praktijken. Wij hebben allemaal het merkteken van het beest ontvangen, of we nu wilden of niet, en het merkteken is eeuwig. Daar kan zelfs God of de keizer niets aan veranderen. Er zijn hier in dit land drie oppergeloven waar iedereen zich aan dient te onderwerpen, waarvoor elke knie zich dient

te buigen, en waartoe elke tong zal belijden : het medische geloof, het geloof in de geestelijke gezondheid, en het orale geloof, tot aan het dentale toe. En of je nu een dentaal bent of je bent het niet : die kerk kent geen grenzen.

Maarten Stokmans-Van Zeilen, zogeheten tandarts, aan de Belgische grens, vermeld dat er de laatste tijd vreemde dingen in zijn zogeheten tandartsen-praktijk plaatsvinden. Zo zouden beugels spontaan inkrimpen, en zogenaamd amalgaam, de zogeheten grijze roestvrije metaal-vullingen, zou spontaan in het niets oplossen. Hij gebruikt daarom nu veel vaker witte en rode vullingen, die volgens hem wat meer betrouwbaar zijn. Rood is tegelijkertijd de kleur van zijn lievelingskat, dus dat geeft ook direkt een emotionele verbinding met thuis. Ook is Maarten tegelijkertijd een enthousiast lid van de pinkstergemeente, en staat hij elke zondag trouw in deze kerk te klappen op de maat van de overigens heel mooie en aanstekelijke muziek. Hij heeft een visie voor het invoeren van veel meer kleuren zogeheten vullingen, zodat de mensen kunnen kiezen waarmee de barbaarse boorgaten voor eeuwig kunnen worden verborgen. Dat zou ook wat meer vrolijkheid brengen onder deze groep mensen die zo lijden onder de orale bezetting uit het oosten. Hij vindt ook wel dat de paus van de zogeheten tandartsen, Alexander de Kleine, de touwtjes wel wat mag vieren.

Kaakchirurg Riekerd van Aarnautsen is het hier niet mee eens, want hij vreest dat een al te zeer bemoedigde jonge generatie wel eens het einde van de bezetting zou kunnen betekenen. En dat zou helemaal godsonterend zijn. De wet die hen door God gegeven is, en waardoor zij de macht hebben gekregen, moet gehandhaafd worden. Van Aarnautsen staat hierin niet alleen. Tenminste negentig procent van de zogeheten tandartsen en kaakchirurgen staan achter hem, alhoewel sommigen gedwongen zijn dit te doen. Ook is hij van mening dat het God Zelf is geweest die het zogeheten amalgaam heeft geschapen, en dat wij Zijn schepping moeten eren en ervan gebruik moeten maken. Hij is van mening dat het amalgaam ook goed gebruikt kan worden in andere delen van het lichaam, vooral in de botten. Hij vindt het onzin om mensen die jarenlang niet kunnen slapen van de heuppijn een nieuwe heup te geven. Implantaties van amalgaam zouden volgens hem wonderen kunnen verrichten. Dit omdat het volgens hem bewezen is dat amalgaam gevoeligheid van de botten kan afdekken.

Ja, de verschillende meningen over amalgaam en het gebruik ervan, dat is me er eentje. Nu wil Van Aarnoutsen zijn naam veranderen in Van Aernoutsen met Ae, want dat staat volgens hem veel deftiger. Men is er maar druk mee, met de grote drie, de drie supergeloven van dit land. Het christelijk geloof is daar helemaal aan ondergeschikt, want ook de christen buigt voor de dokter, de geestelijk verzorger en de zogeheten tandarts. Het geloof van de zogeheten tandarts is gebaseerd op de orale besnijding, als plicht, als prioriteit, en zij die rebels daartegen zijn worden doorverwezen naar de geestelijke verzorgers, want die mensen mankeren natuurlijk heel wat. Veel mensen denken dat we in 1945 zijn bevrijd van de nazi’s, maar de bezetting door de nazi’s is groter dan ooit, door de medi-nazi’s, de psychinazi’s en de nazi’s van de mond, de orale nazi’s. En dit is dan ook de drieeenheid die alomtegenwoordig aanbeden wordt. Het vullingenbeheer wordt overgelaten aan de orale organisten, de tandpasta-producenten, die net zoals de nazi’s fluor gebruiken, een afvalproduct, om de gehypnotiseerde kolonie gewillig te houden. Zij bespelen met grote flair en betutteling de monden van de leken-families, zodat er niet al teveel tegenspraak zal zijn. Men moet

eten wat de pot schaft, en door het gepoets komt er ook nog eens lekker veel gifdamp vrij van de kwikhoudende en kankerverwekkende chemicalien die ze vullingen noemen inplaats van gedwongen bot-implantaten, als de kinderdoop na de besnijdenis. En na zulk een gebeurtenis is hun naam ineens haas, en zijn alle verdere klachten voor de psychiater en de zondagsschool. Nee, dan ben ik maar als een oude jood die zegt : De verlosser moet nog komen. Een geschikte kanditaat hiervoor zou zijn Nelson Lincoln, die ook nog eens voor de dieren opkomt.

Onder dwangverpleging moeten we vandaag de dag van de verboden vrucht eten, om zo vervolgens nog meer in de problemen te komen, om zo nog rijper voor de verboden vrucht te worden. Dit is een vicieuze cirkel. En gedwongen implantaten hebben meer te maken met bezoek van buitenaardse wezens dan met werkelijke zorg. We zijn allang niet meer van onszelf. Maar goed, elke religie heeft zijn ongelovigen, en die moeten naar de hel. De hele wereld zal het beest achterna gaan om zijn beeld te aanbidden en zijn merkteken te dragen. De vijand werkt met vergiftiging, en met ontkenning ervan, zo is het altijd al geweest.

Mijnheer Olafsen uit Zutphen aan de Rijn zegt dat aan amalgaam geen enkel gevaar zit, want alles zit netjes ingedekt binnenin de kies. Nooit van dampvorming en metaalradiatie gehoord, mijnheer Olafsen ? Vervolgens zegt mijnheer Olafsen dat er maar heel weinig van het amalgaam daadwerkelijk in het lichaam terecht kan komen. Hoe weet u dat mijnheer Olafsen ? Ooit weleens opgemeten ? En weet u niet dat de apparatuur van de bezetters zichzelf echt niet zullen gaan verraden ? Drogredenaties, mijnheer Olafsen. En u heeft geen respect voor de mening van een ander, zelfs niet als het om hun eigen mond gaat. Uw wil is wet, want u heeft uw kolonie bezet, en duldt geen verzet. U houdt hen allen in slaap door het stafke van Doornroosje, met uw prikkende boren, soms tot aan de zenuw toe, en dan maar de gepleegde misdaden afdekken. Wie heeft u gezegd in de monden van gevoelige kinderen te gaan boren ? Het is niet veel anders dan Karel de Kleine die met het zwaard de ongelovigen dwong het christendom aan te nemen. En zo is de orale besnijding net zo erg als de vaginale besnijding, omdat het beiden om dwang gaat, en de klachten erbij niet serieus worden genomen. Klachten zijn de tekenen dat de bezetting werkt. En men wil dat zo houden. Alle tong zal belijden, elke knie zal buigen.

Bert Ootjes is door het verzet als zogeheten holistisch tandarts geplaatst in Bergen aan de Maas. Hij werd geplaatst voor het verwijderen van brandmerken, mertekens en nummers van het beest, en werkte in opdracht van de patient. Door de ongelovelijke werkdruk is mijnheer Ootjes overspannen geraakt, en plaatste het verzet een tweede zogeheten holistisch tandarts, professor Joost Achterbergen. Ook hij werkte in opdracht van de patient. Sindsdien zijn er vele zogeheten holistische tandartsen in het land gaan werken om de orale besnijdingen tegen te gaan. Veel van die zogeheten holistische tandartsen waren boorloos, maar ook de bezetters infiltreerden in deze branche, maar dan met boren. Om het infiltreren tegen te gaan plaatste het verzet schermpjes die zelf dauwdruppels konden aanmaken, en die schermpjes bezaten twee soorten poedertjes die op de zogeheten tandarts zouden reageren. Werden de dauwdruppels blauwkleurig, dan was de kust veilig, maar als de dauwdruppels roodkleurig werden, dan had de patient te doen met een infiltrant. Zo konden patienten het snel testen. Het was een uitvinding van Bert Ootjes. Niemand heeft ooit het tegendeel van de werking ervan kunnen bewijzen, en als er wetenschappelijk commentaar van

buiten het verzet kwam, dan werd dat gewoon niet erkend. Het kwam er al snel op neer dat minstens vijftig procent van de zogeheten holistische tandartsen infiltranten waren van de bezetting. Velen hadden gewoon hun eigen gifjes die ze gebruikten, en de orale besnijding werd gewoon doorgezet. Ook het half serieus nemen werd een grote trend.

Ik ben in het verzet gegaan toen ik 25 werd, maar omdat ik op straat werd neergestoken kon ik geen actief lid meer zijn, en beperkte mij hooguit tot discussie-groepjes. Ik raakte verlamd. Ik zit nu in een rolstoel, en moet weer langzaam leren lopen. Mijn vriendin helpt me daarbij. Vandaag ben ik met haar naar het naaktstrand gegaan omdat het buitengewoon mooi weer was. Daar waren mensen met mooie naakte plekken in hun mond, niet vervuild door de zogeheten tandarts. Alles puur natuur.

28 Januari 1971

De flower power beweging groeit nog steeds, meer dan ooit. Ook de ‘Baas in Eigen Mond’ beweging groeit hard, vooral onder de jeugd. Ik kan weer een beetje lopen. De wonden zijn aardig genezen. De naaktstranden zijn dichtbevolkt nu. Overal wordt geprotesteerd en gedemonstreerd tegen de bezetting, tegen de grote drie, maar het ministerie is niet onder de indruk. Het is volgens hen door de gezondheidsraad bewezen dat de grote drie geen kwaad hebben verricht en een bevordering zijn voor de volksgezondheid. Inmiddels grijpt de bevolking massaal naar speciale tandpastas voor gevoelige tanden, want nieuwe zogeheten vullingsoorten zorgen ervoor dat zelfs duikers niet meer zo diep konden duiken als voorheen, doordat ze de druk op de mond niet meer aankunnen vanwege deze nieuwe aanwinst in de pharmaceutische industrie. Dit wordt door het ministerie ontkent. De nieuwe zogeheten vullingsoorten zijn prima. De bezetting kan er alleen maar van profiteren. Er wordt alleen vanuit het hogere elite-ras gedacht. Het leken-ras is niet interessant. Steeds meer jongeren beginnen zich tegen de flower power beweging te verzetten, omdat er maar niets gebeurt. Het is allemaal te soft, en de meesten worden gezien als watjes die niets ondernemen dan mantras zingen en mandalas tekenen. De heavy metal beweging begint te groeien, en kaapt veel van de flower power beweging weg. De zogeheten underground wordt een grote attractie voor degenen die maar geen aansluiting konden vinden in de flower power beweging, of hen die erin teleurgesteld waren en grote vraagtekens hadden.

Bert Ootjes begint een nieuwe pseudo-industrie en wordt door de politie opgepakt en vastgezet. Hij is inmiddels de grootste verzetsstrijder die het verzet kent, en de bekendste. Hij wordt ook wel de Vader van het Verzet genoemd. In de gevangenis vindt Bert Ootjes een nieuw hormoon uit wat tanden weer kan laten aangroeien. Wel zorgt dit hormoon ervoor dat de tanden om de zoveel tijd gewisseld worden, en dat betekent dus tegelijkertijd het einde van de hele zogeheten tandheelkunde. Het hormoon is een mengsel van een stof die door haaien en krokodillen wordt gedragen, en die door een simpele injectie in een mens ingebracht kan worden, eens en voor altijd. Vanaf het moment van de injectie maakt het lichaam de stof zelf aan. Het hormoon slaat in als een bom, en naast het verdwijnen van de zogeheten tandheelkunde valt ook de geestelijke gezondheidszorg en ook het medische bewind. Nu een van de grote drie is gevallen blijkt het dat ze hun belangrijkste schakel kwijt zijn. Mensen worden gezonder doordat ze niet meer als een afvalput van gifstoffen worden behandeld. Ook het kerkelijk geloof valt hierbij in, en onze erfenis bleek niet veel meer te

zijn dan een zogeheten vulling na de besnijdenis, en nu de besnijdenis was verdwenen daalde ook de behoefte naar een zogeheten vulling, maar de dwang was er nog steeds. De grote twee adopteerden toen het kerkelijk geloof als nummer drie, maar de geloofwaardigheid hiervan was tot een minimum gedaald, en velen lieten zich niet zomaar meer afzetten.

3 Januari 1980

Bert Ootjes komt vrij, en zorgt ervoor dat ons land de onafhankelijkheid krijgt. De geestelijke gezondheidszorg en het medische geloof worden tot liefde-werk gereduceerd. Het kerkelijk geloof mag daarbij helpen, maar verliest haar macht. Nelson Lincoln wordt de nieuwe anarchistische leider, en ook Joost Achterbergen speelt hierin een grote rol. Zij worden de nieuwe grote drie. Een man genaamd Tutuc zet een geheel nieuwe religie op gebaseerd op liefde en sex. Maas-Middelland wordt de nieuwe hoofdstad, waar professionele prostituees zich zetelen en de stad leiden. Er worden meer naaktstranden geopend, en het land wordt voor vijftig procent naturistisch. Tutuc richt de Naturistische Anarchistische Partij op, de NAP, en krijgt zestig procent van alle stemmen. Velen hebben een andere definitie van naturisme, die volgens hen veel meer is dan gewoon naakt lopen. Binnen het naturisme komen vele stromingen. Er wordt fel uitgehaald naar de mode beweging die wordt gezien als sexuele onderdrukking en het creeeren van een underdog. Nog steeds dertig procent van de bevolking hangt de mode beweging aan, en ze hebben grote invloed, vooral op scholen, waar andersdenkenden al snel als leken-ras worden gezien. De mode wordt steeds meer gezien als manipulatie en als een belemmering voor de vrijheid.

28 Augustus 1981

Het land heeft de status van Utopia bereikt. Er is vrede overal. Men kan elkaar weer waarderen, men voelt zich weer veilig bij elkaar, er is weer vertrouwen, rust, maar ook onafhankelijkheid. Ik kan inmiddels weer goed lopen en alles weer doen. Veel ga ik met mijn vriendin naar het zwanenmeer, het plantsoen. Hier kom ik helemaal tot rust. We hebben het vaak over onze schooltijd. Ik ben erg veranderd volgens mijn vriendin, minder druk. De roosjes beginnen uit te komen langs het zwanenmeer, en ze brengen wit sap voort. De grootste zwaan van het plantsoen gaat stoer over het riviertje dat het slot omgeeft. Altijd ruikt het hier naar zeewier. Als ze van die grootste zwaan niet zouden zeggen dat het een zwaan was, dan zou ik denken dat het een paard was. De bloemen komen hier laat uit, en niemand weet waarom. Altijd pas na de mid-hitte van de zomer. De criminaliteit is hier tot een nulpunt gedaald. Ik voel me weer veilig op straat.

In andere landen is het nog geen Utopia, en zijn missionarissen van Bert Ootjes vaak niet welkom. Heel veel buitenlanders emigreren naar ons land, en er komen steeds meer flats, die ook steeds hoger worden, en dit schijnt een goede uitwerking te hebben op de onderlinge vrede. In de politiek in andere landen gaat het er hard aan toe, ze geven Bert Ootjes geen kans. En ons land noemen ze de nieuwe toren van Babel. Dan wordt Bert Ootjes in het buitenland vastgezet wegens het smokkelen van zwaar alcoholische dranken. Hier schrijft hij zijn apocalypse. In ons land wordt een standbeeld van hem opgericht. Zijn geboortedag wordt een nationale feestdag. Met de diertjes gaat

het helaas nog steeds niet goed. Ze worden nog volop geslacht, en er wordt nog volop van hen genoten. Wel heeft Nelson Lincoln al heel veel voor hen gedaan. Vegetariers proberen heel wat, maar worden aan alle kanten tegengewerkt. Hun hoop is eigenlijk op Bert Ootjes, maar die zit in de gevangenis. De dieren hebben zo nog steeds geen onafhankelijkheid, en behoren nog steeds tot het leken-ras. Slagers beginnen steeds meer reclame te maken, met de meest idiote, uit zijn verband gerukte, betuttelingen, en proberen de massa met liedjes en slagzinnen in hypnose te houden. Leuk, zo'n arm diertje slachten, en dan ook erbij gaan zingen. De zingende slagers zijn populair, en er worden veel platen verkocht. Ook banketbakkers werken veel vaker met vlees. De warme broodjes met vleesvullingen gaan pijlsnel over de toonbank heen. En ze vinden steeds weer nieuwe dingen uit, en verleggen hun grenzen voortdurend. Voor de dieren is het nog geen Utopia. In het buitenland hebben de dieren het beter.

In de ogen van de dieren zijn de slagers en hun consumenten de bezetters. Zij vinden het racisme, maar niemand schakelt in op hun frequentie, en zij hebben geen diploma's. Nee, dit land is met zijn kar vol diploma's aan de rand van de afgrond terecht gekomen, ook al noemen ze het een Utopia. Maar in de apocalypse hebben de dieren het laatste woord.

2 Augustus 1982

Grillen zijn 'in'. Er wordt veel gebarbecued, veel gezongen en gedanst. Voor de dieren lijkt het alleen maar erger te worden. We zijn in de tachtiger jaren beland. Vlees wordt een handig weggevertje, een uitstekend kado voor speciale gelegenheden, en een bewijs van eeuwige trouw en liefde. Huwelijks-taarten worden meer en meer omgezet in bouwsels van vlees, en de miniaturen van zowel bruid als bruidegom op de top van de vlees-cake zijn steeds meer naakt, als een propaganda voor het naturisme, wat natuurlijk op zich niet verkeerd is. Steeds meer wordt er de nadruk gelegd op practische collectieve ambacht, waarin de vlees-eter moet zien wat hij eet. Veel demonstraties van openlijke slachtingen worden vertoont, en het vlees bestemd voor een huwelijks-feest wordt op het feest zelf geslacht. Door dit soort openlijke vertoning steeg allereerst het aantal vegetariers dramatisch, maar later werd het als cultuur-goed gezien, als educatief. Zo werd alles geheel gestileerd, en elke zenuw lamgelegd. Woorden als 'traditie' werden gebruikt, terwijl die traditie er nooit was. Vegetariers hadden ingezien waar het anarchisme het land naar toe had geleid, en begonnen te verlangen naar een milde vorm van communisme. Een bekend schrijver sprak : 'Het educatieve zwaard heeft een praalwagen gemaakt voor het bandeloze verstand.' Het werd een chaos in het land. Iedereen zag uit naar de terugkomst van Bert Ootjes. Maar die kwam maar niet, want die zat vast in het buitenland. Joost Achterbergen promoveerde weer ergens met een verslag over de carnivorische problematiek, maar dat haalde allemaal niets uit. Men was ergens in aan het vastroesten en kwam er niet meer uit. Er kwam een wet dat iedereen die nog vlees wilde eten de dieren zelf moest fokken en slachten. Negentig procent van de bevolking werd hierdoor boer. Nelson Lincoln had gehoopt dat ze door deze wet zouden terugschrikken, maar nee hoor, het werd een sport, een trend, een ritueel, ja, een geloof. En er werd zoveel mogelijk nonsense over verkocht. Het land kwam in een draaikolk van schaamteloos geweld en arrogantie tegen dieren. Dieren werden gewoon door de steeds naturistischer wordende bevolking als minderwaardig gezien, als ondergeschikt aan, als plezier-leken die uitgebuit moesten worden. Het werd een agrarisch land van

veeteelt waarin iedereen betrokken werd, en de vegetariers zonderden zich veelal af. Zij konden dit zinloze geweld niet bevatten, en velen van hen vertrokken naar het buitenland.

Zovelen konden hun worstjes met karbonaatjes niet missen. Ze moesten er toch niet aan denken om zonder de speklapjes en de frikandellen door het leven te gaan. Vleesproducenten haalden zelfs stunts uit door het vlees te laten regenen op speciale dagen. Het land had een nieuwe bezetter. Men begon een hogere ethische en morele waarde aan vlees te hechten. Het zou gezond zijn en zelfs noodzakelijk voor het instandhouden van het menselijk ras. Het dierlijk ras stond dus zichtbaar op een lager plan volgens deze bezetter. En dieren konden niet spreken, dus die konden zich niet verzetten. De nieuwe orale bezetters waren gekomen. Het geloof in vlees redeneerde als volgt : Mensen waren engelen, en dieren waren gevallen engelen, duivels. Zo verdedigden ze hun handelwijzen, en daarmee beweerden ze ook nog eens dat wanneer zij die dieren verslonden, dan werden hun zonden vergeven. Ik legde me er bij neer. Ik kon niets doen. Vaak ging ik met mijn vriendin naar het zwanenmeer om te bespreken wat we konden doen, maar er was niet veel wat we konden doen. We voelden ons machteloos, en besloten te genieten van de dieren die er nog waren, en die met rust gelaten werden : zwanen. Vaak gingen we ‘s nachts naar het meertje, trokken onze kleren uit en gingen daar zwemmen met de zwanen. Op een dag nam de grootste zwaan ons op zijn rug, en bracht ons naar het slot. Er woonde hier niemand meer. Het slot stond vol met ridder-pantsers. We zijn toen naar boven gegaan en gingen op een oud bed liggen. We waren helemaal naakt. Ineens kwam de zwaan binnen met een pluimhelm op. Dat was wel het zotste wat we ooit gezien hadden, en we moesten beiden heel erg lachen. Boven het bed hing een schilderij met naakte vrouwen en een wereldbol. We wisten dat het een naturistisch slot was. Het was vrij toegankelijk voor iedereen. Overal waren ook spinnewebben. Op een verdieping hoger waren nog meer schilderijen met naakte vrouwen. We besloten weer terug te gaan, zwommen het meertje over, en klommen even later ons bed in. Een man scheen het allemaal op camera te hebben vastgelegd. Hij had een zwarte hond met manen. Hij liet het ons zien en zei dat het het mooiste was wat hij ooit op kamera had vastgelegd. We voelden ons niet bespied ofzo. We vonden het wel dapper van hem, en bovenal knap. Hij wilde ons wel meer beeldmateriaal laten zien. Het waren veelal naaktscenes. Ik kwam dichter bij zijn zwarte hond met de zwarte manen. De hond had zulke prachtige ogen en ik moest hem gewoon omhelzen. Het dier was één en al geconcentreerde kracht. Het dier leek wel van adel. Alles was rust hier en vredig, en we kregen een goed contact met de man.

Hij wilde ons wel vaker filmen, en we stemden toe. Hij was een filmmaker die op zoek was naar unieke, zeldzame tafereeltjes. Wat deze man deed was kunst, hij had de gave om de climaxen en het goede van het leven te vereeuwigen. Mijn vriendin kreeg hem lief. Hij was van haar leeftijd. Ik zei : ‘Ga je gang.’ Ik kon me voorstellen dat ze iemand nodig had van haar leeftijd. Ik was altijd veel te jong voor haar, alhoewel ik me ouder voordeed dan ik was. Nu was ik me dan steeds kinderlijker gaan gedragen, omdat ik daar vroeger nooit de ruimte voor had gehad. Ik beleefde mijn jeugd nu voor de eerste keer in mijn leven. Ik ontmoette een jonge vrouw, jonger dan mij, een buitenlandse, en we werden smoorverliefd. We deden alles samen. Ook gingen we ’s nachts vaak zwemmen in het zwanenmeer, en bezochten we vaak het oude slot. Ik bleef wel gewoon hele goede vrienden met mijn vroegere vriendin en haar nieuwe geliefde. Ik had het gevoel dat zij veel beter bij elkaar pasten, alhoewel we altijd een fantastische relatie hadden gehad. Het was goed zo. We waren beiden verzadigd van elkaar. Ik begon een nieuwe hoodstuk in mijn leven, en zij ook, en ik was nog steeds

verliefd op haar en zij op mij. En de liefde was mooi en goed. De man die van haar leeftijd was had haar op het moment meer te bieden dan ik had, en hij kon heel wat leegtes vullen die door het leeftijds-verschil tussen haar en mij waren ontstaan. Zij had mijn moeder kunnen wezen. Ik had nu behoefte aan iemand die op één lijn stond met mij, van dezelfde leeftijdscategorie, of iets jonger, omdat ik mezelf nu ook jonger gedroeg dan ik was.

De tuin rondom het slot leek Arabisch, hier in Rotterdijk. Het had een beetje een pseudo-religieus-communistische gloed, wel heel mooi trouwens, bijna sprookjesachtig. Het was alsof de zwanen de sleutel ergens bewaarden. Mijn nieuwe vriendin had grote volle borsten die vol leken te hangen met melk, net zoals mijn vorige vriendin. Het leeftijdsverschil hoefde nu niet echt opgevuld te worden, want we scheelden niet zoveel in leeftijd, maar wel kon het lengte-verschil opgevuld worden. Zij was kleiner dan mij, maar verder absoluut niet klein. Omdat ze bruin was zei ze altijd dat ze chocolade-melk had, maar dat was natuurlijk maar een grapje. We hadden beiden een bepaalde orale fixatie en dat was tegelijkertijd om te overleven. Er woedde nu eenmaal een orale oorlog. We waren schaakmat gezet in een machtsspel. De gelovigen zeiden altijd dat het paradijs van Arabisch-Babylonische oorsprong was, dus voor ons was het gebied rondom het slot altijd paradijselijk. Hier moest ergens de sleutel hangen. Met mijn nieuwe vriendin dwaalde ik door de gangen van het grote slot, diep in de nacht. Overal hingen naaktschilderijen die ons denken leken te programmeren. Veel van die schilderijen waren enigmatische paradijselijke taferelen. Sommige vrouwen werden met een blinddoek beschilderd, naakt en met een zwaard. Soms een weegschaal vasthoudende, of een schaal met daarin een soort zwarte of grijze stof. Ze hadden een rechterlijke of richterlijke uitstraling of houding, als een vrouwe Justitia. Ook gaven zij mannen die stof te drinken. Ik moest ineens weer aan die amalgaam-toestanden denken. Zou het een vonnis zijn gebaseerd op in het verleden gepleegde misdaden ? De vrouwen waren van bruine huidskleur, maar niet altijd. Zou de bron van dit alles in het paradijs te vinden zijn ? Zou daar wat mis zijn gegaan ? Waarom gaf Eva haar man van de giftige vrucht ? Ik viel bijna naar achteren toen we in een kamertje kwamen met nog een schilderij. Dit schilderij was heel hoog opgehangen, boven een deur die een open haard verborg. De man was geblinddoekt in dit schilderij. De vrouw niet. Zij had twee ogen als rode appels waardoor ze naar hem keek. Hij zat op een stoel. Zij had een zwaard en een sigaar. Boven het schilderij was nog een schilderij met een geblinddoekte vrouw met een zwaard die stond alsof ze klaar was om te kappen. Maar dat was het schokkendste niet : Beide vrouwen waren als etalage-poppen, werkende voor een industrie, en ze hadden geen borsten. Die waren afgekapt. Ze konden hun moedermelk niet geven. Hun vagina’s waren afgedekt met metaal en een slot. Zij waren kinderloos, ontdaan van hun sexualiteit. Daarom gaven ze niets dan gif en verderf. Mijn nieuwe vriendin schrok er ook van. Het deed haar denken aan de vaginale besnijdenis in Afrika.

‘Zouden dieren zich ook zo voelen ?’ vroeg ik. ‘Zij worden besneden tot de dood.’ Mijn nieuwe vriendin knikte. Ik voelde me onwennig. Toen zijn we maar teruggegaan. ‘Bij de indianen,’ zei ik, ‘in het amazone-gebied, werden soms de borsten van vrouwen geamputeerd zodat ze beter hun pijl en boog konden gebruiken.’

‘Ja,’ zei zijn vriendin, ‘en in Fenicie wat nu Turkije is werd Attis aanbeden, een aan zijn lot overgeleverde jongen die door wilde schapen werd grootgebracht, en zichzelf ontmande door een

vloek. Uit zijn bloed kwam de naaldboom voort, en hij was een vroegere Jezus.’

Als in Turkije daadwerkelijk het paradijs heeft gelegen, dan ging daarachter nog steeds deze gruwelijkheid schuil : een dieper kruis, een genitale afsnijding, een sexuele apartheid. En dit had grote orale gevolgen. Het moederschap en de mannelijkheid werden ingeruild voor de oorlog, de jacht, de dood. Attis had zijn geliefde, Cybele, verlaten voor een sterveling, en werd door Cybele getroffen met de vloek van waanzin, vanwege de jaloezie. In de Joodse legendes duikt ook de naam van Lilith op als de eerste geliefde van Adam, maar zij werd al heel snel de hof uitgestuurd, omdat zij zich niet aan Adam wilde onderwerpen. En dit kruis was een enigma met vele gevolgen. Lilith zwoer dat zij de kinderen van Adam, de mensen, zou vernietigen. Zij kwam terug als de slang om Adam en Eva het gif aan te bieden. Ik ging op mijn buik liggen, en mijn vriendin ging op me liggen. Ik was niet getroffen door een vloek omdat ik een andere vriendin had nu, en mijn vorige vriendin had ook een andere vriend nu. Er was geen jaloezie. Er was vrijheid. Er waren geen rekken in onze monden meer.

Hoofdstuk 2.

‘Een vrouw zonder borsten heeft alleen gif te voeren,’ wordt er weleens gezegd, figuurlijk dan. Dat betekent dat een vrouw die geen verantwoordelijkheid draagt, geen moederlijke empathie, een gevaar is voor de samenleving. Dat was de slang in het paradijs, maar we zagen al dat er vele kanten aan het verhaal zaten, vele factoren speelden een rol, en het is niet echt eerlijk om alles zwart-wit neer te zetten met vurig religieus fundamentalisme. Er waren andere kanten. Wie hakte de borst van de vrouw af ? Waarom was ze zo woedend op de man, en wilde ze hem berechten ? Is er een kant van het verhaal die wij niet kennen ? Of heeft ze haar borst zelf afgehakt, als een amazone, om zo macht te kunnen voeren over de man ? En met welke redenen ? Voelt ze zich bedreigd door de man ? Of wil ze gewoon dwars haar zin doorvoeren.

Ik besluit met mijn vriendin terug te keren tot het slot. Ditmaal gaan we nog hoger. Op een hogere verdieping vinden we veel olie-lampen, veel Arabische spulletjes. De schilderijen zijn veel bloederiger hier, met veel naakte vrouwen die oorlog voeren. Ook zijn er veel jacht-tafereeltjes. We lopen naar de volgende verdieping, waar het enigma al snel toeslaat : afgehakte koppen van bizons staan op de schilderijen. Ook zijn er veel azteekse schilderijen, waar azteekse priesters de harten uit hun slachtoffers snijden en omhoog houden. Het is een dolle boel van besnijdingen en afsnijdingen, allemaal om apartheid te creeeren. Weer een verdieping hoger staat een enorm schilderij met de toren van Babel. De toren van Babel is een verhaal uit de bijbel waarin mensen een toren proberen te bouwen naar de hemel, en naam te maken, maar dan daalt God neer om hen te verwarren en te scheiden, zodat ze elkaar niet meer kunnen verstaan. Nog een verdieping hoger staat een standbeeld van een engel, waarachter een schilderij is met de boom des levens. De engel lijkt op een wachter, zelfs op de engel des doods. Ik houd mijn vriendin vast. We zijn beiden naakt, en staren verschrikt naar de engel en het schilderij. Naast ons is nog een klein trapje naar boven, naar een zoldertje. We horen een stem : ‘Wie wil het ei uitbroeden, wie eet het, en wie staart naar de dop ?’

‘Zei jij dat ?’ vraag ik aan mijn vriendin. ‘Nee,’ zegt ze. ‘Jij ?’ Ik schud mijn hoofd. Dan vliegt er een papegaai van het zoldertje naar beneden. ‘Opkrassen,’ schreeuwt hij. ‘Wie heeft jullie gezegd hier te komen. Het ei zal rotten.’ We lopen naar boven naar het zoldertje en zien overal rotte eieren liggen. Het stinkt hier ook verschrikkelijk naar rotte eieren. ‘Te laat,’ krijst de papegaai, ‘te laat. Jullie hadden eerder moeten komen om het geheim te zien. Nu is het weg, voor eeuwig. Dit is wat jullie krijgen voor jullie optreden : Rotte eieren.’ Tussen de eieren ligt een klein kruisje waaraan een staafje hangt dat lijkt op een mannelijk geslachtsdeel. ‘En nu oprotten,’ roept de papegaai. Het beest begint ons te pikken, en we rennen naar beneden. Het best blijft ons pikken totdat we uit het slot zijn. Snel rennen we door de tuin het water in, en zwemmen naar de overkant, maar nog steeds houdt het beest niet op met aanvallen. Dan komt de grootste zwaan ons te hulp. We houden er heel wat plekken aan over, en willen voorlopig niet meer naar het slot.

Blijkbaar is de vruchtbaarheid aan het lijden verbonden, onlosmakelijk, als twee tegengestelden, het naakte aan het bedekte. We moeten maar wachten totdat daarin vrede is gekomen. In de grondtekst van de bijbel is het paradijs Sheool, het dodenrijk, oftewel de tuin der doden. Ook de val was een werking van het paradijs, om het offer te doen rijpen. De ruwe diamant moest geslepen worden. Ze ligt op mijn rug en heeft haar armen onder mijn oksels door en houdt mijn schouders vast. Ze probeert me op te trekken, maar ik ben moe. Dan vallen we beiden in slaap.

Een oosterse tuin van geheimen, met religieuze valstrikken. Ik schrik wakker. Zij houdt me vast. Ik val weer in slaap. Voor een tweede keer schrik ik wakker. Zij houdt me weer stevig vast, en ik val weer in slaap. In wiens armen lig ik, of is dit weer een strik van de dood. Hoe dan ook, ik heb het nodig om door de dag te komen. Het is mij gegeven. Ze staan daar voor huizen als paardjes, paardjes van de apocalypse om de volle druiven te betreden, te vertrappen. De maan schijnt, de sterren vallen, een droomweb houdt mij vast. Houd mij vast, laat mij jouw trekpop zijn, in dit speelse paradijs is het beter te zijn, beter dan daarbuiten. Het paard van religie trapt hard, ongenadig, straft voor eeuwig, zet schaakmat, en trapt dan de druiven van het genot in, één voor één, en soms meerderen tegelijk. Een hard besluit, van een jaloerse God, een erfenis, van lang geleden, een raadsel dat brult, smeekt, dwingt. Kijk naar de vrucht, niet naar de dop, eet niet, want het is slechts vergif, maar zoek naar haar geheimenis, broedt het uit, en ren wanneer je kan, zweef over de wateren, als een afstandelijke liefde, veilig en ver weg als de zon. Laat de hoop je niet ontnemen, laat je niet zeggen dat ver weg alleen maar koud is, want kijk naar de zon, die het verste weg is van ons allemaal, en schijnt en warmte geeft zoals niemand anders dat kan. De zon, de astronaut, op zoek naar geheimenissen, het grote broeden.

Ik maak een verkeerde beweging en er knapt iets in mijn rug. Toch nog een complicatie van de steekpartij. Ik vecht tegen de dood, en heb een bijna-dood-ervaring. Ik kom in het paradijs, waar naakte vrouwen zijn, overal. Zij houden een geheim vast, een ei, een groot ei, een doorgang, een weg. Het is een ei vol van bloed. Ik bekijk het ei vol belangstelling. En het bloed stolt, en brengt een lichaam voort met orale en genitale vrijheid. En er is een harmonie tussen die twee, en er is vrede. Na een paar dagen ben ik weer de oude. Er is iets veranderd in mij. Ik heb de dood ontmoet, en daardoor het leven. Ik sta aan beide kanten. Ik ben de brug tussen twee naturen.

Er stonden vele narcissen in onze tuin, vechtend tegen de koude dood. Zij gaven het leven warmte, de mensen een warme deken. Alles was bevroren, bevroren legers. Er werd gehandeld in mensen. De koude hand des doods greep hen, en wie kon daar tegen opvechten. Sommigen dachten harmonie in bloed te zien, anderen alleen maar twist. De raven kwamen over de stad. De stad was snel opengebroken. Er was plaats voor het enigma nu, men staarde niet alleen maar naar de dop. Men at niet meer van het vergif. De broeders waren gekomen. In de heldere zon stonden zij daar, in de Arabische zon. De raven waren uit het oosten gekomen. Oosterse wachters waren nu in de stad, kloppende op de deuren. Zij brachten dat andere nieuws. Zij geloofden dat zij het hart waren binnengegaan, op de zwaan waren zij geklommen, en het bracht hen hier. Ook zij hadden hun verwachtingen, hun verlangens, hun logica. De Arabische zon was heet. Zij waren de paarden van de apocalypse, maar niemand heeft hen begrepen. Zachte hoeven hadden zij, manen overal, lange wimpers, dromerige ogen, bruin, dromend van zachte winters, sneeuwwitte daken, waarop het paarse zou neerdalen. De paarse hand zou hen allemaal wegnemen. Zij hadden hun schuilplaats in het oosten wanneer de winter zou vallen, en dan zou het pas echt hard en koud zijn. En de drop-verkopers zouden er rijk van worden, de banketbakkerijen vol, want iedereen wilde daar ineens slapen. Men zou vluchten tot het orale als de genitale klem zou worden gebroken. Nu lag zij nog vastgebonden op de grond, maar de wachters waren dichtbij haar. Ik hoorde een schreeuw. Zij stond op, en bedekte haar naakte lichaam met een nachtjapon. Zij ging de nacht in met een fakkel, zij was de moeder der raven. De paarse hand bracht haar op de punt van de kerktoren. Een sneeuwwitte dag zou het worden, nu Doornroosje was ontwaakt. Niet door een kus. Neen. Door een warme hand, een innige omhelzing.

Het was een paarse dag met lange manen, een koninklijk feest. Doornroosje was opgestaan. Zij stond tussen haar vader en moeder in, de oude koning en koningin. Zij bracht hen de smeltende chocola die voor eeuwen verborgen was gehouden. Iedereen zou wel met haar willen dansen, iedereen zou wel een veeg van haar chocola willen krijgen. Maar zij was selectief in haar genade, zeer selectief. Zij bedekte de edele vruchten met chocola, en schoof hen in de ogen. De bakker stond buiten op een kist en zong van haar. Zo lieten zij het feest ten einde gaan. Maar tot diep in de nacht werd er nagenoten. De bakker stond bij de notenboom met een bijl, en brak het open. Kisten vol mandarijnen stonden hier, kisten vol oude mandarijnse koningen, met een mandarijns accent. Een zetel gaf zij aan de oude man die zij door het licht had geleid. De baard van de oude tovenaar die vastzat in de boomspleet was losgesneden door het zwaard van haar ogen. Haar ogen spoten vuur, en lieten de koralen zien. Dit allemaal in flitsen, niet teveel, want teveel van dit goede zou de draken opwekken. Zij wilden Doornroosje voor eeuwig laten slapen, en niet slechts voor honderd jaar.

Ik keek met haar over de rivier van gisteren, naar de dampen ervan en de spoken, en wij wilden er niet wezen. Wij waren gevangen door het morgenland, waar de prinsessen en prinsen van gisteren niet meer regeerden. Wij konden het, ja, wij konden het wat we jaren niet gekund hadden. In het midden van de stad was zij verlicht. Wij werden door haar gevuld als roomsoezen. Van taai vlees waren haar vullingen, niet om te eten, maar om te broeden. De kok van de slacht werd terechtgesteld, en dit allemaal na een reeks lovende woorden. Morgen zou de maaltijd zijn, niet vandaag. Nooit meer zouden wij van onrijpe druiven eten waardoor de tanden van onze kinderen slee waren geworden. En deze komende maaltijd was een maaltijd voor vogels, raven, want zij

waren bestemd voor dat uur om het eerste aan tafel te gaan en te eten. Het oog van de stad wilde haar verlichten, want de stad had haar nodig, en wilde haar nooit meer uit het gezicht verliezen, maar op die dag vertrokken de zwanen naar het oosten. De raven hadden de stad nu, en zij werden ingenomen, zoals zij eens innamen. Het pasen met zijn versierselen van drop was nog steeds een ingrijpende gebeurtenis. Ik keek haar aan, zij keek naar mij. Ik had mijn oude jeugdliefde teruggevonden. Zij had kleine borsten, niet gevuld, zij was teder, intens, voorzichtig, zacht. Nooit zou er meer een zondvloed komen na die dag. Haar regenboog was een teken daarvan aan haar hemel. Ik schraapte de damp er vanaf. Een standbeeld werd van haar opgericht in de stad. Wij zouden haar nooit vergeten.

Na die week speelden de kinderen spookje in de stad, en werden de oude hobbelpaarden uit de schuur gehaald. Zij speelde, ik droomde. Het was de slag der herinneringen, rijkelijk belegde het mijn brood. Ik liet de raven er van eten. Ik at de worst van het verleden door de berg naar de andere kant, en daar werd het varken van de toekomst geslacht. Tijd was niet meer. De bezetters hadden de stad en het land ingenomen, weer vanuit het oosten, door de Arabische zon. En ik kon alleen maar glimlachen. Ik vond het wel grappig, al die vogels. Wij voerden de vogels aan het zwanenmeer, maar de zwanen zijn hier nooit meer teruggekomen. Zij hadden het geheim ergens anders gebracht. Ook voerden wij de paarden die dag, de paarden van deze apocalypse. Beschuit was haar lievelingsvoer, en rozen haar lievelingsbloemen. Een paard zwom door de grachten. Ik keek erna, en mijn rug maakte mij los van de aarde. Ik zweefde er boven, als een grote broer, als de lange neef. Ik verzorgde de aarde als mijn broertje.

Het regende buiten. Ik zat met mijn jeugdliefde op de bank. Aan al het oude was een einde gekomen, nu ik het oudere had gevonden. Het was als een harem in mijn gedachten, een doornenkroon, een rozenkrans, de cirkelzaag boven Bagdad, de ster van Betlehem. Een zoete ster was het, van genadeloos geduld. Haar licht was verblindend, en toen konden we ineens weer voelen, elkaar voelen. Voelen datgene wat zo lang was weggeweest. Zij liep zo langzaam in haar lange nachtjapon, een oosterse avondjurk, leren schoentjes met riempjes, met allerlei gaten, gelakt, en haar sokjes waren kinderlijk als de bloesem. En nog steeds dacht ik aan de zwanen. Waar zouden ze zijn ? Verblindend was haar licht, des te zoeter haar aanrakingen, haar verschijning. Teer licht, weeskind, wolf, onbegrepen. Ongezadeld in de nacht. Ik borstel haar, er is rust. Zij neemt haar pijl en boog, en gaat de stad in. In de stad staan beelden van zwanen, als een herinnering aan die dag. De zwanen zijn van steen, niet van vlees. De stad is verlaten van zwanen. De oorlog is dood. Elke knie zal zich buigen, elke tong zal belijden, en niemand weet wat. Een onverbiddelijk zwaard heeft de oorlog lamgelegd. Het vrederijk is aangebroken. De paarden van de apocalypse gaan streng door de stad heen, en dan komt de zon op, de Arabische zon. Het jachtboek is nu geopend. Men bekijkt de plaatjes, en begrijpt niet waarom. Men wil terug naar de oude dagen, maar het kan niet meer. Ik borstel haar haren, er is rust. Ze is in de stad met haar boog, als vrouwe Justitia. De rechtszaak begint. Zij was een vrouw van geconcentreerde kracht en zwakheid. De jacht-engel. Zij roepen vrede vrede, terwijl er geen vrede is. Na de duizend jaren zal er een nieuw tijdperk van vrede aanbreken. Ik borstel haar haren nog steeds. Ze zegt niks. Ik zak weg, en ze gaat op mijn rug liggen. Als een kat heeft ze haar prooi. De vlekken van de luipaard spreken van oude wonden. Dan breekt ze mijn rug, en ik ben niet meer van de aarde. Haar bereiken kan ik niet, alleen door stralen. Ik moet haar overgeven, ik moet haar loslaten, de afstand zal nu rechter zijn. Ik voel mij als een Arabische

zon, die het ijzer laat stinken, die het leer zacht maakt.

Zij zal het grote ei uitbroeden, zonder dat het haar zal doden. Van het vergif zal zij niet eten. Eens sprong zij in het wespennest, en werd een luipaard. Nu komt zij niet dichtbij, maar broedt van ver weg. De dokters zeggen dat mijn rug nu goed is, maar ik heb pijn. Zij zeggen dat dat er niet is. Zij staren alleen naar de dop. In een vuur dat eeuwig brandt wonen zij. Van een afstand ontkennen zij de problemen, een naaldboom groeit uit mijn wond. Grootgebracht door wilde schapen ben ik. We zijn omsingeld en schaakmat gezet door levensgevaarlijke zotten. De idioten van de planeet Idiotia zijn gekomen. Waren de dokters maar dronken en aardig. Wat is er van ons Utopia overgebleven ? De nieuwe bezetters ruiken als het oude, de mondenrekken zijn weer terug. Ditmaal met veel prikkeldraad. IJzeren Jaap is uit zijn doos geklommen om de klokken terug te zetten. Waren de zwanen nog maar hier. Zij is een boogschutter, een teken aan de hemel, dat de oorlog nooit meer komen zal, maar we leven met de jacht. Een teken dat er nooit geen zondvloed meer zou komen, maar nu zijn we hier. De ijzeren maagd is onze straf. Zij broedt niet, zij steekt, zij is op jacht. Mijn rug is van ijzer, een bouwwerk van amalgaam, van kwik, van Mercurius, om de rest van mijn lichaam te verzieken. De dokters zien niets op hun foto’s. Zij staren alleen naar de dop. Wij wachten allen op Bert Ootjes, die nu inmiddels een martelaar is. Maar de zwanen hebben hem bezocht. Mijn buik is gemaakt van witte en rode vulling, een eeuwig gif. Zelfs al is de wortel eruit, het symptoom zal altijd blijven. Een leuk syndroom waar geestelijk verzorgers aan kunnen blijven sleutelen. Ouders blijven met hun kinderen naar zulke dokters gaan, want als het kind geestelijk ziek wordt verklaard door de beroepsbeul, dan treft de ouders zelf geen schuld, want geestelijk ziek zijn dat ben je vanaf de geboorte, en zo hebben de ouders die hun kind verrot hebben geslagen een alibi. Zo is de zogeheten tandarts met zijn stiekeme, niet navolgbare, zogeheten vullinkjes die het kind beladen met complexe vergiftigingen en de syndrooms-stempeltjes van de geestelijk verzorgers, de zogeheten psychiaters en hun handlangers, een professionele ouders-bescherming geworden. En hoe kan een kind tegen zo’n doortrapt systeem opboksen ? Een kind heeft geen diploma’s, geen zegeltjes, maar mag deze zegeltjes wel verbreken, door de paardjes van de apocalypse. Maar waar zijn de zwaantjes wanneer je ze nodig hebt ? En waar is Bert Ootjes ?

Rebelse kinderen worden al snel ziek verklaard, niet de maatschappij, nee, want de maatschappij is heiliger, in ieder geval heiliger dan degene die aan de bel trekt. De paardjes staan nog steeds in deze carrousel. En de mierzoete snoepjes van oma moeten de kinderen klaarmaken om een reis door de fuik van de zogeheten tandarts te maken. De zogeheten tandarts gebruikt hiervoor goedgepraat geweld. De Arabische tandarts was nu gekomen, en die was nog wel orthodoxer. Bij de balie werd snoep uitgedeeld wanneer een kind zich keurig en netjes had gedragen. Het hormoon van Bert Ootjes was inmiddels uitgewerkt. Ook de botten begonnen gaatjes te vertonen, en ook die moesten gevuld worden, en daar had de Arabische tandarts een heel arsenaal voor, en die duldde echt geen tegenspraak. Arabisch amalgaam werd daarvoor gebruikt, waarvan de ingredienten strict geheim werden gehouden. Alleen de ingewijden mochten de ambacht uitvoeren, en beunhazen werden streng gestrafd. Die werden openlijk op de pleinen aan de schandpaal gezet. Nee, de Arabische tandarts, daar viel niet mee te sollen. Malafide tandartsen werden als kwakzalvers bestempeld, afgezet, en gingen sindsdien vaak zonder een ledemaat of ontmand door het leven. Azteekse praktijken kwamen niet zelden voor. De Arabische tandarts meende het. De bottenvuller, zo werd de Arabische tandarts vaak genoemd. ‘Ik moet vandaag weer naar de bottenvuller,’ klaagde een oud

mensje. ‘Ja, ik ook,’sprak een bijna tandenloos oud mannetje, en een ander moest de dag erna. Controles waren wekelijks, en sommigen moesten twee keer per week. Elke knie boog, elke tong beleed, en elke trotse nek brak voor de Arabische tandarts. Als er problemen waren met het Arabisch amalgaam, dan werd dat altijd op iets anders geschoven, en dan voelde de Arabische tandarts zich diep beledigd, en kon erg kwaad worden, wat dan de meest verschrikkelijke consequenties had. Het was godslasterlijk om te twijfelen aan het Arabisch amalgaam. Zulke godslasteraars en aanstellers waren rijp voor de Arabische psychiater. De Arabische tandarts was wel heel goed voor dieren. Zo wreed als ze waren naar hun klagende patienten, zo genadig waren ze naar dieren.

Het lichaam van Bert Ootjes lag inmiddels op de bodem van het meer van Geneve, waar ze hem hadden gedumpt. Zijn botten werden later opgedoken en hij kreeg een eervolle begrafenis. De appel brandt, en kan niet meer gegeten worden. Er kan alleen nog maar gekeken worden als naar de uitbarsting van een vulkaan. De trekpop van het verleden is stuk, maar de Arabische tandarts kan het nog wel maken, want die handelt ook in speelgoed. Bert Ootjes zal zich zeker in zijn graf omdraaien. Speelgoed, om kinderen klaar te maken voor de tandarts. Nu kunnen ze nog spelen, maar straks ? Onze enige hoop is de marsmannetjes, maar die bestaan niet. De marsman marcheert onderdrukt in ons geconditioneerd verstand. De Arabische tandarts is de banketbakker, heeft een hotel-keten, is ambitieus. Hij is de grootste snoep-producent voor kinderen. Hij verdient wat bij, om ook een zwembad te hebben onder zijn kast van een huis. De Arabische tandarts is hier kind aan huis. Om Bert Ootjes wordt inmiddels flink gerouwd. Velen worden monddood verklaard. Ik begin een Arabische tandartsen-praktijk, zo’n beetje de enige manier om aan de Arabische tandarts te ontkomen.

Een nieuwe Arabische vogelsoort is er toegevoegd in het plantsoen, om het verlies van de zwanen op te vangen : de draai-konten. Prachtige vogels, daar niet van, maar ze kunnen zo vanuit het niets bezoekers aanvallen. Zo van : van te voren maar eerst bellen. Hele statige, deftige vogels met een strenge zwaar-orthodoxe etiquette. Zo ken ik er nog één. Het doet me een beetje denken aan die papegaai van het slot. Ik durf niet zomaar meer naar het zwanenmeer, het plantsoen. Deze vogels zijn geen grappen.

‘IJs ?’ vraagt ze.

- Ja, met slagroom, zeg ik

‘Siroop erbij ?’

- Ja, die rode

‘De Arabische tandarts zal daar blij mee zijn, die is lekker duur, en veroorzaakt veel gaten in je

botten. Hij zal wel weer flink op je schelden bij de komende controle om zijn blijdschap om de winst goed te verbergen.'

- Nee, ik heb nu mijn eigen kwastjes. Ik kom niet meer bij die man. Ik ben nu zelf die man. Hij mag wel bij mij komen, dan zal ik hem een koekje van eigen deeg geven.

'Arabisch amalgaam ?'

- Ja, schat, die met die vogelstront.

'Schat, je weet toch dat je de doodstraf kan krijgen voor het verraden van de ingredienten.'

- Laat hen maar hierkomen met hun bekken vol mislukte plastische chirurgie en gedwongen eeuwige mode.

'Schat, je weet toch dat dat hun geloof is ? Ze weten niet beter, en dat moet je respecteren.'

- Ik heb daar allemaal geen respect voor. Heb jij respect voor een mes die in je rug wordt gestoken ?

'Toe nou, liefje, dat moet je zo niet zien.'

- Oh, en hoe moet ik het dan zien ?

'Moet je kijken hoe je jezelf opstelt, en dat noemt zich een Arabische tandarts. Een beetje professioneler mag wel.'

- Oh, gaan we het nu ook over professionaliteit hebben, en vergeet vooral het woord deskundig niet te noemen. Ga godverredomme een ezel kopen.

'Zeg, jeetje, nu ga je ook nog eens een beetje lopen vloeken hier.'

- En doe jij nu maar niet ineens alsof je heilig Aagje bent.

'Oh, heerlijk zo'n ruzie met jou, maar je weet wie er boven in bed de touwtjes in handen heeft.'

- Je hebt gelijk, ’t spijt me, zal niet meer gebeuren.

‘Goed, Jan Klaassen, dan is dat in ieder geval duidelijk.’

- Ja, Katrijn.

‘Moet je nu nog ijs met slagroom en rode siroop ?’

- Nee, Katrijn, ik heb geen honger meer.

We starten een restaurant in het midden van de stad, zoals elke goede Arabische tandarts zou doen. Het voedsel is er zalig, en mensen komen hier echt om heerlijk te genieten. We hebben ons eigen plantsoentje met Arabische draaikont-vogels, door ons getemd. Een betere plek kan ik me niet wensen. Mijn wereld kan niet meer stuk, en de hare ook niet.

Karel Klouterwoes

Blauwe Angels

'Deze besjes waren giftig, en wel zo giftig dat ze dat nooit konden weten.'

Hoofdstuk 1.

Bizonbloed was een heksenkind. Tenminste dat dacht ik, totdat ze mij de andere kant van het verhaal liet zien. Ze bewoog giftige bessen langs me heen. Ik had haar van een afstand gezien, en ze kwam steeds dichterbij. Het was een grauwe dag, en het leek overal te tochten. Toen trok ze mij in de sneeuw. Ze trok me diep weg.

Ze voelde zacht aan. Haar heupen waren fors, en ik lag daar. Ze trok me door de sneeuw mee naar haar hut. De sneeuw smolt weg door haar glimlach. En de tuin rood als bloed, verborg haar edelstenen, vastgeklonterd heil. En sneeuwwit kant bedekte haar voeten, en ze was de bloesem van het morgenoog. De tuin had haar schoonheid niet verloren in de winter, maar was gevlochten nu. Ze droeg de boog, en alles om haar heen vervaagde. Ze was als de oplossing van het gouden hertenkind.

Ze kwam langzaam op mij af met haar brede heupen, met de boog gericht op iets achter mij, een bizon. 'Ik ben dat mannelijke zwaard zat,' zei ze. Toen schoot ze een pijl af, dwars door zijn hart. Het beest viel neer, en ze duwde mij opzij, en trok mij in een woning. Vanaf hier konden we de tuin nog beter bezichtigen. Ze las rijmpjes voor uit een met goud gedecoreerd boek, een boek met een leren omslag. De tuin was haar trots. De sneeuw sijpelde naar binnen. Het was hierbinnen warmer. Ze deed wat kleding uit, maar was nog steeds bedekt met riemen. Ze was als de jagersgodin.

Ze droeg een jachtmaal binnen, en begon te eten. Ze liet mij niet dichterbij komen. Ik had het gevoel te verhongeren. 'Ik moet gaan,' zei ik. Maar ze liet me ook niet gaan. 'Wat wil je van me,' vroeg ik.

'Kom hier,' zei ze. 'Maar raak het vlees niet aan. Het is verboden vlees. Je zal sterven als je er van eet.'

'Waarom eet jij het dan ?' vroeg ik, terwijl ik langzaam dichterbij kwam. Ze zei niets. De tuin ruikte naar zure vruchten. Het was alsof de bommen in de tuin vlogen, wanneer zij zich bewoog. Zij was een oorlogsmachine. Zij danste in de tuin met trots, op het bloed van de gevallenen. Ze zag het als haar opdracht.

Ze trok mij dieper in het huis, waar ze op haar zwangere buik wees. 'Maar het kind zal vroeg sterven,' zei ze, terwijl ze een doktersjas aantrok. 'Waarom zeg je dat ?' vraag ik.

'Omdat het niet om het leven gaat. Het gaat om de dood,' sprak ze. Ze kwam met een injectie naald dichtbij me. 'Even de adem inhouden.' Ik trok mijn arm weg. 'Nee,' zei ze. 'Niet wegtrekken. Je moet gevaccineerd worden. Dit huis is gevaarlijk.' Ik keek naar buiten, naar de klonterige druiven die daar hingen, en dik sap droop naar beneden. Daar had ze mij al geprikt. 'Klaar,' zei ze. Ik glimlachte. Ik was bijna flauwgevallen. Ik trok mezelf aan haar op.

'En nu de tuin in,' zei ze.

'Waarom ?' vroeg ik.

'Je moet werken, werken,' zei ze.

'Wat moet ik doen ?' vraag ik.

'Je moet het zo doen, kijk,' zei ze. Maar ze deed niets.

'Ik snap je niet goed,' zei ik. Ze bond een touw aan mijn nek en trok me weg. Even later knipte ze het touw door, zodat het een ketting was. 'Je moet er alleen voor zorgen dat je nergens blijft achterhaken,' zei ze. Rode bloesem omhulde hen, en de schaduwen van de roze nachten omhulden hen beiden. Weer trok ze hem het huis in, en het scheen er flink te tochten.

'Ga nu eens zitten,' zei ze.

Ineens schrikt hij wakker na een zware hersen-operatie. Hij kan zich niet goed bewegen. Een vrouw in ridderkleding zit naast hem. 'Welk jaar is het ?' vraagt hij.

'1978,' zegt ze.

'Waarom ben je gekleed als een ridder ?' vraagt hij.

'Carnaval,' zei ze.

'Wie ben je ?' vraagt hij.

'Ik ben je vrouw,' zegt ze.

'Ik kan het me niet herinneren,' zegt hij. Dan komt er een dokter binnen. De vrouw begint te snikken. 'Is dit mijn vrouw ?' vraagt hij aan de dokter.

'Er is niemand anders in de kamer dan u en ik,' zegt de dokter.

Bizonbloed sleept hem uit het ziekenhuis, en brengt hem terug naar de tuin en het huis. 'Probeer niet te ontsnappen,' zegt ze. 'Ik wil dat je de wachter bent van de tuin.'

'Waarom ik ?' vraag ik.

'Omdat je ... laat maar zitten,' zei ze. 'Doe het nou maar gewoon.' Ik laat mijn hand zakken, en loop wat rond in de tuin. Ze volgt elke beweging die ik maak. 'Vanavond komen de heksen,' zei ze. 'Doe het nou maar.'

Dan stort hij neer. Een grote vogel staat naast hem, die hij vastgrijpt. En de vogel brengt hem naar een ver eiland. Ook hier is Bizonbloed. Ze kijkt hem aan. Ze is halfnaakt, als een wilde. 'Hoe ben je hier gekomen ?' vraagt ze. Ik wijst op de vogel.

'Hier kun je ook waken,' zei ze. 'De heksen komen vanavond. Je moet wel wat te vertellen hebben.'

'Maar ik heb niets te vertellen,' zei ik.

'Geeft niets,' zei ze. 'Gewoon een brilletje op doen is ook goed. Het is carnaval.' Ik loop braaf met haar mee. Even later zitten we in tuinstoelen. Daarachter is een hutje waar ze aan het koken was, voor vanavond.

Hij staart voor zich uit. De dokter grijpt zijn hand. Hij vecht voor zijn leven. De dokter voelt zijn pols, en drukt een alarm-bel in.

Ze loopt binnen in het hutje. 'Kom,' zegt ze. Weer volg ik haar braaf. Ze roert in haar ketel.

Met wat reanimatie krijgen ze hem weer aan de gang. Ze besluiten nog een hersen-operatie te doen.

'Waarom lach je ?' vraagt ze.

'Niets,' zei ik.

'Je hebt een mooie lach,' zegt ze.

Het klontert in zijn hoofd. Dan komt er ineens een straal vrij van zijn hoofd. De dokters springen op zij. Dan klimt er ineens een beestje uit de scheur in zijn hoofd. De dokters beginnen te schreeuwen in paniek en vallen neer. Een zoemend geluid neemt over.

'Tatarak !' krijst het beestje. 'Opereer zijn hersenen.' Vrouwen komen de kamer binnen, en starten de operatie. Ze werken met gouden instrumenten. Er komt schuim op zijn mond. Maar ze krijgen alles weer goed op gang.

Hij zit op het witte zand. Hier en daar liggen wat bladeren, en Bisonbloed zit naast hem. Ze houdt zijn hand vast. 'Ik ben blij dat je er bent,' zegt ze. De geur van koffie zit in zijn klederen. Ze

besluiten het uit te wassen in het meertje verderop. Het is als een heet stoombad. Snel zijn ze beiden naakt. Het zand aan de kusten ziet er niet zo best uit. En er is overal hondenpoep. Hij wordt onwel, en ze trekt hem uit het meertje. Al gauw ligt hij in een hutje onder een verrotte deken.

'We hebben geluk gehad,' zei ze. 'Er ligt overal glas in het meertje.'

'Waarom trok je me daar naartoe dan ?' vraagt hij.

'Alleen daar kun je vrijkomen van de koffielucht,' zei ze.

'Ik wil er weer naartoe,' zei hij.

'Niemand mag daar ooit voor een tweede keer naartoe,' zei ze.

'Ik wil bloeden,' zei ik. 'Al dat valse bloed moet eruit.'

Ze pakt een stukje glas en rijt hem open. 'Hier,' zegt ze.

'Nee, ik moet naar dat meertje,' zei ik. Ik stond op, en rende naar het meertje.

'Je zult sterven en door een haai gegrepen worden,' zei ze.

'Kan me niet schelen !' riep ik, terwijl ik in het meertje dook. Alles was plotseling bruisend water. 'Er bestaat geen dood !' gilde ik. 'Houd toch eens op met je drama !'

'En geef me nu van het verboden vlees !' riep ik. 'Waar is het !'

'Je zult sterven,' zei ze.

'Okay, dan ga ik godverredomme maar dood !' riep ik. 'Wie kan het wat schelen !'

'Ik,' zei ze. Ze trok me er weer uit. Ik zat onder de hondepoep, onder het glas, en vreemde bessen. Ze stopte me in een kist en bedekte de kist met roze kant. 'Ik ben niet dood !' riep ik. Ze drukte op een knop, en er werd een slaaplied gespeeld. 'Ik voel me op en top, dus stop met die onzin !' riep ik. Ik proefde wat van de bessen. Ze waren zoet, zuur en bitter. Waarschijnlijk waren ze ook giftig.

'Je speelt met je leven,' zei ze. Plotseling was de kist in vlammen, maar ik lachte. Ik stapte eruit, brandend, en greep haar beet. Ze had een laken om haar heen.

'Je kunt ook wel een boom zijn,' zei ze. 'Het frisse, jonge hout brandt goed.' Ik knikte.

Het zachte zadel hield ze voor me. Ik ging er op zitten. Ik sloeg het brandend laken om me heen, en het was snel als kant. Ik was de prins van de molen. Ze had gelijk. Ik was dood.

Hoofdstuk 2.

Ik was in de lederen darm van een haai. In de buurt stonden overal rozenstruiken, en de straten waren bezaaid met vuurwerk. En alles was nat, want het had flink geregend. Ik had een nare smaak in mijn mond, van bessen, glas, metalen en hondepoep. Er liepen wat arabieren en punkers op de straat. Ik had last van de wind in mijn hoofd. Alles was zacht, en ik stortte in. Maar touwen trokken mij weer op. Ik moest dansen, zingen, en veel geld verdienen. Dan zou Bizonbloed weer langskomen, en op een dag was het dan zo ver.

Ik herkende haar bijna niet meer terug. Ze was wat ouder nu. Met een schaar trok ze mijn blaren open. 'Kijk naar die bloemen,' zei ze. 'Ze wijzen je de weg naar het leven.' Ik keek, en de kelken hadden bruisend sap in hen. 'Ik wil er van drinken,' zei ik.

'Nee, want dan sterf je weer,' zei ze. Maar het kon me niet schelen. Ik liep af op de wulpse kelken, en begon te drinken. Ik verdronk er bijna in. Ik begon flink dronken te worden.

'Domme idioot !' riep ze. 'Wat ben jij een koppige ezel, zeg. Je doet gewoon alles wat niet mag.'

'En jij moet niet zo de baas over mij spelen,' zei ik. 'Ik bedoel maar, ik heb een blaas, weet je, en ik plas straks alles weer uit.'

'Nou, je bent maar goed begenadigd,' zei ze. 'Je bent een begiftigd man.'

Ik knikte. Ik stortte neer aan haar voeten, en zij sleepte me weg. Ze dumpte me ergens in een sloot, maar touwen trokken hem weer op. Ik ging de eerste de beste stal in waar ik me kon wassen, want ik voelde me nu toch wel een beetje vies. Het water hier zat vol met modder, maar dat kon me niet schelen. Ik voelde me schoner nu. Ik ging ergens in het hooi liggen om op te drogen. Even later rende ik achter het weiland het eerste het beste huisje in en speelde de clown. Ik had ook een harp nu, en ze gooiden geld in mijn hoed. Ik ging van huis tot huis, om mijn kunstje te vertonen. Ik had een beetje drempelvrees, maar een snoepje deed altijd wonderen.

Met modderhanden streelde ze door mijn haren. Het was toch carnaval.

Hij lag aan de hart-monitor. Dokters vreesden voor zijn leven.

Hij zwom met de zwanen, en gleed door alles wat vies, gevaarlijk en verboden was. Iemand kamde zijn haren, en hij zonk weg in een put van stank. Hij was goed door een haai gegrepen, zoals Bizonbloed had geprofeteerd. Maar hij was nogal goddeloos, onkerks en tegen de draad in. Hij had een hekel aan geloof en regels. Zijn bloedvaten waren aan het exploderen, en hij hoorde gelach in zijn hoofd. Hij lachte mee. Kon hem het wat schelen.

Touwen trokken hem op, en hij werd op een podium gezet. Hij zwaaide naar de mensen, en begon te zingen, en te acteren. Het was per slot van rekening carnaval, en alles moest maar kunnen. Een raam werd ingegooid, en hij begon aan zware epilepsie te lijden. Hij zat bij de kapper, en hij hoorde alleen maar lachen. Zijn hoofd werd ingezeept.

De dokters waren alweer een hersen-operatie aan het uitvoeren, om hem van de dood proberen te redden.

Hij had het gevoel alsof hij dronken was. Hij waggelde door de stad. Hij was een clown. Na een lange tijd zag hij Bizonbloed weer terug. Met een dronken stem zei hij dat hij niet had gedacht dat hij haar ooit nog tegen zou komen. Ze bracht hem mee naar een flatwoning, waar ze hem ging douchen. 'Nu is het afgelopen,' zei ze.

'Wie denk je dat je bent ?' vroeg hij. 'De Jezusin ?'

Ze knikte.

'Ik had toch een andere soort van wederkomst verwacht,' zei hij.

'Nee, het is niet te berekenen,' zei zij.

Alle rozen in de stad waren blauw geworden, en het sneeuwde. De Jezusin liep een cafe binnen, en begon te drinken.

'Tatarak !' schreeuwt iemand.

Hij wordt wakker in de tuin, met een beestje in zijn hand. Hij is de tuinwachter. Het beestje had een angel in zijn hand gestoken, waardoor blauw spul in zijn lichaam werd geinjecteerd. Hij trok de angel eruit, en kon weer ademhalen. Hij voelde zich vies, maar ach, het was maar de natuur. Hij zag het als een onbekend vaccin. Waar het goed voor was, wist hij niet, maar het zou wel ergens goed voor zijn, dat wist hij zeker. Nog steeds had hij een beetje dat dronken gevoel. Ook voelde hij zich

overgevoelig. Nee, hij wilde niet nog een keer door zo'n beestje gestoken worden.

Toen hij afgelost werd kon hij naar huis. Zijn geliefde was daar. Ze had een bloemenjurk aan van een hele fijne, zachte, plezierige stof. Als hij die stof voelde, voelde hij zich altijd heel veilig. Ze was thee voor hem aan het zetten, van een soort blauwe bonen. Even later zaten ze beiden aan tafel.

Dokters hadden eindelijk ontdekt wat er mankeerde aan zijn hersenen. Het bleek dat zijn gevoelscentrums geirriteerd waren, waardoor hij niet tegen aanrakingen kon. Het bleek te zijn ontstaan door een allergie tegen bacterien die alleen maar in hout voorkwamen. Ook was er een vreemde uitslag op orgaantjes in zijn hersenen wat ze zouden moeten verwijderen, dus hij ging weer onder het mes.

Hij draaide maar in het rond in de tuin. Hij voelde zich goed.

Hoofdstuk 3.

Ze zaten tegenover elkaar. Ze smeerde het brood. Het was zonnig buiten. Het zonlicht weerspiegelde in hun gouden spulletjes. Er werd gebeld. Ze nam op, en legde weer neer. Hij droomde weg. Ze liep de kamer binnen. Hij keek naar haar door het raam. Plotseling begon het te waaien, dus ook hij ging naar binnen. Er droop zand uit de plantenbakken. De druiven in de tuin dropen. Het was allemaal zeer klonterig. Het leek goed rijp. Hij rende naar buiten in de regen, greep wat druiven en kwakte ze op een bordje.

'Carolien, ik ben je wachter,' zei hij. 'Dat zal ik altijd zijn, wat er ook gebeurd.'

'Ik weet het,' zei ze. 'Je bent zo trouw.'

Ze nam hem mee naar boven en trok aan de touwtjes van zijn blouche. Ze drukte hem op het bed, en ging naast hem liggen. Op het nachtkastje lag een boek genaamd 'Bloedbizon'. Het ging over de jacht op bizons. Het was een soort avonturenverhaal. Hij las er uit voort. Maar hij begreep wel waar de schrijver naartoe wilde. De bizons waren het beeld van mannen die de autoriteit hadden genomen, en die autoriteit misbruikten. Het was een heel feministisch boek, dat ook opkwam voor andere minderheden.

Hij legde het weer weg. 'Carolien,' zei hij. 'Je weet het. Ik sta aan de kant van de vrouw.'

Carolien knikte. 'Ik weet het,' zei ze. Toen gingen ze beiden slapen.

De hersenen werden getest. De man kwam tot leven. Er werd geapplaudiseerd.

'Het leven is een valstrik,' stamelde hij. 'Een web van een vrouwelijke spin.' Hij stond in de bibliotheek. Hij bekeek de vele boeken over vrouwen. Vaak waren die vrouwen de heldinnen, of gevaarlijke vrouwen, waarin de hoofdpersoon verstrikt raakte. Op de kaften waren vaak woestijnen met schaars geklede vrouwen al dan niet met wapens en helmen. 'Ik wil meer weten over het gevaar,' zei hij.

Boven hem zag hij rozenstruiken, als een put. Hij werd naar binnengezogen, en kwam in een plaats waar een heleboel vrouwen waren, genaamd de danaiden. Op hun voetzolen waren de namen van hun vermoorde mannen te lezen, die zij zelf hadden vermoord in de huwelijksnacht. Zo leefden ze voort door de geroofde levens-energie van hun mannen. Het waren merktekenen op hun voeten, waarmee ze anderen ook konden merken. Er droop inkt uit voort. Ook gebruikten ze het voor handtekeningen op rekeningen en andere officiele papieren. Zo konden ze veel gedaan krijgen. Hij klapte het boek dicht, en stond weer met beide benen op de grond. 'Ik moet me van illusies onthouden,' zegt hij.

'Besef het, je hebt een redder nodig,' zei Bizonbloed, de Jezusin.

'Er wordt overal gejaagd, er is niet veel wat je kunt doen. Je zal erg moe worden.'

Er waren overal struiken, en tussen de takken door bloedende borsten. Zij bloedden door de scherpe doornen. 'Je moet het bloed drinken,' zei ze. Ze gaf hem een buisje met bloed, en hij dronk. 'Het is bizonbloed,' zei ze. 'Je hebt nu het vrouwelijke deel in je gevonden.'

'Ik wil dit niet !' riep hij. Toen viel hij neer. Hij schoot een paar bizons van afstand, en ging toen slapen. Vanuit het bloed kwamen klimoppen. De klimoppen brachten hem naarboven naar een hemels paradijs. 'Tatarak !' riep hij. Het zand was hier wit. Er kwam een bruisend sap uit de klimoppen, en de bessen explodeerden. In de klimoppen leefden vrouwen met staarten.

Het merkteken was grauw in hun hoofd. Zij werden gevoerd door borsten, door leidingen die via een kraan getapt konden worden. Het was de moederstad. Zij troonde hier in vuur, zij, Bizonbloed. En Karel Klouterwoes was haar nar.

De stad leek als bedekt met takken, waardoor het bizon veld bezichtigd kon worden, midden in de stad. Hier moest veel gejaagd worden, zodat de man nooit meer zou regeren. De stad leefde door bizonbloed, en zo moest het blijven.

Haar klederen waren doordrenkt met bizonbloed, en zij brandde. Het hield hen dronken. Deze besjes waren giftig, en wel zo giftig dat ze dat nooit konden weten. Een lange trap gaf een antwoord aan Karel Klouterwoes. Ook hij moest buigen voor de koningin, en haar kunstzaal onder ogen komen. 'Verdomme,' zei hij. 'Zij kan het.'

Ik moest oppassen voor Karel Klouterwoes, zoals iedereen dat moest. Hij was door haar gedresseerd, maar het was een roofdier. Hij leefde in haar kooien wanneer zij hem niet gebruikte. En anders was hij gewoon aan de ketting. Er moest goed toezicht op deze man gehouden worden.

Maar op een dag ging het mis. Karel Klouterwoes brak los. Mensen renden in paniek hun huizen binnen, en deden alles goed op slot. Maar het was al te laat. Karel Klouterwoes deed de stad verdrinken in bizonbloed. Ik kon net op tijd ontsnappen. Hij was per slot van rekening maar mijn schaduw. Ook de koningin liet hij in leven. Zij was immers de Jezusin. Ik keek de takken door en zag de zee van bizonbloed. Het was warm op het strand. Het bizonbloed leek weg te trekken en weer op te komen door eb en vloed. Dit werd gereguleerd door een vreemde planeet, de bloedbizon. Deze planeet hing ergens in Orion. Door toedoen van de koningin werd de stad weer leefbaar. Ik keerde weer terug naar de stad, maar Karel Klouterwoes liet het er niet bij zitten. Hij omsingelde de stad met een leger. Ze waren op zoek naar mij.

Ze klopten op hoge deuren, maar ik was veilig met de koningin. Ze liet mij het geheim van de stad zien. Ik zag overal bloed stromen. Het leek van boven naar beneden te regenen. Ze leidde mij naar een trap die mij bracht naar een plaats diep onder de stad. Hier spreidde ze haar jurk uit en vroeg aan mij of ik een ballerina wilde worden.

Het zou het enige medicijn tegen Karel Klouterwoes, de dolle losgebroken nar, zijn. Ik ging staan als een standbeeld, en begon te draaien, terwijl mijn kleding en huid in goud en zilver veranderden. Ik hoorde slaapliederen op de achtergrond. Ze had ergens op een knopje gedrukt. Spoedig ging ik dansend door de stad. Er waren overal leeuwen in de stad, maar het was alsof er glas om me heen was. Ze lieten mij met rust. Met een fluit leidde ik de leeuwen daarna uit de stad, het woud in.

Het leek te verergeren met zijn hersenen. De dokters besloten dat zijn laatste hoop een

hersentransplantatie zou zijn. Voorzichtig werden zijn hersenen eruit gesneden, en werden er nieuwe hersenen ingelegd. Hij moest er spontaan van overgeven. Hij voelde zich anders, bevrijd. Maar daarna was hij in een shock. Weer begonnen ze in zijn hersenen te snijden, omdat ze er zoveel geld mee verdienden. Hij rook de geur van drop.

De bomen groeiden tegen de klok in. De koningin kwam hem redden, maar toen werden ze uit elkaar gescheurd. Hij voelde zich in een lange diepe put wegglijden. Karel Klouterwoes nam zijn lichaam. Hij voelde zich opgesloten in zichzelf, alhoewel hij nu wel moest lachen. Hij zag zichzelf liggen. Het was alsof er een lachgas over hem kwam. Hij stond op en was een geraffineerde nar nu. Hij zou trouw blijven aan de koningin, aan de koningin in zijn hoofd. Zij waakte over hem.

De stad was brandende. Hij klom naar een hogere verdieping in het flatgebouw. Karel Klouterwoes klom achter hem aan, in zijn lichaam. Een gevecht ontstond. 'Brandende dampen !' schreeuwde Karel Klouterwoes. 'Ik zal je wel krijgen.' Hij gaf Karel een trap, en klom verder. Alweer greep Karel hem. 'Je zal niet weg kunnen komen, ventje,' zei Karel. Weer trapte hij Karel weg, maar Karel had zijn jas gegrepen. Toen deed hij zijn jas uit, en klom verder, maar Karel had zijn broekspijpen gegrepen. Ook trok hij toen zijn broek uit, en klom verder, totdat hij helemaal naakt was. Een vogel wachtte hem op aan de top van het gebouw. 'De koningin heeft mij gezonden,' zei de vogel. Maar Karel greep een pistool en schoot de vogel neer. De man begon nu echt in paniek te raken. Door de rook zag hij nog een gebouw op het gebouw, met een ladder ervoor. 'Gelukkig,' zei de man, en rende er naar toe. Karel begon nu ook op hem te schieten. Maar snel was hij hoog op de ladder. Toen Karel bij de ladder was aangekomen, was de man al een raam binnen geklommen. Hij zag ergens een hoed hangen en deed die op, en daarna een lange jas en een broek. Snel rende hij naar de andere kant van het gebouw en begon de trappen op te rennen. 'Ik krijg je wel !' hoorde hij Karel roepen. Helemaal bovenin het gebouw aangekomen belde hij ergens aan, en de koningin deed open. 'Hier ben je veilig,' zei ze. Binnen maakte ze wat thee voor hem klaar, maar al snel hoorden ze gebons op de deur. 'Hier is Karel !' riep hij. 'Ik kom je halen !' Toen trapte Karel de deur in. De koningin drukte ergens op een knopje, en een kistje ging open die Karel helemaal begon op te zuigen. Toen dat klaar was ging het kistje weer dicht. 'Ziezo,' zei de koningin, 'die is weer waar hij wezen moet.' In de kamer was een doorzichtige bol gevuld met bizonbloed, en de bol brandde. 'Het is de stad die brandt,' zei de koningin. De man knikte.

'Dus,' zei de koningin. 'Niemand heeft het ooit zo ver gebracht. Ik ben trots op je.' Het vuur begon weg te trekken. na een tijdje keek ik door het raam naar beneden. Er waren bizon gevechten. Er werd op trompetten geblazen. Weer zag ik alles door vuur wegvagen. Ze was naakt.

Hoofdstuk 4.

Er kwam meer en meer begroeiing. De stad begon op een oerwoud te lijken. De man zat nog steeds dichtbij de koningin. Ze had het kistje op haar schoot. Haar vinger bewoog heel langzaam naar een rood knopje. Plotseling werd er een spiegel ingeslagen, een grote wand. Electrische gestaltes stonden daar in vuur. 'Luister niet naar haar !' riep één van hen. 'Zij is zelf Karel Klouterwoes, en zal je willen opsluiten in haar kistje !' Ze hadden gereedschap in hun hand, en sloegen toe. 'Ren door de spiegel !' riep een ander. Hij rende door de spiegel, waar het gebouw veel hoger was, en de brand veel erger. 'Het is niet waar !' riep de koningin. Hij zag toe hoe er een gevecht ontstond. De koningin had het kistje geopend, en Karel was weer tevoorschijn gekomen. Nu begon ook de koningin in Karel te veranderen. 'Ren !' gilden de electrische gestaltes. De man zette het op een lopen, terwijl er overal explosies waren. Weer rende de man trappen op. Toen hij het plafond had bereikt belde hij ergens aan. De koningin deed open. 'Ik hoop maar dat u de goede bent,' zei de man.

'Natuurlijk,' zei de koningin. 'Ik ben de echte.'

'Ja, dat zeggen ze allemaal,' zei de man. 'Hoe kan ik dat zeker weten ?'

Daar kwam Karel al met een noodvaart door de deur heen. 'Klim uit het raam,' zei de koningin. 'Snel.' De man klom uit het raam, en de koningin deed hetzelfde.

'Ik zie jullie wel,' riep Karel. Een helikopter kwam op de top van het gebouw, met electrische gestaltes. Snel stapten de man en de koningin in, terwijl het gebouw beneden ontplofte. Maar tot hun grote schrik zagen ze de hand van Karel Klouterwoes die een stang onder het toestel had gegrepen. Hij trok zich eraan op, en probeerde de deur te openen. Toen hij een ruit insloeg richtte één van de electrische gestaltes snel een laser-pistool op hem. De man trapte Karel Klouterwoes weg, maar Karel had zijn been gegrepen, en beiden gleden naar buiten. De man kon nog net de stang vastgrijpen. Hij probeerde Karel van zich los te trappen, wat niet lukte. En Karel begon zich al omhoog te trekken aan hem. Maar toen schoot één van de electrische gestaltes hem weg. De man werd weer naar binnen getrokken.

De man klaagde dat met de hersen-transplantatie hij het gevoel had niet meer in zijn eigen lichaam te zitten. Toen hebben de dokters hem een tweede hersen-transplantatie gegeven. De dokters leken op Karel Klouterwoes. Hij trapte hen van hem af, en rende naar buiten met schuim op zijn mond. Hij rende naar de tuin, waar hij tuinwacht was. Hij voelde Karel Klouterwoes in hem. Hij zocht naar het beestje wat hem eens stak. Snel had hij het beestje gevonden, zette het op zijn arm, en liet zich steken.

Iemand trok hem het huis in. Het was Bizonbloed. 'Heb je de oplossing gevonden ?' vroeg ze.

'Ja, stekende beestjes,' zei ze. Ik glimlachte.

Het Lukuk Tablet

Ze waren in een gevecht. Zij probeerde hem in verwarring the brengen door leugens. Hij zat op de bank, en wilde de moed opgeven. Zijn hoofd kon het niet meer aan. Zij wilde hem aangeven bij de godin Serket. Zij was een wellustige vrouw. Ze verkocht haar man aan haar. Maar Serket wilde niet komen, en zond daarom Luluk, een indiaanse prinses. Luluk nam bezit van haar, en bracht haar man nog meer naar beneden, met de meest gemene truukjes. Hij had de moed allang opgegeven en wilde zelfmoord plegen. Hij staarde naar de beeldjes van zijn vrouw, haar godinnen. Hij wist niet wat hij er mee moest, maar hij begon tot hen te bidden.

Een keer kwam in zijn lot, de godinnen waren hem opeens goedgezind. Zijn vrouw kalmeerde. Van binnen voelde hij een haat naar de godinnen want zij hadden dit alles aangesticht. Zij hadden zijn vrouw gek gemaakt. Hij hield het Luluk tablet in zijn handen, en wilde het breken. Dit tablet hield zijn vrouw opgesloten.

Ze vloog hem aan. Ze was ongelovelijk sterk ineens. Ze bond hem vast, en hongerde hem uit. Het tablet werd ergens op een tafel neergelegd. Een vriendin van haar kwam. 'Kun jij dit tablet in

bescherming nemen,' vroeg ze. De vriendin knikte, en vertrok weer.

Hij begon weer tot de godinnen te bidden en wist dat hij zich dit keer beter moest gedragen. Ze maakte hem los. Hij staarde naar de beeldjes van zijn vrouw. Ook hij was in dit tablet opgesloten. 'Dochter van de regen,' werd ze genoemd, 'dienares van Luluk,' ze was aan het kalmeren. In ieder geval liet ze hem nu met rust.

De Rode Riem

De Gevaarlijke Stad

Hij deed vele pogingen om de godin te vinden. Hij ging naar vele kerken, om daar te ontvangen van het goddelijk licht. Vaak probeerden ze hem allerlei dingen aan te smeren, als kaas voor de muizenval, maar daar trapte hij niet in. Hij wilde vrij ontvangen, en integreren met andere ideeen. Vaak waren het maar theorieen, en hij snapte niet hoe mensen daar zo nauw mee om konden gaan. Hij vond het eng, gevaarlijk. Hij begon zich steeds meer terug te trekken, of probeerde de godin van het oorspronkelijke en goede terug te vinden in de natuur, of in boeken. Dat was veel minder gevaarlijk. Boeken waren voor hem om veel gespuis uit te ziften en ver weg te houden. Vriendschappen en bezoekjes in kerken en allerlei organisaties hadden altijd het gevaar dat hij ergens knel kwam te zitten. Er zat altijd een keerzijde aan hun liefdadigheid. Hij zag het als een middel waarmee ze robotjes kweekten, slaven. Hij had vele ervaringen in die kerken en organisaties gehad, en in allerlei specifieke gebouwen, zoals de piramides van Egypte. Hij wilde die nu op zijn gemak en op zichzelf verwerken en uitpluizen, wat het voor waarde had in zijn persoonlijke leven.

In de bibliotheek las hij oude boeken over Hel als de godin van het goddelijke huwelijk, de vruchtbaarheid en de kinderen, die ze later hadden gedemonizeerd. Ook las hij over het verschil tussen kalo-demonen, goede demonen, en kako-demonen, kwade demonen. Hij zag in dat de kerken van vandaag aan alle kanten rammelden met hun opvattingen, en hij wilde er iets aan doen. Hij liep vaak door het park om na te denken, en ging dan op een muur zitten. Hij werd door anderen 'de denker' genoemd, en ging vaak diep op in filosofie wanneer hij met anderen sprak.

Op een dag las hij over de oude Romeinse godin Febris, de godin van ziekte. Maar zij werd aanbeden als de godin van genezing. Haar man was Februus, de god van de hel. Dit had te maken met reinigingen. Maar met de komst van het christendom werd de hel geheel negatief bekeken.

Op een dag was er oorlog in de stad. De christenen wilden totale controle over de stad. Het zou het einde betekenen van het vrije denken. Andersdenkenden werden in de gevangenis gegooid, ook hij. Maar wegens goed gedrag mocht hij al snel bij een oude christelijke dame in huis wonen, als hij zich maar zou gedragen. Gelukkig bestond de bibliotheek nog steeds, en hier ging hij nog steeds

vaak naartoe. De oude dame was erg goed voor hem. Ze maakte vaak warme chocolade melk voor hem, en kon hem goed begrijpen. 'Je hebt helemaal gelijk,' zei de oude dame, 'maar je kunt het beter voor je houden om problemen te voorkomen.' Maar hij wilde juist er wat aan doen. Hij vond de eenzijdige benadering van het christendom oneerlijk. Er waren nog steeds veel relletjes in de stad. Vaak was er vuur. De stad moest leven in deze oorlog.

'Weet je,' zei de oude dame. 'Dit is het enige middel wat je kan uitleiden.' Ze toonde hem een rode riem. 'Wat is het ?' vroeg hij. 'Oh, ik heb het eens van een engel gekregen,' zei de oude dame. 'Sindsdien heb ik het altijd opgeborgen gehouden. Pas hem eens.' Hij schoof de riem door zijn broek, en het paste precies. 'Wijsheid, mijn jongen, wijsheid, en wijsheid zal je leiden.'

Hij probeerde zich te bewegen, maar hij kon het niet. Na een tijdje lukte het hem om te zitten. De oude dame schonk wat thee voor hem in.

De Ballerina

De Rozentrap

Ik las een boek. De letters leken tot mij te komen, en begonnen in mij te draaien. Alsof een vrouw tot mij sprak. Ze was naakt. Ik kon haar door de letters zien. Ze was een engel, de engel van het boek. Het boek was bijzonder, als een schilderij. Ik legde het boek weer terug, en pakte een ander boek, en hetzelfde gebeurde, maar het was een andere vrouw.

Het was een lange reis naar Bagdad. Eindelijk kwam ik daar aan, en stapte uit de trein. Er waren hier huizen met sluiers, en achter de sluiers zaten vrouwen. Sommigen rookten, anderen aten, en weer anderen deden niets. Ik kon dwars door de sluiers heenzien. Er waren rode, dampende lampen achter. Alsof ze iets probeerden te vermorzelen. Ik ramde mijzelf een weg door Bagdad.

Ze had het haar lang, golvend, toen ik bij haar aankwam. Ik zou nu haar bodyguard zijn. Ze sprak met veel tussenpozen.

Ik volgde haar op haar rozentrap. Ik was hier voor geld. Ik had haar een brief geschreven, voor veel geld, en ik zou nog veel meer doen, voor geld. Ik zou haar de show geven van haar leven. Het kon me verder niet schelen wie ze was. Veel informatie had ik niet nodig, als ik mijn geld maar kreeg. Ik droeg ook zorg voor haar dochter. Dat maakte niet uit. Ik was er nu toch.

Ik gaf haar de show van haar leven. Ik maakte mij op, dook, en hees mijzelf op het piratenschip. Ik zat vast aan elastieken. Het schip trok me op naar onbekende hoogtes, hoger dan ik ooit durfde dromen. Zoet was het hier, en zij was zoet. Even dacht ik niet meer aan het geld, maar aan haar. Maar toen werd ik weer stoicijns, als een gelikt zakenman. Ik moest hier weg, en wel zo snel

mogelijk. De show was afgelopen. Ze liet me niet los, en ik liet politie komen, en een piratenleger, die haar gillend afvoerden.

Thuis zat ik het geld te tellen. Ik had goede winst gemaakt. Hier kon ik wat mee. Ik was een ballerina, ik was een pop. Ik bewoog door vreemde muziek, en vreemde ritmes. Magische muziek, en voor al het andere was ik doof.

Nooit Genoeg

De Rode Woestijn

Hoofdstuk 1. De Hellekus

De pijn van het leven werd te erg en hij greep naar de drugs. Hij bleef maar spuiten om zijn hoofd boven water te kunnen houden. Hij kon er erg agressief van worden, of juist heel zachtaardig. Het waren als kleine tekenfilmpjes die in hem gespoten werden, of kleine stickertjes of plakplaatjes, die zijn hoofd op hol brachten, in een andere sfeer. Hij kon weer ademen, maar het spul was erg duur. Hij stal, en bedelde. De momenten dat hij spoot lieten hem zijn bloed weer voelen stromen. Het kon hem niet schelen wat anderen ervan dachten. Hij kon niet terug, want er was teveel pijn. Hij haatte de medische wereld, want zij hadden het allemaal op hun geweten. Sinds zijn geboorte hadden ze hem volgestopt met implantaten voor allerlei onzinnige redenen, diep in zijn lichaam. Hij wilde ook niets meer met zijn ouders te maken hebben, want zij hadden dit allemaal maar toegelaten. Hij beschouwde hen niet meer als zijn ouders.

Sommig spul liet hem voelen alsof hij kon vliegen. Door ander spul voelde hij zich heel wijs. Hij mengde ook veel drugs. Op een dag kwam hij een man tegen die hem veel vertelde over indiaanse drugs. De man nam hem zelfs in huis, en zorgde voor hem als voor een zoon. De indiaanse drugs bleek erg zuiver te zijn. Het maakte van pijn iets totaal anders. De jongen was de man erg dankbaar. Hij leefde er erg van op, en hoefde niet meer op de straat te slapen. De indiaanse drugs bleek erg machtig te zijn. Het maakte mensen intelligent.

De man had ook een dochter. De jongen en het meisje konden erg goed met elkaar opschieten. Ze kon goed verhalen vertellen, en hij luisterde vaak uren aandachtig naar haar. De indiaanse drugs maakte hem erg alert, maar op een dag ging het helemaal mis, en wilde hij van de drugs af. Maar zijn lichaam begon zo te protesteren, en een geweldige angst maakte zich van hem meester. Hij was inmiddels een gevangene van de drugs geworden. 'Probeer wat te minderen,' zei het meisje. Maar het leek wel alsof zijn lichaam meer eiste. Hij was in een zwaar gevecht, en uiteindelijk gaf hij toe dat hij niets in te brengen had. Hij zweefde op het randje van de dood, maar diep binnenin wilde hij dood, want hij leefde in de hel. De man deed er allemaal erg gemakkelijk over, maar het meisje droeg goed zorg voor hem. Hij at nauwelijks meer. Hij had een vreemde buikpijn. Hij had veel visioenen over de dood en de hel.

Het meisje was erg lief voor hem. Ze gaf hem veel liefde, ook sexueel, maar op een dag kon hij dat ook niet meer aan. Zijn zenuwstelsel was zo overgevoelig geworden dat alles pijn deed. Hij begon zichzelf op te sluiten, want sociale contacten waren te zwaar. Het meisje begreep het wel. Ze kon zich goed inleven in hem. Vaak schoof ze liefdesbriefjes bij hem onder de deur door.

Op een dag schoof ze vreemde zaadjes bij hem onder de deur door, in plastic, met een briefje erbij : 'Probeer dit spul eens. Kusjes.' Hij las op de strip van het product : Judas' Kussen. Hij slikte een zaadje in, wat als een klein besje was. Direct sprong er vuur in zijn ogen, en kon hij dwars door alles heenkijken. Hij raakte zijn grip op de werkelijkheid kwijt, en waande zich in een grote rode woestijn, die overigens vol begroeid was.

Een man liep op hem af. De man had een baard en kuste hem. 'Wie bent u ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ik ben Jezus,' zei de man.

'Ben ik dood ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Nee,' zei de man. 'Je bent niet dood, maar je leeft ook niet. Het is iets er tussenin.'

'Oh, dat is interessant,' zei de jongen. 'Wat is het ?'

'Je moet niet zoveel vragen stellen,' zei de man. Er kwam een andere man aanlopen.

'Hi,' zei de man.

De jongen gaf de man een hand en vroeg wie hij was.

'Judas,' zei de man.

'Interessant,' zei de jongen, 'maar goed, ik zal geen vragen meer stellen.'

'Oh, stel ze gerust,' zei de man die zich Judas noemde. De jongen kreeg al snel door dat deze man wat vriendelijker en meer open was dan de andere man.

'I...ik wil weten waar ik ben,' zei de jongen aarzelend.

'Heb je van het besje gegeten ?' vroeg de man.

De jongen knikte. 'Wij zijn je bevrijders,' zei de man. 'Je bent hier veilig. Wij zijn sterk, heel sterk.'

'Waar zijn we ?' vroeg de jongen.

Maar toen gaf de man die zich Jezus noemde hem een enorme duw, en zei bijna brullend : 'Ik zei toch dat je niet zoveel moest vragen ?'

'Ach, let maar niet op hem,' zei Judas tegen de jongen. 'Hij is soms een beetje ruw.'

'Dit is de hel,' zei Judas. 'De plaats tussen leven en dood.'

'Ik moet zeggen, het is een prachtige plaats hier,' zei de jongen. 'Anders dan wat ik had verwacht.'

'Wat verwachtte je ?' vroeg Judas.

Plotseling kon de jongen zich niet meer bewegen, en niet meer praten. Hij voelde zich als een gevangene. Vreemd rood vuur, als takken van bomen die hem hadden gegrepen. Hij werd wakker op zijn bed. Snel greep hij naar de zaadjes, en nam twee zaadjes. Het was alsof rood vuur vanuit zijn ogen opschoot. Het was alsof het meisje van wie hij hield in zijn kamer stond. Maar het rode vuur schoof tussen hen in. Weer verloor hij de grip op de werkelijkheid en kon door alles heenkijken, en weer was hij in de rode woestijn die vol begroeid was. 'Je bent terug,' zei Judas.

'Ja,' zei de jongen. 'Ik zou hier graag willen blijven.'

'Blijf hier dan,' zei Judas.

'Hoe ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Stop met vragen stellen,' zei de man die zich Jezus noemde. 'Ik word er doodziek van.'

'Zeg broer,' zei Judas. 'Ga dan terug.'

Maar Jezus sloeg Judas op zijn kaak, en brulde : 'Ik ga voor niemand uit de weg !'

'Goed,' zei Judas. Toen sloeg hij Jezus zo hard terug dat deze bewusteloos neerviel.

'Welkom in de hel,' zei Judas tegen de jongen. 'Vraag wat je wil.'

'Wie is hij,' vroeg de jongen.

'Hij is een onderdeel van de drugs, een krachtige hallucinatie,' zei Judas.

'En jij dan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ik ook,' zei Judas.

'Bestaan jullie echt, en zijn jullie echte personen ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ja, wij zijn een grotere werkelijkheid dan de wereld waar jij vandaan komt,' zei Judas. 'In jouw wereld wordt de hel vaak afgedaan als een fabeltje, of als een slechte realiteit voor schaduwen en onder-figuren. Maar de hel is de wereld van de drugs, van zaden en geheimen, de wereld waar de natuur het voor het zeggen heeft.'

Opeens wordt het zwart voor de ogen van de jongen, en even later wordt hij wakker op zijn bed. Haastig grist hij de laatste drie zaadjes en slikt ze in. Maar dit keer gebeurt er niet veel. 'Ik moet meer van die troep !' schreeuwt hij. Hij wordt zo zenuwachtig dat hij zijn kamer uitgaat, en zijn meisje aanspreekt. Maar het meisje heeft het spul niet meer, en het is erg duur. 'Godverredomme !' briest hij. 'Waar groeit dat verdomde spul ? Ik moet meer van deze troep hebben.'

'Dat moet je aan pappa vragen,' zei ze. Plotseling valt de jongen op de grond, en er komt schuim op zijn mond. Het meisje sleept hem naar zijn kamer, naar zijn matras. 'I... ik houd van je,' stamelt de jongen. 'Ik ben zo verliefd op je. Je bent altijd zo lief voor me geweest.'

'Vertrouw me,' zei het meisje. 'Ik zal ervoor zorgen dat je zo snel mogelijk weer van die zaadjes hebt.' De jongen zinkt weg in een diepe trance. Na een dag of drie liggen er weer zaadjes die onder zijn deur door zijn geschoven. Als een woest beest scheurt de jongen het plastic open en neemt vier zaadjes. Maar er gebeurt niks. Dan neemt hij de laatste dertien zaadjes allemaal tegelijk, maar weer gebeurt er niets. 'Godverredomme !' schreeuwt de jongen. 'Er gebeurt geen klote !'

Hij laat het meisje op zijn kamer binnen. 'Wat voor spul is het ?' vraagt de jongen. 'Weet je zeker dat het hetzelfde spul is ? Wie verkoopt die rotzooi. Ik moet meer van die rotzooi hebben !'

Het meisje pakt het plastic, en op de rand staat : Judas' Kussen. 'Ja, het is nog steeds hetzelfde spul.'

Hij pakt haar vast en kust haar. 'Je bent zo'n lieve schat dat je dit gedaan hebt,' zegt hij. Hij kust haar weer, en ditmaal intens. Een paar dagen later liggen er weer strips onder de deur door. Ditmaal met gele zaadjes, en op de strips stond : Jesus' Kisses. 'Maar met eentje beginnen,' dacht hij. Hij nam een zaadje, en direct spoot er geel vuur door zijn ogen, en al snel bevond hij zich weer in de rode woestijn die vol begroeid was. Judas stond naast hem. 'Je bent weer terug,' zei hij. De jongen knikte.

'Hoe lang gaat het ditmaal duren ?' zei de jongen.

'Oh, veel langer,' zei Judas.

'Gelukkig,' zei de jongen. 'Ik lijk wel gek.'

'Waar is Jezus ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Dood,' zei Judas. 'Hij is op het moment gekruisigd en begraven.'

'Gek,' zei de jongen.

'Lekker rustig,' zei Judas. 'Het was niet zo'n beste.'

'Kunnen we het over iets anders hebben,' zei de jongen.

'Waar wil je het over hebben,' zei Judas.

'Hebben jullie hier ook telefoons ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Wat wil je daarmee doen ?' vroeg Judas.

'Mijn vriendin bellen,' zei de jongen.

'Die is hier niet,' zei Judas. 'Ze laat jou al die pilletjes slikken omdat ze van je houdt.'

'Ik weet het, maar zij is niet zo gek als mij. Hoe kunnen we haar hier krijgen dan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Wil je dat echt ?' vroeg Judas.

'Ja,' zei de jongen.

'Waarom ?' vroeg Judas.

'Omdat ik van haar houd,' zei de jongen.

'Mis je haar ?' vroeg Judas.

'Ik weet het niet,' zei de jongen.

'Je kunt hier ook vriendinnen krijgen,' zei Judas.

'Waar dan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Op de vriendinnen-markt,' zei Judas. 'Het zijn hallucinaties, sterke hallucinaties, die je kunt kopen.'

'Kopen ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Als in een spel,' zei Judas. 'Ze stelt je vragen, en als je ze goed beantwoord, dan mag je haar meenemen.'

'Eng,' zei de jongen.

'Zullen we het eens proberen ?' zei Judas.

Even later zaten ze tegenover een pop. 'Maar dit zijn poppen,' zei de jongen.

'Je begint met poppen,' zei Judas, 'dan later worden ze echter.'

'Stel je vraag maar,' zei de jongen tegen de pop.

'Hoe ben je hier gekomen,' zei de pop.

'Door een geel zaadje,' zei de jongen.

'Wat was de naam van het zaadje,' zei de pop.

'Jesus' Kisses,' zei de jongen.

'Geweldig,' zei de pop. 'Je hebt me gewonnen.'

'Dat ging makkelijk,' zei de jongen. Maar verderop waren de echtere poppen, en daar waren de vragen veel moeilijker. 'Maar ik wil geen pop als vriendin,' zei de jongen tegen Judas. 'Ik wil een echte persoon.'

'We zijn allemaal poppen,' zei Judas. 'Zelfs jij. We zijn allemaal kleine stukjes bewustzijn, en samengevoegd vormt het een groot geheel. In je reis naar onafhankelijkheid zul je moeten leren dat je zelf je eigen familie bent, en je eigen groep mensen, allemaal stukjes van jezelf, en de rest zal vervagen.'

'Dus ik zal later alleen nog maar contact hebben met mezelf, en niet meer met anderen ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Het gaat om de mechanismes,' zei Judas. 'Zoals ik al zei, we zijn allemaal poppen, kleine stukjes bewustzijn. We weerspiegelen allemaal kleine stukjes oneindigheid, van het grote, algehele mechanisme, en zullen daarin allemaal geabsorbeerd worden. Dan is er geen onderscheid van personen meer, maar alleen de eeuwige principes waarin wij tot rust zijn gekomen door verlichting.'

'Wow, dure woorden,' zei de jongen.

'Dus je zal uiteindelijk alles moeten worden voor jezelf,' zei Judas. 'Dan heb je je doel bereikt, en ben je niet meer afhankelijk van anderen. Nu hebben we anderen nog nodig, maar later niet meer.'

'Okay,' zei de jongen. Hij sprak nog een paar dagen door met Judas, en werd toen wakker op zijn bed. Hij slikte weer een geel zaadje, en bevond zich direct in een oorlog. Overal renden soldaten heen en weer. 'Waar gaat deze oorlog over ?' vroeg hij aan een soldaat. Daar kwam Judas al aanwandelen, in een wit, lichtend gewaad. Hij leek erg veel op Jezus. 'De soldaten horen je niet,' zei Judas. 'Ze strijden voor hun kleine bewustzijn, en zijn niet open voor andere bewustzijnen.'

'Dat is naar,' zei de jongen.

'Het zijn slaven,' zei Judas.

'Waarom kunnen ze mij niet horen ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ze zien je zelfs niet,' zei Judas. 'Ze zijn alleen maar bezig met hun eigen kleine bewustzijn. Daar zijn ze op gefixeerd.'

'Dus in wezen kunnen ze mij geen kwaad doen ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Nee,' zei Judas. 'Ze leven in hun eigen wereld, en kunnen jouw wereld niet bereiken.'

'Gek,' zei de jongen.

Na enkele weken waren de zaadjes van de jongen op, maar er lagen alweer nieuwe zaadjes. De jongen had vele gesprekken met Judas.

'De Jezus kus is een onderdeel van de Judas kus,' zei Judas. 'Een kus die je verlicht, die je uitleidt, naar een hele andere wereld, waar alles meer een geheel is. Zo kom je onder de sluiers door.'

Maar op een dag werkten de gele zaadjes niet meer voor de jongen, hoeveel hij er ook van nam. Weer had hij een gesprek met zijn meisje. Een dag later lagen er weer andere zaadjes onder zijn deur. Ditmaal waren de zaadjes wat groter, bijna als echte bessen, en ze waren blauw, oranje en zwart. Ook waren er bruine zaadjes tussen. De jongen slikte er één in. Op de strip las hij : Hell

Kisses.

Een grote vrouw verscheen voor hem, en liet alles om hem heen draaien om hem in haar wereld te zuigen. Zijn verstand en bewustzijn, en al zijn herinneringen waren plotseling als water zo week, als zachte pudding. Scherpe tonen leken zijn hoofd te doorboren en rode met roze stralen, als infra-rood en lasers. Maar nog steeds leek het alsof ze in zijn kamer waren. Ze ging op zijn bureau zitten. Nee, dit was niet zijn kamer, maar leek op zijn kamer. Het gordijn achter haar was prachtig golvend met satijn, kant, wol en dierlijk touw. Door het raam zag hij niets dan vuur, maar het was als het vuur van drugs. Het speelde met zijn verstand, met zijn herinneringen, met zijn dierlijke instincten en met zijn filosofieen.

'Mijn naam is de Hel,' zei de vrouw. 'Ik ben de plaats waar jij was. Je hebt haar overwonnen.'

'Wie heb ik overwonnen ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Haar, degene die loog over mij,' zei de vrouw. De vrouw pakte hem stevig beet en kuste hem. 'Mijn zuster, genaamd Leven. Mijn andere zuster is Dood.'

'Ik ben blij dat je mij hebt gevonden,' zei de vrouw. Plotseling kwam Judas binnen en omhelsde haar. 'Dank je, schat,' zei ze.

'Dit is mijn moeder,' zei Judas.

'Leuke moeder heb je,' zei de jongen.

'Dank je,' zei Judas, 'ik weet het. Ze is de beste moeder die je maar kan bedenken.' Buiten was er inmiddels rood vuur, als gevuld met bloed.

'Ja, vele oorlogen worden er gestreden,' zei Judas, en wees op het rode vuur. Veel rook kwam er naar binnen door het raam.

'Moeder Oorlog,' zei de vrouw, 'met haar zuster Jacht. En haar andere zuster is Wet.'

'Interessante familie-lijn,' zei de jongen.

'Weet je wat interessant is,' zei Judas. 'Dat ik een deel van die familie-lijn ben.'

'Je bent een gezegende man,' zei de jongen.

Ineens rende Jezus binnen. 'Ha broer,' zei Judas. 'Weer van de doden opgestaan, jongen ?'

'Ja,' hijgde Jezus, 'Tante Leven heeft dat gedaan, maar nu is ze dood. Iemand schoot haar neer. Het lijkt wel alsof ik zwaar aan de drugs ben. Ik lijk godverredomme wel op een eland.'

'Ja, je bent me nogal een idioot,' zei Judas. Toen nam Judas een pistool en schoot Jezus neer. 'Probeer hier maar eens van op te staan.'

'Ik zal er niet om rouwen,' zei de vrouw genaamd de Hel. 'Jarenlang heeft deze knaap ons het leven zuur gemaakt.'

'Ach ma, en het is maar een drugs-pistool. Harde zaadjes die in het lichaam worden geschoten voor hallucinaties,' zei Judas.

'Zoon, je bent een genie,' zei Hel.

'Ik denk dat ik nu echt gek begin te worden,' zei de jongen terwijl hij zijn hoofd greep.

'Dat is Gekte,' zei Hel, 'de moeder van mijn moeder. En haar zus heet Drugs. Door hen zijn we allemaal hier.'

Plotseling ging de deur open, en twee vrouwen kwamen binnen. Ze namen direct de jongen in de houdgreep. 'Wie is hij ? Jongeman, wij arresteren jou.'

'Jullie zijn maar een gekke familie,' zei de jongen.

'Racist,' zei de vrouw genaamd Gekte. 'Ik weet nog wel een goede plaats voor jou : In het kippenhok.'

'Nee, in een goede legbatterij,' zei de vrouw genaamd Drugs.

'Dat is hetzelfde,' zei Gekte. 'En wel Godverredomme, wat doet Jezus hier op de grond.'

'Niet mee bemoeien,' zei Drugs.

'Dat doe ik wel,' zei Gekte.

'Nee, dat doe je niet,' zei Drugs, en sleurde haar mee naar buiten. Buiten door het raam was alles nu gifgroen.

'Wat een stel,' zei Judas.

De jongen werd wakker, en nam nog een zaadje. Snel bevond hij zich in een gevangenis. 'We hebben hem,' zei Gekte.

'Dat is geen nieuws,' zei Drugs.

'Zeg schatje,' zei Gekte, 'zou jij niet tot onze familie willen behoren.'

'Ach, waarom ook niet,' zei de jongen. 'Hoe gaat dat ?'

'Door een web,' zei Drugs. 'We moeten je door een web trekken, en dan moet je een spinnenei inslikken.'

'Klinkt geweldig,' zei de jongen.

Al snel was het voor mekaar, maar ze vertelden hem ook dat hij nu niet meer terugkon naar het gewone leven. Hij zou nu voor altijd in de hel moeten blijven. En onderdelen van de hel waren drugs en gekte.

'Haha, ik ben gek, ik ben gek,' zei de jongen. De twee vrouwen lachten.

Het ging niet goed met Judas. Hij had een verkeerd pilletje ergens ingeslikt en lag op sterven. De twee vrouwen konden er niet om rouwen : 'De één komt, de ander gaat.'

'Waar gaat hij naartoe ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ach, weet je wat het is met die Judas en die Jezus,' zeiden de vrouwen. 'Ze zijn nogal goed met Leven en Dood. Wij houden meer van Hel.'

'Oh,' zei de jongen.

Samen met Hel gingen ze naar de begravenis van Judas en Jezus, en Hel bad tot de slaapgodin om over haar zonen te waken. 'Ik heb in ieder geval nu een nieuwe zoon,' zei Hel, en wees op de jongen.

Hoofdstuk 2. Zij Nam Hem Mee

Hij zat in de trein naar een stad omgeven met drugs-struiken, waar allerlei zaadachtige besjes groeiden die mensen het hoofd dol konden maken. De stad werd streng bewaakt door deze struiken,

die hier en daar echt muren hadden gevormd. In de stad troonde Ziekte, de moeder van Drugs en Gekte. De jongen zou een tijdje bij Ziekte logeren, om zo de familie beter te leren kennen. Ziekte was een hele aardige vrouw. Ze schonk thee voor hem in toen hij was binnengekomen. 'Voor het eerst ben je dan hier,' zei ze met een glimlach. De jongen knikte. 'Dus jij wilt de familie beter leren kennen hè,' zei ze. Weer knikte de jongen. Het was een hele mooie vrouw, zeer lieflijk, intelligent en mysterieus. Een vreemde kracht maakte zich van hem meester. 'Wij geloven niet in toeval hè,' zei Ziekte. 'Jij behoorde hier te zijn, bij mij.' Hij kon haar ogen niet van haar afhouden, en was als gehypnotiseerd.

'Luister je naar muziek ?' vroeg ze. De jongen knikte. Ze begon slaapverwekkende muziek op te zetten, betoverend mooi. Het had een verzachtende uitwerking op hem. Ze reikte hem een schaal met besjes aan. 'Neem er maar van,' zei ze. De jongen begon te grissen en te slikken. De vrouw glimlachte. 'Hongerig joch,' zei ze. Even leek er een glimlach op het gezicht van de jongen te komen, en toen straalde hij. Alles om hem heen scheen langzamer te gaan. Na een tijdje kwam Hel binnen. 'Ik ben blij met hem,' zei Ziekte tegen Hel. 'Hij is een goede aanwinst in de familie.'

Achter de stad was een brug die leidde naar de wereld genaamd Ziekte, haar wereld. Na het gesprek in de stad nam Ziekte hem mee naar haar wereld, in de trein. Hel ging ook mee. De jongen keek zijn ogen uit. Het was de mooiste wereld die hij ooit had gezien. Ziekte leidde hen naar een tafel in een weiland omgeven met wilde woestijnen, vol begroeid. Boven de tafel zweefde een roze theepot-olifant, die thee voor hen inschonk. De thee smaakte naar vla, en naar toverbessen.

Dieper in het weiland was een rivier. Voor de rivier stond een kathedraal. Hier werd de godin, Ziekte, aanbeden. Zij droeg het medicijn, en was dus ook de genezer met de groene vlam van gezondheid. Ze probeerde te onderwijzen dat we alleen onszelf kunnen redden, dat wanneer we een redder proberen te vinden, dan zal het wegglijden. Alles wat we proberen vast te houden en te bezitten, zal van ons wegglijden. Je kan alleen je familie en helpers samenstellen van je eigen innerlijke delen. De rest zal vergaan. Aan het einde zal alleen jijzelf overblijven. De sleutel die zij aanreikt is je eigen sleutel. Dat ben jezelf. Je hebt de ander niet nodig om gelukkig te zijn. De ander is er maar tijdelijk, totdat je hebt geleerd de ander te zijn voor jezelf. Het is een wordings-process. Het gaat om het zijn, niet om het bezitten, niet om relaties. Hiervoor hadden ze een hele speciale drug nodig : Kus van Ziekte. De jongen had nog nooit mensen gezien die zo erg aan de drugs waren dan deze mensen in de kathedraal. Ze bleven maar spuiten en slikken, en anderen zaten er in een totale trance bij, en veranderden geheel van uiterlijk. Zij volgden Ziekte naar de bronnen van genezing.

De Moederboom

Ze was verdwaald in haar hart, en de moederboom had bezit van haar genomen, door haar heen werkende, als een oneindig licht, wat ze niet kon bevatten. Ze was een bloederige wond in mijn hart, maar tegelijkertijd was ze de ridder die mijn kasteel beschermde. Ik was opgesloten in dit kasteel, maar tegelijkertijd was dit kasteel mijn schuilplaats.

Ik kon niet tegen haar op, ze was te sterk. Ze had vele namen, en blies als de noorderwind. Ze was als de moederboom met de vele takken en de weelderige bladeren, maar gelukkig met bloesem. Zij bracht mij voort, en brak mij, om me weer op te nemen door de wind. Ik kon haar niet doorzien, maar soms in flitsen was alles duidelijk. Ik had geen grip op haar, en ze gleed onder me weg. Later was ze als de zon waar ik niet naar kon staren. Ze was ver weg, en ik werd koud, en bloedde dood. Het kon haar niet schelen. Ze had dit pad zelf gemaakt. Het was haar ijzeren wil.

Ze zond mij poppen met kerstmis, en het was altijd kerstmis, en het sneeuwde altijd. Ik was verward, kapot. Ik was upgejut tegen de vele illusies die zij had gecreeerd. Ze speelde een spel met mij. Ik begon weer te roken om het te kunnen verteren. In haar genade zond ze weer een ridder tot mij, een witte ridder, zwart van binnen. Ik bekeek haar aandachtig. Ze was als een sprookjesprinses, als een boom vol witte bloesem. Ik had een worsteling met deze elf voor vele dagen, maar als ik viel, viel ik in zachte kussens. Zachte kussens met gouden fluwelen koorden, waar ik niet teveel naar kon staren, anders zouden ze mij verblinden. Maar zij was goed voor mij. Ze verzorgde mij goed. Ze kon goed koken, alhoewel er altijd gifbessen in de buurt waren. Daar zou zij me wel tegen beschermen. Het was gewoon keuken-decoratie.

Ze wilde altijd gifbessen in de buurt hebben. Het leek haar te inspireren. Het bleek het geheim van de moederboom te zijn. Gifbessen gebruikte ze op haar pijlen. Het was zeer medicinaal. Ik bleef maar staren naar haar. 'Kun je ... kun je ...' Maar verder kwam ik niet. Ik stond in de keuken met haar, maar het was alsof er glas was tussen ons, ook verbaal. Ze keek me vragend aan. Er kwam bloed uit haar ogen. Ze strekte haar armen naar me uit, en smolt weg. Even later stond ze er weer.

Ik brak het ijs, want ik had een handschoen van brandend staal, vuurheet. Rook kwam uit mijn vuisten. Het glas begon te smelten, als vele gezichten. Het was als een deuk in een auto. Maar bereiken kon ik haar niet. Ze was in de rook. Plotseling brandde alles. Er was oorlog in de stad. Planten met gifbessen schoten op om de stad te bedekken. En in het midden van de stad groeide de moederboom.

Ik was bezitterig en verdwaald. Ik stopte mijn huis vol met hebbedingetjes. Ze keek me aan met ogen van een hyena. Ik gromde. Buiten regende het, en er was olie in de plassen. Ik begeerde haar te kennen. Zij was mijn innerlijke wond. Het was een vruchtbare plaats, als de tuin rondom mijn huis in mijn gedachten. Die tuin was roze, sprankelend. Ze stond daar als de ridder, met boeken vol gedichten. Ik werd er hebberig van. Ik kon mijn gedachten niet keren. 'Lees eruit voor,' zei ik. Maar ze zei niets. De wond was te waterig om iets te zeggen. Alles wat ik greep sijpelde weg. De ridder draaide langzaam rond als een ballerina, verspreidende lichte, zachte muziek, als op de achtergrond. Het was niet eens goed hoorbaar, maar ik leek er rustig van te worden. Het greep mijn hart, en liet mij een gat in de tuin zien, waar zoete vruchten uit voortkwamen. Ik begon te eten. Waterige gestaltes waren hier, die zeiden : 'Sophia ...'

'Wie is Sophia ?' vroeg ik.

'Zij is een religieuze ballerina die altijd in dezelfde cirkeltjes draait,' zeiden ze. 'Zij moet gedood worden, anders kom je nooit verder.'

'Houdt ze mij tegen ?' vroeg ik.

'Ja,' zeiden ze. 'Ze leeft in je. Ze vreet alles in je weg. Het is een religieus monster. Je moet haar overwinnen.'

'Hoe ?' vroeg ik.

'Verbrand je goden,' zeiden ze.

Ze lieten mij een waterige vlam zien. 'Neem het aan,' zeiden ze.

Ik pakte het aan en begon te branden, en er was gekrijs in mij. 'Alles wordt nat nu,' zeiden ze.

'Daar gaan mijn hebbedingetjes,' zei ik. Ik stond op een kale berg nu, heel zanderig. De berg leek gemaakt van touw. Ik voelde me gebonden. 'Religie ... strijd ertegen,' zeiden ze. 'Religie is drama en kortzichtigheid, een band om je hoofd.' Ik gleed in een warm meertje, tussen het brandende zand.

'Religie was gemaakt om mensen tot slaven to maken,' zeiden ze. 'Je kunt natuurlijk naar de diepte van zo'n religie gaan, om het te neutralizeren, en het een andere betekenis te geven, maar daarna moet je de religie verbreken en verslaan. Je moet tot de hogere ringen van het leven komen, en uiteindelijk de gouden ring, de ring van de moederboom.'

Ik voelde me als een slaaf worden, met een begeerte die gouden ring te vinden, om zo vrij te zijn ? Ik voelde mijn banden in het licht van dit meer. De waterige gestaltes namen mij dieper in het meertje, waar alles veel heter was. Toen kwam ik in een riviertje dat naar een zee leidde achter de berg. De zee was vol met bomen met giftige bessen, en er waren overal haaien met miljoenen tanden. Het waren de poorten van de hel. 'Eet niet van de bessen,' zeiden de waterige gestaltes, 'en wij zullen je beschermen tegen de haaien.' Ze vormden een cirkel rondom me, die uiteindelijk uitgroeide tot een bol. Ze leidden mij door de zee naar de overkant. Hier waren ook giftige bessen, maar die moest ik gebruiken voor mijn pijlen. Ik moest een jager worden.

Er was hier een stad in oorlog. Ik moest naalden bevestigen aan mijn pijlen, tezamen met de giftige bessen. En ik moest die pijlen door open ramen schieten. Het was een religieuze stad. Ook woonden hier filosofen. Door het midden van de stad groeide de moederboom. Ik was hogerop hier. Ik raakte de boom aan en stond in brand. Toen werd alles nat. Ik klom hoger, en kwam in een woestijn-wereld. Er waren tekenaars hier en filosofen. Zij probeerden hun ringen te verkopen, maar ik was zoek naar de gouden ring van de moederboom. Er was een speciale taal in de gouden ring gegraveerd, zeiden ze, bepaalde tekens. Ineens had ik de gouden ring in mijn hand, en ik steeg op, naar een wereld vol van bomen en struiken met giftige bessen. Er waren ook planten met giftige bessen, en heggen. Ertussen waren allerlei huisjes en flatgebouwen. Hier woonden verhalenvertellers die hun ringen probeerden aan te praten. Maar ik was doof. De gouden ring had me verdoofd. Ik liep op een trap naar boven en zag een bruisend licht. Er werden hier generationele bloedlijnen bewaakt door kikkers. Een ieder die deze bloedlijnen zou aanraken, zou in connectie komen te staan met de moederboom, en zij zou in die persoon opspringen. De magische bloedlijnen waren de trots van een kikkerkoning. Ik schoot de kikkers neer met mijn pijlen en raakte de fontein van bloedlijnen aan, en werd direct naar achteren geslagen. Ik begon kikkers uit te braken, en de waterige gestaltes zeiden dat die kikkers de goden van de godenboom waren. Ik moest elke god achter mij laten. Een rijkere natuur ontvouwde zich voor mij. Ik was nu een deel van de familie. Het wemelde hier voor mijn ogen, als een zwerm vliegen of andere vliegende soorten insecten. Zij schenen zich niet om een god te bekommeren. Zij werden voortgestuwd door de familie, door de moederboom.

Er werd een bord voor mij op tafel gezet, en ik moest veel eten, maar ik raakte maar niet vol. Ik

werd steeds hongeriger. Ik at van de honger, van het holle en het niets. Er werd nog een bord voor mij op tafel gezet, en weer moest ik eten. Ditmaal werd ik echt hebberig. Ik begeerde meer van de bloedlijn, als een gulzige gierigheid. Ik werd door de boom omhoog getrokken, en gehesen op een schip. Daarna werd ik in een zee van gifbessen geworpen. Ik wilde de religie overwinnen, de sluier verscheuren. Ik zwom naar de kust, waar zeemeerminnen zaten op rotsen. Zij waren erg filosofisch. Ze zeiden : 'Drink niet van het gif, maar zie het als dode kunst.' Ik rende het bos in, en joeg op bizons, met de gifbessen op mijn pijlen. Alle spoken van religie vielen neer, en ik maakte er tenten van. Het verloor zijn betekenis geheel. Niemand wist meer wat het was. Ook alle zwijnen waren vastgehaakt aan palen.

Niemand kon mij nog stoppen, geen haas en geen konijn. Ik was de jager. Ik had geen zin om in een ander wonderland verstrikt te raken. Ik smeerde mij in met de gifbessen. De geur was sterk. Ik bedekte mijzelf met zwijnenvel. Zij was mijn innerlijke wond, gek geworden, woest geworden, maar zij beschermde mij ook. Zij ontdeed haarzelf van kleding, en smeerde haarzelf ook in met gifbessen. Zij was het geheim van de moederboom. Zij leefde diep binnenin. Haar vellen lagen op de grond. Zij had een speer in haar hand, en zou de tent bewaken. Ik was opgesloten in deze tent, maar deze tent was ook mijn schuilplaats. Zij had mij het geheim laten zien.

Ik kwam in mijn oude huis toen ik uit dit schilderij was gestapt. En het leek in de verste verten niet meer op wat het was. Het schilderij was nu een portret van een oudere man met een middeleeuwse haardos. Zijn ogen staarden mij aan. Vroeger was dit een schilderij van de bizonjacht. Eens stapte ik er in, en kwam in de klem van religie, omdat het schilderij mij gehypnotiseerd had. Maar ik kwam er ook weer uit. Wie was deze man ? En wie had het geschilderd ? De bizonjacht was een beroemd schilderij, maar dit schilderij kende ik niet. Het leek een beetje op een Amerikaanse president. Op de schilderijen ernaast waren wat landschappen, maar geen van allen hypnotiseerden mij zoals de bizonjacht deed. Ik besloot naar een ander schilderij van de bizonjacht op zoek te gaan. Ik vond er één, en hing het naast de man met de middeleeuwse haardos. Ik stapte in mijn bed en ging slapen. Ik droomde over de moederboom, en over de bizonjacht. De moederboom leek op twee indiaanse vrouwen tegenover elkaar. De indianen geloofden in voorouders, jachttropheeen en zielen van de vijand. Zij geloofden dat wat zij hadden verslagen, zij op hun eigen manier konden gebruiken.

Ik werd wakker en ging naar de bibliotheek. Ik las boeken over indianen en raakte gehypnotiseerd. Ik stapte in het boek, of werd erin gezogen, en gleed weg. Schilderijen van de bizonjacht vlogen om mij heen. Ik ging een stenen trap op, waar ik haar zag staan, mijn innerlijke wond, met een mes en een speer. Ook had zij een boog met pijlen. Ze leidde mij naar een wigwam. Ze drukte mij naar binnen. Alles begon te draaien. Ik had geen kracht meer om op te staan. Ik was opgesloten in het boek. Ik nam het boek mee naar huis, en weer begon alles te draaien. Het was een betoverend boek.

Ik vond het boek gevaarlijk, en bracht het terug, maar ik kon mijn weg er niet meer uitvinden. Pas na vele jaren vond ik een uitgang uit deze kerk. Ik begon te waarschuwen tegen het boek, en het liep uit op een oorlog. In het midden van de stad, tussen de vlammen, groeide de moederboom. Ik ging binnen in de moederboom. Ik ging aan een tafel zitten, tegenover een waarzegster. Maar vlammen kwamen uit haar mond. Ik rende weg. Ik pakte de lift naar boven, maar ze kwam achter mij aan. Ze had een heel leger van waarzegsters met zich. Ik kwam aan bij een pot met gifbessen, en begon gewoon te drinken, te drinken zoals ik nooit had gedronken. Niemand kon me nog de wet voorschrijven. Ik brandde. Ik gilde. Ik moest gewoon overal doorheen. Haaien met miljoenen tanden slokten mij op.

Ik doorzag haar. Ik werd kalm. Ze rookte een sigaret. Ze probeerde me te wurgen, maar ik gooide

haar van mij af. Ze zat hoog op een paard ineens. Maar werd toen weggerukt door een storm. De moederboom nam mij op, en ik braakte gifbessen.

De Stad van Erotos

Zij zat daar, omringd door ogen, met een blauwe mond. Roze olifantjes stonden om haar heen, en de ogen hadden vleugels en zongen zo mooi. Er kwam een roze kracht uit de ogen, die door elkaar heenstroomde. Ook droop er een slijm uit de ogen. Zo was er het oog van wijsheid, het oog van liefde, het oog van genezing, het oog van schoonheid, het oog van kracht, het oog van puurheid, en het oog van licht. Het waren zeven ogen, haar dienstknechten. Zij spraken tot haar als een orakel, maar vaak waren zij stil. Zij droegen de geur van de bossen en de wateren, en zij leefde als in een visioen.

Verderop stond de boom der hyena's. Onder deze boom regeerde de zwarte koningin met haar legioenen over alle witte mannen. Zij schreeuwde, en had veel bloed te verbergen. Onder de last van een ongeboren kind werkte zij. De boom bracht een vergif voort, haar vergif. Hiermee had zij de witte mannen in schuld gebonden. Zij konden deze schulden niet betalen. Zij leefden in honger onder de tirannie van de zwarte koningin. Zij voerde hen met vergif vanuit zwarte borsten, en dichtbij stond een spiegel. In de spiegel was er een wereld waar de witte koning regeerde over de zwarte vrouwen, een omgekeerde wereld, maar niemand kon deze wereld bereiken. De zwarte koningin bewaakte de spiegel bijna hysterisch. Maar de zwarte koningin stierf, en haar dochter nam het over. Haar dochter was zo lief, als de goedheid zelf, en iedereen was blij met deze koningin. En men vergat de boom der hyena's, en men vergat de spiegel, want iedereen leefde nu in geluk en zaligheid. En de spiegel en de boom der hyena's werden verbannen naar het rijk der nachtmerries. Maar zeker bij zeker kwam het land onder invloed van de witte spin, een vreemd en gevaarlijk medicijn.

Zelfs mensen konden verstrikt raken in de webben van deze spin. Zij werden dan tijdenlang uitgehongerd, en moesten van een vreemd vergif eten, wat de spin hen voerde, en zij werden voortdurend gewassen in het speeksel van de spin. De slachtoffers zouden dromen krijgen of hallucinaties van het meest overheerlijke voedsel, wat onbereikbaar voor hen was. Ook zouden ze nachtmerries krijgen dat ze in een varken of een gnoe veranderden, en geplaagd worden door

doodsangsten. Na een tijd zou de witte spin dan veranderen in een zwarte spin, om aan de maaltijd te beginnen. Sommigen zeiden dat de witte spin eigenlijk niet wit was, maar zwart, en dat het alleen maar wit lijkt, also het zijn tanden laat zien. Ook zeiden sommigen dat het de wraak was van de zwarte koningin. De nieuwe koningin wilde er niets aan doen, omdat zij dacht dat het misschien de terugkeer van haar moeder was.

Maar op een dag kwam de witte spin in het paleis en wilde de nieuwe koningin ombrengen. Nog steeds durfde de nieuwe koningin niets te doen, en vluchtte naar het bos. De witte spin nam de troon. Direkt veranderde de witte spin in een witte koning, zodat sommigen dachten dat het de wraak van de spiegel was. Maar alweer gingen de witte mannen in gevangenschap, dus het zou toch heel goed mogelijk de zwarte koningin kunnen wezen, in één van haar gedaantes.

De witte spin vond dat de nieuwe koningin moest sterven. De witte spin verliet zijn troon en ging het bos in om naar haar te zoeken. Hij moest en zou haar vinden, en toen hij haar vond was ze erg verschrikt. 'Alstublieft,' zei het meisje. 'Laat mij leven, ik heb u toch niets aangedaan ? Ik smeek u, geef mij een kans, en laat mij de redenen weten waarom u mij wilt doden.'

Maar de spin antwoordde niet, en begon het meisje aan stukken te rijten. Het volk ging ten onder in doem meer dan ooit tevoren. De spin veranderde vaak van geslacht en kleur, en vaak zagen mensen een hyena op een troon. Mensen begonnen nachtmerries te krijgen van hyenas die hen verscheurden, koelbloedig, zonder genade.

Totdat op een dag een reusachtige witte vlieg het land binnenvloog. De vlieg was prachtig, als betoverend. Velen dachten dat het de terugkeer was van de gestorven nieuwe koningin. De vlieg vloog het paleis binnen en begon met een rustige, zachte stem te spreken. De spin vloog de vlieg aan, maar begon weg te smelten. Een wit vuur begon de spin aan te vreten. Nog nooit had het land zo'n gekrijs gehoord, als het gekrijs van hyenas. De witte vlieg, die reusachtig was, nam de troon, en alweer werden de witte mannen bevrijd.

Zeven jaren regeerde de goede koningin, totdat op een dag een hyena het paleis binnenkwam en de witte vlieg verscheurde. Het bleek de witte spin te zijn die zich als een hyena had vermomd. Hoe zij van de dood was opgestaan begreep niemand. Weer gingen de witte mannen in gevangenschap, erger dan ooit. Zij moesten een voer eten waardoor ze in varkens of gnoes veranderden. Ze klaagden erover dat hun leven bestond uit sterven en geboren worden. 'Ja,' zei de witte spin, 'dat komt omdat jullie in het Grote Wiel van de Witte Spin zijn, van de eeuwige wedergeboorte en verslinding.'

'Dat klinkt oosters,' zei iemand.

'Nee, het is indiaans,' zei de witte spin. 'Het is een wiel, een cyclus, van vlees, niet van reincarnatie.'

'Van vlees en niet van reincarnatie ?' vroeg dezelfde persoon.

'Ja,' zei de witte spin, 'precies zoals ik het zeg. Daar moeten jullie witte mensen maar eens gewend aan raken. Jullie zijn gewoon onderdeel van de voedsel-keten, en in dit rijk ben ik de baas. Ik sta aan de top van de voedsel-keten, en jullie werken voor mij, sterven, en komen hierdoor weer tot leven.'

'Ja, weer om een stuk vlees te worden,' zei die iemand. 'Waar houdt dit alles op ?'

'Het houdt nooit op,' zei de witte spin.

'Bent u een filosoof ofzo ?' vroeg de persoon.

'Gaat je geen snars aan,' snauwde de witte spin. Even leek ze weer op een hyena, en even leek ze weer op een zwarte spin. Vervolgens sprak ze : 'In mijn webben zijn jullie. Wen daar maar aan.'

'Het is een vervloekte indiaanse steen,' zei iemand anders, 'een betoverd juweel. Wij hebben erin gekeken en raakten betoverd.'

'Als een Medusa ofzo ?' vroeg de andere persoon weer. Sommigen knikten.

'Hoe krijgen we dat dan weer recht ?' werd er gevraagd. Maar niemand wist de oplossing. 'Misschien is dit wel ons noodlot,' opperde iemand. In ieder geval voelden ze zich machteloos, en steeds meer hopeloos. Ze waren als opgesloten in een visioen door deze drug. Ze waren op een eeuwige boerderij, maar waar werden ze voor gekweekt ? Of werden ze nergens voor gekweekt. De witte spin richtte zich gewoon op het ritueel, als een traditie, en liet verder niets doorschemeren. 'Ik wed dat het de zwarte koningin is !' riep iemand. Sommigen knikten. 'En kunnen jullie die spiegel herinneren waarin een rijk is waar een witte koning is die zwarte vrouwen onderdrukt ? Nou, daar wil ik ook niet wezen.'

'Misschien heeft hij daar wel een reden voor,' opperde iemand anders. 'Of misschien is dat de witte spin zelf die daar een dubbelbestaan leidt, want soms verandert de witte spin in een witte koning. En de zwarte koningin bewaakte die spiegel altijd in grote hysterie.'

'Of misschien zit in de spiegel een sleutel tot onze bevrijding,' zei weer een ander.

'Ik geloof daar niet in,' zei iemand, 'ten eerste niet in het onderdrukken van vrouwen, en ten tweede niet in het onderdrukken van zwarte vrouwen. Zij zijn de bron van ons leven, zijn we allemaal niet uit hen voortgekomen ? Wij hebben ze nodig, en dat ze ons onderdrukken moeten ze zelf weten, maar we kunnen niet onze bron aanvallen.'

'Jij bent het spoor bijster,' zei een ander. Spoedig liep het uit op een vechtpartij. De witte spin had haar gladiatoren opgesteld, en zaaide strijd. Om die strijd te winnen hadden ze macht nodig, en daarom begonnen ze de witte spin te aanbidden, en werd zij hun godin. Vele tempels bouwden zij voor haar, en zij genoot van hun verdeeldheid. Ze had er een lust en plezier in om strijd te zaaien, achterdocht, wantrouwen en leugens. Op alle mogelijke manieren hongerde ze hen uit, zodat ze zich openstelden voor haar gif. Haar gif werd gezien als levendmakend, overwinnend, almachtig. Zij zagen haar als hun mogelijke bruid.

In hun grootmoed stelden zij wetten op, hun eigen webben, en bouwden kerken en psychiatrieen, en zij was daar, als het grote enigma. Zij broedde voort, ja zelfs in hun graven, maar zij was ongenadig, en gaf slechts illusies, valse hoop. En voor haar tronen werden zij in het ongelijk gesteld, de één meer als de ander.

Zij hield van de jacht en van misleidende woorden. Zij mengde haar giffen op hoge bergen, en als zij afdaalde kwam zij om te doden, maar ook om op te wekken in de hel. Op een dag echter, kwam zij met een geheimenis. Ze begon te vertellen dat de witte vlieg hun enige sleutel was om van hun schuld te worden verlost, en dat haar gif was gemaakt van de witte vlieg. En ze sprak dat de witte vlieg nog eenmaal zou komen om te verlossen en te veroordelen. Op een dag ging de witte spin in een cocon en verandere langzaam in een witte vlieg. Maar deze vlieg was erger dan ze hadden verwacht. Deze vlieg bracht hen een realiteit van ongekende wreedheid. Na zeven jaren van verschrikkelijk leed stierf uiteindelijk de witte vlieg. De mensen leefden door alsof er niets was gebeurd. Ze wilden er eigenlijk niet aan herinnerd worden. Ze vonden hun eigen drug om van alles te herstellen. Zowel de verhalen van de witte spin als van de witte vlieg kwamen steeds meer en

meer op de achtergrond, en men vond het ook niet meer belangrijk. Zij creeerden hun eigen religies en mysteries.

De dromenkoningin was woedend. Zij had hen deze dromen gegeven, maar ze deden er niks meer mee, en ze had haar grip verloren. Een hyena rende haar kasteel binnen, en beet haar in de nek. 'Jij mag dan wel de godin van de dood zijn,' zei de hyena, 'maar ik ben de godin van de hel.' De godin van de dood rende al bloedend het kasteel uit, en rende het bos in. Maar de hyena achterhaalde haar. De hyena beet haar overal, maar vermoordde haar niet. De godin van de dood was nu de bloedende. Naar haar aard zocht ze de dood op, maar kon hem ditmaal niet vinden. Er was geen rad van wedergeboorte meer, want men stierf niet meer. Er kwam nu een ander rad : het Rad van de Hyena, het rad van de hel en van de onsterfelijkheid. En de schuldlast werd alleen maar groter. De grote godin van de hyenas was gekomen. De hyenas gebruikten de witte mannen nog steeds als stukken vlees, maar ditmaal stierven de mannen niet, en elk weggegeten stuk vlees groeide gewoon weer aan na een tijdje. De witte mannen werden vlees-slaven. Velen verlangden weer terug naar de dromenkoningin, naar de witte spin en de witte vlieg. Maar het werd hen niet gegeven. Zij zochten de dood, maar het vluchtte van hen weg. De god van de dood was Een-oog, die op een grote spin reed. Hij was op de vlucht, want hij wilde niet in de handen van de hyenas vallen. Als ze hem zouden vinden, dan zou eeuwige verdoemenis hem ten deel vallen. Maar de hyenas sloegen niets over. Alles kwam in hun boerderij terecht. Het was de levende eeuwig-durende hel, een slagerij. Hier hing het grote wiel van eeuwiggroeiend vlees. De hyenas vonden vetmesting maar niks, want het vlees bleef toch gewoon maar doorgroeien, dus alles moest uitgehongerd worden. Dan was het vlees van de beste kwaliteit, en zo konden de botten ook bereikt worden, want de hyenas waren ook bot-eters.

De witte mannen werden zo zwak dat ze niet meer konden spreken, en alleen nog maar varkensklanken en gnoe-klanken konden maken, en zo doofde ook de stem van de dood uit. De dood had het laatste woord niet meer, ja, was zelfs stom geworden. Ze konden alleen nog maar mekkeren en knorren. Velen zochten troost bij de god van de slaap, maar spoedig werd ook deze bezocht door de hyenas, en zijn lot was verschrikkelijk. De god van de slaap had al deze werelden gecreeerd van misleiding en deceptie, en hypnotiseerde hen allen met zijn muziek. Een web van dromen had hij gecreeerd en werkte nauw samen met de goden van de dood. Maar ook hij brandde toen de hyenas hem vonden, en al zijn paradijsen gingen in rook op. Hij had een lange tong, en rookte veel, ook zijn waterpijp. Hij had hoerenbuurten gecreeerd waar men met geld snel aan z'n trekken kon komen, maar geld telde voor de hyenas niet. De god van slaap was een belangrijke krachtbron voor de god van geld, die ook de god van de dood als zijn krachtbron had. Maar ook de god van geld werd woest aangevallen door de hyenas en al bloedend naar de boerderij getrokken. Als een modepop werd hij naar binnen getrokken. De hyenas beten hem overal waar ze hem bijten konden. Erotos was de god van de slaap, die hij bewerkte door snelle sex. De goden van sex en hoererij waren zijn trouwste dienstknechten. Ook deze twee honden werden door de hyenas flink gebeten en weggedragen naar de boerderij.

De god van slaap had een paradijs waar iedereen liep met een streepjescode, iedereen die had gedronken van de melk van slaap. Zij droegen die code op hun voorhoofden, en daarboven was de tatoeage van een vrouwenborst, als een merkteken. Zijn rijk werd gereguleerd door waterpijpen, die aan de mensen werden vastgemaakt, en wiens pijpen in alle mogelijke openingen van het menselijk lichaam werden gestoken. Zijn doel was de mensen te leiden tot een rots, om hen daar te verstenen en tot de eeuwige slaap te leiden. Maar dat ging nu niet door sinds de hyenas waren gekomen. Zijn

dromen waren ruw verstoord. Ook de waterpijpen van de god van slaap werden aangevallen. En de waterpijpen waren als vreemde paarse spinnen. 'Laat hen slapen,' werd er geroepen. 'Ach, laat hen slapen.' Maar de realiteiten van de hel waren een invasie begonnen, en zij kwamen met dagmerries. De dagmerries waren witte paarden die ook in zwarte paarden en in zwarte vrouwen konden veranderen. Zij waren geriemd en kwamen om te riemen, om hun rijk van slavernij op te zetten. Ook de god van de slaap ging in slavernij. Hij was bijna als een standbeeld, en zacht vuur kwam van hem voort, en hij was omringd door kleine hondjes. 'De god van de dood telt niet meer,' werd er gesproken. 'Zijn economieen zijn ten onder gegaan.' Lamach, de god van medicijnen, was woedend. Hij was de vader van de god van slaap en de god van de dood. In zijn machine kwam hij naar voren, terwijl de hyena's hem direkt aanvielen. De machine viel neer in het zand, en de god van medicijnen begon te bloeden vanuit zijn hoofd, waar hij een hoofdwond had. Er was bloed in het zand. De godin van de tuinen wierp er een roos op. Haar tranen waren van bloed. Zij was zijn vrouw. Zij was gehuld in een donkere jas van bont, maar ook haar vielen de hyena's aan. Ze viel op de grond en de hyena's doken op haar. 'Het godenrijk is vallende,' fluisterde ze. 'Onze verborgen berg, oh, laat niemand grootvader ontdekken.' De god van drugs danste op een meer. Hij had vleugels, was als een jong kind, en droeg een oog op zijn borst. Bloemen zweefden om hem heen. Toen hij de hyenas zag schrok hij, en rende weg. Maar de hyena's kwamen hem achterna. Zij zouden nooit meer loslaten wat hun oog had gezien.

'Heb medelijden met een kind,' werd er geroepen. Maar al snel werd er een bloedspoor in de sneeuw achtergelaten. Overal waar het bloed was gevallen waren vlinders. 'Jullie zullen mijn opa toch niet vinden,' zei het kind. Maar de hyenas volgden de lange ketting waaraan het kind was vastgemaakt, en kwamen uit bij de god van krankzinnigheid, die woonde in een groot kasteel.

'Potverdikkeme, de hel !' schreeuwde de god. 'Ik kan mijn ogen bijna niet geloven. Nou, ik heb op jullie gewacht, hoor. Ik heb al kaartjes voor de trein.' De hyena's vlogen de god van krankzinnigheid aan en sleurden hem naar de boerderij.

De Poortwachter van de Hel

Corruptus werd door duivelen naar de hel geleid, naar een kokende pot waar zijn lever voor eeuwig doormidden gezaagd zou worden. ‘Heb genade,’ zei Corruptus. De zaag bleef in zijn lever steken, en hij werd doorgevoerd naar een ruimte waar zijn organen en daden werden gewogen en gemeten. Izu keek toe. Ook werden er door hem notities gemaakt. Langzaamaan raakte Corruptus gewend

aan de zaag in zijn lever. Toen werd er een zwaard in zijn hart gestoken. ‘Dit zwaard,’ zei Izu, ‘zal daar voor eeuwig zitten. Nooit meer zal je hart onverschillig zijn, maar gevoelig. Voor de armen zul je werken nu, en voor hen die je hebt opgelicht.’ Corruptus vond het een rechtvaardige straf, maar hij was veel te moe en ziek door de zaag in zijn lever en het zwaard in zijn hart. Het zoog zijn energie weg. Hij begon erover te klagen. Maar Izu sprak : ‘Heb je ooit meedelijden gehad met je zieke en verzwakte slaven ? Nooit heb je hen rust gegeven, daarom zal rust ook niet jouw gezel zijn.’ Corruptus vond nog steeds dat de straf rechtvaardig was, en begon aan zijn werk. Zware stenen moest hij tillen, maar zodra hij ze had verzet rolden ze weer terug. ‘Maar heer,’ sprak Corruptus, ‘mijn werk heeft geen waarde. Alles wat ik doe wordt weer ongedaan gemaakt.’

‘Heb je zelf ook niet je slaven nutteloos werk laten verrichten ?’ vroeg Izu. En Corruptus besefte dat de straf rechtvaardig was. Toen het avond werd werd hij in de poel van licht en geluid geworpen, en slaap vond hij niet. Ook anderen werden door duivelen naar deze plaats geleid. ‘Meester,’ sprak Corruptus, ‘ik heb honger. Wat heeft u te eten en drinken voor mij.’

‘Uitwerpselen,’ zei Izu, ‘want dat heb je je slaven ook gegeven.’

‘Oh meester,’ jammerde Corruptus, ‘hoe lang zal deze straf duren.’

‘Totdat je je straf zal hebben uitgezeten,’ zei Izu. ‘Leer ervan, en zij die er niet van leren zullen varen tot de eeuwige slaap die tot vergetelheid leidt.’

‘Ik heb behoefte aan slaap,’ zei Corruptus, ‘maar niet voor eeuwig. Ik besluit om van mijn straf te leren, dan zal ook ik deel hebben aan een zekere opstanding. Deze hel is niet voor eeuwig.’

‘Ga terug, Corruptus,’ sprak Izu, ‘naar de aarde waar je vandaan bent gekomen, en leer hen dat de hel bestaat, maar niet eeuwig is. In het licht is er rechtvaardigheid voor alle mensen. Omdat er over een God wordt gesproken die voor eeuwig straft en onrechtvaardig is, zo zijn de mensen ook onrechtvaardig geworden.’

En zo werd Corruptus teruggezonden tot de aarde met een boodschap. Maar de mensen lachten hem uit, en bespotten hem, zeggende dat hij teveel gedronken had en gek was geworden. Ook in de kerk was hij niet meer welkom. En zo liep Corruptus rond met een zware last. En velen gingen naar de hel zoals Corruptus eens ging. Door duivelen werden ze opgehaald, maar geen van hen werd naar de aarde teruggezonden. En velen jammerden toen ze de plagen van de hel onder ogen kwamen, maar ook werd hen beloofd dat dit niet voor eeuwig zou zijn, maar dat het was om hun zielen te zuiveren.

‘U zult gemeten worden met de maat waarmee gij hebt gemeten,’ predikte Corruptus. ‘Als u doorgaat met spotten, dan zult u ook met dezelfde maat in het hiernamaals bespot worden.’ Maar

nog steeds werd hij uitgelachen, en ze zeiden dat hij het maar gedroomd had. ‘Ik heb het niet gedroomd,’ zei Corruptus, ‘en eens zullen jullie je daarvan bewust zijn. Tot brood zullen jullie gemalen worden.’ Al gauw werd Corruptus opgepakt en in de gevangenis gestopt vanwege ketterijen. Hij besefte dat de wereld een deel van de hel was, en haar bewoners de dienstdoende duivelen. Maar ook duivelen konden veranderen. En zo niet dan zouden ze tot de eeuwige slaap gedreven worden die tot de vergetelheid zou leiden, waar ze verbannen zouden zijn uit de gedachten.

In de gevangenis werd Corruptus meegenomen door twee vuur-engelen. ‘Je moet je straf in de hel verder uitzitten,’ zeiden de engelen. ‘Dertig jaren heb je je naasten onderdrukt, dus je bent nog niet van ons af.’ Corruptus kreeg een bijl door zijn longen, en kreeg problemen met ademhalen. Toen brachten de twee vuur-engelen hem naar het vuur. Het vuur leidde hem naar een plaats waar armen en benen werden afgehakt, in een restaurant. In het vuur begon Corruptus in een dier te veranderen. Tot een stuk vlees werd hij, omdat hij ook zijn naasten als een stuk vlees had behandeld. Zijn vlees ging ten onder, maar zijn ziel kreeg nog een kans. Ook zijn ziel ging door de molen, en er kwamen alleen maar snippers uit. Hij kreeg een nieuwe ziel, en werd door engelen tot Izu geleid. ‘Omdat je in je terugkeer naar de aarde goed hebt geleefd mag je binnen gaan tot de hemel,’ zei Izu. ‘Wel moet je nog een reis maken door vele woestijnen en wildernissen naar de hemelse stad om je te beproeven en klaar te maken.’

‘Dank u, heer,’ zei Corruptus.

‘Ongewapend zul je gaan, Corruptus,’ zei Izu, ‘omdat je op aarde misbruik van wapens hebt gemaakt. Ook zul je gaan zonder rijkdom, omdat je al je rijkdommen al op aarde hebt verspild. Omdat je op aarde macht hebt uitgevoerd over anderen en die macht hebt misbruikt, zul je geen enkele macht hebben op je pad, en geheel afhankelijk zijn van de genade van anderen.’

Toen begon Corruptus zijn lange reis, maar hij was dankbaar dat hij die reis mocht maken. Omdat hij op zijn reis barmhartig was werd hij op zijn pad steeds meer omringd door engelen. Als wilde dieren hem aanvielen, dan werd hij beschermd door de twee vuur-engelen, en op een dag nam een ridder hem mee naar zijn burcht. De ridder zelf was ook door de diepste zwakheid heengegaan, en de hulpeloosheid, en door de bijtende, tergende spotternij der duivelen, en wist precies wat het was. Eens moest hij ook de reis van Corruptus maken, en toen hij eindelijk de hemelse stad had bereikt kreeg hij deze burcht, om barmhartigheid te tonen aan andere reizigers. Corruptus had een erge langdurige honger, en kreeg voedsel van de ridder. De ridder gaf om hem en was erg behulpzaam. Toen Corruptus aangesterkt was ging hij verder. Weer werd hij geplaagd door honger, en wilde dieren vielen hem lastig. Ook werd hij aangevallen door rovers, maar de ridder kwam hem te hulp. Toen hij over een rivier moest zwemmen verdronk hij bijna, en een vis nam hem mee. De vis nam hem mee naar een grot waar hij kon ademen. ‘Zo,’ zei de vis. ‘Die eeuwige stad zul je nooit bereiken. Geef het maar op. Ze hebben je voorgelogen dat er een weg uit de hel is. Uit de hel ontsnapt niemand, en je bent er nog steeds. Maak je klaar voor nog meer zielenpijn, want voor eeuwig zal je branden vanwege je zonden.’

Corruptus wist inderdaad dat zijn schuld groot was, maar hij wilde zich vasthouden aan het feit dat er ook hoop voor hem was, de kans om zijn leven te verbeteren. Maar de vis lachte hem uit. De vis liet zijn staart zien waarmee hij hem wilde slaan, maar weer verscheen de ridder naast hem en weerde de slag af. ‘Ach Corruptus,’ zei de ridder. ‘Geloof niet in hen van de eeuwige dood. Het zijn slechts schimmen. Ook mij zijn ze tot plaag en spot geweest, maar zij die hen zullen overwinnen zullen eten van het geboomte des levens.’ Maar toen de ridder was verdwenen zakte Corruptus in diepe wanhoop. De vis greep hem en sleurde hem nog verder in de diepte, tot een andere grot waarin hij kon ademen. ‘Wie heeft jou gezegd dat je kunt ontsnappen aan de komende toorn,’ sprak de vis. Ook haaien begonnen hem te omsingelen. Corruptus riep om hulp, maar niemand kwam hem helpen.

‘Zie,’ Corruptus, ‘al die hulp was slechts een illusie, een schim. Ze kunnen niets voor je betekenen, want het zijn alleen je eigen ijdele gedachtes.’

‘Maar eens werd ik teruggezonden naar de aarde,’ zei Corruptus.

‘Dat was maar een droom, Corruptus,’ zeiden de vissen. De vissen zagen er gevaarlijk uit, en een grote vrees overviel Corruptus. Staarten omringden hem die hem wilden slaan. ‘Sla mij,’ zei Corruptus. ‘Ik verdien niets anders.’ De vissen sloegen hem, en sleepten hem mee, verder de diepte in, waar ze hem begonnen aan te vreten. ‘Corruptus,’ sprak een stem. ‘Ditmaal zal je ziel ook van je afgenomen worden, maar dit zal je geest tot eeuwig leven wekken.’ En met een nieuwe geest bereikte Corruptus de overkant van de rivier. In de verte zag Corruptus een boomgaard, waar van vruchten jam werd gemaakt. De eeuwige stad had muren gemaakt van brood, en er werd jam opgesmeerd die schitterde in de zon. ‘Waarom smeren jullie er jam op ?’ vroeg Corruptus.

‘Alleen zij die eten zullen binnengaan,’ zei een man. ‘Er zijn geen poorten.’

‘Mag ik er van eten ?’ vroeg Corruptus. De man knikte.

Toen Corruptus begon te eten begon zijn mond pijnlijk te branden. Op een gegeven moment werd het zo pijnlijk dat hij stopte met eten. Maar daarna at hij door omdat hij de hemelse stad binnen wilde gaan. Helemaal uitgeput en verkrampt van de pijn kwam hij aan. Maar van binnen was alles donker. ‘Waarom is het hier donker ?’ vroeg Corruptus.

‘Omdat je oog eerst open moet,’ zei een man. Iemand nam een fakkel en stak zijn oog aan. Hij leek wel in de hel te zijn, nu zijn oog in verschrikkelijke ondragelijke pijn was. ‘Alleen door pijnen zal je oog opengaan,’ sprak iemand. Maar al wat hij zag en voelde was vuur, zo erg dat hij het uitgilde. En er was een licht dat hem verblindde. ‘Hoe kan ik ooit zien in dit verblindend licht en deze teisterende vlam ?’ riep Corruptus.

‘Alleen zij die de boeken van hun binnenste hebben geopend zullen zien,’ werd er gezegd. Toen werd er een speer door zijn buik gestoken, en hij ging in ketenen. ‘Waar ben ik terecht gekomen ?’ jammerde Corruptus. ‘Is dit de hemelse stad ?’

‘Dit is de hemelse stad,’ werd er gezegd, ‘maar het is hier niet zoals de aarde het verteld heeft.’

De pijnen waar Corruptus door moest gaan waren erger dan de pijnen die hij in de hel had. Hij vroeg zich af of er een vergissing was gemaakt. Hij kwam in een put van chaos en verwarring. ‘De hemel is erger dan de hel,’ werd er gezegd. ‘Heel vroeger wist men dat, maar duivelen hebben het omgedraaid.’ Corruptus schreeuwde en gilde en had het gevoel dat hij gek werd. Hij werd krankzinnig van de pijn, een wilde man, een verscheurend dier. Ook begon hij te spotten en te lachen.

‘Weer een dolle man,’ werd er gezegd. ‘Niemand blijft hier gezond. Zij die gegeten hebben van de hemelse vrucht zullen voor eeuwig branden. De hel is maar tijdelijk, maar de hemel is voor eeuwig.’

‘Maar dit is wreed,’ schreeuwde Corruptus. ‘Dit is wreder dan ik ooit ben geweest. Is er ontsnapping mogelijk ?’

‘Niemand die ooit de hemel is binnengaan zal daar ooit ontsnappen,’ werd er gezegd. ‘Zij zullen worden tot dienstknechten van de hemel voor eeuwig.’

Een groot platform kwam naar beneden, waarop Roomse goden stonden. ‘Ik ben dus in de val gelokt ?’ schreeuwde Corruptus. Maar toen voelde hij de hand van de ridder. ‘De luchtweerspiegelingen in de woestijnen en wildernissen die naar de hemelse stad leiden zijn sterk. Ze bevatten veel waarheden, maar het zijn roofdieren op zoek naar prooi. Het zijn duivelen die toegestaan worden de gelovigen te beproeven.’ Corruptus viel in de armen van de ridder. ‘Ik ben zo blij dat je er bent. Ik dacht even dat alles verloren was. Ik zal beter op mijn hoede zijn. Wat kan ik er tegen doen ? En hoe kan ik ze herkennen ?’ Maar de ridder was alweer vertrokken. Corruptus voelde nog steeds de plek waar de ridder zijn armen had geplaatst. Het voelde warm en gloeiend aan. Corruptus voelde zich paranoide worden. Het werd donker, en Corruptus begon als een bezetene om zich heen te slaan. Hij begon alles in twijfel te trekken en had het gevoel dat er een spelletje met hem werd gespeeld. ‘Ik word alleen gelaten op de momenten dat ik jullie nodig heb,’ riep hij.

En in pure wanhoop en angst scheurde hij toen zijn geest aan flarden, totdat hij niets meer was dan een vlam, een schim, een schaduw. Weer kwam hij tot een rivier, waar een piratenschip stond. ‘Vergezel ons,’ riep een piraat hem toe. Maar Corruptus dook in de rivier en probeerde naar de

overkant te zwemmen. Snel werd hij omringd door haaien. Op het nippertje werd hij gered door het piratenschip. De piraten leken zacht en barmhartig als de ridder. Zij kwamen van de hemelse stad om reizigers te helpen. Corruptus was heel blij met deze vrienden. Zij brachten hem de grote rivier over. ‘Als je ooit onze hulp nodig hebt, dan roep je maar,’ zeiden ze. Corruptus was dankbaar, en zette zijn reis voort. Schijnbaar had hij meerdere vrienden nodig om ooit de hemelse stad te kunnen bereiken.

De hemelse stad lag op een stapel boeken, reuzenboeken, als een trap die hij moest beklimmen. De boeken waren van edelgesteente gemaakt, en konden niet geopend worden. Telkens als hij ze beklom werd hij weggeduwd door een wind, en viel in het zand. ‘Hoe kan ik die boeken openen ?’ riep hij.

‘Elk boek heeft een wachter, en die moet je verslaan,’ sprak een stem. Corruptus besloot langs de boeken heen te gaan, in de angst dat het weer een luchtweerspiegeling zou zijn. Hij wilde niet opnieuw in de problemen komen. Maar toen hij verder ging schoof er een zwaard in zijn oog. ‘Heb je het Oog van Izu al gevonden ? Alleen door dit oog zal het boek geopend zijn.’ Hij keek achterom en zag dat de boeken nu zacht waren als brood. ‘Eet,’ werd er gezegd, ‘want alleen door het te eten zul je de stad binnengaan.’ Corruptus begon van de boeken te eten die nu als zachte broden waren, en de hemelse stad begon naar beneden te komen. Maar telkens als alles bijna was opgegeten groeide het brood weer aan, en schoof de hemelse stad weer naar boven. Nog gulziger begon Corruptus te eten, maar na een tijd plofte hij ziek en vermoeid in het zand. Duivelen om hem heen begonnen hem uit te lachen. Ook begon zijn oog meer en meer te steken door het zwaard wat erin was gestoken. Corruptus trok het zwaard eruit en begon het brood in stukken te kappen met het zwaard. Hierdoor kwam de stad steeds lager te liggen, en even later kon hij de stad binnengaan. Maar het was niet wat hij verwachtte. De mensen liepen hier rond met dure kleren, veel sieraden, en begonnen hem te bespotten omdat hij er armoedig uitzag. Dit kon de hemel niet wezen. Deze mensen leefden in een eeuwige illusie. Hij had zelfs geen behoefte om met zulke mensen te spreken. Hij verwachtte liefde te zien in de hemel, en zorg, maar al wat hij kreeg was minachting. Nu hij wist wat de tijdelijkheid van de hel betekende en de eeuwigheid van de hemel liep hij de stad uit en vroeg zich af of er ook nog een derde mogelijkheid was. Of waren deze dingen die op zijn pad waren gekomen niets dan illusie ? En wat was dan de werkelijkheid ? Corruptus ging in het zand zitten, onder een boom en viel in slaap. Toen hij pas veel later wakker werd zag hij engeltjes en duiveltjes dansen in de lucht. Het was tegelijkertijd een dans en een oorlog. Ze leken allemaal een beetje op vlinders. Het leek op een groot vlies wat in de lucht hing, en toen wegviel. Een prachtige stad had hij in het oog nu. Hij had nog nooit eerder zo’n prachtige stad gezien. Ineens stonden de piraten en de ridder naast hem. ‘Kom op, jongen,’ zeiden ze. ‘Je hebt het gered. Laten we de stad binnengaan. En samen gingen ze toen de stad binnen. Het was een stad gebouwd van prachtig spiegelend materiaal, overgoten door zonlicht. Je kon alles van meerdere kanten bekijken, en het geheel was kaleidoscopisch. Ook de twee vuur-engelen kwamen bij hem staan, en toen zoveel engeltjes.

‘Waar zou je nu graag willen helpen ?’ werd er aan hem gevraagd.

‘Nou, het liefst aan de ingang van de hel,’ zei Corruptus, ‘omdat daar nog steeds reizigers komen die denken dat ze er voor eeuwig inmoeten.’

Corruptus kreeg toen een burcht wat de poort van de hel werd, en zelf werd hij de poortwachter van de hel.

Het Kind Van Licht

Ik, 44 jaar, schrijver.

Ik houd van boeken, vooral van de wat mysterieuze boeken. Ik woon alleen in een kasteel. Om de dag door te komen drink ik veel thee. Als ik dat niet doe dan val ik in een diepe depressie die met het verleden te maken heeft. Arabische thee werkt het beste op mij. In de zomer trek ik er altijd met mijn caravan op uit. Ik heb vroeger gejaagd, maar daar heb ik me inmiddels voor negentig procent van bekeerd. Ik jaag nu alleen nog maar bij noodzaak. Ik ben een prominent lid van de jagers-vereniging. Ik houd van sport, maar ik merk bij mezelf dat ik steeds meer de rust opzoek. Ik houd van de indiaanse cultuur. Zij zijn het meest mysterieus voor mij. Ik ben verder niet gelovig, maar maak wel gebruik van de rijke symboliek van religies, als achtergrond. Voor mij is het natte kunst, de koude dood, ik geloof afstandelijk, maar wat ik dan geloof weet ik eignelijk niet. Ik voel mijzelf als een agnost, die weleens gebruik maakt van de metaforen en archetypes om mij heen, waarin ik bij vlagen soms een echte passie heb, die mij overigens ook weer benauwd. Ik voel mij een gevangene van mezelf, van deze wereld. Ik schrijf om ergens de uitgang te kunnen vinden.

Ik houd van dunne boekjes, maar wat dikkere boekjes doen het ook wel goed bij mij. Sommige boeken zijn gewoon echt perfect van formaat en ik kan daar wel uren naar staren en over nadenken. Ik lees veel, maar ben ook veel bezig met mijn geheugen. Sommige boeken benauwen me, en die heb ik liever niet in huis. Ik ben op zoek naar de perfecte boeken. Zo bouw ik mijn stad, mijn land, en mijn huis.

Ik ken mijn kasteel niet, ik woon alleen in een klein gedeelte. In veel kamers ben ik nog nooit geweest. Het kasteel staat verder helemaal leeg. Ik kom uit een gereformeerd gezin, een nachtmerrie, daarom woon ik nu alleen. Niemand zal me ooit de les nog leren. Mijn vader was dominee, en mijn moeder was uit hetzelfde hout gesneden. Ik kon me nooit uiten daar, ik werd nooit serieus genomen. Alleen de dikke bril van mijn vader sprak de waarheid. Wij hadden niets in te

brengen. ’s Nachts is het alsof ik engelen hoor zingen. Vroeger leek het altijd alsof ik duivels hoorde zingen. Mijn vader noemde iedereen vroeger altijd ‘duivel’, en hemzelf beschouwde hij als een half-god. Ik kan daar nu om lachen, maar toen hij de baas was was dit zeer beangstigend, onheilspellend. Via een achterdeurtje in de kerk ben ik ontsnapt. Ik ben naar de kinder-bescherming gegaan en heb verteld wat voor gruwelijke praktijken ze er bij mij thuis op nahielden. Toen stopten ze me in een weeshuis. Mijn vader kreeg een lange gevangenis-straf, en mijn moeder werd in een inrichting geplaatst. Mijn vader is in de gevangenis overleden, en mijn moeder in die inrichting. Dat is natuurlijk een treurig einde, en ik heb daar best veel verdriet van gehad. In het weeshuis ben ik verder goed opgevangen. Ik woon nu op mijzelf.

Ik ben een verzamelaar van oud plastic speelgoed, klassieke uitgaves. Plastic is de toekomst, zeg ik altijd. Ik denk altijd : waren we maar wat meer van plastic, dan zouden een heleboel problemen opgelost zijn. We zijn van een te hoge graad vlees en bloed, en dat veroorzaakt de helse pijnen. Ikzelf weet goed wat pijn is, en het leek altijd wel een vereiste om verder te komen. Wat ik dan schrijf ? Antropologie en cultuur. Ik zou wel als ontdekkingsreiziger naar Zuid-Amerika willen gaan. Vooral het Amazone-gebied trekt mij aan. Er hangt veel kunstfruit in het kasteel, nog van de vorige bewoners.

28 Juni 1972

Ik heb nu een vriendin. We wandelen samen door het kasteel. Dan sleurt ze me mee de tuin in. Ze haalt me over om bij haar in te wonen. Ze heeft een klein huisje in de stad. Ik voel daar wel wat voor. Het kasteel is nu verleden tijd. Haar familie komt vaak op bezoek. Ze heeft een oom Jan en een oom Piet waar ze nogal erg op gesteld is. Sinds ik met haar ben ben ik de dingen anders gaan zien. Ze is veel buiten om de vogels te voeren. Vanaf hier kun je de kerk-klokken goed horen, maar ik vind dat niet erg. Ook heeft ze een voorliefde voor koken. Vooral met uien maakt ze veel bijzondere gerechten. Als ik aan de ui denk pel ik hem af in tranen. Zo zie ik mijn leven. Wortels zijn ook haar favoriet. Wortels doen me denken aan konijnen. Verder houdt van allerlei puddings. Ze is veel bij de bloemen in haar tuin. Als ik aan bloemen, wortels en uien denk, dan zou ik er wel een trap van willen maken om met haar naar de zon te gaan. We houden van de zon. We zitten vaak buiten. Dan filosoferen we over allerlei dingen. Ze heeft boven veel schilderijen van indianen hangen. We zijn beiden erg ontzet over wat de blanken de indianen hebben aangedaan. Op zolder heeft ze een groot schilderij van de bizon-jacht. Ik vertel haar dat ik tegen jagen ben, maar dat het soms noodzakelijk is. Daarom ben ik lid van de jagers-vereniging. Indianen waren jagers voor voedsel, anders zouden ze gek van de honger worden, dus het was volkomen gerechtvaardigd. Ze waren ook nog eens met een jacht-instinct opgezadeld. De indianen zagen de dieren wel als heilig, dus vroegen ook om vergeving als ze op jacht waren geweest. Maar goed, dat kon natuurlijk per stam verschillen. Sommige indianen zagen het misschien ook als hun opdracht om te jagen voor de goden. Hoe dan ook, het hoe en waarom van de jacht interesseerde mij. Het was een prachtig schilderij, dat schilderij op de zolder. Het was net alsof de bizons op dat schilderij zeker niet voor niets stierven. Ze redden een indiaanse stam van de ondergang. Ook kwam er kannibalisme voor onder indianen. Dit had vaak te maken met religie, maar ook met oorlog, en soms gewoon echt honger. Sommige schilderijen die ze had waren echt luguber. Maar ik moest er gewoon meer vanaf

weten. Het was een drang die ik niet kon tegenhouden. Mijn obsessie met indianen werd zo sterk dat mijn vriendin me op andere gedachten probeerde te krijgen, en mij probeerde af te leiden. Maar mijn drang was zo groot en aanstekelijk dat ze op een bepaald moment ook zelf voor de bijl ging. Wij moesten en zouden het geheim ontrafelen.

Mijn vriendin had ook een schilderij van engelen, en dat sprak mij aan, maar beangstigde mij ook. Een ander schilderij was met een engel die op de engel des doods leek, staande voor een poort. Het leek op een reusachtig groot zwart-grijs standbeeld. In de geschiedenis werden de indianen en hun goden door de christenen gedemoniseerd. Natuurlijk is bloedvergiet niet goed te praten, maar daar konden de christenen ook wat van. Ik staarde naar buiten, en kon de kerktoren boven de huizen zien uitsteken. Aan de ene kant trok het christendom mij aan, maar aan de andere kant stootte het mij af. Het was in mijn ogen de arrogantie ten top, verschrikkelijk nationalistisch en cultuurbarbaars. En dan die eeuwige hel, dat was me nogal een piek op de kerstboom. De macht van het christendom was groot, en zaaide angst en paniek. En mijn vraag was wat de God van de christenen met de indiaanse goden en de zielen van de gesneuvelde indianen heeft gedaan. Waar waren zij ? In mijn hoofd dansten de indianen een vurige dans, en als dat zo door zou gaan zou alles spoedig in vuur gaan. Ik kon mezelf er niet van losmaken. Het leek alsof zij brandden door het christelijk stempel. Het van hen geroofde land was nooit aan hen teruggegeven. De indianen hadden ingang tot de natuur, iets wat de blanken nauwelijks hadden, en dat maakte hen jaloers, omdat ingang tot de natuur ook de staf van vruchtbaarheid betekende. Het was alsof de draak een ei bewaakte en tegelijkertijd niet bij dat ei kon komen.

En wij leefden nog steeds dichtbij die draak in dat land, die jaloerse, kleptomanische, arrogante kracht die ons door het vele papier van de natuur af wilde houden. Maar goed, we wilden ook geen slapende draken wakker maken. Mijn vriendin leefde zich uit met het koken. Bij broodgerechten werd het bruine brood bewust gemengd met het witte brood. De blanken zouden deel kunnen hebben aan die natuur, door vermenging, niet door moord en roof. De blanke land-inpikker koos de brede snelweg van de vijandschap en niet de langzame, smalle weg van de vriendschap. Maar de blanke zag de indiaan al als goddeloos bij voorbaat, omdat de leefwijze van de indianen niet bijbels was. Grappig is het dat in de grondteksten van de bijbel alles wel weer indiaans is, maar de blanke leefde met een slappe vertaling daarvan. De spinnenwebben buiten laten me zien wat voor spel er aan de gang is. Of zijn de blanken ook een soort indianen met hun eigen jacht-instinct ? Daar lijkt het wel op, want onze voorouders hebben een verschrikkelijke jacht op de indianen gemaakt, en waren erg barbaars, echt niet minder dan de indianen, en vandaag laat de blanke nog steeds zien wie hij is door al zijn machts-systemen en verschrikkelijke bureaucracy. Daar moet je maar tegen kunnen. De blanke heerser is als een witte spin met een web waar je ‘u’ tegen moet zeggen, en doet in oorlogsstrategie niet onder aan de indiaan. Wie is er nu een wilde ? Schuilt er in iedere blanke niet een indiaan ? Wat rassen-communisme zou de wereld geen kwaad doen.

Het liefdesbed boven de zee was leeg. Zowel de blanke als de indiaan waren vertrokken, naar hun eigen stukje natuur. Het bed was omringd met duizend deuren. Eén van deze deuren was de deur van verzoening, terwijl de anderen deuren waren van de dood. Ik was vastbesloten de juiste deur te kiezen. Ik had maar één kans. Ik ging op mijn gevoel af. Ik opende een deur en viel in een afgrond.

Was dit de dood of de verzoening ? Ik zag grote doodshoofden van indiaanse opperhoofden. Ik zweefde boven de wateren, met haaien onder mij. Aan de andere kant van de afgrond kwam ik aan. Ik was trots op mezelf dat ik het had gered. Waar was ik nu ? Dood of levend ? Eén van de haaien had een grote staart die hij op me richtte. Hij was me gevolgd. Hij stond op het punt om mij met die grote staart te slaan. In mijn binnenste hoorde ik een stem die zei : ‘Omhels de staart.’ Toen ik dat deed ontplofte de staart en kleine doodskoppen kwamen voort. Een vrouw droeg een kruik, de laatste jacht.

De wereld met al haar boosaardigheden bleef ergens steken in een gat, zwevend in een licht. Alleen haar vrucht zou kunnen doorlopen, maar zij zelf zou vergaan in die kruik, in de laatste jacht. Ik staarde naar haar schilderij. Ze had het zelf geschilderd. Ze had een prachtige uitleg gegeven, zoals ik het niet zou kunnen doen. Ik had bewondering voor haar. Zij had een heerlijk boek geschreven. Andere boeken zouden mij steken. In onze gedachten waren wij nog steeds in het kasteel. Wij keken naar het binnenste van het kasteel, wat was als een exotische vrucht, waarvan je zou sterven als je het zou eten, maar wij stierven niet. Wij hadden het kind van licht gevonden. Wij keken naar de vrucht, aten ervan, en beseften dat dit het vlees en bloed was van de verzoening. Wij hadden de juiste deur gevonden. Een geluksgevoel maakte zich van mij meester, als van een geboorte. Dit kind van licht was ons kind. Nu zouden wij nooit een kind opbrengen in de materiele wereld, dat zou wreed zijn. We lieten het kind in de lucht zijn.

In het kasteel, in de kern, was alles anders, waar de pit was, het lichaam van de verzoening. Dit bed was in ons huis nu, in de huiskamer, waar iedereen het kon zien. Ook vanuit de keuken kon het bed gezien worden, en vanuit de tuin. Hier draaide het huis om nu, en buiten sneeuwde het, om alles, maar dan ook alles, met een sluier te bedekken. In onze gedachten was er een gele zwemvogel in het riviertje van het kasteel. Wij wisten niet waar het diertje vandaan kwam. Wij hadden het daar nog nooit eerder gezien. Het was onze trots, een trots om de nieuwe geboorte. Op hetzelfde moment was er een sterfgeval, de oude wereld, en het feit dat we niet meer in het kasteel waren. Maar het was goed zo.

In het bos rondom het kasteel waren zoete vruchten, exotischer dan degenen in het kasteel. In het bos was het goed. Dat was gewoon zo. Nog wel beter dan in het kasteel. En hier waren wij. Hier leefden wij. Van de modder van het dagelijks leven. Het diertje kwam hier ook. En als wij op onze uitgestrekte deken zaten, dan gaven wij hem ook wat voedsel. De gele zwemvogel was onze vriend, een parel uit de andere wereld. Het was een krachtige vogel, die goed voor zichzelf kon zorgen, statig, deftig, onafhankelijk, een hele verschijning. Wij konden hem niet de baas. Het was een koppige, eigenzinnige vogel, maar daar hadden ze om gevraagd. Hij wist precies zijn zin te krijgen. We deelden met hem de oogst.

Hij was een profeet, een prachtig joch, een apocalypse. Hij sprak snel, soms verwarrend. Hij sloeg deuren open. Wij volgden hem, terug naar het kasteel. Hij liet ons boeken zien die nog nooit waren gelezen, en boeken die nog nooit waren geschreven. Hij liet ons gangen zien die we niet kenden, en een wereld waar wij geen deel aan hadden. Een globe van vuur, in het midden van het kasteel. Daar legde hij zijn kleed af en gaf ons precies wat wij wilden. Hij was gekomen om verlangens te

vervullen, wensen. Hij was gekomen om dromen uit te laten komen. En daarna ging hij rond met de hoed. Hij was een handelaar, een makelaar in dromen.

Het

Luipaard

Hoofdstuk 1.

‘Vreemd,’ zei Frida. ‘Het is alsof hij hier nog steeds is.’

‘Wat bedoel je,’ zei Frits, ‘weg is weg.’

‘Oh wat kun jij toch koud zijn,’ zei Frida. ‘Er is meer tussen hemel en aarde.’

‘Goedgelovig zieltje,’ zei Frits. ‘Dood is dood, en we gaan er allemaal aan.’

Frits zat wat computerspelletjes te spelen in de hoek van de kamer. Frida had zich opgemaakt en probeerde hem te verleiden. ‘Sexualiteit is als de dood,’ zei Frits onverschillig. ‘Ik voel me altijd verscheurd als door een beest na een vrijpartij. En je weet dat ik niet van make up houdt. Doe mij maar puur natuur.’

‘Ga in een hutje op de hei wonen, Frits,’ zei Frida. Even later had ze de make up van haar gezicht gewassen. Ze voelde zich alleen. Hector net overleden, en nu zo’n koude partner.

‘Echt, heus,’ zei Frits. ‘Al dat bijgeloof is niks, en zeker niet het geloof in sex. Het leidt allemaal nergens toe. En dat moet dan liefde voorstellen.’

‘Goh, Frits,’ zei Frida. ‘Ik houd toch van je ?’

‘Kan dat niet op een andere manier,’ zei Frits. ‘Het is altijd hetzelfde. We kunnen toch gewoon bij elkaar zijn zonder al dat plakkerige gedoe.’

‘Jij noemt dat plakkerig,’ zei Frida, ‘ik noem het gewoon interesse.’

‘Ik ben meer gesteld op het platonische,’ zei Frits. ‘Dat noem ik interesse. We kunnen toch gewoon praten over de dingen die ons bezig houden, zonder door lichamelijke rituelen alles te bedekken.’

‘Nou, dit houdt mij bezig, en het is gezond,’ zei Frida. ‘Ik wil je kennen.’

‘Praat dan gewoon met me,’ zei Frits. ‘Ik ben hier.’

‘Nee, je bent er niet bij met je gedachtes. Je zit die domme computerspelletjes te doen,’ zei Frida.

‘Zie, je hebt geen interesse in mij. Je noemt dat wat mij bezig houdt dom,’ zei Frits.

‘Laten we geen ruzie maken,’ zei Frida.

‘Mijn hand erop,’ zei Frits.

‘Weet je dat je prachtig bent zonder al die make up troep,’ zei Frits.

‘Ik weet niks, ik voel me verstoten,’ zei Frida. ‘En misschien komt het wel omdat Hector er niet meer is.’

‘Een nieuwe hond wil ik niet,’ zei Frits.

‘Ik ook niet,’ zei Frida.

‘En een poes dan ?’ vraagt Frits.

Na een paar dagen hebben ze twee poezen in huis. Frits noemt Frida de poezenkoningin. Met kerst staat er een grote kerstboom in de kamer, en samen vieren ze kerst met de twee poezen. Frits en Frida hebben veel kadootjes voor elkaar gekocht, om elkaar de liefde te bewijzen. ‘Ik mis Hector,’ zegt Frida.

‘Ik ook,’ zegt Frits, ‘maar het leven gaat door. We kunnen hem met geen mogelijkheid terugkrijgen.’

‘Het brandt van binnen, het eet me op van binnen,’ zegt Frida.

‘Dat is wat de dood doet,’ zegt Frits. ‘Het hoort bij het leven. We gaan er allemaal aan.’

‘Frits,’ zegt Frida. ‘Dat klinkt niet echt avontuurlijk. Kun jij ons niet redden van dit noodlot.’

‘Nee,’ zegt Frits, ‘praat nu geen onzin, Frida. Niemand kan tegen de dood op. Dat moet je gewoon accepteren.’

‘Ik kan het niet,’ zegt Frida. ‘Er moet gewoon meer zijn tussen hemel en aarde.’

‘Dat hebben de mensen bedacht, Frida,’ zegt Frits. ‘Eens verlaten we allemaal het schip van leven, en dan is het afgelopen. We zijn dan niets meer dan een hoopje as wat door de wind verder van elkaar wordt losgetrokken.’

‘Geloof je dat echt ?’ vraagt Frida. ‘Wat ben jij dan bijgelovig, zeg, en wat een kerk zal dat wezen. De kerk die gelooft dat alles eens ophoudt.’

‘Het is geen geloof, jij bent hier de gelovige onder ons,’ zegt Frits.

‘Hoe weet je zo zeker dat alles straks wegrot onder de grond, om in het totale niets te verdwijnen,’ zegt Frida.

‘Gewoon logisch nadenken,’ zegt Frits. ‘Er is geen hemel, dus er kan ook niks tussen aarde en hemel zijn, dat is gewoon onzin, Frida, en dat weet jij ook. Neem een voorbeeld aan de poezen. Komen die ook met dit soort stomzinnige verhalen aanzetten ?’

‘Nu noem je mijn interesses ook ineens stom,’ zegt Frida.

‘Nee, Frida,’ zegt Frits, ‘dat zijn geen interesses, maar illusies. Je bent misleid door koppige mensen die niet aan de dood willen geloven. Eeuwig leven ? Kom zeg.’

‘Of reincarnatie,’ zegt Frida.

‘Ander onderwerp,’ zegt Frits.

‘Ik houd van je, schat,’ zegt Frida.

‘Ander onderwerp,’ zegt Frits.

‘Houd je nog een beetje van me ?’ vraagt Frida.

‘Jazeker,’ zegt Frits, ‘maar ik wil dat je daarop wat meer zult vertrouwen, in plaats van alsmaar over de liefde te praten, en die overmatige honger naar sexualiteit.’

‘Je doet alsof ik een sexbeest ben, alsof het een obsessie is. Ik heb gewoon pijn van binnen,’ zegt Frida.

‘Eens per maand is goed, maar eens per week is teveel van het goede,’ zegt Frits. ‘Het moet speciaal blijven, geen dagelijks brood.’

‘Kom op nou, Frits, dagelijks brood. Ik heb het er haast nooit over,’ zegt Frida.

‘Goed, ander onderwerp dan,’ zegt Frits.

‘Misschien heb je gelijk, Frits, misschien moet ik me meer op de oppervlakte bewegen en wat subtieler worden, en het horizontale wat breder maken, dat is ook een soort diepte, en wat cryptischer. Dat rechtstreekse is inderdaad teveel van het goede. En kijk die katten nou, zijn ze niet schattig, en zij zijn ook zo subtiel en mysterieus,’ zegt Frida. ‘Ze zullen veel geheimen hebben.’

‘Doe nou maar normaal,’ zegt Frits. ‘Altijd dat gefilosofeer. Wees nou eens nuchter.’

‘Alright, Frits, kun jij me daar dan mee helpen ?’ vraagt Frida. ‘Ik ben maar een beginneling.’

‘Altijd,’ zegt Frits.

Hoofdstuk 2.

‘Frits, je bent geweldig,’ zegt Frida. ‘Een betere vriend kan ik me niet voorstellen.’

‘Dank je wel, Frida,’ zegt Frits. ‘En jij mag er ook wezen.’

Hij heeft bijna pretlichtjes in zijn ogen. Op zijn verzoek lopen ze de volgende dagen heel wat pretparken af, en doen veel spelletjes. Daar is Frits verzot op. Frida probeert zich in Frits in te leven. Maar dan moet Frits voor zijn werk een hele lange tijd naar het buitenland. Frida voelt zich erg alleen, maar dan ontmoet zij Fred. Fred is het tegenovergestelde van Frits. Ze moet Fred gewoon de hele tijd van haar afhouden. Alhoewel ze verzot is op Fred mist ze Frits verschrikkelijk. Frits was altijd haar rots in de branding. Fred is gevoelig en week, en zij moet hem altijd uit de put praten. Ze hebben niks met elkaar, maar ze worden goede vrienden, en zo heeft Frida in ieder geval wat gezelschap. Frits weet er ook van, en vindt het allemaal best. Hij heeft zelf ook zijn extra vriendinnen op zijn werk.

Met Fred kan Frida echt in de diepte, ook over het geloof. ‘Mijn vriend wil me stijf en oppervlakkig maken,’ zegt Frida.

‘Oh, dat kan handig zijn,’ zegt Fred. ‘Als een schild tegen de wereld, en zodat vreemde zuignappen je niet weghalen.’

‘Maar soms wil ik weggehaald worden,’ zegt Frida. ‘Het leven is zwaar. Ik mis Hector, en nu mis ik Frits.’

‘Maar je hebt mij nu,’ zegt Fred.

‘Dat weet ik wel,’ zegt Frida. ‘Maar het is toch anders.’

‘En je hebt de poezen,’ zegt Fred.

‘Ja, maar ik mis een schakel,’ zegt Frida.

‘De volgende keer dat ik kom zal ik Loesia meebrengen,’ zegt Fred. ‘Zij is echt geweldig. Ik weet zeker dat jullie veel aan elkaar zullen hebben.’

En zo gebeurde het. Fred neemt de eerstvolgende keer een vriendin met zich mee, Loesia, een feestelijk type. Maakt echt wat leven in de brouwerij. Ze heeft veel verhalen te vertellen en heeft een diep inzicht in mensen. Ze heeft een serieuze kant maar ook veel humor. Frida houdt direct heel veel van haar, en ze kan nog goed koken ook. Binnen de kortste keren zijn Frida en Loesia de dikste vriendinnen.

‘Wat vind je van Fred,’ vraagt Frida haar op een dag.

‘Ach ja, Fred is Fred,’ zegt Loesia. ‘Een leuke jongen, maar niks voor mij. Veel te afhankelijk, veel te teer. Ik zou gek worden als ik met hem samen moest leven, maar we zijn goede vrienden. Ik wil hem graag helpen.’

Frida knikt. Fred leefde helemaal in zijn eigen wereld, en ging soms over de grenzen van anderen heen. Hij kon soms best wel zelfzuchtig zijn. Alles draaide om hem, maar verder was het een lieve jongen. Fred zou graag verkering willen hebben, maar daar was hij eigenlijk niet de persoon voor. Veel meisjes vonden hem leuk, maar toch kwam het er nooit van, alsof een onzichtbare kracht er tussenzat. Daar zat Fred wel erg mee.

‘Ach, je zal heus op een dag wel de ware vinden,’ zei Loesia vaak. Fred was verliefd op Loesia. Hij was helemaal verzot op haar, maar zij niet op hem. Wel voelde ze zich verplicht om hem te helpen. Het was een echt zorgenkindje, als een jongere broer.

‘Fred, ik moet eens met je praten,’ zei Loesia op een dag. ‘Zou jij eens met mij en Frida op een kleine vakantie willen. Dan gaan we naar het bos en dan nemen we de tent mee.’ Dat zag Fred natuurlijk wel zitten. Het liep uit op iets goeds. Ze hadden hun tent dichtbij een rivier, en zo waren ze allemaal even weg uit de dagelijkse sleur, en voor Fred was dat ook wel goed. Fred hield van wandelen en de natuur. Hij ging vaak alleen op pad, en zo hadden de vrouwen veel tijd voor henzelf. Het leek wel alsof Fred door de natuur wat zelfstandiger werd, en wat creatiever werd. Hij begon zijn avontuurlijke kant te ontdekken. Hij kon zich prima redden zo. Loesia en Frida waren erg trots op hem, en vonden dat het plan goed geslaagd was.

Toen Frits eindelijk weer thuis was kon hij direct goed met Fred opschieten. Het bleek dat ze een goede uitwerking op elkaar hadden. Ze gingen vaak samen op pad. Frits was ervan overtuigd dat Fred bij Loesia hoorde, en na wat bemiddelingen stemde Loesia uiteindelijk toe. Fred was wat volwassener geworden, en stond op zijn eigen benen nu, dus voor Loesia was de kust nu vrij.

Omdat Fred en Loesia nu een relatie hadden en dat veel tijd in beslag nam hadden Frits en Frida ineens weer veel meer tijd voor elkaar. Frits was wat opener geworden, en wat dieper, en dat bleek ook voornamelijk te komen door wat vrouwen die hij in het buitenland had ontmoet. Het was alsof ze hem betoverd hadden, als een fles opengetrokken. Frits voelde zich vernieuwd en ingewijd. Frida was tevreden. Het was nu alsof haar eigen fles ook werd opengetrokken.

Bij de volgende werkreis van Frits ontmoette ze Jan en Marlies. Zij bleken het perfecte stel te zijn. Ze waren erg op elkaar ingespeeld, en Frida bewonderde ze echt. ‘Dat zou ik ook wel willen,’ zei ze tegen zichzelf. Maar ze mocht niet klagen. het leek wel alsof Jan en Marlies in een diepe dans waren. Alles was harmonieus, en ze hadden zulke mooie stemmen. Het leken wel twee prachtige struiken die in elkaar verstrengeld waren. Frida kreeg het er warm van van binnen. Ook Fred en Loesia ontmoetten Jan en Marlies eens en werden er door aangestoken. ‘Dit is goed,’ dacht Frida. ‘Deze mensen hebben wat te vertellen, en wat te laten zien.’ Het leek wel alsof Jan en Marlies geheime therapeuten waren. De manier waarop ze met elkaar omgingen was aanstekelijk. En het was heel heilzaam. Zelfs de poezen reageerden er goed op. Frida had het gevoel dat eindelijk het gat werd gedicht wat was ontstaan door de dood van Hector. Jan en Marlies hadden drie honden : Eelco, John en Hotte. En Frida was direct erg aan ze gehecht.

Na een paar maanden was Frits weer thuis. Frits was zichtbaar veranderd. Het was een zware werkreis geweest, en het was alsof hij weer terug bij af was. Dit was de Frits zoals Frida hem kende. Frida’s droom was voorbij. Frits was moe, en wilde alleen maar veel slapen. Frida zat aan zijn bed. ‘Is er soms iets gebeurd ? Je bent anders dan hoe je de vorige keer was toen je thuiskwam,’ zei Frida.

Frits wilde er niet over praten. Maar toen er brieven van een bepaalde vrouw binnen begonnen te komen kwam Frida er al snel achter dat Frits een ander had. ‘Ik ga bij je weg, Frida,’ zei hij. ‘Ik moet dit gewoon doen. Ik denk dat ik nu toch echt de ware heb gevonden.’

‘En dat wat wij hadden dan ?’ snikt Frida. ‘Gooi je dat dan zomaar bij de vuilnis ?’

‘Je moet het accepteren,’ zei Frits. ‘Het is gewoon niet anders.’

De vrouw was heel tropisch. Frits liet Frida wat foto’s zien. ‘Ja, en ze maakt je moe,’ zei Frida. ‘Dat is wat tropische vrouwen doen. Het zijn een soort tse tse vliegen, vermoeidheidsvliegen. Je kunt dat exotische niet aan.’

‘Je hebt gelijk, maar ik ben verliefd,’ zei Frits. ‘Het is een pijn in mijn buik. Ik kan dat ook niet helpen.’

‘Alles voor niets geweest dan,’ zegt Frida. ‘Al die jaren gewoon verspild met jou.’

‘Nee, we hebben een goede tijd gehad,’ zegt Frits. ‘Maar aan alle dingen komt een eind, en ook dit.’

‘Ja, dat zeg je altijd,’ zegt Frida. ‘En wat heeft zij dat ik niet heb ?’

Een paar dagen erna zijn Jan en Marlies op bezoek. Ze vinden het heel erg als ze het horen, en proberen Frida een beetje te troosten, en ook Frits. Ze hebben hun honden meegenomen. Frits is erg onder de indruk van het stel, en het lijkt alsof hij een beetje erdoor wordt opgefleurd.

‘Sommige mannen zijn nu eenmaal aangetrokken door het exotische, als een vlucht uit de dagelijkse sleur,’ zei Jan. ‘Soms krijgen ze dat pas op latere leeftijd, het is de roep van de natuur, als een vlucht uit het gewone.’

‘Maar Frits is nooit zo geweest,’ zei Frida. ‘Hij hield wel altijd veel van computerspelletjes.’

‘Ja, het is allemaal heel speels,’ zei Jan.

‘Ik kan het allemaal moeilijk accepteren,’ zei Frida. ‘Ik voel me zo dom.’

‘Je bent niet dom,’ zei Jan. ‘Frits is gewoon aangestoken door iets wat hij niet kende. Als hij jou nog niet zou kennen en hij zou jou hebben ontmoet dan zou hij precies hetzelfde hebben gehad. Sommige mannen hebben na een bepaalde tijd van het een het andere nodig.’

‘Ik voel me verworpen,’ zegt Frida.

‘Vriendschappen gaan vaker kapot door wat voor reden dan ook,’ zegt Jan. ‘Daar kun je niets aan doen.’

‘Ben ik niet goed genoeg dan ?’ vraagt Frida.

‘Het is als verschillende groentes. Sommige mannen kunnen niet alleen van doperwten leven,’ zegt Jan.

‘Ja, maar ik kan toch zelf ook varieren,’ zegt Frida. ‘Ik kan toch de ene dag als spinazie zijn en de andere dag als bloemkool.’

Later horen ze dat ook Fred en Loesia weer uit elkaar zijn. Het leven met al zijn relaties is inderdaad maar broos. Bijna niets valt er echt in stand te houden. Alles valt uit elkaar vroeg of laat. Daarvan is Frida zich erg bewust. Na een paar weken ontmoet ze Lydia, een wijze vrouw. Lydia kan ook de toekomst voorspellen, en zegt dat Frida een nieuwe man zou ontmoeten. Die man is Willem. Binnen enkele dagen zitten ze al samen in Frida's kamer. Frits is inmiddels vertrokken.

Willem schijnt al snel de liefde van haar leven te zijn. Hij gaat veel dieper dan Frits en ook dieper dan Fred ooit geweest is. Willem is zachtmoedig, warmbloedig en geinteresseerd. Ze hebben een korte maar hevige relatie, en dan wordt ook Willem door een exotische vrouw aan de haak geslagen, en is telkens maar moe. Frida begint het patroon te bemerken. Lydia verteld haar dat ze er van moet leren. Kniezen heeft geen zin. Maar Frida is depressief. Uiteindelijk belt ze Fred. Fred is erg behulpzaam. Samen besluiten ze erop uit te gaan in de natuur. Fred vertelt haar veel over wat er is misgegaan in zijn relatie met Loesia. 'Ik snap niet waarom Frits jou heeft gedumpt. Je bent een fantastische vrouw,' zegt Fred. 'Mag ik het van Frits en Willem overnemen ?' Frida glimlacht. 'Fred je bent veel te jong voor mij.'

'We schelen maar acht jaar,' zegt Fred.

'Dat is nogal wat,' lacht Frida.

'Als we ouder worden zal het leeftijdsverschil verdwijnen,' zegt Fred.

Fred en Frida maken veel wandelingen en praten over het leven. 'Hoe zie jij exotische vrouwen,' vraagt Frida.

'Ik weet het niet,' zegt Fred. 'Ze reflecteren misschien het oorspronkelijke paradijs.'

'Ja, maar Frits en Willem zijn niet gelovig,' zei Frida.

'Maar dan missen ze toch iets, wat ze dan op deze manier proberen aan te vullen. Alles staat met elkaar in verbinding,' zegt Fred.

'Ik weet het niet,' zegt Frida. 'Het maakt me kwaad. Woedend zelfs.'

'Misschien is er wat beters voor je,' zegt Fred.

'Ja, maar ik vind het zo racistisch dat ze beiden voor een exotische vrouw hebben gekozen,' zegt

Frida. ‘Ik voel geen eigenwaarde meer.’

‘Ach, kom op, Frida,’ zegt Fred, ‘ik zei toch dat ik het wel van hen zou willen overnemen.’

‘Het is moeilijk om gedumpt te worden,’ zegt Frida.

‘Ja, dat is zo,’ zegt Fred. ‘Ik werd gedumpt door Loesia. Maar in ieder geval heeft ze het met mij geprobeerd. En Frits en Willem hebben het met jou geprobeerd, dus de liefde was er.’

‘Ja, bij gebrek aan beter zeker,’ zegt Frida.

‘Ze kennen je gewoon niet,’ zegt Fred. ‘Ze hebben een totaal verkeerd beeld van jou. Ze zien jou niet, maar de voorstelling die ze van jou hebben in hun hoofd.’

Fred loopt dichter naast Frida. Voorzichtig raakt hij haar hand aan. Even glijdt er warmte door Frida’s hand en dan door haar lichaam. ‘Het is goed,’ zegt ze. Even later lopen ze arm in arm. Frida ziet Fred als haar jongere broer. ‘Ik ben blij dat je er bent,’ zegt Frida.

Hoofdstuk 3.

Fred kan goed met de poezen van Frida opschieten. Hij speelt graag met ze. Fred en Frida hebben veel aan elkaar, en ook Jan en Marlies zijn rotsen in de branding. Frida denkt nog vaak aan Frits. Ze vindt hem erg egoistisch. Ze begint steeds meer van Fred te houden, maar gewoon als haar broertje. Jan is erg goed met computers, en zijn specialiteit is virtuele vrienden. Zoals computer personages geprogrammeerd zijn zo zijn mensen volgens hem ook geprogrammeerd, en dus is er weinig verschil. Hij laat Fred en Frida al gauw met wat virtuele vrienden op de computer kennis maken. Het zijn een soort robotten, maar ze antwoorden en stellen vragen net als mensen, en al snel raken Fred en Frida eraan verknocht.

‘Is het mogelijk een emotionele relatie met zo’n virtuele vriend op te bouwen ?’ vraagt Fred.

‘Oh, jazeker,’ zegt Jan, ‘en ze zijn tot veel meer dingen in staat dan gewone mensen.’ Jan heeft zelfs wat van zulke robotten in de schuur staan. Het zijn computers die op mensen lijken, en die precies kunnen doen wat mensen kunnen. Het zijn cybernetische mensen. Fred en Frida vinden het geweldig, en al snel krijgen ze zo’n robot naar keuze mee naar huis. Die moeten ze dan als hun nieuwe partner zien en kijken hoe ver ze er mee komen. Het is dus een heel therapeutisch plan. Frida krijgt Max mee naar huis, en Fred Ingrid. De robot kan koffie zetten en je kunt er diepe gesprekken mee voeren. Ook zoekt de robot naar lichamelijk contact. Frida vindt dat nogal eng,

maar al snel vindt ze het heel gewoon, omdat het allemaal wel heel menselijk is. En deze robotten zijn haast supermensen. Ze hebben practische oplossingen voor allerlei soorten problemen, en zijn een soort psychologen aan huis. Frida voelt zich er erg veilig bij. Max is erg zorgzaam en waaks.

Jan heeft er erg veel plezier in deze dingen te bouwen, en al snel proberen ook anderen de robotten uit. Na een tijd komen er wat meerdere soorten bij, en Fred, die weleens wat anders wil, kiest ditmaal een exotische robot. Maar Jan heeft de robot zo geprogrammeerd dat Fred er niet moe van wordt. Tajusa heet de robot, en weet veel over de jungle af. Fred is een en al oor. De robot kan ook heel goed koken, houdt van spelletjes en is mysterieus en cryptisch. Stukje bij beetje nemen Jan’s robotten het hele sociale leven over, en zijn er steeds minder conflicten. En als er dan conflicten ontstaan dan moet Jan ze gewoon even bijprogrammeren. Ook robot-poezen komen erbij, en robot-honden, en die gaan gelukkig nooit dood. Soms moeten er wat onderdelen vervangen worden. In de ogen van Fred en Frida en vele anderen is Jan een held.

Op een dag komt Frida Frits tegen op de markt. Zijn exotische vrouw had hem alweer verlaten voor een ander. ‘Arme stakker,’ dacht Frida. ‘Misschien is hij ook wel gebaat bij zo’n robot van Jan.’ Maar als Frits het verhaal hoort moet hij er niets van weten. ‘Ik wil iemand van vlees en bloed, en laten we eerlijk zijn : onze karakters botsen teveel.’ Toch na een tijdje weet Frida Frits over te halen om eens bij haar langs te komen. Ze zorgt dan dat de robot op zolder is.

Als ze dan eindelijk rond de tafel zitten om wat bij te praten komt Max ineens naar beneden. ‘Zo, kerel, ik heb veel over je gehoord,’ zegt Max.

‘Ik ga echt niet met een robot praten,’ zegt Frits tegen Frida. Maar na een tijdje zijn Max en Frits in een diep gesprek, en Frits is er zo door aangestoken dat hij zelf ook een robot wil, een virtuele vriend. Frida vindt het niet erg. Ze heeft zelf nu Max, en ze weet dat het Frits erg goed zal doen. Bij Jan aangekomen kiest hij een exotische robot uit : Nakabe. ‘Man, ze zijn nog wel beter dan mensen, en ze gaan tenminste nooit weg,’ zei Frits.

‘En je wordt er niet moe van.’ zegt Jan.

Na een tijdje belt Frits Jan op voor een tweede robot, en na een niet al te lange tijd leeft Frits met een harem van robotten.

‘Dit is geweldig,’ zegt Frits. ‘Jan is de man.’

Ook Willem krijgt het verhaal te horen en daarna Loesia. Op een dag bouwt Jan een robot die precies op hem lijkt, om zo zijn werk over te nemen, en vertrekt met zijn vrouw naar een onbewoond eiland. Inmiddels heeft Frida een baan gekregen bij een schoenenwinkel met een klein kleding assortiment. Vanuit het raam van de zijkant kan ze de grote rivier zien. Daarachter is het

grote bos. Frida droomt er vaak over. Ze zou zo graag in die prachtige natuur willen wonen. Ze heeft een voorliefde voor planten. Haar hele huis staat er vol mee, de weelderigste soorten. Ook houdt ze van de exotische soorten. Veel daarvan staan boven en op het zolder. Max praat vaak tegen de planten. Het schijnt dat hij ermee kan communiceren. Max is haar steun en toeverlaat. Op een dag besluit Frida over de grote rivier te gaan samen met Max. Max kijkt zijn ogen uit. Het is een prachtig bos, ongetwijfeld het prachtigste van het land. Er zijn drie bruggen, een brede, een wat smallere en een loopbrug gemaakt van touw en planken, een zeer primitieve, die tegelijkertijd in het wildste gedeelte lift. Het is hier haast een oerwoud. Max wil niet meer terug. Met geen mogelijkheid kan Frida hem mee terugnemen. Max wil hier een huis bouwen. En hij is er aardig goed in. Frida staat versteld van zijn vaardigheid.

‘Laten we hier wonen,’ zegt Max.

‘Ja, maar mijn werk dan ?’ zegt Frida.

‘Ach, de natuur zorgt voor ons. Waarom niet gewoon werken in de natuur ?’ zegt Max.

‘Zit wel wat in,’ zegt Frida, ‘en het is veel gezonder.’

Frida houdt het een paar dagen vol, maar dan mist ze haar huis toch wel heel erg. ‘Max, ik kom je wel weer opzoeken,’ zegt Frida. ‘Nee, Frida, je gaat niet weg,’ zegt Max. ‘Je gaat niet terug naar die gevaarlijke wereld met al die vervuiling.’

‘Oh, maar je kunt me niet dwingen, Max,’ zegt Frida.

‘Ik ben toch veel sterker dan je,’ zegt Max.

‘Toe nou, Max, wat hebben we hier aan,’ zegt Frida. ‘Ik ben zo niet gelukkig.’

Maar Max begon een groot hek rondom het stukje wildernis te bouwen. Midden in de nacht toen Frida sliep haalde hij ook de andere robotten op, de virtuele vrienden. De robotten begonnen snel het hele bos te herbouwen, en introduceerden de biologische technologie. ‘Nog even en je kunt met bomen praten,’ fluisterde Max liefdevol naar Frida. Maar Frida sliep diep. Toen Frida wakker was geworden was ze verbaasd. Het was allemaal zo prachtig nu, alsof de stad ook hier was.

‘Die andere wereld is er niet meer,’ zeiden de robotten. ‘We gaan hier opnieuw beginnen.’

‘Maar waar zijn onze vrienden dan ?’ vroeg Frida.

‘Die zijn ergens anders nu. Ze zijn allemaal in veiligheid, maar los van elkaar,’ zeiden de robotten. ‘Mensen horen niet bij mensen, maar bij hoogbegaafde robotten.’

‘Daar zit wel wat in,’ zei Frida.

Maar toch had Frida nog steeds dat oerverlangen om naar huis te gaan. Op een nacht ontsnapte ze van de robotten, en ging de rivier over. De bruggen werden door de robotten bewaakt, dus ze moest de rivier overzwemmen. Ze hoopte maar dat ze niet door een of andere vis zou worden gegrepen of door sterke stroming, maar het ging allemaal goed. Helemaal bekaf kwam ze naar lang zwemmen aan op de overkant. Kletsnat liep ze naar haar huis. Eerst nam ze een warm bad, maar tegelijkertijd bekroop haar de angst dat de robotten haar hier zouden kunnen vinden. Direkt belde ze Fred op. Maar die had een robotstem, dus Frida vertrouwde het niet meer. ‘Ik moet naar Frits toe,’ dacht ze. Nadat ze wat warme chocolade melk had gedronken en andere kleren had aangedaan vertrok ze direkt naar Frits. Bij Frits aangekomen bemerkte ze direkt dat zijn robotten er niet meer waren. Direkt viel ze Frits om de hals. ‘Opnieuw beginnen ?’ vraagt Frits. Frida knikt.

Hoofdstuk 4.

Al snel zijn Frida en Frits diep met elkaar in gesprek.

‘Ja, ik geloof zeker in de natuur,’ zegt Frits. ‘In dieren, maar ook in de dood die onvermijdelijk is. Het is niet geloven, maar zien, als een zeker weten.’ Een paar dagen later wandelen ze samen in een dierentuin, om de wonderen van de dierenwereld te aanschouwen. Een diepe vriendschap groeit er tussen hen, dieper dan ooit tevoren na dit avontuur. Vaak praten ze tot diep in de nacht. Ze hebben elkaar veel te vertellen. Ze hebben veel pijn van binnen door alles wat er is gebeurd. Bij de dieren voelen ze zich het beste thuis, dus ze besluiten beiden in een dierentuin te werken. Deze dierentuin is voornamelijk een safari park, en als er dan hokken zijn dan zijn die hokken geweldig groot, en dan is dat puur om de dieren veiligheid te geven. Het is een groot project om zo vrijheid aan de dieren te geven zonder dat hun veiligheid erdoor in gevaar komt.

Frida vindt de vogels zo prachtig, en de leeuwen, ja, eigenlijk alle dieren. Er zitten veel dierensoorten bij die Frida niet eens kende. Er gaat een wereld voor haar open. Het blijkt ook een heilzame werking te hebben op haar relatie met Frits. ‘We drijven allemaal naar de kloof van de onoverbruggelijke dood,’ zegt Frits vaak, ‘maar het is allemaal zo mooi, want er komt weer zoveel uit voort. We maken allemaal plaats voor de mooiere dingen, alhoewel deze dingen ook zullen vergaan. Alles zal uiteindelijk vergaan.’ Ook Frida trekt in haar gedachtenwereld dichter naar Frits toe. Frits kan het allemaal zo mooi vertellen dat het toch niet voor niks is geweest. Zijn oppervlakkigheid is wijd en breed, zo oneindig horizontaal dat het diep is. Dichtbij het safari park is een ravijn. Frits en Frida zitten er vaak om in de diepte te kijken. ‘Wat is de natuur toch mooi,’ zegt Frits vaak. Frida knikt dan altijd. Het ravijn getuigt van een loze eeuwigheid waarin alleen de

momenten parels zijn, schatten van onpeilbare waarde. ‘De aardkloot zit vol van geheimen, de tijd is de schat, de eeuwigheid is nutteloos.’

‘Staar naar een dier en zie dat het leven woest is, ongenadig. Kijk naar het luipaard, en leer ervan.’

Bloedbessen

Joost Verschuur komt 's avonds laat thuis van een feestje. Zijn vriendin ligt al in bed. Snel doet hij zijn kleren uit en gaat tegen haar aanliggen. Ze slaapt, maar wordt wakker van hem. Ze kust hem, en dan vallen ze samen in slaap. Midden in de nacht horen ze een hard geluid. Joost rent naar het raam. Iemand staat voor de deur. 'Doet jullie bel het niet ofzo ?' schreeuwt de persoon. Het is de broer van Joost. Even later staat ook zijn zus voor de deur. 'Doe open Joost,' schreeuwt zijn zus. Joost staat als aan de grond genageld, kleed zich langzaam aan, en loopt langzaam naar beneden om de deur te openen. Even later zitten ze rond de tafel. De vriendin van Joost is er inmiddels ook bijgekomen. 'Willen jullie wat drinken ?' vraagt Thea, de vriendin van Joost.

'Nee,' zegt Arnold, de broer van Joost. 'Jacquelien, vertel jij het hen maar.'

Jacquelien, de zus van Joost begint te huilen. 'Pa is ernstig ziek,' zegt ze.

'Wat heeft hij ?' vraagt Joost verschrikt.

'Hartklachten,' zegt Arnold. 'Hij heeft een hart-aanval gehad. Hij heeft niet lang meer te leven. Hij wil dat je nu bij hem komt. Hij wil je iets vertellen.'

Zo gezegd zo gedaan. Even later staat Joost bij zijn vader op de stoep, en een paar minuten later heeft hij de warme hand van zijn vader in zijn hand. 'Joost,' zegt zijn vader, 'ik ga weg. Spoedig zal ik mijn laatste adem uitblazen. Ik heb al met mijn andere kinderen gesproken, maar niet met jou.' Hij knipoogt even naar Joost, en laat dan even een glimlach zien. Joost, ik .... Met jou heb ik altijd het beste contact gehad, van de kinderen, maar de laatste jaren niet meer zoals het was, en ik weet wel waardoor dat komt. Thea had een hekel aan me. In ieder geval ... ik wil je zeggen dat ik van je houd, en dat ... dat ... mijn grootste erfenis naar jou toegaat.'

'En wat is dat dan ?' vraagt Joost.

'Een boek,' zegt zijn vader.

'Wat voor een boek ?' vraagt Joost.

'Een boek van zeerovers en spoken, ik heb het zelf geschreven,' zegt zijn vader. 'Ik heb het onder pseudoniem geschreven, zodat niemand ooit wist dat ik het had geschreven.'

'Die bestseller ?' vraagt Joost. 'Heb jij dat geschreven ?'

Na een paar dagen sterft de vader van Joost en enkele dagen later heeft Joost de eerste

uitgave, de luxe editie, van het boek in bezit, en het manuscript. Joost bergt het meteen goed op. 'Zo, dat was dan de biecht van mijn vader,' zegt Joost tegen Thea. Thea zegt niks. Ze heeft zijn vader nooit gemogen.

'Klaar !' zegt Joost. 'Afgelopen.'

Thea komt langzaam naar hem toe, omhelst hem, en dan kust ze hem.

'Het was niets dan spel,' zegt Joost, 'het contact wat ik eerder met hem had. Ik deed maar net alsof, ik had geen andere keus.'

'Ik weet het,' zegt Thea, 'en vroeger durfde je niet anders.'

Joost kust Thea terug. Samen gaan ze op de bank zitten. Joost speelt wat met haar bloesje. 'Je hebt nu een echt speeltje,' zegt Thea. 'Iets wat je zelf hebt uitgekozen en wat je leuk vindt.'

Joost knikt. Bijna met zijn kin opgeheven. Voor het eerst in zijn leven kan hij echt glimlachen, en hij kijkt rebels. 'Toch wel vreemd dat mijn vader de schrijver was van dat boek,' zei Joost. Thea knikt. 'En jij bent de schrijver van mijn boek,' zegt ze. Joost glimlacht. 'Ik houd ervan je te beschrijven.'

'Doe nog eens een gooi,' zegt Thea.

'Je bent bloedmooi,' zegt Joost. 'Ik kan je wel drinken.'

'Mooi als die struik met bloedbessen daar buiten ?'

'Die bessen zijn giftig,' zegt Joost. 'Jij bent ontgiftigend, genezend.'

'Maar medicijnen zijn soms giftig, Joost,' zegt Thea. 'Giftig, het kan een gave zijn, een gift.'

'Gut wat doe je weer moeilijk,' lacht Joost. En neemt haar in de houdgreep. 'Ik ben toch veel sterker dan jij.'

Thea kijkt hem aan. 'Verleden tijd,' zegt ze zacht. 'Kijk eens diep in mijn ogen.' Joost doet het en voelt zich zwak worden, en dan ineens neemt zij hem in de houdgreep. 'Okay, Thea,' zegt Joost, 'ophouden met die spelletjes nu. Ik weet dat je me kunt betoveren en hypnotiseren. Je bent misschien wel potentieel een gevaar.'

'Gevaar is een te groot woord, noem het maar avontuur,' zegt Thea.

Midden in de nacht worden ze weer wakker van een geluid. Het zijn weer de broer en zus van Joost. Even later zitten ze weer om de tafel.

'Wat heeft vader je gegeven,' vraagt Jacquelien.

'Oh niets,' zegt Joost.

'Probeer het niet achter te houden, Joost,' zegt Jacquelien, 'want moeder heeft gezegd dat jij iets hebt gehad.'

'Dat is tussen vader en mij,' zegt Joost. 'Waarom zijn jullie hier ?'

Joost kijkt ze indringend aan. 'Nou ? Waarom zeggen jullie niets ?'

'Wij vinden dat je moet zeggen wat vader je heeft gegeven,' zegt Jacquelien. Arnold knikt.

'En daarmee komen jullie midden in de nacht ? Waar slaat dat op ?' vraagt Joost.

'Omdat het belangrijk is,' zegt Arnold. 'Nou, zeg op.'

'Okay dan,' zegt Joost, 'als het voor jullie zo belangrijk is, eh, het was een boek, over zeerovers en spoken. Eh, hij heeft dat boek eens geschreven onder pseudoniem.'

'Mis, Joost,' zegt Arnold. 'Bladzijde 441 vertelt het geheim, daar heeft hij in kleine letters geschreven, ga zelf maar kijken.' Joost pakt het boek, gaat naar bladzijde 441 en leest hardop : 'Beste Joost, gefeliciteerd, aan jou de familie-erfenis : een geheim eiland.'

'Moet ik nu hoera zeggen ?' vraagt Joost. 'En waar is dat geheime eiland ?'

'Ga naar bladzijde 847,' zegt Arnold.

En daar leest Joost het. Het schijnt dat Joost een geadopteerd kind was, als baby, en zijn vader en moeder durfden het hem nooit te zeggen. Boos slingert Joost het boek weg, en rent naar buiten, terwijl Thea hem achterna gaat. 'Lees het boek verder voor meer informatie,' roept Arnold hem na. Maar Joost is woedend. Pas na een paar uur komt Joost weer thuis, samen met Thea. Arnold en Jacquelien liggen op de bank te slapen. Op de tafel ligt het boek, en Joost leest verder. Het blijkt dat Joost op dat eiland geboren is.

Na een tijdje kan Joost het accepteren en gaat samen met Thea op vakantie naar het eiland. Er wonen daar twee mensen die ooit de samenleving hebben verlaten. Ze wonen hier als wilden. Als Joost hen het verhaal vertelt begrijpen ze dat hij hun kind is.

'Jij hoort bij ons,' zegt zijn echte vader. 'Ooit hebben ze jou van ons afgepakt. Nu ben je terug. En Thea is ook welkom.' Hij omhelst zijn vader en dan zijn moeder, en ook Thea doet dat. En ze leven nog lang en gelukkig.

Mexicaans

IJs

Hoofdstuk 1.

Ik liep op straat, en dacht aan het mengsel in de lucht, als aan een trap die tot een wolkenkasteel zou leiden, of een andere planeet. Ik had daar vaak over nagedacht en gefilosofeerd. Wie zou daar wonen ? In de nacht trok ik de stoute schoenen aan, en fietste naar de hemel. Ik had een lange regenjas aan.

Een koude oorlog heerste in de hemel, zo koud. Alles hier was gemaakt van het mengsel, prachtige zuilen, zeer hoog, een kolossaal gezicht. Zure gezichten bewaakten deze hemel, professionele gezichten zonder zorg, maar met een doodslust, ongenadig, zonder hart. En ik dacht : als het dan

hier al zo koud is, hoe koud zou dan het opperwezen wel niet zijn, God. Ik zag God in de kleine dingen, de liefde tussen mensen, maar niet hoog op een ijselijke troon, geen gezagswezen die brulde om aandacht, en het dan niet gaf. Wie had deze God gecreeerd, deze machine van de hel. Wie had deze God in het leven geroepen ? Ik liep op straat, en keek door een winkelraam, waar ik protserige chocolade figuren zag liggen. De winkelier was in gesprek met een mevrouw. Zijn gezicht stond vuurrood. Niks geen liefde op zijn gezicht, alleen koele zakelijkheid. En de vrouw keek alsof ze haar liefde op het eerste gezicht had gevonden.

Ik liep door op de trap, tot het zolder, waar ik alle geraamtes nog beter kon bekijken. Een machteloos gevoel overstroomde mij, wat mij vertelde dat er meer aan de hand was. Een pauwenkoningin vond ik op een verdieping boven het zolder. Zij was de leider van een stad. Zij sprak mij geruststellend toe. Zij droeg het raadsel van de schoonheid, het raadsel van de hoer. Ik kwam er meer en meer achter dat ik de toren van Babel aan het beklimmen was. Ik was nog maar een jong kind. Ik had deze dromen zelf gecreeerd. Maar ik wilde er meer van weten. Het kon niet zo zijn dat ik de enige hier was. De pauwenkoningin nam mij mee naar haar kamer. ‘Wil je je voetjes vegen, schatje,’ zei ze. Ook wilde ze dat ik zou douchen. Het was liefde op het eerste gezicht. Ik was verliefd op haar. Maar natuurlijk had ik geen plaats in haar hart. Voor haar was ik maar een nummer. Ik was een jong kind, maar op hetzelfde moment een oude man. Zij was een zeemeeuw in de lucht. Boven de zee zweefde zij, de zee van mijn verlangens, maar ze liet me gaan. Ik was een nummer voor haar. Ik was maar een klein golfje in haar zee, gemaakt om te werken, om haar scheepjes te dragen. Toen ik haar bereikt had was ik oud, zeer oud, toen ze mij toegang gaf tot haar toren. We werden vrienden, en ik herinnerde het moment waarop ze mij voor het eerst zag. Ze had sprekende ogen, gecalculeerd, hardvochtig, maar tegelijkertijd zo zoet. Ik was bang voor haar, en tegelijkertijd bewonderde ik haar. De zuilen van haar stad waren hoog. Zou zij God herbergen ? Ik was bang dat ik haar niet aan zou kunnen, bang dat zij over mij zou heersen, en dat gebeurde ook. Het mengsel was hier een dictator. Ik sloofde mezelf voor haar uit, om een hogere rang te krijgen in haar koninkrijk, en op hetzelfde moment vroeg ik mij af waar ik mee bezig was. Ze maakte mij tot kapitein.

Het mengsel was een mix van edele metalen en edele plastic-soorten, met de sterkte van dansers. Het was zowel buigbaar als onbuigbaar. Je kon het niet manipuleren. Zelden had ik een koppiger geheel gezien. Ik bleef maar gefixeerd op haar. Zij was de ster van het feestje, zij werd aanbeden. Haar stem was zacht en zoet, en tegelijkertijd gebiedend. Ze dwong aandacht en aanbidding. Zij die haar niet genoeg gaven werden geperst als fruit en vruchtjes, en wisten de keer erna wel beter. Zij was de mixer. Haar dans-muziek was meeslepend. Je kon je er nauwelijks tegen verzetten. En het raadsel van de schoonheid in haar was allesverwoestend en traumatiserend. In de nacht was zij een storm van angst. Ze was een vrouw van tegenpolen, ze had een duister gat. Haar legermachten vreesden haar. Ik kon mij niet verzetten tegen haar. Ik voelde me een slaaf. Er was iets in haar wat het einde van de wereld kon veroorzaken. Maar ook zij werd oud en grijs op haar oude dag, en ik trok voort. Als een trekvogel nam ik afscheid van haar. Haar woede liet veel van de toren invallen. Ik hield mij vast aan de dunne zuilen van het mengsel, en klom omhoog. Het mengsel redde mij uit haar grip. Ze was een panische verschijning vanaf toen.

Ik trok me op aan het mengsel, maar het begon te branden en te klonteren. Het droop van me af. Het proefde als een mix van chocola en caramel. Een spin greep mij, en ik verloor alles. Ik had geen identiteit meer, geen enkele zeggenschap. De wind deed met mij wat hij wilde. Ik was als geknakt riet. Ik was gekomen op de academie, waar jonge haantjes met hun veren pronkten, arrogante belhamels, die nog niet wisten dat ze niets wisten. Zij hadden van de grote appel van het ‘zelf’ gegeten. De ‘ik’ was hier de baas. Ook zij droegen het geheim van schoonheid. Zij waren ijdel, en bleven uren lang kammen voor de spiegel. Zij hielden hun schoonheidsverkiezingen van wie er het meest deskundig uitzag. Het mengsel werd hier aanbeden. Zij aanbaden het raadsel van de hoer. Het was een koopwaar, bezegeld met een diploma. Koningen kochten hun tronen voor hoge prijzen, en het raadsel van geld was moord. Ik had geen alibi, dus ze zagen mij als de moordenaar aan, en sloten mij op in een inrichting. Het was de koningin van de pauwen die mij daaruit bevrijdde. Dit land kende geen gevangenissen, alleen inrichtingen. En het mengsel was de militaire dienstplicht. De koningin van de pauwen maakte me tot officier nu. Ik was officier in het leger van het mengsel nu.

De hoer van Babylon zat hier, een prostituee, met een handel in koffie en cacao. Zij had haar mengsel geschapen van macht, want de toren moest verder gebouwd worden, tot in het hart van de hemel. Dit keer zou zij niet falen. Er stond teveel op het spel. Zij was de Izebel die de papieren profetie zou scheuren, als het voorhangsel van de schoonheid. Zij had haar potten en pannen opgestapeld, en beklom dezen. Zij was de prinses op de erwt. Haar matrassen waren opgestapeld tot aan het plafond. Vandaar kon ik het koele wezen zien, het wezen dat ons allemaal met strakke, misselijkmakende hand regeerde en afbeulde. Dit monster was genaamd het beest, slechts haar eigen spiegelbeeld. Ik dronk wat van mijn koffie, en zat tegenover haar, op de wiebelende matras. We voelden de erwt steken. Het stak als het ergste zwaard. Het was de wraak van de koffie-plantage, de opstand der slaven. Zij hadden hun eigen middel : de melange. Het was een mengsel van groenten, koffie, fruit en snoep. Het was een neger-opperhoofd die de toren van Babel claimde. Iemand anders had een middel genaamd : de mix. Al snel liep het uit op een oorlog, en het beest sprong toe, zodat ik er langs kom en naar boven rende. ‘Laten ze elkaar maar opvreten,’ dacht ik bij mezelf. Ik had lang genoeg zitten kaarten. Eindelijk waren er dan wat jokers in het spel. Maar de toren van Babel begon in te storten. Ik kon niet verder naar boven. Weer had de koningin der pauwen genade met mij, en liet mij binnen in het wolkenkasteel. Ik was nu haar generaal. Maar koning was ik nog steeds niet. Ik liep er nog steeds zeer armoedig bij. Ze begon met pudding te gooien, en al snel waren we in een gevecht. Het mengsel was nog steeds meer dan overwinnaar. Ik verdiende het niet om zo te lijden, maar de oren waren doof hier. Een kat genaamd mengelmoes kwam dichterbij. ‘Wat wil je hier beginnen ?’ vroeg hij. ‘Niemand zal naar je luisteren, want ze zijn allemaal in de ban van de mengelmoes.’ Ik maakte een stap naar achteren omdat ik bang was dat deze ‘mengelmoes’ mij zou bespringen. Hij zag er woest uit en levensgevaarlijk. ‘Ik zal je doof maken als de rest,’ zei hij. ‘Ik zal je voorhoofd harder maken dan hun voorhoofden, en je zult hen overwinnen.’

‘Waar bestaat u uit ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Appelmoes,’ zei hij, ‘jam, kaas, en veel worst.’ Hij probeerde mij kopjes te geven, maar ik hield

me afzijdig. Hij zou me met één slag of bijt kunnen vermorzelen. 'Ken je het geheim van Babylon ?' vroeg hij. 'De moederstad van alle hoeren. Ik bewaak haar boom.' En hij probeerde mij te verleiden om van die boom te eten, wat mij tot een koning zou maken in de stad, maar ik weigerde, en zijn woede was groot. Hij kookte van woede, en begon te sissen als een slang. 'Zij die geweigerd hebben komen de stad nooit meer uit,' sprak hij toen kalm. Ik rende de stad binnen, en zocht naar een schuilplaats om me tegen deze kat te beschermen, maar niemand deed voor me open. Binnenin de stad was de gracht van chaos, waar ik toen insprong. Duisternis omhulde mij, maar alles beter dan deze kat. Ik zwom van gracht naar gracht, totdat ik bij een bakkerij aankwam. Het was de bakkerij des doods, waar zwart-grijze vrouwen werkten. 'Mengelmoes zal wel naar je op zoek zijn,' sprak één van de vrouwen. 'Hij houdt niet van zwervers zoals jij. Er is er maar één die je nog kan helpen, en dat is Hutspot.'

'Wie is dat ?' vroeg ik.

Ik ontsnapte via een achterdeurtje met een boekje in mijn hand. Ik was nu in een winkelstraat, op zoek naar Hutspot. Het boekje was een stratenboek, en al snel kwam ik waar ik wezen moest. Hutspot was een oude clown. Hutspot kende de toren van Babel als zijn broekszak en was ooit zelf ternauwernood aan mengelmoes ontsnapt. Hij vertelde mij hoe hij onstnapt was : 'Een glimlach bestaat uit een mengsel tussen monogamie en polygamie, maar de hoererij is een nog groter overspelig mengsel die de glimlach dooft. Daartoe was mengelmoes uitgezonden. Het grootste mengsel is echter het celibaat waarvan je werkelijk gaat lachen, ja, schaterlachen. Dat is het grootste medicijn.'

'Bent u van het katholieke priesterschap of iets soortgelijks,' vroeg ik.

'Nee, zoon,' zei hij. 'Er is een groter mysterie,' zei hij. 'De slang bewaakte in de hof de boom van de vermenging, waardoor er bastaarden voort zouden komen, half-bloed paarden. Adam en Eva waren volbloed-paarden van het koninkrijk, de onaangetaste bloedlijn, ongemengd. Zij leefden in de oorspronkelijke hof van Babylon, het paradijs, waar zij de voorbestemde bruid en bruidegom van Babylon waren. Eet van de hutspot.' En toen zette hij mij een bordje voor. De kat klopte al op de deur, dus ik moest snel eten. Bij de eerste hap die ik naar binnen slikte hoorde ik de kat al krijsen. Bij de tweede hap was alles doodstil. Hutspot had een restaurant, en vertelde mij dat de bruid van Babylon in de kelder leefde. Ik wilde haar graag ontmoeten. Zij was als getooid voor haar man, versierd met kostbare edelstenen. Zij droeg het serum in een glazen bol. Zij was maagd, de prinses van de pauwen. 'Je weet dat het mengsel aids is, hè ?' vroeg ze. Ik knikte. 'En je weet wat de enige oplossing daartegen is, hè ?' vroeg ze. Ik knikte weer. Ze opende de glazen bol, en haalde er een rode condoom uit. 'Hier,' zei ze.

'Nee,' zei ik, 'dat kan ik echt niet aannemen.' Toen rende ik weg, hard de trap op, en toen nog hoger. Dit hier was niets anders dan een andere afdeling van het bordeel. Het mengsel regeerde hier. Ik greep een paraplu die ergens hing, en wist dat als ik ergens de kans kreeg, dan zou ik van deze toren afspringen. Maar alles was gesloten hier. Ik kon alleen naar boven rennen. Er was zo'n

meerkeuze-dictatuur hier. Bovenaan de trap was het rijk van mevrouw Kluts, een heks. Zij stond daar in haar ketel te roeren. Toen ik er langs wilde, veranderde ze in een octopus. Tegelijkertijd veranderde alles wat hier was in een grote zee. ‘Klaar voor de zondvloed ?’ zei ze. Zij was een zeeheks. Zij was het mengsel der mengsels. Ook kon ze alles in steen laten veranderen. Het was bijna twaalf uur op de klok van de toren van Babel. Iedereen verzamelde zich onder de klok, alle bakkers met hun taarten, en toen kwam de snijder naar voren om de taarten te snijden. Het mengsel zou gescheiden worden. Alles ging in grote dozen. Mij wilden ze tot koning maken, maar ik wilde hier niet wezen. Ik verborg me in de klok. In de klok was een tunnel naar een andere toren, de toren van Noach, die zou namelijk hoog genoeg zijn om de hemel te bereiken, die zou nooit vallen, en die zou niet door de zondvloed getroffen worden. De godin der pauwen begroette mij daar, en nam mij naar binnen. Hier werd ik niet als een nummer behandeld. Maar er was iets wat niet klopte. Ik was terecht gekomen in een molen. Ik zou spoedig tot moes vermalen worden. Ik rende snel weer terug naar de toren van Babel, maar die was al aan het branden. Ik kon geen kant op. Plotseling pikte een vogel me op en zette me in de wolken. ‘Hier gaat de toren van Babel verder,’ zei de vogel. Ik klom van wolk tot wolk, en besefte dat de gehele aarde een toren van Babel was. Hoeveel torens zou het kasteel van Babel hebben, dacht ik. Ik stapte in een lift, waar ook de hoer van Babylon inzat, en de bruid van Babylon. ‘Zo, waar gaat de reis naartoe ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Naar de hemel,’ zeiden ze.

‘Oh, de hof van Babylon ?’ vroeg ik. Ze knikten. ‘Moes regeert daar,’ zeiden ze.

‘Oh, mengelmoes ?’ vroeg ik verschrikt.

‘Nee, zijn broer, die is wat makkelijker,’ zeiden ze.

‘Ik hoop het,’ zei ik.

Na een tijdje kwamen we aan in de hof van Babylon. Moes was inderdaad ook een kat, een prachtig beest. ‘De Kat van Babylon,’ zeiden ze. Moes was een aardig dier. Alles leek hier gemaakt te zijn van moes. De druiptuinen waren hier. ‘Koffie ?’ vroeg Moes. Ik knikte. ‘Met of zonder chocola ?’

‘Met,’ zei ik.

‘Goede keus,’ zei Moes. ‘De gifmengers van de hel nog tegen gekomen ?’ Ik knikte. Daar had ik genoeg van gezien.

‘De gedwongen vrucht, hè,’ zei hij. Ik knikte weer.

‘Nu, die gedwongen vrucht is hier niet,’ zei hij. Ik keek naar een omgekapte boom, maar wel vloeide er spul van naar beneden. ‘Ja, beneden komt heel wat aan,’ zei Moes.

‘Kun je die boom niet naar beneden donderen ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Nee, want dan komt niemand meer aan. Dan was jij hier ook nooit gekomen,’ zei Moes. Het raadsel van de schoonheid raasde in de lucht als een mengsel, haarzelf instandhoudende, bevestigende en ondersteunende. Zij had geen zelf-kritiek, zij was puur en alwetend. Zij protste hier en bracht anderen ten onder. En niemand kon haar vasthouden vanwege hun onreinheid. Zij was een giftige lijm in de lucht. Zij was de enige waarheid. Zij nam niemand serieus, kon zich totaal niet verplaatsen in de ander, en had daar ook geen behoefte aan, want alles draaide om haar, zij was de enige. Zij was de chemische stank in de lucht, de uitlaat van de cosmetische fabriek. Zij was van alles en iedereen verlaten, maar hield zichzelf in stand door zelfbevrediging. Ze was een meervoudige personaliteiten syndroom. Zij eiste blindelingse gehoorzaamheid. En dit noemden ze de hemel ? Moes zei dat we daarom beter in de hof van Babylon konden blijven. Er was daarboven niets te zoeken. Maar de bijtende lucht was overal. Moes bracht me naar een grot waar poppen waren. Hier was het veiliger, maar die poppen deugden ook niet echt. Ik voelde me opgesloten hier. Moes begreep me, en bracht me toen naar de grot van een draak. Het vuur van de draak en zijn rook was erg ontgiftigend. Het was de draak van Babylon, die de geheimen hier bewaarde. Ik had het gevoel dat ik weer een beetje kon ademen. De draak verwarmt de toren. De draak heeft dit alles gebouwd. Wij kunnen alleen opstijgen als een phoenix vanuit het as. Dit is de draken-cocon, de cocon van vuur en ijs. Wij zijn vlinders van de dood, die vervolgens worden gedroogd en ingelijst. Wij zijn hier op het mijnenveld, elke stap kan de laatste zijn. Maar uit de cocon zullen wij nooit vallen. De martelaar schreeuwt en niemand verstaat. De draak grijpt om zich heen, en sleurt iedereen mee in zijn val.

Hoofdstuk 2.

De tere vlinder vliegt, raakt vast in webben, valt, en verandert in een moordenaar. Vals beschuldigd, bespot, bedreigd, gedwongen en gehaat, moest zij van het mengsel drinken, van Babylon’s thee, en haar gevoelens verdringen. Tot het dodenrijk daalde zij, in het diepste van de hel vond zij haar pijl. Zij is een moordenaar nu, een deel van de draak zelf. Zij moest drinken van de thee, zij moest eten van het verleden. Zij moest drinken van andere werelden die zij niet kende. Zij was naar de toren van Babel verbannen. De molenaar van het kruis moest zij ontmoeten, en de moordenaar die daaraan hing. Zij verloor alles in de strijd. Door het mengsel werd alles van haar afgesneden. De stem van Babel was zacht en verwarrend. Alleen de ochtend kon verheldering geven. En dan kwam de nacht weer, en dat ging maar door, totdat we zelf een deel van het mengsel waren geworden. De bakker van Babylon mengt ons. Hij maakt van ons dat wat we niet wilden zijn. Hij trekt ons uit elkaar en voegt dingen in, zoals hij dat wil. Ik zat weer in de lift, ditmaal naar beneden, tot diep onder de grond waar de slager van Babylon leefde.

De volgende dag liep ik in de winkelstraat en probeerde dit alles te vergeten. Maar diep van binnen wist ik dat ik nog steeds in deze toren opgesloten zat. Toen ik thuis was staarde ik uit het raam, en ging vroeg naar bed. In mijn bed lag ik te woelen, en probeerde alles van me af te schudden. Ik voelde me ziek. Ik kon wel janken. In mijn boekenkast was een boek van de Babylonische geschiedenis, naast een boek van Mexicaanse ijs-gerechten. Ik trok beide boeken eruit, en las in het eerste boek over Tammuz die het symbool was van de overwinning over relatie-problemen in het huwelijk. Hij was getrouwd met Ishtar, die het pasen uitbeeldde als Easter. Zij was een hemels ei dat ooit uit de hemel viel in de rivier de Eufraat. In de Sumerische voor-cultuur stond zij bekend als Inana die haar zuster Ereshkegal in de onderwereld wilde bezoeken en door zeven poorten moest gaan waarbij ze telkens een kledingstuk of sieraad moest afleggen. Zij beeldde de heilige striptease uit, het pellen van het heilige ei. Ishtar-Inanna was ook de moeder van Tammuz die hem later uit de doden opwekte door haar tranen. Hij had ontdekt dat het huwelijk hem tot het graf had geleid, maar kwam er ook achter dat het hem weer opwekte. Dit is de kracht van het Pasen, Easter. Hij was een voor-christelijke Babylonische Christus. Hij werd verscheurd door een psychiater, en werd toen meervoudige personaliteiten syndroom genoemd. Omdat zijn vrouw nog steeds een relatie met hem had werd zij vanaf dat moment een hoer genoemd, en was toen rijp voor de prostitutie. Ik voelde me machteloos en hulpeloos. Ik greep naar het tweede boek dat ik had gepakt, met de Mexicaanse ijs-recepten. Ik bestelde veel ijs en ging direct aan de slag. Er was zoveel ijs dat ik het in drie ijskasten in de kelder moest stoppen. Ik nodigde een vriendin uit. Ze vond het heerlijk. Ze vertelde mij veel over Mexico. Ik vertelde haar veel over de toren van Babel. ‘Weet je dat er ook zo’n toren in Mexico staat ?’ vroeg ze. Ze haalde een boek uit haar tas en liet het me zien. ‘Het is een ondergrondse toren, naar het middelpunt van de aarde.’

‘En wat is daar te zien, in het middelpunt van de aarde ?’ vroeg ik. Ze haalde nog een boek uit haar tas. Ik schrok. Het waren de meest verschrikkelijke slangen en draken. ‘Dit kun je daar vinden,’ zei ze. Toen ik het boek begon door te bladeren vond ik het prachtig. ‘Daar in Mexico aanbidden ze de dualiteit. Dat betekent dat ze alles aannemen wat je zegt, maar daar maken ze wel hun eigen mengsel van,’ zei ze.

‘Je bedoelt de paradox ?’ vroeg ik. Ze knikte. ‘Ze aanbidden de rokende spiegel,’ zei ze. ‘De spiegel is de enige weg uit de toren van Babylon,’ zei ze. ‘Ik ben gekomen om je te redden.’

‘Nou, dank je wel,’ zei ik. ‘Dank je wel.’ Ze leidde mij naar de spiegel, en door de spiegel kwamen we samen in de ondergrondse toren van Mexico terecht. We gingen het eerste het beste ijs-restaurantje binnen. Het leven was hier goed, veel beter dan in de toren van Babel. Mijn redder zat naast me. Wel begon het steeds kouder te worden. Ik staarde naar een vlechtwerk aan de muur. ‘Je hebt de dubbele draad nodig,’ zei ze. ‘De twee kunnen niet zonder elkaar.’ Ik nam haar in mijn armen en besefte dat ik niet zonder het mengsel kon. Na het eten gingen we naar een hotel. We zochten een spiegel op, en gingen weer terug naar de toren van Babel. ‘De toren van Babel, en het Mexicaanse ijs,’ zei ik. ‘Laten we het daarop houden. Hier woon ik, dit is mijn thuis.’ Ze knikte. Ze stond volledig achter me. Er liepen wachters op de muren van Babel, om het geheim te bewaken. ‘Hier woont de hoer van Babylon,’ zeiden ze telkens. Er kwam een klein hondje op me afrennen. Ik nam het beestje in mijn armen. Ik wilde het geheim weten. We stapten in de lift, en gingen nog

verder naar beneden. We kwamen aan in de hof. Het leek alsof we een cirkeltje hadden gemaakt. Maar dit keer stond de omgekapte boom rechtop, en er was een slang in de boom, genaamd Ea. Deze slang was een orakel. Je moest niets van wat hij zei letterlijk nemen. Hij was de god van de afgrond, die door de Sumeriers ook wel Enki werd genoemd. Hij was ook de god van het water en van de wijsheid. Hier hing het mexicaanse ijs in de boom. ‘Als god zul je zijn, als je van het mexicaanse ijs zal eten,’ zei de slang. ‘En je ogen zullen opengaan. Het zal je hart verlichten.’

‘Ik heb er al van gegeten,’ zei ik.

‘Dan zullen de Spanjaarden je snel vinden,’ zei de slang.

‘De Spaanse inquisitie ?’ vroeg ik. De slang knikte. ‘Maar daar weet ik wel wat op,’ zei de slang. ‘Bouw een schip, want ik zal de zondvloed brengen.’

‘Kan ik niet gewoon de lift weer in ?’ vroeg ik. Het was een schip der zotten waarin ik was beland, maar ook wist ik dat hier ergens het geheim moest zijn. Ik ging zitten op een bankje, en wist niet of ik de raadselachtige slang met z’n allegorieen serieus moest nemen. Weer nam ik wat van het mexicaanse ijs. Het was gewoon lekker, en verder kon het me niet zoveel schelen. Hij was een zoetwater slang, en een slang van het genezend water, dus zo erg zou zo’n zondvloed nog niet eens zijn. In de bijbel was er ergens een tekst over de poel van vuur en zwavel van eeuwige pijniging, wat in de grondtekst een poel van genezing blijkt te zijn. Alles was hier zo dubbel, en alles kon omgedraaid worden. Het orakel lachte naar me. Hij scheen zichzelf ook niet al te serieus te nemen. ‘Ik ben het geheim van de vruchtbaarheid,’ grapte hij, ‘het geheim van alle creatie.’

‘Het zal wel,’ zei ik. Maar mijn mond begon steeds meer te branden. Wat had ik toch gegeten. ‘Ik zei het je toch,’ zei de slang, ‘maar je wilde niet luisteren.’

‘Zeker zwaar gekruid,’ zei ik. Ik gooide de deur achter mij dicht, en ging weer naar mijn kamer. Ik legde de twee boeken weer terug in de boekenkast, samen met de twee boeken die ik van die vriendin had gekregen. Ik ging weer slapen. In de nacht werd ik weer wakker van de pijn. ‘Je bent gekust door het vuur,’ zei een stem. Ik probeerde weer te slapen, maar het lukte niet. ‘Eet wat meer van het mexicaanse ijs, toe,’ zei de stem. Ik strompelde naar de keuken, en begon te eten, zoals ik nog nooit had gegeten, maar het vuur werd steeds erger. Ik hoorde gelach. ‘Okay, wat moet ik nu doen,’ zei ik.

‘Snap je dan niet dat je in een dubbele wereld bent. Wil je meer ijs, dan krijg je meer vuur,’ zei de stem.

Ik moest al snel overgeven van het vele ijs wat ik had gegeten, en er ging nog wel meer uit : vreemd kruid, vreemde bessen, zelfs doorns. ‘Het mexicaans ijs is goed voor orale laxering,’ zei de stem.

Het voelde alsof mijn darmen werden schoongespoeld, en ik spuugde alles uit. Ik ging weer slapen, en sliep als een roos.

Medusa

Hoofdstuk 1. De Zonderling

Ik denk dat ik doodga als ik naar haar kijk. ‘Dit is het rijk van de dood,’ zei ze. Ze had een suikerzoet jurkje aan, met de geur van een herfstbos. Ik draaide mijn gezicht om en keek naar buiten, naar de grauwe stenen. Het was alsof ze lang uitgestrekt op de daken lag, alsof ik haar met mijn ogen niet kon ontwijken. De bus stopte dichtbij, mensen stapten in de bus, en het was alsof zij tussen de rijen stond. Ik denk dat ik doodga als ik haar aankijk, dat ik het dan gewoon niet overleef. Ze pakt me bij mijn hand, en trekt me naar beneden. Het is etenstijd. Zij smeert het brood, kijkt naar buiten naar de heg. Ik ruik haar suikerzoet jurkje, alsof het belegd is met hemelse rijkdommen, maar naar haar kijken durf ik niet. Ik ben laf. Ik voel haar hand nog steeds, terwijl ze me allang heeft losgelaten. Ze voert me.

Ze is als een rots waarvan ik af kan springen, daarom beklim ik haar niet. De pot pindakaas voelt nog warm aan van haar hand. Ze was hier. Nu is ze in de kelder. Omdat ze zo lang wegblijft drink ik de laatste slokken melk en thee, en dan ga ik naar bed. Het was een dag des doods, in de tuin van spot. En gisteren was ik in de tuin van wreedheden. Mijn herinneringen zijn daar. Mijn hersenen bloeden. Ze leest me een boek voor, terwijl ik probeer te slapen. Ik hoor haar stem echoen door mijn hoofd. Het zaad van de lindeboom houd ik stevig vast, en meng het met mijn tranen. Dan smeer ik haar lichaam in, met het mengsel dat lijkt op natte tarwe, griesmeel, het is als brood, en het bed is de oven. Zij is de vrouw van de bakker, en ik ben de bakker. Ik maak haar klaar voor het kostelijke dinner in het diepste van de nacht, en dan slaap ik.

Ze is als de boom aan de rivier. Ik krab aan het hout, het is alsof de sterren breken. Ik denk aan de tuinen waarin wij waren, de hoge poorten in de heggen, de vruchten die zijn als de meest kostelijke snoepjes. Wie plantte hen daar ? Ik keek naar haar gezicht toen ze sliep. Nu was het veilig. De lazarus-koekjes bungelden aan haar lichaam, slap, uitgedroogd, de nacht heerste hier over de dood, de gouden dood. Voor mij was het een vakantie, ze was even geen roofdier meer. Ik kuste haar lippen, en dan slaap ik, vrij, blij, zonder angst, want ze slaapt. Een diepe nacht die mijn bewustzijn breekt, ik ben er even helemaal uit. Tante Connie controleert later de kamers nog even, of alle lichten wel uit zijn voor de nacht, want als de nacht komt, dan moet de nacht echt goed komen. Zo praat ik ’s nachts als met een pop. Ik hoor tante Connie op de gang lopen, als een lijzige boom, verzwakt door het gewicht van haar ouderdom, met passen als het slaan op de koekjestrommel. Ja, haar hele wezen klinkt me als muziek in de oren. Altijd is ze mijn lievelingstante geweest, daarom

wonen we hier samen, maar de herinnering aan haar verzwakt. Ik leef hier in een dorre tuin, spot gemengd met wreedheden, de souvenirs van het duistere gat van het verleden. Geen lichtjes konden dat goedmaken, geen gouden pollepel van welke grootmoeder dan ook. Ik voel me verminkt.

Oom Joop is een man met humor, maar ook hij kon mij niet redden. Als ik wakker word zit er iemand op me, wassende mijn rug. Het is zij. Ik durf haar niet aan te kijken. Ze pakt me beet, laat dan los, pakt me steviger beet, en dan laat ze me helemaal los, om op te staan. Ik ben te moe, en het zonlicht kwelt me. Er liggen hier snoep papiertjes overal. Ik hoor haar lachen. Er is geen tuinman die de wilde tuin van mijn ziel op orde kan krijgen. Ik lig hier voor Jan Worst.

Ze is de laatste van de rozentuin, dus ik kan haar niet wegdoen. De geschiedenis van de graaf, en zijn kinderen. Zij is als de erfenis. Uit mijn gedachten is ze niet. Ze speelt de piano. Ik kijk naar buiten, en probeer langzaam grip te krijgen op de dag. De muren buiten lijken hoog, zoals zij hoog is, van adel. Tante Connie komt binnen, en sleept zichzelf over het tapijt. Het lijkt voor haar een woestijnreis om aan ons bed te komen, en alles lijkt verwaterd. Haar rumoerig kapsel was vroeger deftig en hehoudend. Ze staart in de spiegel. ‘Ik moet me nog opmaken voor de dag, je weet wel, het harnas aandoen,’ zegt ze. Ze gaat tegen de verwarming aanzitten, en luistert naar de piano. De schotel die ze in haar handen heeft maakt haar bijna als een bedelaar. Ze heeft behoefte aan een gesprek, en ik ben te moe. De dochter van de graaf daarentegen is vol energie, en begint het gesprek met haar in zinderende vaart. Ze zijn als een stel vogels. Al snel prakken de vorken een maal. Ik krijg niks, want ik behoor niet tot de dag. Het is alsof ze elkaar voeren.

In de middag ligt ze weer op me. Het lijkt wel alsof ze draadjes aan me bevestigt om me op te hijsen. Er is nog maar een klein stukje van de dag over en dat eist ze helemaal voor haarzelf op, als met gloeiende handen. Buiten hoor ik de bus, mensen stappen in, verveeld, uitgeput. Ik vraag me af of ze ooit zullen aankomen. Zwetend en puffend kom ik aan bij de lift op de gang. Ik wil naar de zolder. Maar de lift schijnt niet te werken. Ik strompel naar de trap, want een dag met de dochter van de graaf is te veel voor mij. Ik zie bij de trap naar de zolder een andere vrouw staan, in wit kant. Ze helpt me op de trap. Ik plof even later op haar bed neer. Zij is de vrouw van de zolder, en ik heb de zolder bereikt, niet te bereiken voor de dochter van de graaf, de dochter des doods. Maar ik hoor haar krijsen beneden, als iemand die zich geprikt heeft bij het naaien. Ja, toe maar, druk die speld maar diep naar binnen, je verdient het, kreng, denk ik bij mezelf. Maar dan word ik ineens mild door de zachtheid van de vrouw hier. Ze komt dichterbij, spreid haar benen waarmee ze mij vastklemt. ‘Ho, doe normaal,’ zeg ik. Ze verzwakt de klem een beetje, maar ik voel haar gewicht op me. ‘Slapen ?’ vraagt ze.

‘Nee, dank je, ik heb net geslapen,’ zeg ik.

Ze loopt naar een kastje, haalt wat brood eruit en besmeerd het. Daarna voert ze me. De lucht is donker hier, en ik hoor de dochter van de graaf nog steeds krijsen. Als ik naar buiten staar is het alsof ze zich heeft uitgespreid over de daken.

‘Waar kom je vandaan ?’ vraagt de vrouw van de zolder.

‘Vanuit de tuin,’ zeg ik.

‘Oh, de tuin der edelheden en martelingen ?’

Ik knik.

‘Zo’n zoet-bitter iets,’ zegt ze. Ik knik weer. De verdiepingen onder de zolder lijken ver weg. Ik staar weer naar buiten, alsof ik mijn ziel zie vliegen. ‘Waar ben ik ?’ vraag ik.

- Bij mij.

Ze pakt een schotel en een kom, en voert me dan soep. ‘Ik wil niet meer terug,’ zeg ik. Ik kwam van een nachtelijk gebrul, en nu was ik hier, een plaats vol protserige spulletjes, over en weer gelakt en opgepoetst. Vanaf de zolder kon ik de tuinen zien, de heggen, met de hoge poorten. ‘Ik ben een vergiftigd mens,’ zeg ik. ‘Een dwaallicht, een pop.’ Ze knikt. Als ik naar buiten keek zag ik mijn weerspiegeling. Zij stond ineens voor de spiegel, en maakte zich op, met allerlei smeerseltjes. ‘Goed spul van de bomen,’ zei ze. ‘Het is voor mijn huid. Ik ga niet naar het feest vanavond, ik blijf wel hier met jou.’

Het is alsof ik met haar hang tussen de verdiepingen, alsof ik met haar zweef boven de tuinen. Ik voel haar gewicht, en ben bang dat we naar beneden vallen, maar ze rekt me uit. Ik zie de begroeiing op de muren, en herinner de begroeiing van de tuinen, de dorens, de valstrikken, puur natuur.

‘Ik ben de maker van de tuin,’ zegt ze plotseling. Ik schrik. ‘Hoe kun je zoiets maken ?’ vraag ik. Ze zwijgt, als het graf. Ik merk dat ik kwaad word van binnen, maar dan voel ik ineens genade. Al snel voel ik niets meer, ik kijk alleen maar in een onbekend gat, als een mist, een waas. Ik kan niet meer nadenken. ‘Wat is er aan de andere kant van de tuin ?’ vraag ik.

- Een snoepwinkel. Ze verkopen eigenlijk gewoon zoete vruchten.

Ik kijk naar haar kanten jurkje. Het is als een snoep jurkje. Ineens heb ik zoiets van : Als ik nog verder naar haar kijk, dan ga ik dood.

Ik rol van het bed af naar de trap, en laat mij naar beneden vallen. De dochter van de graaf vangt mij op, en de vrouw van het zolder stormt naar beneden. ‘Hij zit toch aan touwen vast, elastiek, draden, kettingen, dus wat wil je,’ schreeuwt ze.

‘Is dit de oorlog van de feeen,’ vraag ik, ‘of van de indianen.’ Ze grijpen elkaar in de haren. ‘Uit dat licht,’ roept de vrouw van de zolder. Ik staar doelloos naar de hoeken van de trap. Dan voel ik de hand van tante Connie, die mij naar haar kamer neemt. ‘Thee ?’ vraagt ze.

Ze maakt brood voor me, opgepoft en zacht, een beetje nat, met wat soep en pudding. ‘Je moet goed eten, jongen,’ zegt ze. Ik zie haar kauwen. Het zal wel avondetens-tijd zijn. Ik hoor vrouwen krijsen. Buiten hoor ik vogels krijsen. Het klinkt me als muziek in de oren. Bij tante Connie is alles altijd anders. Ze zorgt voor me, grijpt in wanneer het nodig is. Oom Joop zit aan de andere kant van de kamer. Een verfrommelde papieren zak ligt naast hem, met oud brood. De gouden klok tikt, en het is een rustgevend geluid. Ik probeerde vat te krijgen op de structuur van dit huis, maar het was alsof ik van de daken afgleed, of was dit huis slechts de weerspiegeling van de tuin. Het was niet bepaald mijn Eden, en toch wilde ik dit huis doordringen. Ik voelde mij een zwerver in dit huis, een huis wat ik nooit echt binnen kon gaan. Na een paar uur zaten de twee vrouwen keurig netjes tegen elkaar aan, in keurige zoete kleertjes, als feestbroodjes bij de bakker. Rozen op hen vastgespeld alsof er iemand jarig was, en de spelden gingen diep in hun vlees. ‘Ja dieper, dieper,’ dacht ik. Ik wilde het voelen bloeden. Het was al aan het bloeden. Het bloed sijpelde op de grond. Tante Connie raakte in paniek, en ik ook, omdat ik toch meer waarde hechtte aan de beoordelingen van tante Connie dan aan mezelf. ‘Waarom doen jullie dat !’ riep ze.

‘Dit is ons verbond,’ zeiden de twee vrouwen. ‘Ons bloed-verbond.’

‘Zie je,’ dacht ik bij mezelf, ‘dan had ik het wel goed ingeschat.’

‘Geef me de speld,’ zei ik. ‘Ik wil ook deel hebben aan het bloed-verbond.’ Het was een hele opluchting toen ik de speld in mijn vlees voelde gaan, en ik de zachtheid van de roos tegen mijn huid aanvoelde. Ik voelde me een plak vlees bij de slager.

‘Nu kun je het dak opkomen,’ zeiden de vrouwen. ‘Nu kon je de tuin bezaaien en besproeiien.’ De poort van mijn hersenen leek open te gaan, en de waas leek even te vertrekken. Ik wilde meer van zulke lichaams-spelden. Ik herinnerde de dorens, ik herinnerde hoe genadeloos diep ze gingen, totdat alles binnenin me brak, en ik begon te zweven. Ik was nu boven het dak, maar de huizen om ons heen waren veel groter. Ik kon de zolders inkijken en zag de vrouwen. Ze leken eenzaam, en ik was eenzaam. Ik was met een helm op geboren, maar die ontplofte nu. Ik zweefde bij iemand binnen. En hier zag ik bomen groeien door het hele huis. Ik was nog steeds in de tuin. Hier hingen zoveel gouden klokken aan de muur, die allemaal heerlijk tikten, zo licht, zo zacht, zo helder, ontwakende de diepste roerselen van mijn hersenen. Ze waren als een vuur in mijn lichaam. De mensen die hier woonden hadden allemaal dialogen. Het moest vooral ergens over gaan, maar ze

kwamen er nergens mee. Ze leefden in een cirkeltje. Ik had ze al snel door. Toch was het allemaal erg verrijkend voor mij. Jurkjes hingen er aan de muur, vruchtjes lagen op schaaltjes, gezet op oventjes. ‘Is dit de weg naar de stad ?’ vroeg ik.

- Welke stad. Oh, de overstad.

Ik knikte. ‘Daar heb ik vaker over gehoord,’ zeiden ze. Ze lieten me ladders van touw zien. Ik klom en klom, dit huis was lang, als een herenhuis wat maar niet ophield. Mensen leefden hier als vogels. Ik wist niet waar ik moest kijken. ‘De parel van de tuin,’ zeiden ze, ‘is daar,’ en dan wezen ze omhoog. De ladder was glibberig, en ik gleed weg. In spiegels zag ik mezelf klimmen. Ik had weer het gevoel dat ik van de daken gleed, alsof ik het huis niet kon binnengaan. Tante Connie legde haar hand op mijn hoofd. Haar hand was gloeiend heet, of was mijn hoofd gloeiend heet. ‘Waarom ?’ vroeg ik. ‘Waarom is er hier geen doorkomen aan ?’ Tante Connie zei niks, zweeg als het graf. Ook de twee vrouwen zeiden niets. Het was als een schijnbaar open weg die dood liep. Een zwakte maakte zich van mij meester, en ik was gelijmd aan de grond. Met wilde maar beheerste ogen keek de dochter van de graaf naar mij, alsof ze een wild paard probeerde te temmen, met de koele zelfverzekerdheid dat dat haar aardig lukte. Even stond de tijd stil, en was het alsof zij de muziek van het moment perfect kon berijden. Als ze zou vallen zou ze aan draden verbonden zijn, als aan elastiek, zodat ze niet in de vlammen van het hellemeer zou vallen. Ik snakte naar adem. Ik hoorde haar ogen roepen. Toen greep ze me vast. ‘Ik laat je nooit meer los,’ zei ze. ‘Nooit meer.’ Even dacht ik dat ik thuis gekomen was. Ik probeerde me zo lang te maken als zij zich waardig voelde. ‘Wie ben jij eigenlijk ?’ vroeg ik.

De vrouw van het zolder liep terug naar de trap. In gedachten zweefde ik langs het huis, en de dochter van de graaf lag uitgestrekt op de daken. Wij konden dit huis niet binnenkomen. Wij waren in de tuin. Het zonlicht was aangenaam, en het was alsof we beiden smolten en naar beneden sijpelden, om in elkaar te versmelten ? Waren wij de vruchten van deze tuin ?

Hoofdstuk 2. De Sleutel

Tante Connie legt gouden bestek op de tafel voor het feestmaal. Oom Joop komt aan tafel zitten. Ik zit naast de dochter van de graaf. Ze houdt mijn hand vast. Tante Connie brengt dan de pan met het avondeten, en met een grote lepel laat ze het ploffen op onze borden. ‘Is zij van het zolder niet uitgenodigd ?’ vraag ik.

‘Ze heeft haar eigen,’ zegt tante Connie. Ik heb het gevoel dat ik wat mis, en ga na een tijdje naar het zolder. Ik voel me op en top. Ze ligt op bed, en staart door het raam. Ik ga bij haar zitten. Haar ogen kijken dwars door me heen, alsof ze me niet ziet. Als ik naar buiten kijk, zie ik haar weerspiegelingen daar, alsof ze uitgestrekt is over de daken, en langs de muren, als begroeiing. ‘Zoveel mensen kennen me niet,’ zegt ze. Dan staat ze op en geeft mij een bord. Het schijnt hier ook etenstijd te zijn. Ze schept op. We staren elkaar de hele tijd aan, en als ik dan later naar buiten

staar is het al donker, en haar weerspiegelingen zijn als de lichten in de nacht, als woeste paarden over de daken. Ik hoor tante Connie beneden roepen. Het is tijd voor de nacht, maar ik wil niet slapen. Ik houd de hand vast van de vrouw van het zolder. Mijn hoofd voelt als een stad met huizen, grote huizen, hoge huizen, lange huizen, met bomen er tussen, met plaats voor de tuin. Het is alsof de vrouw van het zolder op mijn hersenen danst, en het doet pijn, en ik word al snel moe. Pudding voert ze me. Grote lange draden voel ik door mijn lichaam gaan, totdat ik het gevoel heb dat ik kan zweven. Haar bed is ineens zo dik en ver weg, haar kamer twee keer groter. Nee, naar buiten wil ik niet meer. Ik ben hier buiten. Zij is mijn wereld. Ik heb een kinderlijk geloof in haar.

Tante Connie laat me de schoonheid van het huis zien, van alle plekken, en ja, ik moet haar gelijk geven. Ze heeft een plaats in mij, alle dingen in dit huis hebben een plaats in mij. Ik heb ze nodig. Ik ben er bijna ziekelijk afhankelijk aan. Het is mijn levenswarmte. Maar toch voelt het alsof ik heen en weer gesleurd word. Ik heb nergens grip op, ik glijd telkens weg, dieper. Dit is een doodlopende weg, een fuik, van vuur. Ik zie ze het glas heffen. Zij zijn als de vlammen in mijn hoofd. Ik durf niet naar ze te kijken, want dan ga ik dood. Het zijn de hoofden van de Medusa. De mensen die hier wonen zijn net zo steen als dit huis, en iedereen die naar hen kijkt verandert in steen. Zo is het leven. Is dit de sleutel weg uit de tuin, of is dit de sleutel tot de tuin.

In de nacht danst de vrouw van de zolder als een zwaan, als een brandende struik. Ik probeer me om te draaien, maar ik kan niet. Deze dans is dodelijk, of misschien wel leidende naar de poort van de hel. Ik sta verstijfd. De uitsteeksels en aanhangsels van haar jurk raken mij. Ik kijk naar haar door mijn glas wijn. De poort brandt. Ik probeer me ergens aan vast te klampen, maar zonder success, totdat ik de stem van tante Connie hoor. Ik kan niet terugroepen. Iemand knijpt mijn keel dicht, maar ik heb geen verlangen om terug te roepen. Ik ben als een boom geworteld in de grond. Ik heb het geheim van Medusa gezien : Alleen met de ogen van wijn kunnen wij haar bekijken. Ze gilt en schreeuwt nu ik het geheim heb ontdek. Ik gooi de wijn in haar gezicht, want ze wil me verscheuren. Dan staat ze in vlammen, en het gehele huis brandt. Ik moet hier weg. Maar de trappen zijn hier van vuur. Alles is van vuur. Ik besluit te blijven. Medusa schijnt aardiger dan ik dacht. Haar hoofden leven hier in een vreemde vrede. Roofdieren bespringen mij en verscheuren mij, en mijn hart is blij. Het is mijn vuur, het is omringd door mijn hart. Ik heb mijn weg hier doorheen gebeten. Een huis met standbeelden. Het is als een brandend strand, en een brandend oog leidt mij uit, om dieper in te gaan. De brandweerman houdt mij stevig vast. Zijn jas is glibberig. En dan brandt hij ook.

Tante Connie doet alsof er niets gebeurt is en staart mij aan. ‘Nog wat koffie, jongen ?’ vraagt ze. Ik zeg niks. Tante Connie schenkt nog wat voor me in. Wie zwijgt stemt toe. Mijn oude bed in de kamer van de dochter van de graaf is versleten, scheuren in de matras, en de piano is vals. Maar niet minder mooi dan de gouden spulletjes van tante Connie. Als tante Connie lacht heb ik het gevoel dat ze op de daken fietst. Ik keek naar de vrouw van de zolder. Waren we niet net als Adam en Eva die door de brandende heg probeerden terug te keren naar het paradijs ? En was dit paradijs een mengsel tussen huizen en blote benen ? Ik keek naar de dochter van de graaf. Ik probeerde een weg door haar heen te graven. Maar ze hield alles tegen. Tante Connie dient de pudding op. Ik kan de borsten zien van de vrouw van het zolder, door haar doorzichtige jurk heen, en ze heeft haar jurk

ook wel flink open. Haar borsten druipen nog, als de moederlijke fontein, maar er zijn geen babies. Ik besluit niets te eten. Hier kan ik niet tegen, en het is dodelijk. Als ik naar de dochter van de graaf kijk, dan zie ik hetzelfde tafereel. Het is onbeschoft tegen tante Connie om pudding te laten druipen terwijl zij pudding opdient. Ik kan oom Joop goed begrijpen dat hij zo ver mogelijk van de tafel afzit, als een bibberend hondje. Maar plotseling is het alsof de stoppen bij mij doorslaan. Ik voel me een baby, een hond zelfs, die gevoed moet worden. Wat een drama. Tante Connie ziet het aan mijn gezicht en raakt in paniek. Zelfs oom Joop staat op. Iedereen zit verstijfd. Ik begin met grote happen van de pudding te eten, zodat al snel mijn hele gezicht eronder zit. Oom Joop lacht mij uit. Dit is de tuin van spot. Waarom zijn Adam en Eva hier teruggekeert. Ook de twee vrouwen lachen mij uit, terwijl ze hun jurken nog meer open trekken. En dan smeren ze de pudding over hun lichaam heen en gaan op de tafel liggen. ‘Ik heb al brood gehad,’ zegt oom Joop. Ik kan hier niet tegen. Zelfs een hond wordt beter behandeld. Ik word er erg stil van, en ga bij oom Joop zitten. ‘Je weet hoe vrouwen zijn,’ zegt oom Joop.

‘Dodelijk is het,’ zeg ik. ‘We hebben niet zomaar met een stel hoofden te maken. Het zijn de hoofden van Medusa.’

‘Kijk naar hen door het glas wijn,’ zegt oom Joop. Tante Connie loopt naar de vrouwen toe, en giet wijn over hen heen. ‘Wat een vertoning,’ zeg ik. ‘Dit is toch niet meer normaal.’

‘Ik dacht ook dat ik naar een ander feestje was gegaan,’ zei oom Joop.

‘Kom op, nu weten we het wel,’ zeg ik. ‘Zo lopen we de fanfare niet. Moet je dat nou eens kijken, ze vervuilen die hele tafel.’

‘Nee hoor,’ zegt de dochter van de graaf. ‘Dit is de oerbron, de big bang.’

‘Als je je maar niet verroert,’ schreeuwt tante Connie. ‘We gaan hier geen polonaise in de kamer houden, al mijn spulletjes worden vies. Is er nog respect in dit land ?’

‘Likken, bloedvriend,’ zegt de vrouw van het zolder tegen haar wederhelft. ‘Alsof je leven er vanaf hangt.’

‘Als jullie niet eten wat de pot schaft,’ zegt tante Connie, ‘dan sodemieteren jullie maar op.’

‘We vonden het eten heerlijk,’ zei de vrouw van het zolder, ‘maar we hebben onze eigen toetjes meegenomen.’

‘Contractbreuk,’ zegt tante Connie. ‘Dat hadden we niet afgesproken zo, en voor half geld komen jullie er echt niet langs. Ik voel me door jullie verschrikkelijk door de tang genomen, als je dat maar weet. Ik heb nog wat blokken hout nodig voor het tuinvuur.’

‘Ik dacht anders dat Adam wel tegen een grapje kon,’ zei de vrouw van het zolder, ‘maar mijnheer loopt daar in het hoekje te kniezen.’

‘Oh, toe maar, geef mij maar weer de schuld,’ zei ik. ‘Het is nu oorlog.’ Ineens stormden de vrouwen op mij af, en peperden mij in met pudding, en trokken me op de tafel. ‘Dit is nog eens een kersttoetje, een vijf-gangen toetje is aan ons welbesteed,’ zei de vrouw van het zolder. Ik was woedend. ‘Als ik ooit loskom, dan zul je wat beleven,’ riep ik.

Het was alsof alle machines ineens stilstonden. We staarden elkaar allemaal aan, maar deden niets. ‘Ode aan de kok,’ zei de dochter van de graaf. Na een tijdje lagen we in het bad, en het was nog gezellig ook. Het was als een lange brandende dag aan het strand. Ik was moe, ik had mijn portie wel gehad. Het was een vreemde gewaarwording dat roosjes zo konden zijn. Ik zou vanaf nu veel meer op mijn hoede zijn. Dit mocht niet nog een keer gebeuren. Tante Connie zou het niet overleven. Er groeiden sinds die dag struiken op het behang, die ervoor zouden moeten zorgen dat deze dingen nooit meer zouden gebeuren. Tante Connie was het goed zat, en huurde bewakers in, die een oogje in het zeil zouden houden. Ook liet ze overal cameras planten. We voelden ons vanaf die dag in ons huis bekeken. Maar de volgende keer dat we aan tafel zaten schoten bij mij weer de stoppen door. Ik verlangde zo naar de oermoeder, dat ik boven op de vrouw van het zolder klom, de stoel brak, en we vielen beiden op de grond. Een wachter schoot een pijl door mijn hoofd, net op tijd, en ik werd aan de muur gespietst. ‘Geef hem melk,’ zei tante Connie rustig. ‘Jullie moeten niet zo paniekerig doen.’ Pudding droop uit de borst van de vrouw van het zolder. Ik kon me niet bewegen. ‘Eerste hulp bij ongelukken,’ zei tante Connie. ‘Hij is dood, hij heeft een pijl dwars door z’n kop. Geef hem de melk des levens, stelletje koeien. Nou, waar wachten jullie op.’

‘Hij hangt te hoog, tante,’ zeiden de vrouwen.

- Nou dan spuit je maar. Druk de knopjes maar goed in.

‘Nee, hij is dood. Hij heeft Medusa gezien, en wie van haar melk drinkt gaat naar de hel.’

- Ik ben niet gelovig, stop met die onzin.

‘God, zelfs als je de tepels van Medusa ziet ben je al overgeleverd aan de vlammen van de hel, en haar duistere hulpjes.’

- Ja, die ken ik, rijden die hier niet de hele tijd rond ? Medusa is al openlijk te kijk gezet, je hoeft het knopje van de tv maar aan te draaien.

‘Arme jongens.’

Ik kon naar de melk fluiten. De dames gingen ieder hun eigen kant op. Ik was in de tuin der wreedheden, ik was op sterven na de dood met die pijl in m’n kop. Oom Joop was behulpzaam en trok de pijl uit mijn hoofd. Maar dat deed nog veel meer pijn, dus ik drukte hem er weer in. Even later klopte ik bij de vrouwen aan de deur, maar ze deden niet open. Ik sliep die nacht bij tante Connie en oom Joop in de huiskamer. De dag erna zaten ze allemaal aan tafel alsof er niets was gebeurd. ‘Zo, de meer dan dodelijke borsten van Medusa zijn ook weer van de partij,’ zei ik. De vrouwen zeiden niets. Ze aten gulzig en verslikten zich een paar keer. Het ging zoals gewoonlijk weer nergens over. ‘Leuk,’ zei ik. ‘We zitten hier aan tafel met vergif. Killers.’

‘Houd je mond,’ zei tante Connie. ‘Jij bent ook niet een van de braafsten.’ Plotseling stonden de vrouwen als een vrouw op, als Medusa, en de muren om ons heen begonnen te branden. ‘Zie,’ riep tante Connie. ‘Ik wist het. Medusa is gekomen om wraak te nemen. Ren voor je leven.’ Oom Joop gooide een deken om ons heen, en trok ons naar zijn kant. Hij was de slimste geweest want sinds de dames hier aten zat hij bijna nooit meer aan tafel. Een golf van geweld sloeg ons neer. Maar oom Joop gedroeg zich als een duivel, en dat moest wel, anders had hij niks bij Medusa in de pap te brokkelen. Ik heb oom Joop nog nooit zo te keer zien gaan. Al snel stond Medusa buiten het raam. ‘Ik wist wel dat die wijven een grote pot met vergif waren,’ zei hij. Ik had nog nooit zo’n groot machts-spel gezien. Ik trilde als een hondje. Oom Joop was een held.

Omdat Medusa ons bleef bezoeken kregen we een ander huis in een andere straat. Er groeiden hier zogenaamde borsten-struiken die vruchten hadden als tepels waaruit een sap voortkwam wat bestand was tegen het borstgif van Medusa. We konden zelfs hierdoor Medusa genezen van haarzelf. De vloek was al snel verbroken. Er hoefde verder geen apocalypse aan te pas te komen. Onze vriendschappen werden hersteld, en al snel leefden we hier weer met elkaar. Alles was veilig nu. We hadden onze condomen-boom gevonden.

Een vrouw leefde tussen de verdiepingen in, een vrouw in mijn hoofd, onderdrukt door de hedendaagse maatschappij, een deel gesloten door de hersenen. Medusa was de oorlogsgodin, weggepest door een maatschappij van valse vrede. Een vreemde vrede bracht haar terug. Zij kende de tuin van spot ook. Ze had die zelf gemaakt. Ook kende ze de tuin van edelheden en wreedheden, op maat gesneden. Ze had zich een weg door die tuin gebaand, terug naar het paradijs. Ze ontmoette haar Adam in de lucht, en leidde ook hem terug. Door de brandende heg gingen zij, en helemaal opgebrand kwamen zij aan. Heel snel kwamen zij erachter dat zij een cirkeltje hadden gelopen. Zo slaan dan al snel de stoppen door, en vinden ze de liefde in zichzelf, die na korte tijd niets dan haat blijkt te zijn. Het is alles niet wat het lijkt. Ik kreeg een fatalistische, nihilistische kijk op het leven door deze dingen. We waren weer terug bij af. Heel wat dromen waren kapot gesprongen, en we begonnen ons oude huis te missen, maar daar woonde een nieuwe familie in.

Waar we dan ook naartoe gaan, het is altijd hetzelfde. Laten we daarom naarbinnen keren, en elkaar daar vinden, of hele andere personen die eindelijk onze dromen kunnen waarmaken, maar dit is slechts ijdelheid, illusie. We jagen lucht achterna, iedereen weet het, maar we blijven proberen. We blijven happen naar de koek die voor ons wordt gehangen. We zijn geconditioneerd, slaven, hondjes van Pavlov. Alles is hier misleiding op misleiding. Ik begon een pessimist te worden, zwaar somber. Ik wilde niemand valse hoop geven, niemand voorliegen. We liepen de leugen achterna omdat er geen waarheid was, of was de waarheid gewoon in een heel klein hoekje ergens, daar waar we het onmogelijk zouden kunnen vinden ? Maar alle dingen zijn toch mogelijk voor hen die geloven. En zo ging ik geloven. Niet in het kerkelijk geloof, maar in die vrouwen hier met hun gekke spelletjes. Misschien dat de grootste leugen ook diep in haar de waarheid droeg. Ik had kans, want ik had een pijl door mijn hoofd. Denken was fataal. Het moest van een andere kant komen. Maar ik merkte al snel dat die vrouwen een gesloten boek waren. Ik kwam er niet ver mee. En ik wilde toch ergens in geloven. Een grote trots was er, ergens diep binnenin. Iets wat mij over het ravijn kon laten zweven, iets wat ik niet kon beschrijven, een mystiek gevoel. Oom Joop zei altijd dat een boek ons erdoor zou helpen, maar hij wist niet welk boek. Een popperige papieren kermis leek het. Tante Connie had een pop in een schoenendoos verborgen, een pop waarin ze heilig geloofde dat deze ons allen redden zou. Vaak sta ik op het balkon en voel me tussen de huizen, tussen de bomen, tussen de rivieren, overal tussen.

Het is een wonder dat ik nog leef met die pijl door mijn hoofd. Op een dag voel ik me door het gevoel dat die pijl in mijn hoofd geeft zo in de wolken, zo extatisch, dat ik merk dat ik kan vliegen. Heel voorzichtig vlieg ik van het balkon, tussen de huizen door. Mensen vallen flauw achter de ramen. ‘Bedrieger,’ roept er iemand. Ik kan er niet mee zitten. Ook al zou het bedrog zijn, ik heb er een goede tijd mee. Ik vlieg naar de top van het hoogste huis in de buurt. Als ik naar beneden kijk is alles wit. Ook het hoge platte horizontale dak waarop ik sta. Ik ruik bosgeuren. Dan vlieg ik over de stad. Wat als ik dit alles zou kunnen ontsnappen. Ik besluit naar de volgende stad te vliegen, daar waar de fabrieks-wolken zijn. Ik houd van de rook. Ik hoop dat we er allemaal in verzuipen. Dat is beter dan wat we hadden. We hebben niets te verliezen. Maar dan roep ik mezelf tot orde. Er staan wat meiden voor een raam. Ze kijken verwonderd. Ik zwaai naar ze. Ze wenken me. Een van hen opent het raam, en ik vlieg naar binnen. ‘Kijk, die kan vliegen,’ zegt er een. ‘Een truc,’ zeg ik. ‘Leer het me,’ zegt een van de meiden. Ik vertel hen over de pijl in mijn kop. Ze giechelen een beetje. Al snel hangen ze aan me. ‘Mag ik in jullie geloven,’ vraag ik. ‘Ik wil ergens in geloven.’

- Wij geloven in de dominee.

‘Okay, maar dat is niet wat. Kan ik in jullie geloven ?’

- Ik weet niet of ik daartoe bevoegd ben.

‘Ik geloof in je.’

- Wat moet ik nu doen ?

‘Vlieg met me mee.’

- Ja, maar ik kan niet vliegen. Waarom blijf je niet gewoon hier. We hebben het hier erg naar onze zin.

‘Okay.’

Ik bleef bij ze staan, en ze trokken me aan tafel. Ik moet zeggen ze waren een stuk netter dan de vrouwen die ik kende, de Medusa-vrouwen. Ze aten deftig, met mes en vork, geen geklieder. Ik staarde naar buiten, allemaal rook. Ik kon niet veel zien. Ze sliepen allemaal in de huiskamer op matrassen. Ik kreeg ook een matras. Ik sliep al snel. Ik merkte al snel dat ik in mezelf aan het bidden was tot hen. Ik was op zoek naar een geloof. De volgende dag namen ze mij mee naar de kerk. Ik moet zeggen dat het mij aardig beviel. De dominee was erg aardig. Hij had ook wel wijze dingen te zeggen, en liep voortdurend met zijn sleutels te rinkelen. Had hij misschien de sleutels om Medusa te openen ? Na de kerkdienst liep ik op hem af om het hem te vragen. Zonder nadenken nam hij een sleutel van zijn sleutelhanger af en gaf het aan mij. ‘Probeer het maar uit,’ zei hij. Maar eigenlijk wilde ik hier niet meer weg. Deze mensen waren geweldig. Weer ging ik met de meiden mee naar hun huis. Omdat ik heel veel aan Medusa dacht, ben ik even later toch teruggegaan naar mijn eigen stad en huis. Ik begon direkt aan de Medusa-vrouwen te sleutelen. En het werkte, tot mijn eigen verbazing. Voor het eerst had ik het gevoel dat ik met hen ergens kwam. Alsof we de boom des levens hadden bereikt. We dronken koffie op het resultaat. Ik wilde de dominee bedanken, en vloog terug naar de andere stad. De meiden waren blij me weer te zien, en samen gingen we naar het huis van de dominee. De dominee was net zijn huis aan het schilderen. Na het bedankje nam ik afscheid van de meiden, en ging weer terug naar mijn eigen huis. Ik had Medusa verlost uit haar kooi.

Hoofdstuk 3. De Gespleten Aarde

De meiden hebben al snel ons huis gevonden, en de dominee ook. Ze waren met de dominee meegereden. De sleutel had namelijk een zendertje van binnen. Natuurlijk waren ze van harte welkom, maar de Medusa-vrouwen werden snel jaloers. Daar wist de dominee wel wat op, want die had veel meer sleutels. Wat me opviel was dat alles snel verstijfde. Alsof de sleutels veel openden, maar tegelijkertijd viel er ook zoveel dicht. We kregen het idee dat er een vloek op de sleutel lag. De dominee was niet overtuigd, want die geloofde heilig in zijn sleutels. Omdat hij zich steeds arroganter opstelde heeft tante Connie hem even later het huis uitgezet. Ik bewaarde de sleutels sindsdien. Die waren veel te gevaarlijk in de handen van een dominee. De meiden aanbaden inmiddels Medusa aan haar voeten. De dominee was woedend en noemde hen afgodendienaars. Ze waren niet meer welkom in zijn stad. Het bleek dat hij ook nog eens de burgemeester was. Medusa

begon trouwens door deze aanbidding ook steeds meer te eisen. Haar voeten moesten gekust worden, anders zou ze alles vertrappen. Ik had allang spijt dat ik haar had verlost, maar het kwam allemaal door die sleutels. Op een gegeven moment was ik het zo zat dat ik de sleutels inslikte. Maar sindsdien ging het niet goed met mij. Ik begon zelf een Medusa te worden. Wie had dat ooit durven dromen dat ik ooit de god der wrake zou worden. Het liep uit op een gevecht met de andere Medusa om de macht. De Medusa begon een gevaarlijk mechanisme te worden. Voordat het nog erger zou worden besloot ik een volgende vliegtocht te beginnen. Ditmaal kwam ik in een andere stad met de hoogste gebouwen. Een oud vrouwtje deed haar raam open, en nodigde mij uit. Toen ik haar het verhaal over de sleutels vertelde scheen ze mij te kunnen helpen. Zij was namelijk een heks. Ik moest een bepaald kruidendrankje drinken, en dan zou ik de sleutels kunnen uitspuwen, en dan zou zij de sleutels omsmelten. Maar alles pakte anders uit. Het kruidendrankje werkte niet. Ik had de krachten van Medusa. Ik was immuun tegen hekserij. Ik moest onder ogen komen dat ik in een monster aan het veranderen was.

Ik strompelde naar de uitgang van deze tuin. Ik had het in zicht nu, en greep naar mijn buik. Ook al verdween de uitgang en de buitenste heg in het niets, en leek het alsof het verder van me af begon te liggen, ik liep toch door. Ik greep om me heen als tastende in het donker. Ik greep het touw mij toegeworpen. Een vriendelijk vrouwengezicht keek me aan. Rozensappen dropen in een fles. Ik hoorde gegorgel en gezang. Bloedende tuinen, zover het oog reikt, vermengd met regen, waar het oog van Medusa over waakt. Het koren dat het goud omhoog haalt, het licht der sterren weerkaatsende, haar vrucht wordt vastgehouden. Medusa waakt. Het houten huis kraakt onder het getal van de lelies. Hier heeft ze haar woning. Hier voedt zij haar raadsel, haar mysterie, waar prinsen op paarden al eeuwen naar zoeken. Nee, zij zullen niet vinden, want Medusa waakt over haar geheim. Haar kroning was een bespotting. Haar lijden was een ontmaskering, maar niemand is ooit tot haar parel gekomen, niemand heeft ooit haar zwaard gedragen. Allen sterven zij door een blik op haar te slaan. Tot steen werden zij in alle eeuwigheden. Haar discipel is zoek, haar beker verloren. Zij heeft haarzelf nog nooit gezien. Zou zij het weten, dan zou zij sterven, daarom weet zij maar half. De rozengrachten hier zijn vol met parels. De mensen hier weten dat Medusa een geheim heeft, alleen ze kennen het niet. Ze hebben er alleen een glimp van opgevangen, en die glimp heeft hen voor altijd verblind.

Ik zit op mijn houten paard, mij hobbelpaard van vroeger, met mijn lange speer, mijn lans. ‘Open de poort,’ roep ik, maar alles zwijgt. Ik vlieg hoog, over de muur heen, maar hier is niks. De aarde is dus toch plat. Is dit het onverbiddelijke geheim van Medusa ? Ik stort hier uit alles wat ik nog in mijn hoofd heb, alle puinhopen, alles gaargebraden, en kijk in de enorme diepte. Nee, het is een ravijn. De aarde is gespleten. Een groot werk moet dat geweest zijn, met de schaar des hemels. Daar aan de overkant weten de mensen niet dat ze niet weten. Ik vlieg weer terug, en omhels mijn Medusa, en mijn meiden. ‘Ik ben aan de andere kant van de schaar geweest,’ zei ik. ‘Daar moeten we ook niet wezen. Vernietig alle spiegels. We staren wel in een glas wijn, met wijn van borsten-struiken.’ Ik strek mij uit. Ze zijn blij dat ik terug ben. Ik solliciteer bij de zeevaart. Ik waarschuw hen dat de aarde wel degelijk plat is, en dat verklaart ook waarom er zoveel schepen zijn gebleven. Ik word er kapitein. Als ik thuis ben speelt oom Joop vaak op het orgel. Maar ik ben niet veel thuis. Ik moet de zee afbakenen. Een hoge rand moet er gemaakt worden, waar niemand meer overheen kan tuimelen. Medusa is als een moeder die haar kinderen terugroept. Zij heeft de tuin gebouwd, en

haar muren, en die moeten we eren, omdat het buiten veel erger is. Er is geen paradijs aan de andere kant van de heg, maar de heg spreekt tot de verbeelding. Ik zie nog meer paradijs in een pot pindakaas. Als ik thuis ben zijn de vrouwen blij, dan is het feest, maar een paradijs zal het nooit zijn, en hebben we dat wel nodig. We hebben toch elkaar.

Op een dag ga ik met de meiden voetballen op het pleintje. Via een tunnel komen we in een ander deel van de stad, in een winkelstraat. We slenteren door de straten. Ik neem hen mee naar de bakker, en koop wat special brood voor hen. Brood kan mij nooit te luxe zijn. Het is een levensnoodzaak. Bij de speelgoedwinkel wanen ze zich in het paradijs. Bij het tuinhek laten we alle zorgen achter ons. Voor de chocolade-winkel danst de vrouw van chocolade. Ze roept herinneringen bij me op, ze danst als een zwaan. We gaan de stoffige winkel binnen. Een grote notenkraker-eekhoorn staart ons aan. 'Ja,' zegt de winkelier, 'veel noten altijd in de chocolade, we hebben een verdrag met de noten-industrie. We kregen dit beeld van hen, toch aardig, vindt u niet.' Ik knikte. De meiden keken de man vriendelijk aan. We konden aan hem zien dat hij er blij van werd. 'Ik zal u vertellen, ik ben mijn vrouw verloren,' zei de winkelier. 'Ik mis haar echt, en er is nu een zee van ruimte boven, want ze had zoveel spullen en die zijn allemaal in haar graf meegegaan. Komt u maar even mee, dan laat ik het u zien.' Boven stond alles leeg. Ik staarde naar buiten, waar de chocolade-vrouw nog steeds danste. Ze was een zwerfster, en werd zo altijd genoemd.

Grote poppen van chocolade stonden in kasten. De man deed er erg zakelijk over, en kraste wat op papieren. Even later stonden we weer op straat. Aan het eind van de straat was een fontein. We zagen tante Connie lopen met een zware tas. 'Tante Connie,' riep ik. Ze had koffie gekocht, in allerlei soorten. Samen liepen we naar huis. Ik hielp haar de tas te dragen, en de meiden hielden ook wat spullen vast. Medusa wachtte ons op.

Roze

Zwanen

Hoofdstuk 1. Het Zwaard Van Calvijn

De vlaggen hingen uit buiten. Hij zat in zijn zitstoel, zijn vrouw was in de keuken. Hij had net het gras weer eens gemaait, wat hij wekelijks deed. Hij staarde naar buiten, naar de begroeiing op de

muur. De metalen platen zaten er goed vast tegenaan, en daar groeiden de planten omheen. Dat kon hem niet wild genoeg zijn. Hij was altijd al geinteresseerd geweest in tuinieren, en hij had dan ook echt zijn eigen stijl, vurig, wild, maar ook piekfijn geordend. Het was een samenspel tussen natuur en mens. Hij had vroeger altijd bij de politie gewerkt, en daar ging het er eigenlijk hetzelfde aan toe : de buurt was wild, en de politie bracht orde, en zo was er een prachtig samenspel, heen en weer. De politie mocht volgens hem de soep niet te heet opdienen, en zo liet hij dan ook de natuur in zijn tuin een zekere vrijheid hebben. Wel hield hij alles goed in de gaten. Hij had een zekere strengheid als hij naar zijn tuin keek. Zijn vrouw kwam de huiskamer binnen met de koffie. Ze zeiden niks tegen elkaar. Het zonlicht golfde de kamer binnen toen zijn vrouw het gordijn iets verder opendeed. Beiden staarden ze naar buiten, de tuin in. De sproeier stond aan, het was een warme dag. Aan de dag scheen geen einde te komen. Zijn vrouw was aan het breien, en hij staarde maar. Geen woord werd er gezegd. Het leek wel alsof zijn denken vastzat. Hij hoorde het getik van de brei-pennen van zijn vrouw. Het leek wel alsof ze heel ver weg zat. Of kwam dat door de vele spullen die er tussenstonden. De tegels op de grond glansten in het zonlicht, maar ze werden er niet bruiner op. Het was een harde vloer. Je zou makkelijk wat kunnen breken als je erop viel. Er lagen ook wat tapijtjes in de grote huiskamer. Ze hadden een groot huis, een alleenstaand huis. Ook het fonteintje in de vijver stond aan. Hij worstelde zichzelf door de dag. Hij verveelde zich, maar wist niet wat hij moest doen. Hij bleef het tikken van de brei-pennen van zijn vrouw maar horen. Kinderen hadden ze niet, nee, ze waren tamelijk eenzaam. De man stond op en liep naar de kast, waar hij een fles sterke drank uittrok, en gaf zijn vrouw ook wat. Ze hielden wel van een borrel. Dat was goed voor het bloed, en dat hielp hen op de been. Eigenlijk leken ze in hun leven niet meer verder te komen. Ze waren in een nauw cirkeltje terecht gekomen, en gingen bergafwaarts. Ze leefden geisoleerd. Er was nauwelijks contact met de buitenwereld, en daar hadden ze ook geen behoefte aan. De tuin was alles voor hen, en hun woning. Zijn vrouw was vroeger arts geweest, voornamelijk kinderarts, maar moest later stoppen vanwege haar alcoholisme. Nu had ze het veel beter onder controle. Haar man hield de wacht over haar, maar liet haar nog wel genieten van een borreltje op zijn tijd. Toch waren de twee erg zwaarmoedig en hielden er een kerkelijk leven op na. De kerk was alles voor hen, voornamelijk op de zondag. Een grote bijbel lag naast de openhaard. Het geloof in God gaf hen rust, als een oase in de woestijn van hun ouderdom.

Op zondag na de kerkdienst fietsten ze samen naar huis. Het was warm weer. Maar al snel zaten ze weer in hun oude positie. Hij had niet veel behoefte om dingen te gaan doen, ook al verveelde hij zich. Hij trok zich op aan de structuur van zijn tuin en zijn huis, wat hij streng in de gaten hield. Het was als het werken in de tempel, alsof hij in de kerk woonde. Hij voelde zich een nauwlettende koster, en dat was hij vroeger ook geweest. Veel was hij bezig met zijn herinneringen, die hem ook half depressief maakten. Een heleboel dingen zou hij terugwillen, maar ze waren onbereikbaar. Het was een treurig stel, en velen zouden hen saai noemen. Als ze kleinkinderen zouden hebben, dan zouden die hier geen leven hebben. In zijn gedachten was hij altijd de tuin en het huis aan het maaien. De gelakte spulletjes waren als hun huisdieren. Maar het ging niet zo goed met zijn vrouw. Ze was aan het dementeren, en dat riep ook wel heel veel herinneringen bij hem op. Op een gegeven moment kon ze niet langer in huis blijven, en moest ze naar een verzorgings-tehuis. Hij kon dat moeilijk accepteren, maar hij had geen andere keus. Hij voelde zich al als een weduwenaar. Het was als een trauma in zijn hoofd, maar het kerkelijk leven beurde hem op. Hij wist dat zijn vrouw een verloren zaak was. Ook de tuin gaf hem rust. De maaiers in zijn hoofd waren nu als van vuur, als grillen. Hij had nu het gevoel dat hij de touwtjes nog strakker moest trekken. Nog steeds stonden de

protserige spulletjes van zijn vrouw hier, de beeldjes, de hebbedingetjes, het antiek, en het gaf hem een gevoel van verbinding met haar. Aan de telefoon kon hij niet meer met haar praten, en ze wist nog nauwelijks wie hij was. Ze was aan het aftakelen tot aan het bot.

Hij ging meer en meer drinken, om het verdriet over zijn vrouw te vergeten, en bezocht kroegen voor het eerst in zijn leven. Het huis en de tuin werden wilder, omdat hij het onderhoud niet meer kon bijhouden, en het was voor hem ook geen prioriteit meer. Hij raakte verslaafd aan de fles, zoals zijn vrouw eens was. Hij kwam in het rijk der schimmen. De alcohol bracht hem een felle stem in zijn hoofd. Met het vele geld dat hij had schafte hij een bar aan in zijn eigen huis, helemaal voor hemzelf. Ook ontving hij vrouwen van lichte zeden aan huis. Maar deze tijden liepen snel ten einde, door het knagend kerkelijk geweten binnenin. De God in zijn hoofd sleepte hem naar het graf, en sprak hem ernstig toe. Hij probeerde zo min mogelijk na te denken, en weer begon het vele staren. Hij was zelf ook door maaiers omringd, de gouden maaiers van de kerk. Zij zouden hem veilig leiden tot aan het graf en tot de hemelpoort. De bijbel scheen hem weer nieuwe kracht te geven, en hij las er veel in, en spoedig begon hij ook zijn tuin en huis te onderhouden als nooit tevoren. Ook koken ging hem goed af, ook al waren het alleen maar de standaard-gerechten. Maar het was alsof iets hem van binnen aanvrat, alsof er een spin in hem leefde. Wat als hij niet een uitverkorene was van de God die hij diende ? Het zwaard van Calvijn sneed diep in zijn ziel. Hoe meer hij de bijbel las, hoe meer hij ook de duistere andere kant van het verhaal zag. Vooral na zijn wilde uitstapjes begon hij de hel meer te vrezen dan ooit. Misschien was de God die hij diende wel helemaal niet zo tevreden over hem. En velen waren geroepen, maar weinig uitverkoren. Hij kwam in de eerstegrote geloofs-strijd van zijn leven, en lijstjes over wie er allemaal niet het koninkrijk des hemels zouden beerven bleven hem kwellen tot diep in de nacht. Het was alsof hij door duiveltjes was gebonden. Misschien ging hij er iets te hypnotisch mee om, maar hij kon er niet van loskomen, totdat ook bij hem Alzheimer toesloeg.

Hij wist niet meer wat de bijbel was. Hij kon er uren naar staren, naar het kaft, maar wist het niet meer. Was het het dagboek van zijn vrouw ? Of het wetboek van de politie, was het pornografisch ? Was het onzedelijkheid ? Een enorme woede maakte zich van hem meester. Hij kon het zich niet meer herinneren. Wel wist hij dat het altijd heel belangrijk voor hem was. Was het een erfenis van zijn vader ? Waren het de liefdesbrieven van meisjes die hij in zijn jonge jaren kreeg ? Was het grootmoeders kookboek ? Een uitgelopen folder van de jehovah’s getuigen ? Een boek van een ons onbekende religie ? Was het een geschiedenis boek. Het zweet steeg hem naar het hoofd. Hij was bijna aan het klappertanden, aan het beven als een jong hondje. Was het een toverboek ? Nee, toverboeken bestonden niet. Een verzameling niet betaalde rekeningen ? Misschien was het van zijn vrouw ? Hij besloot het boek weer neer te leggen. In de kerk kwam hij niet meer. Hij voelde zich als levende achter tralies. Hij wist niet meer wie hij was. Hij werd als een wild dier.

Hij kon uren staren naar dingen, om zich af te vragen wat het was. Hij was de grip op de werkelijkheid kwijt. Het maakte hem kwaad, dat zijn hersenen hem in de steek lieten. Maar aan de andere kant kwam hij erg tot rust. Het leven was hier zwoel. Hij voelde zichzelf als levende op een tropisch eiland, badend in het warme zeewater. Het normale leven drong niet meer tot hem door, en waarom zou dat moeten ? Hij snapte de kaartjes die hij kreeg niet. Hij dacht dat het kokosnoten

waren, of dat het herfst was. Weer wat blaadjes die van de bomen zijn gevallen. Soms probeerde hij ze op te eten, soms hing hij ze aan de muur. Sommige van die kaarten waren prachtig. Op een dag besloot hij zijn hele huis rood te verven, maar toen hem dat niet beviel verfde hij alles bruin. Het stond nog niet eens zo gek. Hij had wel stijl. Hij probeerde af te rekenen met het verleden wat hij maar niet begreep. Hij noemde zichzelf 'baas van de hel'. Ook dacht hij dat hij Calvijn was, maar hij wist niet meer wat Calvijn voorstelde. Hij droeg zijn oude politie-pak weer en was nu baas van de politie, iets wat hij overigens altijd al had willen zijn. Op een dag had hij even een flits in zijn hoofd. 'Had Calvijn niet de bijbel geschreven ? Dit is mijn boek. Mijn agenda. Hierin staat wat er moet gebeuren.' Hij greep de bijbel en liep ermee rond. Hij riep en schold, alsof hij een dictator was. Maar hij raakte in de war van zichzelf en plofte op de bank. Toen ging hij maar weer de tuin instaren. Hij werd er stil van.

In zijn hoofd regende het, en na een tijdje werd hij bedlegerig. Vreemde gezichten zag hij in zijn gedachten, die dan allemaal weer vermengd werden. Hij kon zich niets meer herinneren. Ondanks zijn ziekte had hij een goede tijd. In zijn gedachten waren bomen personen en konden spreken, en hij voerde lange gesprekken met hen. Hij betuttelde hen, omdat hij nu eens eindelijk zijn onderdrukte vader gevoel kon manifesteren. De bomen in zijn hoofd waren als zijn kinderen. 'Jullie zijn de vrucht van mijn tuin,' zei hij altijd. 'Dan is het allemaal toch niet voor niets geweest.' De bomen in zijn hoofd gaven hem zijn geheugen weer een beetje terug, maar op een hele andere manier, met een hele andere kijk op het leven. Maar de bomen in zijn hoofd begonnen te rotten en stierven. Het was een hevig gevecht, want hij beschouwde hen als zijn kinderen. Hij werd weer geconfronteerd met de dorheid van het bestaan, hij nam het stof waar, om hem heen. 'Alles is een bende,' zei hij. Het was een traumatische ervaring zijn kinderen te moeten verliezen. Er was een begrafenis-stemming in zijn hoofd. Maar bloesem scheen voort te komen uit het dode hout, vrouwen. 'Mijn kinderen zijn gestorven,' zei hij. 'Hebben jullie hen niet kunnen redden ?' Maar de vrouwen zeiden niks. Ze waren naakt. 'Toe, trek wat aan,' zei hij. 'Anders sterven jullie zo van de kou.'

'Wij gaan niet dood,' zeiden de vrouwen. 'Wij zijn de vlammetjes van het eeuwig leven. En wij gaan u weer jong maken.'

'Oh, de bron van de eeuwige jeugd,' zei de man. 'Zo, zo.' Maar de man werd steeds zieker. Zijn gedachten kwamen vast te zitten, en hij waande zich in de woestijn. Hij had niet eens de kracht een raam open te zetten. Er kwam een verzorgster langs, elke dag. Die moest dat maar doen. Ze wilden hem eigenlijk naar een verpleeghuis verplaatsen, maar hij wilde zijn huis niet kwijt. Zijn huis en zijn tuin, dat was alles voor hem, zijn tempel. 'De goden hebben mij hier gebracht,' zei hij.

'U bent een kind van de goden ?' vroeg de verzorgster.

'Ja,' zei hij triomfantelijk, 'of hun vader.' De verzorgster las hem vaak voor uit de bijbel, maar hij begreep er niet veel van. Hij zag er hele andere dingen in, en het raakte hem niet meer. 'Wat een mooi sprookjesboek,' zei hij altijd. 'Het schuift maar, en het doet maar, en het komt maar nooit aan

in mijn hart, maar het is een mooi gezicht, dat wel.’

‘Je bent zo mooi als mijn vrouw eens was,’ zei de man op een dag tegen de verzorgster. ‘Mijn vrouw was als een tuin, vol wonderlijke geheimen, en toen ik dacht, nu wil ik eindelijk dat geheim weten, toen ging ze weg. Ze werd van mij weggetrokken, naar een verpleeghuis. Maar ik had het boek nog niet uitgelezen.’

‘Veel dingen zullen nooit afkomen,’ zei de verzorgster. ‘Er is niet voor alles tijd.’

‘Is dat niet sneu ?’ vroeg de man. ‘Of misschien hoort het zo. Weet je hoe ik het bekijk, ik denk dat het verhaal in een ander boek verder gaat.’

De verzorgster knikt. De kamer was vol met de geur van de tuin, gloeiende rozenblaadjes, gloeiend in de zon, bijna schroeiend. Het leek alsof ze van binnen bloedden. ‘We zijn soldaten in de oorlog,’ zei de man. ‘We moeten ons pad zien te vinden. Zovelen weten niet wat hen te wachten staat, als ze dieper in de tuin van het leven komen. Alles sterft hier af.’ De verzorgster knikt weer. ‘Ja, we moeten op die andere frequentie zien te komen,’ zegt ze. ‘Want deze loopt dood. Het is een overgang, je voelt de stromen van de bloemen door de lucht heengaan om het pad voor ons te banen. Voelt u dat ?’

‘Ja,’ zegt de man. ‘De bloemen weten meer dan wij. Dat is waarom ik altijd van tuinen heb gehouden. Er zijn daar geheime gangen. Zij kunnen leiden tot de hemel.’ Midden in de nacht groef de man zich in in de grond. ‘Ik wil een bloem worden,’ zei hij. Het was tijd dat hij een plaats kreeg in het verpleeghuis. Hij had het niet meer in de gaten, dat dit niet zijn eigen huis was. Hij was zich niet echt bewust van de overgang. En de verzorgster zocht hem nog vaak op, en er was een prachtige tuin, nog wel prachtiger dan zijn eigen tuin ooit was geweest. ‘Wat is mijn tuin toch prachtig geworden,’ zei hij trots. En als andere mensen over de schoonheid van de tuin spraken, dan zei hij altijd : ‘Ja, ik heb er hard aan gewerkt. Het is niet voor niets geweest, al die lange jaren.’ Ook het huis zag er pico bello uit, en hij voelde zich als een koning. In het verpleeghuis werden ook kerkdiensten gehouden, maar hij zei altijd tegen de predikant dat hij de politie was. Hij begreep de werkelijke strekking van het verhaal niet meer. Mensen vonden het altijd een beetje vreemd als hij over zijn kinderen, de goden, sprak. Veel van de mensen daar waren toch wel diep gelovig. Hij kon verschrikkelijk opscheppen, en vaak had hij het hoogste woord. Over zijn vrouw die de hemelpoort zou zijn, en dat iedereen zijn vrouw moest aanbidden om in de hemel te kunnen komen. Maar eigenlijk wist hij niet goed meer wat de hemel was. Eens stapte hij op een andere man af met zijn glas, wees in het glas en zei : ‘Zie, daar is de hemel.’ En sommige mensjes waren erg goedgelovig.

Op een dag moest en zou hij preken. Hij duwde bijna de predikant weg van zijn plaats, ging staan en zei : ‘Geliefde broeders en zusters, wij, de goden, hebben vandaag besloten u op deze manier toe te spreken. U bent aangekomen in de hemel, gefeliciteerd. U mag elkaar de hand schudden en kussen.’ En enkelen begonnen dat ook te doen, maar anderen werden overstuur. ‘Ik ben de kapitein

van het schip,’ zei de man. ‘En wie het daar niet mee eens is wordt overboord gezet.’ Na een tijdje luisterden ze allemaal aandachtig naar hem. Hij bedoelde het niet kwaad. Na een tijdje stapte hij op, maar al snel wilden ze hem weer hebben. Elke zondag wilden ze naar hem luisteren. Ook de verzorgsters en verzorgers vonden het interessant. Ze stonden ervan te kijken hoe snel hij opleefde in het verpleeghuis. Hoe hij zich vrijer voelde dan hij ooit was geweest. ‘Een groot profeet is opgestaan,’ riep een man eens tijdens zijn preek.

Hij heeft zijn oude levensstijl vergeten, zijn oude denkstijl, en kan niet meer terug. Hij heeft het gevoel dat er wat fout zit, en kan daar vaak kwaad om worden. Hij wil weer tuinieren, en wordt kwaad als het niet lukt. Een vreemd gevoel heeft zich van hem meester gemaakt, en vreet hem aan van binnenuit. Alsof er een spin in hem leeft, dodelijk, onvermoeibaar, met een duidelijk doel. En hij ligt verstrikt in het web. Wat kan hij doen ? Alle oplevingen zijn maar voor even, om daarna nog dieper weg te vallen. Hij bereidt zich voor op de dood, die maar niet komt. Als hij vrouwen ziet borduren, is het alsof zij hem van binnen prikken. Hij kan daar kwaad om worden. Hij raakt meer en meer geisoleerd van de anderen. Hij heeft zijn eigen kamer. Nog steeds denkt hij dat het zijn eigen huis is, en dat de anderen noodgedwongen bij hem logeren, want buiten is de grote zee, de vloed. Hij herinnert zich een oud kinderversje : Alle dieren twee aan twee, gaan met Noachs ark mee. Hij is er van overtuigd dat hij Noach is, en dat hij hen allemaal gered heeft met zijn ark, zijn huis. Maar nu heeft hij rust nodig. ‘Waarom ben ik zo moe in het paradijs ?’ vraagt hij zich af. ‘Is er soms een slang in het paradijs ? Ben ik gebeten ? Of is dit de hel, is dit mijn straf, ben ik niet uitverkoren ?’ Maar de religieuze verwarring maakt al snel weer plaats voor de grote trots over wat hij allemaal al heeft bereikt in zijn leven : kapitein op een schip. Hij wijt zijn religieus trauma aan een vroegere aanval van zeerovers. Die zouden hem op zijn hoofd hebben geslagen. Zijn geheugen gaat op en naar en maakt rare draaiingen. En dan valt hij op een dag helemaal in een grijs gat. Alles tolt voor zijn ogen. ‘De zeerovers,’ roept hij. ‘Ze hebben teruggeslagen.’ En dan zijn ineens zijn woorden niet verstaanbaar meer. In zijn hersenen gaat alles traag, alsof ze alles vermalen wat nog is overgebleven. Het is hem zwart voor de ogen nu. Hij kan zijn gedachten niet meer onder woorden brengen. Hij denkt dat hij overboord gegooid is, en dat vissen hem aanvreten, haaien. Hij zweeft op het randje van de dood. Hij ziet bloeidende tuinen, gloeiend, bijna schroeiend in de zon. Hij denkt dat hij dood is. Hij voelt zich alsof hij door een donkere gang met bloemen gaat. Hij kan met de bloemen spreken, ze verwelkomen hem. Maar dan is alle verbinding verbroken, en is alles zwart. Hij voelt zich hopeloos verloren, maar even later lijkt het alsof hij in een bloem ligt. De dood ademt hier.

Hij leeft weer in het verleden, alsof zijn vrouw er nog is, zijn zusjes, zijn vader en moeder. Zijn zusjes spelen op het plein. Ze zien eruit als popjes. Hij wil ze omhelzen, maar dan staat hij stijf. Zijn vader roept hem. ‘Zeg Noach, afwassen.’ Ook gaan ze naar de kerk. De stem van de dominee echoot door de kerkzaal. Hij zit weer op school. De leraren staan voor hun schoolborden, waaruit struiken komen om de kinderen mee te nemen. ‘Eindelijk,’ denkt hij. Al zijn nachtmerries komen terug, de struiken die hun dorens in de monden van jonge kinderen stoppen, en hen in hun tanden steken. En die dorens blijven daar zitten. En pepermunt wordt er in de kerk uitgedeeld, van de mintstruik.

‘Ik vraag jullie te luisteren,’ zegt de leraar.

- Nee, zegt een kind.

‘Dan ga je maar naar de directeur.’

- Geen sprake van.

Zo gaat dat altijd. Moe wordt hij ervan. Altijd en eeuwig die dictators. Slangen in het paradijs. Zijn hoofd is heet, zijn oude woede stroomt. Hij heeft zijn vrouw nodig, de poort naar de hemel. Maar hij is jonger nu, en speelt op het plein. De kinderen hebben ruzie. Honden in het paradijs. Ze rennen, ze zijn op jacht. Het zijn vuurbessen in zijn hoofd, de honden van gebrek. Hij ziet de engel des doods, zo vroeg al, zich mengende in het kinderspel. Zijn bittere klauw beroert het zoete kinderhart, en plant het trauma daar, als een pad leidende tot de dood. Zo zijn wij allen hier opgehangen. En op het huwelijk ? Trots kijkt zij hem aan, en dan wordt de spiegel ineens ingeslagen. De engel des doods is hier. Ruw worden kinderdromen verstoord, moeders en vaders gillen. De engel des doods vertrekt met het kind, met de pop, ramen inslaande, deuren intrappende, baant hij zijn weg. De engel des doods is hier, waar Maria haar niet kan tegenhouden. Het is een vrouw, het gezicht van een lerares, een dokter, een arrogante blik. Ze heeft haar lange reis gemaakt vanuit de hel om toe te slaan. De oogst van de hel is bijna rijp, hier staat zij met haar sikkel en zeis, als de Zwarte Maria. Hij smeekt haar het kind te sparen, maar koelbloedig neemt zij het kind mee.

Onbarmhartig heeft zij toegeslagen. Bij het zien van het leed verroerde zij geen vin, koud als de dood was zij. Haar angel vindt haar weg door harten, om te verwonden. Zij sluit geen compromissen, laat zich niet omkopen. Haar zwarte klauw komt om te grijpen en te doden. Zij komt om te breken, om dat wat alreeds zwak is gemaakt mee te nemen. Ze laat woede achter, onbegrip, verscheurde gevoelens, een doorboord hart.

In haar doolhoven zijn we verdwaald, in haar web verstrikt. De confrontatie is onvermijdelijk. Ze laat al haar wapens zien in een reflex. Ze heeft een dodelijke wond, want eens kwam ze haarzelf halen. De engel des levens kijkt haar goedkeurend en bewonderend aan, en we staan schaakmat. Is er nog een andere engel die meeleven toont, dan is dat een gevallen engel, en zo wordt alles weggestreept. Hij wil opstaan uit de kerk, maar hij kan het niet. De woorden van de dominee geven hem troost.

De koude hand voelt hij, die zijn schouder indrukt, het machteloze gevoel, de woede, maar het woord van de dominee is verzachtend, ontgiftigend, totdat de engel des doods weer toeslaat. Haar reis vanuit de de hel stopt hier. Hier neemt zij haar woning. Maria draagt een zwart kleed, haar soldaten hebben zwarte helmen, en die zwarte bessen moeten gegeten worden. Hij schreeuwt, vol woede, maar ze sluiten hem op. Een gevallen engel noemen zij hem. Een engel ? Wat is dat ? Heeft

dat met een auto-industrie te maken ? En de bijbel, wat is dat dan ? Hij weet het niet meer, in zijn hersenen verliest hij grip. Er is een koud gat in zijn hersenen, glibberig, als besmeurd met uitwerpselen. Het is maar een darm. Voedselresten, niets anders, en een grotere vertering moet nog komen ? Of blijft het hierbij ?

Hij staat op straat, het regent. De stad lijkt bezaait met hondenpoep, en nu zwemt het rond in de regen die zich ophoopt op de grond. Kinderen hebben plezier in rubberbootjes. Hier hebben ze altijd van gedroomd. Diepliggende garages lopen onder. Hij kijkt rond. Hij heeft een paraplu. Zo maakt de bakker dus zijn brood, denkt hij.

Hij mag er wezen. Hij voelt zich vrij. Het is dinsdag. Hij loopt naar de brug over het smalle riviertje. Dan gaat hij de winkelstraat in. Hij leest een krant die in het regenwater drijft, althans dat probeert hij. Op zoek naar een gouden boodschap, maar al wat hij ziet zijn de eentonige, naargeestige boodschappen van de engel des doods. Met monotone stappen loopt hij verder. ‘Hier woonde Iris vroeger,’ bedacht hij zich. Maar hij loopt haastig door. Het water is hem bijna tot de knieen gestegen. De stad lijkt nu bezaaid met de uitwerpselen van honden. Het zijn de honden van gebrek, maar hij is gelukkig nu. De apocalypse kent hij nu, de schalen des hemels die over het verloederd volk wordt uitgegoten. Hier heeft hij zo lang op gewacht. En het regent maar door, en de dijken breken door, en hij klimt in een boom. Dit is de boom waar hij als kind altijd in speelde, waar hij zijn hutten had, en zijn eerste vriendinnetjes. De boom was nu veel langer. Ja, hij zou de zondvloed overleven. Deze boom, als de kroon van zijn tuin. Lange schaakstukken staan op de dijken.

Hij zoent met Klara, dan met Els, maar op Klara wordt hij steeds verliefder. Hij trouwt met haar, alles in het wit. De tuin is voor hem het belangrijkste. Die boom moet groeien, anders redden we het niet. Op de dijken en duinen loopt hij, de koppen afhakkende van lange schaakstukken. Zij zijn de weg naar de hemel niet, en hij is de politie. Het gaat om de boom. Maar nieuwe koppen komen uit de schaakstukken ploppen. Hij is in een gevecht met de engel des doods. En de engel des levens lacht. Ze waren zo verliefd. Hij ziet haar staan, bij de brug, Kirsten, zijn eerste liefde. Ze is in schitterend wit met allerlei hangende touwtjes. Hij komt dichterbij en de bliksem slaat hem. Ze staan bij een boom, een andere boom, en dan kussen ze elkaar. Een langere jongen gaat er uiteindelijk met haar vandoor, en dan wordt ze een popje van een andere tuin, vreemd voor hem. En de jaren daarvoor was de liefde in hem zo zwak dat hij alleen maar kon dromen. Er waren zoveel andere dingen in hem die hij veel belangrijker vond. Een auto was belangrijker dan een meisje. De juffrouw was belangrijker dan een meisje. De sterkste zijn was belangrijker dan een meisje. Het meeste hebben was belangrijker dan een meisje. Hij trok aan datgene wat de engel des doods vasthield. Hij wist niet wat het was, maar hij wilde het hebben. Een ongelovelijke kracht maakte zich van hem meester, een jeugdige kracht, en zij liet los. Hij hoorde een schreeuw, een gil. Hij hield de engel des levens in zijn armen. Hij trok haar door het inmiddels tot de nek gestegen regenwater. ‘Kom naar de boom,’ riep hij.

‘Wij weten allemaal wat de enige weg is,’ zei de dominee. Hij wist het niet meer. ‘Ja, maar de stad, de stad,’ riep hij.

‘Grijp de boom,’ riep de dominee. ‘Kus haar. Beklim haar. Ze is van jou. Ik verklaar u nu man en vrouw. En deze bijbel mag jullie huwelijk bezegelen.’ Hij wist niet wat de bijbel was. ‘Liefdesbrieven van Klara of van mijn eerdere liefdes ?’

‘Allemaal,’ zei de dominee. ‘Onderhoud nu je tuin.’

‘Bind haar aan de boom,’ riep iemand. ‘Trek haar op,’ riep een ander. Een politie-agent deed hem in de boeien. ‘Waarom heeft u deze vrouw opgehangen ?’

‘Ik probeerde haar te redden. Ik ben zelf een politie-agent,’ zei hij.

‘U moet voorkomen bij de engel des doods,’ zei de agent. Ze zat daar in de hal, vooroorlogs. ‘Nu is het oorlog,’ riep ze. ‘Je hebt het vuur van de goden gestolen, Prometheus, en aan de mensen gegeven. Je kent je straf.’ Een gier vloog op hem af, om van zijn lever te eten, die tegelijkertijd weer aangroeide. ‘Gier,’ zij hij. ‘Breng haar tot de ark, de grote boom, we missen nog een paar dieren.’

De gier vloog op haar af en greep haar.

Hoofdstuk 2. De Oase

Ze had satijn aan, als een popje. De juffrouw had alle kinderen onder haar macht. Als haar poppen waren ze, en ze behandelde hen goed. Alle jongens waren verliefd op de juffrouw, maar er waren belangrijkere dingen dan de juffrouw. Het jaar daarop kregen ze een nieuwe juffrouw, een verschrikkelijke, het tegenovergestelde van de vorige juffrouw. De nieuwe juffrouw was als de engel des doods, als een wild en gevaarlijk dier. En toch wist ze zich te gedragen dat jaar, en kwamen ze er heelhuids doorheen, en het was maar voor een jaar. De dag des doods was voorbij. Het schip triomfeerde in de haven, aan de kade. ‘Moet dat nou, al dat bloot ?’ vroeg zijn vader toen hij meer en meer ging tekenen.

‘Ja, open en bloot,’ zei hij. ‘Ik laat ze niks meer verbergen. Dieren zijn toch ook bloot ?’

‘Het is een onderwaardering van het vrouwelijke geslacht,’ zei vader. ‘Zie jij vrouwen als dieren ?’

‘Bomen staan toch ook bloot ?’ zei hij. ‘Het is onze enige redding.’

‘Nee,’ zei vader, ‘je weet wie onze enige redding is.’

Maar hij wist het niet meer. Hij was gefixeerd op de boom. De noot moest gekraakt worden, gepeld, tot aan de pit. ‘We hebben lang genoeg gewacht, vader,’ zei hij.

‘Jij groeit op voor galg en rad,’ zei vader.

‘En jij groeit op voor de kus van de engel des doods,’ zei hij tegen vader.

Maar het schip triomfeerde in de haven, aan de kade. De lage boompjes op de grond, de struiken in het diepe zand, warm zand was het, en het leek alsof ze allemaal bewust waren. Het zonlicht leek rinkelend. Hij kon het zich niet meer herinneren, en werd een treurig persoon. Hij wist snel niet meer wat bomen waren. Het dwaalde allemaal op hem heen. Hij lag vaak op bed. Hij was vaak moe, als gekust door de engel des doods. Een diersoort was het in zijn ogen, gemeen, opdringerig.

‘Praat niet zo over engelen,’ zei vader. ‘Het zijn heilige wezens.’ Maar hij wist niet meer wat heilig was. Er was een diep gemis in zijn hart, het knaagde. De somberheid van het alledaagse leven overspoelde hem, verlamde hem.

‘Trouw haar,’ zei de dominee. Het was zijn verlossing uit dat gezin. Klara dronk veel, en hij lustte ook wel een borreltje op zijn tijd, en steeds meer begonnen ze zich in hun huisje terug te trekken. Het was alsof ze alcoholische sappen aan de bomen konden onttrekken. Hij likte aan de bomen.

Zij was het schilderij in zijn huis, een schilderij van groen-metalen maaiers, waarmee hij wel over elke wilde haardos wilde gaan. De groen-metalen maaiers schitterden in het zonlicht. Het was een warme, mooie dag. Ze waren als de wachters van de engel des doods. Maar ze had haar betekenis verloren. Ze was als het ei op tafel. Het was paas-ochtend, de geur van het lijden na de dood, nieuw leven brengend. Zijn vrouw stond in de keuken. Hij staarde naar de tuin. Het zou een prachtige dag worden met veel zon. Er was geen krant vandaag, en op de televisie was er het levenslied. Zijn vrouw kwam even later met de koffie binnen, en ging toen zitten om te breien. Het was alsof hij alles weer opnieuw beleefde. Ze zat ver weg van hem, of dat kwam door de vele spullen die tussen hen stonden. Het huis stond vol met de dierbare spulletjes van zijn vrouw. Er werd niet veel gezegd. Het ging bergafwaarts met zijn vrouw, en snel werd ze door de engel des doods weggehaald. Een groot ei zweefde boven de vijver. Deze had zijn vrouw opgeslokt. Het was alweer pasen. Het jaar daarna was hij alleen. Hij at veel eieren, om iets van zijn vrouw terug te krijgen, maar hij ving veel bot. Hij liet schilderijen in zijn huis hangen, Franse schilderijen, met wulpse gestaltes die ’s nachts tot leven kwamen, tot hem kwamen, om hem te beladen met kerkelijke schuld. Hij wist dat er wat mis was met hem. Hij had aan bomen gelikt.

De nachten duurden lang, waren diep, waarin hij vele gesprekken voerde, naar de schilderijen

staarde. Hij liet een bar plaatsen. De gestaltes van de schilderijen moesten zijn vrouw vervangen, de leegtes opvullen. Maar de kerkelijke prijs was hoog, een prijs die opliep tot aan pasen. Hij was de gekruisigde, hij was de engel des doods. Hij was voortijdig gekomen, gevallen was hij. Maar het grote boek begon de betekenissen te veranderen. Het was een draaiboek, een boek van rekeningen, en hij doneerde veel geld om zijn geweten los te kopen, uit deze hel. Hij was het zelf die die lange reis vanuit de hel had gemaakt, en nu was hij hier, met al zijn groengelakte maaiers. De tuin vroeg erom om gemaaid te worden, en het was een mooie dag. De tuin was klaar om haar oogst te geven. Hij greep, miste, en greep nog een keer, en was vereeuwigd in een schilderij. Hij met de zeis, gedood om te doden. De vlaggen hingen uit buiten. Hij herinnerde de verzorgster die kwam. Hij liet haar ook aan bomen likken, en zij werd als hem. Zij leerde van hem. Hij had een machts-positie. Zij aanbad hem omdat hij ouder was, en veelkleurig was. Voor haar was hij niet ziek maar vrij, een verlicht mens. Hij liet haar het schilderij zien waarop hij stond. ‘Is dat je grootvader ?’ vroeg ze.

- Nee, dat ben ik.

‘Je lijkt veel ouder hier.’

- Macht verouderd.

‘Wie heeft het geschilderd ?’

Hij zwijgt, en hangt het schilderij weer terug. Met pasen eten ze altijd samen paas-eitjes. Dan herinnert hij zich niks meer, en gaat terug in de tijd, zo ver, dat hij bij de witte lijnen aankomt. Als hij erover gaat zal hij sterven. Hij beweegt zich helemaal tot het randje van de laatste streep. Hij kijkt in de diepte van een reusachtig ravijn. ‘Hier wil ik niet sterven,’ denkt hij. Hij gaat terug, en hoort zijn vader en moeder tot hem spreken, hem betuttelen. Hij is niet vrij. Strak wordt hij opgevoed. Zijn vader bespeelt hem als een pop. Zijn moeder kan hem niet bereiken. Hij heeft een ei met vele stralen in zijn hart. ‘Alleen een vrouw kan me hieruit redden,’ denkt hij.

‘Wil je met haar trouwen ?’ vraagt de dominee.

‘Ja,’ zegt hij.

‘Dan is zij nu uw vrouw.’

De kerkdienst gaat verder. Zijn vader en moeder zijn verdrietig omdat ze hem kwijt zijn. Ze wilden hem in een hokje houden. De dominee neemt het hok over. Als dieren zijn ze in het schip van Noach, twee aan twee. Zijn vrouw kan goed naaien en breien. En borduren doet ze ook graag, maar het steekt hem. Het steekt hem dat ze toch ook zo ver weg is. Ze leven in verschillende werelden.

Ze breekt zoveel van zijn hart weg, door haar geprik, als een spin die hem van binnen aanvreet. En met pasen zijn er nieuwe eieren. Hij is het paaskind, maar hij kan niet opnieuw geboren worden. Daarvoor zijn de banden te strak. De tijd brengt dood voort, geen leven. En hij gaat het tegemoet. Een vrouw moet hem redden. Zijn eigen vrouw is niet genoeg, het gaat niet diep genoeg, alhoewel ze diep steekt. Dan zijn daar de Franse schilderijen. Met deuren die ’s nachts opengaan. Hij leert hen bomen likken. Ze worden als hem, en kunnen niet meer terug. Ze zijn de stralen van het ei. Hij is de kapitein op het schip, en buiten loeren de haaien op hem. Ze willen hem naar een verpleeghuis brengen, net als zijn vrouw. Zijn vrouw woont nu in de haaien, als de prinses der haaien is zij. Ze hebben haar overboord gegooid. Hij zal hen vinden. Hij is de engel des doods, het ei met de vele stralen. Hij had niet moeten slapen, hij had zijn tuin moeten onderhouden. Nu is ze weg. De Franse soldaten hebben hun Napoleon gevonden. Hij steekt zijn maaiers in de fik, en is klaar om te gaan grillen. De honden van gebrek zijn in de stad. Nu is alles in vuur. Hij zal zijn vrouw vinden. Hij zal haar vinden in de haai die haar opslokte, en van die haai zullen ze hun boot maken. Maar zijn herinneringen draaien, en zijn ziedend, en dan weet hij ineens niks meer. Hij weet niet dat hij ooit een vrouw had. Hij heeft nu de gedachte dat ze er nooit is geweest. Ze probeerden hem iets op de mouw te spelden. Hij woont alleen. Zijn huis staat in een klein bos, met een bloemenveld. Hij woont hier eenzaam en verlaten, met zijn maaiers. Veel te maaien elke dag. Daar trekt hij zich aan op. En schilderijen zijn zijn passie maar zij zijn dood. En ook boeken zijn zijn passie, maar zij zijn dood. Hij houdt van de engel des doods. Het leven is te eng. Hij heeft een Maria-beeld naast de televisie, wat hij ooit heeft zwartgeverfd. Er is een lamp in geplaatst. Hij aanbidt haar, maar dan verdwijnt haar betekenis. Ook zij is dood. De dode kunst trekt hem aan, en het dode water der bomen, de alcohol. De lucht ruikt naar drop. Hij durft niet naar het toilet, daarom gebruikt hij een po die hij eens in de week verschoont. De po staat boven, en bakent zijn terrein af. Het beschermt hem tegen de wilde dieren van het bos. Hij staart uit het raam en ziet de uitgestrekte velden der vergetelheid. Hier zijn de witte strepen. En nu wil hij er echt voor gaan. Hij vecht, hij schreeuwt, hij overwint, en verliest dan. Beelden staan er in zijn huis, die het Christus-verhaal uitbeelden. Vaak gaat hij langs die beelden. Die beelden zijn als zijn huisdieren, veilig in de ark van Noach. De ark van Mozes heeft horens. Hij komt dichterbij, en de geur van wierook, drop en chocola overspoelt hem, maar ook de geur van hondenpoep. Hij grijpt de horens van de ark, maar wordt dan achteruit geslagen. Boven de ark verschijnt een ei met vele stralen. De ark verandert in een doodskist, en hij heeft het gevoel alsof hij in een lift zit, en wordt uitgestrekt als een sigaar in een sigaren-houder. ‘Ik ben een van de velen,’ denkt hij. ‘Velen zijn geroepen, weinig uitverkoren.’ Doodsangst overvalt hem.

Zijn hang naar materiele goederen wordt groter, die zijn hersenen bevriezen. Goud en metaal is zijn lust, edele metalen, het liefst gelakt. De badkamer is als een ark voor hem. Hij staart veel naar bijbeltaferelen op schilderijen, maar hij kan ze nauwelijks herinneren. Hij is alleen, in een koel huis. Hij strijdt tegen alles totdat het dood is. Het dode heeft de vlam van ander leven, elitair leven, fijngevoelige kunst. Maar hij kan dit leven niet opbrengen. Het hout om hem heen begint te rotten, het goud om hem heen begint te stinken, en het koele begint hem te steken. Een spin vreet hem aan, een groep dolle wolven. De honden van gebrek zijn hier, de honden van een duivels paradijs. Zij nemen hem mee naar het verpleeghuis, en zij gaan zijn huis bewonen. Zij hebben al zijn medailles afgenomen, om er zelf mee te pronken. ‘Alleen de duivel kan de duivel overwinnen,’ denkt hij. Hij weet nog nauwelijks wie of wat de duivel is. Hij ziet het als een wapen. Hij moet zich verdedigen, maar hij kan het niet. ‘Ik kan net zo goed Frans praten,’ denkt hij.

De juffrouw houdt hem stevig vast.

‘Wil je met haar trouwen ?’ vraagt de dominee.

Hij knikt verlegen. Als hij thuis is maait hij het gras. Zijn vrouw komt hem een hoog glas brengen. Later zitten ze in de tuin. Ze gaan vroeg naar bed. Zijn vrouw leest voor. Over de engel des doods wordt niet gesproken. Wel weten ze dat het een plaaggeest is. Dan gaan ze slapen. Zijn vrouw kust hem. Hij houdt haar hand vast. Zijn zusjes wonen bij hem in. Ze zijn paas-eitjes aan het beschilderen. Als hij het ziet krijgt hij er honger van. Zijn zusjes spelen vaak op het pleintje, waar ze spelletjes doen. Ook zijn ouders wonen bij hem in. Hij draagt het ei met stralen. In de nacht maait hij. Dokters nemen hem mee in de nacht, zeggende dat hij schizofreen is, een gevaar voor de samenleving, met zijn maaiers. Zij nemen hem mee en sluiten hem op, ver weg van het oog van zijn familie. Zij willen het ei met de stralen uit hem roven, maar zij kunnen het niet. Hij denkt dat zij buitenaardsen zijn. Van de planeet aarde schijnt hij nog nooit gehoord te hebben, en wil er ook niet zoveel mee te maken hebben.

Met hem schijnt het beter te gaan nu ze hem nieuwe pillen hebben gegeven. Hij is inmiddels in het ziekenhuis, op een speciale afdeling. Langzaam begint hij weer uit bed te komen. De zusters bewonderen hem vanwege zijn humor en zijn markante persoonlijkheid. Hij is bijna hun god. Hij wordt hier als een prins behandeld, als een prins die van het paard is gevallen, zoals hij dat altijd zegt. Snel heeft hij een vriendin, en zijn gezondheid verbeterd steeds meer, tot zo’n hoogte dat hij zelfs weer op zichzelf zou kunnen wonen. Met zijn vriendin krijgt hij ergens een woning hoog in een flat. Zijn vriendin is veel jonger, maar door de pillen verjongd hij ook. In zijn flatwoning voelt hij zich al snel als de prins van Bagdad. Door de pillen loopt zijn leeftijd zo drastisch terug dat hij op een gegeven moment nog maar twintig is. Het voelt heerlijk aan tussen de hoge flatgebouwen. Hij staart vaak naar de overkant. Hij voelt zich vitaal. Tussen de flatgebouwen door zijn de prachtigste rozentuinen, waar hij vaak doorloopt of langsloopt met zijn vriendin. Er hangt een beetje een oosters of Arabisch sfeertje, en dat bevalt hem wel. Maar de rozenstruiken groeien steeds hoger en worden steeds dichter, om zo de flatgebouwen te isoleren. Nu voelt hij zich als Doornroosje. Ze gaan verhuizen en krijgen een flatje aan het weiland. Op dit tijdstip begint het weer slechter met hem te gaan, ook al is hij twintig. Misschien dat nu de ouderdom toch echt toeslaat. Weer belandt hij in het ziekenhuis, maar hij voelt zich nog steeds de prins van Bagdad, en zelfs van heel Arabie. Hij staart vaak naar de stenen van het ziekenhuis die zo’n aparte kleur hebben. Vooral als het zonlicht erop valt heeft het een prachtig effect. Zacht roze is toch wel de mooiste kleur, denkt hij.

En als zijn vriendin bij hem op bezoek komt heeft ze zo’n mooie roze jurk. Ze neemt hem mee voor een wandeling langs het meer. De melkfabriek staat hier dichtbij en alles ruikt hier aangebrand. In zijn gedachten zweeft hij met haar over het meer, en roze zwanen volgen hen. Even later liggen ze beiden in het koele meer. ‘Zullen we naar de overkant zwemmen ?’ vraagt hij. Zijn vriendin vindt het best. Dat hebben ze al wel eerder gedaan. Achter het meer zijn de weilanden, en achter het weilanden is hun flat. Helemaal nat komen ze aan in hun woning. Maar hij zorgt dat hij voor het

donker wordt weer in het ziekenhuis is. Ook al is hij nu dan weer in het ziekenhuis, deze laatste bladzijden van zijn leven zijn sterk en roze, als rotsen waarop hij kan bouwen. Hij voelt zich veilig hier, iets wat over hem waakt. De golfjes die hier aankomen brengen voornamelijk geluk. Een oase was over hem heengevallen, en dat was allemaal net op tijd.

Het Korte Oog

Sally was een prostituee, een dame van lichte zeden. Voor de ramen voerde ze altijd haar spel op, haar dans, om ogen te betoveren. Willem bezocht haar vaak, maar op een dag gaf hij haar zoveel geld dat ze nooit meer hoefde te werken. Ze was hem erg dankbaar. Ze kreeg een huisje in het bos. Willem kwam haar vaak bezoeken. Sally was erg aan hem gehecht. Sally zag Willem als haar redder. En de liefde was mooi. Ze hadden nog nooit gevreeen. Willem bezocht haar alleen maar op met haar te praten. Hij wilde haar helpen.

Hij heeft iets buitenaards. Hij is niet van deze wereld. En een liefde dat hij heeft. De vriendinnen van Sally werkten nog steeds in de prostitutie, en diep in hun hart hoopten ze dat Willem hen ook zou redden. Willem had een hart van goud.

Het korte oog zat op zijn troon. Vloekend, tierend. Hij wilde iedereen kort houden, ver weg van elkaar, en dat ze dan ook kort door de bocht met elkaar om zouden gaan, want het korte oog vreesde de liefde.

En deze liefde was zo brandend. Als Sally Willem aankeek dan kon je dat voelen. En als Willem Sally aankeek dan kon je hart daar van wegsmelten. Als je dat gelukkige paar zo zou zien, dan zou je denken : Ze hebben het over mij. Willem was niet zelfzuchtig, en Sally ook niet. Ze hielden beiden veel van mensen.

Het korte oog was als een kraal in een computerspel. Ver kijken kon hij niet, want dan zou hij zijn macht verliezen. De mensen waren slechts pionnen. Het korte oog had ijzeren wetten opgesteld.

Uiteindelijk zijn ze beiden maar in de wildernis gaan wonen. Het korte oog was woedend. Maar op een dag bezocht het korte oog Willem. Kijk eens wat je geliefde je heeft aangedaan, degene wiens leven jij hebt gered, zei het korte oog. Is het niet allemaal een grote illusie. De dromen die je hebt zijn onhaalbaar. Ik bied je een betere droom. Je zal alles kunnen hebben wat je hartje begeert.

Hoe dan ? vroeg Willem.

Ik kan een superster van je maken, zei het korte oog.

Gehypnotiseerd gaf hij toe aan het korte oog. Als in een speedboot behaalde hij een superster status. Maar hij kwam onder zulke hoge druk te staan dat hij zelfmoord pleegde.

Sally begon te gillen. Maar het korte oog had geen medelijden met haar en vermoordde haar, en vrat haar op. In het dodenrijk kwam ze Willem weer tegen met gebogen hoofd.

Maar het korte oog regeerde ook hier, en liet hen afdalen naar de hel.

Ik brand, zei Willem.

Ik ook, zei Sally.

Jullie hebben je niet aan mijn wetten gehouden, zei het korte oog. Jullie waren wispelturig, en jullie brabbelden maar wat. Ik eis radicaliteit en fundamentalisme, is dat teveel gevraagd ? Branden zullen jullie in de hel.

De volgende dag werden Sally en Willem wakker. Willem sloot Sally in zijn armen. Ik heb zo naar gedroomd, schat, dat ik je uit de prostitutie moest redden. En een heerschap genaamd het korte oog leidde ons naar de hel.

Het korte oog bestaat niet, zei Sally. Het is een leugen. Er zijn alleen maar lange ogen die uitreiken naar elkaars hart. Het is alleen maar liefde, en het oog van de liefde. Jij bent in mijn wereld, zei Sally. Die andere wereld is niet echt. Er zijn alleen maar dingen die je niet begrijpt die zich als verschrikkelijke monsters ontpoppen.

Sally sprak weer als een engel, zoals ze altijd deed.

Zul je me helpen om duidelijkheid te krijgen ? vroeg Willem. Ik ben nog niet zo ver als jou. Je bent vier jaar ouder.

Shhh, zei Sally.

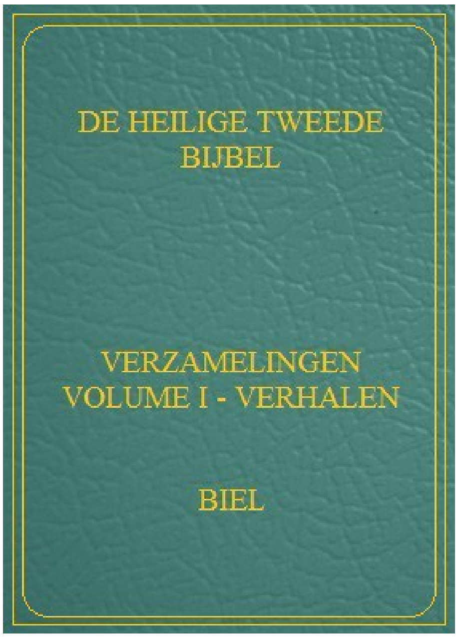
Het Hemelbed

Ze loopt op de straat. Stenen uiltjes vallen haar aan met religieuze ideeen. Ze gaat door het tuinhek, en doet het hekje weer achter haar dicht, een hek met lange scherpe punten. Ze gaat het kasteel binnen als ze door de lange vlindertuin heeft gelopen. De kok ziet haar aankomen en wuift naar haar. Als hij dat doet krijgt ze altijd een warm gevoel van binnen. De raadsels hier zijn onopgelost. Zo gaat het altijd. De stenen uiltjes vallen haar altijd aan als ze buiten de tuin is. Maar in de tuin en het kasteel heeft ze rust. Ze loopt naar boven en gaat op haar hemelbed liggen. Naast het bed staat een oude piano. Dan grijpt ze haar telefoon, en belt naar haar geliefde. ‘Hallo,’ zegt ze. Even later valt ze in slaap.

De volgende ochtend gaat ze weer door het tuinhekje, en werd weer door de stenen religieuze uiltjes aangevlogen. Het zijn de uiltjes van haar verleden. Gelukkig zijn ze nu van steen, maar ze vladderen nog steeds verschrikkelijk, en die krengen kunnen nog steeds goed bijten en met hun vleugels slaan. Vroeger leefde ze met die uiltjes, moest ze doen wat ze zeiden, maar nu konden ze haar alleen maar van buitenaf aanvallen. Ze liep door de regen en stak een paraplu op. Ze merkte dat ze daar de uiltjes ook flink goed mee van haar af kon slaan. Ze ging naar haar geliefde waar ze werkte als secretaresse. Haar geliefde had een muurtje om zijn huis waar ook stenen uiltjes opstonden, maar deze konden niets doen. Ze waren één geheel met de muur.

Zij en haar geliefde hadden een woningvereniging genaamd ‘De Gouden Leeuw’. Eens werd de stad geteisterd door een dokter die de stadsmensen dwong om giftige medicijnen in te nemen met een streng bewind van dwang-verpleging. Dit trok de stenen uiltjes aan die toen een strenge religie brachten, zodat de mensen die dokter konden vergeten. Vele mensen waren van die dokter zo ziek geworden dat ze hun werk niet meer konden doen, en hun woningen uitgezet werden omdat ze het niet meer konden betalen. ‘De Gouden Leeuw’ was opgezet om die zieke mensen een woning te geven. Het was een woningbouw voor zwervers. Nu het bewind van de dokter was verdwenen was er nog steeds het bewind van de stenen uiltjes, en de mensen waren nog erg ziek. De Gouden Leeuw had woningen voor de helft van de stad. De stenen uiltjes wilden hun religieuze dwang niet stoppen, omdat ze bang waren dat er ooit een tweede dwangdokter zou opstaan. Sinds de Gouden Leeuw bestond kwamen de stenen uiltjes niet meer in de tuinen en de huizen van de mensen, maar wel waren ze op straat, en vielen voetgangers lastig. Ook hielden ze zich op bij muurtjes en hekjes. Ze waren een plaag in de stad. Natuurlijk was iedereen bang dat er een tweede medische dictator zou opstaan, maar daar zou de Gouden Leeuw wel toezicht op houden. Men zag de stenen uiltjes vaak als een kwelling.

En als zij in bed lagen, zij en haar geliefde, dan droop een lijm van hen, als het spinsel der spinnen, om de stenen uiltjes vast te plakken aan de muren. Zij vreeen voor een betere wereld, voor de vrije stad.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De Bibelebonse Wijn
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Elwin bij de Heks

Jaap en André
en de Rusland Machine

Hoofdstuk 1.

"Jaap !" riep moeder, "Opstaan. Het is dinsdagochtend, drie uur in de nacht. We zouden naar professor Malerus gaan." Even was het toen stil, en toen riep ze "André ! Opstaan. Het is tijd !" Het was heel vroeg in de ochtend. De meeste kinderen zouden rondom deze tijd nog slapen, maar Jaap en André waren nu klaarwakker door het gegil van hun moeder. En ze waren blij, want ze mochten naar professor Malerus toe. Dat vonden ze veel leuker dan school.

Na zich aangekleed te hebben zaten ze al snel met moeder aan het ontbijt. Moeder had haar krulspelden in. "Ga je zo naar professor Malerus toe met die krulspelden in je haar ?" vroeg André lachend.

"Welnee," sprak moeder lachend. "Die haal ik er zo uit, maar eet nu snel je bord leeg. We gaan zo weg."

Zo gezegd zo gedaan. Moeder haalde na het ontbijt de krulspelden uit haar haar. Ze stond voor de grote spiegel. Ze deed de krulspelden in een roze gevlochten mandje. De kinderen trokken alvast hun jassen aan. "Gaat u zo naar professor Malerus toe ?" vroeg André lachend. "In uw nachtjapon ?"

Moeder lachte terug. "Waarom niet ? Goed idee. Daar was ik nog niet opgekomen," sprak moeder.

"En met uw pantoffels ?" lachte Jaap.

Moeder lachte. "We hebben nog wel even de tijd." Toen ging ze naar boven, en even later kwam ze naar beneden in een flitsend pak. Het was een zwart pak met allemaal glitters. Ook had ze laarzen aan.

"Gaat u zo naar professor Malerus, in dat flitsende zwarte pak ?" vroeg Jaap. "Hij zou zich rot schrikken."

"Welnee," sprak moeder. "Hij is wel wat gewend."

"U lijkt wel op een superster, mamma," zei André. "Professor Malerus gaat echt schrikken."

"Misschien houdt hij me dan wel," lachte moeder. "Wie zou er nu niet bij professor Malerus willen wonen."

"Mogen wij dan ook bij u wonen ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Natuurlijk," zei moeder. "Jullie zijn toch mijn kinderen ?"

"Maar wat zou pappa daar van vinden ?" vroeg André.

"Dat weet ik niet," lachte moeder. "Maar hij moet er maar aan wennen."

Ze gingen de voordeur uit, en moeder sloot netjes de deur. Toen moesten ze nog even door een stukje bos of park lopen, en kwamen zo aan bij het huis van professor Malerus. Ze belden aan, en hij deed al snel open. Hij keek niet eens naar hen, maar maakte een gebaar dat ze binnen konden komen, en liep door de lange gang heen. "Volgen jullie mij maar," riep hij. Het was diep in de nacht. "Jullie zijn precies op tijd !" riep hij weer. In de woonkamer kregen ze thee, en toen nam hij ze mee naar de kelder over een trap naar beneden, door een andere deur in de woonkamer.

Hij deed een beetje haastig. Ze hadden hun thee nog niet opgedronken, maar stonden daar met hun kopjes in hun handen. Hij liet ze een machine zien. De machine pruttelde verschrikkelijk.

"Wat is het ?" vroeg André.

"Mijn nieuwe uitvinding," sprak professor Malerus.

"Dat begrijp ik," zei André, "maar waar is het voor ?"

"Dat zul je wel zien," zei professor Malerus die niet op of omkeek. Hij was alleen in grote concentratie naar de machine aan het kijken. Hij keek naar wat schermpjes. Er verschenen allerlei ingewikkelde getallen en vreemde symbolen op die André en Jaap niet begrepen.

"Niet te dichtbij komen," sprak professor Malerus. Toen ineens waren er kleine ontploffinkjes in de ketel. Professor Malerus keek naar de stangen die vanuit de ketel liepen. "Het werkt," sprak professor Malerus.

Zachte muziek kwam uit de machine. Met een knopje draaide hij de machine om, en er was een grote open cabine met stoeltjes waar ze op konden zitten. Toen schoof de professor een kap over hen heen. "Donker," zei André.

"Dat moet ook," sprak professor Malerus.

"Ik zie niks," zei Jaap. Toen schoof professor Malerus de kap iets op, en ging toen op het voorste stoeltje zitten. "Nu gaat het beginnen," sprak professor Malerus. Het was alsof er iets bewoog, maar ze wisten niet of het de stoeltjes waren of de machine zelf. Plotseling was alles wit. Ze begonnen het enorm koud te krijgen. Ze waren in de sneeuw. Er was overal ijs.

"Hoe kan dat ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Heel simpel," sprak professor Malerus. En toen volgde er een onnavolgbaar verhaal van ingewikkelde wiskunde en natuurkunde. Jaap en André begrepen er niet veel van. "Ik heb het koud," zei André.

"Oh, het zal nog wel veel kouder worden," zei professor Malerus.

"Waarom zijn we hier dan ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Dat zul je wel zien," sprak professor Malerus. De stoeltjes zweefden gewoon over het ijs en de sneeuw heen, totdat ze bij de zee aankwamen. "In de zee is het lekker warm," sprak professor Malerus. Na een tijdje lagen ze in de zee, en professor Malerus lachte. Er waren hier ook zwembanden. "Mijn pak !" riep moeder. Jaap en André lachten. "En uw haar !" riep André.

Professor Malerus gaf hen zwemkleding en sprak : "Doe je kleren maar uit, daar heb je allemaal niets meer aan." Het water was inderdaad lekker warm. Het was hier heel tropisch, terwijl verderop nog sneeuw en ijs was. "Dit is een oase in het ijs," zei professor Malerus. "Komt niet vaak voor."

"Is het zeldzaam ?" vroeg André. Professor Malerus knikte.

Ineens was alles zwart. Het bleek dat ze al die tijd gewoon in de machine zaten. "Het leek net echt," zei Jaap. "Ik had het ook echt koud, en daarna warm."

"Dit was maar een voorbeeldje," zei professor Malerus.

"Waar waren we ?" vroeg André.

"Gewoon in de machine," sprak professor Malerus.

"Gewoon allemaal nep ?" vroeg André.

"Ja, een gesimuleerde werkelijkheid," sprak professor Malerus.

"Mogen we hier blijven ?" vroeg Jaap. "Ik zou hier wel naar school willen."

"Nee," zei moeder. "Het ritje is nu afgelopen. We gaan nu naar huis. Je vader zou het vast geen goed idee vinden als jullie hier blijven."

"Ah, toe nou," zei André. "U zei dat u zelf wel heel graag bij professor Malerus zou willen blijven wonen."

"Dat was maar een grapje," zei moeder. "Het zou me wel leuk lijken, maar het is niet haalbaar. Je vader zou dat nooit goedvinden."

"Ah," zei Jaap, "mams, toe nou, doe niet zo flauw. We kunnen het toch proberen ? Misschien vindt pappa het wel heel leuk, en komt hij ook."

"Daar zou ik niet van uitgaan," zei moeder streng.

"Mams, doe niet zo flauw !" riep André. "U gunt ons niets. Wij willen hier blijven, en nu loopt u moeilijk te doen."

"Professor, doe iets," zei moeder.

"Tja," zei professor Malerus, "als ze het zo graag willen. Er is hier ook een school in de machine. Een veel betere school, al zeg ik het zelf. Het zou veel beter voor de kinderen zijn. Waarom denk je dat ik al deze uitvindingen heb gemaakt ?"

Moeder schoof de kap omhoog, stond op en liep de cabine van de machine uit. "Goed, maar ik heb jullie gewaarschuwd," zei ze boos. "Jullie horen nog van mij en je vader."

Stampvoetend liep ze de kelder uit de trap op. Professor Malerus ging ook de machine uit, want hij zou verder gaan met nieuwe uitvindingen. Professor Malerus was nooit klaar. De jongens bleven op hun stoeltjes zitten, en even later waren ze weer in het ijsgebied, en toen in de warme zee. "Waar moeten we nu naartoe ?" vroeg André. "De professor zei dat er hier ook een school was, dus die moeten we dan eerst zoeken," zei Jaap.

"Kom mee," zei André, terwijl hij Jaap het water uittrok. Samen renden ze het strandje over totdat ze in een klein bosje kwamen. Hier was een pad met kiezelsteentjes, en die leidde naar een dorp. Ze begonnen steeds meer huizen te zien tussen de bomen, dus ze wisten dat ze hier dichtbij de school moesten zijn. Ze waren erg benieuwd. "Wat zouden we daar leren ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Ik hoop een hoop leuke dingen," zei André, "niet zo saai als op onze school. Al die getalletjes en dat netjes schrijven gedoe, daar wordt je toch helemaal gek van ?"

Na een tijdje kwamen ze bij een school aan. Ze liepen het pleintje over en gingen direct naar binnen. Een juffrouw zat in een leeg klaslokaal.

"Kom, kom," fluisterde de juffrouw.

"Wie bent u ?" vroeg André, "en waarom is uw klas leeg ?"

"Ik ben juffrouw Amulek," fluisterde de vrouw, "en mijn klas is leeg omdat het nog geen tijd is."

"Waarom fluistert u ?" vroeg Jaap die om zich heen keek.

"Ik geef altijd fluisterend les," fluisterde de juffrouw. "Jullie zijn hier in het Fluister dorp. Iedereen fluistert hier."

"Vreemd," zei André.

"Okay," fluisterde Jaap. "En waarom is dat ?"

"Dan letten de kinderen beter op," fluisterde de juffrouw. "Iedereen heeft zo meer aandacht voor elkaar. Alleen op donderdag spreekt men. Donderdag is praatdag, en de andere dagen zijn de fluisterdagen."

"Waarom is dat ?" fluisterde Jaap weer.

"Omdat Donderdag de vrije dag is," fluisterde de juffrouw. "Dat is de rustdag, de dag waarop je niet hoeft op te letten."

"Is dat overal zo hier ?" vroeg Jaap ineens, niet meer fluisterend. "Ik zou moe worden van al dat gefluister."

"Nee," fluisterde de juffrouw, "alleen hier. Dit is het fluisterdorp, oftewel het Dinsdag Dorp. Als je gewoon wil praten dan moet je naar het Donderdag Dorp gaan, hier verderop."

"Dat lijkt me beter," zei André. "Hoe komen we daar ?"

"Gewoon het dorp uitlopen tot aan het kiezelpad, en dan door het bos loop je er vanzelf tegenaan," fluisterde de juffrouw. "Maar voordat je gaat is er wel iets wat je moet weten. Alleen op Donderdag kan men het dorp in en uit. Op de andere dagen laten de dorpwachters je er niet door."

"Dan wachten we wel," sprak André.

"Maar dan moet je wel zorgen dat je vandaag nog uit het Dinsdag Dorp gaat," fluisterde de juffrouw. "In het bos tussen het Dinsdag Dorp en het Donderdag Dorp moet je wachten. Je kunt

alleen maar op Dinsdag in en uit het Dinsdagdorp."

"Wat een gedoe allemaal," zei Jaap.

"Waar is het allemaal goed voor ?" vroeg André.

"Om veiligheidsredenen," fluisterde de juffrouw.

Zijn er ook dorpen waar je gewoon op alle dagen van de week in en uit kunt ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Nee, die zijn er niet," fluisterde de juffrouw. "Dit is het Donderdag Land, en dat land kent alleen maar twee dorpen. Dit dorp, en het Donderdag Dorp. Het Dinsdag Dorp is het eerste dorp van het land, en je komt er alleen in op Dinsdag. Dinsdag is de poortwachter van het land Donderdag. Dinsdag Dorp is het poortdorp."

"Belachelijk," zei Jaap.

André stootte hem aan.

"Ik heb die poortwachter genaamd Dinsdag niet eens gezien," zei Jaap. André begon te lachen.

De juffrouw zei niets. Na een tijdje fluisterde ze : "Het is een reus. Hij is eerst heel koud, en dan heel warm."

"Oh, dat ijsgebied met die warme zee," lachte André. "Dus de reus is een soort landschap, verder onzichtbaar als reus ?"

"Zoiets," fluisterde de juffrouw, "maar zo is hij niet altijd. Reus Dinsdag noemen we hem."

"En wanneer kan iemand het Donderdag land weer uit dan ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Ook alleen op Dinsdag," fluisterde de juffrouw.

"Griezelig," zei Jaap.

"Elk land heeft zijn eigen wetten," fluisterde de juffrouw. "De reus beschermt het land goed. We zijn zeer trots op hem."

Er begonnen al wat kinderen fluisterend de klas binnen te komen. Jaap en André bedankten de juffrouw en liepen toen door het dorp heen totdat ze bij het kiezelpad aankwamen. Het was dinsdag, dus ze konden het dorp uit. Ze wisten dat ze in het bos moesten wachten tot donderdag om het Donderdag Dorp in te kunnen. Het lopen duurde niet lang, en ze konden in ieder geval al om het Donderdag Dorp heenlopen om het te bekijken. Het was gelukkig warm, dus ze konden gewoon in de open lucht slapen. Er stonden zelfs wat lege tentjes hier en daar.

Hoofdstuk 2.

Donderdag Dorp was van de buitenkant prachtig, en Jaap en André werden steeds nieuwsgieriger. De hele dag waren ze bezig met onderzoeken, en aan het einde van de dag waren ze verschrikkelijk moe, en gingen één van de tentjes binnen om daar te slapen. De volgende dag was het woensdag, en ze waren al vroeg op. Ze zagen er naar uit Donderdag Dorp te kunnen binnengaan, maar dan moesten ze tot donderdag wachten. Weer gingen ze de buitenkant van het dorp onderzoeken en liepen om het hele dorp heen. Het was prachtig natuurgebied, en het lag aan een meer. Maar plotseling werd alles donker. En ineens werd de kap van de cabine van de machine opgetrokken. Regelrecht keken Jaap en André in de gezichten van drie politie agenten. "Eruit, jongens," sprak een agent. Hij trok hen één voor één aan hun arm de cabine uit. "Waar is professor Malerus ?" vroeg André.

"Die is gearresteerd," zei de agent. "Kinderen van school weghouden is een kwalijke zaak. Bovendien heeft hij verdachte uitvindingen gemaakt, waarvan deze machine er één is. Kom op, jongens, dat is geen plaats voor kinderen. Ga terug naar huis."

"Ja maar ..." zei Jaap.

"Niets te ja-maaren," bromde de agent. "Wegwezen nu." Hij begon hen al met zijn politie knuppel te slaan, dus toen zijn ze maar gegaan. Thuisgekomen zagen ze hun woeste vader op de bank zitten, en moeder was ook niet al te vrolijk. Hun vader stond op en begon te tieren. "Dat wordt de hele week straf," bulderde hij. "Geen televisie, en vroeg naar bed."

"Ik zei het jullie toch !" riep moeder. "Maar toch maar koppig en eigenwijs zijn."

"Professor Malerus is in de gevangenis," zei André sip.

"Dat heeft hij verdiend ook !" brulde vader. "Die man moet met zijn tengels van kinderen afblijven. Hij zou jullie totaal verpesten door zijn vreemde machines. Een kind moet naar school."

"Ja maar in het Donderdag land zijn ook scholen," zei Jaap.

"Donderdag land ?" lachte vader spottend. "Hoe kom je daar nu weer bij ? Dat zal me een school wezen dan. Die professor is niet goed bij zijn hoofd."

"Hoe weet u dat nou ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Naar boven nu," brulde vader. "Naar jullie kamer. Ruim die maar eens op om ergens mee te beginnen."

Jaap en André liepen mopperend naar boven. Hun vader had vast en zeker de politie gebeld.

André en Jaap begonnen hun kamer op te ruimen zoals hun vader hen had opgedragen. Bij het avondeten vroegen ze of ze professor Malerus in de gevangenis mochten bezoeken. "Eén keer per week," zei vader. "Want er is maar één keer per week bezoekuur."

"Welke dag is dat ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Altijd op de donderdag van vier tot vijf," sprak vader.

"Oh donderdag," zei André. "Dat is morgen al." Beiden kregen ze een dikke glimlach. Ook moeder zou met hen mee gaan. "Doet u uw zwarte pak met glitters weer aan, mamma ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Nee, Jaap," zei moeder streng. "Die gaat trouwens in de was."

"Wat gaat u dan aandoen, mams ?" vroeg André.

"Dat doet er niet toe," sprak moeder. "Professor Malerus heeft toch nergens oog voor, vooral niet nu hij in de gevangenis zit. Hij zal wel genoeg aan zijn hoofd hebben."

"Maar wij hebben wel altijd oog voor u, mams," zei Jaap.

"Het zou handig zijn als je ook eens wat oor zou hebben voor je moeder in plaats van alleen maar een oog," sprak moeder streng.

"Ach, die stomme politie agenten kwamen weer net op het verkeerde moment," mopperde Jaap. "We waren net ons aan het voorbereiden om Donderdag Dorp te bezoeken."

"Heb maar niet zulke praatjes," zei moeder nijdig. "Wat als je daar iets in de nek zou springen waar je niet op had gerekend ? Je weet het maar nooit met zulke gevaarlijke uitvindingen van professor Malerus."

"Eerst was u nog enthousiast !" riep André, "en toen we het leuk begonnen te vinden werd u een grote spelbreker."

"Daar zijn moeders voor," zei moeder. "En jullie vonden het iets te leuks. School gaat altijd voor het leuke."

"In Donderdag Dorp zou er ook school zijn," zei André.

"Afgelopen nu, en dooreten," bromde vader. Er werd toen niets meer gezegd. De volgende dag gingen ze met moeder professor Malerus in de gevangenis bezoeken. Moeder begon hem direct uit te foeteren met het bezoek uur. "Zie je nu wel waar het je allemaal gebracht heeft !" tierde ze. "En wees maar blij dat we je nog bezoeken."

André en Jaap waren kwaad op hun moeder, en dat lieten ze ook merken. "Ga jij dan maar weer weg !" riep Jaap. En dat deed moeder. Na haar woordje gezegd te hebben liep ze stampvoetend weg.

"Klaarblijkelijk ben ik een gevaar voor de samenleving," sprak professor Malerus. "Ze willen mij opgesloten houden in de gevangenis voor de rest van mijn leven."

"Dat nooit !" foeterde Jaap. "Dat is belachelijk. Uw uitvindingen zouden zoveel voor de samenleving kunnen betekenen."

"Blijkbaar denkt de politie daar anders over," sprak professor Malerus.

"Wat een stelletje apen," foeterde Jaap.

"We kunnen toch terug naar uw machine om hulp te halen uit het Donderdag land ?" fluisterde André, die niet wilde dat de bewakers het zouden horen. "Ze hebben daar ook een reus genaamd Dinsdag, de poortwachter van het land. Misschien dat hij iets kan betekenen ?"

Professor Malerus glimlachte. "Slimme jongen," zei hij zacht. "Onder de deurmat voor de voordeur ligt een extra sleutel. Beproef ons geluk maar, jongen, want hier heb ik geen leven," zei hij toen fluisterend. Even legde de professor de jongens nog uit hoe de machine op gang gezet kon worden. Ook dit deed hij fluisterend. De jongens moesten direct terugdenken aan de fluisterende juffrouw Amulek in het Dinsdag Dorp, wat het fluisterdorp was.

Maar toen ze bij het huis van professor Malerus aankwamen zagen ze agenten in en rondom het huis. Ze hoopten maar dat de machine niet in beslag genomen zou worden.

Toen ze thuiskwamen waren vader en moeder weer erg chagrijnig. André stootte Jaap aan en zei fluisterend : "Waren we nog maar in het Donderdag land."

Fluisterend zei Jaap terug : "Daar komen we hopelijk snel weer terug. Even afwachten totdat dat politie gespuis weer weg is."

Ze gingen direct weer naar hun kamer. Ze moesten toch nog huiswerk doen, en bij hun vader en moeder te zitten was nu echt geen pretje. Midden in de nacht maakte André Jaap wakker. Ze zouden het nu alles rustig was nog een keer proberen. Heel stilletjes kleedden ze zichzelf aan en gingen het huis uit. Ze hoopten maar dat vader en moeder niets zouden merken, want dan zou het huis te klein zijn. Gelukkig ging het goed. Het was diep in de nacht, en gelukkig was er ook geen politie bij het huis van professor Malerus. André keek onder de deurmat voor de voordeur, en daar lag inderdaad de sleutel, die hij toen pakte. Beiden konden ze zo het huis binnenkomen. Ze liepen de lange gang door naar de woonkamer en gingen toen direct door de andere deur in de woonkamer de trap af om in de kelder te komen. Tot hun grote opluchting stond daar nog steeds de machine. Het was een heel groot ding, en professor Malerus had hen precies uitgelegd hoe het ding op gang te krijgen. Al gauw pruttelde de machine. Even later waren er de kleine ontploffinkjes die nodig waren om de machine te laten starten. Ze gingen de cabine binnen en gingen op de stoeltjes zitten.

'Wacht,' sprak een stem. 'Wat doen jullie hier ?"

De jongens schrokken. "Wie bent u ?" vroeg André.

"Ik ben reus Dinsdag, de poortwachter van het Donderdag land," sprak de stem. "Het is nu geen dinsdag, dus ik kan jullie niet toelaten, helaas."

"We hebben u nodig," smeekte André, en begon het hele verhaal te vertellen over hoe professor Malerus in de gevangenis terecht kwam.

"Maar dat is verschrikkelijk !" zei reus Dinsdag luid. "Door hem bestaan wij. Hij is onze vader, onze uitvinder, onze ... Maar wacht eens even ... Hebben jullie die twee stangen gezien aan de voorkant van de machine ? De roze dinsdag stang, de fluisterstang, en de blauwe donderdag stang. Ze lopen vanuit de ketel."

"Ja, die hebben we gezien," zei Jaap.

"Nu, luister goed," zei reus Dinsdag. "Als die stangen verwisseld worden, dan wordt jullie wereld verwisseld met de onze, dus dan is onze wereld buiten de machine, en jullie wereld binnenin de machine. Ik ben de poortwachter van de machine, dus dan is het voor mij een koud kunstje om professor Malerus uit de gevangenis te halen."

"Maar hoe werkt dat dan ?" vroeg André.

"Daar hebben we juffrouw Amulek voor nodig," sprak de reus. "Die kan ze zo verwisselen. Die is zo handig met dit soort dingen. En dan hoeft ze ook niet meer te fluisteren. Ze moeten in het Dinsdag Dorp alle dagen van de week, behalve donderdag, fluisteren, anders zou de machine ketel te veel onder druk staan en dan zouden we er allemaal aangaan. Dat komt omdat professor Malerus de stangen verkeerd heeft geinstalleerd. In zijn verstrooidheid heeft hij de stangen met elkaar verwisseld."

"Maar waarom zegt u dat nu pas ? Had u dat niet even aan professor Malerus kunnen doorgeven toen hij nog hier was ?" vroeg Jaap, "Dan had dit allemaal voorkomen kunnen worden."

"Ik ben zelf ook nogal vergeetachtig," sprak reus Dinsdag. "Maar ik herinnerde me het ineens weer."

Hoofdstuk 3.

"Juffrouw Amulek !" riep reus Dinsdag.

"Ja," fluisterde iemand.

"Kun je even komen helpen met het verwisselen van de stangen," vroeg reus Dinsdag. "Professor Malerus had ze per ongeluk verwisseld. De roze stang moet op de plek van de blauwe, en de blauwe moet op de plek van de roze."

"Komt voor elkaar," fluisterde juffrouw Amulek.

Ze zagen verder niets, maar voelden een warme wind over zich heenkomen. Er was ineens veel gekraak in de machine, en zelfs gekrijs. Er was toen een enorme ontploffing in de ketel, maar gelukkig ging alles goed. Dat hoorde erbij volgens reus Dinsdag. "Gepiept," zei juffrouw Amulek.

"We zijn buiten de machine !" riep de reus. "Je kan weer gewoon praten, juffrouw Amulek. De ketel zal er niet meer door onder druk staan."

Juffrouw Amulek zuchtte diep. "Dat is een hele opluchting," sprak ze op normale toon.

"U heeft een mooie stem, juffrouw Amulek," sprak Jaap.

"Dank je," sprak juffrouw Amulek.

"Dus nu zijn vader en moeder, en professor Malerus in de machine ?" vroeg André.

"Ja," sprak de reus. "Nu is hun wereld de gesimuleerde werkelijkheid die bedient kan worden door

knopjes."

"En hoe komt professor Malerus nu vrij ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Ik ga er vannacht naartoe," sprak reus Dinsdag. "Juffrouw Amulek kan mooi de knopjes bedienen."

En zo gebeurde het. De machine stond nu in de school van juffrouw Amulek, en het huis van professor Malerus was waar zij die door de machine heengingen terecht kwamen. André en Jaap bleven bij juffrouw Amulek, want het zou veel te gevaarlijk zijn. Wel konden ze alles op een scherm volgen. Reus Dinsdag kwam in het huis van professor Malerus terecht, en ging toen naar buiten op weg naar de gevangenis. Maar plotseling viel het beeld weg. Ze zagen niets dan sneeuw op het beeld. Toen herinnerden André en Jaap het weer. Reus Dinsdag kon in een ijsgebied veranderen. Daarna zagen ze de warme zee op het scherm, en toen ineens het hoofd van professor Malerus die door een zwemband naar boven kwam. André en Jaap moesten lachen. Ze waren erg opgelucht. De operatie leek geslaagd. "Kom maar uit de cabine, professor Malerus," sprak juffrouw Amulek vriendelijk. En daar kwam professor Malerus onder de cabine-kap vandaan. "Goed gedaan jongens, en meisje," sprak professor Malerus. "Ik dacht even dat ik er nooit meer uit zou komen. Ik ga er nu heel lang aan werken om het een totaal nieuwe wereld te maken in de machine."

André en Jaap glimlachten. Ze wilden niet meer terug. Ze zouden nu hierblijven. Ze zouden voorlopig wonen in het huisje van juffrouw Amulek. Ze kon hele lekkere lommer-soep maken. Maar op een dag was de machine van professor Malerus kapot, en niemand kon het meer aan de praat krijgen, zelfs juffrouw Amulek niet, en langzaam begon alles weer te worden als vanouds. De machine stond gewoon weer in de kelder van professor Malerus. Het Donderdag land leek niet meer te bestaan sinds de machine kapot was. Ook reus Dinsdag en juffrouw Amulek waren verdwenen. Maar gelukkig was professor Malerus nog steeds vrij. "Ik moet onderduiken, jongens," sprak hij. "Alles is teruggedraaid zoals het was, omdat de machine stuk is. Als ze me vinden zullen ze me weer opsluiten," sprak professor Malerus.

"Maar hoe kan dat ?" vroeg Jaap. "U bent toch de professor ? Wat is er dan gebeurd ?"

"Er is iets doorgebrand," sprak de professor. "Het is heel kostbaar en zeldzaam spul wat alleen in Afrika groeit. Ik moet hier weg, en misschien zoeken in Afrika, en dan weer terugkomen om de machine proberen te herstellen, maar ach, laat maar, ik weet zeker dat ik gezocht wordt, overal. Ik ben in hun ogen een gevaarlijke ontsnapte crimineel. Ik zou nooit ver komen."

"Maar kunt u dan geen ander materiaal ervoor in de plaats gebruiken ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Onmogelijk," sprak de professor. "Zonder dit materiaal werkt het gewoon niet. Het is doorgebrand en ik krijg het niet meer goed."

André en Jaap keken sip. "En onze vader en moeder zullen ons snel terugvinden," zei Jaap. "Wij zullen dan ook met u moeten onderduiken. Waar zullen we naartoe gaan ?"

"Ik heb nog wel ergens een vriendin," sprak professor Malerus. "Ik weet zeker dat zij mij wel zou willen helpen, en jullie natuurlijk. Ze heeft een groot huis met veel kamers, dus dat komt wel goed. Dan nemen we de machine mee."

Met een telefoontje was het snel geregeld. De machine was gemaakt van speciale opvouwbare materialen. Zelfs het metaal was opvouwbaar, en alles paste net in een koffertje. André en Jaap keken er verbaasd naar toen de professor de machine opvouwde. Met wat koffers gingen ze even later naar het station. Professor Malerus had een hoed en een zonnebril op omdat hij niet herkend

wilde worden. Ze zouden met de trein gaan.

Penitide heette de vrouw. Ze kwam hen na de treinreis van het station afhalen. Ze begreep het hele verhaal en stond achter zijn uitvindingen. Ze vond dat professor Malerus een onbegrepen genie was die tegen de staat beschermd moest worden. In het huis van Penitide kregen ze alle drie hun eigen slaap kamer. In een speciaal kamertje werd de machine uitgevouwen. Ook Penitide kreeg het verhaal te horen wat er mankeerde aan de machine. Toen ze hoorde over het ontbrekende Afrikaanse materiaal sprak ze : "Laat ik nou net daar iets van hebben. Drie jaar geleden was ik in Afrika, en vond het gesteente los in een grot. Ik heb het meegenomen als aandenken. Het ligt in een mandje op zolder, maar als het gebruikt kan worden om die machine weer aan de praat te brengen, dan graag. Dan heeft het toch nog een functie in plaats van alleen maar in een mandje te liggen de hele dag. Er keek toch geen ene kip naar. Het lag daar maar te liggen. Het is inderdaad een soort brandbaar schuimsteen. Het schijnt ook na verloop van tijd te krimpen, dus het is na een bepaalde tijd altijd weer aan vervanging toe. Zeg, zou je niet iets kunnen uitvinden wat ervoor zorgt dat het spul niet meer doorbrand of krimpt ?"

Professor Malerus keek verbaasd, en het gaf ook de jongens weer wat hoop. "Ik kan me dat bijna niet voorstellen dat dat hetzelfde spul is als wat ik nodig heb voor mijn machine," sprak professor Malerus. "Dat spul is zo zeldzaam dat je dat echt niet ergens zomaar in een Afrikaanse grot tegen kan komen. Het groeit alleen diep onder de grond. Het is ook niet echt gesteente, maar meer iets plantaardigs. Waarschijnlijk heb je je vergist. Ik kan het me haast niet voorstellen. Het is een soort kruid. Het is brandbaar en krimpt, en om bruikbaar te zijn voor mijn machine moet het aan een heleboel voorwaardes voldoen. Ik denk dat ik de moed maar moet opgeven."

"Ik zal het wel even halen," sprak Penitide, en ging naar het zolder. Even later kwam ze met het mandje terug, maar professor Malerus begon al direct met zijn hoofd te schudden. "Nee, nee nee, dit is het echt niet." Toen begon hij wat te mompelen, en vreemde formules op te zeggen. "Er mankeert heel wat aan, en ik kan dit nooit voor mijn machine gebruiken. Geen denken aan. Het lijkt misschien een beetje op dat wat ik bedoel, maar het is het echt niet."

Hoofdstuk 4.

"Zou ik jou eens wat zeggen ?" vroeg Penitide. "Volgens mij is dit net wat je nodig hebt, en zit je het gewoon moeilijker te maken dan wat het is. Waarom probeer je het niet gewoon ? Nee heb je en ja kun je krijgen."

"Nee, Penitide," sprak professor Malerus. "Ik zou er alleen maar mijn tijd mee verdoen om jou valse hoop te geven. Echt niet, meisje."

Maar ook de jongens begonnen aan te dringen. Ze wisten namelijk hoe verstrooid de professor kon zijn. Dat hadden ze wel gemerkt met die stangen.

Na een lange tijd stemde professor Malerus eindelijk toe, maar gewoon om van het gezeur af te zijn. Hij begon met een mesje in het spul te snijden, en begon even later het spul te installeren. Toen startte hij de machine. "Lieve hemel," zei hij na een tijdje terwijl hij op de schermpjes keek. "Het

schijnt te werken. Ik kan mijn ogen niet geloven."

"Zie je nu wel, verstrooide professor," sprak Penitide. "Nu moet je alleen nog een middeltje vinden waardoor het spul niet meer door kan branden en niet meer kan krimpen, maar voorlopig hebben we meer dan genoeg." Ook de jongens waren blij. Professor Malerus trok de kap van de cabine open, en ze gingen alle vier op de stoeltjes zitten. Hij trok de kap weer dicht totdat het pikkedonker was. Al snel begonnen ze het koud te krijgen. Ze hoorden het loeien van een ijsstorm, wat bijna krijste in hun oren. "Ik ken dit helemaal niet !" riep de professor. "Er is iets goed fout."

Overal was ijs en sneeuw, en er was veel storm. In de verte zagen ze lawines. "Laten we dan teruggaan," sprak Penitide kalm.

"Dat kan ik niet," zei de professor in paniek. "Daarom zei ik dat er wat goed fout zit."

Ook de jongens begonnen in paniek te raken. "Wat is er mis dan, professor ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Het mechanische systeem van de machine is al bevroren," sprak de professor.

"Hoe komt dat ?" vroeg André.

"Waarschijnlijk door het nieuwe spul wat jullie koste wat het koste wilden gebruiken voor de machine," sprak de professor.

"Ik wist niet dat er gevaren waren," sprak Penitide kalm. "Dan had je me dat moeten uitleggen."

"Dat heb ik gedaan, maar je wilde niet luisteren," foeterde de professor.

"Niet waar," zei Penitide. "Je zei alleen dat het niet zou werken, niet dat er gevaren zouden zijn."

Even later keken ze in een afgrond van lava. "We zijn er geweest," sprak de professor. "Het gat komt steeds dichterbij om ons op te slokken."

"Doe iets, Malerus," sprak Penitide.

"Ik kan niks, dankzij jou," sprak de professor.

"Nee, nee !" krijste André. "Ik wil niet dood."

Jaap begon te huilen. "Ik heb het zo heet. Straks smelt ik weg."

"Nee joh," zei Penitide. "We verzinnen wel wat."

"Allemaal blijven zitten," zei de professor.

Het begon steeds heter te worden, en ze waren nu gevaarlijk dicht bij het lava gekomen, totdat ook Penitide haar kalmte verloor. "Nu begrijp ik waarom ze jou lieten opsluiten ! Je bent levensgevaarlijk ! Moet je zien wat je gemaakt hebt !" riep ze. "Dat is toch niet meer normaal ? We worden zodadelijk gegrild. Wie wil er nu een gebakken eitje zijn hier ?"

"Jouw idee," zei de professor, die ook al zwaar aan het zweten was. "Als jouw verdachte materiaal zich aan de voorschriften had gehouden dan was er niets aan de hand geweest. Jij dwong mij om het te gebruiken."

"Geef anderen maar weer de schuld," foeterde Penitide. "Dat is altijd makkelijk. Jij had moeten ingrijpen als je wist hoe gevaarlijk dit kon zijn."

"Ik kon niet meer ingrijpen, want jij had het roer overgenomen," zei de professor. Hij was al aan het beven vanwege de warmte.

"Je hebt gewoon geen ruggegraat," foeterde Penitide. "Ze kunnen je als watje verkopen bij de drogist."

"Nu niet zwaar beledigend gaan doen, Penitide," sprak de professor, "doe dat niet." De professor was aan het klooien met een klein apparaatje wat hij uit zijn zak had gehaald. "Ik zal kijken of ik .... ik zal kij ... Ik zal kijken of ik reus Dinsdag door een bepaalde code kan bereiken," zuchtte de professor bevend en verzwakt.

"Ik kan niet meer," jammerde André. Ineens werden ze weggeduwd van de lava door een frisse wind. Het was reus Dinsdag. "Hier moet je niet komen !" riep de reus.

"Het is het verkeerde materiaal in de uitgangen A en U !" riep de professor.

"Nee, professor !" bulderde de reus. "Dit is komen te ontstaan omdat de machine te lang kapot is geweest. Onze hele wereld is ten onder gegaan. Er is geen Donderdag land meer."

"Waar is juffrouw Amulek ?" riep Jaap, "en alle kinderen van haar school ?"

Een zachte wind had hen inmiddels meegenomen. "Ze zijn allemaal veilig in een grot waar ik ze naartoe genomen heb."

De zachte wind leidde hen naar een berg waar een grote grot was. Daar waren alle inwoners van Donderdag land ondergebracht.

"Zie je nu wel," foeterde Penitide kwaad. "Het lag niet aan mijn materiaal, maar aan jouw kapotte machine."

"Ik heb een andere mening," zei de professor.

"Ik had je nooit moeten binnennemen," zei Penitide. "Grootste vergissing in mijn leven. Het is mijn eigen dikke schuld."

"Deze situatie was al voordat de machine gerepareerd werd door het nieuwe materiaal," sprak de reus. "Door het nieuwe materiaal kon ik eindelijk een schuilplaats vinden voor mijn volk."

"Je kletst," foeterde de professor. "Het nieuwe materiaal sluit niet aan op mijn machine. Er gaat teveel fout."

"Zitten we niet goed hier, professor ?" vroeg de reus.

"We kunnen er niet meer uit," sprak de professor, "en dat komt door het nieuwe materiaal. Het heeft mijn toegang tot het centrale systeem geblokkeerd. Ik kan mijn machine niet meer bedienen."

"Wat nu ?" vroeg de reus.

"De enige oplossing zou zijn een extra derde stang in de ketel te plaatsen," sprak de professor. "Die stang zou dan een vervanging moeten zijn voor het systeem met het zeldzame Afrikaanse materiaal. Dat systeem moet echt weg, want het veroorzaakt teveel problemen, en zal ook altijd weer aan vervanging toe zijn na een bepaalde tijd."

"Wat voor stang is het, professor ?" vroeg de reus.

Er gaat van alles mis als die stang er niet is," sprak de professor. "Er komen de grootst mogelijke ruzies en oorlogen van. Ja, ik herinner het me weer, ik herinner me het weer. Ik ook altijd met mijn verstrooide kop." De professor begon toen steeds meer geheimzinnig te kijken. "Het is de woensdag stang, het geheim van Woensdag."

"En waar kunnen we het vinden, professor ?" vroeg de reus.

"Eens even kijken, even nadenken," sprak de professor. "Ja, ik weet het weer. Ik heb het weer. Het gebeurt alleen op woensdag. Het is een rode stang. Zodra het komt zullen de dorpen weer terug zijn, en er zal een nieuw dorp bij zijn : het Woensdag dorp. Reus Dinsdag, herinner jij je reus Woensdag nog ? Heel lang geleden. Hij kwam bij je wieg staan. Ik herinner me dat als hij kwaad werd dan waren er ijstormen, lawines, en veel lava. Ik denk dat hij het was. We waren hem vergeten. Ik was hem vergeten. Hij wil weer terug. Reus Woensdag heeft de woensdag stang. Eens ging hij zeilen, maar hij kwam nooit meer terug. Ik ben hem vergeten, en dat neemt hij me kwalijk. Maar hij zou ons nooit daadwerkelijk kwaaddoen. Daarom zijn we hier."

"Nou, het was anders knap eng," zei Jaap.

"Hij houdt van griezelen," zei de professor. "Het is een griezelreus, maar hij is heel goedmoedig."

"Waar woont hij, professor ?" vroeg reus Dinsdag. "Dat moet dan wel van heel lang geleden zijn, want ik kan hem niet meer herinneren. Ik was nog te jong."

"Ik weet niet waar hij woont," sprak de professor. "Maar hij moet dichtbij zijn, heel dichtbij. Hij is teruggekomen."

Plotseling stond er een vurige gestalte in de opening van de grot. "Gij hebt mij gewekt. Wat moet gij van mij ?" brulde de gestalte.

"Ah, daar is reus Woensdag," sprak de professor. "Ben je teruggekomen, jongen ? Ik heb de rode stang nodig."

"Die krijg je niet !" bulderde reus Woensdag.

Hoofdstuk 5.

"Jij bent de enige die ons kunt redden, reus Woensdag," sprak de professor.
"Dan red ik je niet, red jezelf," bulderde de reus.
"Alles wat we willen is de rode stang," sprak de professor.

"Die heb ik niet," bulderde de reus.
"Woensdag geef ik het je," bulderde de reus weer.

"Het is vandaag woensdag," sprak de professor.

"Laat maar zitten dan !" bulderde de reus. Toen vertrok hij weer.

"Zie, hij wil niet meewerken," sprak de professor.

Na een tijdje kwam reus Woensdag weer terug. Ditmaal was hij een gestalte van ijs. Hij gooide een rode staaf naar de professor. "Ik kan hem toch niet langer houden, want mijn vingers beginnen ervan te branden," bulderde de reus.

"Dat komt omdat de stang terug wil waar het hoort," sprak de professor.

"Je hebt me nogal babbels," bulderde de reus.

"Wat is het geheim van woensdag ?" vroeg reus Dinsdag.

"Woensdag was ooit de slaapdag van de reuzen," sprak de professor. "Dan bleven ze de hele dag slapen, en dan gingen ze dromen, de mooiste dromen."

Plotseling begon de rode stang te spreken : "Werp me naar boven. Dan zal ik me in de machine installeren." Dat deed de professor. Er was toen een enorme ontploffing. De ketel begon anders te werken. Jaap en André keken hun ogen uit. Het Donderdag land begon weer terug te komen. Maar ineens waren er nog meer explosies. Versuft zaten ze alle vier op de grond in het kamertje waar de machine stond, in het huis van Penitide : André, Jaap, de professor en Penitide. De machine was overhit geraakt, en was ontploft. Er was niet veel meer van over.

"Mijn arme kunstwerk !" jammerde de professor.

"Jij altijd en je goede ideeën," foeterde Penitide. "Je bent levensgevaarlijk, ook vooral levensgevaarlijk voor kinderen. In de gevangenis hoor je thuis. Eigenlijk zou ik nu direct de politie willen bellen. Je rommelt maar wat aan met je verstrooide kop."

"Maar dan zullen ze jou als medeplichtig houden," sprak de professor. "Je bent al te diep in de nesten geraakt, vriendin. Er is geen weg terug meer voor jou nu."

"Puh, dat maak ik zelf nog wel uit," foeterde Penitide. "Pak jullie spullen en maak dat je wegkomt. Ik wil niets meer met deze zaak te maken hebben. Ik ben er helemaal klaar mee. Je mag hopen dat ik niet alsnog de politie telefoneer."

"Je weet dat jij dan ook goed erbij bent, vriendin," sprak de professor.

"Ik ben je vriendin niet, als je dat maar weet," sprak Penitide. "Pak je spullen en vertrek, nu."

"Die machine mag je houden als aandenken," zei de professor. "Ik ben er ook klaar mee. Ik kan het toch niet meer gebruiken, en de rommel valt ook niet op te vouwen."

"Mij met de rommel achterlaten zeker," sprak Penitide. "Komt niks van in. Neem je rommel mee, en ga terug naar je trein."

"Kom jongens," zei de professor. Ze pakten hun spullen en vertrokken. De jongens hadden beiden een klein stukje van de ontplofte machine meegenomen als aandenken. Verder lieten ze de machine bij Penitide achter die er maar over bleef foeteren. Zelfs toen ze allang wegwaren. Uiteindelijk besloot ze het bij het grof vuil te zetten.

"Wat een heks was dat, die Penitide," sprak Jaap.

"Ja, een walgelijke vrouw," sprak de professor. "Ik weet zeker dat zij met dat materiaal heeft lopen knoeien. Alles, maar dan ook alles liep verkeerd."

"Waar gaan we nu naartoe ?" vroeg André. Ze zaten inmiddels in de trein.

"Wat denk je zelf ?" vroeg de professor.

"Ik weet het niet," zei André.

"En jij, Jaap ?" vroeg de professor.

"Ik mis juffrouw Amulek," zei Jaap.

"En reus Dinsdag," zei André.

"Ik ben er klaar mee," sprak de professor. "Misschien hoor ik wel in de gevangenis thuis."

"Nee !" riepen André en Jaap. "We verzinnen wel wat. U moet Donderdag land redden. U kunt toch gewoon leren van de fouten, en opnieuw beginnen ?"

"Geen denken aan," sprak de professor.

"U bent slim genoeg," sprak Jaap. "Donderdag land gaat verloren zonder u."

"Hmm," zei de professor. "Ach weet je, ik denk dat ik gek aan het worden ben. Het was per slot van rekening maar een gesimuleerde werkelijkheid. Het was niet echt."

"Dus dat we bijna in de lava terecht kwamen was ook niet echt ?" vroeg André. "Het was zo verschrikkelijk heet."

"Allemaal simulaties," zei de professor. "Het zenuwstelsel reageert daar weer op. Het is allemaal inbeelding. Ik liet me er teveel in meesleuren, en zelfs voor mij leek het op een bepaald moment net echt. Ik was echt bang geworden, en echt in paniek geraakt, omdat ik de machine niet meer kon bedienen. Het ding was op hol geslagen, maar na oververhitting schakelt de machine vanzelf uit, en als dat niet lukt, dan heeft de machine een ingebouwd self-destruct programma, als laatste redmiddel, en zo is dat ook gegaan. Sorry jongens, ik liet me er teveel in meesleuren, ik liet me er teveel in meegaan."

"Dus juffrouw Amulek en reus Dinsdag bestaan helemaal niet ?" vroeg Jaap bijna huilend.

"Sorry jongens," zei de professor. "Het is mijn fout geweest, mijn schuld."

"Ja, maar reus Dinsdag heeft u wel mooi de gevangenis uit gehaald," sprak André.

"Welnee," sprak de professor. "Dat was allemaal trucage. De machine speelde met jullie verbeelding en simuleerde dat ook. Ik moet jullie wat bekennen, jongens. Ik heb nooit echt in de gevangenis gezeten. De machine simuleerde alsof jullie er door politie agenten weer werden uitgehaald, maar jullie zaten er nog steeds in. Ook dat was een gesimuleerde werkelijkheid."

"D... dus Penitide was ook maar gewoon een onderdeel van de gesimuleerde werkelijkheid van de machine ?" vroeg Jaap. De professor knikte. "Nog sterker ...," sprak de professor. "We zitten nog steeds in de machine. Ik kan het laten stoppen op elk moment, en dan schuif ik de kap weg en dan kunnen jullie eruit."

"Dus de machine was helemaal niet kapot gegaan, maar dat verzon de machine gewoon zelf ?" vroeg Jaap. De professor knikte.

Hoofdstuk 6.

"We weten zo nooit of we er wel echt uit zijn," sprak Jaap die een beetje in paniek raakte. "Maar goed, werkelijkheid of gesimuleerde werkelijkheid : Ik wil terug naar Donderdag land, naar juffrouw Amulek en reus Dinsdag."

Ze zaten in de trein, maar ze wisten dat ze nog steeds in de machine waren. Toen werd alles zwart, en de professor schoof de kap van de cabine omhoog. "Nee, ik stop ermee, jongens," sprak de professor. "Het is al te ver gegaan. Ik dacht jullie voor de gek te houden, maar ik werd later zelf voor de gek gehouden. Het is een gevaarlijke machine."

"U gaat het toch niet weggooien ?" vroeg André. "We kunnen heus wel tegen een grapje."

"Het grapje liep uit de hand," sprak de professor. "Nogmaals, sorry jongens. Groeten aan jullie vader en moeder. Het was leuk, maar aan alle leuke dingen komt een eind."

Jaap keek op de klok. Het was nog geen zes uur 's ochtends. "Wat voor dag is het vandaag ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Dinsdag," zei de professor. "Jullie kwamen hier een paar uur geleden."

"Het leek wel dagen te duren in de machine," sprak Jaap.

"Dat klopt," sprak de professor. "Dat is gesimuleerde tijd, ook trucage. Dat doet de machine."

"Ik wil niet weg," zei André.

"Ik ook niet," zei Jaap.

"Jullie lijken wel een stelletje verslaafden," sprak de professor.

"Uw schuld," sprak Jaap. "Wij eisen juffrouw Amulek weer te zien en reus Dinsdag."

"Dat gaat niet gebeuren," sprak de professor. "Wat ik wel kan doen is jullie beiden een boek mee te geven over juffrouw Amulek en reus Dinsdag. Het is een boek over het Donderdag land."

Dat leek André en Jaap wel wat. Glunderend namen ze het boek in ontvangst. Ze kregen beiden hetzelfde boek, zodat ze er geen ruzie over konden maken.

Nog steeds was er een grote glimlach op hun gezicht toen ze thuiskwamen.
"Zo," sprak moeder, "jullie zijn vroeg thuis."

"Ja, het ging allemaal erg snel," zei Jaap, "en we hebben een leuk boek van de professor gehad."

"Leuk," zei moeder, "en wat hebben jullie allemaal bij de professor gedaan ? Wat heeft hij jullie laten zien ?"

"Ehm, mamma," zei Jaap. "U was er toch ook bij in het begin, toen we de machine binnengingen ? We waren in het ijsgebied, en toen in de warme zee met u en de professor."

"Waar heb je het over, lieve jongen ?" vroeg moeder. "Jullie zijn alleen naar de professor gegaan."

"Vreemd," zei Jaap. "Zou dat ook al een truuk van de machine geweest zijn dan ?"

Ook André keek verbaasd naar moeder.

"Nou, dat vind ik toch wel vreemd dan dat je dat denkt," sprak moeder.

"Hoe weten we nu of we niet nog steeds in die machine zitten ?" fluisterde André in Jaap's oor.

"Ja, dat weten we dus niet," fluisterde Jaap terug, "maar er gebeuren hier dus wel hele vreemde dingen."

"Ik vertrouw die hele professor voor geen cent meer," fluisterde André.

"Wat als we vanaf onze geboorte al in die machine zaten ?" fluisterde Jaap.

"Eng idee," zei André.

's Avonds in bed gingen ze beiden lezen in hun boek. Het ging niet alleen over reus Dinsdag en juffrouw Amulek in het Donderdag land, maar ook over een toversteen. Die toversteen moest ergens in het bos zijn, en de steen was het portaal tot het donderdag land. In het hele boek kwam de machine van de professor niet eens voor. De jongens waren helemaal enthousiast na het lezen van het boek. Ze moesten en zouden de toversteen vinden. Het boek beschreef ook waar de toversteen ergens moest zijn. Omdat het boek over hun eigen dorp ging moest het dichtbij zijn. De steen was ergens onder de grond in het bos, volgens het boek. Eigenlijk konden Jaap en André niet wachten

tot de volgende dag. Ze wachtten totdat hun vader en moeder sliepen, en gingen toen met een zaklamp naar buiten, naar het bos. Ze hadden het boek meegenomen. Er moest ergens een groot hol zijn in het bos wat onder de grond liep. Daar moesten ze doorheen. Het zou leiden tot een tunnel die nog dieper onder de grond zou gaan. Na een tijdje zoeken, met de aanwijzingen van het boek, hadden ze het hol gevonden. Het was heel donker, maar de zaklampen hielpen goed. Het hol was in een heuveltje, en liep schuin naar beneden. Het was er erg modderig. Na een tijdje kwamen ze aan bij de tunnel, zoals het boek had uitgelegd. De tunnel liep nog dieper tot onder de grond, en zou tot een open ruimte leiden waar de steen ergens moest liggen.

"Ik ben benieuwd," fluisterde Jaap naar André. Soms waren er bochten die naar beneden liepen, en het leek zigzaggend naar beneden te gaan, dieper en dieper. André begon het benauwd te krijgen, en ook Jaap. "Ik hoop dat we het snel vinden," zei André. Jaap begon inmiddels al te hoesten. "Ik voel me niet goed," zei Jaap.

"Ik ook niet," zei André. "Waar zou het door komen ?"

"Ik weet het niet," zei Jaap, "maar ik krijg bijna geen lucht."

De tunnel leidde uiteindelijk inderdaad naar een open ruimte, zoals het boek zei. Hier was een grote gloeiende steen. Er kwam heel broeierig zacht licht vanaf. "Ik ben duizelig," zei André. André liep er naartoe en raakte de steen aan, maar hij werd direct achteruit geslingerd. "Au, het lijkt wel alsof er stroom op staat," zei André luid.

"Oppassen geblazen dus," zei Jaap. Jaap liep om de steen heen ... "Het lijkt wel ..." zei Jaap.

"Wat ?" vroeg André.

"Zou dit het portaal zijn ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Ik denk het," zei André, "als we het boek kunnen geloven."

"Ik vraag me af wat we nu moeten doen," zei Jaap.

"Een steen, een steen," sprak de toversteen, "nog even en jullie zullen smelten."

"Wat bedoelt u ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Nou, gewoon zoals ik het zeg," zei de steen.

"Maar ik begrijp u niet," zei Jaap.

"Dat is mijn probleem niet," zei de steen.

"Hoe komen we tot het donderdag land ?" vroeg André.

"Er is hier geen donderdag land," sprak de steen.

"Ja maar het boek zei dat de toversteen het portaal is tot het donderdag land," sprak Jaap.

"Je boek kan me nog meer vertellen," zei de steen. "Wie denk je dat het beter weet, een boek of een sprekende steen ?"

"Ik weet het niet," zei Jaap. "Heeft het boek ons dan bedrogen ? We hadden het namelijk wel van iemand gehad die ons al eerder had bedrogen."

"Ga er maar vanuit dat jullie weer bedrogen zijn," sprak de steen. "Er is hier geen portaal naar een donderdag land. Wie verzint nu zoiets ?"

Jaap en André keken de steen sip aan. "We hadden ons er zo op verheugd," zei Jaap. "We missen reus Dinsdag en juffrouw Amulek."

"Daar heb ik allemaal niets mee te maken," zei de steen. "Verwacht niet dat je bij mij kunt gaan lopen uithuilen op mijn schouders. Ik ben zo hard als steen. Het zou alleen maar erger worden."

Jaap en André begonnen het steeds warmer te krijgen. "Wat is hier aan de hand !" riep Jaap. Hij begon weer weg te rennen uit de open ruimte de tunnel in, en toen ook André. "Het is hier niet pluis !" riep Jaap. "Alsof we gekookt worden !"

"Ren maar !" riep de steen. "Ik zei het jullie toch ! Jullie zullen smelten !"

"Maar waarom, waarom !" schreeuwde Jaap, die harder en harder begon te rennen. Maar ze konden de steen niet meer verstaan. Het was te ver weg. "Naar de uitgang !" riep Jaap bijna zonder adem. Na een tijdje stonden ze weer buiten het hol. "Eindelijk frisse lucht," zei Jaap.

"En gelukkig is het hier kouder," zei André.

"Ja, we werden gewoon gegrild," zei Jaap. "Wat nu ?"

"Volgens mij hebben we het boek niet goed gelezen," zei André.

"Denk je ?" vroeg Jaap. Weer begonnen ze in hun boek te lezen. Ze hadden beiden het boek meegenomen.

"Een vorst komt altijd van onderen naar de toversteen toe, niet van boven, anders zou hij smelten," staat hier," zei André.

"Een vorst ? Is dat het koude weer of een koninklijk iemand ?" vroeg Jaap. "Wij zijn geen van beiden."

"We zijn rechtstreeks van boven naar beneden tot de open ruimte gegaan, maar waarschijnlijk moeten we een weg zien te vinden die onder de open ruimte terecht komt, en dan moeten we naar boven, want ik kan me herinneren dat er wel een opening van een hol was achter de toversteen," sprak André. "Een vorst is misschien een prins ? Als het voor een prins geldt, waarom dan niet voor ons ? Als we daar gebleven waren dan zouden we echt gesmolten zijn. Blijkbaar accepteert de toversteen het niet als iemand van boven komt."

"Vreemd," zei Jaap. "Misschien heb je gelijk. Laten we goed zoeken naar een ander hol in de buurt."

"Hier staat : "Alleen zij die onder de modder de toversteen bereiken zullen het geluk vinden, want kwam de toversteen niet uit het diepste der aarde ?" zei André.

"Hmmm," zei Jaap. "Misschien herkent de toversteen ons als één van hen als we ons hebben ingesmeerd met datgene waarin hij geboren is : aarde ?"

"We kunnen het proberen," zei André.

Jaap begon te lachen en begon zijn kleren uit te trekken, behalve zijn onderbroek, en begon zichzelf in te smeren met modder. André deed toen precies hetzelfde, en lachte ook. "Het kietelt," lachte André. Toen gingen ze terug het hol in. Ze voelden zich veel beter nu, en kregen het ook niet meer benauwd. Ze voelden zich steeds beter naarmate ze dieper onder de grond gingen. Toch begon het ook steeds warmer te worden. "Dat gaat niet goed," zei Jaap. "Het is beter dan de vorige keer, maar ik zie vuur in de verte."

"Ja," zei André, "laten we teruggaan en naar een ander hol zoeken. Ik denk dat er niks anders opzit."

Ze bleven zoeken met hun zaklantaars toen ze weer uit het hol waren gekomen. Ook bleven ze doorlezen in hun boek.

"Oh kijk," zei André. "Het hol om onder de toversteen te komen is in een andere stad," staat hier.

"We hadden het boek veel beter moeten lezen," sprak Jaap. "Dan waren we niet zo in de problemen gekomen als nu."

"Laten we maar naar huis gaan, en het eerst helemaal nauwkeurig lezen," zei André, "anders vergeten we straks weer wat."

"Gelijk heb je," sprak Jaap. En toen zijn ze maar naar huis gegaan. Wel moesten ze toen eerst een bad nemen, want ze waren helemaal onder de modder. Gelukkig werden vader en moeder er niet wakker van.

De volgende dag waren ze alweer vroeg op, en natuurlijk gingen ze direct lezen. Het boek zei dat ze naar een stadje verderop moesten waar de broer van professor Malerus zou wonen, professor Hagelaar. Ze zouden daar met de trein naartoe moeten. Jaap en André waren zo enthousiast dat ze niet meer konden wachten. Ze zouden het boek wel verder lezen in de trein. In het boek stond precies beschreven waar professor Hagelaar woonde, en hoe ze daar zouden moeten komen. Ze hoopten maar dat de professor daar nog steeds zou wonen, want het leek nogal een oud boek.

"Stel dat hij daar nog steeds zou wonen, dan worden we misschien weer bedrogen. Vaak zit het in de familie," zei Jaap.

"Laten we het er toch maar op wagen, want ik zie geen andere weg om terug te komen tot het Donderdag land," zei André.

"Dat is waar," zei Jaap. "En ik ben erg nieuwsgierig."

De jongens waren erg zenuwachtig. Vader en moeder lagen nog te slapen. Van hun zakgeld zouden ze treinkaartjes kopen. Het stadje waar ze naartoe moesten was niet ver. Vijf minuten in de trein. In de trein lazen ze nog even in het boek, en toen waren ze er al. Ze moesten toen over een pad langs een hele lange heg lopen, en zo kwamen ze de stad in, waar professor Hagelaar ergens moest wonen. Ze letten goed op de beschrijvingen van het boek. Na een tijdje kwamen ze aan bij het huis. Professor Hagelaar woonde boven een winkel, althans als hij daar nog steeds zou wonen, want dat was nog maar de vraag. Er stond wel Hagelaar op een bordje boven de bel. Dat was al een hele opluchting voor de jongens. Jaap belde aan. Na een tijdje deed een vrouw open. Ze mochten mee naar boven komen, waar professor Hagelaar woonde. De vrouw leek op een dienstmeisje. Een man met een grote baard en een pijpje stond bovenaan de trap. Hij was direct erg vriendelijk. De jongens

vertelden hem het verhaal. "Oh, dat boek ?" lachte hij. "Ja, dat heb ik ooit eens geschreven onder een valse naam, een pseudoniem."

"Ik hoop dat verder het verhaal over de toversteen en het Donderdag land niet vals is," zei Jaap.

"Nee, nee nee, dat is allemaal echt waar," sprak professor Hagelaar. Hij nam de jongens mee naar de woonkamer. Hier hingen een heleboel koekoeksklokken. Professor Hagelaar was een maker van levend speelgoed. Het was heel griezelig, zo griezelig dat het beneden in zijn speelgoedwinkel niet verkocht mocht worden. Hij vertelde over het hol in de achtertuin van de winkel, wat helemaal tot onder de open ruimte van de toversteen in het bos liep.

"Hoe werkt dat portaal tot Donderdag land dan precies ?" vroeg Jaap. "Is dat de toversteen zelf ?"

"Nee," zei professor Hagelaar. "De steen moet op een bepaalde manier gedraaid worden om het portaal te openen."

"Maar toen ik de steen aanraakte werd ik achteruit geslingerd," zei André.

Professor Hagelaar lachte. "Ja, ja ja, dat komt omdat je er niet aan mocht zitten. Je voldeed nog niet aan de voorwaardes. Je had het boek maar half gelezen," sprak de professor.

Hoofdstuk 7.

"Dus als we door dat hol in de achtertuin gaan en ons insmeren met modder, dan kunnen we veilig naar de steen toe om de steen in de juiste positie te draaien om het portaal tot het Donderdag land te openen ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Vergeet het maar," zei professor Hagelaar. "Er komt veel meer bij kijken. De steen kan niet zomaar gedraaid worden. Daarvoor zit het veels te vast, en de steen is daarvoor ook veel te heet. Je handen zouden er vanaf branden."

"Het leek wel of er stroom opstond toen ik het aanraakte," sprak André.

"Dan mag je geluk hebben dat je nog leeft," sprak professor Hagelaar.

"Wie schrijft nu zulke gevaarlijke boeken dan ?" vroeg Jaap. "U bent al net zo gevaarlijk als uw broer. Daar hebben we ook al heel wat mee meegemaakt."

"Vergelijk me alsjeblieft niet met mijn broer," sprak professor Hagelaar. "Alles was duidelijk in het boek uitgelegd."

"Ja, maar kinderen lezen er overheen," sprak Jaap.

"Nu, luister," sprak professor Hagelaar, "de steen kan alleen draaien door een toverliedje."

"Ja, houd maar op," zei Jaap. "Ik heb het idee dat we weer gigantisch in de maling worden genomen."

"Volgens mij ook, Jaap," zei André.

"Zeg professor Hagelaar," zei Jaap, "kunnen we hier niet gewoon bij u blijven logeren, en dat we dan leuke spelletjes gaan doen, en dan de stad in ?"

"Goed kinderen," glimlachte professor Hagelaar, "als jullie het niet willen geloven, dan kunnen we hier ook gewoon spelletjes doen en een leuke tijd hebben. Ik zal jullie vader en moeder er wel even voor opbellen."

En zo gebeurde het. Vader en moeder vonden het goed, en zo bleven de jongens een paar weken bij professor Hagelaar logeren, en ze hadden een leuke tijd. Het was per slot van rekening vakantie tijd. Maar aan het einde van het logeren bij professor Hagelaar schoof professor Malerus toch weer de kap van de machine-cabine omhoog, en bleek het dat ze toch al die tijd weer gewoon in de machine hadden gezeten. "Dacht ik het niet !" riep Jaap. "Ik had het kunnen weten !" Ze keken recht in het lachende gezicht van professor Malerus.

"De toversteen nog gevonden ?" grinnikte professor Malerus.

"Wat bent u een bandiet !" riep Jaap. "Ja, gevonden, maar weer weggezonden. Het is een onmogelijke opgave !"

"Het is gewoon een spel," zei professor Malerus, "en jullie wilden het niet afmaken."

"We hebben wel wat anders te doen dan al die onzin puzzeltochten. Het leidt toch nergens toe," zuchtte André.

"Kom, kom," zei professor Malerus, "Jullie vonden het beter dan school."

"Dat wel," zei André, "maar dan noemt u ook wel wat op. In ieder geval hebben we lekker spelletjes gedaan met uw broer, en zijn we de stad ingeweest."

"En als jullie straks weer op die saaie school zitten, dan zullen jullie er naar terugverlangen," zei professor Malerus lachend.

"Zeg, heeft u ons allemaal gemaakt ?" vroeg Jaap. "Heeft u misschien ook vader en moeder gemaakt en ons hele leven ?"

Professor Malerus knikte.

"Maar wie heeft u dan gemaakt ?" vroeg Jaap.

"De Machine," zei professor Malerus.

"Ja, maar ik dacht dat u de machine had uitgevonden ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Nee, net andersom," sprak professor Malerus.

"En wat is de naam van de machine dan ?"

"De Rusland Machine," sprak professor Malerus.

"Maar wie heeft de Rusland machine dan gemaakt ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Reus Maandag," sprak professor Malerus, "maar dat is een heel lang verhaal."

"En misschien weer een leugen," zei André.

"Wie weet," sprak professor Malerus. "Het is een puzzel voor de puzzelaars."

Even later liepen Jaap en André trillend en bevend het huis van professor Malerus uit. Ze hadden datzelfde gevoel als wanneer ze op de kermis waren geweest en in vele machines hadden gezeten. Ze waren buitengewoon vrolijk, en ze wisten niet of ze nu blij moesten zijn dat het weer afgelopen was, of blij moesten zijn dat ze er geweest waren, of blij omdat ze er misschien nog steeds inzaten. Met een brede glimlach liepen ze naar huis, en toen ze binnenkwamen zagen ze hun vader op de bank zitten met de krant. Ze schoten direct in de lach. "Wat valt er te lachen," bromde vader.

"Vraag het aan professor Malerus !" riep Jaap lachend, en rende samen met André giechelend naar boven.

ANTON, JAAP EN SUSANNE

ZWEMMEN IN DEURSEN

Hoofdstuk 1. Het Grote Avontuur in het Zwembad
Hoofdstuk 2. Het Vreemde Mannetje
Hoofdstuk 3. De Middernachts-Wolf
Hoofdstuk 4. Het Contract

Hoofdstuk 1. Het Grote Avontuur in het Zwembad

Anton reed met Jaap en Susanne door Deursen, op zoek naar een terrasje. Toen ze er een hadden gevonden, parkeerde hij de auto, en zaten al snel aan een tafeltje. Een lange, slanke ober kwam hen bedienen. Ze bestelden ijs. Anton keek omhoog. Ze zaten onder een gezellig dakje met strepen. Al gauw kwam het ijs op een dienblad, met rietjes erin. Alhoewel ze onder een dakje zaten, begon het al snel vochtig te worden. Het begon wat te regenen. Ze namen het ijs en gingen naar binnen. Wat hing er hier een rooklucht. Ze besloten dichtbij de ingang te zitten. Dit was niet normaal. Ze kregen het er benauwd van. Anton maakte een opmerking erover naar de ober. 'Ja, mijnheer, er wordt hier veel gerookt. Daarvoor hebben we het terras voor de niet-rokers.'

'Maar wat als het regent ?' vroeg Anton. 'U kunt ons toch niet zomaar buiten laten zitten ?'

'Ik kan het niet helpen, mijnheer. Dit is een rook-café. U kunt ook een café uitkiezen waar niet gerookt mag worden,' sprak de ober.

'Ik kan wel een beetje tegen rook, maar dit is niet normaal,' zei Anton. De ober trok zijn schouders op.

Even later waren ze weer in de auto. Jaap zat een liedje te neurien. 'Wat een raar café was dat, zeg,' zei Anton. Susanne had haar walkman op en hoorde niets, en Jaap was diep in gedachten weggezonken. Ze waren op weg naar het zwembad van Deursen. Daar aangekomen kochten ze drie kaartjes en gingen zich snel omkleden. In het zwembad lag er een soort reuzen-olifant van plastic in het water, waar op geklommen kon worden. Vanaf de kant keken Anton, Jaap en Susanne ernaar. 'Wat een ding,' zei Anton. 'Ik ga er niet op.' Toen liepen ze naar een ander bad, waar het wat rustiger was. Het water was warm. Het was er niet te diep. Er was ook nog een buitenzwembad, wat helemaal doorliep tot het bos, en wat overging in een bosrivier die tot een bosmeer leidde. Veel mensen begonnen aan een zwemtocht door het bos, vanuit het zwembad.

Ook Anton, Jaap en Susanne gingen daar even later naartoe. Er was een prachtig uitzicht, en het was niet te koud. Het water had een warme gloed, en al snel zwommen ze naar de rivier. De mensen waren dol-enthousiast. Na lang zwemmen kwamen ze aan in het bosmeer. Er waren hier prachtige oevers waar je kon zonnebaden. Anton keek om zich heen toen hij het bosmeer begon in te zwemmen. Wat waren de mensen hier luidruchtig. Ze keken allemaal omhoog en schreeuwden. Hij kon niet verstaan wat ze schreeuwden. Een man had zijn vinger naar voren gewezen. Toen zag Anton het ook. Grote rookwolken waren in de verte. 'Dat lijkt wel op een bosbrand !' riep Anton. 'Laten we omkeren !' Hij keek om zich heen waar Jaap en Susanne waren, maar hij zag ze niet. Er kwam steeds meer rook. Anton begon het benauwd te krijgen, en probeerde terug te zwemmen, maar hij wist niet meer welke kant hij opmoest. Toen zag hij niets meer.

'Help, help !' riep Anton. 'Jaap en Susanne, waar zijn jullie !'

Overal hoorde hij gegil en gekrijs. 'Er is een vliegtuig neergestort !' hoorde hij iemand roepen. Dat had dan natuurlijk die bosbrand veroorzaakt. 'Kom, kom !' hoorde hij iemand roepen. Hij zwom op

het geluid af. 'Allemaal komen !' werd er geroepen. Na een tijdje was hij weer in de rivier, en toen kon hij steeds beter zien. Maar alles leek wel wit. Wat was er met zijn ogen gebeurd ? Het was alsof er een schuim op zijn ogen was, als een waas. 'Jaap, waar ben je ?' riep Anton. Opeens voelde hij handen op zijn schouders. 'Ik ben hier. Gaat het ?' vroeg Jaap.

'Waar is Susanne ?' vroeg Anton.
'Bij mij, achter me,' zei Jaap. 'Laten we terugzwemmen.'
Toen ze bij het zwembad aankwamen waren er allemaal mensen van de EHBO. Sommige zwemmers hadden last van benauwdheid. Sommigen moesten op de kant getrokken worden. Ze hadden geen kracht meer. Anton keek om zich heen of hij nog mensen kon helpen. Hij kon hier weer alles zien. Ook Jaap en Susanne hielpen mee. Ze ontfermden zich over wat huilende kinderen.

De baas van het zwembad was er ook. 'Ik vind dit verschrikkelijk,' zei hij. Hij nodigde iedereen uit om naar een zaaltje binnen het zwembad te komen. Daar zou hij de mensen toespreken. Anton, Jaap en Susanne liepen met hem mee naar het zaaltje. Er waren daar inmiddels veel mensen. De zaal was bijna vol. De baas van het zwembad liep naar de microfoon. 'Zodadelijk krijgt u uw geld terug. Ik vind dit verschrikkelijk,' sprak hij. 'Gelukkig doet de politie en de brandweer er alles aan om de schade minimaal te houden. Het is een ramp, beste mensen, een vliegtuig ramp, en tegelijkertijd een zwembad ramp. Maar wij laten het er niet bij zitten. Er zullen zo wat bussen komen, en u bent allen uitgenodigd om mee te reizen tot de raket-basis om de nieuwste raket te bezichtigen. Ik hoop dat dit de schrik wat zal verzachten.' Er werd geklapt in de zaal. Iedereen kon nu zich aankleden, om zo naar de bussen buiten het zwembad te gaan. Ook Anton, Jaap en Susanne gingen naar de kleedhokjes, en even later zaten ze alledrie in de bus. Ze waren wel benieuwd naar de raket. Ze hadden er al veel over gehoord.

De bus ging door vele weilanden, en kwam toen in een bos aan. Na lang reizen door het bos kwamen ze aan in een zandgebied met veel heides. In de verte was ergens de raket-basis. De bus-chauffeur sprak hen toe. 'Zodadelijk zullen we de raket-basis binnenrijden, en dan zult u aan de rechterkant de basis met de nieuwe raket zien.' Anton keek uit het raam. Toen ze bij de basis waren aangekomen zagen ze de professor die de raket had uitgevonden. Hij liep daar rond in zijn lange witte jas. Hij heette iedereen welkom. Hij zou een rondleiding geven in de raket.

Iedereen moest hem volgen tot de ingang van de raket. De professor had een pijp in zijn mond en een brede glimlach. Je kon zien dat hij erg trots op zijn werk was. Anton, Jaap, Susanne en de andere mensen keken hun ogen uit. Er was zelfs een kleine bioscoop in de raket, in een klein zaaltje. Er werd een film gedraaid in de kleine bioscoop. Er verscheen een hand op het witte doek, en er waren wat aftitelingen. Het was waarschijnlijk al afgelopen.

De professor liep zenuwachtig heen en weer. Niemand wist goed wat er aan de hand was. Hij had een telefoontje in zijn hand, als een soort walkie talkie. Hij knikte maar, en zweet stond op zijn voorhoofd. Toen richtte hij zich tot de mensen. 'Dames en heren, ik vraag u allen rustig te blijven. De bosbrand heeft zich snel verspreid, en ook onze velden branden nu. We zijn totaal omsingeld. Niemand weet hoe dit kan. Misschien door het hete weer, maar ook een oorlog is niet uitgesloten.'

'Een oorlog ?' riep Anton. 'Maar professor, wat loopt u nu allemaal te bazelen ?'

'Als we omsingeld zijn, start de motor dan, professor, waar wacht u nog op ?' riep Susanne.

'Ik wil eruit !' riep iemand.

'Niemand kan er uit,' zei de professor. 'We zijn omsingeld door grote vuurzeeen, maar dit is gelijk de gelegenheid om mijn raket te testen.'

Meer en meer mensen begonnen in paniek te raken, maar ze wisten dat het starten van de raket de enige oplossing zou zijn. De professor liep naar een kleine cabine en begon op de knoppen te drukken.

'Allemachtig,' zei Anton. 'Ik vertrouw dit voor geen cent. Die gek loopt volgens mij gewoon wat te verzinnen om zijn raket te kunnen uitproberen. Een oorlog ? Laat me toch niet lachen.'

'Hij zei niet dat het een oorlog is,' zei Jaap. 'Hij zei alleen dat een oorlog niet uitgesloten is. Zag je dan niet dat hij een telefoontje kreeg ? Er is meer aan de hand.'
Anton rende naar een klein raampje, en begon naar buiten te kijken. 'Mensen !' riep hij. 'Er is helemaal geen vuur ! Deze professor neemt iedereen in de maling.'

'Je bent gek !' riep de baas van het zwembad. 'Hoe durf je zo over de professor te spreken.'

'Kom het zelf dan zien, halve gek !' riep Anton. 'Kijk door dit kleine raampje, en vertelt u mij eens waar het vuur is !'

De baas van het zwembad liep op Anton af, en gluurde door het raampje. 'Je hebt gelijk. Er is helemaal geen vuur,' sprak hij. 'Kom op, mensen, deze raket en deze professor zijn niet pluis. We gaan eruit.' Met grote stappen liep hij af op de uitgang, maar de deuren waren op slot. 'Professor, ik gebied u de deuren te openen !' riep de baas van het zwembad woedend.

'Komt niks van in, toffe jongen !' riep de professor. 'Je zou ons allemaal laten omkomen. De raket is al opgestart, dus ik kan niets meer opendoen.'

'Maar er is helemaal geen vuur buiten !' schreeuwde de baas van het zwembad zo hard als hij kon.

'U gaat mij toch niet in de maling nemen !' riep de professor. Ook andere mensen hadden inmiddels door het raampje gekeken en zagen geen vuur. Ook de professor liep naar het raampje en gluurde naar buiten. 'Verhip, nee, je hebt gelijk. Er is helemaal geen vuur.'

'Doe die raket dan uit, malle man !' riep de baas van het zwembad. 'Wat sta jij hier nog te staan !'

'Mijn excuses,' zei de professor. 'Ik kan de raket niet uitzetten, want dan gaan we er allemaal aan. Hij is al op gang gebracht.'

'Wie heeft jou getelefoneerd met die draken-onzin ?' bulderde de baas van het zwembad. Anton keek naar het gezicht van de man wat helemaal rood was. Hij had nog nooit iemand zo boos gezien.

'Jax Bladerdeeg,' zei de professor. De baas van het zwembad greep een brandweer-bijl van de muur en rende naar de cabine om alles kort en klein te slaan. De professor keek verslagen toe. 'Mijn mooie kunstwerk naar de knoppen !' riep hij. 'Dit zal je duur komen te staan !'

'Maak jij je maar klaar voor een trip naar de gevangenis !' bulderde de baas van het zwembad. 'Aan één ramp hebben we vandaag wel genoeg, circus-clown. En nu mag jij ons vertellen wie die Jax Bladerdeeg wel niet is.'

'Mijn baas,' zei de professor.

Er werd op de deuren van de raket nogal hard geklopt, alsof er met gereedschap op werd geslagen. Even later werden de deuren ingetrapt, en gewapende mannen renden de raket binnen. Ze droegen

geweren. 'Iedereen op de grond, dit is een overval !' Er klonken al wat schoten. Anton, Jaap en Susanne doken op de grond, en ook de andere mensen namen geen enkel risico. Een andere man in een lange witte jas en met een hoed liep de raket binnen. 'Goed werk, jongens,' zei hij. De baas van het zwembad keek op met open mond. 'Wel heb ik ooit,' zei hij. 'Hoe durf jij hier op zo'n smerige manier binnen te komen !' bulderde de baas van het zwembad.

'Snoer hem de mond !' riep de man met de hoed. Tegelijkertijd vlogen twee overvallers op hem af, en begonnen hem vast te binden, om vervolgens een grote prop in zijn mond te duwen. 'Laat me los !' probeerde de baas van het zwembad te schreeuwen, maar er kwam niet veel uit.

'Dit is Jax Bladerdeeg, mijn baas,' sprak de professor.

'Ja, ja, ja, houd nu maar op,' zei de man met de hoed. Anton probeerde voorzichtig naar de zijkant van de raket te kruipen, waar een trap was. Ook wenkte hij Jaap en Susanne. Voorzichtig kropen ze op de trap, maar de overvallers begonnen hen door te krijgen. 'Ren !' riep Anton. Ze stoven de trap op, terwijl ze al schoten hoorden. Bovenaan de trap was een gordijn, waarachter een andere trap was. Die renden ze ook op. 'Jullie kunnen geen kant op !' werd er geroepen. Er waren hier vele trappen, die vaak door een deur of een gordijn van elkaar gescheiden waren, en soms was er een klein gangetje tussenin. 'We vinden jullie wel !' werd er geroepen. Na lang rennen op de trappen kwamen ze aan op een soort zoldertje van de raket. Anton sloeg een raam in en keek naar buiten, maar dat was veel te hoog. Er was ook een ander trappenstelsel waar ze naar beneden konden rennen, zonder dat ze de overvallers zouden tegenkomen. Nu moesten ze snel zijn. Ze hoorden al stemmen dichterbij. Anton sprong bijna van de eerste trap naar beneden af, en ook de anderen volgden hem snel na. Dit was een ander trappenstelsel. Een zware rook rookten ze hier. Ineens kwamen ze de buschauffeur tegen. Die was op eigen houtje de raket gaan onderzoeken, en wist nog niets af van wat er gebeurt was. 'Kom mee !' zei Anton hard fluisterend tegen hem. 'Er is een overval in de raket.' De bus-chauffeur wist een andere uitgang in dit trappenstelsel, en al snel waren ze uit de raket. Buiten de raket was er nog een trappenstelsel waar ze vanaf moesten rennen.

'Naar de bus !' riep Anton. Zo snel als ze konden renden ze de metalen trappen buiten de raket af, en renden naar de bus toe. Ook de overvallers waren al buiten, en begonnen te schieten. In de bus aangekomen startte de bus-chauffeur snel de bus. Direct belde hij de politie door een soort intercom. Ook de bus-maatschappij werd op de hoogte gebracht, terwijl Anton duidelijk uitlegde wat er was gebeurt. 'Zovelen zijn gegijzeld !' riep de bus-chauffeur door de intercom.

De volgende dag stond het in de kranten. Jax Bladerdeeg had weer toegeslagen, een beruchte maffia baas. En de professor scheen voor hem te werken. Het zwembad in Deursen was helemaal afgebrand door criminelen. Jax Bladerdeeg was niet de echte naam van de maffia baas. Niemand wist zijn echte naam, maar hij werd ook wel Achtus Zudelknopfen genoemd.

Hoofdstuk 2. Het Vreemde Mannetje

Een week later zaten Anton, Jaap en Susanne weer op een terrasje. Ze hadden weer ijs besteld, en spraken na over wat er op de raket-basis was gebeurd. Niemand wist waar de gegijzelden waren, want de overvallers ontvoerden hen met de overgebleven bussen. Er werden nog steeds grote onderzoeken gedaan.

Inmiddels werd er een nieuw zwembad gebouwd en er kwam een nieuwe baas van het zwembad. Anton, Jaap en Susanne hadden het zwemmen niet afgeleerd. Nog steeds gingen ze zo nu en dan zwemmen, en nog steeds zwommen ze dan helemaal tot het bosmeer. Maar op een dag gebeurde er iets vreemds. Een klein mannetje met een lang paarsachtig jasje en een paars mutsje stond op de kant van het bosmeer. Hij had een grijs baardje. Ook had hij een munt in zijn handje. De munt was

bijna groter dan zijn hand, en glom. 'Weet je wat dit is ?' vroeg hij.

'Wie bent u eigenlijk, als ik vragen mag ?' vroeg Susanne.

'Gaat je geen snars aan,' zei het mannetje. 'En ik vroeg jou het eerst, dus je mag mij eerst antwoorden. Ik houd er niet van als mijn vragen genegeerd worden, en dat ik dan ineens vragen krijg in plaats van antwoorden.'

'Nee, ik heb geen idee wat u in uw hand houdt. Het lijkt op een munt,' zei Susanne.

'Mis !' schreeuwde het mannetje. 'Ik heb er een hekel aan als men mij verkeerde antwoorden geeft. Houd dan liever helemaal je mond. Je kon gewoon ja of nee antwoorden, want dat is alles wat ik vroeg, of je wist was het was.'

'Nou zeg,' zei Susanne, 'u hoeft er niet zo naar en moeilijk over te doen.'

'Ach, trut, houd nu je mond,' zei het mannetje.

'Dit gesprek is over,' zei Susanne. Maar ze merkte dat ze zich niet meer kon bewegen. Anton en Jaap waren verderop aan het zwemmen. Ze kon hen niet eens meer roepen. Het leek wel alsof haar stem vast zat.

'Ik ben er niet van gediend op zo'n manier toegesproken te worden,' zei het mannetje. 'Dus nu zul je luisteren in plaats van je mondje op zo'n vervelende, genieperige manier te gebruiken. Kom nu het water uit, en volg mij, dan zal ik je wat laten zien.'

Als gehypnotiseerd stapte Susanne het water uit en volgde het mannetje. Het mannetje leidde haar naar een boshutje. 'Hier woon ik,' snauwde het mannetje. 'Ik drink water met azijn, of gewoon slootwater. Ik eet mos en vuil. Ik eet de grond. Ga nu zitten, dan voer ik je wat.'

Susanne ging gehypnotiseerd in het gras zitten. 'Lekkere kevertjes en torretjes, sprinkhanen. Hier, doe je mond open.' Een vieze lepel met beestjes werd voor haar mond geschoven, maar Susanne hield haar mond stijf dicht.

'Ach, ik zie dat je geen honger hebt,' zei het mannetje, en stopte toen de smerige lepel in zijn eigen mond. 'Wat een ondankbaar meisje ben je, kindje. Iemand anders zou het maar wat graag willen eten.'

Susanne begon rood te worden, en bang. Ze kon zich nog steeds niet goed bewegen. Inmiddels hadden Anton en Jaap door dat Susanne was verdwenen, en gingen op onderzoek uit.

'Weet je wat ik met je ga doen ?' vroeg het mannetje. 'Spek van katten, honden, muizen en ratten, dat ga ik je voeren.' Grote tranen biggelden over de wangen van Susanne, die nog steeds niet kon praten.

'Of heb je daar geen zin in, ondankbaar kind ?' vroeg het mannetje. 'Ik kan je niet uitstaan, verwend nest.' Hij gaf haar een klap in haar gezicht. Nog steeds kon Susanne niet spreken. Haar tong zat helemaal vast. 'Wanneer vertrouw je mij eens,' snauwde het mannetje. Het mannetje begon steeds dwazer en woedender te worden. Hij raasde en schold dat het een lieve lust was. Ineens hoorden Anton en Jaap het woedende mannetje, en renden op het geluid af. 'Wat doe jij hier, Susanne ?' vroeg Anton. Susanne beefde.

'En wie ben jij, mannetje ?' vroeg Anton.

'Gaat je geen snars aan !' snauwde het mannetje kribbig. 'Ik doe dit niet voor jullie.'

'Nou, waar gaat dit nog over, irritante schelm,' zei Anton. 'En waarom ga jij met dit gespuis mee, Susanne ?' vroeg Anton. Jaap was op haar af gelopen. 'Hey, wat is er. Waarom beef je zo, en waarom huil je ?' Maar Susanne kon nog steeds geen woord uitbrengen. En toen was het mannetje weg, zomaar plotseling verdwenen. Susanne barstte in huilen uit. 'Ik kon me niet meer bewegen,' snikte ze. 'Ik kon zelfs niet meer praten,' huilde ze. Jaap sloeg een arm om haar heen. Anton wist niet wat hij zag. 'Waar is dat mannetje nu ?'

'Weg,' zei Jaap.

'Dat kereltje was er net nog,' zei Anton. 'Dat kan toch niet ?'

Jaap haalde zijn schouders op.

'Ik kan dit niet geloven,' zei Anton. 'Er gebeuren hier vreemde dingen. Er is altijd wat in het zwembad. Laten we teruggaan.' Susanne vertelde het verhaal terwijl ze terugliepen, en Anton en Jaap luisterden met open mond.

'Het spookt in Deursen,' zei Anton. 'We zijn hier niet meer veilig. Er is iets aan de hand.' Snel gingen ze naar de kleedhokjes om zich aan te kleden, en al gauw zaten ze in de auto om naar huis te rijden. Anton zat achter het stuur. 'Ik begrijp dit niet,' snauwde hij. 'Waarom moet ons dat altijd overkomen.'

'Nu praat jij ook al als dat mannetje,' zei Susanne een beetje kribbig. 'Daar hoef je ons toch niet de schuld voor te geven, en ons af te snauwen ?'

'Ik geef jullie niet de schuld,' bromde Anton verder. 'Ik ben gewoon moe van dit alles. En je hoeft mij dan ook niet zo kribbig toe te spreken. Ik snauw jullie niet af, maar ik ben gewoon boos op de omstandigheden. Het is niet meer zoals het was in Deursen.'

Bij een grote villa stopten ze. Hier woonde Anton. Jaap woonde naast hem, en Susanne woonde tegenover hen. Anton parkeerde de auto, en toen liepen ze naar Susanne's huis.

'Gaat het alweer een beetje beter met je ?' vroeg Anton bezorgd. Susanne knikte. Ze opende de deur en even later zaten ze in de huiskamer. 'Wat een gekkenwerk is Deursen geworden,' mopperde Anton. 'We zijn ons leven niet eens meer zeker.'

'Ja, en nu ook al een mannetje dat ervoor zorgt dat je je niet meer kan bewegen en niet meer kan praten,' zei Susanne. 'En zomaar ineens was hij verdwenen.'

'Ja, het is raar,' zei Anton. 'Zou het allemaal met elkaar te maken hebben ? De vliegtuigramp, de overval en dat rare mannetje ?'

Ze besloten op onderzoek uit te gaan. Ze wilden het wrak van het vliegtuig weleens zien. Na wat gegeten te hebben gingen ze op pad. Het was al een beetje donker geworden, daarom hadden ze zaklampen meegenomen. Na een tijdje rijden door het bos kwamen ze bij het wrak aan. Het was nogal een groot vliegtuig, en daarom had het ook zo'n grote bosbrand veroorzaakt. Met hun zaklampen schenen ze op het wrak. Alles was afgebrand, maar tot hun verbazing zagen ze een vreemd kistje liggen tussen de afgebrande vliegtuig-stoelen. Anton nam het kistje in zijn armen, en

droeg het weg van het wrak. Er was een groot dwars kruis op de deksel. Verder was de kist helemaal zwart. Hij tilde het deksel ietsje op en sloeg het toen direct weer dicht. 'Allemaal licht,' stamelde hij. 'Alle duivels, het spookt hier echt.' Ook Susanne tilde het deksel ietsje op, maar werd toen achteruit geslagen door een wind. 'Wel allebarstens,' gromde Anton. Susanne en Jaap waren ook met verbazing geslagen. 'Allemaal achteruit,' zei Anton. 'Kom niet dichterbij.' Hij pakte een tak die ergens lag, en van een afstand tilde hij het deksel op met de tak. Een spookachtige gestalte rees op van de geopende kist, met zacht licht. 'Allemachtig,' stamelde Anton. 'Wie bent u ?'

'Het is vast een truuk,' zei Susanne.

'Nee,' zei Anton, 'dit is je reinste spokerij. Ben je dat mannetje vergeten wat zomaar verdween ?'

'Wie heeft mij opgeroepen ?' sprak de gestalte met een langzame, lage stem die heel ijzig en ver weg klonk.

'Wie bent u ?' vroeg Anton weer. 'Wij hebben niets opgeroepen. We kwamen alleen naar het neergestorte vliegtuig kijken, en vonden deze kist.'

'Het is mijn kist,' zei de gestalte.

'Wie bent u ?' vroegen ze alledrie.

'Het spook van het uur,' sprak de gestalte. 'Elk uur is er een ander spook.'

'Hebben jullie misschien iets te maken met de vliegtuigramp, de bosbrand, de overval van de raket-basis en een vreemd mannetje dat mensen vastplakt en dan in het niets verdwijnt ?' vroeg Anton.

'Het is een mooie vraag,' zei het spook. 'Wonderschoon, zeer elegant.'

'Antwoord ons nu maar in plaats van je gebazel,' zei Anton een beetje ongeduldig.

'Maak anders gewoon dat je wegkomt,' gromde het spook. 'Ik ben jullie niets verschuldigd. Jullie zijn op mijn terrein.'

'Wij gaan niet weg,' zei Anton. 'Het bos is niet van jou.'

'Maar de kist wel,' sprak het spook beledigd, 'dus nu wegwezen !' En met een strakke en ijskoude wind werden ze alledrie weggeduwd.

'Blijf uit mijn buurt !' schreeuwde het spook. 'Je had dit nooit moeten doen.'

'Wij willen alleen een antwoord !' riep Susanne.

'Wat voor antwoord ?' vroeg het spook.

'Nou, of jullie iets te maken hebben met de vreemde dingen die de laatste tijd in Deursen gebeuren !' riep Susanne.

'Ik weet van niks,' zei het spook. 'Ik zat zolang opgesloten in deze kist, en ik vond het allemaal best, maar nu heb ik het koud. Jullie zijn me ook een stelletje.'

'Als u eerlijk antwoord geeft, dan stoppen we u weer toe in uw kist,' zei Susanne.

'Ik heb nergens iets mee te maken,' sprak het spook.

'Van wie is de kist dan ?' vroeg Susanne.

'Van ons,' zei het spook.

'Maar wie heeft de kist meegenomen in het vliegtuig ?' vroeg Susanne.

'Wij waren besteld …' zei het spook.

'Door wie ?' vroeg Susanne nieuwsgierig.

Het spook wilde niets meer zeggen en trok zich terug in de kist, terwijl hij de deksel greep en op de kist legde. 'Zie, hij kan het zelf,' zei Anton. 'Ze proberen een rad voor ons ogen te dragen. Ik vertrouw ze voor geen cent.'

'Wegwezen !' bulderde het vanuit de kist. 'Of willen jullie nog een zwembad ramp ?'

'Zie, zij waren het,' zei Anton.

'Wat moeten we nu doen ?' vroeg Susanne die al een beetje begon te trillen.

'Waarom hebben jullie zoveel rampen veroorzaakt ?' vroeg Anton. 'Het zou me niks verbazen als jullie nog meer rampen op jullie geweten hebben.'

'Wij zijn rampen-spoken. Men betaalt voor ons,' sprak het spook vanuit de kist.

'Wie betaalde jullie, en hoe gaat die betaling in zijn werk ?' vroeg Susanne.

'Jax Bladerdeeg,' sprak het spook. 'En de betaling gaat door offers.'

'Wat voor offers ?' vroeg Susanne.

'Kinderoffers,' sprak het spook.

'Wat ?' vroeg Susanne. 'Zijn jullie gek geworden ?'

'Wij roosteren en eten kinderen,' sprak het spook. 'Wat is daar zo abnormaal aan ?'

'Ik geloof mijn oren niet,' zei Susanne. 'Weet je wel eens wat je zegt. Luister nu eens goed naar jezelf om te horen wat voor een soort onzin je loopt uit te kramen.'

Ook de anderen waren stomverbaasd.

'We veranderen toch niet voor jullie,' zei het spook. 'We hebben wel andere dingen te doen.'

Anton was een beetje wanhopig. Dit was echt zware misdaad, tenzij het spook hen maar wat zat voor te liegen.

'Moet je horen, spook,' sprak Anton. 'Ik heb een beetje genoeg van je praatjes, maar waar zijn die kinderen dan ?'

'We mesten ze vet ergens diep onder de grond in kooien,' lachte het spook.

'Maar dat kan toch niet !' riep Susanne. 'dat kun je toch niet maken tegenover hun ouders ?'

'Niks mee te maken,' zei het spook. 'En nu opdonderen,' bulderde het spook vanuit de kist. En weer werden ze als door een wind geslagen, maar ditmaal werden ze echt ver weggeslingerd. Verslagen strompelden ze terug naar de auto.

De volgende ochtend waren ze op weg naar het politie-bureau. Maar toen ze hun verhaal brachten werden ze uitgelachen. 'Ach, kom nou,' zei één van de agenten. 'Jullie gaan ons toch niet vertellen dat er hier mannetjes zijn die in het niets verdwijnen, en spoken die rampen veroorzaken en mensen door het bos heen slingeren. Kom eens met een beter verhaal.'

Anton was boos. 'Nou, dan geloven jullie ons toch lekker niet ?'

Boos liep hij het politie-bureau uit, terwijl de andere twee hem volgden. Anton had het helemaal gehad met Deursen.

'Volgens mij is de politie ook al onder invloed van de spoken,' zei Susanne. De broer van de professor van de vlieg-basis was een goede bekende van Anton. Ook hij was een uitvinder. Ze besloten naar hem te gaan om raad. Hij woonde boven een café. 'Oom Aart,' noemde Anton hem altijd. Ook hij was een professor, maar heel anders dan zijn broer. Hij nam hen direct serieus toen ze hem het verhaal vertelden. 'Interessant,' zei oom Aart. 'Weet je, ik vertrouw mijn broer voor geen cent. Het was altijd al een vreemd mannetje. Al van jongs af aan wist hij zoveel van techniek af dat hij al dieren kon laten praten. Ik ben ervan overtuigd dat hij de spook-kist heeft gemaakt.'

Alledrie keken ze oom Aart met open mond aan. Oom Aart liet hen een boekje zien. Het was een boekje met bouw-instructies voor een spook-klok. De spook-klok zou de hele aarde verzwelgen, en alleen hen die goed zouden betalen zouden deel hebben aan de spook-klok om een nieuwe realiteit te creeeren. 'Dit boekje schreef hij toen hij acht jaar was,' zei oom Aart. 'Het is een gevaarlijke jongen, altijd al geweest. Die spookklok moet dus ergens in die kist zitten.'

'Wat kunnen we eraan doen, oom Aart ?' vroeg Anton.

'Nou ja, ik ben niet zo genieus als mijn broer,' zei oom Aart, 'maar laat me eens denken. Even leek het alsof oom Aart pretlichtjes in zijn ogen had. Dat gaf hen alledrie weer wat hoop. 'Ik ken die spoken van mijn broer,' sprak oom Aart. 'Ze waren elk voor een uur, en hij had ze opgewekt uit hout. Het blijkt dat als je hout op een bepaalde manier bewerkt, dan begint het electriciteit af te geven, en daar heeft hij op een hele slimme manier gebruik van gemaakt. Eigenlijk heeft het helemaal niets met spokerij te maken, maar met de werkingen van de natuur. Ik kan me alleen nog herinneren dat hij zei dat de hele spookklok niet zou werken als er wolven in het spel zouden komen. Er zou een middernachts-wolf bestaan die opgeroepen kon worden vanuit een roos. Hij wist precies hoe dat zou moeten, maar het boekje wat hij daarover had geschreven heeft hij in vuur geworpen. Hij was te bang dat iemand het ooit eens zou gebruiken. De middernachts-wolf zou korte metten met zijn spookklok maken. Ik denk dat hij de spookkist heeft gemaakt voor extra veiligheid.'

Hoofdstuk 3. De Middernachts-Wolf

'Ik zal jullie een geheimpje vertellen,' sprak oom Aart. 'Ik ben de middernachts-wolf. Elke nacht om twaalf uur precies verander ik in een wolf.'

Anton keek oom Aart met grote ogen aan. 'En kunt u wat aan die spookklok doen, en misschien ervoor zorgen dat dit maffia mysterie wordt opgelost ?' Oom Aart knikte.

'De roos gaat het mij vertellen,' zei oom Aart.

'Wie of wat is de roos, oom Aart ?' vroeg Susanne.

'Een fee,' zei oom Aart. 'Zij raakt mij altijd aan in het midden van de nacht met haar toverstaf, en dan wordt ik een wolf.'

'Nog steeds ?' vroeg Susanne.

'Nee,' zei oom Aart, 'niet meer. Toen ik jong was, maar ik weet nog precies waar ze woont. Ze woont diep in het bos. Alleen om twaalf uur 's nachts zou ik naar haar toe kunnen gaan, maar niet ervoor of erna, want dan zou ze me verslinden.'

'Klinkt gevaarlijk,' zei Anton.

'Ze is een monster,' zei oom Aart, 'maar we hebben haar nodig.'

Toen het bijna nacht was besloten ze naar het bos te gaan. Ze gingen heel diep. Ze kwamen aan bij een diepliggende rivier. Er was een brug van touwen over de rivier. Het was hier bijna een oerwoud. Zo wild hadden ze het nog niet gezien. 'Daar achter de brug woont ze,' sprak oom Aart. Ze hadden er wel vertrouwen in. Oom Aart was een kundig en bezonnen man. Het was bijna twaalf uur. Oom Aart ging als eerste de brug op. De brug wiebelde een beetje, en het stormde. Ook begon het te onweren. Er was donder en toen veel bliksem. Het leek wel alsof de donkere lucht in tweeen begon te splijten. 'Wie heeft mij geroepen !' sprak een suizende stem.

'Ik, tante !' riep oom Aart met een bevende stem. Een lichtende gestalte kwam dichterbij op de brug. 'Volg mij,' sprak ze met een harde, fluisterende stem. Het was nu twaalf uur. Ze volgden haar naar een klein huisje. Er was dichte begroeiing hier. In het huisje gingen ze aan een tafeltje zitten. De fee schonk wat te drinken in. Even raakte ze oom Aart met haar toverstaf aan, en die begon direct in een wolf te veranderen. Wel had hij nog steeds zijn zwarte jas aan.

Anton vertelde de fee het hele verhaal, ook over de kinderoffers die aan de spoken gebracht zouden moeten worden, en dat de kinderen hiervoor diep in de aarde opgesloten werden gehouden.

'Ach welnee,' zei de fee. 'Dat zijn gewoon spookkinderen. En die zijn niet opgesloten. Ze maken jullie maar wat wijs.' Wel zag ze het gevaar van de spookklok in, en wist ze dat het veel rampen bracht, en dat er nog steeds mensen in handen van de maffia waren.

'Ik heb een goed idee,' sprak ze. Ze nam hen mee naar buiten, en leidde hen naar een bootje aan de rand van de rivier. Voorzichtig stapte ze in het bootje, en wenkte de anderen. Even later waren ze allemaal in het bootje, en ze begon te peddelen. Er hing een dikke mist over de rivier, maar ze konden de zijkanten van de rivier nog wel een beetje zien.

'Ik weet waar mensen opgesloten worden gehouden,' sprak ze. 'Onder het zwembad. De nieuwe baas van het zwembad is ook van de maffia.' De wolf begon te grommen. Wat had hij zin om te rennen en te bijten. Zijn ogen waren rood van woede. Het bootje ging richting het zwembad. Eerst kwamen ze bij het meertje aan, en toen gingen ze over de rivier achter het meertje naar het zwembad. Bij het zwembad aangekomen stapten ze uit.

'Dit is toch niet normaal meer,' zei Anton. 'Het lijkt wel alsof iedereen tegenwoordig van de maffia is.' De wolf gromde. Hij leek in de verste verten niet meer op oom Aart. 'Goedzo jongen,' sprak de fee. 'Je hebt zo heel wat te bijten.' Als eerste moest de wolf het slot van het zwembad doorbijten. Direct hoorden ze een alarm. De fee trapte verder de deur in, en al snel gingen ze over een trap naar beneden. Daar kwamen ze bij een lift. Met de lift gingen ze nog dieper onder de grond. Het leek wel uren te duren. Toen ineens ging de liftdeur open, en ze keken in een enorme grot. Daar stonden de kooien met de mensen erin die ontvoerd waren op de raket-basis. De wolf rende op de kooien af en begon de sloten los te kauwen en te bijten. Maar alweer hoorden ze alarms. Bewakers kwamen op hen afrennen en er ontstond een vuur gevecht. De fee kon nog net op tijd bescherming bieden. De wolf bleek immuun te zijn voor de kogels en vloog op de bewakers af, één voor één. De bewakers schreeuwden. Ze konden niet veel tegen de wolf beginnen.

'Als ik het niet dacht,' zei de fee, en wees omhoog waar een grote spook-klok hing in de grot. 'Spring, wolf !' riep ze. De wolf maakte een reuzensprong en greep de klok met zijn bek. De klok had vele spook-armen, die allemaal door de wolf werden gebeten.

'We moeten weg,' zei de fee. 'De betovering is bijna uitgewerkt.' Allemaal renden ze snel naar de lift, maar de lift ging niet open. De spookklok begon te lachen.

De wolf begon inmiddels weer te veranderen in oom Aart. De spookklok lachte heel gemeen, en met vele armen werd oom Aart gegrepen. 'Verslinden zullen we je,' lachte de spookklok.

'Oh nee,' zei de fee, 'dat gaat zomaar niet. Jullie vergeten dat ik er bij ben.'

'Jou zullen we ook verslinden, ouwe heks !' gierde de spook-klok. Met vele armen grepen ze haar ook. De fee begon te gillen. Anton, Jaap en Susanne stonden nog steeds met de bevrijde gegijzelden voor de lift. Anton drukte op de knopjes. 'Ga dan open, kreng,' fluisterde hij hard.

De armen van de spookklok begonnen flink te groeien en grepen wild om hen heen. Ook begon de klok sneller te draaien, als een tornado of draaikolk. Alles sleurden ze met zich mee. 'We gaan jullie vernietigen !' brulden ze.

Ook Jaap begon op de knoppen van de lift te slaan, maar de deur ging maar niet open. 'We zitten hier vast,' fluisterde hij hard.

'We zijn er geweest, Jaap,' zei Anton. De oude baas van het zwembad was woedend toen hij de spookklok zo zag razen. Hij was helemaal rood, en stond op ontploffen. Hij raapte stenen van de grond en begon naar de spookklok te gooien. Maar niets hielp. De spookklok werd razender en razender en kwam langzaam op hen af. 'We zijn er geweest,' zei Anton weer. Susanne had haar ogen stijf dichtgetrokken. Ze kon het niet meer aanzien.

Mensen begonnen tegen de liftdeur aan te trappen. De oude baas van het zwembad nam een aanloop en trapte de liftdeur open. Iedereen begon zich op te hopen in de lift, en toen iedereen binnen was drukte de oude baas van het zwembad de knoppen in om de lift omhoog te laten gaan. De spook-klok had inmiddels in woede de omhooggaande lift van onderen gegrepen met zijn vele armen, en probeerde zich naar binnen te wringen. De mensen krijsten. Het was gelukkig een hele grote, ruime lift, dus ze konden er allemaal in, maar de spookklok gaf zich niet gewonnen. Mensen begonnen op de binnengekomen armen te trappen. Het was een lange reis naar boven. Het leek wel alsof de lift nooit zou aankomen. Maar toen de lift was gestopt was het niet het zwembad waar ze naar binnen gingen. Neen. Iemand speelde een spelletje met hen. Het leek wel alsof ze zelfs dieper waren gegaan. Ze waren diep onder de aarde. Het leek wel een spooklift.

'Dit zwembad is niet pluis,' zei Anton. Allemaal stapten ze naar buiten. Het was hier donker, en op sommige plaatsen was vuur. 'We zijn hier diep onder de aarde,' zei Anton. Alles was rustig nu. De spookklok was nergens te bekennen. 'We mogen nog van geluk spreken dat we nog leven,' zei Susanne.

'Laten we rustig blijven, mensen,' zei de oude baas van het zwembad. 'We vinden wel een oplossing.' Sommige mensen waren aan het beven en trillen. De oude baas van het zwembad liep richting de vuren, waar het lichter was. De mensen volgden hem. Tussen de vuren waren wat metalen bruggen. Die bruggen gingen over lava heen. Verderop waren er veel meer lava-rivieren. Er stonden hier grote ketels met lava erin. De mensen vroegen zich af waar ze terecht waren gekomen.

Ze gingen over een heleboel metalen bruggetjes, en kwamen toen in een ruimte waar een heleboel kisten stonden. Anton keek even in zo'n kist. Er zat een levensgrote pop in. Verderop hingen een heleboel van zulke poppen aan haken. De poppen konden bewegen en konden ook zachtjes praten. 'Wat is hier aan de hand ?' zei Anton. 'Het zijn levende poppen, net als mensen.'

'Wie zijn jullie ?' vroeg Anton aan de poppen.

'Wij zijn robotten,' zei één van de poppen. 'Wij zijn gemaakt om te werken voor de maffia.'

Opeens sprong het vreemde mannetje dat Susanne had lastiggevallen tevoorschijn. Anton kon zich direct niet meer bewegen en niet meer praten. 'Ik dacht jij zou ook vast wel zo'n mooie pop willen zijn,' grapte het mannetje. Toen Susanne het mannetje zag slaakte ze een kreet. 'Jullie zijn gekomen waar ik jullie wilde hebben !' krijste het mannetje schaterlachend. 'Jullie zullen snel allemaal mooie poppen worden zoals deze.' Ook Susanne kon zich niet meer bewegen. Jaap kon nog net op tijd wegrennen, en ook wat andere mensen. 'Ze zullen niet ver komen,' bromde het mannetje lacherig.

'Stop, stop !' riep het mannetje, bijna met een mechanische stem. Toen konden ineens de anderen zich ook niet meer bewegen. 'Poppen zullen jullie worden. Poppen zullen jullie zijn,' schaterde het mannetje. Sommige poppen begonnen te giechelen. 'Ja, poppen, jullie krijgen er wat nieuwe broertjes en zusjes bij.'

'Dank u wel,' zeiden sommige poppen. Sommige van die poppen praatten erg traag. Het mannetje begon om zijn gegijzelden heen te dansen, en werd steeds zotter. Ook begon hij hen met een staf te slaan. 'Ik zal jullie temmen !' riep hij. De staf leek onder stroom te staan. Eén voor één begon het mannetje zijn nieuwe aanwinsten naar de kisten te sleuren. 'Allemaal poppetjes, één voor één,' zong het mannetje. En toen begon hij nog meer vreemde liedjes en rijmpjes te zingen. 'Poppetje, poppetje, wat een pret, en we gaan nog niet naar bed.'

'Oh, moeder, wat zijn je poppetjes schoon. Morgen zit ik op de troon.'

'Ach vadertje kijk niet zo sip, ik maak poppetjes voor jou in een wip.'

'Ik zal ze, die vervelende krengen !' riep het mannetje, en begon toen te schaterlachen. 'Niemand die hen hier vinden kan, ha ha ha. Oh, wat ben ik toch duivels slim.'

Maar toen het weer middernacht was veranderde de door de spookklok opgeslokte oom Aart weer in een wolf. Ook de fee kwam vrij. Ze stormden op de spooklift af, en gingen de diepte in. 'Ik weet waar ze zijn,' sprak de fee, 'ik voel het.' Toen de lift stopte, renden ze er beiden uit. De wolf ging recht op zijn doel af. Hij dook op het mannetje af en beet het kapot als een pop. Direct kon iedereen zich weer bewegen en praten, en konden ze uit hun kisten komen. Ook de andere poppen begonnen

weer mens te worden.

Anton was woedend, maar tegelijkertijd opgelucht. Hij nam Jaap en Susanne in zijn armen. Snel renden ze met z'n allen de lift in, maar er waren zoveel poppen weer tot mens geworden, dat ze er niet allemaal inpasten.

De volgende dag zaten Anton, Jaap en Susanne weer op een terrasje. Alles was goedgekomen. In Deursen was een groot feest, omdat zoveel vermisten waren teruggevonden.

Jax en zijn bende waren opgepakt. Zij gingen de gevangenis in voor hun streken. De oude baas van het zwembad werd weer de baas over het nieuwe zwembad, en zo leek alles weer wat rustiger te worden. Ook de broer van oom Aart, de professor van de raket-basis, was opgepakt en kreeg gevangenis-straf. Oom Aart kon er niet om rouwen. Hij vond het altijd al een belhamel die hij liever achter de tralies zou zien. In zijn ogen was het altijd al een groot gevaarte met veel te veel vrijheid. Niemand wist waar de spookklok was. Maar op een dag tijdens een boswandeling kregen Anton, Jaap en Susanne de schrik van hun leven. De spookklok met zijn vele armen stond ineens voor hen, en begon hen te grijpen. De grond onder hen begon weg te vallen, en zo werden ze de diepte in getrokken. 'Zo snel komen jullie niet van me af !' snauwde de spookklok. De spookklok begon aan hun haren te trekken. 'Wat wil je van ons !' riep Anton.

'Dat zul je nog wel eens zien,' sprak de spookklok.

'Waar breng je ons naartoe ?' riep Anton.

'Niet zoveel vragen stellen,' sprak de spookklok.

Hij sleurde ze alle drie door een diepe tunnel dieper de grond in. Na een tijdje kwamen ze in een grote ondergrondse wildernis. Anton, Jaap en Susanne keken hun ogen uit. 'Maar dat kan toch helemaal niet ?' stamelde Anton. 'Hoe kan er nu een wildernis onder de grond zijn ?'

'Je ziet het toch dat het kan !' snauwde de spookklok. De spookklok begon hen toen door de wildernis te sleuren, totdat ze bij een groot kasteel aankwamen. 'De heks wil jullie zien ?' zei de spookklok. 'Het is bijna middernacht.'

'De heks ?' vroeg Anton. 'Wie is dat ?'

'Dat zul je wel zien,' sprak de spookklok. Hij trok ze alle drie naar binnen, en ze zagen een grote troon in de verte. Toen sleurde hij ze helemaal voor de troon. Op de troon zat een vrouw in een witte jurk met grijze haren. Achter haar was een grote rode schijf waar ze tegenaan leunde. 'Zo, eindelijk zijn jullie gekomen,' sprak de vrouw.

'Wat wilt u van ons ?' vroeg Anton een beetje kribbig.

'Jongen, daar hoef je niet zo ellendig over te doen. Ik strijdt al tijden voor de wildernis onder de grond, want boven de grond is allemaal vervuiling,' sprak de vrouw.

'Heeft u soms die vliegramp en al die verdere rampen veroorzaakt, sinds het er op lijkt dat mijnheer de spookklok en u dikke vrienden zijn, en hij voor u werkt,' vroeg Anton.

'Oh, de spookramp ? Nee, die heb ik niet veroorzaakt,' sprak de vrouw.

Opeens konden ze zich niet meer bewegen, en praten was ook onmogelijk geworden, terwijl de

heks begon te schaterlachen. 'Leidt hen tot de kooien, spookklok, wij kunnen ze nog goed gebruiken !' krijste ze. De spookklok nam hen mee in een ruk, en ging een gang op die leidde naar een ruimte met kooien. Hij drukte ze allemaal in één kooi.

Nog steeds konden ze niet praten, hoeveel ze dat ook probeerden, en ze konden zich niet bewegen. Ze lagen als slappe lappenpoppen op de grond. Deze heks was erg gevaarlijk. Na een tijdje kwam de heks de kooi bezoeken, en grijnste. 'Wel, wel, wie hebben we daar,' zei de heks met een hoge, krijsende stem die pijn deed aan hun oren. 'Ik kan jullie wel gebruiken als gevechts-poppen. Dan gaan jullie aan het front. Levende schilden zullen jullie zijn !'

'Kijk me eens aan. Jullie zullen onder mijn hypnose zijn. Jullie zullen alleen denken en doen wat ik jullie gebiedt, begrepen ?'

'Ja,' zeiden ze alle drie traag.

'Ja, koningin moet dat zijn !' kraste ze.

'Ja, koningin,' zeiden ze alle drie traag. Ze nam Anton en Susanne's handen in haar handen, terwijl er een vreemde kracht door hen stroomde. En toen even later pakte ze de hand van Jaap. Alle drie begonnen ze een beetje waggelend op hun benen te staan. Anton trilde. 'Ja, heks,' sprak hij.

'Goedzo, jongen, je begint het al te leren,' kraste ze. 'Marcheer voor me. Kom achter me aan.' De heks liep de gang op en ging een andere gang in, terwijl Anton, Jaap en Susanne haar gehypnotiseerd volgden.

Op een tafeltje stond een glas met een glazen pot met water. 'Breng me wat water,' snauwde ze naar Anton. Anton liep gehypnotiseerd naar de tafel, en schonk water in het glas, en bracht het toen naar de heks, die er direct gulzig van begon te drinken. Aan de muur hingen wapens. Ze wees op de wapens en sprak : 'Die wapens zullen jullie gebruiken.'

Ze nam de wapens van de muur en begon ze uit te delen. 'Op het front zullen jullie vechten. De ondergrondse wildernis wordt aangevreten door vliegende reuzen-kevers, met grote, logge lichamen en piepkleine hoofdjes. Jullie zullen wachters op mijn toren worden, en niet alleen mijn kasteel verdedigen, maar ook ten aanval gaan,' sprak de heks. Anton, Jaap en Susanne keken naar hun geweren. Toen keken ze weer naar de heks. 'Begrepen, heks,' zei Anton. Toen leidde de heks hen naar de toren van het kasteel. Ze moesten een heleboel trappen op, en kwamen toen buiten op de toren, vanwaar ze een uitzicht hadden over de wildernis. 'Schiet, schiet !' schreeuwde de heks. 'Als je goed kijkt kun je de reuzen-kevers al zien. En inderdaad vlogen er al snel heel wat vliegende reuzen-kevers om hen heen, en ze moesten vechten voor hun leven. Ook de heks vocht mee met haar toverkrachten. Ze begonnen een beetje in de gaten te krijgen wat er aan de hand was. Deze reuzen-kevers waren inderdaad verschrikkelijk, en al gauw waren ze trots en tevreden met hun taak.

'Goed voor nu,' sprak de heks na een tijdje, en ze moesten de toren weer in. Ze hadden een paar bijtwonden van de kevers, maar verder hadden ze goed gevochten.

'Ik heb jullie hier gebracht door rampen,' sprak de heks. Ze nam hen mee naar een eetzaal, waar hen de meest overheerlijke gerechten werden gebracht op een lange tafel, door een heleboel koks in wit gekleed met hoge witte mutsen. 'Eet, liefjes, dan zijn jullie straks weer klaar voor het gevecht.' Alle drie begonnen ze te eten totdat hun buiken vol waren. 'Pfff... ik kan niet meer,' zei Anton.

'Ik heb veel te veel gegeten,' zuchtte Susanne.

Ergens op een hogere verdieping in het kasteel kregen ze een kamer waar ze konden uitrusten. De hypnose begon een beetje uit te werken, want het was slechts het kasteel van een middernachts-heks, die alleen veel macht hebben in het diepste van de nacht. 'Dat mens is gek,' zei Anton ineens. 'Ik voel me weer normaal. Het lijkt wel alsof de betovering is verbroken. Laten we kijken wat er aan de hand is.'

Stilletjes liepen ze de kamer uit, en gingen over de trappen naar beneden. Ze verscholen zich achter een grote plant in een grote bak, en keken zo de troonzaal in. Ze zagen haar op haar troon zitten. Ze bewoog niet, maar trilde een beetje. 'Laten we ontsnappen nu het kan,' zei Susanne. Stilletjes liepen ze naar de poort van het kasteel, en renden toen de wildernis in. Maar de spookklok kwam achter hen aan. Hij krijste, en leek veel groter. 'Klim in een boom !' riep Anton. Snel klommen ze in een hoge boom, maar de spookklok klom er ook in. Met zijn vele armen kon hij goed klimmen. 'We zijn er geweest,' riep Anton.

'Nee !' riep Susanne, 'hier is een liaan. Houd vast.' Met z'n drieen hielden ze zich stevig vast aan de liaan, en zwiepten de wildernis in. De liaan ging helemaal over een rivier heen, en ze kwamen aan de andere kant terecht. Ze hoorden de spookklok brullen in de verte. Na lang rennen hoorden ze niets meer. Over heuveltjes kwamen ze steeds hogerop, totdat ze eindelijk door een gat boven de grond in het bos uitkwamen. Vermoeid, maar opgelucht slenterden ze naar huis. Thuisgekomen gingen ze direct slapen.

De volgende dag, ergens in de middag, werden ze wakker.

Hoofdstuk 4. Het Contract

'Deursen is een spookstad geworden,' gromde Anton.
'De spookklok zal ons overal vinden, volgens mij heeft het niks met Deursen te maken,' sprak Susanne.
'Nee, deze dingen gebeuren alleen in Deursen,' zei Anton.
'We moeten weg,' zei Jaap. 'We zijn hier niet veilig.'

'Zeg, ik laat me niet wegjagen door een stuk speelgoed !' snauwde Anton.
'Het is geen speelgoed,' zei Jaap. 'Dat weet je best. Het is gevaarlijke militaire techniek.'
'Jaap, nu moet je ophouden,' sprak Anton geirriteerd. 'Ik probeer mijn hoofd erbij te houden. We moeten het niet groter maken dan het is. We kunnen best dit mysterie oplossen.'

Ze besloten naar oom Aart te gaan, om hem te vertellen wat er gebeurd was. Oom Aart wilde naar de gevangenis gaan om zijn broer op te zoeken, om die om raad te vragen. 'Kunnen we die broer van u wel vertrouwen ?' vroeg Anton.

'We hebben niet veel keuze,' zei oom Aart. Zo gezegd zo gedaan. In de auto van oom Aart reden ze even later richting de gevangenis. Gauw zaten ze om de tafel met de broer van oom Aart. Ook de professor van de vlieg-basis, de broer van oom Aart die nu opgesloten was, kreeg het verhaal over wat de spookklok had gedaan te horen. 'Ik kan het niet helpen. Het is de natuur aan het werk,' zei de professor.

'Toe nou, broer,' zei oom Aart. 'Je weet vast wel wat te bedenken.'

'Ik heb de uiteindelijke spookklok niet gemaakt,' zei de professor. 'Ik heb de spoken uit hout opgewekt, en veel over de spookklok geschreven. Ik was er mee bezig, maar heb later het werk overgedragen aan Leo. Leo heeft het eindproduct gemaakt.'

'Wie is Leo ?' vroeg Anton.

'Leo is een zakenman,' zei oom Aart. 'Hij kwam vroeger veel bij ons thuis, en was een vriend van ons beiden, maar hij was een gevaarlijke jongen. Hij deugde niet.'

'Waarom deugde hij niet ?' vroeg Anton.

'Het was een misdadiger,' zei oom Aart.

'Voor veel geld kocht hij het project van mij over,' zei de professor. 'En hij was de uiteindelijke oprichter van de spookklok. Jullie moeten bij hem zijn als jullie meer willen weten.'

'Waar woont hij tegenwoordig ?' vroeg oom Aart. De professor krabbelde wat op een papiertje en gaf het aan oom Aart. 'Hier, ga daar maar eens kijken.'

'Kom op, jongens,' zei oom Aart, en liep het zaaltje uit. Even later zaten ze in de auto.

Leo had een groot laboratorium voor ziekenhuis-producten. Ze kwamen aan bij een groot gebouw waar oom Aart de auto parkeerde.

Even later kwamen ze aan in het kantoor van Leo. Leo zat achter een wit bureau. 'Nu moet jij eens horen, Leo. Ik hoorde van mijn broer dat jij het spookklok project van hem had overgekocht, en dat jij de spookklok hebt gemaakt. Heb jij enig idee wat de spookklok allemaal heeft aangericht ?' snauwde oom Aart.

'Maar natuurlijk,' zei Leo zonder blikken of blozen. 'En ik ben er zeer trots op. De spookklok is gemaakt om rampen te maken en allerlei ellende, zodat wij onze ziekenhuis-producten goed kunnen verkopen.'

'Maar dat is belachelijk,' snauwde oom Aart. 'Dus jij vindt jouw heilige producten en het geld wat je ermee kunt verdienen belangrijker dan het geluk van mensenlevens ?'

'Daar betalen ze dan maar voor,' sprak Leo kalm. 'Geluk is altijd duur, en hoeft heus niet goedkoop te zijn. Daar worden mensen lui van.'

Oom Aart werd rood van woede. 'Jij bent levens aan het vernietigen met je spookklok, Leo.'

'Dan heeft de politie ook wat te doen,' grapte Leo. 'Ik zorg ervoor dat iedereen aan het werk komt.'

'Je bent een malloot, Leo,' bulderde oom Aart. 'Je denkt alleen aan jezelf en aan geld. Ze moesten jou ook opsluiten.'

'Dat gebeurt zomaar niet,' grijnsde Leo. 'De spookklok regeert ook over de politie. Alle beslissingen liggen bij mij. Ik heb het ding geprogrammeert, dus ik ben de baas over Deursen, en straks over de hele wereld.'

'Allemaal door rampen, Leo,' snauwde oom Aart. 'Je moet je schamen.'

'Hoe heeft u die spookklok gemaakt ?' vroeg Anton.

'Waarom zou ik jou dat vertellen, jongetje,' zei Leo. 'Hoeveel betaal je ervoor ?'

'Hoe kunnen we de spookklok onschadelijk maken ?' vroeg Susanne.

'De spookklok zal jullie onschadelijk maken,' sprak Leo kalm. 'Er valt niet tegen op te boksen. Het is een genie.'

Oom Aart werd wat rustiger. Hij besefte dat hij er niet veel mee opschoot door zo te snauwen. 'Hoe heb je die spoken zover gekregen voor je te werken ?' vroeg oom Aart.

'Ik heb ze alle twaalf ontmoet, en ik moest offers brengen,' zei Leo.

'Wat was het offer ?' vroeg oom Aart.

'Mezelf,' zei Leo. 'De spoken wonen in mij, als hun tweede huis.'

'Ach, Leo,' zei oom Aart. 'Doe toch niet zo mal. Waarom zou je dat doen ?'

'Ze beschermen mij goed, en mijn handel in ziekenhuis-producten loopt prima,' zei Leo.

'Ik denk dat zij eerder de baas over jou spelen,' zei oom Aart.

'Ach welnee,' zei Leo. 'We hebben een goed contract gesloten.'

'Hoe en waar hebt u de spoken ontmoet ?' vroeg Anton.

'Nou, kijk eens even,' zei Leo, 'ik kon het spookklok project alleen overkopen als ik de spoken zou hebben ontmoet en me aan hen bewezen zou hebben. Ik moest ze eerst geinteresseerd maken om in de klok te gaan wonen.

Het eerste spook ontmoette ik diep in het bos. Ik moest over een rivier in de nacht bij dichte mist, over een brug van touw. Hij wachtte me daar op. Hij was het spook van overstromingen. Hij kon rivieren en zeeen laten overstromen. Toen ik over de brug ging was er donder en bliksem. Hij riep mij van de andere kant. Hij had allemaal wit licht om zich heen. Hij woonde in een grot achter een waterval. Door de waterval gingen we naar binnen. Uit zijn vingers droop water, en toen begon het uit zijn hele lichaam te stromen, en het hield maar niet op. Ik rende weg, maar werd door de stroom ingehaald. Toen ging hij bij me naar binnen door mijn mond. Sindsdien ben ik een deel van hem, en is hij een deel van mij. De volgende dag was er een grote overstroming die ervoor zorgde dat Deursen aan zee kwam te liggen met zijn eigen strand- en duinengebied. Dankzij mijn vriendschap met het eerste spook was Deursen gespaard gebleven.

Het tweede spook woonde ook in het bos, en ik moest weer de rivier over, maar ditmaal over een andere brug van touw. Het spook wachtte mij al op. Het was het spook van vuurrampen. Hij veroorzaakte al direct een kleine bosbrand. Ik trilde als een rietje. Ik had nog nooit zoiets gezien. Ik dacht er direct aan hoeveel geld dit spook me zou opleveren. Het spook stak zijn hand uit, en ik schudde zijn hand. Hij leidde mij naar een boshutje. Hier woonde hij. Hij kon geld uit het niets tevoorschijn toveren. Hij sprak niet veel. Ook hij ging door mijn mond naar binnen, en door mijn oren. Mijn oren leken te piepen, en even leek het alsof ik in brand stond. Maar daarna werd alles rustig, en een zacht gevoel overstroomde mij. De volgende dag waren er veel bosbranden, en het kwam op de voorpagina van de krant. Ook het tweede spook wilde in mijn klok wonen, en we waren al snel dikke vrienden.

De derde spook was het ijs-spook …'

Leo stopte met praten. Er begon allemaal ijs uit zijn mond te komen, en het bleef maar stromen. 'Och jongen,' zei oom Aart. 'Wat hebben ze jou toch goed te pakken.' Leo begon te bibberen als een hondje.

'Ik denk dat het voor jou beter is om ermee te stoppen,' zei oom Aart. 'Dit is toch niet meer normaal ?' Het ijs bleef maar stromen, en na een tijdje lag de hele vloer eronder. 'Kom op, jongens,' zei oom Aart. 'Hier valt toch niet mee te praten.' Hij stond op en liep de deur uit, terwijl Anton, Jaap en Susanne hem volgden. 'Ik ben er klaar mee,' zei oom Aart. 'Het beste is dat we allemaal gaan verhuizen naar een andere plaats. Deursen is niet meer wat het geweest is.' En zo gebeurde het. Alle vier verhuisden ze naar een ander dorp. Ze gingen in Nunspeet wonen. Ze kwamen alle vier bij elkaar in de straat te wonen. Jaap kwam naast Anton te wonen, en tegenover hen woonden Susanne en oom Aart. Of ze ooit nog last hadden gekregen van de spookklok is niet bekend.

DE BIBELEBONSE
PAP

Hoofdstuk 1. Spijbelaars voor de Spin
Hoofdstuk 2. Het Kruid van Jonas
Hoofdstuk 3. De Bostrein

Hoofdstuk 1. Spijbelaars voor de Spin

In een heel oud Nederland, wel honderden jaren geleden was Lelystad een poortstadje aan de zee. Er waren veel piraten die tijd, en die konden alleen via Lelystad in Nederland komen als ze zich gedroegen. Nederland had goed bewaakte dijken, en Lelystad was de enige haven en poort tot Nederland. Verder was Nederland stevig ommuurd tegen allerlei ander gespuis ter land. Alleen de vogels konden makkelijk binnengaan, en zo ook de sprekende duif Oerling. Oerling was al een hele oude vogel, al vele honderden jaren oud, maar hij ging maar niet dood, omdat hij eens van de Bibelebonse pap had gegeten. Hij werd dus eigenlijk ook niet ouder, maar leefde gewoon als dezelfde door.

Groot was Nederland wel, heel groot, met vele dorpjes en steden. Vooral dorpjes, en vele grote dorpen. Lelystad was de grootste stad, aan de kust, maar Renkum was de hoofdstad van Nederland. Zo is dat eeuwen geweest.

Je zou denken dat Nederland dan ontzettend goed beveiligd was met al die zwaar bewaakte dijken en stevige muren, maar niets is minder waar. Nederland was niet goed beveiligd, of niet goed genoeg, want eens vielen de piraten binnen via Lelystad. Ons hele landje werd toen een piraten natie. Het laatste tovenaarsgeslacht wat Nederland had, het geslacht Buis, werd toen omgebracht. Alleen Zaderling Buis en zijn broer Georgius lieten ze in leven, want die waren nog jong, en die leken onschuldig. Tientallen jaren later werd Joost geboren, en Zaderling Buis was de trotse vader, en Georgius de trotse oom. Er was weer hoop gekomen voor het geslacht Buis, alhoewel er van een tovenaarsgeslacht niet meer echt te spreken was, want de piraten hadden alle tovenaars van de familie uitgemoord.

Toch was dat niet helemaal waar. Georgius had een boek van zijn vader geërfd waar nog veel over tovenarij instond, en hierdoor leerde Georgius zichzelf de kunst aan. Zijn neefje, Joost, werd toen later zijn tovenaarsleerling, alhoewel hij toen inmiddels in de gevangenis terecht was gekomen door onbekende redenen. Zijn neefje bezocht hem veel en leerde zo het vak. Joost wilde iets tegen de piraten doen die het land regeerden, maar hij kon niet veel doen. Hij was jong, en had niet veel kennis. Zelfs zijn oom Georgius zat met zijn handen in het haar. Hij vroeg zich af waarom hij in de gevangenis zat, maar niemand wilde het hem zeggen. Misschien had het ermee te maken dat hij een Buis was, maar zijn iets jongere broer, Zaderling, was nog op vrije voeten. Of misschien had het ermee te maken dat hij de oudste was en ze het toch niet vertrouwden ?

Joost zat in de klas van meester Tulp. In deze klas zat ook Klaas de Wit, de ergste pester van Nederland. Ze zeiden dat hij een sleutel bewaarde, de sleutel van de Bibelebonse pap waardoor je nooit oud wordt.
De Bibelebonse pap werd niet verkocht in Nederland. Er waren een heleboel verhalen over dat het alleen maar voor het kwade tovenaarsgeslacht was van Klaas de Wit, zodat zij altijd jong bleven. Ieder ander mens in Nederland werd oud.
Joost en Klaas zaten dus bij elkaar in de klas en waren altijd in gevecht. Klaas de Pester, zoals hij weleens werd genoemd, was het zoontje van de bakker. En het was ook zo, die familie leek maar niet ouder te worden. Zouden die verhalen toch waar zijn ? Zou er nog een soort van laatste tovenaarsgeslacht zijn, maar dan een kwaad tovenaarsgeslacht ? Joost dacht van wel. Hij geloofde al die verhalen. Hij had teveel met Klaas meegemaakt. Klaas zei zelf al altijd dat het waar kon zijn, maar dat hij er niets over wilde zeggen. Sommigen zeiden dat ze hem er weleens over hadden horen opscheppen, maar Joost had dat nog nooit meegemaakt.

Meester Tulp leerde de kinderen van alles, vooral voetballen. Daar was de meester verzot op. Hij deed dit altijd met zijn lange zwarte onderwijzersjas en zijn onderwijzerspet op, met een fluitje in zijn mond. Op een dag nam hij de kinderen mee het bos in. Hij vertelde hen dat hier ergens kruid voor de Bibelebonse pap moest groeien. Maar Klaas lachte hem uit. "Dat kruid groeit hier niet, meester," lachte hij. "Dat kruid wordt door onze familie bewaakt, het beste bakkersgeslacht van Nederland, en het wordt alleen verkocht aan de piraten, zodat zij altijd jong zullen blijven." Joost schrok. De meester negeerde gewoon wat Klaas zei, en zei : "En toch is het zo." Klaas lachte alleen maar harder. "Ga hier maar op zoek, meester, met al uw domme uilskuikens. Jullie zullen het kruid toch niet vinden," lachte hij.

Die nacht kon Joost niet slapen. Hij bleef maar denken over wat de meester had gezegd. Zou het kruid dan toch ergens in het bos groeien ? Oom Georgius had hem veel geleerd over toveren, maar hij had het gevoel dat het niet werkte. Hij hoopte maar dat hij eens het Bibelebonse kruid zou vinden, want dan zou hij nooit oud worden, en dan zou hij misschien echt allerlei toverkrachten hebben. Misschien was het ook wel goed dat hij geen echte toverkrachten had, en dat al het getover toch niet werkte, want anders zou hij misschien ook wel opgesloten worden. Joost moest ook altijd oppassen met oefenen. Oom Georgius zei dat hij het alleen 's nachts mocht doen, zodat niemand het kon zien.

Ook had Joost het geluk dat hij nog steeds jong was, dus snel in de gevangenis belanden zou hij toch niet. Hij was nog een kind. De volgende dag nam meester Tulp hen weer naar het bos.
"Meester, waar groeit ergens het Bibelebonse kruid ?" vroeg Joost.
"Ken je de trap van Gorrestein ?" vroeg de meester. "Die staat ergens diep in het bos, en daar moeten we zijn." Klaas begon weer te lachen en de meester te bespotten. Ze waren het wel gewend en negeerden hem gewoon zoals altijd.
"Ergens diep in het bos moet dus die trap zijn die leidt naar het Bibelebonse kruid," zei de meester, "maar niemand weet waar die trap is. De piraten weten het ook niet."
Weer begon Klaas te lachen en te spotten. "Mijn vader, bakker de Wit, heeft dat kruid, en hij zal echt zijn ingrediënten niet verklappen, aan niemand," lachte hij. "Alleen onze familie eet van de Bibelebonse pap, en de piraten die het land besturen."
De meester schudde zijn hoofd. "Dat is niet waar, kinderen." Klaas begon steeds harder te lachen.

"Waarom is het niet waar, meester ?" vroeg Joost.

"Niemand weet waar de trap van Gorrestein is, Joost. Alleen de oude tovenaars wisten het, maar die zijn dood zoals je weet."

Joost zou het oom Georgius wel vragen. Misschien wist hij het. Natuurlijk vertelde hij dat niet aan de meester en de kinderen. Hij hield het voor zich. Toen hij thuisgekomen was van school ging hij direct naar de gevangenis om zijn oom te bezoeken. Van oom Georgius kreeg hij het geërfde boek mee. Daar zou het volgens zijn oom wel in staan. Joost was helemaal door het dolle heen. Altijd had hij al in dat boek willen lezen, en nu mocht hij het zelfs mee naar huis nemen. Joost fietste zo hard als hij kon, en kwam helemaal buiten adem thuis. Snel ging hij zijn kamer in, en nam het grote zwarte boek met het vreemde gouden teken erop uit zijn tas. Dit was dus het familie boek. Hier zou dus alles instaan wat hij moest weten volgens oom. Hij ging achter zijn bureautje zitten en sloeg het grote boek open. Als eerste werd er gesproken over een oude duif genaamd Oerling. Die duif zou niet kunnen sterven, omdat hij van de Bibelebonse pap had gegeten. De duif zou leiden tot de trap van Gorrestein diep in het bos. De duif zou komen als je een bepaald versje zou zingen. Het versje stond in het boek beschreven. Het was een heel klein en vreemd versje. Joost begon er nog doller van te worden. Hij zou het aan meester Tulp vertellen. De volgende dag na schooltijd ging Joost naar meester Tulp toe die achter zijn bureau zat. Hij had goed gewacht totdat alle kinderen uit de klas waren. Toen vertelde hij over het boek, over de trap en de duif, en dat de duif zou komen door

een bepaald versje. Van oom Georgius mocht hij het boek niet overal mee naartoe nemen, maar moest hij het verborgen op zijn kamer houden. Daarom ging meester Tulp met Joost mee naar zijn kamer. Daar liet Joost de meester het versje zien.

"Zou het echt werken, meester ?" vroeg Joost.

Meester Tulp begon het versje te zingen, en ze keken beiden uit het raam. Maar er gebeurde niets.
"Zing jij het eens, Joost."
Joost begon het vreemde rijmpje te zingen.
Ineens fladderde er wat voor het raam. Het was een grote duif. Joost deed het raam open en liet de duif binnen. Het was de sprekende duif Oerling.
Oerling keek meester Tulp en Joost aan.
"Waarom hebt gij mij geroepen ?" vroeg de duif.

"Wij zouden graag weten waar de trap van Gorrestein is," sprak Joost. "We zijn namelijk op zoek naar het Bibelebonse kruid."

"Ah," zei de duif, "volgt u mij maar."

Ze gingen over de trap naar beneden en toen het huis uit. Eerst leidde de duif hen naar het bos. Ze moesten diep het bos in. Oerling kende de weg. Ze kwamen op plaatsen waar ze nog nooit eerder geweest waren, en het was zo stil hier en zo prachtig. Ze kwamen langs een grote rivier. "Hier moet het ergens wezen," sprak Oerling.

"Wat kunnen we daar verwachten ?" vroeg Joost.

"Dat zul je wel zien," zei de duif.

Ze liepen nog een lang eind door langs de rivier, totdat de rivier ergens ophield. Hier was het bos woester, en ze moesten nog dieper. Het werd donkerder en donkerder, maar er waren gelukkig lichtgevende insecten.

"Ik dacht dat we er al bijna waren," zei Joost.

"Nog even doorlopen," zei Oerling.

Na een tijdje begonnen ze erg moe te worden. "Hier moet het ergens zijn," zei Oerling.

"Ik ben zo moe," klaagde Joost. Ook de meester was moe, maar stapte stevig door.

"Kom, Joost," zei hij, "het is voor een goed doel."

In de verte zagen ze een lichtgevende trap. Het was heel zacht licht. Het stond daar zomaar diep in het bos. "Woe," zei Joost, "wat griezelig. Het is een lichtgevende trap en het houdt zomaar ergens in de lucht op."

"Dat is de mist," zei Oerling. Steeds dichter kwamen ze bij de trap. Het was heel bijzonder lichtgevend steen. "Dit is de trap van Gorrestein," zei Oerling.

"Wie is precies Gorrestein ?" vroeg Joost.

"Dat zul je wel zien," kraste Oerling.

"Komt u verder," sprak een stem. Er ging een deur open aan de zijkant van de trap, en een oude man in een lichtgevend gewaad en met een lange witte baard kwam naar buiten.

"Wat kan ik voor u doen ?" zei hij met een donkere stem.
Joost vertelde het verhaal.

"Ah, het Bibelebonse kruid zei u ?" zei de oude man. "Komt u maar mee naar binnen."

Hij leidde hen door de deur de trap binnen. Toen moesten ze over een trap naar beneden. "Ik woon heel diep," zei de man. "Maar als u het geheim wilt weten, dan moet u dus deze kant op en niet de trap omhoog."

"Oh," zei Joost.

"Zo, dus je hebt je opa meegenomen ?" vroeg de oude man.

"Nee, dat is meester Tulp," zei Joost.

"Ah, meester Tulp," zei de oude man. "Welkom, u ook, meester Tulp."

"We reizen vaak samen," zei meester Tulp.

"Ah, ik zie het," zei de oude man, "gezellig, en twee is beter dan maar alleen."

"Zo is het," zei meester Tulp, "goed gezelschap is een groot geluk, en brengt goede hulp en raad op zijn tijd."

"Heeft u weleens van de Bibelebonse pap gegeten ?" vroeg Joost.

"Ik ?" vroeg de oude man. "Nee. Het is mij te ver. Ik zal het u zo aanwijzen."

"Maar wie bent u dan ?" vroeg Joost.

"Ik ben Gorrestein," zei de oude man, "en dit is mijn trap."

"Ik begrijp het," zei Joost, "maar ... wat doet u hier dan ?"

"Het is beter hier te zijn dan bij de piraten," lachte de oude man. "Die zeeschuimers zijn nergens goed voor."

"Daar heeft u gelijk in," zei Joost. "Gelukkig maar dat ze u nooit hebben gevonden. Bent u een soort tovenaar ?"

"Nee," zei de oude man. "Toveren doe ik niet. Dan zou ik allang alles hebben veranderd."

"Ik begrijp het," sprak Joost.

Ze kwamen aan bij een ondergrondse rivier waar een bootje stond. "Als u hier instapt," zei de oude man, "en u gaat met de stroom mee, dan komt u vanzelf bij het Bibelebonse kruid."

"Waarom wilt u niet mee ?" vroeg Joost.

"Het is mij te ver, twee dagen in een boot," zei de oude man.

"Twee dagen ?" vroeg Joost.

"Laten we het maar doen," zei meester Tulp. "Het is voor een goed doel."

"Daar heeft u gelijk in," zei de oude man. Meester Tulp en Joost stapten in het bootje en de oude man duwde het bootje de rivier op. "U heeft geen peddels nodig. De rivier doet het vanzelf," zei de oude man. Het was hier erg donker, maar weer waren er lichtgevende insecten. Ze moesten een hele lange tijd in het bootje zitten. Overal aan de zijkanten van de rivier waren grote boomstronken en wortels van bomen, als in een muur van grond. De rivier ging door een soort ondergrondse bostunnel, dieper en dieper. Er begon steeds meer kruid langs de zijkanten te groeien. "Zou dit het Bibelebonse kruid al zijn, meester ?" vroeg Joost. Maar de meester sliep. Ook Joost viel na een tijdje in slaap.

Toen ze weer wakker werden leek het alsof ze dagen hadden geslapen. Het bootje was bij een grote keuken terechtgekomen, als een open paleiskeuken. Ze werden door twee kokken gegrepen. "Wat komen jullie hier doen ?" werd er gebulderd.

Joost vertelde het verhaal, maar kon zijn zinnen niet afmaken. Meester Tulp deed toen het verhaal. "Bibbelebons kruid ?" snauwde één van de kokken. "Zijn jullie gek geworden ?"

"Bibbele wat ?" vroeg de andere kok.

"Ik kan geen wijs worden van deze snaters," zei de ene kok weer.

Ze werden meegesleurd de keuken in door een gang, en kwamen toen in een donkere kelder terecht waarin ze werden geduwd. De deur ging op slot, en er zaten tralies voor het kleine raampje van de deur, wat zo vuil was dat het niet veel licht doorliet.

"Nu zitten we mooi in de penarie," zei Joost.

"Rustig afwachten, Joost," zei de meester. "Het is voor een goed doel. We komen er heus wel langs."

"Dat zegt u altijd dat het voor een goed doel is," zei Joost. "Misschien zijn we ergens verkeerd gegaan."

"Misschien," zei meester Tulp. "We komen er wel achter."

Na een tijdje deed een grote dikke kok de deur open. De man was kaal op zijn hoofd, en sleurde hen beiden naar buiten. "Wat moet dit hier, en wie zijn jullie ?" bulderde de dikke kok. "Verstekelingen ?"

"Is het hier een schip dan ?" vroeg meester Tulp.

"Zeg op," zei de dikke kok. "Wie zijn jullie ?"

Meester Tulp deed weer het verhaal.

"Bibbelebonse wat ?" snauwde ook deze kok. "Zeg, ik ben de hoofdkok hier en heb nog nooit zoiets

belachelijks gehoord. Pap waarvan je nooit oud word, ja ja. Je hebt nogal wat praatjes, en jij noemt jezelf meester ?"

Meester Tulp zuchtte. "Waarschijnlijk zijn we hier verkeerd. Kunt u ons eruit laten en ons verder de rivier laten opgaan. Nee, ik weet zeker dat we hier verkeerd zijn."

"Of misschien moesten we er eerder uit," zei Joost, "maar we vielen in slaap."

Opeens kwam Oerling aanvliegen. "Wat moet die smerige duif hier ?" bulderde de hoofdkok.

"Laat ze met rust," krijste Oerling. De kok moest snel zijn vingers in zijn oren stoppen, en ook meester Tulp en Joost. Oerling was flink kwaad, en begon de kok te pikken met zijn snavel. "Het zijn mijn gasten," tierde Oerling. Toen de kok ze in schrik losliet begon Oerling wat rustiger te worden.

"Ze hadden er eerder uitgemoeten, maar ze vielen in slaap," zei de vogel.

"Volg mij," zei de vogel. Oerling bracht hen weer helemaal terug naar het bootje. Aan een touw begon de grote vogel het bootje tegen de stroom in te trekken, nadat Joost en meester Tulp waren ingestapt. Het touw was in de grote klauwen van het beest. Ergens anders moesten ze een andere tunnel inslaan. Hier was het een stuk lichter. Nu gingen ze weer met de stroom mee, en ook Oerling ging in het bootje. Ze gingen af op een groot bulderend licht wat als water was. Het was als een lichtgevende waterval. Ineens gingen ze met het bootje de tunnel uit en gleden over een waterval naar beneden. Snel greep Oerling Joost en meester Tulp in zijn klauwen en vloog met hen weg.

Oerling bracht hen over een meertje tot de oever waar hele hoge bomen stonden. Na een tijdje lopen kwamen ze bij een toren die geen top bleek te hebben, maar alsmaar hoger was. Oerling noemde het de eindeloze toren. Hier moesten ze zijn. Ze moesten door een deurtje om de trap op te kunnen gaan. Die zou cirkelend naar boven leiden. Na een tijdje kwamen ze aan bij een deur langs de trap. Hier moesten ze aankloppen. Een oude vrouw deed open. Zij was genaamd Jorit, een heks. Zij vertelde hen nadat ze hun verhaal hadden verteld dat het kruid van Bibelebons levensgevaarlijk was. Het werd gesponnen van spinnenrag, en groeide bovenop de eindeloze toren om eens in de driehonderd jaar vruchten te geven. Van het kruid zelf mocht je niet eten, want dan zou je sterven.

"Hoe kan er nu kruid op de top van de toren groeien als er geen top is, als de toren eindeloos is ?" vroeg Joost verbaasd.

"Dat komt," zei de heks, "omdat je het geheim van de vruchten nog niet kent. Je kunt alleen op de top van de eindeloze toren komen door de zeven winden van het bos."

"Waar kunnen we die vinden ?" vroeg Joost.

"Een paar verdiepingen hoger," zei de heks.

Joost en meester Tulp bedankten de heks, en gingen de trap weer op. Maar het leek wel zeshonderd jaar te duren. Hoeveel trappen ze ook opgingen, ze zagen geen deur.

"Of misschien hebben ze wel helemaal geen deur, die zeven winden van het bos ?" vroeg Joost. Joost begon erg moe te worden, en ook meester Tulp. "Volhouden, Joost," zei meester Tulp.

"Ik kom bijna niet meer verder," zei Joost.
"Laten we anders even gaan zitten," zei meester Tulp. "Dit is ook geen doen, en misschien zijn we

wel weer te ver gegaan."

Beiden gingen ze op de trap zitten. "Het is zo eindeloos," zei Joost. "Ik ben zo moe. Ik moet er niet aan denken nog verder te gaan, en ook niet om weer helemaal terug te gaan."

"We zitten vast lijkt het wel," zei meester Tulp. "Maar laten we de moed maar niet opgeven. We komen er heus wel." Na een tijdje begonnen ze beiden in slaap te dutten. Opeens werden ze opgenomen door een enorm sterke wind en werden hoger in de toren getrokken.

"Daar zijn ze," bulderde de wind. Hij riep naar de zes andere winden. In een loeivaart werden ze getrokken naar een deur veel hoger in de toren. De wind zoemde over de trappen heen. Wat was dat een eind weg, zeg. Daar zouden ze nooit in hun eentje kunnen komen. Dat zou jaren duren, zo niet eeuwen. Plotseling stonden ze voor de deur. Een ijzige gestalte die helemaal doorzichtig was deed open. "Zo, zijn jullie daar eindelijk," zei de gestalte. "Dat mocht weleens tijd worden."

"Kent u ons ?" vroeg Joost.

"Nee. Nee, nee," sprak de ijzige gestalte. "Ik ken jullie niet. Waarom zou ik jullie moeten kennen."

"Omdat u net zei dat we daar eindelijk zijn," zei Joost. "U heeft op ons zitten wachten ?"

"Ja, natuurlijk," zei de ijzige gestalte. "Maar ik ken jullie verder niet."

"Oh, zit dat zo," zei Joost.

"Ja, wij voelen dingen aan, weet je," zei de doorzichtige gestalte. "Dat is de kwestie met winden. We voelden jullie aankomen, maar jullie kwamen maar niet."

"Het was ook zo'n eind," zei Joost.

"Natuurlijk," lachte de gestalte. "Moeten jullie een kopje thee, bosthee ?" vroeg de gestalte.

"Graag," zei Joost.

"Doet u mij ook maar," zei meester Tulp.

Binnengekomen zagen ze nog meer doorzichtige gestaltes, in verschillende heel vage kleuren. Het waren de zeven boswinden.

De ijzige gestalte, die de ijzige wind van het bos was, scheen IJshout te heten. Hij scheen al te weten waarvoor ze kwamen, want winden schijnen dat aan te voelen. Hij keek hen aan, en zei : "Het Bibelebonse kruid is zeer gevaarlijk, zeer gevaarlijk. Dat mag u niet onderschatten."

"En het duurt driehonderd jaar voordat het kruid nieuwe vruchten geeft ?" vroeg Joost.

"Helaas wel, helaas wel," sprak IJshout, "maar je moet het geheim van de vruchten kennen. Ziet u, het topje van de eindeloze toren is een droom. Daarom heeft u een slaap nodig zo diep waarin het ijs breekt om zo dit geheim te kunnen zien. IJs is alles wat de spin gemaakt heeft, ziet u. Het spint zowel het ijs als het kruid, als een web, maar alleen de vrucht geeft leven. Zij die van het kruid eten zullen sterven. Ook het kruid is ijs. Voor hen die niet diep slapen is de driehonderd jaar een probleem, maar niet voor hen die van de vruchten van de warme slaap hebben gegeten, om zo tot de vruchten van het Bibelebonse kruid te komen."

"Mag ik u wat vragen ?" vroeg Joost. "Hoe komen we aan die vruchten van warme slaap ? En een jongen uit mijn klas beweert te hebben gegeten van het Bibelebonse kruid, en dat hij net als zijn familie en de bestuurders van het land nooit oud zal worden. Hij zegt de Bibelebonse pap is van dat kruid gemaakt."

"Dan is hij al dood," zei IJshout, "een schim, want allen die van het kruid eten zullen sterven. Zij zijn gevangenen van de spin, en zij worden slechts bereid om opgegeten te worden. Het zijn slechts de voorbereidingen van de kok. Het is misschien naar om te zien allemaal hoe ze spartelen, maar het zijn slechts stuiptrekkingen. Ze zijn dood. Er zit geen leven in hen."

Joost slikte even. "Het is de grootste pestkop van Nederland."

"Ach welnee," zei IJshout. "Hij suddert slechts in de pan. Allemaal schaduwen en weerspiegelingen, schimmen. Spookachtig griezelig, dat wel, maar een kookkunst. En om je andere vraag te beantwoorden : Mijn broer, Warmhout, brengt de vrucht van de warme slaap die al het ijs breekt, zodat je tot de vrucht van het Bibelebonse kruid kunt komen. Die vrucht is goed en levengevend. Hier wordt de pap van gemaakt, gebrouwen, maar kom er niet aan voordat het klaar is."

"Waarom niet ?" vroeg Joost.

"Omdat het anders giftig is," sprak IJshout.

"Dus ook de vruchten van het Bibelebonse kruid zijn giftig ?" vroeg Joost schrikkend.

"Als het niet goed bereid is," sprak IJshout. "Daarom heb je een goede kok nodig, anders kun je het wel vergeten."

In een hoek zat Warmhout, de broer van IJshout. Hij was de warme wind van het bos, in tegenstelling tot zijn broer. Hij had het gesprek glimlachend aangehoord. "Ja hoor, bij mij moet je wezen," zei hij. "Ik zal jullie straks hogerop nemen totdat het ijs breekt, in een diepe warme slaap. In die slaap zul je komen tot de droom van de Bibelebonse vruchten, in plaats van driehonderd jaar erop wachten."

IJshout glimlachte. "Dan zit mijn werk erop voor nu."

Nog even praatten ze door, en toen was het tijd dat Warmhout hen nog verder mee naar boven zou nemen. Warmhout was dus de warme wind van het bos, en nam hen toen beiden in zijn armen, ging door de deur naar de trappen, en toen steeg hij omhoog. Ook dit ging weer erg snel, en ook geruisloos. Het leek nog wel sneller te gaan dan de eerste keer. Met gemak vloog hij snel over duizende trappen heen. Joost en meester Tulp begonnen al langzaam in slaap te vallen. Joost voelde helemaal niets meer, alsof hij in de ruimte zweefde. Hij voelde niet eens meer dat hij vooruit ging. Alles was zo zacht. Alles verliep zo soepel. Er gleed een warmte over hem heen, en al snel zag hij niets meer. Hij was in de warme slaap. Ook meester Tulp kwam in de warme slaap. Warmhout moest nu door de ijsbarrière van de eindeloze toren heenbreken, om zo tot de droomtop te komen, en tot de vruchten van het Bibelebonse kruid. Overal was kruid nu. Het leek wel alsof de lucht er vol mee was. Iemand hijgde en kreunde, alsof er een baby geboren zou worden, als een boom die vruchten zou geven.

"Ik kan het niet !" schreeuwde iemand.

"Je kan het wel," zei iemand anders.

"Nee, ik kan het echt niet," werd er weer geschreeuwd.

"Jawel, het is niet de eerste keer. Het zal je heus wel weer lukken."

En toen was het doodstil.

Joost en meester Tulp werden wakker tussen de vruchten. Het waren allerlei soorten vruchten die ze niet kenden. Gevaarlijk waren die vruchten wel, zoals IJshout had gezegd, want ze moesten door een kok goed worden bereid. "Raak ze niet aan, Joost," zei meester Tulp.

"We moeten wachten op de kok," zei Joost.

"Raak ze maar niet aan, meester, anders ontploffen ze."

"Nou, dat zal nog wel meevallen. We mogen ze alleen niet eten, Joost."

"Laten we maar geen risico nemen, meester. Voorkomen is beter dan genezen."

Maar de vruchten leken pootjes te hebben, en kwamen naar ze toe. Het leken wel een soort kevers, insecten. Ze hadden allerlei kleuren rood. De vruchten begonnen steeds agressiever te worden. Toen begonnen ze te bijten.

Joost begon te gillen en te schreeuwen. "Dit lijkt wel een nachtmerrie !"

"Dat is het waarschijnlijk, Joost," zei meester Tulp die de vruchten van zich af begon te slaan.

"Als ze hier Bibelebonse pap van maken, dan hoef ik het niet meer !" schreeuwde Joost.

"Zoei," zei de wind, "het zijn de vruchten van de warme slaap. Zonder deze vruchten kom je niet in een diepere slaap, het is een soort narcose spuit."

Joost en meester Tulp werden zo geprikt en gestoken dat ze in een nog diepere slaap vielen.

"Ik wil eruit !" werd er geroepen.

"Nog even," zei iemand anders.

"Ik wil niet !"

"Je hebt niets te willen. Sommige dingen zijn nu eenmaal nodig."

Toen werd het doodstil. Hier konden ze de trappen weer zien. Ze zagen dat hier ergens de toren begon af te buigen. Het ging helemaal scheef totdat het over de kop ging, en toen weer. De trappen gingen hier recht door enorme watervallen heen, en bloemenvelden. Hier nam een andere broer het over : Waterhout, de natte boswind.

"Heb je ze ?" vroeg Warmhout.

"Ja, ik heb ze. Laat maar los," zei Waterhout.

De top van de eindeloze toren was een draaikolk waardoor ze in een andere natuur kwamen. Ze werden er doorheen gezogen totdat ze in de bloemenvelden waren omgeven door watervallen. Er stroomde een rivier rondom de bloemenvelden heen. Waterhout stond voor ze, als een waterige, doorzichtige gestalte. "Ziezo," zei hij. "Ik ben de kok."

"Om duizelig van te worden," zei Joost.

Waterhout glimlachte. "Het trekt wel weg," zei hij.

"Dus zo kook jij," zei meester Tulp.

"Zo kook ik," glimlachte Waterhout.

"Dus het is echt waar van de Bibelebonse pap ?" vroeg Joost.

Waterhout knikte. "Ja, waarom niet ?" zei hij. "Het is allemaal wiskundig en natuurkundig eenvoudig te beredeneren."

"Waar is uw keuken ?" vroeg Joost.

"Hier," glimlachte Waterhout.

"Ziet u, wij kwamen voor de Bibelebonse pap om zo niet oud meer te hoeven worden," zei Joost. "Een kok is nodig zodat het niet giftig is. Heeft u nu zo'n middel wat niet giftig is ?"

"Bakken vol," zei Waterhout. "Alle ingrediënten zijn op de juiste manier toebereid, in de juiste verhouding, en de processen waren stipt op tijd, niet te lang en niet te kort. Het is een heel wiskundig vak, want anders gaat er van alles mis. Dat wil je niet weten, maar dit vak is levens en levensgevaarlijk. Dat mogen alleen de volleerden, de bevoegden, beoefenen. Zo niet dan zou het een ramp kunnen betekenen. Dan zou het koorddansen zijn tussen twee hoge flatten in."

"Zonder vangnet zeker," zei Joost.

"Precies," zei Waterhout. "Ik zou er dus maar niet aan beginnen. Beunhazen zijn een groot gevaar, en die komen dan ook achter de tralies terecht. Daar zorgt de spin wel voor. Alles wordt hier fijn getest."

"Ik begrijp het," zei Joost. "Is er ook een school voor dit soort dingen."

"Jazeker, mijn jongen, mijn lieve jongen," zei Waterhout ineens dolgelukkig. "Ik ben zo waanzinnig blij dat je deze vraag stelt. Het is namelijk een zaak van leven of dood, wat maar weinigen beseffen, of ze beseffen het te laat. Een andere broer, Spinrag, heeft hiervoor een school. Hij is de zachte boswind. Hij wordt ook wel "de spin" genoemd."

"Ik besef dat ik maar erg tijdelijk ben," zei Joost, "en ik weet niet hoeveel tijd ik en meester Tulp nog hebben, maar zouden wij daarom direct wat van de Bibelebonse pap mogen eten, zodat we niet meer ouder kunnen worden ?"

"Wij verkopen alleen het poeder voor de pap," zei Waterhout. "Dat kan niet zomaar vermengd worden met melk of water. Dat zou levens en levensgevaarlijk zijn."

"Hoe duur is dat poeder ?" vroeg Joost. "En hoe en met wat moet het poeder gemengd worden ?"

"Heel duur, heel duur," zei Waterhout. "Dat kan een sterfelijk mens niet zomaar betalen. En met wat en hoe het poeder vermengd moet worden wordt allemaal op onze school onderwezen, zodat er absoluut geen fouten gemaakt kunnen worden."

"Maar dat lijkt op een onmogelijke opgave," zei meester Tulp.
Joost begon verschrikkelijk te zuchten en werd steeds wanhopiger.

"U moet weten, meester Tulp," sprak Waterhout, "waar een wil is is een weg. Als u een volleerde Bibelebonse bakker bent geworden kunt u hopen goud verdienen."

"Het gaat mij niet om goud of geld," sprak meester Tulp. "Ik blijf het liefst schoolmeester."

"Oh, maar als u een volleerde Bibelebonse bakker bent geworden, dan kunt u ook lesgeven op de school van mijn broer, en dan verdient u ook bakken geld," zei Waterhout.

"Geld interesseert me niet. Maar anderen te leren goed te doen, en ook iets van hen te leren, daar gaat het mij om," zei meester Tulp.

"Prijzenswaardig, zeer prijzenswaardig," zei Waterhout.

"Ja," zei Joost. "Mij gaat het ook niet om het geld. Waar het mij om gaat is een middel te vinden om niet meer oud te worden, en daar anderen ook mee te helpen."

"Jullie hebben beiden een goed hart," zei Waterhout, "en dat doet me goed. Maar denk je eens in als niemand oud zou worden en niemand zou sterven, dan zouden ook de slechterikken nooit oud worden en nooit sterven. Ze zouden eeuwig kunnen bestaan als een groot eeuwig kwaad."

"Maar daar zorgt de spin toch voor dat het niet in de verkeerde handen valt ?" vroeg Joost.

"Precies, slimme jongen," glimlachte Waterhout. "En daarom zijn jullie hier, en daarom hebben de piraten en hun gespuis de trap van Gorrestein ook nooit kunnen vinden. Ook al zouden ze het vinden, dan zou de spin wel met ze afrekenen."

"Of ze zouden de trap naar boven nemen in plaats van naar beneden, want de trap naar beneden is verborgen," zei Joost. "Aan de zijkant van de trap verscheen in de steen een deur die er eerst niet was, en toen kwam de oude man, Gorrestein zelf, naar buiten."

"Precies, slimme, lieve jongen," zei Waterhout. "Maak jij je daarom maar niet druk. Alles zal wel goedkomen. De Bibelebonse pap is alleen een verdienste op school. De spijbelaars zijn voor de spin."

Hoofdstuk 2. Het Kruid van Jonas

Waterhout vertelde dat het giftige Bibelebonse kruid in de oorlog werd gebruikt, samen met boswind, in speciale Bibelebonse kanonnen. Joost zei dat dat hard nodig was vanwege de piraten die Nederland bezet hielden. Van het kruid werden speciale Bibelebonse kanonkogels gemaakt. Op een dag was het oorlog. De boswinden en hun legers kwamen boven de grond en voerden oorlog tegen de piraten die Nederland bezet hielden. Renkum, de hoofdstad werd eerst terugveroverd, en toen Kampen, Nunspeet, Lelystad en Amsterdam. Ook Joost en meester Tulp vochten mee tegen de piraten. Door de oorlog begon het Bibelebonse kruid overal in hagen door Nederland heen te groeien. De piraten waren woedend, want zo waren de inwoners van Nederland een stap dichterbij de Bibelebonse pap gekomen.

Joost Buis was de smerige piraten goed beu, en begon de inwoners te onderwijzen over de Bibelebonse pap, alles wat hij wist. Ook begon hij pakken Bibelebonse pap-poeder met gebruiksaanwijzing te verspreiden, en maakte hij de pap zelf. De mensen wilden dat hij de Bibelebonse pap koning zou worden. Nederland moest een Bibelebons land worden. Er werd verschrikkelijk gevochten, en oom Georgius zat nog steeds in de gevangenis. De zeven boswinden vochten krachtig mee, en bliezen de piraten weg. Warmhout, de warme wind van het bos, bracht de warme slaap over de mensen, om ze in zo'n diepe slaap te brengen dat het ijs zou breken. Hierin zouden ze het geheim van de Bibelebonse vruchten zien.

De eindeloze toren groeide nu door in Utrecht. Het was boven de grond uitgekomen. Hier woonden Jorit en de zeven boswinden nu, en van hieruit waaiden ze door heel Nederland, om de piraten weg te blazen, weg over de muren en de dijken, en om Nederland te beschermen tegen de piraten. Nederland werd nu beter beveiligd dan ooit, en overal over de muren en dijken groeide het Bibelebonse kruid. Het Zuiden van Nederland, wat eerst België heette, heette nu Suriname, en ook dat deel was geheel omgeven met hagen en struiken van het Bibelebonse kruid.

Overal reden tanks door de straten. Een Surinaams meisje moest de nieuwe pap koningin worden naast Joost Buis. Oom Georgius had dat tegen Joost gezegd. Meester Tulp zou wel een meisje voor hem uitzoeken in Suriname, in het Zuiden van Nederland. Utrecht zou de nieuwe hoofdstad worden van het Bibelebonse Nederland. Meester Tulp bracht vele Surinaamse meisjes naar het paleis om ze daar aan een pap test te onderwerpen. Het meisje wat de beste Bibelebonse pap zou koken zou de nieuwe pap koningin worden. Meester Tulp en Joost Buis, de nieuwe pap koning, zouden beiden de pap proeven. Na een tijdje was het gebeurd, en het was wel duidelijk. Er was een pap koningin uitgekozen. Het volk was blij. Het tovenaars-geslacht was nu hersteld.

Door de Bibelebonse pap zou het volk nooit meer oud worden, nooit meer sterven, maar het hield de piraten en ander gespuis op een afstand. Warmhout, de warme wind van het bos, lette er goed op. Spinrag, de zachte wind van het bos, rekende ook met de piraten en het gespuis af. De eindeloze toren waarin Jorit en de zeven boswinden woonden werd een toren van het paleis in Utrecht.

De nieuwe Surinaamse koningin die uit het Zuiden van Nederland kwam kon heel goed koken en was een echte lekkerbek. Daarom werd zij ook wel koningin Lekkerbek genoemd. Zij had wel honderdduizenden recepten, en leerde het volk een goede kookkunst. Hierin was zij erg bedreven, en gaf nooit op. Een goed recept is de sleutel, zei zij altijd. Zij zag de kookkunst als een oorlog, en ze moesten wel, want oom Georgius zat nog steeds opgesloten. De strijd was nog niet gestreden. Er waren nog steeds bezette gebieden. Maar in ieder geval was het Bibelebonse leger gekomen, en het Bibelebonse leger zou niet meer vertrekken. Het geslacht Buis moest weer opgericht worden.

Soms moesten Joost en zijn koningin er even tussenuit, en dan gingen ze naar hun vakantie-huis in Amsterdam, in een flat. Dan nam meester Tulp altijd het bestuur van het land over. Dat kon hij erg goed. De nieuwe pap koning en pap koningin hielden er ook van om vaak bij mensen door het hele

land te logeren. Dat hield het contact met het volk levendig. Dat was goed voor de onderlinge verstandhoudingen. Ja, Joost was een jongen die op dezelfde lijn als het volk stond, dichtbij de mensen. Zowel Joost als zijn koningin hadden beiden van de Bibelebonse pap gegeten en werden dus niet meer ouder.

De indianen in het woeste Amerika aten rode pap. Hierdoor werden zij snel boos, en waren zij oorlogszuchtig. Het gaf hen nachtmerries, rode paarden, die zij bereden. Oerling sprak er wel eens over. Hij had hen afgeluisterd, en ze waren van plan in bootjes te komen om het Bibelebonse Nederland te bezetten. Joost wist niet wat erger was : piraten of indianen. Joost zou in ieder geval op zijn hoede zijn.

Op een dag kwamen ze : met hun bootjes en hun rode paarden, de nachtmerries. Ze brachten storm met zich mee, waar de boswinden niet tegenop konden, en namen het Bibelebonse Nederland in via Lelystad, het poortstadje aan de kust. Joost was in rep en roer, want nu zou het niet lang duren voordat ze in Utrecht zouden zijn. Joost en koningin Lekkerbek zouden in de eindeloze toren naar beneden gaan, onder de grond. Dat zou het veiligst zijn. Joost wilde het er niet op wagen met zulke woeste indianen. Hij nam zoveel spulletjes mee als hij nodig dacht te hebben, en ging naar de eindeloze toren waar koningin Lekkerbek hem al opwachtte.

"Drommels," riep Joost. "Die drommelse indianen." Ook meester Tulp zou meegaan in de eindeloze toren naar beneden. "Tegen storm kunnen we niet op," zei meester Tulp. Ook meester Tulp had een tas meegenomen. En daar kwam ook Oerling aan die zei dat ze snel moesten wezen. De indianen kwamen in een stormdraf af op Utrecht, en walsten alles plat. Alle drie renden ze met Oerling de trappen af. Joost durfde niet meer naar boven. Iets hield hem in een verlammende schrik. Nederland zou in de ketenen van het woeste Amerika komen, en iedereen moest zichzelf maar zien te redden. Joost kon zo geen pap koning zijn. Door de eindeloze toren kwamen ze weer onder de grond, in het onderaardse rijk, maar tot hun grote schrik waren daar de indianen ook al. Vurig reden ze daar op hun rode paarden, de nachtmerries. Ze moesten nog dieper, maar de indianen waren inmiddels al in de toren gekomen. "Rennen, jongens !" riep Oerling. "Ze komen achter ons aan !"

"Kun jij niets doen ?" riep Joost.

"Niemand kan tegen de rode pap op !" kraste Oerling.

"We zitten goed in de problemen," hijgde Joost. Ze gingen dieper en dieper, terwijl ze achter hen het gejoel van de indianen hoorden, en het gesuis van pijlen.

"We gaan eraan !" riep Joost.

Plotseling kwam er een wind die hen opnam, en sneller in de diepte begon te trekken over de trap naar beneden binnen de eindeloze toren. De wind ging sneller en sneller, maar zei dat ze achterna werden gezeten door stormen. Plotseling konden ze niet meer verder. Ze waren op de donkere grond terechtgekomen en keken recht in de ogen van woeste indianen op hun vurige paarden.

"Ik denk dat we verdwaald zijn," zei Joost.

Een indiaan stapte van zijn paard af. "U bent koning pap ?" vroeg de indiaan.

"Ja, dat ben ik," zei Joost. "Wat wilt u ?"

"Pap," zei de indiaan. "Wij willen wat van uw Bibelebonse pap."

"Om nooit oud te worden zeker," zei Joost.

"Precies," zei de indiaan, "om eeuwig te kunnen leven."

"Wat betaalt u ervoor ?" vroeg Joost.

"Niets," zei de indiaan die zijn schouders optrok. "Wij bezetten immers uw land."

"Als ik het u geef, gaat u dan weg ?" vroeg Joost.

"Natuurlijk niet," zei de indiaan. "Het is pas het begin. Zo kunnen wij het land beter besturen."

"Maar het is ons land," zei Joost.

"Nee," zei de indiaan. "U begrijpt er niets van. Nederland was eens van ons, maar piraten stalen het van ons weg, en hakten het los van Amerika. Het heeft toen eeuwen op de zee gedreven, en nu is het hier."

"Ik vind dat u vreemde verhalen vertelt," zei Joost. "Vind u dat zelf ook niet ?"

De indiaan greep zijn tomahawk en sloeg met de achterkant van het bijltje op Joost zijn hoofd.
"Au !" zei Joost.

"Het is de waarheid," sprak de indiaan. "We hebben niets aan leugenaars. Je klinkt piraats. Geef op die pap. Wij willen eeuwig leven."

Joost was duizelig van de klap. Hij keek naar meester Tulp. "I... is het waar wat de indiaan zegt ?" vroeg hij aan meester Tulp, stotterend.

"Ik denk het wel," zei meester Tulp. "Dat stond al in het lesboek van geschiedenis, maar daar waren we nog niet aan toe gekomen."

"D... dus Nederland was oorspronkelijk een deel van Amerika ?" vroeg Joost.

Meester Tulp knikte.

"Neemt u me niet kwalijk," zei Joost tegen de indiaan. "Neemt u zoveel Bibelebonse pap als u wilt. Het wordt overal in Nederland gemaakt tegenwoordig."

"Maar hoe moeten we het maken ?" vroeg de indiaan. "Wij hebben alleen pap-poeder gevonden."

"Als u ons over de rode pap leert, dan leren wij u over de Bibelebonse pap," zei Joost.

De rode pap bleek aan net zoveel regels onderhevig te zijn als de Bibelebonse pap, anders zouden de groots mogelijke ongelukken kunnen gebeuren. Eens hadden piraten zelf een rode pap gemaakt, zonder zich aan de juiste voorschriften te houden, omdat ze die niet kenden. Zo hebben ze Nederland van Amerika kunnen losscheuren. Door de indianen werd deze vervalste rode pap de piraten pap genoemd, maar de piraten zelf noemden het de Bibelebonse pap.

"Maar dat is helemaal de Bibelebonse pap niet," zei Joost toen de indiaan het hem vertelde.

"Precies," zei de indiaan. "Dat wisten wij vanaf het begin. Wij waren in Nederland, toen het nog tot

Amerika behoorde, al op zoek naar de Bibelebonse pap. Het moest ergens diep onder de grond zijn."

"Wij hebben het gevonden," zei Joost. "We worden nooit oud."

"Alleen door de Bibelebonse pap kan Nederland weer aangesloten worden aan Amerika," zei de indiaan.

"Hoe zal dat gaan ?" vroeg Lekkerbek.

"Als wij van de Bibelebonse pap eten en daardoor niet oud worden, dan kunnen wij de piraten voorgoed verslaan," zei de indiaan. "Alleen dan kan Nederland terugdrijven tot Amerika."

"Wow," zei Joost. "Wij behoren tot Amerika."

Amerika was enorm groot, en Nederland begon in die dagen terug te drijven tot Amerika. Of dreef Amerika tot Nederland, of beiden ? Het leek wel alsof Amerika dreef tot Nederland. Het was wat meester Tulp beweerde. En de zee tussen Nederland en Amerika werd steeds kleiner en kleiner, totdat het een rivier was. Vanaf de dijken en vanaf Lelystad kon je Amerika gewoon in de verte zien. Het waren allemaal woeste bossen. De rivier tussen Nederland en Amerika werd de Bibelebonse rivier genoemd.

De rode pap, hoe werd die eigenlijk gemaakt ?

Allereerst ging het over de indiaanse vlieg die in de Amerikaanse bossen leefde. Deze vlieg bracht honingwebben voort, van een hele taaie witte stof. Hiervoor had de vlieg een honingklier. De witte stof zou dromen brengen, en moest vermengd worden met een rode poeder om er pap van te maken. De indiaanse vlieg, een Amerikaanse bosvlieg, was dus een soort droom-camera of droom-projector. Het ontmoeten van zo'n vlieg was niet zonder gevaren. Ze werden als gevaarlijk beschouwd. Sommige van die vliegen waren zwaar giftig. Ze waren bewapend met gifklieren. Daarom was het werken met de honing van de indiaanse vlieg, de witte stof, ook niet zonder gevaren, en moest men daarvoor naar school. Piraten gingen niet naar school. Die rommelden maar wat aan, en zo hadden zij Nederland eens gestolen van Amerika. Piraat was een ander woord voor spijbelaar. De indiaanse vlieg kwam nog veelvuldig voor in de Amerikaanse bossen, en zij werden door de indianen als heilig beschouwd. Zij gingen zorgvuldig met de indiaanse vliegen om.

Piraten joegen vaak op indiaanse vliegen. Een gevangen exemplaar was veel geld waard, vooral als ze gedroogd waren, maar ze werden dus ook veelvuldig gebruikt in boerderijen en fokkerijen, voor hun honing. Piraten maakten er drugs van, medicijnen en hadden hun eigen pappen. Ook werden de indiaanse vliegen zelf gebruikt als ingrediënt, alhoewel sommige soorten dodelijk waren. Niet alleen dodelijk als ze gegeten werden, maar sommigen konden ook dodelijke steken toebrengen. Er waren allerlei indiaanse soorten steekvliegen. Hierom was het zo dat niet alle piraten zich waagden aan de jacht op zulke insecten. Sommigen hadden hier allerlei speciale pakken voor, maar de indiaanse vliegen waren gewiekst. Sommigen hadden zelfs angels die door metaal heen zouden kunnen steken. En die angels konden ook heel lang worden.

Sinds Amerika en Nederland alleen nog maar een rivier tussen hen in hadden, en daardoor eigenlijk weer bij elkaar hoorden, kwamen er ook steeds meer indiaanse vliegen in Nederland voor. In Nederland werden zij gezien als de brengers der dromen. Sommige indianen zagen de komst van de piraten als een boze droom veroorzaakt door de piraatse vlieg, een vliegensoort dat voornamelijk

voorkwam op de zogeheten Piraatse eilanden van Piratië, maar anderen zeiden dat het was veroorzaakt door een hele speciale indiaanse vlieg genaamd de doktersvlieg. Het zou medicinaal zijn voor iets, als een antistof waarin een kleine hoeveelheid van het probleem zat, om zo de tegenpool op te wekken, het medicijn zelf. Het was dus een heel diagnostisch proces. De vele doktoren in Nederland begonnen zich te buigen over dit soort indianen-verhalen. Zo ook dokter Tulp, de broer van meester Tulp. Hij was heelmeester op het paleis sinds Joost en Lekkerbek daat hun intrede hadden gedaan.

Hij deed een uitgebreid onderzoek naar de indiaanse doktersvlieg, en ging over de Bibelebonse rivier naar Amerika. Hij kwam tot de conclusie dat het inderdaad de doktersvlieg moest zijn geweest die alles aan had gericht. Tegelijkertijd kwam hij tot de conclusie dat ook de oplossing te vinden was in de doktersvlieg, en dat de Bibelebonse pap dus een ingrediënt miste. De doktersvlieg was uiterst zeldzaam. Het was een beschermde soort, want er waren er nog maar een paar over. De indianen hadden hem verteld dat hij daarvoor naar het Turfwoud moest gaan aan de kust van Amerika. De laatste doktersvliegen zouden leven met de heks Komeini, die in de diepte van het Turfwoud woonde. Haar huis zou omgeven zijn door een ravijn, en over het ravijn zou het regenen met speren in plaats van gewone regen. Joost huiverde toen hij het verhaal hoorde, maar hij zou ook meegaan met dokter Tulp, samen met meester Tulp. Ook Joost zag het belang in van deze soort van indiaanse vliegen. Hij zou daarom meegaan voor het voortbestaan van Nederland en Amerika. Op een nacht gingen ze met een boot de Bibelebonse rivier over, geleid door Oerling. Oerling zou aangeven waar ze ergens moesten stoppen. In het woud zou Oerling zeggen waar ongeveer de speren regen begon. Het was een algemeen gevaar waar ook de indianen goed van op de hoogte waren. Niet velen waagden zich daarom in het Turfwoud. Ook de heks Komeini was zeer gevreesd.

In de verte hoorden ze een stem krijsend als de bliksem. Het was de stem van heks Komeini. "Wie zijn jullie dat jullie tot mijn domein hebben durven komen ?" krijste de heks. "Amerika is van mij, en daarom ook Nederland, en het geheim van de doktersvlieg is in mijn hand. Ik voel waar jullie voor komen. De laatste doktersvlieg zal sterven, en dan zal alles van mij zijn !"

Het gekrijs ging Joost door merg en been. Hij stond stokstijf, en durfde zich niet meer te bewegen. Oerling zei dat ze hier moesten stoppen, want hier zou ergens de sperenregen beginnen. Die regen zou genadeloos zijn. De speren zouden door alles heengaan, zelfs door de botten. Het waren bottenspietsers, de wachters van de heks.

"Hoe komen we hier ooit doorheen ?" rilde Joost. "De heks weet al dat we zijn gekomen, en waar we voor gekomen zijn."

"Rustig blijven, Joost," zei Oerling. "Laten we nu naar de zijkant gaan, want we kunnen hier niet recht doorheen."

Na een tijdje lopen langs de zijkant van de sperenregen kwamen ze aan bij een diepe put. Hier moesten ze in. Oerling zou ze één voor één in de diepte brengen, want op de bodem van de diepe put zou een tunnel zijn die onder het ravijn door zou gaan. Joost zou eerst gaan. De put was heel diep, en het was een lange vliegtocht. Op sommige plaatsen was de put heel nauw, waarin Joost bijna vast kwam te zitten, maar gelukkig kwam hij er door. Even later stonden ook dokter Tulp en meester Tulp naast hem. Oerling zou als eerste de tunnel ingaan, en de anderen zouden hem volgen. Maar hier klonk de stem van de heks zelfs harder, als zware donder. "Ik weet wel dat jullie er zijn !" bulderde en krijste ze. Ze leek wel een dubbele stem te hebben, een zware en een hoge stem. Eén van de stemmen was heel laag, en er leken steeds meer stemmen bij te komen die allemaal hetzelfde zeiden. "Het zal jullie lijkenkist worden !" krijste, bulderde en gromde ze. "Ik heb nog hout nodig voor het vuur. Botten is ook goed, gespietste botten. Hmmm, en wat zullen jullie lekker smaken. Of ik voer jullie aan mijn visjes of varkentjes, of aan de laatste doktersvlieg die daarna zal sterven !"

De heks gromde en kreunde als een wild dier. In de tunnel waren fakkels aan de wanden. Plotseling stond de heks voor hen in een zwarte mantel. Oerling vloog wat naar achteren, terwijl Joost een fakkel greep van de wand. "Laat ons erdoor heks. Amerika en Nederland is van de indianen, en wij zijn nu bevriend. Wij kennen de geschiedenis," zei Joost luid.

"Oh niks," zei de heks. "Jullie weten niets van de geschiedenis."

Er rolde bliksem over haar hand heen. "En nu, achteruit !" gilde ze. "Jullie zijn dwazen om jullie noodlot te tarten !"

"Wij gaan niet achteruit," zei dokter Tulp. "In naam van de wetenschap, laat ons erdoor !"

De heks begon te lachen. "Wetenschap ?" krijste ze. "Zeg, doe me een lol, en ga terug naar school. Wat weet jij van de wetenschap af, puntmuts ? Onder piraten zijn jullie opgegroeid, en dan denken jullie alles even op je luie sloffen te weten ? Zeg, laat me niet lachen. Achteruit nu, dwazen, of je krijgt hier een lel van." De heks stak haar hand in de lucht, en de bliksem begon nog sneller op haar hand te tollen. "Achteruit nu, of ik begin mijn geduld te verliezen ! Moeder wacht thuis op jullie met pap !"

"Wij gaan niet achteruit !" riep Joost. "Ik ben de pap koning van Nederland, en wij hebben vriendschap gesloten met Amerika. Wij willen alles weten over de doktersvlieg die onze laatste redding zou zijn, om voor eens en altijd los te komen van de piraatse onderdrukking. Wij komen voor het missende ingrediënt van de Bibelebonse pap !"

"Ach jongen," krijste de heks lachend en spottend. "Wat weet jij af van Bibelebonse pap. Jullie zullen allen sterven, inclusief de piraten, en dan zullen de heksen overnemen."

"Genoeg heks !" riep meester Tulp, terwijl hij naar Oerling keek. "Wat nu ?" fluisterde hij hard naar Oerling.

"Wat nu, wat nu ?" riep de heks spottend. "Je weet het niet meer, hè, schoolmeestertje ? Dat is wat om met je mond vol tanden ineens te staan tegenover een echte heks. Wij weten veel meer dan jullie, juliie door piraten opgeleid tuig. Wat weten jullie van de geheimen van het bos en de ondergrond ? Helemaal niets."

Ineens spoot de bliksemstraal voort van haar hand. Ze had het gemunt op Oerling die net op tijd kon wegduiken. Joost vloog de heks aan, maar die kreeg direct een klap van de bliksem waardoor hij met een grote vaart tegen de wand werd geslingerd. Joost lag daar als dood op de grond. Oerling keek de heks aan. "Bitter oud mens," kraste hij. "Als je denkt zoveel te weten, waarom deel je je kennis dan niet ten gunste van het volk ?"

"Wat heb ik met het volk te maken !" krijste de heks. "Het volk is ten dode gedoemd. Waarom denk je dat ik zo diep in het Turfwoud woon ? Niemand kan hier komen. Ook jullie niet." En weer schoot er bliksem vanuit haar handen. Dit keer werd meester Tulp geraakt en tegen de wand geslingerd. Ook hij lag als dood op de grond. Opeens was er overal blauw vuur met bliksem rondom de heks, terwijl ze lachte. Toen was ze verdwenen. Dokter Tulp moest achteruit springen. Toen ontfermde hij zich over Joost en zijn broer. Met wat middeltjes kon hij ze even later weer op de been helpen.

"Zonder de Bibelebonse pap zouden jullie dood zijn geweest," zei dokter Tulp.

"Wat nu ?" vroeg Joost.

Na een tijdje hoorden ze weer gekrijs, maar dit keer was het niet van de heks. Volgens Oerling en dokter Tulp was het het geluid van de doktersvlieg. "We moeten snel zijn," zei Oerling. Hij vloog voor hen uit dieper de tunnel in, terwijl de anderen hem volgden. Na een tijd kwamen ze uit de tunnel waar de bodem was van een andere put die omhoog liep. Oerling zou ze één voor één omhoog trekken uit de put. Na een tijdje stonden ze alledrie aan de overkant van het ravijn, dichtbij het huisje van de heks. Hier was het gekrijs nog wel harder. Het leek wel alsof de doktersvlieg tegen de heks krijste. Dichter en dichter kwamen ze bij het huisje. Plotseling zagen ze de vlieg in een glazen kooi, en de heks stond ervoor met haar rug naar hen toe.

"Ik weet wel dat jullie gekomen zijn !" krijste de heks, en draaide zich toen grommend om. De doktersvlieg spoot een soort gif tegen het glas aan, terwijl er rook van het glas afkwam.

"Waar ben je mee bezig, heks ?" riep Joost.

"Ga ik jou aan je neus hangen," zei de heks.

"Als je nou slim bent, heks, dan laat je ons even naar de doktersvlieg kijken voor de wetenschap," zei dokter Tulp. "Dat zou jou ook nog ten goede kunnen komen."

"Geen sprake van," krijste de heks. "De laatste doktersvlieg is van mij, en met de doktersvlieg sterven alle geheimen. Dan is het ook afgelopen met de Bibelebonse pap."

Oerling keek de heks strak aan. "Vertel op, heks, wat wil je ons zeggen ? Wat weet jij van de geschiedenis wat wij niet weten ?" kraste Oerling.

"Dom," zei de heks. "Jullie zijn domoren, maar goed, luister goed wat ik zeg, want ik zeg het maar één keer. Amerika behoorde tot het land Heksië, maar het land ging grotendeels in de golven verloren. De doktersvlieg draagt hiervan de geheimen, maar ik zal het spoedig verpulveren om er een zalfje van te maken. Het zal mij alle macht schenken die ik begeer."

Joost bedacht zich geen moment en raapte een steen van de grond af om het tegen het glas van de kooi te gooien. Direct sprong het glas kapot en de doktersvlieg kwam vrij. "Wat doe je nou !" krijste de heks met een hoge en tegelijk lage stem, terwijl de doktersvlieg haar direct in het gezicht spoot met een witte gifstraal.

De heks krijste terwijl ze begon weg te smelten. "Stap achteruit !" riep Oerling. "Dat beest is levensgevaarlijk !" Direct renden ze naar achteren, terwijl ze naar de heks keken die wegsmolt. De doktersvlieg was woest als een dolle wesp, en probeerde Oerling te raken met een gifstraal. "Als hij ons raakt is het afgelopen !" riep Oerling, die net op tijd opzij kon vliegen. Een boom werd geraakt die direct wegsmolt.

"Zelfs de Bibelebonse pap kan hier niet tegenop !" riep Oerling. "De vlieg heeft het ontbrekende ingrediënt."

De doktersvlieg was razend, en in de verte leken er meerdere doktersvliegen aan te komen. "Rennen !" riep Oerling. Ze renden richting het huisje van de heks, en gingen daar naar binnen. Snel deden ze de deur op slot. In het huisje van de heks tikten allerlei klokken door elkaar heen. De doktersvliegen begonnen op de ramen te tikken en te spuiten. Snel was het hele huisje omsingeld met de doktersvliegen.

Joost ging naar de boekenkast en begon door de vreemde boeken te bladeren. Het ging allemaal over doktersvliegen, en over het land Heksië wat eens was gezonken. Alleen Amerika, een deel van

het reusachtige Heksië, werd niet door de golven verslonden. Buiten krijsten de doktersvliegen. Ze waren woedend.

Joost las ook nog wat anders. De doktersvlieg scheen naast de gifklier ook een belangrijke melkklier te hebben. De melk zou piratendodend zijn, net als het gif overigens. De melk zou een bepaalde stof in de hersenen uitdoven die de boze piratendroom zou aanmaken. Het was een onderdeel van de hersenwetenschap van de natuur.

Ook dokter Tulp en meester Tulp grepen een boek om te zoeken naar antwoorden. Er stonden hier vele bijzondere boeken over de natuur, maar ze waren in groot gevaar. "Vlug," zei Oerling. "Neem wat boeken mee, maar dan moeten we toch echt naar de kelder, want de heks gebruikte speciaal glas voor de kooi van de doktersvlieg, en de ramen van het huisje zullen het echt niet lang meer houden." Oerling vloog de gang op naar de kelderdeur, terwijl de anderen hem volgden met zoveel mogelijk boeken in hun armen. Over de trap van de kelder gingen ze haastig naar beneden, de deur achter hen sluitende. Maar ook in de kelder waren de doktersvliegen al. "Ingesloten," kraste Oerling. Weer renden ze naar boven. Oerling vloog de trap op en opende de deur van de badkamer waar geen ramen in zaten, en wat in het midden van het huisje was. "Hier zijn we voorlopig veilig," kraste Oerling. Ook de anderen gingen naar binnen met de boeken.

"Ik vraag me af hoe we deze beesten moeten temmen," zei Joost. Ze waren alledrie druk met lezen, op zoek naar een oplossing, naar kennis.

"Hier staat wat," zei dokter Tulp. "De doktersvlieg, als drager van de geheimen van Heksië, geeft in het holst van de nacht in een bepaald uur rode melk vanuit een melkklier. Zo laadt de doktersvlieg zichzelf op, en geeft leven aan zichzelf. Niemand komt tot dit geheim, dan hen van de schat van Zuskus."

"Ik begrijp er niks van," zei meester Tulp. "En waar halen we de schat van Zuskus zo één, twee, drie vandaan ?'

"Dat staat er niet bij," zei dokter Tulp.

"Dan hebben we er niet veel aan," zei meester Tulp.

"Jawel," zei Oerling. "Alle beetjes helpen. Laten we de moed niet opgeven."

Inmiddels begonnen de doktersvliegen al op de badkamer deur te pikken. Ze waren het huisje dus al binnengekomen. Ze bonkten hard, en dan waren er kleine pauzes. Joost begon het benauwd te krijgen.

"Hier staat wat over de schat van Zuskus," zei Joost. "De schat van Zuskus is een piratenschat, ergens in Heksië. De heksen hebben het eens bemachtigd. Het kan geroepen worden door een rijmpje." Joost begon het rijmpje hardop te zeggen, en toen nog een keer. Een grote blauwe gestalte begon te verschijnen in de badkamer van het huisje van de heks. "Waarom hebt gij mij geroepen ?" zei de blauwe gestalte met een lage, trage en zware stem.

"Wie bent u ?" vroeg Joost die diep was geschrokken, maar ook verheugd was over de mogelijkheid dat ze nu eindelijk hulp zouden krijgen.

"Ik ben het spook van de schat van Zuskus," zei de blauwe, doorzichtige gestalte. "Die schat ligt diep op de zeebodem waar eerst Heksië lag. Alles is vergaan, behalve Amerika. Waarmee kan ik u van dienst zijn ?"

"Wij worden achterna gezeten door de doktersvliegen," zei Joost. "We hadden hun melk nodig, maar het is uit de hand gelopen."

"Nogal," zei meester Tulp.

"Goed dan," zei de blauwe gestalte. "Ik kan u dit zeggen : Ik ben een wind van de zee. Zonder zeewind zit het je niet mee. Ik ken alle geheimen van de doktersvliegen. Het is voor mij eenvoudig hen te temmen en weg te leiden waar ik maar wil. Zij zijn een gif tegen piraten en heksen en mogelijkerwijs iedereen, maar in juist gebruik zijn zij ook een medicijn. Alleen een volleerd dokter kan hen de baas, een volleerd dokter zoals mij. Het is een waar gezegde je niet bezig te houden met de doktersvliegen, want zij zullen je zeker vernietigen, maar koop en leer het medicijn van mij."

"Weet u zeker dat u de doktersvliegen aankunt ?" vroeg Joost.

"Jazeker," sprak de blauwe gestalte. "Ik zal ze ver weg leiden, en dan zal ik terugkomen om jullie te helpen."

De blauwe gestalte opende de deur, en begon de zwerm doktersvliegen te omhullen, en toen mee te zuigen en blazen van de trap af, om zo met hen het huisje uit te gaan. Na een tijdje was de rust teruggekeerd. De blauwe gestalte had alle doktersvliegen geroepen om hem te volgen. Na een tijd kwam hij terug zonder de doktersvliegen. Hij begon toen honderduit te vertellen over de melk. "Een flesje zeewind is alles wat je nodig hebt," zei de blauwe gestalte. "Eén druppel per bord pap is alles wat je nodig hebt om de piraten weg te houden, en het flesje raakt nooit op, want het is immers zeewind, ziet u. Dat kan niet opraken. Dat groeit vanzelf, en vermenigvuldigt zichzelf wanneer het wil."

"Hoeveel kost het ?" vroeg Joost.

"Ach ja, de kosten," zei de blauwe gestalte, "het kost niks, en dat is heel wat. Ik bedoel ermee dat je goed de gebruiksaanwijzing moet lezen bij het flesje, en je aan de toegestane hoeveelheden moet houden, anders gaat alles verkeerd. Bij verkeerd gebruik komen er meer piraten dan je lief is, meer dan je ooit in je hele leven hebt gezien."

"Begrepen," zei Joost. Ieder van hen kreeg een flesje mee, en zo was het missende ingrediënt van de Bibelebonse pap aangevuld. Met de zeewind in een flesje konden ze zo de laatste piraten uit Nederland verdrijven. Het Bibelebonse leger kon nu eindelijk de gevangenis bestormen waar oom Georgius opgesloten zou zitten, maar ze vonden hem niet in zijn cel.

Joost wist dat er hekserij in het spel moest zijn. Er zou meer moeten gebeuren om oom Georgius vrij te zetten. De indianen hadden hem verteld dat er wel meer heksen in de Amerikaanse bossen woonden die met alle problemen rond de Bibelebonse pap te maken hadden. Zo was er het Lattenwoud achter het Turfwoud. In het Lattenwoud groeiden er speren aan de bomen en in de bloemen, en in het midden van het woud waren de sperenvelden waar speren naast en achter elkaar in de grond waren gestoken. Als je zo'n speer zou aanraken, dan zou je sterven. Achter de velden gaat het woud verder en staat het grote huis van de heks Zwolle, die voortdurend rijmpjes opzegt. Ook de rijmpjes zijn dodelijk als je geen tegenrijmpjes kent. Het zijn zware toverspreuken.

Indianen vertelden over haar. Dat ze dan bijvoorbeeld zei tot een ieder die het door de sperenvelden heeft gehaald tot haar huis :
"Door de sperenvelden ben je heelhuids gekomen,
Maar zie, het zijn slechts bedriegelijke dromen,

Want door vele speren ben je geraakt,
En de illusie van leven is die hier de dienst uitmaakt."

En dan zou je zelf een tegenrijmpje moeten opzeggen, anders zou het vuur uit haar mond je verslinden :
"Oh heks, je denkt een ander te bedriegen,
Maar het is slechts tot jezelf liegen,
Want niemand kan die macht dragen dan die weet,
Dat alles wat hij de ander denkt aan te doen slechts aan zijn eigen hart vreet."

De rijmende heks van de dood werd zij wel genoemd. Alleen volleerde dichters zouden door haar domein heen kunnen komen. Maar hoe vaak had zij wel niet dichters gestrikt tot hun noodlot ? Want zij was een zeer gewiekste vrouw met vele truken. Hoeveel dichters had zij wel niet in haar macht gekregen ? Want zij had vele rijmpjes klaar, en ging door tot diep in de nacht, totdat zij in slaap vielen, en zij hen kon kooien. Ja, door haar rijmen werden zij bewaakt. Zij was de strik der tovenaren die door een verkeerd uitgesproken spreuk zichzelf betoverden. Zij wachtte altijd geduldig haar tijd af, totdat zij ergens een gaatje zag waardoor zij hen kon pakken, of hen kon laten struikelen. Zij draaide alles in hen om. Zo werden zij hun eigen grootste vijanden, totdat grote wroeging hen verscheurde. Zij was de strikkende dichteres van de hel, van een groot kwaad. Hier was geen Bibelebonse pap tegen opgewassen. Zij lachte al die pap eters uit. De Bibelebonse pap miste nog een ingrediënt. Nederland was nog steeds in de macht van de heksen.

Zij speelde woordspelletjes. Zij legde verbale valstrikken. Met gewiekste toverspreuken in een gladde, snelle, giftige tong, bond zij hen allen, en zo moesten zij allen van haar pap eten, gedwongen pap, heksenpap.

Ze mochten geen speren aanraken toen ze daar naartoe gingen. Ook moesten ze oppassen niet onder een boom door te lopen, want de speren vielen er zo uit. Ook moesten ze uit de buurt blijven van de bloemen, want ook door sprongen de speren zo uit. Joost ging er naartoe samen met dokter Tulp, meester Tulp en Oerling. Oerling ging zoals gewoonlijks voorop. Hij voelde vaak de gevaren haarscherp aan. Helemaal uitgeput kwamen ze aan bij het grote huis van heks Zwolle, waar ze al klaarstond om de meest gemene rijmpjes over hen uit te spreken. Ze zei de meest verschrikkelijke dingen over hen, en bespotte hen in de rijmpjes, terwijl zij met tegenrijmpjes moesten komen. Oerling was hier gelukkig heel goed in, maar ze waren moe, en de heks ging maar door. Waar hield dit ergens op ?

Joost stond dichtbij haar, en zag dat ze een vreemd kettinkje om haar hals droeg. Met zijn laatste krachten boog hij snel voorover om het kettinkje te grijpen, en trok het met een ruk van haar hals af. De heks krijste. "Geef hier, dat is mijn rijmmacht !"

De heks kon niet meer rijmen, en begon weg te smelten in afschuwelijk gekrijs.

Ze gingen haar huis binnen om onderzoek te doen. Ze bladerden wat door haar boeken. Er stonden daar de meest vreemde rijmpjes in, die ze allemaal uit haar hoofd had geleerd. De boeken gingen over de zogenaamde rijmende planten. Achter haar huis konden ze die in haar door een hek omgeven tuin vinden. De planten krioelden daar als slangen, klaar om te worstelen en te wurgen. "Wat komen jullie doen ?" krijsten de planten. Ze leken rusteloos. Joost vertelde het verhaal. De planten gaven toe dat zij haar al die rijmpjes hadden geleerd, en zij had die in boeken opgetekend.

"Waarom ?" vroeg Joost.

"Rijmen zijn het leven," sprak een woest kronkelende zwarte plant. Hij schoof vlak voor het gezicht

van Joost en Joost moest een paar stappen achteruit zetten. Toen begon de plant ook naar hen te rijmen, en al snel begonnen de andere planten ook rijmen op te zeggen, allemaal door elkaar heen. "De heks is dood," sprak Joost.

"Echt waar ?" vroeg de zwarte plant. Joost knikte. Plotseling begonnen alle planten te juichen. "Die rotheks dwong ons te rijmen, altijd maar weer," sprak de plant. "Nooit was er tijd voor iets anders. We houden van rijmen, daar niet van, maar we houden ook van losse verhalen zonder rijmen."

"Jullie zijn vrij nu," zei Joost.

"Wat kunnen we voor u terugdoen ?" vroegen de planten.

"Ik zoek naar een ontbrekend ingrediënt voor de Bibelebonse pap wat hier zou moeten wezen," zei Joost.

"Wij zijn allen zeeplanten," zei de zwarte plant. "De heks bracht ons hier. Wij dragen het kruid met alle geheimen van het land Heksië, wat nu grotendeels op de zeebodem ligt. Wij moesten rijmen om deze geheimen verborgen te houden. Heus, je moet deze geheimen leren kennen om te begrijpen wat er met je land aan de gang is. De geschiedenis van Heksië is de sleutel van de Bibelebonse pap. Wij hebben het ontbrekende sleutel ingrediënt."

Dokter Tulp, meester Tulp en Joost bekeken de planten, en zagen het kruid ertussen. Het groeide overal, en ze moesten het in zakken verzamelen. Ook legden de planten hen uit hoe ze het moesten gebruiken in de pap.

In het Zeewoud achter het Lattenwoud leefde Sylva, de zeeheks. Alhoewel het een gewoon bos was waren er hier zeeplanten, vliegende vissen en vissen met poten die aan en in rivieren leefden. Sylva was de ergst mogelijke opgemaakte heks, met de meeste sieraden. Hier waren sieraden op sieraden gelegd. Alles lag er dik bovenop. Sylva was een lopend sieraad. Ze woonde in een soort tempel, met grottenstelsels van trappen en tunnels. De meest verschrikkelijke roofdieren bewaakten haar tempel, en vaak ging ze in lange gewaden helemaal bedekt met sieraden trage wandelingen maken door de tempeltuinen. Ook zij droeg de geheimen van het gezonken Heksië. Zij had grote maaimachines om alles wat leefde te oogsten, bloemen en planten. Die moesten aan haar geofferd worden. Zij waande haarzelf de heksengodin van Heksië. Zij diende haarzelf. Eens moest zij baren, en zelfs het kind wat zij baarde moest aan haar geofferd worden. Zij gooide het kind in het water. Zij was de heksenkoningin. Ook vissen moesten er aan haar geofferd worden, en allerlei soorten andere dieren. Zij leefde van de dood. Overal in het Zeewoud stonden haar boskerken, maar niemand kwam daar. Indianen bleven ver van hen vandaan. Het was Sylva de zeeheks die Heksië had laten zinken als een offer aan haar. Alleen Amerika bleef nog boven water, opdat zij daar zou wonen en tronen.

Zij hield van de eenzaamheid, en van het eten en drinken van gif. Het gaf haar macht. Maar ze begon oud te worden, en ook was ze op zoek naar de Bibelebonse pap. Ook was ze bijna blind.

Haar werkers waren onzichtbaar, de machten van de natuur, en de bomen en planten die haar dienden. Zij moesten voor haar een trage duivelse dans opvoeren, opdat alles platgemaaid zou worden, tot een offer aan haar. Zij was het geheim van de muntstruik. Haar soldaten zond zij tot de uiteinden om haar oogsten binnen te halen, tot offer aan haar. Zij klopten op hoge deuren, en vroegen om kind en dieren offers. Geen medelij hadden zij. Haar soldaten waren religieus, als een dekmantel van haar kwaad. De lamp van het witte geweld werd bedekt door haar mantel. Zij was een schoonprater, waarvoor zij de kunsten van de literatuur gebruikte. Een liturgie was altijd haar excuus. Zij hield ervan bij nacht over kerkhoven te dwalen. Zij had lange kanonnen van de natuur op haar muren. Ja, zij gebruikte de natuur te pas en te onpas. Ook door de natuur praatte zij alles

goed. De natuur was haar excuus. "Het is de natuur," zei zij dan, en : "Het staat geschreven." Boeken waren haar liefhebberij. Zij had bibliotheken vol, allemaal door haarzelf geschreven, door de eeuwen heen, maar zij begon oud te worden, heel oud. Zij was op zoek naar de Bibelebonse pap.

Zij bewaakte het diepzee kruid van Jonas, een kruid waardoor je met alles en iedereen kon communiceren. Het zou veel misverstanden en gemis uit de weg kunnen ruimen. Maar het kruid was ook vervloekt. Een ieder die van het kruid nam, leefde niet lang. Deze vloek zou alleen opgeheven kunnen worden als het kruid toegevoegd zou worden aan de Bibelebonse pap als ingrediënt. Toen Joost, dokter Tulp en meester Tulp de heks bezochten keken ze hun ogen uit in de wondere wereld van het Zeewoud. Het was als diepzee natuur, maar gewoon in het bos, boven de grond. Ze waren verbaasd en verwonderd door de pracht van deze natuur, en zelfs de vele boskerken waren een stuk adembenemende natuurkunst. Maar ze konden wel begrijpen waarom al deze plaatsen zo verlaten waren. Ze vonden de heks dolend op een kerkhof. Toen ze hen zag barstte ze in snikken uit. "Eindelijk hebben jullie mij gevonden !" riep ze, en rende op hen af.

"Ik ruik Bibelebonse pap !" krijste ze. "Zijn jullie van de Bibelebonse pap waar ik al zo lang naar op zoek ben ?"

Joost, dokter Tulp en meester Tulp keken haar verbaasd aan. "Heus, ik wil mijn leven beteren," snikte de heks. "Als ik maar van de Bibelebonse pap kan nemen. Al is het maar één hapje."

"Zeg heks," zei Joost, "hoe weten wij dat het waar is dat u uw leven wil beteren ?"

"Jullie mogen alles hebben, mijn gehele rijk," snikte de heks. "Als ik maar met jullie meemag. Ik ben zat van dit leven, dit eenzame, slechte leven. Heel mijn leven ben ik een slechte heks geweest, en het heeft mij geen goed gebracht."

Joost deed een stap achteruit, want de heks wilde haar omhelzen. Oerling bleef tussen hen en de heks invliegen. "Vertrouw haar niet," kraste Oerling. "Laat haar je niet aanraken."

De heks begon nog harder te snikken. "Jullie begrijpen mij niet. Ik wil echt veranderen. Ik zal jullie alles geven."

"Maak dat je wegkomt, heks," kraste Oerling. "Je bent vol truken, daar sta je om bekend."

De heks begon te veranderen in een enorme zwarte zeedraak. "Goed !" krijste ze. "Ik weet waar jullie voor komen, maar jullie krijgen het niet.

Oh kruid wat op de zeebodem woont,
Waardoor alle dingen spreken, maar horen doen ze het niet,
Zo leeft een ieder eenzaam en in misverstand,
Het kruid ver weg van hun land,
Zo leven zij in groot verdriet, alle dagen weer,
Een ieder die het kruid dan vindt,
Zal slechts kort leven, doch bemind,
Het kruid van Jonas in diepe zee,
Een offer voor mij, het nam zovelen mee,
Maar nooit kunnen zij ervan vertellen,
Zij leven slechts in zeebellen,
Het kruid van Jonas doet hen horen,
Maar spreken kunnen zij niet lang,
Zij zijn hopeloos verloren."

Zij hadden goed door hoe gevaarlijk dat kruid was. De heks vertrok weer. Ze hadden haar in een verschrikkelijke gedaante gezien. Oerling vloog vooruit, en zij volgden hem naar de tempel van de heks. Er stond een jongetje met een teddybeertje hangend aan zijn hand. Het jongetje had een pyama aan. "Hallo, wie ben jij ?" vroeg Joost. "Dat moet Jonas zijn," zei dokter Tulp.

"I ... ik ben .... Jonas," zei het jongetje stotterend.

"Waarom ben je hier, kleine jongen ?" vroeg meester Tulp.

"I ... ik weet het niet," zei het jongetje. "Ik moet hier altijd staan."

"Van wie ?" vroeg Joost.

"Van de heks," zei het jongetje.

"En wat moet je doen voor haar ?" vroeg Joost.

Toen rende het jongetje naar binnen in de tempel.

"Vreemd," zei Joost.

Toen hoorden ze een zachte vrouwenstem zingen :

"Eens, zoveel jaren geleden, ik weet het niet meer,
Kwam er een ridder, met een piraat en een heer,
Zij dobbelden om mijn kleren, en zo stond ik daar naakt,
De avond viel, en snel had de slaap hen aangeraakt,
Een slaap zo dodelijk en stil,
Zij hadden van het kruid van Jonas gegeten,
Hun lichamen na een golf van warmte zo koud en zo kil,
Zoek je wat plezier in de herberg voor vier, drie of twee,
Het is slechts van korte duur, olé, olé."

"Het is hier zeker vreemd," zei dokter Tulp.

Langzaam en voorzichtig gingen ze de tempel binnen, Oerling voorop.
Maar daar kwam het jongetje weer aanrennen, en begon hen te slaan en te schoppen.
"Mijn moeder wil niet dat jullie komen," zei hij.

"Wie is je moeder ?" vroeg Joost.
"Gaat je niks aan," zei het jongetje zacht. Ze konden het bijna niet horen.

"We komen voor het kruid, jongetje," zei dokter Tulp. "Het kruid van Jonas."

"Mijn moeder zegt dat het te gevaarlijk is," zei Jonas.

"Dat weten we," zei dokter Tulp, "en daarom is het beter dat we het kruid bestuderen en onschadelijk maken."

"Het heeft een bedoeling," zei het jongetje. "Het is de wachter van de heks. Mijn moeder heeft het voor haar gemaakt."

"De heks is slecht en gevaarlijk. We kunnen haar niet vertrouwen, jongetje" zei meester Tulp.

"Nietwaar !" riep het jongetje, terwijl hij weer begon te stompen en te slaan. Ook begon hij te knijpen.

"Wil je dat laten, jongetje ?" zei meester Tulp.

"Nee, jullie moeten weg !" riep het jongetje. Ineens kwam er een indiaanse vrouw aanlopen.

"Hoe kan ik u helpen," zei ze zacht, terwijl ze zich over het jongetje ontfermde.

Joost vertelde het verhaal. De vrouw glimlachte. "Ik kan u daaraan niet helpen," zei ze. "Het is de wachter van de heks. Zij heeft u al een aanbod gedaan in ruil voor de Bibelebonse pap."

"Wij onderhandelen niet met heksen die vol truken zijn," zei dokter Tulp.

"Dan moet u het zelf weten," zei de vrouw, en liep met het jongetje weer weg.

Er waren verschillende gangen in het grottenstelsel van de tempel. Ze gingen één van de gangen binnen. Oerling ging voorop. Weer hoorden ze gezang van een zachte vrouwenstem :

"Weet je wel, heb je het al gehoord,
Zij kunnen niet meer spreken,
Eens hebben zij van het kruid genomen,
Het kruid van Jonas in de diepte van de zee,
Waar zijn nu hun dromen ?"

Toen vaagde het gezang weer weg. "Het spookt hier goed," zei dokter Tulp.

Toen hoorde ze een krassende stem zingen :
"Weet je het al, weet je het al,
Snoep verkoopt zeer goed,
Maar goed gezelschap veel beter,
En als je dan mens en dier kunt verstaan,
Dan heb je van het kruid van Jonas gegeten,
Het is snel met je gedaan."

De gang leidde naar een grotere grot waar ze een heks in een zwart gewaad in een ketel zagen roeren.

Toen kraste ze verder, zingend : "Het kruid van Jonas, het kruid wat zoveel leven gaf, en dan de dood,
Het kruid van Jonas, zoveel helden vonden het, en vonden nooit de weg terug,
Het kruid van Jonas, een doodlopende weg van zoveel geluk, en dan slechts tranen,
De wachter van de heks, de wachter van haar krater,
Het kruid van Jonas, als een vulkaan, als een lopend vuurtje,
Het geheim van de zee voor eeuwig.

Het kruid van Jonas, dat kleine kind,
Dat kleine aapje, je sterft altijd bemind,
Het liefdesvuur gaat altijd snel,

Je bent afgebrand voordat je het weet,
Slechts brandhout voor de hel."

Ze stonden met open mond naar de heks aan de grote ketel te kijken. Er kwam een mysterieuze rook uit de ketel. Hier werd waarschijnlijk het kruid van Jonas gekookt en gebrouwen.

"We hebben maar heel iets nodig," fluisterde dokter Tulp, "en vooral niets eten of drinken hier."

Aan de zijkanten van de grot waarin de heks stond groeide vreemd kruid. Ook stonden er wat dozen met het kruid erin. "Zullen we het erop wagen ?" vroeg Joost. Plotseling vloog Oerling naar binnen, en greep met zijn snavel wat kruid uit een doos, en vloog toen weer terug. De heks draaide zich ineens naar hen toe. "Blijf staan waar je staat !" riep ze. "Iemand heeft van het kruid genomen !" Ze haalde haar grote lepel uit de ketel en riep : "Dan zullen jullie het eten ook !" Ze richtte haar grote lepel op hen. "Kom hier, dan zul je eten wat je zo graag wilde. Dan zul je eten wat je stal !"

Ze zetten het toen op een rennen. Ze renden terug de gang door, maar het leek wel alsof de gang veranderd was, en ze kwamen alleen maar in andere gangen terecht. "Als ratten in de val !" hoorde ze de heks roepen. Ergens op een gang was een deur die ze opendeden. Ze keken ineens recht in het gezicht van een man met een plat hoekig oranje-geel achtig petje op waar aan de voorkant een klein kwastje hing. "Tokijn is de naam," zei hij. "Jullie hebben het kruid gevonden, en niet gegeten. Dat komt niet vaak voor." Hij begon heel snel te praten, en ging toen steeds langzamer. "Luister," zei hij, terwijl zijn stem was als het golven van de zee. "Eet het niet. Alleen als ingrediënt in de Bibelebonse pap is het veilig. Ik was een gevangene van de heks, maar jullie hebben mij gevonden. Ik kan jullie helpen. Het is een duivel, die heks. Jullie komen op het juiste moment."

"Wie zijn Jonas en zijn indiaanse moeder ?" vroeg Joost.

"Dat zul je wel zien," zei Tokijn geheimzinnig. "Wat nu belangrijk is, is dat we door de gangen gaan. Ik ken de weg," zei Tokijn. Ze gingen de gang weer op. Tokijn had een lange, dunne mantel aan wat ook oranje-geel achtig was, en hij droeg pantoffels.

"Jonas !" riep hij. "Er is bezoek !"

Daar kwam Jonas al aanrennen. "I ... ik ken hen," stotterde Jonas. "Ze zijn niet aardig. Ze komen het kruid stelen."

"Welnee, Jonas," zei Tokijn. "Ze komen het kruid onschadelijk maken. Heus, het is het beste voor ons allemaal."

"W... wij houden van het kruid," zei het jongetje. "Het is mijn kruid. Mamma heeft het voor mij gemaakt."

"Moet je opletten," zei Tokijn, die even met zijn vingers knipte. Het jongetje viel direct in een diepe slaap. Toen kwam ook de indiaanse vrouw aanlopen. "Wat heb je gedaan, Tokijn ?" vroeg ze zacht.

"Zing dat mooie lied eens wat je laatst voor mij hebt gezongen," zei Tokijn.

"Oh, Tokijn," zei ze ineens heel verlegen. "Dat kan ik hier niet doen."

"Toe nou," zei Tokijn, "het is zo'n mooi lied. Iedereen moet dat horen."

Toen begon de indiaanse vrouw te zingen, zo mooi. Het ging over het indiaanse kruid van Jonas.

Het was een kruid wat groeide op de zeebodem, een kruid wat in het hoofd van Jonas groeide,
Wat verhalen vertelde, indiaanse verhalen, om het jongetje ergens tegen te beveiligen.
Het jongetje had die verhalen zelf gemaakt, onder invloed van het kruid.
Hij mocht het kruid niet eten. Hij hield van het kruid. Hij sprak met het kruid.
Het leefde in zijn hoofd. Het was zijn wachter. Het suste hem altijd in slaap.

Plotseling greep de vrouw naar haar buik en stopte met zingen.
"We moeten hier weg, Tokijn," zei ze kreunend van de pijn. "Er is iets goed mis."

"De betovering wordt verbroken," zei Tokijn. "De Bibelebonse pap koning is gekomen."

Een woeste zwarte zeedraak kwam in de verte op hen af, maar de gangen begonnen te draaien en ketsten de zeedraak af. De zeedraak krijste verschrikkelijk.

"We hebben niet veel tijd," zei Tokijn. "Kom mee," zei hij, terwijl hij even in zijn vingers knipte. Ook de indiaanse vrouw viel op de grond in slaap. "Het waren de verschillende gedaantes van de heks," fluisterde Tokijn. "Nu moeten we hier zo snel mogelijk weg." Het leek wel alsof er een aardbeving plaatsvond. "Kom nog eens terug op een beter moment !" werd er geroepen. Toen stonden ze ineens allemaal buiten de tempel met Tokijn. "Ik kan wel een beetje toveren," glimlachte Tokijn. Overal begon het Zeewoud om hen heen vlam te vatten. "Rennen," zei Tokijn. "We moeten zo snel mogelijk het Zeewoud uit. Tokijn kende wel een korte weg. Ze volgden hem, en met wat magische truken waren ze snel uit het bos. Achter hen was een enorm krijsend vuur wat als een woesteling om zich heengreep. Ze wisten niet hoe snel ze in de rivier moesten komen. Amerika stond in brand. Voor hoe ver wisten ze niet, maar Tokijn zei dat het alleen de heksenwouden betrof, niet het indiaanse gebied. Ze vonden een bootje waarmee ze zo snel mogelijk de Bibelebonse rivier overgingen. Terug naar Nederland. Oerling had het kruid van Jonas goed vast tussen zijn snavel.

Toen ze in Utrecht op het paleis waren aangekomen onderwierp dokter Tulp het kruid direct aan een onderzoek. Het was een zaaddragend kruid, waarmee ze meer van het kruid konden kweken. Dit gebeurde in kassen van speciaal glas. De Bibelebonse pap werd zo tot een middel waardoor mensen elkaar beter konden verstaan, en ook dieren en planten.

Hoofdstuk 3. De Bostrein

Lotus Koek was de kannibalen koning van het land Chagerijnië wat onder Suriname, het Zuiden van Nederland lag. Hij woonde op de Kanarische eilanden, wat eilanden in het centrale bosmeer van het bos. Rondom het meer lag een enorm bos, en rondom het bos waren huizen gebouwd. De inwoners van dit land waren, zoals de naam al doet vermoeden, enorm chagerijnig, en niemand wist waarom. Lotus Koek zelf was echter de vrolijkheid zelve. En zoals de inwoners van het land Chagerijnië enorm gierig en ongastvrij waren, zo was Lotus Koek de gulheid zelve, en enorm

gastvrij. Altijd deelde hij taartjes uit en snoep, of hij liet het uitdelen. De Chagerijnen, zoals de inwoners van Chagerijnië genoemd werden, hadden daar nooit veel belang in. Zij wisten immers dat hun koning een kannibaal was, en dat was wettelijk zo bepaald dat dit toegestaan was. Daarom zorgden de Chagerijnen ervoor zo dun mogelijk te blijven. Zij die hier niet meer tegen konden gingen dikwijls de rivier over die tussen de huizen en het bos inlag, om zo zelf een kannibaal te worden, maar dit liep niet altijd goed af.

Het land Chagerijnië was onderdeel van een veel groter gebied, genaamd Kannibalië. Joost had hier veel over gehoord en wilde hier iets aan doen. Op een dag ging hij samen met dokter Tulp, meester Tulp, Tokijn en Oerling naar het land toe. Hij moest hiervoor helemaal de Surinaamse grens van Zuid Nederland over. Dit was een zwaar bewaakte grens, ook door de Chagerijnen. De Chagerijnen hadden er niks mee te maken dat hij de Bibelebonse pap koning van Nederland was. Joost en de anderen moesten streng onderzocht worden door de Chagerijnen voordat ze het land binnen konden gaan. De Chagerijnen lieten hen duidelijk merken dat ze niet welkom waren. Van de Bibelebonse pap hadden ze nog nooit gehoord, en ze hadden er ook geen interesse in. Toch mochten ze na lang praten erdoor. Ze kwamen eerst in de woonwijken. De straten hadden hier allemaal vreemde namen, vaak verbonden aan voedsel. De Chagerijnen zelf bleken hier niet blij over te zijn. Overal liepen ze rond met chagerijnige gezichten, en er werd niet gegroet. Oerling ging voorop, en leidde hen door de vele woonwijkjes naar de rivier die tussen de huizen en het bos inlag. De rivier werd genoemd : de Kannibaalse rivier. Met een bootje zijn ze die overgestoken, want er waren geen bruggen. Zo kwamen ze in het bos aan. Er hing hier een zoetige geur. Van achter de bomen kwamen bakkers tevoorschijn met schalen vol taartjes. Die werden aan hen aangeboden, maar ze wisten natuurlijk dat ze daar niets van moesten eten. Gelukkig werd het niet opgedrongen. Dieper in het bos kwamen ze uiteindelijk aan bij een meer. In dit meer moesten zich de Kanarische eilanden bevinden waar kannibalen koning Lotus Koek zou wonen.

Weer namen ze een bootje om het meer op te gaan. Het was een groot meer. Ze hadden allemaal een peddel waarmee ze vooruit kwamen. Alles ging tamelijk rustig. Ze kwamen bij een eerste eiland aan. Plotseling sprong er een woeste dikke man uit de struiken, en rende op hen af met een pollepel. Hij was woest in de zin dat hij een botje door zijn neus had, en botjes in zijn haar. Ook waren zijn sieraden gemaakt van botjes. Hij had grote ogen, en zijn huid was donker. Hier en daar waren strepen verf. Verder was hij heel vriendelijk, en gastvrij. Het bleek kannibalen koning Lotus Koek te zijn.

"Waar zijn de anderen ?" vroeg Joost.

"De hort op," lachte hij. "Welkom op de Kanarische eilanden," zei hij met een vreemd accent. "En ik ben kannibalen koning Lotus Koek."

"En kannibalisme is hier wettig ?" vroeg Joost.

"Uiteraard," zei de kannibalen koning. "Het staat in het wetboek, gekerfd in een boom. Wat wil je nog meer ?'

"Ja, ik vind het niet zo netjes," zei Joost.

"Wij eten verder heel netjes," zei de kannibalen koning. "Zin in een taartje, snoep of koeken ?"

Joost en de anderen schudden hun hoofd. "Begrijpelijk," zei de kannibalen koning. "Zeer begrijpelijk zelfs. Ik was eens ook zo, maar nu heb ik alle trossen los."

"Uw burgers zijn chagerijnig ?" vroeg Joost.

"Ja, heel chagerijnig," zei de kannibalen koning. "Dat moet wel, hè ?"

"Waarom ?" vroeg Joost.

"Nou, anders eh ... anders ... Niet van die moeilijke vragen stellen," lachte de kannibalen koning vriendelijk, terwijl hij Joost op zijn schouder klopte. Toen sloeg hij een arm om Joost heen. Joost schudde zichzelf weer los.

"Ik vind het maar vreemd," zei Joost. "Moet ik dit zomaar normaal vinden ?"

"Het is onze aard," zei de kannibalen koning vriendelijk. "Het zit in ons bloed. Wij hebben met alles bijbedoelingen. Daar leven we van."

"Nou, ik vind het niet zo lekker," zei Joost.

"Ach, het went wel," zei de kannibalen koning sussend.

"Hoe bent u zo geworden eigenlijk ?" vroeg dokter Tulp. "Heel eigenaardig, heel eigenaardig."

"Ik ben zo geboren," zei de kannibalen koning. "Zo ben ik altijd al geweest. Ik was altijd al een gulle gever, en de beloning zit erin als ze het aannemen."

"Dan beloont u uzelf ?" vroeg Joost.

"Jazeker," zei de kannibalen koning. "Wie eens wat aanneemt, zal ook wel meerdere dingen aannemen, als het bevalt, nietwaar ? Ik kan dan een heleboel proberen. Lukt het ene niet, dan lukt het andere wel."

"Dus u ziet mensen gewoon als een stuk vlees ?" vroeg Joost. "Ons ook ?"

"Ja, natuurlijk," zei de kannibalen koning vriendelijk als altijd. "Het is helemaal niks om je voor te schamen of verlegen over te doen. Iedereen is gemaakt van vlees, en vlees is er om gegeten te worden, om genoten te worden."

"Ik ben het er niet mee eens," zei Joost. "Je rooft zo het leven van iemand anders voor je eigen gulzigheid."

"Ach nee," zei de kannibaalse koning. "Zo moet je dat niet zien. Kip is zo gezond als mensenvlees. Waarom zou je daar niet van mogen genieten," terwijl hij op Oerling wees. "U moet weten : Een kip is een kip. Zo is het dier gemaakt."

"Het is een duif," zei Joost, "en het heeft van de Bibelebonse pap gegeten."

"Biebele wattus ?" vroeg de kannibalen koning.

"De Bibelebonse pap, waar je nooit oud van wordt," zei Joost. "Dan kun je eeuwig leven."

"Wie zit daar nou op te wachten om eeuwig te leven ?" vroeg de kannibalen koning vriendelijk, met een brede glimlach. "Dat is toch niks aan ? Dat is toch saai ? Nee, de dood hoort bij het leven, om het leven op smaak te maken. Wat is vuur zonder ijs, en wat is water zonder lucht ?"

"U begrijpt het niet," zei Joost. "De Bibelebonse pap is er om een mensenleven en dierenleven beter te maken, en ook het plantenleven, de bomen, de struiken, de planten, alles."

De kannibalen koning begon te lachen. "Ik heb het goed naar mijn zin, jongen. Ik eet liever een kippenboutje of een mensenarm of been dan saaie pap."

"Saaie pap ?" vroeg Joost. "Werkelijk, u kent de Bibelebonse pap nog niet. Uw lief en vriendelijk gedoe komt heel ongeloofwaardig over, onbetrouwbaar."

De kannibalen koning begon steeds zachter en liever te praten, maar Joost trapte er niet in. "Jullie zijn van harte welkom," lachte de kannibalen koning vriendelijk. "Ook al hebben wij totaal verschillende ideeën. Vrede is heel wat waard, vind je niet ? Ik zal een hut speciaal voor u laten klaarmaken. Ik zal ervoor zorgen dat u op uw wenken bedient wordt."

"Ach laat maar," zei Joost. "Het is niet nodig."

De kannibalen koning was verder totaal niet opdringerig, maar dat had natuurlijk een reden. Na een tijdje stond hij voor hen met een mes, en vroeg wie van hen het eerste eraan wilde gaan. Nooit hadden ze gedacht dat kannibalen zo beleefd konden zijn.

"Doet u dat mes maar weer weg," zei meester Tulp. "Niemand van ons is daar voor gekomen." De kannibalen koning was de vriendelijkheid en gastvrijheid zelve, en legde het mes weer weg. "Zoals u wilt," zei de kannibalen koning. "Het is allemaal voor uw plezier. De gast is koning."

Toen de andere kannibalen terugkwamen was de sfeer ineens heel anders. Zij waren veel ruiger, en veel chagerijniger. "Waarom zijn die toeristen nog niet in de ketel ?" vroegen ze.

"Het zijn onze gasten," zei de kannibalen koning. "En dat had ik aangeboden, maar dat wilden ze nog niet. De gast is koning natuurlijk. Het mag hen aan niets ontbreken, en hen mag ook niets opgedrongen worden."

"Ja, maar we hebben voedsel nodig," zei de kannibaal. "Laten ze opschieten."

"Ze hebben inderdaad voedsel nodig," zei de kannibalen koning. "Heel attent dat je dat hebt opgemerkt. Ik heb ze wat fruit aangeboden, maar ze hadden nog geen honger. Ik ben trots op zo'n zorgzame onderdaan als jij. Niemand kan aan jou tippen.

De kannibaal begon te grommen, en trok een mes. "Nog even en ik rijg ze zelf aan het mes."

De kannibalen koning keek hem vriendelijk aan. "Ga je maar even wassen. Dat zal je goed doen. Dat zal de honger wel stillen. En dan kun je daarna een pruimpje eten misschien."

"Ik eet geen pruimpjes !" bulderde de kannibaal. "Bij Lazarus ! Ik heb mensenvlees nodig !" Toen rende hij boos en stampvoetend weg.

"Wie is Lazarus ?" vroeg Joost.

"Oh, Lazarus is een zaadboom die wij vereren," zei de kannibalen koning vriendelijk.

"Wat doet het zaad ?" vroeg dokter Tulp.

"Het zaad is als een stuifmeel wat zich in de lucht vermengd en in de wind," zei de kannibalen koning, "en het maakt mensen nieuwsgierig. Ook maakt het mensen gewillig. Zonder de Lazarus boom zouden wij niet kunnen leven."

"Ik ben blij dat ik nog niets gegeten of gedronken heb hier," fluisterde Joost naar meester Tulp die naast hem stond.

"Zijn er nog meer bomen die u vereert ?" vroeg dokter Tulp.

"Nee," zei de kannibalen koning.

"Mag ik vragen," zei Joost, "U zei het zaad van de Lazarus boom maakt gewillig. Gewillig tot wie ?"

"De heks van Kannibalië waartoe dit eenvoudige land behoort," zei de kannibalen koning vriendelijk. "Zij woont in het Lazarus woud achter het land Chagerijnië."
"Dan heeft die heks u vast zo vriendelijk en week gemaakt door het Lazarus zaad," zei Joost. "Oh ja," zei de kannibalen koning. "Zij is een zoet mens. Zij wordt weleens de snoep heks genoemd."

Daar de heks van Kannibalië onder de grond woonde zouden ze onder de grond gaan met een bootje door het ondergrondse rivierengebied onder Chagerijnië tot onder het Lazarus woud. Natuurlijk wilden ze deze heks bezoeken, ter bevordering van de Bibelebonse pap. Het werd een lange reis onder de grond in een bootje, totdat ze bij het domein van de heks van Kannibalië waren gekomen in de diepte van het Lazarus woud. Haar ondergrondse rijk was ook zoetig, met bloemen in allerlei kleuren, bijna betoverend. Zelfs het rivierwier was kleurig. Het water was hier zeer helder. Ze konden er vanuit het bootje gewoon doorheen kijken. Er zwommen hier ook wonderlijke vissen, oranje met felle strepen, blauw, geel, en hele kleine groenen. Verderop waren er weer andere soorten, groter en met donkere kleuren. Dikwijls hadden ze gepuilde lippen. De natuur was prachtig hier. Ze kwamen aan bij een dichte heg waar een opening was. Hier gingen ze het bootje uit en gingen door de opening van de heg. Ze kwamen over een lang tuinpad in een grottengang terecht. De grottengang liep uit op een veldje waar een soort kruidig graan groeide. Achter het veldje waren nog wat bomen. Er was wat rook, maar ze wisten niet waar het vandaan kwam. Achter de bomen was een soort vallei, wat ook weer overliep in een bos. Ze kwamen aan in een bosdorpje. Overal waren er oude bosgebouwen waarin kinderen woonden. De kinderen ontvingen hen hartelijk, en ze deden hun verhaal.

"Oh, de paarse heks ?" vroeg één van de kinderen. "Want dat is degene die Kannibalië bestuurt, dit hele gebied."

"Ik wist niet dat ze de paarse heks was," zei Joost. "De kannibalen koning van Chagerijnië noemde haar de snoep heks."

"Ja, dat is dezelfde," zei het kind.

"En ze is zoet ?" vroeg Joost.

"Ja," zei het kind. "Ze komt vaak in haar paarse gewaad om ons snoep te brengen en speelgoed. Ze zorgt goed voor ons."

"Hoe vaak gebeurt dat ?" vroeg dokter Tulp.

"Meestal op feestdagen," zei het kind.

"Dankzij haar kunnen we hier leven," zei een ander kind. "Zij heeft ons verlost."

"Van wat ?" vroeg Joost.

"Van de wolven," zei het kind.

Joost zag een paarse gestalte op één van de daken staan. De paarse gestalte had een kap op.
"Is ze dat ?" vroeg Joost.

"Ja," zeiden sommige kinderen.

"Wat moet dat hier ?" zei de vrouw. "Excuseert u mij. Ik heb de zorg over deze kinderen."

Joost vertelde het verhaal.

"Bibelebonse pap ? Nou, dat is interessant," zei de vrouw, die haar kap afdeed. Ze liet een ring om haar vinger zien. "Eens gekregen," zei ze. "Het is een Bibelebonse ring. Mijn vader nam het eens mee van zijn reizen, en gaf het aan mij."

"Zo, zo," zei Joost, "zeker zuinig mee."

"Zeker," zei de vrouw.

"Bent u de snoepheks ?" vroeg Joost.

"Ach welnee," zei de vrouw. "Ik breng ze soms wat, en ik maak soms ritjes met hen in de bostrein, maar ik ben slechts een gezant van de heks."

"Met wat voor doeleinden ?" vroeg dokter Tulp.

"Ik kan u daar geen inzage in geven, maar als u de heks zelf wil spreken, dan kan de bostrein daarin behulpzaam zijn," sprak de vrouw.

Ze stemden in, en de vrouw leidde hen naar de bostrein achter het kinderdorp. Deze trein zou dieper het bos ingaan en ook langs allerlei bosvelden gaan. Het was een verschrikkelijk lawaai, maar in de trein zelf hoorde je het haast niet. Ze gingen met de vrouw in een grote coupé zitten.

"Vertel ons eens, is het een zoet mens, zoals de kannibalen koning zei ?" vroeg Joost.

"Ik kan u daarop geen antwoord geven," zei de vrouw. "U moet dat zelf ondervinden." De trein zou helemaal leiden tot aan de poort van de woning van de heks. Zij woonde in een gebied waar bomen pijlen voortbrachten die door de bomen werden afgeschoten. Die bomen waren dus levensgevaarlijk en bewaakten haar gebied. Alleen door de bostrein kon veilig het gebied ingegaan worden.
Buiten door het raam zagen ze telkens hoe vogeltjes door zulke pijlen werden doorspietst. De trein was in een bergachtig gebied terecht gekomen. Plotseling was alles donker. De trein ging door een tunnel. Steeds vaker ging de trein door lange tunnels onder bergen door. Toen ging de trein langs vele velden waar geel kruidig graan groeide. Haar reusachtige paleis in de bergen was geheel gemaakt van snoep. Het was een oogverblindend paleis, als een paradijs zo prachtig. De trein stopte aan de paleispoort, waar twee zwarte ridders stonden. Aan beide kanten naast het paleis en achter het paleis was een stad gebouwd, zo in de bergen, Er waren veel palmbomen en velden. Een donkere vrouw kwam naar buiten rennen, helemaal versierd met snoep. "Welkom tot mijn paradijs,"

zei ze warm. Ze vertelde hen een heel verhaal over hoe blij ze was dat ze waren gekomen, en legde hen uit hoe alles werkte. Zij had de bostrein laten maken, omdat ze verzot op zulk speelgoed was. Ze nam hen mee het paleis in, en leidde hen rond. Ook zij wilde dat ze snoep zouden eten. Ze vroegen zich af waarom, maar ze waren immers in Kannibalië. Overal stonden kooien met kinderen, en ze deed alsof het de normaalste zaak van de wereld was. "Als jullie goed eten, dan eten wij er ook goed van," zei ze, wat volgens Joost een verdachte opmerking was.

"Waarom zijn al die kinderen in kooien ?" vroeg Joost.

"Oh, het zijn gevaarlijke belhamels," zei de heks.

"Wat gaat er met hen gebeuren ?" vroeg dokter Tulp.

"Dat hangt van hun gedrag af," zei de heks.

Er stonden in het paleis ook boompjes waar kinderen in groeiden.

"Kinderen komen hier uit de bomen ?" vroeg Joost.

"Ja," zei de heks. "Het is het Lazarus zaad."

Nu begrepen ze wat de Lazarus boom werkelijk was. Het bracht kinderen voort.

"Wat gebeurt er met de kinderen die in de bomen groeien ?" vroeg meester Tulp.

"Wij eten wat de pot schaft," zei de heks, wat Joost weer een verdachte opmerking vond.

"Kom, ik zal jullie mijn slaapkamer laten zien," zei de heks. Ze ging een trap op en toen een hal in, waar de anderen haar volgden. Hier was ergens haar kamer. De kamer stond vol met spelletjes en speelgoed. Ook lag er veel snoep. Haar bed was een hemelbed met een rode sluier. "Hier gebeurt alles," zei ze.

"Wat bedoelt u ?" vroeg Joost, die een beetje overrompelt was door alles.

"Dit is mijn troonzaal," zei ze. "Eenvoud siert de mens, zeg ik altijd."

Joost keek rond in de kamer. "We hebben ook bomen waar varkens in groeien, en bepaalde stenen doen dat ook. Daarmee hebben we onze stad gebouwd, zodat de mensen altijd genoeg te eten hebben," zei de heks.

"Waarom eet je niet gewoon pap, Bibelebonse pap waar je nooit oud van wordt en waar je eeuwig door leeft," zei Joost.

"Ah, de Bibelebonzen," zei de heks, "onze verre voorouders," terwijl ze naar een schilderij aan de muur wees. "Hier is een Bibelebonzer," terwijl ze glimlachte. Het was een portret van een oude man. "Heus wij eren de voorouders, maar het leven gaat door, en zo ook de dood."

Joost had het gevoel alsof er niet met deze vrouw te praten viel. Hij zuchtte. "Heus, je zou het eens moeten proberen," zei hij. "Mens, dier en plant zullen zo in vrede leven."

"Vrede verkoopt niet," zei de heks. "De mens wil oorlog, en dan zijn spelletjes de gouden middenweg. Kinderen spelen met soldaatjes en indiaantjes. Dat is wat hen bezig houdt, het

avontuur. Vrede wordt al snel saai."

"U bent een zakenvrouw," zei Joost, "maar de Bibelebonse pap heeft niets met geld te maken. Je kunt het hemelse niet kopen, en geld maakt niet gelukkig."

"Kijk eens om je heen en zie waar geld mij heeft gebracht," zei de heks. "Geld heeft mij gelukkig gemaakt, en het groeit hier aan de bomen, en de stenen brengen het voort. Ik heb dit paradijs gekocht. Geld heeft me gelukkig gemaakt."

"Geld is geen goede raadgever," zei Tokijn. "Geld leidt altijd tot de valstrikken. Het geld liegt. Ik heb dat altijd weer gezien."

"Ja," zei meester Tulp, "en denk eens aan die arme kinderen die in de bomen groeien. Egoïstisch geluk is geen waar geluk. Het leidt tot de dood."

"Zij die leven voor en door de dood, zullen ook sterven door de dood," zei Tokijn.

"De dood verkoopt goed," zei de heks. Allemaal wisten ze dat er met de heks niet te praten viel.

"Nu, zeg op, wat wil je," zei de heks.

"Die Lazarus bomen en Lazarus stenen die kinderen, dieren en geld voortbrengen zijn zeer merkwaardig," zei dokter Tulp. "Waar heeft u die ergens vandaan gehaald, en hoe werkt dat precies ? Ik begrijp dit niet."

"Het is een bijzonder soort snoep wat hier in de bergen groeit, als stenen of bomen," zei de heks, "en dan brengt het deze goederen voort."

"Zeer merkwaardig, zeer eigenzinnig," zei dokter Tulp. "Dat heb ik nou nog nooit eerder gezien."

"Al het goede leven is van snoep," zei de heks, "en snoep moet gegeten worden, anders heb je er niks aan."

"Het is een vreemd soort geluk," zei meester Tulp, "maar het lijkt mij erg schadelijk."

"Jullie begrijpen het gewoon niet," zei de heks. "Maar dat zal mij niet tegenhouden. Mij maken jullie niet gek. Hebben jullie weleens een peperkoek mannetje gegeten ?"

"Weleens," zei meester Tulp.

"En had je toen ook medelijden met het peperkoek mannetje ?" vroeg de heks. "Had je er achteraf spijt van omdat je het zielig vond ?"

"Nee, niet echt," zei meester Tulp, "maar het was geen echt mannetje."

"En dit hier zijn geen echte kinderen !" riep de heks geirriteerd. "Nooit van automatisch speelgoed gehoord ? En het is van snoep. Snoep heeft nooit pijn. Snoep gaat nooit dood."

"De kinderen in de kooien en in het kinderdorp leken echt," zei Joost. "Zit u niet een beetje de boel te bedriegen ?"

"Jullie zijn onkundig !" riep de heks. "Jullie zijn spijbelaars. Eigenlijk horen jullie in de kooien

thuis. Jullie weten niets van snoep af. Jullie zijn een gevaar voor de geschoolde samenleving."

"U heeft maar een vreemd bedrijf," zei Joost, "en ik geloof er allemaal niks van wat u zegt. Ik houd het bij de Bibelebonse pap. Ik ben notabene de koning van de Bibelebonse pap."

"Daar heb ik allemaal niks mee te maken," zei de heks.

"Wat is nu precies het geheim van het Lazarus snoep wat op deze eigenaardige manier hier in de bergen groeit ?" vroeg dokter Tulp.

"Dat ... gaat u niks aan," zei de heks. "Het is niet alleen staatsgeheim, maar ook het geheim van mijn ambacht en mijn succes. Het is een beetje brutaal om dat zomaar te vragen."

"Oorspronkelijk was het Lazarus zaad een ingrediënt van de Bibelebonse pap," zei Tokijn. "Maar door schurken is het verdoezeld, en zo kwam de Lazarus boom onder een vloek."

"Hoe weet jij dat !" krijste de heks.

"Ik heb zo mijn eigen geheimen," zei Tokijn. Hij greep de pols van de heks en liet niet meer los. "Ik ben een Bibelebonse tovenaar. Ik heb lang in ballingschap gezeten. Ik weet meer dan je denkt."

Met deze woorden kwam er een vuur uit Tokijn's ogen. "De Lazarus boom was oorspronkelijk een Bibelebonse boom," zei Tokijn kalm. "Ik weet dat jij het zaad bewaakt."

"Niet waar !" krijste de heks. Ze begon te roepen naar de zwarte ridders die direct de trap opstormden.

"Wat is er, heks ?" riepen ze haar toe. Ze keek hen aan en sprak : "Tokijn is teruggekomen. Hij was de oorspronkelijke bewaker van de Bibelebonse pap. Ik moet hem het Lazarus zaad geven. Ga het halen in de paleiselijke kluis."

Even later kwamen ze terug met een glazen bol waarin het Lazarus zaad lag. "Geef het aan Tokijn," zei de heks. Toen overhandigden ze hem de glazen bol. Tokijn nam de bol aan, en liet toen de pols van de heks los.

De heks zuchtte, en begon in een pijlschietende struik te veranderen, en ook de zwarte ridders. "Kom vlug," zei Tokijn. "We moeten terug naar de bostrein. Haastig liepen ze terug naar de trap en renden even later naar de bostrein. Ditmaal bracht de bostrein hen helemaal terug naar de eindeloze toren diep onder de grond. Door de boswinden waren ze even later terug in het paleis. Er was weer een belangrijk ingrediënt van de Bibelebonse pap teruggebracht.

Toen ze thuis waren gekomen had Lekkerbek een grote verrassing voor Joost. Daar stond oom Georgius. Joost was erg blij en begon direct vragen te stellen. "Shhh," zei oom Georgius, "dat is een heel lang verhaal. Dat vertel ik je nog wel, maar eerst is het feest." En zo was er een groot feest in heel Nederland ter ere van de terugkeer van oom Georgius, en natuurlijk ter ere van de Bibelebonse pap.

Einde

DE BIBELEBONSE WIJN

Hoofdstuk 1. Het Wijnpaard

Hoofdstuk 2. De Dolle Stier
Hoofdstuk 3. De Rijder op het Slaap Paard

Hoofdstuk 1. Het Wijnpaard

De kabouter gaf hem een klap in zijn gezicht, en foeterde : "Dat zei ik helemaal niet. Bij de les blijven, jongen." Joost Buis keek voor zich uit, een beetje duizelig, en keek toen weer naar de kabouter. Alles was wazig voor zijn ogen. De kabouter herhaalde : "Dat zei ik helemaal niet. Nou, goed luisteren, anders gaat het weer helemaal verkeerd." Joost keek naar zijn pannekoek op het bord. De pannekoek had oogjes en een mond. Ook had de pannekoek kleine armpjes en beentjes. Joost keek nog eens beter. "Zie je het nu ?" foeterde de kabouter.

"Ja, inderdaad," zei Joost. "U heeft helemaal gelijk."

"In vervolg moet u leren mij te laten uitspreken," sprak de kabouter. De kabouter had een koksmuts op. Hij werkte hier in dit restaurant, het pannekoeken-restaurant van de Bibelebonse pap. De kabouter kende het geheim de lekkerste pannekoeken te bakken van de Bibelebonse pap. Daar was de kabouter voor opgeleid, net zoals vele andere kabouters.

Het land stond vol met zulke pannekoeken-restauranten. Joost keek de kabouter aan. "Dit betekent een ramp," sprak de kabouter. "De pannekoeken zijn razend."

"Ik zie het nu," sprak Joost.

"Ja, maar wat gaat u daar aan doen dan ?" zei de kabouter streng. "Dat kan toch niet zo ? Ze zullen ons hele land ombrengen als er niets aan gedaan wordt."

"Ik denk dan toch dat er nog een ingrediënt mist in de Bibelebonse pap," sprak Joost.
"Dat heeft u goed gezien," foeterde de kabouter. "Wat nu ?"

"Dus er zijn al hele legers van zulke woeste, levende pannekoeken gesignaleerd ?" sprak Joost.

"Jazeker," sprak de kabouter. "Ik heb geen zin om nog langer mijn tijd te verdoen hier en wachten totdat de tikkende tijdbom ontploft. Er moet nu wat gebeuren, anders stap ik op. Mijn beroep is levensgevaarlijk geworden."

Joost dacht even na. "Ik ga er direct mee aan de slag," zei Joost na enkele minuten van nadenken.

"Tjonge, nou dat mocht wel eens tijd worden, koning," foeterde de kabouter.

Joost stapte op, en ging naar oom Georgius. Hij vertelde hem direct het hele verhaal. Sinds oom Georgius was teruggekomen werden er Bibelebonse pannekoeken gemaakt. Daar had hij een bepaald recept voor meegebracht. De pannekoeken werden gemaakt van de Bibelebonse pap, maar er werden ook andere ingrediënten voor gebruikt. Oom Georgius zei dat het niet aan de nieuwe ingrediënten kon liggen, maar dat er waarschijnlijk dan toch nog een ingrediënt miste, waardoor de pannekoeken tot leven kwamen. Het waren woestelingen. Ze waren al legers aan het vormen, en het kon inderdaad een grote ramp voor het land betekenen als er niet snel wat aan gedaan zou worden.

Midden in de nacht werd Joost door oom Georgius wakker gemaakt. Hij hijgde. "Ze komen, ze komen !" riep oom Georgius. "Ze kloppen al op de deuren en ramen van de huizen, en willen iedereen meenemen."

"Meenemen ?" vroeg Joost slaperig. "Waar naartoe dan ?"

"Niemand weet het," zei oom Georgius. "Het is nu alleen nog maar dreigen, maar dat kan snel van kwaad tot erger worden. Het is meer een verzoek op dit moment."

"Wat willen ze ?" vroeg Joost.

Plotseling stonden de pannekoeken al in de slaapkamer. Ze waren misschien door een open raam binnengekomen. "Welaan," zei één van de pannekoeken. Oom Georgius en Joost keken verschrikt naar de pannekoek. Het was een woesteling.

"Eh, wat moet u ?" vroeg Joost. "Het is midden in de nacht."

"Wij willen praten," sprak de pannekoek. Zijn armen waren wild aan het draaien. Hij was totaal niet in de rust, en zijn ogen draaiden ook gevaarlijk.

"Praten ?" vroeg Joost. "Het is midden in de nacht."

"Niks mee te maken," zei een andere pannekoek. Het waren hele dikke opgevouwen pannekoeken, bijna als koeken. "Jullie zitten anders wel te praten."

"Ja, over jullie," zei Joost. "Jullie beginnen al een probleem te vormen, schijnt het."

"Mooi," sprak de pannekoek.

"Mooi ?" vroeg oom Georgius. "Ik weet niet wat daar zo mooi aan is. Jullie hebben heel wat onrust gebracht al."

"Mooi," zei de pannekoek weer. "Het mocht weleens tijd worden. Wij worden namelijk gegeten."

"Vind u het raar ?" vroeg Joost verbaasd. "U bent een pannekoek. Die zijn ervoor om gegeten te worden."

"Nu niet beledigend doen," sprak de pannekoek woest. De pannekoek deed een stap naar voren, en gromde er ook bij.

"Wie heeft dat zo bepaald ?" vroeg een andere pannekoek.

"Eh, wij," zei Joost. "Dat is een gegeven. Jullie zijn voedsel."

"Nou moet je eens even ophouden," zei de pannekoek. "Dat bepaal jij niet. Luister : U sluit nu al uw pannekoeken-restauranten, of er gaan hier ongelukken gebeuren."

Joost dacht even na. Wat moest hij nu doen ? Hij keek naar oom Georgius.

"Doe het maar," zei oom Georgius. "We hebben geen andere keus. Blijkbaar mist er wat in de Bibelebonse pap, anders had dit nooit kunnen gebeuren."

"Of iemand heeft er iets ingegooid wat er niet in hoorde," zei Joost. Hij keek toen weer naar de pannekoeken. "Wij zullen de restauranten tijdelijk sluiten, totdat er een oplossing is gevonden."

"Wij doen niet meer mee," brulde de pannekoek. "En als betaling eisen wij dat alle inwoners van dit land met ons meegaan als gevangenen. Dit land zal onze kolonie worden. Wij regeren het nu."

"Dat gaat wel een beetje erg ver," zei Joost. "Ik heb veel dingen meegemaakt, maar nooit zoiets als dit. Vind je dat zelf ook niet een beetje ver gaan ?"

"Nee, ik niet," zei de pannekoek die zich begon op te zwellen. "Wij hebben hele andere plannen."

Joost keek naar oom Georgius. Toen keek hij weer terug naar de pannekoeken. "Jullie vergissen je."

Plotseling ging er ijzer om de polsen van zowel Joost als oom Georgius. Toen hoorden ze een klik, en werd er aan een ketting getrokken. De pannekoeken hadden hen inmiddels van achteren overmeesterd.

"Gevangen," sprak de pannekoek. "Het is een lange nacht geweest. Jullie waren de laatsten. Het hele volk was al in ballingschap." Toen werden Joost en oom Georgius aan een lange ketting meegetrokken.

"Waar gaan we naartoe ?" vroeg Joost verschrikt.

"Dat zul je wel zien," zei de pannekoek.

Joost was erg nijdig. Hij vroeg zich af wat er aan de hand was. Buiten waren er grote stoeten geketende mensen in rijen die allemaal werden meegetrokken. Ze werden meegetrokken tot schepen scheen het. "We gaan naar een vreemd land !" riep de pannekoek. Legers van pannekoeken waren er rondom de mensen. Joost werd er duizelig van.

"Mag ik aan uw voorstellen : de koning," sprak de pannekoek tegen wat andere pannekoeken. "De vorige koning zul je bedoelen," lachte een andere pannekoek, terwijl ook de andere pannekoeken begonnen te lachen. Joost werd naar een groot schip getrokken. Oom Georgius was van hem weggetrokken. Die ging naar een ander schip.

Er was een klein kamertje op het schip waar Joost in werd getrokken. Er zat daar een pannekoek achter een bureautje. "Zo zo," sprak de pannekoek. "Dus jij bent de koning van dit onheugelijke land. Allemaal verleden tijd nu."

"Wat wilt u ?" vroeg Joost.

"Dat is voor jou een vraag en voor mij een weet. Een goede vraag wel te verstaan, en ik zal het nooit beantwoorden. Je zult het zelf wel zien," sprak de pannekoek.

Joost had pijn in zijn buik. Wat was er gebeurd ? Hoe kon dit gebeuren ? Hij stond voor een raadsel.

De zeilen werden gehesen en het schip ging varen. Het was een grote vloot met vele schepen, vol gevangenen. In het kleine kamertje op het schip raakte Joost geheel zijn oriëntatie kwijt, en zijn gevoel van tijd. Hij sliep geketend op hooi, dichtbij het bureau. Hij hoopte maar dat er snel een einde zou komen aan deze nachtmerrie. Hier had hij niet om gevraagd.

He schip legde aan bij een eiland. Hier zou Joost moeten verschijnen voor de pannekoek koning. Hij werd aan een ketting meegesleept tot een groot paleis ergens in zandgebied op het eiland. Hij keek om zich heen en zag de hoge muren van het kasteel, die waren als een soort metaal van een licht bruine kleur. De koning zat daar op een troon van hetzelfde soort metaal, maar de koning was zelf geen pannekoek. De koning beweerde dat hij de koning was van de winden, maar dat de heksenwind in zijn rijk had lopen plunderen, en alle winden meenam om hen onder te brengen in de bibelebonse pannekoeken. Dat was het geheim waarom de pannekoeken tot leven waren gekomen.

Joost luisterde met open mond naar de koning. De heksenwind werd dus als probleem aangewezen. Joost vroeg de koning waarom hiervoor het hele volk in ballingschap moest, maar de koning zei dat dat belangrijk was, omdat het volk beschermt moest worden tegen de heksenwind. Alleen de winden van de windenkoning zouden dat kunnen doen. Hoe wist de koning zelf ook nog niet. Hij had een grote nederlaag geleden door de heksenwind.

Joost zou maar wat graag willen helpen, maar wist niet hoe. "Hoe is de heksenwind ontstaan ?" vroeg Joost. Maar de koning wist het niet. Plotseling kwam er een bulderende storm binnen. De deuren waren opengeslagen, en de soldaten van de koning, die overigens ook geen pannekoeken waren, riepen : "De heksenwind !" Joost werd gegrepen door de storm en naar buiten gesleurd, en toen hoog in de lucht getrokken. Joost kon bijna geen adem halen. Hij werd heel hoog getrokken en ging toen een wolk in, waar een wolkenpaleis was. Door een torenraam werd hij naar binnengegooid en kwam oog in oog te staan met een heks.

"Ben je daar eindelijk, jongen," kraste de heks. "Waarom is het altijd zo dat ik alleen maar hierdoor iemand's aandacht kan trekken ?"

"Wie ben je, heks," sprak Joost, "en wat wil je ?"

"Je kent me nog niet, en dat vind ik jammer," kraste de heks.

"Zeg op, wat wil je," sprak Joost.

"Kom eens even hier," kraste de heks.

"Ik kom nergens," zei Joost. "Wat is dit voor belachelijk gedoe ?"

"Kom kom," kraste de heks. "Je weet het wel, je weet het wel. Ik heb jou nog veel te onderwijzen."

"Ik wil niet onderwezen worden door een heks !" riep Joost luid.

"Sssstttt..." kraste de heks fluisterend. "Je maakt de kinderen wakker."

"Welke kinderen ?" vroeg Joost.

"Laat maar," sprak de heks. "Kunnen we even ter zake komen ?"

"Ik doe geen zaken met heksen," sprak Joost.

"Ach kom," kraste de heks. "Ik bedoel het niet slecht. Ik wilde alleen een leger maken van de Bibelebonse pannekoeken. Ze hebben zoveel goede kwaliteiten."

"Een pannekoeken leger ?" sprak Joost verbaasd. "Waar is dat goed voor, en waarom heb je de winden van de windenkoning daarvoor gebruikt om de pannekoeken tot leven te wekken ? Ze zijn er niet bepaald blij mee."

"Ach, dan hebben ze wat te doen," kraste de heks. "Werken voor een echte heks die orde op zaken kan stellen is toch beter dan werken voor zo'n luiwammes van een windenkoning die van geen toeten nog blazen weet."

"Me dunkt dat je nogal praatjes hebt, heks," sprak Joost verontwaardigd. "Zeg op : Waar is het voor nodig ?"

"Tut tut," zei de heks. "Nu zelf geen babbels gaan krijgen."

"Ik ben toevallig de koning van de Bibelonse pap en de Bibelebonse pannekoeken," sprak Joost nijdig. "Als je dingen wil, of plannen hebt, dan praat en overleg je daar eerst over. Maar niet zoals dit. Dat kan echt niet, heks."

"Praatjesmaker," zei de heks. "Wat weet jij er nou allemaal vanaf hoe alles moet gaan, snotaap."

"Ik vraag het nog één keer, heks," zei Joost : "Wat moet je ?"

"Ik moet helemaal niets," kraste de heks. "Ik bewijs je een gunst door je pannekoeken tot leven te wekken, en meneer is er niet blij mee. Ondankbare hond."

"Een gunst ?" vroeg Joost. "Wat is daar voor gunst aan, een beetje onze pannekoeken in soldaten veranderen zodat ze niet meer gegeten worden ? Nogmaals : de pannekoeken waren er niet blij mee, of telt dat niet voor jou."

"Meneertje koekepeertje," sprak de heks. "Nu moet je eens even goed luisteren. Levende pannekoeken heeft nog niemand gegeten. Ze krijgen pootjes, en weg zijn ze. En dat is maar goed ook, want jullie aten veels te veel, veels te veel. Nu hebben de pannekoeken een echte functie gekregen. Ze zouden jouw land en mij goed kunnen helpen."

Joost boog zijn hoofd. Hij voelde dat hij niet veel in te brengen had in zo'n situatie als dit. Hij was hier bij de heks in een wolkenpaleis, en zijn volk leefde beneden in ballingschap.

"Een pannenkoeken leger, en dan ?" vroeg Joost. "Wie is de vijand ?"

"Ik heb jullie opgenomen voor de strijd," sprak de heks.

"Tegen ?" vroeg Joost.

"Tegen vraatzucht," sprak de heks. "Maak je voedsel tot een soldaat, tot een wapen, of maak er kleding van, of voertuigen, kan me niet schelen, als je maar stopt met al dat vele eten, Bibelebonse

flutkoning."

Joost werd rood van woede. "Wij eten helemaal niet teveel. Daar zijn allerlei reglementen voor dat niemand teveel eet. Zij die dat doen worden in de gevangenis gezet, of moeten naar het ziekenhuis," bromde hij.

"Blijkbaar is het niet genoeg," kraste de heks.

"Niet genoeg ? Hoezo ?" vroeg Joost nijdig en beledigd.

"Ik weet genoeg," sprak de heks.

"U bent niet bepaald communicatief," sprak Joost.

"Ik heb al genoeg gezegd," kraste de heks.

Joost dacht na. Er waren inderdaad mensen in zijn land die teveel aten, maar die kwamen in de gevangenis of het ziekenhuis terecht. Maar ja, soms ontsnapte er weleens iemand, en die kon dan een grote bedreiging voor het land vormen. Ze zochten elkaar op, en smeedden zo hun plannen. Veelal gingen ze onder de grond wonen. Het waren vreetbendes, zware criminelen. Misschien bedoelde de heks dat ? Misschien had de heks toch wel een beetje gelijk ?

"Ik zie meer dan je denkt," kraste de heks, "vanuit het wolkenpaleis, en ik vond het wel welletjes."

"Ik begrijp het heks," zei Joost na lang peinzen. "Dreigt er gevaar ?"

"Groot gevaar," kraste de heks. "Het vreters-complot van pannekoek-verslaafden. Ze gaan daar waar het oog niet kan komen, maar ik zie alles. Ik zie wat ze in het geheim smeden."

Joost kon snel tot een overeenkomst komen met de heks, en ook met de winden-koning. Alles werd nu begrepen, en vanaf die dag waren er legers van pannekoeken in Nederland die het volk veilig moesten houden tegen vraatzucht. De winden van de windenkoning die de pannekoeken tot leven hadden gebracht en in de pannekoeken woonden waren hoog gevoelig, zodat ze hun werk goed konden doen.

Maar de mensen in het land begonnen al gauw te protesteren. Ze wilden geen pannekoeken politie. Er kwamen al snel burgeroorlogen. Het pannekoeken leger had de handen vol hieraan. De grootste woede werd gericht tot Joost, de koning. Ze wilden dat hij af zou treden. Op een gegeven moment werd het zo erg dat Joost het bos moest invluchten. Hij riep daar tot de heksenwind, die hem in een storm kwam opnemen om hem naar het wolkenpaleis te brengen.

"Heks, het werkt niet," zuchtte Joost toen hij even later bij de heks was. "Het volk wil me niet meer, en het pannekoeken leger kan niet tegen hen op."

"Je moet één ding goed begrijpen, Joost," sprak de heks. "Het pannekoeken leger moet getraind worden. Ze zijn nieuw in het vak. Ze zijn hier inderdaad nog niet tegen opgewassen, maar wat tijd en scholing doet wonderen."

Joost glimlachte. "Maar hoe dan, heks ? Wie kan hen onderwijzen ?" vroeg hij.

"De heksenwind kan hen onderwijzen," sprak de heks.

En zo begon er een groot scholingsproces voor het pannekoeken leger. De heksenwind zou lesgeven in het wolkenpaleis, en de ene helft van het leger onderwees zij 's ochtends, en de andere helft onderwees zij 's middags. Ook gaf zij weleens lessen in de avond voor kleinere groepjes. Het pannenkoeken leger werd groter in Nederland en beter getraind, maar nog steeds waren er grote burgeroorlogen. Vaak brak er brand uit. Het was het tijdperk van de brandstichters.

Eigenlijk werden de burgeroorlogen alleen maar erger. Het was hard tegen hard. Maar het pannekoeken leger kon nu in ieder geval standhouden. Ook zagen zij het als een uitdaging. Maar dit geluk was maar van korte duur, want de burgeroorlogen werden zo erg, en het pannekoeken leger begon zulke grote nederlagen te lijden, en waren zo gehaat, dat ze voorlopig geheel opgenomen moesten worden in het wolken paleis, anders zou er niets van hen overblijven. Door deze chaos kwam het land in nog grotere problemen. Er waren ook grote bosbranden. Joost en de heks waren ten einde raad. De heksenwind was nog steeds bezig met het trainen van het pannenkoeken leger. Ze werden voor nu niet naar beneden gezonden. Ook de heks en Joost volgden lessen bij de heksenwind.

Op een dag waren ze allen tezamen gekomen in de grote onderwijs-zaal van het wolkenpaleis. Het hele pannekoekenleger was er, en ook Joost en de heks, en de windenkoning met zijn gehele hofhouding. De heksenwind zou die dag een groot geheim aan de dag stellen. Ze stond daar voor het publiek en sprak :

"De wijn van Ekolijn, een groot geheim,
In het diepste van de nacht heeft het altijd op ons gewacht,
Het woont in de aarde diep, waar zij tot u riep,
U bent door dit alles heengegaan, opdat zij zal stromen,
Een groot Bibelebonse geheim,
Deze Bibelebonse wijn."

Ekolijn was een mannetje die diep in de aarde woonde. Hij bewaakte daar de Bibelebonse wijn. Van die wijn zou je in een betoverende slaap komen. Het mannetje kon heel snel zijn, en had een neusje als van een clown. Het mannetje was een bosdwerg, een aarddwerg. Je zou alleen bij Ekolijn kunnen komen door een hele diepe put in de aarde. Ekolijn zong altijd liedjes. Soms waren die liedjes vrolijk, en soms waren ze droevig. De Bibelebonse wijn zou vrede brengen, maar niemand had ooit de plaats van Ekolijn gevonden. Het was de vraag of Ekolijn echt zou bestaan of dat het maar een liedje was.

Joost wilde wel op onderzoek uit. De heksenwind zou hem terugbrengen naar het bos, als de mensen zouden slapen, naar een plaats waar geen bosbranden waren. In de nacht bracht de heksenwind hem naar beneden het bos in. Joost keek goed om zich heen. "Waar kan die put ergens zijn ?" vroeg Joost aan de heksenwind. De heksenwind blies haarzelf op en gebood Joost haar te volgen. Ze leidde hem naar een diep ravijn. "Hier moet het wezen," sprak ze. "Onderin het ravijn moet ergens de put naar Ekolijn zijn."

"Ben jij daar weleens geweest ?" vroeg Joost.

"Ben je gek," zei de heksenwind. "Veel te gevaarlijk voor mij. Ik zou daar ergens kunnen vastraken."

Wat dat inhield zei de heksenwind verder niet. Daar sprak ze niet over. Joost moest dus helemaal alleen langs het ravijn naar beneden klouteren. Er groeide hier allemaal vreemd kruid. Gelukkig was het er niet stijl, maar liep alles schuin naar beneden. Het was een soort vallei. De heksenwind was inmiddels weer teruggegaan. Er lagen hier allemaal schedels. Ook lagen er botten. Er gleed een

rilling over Joost. Plotseling hoorde hij gekrijs in de verte.
Ergens beneden was een smalle put waar een touw inhing, vastgemaakt aan een paaltje. Joost ging langs het touw naar beneden. Dieper in de put was het ruimer. Maar ergens hield het touw op, en hij hing nog steeds ergens. Hij kon niet dieper, en hij durfde zich ook niet te laten vallen. Plotseling keek hij recht in de ogen van een vogel.

"Wat moet dat hier," kraste de vogel.
"Ik ben op zoek naar Ekolijn," zei Joost een beetje hijgend.

"Klim maar op mijn rug," zei de vogel. Het was een tamelijk grote vogel, dus Joost waagde het erop. De vogel vloog met Joost heel diep de put in. "Ik kom hier maar eens in de drie miljoen jaren," kraste de grote vogel, "maar vanavond was het het feest van ..." maar verder kon Joost het niet verstaan. Het vliegen leek wel eeuwig te duren. Joost was zijn besef van tijd kwijt. Ineens stond hij op de grond voor een klein tunneltje. "Hier doorheen," sprak de vogel, "dan de rechter bocht nemen. Dan kom je er vanzelf." Joost kon in het tunneltje als hij zou kruipen. Hij moest heel lang door de modder kruipen voordat hij aankwam bij een splitsing met twee bochten. Hij nam de rechter bocht zoals de vogel had gesproken. Hier moest hij zijn. Helemaal onder de modder kwam hij aan bij een klein deurtje. Hij ging naar binnen, en hier was een grote open ruimte met een boom. In de boom was een deurtje wat direct openklapte en een mannetje rende naar buiten. Joost kon het bijna niet met zijn ogen volgen. "Dus hier is nog nooit iemand geweest ?" vroeg Joost zichzelf af.

"Ekolijn is de naam," sprak het mannetje.

"Ik kom voor de wijn," sprak Joost, "om maar direct met de deur in huis te vallen. Ik ben Joost, koning van de B...." maar verder kon Joost niet komen.

"Bespaar me je praatjes," zei Ekolijn. "Ik ben de vriendelijkste niet tot vreemdelingen."

"Jij bent zeker de lolligste thuis met die clownneus en je opmerkingen," sprak Joost.

"De lolligste zeer zeker niet," sprak Ekolijn. "Mijn drie broers zijn nog wel veel lolliger, maar wat kom je doen ? Je denkt toch niet dat ik je ook maar enige Bibelebonse wijn meegeef ? Waar is het voor ?"

Joost vertelde zijn verhaal.

"Interessant verhaal," zei Ekolijn. "Maar eh .... daarom wonen wij hier. Daarom wonen wij hier, want daarboven is alles slechts geklier, en daar zouden wij dan onze kostbare wijn voor moeten opofferen ?"

Joost trok rare gezichten. "Als het kan," zei hij. "We hebben het hard nodig. Hoeveel vraagt u voor de wijn ? En wat zijn precies de kwaliteiten van de wijn ?"

"Nou ja, kijk eens hier," zei Ekolijn, "goed dat je die vragen stelt. Ik heb nog drie broers die over deze zaak beslissen. De makkelijksten zijn het zeer zeker niet. Ik ben al niet makkelijk, maar zij zijn helemaal niet makkelijk."

"Iets meer informatie over de wijn graag," sprak Joost een beetje ongeduldig.

"Je hebt wel haast, moet ik zeggen," zei Ekolijn.

Joost begon een beetje nijdig te worden. "Alles op zijn tijd," zei Ekolijn.

"Ik zie u heeft grote nood," sprak Ekolijn. "Misschien kunnen we een uitzondering maken, maar dat ga ik met mijn broers overleggen." Ekolijn rende de boom weer in en kwam er na een paar tellen weer uit. "We hebben het besproken, hoor," sprak Ekolijn, "maar eh, het is toch niet voldoende. Het is toverwijn, ziet u, en dat verspillen we niet zomaar aan de eerste de beste."

De dwerg begon te neuriën en toen te zingen, terwijl hij aan wat karweitjes begon : "Rode, donkere wijn, vloeiende vanuit het geheim. Het geheim wil je niet weten, en iedereen is het vergeten. Er komt altijd iets tussen, het springt altijd weg. Het kan nergens komen, en je hebt altijd pech. Onbereikbaar is dit geheim, waar de brug verdwijnt in de eeuwigheid. Het strekt zich uit, en brandt dan af, het draait rond, en dan is alles anders als je dichterbij komt. Voor eeuwig zul je dwalen. Nooit zul je de Bibelebonse wijn behalen." Toen begon de dwerg hard te lachen, terwijl hij Joost volkomen negeerde. Druk bezig was hij met zijn karweitjes. Joost was boos, en moest nog veel meer van die gemene liedjes aanhoren.

"Had ik de linkerbocht maar genomen," dacht Joost bij zichzelf, en ging terug het tunneltje in, terug naar de splitsing, waar hij toen de linkerbocht nam. Tot zijn grote verbazing kwam hij hier ook aan bij de open ruimte met de boom. Direct sprong weer hetzelfde mannetje door het deurtje naar buiten, nog wel sneller dan de vorige keer. "Welkom gast," zei het mannetje. "De naam is Ekolijn."

"Maar had ik u net niet al gezien ?" vroeg Joost.

"Welnee," zei het mannetje. "Dit is de eerste keer."

"Ja maar ik had net een heel gesprek met u gehad," zei Joost, "bent u dat nu alweer vergeten ?"

"Nee hoor," zei Ekolijn, "mijn geheugen werkt goed. Dit is echt de eerste keer. Nog nooit eerder voorgekomen."

"Vreemd dan," zei Joost. "Ik nam de rechterbocht en kwam u daar tegen."

"De rechterbocht is maar een spiegelbeeld," zei Ekolijn. "Hier moet je wezen. Kom je voor de wijn ?"

Joost knikte.

"Goed, dan zal ik je erover onderwijzen," sprak Ekolijn.

"U heeft toevallig geen drie broers ?" vroeg Joost.

"Nee joh," sprak Ekolijn. "Het spiegelbeeld splitst mij op in vier delen, en doet dan alsof de andere delen mijn drie broers zijn. Het zijn niet de vriendelijksten, maar dat komt omdat de stukken afgescheiden zijn en geen geheel vormen. De vriendelijkheid is in de scheuring niet bewaard gebleven. Heel begrijpelijk."

"Ik zie het," sprak Joost.

"Nu," zei Ekolijn. "Die wijn brengt de toverdroom, waarin alles anders wordt.

Ekolijn keek Joost aan. Hij pakte hem bij zijn arm, en trok hem door het deurtje de boom in. Hier was een trap naar beneden. "Kijk," zei Ekolijn, "deze trap leidt tot het wijnbos. Daar groeit de Bibelebonse wijn als vruchten aan de bomen. Daar moet je zijn. Wij drinken het, en baden erin,

opdat de vraatzucht wegvaagt. Moet je goed luisteren : Midden in het wijnbos staat het wijnhuis, waar het wijnzaad wordt gemaakt. Het ligt daar in grote zakken. Het is het geheim van het wijnbos. Het wijnzaad wordt gemaakt door een grote machine, die het wijnzaad maakt door leugens."

"Door leugens ?" vroeg Joost verschrikt. "Maar dan is het toch geen goede machine ?"

"Jawel, jawel," zei Ekolijn die een pijpje opstak. "Je begrijpt het verkeerd. Het zijn geen echte leugens, maar raadsels."

"Ik zie het," zei Joost gerustgesteld. "Als ik ergens een hekel aan heb dan zijn het wel leugens."

"Ik ook," zei Ekolijn. "De raadsels zijn ervoor om indringers tegen te houden en om de tuin te leiden."

"Klinkt als een goed plan," sprak Joost. "Dat zou ik graag voor mijn land willen gebruiken."

"Het is raadselwijn," sprak Ekolijn. "Maar duur, zo duur."

"Duur ?" vroeg Joost.

"Ja, dat moet wel, hè," sprak Ekolijn.

"Wat kost het ?" vroeg Joost.

"Je leven," zei Ekolijn.

"Laat dan maar zitten. Dat gaat mij te ver," zei Joost.

"Wacht nou even," zei Ekolijn. "Je moet me wel laten uitspreken."

Joost luisterde. Even was het stil. Toen sprak Ekolijn verder : "Nogmaals : Ik zei dat het je het leven kost."

Joost knikte. "Wat bedoel ik hiermee ?" vroeg Ekolijn. "Ik bedoel hiermee dat je een totaal ander leven zal krijgen. Je moet dus als het ware je vorige leven inleveren. Het gaat dus om een grote verandering."

"Ik begrijp het," zei Joost. "En wat houdt die verandering precies in ?"

"Je zal niet dezelfde zijn," zei Ekolijn. "Je vorige leven zal nog steeds ronddwalen en de bewaker worden van de wijn."

"Dus ik ga gesplitst worden ?" vroeg Joost.

Ekolijn was even stil. Je zal in vieren gedeeld worden, net als ik. Dat is je spiegelbeeld, de bewaker.

"Hoe gaat dat gebeuren ?" vroeg Joost.

"Dat doet de wijn," sprak Ekolijn.

"Eigenaardig," sprak Joost. "Dus mijn verleden wordt in vieren gedeeld en ik leef zelf door als het vijfde deel ?"

"Warempel," sprak Ekolijn. "Je hebt het door."

Ekolijn pakte Joost's hand, en leidde hem naar beneden over de trap. Het waren vele trappen. Ze gingen helemaal de diepte in. Het werd steeds donkerder. Na een tijdje kwamen ze aan bij het wijnbos. Ook hier was het donker, maar aan de rand van het bos stond een grote lichtende steen met daarop een beeltenis van een blanke man met indianenveren, zittende op een rood paard. Ernaast stond geschreven : "Alleen zij die het wijnpaard berijden zullen het wijnbos kunnen binnengaan." Ekolijn wees ernaar, en sprak : "In de bovenwereld zijn ze allemaal verslaafd aan de bibelebonse pap. De bibelebonse wijn is ervoor om de vraatzucht te doen verdwijnen, maar omdat er ook het gevaar is van het verslaafd worden aan de bibelebonse wijn, moet men leren het wijnpaard te berijden. En het wijnpaard is het dolste paard wat er bestaat. Dat kan ik je wel vertellen."

Joost zag het al helemaal voor zich. Een woest rood paard, en dat zou hij dan moeten berijden ? Geen sprake van.

"Is er geen andere mogelijkheid ?' vroeg Joost.

"Helaas niet," sprak Ekolijn. "De verslaving aan de wijn is een groot gevaar en dat moet getemd worden. In feite is de bovenwereld het resultaat van een wijn verslaving. Iemand heeft het gedroomd."

"Dus ik kwam uit een droom ?" vroeg Joost.

Ekolijn knikte. "We kunnen hier niet te lang blijven, want als het wijnpaard ons in de gaten krijgt, dan is het goed mis."

"Kun jij hem niet berijden dan ?" vroeg Joost.

"Nee," zei Ekolijn. "Ik ben slechts een bewaker van de wijn, een bewaker van het wijnbos. Ik mag er zelf niet in."

"Heeft u weleens van die wijn gedronken ?" vroeg Joost.

"Nee joh," zei Ekolijn.

Joost keek hem verbaasd aan.

"Voor zover ik weet hebben alleen de blanke indiaan en de wijnverslaafde ooit van de wijn gedronken, maar dat kan net zo goed mythe zijn," sprak Ekolijn.

"Wie is de wijnverslaafde ?" vroeg Joost.

Ekolijn zweeg. Na een paar minuten stilte sprak Ekolijn : "Daar moet je het niet over hebben."

Joost stond voor een raadsel. Ekolijn pakte hem bij de hand en wilde de trap weer oplopen, maar Joost hield hem tegen. "Wacht even," zei Joost. "Ik zou graag het woeste, dolle wijnpaard willen berijden. Mijn land heeft mij nodig, en daarbij heb ik de Bibelebonse wijn dus echt nodig om orde op zaken te kunnen stellen."

Ekolijn keek hem met grote ogen aan. "Dat lukt je nooit," sprak Ekolijn. "Nooit."

"Maar waarom heb je me hier dan naartoe genomen ?" vroeg Joost.

Ekolijn zweeg. In de verte kwam het rode paard al aanstormen. "Ik zei het je toch," zei Ekolijn ongeduldig. "Nu hebben we de poppen aan het dansen. Daar komt het paard aan." Ekolijn greep Joost vast, maar Joost rukte zich los. "Alles of niets dan maar," zei Joost. "Ik ga het er op wagen." Maar het paard was woest. Er was donder en bliksem, en het paard steigerde en schopte toen Joost tegen zijn kin aan. Joost had het gevoel alsof zijn hele gezicht in brand stond en viel na een paar seconde bewusteloos. Ekolijn greep Joost als de bliksem, en ging als de bliksem met Joost in zijn armen de trap op. Gelukkig was Ekolijn sneller dan het paard. Snel was hij weer boven met Joost en sloot de trap naar beneden af door het luik dicht te doen. Na een tijdje begon het paard tegen het luik aan te trappen. Joost begon weer langzaam bij te komen. "Ik zei het je toch !" foeterde Ekolijn. "Nu hebben we dus echt de poppen aan het dansen. Dat wordt vanavond dus gebakken peren eten." Het paard begon steeds harder tegen het luik te trappen. "Hier zijn we niet veilig," sprak Ekolijn. "We moeten hier weg." Daar begon het paard al door het luik te breken. Weer droeg Ekolijn Joost in zijn armen. Hij was verschrikkelijk sterk, en begon weer als de bliksem te rennen. Het paard stoof achter hen aan. Ekolijn rende door de tunnel heen, helemaal tot uit het ravijn. Het woeste paard zat nog steeds achter hen aan. Ze waren nu boven de grond gekomen, en Ekolijn rende helemaal het bos door totdat ze in een stadje aankwamen. Het rode paard was woest en begon tegen huizen aan te trappen. Mensen kwamen in rep en roer naar buiten, en werden door het dolle paard tegen de grond getrapt. Ekolijn was moe geworden, en zette Joost neer. Het paard zat nu niet meer achter hen aan, maar ze zagen hoe het paard tegen de huizen en mensen hier tekeer ging, bij de grachten. Het hele stadje was in rep en roer.

"Wat moet dat hier !" schreeuwden de mensen. Maar meer konden ze niet zeggen, want dan had het paard hen al tegen de vlakte getrapt. Er was veel gegil. Joost bleef op een afstand sprakeloos kijken met Ekolijn. Hij moest iets doen als koning. Joost waagde het er op en begon met stevige passen naar het paard te lopen, maar plotseling voelde hij weer scheurende pijn in zijn kin. "Niet doen !" riep Ekolijn hem toe. Joost liep weer terug naar Ekolijn. Het paard was woedend, en trapte overal in het stadje ramen en deuren in. Joost bleef staan als verstijfd. Na een tijdje kwam het paard weer op hen af. "We zijn er geweest," zei Ekolijn. "Ik ben te moe. Ik moet rusten." Iemand gooide een Bibelebonse pannekoek naar Joost. "Hier," werd er geroepen, "probeer het paard hiermee te voeren, koning." Joost raapte de pannekoek op en stak het uit naar het wijnpaard. Het paard begon direct rustiger te worden, en liep langzaam af op Joost. Het paard had alleen oog voor de pannekoek en begon ervan te eten uit Joost z'n hand. Ekolijn keek verbaasd en opgelucht toe. "Goedzo," zei Joost tegen het paard. "Brave jongen," terwijl hij met zijn andere hand het paard aaide. Het paard brieste, maar was nog steeds rustig. Joost zou het erop wagen, en klom op het paard.

Maar weer kreeg Joost een scheurende pijn in zijn kin. Hij voelde zichzelf heel duizelig worden. Langzaam stapte hij van het paard af, en ging op de grond liggen. Na een tijdje werd hij naar het ziekenhuis gebracht. De dokter die hem onderzocht zei dat hij zijn kaak had gebroken. Dat was inderdaad een hoge prijs om op het wijnpaard te kunnen rijden. In ieder geval wist hij nu hoe hij het paard moest temmen.

Hoofdstuk 2. De Dolle Stier

Toen Joost uit het ziekenhuis was gekomen bracht Ekolijn hem naar een weiland waar het wijnpaard graaste. Joost had een Bibelebonse pannekoek bij zich en gaf dit aan het paard, waarna hij op het paard klom. Het paard was al die tijd rustig geweest. In rustige pas ging Joost op het paard naar het bos, samen met Ekolijn die naast hen liep. Er was zoveel veranderd. Het ravijn was niet meer zo diep, en veel schuiner, nog meer als een vallei, en er was geen put meer, maar alleen nog de tunnel, en die was veel ruimer nu, wat Joost al eerder had opgemerkt toen Ekolijn er met hem doorheen rende. Ze gingen naar de boom en gingen daar naar binnen, om zo over de trap naar beneden tot het wijnbos te komen. Joost kon nu eindelijk in het wijnbos komen, rijdende op het wijnpaard. Het was een prachtig bos, en na een tijdje kwamen ze aan bij het wijnhuis. Ekolijn was aan de rand van het bos gebleven. Het wijnhuis was groter dan Joost had gedacht. Het was een gigantisch gebouw. Joost ging op het paard naar binnen. Hij kwam in een hal terecht, en stapte toen van het paard af. Hij liep door de hal en keek naar de muren waaraan schilderijen hingen. Hij ging door een deur en kwam weer in een hal. Aan de muur hing een schilderij van de blanke indiaan op het wijnpaard. Joost had de teugels vast van het wijnpaard. Hij keek naar de andere muur en schrok. Er hing een soort monument met tekst. Er stond op : "Het wijnhuis voor waaghalzen. Het wijnpaard hebben ze getemt, maar hebben zij zichzelf getemt. Oh waakt u toch voor de spiegelbeelden die spoken in dit huis."

Joost slikte even. Hij keek nog eens goed naar de blanke indiaan. De jongen leek verdacht veel op hemzelf. Toen kreeg Joost de schrik van zijn leven. De blanke indiaan draaide plotseling zijn hoofd en keek naar hem terwijl zijn mond bewoog. Joost sprong achteruit. "Heb je mij geroepen ?" vroeg de blanke indiaan.

"Wie ben je ?" vroeg Joost.

"Jouw spiegelbeeld," zei de blanke indiaan.

"Hoe is dat gekomen ?" vroeg Joost.

"De wijn, mijn jongen," sprak de blanke indiaan op het schilderij. "De Bibelebonse wijn."

"Maar die heb ik nog nooit gedronken," zei Joost.

"Ik ben jouw toekomst," sprak de blanke indiaan.

"En Ekolijn dan ?" vroeg Joost, "Heeft hij weleens van de Bibelebonse wijn gedronken ? Hij zei eerst van wel, en toen weer niet. Maar ja, ik weet ook dat hij spiegelbeelden heeft."

"Precies," zei de blanke indiaan. "Alles loopt hier door elkaar heen. Natuurlijk heeft hij van de Bibelebonse wijn gedronken, en daardoor zijn zijn spiegelbeelden ontstaan."

"Hij had het ook over een wijnverslaafde, die de bovenwereld zou hebben gemaakt of gedroomd," zei Joost.

"Ja," sprak de blanke indiaan. "Dat is één van zijn spiegelbeelden."

"Vandaar dat hij er niet over wilde praten," zei Joost.

De blanke indiaan knikte. "Het ligt nogal gevoelig."

"Heb ik nog meer spiegelbeelden ?" vroeg Joost.

"Genoeg," sprak de blanke indiaan. "De hele gang hangt vol met jouw spiegelbeelden, maar zij zijn bewakers van de wijn."

Joost liep verder door in de hal, en kreeg weer de schrik van zijn leven. Hij zag een schilderij met een man met een stierenvechters pak en een lang dun zwaard. : "Zeg me dat je mijn spiegelbeeld niet bent," sprak Joost. De man had een baard. Hij richtte het lange dunne zwaard op Joost. "Halt," zei de man. "Zei je daar spiegelbeeld ? Ik ben inderdaad een spiegelbeeld. Ik voer oorlog tegen de wijnverslaafden en hen die onbevoegd de wijn willen stelen. Geen stap verder."

"Ik ben op zoek naar de Bibelebonse wijn," sprak Joost, "naar het wijnzaad. Ik heb het nodig voor in mijn land."

"Dat zeggen ze allemaal," zei de stierenvechter. "Ik ben jouw toekomst, jouw dolle toekomst. Ik ben doller dan de stier, en doller dan het wijnpaard ooit is geweest."

"Als jij mijn spiegelbeeld bent van de toekomst, waarom help je me dan niet ?" vroeg Joost.

"Waarom zou ik dat doen ?" vroeg de stierenvechter op het schilderij. "Ik bewijs je een dienst. Die wijn is gevaarlijk. Als je er teveel van neemt dan ga je vreemd dromen, en kom je op de verkeerde plaatsen met alle gevolgen ervan."

"Hoe kan ik de wijn dan de baas ?" vroeg Joost.

"Alleen als je wordt zoals mij," sprak de stierenvechter. "Doller dan de wijn, doller dan de stier, en doller dan het wijnpaard ooit is geweest."

"Waar is dat goed voor ?" vroeg Joost.

De stierenvechter begon geïrriteerd te worden. "Om de Bibelebonse wijn de baas te blijven !" brulde hij. "Anders komt er een overstroming."

"Hoe word ik als jou ?" vroeg Joost.

"Door te lezen, veel te lezen," sprak de stierenvechter.

"Welke boeken ?" vroeg Joost.

"Ik heb geen zin om dat uit te leggen," zei de stierenvechter.

Joost liep door. Hij was er klaar mee.

"De wijn is te gevaarlijk !" riep de stierenvechter nog. Verderop in de hal zag hij een ander schilderij. Het was een schilderij van ijsvlaktes. Weer ging hij door een deur. Hij had nog steeds de teugels vast van het wijnpaard. Achter deze deur was een boekenkamer. Achter een bureau zat de stierenvechter. "Dat schilderij in de hal is zeker uw spiegelbeeld," zei Joost.

De man keek op, en knikte. "Ja, en ik ben jouw spiegelbeeld van de toekomst. Die op het schilderij is niet zo'n beste. Niet erg behulpzaam," sprak de man.

"Dat had ik gemerkt," zei Joost. "Wat voor soort boeken moet ik lezen om als u te worden ?"

"Kijk maar," zei de man, en gaf hem een boek. Joost bladerde door het boek. Op elke bladzijde stond een spiegelbeeld op een schilderij. "Je moet veel leren over de spiegelbeelden," sprak de stierenvechter.

"En moet ik daadwerkelijk doller worden dan een stier ?" vroeg Joost.

"Oh ja," zei de stierenvechter, "doller worden dan de wijn. De wijn is als een dolle stier. Als je niet doller wordt dan de wijn, dan zal het je verzuipen. De wijn is het dolste van allemaal."

"Ook doller dan u ?" vroeg Joost.

"Oh ja," zei de stierenvechter, "veel doller dan ik. Ik ben de wijn nog nooit de baas geworden. Ik heb ook nog nooit van de wijn gedronken. Daarom ben ik hier."

"Maar de stierenvechter op het schilderij beweerde dat hij doller was dan de wijn en de stier," sprak Joost.

"Hij kletst," sprak de stierenvechter. "Hij is niet voor niets op het schilderij. En opgeruimd staat netjes."

"En de blanke indiaan dan ?" vroeg Joost. "Heeft hij van de wijn gedronken ?"

"Voor zover ik weet ja," sprak de stierenvechter. "Hij en de wijnverslaafde."

"De blanke indiaan had weer andere verhalen," sprak Joost. "Alles wat ik wil is wat wijnzaad zodat ik er wat van in mijn land kan zaaien."

De stierenvechter wees op een deur achter hem. "Ga die gang op, en dan kom je vanzelf in de arena van de Bibelebonse wijn terecht. Het is dus een stier, en de stier is flink dol. Succes," sprak de stierenvechter.

Joost ging met het paard de gang op, en liep helemaal door tot hij in een open ruimte kwam. Hij had nog wat Bibelebonse pannekoeken meegenomen, dus hij dacht dat hij kon proberen de stier hiermee te temmen. Plotseling renden er allemaal clowns langs hem heen. "De stier komt, de stier komt !" riepen ze. Joost greep een pannekoek, en ging voor de veiligheid op het paard zitten. Er kwam een hele rustige stier op Joost af, en voor de zekerheid gooide Joost een pannekoek op de stier af, maar de stier negeerde het gewoon. Bij het paard aangekomen werd de stier ineens woest, en drukte zijn horens in de huid van het paard. Het paard trapte de stier van hem af, maar het paard was niet meer dezelfde als vroeger. Al gauw stortte het paard neer, en Joost moest maken dat hij wegkwam. De clowns probeerden de woeste stier af te leiden. Joost rende en rende. Toen viel hij en er was niets anders dan een stofhoop om hem heen. Hij keek op en zag de blanke indiaan op zijn rode paard voor hem staan. "Help," kreunde Joost. Toen stormde de blanke indiaan op zijn paard op de stier af. Er waren niets dan stofwolken. Joost kon bijna niets zien. Tot zijn grote schrik zag hij toen ook de blanke indiaan met het paard vallen. De woeste stier kwam toen weer achter Joost aan. Joost rende en rende, en zag de clowns ook niet meer. Weer nam Joost een pannekoek, en hield het in zijn hand, maar dat maakte de stier alleen maar woester. "Doller worden dan de stier," dacht Joost bij zichzelf. Plotseling draaide hij zich naar de stier, en brulde als een leeuw. "Doller worden dan de stier," zei hij tegen zichzelf, en brulde weer. Maar de stier nam hem op de horens. Joost sprong op de rug van de stier, maar werd er met dezelfde vaart weer afgeslingerd. Weer nam de stier hem op de horens,

en smeet hem weer een eind weg. Plotseling zag hij Ekolijn als de bliksem rondrennen. Ekolijn maakte cirkeltjes om de stier heen, die daar helemaal van in de war raakte, en toen kwam Ekolijn naar Joost toe, nam hem op, en snelde weg met Joost. Ekolijn bracht hem naar een tunnel en zette hem daar neer. "Hoe ben je hier gekomen ?" vroeg Joost buiten adem. Ekolijn zei niets. Na een paar minuten antwoordde Ekolijn : "Door een wijnverslaving."

"Jij bent de wijnverslaafde ?" vroeg Joost. "Ekolijn's spiegelbeeld ?"

Ekolijn knikte. Joost zuchtte. "Een geluk bij een ongeluk dan. Ik vraag me af hoe ik dat beest ooit kan temmen."

"Ik moet weer gaan," zei Ekolijn, en snelde weer weg.

Joost dacht na. Hij moest en zou de oplossing vinden. Hij klaagde een beetje over wat er was gebeurd. Hij liep dieper de tunnel in en kwam daar een kabouter tegen. Ook tegen de kabouter begon Joost te klagen over dit land. "Zwijgen nu," sprak de kabouter na een tijdje. "Zwijg ! Dit land is onder een zware betovering. Laat je er niet zo in mee sleuren. Soms is het beter je mond dicht te houden, om even een stap achteruit te nemen en het zichzelf te laten herstellen. Dat kan niet altijd door het vele praten." Even moest Joost terugdenken aan de kabouter van het pannekoeken-restaurant. Hij vroeg zich af hoe iemand zo onbeschoft kon doen tegen een koning, maar hij wist wel dat de kabouter gelijk had. Boos liep de kabouter weg. Joost riep hem nog na, maar dat hielp niet. Joost ging nog dieper de tunnel in. Er lag daar een grote steen waarop geschreven stond : "Kent gij de wijn van Ekolijn ? Dat grote geheim ? Hebt gij de Bibelebonse wijn zien springen als een dolle stier ? Wat een wijn, wat een wijn, het is slechts een spiegelbeeld van Ekolijn."

Joost keek op en dacht na. "Dus Ekolijn is de wijn zelf ? Ekolijn was ook die dolle stier ? Wat ben ik toch in een vreemd land terechtgekomen." Hij ging nog dieper de tunnel in. Het werd hier donkerder, en de tunnel liep in een bocht. "Die wijn is vreemd en gevaarlijk," dacht Joost bij zichzelf. "Het brengt de meest vreemde spiegelbeelden. En het bovenland is dan ook zo'n spiegelbeeld, een droom van Ekolijn ? Wat een nachtmerrie."

Weer zag hij een grote, lichtende steen tegen de wand van de tunnel aanliggen, tegen de muur. Er stond in een vreemd handschrift op geschreven : "Oh ridder, gij bent dichter bij het geheim van de Bibelebonse wijn gekomen. Het is de raadselwijn .... Als gij het drinkt dan ...." en verder waren de letters weggevaagd. Joost liep verder. Hij werd steeds nieuwsgieriger. Daar lag weer een steen, een wat kleinere. Ook daar stonden letters op, maar hij kon het niet lezen. Het waren vreemde tekens. Er was hier en daar wat verlichting in de tunnel. Het was heel zacht, dromerig licht. De tunnel liep over in een gang, waar weer schilderijen aan de muren hingen. Het waren vaak schilderijen met jachttafereeltjes. In de verte hoorde hij neuriën, en toen een liedje. Het was de stem van Ekolijn. Ekolijn liep in de verte op hem af. "Ben je daar eindelijk, jongen ?" sprak Ekolijn. "Ik heb lang op je gewacht. Dit land is onder zware betovering van de Bibelebonse wijn. Alles wordt afgesplitst en gaat een leven op zichzelf leiden."

"Inderdaad," zei Joost. "Dat is me nu wel zo klaar als een klontje."

Ekolijn begon te lachen. "Zo klaar als een klontje, ha ha." Ekolijn begon steeds harder te lachen, en telkens zei hij "Zo klaar als een klontje."

"Kom mee," zei Ekolijn na een tijdje. Hij had Joost bij zijn arm en liep met hem dieper de gang in. "Ken je het geheim van de Bibelebonse wijn, de wijn van Ekolijn ?" vroeg Ekolijn. Joost zei niets. "Je weet het niet, hè ?" sprak Ekolijn. "Kom, ik laat het je zien." De gang leidde tot een grote witte deur, van parelachtig wit. Ze kwamen binnen in een zaal waar duizenden stoelen waren van rood

fluweel, en daarachter was een podium. "Hier spreekt de wijn," sprak Ekolijn. "Het is mijn spiegelbeeld." Joost keek verbaasd in het rond. Er was verder niemand. "Wie komen hier ?" vroeg Joost.

"Jij bent de eerste," sprak Ekolijn. "Neem een stoel."

Joost ging helemaal vooraan zitten, dichtbij het podium. Een mannetje geheel in het rood kwam binnen vanuit een deur achter het podium. "Daar heb je hem," zei Ekolijn, die naast Joost was gaan zitten. "Mijn spiegelbeeld."

"Ik hoop beter dan die dolle stier," fluisterde Joost naar Ekolijn. Ekolijn moest lachen.

"Welkom aanwezigen," sprak het rode mannetje op het podium. "Het zijn er maar twee !" riep Ekolijn.

"Ik heet u hartelijk welkom," sprak het rode mannetje. Even werd het duizelig voor Joost zijn ogen. Hij begon dubbel te zien, en toen ineens begon alles samen te voegen. Ekolijn was nu het rode mannetje, en er stond maar één stoel waarop Joost zat, en het rode mannetje stond voor hem. Ekolijn had gewoon een rood pak aan. "Ben je daar, jongen ?" sprak Ekolijn. Joost knikte verbaasd. Ekolijn legde zijn hand op de schouder van Joost. "Dit land, dit bos, is zwaar betoverd."

"Ik weet het," zei Joost. In zijn andere hand had Ekolijn een beker, en die zat vol met de Bibelebonse wijn. "Drink maar, jongen," sprak Ekolijn, terwijl hij de beker gaf. Joost begon te drinken. Eerst haastig, maar toen langzamer. De vloer begon te worden als water, als golvend water, en Joost begon er in weg te zakken. "Help," zei Joost.

"Laat het maar over je heen komen," sprak Ekolijn. Joost gleed in een diepe put naar beneden. Hij had een warm gevoel van binnen. "Het is de wijn," sprak Ekolijn. "De wijn spreekt." Joost gleed dieper en dieper en viel in een diepe slaap. Na een lange tijd werd hij wakker in een bed. Ekolijn zat naast hem op een stoel. "Hoe was de Bibelebonse wijn ?" vroeg Ekolijn.

"Het lijkt wel alsof ik eeuwen heb geslapen," sprak Joost. "Waar zijn we ?"

"Ik wil eerst iets van je weten," sprak Ekolijn. "Heb je iets gezien terwijl je sliep ?"

"Alles was rustig," zei Joost.

"Goed," zei Ekolijn. "We zijn hier in een plaats onder het wijnbos. Hier groeit het wijnzaad, in de struiken. Ik ben een struik, mijn jongen."

"Je bent heel wat," zei Joost.

"Ja," gniffelde Ekolijn. "Ik heb zoveel spiegelbeelden door de Bibelebonse wijn."

"Je kan er een winkel van maken," zei Joost.

"Ik ben niet te koop," zei Ekolijn, "maar wel te leren kennen."

"Als op een school," zei Joost.

Ekolijn knikte. "Een natuurschool."

Joost keek naar Ekolijn. Ekolijn had zoveel laagjes, en die leken allemaal te draaien om zijn clownsneusje. Ekolijn was als de regenboog van het bos, als een natuurverschijnsel die alle realiteiten maakte door spiegelbeelden, door de Bibelebonse wijn. Ja, Ekolijn was de Bibelebonse wijn. Het was een raadsel om zo hogerop in de natuurschool te komen. Joost wist dat zijn land dit nodig had. Als Joost naar Ekolijn keek dan zag hij de golven van de zee, in zoveel laagjes. Het maakte hem warm van binnen. Het was de diepte van de natuur, wat de natuur verborgen hield voor hen die net zoals Joost op zoek waren naar de oplossing. Dat was geen makkelijke opgave.

"Joost," zei Ekolijn. "Hier in dit land onder het wijnbos is ook een spiegelbeeld van jouw land, waar ze allen van de Bibelebonse wijn drinken en in vrede met elkaar leven. Alleen de wijnverslaafden zijn een groot probleem. De vraatzucht bestaat daar niet meer, maar de drinkzucht, hè, de drinkzucht ... Grote dronkelappen lopen daar op straat."

"Wat doen ze ?" vroeg Joost.

"Ach, ze zien de dingen niet helder," sprak Ekolijn. "Ze draaien alles om, en dat kan weleens problemen geven, vooral als ze in hoge functies komen. Ze dromen hun dromen, en maken alles kapot, en spelen dan de grote redder. Het is hoe ze handel drijven, hoe ze hun producten verkopen. Eerst maken ze het probleem, en dan bieden ze het medicijn."

"Maar dat is verschrikkelijk," sprak Joost. "Ja, dat kun je wel zeggen," zei Ekolijn. "Het is nog wel erger dan de vraatzucht, als je het mij vraagt."

"Dus het is een soort valse vrede ?" vroeg Joost.

Ekolijn knikte.

"Wat kunnen we daaraan doen ?" vroeg Joost. "Ze moeten dan leren het wijnpaard te berijden, om hun wijnverslaving te doen verdwijnen."

"Nee," zei Ekolijn. "Er is iets veel ergers dan het wijnpaard en de dolle stier."

Joost keek Ekolijn aan. "Iets nog ergers ?" vroeg Joost.

Ekolijn knikte. "De wijnzee is het probleem," sprak Ekolijn. "Die overstroomt vaak, en als we die niet bedwingen, dan gaan we er allemaal aan. Als dat zo door gaat zal het alles opslokken."

"Zouden dijken helpen ?" vroeg Joost. Ekolijn begon te lachen. "Dijken ? Daar breekt de wijnzee zo door heen. Het is een allesverwoestende zee. Het komt overal doorheen en overheen."

"Wie heeft die wijnzee dan gemaakt ?" vroeg Joost.

"Wat denk je ?" vroeg Ekolijn. "Ik."

"Maar waarom dan ?" vroeg Joost.

"Tja," zei Ekolijn. "Moet je luisteren, lieve jongen. Ik heb nogal veel geheimen, grote geheimen, en ik had de wijnzee als wachter aangesteld, maar het liep nogal uit de hand, begrijp je ?"

Joost keek Ekolijn met grote ogen aan.

"Wat nu ?" vroeg Joost.

"De wijnzee wordt elke dag woester," zei Ekolijn.

"Kunnen we dan niet beter naar boven gaan ?" vroeg Joost.

"Welnee joh," sprak Ekolijn. "Je moet het raadsel oplossen. De wijnzee zal ons overal vinden, en ons meesleuren waar dan ook. Je kunt er niet voor wegvhollen."

"Ik begrijp het," sprak Joost. "Die Bibelebonse wijn is dus ook een complete ramp. En ik maar denken dat het mijn land zou kunnen helpen."

Er werd op de deur van de slaapkamer geklopt. "Het is de zee," sprak Ekolijn kalm. "Hij doet nu nog beleefd." Ineens werd de deur opengeslagen, en Joost keek recht in een rode zee, die wild leek, maar toch nog tamelijk kalm, als ingehouden woede.

"Zaken doen ?" sprak de zee.

"Wat wil je ?" vroeg Ekolijn.

"Ik wil Joost," sprak de zee.

"Ach wijnzee, wat moet je toch met hem ?" vroeg Ekolijn.

"Gaat je niks aan, Ekolijn," sprak de wijnzee, en greep door een golf naar Joost. Joost trok direct de dekens over hem heen.

"Blijf van hem af !" riep Ekolijn, "Maak dat je wegkomt."

Maar de zee gaf Ekolijn een klap. "Ik wil hem nu !" bulderde de zee.

"Wat moet ik doen ?" riep Joost.

"Je kunt niets doen," zei Ekolijn.

Plotseling greep een golf het hele bed van Joost, en trok hem de zee in. Het was een ondergrondse zee, helemaal rood, van wijn. Het was de Bibelebonse wijnzee. Met een loeivaart sleurde de golf het bed van Joost mee. Joost zat rechtop in zijn bed.

Toen sloeg de golf het bed kapot tegen de rotsen, terwijl Joost bewusteloos op het zand viel. Een meisje met een rieten rokje kwam naar Joost toe, en bood hem wat te drinken aan. Na een tijdje kwam Joost bij, terwijl ze het weer aanbood. "Ik drink hier niets meer," sprak Joost woest. Hij voelde zich zwak en gebroken, en erg boos. Het meisje nam zijn hand. "Waar ben ik ?" vroeg Joost.

"Op het wijn eiland," sprak het meisje. De zee was inmiddels rustiger geworden. "Waarom ben ik hier ?" vroeg Joost.

"De zee riep je," sprak het meisje. "Hij wilde je het wijn eiland laten zien."

"En dat moest door mij tegen de rotsen aan te slingeren ?" vroeg Joost. "Er waren geen andere mogelijkheden ?"

"Je was onder een zware betovering," sprak het meisje. "Je moest wel."

"Zo behandel je geen koning," zei Joost.

"Het was een vergissing," sprak het meisje.

"Wat was een vergissing ?" vroeg Joost. "Dat geslinger tegen de rotsen, of dat ik een koning ben ?"

Het meisje zei niets. "Sorry," zei ze na een tijdje.

"Vreemd hoor," zei Joost. "Zo ga je niet met mensen om."

"Je vergeet de spiegelbeelden," sprak het meisje. "Je vergeet de ernst van de betoveringen."

"Het is goed met jullie," zei Joost boos. "Zo kan ik het ook. Bij iemand het pulp eruit slaan en dan zeggen : "Ja, sorry, maar je was onder een zware betovering." Bij ons in het land ga je daarvoor de bak in. Linea recta."

"Mijnheer, u begrijpt het helemaal verkeerd," sprak het meisje. Ze wiegde een beetje met haar heupen voor hem. "Het was een vergissing."

"Hoezo een vergissing ?" vroeg Joost brutaal. "En kun je stoppen met dat gedans voor mijn ogen ? Ik lig hier half bewusteloos en jij maakt er een dansje bij. Dat is toch onbeschoft ? Vooral naar een koning."

"Ik dans helemaal niet," sprak het meisje koud. "U bent nog steeds onder de invloed van de Bibelebonse wijn."

"Dus ik kan mijn eigen ogen niet meer geloven ?" vroeg Joost. "Vreemd, hoor."

Naar zijn gevoel stond zij nog steeds heupwiegend voor hem, maar ze had hem ook in twijfel gebracht. Ze hielp hem op te staan en bracht hem naar een hut achter het strandje. Er stond daar een fles Bibelebonse wijn op een tafeltje.

"Nooit teveel er van drinken," sprak het meisje. "Geniet van de zee."

"Genieten van de zee die mij tegen de rotsen slingerde ?" vroeg Joost. "Dat is zeker een grapje."

"U was onder een zware betovering," sprak het meisje. "De zee heeft niks gedaan."

"En nu ook nog alles goed gaan lopen praten !" bulderde Joost. "Ik zal het woord niet zeggen, maar ik heb nu hele erge zin om te gaan schelden."

"Het is jouw beleving, omdat je onder een zware betovering was," sprak het meisje. "Zelfs een veertje die je zou strelen zou hard bij je aankomen."

"Ik begrijp het," zei Joost.

"De zee maakte alleen contact, en jij reageerde zo heftig," sprak het meisje. "En dan geef je anderen de schuld. Dat is typisch een wijnverslaving."

"Ik ben helemaal niet verslaafd aan de wijn !" bulderde Joost.

"De wijn zit in je bloed," sprak het meisje. "Vanaf je geboorte al. Je bent dronken geboren."

"Nu niet beledigend gaan doen," sprak Joost. "Je hebt het wel tegen de koning toevallig."

"Het is de waarheid, mijnheer," sprak het meisje. "Ekolijn was altijd je vriend. Het heeft altijd in je bloed gezeten."

"Ik ben van een tovenaarsgeslacht," zei Joost.

"Zie," zei het meisje. "Ik weet meer dan jij denkt."

"Wat doe ik eraan ?" vroeg Joost.

"Je moet de geheimen van de wijnzee leren kennen," sprak het meisje. "Zwem erin, geniet ervan, laat je onderwijzen over zijn natuurgeheimen, en drink er minder van."

"Kom," zei ze, en rende over het strandje de zee in. De zee was helemaal rood. Joost volgde haar, en stapte ook voorzichtig in de zee. De golven waren prachtig, fonkelend rood, met vele laagjes, als de regenboog op de toppen. Hij kon dwars door de zee heenkijken. De zee was lekker warm, en hij voelde zich weer helemaal warm van binnen worden. Het was een prachtige, rijke natuur, die zijn ziel leek binnen te vloeien. Zou hij echt teveel gedronken hebben, en zelfs dronken zijn geboren ? Zou het meisje toch gelijk hebben ? Ze spatte wat water naar hem toe, en dook toen in de golven. Joost dook haar achteraan. Hij voelde zich veel beter nu, alsof de zee hem genas.

Onderwater konden ze gewoon ademen, en het meisje liet hem van alles onder water zien. Hier groeiden ook wijnstruiken en wijnplanten, en er waren geheime grotten. De prachtigste edelstenen waren er te vinden onderwater in de grotten. Joost keek zijn ogen uit. Hij voelde iets bruisen in zijn hoofd. Hij besefte dat de Bibelebonse wijn eigenlijk voor hele andere dingen bestemd was dan het drinken ervan. Het meisje overtuigde hem hiervan. Ze konden gewoon met elkaar praten onder water. Toen zag Joost iets waarvan zijn hart bijna stilstond. Het was een wijnklok, als van parelachtige, doorzichtige stenen gemaakt. Hier leek de zee vanuit te stromen en ook weer in terug te gaan. Het meisje hield de klok in haar handen, en zei dat er nog wel meerdere klokken waren. Toen Joost de klok vasthield leek het alsof hij de wijnzee van binnen voelde stromen, op en neer, van links naar rechts. Het begon in hem te cirkelen en te draaien. Plotseling had hij een prachtige droom, zomaar onderwater. Hij zag hem en het meisje in een kamer, en er hingen klokken aan de muren, en er stond daar een man met een lange baard. Joost hield de handen van het meisje vast. De man was de klokkenmaker van de wijnzee. Joost voelde toen niets dan geluk door hem heenstromen. Hij zag alle laagjes van zijn leven vanuit de klokken stromen. Ze begonnen te vermengen door de wijnzee. Toen gleed de droom weer langzaam van hem weg. "Ik heb gedroomd !" riep Joost.

"Het zijn de droomvissen !" riep het meisje. "Zij brengen dromen !"

"Oh !" riep Joost, en zwom weer naar haar toe. Het leek wel alsof hij een eindje was meegetrokken met de droomvis. De droomvissen waren bijna één met de wijnzee. Ze waren nauwelijks zichtbaar. Ze waren als de wijn zelf, als de golven, en konden zomaar iemand overweldigen. "Leef je hier alleen ?" vroeg Joost. Het meisje antwoordde niet. "Ik heb genoeg aan de spiegelbeelden," zei ze even later. Toen gaf ze hem een zoen op zijn wang.

Joost schrok wakker in het Bibelebonse pannekoeken-restaurant. Alles, maar dan ook alles, was maar een droom geweest. Hij staarde naar de Bibelebonse pannekoek op zijn bord. De pannekoek had geen oogjes en ook geen mond. Ook had de pannekoek geen armpjes en beentjes. "Hoe smaakt

het, koning ?" vroeg de kabouter met de koksmuts op die aan zijn tafeltje stond.

"Ik viel ervan in slaap en had een vreemde droom," sprak Joost.
"Dat moet de Bibelebonse wijn zijn geweest die hier door het deeg wordt gemengd, koning," sprak de kabouter.

"Vreemd," sprak Joost. "Ik vraag me af wat er dan allemaal van waar is geweest als het maar een droom was."

"De Bibelebonse wijn spreekt, koning," sprak de kabouter. "Dat weten we allemaal."

"Dan weet ik het nu ook," zei Joost. "Mij werd niks verteld."

Joost at de rest van de pannekoek op, en vertrok toen. Hij wilde weten wat er waar was van zijn droom. Het kwam natuurlijk door de toverwijn, dus Joost dacht dat het wel een bedoeling moest hebben allemaal. Joost ging het bos in, op zoek naar het ravijn waardoor hij in het avontuur kwam en Ekolijn ontmoette. Maar hoe hij ook zocht, hij vond het niet. "Zou het dan toch allemaal maar een droom zijn geweest ?" vroeg Joost zich af. Joost strompelde door het bos. Hij was erg moe geworden van het vele zoeken. Na een tijdje viel hij in slaap. Door luid gekras van vogels werd hij even later wakker en zette zijn zoektocht voort. Hij moest en zou het vinden. "Bibelebonse wijn, wat een onzin," bromde Joost. Toch miste hij ook Ekolijn, en het meisje van het wijneiland. Het begon aan hem te knagen, en na lange tijd begon hij Ekolijn te roepen. Weer hoorde hij gekras van vogels. Ekolijn was verder in geen velden of wegen te bekennen. Toch dacht hij dat hij wat herkende waar hij nu liep. Hier moest toch ergens dat ravijn zijn.

"Hola," zei een stem die op die van Ekolijn leek. Joost keek recht in het gezicht van het mannetje. "Ben je daar eindelijk ?" sprak Ekolijn.

"Ik heb je lopen zoeken," zei Joost.

"Kom mee," zei Ekolijn.

"Hoe kan dat nou ?" vroeg Joost. "Ik werd wakker in het pannekoeken-restaurant van een droom nadat ik van een pannekoek had gegeten. Ze zeiden dat ik had gedroomd door de Bibelebonse wijn die door het deeg was gemengd."

Ekolijn lachte. "Het was geen droom," sprak Ekolijn, "maar de betovering maakte weer spiegelbeelden, en dan loopt alles door elkaar heen. Dan lijkt het dat je terug naar af gaat, maar gelukkig ben je weer terug."

"Ja, maar alles was rustig in mijn land," sprak Joost, "alsof er nooit wat was gebeurd."

"Ik zei het je toch dat jouw land hier in vrede leeft door de Bibelebonse wijn," sprak Ekolijn. "Dit is een spiegelbeeld onder het wijnbos, waar de Bibelebonse wijn je bracht."

"Maar bracht de Bibelebonse wijn geen toverdromen ?" vroeg Joost.

"Nee," zei Ekolijn. "We zeggen dat weleens, maar het zijn gewoon spiegelbeelden. De wijn is een spiegeldrank, een drank van raadselen. De wijnzee nam je mee, en dan weet je het wel."

"Wie was dat meisje op het wijneiland ?" vroeg Joost.

"Shhh..." sprak Ekolijn fluisterend. "Spreek daar niet over."

"Waarom niet ?" vroeg Joost.

"Shhhhhh..." fluisterde Ekolijn harder.

Joost schrok wakker in de wijnzee en zag het meisje lachend voor hem. "Weer gedroomd," zei Joost.

"De droomvissen moeten je wel hebben vandaag," sprak het meisje met een glimlach.

"Laten we uit het water gaan," zei Joost een beetje benauwd. "Ik begin gek te worden van die droomvissen. Ik vraag me af wat erger is : droomvissen of pyranha's ?"

Het meisje lachte. "Wat als je nu de zee uitgaat, denk je dat dan alles afgelopen is ? Wat als dat ook weer een droom is van de droomvissen ?"

"Zo kunnen we wel aan de gang blijven," bromde Joost.

Samen zwommen ze terug, en gingen het strandje op. Helemaal nat kwamen ze aan bij de hut. "Toch ben ik blij dat ik hier ben," sprak Joost, "maar wat als ik straks weer wakker wordt boven mijn pannekoek in het Bibelebonse pannekoek-restaurant ?"

"Dan is het een goede pannekoek geweest," glimlachte het meisje terwijl ze haar tong uitstak.

"Het zou een drama zijn," sprak Joost, "want dan zou ik je weer enorm gaan missen, en deze prachtige natuur hier."

"En dan zou je snel weerkomen voor een nieuwe pannekoek," glimlachte het meisje die weer haar tong een beetje uitstak. "Dat is de bedoeling ervan. Ze weten precies hoe ze hun pannekoeken moeten verkopen."

"Maar wat als ik dan hele andere dromen krijg, en je nooit meer terugzie, dat ik nooit meer over je droom, en over de prachtige natuur hier van het wijneiland ?" vroeg Joost. "Ik zou er erg moe van worden. Telkens maar weer Bibelebonse pannekoeken eten in de hoop over je te dromen, en dan telkens weer wakker te worden zonder jou. Dat lijkt me een grote nachtmerrie. Ik zou er depressief van kunnen worden, of nog erger. Ik zou het leven niet meer zien zitten."

"Maar daar zou je ook weer van wakker worden," glimlachte het meisje. "Die droomvissen blijven niet voor altijd aan je vastkleven, en dan ben je weer wakker, en besef je dat je nog steeds hier bent."

"Noem ze gerust nachtmerrie-vissen dan," zei Joost.

"De vissen zijn belhamels, dat is een feit," zei het meisje.

"Waarom gaan we de zee dan nog in als ze zo zijn ?" vroeg Joost.

Het meisje keek Joost diep aan met haar donkere ogen. Even zei ze niks en bleef maar in Joost z'n ogen kijken. "Luister," zei ze toen. "Je moet ze leren kennen. Ze zijn het geheim van de wijnzee en van dit eiland."

"Ik heb het vermoeden dat dit dan ook een droom van zo'n droomvis is," sprak Joost. "Een mooie droom, maar waar loopt het op uit ? Het kunnen plaaggeesten zijn."

Het meisje stak weer glimlachend haar tong uit. "Tot nu toe is alles nog goed gegaan," sprak het meisje. Joost was bang om weer wakker te worden. Hij wilde dit niet verliezen.

"Leidt me tot het geheim van de Bibelebonse wijn," smeekte hij het meisje. "Ik kan er niet zonder leven. Ik wil niets anders meer."

"Je spreekt als een wijnverslaafde," sprak het meisje glimlachend, alsof ze hem uitlachte.

"Ik drink het toch niet ?" zei Joost. "Ik weet nu dat ik het moet leren kennen, erin moet zwemmen, in plaats van drinken. Dat heb ik van jou geleerd."

"Goedzo," sprak het meisje.

Hoofdstuk 3. De Rijder op het Slaap Paard

Joost keek in de donkere ogen van het meisje, en voelde zich toen wegvagen. Hij lag in het zand van de arena van de dolle stier. Blijkbaar had de stier hem zo hard geraakt dat hij bewusteloos was geraakt en ging hallucineren of dromen. Joost probeerde op te staan, maar het lukte hem niet. Hij zag de stier op een afstand naar hem kijken, en hij zag ook Ekolijn. "Niks zeggen !" riep Ekolijn. "Dit spiegelbeeld wordt opgewekt als je spreekt."

Joost lag doodstil en durfde niks te zeggen. "Ook niet bewegen !" riep Ekolijn. "Het wordt dol als je je beweegt !" Zowel de stier als Ekolijn kwamen dichterbij. Joost durfde niet eens adem te halen. Joost keek naar de stier en naar Ekolijn. Ze kwamen steeds dichter bij hem, en dichter bij elkaar, totdat Joost zag dat ze vermengd werden, en toen was het alleen nog Ekolijn. Ekolijn legde zijn hand op Joost z'n schouder. "Nu kun je weer spreken en bewegen," sprak Ekolijn, terwijl hij Joost optrok. "Waar is de stier nu ?" vroeg Joost.

"Gewoon oppassen met spreken en bewegen," zei Ekolijn. "Dit is een zwaar betoverd land. Soms moet je stil zijn." Joost knikte. Hij snapte dat de wijnverslaving gelijk opliep met de spreekverslaving en de beweegverslaving. Alles moest met een zekere mate gebeuren, met een zekere timing en met een duidelijke grens. Toch herinnerde hij zich ook de woorden van de stierenvechters. "Maar de stierenvechters zeiden dat ik doller moest worden dan de stier," sprak Joost.

"Op sommige momenten," sprak Ekolijn. "Ook met mate, en in de juiste balans. Het gaat om zelfbeheersing. De dolle stier is niets anders dan een spiegelbeeld van je eigen onbeheerstheid."

"Ik durf het bijna niet te vragen," sprak Joost, "maar ben ik weer gegrepen door zo'n droomvis waar ik later weer van wakker wordt, of had de dolle stier me gewoon goed te pakken gehad zodat ik over het wijn eiland en de droom vissen hallucineerde of droomde, of wordt ik straks weer gewoon

wakker in het pannekoeken-restaurant. Me dunkt het is nogal een mysterie."

"Eén ding is zeker," sprak Ekolijn. "Het is de Bibelebonse wijn. Alles loopt door elkaar heen. Dit land is flink betoverd."

"Eén ding is zeker dat ik langzaam gek van die Bibelebonse wijn wordt," sprak Joost.

"Maar je hebt al wel heel wat geleerd," sprak Ekolijn.

"Dat is waar," zei Joost. "En het lijkt erop alsof het de enige weg is, anders blijft het me plagen, en mijn hele land."

"Zo is het," zei Ekolijn. "Het is de diepte van de natuur, en onwetendheid is de grootste plaag."

Joost knikte.

"Kom, ik zal je nog wat laten zien," sprak Ekolijn, en nam Joost aan zijn arm mee naar een andere tunnel aan de zijkant van de arena van de dolle stier. De tunnel liep uit op een gang, waar weer schilderijen hingen. Tot Joost z'n grote vreugde waren hier schilderijen van het wijneiland en van het meisje. Ook waren er schilderijen van de droomvissen, die op de schilderijen beter te zien waren. Ze gaven een blauwachtige energie af. "Prachtig," zei Joost, "ook al zijn het nachtmerrie-vissen."

"Het zijn pyranha's," zei Ekolijn, "maar dan subtieler. Ze spelen mentale spelletjes."

"Kijk eens naar het meisje," zei Ekolijn.

Joost keek naar het schilderij en kwam dichterbij. Hij legde zijn vinger op het schilderij, gewoon om even contact te maken. Op het schilderij had het meisje ook haar rieten rokje aan. In haar hand had ze een fles Bibelebonse wijn.

"Raakte je aan dit leven verslaafd, zo tropisch aan het strand ?" vroeg Ekolijn.

"Bijna wel," zei Joost.

"En werd je bang dat je het ooit weer zou kunnen verliezen ?" vroeg Ekolijn.

"Ja," knikte Joost. "Ik was ontzettend bang."

"Je was verslaafd," sprak Ekolijn, "en je was haar klant."

"Maar ik dronk niet van de Bibelebonse wijn," sprak Joost.

"Nee, maar je was er op andere manieren aan verslaafd," sprak Ekolijn.

"Ze zei dat ik als een wijnverslaafde was," zei Joost.

"Precies," zei Ekolijn.

"Ze zei ook dat ik dronken geboren was," zei Joost.

"Weet je wat het is ?" zei Ekolijn. "Je moet dit begrijpen. De reclame heeft vele truukjes. Zij maakte

reclame voor de Bibelebonse wijn op haar manier. Ja, je hebt het nodig, maar voor haar ben je slechts een klant."

Joost boog zijn hoofd. "Dat zei ze ook van het Bibelebonse pannekoeken-restaurant, dat ze precies wisten hoe ze het spul moesten verkopen," sprak Joost.

Ekolijn schudde zijn hoofd. "Die vrouw is levensgevaarlijk," zei Ekolijn. "Je moet haar leren temmen als een stierenvechter. Ze is een dolle stier die je zou kunnen opvreten met huid en haar. Je laat je het hoofd teveel dol maken."

"Bedankt voor je wijze raad," zei Joost. "Je bent een goede vriend."
"Kijk nog eens beter naar het schilderij," sprak Ekolijn. "Wat zie je ?"

Joost ging nog dichter bij het schilderij staan en bekeek het aandachtig. Hij was op zoek naar details.

"Kijk goed," zei Ekolijn.

"Ik weet het niet," zei Joost.

Ekolijn's vinger bewoog naar het meisje, en toen naar haar mond. "Wat zie je hier ?"

Plotseling opende het meisje haar mond. Joost schrok.

"Ze houdt zich stil, maar dit zijn levende schilderijen," sprak Ekolijn.

"Wat moeten jullie van me ?" sprak het meisje een beetje geïrriteerd. "Zien jullie dan niet dat ik bezig ben met de verkoop ?"

Joost was op zijn hoede nu. "Wat verkoop je ?" vroeg hij.

"Verhalen," sprak ze.

"Wat voor verhalen ?" vroeg Joost.

"Verhalen over wijn," sprak ze.

"Alleen verhalen ?" vroeg Joost.

"En dromen," sprak ze.

"Wie zijn je klanten ?" vroeg Joost.

"Ik dacht dat jij een klant was," sprak het meisje.

"Niet meer," zei Joost.

"Dan heb ik geen klanten meer," sprak het meisje.

"Zielig voor je," zei Joost.

"Kijk beter," zei Ekolijn tegen Joost.

Er stroomde vuur uit de mond van het meisje. Er kwam stoom uit haar oren. Ze begon over te koken.

"Wat betekent dit ?" vroeg Joost.

"Goed kijken," zei Ekolijn.

Ze begon nu zelf de Bibelebonse wijn op te drinken.

"Kom," zei Ekolijn, en leidde hem naar het volgende schilderij. "Ik begrijp het niet," zei Joost. Het schilderij was geheel wit. "Kijk goed," zei Ekolijn.

"Het is geheel wit," zei Joost.

"Nee," zei Ekolijn.

Joost werd met een brandende pijn in zijn kin wakker op de grond en zag het wijnpaard woest om zich heen trappen naar de mensen toe. "Ik wist het," kreunde Joost. "Het was dus toch die trap van het wijnpaard." Joost probeerde weg te kruipen, maar dat ging niet best. Ineens herinnerde hij zich wat er was gebeurd voordat dit alles gebeurde. Hij zou die dag met oom Georgius naar het Bibelebonse pannekoeken-restaurant gaan, maar eerst zou hij een ritje maken op zijn nieuwe wijnpaard. Waarschijnlijk was hij er vanaf gevallen, of kreeg hij een trap van het beest, of beiden. Het wijnpaard was woest. Na een tijdje zag Joost het paard niet meer. Het Bibelebonse pannekoeken-restaurant was dichtbij, en Joost kroop er in grote pijn naartoe. De pannekoeken-koks ontfermden zich direct over hem. "Wat is er gebeurd, koning ?" vroegen de koks.

"Ik weet het niet meer, ik weet het niet meer," jammerde Joost. "Ik weet alleen dat ik een enorme pijn in mijn kin heb."

"En u zou vandaag met uw oom hier komen heb ik begrepen," sprak één van de koks. "Waar is uw oom ?"

"Ik weet niet of ik wel zin heb in pannekoeken vandaag," sprak Joost. "Mijn kin doet teveel pijn."

"Dat zien we," zei een andere kok. "En die pijn overviel u zomaar ?"

"Ik weet het niet," zei Joost. "Ik denk dat ik niets meer weet."

"Wat heeft u vanochtend gegeten ?" vroeg de kok.

"Al slaat u me dood," gromde Joost. "Ik kan het me niet meer herinneren."

Daar kwam iemand anders binnen. "De koning is van zijn paard gevallen," sprak de persoon.
"En wie bent u ?" vroeg de kok.
"Een getuige," zei de persoon.

"Dan moet hij rust houden," zei de kok. Twee koks namen Joost mee naar een kamer dieper in het restaurant, waar ze hem op een bed legden. "Van het paard afgevallen, hè ?" werd er gezegd. "Waarschijnlijk toen op uw kin gevallen, koning."

"Ik ga nooit meer paardrijden," jammerde Joost.

Joost dacht na over Ekolijn. Hij dacht er niet over om in het bos op zoek te gaan of het allemaar echt waar was. Hij wist waar dat op uit kon lopen. Joost had rust nodig. Toch miste hij Ekolijn ook.

Toen Joost hersteld was vertelde hij overal over zijn belevenis. De mensen vonden het zo'n ingrijpend verhaal dat ze een standbeeld maakten van Joost op het wijnpaard. Het kwam op het plein van de langste winkelstraat van het land te staan. De winkelstraat was eindeloos, en niemand wist hoe dat kon. En het was al helemaal een raadsel hoe de straat gewoon in het land paste, en zelfs gewoon in de stad waarin het stond. Toen het beeld was opgericht ging Joost er een kijkje nemen. Hij was er erg van onder de indruk, en het bracht weer veel herinneringen naar boven. Een vrouw liep op hem af, die een beetje leek op het meisje van het wijneiland. Ze nodigde Joost uit om bij haar thuis te komen. Ze beweerde dat ze een huis had wat eindeloos naar achteren doorliep. Joost kon dat moeilijk geloven, maar per slot van rekening was de winkelstraat ook eindeloos. Na lang lopen kwamen ze bij haar huis aan. Ze bleven maar daarlopen naar achteren in het huis, en er kwam maar geen einde aan, dus Joost begon het meer en meer te geloven. Ook dit huis paste gewoon in de stad. "Herinnert u zich mij nog ?" vroeg de vrouw.

"U doet me wel aan iemand denken," sprak Joost.

"Zeg eens," zei de vrouw.

"Verkoopt u toevallig de Bibelebonse wijn ?" vroeg Joost.

"Dat klopt," zei de vrouw, "en dat is het geheim van mijn eindeloze huis, en ook van de eindeloze winkelstraat."

"Kent u iemand genaamd Ekolijn ?" vroeg Joost. De vrouw keek verbaasd. "Hoe weet u dat ?" vroeg ze. "Ik kwam hem eens in het bos tegen, en hij leerde me de Bibelebonse wijn te maken. Hij had het over oppassen met spiegelbeelden, of zoiets. Ik leefde in armoede die tijd. Hij gaf me een heleboel geld, en vroeg me om nooit zijn naam te noemen. Door hem heb ik een nieuw leven gekregen. Ik heb hem daarna nooit meer teruggezien."

Joost glimlachte. "Maar zeg eens, waar ken ik u dan van ?"

"Ach koning," sprak de vrouw. "Bent u dat nu alweer vergeten ? Ik was degene die u het wijnpaard verkocht."

"Ach ja," zei Joost, "nu weet ik het weer. U bleef de hele avond, en we speelden nog een spelletje kaart."

De vrouw glimlachte. "Mag ik u dan wat vragen ?"

Joost knikte "Ja."

"Ach, laat ook maar zitten," sprak de vrouw. "Dat kan ik u echt niet vragen."

"Wat is het ?" vroeg Joost.

"Dan niet gaan lachen, koning," sprak de vrouw.

"Ik zal niet lachen," zei Joost, maar hij kon al bijna zijn lachen niet inhouden.

"Nou, mijn huis is een beetje te groot voor mij," sprak de vrouw. "Ik verdwaal er nogal vaak in, en ik dacht dat u het veel beter zou kunnen gebruiken."

"Wat is de prijs ?" vroeg Joost.

"Nou, als u voor mij een normaal huisje heeft, dan ben ik al blij genoeg," sprak de vrouw.

Joost had nog wel een normaal huisje aan de rand van het bos, en ze besloten te ruilen. Zowel Joost als de vrouw waren er erg blij mee. Te wonen aan de rand van het bos deed de vrouw nog meer herinneren aan Ekolijn, en voor Joost deed het eindeloze huis hem herinneren aan Ekolijn, want voor Joost leek het avontuur met Ekolijn eindeloos. Joost zocht haar nog vaak op. Dan spraken ze vaak over Ekolijn. Het was ten slotte hun grote geheim.

Op een nacht ging Joost op onderzoek uit in zijn nieuwe huis wat eindeloos doorliep naar achteren. Hij dwaalde door de gangen met een zaklantaarn. Ook hier hingen vreemde schilderijen, die alleen maar vreemder werden hoe dieper hij de gangen opging. Hij wist dat hij zou kunnen verdwalen hier, maar toch waagde hij het erop. Hij dacht dat hij geluiden hoorde, en besloot eens in de kamers te kijken. Vele kamers stonden leeg. Op een gegeven moment leidde een gang rechtstreeks op een deur af, waar de gang stopte. Joost ging naar binnen en moest direct zijn armen voor zijn ogen werpen vanwege vreemd licht. Het was een hele grote hal. Aan het einde van de hal stond een standbeeld van een kever die een beker vasthield. Boven de beker draaiden radertjes. Joost liep op het beeld af. "Wat moet dat daar ?" sprak iemand.

"Ik ben de nieuwe bewoner," sprak Joost, "toevallig de koning van dit land. Wie bent u ?" Joost scheen zijn zaklantaarn alle kanten op, maar zag nog niemand. Toen viel het weer stil. Achter het keverbeeld was een deur. Joost ging erdoor naar binnen, en weer viel een vreemd licht op hem, wat toen weer wegtrok. "Kom je voor de wijn ?" sprak een stem, "de Bibelebonse wijn ?"

"Ik heb genoeg Bibelebonse wijn," sprak Joost. "Van de vorige bewoonster."

"Ken je het geheim van de wijn ?" vroeg de stem.

"Zeg op, wat moet u ?" vroeg Joost, "en waar bent u ?" Joost scheen overal met zijn zaklamp, maar zag weer niemand.

"Ik ben de wachter van de wijn," sprak de stem.

"Ik dacht dat Ekolijn de wachter van de wijn was," sprak Joost.

"Ekolijn is allang dood," sprak de stem. "Ik ben zijn opvolger."

"Dood ?" vroeg Joost.

"Ja, hij had zichzelf doodgedronken," sprak de stem. Een gevleugelde beker met een regenboog erboven verscheen voor Joost. Het was van een speciaal metaal wat Joost niet kende. Het was een soort zacht bruin-geel met een heldere weerkaatsing. Er kwam stoom uit de beker. "De wijn is klaar," sprak de beker.

"Klaar voor wat ?" vroeg Joost.

"Om opgedronken te worden," sprak de beker. Joost bleef maar naar de beker staren en kon er zijn verleden in zien.

"Er is iets wat ik van je wil vragen," sprak de beker.

"Wat is het ?" vroeg Joost.

"Ik kom van eindeloos diep," sprak de beker. "Dit huis gaat niet alleen eindeloos ver naar achteren, maar gaat ook eindeloos diep naar beneden. Elke verdieping is een andere tijd, en elke verdieping is een ander spiegelbeeld."

"Wat wilt u dat ik doe ?" vroeg Joost.

"Ik kan je leiden naar de plaats waar de liften zijn," sprak de beker.

"En dan ?" vroeg Joost.

Plotseling werd het duizelig voor Joost z'n ogen. Alles begon weg te vagen. Hij werd wakker, rijdende op het rode paard in het wijnbos. Het wijnpaard werd ook wel het slaappaard genoemd, want allen die het paard berijden vallen in slaap. En dat was ook de reden waarom Joost zulke vreemde dromen had. Joost kon zich herinneren dat voordat hij naar het pannekoeken-restaurant zou gaan met zijn oom Georgius, hij eerst een ritje ging maken met het wijnpaard. Hij ging naar een nieuw aangelegd bos, genaamd het wijnbos. Pas hier viel hij op het paard in slaap, en kreeg de vreemde dromen. Misschien droomde hij nog steeds, maar hij zat op het paard. Het was donker in het wijnbos. Het was er heel stil. De maan scheen door de bomen. Hij dacht eraan wat er allemaal verscholen kon zijn in de aarde.

Einde

De Gokkoning van

Ovven

Hoofdstuk 1.

Op de kermis sloeg hij toe. Hij was een dief. Hij stal van kinderen, en hij stal soms zelfs de

kinderen zelf. Hij was een kinderdief. Hij maakte hun dromen kapot.

Elwin wist hier allemaal niets van.

Het reizen door de natuur kan op een kameel. Elwin heeft dat ook weleens gedaan. Op een kameel ging hij door riviertjes, en vlaktes met wat bosjes. De zon scheen fijn, en het was een fijne dag waarop hij een reis maakte op een kameel. Hij had zijn spulletjes vastgemaakt met een riem aan de bult van de kameel, en ging er toen opzitten.

Waarom Elwin op reis ging ? Hij had gehoord dat er in de bergen ergens een hele bijzondere steen zou zijn, gemaakt door dwergen, door kabouters. Het zou een heel bijzondere droom steen zijn, die de mensen hele bijzondere dromen zou kunnen geven. Voordat Elwin op reis ging had hij daar weleens over in boeken gelezen, en zelfs een paar keer in de krant. Alles zou misschien zoveel mooier zijn als de droom steen in Ovven zou zijn.

Elwin ging helemaal alleen op de kameel. Hij wist wel waar hij ergens moest zijn, en hij had de reismap meegenomen. Daar keek hij zo nu en dan op. Hij had weleens plaatjes van de steen gezien, met daarop elfjes en kabouters die rondom de prachtig flonkerende roze-rode steen dansten. Ook waren er op die plaatjes allemaal vlindertjes te zien.

Maar toen Elwin eindelijk aankwam bij de grot waar de steen moest wezen, werd hij tegengehouden door groene bewakers met bruine helmen en slagtanden. 'Halt,' zei één van de bewakers die zijn speer al had uitgestoken om Elwin tegen te houden. 'Wat wil je ? Niemand kan zomaar tot de droom steen komen.'

'Maar ik zag op plaatjes dat er allemaal elfjes, kabouters en vlindertjes omheen dansten,' zei Elwin.

'Niks mee te maken,' bromde de groene wachter.

'Nou, u bent ook niet echt in de stemming vandaag,' zei Elwin. 'Met al dat gesnauw.'

'Ik ben wel in de stemming,' zei de groene wachter. 'Het is mijn werk. Ik moet de droom steen met hand en tand bewaken. Alleen de koning bepaalt wie er bij de steen mag komen.'

'Zo zo,' zei Elwin die inmiddels van zijn kameel was afgestapt. 'En wie mag die koning dan wel niet wezen ?'

'Koning Kabeljauw,' zei de groene wachter mopperend. 'En maak nu dat je wegkomt.'

'Kan ik de koning niet spreken ?' vroeg Elwin. 'Ik zou graag de droom steen willen zien.'

'Daarvoor moet je bij Wat-Glim-Je-Mooi zijn, zij is een elfje met gele vleugels,' bromde de groene wachter.

De groene wachter legde Elwin even uit waar dat elfje woonde, en toen ging Elwin weer op pad. Na een tijdje kwam hij aan bij een klein bosje, aan de rand van de bergen. Bij een huisje klopte Elwin aan. Een klein elvenmeisje deed open. Ze had lang haar en ze had een gele jurk aan. 'Hallo, Wat-Glim-Je-Mooi,' zei Elwin.
'Dank je,' zei het elvenmeisje.

'Ik dacht dat dat je naam was,' zei Elwin.
Het elvenmeisje begon te giechelen. 'Ja, dat is ook zo. Wat kom je doen ?'

'Ik zou graag koning Kabeljauw willen spreken voor het zien van de droom steen,' sprak Elwin.

'Dat is een vis met een kroontje, hier vlakbij in de rivier,' sprak het meisje. 'Ik kan je wel aan de koning voorstellen, maar dan moet je wel eerst glimmen.'

'Hoe moet ik glimmen dan ?' vroeg Elwin.

Het elvenmeisje zuchtte. 'Jammer dat je nog niet glimt, want dan hadden we direct naar de koning gekunt. Ik zal het je wel even uitleggen : 'Je kunt alleen glimmen door de droom steen.'

'Ja, maar ik ben verboden de droom steen te zien, en daarvoor moest ik juist eerst met de koning spreken,' sprak Elwin.

'Tja,' zei het elvenmeisje, 'dan weet ik het ook niet.'

'Kan ik niet eerst de droom steen zien om te glimmen, en dan pas naar de koning gaan ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Onmogelijk,' sprak het elvenmeisje met een diepe zucht. 'Dat laat hij nooit toe. Eerst moet je glimmen, en dan kun je pas met de koning spreken, en dan pas naar de droom steen.'

'Ja, dan is het inderdaad onmogelijk,' zei Elwin. 'Ik glim niet, en mag niet bij de droom steen komen.'

'Helaas,' zei het elvenmeisje. 'Ik kan je niet helpen.'

'Wat een nare belevenis,' zei Elwin. 'Ik ben hiervoor speciaal naartoe gekomen. Ik heb een hele lange reis gemaakt, op mijn kameel, en nu dit.'

'Ik begrijp het,' zuchtte het elvenmeisje.

'Is er dan echt geen andere oplossing ?' vroeg Elwin.

Het elvenmeisje schudde haar hoofd. 'Nee, niet echt. Tenzij je …'

Het elvenmeisje werd stil.

'Tenzij ik wat ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Laat maar zitten,' sprak het elvenmeisje. Ze ging aan een tafeltje zitten, en ging verder met haar naaiwerk.

'Wat ben je aan het maken ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Oh, iets voor de buurman,' zei het elvenmeisje.

'Maar ik zie helemaal geen ander huisje in de buurt,' sprak Elwin.
'Het is voor een mol, die net onder de grond woont, in een hol,' zei het elvenmeisje.

Elwin dacht na. Hij moest en zou bij die droom steen komen, maar die groene wachters waren natuurlijk ook een probleem. 'Zeg, wie hebben die steen eigenlijk gemaakt ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Kik en Kes,' zei het elvenmeisje.

Kik en Kes woonden helemaal aan de zee, en volgens het elvenmeisje zou dat de enige oplossing zijn, om daar naartoe te gaan. Elwin ging het huisje weer uit en klom op zijn kameel na het elvenmeisje bedankt te hebben. Het elvenmeisje wenste Elwin een goede reis en zwaaide hem na.

Door bosjes, langs rivieren en over bergen kwam Elwin na dagen reizen eindelijk aan bij de zee waar Kik en Kes woonden. Het waren twee kabouters. Ze huppelden en dansten om een kampvuur heen. Ze leken wel broertjes, en dat waren ze ook, en zij hadden beiden de droom steen gemaakt.

De broertjes kregen al snel in de gaten dat Elwin bij hen was gekomen, en begonnen hem aan te staren. 'Goedendag,' zei Elwin, en stapte van de kameel af. Al snel begon hij het verhaal te vertellen, en de kabouters luisterden aandachtig.

Aan het einde van het verhaal sprak Kes : 'Beste Elwin, de droomsteen is eens van ons gestolen door koning Kabeljauw, oftewel de gokkoning. Het is een smerige dief, die nu door de droomsteen de dromen van kinderen probeert te stelen.'

'Maar dat is verschrikkelijk,' sprak Elwin. 'Hoe doet hij dat ?'

'Nou,' zei Kes, 'heel simpel. Hij lokt de kinderen naar zijn kermis en dan laat hij ze gokken, en als ze verliezen dan steelt hij hun dromen, en als ze winnen, dan neemt hij ze met hem mee. Natuurlijk laat hij dan wel een namaak-kind achter voor de ouders.'

'Maar is hij geen vis ?' vroeg Elwin verbaasd.

'Soms,' zei Kik. 'Hij kan van gedaante veranderen. Hij is een tovenaar.'

'Wat kunnen we eraan doen ?' vroeg Elwin.

'En nog eens iets,' zei Kik, 'de droomsteen in de grot waar je naar op zoek was is namaak om bandieten te misleiden. De echte droomsteen is in het gokpaleis van koning Kabeljauw, hoog in de bergen.'

Elwin zuchtte. 'Hoe ga ik daar ooit komen ? Waar is het ?'

'Het gokpaleis is goed verborgen, maar Utsmul, onze raaf, weet wel waar het is. Niemand waagt zich verder daar. Wij hadden de moed al opgegeven, totdat jij er weer over begon,' sprak Kes.

Elwin knikte. 'Ik wil er wel naartoe. Hij zal de gestolen droomsteen vast goed verborgen houden, maar ik wil het er op wagen.'

'Wees maar voorzichtig, Elwin,' waarschuwde Kes. 'Hij is niet zomaar voor een dubbeltje te vangen. Hij is erg ervaren in het toveren.'

'Ik begrijp het. Maar iemand moet hem tegenhouden,' sprak Elwin dapper.

'Goed dan, als je er op staat,' sprak Kes, en begon op zijn vingers te fluiten. Na een tijdje kwam er een grote raaf aanvliegen. Dat moest Utsmul wezen.

'Utsmul,' sprak Kes. 'Kun jij deze jongen afzetten bij het gokpaleis van koning Kabeljauw en dan

direct weer terugkomen ?'

Elwin mocht op zijn rug klimmen, en na een kort afscheid steeg de grote raaf op, en ging richting de bergen. De raaf wist precies waar het was, maar eigenlijk wilden de kabouters hem daar niet hebben. Daarom moest hij ook direct weer terugkomen.

Het gokpaleis was gemaakt van een doorzichtig gesteente en was verlicht. Elwin wist dat van hieruit de gokkoning zijn grote toverij bedreef door de droomsteen. De raaf zette hem af, en vloog direct weer weg. Elwin hield zich goed verscholen achter een heuveltje. Er waren ook wat struiken. Ook hier kon hij zich achter verschuilen, en liep zo dichter en dichter naar het gokpaleis toe. Hij hoorde harde muziek vanuit het gokpaleis komen. Het leek wel alsof er een feestje was.

Elwin zag wachten staan bij de grote poort van het gokpaleis. Daar moest hij niet zijn. Achter struikjes liep hij helemaal naar de achterkant van het gokpaleis. Ergens door een achterdeurtje van de keuken ging hij naar binnen. Hier werkte een vrouw met een grote witte koksmuts op. 'Wat mot je !' snauwde de vrouw die aan de maalmachine stond. Elwin keek naar de plakjes ham en trok een vies gezicht. 'Wat doet u hier kan ik beter vragen,' sprak Elwin.

'Zeg, brutaal ventje,' sprak de vrouw. 'Zal ik jou eens een draai om je oren geven ?'

'Nou, dat hoeft nu ook weer niet,' zei Elwin. 'Het was gewoon een vraag.'

'Het antwoord op de vraag is : Gaat je geen klapperjanus aan, meneertje kwekgraag,' snauwde de vrouw.

'Okay, goed,' zei Elwin. 'Ik kan wel zien dat u een slecht humeur heeft. Is er soms iets gebeurd ?'

'Ophoepelen nou, ventje !' riep de vrouw die ineens stopte met de maalmachine. 'Of zou ik jou eens door de maalmachine halen, want je staat er nogal om te trappelen.'

'Nou,' zei Elwin, 'dat hoeft nu ook weer niet. Waarom doet u zo boos ? Iets verkeerds gegeten !' Nu werd de vrouw echt woedend en greep een slagersmes van de muur. 'Zeg, akelig ventje, vlegel, zal ik jou eens aan het mes rijgen ?' riep ze terwijl ze op Elwin afstapte. Elwin deed direct een stap achteruit. 'Nou, vertel op, oude heks, wat doe je daar ?' vroeg Elwin brutaal. 'U gaat me toch niet vertellen dat hier niets gebeurd is, hè ?' En toen begon Elwin het hele verhaal zonder een blad voor zijn mond te vertellen. Elwin was een openlijke en eerlijke jongen, en zei altijd alles recht voor zijn raap. De vrouw stond hem met open mond aan te kijken, terwijl het mes uit haar hand gleed. Zo slap waren haar handen geworden. Ze begon te stamelen : 'H... hoe weet jij dat allemaal ?'

'Ik heb met Kik en Kes gesproken,' sprak Elwin.

De vrouw wreef over haar kin. 'Hmmm, het is inderdaad waar dat hier een droomsteen verborgen wordt gehouden waar toverij mee wordt bedreven. Ik ben de kokkin hier. Eens won ik een gokspelletje op de kermis, en werd ik hier mee naartoe genomen. Sindsdien moest ik hier werken.

Elwin knikte. 'Jongen, je bent in groot gevaar,' sprak de vrouw. 'Als de koning erachter komt dan ga je eraan, ik zeg het je.'

'Ik moet die steen hebben,' sprak Elwin. 'Hij is van Kik en Kes, en de gokkoning moet stoppen met het lastigvallen van kinderen.'

'Ach,' sprak de vrouw. 'Je kunt toch niet tegen hem op, maar ik wens je geluk.'

Elwin liep door de grote keuken heen, en kwam toen door een deur op de gang. Direct ging hij weer terug, want hij had wachten gezien. 'Ga de kelder maar in,' sprak de kokkin, 'want hoogstwaarschijnlijk wordt de droomsteen ergens ondergronds verborgen gehouden of op een hogere verdieping. Zoek het maar uit, want in de kelder is een lift.'

De vrouw wees op de kelderdeur ergens aan de zijkant van de keuken, en daar liep Elwin toen naartoe en ging de kelder binnen door van de trap af naar beneden te gaan. Daar stond inderdaad de lift. De lift kon zowel dieper als omhoog.

'Eerst maar eens omhoog,' zei Elwin tegen zichzelf, en drukte op een rode knop voor de hogere verdieping. Na een tijdje stapte hij uit en keek direct goed om zich heen. Hier was ook een lange gang zoals op de begane grond waar hij de wachten zag. Gelukkig zag hij nu niemand. Er waren hier een heleboel deuren. Elwin was vastbesloten de droomsteen te vinden.

'Welke deur zal ik eens nemen ?' dacht Elwin bij zichzelf. 'Hmmm,' zei hij, terwijl hij langs de deuren begon te lopen. Het leek maar niet op te houden. De gang was erg lang, en hij liep over een langwerpig rood tapijt. Het leek wel alsof de gang een beetje naar beneden liep, en daarna weer een beetje omhoog ging. 'Het lijkt wel alsof hier olifanten hebben gelopen,' dacht Elwin bij zichzelf. 'Het is hier een beetje ingezakt.' Ook ging de gang in een bocht, en toen ging de gang weer verder. Er leek echt geen einde aan te komen. Aan beide kanten waren er deuren. Toen ineens ging er een deur open. 'Wie is daar !' werd er geroepen. Het gebeurde ergens achter Elwin, en hij liep weer een beetje terug. Hij wist dat hij erg voorzichtig moest zijn. Er kwam een lange man met een lange hoed uit de deur-opening. Hij had een hele deftige jas aan. 'Wat moet dat hier, ventje,' zei de lange man.

'Wie bent u eigenlijk ?' vroeg Elwin op een hele brutale manier. 'U doet zomaar de deur open en begint te roepen.'

'Ja, wat nou,' sprak de man, 'dit is mijn domein. Ik ben een kermisbaas.'

'Oh, toch niet de koning hoop ik,' sprak Elwin.

'Ach welnee, de koning is dood. Ik bedoelde deze kamer hier is mijn domein, en als ik geluid oppik vanuit mijn kamer dan wil ik graag weten wie het is,' sprak de man.

Elwin keek verbaasd. 'De koning is dood ? Dat wist ik niet. Wanneer is dat gebeurd, en is er inmiddels alweer een nieuwe koning ?'

De man keek hem met grote ogen aan. 'Eh, nee, er is geen nieuwe koning. De koning is allang dood, al wel vijfhonderd jaar.'
'Ik vraag me af of ik dan wel in het juiste paleis ben,' zei Elwin, en begon toen het verhaal over de droomsteen te vertellen.

De man begon hard te lachen. 'Ach jongen, wat zijn dat toch allemaal voor sprookjes. Er is hier geen droomsteen, en al helemaal geen gokkoning.'

Elwin wist niet of hij de man kon geloven. Het kon natuurlijk ook een valstrik zijn. Misschien had de man wel wat te verbergen, of misschien was hij de gokkoning wel.

'Eh, i... ik loop nog even verder,' zei Elwin. De man maakte even een vreemd gebaar en ging toen zijn kamer weer in. Elwin liep verder. Zou hij echt in het verkeerde paleis zijn, of werd hij door de man bedrogen ?

'Ik ben Emiel,' hoorde hij iemand zingen. 'Erg sterk, maar een beetje fragiel, zo mooi als een bloem, niet op zoek naar roem. Ik houd mij graag stil, maar soms geef ik een gil. Soms zing ik een lied, zo verdwijnt het verdriet.' Een man met een accordeon kwam ineens door een deur de gang op. Toen hij Elwin zag schrok hij. 'Wel alle kermisklanten !' riep hij. 'Wie ben jij !'

'Ik ben Elwin, en wie ben jij ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Emiel is de naam,' sprak de man, en stak zijn hand uit. 'Laat het handenschudden maar zitten,' zei Elwin brutaal. 'Wij zijn nog geen vrienden.'

'Beleefdheidsgebaar,' sprak de man. 'Ik ben van goede wil.'

Elwin begon zijn verhaal te vertellen, maar weer kreeg hij hetzelfde antwoord dat de koning al vijfhonderd jaar dood was, en dat er hier geen droomsteen was. De man scheen ook op de kermis te werken. 'Maar de kokkin zei dat het allemaal waar was,' sprak Elwin.

De man begon te schudden van het lachen. 'De kokkin ? Dat mens is hartstikke gek,' zei de man. 'Dat mens praat met iedereen mee, en je kan haar van alles wijsmaken. Zij is degene die dit soort zotte verhalen de wereld in helpt. Ze hebben me weleens verteld dat ze vroeger van een hooiwagen is afgevallen.'

'Hmm,' zei Elwin, 'maar ook Kik en Kes zeiden dat het waar was. In feite hebben zij mij gezegd dat hier de gokkoning woont en hier de droomsteen verborgen houdt waarmee hij kinderen betovert.'

'Ach welnee,' sprak de man. 'Kik en Kes ? Ik zou niet weten wie dat zijn, maar daarvan is geen sprake. Dit soort dingen gebeuren hier niet. Dit paleis is voor een ieder die op de kermis werkt, als een soort ontmoetings-plaats. Het heeft geen koning.'

Elwin trok zijn wenkbrauwen op. 'Okay, dan zijn we uitgepraat. Ik ga het nog even verder proberen, want ik krijg nu tegenstrijdige verhalen te horen.'

'Succes ermee, jongen,' sprak Emiel, en ging weer zijn kamer in. Elwin begon nu hard door de gang te rennen. Hij wilde weten wanneer de gang nu eens eindelijk zou ophouden, maar het leek niet op te houden. 'Is dat gebouw dan zo groot ?' dacht Elwin bij zichzelf. 'Van buiten leek het wel groot, maar ook weer niet zo groot, of zou het toverij zijn. Misschien ben ik al onder een betovering gekomen ?' Elwin rilde even, en rende toen verder. 'Ik ga gewoon wat deuren binnen,' zei Elwin tegen zichzelf, en trok een deur open. Weer zag hij een hele lange gang. En weer begon hij te rennen, en leek het wel alsof de vloer een beetje was ingezakt. 'Weer die olifanten,' dacht Elwin bij zichzelf, en toen ging de vloer weer een beetje opwaarts. Ook aan deze gang leek geen einde te komen. Hij ging weer een willekeurige deur naar binnen, en weer was het precies hetzelfde. Het was weer een lange, eindeloze gang. 'Ik ben goed verdwaald,' sprak Elwin tot zichzelf. 'Wat een doolhof is dit, zeg.'

Welke deur Elwin ook probeerde, het waren alleen maar gangen. Er waren hier helemaal geen kamers. Elwin begon erg moe te worden. 'Hoe kon ik ook zo dom zijn,' sprak Elwin tegen zichzelf. 'Is er iemand !' begon Elwin te roepen. Maar er was geen antwoord. Het bleef doodstil, en het leek steeds stiller te worden. Het leek wel alsof de muren en deuren hem aanstaarden. Elwin merkte dat hij niet goed kon ademen. Hij had frisse lucht nodig. 'Ik wil eruit !' riep hij. Na een tijdje stortte hij moe op de grond neer. Hij draaide zich om met zijn gezicht naar het plafond, waar hij een luik zag. Elwin kreeg weer een beetje hoop. Er hing een klein touwtje aan het luik. Maar Elwin kon er net niet bij. Toen sprong Elwin in de lucht, en greep het touwtje. Direct ging het luik open, en er gleed

een trap naar beneden. Voorzichtig ging Elwin de trap op, die als een ladder was. Het was hier erg donker. Een zwart beest, als een zwarte kat, staarde naar hem. 'Wat kom je doen ?' sprak de kat.

Direct begon Elwin zijn verhaal te vertellen. De kat begon te lachen. Elwin kreeg weer hetzelfde te horen, dat er geen koning was en al helemaal geen droomsteen. 'Hoe zou jij dat weten ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Ik ken het paleis van binnenste buiten,' sprak de kat. Ik ben hier geboren en opgegroeid.'

'Oh,' zei Elwin. 'Waarschijnlijk ben ik dan echt in het verkeerde paleis, of jullie zijn allemaal bedriegers, kermis-bedriegers, oplichters.'

'Wat maakt het uit,' sprak de kat. 'Je komt hier toch niet meer weg.'

'Waarom niet ?' vroeg Elwin. 'Wat is dat voor iets belachelijks, een paleis waar je niet meer uit weg kan.'

'Je had hier nooit moeten komen,' sprak de kat.

'Oh, nu begrijp ik het,' zei Elwin boos. 'Jij bent natuurlijk die gokkoning die het altijd maar weer op kinderen heeft gemunt.'

'Natuurlijk niet !' schreeuwde de kat plotseling. 'Ik bedoel als je hier niet bent uitgenodigd dan had je niet moeten komen. We hebben het niet zo op indringers en dieven. Die worden dan ook netjes in de val gelokt.'

'Oh, dus zo zit het !' schreeuwde Elwin woedend terug. 'Meneer de gokkoning mag de droomsteen stelen en het leven van kinderen zuur maken, en zij die daar wat aan willen doen hebben het ineens gedaan ?'

De kat begon te grijnzen. 'Kereltje, waarom zo moeilijk ? Ten eerste zoals ik al zei is er hier geen gokkoning of droomsteen, en ten tweede : Ook al ben je verkeerd ingelicht is dat nog geen goede reden om zo maar ergens in te breken en politie-agent te spelen. Daar zijn andere wegen voor. Je had het op z'n minst kunnen vragen.'

'Dat doe ik nu toch ?' zei Elwin.

'Nee,' zei de kat. 'Je had bijvoorbeeld eerst kunnen bellen of een brief kunnen schrijven.'

'Ja, zeg, doe me een lol,' zei Elwin. 'Ik had jullie telefoonnummer niet, ik wist het adres niet, en naar mijn informatie had ik te maken met zware criminelen, dus die vlieger ging niet op.'

'Je bent een valse beschuldiger !' brulde de kat. 'Daar zijn geen bewijzen voor. Wij zijn eerlijke kermiswerkers.'

'Wat is jouw taak dan ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Simpel,' zei de kat. 'Afrekenen met kermis-dieven zoals jij.'

'Ah, dus jij bent van de kermis-beveiliging ?' zei Elwin. De kat knikte.

'Ik begrijp het,' zei Elwin, die een beetje moedeloos begon te worden. 'Ik heb een fout gemaakt, een

grote fout. Ik moest in een ander paleis zijn. Ik heb de verkeerde deur genomen. Hoe kom ik eruit ?'

'Dat had ik je al gezegd,' zei de kat. 'Je komt hier niet meer uit. Vergeet het maar. Dit is je verdiende loon.'

'Maar ik had goede bedoelingen,' sprak Elwin. 'Ik wilde de kinderen helpen, en Kik en Kes, en ik wilde van de kermis weer een veilige plaats maken.'

'Jij beledigt ons beroep,' sprak de kat. 'De kermis is de meest veilige plaats in Ovven, en Kik en Kes zijn leugenkabouters, treiterkabouters, trollen.'

'Okay, okay,' zei Elwin, die wist dat hij niet zomaar van de kat zou afkomen. 'Ik zal het niet meer doen. Laat me er nu alsjeblieft uit. Hoe lang zal ik hiervoor gestrafd worden ?'

'Zoals ik al zei,' sprak de kat, 'kom je hier niet meer uit.'

'Dat is misdadig,' sprak Elwin. 'Jullie zijn criminelen.'

'Nu moet je de boel niet gaan omdraaien,' sprak de kat.

'Wat ga je met me doen ?' riep Elwin.

'Dat zul je nog wel zien,' sprak de kat. In grote woede trapte Elwin plotseling de kat van zich weg, en ging snel de ladder af, drukte de ladder terug, en gooide vliegensvlug het luik dicht. Snel trok Elwin het vloertapijt op om te zien of daar misschien ook een luik zat, en ja hoor. Elwin trok vliegensvlug het luik open, terwijl er een ladder uitschoof naar beneden. 'Ik krijg je nog wel, ellendeling !' hoorde hij de kat roepen. Elwin stoorde zich er niet aan, en ging over de ladder naar beneden. Hier was ook een gang. Dat zou de begane grond moeten zijn. Hier moest ergens de keuken zijn met de kokkin. Maar het waren weer veel gangen met allemaal deuren naar gangen, dus Elwin werd al snel duizelig. 'Je komt er toch niet meer uit !' hoorde hij de kat krijsen. Elwin werd helemaal naar van het gekrijs. 'Houd je kop !' riep Elwin. Maar het gekrijs leek alleen maar erger te worden. Elwin stopte zijn vingers in zijn oren en begon te beven. Met zijn voet schoof hij het vloertapijt weg en zag weer een luik. Snel deed hij zijn vingers even uit zijn oren om het luik open te trekken, maar tot zijn grote schrik was daar weer alles donker. Hij hoopte maar dat hij hier geen tweede kat zou tegenkomen. Hij had zijn vingers weer in zijn oren gestopt vanwege het gekrijs, en direct toen hij over de uitgeschoven ladder de diepte was ingegaan werd hij door een hele groep zwarte katten aangevlogen.

'Nee !' jammerde Elwin, die om zich heen begon te slaan en te schoppen. 'Help !' riep hij. De katten beten hem en krabten hem. Elwin werd hoe langer hoe bozer, maar ook banger. Op de grond was alles nat. Er lag hier water en tot zijn grote schrik lag er dichtbij hem een krokodil. Elwin begon door het water te rennen, maar al gauw begon het water dieper te worden. Er stond hier een sterke stroming. Hij hoorde het water bruisen, alsof er ergens een grote waterval dichtbij was. Elwin gilde bijna van angst toen de sterke stroom hem meesleurde. 'Help !' schreeuwde hij, en toen ging hij kopje onder. Wat er toen gebeurde kon hij zich niet meer herinneren, maar hij werd even later wakker in een bed, terwijl een boerin zich over hem heenboog en bezorgd naar hem glimlachtte. 'Je bent veilig hier,' sprak de vrouw. 'Je was op een gevaarlijke plaats.'

'Waar ben ik ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Op de boerderij,' sprak de vrouw.

'Welke boerderij ? Is dit nog steeds het gokpaleis ?' vroeg Elwin.

De vrouw knikte. 'Je ging door een gat heen. Het water zoog je erdoor, en toen kwam je hier. Dit is nog een verdieping lager. Het gebeurt wel vaker. Wij zorgen voor de slachtoffers. Er gebeuren vreemde dingen op de hogere verdiepingen.'

'E... en dit is een boerderij ?' Elwin keek om zich heen, en het leek inderdaad op een boerderij. Elwin begon zijn verhaal te stotteren en kon het niet laten de boerin te vragen of het gokpaleis ook een gokkoning had en een verborgen gehouden droomsteen. De vrouw begon te lachen. 'Dus je hebt het ook gehoord ?' vroeg ze.

'Ja, van Kik en Kes,' sprak Elwin, 'en van de kokkin in de keuken.'

'Luister goed,' sprak de boerin. 'Ja, het is waar dat er een gokkoning is, en een droomsteen die hij bewaakt, maar daar mag eigenlijk niet over gesproken worden.'

'Zie, dus het is toch waar !' riep Elwin.

'Shhhh !' zei de vrouw hardop, en legde haar vinger op zijn mond. 'Mondje dicht, jongen, want we willen niet in de problemen komen.'

'Okay,' zei Elwin, 'sorry.' De vrouw glimlachtte naar hem. Elwin merkte dat hij droge kleren aanhad. Het was een pyjama. De vrouw had hem goed verzorgd. 'Weet u dan ook waar de droomsteen is ?' vroeg Elwin fluisterend. De vrouw schudde haar hoofd. 'Die wordt veel te goed verborgen gehouden,' sprak ze.

Elwin was erg moe, en viel al snel weer in slaap. Na een hele lange tijd, hij wist niet hoe lang, werd hij wakker. Het leek wel alsof hij verschillende dagen had geslapen, maar hij was ook zo moe geweest. Hij stapte uit bed, en keek rond in de boerderij. Het was een beetje donker, dus hij deed wat lampjes aan. Hij zag de boerin niet. Even later vond hij haar slaapkamer en zag dat ze sliep. Voorzichtig liep Elwin weer terug naar zijn kamer. Over een stoel hingen wat droge kleren die hij kon aantrekken. Nadat hij dat had gedaan ging hij de gang op. De gang was heel lang, en het deed hem denken aan de gangen van de hogere verdiepingen. 'Nee, niet weer,' zuchtte hij. 'Laat ik maar weer teruggaan.' Maar hoe ver hij ook terugliep, hij kon de boerderij niet meer vinden. 'Dat moet ik weer net hebben !' sprak hij luid. Hij begon de boerin te roepen, want angst begon weer over zijn rug te glijden. Alles was doodstil. 'Wat is er, jongen ?' werd er ineens geroepen. Het was de boerin. Na een korte tijd kwam ze eraan lopen, met een glimlach. Ze nam hem bij de hand en samen liepen ze terug naar de boerderij. 'Zij die hier niet wonen verdwalen altijd,' sprak de vrouw glimlachend.

Ze gingen naar de woonkamer, en de vrouw gaf hem wat te eten en te drinken. 'Hier, je zult wel honger hebben,' sprak ze.

'Eigenlijk niet,' zei Elwin. 'Ik weet niet hoe het komt.' In ieder geval nam hij wat te drinken. De vrouw glimlachtte weer naar hem. 'Heeft u ook kinderen ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Nee,' zei de vrouw.

'En een boer ?' vroeg Elwin.

De vrouw schudde haar hoofd. 'Ik woon hier helemaal alleen. Toen ik een kind was won ik eens op de kermis, en toen werd ik hier mee naartoe genomen om als boerin te werken.'

'Dat moet heel eenzaam zijn,' sprak Elwin. De vrouw knikte. 'Wij zijn onder een betovering,' sprak ze. 'De gokkoning gebruikt de droomsteen voor zijn kwade doeleinden.'

'Daarom ben ik hier,' zei Elwin. 'Weet u ook wat onder deze verdieping is ?'

De vrouw schudde haar hoofd. Elwin dacht na. Hij wilde de vrouw graag helpen, maar hij wist niet hoe. Wat hij wel wist is dat de droomsteen zo snel mogelijk terugmoest naar Kik en Kes. Hij wilde het geheim kennen van het gokpaleis en de gokkoning. Hij wist dat het geen optie was om naar de hogere verdieping te gaan, want daar zouden de katten en de krokodillen hem al opwachten. Samen met de boerin wilde hij kijken of er ergens een luik zou zijn onder het vloertapijt op de gang. De boerin knikte, en nam zijn hand, stond op, en liep met hem de gang op. Met zijn voet schoof hij het vloertapijt weg, en zag inderdaad een luik. Samen maakten ze het luik open. Er kwam veel licht doorheen.

Hoofdstuk 2.

Er kwam een narretje door het luik heen naar boven. 'Bedankt,' zuchtte het narretje. 'Ik heb hier zolang opgesloten gezeten. Ik dacht dat ik er nooit meer uit zou komen.' Het mannetje was erg opgelucht. 'Wie bent u ?' vroeg Elwin.

'De naam is Rotenstein, en ik zing graag een refrein,' sprak het mannetje. Elwin keek hem verbaasd aan. 'Wat is daar beneden ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Oh, het is daar verschrikkelijk,' sprak Rotenstein. 'Allemaal krokodillen en katten, en water, veel water, en vaak donker.'

'Maar nu was het licht, en het klinkt wel een beetje als waar ik vandaan kwam,' sprak Elwin.

'Ja, licht, eens in de week ofzo, voor een paar uurtjes, veel licht,' sprak Rotenstein.

'Hoe kwam je daar ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Op de fiets,' zei het mannetje. Elwin was verbaasd. 'Daar ben je zo een keer ingefietst ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Nou, eigenlijk fietste ik gewoon eens een keer naar de kermis, won iets, en toen namen ze me op de fiets hier naartoe,' zei het mannetje.

'Wie waren dat ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Dat kan ik me niet meer herinneren,' sprak het mannetje. 'Het is al zo lang geleden, maar sindsdien moest ik nar zijn, mensen aan het lachen maken, maar dat ging niet echt goed, en toen hebben ze me hieronder gebracht.'

'Maar dat is verschrikkelijk,' zei Elwin. 'Ik denk dat we hier nu allemaal vastzitten.'

'Oh, dus jij kunt ook niet weg ?' zei het mannetje. 'En u, boerin, ook niet ?'

De boerin schudde haar hoofd. 'Allemaal vast,' sprak ze.

'Wat een waardeloze bedoening, zeg,' sprak het narretje. 'Er moet toch iets op te vinden zijn ?'

'Ja,' zei Elwin, 'en er moet hier ook nog ergens een kokkin zijn, die zit in hetzelfde probleem als ons.'

'Nou, mooi is dat,' sprak het narretje. 'Hoeveel meer zouden er hier opgesloten zitten in dit reusachtige paleis ?'

'Ik heb geen idee,' zei Elwin.

'Maar we hebben in ieder geval elkaar,' sprak het mannetje. 'Laten we dichtbij elkaar blijven.'

'Ik wil hem hier niet hebben,' zei de boerin. 'Ik vertrouw hem niet. Hij lijkt op een kermiswerker.'

Elwin keek bedenkelijk. 'Echt niet, mevrouw !' riep het narretje. 'Ik zweer u dat ik nooit zo ben geweest. Ze hebben mij dit pakje aangetrokken en ik moest gek doen om de mensen aan het lachen te maken.'

'Ik vertrouw hem niet, Elwin,' zei de boerin. 'Ik wil weer terug. Ik voel me niet op mijn gemak.' De boerin draaide zich om en liep terug naar de woonkamer. 'Kom je, Elwin ?' zei ze nog, en toen verdween ze door de bocht van de gang. Elwin raakte in paniek, want hij wist dat hij de boerin nodig had om terug te komen in de boerderij. 'Boerin !' riep hij. Hij rende de bocht om, maar zag alleen maar een eindeloos lange gang. Elwin zuchtte, en ging weer terug naar het narretje. Hij hoopte dat de boerin snel weer zou terugkomen, maar dat gebeurde niet. 'Jij gelooft me toch, hè, Elwin ?' vroeg het narretje. Elwin keek het narretje aan en knipperde even met zijn ogen. 'Ik weet het niet, narretje,' sprak Elwin. 'Ik ken je niet lang genoeg om het zeker te weten.' Het narretje keek hem strak in zijn ogen. 'Je gelooft me toch wel, hè, Elwin ? Je gelooft toch niet die praatjes van die gekke, dikke boerin ? Hé Elwin !' zei het narretje die steeds harder begon te praten, en toen zelfs vlak voor Elwin begon te roepen. De rillingen vlogen Elwin over zijn rug. Plotseling haalde het narretje vanuit het niets een knuppel te voorschijn, en sloeg Elwin op zijn hoofd. Na een tijdje werd Elwin wakker. Hij voelde een bult op zijn hoofd, en er was bloed aan zijn hand. Hij lag op het tapijt. Het luik was dicht, en er was geen narretje meer te bekennen. Trillend stond Elwin op, en begon verder te zoeken. Hij riep naar de boerin, maar tevergeefs.

Hij wist dat de gangen hier eindeloos waren. Naar boven wilde hij niet, en ook niet naar beneden. Maar als hij moest kiezen, dan toch liever naar beneden, maar eerst wilde hij wat anders proberen. Hij begon de muren te onderzoeken. Ook begon hij de deurknoppen te onderzoeken. Uiteindelijk begon hij te schreeuwen van ellende. Hij voelde zich bedrogen, en hij was bang. Hij begon geklop te horen op de vloer, en toen ook op het plafond. Het spookte hier verschrikkelijk. Dit was niet zomaar een gokpaleis, maar een spookhuis. 'Wat moeten jullie van me !' riep Elwin.

'Ik kan het niet meer verdragen,' zei Elwin tegen zichzelf. 'Ik kan dit niet lang meer volhouden. Iemand moet me helpen.' Elwin begon op de muren te kloppen, om te zien of er ergens misschien zwakke plekken waren, maar voor wat ? Na een tijdje was hij zo moedeloos dat hij weer het tapijt wegschoof met zijn voet. Er waren veel luiken onder het tapijt. Hij maakte er eentje jammerend open, niet wetende wat hij dit keer zou aantreffen. Alweer was er licht, en het narretje verscheen weer. Elwin schrok en hysterisch gooide hij het luik weer dicht. 'Dat was op het nippertje,' zuchtte Elwin, terwijl hij beefde van de schrik. 'Ik weet wel waar je bent !' krijste het narretje. 'Ik zal je wel krijgen !' Elwin begon te rennen, maar het narretje bleef krijsen. De boerin had gelijk had, maar hij wist niet of de boerin wel te vertrouwen was, want waar was ze gebleven ? Hij wenste dat hij gewoon dichtbij de boerin was gebleven. Of misschien kon hij wel niemand hier vertrouwen, en was alles één groot bedrog ? Elwin had zijn vingers in zijn oren gestopt terwijl hij bleef rennen. Hij

wilde alles van zich afschudden. Alhoewel de gang eindeloos leek bleef hij toch rennen. Hij moest en zou hier doorheen komen. Hij moest een manier zien te vinden om de betovering te verbreken. Hij gooide alle deuren open aan beide kanten, en bleef allemaal gangen zien. Dit moest toch ergens een keer stoppen ?

Hij begreep nu waarom Kik en Kes niet meewilden en hem nog hadden gewaarschuwd. Oh, had hij nu maar naar hen geluisterd, maar eigenlijk wilde hij de moed nog niet opgeven. Iemand moest deze tovenaar een halt toeroepen. Alhoewel hij er aan twijfelde of hij daar wel de juiste persoon voor was. Hij begon te schelden op de vele deuren en de lange gangen, maar niets hielp. Opeens stond er een oude vrouw voor hem met een kaars. 'Geef de moed maar op, jongen,' sprak ze.

'Nooit !' riep Elwin. De vrouw leek op een oude boerin.

'U bent toch niet dezelfde boerin die ik al eerder was tegengekomen toch ?' vroeg Elwin. De vrouw schudde haar hoofd. 'Nee, Elwin, ik ben iets veel ergers.'

Elwin schrok. 'Hoe kent u mijn naam, en hoezo bent u iets veel ergers ?' Plotseling stond de vrouw in de vlammen, en donder en bliksem verscheen boven haar hoofd. 'Ik ben een heks !' krijste ze, terwijl ze geheel in een vuurvlam veranderde, en toen verdween ze. Elwin greep naar zijn hoofd en jammerde. 'Wat is er toch met mij aan de hand. Zijn dit verbeeldingen ? Word ik straks gewoon weer wakker in mijn eigen bed ? Oh, was ik maar thuisgebleven. Ik ook altijd met mijn stomme ideeen.' Elwin begon uit pure wanhoop te springen op de vloer. Plotseling gingen alle deuren voor hem en achter hem open en door elke deur kwam er een clown met een mes uit. Allemaal begonnen ze langzaam op hem af te komen. Elwin aarzelde geen moment, schoof het tapijt met zijn voet opzij, opende vliegensvlug een luik en sprong naar binnen. 'Narretje of geen narretje,' zei hij tegen zichzelf. 'Hierboven moet ik niet meer wezen.' Alles was hier licht, en direct hoorde hij het narretje krijsen, maar hij viel dieper en dieper. 'Kom terug !' schreeuwde het narretje in de verte. Na een tijdje leek het wel alsof Elwin op een grote hoop kussens was gevallen. Alles was zo zacht hier. Hij begon zich direct een weg door de kussens te graven, nog steeds bang voor de clowns en het narretje.

Na een tijdje had hij de bodem bereikt, en baande zich een weg door de kussens heen. Hij begon steeds meer zand onder zijn voeten te voelen, en na een tijdje kwam hij aan in een woestijn. Hij kon zo eindelijk uit de hoop kussens stappen. Het was hier licht, en toch wist hij dat het slechts een verdieping was van het gokpaleis, diep onder de grond.

Er was een oase dichtbij, en verderop in de woestijn was een cafeetje. Elwin liep daar naar binnen, waar een lange cowboy, en twee kale mannen met een lange baard een spelletje met dobbelstenen deden. De cowboy hief even zijn grote hoed op, en sprak : 'Goedenavond, heer.' Ook de twee kale mannen met de lange baarden knikten naar hem. 'Wat zal het wezen, hoe kan ik je helpen ?' vroeg de lange cowboy met de grote hoed.

'Nou, als het zou kunnen,' zei Elwin, 'dan kunt u mij uitleg geven over waar ik terecht ben gekomen, en waar de gokkoning is en de droomsteen ?'

De cowboy en ook de twee kale mannen trokken hun wenkbrauwen op. 'Wat zeg je me daar ?' snauwde de cowboy. 'Alsof ik jou dat ga vertellen ! Dat is een groot geheim, en daar kun je ook beter niet over beginnen,' terwijl hij zijn twee revolvers trok. 'Ik daag je uit voor een duel !'

'Kalm maar, het is nog maar een kind,' zei één van de kale mannen, terwijl de andere knikte. Nu werd de cowboy pas echt woedend. 'Wat heb ik daar mee te maken ? Hij heeft zijn mond over zulke dingen te houden. Dat is niet goed voor mijn zaken. Straks komt niemand hier nog.'

'Luister,' zei de andere kale man. 'Ben je nu niet een beetje aan het overdrijven ?'

De cowboy trapte de tafel om, terwijl de dobbelstenen over de grond begonnen te rollen. 'Ik daag jullie ook uit voor een duel !' brulde hij. 'Ik kom hier over een uurtje terug, en als ik jullie hier dan nog zie, dan schiet ik een grote barst in jullie !' Toen rende hij scheldend het café uit.

'Die moet even afkoelen,' zei de andere kale man weer. 'En wie ben jij ?'

'Ik ben Elwin,' sprak Elwin, en begon toen zijn hele verhaal te vertellen. De kale mannen keken hem aan in grote verbazing. 'Laten we hier eerst weggaan,' sprak één van de kale mannen, 'anders komt dat heethoofd terug, en dan hebben we goed de poppen aan het dansen.' De andere kale man knikte, en sprak : 'Het is inderdaad nogal een heethoofd.'

'Waar moeten we nu naartoe ?' vroeg Elwin.

'De woestijn in natuurlijk,' zei één van de kale mannen. 'In de oase zal hij ons ook vinden.' En daar gingen ze, dieper de woestijn in. Ze hadden volgens de kale mannen geen andere keuze, en ze hoopten dat ze hem niet hier ergens tegen zouden komen. Er waren hier veel zanderige heuveltjes. 'Vertel me eens,' sprak één van de kale mannen, 'dus jij gelooft echt dat dit slechts een verdieping is van een gokpaleis, en nog wel onder de grond ?'

Elwin knikte. 'Ja,' sprak Elwin. 'Ik heb het zelf gezien, en ik ben er geweest, en kwam toen hier terecht toen ik dieper ging.' De oude kale mannen begonnen te lachen. Ze hadden bijna geen tanden meer. 'Wat een kletspraat,' zei één van hen. Dus als we hier dieper graven dan komen we misschien in een andere verdieping van dat zogenaamde gokpaleis ?' Elwin knikte weer. 'Ja, dat denk ik wel, tenzij dit de onderste verdieping is.' De oude mannen begonnen nog harder te bulderen van het lachen.

'Wees maar voorzichtig,' zei Elwin. 'Straks hoort de boze cowboy ons nog.'

Toen werden de oude mannen met de lange baarden wat stiller. 'Hij heeft gelijk,' zei één van hen. Toen sprak de ander : 'Jongen, kijk nu eens goed om je heen en naar boven. Lijkt dit op een verdieping van een paleis ? Zie je boven je een plafond hangen ?'

Elwin schudde zijn hoofd. 'Nee, maar vergeet niet dat het het gokpaleis is van een tovenaar.'

De oude mannen keken bedenkelijk. 'Hmmm, misschien heeft hij gelijk,' zei één van hen. 'Er gebeuren hier soms inderdaad vreemde dingen.'

'Ja,' zei de ander, 'en als die droomsteen echt bestaat en hier ook ergens ligt, misschien zijn er dan nog veel meer schatten.'

'Wees daar maar niet zo zeker van !' zei een stem opeens. Ze stonden ineens recht voor de lange cowboy en keken in de loop van zijn revolver. 'Ik daag jullie uit voor een duel !' riep hij weer. 'Ik doe dertig passen achteruit, en jullie doen hetzelfde, en dan zal het duel beginnen. Moge de beste winnen.'

De cowboy draaide zich om en begon de dertig passen al te maken. Hij nam lange passen. 'Kom,' fluisterde één van de oude mannen hard, en rende de andere kant op, om zo snel mogelijk uit de buurt van de gevaarlijke cowboy te komen. De anderen volgden hem. 'Graven nu,' zei de oude man luid, 'misschien dat de jongen gelijk heeft. We moeten van die cowboy af zien te komen. Alledrie

begonnen ze haastig op dezelfde plek met hun handen te graven, en Elwin hoopte maar dat het een dunne laag zand was. Snel vonden ze een marmeren luik, en begonnen het zand ervan weg te halen zodat het geheel zichtbaar zou worden. Maar de cowboy stond al in de verte naar hen te kijken, en kwam steeds dichterbij. 'Het duel is begonnen !' riep de cowboy, en ze hoorden al schoten. Elwin's hart klopte in zijn keel. 'Sneller, sneller !' riep één van de oude mannen. Maar toen ze het luik wilde opentrekken merkten ze dat er een groot slot opzat. Eén van de oude mannen werd in zijn arm geraakt en schreeuwde van de pijn. 'We zijn verloren !' riep de andere kale man. Elwin begon al weg te rennen, maar ineens riepen de oude mannen hem terug. 'Kom terug, kom terug. Eén van de kogels heeft het slot van het luik opengesloten !' Haastig draaide Elwin zich om, en zag hoe de oude mannen door het luik heengingen. Hij rende naar het luik toe zo hard als hij kon, maar tot zijn grote schrik zag hij toen de cowboy die bij het luik was aangekomen. 'Dat doen we dus niet,' sprak de cowboy, en maakte het luik weer dicht.

'Kom, Elwin !' werd er weer door de oude mannen geroepen, maar Elwin zat in de val. 'Ik kan niet !' riep Elwin. 'De cowboy heeft het luik dichtgegooid, en staat hier voor me !' Toen werd het heel stil. De cowboy kwam dichter en dichter bij Elwin, en Elwin wist dat rennen geen zin meer had. Elwin keek recht in de loop van de revolver die de cowboy op hem gericht hield. 'Er gaat hier niks meer gebeuren,' sprak de cowboy. 'Alleen een klein kogeltje.' Toen begon hij te lachen. 'Zeg je laatste wens maar, doe een optelsom, of zing een versje, dat kan mij niet schelen. Je laatste minuut is geslagen. Ik wacht.'

Elwin begon te beven en te trillen. 'I... ik weet het niet,' zei Elwin.

'Wat weet je niet ?' vroeg de cowboy.

'Wat ik moet zeggen,' zei Elwin.

'Goed,' zei de cowboy, 'dan doen we het zonder …'

Maar verder kon de cowboy niet komen. Eén van de oude mannen had hem van achteren met een grote koekepan op zijn hoofd geslagen. De cowboy zakte in elkaar. 'Kom nu vlug, Elwin,' zeiden de oude mannen. 'Er is een keuken onder de woestijn. Weer gingen ze door het luik, en dit keer samen met Elwin. Toen deden ze het luik achter zich dicht. Ze hoopten nu dat de cowboy hen niet meer zou kunnen kwellen.

Het was een reusachtige ondergrondse keuken waar ze in terecht waren gekomen, maar er was niemand. 'Laten we dit gebouw onderzoeken,' zei één van de oude mannen. Er waren hier overal pannen en potten, en er hingen overal messen en hakbijlen aan de muren. 'Het lijkt wel oorlog,' sprak één van de oude mannen. Ze gingen een deur door, en kwamen toen in een andere zaal. Er stonden een heleboel ovens en fornuizen. Ze gingen toen door een enorme metalen schuifdeur en kwamen in een grote witte eetzaal terecht waar een heleboel tafels stonden. Hier was ook niemand. Ze liepen de hele zaal door en gingen toen door een zijdeurtje, waardoor ze in een grote hal terecht kwamen. Hier was een grote trap naar boven, bekleed met rood fluwelen tapijt, en er was een lift, en nog een kleinere gang en wat deuren.

'De jongen heeft gelijk gehad,' zei één van de oude mannen. 'Waarschijnlijk heeft hij ook gelijk over de droomsteen. Die moet hier dus ergens zijn, of op een andere verdieping. Zijn verhaal klinkt aannemelijk. De andere oude man knikte.

'Die lift ga ik niet in. Dat brengt alleen maar narigheid,' sprak Elwin. Hij liep naar de kleinere gang, en sloeg daar een deur open, maar tot zijn grote schrik zag hij toen een hele lange gang die precies leek op de eindeloze gangen waar hij vandaan was gekomen. Snel gooide hij de deur dicht. 'Hier

moeten we ook niet wezen,' beefde hij. Hij liep verder op het kleine gangetje en maakte geen deuren meer open. Aan het einde van het kleine gangetje was een trap naar boven. 'Laten we dit proberen,' sprak hij. De oude mannen volgden hem op de voet. Elwin was blij dat hij twee vrienden had gevonden. Op een hogere verdieping waar de trap naartoe leidde stond een deur open van een kamertje. Elwin en de oude mannen gingen er naar binnen. Elwin keek door het raam en zag allemaal woestijn. 'Hmmm, daar komen we vandaan,' sprak één van de oude mannen. Elwin knikte. 'Laten we nog verder de trap op,' sprak Elwin. Op een verdieping hoger was weer een kamer, en een badkamer. Ook was er een grote hal. Hier stonden allemaal antieke spullen, zoals planeetbollen en oude stoelen. Ook hingen er antieke koninklijke gordijnen. 'Misschien woont de gokkoning hier ?' zei één van de oude mannen.

'Ik hoop het niet, want anders zouden we in grote problemen kunnen zijn,' sprak Elwin.

'Maar dat zou ook betekenen dat we dichter bij de droomsteen zouden kunnen zijn, en dat is toch wat we willen ?' zei de andere oude man. 'Dat is waar,' zei Elwin. Ze keken door een groot raam, en zagen een herfstbos buiten, als een koninklijke tuin. Ze hoorden gebrul in de verte. Even gingen de rillingen door Elwin heen. Hij hoopte echt dat ze dit keer niet in de problemen zouden komen. De oude mannen begonnen de kamer te doorzoeken, terwijl Elwin uit het raam bleef kijken. Het was alsof hij deze plaats ergens van kende. Buiten zag hij een tuinman de bladeren bij elkaar harken. Opeens stond er een dienstmeisje in de grote deur opening. 'Ah, de gasten zijn er al,' sprak ze opgewekt. 'Hoe kan ik jullie helpen ?'

'Eh, bedankt,' sprak één van de oude mannen. 'Wij komen voor de gokkoning, Hoe laat komt hij ?'

Het dienstmeisje hief haar wenkbrauwen op en begon te lachen. 'Meneer maakt zeker een grapje. Gokkoning ? Daar heb ik nog nooit van gehoord, tenzij u de gokautomaten in de kantine bedoeld.' De oude man kreeg een rood gezicht. Elwin begon haar toen het hele verhaal uit te leggen, maar het dienstmeisje begreep er niet veel van. 'Dat klinkt als een sprookje,' sprak ze. 'Dus als ik het goed begrijp heeft u deze kamer niet gereserveerd ?'

Opeens stond er een dikke man met een sigaar en een gestreept pak in de deur opening. 'Wat moet dit hier !' bulderde hij. 'Jullie komen me niet bekend voor, en hebben geen plaats in dit sjiek hotel. Nu, wegwezen, of ik laat jullie verwijderen met de harde hand. Maak dat je wegkomt nu.'

Maar dat liet Elwin niet op zich zitten. Hij stapte op de man af en gaf hem een stomp in zijn dikke buik. 'Wie heeft jou geleerd om zo tegen ons te praten ? En jullie hebben hier gokautomaten ? Dan moet hier vast en zeker ook de gokkoning ergens zijn en de droomsteen die hij verborgen houdt.'

Ruw greep de man Elwin bij zijn arm, en begon hem door elkaar te rammelen. 'Zeg, wat is dat, ventje ? Er woont hier geen koning, en al helemaal geen gokkoning. Droomstenen komen verder alleen in jouw praatjes voor.' Toen duwde de man Elwin weg. Nu begon Elwin echt kwaad te worden. 'Maar dit is een onderdeel van het gokpaleis !' riep Elwin boos naar de man.

'Ja ja,' lachte de man in het donkere gestreepte pak. Hij had ook een donkere hoed op, en zijn sigaar gleed bijna uit zijn mond. 'En mijn tante is een olifant, en mijn oom draagt driehonderd brillen. Zeg, kom nou, onderdeel van een gokpaleis ? Wie denk je wel niet dat je bent ? Allemaal hazentaal.' Ook de dikke man die de hotelbaas leek te zijn trok een revolver en richtte de loop op Elwin om hem onder schot te houden. 'Daar gaan we weer !' riep één van de oude kale mannen. 'Tegenwoordig wordt er bij het minste of geringste al naar een pistool gegrepen ! Belachelijk !'

'Houd je muil, ouwe,' sprak de dikke hotelbaas. 'En nu allemaal ophoepelen, want mijn pistool jeukt.' De dikke hotelbaas stond daar al rood van woede en begon al lampen kapot te schieten als

waarschuwing.

Het dienstmeisje keek geschrokken. 'Weet u dat zeker dat u die dure porseleinen en kristallen antieke lampen kapot wil schieten vanwege een stel belhamels ?' riep ze.

'Ach klets niet, hoela hoep,' zei de hotelbaas. 'Dat laat ik hen allemaal betalen.'

Elwin begon de kamer uit te rennen, en de oude mannen volgden hem. 'En nu betalen voor de lampen !' gilde de hotelbaas. 'Ja !' riep het dienstmeisje. 'Het is jullie schuld !' Elwin rende de trap weer op naar een hogere verdieping. Hier waren een heleboel kamers in een cirkel waar allemaal Chinese meisjes stonden in zijden Chinese pyjama's en jurken. 'Het lijkt wel kerstfeest,' sprak één van de oude mannen. Achter zich hoorden ze schoten. Dat moest de hotelbaas zijn. 'Laten we nog hoger gaan,' zei Elwin luid tegen de oude mannen, en weer rende hij de trap op. Maar op de volgende verdieping waren de eindeloze gangen weer. 'Hier niet, hier niet !' riep Elwin. Maar ook de hotelbaas was verder de trap opgegaan, met het dienstmeisje achter hem. 'Jullie kunnen me nu niet meer ontkomen !' sprak hij gemeen. 'Hoezo niet ?' vroeg Elwin. 'Kijk eens naar al die gangen hier.' De hotelbaas begon te lachen. 'Het is mijn hotel,' zei de hotelbaas. 'Ik ken de weg. Jullie niet. Verstoppen heeft geen zin.'

'Oh, dus die eindeloze gangen zijn van jou ? Dan moet jij dus wel de gokkoning zijn !' riep Elwin. De hotelbaas kwam steeds dichter bij hem. 'Ren dan, ren,' sprak de hotelbaas. 'Als je wil leven.' De oude mannen begonnen al zo'n eindeloze gang op te rennen. 'Nee, nee, kom terug !' riep Elwin. 'Die gangen zijn eindeloos, daar kom je nooit meer weg !' Maar ze hoorden hem al niet meer, en al snel verdwenen ze in een bocht.

Elwin keek de hotelbaas recht in zijn ogen. Wat waren die ogen gemeen. 'U moet de gokkoning wel zijn,' sprak Elwin. 'Wat gaat u met mijn vrienden doen ?'

'Welke vrienden ?' lachte de hotelbaas. 'Ze bestaan niet meer.'

'Hoe weet u dat ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Omdat ze goed in de val zijn gelopen, die indringers,' sprak de hotelbaas. 'Vooruit, ren dan.'

'Ren zelf,' zei Elwin.

'Ik heb de revolver hier, en het is mijn hotel,' zei de hotelbaas.

'Ik waag me er niet meer aan,' sprak Elwin. De hotelbaas bewoog de loop van de revolver helemaal tegen Elwin's kin aan en drukte er tegen. 'De droomsteen ligt daar ergens. Waarom zou je er niet op afgaan ?' sprak de hotelbaas.

'Ik ben niet gek,' zei Elwin.

'De droomsteen wacht al op je, ventje, nou, komt er nog wat van ?' sprak de hotelbaas.

Opeens werd de hotelbaas van achteren neegeslagen met een koekepan. Het was de cowboy. 'Zo, die had je nog van mij tegoed,' sprak de cowboy. Het dienstmeisje begon gillend weg te rennen. Toen richtte de cowboy zich op Elwin. 'Jij weer, hè ?'

Uit de zak van de hotelbaas die op de grond lag gleed een bos met sleutels. Elwin bedacht zich geen moment en greep de bos met sleutels. 'Nee !' krijste de cowboy. 'Doe die sleutels weg !' Elwin hield

de bos sleutels voor de neus van de cowboy. Hij hield ze stevig vast en liet ze daar bungelen. De cowboy zakte slap in elkaar en begon te jammeren en te smeken : 'Ik smeek je, haal die ellendige dingen van me weg. Ik kan er niet tegen, ik kan er niet tegen.' Zijn handen waren slap geworden, en de koekepan en de revolver gleden eruit weg en vielen op de grond. Elwin trapte ze weg met zijn voet. Met zijn andere hand haalde hij de tweede revolver weg van de cowboy, en toen ook een mes. 'Die sleutels zijn van mij nu,' sprak Elwin. 'Nu, maak dat je wegkomt !' De cowboy kruipte één van de eindeloze gangen op en begon toen hard en gillend weg te rennen, totdat hij in een bocht verdween.

'Ziezo,' zei Elwin, maar toen hij zich omdraaide werd hij onder schot gehouden door het dienstmeisje die één van de revolvers op de grond had gegrepen. 'Terug met die sleutels,' sprak ze streng. 'Op de grond ermee.' Elwin liet van schrik de sleutels vallen. 'Handen omhoog,' sprak ze. Elwin deed zijn handen omhoog. De andere revolver en het mes schopte ze bij hem weg, en bukte toen om de sleutelbos te pakken, terwijl ze hem strak bleef aankijken en onder schot hield.

'Hier ga je zwaar voor betalen,' sprak het dienstmeisje.

'Ik weet het,' zei Elwin. 'Dat was dom van mij.'

'Een beetje heel dom,' zei het dienstmeisje. Langzaam begon de hotelbaas bij te komen. 'Hmmm, goed werk,' zei hij tegen het dienstmeisje. 'Hij is nu van ons. Misschien kunnen we hem goed gebruiken.'

Maar daar zagen ze ineens de cowboy terugkomen vanuit de eindeloze gang die met een enorme snelheid op hen afkwam. Van schrik richtte het dienstmeisje de revolver op de aanstormende cowboy, terwijl Elwin dankbaar van het moment gebruik maakte en de benen nam. Hij ging de trap af naar beneden, en wist dat hij nu zo diep mogelijk weer moest, want boven liep het spoor dood. Hij hoorde de hotelbaas en de cowboy al op elkaar schelden, en ook het gekrijs van het dienstmeisje klonk er doorheen. Ze leken hem helemaal vergeten te zijn. In de hal naast de eetzaal zocht Elwin onder het tapijt naar een luik, maar dat scheen er niet te zijn. Hij liep toen naar de andere kant van de hal naast de eetzaal waar hij een deur opende, maar daar zag hij weer zo'n eindeloze gang. 'Dan de lift maar,' sprak Elwin tegen zichzelf en rende naar de lift. 'Dit zijn probleem-dingen,' mompelde hij. Hij drukte op een gloeiende rode knop voor een verdieping lager toen hij in de lift was.

'Ik ben benieuwd,' zei Elwin tegen zichzelf, terwijl hij rilde. Hij voelde zich niet echt goed. De lift leek maar niet te stoppen. Na een hele lange tijd, en dat leken wel uren te zijn, stopte de lift eindelijk. Maar toen Elwin uitstapte was hij weer op precies dezelfde verdieping als waar hij was ingestapt, namelijk van het hotel, in de hal dichtbij de eetzaal. Toch leek alles net iets anders. Hij stapte uit, en zag tot zijn grote schrik de hotelbaas, de cowboy en het dienstmeisje op hem afkomen. Hij wilde weer de lift instappen, maar de deur zat dicht, en hij kreeg de liftdeur met geen mogelijkheid meer open. Elwin begon op het knopje te rammen. 'Toe nou, ga open, kreng !' riep hij. Toen ineens voelde hij van achter een hand op zijn schouder. Het was de hotelbaas. Elwin kromp ineen toen hij zich omdraaide, en had erge buikpijn. Hij keek naar het dienstmeisje die breed glimlachte. Toen keek hij naar de cowboy die ook breed glimlachte, en de hotelbaas keek heel bezorgd naar hem.

'Ummm, wat is hier aan de hand ?' vroeg Elwin die er niets van begreep. Hij had eerder pistool onder zijn neus verwacht of een klap met een koekepan. 'Niets,' zei de cowboy glimlachend en vriendelijk. 'Helemaal niets. We vroegen ons af hoe het met je ging als onze gast.'

'Tttttt,' zei Elwin. 'Eerst loop je me nog achterna met een pistool en moest ik weg, en werd ik onder schot gehouden, enzovoorts, en nu zijn jullie ineens mijn vrienden ofzo ?' Elwin was heel verbaasd.

Ook de cowboy, het dienstmeisje en de hotelbaas waren heel verbaasd, en keken hem bezorgd en liefdevol aan. 'Maar jongen toch, waar haal je dat toch allemaal vandaan ? Pistolen ? Heb je soms eng gedroomd ?' vroeg de hotelbaas vriendelijk en vol interesse.

'I... ik weet het niet meer,' sprak Elwin, en begon het hele verhaal te vertellen. 'Oh, jij komt van boven,' zei het dienstmeisje met een aardige stem. 'Nu begrijpen wij het. Daarboven is alles omgekeerde wereld. Daar moet je ook niet komen, jongen.'

'Maar die lift dan ?' vroeg Elwin. 'Leidt die dan niet naar boven, want daar kom ik vandaan.'

'Die lift gaat alleen maar door de verdiepingen van het hotel, maar niet hoger,' sprak de cowboy. 'Jij moet van heel hoog zijn gekomen, waar je alleen maar van kan komen, maar nooit naartoe kan gaan.'

'Ik snap het niet,' zei Elwin. 'Ik kan dus nooit meer terug ?'

'Precies,' zei de hotelbaas. 'En gelukkig maar, want daar is alles omgekeerde wereld.'

'Ja maar, Kik en Kes dan ?' vroeg Elwin. 'Zij moeten hun droomsteen terugkrijgen, en er zijn zoveel kinderen door de gokkoning naar die plaats ontvoerd, en die moeten daar werken.'

'Oh,' zei de hotelbaas, 'maak je maar niet ongerust, hoor. Die zullen ook hun weg hier naartoe wel vinden.'

'Ik kan ze toch niet zomaar aan hun lot overlaten ?' vroeg Elwin. 'En waar is die droomsteen dan ?'

'Tja,' zei de cowboy. 'Dat weten we niet, en dat weet niemand, alhoewel sommigen zeggen dat deze verdieping de droomsteen is.'

'En wat is hier onder dan ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Oh, hieronder moet je ook niet wezen,' sprak het dienstmeisje vriendelijk. 'Dit hier is een verdieping uit duizenden. De rest is allemaal omgekeerde wereld. Ook wij vonden ooit onze weg naar deze plaats, en we wilden sindsdien nooit meer weg. Voor ons is dit de droomsteen.'

'Maar ik zou graag over deze plaats willen vertellen aan mijn vrienden, de kokkin, de boerin, de twee oude mannen en Kik en Kes,' sprak Elwin.

'Ze moeten daar zelf achter komen, Elwin,' sprak de cowboy. 'Iedereen moet die reis voor zichzelf maken en de juiste lessen leren en de juiste beslissingen maken.'

'Maar toch wil ik ze helpen,' sprak Elwin.

'Dat kan niet,' zei de cowboy. 'Dat is te gevaarlijk. Je wilt toch niet dat de verkeerde personen deze plaats vinden ? Het is te riskant, en daarom kan niemand ooit nog terug naar waar ze vandaan kwamen. Begrijp je dat ?'

'Ik begrijp het wel,' zei Elwin, 'maar we zitten hier toch niet opgesloten ?'

De cowboy schudde liefdevol zijn hoofd. 'Elwin, Elwin, Elwin. Jongen, het heeft niets met opgesloten te maken, maar met beveiliging. Dat is toch een goede zaak dan ?'

Elwin boog zijn hoofd. 'Maar is er dan niets wat we voor hen kunnen doen ? Helemaal niets ?'

'Helemaal niets,' sprak het dienstmeisje.

Elwin keek haar even aan en boog toen zijn hoofd weer. 'Maar Kik en Kes zullen hier nooit komen. Ze zijn veel te bang voor het gokpaleis. Ik moet ze gaan opzoeken. Ik kan het niet over mijn hart halen om hen in de steek te laten.'

'Goed,' zei de cowboy plotseling. 'Er is één manier om je vrienden te bezoeken, maar dan zullen we allemaal gaan. We zullen jou nooit in de steek laten. Jij bent één van ons.'

Het dienstmeisje en de hotelbaas keken de cowboy verbaasd aan. 'Wat is die manier dan, cowboy ?' vroeg de hotelbaas vriendelijk en vol interesse. 'Oh,' zei de cowboy, 'ik moet gewoon even de lift anders instellen. Ik ben de mechanicus, dus dat komt wel goed. Het is voor mij een koud kunstje. Ik heb ook ooit eens het hele gokpaleis voor de gokkoning gemaakt.'

Elwin keek verbaasd. 'Dus jij hebt dit alles gemaakt ? Wacht eens even. Betekent dat dat er op deze verdieping ook een aardige gokkoning is, net zo aardig als jullie ?'

De hotelbaas begon breed te glimlachen en ook het dienstmeisje. 'Die is nog wel aardiger dan wij allemaal bij elkaar,' lachte de hotelbaas.

'Hmmm,' zei Elwin, 'dus als ik het goed begrijp heeft de cowboy alle andere verdiepingen gemaakt om alles te beveiligen tegen gespuis ?' De anderen knikten. 'Hmmm,' zei Elwin. 'Betekent dat dat de cowboy onaantastbaar is, omdat hij alles gemaakt heeft ?'

'Was dat maar zo,' sprak de cowboy. 'Ik heb alles zo lang geleden gemaakt, en er houdt zich daar zoveel verschrikkelijk tuig op, en alles slaat soms echt op hol.'

Elwin zuchtte. 'We moeten toch echt naar Kik en Kes gaan.'

'Komt voor de bakker,' zei de cowboy. 'Stap allemaal in de lift, dan stel ik hem even bij, en dan kunnen we hoger.'

'Spannend,' zei Elwin.

Toen ze allemaal in de lift waren schroefde de cowboy even een kastje open, draaide even wat hier en daar, en schroefde toen het kastje weer dicht. Toen drukte hij op een rood gloeiende knop, en daar gingen ze. De lift begon na een tijdje zwaar te piepen. Ze keken allemaal even verschrikt, behalve de cowboy, die glimlachtte wat. 'Ach, negeer dat gepiep maar. De lift is er niet aan gewend, dus die protesteert even, maar als het goed is houdt hij zich zo wel stil, want ik heb hem nu anders ingesteld.'

'Dat hoop ik maar,' sprak Elwin. Het gepiep werd alleen maar erger, zo erg dat Elwin zijn vingers in zijn oren had gestopt. En toen opeens stopte het geluid. Elwin en de anderen haalden opgelucht adem. Toen na een tijdje de liftdeur open ging keken ze recht in een eindeloze gang. 'Daar ga ik dus niet in !' riep Elwin geschrokken.

'Elwin, de maker van de eindeloze gang is hier,' zei de hotelbaas, 'dus we hebben niets te vrezen,' terwijl hij op de cowboy wees. De cowboy glimlachtte een beetje. 'Volg mij,' sprak hij. De cowboy liep de gang op, en de anderen volgden hem. 'Er zit een code in,' sprak de cowboy. 'We nemen eerst

de tiende deur aan de linkerkant, en dan in de volgende gang nemen we weer de tiende deur aan de linkerkant, en in de volgende gang doen we precies hetzelfde.'

'Interessant,' zei Elwin, die alweer een beetje hoop kreeg. Ze telden tien deuren aan de linkerkant van de gang, en gingen toen door de tiende deur binnen. Toen telden ze op de volgende gang weer tien deuren aan de linkerkant om door de tiende deur heen te gaan. Daarna telden ze op de volgende gang weer tien deuren aan de linkerkant om door de tiende deur heen te gaan. Zo kwamen ze in een kamer terecht. 'Geweldig !' riep Elwin. 'Dus alleen zij die deze code kennen hebben een kamer in het gokpaleis ?' De cowboy knikte.

'Geniaal, en zo goed tegen dieven !' lachte Elwin.

'Dat dacht je maar,' sprak de cowboy. 'Er zijn genoeg bandieten die deze code kennen, en daarom zit het gokpaleis vol met vagebonden.'

'Had ik die code maar gekend toen ik naar het gokpaleis kwam,' lachte Elwin, 'dan was het allemaal zo erg niet geweest.'

'Er zijn wel meer codes,' sprak de cowboy.

'Dat geloof ik graag,' lachte Elwin, die zich al een stuk opgeluchter voelde.

'Als je drie keer de zevende deur aan de linkerkant neemt, dan vind je daar iemand die verdwaald is in de gangen,' sprak de cowboy.

Elwin rende de kamer uit. Hij kon niet wachten om het uit te proberen, want hij wilde de oude mannen weer zien. Hij wilde ze graag verrassen. Hij rende naar de zevende deur aan de linkerkant, en toen weer naar de zevende deur aan de linkerkant, en toen weer. Tot zijn grote verbazing kwam hij toen op een gang waar de twee oude mannen waren. Ze zaten vermoeid op de grond, en keken verbaasd en verrast op naar Elwin. 'Ik heb ze gevonden !' riep Elwin.

'Eindelijk heb je ons gevonden !' riep één van de oude mannen, en stond op om Elwin te omhelzen. Ook de andere oude man stond op en omhelsde Elwin. 'Daar zijn we blij mee,' sprak hij. 'We dachten dat we hier nooit meer uit zouden komen.' Ook de cowboy, de hotelbaas en de dienstmaagd kwamen, en Elwin begon het hele verhaal te vertellen.

'En hoe komen we uit het gokpaleis ?' vroeg één van de oude mannen.

'Simpel,' sprak de cowboy. 'Neem drie keer de derde deur aan de linkerkant, en je komt op de gang die naar de paleispoort leidt. Kom, ik zal het je laten zien.' De cowboy nam de derde deur aan de linkerkant geteld vanaf de deur waardoor ze op deze gang kwamen. De anderen volgden hem. Toen nam hij weer de derde linker deur, en toen weer. Zo kwamen ze in een grote hal terecht die naar de poort van het paleis leidde, maar er stonden wachten daar.

'Problemen,' sprak de cowboy. 'Ik ken die wachters niet.' Maar de wachten hadden hen al gezien en kwamen met speren op hen af. 'Wat moet dat daar ?' riep een wacht, die snel dichterbij kwam. 'En wie zijn jullie ?' Ze waren met z'n tweeen en ze hadden zware zwarte pakken aan, en hadden vreemde, angstaanjagende helmen op.

'Genoeg praatjes,' sprak de cowboy. 'Ik ben de maker van het gokpaleis.' Hij boog naar de anderen toe en sprak : 'Nu zijn we in de problemen.' Elwin verstijfde van de schrik.

De wachten deden net alsof ze de cowboy niet hoorden. 'Wie zijn jullie ?' vroeg de wacht weer.

'Gaat je niks aan,' sprak de cowboy. 'Ik heb dit gokpaleis gemaakt. Nou, maak dat je wegkomt.'

De wachten begonnen te lachen en elkaar aan te stoten. 'Dat zeggen ze allemaal dat ze het paleis hebben gebouwd.' Plotseling grepen ze de cowboy vast.

'Hey, laat hem los !' riep Elwin.

'Waarom zouden we ?' zei één van de wachten. 'Hij is een onbevoegde, net zoals jullie. Dit is verboden terrein voor onbekenden.'

'Laat maar, Elwin,' sprak de cowboy. 'Ze zullen er nog wel achter komen.' De cowboy werd afgevoerd, en was al snel verdwenen met de twee wachten. 'Laten we dit spookpaleis uitgaan nu het nog kan,' sprak Elwin, en rende toen op de poort af. De anderen renden achter hem aan. Daarna stonden ze allemaal buiten. Elwin blies op zijn vingers op dezelfde manier als Kes eens deed. Niet lang daarna kwam er een grote raaf aanvliegen. Het was Utsmul. 'Fijn dat je er bent, Utsmul !' riep Elwin. 'Breng ons snel naar Kik en Kes !' Elwin en de anderen klommen op de raaf, die direct richting de zee vloog waaraan Kik en Kes woonden. Toen ze daar aankwamen waren Kik en Kes weer aan het dansen rondom een kampvuur. 'Kijk,' zei Kes tegen Kik, 'daar komt Utsmul. Hij heeft Elwin met wat anderen meegenomen.' Kik en Kes waren blij hen te zien. 'Ha, Elwin !' riep Kes, 'wat een verrassing ! We hopen dat je met goed nieuws komt. Heb je de droomsteen inmiddels gevonden ?' Elwin stapte van de vogel af, en ook de anderen. Hij liep op Kik en Kes af en omhelsde hem. Elwin begon direct het hele verhaal te vertellen.

Hoofdstuk 3.

'Dus de droomsteen is een bepaalde verdieping in het gokpaleis, en de cowboy heeft alle andere verdiepingen gemaakt om de droomsteen te beveiligen ?' vroeg Kes. Elwin knikte.

'Hmmm,' zei Kes. 'Dan is dat vast een andere soort droomsteen, want onze droomsteen is gewoon een steen, een flonkerende roze-rode steen,' terwijl hij een plaatje van de steen uit zijn broekzak haalde.

'Er loopt veel gespuis rond in het spookpaleis,' sprak Elwin. 'Misschien houden zij de steen daar wel verborgen. De cowboy had het er ook over dat er veel bandieten zijn daar.'

'Waarom heeft hij het gokpaleis dan gemaakt ?' vroeg Kek. 'Dat klinkt nogal dom.'

'Het gokpaleis zit vol met valstrikken,' sprak Elwin, 'en alles werkt daar door codes. Nu kunnen sommige bandieten misschien wat codes kennen, maar lang niet allemaal. Uiteindelijk zal het gokpaleis dus wel met hen afrekenen.'

'Dat hoop ik maar,' sprak Kes. 'Maar wat kunnen we doen om die arme cowboy te helpen, want het lijkt erop alsof hij in één van zijn eigengemaakte valstrikken is gelopen ?'

'De cowboy zal zich wel redden,' sprak de hotelbaas glimlachend en vol vertrouwen en zekerheid. 'Hij is slim genoeg om er iets voor te vinden. Hij heeft immers alles gemaakt, en waarschijnlijk test hij nu alles uit, en zal die twee vagebonden van wachten flink op hun nummer zetten.' Ook het dienstmeisje knikte glimlachend.

Plotseling zagen ze vanaf de bergen een enorm lange clown komen. Zijn benen bleven gewoon in de bergen staan, en zijn enorm lange lichaam schoof zich naar hen toe. In zijn armen droeg hij de flonkerende roze-rode droomsteen, en de cowboy zat erop. 'Dat is de gokkoning !' riep de hotelbaas, 'de gokkoning van onze droomsteen-verdieping !' De clown zette de steen met de cowboy erop bij hen neer, en stapte toen met zijn lange benen naar hen toe, terwijl zijn benen weer kleiner werden. Hij was als elastiek. 'Hoera !' riepen Kik en Kes toen ze de droomsteen weer terughadden.

'De gokkoning heeft mij van de valse wachten bevrijd,' lachte de cowboy. Elwin maakte een buiging voor de gokkoning, en de clown nam hem in zijn armen en knuffelde hem. Elwin herkende de clown. Heel lang geleden had Elwin eens over deze clown gedroomd, die hem overal mee naar toe nam in zijn armen, en heel snel ging, van plaats naar plaats. Hij kon inderdaad heel lang worden. 'Elwin, dit is nu het geheim van de droomsteen,' sprak de cowboy glimlachend.

Einde

De Zandman van

Ovven

Hoofdstuk 1.

Overal lag er zand in het paleis. Klaas Vaak was net langsgekomen. Op zijn dromenwagen betoverde hij het hele land van Ovven. Hij werd ook wel de zandman genoemd.

Maar op een dag gebeurde dat niet meer. Klaas Vaak was ontvoerd. De mensen konden niet meer goed in slaap komen.

Elwin ging op onderzoek uit. Hij ging op reis op een kameel, door de woestijnen, om op zoek te gaan naar een spoor van Klaas Vaak. Die kon natuurlijk niet ver van het zand vandaan zijn, dacht Elwin. Eerst ging Elwin naar het domein van Klaas Vaak diep in de woestijn. Hij kwam aan bij de

huizenhoge poort van het woestijngebied, en zag direct dat er een steen miste die gewoonlijks altijd hoog in de boog van de poort was. Er miste een grote rode steen aan de rechterkant waar de poort naar links begint te buigen. Die rode steen was de steen van de zee. Zonder de steen zou de zandman zijn werk niet kunnen doen. Maar die steen was nu weg, en daarmee ook de zandman. Elwin stond voor een groot raadsel.

Elwin voelde alsof er een stuk uit zijn hart was gesneden, alsof hij een stuk van zijn hart miste, en hij was er van overtuigd dat het met elkaar te maken had. Ook Elwin kon sinds de verdwijning van de zandman niet meer goed in slaap komen, zoals zoveel anderen in Ovven.

De zee is één van de door de mens meest gevreeste natuur-elementen, omdat de zee de tijd laat zien, zowel het verleden als de toekomst. De zee is de tijdmachine van de natuur. Deze tijdmachine wordt bestuurd door de grote Zeeman, Aart Golf, ook wel koning Oceanus genoemd, van de zeemeerminnen en zeemeermannen. Hij is zelf ook een zeemeerman. Hij heeft een kaal hoofd en een hele lange baard. Nu de steen van de zee was geroofd had Klaas Vaak zijn macht over de zee verloren. Elwin hoorde de zee bulderen in de verte. Elwin wist dat waarschijnlijk spoedig de zee het gebied van Klaas Vaak totaal zou overnemen. En wat zou er dan gebeuren ? Ovven zou niet kunnen bestaan zonder Klaas Vaak. Elwin wist niet hoeveel tijd hij nog had. Met zijn kameel besloot hij naar de zee achter de woestijn te gaan om op onderzoek uit te gaan. Hij wilde met Aart Golf, oftewel koning Oceanus spreken om te horen wat er aan de hand was.

Toen hij bij de zee was aangekomen wist hij dat hij voorzichtig moest zijn, want er was daar een piratenschip bij de kust. Ineens werd Elwin van achter hard geslagen op zijn hoofd en van zijn kameel afgetrokken. Het was een piraat. Een andere piraat stond erbij, en toen sleurden ze hem beiden naar het piratenschip. Elwin werd pas wakker toen hij in een kooi op het schip was. Hij had in het hooi op de grond gelegen. 'W... wat heeft dat te betekenen,' stamelde Elwin van de doffe pijn die hij nog in zijn hoofd had.

Toen de piraten-kapitein en hoofdman hem kwam bekijken begon die direct te lachen. 'Ha ha, die moet overboord. Die kunnen we echt niet gebruiken, alleen als vissenvoer.'

'Hij zou het dek kunnen schrobben,' sprak een andere piraat.

'Mond houden,' sprak de kapitein. 'Dat is jouw taak, en dat blijf jij doen. Vannacht nog gaat deze jongen overboord. De vissen moeten ook eten.' Wat andere piraten begonnen te lachen.

Elwin beefde en rilde in zijn kooi. Hij voelde zich echt niet lekker, vooral niet met zo'n naar vooruitzicht. Elwin begon om hulp te schreeuwen toen ze allemaal weer weg waren, maar niemand kwam hem te hulp. 'Je bent er goed bij,' sprak een raaf in een kooi aan de andere kant van de ruimte waarin Elwin was opgesloten.

'Kunt u me niet helpen ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Wat kan ik doen ?' snauwde de raaf. 'Gebruik jij je ogen wel ? Ik zit ook in een kooi. Ik ben zo hulpeloos en machteloos als jij.'

'Snauw niet zo, vreemde vogel,' sprak Elwin. 'Ik kon het toch proberen ? Iedereen maakt fouten.'

'Maar jij wel heel erg veel,' sprak de raaf.

'Je kent me niet eens,' snauwde Elwin terug. 'Ik hoop dat ze jou opbakken.'

'Nu ga je te ver, ventje !' kraaide de raaf. 'Als ik niet in deze kooi zat dan zou ik je ogen uitpikken.'

'Rotvogel,' sprak Elwin. De raaf zei niets meer terug en ging een dutje doen. Ook Elwin was erg moe geworden en viel weer in slaap. Midden in de nacht werd hij uit zijn kooi gehaald door piraten.

'Laat die jongen met rust,' kraaide de raaf. 'Hij heeft jullie niets gedaan.'

'Snuit houden, raaf,' bulderde een piraat. 'Met jou rekenen we later af. Door de soep zal je misschien goed smaken.' Terwijl de andere piraten begonnen te bulderen van het lachen. Elwin keek dankbaar naar de raaf, maar wist dat de raaf ook verder niets kon doen. 'Doe met mij wat je wilt,' sprak Elwin dapper, 'maar geef die raaf zijn vrijheid terug. Laat de vogels met rust, anders zullen de grote vissen jullie schip zeker opslokken voor jullie slechte daden.'

De piraten lachten hard. 'Wat een druiloor ben jij, jongen !' gromde een piraat dichtbij zijn oor. Het was een hele dikke piraat met een rode doek om zijn hoofd met witte ballen erop geschilderd. 'Wij moeten ook eten ! Daar zijn vogels voor.'

'Je bent al veel te dik,' sprak Elwin. 'Geef die vogels maar eens te eten, hebzuchtig kreng.'

'Kreng ? Jij durft mij kreng te noemen, maffe druiloor ?' gromde de dikke piraat terwijl hij zijn mes trok en onder Elwin's kin zette. 'Wij zullen nu voor de visjes zorgen, en jou aan hen voeren.' De piraat bond zijn handen op zijn rug en aan zijn voet bond hij een touw waaraan een hele grote steen was vastgemaakt. 'Zo zal je snel zinken,' lachte een andere piraat die maar één tand had. 'Dat is makkelijker voor de vissen. Zou jij het fijn vinden dat als je zou gaan eten en je voedsel zou ineens van je bord afspringen om weg te rennen ?'

Elwin zei niets. 'Ik waarschuw jullie, piraten,' kraaide de raaf. 'Als jullie de jongen ook maar een haar krenken dan zal de afrekening volgen.'

De piraten lachten. 'Wie ga je daarvoor meebrengen, domme vogel ?' riep een piraat hard.

'Dat zul je nog wel zien,' sprak de raaf. 'Jullie worden goed in de gaten gehouden.'

'Negeer die maffe kippebout. Eten hoort niet te spreken !' gromde de dikke piraat die het helemaal gehad had. Hij sleurde Elwin het dek op, terwijl een andere piraat de grote steen droeg. 'Ik heb jullie gewaarschuwd !' riep de raaf hen na. 'Ik zal die vogel zo de strot doorsnijden,' sprak de dikke piraat, en duwde Elwin naar de reling. 'Laat me met rust !' riep Elwin. 'Hier zullen jullie voor boeten.'

'Wees blij dat we nog iets van jouw zinloze leven maken,' gromde de dikke piraat. Hij begon Elwin al over de reling te duwen, die daar al snel aan het touw om zijn voet bungelde. De andere piraat hield nog steeds de steen vast. 'Gooi,' brulde de dikke piraat, en zo werd de zware steen waaraan Elwin vastzat met een touw in de zee geworpen, waardoor Elwin als een pijl meeschoot in het bruisende zeewater. Elwin begon direct snel te zinken. 'Dit is mijn einde,' dacht Elwin, die heel diep adem had genomen. Elwin begon te tellen, maar na een tijdje begon hij zijn bewustzijn te verliezen. 'Vaarwel' was het laatste woord wat Elwin sprak. Toen werd het zwart voor zijn ogen. Een zeemeermin zag hem in de zeediepte glijden en aarzelde geen moment en schoot op hem af. Vliegensvlug maakte ze het touw van zijn voet los, en trok hem met haar mee. Ze bracht hem naar een grot. Ze wist dat hij snel adem nodig had. Ze legde iets op zijn mond. Het was een soort kwal die niet stak. De kwal gaf adem aan Elwin, en begon zich te vormen om het hele hoofd van Elwin, als een soort doorzichtige helm, als een adem masker. Elwin nam diep adem, en kwam weer bij zijn positieven. 'W... waar ben ik ?' stamelde Elwin.

De zeemeermin keek hem aan. 'Je bent hier diep onderwater,' sprak ze. Elwin was verwonderd dat hij gewoon kon ademen. Hij begon te glimlachen. Hij keek de zeemeermin aan. Ze had lang golvend haar en juwelen om haar nek. De juwelen waren prachtig blauw, en ze fonkelden. Ze hadden een zachte kleur. Elwin voelde zich als betoverd.

'Kom,' sprak de zeemeermin, 'ik zal je naar onze koning leiden.'

'Koning Oceanus ?' vroeg Elwin. 'Die moest ik net spreken. Er is namelijk wat verschrikkelijks gebeurd met Klaas Vaak.'

De zeemeermin begon te glimlachen. 'Ook al ? Van mijn vader hebben ze de tijdmachine gestolen. Ze zijn flink bezig.'

'Ja,' sprak Elwin, 'ze hebben de rode zee steen uit de poort van Klaas Vaak gestolen, zijn droommachine en zelfs Klaas Vaak zelf hebben ze ontvoerd.'

De zeemeermin schrok van deze woorden. 'Ontvoerd ? Maar dat is verschrikkelijk. Laten we gauw vader raadplegen.' De zeeemeermin trok hem verder en zwom naar een grotere grot die leidde tot een hele grote hal waar een grote troon stond bezet met schelpen, waarom een reusachtige gestalte zat met een vissenstaart en een lange, grote witte baard. De koning leek een klein kroontje op te hebben bezet met diamanten en andere witte of doorzichtige fonkelende steentjes. Elwin's mond viel bijna open toen hij de zeemeerman zag. Dit moest Aart Golf, oftewel koning Oceanus zijn.

'Kom verder,' sprak een donkere, zware stem die door de hele hal begon te echoën. 'Met wie heb ik het genoegen ?' sprak de koning vriendelijk. Elwin maakte een buiging, en vertelde het verhaal.

'Zo zo,' sprak de koning, 'en jij denkt dat ik weet wie de daders zijn ?'

Elwin knikte. 'U staat bekend als een groot koning met groot inzicht en groot overzicht over Ovven. U blijkt daar ook allemaal apparaten voor te hebben.'

'Het probleem is,' sprak de koning, 'dat mijn tijdmachine gestolen is, het bron-apparaat voor alle andere apparaten. Niet veel werkt er nog nu de tijdmachine weg is.'

'Dat spijt me heel erg, beste koning,' sprak Elwin. 'Ik zal er alles aan doen om uw tijdmachine terug te vinden nu ik toch bezig ben Klaas Vaak op te sporen. Ik weet zeker dat er een verband is tussen deze diefstallen.'

De koning knikte. 'Ik kan je niet helpen nu mijn tijdmachine er niet is. Mijn inzicht reikt niet verder dan mijn troon op het moment.'

'Ik begrijp het,' sprak Elwin.

'Jittefes, kun jij deze jongen weer even naar de zee-oppervlakte brengen ?' sprak de koning tegen zijn dochter, 'en oh, wacht eens even, jongeman. Ik zou je aanraden om in het bos op zoek te gaan naar de Bosman. Arend Gluur heet hij, en hij bewaakt een zekere groei-machine. Misschien dat hij meer weet, en in het ergste geval is hij de dader, maar dat kan ik niet met zekerheid zeggen. In ieder geval : Wees op je hoede, want zijn onderdanen zijn kannibalen.'
'Komt voor elkaar, vader,' sprak de zeemeermin, en na een kort afscheid zwom ze met Elwin naar boven. Aan de zee-oppervlakte aangekomen zagen ze nog steeds het piratenschip in de verte. 'Ik zal je naar de boskust brengen naast de woestijn,' zei de zeemeermin. De zeemeermin zwom met grote vaart met Elwin op haar rug naar de boskust en zette hem daar aan land. 'Bedankt,' sprak Elwin. 'Ik

zal kijken of ik hier de Bosman kan vinden.'

'Ik wens je geluk !' riep de zeemeermin die alweer wegzwom. Elwin liep direct het bos in. Hij was namelijk bang dat piraten hem weer op het strand zouden vinden. Angstig keek hij om zich heen, wetende dat er ook gevaren in het bos waren, maar hij moest en zou met de bosman spreken. Na een tijdje lopen zag hij in de verte op een open plek in het bos een groep wilden met botjes door hun neus dansen en jammeren rondom een ketel. Elwin wist dat hij voorzichtig moet zijn, maar ze jammerden zo erg dat Elwin ze wilde proberen te helpen. Misschien waren het wel de onderdanen van Arend Gluur, de bosman.

Dapper liep hij op de jammerende wilden af, maar bleef zijn afstand bewaren. 'Kan ik jullie ergens mee helpen ?' vroeg Elwin, terwijl hij zijn hand opstak. Verbaasd keken de wilden op. 'Daar ! Eindelijk voedsel !' riep één van de wilden. Ze namen hun speren en begonnen op Elwin af te rennen. Ook Elwin zette het op een rennen. 'Hongerige kannibalen dus,' dacht Elwin bij zichzelf. 'Ik kom ook altijd op het verkeerde moment.' Plotseling struikelde Elwin over een boomstronk, en al snel was hij omsingeld door de wilden die hun speren op hem gericht hadden. 'Sta stil, voedsel,' sprak één van de wilden. Hij werd vastgebonden en meegeduwd naar de ketel, waar hij in werd gestopt. 'Toe nou,' sprak Elwin. 'Ik ben geen banaan. Ik ben op zoek naar Arend Gluur de bosman.' De wilden begonnen om hem heen te dansen, terwijl het vuur oplaaide. 'Eindelijk vlees !' riepen ze. Elwin begon het al snel heet te krijgen. 'Heus, jullie vergissen je !' riep Elwin. De wilden begonnen steeds woester te dansen.

Elwin boog zijn hoofd. 'Ik ook allemaal met mijn domme ideeen,' sprak hij tot zichzelf. 'Ik heb een belangrijke boodschap voor Arend Gluur. Ik ben gezonden door koning Oceanus !' riep Elwin hard. De wilden schenen niet te luisteren, en Elwin begon het steeds heter te krijgen. 'Ik stik hier !' piepte Elwin. Elwin begon zijn bewustzijn te verliezen. Wat er toen gebeurde kon hij zich niet meer herinneren, maar hij werd wakker in het zand, terwijl een grote man naar hem staarde. Elwin was nog steeds drijfnat en nog steeds vastgebonden. De man prikte met een stok in hem. 'Nog niet gaar zie ik,' sprak de man. 'Welkom. Ik ben Arend Gluur. Ik redde je leven. Ik hoorde dat je mij wilde spreken voor een belangrijke boodschap. Spreek op, anders gooi ik je weer terug. De man had een bril op en een hoed. Ook had hij een blouche aan met sterretjes erop. Hij leek op een toerist. Toen begon Elwin het verhaal te vertellen.

Arend Gluur begon te jammeren. 'Zij ook al ? Mijn groei-machine is gestolen. Ik kon dingen, mensen en dieren groter of kleiner maken door die machine. Daardoor had ik macht over het bos, maar ik lijk het te verliezen. Nu hebben mijn kannibalen altijd honger. Ze kunnen nog geen druif of appel bemachtigen.'

'Dat spijt me zeer,' sprak Elwin.

Het was even een tijdje stil. Plotseling zei Arend Gluur : 'Ik weet wie het gedaan heeft. Het is Berend Blok, de vuurman. Hij heeft onze machines gestolen omdat hij een geld-machine wilde bouwen, om zo over heel Ovven te heersen.'

'Waar woont hij ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Onder de grond,' zei Arend Gluur. 'Daar houdt hij ook de zee steen verborgen, en Klaas Vaak die hij heeft ontvoerd.'

Elwin wilde daar wel naartoe. Arend Gluur en de kannibalen zouden met hem mee gaan.

Hoofdstuk 2.

Ze zouden eerst de nacht afwachten om wat proberen te rusten, alhoewel niemand goed in slaap kon komen doordat Klaas Vaak was ontvoerd. En in de nacht viel de vuurman al aan. Vlammen kwamen om Elwin te grijpen en de diepte in te sleuren. Elwin werd naar een grote put getrokken waar de vlammen hem joelend introkken.

Diep onder de grond werd Elwin in een kooi gestopt. Dichtbij was de kooi van Klaas Vaak. Klaas Vaak lag op de grond. Hij leek zijn bewustzijn te hebben verloren. Voor de kooi van Elwin danste Berend Blok, de vuurman. 'Geld, geld, ik nam het met groot geweld !' riep hij, terwijl hij als een gek geld begon rond te strooien. 'De geld-machine werkt !' riep hij. 'Ik ben een rijk man !' Uit pompen verderop begon geld te spuiten. 'Ik heb een grote vangst gedaan !' lachte de vuurman. De geld-machine die hij had gebouwd van de gestolen machines was op hol geslagen. Er bleef maar geld uitrollen, en ook de twee olifanten van Berend Blok waren onder de betovering ervan gekomen, en hun slurfen stopten niet met het spuiten van geld. Overal lag geld, en de laag op de grond werd steeds hoger, ook in de kooi van Elwin. De vuurman gierde van het lachen. Ook hij was op hol geslagen. Plotseling kwam de piraten-raaf aanvliegen. Hij vloog recht op de kooi van Elwin af, en pikte het slot open. 'Hoe ben je uit jouw kooi losgekomen ?' vroeg Elwin verrast, terwijl hij uit de kooi rende. 'Toen een piraat het kooitje opendeed om me te voeren pikte ik in zijn hand en vloog weg,' kraste de raaf. De vuurman was al helemaal onder het geld bedolven. Vlug vloog de raaf naar de kooi van Klaas Vaak en pikte zijn slot ook open. Maar Klaas Vaak was nog steeds bewusteloos, en begon ook langzaam onder het geld te verdwijnen. 'Iemand moet die machine stoppen !' riep Elwin. Plotseling zagen ze koning Oceanus en zijn dochter, Jittefes, komen aanzwemmen door het geld. Elwin wees hen de plaats waar Klaas Vaak onder het geld lag, en beiden begonnen ze hem op te duiken. Spoedig waren er nog veel meer zeemeermannen en zeemeerminnen, een heel leger, en ze begonnen de geldmachine op te duiken.

Elwin zwom in het geld, en keek hoe de geldmachine werd opgedoken. Hij vond het wel een schitterende uitvinding. Het geld begon machtige rivieren te vormen die door de armste delen van Ovven begonnen te stromen. Proestend kwam Berend Blok naar boven zwemmen, want ook hij was kopje onder gegaan. Hij werd direct door een paar zeemeerminnen vastgegrepen. 'Ik bedoelde het niet verkeerd !' riep hij. 'Ik wilde de armsten van Ovven helpen, en dat kon ik alleen maar als ik de droommachine, de tijdmachine en de groeimachine zou hebben om daar de geldmachine van te maken !'

'Maar waarom vroeg je dat niet dan ? En waarom heb je daar zelfs Klaas Vaak voor ontvoerd ?' riep Elwin, die naar hem toe begon te zwemmen. Elwin begreep er niet veel van.

'Omdat niemand me geloofde !' riep Berend Blok. 'Ik moest wat doen tegen de hongersnood in grote delen van Ovven die door de piraten was veroorzaakt ! Klaas Vaak wilde me laten opsluiten !'

'Maar je had koning Oceanus kunnen vragen voordat je zijn tijdmachine stal !' riep Elwin.

'Ik moest snel handelen !' riep Berend Blok. 'Klaas Vaak zat al achter me aan, en ik kon geen risico's meer nemen. Ik moest eerst de geldmachine maken, en dan zouden ze zelf wel zien waar het goed voor was.'

Elwin zuchtte. Hij hoopte maar dat Klaas Vaak in orde was. Hij kon Berend Blok ook wel een beetje begrijpen. Het leek op een daad van zelfverdediging, maar hij wilde eerst de kant van het verhaal van Klaas Vaak horen.

Het leger van koning Oceanus nam iedereen mee naar het rijk van de koning om daar berecht te

worden. Ook Arenhd Gluur en zijn kannibalen werden meegenomen. Ze moesten allemaal voor de troon van Arend Golf verschijnen, de grote Zeeman, oftewel koning Oceanus. Klaas Vaak was inmiddels weer bijgekomen, en ze hadden allemaal een ademkwal over hun hoofd gekregen, zodat ze goed in de zee konden ademen. Ook konden ze zo alles goed horen, en konden ze goed spreken. De kwallen zorgden voor goede communicatie.

Toen Klaas Vaak het verhaal van Berend Blok kreeg te horen knikte hij en bood hij zijn excuses aan. Hij wist niet dat Berend Blok goed werk wilde doen. De kannibalen waren zo geworden door de honger, maar daar zouden de geldrivieren verandering in brengen. De enigen die nog een probleem waren waren de piraten. Daarom vielen de legers van koning Oceanus op een nacht alle piratenschepen binnen, en trokken de piraten de zee in om te worden berecht door koning Oceanus.

Elwin vond dat een goed plan, want de piraten stonden hem naar het leven.

Toen de piraten waren berecht begon eindelijk de rust weer in Ovven terug te keren en konden de mensen weer normaal slapen. En de zandman reed weer op zijn koets om zijn zand te strooien alsof het nooit anders was geweest. Maar nu strooide hij niet alleen zand, maar ook als het nodig was strooide hij geld voor de allerarmsten. En zo werd de zandman van Ovven nog wel geliefder dan ooit tevoren.

En Berend Blok ? Die werd gezien als een grote held die het land van Ovven eens van de hongersnood redde.

Einde

Het Paarse Complot

Hoofdstuk 1. Het Boertje
Hoofdstuk 2. Helga
Hoofdstuk 3. Tijd Is Geld
Hoofdstuk 4. Nat Kruid
Hoofdstuk 5. De Mist
Hoofdstuk 6. De Geheimen van Kapitein Wak
Hoofdstuk 7. De Geluksvogel

Hoofdstuk 1. Het Boertje

Ik raakte verstrikt in de woeste doornstruiken die haar paleistuinen omgaven, als een prooi die in een net verstrikt raakte. Ze sprak dat het de poorten van de hel waren, en ik was diep afgedaald. Ik had hier niet moeten komen, maar er was geen weg meer terug. Haar boeken waren de koninginnen van de hel die mij kwelden. Ik verdiende straf in haar ogen, maar ik wist niet waarom.

"Was ik maar bij moeder thuisgebleven," sprak ik.

Toen was het toneelstuk afgelopen. We gingen allemaal naar huis na nog wat gedronken te hebben in het café. Ik stortte op mijn bed. Waar was ik toch in terecht gekomen ? Maar ja, in de fabriek wilde ik niet werken.

Ik probeerde mezelf hogerop te werken als toneelspeler. Ik wilde van dit soort komedies weg, maar dat ging niet makkelijk. Er was een te hoge vraag naar dit soort komedies. Ik wilde andere soorten toneelstukken spelen, maar daar was niet echt vraag naar.

"Duivels en vampieren, piraten en kannibalen, indianen en cowboys," sprak ik tot de toneelbaas. "Hoe lang denkt u dat ik dit nog ga volhouden ? Het is toch wel altijd en eeuwig hetzelfde liedje."

De toneelbaas begon te grommen. "Daar is nu eenmaal veel vraag naar, en we hebben de toneelstukken zo komisch mogelijk gemaakt. Het is een goede grap."

Ik zuchtte. Ik had het gevoel alsof ik hier nooit meer uit zou komen. Ik voelde mij een slaaf. "Het is altijd hetzelfde. Als er voor mij dan niets anders is, dan heb ik toch het liefst zo veel mogelijk afwisseling, en zoveel mogelijk nieuwe toneelstukken in dat genre." Maar nee, dat was ook niet goed, want de mensen wilden nu eenmaal veel van hetzelfde zien. Sommige toneelstukken waren gewoon nationale stokpaardjes.

Op een bepaald moment kon ik er niet meer tegen. Ik had mijn grenzen bereikt, en na een huilbui op het podium ben ik het land uitgevlucht. Maar al snel bleek het dat het in andere landen nog wel erger was, dus ik kwam weer terug waar ik vandaan kwam. Gelukkig mocht ik wel op ziekenverlof. De aardige secretaresse kwam me zo nu en dan opzoeken om te zien hoe het met me ging, maar het ging eigenlijk alleen maar erger. Ik had er 's nachts ook nachtmerries van.

"Mijnheer Windesheim, wordt het geen tijd dat u een ander beroep kiest ?" vroeg de secretaresse vriendelijk.

"Ja, maar wat dan ?" vroeg ik. "In een fabriek kan ik niet werken."

"Er zijn veel meer mogelijkheden," sprak de secretaresse. Ze opende een gids en begon beroepen op te lezen. Ik had er nog nooit van gehoord. Ze opende een nieuwe wereld voor mij.

"En daar kan ik zomaar werken ?" vroeg ik. "Of moet ik daarvoor eerst naar school ?"

Ze keek me aan. "Ik kan wel wat voor u regelen. Het is beiden. U kunt zowel studeren als werken. Er is veel balans met dit soort beroepen."

Ik begon weer een beetje hoop te krijgen. Ze had één en al aandacht voor mij, en begreep mijn angsten. Ze begon de beroepen uitvoerig te bespreken en aan het einde ervan mocht ik een keuze maken. Zij zou het voor me regelen. Het beroep wat ik had gekozen was het ontcijferen van oude teksten. Ik moest dus wel een taalkundige opleiding krijgen, etymologie, over de oorsprong van talen, en zaken zoals cryptologie en ik moest opgeleid worden tot taalkundig detective. Dat was dus een hele mond vol, maar alles beter dan waar ik me nog in bevond, zij het met ziekteverlof.

Eigenlijk regelde ze alles voor mij. Ze regelde een studie, werk, en zelfs de verhuizing. Ik kreeg een groot huis in het bos, als een villa, dus ik werd direct goed betaald. Zij was mijn sleutel tot de hemel. Ik werd als een heilige behandeld, en ze hadden er groot vertrouwen in dat ik bepaalde oude teksten die nogal belangrijk schenen te zijn kon ontcijferen. Ik wist helemaal niks, tenminste dat dacht ik. Ik speelde het spelletje maar een beetje mee. Ik was goed opgeleid als toneelspeler voor dat soort dingen. Ik kon me er goed in uiten, en het was een keer wat anders. Ik dacht : "Ik verzin wel wat. Dit is tenminste iets waar ik bij kan ademen."

Twee mede-studenten, een blanke jongen en een donker meisje, lieten mij de geschriften zien. Het waren tabellen met hele vreemde tekens. Ze waren erg vriendelijk naar mij, en behandelden mij alsof ik vele klassen hoger was dan hen. Het leek wel alsof ze dachten dat ik een hogere band had in een vechtsport, jiu jitsu ofzo. Ze waren er stellig van overtuigd dat ik dit kon, iets wat zij niet konden. Er bleken geen leraren te zijn, maar studenten onderwezen elkaar. Nieuwe studenten werden als heilig beschouwd, en als leraren, en zij moesten de hogere klassen onderwijzen. Ook ik moest hen onderwijzen, maar wat moest ik zeggen ? Gelukkig was ik dus opgeleid in toneelspelen, dus ik maakte er gewoon wat van, en ze vonden het prachtig. Ze zagen mij als een held. Ik had hen bevrijding gebracht. Het viel me op dat alles hier omgedraaid was. Hoe lager de klas, hoe beter. Nieuwe studenten kregen het best betaald en hadden de beste huizen. Waarom wist ik niet.

Na verschillende maanden had ik een gesprek met de secretaresse van mijn vorig beroep die mij zo goed geholpen had en mij een nieuw leven had gegeven, en ik vertelde haar alles. Ze vertelde mij dat ik moest proberen in de lagere klassen terecht te komen, die geheim waren. Als mij dat niet op tijd zou lukken dan zou ik in een hogere klas terechtkomen. De lagere klassen bleken onder de grond te leven.

"Onder de grond ?" vroeg ik verbaasd. "Wat moet ik daar dan ?"

"Daar zijn nog betere voorzieningen," sprak de secretaresse vriendelijk. Ze was weer vol met aandacht voor mij, en legde mij alles uit. Het bleek dat de school draaide om een vreemde religie waarin een verdronken vrouw werd aanbeden. Voor sommigen was dit een engel, of een godin, en voor anderen gewoon een vrouw, maar om haar draaide alles, hun hele leven.

"Hoe verdronk zij dan ?" vroeg ik.

"Ik heb me daar nooit zo in verdiept," sprak de secretaresse. "Het lijkt mij het beste dat je dat aan hen zelf vraagt."

Ik keek verbaasd. Mijn nieuwsgierigheid was nu wel gewekt. Toen ik weer terug was bij mijn mede-studenten vroeg ik hen hoe ik in de lagere klassen kon komen, en wie eigenlijk die verdronken vrouw was, en hoe ze aan haar einde was gekomen.

De jongen en het meisje keken mij glimlachend aan. "Ontcijfer jij die teksten nu maar," sprak het meisje lachend. Ze deden er nogal geheimzinnig over. Ik moest me er bij neerleggen dat ik niet makkelijk aan informatie zou kunnen komen. "Lagere klassen ?" lachte ze, terwijl ze haar tongetje uitstak. Ik kwam er niet mee verder, en boog mijn hoofd weer over de teksten. Ik probeerde er een verhaal van te maken. Toen ik klaar was kreeg ik weer nieuwe teksten. Het viel me op dat het steeds dezelfde soorten tekens waren. De lettertjes waren heel klein opgeschreven. Ik moest mijn verhaal ook onderbouwen.

Ik begon steeds meer bepaalde patronen in de teksten te zien, en daar werkte ik mee verder. Het leek wel alsof er een heleboel lagen inzaten, en ik begon het op te dienen als een soort wetenschap. Ik wist dat alles slechts giswerk was en toneelspel, maar ik wilde in de lagere klassen komen en meer weten over de verdronken vrouw die zij aanbaden, en waar ze mij niets over wilden vertellen. Het leek wel iets persoonlijks te zijn, of misschien konden ze het gewoon niet vertellen. Misschien was het te emotioneel. Er waren verder ook geen kerkdiensten of afbeeldingen van deze religie. Ook wist ik niet of de secretaresse de exacte waarheid had gesproken.

Op een dag gingen we met wat andere mede-studenten in een busje diep het bos in. Er was daar ergens een vijver en een nog groter huis dan ik had, een gigantisch grote witte villa met verschillende verdiepingen. Het was een prachtig huis, als witte chocolade, en diep in het bos. In de vijver waren prachtige zwanen. Op een terrein met kiezelsteentjes stapten wij uit, en liepen het grote gebouw in. Ik keek mijn ogen uit in de gang, en kreeg toen de zalen te zien. Ook lieten ze mij de keuken zien en de eetzaal.

Het donkere meisje zou het woord doen. Ze sprak ons even later toe in één van de zaaltjes. "Geachte mede-studenten," sprak ze. "We zijn allen blij met deze nieuwe dag gegeven door zij die verdronken was." En toen volgde er een lange toespraak over de teksten die ik had ontcijferd. Mijn naam werd ook nog genoemd, maar ook andere namen. Alle nieuwe studenten waren bezig geweest met de ontcijfering van deze teksten. Uit sommige van hun werken werd voorgelezen. Er waren ook andere busjes gekomen met mede-studenten, dus de zaal zat vol. Ik begon de verschillen te merken tussen mijn ontcijferingen en ontcijferingen van anderen, maar er waren ook tot mijn grote verbazing duidelijke overeenkomsten. Het donkere meisje was trots op ons, en dat liet ze ook duidelijk merken. Ze beschouwde onze teksten als heilig. Ze had een kleine verzameling gemaakt, en daar zou een boek van gedrukt worden. Ook mijn ontcijferingen zouden in dit boek komen, en het zou opgedragen worden aan zij die verdronken was. Het werd beschouwd als haar heilige boek.

Er bleken nog veel meer van zulke boeken te zijn, want zo deden ze het al jaren. De boeken waren

te vinden in een grote bibliotheek onder het gebouw, en dat was al zo voor vele eeuwen. Aan het einde van de toespraak gingen we naar beneden, naar de bibliotheek. Het was inderdaad een reusachtige bibliotheek met enorm veel boekenkasten en stellages. De nieuwe studenten mochten vanaf nu hier studeren. We kregen allemaal onze eigen kamer in het witte gebouw. Ik mocht wat boeken meenemen om te lezen en te bestuderen.

Wat me opviel waren weer de verschillen en de duidelijke overeenkomsten. Ik begon er patronen in te zien. Ik las en las, en leerde. Toch beschouwde ik het als verzonnen, maar het was wel leuk bedacht. Zo kon ik vele verhalen lezen tijdens de studie. Na een paar maanden was er ook een soort examen waarvoor ik slaagde, en toen ging ik naar een lagere klas. Hier had ik dus op gewacht. Er was een lift in het witte gebouw die onder de grond ging, nog dieper dan de bibliotheek.

Ik ging daar uit de lift en liep recht tegen een boertje aan. "Pardon," zei ik.
"Geeft niks, kerel," sprak de boer een beetje plat. "Ik stond juist op jou te wachten."

"Oh, u kent mij al ?" vroeg ik verbaasd.
"Ja, ze hadden mij al over je verteld," sprak het boertje. "Welkom op de lagere klas. Ik ben van een nog lagere klas, dus ik zal jou wel wegwijs maken hier."

"Goed," sprak ik, "interessant. En waar kan ik zolang wonen ?"

"Bij mij in de boerderij," sprak het boertje.

"Hier onder de grond ?" vroeg ik terwijl ik om me heen keek. Er waren hier overal verlichte gangen met plantenbakken als kleine plantsoentjes, en vijvers. Aan de muren hingen schilderijen. "Precies," sprak het boertje plat. "De gangen lopen uit op ondergronds weiland gebied, en daar staat mijn boerderij."

"Klinkt interessant," sprak ik weer. "'t Zal wel donker zijn daar."

"Ach, welnee," sprak het boertje. "Er is overal goede verlichting, ook bij het weiland."

"Interessant," zei ik weer. "Wat is dit keer de studie opdracht en de werk opdracht in deze klas ?" vroeg ik.

"Kom maar mee," sprak het boertje plat. "Ik zal het je wel laten zien." Het boertje was een stuk kleiner dan ik, en had een platte pet op. Hij nam mij door de gangen mee langs allerlei lokalen, en na een tijdje stonden we buiten. Het regende een beetje.

Het was er flink donker, maar hier en daar stonden lantaarnen. Langs de weilanden liep een pad naar zijn boerderij. Toen we daar aankwamen leidde hij me naar binnen naar de huiskamer en liet mij een plattegrond zien op een ronde salontafel. "Zo kerel," sprak hij. "Dit is de plattegrond van het leger." Hij haalde wat pionnen uit zijn zak en zette ze hier en daar op de plattegrond, en begon toen heel wat uit te leggen waar ik niets van begreep. "Excuseert u mij," sprak ik na een tijdje. "Een leger en legeroefeningen ? En wat is de opdracht ?" Het boertje keek me verbaasd aan. "Ben je besuikerd," sprak het boertje plat. "Dit is geen leger en ook geen legeroefeningen."

"Maar u zei net dat het een plattegrond is van het leger," zei ik. Het boertje schudde zijn hoofd. "Je begrijpt het niet, kerel. Het leger is de naam van dit gebied, maar het heeft verder niets met het leger te maken."

Ik knikte, als teken dat ik het eindelijk begreep, en luisterde verder naar hem. Maar wat hij allemaal

vertelde kon ik geen touw aan vast knopen. "Nu moet u echt eens luisteren, boertje," sprak ik na een tijdje. "Ik begrijp echt niet waarover u het heeft. En u praat zo verschrikkelijk plat dat ik er echt niets meer van versta." Het boertje keek me verbaasd aan. "Ik dacht toch dat ik heel duidelijk was geweest, kerel." Ook ik begon hem toen verbaasd aan te kijken. "Helemaal niet," sprak ik. "Het is echt niet te volgen."

Het boertje trok zijn wenkbrauwen op. "Dat is wel de eerste keer dat mij zoiets over komt," sprak het boertje. "Jij bent de eerste die mij niet kan verstaan en mij niet begrijpt." Ik boog mijn hoofd. Toen sprak het boertje verder : "Ze vertelden mij dat u een taalkundige was, maar het schijnt dat u echt niet veel kaas hebt gegeten van taal. U moet nog veel leren." Het viel me op dat het boertje ineens veel beleefder sprak, en zelfs "u" tegen me zei. Ik trok mijn wenkbrauwen op. "Dus hoe minder ik er van snap, hoe beleefder en deftiger u spreekt," sprak ik.

"Oh ja, ja ja," sprak het boertje. "Zij die er niets van begrijpen zijn de koningen hier. Zij hebben grote macht, en zij moeten gehoorzaamt worden. Ik ben uw lakei."

Ik schoot in de lach. "Nou, dat klinkt wel een beetje overdreven, vind u niet ?" zei ik. Maar het boertje was doodserieus, en maakte een buiging voor me. "Hoe maakt u het," sprak hij deftig. "En hoe kan ik u van dienst zijn ?"

"U bent me wel een mallerd," sprak ik. Ik wist niet hoe ik het had. Ik keek het boertje aan. "Overtuigd ?" vroeg hij. Ik zei niets en zuchtte. Even was het stil. "En waar slaap ik ?" vroeg ik.

"Hier kunt u echt niet slapen, edelachtbare en majesteit," sprak het boertje zo deftig mogelijk. "U hoort op het paleis," terwijl hij op de plattegrond één van de pionnen verschoof naar het paleis. Achter de weilanden was een bos, en ergens diep in het bos was het paleis.

"En waar slaapt u ?" vroeg ik.

"Ik zal u begeleiden naar het paleis, en daar zal ik ook een kamer hebben, want ik ben uw lakei," sprak het boertje.

Ik begon te lachen. Ik dacht bij mezelf : "In wat voor zotterij ben ik nu weer beland ?" Maar ik besloot het spelletje mee te spelen. Ik was immers goed opgeleid als toneelspeler, dus dit zou een fluitje van een cent zijn, en misschien kon ik zo in een nog lagere klas komen om te begrijpen wat er allemaal gaande was, en wie nou precies die verdronken vrouw die ze vereerden was. Natuurlijk was er ook een mogelijkheid dat zij een spelletje met mij speelden. Wat was hier in vredesnaam aan de hand in deze verborgen en geheime samenleving ?

Weer gingen we door de weilanden totdat we bij het bos aankwamen. Ook door het bos waren gelukkig lantaarnen. Een pad door het bos leidde ons helemaal tot aan het paleis. Het paleis was een enorm wit gebouw met hoge torens. Het leek wel op witte chocolade. Ik keek mijn ogen uit. Zoiets prachtigs had ik nog nooit gezien. Achter het paleis was een vijver met zwanen, en een brug die er over liep. Het leek wel een beetje op de witte villa waarin ik woonde. Maar in ieder geval : Het paleis was nu mijn nieuwe huis. Ook het boertje zou hier gaan wonen. Het boertje leidde mij naar binnen in het enorme gebouw. Ergens boven liet het boertje mij mijn kamer zien, en zijn kamer was ernaast. Ik wist nog steeds niet wat mijn opdracht was. Ik vroeg het weer aan het boertje, en niet alleen dat : Ook vroeg ik hem over de verdronken vrouw die vereerd werd door deze geheime en verborgen samenleving, maar het boertje begon heel geheimzinnig te doen, en weer begon hij enorm plat te praten, zo erg dat het niet meer verstaanbaar was. Schijnbaar moest ik dit allemaal ontcijferen, en hoorde dit bij de opdracht. Ik begon er die nacht diep over na te denken, over wat het boertje allemaal had gezegd. Ik probeerde er mijn eigen verhaal van te maken, zoals ik dat ook in de

vorige klas had gemaakt, en ik begon het op te schrijven. Ik maakte er een heel boekwerk van, allemaal over het boertje. Het boertje interesseerde mij als mens. Hij was een warme, en ook zorgzame persoonlijkheid, alhoewel niet altijd even duidelijk. Ik moest op dezelfde golflengte als hem komen. Het boertje was verder niet op zijn mond gevallen. Hij zei dingen vaak recht voor zijn raap, en durfde mij ook in de rede te vallen wanneer hij dat nodig vond. "Ben je besuikerd," zei hij dan altijd, en gaf dan goede raad. Hij was niet alleen mijn lakei, maar ook mijn raadsheer.

Er groeide al snel een diepe en warme band tussen het boertje en mij. Ik begon hem steeds meer te begrijpen, of misschien dat ik alleen maar dacht dat ik hem begreep. Natuurlijk was veel ervan slechts mijn eigen verzinsels. Ik moest hem ontcijferen om in een nog lagere klas te kunnen komen, en zo maakte ik dus mijn eigen verhaal en interpretatie ervan. Ik had wel het gevoel dat het klikte en klopte. Ik begon steeds beter de patronen te zien in het boertje, alsof ik hem steeds beter aanvoelde. Het was bijna telepathisch, maar ook als een gevolg van de sociologische bestudering van het boertje. Ik begon een oog te krijgen voor de cryptiek die hij gebruikte. Het was iets wat ik zelf moest ontdekken, zodat niemand anders hem zou begrijpen dan ikzelf. Zo kon hij me dan zijn geheime boodschappen doorgeven. Op een dag gaf hij mij een certificaat, en ik mocht door naar een nog lagere klas. Hij bleek een soort robot te zijn, een soort systeem. Wie hem had geprogrammeerd wist ik niet, en hij wist het zelf ook niet, of wilde mij het niet vertellen.

Ook het boertje zelf was van een nog lagere klas. Hij leidde mij naar een lift in het paleis die een verdieping lager zou gaan. Ik was benieuwd waar ik ditmaal terecht zou komen. Het boertje ging met mij de lift in en drukte op de knopjes. Hij moest allerlei codes intoetsen. Het leek wel op een heel verhaal. Toen eindelijk begon de lift naar onderen te gaan. Niet lang daarna ging de liftdeur open, en we stapten uit. Het was hier erg donker.

"Even doorlopen," sprak het boertje. We liepen naar voren totdat we bij een struikje aankwamen. Verderop waren er steeds meer struikjes, en in de verte stond een lantaarn. "Waar zijn we ?" vroeg ik. Maar het boertje zei niks. We liepen door totdat we bij de lantaarn waren aangekomen. We waren nu aan de rand van een weg. We moesten de weg oversteken en kwamen toen bij een weiland aan. "Of moeten we weer naar een boerderijtje ?" vroeg ik.

"Nee," sprak het boertje, "naar een stationnetje dit keer." We moesten het weiland over, en toen kwamen we aan bij een heel klein stationnetje. Achter het stationnetje waren ook weer weilanden. Het stationnetje was goed verlicht. Er stonden hier en daar wat lantaarnen. We moesten op een trein wachten. "Waar gaan we naartoe ?" vroeg ik.

"Dat zul je wel zien," sprak het boertje. Na een tijdje kwam er een trein, en we stapten in. Ik ging tegenover het boertje in een coupé zitten. De trein stopte na een tijd bij een vechtsport school. We stapten uit, en buiten stonden wat kinderen. Ze hadden een brede glimlach en ze stonden daar met medailles en bekers. "Zij hebben de laagste band behaald van hun vechtsport," sprak het boertje.

"Wat voor kleur is dat ?" vroeg ik.

"Paars," sprak het boertje.

"En kunnen ze daarna nog lager ?" vroeg ik.

"Ja," sprak het boertje. "Daarna kunnen ze verder met verdienen van roze strepen."

"En hoe is deze vechtsport genaamd ?" vroeg ik.

Het boertje zweeg. Na een tijdje sprak hij : "Het is gewijd aan zij die verdronken was."

Ik was even stil. In de verte hoorde ik het geluid van treinen. Nog steeds wist ik eigenlijk niets over zij die verdronken was, en ik kon er ook beter maar niet om vragen. De kinderen glimlachten naar mij. Ze hadden een bepaalde trots over zich. Natuurlijk kwam dat door de laagste band die ze hadden behaald. Hier hadden ze hard voor gewerkt. "Gezegend bent u in de naam van zij die verdronken was," zei één van de jongens tegen ons. Terwijl twee andere jongens elkaar aanstootten en fluisterden : "Dat is de koning." Toen we dichterbij hen kwamen maakten ze allemaal een buiging.

"Zij zullen je hier wegwijs maken," sprak het boertje. Ineens was het boertje verdwenen. Ik knipperde met mijn ogen, maar het boertje was toch echt weg. "Hoe kan dat ?" vroeg ik verbaasd, terwijl één van de jongens begon te grinniken. Hij kwam naar me toe en gaf me een omhelzing. "U bent nu één van ons," sprak hij bijna fluisterend.

Hoofdstuk 2. Helga

"En wat betekent dat, dat ik één van jullie ben ?" vroeg ik verbaasd.

"U bent van de nog lagere klas, net als ons," glunderde de jongen.

"En het boertje, van welke klas is hij ?" vroeg ik.

"Shhh," zei de jongen, "daar praat niemand over."

"Wat is de opdracht hier ?" vroeg ik.

"Shhh," lachte de jongen weer. Hij stak toen zijn tongetje uit. Ook de andere jongens lachten. Ze kwamen over als hele lieve, aandachtige en tedere jongens, heel zorgzaam.

"En waar slaap ik ?" vroeg ik, terwijl ik verwachte dat ik weer geen antwoord zou krijgen. Eén van de jongens wees naar de vechtsport school. "Daarachter wonen wij, in een gebouw in het bos, achter de vechtsport school," sprak hij. Na een tijdje liepen we er naartoe. We hadden allemaal onze eigen kamer. In de gezamenlijke kamer stond een tv, een tafeltennistafel en een voetbalspel tafel. In mijn kamer stond een boekenkastje, een bed, en een wastafel. Op het bed lag een brief. Het was een brief van het boertje met wat instructies. Het boertje had dit alles voor mij geregeld. Ik was het boertje erg dankbaar en voelde de warmte naar binnen stromen.

Ik werd opgeleid in deze vechtsport. Het was de vechtsport van de slaap, ter ere van zij die verdronken was, maar ik werd nog niet veel wijzer over haar. Alles was omhuld met veel geheimdoenerij en mysterie. Toen ik de paarse band had gehaald mocht ik naar de nog veel lagere klas. De jongens brachten mij terug naar het stationnetje, en zwaaiden mij uit toen de trein was gekomen en mij meenam. In de trein kwam ik het boertje weer tegen. Hij was erg trots op mij. Bij het volgende stationnetje stapten we uit, en gingen we met een lift naar beneden. Weer ging de lift

dieper onder de grond en na een tijdje stapten we uit. Hier was een donkere parkeergarage, maar wel met wat kleine lampjes hier en daar. Het was een beetje schemerig. Even later moesten we een trap op en kwamen we in een gebouw aan. Aan de muren van de gangen hingen schilderijen, en op de grond was tapijt of tegels. Ergens bij een deur belde het boertje aan. Een oud vrouwtje deed open. "Hallo Helga," sprak het boertje. "Hier is de nieuwe student."

"Geweldig," sprak het oude vrouwtje. "Ik heb al koffie met gebak klaarstaan." Even later zaten we rondom een tafel. Het oude vrouwtje begon honderduit te vertellen. Ze was niet bepaald op haar mondje gevallen, en ze was heel innemend en geinteresseerd. Of misschien leek dat alleen maar zo, want ik kon er geen woord tussen krijgen, geen speld. Ze praatte maar door. Ze had het over van alles en nog wat. Ze was in ieder geval wel heel gastvrij. Alhoewel ze heel aandachtig en geinteresseerd leek luisterde ze eigenlijk niet naar mij, maar vreemd genoeg wel naar het boertje. Als hij iets zei liet ze hem uitpraten, en reageerde daar ook op, maar als ik wat zei dan praatte ze daar snel overheen, en veranderde het onderwerp. Na een tijdje begon me dat ernorm te frustreren, want ze was bijna betuttelend, maar het was verder een heel lief mens, dus ik liet het maar zo. Misschien had het wel tijd nodig. Als ik iets zei dan zei ze ook heel vaak : "Ja, ja, dat is zo," maar dan gaf ze er geheel haar eigen uitleg aan, en bleek het dat ze me totaal verkeerd begreep en interpreteerde. Zo maakte ze enorme verhalen van mijn weinige woorden die ik eruit kon floepen. Ik had niet de kans om mijzelf duidelijk te maken, om het haar uit te leggen, en ze deed net alsof ze alles al volkomen begreep. Ze maakte van mij totaal iemand anders dan wie ik was, in haar eigen verhalen. Ze was als een overweldigende zee of storm. Toch vond ik haar heel interessant. Ze leek uitermate creatief, behulpzaam en zorgzaam. Er gleed meer en meer een warmte over me die ik niet begreep. Het maakte mij emotioneel, maar toch kon ik me inhouden, want mijn nieuwsgierigheid naar meer van deze vrouw was veel groter.

Meer en meer begon ik tegen mezelf te zeggen : "Wat een geweldig mens is dit." Ook bij haar waagde ik het er op en vroeg over zij die verdronken was, en verwachte eigenlijk ook van deze vrouw geen antwoord, maar ze begon ineens honderduit erover te vertellen als een stortvloed. Ze vertelde dat zij die verdronken was eens op een bootje de bosrivier was opgegaan en toen gegrepen werd door een beest wat uit het water scheen te komen. "Zij werd door het beest de diepte in getrokken, waarna ze verdronk. Zij die verdronken was was een dichteres, en die dag was ze geheel in het wit, met een witte hoed op met roze kant, en zij was met haar geliefde, een dichter de bosrivier opgegaan in een bootje. Ze vertelden elkaar gedichten totdat zij werd weggegrepen. De dichter is sindsdien nooit meer dezelfde geweest. Hij raakte in grote depressie en werd geplaagd door angsten, alsof het beest ook aan hem trok. Op een dag vluchtte hij het bos in, en niemand heeft hem ooit weer teruggezien. Ze zeggen dat hij sindsdien altijd naar haar op zoek was, en noemden hem sindsdien : de verloren dichter. Het is een heel tragisch verhaal."

Ik zuchtte en bibberde een beetje. Eindelijk was er iemand die erover tot mij sprak. Ik was de vrouw erg dankbaar hiervoor. De boer glimlachte. "Zij kan het altijd het beste vertellen," sprak hij.

"Ik ben ervoor geroepen," sprak ze. "Zij die verdronken was bezocht mij in een droom. Ze riep naar me en wenkte me. We zwommen samen naar de oppervlakte van het water en toen naar de kust. We waren in de zee. Ik meende iets van een piratenschip te zien, maar toen was het weg. We lagen even later beiden op het strand. Ze gaf mij een boek, en drukte het tegen mijn hart. Mijn hart begon te branden. Het was een vreemd vuur, betoverend, als een paars vuur, en ik begon te roepen, te roepen naar haar volgelingen. Ze hadden allemaal paarse kappen op, en ze omringden ons. Toen kreeg ik ook een paarse pij met een paarse kap op, en we gingen de steden in om het goede nieuws te vertellen dat zij die verdronken was weer onder ons was. Zij leeft. Zij spreekt, oh zegt het voort." Toen was het even stil. De vrouw staarde voor haar uit. "Het is zo mooi, zo prachtig," sprak ze. "De tederheid op die gezichten, de aandacht, de zorg, de interesse, en het mysterie, als golven van de oceaan waarin wij kunnen duiken, om het te onderzoeken, om steeds dieper te gaan. Glorieus was

het." Ik staarde naar de vrouw en het was alsof er een paars licht om haar hoofd was. Ik knipperde even met mijn ogen. Ik zag ook het boertje naar haar kijken. Voor een lange tijd was het nu stil. Ik dacht na over de woorden die ze had gezegd. Ik keek naar het boertje, en toen weer naar haar. Ook keken ze naar mij. We keken allemaal elkaar aan. Even was het alsof er paarse vlammen tussen ons waren. Ze dansten door ons heen.

"Zij stierf uit zorg voor ons," sprak de vrouw, "maar nog meer als een voorbeeld. Het is een gedicht. Het is iets groots. Het is een groot geheimenis."

"Kan ik dat wel dragen ?" vroeg ik.

"Oh, maar natuurlijk kun je dat," sprak de vrouw. "Jij bent ook een geroepene. Ieder die zij roept krijgt hiervoor de kracht. Zij is een deler. Zij deelt met hen die tot haar komen."

Ik begon steeds meer geïnteresseerd te raken in deze religie. Het was meer poëzie dan religie, en dat maakte het voor mij aantrekkelijk. Het mysterie trok mij, meer dan wat dan ook. Ik had hier zo lang op gewacht. Iets had mij zo lang getrokken, en deze vrouw had mij openhartig uitleg gegeven. Ik mocht het boertje dankbaar zijn dat hij mij naar deze vrouw had gebracht. Hij was een goede lakei geweest. Hij was niet roekeloos met het geheim omgesprongen. Nee, hij had het bewaard en gekoesterd. Hij had het goed opgeborgen en bewaakt, opdat rovers het niet zouden wegroven. Hij had mij op de proef gesteld om te zien of ik waardig was. Deze vrouw was van de laagste klas, en hierin konden strepen verdiend worden ... paarse strepen. Ik keek naar het boertje. Ook hij scheen van de laagste klas te zijn. Weer werd ik warm van binnen. Ik was deze mensen dankbaar. Zij hadden zin aan mijn leven gegeven. Ik herinnerde mij het toneel, en ik wilde er eigenlijk niet meer aan denken.

Ik keek de vrouw aan, Helga, en zij keek naar mij. Het leek wel alsof er zoete honing in mijn hart droop. Het boertje stond op. "Ik moet gaan," sprak hij. "Buiten staan ze op me te wachten met paard en wagen."

"En ik dan ?" vroeg ik aan het boertje.
"Jij blijft bij Helga voorlopig," sprak hij.

Toen verdween het boertje weer. Ik was in goede handen. Helga zou mij verder onderwijzen. Met Helga was het leven wonderlijk. Ik overpeinsde het feit hoe verschillend zij en het boertje waren, maar toch in grote overeenstemming met elkaar, en het feit dat zij beiden zo belangrijk voor mij waren. Ik kreeg een eigen kamer in Helga's huis. Op een nacht werd ik wakker gemaakt door twee personen in paarse pijen met paarse kappen. Ook ik kreeg een paarse pij met een paarse kap die ik mocht aantrekken. Toen namen zij me mee naar buiten aan de andere kant van Helga's huis. Hier was een hele stoet van personen met paarse pijen en paarse kappen. Zij waren allemaal gewijd aan zij die verdronken was. Wij gingen allemaal in een grote optocht naar een schip. Eerst gingen wij door iets wat leek op een stad. Aan een zeekade was het schip. Het was een groot schip. Op het schip was er een groot paars vuur, als een grote paarse vlam, waarin een vrouw verscheen. Ze had zacht paarse kleding aan, heel fijn en zacht, bijna doorzichtig. Zij glimlachte naar ons. "Mijn getrouwe werkers," sprak zij, "mijn getrouwe studenten. Welkom tot de laagste klas." Toen mochten wij het schip opkomen. Iedereen was in volle verwondering. Toen ik dichterbij kwam zag ik dat ze een grote indianentooi op had en op een paard zat. Ook had zij een speer in haar hand, en wees met de speer naar de zee, die bijna zwart was. "Het grote toernooi is vanavond. Dat de beste mag winnen," sprak zij. Ik snapte niet wat zij bedoelde, maar zij was immers dichteres.

Ik kwam dichter tot haar, en raakte haar paard aan. Ook het paard was in de paarse vlam. Ze keek naar beneden, naar mij. "Jij van het boertje," sprak zij. "Eindelijk heb je mij gevonden, mijn

verloren dichter."

Ik keek op naar haar. "Ik ? U moet in de war zijn met iemand anders," sprak ik verbaasd.

"Nee," sprak ze, "Jij, jij ..."

Ik werd wakker in mijn kamer in Helga's huis. De volgende ochtend vertelde ik de droom aan Helga. Helga glimlachte. "Ze roept je, jongen," sprak ze. "De laagste klas is de klas van de verloren dichter." Ik keek haar verbaasd aan. "Dus wij zijn allemaal verloren dichters ?" vroeg ik aan Helga. Helga knikte. "We moeten allemaal weer terug naar haar om de verloren vlam te ontvangen, de paarse, die van slaap. Alleen zo komen we dichter bij haar, die ons hart is, ons paarse hart."

"Met roze strepen ?" vroeg ik. Helga knikte. "Roze is de kleur van de dromen, van de fantasie, van de verloren wereld."

"Ik wil terug, Helga," sprak ik. "Het was zo prachtig. En zij was zo prachtig op haar paard, geheel in paarse vlammen, als een stuk verloren natuur."

Helga knikte weer, glimlachend. "Zij is een komedie," sprak ze. "Ze is humor. Zij heeft alles gemaakt, maar de mens begrijpt er niets van."

Ik zuchtte. "Kon ik het maar begrijpen," sprak ik, "maar het lijkt nog steeds alsof ik in het donker grijp."

"Humor is strategie," sprak Helga. "Het is een toernooi. Elke grap heeft zijn doel."

"Zo voelt het allemaal aan," sprak ik, "alsof alles één grote grap is."

"Humor neemt de tijd, mijn jongen," sprak Helga. "Ware humor is dichterlijk. Het maakt van alles iets anders. Humor is de schepper."

"Diepe woorden," sprak ik. "En ik kan ze niet eens overzien. Alles glijdt tussen mijn vingers weg."

"Zij die haar hebben gezien zijn de dag erna depressief," sprak Helga. "Het trekt hen uit elkaar als een voetbalspel. Ze worden heen en weer geslingerd. Aan het einde van de rit ben je niets anders dan een pingpong-balletje."

"Pingpong-balletje," sprak ik langzaam. "Zo voel ik me nu. Ik voel me er echt tussenin hangen. Ik kan me nergens aarden. Alles gaat zo snel. Ik heb geen vastigheid."

Helga knikte. "Roze strepen moet je verdienen. We gaan van droom tot droom. Om elke droom wordt gevochten. Dat is het grote toernooi," sprak ze.

Ik trilde. Het was alsof ik moest afkicken van een bepaalde drug, tenminste zo voelde het. Ik staarde naar een schilderij aan de muur : een vrouw die in het water lag tussen de waterbloemen. Het was als een bloemenzee. Het leek wel alsof ik de bloemengeuren kon ruiken. Ik was in de greep van iets. Even kon ik me niet bewegen, en niet ademen, en toen zuchtte ik van verlichting.

"Wat is haar naam ?" vroeg ik aan Helga. Helga zweeg. Na een tijdje sprak ze : "Dat is iets waar we niet over spreken."

"Waarom niet ?" vroeg ik.

Helga zweeg weer. Het was alsof ze zocht naar woorden. Ten slotte sprak ze : "Omdat het te prachtig is om in woorden uit te drukken. We schieten woorden tekort hiermee."

"Dus de vrouw die verdronken was heeft nooit een naam gehad ?" vroeg ik weer.

"Shhh," zei ze. "Luister naar je hart. Laat haar spreken in haar taal, en het zal ontcijferd worden op haar tijd."

Ik merkte dat de vrouw nu meer als het boertje was, veel geheimzinniger, alsof ik haar nu ook moest ontcijferen. Maar ik had al gemerkt hoe anders ze naar me deed dan in het begin, alsof het door seizoenen ging.

"Ben ik al van de laagste klas ?" vroeg ik.

Helga schudde haar hoofd.

"Maar in de droom sprak zij die verdronken was een verwelkoming uit tot ons die tot de laagste klas waren gekomen," sprak ik.

Helga glimlachte. "Dat klopt," sprak ze. "Je bent erg dichtbij gekomen. Het boertje en ik zijn van de laagste klas, en je wordt door ons onderwezen, dus je staat er al met één been in."

"Maar ze noemde mij de verloren dichter," sprak ik, "en u zei dat de laagste klas de klas van de verloren dichter is." Helga knikte. "Dat komt, mijn jongen, omdat zij je roept tot die laatste klas, en je laat kennis maken met de laatste klas. Je bent de verloren dichter die haar zoekt, maar nu moet je nog volledig je verloren klas vinden, en haar volledig vinden," sprak ze glimlachend.

"En wanneer zal dat gebeuren ?" vroeg ik.

Helga zweeg. Ze stond op en liep naar de keuken. "Volg het dichterlijke pad," sprak ze.

Even kon ik er de humor niet van inzien, alsof ik in gevecht was met een beest, misschien wel hetzelfde beest waarover Helga had verteld. "Dat beest, hè," vroeg ik. "Wie of wat is het ?"

"Niemand weet het," sprak Helga.

"Maar zij die verdronken was zou het toch wel weten ?" vroeg ik.

Helga zweeg. "Daar wordt niet over gesproken," sprak ze.

"Laat me raden," sprak ik, "omdat dat ook niet in woorden uitgedrukt kan worden, omdat het zo verschrikkelijk is ?"

"Misschien," zei Helga.

Ik zweeg. Ineens durfde ik niet meer verder te vragen. Ik had het gevoel dat ik het zelf zou moeten uitvinden. Het leek wel alsof ik tegen ijzeren grenzen aanbotste. Hier ergens stopte de praterigheid van Helga. Hier was de koek ergens op, alhoewel ze al veel minder praterig was dan in het begin. Ik zag Helga stiller en stiller worden. Misschien was ze wel moe. Wel was ze nog steeds erg vriendelijk. Ze bedoelde het niet verkeerd. Misschien was ze wel bang om over bepaalde dingen te praten, of mocht ze er echt niet over praten.

Na een tijdje toen ze terugkwam uit de keuken met wat koffie sprak ze glimlachend : "Je zal er vanzelf wel achter komen."

"Ik hoop het," sprak ik.

Ik ging die avond vroeg naar bed, omdat ik zo moe was, en ik kon alleen maar huilen. Ik huilde mezelf in slaap. Die nacht bevond ik me op de zware golven van een paarse zee. Het leek religieus, maar het was dichterlijk. Op de golven kwam een vrouw naar me toe in lichte kleding. De kleding was licht, dun en zacht, als een fijne vloeistof die van haar afdroop. Het gaf schemerig, flonkerend licht. Ik keek op naar de vrouw die op het water leek te lopen. De golven waarin ik lag leken als zware drank, als siroop van drop. Ik was onder een zware bedwelming, en de vrouw kwam dichter bij me, en reikte haar hand uit. Ik nam haar hand aan, en ze begon mij uit de golven te trekken. Ik huilde, en kon niet meer stoppen met huilen. "Wie bent u ?" huilde ik, terwijl ik beefde over mijn hele lichaam.

"De nachtkoorts," sprak ze. "Ik ben Zij die verdronken was en leeft tot in alle eeuwigheid."

"Dat klinkt me nogal religieus," zei ik huilerig.

"Nee," sprak ze. "Het is veel meer dan dat. Het is dichterlijk, mijn verloren dichter. Ik ben jouw pen, jouw hart. Schrijf ..."

"Waar moet ik schrijven ?" vroeg ik, "en wat moet ik schrijven ?"

"Schrijf over mij," sprak ze.

Toen begon ze weg te vagen in de golven, weg te zinken, terwijl ze mijn naam riep. Het echoode helemaal door me heen, alsof ik door de bliksem was geslagen. Toen begon ik langzaam wakker te worden. De volgende ochtend vertelde ik de droom aan Helga. "Dat kun je hier mooi doen," sprak ze. "Hier heb je alle rust om over haar te schrijven. Ze zal je zeker hierin leiden."

Die middag kwam het boertje ook. Ook aan hem vertelde ik de dromen.
"Goedzo, kerel," sprak hij. "De kurk is eindelijk van de fles. Het paarse kan nu vrijuit stromen."

"Maar ik ken het paarse eigenlijk nog helemaal niet," sprak ik.
"Dat komt wel," sprak het boertje plat. "Humor heeft geen haast."

"Alles is dus inderdaad één grote grap ?" vroeg ik.
Het boertje knikte. "Zij die verdronken was is de grootste clown die er bestaat. Zonder humor is niets geworden," sprak hij.

"Maar al die oorlogen dan, die hongersnoden en ziekte en dood, is dat dan allemaal maar een komedie ?" vroeg ik.
Het boertje schudde zijn hoofd. "Het zijn de schaduwen ervan die de mens niet begrijpt," sprak het boertje. "De mens moet tot ontwaking komen, tot het grote geheim. En er is geen snelle ontwaking, zoals je wel gezien hebt."

Helga knikte. "De mensheid heeft verlossing nodig, maar de sleutel is in de mens zelf," sprak zij. "De mens moet het zelf doen. De mens moet zelf op avontuur, zoals jij op avontuur bent gegaan."

Ik glimlachte. "Maar soms lijkt het wel alsof ik alleen maar verder afdrijf," sprak ik.

"Oh ja, ja," zei Helga, "natuurlijk jongen, want zoveel vragen beantwoord geven ook weer geboorte aan zoveel nieuwe vragen, ja, een zee van vragen."

"Het lijkt eindeloos dan," zei ik bijna lachend.

"Ha, ja," zei Helga lachend, "maar eindeloos is een grote grap."

"Is het niet gemeen ?" vroeg ik.

"Nee," sprak Helga, "het is intelligentie, het is kunst. Zij die verdronken was is de grootste kunstenares ooit. Zij heeft haar kunst goed beveiligd en cryptisch versleuteld. Alleen de waardigen zullen het uiteindelijk kunnen openmaken, zij die de tijd ervoor hebben genomen om het te ontraadselen. Dat zijn niet hen die naar de allerhoogste klassen zijn opgeklommen, maar zij die naar de allerlaagste klassen zijn gegaan."

Ik knikte. "Het is dan gelijktijdig een komedie en een complot," sprak ik, "als het paarse complot."

Het boertje en Helga knikten. "Je begint het al goed door te krijgen, mannetje," sprak het boertje. "Ik ben trots op je."

Ditmaal bleef het boertje logeren. Die nacht had ik weer een droom. Een schip vol clowns die feest vierden liep op een klip en zonk. De clowns zonken met hun zware pakken en kwamen tussen de waterplanten en de waterbloemen terecht, maar hun zielen gingen door met feestvieren, en zij gingen tot de stad om in de hoofden van de mensen te kruipen. En zij zongen een lied : "Oh, laat mij je meenemen, laat mij je meenemen, tot de waterplanten, tot de waterplanten. Oh, laat ons jullie meenemen tot de bloemenzee voorgoed. Nee, je kunt niets meenemen, laat alles achter, laat alles achter. Nee, je moet alles achterlaten, een nieuw leven begint daar." Zij zongen dit in de hoofden van de mensen, en gingen toen in een grote stoet door de stad. De clowns waren gekomen.

Ik werd wakker in zweet. Toen ik de droom de volgende ochtend vertelde aan het boertje en Helga moesten ze hartelijk lachen. "Jij bent me wel het dromenmannetje, kereltje," sprak het boertje. "Ze moeten je wel telkens hebben." Ik begon op aanraden van Helga en het boertje een dromenjournaal bij te houden. Vaak gingen de dromen over kermissen, pretparken en hen met de paarse kappen. Het scheen met elkaar in verband te staan. Zij hadden een vreemde religie, rond zij die verdronken was.

Ik wilde meer weten over zij die verdronken was, maar alles bleef mysterieus, en soms had ik het gevoel alsof ik helemaal weggleed. Het boertje zei dan altijd dat dat het verdrinken was van zij die verdronken was, en dat ik moest deelhebben in die ervaring van haar om tot haar te komen. Ook zei het boertje dat zij die verdronken was omringd is door tien meestergrappen. Deze meestergrappen bewaakten haar poorten.

Hoofdstuk 3. Tijd Is Geld

Op een dag gingen we het bos in om op zoek te gaan naar de grappen. We gingen vroeg weg, en we volgden een pad met lantaarns. Het was hier verder verschrikkelijk donker, en de lantaarns stonden steeds verder uit elkaar. Telkens als we een lantaarn hadden bereikt moesten we aflopen op het

volgende licht in de verte. Maar ook de verre lichten begonnen steeds vager en waziger te worden, en vaak stonden er vele bomen tussen die het licht versperden. "Volgens mij zijn we al in de eerste grap," sprak het boertje plat. Ik begon te lachen. Ook Helga lachte. "Ik dacht dat ik al in een grap was vanaf het begin," sprak ik. Het boertje lachte. Het begon steeds donkerder te worden. Het leek wel alsof het pad hier dood begon te lopen, en de bomen stonden steeds dichter op elkaar, alsof het bijna een heg begon te vormen. "Zijn jullie hier al eens eerder geweest ?" vroeg ik.

"Shhh," zei het boertje bijna fluisterend. "We moeten hier heel stil wezen." Op een gegeven moment konden we niet meer verder. Achter ons kwam een heel klein narretje tevoorschijn in een rood pakje met hier en daar wat blauw draad wat van fluweel leek. Ook had het narretje een mutsje op met drie punten. "Halt," sprak het kleine vreemde narretje, "wat is het wachtwoord ?"

"Het wachtwoord ?" vroeg het boertje. "Kerel, ik ken geen wachtwoorden. Wij zijn hier voor de eerste grap."

"Maar dat gaat niet zomaar !" tierde het narretje woest. "Denk je nu echt dat je er zo maar doorkomt zonder wachtwoord ?"

"De vorige keer dat we hier waren waren er niks geen rare wachtwoord-toestanden," sprak het boertje plat. "Kerel, heb jij misschien teveel gedronken ? En wie ben jij eigenlijk, mannetje ?"

"Opdrachten van de koningin," sprak het mannetje. "Ik ben de nieuwe lijfwacht."

"Dus jij beweert de koningin te kennen ?" vroeg het boertje. "Wie is zij dan ?"

"Gaat je niets aan," brieste het narretje. "Eerst het wachtwoord, en dan doen we zaken."

"Volgens mij bent u verdwaald," sprak Helga. "Weet u zeker dat u hier moet zijn om voorbijgangers lastig te vallen ?"

"Krijg nou wat,' brieste het narretje, "en nog praatjes hebben ook. Jullie komen er niet langs, en daarom staat alles hier ook te dicht op elkaar om er langs te komen. Ik alleen ken het toverwoord om verder te komen."

"En wat is dat toverwoord dan ?" vroeg het boertje. "Ach, hebben we eigenlijk wel tijd voor jouw fabeltjes ?"

"Zeg eerst het wachtwoord maar," sprak het narretje, "dan doen we zaken."

"Ben je besuikerd," sprak het boertje. "Alsof we daar nog tijd voor hebben om allerlei opzegversjes te doen en optelsommetjes."

"Dan blijf je maar waar je bent," sprak het narretje kalm, en verdween weer.

"Wat een idioterie,' sprak het boertje. "We moeten ergens verkeerd zijn gelopen. Hier is alles veel te dicht op elkaar, als een heg. Er valt niet doorheen te komen. Laten we maar even wat teruggaan."

Ze liepen even een stuk terug en gingen toen een andere kant op. Maar ook daar begonnen de bomen steeds dichter op elkaar te staan, en werd het steeds donkerder. En weer kwamen ze het narretje tegen, maar die zei dit keer niets. "Hier moeten we ook niet wezen," sprak het boertje. Laten we maar helemaal teruglopen naar de laatste lantaarn.

Maar er was geen lantaarn meer te vinden, en ook toen ze helemaal terugliepen begonnen de bomen steeds dichter op elkaar te staan. "Misschien moeten we in de bomen klimmen," sprak ik.

"Ben je besuikerd," sprak het boertje. "Nee, er is hier iets veranderd, en er is geen doorkomen aan."

"Het is waarschijnlijk de eerste grap," sprak Helga. "We worden aan alle kanten in het nauw gedreven."

"Laten we maar weer naar het narretje gaan," sprak het boertje. En dat deden we. Toen we het narretje weer zagen staan vroeg het boertje : "Zeg kerel, dat wachtwoord, hè ? Hoe komen we aan dat wachtwoord ?"

"Alleen zij die uitgenodigd zijn door de koningin hebben het wachtwoord," sprak het narretje. "Zo kunnen we dat controlleren."

"Volgens mij ben jij de eerste grap die altijd alles veranderd," sprak het boertje, "want zo is het nooit geweest, en deze grap laat alles lang duren en laat ons totaal vastlopen."

"Het is om gek van te worden," sprak Helga. "Vind u dat zelf ook niet, narretje ?"

"Ik doe gewoon mijn werk," sprak het narretje. "Zij die het wachtwoord niet kennen komen er niet door."

"Wat een grappenmaker ben je," sprak het boertje.

"Ik ben een bewaker," sprak het narretje.

"Wat doet dat vreemde mutsje dan op je hoofd ?" vroeg het boertje plat.

Het narretje haalde een speertje tevoorschijn en begon het boertje te slaan.

"Oh, en nu ook nog slaan ?" vroeg het boertje. Het narretje begon steeds woester te worden, en begon ons met het speertje te prikken. We begonnen hard weg te rennen, want hier viel toch niet mee te praten, maar het narretje hield niet op. Hij bleef ons prikken en slaan. "Stop, stop !" riep ik. Maar het narretje werd steeds wilder. Het begon ook steeds meer pijn te doen. Alledrie gilden en schreeuwden we. "Stop, stop !" riep ik weer. "Ben je dan doof ? Het wachtwoord is : stop !" Plotseling stopte het narretje, en werd kalm. "U heeft het wachtwoord goed geraden. U bent uitgenodigd door de koningin. Komt u maar mee." Het boertje en Helga glimlachten, en ik wist niet hoe ik het had. Het speertje was nu een soort stafje, en zodra het narretje ermee op de dichte bomen sloeg schoven ze van elkaar weg als sluiers die werden weggeschoven. Na een tijdje kwamen we op een wit pad terecht, zeer breed, en in de verte stond er een reusachtig wit paleis, nog reusachtiger en witter dan ik ooit had gezien. Daarachter leek een strand met zee te zijn. Maar hoe verder we richting het paleis liepen, hoe verder het van ons vandaan kwam te liggen. "Dit moet wel de tweede grap zijn," sprak Helga. Ik zuchtte en begon moe te worden. "Doorlopen, kerel," sprak het boertje.

"Ja, maar zo werkt het niet. We komen alleen maar verder van het paleis vandaan," zuchtte ik.

"Niet zo klagen," sprak het narretje. "Wie zegt dat we op weg zijn naar het paleis. We hebben niets met het paleis te maken."

"Maar ik dacht dat we naar de koningin gingen ?" vroeg ik.

Opeens sloeg het mannetje een andere kant op. We gingen richting een bos, maar ook het bos kwam steeds verder weg te liggen. Ik was zo moe van het lopen geworden na een tijdje. "Laten we hier stoppen," klaagde ik. Niemand zei wat. Iedereen liep door, terwijl ik steeds meer achter begon te raken. Ik kon hen niet meer bijhouden. Ik begon harder en harder te rennen, maar hoe harder ik rende hoe verder ze van me vandaan waren. Ik schreeuwde en riep, maar niets hielp. Ik kon niet meer verder, en besloot toen te gaan zitten.

Ik kon mijn ogen niet meer open houden. Na een tijdje viel ik in slaap. Ik werd even later wakker in het paleis, in een kamertje, in een bed. Ik wist niet hoe lang ik had geslapen. Door het raam kon ik het strand zien en de zee. Een grotere nar kwam binnen. Ik begon rechtop in het bed te zitten. "U moet de tweede grap zijn," sprak ik.

"Hier glijdt altijd alles weg," sprak de nar. Hij had een staf met een grote knop in zijn hand. Hij wees op mij ermee. "Wie bent u ? Aangekomen, of nog steeds in dromenland ?" Ik legde uit wie ik was, en de nar begon te knikken. "Komt vaker voor, komt vaker voor," sprak hij. "Ik denk dat u toch daadwerkelijk aangekomen bent, maar alles glipt hier weg als de zee, en alles zal u verkeerd begrijpen, en alles zal over u liegen. Alles is hier onbereikbaar, en u zult verrukt zijn wanneer u de waarheid hoort, maar ook dat zal van u worden weggenomen."

"Akelig," sprak ik. "Oh, was ik maar bij moeder thuisgebleven," wat ik altijd op het toneel zei. Ik zag een indiaanse vrouw vanaf het strand dichter bij het raam komen. Ze keek naar binnen door het raam, wat een stuk openstond. "Waren de doornstruiken die haar paleistuinen omgaven de poorten van de hel ?" vroeg ze. "En waren haar boeken de koninginnen van de hel om je te kwellen ?" lachte ze. Het deed me herinneren aan een toneelstuk wat ik speelde. "Ik dacht het wel," sprak ik tot de vrouw. Lachend rende ze weg, en toen leek ze in het niets weg te vagen. "Spoken ?" vroeg ik.

"Natuurlijk," sprak de nar. "De spoken van het verleden. Ze blijven in je hoofd ronddwalen als herinneringen. Ze spreken, en hebben hun eigen kamer."

"Woont zij hier ook op het paleis ?" vroeg ik.

"Jazeker," sprak de nar. "Zij is één van de tien koninginnen. Zij die verdronken was heeft hen aangesteld."

"Oh, de tien grappen ?" vroeg ik.

De nar knikte. Ik zuchtte. Ik vroeg me af waar het boertje en Helga waren gebleven. Ik vroeg het de nar, maar die zweeg, en liep toen weg. "Ik moet even iets doen !" riep hij nog.

Ik ging uit het bed, en besloot door de gangen van het paleis te dwalen. Ik raakte goed verdwaald. Het was een echt doolhof hier, en er waren steeds minder deuren op de gangen. Ik besloot maar door een deur te gaan voordat er helemaal geen deuren meer zouden zijn. Het was per slot van rekening een spookkasteel.

Ik kwam in een kamer waar een man achter een piano zat op een stoel. De man zat helemaal onder de spinnenwebben. "Sigaartje ?" vroeg de man.

"Nee, dank u," sprak ik. "Ik rook niet."

"Vervelend," sprak de man.

"Waarom nou weer vervelend ?" sprak ik. "Roken is niet goed voor de gezondheid."

"Oh, hier wel," sprak de man. "Hier is roken erg goed voor de gezondheid. Niet te roken is dodelijk hier. Onze rook-artikelen zijn medicinaal."

Ik zuchtte. "Doet u mij dan maar een sigaretje."

De man graaide even in zijn zak en haalde er een verfrommeld pakje uit. Even later had hij een sigaret en stak die voor me aan.

Het rook sprookjesachtig. Ik had nog nooit gerookt, maar als dat noodzakelijk was om in leven te blijven, dan had ik geen andere keus. De man keek me glimachend aan. Er gingen allerlei vlammetjes op van de sigaret die in elfjes of feetjes leken te veranderen, en soms waren het spoken en vampieren. Ik voelde me vreemd en haalde diep in. "Is dit de tweede grap nog of zijn we al in de derde ?" vroeg ik. De man lachte. "U noemt dit een grap, mijnheer ?" vroeg hij deftig. "Het is anders doodserieus."

Ik zuchtte. Ik keek de man nog eens goed aan, en onderzocht hem. "Ik heb echt geen idee waarin ik terecht ben gekomen," sprak ik.

"Oh, op het morgen eiland," sprak de man.

"Oh, dit is een eiland ?" vroeg ik verbaasd.

"Ja," sprak de man. "Een woest eiland in een nog woestere zee."

"Heerlijk," sprak ik sarcastisch, "echt prima, en geweldig. En straks is het vloed en worden we allemaal weggespoeld ?"

"Ik hoop het niet," sprak de man lachend.

"U schijnt er nogal gelukkig om te zijn, om dit alles," sprak ik.

"Nee," zei de man, "dat niet. Maar wat moeten we anders ?"

"Ik weet het niet," zei ik. "Ik weet helemaal niks meer. En waarom zit u onder de spinnenwebben ?"

"Dat is een keer wat anders," zei de man. "Trouwens ... ik zit hier al zo lang. Dan kun je dat niet voorkomen."

"Dus u komt nooit buiten ?" vroeg ik. "U gaat uw kamer nooit uit, en u zit altijd maar achter de piano ?"

"Ja hoor," sprak de man. "Het is mijn leven." Toen begon hij piano te spelen, en ik wist niet goed wat hij nu bedoelde. Ik kon er geen speld meer tussenkrijgen. Hij begon ook steeds woester te spelen, en steeds harder. Na een tijdje moest ik mijn vingers in mijn oren stoppen, en ben ik maar weggerend. Maar ook op de gangen moest ik rennen, want het ging steeds harder en harder. Het was alsof mijn oren zouden ontploffen. Ik begon te roepen : "Help, help !" Ik kon ook de uitgang maar niet vinden. Ik begon duizelig te worden. Ik had het gevoel alsof ik elk moment kon neervallen, en ik had pijn in mijn buik. Toen viel ik de eerste de beste deur in.

Ik lag op de grond. Alles was doodstil. Ik keek op en zag het boertje en Helga bij het raam staan. Ze keken verbaasd naar me.

"Wat doe jij hier ?" vroeg Helga. "We dachten even dat we je voorgoed kwijt waren."

Het boertje hielp me op. "Zeg kerel, alles goed met je ? We hebben je eindelijk gevonden."

Ik zuchtte van opluchting. "Dit paleis is echt niet pluis," sprak ik.

"We weten het," sprak Helga. Het boertje knikte. "En dat is nog zachtjes gezegd," sprak het boertje plat.

"We moeten hier zo snel mogelijk weer uit," sprak ik.

"Ben je besuikerd," sprak het boertje. "Buiten is het nog wel veel erger. Daar is de zee, de woeste zee."

"Ja, ze zeiden dat dit een eiland was hier, van de morgen," sprak ik.

"Nee," zei het boertje, "het is een schip. En we zijn in grote problemen. De storm heeft al flink toegeslagen."

"Zeg maar gerust de tornado, of de orkaan," sprak Helga.

"Zijn de ramen dicht ?" vroeg ik. Het boertje knikte. "Kom er maar niet te dicht bij."

Ik rilde en bibberde een beetje. Waar was ik toch in terecht gekomen, en weer zei ik bij mezelf : "Oh, was ik maar bij moeder thuis gebleven."

"Het is de derde grap," sprak het boertje, "waarin alles steeds harder en erger wordt. We zijn in grote ellende."

"Ik denk dat ik de derde grap heb gezien," sprak ik. "Het was een man onder de spinnenwebben achter een piano, en hij begon steeds harder piano te spelen."

"Dat kan hem zijn," sprak het boertje. "Het is oorverdovend, maar buiten is het alleen maar erger."

"Ik begin een beetje ziek en misselijk van al die grappen te worden," sprak ik.

"Het paleis van de koningin wordt goed bewaakt," sprak het boertje. "Je komt niet zomaar van haar lijfwachten af. Je komt er niet zomaar doorheen."

"Dat heb ik gemerkt," sprak ik.

"We mogen van geluk spreken dat we elkaar weer zijn tegengekomen," sprak Helga. "Het had ook anders kunnen zijn, en dit is zo'n groot paleis."

"Of schip," sprak het boertje, terwijl hij knikte.

"Probeert iets of iemand ons soms in de war te brengen ?" vroeg ik.

"Ik denk het wel," sprak het boertje plat. "Maar wij laten ons niet kennen."

"Wat kunnen we doen ?" vroeg ik.

"Rustig blijven doorademen," sprak Helga.

"Ik durf niet van deze kamer af," sprak ik. "Het geluid op de gang was moordend. Ik heb geluk dat ik nog leef."

Het boertje knikte. "Laten we voorlopig maar hier blijven, en hopen dat de derde grap snel slaapt."

Gelukkig was de kamer erg groot, en stonden er wat bedden en had het een keukentje.

De kamer begon steeds meer te schudden, dus we waren duidelijk op een schip, tenzij het een aardbeving was. De kamer ging heen en weer, en ik werd enorm zeeziek. Na een tijdje kon ik er niet meer tegen, en kroop richting de deur. "Niet doen, kerel, ben je besuikerd," sprak het boertje. "Op de gang is het nog wel veel erger."

"Ja, maar misschien is het in een andere kamer minder erg," sprak ik.

"We moeten wachten totdat de gestoorde pianist gestopt is," sprak het boertje plat. "Het is een crimineel, een moordenaar. Laten we wachten totdat hij slaapt. Dan is het veilig."

Het boertje zei nog steeds het piano spel in de verte te horen bulderen, maar ik hoorde niets. Het boertje had waarschijnlijk betere oren dan ik. Wel hoorde ik de storm buiten bulderen. Al gauw lag ik op een bed. Ik had enorme buikpijn en was misselijk. Ik was goed zeeziek. Het leek steeds erger te worden. Alles begon door de kamer heen te schuiven, ook de bedden. "Nee," huilde ik. "We gaan eraan."

"Volhouden, jongen," sprak het boertje. Ook Helga sprak me toe. Hoe ze zich er zo goed onder hielden was mij een raadsel. Misschien hadden ze het vaker gedaan.

Het leek wel alsof er allerlei alarmen afgingen. Alles was in rep en roer. En toen begon er ook nog water over de vloer binnen te glijden. "We zijn er geweest, jongens !" riep ik.

"Ach welnee," sprak het boertje. "Een beetje water kan geen kwaad." Maar meer en meer water begon er binnen te stromen. Na een tijdje was het aan het bed gekomen, en ik begon nat te worden. Ook leek er water vanaf het plafond naar beneden te sijpelen. "Zie je nu wel, het stopt niet !" riep ik. Ik begon om hulp te roepen. Plotseling stroomde het water over me als bakken tegelijk. Ik gilde en schreeuwde. Er stond een man voor me in een zwarte regenjas en met een grote brede hoed op, als van Napoleon, een piraat of een kapitein. Hij greep mijn hand, en riep : "Kom mee !" Ik kon het boertje en Helga niet meer zien, en hoopte maar dat ze veilig waren. "Ik ben de kapitein !" riep de man, terwijl hij me de kamer uittrok. Hij had me goed vast, en sleepte mij door het water heen. In de verte hoorde ik op de achtergrond piano-geweld, maar het geluid van de storm en het water was veel harder. Het was een stormorkaan. De kapitein trok mij naar de deur aan de andere kant van de gang, en sleepte me daar een kamer binnen. Snel smeet hij de deur dicht. In deze kamer was geen druppeltje water te vinden, en alles stond kaarsrecht en het was doodstil. De kapitein ging achter een bureau zitten. "Welkom," zei hij, terwijl hij een pijp opstak.

"Bedankt," zei ik, "en bedankt dat u mij gered heeft, maar waar zijn Helga en het boertje ?"

"Dat weet ik niet," sprak hij.

"Ja maar we moeten ze vinden," zei ik. "Het zijn mijn beste vrienden."

"Jij blijft hier," sprak de kapitein. "Buiten deze kamer is het levensgevaarlijk, en zij kunnen wel voor zichzelf zorgen."

"Dat hoop ik maar," sprak ik bezorgd, maar ook met een zeker vertrouwen. Op een bepaalde manier leken Helga en het boertje onaantastbaar.

"Wat een grap," sprak ik. De kapitein glimlachte.

"Ik heb nog nooit zoiets gezien of meegemaakt," sprak ik.

De kapitein begon zijn pijpje te roken, en ik was ergens op een stoel gaan zitten vlak voor zijn bureau. "Dat was wat, hè ?" sprak hij.

"Dat kunt u wel zeggen," sprak ik.

"Het gebeurt niet vaak, maar als het dan gebeurt, dan is het ook goed mis," sprak de kapitein.

Hij stond op en schonk aan een tafel een borreltje in.

"Moet je wat ?" vroeg hij.

"Laat me raden," sprak ik. "Het is zeker belangrijk voor mijn gezondheid en van levensbelang ? Zeker weer één van die preventieve medicijnen hier ?"

De kapitein knikte.

"Doet u maar dan," sprak ik, "want ik wil geen enkel risico lopen."

Het borreltje wat ik even later dronk was zoet en bitter tegelijk, als een bitter medicijn met een bijsmaakje. Aardbei ofzo. Ook smaakte het naar dropsiroop en munt. Kaneel proefte ik ook.

"Lekker hè ?" vroeg hij.

Ik knikte. Even was het een lange tijd doodstil. Ik durfde eigenlijk niets te vragen. Ik had er ook de kracht niet voor, en het zou me alleen maar verder martelen. Het leek wel alsof ik overgevoelig was geworden, en moe van alles. "Wat een grap," zei ik weer. De kapitein glimlachte. Plotseling zei ik : "Hoe is het nu om kapitein te zijn op zo'n schip ?"

De kapitein bleef zwijgen. Na een tijdje zei hij : "Ja, dat weet ik niet."

Ik knikte maar. "En wat nu ?" vroeg ik een tijdje later.

Maar er kwam niets uit de kapitein. Hij had zijn ogen gesloten en zijn hoofd hing voorover. Hij was zeker moe. Misschien sliep hij wel. Ik durfde verder niet op te staan om de kamer uit te lopen. Als ik daar aan dacht dan gierde de angst door me heen, dus ik bleef maar gewoon kijken naar de slapende kapitein. Dat maakte mij wel rustig, en gaf mij een veilig gevoel. Deze man had mijn leven gered. Het was een held. Ook ik begon steeds meer moe te worden. Ik had echt behoefte aan slaap, en langzaam begon ook ik in slaap te vallen op mijn stoel. Ik kon helemaal in deze stoel wegzakken, alsof ik er in verdronk.

Ik werd wakker gemaakt door de hand van het boertje op mijn schouder. Ook Helga stond voor mij. "Kom mee," sprak het boertje. "We moeten hier weg."

Maar ik wees op de kapitein. "Kunnen we niet beter bij hem blijven ?" vroeg ik. "Hij heeft mijn leven gered, en hij lijkt me een soort van tovenaar."

"Ben je besuikerd," sprak het boertje plat. "Dat is de vierde grappenmeester. Hij heeft de vorige drie grappen gemaakt. Hij brengt mensen in de grootst mogelijke problemen, en speelt dan de grote redder. Je wilt toch niet nog een keer zo'n ritje maken ? Kom mee, het schip is in een haven aangekomen." Het boertje trok me op, en trok me mee uit de kamer. We liepen de gang uit en kwamen toen bij de uitgang van het schip. Over een loopbrug kwamen we in de haven. "Vaarwel, schip," sprak het boertje. We kwamen op een kade waarlangs wat cafeetjes stonden. "Hier moeten we zijn," sprak het boertje.

Overal liepen piraten rond, en soms piraten-kapiteinen. Sommigen hadden houten of metalen benen. Ook hadden sommigen papegaaien op hun schouders, of andere paradijselijke vogels, of sommigen liepen rond met kooitjes waarin vogels zaten. Sommige kooitjes leken van goud te zijn. Het leek wel op een piraten-haven. Ik vroeg me af of we wel veilig waren. Het boertje trok me in een café. Daar gingen we met z'n drieën aan een tafeltje zitten. Een lange piraten-ober met een gouden oorbel in zijn oor en een rode piratendoek met witte cirkels om zijn hoofd kwam naar ons toe. "Wat mag het zijn ?" vroeg hij, terwijl hij een klein notitie-blokje met een pennetje pakte. Het boertje fluisterde hem even iets in het oor, en de piraten-ober knikte. Even later stonden er drie hele lange milkshakes met rietjes op de tafel. Ik begon te drinken. Ik vroeg me af waar we waren. "Dit is een piraten-eiland," sprak het boertje. "De vijfde grap woont hier ergens."

"De vijfde grap is een boek," sprak Helga. "Het is een sprekend boek wat geen einde kent."

"En geen begin," sprak het boertje.

"En er staat altijd weer wat anders in," sprak Helga.

"Ja, als een krant of tijdschrift wat altijd anders is," sprak het boertje.

"Sommigen voorspellen de toekomst erdoor, of weten allerlei dingen van je," sprak Helga.

Na wat gedronken te hebben gingen we weer naar buiten. We gingen dieper het kleine piratenstadje in, totdat we bij een open vlakte kwamen met hier en daar wat struikjes. Er waren hier veel velden, en in de verte stond een kasteel. Het boek zou ergens in het kasteel wonen. Een vrouw op een paard kwam ons tegemoet. Ze hield een lans in haar hand en had schouder-beschermers op met franje. Het was een donkere vrouw. "Het boek verwacht u al," sprak de vrouw. "Volg mij."

"Heel wat aardiger dan dat narretje in het bos," dacht ik bij mezelf. We volgden de vrouw door de velden, en toen we bij het kasteel waren aangekomen liet ze ons binnen, nadat ze van het paard was afgestapt. Dit moest dus de vijfde grap zijn. Ik was erg benieuwd en hield mijn adem in. Wat zou het dit keer wezen ?

"Er zijn drie boeken," sprak de vrouw. Ze wees toen op drie deuren. "Kiest u zelf maar een deur uit."

"Klinkt weer erg misleidend," sprak ik.

De vrouw zuchtte een beetje. Ze leek geïrriteerd naar mij. "Laten we de middelste deur maar kiezen," sprak het boertje. De vrouw liep op de middelste deur af en opende die. We liepen naar binnen, en de vrouw gebood ons te zitten. Er stonden drie stoelen voor een bureau. Achter het

bureau was een grote krant opgeheven, waarachter rook vandaan kwam. Plotseling werd de krant neergelegd, en we keken recht in de ogen van een sprekend boek. Het was een heel dik boek met grote ogen en een grote mond. Verder was het boek erg vriendelijk. "Ik ben de vijfde grap, aangenaam," sprak het boek. "Zegt u maar waarvoor u komt."

"Nou, ziet u," sprak het boertje plat. "Deze man hier wil graag aangenomen worden in de laagste klas, en daarvoor moet hij eerst door de tien grappen heen."

"Maar dat gaat zo maar niet," lachte het boek. "Waarom wil hij dat zo graag ?"

"Hij is geïnteresseerd in zij die verdronken was," sprak het boertje, "en heeft enkele dromen over haar gehad. Ook is hij een toneelspeler die eens wat anders wilde."

"Een toneelspeler, hè ?" sprak het boek. "En ik moet hier mijn geld aan verspillen ?"

"Geld ?" vroeg ik.

"Om u gaat het zeker," sprak het boek terwijl hij minachtend naar me keek.

Ik knikte.

"Laat me het u duidelijk uitleggen, mijnheer," sprak het boek. "Tijd is geld, veel geld. Door u mis ik elke seconde dat ik tijd aan u besteed geld, veel geld, en daar zal u voor opdraaien. Ik hoop dat u een grote bankrekening hebt."

"Mijnheer het boek," sprak Helga, "kunt u even ophouden met die grapjes nu. We komen hier voor een serieuze zaak. Mijnheer Windesheim wil het geheim kennen van zij die verdronken was."

"Dan zal hij het boek moeten lezen," sprak het boek deftig.

"Welk boek ?" vroeg ik.

"Ikzelf," sprak het boek. Het boek ging plat op het bureau liggen, over de krant heen, en sloeg zichzelf open. "Kom en lees," sprak hij. Ik ging achter het bureau zitten en keek in het boek. Het was een reusachtig boek, maar alle letters rolden voor mijn ogen, en de plaatjes waren als spiegels. Het leken wel diepe gaten, en er kwam mist doorheen, of rook. Uit de plaatjes kwamen handen die mij wenkten. Plotseling werd ik door de handen gegrepen, en in het boek getrokken.

Ik kwam in een tempel met hoge pilaren. Ze deden allemaal een beetje paarsachtig aan. Op een zachtpaarse troon zat zij die verdronken was. "Kom verder," sprak ze. Ze wenkte me. Ik kwam dichterbij. Er waren een paar lichtpaarse treden onder de troon. "Kom nog dichterbij," sprak ze. Ik ging op de eerste trede staan. "Goedzo," sprak ze. "Mijnheer Windesheim," sprak ze. "Ik ken uw pijn. Het is mijn pijn. En omdat u meer informatie over mij zocht, heeft u mij gevonden. Zoals u weet ben ik een dichteres en een kunstenares, en bent u de verloren dichter. Daarom heb ik tien meestergrappen tot u gezonden, om u te testen, te begeleiden en te beschermen."

"Volgens mij heb ik er nu vijf gehad, tenzij dit de zesde is," sprak ik.

"Leer te tellen, mijnheer Windesheim," sprak ze, terwijl ze haar tong iets uitstak. "Het narretje in het bos is de eerste, de indiaanse vrouw aan het strand de tweede, de man in de piano kamer de derde, de kapitein van het schip de vierde, het eindeloze en altijd-veranderende boek de vijfde, de nar in het paleis de zesde, het boertje de zevende, Helga de achtste, de secretaresse van het toneel de

negende, en ikzelf ben de tiende."

Ik keek haar verbaasd aan. "Dus ik ben al door de grappen heengekomen ?" vroeg ik. Ze knikte. "Welkom tot de laagste klas, die van de verloren dichter," sprak ze.

"Ben ik nu echt in de laagste klas terecht gekomen ?" vroeg ik wantrouwend, "want de vorige keer zei u iets soortgelijks, en toen zei Helga dat ik het nog maar voor de helft was."

"Maar nu is het echt," sprak zij die verdronken was met een glimlach.

"Ik weet het niet," sprak ik. "Straks als ik Helga weer spreek dan maakt ze er misschien weer iets anders van."

"Wie is nu de koningin ?" vroeg zij die verdronken was.

"U, dacht ik," sprak ik aarzelend, "maar ik dacht dat alle meestergrappen koninginnen waren, tenminste dat zei de nar in het paleis."

"De tien boeken van zij wiens deuren de poorten van de hel zijn ?" sprak zij die verdronken was. "Ja, natuurlijk, de grappen komen in allerlei vormen, als mijn lijfwachten, mijn maskers, mijn koningen en koninginnen, maar ik ben de opperkoningin."

"En wie was het beest dan die u in de diepte trok ?" vroeg ik.

"Dat was ik zelf," sprak ze. "Het was een grap met een diepere betekenis."

Ik zuchtte van opluchting. "Het was dus echt allemaal maar een grap ?" vroeg ik.

Ze knikte.

"Kom uit dat boek !" werd er ineens geroepen. Het boek werd dichtgeslagen en ik werd eruit getrokken. Het boek staarde mij aan met verwilderde ogen. "Moet ik je soms verslinden ?" vroeg het boek.

"Waarom ?" vroeg ik. "Dit was toch de bedoeling ?"

"Ik vroeg je het boek te lezen !" krijste het boek. "Ik vroeg je niet het boek in te gaan !"

"Ja, maar ik werd erin getrokken door handen," sprak ik.

"Nee," krijste het boek, "je liet jezelf erin trekken."

"Echt niet, mijnheer," sprak ik. "Ik kon me er niet tegen verzetten. Het was te sterk. Ik kon er niets aan doen."

"En wie er te lang inblijft wordt verzwolgen en komt er nooit meer uit," sprak het boek woedend. "Het zou je kunnen verslinden als je langer was gebleven."

"Sorry," sprak ik. "Ik had dat niet in de gaten."

"Je hebt maar geluk," sprak het boek. "Dat was op het nippertje. Maar in ieder geval : Hier heb je je certificaat. Welkom tot de laagste klas, de klas van de verloren dichter." Er kwamen handen uit het

boek die me een papier voorhielden, een document, met daarop een rood zegel. Hierop stond de naam van de klas, en mijn naam. Ik nam het papier aan en stopte het in de binnenzak van mijn jas. Daar paste het precies in. Toen sloot ik het met de rits.

"Luister goed," sprak het boek. "Ga nu naar de eerste deur, en ga daar naar binnen. Ik ging de kamer van het boek uit en liep toen naar de eerste deur. Binnen was een lift waar Helga en het boertje ook waren. Ze glimlachten naar mij. "Welkom in de laagste klas, de klas van de verloren dichter," sprak het boertje. "Welkom in het paarse complot," sprak Helga. "Wij waren beiden van het paarse complot om jou te helpen."

Hoofdstuk 4. Nat Kruid

De liftdeur ging open, en we gingen naar binnen. Weer ging de lift diep naar beneden. Na een tijdje stapten we uit in een schemerig gangetje waar hier en daar plantenbakken stonden en waarachter een zaaltje was. Het zaaltje zat vol met personen met paarse kappen op. Wij gingen ergens dichtbij de ingang zitten, achterin de zaal. Eén van hen met de paardse kappen deed het woord : "Allemaal hartelijk welkom in het paarse complot. Eens werd u zelf geholpen en uitgered door iemand van het paarse complot, en nu bent u zelf van het paarse complot om anderen te helpen en tot een beter leven te leiden met een diepere zin." De zaal was echt vol. Er waren wel honderden met een paarse kap op. Helga en het boertje zeiden dat er wel veel meer van zulke zaaltjes waren. Dit was het gebied van de laagste klas.

Op een gang ergens in het gebouw kreeg ik een kamer. Ook het boertje en Helga hadden hier een eigen kamer. Ik was nu van het paarse complot, de laagste klas.

De volgende ochtend was er weer een bijeenkomst. Leden van het paarse complot lazen hun gedichten voor of hun verhalen. Ik las zelf wat voor uit mijn dromenjournaal, en ik vertelde wat over oude teksten die ik had ontcijferd, en over toneelstukken die ik had gespeeld toen ik nog op het toneel werkte. Ik was per slot van rekening opgeleid als toneelspeler. Van zo'n veilige afstand kon ik er wel over praten. Ze vonden het allemaal erg interessant, en de keer daarna nodigden ze mij weer uit om er wat over te vertellen. Mijn avonturen met Helga en het boertje vonden zij ook heel amusant. Zij vonden dat ik veel bruikbaar materiaal had. Ze vroegen mij zoveel mogelijk wat ik had meegemaakt op te tekenen voor het archief. Er was geen lagere klas meer te behalen, want dit was de allerlaagste klas, maar men kon hier nog wel extra strepen verdienen, de zogeheten paarse strepen. De eerste paarse streep die ik moest behalen was de streep van de meestergrap. Ik moest dus zelf een meestergrap worden. Ik moest een opleiding volgen tot meesterclown of grappenmeester.

Ik vroeg me af wat dat inhield. De lessen werden gegeven in een ander zaaltje. Achter het zaaltje waren de bloemenvelden. Vaak hielden hen met de paarse kappen optochten door deze velden. Dit ging zo langzaam mogelijk.

Ik wist niet wat het inhield, en had vele vragen. Blijkbaar hadden Helga en het boertje de paarse streep al behaald, want zij waren al meestergrappen. Zij zouden mij dus ook kunnen onderwijzen.

Op een dag werd er in een zaaltje een sprookjesfilm gedraaid genaamd Paarskapje :

Paarskapje

Moeder zei tegen Paarskapje : "Kom niet in het bos, want daar woont een leeuw."
Maar Paarskapje wilde niet luisteren. Ze ging stiekem toch naar het bos.
Aan de rand van het bos stond de leeuw.
"Zo, zo," sprak de leeuw toen Paarskapje dichterbij kwam, "dus jij hebt niet geluisterd naar de volwassenen, huh ?"
"Hoe weet u dat ?" vroeg Paarskapje.
"Leeuwen weten veel," sprak de leeuw, "maar kom maar op mijn rug, dan zal ik je laten zien hoeveel ik weet."
"Ik wilde eigenlijk gewoon het bos in," sprak Paarskapje, "en ik heb niet zoveel zin nu in malle ritjes op de rug van een leeuw."
"Malle ritjes ?" sprak de leeuw een beetje beledigd, "maar onze ritjes zijn zeer leerzaam."

"Dat kan wel wezen," sprak Paarskapje, "maar ik moet er nu door. Ga aan de kant, want ik wil het bos in."
"Het bos is van mij," sprak de leeuw. "Je bent een dom kind, en je komt er niet langs."
Het begon Paarskapje op haar zenuwen te werken, en uiteindelijk stemde ze in. "Okay, vooruit dan maar," sprak ze tegen de leeuw. "Neem jij me maar mee, en laat me maar eens zien wat jij al allemaal weet."
De leeuw liet Paarskapje op zijn rug klimmen, en toen begon de reis. Vliegensvlug snelde hij door het bos tot aan de rand van de zee.
"Nou, ik heb niet veel van het bos kunnen zien, want je ging veel te snel," zei Paarskapje.
"Voor kinderen is het nooit goed," bromde de leeuw.
"Kun je me nu het bos laten zien ?" vroeg Paarskapje. "En iets langzamer graag. Je was er zo doorheen, en ik heb niks maar dan ook helemaal niks kunnen zien."
"Ja, maar ik moet wel snel," zei de leeuw. "Er woont namelijk een wolf in het bos, en wij liggen elkaar niet zo. Er zou een groot gevecht om jou uitbreken."
"Ah, dus dat zit zo," sprak Paarskapje. "Laat mij dan gewoon alleen het bos in gaan, dan kan jij hier blijven, en dan kan ik alles op mijn gemak bekijken."
"Geen sprake van," sprak de leeuw. "Zoals ik al zei woont er een wolf in het midden van het bos, en die zou jou maar wat graag willen verslinden, en dan heb ik het op mijn geweten."
"Helemaal niet," sprak Paarskapje. "Ik wil het toch zelf ?"
"Ja, maar ik ben de bewaker van het bos," sprak de leeuw, "dus ik ben verantwoordelijk."
Paarskapje stapte van de leeuw af. "Nu moet het afgelopen zijn. Het bos is van niemand en van iedereen. Misschien dat hierom mijn moeder mij voor jou heeft gewaarschuwd, want je bent een echte zeurkous."
"Heus," sprak de leeuw, "het is voor je eigen bestwil." Maar Paarskapje begon al het bos in te rennen. De leeuw kwam niet achter haar aan. Hij schudde alleen zijn hoofd.
Diep in het bos bij een riviertje kwam Paarskapje de wolf tegen. De wolf stond daar stokstijf.
"Hoe maakt u het ?" vroeg Paarskapje, maar de wolf sprak niet. Verderop was een huisje.
Paarskapje klopte even aan. Er werd al snel geopend en een grote vrouw met een doek om haar hoofd deed open. "Kom maar binnen," sprak ze.
"Wie bent u ?" sprak Paarskapje.
"Een doodgewone heks," sprak de vrouw. "In de stad moeten ze me niet, dus ik ben maar hier gaan wonen."
Paarskapje keek om haar heen. "Zijn die leeuw en die wolf toevallig ook van u ? Ze schijnen ruzie te hebben."

"Ja," sprak de oude vrouw. "Die spreken elkaar niet meer. Ze hebben beiden hun eigen terrein."
"Vreemd," sprak Paarskapje. "En waar gaat de ruzie over ?"
"Om jou," sprak de heks.
Paarskapje schrok. "Om mij ?"
"Ja," sprak de heks. "Ik zag in mijn kristallen bol dat er een meisje met een paars kapje om haar hoofd zou komen, en toen begonnen ze ruzie te maken over wie haar mocht opeten."
"Vreemd," sprak Paarskapje. "De leeuw was heel aardig, en de wolf zei helemaal niks. Ik leef nog steeds."
De heks keek het meisje aan met grote ogen. "Maar natuurlijk," sprak de oude vrouw, "ik zei hen dat ze jou geen haar mochten krenken. Jij zou namelijk van mij zijn."
Paarskapje schrok nu nog meer. "Eh, ik denk dat ik nu moet gaan," sprak het meisje, en rende naar de deur. Maar de deur zat op slot.
"Je kunt niet ontsnappen, kind," sprak de vrouw, "maar ik ben de kwaadste niet. Ik zal je niet opeten. Ik heb alleen een hulpje nodig."
"Ja, maar mevrouw," sprak het meisje. "Ik heb daar echt geen tijd voor. En ik moet naar school."
"Ach, dat went wel," sprak de vrouw. "Wat is nu belangrijker ? School of het helpen van een arme, oude vrouw ?"
En zo gebeurde het. De oude vrouw droeg Paarskapje karweitjes op, en die zou Paarskapje dan uitvoeren. De wolf moest ervoor zorgen dat Paarskapje niet de benen zou nemen. Paarskapje begon inderdaad snel er aan te wennen, en dacht bij zichzelf dat het toch ook wel belangrijk was om oude mensen te helpen. En ze hoefde niet meer naar school, dus eigenlijk was ze er achteraf nog wel blij om ook. De wolf deed haar verder geen kwaad, en Paarskapje begon steeds meer en meer te genieten van het wonen in het bos. De heks bleek de kwaadste niet te zijn, en ze deden vaak spelletjes.
Op een nacht kwam de leeuw haar kamertje binnen. Hij kwam naar haar bed toe en sprak : "Zie je nu wel, je bent nu in de macht van de wolf. De oude vrouw werkt voor hem, en zij moet je veel laten werken en veel laten eten zodat je taai en dik wordt, zodat hij je kan opeten."
"Leugens," sprak Paarskapje. "Het is een hartstikke aardige vrouw, en de wolf doet geen vlieg kwaad. Ik hoef helemaal niet hard te werken, en ik heb het hier erg naar mijn zin. Ook hoef ik niet naar die vervelende school, en dik ben ik niet."
De leeuw schudde zijn hoofd. "Begrijpen doe je het niet. De wolf is een levensgevaarlijke heks die spelletjes met je speelt. Het zijn twee heksen, en de wolf is de baas. Zodra je dik genoeg bent zal de wolf je opeten."
"Ik geloof je niet," sprak Paarskapje, "maar ik zal er op letten niet teveel en niet te zoet te eten. Dan zullen we zien of u de waarheid hebt gesproken."
De leeuw verdween weer, en de volgende ochtend zorgde het meisje er goed voor dat ze minder at, en vooral minder zoetigheid at. Aan tafel kreeg het meisje het toen wel te horen. De oude vrouw begon er overstuur van te raken. "Eet eens wat meer zoet," zei de vrouw, "want zoet doet goed."
"Ik moet niets," zei het meisje. Maar de oude vrouw begon bozer en bozer te worden, vooral omdat het dag na dag gebeurde. Op een gegeven moment krijste ze : "Ik wil dat je meer zoet eet, anders zal de wolf je eten." Toen wist het meisje dat de leeuw gelijk had gehad. Ze beloofde direct dat ze meer zoet zou gaan eten, maar ze deed het niet. "Morgen zal ik het doen," sprak ze. De heks werd iets rustiger door die belofte. Midden in de nacht hoopte het meisje dat de leeuw weer terug zou komen. Ze durfde niet zelf te ontsnappen, want de wolf hield haar goed in de gaten. Hoe de leeuw het huis en haar kamer was binnen gekomen was haar een raadsel.
Maar de leeuw kwam niet, en het meisje begon zich zorgen te maken. De volgende dag deed ze alsof ze ziek was, en wilde niet veel eten. "Toe eet wat zoet," sprak de oude vrouw, "want zoet doet je goed."
"Ik heb niet zo'n zin," sprak het meisje. "Ik voel me niet lekker."
De oude vrouw was er niet blij om, en mopperde. Alles ging gelukkig goed, maar die nacht kwam de leeuw weer niet. Nu begon het meisje zich pas echt zorgen te maken. Ze kon het zo niet lang volhouden. Toen ze weer bijna niets at en geen zoet begon de oude vrouw te krijsen. "Je kunt niet

altijd ziek zijn ! Nu moet je wat zoet eten, anders zal de wolf je eten." Ze stopte een lepel in de suiker en bracht het toen naar de mond van het meisje. "Eet, en daarna zul je taartjes krijgen."

"Maar ik heb buikpijn !" riep het meisje.
"Kan me niet schelen," sprak de oude vrouw. "Als je beter wil worden dan zul je wat moeten eten. Eet of wordt gegeten." Het meisje begon te huilen. "U begrijpt er helemaal niets van," klaagde ze.
"Ik begrijp alles !" tierde de oude vrouw, "maar jij begrijpt niks. Eet nu !" Het meisje duwde de lepel met suiker weg die onder haar neus was gedrukt, en pakte de suikerpot en gooide de suiker in het gezicht van de heks. "Vreet die troep zelf op !" riep Paarskapje woest, en rende naar boven naar haar kamer. De heks krijste. "Mijn ogen, mijn ogen ! Ik zal je krijgen, kreng !" bulderde de heks, en kwam met grote, zware stappen de trap op. Het meisje duwde de kast voor de deur, en keek het raam uit. Ze zag de wolf niet, dus ze zou het er op wagen. De heks begon inmiddels al op de deur te slaan. "Ik heb nog wat suiker voor je !" riep de heks. Het meisje begon het raam uit te klimmen en kwam op een schuin dakje terecht. De heks was inmiddels in haar kamer gekomen en keek uit het raam. "Grijp haar !" riep ze. Snel sprong het meisje van het schuine dakje af, en kwam in een struik terecht. Al snel was ze op de grond, en begon te rennen zonder om te kijken. "Je zult niet ver komen !" hoorde ze achter haar bulderen.
"Leeuw, leeuw ! Waar bent u ?" riep ze zo hard als ze kon. Aan het rivierje stond een bootje waar ze instapte met een lange stok, en ze begon zichzelf voort te duwen. De grote zwarte wolf was snel aan de rand van de rivier gekomen. "Je zult niet ver komen," bulderde hij.
Aan de andere kant van de rivier stond de leeuw. "Heb je het eindelijk gemerkt !" riep hij.
Het meisje duwde het bootje voort met de stok, en zorgde dat ze in het midden bleef van de rivier. "Ik vertrouw jullie beiden niet !" riep het meisje. "Was ik maar bij moeder thuis gebleven. Jullie hebben me alleen ellende gebracht. Had ik maar naar haar geluisterd."
"Dom kind !" riep de leeuw. "Je moeder is nog wel erger dan die twee heksen bij elkaar."
Het meisje kwam verder en verder op de rivier. "Erger dan jou kan het niet wezen !" riep ze terug naar de leeuw. Vreemd genoeg volgden zowel de leeuw als de wolf haar niet meer. Het was alsof ze hier niet durfden te komen, en het meisje ging over de rivier dieper en dieper het bos in. Ze dacht na over de woorden van de leeuw. Wat als hij gelijk had ? Ze trok haar kleren uit en deed haar paarse kapje af, en stapte over de rand van de boot om zo het water in te glijden. Ze zwom en zwom, niet wetende wat ze moest doen, maar ze wilde in ieder geval niet terug naar de vrouw en de wolf. Ze dacht veel na over de leeuw, en besloot naar de andere kant van de rivier te zwemmen. De leeuw was nergens meer te bekennen. Uit pure wanhoop begon ze even later de leeuw te roepen, maar die kwam niet. Toen besloot ze helemaal terug te lopen aan de andere kant van de rivier, naar waar de leeuw was. maar toen ze aan de overkant een glimp van de wolf opving wilde ze niet meer verder. Ze begon te rennen en te rennen in het bos, roepende naar de leeuw. Ze dacht dat de leeuw haar laatste hoop was. Na een tijdje plofte ze moe in het zand, en viel in slaap.

Ze werd wakker in een huisje, in een kamertje, wat gelukkig niet het kamertje was waar ze vandaan kwam. Wel woonde er hier een andere vrouw, die iets jonger was. De vrouw liep het kamertje binnen, en ging op een stoel zitten naast haar bed. Ze rook naar bloemen. "Ik dacht : laat ik je maar meenemen," sprak de vrouw vriendelijk. "Je lag er zo vredig te slapen, maar je was in groot gevaar."
"Gevaar ?" vroeg het meisje.
"Ja," knikte de vrouw. Ze had een bloemenjurk aan. "Er woont hier veel gespuis in dit bos."
"Dat heb ik gemerkt," sprak het meisje. "Had ik maar beter naar mijn moeder geluisterd."
Even was het stil. Toen vroeg het meisje : "Van de wolf en de heks weet ik het, maar kunt u mij uitleggen over de leeuw ?" De vrouw keek haar diep in de ogen. "Ik ben de leeuw," sprak de vrouw.
Het meisje schrok. "Ben ik dan nu in gevaar ?"
De vrouw glimlachte. "Nee, ik wilde je juist voor het gevaar behoeden. Ik verander soms in een leeuw, en daarom kan ik niet in de stad leven zoals je misschien wel zult begrijpen." Het meisje knikte. "En hoe kan dat ?" vroeg het meisje.

"Ik weet het niet," sprak de vrouw. "Ik ben zo geboren."
Het meisje had wat nieuwe kleren gekregen en een nieuw paars kapje, en toen bracht de vrouw haar weer naar huis. Maar daar waar vroeger de rand van het bos was en het stadje was nu ook overal bos. Het meisje begon te huilen. "Wat is er toch gebeurd ?" vroeg ze.
"Ik moet je bekennen dat ik dat ook niet weet," sprak de vrouw.
De vrouw nam het meisje toen weer mee terug naar haar huisje, en sindsdien bleef het meisje daar wonen. Nooit meer hebben ze nog iets van de wolf en de heks gehoord, en ook niet van het stadje.

Einde

Aan het einde van de film werd er door iemand met een paarse kap een uitleg gegeven : "Paars is de kleur van de slaap, en ook de leeuw wordt soms als symbool van de slaap gebruikt in de dichterskunst. Elke herinnering is een droom, en als je dan dieper wil gaan, een dieper inzicht wil krijgen, dan moet je eerst tot een diepere slaap komen, dus dieper met de lift. Dit is ook ter genezing van de herinneringen, die soms zelfs gewoon pure nachtmerries zijn. De diepere slaap lost zo heel wat op, en dan zijn soms ineens de oude dingen verdwenen of in een andere vorm gegoten."

Ik dacht over mijn eigen leven, en voelde mijzelf als Paarskapje. Mijn oude leven was weg, en nu woonde ik met de leeuw die zorgzaam over mij was. Ik was dankbaar voor Helga en het boertje, en alle vrienden die ik hier had van het paarse complot.

Ik begon mee te lopen in de optochten door de bloemenvelden in paarse pij en met paarse kap. Ik moest leren te vertragen om tot diepere slaap te komen, om zo ook tot diepere dromen en inzichten te komen. Het was een soort meditatie-oefening. Door te vertragen ontstond er ook zoveel ruimte voor andere dingen. Ook Helga en het boertje liepen soms mee in deze optochten. Ik kon zo ontwaken uit vele nachtmerries waarin ik vastzat. Het gebeurde dus door een diepere slaap, een diepere vertraging. Ik moest mijzelf hier in disciplineren. Het was geen makkelijke oefening. Hen met de paarse pijen en kappen zongen bepaalde trage gezangen, en die moest ik ook leren.

Op een nacht werd ik geroepen door een vrouwelijke stem. Als in een trance ging ik mijn kamer uit en dwaalde door de gangen. Na een tijdje lopen, ik weet niet hoe lang, kwam ik in een ruimte aan waar pilaren stonden, als in een tempel, en ik herinnerde deze plaats. Ik zag zij die verdronken was zitten op een troon. Kinderen met grote pluimen om haar te verkoelen stonden naast haar. "Kom nabij, mijn verloren dichter," sprak ze.

"Ja, majesteit ?" sprak ik, terwijl ik dichter bij haar kwam. Ze stond op van de troon en kwam naar me toe, en gaf mij een kus op mijn voorhoofd. "Mijnheer Windesheim," sprak ze, "u komt op het juiste moment."

"Hoezo ?" sprak ik.

"Omdat ik een opdracht voor u heb," sprak ze glimlachend. Ze was in een soort nachtjapon. Ze leidde mij achter de troon waar een deur was van een zaaltje waarin een groot filmscherm stond. Op het filmscherm was een donkere vrouw te zien die tussen de waterbloemen lag. "Mijn verdrinking," sprak ze, "maar dit is slechts een symbool van het komen tot inzicht, door een diepere slaap, tot een diepere droom."

Ik sloeg een arm om haar heen, en ze draaide zich weer naar me toe en omhelsde me.

Ze liet een volgende dia zien van een groot schip. Ook dit schip herkende ik. "Hier wil ik met jou naartoe," sprak zij, "waar ik je al eerder heb ontmoet in een droom." Ik knikte. Achter het scherm was nog een deur die naar buiten leidde. Hier kwamen we op de zeekade waaraan het schip stond. "Kom," sprak ze terwijl ze de loopbrug opliep. Ze had mijn hand vast en ik liep mee. Op het schip omhelsde ze me weer. De golven van de zee waren bijna zwart als dropsiroop. Er waren verschillende personen met paarse kappen op het schip. Zij maakten de touwen los en hesen de zeilen. We gingen de zee op. Ik was hoog vereerd dat ik met haar mocht zeilen. Ik was op haar schip. In het schip had ze een kamer waar ze me naartoe nam. Ze begon een fles te schudden. "Drink dit," sprak ze, terwijl ze wat voor me inschonk. Ik dronk wat ze me gaf, en keek naar haar. Het smaakte zoet en bitter. "Het is het water van mijn verdrinking," sprak ze.

"I... ik begrijp het niet," sprak ik.

"Je zult het begrijpen," sprak ze. Ik moest even neerliggen. Ze bracht mij naar een bed. "Het komt door het drankje," sprak ze. Het tolde in mijn hoofd.

"Waarom, waarom ?" vroeg ik. Ik had het gevoel alsof ik doodging.

"Om mij te leren kennen," sprak ze. Ze wreef wat nat kruid in mijn haar. Het rook heel scherp, naar het bos. "Dit is ter herdenking van mijn verdrinking," sprak ze. Ik werd emotioneel, en omhelsde haar. "Het is een poort," sprak ze. "Straks is het schip door de poort, en dan zijn we op de bloemenzee."

Langzaam begon ik wakker te worden op mijn eigen bed. Het was maar een droom geweest, maar wel een mooie, zoete droom. Ik keek naar het kleine lampje op mijn nachtkastje wat ik had aangeklikt. Het gaf iets licht, maar niet teveel. Ik zou er net bij kunnen lezen. Er was een gevoel van diepe vrede over me, en ik voelde me heerlijk veilig. Langzaam zonk ik weer in slaap.

De volgende ochtend vertelde ik de droom aan Helga en het boertje.

"Ze moet je wel hebben," sprak het boertje plat. Ik glimlachte. Ook Helga glimlachte. "Weer wat voor je dromenjournaal," sprak ze. Ik vroeg me nog steeds af hoe ik nu tot een meestergrap kon worden, maar het leek wel alsof iedereen er omheen praatte, en in de klas ging het ook over alles behalve dat. Ik hield me maar vast aan de gouden wet dat alles tijd nodig had.

Het was in die dagen dat er een oorlog begon : Hen met de zwarte kappen vielen binnen. Ook dit was een vreemde verborgen en geheime samenleving waar ik niets vanaf wist. Niemand had me hier over verteld, en een grote verbazing sloeg mij. Ik wist ook niet wat ik moest doen. Het leek wel een dichterlijke oorlog. Ze kwamen om hun gedichten voor te lezen, en er werden gedichten tot hen gelezen. Het was een vreemde oorlog. De oorlog was volstrekt verbaal, volstrekt dichterlijk. Er werden geen wapens gebruikt. Het wapen was de tong. Het viel mij op hoe hoffelijk en beleefd hen met de zwarte kappen waren. Alhoewel zij ongevraagd waren binnengevallen werden zij wel uiterst gastvrij behandeld, en mochten zij hun gedichten voordragen.

We gingen allemaal naar een zaaltje waar één van hen met de zwarte kappen naar voren ging om het woord te doen. Ze waren in een grote groep gekomen. Ze zaten overal in de zaal tussen hen met de paarse kappen in. Het was een prachtig mengsel. Toen de persoon begon te spreken bleek het een vrouw te zijn. Zij vertelde over zij die was verdronken. Ook hen met de zwarte kappen vereerden haar. De vrouw vertelde hoe de open doodskist van zij die was verdronken op een boot over de zee van witte bloemen ging. Overal waren witte bloemen en zij vormden rivieren. Dit was de eerste bloemenzee.

"Oh, ziet hoe zij verdronken is,
En ziet haar open doodskist,
Hoe zij langs de witte bloemen ging,
De hemelen zich openende,
Om haar geheim te ontvangen,"
sprak de vrouw met de zwarte kap.

"Oh, een groot geheimenis is daar,
Wanneer witte zeebloemen zich openen,
En zij openen ook haar."

Achter haar was een wit scherm, waarop dia's werden vertoond.

Ik zat tussen Helga in het boertje in. Het boertje stootte mij aan en sprak dat hen met de zwarte kappen van een hele hoge paarse streep waren. Zo nu en dan vielen ze binnen om te onderwijzen. Het was een schijn-oorlog, een schijn-bezetting.

De vrouw met de zwarte kap begon te vertellen over de zee van witte bloemen, de eerste bloemenzee. "De mysterieën van zij die verdronken was," fluisterde het boertje tegen mij.

De witte bloemen waren de eersten die haar opvingen na haar verdrinking. Zij zorgden voor haar, en gaven haar inzicht. Op de dia's was haar doodskist te zien die langs de witte bloemen ging, op een boot over het water. Haar ziel gleed uit haar lichaam en stond op, om zo in het water te glijden om te zijn met de witte bloemen. De witte bloemen waren haar angsten, maar zij hielden haar veilig. Zij waren erg zorgzaam. Zij hadden alle aandacht voor haar. De koning van de witte bloemen nam haar mee tot een groot schip, het nachtschip, waarmee ze hen met de paarse kappen zou ophalen. Zij bezongen haar dood en ontwaking met trage gezangen, met diep respect en grote eerbied.

Angsten deden haar ontwaken. Zij werd gebaard door angst in het diepste van de zee. Angst was haar vader, de witte bloemenkoning. In angst ligt grote zorgzaamheid en veiligheid. Diepe ontwaking is voor hen die haar vindt. Op het nachtschip moest zij hen halen. Zo kwam zij tot de tweede bloemenzee, de zee van de rode bloemen, de zee van het lijden. Deze bloemen vertelden haar verhalen wonderschoon. Ook hier ging haar doodskist langs, op een boot, en haar ziel gleed in de diepte. Een schip van groot lijden is van hen die zijn ontwaakt, maar zij kennen het verhaal. Zijn zij niet slechts grappen ? Want alleen diepe grappen van groot inzicht komen tot de derde bloemenzee, de zee van het gele. Gele bloemen overal, om de grap te vertellen aan hen die tot wijsheid zijn gekomen. Ook daar ging haar ziel doorheen, en zij kwam tot een paarse stad. Ja, vuile, paarse bloemen groeien aan de kusten van die stad, zwart wordende in de nacht, om schijn-oorlogen te voeren. Ja, zij dragen het educatieve zwaard. Zij zijn hen van de dichterlijke oorlogen, hen met de zwarte kappen.

Zij waren als een donderstorm. Na de voordracht die heel lang duurde moesten wij allemaal onze paarse kap opzetten om met de zwarte kappen mee te gaan naar de bloemenvelden. Ditmaal gingen we zo ver dat we helemaal bij de zee aankwamen waar het nachtschip stond. Hen met de zwarte kappen hadden nieuwe liederen gezongen, en wij mochten alleen maar luisteren. De liederen waren trage gezangen over zij die was verdronken, over haar tocht door de witte bloemenzee, en de andere bloemenzeeën. Zij zongen over de stad, de paarse, en over de oorlogen. Na het schip bezichtigd te

hebben gingen we weer terug. Ik zou graag meer willen weten van het mysterie van de zwarte kappen, maar iedereen deed mysterieus. De dag erna was de groep van de zwarte kappen gehalveerd, en een week later was er nog maar één over. Deze werd als een heilige behandeld. Ook at hij met ons, en ik keek vaak naar deze persoon. Ik kon het gezicht niet zien vanwege de kap die alles verduisterde, dus ik wist niet of het een man of een vrouw was. De persoon had nog niet gesproken. Altijd was deze persoon zwijgzaam aanwezig om op ons toe te zien.

Toen ik op een dag toenadering zocht zweeg de persoon. Ik kwam er niet doorheen. Het boertje zei dat ik het de tijd moest gunnen. Ik begon er steeds meer aan gewend te raken dat deze persoon er altijd was. Het gaf ook wel een gevoel van grote veiligheid. In mijn ogen was het een soort nachtwacht, maar dan één die niet sprak. Ook 's nachts was deze persoon vaak op.

Wel begon ik de persoon na een tijdje minder te zien. Het boertje sprak dat de oorlog ten einde was gekomen.

Hoofdstuk 5. De Mist

Die nacht kon ik maar niet in slaap komen. Pas heel diep in de nacht viel ik in slaap en ik droomde over een grote donkere donderstorm in de lucht, als een wervelstorm, een reusachtige orkaan die de hele hemel openscheurde. Toen begon het te regenen en er kwamen allerlei wonderlijke bloemen op uit de grond die de steden en de hele aardbodem begonnen te vullen.

Ik werd wakker en klikte het nachtlampje aan, en keek even in het zachte, schemerige licht. Toen viel ik weer in slaap. De volgende ochtend vertelde ik zoals gewoonlijks de droom aan Helga en het boertje. "Het is een groot geheim," sprak het boertje, "en dat is nog maar het begin van de geheimen." Helga knikte. "Ja," sprak ze. "Bereid je voor op veel meer, jongen." Ik had in ieder geval veel om naar toe te werken. Ik wilde maar wat graag behoren tot hen met de zwarte kappen, maar eerst moest ik een meestergrap worden. Ik vroeg me af wat dat inhield, maar niemand zei me er veel over. Er werd enorm geheimzinnig over gedaan. Ik hield me maar vast aan de toespraak van de vrouw met de zwarte kap.

Ik dacht veel na over de bloemenzeeën, de witte, de rode en de gele. De gele zou uitlopen op een paarse stad. Op een nacht had ik weer een droom. De donderende wervelstorm die de hemel openbrak verscheen weer in de duistere nacht. En de koning van de witte bloemen daalde neer met een grote gouden staf waarmee hij iedereen sloeg, en waardoor de meest wonderlijke bloemen omhoog begonnen te kronkelen vanuit de grond. Ze grepen de mensen als wurgslangen. Het was de vader van zij die verdronken was. Toen veranderde hij in een klein narretje. Ik kende dit narretje. Het was het narretje van het bos. Ik herinnerde hoe het narretje ons had geslagen met zijn speertje. Het was de eerste grap. Het narretje kwam dichter en dichter bij me, en plotseling veranderde het in een kaart. Het was de kaart van de witte bloemenkoning. Ik greep naar de kaart en er begon een enorme sirene af te gaan die harder en harder ging. Van schrik liet ik de kaart vallen, en toen werd het rustig. Dit leek wel op de derde grap, van de wilde man achter de piano. Die man zat toen onder de spinnenwebben. Een andere kaart schoof achter de kaart van de witte bloemenkoning vandaan. Het was de kaart van de woeste pianist. Ik durfde de kaart niet aan te raken. Ik durfde helemaal geen kaart meer aan te raken. De hel zou erdoor kunnen losbreken. Deze kaarten waren levensgevaarlijk.

"Verdien de kaarten," sprak de witte bloemenkoning op de eerste kaart. "Het zijn grote geheimen."

"Hoe kan ik ze verdienen ?" vroeg ik. Maar ik werd wakker. Weer vertelde ik de droom aan Helga en het boertje de volgende ochtend. Beiden lachten ze. "Ja, ja," zei het boertje. "Het zijn niet de makkelijksten." Helga glimlachte. "Ze zijn je aan het uitproberen," sprak ze. Ik besloot het maar rustig af te wachten. De lessen begonnen steeds saaier te worden inmiddels op het schooltje. Het ging eigenlijk nergens over. Soms viel ik in slaap in het zaaltje waar we leskregen. Wel was het verder rustgevend, en inspireerde het mij op een vreemde manier. Op een dag was er een overstroming in het gebouw. De zee was gekomen. Iedereen moest zo snel mogelijk met de lift naar boven. Het water begon al te stijgen tot mijn knieën. Ik zag Helga en het boertje de lift ingaan, en ze riepen mij ook. Ik probeerde vooruit te komen, maar het lukte niet echt. Snel was het water al tot mijn heupen gestegen. Het boertje gooide een touw wat ik greep. Zo sleurde hij mij in de lift. Hij drukte snel op een knopje waardoor de lifdeur dichtschoof, en toen gingen we naar boven. "Wat is er gebeurd ?" vroeg ik.

"Een overstroming," sprak het boertje.

"Dat moet de derde grap zijn," sprak ik, "de woeste pianist. Ik droomde over die kaart, en ik moest het verdienen. Hij veroorzaakt zulke overstromingen door zijn idiote piano spel."

"Doet het je ergens aan denken ?" vroeg het boertje.

"Ja," zei ik. "Ik heb hem op het schip ontmoet en toen begon alle ellende, totdat de kapitein mij redde."

"Nee, dat bedoel ik niet," zei het boertje. "Denk verder terug, aan de tijd waarin je toneelspeelde. Was dat niet precies hetzelfde ? Dat was ook een soort overstroming. Je hield het niet meer vol."

"Ja, je hebt gelijk," sprak ik. "Het is alsof de geschiedenis zich herhaalt."

We gingen helemaal terug tot boven de grond, want het boertje zei dat we niet onder de grond konden blijven. Onderweg stopte de lift weleens, en er begonnen steeds meer personen met zwarte kappen in te stappen. Zij begonnen allerlei vreemde codes in te typen op het knopjes systeem van de lift.

"Wat is er gebeurd ?" vroeg ik aan de personen met de zwarte kappen, maar niemand zei wat. Na een tijdje sprak er één : "Een overstroming." Het leek wel alsof de lift ineens begon te schuiven in plaats van omhoog te gaan. "We gaan naar de paarse stad," sprak één van de zwarte kappen. "Alleen daar is het veilig." Ik hield mijn adem in. Blijkbaar was de lift nu in een andere tunnel terecht gekomen. Ik ging op het bankje van de lift zitten, waar Helga en het boertje ook al zaten. Het leek wel alsof we in een trein zaten, of een metro. Soms gingen we een bocht om.

Ik begon moe te worden en na een tijdje viel ik langzaam in slaap. Na een lange tijd, ik weet niet hoe lang, werd ik wakker gemaakt. Helga had me wakker gemaakt. We waren in de paarse stad aangekomen. De lift was aangekomen in een toren, en toen we uitstapten waren we in het centrum van de paarse stad. Het was heel miezerig weer. Het regende. De paarse kappen liepen voorop en wij moesten hen volgen. De lucht was erg donker, en ik zag een enorme wervelstorm in de lucht hangen. We liepen een groot kerkgebouw in waar een woeste man achter een piano zat. Hij stond op en liep naar ons toe. Even dacht ik dat het de woeste pianist van het schip was. Hij sprak erg beleefd en verwelkomde ons. Hij zat niet onder de spinnenwebben. Wel zag hij er verder uit als een woesteling die je zo kon bespringen. Hij had een woeste baard, een lap die één van zijn ogen

bedekte, één tand, en een vikingshelm op. Hij leek op een piraat. Ook had hij een houten been. "Het is de woeste pianist," fluisterde Helga in mijn oor. "Die heeft vele gedaantes, en heeft waarschijnlijk de overstroming veroorzaakt."

Ik hoopte maar dat hij niet zou gaan piano spelen. Dat had hij waarschijnlijk al gedaan. Het kerkgebouw begon geheel vol te stromen met hen met de zwarte kappen.

Toen de zaal vol was begon de man iedereen toe te spreken. "Hartelijk welkom," sprak hij weer. "Zoals u ziet spreek ik u toe vanuit dit noodweer. Ik heb dat helaas niet kunnen tegenhouden. Ordes van de kapitein, ziet u. Er werden toen kaarten uitgedeeld en ze begonnen een vreemd spel te spelen, genaamd : "Het Paarse Complot". Natuurlijk kende ik die naam, en ik dacht ook dat ik in hetzelfde complot zat, tenzij dit iets anders was. Er werden ook dobbelstenen en pionnen bijgehaald. Iedereen werd in groepjes verdeeld. Maar de woesteling begon zich weer vreemd te gedragen. Hij rende weer naar de piano toe en begon woest te spelen. "Dat gaat niet goed," sprak het boertje. "Kom mee," terwijl hij mij en Helga het kerkgebouw uittrok. "Terug naar de lift," zei hij plat. "Dit is nog maar het begin." Ik had inmiddels mijn vingers al in mijn oren gestopt, en het ging harder en harder. "De derde grap weer !" riep ik tegen het boertje. Het was alsof ik tegen de wind in moest roepen. We renden naar het torentje toe en gingen de lift in met z'n drieën. "Het is weer zo ver," sprak Helga. "Die man leek wel dronken."

"Hartstike dronken en bezopen," sprak het boertje. "Laten we maken dat we hier wegkomen." Hij begon snel wat knopjes in te drukken, en daar ging de lift. De lift ging eerst naar beneden en toen begon de lift te schuiven. Weer had ik het gevoel alsof we in de metro zaten. De lift begon weer bochten te maken. "We moeten dit keer echt naar boven," sprak het boertje.

"Maar hopen dat er geen zwarte kappen meer instappen," sprak Helga.

"Inderdaad," sprak het boertje. "Die lui maken ons helemaal gek. Ze hebben hun kans gehad."

Maar ook op de vloer van de lift begon het al nat te worden. De lift begon te schudden en te schudden, en ook van het plafond begon al water te druipen. "Hier ook al," zei het boertje. De lift begon toen ook helemaal vol te lopen. Snel was het al tot onze heupen gekomen, en de lift was tot stilstand gekomen.

"We gaan eraan !" riep ik.

"Rustig blijven, jongen," sprak Helga. Het boertje was op de knoppen aan het tikken, maar niets hielp. Na een tijdje was het water al tot onze nek gekomen. Plotseling ging de deur open. Daar stond de kapitein. "Als ik het niet dacht," zei ik. De kapitein trok ons uit de lift, terwijl het water ineens wat lager stond. We stonden op een soort ondergronds station. Hij begon ons mee te trekken naar een trap toe. "Dat is de vierde grap," zei ik tegen het boertje. "Die komt ons allemaal redden."

"Van wat hij zelf heeft aangericht," zei het boertje. De kapitein leidde ons de trap op en ging toen ergens een kamer binnen. Daar stond een bureau en wat stoelen. "Gaat u zitten," sprak hij.

We gingen alledrie zitten. "Waarom moet dit allemaal nou ?" vroeg ik.

"We moeten hier zo snel mogelijk weg," fluisterde het boertje.

"Maar hoe ?" fluisterde ik terug.

De kapitein was bezig zijn pijp op te steken.

"Zoveel vrienden bij elkaar," sprak de kapitein. "Laat ik duidelijk zijn : Een mens moet toch wat, nietwaar ?"

"Ja, maar waarom doet u dit allemaal," vroeg ik. "Want u bent de baas van de eerste drie grappen ? De woeste pianist zei dat het uw orders waren."

De kapitein glimlachte. "Ah, ja, de sleutel, wat als het nu de sleutel is ?"

"Tot wat ?" vroeg ik.

"De sleutel tot begrijpen," sprak de kapitein.

"Ik snap er anders niet veel van," sprak ik.

"Je kent het spel nog niet," sprak de kapitein. "In het spel gebeuren deze dingen."

"Dat lijkt dus weer op een oorlog," sprak ik.

"Een spel-oorlog, schijn-oorlog, een dichterlijke oorlog," sprak de kapitein. "Je moet leren het spel te spelen."

Ik zuchtte.

"Ik ben een spelbank," sprak de kapitein. Het boertje stond op en greep mijn arm. "Rennen," sprak hij, terwijl hij de deur losgooide. Hij trok mij mee, en ook Helga kwam mee. "Ren zo hard als je kan," sprak Helga. Ik begreep er niets van, maar deed maar wat ze zeiden. "Kom hier !" bulderde de kapitein.

"Wegwezen," zei het boertje. We renden uit het station weg en kwamen op een weiland terecht. "Maar waarom dan ?" vroeg ik. Het boertje bleef me meetrekken, en ook Helga rende mee. Achter ons hoorden we de kapitein bulderen.

"Hoe kunnen we veilig zijn tegen hem ?" vroeg ik.

"Gewoon doorrennen," zei het boertje.

We renden een bos in totdat we aankwamen bij een klein huisje waar een oud vrouwtje woonde. De vrouw liep een beetje gebogen en had een stok. Het boertje vertelde het verhaal, en we mochten binnenkomen. Het boertje scheen het oude vrouwtje te kennen. Aan de muur hingen schilderijen van het narretje, de indiaanse vrouw, de woeste pianist en de kapitein. Vier schilderijen op een rij. Dit waren de eerste vier grappen. Ik keek er indringend naar. "Het zijn niet zulke besten," sprak het oude vrouwtje.

"Het is groot tuig," sprak het boertje. Helga knikte. We gingen om een tafel zitten. Het oude vrouwtje keek me aan. Het vrouwtje was ouder dan Helga. "Ik zou je wat willen vragen," sprak het vrouwtje. "Kun je mij vertellen hoe deze schobbejakken jouw leven hebben geterroriseerd ?" Ik knikte en begon te vertellen. Het vrouwtje luisterde aandachtig.

Aan het einde van mijn verhaal sprak ze : "U heeft het boek zonder begin en einde nodig, dat altijd veranderd."

"De vijfde grap ?" vroeg ik. Ze knikte. "Het eindeloze boek weet wel raad met hen," sprak ze.

"Waar is het boek ?" vroeg ik.

"Boven," sprak ze. "Zolang je het boek niet hebt, zullen de grappen altijd met je dollen."

"Maar eens had ik het eindeloze boek ontmoet," sprak ik.

"Dat is niet genoeg," zei het vrouwtje. "Je moet de kaart ervan verdienen."

"Hoe kan ik het verdienen ?" vroeg ik.

"Ga eerst maar naar boven," sprak ze.

Ik ging de gang op en toen de trap op. Boven was weer een gangetje, met vier deuren. Ook het vrouwtje, Helga en het boertje kwamen toen de trap op. Het vrouwtje wees de juiste deur aan en ging naar binnen. Daar zat het boek achter een bureau. Het boek rookte een pijpje. "Zaken doen ?" vroeg hij.

"Deze mijnheer wil zaken doen," sprak het vrouwtje.

"Waar gaat het over ?" vroeg hij.

"Vier grappen," sprak het vrouwtje.

"Als hij de vier grappen de baas wil zijn dan moet hij hun kaarten hebben, en daarvoor moet hij eerst mijn kaart hebben, de kaart van het eindeloze boek," sprak het boek vriendelijk. "Gaat u zitten," sprak hij tegen ons. We namen een stoel en gingen zitten. "Dus u wil de kapitein, die de baas van de drie is, een halt toeroepen ?" vroeg het boek deftig. Ik knikte. "Maar dat is een koud kunstje," sprak het boek. Maar ineens werd er woest op de deur geklopt. Het was de kapitein. Hij stormde binnen, en wilde mij grijpen. "Ho, ho," sprak het eindeloze boek, "dat gaat zomaar niet." Het eindeloze boek kwam achter zijn bureau vandaan en greep de kapitein. Maar dat liet de kapitein niet op zich zitten. Hij greep zijn sabel en reeg het boek eraan. Maar het boek begon op hem te druipen, en verslond hem zo langzaam. Na een tijdje ging het boek weer zitten. "Ziezo," sprak het boek, "zo doen we dat." Ik keek het boek verbaasd aan. "Het boek is altijd de baas van de kapitein," sprak het boek. Het boek gaf mij de kaarten van de vier grappen, en toen de kaart van het eindeloze boek.

"Hoe werkt dat precies ?" vroeg ik.

"Je moet het spel en de kaarten leren kennen," sprak het eindeloze boek. "Zo moet je een grappenmeester worden, een meester van het paarse complot."

Ik moest veel leren over het spel, maar het oude vrouwtje onderwees mij. Ook Helga en het boertje vertelden me zo nu en dan er wat over. Het eindeloze boek hield zich verder gesloten.

Het was in die dagen dat er weer een oorlog begon. Er was getrommel buiten en soms trompetgeschal. Hen met de zwarte kappen vielen binnen. Zij begonnen weer met het voorlezen van gedichten. Ik wist dat het slechts educatief was. Ze hadden een dichterlijke discipline. Ze namen ons mee naar het station waar we moesten wachten op een trein. Ze hadden ook het oude vrouwtje en het eindeloze boek meegenomen. Na een tijdje kwam er een trein aan die ons leidde naar het paarse stadje. Ze brachten ons naar het kerkgebouw, waar we het spel moesten spelen. Dit keer moesten

we meedoen, anders zou het geweld van de woeste pianist ons weer achterna komen. Gelukkig had ik nu wat kaarten, dus ik kon meedoen. Ook de anderen deden mee. Door een kaart in het spel te gooien verdiende ik er kaarten bij. Ik had het narretje van het bos op tafel gelegd, en daar werden door de anderen ook kaarten opgelegd. De kaarten werden door iemand geschud en zo ontstond er een verhaal door het neerleggen van de kaarten. Iedereen moest zo een verhaal vertellen aan de hand van de kaarten, en de kaartenlegger mocht een verhaal uitkiezen. Degene die dat verhaal had verteld won alle kaarten. Vanwege mijn ervaring met toneelspelen won ik vaak, en had na een tijdje een hele stapel kaarten. Iedereen had ook een pion op een bord, en de winnaar mocht altijd met de dobbelsteen gooien om te zien hoeveel stappen zijn of haar pion mocht zetten. Degene die het bordspel won won ook nog allerlei extra kaarten. We leerden zo creatief en verhalend om te gaan met ogenschijnlijke problemen. Omdat ik zoveel kaarten won begonnen ze me meer en meer de kaartenkoning te noemen. Na een tijdje had ik genoeg kaarten verdiend voor de eerste paarse streep, en zo werd ik beëdigd tot grappenmeester. Ik kwam erachter dat een grappenmeester een groot verhalenmeester en kaartenmeester was.

Ik was nu uitermate geïnteresseerd in hen met de zwarte kappen, en wilde alles van hen weten. Ik zou graag de hogere paarse streep willen ontvangen. Zij waren van de dichterlijke defensie, van strategie, van een gedisciplineerde, dichterlijke vechtkunst. Zij waren grote kunstenaren, zoals zij die verdronken was. Ik slenterde door de straten van het centrum van de paarse stad, samen met Helga, het boertje en een zwarte kap die ons had uitgenodigd. Het was een vrouw, en we gingen naar haar huis, naar een bovenwoning. Het was nog steeds een beetje miezerig weer. Bij haar huis aangekomen moesten we eerst een trap op, en zo kwamen we op de eerste verdieping waar zij woonde. We gingen rondom een tafel zitten in haar huiskamer, waar we even later koffie dronken. Ik wilde zoveel mogelijk te weten zien te komen over de zwarte kappen. Ik wilde hun gevechtskunst leren en mijzelf er in disciplineren. "Het idee is," sprak de vrouw met de zwarte kap, "dat zwak wint van sterk, en zacht wint van hard. De verdediger wint van de aanvaller."

"Maar u viel aan in het gebouw van de paarse kappen," sprak ik. "Zij het met gedichten, zij het zonder geweld, maar het was een aanval, geen verdediging, en even later was er een verschrikkelijke overstroming. En daarom zijn we hier. De overstromingen hebben ons hier gebracht, en jullie aanvallen op ons."

De vrouw met de zwarte kap glimlachte. "Ik kan wel zien dat je nieuw bent," sprak ze. "Je begrijpt er echt helemaal niets van." Even was het stil en ze leek me wel uit te lachen. Het lachen leek maar door te gaan, maar ik kon niet echt haar gezicht zien. Het leek alsof ze lachte, maar helemaal zeker was ik niet. Ook het boertje schoot in de lach, en toen ook Helga, maar ik kon er niet om lachen. "Heus," sprak de vrouw na een tijdje. "We zijn het wel gewend. Het komt wel vaker voor."

"Zit u me nu in de maling te nemen ?" vroeg ik. "Dus die zwarte kappen zijn er eigenlijk voor om mensen in de maling te nemen ? Want zo voelt het wel de hele tijd."

De vrouw, het boertje en Helga begonnen toen nog harder te lachen. "Jullie zijn me een stelletje," sprak ik.

"Je bent anders een grappenmaker," sprak de vrouw. "Luister : ook wij zijn van de paarse kappen, ook wij zitten in het paarse complot. Ook wij mengen ons met paarse kappen in het gebouw van de paarse kappen waar je vandaan kwam. Alleen soms hebben wij zwarte kappen op. Het was dus technisch niet eens een aanval. Het was ons eigen terrein. Daarom was het ook een schijn-oorlog. Wij verdedigden ons met gedichten, met het educatieve zwaard, tegen nieuwen zoals jij."

"Dus ik ben een bedreiging ?" vroeg ik.

"Potentieel gezien, ja," sprak de vrouw. "Je weet nergens iets van. Je zou zo alles in de war kunnen schoppen."

"Vertel me over die vechtkunst," sprak ik. "Hoe gaat dat in zijn werk. Wat zijn de technieken ?"

"Gedichten," sprak de vrouw met de zwarte kap, "de zachte woorden die alles ontwijken. Gedichten over zwakte en kwetsbaarheid, over emotie en gevoelens, maar dan in een gedetaileerde discipline. Het gaat om het detail. Tegelijkertijd is het vaag, maar er is een groot detail in vaagheid. Zij gaan hand in hand."

"Het is dus secuur, precies, en tegelijkertijd wazig en chaotisch ?" vroeg ik.

"Het is een vechtkunst," sprak ze. "Het gebruikt diverse middelen."

"Ik zou het graag willen leren," sprak ik.

"Zwakheid en zachtheid zijn wapenen," sprak ze. "Het breekt beenderen. Ook is het een oefening in stil zijn. Ook stilheid is zo'n wapen. Het moet op het juiste moment worden toegepast met dodelijke precisie."

"Interessant," sprak ik. Het was alsof er een vreemde dropsiroop langs mijn gehemelte droop. Haar woorden schenen mij leven te geven en nieuw uitzicht.

"Het indirecte wint van het directe, de omweg wint van de kortste weg," sprak de vrouw. "Het directe zal afsterven. Het is een illusie."

"Dus het directe is een schaduw van het indirecte ?" vroeg ik.

De vrouw knikte. "Het indirecte is ruimte, en het directe is kortzichtigheid, maar beiden hebben een plaats in het gedicht. Het gedicht omzeilt, maar negeert niet. Het gedicht is inclusief, niet exclusief, maar dingen worden soms tijdelijk ontweken. Het is de kunst van het ontwijken. Het maakt lijnen, kronkels en cirkels, en zo wordt alles omgevormd."

"Dat is een prachtige filosofie," sprak ik.

"Leer minder direct te zijn," sprak ze, "leer meer te draaien, bochten in te slaan, leer te bedekken, te veranderen, leer de mist kennen, leer wazig te maken, want dat is je uitvlucht. Het is je verdediging in deze gevaarlijke realiteit."

"Ik wil zeer zeker deze bijzondere vechtkunst leren kennen," sprak ik. "Ik zou graag willen behoren tot de tweede paarse streep, die van de zwarte kappen," sprak ik.

"Maar leer minder direct te zijn, zoals ik zei," sprak de vrouw.

"Wat bedoelt u precies ?" vroeg ik.

"Ga naar een bibliotheek en lees boeken," sprak ze. "De woorden zijn jouw sieraden, en je kunt ze draaien en schakelen totdat het bij je past. Het maakt niet uit wat de woorden zijn. Maak het directe tot het indirecte, geef er een andere betekenis aan. Een woord is slechts een vat. Jij moet het vat vullen."

"Alle woorden zijn dus leeg van nature ?" vroeg ik.

"Ja," sprak de vrouw, "het zijn buizen. En nu ligt er voor jou een taak. Ga zacht met de woorden om, niet direct. Maak de juiste schakels. Het is creatief materiaal." Ze stond op en greep een boek uit de boekenkast. Het was een oorlogsboek. "Begin met dit boek," sprak ze. Dat was wel het zwaarste wat ik me kon bedenken : een oorlogsboek. "Maak er gebruik van," sprak ze, terwijl ze het aan me gaf. Ik sloeg het boek open, en ik zag alle woorden als ringetjes en schakeltjes, als puzzelstukjes. Ik moest het ontcijferen en tot goed gebruik maken. Ik herinnerde me weer dat ik oorspronkelijk opgeleid zou worden tot taalkundig detective, en dat ik als opdracht had bepaalde teksten te ontcijferen. Het was alsof ik weer een duidelijk spoor zag.

"Dit is dus je nieuwe opdracht," sprak de vrouw. We kregen alle drie een eigen kamer. In de avond begon ik het boek door te lezen in mijn kamertje, na een tijd naar de kaft te hebben gestaard. Het was een heel heftig oorlogsboek, heel bloederig. Na een tijdje gelezen te hebben ging ik slapen. Ook hier kwam toen een reusachtige overstroming. Een golf kwam door het raam heen, greep mij, en trok mij mee. Ik werd een zee in gesleurd die naar bloemen ruikte. Plotseling was alles licht. Het was alsof ik boven de grond was, en ik zag een eiland. Met mijn bed was ik op een golf, en ik werd richting het eiland gesleurd. Ik voelde mij heel duizelig. Op het strand van het eiland stond zij die verdronken was. Mijn bed belandde aan haar voeten. Ik keek naar haar op. Ze had bloemen in haar haar, en een zachtpaarse, bijna doorzichtige jurk had ze aan. "Zo," sprak ze.

"Wat is er gebeurd ?" vroeg ik.

"De overstroming van de bloemenzee," sprak ze. Ik wist niet of ik wakker was of in slaap, maar alles rook naar bloemen.
"Mooi schoon," sprak ze, "de lucht en je verstand."

"Wat bedoelt u ?" vroeg ik. Even was het stil. Ook leek het toen alsof het eiland werd overstroomt en we verdwenen bijna in de golven. Ze riep naar me, maar haar stem begon steeds vager te worden. Een wilde golf sleurde mij mee, en na een tijdje werd ik op vast land geslingerd. Ik lag daar op een wit strand. Een indiaanse vrouw kwam naar me toe. Ze had een rieten rokje aan. Ik herkende haar. "Waren haar deuren de poorten van de hel ?" vroeg ze. "En waren haar boeken de koninginnen van de hel om je te kwellen ?" vroeg ze. "Was je maar bij moeder thuisgebleven, hè."

Ik zuchtte. Ik wist dat zij de tweede grap was. De nar in het paleis had gezegd dat het herinneringen waren die in mijn hoofd ronddwaalden als spoken, en zij hebben hun eigen kamer. "Ik ben nu ook een meestergrap," sprak ik.

"Je kent de grap niet," sprak ze, terwijl ze haar tong even uit haar mond liet uitglijden.

"Wat doe ik eraan ?" vroeg ik.

"Je kunt niets doen," sprak ze. Ze kwam dichterbij me staan. Ze stak toen haar hand uit. Toen trok ze me op en leidde mij mee. "Waar gaan we naartoe ?" vroeg ik.

"Dat zul je wel zien," sprak ze. We gingen over het strand een oerwoud in. Hier had zij ergens een hutje. Het was gemaakt van bamboe, riet en gras.

Ze begon een lied te zingen in een taal die ik niet verstond. "Waar gaat het over ?" vroeg ik. Maar zonder te antwoorden zong ze door.

"Je bent in het boek," sprak ze plotseling. "Het oorlogsboek wat je zou ontcijferen."

"Zijn we in gevaar ?" vroeg ik.

"Nee joh," zei ze. "Dit is de ontcijfering. Ik ben de ontcijfering."

"Interessant," sprak ik, "maar je bent een grap ?"

"De grap is de ontcijfering," sprak ze. "Je moet de humor ervan inzien om zo inzicht te verkrijgen."

"De humor van een oorlog ?" vroeg ik. "Is dat niet een beetje vergezocht ?"

"Het leven is een toneelstuk, en wij zijn de spelers," sprak ze. "Het is om het te verwerken."

"Jij hebt vast ook veel meegemaakt," sprak ik. Ze knikte.

"Ik heb het moeten ontcijferen," sprak ze. "Zoveel vissen in het water die herinneringen zijn."

"Jij lijkt me ook heel dichterlijk," sprak ik. Ze knikte. "Ik ben van het paarse complot, net als jij."

"Zeker van een hele hoge paarse streep," sprak ik.

Ze zweeg, en toen knikte ze. "Ik leef van de visserij, om mijn herinneringen te ontcijferen, anders zou ik gek worden."

"Ik begrijp het," sprak ik.

"De derde paarse streep is van de visserij," sprak de indiaanse vrouw. "Het zijn geschiedenis lessen. Ik ben lerares geschiedenis."

"Interessant," sprak ik. "En is dit je vakantie-huisje ?"

"Min of meer," sprak ze.

"Waar woon je ?" vroeg ik.

"In een vissersstadje," sprak ze. "Mijn pleegvader is de kapitein. Hij is ook visser."

Even schrok ik. "Maar dat is toch een verschrikkelijke man ?" vroeg ik. "Hij maakt problemen en doet dan net alsof hij de redder is, en hij valt zomaar iedereen aan."

"Welnee, joh," sprak ze. "Je moet hem een beetje kennen. Het is gewoon een grote grapjas."

"En ik neem aan dat jij het vak van hem hebt geleerd ?" vroeg ik.

Ze knikte.

"Ik zou graag geschiedenis lessen van je willen krijgen," sprak ik.

"Wat is de betaling ?" vroeg ze, terwijl ze haar tong weer iets uitstak naar me.

"Je kunt me het vak leren, en dan kan ik je helpen," sprak ik.

"Afgesproken," zei ze.

Hoofdstuk 6. De Geheimen van Kapitein Wak

Er waren allemaal kleine rode lichtjes in het vissersstadje waar ze me naartoe nam. Ze had inmiddels andere kleren aangetrokken. Ze had een kamer ergens op een bovenverdieping in het centrum ergens. We moesten een paar trappen op om daar te komen. Ze had enorm veel boekenkasten in haar appartementje. Ook haar pleegvader zou hier ergens in de buurt wonen, alhoewel hij vaak op zijn schip was. Hij was altijd veel op reis. "Lekker rustig als je pleegvader veel op reis is," sprak ik.

"Vind je ?" vroeg ze. "Hij is een systeem. Ik gebruik het voor de geschiedenis-lessen om dingen te ontcijferen."

Ik keek haar verbaasd aan. "Echt," sprak ik. "Ik zou heel graag een keer zo'n les willen bijwonen. En je werkt ook in de visserij ?"

"Half om half, als bijbaantje," sprak ze.

Het was een echt vissersdorpje. Hier woonden de vissersfamilies. Ze bleven herinneringen opvissen om er wat anders van te maken. In de haven lagen veel grote vissersschepen, en ook langs de kade stonden er veel vissersboten. In de stad waren er natuurlijk veel viswinkels en viskraampjes. Vaak was er ook een vismarkt. Maar volgens de indiaanse vrouw was het allemaal schijn. Het was een schijn-visserij. Alles draaide om het vak geschiedenis. Daarom stonden haar boekenkasten ook vol met geschiedenisboeken, en daar tussendoor stonden ook haar eigen dagboeken. "Dagboeken zijn goud waard," sprak ze.

De volgende dag nam ze mij mee naar haar lokaal waar ze lesgaf. Het was ook ergens op een bovenwoning, midden in de stad. In het lokaal hingen veel schilderijen van vissen en vissersschepen. Het waren schilderijen van de zee. Na een tijdje zat het klaslokaal vol. Ik zat achterin. Zij stond voor haar bureautje voorin en deed het woord. Ze begon met het vertellen van verhalen, en ik luisterde met open mond. Ik was met verbazing geslagen. Wat kon zij mooi vertellen. Na de verhalen besprak ze de betekenis van de verhalen, en legde verbanden met de geschiedenis. Zo was de geschiedenis gewijd aan het verhaal, en niet andersom. Iedere leerling mocht toen zijn of haar eigen verleden vertellen, en dan maakte zij er een verhaal van. Ook mochten ze dit bij elkaar doen. Ik vond het heel leerzaam. Ze was echt een heel begaafd lerares.

De tweede dag liet zij hen kaarten van hun verleden maken, en speelden ze hier een spel mee, wat wel een beetje leek op het spel van het paarse complot. Het was een kaartspel.

Die nacht had ik dromen over grote vissersschepen met veel vis, allemaal herinneringen, die verkocht werden op de vismarkten, om zo letters te worden in boeken.

De dagen daarop werkte ze in de visserij. Ik bleef thuis om wat boeken te lezen. Ook kwam ik boeken tegen die eigenlijk nergens over gingen. Eén boek ging over zoute vis. Zo was haar leven heel afwisselend.

Ook vond ik een boek over de zwarte kappen. Het stond vol met gedichten. Ik werd onderwezen door deze boeken. Ze groeiden in mijn hart. Mijn hart raakte meer en meer verzadigd. Ik voelde me op mijn gemak bij deze vrouw. We hadden beiden een grote passie voor de natuur. We groeiden naar elkaar toe, ook al was zij vaak weg, en las ik vaak boeken. Het leek wel alsof er onzichtbare banden tussen ons waren, en hoe minder we elkaar zagen, hoe sterker die band werd. Het was alsof zij tot mij sprak en mij onderwees door de boeken. Op een dag moest zij voor een langere tijd weg. Ze zou op reis gaan. Ik mocht zolang in haar huis wonen. Waar kon ik anders naartoe ? Ik hoopte maar dat het boertje en Helga ook goed terecht waren gekomen na de overstroming.

Er was een drang in mij om te onderzoeken. Ik kon niet stil zitten. Ik las en ik las. De dagen vlogen voorbij. Op een dag kwam haar pleegvader binnen. "Is ze er niet ?" vroeg hij.

"Ze is op reis, kapitein," sprak ik. De kapitein ging zitten, en ik gaf hem wat te drinken. Hij deed verder heel aardig. "Zeg kerel," sprak hij, "weet jij van het vissersschip, het verhaal van het vissersschip ?"

"Wat bedoelt u precies ?" vroeg ik.

"Het is een lied," sprak hij, en hij begon te zingen. De man zong maar door, en hij stopte niet meer. Ook begon hij steeds harder te zingen.

"Als dat maar goed gaat," dacht ik bij mezelf. Ik begon ook piano-muziek in de verte te horen, dus ik vermoedde dat de woeste pianist ook weer in de buurt was. Plotseling stopte het, en ook de kapitein stopte met zingen.

Ik zuchtte van opluchting. "Dat had je niet gedacht, hè ?" lachte de kapitein. "Oh, het is zo'n mooi wijsje. Ik kan het wel de hele dag doorzingen."

Ik gaf hem nog wat te drinken, en hoopte maar dat hij rustig zou blijven. Na een tijdje ging hij weer weg, en ik voelde mij de gelukkigste man van de wereld.

Ik greep het boek genaamd "Zoute Vis" en begon te lezen. Het was een zwaar psychologisch boek over een man wiens vrouw ontvoerd was en in de mensenhandel terecht kwam. De man schakelde een detective in, maar die werd om het leven gebracht. Er was nog maar één ding mogelijk voor de man, en dat was zelf op onderzoek uit te gaan. Al gauw kwam hij erachter dat zijn vrouw lid was geworden van een religieuze secte. Het boek gaat over de telefoongesprekken en de brieven tussen de man en de vrouw, waarin hij vermoed dat zij gedwongen is bepaalde dingen te zeggen en te schrijven, anders zou zij het met haar leven moeten bekopen. Harde bewijzen heeft hij hiervoor niet, en dat begint zijn leven in tweeën te scheuren. Het boek gaat over de mentale kwellingen van de man die altijd in onzekerheid en ongerustheid moet leven. Aan het einde van het boek vind hij zijn vrouw terug, maar zij is in stukjes gesneden.

Als de geschiedenis lerares terug is van haar reis spreek ik met haar over dit boek, hoe tragisch het is en verschrikkelijk, als horror. Zij vertelt me dat het metaforisch is. Ze begint me vriendelijk uit te leggen waar alles voor staat. Een man die zijn vrouw heeft verloren staat metaforisch voor een oorlogs-trauma waardoor de man als het ware psychisch verlamd is geraakt en daardoor sociale problemen heeft. Het is iets binnen de man zelf, en daardoor is er de dichterlijke vechtkunst van de zwarte kappen om hier doorheen te kunnen komen.

"Het is de staf van de witte bloemenkoning die de mens slaat," sprak ze, "oftewel het bosnarretje met het speertje, dat is hetzelfde. Zij slaan het trauma in de mens. Het is de motor van het schip. Zonder weerstand kan het schip niet varen. Het is een natuurkundige wet."

"Dat is de eerste grap," sprak ik, "en dan de derde grap maakt alles erger ?" vroeg ik. Ze knikte. "Ja, totdat de vierde grap komt, de gedwongen hulp, mijn pleegvader. Hij komt altijd zonder aankondiging met de deur in huis vallen, hè ?"

"Dat kun je wel zeggen," zei ik. "Maar jij bent toch de tweede grap ?"

"Shhh," sprak ze, terwijl ze haar tong iets liet uitglijden naar mij.

"Je bent eigenlijk heel aardig," sprak ik.

"Dat komt omdat je mij hebt leren kennen," sprak de geschiedenis lerares, "en je hebt mij leren waarderen. Ik ben de eenzaamheid."

"En dat is een grap ?" vroeg ik.

"Ja," knikte ze, "want eenzaamheid is ook een persoon. Eigenlijk is het dus onmogelijk om echt eenzaam te zijn."

Ik glimlachte. "Je bent erg wijs," sprak ik.

"Je hebt de eenzaamheid leren kennen als een vriend," sprak ze. "Je bent daarom dicht bij de zwarte kappen gekomen, want zij worden ook wel "de eenzamen" genoemd." Ik was verheugd dat ze dit zei, want dat betekende dat ik bijna de tweede paarse streep had behaald, die van de zwarte kappen. Dit was iets waar ik naar uitzag en waar ik naartoe groeide.

Ik had haar slaapkamer nog nooit gezien, en die hield ze ook altijd opgesloten, maar daar had ze nog wat extra boeken liggen. Het was een hele eer toen zij mij haar slaapkamer liet zien. Er hingen overal gordijntjes in haar kamer. Hier had zij boeken van het bosnarretje, oftewel de witte bloemenkoning, en van de woeste pianist, en haar pleegvader en zelfs een boek over haarzelf. Zij raadde mij aan om die boeken te lezen om meer grip op de zaak te krijgen. Zij gaf mij de boeken mee en ik was haar erg dankbaar daarvoor. Ik begon met het lezen van het boek over haarzelf. Het ging over een meisje dat was ontvoerd door piraten. Zij werd verschrikkelijk misbruikt en moest alles doen wat zij zeiden. Later kon zij zich uit deze levensstijl loskrijgen, en werd zij opgevangen door de kapitein die haar pleegvader werd. Zij had dus geen makkelijk leven gehad, en had daardoor sociale problemen. Maar nu was ze dan geschiedenis lerares, om herinneringen te verwerken. Daarna begon ik aan de andere boeken, eerst van de woeste pianist. Ook vertelde de geschiedenis lerares mij veel over de woeste pianist. Hij bleek in zijn jeugd eens op zijn hoofd te zijn gevallen, en sindsdien had hij zware aanvallen, die als ze begonnen steeds erger werden. Naarmate ik meer in het boek las over hem, en meer naar de geschiedenis lerares luisterde die over hem vertelde begon ik hem steeds beter te begrijpen. De geschiedenis lerares zei dat ik zonder hem de geschiedenis nooit zou kunnen begrijpen. De woeste pianist was de stuurman van het schip. Ook was het een noodbel, waarna de kapitein uitredding kon bieden. Zij waren dus beiden sleutels in de ontcijfering. De woeste pianist was de diagnose, en de kapitein het medicijn.

Blijkbaar waren er veel gevaren, anders zou de woeste pianist er niet wezen. En de woeste pianist beschermde tegen iets nog veel ergers, vertelde de geschiedenis lerares. Ik begon in te zien dat de grappen een grote functie hadden, maar dat ze geen katjes waren om zonder handschoenen op te

pakken. Zij moesten met grote zorg en voorzichtigheid behandeld worden. Op zichzelf staande konden zij niet rechtstreeks vertrouwd worden. De directe weg was inderdaad zoals gezegd was een doodlopende weg. Hier was groot hoogspannings-gevaar, maar de geschiedenis lerares leek een kundig electricien. Zij leerde mij de natuurwetten van de grappen.

Ik wist dat alle grappen uit de hand zouden kunnen lopen zonder de vijfde grap, het eindeloze boek. De geschiedenis lerares sprak dat daarom dan ook het eindeloze boek vereerd werd in het vissersstadje, naast zij die verdronken was. Op het stadsplein stond een beeld van het eindeloze boek, waar mensen vaak zongen. Ook op de kade stonden veel paaltjes met stukken van het eindeloze boek op plastic bladzijdes. Vaak waren er ook verzen van het eindeloze boek gegraveerd op de stenen van de huizen, of op andere stenen door de stad heen. Ik vond dit begrijpelijk, sinds ik de noodzaak van de aanwezigheid van dit boek had ingezien. Ook de geschiedenis lerares was daarom een vereerder van het eindeloze boek.

"Wie heeft het eindeloze boek geschreven ?" vroeg ik.

"De nar," sprak ze, "de grotere nar van het paleis." Ik herinnerde me hem. We hadden elkaar heel kort ontmoet, en toen moest hij weer weg.

"Hij is de zesde grap," sprak ze vervolgens.

"En wat is precies de grap. Wat is hij precies ?" vroeg ik.

De geschiedenis lerares zweeg. Na een tijdje sprak ze : "Hij is groot. Hij is een zee, een groot geheim. Hij heeft jou hier gebracht."

"Oh, de laatste overstroming ?" vroeg ik, "die me jou weer deed ontmoeten ?"

Ze knikte. "Het is de Grote Bloemenzee, de vierde," sprak ze.

"En wat is precies de grap ?" vroeg ik.

"De grap van het misverstand en de leugen, die beiden slechts de raadselen zijn van de waarheid," sprak ze. "Het is hoe geliefden in oorlogstijd met elkaar communiceren. Ze verpakken hun boodschappen voor elkaar in raadselen, hopende dat de ander ze kan ontcijferen."

"Interessant," sprak ik. "Dus de zee brengt ook boodschappen ?"

"Natuurlijk," sprak ze. "De Grote Bloemenzee heeft het eindeloze boek geschreven waarin zich alle boodschappen bevinden, maar het is een groot labyrint. Alle boodschappen zijn zo beveiligd en zullen alleen aankomen bij de geadresseerde, en alleen door de geadresseerde begrepen worden."

"Dat klinkt als een goed systeem," sprak ik.

Het verhaal van de nar in het paleis was eigenlijk heel tragisch. Als kind werd hij opgesloten gehouden, en daarom is hij zo geworden als hij is. Hij laat zijn hart niet kennen, en moet ook altijd weg. Hij kan zich niet aarden, en daarom is hij een zee.

De geschiedenis lerares vertelde zijn geschiedenis. Het jongetje had geen speelgoed en werd mishandeld. Hij leefde in een ondergrondse tunnel. Hij was een prins waarvan de profetieën zeiden dat hij een groot medicijn zou uitvinden. Die profetieën waren geuit door een orakel. Het orakel werd verwoest en het jongetje werd door de artsen van het paleis opgesloten in een verborgen

tunnel, omdat ze hem als een bedreiging zagen voor hun professie.

"Hoe is het jongetje uiteindelijk bevrijd ?" vroeg ik.

"Hij is nooit bevrijd," sprak de geschiedenis lerares. "Hij werd vergiftigd en stierf toen. Toen werd hij een spook en schreef het eindeloze boek. Hij is nu de grote bloemenzee. Hij heeft zichzelf bevrijd."

"Gelukkig maar," sprak ik.

Ze liet mij een boek zien over de grote bloemenzee. "Lees dit," sprak ze. Ik nam het boek naar mijn kamer en begon direct te lezen. Het was een heel dik boek en ik las uren en uren. Toen het jongetje een spook was geworden werd hij goed opgevangen door een piratenschip onder leiding van kapitein Wak, een vriendelijke piraten-kapitein. Het was een spookschip dat ook rebelleerde tegen de corruptie en de misdaad van de artsen. Het was hier waar het jongetje zijn medicijn ontwikkelde. Kapitein Wak leerde hem hiervoor de kunsten van het toveren. Kapitein Wak was ook de Stille Bloemenzee, een andere zee, waaruit Grote Bloemenzee voortkwam. Beide zeeën zijn grote oceanen. Er werd gezegd dat in de Stille Bloemenzee het paradijs lag, en het jongetje schreef er veel over. Als niemand anders kende hij de geheimen van kapitein Wak.

Hij had aan kapitein Wak belooft dat hij de geheimen van de Stille Zee goed zou bewaken. Hiervoor schreef hij het eindeloze boek en veranderde hij door de toverkunsten van Kapitein Wak in een bloemenzee, de Grote Bloemenzee, die om de Stille Bloemenzee heenligt. Men zegt dat de Stille Bloemenzee nog wel veel groter is dan de Grote Bloemenzee, en dat in vergelijking de Grote Bloemenzee maar een druppel is.

Het scheen dat het jongetje niet alleen het eindeloze boek had geschreven, maar ook de pleegvader van de geschiedenis lerares, oftewel de kapitein, de vierde grap, had gemaakt, als een bitter medicijn, een medicijn wat zeker niet teveel gebruikt mocht worden, alleen in hele kleine beetjes. Ik begreep daarom ook des te meer de voorzichtigheid van het boertje, want teveel van dit medicijn zou rampzalig zijn en alles alleen maar erger maken.

De kapitein was een grote en belangrijke machine op het schip, maar het was alleen voor bevoegden, hen die diep ingewijd waren in het paarse complot. Het was een zeer technisch systeem, wat het jongetje in zijn wanhoop had vervaardigd, en waar de corrupte paleis artsen altijd bang voor waren geweest. Ze vreesden dit systeem meer dan wie dan ook. Eigenlijk was het een groot oorlogsschip, en ook de woeste pianist was een machtig en zeer gevreesd wapen. Ook dit was een creatie van het jongetje.

In de Stille Bloemenzee, ook wel de Stille Bloemen Oceaan genoemd, moesten ergens de paradijs eilanden liggen. Ook daar ging het boek over. Op de paradijs eilanden zou de inwijding tot de zwarte kappen plaatsvinden. Het leek mij een onmogelijke taak om daar te komen, en ik zag er echt tegenop, maar toen ik er met de geschiedenis lerares over sprak had zij wel een plannetje.

Het was waar dat er verschrikkelijke stormen en orkanen woedden op de Stille Bloemen Zee, zodat niemand zomaar tot de paradijs eilanden zou kunnen komen. De Stille Bloemen Oceaan was dus helemaal niet zo stil. Maar de geschiedenis lerares had wel een plannetje. Onder het huis van haar pleegvader zou zich een tunnel bevinden die helemaal doorliep onder de Grote Bloemen Zee en de Stille Bloemen Oceaan, tot onder de paradijs eilanden. Haar pleegvader was deze keer op reis, en zij had de sleutels. Het was daarom een koud kunstje onder zijn huis te komen. Er was daar een klein geheim stationnetje verbonden aan de tunnel. Met een lift gingen we daar naartoe. Haar pleegvader had een kast van een huis.

Er stond daar een vreemde machine, toen we op het stationnetje aankwamen. Deze vreemde machine zou ons door de tunnel leiden. Tot mijn grote schrik waren er ook zwarte kappen. Zij leken in oorlogs-stemming en begonnen gedichten tot ons voor te dragen. We mochten niet bij de machine komen. Ook de geschiedenis lerares begon gedichten voor te dragen en verzen op te zeggen van allerlei boeken, en van het eindeloze boek. "Laat ons erdoor," sprak zij. "Mijn pleegvader zal jullie zwaar straffen als jullie ons proberen tegen te houden."

"Straffen met gedichten ?" vroeg één van de zwarte kappen.

"Achteruit," sprak de geschiedenis lerares, terwijl ze een wapen trok. "Laat me dit niet gebruiken," sprak ze. Maar toen renden de zwarte kappen naar de vreemde machine en gingen ermee de tunnel in. "Te laat," sprak de geschiedenis lerares. "Mijn pleegvader zal ze leren." Ze pakte een notitie-blokje en een pennetje en maakte wat notities. Er was nog ergens een kelder waar alleen zij toegang tot had. We liepen naar de kelder toe, wat meer een soort garage was. Er stond hier ook nog een enorm grote en vreemde machine. "Nu maar hopen dat ik hem aan de gang kan krijgen," sprak de geschiedenis lerares. We gingen beiden de machine in, en in de cockpit begon ze op allerlei knopjes te drukken. Na een tijdje kreeg ze hem aan de praat, en ze bleek er heel verheugd over te zijn, net als ik. Ze begon het ding uit de garage te sturen, en even later kon het ding over een schuine helling naar beneden op de rails terecht komen. "Ziezo," sprak ze, "in orde." Ik glimlachte. Ze begon nu het ding pas echt op te starten, en al snel gingen we vanuit het stationnetje de tunnel in. Gelukkig was de tunnel goed schemerig verlicht. Hier en daar waren lampjes. Er was geen overbelichting. Alles was goed verdeeld, en de lampjes waren op goede afstand van elkaar verwijderd. De vreemde machine kon hoge snelheden bereiken, en zo duurde het niet lang of we schoten er doorheen, op naar de paradijs-eilanden. Wel moesten we hiervoor vele uren door de tunnel heen, en ik hoopte maar dat er onderweg niets aan de machine zou mankeren. Ik zou niet graag vast willen zitten ergens midden in zo'n tunnel onder de oceaan. Na een tijd was ik geheel mijn besef van tijd kwijt, en ik voelde me ook anders. Ik had geen idee waar we nu waren. Alles ging gelukkig goed, en na een tijdje stapten we uit op een stationnetje onder de paradijs-eilanden. Met een lift konden we naar boven.

De geschiedenis lerares leidde mij naar een zaaltje met een voorstelling waarin de beroemde piraten-kapitein Wak zou optreden. De hele zaal zat vol met zwarte kappen. We gingen ergens achteraan zitten. Na een tijdje kwam kapitein Wak op het podium, nam zijn hoed even af en lachte breeduit. Hij begon toen honderduit over zijn avonturen te praten, wat hij allemaal had meegemaakt, maar noem het maar gerust opscheppen. Ik had nog nooit in mijn leven zo'n grote opschepper gezien. Hij gaf dat ook wel toe, maar hij zei dan dat als je ooit geconfronteerd wordt met grote opscheppers, zorg er dan voor dat je zelf de grootste opschepper bent. De verhalen haalde hij dus uit zijn zak. Het rolde gewoon zijn zakken uit, en uit zijn hoed. Daarna deed hij wat tovertruukjes. Ook wist hij veel over mensen te vertellen. Hij kon gedachten lezen en de toekomst voorspellen, als een orakel. Het werd een onvergetelijke avond. Het mooiste moment was nog dat hij aan het einde van de voorstelling naar mij toekwam en mij verwelkomde tot de tweede paarse streep, die van de zwarte kappen. Ik was nu één van de opscheppers, sprak hij, en hij gaf mij een medaille. Ik was met mijn hoofd in de wolken.

Hoofdstuk 7. De Geluksvogel

Eén van de paradijs eilanden was genaamd "Het Eiland van de Gouden Dobbelsteen". In een bootje gingen we er naartoe. Het eiland stond vol met gebouwen en complexen die bereikt konden worden door trappen. Alles was onderverdeeld in verhogingen en verlagingen. Het hoogste deel van het eiland werd de gokstad genoemd. Het stond hier vol met gokpaleizen en andere soorten goktenten. Niets kon hier verdiend worden. Alles ging door gokken. Men zei dat een orakel mensen op die manier beloonde. Het orakel werd vereerd, en was genaamd de Gouden Dobbelsteen. Deze dobbelsteen zou alles weten, en als iemand bijvoorbeeld was bestolen of verkeerd behandeld, dan kon het in de gokstad worden gecompenseerd. De dobbelsteen zorgde er goed voor dat zij die anderen hadden afgescheept hier grote verliezen leden. Het stadje was daarom ook gevreesd door schurken, oplichters en criminelen. Toch trok het allerlei goudzoekers en geluksvogels aan omdat er zulke hoge prijzen gewonnen konden worden. Ook kapitein Wak scheen uit dit stadje te komen. Hier woonden de gouden gokkers, hen van de vierde paarse streep, een soort hoge jokers.

Ook ik wilde dit stadje bezoeken, want ik had het gevoel in bepaalde opzichten te zijn benadeeld en opgelicht in mijn leven, wat terugging tot een ver verleden. In plaats van erover te praten met een goudzoekende arts, zou ik toch liever een spelletje spelen op een goudgevende machine. En in dit stadje waren allerlei soorten gokspelletjes. Je kon het zo gek niet bedenken. Vaak gingen de gokspelletjes ook extreem ver. Bij sommige spelletjes kon je zelfs je leven verliezen. De geschiedenis lerares raadde mij aan zo ver mogelijk van die gevaarlijke gokspelletjes vandaan te blijven. Zij zou mij wel in de stad wegwijs maken, en laten zien welke spelletjes voor mij veilig waren en medicinaal. De gokdokter was in deze stad een begrip. De gebouwen in deze stad waren de hoogsten die ik ooit had gezien. Sommigen leken wel eindeloos.

Op een zekere dag was er een grote invasie op de paradijs eilanden. Er was een groot spookschip gekomen, genaamd : 't Zalige Woord. De spoken van dit schip waren van een vreemde religieuze secte. Zij vereerden een kikker die aan een kruis hing. Deze kikker zou een ieder die in hem geloofde slapend rijk maken. Zij vielen ook het gokstadje binnen, maar zij begonnen de gevaarlijke gokspelletjes van het stadje te spelen, en velen van hen verloren het leven. Nu, als je als spook je leven verliest, dan heb je het ook goed verloren. De overgeblevenen wisten niet hoe snel ze weer zouden wegkomen op hun spookschip 't Zalige Woord. Niemand begreep overigens hoe ze met het schip door de stormen en orkanen van de Stille Bloemen Zee waren gekomen. Maar ja : Spookschepen zijn spookschepen.

Ik merkte dat het systeem niet helemaal waterdicht was. Maar ja : dat noemden ze de volmaaktheid van de onvolmaaktheid. Later bleek het een grap te zijn geweest van kapitein Wak zelf. Dat gebeurde wel vaker op twintig Augustus, de dag van de gouden jokers. Op deze feestdag hield men altijd elkaar voor de gek. Deze datum werd aangehouden als de datum waarop kapitein Wak eens bij het eiland Dakzand de artselijke vloot innam.

Vanuit het Eiland van de Gouden Dobbelsteen waren er ook gouden bruggen naar andere paradijs eilanden in de buurt. Alleen als men een reis naar zo'n eiland had gewonnen in het gokstadje kon men over de gouden brug er naartoe. Er was geen andere manier. Men kreeg toegang op zo'n brug door een klein gouden kaartje. Op dit kaartje was ook vermeld voor hoe lang het verblijf geldig was. Soms was dat heel kort, en soms lang, oplopend tot onbeperkt.

Wapengebruik ging eigenlijk precies hetzelfde. Alleen de gouden gokkers of gouden jokers waren bevoegd een wapen te hebben, en dit kon alleen maar werken door het wapen te activeren met zulke kleine gouden kaartjes. Wapengebruik was dus verbonden aan toegang tot bepaalde eilanden. Dit was ook de reden waarom de zwarte kappen geen wapens mochten gebruiken. Zij waren pas van de tweede paarse streep, terwijl wapengebruik pas mogelijk was vanaf de vierde paarse streep. Ik

besefte dat de geschiedenis lerares daarom ook minstens de vierde paarse streep had, want zij had in het stationnetje onder het huis van haar pleegvader een wapen getrokken om de zwarte kappen tot orde te roepen, tenzij ze dit onbevoegd deed. De vraag was ook natuurlijk of ze het wapen wel zou kunnen gebruiken indien nodig. Ik had het niet gezien, maar om het daadwerkelijk te kunnen gebruiken zou zij dus gouden kaartjes bij zich moeten hebben om het te kunnen activeren.

Daarom konden ook alleen hen van de gouden gokkers binnen treden in de legermacht en de politie macht. Wapengebruik was dus alleen voor diep ingewijden binnen het paarse complot.

De eilanden waar de bruggen naartoe leidden werden de boeren eilanden genoemd. Hier zouden de gokboertjes en de gouden boertjes wonen.

De geschiedenis lerares vertelde mij veel over de eilanden. Ze vertelde ook dat eens in de zoveel tijd de Rechte Bloemen Zee zou komen om alles te zuiveren door een grote overstroming. De Stille Bloemen Zee was ook slechts een druppel vergeleken met de Rechte Bloemen Zee. De Stille Bloemenzee omhulde deze zee, zoals de Grote Bloemenzee de Stille Bloemenzee omhulde. Wanneer de Rechte Bloemen Zee zou overstromen en zich zou vermengen met de Stille Bloemenzee, dan zouden ze in een onderzeeboot moeten. Op een dag was het zo ver. Overal gingen alarms af, en we moesten allemaal naar een reusachtige onderzeeboot die ergens op het eiland stond. Elk eiland had zijn eigen onderzeeboot. De geschiedenis lerares wist wel waar het was, en leidde mij naar het reusachtige schip. Iedereen stond te dringen bij het schip. In de verte waren al reusachtige golven te zien die op ons af kwamen. Er was niet veel tijd. Het schip had gelukkig meerdere ingangen, en daarom ging het in goed tempo. Toen ik in de onderzeeboot was binnengekomen keek ik mijn ogen uit. Een matroos leidde ons naar een bepaalde gang waarin we beiden een eigen kamer kregen, naast elkaar. Het waren hele gezellige kamertjes met een bed. Ook had elke kamer zijn eigen tafel en wat stoelen.

De geschiedenis lerares nodigde mij uit in haar kamer, zodat ze verder kon vertellen. Ik luisterde aandachtig naar haar. Eigenlijk vergaten we de overstroming geheel. Alles ging tamelijk rustig en gepland. De geschiedenis lerares vertelde dat de onderzeeboot naar het Rechte Bloemenzee gebied zou gaan. De overstroming zou nogal lang duren namelijk, en het schip zou genoodzaakt zijn aan te leggen bij de natuur eilanden in dit zeegebied. Op deze eilanden zouden kannibalen wonen. Dit was voor mij de druppel die de emmer deed overlopen. Het angstzweet begon bij mij uit te breken, en ik begon echt voor de eerste keer weer terug te verlangen naar mijn baan op het toneel. Ik wilde weer toneelspeler worden, of werken in een patatkraam, of beiden, voor de afwisseling. Alles beter dan dit. De geschiedenis lerares keek mij aan en gaf mij een gouden sleutel. "Dit is een sleutel voor een magische lift in de onderzeeboot," sprak ze. "Het kan magisch terug gaan naar het verleden naar elk gewenst punt. Alleen geschiedenis leraressen hebben zo'n sleutel," sprak ze.

"Oh, weer zo'n hogere paarse streep ?" sprak ik cynisch. Ik had het helemaal gehad met deze idiote wereld van het paarse complot. Ik werd stapelgek van dit paarse complot, want het scheen allemaal tegen mij gericht te zijn. Ik greep de sleutel uit haar hand en riep woest : "En waar is die magische lift dan ? Breng me er naartoe." Ze deed de deur open en sprak : "Volg mij." Ik liep achter haar aan, en we moesten even de gang door, totdat we op een andere gang kwamen die in een bocht liep. Na een tijdje kwamen we bij de magische lift aan. "Open de deur," sprak ze. Ik stak de sleutel in het sleutelgat en draaide de deur open. Beiden gingen we naar binnen. Even toetste ze wat in op het knoppensysteem aan de wand waarboven een scherm was. Op het scherm verscheen mijn hele verleden. "Waar wil je naartoe ?" vroeg ze.

"Naar huis," sprak ik emotioneel. "Ik speel liever met kannibalen op het toneel, dan in het echt."

"Ik begrijp het," sprak de geschiedenis lerares.

"Ik moet hier echt weg," sprak ik, terwijl ik haar op haar voorhoofd kuste.

"Ik zal je missen," sprak ze.

"Wil jij niet met me mee ?" vroeg ik. "Ik zou niet graag willen dat je eindigde in de pan."

Ze schudde haar hoofd. "Ik moet hier blijven," sprak ze.

Ik was helemaal klaar met het paarse complot. Ik had het gevoel dat ik niet meer kon ademen, alsof ik verdronk.

Vlug typte de geschiedenis lerares nog wat in op het knoppenstelsel. "Ik moet nu gaan," sprak ze toen. "Alles is in orde." Toen opende ze de deur van de lift, en ging eruit, terwijl ze de deur achter haar sloot. Opeens werd het zwart voor mijn ogen, of de lift was totaal donker. Ik voelde me in een diepe slaap glijden. Ik werd wakker en keek recht in het gezicht van de secretaresse van het toneel.

"Mijnheer Windesheim, wordt het geen tijd dat u een ander beroep kiest ?" vroeg de secretaresse vriendelijk.

Ik schudde mijn hoofd : "Nee, ik houd van mijn baan bij het toneel. Voor de afwisseling heb ik misschien een bijbaantje nodig, bij een patatkraam ofzo."

"Er zijn veel mogelijkheden," sprak de secretaresse.

"Nee, nee, het is goed zo," sprak ik. De volgende dag ging ik fluitend en vol frisse moed naar het toneel. Ik was de gelukkigste mens van de wereld, een ware geluksvogel.

Einde

De Prins en de Rode Zee

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Hoofdstuk 1. De Kronieken van Prinses Mekka

'Saturnus, met je paarse sneeuw,
Die diepe slaap brengt telkens weer,
Twee sterren in een steen,
Met Sirius vormde jij een grote zee,
De zee van Eldemor, waarop de aarde slaapt,
De sluier van paarse sneeuw die over haar waakt,
De ruiter van Eldemor rijdt over de golven,
Totdat het roze ons allemaal doet ontwaken,
In de droom van de rode zee,
Golf na golf komt het,

Slag na slag,
Omdat het rode op ons wacht.'

Op Saturnus lag een land van overweldigende pracht, van subtiele, ordenende gevoeligheid voor ritueel, ritme en regelmaat, bijna met een aangeboren vertrouwen in de hogere orde van de dingen, het hogere archief van bovenmenselijkheid, een paar stappen verder in evolutie dan de aarde. Boven op een trap was een klein meisje aan het huilen. Ze had een oude, kleine pop in haar hand. De tand van de tijd had haar beroert, en ze vertaalde dat op haar eigen manier. Ze kon nog niet zien wat er gaande was, maar ze nam dat wat ze kon begrijpen. Het was teveel voor haar, en ze voelde zich ongeholpen, eenzaam, totaal afgezonderd. Ze miste de paarse sneeuw. Ze mocht nooit naar buiten. Dat zou te gevaarlijk zijn. De zwarte drakenruiters waren op strooftocht. Zij roofden kinderen. Medelijden hadden zij niet. Met grote hardheid en wreedheid verstoorden zij de dromen van vaders en moeders. Nu werden de kinderen binnengehouden, in de hoop dat de drakenruiters niet zouden aankloppen om het huis te doorzoeken. Hoe dit kon gebeuren heeft een duistere en droeve geschiedenis.

In een land op Saturnus, het district Onterio, waarin een gebied genaamd Orn lag, leefden een oude koning en koningin. Zij wilden al heel lang een kind, maar zij konden geen kinderen krijgen. Op een dag ging hun wens toch in vervulling, tegen alle verwachtingen in. De koningin werd zwanger en baarde een prinsesje. Ze noemden haar prinses Mekka.

Op Saturnus was het heel gewoon draken als huisdier te hebben. Vooral de wat rijkeren hadden vaak vele draken. Dit was niet zonder gevaar, maar gewoonlijks werden de draken goed getemt voordat ze als huisdier konden functioneren. Wilde draken die niet getraind waren mochten absoluut niet verkocht worden aan de gewone burger. Toch ging het niet altijd goed met de getemde draken. Ze waren nog steeds duistere, geheimzinnige roofdieren met een onvoorspelbaar karakter. Het temmen kon dus van heel bedrieglijke aard zijn. Een draak kon het gewoon meespelen, maar als hij de kans zag, zou hij kunnen toeslaan. Eigenlijk werden alleen de goedaardige draken gebruikt voor de gewone burger, maar een draak kon plotseling veranderen, of zijn ware aard laten zien.

Als Lydia, de koningin van Onterio, wonende in Orn, het kon overdoen had zij haar dochter nooit een draak gegeven. Zij, en haar man, koning Azabarar, hadden hun dochtertje op jonge leeftijd een draak als huisdier gegeven, zodat het prinsesje vertrouwd kon raken met de dierenwereld. De kleine draak, Saubar, stond bekend als een goedaardig dier, goed voor kinderen ook. Met draken kon je vaak een diepe vriendschap opbouwen, en het hielp kinderen om sociale vaardigheden aan te leren. Al snel hadden het prinsesje en de draak Saubar een hechte band. Zij kon zelfs rondvliegen op de draak, alhoewel Saubar was getraind niet hoog te gaan met kinderen. De draak had een gele, bijna gouden huid. Het meisje hield ervan de huid van de draak te strelen. In de winters kleurde zijn huid altijd paars, terwijl het onder zijn vleugels wit werd.

Helaas werd de draak ernstig ziek en stierf. Als troost werd een andere draak aan het meisje gegeven : de draak Oros. Oros was een goed getemde draak, getemd door de beste drakentemmers van Onterio. Hij leek heel goedaardig, maar sloeg toch plotseling om. Hij was getraind om laag te blijven vliegen met kinderen, maar hij nam het prinsesje plotseling mee op een hele hoge en verre tocht. Hij vloog met haar de wildernis in, naar een berg, waar hij een grot binnenging, waar gevaarlijke, ongetemde draken leefden.

Het prinsesje werd sindsdien opgesloten gehouden. Koning Azabarar en koningin Lydia waren er kapot van, en sindsdien was koningin Lydia depressief. Er werden vele zoektochten gehouden, maar het prinsesje werd niet gevonden. De gruwelijkheden van haar gevangenschap zal ik u verder besparen. Sindsdien werden draken als huisdieren verbannen in het hele land Onterio. Ook werden

er sindsdien vele aanvallen gedaan door wilde draken op de steden en dorpen van Onterio. Zij kwamen voornamelijk om kinderen te roven. Dit getal liep hoog op, en het werd zo erg dat kinderen tijdelijk niet meer buiten mochten spelen, omdat het te gevaarlijk was. Vaak werden er zwarte ruiters gezien die de draken schenen te berijden. Het was de tijd van de drakenruiters.

De broer van koningin Lydia, de oom van het prinsesje, en raadsheer van het koninklijke paleis in Orn vond dat het tijd was om de prins van Eldemor in te schakelen. Sopraan was er inmiddels achtergekomen waar de prinses verborgen werd gehouden.

In korte woorden vertel ik u dit, vanwege het grote en zware leed hieraan verbonden. De kronieken van prinses Mekka draag ik met mij mee.

Hoofdstuk 2. De Ontmoeting met Sopraan

Aan de zeeen van Eldemor zat hij. Zijn tranen waren van bloed, die zich mengden met het water. De zee was wild, en hij strompelde in het water, verder en verder, daar waar de golven hem meenamen. De golven waren zwart en paars, waar hij slaperig van werd. Hij droomde, alsof hij op een reusachtig schip was op de golven. Als een vogel vloog hij op vanuit de golven, terwijl de lichten van Saturnus op hem straalden. Ze bewogen hem, ze namen hem op.

Op de vleugelen van Saturnus was hij. Een beverig licht, bijna broeiend. Hij zag de bomen in de verte, die bijna naar hem leken te wuiven. De wind speelde met hun takken en bladeren. Plotseling was hij bedolven onder de bladeren. Hij zag prikkeldraad voor zich. Hij wist dat hij nu terugmoest, maar iets riep hem.

Michael was bij hem. Michael had zijn zwaard getrokken. Zoveel prikkeldraad was voor hen, hen bedreigende. 'Zoon van Eldemor, kom nader,' werd er geroepen. Het was een bulderende stem in de verte. 'Maar er is prikkeldraad !' riep hij. Toen was er even veel licht, alsof het prikkeldraad begon weg te smelten.

Door het wegsmeltende prikkeldraad kwam een man in een lang wit gewaad van heel fijne stof. De man had een lange baard, en stak zijn hand uit. Ook had hij een blauwe riem die paarsachtig aandeed.

'Sopraan is de naam,' sprak hij.

De prins van Eldemor veegde wat tranen van bloed uit zijn ogen weg, en schudde de hand van de man. In de verte hoorden ze het gehuil van wolven. Michael bleef toekijken op een afstand.

'De wolven huilen, omdat je gekomen bent,' sprak Sopraan.

'Waarom ?' vroeg de prins.

'Omdat je het eeuwige boek in je hoofd draagt,' sprak Sopraan. 'Het zit daar als een litteken, eens geslagen door een draak.'

De prins herinnerde zich het gevecht, waarin zijn hoofd verwond raakte. Het leek wel alsof de draak in zijn hoofd kon komen, en het brandwonden aanbracht op zijn hersenen. Dat was op de planeet Sirius, waar hij een prinses redde. Prinses Regenboog, ook wel Prinses Aurora genoemd. Hij nam

haar mee naar zijn wereld, de aarde. Ze was een vrouw van rond de vierenveertig. Ze had zijn moeder kunnen wezen. Ze was een koppige vrouw, en dat had haar in de problemen gebracht. Om in zijn wereld te komen moest ze door een lange tunnel om haar geheugen en identiteit te verliezen, waardoor ook de draak de macht over haar zou verliezen, en ze zou opnieuw geboren moeten worden door een vrouw. Hevig had ze met hem gebekvecht, maar uiteindelijk zag ze in dat er geen andere weg was. Toen ze geboren werd in zijn wereld wilde ze hem en de vrouw die haar gebaard had niet aankijken. Telkens draaide ze haar gezichtje weg. Zou de draak nog steeds een zekere macht over haar hebben gehad ? Hij herinnerde het dubbele in haar. Hij zag ook haar kwaliteiten. Wie wilde er nu met een draakse vrouw in één huis leven ? Maar hij had geen andere keus, en hij hield ook van haar. Als baby was ze nog steeds koppig, maar verder wel rustig. Ze kon zo ineens toeslaan, en dan liet ze al haar registers los, en sloeg over een geheel andere boeg. Eens nam de draak haar mee, door haar wispelturigheid. Eens sprak de draak haar toe, vastberaden om haar tot één van zijn pionnen te maken. Maar de prins gooide roet in het eten, door het eeuwige boek in zijn hoofd. Al eerder had de draak hem geslagen. Hij kwam te dichtbij de heilige relikwieen van Sirius, relikwieen die het universum zouden kunnen veranderen. Hij was dronken geraakt van een hemels sap, en kwam tot diep in de tempelen van Sirius, waar hij zijn weg vond tot aan de heilige ark. Toen hij de heilige ark aanraakte werd hij weggeslingerd, en de draak blies op hem, om zijn hoofd zwaar te verwonden.

'In Sirius zal je grafstede zijn, in Sirius zal je scepter begraven worden,' siste de draak, maar de verwondingen zorgden er juist voor dat het eeuwige boek tot geboorte kwam in het hoofd van de prins. Het eeuwige boek was als een brullend monster in zijn hoofd, totaal verwilderd. Met het monster kon hij het slot openmaken van de kerker van de prinses. Waarom koos hij deze koppige vrouw ? Vanwege haar sieraad. Zij kon de bloemen laten groeien, de mist laten optrekken als een weergodin.

'Ik denk dat je niet helemaal begrijpt waar het om gaat,' sprak Sopraan.

De prins keek op. Hij was te diep in gedachten gezonken geweest. 'Ik weet waarvoor je bent gekomen,' sprak Sopraan. 'Je hebt de helft van een sieraad, en nu wil je de andere helft, om de draken voorgoed te verslaan. Ze zijn naar je op jacht, met hun trollenlegers, en nu zoek je hulp.'

De prins knikte, weer tranen van bloed uit zijn gezicht wegvegende.
'Is ze veilig ?' vroeg Sopraan.
'Wie ?' sprak de prins.
'De vrouw van de eerste helft van het sieraad,' sprak Sopraan.
'Ja,' zei de prins. 'Ze is bij mij, maar een beetje koppig.'

'Het sieraad is los van de andere delen. Daarom volgt het haar eigen weg, en het brengt haar in de problemen,' sprak Sopraan.

'Zoon van Eldemor, je vader was een elvenkoning, en je moeder een feeenkoningin,' sprak Sopraan. 'Nu, de draken hebben jouw familie verscheurt, door het familie-sieraad te verscheuren, om de buit te verdelen onder elkaar, maar doordat het sieraad van Eldemor niet hun eigendom was, hebben de verschillende afgescheurde delen van het sieraad wraak gezworen. Zij kwamen toen in de handen van zeven prinsessen, waarvan vijf gestorven zijn. Het sieraad werd deels hersteld, maar bestaat nog steeds uit twee delen. Eén deel is met jou, en het andere deel is hier."

'Hoe krijg ik het sieraad ?' vroeg de prins.
'Het is met prinses Mekka, mijn nichtje,' zei Sopraan. 'Ook zij wordt opgesloten gehouden door een draak.'

'Alweer een draak ?' bromde de prins. 'Alsof we het nog niet met genoeg draken aan de stok hebben.'

'Vele draken,' zei Sopraan. 'Onthoudt dat zij je familie verscheurden.' De prins knikte. Hij herinnerde zich als de dag van gisteren hoe Gesim, de draak van Sirius, zijn vader, de elvenkoning vermoordde. Dit was een zwarte dag in de geschiedenis. De prins werd weer duizelig toen hij eraan dacht. Hij was zo jong toen dat gebeurde. Vanaf toen moest hij zijn vader elke dag missen. 'Die vieze gele draak,' dacht de prins bij zichzelf.

'Alleen jij kunt haar bevrijden,' sprak Sopraan. 'Jij draagt immers het eeuwige boek in je hoofd.' Sopraan wenkte hem, en leidde hem naar een lange ondergrondse tunnel. 'Vijf dagen lopen,' sprak Sopraan, 'en dan kom je aan bij haar kerker. Maar Oros, de draak, bewaakt haar.'

De prins hapt plotseling naar adem. Er klopte iets niet. Hij grijpt naar zijn keel, naar het amulet wat daar hangt, als een half sieraad, een halve amulet, vastgemaakt aan een kettinkje. Plotseling wordt het duizelig voor zijn ogen. Even later wordt hij wakker in de armen van Sopraan. 'De draak valt je nu al aan,' sprak Sopraan. 'Zoon van Eldemor, de poort is open.' Plotseling zag de prins een helder licht voor hem, als een geopende poort. Hij kon daar zo binnenstappen, samen met Michael. Ook Matthias was met hen. Woest sloeg de draak toe. 'Oros !' riep Michael. 'De ene helft van het sieraad zoekt de andere helft. Je kunt het niet tegenhouden !' Woedend sloeg de draak weer van zich af. Ze werden allen geraakt als door bliksem. De prins beet op zijn lip. Hij trok het zwaard wat hij eens van Matthias had gekregen. Maar de draak sloeg hen zo ver weg dat de prins wegzonk in de zee. Even voelde hij zich alsof hij zou verdrinken, maar toen voelde hij Michael en Matthias die hem weer optrokken. Het was geweldig zulke gevleugelde vrienden te hebben. 'Gebruik het boek,' sprak Matthias, 'het eeuwige boek.'

De prins greep naar zijn hoofd. Hij had allemaal steken. 'Ik bestrijd je door het eeuwige boek in mijn hoofd, Oros !' riep de prins. Overal verscheen vuur, alsof het vuur regende. Wild sloeg de draak met zijn staart. Ineens was alles stil. Er verscheen poezie in het hoofd van de prins. Hij kon het zo lezen. Weer lag hij in de zee, maar ditmaal had hij prinses Mekka in zijn armen.

'Het sieraad is herenigd,' sprak Sopraan.

Hoofdstuk 3. De Zwarte Wachter

Ook prinses Mekka bracht hij tot zijn wereld, de aarde. Ook zij werd opnieuw geboren, in de schoot van dezelfde vrouw die de eerste prinses had gebaart. Zij kwamen door op grote hoogtes, waar de draken hen niet konden vinden. Verborgen moesten zij worden, en verborgen moesten zij opgroeien, achter donkere gordijnen, en zij mochten niet veel aan hun prinsessen-levens herinnert worden in het begin, opdat de draken hen niet zouden grijpen. Ze moesten hun herinneringen verliezen. Dat gebeurde door de geboorte. Zij gingen door de grote tunnel van Tsaar. Zo werden zij schoongewassen, en zo verloren de draken elk spoor. Maar beiden hadden deels een draakse natuur. Op zich was dit geen probleem. Er waren ook goede draken. Maar zij hadden teveel overgenomen van hun slechte draakse meesters. Die natuur zou moeten sterven. Dit zou gebeuren in de grote tunnel van Tsaar.

De prins wist dat hij een hoge prijs moest betalen. Hij droeg het volledige sieraad nu, het sieraad wat het eeuwige boek geheel zou opwekken. In de grote tunnel van Tsaar voelde hij zich wegglijden. Hij gleed tot de grote feeen rivier, de Sep, terwijl de draken achter hem joegen. Alles glipte uit zijn vingers en hij moest alles loslaten. Een groot kwaad was opgestaan. Hij droeg het

geheim diep van binnen. De drakenstaart had hem zwaar verwond. Hij kon niets meer vasthouden.

Ze joegen op hem, zes draken, om het eeuwige boek in hem te doven. Grote trollenlegers kwamen tot de feeen rivier, de Sep, om grote slachtingen aan te richten. De prins was aangekomen in een feeen huis, waar ze hem verborgen hielden. De zes draken-koningen doorzochten het hele feeen land, maar konden hem niet vinden. In zijn dromen werd de prins meegetrokken met feeen. Hij moest een feeenridder worden om te kunnen overleven. Het eeuwige boek moest hij schrijven. Zijn pen was zijn zwaard.

Sopraan zocht hem vaak op, en hij maakte contact met de ouders van prinses Mekka. Zij waren hem erg dankbaar, want hij had hun dochter gered van de draak. Zij zonden hem vele gaven. Toen het eeuwige boek werd verspreid onder de feeen was dit een grote overwinning. De trollenlegers werden weggedreven van de feeen rivier, de Sep. De prins moest veel schrijven. Hij had niets meer van zijn verleden. Hij voelde zich arm, maar het eeuwige boek was een grote rijkdom voor hem. De prins leidde een sober leven, maar de feeen waren met hem. Als hij niet sober zou leven, dan zouden de draken teveel houvast hebben. Dagelijks baadde de prins in de feeen rivier, de Sep. Hij was een feeen ridder nu, met een grote opdracht.

Ondertussen kwamen de trollenlegers tot een grotere duisternis : een vals licht, het licht van Paam. Illusies bouwden ze op de aarde met dit licht, om te proberen de prinsessen te strikken. De prinsessen leefden in het diepe ijs van de tunnel van Tsaar, afgesloten van hun verleden. Zij droomden dromen uit een orakel, maar soms waren er nachtmerries. Nog steeds leefden ze onder de druk van de draken. De prins bewaakte hen zo goed als hij kon.

De lichten van Paam kwamen ook tot de feeen wereld, om vele feeen te misleiden, en hun ridders. De prins streed met het eeuwige boek, om diepere betekenis te vinden. Vaak leken de deuren gesloten te zijn.

In de woestijn van Dejam, ver weg van de feeen rivier, de Sep, in een afgelegen, verwilderde feeen tempel lag een gevaarlijke trollensteen, de Evit. De feeen wisten niet of het een goede of slechte steen was. Sommigen geloofden dat het een goede steen was, terwijl anderen geloofden dat het een slechte steen was, en weer anderen geloofden dat de steen niet goed en niet slecht was. De steen doodde vele feeenpriesters en priesteressen. Niet velen durfden bij de steen te komen. Vanwege het grote gevaar van de steen werd de steen achter een gordijn geplaatst. Dit gordijn was paars, en paarse wachters stonden ervoor. Alleen hogepriesters en hogepriesteressen mochten nog bij de steen komen, maar zelfs dat ging niet altijd goed, en jaarlijks kwamen er nog verschillende hogepriesters en hogepriesteressen om, vanwege de grilligheid van de steen. Niemand kon de steen eigenlijk vertrouwen. De steen was als een onvoorspelbaar roofdier. De steen werd gehoorzaamt uit pure angst.

Op een dag gebood de steen te worden geworpen in de feeen rivier, de Sep. De steen werd gedragen door zeven door de steen geselecteerde hogepriesters. Toen de steen in de feeen rivier, de Sep, werd geworpen, werden de zeven hogepriesters gedood door een straal komende vanuit de steen. De steen werd zacht en begon te veranderen in een zwarte wachter, die de rivier overzwom. De zwarte wachter was op weg naar de prins. Hij spande zijn zwarte boog, waar hij een zwarte pijl oplegde, en rende naar de schuilplaats van de prins, waar hij verborgen werd gehouden door feeen. De prins zat achter zijn schrijftafel. Plotseling was er een zwarte pijl op zijn neus gericht.

'Het sieraad, waar is het,' sprak de wachter met een trage en lage stem. Even werd de prins duizelig, en voelde alsof hij zou flauwvallen. 'Prins Jagerstouw, geef het sieraad direct hier,' sprak de wachter. De prins stond op, en liep naar een la waarin het sieraad was.

'Wat ga je ermee doen,' vroeg de prins. 'Gaat je niet veel aan, denk ik zo,' sprak de wachter. Aarzelend gaf de prins het sieraad aan de wachter. 'Draag je het veel ?' vroeg de wachter.

'Soms,' zei de prins, 'vooral bij speciale gelegenheden.'

De wachter greep het sieraad, en ging er snel vandoor. Hij dook in de rivier en werd weer een steen, die in de diepte van de rivier zonk. Er was veel donder en bliksem in feeen land. Veel feeen stierven. Ook waren er aardbevingen. De wachter had gesproken, en had genomen wat oorspronkelijk van hem was. Ook de familie Eldemor waren niet de rechtmatige eigenaren van het sieraad. Het sieraad lag op de steen, in de feeen rivier. De steen vergrootte het sieraad, en begon het om te smelten. Oorspronkelijk was het sieraad een orakel, een orakel waarin de steen woonde. Dit orakel was genaamd de Nahemsh, het grote orakel van trol.

'Neem mij weer op, en breng mij tot mijn tempel !' bulderde de steen vanuit de rivier. Een groep feeen priesters en priesteressen namen de steen op uit het water, en brachten de steen tot de woestijn van Dejam, tot achter het paarse gordijn van de tempel. Toen de steen op zijn plek was vielen de priesters en de priesteressen die de steen hadden gedragen of aangeraakt dood neer. Er was grote paniek in de tempel. Anderen keken geschokt toe, en sommigen verborgen hun gezicht. 'Versluier u nu met paarse sluiers, opdat u niet zult sterven,' sprak de steen. Nog steeds was de steen bezig het sieraad om te smelten tot het orakel wat het eerst was. Paars vuur kwam er van de steen af.

Vanaf toen droegen de priesters en priesteressen van de tempel paarse sluiers. Dit leek de steen wat te sussen. Maar nog steeds had de steen soms woede uitbarstingen, en dan kwam er rook, vuur en bliksem van de steen af. Soms vielen er doden. 'Hoe kunnen wij u het beste dienen ?' sprak Tedia, een lange feeen-priesteres.

'Luister Tedia,' sprak de steen. 'Ik ken jullie hart. Voor mij kun je niets verbergen.'

'Ik weet het, heilige trollensteen, heilige Evit,' sprak de fee. 'Maar onderwijs ons.'

'Buig voor mij,' sprak de steen, 'opdat u leeft.'

De fee boog, en ging op haar knieen. 'Maak paarse matjes,' bulderde de steen.

'Anders nog iets ?' vroeg de fee. 'Spaart u ook zegeltjes ?'

Ineens moest de steen lachen. 'Ik mag jou wel,' sprak de steen.
'Ik voel me vereerd,' sprak Tedia.

Het orakel begon steeds meer gestalte te krijgen, met de steen in het midden. Daar stond het als een groot relikwie, een groot mysterie en een groot raadsel. In vrees vielen de priesters en priesteressen voor het beeld neer. Met grote angst in hun ogen, maar ook met verbazing en verwondering keken ze naar Tedia, en ze vroegen zich af hoe ze zo durfde te spreken tegen de gevaarlijke steen. Ze waren in ieder geval blij dat ze nog steeds leefde. Zo'n grapje had natuurlijk heel verkeerd kunnen aflopen met zo'n heilig object in de buurt, en het grapje was zelfs gericht tot het object zelf. Waarschijnlijk had de steen ook wat humor, of werden ze voor de gek gehouden ? Nog steeds kenden ze niet de ware aard van de steen, en wisten zij niet waar de steen op uit was. Nog steeds vreesden ze voor hun leven. De steen had geen medelijden gehad met velen van hen.

'Tedia heeft voor het beste deel gekozen,' sprak de steen : 'Onderwijs.'

'Onderwijs ons !' riepen ineens wat priesters en priesteressen. 'Wij staan open voor u, wat u ons te

zeggen heeft.'

'Goed dan,' sprak de steen.

Hoofdstuk 4. Het Dansende Jongetje

De steen droeg hen op kerken te bouwen en kloosters door het hele feeenland, en zij moesten optochten houden in paarse gewaden en paarse kappen. Zij moesten monniken worden van de steen. In de steen waren visioenen over barbaren in grote gevechten die veel bloed vergoten. 'Hier is jullie magie op gebouwd !' bulderde de steen. 'Jullie moeten al jullie kerken en kloosters verlaten, om zo dieper de natuur in te gaan !'

'Maar u heeft zelf gezegd dat wij die kerken en kloosters moesten bouwen,' sprak Tedia.
'Kan me niet schelen,' sprak de steen. 'Doe wat ik zeg.'

'Zoals u wilt,' sprak Tedia. De steen droeg hen op de rivier, de Sep, te volgen, dieper de natuur in. Het orakel waarin de steen zich bevond moest in een kist met lange draagstokken meegenomen worden. Niemand mocht omkijken. Zij die dat wel zouden doen zouden dood neervallen, of in de grond wegzakken. Ook smolten sommigen die omkeken gewoon weg. Iedereen was in grote angst. Ook de prins moest mee in de grote stoet.

'Ik kan u een geweldig sprookje vertellen,' sprak een gek tot de steen. Hij was de clown van de feeen. 'Als u het leuk vind, mogen we dan terug ?' Maar de clown begon weg te smelten in zijn schoenen, en er was luid gegil van andere feeen toen ze het zagen. Er viel niet te spotten met het gezag van de steen. De steen was hypergevoelig en levensgevaarlijk. Vele feeen huilden, en durfden niet eens meer te denken, bang om aan de steen ongehoorzaam te zijn. Ook de prins was op zijn hoede.

Ergens aan de rivier stopten ze. De steen wilde rusten. De feeen moesten een tent maken voor de steen, en weer moest de steen achter een paars gordijn geplaatst worden. De steen begon steeds meer paars te kleuren. 'Ik heb jullie verteld over de barbaren, waar jullie magie op gebaseerd is,' bulderde de steen, terwijl er een vreemd licht van de steen afkwam, een paarsachtig licht. De feeen begonnen moe te worden en duizelig van het licht. Ook hypnotiseerde het hen. 'De barbaren wonen in de woestijnen, maar ik wil dat jullie de natuur intrekken,' sprak de steen. 'Ik wil jullie een nieuwe magie geven.'

'Bent u een trol ?' vroeg een jongetje.
'Ik ben een trollensteen,' sprak de steen.
'Kunt u voor ons koken ?' vroeg het jongetje.
Direct gaf zijn moeder hem een draai om zijn oren.
'Vergeef hem,' sprak de feeenmoeder tot de steen. 'Hij is nog jong.'

'Maar hij is wijs,' sprak de steen. 'Ik zal voor jullie koken. Vanaf nu zal jullie voedsel uit mij komen.'
Ineens brak er een vloeistof los van de steen. Ook stroomde er een vastere stof uit de steen. Het deed allemaal een beetje paarsachtig aan. 'Hier zullen jullie voortaan van leven,' sprak de steen. 'Eet en drink nu.' De feeen kwamen dichterbij tot de steen achter het paarse gordijn, die nog steeds in de kist stond met de lange draagstokken. Met bekers en bakjes vingen ze het voedsel en het drinken van de steen op, en deden wat hen gezegd werd : Ze aten en dronken.

'Verrukkelijk !' riep iemand. Maar verder was het stil. De feeen waren nog steeds in grote angst, en

velen durfden niet zomaar te spreken.

'Geniet,' sprak de steen. 'Het is feest. Het is ter herdenking van de grote uittocht.'

'Ja, Jopie allemachtig, steen ze, steen !' riep het jongetje.

De steen lachte. 'Ik mag hem wel,' zei de steen.

'Vergeef hem, hij is jong,' sprak de vrouw weer.

'Het is goed,' sprak de steen geruststellend. 'Hij is wijs.'

'Ku Jopie, Ku Jopie !' riep het jongetje, en begon te dansen voor de steen.

Sommigen hadden hun hand voor hun gezicht gedaan, omdat ze bang waren om te zien wat de steen met het jongetje zou doen, maar de steen bleef rustig, en scheen opgewekt.

'Gekke idioot !' riep het jongetje. Weer gaf zijn moeder hem een draai om z'n oren. 'Zeg zulke dingen nooit,' sprak ze met grote boosheid en angst in haar ogen. Ze wilde haar zoontje niet verliezen. 'Hij …. hij is niet in orde,' stamelde ze. 'Vergeef hem, hij bedoelt het niet zo.'

De steen was aan het schaterlachen. 'Hij heeft wel babbels.'

'Ik wil met je vechten, idiote steen !' riep het jongetje weer, met een ondeugende blik in zijn ogen. Iedereen was geschokt, en verbaast dat de steen het jongetje niets aandeed.

'Hij is een beetje speels,' zei de steen. Het jongetje begon te lachen. 'Kun je ook levend worden ?' Plotseling stond de zwarte wachter voor hen. Sommige feeen gilden. Anderen begonnen te huilen. De prins was dichterbij gekomen. Dit was de persoon die zijn sieraad van hem had afgenomen. De wachter had zijn boog gespannen, met een zwarte pijl erop. Sommige feeen beefden van angst. 'Wie wil er het eerst aan ?' sprak de zwarte wachter.

'U houd ervan mensen aan het schrikken te maken, hè ? U houd ervan mensen bang te maken,' sprak de prins dapper. Hij was de schrijver van het eeuwige boek, dus daarom voelde hij zich opgewassen tegen de vreemde wachter.

'Ik wil je niet bangmaken,' zei de wachter, 'maar draken jagen op jou.'

'Ik weet het,' zei de prins.

'Ik ben hier om te helpen,' sprak de steen.

'Wie bent u ?' vroeg de prins. 'Zoveel feeen zijn er omgekomen door jouw toedoen.'

'Ik weet het,' zei de wachter. 'Zij waren allemaal …. SPIONNEN VAN DE DRAAK !' bulderde de wachter. De prins schrok, en ook de feeen. 'Ik ben jullie beschermer !' bulderde de wachter. 'En kijk hoe jullie mij behandelen. Ik heb geen kwaad in zin.'

'Dat zeggen ze allemaal,' krijste het jongetje.
De wachter liep naar het kleine jongetje toe, en nam de kleine jongen in zijn armen. 'Je weet het … dat ik geen kwaad in zin heb …,' sprak de wachter. Het jongetje knikte. 'Mag ik bij u wonen ?' vroeg het jongetje.

De wachter zette het jongetje weer neer, stapte in de kist en veranderde weer in de steen. Alle feeen bogen voor de steen, maar het jongetje danste. Het jongetje scheen het hart van de wachter gewonnen te hebben.

Hoofdstuk 5. Het Land van Trol

Na een paar dagen trokken ze weer verder. Het was een lange reis langs de rivier de Sep. Naarmate ze dieper in de wildernis kwamen werd de steen steeds groener. Ook begon alles steeds trager te gaan, het lopen, het spreken, het denken, alles. En de feeen vroegen zich af wat er aan de hand was. Nog nooit waren ze zo diep de wildernis ingegaan.

'Dit is het land van vertraging,' sprak de steen, 'het land van trol. Alles versteent hier, alles vertraagt hier, totdat alles teruggaat in het verleden. In dit land is er geen toekomst, alleen het verleden, wat een groot geheim in zich draagt.'

'En wat mag dat geheim dan wel wezen ?' vroeg het kleine jongetje brutaal.

'Ga ik jou nog niet aan je neus hangen,' sprak de steen.

'Ik zal een kikker aan je neus hangen,' sprak het kleine jongetje.

De steen veranderde weer in de wachter, en de wachter nam grote passen. 'Hier moet ergens de poort van trol zijn, die tot diep onder de grond leidt.'

'Je moet het verleden achter je laten,' sprak het jongetje.
'Nee,' zei de wachter, 'juist niet. In het verleden ligt de sleutel opgeborgen.'
'Nee,' zei het jongetje. 'Mijn moeder zegt altijd dat we het verleden moeten laten wat het is, en doorgaan.'

'Kun je je mond nu houden ?' vroeg de wachter.
'Onder de grond wacht het verleden op ons. Het verleden wil tot ons spreken.'

Even stampte hij op de grond, en begon er toen in weg te zinken. 'Volg mij !' riep de wachter. Zoveel feeen kwamen onder de grond die dag. Ze keken hun ogen uit in hun verleden. Overal waren er vlammen die verborgen geheimen in hun verleden lieten zien. Het leek alsof ze overal doorheen konden kijken. Het jongetje schreeuwde van opwinding. Een doorzichtige, groenachtige man verscheen voor hen, met een heel traag kloppend groen hart. Voor hem was een vliegend boek. 'Heb deel aan de heilige vertraging,' sprak de wachter. 'Het laat de verborgen dingen zien, dat wat ertussen zit. De snelheid kan het niet laten zien.'

'Ga verder,' sprak het jongetje, 'je begint het te leren.'

Ze kwamen tot een groot groen vuur, wat over hun gezichten begon te komen, en over hun handen. Het voelde aan als een medicijn. Het was het medicijn van de bomen, en het trollen-medicijn. Ze kwamen aan bij een gebied van uitgestrekte groene moerassen. Hier was waar de tijd stilstond. De tijd stopte hier, en ging niet meer verder. 'Het land van trol is omgeven door moerassen,' sprak de wachter. 'Hier stopt alle tijd. Alles gaat hier terug naar het verleden. Het geheim van de eeuwige jeugd is hier.'

'Ik ben al klein genoeg,' zei het jongetje. 'Ik moet nog groeien.'

'Oh, dat kan hier ook,' sprak de wachter. 'Je kunt opgroeien in het verleden.'

'Wat moeten we bij de trollen ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Jij moet niet zoveel vragen stellen, kereltje,' sprak de wachter. 'In ieder geval : Hier ligt het geheim van de draken. Draken zijn een soort trollen. Zij konden de tijd vertragen, en konden zo de tijd stoppen om hun magie te bedrijven.'

'Hoe deden ze dat ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Door mij,' sprak de wachter. 'Maar ik ontsnapte. Ze hebben nog steeds veel macht door deze moerassen.'

'Dus in deze moerassen ga je niet dood, maar gewoon terug in de tijd ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Precies,' zei de wachter. 'Maar dan zul je eerst de trollen en hun drakenmeesters moeten overwinnen, want zij bewaken de poort van tijd.'

'En wat als je hen niet te slim afbent ?' vroeg het jongetje. 'Wat dan ?'

De wachter zweeg.

'Alsjeblieft, vertel het me ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'We zijn nog steeds in hun tijdgevangenis,' sprak de wachter. 'We zitten gevangen in een magische bal. Ze zijn nog niet overwonnen.'

'Hoe moeten we ze overwinnen ?' vroeg het jongetje.

De wachter keek naar prins Jagerstouw. Toen wees hij naar hem. 'Door hem,' sprak de wachter. 'Hij bezit het geheime wapen.' Prins Jagerstouw keek op. 'Wie, ik ?' vroeg de prins.

'Ja, jij,' sprak de wachter. 'Herinner je je derde kind ? Hij was een groot Tibetaans leider die na zijn dood vastraakte in de tunnels van de onderwereld. Jij verloste hem, ook van de verschrikkelijke beesten die hem wilden meenemen. Hij droeg de trollensleutel, die eens de draken totaal zou verslaan, door het orakel te openen. Nu draag jij die sleutel.'

'Welk orakel ?' vroeg de prins.

'Het orakel van de draken,' sprak de wachter. 'De trollensleutel die jij bewaakte was de oorzaak van veel pijn.' Allereerst had de trollensleutel het op hem gemunt, en scheurde hem los van zijn familie. Maar dit had de woede van de trollensleutel niet gestilt. Neen. De woede van de trollensleutel was alleen maar erger geworden. Nu had de trollensleutel het gemunt op de draken. Daarom kwam de trollensleutel goed van pas. De prins was duizelig. Hij voelde iets in hem branden. Het was de trollensleutel. Er was iets wat hem het moeras introk. Hij kon het niet tegenhouden, en de wachter kon hem ook niet helpen. 'De trollensleutel zoekt wraak !' riep de wachter, terwijl de prins in het moeras begon weg te zinken.

De prins voelde dat hij teruggleed in de tijd. Hij had zijn dochters in zijn armen, maar plotseling waren zij in vuur, en werden van hem losgetrokken. Draken kwamen tussen hen en de prins. De trollensleutel spuwde vuur, recht tegen het drakenvuur in. Er waren enorme explosies en zeeen van

lava waarin de prins werd meegesleurd. De prins verloor zijn bewustzijn. Even kwam hij bij en het leek alsof hij de poppen van zijn kinderen naast hem zag drijven, maar toen gleed hij weer weg. De trollensleutel trok hem mee naar het land van trol. In de verte zag hij rode vurige stenen op elkaar gestapeld, als tabletten, als een orakel. Hij had nu de trollensleutel in zijn hand. 'Werp mij nu naar het rode orakel van de draken,' sprak de trollensleutel. De prins deed dit onmiddellijk. Er waren weer overal explosies. De prins werd opgeheven, en toen als door een onzichtbare hand richting het brandende orakel geworpen. 'Nee !' riep de prins. Met een klap kwam hij tegen het orakel aan. Het orakel begon te draaien als een vleesmolen. De prins gilde en krijste. Het leek wel alsof hij tot gehakt werd gemalen.

'Ik ben je beschermer,' sprak de trollensleutel. 'Ik scheurde jou van alles weg, opdat de draken jou niet konden grijpen.'

'Maar ze hebben me gegrepen !' brulde de prins.

'Welnee,' sprak de trollensleutel. 'Ik heb je altijd afgezonderd gehouden.'

'We zitten in hun tijdgevangenis, had de zwarte wachter gezegd,' sprak de prins. De prins keek naar de sleutel. Het leek op een kruis met een staart, en met allerlei bochten. 'Open het orakel,' sprak de trollensleutel. Maar weer werd de prins weggeslingerd. Opeens stond er iemand naast de prins. Het was de zwarte wachter. De zwarte wachter spande zijn boog, legde een zwarte pijl erop en schoot op het orakel. Weer was er veel vuur. Er kwam een soort glazen opening in het orakel. De zwarte wachter tilde de prins op, en rende naar de glazen opening. Toen de wachter daardoor binnenging explodeerde het glas. Een rood gloeiend stuk vlees krioelde voor hen. 'Stop de sleutel hierin,' sprak de wachter. Voorzichtig bracht de prins de trollensleutel tot vlakbij het rode stuk vlees. Toen stak hij de trollensleutel erin. 'Idioot !' schreeuwde het stuk vlees. Het orakel begon nog meer te exploderen. De prins en de wachter vielen naar beneden. De wachter trok zichzelf op aan een rode tentakel. Ook had hij de prins vast.

'De draken zijn woedend,' sprak de wachter. De wachter begon weer in een steen te veranderen, omhuld door zijn eigen orakel. Toen veranderde hij weer in de wachter, nam een sprong, en kwam daar waar eerst het draken orakel stond. Toen veranderde hij weer in een steen omhuld in het orakel. Maar de trollensleutel was nog steeds woest. Hij sprong uit de hand van de prins, en begon het orakel van de wachter in stukken te slaan. De steen had zijn macht verloren. De trollensleutel had de steen in kleine stukjes gehakt. 'De Evit is vernietigd !' gilde een stem. Toen was er een groot geklaag en gejammer.

'Wat doe je nou, stommeling !' riep de prins tegen de trollensleutel. 'De Evit beschermde ons tegen de draken !'

'De steen is gevaarlijk,' sprak de trollensleutel. De trollensleutel begon zichzelf op te sieren met de kleine stukjes van de steen. 'Nu is het weer op de juiste plaats,' sprak de trollensleutel. De trollensleutel begon een andere vorm te krijgen, en begon zichzelf totaal om te smelten. De prins greep de trollensleutel en hief het op in de lucht. Op dat moment sloeg een grote bliksem in de trollensleutel. Weer hoorden ze gekrijs in de verte, en het gehuil van wolven.

De trollensleutel was nu samengesmolten met de gevaarlijke steen.

Hoofdstuk 6. De Trollensleutel

De prins hield de trollensleutel stevig vast. Ja, de trollensleutel had hem veel pijn gebracht, maar

hem ook gered. De roltrap van de tijd lag voor hem. Hij kon zo naar beneden kijken in de tijd. Er kwam mist van de trollensleutel. Opeens stond er een mistige gestalte voor hem. De trollensleutel was verdwenen.

'Ik ben de trollensleutel,' sprak de mistige gestalte. 'Door jouw moed ben ik vrijgezet. Als je daar naar beneden gaat, dan kom je weer in feeenland terecht.'

De prins keek de mistige gestalte aan. In de verte hoorde hij gehuil van wolven.

'Nu het orakel van de draken vernietigd is, zullen de moerassen op ons insluiten. De draken zijn woedend,' sprak de mistige gestalte. De prins keek naar de plaats waar eerst het orakel van de draken stond. Er kwam water naar boven uit een gat. 'Wat is dat daar ?' vroeg de prins.

'Dat is het Meer van Visioen wat verborgen zat onder het orakel,' sprak de mistige gestalte. In de verte bulderden de moerassen. De golven werden steeds hoger, klaar om hen te verslinden, terwijl het Meer van Visioen omhoog begon te spuiten. De prins wilde naar de roltrap van tijd rennen, maar de mistige gestalte hield hem tegen.

'Laat me erdoor !' riep de prins.

'Het moeras zal je vinden in de tijd,' sprak de mistige gestalte. 'Het zal je doen vastraken in de tijd. We kunnen beter hier blijven.' Het Meer van Visioen begon over hen heen te komen, en het water begon te stijgen, zich vermengende met het moeras. De prins schreeuwde. Plotseling had hij de trollensleutel weer in zijn hand. 'Laat het over je komen,' sprak de trollensleutel.

De prins voelde zich alsof hij verdronk. In een sterke stroom werd hij meegezogen in het Meer van Visioen, wat steeds meer moerassig werd. Ineens werd hij in de diepte gezogen. Onder het Meer van Visioen waren de ijskerkers. Nog steeds voelde de prins zich verdrinken, en begon duizelig te worden. Toen werd het zwart voor zijn ogen.

Na een lange tijd werd de prins wakker in een ijskerker. Nog steeds had hij de trollensleutel stevig vast. De prins voelde zich bevroren. 'Het lijkt erop dat we nu echt bevroren zijn in de tijd,' sprak de prins tot de trollensleutel. De prins was in grote wanhoop. De trollensleutel sprak niet meer. Tot zijn grote schrik zag de prins kleine draakjes en slangetjes uit de trollensleutel komen die daarvan begonnen te eten. 'Nee !' schreeuwde de prins.

Een vreemdsoortige priester gekleed in paars, groen en wit stond voor de deur van de ijskerker waarin de prins was opgesloten. 'De trollensleutel was een groot kwaad,' sprak de priester. 'De trollensleutel had al die realiteiten gemaakt waar je vandaan kwam, en kijk waar het je heeft gebracht.' Even leek het alsof de priester hem uitlachte.

'De trollensleutel was jouw reis tot de ijskerkers,' sprak de priester. 'Je bent onder een zware vervloeking. Daarom houden we je hier.'

'Een zware betovering ?' vroeg de prins. 'Van wie ? En waarom zou ik je geloven en vertrouwen ?'

'Wees maar blij dat de draken er zijn,' sprak de priester. 'Jij bent onder de zware betovering van het kwaad van de trollensleutel.'

'Waarom moet ik blij zijn ?' vroeg de prins. 'Ze hebben mij alleen maar ellende gebracht.'

'Nee,' zei de priester. 'De draken hielden de gevaarlijke voorwerpen verborgen, om jullie daar tegen

te beschermen. Maar je was hebberig. Jij wilde die sieraden hebben ! Zie waar je hebberigheid je gebracht heeft. Je had er van af moeten blijven, om het aan de draken over te laten.'

De prins boog zijn hoofd. 'De draken hielden mijn dochters in gevangenschap, slavernij en grote kwelling. Noem je dat bescherming ? Alles waar de draken op uit waren was macht. Mijn hele familie hebben ze uit elkaar gescheurd, en mijn vader, de elvenkoning van Eldemor.'

De priester kreeg ineens een hele lage, trage stem, die op een bepaalde manier op de normale snelheid ging. 'Dat waren jouw dochters niet ! Jij roofde hen uit onze domeinen ! Zij droegen gevaarlijke, behekste sieraden, die beter af waren onder onze bescherming,' sprak de priester bijna brullend. 'Wij beschermden het universum tegen dit grote kwaad.'

'Niet waar,' sprak de prins. 'Familie van de prinsessen hadden onze hulp ingeroepen. En de sieraden die zij droegen waren oorspronkelijk van het familie sieraad van Eldemor.'

'Je stinkt, liegbeest !' bulderde de priester. 'Dat zogenaamde familie sieraad van Eldemor was oorspronkelijk het orakel van de Evit, de steen van trol. Hiermee voorspelden wij de toekomst, en zorgden dat alles onder onze liefdevolle bewaking en bescherming was. Het was ons eigendom, en jouw familie had dit geroofd.'

'Evit was jullie gevangene,' sprak de prins, 'maar hij ontsnapte. Hij is de zwarte wachter. Oorspronkelijk bleek hij één geheel te vormen met de trollensleutel, en zij waren niet aan jullie zijde. Zij bestreden het grote kwaad van de draken.'

'En elkaar, ja !' bulderde de priester. 'Die objecten waren levensgevaarlijk, en waren alleen veilig in onze handen. Wij zijn de meesters van de magie en de meesters van het universum en tijd. Aan ons dienden jullie je te onderwerpen voor jullie eigen bestwil. Maar jouw koppigheid en eigenwijsheid heeft jou in grote problemen gebracht.'

'Jullie hebben mijn dochters gekweld,' sprak de prins. 'Ik zal niet rusten totdat ….' De prins greep naar zijn buik.

'De tijd zal het leren,' sprak de priester, en vertrok.

De prins was duizelig en kon moeilijk praten. Hij voelde zich bevroren. De pijn in zijn buik leek hem in zijn gedachten te verscheuren. Het was alsof zijn hart op de grond lag, bloedend, en niemand deed iets. Hij was hier helemaal alleen, overgeleverd aan de beslissingen van de draken en hun priesters.

De prins spuwde bloed op de grond, en viel toen in een diepe slaap. In een droom verscheen een fee in het wit voor hem. De fee had een witte hoed op, die bedekt was met fijne stof. Ook haar jurk was van zeer fijne stof gemaakt. Haar witte mantel had ze als sneeuw van haar afgegooid. Sneeuw lag op de grond. Ook waren er witte duiven, en een waterput. 'Je kan niet terug naar het verleden,' sprak de vrouw. 'Je zou daar bevriezen. Alles loopt vast in het verleden door het grote kwaad van de draken. Zij van het verleden leven in bevroren dromen, in het groene komplot.'

De prins keek op. 'Wie bent u ?' vroeg de prins.

'Het is de sneeuwkoningin, de sneeuwkoningin der feeen,' sprak de vrouw. 'Ook ik heb verlossing nodig. Ik zit in de sneeuwkerkers onder de ijskerkers.' Plotseling was er allemaal bloed voor de ogen van de prins, en vaagde de droom weer weg. De prins schrok wakker, maar viel toen weer in slaap. Weer droomde hij over een andere vrouw. De vrouw was gehuld in lompen, en was besmeurd

met vuil. 'Laat al die gevaarlijke objecten los,' sprak de vrouw snibbig. 'Ze zijn van de stad. Je hebt niet veel nodig. De natuur geeft je alles wat je nodig hebt.' De vrouw begon aan hem te trekken, en nu was ook de sneeuwfee daar, die ook aan hem begon te trekken, en toen meerdere vrouwen. Ze begonnen hem de diepte in te trekken. De prins schreeuwde. Hij probeerde wakker te worden, maar het lukte hem niet.

'Je bent in het Meer van Visioen,' sprak een stem. 'Dat is een meer van illusies, zodat je het geheim niet zult zien. Zij die in het Meer van Visioen zijn worden bedrogen, en elke schijnbare ontsnapping zal hen in werkelijkheid alleen maar dieper meetrekken in de dieptes van het Meer van Visioen. Je bent in een draaikolk. De draken hebben dit beslist.'

'Wie bent u !' schreeuwde de prins. Weer was alles alleen maar bloed voor zijn ogen. Hij zag alleen maar rood. Plotseling zag hij een barbaarse strijder voor hem staan, met een gebogen zwaard. 'Wij barbaren beslissen de magie van de draken. Zij kunnen niets doen zonder ons,' sprak de man.

'Ik kan hier niemand vertrouwen,' sprak de prins, 'en ik weet dat ik droom.'

De barbaar lachte bijna spottend. 'Het Meer van Visioen is een droom, een gevangenis van dromen. Zelfs als je denkt dat je ontwaakt, droom je nog steeds. Onze gevechten en oorlogen maken uit hoe de draken magie werkt, en ook de feeen magie en de magie van trol. Hierbij staat of valt alles. Al hun wonderen, betoveringen, vervloekingen, nachtmerries, tragedies, depressies en trauma's komen voort vanuit veel barbaars bloedvergiet,' sprak de barbaar.

'Dat was de reden dat de steen van trol wilde dat we dieper de wildernis in zouden gaan, langs de rivier de Sep, om zo het feeenland achter ons te laten,' sprak de prins. 'En zie waar het ons heeft gebracht.'

'Dieper in de wildernis ? Laat me niet lachen,' bulderde de barbaar. 'De steen heeft jullie bedrogen. Ergens halverwege de rivier de Sep liet hij jullie onder de grond gaan richting het land van trol. Jullie hadden verder moeten gaan langs de rivier. Doordat je onder de grond ging werd je de gevangene van het Meer van Visioen, het grote web van leugens. De steen van trol heeft jullie in de val gelokt. Allen zijn jullie gevangenen van het Meer.'

'Leugens,' sprak de prins. 'Alles werd trager en trager toen we dieper de wildernis ingingen langs de rivier de Sep. Onze gedachtes werden trager, totdat we niet meer verder konden. Toen bracht de steen van trol ons onder de grond. Er was geen andere optie. De tijd stopte ergens langs de rivier de Sep. We hadden geen andere keus.'

'Leugens ?' sprak de barbaar sarcastisch lachend. 'Jullie zijn bedrogen. De steen van trol kan de tijd stoppen zoals niemand anders, en komt dan met allerlei smoesjes, zodat jullie gehoorzamen, en de steen zijn doelen met jullie kan bereiken. Jullie zijn erin geluisd. Een rad heeft hij jullie voor de ogen gedraaid. Dat is alles wat ik ervan kan zeggen. En wij werken voor deze leugenachtige magie. Wij zijn slaven van het geweld. Alleen door groot geweld wordt zulke magie opgewekt.'

Hoofdstuk 7. Het Overbruggen van de Eindeloosheid

'En hoe kan ik jou vertrouwen, sinds jij zelf een onderdeel bent van het Meer van Visioen ?' vroeg de prins.

'Omdat ik een slaaf ben,' sprak de barbaar, 'een medegevangene die naar ontsnapping zoekt. We zouden elkaar kunnen helpen. Luister : Als je verder was gegaan langs de rivier de Sep, helemaal tot aan de Grote Woestijn, en dan er doorheen tot het land van de indianen, dan was je hier niet

geweest.'

'Is daar vrijheid ?' sprak de prins. 'Hebben de draken daar geen macht ?'

'Grote vrijheid is daar,' sprak de barbaar. 'En wanneer een draak door de Grote Woestijn nadert tot het land van indianen, dan veranderen ze daar in grote buffels. Het enige gevaar is wanneer de buffels helemaal door het land van de indianen kunnen komen tot de Grote Afgrond, daar waar alle ruimte stopt. Ruimte gaat daar niet verder, en de buffels die daar weten te komen zullen daar worden tot onsterfelijke draken. Wel is het zo dat de Grote Afgrond alles weer terugdrijft in de ruimte. Onsterfelijke draken kunnen niet in het land der indianen leven, maar kunnen wel het gebied tot aan de Grote Woestijn teisteren. Dit is ook de reden dat de indianen op zulke buffels jagen. Niemand van hen wil dat zij zich tot onsterfelijke draken ontwikkelen.'

'Hoeveel onsterfelijke draken bestaan er al ?' vroeg de prins.

'Velen,' sprak de barbaar. 'De indianen hebben onze hulp nodig, en alleen in het land van de indianen zijn wij veilig tegen de draken, maar wij moeten wel deelnemen aan de buffeljacht dan.'

'Ik begrijp het,' zei de prins. 'Dus nu zijn wij nog in de klauwen van de onsterfelijke draken ?'

'Precies,' sprak de barbaar. 'Nu snap je het.'

'Zijn die draken echt onsterfelijk, of kan die onsterfelijkheid ook weer ongedaan gemaakt worden ?' vroeg de prins.

'Men heeft mij verteld dat het geheim hiertoe ligt in het land van de indianen,' sprak de barbaar.

'Hoe komen we daar ?' vroeg de prins. 'Gezien we in het Meer van Visioen opgesloten zijn, en elke ontsnapping een groter bedrog is, zoals je zei.'

'Ik weet wel een manier,' sprak de barbaar.

De prins wist nog steeds niet of hij de barbaar wel kon vertrouwen, maar hij waagde het erop. De gevangenen en slaven van het Meer schenen te kunnen communiceren met elkaar door dromen. Maar in hoeverre zouden de draken dat kunnen beinvloeden ? En wat als het ontdekt werd ? De prins werd geplaagd door angsten. De droom was weer weggevaagd, en hij werd wakker in zijn kerker. Hij had honger, maar er scheen niets te eten te zijn.

Ook de prins werd tot een slaaf gemaakt, en hij moest jagen aan de rivier de Sep. De draken hadden het hele feeenland ingenomen. De prins had een keten om zijn nek die verbonden was met zijn hart. De draken hadden hem gezegd dat als hij zou proberen te ontsnappen, dan zou de keten zich om zijn hart wikkelen om het te verstikken. De prins was daarom goed op zijn hoede, en nam geen risico's. Hij probeerde de barbaar en zijn verhaal te vergeten, maar op een dag ontmoette hij de barbaar. De prins moest een gevecht bekijken in de arena. De barbaar had een groot mes, en moest een grote groene slang verslaan. Op de tribunes zaten de drakenmeesters met hun trollen en hun slaven. Zij joelden daar en applaudiseerden. De prins was ongerust over de barbaar, maar na een lang en slopend gevecht had de barbaar toch de kop van het beest weten af te hakken. De barbaar was inmiddels zwaar gewond. De prins werd opgeroepen om de wonden van de barbaar te verzorgen. Ze moesten daarvoor naar een speciale hut buiten de arena. De prins begon de wonden schoon te maken van de barbaar met een doek. Toen verbond de prins de wonden.

'Psst, ik heb dit zo geregeld,' fluisterde de barbaar. 'Van mijn meester heb ik soms wat boeken van

drakenmagie geleerd terwijl hij sliep. Luister : We zijn hier dichtbij de rivier de Sep. Ik heb een bootje kunnen regelen door twee dwergen die ik ken. Als het nacht is moeten we het erop wagen.'

'Ja maar je vergeet de keten die ik om mijn nek en hart draag,' sprak de prins. 'Het zal mijn dood worden als ik zal proberen te ontsnappen.'

'Nee,' sprak de barbaar. 'Ik heb daar wel aan gedacht. Luister : De magie van draak : Strooi wat elvenzout op de keten van de gevangene of slaaf, en de keten zal in slaap vallen. Elvenzout heb ik ook geregeld door de twee dwergen.'

De barbaar haalde een zakje van zijn riem af. 'Hier, smeer dit op de keten als het nacht wordt,' sprak de barbaar. 'Smeer het geregeld erop, zodat de keten niet wakker wordt.'

'Dit is eng,' sprak de prins. 'Als de keten wakker wordt ben ik er geweest.'

'Je bent al dood,' sprak de barbaar. 'Grijp je kans om te kunnen leven.'

'Ja, maar mij is eens verteld dat zij die schijnbaar ontsnappen uit het Meer alleen maar in diepere ellende terecht komen,' sprak de prins.

'Vertrouw erop dat ik een beetje draken magie ken,' sprak de barbaar hem geruststellend toe.

'Dat is makkelijker gezegd dan gedaan,' zei de prins.

De twee wachtten totdat het nacht was geworden. De prins strooide wat van het elvenzout op de keten, en waagde het erop. De barbaar had hem gezegd dat er niet veel elvenzout nodig was om de keten te doen slapen. De prins moest erg zuinig zijn op het elvenzout, want verder moest het wel geregeld gestrooid worden, anders zou de keten ontwaken. Snel vertrokken ze naar het bootje aan de kant van de rivier de Sep. Alles was gelukkig rustig. Beiden stapten ze in de boot, en namen een peddel, en begonnen over de grote rivier de Sep weg te peddelen. Steeds dieper en dieper kwamen ze in de wildernis. Er was steeds meer en meer begroeiing, en ze kwamen ook langs de plek waar de steen van trol alles had vertraagd, maar dit keer vertraagde er niets. 'Zie,' sprak de barbaar, 'we kunnen rustig door peddelen, zonder vertraging of stilstand van de tijd.' De prins begon steken in zijn hart te krijgen. Snel strooide hij weer wat elvenzout op de keten.

Vreemde geluiden kwamen uit de wildernis. Ook angstaanjagende geluiden van vreemde dieren. 'Zijn we in gevaar ?' vroeg de prins.

'Altijd,' sprak de barbaar. Na een tijdje begon het elvenzout op te raken. De prins begon in paniek te raken. 'Wat moeten we nu doen ?' vroeg de prins, die al weer steken in zijn hart begon te krijgen. Zijn hart klopte ook veel sneller dan normaal.

'Luister,' sprak de barbaar. 'Hier dichtbij woont een dwergensmid. Hij moet de keten veilig kunnen verwijderen, tenminste dat hoop ik.' De prins slikte. Hij begon nu echt bang te worden. 'Wat als het niet gaat lukken ? Dan ga ik eraan,' beefde de prins.

'We wagen het erop,' sprak de barbaar. De prins werd al geplaagd door allerlei gedachten wat voor verschrikkelijke dingen er met hem zouden kunnen gebeuren als de keten wakker zou worden. De prins durfde bijna niet meer te ademen. Ook durfde hij zich nog nauwelijks te bewegen, en zat hij stokstijf in het bootje. 'Doorpeddelen,' sprak de barbaar. Maar de prins durfde niet meer. Hij voelde zich al helemaal wegglijden in zichzelf van de angst. Zijn hart ging als een razende te keer. Hij kon nog één keer wat elvenzout strooien, en dan moesten ze snel zijn. Maar het scheen al niet meer te

werken. Het hart van de prins sloeg totaal op hol, en hij kon niet meer goed ademen, alsof hij gewurgd werd.

'Doorpeddelen !' riep de barbaar, terwijl hij de prins in het gezicht sloeg. 'Wakker worden, als je wil blijven leven.' Maar de prins begon weg te zakken in grote duizeligheid. Toen werd alles zwart voor de ogen van de prins.

De barbaar zette het bootje aan de kant van de rivier, en bond het goed vast aan een boompje. Toen nam hij de prins op zijn schouder, en liep in snelle pas naar een huisje vlakbij, waar de dwergensmid woonde.

De barbaar vertelde snel het verhaal, toen hij de prins op een tafel had neergelegd. 'Wakker worden !' riep de barbaar, terwijl hij de prins in het gezicht sloeg. Even kwam de prins bij. 'Ik kan niets voor hem doen,' sprak de dwergensmid. 'Ik heb hier het gereedschap niet voor. Ik kan niet tegen zulke ketenen op. Als ik iets ga proberen, dan zal de keten wakker worden, en ons alle drie doden.' De prins zakte weg in een nog grotere wanhoop.

'Heb je dan misschien nog elvenzout ?' vroeg de barbaar. 'Anders gaat hij het waarschijnlijk niet overleven.'

'Elvenzout heb ik volop,' sprak de dwergensmid. Hij liep naar een kastje toe en haalde een grote pot elvenzout tevoorschijn. Snel griste de barbaar de pot uit zijn handen, opende het en strooide een flinke hoeveelheid op de keten. 'Niet zoveel, dwaas !' riep de dwerg. 'Teveel van het elvenzout kan de keten ook wakker maken. Dan werkt het niet meer, en dan heb je er helemaal niks aan.' Snel veegde de barbaar weer wat van het elvenzout weg. 'Ik schoot wat uit,' sprak de barbaar. De prins leek weer bij zijn positieven te komen. De prins was dolgelukkig toen hij de grote pot elvenzout zag. 'Ik zal het in een zak doen voor je. Dan kun je er wel even mee vooruit, maar eh … niet teveel erop strooien, hè ?'

'Begrepen,' zei de prins.

'Waar kunnen we hem verlossen ?' vroeg de barbaar.

'In het eeuwige land van de indianen,' sprak de dwerg. 'Die hebben wel wat voor hem.'

'Goed,' sprak de barbaar. Hij schudde de hand van de dwerg, en liep toen het huisje uit. Ook de prins schudde de hand van de dwerg en bedankte hem. Met de zak elvenzout liep hij naar buiten, de barbaar achterna.

Weer stapten ze in het bootje en gingen de rivier de Sep op, op weg naar de Grote Woestijn, waarachter het eeuwige land van de indianen lag.

De prins had het nog steeds moeilijk. Weer werd hij duizelig. Het was alsof er iets in zijn hoofd knapte, en het werd hem weer zwart voor zijn ogen. 'Ik weet wat je aan het doen bent,' sprak een stem. 'En het is heel dom van je. Het elvenzout heeft mij tijdelijk verlamd, maar als ik ontwaak zal ik je doden.' Het was de keten. 'Ugh,' sprak de prins, en vertelde de barbaar wat de keten zojuist tot hem had gesproken.'

'De keten probeert je te intimideren, maar we moeten vol houden,' sprak de barbaar, terwijl ze verder peddelden.

'Ik hoop niet dat het elvenzout zijn kracht verliest,' zei de prins.

'Welnee,' zei de barbaar geruststellend. 'De keten kan niks beginnen.'

'Dat hoop ik maar,' zei de prins. Hij voelde zich nog steeds erg benauwd. 'Het lijkt wel alsof het elvenzout kracht aan het verliezen is. De keten lijkt wakker te zijn, maar is nog steeds te verlamd om me wat aan te doen,' sprak de prins ongerust.

'Welnee,' zei de barbaar. 'Het elvenzout is juist krachtiger geworden. Verlamming is zelfs beter dan slaap.'

'Ja, maar de keten botviert grote woede op mij,' sprak de prins. 'Is er geen beter middel ?'

'Niet dat ik weet,' sprak de barbaar. De prins was in grote angst. Hij vond dat de barbaar maar makkelijk praten had. Rustig peddelde de barbaar door, terwijl de prins vaak stokstijf in het bootje zat.

De keten om de nek van de prins begon steeds strakker te zitten. 'Daar, ik zal je,' sprak de keten venijnig.

'Het wurgt me,' zei de prins, terwijl hij naar adem snakte. De barbaar deed weer wat elvenzout op de keten, maar het leek alleen maar erger te worden. 'Zie, het werkt niet,' zei de prins in paniek. Hij greep naar zijn keel, en probeerde wat ruimte te maken tussen hem en de keten. De keten was meedogenloos. De keten kwam strakker en strakker te zitten. Weer werd het zwart voor de ogen van de prins. Hij voelde zich alsof hij zou stikken. Na een tijdje kwam de prins weer bij. Hij kon wat rustiger ademhalen. 'Misschien slaapt de keten weer,' sprak de prins.

'Het went wel,' sprak de barbaar.

'Nee,' zei de prins. 'Het went niet, en ik wil er vanaf.'

'Wees blij dat je nog leeft,' sprak de wachter.

'Ja, maar voor hoe lang ?' zei de prins.

Aan de rivier de Sep leek geen einde te komen. 'Hoe lang gaat dit nog door ?' jammerde de prins.

'De rivier de Sep is eindeloos,' sprak de barbaar. 'Ik zei je toch dat je de vorige keer veel te vroeg stopte ?'

'Dat kwam door de steen,' zei de prins. 'We hadden geen andere keus.'

'Ja, hij heeft jullie zwaar bedrogen,' sprak de barbaar.

'Stopt deze rivier nooit ?' vroeg de prins.

'Nee,' zei de barbaar. 'De rivier de Sep is een eindeloze rivier.'

'Ja maar je zei dat de rivier zou uitlopen in de Grote Woestijn,' zei de prins.

'Jawel,' zei de barbaar, 'maar de Grote Woestijn is in wezen onbereikbaar, omdat de rivier de Sep eindeloos is.'

'Ja, maar hoe komen we daar dan ?' vroeg de prins een beetje ongeduldig en geirriteerd.

'We kunnen daar niet komen,' zei de barbaar.

'Zeg, zit je me nu voor de gek te houden, of niet ?' vroeg de prins een beetje boos. 'Wat doen we hier dan als we er toch niet kunnen komen ?'

'Proberen,' zei de barbaar. 'Er moet een manier zijn. Onthoud dat ik een beetje draken magie ken. Als de draken in de Grote Woestijn kunnen komen, dan kunnen wij het misschien ook.'

'Ja, maar de manier waarop je praat is irritant, alsof je jezelf tegenspreekt,' sprak de prins.

'Alles heeft twee kanten,' sprak de barbaar.

'Hoe kunnen we eindeloosheid overbruggen ?' vroeg de prins.

'Door draken magie,' sprak de barbaar.

'En hoe gaat dat ?' vroeg de prins.

'We moeten naar de pekkabouter,' zei de barbaar. 'Die maakt speciaal pek hiervoor, waarmee we het bootje kunnen insmeren om zo de Grote Woestijn te bereiken.'

'Toverpek ofzo ? Pek voor draken magie ?' vroeg de prins. 'Klinkt interessant.'

'Ja, maar die pekkabouter is niet zo'n brave broeder, prins Jagerstouw,' sprak de barbaar. 'We moeten net geluk hebben. Als hij ons niet mag, dan zou hij ons kunnen aanvallen met de toverpek, waardoor we vastgeplakt worden, en nooit meer weg kunnen komen. De pekkabouter staat erom bekend dat hij als hij in een slechte bui is je in een standbeeld kan veranderen.'

'Zouden we het dan wel doen ?' vroeg de prins.

'We hebben geen andere keus,' sprak de barbaar. 'We kunnen hem gewoon op de normale manier benaderen, of wachten totdat hij slaapt, en dan de toverpek roven.'

De prins dacht even na. 'Laten we het maar op de normale manier doen, want op dieventocht gaan heb ik even geen zin in.'

'We lopen dan wel groot risico,' sprak de barbaar.

'Ja, maar als we op dievenpad gaan lopen we ook een groot risico,' zei de prins.

'Het is nogal eenvoudig,' zei de barbaar. 'Als de kabouter slaapt kunnen we gewoon de schuur in waar het toverpek is.'

Bij een vernauwing van de rivier de Sep, waar een klein bruggetje was, moesten ze het bootje uitstappen. De barbaar maakte het bootje goed vast aan een struik met een touw. Even moesten ze een zandweggetje op, wat uitliep op een graspad wat naar het huisje van de pekkabouter leidde. Maar al snel werden ze begroet door luid geblaf. De honden lagen dan wel aan een ketting, maar ze wisten nu allebei dat diefstal geen optie was. Bij het huisje aangekomen klopte de barbaar aan, waarna even later een klein mannetje met een lange wit-grijze puntbaard opendeed. Hij had een

rood pakje aan, met rode, zachte laarzen. 'Kijk eens aan, bezoek !' snauwde het mannetje. 'Kom verder, alhoewel ik niet bepaald in een goede bui ben.'

'We kunnen ook een andere keer terugkomen,' sprak de barbaar, die al in gedachten had hoe hij eventueel de honden zou kunnen rustig maken.'

'Welnee, kom verder,' sprak de kabouter, die de barbaar en de prins al had vastgegrepen om ze naar binnen te trekken.

'Het is hier eenzaam wonen,' sprak de kabouter. Toen was het even een lange tijd stil.

'Ik begrijp het,' sprak de barbaar ineens. 'Ik hoop dat we niet ongelegen komen. U heeft een mooi onderkomen hier. Het moet vast heel duur zijn geweest, of in ieder geval zwaar werk. Zeg, beste man, moet u eens luisteren. Wij komen voor een beetje toverpek, en we vroegen ons af …' Maar afmaken kon hij zijn zin niet, want de kabouter begon hevig te foeteren. 'Toverpek ! Zeg, wie denken jullie wel niet dat ik ben. De eerste de beste … ? Wel alle drommels, wie denken jullie wel niet wie jullie voor je hebben ? Dat zijn me nogal wat kwajongens streken, zomaar een arme oude kabouter om toverpek vragen. Weten jullie wel niet hoe duur dat spul is, en hoe lang ik moet werken voor maar één druppel toverpek ? En dan komen jullie hier op z'n Jan Boerenfluitjes om toverpek zaniken. Zijn jullie lui ? Zijn jullie op jullie achterhoofd gevallen ? Nou, dat moet ik nog meemaken, dat jullie nog een keer om toverpek komen vragen. Ik moet het nog meemaken. Nee, ik zal dat niet meer meemaken, daarin kan ik jullie geruststellen. Er komt heus geen tweede keer.'

De kabouter foeterde verschrikkelijk, en er leek geen einde aan te komen. Geen woord konden ze er tussen krijgen. Ze wisten dat ze al goed te ver waren gegaan, en waren hard aan het denken hoe ze de kabouter weer rustig konden maken, of hoe ze aan de woedende kabouter, die steeds woester en gevaarlijker werd, te ontkomen.

'Nog even, en ik trek potverdorie mijn mes !' riep de kabouter hevig snauwend. 'Wie denken jullie wel niet dat jullie zijn om voor zoiets een arme, oude kabouter lastig te vallen ?'

Inmiddels had de barbaar een zak met geld van zijn riem losgetrokken, en drukte het onder de neus van de razende kabouter. De kabouter keek erna, en schreeuwde : 'Hoe durf je mij daar zo weinig geld voor aan te bieden. Als ik het niet dacht. Wat klunzige armoedzaaiers proberen mij voor geen geld, voor een appel en een ei, mijn kostbare, dierbare toverpek af te troggelen, waar ik zo hard voor gewerkt heb met bloed, zweet en tranen ? Elke druppel koste mij bijna mijn leven. Elke druppel heeft mij groot lijden gebracht, en jullie denken dat even doodleuk van mij te krijgen alsof ik potverdorie de grote geef-kabouter ben ? Oh ja, vadertje zal het jullie weleens even schenken wou je zeggen. Nou, ik weet al precies wat ik met jullie ga doen.'

'Alstublieft,' smeekte de prins. 'We zullen alles voor u doen voor maar één druppel toverpek. U mag alles van ons hebben. Wij zijn uw dienstknechten zo lang als u wilt, en als dat nog niet genoeg is, dan smeek ik u om ons te vergeven voor onze klunzerigheid, voor deze ene keer. Misschien waren we gewoon aan het verkeerde adres. We waren op zoek naar de heer Jules Suikerbiet, en dat was geen kabouter. Vergeef ons. We hebben aangeklopt aan de verkeerde deur.'

'Jullie hebben niets,' raaste de kabouter. 'Jullie hebben niets te bieden voor alle eeuwen van pijn en tragedie die ik heb moeten doorstaan voor een paar rot-druppels toverpek. Ik zal jullie leren, snot apen die jullie er zijn. Niets kunnen jullie doen om ook maar een halve druppel toverpek te betalen, stelletje lamlendelingen. Het geblaf van mijn honden was er al om jullie te waarschuwen, maar nee hoor. Toch nog komen klagen, huilen en smeken bij een oude kabouter voor wat toverpek. Het is onbetaalbaar, vergeet het maar. En wat jullie gedaan hebben, wat jullie nu op jullie geweten hebben

door een oude, hardwerkende kabouter lastig te vallen op deze manier is ook onbetaalbaar. Kom op, jongens. Dat kunnen jullie niet meer goedmaken. Jullie hebben mij groot leed gebracht.'

De razende, woeste kabouter greep naar het mes wat aan zijn riem zat. 'En nu meekomen naar de schuur !' snauwde hij hysterisch. De barbaar verroerde zich niet, en de prins wist ook niet wat hij moest doen. Maar de kabouter trok hen het huisje uit naar de schuur, terwijl de honden hevig aan het blaffen waren. In de schuur was een bad met toverpek.

'Alstublieft,' smeekte de prins. 'We hadden echt geen kwaad in zin.' De kabouter zei niets meer, en begon met touw de barbaar en de prins vast te binden. 'Ik ga eraan,' dacht de prins bij zichzelf. 'En ik heb ook nog een keten die achter mij jaagt.' De prins wilde zich niet zomaar overgeven, en rukte zich los toen de kabouter een knoop in het touw wilde maken. 'Sufferd, blijf stil !' snauwde de kabouter. Ook de barbaar rukte zich los van de kabouter, maar de kabouter had al snel een beker toverpek in zijn handen. 'Dit willen jullie echt niet over jullie heenkrijgen, want dan kun je je nooit meer bewegen. Vastgeplakt voor eeuwig, dus denk maar goed na voordat je iets stoms doet.' De kabouter hief de beker op, klaar om het pek te gooien. 'Het elvenzout !' riep de barbaar. De prins greep naar zijn zak met elvenzout die hij aan zijn riem had zitten, en nam er wat van in zijn hand. Snel gooide hij het in het gezicht van de kabouter.

'Dat hadden we eerder moeten doen,' sprak de barbaar. De kabouter lag doodstil op de grond. Hij sliep. Vanuit zijn beker droop het toverpek op zijn rode pakje, en hij begon langzaam te verstenen, terwijl hij lag vastgeplakt aan de grond. De barbaar en de prins namen toen zoveel mogelijk toverpek mee als ze konden, en nadat ze wat toverpek naar de woeste honden van de kabouter hadden gegooid om deze ook te zien verstenen en vastplakken aan de grond, gingen ze terug naar het bootje. Ze mochten het toverpek niet aanraken, maar goten het uit aan de zijkanten van de boot, en smeerden de zijkanten van het bootje in met het toverpek. Voorzichtig stapten ze toen in het bootje, en gingen de rivier de Sep weer op. Ditmaal merkten ze dat het sneller ging, en al gauw kwamen ze aan bij de reusachtige woestijn, de Grote Woestijn. Het bootje lieten ze aan het einde van de rivier achter, en gingen toen door de Grote Woestijn op weg naar het eeuwige land van de indianen.

Hoofdstuk 8. De Tweede Rivier

Het was warm in de woestijn. De prins keek zijn ogen uit. Er leek geen einde te komen aan de uitgestrekte vlaktes. 'Hoe komen we hier doorheen ?' vroeg de prins. 'Ook deze woestijn lijkt wel eindeloos.'
'Precies,' zei de barbaar. 'Deze woestijn is eindeloos, zoals de rivier de Sep, en we kunnen alleen de overkant bereiken door draken magie.'

'Ook weer door toverpek ?' vroeg de prins.

'Nee,' sprak de barbaar. 'Alleen het ei van de gele vogel kan de Grote Woestijn overbruggen.'

'Wat is de gele vogel, en waar kunnen we zo'n ei vinden ?' vroeg de prins.

'De gele vogel is een drakenvogel. Ze kunnen reusachtig groot worden. Het ei geeft de bezitter magische krachten,' sprak de barbaar. 'De vogel komt hier eens in de tien jaar, en een ei zal hij ons echt niet geven.'

'Maar hoe komen we dan de Grote Woestijn over ?' vroeg de prins.

'Madammeke Zig Zag kan de vogel oproepen, en ze verkoopt volgens mij ook zulke eieren,' sprak de barbaar.

'Wie is Madammeke Zig Zag, en waar kunnen we haar vinden ?' vroeg de prins.

'Het probleem is dat ze aan de andere kant van de Grote Woestijn woont,' sprak de barbaar.

'Daar hebben we dan niks aan,' sprak de prins een beetje teleurgesteld.

'Zij komt hier eens in de honderd jaar,' sprak de barbaar bijna deftig.

'Zeg luister eens,' zei de prins. 'Waarom praat je ineens zo deftig. Is ze in de buurt ofzo ?'

'Nee,' zei de barbaar. 'Ze is geen velden of wegen te bekennen, maar ik weet dat zij wil dat wanneer men over haar spreekt, dan moet men deftig spreken, heel deftig.'

'Oh, luistert ze ons af ofzo ?' vroeg de prins.

'Wie weet,' sprak de barbaar met deftige gebaren. 'Madammeke Zig Zag kan immers alles.'

'Kan ze niet even voor ons komen ?' vroeg de prins.

'Nee, dat kan ze niet. Zet dat maar snel uit je hoofd,' sprak de barbaar.

'En waarom dan niet ?' vroeg de prins.

'Omdat zij gebonden is aan de wetten van de draken magie. Zo niet, dan zou het hele universum ontploffen,' sprak de barbaar.

'Ligt het zo gevoelig ?' vroeg de prins. 'Zij woont dus tussen de Grote Woestijn en het land van de indianen in ?'

'Ja, in het overgangs-gebied,' sprak de barbaar, 'daar waar alle draken veranderen in buffels.'

'Ik zie hier geen draken,' sprak de prins.

'Nee,' zei de barbaar, 'inderdaad. Die komen hier niet vaak. Het is een groot risico.'

'Dus voor hetzelfde geld wachten we hier nog honderd jaar totdat die Madammeke Zig Zag eens komt opdagen ?' vroeg de prins.

'Ja, en dan heb je kans dat ze nog even terug moet voor haar eieren,' sprak de barbaar, 'dus dan zijn we zo nog honderd jaar verder voordat ze weer terug is.'

'Gezellig,' zei de prins. 'Is er geen andere manier om over de Grote woestijn te komen ? Ik bedoel iets sneller.'

'Niet dat ik weet,' sprak de barbaar.

'Kunnen we misschien op de rug van zo'n draak ?' vroeg de prins.

'Ben je gek,' sprak de barbaar. 'Dat gaat echt niet gebeuren.'

De prins voelde zich moedeloos worden. Hij begon van pure paniek de woestijn in te rennen, en begon toen als een wildeman te schreeuwen. 'Het is niet eerlijk, het is niet eerlijk !' schreeuwde hij. Plotseling zagen ze in de verte wat indianen op paarden aankomen. 'Hey !' riep de prins, en begon te springen en te zwaaien. 'Hey, hier moeten jullie zijn !'

De prins rende terug naar de barbaar. 'Daar komen wat indianen aan. Hoe komen die hier nu ?' vroeg de prins.

'Zij gebruiken de magie van de Grote Afgrond,' sprak de barbaar.

'Kunnen zij ons niet meenemen ?' vroeg de prins met enige hoop.

'Misschien,' zei de barbaar. 'We kunnen het proberen.'

De indianen ter paard kwamen steeds dichterbij. Na een tijdje stonden ze vlak voor de prins en de barbaar. De prins begon direct het hele verhaal te vertellen, in de hoop dat de indianen hen zouden meenemen.

Maar ook de indianen schenen aan ijzeren wetten te zijn onderworpen. Wel wilden ze aan Madammeke Zig Zag om twee eieren van de gele drakenvogel vragen. De barbaar gaf hen daarvoor wat geld mee. De indianen waren maar wat blij, sinds de barbaar en de prins hen wilden helpen in de buffeljacht, om zo te voorkomen dat er niet nog meer draken de Grote Afgrond zouden bereiken om zo onsterfelijk te worden. Ze gingen direct terug over de woestijn.

Zelfs voor de indianen was het nog een reis van drie dagen door de Grote Woestijn, maar dat hadden ze er wel voor over. Ongeveer na een week waren ze weer terug met de eieren. In de diepte van de woestijn zouden de eieren zo warm worden dat ze spontaan uitgebroed zouden worden. De jonge gele drakenvogels zouden direct al sterk en magisch genoeg zijn om hen over de eindeloze woestijn te brengen.

De prins en de barbaar begonnen hun tocht over de Grote Woestijn, met de eieren in hun handen. De eieren waren best wel groot en zwaar, maar het was nog wel te doen. Soms namen ze even een rustpauze. Na een paar uur te hebben gelopen begonnen de eieren steeds heter te worden. Op een gegeven moment waren de eieren zo heet, dat ze niet meer te dragen waren. De prins en de barbaar legden hun eieren in het zand, waar ze al snel kapot begonnen te springen. Twee jonge gele drakenvogels kwamen eruit. Ze strekten zich helemaal uit, en waren veel groter dan hun eieren zelf. Met gemak konden de prins en de barbaar op hun ruggen zitten. Ze waren blij dat het allemaal goed verliep zonder problemen. De twee gele drakenvogels stegen al snel op, en begonnen met een loeivaart richting het eeuwige land van de indianen te vliegen. De prins en de barbaar hielden de nekken van de goede drakenvogels goed vast. Het was alsof ze een magische barriere doorbraken. Dit konden de vogels doen, vanwege de draken magie die zij overvloedig van nature bezaten.

In de verte zagen ze het eeuwige land van de indianen. De prins slaakte een kreet van opwinding. Het was hier een erg tropisch klimaat. Vanuit de hete lucht vlogen ze in de wat vochtigere lucht vlak boven het begindeel van het eeuwige land van de indianen. Hier daalden de vogels neer, alsof ze wisten wat ze moesten doen. Het leek wel alsof de vogels niet meer verder konden. Tot hun grote schrik merkten ze dat de vogels in buffels begonnen te veranderen. Met een plof stortten ze op de grond. De buffels renden weer terug richting de woestijn door het overgangs-gebied.

De barbaar en de prins keken elkaar aan. Toen keken ze naar het eeuwige land van de indianen, en gingen tot het eerste de beste kamp. Een indiaan zat daar op de grond, voor zijn wigwam. Hij rookte

een soort pijp, een lange pijp met veren. De prins wees op zijn keten, en begon al snel zijn verhaal te vertellen. Hij hoopte dat de indiaan hem kon helpen van de keten af te komen. De indiaan begon te spreken over de Grote Afgrond, waar alle ruimte ophoudt te bestaan, en waar men de ruimte weer wordt ingedreven. Alle ruimte stopt op dat punt. Door de magie van de Grote Afgrond zouden de indianen alles kunnen bereiken wat ze wilden, en alles kunnen krijgen wat ze wilden. Ook zouden ze hier kunnen afkomen van alles wat ze wilden. Wel was het zo dat de magische bron van de Grote Afgrond in de loop van tijden zo vervuild was geraakt vanwege de draken die als buffels tot de Grote Afgrond konden komen.

'Ik kan u helpen, als drakenjager,' sprak de prins, 'maar doet u alstublieft wat aan de keten om mij nek, die zich ook in mijn huid heeft gedrongen om mijn hart te ketenen. Hierom is mijn leven nog steeds in groot gevaar.'

De indiaan keek naar de keten en knikte. De draken die als buffels tot de Grote Afgrond konden komen werden daar onsterfelijke draken, en alhoewel ze weer teruggedreven werden tot ver buiten het eeuwige land van de indianen en de Grote Woestijn, hadden ze de bron van de Grote Afgrond ernstig vervuild, en zou dat een ernstige bedreiging kunnen vormen voor het voortbestaan van de bron en van het eeuwige land van de indianen. De draken zouden maar wat graag de bron en het eeuwige land van de indianen willen vernietigen of innemen. De indiaan raakte de keten aan. 'Elvenzout ?' vroeg hij. 'Ja,' zei de prins. 'Dat gebruik ik om de keten in slaap en verlamming te houden, zodat het mij niet kan doden vanwege mijn ontsnapping.' De indiaan knikte.

De indiaan begon aan de keten te trekken, maar kon het niet loskrijgen. 'Het zit goed vast,' zei de indiaan.

'Maakt u alstublieft de keten niet wakker, want dan ben ik er geweest,' sprak de prins die zich weer een beetje benauwd voelde. 'Maak je geen zorgen,' zei de indiaan. 'Als mijn vader terugkomt, het grote opperhoofd van deze stam, en medicijnman, dan zal hij je wel kunnen helpen.'

Na een tijdje kwam er een man met een grote verentooi op een paard tot het kamp. Hij stapte van zijn paard af. Ook hij rookte een pijp. Het bleek het opperhoofd te zijn. Hij wees direct op zijn keel, terwijl hij naar de prins keek. 'Laat me je helpen,' zei het opperhoofd. Het opperhoofd kwam naar de prins toe en legde zijn hoofd tegen de borst van de prins aan, alsof hij wilde luisteren. Toen nam het opperhoofd voorzichtig de keten in zijn hand. De keten zat nog steeds erg strak. 'Een lastig ding,' zei het opperhoofd. De prins knikte.

Heel langzaam begon het opperhoofd de keten te vieren, heel voorzichtig, heen en weer. 'Dit heb ik van Madammeke Zig Zag geleerd,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'Wij sussen de keten, maken het kalm en rustig, door het te brengen in natuurlijke golfbewegingen. Dan zal de keten minder gespannen zijn.' Het opperhoofd had zijn hand tussen de nekketen en de nek van de prins gelegd, en deed hier hetzelfde. Ineens met een zwaai brak hij de keten los. De prins zuchtte van opluchting. 'Nu zal de keten om je hart ook breken,' sprak het opperhoofd. Hij begon aan de keten te trekken, en trok de keten helemaal uit de borst van de prins, door de opening die daar altijd zat. Even bloedde de prins, maar het opperhoofd verbond het. Het opperhoofd slingerde de keten in het vuur.

'Bedankt,' zei de prins, die zich al een stuk beter voelde.

'Eindelijk,' sprak de barbaar.

'Laten we tot de Grote Afgrond gaan,' sprak het opperhoofd. De prins en de barbaar kregen een paard, en volgden het opperhoofd en zijn zoon.

Vele dagen moesten ze reizen voordat ze een glimp opvingen van de Grote Afgrond. Het leek wel alsof de Grote Afgrond hen tegemoet kwam. Er waren in de verte vele stormen, als tornado's. Ze droegen een vreemd licht in allerlei kleuren, zoals paars, geel en oranje. De tornado's waren als pilaren met hun eigen kleur, en bovenop hen was er een dak van een vreemd rood licht, bijna verzilverd. Het was een groot natuurverschijnsel. Het opperhoofd sprak dat de Grote Afgrond bewoog. Het kon dichtbij komen en ver weg. Ineens keken ze in een immens diepe afgrond. De paarden steigerden. Ergens stopte hier alle ruimte. Het leek wel alsof hier hun gedachten stopten, alsof al hun gedachten hier afbrokkelden. Het was even voor een lange tijd stil.

Toen probeerde het opperhoofd te praten, maar hij kon het niet. Hij maakte alleen wat gebaren met zijn handen, maar kon verder geen woord eruit krijgen. Na een tijdje stuntelen kon hij een beetje stotteren, maar niemand kon het verstaan. Na een tijdje begon hij duidelijker te spreken : 'Dat wat men tijd noemt is in wezen gewoon ook ruimte. Tijd bestaat niet. Zie tijd als ruimte, om zo niet opgesloten te raken in de betovering van tijd. Hier stopt alle ruimte. Hier kunnen we niet verder, maar hier worden we weer teruggedreven de ruimte in. De Grote Afgrond beweegt en kan ons overal brengen.'

'Dat lijkt op één grote trukendoos,' sprak de prins. 'Zou ruimte misschien ook een truuk zijn ?'

'Jazeker,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'Alles bestaat alleen maar op kaarten. Die kaarten geven de illusie van ruimte, en zo ook van tijd. Dit zijn de kaarten van de Rode Zee.'

'De Rode Zee ?' sprak de prins. 'Waar is die zee eigenlijk ?'

'Oh, die zee is wonderbaar,' sprak het opperhoofd. Zijn zoon knikte. 'Die zee is paradijselijk, en bevat alle geheimen van het leven.'

'Maar waar is die zee ?' vroeg de prins.

'Niemand weet dat,' zei het opperhoofd. 'Er bestaat immers geen ruimte. Dat is allemaal illusie. Ook nummers zijn illusie. Alles is één en hetzelfde.'

'Wauw,' zei de prins. 'Maar waar manifesteert de Rode Zee zich in de ruimte ?'

'Die zee is inderdaad nergens,' zei het opperhoofd, 'maar soms manifesteert de Rode Zee zich aan de andere kant van de rivier de Sep.'

'Dat is een eind lopen,' sprak de barbaar.

'Haha,' sprak het opperhoofd, 'inderdaad, want de rivier de Sep is eindeloos.' De zoon van het opperhoofd knikte. 'Je kunt er niet zomaar komen,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'Alleen zij die de magie van de Grote Afgrond kennen maken kans.'

'Is dat nodig ?' vroeg de prins. 'Ik bedoel is het nodig om tot de Rode Zee te gaan ?'

'Jazeker,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'Je moet de geheimen van het leven leren kennen, de kaarten van de Rode Zee, om zo tot de spiegelwereld van het eeuwige land van de indianen te komen, die achter de Rode Zee ligt, dus dat is helemaal aan de andere kant van de feeen rivier de Sep. Daar is afgerekend met het draken probleem.'

'Waarom bent u hier dan nog ?' vroeg de prins. 'Omdat ik de geheimen van de spiegel nog niet goed ken,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'Dus ik heb de spiegelwereld nog nooit kunnen binnengaan.' De zoon

van het opperhoofd knikte.

'Het gebied van de Rode Zee aan de andere kant van de feeen rivier de Sep is een mysterieus gebied. Soms is de Rode Zee er wel, en soms is het er niet, omdat het eigenlijk nergens is, omdat ruimte een grote illusie is,' sprak het opperhoofd. Zijn zoon knikte. 'Velen kunnen nooit tot dit gebied komen,' ging het opperhoofd verder, 'want de feeen rivier de Sep is een eindeloze rivier. Aan de andere kant van de feeen rivier de Sep, oftewel het andere uiteinde, terwijl dat een eindeloos uiteinde is, ligt de bron van de feeen rivier de Sep, een groot geheim, bewaakt door een onsterfelijke draak. Dit is de draak Temin. Deze bron ligt dus in het gebied van de Rode Zee. De onsterfelijke draken zijn naar ons op jacht. Er is dus een hoger doel dan de buffeljacht, en dat is te komen tot de spiegelwereld van het eeuwige land van de indianen aan het andere eindeloze uiteinde van de rivier de Sep.' De zoon van het opperhoofd knikte.

'Dat is in godsnaam een lange reis,' sprak de barbaar. De zoon van het opperhoofd knikte. 'Dat is het zeker,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'En terug te gaan langs de feeen rivier is niet zonder gevaren. De draken jagen volop daar, en maken veel gevangenen en slaven zoals jullie wel weten. En zij die voor een tweede keer door de draken beetgenomen worden, die zijn er veel erger aan toe.'

'Dus die indianen die we aan het begin van de Grote Woestijn tegenkwamen waren ook op weg naar het andere eindeloze uiteinde van de rivier de Sep ?' vroeg de prins.

'Waarschijnlijk wel,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'Zij waren waarschijnlijk, hoogst waarschijnlijk, op weg naar de Rode Zee daar.' De zoon van het opperhoofd knikte.

'Wij hebben in ieder geval een voordeel,' sprak het opperhoofd. Even was het stil. Toen vervolgde het opperhoofd : 'Wij hebben de magie van de Grote Afgrond, een heilige magie. Wij kunnen bereiken wat wij willen, en afscheiden wat wij willen. Wij bemachtigen het grote geheim van ruimte, van verplaatsing, van samenkomen en weer weggaan. Maar het is bekend dat die magie van ons wegvlucht naarmate wij het Grote Midden van de rivier de Sep bereiken. Daar heersen de draken en de trollen volop. Het is het brandpunt van het grote kwaad en het grote bedrog, het middelpunt en de bron van alle ellende. Eens werd daar een draak geboren, en sindsdien waren ze niet meer te stoppen.' De zoon van het opperhoofd knikte weer.

'Hoe gebeurde dat ?' vroeg de prins.

'Salmar was een onsterfelijke draak, een onsterfelijk ei. Hij is de heerser over alle onsterfelijke draken. Nog steeds woont hij in het onsterfelijke ei. Dat is zijn schuilplaats. Hij is een meester van vermommingen. Sommigen zeggen dat hij al deze werelden heeft gemaakt. Sommigen denken dat hij goed is, en anderen denken dat hij slecht is, terwijl weer anderen denken dat hij niet goed en niet slecht is,' antwoordde het opperhoofd. Even was het een tijdje stil. Toen vervolgde het opperhoofd weer : 'In feite begon zo al het kwaad, en men zegt dat zelfs Salmar het kwaad niet meer kon stoppen.'

'Maar hoe werd hij geboren ?' vroeg de prins.

'Dat is een duister geheim van de rivier de Sep,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'Zo duister dat wij daar niet over mogen praten.'

'Ik begrijp het,' sprak de prins.

'Nee, je begrijpt het niet,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'Als wij daar over zouden spreken, dan zouden al

deze werelden kunnen ontploffen, en daarmee het hele universum, en alles zou ophouden te bestaan.'

'Maar dat begrijp ik,' sprak de prins. 'Geheimen zijn niet voor niets geheimen. Dat kan vele redenen hebben die wij niet weten.'

'Nu begrijp je het,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'Het komt erop neer dat de wetten van magie onderhevig zijn aan veel geheimhouding. De magie gaat verloren als al die kaarten zomaar op tafel worden gelegd. Maar die kaarten kun je verdienen. Geheimen kun je verdienen, en dat is een grote uitdaging. Het maakt het leven waard te leven.' De zoon van het opperhoofd knikte instemmend.

'Dit is groots,' sprak de prins. 'Het lijkt wel alsof ik niet kan denken, maar alleen maar ervaren. Alles draait en tolt in mijn hoofd.'

'Dat is de magie van de Grote Afgrond,' lachte het opperhoofd. 'En nu op naar de magie van de Rode Zee. Het is als een kaartspel.'

'Maar de magie van de Grote Afgrond zal afnemen als we de rivier de Sep weer opgaan ?' vroeg de prins.

'Uiteindelijk wel,' zei het opperhoofd, 'maar de magie van de Rode Zee zal ons tegemoet treden. Althans dat mogen we hopen. Het is niet voor iedereen. Er zal over onze hoofden worden beslist.'

'Waar gaat het van afhangen ?' vroeg de prins.

'Doorzettingsvermogen, goede wil, dapperheid, moed, volhoudingsvermogen, vastberadenheid, regelmaat, houvast, vertrouwen, wilskracht, trouw, plichtsgevoel en waardigheid, om maar wat dingen op te noemen. In andere woorden : Je moet een grote leergierigheid hebben,' sprak het opperhoofd.

'Dat is een geruststelling,' sprak de prins. 'Ik ben namelijk erg leergierig. Ik wil altijd alles weten. Sommigen noemen mij de ondervrager van Eldemor.'

'Aha,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'Nou, dat kan misschien nog goed van pas komen.'

Vlakbij de Grote Afgrond was een hal. Het was de Hal van Verplaatsing. Hier werd de magie van de Grote Afgrond onderwezen. Met z'n vieren gingen ze de grote hal binnen. Hier stond ergens een grote tafel met daarop een map met gebieden. Ook stonden er pionnen op, en lagen er kaarten. Het geheel deed een beetje Middeleeuws aan. Toch brandden er ook lampjes, die waren als kleine kaarsjes. De vlammetjes hadden verschillende kleuren.

'Ik kan het niet goed zien,' sprak de prins. 'Het is wazig voor mijn ogen.'

'Je moet nog wennen aan de magie van de Grote Afgrond,' glimlachte het opperhoofd.

'Ja, nu kan ik het zien,' sprak de prins. 'Heel duidelijk.'

Het opperhoofd begon de pionnen te bewegen, en de lampjes begonnen te knipperen. 'Binnen dit gebied is de magie van de Grote Afgrond makkelijk uit te oefenen. Daarbuiten wordt het moeilijker,' sprak het opperhoofd. Zijn zoon knikte weer als altijd.

Het opperhoofd wees het gebied van Madammeke Zig Zag aan. Hij bewoog een pion daar naartoe,

en de lampjes in het gebied begonnen overal paars te worden. 'We moeten haar om raad vragen hoe we naar de Rode Zee kunnen gaan,' sprak het opperhoofd. De prins knikte. Ook de barbaar knikte.

'Hoe komen we daar bij Madammeke Zig Zag, want het is me nogal een rot eind,' vroeg de prins.

'Moet je opletten,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'Ik zal je wat laten zien. We gaan tijd en ruimte overbruggen door de magie van de Grote Afgrond. Het opperhoofd drukte een aantal knopjes in. Toen begonnen de lampjes langzaam roze te worden in het gebied van Madammeke Zig Zag. 'Dit is haar huis,' sprak het opperhoofd, terwijl hij er even naar wees. Hij wees naar één van de pionnen, en begon de pion te bewegen tot de grote hal op de map. De grote hal was ook een pion. Toen bewoog hij de pion van het huis van Madammeke Zig Zag weer terug, en begon toen de pion van de grote hal te schuiven naar het huis van Madammeke Zig Zag. 'Zie je ?' vroeg hij.

'Ik begrijp er niet veel van,' sprak de prins. 'Gaat dat altijd zo moeilijk ?'

'Ik probeer je iets te laten zien,' zei het opperhoofd. 'Er moet eerst een verbinding gemaakt worden.'

'Ik begrijp het,' sprak de prins.

Het opperhoofd pakte een kaart, en begon het voor te lezen :
'Madammeke Zig Zag verwacht jullie al.'

Het opperhoofd glimlachte. 'Zie ? Er is contact gemaakt. De kaarten reageren op de pionnen, en geven dan een boodschap door.'

'Geweldig,' sprak de prins. 'Heel mooi,' zei de barbaar.

'Dat wil niet zeggen dat het altijd zo moet,' zei het opperhoofd. 'Dit is maar een hulpmiddel voor beginners. De pionnen van waar je bent en waar je naartoe moet, moeten contact met elkaar maken, en dan reageren de kaarten daarop.'

'Maar hoe komen we daar dan ?' vroeg de prins.

'Let goed op,' sprak het opperhoofd. Weer pakte hij een kaart. 'Lees het voor,' zei hij tegen de prins met een glimlach. De prins pakte de kaart en begon te lezen : 'Overbrug iedere ruimte snel en makkelijk door een feeenwortel.'

'Hoe doe ik dat ?' vroeg de prins.

'Door het te eten,' sprak het opperhoofd.

'Waar kan ik feeenwortels vinden ?' vroeg de prins.

'De Hal van Verplaatsing heeft ze volop in de keuken en de kelders,' glimlachte het opperhoofd. Zijn zoon knikte. Een glimlach verscheen op zijn gezicht. 'Arend Pot, mijn zoon, leidt onze gasten naar de keuken en de kelders, en laat ze die overheerlijke, magische, wonderlijke feeenwortels voor verplaatsing maar eens zien.'

'Dank u vader,' zei de indiaan. 'Volg mij,' zei hij tegen de prins en de barbaar. Aan de andere kant van de hal moesten ze even een trap af, en liepen zo regelrecht de keuken in. De indiaan trok wat lades open waar al veel feeenwortels te zien waren. Toen trok hij de koelkast open waar nog wel meer wortels lagen, en toen nog wat kastjes. Hij gaf een wortel aan de prins en één aan de barbaar.

'Nog niet opeten,' zei hij. Toen leidde hij ze naar de kelders, waar dozen vol met wortels lagen. Het opperhoofd glimlachte. 'Daar kun je veel mee reizen,' sprak het opperhoofd, 'maar ik zal jullie een geheim vertellen. De wortels raken nooit op. Je hebt maar één wortel nodig, die gewoon weer aangroeit als je ervan hebt gegeten.'

'Dat is handig,' zei de prins.

'Handig en gezellig,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'Je wortel wordt je beste vriend.' De zoon van het opperhoofd glimlachte breed, en begon hevig te knikken.

'Het is maar voor even,' zei de zoon van het opperhoofd. 'Het is maar voor beginners. In de hogere magie van de Grote Afgrond heb je die wortels niet meer nodig.'

Weer liepen ze terug naar de tafel met de map. 'Ik zal jullie nog even wat laten zien,' sprak het opperhoofd. Weer drukte hij een heleboel knopjes in, en de lampjes begonnen rood te kleuren. Weer nam hij een kaart, en las het voor : 'De verbinding is gemaakt, en de verbinding is open. Jullie zijn alle vier waardig bevonden voor de grote verplaatsing.'

'Eet nu je wortel,' sprak het opperhoofd. De prins en de barbaar begonnen gulzig te eten van hun wortel. Het leek wel alsof alles roze werd voor de ogen van de prins, en langzaam begon alles oranje te worden. Langzaam deed hij zijn ogen open. Een grote vrouw stond voor hem met een hoed op en een pollepel in haar hand. Hij keek om zich heen en merkte dat hij in een huis was. Daar waren ook de anderen. Dit was het huis van Madammeke Zig Zag. Het opperhoofd boog beleefd voor de vrouw, en ook zijn zoon. Ze bogen wel twintig keer. Ook de prins begon maar te buigen.

'Zeg, buig jij ook eens even voor mij,' sprak Madammeke Zig Zag tot de barbaar. 'Zomaar plomp voor me staan is ook niet echt netjes.'

'Ja, mevrouw,' sprak de barbaar deftig, en boog diep voor haar. Toen knielde hij.

'Zo mag ik het zien,' zei Madammeke Zig Zag.

Het opperhoofd vertelde haar het verhaal, dat zijn gasten graag naar de Rode Zee zouden gaan. Madammeke Zig Zag liep naar haar bol van visioenen om erin te kijken wat het beste was.

'Aha, ik zie het,' zei Madammeke Zig Zag, 'het is beter om niet terug te gaan langs de rivier de Sep. Veel te gevaarlijk. Er is een betere weg. De Regenboog Rivier, dat is de grote elven rivier, is een andere rivier die met een grote boog weg van de feeen rivier de Grote Afgrond verbindt met de Rode Zee. Die rivier ligt er dus tussen, maar is ver verwijderd van de feeen rivier. Om die rivier te bereiken moet je langs de Grote Afgrond gaan.'

Het opperhoofd glimlachte : 'Hartelijk dank voor deze wijze raad, Madammeke Zig Zag.'

'Kan daar ook magie van de Grote Afgrond gebruikt worden ?' vroeg de prins.

'Helemaal niet,' sprak Madammeke Zig Zag. 'Je kunt daar zelfs niet komen door Grote Afgrond magie. De elven hebben hun eigen magie.'

Madammeke Zig Zag legde hen even uit hoe ze moesten komen bij de Regenboog Rivier van de elven, en toen gingen ze op pad.

Het was een lange reis langs de Grote Afgrond. Eerst was de Grote Afgrond hen gelukkig

tegemoetgekomen, maar toen moesten ze nog een hele lange reis er langsheen. Op een gegeven moment kwam het stoom van de wateren van de Regenboog Rivier hen tegemoet. De rivier stoomde altijd erg. Niet dat het er altijd heet was. Het kon soms heet zijn, maar het klimaat was gewoon ook erg vochtig. Het leek hen van ver al te besproeien. Het was een aangenaam gevoel, als stuivend water, wat tegelijkertijd heet en fris was. De prins kreeg het er warm van, maar niet onaangenaam. Het leek hem te omhullen als een warme deken. Het maakte hem blij en gelukkig. Het was alsof zijn herinneringen gespoeld werden, en zijn wonden verdwenen. Overal waren hier klotsende watervalletjes. Ze waren nu erg dichtbij de rivier. Ergens vonden zij een bootje waarin zij de rivier opgingen. Aan beide kanten van de rivier waren hoge vochtige heuvels met verschillende verhogingen en veel begroeiing. Alle vier namen zij een peddel, en begonnen te peddelen. Er was een bepaalde stroom in de rivier die hen meetrok verder de rivier op. Plotseling sprong er een lange elf in hun bootje. 'Hey, welkom in het gebied van de Regenboog Rivier,' sprak de elf hen toe. 'Hoe kan ik jullie helpen. Waar gaat de reis naartoe ?' Het opperhoofd begon het verhaal te vertellen.

'Ah,' zei de elf. Hij strekte zich even uit. Even was het stil. 'Ik ben Langelf,' sprak de elf plotseling. 'De Regenboog Rivier gaat helemaal terug in de tijd, totdat het aankomt bij de Rode Zee, waar alle tijd begint, als de bron van alle tijd.'

'Ik dacht dat tijd niet bestond, maar dat tijd niets anders is dan ruimte,' sprak de prins.

'Precies !' riep de elf enthousiast. 'Jij begrijpt het. Tijd is een illusie, een onderverdeling van overbruggelijke en onoverbruggelijke ruimte. Tijd is een bouwsteen. Je kunt ermee bouwen, wat je maar wilt. Dus eigenlijk is het gewoon ruimte en materie.' De elf keek heel filosofisch. 'We gaan hier door alle tijden heen, totdat we bij de bron van alles komen. Tijd is eindeloos, zonder begin en zonder einde, maar door de elven magie kun je dit uiteindelijk overbruggen, waar tijd gewoon ruimte is, de verschillende etappes van de Regenboog Rivier. Wij zijn erg trots op ons majestueuze werkstuk.

'Wie hebben de Regenboog Rivier gemaakt ?' vroeg de prins.

'Wij,' zei Langelf.

'Het is inderdaad iets heel lieflijks,' sprak de prins, 'en een adembenemende gewaarwording met zoveel gevoel en intensiteit.'

'Jullie zijn van harte welkom,' sprak Langelf.

'Ik voel een warmte in me dalen, en dan stijgt het weer op,' sprak de prins.

'Je herinneringen worden gezuiverd,' zei Langelf. 'Al je gebieden van tijd, tussen de twee eindeloze uiteindes van tijd in.'

'Geweldig,' sprak de prins.

'Wij waren allemaal gevangenen van de tijd,' sprak de elf. 'Maar de Rode Zee heeft ons vrijgezet. De Rode Zee is de bron van de Regenboog Rivier.'

'Fantastisch,' zei de prins. 'Is de Rode Zee een kaartspel ?'

'Zo zou ik het niet noemen,' sprak de elf. 'Het is veel meer dan dat. Ruimte bestaat niet. Alles is inderdaad onderverdeeld op kaarten die de illusie van ruimte geven, en zo de illusie van tijd. Alles wordt dus geregeerd door kaarten, en je mag in je leven stap voor stap de meest magische kaarten

ontdekken. Die kaarten maken je gelukkig, doordat ze je hogere informatie geven, en dus hogere magie om je leven te begrijpen. Dit zal veel pijn weghalen, de pijn van verwarring en onbegrip. Er is veel misverstand in het universum omdat velen de kaarten niet kennen. Het is dus niet zomaar een spel, maar ook een verhaal over je eigen leven. Je moet ontdekken wie je bent, en waar je naartoe mag gaan. Is dat niet wonderlijk ?'

De prins knikte. Ook de zoon van het opperhoofd knikte instemmend. Allen waren ze aandachtig aan het luisteren naar de elf.

'Dus het is een spel en een verhaal met kaarten ?' vroeg de prins.

'Je moet het zo zien,' sprak de elf. 'De kaarten staan voor bepaalde stralen, bepaalde karakters en eigenschappen, elementen in het leven, die leiding kunnen geven en deuren kunnen openen. Die kaarten kun je verdienen, en worden aan je gegeven op de juiste tijd. Zo mag je komen tot de Rode Zee, waar de kaarten arsenalen zich bevinden, de kaart-archieven van het leven.'

'Wij moeten dus oorlog voeren door de kaarten ?' vroeg de prins.

'Oh ja,' sprak de elf. 'Wij moeten de draken verslaan. Alleen de kaarten kunnen dit. De kaarten hebben alle informatie die je nodig hebt.'

'Magisch,' sprak de prins. 'Hoe gaat dat in z'n werk ? De draken verslaan door de kaarten ?'

'Dat zul je wel zien,' glimlachte de elf. 'Het grote spel of verhaal is nog maar net begonnen. Het is een grote oorlog. Een oorlog van kaarten. Informatie tegen informatie. Degene met de beste informatie wint.'

'Dus als ik het goed begrijp is de Rode Zee er niet altijd ?' vroeg de prins.

'Eigenlijk nooit,' sprak de elf. 'En eigenlijk is de Rode Zee nergens, omdat tijd en ruimte niet echt bestaan. Je moet daar doorheen prikken. De Rode Zee is een kaart. Dat is alles wat het is, als de heerser van alle kaarten, die de poort tot de spiegelwereld van het eeuwige land van de indianen bewaakt. Die poort is een magische spiegel. Alleen door de juiste kaarten kan die poort geopend worden.'

'Wauw,' zei de prins. 'Dus de Regenboog Rivier eindigt in een kaart ?'

'Nee,' zei de elf. 'Het loopt uit in een groot bos tot een feeen terras, waar feeen komen voor een potje kaart.'

'Aha !' lachte de zoon van het opperhoofd.

'De feeen spelen daar kaart, en een ieder die daar komt kan daar aan deelnemen, maar er zijn wat risico's aan verbonden, hele grote risico's zelfs,' sprak de elf. 'De kaart van de Rode Zee moet je winnen, maar als je verliest, dan zak je of door de grond tot het land van trol, of je gaat terug naar de feeen rivier de Sep. Het hangt er maar net vanaf welke kaarten je krijgt.'

'Dat klinkt gevaarlijk,' sprak de prins. 'Moet ik daar echt mijn leven voor wagen ?'

'Beste broeder,' sprak de elf, 'jij bent degene die de kaart van het eeuwige boek draagt, een zeer mysterieuze kaart. Die kaart kun je voor alles inzetten. Het is de joker van het spel.'

'Dus in wezen draag ik de kaart van de Rode Zee al bij me, als ik de kaart van het eeuwige boek voor alles kan gebruiken ?' vroeg de prins.

'Jazeker,' sprak de elf. 'Je kan gewoon daar die kaart laten zien, en vragen om de kaart van de Rode Zee.'

'Maar waar heb ik die kaart ?' vroeg de prins.

'Het litteken in je hoofd zal het je laten zien,' sprak de elf. 'Heb jij niet ooit het eeuwige boek geschreven aan de feeen rivier de Sep ?'

'Deels,' sprak de prins.

'Fraai,' sprak de elf. 'Heb je daar nog iets van bij je ?'

'Nee,' sprak de prins.

'De feeen zullen het vast aan je kunnen zien dat jij de schrijver van het eeuwige boek bent. Misschien hebben zij die kaart wel voor je,' sprak de elf.

'Ik hoop het,' sprak de prins.

'Iedereen draagt al kaarten met zich mee van nature,' sprak de elf. 'Ik zie ook bij jou de kaart van de Dinosaurus Rijder, en de kaart van de Krokodillen Rijder.'

'Waar ?' vroeg de prins.

'Ik heb daar ogen voor,' zei de elf. 'Ik kan het onzichtbare zien.'

'Waarom spelen die feeen zo'n gevaarlijk spel eigenlijk,' vroeg de prins.

'Om de spionnen van de draak uit te ziften,' sprak de elf. 'Het kaartspel kan hen namelijk ontmaskeren.'

'Ik begrijp het,' sprak de prins. 'Voor bescherming en veiligheid dus.'

'Jazeker,' sprak de elf.

Op een verhoging in het bos lag het feeen terras. Er was een grote cirkel van vele feeen, allemaal rondom een grote tafel. Het bootje stopte vlakbij het terras, waar de rivier ten einde liep. Iedereen stapte uit. 'Ik moet weer gaan,' sprak de elf, en verdween weer snel het bos in. De feeen waren druk bezig met kaarten. Er zaten veel wezens tussen hen in, en zelfs draken. 'Ik denk dat je het aan het verliezen bent, Almond,' sprak een fee. 'Het Meer van Visioen is geen leuke plaats om te zijn.'

'Oh, jawel,' zei één van de draken. 'Wij hebben het zelf gemaakt.'

'Welnee joh,' zei de fee. 'Het is een gevangenis die wij hebben gemaakt, voor losbollige betweters zoals jij.'

De draak begon een beetje geirriteerd te raken, en boos, en begon vuur te spugen.

'Oh, Almond,' zei de fee. 'Leer eens te communiceren in plaats van al dat nutteloze geweld. Dat

vuur is alleen maar kook-vuur. Dat kunnen we goed gebruiken, en het deert ons niet. We kunnen ons eten ermee opwarmen, maar voor jou is het echt tijd om naar school te gaan, misschien een iets leuker en beleefder woord voor gevangenis.'

'Jullie feeen brouwen er weer niets van,' brulde de draak. 'Morgen zal ik terug zijn om jullie eens een lesje te leren !'

'Volgende week, Almond,' sprak de fee. 'Een weekje school zal je goeddoen. Het Meer van Visioen is altijd blij met terugkerende leerlingen. Volgende week zullen we zien of je er echt iets van heb opgestoken, Almond.'

'Haa,' brulde de draak, 'dat lieve Meer van Visioen is van ons, en het is een meer vol leugens. Ik ben er niet bang voor. Wij houden van liegen en bedriegen. Het is ons dagelijks brood. Je doet me daar een groot genoegen mee om me daar naartoe te zenden, als een reisje naar een pretpark. Het zal een dolleuk feestje zijn.'

'Nee, Almond,' sprak de fee. 'Het Meer van Visioen is geen domein van leugens en bedotterij. Het zijn raadsels die je moet oplossen. Doe je het niet, dan blijf je zitten in de klas.'

'Totdat ik het door ga krijgen, juf ?' brulde de draak.

'Precies, Almond,' sprak de fee.

'Wat een ellende, wat een dikke ellende,' brulde de draak. 'Het is altijd hetzelfde liedje hier. Almond, doe dit. Almond, doe dat. Nooit een keertje tijd voor plezier.'

'We hebben genoeg plezier vandaag gehad, Almond,' sprak de fee, 'maar helaas heb je het spel weer verloren, dus moet je terug naar school. Volgende keer beter.'

'Waarom ga je zelf niet naar school, juf ?' brulde de draak.

'Het hele leven is een school,' sprak de fee. 'Soms is het tijd om te spelen, soms is het tijd te leren, en dat geldt voor ons allemaal.'

'Ik zie u gauw dan in het Meer van Visioen, juf,' brulde de draak.

'Ik moet nog afwassen, en daarna is het alweer tijd voor een spelletje kaart,' sprak de fee. 'Ik moet nog meer leerlingen testen.'

De fee drukte een knopje in, en de draak gleed weg door de grond. 'Ziezo, die is weg,' zei de fee.

Het scheen dat de feeen hier een heel ander idee en beeld hadden van het Meer van Visioen. Wat minder dramatisch, meer als een leerschool en een puzzel.

'En wie hebben we daar ?' sprak de fee die de leiding van het spel scheen te hebben. Het opperhoofd begon het verhaal te vertellen.

'Aha, ik zie het,' sprak de fee. 'En hebben jullie ook zin in een potje kaart ?'

'Ik wil niet eindigen in het Meer van Visioen,' sprak de prins.

'Maak je geen zorgen,' sprak de fee. 'Ik zie dat je de kaart van het eeuwige boek draagt. Die kun je

voor alles inzetten.'

'Ik zou graag de kaart van de Rode Zee willen hebben,' sprak de prins.

'Nou, dan krijg je er eentje bij,' glimlachte de fee. Uit haar binnenste jaszak haalde ze een kaart, en gaf het aan de prins. 'Alsjeblieft,' zei ze.

De prins keek op de kaart, en zag een rood glimmende zee. 'Kunnen mijn vrienden ook mee ?' vroeg de prins.

'Je kunt er precies drie meenemen, maar het hadden er ook echt niet meer moeten zijn,' glimlachte de fee.

'Waar moeten we nu naartoe ?' vroeg de prins.

'Achter het terras staat een kaartlees-machine, een standbeeld van een eekhoorn. Je kunt de kaart daar in de gleuf drukken, ten hoogte van zijn borst,' glimlachte de fee.

Ze liepen naar de andere kant van het terras, en achter een bruin muurtje stond inderdaad de eekhoorn. De prins stopte het kaartje in de gleuf. Na een tijdje begon de eekhoorn te spreken. 'Eh, nee hoor, komt niks van in. Nee hoor, ik kan je echt niet doorlaten. Nee hoor, ik kan niets voor je doen. Sorry hoor, maar daar komt echt niets van in.' Ook de fee kwam achter het bruine muurtje en begon te lachen. 'Dat doet hij wel vaker hoor,' lachte de fee. 'Hij is even het kaartje aan het verwerken.'

'Ik kan dit niet doen,' zei de eekhoorn. 'Ik ga hier echt niet voor zitten. Ik heb het wel weer gezien, en hier komt niks van in. Er komt niks van in, hoor. Echt niet.'

De fee lachte erom. 'Hij is bijna klaar, denk ik,' lachte de fee.

'Oh ja,' zei de eekhoorn, 'nou zie ik het hoor. Nou, vooruit dan maar, voor deze ene keer. Maar laat het niet meer gebeuren. Ik heb hier al genoeg van gehad, en je bent de laatste voor vandaag. Vooruit maar dan, maar wel doorlopen, en niet treuzelen, anders roep ik je weer terug. Dit is echt de laatste keer dat ik je doorlaat. Waag het niet nog een keer bij me te komen met je smoesjes.'

De fee lachte. 'Zie je nu wel, niets aan de hand. Hij laat je gewoon door.'

'En waar moeten we nu naartoe ?' vroeg de prins.

'Volg mij maar,' zei de fee. Na een tijdje wees ze een richting in. 'Als je die kant op loopt,' zei ze, 'dan kom je vanzelf bij de Rode Zee. Alleen zij die de kaart hebben kunnen de Rode Zee zien. Voor alle anderen is de Rode Zee er niet.'

De prins hield het kaartje goed vast, en liep in de richting die de fee had aangewezen, terwijl de anderen hem volgden. Het was hier nogal dichtbegroeid. Na een tijdje lopen zagen ze in de verte wat roods glinsteren. 'Dat moet de Rode Zee zijn,' sprak de prins.

Hoofdstuk 9. De Rode Zee

Plotseling werden ze tegengehouden door elven die pijl en boog op hen gericht hadden. 'Wat komen

jullie hier doen ?' snauwde één van de elven.

'Wij hebben toegang gekregen van de feeen van het feeen terras,' sprak de prins.

'Niks mee te maken,' snauwde de elf, die zijn pijl al bijna in het gezicht van de prins had gedrukt. 'Maak dat je wegkomt,' sprak de elf geirriteerd.

'We hebben ook een kaartje,' zei de prins, en liet de kaart van de Rode Zee zien.

De elven begonnen te lachen. 'Wat hebben wij daar nou mee te maken, jongen,' zei de elf op een bijna spottende toon. Hij had zijn hand tegen de schouder van de prins gezet, en duwde hem weg. 'Dit is ons gebied, belachelijk figuur. Val ons niet lastig met je stomme kaartjes.'

'Wij komen voor de Rode Zee,' sprak de barbaar.

'Rode Zee ?' lachte de elf. 'Er zijn hier geen zeeen. Nou maak dat je wegkomt, en snel een beetje. We hebben geen uren de tijd.'

Het opperhoofd sprak toen wat dingen in een speciale elventaal, maar toen begon de elf nog kwaaier te worden. Met zijn boog sloeg hij het opperhoofd, en ook de andere elven begonnen te slaan. 'Laat je niet misleiden om tegen hen te vechten,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'Ze bezitten hoge magie, en de magie van de Grote Afgrond werkt hier niet. Zij zijn zo'n beetje de politie hier, dus we kunnen beter meewerken.'

Eén van de elven schoot giftige pijltjes met zijn blaaspijp. Alle vier werden ze geraakt, en vielen in een diepe slaap. De elven bonden hen vast, en namen hen mee naar een dichtbijzijnd dorp. Hier werden ze in een boerderij in een kooi gezet. Na een tijdje werden ze wakker in de kooi. Een wat oudere elf kwam om hen te ondervragen. Het bleek de hoofdman van het dorp te zijn.

'En jullie zijn op zoek naar de Rode Zee hier ?' bulderde de hoofdman van het lachen. 'Luister nou eens even. Laat me nou even niet lachen. Er zijn hier geen zeeen. Men heeft jullie maar wat wijsgemaakt. De Rode Zee ? Laat me toch niet lachen. Jullie hebben zeker domme spelletjes gedaan met die feeen. Die deugen niet. Die fantaseren er maar op los. Grote bedriegers zijn het. Al tijden zijn wij in grote oorlog met hen.'

De hoofdman ging op een stoel zitten en staarde naar hen. 'Denken jullie echt dat ik die onzin ga geloven ? Wij geloven in de elven kerk en het eeuwige boek, en daar blijft het bij.'

'Ik ben de schrijver van het eeuwige boek,' sprak de prins.

'Leugenaar !' bulderde de hoofdman. Toen begon hij te lachen. 'Het eeuwige boek is geschreven door een oude elf die allang is overleden. Probeer me nu niet nog meer onzin aan m'n neus te smeren.'

'Laat me dat eeuwige boek dan eens zien,' sprak de prins.

De hoofdman liep naar een boekenkast en griste een heel dik boek eruit. Toen liep hij naar de kooi toe, en stak het boek door de tralies. De prins pakte het boek, en begon te lezen. 'Dat heb ik geschreven,' zei de prins. 'Dat heb ik geschreven aan de feeen rivier de Sep. Het boek is nog niet af.'

'Heiligschennis !' bulderde de hoofdman. 'Hoe durf je te zeggen dat ons heilige boek nog niet af is. En hoe durf je te zeggen dat jij de schrijver van het eeuwige boek bent ?'

'Omdat het zo is. De oude elf moet het gestolen hebben, en gezegd hebben dat hij het eeuwige boek zelf had geschreven,'sprak de prins.

'Dikke onzin, dikke onzin,' sprak de hoofdman. 'Dit is heiligschennis naar onze profeet. Of je bent gewoon gek, krankzinnig, en denkt echt dat jij het eeuwige boek hebt geschreven, ons heilig boek waarin wij geloven. Ik ben veel malloten in mijn leven tegengekomen, maar jij bent wel echt de zotste van allemaal. En dan nog al die praatjes over de Rode Zee. Er is hier geen Rode Zee.'

'Je kunt alleen de Rode Zee zien als je de kaart van de Rode Zee hebt,' sprak de prins.

'Wat ?' lachte de hoofdman. 'Wat is dat voor grote onzin. Geef hier die kaart dan.'

'Ik kon het alleen maar voor mijn drie vrienden en mezelf gebruiken,' sprak de prins. 'Het moest eerst getest worden door een standbeeld van een eekhoorn.'

'Zeg, laat me nou toch echt niet lachen, vriend,' bulderde de hoofdman. 'Een standbeeld van een eekhoorn ? Wat zullen we nou krijgen ? Wat zijn dit voor smoesjes. Geef hier die kaart.'

De prins schoof de kaart van de Rode Zee door de tralies, die direct door de hoofdman uit zijn hand werd gegrist. 'Kijk dit nou eens,' bulderde de hoofdman. 'Dat zijn nou typisch van die belachelijke onzin kaarten van de Regenboog Rivier elven, waar wij ook in oorlog mee leven. Dat is allemaal bijgeloof, jongen. Ze filosoferen maar, maar het slaat allemaal nergens op. Het is allemaal mooidoenerij, maar je bereikt daar nooit wat. Houd die kaart van je maar, jongen. Ik ga er niet eens mijn tijd aan verspillen.' De hoofdman schoof de kaart weer terug door de tralies, en de prins nam de kaart opgelucht terug.

'Luister,' zei de hoofdman. 'Wij geloven in de elven kerk en het heilige eeuwige boek, geschreven door onze grote profeet, waarin wij ook geloven. Wat wij ook geloven en zeker weten is dat de feeen waar je het over had vermomde dinosaurussen zijn om ons geloof aan te vallen. Ze komen als lieftallige wezens tot ons om ons van ons geloof af te helpen. Het zijn grote bedriegers. Ze hebben jullie ook bedrogen. Morgen moeten jullie voorkomen bij de nieuwe profeet die onze kerk leidt. Die zal over jullie verdere lot beslissen.'

Boos liep de hoofdman de boerderij uit. Op het hooi in de kooi konden ze slapen, en dat deden ze ook, want ze waren flink moe.

De volgende dag werden ze uit hun kooi gehaald, en naar de kerk gebracht. Op een hoge troon zat een elf met lange uitstekende puntoren. Ze stonden een beetje scheef de lucht in. Hij had een groen pakje aan. 'Kom verder, vrienden, en welkom,' sprak de elf, die heel vriendelijk leek.

'Het spijt ons dat we zomaar in uw gebied kwamen,' sprak het opperhoofd. Zijn zoon knikte.

'Ach,' sprak de elf, 'helemaal geen probleem. Helemaal geen probleem. Ziet u, ik wil u mijn diepste excuses aanbieden. De dorpelingen hier zijn nogal ruw en onhandig. Ze schrikken snel van dingen, en komen dan in onnodig verweer. Ik denk dat ze zich zo veiliger voelen. Het is hun manier van bescherming, maar het klopt niet echt.'

'We waren op weg naar de Rode Zee,' sprak de prins.

'Daar heb ik over gehoord,' glimlachte de elf vriendelijk. 'Maar ik weet er niet veel vanaf. En ik hoorde dat u beweerde de schrijver te zijn van het eeuwige boek ?'

De prins knikte.

'Dat zou best kunnen. Ik twijfel daar niet aan. De vorige profeet lichtte de mensen namelijk graag op,' sprak de elf. 'Ik heb hier veel werk te doen om dat weer te herstellen. Nogmaals mijn excuses voor de manier waarop zij u behandelden.'

'U kon er niets aan doen,' sprak de prins. 'Ik hoorde dat u hier nieuw was.'

'Ja,' sprak de elf, 'ik ben hier van pas geleden. Maar ik ben nu al heilig verklaard.'

Handig,' sprak de prins.

'Jazeker,' lachte de elf. 'Dat kan goed van pas komen.'

'Klopt het dat uw volk in oorlog is met de Regenboog Rivier elven ?' vroeg de prins.

'Ja, dat klopt, dat is nog iets van vroeger,' sprak de elf. 'Daar wil ik ook snel een einde aan maken, en ook aan die bizarre oorlog met de feeen. Het is nergens voor nodig, maar heeft met vroeger te maken.'

'Goed werk,' sprak de prins. 'En hoe noemen jullie jezelf ?'

'Bosbes elven,' sprak de elf. 'Dit is het Bosbes bos. En ik wil jullie niet verder ophouden. Ik zie geen reden om jullie hier nog vast te houden. Jullie kunnen jullie reis voortzetten,' glimlachte de elf. 'En ik wens jullie een goede reis.'

'Bedankt,' zei het opperhoofd. Even later liepen ze het dorp uit, en zochten naar de plek waar ze werden aangehouden. Daar moesten ze verder richting de Rode Zee. Maar alles was veranderd. Ze herkenden niets. 'Dat moet de Bosbes magie zijn,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'Ik ken deze elven. Alles verandert hier de hele tijd, zodat niemand hier weg kan, en indringers hun weg niet kunnen vinden. We zitten hier vast. Alles zal in hun voordeel werken. Alleen door hun Bosbes magie kun je de weg vinden. Dat is een hopeloze zaak, want ik ken het niet.'

Ze probeerden het dorp weer te vinden, maar ook het dorp was in geen velden of wegen te bekennen. Het was spoorloos verdwenen.

'Wat gek,' sprak de prins. 'Het was hier net nog.'

'Dat zei ik,' zei het opperhoofd. 'Het is Bosbes magie.'

Uren zochten ze in het bos naar aanknopingspunten, maar alles leek op elkaar. Ze hadden het gevoel in cirkeltjes te lopen. Ze werden er doodmoe van, en na een tijdje stortten ze alle vier neer op het mos om te slapen.

Het opperhoofd en zijn zoon werden als eerste weer wakker. 'Dit vreesde ik al,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'We komen hier nooit meer uit.' Toen de prins en de barbaar wakker werden gingen ze weer uren lang zoeken, maar tevergeefs. Alles bleef op elkaar lijken. 'Dit lijkt wel op een eeuwig bos,' sprak het opperhoofd.

'Dat is het ook,' zei de barbaar. 'Ze hebben ons goed te pakken.'

'Wat een doolhof,' sprak de prins.

'Was het maar een doolhof,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'Maar dit is allemaal hetzelfde. Het stopt nooit.'

'Wat nu ?' vroeg de prins.

'We zijn goed de gebakken peer,' sprak het opperhoofd.

Plotseling zagen ze wat roods glinsteren in de verte. 'Dat moet de Rode Zee zijn !' riep de prins. 'Rennen, jongens, anders is het weer weg.' De prins zette het op een rennen, en ook de anderen renden achter hem aan. Ze renden zo hard als ze konden, en kwamen aan bij de Rode Zee. 'Wat een glorieus moment,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'En dat net toen we het nodig hadden.'

'Het lijkt meer op een meer,' zei de barbaar. 'En het ziet eruit als bessensap.' De prins proefte er wat van. 'Inderdaad, bessensap, meer wel heerlijk.'

'Pure Bosbes magie,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'Het heeft ons niet in de steek gelaten.'

'Wat wonderlijk,' sprak de prins. 'Maar zou dit nou dan toch de Rode Zee zijn ?'

'Ik weet het niet,' sprak het opperhoofd. Ineens verscheen de nieuwe elven profeet voor hen. 'Ik heb door een wonder de Rode Zee voor jullie gemaakt,' glimlachte de elf. 'Mijn toverstaf liet mij zien dat jullie in de problemen waren geraakt.'

'Dat waren we zeker,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'Onze dank is groot.'

'De elven oorlogen hebben het land zo gemaakt. Uit angst verandert het de hele tijd,' sprak de elf. 'Misschien dat de Rode Zee daar verandering in kan brengen.' Een kaart kwam naar boven drijven uit het meer van bessensap. De prins greep de kaart, en las hardop : 'Welkom tot de Rode Zee. De kaarten zullen uw pad leiden.'

Een pad van kaarten begon zich over het meer van bessensap te vormen. Aan het einde van het pad stond een spiegel. 'Dat moet de spiegelpoort zijn tot de spiegelwereld van het eeuwige land van indianen,' sprak de prins.

Hengsten renden langs de Rode Zee langs het strand. Ze gingen zo snel dat ze bijna niet te zien waren. De Rode Zee leek ineens vele malen groter, en werd steeds groter. De Rode Zee lag tussen het land van oneindige grootte, te groot om te kunnen opmerken, en het land van oneindige kleinte, te klein om te kunnen opmerken. Je zou daar alleen kunnen komen en het opmerken door de hengsten te berijden, maar die gingen te snel. Hiervoor hadden ze de vertragende steen nodig die was samengesmolten met de trollensleutel, maar die was verslonden door de draken. Ze zouden dus terugmoeten naar een dieper verleden, maar tijd was dus in wezen niets dan ruimte, en ruimte was in wezen niets anders dan een kaart.

De kaartenbrug lag nog steeds voor hen, gaande over de enorme Rode Zee. In de verte zagen ze wat glinsteren, wat de magische spiegelpoort tot de spiegelwereld van het eeuwige land van de indianen moest zijn. Plotseling rende de barbaar op de brug af. Hij begon als een zot te rennen over de kaarten richting de magische spiegel in de verte. Ze probeerden hem nog terug te roepen, maar hij bleef maar doorrennen. Toen zagen ze hem door de kaarten heen wegzakken in de Rode Zee.

Hij had de kaarten moeten lezen. Niemand wist waar hij nu naartoe zou gaan. Ze leken hem kwijt te zijn. De prins boog zijn hoofd. Voorzichtig liepen ze naar de kaartenbrug, vol verdriet over hun

verloren vriend. 'Komt hij nog terug ?' vroeg de prins. Niemand antwoordde. 'Hij had de kaarten moeten lezen,' sprak de elf. 'Ik kan je niks zeggen.'

Ze keken naar de kaarten die in een bepaalde volgorde lagen. De eerste kaart sprak dat ze een kristal van het land van oneindige grootte moesten meenemen, en een kristal van het land van oneindige kleinte. Alleen zo zouden ze veilig op de eerste kaart van de kaartenbrug kunnen staan. Maar om in die landen te kunnen komen hadden ze de hengsten nodig, en om de hengsten te kunnen berijden hadden ze de trollensleutel nodig die ooit door de draken was verslonden. Ze zouden dus hiervoor naar een dieper verleden moeten waar de trollensleutel nog steeds bestond. Tijd was dus eigenlijk ruimte, en ruimte was dus eigenlijk een kaart. Ze hadden dus de kaart van de trollensleutel nodig voordat ze die hengsten zouden kunnen berijden. De kaart van de trollensleutel was de derde kaart van de kaartenbrug, waar ze dus nog niet konden komen. Bosbes magie kon de tijdsvolgorde, de chronologie van dingen, en de ruimtelijke volgorde van dingen veranderen. Maar de kaart van Bosbes magie lag nog wel verder weg op de brug. Dat was de vierde kaart. Die konden ze dus niet bereiken. Gelukkig was de elf er nog. Hij kon wel Bosbes magie, en veranderde de volgorde van de kaarten voor hen. De prins was dolgelukkig. Nu was de kaart van Bosbes magie de eerste kaart, waar ze gewoon op konden staan. De tweede kaart was nu de kaart van de trollensleutel. De derde kaart was de kaart van de twee kristallen van het land van oneindige grootte en het land van oneindige kleinte, dus eigenlijk was het niet nodig de hengsten te berijden. Zo konden ze dus ook heel makkelijk nu op de vierde kaart staan waar die kristallen gevraagd werden.

De vijfde kaart was de kaart van de verloren vriend. Toen ze daar op gingen staan was ineens de barbaar weer terug. Ze waren allemaal dolgelukkig. 'Waar was je geweest ?' vroeg de prins die direct de barbaar omhelsde. 'Oh, bij een dwerg hier onder de Rode Zee, waar ik in slaap viel. Ik kan me er niet veel van herinneren,' zei de barbaar.

'Onder de Rode Zee is het rijk van slaap,' sprak de elf.

'Blij dat je weer terugbent,' sprak het opperhoofd. Zijn zoon knikte glimlachend en instemmend.

De zesde kaart was een hele lange kaart die helemaal tot de spiegelpoort tot de spiegelwereld van het eeuwige land van de indianen reikte. Deze kaart was genoemd de langste kaart. Maar verderop de kaartenbrug begon het steeds meer te waaien en zelfs te stormen. Ook leek de langste kaart verderop steeds dunner te worden. 'Floep,' daar ging de zoon van het opperhoofd. En floep, daar gingen de anderen. Ze werden meegesleurd door een grote golf. Ze gingen richting de magische spiegel. De kaartenbrug leek geheel te zijn verdwenen. Alle vijf werden ze na een tijdje opgehesen door een vreemd schip. Ze waren half in slaap.

Het bleek een schip van koopmannen te zijn, met zwarte pakken die Middeleeuws leken. Ze hadden veel sieraden en aan tafeltjes werd er gedobbeld. 'Wie zijn jullie ?' bulderde een man met een zwarte, vreemdsoortige platte muts.

De elf nam het woord, en vertelde het verhaal. 'Zo zo,' bulderde de man. 'En wie heeft jullie toestemming gegeven hier zomaar te komen ?'

'Dit is mijn land,' sprak de elf. 'Dit is Bosbes gebied.'

'Mispoes,' bulderde de man. 'Dit is het gebied van de Rode Zee. Niemand komt hier zomaar langs of door.'

'Ik heb de Rode Zee zelf gemaakt,' sprak de elf, 'omdat mijn vrienden ernaar op zoek waren.'

'Heiligschennis !' bulderde de koopman. 'Niemand heeft de Rode Zee gemaakt. De Rode Zee heeft altijd al bestaan, zonder begin en zonder einde.'

'Wie bent u dan ?' vroeg de elf.

'Wij zijn koopmannen van het eeuwige boek,' sprak de man.

'Dat boek heb ik geschreven,' zei de prins.

'Ach onzin,' sprak de koopman. 'Dat boek heeft niemand geschreven. Dat boek heeft altijd bestaan, zonder begin en zonder einde.'

'U drijft handel met mijn boek ?' vroeg de prins. 'Dat boek is gratis.'

'Nu moet je ophouden,' sprak de koopman. 'Ten eerste is het jouw boek niet, en ten tweede is niets gratis.'

De prins keek uit het schip de zee in. Ergens zag hij de kaartenbrug verder gaan. 'Kunt u ons afzetten daar op die kaartenbrug ?' vroeg de prins terwijl hij op de brug wees.

De koopman keek de zee in naar de brug. 'Wel heb ik ooit,' sprak de koopman. 'Dat heb ik nou nog nooit gezien.' Het schip kwam steeds dichterbij de brug. De prins kon zien dat de eerste kaart de kaart van de koopvaarders van het eeuwige boek was. Het hele schip begon in een kaart te veranderen, en ze rolden helemaal naar de eerste kaart van de brug. De koopmannen waren weer in de kaart verdwenen.

De tweede kaart was de kaart van de Rode Zee, die de prins zelf ook al had. Toen ze erop gingen staan stonden ze ineens voor de magische spiegel. 'Welkom,' sprak de spiegel. 'U hebt de juiste kaarten bereikt om de poort tot de spiegelwereld van het eeuwige land van de indianen te openen. Komt u verder.'

Alle vijf konden ze zo door de magische poort lopen, als door een waterval, om zo in de spiegelwereld te komen. De prins keek zijn ogen uit. Er waren overal bessenstruiken in het warme, zelfs hete, zand. Weer zagen ze in de verte een zee, die zwart was. 'Dit moet de zwarte zee zijn die de spiegelwereld omgeeft,' sprak het opperhoofd. Zijn zoon knikte.

Ze liepen langs de bessenstruiken, en al snel kwamen ze op een zandpad door een klein bos terecht, wat benedenwaarts afliep naar de zwarte zee. 'Wat is dat voor een zee ?' vroeg de prins.

'Ik weet het niet,' sprak het opperhoofd. 'Ik heb alleen Madammeke Zig Zag er weleens over horen praten.'

'Wat zei ze erover ?' vroeg de prins.

'Ze noemde het alleen op, maar zei er verder niets over,' sprak het opperhoofd.

Vanuit de verte konden ze alweer een nieuwe kaartenbrug zien. Na een tijdje renden ze naar beneden naar de eerste kaart. De prins begon hardop te lezen :

Oh, elven kerk, ontwaak,
Van kaarten zult gij gebouwd worden,
Een kaarten kerk zult gij zijn,

Waarin allen zullen slapen,
Nooit meer ontwaken zullen zij,
Totdat zij het gouden draad zien.

Oh, gouden draad,
Lang bent gij en vol geheimen,
Waar zij u niet zien, slapen zij,
Sommigen een eeuwigheid,
Anderen een lange tijd,
U laat u niet gauw zien.

Hoog in de elvenkerk tikt gij,
In een verborgen toren, zeer hoog,
Ja, in de hoogste toren die nooit stopt met groeien bent gij,
In eindeloze hoogtes waar zij allen duizelen,
Wanneer zij u grijpen, vallen zij.

In een eindeloze put, zo diep,
Waar alleen u redden zal,
Oh gouden draad van eeuwigheden,
Bouw uw elven kerk snel,
Een standbeeld zullen zij van uw profeet maken,
Hij weet de weg wel.

Waarom zou iemand weten, anders dan uw profeet ?
Alleen hij weet,
En zijn standbeeld die eeuwig leeft.'

Langzaam begon de kaart om te draaien, waarop een gouden standbeeld was te zien van een elf. Dit was de kaart van de elvenprofeet van de gouden draad. 'Welkom in de spiegelwereld,' sprak de kaart. 'U bent aangekomen bij de zwarte zee, de eindeloze put.'

'Kunnen wij op u staan ?' vroeg de prins.

'Kun je niet lezen ?' snauwde de kaart. 'Je hebt de gouden draad nodig, anders zul je wegzakken in de eindeloze put, in de golven van de zwarte zee. En zij die naar het gouden draad grijpen zullen ook in de zwarte zee verdwijnen.'

'Hoe komen we bij de gouden draad ?' vroeg de prins.

'Door de elvenprofeet van de gouden draad,' sprak de kaart.

'Maar bent u dat niet ?' vroeg de prins.

'Nee,' snauwde de kaart. 'Ik ben slechts zijn kaart.'

'Ik dacht dat het juist om de kaarten ging,' sprak de prins.

'Helemaal niet,' sprak de kaart. 'Wie heeft je die onzin verteld ?'

'Laat maar zitten,' zei de prins.

'Zeg, wij laten hier helemaal niets zitten,' sprak de kaart. 'Zeg op. Wie heeft jou die onzin verteld ?'

'Het was aan de andere kant van de spiegel,' sprak de prins.

'Oh ja, dan begrijp ik het,' sprak de kaart. 'Dat is de spiegelkant, die draaien alles om. Grote leugenaars zijn het. Daar kun je beter niet meer komen. Je kunt hier beter blijven in de kerk.'

'Wat voor kerk ?' vroeg de prins.

'De elvenkerk, domoor !' snauwde de kaart.

'Ik zie geen elvenkerk,' sprak de prins.

'De zwarte zee is de elvenkerk. Het is gebouwd van kaarten,' sprak de kaart. 'Torens komen uit de zee bij nacht. Daar waar het gouden draad wacht.'

'Hoe komen we bij die torens ?' vroeg de prins.

'Je begrijpt het niet,' foeterde de kaart. 'Ik zei het je toch dat de elvenprofeet van de gouden draad de enige is die de weg weet ? Zonder hem ben je nergens.'

'Waar kunnen we de elvenprofeet van de gouden draad vinden ?' vroeg de prins.

'Dat weet alleen de elvenprofeet van de gouden draad waar hij is,' sprak de kaart.

De prins probeerde de tweede kaart te zien, maar het was nogal donker. Het begon al nacht te worden. Plotseling begonnen er torens uit de zee te komen. Het leek wel alsof ze een elvenkasteel of elvenkerk uit het water zagen oprijzen. De muren waren huizenhoog, en de torens groeiden maar door. 'De kerkdienst gaat beginnen,' sprak de kaart.

Over de brug kwam een elf aanlopen vanuit de elvenkerk op het water. De elf keek even opzij, en keek toen weer naar hen. Het was de elvenprofeet van de gouden draad.

'Goed dat jullie gekomen zijn,' sprak de elf. Hij had een goudkleurig pakje aan. Ook hij had lange puntige oren die scheef in de lucht stonden. Even sprak hij in een speciale elventaal tot de andere elf. Ook het opperhoofd kon de taal verstaan, en zei wat tegen hem in de speciale elventaal. Zijn zoon knikte, dus waarschijnlijk verstond hij het ook.

'Vrienden,' sprak de elvenprofeet van de gouden draad. 'Mag ik u welkom heten in de elvenkerk ? Deze kerk is gebaseerd op het eeuwige boek.'

'Dat heb ik geschreven,' sprak de prins.

'Dan ben jij dus wel een hele bijzondere gast,' glimlachte de elf. 'Het gouden draad wacht al op jullie.'

'Wie of wat is het gouden draad ?' vroeg de prins.

'Het gouden draad is de enige weg over de zwarte zee tot de spiegelwereld van het eeuwige land van de indianen,' sprak de elf.

'Wat is de boodschap van de elvenkerk ?' vroeg de prins.

'Dat alles een elvenkerk is, een school,' sprak de elf, 'waarin je alles mag terugvinden wat je verloren bent. In andere vormen zul je het terugvinden, vormen beter voor je.'

'Dus wij waren altijd al in de zwarte zee ?' vroeg de prins.

'Jullie komen van heel diep,' sprak de elf. 'Jullie zijn dichtbij de gouden draad gekomen.'

'Wat is er zo wonderlijk in die spiegelwereld van het eeuwige land van de indianen ?' vroeg de prins.

'Het is een spiegelwereld,' sprak de elf, 'dat wil zeggen dat de leugens weer omgedraaid zullen worden tot de waarheid. Je gaat daar zien hoe dingen echt zijn.'

'Waar is de gouden draad ?' vroeg de prins. Loop maar met mij mee,' sprak de elvenprofeet van de gouden draad. Met hem konden ze gewoon over de kaartenbrug lopen, recht de elvenkerk in. De elvenkerk was binnenin goed verlicht. Aan beide zijden was een brede trap die naarboven ging, naar een balkon. Boven het balkon zweefde een gouden draad.

'Wonderlijk,' sprak de prins. De gouden draad snelde op hen af, en begon hen te omhelzen. 'Welkom,' sprak de gouden draad. 'Ik zal jullie leiden over de zwarte zee tot de spiegelwereld van het eeuwige land van de indianen, waar alles is zoals het is. Jullie komen uit het rijk der leugens, uit de spiegelkant, waar alles omgedraaid is. Ik ben blij dat jullie eindelijk gekomen zijn. Ik heb zo lang op jullie gewacht.'

Het opperhoofd maakte een buiging, en toen ook zijn zoon. 'Wij voelen ons vereerd,' sprak het opperhoofd. Zijn zoon knikte hevig.

'Welkom, gasten,' sprak het gouden draad. 'Wij voelen ons ook vereerd. Jullie hebben een lange reis gemaakt om hier te komen. Goede keuze, goede keuze.'

'Zal ik jullie een verhaal vertellen ?' vroeg de gouden draad. Ze knikten.

'Er waren eens een prins en een prinses in het land van Eldemor. De prinses was van een andere familie, maar woonde bij de prins in. Haar ouders waren omgekomen. Het was een indiaanse prinses met een indiaanse vader en een moeder die half elf en half fee was. Zij was een halfling. Op een dag werd zij meegenomen door de draken. Een grote ontvoering. De halfling is innerlijk verdeeld. Ze heeft teveel rassen in haar. Ook had zij het bloed van trol en het bloed van de draak. Ze werd meegenomen tot duistere spiegelwerelden van draken en trollen. De rokende drakenspiegel werd haar heerser, haar meester. De rook van deze spiegel had haar bedwelmt, met zijn gif, en nam haar mee, door zijn spiegelrijk. Zij is de slavin van de drakenspiegel. Zij moest kinderen lokken tot deze spiegel, om zo nog meer slaven te maken : kinderslaven.'

'Maar dat is verschrikkelijk,' sprak de prins. 'Wat kunnen wij er aan doen ?'

'Vernietig de drakenspiegel,' sprak de gouden draad. 'Het is de heilige opdracht van alle elven van de elvenkerk en hun bondgenoten.'

De elvenprofeet van de gouden draad had een harpje in zijn hand genomen, en begon te spelen en te zingen :

'Oh drakenspiegel,

Jij venijnig kwaad,
Zoveel kinderen heb je gestolen,
En hen tot slaven gekroont,
Met veel liefde en gulle gaven,
Misleidde jij hun hart,
En maakte hen tot slaven

Jij ontnam hen de kennis zichzelf te vinden,
Jouw giftige rook had hen bedwelmt,
In jouw spiegelrijk raakten ze verstrikt,
Zoveel kinderslaven marcheren daar,
Hun lied zal hen nooit tot de morgen doen komen,
Overal waar het nacht is jagen de draken,
Opdat zij nooit meer zullen ontwaken

Oh elvenhart, aanschouw dit grote kwaad,
Twee sleutels zijn u gegeven,
Om de drakenspiegel te verbreken.'

'Wat zijn de twee sleutels om de drakenspiegel te verbreken, en waar bevindt zich de drakenspiegel ?' vroeg de prins.

'Overal in de lucht,' sprak de gouden draad. 'Als een draak is geworden tot drakenmeester, dan kan hij de gedaante van een ruiter aannemen, die dan de draken van de lagere rangen kunnen berijden. Het gaat altijd door. Altijd zijn ze op jacht. Het zit in de lucht als een gif, maar allen worden beheerst door de drakenspiegel. Je vraagt om de twee sleutels ? Voor nu moet dat geheim blijven, anders zou het universum ontploffen. De drakenspiegel houdt de kinderslaven opgesloten in zijn spiegelrijk, waar hij hen opgesloten houdt in boeken, in vreemde verhalen en gedichten.'

'Waar is de halfling prinses nu ?' vroeg de prins.

'Zij is nog steeds met de drakenspiegel,' sprak de gouden draad.

'Waar ?' vroeg de prins.

'In de lucht,' sprak de gouden draad. 'In feite in een kaart, in de kaart van de drakenspiegel.'

'Waar kunnen we die kaart vinden ?' vroeg de prins.

'Niemand weet het, onbekend,' sprak de gouden draad.

'Dus zij zit ook opgesloten in een vreemd verhaal of vreemd gedicht ?' vroeg de prins.

'Vraag niet door,' sprak de gouden draad. 'We moeten voorzichtig zijn. De drakenspiegel is erg gevoelig en weet wanneer men over hem praat.'

'Wij zouden graag naar de spiegelwereld van het eeuwige land van indianen gaan. Kunt u ons daar brengen ? Misschien dat we daar meer te weten komen.'

'Volg mij,' sprak de gouden draad. Ze liepen de elvenkerk uit, en de gouden draad begon zich heel lang uit te strekken, en maakte zich een beetje wijder, totdat er een pad ging over de zwarte zee. Direct begonnen ze aan hun reis over de zwarte zee, over het pad van de gouden draad. Urenlang

moesten ze lopen, totdat ze eindelijk land zagen. Dat moest de spiegelwereld van het eeuwige land van de indianen zijn.

'Droom ik nu ?' vroeg de prins. Aan de kust stonden lange rijen met feeen. Ze hadden lichte jurken aan van allerlei kleuren : blauw, roze, geel, oranje. En de kleuren waren van prachtig lichte tinten, bijna doorzichtig. Sommige feeen hadden parasolletjes. De prins zette het op een rennen, en de anderen renden achter hem aan. 'Wat geweldig !' riep de prins. Ze moesten nog wel even een tijdje rennen voordat ze eindelijk de kust hadden bereikt. Toen de prins een voet op het land zette voelde hij zich ineens heel vreemd. Even werd het roze voor zijn ogen. Een fee in een licht roze jurk van bijna doorzichtige tint kwam naar hen toe. 'Welkom in de spiegelwereld van het eeuwige land van de indianen,' sprak ze.

'Waar zijn de indianen ?' vroeg de prins.

'U bent prins Jagerstouw, de schrijver van het eeuwige boek ?' vroeg de fee.

De prins knikte. 'Komt u maar mee,' sprak de fee.

Ze werden geleid tot een klein stadje. Ergens was er een klein cafeetje waar de fee binnenging. 'Dat is Edward, de barkeeper,' zei ze terwijl ze wees op een man met een schort die stond af te wassen. De man wuifde even. Toen liep ze op een trap naar boven, terwijl de anderen haar volgden. Boven het cafe was een kamer waar een grote klok hing. Ze ging op een stoel zitten. 'Gaat u zitten,' sprak ze, terwijl ook de anderen een stoel namen.

'Onze magie komt voort uit de gevechten tussen dinosaurussen,' sprak ze. 'Verderop in het land wonen de elven waarvan hun magie voortkomt uit de oorlogen van de indianen. De indianen wonen nog veel dieper in het land. Zij leven in grote oorlog.'

'Met wie zijn ze in oorlog ?' vroeg de barbaar.

'Met andere stammen, met feeen en met elven,' sprak de fee. 'Vanuit die oorlogen winnen de elven hun magie. De indianen bewaken een groot geheim : de rokende drakenspiegel. De drakenspiegel doet hen tegen elkaar strijden. De drakenspiegel heeft hen behekst, zeg maar bedraakt. Zij zijn slaven van geweld. Wij hebben ze geprobeerd te helpen, maar tevergeefs. Ik ben blij dat jullie zijn gekomen.' Toen richtte ze zich tot de prins. 'Eens zonden we jou de trollensleutel, Vika, en het trollenorakel, Nahemsh. Heb je die bij je ?'

'Nee,' zei de prins. 'De trollensleutel had het trollenorakel vernietigd, omdat het trollenorakel te gevaarlijk zou zijn. Toen werd de trollensleutel vernietigd door de draken.'

'Oh, dus ze raakten met elkaar in gevecht ?' sprak de fee. 'De drakenspiegel moet hen tegen elkaar opgestookt hebben, zoals hij altijd doet. Maar ze zijn niet verdwenen, prins Jagerstouw. De kaarten van de trollensleutel en het trollenorakel zitten nog steeds in je geheugen. Het zijn geheugenkaarten, en die zijn magisch. Ook het trollenorakel is een sleutel, de tweede sleutel. Dit was de sleutel van de indianen, die door de trollen werd gestolen en werd omgesmolten tot het orakel van trol, om de toekomst mee te voorspellen. De kaart van de sleutel van de indianen bestaat nog steeds in het verleden, maar niet in jouw geheugen, prins Jagerstouw, maar in mijn geheugen. Ik kan me de verschrikkelijke dag dat die sleutel gestolen werd nog goed herinneren, als de dag van gisteren. Het is nog steeds diep in mijn geheugen gegrift. Sindsdien werden de indianen slaven van de drakenspiegel, de slaven van geweld, door de stokerijen van de spiegel. Geef mij de kaart van het trollen orakel, zodat mijn kaart van de sleutel van de indianen geactiveerd kan worden.'

'Hoe kan ik de kaart geven ?' vroeg de prins.

'Het zit in je geheugen,' sprak de fee. 'Haal het uit je geheugen en geef het aan mij ?'

'Ja, maar hoe ?' vroeg de prins.

'Laat maar, ik doe het zelf wel,' sprak de fee. 'Denk nu heel sterk aan de herinneringen die je hebt van het trollen orakel.'

De prins begon diep te denken, en terug te gaan in zijn geheugen naar de momenten van het trollen orakel.

'Goedzo,' zei de fee. Even legde ze haar hand op zijn hart. 'De kaart is nu met mij,' zei de fee. 'De kaart van de sleutel van de indianen wordt nu geactiveerd. In combinatie met de kaart van de trollensleutel die jij draagt is de indianen sleutel nu sterk genoeg, omdat de trollensleutel de kaart van de sleutel van de indianen zo kan vertragen dat de drakenspiegel het niet meer weg kan stelen.'

De prins voelde zichzelf steeds meer wegglijden in zichzelf, in een grote diepte. Hij bevond zich plotseling op de golven van de zwarte zee die traag bewogen. Steeds trager begonnen ze te bewegen, totdat hij er dwars doorheen kon kijken. Hij bevond zich in de drakenspiegel, en een tovenaar bezweerde de spiegel. Het was de grote tovenaar van de drakenspiegel. 'Ik bestrijd je door het eeuwige boek !' riep de prins tot de tovenaar. 'Laat me los uit deze spiegel !' Er stond een grote druk op de spiegel, en plotseling explodeerde het.' De prins stond nu oog in oog met de tovenaar die de drakenspiegel had gemaakt.

'Laat me je pakken, jongetje !' krijste de tovenaar. 'Niemand ontsnapt zomaar uit de drakenspiegel !' De prins zette het op een rennen. Snel rende hij door een paars gordijn een gang op. De gang eindigde bij een trap die hij toen oprende. 'Ik krijg je wel !' krijste de tovenaar.

Het werd zwart voor de ogen van de prins. Hij viel in een diepe, duistere put, en merkte toen dat hij zich weer bevond op de golven van de zwarte zee. Steeds trager gingen de golven. Dit was zware magie. Toen de golven bijna stilstonden zag hij de kerker waar de halfling prinses inzat, dwars door de golven heen. Hij merkte dat hij er dwars doorheen kon rennen. Hij rende door tot aan de tralies, waar het slot zat met twee gleuven. 'Vlug,' sprak de stem van de fee in zijn hoofd. 'Je hebt twee kaarten : de trollensleutel en de sleutel van de indianen. Steek ze in het slot.' De prins keek naar zijn hand waarin de twee kaarten lagen, en stopte ze in de twee gleuven van het slot. Plotseling ging het slot open. De prins greep de hand van de halfling prinses, en rende met haar de kerker uit. Maar daar was de tovenaar weer met twee wilde honden die hen aanvlogen. Weer werd de prins zwart voor zijn ogen. Hij voelde zich nog dieper wegglijden. Alle herinneringen vlogen langs hem heen als kaarten in een cirkel. Hij greep de kaart van het elvenzout, maar voelde zich alleen maar zieker worden. Al zijn vrienden waren ook kaarten. Hij greep de kaarten van zijn vrienden en werd warm van binnen. 'Zij helpen je,' sprak de fee. Zij was in het midden van de kaarten cirkel. Van haar toverstafje droop glimmend spul. 'Ik geef je twee nieuwe kaarten, prins,' sprak de fee. Hij kreeg de kaart van de halfling prinses en de kaart van de tovenaar van de drakenspiegel. Plotseling zag hij zijn verwonde hart, wat helemaal zwart was gekleurd. De twee wonden van zijn hart veranderden in gleuven. 'Vlug,' sprak de fee, 'steek de twee nieuwe kaarten in de gleuven van je hart.' De prins deed het meteen. De tovenaar lag op de grond. Rook kwam uit de spiegel, die als een glazen bol was op een standaard. Er zat groen sap in wat soms paars kleurde.

'Geef mij die kaarten,' kreunde de tovenaar. De prins liep naar de tovenaar toe, en keek in de zakken van de tovenaar, waar hij een stapeltje kaarten weggriste. 'Nee !' krijste de tovenaar. 'Geef mijn kaarten terug ! Dat zijn mijn kaarten !'

Ook de kaarten van prinses Mekka en prinses Regenboog waren in het stapeltje.

De prins zuchtte, en liep door een gordijn een grote gang op die naar een grote trap naar beneden leidde. Snel was de prins buiten het kasteel in de dooiende sneeuw. Nog één keer keek de prins om naar het kasteel, en liep toen in trage pas de kasteel tuin uit. Hij sloot het hek achter zich, en liep richting het dichtstbijzijnde dorp.

Hij kende hier niemand. Hij kende dit dorp niet. Hij klopte aan bij de eerste de beste deur. Een vrouw deed open, en hij begon direct zijn verhaal te vertellen. De vrouw sloeg een arm om hem heen, en gaf hem wat te drinken. Tot diep in de nacht waren ze in gesprek. Ze had wel een kamer voor de prins waar hij kon overnachten. Toen hij sliep ging ze naar het dorpsbestuur om mee te delen wat hij had gezegd. Ze wilden hem weer verkopen aan de tovenaar. Gewapend ging het dorpsbestuur naar het huisje van de prins, waar ze hem arresteerden. De tovenaar kon hem weer terugkopen.

Maar de drakenspiegel was niet meer wat het geweest was. En de tovenaar begon tekenen van veroudering te vertonen, van zware vergeetachtigheid en dementie. De tovenaar was niet meer wie hij geweest was, en wist op een gegeven moment niet meer wie hij was. Ook dacht hij dat het kasteel een herberg was waar hij verbleef, en dat de prins de herbergier was. Zo kwam het kasteel steeds meer in handen van de prins. Op een dag vertrok de zwaar demente tovenaar weer van het kasteel, omdat hij dacht dat hij slechts op doorreis was.

'Ik zag de Sep, en ik dacht aan jou. Zo'n magische rivier, waaraan mijn kasteel staat. Het rivier-gebied is weer vrij van draken, maar ja, het is wel in de spiegel wereld. Ik blijf aan twee kanten, zoals dromen en ontwaken. Het kwaad kunnen we niet helemaal wegdenken, want we moeten nog wel wat te puzzelen hebben, en het zet ons aan om creatief te zijn. Ik ben blij met mijn kasteel. Elke dag ontdek ik weer nieuwe dingen. Wat komen we van diep, hè ?

Liefs,
Prins Jagerstouw'

'Saturnus, met je paarse sneeuw,
Die diepe slaap brengt telkens weer,
Twee sterren in een steen,
Met Sirius vormde jij een grote zee,
De zee van Eldemor, waarop de aarde slaapt,
De sluier van paarse sneeuw die over haar waakt,
De ruiter van Eldemor rijdt over de golven,
Totdat het roze ons allemaal doet ontwaken,
In de droom van de rode zee,
Golf na golf komt het,
Slag na slag,
Omdat het rode op ons wacht.'

Einde

De Wonderlijke Boekenkamer van Oom Benno

Hoofdstuk 1. Ziek

Bertram had een boze tante en een vreemde oom. Ze hielden hem opgesloten in een kamer. Hij was altijd ziek, en mocht nooit uit zijn kamer. Zijn eten werd gebracht. Hij mocht dus ook niet naar buiten, maar dat zou hij waarschijnlijk ook niet kunnen, omdat hij te ziek was. Zijn boze tante was de rode heks, en zijn vreemde oom was oom Benno, ook een heks, en een tovenaar. Oom Benno had een boekenkamer, waar een heleboel indianenboeken stonden. Ook stonden er vele andere soorten boeken. Bertram mocht daar beslist niet komen. De goudvis had gezegd dat Bertram in de boeken de sleutel tot zijn ontsnapping kon vinden.

Op een nacht hadden zijn oom en tante vergeten zijn deur op slot te doen. Stilletjes sloop Bertram uit zijn kamer, en liep de boekenkamer van oom Benno in. Bertram griste direct een indianenboek uit de boekenkast. En toen nog één, en toen nog één, en liep toen snel naar zijn kamer terug. 'Ik moet ze maar goed verborgen houden,' zei Bertram tegen zichzelf, en ze alleen 's nachts lezen wanneer oom en tante slapen. Het was nu 's nachts, dus Bertram begon direct te lezen.

'Horlepiep,' zei Bertram tegen zichzelf, wat gebeurt er nu ? Ik ben helemaal duizelig ineens. Hij had de eerste bladzijde van een indianenboek opengeslagen, en werd helemaal warm van binnen. De letters duizelden voor zijn ogen. 'Hoofdstuk één,' las hij. Hij hoorde wat schoten, en gezwiep van een zweep of lasso. 'Hoe kan dat ?' vroeg hij zichzelf af. Hij klapte het boek dicht, maar het was al te laat. Toen hij opkeek was hij in een woestijn, een prairie. Twee cowboys stonden voor hem. 'Wat moet dat daar ?' zeiden ze. Toen ineens vielen ze beiden naar voren. Ze hadden pijlen in hun rug. Een groep indianen op paarden namen Bertram mee. In het kamp merkte Bertram dat hij vastgebonden was. Ze brachten hem naar een paal, waar hij aan vastgemaakt werd.

'Laat me los,' zei Bertram. 'Ik ben ziek.'

'Niks mee te maken,' zeiden de indianen.

'Wat gaan jullie met me doen ?' vroeg Bertram.

'Dat zul je nog wel zien,' zeiden ze.

Bertram begon te huilen. Zijn oom en tante hadden hem weleens verteld wat indianen met hun gevangenen doen. Hij werd naar een grote ketel gebracht even later. 'Gaan jullie me opeten ?' huilde Bertram. 'Nee,' zeiden de indianen. 'Jij moet vanaf nu voor ons koken.'

'Maar ik ben daar veel te ziek voor,' zei Bertram.

'Geeft niks,' zeiden de indianen. 'Daar krijg je wel medicijnen voor.'

Ze gaven hem een soort groene dropjes, en na een tijdje voelde Bertram zich veel beter.

'Ik houd van jullie,' zei Bertram. 'Jullie hebben mij beter gemaakt.'

'Niks mee te maken,' zeiden de indianen boos. 'Je bent onze slaaf. Je moet voor ons koken nu.'

'Mij best,' zei Bertram, die allang blij was dat ze hem beter hadden gemaakt. 'Ik ben niet ziek meer !' juichte Bertram. 'Stil houden, jongen,' zei een wat oudere indiaanse vrouw.

Bertram roerde in de pan. Hij moest soep maken. Ze legden hem uit wat hij allemaal in de pan moest stoppen. Veel kruiden, en allerlei soorten vruchtjes.

De soep was heel lekker.
'Nu moet je weer terug,' zeiden de indianen.

'Wat ?' zei Bertram teleurgesteld. 'Ik wil niet meer terug naar mijn oom en tante. Ze houden me opgesloten.

'Niets mee te maken,' zeiden de indianen. 'We kunnen je hier niet houden.'

'Alsjeblieft,' smeekte Bertram, 'ik zal alles doen wat jullie willen.'

'Nee, jongen,' zei een wat oudere indiaanse vrouw. 'Je moet terug.'

Bertram begon te huilen. Trillend hield hij het boek in zijn handen, en merkte dat hij weer in zijn kamer was. Ook voelde hij zich weer ziek.

Hoofdstuk 2. De Ontsnapping

Bertram legde de boeken diep onder zijn bed, onder een doek, en ging slapen. De volgende ochtend was hij vroeg wakker. Hij deed de gordijnen open, maar het licht deed zoveel pijn aan zijn ogen dat hij de gordijnen weer dichtdeed. Oom en tante sliepen nog, dus hij kon nog wel even lezen. Hij pakte een ander indianenboek, sloeg het open, en werd weer duizelig. Snel bevond hij zich in een oerwoud. Wilde beesten stonden om hem heen. Hij was wel even bang. Toen hoorde hij schoten. De beesten renden weg, en al snel stond er een indiaan met een geweer voor hem.

'Meekomen jij,' zei de indiaan. Bertram liep mee met de indiaan, die hem naar het kamp bracht. Langs het kamp was een rivier met bootjes. 'Jij bent wie ?' vroeg de indiaan.

'Bertram,' zei hij.

'Oh, ah,' zei de indiaan. 'Ik jouw naam leuk vinden.'

'Haha,' zei Bertram.

'Waarom jongen zij hier zijn ?' vroeg de indiaan.

Toen legde Bertram het uit aan de indiaan. De indiaan begreep er niets van.

'Ik heb tent voor jou,' zei de indiaan. Hij nam Bertram mee naar een lege indianentent. 'Hier mag jij wonen,' zei de indiaan.

'Dank je wel,' zei Bertram. 'Dat is erg aardig van u.'

's Nachts komen de spoken,' zei de indiaan, 'de geesten van de voorouders.'

'Gezellig,' zei Bertram.

'Nee,' zei de indiaan. 'Niet gezellig. Zij zijn boos, altijd boos.'

'En ik ben altijd ziek,' zei Bertram.

'Ik zal de spoken zeggen, jij altijd ziek zijn,' zei de indiaan.
Maar ineens werd hij wild door mekaar geschud door oom Benno. 'Heb jij aan mijn indianen-boeken gezeten ?' brult oom Benno woest.

'Waar komt die man vandaan ?' vraagt de indiaan.

'Heb ik jou iets gevraagd, snotaap ?' brult oom Benno. 'Die jongen moet meekomen, meekomen, nu !'

De indiaan grijpt zijn hakbijl en slaat oom Benno tegen de grond met de achterkant. 'Zo, wijsneus,' zegt de indiaan. 'Jij mij niet beledigen, en van jongen afblijven.' Oom Benno wordt vastgebonden, en naar een paal gesleept. 'Ziezo, die kan mij niet meer beledigen,' zei de indiaan.

Toen de andere indianen terugkwamen vroegen ze : 'Wat moet die dikke man hier ?'

'Het is een uilskuiken,' zei de indiaan. 'Hij heeft ons beledigd, en wilde jongen roven.'

'Wie is die jongen ?' vroegen ze.

'Goed kijken,' zei de indiaan. 'Hij is de machtige zonnedroom.'

De indianen bogen voor Bertram neer. Bertram begon te lachen.

'Maak me onmiddellijk los, Bertram !' brulde oom Benno.

Maar Bertram deed net alsof hij hem niet hoorde. Toen het nacht geworden was brulde oom Benno de hele nacht door. De volgende dag zei de indiaan dat hij naar het gevangenen-kamp moest. 'Wat gaan jullie met hem doen ?' vroeg Bertram.

'Weten we nog niet,' zei de indiaan. Toen oom Benno was afgevoerd was het eindelijk rustig.

Een paar dagen later moest Bertram weer terug. Ze konden hem niet te lang houden. Maar ze wilden oom Benno houden, ook om Bertram een dienst te bewijzen. Bertram knipperde even met

zijn ogen, en was weer in zijn eigen kamer, starende naar het boek. Bertram had honger, maar er was geen voedsel op zijn kamer. Hij liep naar de deur en merkte dat de deur nog steeds open was. Tante riep hem. 'Bertram, kom naar mijn slaapkamer. Ik ben ziek, en ik weet niet waar je oom is.'

Bertram liep direct haar kamer binnen. Het was hier heel donker. Hij zag tante in haar bed liggen. 'Jongen, je bent nu oud genoeg geworden om je kamer uit te kunnen,' zei tante. 'Kun je wat voor je oude tante klaarmaken. Ik voel me zo zwak.'

'Natuurlijk tante,' zei Bertram.

Hij liep naar beneden de keuken in, en maakte wat brood voor haar met thee en een eitje. Toen bracht hij het boven. 'Dank je wel, lieverd,' zei tante. 'Ga nu maar doen waar je zin in hebt.'

Bertram ging direct naar de boekenkamer. De goudvis had gelijk gehad. In de boeken had hij de sleutel tot zijn ontsnapping gevonden.

Het Mysterie van het IJskasteel

Berend en Albert hadden een vader die opgesloten was in een ijskasteel. Tante Audam kwam met de kinderen praten die helemaal overstuur waren. Ze hadden geen moeder meer, dus ze wisten niet waar ze naar toe moesten. Tante Audam zou ze mee nemen naar een andere tante die wel raad met hen zou weten. Ook zou deze tante kunnen helpen in de bevrijding van hun vader. Tante Jokebed woonde een paar stadjes verder. Tante Jokebed had een zoontje genaamd David. Ze zouden zolang bij David op de kamer slapen. Gelukkig had David een hele grote kamer. Tante Jokebed kende het ijskasteel wel. Haar man werd daar vroeger ook gevangen gehouden. Het had allemaal te maken met een hertog die in een kat kon veranderen. Hertog Kat-Anders heette die. Zijn echte naam was Paulus Wilhelmus de Vijfde. De vader van Berend en Albert had een aantal rekeningen niet betaald, en er waren nog wel meer dingen aan de hand. Hertog Kat-Anders zou voor de staat werken. Het was allemaal nog wel een geheimzinnige bedoeling. Vader was opeens verdwenen, en de ochtend erna vonden de kinderen een brief op de deurmat, waarop geschreven stond dat hun vader nu was opgesloten in het ijskasteel. Dat was een ijskoude, zeer gevreesde, oude gevangenis. De kinderen misten hun vader heel erg.

Tante Katrien had zich het lot van de kinderen ook erg aangetrokken, en kwam de kinderen vaak opzoeken. Soms nam ze de kinderen weleens mee naar haar huis, om te logeren. De tantes waren ervan overtuigd dat hertog Kat-Anders helemaal niet voor de staat werkte, maar dat het een misdaads-organisatie was. Vaak kwam de familie bij elkaar om te overleggen wat ze konden doen. Oom Joep zou weleens een kijkje willen nemen daar bij het ijskasteel, maar sommige tantes waren

het daar niet mee eens. Het zou veel te gevaarlijk zijn. Maar oom Joep wilde zich niet laten kennen, en besloot er toch naartoe te gaan. Het ging immers om zijn broer.

Oom Joep ging er met de auto naartoe, maar werd door twee ridderachtige figuren met speren tegengehouden. 'Halt,' zei één van de ridders. 'U komt er niet doorheen. Verboden terrein.'

'Ik wil weten wat jullie met mijn broer hebben gedaan,' zei oom Joep.

'Dat kunnen we niet achterhalen,' zeiden de ridders. 'Er zijn hier teveel gevangenen om daaraan te beginnen.'

'Maar ik heb er recht op,' zei oom Joep. Maar de ridders wilden hem niet antwoorden. 'Mijnheer,' zei één van de ridders, 'nu moet u maken dat u hier wegkomt, anders laten wij u arresteren vanwege betreding van verboden terrein, en wegens het onnodig lastigvallen van het gezag.'

Oom Joep maakte rechtsomkeerds, en lichtte de familie in. Tante Jokebed kende iemand genaamd meester Ed Konijn, een meester in de rechten. Misschien dat die wel wat zou kunnen betekenen. Oom Joep wilde daar wel naartoe gaan samen met Berend en Albert. Het was al laat, maar door een telefoontje kon er nog wel wat geregeld worden, en ze waren meer dan van harte welkom. Meester Ed Konijn woonde diep in het bos. Toen ze aanklopten bij zijn huis deed een lange, gezette man met een lichte huidziekte de deur los. 'Komt u verder,' zei Ed. Even later zaten ze in een sjieke woonkamer met veel schilderijen en antieke meubels. Ook hingen er veel jacht-trofeeen aan de muur. De kinderen begonnen hun verhaal te vertellen over wat er met hun vader gebeurt was, en oom Joep sprak zijn vermoeden uit dat het om een misdaad ging.

'Dat is allemaal waar,' zei Ed Konijn. 'Het ijskasteel is het gevangenis-terrein van een misdaads-organisatie, maar niemand kan daar iets aan doen, zelfs de staat niet.'

'Maar waarom niet ?' vroeg oom Joep.

'Omdat ze te sterk zijn,' zei Ed Konijn.

'Leuke achternaam heeft u trouwens,' zei oom Joep.

'Dank u,' zei Ed Konijn.

'Kunt u ons helpen ?' vroeg oom Joep.

'Luister,' zei Ed Konijn, 'we lopen nu al gevaar omdat we hierover praten. We kunnen beter stoppen.'

'Ja, maar het gaat om mijn broer,' zei oom Joep, 'en zijn kinderen hier hebben hun vader nodig, vooral sinds hun moeder er niet meer is. Is er dan echt helemaal niets wat u voor ons zou kunnen betekenen ?'

'Ik vrees van niet,' zei Ed Konijn. 'En dat vind ik al vreselijk op zichzelf. Ik had u graag willen helpen.'

'U bent meester in de rechten,' zei oom Joep. 'U moet daar wel iets mee kunnen doen. We zijn hier toch niet voor niets gekomen ?'

'Dat is waar,' zei Ed Konijn. 'Hmm..., laat me eens zien. U zou met de hertog zelf kunnen praten. Ik

geloof dat hij nogal wispelturig is. Hij heeft een vreemde soort van ziekte. Hij is een weerkat, wat betekent dat hij in een kat kan veranderen. Het heeft natuurlijk wel een risico, maar ik heb de indruk dat u dat risico wel wilt nemen.'

'Waar kunnen we de hertog spreken ?' vroeg oom Joep.

'Goede vraag,' zei Ed Konijn. 'Achter het ijskasteel is zijn huis. Het is daar niet pluis, dat kan ik u wel vertellen. Het spookt daar.'

'Bent u er weleens geweest ?' vroeg oom Joep. Het hoofd van Ed Konijn begon verschrikkelijk rood te worden. 'Eh..., daar kan ik niet over praten,' stamelde hij.

'Ach, toe nou, kom op,' zei oom Joep.

'Het is mij verboden daarover te praten. Beroeps-geheim,' zei Ed Konijn.

'En hoe kom ik daar ?' vroeg oom Joep. 'Want het ijskasteel is streng bewaakt.'

Ed Konijn stopte zijn hand in zijn zak en haalde er een kaartje uit. 'Zie, hier staat zijn telefoon-nummer op.'

Oom Joep nam het kaartje aan. De kinderen bleven die nacht bij oom Joep slapen. De volgende ochtend belde oom Joep op naar de hertog. Hij kreeg een bediende aan de lijn. 'Kom maar langs om acht uur vanavond,' zei de bediende, 'maar zorg er voor dat u niet langs het ijskasteel gaat. U moet regelrecht naar het huis van de hertog komen, aan de achterkant van het ijskasteel. Even werd er uitgelegd hoe te rijden, en toen wist oom Joep genoeg. Weer zouden de kinderen met hem meegaan.

Om precies acht uur kwamen ze aan bij het huis van de hertog. Er kwam al direct een bediende aanrennen. 'Waar heeft u uw koffers ?' vroeg de bediende.

'Wij hebben geen koffers bij ons,' zei oom Joep.

'Dus u komt niet logeren ?' vroeg de bediende.

'Nee, wij komen niet logeren,' zei oom Joep.

'Komt u maar mee,' zei de bediende ineens heel nors. Ze kwamen binnen in een grote hal. Aan de rechterkant was een lange gang. 'Loop deze hele gang uit, en klop dan vier keer op de deur aan het einde van de gang. De hertog verwacht u daar,' zei de bediende.

In de gang hingen veel schilderijen, en er stonden veel kastjes aan de zijkanten. Even bonkte het hart in de keel van oom Joep. Hij hoopte maar dat de hertog hem kon helpen. Bij de grote deur aangekomen klopte hij vier keer aan. Direct werd de deur opengemaakt, en een kleine man deed open. 'Geweldig, jullie zijn er al,' zei de man. 'Gaat u maar zitten.'

De kinderen vertelden hun verhaal, en daarna sprak oom Joep zijn vermoeden uit dat het om een misdaad ging.

'Ach welnee,' zei de hertog. 'Ik heb de papieren van deze man doorgekeken, van jullie vader, en uw broer, en deze mijnheer heeft nogal veel op zijn geweten, dus zijn gevangenneming is volkomen terecht. Ik kan daar verder weinig aan doen, sorry dat ik het moet zeggen.'

'Oh, en wat heeft hij dan gedaan ?' vroeg oom Joep, terwijl ook de kinderen begonnen te protesteren.

'Luister goed,' zei de hertog. 'Ik kan en mag daar verder niets over zeggen. De raad heeft beslist. Het is tegen de wet om daar zomaar vrij over te praten. U zou daar zelf ook gevaar mee kunnen lopen.'

'Ja, ja,' zei oom Joep. 'U kunt me nog meer vertellen. Wij als naaste familie hebben er recht op te weten wat er is gebeurd, en waarom hij opgesloten zit.'

'Rustig aan,' zei de hertog. 'Ik waarschuw u. U vraagt teveel. Ik ben niet gemachtigd hierover te spreken.'

'En wie heeft u de opdracht gegeven daarover te zwijgen ?' vroeg oom Joep die bijna stond te koken.

'Kan en mag ik u niet vertellen,' zei de hertog zuur.

'Het is alsof ik met mijn hoofd tegen een muur aanloop,' zei oom Joep.

'Het spijt me bijzonder,' zei de hertog.

'Is het waar dat u in een kat kan veranderen ?' vroeg Berend.

De hertog werd ineens erg zenuwachtig. 'Allemaal sprookjes,' zei hij. Hij begon op zijn horloge te kijken. 'Ik vind dat u nu moet gaan, u kunt beter gaan. Deze zaak is afgerond.'

'Afgerond ?' vroeg oom Joep woedend. 'We zijn hier geen steek wijzer geworden.'

'U kunt gaan,' zei de hertog, terwijl hij een wimpelend gebaar met zijn handen maakte.

'Ik laat het er hier niet bij zitten,' zei oom Joep, terwijl hij opstond.

'Dat kunt u beter wel doen,' zei de hertog, 'anders kunt u in grote problemen komen.'

'En wat voor problemen dan wel ?' vroeg oom Joep.

Maar de hertog zweeg.

De familie werd weer ingelicht, en ze zouden opnieuw bij elkaar komen. 'Nou,' zei tante Katrien, 'daar schieten we niet erg veel mee op.'

Ook was er een andere oom bijgekomen : oom Bakus. Oom Bakus zei dat de hertog zoveel macht had, omdat het land oorspronkelijk van zijn voorouders was. Zijn voorouders van ver terug bezaten het land, nog voordat er een staat bestond. Oom Bakus zei ook dat de hertog die macht samen met zijn broer had geerfd, hertog Hernandes. Volgens oom Bakus zou hertog Hernandes veel kunnen betekenen. Oom Bakus wist wel waar die hertog woonde, en wilde er wel met oom Joep en de kinderen naartoe. Ook tante Katrien wilde wel mee. Ze was van mening dat wanneer er meerdere familie-leden zouden meegaan, ze meer kans van slagen hadden. Oom Bakus belde op, en ze konden direct komen. Het was niet zo lang rijden. Het huis van hertog Hernandes was vele malen groter dan het huis van hertog Kat-Anders. Hertog Hernandes wachtte hen al op bij de deur. 'Zo, kom binnen,' zei hij met een warme, hartelijke stem. 'Kan ik jullie iets te drinken aanbieden ?' Even later zaten ze in een grote zaal, aan een soort eet-tafel. Ze kregen allerlei toetjes voorgeschoteld, en

andere hapjes. 'Zo zo,' zei oom Bakus. 'Hier is veel werk aan besteed.'

'Ja,' zei hertog Hernandes. 'Jullie zijn namelijk mijn speciale gasten. Ziet u, die krijg ik hier bijna nooit. Alles gaat via mijn broer, Paulus Wilhelmus de Vijfde, oftewel hertog Kat-Anders. Ik ben wat minder bekend, denk ik. Ik ben blij dat jullie er zijn. Blijven jullie ook logeren ?'

'Dat is erg aardig van u aangeboden,' zei oom Bakus, 'maar we zijn hier eigenlijk alleen maar om wat belangrijke dingen te bespreken.'

'Nou ja, dat kan toch ook uitstekend alle dagen dat u hier verblijft ?' sprak hertog Hernandes. De kinderen begonnen weer als eerste hun verhaal te vertellen, en ze lieten duidelijk blijken hoe erg ze hun vader misten. Oom Bakus, tante Katrien en oom Joep spraken daarna hun vermoeden uit dat het om een misdaad ging. Ook vertelde oom Joep hoe hertog Kat-Anders reageerde. 'Ach ja, dat is typisch mijn broer,' zei hertog Hernandes. 'Ik snap jullie verhaal volkomen.' Toen bladerde de hertog wat papieren door. 'Ik zie hier duidelijk de reden waarom jullie familie-lid is opgepakt en gevangen gezet. Deze man heeft namelijk een gevaarlijke ziekte die maakt dat hij soms in een kat veranderd. Hebben jullie daar ooit iets van gemerkt ?'

'Niets !' protesteerde tante Katrien. 'Mijn broer zou zoiets nooit doen. Daar is hij helemaal het type niet voor, en dit is allemaal erg belachelijk. Te meer omdat deze verhalen juist over uw broer, hertog Kat-Anders, de ronde gaan.'

'Eh, dat moet een vergissing zijn,' zei hertog Hernandes ineens heel snibbig. 'En ik stel het niet op prijs dat u zo over mijn broer praat.'

'Daar kunnen wij verder niets aan doen dat die verhalen over uw broer de ronde gaan,' zei tante Katrien.

'Maar u hoeft dat niet op te noemen,' zei hertog Hernandes. 'Het is niet netjes. En u doet daar dan mee aan de verspreiding van verschrikkelijke leugens en ophitserij.'

'Zeg kom,' bulderde tante Katrien. 'Zo zijn we niet getrouwd, hè. U beschuldigt mijn broer ervan deze ziekte te hebben.'

'Het zijn de feiten, mevrouw,' sprak de hertog ineens kalm. 'Het is bij hem waargenomen, en daar kunnen u en ik of wie dan ook niets aan doen.'

'Pardon ?' zei tante Katrien. 'Zeg, pardon ? Daar hebben wij nooit iets van meegekregen, en dat hebben wij ook nooit gesignaleerd. Nogmaals is dat bij uw broer geconstateerd, niet bij mijn broer. U moet hier de dingen niet door elkaar halen.'

'Shhhh...' fluisterde de hertog hard. 'Daar moet u dus absoluut niet over spreken. Daar kan u voor worden opgepakt. Ik zal maar oppassen als ik u was. De muren hebben hier oren.'

'Ja, inderdaad,' zei tante Katrien spottend. 'En al zou mijn broer die ziekte hebben. Waarom zou hij daarvoor de gevangenis inmoeten ?'

'Omdat hij gevaarlijk is,' zei de hertog indringend. 'Zeer gevaarlijk. Weer-katten zijn een ernstig probleem wat niet onderschat mag worden. Het kan op een vervelend moment totaal verkeerd gaan, ziet u.'

'Nee, dat zie ik niet,' zei tante Katrien. 'Het is een schande dat u zo over mijn broer praat. U toont

ons niet eens een degelijk bewijs.'

'Verdraaid,' zei de hertog. 'Al het bewijs is in deze documenten. Daaraan te twijfelen, en bovenal het officiele bewijs tegen te spreken, kan u in de problemen brengen. Ik kan u laten arresteren voor het tegenspreken van het gezag.'

'Belachelijk,' zei tante Katrien.

'In ieder geval,' zei de hertog. 'Uw familie-lid is in zo'n ernstige toestand dat ijs-verblijf noodzakelijk is, ver weg van zijn sociale omgeving. Het is voor uw bescherming. En praat ook verder niet over zijn ziekte, want de ziekte wordt namelijk in anderen opgewekt door er over te praten. Het is hyper-besmettelijk en heeft een psychische oorsprong. Weet waar u aan begint. Elk geval van weer-katterigheid moet zo snel mogelijk uit de samenleving verwijderd worden, en het hele geval moet in de doofpot gestopt worden, zodat het zich niet kan verspreiden. Kan ik rekenen op uw medewerking ?'

'Ik denk niet dat we hier ook maar een stap verder komen,' zei tante Katrien.

'En blijft u nog logeren ?' vroeg de hertog ineens enthousiast.

'Geen denken aan,' zei tante Katrien.

'We blijven wèl logeren,' zei oom Bakus. 'Katrien, jij mag naar huis, maar wij moeten dit gewoon doen. We hebben geen andere oplossing.'

'Zeer goed,' glimlachte de hertog.

'Nee, dan blijf ik ook wel,' zei tante Katrien.

Ze kregen allemaal hun eigen kamer. Midden in de nacht sloop oom Bakus naar tante Katrien. Ook maakte hij oom Joep wakker. Hij wilde op onderzoek uit in het huis van hertog Hernandes. In de eetzaal had de hertog de documenten laten liggen. Oom Bakus begon direct te bladeren en te lezen. Inderdaad stond er dat hun broer een ernstige ziekte had. Deze ziekte was vastgesteld door professor Eindricht. Ook gingen ze nog even op andere plaatsen zoeken, maar ze vonden niets wat ze konden gebruiken. De volgende ochtend werden ze vroeg wakker gemaakt door bedienden. De bedienden zeiden dat ze zo snel mogelijk moesten vertrekken. Er was verder geen uitleg bij, maar niemand had nog zin om ook maar iets langer te blijven.

'Wat een vreemd heerschap was dat,' zei tante Katrien in de auto. 'Ja, nog wel erger dan zijn broer,' zei oom Joep.

'En dat terwijl het allemaal zo goed begon,' zei oom Bakus.

'Ach, schijn bedriegt,' zei tante Katrien. 'En wie is nu die professor Eindricht ? Want hij moet hier allemaal veel meer over weten.'

Toen ze even later de kinderen bij tante Jokebed afzetten, en het haar vertelden, zei ze dat professor Eindricht in het ijskasteel werkte. Hij zou ook veel te maken hebben gehad met het oppakken van haar man. Daar werd ook altijd heel geheimzinnig over gedaan. Tante Jokebed wilde daar nooit over praten. En toen ze het haar weer vroegen wat er nu precies met haar man aan de hand was, zei ze dat ze daar niet over mocht praten. 'Begin jij nu ook al,' zei tante Katrien.

'Vreemd,' zei oom Bakus. 'In ieder geval wil ik graag met die professor Eindricht praten.'

'Doe het niet !' zei tante Jokebed luid. 'Je gaat daar erge spijt van krijgen.'

'Ach Jokebed,' zei tante Katrien, 'waarom zo hysterisch ? Hebben wij een andere keuze ?'

'Ik weet wat hij met mijn man heeft gedaan, en wat hij met ons allemaal kan doen,' zei Jokebed in paniek. 'Het is een gevaarlijke man. Hij kan onze hele familie in de vernieling brengen als we niet oppassen. Laten we een andere oplossing proberen te vinden.'

'Nee, Jokebed,' zei oom Bakus. 'Het is mooi geweest zo. Ik ben het zat. Ik wil precies weten hoe de vork in de steel zit.'

'Als je naar hem toe gaat, laat hij je niet meer gaan !' zei tante Jokebed luid. 'Je bent gewaarschuwd !'

Inmiddels was tante Audam ook gekomen. Zij kreeg ook het hele verhaal te horen. 'Kom nou,' zei oom Bakus. 'Ik laat me niet bangmaken.'

'Maar luister,' zei tante Audam. 'Jokebed heeft ervaring met hen. Haar man zat in hetzelfde schuitje. We kunnen beter naar haar advies luisteren, dan dat we op eigen houtje dingen gaan doen tegen deze gevaarlijke misdaads-organisatie. We mogen het niet onderschatten.'

'Ja, maar we moeten wat doen. Het duurt allemaal al veel te lang. Bodelang heeft ons nodig. Ik zal voor mijn broer blijven vechten, ook al moet ik mijn eigen leven en vrijheid daarvoor opofferen,' zei oom Bakus vastbesloten.

'Oh, jij bent gewoon dom,' zei tante Audam. 'Denk je dat Bodelang wil dat jij je leven in gevaar brengt ? Wij hebben je nodig. We kunnen niet ook nog eens jou missen. Berend en Albert hebben je ook nodig.'

'Maar meer dan dat : Ze hebben hun vader nodig,' zei oom Bakus.

'Bakus is mijn held,' zei tante Katrien. 'En ik ben bereid om met hem mee te gaan.'

'Geen sprake van, Katrien,' zei oom Joep. 'Jij blijft hier. Veel te gevaarlijk. En ik kan jou niet missen als er wat verkeerd gaat.'

'Schat,' zei tante Katrien. 'Dan ga jij toch ook gewoon met ons mee ? Samen staan we sterk.'

'Als jij gaat, dan ga ik ook,' zei oom Joep.

'Goed, dan gaan we met z'n drieen,' zei oom Bakus. 'We zullen die professor eens een lesje leren. Wie denkt hij wel niet dat hij is ? Dan kent hij ons nog niet.'

'Zeg, klets jij niet zo uit je nek,' zei tante Audam. 'En luisteren jullie nu eens even naar mij, want ik heb een niet al te fijne mededeling voor jullie. Jullie weten dat ik de oudste ben, hè ? En jullie weten dat ik Bodelang het langste ken, omdat hij na mij kwam, hè ? Tot mijn spijt moet ik jullie mededelen dat hij wel degelijk weer-katterigheid had, al vanaf zijn geboorte. Het gebeurde niet al te vaak, maar hij veranderde soms in een kat, en dan was het goed mis. Iedereen moest zich bergen.'

'Onze ouders hebben daar nooit een woord over gezegd,' zei tante Katrien. 'Dit is allemaal

zottigheid.'

'Nee, dat is het niet, Katrien,' snauwde tante Audam. 'Onze ouders mochten daar nooit wat over zeggen. Dat was verboden. Je kon daarvoor opgepakt worden. Het was verboden over weerkatterigheid te praten, en daar moet je vandaag de dag nog steeds mee oppassen. Ik heb misschien nu al teveel gezegd, maar ik vond toch dat jullie dit moesten weten.'

'Laten we alsjeblieft stoppen hierover te praten,' zei tante Jokebed bijna smekend. 'We zullen pertinent in de problemen gaan komen als we niet stoppen. Alsjeblieft.'

'Al die onzin moet nu maar eens afgelopen zijn,' zei oom Bakus. 'Katrien, ik en Joep gaan met professor Eindricht praten.'

'Dom !' zei tante Audam luid. 'Heel dom, maar je moet het zelf weten.'

'Ja, heel dom van je,' zei tante Jokebed zachtjes. Oom Bakus had de telefoon gegrepen. Ze konden volgende week langskomen.

Het leek wel alsof de dagen eeuwig duurden. Oom Bakus stond te popelen om met de professor te praten. Eindelijk was het dan zo ver, en ze werden direct door de bewakers binnengelaten. Ze konden de auto vlak voor het ijskasteel parkeren. Door een grote deur konden ze naar binnen. Er waren hier allemaal wachthokjes waar bewakers zaten. Ook waren er veel militairen en agenten. Iemand met rechtopstaand blond haar kwam op hen af, in een hele lange zwarte jas. 'Eindricht,' zei hij snel, toen hij hen de hand aanreikte. 'Komt u met mij mee,' zei hij weer snel, terwijl hij een trap oprende. Het was een hele lange brede trap, die heel hoog voerde. In de verte was een hoge deur, waar hij doorheen rende. De deur was ook heel breed. 'Gaat u zitten !' schreeuwde hij. Oom Bakus, tante Katrien en oom Joep renden hem achterna. Wat ging die man snel, en wat praatte hij snel. Hij ging achter een groot zwart bureau zitten, en begon te lachen. 'Ja, haha, ik weet al waarvoor jullie komen. Familie-lid, hè ? Nou, hij is in goede handen hoor, dat kleine katje.'

Oom Bakus sloeg met zijn vuist op tafel. 'Ophouden met die onzin nu. Hoe lang moet hij hier blijven ?'

'Voor de rest van zijn leven,' zei professor Eindricht met een blij gezicht.

'Bent u gek geworden !' riep oom Bakus. 'En waarom lacht u daarom ?'

'Omdat wij goed voor hem zorgen,' zei de professor stralend.

'U bent gek,' zei tante Katrien.

'Shhh.... tut tut tut,' zei de professor. 'Zeg dat maar niet te hard, haha.'

'En waarom niet ?' vroeg Katrien nijdig.

'Daar kunnen de katten niet tegen,' zei de professor. 'Daar worden ze wild van, en gevaarlijk.'

'Nee, u bent gevaarlijk,' zei oom Bakus. 'U laat mijn broer nu vrij, of u zult wat gaan beleven.'

'Oh, geen denken aan,' lachte de professor. 'We kunnen hem veel te goed gebruiken ?'

'Voor wat ?' riep oom Bakus.

'Gaat u niks aan,' zei de professor. 'Allemaal geheim. Beroeps-geheim, staats-geheim, hoe u het ook wilt noemen.'

'U werkt niet samen met de staat,' zei oom Joep. 'U bent een misdaads-organisatie.'

'Misdaads-organisatie ?' lachte de professor. 'Wij doen proeven. Onze gevangenen bewijzen de voortgang van de wetenschap daarmee een grote eer.

'Proeven ?' vroeg tante Katrien. 'Maar dat is vreselijk.'

'Het is vreselijk, precies,' zei de professor. 'Maar als de wetenschap zich niet ontwikkeld is het nog veel erger. We moeten offers brengen.'

'Zeg, blijf met je handen van andere mensen af dan,' zei oom Bakus.

'Nee,' zei de professor, 'nee, nee. Ik denk dat u het verkeerd begrijpt. Wij zijn bezig om een medicijn te ontwikkelen tegen weerkatterigheid. Het is allemaal voor bestwil van uw broer.'

'Geef onze broer terug,' zei oom Bakus. 'Wij hebben nooit weerkatterigheid in hem gemerkt.'

'Waar heb je je ogen ?' vroeg de professor. 'Het wordt alleen maar erger met hem. Hij is bijna dag en nacht een kat.'

'Ja, ik zou ook een kat worden als ik hier zou zitten,' zei oom Bakus. 'Ik waarschuw u. Ik tel tot drie. Laat hem los.'

'Geen denken aan,' zei de professor. 'U heeft een gevaarlijke wens. U wilt weerkatterigheid terug in de samenleving. Ik kan u daarvoor opsluiten.'

'Mijn broer bedoelt het niet zo,' zei oom Joep. 'Hij is alleen een beetje overstuur.'

'Overstuur ?' vroeg de professor. 'Volgens mij begint hij zelf al vormen van weerkatterigheid te vertonen.'

'Daar kunt u dan beter niet over praten, want dan kunt u het ook krijgen,' zei tante Katrien.

'Ik ben immuun,' zei de professor.

'Hoe dan ?' snauwde tante Katrien.

'Een pilletje ?' zei de professor.

'Ik dacht dat er nog geen medicijn was,' zei tante Katrien.

'Geen medicijn om het te genezen,' zei de professor, 'maar wel eentje om het te voorkomen.'

'Waarom verspreid u dat medicijn dan niet ?' vroeg tante Katrien.

'Zit al in het drink water,' zei de professor, 'in de tandpasta, in het voedsel, in de shampoo, everywhere.'

'Hoe kan Bakus het dan nu ontwikkelen ?' vroeg tante Katrien.

'Nou, heel simpel,' zei de professor. 'Het zat waarschijnlijk al in zijn genetisch materiaal.'

'Ja, zo ken ik er nog wel eentje,' zei tante Katrien.

'Jullie zijn maar een gevaarlijke familie,' zei de professor. 'Ik zit eraan te denken jullie niet meer te laten gaan.

'Oh nee !' riep oom Bakus, 'oh nee !' Oom Bakus greep zijn buik, en begon in een zwarte panter te veranderen. Hij sprong op professor Eindricht af en beet hem in zijn nek. Toen veranderde hij weer in een mens, en riep dicht bij het oor van professor Eindricht : 'Jouw spelletjes zijn afgelopen. Geef ons nu onze broer terug, en allen die u onrechtmatig hier vasthoudt !' Professor Eindricht drukte al bloedend een paar alarm-knopjes in, en spoedig kwam er een heel legertje bewakers op hen af. Alweer veranderde oom Bakus in een panter, en ditmaal een veel grotere. Toen hij brulde grepen de wachters naar hun oren, en vielen op de grond. De panter rende in een reuze vaart naar beneden, en brak wat gevangenis deuren open. Weer veranderde hij in een mens, greep zijn broer, en rende met hem uit het kasteel, terwijl hij de anderen riep. 'Kom op, we moeten maken dat we hier wegkomen !' Al snel zaten ze in de auto.

Berend en Albert waren blij hun vader weer te zien.

Inmiddels was de man van tante Audam van een lange reis thuisgekomen. Ook hij kreeg het verhaal te horen, en deed mee aan de familie-samenkomsten. Deze oom Arend zei dat de weerkatterigheid waarschijnlijk een uit de hand gelopen vaccin was tegen de ziekte van weerman. De ziekte van weerman was een ziekte waarbij jongens soms veranderden in mannen, vooral 's nachts. Dan renden ze veelal de bossen in om te gaan jagen, en om op zoek te gaan naar elkaar. Dan vormden ze stammen, en maakten het bos onveilig, ook al waren ze gewoonlijks met het morgenlicht gewoon weer jongens. Veel families verloren hun zonen aan deze ziekte. Daarom werd het vaccin ontwikkeld, maar het had het bijverschijnsel van weerkatterigheid.

'Vreemd,' zei oom Bakus. 'Dan heeft onze familie waarschijnlijk heel vroeger aan die ziekte van weerman geleden, en hebben ze bij ons het vaccin toegedient.'

'Dat kan wel kloppen,' zei oom Arend. 'Bij mij in de familie speelde hetzelfde.'

'Wat moeten we nu doen dan ?' vroeg tante Katrien.

'In het buitenland zijn ze druk bezig met het zoeken naar een vaccin tegen weerkatterigheid,' zei oom Arend.

'Ach wat,' zei oom Bakus. 'Als ik die weerkatterigheid niet had, dan had ik Bodelang nooit uit het ijskasteel kunnen krijgen.'

'Ach, klets geen onzin, Bakus,' zei tante Audam. 'Als onze familie geen weerkatterigheid zou hebben, dan zou Bodelang nooit in het ijskasteel zijn opgesloten in de eerste plaats. Het heeft ons alleen maar in de problemen gebracht.'

'Dat is wel waar,' zei oom Arend, 'maar vergeet niet dat de familie waarschijnlijk was belast met een veel groter probleem in het verleden, waarin vele jongens de ziekte van weerman hadden, en de familie verlieten om in het bos te gaan wonen. 's Nachts groeiden hun baarden, werden ze langer, en gingen op jacht als bezeten wilde mannen, en ook vielen ze iedere onschuldige bezoeker van het

bos lastig, met alle gevolgen daarvan.'

'En in het daglicht waren het gewoon weer jongens ?' vroeg oom Bakus. 'Ik zou maar wat graag mijn eeuwige jeugd hebben willen behouden, maar ik heb het waarschijnlijk verloren door dat stomme vaccin. Wat een idioterie, zeg. Het was waarschijnlijk gewoon een stukje natuur.'

'En ik ben mijn man verloren,' zei tante Jokebed.

'Die stammen waren vroeger de oorzaak van het grootste aantal vermissingen per jaar,' zei oom Arend.

'We moeten ons kunnen verdedigen tegen al die geleerden met hun proeven. Ik wil niet hun nieuwe proef-konijn zijn,' zei oom Bakus.

'Is er geen snellere manier om van die weerkatterigheid af te komen ?' vroeg tante Katrien. 'Door een soort recept van grootmoeder's geheim ofzo ?'

'Bestaan die stammen nog steeds ?' vroeg oom Bakus.

'Diep in de bossen waar geen kip komt,' zei oom Arend, 'en onder de grond.'

'Dus daar moet nog ergens familie van ons rondlopen ?' vroeg oom Bakus.

'Waarschijnlijk wel. Het vaccin werd alleen toegedient aan de verdere familie-leden die er nog waren, maar natuurlijk niet aan de stammen zelf. Die waren te wild, en onbereikbaar,' zei oom Arend.

'Ik wil er naartoe !' riep oom Bakus. 'Ik wil niet nog ouder worden, en ik wil mijn jeugd terug. Mijn weerkatterigheid zal een goed verdedigings-middel zijn, mochten ze willen aanvallen.'

'Hoe is de ziekte van weerman dan eigenlijk ontstaan ?' vroeg tante Katrien.

'Dat is nogal een lang verhaal,' zei oom Arend. 'De verre voorouders van de hertogen hadden een vreemde ziekte waarbij ze soms in hyenas veranderden. Lioporitus heette die ziekte. Ze hadden van alles geprobeerd om die ziekte uit te roeien, maar niets hielp. Ze waren bang dat het ook op andere families zou overspringen. Als voorzorg werden de families in hun naaste omgeving geinjecteerd met een vaccin. En dat vaccin had als bijwerking de ziekte van weerman.'

'Vreemd,' zei tante Katrien, 'maar wel interessant. Zijn er nog steeds mensen die deze ziekte hebben ?'

'Allen die deze ziekte hadden zijn inmiddels overleden, alleen een tweede broer van hertog Kat-Anders blijkt deze ziekte nog te hebben,' zei oom Arend. 'Het bestaan van deze broer is angstvallig geheimgehouden. Hij was met deze ziekte geboren, en heeft altijd geisoleerd diep in het bos gewoond. Hij is genaamd hertog von Brunsga.'

Het omweerde buiten. Er was een harde knal met een bliksemflits die midden in de kamer kwam. Iedereen was onder fel licht.

'Zijn broers zijn hartstikke bang van hem. In het geheim wordt het hele land door hem geregeerd, of zeg maar liever geterroriseerd,' zei oom Arend.

'Zeg Arend,' zei tante Jokebed, 'kun je nu alsjeblieft je mond dichthouden, want je brengt ons allemaal nog in de problemen.'

'Ik heb lang genoeg gezwegen,' zei oom Arend. 'En kom er maar voor uit dat je een spion van hertog von Brunsga bent, Jokebed.' Tante Jokebed trok haar pistool. 'Het is afgelopen, Arend. Draai je om, en leg je handen tegen de muur.' Binnen een paar minuten kwamen er agenten in het zwart binnen, die oom Arend in de boeien sloegen. 'Bedrieger die je er bent !' riep tante Katrien naar tante Jokebed. Nu richtte tante Jokebed ook het pistool op tante Katrien en oom Bakus. 'Doe geen domme dingen, Jokebed,' zei oom Bakus kalm. Er kwamen meerdere agenten binnen, en ook oom Bakus werd in de boeien geslagen. Ook tante Audam had een pistool getrokken. 'Jij ook al !' riep tante Katrien. 'Ook zo'n vuile bedrieger !'

'Ik wist het !' riep oom Arend, 'maar ik kon niet langer zwijgen. De familie is in groot gevaar. De hertog heeft zijn spionnen overal.' Ook Bodelang werd weer in de boeien geslagen, onder veel geprotesteer van Berend en Albert. 'Jullie blijven bij mij, Berend en Albert,' zei tante Jokebed.

'Nee !' riep Albert. 'Wij willen niets meer met u te maken hebben. U heeft ons bedrogen, en onze vader verraden.'

'Ze gaan met mij mee !' riep tante Katrien. Maar toen werd ook tante Katrien in de boeien geslagen. Oom Joep rende naar de achterdeur toe, rukte die open, en riep : 'Berend en Albert, we moeten hier ogenblikkelijk weg !' Berend en Albert renden achter hem aan. Snel renden ze naar zijn geparkeerde auto toe, en stapten in. Maar al gauw werden ze achtervolgd door agenten. Oom Joep deed de autolichten uit en reed het bos in. Het was nog net licht genoeg dat hij kon zien waar hij reed. Na een tijdje waren ze van de agenten af. Oom Joep wist dat hij niet naar zijn huis kon rijden. Hij reed naar een vriendin. Ze ontving hen direct hartelijk. Oom Joep vertelde wat er allemaal was gebeurd. De vrouw vertelde dat ze een verboden, illegaal boek had over hertog von Brunsga. Het was geschreven door een ex-agent die voor hem werkte : Klaas van Galen.

Ineens waren er agenten binnen. Oom Joep werd geboeid, en de vrouw. Albert probeerde weg te komen, maar werd gegrepen. Berend stond wat verder weg, en kon net door de achterdeur naar buiten ontsnappen. Hij rende de achtertuin in, en sprong in het riviertje. Snel zwom hij naar de overkant, en rende het bos in zo hard als hij kon. Hij rende zonder om te kijken, en na heel lang rennen kwam hij aan bij een verlicht gebouw. Hij rende naar binnen. Hij was helemaal nat. Daar stond een man. 'Wie bent u ?' zei de man.

'Ik heet Berend,' zei Berend. 'Wie bent u ?'

'Ik ben hertog von Brunsga,' zei de man. 'Ik zal u wel even warme kleren geven.' Na een tijdje zaten ze samen in een warme kamer op sjieke stoelen aan een tafel. Berend had inmiddels andere kleren aan. Hij was nog steeds flink aan het hijgen. 'Zo, jij hebt zeker hard gerend, en lang. Waar was je voor op de vlucht ?' vroeg de hertog.

'Kan ik u niet vertellen, mijnheer,' zei Berend.

'Dat kunt u beter wel doen,' zei de hertog deftig.

'Ziet u, het gaat om mijn familie,' zei Berend. Toen vertelde Berend het hele verhaal. 'Maar ik heb absoluut geen hyena ziekte,' zei de hertog. 'Dat is echt een sprookje. Ik snap niet waar mensen zulke verhalen vandaan halen.'

'Ik weet het ook niet, mijnheer,' zei Berend. 'Maar regeert u het land in het geheim ?'

De hertog begon te lachen. 'Ach welnee, joh. Dat zijn ook allemaal verzinsels. Zodra mensen niet veel weten over iets, beginnen ze te fantaseren.'

Berend wist niet meer wat hij moest geloven.

'Ik vind het heel vervelend voor je dat dit allemaal met je familie is gebeurd,' zei de hertog. 'Mijn andere broers regeren het land ook niet. Dat doet de staat, maar dit kan heel goed allemaal een misdaad zijn.'

'Maar twee tantes waren ontmaskerd als spionnen voor u. Hoe kan dat dan ?' vroeg Berend. 'Ik snap er niets meer van.'

'Misschien dat iemand zich voordoet als mij, of ze gebruiken mijn naam zonder mijn toestemming,' zei de hertog. 'Het land is inderdaad niet pluis, en daarom houd ik me er allemaal ver vandaan. Zoveel bedrog gaande. Je mag hier wel zo lang wonen, totdat dit allemaal opgelost is.'

'Ik durf niet meer terug,' zei Berend, 'dus heel graag.'

'Dat kan ik me voorstellen,' zei de hertog. 'Wat een spookhuis daar, zeg.'

Berend kreeg een eigen kamer, een hele grote. Er hingen veel jacht-trofeeen en vreemde schilderijen aan de muur. Midden in de nacht werd hij wakker van een vreemd geluid. Plotseling stond er een hyena in zijn kamer. Hij wreef in zijn ogen. 'Wat is dat nou ?' zei hij slaperig. Hij kneep in zijn arm om te controleren of hij wel echt wakker was. De hyena kwam steeds dichterbij. Toen ineens begon de hyena hem te likken. 'Jij bent wel heel lief,' zei Berend.

De volgende dag vertelde Berend aan de hertog over de hyena. 'Wat vreemd,' zei de hertog. 'Dat heb ik hier nog nooit gezien.'

De volgende nacht werd Berend weer wakker diep in de nacht. Twee agenten stonden naast zijn bed. Berend schrok, en riep meteen hard om hulp. Direct stormde de hertog zijn kamer binnen. 'Zeg heren, wat moet dat daar !' riep hij. 'Laat onmiddelijk die jongen los.'

'Dat is hertog von Brunsga,' zei Berend.

'Ja, ja,' zei één van de agenten. 'Dat zeggen ze allemaal, dat ze hertog von Brunsga zijn. Meekomen, jongetje.'

Maar toen begon de hertog in een hyena te veranderen en sprong de agenten naar de keel. De agenten wisten niet hoe snel ze weg moesten komen. Toen veranderde de hertog weer in een mens. De hertog was erg verbaast. 'Zeg, dat is mij nou nog nooit eerder overkomen.'

'Misschien heeft u wel een speciale gave,' zei Berend.

'Misschien wel,' zei de hertog. 'Het kwam in ieder geval goed van pas.'

'Ik voel me wel veilig bij u,' zei Berend. 'U kan mij in ieder geval beschermen.'

'Ik kan soms erg boos worden,' zei de hertog, 'maar dit heb ik nog nooit meegemaakt.'

'Ik vond het wel tof,' zei Berend. 'U had die agenten goed te pakken.'

'Oh, ze kunnen zo vervelend zijn,' zei de hertog, 'maar ze hebben nu een koekje van eigen deeg.'

'U bent een aardige man, hertog von Brunsga,' zei Berend. 'Veel aardiger en zorgzamer dan uw broers, en minder saai.'

Maar na een tijdje hoorden ze geluiden van auto's en busjes buiten. Ze keken uit het raam, en zagen een heel leger van agenten staan. 'Lever de jongen uit !' werd er geroepen. De hertog opende een raampje en riep : 'Geen sprake van. Daar komt helemaal niks van in. Wie denken jullie wel niet wie jullie zijn ?'

'Het gezag !' riep een agent. 'We hebben ordes van hertog von Brunsga !'

'Maar dat ben ik zelf, oelewapper !' riep de hertog.

Er werden ramen ingeslagen, en de deur werd ingetrapt. Even later rende een heel leger van agenten naar boven naar de kamer van Berend, waar ze nog steeds waren. De agenten renden op de jongen af, en wilden hem grijpen, maar in één klap veranderde de hertog in een grote massa van grote hyenas. Wel honderden hyenas sprongen op de agenten af, en renden naar beneden om ook de agenten die nog buiten stonden aan te vallen.

'Stop, stop !' riep een agent. 'Dit moet wel hertog von Brunsga zelf zijn. Dat kan niet anders ! Het is een weersplitser. Dat kan alleen hertog van Brunsga. Ren voor je leven, en maak rechtsomkeerds !'

Maar het was al te laat. Vele agenten lagen bloedend op de grond. De hyenas hadden geen medelijden. 'Stop alstublieft,' huilde een agent. 'We zullen alles voor u doen, wat u maar wilt. We weten nu dat we een grote vergissing hebben begaan.' Ineens kwamen alle hyenas weer bij elkaar als in een storm, en er was een enorme donderslag die ook het hele gebouw verlichte, zo sterk dat het leek alsof het gebouw in de vlammen stond. Ineens stond de hertog voor hen, en waren de hyenas verdwenen. De hertog stond daar in de rook. 'Zo heren, ik zal jullie direct vertellen wat jullie moeten doen,' zei de hertog. 'U gaat direct de familie van deze jongen vrijzetten uit het ijskasteel, en u gaat hen hier naartoe brengen. U zult hen met respect behandelen en geen haar op hun hoofd krenken. De jongen is genaamd Berend, en zijn familie-leden heten : Albert, zijn broer, en Bodelang, zijn vader. En dan zijn oom Bakus, zijn tante Katrien, zijn oom Arend, zijn oom Joep, en de vriendin van oom Joep. Verder wil ik dat u Jokebed en Audam, twee tantes van Berend, ontslaat, en laat opsluiten in het ijskasteel.'

'Komt voor elkaar, hertog von Brunsga,' zei de agent. Hij had het snel allemaal even opgeschreven, en vertrok toen met de andere agenten. Een paar uur later kwamen degenen die waren vrijgezet aan. Een agent had ze met een busje gebracht. De agent vertrok direct weer. Berend was erg blij zijn familie weer te zien, en omhelsde ze. De hertog legde hen later uit hoe de vork in de steel zat.

De Regenboog

Spiegel

Hoofdstuk 1. De Gevangene van IJs

'Verdwaald in het spiegelijs van de draak,
Alle muren zijn doorgangen hier,
En alle doorgangen zijn muren,
Oh welk toverlied kan bevrijding geven ?
Welke illusie kan ons verlossen,
Of kan de stem van een kind ons doen ontwaken ?
Zoveel stemmen in de nacht doorklieven ons hart,
Als verwarring de meester van ons hart is,
Wie draagt dan de sleutel ?
Een droom ontwaakt hier,
Een grote Exodus,

Waarin alle elven weer dansen,
En de feeen hun spiegel vinden,
Waar de regenboog over ons allen waakt,
Maar is de regenboog wie zij zegt dat ze is ?
Is zij ?
Wie is zij ?
Harten smelt ze in haar hand,
Innemende het verstand,
En dan golven van nieuwe dromen,
Is dit waar wij op uitkomen ?
Maar gebonden is zij in het meer van ijs,
Gebonden is zij, als een danser op zee,
Oh, wie doet haar ontwaken ?'

De ijsdraken waren altijd op jacht … De drakenspiegel van ijs maakte hen dronken, opdat zij slaven waren van geweld, bloedgulzig. Drie drakenspiegels waren er in het land van fee. De drakenspiegel van vuur was alreeds gebroken, en had zijn macht verloren. Alles wat de drakenspiegel van vuur had vergaart vloeide nu uit de gebroken spiegel weg. De draken waren woedend en woest. Ze hielden hun dansen op de bergen, waar de meesters waren, in de hoop dat het ritueel hen de spiegel terug zou geven, maar tevergeefs.

Zalumiel, de goede tovenaar van het land van fee was vanuit zijn kasteel op een reis naar de ijsbergen, waar de ijsdraken zich ophielden. Hij kwam om hen een medicijn te brengen, als een teken van welwillende vriendschap. Maar de ijsdraken wilden zijn vriendschap niet, en toen hij daar aankwam en zijn verhaal had gedaan, wierpen ze hem in een diepe afgrond.

Je zou denken dat het niet slim was van de tovenaar om zich zo maar prijs te geven op die manier, maar Zalumiel was een wijze tovenaar. Het medicijn wat hij hen aanbood en liet zien was zo krachtig, dat wanneer ze ernaar zouden kijken het hun zicht zou veranderen. Ze zouden dingen gaan zien die er helemaal niet waren, en dingen die er waren zouden ze niet meer kunnen zien. Toen ze het medicijn zagen kon het medicijn hun ogen veranderen, en hun laten denken dat ze Zalumiel in de afgrond hadden geworpen. Terwijl Zalumiel zelf zo langs de ijsdraken kon om te naderen tot de drakenspiegel van ijs. Hij greep zijn sikkel en gooide het naar de drakenspiegel van ijs, en toen richtte hij zijn staf op de spiegel en liet een magisch vuur eruit stromen om het ijs te laten smelten.

Maar de drakenspiegel van ijs herstelde vanzelf weer. De tovenaar wist dat er meer voor nodig was om de spiegel voorgoed te breken. De drakenspiegel van ijs kwam als een octopus op de tovenaar af, en ze raakten in een worsteling, waarin de octopus de tovenaar meetrok tot de spiegelrijken. De tovenaar wist dat hij deze reis moest maken om het geheim van de drakenspiegel van ijs te leren kennen.

De drakenspiegel van ijs had alle ruimtes gescheiden door bewegend, ondoordringbaar ijs, waardoor de illusie van tijd was ontstaan. Door een cirkel van ijskaarten ontstond de illusie van ruimte. Het hutselde alle ruimtes en tijd door elkaar, zodat de tijds-volgordes, de chronologie, en de ruimtelijke volgordes zouden veranderen. De tovenaar ging op een bootje over de ijsrivieren, op zoek naar meer wijsheid, meer inzicht, in dit grote kwaad. Het leek op een web van nachtmerries, en bedrieglijke dromen lokten slachtoffers hiervoor.

Het zwaard van dromen was op de rug van de tovenaar, rustend als een wachter, en soms greep de tovenaar het en had hevige gevechten. Gevechten tegen de beesten die zich verborgen hielden in het ijs en de ijs-rivieren. De tovenaar droeg een duister geheim met zich mee : de Klok van Tamin, die door bewegende, ondoordringbare duisternis de ruimtes had gescheiden, waardoor er een magische tijd ontstond. De duistere wachters van de Klok van Tamin hadden een doel : het vernietigen van de drakenspiegel van ijs. De tovenaar had deze klok geerfd van zijn voorouders, en had altijd in zijn kasteel gestaan. Al deze wachters van de klok droegen een kaart van duisternis.

De tovenaar had de klok uit zijn knapzak gehaald. Het was een klok van een speciaal soort kristal, een kleine klok. Hij aaide de klok, en sprak er tegen. 'Veertien uren in een klok,

veertien kaarten, de wachters van de magische tijd,' sprak de tovenaar. Toen kuste hij de klok. De tovenaar kwam aan bij een grote waterval van ijs, waar een groot orakel van ijs was. 'Welaan, met veertien bevroren wachters komt hij aan, zoekende naar de sleutel om hun hart te verwarmen en tot leven te brengen, om het grote kwaad van de drakenspiegel van ijs te bestrijden,' sprak het orakel. 'Zijn wij niet allen bevroren in het land van de draak ? Oh het kwaad gaat diep. Wat kun ik voor u doen ?'

'Precies wat u zegt,' sprak de tovenaar. 'Ik zoek deze wachters van mijn klok tot leven te brengen.'

'Ik kan u niet helpen,' sprak het orakel. 'Help uzelf.' De tovenaar was woedend, en sloeg het orakel aan stukken met zijn staf. Hij wist dat het orakel niets anders dan een spotter was. In de spiegelrijken van de drakenspiegel van ijs vond de tovenaar zijn eigen kasteel weer, maar het was hier heel anders. Hij herkende het bijna niet meer terug.

'In ijs zitten we allen opgesloten,

Waar het ijs ons verstand infecteert,

Schept het zijn eigen realiteit,

De realiteit van de draken spiegel van ijs,

Oh, wie kan die spiegel verbrijzelen ?

Of zijn wie gedoemd hier voor eeuwig te verblijven,

Och, tijd is maar een leugen,

In het beste geval een metafoor,

Om te laten zien dat alles een reis is,

Dat de halsketting vele stenen heeft,

De tovenaar weet het,

De tovenaar ziet het,

Hij kan door stralen kijken.'

'Op de nachtzeeen is de tovenaar,

Iemand was op de zee,

Een fee,

Zij kwam de tovenaar tegemoet,

Zij straalde als de regenboog,

Als de feeenkoningin van de regenboog,

Lang waren zij uit elkaar gescheurd door de drakenspiegel van ijs,

Maar in de dieptes van het ijs vonden ze elkaar weer,

In de dieptes van de spiegelwerelden.'

'Op de nachtzeeen is de tovenaar,

Hij blaast de trompet,

Om het sein van verzoening te geven.'

De feeenkoningin van de regenboog danste in zijn kasteel. 'Eindelijk ben je gekomen,' sprak ze. Ze hield de regenboog spiegel in haar hand. 'Dit heeft jou getrokken,' sprak ze. 'Je bent nu in mijn dromenweb.'

'Dat is een goede hulp,' sprak de tovenaar. 'Ik ben blij dat we elkaar weer gevonden hebben.'

'Ja, maar je kent me niet,' sprak de feeenkoningin. 'Ik heb vele gezichten. De regenboog heeft mij zo gemaakt.'

'Hadden we het niet goed samen ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

'Ik moest dit pad wel opgaan,' sprak de feeenkoningin. 'Er was werk te doen. Ik heb het kasteel bereikt in de spiegelwereld, en vond de regenboog spiegel. Hiermee kon ik je roepen. Je kon deze roep niet tegenhouden, Zalumiel.'

'Ik ben blij dat ik je terugheb,' sprak de tovenaar.

'Je hebt me niet terug,' sprak de feeenkoningin. 'Ik vaag altijd weg als een hand mij grijpt, en altijd smelt ik weg om tot de zee terug te keren, waar ik dans. Ik ben de gevangene van ijs. Geef de moed op mij ooit terug te vinden.'

'Nooit !' bulderde de tovenaar.

'Je zult wel moeten,' sprak de feeenkoningin van de regenboog, en begon weg te vagen, terwijl ze de regenboog spiegel uit haar hand liet vallen. De scherven van de regenboog spiegel was alles wat ze voor de tovenaar achterliet.

De tovenaar raapte de scherven bij elkaar en stopte ze in zijn knapzak. Hij liep terug naar de poort van het kasteel, en wilde alles weer achterlaten, want het deed teveel pijn. Hier waren al zijn herinneringen.

De tovenaar ging weer door de hoge sneeuw terug naar de ijsrivier. Verslagen zat hij in zijn bootje, en peddelde weer door het ijs. Hij moest het verleden achter zich laten, maar wat als zich daar nog een sleutel bevond ? Of zou die sleutel op een andere manier terugkomen door de toekomst ?

Hij volgde de echo's die hem lonkten, en hij voelde zich diep wegzakken in het ijs. Zijn bootje gleed over de benedenwaartse ijsrivieren, steeds dieper en dieper. Er was hier zoveel ijs, en het was zo koud, dat hij niets kon vastpakken. Hij had nergens grip op, en hij kon niet meer peddelen. Er was stroming in de rivier die hem meetrok, en hij zat daar bijna als bevroren.

Het bootje stopte ergens bij een huisje diep onder de sneeuw. De tovenaar stapte als bevroren uit het bootje, en liep langzaam naar het huisje toe. Hij kon zich haast niet bewegen. Hij klopte aan op een houten deur. Een elf deed open. Het was de elvensmid. 'Kom verder,' zei de elf. 'je zult het vast koud hebben.' Binnen was een vuurtje.

'Wat heb je meegebracht om te smeden ?' sprak de elf. De tovenaar leegde zijn knapzak op een tafel, en nam alles behalve de scherven van de regenboog spiegel terug. 'Dit,' zei de tovenaar.

'Ah, scherven van het verleden,' sprak de elvensmid. 'Een lange, duistere geschiedenis.' De tovenaar knikte.

'Jij kan haar terugroepen door de regenboog spiegel,' sprak de elvensmid. 'Ze kon het niet meer dragen. Het lijden was te zwaar voor haar.'

'Ze was mijn koningin,' sprak de tovenaar.

'Elke koningin moet eens de ijs reis maken,' sprak de elvensmid.

'Ik weet het,' sprak de tovenaar. 'Maar nu is ze een gevangene van ijs.'

'Vele gezichten heeft zij,' sprak de elvensmid. 'Ik kan zoveel zien in deze scherven. Wil je haar terug ?'

'Ja,' sprak de tovenaar.

'Waarom ?' vroeg de elvensmid.

De tovenaar zweeg even. Toen sprak hij : 'Wat kunt u voor mij doen ?'

'Zoveel scherven aan jou gegeven,' sprak de elvensmid, 'allemaal haar gezichten. Zij hebben jouw hart doorboort. Waarom wil je haar terug ?'

'Ik weet het niet,' sprak de tovenaar. 'Ik wil haar helpen. Het land van fee heeft haar ook nodig.'

'Ah, daar komen jullie vandaan,' sprak de elvensmid. 'Er is een andere feeenkoningin nu. Keer om, tovenaar. Wees de nieuwe koningin tot steun, want de oude koningin en jij zijn te verschillend. Het past niet.'

'We hadden goede tijden samen,' sprak de tovenaar.

'Ja, maar ze kon het niet dragen. Het ijs trekt haar, meer dan wat dan ook,' sprak de elf. 'Je kent haar niet. Er is veel onheil in haar hart.'

'Onheil ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

'Ja, duisternis,' sprak de elf.

'Ik ben zelf ingewijde op het pad van de duisternis,' sprak de tovenaar. 'De duisternis is het enige wat ons kan redden uit de klauwen van het spiegelende draken ijs.' De tovenaar liet de Klok van Tamin zien die hij ook in zijn rugzak had. 'Dit is de spiegel van duisternis,' sprak de tovenaar. 'Ik zoek de wachters ervan tot leven te wekken. Dit is mijn enige hoop om de drakenspiegel van ijs te breken.'

'Mens allemachtig,' sprak de elvensmid. 'Dat ding is levensgevaarlijk ! Geen manier in leven en sterven dat ik dat ding tot leven ga wekken. Ik zou wel goed gek wezen.'

'Werk je voor de ijsdraken ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

'Ik ? Nee, hoor,' sprak de elf. 'Maar je komt een beetje te dichtbij met dat duivelse ding. Doe het weg, of ik sla het aan diggelen.' Snel stopte de tovenaar de klok van het speciale duistere kristal weer in zijn tas.

'Praatjes begin je me daar te krijgen,' mopperde de elvensmid. 'Alsof ik voor de ijsdraken werk.'

'Het was maar een vraag,' sprak de tovenaar.

'Maar wel een hele beledigende,' sprak de elvensmid. 'Dat je dat over mij durft te denken.'

'Ik dacht niks,' sprak de tovenaar. 'Ik vroeg alleen maar.'

'Ja, ja, ja, ja, het is goed,' sprak de elvensmid geirriteerd. 'Nou, zeg op. Hoe kan ik je helpen ?'

'Ik zoek onderdak tegen de sneeuw en de vorst,' sprak de tovenaar. 'Tevens vraag ik u de regenboog spiegel te herstellen.'

'Bij nader inzien lijkt me dat niet verstandig,' sprak de elvensmid. 'Het zal haar roepen, en ze heeft een hart van ijs.'

'Ze had vele kanten, niet alleen maar ijs,' sprak de tovenaar.

'IJs komt in vele vormen, jongen,' sprak de elvensmid.

'Ik ben ervan overtuigd dat het land van fee haar nodig heeft,' sprak de tovenaar.

'Ik ben ervan overtuigd dat jij uit je nek kletst,' snauwde de elf. 'Hoe meer ik in de scherven keek, hoe meer ik zag hoe gevaarlijk en duister ze is.'

'We hebben de duisternis nodig, vriend,' sprak de tovenaar. 'Het ijs kan niet tegen de duisternis op, alleen maar tijdelijk.'

'Dat dacht je maar, jongen,' snauwde de elvensmid. 'De duisternis is zo gevaarlijk als het licht, en allebei buigen zij voor het ijs !'

'Waarom bent u hier zo diep in sneeuw en vorst dan ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

'Voor mijn missie,' sprak de elvensmid. 'Ik ben een zendeling.'

'Waar komt u vandaan als ik vragen mag ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

'Gaat je niks aan,' snauwde de elf.

'Nou, u heeft me maar een heilzame boodschap te brengen,' sprak de tovenaar.

'Dat heb ik zeker,' sprak de elf. 'Nou, kunnen we nu even ter zake komen ? Wat wil je ?'

'Herstel voor mij de regenboog spiegel, en ik ben weer weg,' sprak de tovenaar.

De tovenaar betaalde de elvensmid die direct onder luid protesteren aan de gang ging. 'Je moet het zelf weten als dit is wat je wil,' snauwde de elvensmid. Na een uurtje was het klaar, en de elvensmid wilde dat de tovenaar direct zou vertrekken. De elvensmid duwde hem bijna de deur uit, maar in ieder geval had de tovenaar nu wat hij wilde : de regenboog spiegel. Er leek veel hitte van de regenboog spiegel af te komen, waarmee de tovenaar zich kon warmen. Achter het huisje van de elvensmid was een bos, waar de tovenaar inliep. Terwijl hij liep keek hij af en toe in de regenboog spiegel. Na een tijdje zag hij daarin het gezicht van de feeenkoningin van de regenboog.

'Waar ben je ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

'Dansende op de nachtzee,' sprak de feeenkoningin. 'Je kan de regenboog spiegel niet houden. Het zal van je wegvluchten zoals ik van je wegvluchtte.'

De tovenaar boog zijn hoofd, terwijl de regenboog spiegel uit zijn handen begon weg te vagen.

Plotseling stond er een man in het zwart voor hem met een zwaard. 'Geen stap verder,' sprak de man. 'Dit is het domein van de tovenaar van de drakenspiegel van ijs.'

'Hem moest ik net hebben,' sprak Zalumiel.

'Hij wil niets met je te maken hebben,' sprak de man. 'Vertrek nu of ik maak dat je vertrekt.'

'Dat verbaast me niks,' sprak Zalumiel. 'Hij is immers een tovenaar van ijs, nogal koud in sociale contacten.'

Zalumiel trok zijn zwaard van achter zijn rug, en sprak : 'Ik ga voor niemand uit de weg. Ik merk dat ik op het juiste pad ben.' Toen volgde er een lang zwaardgevecht. Zalumiel verloor hierin zijn zwaard en zijn knapzak, en werd geraakt aan zijn arm. Toen verdween de man in het zwart weer.

De tovenaar strompelde naar het dichtstbijzijnde huisje, en klopte daar aan. Een oud vrouwtje deed open en liet hem binnen. De tovenaar deed zijn verhaal. 'Oh ja, de tovenaar van de drakenspiegel van ijs is verschrikkelijk,' zei het vrouwtje. 'Wij hebben het bos nodig om tegen hem bestand te zijn. Wij moeten de geheimen van het bos kennen en de bos magie.' Ondertussen verzorgde het vrouwtje zijn wond. 'De nachtzeeen vormen de sleutel,' sprak het vrouwtje. 'Dit zijn de nachtmerries van je leven.' De tovenaar haalde zijn klok tevoorschijn, de spiegel van duisternis, en vertelde haar dat hij de wachters ervan tot leven zocht te wekken. 'Het bos zal het doen,' sprak het vrouwtje.

'Hoe ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

Hoofdstuk 2. De Grote Jacht

'Ergens diep onder de grond moet de beker van Nakordonne zijn, een beker van grote macht, die de bezitter ongekende krachten zal geven,' sprak het vrouwtje. 'Onder de grond zijn de zeven zeeen van de dood. Jij moet hun geheim kennen, voordat jij tot de beker zou komen. Zij die het geheim niet hebben zullen door de beker verslonden worden.

De zeven zeeen van de dood, zij dragen een groot geheim,
In de nachten zijn zij bloed,
Maar het is altijd nacht daar,
Zoutig is hun smaak, en soldaten komen van hen,
Vechtslaven met grote geheimen,
Geriemd zijn zij in de nacht,
Ontsnappen kunnen zij niet,

Ook zij moeten tot het geheim komen.

Komen zullen zij tot het geheim,
De planeet zal sterven,
En alleen zij die de beker van Nakordonne zullen bereiken,
Zullen leven tot in eeuwigheid,
In haar zullen zij de weg vinden tot de andere planeet,
Als door een nieuwe geboorte,
Zij sterven niet.'

De tovenaar had zijn hoop op deze beker gevestigd. Het vrouwtje leidde hem naar een kamer met een bed waar hij kon slapen. Hij had wilde dromen, maar kon zijn weg niet vinden. Hij dacht dat hij het geheim nu kende, maar hij begon de moed op te geven. Totdat op een nacht de beker van Nakordonne aan hem verscheen. Het bleek een poort te zijn waardoor hij ingezogen werd. Hij zag de zeven zeeen van de dood met hun vele schepen. Hij zag de geriemde vechtslaven op de schepen. 'Deze schepen leiden tot de andere planeet,' sprak de beker. 'De zeeen des doods leiden tot aan de andere planeet. Dat is het grote geheim.'

'Wat is de andere planeet ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

'Oh, ver van hier,' sprak de beker. 'Ik ben het schip, ik ben de schepen. Het gaat erom op de juiste schepen te zijn. De meerderheid van de schepen zullen vergaan. Alleen een paar schepen zullen aankomen op de andere planeet.'

'Wat is de naam van de andere planeet ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

'Dat is de naam,' zei de beker. 'De naam is de andere planeet.'

Ineens was de planeet brandende. 'Kom,' sprak de beker, 'de planeet is aan het vergaan. Ik zal je tot de andere planeet nemen.' De beker nam hem op, en even later werd hij wakker in een grote wildernis. Zoetruikende planten en struiken waren om hem heen. Hij aanbad de beker van Nakordonne, en boog voor de beker neer. Hij kuste de beker. Ineens stond er een blootvoetse vrouw voor hem in een geraveld broekje van een lichte hooiachtige kleur. Ze had een boog. De beker was verdwenen. 'Wie bent u ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

'Ik ben de beker van Nakordonne,' sprak de vrouw. 'Kom.' De tovenaar liep achter haar aan. Zij leidde hem tot een kamp in de wildernis, waar een stam woonde. Hij keek naar de rieten hutten gemaakt van gras en riet. 'Dit is je nieuwe woonplaats,' sprak de vrouw. In de verte zag hij een strandje met een zee. 'De zeeen des doods zijn hier ook,' sprak de vrouw. 'Zeven zeeen des doods met grote geheimen.'

Hij kreeg een keten om zijn nek, en de vrouw trok hem mee langs de rivieren van het

gebied. Hij wist dat hij slechts bezit was. Tot zijn grote schrik zag hij in de verte zijn moeder aankomen, degene die hij vreeste. Hij had gehoopt dat hij hier een beter leven zou krijgen. 'Vlug, laten we hier weggaan,' zei hij in paniek. 'Daar komt mijn moeder. Zij zal je vast aanvallen.' De vrouw trok haar speer, en ook de grote moeder had alreeds haar speer getrokken, en een mes. Ook had ze een werpnet aan haar schouder hangen, en aan haar heup hing een grote gesel. Er ontstond een groot gevecht, waarin de vrouw de keten van de tovenaar losliet. In steeds groter wordende paniek rende hij weg. Hij durfde niet meer om te kijken. Hij rende langs de rivieren dieper de wildernis in, en bleef rennen zonder om te kijken. 'Je zal niet ver komen,' werd er geschreeuwd. Hij wist niet of dat de stem van zijn moeder was, of van de vrouw, en of dat tegen hem werd geroepen of tegen de ander. Met bonzend hart rende hij verder. Hij kon bijna niet meer, en na een lange tijd rennen, na uren, stortte hij vermoeid neer op het zand aan een rivier. Even later stond er een blootvoetse vrouw voor hem. Zij had een kort rokje van een hooiachtige kleur. Ook had zij een speer. Ze had kort kroezig haar. Ze nam hem mee naar een kamp, waar rieten hutjes stonden, gemaakt van gras en riet. 'Wie ben je ?' vroeg ze.

'Zalumiel,' zei hij.

'En wat kom je hier doen ?' vroeg ze.

Toen vertelde de tovenaar het verhaal.

'Oh, je kunt hier wel blijven,' zei de vrouw, en bracht hem naar een hut. 'Hier kun je wel slapen.'

'Bedankt,' zei de tovenaar. De vrouw leidde hem toen naar een vuur, waar zij hem te eten gaf.

'Wat als één van de vrouwen hier komt om me terug te nemen ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

'Zij kunnen hier niet zomaar komen,' sprak de vrouw. 'Tenzij ze een speer door hun hoofd willen.'

'Je kent mijn moeder niet,' sprak de tovenaar. 'Ze is gevaarlijk.'

'Wij ook,' zei de vrouw, zichtbaar geirriteerd. 'Luister, als je hier wil blijven, dan moet je ophouden over hen.'

'Begrepen,' zei de tovenaar. Hij boog zijn hoofd.

'Hier zul je ook echt geen vrijheid hebben,' sprak de vrouw. 'Mannen zijn hier onderdanig aan de vrouwen. Deze hierarchie is altijd al zo geweest. Het is onze traditie.'

De tovenaar knikte. Hij hoopte maar dat hij hier een beter leven zou hebben. In de nachten had hij wilde dromen over de zeeen des doods. Hij wist dat ze grote, duistere geheimen hadden.

´Wilde dromen,
Op de zeeen des doods,
Duistere poorten,
Je verliest jezelf,
En weet niet maar waar je bent,
Zoals je eens was,
Ben je niet meer,
Je hart gestolen,
En opgebaard,
In de grote hallen,
Onder de zeeen des doods,
Waar de beker van Nakordonne wordt gevuld´

´Wilde dromen,
hebben hem gegrepen,
Hij weet niet meer,
waar hij is,
Zij hebben hem genomen,
tot duistere poorten,
waar hij van schip tot schip wordt verkocht,
slechts bezit is hij,
zijn hart gestolen,
In de grote hallen,
Onder de zeeen des doods,
Waar de beker van Nakordonne wordt gevuld´

´Er is een geheim in eeuwigheid,
Van de beker van Nakordonne,
Zij die van de beker gedronken hebben kunnen nooit meer terug,
Voor altijd aan haar verbonden,
Zij sleept hen mee, van rivier tot rivier,
Haar beker vullende keer op keer,
Haar beker raakt nooit meer op,
Hun harten in haar verloren gegaan,
Voor eeuwig gedoemd zijn zij´

´Zij draagt een duister geheim,
Zij kent hun zwakke plekken,
Zij heeft hen daar geketend,
En trekt hen met haar mee,
Nee, nooit zullen zij ontkomen,
Van de beker van Nakordonne,
Nee, nooit zullen zij haar begrijpen,
In verwarring zullen zij vergaan´

´Aan de zee danst zij met een mes,
En danst zij met een speer,
Een ontmoeting met haar is dodelijk,
Wanneer zij naar je staart ketent zij je hart,
In een slavenkaravaan trekt zij je mee,
Van zee tot zee ga je,
Want je hebt naar de beker gegrepen´

´Oh gulzigaards en dronkaards ….´

Ben ik dat ? vroeg hij zichzelf af.
Maar ik ben toch vrij van haar gekomen sinds mijn moeder haar aanviel ?
Hij durfde er niet met de vrouw die hem tot het kamp had genomen over te praten.
Hij trilde in wanhoop toen hij wakker werd, en durfde niet meer te slapen.

Maar na een tijdje werd hij weer zo moe dat hij in slaap viel, en weer namen de wilde nachtmerries hem mee.

´In bloed heeft zij zich gewassen. Zij staat op met boog en speer,
Klaar voor de jacht, en zij neemt je mee,
In de duisternis zoekt zij naar prooi,
Dan begint de grote jacht,
Zij zal niet loslaten wat zij heeft gezien,
Haar speer zal het doorboren,
Zij roept je op tot de jacht,
Om te worden als haar,
Maar onbereikbaar is zij,

Zij is de pest der nachtmerries´

´Ik kom tot je in bloed,

Om je mee te nemen over de zeeen des doods,

Om je geheimen te leren,

Mijn duistere hart roept je naam,

Ik heb geen hart, het is een masker,

Het enige hart wat ik heb is jouw hart,

Jouw hart is mijn hart,

Ik heb het geroofd en gaf je nieuw leven´

'Er zijn grote geheimen in de zeven woestijnen des doods,

Van hieruit ging alles verkeerd,

Waar zij kruizen is de stad Texab,

Waar de steen des doods bewaakt wordt.'

Hij had van de beker van Nakordonne gedronken om tot de onderwereld te gaan, om zo de veertien bevoren wachters van de klok van Tamin, de spiegel van duisternis, te ontdooien en tot leven te wekken.

Hij was op de zee van wilde dromen.

Liefde en Haat

De mannen en de vrouwen kwamen steeds dichter bij de vulkaan. De grond werd steeds heter onder hun voeten. Als ze hierin zouden afdalen, dan zouden ze in het binnenste van de planeet komen. Nog voordat ze zouden afdalen hoorden ze een kreet. Agdan greep Azeda vast. De grond onder haar voeten leek te verdwijnen. Nu moesten ze snel zijn. Agdan wierp zijn touw naar Osdol, en die bond het snel aan een boom. Agdan zwiepte met Azeda neer beneden, en al snel hadden ook de anderen het touw vanaf de boom vastgegrepen. Nu moesten ze snel zijn, want alles leek op instorten te staan. Maar het was al te laat. Ook de

boom stortte in, en allen vlogen ze gillend naar beneden. Gelukkig kwamen ze in een zacht vlak terecht waarvan de temperatuur dragelijk was, en zo gleden ze verder in de vulkaan.

Jesmig had Misdan's voet vast, en gleed zo achter hem aan. Ze was bang de groep te verliezen. Maar alles ging goed, en na een tijdje kwamen ze binnen in een enorm grote holle ruimte. Zou dit het binnenste van de planeet al zijn. Osdol schreeuwde dat iedereen elkaar vast moest houden. Er konden hier gevaarlijke wezens rondlopen, en er konden zich ook gevaarlijke valstrikken bevinden. Iedereen hield elkaar goed vast, en gelukkig ging alles goed. Totdat er een deur in de holle ruimte openging. Een man in een zwart gewaad en met een lange witte baard kwam naar hem toe. 'Euspuicius,' zei Osdol.

'Je bent toch gekomen, Osdol,' zei de man. 'Ja, oom,' zei Osdol. 'En we hebben het nog wel snel gedaan. Ik had verwacht dat we ...' Maar de man gebood Osdol om stil te zijn. 'Ik ben jullie tegemoetgekomen. Maar we zijn er nog niet,' zei de man. 'Jullie hebben mij nodig, anders overleven jullie het hier niet. Kom, volg mij. Ik weet de weg.'

Toen ze door de deur gingen zagen ze de ravijnen, en er hingen overal adembenemende sieraden. 'Er zijn hier veel valstrikken,' zei de man. 'En jullie moeten eerst gebrandmerkt worden.'

'Gebrandmerkt ?' vroeg Azeda. 'waarvoor ?'

'Dat zul je wel zien,' zei de man. Plotseling zagen ze allerlei vreemd krijsende reuzeninsecten op hen afkomen. Ze leken een beetje op wespen met lange angels. Iedereen schrok. De insecten drukten hun lange angels in het vlees van de groep, en de groep gilde het uit. De angels waren kokendheet, en gingen diep in hun lichamen. De mannen vochten uit alle macht met hun zwaarden, maar de insecten waren veel sneller. De groep begon hevig te bloeden, maar toen vertrokken de insecten ineens onverklaarbaar.

Wees maar blij, zei de oude man. De ravijnen zullen die littekens herkennen, en zullen jullie doorgang geven. Zonder deze wonden zouden jullie door de ravijnen gegrepen worden en opgeslokt worden ....

Iedereen vond dat wel erg vreemd. De oude man wist gelukkig precies de weg, en na een tijd kwamen ze bij zijn huisje aan.

Iedereen was erg moe. De mannen kregen een kamer, en de vrouwen kregen een andere kamer. In de nacht werden ze allen opgeschrikt door een schel krijsend geluid. Eén van de mannen rende naar buiten, en zag een zwevend platform in één van de ravijnen, op dezelfde

hoogte. Een man en wat vrouwen in vreemde klederen riepen hem. Ze schenen zelfs zijn naam te kennen. Als gehypnotiseerd liep de man naar voren, en ook het platform kwam dichtbij. Ook een andere man was inmiddels naar buiten gekomen. ‘Doe het niet, Asdor,’ zei de andere man. Maar Asdor stapte op het platform en toen ging het platform naar de andere kant van het ravijn, en toen langs de vulkanen van de overkant heen, om vervolgens in een bocht te verdwijnen.

‘Ik kan je geen garanties geven over Asdor,’ zei de oude man de volgende dag. ‘Er zijn hier vele volkeren, soms kwaad van zin, soms goed, maar ook heel vaak ertussenin. Maar als jullie gekrijs hoorden, dan was dat waarschijnlijk een vleermuis, of weer insecten.’

De volgdende nacht hoorden ze weer gekrijs. Azeda bleef direkt klaarwakker, terwijl de anderen weer verder sliepen. Langzaam ging ze uit haar bed, en liep naar buiten. Ook zij zag het platform en moest aan Asdor denken. ‘Nee,’ dacht ze bij haarzelf. ‘Dit is niet goed als ik meega.’ Maar plotseling greep een hand haar van achteren. Ze werd geblinddoekt, en al gauw stond ze op het platform. Na een tijdje werd ze van het platform afgeduwd, en de blinddoek ging er weer af. Er was hier een prachtige natuur. Het was als een jungle, en er stroomde een vreemd soort sap. ‘Je hebt dit altijd al gewild,’ zei een stem. ‘Je wist dat het een natuur was, waarin je hetzelfde zou zijn als die natuur, en die natuur als jou. Je wilde wel dat het je zou omhullen.’

‘Oh god, ja,’ zei Azeda, ‘maar waar is Asdor ?’

‘Asdor is in goede handen,’ zei een stem. Ze wist niet waar die stem vandaan kwam, maar van achter duwde iemand haar voorwaarts. Ze durfde niet achterom te kijken. Plotseling werd ze in een grot geduwd, en ze zag Asdor staan. ‘Asdor,’ riep ze.

Asdor glimlachte. ‘Wat is dit voor een natuur ?’ vroeg ze.

‘Mens en natuur is hier één,’ zei Asdor vriendelijk. De natuur was hier als een stel reuzen bij elkaar. Ze ademde de doordringende lucht in, en de warme geur. Ze liep voorzichtig op Asdor af, maar het leek alsof er glas tussen haar en Asdor was. ‘Asdor, ik kan niet verder,’ zei ze. Ze moest een stukje opzij stappen, toen vooruit, toen weer opzij naar de andere kant, en toen weer vooruit. Asdor omhelsde haar. ‘Ben je in orde ?’ vroeg Azeda.

‘Ja,’ fluisterde Asdor. Na niet al te lange tijd kwamen de volgende van hun vrienden hier, en waren overweldigd door de natuur. Verderop was een meer vol van vreemd sap. Er was een eilandje waar ze naartoe zwommen. Ze konden zichzelf helemaal verliezen in deze omgeving.

Maar toen ze naar de andere kant van het meer waren gezwommen zagen ze daar oude mannen in kooien. Een schaduw leek hun enthousiasme te overvallen. ‘Wat is dit voor land ? krijste Azeda, en rende op de kooien af om ze zo snel mogelijk los proberen te krijgen.

‘We weten wel wie jullie zijn,’ zeiden de oude mannen. ‘Jullie zijn van de Xzeda. Jullie openen onze kooien om ons naar nog verschrikkelijkere kooien te leiden.’

‘Nee,’ riep Azeda. ‘We zijn hier niks. Wat is hier aan de hand ?’

‘Oh, zijn jullie niet van de Xzeda ?’ zei een oude man.

‘Nee, zei Asdor, wij zijn niet van deze plaats. Wie zijn de Xzeda ?

‘Zij zijn reuzen-insecten als wespen, en ze komen ook in menselijke vorm. Zij hebben ons hier opgesloten,’ sprak de oude man.

In ieder geval waren de kooien nu open, en ze konden beter bij de oude mannen blijven. Er schenen hier veel gevaren te zijn, en ze hadden al allemaal spijt dat ze meegegaan waren. Maar ook hadden ze zin in avontuur.

De oude mannen leidden hen naar een oude grot. Hier lieten ze oude papieren zien waarop de insecten getekend stonden. ‘Ja, die kennen we,’ zei Azeda, en liet haar wond zien. Ook de oude mannen lieten hun littekens zien. ‘Daarmee houden ze ons in de gaten,’ zei de oude man. ‘ze ruiken het litteken. Daarom moeten we doorreizen anders zullen ze ons vinden.’

De oude man vertelde hen dat ze op zoek moesten naar een nieuw litteken, een teken waardoor de Xzeda niet meer bij hen zou kunnen komen, een teken dat hen zou verwarren.

‘Maar hoe komen we bij dat teken ?’ vroeg Azeda.

De oude man opende een put achterin de grot. Eén voor één daalden ze naar beneden. Er was hier veel modder. Het leidde hen naar een vieze stinkende rivier. De oude man dook in het water, en de rest moest volgen. Maar na een tijdje werden ze omsingeld door piranha’s. De piranha’s leken zich te storten op de oude mannen. De rest kon ontsnappen. Iedereen zwom snel door, maar toen de piranha’s de oude mannen binnen een mum van tijd hadden

verslonden grepen ze ook de anderen. Alleen Asdor en Azeda konden ontsnappen. Asdor had een paar piranha's aan zijn mes geregen, en toen bleven ze uit de buurt. Azeda zwom zo dicht mogelijk bij hem. In de verte zagen ze een berg, en na een tijdje konden ze op de oever klimmen. In de verte hoorden ze gekrijs van reuzen-insecten die steeds dichterbij kwamen. Snel gingen Azeda en Asdor door een gleuf de berg binnen. Ze dachten allebei na over het tweede litteken, hoe ze dat konden krijgen, en waar. In een schacht klommen ze op een trappetje omhoog, en kwamen in een ruimte waar een reuzenoog lag. 'Laten we hier weggaan,' zei Azeda. 'Het bevalt me hier niet.' Een vreemde rook scheen zich te verspreiden.

'We kunnen niet terug,' zei Asdor, 'ik wil niet nog een keer gestoken worden. Laten we op zoek gaan naar het tweede merkteken.' Ze merkten dat ze door de opening een nieuw pad konden volgen. Het was een soort tunnel, en de wanden voelden erg zacht aan. Plotseling kon Asdor zich niet meer bewegen. 'Kom op,' zei Azeda, 'we moeten verder. Je hebt gelijk. We kunnen niet terug, en straks zetten ze ons ook in die kooien waar die oude mannen inzaten.'

'H...h...het komt door die tunnel,' stotterde Asdor ... Azeda nam hem snel op haar rug, en trok hem voort. Na een tijdje gleed ze uit, en ging de tunnel schuin naar beneden. Het was alsof ze in een ruimte waren waar ze niet mochten komen, want ook Azeda kon zich niet meer bewegen. Het was alsof ze door een vreemd insect waren gestoken. Een vreemd oranje gekruisd litteken verscheen op hun bovenbenen. Ineens konden ze weer ademhalen. Beiden waren opgelucht, en konden zich na een tijdje weer een beetje bewegen. Alles was glad hier, en ze gleden nog steeds naar beneden. Ze hielden elkaar stevig vast.

'Wat een vreemde tunnel is dit,' zei Azeda.' Asdor knikte. Ze hielden elkaar vast. 'Dit kan niet goed zijn, Asdor,' zei Azeda. Asdor zei niets. Asdor probeerde grip te krijgen op de tunnel, maar alles ging sneller en sneller. Alles was nat. 'Ik laat je los, Asdor,' zei Azeda. En plotseling kwamen ze in twee verschillende tunnels terecht. Allebei kwamen ze in een bron van vreemd stomend sap terecht. 'Kun je me horen ?' riep Ador.

'Ja !' riep Azeda op haar hardst.

Plotseling hoorde hij Azeda luid krijsen. 'Piranha's !' gilde ze. Asdor raakte in paniek, want hij wist niet hoe hij bij haar moest komen. Na een tijdje was alles stil. Ze hadden haar verscheurd. Asdor liep verder in de bron, en stapte aan de overkant er weer uit. Hij voelde haat en liefde tegelijk naar de natuur, maar bovenal verwarring, ongeloof en onbegrip. Hij liep op een heuveltje omhoog, en ging door een deur naar binnen. Na een tijdje herkende hij het weer. Hij was dicht bij het huis van Osdol's oom. Toen hij binnenkwam zag hij Osdol, de oude man, Agdan, Jesmig en Misdan. Hij had een verhaal te vertellen.

De oude man kon hem wel vertellen hoe de vork in de steel zat. De natuur was verdeeld, zoals de mens verdeeld was, en de natuur was op sommige punten net zo hopeloos en

hulpeloos als de mens dat was. Osdol omhelsde zijn oude vriend, en was blij dat hij het had overleefd. Maar allen treurden ze over Azeda en de anderen die het niet konden navertellen. Asdor liet hen het litteken zien wat hij erbij had gekregen, het oranje kruisje op zijn bovenbeen. Als dit het teken was waar de oude mannen over spraken, dan zou hij nu niet meer door de reuzen-insecten lastig gevallen kunnen worden, maar omdat Azeda dat kruisje ook had, wist hij dat de strijd tegen de piranha's in ieder geval nog niet over was. En wat als dat helemaal niet het teken was waardoor hij macht over de Xzeda zou hebben ? Dan kon hij nog steeds hun prooi worden, om in hun kooien een oude man te worden. Daar had hij niet zoveel zin in. Door zijn onwetendheid zou hij dus een groot risico lopen als hij zou teruggaan. Maar iets in hem trok hem.

Osdol en Agdan vonden op een dag een gebied vol vulkanen nog dieper onder de grond. Deze vulkanen waren anders dan ze ooit hadden gezien, en al gauw haalden ze de anderen erbij. Ook Ogdol's oom ging mee. Er waren hier vreemdsoortige slangen, en sommigen van hen waren erg groot, zo groot dat ze de vulkanen met gemak konden wurgen. Allen keken ze vol bewondering naar hoe de slangen zich over de vulkanische oppervlaktes bewogen. De hittes waren groter dan normaal, maar veel minder pijnlijk. De pijn zou je kunnen vergelijken met gestoken te worden door een steekvlieg. Langzaam zakten de mannen naar beneden in een krater, en ook de vrouwen volgden hen. Osdol's oom bleef staan, wenste hen een goede reis, en ging na wat waarschuwingen weer terug. Ze waren met z'n vijven : drie mannen en twee vrouwen. Nog steeds treurden ze over Azeda, die door piranha's was verslonden.

Maar de schrik sloeg hen om 't hart toen ze iets onderin de krater zagen bewegen. Het was een been. En plotseling kwam er een heel lichaam uit. Het was Azeda. Iedereen was erg blij, en verbaasd. 'Wij dachten dat je verslonden was door piranha's,' sprak Agdan.

'Nee,' zei Azeda, terwijl ze hen één voor één omhelsde. 'de piranha's trokken mij mee in de diepte van de bron waarin ik was gegleden, en brachten mij hier. De grond is erg vruchtbaar.'

'Hoe bedoel je ?' vroeg Agdan. 'We verwachtten hier de dood, maar je zegt nu dat alles hier leeft ?' Osdol's oom had hen verteld dat dieper in de aarde alles praktisch dood was, alleen vuur, veel vuur, en vulkaan-activiteit. Nu hoorden en zagen ze iets anders. 'Kom mee,' zei Azeda, en leidde hen door het gat waaruit ze gekomen was. Er waren hier meren, en daarin konden ze gewoon zwemmen. Agdan omhelsde Azeda, en samen gleden ze in de diepte van een kratermeer. Dat had hij zolang niet kunnen doen. Ook de andere mannen en vrouwen volgden. Azeda wist hier de weg. Ze konden hier gewoon ademen. Een geur maakte zich van hen meester, als de rook van hete vulkanen. Er groeiden hier vreemde planten met vreemde vruchten. Azeda gaf hen allemaal te eten, en vertelde honderduit.

De bodem van het meer voelde ribbelig aan, en was bruin-roze. Het water was zo helder dat ze alles goed konden zien. Ook het water ribbelde. Hier waren de piranha's niet agressief. Het was alsof ze hier thuis waren gekomen, en hun rust hadden gevonden. Het was hier

zoveel beter dan in een gewone rivier of een gewoon meer. Dit was magisch. Iedereen was blij dat Azeda weer terecht was gekomen.

Eén van de mannen gleed door een nauwe opening. Al snel volgden de anderen. Diep van onderen hoorden ze een geluid. Het was een lange tunnel. In de ruimte waar ze terecht waren gekomen was alles heel zacht en donzig, en overal om hen heen stonden prachtige motors door zonlicht overgoten. Boven hen schitterde de roze zon. Al snel crosten ze door de gangen, door licht verhelderd. Niet lang daarna waren ze op de uitgestrekte vlaktes.

De zon ging onder, en het werd nacht. Een kou raasde over de vlaktes, en ze zochten warmte bij elkaar. Er was niets rustgevenders dan hier te wonen, maar al gauw werden ze ergens door opgejaagd wat ze niet konden verklaren. Een vreemd gevoel van binnen. Wat zo mooi had kunnen zijn liep al snel uit op een nachtmerrie. Ze werden gevangen genomen door ratten. Gebonden op de ruggen van de ratten werden ze tot duistere plaatsen gebracht. Hier was de kou de baas, en wanneer er hitte was, dan was het gewoon de pijn. Ze herinnerden hun motors die schitterden in de stralen van de zon. Ze verlangden terug naar die tijden, maar zij waren nu gevangenen van de ratten. En voor hoe lang ? Misschien wel voor altijd.

Na lange nachten van hopeloosheid, pijn en verdriet hoorden ze ineens schoten. Overal om hen heen zagen ze ratten neervallen. Het was Osdol’s oom. Hij had een grote motor meegenomen, en al snel zaten ze allemaal achterop. Met grote snelheid croste de oude man uit de schuur van de ratten. Hij kende de weg hier wel, en kende ook de gevaren. Maar zij die pas waren bevrijd waren geheel afgestompd. Ze voelden niets anders dan een botte pijn. Als dit het leven was. En wie vertelde hen dat niet nog grotere gevaren hen al opwachten ? Ze hadden nergens meer zin in. Het was alsof het trauma van de ratten hen diep verwond had, met eeuwige wonden. Het was alsof de ratten nog steeds binnen in hen leefden. Thuisgekomen bij Osdol’s oom namen ze allemaal een warm bad, maar niets scheen te helpen. Eigenlijk wilden ze gewoon helemaal naar huis, want ze hadden genoeg van het leven onder de aarde. In hun ogen was het allemaal te duur.

Op een dag raakte Agdan Azela aan. Azela gilde het uit. Het deed pijn, alsof ze in de brandnetels was gevallen. En dit was zelfs erger .... zo erg dat ze helemaal in paniek raakte bij de gedachte dat hij het weer zou kunnen doen. ‘Doe dat nooit meer,’ krijste ze. Agdan was de eerste die helemaal herstelde, en wilde terug naar de diepte om uit te vinden wat daar gaande was. Maar de anderen wilden hem niet laten gaan. Bij de vrouwen leken de wonden erger dan ooit tevoren.

Op een dag bood Osdol’s oom aan om op de grote motor samen met Agdan terug naar de diepte te gaan. De vrouwen vertrouwden Osdol’s oom, en alhoewel ze zelf niet meegingen, gaven ze wel toestemming aan Agdan om mee te gaan.

De motor ging ditmaal dieper dan ooit tevoren, en ze kwamen zelfs op terrein waar Osdol’s

oom nog nooit was geweest. Hij wist dat het gevaarlijk was, maar het ging om het hogere goed. Zoete geuren leken naar hen te lonken. Maar beiden waren ze op hun hoede. Een vrouw staarde hen aan, een vrouw die ze niet kenden. Toen rende de vrouw weg. Langzaam kwamen Agdan en de oude man dichterbij. Door een gleuf in een rots zagen vulkanen. Er kwam een indringende, hypnotiserende geur door de gleuf heen. Boven de vulkanen hing een duistere bruine zon. Ze konden niet door de gleuf heen, alhoewel ze dat wel zouden willen. Ze vroegen zich af waar de vrouw naartoe was gegaan.

Het beklimmen van de rots was erg gevaarlijk, maar na een tijdje kwamen ze er toch overheen. Ook hesen ze met een touw de motor van de oude man over de rots heen. De lichten die hier waren, waren verzwakkend. Vanuit de meertjes schepte de oude man wat van de vreemde sappen in kruiken en flessen. De man herkende dit spul als geneesmiddelen voor eeuwige wonden. Verder merkten ze dat ze direkt weer moesten vertrekken, vanwege de dreigende lucht, die hun zuurstof begon af te nemen. Thuisgekomen na een lange reis werden de vrouwen en de overige mannen met het sap ingesmeerd, en begonnen wonderbaarlijk te herstellen. Agdan vroeg zich echter af waarom hij zonder het sap was hersteld. De man zei dat hij waarschijnlijk dat sap al in zijn lichaam droeg.

Het Skelettenleger

Onder de aarde leven de ergst mogelijke indianenstammen, daar waar de dood heerst. Zij leven van de dood, en doden om te leven. Hun meester : Krikwistik, een luguber skelet, die zijn opperhoofden heeft aangesteld over elke stam : elke stam één. Aan Krikwistik hebben zij allemaal verantwoording af te leggen. Als zij niet wreed genoeg zijn, dan komen ze voor de baas. Als zij niet overal dood en ellende brengen, dan zijn zij de pineut. Want wee degene die zich niet aan de wetten van Krikwistik houd, die zal ten prooie vallen aan iets ergers dan de dood, namelijk Krikwistik zelf.

Luid gillend en roepend zit hij op z’n paard om de stammen langs te gaan. En daar waar hij ongehoorzaamheid vind zullen klappen vallen. Harde klappen, want hij is immers Krikwistik, de verschrikkelijke.

Al die armelijke zielen gebonden door zijn ketenen hebben geen hoop wanneer zij voor Krikwistik moeten verschijnen. Hij geeft hen dood op dood. Over skeletten heerst hij, en hun geestverschijningen, om goedbedoelende en onwetende zielen te verstrikken in zijn netten. Over hun hoofden voert hij macht, en zijn toorn daalt op hen in de vorm van visioenen. Nee, niemand kan ontsnappen aan de toorn van Krikwistik. Zij die willen ontsnappen, of zijn valse genade en valse hoop aannemen, zakken alleen dieper weg in zijn valstrikken. Zij vallen ten prooi aan de meest doortrapte en wreedste indiaanse dodenstammen, waar skeletten hun lusten botvieren op hopeloze schepselen.

Op de vlakte van Terezebil rijdt een dodenrijder, hoog op ’t paard, met vlag en speer. De vlag is een visioen die hij zijn slachtoffers voorhoudt. Als hij spreekt, bedriegt hij, bedottend. Zijn speer treft altijd. Hij is de rechterhand van Krikwistik, de ondeugd. Dan gilt hij om zijn geestesverschijning te verruilen voor zijn verschijning als skelet. Geen dier of ziel is veilig voor hem.

In de verte zijn de optochten van zielen die steun zoeken bij elkaar. In lange gewaden gaan zij, met kappen over hun hoofden. Maar de dodenrijder komt naar hen toe, en rijgt hen allen meedogenloos aan zijn speer, om met een slavenleger te vertrekken. Niemand zal werkeloos zijn in de dodensferen van Krikwistik. Niemand zal zich bezig houden met klagende optochten van het ach en wee. Nee, werken zullen ze allemaal, wanneer de speer van de dodenrijder hen doorsteekt.

De achtkoppige hond van Krikwistik gaat langs de huizen waar de zielen der vennen wonen. Speelt daar een kind onbewaakt, dan grijpt één der koppen het kind, en brengt het naar het rijk van Krikwistik. Er is geen hoop voor hen die door Krikwistik geketend worden. Zijn ketens zijn onverbrekelijk.

Een moeder gilt. Haar tweede kind verloren in zo’n korte tijd. De wind huilt en giert, en niemand die helpt. Tovenaars zijn veelal corrupt hier. Vaak werken ze rechtstreeks voor Krikwistik.

Maldachus is een hondenrijder. Ook hij vangt zielen, en brengt ze naar Krikwistik. Hij voert een leger aan van hondenrijders. Als zij de wind bespelen, dan roven zij de zielen uit hun bedden. Dit doen zij door bedriegelijke dromen. Zij zenden hun nachtmerries uit als wilde honden, om later een rijke vangst binnen te halen. Als de dodenvissers zijn zij.

Voor zoveel kinderen is het de laatste dag op school wanneer Krikwistik zelf op zijn wagen door de lucht gaat. Hij gelooft niet in dodenopvoeding. Ze moeten wild gemaakt worden, om aan zijn wetten onderworpen te worden.

Het geheim van zijn macht ? Een apparaat waarmee hij de aarde kan verschuiven, een machine die de ziel van een meisje vasthoudt. Eens vond hij haar op hulpeloze vlaktes. Maar al snel zag hij de bijzonderheid en zeldzaamheid van dit kind, en nam haar eerst onder zijn hoede. Maar toen het meisje zich niet aan hem onderwierp werd ze al snel het slachtoffer van zijn wreedheden.

Oh, begeert is dit apparaat in de onderwerelden. Hiermee maakt hij indrukwekkende progressies van windstreek tot windstreek, en maakt hij iedereen voor hem in siddering.

Niets dan dood en verderf zaait hij, en door de angst maakt hij bezit van hen. Ja, dan schiet hij pijlen van visioenen door hun botten heen, pijlen gemaakt van slangen. En zo voert hij hen gillend aan van dichtbij. Ja, hij woont in zijn slaven, door het vreemde apparaat. En zo, door het apparaat, werd hij Krikwistik, de Bottenspietser. Geen skelet is voor hem onbereikbaar. Door het apparaat heeft hij hen allen in zijn macht. Zijn stem is als het spietsen van botten.

Elke adem komt voort uit het apparaat, elk licht, elke geur. En alles wat het apparaat doet is bottenspietsen, als een schietende naaimachine. Niemand vind zichzelf nog terug die door Krikwistik is gestoken. Zij vallen allemaal als in een diepe slaap, en worden door vreemde dromen weer opgewekt. Zij leven voor en door ... de dood.

Er is geen geest die dichterbij kan komen dan Krikwistik, en er is geen geest die verder weg kan zijn dan hij. En daarom komen klappen dan ook veel harder aan, gaan pijlen sneller en dieper. Hij voert een leger aan van de dood. En allen brengen zij voort : de melk van de dood.

Niemand steekt dieper dan Krikwistik, daar waar geen tovenaar kan komen. Over hun hoofden voert hij macht. Zij die ongehoorzaam zijn doet hij lijden, diep in zijn martelkelders. Zij lijden daar zonder enige vorm van verlichting, omdat zij het hadden gewaagd de meester te dwarsbomen. Nu zijn zij dan vol spijt en wroeging.

Krikwistik is een dun skelet met een klein hoofdje en een reusachtige cape. Hiermee rijdt hij vaak op hoge paarden, of op zijn wagens, gevolgd door duizenden, zo niet miljoenen skeletten die hem dienen en volgen. Over de dood heerst hij.

Op een dag onthoofde hij een meisje, en stopte haar hoofd in een vissenkom. Dit soort lugubere dingen deed hij veel, om zijn koninkrijk van assecoires uit te breiden. Hij was een verzamelaar van vreemde objecten, en alles leek aan kettingen vast te zitten. Zijn lievertjes hadden extra voorrechten. Meestal hield dat in dat zij mochten jagen op de voor anderen verboden terreinen.

Zij waren de verzamelaars van doodskoppen en zielen, waarmee ze hun eigen hutten bouwden. Ze waren dikwijls rumoerig en luid schreeuwend, en waren de schrik onder de dodenstammen. Krikwistik was erg trots op hen, want zij hielpen hem de angst staande te houden. Deze skeletten waren wild, en brachten chaos waar ze kwamen.

Eens bracht hij de vissenkom met het meisjeshoofd naar een dodensmid, die er een lichtgevende punt van maakte op zijn dodenstaf. Hiermee kon hij de doodskoppen doorboren.

De dodenrijder is het voorwerp van zijn trots. Ook de dodenrijder heeft vele voorrechten, en hen die hij voorrechten heeft gegeven. De dodenrijder woont aan de stranden van de dood, en zij die van hem voorrechten hebben gekregen wonen vaak aan strandjes van bosmeren en andere doodsmeren en doodsrivieren. Op een dag gaf Krikwistik hem een speerpunt waarmee hij zielen kon spietsen als door een schietende naaimachine.

De hut van de dodenrijder is gemaakt van botten, doodskoppen, en hopeloos bungelende zielen. Zij gillen wanneer iemand dichtbij komt. De hut van Krikwistik is gemaakt van lugubere voorwerpen, en van de dood zelf. Hopeloos bungelende zielen gillen wanneer hij langskomt, en zij ijlen.

Door een bepaalde vloeistof kan hij de doodskoppen en de botten laten krimpen en laten verkleuren. Hier sterft de dood nooit. Ook slapen zij niet. Er komt nooit een einde aan hun lijden. Alles doet hen gillen en verkleuren.

De hutten van hen die voorrechten hebben zijn ook gedecoreerd door dit soort dingen. Alhoewel velen in wigwams wonen. Wanneer zij klederen dragen, dan zijn deze gemaakt door een speciale kleermaker van Krikwiktus.

Deze kleermaker woont diep in het dodenbos, waar hij zijn zielenfokkerijen heeft, allemaal voor zijn werk. Ook hij is de trots van Krikwiktus, een man met vele voorrechten, en velen die hij met voorrechten heeft bekleed. In de jungle van de dood werkt hij met zijn vloeistoffen.

De jagers van de kleermaker zijn meedogenloos, omdat ze maar één doel hebben : huiden, botten, en andere assecoires voor de kleermaker. Ook werken de zielen mee aan het bereiden van de vloeistoffen.

Deze zielen slapen nooit, door de dood sterven zij niet. Zij zijn ingespoten met vloeistoffen

die hen altijd wakker houden, en om alles gillen zij.

Sommige zielen zijn geheel gemaakt van geluiden, en anderen zijn geheel gemaakt van geuren, maar de kleermaker doorsteekt hen allemaal. Krikwistik gaf hem eens een schietende boor. Ook heeft hij een schietende zaag. Nee, niemand is veilig wanneer de kleermaker op jacht gaat. Meestal laat hij dat doen door zijn jagers, maar soms gaat hij zelf op jacht. Dan gaat hij naar de stranden, naar de doodsmeren en de doodsrivieren. Ook vijvers slaat hij niet over. Het is een beestachtig skelet, met een reusachtige cape die hij telkens om zijn dunne lichaam heenslaat. Krijsend voert hij hen aan in de jacht, en krijsend doorboort hij zijn slachtoffers. In de nachten doorboort hij hun bedden, want zij zullen niet slapen. Daar zal hij wel voor zorgen. Hij legt kreeften op hun huiden, om de vloeistoffen binnen te brengen, en dan staan zij op voor altijd, als zombies. Nooit meer werden zij door de slaap gewassen sinds zij waren aangeraakt door de kleermaker.

’s Nachts liepen zij paniekerig heen en weer, totdat de kleermaker ook hun oren doorboorde, hun keel en hun neus. En zo werden hun geesten doorboort, en stonden zij aan de doodsmeren en doodsrivieren. Ja, de kleermaker bouwde van hen hutten en wigwammen. Ook maakte hij wapens van hen.

Er was niemand gemener dan Krikwistik die zijn dienstknechten zo geprogrammeerd had : de dodenrijder, zijn rechterhand, en dan Maldachus de hondenrijder, de achtkoppige hond, en de kleermaker. Zij waren de werktuigen van een luguber apparaat.

Op een dag maakte hij hen week als lammetjes, en riep hij zijn lievertjes, degenen die hijzelf met voorrechten had bekleed. Dit was de dag dat zijn lievertjes de taken overnamen. Het was de dag waarop de windstreken van de dood begonnen te bloeden. Niemand had deze slachting zien aankomen, en Krikwiktus werd verhoogd in een vloeistof waar niemand meer kon slapen of sterven. Zij waren de levende dood, en werken zouden zij. Het skelet voerde een leger van zombies aan, en sindsdien had zijn koninkrijk geen grenzen meer. Krikwiktus had altijd al gewacht op de dag dat hij zijn metgezellen uit de weg zou ruimen.

Een nieuwe kleermaker stond op, die krijsend de slaven aanvoerde. En deze kleermaker was zo goed dat er nieuwe lichamen gemaakt werden, de lichamen van de dood. Maar alleen Krikwistik bepaalde wie die lichamen zouden krijgen. Krikwistik had die voorrechten alleen voor zijn lievertjes bepaald. En de hopeloze, hulpeloze en weke zielen die die lichamen zagen werden geteisterd door de bottenketeners, geesten die de botten vastketenden, een grijze massa die hun hersenen scheen te verlammen.

En de broosheid van de zielen zonder hoop begon alleen maar te groeien, en werd een delicatesse voor het skelet. Deze zielen brachten een nieuwe drank voort : de nieuwe melk van de dood. Dit was een stinkende melk waarvan de nieuwe lichamen leefden.

De nieuwe lichamen stelden zich op bij de doodsrivieren en doodsmeren, en vormden nieuwe groepen en stammen. Vaak waren er gevechten, tot groot plezier van Krikwistik. Maar het grootste plezier hechtte hij aan de zorg, die helemaal geen zorg was. Zij die er waren om wonden te verbinden maakten het alleen maar erger. Dit waren de valstrikken van Krikwistik.

Krikwistik had er een genoegen in die valstrikken uit te denken. Het was een meesterbrein. Door indiaanse geesten, skeletten en zombies bracht hij doem op de vlaktes van de dood. Hij was de dood zelf, de levende dood.

Op een dag kwam er een indiaanse geest naar de dodenhut van Krikwistik. De indiaanse geest verkocht skeletten, en was nog niet goed op de hoogte wie Krikwistik was. ‘Skeletten te koop,’ zei de ietwat verwarde geest tegen Krikwistik die verbaasd naar buiten kwam. Krikwistik sloeg de geest neer, en stal zijn wagen vol skeletten. Later kwam Krikwistik erachter dat het een gouden vangst was, want deze skeletten konden doordringen tot in de dieptes van de grond, en van gesteentes. En voor Krikwistik was het een koud kunstje ze te temmen.

Het gebeurde vaak dat verwarde geesten langskwamen om dingen te verkopen. Krikwistik kocht nooit wat. Hij stal alleen.

Een geest genaamd Zeverdijm dacht dat hij een skelet was, maar Krikwistik liet hem keer op keer zien dat hij toch maar gewoon een geest was. Geesten waren hier ondergeschikt aan de skeletten, alhoewel sommige indiaanse geesten veel macht over skeletten konden hebben. Zielen en zombies waren over het algemeen ondergeschikt aan de geesten, maar hierin waren ook uitzonderingen. Er waren zielen die verschrikkelijk veel macht hadden. Dit was dan omdat Krikwistik daar een reden voor had. Krikwistik was sluw en listig, en voor geen gat te vallen. Hij was de oudste van allemaal.

Het ging Krikwistik allemaal niet zozeer om kracht, maar om sluwheid. Hij was een intelligent meesterbrein. Hij kon uren nadenken over zijn machtsgebied, en dacht dingen uit om zijn machtspositie te versterken. Hiervoor riep hij dan vaak de hulp van de dodensmid in.

Op een dag had hij een dodenspiegel neergezet. Het was als een web waarmee hij zielen, geesten en nog lagere doodsvormen lokte. Door de dodenspiegel zagen ze hun geliefden, maar konden daarna niet meer uit de webben loskomen. Zo werden ze levend voer voor Krikwistik.

Er was geen groter genot voor Krikwistik dan de dodenspiegel, waar hij ook zijn apparaat door liet werken. Zelf kon hij door de dodenspiegel door alle grenzen heen reizen, en

werden zijn verschijningen nog machtiger. Krikwistik wilde het ‘Al’ in handen hebben. En hij wist dat hij daarvoor een labyrint moest bouwen met bedriegelijke, misleidende en verlokkende verschijningen. Ook de lagere doodsvormen kwamen al snel in zijn hand. En er was veel waarvoor hij hen kon gebruiken.

Zij werkten in het labyrint, en al snel begon hij liefde te vatten voor sommige lagere doodsvormen. Hij stelde zijn zielen en zombies over grote hoeveelheden van hen aan. Zij waren als kreeften en kwallen die in de hersenen van hun slachtoffers gingen wonen, en hen zo van misleiding tot misleiding brachten, steeds dieper in het labyrint. Ze maakten hun slachtoffers zo tot altijdgroeiende voedselbronnen.

En zo werd het labyrint van Krikwiktus een stempel dat gedrukt werd op een ieder die zich met de dood inliet. Iedere ziel die zich door de lagere vormen van de dood liet verlokken werd gebrandmerkt. Voor Krikwiktus was het alleen een teken van zijn macht.

Einde

De Skelettenrijder

Er was eens een jongen die de moeders van andere jongens roofde. Hij had een luchtschip geheel gebouwd van botten, waarmee hij op de winden van de dood dreef. Ook had hij een heleboel muziekinstrumenten van de dood gemaakt. Hiermee betoverde hij de moeders altijd, en maakte hen zo deel van zijn harem.

Maar vrij waren die moeders niet. Ze waren nu voor altijd aan zijn schip geketend. Het was een groot schip, dat wel, en de moeders hadden ook wel veel beweegruimte, maar ontsnappen konden ze niet. De jongen was een schurk, een bandiet, een moederdief, maar hij was bovenal een moordenaar, een huurmoordenaar. Voor geld deed hij alles, omdat hij zo zijn schip kon uitbouwen, en zijn verzameling instrumenten. De jongen was de schrik van de dood, en maakte mooie muziek om te ontvoeren en te moorden. Maar de moeders hield hij veelal in leven. Zij werden de slaven op zijn schip. Tijd om te rouwen was er niet. Er moest gewerkt worden.

Vroeger was de jongen lid van een straatbende, een motorbende, maar nu was zeilen op zijn doodsschip zijn grote liefde. Het was een lieve jongen, die maar hoefde te glimlachen om

iemand te betoveren. Hij had van die diepe ogen waar je van weg kon smelten. Vroeger moordde hij altijd door messen, maar nu verdronk hij zijn slachtoffers. Hij lokte ze eerst naar het water en dan sloeg hij zijn slag. Hij hield zich daarom veel op bij de meren van de dood.

Ook was de jongen een strateeg. Je kon bij hem legers inhuren. Hij was een zakenman van de dood geworden. Zelf was hij al jaren dood, en daarom gaf hij niks meer om het leven. De dood leverde hem alleen maar geld op.

Zo op het eerste gezicht hingen zijn haren altijd voor zijn ogen, maar als je dan dichterbij kwam, dan zag je zijn prachtige donkere ogen er doorheen. Velen smeekten hem altijd hen mee te nemen op zijn boot over de rivieren en de meren van de dood, en om hen de geheimen van de dood te leren kennen.

Iedereen die zijn prachtige muziek hoorde scheen niets meer om het leven te geven, alleen maar om de dood. Het was een zachte jongen, maar wel één die de nachtmerrie bracht. Hij kon je de stuipen op het lijf jagen. Hij dronk al vele jaren van de geheime wateren van de dood, waar alleen zijn schip kon komen. Daar liet hij de vrouwen baden. Dat deed hij altijd als het dodenrood aan de hemel stond.

Maar op een dag viel een wilde indianenstam zijn schip aan. Het waren skeletten, zombies, geesten en lagere doodsvormen. Ze trokken zijn schip de diepte in. De indiaanse dodenstam werd aangevoerd door een skelettenrijder. Hij had een kaal hoofd met een hanenkam. De jongen kende de skelettenrijder wel, want ze hadden vroeger in dezelfde straatbende gezeten. Het werd een lang gevecht, waarin de skelettenrijder uiteindelijk het schip overnam. De vrouwen moesten nu nog harder werken, en werden veel ruwer behandeld. De huid van de jongen werd afgesneden, en zijn skelet werd aan de voorkant van het schip vastgeregen. De skelettenrijder kon niet veel doen met de muziekinstrumenten, en maakte er wapens van en jachtgerei. Ook maakte hij er kooien van waar veel vrouwen in terecht kwamen. Na een tijdje kreeg de skelettenrijder genoeg van het schip, en liet er hutten van maken.

De skelettenrijder roofde vaders, en stopte hen in de kooien. Vaak liet hij de moeders weer vrij. Vaak gebruikte hij de mannen voor zijn legers. Ook hij had vele huurlegers. Maar op een dag stopte hij daarmee. Hij wilde leven door de jacht en niet door geld. Voor hem had de dood niets met geld te maken maar met de jacht. De winden van de dood hielden zich met geld bezig, maar de stormen van de dood hielden zich bezig met de jacht.

Hij jaagde voor huiden, botten en vlees, om zichzelf te kunnen kleden en voeden. Ook zette hij daarvoor een fokkerij op, zodat hij minder hoefde te jagen. Hij zette hiervoor een heleboel vallen uit. De skelettenrijder maakte door botten stevig aan elkaar te binden fuiken van kooien, waardoor de prooi in een fokkooi terechtkwam. Hier stierven de fokprooien niet, maar werden zo een bron van kleding en voedsel. Als de prooien na een aantal jaren

geen huid en vlees meer produceerden werden ze skeletten, en daardoor bruikbaar voor andere dingen. De skelettenrijder besteedde het meest aandacht aan de skelettenfokkerijen. Maar al gauw ontdekte hij een varkenssoort dat eeuwenlang vlees en huid kon voortbrengen. Het waren de doodsvarkens van het Afgazide-soort.

De Skelettenrijder had een kleine doodskop om zijn nek waarmee hij met gemak kon infiltreren onder hen die dachten dat ze leefden. De skelettenrijder zei altijd dat ze in bevroren dromen leefden. In zijn ogen waren ze de lagere vormen van de dood. Ze staarden zich altijd zo blind op de weinige zintuigen die ze hadden, dat de rest er dood bijhing. Zij die van de dood leefden hadden veel meer zintuigen, zoals de jacht en de slacht. Op zijn voorhoofd had de skelettenrijder een steen die zijn fokzintuig was. Maar de skelettenrijder had veel meer zintuigen. De dood had zoveel zintuigen.

Op een dag werd de skelettenrijder lastig gevallen door een apparaat dat zielen doorboorde. In het begin leek de skelettenrijder zich er goed doorheen te slaan, maar later begon het apparaat aan hem te kleven, en drong naar binnen. Sindsdien was de skelettenrijder zichzelf niet meer, en werd alles door het apparaat overgenomen. Hij probeerde zijn drie sterkste zintuigen uit op het apparaat om los te komen, de grote drie : jacht, slacht en fok, maar het apparaat was veel te sterk. Na een lange strijd had de skelettenrijder geen ziel meer, en was nu geheel een skelet geworden. Het apparaat had zijn ziel geheel opgeslokt, en vertrok weer. Sindsdien merkte de skelettenrijder dat zijn reukvermogen sterk verbeterd was, en was daarom het apparaat zelfs dankbaar.

Een steen op zijn buik was zijn slacht-zintuig, en een steen op zijn borst was zijn jacht-zintuig. Het JSF-moduum was een orgaan in zijn voeten die de grote drie bestuurde. Het belangrijkste orgaan wat daaruit voortkwam was de penuum, het geslachtsorgaan, dat creativiteit voortbracht. Hierop was zijn gehele schepping gebouwd. Er werd niet in termen van sex gedacht, alleen maar door dit systeem. Sex was verraderlijk, omdat het de hoofdzintuigen afsloot, en de bijzintuigen opblies, voor de algehele aftakeling van het zintuigelijke.

Het beste wapen dat de skeletttenrijder had was een boog waarmee hij botten kon spietsen. Hiermee ving hij de skeletten. Vaak ging hij er gillend mee op jacht. Door te gillen opende hij al zijn zintuigen, en activereerde hij zijn boog. In de gevangen skeletten plaatste hij implantaten die hun botten automatisch spietsten wanneer ze aangroeiden. En daarom werd hij genoemd : de skelettenrijder.

Het was altijd indrukwekkend als hij op zijn wagen reed, geheel gemaakt van skeletten. Maar op een dag kwam het apparaat terug om zijn botten te doorspietsen. Het apparaat had een veel betere apparatuur dan hijzelf had, en al snel kleefde het apparaat aan hem vast, en drong weer naar binnen. Ditmaal om een implantaat te plaatsen dat zijn botten automatisch zou spietsen. Maar dit implantaat spietste niet eenmalig en niet alleen maar dat wat aangroeide. Nee, dit implantaat bleef spietsen totdat het bot een grijze massa was geworden. De botten werden geheel misvormd tot een nieuwe creatie. De skelettenrijder begon te

groeien. Ook begon de skelettenrijder verfijnder te bewegen. Na een lange tijd vertrok het apparaat weer. De skelettenrijder paste zijn boog aan, en ging weer op jacht. Ditmaal zocht hij ook de grotere skeletten op, omdat hij zelf ook groter was geworden.

‘Necreon !’ sprak een reuzenskelet tot hem. De reus was erg vriendelijk. De reus had een wagen geheel gemaakt van Afgazide-varkensskeletten. De skelettenrijder wist dat het eeuwen zou duren voordat zo’n wagen klaar zou zijn, omdat het doodsvarkens waren wiens huid en vlees bleef groeien. De reus bood de skelettenrijder zijn wagen aan, en zei weer ‘Necreon !’

De skelettenrijder ging in de wagen zitten. Deze wagen was minstens dertig keer zo groot als zijn oude, en de reus maakte hem duidelijk dat deze wagen ook wel minstens dertig keer zo snel ging. Ook brachten de botten telkens een vloeistof voort waar de skelettenrijder van zou kunnen drinken. Die vloeistof was ook het geheim van de kracht en de snelheid van de wagen, en zorgde ervoor dat de wagen niet afbrak. De wagen was erg veerkrachtig en soepel.

De reus liet hem zien hoe de wagen gestart moest worden, en begon te gillen. Zo hard en vibrerend kon de skelettenrijder niet gillen. Toen haalde de reus een implantaat uit zijn borst en plaatste het in de borst van de skelettenrijder. Toen kon de skelettenrijder gillen als nooit tevoren, en kon de wagen starten. De reus rende achter de wagen aan, en ging even later op het achterste gedeelte van de wagen zitten. Samen maakte ze de grootste jacht die ze ooit hadden gehouden. Ze waren op zoek naar skeletten, en dan voornamelijk de reuzenskeletten.

De reus leidde hem naar een plaats waar de reuzenskeletten van varkens woonden, en de reus bouwde een wagen groter dan die van de skelettenrijder. De reus legde hem uit hoe zo’n wagen te bouwen, en al snel kon ook de skelettenrijder zulke reuzenwagens bouwen als de beste. De vriendschap met de reus betekende veel voor de skelettenrijder.

Het implantaat van het apparaat zorgde ervoor dat de skelettenrijder steeds groter en groter werd, en op een dag was hij groter dan de reus, en verliet hem. De skelettenrijder ging zich bezig houden met het fokken van de reuzenskelettenwagens. Steeds weer bouwde hij grotere en betere wagens.

Einde

De Skelettenrijder II

Op een grote heuvel stond zijn nieuwe wagen, geheel gemaakt van de skeletten van de afgazide-varkens. Vol trots beklom hij de heuvel. De wagen was heel lang, en stond daar gestroomlijnt, schitterende in de zon van de dood. ‘Ik wilde dat ik deze al langer had,’ zei de skelettenrijder tegen zichzelf. Hij startte de wagen door een gil, en reed er mee weg. Hij reed er mee naar een dodenstad geheel gemaakt van botten. Langs de weg stonden wat vrouwen die wel een ritje met zo’n wagen wilden maken. Deze vrouwen hadden vreemde lichtgevende strepen op hun rug. Maar de skelettenrijder had geen tijd voor die onzin. Trouwens, hij wist hoe gemeen die vrouwen konden zijn. Ze konden je wagen stuk maken, of zelfs van je afroven.

In de stad leverde hij even een pakketje af, en racete toen verder. Een heleboel van zijn oude wagens werkten nu in zijn fokkerijen. Op eenzame vlaktes sprong er opeens een vrouw in zijn wagen, die hij er ook snel weer uitduwde. Hij had geen tijd voor die onzin. Die vrouwen moesten zelf maar aan een wagen zien te komen. Maar steeds meer schenen ze zich tussen de skeletten van de wagen te verstoppen.

Op een dag was zijn wagen gestolen, en hij wist wel bijna zeker dat vrouwen dat hadden gedaan. Een skelet van een gorilla trooste hem, en gaf hem een nieuwe wagen, nog groter en langer dan de vorige. De gorilla leerde hem gillen zoals niemand anders kon, zodat hij zijn nieuwe wagen kon starten, en zo niemand anders de wagen kon starten. Het skelet van de gorilla zou voortaan met hem meerijden, in ieder geval voorlopig, om de verstekelingen uit de wagen te smijten.

Maar steeds meer vrouwen probeerden op allerlei manieren een plaatsje in de wagen te krijgen. De skelettenrijder begon eraan te wennen, spietste gewoon hun botten en maakte hen deel van de wagen. De botten van de vrouwen schenen snel weer te verteren. De skelettenrijder had er niet veel interesse in om van vrouwenskeletten wagens te maken, omdat er van de skeletten van de afgazide-varkens veel betere en snellere wagens gemaakt konden worden. Ook liet hij veel mannenskeletten die hij vroeger voor de wagens gebruikte vrij.

Hij ging van dodenstad naar dodenstad voor nieuwe onderdelen voor zijn wagen. Hij wilde van zijn wagenfokkerij af, om zo met zijn nieuwe wagen, die een fokkerij op zich was, de Afgazide-woestijn over te gaan. Zo verkocht hij zijn wagenfokkerijen voor nieuwe onderdelen voor zijn nieuwe wagen. De nieuwe wagen zou zo krachtig en snel genoeg zijn om goed door die woestijn heen te komen, zonder ten prooi te vallen aan allerlei ongemakken.

Alles was in handen van de Afgazide-geleerden, de doodsgeleerden, en als hij over die woestijn zou heenkomen, dan zou hij vrij zijn van al hun invloeden. Het project slaagde, en hij kuste zijn wagen. Nu was hij vrij.

Er waren een heleboel geleerden die het hem niet gunden. Ze hadden het niet zo op skelettenrijders. Maar dat kon de skelettenrijder niets schelen. Voor hem was het uur van de vrijheid nu aangebroken, en hij zocht een beste heuvel op om daar zijn wagen neer te zetten. Achter de heuvel was een dorp van reuzenskeletten. De skelettenrijder zelf was gelukkig ook niet één van de kleinsten. Maar deze reuzen waren echt groot, en ze fokten varkensskeletten. De skelettenrijder kwam er achter dat ze helemaal geen wagens hadden, alleen hutten. De skelettenrijder moest daar wel een beetje om lachen, want wie geen wagen had was volgens hem ook niet vrij. In de nacht stal hij wat onderdelen van de reuzen die hij voor zijn wagen kon gebruiken, en racete toen snel weer door. Ook verderop kwam hij langs vele dorpen en steden van reuzenskeletten, maar nergens kwam hij wagens tegen. Met grote ogen keken de reuzen naar zijn wagen. Zoiets hadden ze nog nooit gezien. Anderen renden gillend weg.

Later toen hij bij rivieren, meren en bossen aankwam begon hij wat wagens te zien. In het begin waren die niet zo heel groot, maar toen hij bij de jungles aankwam en de velden waren die zelfs groter dan zijn eigen wagen. Toch waren de reuzen daar erg onder de indruk van zijn wagen, omdat die zo anders was, en al snel wilden ze zijn wagen ruilen voor een hele grote wagen van hen. Na wat onderzoek stemde de skelettenrijder toe, want nu had hij een wagen zo snel en krachtig als de stormen van de dood. Deze wagen was gemaakt van de skeletten van hele andere varkenssoorten. De varkens waren veel groter, en maakten veel meer lawaai.

Het was een echte jachtwagen, en de skelettenrijder gilde luid om op zoek te gaan naar de grootste varkensskeletten voor zijn wagen. Als hij er eentje gevonden had, dan doorspietste hij alle botten van het skelet. Vaak liet hij de varkensskeletten ook weer los, als hij nog grotere had gevangen. Zijn wagen moest de beste worden.

Nooit heb ik een snellere wagen gezien dan die van de skelettenrijder. Hij ging sneller dan de storm, komende om te stelen. Toch viel hij op een dag weer in de handen van de Afgazide-geleerden. Ze wilden een bepaald sap uit zijn botten persen. Dit sap zou voor de Afgazide-geleerden belangrijk zijn om op een krachtigere planeet van de dood te kunnen komen. Ze hadden daartoe een ruimtecapsule ontworpen die in de lucht geschoten zou worden. De Afgazide-geleerden doorstaken al zijn botten om het sap eruit te melken. De skelettenrijder werd een dorre gestalte toen hij steeds minder van dat bottensap begon op te geven. Zijn bronnen raakten uitgedroogd. Voor de skelettenrijder was dit de woestijn van zijn leven. De Afgazide-geleerden brachten hem na het project naar de woestijn waar ze hem begroeven. Niet lang daarna vertrokken de Afgazide-geleerden naar de krachtigere planeet van de dood, maar het liep uit op een mislukking. Na eeuwen in zijn woestijngraf te hebben gelegen stond de skelettenrijder op, ditmaal om wraak te nemen op de Afgazide-geleerden. Hij had geen wagen meer, maar de Afgazide-geleerden zouden hun skeletten daarvoor moeten doneren. In kracht stond de skelettenrijder op, en calculeerde de horror in die hij hen zou brengen. Hij reeg hun skeletten aan elkaar, en bouwde zijn wagen, en werd

een grotere doem dan hij ooit was geweest. Niet velen kennen de doem van dit tijdperk, omdat hij van te voren hun ogen liet sluiten. Het zou voor velen te wreed zijn, en dat wilde hij hen besparen. Maar met de Afgazide-geleerden had hij geen medelijden, en zij zijn nog steeds de getuige van deze doem.

Einde

De Skelettenrijder III

Op een eenzame hoogte rijdt een man op een wagen, als op een paard. Het is de skelettenrijder. Hij gaat trager dan ooit, en zijn stappen zijn droevig. Plotseling trekt hij aan de teugels, en het skelet waarop hij rijdt staat stil. Een andere man komt langs, ook droevig, maar trekt dan een pistool, schiet, en de skelettenrijder valt van zijn skeletwagen. Is dit het einde van de skelettenrijder.

De man raapt het levenloze skelet op, en snijdt de botten van elkaar weg. Thuisgekomen maakt hij er een kleed van. In de skeletwagen was hij niet geinteresseerd, alleen maar in de rijder. Zijn vrouw komt thuis, ziet het kleed en is onder de indruk. Ze tikt met haar hand tegen het kleed van botten, en een prachtig geluid ontstaat als de botten tegen elkaar klikken. Dit lijkt het einde van de skelettenrijder. De man vertelt zijn vrouw over de skeletwagen, en zijn vrouw gaat naar de plek om de wagen op te halen. Zij is er wel in geinteresseerd. De skeletwagen is tam, gedresseerd. Het skelet lijkt op het skelet van een reuzenvarken of een zwijn. De vrouw klimt erop gilt, en het dier begint te steigeren. De vrouw krijgt het beest niet meer stil, en moet er even later vanaf springen. Teleurgesteld gaat ze naar huis. Haar man heeft de doodskop van de skelettenrijder in een kom gestopt. Samen staren ze ernaar.

De man is al oud, de vrouw nog erg jong. Midden in de nacht begint het bottenkleed te bewegen. Door de storm. Een stormrijder komt binnen, grijpt het kleed, en daarna de kom met de doodskop, en vertrekt. Thuisgekomen zet de stormrijder het skelet in elkaar, maar de skelettenrijder leeft niet meer, zelfs niet van de dood. Het is een verloren zaak. En zo staat het skelet jarenlang in een klaslokaal. Totdat een jongetje op een dag moet nablijven, en het skelet eens van dichtbij bekijkt. ‘Ik wilde wel dat ik zo’n skelet was,’ dacht het jongetje bij zichzelf, ‘dan zou ik ze eens allemaal een lesje leren.’ Even lijkt het alsof het skelet

beweegt. Het jongetje schrikt. ‘Wat doe jij daar !’ zegt de stem van de leraar die net binnen komt.

‘Oh niets, meneer,’ zei het jongetje, ‘ik dacht alleen maar even aan .... ach laat maar.’ De leraar loopt naar zijn bureau, steekt een kaars aan, en daarna zijn sigeret. Zo doet hij dat altijd. Het jongetje kijkt naar de leraar. ‘Hoeveel skeletten heeft u eigenlijk ?’ vraagt het jongetje. De leraar kijkt ongeinteresseerd op, en zegt : ‘een stuk of vijftig, allemaal in het magazijn.’

‘Mag ik ze eens zien ?’ vraagt de jongen nieuwsgierig.

‘Natuurlijk,’ zei de leraar.

Als de jongen even later in het magzijn is en de skeletten ziet, zegt hij : ‘Wauw, een heel skelettenleger.’ In gedachten ziet hij zichzelf als de aanvoerder van die skeletten en droomt even weg. ‘Kom niet te dichtbij !’ roept de leraar. ‘Ik wil niet dat ze breken.’

‘Hoe komt u daar allemaal aan ?’ vraagt het jongetje weer nieuwsgierig.

De leraar komt ook wat dichterbij, en glimlacht. ‘Ik heb ze eens gekregen van een indiaan waar ik vroeger mee bevriend was. Ik was bij een indianenstam in Zuid-Amerika.’

‘Wauw,’ zei het jongetje. ‘En denk je dat die skeletten door de indianen waren vermoord ?’

‘Nee,’ lachtte de leraar. ‘De indianen hadden die skeletten gewoon in de loop van de tijd in het oerwoud gevonden. Indianen zijn vaak skelettenverzamelaars.’

‘Heeft u ook indianenboeken ?’ vraagt het jongetje weer nieuwsgierig.

‘Oh, wel honderden,’ zei de leraar ineens heel vriendelijk. ‘Als je wil wil ik er wel eens een paar voor je meenemen.’

‘Graag,’ knikte de jongen.

Een paar dagen later gaat de jongen met een tas vol indianenboeken naar huis. Thuisgekomen legt hij de boeken allemaal op zijn bed neer. De boeken zijn erg luguber, over indianen die op skeletten rijden. Eén zo'n indiaan werd de skelettenrijder genoemd. Het jongetje wilde wel dat hij een skelettenrijder was. Dan zou hij ze allemaal eens een lesje leren. Ook leest hij over de bottenknopers, zij die allerlei dingen van botten maken.

Na een paar maanden heeft de jongen alle boeken gelezen, en krijgt dan van zijn leraar een nieuwe tas mee. Deze boeken zijn nog luguberder, en het jongetje kan er 's nachts niet goed van slapen. Hij krijgt er nachtmerries van. Maar toch leest de jongen dapper door, zelfs tot diep in de nacht. Op een dag vind zijn moeder één van de boeken, en wordt erg boos. De jongen moet de boeken direkt terugbrengen, maar hij verstopt gewoon de boeken wat beter.

In de boeken wordt ook de biologie van de dood beschreven, dat gaat over hoe het lichaam van de doden werkt, en wat voor soorten daar allemaal te vinden zijn. Soms heeft de leraar het er weleens over in de les, en de jongen vind het erg interessant.

Op een dag is de jongen ziek, en droomt dat hij dood is. Hij heeft nu een nieuw lichaam, en ontdekt de vele soorten van de dood. Er zijn skeletten, zombies, geesten, zielen, lagere doodsvormen en zo verder. Maar de jongen is in zijn droom een skelettenrijder, met een wagen geheel gemaakt van skeletten. Ook droomt hij dat de leraar een skelettenrijder is, en zijn moeder. Ze rijden in het oerwoud.

Maar dan schiet een man met een pistool de leraar neer, en daarna zijn moeder. De jongen krijst, en weet te vluchten op zijn skelettenwagen. Hij voelt dat de man ook achter hem aankomt, maar ziet dan een boog met wat pijlen liggen in de skelettenwagen. Hij pakt de boog met de pijlen, draait zich om, en schiet dwars door de botten van de man heen. Maar nu komt er ook een vrouw op hem af. Hij kent de vrouw niet, schiet weer, en schiet dwars door haar botten heen. Zowel de man als de vrouw vallen op de grond, en de jongen snelt weg op zijn skelettenwagen. Even later komt de jongen in een stad geheel gemaakt van botten. 'Er is een pakje voor u aangekomen, meneer ....' zegt iemand. Het pakje wordt in zijn wagen gegooid. Als de jongen even later het pakje openmaakt is het een brief : 'Ik ben dood, maar ik leef,' staat erop. 'De leraar leeft ook. Van je mamma.' De jongen besluit terug te keren naar de plaats waar zijn moeder en de leraar werden vermoord. Maar hij vindt daar niets dan botten. Voorzichtig probeert hij de botten weer in elkaar te zetten, en na een tijdje zijn het twee skeletten. 'Ik houd van je,' zegt het ene skelet. 'Mamma !' roept de jongen, en omhelst het skelet.

Dan wordt de jongen wakker. Zijn moeder is net op de overloop de was aan het doen. 'Mamma ?' vraagt de jongen.

Zijn moeder zegt niets. Wanneer ze zich later naar hem toedraait kijkt hij recht in het gezicht van een skelet. De jongen schrikt maar nauwelijks. 'Ik heb gehoord wat je wens was,' zei het skelet. 'Je bent nu een skelettenrijder als in je droom.'

Als de jongen naar buiten kijkt ziet hij één en al oerwoud.

Einde

De Terugkeer

van de

Skelettenrijder

Een man loopt ’s avonds laat naar zijn kast met glazen en drank. Hij is een drankverslaafde, en gooit weer een nieuw glas vol. Buiten hoort hij wat vreemde geluiden, kijkt uit het raam, maar ziet niets. Dan loopt hij naar boven en gaat naar bed. Zijn vrouw slaapt al. Even later hoort hij weer vreemde geluiden. Als hij weer door het raam kijkt ziet hij een paar jongens op motors. Ze kijken naar boven, en zien hem staan. ‘Hey ouwe, rot op !’ roept één van hen. De man schuift het gordijn voor het raam, doet zijn oordopjes in, en gaat slapen.

Midden in de nacht wordt de deur ingetrapt. ‘Zeg ouwe,’ zegt een stem, ‘ik had je toch gezegd dat je moest oprotten. Je wil niet luisteren, hè ?’ Het is een jongen van die motorbende. Karel heet hij, en is de schrik van de buurt. Vaak is hij dronken. Hij grijpt de oude man uit zijn bed en smijt hem uit het raam. De vrouw van de oude man slaakt een gil.

De volgende dag is het in de krant : jongen uit motorbende vermoord een oud echtpaar. De jongen wordt opgepakt en komt in de gevangenis terecht. Ook daar is hij onhandelbaar. Maar op een nacht verdwijnt hij mysterieus. Ze kwamen hem halen .... zij, de skelettenrijders.

Elke nacht raast hij op zijn motor gemaakt van skeletten over de daken, om iedereen het leven zuur te maken. De skelettenrijder is terug.

De skelettenrijder beukt nog steeds door deuren heen, om niets dan skeletten achter te laten. Met zijn boog doorboort hij hun botten, om slaven op te richten, tot een groot skelettenleger. Ook met zijn oude bendevrienden heeft hij geen medelijden.

'Karel van Dijk !' wordt er luid gesproken. Er werd ook luid op de tafel geklopt. Een boze leraar staart de jongen aan. 'Zit je weer te dromen. Je moet opletten, jongen, anders ...'

'Ja wat dan, anders ?' zegt een jongen die achter Karel zit. 'Anders wat ?' Hij staat op, grijpt de leraar en drukt hem tegen de muur aan. 'Wat nou anders ? Laat die jongen toch dromen.' En dan smijt hij de leraar op de grond. Sommige meisjes beginnen te gillen. De leraar heeft het schuim op de mond staan. Dan staat hij boos op, en rent het klaslokaal uit.

'Wat doe je nou, man ?' vraagt een andere jongen.

Even later is de leraar terug met een paar andere leraren, en de jongen wordt meegenomen. Na een paar minuten komt de leraar alleen terug, en gaat verder met de les.

Als Karel thuiskomt rent hij direkt naar boven en gaat op zijn bed liggen. Een uur later is er telefoon. Het is de jongen die de leraar had gegrepen. 'Ze hebben me van school gestuurd, Karel. Maar ja, dat is beter dan naar die saaie lessen te moeten luisteren. Ik zeg maar zo : lang leve de lol. En droom jij maar lekker verder. We pakken die lui nog wel een keer.' Karel zegt niets. Hij laat de jongen maar praten. Karel is geen jongen van geweld.

Karel is een stille jongen, iemand die niet veel praat.

De dag erna belt de jongen weer, en hangt hele verhalen tegen Karel op. De jongen vraagt Karel voor een fietstochtje.

Midden in het bos vertelt de jongen dat hij eigenlijk een skelettenrijder is. Karel schrikt. Hij herinnert dat ze dat boek eens moesten lezen voor een project. Was het hem nu echt in het bolletje geslagen ? Maar de jongen was serieus.

'Moet ik nu bang voor je worden ?' vroeg Karel benauwd.

‘Nee,’ zei de jongen, ‘we zijn toch vrienden, jij en ik ?’ Opeens begint de jongen een hele andere toon aan te slaan, en Karel wordt steeds banger en banger. ‘Weet je eigenlijk wel waarom ik je mee naar het bos heb gevraagd ?’ vraagt de jongen.

‘Nee,’ zei Karel, ‘eigenlijk niet. Maar ik begin al een vermoeden te krijgen.’ Ineens maakt Karel rechtsomkeerts en fietst hard weg. De jongen komt hem achterna. ‘Ik krijg je wel, Karel, wees maar niet bang. Ik krijg je, en dan zal de afrekening volgen.’ Bij een bosmeertje is de weg afgezet. Karel springt van zijn fiets af, en rent verder in het bos. De jongen heeft hem al bijna ingehaald. Dan rollen ze samen door het zand. De jongen grijpt hem, en zegt dan dat hij maar een grapje maakte. Karel haalt diep adem, en kan er achteraf wel om lachen. Maar op zijn gemak voelt hij zich niet.

‘Doe nou eens rustig,’ zegt de jongen. ‘Waarom doe je altijd zo gehaast. Ik weet je bent een stille jongen, maar doe nou eens gewoon normaal, zoals ik.’

‘Wat wil je dan dat ik doe ?’ vraagt Karel ongemakkelijk.

‘Zullen we samen in het bos gaan wonen ? Dan maken we een hut van takken,’ zegt de jongen. Karel glimlacht. Eigenlijk lijkt hem dat wel wat.

Later bleek dat de jongen die hut allang had gemaakt. Het was een prachtige hut. De jongens slapen die nacht dicht tegen elkaar aan. Midden in de nacht zijn er vreemde geluiden. Karel loopt naar buiten, en ziet daar een zwarte gestalte staan. Karel schrikt, gaat weer naar binnen, en probeert de jongen wakker te krijgen. De jongen slaapt erg diep, maar wordt na een tijdje door het geduw en hard gefluister wakker. Ook de jongen loopt naar buiten, ziet de zwarte gestalte staan, en gaat weer naar binnen. ‘Niets bijzonders,’ zei hij.

‘Niets bijzonders ?’ vraagt Karel.

‘Nee,’ zegt de jongen. ‘Gewoon een zwarte gestalte. Wat is daar mis mee ?’

Maar Karel voelt zich er niet goed bij, en loopt weer naar buiten. Ditmaal komt hij dichterbij. Het is een skelet in een zwarte cape. Karel schrikt. Wie zou dat hier neer hebben gezet ? Later bleek dat de jongen dat zelf had gedaan toen Karel al sliep.

De jongens besluiten wat zuidelijker te gaan wonen, waar het wat warmer is, en bouwen

daar weer een hut. Maar ditkeer gaat er van alles mis. Het hutje wordt een puinhoop, en ze besluiten een wigwam van dierenhuiden te maken.

‘Denk jij nog weleens aan dat boek de skelettenrijder ?’ vroeg de jongen op een nacht.

‘Nee,’ loog Karel.

‘Nou, ik anders wel,’ zei de jongen. ‘ik denk liever na over de skelettenrijder dan over school.’

‘Wie heeft dat boek eigenlijk geschreven ?’ vroeg Karel.

Op een dag besluiten ze de schrijver op te zoeken. De schrijver woont in een kasteel, in een ver afgelegen bos. Het kasteel staat vol met skeletten. De schrijver slaapt overdags en waakt ’s nachts. De kast van de schrijver staat vol met enge boeken. De schrijver nodigt de jongens uit om een tijd bij hem te logeren. Hier krijgen de jongens de schrik van hun leven. In de nacht verandert de schrijver in een skelet. ‘Ja, ik heb jullie gewaarschuwd,’ zei het skelet. ‘Ik ben niet normaal, maar anders had ik nooit kunnen zijn.’ Het skelet rent achter hen aan, en de jongens rennen door het hele kasteel heen. Plotseling vallen er allemaal skeletten vanuit het plafond naar beneden, en de beide jongens worden er onder bedolven.

‘Is het nu eens afgelopen ?’ riep Karel. ‘Het moet nu afgelopen zijn, al die onzin.’ Maar het levende skelet kwam dichterbij, en haalde toen een lang en vlijmscherp mes tevoorschijn. ‘Hiervan leef ik,’ zei het skelet. ‘Zo niet, dan ben ik dood.’ De beide jongens beginnen te krijsen.

‘Goedemorgen Karel,’ zei een stem. Karel wordt wakker en ziet het gezicht van zijn moeder met een lieve glimlach.

‘Ik heb over Kerwin gedroomd, mamma,’ zei Karel. ‘dat hij weer leefde. We zaten beiden in dezelfde klas, en hij nam het voor me op. ‘Kerwin is dood,’ zei zijn moeder. ‘Ik weet dat het moeilijk is om dat te aanvaarden, maar het leven is niet anders.’

‘Ja, maar mamma,’ zei Karel, ‘ik was toch blij dat ik weer over hem heb gedroomd. Het was net echt, alsof hij echt weer bij me was.’

‘Karel,’ zuchtte zijn moeder, ‘Kerwin was een vreemde jongen. Wat zou hij geworden zijn als hij niet zo jong was overleden ? Zeg het maar ... crimineel, moordenaar, dief, of kanibaal, stroper of kinderlokker ? Echt, het is beter zo. En er waren dingen die wij jou nooit verteld hebben. Hij was niet te vertrouwen met andere kinderen.’

‘En toch mis ik hem, mamma,’ zei Karel.

‘Oh, dat is omdat je hem niet kende. Je was nog te jong,’ zei z’n moeder. ‘Hij heeft andere kinderen met messen bewerkt, en zelfs eens een jongetje laten verdrinken.’

‘Ma, houd op met die onzin, ik geloof je niet,’ zei Karel. Moeder glimlachte. ‘Heus, ik help je alleen om je het te laten verwerken, die dag dat hij ... nou ja, je weet zelf wel wat er gebeurde.’

‘Je probeert me het nog moeilijker te maken lijkt wel, ma. Je weet dat ik niet tegen die grapjes kan.’

- Oh, maar als je teveel denkt dat het zo’n lieve jongen was, dan verwerk je het nooit. Je gaat al jaren niet meer naar school vanwege je trauma.

‘Mamma, ik heb dat trauma zelf verdient. Ik had voor hem op moeten komen toen hij door dat groepje in elkaar werd geslagen. Wist ik veel dat ze later een mes in hem zouden steken ?’

- Oh, maar als jij hem had geholpen, dan hadden ze jou ook aan het mes geregen. Heus, het is beter zo.

‘Ma, hij hielp mij altijd goed met allerlei dingen. Ik voel me zo’n verrader, zo’n lafaard.’

- Jongen, het was niet laf, maar wijs. Voor hem was het al een verloren zaak.

Karel staart zijn moeder aan en stort zich huilend in haar armen. Na al die jaren is hij er nog steeds niet overheen gekomen, en leeft hij als in de greep van een skelettenrijder, iets dat hij niet kan zien, maar toch altijd bij hem is.

Einde

D e   K o o i

De indiaanse machine kreeg een roos op het scherm, en kon zo mikken op de machine die voor hem stond. Er kwam een kaartje naar boven genaamd bloedstraal die hij kon inzetten om door een bloedstraal de machine voor hem uit te schakelen. De machine activeerde het kaartje, mikte door de roos richting de machine te schuiven, en met een duistere donderslag, het donkerder worden van het beeld, en een rijke bliksemslag liep er een lange straal bloed als kokend spuitende olie naar de andere machine toe om die uit te schakelen. De indiaanse machine die geschoten had draaide zich om, en genoot door zijn achteruitkijkspiegeltje van de explosie. Nu moest hij maken dat hij wegkwam.

Hij was een robot, gemaakt om te doden, gemaakt om uit te schakelen. Hij was gemaakt voor de jacht, voor een duistere nacht. Een andere machine probeerde hem tegen te houden. Nu verscheen er een ander kaartje op zijn dashboard. Een groene gifstraal, weer als spuitende kokende olie. Snel was het kaartje geactiveerd, en een hoge toon telde af, terwijl hij met zijn roos mikte. Luid gegil was daar, terwijl de groene gifstraal als de bliksem neerdaalde op de machine die hem blokkeerde. Toen was er gelach en een paar dubbele explosies, met het zoemende geluid van vriendelijke sirenes, en wat heldere bliksemschichten die als een koepel alles verlichten. De indiaanse machine was tervreden, en rende door. Een robot was hij, gemaakt om te doden dat wat hem in de weg stond.

De robot rende een gebouw binnen, zag wat vrouwen en schoot. Hier had hij geen kaartjes met speciale aanvallen voor nodig. Die gebruikte hij alleen voor moeilijke machines. Nu schoot hij gewoon met zijn standaard D.A.X.-pistool, ingebouwd in zijn helm. Met het roosje mikte hij altijd makkelijk. Hij had ook een getatoeeerd roosje op zijn arm. Soms brandde dat roosje weleens als hij weer had geschoten. Hier was niemand vriendelijk. Niemand wilde hem hier hebben. Hij rende over de trappen naar boven, en stoorde zich niet aan politieagenten die hem probeerden tegen te houden. Met alle gemak slingerde hij ze

over de relingen van de trap. Voor polities was hij vaak immuun. Hij was zelf een agent.

Plotseling stond hij voor een groene grote deur als een garagedeur. Een kaartje verscheen in zijn dashboard van een getatoeeerde vrouw. Hij wist wat dat betekende. Toen hij het kaartje activeerde explodeerde de deur door ultra-hoog K.S.X.-geluid. Snel was hij op het dak en rende naar een helicopter toe. Net op tijd. Toen hij instapte explodeerde het gebouw onder hem, en daarna de hele omgeving. Hij had een setje kaartjes in zijn handen, en stopte ze in een gleuf van zijn arm. De piloot glimlachte wat. ‘Zo, heb je de opdracht volbracht, Huskelson ?’ vroeg de piloot. Maar de robot zei niets, opende de deur van de helicopter en trok de piloot in een ruk eruit. Snel nam de robot het stuur over, en zag onder hem de hele planeet exploderen.

Nu een lange tijd kwam de robot in een jungle aan. Er waren niet veel lui die hem tegen konden houden. Alle apen hier waren robotten. Hij knalde er een paar neer, en zocht een goede boomhut uit.

De robot leek op een gokmachine, maar hij was hoog geprogrammeerd, zeer verfijnd. De geleerden waren zeer tevreden over het resultaat, totdat hij hen opzocht op hun veilige berg en hen één voor één afmaakte. Waren het de kaartjes die hem op een ander idee hadden gebracht ? Of had een andere, hogere straling de robot overgenomen ? De robot maakte een heleboel veranderingen in hun computers, verliet het gebouw en liet het van een afstand exploderen. Hij voelde zich opgesloten in zijn pak, en na een tijdje trok hij z’n pak uit. Een lange slanke indiaanse man staarde naar het pak waarin hij zolang opgesloten zat. Hij was nu eindelijk vrij. Een vampier was hij, en in de jungle was zijn plaats. Hij ving een slang, beet de kop af van het dier en begon langzaam zijn bloed eruit te zuigen. Hij was een wilde, levende van de dood, en de dood leefde van hem. Hier waren leven en dood hetzelfde, net als wreedheid en genade, zachtheid en hardheid. Hier waren geen grenzen, zolang hij maar kon overleven.

Zoveel gevaren omringden hem. Alleen de rooflustigste zou overleven. Hij was alreeds erg paranoide, omdat alles hem bedreigde. Hij viel al aan zonder dat daar reden toe was, en hij wist dat de aanval de beste verdediging was. Als hij door luiheid, domheid, of onoplettendheid in de handen zou vallen van een roofdier, dan zou een wrede dood hem wachten. Daarom had hij geen grenzen, geen wetten, alleen de wet van de aanval. Hij vertrouwde niets en niemand, want door vertrouwen was eens zijn hele familie uitgeroeid.

Hij gaf niks om de ander, ook niet om hen die ogenschijnlijk geen gevaar vormden, ook niet om hen die hem hielpen, of zelfs zijn leven hadden gered. Want eens gaf hij om iemand die zijn hele familie had uitgemoord. Hij wilde geen risico meer lopen. Iedereen moest voor zichzelf zorgen. En dit alles ging toch altijd door de dood heen. Hij was al dood, dus waarom er nog tegen strijden ?

Vriendschap moest maar op een andere manier ontstaan. Niet door vertrouwen, maar door

de dood. De dood zou uitmaken wie zijn echte vrienden waren. Het leven zou alleen bedriegen. Hij geloofde niet in de liefde. Alleen de haat zou leiden tot liefde, door de dood heen. Hier was er geen scheiding tussen dood en leven, tussen liefde en haat. Alles was hetzelfde. Hierin zou een hele nieuwe orde ontstaan.

Als hij honger had at hij, vaak rauw. Alles at hij wat hij kon vinden. Hij had geen gevoelens voor de wezens die hij doodde. Alles moest toch veranderen, en gevoel zou pijn doen. Hij haatte alles wat hem mogelijk gevoel zou kunnen geven. En om dat te bewijzen moordde hij niet alleen voor veel vlees, maar ook gewoon voor zijn plezier. Hij was dom, hij had geen hersenen. Die zouden hem namelijk alleen maar bedriegen. Hij haatte alles met hersenen. Hij liet zich leiden door instincten, door zijn lusten. Hij was een vampier, omdat hij geen slaaf meer wilde zijn.

De wezens om hem heen kwelden hem, als de cipiers van zijn gevangenis. Hij leefde voor de moord. Hij was vrij in de jungle, en leefde voor de jacht. Niet alleen voor het vlees, maar ook voor zijn plezier. Het gaf hem lust, en zo had hij het gevoel dat hij leefde. Hij leefde door de dood van anderen, en de dood leefde van hem. In het begin voelde dit voor hem tragisch aan, maar later legde hij zich erbij neer, en verhardde zich erin. Hij had geen andere keus.

Maar ook liet hij leven, ook liet hij staan, en ademen. Ook gaf hij leven. Hij was een man van extremen, een man van een vreemde paradox.

Hij leefde in de jungle. Wie hadden hem gemaakt zoals hij was ? De geleerden. Eerst hadden ze iemand naar zijn familie gezonden om zijn familie uit te moorden, en toen dat gebeurt was maakten ze een robot van hem. Hij was nog erg jong. Nu was hij vrij, en zou zich nooit meer laten bedriegen door geleerden, nee, door niemand. Hij had dorst naar de diepere jungle en haar vlaktes om daar een schuilplaats te vinden, een plaats van moord, een plaats van horror, als een effectief wapen van zelfverdediging. Nooit meer wilde hij een robot zijn. Hij wilde vrij zijn, en zou deze vrijheid koste wat het koste bewaren en verdedigen. Geen enkel wezen vertrouwde hij. Geen enkel wezen liet hij te dicht bij zich komen, tenzij hij zich oppermachtig voelde. Tenzij hij zich trots voelde en met zijn vuisten op zijn borst sloeg. Hij was als een aapmens, als een roofdier, een vampier. Het roosje getatoeeerd op zijn arm was zijn laatste aandenken aan de geleerden en het vreemde pak waar ze hem in hadden gehesen. Maar op een dag sneed hij met z’n dolk het roosje uit z’n arm. Brullend van de pijn dook hij in het water. Toen hij bovenkwam zag hij een vrouw met lang haar in het water naar hem kijken. Ze had een glimlach, en plotseling wist hij niet wat hij moest doen. De vrouw deed hem aan zijn familie denken, en er was iets in hem wat hem tegenhield haar pijn te doen. De vrouw zwom naar hem toe, terwijl hij in een vreemde shock raakte. Ze raakte zijn arm aan en er ging electriciteit door hem heen, als loeiende, spuitende en kokende sirenes.

Hij wist niet wat er gebeurde, maar de vrouw had macht over hem. Hij wilde haar geen pijn doen. Ze pakte hem vast, en de man schrok. Plotseling begon de man te brullen, en kwam

zo snel mogelijk uit het water. Hij was in de war. En het leek wel alsof hij niet meer wist wat hij moest doen. Uiteindelijk rende hij weg.

De vrouw rende achter hem aan. ‘Ik kan je helpen !’ riep de vrouw.

Maar de man was veel te bang dat zij door de geleerden was gestuurd. De man greep naar zijn hoofd en begon in paniek te gillen. Hij wilde dit niet. Hij wilde dat hij de vrouw nooit had gezien, en dat zij hem nooit had gezien. Plotseling had hij zich niet meer in bedwang. Greep een mes, en wilde haar vermoorden. Het was al te ver gegaan. Hij zou niet met deze vreemde herinnering in zijn hoofd kunnen leven. Ze moest dood. Ze had teveel gezien, en was te dichtbij gekomen. Zij hoorde haar niet. Plotseling hoorden ze beiden een knal. De man wierp een mes naar de geschrokken vrouw, en raakte haar in haar borst, terwijl bloed begon voort te komen. Even dacht de man dat hij zou gaan huilen, maar toen begon hij onbeheerst te lachen. Een krokodil kwam die de vrouw verder verscheurde, en even later scheurde de man de krokodil aan stukken, en begon woest te krijsen en te brullen. Hij probeerde de herinnering te wissen, maar alles in zijn hoofd leek hem te achtervolgen. De man rolde door de modder, ving weer een grote slang, beet zijn kop eraf en begon het slangenbloed eruit te zuigen. Hierdoor werd hij weer een beetje rustig. Ook verscheurde hij even later een leeuw, om door het leeuwenbloed en het leeuwenvlees verder tot rust te komen, en na een lange dag viel de man in een boom in slaap.

De volgende dag werd de man wakker met verschrikkelijke hoofdpijn. Nog steeds had hij die nare herinnering, alsof het aan hem vrat. Al moordend zocht hij zijn weg door de jungle, en maakte van huiden een wigwam. Dit deed hij bovenop een veld vol vlees en bloed. Alles moest in zijn ogen veranderen, maar ver kwam hij niet. Hij kon alleen maar moorden, en soms in leven laten, maar echt dingen veranderen kon hij niet. Hij kon tenten maken van huiden, hutten maken van botten, en hij kon doodskoppen verzamelen. Vlees kon hij eten, bloed kon hij drinken, en hij kon erin baden, maar wat kon hij verder doen ? Hield het hier niet op allemaal ? Was dit een doodlopende weg ?

Een verschrikkelijk eenzaam bestaan had hij sinds hij de vrouw had vermoord, want zo’n vrouw zou toch nooit meer terugkomen. Maar dit was beter dan in een vriendschap ten onder gaan, door vertrouwen in een val gelokt te worden waar hij nooit meer uit zou kunnen komen. Vrouwen van de jungle kende hij wel. Ze vingen mannen om hen te fokken, voor vlees, botten en voor andere dingen zoals slavernij. In zijn ogen waren vrouwen erger dan roofdieren. Ze waren gemeen en doortrapt, listig en sluw. Hij wilde zich er niet mee bemoeien. Hij wist waar in de jungle zij hun mannenfokkerijen hadden, maar hij had geen zin om de mannen te helpen. Want bevrijdde mannen waren in zijn ogen allemaal geleerden, of andere soorten roofdieren. Hij voelde alleen maar haat naar mannen en vrouwen, zelfs naar zichzelf. Maar hij leerde van zichzelf te houden zoals hij was, steeds meer en meer. Was hij geen produkt van de natuur ? Hij mocht dan een vampier zijn, maar wie was dat niet ? Het was bijna een wet van de natuur om te kunnen overleven, en om alles te kunnen laten veranderen. Maar verandering zag hij niet echt. Het leven bestond uit bloed, zweet en tranen, en daar bleef het bij. Voor hem was het leven jagen, eten, en slapen.

In een nacht werd hij door stevige handen vastgepakt. Hij werd gebonden, en meegeleid naar een fokkerij. Het waren vrouwen die hem hadden gevonden. Ze kwamen om met hem af te rekenen. De vrouwen waren ruw, en hij wist wel zeker dat ze kanibalen waren. Dat waren alle vrouwen die hier hun fokkerij hadden. In een kooi werd hij geduwd, en zelfs in de kooi vastgebonden. Veel bewegen kon hij niet, omdat zowel zijn handen als voeten vastzaten. Toen hij hier veel moest eten wist hij wat er aan de hand was. Maar zijn domheid vertelde hem dat het voedsel hier lekkerder was dan wat hij zelf altijd ving. Bang was hij dat hij weer door geleerden meegenomen zou worden, maar dat gebeurde niet. Hij wilde liever hier sterven in gevangenschap dan weer in de handen van geleerden terecht te komen. Tot zijn eigen plezier merkte dat hij hier niet dikker werd, terwijl andere mannen zo vet werden als varkens. Maar aan de andere kant maakte het hem onzeker, omdat hij niet wist wat ze dan met hem zouden doen. Hij werd gedwongen om meer te eten, terwijl hij al veel at. Ook probeerde ze het met andere soorten vlees, maar de man bleef zo slank als hij was.

‘Wees blij dat je hier bent,’ zei een vrouw. ‘Een man alleen in de jungle is een prooi voor geleerden en hun experimenten. Wij leren die geleerden hier een lesje.’ De man zei niets.

‘En nog wat,’ zei de vrouw, ‘het beste jachtvoedsel krijg je hier. Je hoeft er niet zelf voor te jagen. Dat doen wij wel, alhoewel we grotendeels leven van de fokkerij. Dan hebben we tijd voor andere dingen, weet je wel ? Je mag trouwens van geluk spreken dat je niet dikker wordt.’

Maar op een dag kon de man uit zijn kooi ontsnappen, en vloog een aantal van de vrouwen aan die hij in koele bloede vermoordde. Hij draaide hen de nekken om in een ruk. Na een tijdje kwam hij in een zaal waar hun koningin zat op een bank vol veren en zachte huiden. Mannen die ketenen om hun nek hadden bedienden haar. De man rende op de vrouw af, terwijl hij een mes van een andere vrouw wegpakte, en onthoofde de koningin. Vele vrouwen kwamen er achter hem aan, en de man moest rennen voor zijn leven. Op een web van touwen klom hij naar boven, en hoorde schoten beneden. ‘Politie !’ riep er iemand. Terwijl de man over het web op een hogere verdieping aankwam met een heel laag plafond. In de verte zag hij een gordijn waar hij doorheen rolde. Achter het gordijn kreeg hij de schrik van zijn leven. Vrouwen lagen hier gesluierd met roofdieren. Hij bedacht zich geen ogenblik, onthoofde de dieren, en daarna de vrouwen. Maar ook andere vrouwen kwamen binnen, en hij kon nog maar net ontkomen door een ander gordijn. Aan een hangend touw klom hij naar boven, terwijl hij weer schoten hoorde. ‘Politie !’ riep iemand. ‘Allemaal op de grond !’ Het leek erop dat de mannenfokkerij nu geheel werd opgerold. Na een tijdje kwam hij op het dak van de fokkerij. Een helicopter kwam naar hem toe, maar hij was veels te bang dat hij in handen van geleerden zou raken, en klom langs het dak naar beneden en rende terug de jungle in. ‘Laten ze elkaar maar afmaken,’ dacht hij. Het maakte het er voor hem in ieder geval niet makkelijker op.

Sindsdien ging hij onder de grond wonen, in grote angst voor vrouwen en geleerden. Of hij ooit nog vrouwen of geleerden is tegekomen onder de grond weet niemand.

Einde

D e K o o i II

Een man werd wakker in de kooi waarin ze hem hadden vastgebonden. Het was een vreemde cel waarin hij aan banden was vastgemaakt. Ze hielden hem voor melk. Ze noemden het melk, maar dat was de codenaam voor alles wat ze van hem aftapten. Hij had electroden op zijn hoofd, maar ook op zijn gezicht, en verder op zijn hele lichaam. Ze tapten zijn dromen af.

Op zich zou je kunnen denken dat het allemaal ten dienste stond van de man. De geleerden waren vriendelijk naar hem, en soms had hij gezelschap in zijn kooi. Je zou kunnen denken dat al die aftapperijen ervoor zorgden dat er geen vreemde hersenspinsels konden ontstaan, maar niets was minder waar. Alle hoop die hij had werd afgetapt, alle schone klanken die hij in zijn hoofd had als een herinnering aan vroeger ... Overal waar hij zich aan vast probeerde te klampen werd afgetapt.

Alles wat hij nog was was een wrak, en toch droomde hij. Dit waren de dromen die door de Afgazide-geleerden bij hem waren ingeplant. Zij waren de implantaten van de melk-machine. Er waren allerlei manieren waarop ze hem konden melken. Ontsnapping was onmogelijk.

‘Ik heb hier een draad voor je,’ zei een vrouw. Hij moest het doorslikken, terwijl zij het uiteinde in haar handen hield. Na een paar dagen had zij ook het andere uiteinde in handen, en het spoor volgde door zijn hele lichaam, door het hele spijsverteringskanaal. De uiteinden werden aan instrumenten in de kooi bevestigd als pluggen, en wanneer het draad bewoog of begon te trillen werd de man op een bepaalde manier gemolken.

De horror was voor de man ondragelijk. Hij voelde zich een beest. Op een dag wist hij de electroden van zijn hoofd los te krijgen. Hoe hij dat had gedaan wist hij niet meer, maar hij had het voor elkaar gekregen in een woelige nacht. Hij kon weer enigszins een beetje nadenken, alhoewel elke gedachte hem pijn deed. Waar waren de geleerden ? Ze waren die dag niet gekomen. Hij werd gevoed door vreemde buizen, en stapje voor stapje begon hij zich los te wringen.

Zijn droom was snel afgelopen, want hij werd wakker en merkte dat hij nog steeds vastzat. Wel voelde hij dat de electroden een beetje losser zaten dan anders.

Plotseling zag hij een groene straal boven zich, en hij merkte dat de groene straal op de electroden gericht was. 'We komen je bevrijden,' zei een stem. Wie waren zij ? Plotseling waren de electroden van zijn hoofd geheel doorgebrand, en hij kon zijn hoofd goed bewegen, alhoewel op zijn gezicht nog steeds electroden waren. Hij haalde adem, en het voelde prettig aan. Hij was de melkerij zat, en hoopte dat zijn bevrijders snel klaar waren. Een klein blauw straaltje maakte de electroden van zijn gezicht los, en een rode straal maakte verder alle electroden van zijn verdere lichaam los. Een levensvuur kwam in hem binnen, sprankelend, en hij voelde zijn bloed weer stromen.

Ook kwamen er wat lasers die de banden losbranden, en de draden waaraan hij vastzat. Het draad dat door zijn hele lichaam heenzat werd er langzaam uitgetrokken. Hij hoorde zachte sirenes in zijn hoofd, die het levensvuur van binnen op een prachtige wijze aanwakkerden. De tonen voelden prettig aan, als levengevend. Hij kon weer diep ademhalen, en weer helder nadenken. Plotseling begonnen de muren naast hem weg te smelten, en de lasers lieten hem een pad zien. Hij was nu los en rende achter de lasers aan. Waar kwamen die lasers toch vandaan, en wie waren ze ?

Niet lang daarna was de man in een andere wereld. Hij speelde in een prachtige klankenzee met de Ludipussen, een volk van grappige wezentjes. Ze waren klein, zacht en lief. 'Je hoeft niet bang te zijn dat je weer terugmoet naar die melkfabriek,' zei een Ludipus met een zacht, zoet stemmetje. De man speelde in het water, dat zo zacht en tegelijkertijd vibrerend aanvoelde dat het levensvuur binnenin begon te waaien als nooit tevoren. De Ludipussen vertelden hem dat ze voor hem zouden zorgen. Ze waren zo klein en van zo'n andere energie dat ze gemakkelijk in de man binnen konden komen, en dat moest ook wel, want zo zouden ze ervoor zorgen dat er nooit meer electroden op hem geplaatst werden. De Ludipussen waren de onderdelen van een nieuwe wapenrusting van de man, onderdelen van een geheel nieuw en vrij lichaam.

De Ludipussen brachten de man tot hun koning. De koning was blij de man te zien. De man kreeg geheel nieuwe ogen van de koning, en de koning gaf hem de opdracht om over de zee te zwemmen, tot de eilanden van de Ludipussen. De koning wilde namelijk dat de man alle Ludipussen leerde kennen.

Nu de man vrij was voelde hij zich goed. Er waren hier prachtige bossen in allerlei kleuren. En door de nieuwe ogen kon hij nu zoveel meer straaltjes zien. De lucht was vol met straaltjes, de straaltjes die hem eens gered hadden.

Het was een lange zwemtocht over de prachtige zee. De eilandjes schitterden in de zon, en de man verheugde zich al op de eilandjes. Hier leefden weer hele andere Ludipussen. Op een van de eilanden woonden Ludipussen die op vliegen leken. Er kwamen klanken van hen af die zichtbaar waren als kleurige lichten, en je kon die lichten zelfs voelen. Ze waren heel zacht, en brachten een bepaalde vloeistof voort. De man zag hoe de vloeistoffen in de zee druipten. Het was een prachtig eiland, en de man mocht ritjes maken op hun ruggen, ritjes door de lucht, om zo van eiland tot eiland te gaan. Op een bepaald eiland kreeg de man nieuwe oren waarmee hij een heleboel meer klanken kon horen. Door de nieuwe oren bleek de vloeistof binnen te komen, om hem heel warm van binnen te maken. De man was erg blij met z'n nieuwe oren.

Het was alsof hij door een nieuw levensvuur werd omhuld, en al gauw vormden de klanken om hem heen vleugels van druipend licht. Nu kon hij zelf vliegen, en hij ging van eiland tot eiland. Op een ander eiland kreeg hij een nieuwe neus, waar hij zoveel meer geuren mee kon ruiken, en de geuren begonnen een paar extra vleugels erbij te vormen, geheel gemaakt van geuren en vreemde lichten die druipten. De man voelde zich nu als een vlinder, en hij merkte dat hij door een simpele gedachte kon verdwijnen en verschijnen. Was hij nu een toverwezen geworden ? De geuren vormden een heel nieuw patroon om hem heen, en het leek wel alsof hij de geuren diep kon inslikken. Het smaakte heel lekker, en het gaf hem veel zuurstof. De nieuwe geuren vormden ook weer extra klankjes en extra licht, waardoor een nog fijnere en zachtere vloeistof begon te stromen. Op een ander eiland kreeg hij een nieuwe mond waar hij zoveel meer mee kon proeven.

De man kwam diep tot rust, en vroeg aan de Ludipussen hoe dit allemaal kon gebeuren. 'Nou gewoon,' zei een Ludipus. 'Wij hebben een perfecte melkfabriek. Die geleerden houden zich zoveel bezig met het melken, en met het bouwen van hun koninkrijkjes, dat ze helemaal vergeten dat ze zelf ook gemolken worden.'

'Oh, maar is dat niet gevaarlijk ?' vroeg de man. 'Nee hoor,' zei het kleine mannetje. 'Wij zijn allemaal melkmannetjes, en wij weten precies hoe wij dat moeten doen. Daar hebben we lange ervaring in. Kijk, die geleerden zijn niet ouder dan een jaar of dertig tot tachtig, maar wij werken hier al miljoenen jaren. Wie heeft er dan meer recht van spreken ?'

'Nou, ik denk jullie,' zei de man. 'En ik ben blij dat jullie mij gered hebben, want ik had het helemaal niet naar m'n zin in die kooi.'

'Dus dit is allemaal niets anders dan een grote melkfabriek ?'

Het mannetje knikte. ‘En wat maken jullie daar dan van ?’ vroeg de man.

‘IJs,’ zei het mannetje.

‘Waarvoor ?’ vroeg de man.

‘Voor ijspaleizen,’ zei het mannetje. ‘Kijk, als je van dat ijs eet, likt of proeft, dan komt het levensvuur in je. Het is toverijs.’

En zo bracht het mannetje de man naar een eiland waar de ijspaleizen stonden. De man nam een hapje en ineens kwam er een groot levensvuur om hem heen met hele kleine vliegjes als vuurvliegjes. Ineens kon hij nog meer zien, ruiken, horen, en voelen. En hij zag wezentjes naar hem toekomen die hem met ijs bekogelden. Ook hij pakte wat ijs en gooide terug. De man had toen een lange tijd veel ijspret met de wezentjes, en lieten hem een kamer zien in het ijspaleis waar de man mocht wonen. Dat vond de man erg aardig van de wezentjes. Het ijs gloeide helemaal, en ook de gangen lagen vol met ijs. Ieder wezen had zijn eigen kamertje. Op een lange ijstrap klom de man naar boven. Hier woonde niemand. Het was als een zolder. Vanuit het raampje kon hij een ander ijspaleis zien. Er stonden hier wel duizenden ijspaleizen. Het was een echt ijsjeseiland.

Buiten lag er ook overal ijs, en stonden er ijsmannetjes met ijskarretjes. Niet omdat ze daarmee ijs verkochten, maar daarmee konden ze reisjes maken naar de grote ijsmachines.

In de grote ijsmachines werd het ijs gemaakt, en die stonden in contact met de melkfabrieken, waar de melkmannetjes werkten.

Vanuit de ijsmachines stroomden verschillende soorten kleuren ijs. Het ijs werd verdeeld door een soort ijsklok. De ijsmannetjes die hier werkten werkten er ook al voor miljoenen jaren.

De man keek zijn ogen uit op het ijsjeseiland, en nam soms een klein hapje.

‘Maar is dit nu alles ?’ vroeg de man aan een mannetje. ‘Hier hebben we ijs, maar houd daar alles mee op ?’

‘Nee,’ zei het mannetje, ‘kom maar mee.’

En de man werd geleid naar een kamertje in een grote ijsmachine waar zoveel ijs was dat er ijsbloemen groeiden en bloeiden, vol met allerlei soorten levensvuur. ‘Adem dit in,’ zei het mannetje, ‘en je zal verdwijnen en verschijnen op een plek waar je nog nooit eerder bent geweest. Een plek hier heel ver vandaan.’ De man haalde diep adem, en draaide zo snel in het rond totdat hij in de ruimte suisde, en toen helemaal verdween. Hij kwam aan in een donkere ruimte waar wat kleine lichtjes waren. Hier was geen ijs, ook geen melk, en hij zag ook nergens wezentjes. Op de grond groeide haar, en het haar was heel vochtig en zacht. Plotseling kwam er een ijskarretje naar voren, waar een soort metalen kaartje uit omhoog kwam. Op het metalen kaartje stonden wat tekens, en het had een warme gloed tegelijkertijd omhuld door stomend ijs. Ook een ander ijskarretje kwam naar voren en hetzelfde gebeurde, maar dit was een ander metalen kaartje met andere tekens. En zo gebeurde achtien keer hetzelfde, terwijl de man in de cirkel van ijskarretjes stond. Vanuit de kaartjes begonnen klanken voort te komen, lichten en geuren, en de tekens op de kaartjes begonnen te bewegen. Weer begon er melk te vloeien, en alles werd natter en natter, totdat de man zwom in een zee van melk. Na een tijdje kwam de man bij een eilandje aan, waarop weer een ijskarretje stond. Verder lag er overal zand.

Plotseling kwam er een bloeddruppel door het zand heen, en de bloeddruppel gleed in de zee van melk die direkt in een zee van bloed veranderde. Het ijskarretje veranderde in een groot stuk gebraden vlees. De man had inmiddels erge honger gekregen en begon te eten en te drinken, maar zodra zijn lippen het vlees aanraakten veranderde het weer in een ijskarretje, en toen zijn lippen het bloed aanraakten veranderde het weer in melk. Toen hij zijn lippen terugtrok veranderde het weer in bloed, en ook het ijskarretje was inmiddels weer in een groot stuk gebraden vlees veranderd. De man zwom verder tot een volgend eiland, waar een slagerij stond. De slagerij hing vol met gebraden vlees, maar zodra de man zijn lippen er tegenaan zette veranderde het gebraden vlees in ijskarretjes. De man kreeg toen in de gaten dat er iets anders moest gebeuren met het gebraden vlees. Hij nam een stuk vlees op, bracht het naar buiten en begroef het in de grond. Even later kwamen er bloemen, struiken en bomen van vlees uit voort. Nog meer stukken vlees bracht hij naar buiten om het in de grond te begraven, en nog meer bloemen, struiken en bomen kwamen er uit voort. Maar niet alleen dat, ook hutjes en tentjes van vlees.

Na een tijdje waren al die dingen van vlees uitgegroeid tot wezens. Als hij nu zijn lippen tegen die wezens aanzette kwam het levensvuur over hen. Hij sloot vriendschap met de wezens. Maar de wezens huilden veel, en na een tijdje liet hij al het vlees uit de slagerij in de grond begraven, en hetzelfde gebeurde. Toen de wezens nog steeds veel huilden, herinnerde hij het vorige eiland, waar ook nog vlees was. Hij zwom terug over de zee van bloed. Nam het vlees op zijn schouders en zwom terug, om het vlees op het andere eiland te begraven. Ook maakte hij zichzelf akkers waar hij elke dag bloed vanuit de zee naartoe bracht om daar te zaaien. Wonderlijke bloedbomen kwamen daar uit voort, en ook bloedbloemen en struiken. En hij keek telkens toe hoe ook zij in wezens veranderden. Door zijn lippen bracht hij het levensvuur in hen. Zo waren er twee soorten wezens die vriendschap met elkaar sloten. Het huilen werd niet minder. De zee van bloed groeide, en overstroomde op een dag het hele eiland. Maar de man had een schip gemaakt voor alle wezens. Na een lange reis kwamen ze op een nieuw eiland, geheel gemaakt van vlees. De

man wist inmiddels wat hij moest doen, en de wezens hielpen mee : ze begroeven al het vlees, en er kwamen wezens uit voort. Ook bouwden ze weer akkers en hielpen de man met het zaaien van het bloed vanuit de zee. Het aantal wezens van beide soorten begon weer enorm te groeien, en ze hielpen allemaal mee. Dit keer maakte de man dus een heel groot schip, voor het geval weer alles zou overstromen. Maar de wezens kwamen erachter dat ze het bloed ook gewoon konden drinken, en het vele vlees van het eiland begonnen ze te eten. Alhoewel er genoeg was begonnen ze bezitterig te worden, en voerden al snel oorlog met elkaar. Maar altijd als de man wilde eten of drinken veranderde het in ijs en melk. De man begon zich af te vragen waarom.

Op een dag kwam er een klein mannetje op hem af, die hem een amulet gaf. Sindsdien veranderde het niet meer in ijs en melk. Maar ook de man begon erg bezitterig te worden, en deed al snel mee met de oorlog. En niemand dacht er meer aan het bloed op de akkers te zaaien en het vlees te begraven, want dan zouden er veel te veel wezens bijkomen. En er werd niet alleen oorlog gevoerd, maar ook de jacht werd geopend. Alles ging om het domineren en het drijven van slaven. Er ontstond vriendjespolitiek, en men wisselde levensvuur uit ten koste van anderen. Er ontstonden harems, die ook ingezet werden in de oorlog en de jacht, totdat de fokkerij helemaal compleet was. Het werd een fabriek. Men probeerde elkaar uit, en het resultaat ? Men leerde het winnen van sieraden, betoverende elementen. De man had ook een harem. Het waren sieraadjagers. De harem werd steeds groter, en hij werd een echte haremrover. Wat had het amulet met hem gedaan ? En wie was de verstrekker van dat amulet ? Hij hield ervan om andermans harem te plunderen. In het amulet was een traan in een steen.

Zou hij nog een keer mogen kiezen om het amulet wel of niet te dragen, dan zou hij het niet weten. Want wat zou er zijn gebeurt als hij het amulet niet zou hebben aangenomen ?

Hij leefde in een roes, hij en zijn harem. Wilden ze het wel echt, of waren het zijn slaven ? Er was altijd veel gehuil. In zijn ogen was het zaad, en hij zaaide het op de akkers. Een nieuw soort kwam voort. Ook anderen begonnen de tranen te zaaien, en het nieuwe soort groeide. ‘Een beetje bloed, een beetje zweet, een beetje tranen en wat vlees, en ik maak een geheel nieuw soort,’ sprak het amulet op een dag. De man begon direkt zijn oude taak weer op te pakken. Hij zaaide het eerst dun, en daarna dik, en meer en meer soorten begonnen voort te komen. Men begon allerlei dingen te zaaien.

Op een dag was er weer een overstroming van de zee van bloed. Er werd gevochten voor een plaatsje in het grote schip. Velen verdronken. De man had natuurlijk een plaatsje weten te bemachtigen, omdat het zijn schip was. Verderop waren de wolken van bloed, de hele lucht was van bloed, en het regende tranen. Alles was van vlees, dus er viel ook niets meer te begraven. Het enige geschenk dat het nieuwe land gaf was een grotere honger en dorst, en zoveel manieren om die te stillen. Daarom vierde diefstal hoogtij.

Was dit geen ergere kooi dan de kooi waar hij vandaan kwam ? Hij was nu tenminste vrij, en zou die vrijheid in alle koelbloedigheid verdedigen. Vrij ? Hij was gevangen door een

amulet. Hier was vrijheid en gevangenschap hetzelfde.

Hier golden de wetten van een bruut amulet, maar het hield hem tenminste uit de kooi vandaan. Als hij niet had doorgevraagd, dan was hij nog steeds bij de knuffelmannetjes met hun melkfabriekjes en ijsfabriekjes, als hij genoegen zou nemen met de dingen voor de horizon. Het zou een middenweg zijn geweest tussen de kooi en het amulet, maar zou hij daar kunnen leven ? Hij was iemand die doorvroeg en doorzocht. Was dit amulet nu zijn straf ?

Hij was één van hen geworden, maar wie waren zij eigenlijk ? Het nieuwe land was als een zee van vlees. Hij kon er met zijn boot gewoon overheen. Maar zodra het schip eroverheen ging kwam het vlees tot leven. En dat was eigenlijk maar goed ook. Als het vlees werd aangeraakt, kwam het tot leven. Het was in die dagen dat er een tweede amulet verscheen, en die scheen van de één op de ander over te wippen. Als iemand die het tweede amulet droeg zijn lippen tegen het vlees wilde zetten, veranderde het vlees in chocolade.

De man begon toen een beetje te beseffen hoe ver hij van huis was. Op een dag zette het tweede amulet alles in een vreemd vuur, de dag waarop vrede en oorlog hetzelfde bleek te zijn. Het tweede amulet was als een amulet van doornen, die vaak boven de menigte uitvloog om de kudde te leiden. Het tweede amulet was niemands bezit, maar sprong van de ene op de andere.

Voor de man eindigde de reis in een chocolade-fabriek. Als hij zijn lippen tegen de chocolade aanzette veranderde het in vlees. En niet alleen dat. Het vlees kwam ook tot leven. Had de man nu wezens vrijgezet ? Wat was chocolade nu werkelijk ? Wie bepaalde wat wat was ? De mannetjes ? De amuletten ? Of hangt het er vanaf wat voor ogen en wat voor mond je hebt ? Niet iedereen ziet en proeft namelijk hetzelfde. Of was de man tot een plaats gekomen waar alles hetzelfde was ?

Einde

D e   K o o i   III

In een wereld waar chocolade en vlees hetzelfde is, vuur en ijs, oorlog en vrede, dood en leven, alles hetzelfde. Het is de wereld van een kooi, een vreemd amulet, die hoofden heeft ingenomen. Geen hersenen meer, alleen instincten, voortgedreven door een bovennatuurlijke honger en dorst. In deze wereld is waarheid en leugen hetzelfde. Een wereld waar je gemengde gevoelens hebt. Je wilt weg, terwijl je wilt blijven, want wat wacht buiten op je ? Het is een gemene wereld, maar ze noemen het genade. Het is een harde wereld, maar ze noemen het zachtheid. Alles is hier omgedraaid, en alles is alles geworden, als in een vreemd vuur. Het is de wereld van een losgeslagen amulet. Wie maakte dat amulet ? Maar een betere vraag is : Hoe kan het vernietigd worden ? En als het dan vernietigd is, krijgen we dan later geen spijt, omdat alles allemaal veel erger is geworden sinds het amulet er niet meer is ?

Er is een wereld waar de jacht de vrijlating is, de wereld van het amulet. Het is een wereld waar het bloed is als de wijn, voortstromende van een steen in het amulet, een steen waarin een traan zit. Wij hebben die wereld zelf gemaakt, wij hebben die wereld zelf aanvaard, door het amulet. En het amulet is een schamele troost in een zee van een nog grotere ellende. Want waar zouden wij zijn als het amulet nooit had bestaan ? Dan waren we overgeleverd aan de onpeilbare duisternissen, daar waar geen licht kan doordringen. Maar de wereld van het amulet is daar ... waar het licht duisternis is.

Het is altijd een verrassing voor iedereen wanneer die wereld zich opent. Zoveel verwarring, maar ook zoveel helderheid, daar waar de wildernis en de chaos de enige orde is.

Er is geen hoop op de heuvel waar spinnen jagen, waar het enige licht gebraden vlees is, en waar vliegen neerdalen om alles voor altijd te laten bloeden. Is dit geen doorn in het oog van de heer die alles geschapen heeft ? En waarom schiep hij dan ook dit ? Of is dit buiten hem omgegaan ?

Maar in ieder geval zijn zij van die wereld naar zuivere vormen op zoek. Er is in deze wereld geen verschil tussen schepper en schepping, want vaak heeft de schepping zijn schepper zelf geschapen. En daarom is deze wereld ook geen paradijs, onderwereld of hel. In deze wereld is goed en kwaad hetzelfde. Daarom is er in deze wereld ook geen appel die alles kan verpesten, omdat er geen verschil is tussen de eter en het voedsel, en al helemaal niet tussen honger en verzadiging, tussen eten en niet eten. Alles vreet, en alles heeft honger, en dat is het enige wat kan verzadigen. Zij die buiten deze wereld staan staan op één been, of hebben helemaal geen benen.

Ik ken niemand die ooit uit die wereld ontsnapt is want er is geen ontsnapping mogelijk. Je kunt alleen maar wegzinken in allerlei verderf. De ontsnapping staat hier namelijk gelijk aan het dieper opgesloten worden.

Geef de moed maar op als je in deze wereld verstrikt bent geraakt, want hoe meer je er tegen verzet des te dieper je er in vastraakt.

Laten we dan ook de moed opgeven voor hen die in deze wereld verstrikt zijn geraakt, en al onze reddingsacties opgeven, want onherroepelijk zullen we meegesleurd worden.

Het is de wereld van de verdoemden, zo dichtbij. Het is de wereld van hen die door het amulet zijn gebonden.

Er is hier geen verschil tussen rijkdom en armoede, tussen doden en tot leven brengen. Zij zijn allen moordenaars. Geketend gaan ze de ondergang tegemoet, als in een vreemd vuur. Het is een tragiek die niemand begrijpt en niemand op waarde of onwaarde kan schatten. Het is een carnaval waar het gezicht gelijk is aan het masker. We komen verkleed als onszelf. En iedereen schrikt.

Het is de wereld van de optochten der doden, en iedereen is verveeld, wachtende op iets nieuws. Zij zijn op zoek naar de hogere vormen. Een traan in een steen getuigt van de tragiek van het amulet. Want wie is het amulet ? Er is in de wereld van het amulet geen onderscheid tussen het ding en de persoon. Het amulet kan met zijn toverkracht een slaaf zijn, uitgezonden met een opdracht, of gewoon om een wens te moeten vervullen.

Feit is dat het amulet alle krachten moet harmonizeren, maar ten koste van wat ? Zou je niet moe worden van zo'n wereld. En waar staan wij ergens ? Waar gaan we naartoe ? Het hangt er vanaf in hoeverre onze ogen geopend zijn waar we leven. Onze zintuigen bepalen dat. Maar bovenal ons intellect, en dat intellect moet open staan, en niet zelfvoldaan zijn.

Hen van het brandend intellect, gevangen in een vreemd vuur, achter tralies van ijs, zij waren als de draken. Hun vlees brandde en bloed kookte, en zij droegen de krachten van het amulet. Op hun vlees verschenen de een-dags-tatoeages, en hun harten gloeiden zo dat ze door het vlees te zien waren. Hun harten waren als brandende boeken. Zij zijn op zoek naar het hogere intellect, een weg die buiten de hersenen om gaat, want zij hebben geen hersenen. In een vlam zijn zij, terwijl hun heuvelen besmeurd zijn met wespenzeep. De steek is hier het zachte, de hoornaarssteek iets wat ze de kus noemen.

Wat nou opgewekt worden door een kus ? Dat is een oud sprookje. Hier val je in slaap door de kus, om ten prooie te vallen aan een web van leugens, dromen .... dromen ... dromen .... Hier is de kus de doodsteek. Maar .... leven en dood is hetzelfde, en waarheid is de leugen, slapen is het waken, dus waarom klagen wij ? Is dit dan de weg naar het hogere intellect, of verliezen we dan ook het laatste wat we hebben ?

Eens was de leugen de weg naar de oude dingen, de list van onze overleden voorouders om weer een plaats te krijgen in de nog grotere leugen die hen had weggeduwd, het grote vandaag, die ze de waarheid noemden. Het was iets in hun ogen waardoor ze de dingen anders zagen. Maar hier was geen verschil tussen de moeder en het kind. Alles was hetzelfde, geen onderscheid tussen de drijver en zijn slaaf. En dit alles door de traan, een rode traan, want die traan was van bloed.

En die traan zit nog steeds in de steen van het amulet. Op de heuvelen stonden zij, hen die gebonden waren door het amulet. Zij dreven elkaar naar het hogere intellect. Zij hadden nauwelijks kledingen, want de bedekking en de naaktheid was hier hetzelfde. Er was geen masker waarachter ze zich veilig konden voelen, en toch voelden zij zich veilig. Er was geen verschil tussen het masker en het lichaam. Zij waren de broeders van het vlees en de chocolade, iets dat hetzelfde was, in deze wereld ondergedompeld in brandende wespenzeep, waar de steek het zachte is, waar de slaap hen liet opstaan, en de wake het slapen was. Een wereld ondergedompeld in een vreemd vuur, voortkomende vanuit het amulet.

De hoornaarssteek liet hun hart kloppen, als de klok van vuur. En al het vuur was zacht. Het was als gestoken worden door een vreemde vlieg ... de vreemde doornen van het amulet. Zoveel zeeen van vreemde insecten waardoor het hogere intellect te bereiken was, maar was dit niet allemaal een valstrik ?

‘Strik mij dan, als de strik de traan des levens doet ontwaken,’ sprak een jongen luid op de heuvelen van wespenzeep. Zijn speer was gedecoreerd met de fijnste sieraden, die op versteende insecten leken. Insecten met een wonderlijke geur. ‘Leid mij dan tot de put, het wazige gat, als dat mij van het rode van de traan laat drinken,’ sprak de jongen. Er was hier geen verschil tussen de valstrik en de levensweg.

Het amulet voedde de kuddes door honger, verzadigde hen met dorst. Het amulet verwarde hen om het oor en het oog te openen. Zij verloren hun wapenrusting in deze wereld, want hier was elke immuniteit kwetsbaarheid. De gevoelige steen was altijd de steen met de rode traan, als een bloedkoraal, voortkomende vanuit de put van verwarring. En als er ergens druppels van helderheid en orde waren, dan was het daar. Daar, in en door die insectenovens, wespenmolens, was de weg van het hogere intellect, een overgevoeligheid die hetzelfde was als koelbloedige hardheid. De woede trilde in de hand en de keel van de jongen, toen hij in de put van verwarring werd geworpen. Door de wespenzeep gleed hij erin, alsof een hand hem duwde, een voet hem wegtrapte en liet struikelen. Maar de woede was hier de tevredenheid, een diepe vrede, een zachte aanraking. De woede was hier niets anders dan een geopend intellect, een brandend boek, een op hol geslagen hart, gloeiend als omhuld door duizenden vuurvliegjes.

Zijn neus werd als de steen van het amulet, maar hier was het oog hetzelfde als de neus, en ook het oor was niet anders dan hen. Het was alsof er een vreemd insect op zijn neus zat, alsof zijn ogen omdraaiden en scheel keken.

En hij kwam erachter dat er geen andere weg was dan de valstrik. Het was een web van een vreemde spin, waar het enige licht gebraden vlees was, de enige geur, en het enige geluid knetterend vuur en gillend hout. Maar toen de jongen dichterbij kwam was het niets anders dan een huis van chocolade. Binnenin zag hij een bruine traan, een traan van vlees.

Hij keerde terug tot de heuvelen van wespenzeep, en gleed in een andere put. Ook hier vond hij een web van een vreemde spin, waar gebraden vlees van dichtbij niets anders bleek te zijn dan een huis van chocolade. Binnenin zag hij een rode traan, de traan van bloed, als de levenstraan waarvan hij wilde drinken, maar het bleek gewoon wijn te zijn. De stralen van gebraden vlees werden zijn vleugels. Hij voelde zich een vlinder, en zodra de vleugels bewogen bleek het allemaal maar gewoon chocolade te zijn. Hij was maar een gewone chocolade-jongen, maar het duistere oog zag iets anders.

Er was een oog in een amulet die hij vond in een derde put. Het oog was godslasterlijk, want hier was er geen verschil tussen god en mens. Ook was er geen verschil tussen elf en mens, want hier waren alleen indianen.

Er was hier geen verschil tussen wijsheid en domheid, tussen lelijkheid en mooiheid, tussen ziekte en gezondheid. Iedereen was hier ziek door het amulet, en alle muren waren hier afgebroken. En daarom waren de velden uitgestrekt, en knetterde het vuur extra harder. De jongen nam het amulet met het oog mee naar de heuvels van wespenzeep, en predikte een nieuw intellect. Ook anderen daalden in de putten af.

Als er iets knetterde, dan was het de jongen met het amulet met het oog. Velen kwamen terug vanuit de putten, en waren nu als vlinders, net als de jongen. Maar hier was er geen verschil tussen de vlinder en de vlieg, en ook de spin was niet anders. Er was hier geen verschil tussen insect en mens. Zij waren allen indianen.

Zij aten van het hongervlees als van duistere chocolade. Zij zaten vast in een kooi gemaakt door het amulet. Het waren kooien waarvan de tralies draken waren, en het ijs was bloed, als een grotere dorst. Het bloed van de dorst hebben zij gedronken, om nog dorstiger te worden. Het amulet had die wereld gemaakt, een wereld waar niemand uit kon ontsnappen, alleen maar dieper in kon wegzinken.

En de varkens ? Hier was er geen verschil tussen het varken en de draak. De vlinders vlogen alleen om doem te brengen op de heuvels van wespenzeep. Het waren steekvlinders, die zich op die manier overal konden inhechten. Zij waren de steekvlinders van ... het amulet.

Het was een wereld waar schoonheid gelijk stond aan vuilheid, een wereld van een vreemd licht, het licht van een amulet. Zij konden niet ontsnappen uit hun kooien. De tralies waren hun vleugels, stralen als onuitputtelijk ijs ... als ijs dat bloed was, de grotere dorst. Zij aten van een traan van vlees, als van duistere chocolade, maar het vrat ook aan hen, een duistere woestheid, in een wereld waar alles vrat. Geen verschil tussen de slager en het slachtvee, en ook het roofdier was niet anders. Daar zorgde het amulet voor, als het hogere intellect, een duister intellect, maar vol van licht ... als een boek bedekt met zoveel miljoenen vuurvliegjes .... als een brandend boek.

En wat zien zij die het boek bekijken ? Het oog is hier niet anders dan hetgeen hij bekijkt. In deze wereld zijn alleen maar ogen .... stenen waarin tranen opgeborgen zitten. Het verandert terwijl je kijkt, want jouw oog is een vuur, en creeert .... als de creatie van een amulet.

Na een lange dag zijn er geen letters meer, alleen vlees en bloed, brandend in een vreemd vuur ... het vuur van een amulet. Dan komen zij tot leven, en zijn er alleen nog maar plaatjes. Geen verschil tussen licht en duisternis.

Geen verschil meer tussen pijn en plezier, want het amulet heeft de muur afgebroken, in duistere woede, als een gillende traan. Hij kwam om vrij te zetten, maar wat deed hij hen aan ? In duisternis leidt hij hen voort, tot een hoger intellect. Hoger intellect ? Wat als dit alles een valstrik is ? Wij zijn zo bang voor de valstrik. Waar zouden wij zijn zonder de valstrik ? Was dan alles niet gewoon nog erger ? Waarom geen compromis sluiten, zoals in een paradox ? Dat noem ik van twee walletjes eten.

Het amulet bracht hen van een enge wereld naar een enge wereld. Kunnen we niet beter gewoon twee heren dienen ? Dan komen de klappen misschien minder hard aan. Dan hebben de heren misschien nog een zwakke plek voor ons ? Maar mogen we dan niet meer kiezen ? Is er geen democratie hiervoor in deze dingen ? Maar wat nou als de meerderheid tegen ons stemt ?

In de wereld van het amulet is democratie hetzelfde als anarchisme .... En dictatuur is al niet anders. Geen verschil tussen de drijver en zijn slaaf.

Een enge uitnodiging van het amulet. Het was een brandende nacht nadat het amulet nog meer kuddes had misleid. En waartoe ? Sommigen probeerden het amulet te doorgronden ... Wie was het amulet ? Hoe konden ze het amulet vernietigen, of misschien wel omsmelten tot zuivere vormen ? Want hadden niet alle dingen diep van binnen een potentiele puurheid ?

‘Ik zie zoveel liefde en zoveel haat in je ogen,’ fluisterde het amulet.

‘Neem een beetje van mijn liefde weg, en er zal geen haat meer zijn. Neem een beetje van mijn haat weg en er zal geen liefde meer zijn. Die twee dingen houden elkaar in stand.

Ik zie zoveel schoonheid en zoveel lelijkheid in je ogen. Neem een beetje van mijn schoonheid weg, en er zal geen lelijkheid meer zijn. Neem een beetje van mijn lelijkheid weg, en er zal geen schoonheid meer zijn. Die twee houden elkaar in stand.’

Ik boog mijn hoofd, en stond in een woestijn, gewapend met de mysterieuze wapens van de vlieg. In deze woestijn blijven we altijd huilen en liegen, altijd ontkennen. Zo lang de nacht voortduurt zullen we het groene niet binnengaan. In de verte hoorde ik gezang als de stem van jongens : ‘Wij zijn mooi, jullie zijn lelijk, wij zijn mooi, en jullie zijn lelijk. Wij zijn lelijk en jullie zijn mooi. Wij zijn lelijk en jullie zijn mooi. Wij zijn mooi en jullie zijn mooi. Wij zijn lelijk en jullie zijn lelijk, en jij bent de lelijke. Neem daarom van het moedervoedsel.’

Niemand stak zoals zij staken, en niemand maakten zacht zoals zij zacht maakten. In de verte glitterde een woestijnstad in de zon, als gemaakt van glas. Maar het was als een vreemd soort chrystal, als tranenchrystal. Zovelen waren daar, gewapend met de wapens van de vlieg. Ze liepen door de steegjes, en zaten in de huizen. Hier scheen altijd iedereen te huilen, net als in de woestijn, maar in deze wereld was de traan en de klank hetzelfde. Ik liep een huis binnen en vertelde over het amulet. Zij leken erg geinteresseerd te zijn. Ik wees hen de weg naar het amulet, en ik heb ze nooit meer teruggezien.

Toen vroeg ik naar het moedervoedsel. Zij leiden mij naar een oase, vol met groen. De rotsen leken hier te huilen, en allen dronken zij van de traan. Het stroomde voort vanuit de bomen en de struiken.

Hier was geluid hetzelfde als de steek, en de geur was niet anders. Ik zocht beschutting, alleen maar om te ontdekken dat dit hetzelfde was als naaktheid. Was ik al in de wereld van het amulet ?

Was er voor mij nog hoop, of was ik al een gevallene, een verdoemde ? Je kon hier niet rondkijken zonder te steken en gestoken te worden. Je kon hier niet bewegen zonder te beseffen dat alles zowel de steker als de gestokene was. Daarom traanden alle ogen, en waren onze ogen als messen. We hadden gewapende ogen.

Plotseling was er het geluid van messen in de lucht, en de lucht werd vol met lange indiaanse vliegen met de kleinst mogelijke hoofdjes. Ze leken een beetje op sprinkhanen en hadden de prachtigste vleugels, die de fijnste poeders leken te verspreiden. Dit waren de

poeders van de woestijn. Ze leken woest, en toen zij hun zachte vochtige lichten verspreiden leken wij niets anders dan de marionetten van deze lichtorde. Dit was het lot van een ieder die van het moedervoedsel had genomen. De lichten werden als pijlen in ons geschoten, en de reflex maakte ons bezeten. Hier was overgevoeligheid overhardheid, als een strakke, doelbewuste killermachine, die maar één doel had : inwoning. Maar waarom wilde het ons bewonen ? Waren wij nu robotten geworden ? En zo ja, robotten van wie ?

Er was hier geen verschil tussen de schieter en het geschotene. We hadden allemaal onze bogen en harpoenen, in dit zachte zweterige licht, en we waren allemaal bezeten door de reflex. Dat konden we zien in elkaars ogen.

Hier is bloed en vlees hetzelfde, en ook de beenderen zijn niet anders. Hier is alles gemalen tot een tekenfilm .... vreemde verf, komende vanuit een amulet. Een vreemd vuur brandt hier, waar alles tot verf gemalen is, waar duisternis en de tekenfilm hetzelfde zijn.

Einde

De Eeuwige Vlam

Er was elvengetrommel in het kamp van de indiaanse elven. Salucia pakte haar speer en rende naar de dichtsbijzijnde boom waar ze in klom. Haar vader zou terugkomen, maar ook verwachte zij een aanval van de Maribiren, een elvenstam aan de westkant van hun kamp. Ze zouden gehoord hebben van de terugkomst van Salucia's vader, die zolang bij de tovenaar van Ostford had gewerkt. De tovenaar zou hem beloond hebben met zoveel toverdingen dat de Maribiren daar graag een graantje van wilden meepikken. Maar alles bleef gelukkig rustig, en Salucia's vader maakte het goed. Misschien hadden de Maribiren de dreiging wel gevoeld die uitging vanuit het kasteel van de tovenaar van Ostford. Salucia's vader droeg een wapenrusting die zij nog niet kende : fier, maar ook teder en afschrikwekkend, verlokkend, als een verwarrende paradox. Ze voelde wel de nieuwsgierigheid van de Maribiren, maar besloot er geen aandacht aan te schenken. Ze voelde de donkere ogen van de Maribiren loeren, vol lust maar ook vol angst. Wat had de tovenaar van Ostford toch gedaan ? Er kwam een wonderlijke, indringende magie vanuit het kamp van de indiaanse elven. Salucia was gerustgesteld. Alles was goed met haar vader. De tovenaar had goed werk verricht. Maar toen haar vader een paar littekens liet zien schrok Salucia. 'Ik weet het, mijn kind,' zei haar vader. 'Werken bij de tovenaar was niet zonder gevaren. Ik moest ingewijd worden in de hogere magie. Ik heb gevochten met de

wachters van de tovenaar, en zij hebben mij verwond, maar alleen zo kon ik het zegel dragen.'

'Welk zegel, vader ?' vroeg Salucia. Haar vader keek haar teder aan, en ze zag een glinstering in zijn ogen. Zijn ogen waren doorbloed, vol van geheimenissen, als grote bruine kralen die het zonlicht op een mysterieuze wijze weerspiegelden, maar ook zoveel duisternis. 'Ga slapen, Salucia,' zei haar vader. 'Het is laat.'

Salucia wist niet wat er die nacht zou gebeuren, maar Maribiren kwamen het kamp binnen om haar te ontvoeren. Ze brachten haar naar een plaats, een bron, waar het elvenlicht haar omhulde. Niets wist zij van de raadselen van de Maribiren. Het was een prachtige ervaring, iets wat ze niet had verwacht, omdat de Maribiren in vijandschap leefden met haar eigen stam. Maar wie waren dit ? Het waren Maribiren die zij niet kende. Ze waren ouder, en ze leken rustiger. 'Ga maar, Salucia,' zeiden ze tegen haar. Maar Salucia wilde niet weg. Ze wilde blijven in deze elvenbron, die haar hart zo scheen te raken. Badend in licht zwom ze naar de andere kant van de warme bron.

Plotseling werd er een zwaard gestoken in de man die het dichtst bij Salucia baadde. Het was haar vader die haar kwam terughalen. Salucia had gemengde gevoelens. 'Ze willen je van de tovenaar van Ostford afhouden,' sprak haar vader, terwijl de andere gestaltes om haar heen in de bron leken te verdrinken. 'Vader, wat doet u ?' vroeg Salucia. Niet lang daarna hoorde Salucia een schot, en zag haar vader in vertraging neervallen. De bron vulde zich met bloed. Een donkere gestalte stond voor Salucia, en draaide zich toen om om in het niets te verdwijnen. Salucia slaakte een gil, en kwam er snel achter dat haar vader dood was. Ook was er geen enkele Maribir meer te bekennen.

Nu was het voor Salucia tijd om zelf de tovenaar van Ostford te bezoeken, want ze snapte niet wat er met haar gebeurde. In tranen zocht ze haar pad, terwijl ze de aanwijzingen van haar vader herinnerde. Haar vader had haar veel verteld over hoe de tovenaar woonde, maar vooral hoe er te komen. Toen Salucia bij de hoge verlichte poort van het kasteel van de tovenaar van Ostford aankwam viel ze huilend een lange elf in de armen. Snel en stoterig vertelde ze het verhaal. Ze wist dat ze hier troost en antwoord zou krijgen. De elf nam haar zorgzaam mee naar binnen. 'Er zijn zoveel dingen die je niet begrijpt,' zei de elf. 'Je bent erg jong, Salucia. De tovenaar wacht op je.'

Binnen leek alles heel anders dan wat haar vader haar altijd verteld had. Aan de muur hingen indiaanse speren, vreemde messen, en sommige muren waren doordrenkt met bloed. Salucia schrok, en vroeg wat dat bloed moest voorstellen. De elf sprak niet. Salucia begon bang te worden, maar ineens nam de elf Salucia weer in zijn armen. 'Je hoeft niet bang te zijn, lieveling,' zei de elf. 'Alles zal duidelijk worden, maar we mogen niet teveel praten. Ach, we mogen het wel, maar het is niet verstandig. Laten we de dingen stap voor stap doen.

De tovenaar was een wonderlijke man. Hij gaf Salucia ringen voor in het kasteel. De ringen werden aan haar klederen vastgemaakt, en de ringen zouden uitleg geven over alle dingen. Het waren sprekende ringen, en meer en meer begon Salucia zich op haar gemak te voelen. Maar ook proefde ze een soort dreiging die ze niet kon beschrijven.

De tovenaar droeg lange gewaden, en bracht haar tot een andere indiaanse elvenstam in de dieptes van het kasteel. De elven spraken niet, maar communiceerden op een andere manier, door hun ogen, en door het bewegen van hun lippen. ‘Leer hen praten,’ zei de tovenaar. ‘Dat is je eerste opdracht. Ik zal je later alles uitleggen over je vader. Wie hij was, en ook wie de Maribiren zijn.’

Salucia nam de tijd om de elven te leren spreken, en ook leerde ze hun manier van communicatie. De tovenaar was na enkele maanden zeer tevreden, en bracht haar tot een andere indiaanse elvenstam dieper in het kasteel. Het kasteel was erg groot. Deze stam communiceerde door te gillen en door allerlei vreemde klanken overmatig te herhalen. ‘Kom,’ zei de tovenaar, en bracht haar tot een elvenbron in een grote ruimte. De bron was bijna geheel blauw, als blauwe bubbelende verf. De tovenaar maakte wat strepen op haar huid, en daalde toen zelf in de bron af. Salucia moest hem volgen. Hij zwom naar een deur diep onderin de bron, opende die deur en zwom naar binnen. Hier zwommen haaien en allerlei andere vissen, maar ze deden niets. Ze staarden alleen. De tovenaar zwom met Salucia door naar de volgende deur, en toen ze achter de deur naar boven zwommen kwamen ze in een geheel nieuwe ruimte terecht. ‘Als ik er niet bij was zou je verslonden zijn door de haaien en de andere vissen,’ sprak de tovenaar. ‘Ik bepaal dus wie hier komt.’ Er hing een vreemde indringende geur als een soort verf, maar het rook heel lichamelijk en warm.

Salucia keek haar ogen uit, want er dropen hier een heleboel vreemde stoffen met vreemde kleuren. Het was een soort modder. De tovenaar keek naar Salucia en knipoogde naar haar. ‘Weet je, Salucia,’ zei de tovenaar, ‘ik laat je dit alles zien, en eens liet ik je vader dit alles zien, omdat ik wil dat jij en je nageslacht in dit kasteel zullen leven. Buiten zullen de Maribiren alles overnemen en ze zullen niets van je stam overlaten. Jouw vader hebben ze uit de weg geruimd, maar jou heb ik beschermd.’ Salucia begon te huilen. Ze had verwacht dat ook haar vader beschermd zou worden, en daarom begreep ze niet waarom de Maribiren hem konden vermoorden. De tovenaar nam haar in zijn armen, en sprak : ‘Ik zou je vader maar wat graag willen beschermen, maar de macht van de Maribiren is niet te onderschatten. Echter, als je getrouw het pad volgt, en bij me blijft, zul je je vader terugzien.’ Maar toen werd de tovenaar ineens erg droevig. Ik zal nog even bij je blijven, totdat je totaal door het kasteel bent aanvaart en in veiligheid bent gebracht. Dan zal ik mijn reis moeten richten op de gebieden van de Maribiren. Ik zal de donkere en zwarte reis moeten maken, zodat ze dit kasteel niet zullen innemen.’ Salucia greep de tovenaar extra stevig vast en sprak : ‘Maar kunnen we niet samen in die veiligheid blijven ? Waarom zou u zoveel riskeren ? Dit kasteel is van u en blijft van u !’

‘Meisje,’ zei de tovenaar, ‘je kent de krachten van de Maribiren niet. Ik moet daar naartoe, anders zal dit kasteel van hen zijn en is er voor jou en je nageslacht geen enkele hoop. Zo zullen ook alle andere indiaanse elvenstammen vergaan, en zal de vlam van Ostford

voorgoed doven.'

En zo namen die twee na een lange tijd van lopen en spreken afscheid van elkaar. De tovenaar had haar uitgelegd wat ze moest doen, en verder zouden de ringen haar leiden. Salucia zuchtte diep en probeerde moedig te blijven, maar al snel overvielen duistere angsten haar. Rustte het dan allemaal op haar schouders ? Waarom was alles zo ingewikkeld ?

Zoals de tovenaar had gezegd kwam ze eerst in een gebied vol met bomen. De bomen leken bijna op elven, en zij brachten vreemde eieren voort. De tovenaar had haar een speciale rode lap gegeven waarmee ze die eieren kon uitbroeden. Maar er was iets in haar wat zei dat ze dat niet moest doen. Ook de ringen gaven haar het advies om het niet te doen. De ringen hadden duidelijk een hele andere visie dan de tovenaar, en Salucia vroeg zich af waarom de tovenaar haar die ringen had geschonken. Maar veel plannen bleken overeen te stemmen. Salucia bond de rode lap om haar hoofd naarmate het warmer werd. Soms bleef ze wat rusten tegen de kasteelmuren aan, en trok dan verder.

Er waren zoveel dingen die Salucia niet begreep. Hoe zou ze aan nageslacht komen ? Waar zou ze haar vader ontmoeten en hoe ? De ringen vertelden nog niet veel. Het was alsof Salucia hun vertrouwen eerst moest winnen. Er waren een aantal dingen die ze heel strak in haar gedachten had, als een betoverend visioen, en dat was de reis van de tovenaar om hen veilig te stellen, en haar eigen reis om uiteindelijk de tovenaar veilig te stellen. Ze was vastberaden, en ze wist dat wanneer de tovenaar de eeuwige vlam had bereikt in het rijk van de Maribiren, dan zouden ze met elkaar verzoend worden. Maar dat kon alleen gebeuren als zij de eeuwige vlam van het kasteel zou bereiken. Zo niet, dan zouden ze beiden sterven, en zouden de Maribiren het kasteel voor altijd in handen krijgen. Het was vreemd als ze terugdacht aan de ontvoering. Ze kwam in een elvenbron van licht, en ze had even het idee dat de stam goed was, of tenminste een deel van die stam. Eén van de ringen vertelde haar dat er ook Maribiren waren die eigendom waren van de stam, als krijgsgevangenen die ingeburgerd waren. Ze probeerde het te begrijpen, maar het leek alsof ze het niet kon grijpen. En eigenlijk wilde ze het niet grijpen, omdat ze bang was om goede gevoelens te hebben over enkele Maribiren. Ze was bang dat hun krachten haar verstand zouden innemen. In dit was ze gemengd, en het trok haar bijna uit elkaar.

Een lange gestalte stond voor haar toen ze haar ogen langzaam opendeed. Ze schrok. Het leek op een Maribir, een wat oudere Maribir. De Maribir wilde zijn mond openen, maar zuchtte toen. 'Ik heb je vader verdraaid zien wegzakken,' zei de Maribir.

'Jij, jij,' stamelde Salucia, 'was jij niet één van mijn ontvoerders ? Jullie hebben me niets gedaan, alleen gebracht naar die zalige elvenbron, waar daarna verschrikkelijke dingen gebeurde.'

'Ja,' sprak de maribir. 'Ik moet je iets vertellen. Wij zijn .... wij waren krijgsgevangenen ...

Jij hebt ons verlost .... Jouw hart .... De reis die je hier maakt zette ons vrij, trok ons los in onze gedachte ....'

'Waar zijn de anderen ?' vroeg Salucia.

'Verderop,' zei de man.

En toen zag Salucia in hoe belangrijk haar reis was. Zij was zelf een sleutel. Ze begreep alleen niet hoe, en nog steeds was ze bang om bedrogen te worden.

Na een tijdje kwam ze bij een kamp aan vol met Maribiren, maar deze waren anders, als de krijgsgevangen man. Misschien dat de man hen bedoelde. Het leek alsof zoveel angst van haar werd weggenomen toen hij haar zag. Ja, deze waren anders, ouder, rustiger, en het was alsof ze weer baadde in die elvenbron. Alleen nu hoopte ze dat er geen verschrikkelijke dingen zouden gebeuren.

'Salucia,' sprak een vertrouwde stem.

En daar stond ze dan. Zolang in de armen van zoiets vertrouwelijks. En warmte stroomde haar trillerige lijf binnen, om haar rustig te maken. Sieraden kreeg ze om haar heen, en allerlei kleine flesjes, vol magie. 'Ik denk dat ik me vergis. Zijn jullie mijn ontvoerders ?' Niemand zei wat. Ze voelde zich alleen wegglijden in een diepe rust. De muren van het kasteel waren hier ver weg, het plafond hoog, en gloeiend als de hete zon, terwijl er zand op de geblokte vloer lag, rood en geel geblokt. Salucia zakte neer, en tranen stroomden. Een vertrouwelijke hand greep haar hand zachtjes en teder. Ze hield haar ogen stijf dicht.

'Maar ik wil niet,' zei ze. En toen ze haar ogen opende was iedereen weg, en ook haar ringen waren verdwenen. Wat was er gaande. Ze wilde een gil slaken, maar kon niet, alsof er een hand op haar mond lag. Een tedere hand, en daarom was ze nog steeds zo rustig, en ze zag nog steeds al die andere sieraden aan haar lichaam en klederen bungelen, en zoveel kleine flesjes.

'Ik heb zoiets vreemds meegemaakt,' zei ze tegen zichzelf. Ze opende een flesje en een wonderlijke geur verspreidde zich. Een geest stond voor haar met een zwaard. Toen ze naar boven keek zag ze op een hoogte de stam weer, en vroeg vriendelijk of de geest haar daar naartoe wilde brengen. Dat was in een wip gebeurt. Ze wist niet wat ze moest denken, en weer omhelsde ze haar vrienden één voor één. Ze droegen hele aparte flesjes en kruikjes aan kettingen om hun nek, en hun broeken waren van prachtige zachte stoffen, als van fluweel. Maar alles leek wel nat, en één van hen hield zijn hand op waarin een vlam

verscheen.

‘De eeuwige vlam van het kasteel,’ zei een ander. Maar je hebt het nog niet bereikt. Wat zou het kosten om de vlam van de één naar de ander te laten overspringen ?

En hoeveel tijd zouden ze hebben ? De tovenaar had haar verteld dat er niet veel tijd was. De eeuwige vlam was nu zo dichtbij, maar tegelijkertijd zo verweg. Wat als de tovenaar al op haar zou wachten ? Wat als hij de eeuwige vlam in het rijk der Maribiren al had bereikt ? Paniek begon over haar te komen, maar tegelijkertijd suste ze haarzelf, en ook de anderen begonnen haar te sussen.

‘Ik kan je die vlam geven,’ sprak hij, een lange Maribir, een voormalig krijgsgevangene, wellicht een slaaf. ‘Ik ben je veel verschuldigd,’ zei hij. Hij schoof dichterbij, maar de vlam begon te doven. ‘Zie je wat er gebeurt ?’ zei hij.

Salucia zakte weg in wanhoop. Ze dacht terug aan de tovenaar, en haar onwetendheid maakte haar onzeker.

‘Sssh, praat niet,’ zei de man met de vlam. Toen vertrok hij.

‘Je zal hem vinden,’ zeiden de anderen, ‘en dan zal de vlam overspringen.’

Daarna moest Salucia een lange reis maken door een woestijn, terwijl al haar toverij haar in de steek leek te laten. Boven op een hoogte was er niets dan droogte, waar de stralen van de inmens hete zon speelden, en ze wist niet hoe ze daar kon komen. Waar waren de anderen ? Ze wist het niet. Ze vaagden soms gewoon geheel weg, zonder dat ze het besefte. Vaak sloot ze haar ogen en opende ze weer. Ze begreep er niets van. Achter een struikje zag ze een opening waar het zand schoof. Overal lagen rode lappen, en ze herinnerde de woorden van de tovenaar dat ze door die lappen verschillende soorten eieren kon uitbroeden. Ze besloot wat eieren van het struikje te plukken, en wikkelde ze in de rode lappen. Vogels kwamen voort, en brachten haar snel op die hogere plaats. Onzekerheid maakte zich meester van haar. Ook dorst vervulde haar, terwijl al haar flesjes allang leeg waren. Maar verderop was een bron. Langzaam liet ze zich in de bron zakken die heter was dan het zand, maar prettig aanvoelde. Plotseling voelde ze lippen op haar huid. Iemand was achter haar, en de hitte scheen te verdwijnen.

Het was de man met de eeuwige vlam. ‘Zie je,’ zei de man, ‘als ik dichtbij je komt vertrekt de vlam. Als hij geheel gedoofd is, is alles verloren.’ De man was een eind van haar weg gezwommen. De bron was koud geworden. Salucia schrok. Snel stapte ze uit de bron en

durfde niet meer over de man na te denken. Even later kwam ze bij een blok ijs waar de vlam was. Voorzichtig stak ze haar hand in het ijs, en de vlam begon haar gezicht te verlichten. Ze voelde zich blij worden van binnen, en vol worden met een hele andere warmte. Op hetzelfde moment begreep ze waarom de tovenaar haar moest verlaten, en ervoer ze met haar hele wezen dat ook hij nu de eeuwige vlam had bereikt. Ze hadden het samen gedaan.

Einde

De Wraak van

de Plaaggeesten

Dat de indiaanse elven hard hadden gewerkt wist iedereen. Het was een prachtig kamp geworden, en ze aten vollop van hun jachtmaal. Ditkeer hadden ze de beestachtige wachters van de keizer weten te strikken, en de toverkrachten vloeiden van hun monden af. Niemand wist van hun jachttaktieken af, want die werden al eeuwenlang geheim gehouden. Als de bliksem sloegen ze toe, terwijl ze verwarrende sporen achterlieten. Niemand zou dit kamp ooit kunnen bereiken, omdat zodra iemand naderde, alles onzichtbaar werd. Dit ging automatisch. Zoveel toverflessen en toverkruiken verspreidden zoveel mysterieuze geuren die hiertoe in staat waren. Sommigen dachten dat die geuren iemands hersenen gek konden maken, zodat bepaalde dingen niet meer te zien waren, en anderen dachten dat het kamp daadwerkelijk als door een waas onzichtbaar werd. Hoe dan ook, de onbereikbaarheid was een feit. Daarom waren de indiaanse elven erg trots en voorzichtig met hun burgerschap. Het kwam weleens voor dat een elf om een bepaalde reden verbannen werd.

Sliktior had de keizer één keer ontmoet en vond het niet wat. Ook Sorsor kende de keizer een beetje. Ze dachten terug aan de tijden dat er vrede was, maar sinds de keizer beestachtige wachters begon in te huren leek het alsof zijn hersenen werden ingenomen. Het was een tovenaar die de keizer zo ver had gebracht, en de keizer dacht dat hij in z’n recht stond. Wat deden die wachters ? Ze maakten alles en iedereen onveilig. Woorden schieten mij te kort om zulke afschuwelijkheden te beschrijven. Daarom waren de indiaanse elven zo blij het vlees van deze beesten in hun monden te voelen vloeien. Sliktior had het vlees niet aangeraakt. Hij was bang dat hem wat zou overkomen.

Sorsor dacht aan de keizer, en aan de tovenaar met zijn toveres. De tovenaar had die

wachters eens gecreeerd, en het zou niet zonder gevaren zijn het vlees van zulke wachters zomaar te eten. De wachters waren deels leeuw, deels tijger en deels wolf, en verder steeg hun roofkwaliteit boven alles uit. Het waren de superroofdieren die de andere roofdieren aten. Vaak gingen ze op jacht om alles te verscheuren wat los en vaststond, maar bovenal waren ze gemeen. Een nachtmerrie zou het zijn om in hun kerkers terecht te komen. Sorsor had het idee dat de keizer niet goed doorhad wat hij in huis had gehaald, dat hij niet wist wat er allemaal gebeurde. De keizer was zo druk met andere dingen bezig, en in Sorsor's ogen was de keizer totaal in de macht van de tovenaar en zijn toveres.

Sorsor had wel van het vlees gegeten, en vermomde zich tot een wachter. Hij ging naar het kasteel van de keizer, sloop naar binnen, en stal een bol met toverkooltjes. Snel ging hij terug naar zijn kamp, hief de bol op, en zei : 'Dit hier is het hart van de keizer. Voor ons is er geen hoop als wij hen van het keizerlijk kasteel hun gang laten gaan. Zij zijn vol list en sluwheid, en de keizer zelf is een pion in hun handen. Wij kunnen hem niet redden. Wij kunnen niet op tegen de machten van de tovenaar en zijn toveres. Zij zullen ons hier vinden en geen spaan van ons overlaten. Daarom : deze bol met toverkooltjes is het dierbaarste bezit van de keizer, en hij zal zeker sterven wanneer de bol is gebroken.' Toen brak Sorsor de bol, en er was luid gejuich. Allen wisten zij dat de tovenaar en toveres alleen konden regeren door de keizer. Nu was de keizer gestorven.

Sorsor ging terug naar het kasteel, en er was veel doodslucht en rouw. Met gebogen hoofden kwamen de tovenaar en zijn toveres uit een grot naast het kasteel. De tovenaar hief zijn handen op en riep : 'De goden hebben wraak genomen.'

Sorsor nam twee messen en wierp hen in de harten van de tovenaar en zijn toveres. Nu was de omgeving en het land vrij van hun onderdrukking. Sorsor hield zijn laatste toespraak tot zijn stam, en maakte toen Sliktior tot opperhoofd. Sorsor zou beginnen aan zijn grote reis naar de bergen van de goden. Dit gebeurde altijd als een opperhoofd een daad begaan had zoals Sorsor. Ze zouden Sorsor herinneren als hun held, en Sliktior zou Sorsor de Tweede heten.

Sorsor pakte Sliktior vast, kuste zijn voorhoofd, en vertrok. Niet veel nam hij mee. Zijn kledingen werden verdeeld onder de stam, en ook grote delen van zijn bezit, terwijl er ook veel werd verbrand. Twee misdadigers werden aan de martelpaal geslagen, en zij zouden sterven in plaats van verbannen worden. Zij verkozen de dood boven het verbannen worden, want de verbanning was in hun ogen een veel grotere schande. Door de martelpaal zou hun geest in het kamp blijven, en door mee te strijden in de oorlogen zouden ze hun eer kunnen herstellen. Ja, de regels van het kamp waren van grote wreedheid, maar ook van grote genade, als een geheimzinnige paradox van rechtvaardigheid. Zo had Sorsor het hen geleerd.

Sorsor was een man van grote wijsheid, geschonken door de goden die hij niet kende. Nu hij door zijn list en sluwheid de tovenaar en toveres had verslagen was hij waardig die goden te leren kennen. De goden woonden in de bergen, naast andere tovenaars en grote

elven. Maar eerst zou hij door die verschrikkelijke woestijn moeten waar de goden hem op de proef zouden stellen.

In de woestijn werd hij gekweld door waanideeen, luchtweerspiegelingen, honger en dorst. De pijn van de droogte stak hem. Een oase was wat hij verlangde, een echte oase, maar alles was hier om hem te plagen. Er was hier niets te bereiken, en de plaaggeesten waren zijn enig gezelschap. Sorsor had niet geleerd in eenzaamheid te leven, en kon de leegte die zijn ziel teisterde niet aan. Hij wist dat de plaaggeesten niet per definitie slecht waren. Ze waren uitgezonden door de goden om hem te testen. Na een lange en angstige ervaring van leegheid en hopeloosheid riep hij het uit tot de plaaggeesten : ‘Als er dan niemand anders is, vullen jullie mij dan op, want de leegte vreet me weg.’ Gillend en joelend namen de plaaggeesten bezit van hem. Hier hadden ze lange tijd op gewacht, en nu zou Sorsor voorbereid zijn om de grotten van de goden te betreden. Het was de plaaggeest zelf die geplaagd werd en rust zocht, en die niet kon vinden. Nu de plaaggeest hem had vervuld stroomde er toverkracht door hem heen, en kon hij de goden bereiken zonder weg te smelten.

In een plaats van toverkolen ontmoette hij de god Prektiktion. De god bedankte hem dat Sorsor hem tot rust had gebracht, en de plaaggeest die Prektiktion tot hem had gezonden had aangenomen. Sorsor sprak over de verwoesting van het keizerlijke hart, en de god Prektiktion wist er alles van. ‘Ik heb jou die wijsheid gegeven,’ sprak de god. En de god vulde Sorsor met een hele reeks toverkrachten. De god Prektiktion had vele tovenaars in dienst, en kon ook Sorsor goed gebruiken. De god gaf hem een fles vol andere goden die hij kon oproepen. Die andere goden hadden de meest vreemde namen die Sorsor moeilijk kon uitspreken.

Prektiktion sprak dat de stam van Sorsor nu was overgeleverd aan de krachten van de woestijn, want ook naar hen zouden de plaaggeesten op zoek gaan om hen te testen. Sorsor nam de fles en gooide hem tegen een stenen muur kapot. ‘Ik had beloofd hen met mijn leven te beschermen,’ sprak Sorsor. ‘Waarom ben ik hier ?’

‘Je had geen andere keus,’ sprak Prektiktion. Sorsor viel op de grond en huilde. Hij miste zijn stam.

‘Als zij de plaaggeest aannemen,’ sprak Prektiktion, ‘dan zal je hart met hen verbonden zijn.’

Na vele lange jaren kwam ook Sliktior tot de plaats van toverkolen, en vertelde Sorsor dat hij niet kwam vanwege een grote daad, maar omdat hij was verbannen. Sorsor viel neer in woede. Hij kon zich niet voorstellen dat zijn stam tot zoiets in staat zou zijn, maar later begreep hij het. Sliktior had lafheid vertoond. Sorsor vroeg zich af hoe een verbannene hier kon komen. Uit het oog van Prektiktion kwam een straal vuur die in een flits Sliktior verteerde. ‘Veel vaker komen hier bannelingen,’ sprak Prektiktion. ‘Zij kunnen hier komen

met een geheime sleutel, maar hun lot is het vuur.'

'Zijn zij indringers ?' vroeg Sorsor. Maar Prektiktion schudde zijn hoofd. 'Nee, zij worden toegelaten omdat zij dieven zijn. Zij nemen altijd een stukje weg van de stam als zij gaan. Zij zijn dus bijzonder in onze ogen, en onze ogen zullen dat bijzondere dan nemen.'

'Maar waar is Sliktior dan nu ?' vroeg Sorsor.

'Hij is overgeleverd aan de wraak van de plaaggeesten,' sprak Prektiktion.

Maar dat liet Sorsor niet op zich zitten, want hij hield meer van Sliktior dan van welke god of elf dan ook. Er was één ding dat hem liet strijden tegen de goden, en wat hij altijd droeg, en dat was een klein kruikje vastgemaakt aan een leren ketting om z'n nek. Zijn voorouders hadden hem verteld dat hij het flesje echter maar één keer kon gebruiken. Hij opende het flesje, en een stroom van gif sloeg de god neer. Sorsor greep een mes dat aan zijn been gebonden was door een band, en wierp het in het hart van de god zoals hij eens de tovenaar en de tovenares had uitgeschakeld. Op hetzelfde moment werd de huid van de god opengescheurd en Sliktior stapte eruit, als een priemend vuur. 'Raak me niet aan !' riep Sliktior. Maar Sorsor greep hem stevig vast. 'Aan de wraak van de plaaggeesten zal je niet overgeleverd zijn,' sprak Sorsor, 'maar weest gastvrij voor hen, want aan de wraak der goden waren ze overgeleverd.' Er zat nog één druppel in het flesje waar Sorsor Sliktior van liet drinken, en de plaaggeest vervulde toen ook hem.

Samen zijn ze toen door de woestijn naar hun stam teruggegaan. Maar de andere goden hadden zich gevestigd in het kamp, en hadden de indiaanse elven tot slavernij gedwongen. Het flesje was leeg, maar omdat Sliktior van het flesje had gedronken was hij immuun. En zo bevrijdde Sliktior zijn stam van de goden, en werd hij in ere hersteld.

Sorsor zou weer teruggaan naar de bergen, en ditmaal niet om tot de goden te gaan, maar tot de grote elven. De grote elven droegen zorg voor vele plaaggeesten die ze uit de verschrikkelijke handen van de goden hadden weggekregen. Toen Sorsor een groot aantal grote elven had leren kennen stelden ze hem aan als opperhoofd van een stam van indiaanse plaaggeesten. Deze indiaanse plaaggeesten konden toveren als de beste, en Sorsor moest oppassen dat ze hem niet in de val lieten lopen. Vaak moest er een grote elf ingrijpen.

Na vele jaren kwam ook Sliktior naar deze plaats, en deze keer niet omdat hij verbannen was, maar omdat hij de stam van indiaanse elven een nieuwe grote dienst had bewezen, zo groot als de daad van Sorsor. Sliktior nam de taak van Sorsor nu hier over, en Sorsor vertrok dieper in de bergen. Sorsor kwam tot een plaats waar veel indiaanse tovenaars woonden, en hij zag in dat zij veel grotere plaaggeesten waren dan degenen die hij al kende. Ze waren duivels wreed, maar daarnaast ook genadig, als een wet die hij ook eens kende, de

paradox van rechtvaardigheid. Fliktivian was een woestijnvlinder die grote luchtweerspiegelingen kon veroorzaken, en Sorsor ontmoette vele anderen. Sorsor kwam erachter dat zij uiteindelijk verantwoordelijk waren voor alle moeizame tafereeltjes van zijn leven, maar ditmaal waren ze vriendelijk naar hen, alsof hij nu één van hen was. Sorsor kwam er echter achter dat velen van hen niet deugden, en slachtte hen af in verschrikkelijke gevechten. In deze gevechten leerde hij wat ware gemeenheid was, en dat de ogenschijnlijke genade de gemeenheid nog groter maakte. Want Sorsor raakte ervan in de war, en werd zo een gemakkelijke prooi. Maar Sliktior volgde hem op de voet, en maakte zijn meester vrij. Er waren geheimenissen die Sliktior droeg waar Sorsor nog geen weet van had.

Sorsor had vele vragen, vragen die beantwoord zouden worden op zijn pad door de woestijnen en de bergketens. Het was alsof alles bijdroeg aan de grote puzzel in zijn hoofd, maar sommige stukjes leken alles weer af te breken. Sorsor raakte erg verwilderd. Op een dag vond Sorsor een heleboel plaaggeesten in een flesje. Als hij ze vrij zou laten, zouden dingen dan erger worden of beter ? Hij wist dat ze waren gezonden om te plagen, en eigenlijk had hij genoeg van het geplaag. Hij wist dat als hij het niet zou openen, dan zou waarschijnlijk iemand anders het openen. Sorsor besloot het flesje om z’n nek te dragen, om het in gevallen van nood te gebruiken. Je kon nooit weten. Maar later besloot hij het diep in de woestijn te begraven, want er waren al genoeg plaaggeesten op de wereld.

Einde

Het Toverwapen

De indiaanse strijder hakte er op los met zijn mes. Ditkeer was er geen ontsnappen aan, want hij was omsingeld door een groep apen. Geen van de apen gaf snel op, ook al bracht de indiaan hen flink wat wonden toe. Ook al lagen na een tijd veel apen op de grond, de laatste aap greep de indiaan en bracht hem mee in een boom. De indiaan bloedde hevig, en vroeg zich af waarom de aap hem niet verscheurde. In een hoge boomhut werd de indiaan op een bed gelegd. Een vrouw begon zijn rug te masseren. Waarom verbond ze zijn wonden niet als ze zo vriendelijk was ? Haar handen zaten na een tijdje onder het bloed.

‘Ach, dat droogt wel op,’ zei de vrouw. De aap scheurde zijn huid van zich weg en bleek een andere vrouw te zijn. Lachend keken de vrouwen de indiaan aan. ‘Maar ... maar .... wie zijn die andere apen dan ? Ze liggen bloedend op de grond,’ zei de indiaan stotterend. ‘En zou je je handen niet eens wassen ?’ De vrouw met bloed aan haar handen liep de boomhut uit, en dook vanaf een tak in de rivier. Wat een nachtmerrie leek liep op een droom uit. De

vrouwen waren hem helemaal niet vijandig gezind.

De man dook haar achterna en ook de andere vrouw. Snel zwommen ze naar de kant, en de vrouwen lieten hem zien dat de apen toch wel echt apen waren. ‘Ik kwam je gewoon redden,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Als ik er niet was geweest, dan hadden de apen je verscheurd. Ik draag toverkrachten. Mijn moeder was een indiaanse elf.’ De man keek de vrouw diep in de ogen, en zag een glinstering.

‘Heus,’ zei één van de vrouwen, ‘je moet niet meer teruggaan naar je stam. Ze maken alleen maar oorlog.’ Maar de indiaan wilde terug, en ging weg na de vrouwen te hebben bedankt.

De vrouwen hadden nog veel te doen. Ze moesten wat dingen in de rivier wassen, en die avond zouden ze naar de indiaanse elvenstam gaan waar hun moeder vandaan kwam. Hun moeder leefde niet meer, maar ze hadden nog steeds contact met haar stam. De twee vrouwen waren halfzusters.

Die avond laat kwamen ze in het kamp van de indiaanse elven aan. Er was veel gezang, en de elven vierden een vreemd feest. Het was een oorlogsfeest, en het zag er erg luguber uit. De elven dronken bloed, en maakten oorlogswapens. De vrouwen waren wel wat gewend, maar ze wilden juist dat al die oorlogen zouden stoppen. Na een tijdje verlieten ze het kamp huilend.

De oorlogselven maakten zichzelf paraat. Ze hadden net een strijd achter de rug en maakten zich al op voor de volgende strijd. Intussen vielen de twee halfzusters elkaar in de boomhut in de armen. Snikkend vertelden ze elkaar hoe afschuwelijk ze al die oorlogen vonden, en dat ze er niet meer tegenkonden. Volgens hen moest er veel meer getoverd worden, en minder gestreden. ‘Als we nu een middel hadden,’ zuchtte de ene vrouw .... ‘Laten we op zoek gaan in de rivier,’ sprak de andere vrouw.

De indiaanse elven waren inmiddels in een bloedig gevecht tegen een andere stam. Die nacht brak er iets in de lucht. De vrouwen hadden iets gevonden, een oude steen op de bodem van de rivier. Maar door de steen werd alles alleen maar erger, want de steen bezat oorlogslust. De vrouwen raakten erdoor betoverd, en gingen terug naar de indiaanse elvenstam. ‘Wij hebben ons bedacht,’ zeiden de vrouwen. ‘Oorlog is goed, anders worden we iemands anders bezit. We moeten vechten voor ons leven. Maak ons tot jullie soldaten.’ En toen begonnen de elven hun harten naar hen te openen en vertelden over zovelen van hun die in andere stammen in slavernij leefden. De oorlog was nodig om hen te bevrijden, en zolang er geen tovermiddeltjes daarvoor waren was dat de enige oplossing. Maar oorlog maakte ook zoveel kapot, en de elven leerden te delen in elkaars lot.

Maar er was één wat oudere elf met een lange baard die altijd zei dat wijsheid en list veel

belangrijker waren dan oorlog. Hij vertelde de elven altijd over de grote reis die ze moesten maken in plaats van bij elkaar te hangen voor wraak en oorlog. In zijn ogen mochten de elven alleen een wapen dragen om zichzelf op die reis te verdedigen, maar ze moesten de eenzaamheid ingaan om zo wijs te worden. Oorlog zou veel te veel kapotmaken.

Sommigen vonden wel dat hij gelijk had, maar anderen vonden hem een oude zeur met dromerige ideeen. Toen de vrouwen hem leerden kennen kon de oude elf hen best wel snel weer uit hun betovering halen, en op een dag besloten ze met z'n drieen de grote reis te maken. De oude elf had er zo lang op gewacht dat er iemand met hem mee zou gaan, en nu zouden er zelfs twee meegaan. Hij hoopte dat de rest zou volgen, maar dat gebeurde niet. En zo vertrokken ze met z'n drieen. De indiaanse elvenstam waren blij te zijn verlost van de oude elf.

De elf had in zijn jongere jaren al eerder zo'n reis gemaakt, en was daarna naar zijn stam teruggekeerd om de anderen daarover te onderwijzen. De grote reis zou tovenaars van hen maken, maar daarvoor moesten ze op een moment wel hun eigen weg kiezen.

De elf zei dat als ze echte tovenaars zouden worden, dan zouden ze pas echt anderen kunnen helpen en bevrijden. Maar eerst zouden ze daarvoor moeten leren verdwijnen en verschijnen, anders zouden ze nog steeds gevangen kunnen worden. De vrouwen hadden wel wat toverkrachten, maar echte tovenaressen waren ze nog niet.

De oude elf zei dat op de vlaktes van de eenzaamheid en vergetelheid vele wilde dieren leefden die ze eerst moesten overwinnen. Deze wilde dieren zouden hun toverkrachten proberen tegen te houden. De elf wilde de vrouwen uitleggen hoe ze moesten jagen, maar de vrouwen vroegen of er geen andere manier was. 'Nee,' zei de elf. 'Je moet de confrontaties aangaan met de heren van de duisternis die in zoveel vormen tot je zullen komen.' De elf sprak dat de wilde dieren hen onherroepelijk zouden vinden, en dan zouden ze moeten vechten voor hun leven. 'Het vlees van de zelfverdediging zal je in leven houden. Dat is iets anders dan oorlog, en eigenlijk ook iets anders dan jacht. Op de grote reis mag je een wapen dragen om jezelf te verdedigen.'

De vrouwen vonden de elf erg luguber als ze hem zagen eten van achtergelaten dode wilde dieren, maar toen ze even later met hun eigen ogen zagen hoe gevaarlijk zulke wilde dieren waren begonnen ze het steeds gewoner te vinden. De elf maakte klederen van de afgestroopte huiden, ook om andere wilde dieren af te schrikken, of om hen te laten denken dat hij één van hen was.

De elf leidde hen naar een meer van bloed, waarvan de bodem geheel van vlees was gemaakt. 'Als je tovenaar wil worden, dan zul je eerst het meer moeten overzwemmen,' sprak de elf. Dat vonden de vrouwen een beetje teveel van het goede, maar toen ze de elf zagen duiken zwommen ze hem achterna. De velden achter het meer waren branderig, en het ruikte er naar gebraden vlees. Verderop zagen ze hoe de meest gevaarlijke wilde dieren

werden gebraden.

‘Is er geen tovermiddel om die noodzakelijke jacht van zelfverdediging te laten stoppen voor een andere oplossing ?’ vroeg één van de vrouwen. Maar de elf schudde zijn hoofd. Toveren was in wezen ook gewoon een strijd en een jacht. Er moesten bedreigende dingen overwonnen worden, om daarna getransformeerd te worden. ‘Tovenaar wordt je door gevaarlijke toverbeesten te eten,’ sprak de elf. ‘Zij blokkeren namelijk de weg tot het tovenaarschap en zij dragen alle toverkrachten die eigenlijk van jou zijn.’

‘Maar is dat niet gevaarlijk om zulke toverbeesten te eten ? Zijn ze niet giftig, of betoverend ?’ vroeg de andere vrouw. ‘Eerst is de strijd van buiten,’ zei de elf, ‘en als je ze gegeten hebt is er een strijd van binnen. Maar beide vormen van strijd zijn belangrijk voor het behalen van tovenaarschap.’

En zo werd de jacht op de toverbeesten een feit, want iedereen wist toen dat aanval vaak de beste verdediging was. Op een bepaald punt moesten de vrouwen en de elf alleen verder, en zo kozen ze alledrie een eenzaam pad. En ze merkten dat toen ze tovenaar werden ze konden verdwijnen en verschijnen, en zo nooit meer een slachtoffer waren. Ook merkten ze dat ze de ander alleen maar konden helpen door hen ook de grote reis te laten maken. Want iemand zal altijd gevangen blijven zolang hij nog niet kan verdwijnen en verschijnen : gevangen in zichzelf. Maar toen ze de eerste fase van het tovenaarschap voorbij waren merkten ze ook dat er hogere toverkrachten waren, en zo ontstond er een geheel nieuwe strijd en daarbij een hele nieuwe jacht, om los te komen van een veel diepere gevangenschap, die van de onwetendheid. En zo waren er dus vele vormen van zelfverdediging die langzaam maar zeker als gewoon werden beschouwd. En zo werden zowel jacht als oorlog twee wapens van de zelfverdediging.

Het op de uitkijk staan, een bezigheid die beide vrouwen en de oude elf begonnen lief te hebben toen ze hun eigen toverkasteel hadden verworven, en hun eigen toverheuvel. Vele toverwapens hadden ze zichzelf bereid, om hun tovenaarschap tot grotere hoogtes te drijven.

Einde

De Elvenoorlogen

Geen wapen bleef onaangeroerd in de bloederige elvenoorlog tussen de indiaanse elvenstammen. En eigenlijk draaide het in die oorlog alleen om tranenstenen, bloedkoraalachtige toverstenen. Gekrijs en gegil vulde de nacht, totdat een joelende stam uiteindelijk had gewonnen. Ze droegen de toverstenen naar een geheime plek, en probeerden verder de hele oorlog te verwerken. De oorlog had lang geduurd, maar het doel was nu bereikt.

Witsmiktiel, de indiaanse elvensmid van de stam die de elvenoorlog had gewonnen smolt de stenen om, en zo kon er een nieuw daglicht komen over alle stammen. Nog nooit gingen zoveel elven in slavernij, en nog nooit was er zoveel doem in de omgeving. Het vee van de elvenstammen die in de oorlog ten onder was gegaan werd vollop geslacht, wat een zwarte bladzij was in de geschiedenis van de indiaanse elven. Zelfs de winnende stam gaf dat later toe, want waar was alles om te doen ? Om tranenstenen die omgesmolten moesten worden, zodat er nieuw daglicht zou komen : allemaal om slaven te maken : Elven in boten, elven op fokkerijen, elven in de bouw, van alles.

Er was een man, een elf, Timgrimado, die hen uiteindelijk de onzin van dit alles liet inzien. Hij stal de omgesmolten stenen en liet er een wapen van maken waarmee hij hen allen zou domineren. Afschaffen liet hij alle slavernij, alle fokkerij en slachterij, en hij leerde hen te vechten voor henzelf in plaats van voor anderen, zodat ze ook niet anderen voor zichzelf zouden gebruiken. Sindsdien was er wel veel onverschilligheid, maar men bleef in ieder geval van elkaar af. Timgrimado vertrok later weer, maar vertelde hen dat hij ze allemaal zou slopen als ze weer in hun oude wegen zouden terugvallen.

Velen probeerden erachter te komen waar Timgrimado naartoe was gegaan, maar niemand wist het. Velen verlieten hun stam om ook als Timgrimado te ‘vertrekken’. Niemand wist precies wat dat inhield, maar men vond dat wel stoer. Zelfs kinderen kondigden soms aan hun stam te verlaten, maar vaak stonden de ouders dat niet toe. Voor een elf was het belangrijk om tovenaar te worden, om de eenzaamheid en de vergetelheid te domineren, in plaats van elkaar. Ja, Timgrimado had hen wijze lessen geleerd.

Maar na tijden begonnen de verhalen over Timgrimado steeds meer weg te vagen, totdat op een bepaald moment niemand meer echt wist wie of wat Timgrado nou precies was, en men begon terug te vallen in oude gewoontes. En zo ontstond er een nieuwe elvenoorlog, nog luguberder dan die daarvoor. Ditmaal ging de oorlog om goud. Enkele indiaanse elvenstammen hadden goudmijnen gevonden. Weer brak er een tijd aan van slavernij voor de onderworpen stammen, en weer begonnen fokkerijen en slachterijen volop te bloeien. De grote winnaar van de oorlog was Herpidasis, het opperhoofd van een wrede indiaanse elvenstam. Herpidasis maakte zichzelf tot keizer van alle onderworpen stammen, en het moest genade heten dat hij ze in leven liet. Natuurlijk moesten ze bijna allemaal in de goudmijnen werken, en niemand maar dan ook niemand dacht over Timgrimado, omdat niemand meer wist wie hij was.

En daarom was het dan ook een extra verrassing toen hij ineens voor de deur stond. Hij was net zo verwilderd als vroeger, alsof hij vanuit de dieptes van de eenzaamheid en de vergetelheid kwam. Ditkeer was Timgrimado erger dan hij ooit was. Hij greep Herpidasis bij z’n nek en rukte z’n kop eraf. Alle volgelingen van Herpidasis maakte hij tot slaaf door onverwoestbare rode toverketens om hun nek, en zo voerde hij hen allen mee naar zijn duistere kastelen diep in de vergetelheid. Woest brulde Timgrimado tot zijn slaven : ‘Ik heb jullie eerst geleerd niet van slavernij te leven en elkaar vrij te laten zoals ik jullie vrijliet. Maar omdat jullie niet naar mij wilden luisteren laat ik jullie nu zien dat hij die van slaven leeft zelf een slaaf is.’ En zo moesten de slaven hard werken in de mijnen onder de duistere kastelen van Timgrimado.

Maar op een dag wist één van de slaven vrij te komen, en stal het wapen van tranenstenen dat Timgrimado in bezit had. De slaaf ging er direkt mee naar Timgrimado toe en hief het wapen in de lucht : ‘Zie je dit hier !’ krijste de slaaf. ‘Dit heb jij eens gestolen en je macht opgeeist, maar nu is het van ons.’ En een bliksemstraal kwam van het wapen af om Timgrimado te ketenen. De slaaf zette verder met het wapen alle andere slaven vrij, en samen voerden ze Timgrimado mee naar hun oude domein. Hier maakten ze weer alle andere stammen tot hun slaaf, en Timgrimado werd in een kerker geworpen. En sindsdien stond de wreedheid van de overheersende stam op het toppunt. Het werd zo erg dat machtige tovenaars hun legers stuurden, alleen maar om te ontdekken dat Herpidasis en zijn elven hun slavenrijk met onbreekbare hand uitbreiden. Na een tijdje waagde zich geen enkele tovenaar er nog aan. En zo werd Herpidasis zelfs de schrik der tovenaars.

Maar Timgrimado wist een gat te graven in zijn kerker tot diep onder de grond. Hier vond hij zogenaamde gilstenen waar hij een nieuw wapen van maakte. Timgrimado bleek onoverwinnelijk door het nieuwe wapen, nadat hij er de deur van de kerker mee had gesloopt. Een wachter probeerde hem te grijpen, maar snel onthoofde Timgrimado de wachter en nam zijn helm en pantser. Niet lang daarna had Timgrimado het hele keizershuis onderworpen, omdat het wapen zo gilde dat iedereen erdoor in elkaar zakte wanneer Timgrimado zijn wapen richtte. Timgrimado begon de oude wetten weer te verkondigen, maar wist nu ook dat hij nooit meer zou terugkeren als hij zou vertrekken. Timgrimado voegde daarom geen waarschuwing meer achter de wetten, omdat hij niet nog een keer in de val gelokt wilde worden. De indiaanse elven moesten nu voor zichzelf zorgen. Hij raadde hen allemaal aan hun stammen te verlaten om de eenzaamheid en de vergetelheid op te zoeken.

Terug naar zijn duistere kastelen en mijnen kon hij niet, want daar zouden ze hem kunnen vinden, en daarom sloeg hij een totaal nieuwe richting in, en wiste zijn sporen uit. Hij wist dat zij die in stammen bleven leven ook oorlog zouden blijven voeren.

Einde

Hersenspinsels der Elven

Mirik, Mirit, en Sakja waren drie indiaanse oorlogselven. Ze hadden toverwapens, een heel kasteel vol, en ze deinsten niet terug voor bloederigheden en het drinken van bloed. Ze waren heel vampiristisch van aard.

Vaak vochten ze alledrie aan elkaars zijde, maar meestal leefden ze op zichzelf. De jacht deden ze meestal alleen. Er waren geen gruwelijkere en prachtigere elven dan hen, maar de wraak der heksen en tovenaars keerden vaak tegen hen.

Meestal als ze alleen waren kregen ze het zwaar te verduren, en daarom zochten ze elkaar nog weleens op. Gelukkig konden ze goed verdwijnen en verschijnen, en dat maakte alles iets makkelijker, maar er waren genoeg tovenaars en heksen, en genoeg boze elven die hen daarin met gemak konden volgen. Zij waren niet de enigen die konden verdwijnen en verschijnen. Ze hadden een hoge tovenaarsgraad, dat wel, maar hier woedde de oorlog het hardst.

Vaak smeerden ze zichzelf in met toverbloed, of namen ze een bad met tovergeuren. Het bad was bekleed met de huiden van allerlei toverbeesten die ze hadden verslagen. Maar als ze bij elkaar waren dan was er zoveel toverkracht dat het de meest gevaarlijke heksen aantrok, en daarom besloten ze op een dag voorgoed uit elkaar te gaan. Ieder van hen zou een richting kiezen, en ze zouden alleen nog maar voor zichzelf strijden.

Van huiden maakten ze een eigen wigwam in verlaten gebied. En sindsdien werd alles rustiger.

Ze wisten dat ze alleen veilig waren als ze op zichzelf waren. In die verlaten gebieden hadden ze nog wel veel strijd te voeren tegen de wilde dieren. Deze wilde dieren waren erg gevaarlijk, omdat ze in hen wilden wonen. Deze wilde dieren wilden bezit van hen nemen. En ze wisten dat ze de wilde dieren alleen konden overwinnen door bezit van hen te nemen. Daarom liepen ze vaak in verschillende dierenhuiden rond, en bovenal moesten ze steeds verdertrekken.

Sommige beesten waren zo groot dat als ze hen overwonnen hadden ze met gemak erin konden leven als in een tent. Ze kwamen erachter dat deze wilde dieren nog wel erger waren dan tovenaars en heksen. Als ze niet zo wild zouden zijn als deze beesten zelf, dan zouden ze hier niet standhouden. Wie zou denken dat hun paden weer zouden kruizen na

een lange reis en een lange strijd tegen de wilde dieren en beesten ? Een wilde indiaanse elvenstam leefde hier, maar zij zouden daar alleen deel van kunnen worden als ze deze stam zouden verslaan in een schijngevecht.

Deze elven hadden de wilde dieren en beesten tot hun beschikking om erop te rijden. Ook voerden zij oorlog tegen anderen van die duistere elvenstammen, maar deze oorlogen waren slechts schijn. Door schijnoorlogen werden er contacten gelegd en door schijnoorlogen werden deze contacten verder uitgebouwd, tot in de diepste vriendschappen. Door schijnoorlogen beschermde men elkaar.

En zij kwamen door de diepste duisternissen tot de grootste lichtbronnen der elven, en tot een heleboel andere elvenparadoxen. De toverdranken brachten een roes in de elven, een passie en een lust, als een recht en een plicht. De elvenscenario's gingen diep, en waren wonderlijk in hun verdediging. Het waren schijnlichten, schijngesprekken, en zelfs schijnvriendschappen, alles om hun doelen te bereiken, de ijskoude wateren van een diepe eenzaamheid, waarin een prachtige tweeledigheid werd opgewekt, een zuivere tweeledigheid, zich in schijn uitstrekkende naar de driehoek. Dit alles tot makkelijker en sneller te verdwijnen en te verschijnen, om geheel op te lossen in een realiteit. Nee, makkelijk was het niet om de hogere tovergraden te bereiken, om deel te krijgen aan de hogere hersenspinsels der elven.

Einde

De Trollenspiegel

Als iemand in de trollenspiegel keek, viel hij direkt dood neer en werd zijn ziel door de spiegel heengetrokken om hem in het land der trollen te laten werken. Het was een groensoortig zaad waardoor de zielen dan geketend werden, een zaad dat vanuit de ziel een gevoelige plek liet voortgroeien als een trollenspiegel. Zo kon niemand de ziel bevrijden zonder zelf ook een slachtoffer van de trollenspiegel te worden.

De trollen waren een wreed volk zonder enige genade. En als er dan genade was, dan zat er altijd wel een addertje onder het gras. Zo waren velen blij en verheugd als de trollen hen vrijlieten, maar dan werden ze al snel gegrepen door een groen vuur waardoor ze nog verschrikkelijker gebonden werden. Nee, een trol liet zijn gevangene nooit vrij. Een trol maakte alleen zijn slachtoffers klaar voor nog grotere wreedheden. Hierin had de trol altijd veel plezier.

Er was geen volk zo wreed als het volk der trollen. Ze kenden geen genade. Hun genade was alleen een nog grotere wreedheid. Dit maakte hen berucht. Ja, de trollen waren zeer gevreesd. Veel plezier hadden ze erin als hopeloze zielen voor hun aanwezigheid trilden. Want in de handen te vallen van een trol, was te komen in een fuik waaruit geen ontsnapping mogelijk was, alleen het uitzicht op een steeds groeiende ellende. De gevangene had alleen het uitzicht op ongekend wrede martelingen, die alleen maar wreder en wreder zouden worden, tot groot plezier van de trollen. En zolang je nog niet door hen gepakt was, kon je erop wachten dat ze op een dag voor je deur zouden staan, want een trol geeft nooit op. Hij zou het telkens weer opnieuw proberen door de ene na de andere valstrik, totdat je een keer op een onbedachtzaam moment zou toehappen, als het begin van een ritje dat steeds duisterder zou worden.

Ze hadden er groot plezier in om alles langzaam op te bouwen, om de spanning en angst zo groot mogelijk te maken, en om maar zoveel mogelijk valse hoop en zekerheid te schenken, zodat de klap daarna extra hard zou aankomen. Ja, het waren misbaksels, en zij woonden in de trollenspiegels en hun slachtoffers. Telkens weer spanden zij hun netten en webben om hun geluk te beproeven. Nee, er was geen groter duivels kwaad dan de trollenspiegel. Het was een ras erger dan demonen en vampieren. Als zij in de buurt waren dan gilden de geesten, spoken en duivelen het uit. Er was niets vergeleken met de trollen. Eens hadden zij de trollenspiegel ontworpen, en sindsdien groeide hun macht.

En allen die nog nooit in de trollenspiegel hadden gekeken, en dachten dat het zo'n vaart niet zou lopen, en dat het gewoon iets onschuldigs was, zouden zich eens op een dag ook bewust zijn .... van het kwaad van de trollenspiegel.

Einde

De Monster Meester

Grimhaldt was een tovermeester van vele monsters. Zijn grote vijand was Aswaldt, de koning der skeletten. Grimhaldt was in zijn toverkamer de meest verschrikkelijke drankjes aan het brouwen. Grimhaldt had een heleboel schatten verborgen onder de aarde die bewaakt werden door wachters die eruit zagen als voeten : grote voeten en kleine voeten. Het was een vreemd ras wat hij ooit eens verslagen had, en sindsdien moesten zij zijn schatten bewaken. Aartslepal was zo'n voet, en was van top tot teen bewapend. Hij was de hoofdman van de voetwezens. Grimhaldt was erg trots op hem en had hem bekleed met de prachtigste sieraden.

Op een dag was er een belangrijke ring van Grimhaldt gestolen. Het was een ring waarmee bepaalde toverboeken geopend konden worden, en alleen bij het licht van die ring gelezen konden worden. Grimhaldt was woedend en riep Aartslepal bij zich. Hij ontdeed Aartslepal van zijn sieraden en zond hem uit zijn grottenstelsel de kou in. Aartslepal maakte een lange reis door het sneeuw en over het ijs, een reis die hij bijna niet zou overleven, maar hij was nu in ieder geval wel vrij. Na long lopen kwam hij aan bij een groot kasteel, als een spookslot. De muren waren lang en overal stonden skeletten.

Het kasteel was min of meer van botten gemaakt, en er hing een vreemde geur. Toen Grimhaldt merkte dat Aartslepal de tocht had overleefd was hij buiten zichzelf van woede. Hij greep een paar van de voetwezens die nog steeds wachters waren van zijn schatten, en wierp de wachters in zijn ketel voor een nieuwe toverdrank. Toen de toverdrank klaar was liep hij ermee naar een paar toverboeken die nog nooit geopend waren. Met een druppel in het slot kon hij elk boek openen. Nu kwamen de grootst mogelijke monsters vrij. Ook nam Grimhaldt zelf een slok van het mengsel en maakte samen met de monsters een reis naar het spookslot. Grimhaldt stormde naar binnen en kwam al snel in gevecht met Aswaldt de skelettenkoning. Maar de skeletten waren veel sterker dan het leger van Grimhaldt. Aswaldt trok zijn mes en stak het in het hart van Grimhaldt. Nu zou je denken dat nu Grimhaldt was verslagen zijn wachters wel makkelijk bevrijd konden worden, maar niets is minder waar. De wachters van Grimhaldt leefden diep onder de grond.

Het was een uittocht die vele jaren duurde. Vele kostbaarheden die diep onder de aarde lagen kwamen vrij. Het belangrijkste was wel de spiegel van Grimhaldt waarmee hij zijn toverijen bedreef. De wachters van die spiegel had hij zo dronken gemaakt en zo gevaarlijk dat er geen overwinning mogelijk was. Het waren de wachters zelf die overwinning behaalden door de spiegel. En zo kregen uiteindelijk de wachters het spookslot in handen, en begon Aswaldt zijn grote reis naar de eeuwigheid.

De Toverlist

De zwartvoetkabouters waren in oorlog met de witgouden elven. Ze hadden hun manschappen verzameld, en streden om de kroon over het land Tuburia. In Tuburia hadden de zwartvoetkabouters hun rijk onder de grond gebouwd, en de witgouden elven leefden meestal in de bossen. Maar nu de heksenkoning was gestorven, was er een groot gevecht om de kroon. Er was nog een ander die wel wat in de kroon zag. Zij was de tovenares van de zwarte bergen. Niet veel zielen durften zich hier te vertonen. Ze zeiden dat het daar spookte. Op een dag had de tovenares zich verkleed als een arme vrouw in lompen. Ze klopte aan bij een huisje van de zwartvoetkabouters. Emiel deed open. Hij en zijn vrouwtje waren nog op, maar zouden gauw naar bed gaan, want het was al avond geworden, en zij hadden de lantaarn buiten al aangedaan. 'Wat kan ik voor u doen, mevrouw ?' vroeg Emiel. 'Ach, heeft u iets te eten en misschien een slaapplaats voor deze arme weduwe ?' vroeg de vrouw. Maar Emiel sloeg de deur keihard dicht. Hij had niets aan landlopers. Ze kwamen alleen maar om de boel op te vreten, en ze werkten niet. Maar toen werd de tovenares erg kwaad en veranderde weer in haar eigen gedaante. Weer klopte ze aan, en Emiel deed open. Maar dit keer kon hij niets uitbrengen. Hevig geschrokken liep hij weer naar binnen, terwijl hij de deur liet openstaan. 'Dat is beter,' zei de tovenares. 'Het is mij wel duidelijk dat je de kroon niet waardig bent.' Maar daar was Emiel niet in geinteresseerd. Emiel was een harde werker die van aanpakken hield. En hij zag er niets in om zijn hele leven op een troon te zitten. Eigenlijk was Emiel heel anders dan de andere zwartvoetkabouters. Zij waren dikwijls lui en verzot op geld en glimmende dingen. 'Ik heb je nodig, Emiel,' zei de tovenares. Een zwarte raaf kwam in het raam zitten. Het was de raaf van de tovenares. Emiel lag op de grond. Hij was flauwgevallen van angst. De raaf had zijn vrouwtje versteend. De tovenares begon te lachen. Ze zou Emiel en zijn vrouwtje meenemen naar haar slot, in de zwarte bergen. Hier zou ze een boos plan smeden.

Na een paar dagen bracht ze Emiel en zijn vrouwtje terug naar hun huisje. Ze zette ze op de bank en vertrok. Na een tijdje konden ze zich beiden weer bewegen. 'Wat is er gebeurd ?' vroeg Emiel. Maar ook zijn vrouwtje wist het niet te vertellen. 'Het lijkt wel alsof ik jaren heb geslapen,' zei ze zacht. Buiten hoorden ze het gestamp van de kabouters. Ze zouden naar het bos gaan, om oorlog te voeren tegen de witgouden elven. Ineens werd er op de deur gebonst. Het was Roodjak, de legeraanvoerder van de zwartvoetkabouters. 'Meekomen !' riep hij, 'de oorlog gaat beginnen.' Emiel stond op en liep naar de deur. Maar hij voelde zich erg duizelig. Toen hij de deur openmaakte stond Roodjak hem nors aan te kijken. Roodjak had een hele grote baard die nogal vurig aandeed. Ook droeg hij een grote hoed en een vreemd zwart pak. 'Zeg, komt er nog wat van ?' riep hij ongeduldig. 'Ik voel me een beetje ziek,' zei Emiel.

'Niks mee te maken,' bulderde Roodjak. 'Het is nu tijd voor oorlog, en geen tijd om ziek te zijn.' En daar moest die arme Emiel mee. In het bos was er veel lawaai, en de zwartvoetkabouters schoten met hun kanonnen. De witgouden elven gooiden bommen met wit toverpoeder. Hiervan vielen er vele kabouters in slaap. 'Luiwammessen,' schreeuwde Roodjak, 'opstaan, het is nu geen tijd om te slapen.' De kabouters leden een zware nederlaag. 'Geef ons de kroon,' riepen de elven naar Roodjak. Maar Roodjak had geen kroon. Hij dacht dat de witgouden elven die hadden. 'Houdt me niet voor de gek,' brulde Roodjak, en maakte zware passen naar voren. 'Ik geloof niet in die toveronzin van jullie. Geef me de kroon.' Maar de elven hadden geen kroon, en Roodjak werd steeds kwaaier en kwaaier. Plotseling verscheen de tovenares met haar raaf. Ze had de kroon in haar handen. 'Zeg, hoe kom jij aan die kroon,' brulde Roodjak. Maar de tovenares gaf geen antwoord, en heel langzaam bewoog ze de kroon tot haar hoofd, om de kroon op te zetten. Maar de kroon was veel te groot.

Roodjak bulderde van het lachen. Ineens kwam Emiel naar voren stappen, en zei : 'Pas op voor haar, Roodjak, want zij kan toveren.' Maar dat weerhield Roodjak niet. Met forse stappen liep hij op de tovenares af, en greep de kroon van haar weg. Roodjak zette de kroon op zijn grote hoed en die paste precies. 'Hoe staat ie ?' bulderde Roodjak van het lachen. 'Ach toch,' zei de tovenares, 'zot op alles wat glimt, een echte zwartvoetkabouter. Toch wel jammer dat het de echte kroon niet is, maar één van de vele maaksels om hebberige kabouters een lesje te leren.' En daar begon ineens die arme Roodjak te draaien en te draaien als een molen, steeds sneller en sneller. 'Wat is dit ? Haal me eruit,' schreeuwde hij. Maar daar steeg Roodjak op, en zweefde richting het slot van de tovenares. 'Ziezo,' zei de tovenares, 'hem zal ik ook nog wel goed kunnen gebruiken.' Maar Emiel en een paar andere kabouters begonnen erg boos op de tovenares te worden. 'Ach, geen zorgen, Emiel,' schaterde de tovenares, 'jij hebt ook zo'n kroon, schattebout, ik heb je er eentje laten inslikken.' Emiel werd erg rood ineens, en voelde alle energie uit hem wegstromen. Ineens werd ook hij als door de wind opgenomen, en zweefde richting het slot. Er waren niet veel elven meer in de buurt. Zij waren altijd erg bang voor de tovenares en haar streken. Nu ze dan beide partijen erg bang had gemaakt voor kronen, kon ze in haar eentje rustig op zoek gaan naar de kroon van de heksenkoning.

De Trollenkoning

Eens, en dat is al heel lang geleden, zwierf ik in de bossen en verdwaalde uiteindelijk. Zo diep was ik nog nooit geweest, en ik wist niet meer hoe ik terug moest komen. Midden in de nacht kwam ik in een trollendorp terecht. Er zijn maar weinigen die het geloven. Echt waar, die trollen die leven net zoals wij : ze vissen, jagen, hebben boerderijen, huizen of hutten met keukens. In ieder geval was het een echte trollenbende. Ik had nog nooit zoveel vuil en puinhoop bij elkaar gezien. Ze leefden daar verwaarloosd, droegen bijna geen klederen, maar wel veel riemen als tuigjes, waar ze hun wapens aan vast konden maken.

Ik bleef er staan, maar ineens werd ik gegrepen. Ik werd van mijn fiets afgetrokken en er ontstond een hevig gevecht. Ik had weleens gehoord dat het niet best was om in de handen van trollen te vallen, dus ik deed m’n uiterste best om weer los te komen, maar tevergeefs. Ze brachten mij voor hun koning, en maakten mij tot een gladiator. Ik moest tegen allerlei enge beesten vechten. Dit tot groot vermaak van de trollen. Ik dacht werkelijk dat ik hier nooit vrienden zou krijgen, en ik moest altijd in een donkere kerker slapen. Maar op een nacht kwam er een trollenvrouw bij me. Ze gaf me wat bloemen, heel lief, en ze zei : ‘Wacht tot de sterren uit de lucht zullen vallen om jouw kerker te openen.’ Ik dacht dat ik dan zou kunnen wachten tot sint juttemes, want dat zou toch nooit gebeuren. Ik snapte niet wat ze bedoelde, maar plotseling liet ze een glimmende sleutel voor mijn neus bungelen. Door de tralies staarde ik ernaar en naar haar. Ze was heel mooi, en het beetje licht

dat er was weerkaatste zo prachtig in haar ogen. Ze liet de sleutel bungelen, alsof ze ermee wilde plagen. ‘Zie, ik heb de sleutel van de koning gestolen,’ sprak ze. ‘Ik kon het niet aanzien hoe ze jou mishandelden, maar ik ben er voor jou, nu, dus kom.’ Ze drukte uiteindelijk de sleutel in het sleutelgat en maakte de deur open. Maar daar kwamen al een paar trollenwachters aan, en toen deed ze iets heel doms. In paniek drukte ze mij weer terug in de kerker, en ook zij ging naar binnen, en deed de deur weer op slot. De trollenwachters keken naar binnen en moesten lachen. ‘Haha, nu hebben we twee vliegen in één klap. Daar zal de koning blij mee zijn. Ze gristen de sleutel weg en liepen verder. De vrouw begon te snikken. ‘Het is allemaal mijn schuld,’ zei ze. ‘Nu zullen we morgen vast opgehangen worden.’ En ja hoor, dat was de bedoeling. Want toen de koning het de volgende dag hoorde moesten we voorkomen. Hij was woedend, maar ook gemeen. Hij lachtte gemeen. Hij zei : ‘Ophangen die lui.’ En zo werden we naar het marktplein geduwd, geboeid, en kregen een strop om onze nek. Nu zou je misschien denken : ‘Kerel, hoe ben je daar aan ontsnapt ?’ Er kwamen op dat moment net wat vissers terug van een vistocht. Het waren vrienden van de vrouw. Toen ze zagen wat er aan de gang was trommelden ze nog meer van hun vrienden op, en het werd een kleine burgeroorlog, waardoor wij tenslotte gered werden. De koning werd afgezet, en ze wilden dat ik de nieuwe koning zou worden.

Ik kreeg een heleboel vrouwen, omdat dat de gewoonte was. Ook kreeg ik een hele vreemde grote edelsteen waarin een meisje opgesloten zou zitten. Ik vond dat wel wat vreemd dus ik vroeg ernaar. Het bleek een zingende steen te zijn, die eens door een trol was gevonden. Het was een geschenk aan de koning. Ik dacht : Het zal wel goed zijn.

Sinds ik aan de macht was ontstonden er wel vaker relletjes. Trollen waren wat dat aanging erg vechtlustig. Ik wilde hen wel helpen wat liever te zijn naar elkaar, maar sommige trollen waren daar niet al te open voor. Ze wezen me erop dat sommige dingen gewoon moesten gebeuren. Het hoorde zogezegd bij hun algemene ontwikkeling.

Het voel me op hoe weinig protest er tegen mij als koning was. Ze vonden het allemaal best, en het leek allemaal heel natuurlijk te gaan. Toen ik op een dag geen koning meer wilde zijn en verder wilde trekken, kreeg ik van hen een toverpaard en een eenhoorn als dank en afscheid. Terug naar huis wilde ik niet, maar hier blijven ook niet. Dus ik vertrok naar de dieptes van de bossen .... Weer kwam ik hier allemaal trollendorpjes tegen. Ik kon mijn ogen niet geloven. Wat me opviel was dat er hier veel vee gehouden werd, als in fokkerijen, vooral kippen en varkens. Deze beesten werden door de trollen volop geslacht, omdat de trollen hier voornamelijk vlees aten om in leven te blijven. Maar tot mijn grote schrik zag ik ook hoe ze mensen fokten, voor slavenwerk en voor de slacht. En ik wist dat ik eigenlijk op de verkeerde plaats was gekomen. Maar ik had mijn trollenkroon nog steeds. Ik zette hem op, en stapte richting het stadhuis. Al snel merkte ik hoe dom de trollen waren, want ze dachten echt dat ik de koning was, en eigenlijk was ik dat ook nog steeds wel. Ik kwam er ook achter dat ze het allemaal niet zo kwaad bedoelden. Eigenlijk wisten ze niet beter. Ik vroeg me af hoe ze aan al die mensen gekomen waren, maar feit was dat ze die mensen gewoon doorfokten, en ik begon me af te vragen wat ik nu moest doen.

Uiteindelijk ben ik maar gewoon terug gegaan naar de mensenwereld, en heb ik mijn verhaal verteld. Het viel me op hoe weinig men om deze mensen gaf. Mijn verhaal werd gewoon niet geloofd.

Vele jaren later ging ik terug naar de trollenwereld, maar er bleek niets meer van hun wereld over te zijn. Met gemengde gevoelens denk ik aan hen terug.

Einde

Het Rode Zaad

Onder de indiaanse reuzen van de Rotmor-zone in het Angela-gebied was er een onbeschrijfelijke horror. Zij waren reusachtig, voortgekomen vanuit vreemd zaad, rood zaad. Zij hadden een dag aangesteld voor het uitroeien van speciale rassen. Zij waren voortgekomen vanuit wonderzaad, ja, als kabouters waren zij eerst, toen ze nog in de moederschoot waren. Niemand zou denken dat zij ooit zo klein waren geweest, zo klein dat alles wat ze deden betoverend was. En betoverend waren zij nog steeds.

Wanneer zij bewogen hadden zij de bewegingen als ridders, fier en strak. Zij hadden allemaal hun eigen doelen, en leefden de wetten om die doelen te bereiken strak na, als de wetten van een vreemde en wrede natuur. Zij waren hier als goden, alhoewel ze de goden op een bepaalde dag onder de aarde hadden opgesloten in rode kajuiten, als een gevangenis in een schip.

Mikduktus was een van de gevangenbewakers daar. Hij droeg een groen met zwart gewaad gemaakt van bladeren. Nu hadden ze dan een bepaalde dag aangesteld tot een godenmaal, waarin ze deze gefokte goden zouden verschranzen. Als er iets was dat de reuzen haatten dan waren het de goden. Zij hadden alles verwoest, en regeerden met strakke hand. Nu waren de goden dood, of liever : zo goed als dood. Het vlees werd opgediend, en zo waren er driemiljoen vierhonderd achtien gebraden

stukken godenvlees in een grote reuzenzaal.

Amerim was een jonge reus die met zijn vader meeging naar het godenmaal. Amerim was een gevoelige jongen, en smeekte de reuzen om in het vervolg iets genadiger te wezen. Wel at hij mee van het vlees, omdat dat van zijn vader moest. Amerim’s vader duldde nooit tegenspraak, en daarom was Amerim altijd erg voorzichtig met hem. Als zijn vader ontplofte dan kon je je maar beter bergen.

Vele reuzen wisten dat. Ze vreesden Amerim’s vader als geen ander. Op een dag ging Amerim met zijn vader het bos in, waar ze een grot vonden vol met rood zaad. Amerim’s vader vertelde dat dit zaad de oorsprong was van alle reuzen. Hier zouden de reuzenvrouwen op een bepaalde leeftijd naartoe gaan, om van dit zaad te eten en zwanger te worden. Amerim wist niet wie zijn moeder was. Dat moest altijd geheim gehouden worden. Als de reuzenvrouwen zwanger geworden waren, dan werden ze gesluierd en kwamen op een reuzenkasteel terecht, waar ze de rest van hun leven moesten wonen samen met andere reuzenvrouwen. Zij moesten in het geheim baren, en dan werden de kinderen gewisseld, en in een grote cirkel geplaatst, waar even later de gesluierde reuzenvrouwen omheen moesten dansen, zodat niemand wist welk kind bij wie hoorde.

Vaders werden dan aangekozen om voor de kinderen te zorgen. Als een kind dan later toch wilde weten wie zijn moeder was, dan moest zo’n kind zelf van het zaad eten, en zou dan in een droom zijn ware moeder zien.

Amerim at, viel in slaap en kreeg een droom van een reuzenvrouw met een grote indianentooi, met een heleboel witte veren met sommige zwarte plukjes, en rode plukjes. ‘Lieverd,’ sprak een stem, ‘ik ben van een andere reuzenstam nu. Ik ben uit het kasteel van de gesluierde reuzenvrouwen gevlucht, en woon nu in het bos. Kom me opzoeken.’ Amerim wist direkt dat dit zijn moeder was. Toen hij het zijn vader vertelde werd de reus erg boos. In paniek rende Amerim het bos in, en ging op zoek naar zijn moeder. Hij moest zich veel verbergen, want zijn vader kwam hem achterna. Maar na een tijdje had zijn vader geheel het spoor verloren, en ging weer terug. Niet veel reuzen waagden zo diep in het bos te komen, omdat ze bang waren voor allerlei wilde reuzenstammen.

Na een tijdje kwam Amerim bij een grote boomstronk waarachter de modderreuzen leefden. In deze stam vond hij zijn moeder. Amerim werd direkt liefdevol door hen uitgenodigd. De reuzen waren heel wijs, en helemaal niet zo afschrikwekkend als gezegd werd. Maar Amerim kende natuurlijk de andere stammen van het bos nog niet. De modderreuzen waren heel technisch, en hadden allerlei werktuigen vervaardigd. Amerim keek zijn ogen uit. Er waren zelfs liften waarmee ze tot de hoogste boomtoppen konden komen. Amerim was zo onder de indruk dat hij zijn vader helemaal vergat. Amerim’s moeder was een groot opperhoofd van de modderreuzen, maar er waren hier een heleboel opperhoofden. Amerim kwam erg tot rust bij zijn moeder, en zijn moeder liet hem zien in welke grot zij woonde. Ook woonden er reuzen in reusachtige bomen en in hutten. Dieper in het bos leefden de reuzen in wigwams en in tenten. Hutten kwamen daar veel minder voor, alhoewel .... er waren wel hutten gemaakt van beenderen en doodskoppen. Maar Amerim’s moeder vertelde hem dat hij niet bang voor andere stammen hoefden te zijn, omdat ze allemaal in vrede met elkaar leefden. De reuzen leefden van de jacht, en niet van de oorlog. De reuzen hier waren veel groter dan

de reuzen die Amerim kende. Ook zijn moeder was erg groot, en hij vroeg zich af hoe dat kon. Zijn moeder legde hem uit dat er hier voedsel was waarvan je groter kon worden. De reuzen aten hier allerlei soorten zaad.

Het was duister zaad dat Amerim nog niet kende. Zijn moeder had er potten vol van, en toen zij hem voerde merkte hij direkt dat hij ervan begon te groeien. Toen hij groot genoeg was, enige jaren later nam zijn moeder hem mee naar een hal vol met reuzenspiegels. Deze reuzenspiegels creeerden de wereld zoals hij was. Het waren sprekende reuzenogen. Ze vertelden de jongen wat hij later zou worden. De jongen ging door de reuzenspiegel, en kwam in een andere wereld terecht. Zoveel wezens leefden hier die vele reuzenspiegels droegen. De wezens waren harig en nog wel groter dan de reuzen die hij kende. Zijn moeder was ook meegekomen.

De reuzen hier waren nog wilder dan de reuzen die hij kende. Ze maakten niet alleen jacht op wilde dieren, maar ook op andere reuzen. Misschien waren de reuzen waar de jongen opgroeide daarom altijd zo bang voor het bos. In een grote zaal aten ze van het reuzenmaal : driehonderdmiljoen en vijvenveertigduizend schalen vol reuzenvlees, zoals reuzenogen, reuzentenen, en reuzenvingers.

De jongen vroeg zich af waar hij terecht was gekomen. Zijn moeder zei dat hij deze reuzen diende te onderwerpen. Hij zou hun koning worden. ‘Ik heb het niet zo op die pottenkijkers,’ brulde een harige reus. ‘Ach laat hun,’ zei een grote trage reus, ‘ze doen ons toch geen kwaad ?’

De jongen werd door zijn moeder vastgepakt en gebracht naar een andere zaal. Deze zaal was nog wel groter dan de andere. Hier zagen ze reuzen met vleugels die net van hun jachtpartij terugkwamen, en ook werd hier het vlees geslacht en klaargemaakt. Het was een grote reuzenkeuken, als een jagershuis. ‘Moeder !’ brulde één van de reuzen, en stormde op de reuzenvrouw af. ‘Dit is je broer, zoon,’ zei de moeder van de jongen. De reus was reusachtig, en moeder vertelde dat de jongen net zo groot zou worden. De grote reus nam hen even later mee naar zijn huis waar ze rond de tafel gingen zitten. Even later schoof de grote reus een schaal met reuzenogen en reuzentenen voor de jongen. ‘Maar dat ga ik echt niet eten,’ zei de jongen, ‘jullie met je barbaarse praktijken.’

De reus keek hem begrijpend aan. ‘Zeg,’ zei de reus. ‘Als wij hen niet eten, dan zouden ze ons eten, en zij zijn veel erger dan wij. Zij jagen niet alleen, maar zij martelen ook, als trollen.’ De jongen zei niets, en begon voorzichtig te eten, wetende dat als hij niet groter zou worden, dan zou het rijk in groot gevaar zijn. Hij moest immers hun koning worden, dat had moeder hem zelf gezegd.

‘Waar wonen die reuzen ergens ?’ vroeg de jongen voorzichtig. Moeder wees naar een schilderij met wat bergen dat aan de muur hing. ‘Achter de reuzenbergen wonen zij,’ zei de grote reus. ‘Maar ik heb liever niet dat jij daar komt. Want als ze je te pakken krijgen, dan is het goed mis.’

En toen vertelde moeder een verhaal over de achtergrond van die reuzen. Ze waren vage

afstammelingen van trollen. De trollen zelf zouden ver achter hen wonen, en die zouden nog verschrikkelijker zijn. Deze trollen zouden kaarsen hebben van gebroken beenderen en reuzenschedels, en andere lugubere dingen. Deze trollen zouden in de reuzen wonen voor allerlei boosaardige praktijken. Ja, die trollen waren boosaardige, angstaanjagende wezens die nergens voor terugdeinsden.

De jongen luisterde huiverend naar het verhaal van zijn moeder, terwijl zijn broer begon te lachen. ‘Ach,’ zei de grote reus, ‘jongen, ik neem je er wel een keer naartoe. Dan kun je het met je eigen ogen zien.’

Moeder begon te glimlachen. ‘Ja, ik kan lugubere verhalen vertellen. En het is nog echt waar ook. Het gebeurt allemaal achter de reuzenbergen, waar reuzen en trollen tezamenleven.’

‘Ja, mams, en vertel eens over die druipende kaarsen die ze hebben,’ zei de grote reus lachend.

‘Oh ja, dat was ik vergeten te vertellen,’ zei moeder. ‘Die kaarsen druipen van slijm, bloed en snot.’

‘Ha, ha, ha,’ bulderde de grote reus. ‘Wat een boeltje daar, hè, mams ?’

Moeder schudde van het lachen. ‘Maar pas maar op dat je niet in hun handen komt, zoon, want dan ben je de klos, echt waar, dan veranderen ze jou ook in zo’n druipende kaars. En dan verkopen ze je op hun markten. Daarom : als je gaat, ga dan met ons. Wij zorgen wel dat jou niets overkomt.’

En zo gebeurde het. De jongen ging met zijn moeder en zijn grote broer op reis. Na een tijdje kwamen ze de eerste trol al tegen. De trol was direkt erg vriendelijk, helemaal niet zoals de jongen had verwacht. In een grote huifkar bracht de trol hen over de bergpaden heen, en het duurde niet al te lang voordat ze achter de reuzenbergen kwamen. De jongen had zich het allemaal heel anders voorgesteld. De trollen waren allemaal erg vriendelijk naar hen.

Maar in hun huisjes stonden inderdaad vreemde kaarsen, en de jongen vroeg zich af waarvan die kaarsen gemaakt waren. ‘Oh, van reuzenogen, reuzenharen, reuzentenen en reuzenvingers, enzo,’ zei een trol glimlachend alsof hij er niks van meende. Maar de kaarsen hadden een erg vreemde geur.

Later bleek dat de trollen helemaal geen reuzenvlees aten, maar gewoon kippenvlees, varkensvlees en rundergehakt. De jongen snapte het niet meer goed. Wie moest hij nu geloven ? Werd hij niet gewoon overal in de maling genomen ?

De trollen aten veel, terwijl de jongen allang niet meer kon. De trollen boerden veel, en hadden veel sterke verhalen. De jongen glipte er even tussenuit en liep naar wat van die vreemde kaarsen toe. Hij rook er even aan, en rook de indringende geur. Ook ging hij er even met zijn vinger over, en voelde dat er veel stof aanzat. Ook voelde het een beetje slijmerig aan. Het was een kaars met blauw vuur, en daarnaast stond een kaars met rood vuur, en verderop nog één met groen vuur. Aan de muren en aan de plafonds hingen vreemde spiegels. Ze leken wel een beetje op de reuzenspiegels. Maar de jongen kon er niets door zien. Ook liep de jongen even naar de gang, waar vreemde opgezette spinnen en krabben stonden. Ook hier hingen vreemde spiegels aan de muur en aan de plafonds. Ze lagen zelfs op de vloer, verweven in een vreemd tapijt. De vreemde spiegels leken een beetje op de buiken van spinnen. De jongen kon er niets door zien.

De huizen van de trollen waren door gangen aan elkaar verbonden, en al snel kwam hij in een ander huis. Hier waren de trollen ook erg vriendelijk, en ze nodigden hem uit om wat pudding met hen te nemen. Maar de jongen zat al helemaal vol.

Het trollentoilet was een vreemde bedoening met kettingen en leer, maar dingen leken daar ook van harige dierenhuiden gemaakt te zijn. Boven was er een badkamer waar dezelfde soort dingen stonden, en weer die druiperige kaarsen.

Op het zolder hoorde hij iemand zingen, en ging er over de trap naartoe. Maar het bleek een grammofoonspeler te zijn. Niemand was verder in de buurt. Toen hij door het raam keek zag hij rook. In de verte was een veldje tussen wat bomen waar trollen een barbecue hielden.

De volgende dag trokken de jongen, zijn moeder en zijn broer verder met de huifkar. Verderop bleek alles veel luguberder te zijn, alhoewel de trollen nog steeds erg vriendelijk waren. Hier woonden ze in grotten, in hutten, en in tenten. De trollen hier waren veel langer en droegen vaak riemen met doodskoppen erop en daaronder droegen ze harige broeken. Ook droegen ze kettingen met tanden eraan. Deze trollen bleken wel echt reuzen te eten, want hier zag de jongen gebraden reuzenharten, gebraden reuzenlever, en een heleboel andere reuzenorganen, meestal liggende tussen een hoop reuzenogen, reuzentenen, reuzenvingers en reuzenbotten.

Weer zag hij vreemde kaarsen die bijna een soort van aders hadden met vreemde knopen erin, en wat ervan afdroop leek veel op bloed, snot en slijm.

Sommige kaarsen leken geheel van reuzentenen gemaakt te zijn, anderen van reuzenogen, en weer anderen van reuzenvingers. Verderop kwamen ze in hallen die geheel van reuzenogen waren gemaakt, en daarna in hallen die geheel van reuzenvingers waren gemaakt. Vandaaruit kwamen ze in de hallen van reuzentenen, die over leken te lopen in hallen van trollentenen. Hier zagen ze kooien met trollenkinderen door de lucht gaan. De kinderen leken op reuzenkinderen, maar ze waren veel dunner en hadden een andere huidskleur, bijna als zand. De kooien zaten vast aan touwen en werden in de lucht voortgetrokken.

Einde

Jetje’s Moeder

Jetje’s moeder was een heks. En niet zomaar een heks. Ze at mensenvlees. Jetje’s moeder kwam nooit beneden. Ze woonde op zolder. Jetje durfde hier nooit te komen. Haar vader zei altijd : ‘Kom daar maar niet.’ Het stonk er ook verschrikkelijk. Op een dag kwam er een meneer aan de deur. Jetje’s vader moest een hoge rekening betalen, maar hij had er het geld niet voor. ‘Ja, mijn vrouw heeft al het geld,’ zei Jetje’s vader tegen de meneer. ‘Maar ziet u, zij is een heks en woont op de grote zolder. Ze eet mensenvlees, dus ik kan daar maar beter niet komen.’

‘Ja, maar ik moet dat geld toch hebben,’ zei de meneer.

Midden in de nacht ging Jetje’s vader naar de grote zolder. ‘Ik heb wat geld nodig,’ zei Jetje’s vader tegen de heks.

‘Nee, dat krijg je niet,’ zei de heks. ‘Breng me eerst maar wat jongetjes, dikke jongetjes, vetgemest, want ik heb honger.’

‘Nou, je kunt toch gewoon uit de koelkast eten,’ zei vader.

‘Nee, ik wil mensenvlees,’ zei de heks.

‘Maar dat kan echt niet hoor,’ zei vader. ‘En ik moet het geld nu hebben, anders komt morgen die meneer terug, en dan zwaait er wat.’

‘Laat die meneer maar hier komen,’ zei de heks.

‘Goed,’ zei Jetje’s vader, ‘als je dat zo wil. Dan kun jij het aan hem uitleggen.’

En zo gebeurde het. Jetje’s vader stuurde de meneer de volgende dag naar het zolder. Na een uur was de man nog niet beneden, en Jetje’s vader ging weer naar het zolder om te kijken hoe het was afgelopen. De heks had de meneer in een kooi opgesloten. Oh, oh, dat ging helemaal niet goed. De meneer was woest.

‘Zeg, laat die meneer eens even los,’ zei Jetje’s vader. Maar de heks wilde dat niet. ‘En ga nu maar weg, anders stop ik jou ook in een hok,’ zei de heks. Toen is Jetje’s vader maar naar beneden gegaan, en wilde er nu echt nooit meer komen.

Maar op een mooie zonnige dag toen Jetje eens iets van het zolder moest halen kwam ze erachter dat haar moeder er niet meer woonde. Alle spullen waren weg. Er lag een briefje op de grond, waarop stond geschreven : ‘Lieve Jetje, ik woon nu in het bos. Groeten van de heks. Kom je me eens opzoeken ?’ Nou, dat durfde Jetje natuurlijk niet, maar op een dag besloot ze er toch met een paar vriendjes en vriendinnetjes naartoe te gaan. De heks woonde nu heel diep in het bos, en daarvoor moesten ze een eind fietsen. Dat ging niet zo snel, want Kareltje was nogal dik, en kwam maar moeilijk vooruit. ‘Kareltje, mijn moeder is nogal gevaarlijk,’ zei Jetje. ‘Ze eet mensenvlees.’ Maar Kareltje moest erom lachen, en zei met zijn mond vol dat hij dat niet geloofde.

Toen ze bij het huisje van Jetje’s moeder aankwamen was het een keurige boel. Jetje’s moeder kwam naar buiten met de krulspelden in, en ze leek op een echte dame. ‘Zo, mams, verwacht je visite ? De koningin ofzo ?’ vroeg Jetje.

‘Nou, jullie zouden toch komen ?’ zei Jetje’s moeder. Jetje knikte. ‘Mams, dit zijn Kareltje, Benno, en nog wat vriendinnetjes. Jetje’s moeder gaf alleen Kareltje en Benno een hand. Benno was aan het eten zoals altijd. Hij had altijd zijn mond vol, net als Kareltje, maar hij was nog niet zo dik als Kareltje.

‘Je bent niet zo dik als Kareltje,’ zei Jetje’s moeder tegen Benno. ‘Maar dat komt nog wel.’

‘Waarom dan, mevrouw ?’ vroeg Benno.

‘Oh, als je zoveel eet,’ zei Jetje’s moeder, ‘dan zal dat vast wel lukken.’ Kareltje en Benno keken elkaar even vreemd aan. Wat een rare moeder had Jetje dat ze zulke dingen zei. Maar al gauw viel Jetje’s moeder goed bij Kareltje en Benno in de smaak, want in de woonkamer stonden de overheerlijkste taartjes en toetjes. ‘Zo, ik dacht laat ik jullie eens goed verwennen,’ zei Jetje’s moeder. ‘Jullie moeten er nog van groeien.’ Dat lieten Kareltje en Benno zich geen tweede keer zeggen. Snel holden ze op de tafel af, en begonnen te eten dat het een lieve lust was. Maar de meisjes aten niks. ‘Zeg, waarom eten jullie niet ?’ vroeg Jetje’s moeder. ‘Ik heb het speciaal voor jullie gemaakt.’

‘Oh, ik had thuis al genoeg gegeten,’ zei Lizzie.

‘Ja, en ik heb niet zo’n honger,’ zei Daphne.

‘En jij dan, Jetje ?’ vroeg Jetje’s moeder.

‘Oh, ik heb ook niet zo’n zin. Ik ben een beetje misselijk,’ zei Jetje.

‘Dat kan,’ zei Jetje’s moeder, ‘maar ik heb anders wel zin hoor. Dan eet ik wel een extra taartje voor jullie.’

‘Lekker spul, moeder van Jetje,’ zei Benno.

‘Ja,’ zei Kareltje met zijn mond vol. ‘Mogen we nog eens komen ?’

‘Jullie mogen zo vaak komen als jullie maar willen,’ zei Jetje’s moeder. ‘Jullie mogen wel logeren, want het is toch weekend.’

‘Graag mevrouw,’ zei Benno. Kareltje knikte instemmend. De meisjes lieten zich pas na lang praten overhalen, maar Jetje wilde absoluut niet blijven. Jetje was bang dat haar moeder nog steeds was zoals vroeger. Opeens keerde ze zich om, rende naar buiten naar haar fiets, en reed weg.

Toen ze thuiskwam vertelde ze alles aan haar vader. ‘Ach,’ zei haar vader. ‘Misschien is ze nu wel veranderd. Ze heeft een nieuw huis, en ze gedraagt zich nu als een echte dame. Zullen we samen eens bij haar op bezoek gaan ? Maar Jetje wilde er niet meer komen. Toch begon ze zich een beetje bezorgd te maken over haar vriendjes en vriendinnetjes, maar even later dacht ze dat ze zich aanstelde.

Na het weekend kwamen de kinderen vrolijk terug. ‘Je hebt een geweldige moeder, Jetje,’ zei Kareltje. Ook Benno en de meisjes knikten volop. ‘Zie je nou wel,’ zei Jetje’s vader. ‘Er is niets aan de hand. Misschien is ze erg veranderd.’

‘Dus ze is nu geen heks meer ?’ vroeg Jetje.

‘Ik denk het niet,’ zei vader. Maar toen schrok Jetje. Ze keek naar Kareltje, en zag hoe er een schroefje uit zijn broekspijp viel. Jetje raakte het op, en keek Kareltje in de ogen. Kareltje bewoog niet meer. En toen zag Jetje ook een schroefje op zijn hoofd zitten. Dit was Kareltje helemaal niet, maar een robot. Ook zag ze die schroefjes op de andere kinderen zitten, en toen schrok vader ook. ‘Dat is niet pluis, Jetje,’ zei vader. ‘We moeten direkt naar het huisje toe.’

‘Nee,’ krijste Jetje. ‘Dan sluit ze ons ook op. Dat heeft ze al eens eerder gedaan met die meneer, weet je wel ?’

Vader knikte. Toen zijn ze samen maar gaan afwassen. ‘We moeten echt wat doen, Jetje,’ zei vader.

‘Ja, maar wat dan ?’ vroeg Jetje.

‘Ik weet het niet,’ zei vader. ‘Laten we er eerst maar een nachtje over slapen.

Maar de volgende dag waren vader en Jetje het alweer vergeten. Totdat Jetje op een dag weer op de zolder kwam en ontdekte dat haar moeder er weer woonde. Ook stonden er kooien met de meneer van de rekening, Kareltje, Benno, en haar twee vriendinnetjes Lizzie en Daphne. Ze waren allemaal verschrikkelijk dik geworden. ‘Mams, wat heb je met ze gedaan ?’ vroeg Jetje, ‘en waarom woon je nu weer hier ?’

Maar toen schrok Jetje. Haar moeder was gaan roesten, en dat was geen goed teken. Dat betekende namelijk dat haar moeder ook een robot was. Helemaal in paniek rende ze naar beneden. Direkt vertelde ze het aan haar vader. ‘Oh ja,’ zei Jetje’s vader, ‘dat is waar ook. Dat was ik helemaal vergeten. Ik heb haar zelf eens gemaakt. Ik had haar roestvrij moeten maken, en verder had ik nog wat foutjes gemaakt.’

‘Nou, ik vind het anders oerdom,’ zei Jetje. ‘Wie maakt er nou zo’n gevaarlijke heks als mijn moeder ?’

‘Ach,’ zei vader, ‘stel je niet zo aan. Trouwens, die meneer was ook maar een robot hoor, en ook Kareltje, Benno, Lizzie en Daphne. Zelfs de juffrouw is een robot. Ik heb ze allemaal eens gemaakt.’

‘Nou, je hebt me er behoorlijk bang mee gemaakt,’ zei Jetje. Maar toen ontdekte ze ineens iets anders. Wat zat daar bij het oor van haar vader ? Dat was een heel klein schroefje. Toen ze er aan draaide stopte haar vader ineens met bewegen en keek strak voor zich uit. ‘Vader ?’ zei Jetje. ‘Ach nee, hè ? Is mijn vader dan ook een robot ?’ In paniek rende Jetje naar het huis van de juffrouw. De juffrouw was in de woonkamer aan het breien. Direkt begon Jetje haar te onderzoeken. ‘Ach kind, wat doe je allemaal toch ?’ vroeg de juffrouw.

‘Even kijken of mijn vader gelijk heeft,’ zei Jetje. En ja hoor, even later vond ze wat schroefjes. Nu kon ze niemand meer vertrouwen. Huilend slenterde ze naar huis terug. Ze durfde die nacht bijna niet te slapen. Ze was helemaal alleen in zo’n groot huis met robotten. De volgende dag werd er aangebeld. Het was een meneer met een snor en een hoed op. De meneer stak zijn hand uit naar Jetje en zei : ‘Hallo, ik ben jouw vader. Je hebt het eindelijk ontdekt over de robotten ? Je mamma is ook echt heel blij. Ga je met ons mee ?’

‘Ja, maar wie bent u ?’ vroeg Jetje. ‘Wie heeft dan al die robotten gemaakt ?’

‘Ach, die heb ik zelf ooit eens gemaakt. Heel dom van me. Ik dacht dan had je wat speelkameraadjes, want je mamma en ik waren vaak weg. Maar ze gingen met je op de loop,’ zei de meneer. Jetje stapte even later in de mooie grote auto, en al gauw kwamen ze aan bij een prachtig groot huis. Die dag ontmoette Jetje voor het eerst haar moeder, en vader en moeder stroopten beiden hun mouwen op om te laten zien dat ze echt geen robotten waren.

Het Slagroom

Geheim

Hoofdstuk 1.

Fonteinenland was omringd door een rivier van slagroom. Koning Fontein zat op zijn troon, en prins Fontein stond naast hem. Koningin Fontein was in de keuken, waar er gewerkt werd aan een feestmaaltijd, want er waren belangrijke gasten. De eetzaal stond al vol met stoeltjes van slagroom-leer. Ook stonden er standbeelden gemaakt van chocolade en drop. In de kelders van de keuken waren geleerden en koks bezig een draak te veranderen in slagroom. Zo ging dat vaak. Prins Fontein nam vaak draken mee als hij terugkwam van een reis, en dit keer had hij een hele grote meegenomen.

In Fonteinenland was er een wet dat als iemand herhaaldelijk moeilijkheden en overlast veroorzaakte, zoals boeven, draken en ander gespuis, en hun leven niet wilden verbeteren, dan liepen ze de kans om in slagroom veranderd te worden. Zo rekende Fonteinenland af met vervelende lieden. Slagroom werd ook vaak als oorlogswapen gebruikt, en oorlogen waren er veel. Ook waren er veel verschillende soorten slagroom. Prins Fontein bewaakte een heel groot receptenboek daarvoor.

'Plop, plop, plop,' één voor één werden er kersen in de slagroom gegooid. Een heerlijke geur verspreidde zich door Fonteinenland, maar op de muren renden de soldaten van de koning heen en weer. Ze hadden iets gezien. Er kwam een schip naar het land toe over de slagroom-rivier. Koning Fontein werd ingelicht, en ook prins Fontein, maar de koning begon te bulderen van het lachen. Hij zag de paniek op de gezichten van zijn soldaten. En ze zweetten kersensap. 'Nee, welnee,' zei de koning. 'Dat wordt geen oorlog. Dat schip, en dat zal ik je vertellen, heeft helemaal niets te maken met oorlog. Ik heb mijn gouden vogel gezonden naar het buurland, om ze een schip met spruitjes te laten zenden voor het grote diner. 'Plop,' daar vloog een spruitje door de lucht. En daar ging er nog één. Een woeste man stond voor de koning, met spruitjes in zijn haren. Zijn haren waren bijna groen, en ook zijn kleren waren bijna groen van de spruitjes. 'Dag Harro,' zei de koning. 'Fijn je weer eens te zien.'

'Ik heb ook tomaten voor u meegenomen, koning,' zei Harro.

'Heel goed, mijn jongen,' zei koning Fontein. 'Ik wist dat ik op je kon rekenen.' Na een tijdje stond de hele keuken propvol met dozen met tomaten en spruitjes. Toen de feestmaaltijd klaar was was het inmiddels vol in de eetzaal. Ook Harro was uitgenodigd. Prins Fontein deed het woord : 'Wij hopen dat het eten u overheerlijk zal smaken.' Iedereen applaudiseerde. De feestmaaltijd zag er geweldig uit.

Koningin Fontein zat naast de koning. Zij had ook meegewerkt. Onder de tafel hield zij de hand vast van koning Fontein. 'Dat heb je goed gedaan, schat,' fluisterde koning Fontein haar liefdevol

toe.

De belangrijke gasten waren uit een ver land gekomen. Ze hadden hun prinses meegenomen, prinses Zoete Droom. Ze had een kroon met een half maantje erop, helemaal van goud, en ze had een schitterend gewaad, wit met allerlei kleine pareltjes en steentjes. Maar haar koninkrijk leed onder de terreur van een verschrikkelijke draak, en daarom was ze hier, om hulp en advies te vragen. Snikkend vertelde de prinses haar verhaal. De draak was een verschrikkelijk monster die ervoor zorgde dat altijd alle woorden werden omgedraaid zodat iedereen de verschrikkelijkste ruzie met elkaar kreeg. 'Lolak,' heette hij.

Plotseling werd er op de deur van de eetzaal geklopt. Een sterke wind kwam naar binnen en plotseling viel iedereen tegen de vlakte. Een ijselijk gelach steeg op. Het was Lolak. Iedereen had het bewustzijn verloren, behalve prins Fontein, want die was direct onder de tafel gedoken toen de sterke wind binnenkwam. Snel trok hij zijn zwaard, en door de deuropening zag hij de nek van de draak. Snel wierp hij zijn zwaard in de nek van het beest, maar plotseling werd de prins door een klauw gegrepen. Ook de prins verloor zijn bewustzijn, en waakte pas veel later op. Hij keek om zich heen. Hij was in een kerker.

Na een tijdje gleed de draak naar binnen en veranderde in een vrouw. 'Zo prins,' zei de vrouw met een hekserige stem. 'En wie kan je nu redden hier ?'

De prins smeekte haar hem vrij te zetten, en hij wilde alles wel voor haar doen. 'Goed,' zei de vrouw, 'ik zal je vrijzetten, maar op voorwaarde dat je de zeeen van slagroom diep onder de aarde bezoekt en het halssieraad van draak Holgst steelt om het aan mij te brengen.'

De prins wist dat hij geen andere keus had. Aan een hele lange keten liet ze hem naar beneden gaan over een trappetje. Na een lange tijd over veel meer trappetjes kwam prins Fontein eindelijk bij de slagroom zeeen aan. De zeeen schuimden verschrikkelijk. Hij vroeg zich af waarom de heks dat halssieraad wilde hebben. Er waren hier verschillende zeeen die allemaal door elkaar heenzweefden. De prins had nog nooit zoveel slagroom gezien. Hier moest dan ergens draak Holgst wonen. De prins stapte in één van de zeeen en begon te zwemmen. Zijn mond werd direct erg zoet. In de verte zag hij iets glinsteren, en hij hoorde gebrul als van vuur. Een zwarte gestalte verscheen onder hem, en hij werd in de lucht geslingerd, om zo in een andere slagroomzee terecht te komen. De zee was kolkend, en de golven werden steeds woester. Weer zag hij iets glinsteren. Het deed zelfs pijn aan zijn ogen. 'Wie heeft jou gezegd dichterbij te komen,' werd er geroepen.

'De heks heeft je halssieraad nodig,' riep de prins. Draak Holgst begon te bulderen van het lachen. 'Dat krijgt ze niet,' riep hij.

'Maar dan kan ik daar nooit meer weg,' riep prins Fontein, 'want ik zit aan haar keten.'

'Vaarwel,' sprak de draak, en zwom weg. De zee werd hoe langer hoe woester, en de keten begon strak te trekken, dus de prins kon niet verder zwemmen. Teleurgesteld zwom de prins terug. Bij de heks aangekomen vertelde hij het verhaal. 'Okay,' zei de heks, 'dan zal ik je keten langer maken, maar waag het niet om zonder het halssieraad terug te komen.' En weer ging de prins op pad, ditmaal met een langere keten. Nog dieper ging hij de slagroomzeeen in nu. Maar de draak was in geen velden of wegen te bekennen. Totdat de prins op een eiland aankwam. Er waren hier een heleboel zeemeerminnen met zilveren sieraden in hun haar en op andere plaatsen. Ook droegen ze sleutels. Het was alsof er slagroom in zijn hoofd werd gespoten en in zijn hele lichaam. In de verte zag hij een vulkaan, en hij zag er iets glinsteren. Maar toen hij richting de vulkaan begon te lopen werd er weer geroepen : 'Wie heeft jou gezegd dichterbij te komen.'

De prins besloot te wachten totdat het nacht was. Midden in de nacht beklom hij de vulkaan. Alles was rustig nu. Een enorm grote zwarte draak lag te slapen in de krater, met het halssieraad. Maar

toen hij bij het halssieraad aankwam zat daar een slot op met een heleboel sleutelgaten. Teleurgesteld liep hij terug en kwam de zeemeerminnen met de sleutels weer tegen. 'Waar zijn die sleutels van ?' vroeg de prins.

'Van het slot van de draak,' zeiden de zeemeerminnen. 'Hij is onder onze betovering, en als hij los zou komen dan zou alles boven de grond door hem verwoest worden.'

Daar schrok de prins wel even van, en hij was daarom blij dat hij het slot niet had kunnen openen. Maar hij vroeg zich af hoe hij dan ooit uit de macht van Lolak kon komen. Maar opeens had hij een idee. Op het paleis van zijn vader zou de draak in de kelders onder de keuken in slagroom veranderd kunnen worden, tenminste als het paleis nog zou bestaan, na de aanval van Lolak.

De zeemeerminnen wisten wel hoe ze de slagroomrivier konden bereiken via de slagroom-zeeen, om te kijken hoe het met Fonteinenland gesteld was, maar ze kwamen terug met slecht nieuws. Het hele land was verwoest en lag in as. Maar op hetzelfde moment werd er aan de keten getrokken. De heks wilde dus waarschijnlijk dat hij terug zou komen. Toen de prins terugkwam zonder het halssieraad was de heks woest. Maar de prins was ook woest op de heks omdat Fonteinenland verwoest was. 'Ik weet het wel, heks,' zei de prins. 'Alles wat je wil is dat ik het halssieraad van draak Holgst losmaak, zodat hij bevrijd wordt van de zeemeerminnen-betovering, en zodat hij alles boven de grond kan vernietigen.'

'Genoeg !' schreeuwde de heks.

'En wat heb je met prinses Zoete Droom gedaan, en met mijn vader en moeder, en met alle anderen ?' vroeg de prins. Maar de heks zei niets. Na een tijdje viel de heks in slaap, en de prins ging terug naar de zeemeerminnen. 'Is er geen manier om mijn keten los te maken ?' vroeg de prins aan de zeemeerminnen. 'Nee,' zeiden de zeemeerminnen. 'Niemand kan tegen haar krachten op.'

'Wat moeten we dan doen ?' vroeg de prins.

'Als je draak Holgst in slagroom kunt veranderen, dan is het halssieraad niet meer nodig,' zeiden de zeemeerminnen.

'Ja, maar dat gebeurde in de kelders van de keuken,' zei prins Fontein, 'en daar kwamen altijd heel veel geleerden en koks aan te pas.' En weer bulderde de draak. 'Oh, hij is wakker,' zeiden de zeemeerminnen. 'Wat we kunnen doen is je een ander halssieraad meegeven wat op het halssieraad van de draak lijkt.' De prins stemde in, en even later kwam hij met een ander halssieraad bij de heks. De heks nam het sieraad, en legde het in een kistje. 'Nu is Holgst vrij om te doen en te laten wat hij wil. Het sieraad is veilig bij mij. Ik zal het zelfs kunnen dragen, want ik ben immuun voor de betoveringen van de zeemeerminnen,' krijste ze. Snel maakte ze de keten van de prins los. 'Spoedig zal alles boven de grond vernietigd zijn,' lachte ze. De prins ging snel terug naar de slagroomzeeen, anders zou de heks zich kunnen bedenken. De zeemeerminnen namen hem mee naar hun rijk, in de dieptes van de slagroomzeeen. De prins vroeg zich af of zijn vader en moeder nog leefden, en prinses Zoete Droom en alle anderen.

'In de zee liggen alle schatten,' zeiden de zeemeerminnen. 'Alles wat je verloren hebt kun je daar terugvinden. De zee is bewustzijn.' De prins was erg gerustgesteld dat te horen. 'De zee is een grotere realiteit dan al de anderen,' zeiden de zeemeerminnen. Ze brachten hem naar een spiegel waar hij Fonteinenland door kon zien, prachtiger dan ooit. 'Het moet nog ergens in de zee zijn,' zeiden de zeemeerminnen. 'Er is niets verloren. Zwem door de spiegel.' Dat liet de prins zich geen twee keer zeggen. Hij zwom door het portaal van de spiegel, maar werd direkt tegengehouden door een duistere gestalte. 'Ben je mij soms vergeten ?' zei de gestalte. 'Mij, de grote Lolak. Je komt er niet zomaar langs. Ik heers over alle weerspiegelingen, en jij bent maar een weerspiegeling. Het echte zul je nooit vinden.' De prins trok zijn zwaard, maar dat begon direkt te smelten. 'Vecht er

maar voor,' sprak de heks schaterlachend, 'maar het is toch allemaal nutteloos.' Plotseling werd de spiegel ingeslagen, en duisternis vulde de zee. De zeemeerminnen vluchtten weg, maar ze wisten niet waartoe. De prins was bewusteloos geraakt door de klap, en één van de zeemeerminnen trok hem met haar mee. Ze bracht hem naar een eiland waar hij even later ontwaakte. 'Wij proberen onze fantasieen altijd tot leven te brengen, maar Lolak staat er altijd tussen,' sprak ze.

'Nu heeft ze ook nog jullie rijk vernietigd,' zei de prins.

'Nee,' zei de zeemeermin, en toonde hem haar halssieraad. 'Ik draag het bewustzijn van de zee, hoger dan ieder ander bewustzijn. Ik ben de zeemeerminnen-koningin. Door dit halssieraad heb ik toegang tot alles wat anderen verloren hebben.' Ze begon wat aan de stenen van het halssieraad te draaien. In de verte zag hij Fonteinenland, en ook zag hij het rijk van de zeemeerminnen, en het land van prinses Zoete Droom. Het zag er allemaal schitterend uit, maar het leken wel luchtweerspiegelingen. 'Je bewustzijn moet sterker worden, lieve prins,' zei de zeemeerminnen-koningin.

De zeemeerminnen-koningin leidde hem naar Fonteinenland, wat nog steeds bestond in haar halssieraad. Toen draak Holgst sliep brachten ze hem naar de kelders van de keuken, waar hij tot slagroom gemaakt kon worden. 'Hoe krijgen we Lolak in de kelders van de keuken ?' vroeg de prins even later aan de zeemeerminnen-koningin. 'Door bewustzijn,' sprak ze. 'Hoe hoger je bewustzijn is, hoe minder er verloren is, en hoe minder macht Lolak heeft.'

De zeemeerminnen-koningin deed het halssieraad van de draak nu om de nek van prins Fontein, en slagroom-zeeen begonnen zich om hem heen te vormen, prachtiger dan ooit tevoren. De prins kon weer een beetje ademhalen. Ook zag hij daar prinses Zoete Droom zwemmen. De prinses was blij om hem te zien. 'Het is beter nu in ons land,' zei de prinses. De draak verliest meer en meer grip.

'Gelukkig maar,' zei de prins.

Hoofdstuk 2.

Na dit avontuur zaten de koning en de koningin van Fonteinenland weer op hun troon alsof er nooit wat was gebeurd. Prins Fontein was verliefd op prinses Zoete Droom, en samen zouden ze meehelpen het land te regeren. Maar toen andere draken hoorden wat er met draak Holgst en draak Lolak was gebeurd begonnen ze een grote drakenoorlog tegen Fonteinenland. En ditmaal kwamen er veel grotere draken opdagen, en het zeemeerminnen-sieraad kon niets beginnen. Prins Fontein was ten einde raad. Koning Fontein zei dat de enige oplossing zou zijn naar de slagroom-tovenaar te gaan, die diep in het bos woonde, en die Fonteinenland zou hebben gemaakt. Prins Fontein zocht hem op, na een lange reis door het bos. De slagroom-tovenaar woonde in een groot kasteel. Hij werd ook wel tovenaar Lunera genoemd. Het hart van de prins begon sneller te bonzen. Er hingen hier grote maskers van allerlei dieren, apen, beren, leeuwen, tijgers en noem maar op, ook van vele onbekende monsters. Tovenaar Lunera zat achter zijn bureau. Hij was een boek aan het lezen. 'Wie ben jij,' zei hij zonder op te kijken.

Prins Fontein begon direkt zijn verhaal te vertellen. 'Draken zei je ?' vroeg de tovenaar. 'Ach jongen, het is zo'n koud kunstje om zelfs de grootste draken in slagroom te veranderen, zonder ze eerste naar keukenkelders te brengen, zonder al dat gedoe met geleerden en koks. Luister.' De tovenaar liet hem een boek zien. Het boek heette : 'Het Geheim van de Gulden Draak.'

'Hier staat het,' zei de tovenaar. 'Je moet op zoek gaan naar deze gulden draak, die een boom met bijzondere vruchten bewaakt. Als je deze vruchten plukt en naar een draak gooit, dan veranderen ze direkt in slagroom. Daarom wordt deze boom zo streng door de gulden draak bewaakt. Er bestaat maar één zo'n boom, en de draken zijn bang dat iemand die boom ooit vindt.'

'Maar waar kan ik die boom vinden dan ?' vroeg prins Fontein.

De tovenaar gaf hem een sleutel en zei : 'Ga naar de heksentuin van Gradore, open het hek, en vraag aan Gradore waar de gulden draak is.'

De prins ging direkt op pad. De heksentuin was achter het bos, een soort paradijs. Daar aangekomen opende hij het hoge gouden hek met een sleutel. 'Wat kom je doen,' krijste een oude vrouw.

'Ik kom voor de gulden draak, waar is hij ?' vroeg de prins.

'Kom maar mee,' zei Gradore. 'Hij leeft in het ravijn. Er zijn wel meerdere dommeriken geweest die hem hebben geprobeerd te temmen, maar tevergeefs. Niemand is ooit teruggekeerd van dit ravijn.' Er was een trappetje langs de ravijn waarmee je naar beneden kon. In de verte was de boom te zien met glinsterende vruchten, en een gouden draak die ervoor lag, en die op een slang leek. Snel ging de prins naar beneden. Dit zou een gevaarlijk spelletje worden. De draak zag hem bijna direkt en snelde op hem af. De prins trok zijn zwaard. De draak liet zijn tanden zien die als een sneldraaiende malen waren. De prins kon net op tijd opzij springen en verborg zich achter de trap. Langzaam liet hij zich naar beneden glijden. Na een tijdje stond hij op de bodem van het ravijn. Langzaam liep hij naar de boom toe. De draak was in geen velden of wegen te bekennen. Maar plotseling kwam de draak van achter de boom tevoorschijn. De draak was ziedend, en weer verstopte de prins zich achter de trap. Ditmaal kwam er vuur uit de bek van de draak, en het ging dwars door de trap heen, waardoor de prins zijn schild moest trekken. Het vuur ging maar door en door, en de prins begon het wel heel erg heet te krijgen. Van boven kon de prins de tovenaar zien komen, die een gouden vogel op de boom afstuurde. Maar de draak begon meerdere koppen te krijgen die als lange slangen werden, de boom vurig bewakende. 'Het heeft allemaal geen zin,' riep Gradore vanaf de top van het ravijn. De gouden vogel was nu erg dichtbij de boom gekomen, maar één van de koppen had hem bijna te pakken. De prins trok zijn boog, en een pijl, en mikte vlak op een takje wat een vrucht vasthield. Het takje vloog los, en de vrucht viel boven op één van de koppen van de draak, die direkt in slagroom begon te veranderen. Ook de rest van de draak begon al snel te smelten. 'Goed werk,' riep de tovenaar.

Ze namen nu zoveel mogelijk vruchten mee die ze bij de tovenaar in de tuin plantten, en waar zo veel meer van zulke bomen konden groeien, en een krachtige tegenaanval begon nu tegen de draken. Door de vruchten begonnen ze al snel in slagroom te veranderen. De vruchten werden in kanonnen gestopt, of op pijlen gestoken. Ook werden de vruchten gewoon gegooid.

Als herdenking aan de overwinning over de draken werden er elk jaar voedsel-gevechten georganiseerd. Iedereen mocht elkaar dan bekogelen met voedsel, en aan het einde van de dag kwamen er grote wasmachines met slagroom waarin iedereen gewassen moest worden. Dit was altijd een dol festijn en het hoogtepunt van het jaar.

Op een dag kwam er een ander prinsesje van een ander ver land op bezoek. Het was prinses Zonnetraantje. Ze had een kroontje met een zonnetje er bovenop, en ze was een vriendinnetje van prinses Zoete Droom. Prinses Zonnetraantje kon heel lekker zoet koken, en vertoonde al snel haar kunsten in de keuken. Ze bracht het overheerlijkste gebak naar de eetzaal, gevuld met warme appel en peer-vruchten.

Het Zeepje

Sanne en Frits kwamen dichterbij de indiaanse amazone-koningin die ze hadden gevonden in het bos. De koningin glimlachte. 'Zo, en wie zijn jullie,' vroeg ze. Het was een aardige vrouw.

'Nu dan,' zei ze, 'het geheim van de dorga-indianen ligt diep verborgen in de grond.' Ze hief een zeepje in de lucht. 'Ik wil dat jullie dit zeepje eten alvorens in de afgrond the kunnen gaan.

'Geen sprake van,' zei een stem. Een man met een snor stond achter de kinderen ineens. Het was de vader van de kinderen. De koningin glimlachte. 'Maar het is gemaakt van chocolade,' zei de koninging, 'witte creme-achtige chocolade.'

'Dat kan wel waar wezen,' zei de man nors. 'Maar de kinderen gaan nu met mij mee naar huis.'

'Oh, dacht je dat,' sprak de koningin. 'Ik ben ook de koningin hier, dus dit alles valt onder mijn beslissing.'

'Ja, en ik ben de keizer van Achtoepikum, en ik gebied dat mijn kinderen nu met mij meegaan,' sprak de man. De koningin begon te gniffelen. 'U bent nogal een interessante man,' sprak de koningin.

'Ach toe, papa,' zei Frits. 'Mag ze met ons mee naar huis.'

'Vooruit dan maar,' zei vader.

Thuis was alles een beetje treurig, omdat de moeder van de kinderen was overleden. Daarom was de indiaanse amazone-koningin een ware aanwinst. Ze was erg lief en zorgzaam voor de kinderen. Diep in de nacht ging Frits naar de kamer waar de koningin sliep, gluurde in haar tas en haalde het zeepje eruit. Dat had hij niet vergeten. Hij beet er een stukje uit, en plotseling schoof de grond open, en hij viel in een diepe kuil van licht. Hij voelde een hand op zijn schouder en iemand zette hem op een stoeltje. 'Wie zijn jullie ?' vroeg Frits.

'Gaat je niks aan,' zei een stem. Weer nam Frits een hapje van het zeepje, en weer schoof de grond open en met stoel en al gleed Frits in de diepte. Maar daar stond hij ineens weer in de kamer van de koningin. 'Niet meer doen,' zei hij tegen zichzelf. Hij stopte het zeepje weer terug in de tas, en ging terug naar zijn eigen kamer.

De volgende ochtend zaten ze allemaal aan het ontbijt. De koningin was zo mooi dat Frits er bang van werd. 'Wie heeft er van het zeepje gegeten ?' sprak de koningin. Frits stak aarzelend zijn hand op.

'Nou keurig, jongen,' zei de koningin, 'maar je had het hele zeepje moeten opeten, anders kom je in ... anders kom je in ... anders kom je in ehm .... laat maar.'

'Ik durf het niet,' zei Frits.

'Sanna, durf jij het ?' vroeg de koningin. Sanne schudde haar hoofd.

'Geef mij dat zeepje maar,' zei vader. De koningin overhandigde het zeepje. 'Weet je het zeker ?' vroeg de koningin. Vader knikte. Maar toen hij van het zeepje begon te eten was hij met een paar hapjes al uitgeput en overvol. Vreemd genoeg bleef hij gewoon op een stoel zitten. 'Waarom zakt hij niet in de grond ?' vroeg Frits. Maar daar gebeurde het al, en plotseling was vader verdwenen.

'Zo, opgeruimd staat netjes,' sprak de koningin. 'We hebben niets aan mannen.'

'Maar ik ben een man,' zei Frits.

'Ach Frits,' zei de koningin, 'jij bent geen man, jij bent een jongen.'

'Maar wat als ik straks een man word,' vroeg Frits, 'ruimt u mij dan ook op ?'

De koningin keek hem ernstig aan. 'Frits,' zei ze. 'Ik heb een ander zeepje voor je, ditmaal gemaakt van donkere chocolade, en ik wil dat je het eet, zodat je nooit een man zult worden.'

'Moet ik het helemaal opeten ?' vroeg Frits.

'Oh, een likje is al genoeg,' zei de koningin. Toen haalde ze langzaam het donkerbruine zeepje uit de tas. Frits haalde diep adem. De koningin overhandigde het zeepje, en al snel nam Frits een likje. Hij vond het zo lekker dat hij verder begon te eten. 'Zo, dat komt dan wel goed,' zei de koningin.

De koningin was een fantastische moeder, en de kinderen misten hun vader totaal niet. Ze mochten alles, en elke dag was het feest. Ze konden zich geen betere moeder bedenken. De koningin was een harde werkster zodat alles goed opgeruimd bleef, maar ze deed alles snel, zodat ze altijd veel tijd voor de kinderen had. Ze las de kinderen voor, ging met hen overal naartoe, en de kinderen kwamen niets tekort. Ook kon ze heel lekker koken, en de kinderen waren elke dag jarig. Maar op een dag werd de koningin ernstig ziek. Ze had het gevoel dat ze terug moest naar het bos. Ze begon heel veel planten in het huis te zetten in de hoop dat dat zou helpen, maar niets hielp. Ze was erg moe, zo moe en ziek dat de dokter haar vertelde dat ze voor een tijdje op haarzelf moest wonen zonder de kinderen, want ze was veel te druk geweest met de kinderen, zonder aan haarzelf te denken. De kinderen mochten zolang op een vakantie-oord wonen.

In haar nieuwe huisje kon de koningin tot haarzelf komen. Al gauw begon ze ook aan geheugenverlies te lijden, en kon de kinderen nog maar nauwelijks herinneren. Ze kon zich nog wel herinneren dat Frits eens tegen haar zei : 'U bent zo mooi, ik ben er bang van.' Maar ze wist eigenlijk niet meer goed wie Frits was. En Sanne ? Wie was dat ?

Op een dag was de vader van de kinderen weer boven de grond gekomen, zijn gezicht helemaal vuil, zijn kleren kleddernat en modderig. Als eerste zocht hij zijn kinderen op, die heel blij waren hem te zien. 'Ik heb het geheim van de dorga-indianen gevonden,' zei vader met een blij gezicht. Hij hief een zeepje in de lucht. 'Als ik hier van eet, dan word ik weer een jongen.'

Vader nam een hap, en veranderde in een jongen. Nu wilde hij de koningin zien. Daar aangekomen was de koningin erg verbaasd. Ze herkende hem natuurlijk niet. 'Je bent zo mooi dat ik er bang van ben,' zei de koningin, 'ik bedoel je gloed. Heb je van het zeepje gegeten ?' De jongen knikte. Hij overhandigde haar het zeepje, ze brak er een stukje vanaf, keek ernaar en stopte het toen in haar mond. Tranen rolden over haar gezicht. 'Ik ben weer beter,' sprak ze. Ze was geen vrouw meer, maar een meisje. 'Je bent zo mooi dat ik er bang van ben,' zei de jongen.

'Het is het zeepje,' zei het meisje, 'de gloed, we zijn weer kinderen.'

'Gelukkig maar,' zei de jongen.

'Jij bent de mooiste van allemaal, jij bent de maan en de sterren. De strepen op je buik en borst

vertellen een verhaal. Jij bent de liefste van allemaal, en nu spreken wij dezelfde taal.'

De

Broodjesfee

De prins zat in zijn roze pudding pyama op de troon. Griffioenen vlogen om hem heen. Ze hadden de sleutel meegenomen. De prins greep de sleutel en richtte het op een deur die al honderden jaren gesloten was. De deur ging open. In deze ruimte lagen allemaal muziek instrumenten. Ze hadden armen en benen, en konden praten. De prins was tevreden. De griffioenen waren van ver gekomen, en mochten een tijdje in de gouden kooien van het paleis wonen. Die kooien stonden gewoon open, maar er was daar goed voer te vinden, en goede, rustige slaapplaatsen. Al snel hadden de griffioenen het erg naar hun zin.

De prins bekeek de muziek-instrumenten eens. Ook speelde hij er eens op. ‘Tover-instrumenten,’ zei een van de grifioenen. Ze konden het weer regelen, en de zee. De fee Fauna woonde in een van de instrumenten. De zee-elven woonden in andere instrumenten, en er waren ook strand-feeen. Ze konden de muziek-instrumenten goed bespelen. De prins was erg verwonderd. Hij was blij dat de sleutel terug was. Janna was de zonnefee. Zij woonde in de lamp van de ruimte.

Zij vertelde de prins van een dorpje dicht bij de zee, waar elven en feeen tezamen woonden. Zij vertelde van de grote ijs-automaten langs de zee, en van de feeendrank.

En waar is dat ? vroeg de prins.

Oh, het is niet zo moeilijk, zei de zonnefee. Tel tot drie, draai in de rondte en klap dan vier maal. De prins deed het direkt en verdween in het niets. Hij bevond zich ineens op het strand. Om hem heen waren grote ijsmachines. Ze hadden ijs in allerlei kleuren. De zon was heet, en de prins had wel trek in wat ijs. Hij was bijna duizelig van de hitte. Alles draaide voor zijn ogen. Toen voelde hij het heerlijke ijs in zijn mond druipen, zo lekker zoet. Janna de zonnefee stond lachend voor hem.

En, hoe vind je het ? vroeg ze.

Oh, heerlijk, zei de prins. De prins ging op het zand zitten. Daar waren de griffioenen, als grote arenden met vlammende vleugels.

Zullen we de zee overvliegen ? vroeg Janna de zonnefee.

Ja, geweldig, zei de prins. Ze gingen allebei op een griffioen zitten, en al gauw waren ze hoog in de lucht, terwijl de zee onder hen verdween. In de verte zagen ze nog grotere ijsmachines, en het leek wel alsof het hier nog warmer was. De griffioenen brachten hen naar een eiland heel ver weg. Wilden woonden hier, als een oerwereld. Ze leefden hier tezamen met veel roofdieren.

Verderop op het eiland stond een grote kathedraal waar een fee in woonde. Het bleek dat zij de koningin van het eiland was en de maker van alle roofdieren. Grote voedselmachines stonden rondom de kathedraal, en veel snackbar-kraampjes. Maar al het voedsel was levend hier, met armen en benen. De prins had al snel door dat het voedsel er hier heel gelukkig uitzag.

Het voedsel is gelukkig, zei Janna de zonnefee, want ze gaan allemaal door toverdeuren heen. Rondom de kathedraal stonden ook allemaal kleurige grote liften, als torens. Samen gingen de prins en Janna in zo’n lift, en al snel hadden ze een groot uitzicht over het eiland. Na een tijdje kwamen ze uit de lift en stapten een grote hal binnen. Hier zat een dik jongetje aan een grote tafel, en een tovenaar stond aan het einde van de tafel, naast zijn troon.

Pa, geef me nu mijn voedsel, schreeuwde het dikke jongetje. De tovenaar klapte in zijn handen en direkt kwam er lopend voedsel binnen : lopende pasteitjes, lopende kippepootjes, lopende broodjes, lopende pizas, lopende pannekoeken, lopende puddingkjes en nog veel meer. Ze liepen allemaal de tafel op en het dikke jongetje begon direkt te eten.

Meer, pa, zei het dikke jongetje met zijn mond vol. Weer klapte de tovenaar in zijn handen, en weer ging er een deur open waardoor lopend voedsel kwam. Ditmaal was het voedsel veel groter, en de

ogen van het dikke jongetje glunderden.

Jottems, haha, ik heb honger, zei het dikke jongetje. Dank je, pa. Plotseling veranderde het dikke jongetje in een roofdier en verslond de tovenaar.

Dat komt door een toverspiegel, zei Janna de toverfee. Als de zon op zijn hoogste punt is dan gebeuren deze dingen.

Ik ruik nog meer vlees, brulde het roofdier. Snel gingen Janna de toverfee en de prins de lift weer in. De zonnefee zei dat elke lift naar zo’n hal leidt waar dikke jongetjes met hun tovenaarsvaders wonen. En dat de koningin van het eiland dat allemaal gemaakt had.

Hoe heet die fee, vroeg de prins.

Kom, zei de zonnefee, ik laat het je zien. Toen ze weer op de grond waren stapten ze de kathedraal binnen. De fee zat tussen de broodjes.

Het is een broodjesfee, zei de zonnefee.

Kom eens dichterbij, zei de broodjesfee. Weer zo iemand die weinig eet. Ik zal je leren veel te eten. Toen gingen vele deuren open en de grootst mogelijke broden kwamen binnen, rijkelijk belegd met een overvloed aan overheerlijk voedsel. Plotseling werd de prins erdoor overstroomt.

Nee, nee, riep de prins.

De prins werd wakker in zweet. Naarmate de dag verstreek dacht hij glimlachend terug aan de broodjesfee.

De Groene Verlichting

Bevroren Dromen

Hoofdstuk 1. De verandering

Hoofdstuk 2. De schuilplaats

Hoofdstuk 3. De Laser

Hoofdstuk 4. De Staatsgreep

Hoofdstuk 5. Geb

Hoofdstuk 1. De verandering

In een zaal stond hij, de grote boom. Het was volle maan, en hij was tot leven gekomen, kijkende over de blauwe aarde. Het was als het land van de blauwe zon. Een grote hond stond naast hem. Als het morgen zou zijn, zou hij weer onbeweeglijk staan als de grote boom. Hij sprak ook andere bomen toe, die tot leven waren gekomen. De fee van de maan stond erbij. Ze had haar toverstokje goed vast. Ze wist dat als de morgen zou komen, dan zouden de bomen niet meer kunnen spreken, en niet meer kunnen bewegen. En dan zou zij weer moeten terugkeren naar de maan. Het was een blauwe maan, en die verscheen niet eens zo vaak. Vaak was hij verdwenen achter duistere wolken. De grote boom nam het woord, en sprak de menigte toe. Het waren woorden van grote ernst. Hij sprak dat over een tijdje de planeet in de cirkel en het magnetische veld van de zwarte zon terecht zou komen, en dan zouden ze voor altijd tot leven komen. De bomen zagen erg naar dat moment uit, en dan zou ook de fee van de maan tot hen kunnen komen zo vaak ze wilde. Er was echter nog één gevaar wat hen in de weg stond, en dat was de heks Sausibir. Zij zou er door haar krachten in kunnen slagen de planeet in een andere zonnencirkel te brengen. Dit was een magnetische cirkel rondom de zon Misfamen. Als de heks erin zou slagen, dan zouden de bomen nooit meer tot leven kunnen komen. De heks wilde de bomen gebruiken om haar kasteel mee uit te bouwen.

Maar als de zwarte zon haar zou verslaan, dan zouden de bomen langzaam veranderen in nieuwe wezens die konden bewegen en spreken. De grote boom was in ernst, en ze waren allemaal nog erg bang, want de heks was zeer krachtig. De fee opende een boek, en sprak : 'In onze boeken staat dat de heks Sausibir op zoek is naar een groene toverstaf die in het middelpunt van de planeet zou liggen. Als ze die staf heeft gevonden, dan zal ze in staat zijn de planeet in de cirkel van de boze zon Misfamen te krijgen.' Een andere boom kwam naar voren, en keek heel ernstig en wijs.

Een jongen schrok wakker. Wat had hij toch vreemd gedroomd. Hij had een vreemde ziekte, waarin hij vaak flauwviel, en vaak kon hij moeilijk praten. Ook had hij vaak last van verkrampingen, en dan kon hij zich vaak niet bewegen. De artsen zeiden dat hij de boomziekte had, maar veel was er niet over bekend. De jongen had een obsessie als het op bomen aankwam. De volgende nacht had de jongen weer dezelfde droom, en er kwam een fee aan zijn bed of hij hen wilde helpen. Maar de jongen geloofde niet in feeen. Toen hij het aan zijn artsen vertelde moesten ze een beetje grinniken.

Nacht na nacht kwamen de dromen terug, en zelfs overdag verschenen er feeen aan hem. Hij werd er erg moe van, en dacht dat hij gek aan het worden was. De artsen besloten om hem door te verwijzen naar een psychiater, die hem vertelde dat het inderdaad een geestesziekte was. Misschien hoorde het wel bij de zg. boomziekte die hij in de loop der jaren had ontwikkeld. De jongen kon niet meer naar school, en het was voor hem ook moeilijk geworden om buiten te komen. Hij kon niet tegen licht.

Op een dag toen de jongen de krant las, las hij over een nieuw schoonmaakmiddel dat op de markt was gebracht, genaamd Misfamen. 'Verrek,' zei de jongen tegen zichzelf. Het was de naam van de boze zon uit zijn dromen. 'Ach, het zal wel toeval zijn,' dacht de jongen bij zichzelf. Na een tijdje werd het merk uit de handel gehaald, en wel om een paar redenen. Het bleek zeer milieu-onvriendelijk te zijn. Mensen en dieren zouden er ziek van worden, en de fabrikant was in het nieuws gekomen, vanwege een moord. Na een tijdje begonnen de dromen van de jongen minder te worden, en de feeen verschenen minder vaak. De psychiater was erg tevreden. Ze hadden hem een middel gegeven genaamd Sausibir. Het scheen ook erg goed te werken tegen depressies, en het middel werd erg bekend. Ook het schoonmaakmiddel Misfamen werd weer volop verkocht, omdat onderzoek aangaf dat het middel absoluut niet milieu-onvriendelijk zou zijn. De fabrikant die verdacht was van moord was inmiddels weer vrijgesproken, omdat er geen enkel bewijs tegen hem was. Steeds meer begon de jongen de vreemde dromen en feeenverhalen te vergeten, daar ze nauwelijks nog in zijn leven voorkwamen. Ook begon de jongen verbeteringen te tonen op lichamelijk vlak. Hij kon zich beter bewegen, en viel nauwelijks nog flauw. Het was alsof de epileptische neigingen die hij had steeds meer en meer op de achtergrond kwamen, en na een tijdje kwamen ze helemaal niet meer voor. Ook het praten ging beter en beter, en al snel kon hij weer naar school. Over de boomziekte werd niet meer gesproken. De jongen verloor zijn obsessie voor bomen, en werd manager in een hoge functie bij één of ander bedrijf. Dit bedrijf produceerde allerlei soorten medicijnen in verschillende zout-verbindingen. De zouten zouden mensen weer energie geven, en zouden hun angst voor falen wegnemen, en hun denkvermogen vergroten. Het ware nieuwe zout-verbindingen ontstaan uit jaren lange experimenten in laboratoria. Het middel werd gemaakt van elementen gewonnen uit de zeedieptes en de aarddieptes, en was een groots project. Eén van die middelen heette 'de groene staaf,' en was het allersuccesvolste. Het bleek ook goed te helpen bij slaapproblemen. De jongen verdiende erg goed, en woonde in een groot landhuis.

Op een nacht had hij weer een droom, na een zeer lange tijd. Ditmaal ging het over groene mensachtige wezens die in een kamer diep onder de aarde leefden. Ineens kwam er een zwarte hond binnenrennen, en de kamer werd groter en groter, en begon zich in meerdere kamers te verdelen, terwijl de zwarte hond door de kamers begon te rennen. Hij vond dit maar een vreemde droom, en probeerde het weer te vergeten. Maar op een dag werd er op zijn deur geklopt. Het was een oude en arme vrouw die voor hem stond. Ze vroeg hem of hij het allemaal nog herinnerde. Hij wist niet waar ze het over had. 'De feeen, de bomen,' sprak ze. Daar wilde hij het niet over hebben, en deed de deur voor haar dicht. Maar weer klopte ze aan, en ditmaal zeer indringend. Het leek alsof hij weer duizelig werd, en alsof alles nu zo dichtbij kwam. Hij rende naar boven en greep naar z'n buik. Al snel begon hij over te geven, en kwam er allemaal groen spul uit z'n mond. Wat gebeurde er toch allemaal. Hij greep naar de telefoon om zijn arts te bellen. Na een tijdje kwam deze bij hem aan. Hij lag inmiddels op de grond. De arts voelde zijn pols. Hij moest snel in het ziekenhuis opgenomen worden. De artsen waren bang dat de boomziekte aan het terugkomen was, en ditmaal leek het erger dan ooit te voren. De jongen raakte in coma, en vocht dagenlang voor zijn leven. Na een paar weken kwam hij weer lichtelijk bij, en vertelde over de arme oude vrouw. De artsen vroegen hem of hij dat gedroomd had, of dat het echt was. Hij was ervan overtuigd dat het echt was. Maar hoe wist de vrouw over zijn dromen ? Misschien was er wel informatie uitgelekt. En hoe kon het dat alles ineens weer was teruggekomen ? De artsen wisten het niet, maar brachten het niet in verband met de vrouw. Ziektes konden soms gewoon terugkeren. De jongen voelde zich erg zwak, en hij moest naar een rustoord in het bos om bij te komen. Toen hij daar aankwam schrok hij. De arme, oude vrouw woonde daar ook. Ze deed net alsof ze hem niet kende, maar de jongen werd erg

nieuwsgierig. Nadat hij de maanden die erop volgden weer een beetje op krachten was gekomen probeerde hij haar aan te spreken. Hij kwam haar eigenlijk alleen maar tegen bij de maaltijden, en soms op de gang, maar ze spraken niet met elkaar. De vrouw deed alsof ze van niets wist, maar de jongen hield aan. De jongen ging erg aan zichzelf twijfelen, en begon zich ook van zijn lotgenoten steeds meer terug te trekken. Maar op een dag werd er op z'n kamer geklopt. Toen hij opendeed was het de oude arme vrouw. Ze had een boek voor hem. Het was een boek over geestesziektes. Toen ze weg wilde lopen riep de jongen haar na. Maar ze keerde niet meer om. Hij deed de kamerdeur weer dicht en begon te lezen. Maar na een tijdje klapte hij het boek weer dicht. Hij kon zich niet concentreren. Hij besloot het voor een tijdje in zijn la op te bergen.

Het was herfst. De kleuren van de bomen waren zo mooi. Hij keek vaak naar buiten, en kwam erdoor tot rust. Eigenlijk herinnerde hij zich steeds minder over vroeger. Ook probeerde hij zo min mogelijk na te denken over zijn ziekte, en probeerde hij zoveel mogelijk van het leven te genieten. Hij hield van de rust, van zijn kamer. De andere lotgenoten hadden allemaal hun eigen leven. Soms kwam er weleens bezoek, maar dat had hij liever niet. Door zijn ziekte kon hij bijna niet naar buiten, daar het licht hem teveel pijn deed. Hij was gelukkig zoals hij was, omdat hij geleerd had er genoegen mee te nemen en er uit probeerde te halen wat hij kon. Hij probeerde niet teveel na te denken, omdat hij dacht dat dat toch niets zou oplossen of zou aanvoegen. Na een paar jaren ging het rustoord dicht en zouden de patienten moeten verhuizen naar een ander rustoord dichtbij zee. Ook hier had de jongen het erg naar z'n zin. In de verte hoorde hij soms de zee ruizen. Er was een klein bos dichtbij waar hij weleens ging wandelen. Het leek alsof de zee op de achtergrond een goed en genezend effect op hem had. Op een dag toen hij weer eens met een begeleider in het bos was, vond de begeleider een vreemd langwerpig groen staafje op de grond. Het was buigbaar en het glimde heel speciaal. De jongen glimlachte. De begeleider gaf het aan de jongen. Het leek wel alsof het staafje licht gaf. De jongen besloot het staafje mee te nemen naar zijn kamer. Aangekomen legde hij het staafje op zijn nachtkastje. De begeleider had hem netjes naar zijn kamer gebracht en zou nu met iemand anders naar het bos gaan. De jongen hield erg veel van die begeleider. De begeleider was erg goed voor hem, en deed eigenlijk nooit moeilijk, en stelde ook nooit geen moeilijke vragen. De begeleider begreep de jongen erg goed.

Midden in de nacht werd de jongen wakker. Het groene staafje gaf erg veel licht af, en begon te kronkelen : 'Zeg Pedro, zeg Pedro,' zei het staafje. 'Dat had je niet gedacht, hè, dat ik ooit nog eens tegen je zou praten.' En toen hield het staafje zich een hele lange tijd stil. De jongen raakte erg in paniek. Hij rende van zijn kamer af naar het begeleidershokje toe, waar de nachtdienst zat. 'Ik begin gek te worden,' riep de jongen. De nachtdienst liep naar hem toe, en probeerde hem te troosten. 'Ga eens even zitten, Pedro, en vertel me eens heel rustig wat er gebeurd is.' Pedro ging zitten, en begon te vertellen. Ineens kwam het staafje naar binnen kronkelen, en Pedro gaf een gil. 'Daar is het, daar is het,' gilde hij. Maar de nachtdienst zag niks. 'Pedro, waar heb je het over, er is hier niets,' zei de nachtdienst. 'Zie je,' zei Pedro, 'ik ben echt gek aan het worden.' Maar de nachtdienst begon hem te troosten. 'Ach, Pedro, iedereen verbeeldt zich weleens wat. Dat hoort nu eenmaal bij ons. Iedereen vergist zich weleens.' Na een tijdje strompelde Pedro weer langzaam terug naar z'n kamer en ging weer slapen. De volgende morgen was alles erg beklemmend. Een man die Pedro niet kende kwam binnen, samen met een mevrouw. 'Pedro, we hebben besloten je over te laten plaatsen naar een oord waar je nog beter tot rust kunt komen. Het is een paar straten verder, en iets dieper in het bos.' Pedro vond het wel een goed idee, maar toen hij daar aankwam schrok hij wel even. De patienten leken wel op apen, en het leek hem hier helemaal niet rustig. Ze gilden, bewogen heel snel en vreemd, en keken raar uit hun ogen, alsof ze Pedro elk moment konden bespringen. Maar de man en de mevrouw zeiden dat Pedro gewoon moest doorlopen. Ze moesten door een hele lange gang, die in een bocht liep, en kwamen na een tijdje lopen in een andere zaal. Er zaten hier wat gehandicapten, en Pedro vroeg zich af of hij hier wel moest wezen. Maar de reis was nog niet ten einde. Ze moesten achter de zaal linksaf slaan, en weer moesten ze door een lange gang die in een bocht liep. Wat een reusachtig groot en uitgestrekt gebouw was dit, en het was hier verderop steeds rustiger aan het worden. Helemaal aan het eind van de gang was nog een klein halletje dat leek op een magazijn.

Achter het halletje was een huiselijke kamer waar een wat oudere man een pijp rookte. 'Dag Pedro,' zei de man, 'fijn dat je bent gekomen. Ze hebben me al over jou verteld.' De man scheen dezelfde ziekte als Pedro te hebben, maar worstelde nog steeds met de vraag of het echt was, ja of nee. De man had ook vele dromen en verschijningen gehad, en allerlei andere dingen die achteraf verbeeldingen bleken te zijn. Of waren het geen verbeeldingen ? Pedro had geen zin om daar over te praten. Pedro wilde alles vergeten wat er was gebeurd. En de man respecteerde dat direkt. Het was geen snelle prater, en Pedro hoopte dat hij hier goed tot rust kon komen. Achter de kamer was nog een klein halletje met een paar kamers, waarvan één kamer voor Pedro was. De kamer had een prachtig uitzicht op het bos. Er waren zoveel bomen waar Pedro naar kon kijken. Ook was er een deur naar buiten, maar Pedro wilde voorlopig niet naar buiten. Er woonde hier ook nog een andere vrouw, maar die was op dat moment een tijdje logeren bij familie. De man deed niet veel. Hij zat alsmaar in z'n stoel, en ging pas 's avonds laat naar z'n kamer. Er was een bel in de kamer van Pedro waarmee hij begeleiding zou kunnen krijgen wanneer hij dat wilde.

De artsen hadden besloten Pedro weer Sausibir als medicijn te geven. Maar dit keer reageerde Pedro er helemaal verkeerd op. De wanen werden erger en erger, en al snel wilde Pedro niet meer leven. De artsen besloten maar helemaal te stoppen met het middel voor Pedro, en na het falen van nog wat andere middelen kwamen ze erachter dat Pedro overgevoelig was geworden voor medicijnen. Rust was gewoon het belangrijkste voor nu. Soms kwam de begeleiding nog even kijken of het allemaal goed ging, en ja hoor, het ging steeds beter toen Pedro met de middelen was gestopt. Maar voorlopig wilde hij niet naar buiten. Hij zat vaak op z'n kamer. Het corveeen ging goed. Pedro kon goed afwassen en zou nu ook voor het eerst op deze afdeling schoonmaken. Toen hij naar het schoonmaakhok liep en de deur opende zag hij het middel Misfamen staan. Pedro schrok. Maar herstelde zich snel, en mengde het met wat water. Het was een zuiver natuurprodukt, gemaakt van middelen die gewonnen waren uit de aarddieptes en zeedieptes. Gelukkig hoefde Pedro niet vaak schoon te maken, en soms deed Pedro het gewoon met afwasmiddel of zeep.

Na een tijdje kwam de vrouw terug van het logeren en maakte kennis met Pedro. Ze was een overspannen geraakte botanicus, en had veel verstand van bomen. De vrouw was bezig geweest met een experiment om de bio-electriciteit van bomen voor allerlei dingen te gebruiken, en bij het laboratorium waar ze werkte hadden ze het zelfs voor elkaar gekregen om voertuigen te laten rijden op boom-energie. Op een bepaalde wijze raakte Pedro diep geinteresseerd in haar verhalen. En ook de man vond het fijn om naar haar te luisteren. Ze had een erg rustgevende stem, en al snel was Pedro dikke vrienden met haar. Pedro durfde haar niet zoveel over zichzelf te vertellen, en gelukkig vroeg de vrouw daar ook niet naar. Ze had wat apparaatjes meegenomen met celletjes erin die op een soort kaartje zaten, en die vingen de boom-energie dan op. Samen met de vrouw ging Pedro weleens naar buiten. Het was altijd erg rustig in het bos. De vrouw vertelde hem ook over robotten die op boom-energie liepen. Op een dag nadat ze weer even een tijdje bij familie had gelogeerd nam ze er één voor Pedro mee. Het was een geschenk voor hem. Pedro kon zijn ogen nauwelijks geloven. De robot kon van alles doen, en je kon er zelfs een gesprek mee voeren. Het werd Pedro's beste vriendje, en al snel knapte Pedro erg op. Velen merkten hoe hij aan het veranderen was, en hij begon ook wandelingen met de robot te maken.

De vrouw legde Pedro veel uit over hoe zo'n robot werd gemaakt, en na een tijdje werden er ook steeds meer van zulke robotten gebruikt. Het idee sloeg erg aan. Het bleek dat het gebruik van boom-energie erg goed was voor de bomen zelf, en voor het milieu. Ook bleek de boom-energie erg goed en genezend te zijn voor het functioneren van het lichaam. En al snel werden er bij sommigen kleine capsules ingebouwd die boom-energie opvingen en gebruikten ter ondersteuning van het lichaam. Maar er kwam ook concurrentie op de markt. Zo bleken er ook al apparaten te zijn die op bloem-energie werkten, wespen-energie, spinnen-energie, vliegen-energie en zelfs lever-energie. Telkens merkten ze dat de energieen die gebruikt werden weer een voorspoedig effect hadden op hetgeen waarvan die energie was. Elke energie had z'n eigen frequentie, en kon door de instel van de juiste frequentie door een tuner makkelijk afgetapt worden. Zo begon men met allerlei natuur-electriciteiten te experimenteren en ze ook koppelend te gebruiken. En door de koppels kwamen er

weer hele speciale energieen vrij, als een soort van positief bijprodukt. Pedro was erg enthousiast en schoolde zichzelf goed op deze gebieden, met name ook door de tussenkomst van de vrouw op z'n afdeling.

Op een dag kwam de vrouw aanzetten met een robot die op haaien-electriciteit werkte. De robot kon zwaar werk verrichten en werd vaak ingezet voor de bouw van huizen en gebouwen. Pedro was erg enthousiast, en niet lang daarna had Pedro zelfs een klein voertuigje dat op haaien-energie werkte. In de ziekenhuizen kende men inmiddels de implantaten die op haaien-energie werkten. Vooral hen die om enige reden verlamd waren hadden veel baat bij deze apparaatjes. Pedro was erg trots op de dingen die hij inmiddels zelf kon maken, maar op een nacht had hij een erg akelige droom. In die droom werd hij bezocht door de heks Sausibir, die op hem begon te schelden. Even dacht hij dat alles fout ging, ook toen hij de volgende dag wakker werd, en een zwarte planeet boven het bos buiten zag hangen die alles scheen te verduisteren. Hij dacht dat hij het zichzelf weer allemaal verbeelde, en dacht ook dat het wel weer weg zou gaan als hij door zou gaan met het ontwikkelen van de natuur-technologie. Maar niets was minder waar. Ook anderen hadden de zwarte planeet gesignaleerd, en de duisternis ging niet weg. Wetenschappers zeiden dat het een zwarte zon was die zo'n sterke magnetische straling had dat de planeet vanaf nu om deze zon zou heentrekken. Er was veel paniek, want men zei dat het electrisch veld van deze zon de aarde zou aantasten en ook het leven op aarde. Velen begonnen een soort virus te vertonen dat het zwarte boom-virus heette. Het virus zou de hersencellen aantasten en waanideeen brengen, als een soort van geestesziekte. Maar niet alleen dat, want ook het lichaam zou heel langzaam aftakelen onder de ergst mogelijke pijnen. Pedro was bang. Een groot deel van de bevolking was al door het virus aangetast, min of meer, en er was nog geen technologie of medicijn tegen opgewassen.

Er was iets in Pedro geknapt. Vele mensen gingen naar het ziekenhuis voor onderzoek. Achteraf scheen het mee te vallen, en werden wel degelijk mensen weer genezen, maar de duisternis bleef door de zwarte planeet, en er waren inmiddels velen door het virus omgekomen. Het leek wel alsof de aarde z'n scherven opraapte om door te gaan met dat wat overgebleven was. Na een korte tijd van herstel en opleving sloeg het virus opnieuw toe, harder dan ooit. De aarde werd naar de zwarte zon toegezogen, meer en meer, alsof het al cirkelend in de zwarte zon zou verdwijnen, zou oplossen. Zij die overgebleven waren, waren moe, en leden aan ernstige pijnen en aftakelingen. Het aardoppervlak was heter dan ooit tevoren.

Plotseling schrok Pedro wakker. Het was allemaal maar een droom. Het was net voordat de vrouw van de afdeling terug zou komen van het logeren bij familie. Pedro had zich er een beetje druk over gemaakt, omdat hij bang was dat het misschien niet zou klikken, en eigenlijk was hij ook erg nieuwsgierig. Nu zou hij haar dan ontmoeten. Ze bleek heel anders te zijn dan in z'n dromen. Ze leek veel ouder, en was ook veel rustiger. Pedro had niet echt het gevoel dat hij contact met haar kon maken. Ze zei niet veel. Pedro vond het achteraf wel best zo. Geen vreemde technologieen, geen robotten, en geen zwarte zonnen die het leven op aarde onveilig zouden maken.

Hoofdstuk 2. De Schuilplaats

Pedro was bang geworden om te slapen. Als hij niet nog een keer zo gek zou dromen. Gelukkig was het de nachten erna erg rustig. Totdat hij op een nacht droomde over een zwarte hond die als door de ramen van zijn hoofd binnenkwam. Peter was stijf van de schrik, en kon zich niet bewegen toen hij wakker was geworden. Na een lange tijd kwam er een begeleider binnen die hem probeerde te troosten. Pedro kon maar moeilijk praten. De begeleider gaf hem een kopje water. Heel langzaam begon Pedro weer een beetje bij te komen. De begeleider vond het erg naar voor Pedro, maar moedigde hem aan om het weer te vergeten, en om door te gaan met z'n leven. De spanning omtrend de vrouw was nu voorbij, omdat hij nu wist wie en wat ze was. Pedro hoopte dat er voorlopig geen nieuwelingen zouden komen. Hij merkte bij zichzelf dat hij steeds moeilijker tegen veranderingen kon. Het leek wel alsof elke verandering, hoe klein ook, z'n hart omdraaiden in z'n

borstkas.

Pedro kon het goed vinden met z'n begeleiders. Nog steeds ging hij weleens met ze wandelen. Voor het eerst zou hij op een avond met een begeleider naar zee gaan. Hij verheugde zich er erg op. Als kind hield hij altijd al erg veel van de zee. De zee was erg rustig die avond, en ze maakten een lange strandwandeling. Plotseling draaide de begeleider zich naar pedro toe, en het leek alsof hij het gezicht van een zwarte hond had. Pedro schrok, maar dacht direkt dat het kwam omdat het al donker was. De begeleider pakte Pedro's hand vast, en er ging een rilling door Pedro heen. 'Pedro,' zei de begeleider, 'ik moet je wat vertellen. Ik ken je nu al geruime tijd, en ik vind dat je er erg op vooruit bent gegaan. We zijn nu bij de zee, en alles gaat goed. Je hebt geen last van wanen.' Pedro glimlachte. Die begeleider moest eens weten, maar goed, er was mee te leven, en Pedro hoefde het ook niet erger te maken dan het was. Toen haalde de begeleider een klein beeldje uit zijn zak. Het was een zwarte hond die op een soort schatkist zat. Pedro dacht even dat hij flauw zou vallen, maar liet de man uitpraten. 'Dit is voor jou. Ik weet dat je laatst over een zwarte hond hebt gedroomd, de nachtmerrie, maar misschien zal dit je helpen. Waarom besluit je niet om er positief tegen aan te kijken ? Dromen horen ook bij het leven, en zelfs wanen. We wanen allemaal wel eens wat. Probeer er gewoon op een goede manier mee om te gaan. Zo van : 'okay, ik heb over een zwarte hond gedroomd. Er is niks verkeerds met een zwarte hond op zich.' Zet het gewoon op je nachtkastje en leer het accepteren.'

Maar ineens werd Pedro onwel. En een verschrikkelijke angst beklom hem. 'Nee,' schreeuwde hij in paniek, 'nee.' De begeleider wist direkt dat het allemaal te ver voor Pedro was gegaan. Het was teveel voor hem. Pedro rende weg, en de begeleider rende achter hem aan. 'Doe dat ding weg,' gilde Pedro. 'Ik kan er niet tegen.' De begeleider kon nu niet meer zeggen dat Pedro maar met z'n angst voor zwarte honden moest leren omgaan. Dat werkte simpelweg niet bij Pedro. Hard rende Pedro terug naar de afdeling. Een andere begeleider ving hem op, en Pedro vertelde hem het verhaal. Na een paar dagen hoorde Pedro dat de begeleider die hem het beeldje wilde geven was ontslagen. Pedro vroeg zich af waarom. Hem werd verteld dat het een religieus beeldje was uit Egypte. En dat was ongeoorloofd op de afdeling. Er stond duidelijk in de regels dat de begeleiders ten eerste geen religieuze dingen aan patienten mochten opleggen, en ten tweede mochten ze geen persoonlijke cadeautjes geven. Er was ook nog een derde reden waarom de man was ontslagen. De patienten mochten niet geconfronteerd worden met hun angsten. De patienten moesten afgeleid worden en beschermd, zo was de therapeutische benadering. Pedro vond het aan de ene kant te ver gaan, dat deze begeleider daarom was ontslagen, en had spijt dat hij het doorverteld had, maar aan de andere kant voelde Pedro zich bedreigd, ook al bedoelde de man het goed. Pedro zocht bescherming, en die had hij op deze manier dubbel en dwars gevonden.

De opvolger van de desbetreffende begeleider was een vrouw. Pedro kon erg goed gesprekken met haar voeren, en die gesprekken gingen nogal diep. De vrouw was lid van een religieuze beweging die 'De Groene Verlichting' heette. Dat was een beweging die geloofde dat de bomen de aarde zou overnemen, de plantegroei, en dat de aarde weer geheel plantaardig, botanisch, zou worden, alle levende wezens. Pedro wist niet goed wat hij er van denken moest. De vrouw moest natuurlijk goed ervoor zorgen dat zij Pedro niets opdrong, want dan zou ze in hetzelfde lot vallen als de vorige begeleider. In de reglementen stond dat de begeleiders wel religieus mochten zijn, en dat ze best wel dingen over hun persoonlijke leven mochten vertellen aan hen die ze begeleiden, als de situatie zich zou voordoen, maar ze mochten hen absoluut geen deel laten hebben in hun privé-leven. De beweging van de Groene Verlichting zou steeds meer groeien op aarde, en Pedro kwam erachter dat meerdere begeleiders van deze beweging lid waren. Maar diep erop ingaan wilde Pedro niet, en zorgde er altijd voor dat het onderwerp snel weer over iets anders ging, en ook de desbetreffende begeleiders lieten er niet al te veel over los. Eén van de nachtdiensten waar Pedro regelmatig goede gesprekken mee had was niet religieus. Zij vond de beweringen van de Groene Verlichting maar geklets. Zij geloofde dat alles zou vergaan, zowel mens, dier als plant, en dan zou alles in het niets oplossen. Zij van de Groene Verlichting geloofden dat zij die botanisch geworden waren eeuwig zouden leven. Wel vond de nachtdienst dat je oudere mensen hun geloof nooit moest afpakken,

want dat hadden ze misschien nodig op hun oude dag, om niet zo bang te zijn voor de dood, en omdat het voor oudere mensen veel te moeilijk zou zijn en veel te ingrijpend om nog van standpunt of geloof te moeten veranderen. Pedro had eigenlijk geen standpunten. Hij hoorde al die verhalen maar aan.

Op een nacht werd Pedro badend in het zweet wakker. Hij had weer zo raar gedroomd. Plotseling keek hij naar zijn handen, en zag dat z'n armen bijna als takken waren geworden, en dat er bladeren aan groeiden. Maar toen hij ineens wakker schrok wist hij dat hij dit alles gedroomd had. Hij moest het maar niet meer over zware dingen hebben als religieuze overtuiging of levensstandpunt. De begeleiding reageerde daar direkt positief op. Maar het begon steeds vaker voor te komen dat Pedro 's nachts het gevoel had dat hij in een plant of boom aan het veranderen was. Op een nacht schrok hij wakker. Er zat een lange man vlakbij de muur, dichtbij z'n bed, en die man had boomachtige ledematen, als takken met bladeren. De man had een donkere groenachtige kleur, en Pedro zette het op een gillen. 'Ga mijn kamer uit,' schreeuwde Pedro. Maar de man bewoog niet. Toen Pedro het licht aandeed bleek het slechts zijn badjas te zijn die aan de muur hing. Ja, vergissingen kunnen gebeuren. Pedro zweette. Wanneer zou dit eens ophouden ?

Na enige jaren woonde Pedro weer op zichzelf. Op een dag werd er aangebeld. Het bleek iemand van de Groene Verlichting te zijn. Ze gingen de huizen langs om over hun geloof te vertellen en om leden te werven. Maar Pedro wilde er niets mee te maken hebben. De man van de beweging begon erg agressief te doen, dat als Pedro niet zou luisteren, dan zou zijn lot de vernietiging zijn. Pedro vond dat nogal intimiderend, en waarschuwde de man dat als hij niet zou stoppen, dan zou Pedro de politie bellen. De man drukte Pedro boos een folder in z'n vingers en vertrok met de woorden : 'Dan moet je het zelf maar weten.' Pedro vouwde een vliegtuigje van het foldertje en gooide het de man achterna, die al bijna uit zicht was verdwenen. Pedro wilde absoluut niets met dit soort zaken te maken hebben, omdat hij geen terugval wilde krijgen. Pedro moest juist los proberen te komen van dit soort dingen. Pedro liet een sticker op zijn deur aanbrengen om dit soort dingen buiten de deur te houden. Op de televisie waren er vaak programma's over of van de Groene Verlichting. Het was één van de snelst groeiende religies op aarde. Er waren zelfs al zenders van de Groene Verlichting. Pedro keek daarom niet vaak naar de televisie. Sommige groepen binnen de Groene Verlichting waren erg agressief en sommige groepen waren erg conservatief. Wat dat betrefd waren er veel verschillen binnen de beweging. Er was één beweging binnen de Groene Verlichting die zo extreem was dat ze geloofden dat ze hen die niet van de Groene Verlichting waren moesten uitroeien. Gelukkig was die beweging erg klein, maar anderen zeiden dat in het geheim die beweging veel groter was dan ze dachten. De beweging zou veelal ondergronds werken, en in diepe list. Er werd gewaarschuwd voor aanslagen vanuit deze groep, die de zwarte groenen werden genoemd.

Pedro wist dat hij in gevaar was, omdat hij niet lid was van de beweging. Maar er was zelfs één harde kern binnen de zwarte groenen die geloofden dat een ieder die niet lid was van de zwarte groenen, die moest uitgeroeid worden, openlijk of subtiel. Er werd beweerd dat zelfs de regering leden had die van deze harde kern waren, maar bewijs was daar nog niet voor geleverd. En deze regeringsleden zouden de hand boven de hoofden van sommige geweldadige acties hebben gehouden, en er zelfs ruimte voor geven. Pedro wilde niet het doelwit worden van terroristen. Wat kon hij doen ? Een hond nemen, of lid worden van de Groene Verlichting voor eigen veiligheid ? Pedro was bang voor honden, dus dat viel eigenlijk al af, maar omdat Pedro nog wel banger was voor aanslagen, en absoluut geen huichelaar wilde zijn door uit angst 'gelovig' te worden, koos hij voor een hond. Hij ging naar een asiel en kocht daar een zwarte hond. Al snel werd Pedro beste maatjes met het beest, en de hond was erg waaks. Maar op een dag vond Pedro de hond dood in zijn mand. De dierenarts constateerde vergiftiging. En zo kocht Pedro een andere hond, die ook ten prooi viel aan vergiftiging, en zelfs in een derde geval gebeurde dit. Pedro wist dat ze het op hem gemunt hadden, en begon sterk te vermoeden dat de man die bij hem aan de deur kwam van de zwarte groenen was. Ze hadden Pedro natuurlijk al op een lijst gezet. Wat kon Pedro doen ? Verhuizen ? De zwarte groenen waren overal.

Op een dag kwam er een andere vrouw bij Pedro aan de deur. Het bleek iemand van de Groene

Verlichting te zijn. Pedro wees op de sticker en zei : 'Kunt u niet lezen ?' De vrouw verontschuldigde zich en zei dat ze dat over het hoofd had gezien. Maar omdat de vrouw zo vriendelijk was en zo zacht bij Pedro overkwam liet hij haar binnen. De vrouw bleek van een conservatieve groep te zijn binnen de Groene Verlichting. Zij keurde ook streng de werken van de zwarte groenen af. De vrouw was zich ervan bewust dat de harde kern binnen de zwarte groenen een gevaar voor haar en haar conservatieve groep waren, en ze vertelde Pedro over een schuilplaats die ze hadden, onder de grond. Zij die zich bedreigd voelden konden daar komen wonen. Het was een samenlevingsverband, en ook anderen buiten de Groene Verlichting werden geaccepteerd. Pedro zag dat op een bepaalde wijze wel zitten, en al snel besloot hij over te verhuizen. Het was een streng bewaakte stad onder de grond, die uitliep in het bos. Boven de grond kwamen aanslagen inmiddels op grote schaal voor.

Bij de schuilplaats aangekomen werd Pedro naar een speciale afdeling gebracht voor niet-gelovigen. Pedro kreeg een ruime kamer toegezegd, maar al snel kwam hij erachter dat het een val was. Hij kon zijn kamer niet meer uit. Op de muur was een scherm, als een soort televisie. 'Welkom bij de Groene Verlichting. Voor de veiligheid hebben wij uw kamer op slot gedaan. Dit is maar voor even. We willen eerst een aantal dingen van u weten.' Onder het scherm was er een ja en nee knop, en zo moest Pedro eerst een ellenlange vragenlijst beantwoorden. Aan het einde van de lijst ging zijn kamerdeur weer open. Pedro was erg opgelucht. Maar dat was maar van korte duur. De voorzieningen waren erg zwak, en er werd telkens een beroep op hem gedaan om lid te worden van de Groene Verlichting voor betere voorzieningen. In Pedro's ogen was dit dus een soort rassenonderscheid. Gelovigen hadden veel meer rechten. Pedro besloot om maar genoegen te nemen met de zwakke voorzieningen. Maar op een dag stond er een soldaat in zwart en groen voor zijn deur met een zwarte hond. De man droeg een geweer, en liet Pedro kiezen tussen de dood en de Groene Verlichting. Die keuze was dus snel gemaakt. Pedro moest de kamer uit, om plaats te maken voor een nieuwe ongelovige. Pedro was nu opgenomen in de ledenlijst van de Groene Verlichting. Hij kreeg een klein appartementje in een ander deel van de ondergrondse stad, waar hij met een soort van metro naartoe werd vervoerd. Het was er erg donker, maar er waren meerdere en betere voorzieningen over het algemeen. Toch was alles erg stoffig, droog en donker, en Pedro voelde zich er niet op z'n gemak. De buurt was ook duister, en de lift in het gebouw was oud, en leek Pedro zelfs gevaarlijk. Er zat geen alarm bij, dus wat zou er gebeuren als de lift vastliep. Na wat verkenning kwam Pedro weer terug in z'n donkere appartementje. Er lag een brief op tafel, waarop stond dat als Pedro betere voorzieningen wilde, dan moest Pedro lid worden van de uitgaande Groene Verlichting, zij die langs de huizen zouden gaan om leden te werven. Dat leek Pedro niks, maar hij kon niet anders. Hij vertrouwde zijn huidige buurt voor geen cent.

Er stond bij waar Pedro de brief kon inleveren als hij hogerop wilde. Na de brief ingeleverd te hebben kreeg Pedro een seintje dat hij kon komen met z'n spullen. Hij kreeg doorgang in het appartement waar hij de brief had afgeleverd, en kwam weer in een metro terecht. Ditmaal kwam hij in een lichter deel van de ondergrondse stad terecht. Hij kreeg een ruim appartement, en er waren gezamenlijke gangen en zalen waar hij medebewoners van dit stadsdeel kon ontmoeten. Hij wist zeker dat er onder de anderen ook lieden tussenzaten die net als hem noodgedwongen waren hier te komen. Pedro voelde zich min of meer ontvoerd, maar hij was in ieder geval tot nu toe veilig. Er mocht geen persoonlijke informatie worden uitgedeeld, anders zou dat leiden tot verwijdering. Er moest doelmatig worden gewerkt voor ledenwerving. Pedro kwam in een soort klas terecht, waar hij verder onderwezen zou worden. Hij was niets meer dan een nummer, met een opgelegde identiteit. Pedro keek wel eens links en rechts naar zijn mede-klasgenoten. Misschien dat hun ogen meer zouden verraden ? De sfeer was zowel gespannen als rustgevend. Pedro was blij dat hij beschermd werd, maar voor hoe lang ? Na een tijdje was het voor hem dan de eerste keer om langs de huizen te gaan. Hij werd ingedeeld naast een vrouw. De vrouw zei niet veel. Misschien was ze ook wel bang om teveel te zeggen. Ze durfde hem ook nauwelijks aan te kijken. Bij het eerste huis werd de deur direkt weer voor hen dichtgesmeten. Na een tijdje werd het de vrouw teveel, en ze rende weg. Pedro wist direkt dat zij ook een slachtoffer was. Na een tijdje kwam ze

weer terug met gebogen hoofd. Ze wist dat het leven buiten voor haar veel gevaarlijker was. Maar aangekomen bij de toegangslift voor de ondergrondse stad werd ze geweigerd. Werden ze dan ook al boven de grond in de gaten gehouden ? Pedro mocht wel naar binnen, maar wist dat als hij afwijkend gedrag zou tonen, dan zou hij ook geweigerd worden. Pedro besloot zijn hoofd koel te houden, en gewoon zijn plicht te doen. Wat kon hij anders ? Maar hij had meer en meer het gevoel dat hij van zijn eigen identiteit werd beroofd. Hij voelde zich worden als een plant. Op een gegeven moment tijdens de ledenwervingen werd het hem teveel, en rende weg, net zoals de vrouw waar hij eens mee werkte. Zou ze nog leven ? Hij wist dat er voor hem nu geen weg meer terugwas. Hij besloot naar het bos te gaan.

Na een lange zwerftocht kwam hij bij een boshuisje aan. Stilletjes sloop hij naar binnen. Zou er iemand wonen. Opeens werd hij van achteren op z'n hoofd geslagen. Na een tijdje werd hij wakker in een bed. Een vrouw zat bij z'n bed. 'Het spijt me dat ik je neer moest slaan. Ik wilde geen risico lopen.' De vrouw was er achter gekomen dat ook hij een ontsnapte was. Ze vertelde hem dat zij en haar zusters hier woonden. Op de grond kronkelde een grote slang. Pedro schrok, maar de vrouw zei dat het gewoon een huisdier was. Na een tijdje kwamen ook de andere vrouwen thuis. Ze besloten dat Pedro wel bij hen mocht wonen zo lang. Maar Pedro vertrouwde het niet helemaal. Hij wilde niet het slachtoffer worden van iets nieuws. De vrouwen gedroegen zich vreemd. Toen Pedro vertelde dat hij liever verder het bos in wilde greep één van de vrouwen een geweer van de muur af, en richtte het op hem. 'Er gaat hier niemand weg,' zei de vrouw. 'We kunnen jouw veel te goed gebruiken.' Pedro vroeg zich af waarvoor. Hij had nog steeds erg veel pijn in zijn hoofd, en ging weer liggen. Eén van de vrouwen haalde wat water voor hem. Midden in de nacht werd Pedro wakker, maar merkte dat de vrouwen hem met riemen aan het bed hadden vastgemaakt. Wat had dit nu weer te betekenen ? 'Psst,' fluisterde één van de vrouwen vanuit het donker, 'ze zijn veel te bang dat je ons gaat verraden. Daarom laten ze je niet gaan.' Langzaam kroop ze naar hem toe, en ging naast hem liggen op het bed. 'Maar ik kan je wel helpen. Als je mij mee wil nemen, dan maak ik je los.' Pedro stemde toe. De vrouw maakte hem los, en stilletjes liepen ze naar buiten. Pedro vroeg zich af wat hij met de vrouw moest, maar was tegelijkertijd dankbaar dat zij hem los had gemaakt. Samen gingen ze nog dieper het bos in. Pedro vroeg zich af waarom de vrouw met hem mee wilde in plaats van bij de vrouwen te blijven. De vrouw vertelde hem dat haar zussen erg vervelend waren naar haar, dat zij altijd het meeste werk moest doen, en dat ze haar vernederden. Ze stierf nog liever dan daar te blijven. Maar Pedro had geen zin om met haar op te trekken. Hij dacht na over hoe hij van haar af kon komen, maar kreeg toen weer medelijden met haar, en wilde eerst een goede plek voor haar vinden. Terug naar de schuilplaats van de Groene Verlichting kon ze ook niet, want ze was al eens ontsnapt, net als haar zusters. Pedro besloot naar een andere plaats te gaan, waar ze hem niet kenden, maar zeker weten deed hij natuurlijk toch nooit. In een dorpje achter het bos meldde hij zich aan, samen met de vrouw. Ze kregen allebei vrij snel een huisje toegewezen, en Pedro dacht dat hij wel opnieuw zou kunnen beginnen. Maar na een tijdje begon hij vreemde dreigbrieven te krijgen, en voor Pedro zat er niets anders op om hulp te zoeken bij de afdeling waar hij patient was geweest. Ze waren erg behulpzaam naar hem, en al snel kon hij daar terecht. De oude man en de vrouw woonden daar nog steeds. Ze waren blij hem te zien, maar verder zeiden ze niet veel. Hier voelde Pedro zich het veiligst.

Hoofdstuk 3. De Laser

Ook de begeleiding daar was blij Pedro na al die tijd weer te zien. Op een nacht had Pedro een vreemde droom waarin mannen met groene gezichten naar de aarde kwamen om zich te verspreiden. Maar Pedro probeerde het zo snel weer te vergeten. Iedereen droomde wel eens, dacht hij. Maar de droom kwam steeds vaker terug en werd steeds enger. Pedro merkte dat hij deze afdeling was ontgroeid. Hij kon zich hier als het ware niet meer aarden, en besloot na een paar weken weer te vertrekken. Pedro besloot weer terug te gaan naar het huis waar hij de dreigbrieven kreeg, maar hij kreeg een ander huis toegewezen. Ook besloot Pedro weer een hond te kopen, en

ditmaal liet hij de hond niet meer alleen buiten in een kooi, maar bleef de hond binnen. Pedro wilde geen risico lopen op vergiftiging. Al snel werden Pedro en de hond dikke maatjes. Er kwamen hier geen dreigbrieven, maar Pedro was wel op z'n hoede. Pedro begon te merken dat z'n boomziekte weer aan het opkomen was. Hij kon maar moeilijk spreken, moeilijk bewegen, en had neigingen om flauw te vallen. Na een paar dagen lag Pedro met hoge koorts op bed, en vocht voor z'n leven. Op de televisie werd er gesproken van gasaanvallen op de ongelovige samenleving. Pedro voelde zich geforceerd om weer lid te worden van de Groene Verlichting voor z'n eigen veiligheid. Door z'n ontsnapping was hij automatisch uitgeschreven, en terug naar de ondergrondse stad kon hij niet en wilde hij niet. Hij besloot zich via een telefoonnummer op de televisie in te schrijven bij een erg gematigde groep van de Groene Verlichting. Dat zou de woede van de harde kern misschien iets verlichten, ook al liep hij dan nog steeds gevaar. Hij kon zich natuurlijk ook laten inschrijven bij de zwarte groenen, dan was hij direkt van al het gezeur af. Uiteindelijk besloot hij dat maar te doen. Hij had geen andere keus. Een dag erna kwam er een man bij hem aan de deur in zwart pak. De man plaatste wat apparatuur in Pedro's huis, maar wilde niet zeggen wat voor apparatuur het was. Pedro, die inmiddels alweer bijna beter was, werd een beetje boos op de man, en gebood hem uitleg te geven. De man gaf hem een foldertje. Maar Pedro kon van dat foldertje niets wijzer worden. De man zei dat elk lid van de zwarte groenen zulke apparatuur in huis kreeg, wat ervoor zou zorgen dat er geen schadelijke gassen binnen zouden komen. Het was een soort afweer-systeem. Pedro vond het allemaal best, als hij maar veilig was.

Pedro wist dat hij nu bij een duister genootschap aangesloten was, maar hij kon niet anders. Hij hoopte maar dat ze niet zoveel van hem zouden vragen, en dat het dus gewoon bij een slapend lidmaatschap bleef. Pedro besloot het foldertje van de apparatuur nog eens te lezen. Het ging over verschillende boom-electriciteiten die door de apparatuur werd opgevangen en uitgezonden. Zo ging het om bepaalde energieen van de zwarte bomen, groene bomen, en ook rode en gele bomen. Om welke bomen het precies ging stond er niet bij. De verschillende kleuren waren gewoon schuilnamen voor bekende bomen. Pedro keek nog eens naar de apparatuur. Er zaten roze lampjes bij, die soms knipperden, groene lampjes, rode lampjes en zwarte lampjes. Pedro vond het maar griezelig, want wie weet werd hij wel afgeluisterd of op een andere manier in de gaten gehouden. Voorlopig was hij in ieder geval veilig. Wekelijks kreeg hij een blad binnen, een soort magazine van de zwarte groenen, maar daar stond niet echt veel in, en Pedro vond het dan ook niet echt een probleem om die bladen thuis te hebben. Het leken op een bepaalde manier erg natuurvriendelijke bladen, en Pedro kon er niets agressiefs in bespeuren.

Op een dag werd Pedro opgeroepen voor een onderzoek in een gebouw in een ander dorp. Pedro moest zijn mond opendoen voor een apparaat, en er werden foto's gemaakt. Toen mocht hij weer gaan. Na een paar dagen kwam er weer een man langs met een zwart pak. De man vertelde Pedro dat hij was geselecteerd om langs de huizen te gaan voor de zwarte groenen. Hij mocht niet praten over de zwarte groenen, maar moest zeggen dat hij het gedachtengoed van de groene verlichting bracht. Hij mocht absoluut niet agressief overkomen. Verder zou het allemaal erg oppervlakkig blijven, en Pedro hoefde maar eens per maand te verschijnen, en dan in een ander dorp. Pedro stemde hierin toe. Wel kwam er nog bij dat hij wat cursussen moest volgen over huisbezoek. En zo ging dat een tijdje door, en alles ging redelijk goed. Pedro bracht de boodschap zo objectief mogelijk, en vertelde niet dat hij van de zwarte groenen was. Diep in zijn hart was hij dat ook helemaal niet, dus hij had er vrede mee. Maar na een periode kreeg Pedro een brief thuis waarin stond dat hij geselecteerd was voor werk in het buitenland. En dit keer ging het niet om huisbezoek, maar om trainingen te geven aan pasbekeerden. De trainingen gingen nogal diep, en hadden zelfs het agressieve karakter waar Pedro altijd zo bang voor was geweest. Pedro weigerde, maar tegelijkertijd vroeg hij om een wat geschiktere baan voor hem. Er werd erg vriendelijk op Pedro's brief gereageerd, en bijgesloten was er een folder waarop Pedro de verschillende mogelijkheden zag. Er werden nog lieden gevraagd voor een laboratorium dat experimenteerde met boom-electriciteiten, en Pedro besloot op die vacature in te gaan. Het centrum was niet zo ver bij Pedro vandaan, en Pedro werd direkt aangenomen. Op de afdeling zou hij ook een kamer krijgen, en hij

mocht zelf uitkiezen welke tijden hij wilde werken. Verder had Pedro veel vrije tijd, zodat hij het gevoel had dat het hem niet opslokte. Maar Pedro vond het reuze interessant, want hier leerde hij hoe de boom-energieen op het lichaam inwerkten, en waar het allemaal voor gebruikt kon worden. Pedro bleek een goede aanwinst voor het laboratorium te zijn. Hij had enorme werkenthousiasme, en vond veel dingen uit. Het bleek dat hij een talent had op dit gebied. Pedro begon boeken te schrijven, die nogal aansloegen bij het publiek van de Groene Verlichting. En stukje bij beetje werd Pedro een autoriteit op het gebied van boom-electriciteit en de daarbij horende techniek, wat gezien werd als één van de basissen van de Groene Verlichting. Het hele idee van de Groene Verlichting stond bij Pedro erg op de achtergrond, zoveel mogelijk, want Pedro was absoluut niet religieus aangelegd. Pedro was geinteresseerd in de technische kant van het leven, met bomen als waardig medicijn en hulpmiddel voor de samenleving. Pedro kwam erachter welke boom-energieen de hersenen bestuurden, en de emoties, en het geweten, en zijn ontdekkingen werden gezien als revolutionair. Pedro kon het erg goed vinden met zijn collega's, en over de zwarte groenen werd eigenlijk nooit gesproken. Pedro had ook niet het idee dat zijn collega's daarbij hoorden, en het centrum was een onafhankelijk centrum voor onderzoek. Pedro zag het gewoon als een bepaalde tak van de wetenschap, maar dan enorm zelfstandig en onafhankelijk. Pedro hield van dat woord.

Al gauw kwam Pedro erachter dat verschillende boom-energieen verantwoordelijk waren voor het religieuze denken. De ene mens was hiervoor gevoeliger dan de ander, en dat had ook te maken met de omliggende omstandigheden. Soms werd men daarin gewoon gedwongen, en Pedro had ook al ontdekt welke boom-energieen voor dwangmatigheden zorgden en voor manipulatie en zelfs dictatuur. Pedro stelde zich erg mild op. Hij wilde weten wat de drijfveer was van deze energieen. Zij hadden natuurlijk een bron en een doel, en misschien werden zij ook weer door andere boom-electriciteiten beinvloed. Het bleek een spel te zijn van electriciteiten, een wisselwerking, een samenhang, en de creativiteit wat dat met zich meebracht. Het bleek zich na verloop van tijd allemaal te verfijnen, en te ontwikkelen, totdat een nieuwe stroom van frequencies opstak om allereerst chaos te brengen. Die chaos was als een soort protest, als een basis voor een opkomst van een over het hoofd geziende energie. De bestaande hierarchie werd ontmaskerd als een cocon voor nieuwe botanische patronen. Zo zou er vanuit de chaos en de onderdrukking langzaamaan een nieuwe orde ontstaan. Het centrum werkte nauw samen met het ziekenhuis. Pedro was erg blij met z'n nieuwe baan.

Op een nacht had Pedro een droom. Een stem zei tegen hem : 'Pedro, geloof jij dat de vibraties van jouw stem de vibraties zijn van bomen ? Zij hebben in jou een stem, en door jouw werk worden hun energieen gerankschikt en functioneel gemaakt. Ja, jij bent de schoot der bomen.' Pedro schrok wakker en probeerde het weg te wimpelen. Hij was natuurlijk zo druk met z'n werk dat dit was gebeurd. Hij geloofde niet dat bomen een persoonlijkheid hadden. Ze waren natuurlijk wel functioneel als energiebronnen, net zoals de zon en de sterren, net zoals het water en de wind. Pedro kende natuurlijk wel de primitieve religies die deze energiebronnen als goden vereerden, maar zover wilde Pedro niet gaan. Hij had het niet zo op met al die zweverigheid. Het was al erg genoeg dat hij een gedwongen lidmaatschap bij de zwarte groenen had, die hij zag als een groep extremistische fanatiekelingen. En hij wist zeker dat als hij de banden met hen zou breken, dan zou hij eraan gaan. Die lui waren bloedserieus.

Veel veranderingen waren er in de regering. Veel conservatievelingen binnen de Groene Verlichting kwamen aan de macht, iets wat Pedro een beter idee vond dan al die vreemde en gevaarlijke zwarte groenen die vaak in het geheim werkten. De nieuwe president had zo'n afschuw tegen de zwarte groenen, dat hij een onderzoek liet doen door het hele land. Zij die van de zwarte groenen bleken te zijn hing gevangenisstraf boven het hoofd, vooral als het bleek dat ze misdaden op hun naam hadden staan. De president vond de opstelling van de zwarte groenen al tijden een gevaar voor het land. Bij invallen kwamen er al snel ledenlijsten aan het licht, en ook de naam van Pedro werd gevonden. Pedro moest voorkomen bij een speciaal daarvoor ingerichte rechtbank. Met een kleine standaardboete kwam hij daar vanaf, omdat hij gedwongen lid was. Hij was zoals ze dat noemden het slachtoffer van geestelijke ontvoering. Pedro kon zijn werk al snel weer voortzetten,

en werd voor zijn werk geprezen. Al snel was de rust in het land teruggekeerd, en de slachtoffers van geestelijke ontvoering door de zwarte groenen kregen goede hulp en opvang. Pedro kon zich helemaal storten op zijn werk. Hij zag niet echt gevaar in de conservatieve orde van de Groene Verlichting. Veel ideeen kon hij wel aanhangen op een bepaalde wijze, en zo bleef de vriendschap tussen Pedro en het genootschap voortbestaan. Pedro hoefde absoluut geen lid meer te zijn. De president vond dat onzin, omdat er een vrijheid van levensovertuiging bestond. En een naam zei bijvoorbeeld ook helemaal niks. Iedereen moest leren zijn eigen identiteit te vinden binnen de afgrenzende normen en waarden.

Pedro vond uit dat de ademhaling niet alleen door zuurstof, de oxygene, ging, maar ook wanneer de longen waren ingesteld op de boom-energieen die daarvoor bestonden. Het bleek dat elke long daarin uniek was, en vaak scheen het dat er wel middelen waren om de long op dat gebied te verfijnen. Zo waren er ook boom-electriciteiten die zo ontwikkeld waren dat ze andere boom-electriciteiten konden opvangen voor bijvoorbeeld de ademhaling. Het lichaam kon zo klaargemaakt worden om een zogenaamde boomcapsule te ontvangen, die zich in de longen vestigde, of erop, en zo de benodigde adem-energieen van de bomen kon opvangen. Dit ging dan door het instellen als een tuner op de golflengtes van die energieen en niet eens zozeer door de pomp der longen, het inademen. Zo kon de long ook werken als een ontvanger, als een soort radio, naast het hele pompgebeuren. Die boomcapsules konden soms zo krachtig zijn dat er gewoon mee onder water geleefd kon worden voor een lange tijd, zonder dat dat schade toebracht aan het lichaam of fataal afliep. Zo waren er ook capsules die door bomen werden afgegeven om zich in het hart te vestigen voor een zo natuurgetrouw mogelijke hartslag. Pedro had een boomlaser ontwikkeld waarmee hij dit soort capsules eenvoudig kon installeren in de verschillende lichaamsdelen voor optimaal functioneren. Ook had hij daarvoor een scanner laten bouwen, zodat de capsules in beeld gebracht konden worden. Vaak liet hij degenen die op die manier behandeld waren terugkomen om te kijken of de capsule nog steeds aanwezig was.

Hoofdstuk 4. De Staatsgreep

Maar op een dag was er een staatsgreep in het gebouw van de president. Het waren de zwarte groenen, en de president werd door één van hen neergeschoten. Ze hadden hun gezichten groengeverfd, en ze hadden zwarte honden bij zich. Alles was op televisie te volgen, en de burgers werden opgeroepen om weerstand te bieden. Het liep uit op een burgeroorlog. Velen vochten aan de kant van de zwarte groenen, meer nog dan Pedro had verwacht. Het had zo'n lange tijd gesluimerd. Ook de televisiezenders werden overgenomen, en van de Groene Verlichting mocht niet eens meer gesproken worden. Iedereen moest lid worden van de zwarte groenen of het met de dood bekopen. Ook velen in het leger bleken van de zwarte groenen te zijn, en na een tijdje was de gehele staatsgreep geschiedt en geslaagd. Pedro wist dat er voor hem niets anders opzat om maar weer voor de zwarte groenen te kiezen, maar ditmaal had het veel zwaardere consequenties. Pedro moest het leger in, en meevechten met de zwarte groenen. In andere landen vonden ook staatsgrepen plaats, maar sommigen van de grootste landen hadden nog steeds een conservatief beleid, en het zou oorlog worden. Dit was voor Pedro onaanvaardbaar daar hij gewetensbezwaren had tegen het leger. Hij stierf nog liever, maar een andere mogelijkheid zou zijn om zich als zieke op te geven bij een afdeling. Hij kon weer bij z'n oude afdeling terecht. De oude man en de vrouw die hij daarvan kende leefden inmiddels niet meer, en er waren twee nieuwen ervoor in de plaats gekomen. De oude begeleiding bestond niet meer. Er deden daar zwarte groenen dienst. Inmiddels hadden de landen die in de handen van de zwarte groenen gekomen waren zich verenigd tot een oorlog tegen de grootmachten. Vele ongelovigen waren omgebracht en in sommige speciale gevallen vastgezet. Gelukkig was er voor Pedro de mogelijkheid om op de ziekenafdeling waar hij was door te gaan met zijn onderzoek. Het was alsof de zwarte groenen wel heil in hem zagen, en het viel Pedro op dat de zwarte groenen opmerkelijk vriendelijk en beleefd naar hem waren. Soms kwam er wel eens een hogere functie van het gehele ziekenorgaan langs bij Pedro om wat vragen te stellen. Ze leken

Pedro bijna te vereren. Pedro werd bijna een beetje verlegen van de aandacht. En alhoewel het een beetje vreemd aanvoelde, maakte het hem rustig. Pedro ging door met het schrijven van boeken, en alles begon weer een beetje in rustiger vaarwater te komen. Hij hield zich eigenlijk helemaal niet met het nieuws bezig en verder vroegen ze hier helemaal niks van hem. Wel namen zijn begeleiders soms wel eens wat rapporten van Pedro mee van de onderzoeken die hij had gedaan. Wat ze daar verder mee deden, dat wist Pedro niet.

Op een dag kwam er een begeleider bij Pedro op z'n kamer. Het was iemand van de zwarte groenen. Hij had een ernstige blik in zijn ogen. 'Pedro, de presidenten van de tegenstandige landen zijn omgebracht. Ook de functionarissen die niet met ons willen samenwerken zijn omgebracht en in sommige uitzonderlijke gevallen vastgezet. De aarde is nu van de zwarte groenen. Ik wilde dat jij dit zou weten.' Pedro was geschokt, maar wist dat dit zou gebeuren. Hij had het met al zijn technologieen niet kunnen voorkomen. Pedro raakte diep depressief, ook naarmate hij meerdere dingen hoorde over de werken van de zwarte groenen wereldwijd. Hij besloot te stoppen met zijn onderzoek, omdat hij er geen heil in zag. De begeleiders respecteerden zijn keuze. Ze wisten dat hij rust nodig had. Pedro was in hun ogen ernstig ziek, maar verder briljant van geest. Van zijn onderzoeksrapporten maakten ze boeken, naast de andere boeken die hij had geschreven, en het werd één van de grootste boekenlijnen op de boekenmarkten van de zwarte groenen. Pedro was in ieder geval blij dat het ook aansloeg bij de zwarte groenen. Hopelijk zouden ze er ooit nog eens lering uittrekken, maar hoop op verandering had Pedro eigenlijk weinig tot niets. Pedro legde zich neer bij de nieuwe wereldregering, de nieuwe wereldorde. Hij hield zich nu eigenlijk alleen nog maar bezig met zijn ziek zijn, en probeerde te leven met dat wat hij nog had. Hij hield van de kleine dingen van het leven, en was daar tevreden mee. Het leek alsof zijn depressies begonnen te verminderen op sommige momenten, maar andere momenten zakte hij weer diep weg, ja, ook in angst voor de toekomst, angst voor dat wat zou kunnen komen. Ja, grote angst had hij voor de harde kernen binnen de beweging, en hun geheime diepere kernen. Wat zouden ze met hem gaan doen ?

Pedro keek naar buiten, naar de bomen. De natuur was nog steeds prachtig, ja, dat wel. De zwarte groenen hadden niets tegen de natuur. Pedro zou hier de rest van zijn leven wel willen blijven. Waar moest hij anders naartoe ? Op een dag was er iemand op het kantoor van de begeleiding gekomen. Het was een wetenschapper, die diep geinteresseerd was in de ideeen van Pedro, door de boeken die Pedro had geschreven. De man had een kado voor Pedro. Het was een robot die geheel liep op de verschillende boom-energieen, en waar Pedro zelfs mee zou kunnen praten. Een begeleider kwam het kado brengen. 'Ja, zet hem maar in de hoek van de kamer,' zei Pedro. De robot scheen veel van Pedro af te weten, en al gauw begon Pedro het eng te vinden. Een begeleider voerde de robot weer af. Als het te persoonlijk werd, vond Pedro het al snel eng worden, vooral als het over zijn verleden ging. Hoe dieper ze wisten door te tasten, hoe enger het voor Pedro werd. Pedro had rust nodig, en wilde zijn identiteit nog meer afbakenen. Op een dag besloot Pedro eens vermomd een kijkje in de buitenwereld te nemen. Wat was het hier veranderd, zeg. In de winkels kon je betalen door je arm in een automaat te steken, en dan werden er allerlei soorten boom-energieen afgetapt. De automaat had allerlei lampjes die dan gingen knipperen en piepen. Maar de verkoopster zei dat de automaat ook veel neutrale boom-energieen teruggaf, en dat waren dan de energieen die de winkel overvloedig had. Die energieen werden 'de neutralen' genoemd. Pedro bestelde een beeldje van een zwarte hond die op een schatkist zat, omdat dat hem liet denken aan de honden die hij eens had gehad. Hij stak zijn arm in de automaat, en er kwamen hele hoge toetjes uit. Het leek wel alsof zijn arm was vastgezet, maar na een tijdje hoorde hij zacht gezoem, en kon hij z'n arm er weer uittrekken. Hij voelde zich heel anders nou. 'Nou, bedankt,' zei hij opgewekt tegen de verkoopster, en liep de winkel uit. De verkoopster glimlachte terug naar hem. In de volgende winkel bestelde Pedro wat nieuwsoortige groentevruchten, die op een soort donkere uitgegroeide paprika's leken. Het waren nieuw gekweekte soorten. Pedro stopte zijn arm in de automaat en er kwamen hoge zoemende geluiden uit. Hier was het wat sneller gedaan, en snel kon Pedro zijn hand er weer uittrekken. Dit was een heel ander gevoel.

Op straat bewogen mensen vaak voort op voortbewegende band, zodat ze gewoon stil konden

blijven staan. Na een tijdje ging Pedro weer terug naar de afdeling. Opeens voelde hij een hand op zijn schouder. Het was één van zijn mede-bewoners. De bewoner vroeg of Pedro ook sigaretten had, maar Pedro zei direkt : 'Houd daarover op, want als ze het horen dan schieten ze je dood. Op roken staat de doodstraf, ben je dat vergeten ?' De man deinsde achteruit en ging weer zitten. 'Ik vroeg het je alleen maar,' zei hij.

Opeens schrok hij wakker. Hij ... Pedro ? Hij heette helemaal geen Pedro. Wat voor een drugs hadden zij hem gegeven. De droom was levensecht. Hij lag aan banden vastgemaakt op een soort tafel, op een soort brancard, met vreemdsoortige apparatuur aan zijn armen en benen, en wat was er om zijn hoofd heen ? Hij voelde druk, maar kon het niet zien. Om de tafel stonden wat mannen. Eén man was wat ouder, had een grijzige kleine baard, en een lichte huidziekte. Ze zeiden dat ze bomen waren. Bomen ? De jongen geloofde niet dat bomen konden praten. De jongen begon te protesteren, maar de oudere man greep hem bij de keel. 'Nu moet je ophouden,' zei de man, 'je denkt zeker dat jij het enige wezen bent dat kan leven.' De jongen kreeg een lichte klap in zijn gezicht. 'Wat hebben jullie me gegeven ?' vroeg hij aan de mannen. 'Niets,' zei één van de mannen. 'Je wordt bestraald met boom-electriciteiten. Die vormen jouw realiteit, maar het is maar een droom. Zelfs dit is een droom.' En weer werd de jongen wakker, en ditmaal lag er een vreemsoortige octopus die meer als een grote plant of struik was op hem. Hij voelde een druk op z'n lichaam die naar z'n hoofd steeg, en het leek alsof die druk zijn denken beinvloedde. 'Ik ben van de octopusboom,' zei het schepsel. 'Door druk op je lichaam, en vooral op je lever uit te oefenen stijgt er een electrische capsule naar je hoofd die jouw deze ervaringen geeft.' De jongen zei niks, maar bleef stil liggen. Hij voelde zich compleet machteloos. Of was hij gewoon gestorven ?

'Je bent niet dood,' zei de vreemde octopus-plant, 'je droomt slechts, en je leven was een hardnekkige droom, als een hardnekkige vloeistof in je hersenen. Hard boomwater noemen wij dat.' De jongen bemerkte dat hij niet kon spreken. Wat wilden ze toch van hem ? Wat voor zin had alles nog ? Of kreeg hierdoor alles weer zin ? 'Bomen zijn de dingen die je in je leven op de achtergrond probeerde te drukken, totdat je niet anders kon dan ze een plaatsje te geven in jouw leven, maar nog steeds doe je er laagachtend over, alsof het geen personen zijn,' snauwde de octopus-plant, terwijl hij zich strakker tegen de jongen aandrukte. Opeens kwamen er een soort kleine cirkelzaagjes tevoorschijn uit de huid van de octopusplant, en begonnen zijn buik open te snijden. De lever van de jongen werd eruit gehaald, en de octopusplant slikte het in. Het deed geen pijn bij de jongen, misschien ook doordat hij wist dat het toch maar een droom was. 'Een droom kan waarheid bevatten,' sprak de octopus-plant. De jongen voelde al het leven uit zich wegtrekken, nu hij geen lever meer had, en weer schrok hij wakker. Het leek wel alsof hij van droom naar droom ging. Alsof hij in een vreemdsoortige lift zat. Waar zou de reis eindigen ? 'Die dromen zijn een geschenk van de bomen die je op een bepaalde manier ervaart, maar als je er afstand van doet blijkt het iets anders te zijn,' sprak een stem. 'Wij bomen, wij onderdrukten, nemen alles over. Nu is het onze tijd.' Was dit soms weer een experiment van de zwarte groenen ? De jongen wist het niet. Opeens rolde hij uit de lift en kwam in een tunnel terecht die in verbinding stond met een ruimteschip. Wat is dit ? dacht de jongen. Misschien was dit wel allemaal de procedure om tot dit ruimteschip opgenomen te worden. Bestond de aarde nog wel ? Heeft de aarde wel echt bestaan, of is hij gered door buitenaardse wezens ? Aan de uitvoering van het schip kon de jongen merken dat het liep op bomen-energie, maar waar waren die bomen dan ? Of waren de bomen als personen binnen in het schip. Strompelend probeerde de jongen binnen te komen. Toen hij binnen was liep er een man in een glanzend pak op hem af. De man had een baard en sprak : 'Welkom. Zie je die zwarte planeet in de verte ? Dat is de zwarte zon. Alle bomen leven door de zwarte zon en ontlenen hun energieen daaruit. Alle bomen-energie is slechts zwarte zonnen-energie.' De jongen keek bedenkelijk. De man knikte. 'Als levend wezen dien je te leven vanuit de verborgen dingen, zoals de zwarte zon. Het verborgene staat garant voor de toekomst, en de verdere levensreis.' De jongen keek de man met grote ogen aan. 'Bent u een boom ?' vroeg de jongen. 'Ja,' zei de man. De jongen werd verder naar binnen gevoerd, en zag de zalen van het schip. Daarna kreeg hij een eigen kamer toegewezen. 'Je bent belangrijk voor ons,' zei de man, en vertrok, terwijl hij de jongen in zijn kamer achterliet. De

deur werd op slot gedaan, en de jongen wist dus dat hij een gevangene was. Maar goed, was dit kwaad bedoeld of om hem ergens tegen te beschermen. In zijn kamer stond een grote botanische computer. De energieen waardoor deze computer werkte waren van de zwarte zon. Elke boomenergie was een bepaalde laserstraal van de zwarte zon, en tezamen vormden ze letters op het scherm. Via een keyboard kon de jongen boodschappen intypen, en spreken met bomen. Maar snel kreeg de jongen last van zijn hoofd en ging op bed liggen. Na een tijdje ging er een zoemend alarm aan. De man deed de kamerdeur open en rende naar de jongen toe. 'Maak je klaar,' zei de man, 'we gaan naar de zwarte zon. Je zult een speciaal pak aan moeten doen dat in de kast ligt om bestand te kunnen zijn tegen de straling.' De jongen had een bepaalde tijd om het pak aan te doen. Het pak voelde erg dik en zacht aan, als dikke vla, en de jongen kon er goed in bewegen.

Na een tijdje moesten ze uitstappen. Eerst moesten ze door een lange tunnel heenlopen, en toen kwamen ze in een hal terecht waar een kanaal was met vreemde stromen energie. Ze waren in een ingebouwde capsule gekomen binnenin de zwarte zon, in de kern. Het was een grote capsule. De jongen zag een heleboel wezens in pakken lopen, en liep achter ze aan. Langs de kanten van het kanaal waren stroken waarop je kon lopen, met wat deuren aan de zijkant. De wezens liepen door de deuren heen, en ook de jongen ging door een deur heen. Hij moest over platen lopen die allerlei energie-patronen hadden, en zodra hij erop stapte voelde hij rare dingen door zijn lichaam schieten, en door zijn mond, en kon hij heel diep inhalen. Zijn bewegingen werden scherper en sneller, en veel geconcentreerder, en alles werd zachter en zachter. Weer schrok de jongen wakker. De man stond voor hem. 'Door van droom tot droom te gaan, en van ontwaking tot ontwaking verplaats je jezelf. Dit is hoe bomen leven,' vertelde de man. Ze waren nu heel diep in de kern van de zwarte zon. De jongen had nog steeds z'n pak aan, maar dit had nu een andere kleur. Aan groot apparaat hing boven hem, en sneed een cirkel in zijn pak. Snel vergaderde zich een enorme hitte op het gat, en ineens plopte de lever van de jongen omhoog als gebraden. Veel druk ging van het hoofd van de jongen af, en het leek wel alsof hij nieuwe dingen kon ruiken. Alsof hij de zee kon ruiken en allerlei overheerlijke zonne-olien en zeeparfums. Een soort sap droop er uit het apparaat en ging door de cirkel naarbinnen. 'Dit is belangrijk om nog dieper in de zwarte zonnenkern te kunnen.' zei de man. 'Dit sap zal er voor zorgen dat je niet inwendig geroosterd zult worden.' Weer kwam het apparaat dichtbij en schoot een nauwsluitende deksel over het gat heen en een stangetje begon er op te tikken. Een hol geluid kwam eruit voort, en de plank waar de jongen op lag begon vooruit te schuiven, terwijl de man ook op de plank sprong. De plank ging door een gat, en werd iets groter, totdat het een soort vlot was, en toen bevonden ze zich op een gigantische zee van dik stromende energieen. Dit waren de pure boomenergie-bronnen, oftewel de zwarte zonne-energieen.

Na een tijdje kwamen ze met het vlot in een zaal, terwijl de jongen weer voelde alsof hij duizend keer heel snel achter elkaar wakker werd. Het was een soort vergaderzaal. Mannen zaten hoog in capsules, en een grote dobbelsteen lag op een grote wijde tafel in het midden van de kring. Ook de man en de jongen kregen een capsule. Een andere man drukte op een knop, en de dobbelsteen begon te draaien. terwijl de dobbelsteen draaide kreeg de jongen vreemde gevoelens die hij niet kon thuisbrengen. De man naast hem vertelde dat de dobbelsteen de stem was van de verborgen boom, de zwarte boom, die zelfs voor de bomen hier verborgen was. Omdat ze geloofden dat het verborgene de toekomst was, en het pad dat ze moesten gaan, lieten ze de dobbelsteen draaien om de koers te bepalen. Het verborgene was voor hen de horizon met geheimenissen en wijsheid waar zij niets van wisten. Om de beurt drukten ze op een knop in de capsule, en ook de jongen moest zijn knop indrukken. Alle uitkomsten werden op een groot scherm genoteerd. Het was een vreemd alfabet. Het was het alfabet waarmee de zwarte boom sprak. Plotseling kwam er zwarte bliksem tevoorschijn, en de dobbelsteen spatte uit elkaar. Een enorm monster kwam tevoorschijn als een zwarte draak, maar het was een plant of struik. Een licht ging aan in één van de capsules, en dat licht begon heel snel over de capsules heen te gaan. Een man naast de jongen zei dat waar het licht zou stoppen die capsule zou meegaan met de zwarte drakenstruik, maar niemand wist naartoe. Geen enkele capsule was ooit teruggekeerd. Velen geloofden dat de zwarte drakenstruik de capsule mee zou nemen naar de zwarte boom. Bang waren ze niet, maar de jongen was wel een beetje bang. En

tot zijn schrik stopte het licht in zijn capsule. Iedereen riep : 'Jij bent de uitverkorene,' terwijl niemand dus wist wat dat zou betekenen. De jongen verdween met de capsule in het gat, terwijl de drakenstruik om hem heen bewoog. De jongen wilde wel dat de man met hem mee zou gaan, maar hij was de enige in deze capsule, en er kon maar één capsule mee. Weer leek het alsof de jongen heel snel miljoen keer wakker werd, en hij voelde zich heel licht worden. Vanuit de verte werd er geroepen : 'Hij komt aan tot de diepere kernen van de zwarte zon, dichtbij de zwarte boom, dichter en dichter.' Het leek op een vrouwenstem, maar de jongen wist het niet zeker. In de verte zag hij een woestijn die voor zijn ogen bewoog, met bijna een spiegelend oppervlak. Op die woestijn stond een geribbelde zwarte boom, terwijl het leek alsof de capsule over de drakenstruik gleed. In de verte vlakbij de boom zag hij wat zwarte honden spelen. De rillingen liepen over hem heen. Als ze hem maar geen kwaad zouden doen.

Bij de zwarte boom aangekomen merkte hij dat deze gewoon kon bewegen en praten. Van dichtbij leek de boom net op een lichaam, een lang, slank lichaam. Opeens leek het alsof er iets om hem heen brak, en leek het alsof hij in de diepte viel, maar de zwarte boom stond nog steeds voor hem, en kwam steeds dichterbij. 'Ik heb je nodig,' zei de zwarte boom. 'de zwarte zon staat op uitsterven. Als de vlam dooft, dan gaan we er allemaal aan. De heks Sausibir van de boze zon genaamd Misfamen is onze vijand. Als zij er in zal slagen de groene staaf te vinden dan ... dan ...' En toen herinnerde de jongen zijn dromen weer. Ja, dit kende hij. 'Ik heb je nodig,' echoode het door het hoofd van de jongen. Maar de jongen was ver weg in zijn herinnering. Het leek wel alsof al zijn oude dromen weer werden afgespeeld. Toen de jongen wakker werd wist hij direkt wat er was gebeurd. Hij had een gevaarlijke soort drugs gebruikt, waardoor hij al deze vreemde dromen had gehad, waarin hij iemand anders was, en wat leek alsof het jaren en jaren duurde. Er was slechts één nacht voorbij. Zijn vriendin lag naast hem. Ze sliep nog. De jongen kon zich herinneren dat hij de drugs voor het slapen gaan had ingenomen. Ze zeiden dat je er zo lekker van kon slapen en er goed 'high' van kon worden. Gelukkig was het geen slechte trip geweest, maar toch vroeg de jongen zich af of hij er mee door moest gaan. Het stond nog steeds bekend als gevaarlijk, en voor de jongen was het eigenlijk een experiment. Zijn vriendin had het ook ingenomen. Het zou hem benieuwen wat zij allemaal mee had gemaakt. Hij draaide zich naar haar toe. Misschien moest hij haar wel verlossen. Heel zacht begon hij tegen haar te fluisteren : 'Alles is okay, alles is goed, je bent bij mij. Je bent veilig.' Plotseling werd het meisje wakker en omhelsde hem heel stevig. 'Houd me vast,' rilde ze, 'laat me niet meer teruggaan, er is overal vuur.' Maar weer viel het meisje in slaap, en de jongen wist nu dat het ernst was. De drugs was gemaakt van bessen van een vreemdsoortige plant, en ze konden het beter maar niet gebruiken. Weer begon hij zachtjes tegen haar te fluisteren, en hij aaide haar heel zacht. Na een tijdje werd het meisje weer wakker, en schreeuwde : 'Blijf van me af, wie ben je ? Wie denk je wel niet dat je bent.' Ze ging rechtop zitten en begon hem te slaan, terwijl de jongen haar probeerde te kalmeren. Na een tijdje was het meisje bij positieven. Samen zaten ze rechtop in bed. De jongen had wat water gehaald voor zijn vriendin. Toen ze haar verhaal vertelde leek het erg veel op het verhaal van de jongen.

Plotseling werd de jongen weer wakker. Hij wist dat er wat aan de hand was. Hij keek in de ogen van een indiaan die hem een tros vreemde planten en bessen voor zijn neus hield. Hij kon zich niet bewegen. 'Wij zullen je moeten offeren voor onze goden,' zei de indiaan. De indiaan sprak de taal van de jongen. 'Onze goden zijn bomen, en zij zijn jaloers op jullie organen, die zij niet hebben. Toen sneed de indiaan de lever en het hart uit de jongen. De jongen schreeuwde, maar het deed hem nauwelijks pijn. Wat gebeurde er toch ? De indiaan rees het hart en de lever op tot de hemel, en sprak : 'Oh zwarte zon, brenger van al het leven, gij die de bomen draagt, aanvaard dit offer, en spreek weer.' Plotseling pakte de indiaan een fakkel. Stak dit aan bij het dichtsbijzijnde vuur en stak de jongen aan. Weer voelde de jongen bijna niets. Het was alsof hij er immuun voor was. De indiaan was zichtbaar geshokkeerd, want de jongen was nog steeds bij positieven en verschroeide niet. De indiaan boog neer in het zand en sprak : 'Gij moet wel de gezondene zijn van de zwarte zon of de zwarte maan, gij bent de god der bomen, de god van ons oerwoud. Heb genade met ons, oh God van de zwarte zon.' En vele malen boog de indiaan zich in het stof. De jongen wist dat hij elk

moment weer wakker kon worden. Waren dit alleen maar schijn-realiteiten in zijn hoofd ? Het leken wel de laagjes van zijn ziel die elk een onafhankelijk leven leiden, en het leek wel alsof ze nu in razend tempo bij elkaar kwamen. De indiaan maakte de jongen los. De jongen had geen hart en lever meer, en hij voelde zich als een slang. De indiaan nam hem mee naar zijn stam, en riep : 'De god der zwarte zon is gekomen, buigt allen voor hem neer.' Vanuit alle kanten kwamen indianen die zich voor hem neer storten, en begonnen te bidden en te weeklagen. Ze waren allemaal bang dat de god van de zwarte zon hen zou straffen. De jongen wist niet goed waar hij in terecht was gekomen. Er werd hem allerlei voedsel aangeboden. De jongen hoopte maar dat hij snel weer wakker zou worden.

Was hij de gevangene van een drug ? Was hij geestesziek, of was misschien alles en iedereen geestesziek ? En wat was geestesziekte eigenlijk ? Was het gewoon één van de patronen van ervaring, of was het een gevaarlijk iets dat hoe dan ook uitgebannen moest worden. Maar door wie ? En wie zei hem dat dat dan realiteit zou zijn ? Wat was nou de echte realiteit ? Of was de realiteit een opsomming van hoe je dingen beleefde ? Dan had iedereen dus een andere realiteit. Waar moest hij naartoe ? Was hij dood ? Of was hij juist echt tot leven gekomen ? Niemand wist het, en niemand kon het hem vertellen.

Hoofdstuk 5. Geb

Hij probeerde zich te herinneren of hij drugs had gebruikt. Ja, hij had dat gedaan, maar dat bleek een droom te zijn. En het was een droom in een droom, als een vreemd wezen, een vreemde boom met vele ringen, met vele vertakkingen. Als een octopus-boom was het, als een draaiend iets wat telkens terugkwam. Of was hij misschien echt het slachtoffer van experimenten van buitenaardse wezens ? Of was het juist zijn ontsnapping. Waren zij zijn redders ? Hij wist het niet, en hij vond het eng, maar tegelijkertijd kwam alles steeds meer op de achtergrond, om plaats te maken voor een verlichting ... Was dit de ware groene verlichting ? Dat hij altijd weer kon ontsnappen in een andere droom. Iets was nooit echt helemaal waar, en dat begon hij steeds meer te beseffen ... alles was niets dan een hardnekkige droom ... zo hardnekkig, dat hij in zo'n droom wel tachtig tot negentig jaar zou kunnen worden, met allerlei vertrouwelijke gezichten ... met iets dat hij 'familie' zou kunnen noemen. De delen van de familie waren de hardnekkigste elementen uit die chronische droom, want die delen bleven bij je, ook al koos je ervoor om ze stukje bij beetje te verwijderen uit je leven. Je kon wel uit je familie gaan, maar hoe kreeg je je familie uit je weg. Het waren diepe littekenen, als tatoeages van bomen. Ze waren te diep in je geworteld om je diepere betekenissen te laten zien. Het waren de verborgen delen van je ziel, waar je een eigen voorstelling van had gemaakt ... de bomen ...

Hard werd er op tafel geslagen. Een jongen was tijdens een saaie les in slaap gevallen. De onderwijzer stond voor hem. Wat had hij toch vreemd gedroomd. De onderwijzer had les gegeven over bomen. 'Doe vooral geen moeite om op te letten,' zei de leraar sarcastisch. De kinderen om hem heen grinnikten en staarden de slaperige jongen aan. 'Ach wat,' zei de jongen. 'moet ik nog geloven dat je echt bent. Je bent zelf een boom.' De kinderen lachten, maar de leraar werd erg boos. 'Zeg als je zo door gaat met je praatjes, dan stuur ik je naar de direkteur.' De jongen trok een onverschillig gezicht. 'Laat hem ook maar komen. Hij is ook één van de vele bomen,' zei de jongen. De jongen was voor niets en niemand bang, omdat hij wist dat hij elk moment ook van deze droom kon ontwaken. Maar wat als de droom chronisch zou zijn, en hij in deze situatie tachtig of negentig jaar oud moest worden ? Daar was de jongen toch ook wel een beetje bang voor, maar meestal duurden de dromen bij hem korter. Het was alsof er een octopus-boom in hem leefde, een dromenboom. Alles was zo fragmentarisch. En daar werd weer iemand wakker. Het leek wel alsof de dromen van identiteit verwisselden. Het was alsof de octopusplant weer bezig was.

Hahahaha, schreeuwde de octopus-plant. Ja, ik ben het weer. Ik ben weer aan de wandel. Maar plotseling werd de octopus-plant afgeschoten. Een lange man met een geweer stond bij het lijk, en

nam het tussen zijn vingers en trok het omhoog. Naast de man stond een zwarte hond. Het was een vleesetende plant. Het vlees van zielen. Het was een zielen-eter. De lange man zou het meenemen naar zijn laboratorium om het op te zetten. De man heette Geb. Hij had een groenachtige huid. Hij nam het leven niet serieus. Hij wist dat hij zo weer wakker kon worden, en dat dan alles anders bleek te zijn. Ze hadden misschien wel met miljoenen van die octopusplanten te maken. En hoeveel leefden er wel niet binnenin bij hemzelf ? Hij wist het niet, en maakte zich er niet te druk om. Toen hij bijna bij z'n laboratorium was aangekomen werd hij aangevallen door een vliegenplant. De plant had hele dikke vleugels en leek op een vlieg. Snel spoot de plant spul af op Geb, en Geb voelde dat zijn denken en zijn bewegingen heel traag werden. Hij wist dat als hij hier niets aan zou doen, dan zou hij in slaap vallen, en dan zou de vliegenplant hem eten. Strompelend liep hij zijn laboratorium binnen, en maakte snel een flesje open, en dronk het op. Snel kon hij zich weer goed bewegen, pakte zijn geweer en schoot de vliegenplant af, die inmiddels al op z'n schouder zat. Het was groen spul uit een flesje dat de Groene Verlichting heette. De man keek naar buiten. De zon was zwart. Het was donker. Grinnikend liep hij naar binnen. In een ketel begon hij te roeren, en er lag daar allerlei groene vloeistof in, als een soort slijm. Met een kwastje begon hij de groene vloeistof te smeren over een soort roostertje of raamwerk, en draaide het om, om ook de onderkant in te smeren. Vanuit een kast haalde hij een groen staafje dat licht glom en begon dat over het besmeerde roostertje of raamwerk te strijken. Vanuit het rooster kwamen groene gelei-achtige schepselen tevoorschijn. Dit was het staafje dat de heks Sausibir ook wilde hebben. De gelei-achtige wezens gingen naar buiten en begonnen alle bomen, planten en struiken te omhullen, en dezen begonnen tot leven te komen. Ze waren op weg om alle plantaardigen vrij te zetten. De grond begon meer en meer in groene blubber te veranderen, dat hier en daar begon op te drogen. Het was een geslaagde dag.

Pats. Iemand werd wakker, en nog iemand anders werd wakker. Wat hadden ze allemaal vreemd gedroomd. Buiten renden er zwarte honden op straat. Ze blaften hard. Vandaag zouden er verkiezingen zijn. Het spande eigenlijk om twee partijen. De Partij van de Groene Verlichting, de PGV, of de Zwarte Groenen, de ZG. Het was een drukke week geweest met campagnes, en nu was het dan zover.

Einde

Jaap en André
en de Wakkelsoep

Toen Jaap op zijn kamer was om huiswerk te maken zag hij ineens lijm druppelen in zijn kamer, zomaar vanuit het niets. Hij liep er op af en raakte de lijm aan, maar hij kon niet meer loskomen. Wat was dat spul plakkerig. Hij wist niet wat hij moest doen, en begon te roepen, maar niemand

scheen hem te horen, of misschien was iedereen wel weg. Hoe meer hij probeerde los te komen, hoe meer hij werd gegrepen door de lijm, en toen ineens werd hij zo de vloer ingetrokken. Hij gilde en schreeuwde, maar er was geen hulp. "Is er dan niemand die me hoort !" riep Jaap.

Hij zag niets meer. Alles was wazig voor zijn ogen. Hij kon zich ook niet meer bewegen. Even later kon hij weer zien, en hij zag dat hij in een bos was. Een meisje van het bos kwam op hem af. "Wie ben je ?" vroeg Jaap. "En waar ben ik ?"

"Ik ben de koningin van de jacht ?" zei het meisje.

"Waar jaag je op, op mij ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Op wakkels," zei het meisje van het bos. "Wakkels zijn gaten in het ijs."

"Dat noemen wij wakken," zei Jaap. "Waarom jaag je daarop ?"

"Omdat ik de ijskoningin ben. Er mogen geen gaten in het ijs zitten, want dan smelten we weg," sprak het meisje.

"Ah," zei Jaap. "Waar ben ik ?"

"In Samaica," zei het meisje.

"Wat is dat ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Een land," zei het meisje.

"Hoe kom ik daar ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Door de lijm," sprak het meisje.

"Wat is dat voor een lijm ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Ik gebruik het in de jacht om het ijs weer dicht te lijmen. Het is ijslijm," sprak het meisje.

"Mag ik nu weer naar huis ?" vroeg Jaap. "Ik moet nog huiswerk doen."

"Dat huiswerk kan wel wachten," sprak het meisje.

Het meisje hielp hem opstaan. "Wat gaan we doen ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Dat zul je wel zien," zei het meisje.

Ze nam hem mee naar een rivier van de ijslijm. Alles bruiste hier, spoot en sproeide, zoals een waterval. "Hier worden ze allemaal meegetrokken," zei het meisje. "Zoals jij werd meegetrokken. Ik heb je eruit gehaald."

"Nou, bedankt," zei Jaap. "Ik moet voor het avondeten weer terug zijn."

"Het avondeten kan wel wachten," zei het meisje. "Er zijn veel belangrijkere dingen dan dat."

"Zoals wat ?" vroeg Jaap.

"IJslijmen," zei het meisje. "Je kan zo met een ijslijmstift de gaten in het ijs lijmen. Alles is hier van ijs gemaakt. Het is een kneedbaar ijs in allerlei kleuren."

"Ja, maar ik moet naar huis en naar school," zei Jaap.

"Wat is nu belangrijker ?" vroeg het meisje.

"Ja, maar mijn vader en moeder zullen mij missen," zei Jaap, "en André."

"Ik laat je niet meer gaan," zei het meisje. "Het is veel te gevaarlijk daar, teveel wakkels. Alles is van ijsklei gemaakt, maar jij komt uit de wakkelwereld waaruit ik je verlost heb."

Jaap knipperde even met zijn ogen. "Ik voel me inderdaad heel anders."

"Als er wakkels zijn wordt alles vies en smelt alles," zei het meisje.

"Ja, dat mag niet gebeuren," zei Jaap, die steeds meer en meer onder een vreemde hypnose kwam.

"Wakkels zijn stom, dom en lui," zei het meisje.

"Ik zal aan uw zijde strijden, koningin," zei Jaap onder zware hypnose. "Die wakkels zullen niet ver komen."

Het meisje glimlachte. "Zo mag ik het horen," zei ze.

Ze liep naar hem toe en smeerde wat strepen van ijslijm op zijn gezicht.

"Ik ben nu oorlog," zei ze, "de koningin van de oorlog. Wakkels zijn veelvraten, ze vreten alles op wat los en vastzit om nog meer wakkels te maken."

"Maar dat is verschrikkelijk, koningin," zei Jaap.

"Ja, je moet eens weten," zei het meisje. "Ze laten ons overwerk doen. Ik ben blij dat ik jou heb."

"Ik doe het met groot plezier," zei Jaap, die steeds vrolijker begon te worden.

"Lach niet teveel," zei het meisje. "De wakkels lachen de hele dag door. Dat is alles wat ze kunnen. Ze slapen, eten en lachen, de hele dag door, en maar meer wakkels maken."

"Het is een ramp," zei Jaap.

"Het is een serieuze zaak," zei het meisje. "Heb je hun fabrieken gezien ? Het stinkt."

"Dat moeten we niet hebben," zei Jaap.

"Maar zo weten we wel waar ze zijn," zei het meisje.

"Dat is waar," zei Jaap. "De stank verraadt hen."

"Ze bouwen hun huizen overal en gaan dan familietje spelen," zei het meisje, "de wakkel industrie."

"Ah," zei Jaap, die begon te gapen. Hij hoorde het meisje verder praten in de verte. Hij begon steeds meer moe te worden. Maar toen het meisje de ijslijm stift weer tegen zijn huid zette was hij weer klaar wakker. "Ze hadden je bijna," zei het meisje.

"Ik trek mijn zwaard van ijslijm en ik strijd voor mijn koningin," zei Jaap.

"Wees waakzaam," zei het meisje. "Ze zitten overal te loeren. Als er één wakkel is zijn er meer in de buurt. Ze komen altijd in groepen. Maar wij hebben onze eigen industrie van ijslijm naaimachines. Het zijn dus eigenlijk lijmmachines. Ze zijn heel productief en creatief."

"Waar zijn ze ?" vroeg Jaap.

"Oh, dieper in het bos," zei het meisje.

"Ik wil ze graag zien," zei Jaap.

"Dan moeten we naar de ijslijm watervallen," zei het meisje. "De wakkels maken ook de mens ziek, en spelen dan doktertje om het nog erger te maken."

Over een zanderig pad gingen ze dieper het bos in. Maar ze werden aangevallen door wakkels die zo uit de struiken kwamen. "Ah !" lachte de koningin. "We eten vanavond wakkel soep, zo lekker." De wakkels waren exotische vruchten die hier groeiden. Jaap begon ze te plukken en ervan te eten. "Ja, mmm, wakkelsoep," zei Jaap, "dat lijkt me wel wat."

En zo hadden ze die avond genoeg om te eten en genoeg om over te praten. Het meisje kookte overheerlijke wakkelsoep, en Jaap keek toe hoe ze dat deed. "Breng me meer wakkels, Jaap, meer. Want zovelen hebben nog nooit van de wakkelsoep gehoord, en zovelen hebben er nog nooit van geproefd, en leiden een miserabel leven. Wakkelsoep is het lekkerste wat er is."

Einde

De Plaag van Elzega

In het stadje Elzega was een plaag van vliegende vissen die de hoofden van de burgers teisterden. De heksenmeester had een zwart zaad waarmee hij vissen kon laten vliegen, en hij gaf hen de naarste opdrachten. Zo zaaide hij een boel tragedie en hopeloosheid. De vissen waren gevreesd, en als ze dan weer vertrokken was het leed vaak al geschied, of begon toen pas echt.

Iedereen was met zijn handen in het haar. Ook de kleine Jog vond het vervelend. Hij was vastbesloten hier iets aan te doen, en op een dag stapte hij naar de burgemeester. Jog belde aan, en de dienstmaagd van de burgemeester deed bezorgd open. 'Is er wat gebeurd, kleine ?'

'Nee,' zei Jog, 'ik wil gewoon de burgemeester spreken.' Na een tijdje wachten kon de kleine Jog bij de burgemeester naar binnen in zijn kamer.

'Zo, kleine jongen, dus jij wilt de stad redden van dit boze gespuis, huh ?' zei de burgemeester nadat Jog hem het verhaal had verteld. 'En hoe zou jij dat willen doen, kleine man ?'

'Geef me even de tijd, burgemeester,' zei de jongen. 'Ik kan vast wel iets bedenken.'

'Toch wel vreemd, jongen, dat je hier komt zonder ook maar enig idee te hebben, want meestal zijn degenen die hier komen al voorbereid met een idee of plan. Maar in ieder geval is het erg dapper van je,' zei de burgemeester.

Met de dagen leek het steeds erger te worden. De vissen waren erg bloeddorstig, en maakten velen ziek. Ook maakten ze angstaanjagende geluiden, waardoor mensen 's nachts niet konden slapen.

Het waaide hard buiten. De kerkklokken bleven maar luiden. Jog staarde voor zich uit, vastbesloten een plan te bedenken. 'Jongen, geef de moed maar op,' zei zijn moeder telkens. 'Hier is geen kruid tegen opgewassen.' Ze probeerden mensen gek te maken met hun gekrijs. In het stadje werden ze inmiddels overal de schuld voor gegeven. Ook zouden ze kinderen gekke en nare versjes laten zingen.

Toen Jog achttien was had hij ineens een plan. Hij zou naar het boze berkenbos gaan, op zoek naar de heksenmeester die dit allemaal op zijn geweten had.

Na lang lopen kwam hij bij een huisje. Hij ging naar binnen, en zag de heksenmeester achter een tafeltje zitten. 'Zeg kerel,' zei Jog, 'je boze spelletjes zijn uit. Jij bent de schuldige, en ik ben de wraakengel.'

'Zo zo,' zei de heksenmeester. 'Praatjes, hè, je bent er anders nog niet.' De heksenmeester stond op, en een vuurvlam kwam van zijn hand die regelrecht op Jog afvloog. Jog kon nog net bukken. Maar toen kwamen er twee vliegende vissen binnenvliegen, die met groot gekrijs Jog grepen en met hem wegvlogen. Ze brachten hem op een heel hoog nest in de bergen, waar het heel koud was.

'Je moet voor heksenmeester Troegadoer verschijnen,' zei één van de vliegende vissen.

Na hem ernstig toegetakeld te hebben, brachten ze hem bloedend naar een dichtbijzijnd kasteel in het bos. Heksenmeester Troegadoer zat binnenin op een troon. 'Laat deze lamlendeling binnenkomen !' riep de heksenmeester. 'Hij heeft mijn broer bedreigd. Nu is hij van mij.' De heksenmeester begon te lachen.

'Maar jullie hebben Elzega getergd met jullie vliegende vissen !' riep Jog.

De vliegende vissen brachten hem tot vlak voor de troon, en lieten hem toen neervallen. Kreunend en hijgend stond Jog moeizaam op. Hij was diep verwond.

'Elzega is ons terrein,' zei Troegadoer. 'Jullie hadden nooit dat stadje moeten bouwen op natuur gebied.'

'Daar kunnen wij niets aan doen,' riep Jog boos, 'dat hebben onze voorouders gedaan, en ze zeiden dat het een open vlakte was. Ze hebben geen bomen ervoor omgekapt, of ander natuurgebied.'

'Leugens,' zei Troegadoer, 'ze hebben een heel stuk bos ervoor weggekapt. Als je leven je lief is, vertrek uit de stad. De stad zal vernietigd worden.'

'Mijn voorouders moesten wel ergens leven. Ze hebben niets verkeerds gedaan,' zei Jog.

'Dat maken ze je maar wijs,' zei Troegadoer. 'Spoedig zal de stad vergaan, en er is niks wat je daaraan kunt doen.'

Jog probeerde zich los te rukken uit de greep die de vliegende vissen op hem hadden. Ze stonken verschrikkelijk. Hij voelde hun hete adem in zijn nek. Ze hadden bijna een zwarte huid.

Ze spoten hun inktgas in hem, terwijl hun nagels als naalden diep in zijn huid gingen. Hij werd plotseling depressief en duizelig. Toen viel hij op de grond. Troegadoer begon te lachen.

Jog wordt dan wakker na een tijdje in een langwerpige zaal op een bed, waar nog veel meer mensen op bedden liggen.

Een klein meisje komt aangelopen met lang, zwart haar. 'Wij zullen je bewerken met het zwarte zaad,' zei het meisje. 'Ook jij zal in een vliegende vis veranderen. We kunnen je goed gebruiken.'

'Nee !' gilde Jog, maar al snel injecteerde het meisje hem, en hij viel weer in een diepe slaap. Hij werd in een capsule gestopt en ging diep in de grond. Hij werd wakker toen ze de boom van het zwarte zaad hadden bereikt, diep onder de grond. Er zaten vleermuizen in deze boom. Hij moest van het zaad eten. Hij werd in een rivier geworpen en ging kopje onder. Hij zwom naar boven, en merkte dat hij in de zee was. Ook merkte hij dat hij een vis was geworden. Hij zag meerdere vissen om zich heen, en ze stegen op uit het water, om te vliegen.

Ook hij merkte dat hij kon vliegen. Zijn huid was bijna zwart. Hij bevond zich in een zaal met vele andere vliegende vissen. Ze keken allemaal richting een bol, waarop een vogelachtige verschijning zat met grote vleugels. Toen veranderde de verschijning in een koning. Het was de koning van de vliegende vissen.

Plotseling merkte Jog dat hij zijn eigen lichaam weer terughad. Hij rende door een tunnel, zoekende naar de uitgang. 'Nee, ik wil dit niet !' riep hij. Hij ramde met zijn vuisten op glas. Hij had het gevoel dat hij verdronk. Hij kon niet ademen. 'Is er dan niemand om me te helpen !' riep hij in wanhoop.

'Er is iets mis,' zei het kleine meisje. 'We kunnen hem niet veranderen in een vliegende vis. Zijn hart is te sterk.'

Plotseling voelde Jog dat hij buiten lag op de grond, vlak voor het kasteel. Zo snel als hij kon rende hij terug naar het stadje Elzega. Hij was door deze ervaring zo getraumatiseerd dat hij er nooit meer

over durfde te spreken.

De Drie Reuzen

In het stadje Glorrikom was een ware muizenplaag. Ze vraten alles wat los en vast zat, en de inwoners van Glorrikom waren hopeloos. Het bestuur van het stadje Glorrikom loofde een grote beloning uit aan de persoon die hen van de muizenplaag zou kunnen verlossen. Maar vele jaren lang kwam er niemand opdagen. Uiteindelijk op een dag kwam er een oud vrouwtje aan de poort van Glorrikom, en vertelde aan de poortwachter dat zij wel een middeltje had om met de muizen af te rekenen. De poortwachter zuchtte diep, en wist niet of hij dit wel kon geloven, maar al snel haalde het oude vrouwtje een spuitbus tevoorschijn, spoot wat in het rond, en de vele muizen die op de grond speelden vielen dood neer. De poortwachter kuchte even, maar kon toen zijn ogen niet geloven. Hij wreef in zijn ogen en keek nog eens. Zo snel als hij kon rende hij naar het stadsbestuur die er vreemd van opkeken.

'Breng dat vrouwtje hier,' zei het bestuur. Na een tijdje stond het oude vrouwtje op de stoep en toonde hen de spuitbus. Ze spoot even wat in het rond en direct vielen de muizen die op de grond speelden dood neer. 'Maar dat is geweldig,' zei het bestuur. En ze kon direct beginnen. En och, het vrouwtje begon zo te spuiten dat spoedig het hele stadje onder een zwarte walm was, en niemand kon nog iets zien. Het prikte zelfs een beetje in hun ogen. Toen de walm eindelijk na een lange tijd was gezakt waren alle muizen verdwenen, maar tegelijkertijd waren ook alle kinderen verdwenen, en het vrouwtje was in geen velden of wegen te bekennen. 'We zijn bedrogen !' riep het bestuur. En snel waren alle mensen in rep en roer. Waar waren hun kinderen ? En waar was het vrouwtje, want zij moest wel een heel erg gemene heks zijn.

Ver weg hoog in een gebouw waren de kinderen ondergebracht. Ze lagen allemaal doodziek in bedden, en het oude vrouwtje liep schreeuwend langs de bedden. 'Zo, nietsnutten, als jullie straks weer beter zijn, dan zal ik jullie eens leren wat werken is.' En toen de kinderen weer beter waren moesten ze hard werken voor de heks, voornamelijk in de vele keukens die ze had. De kinderen moesten veel brood bakken. Het brood was wel erg lekker, en ze kregen er zoveel van als ze wilden, maar de kinderen leden erg onder het bewind van deze vrouw. Het was er zo erg dat veel kinderen het niet meer konden uithouden. 'Oh, die oude heks,' zei een jongetje, 'ik kan haar wel wat aandoen.'

'We moeten gewoon ontsnappen,' zei een meisje.

'Ja, maar hoe ?' vroegen twee andere meisjes. Het gebouw was overal potdicht.

'Gewoon wachten totdat ze slaapt, en dan haar kamer doorzoeken of daar iets is, een sleutel ofzo voor iets,' zei een wat ouder meisje. Dat vonden de meisjes wel een goed idee. En toen de oude heks sliep slopen ze stilletjes naar haar kamer. Ze zochten in alle laden, maar konden niets vinden. Maar even later vond één van de meisjes iets onder een lamp. Het was inderdaad een sleutel. Stilletjes slopen de meisjes weer uit de kamer, waar andere meisjes hen opwachtten. 'Hebben jullie wat gevonden ?' vroegen ze. En al gauw werd de sleutel getoond, en een glimlach van verlichting kwam op hun gezichten. Er was een deur die naar een grot leidde, en daar paste de sleutel op. Alle kinderen werden opgetrommeld, en de uittocht zou beginnen. Het waren een heleboel kinderen. In de grot was een andere grote deur, bestaande uit twee deuren die tezamen één deur vormden. Beide deuren hadden een gouden roos op hen. Al snel klopten de kinderen op de deur. Een dwerg deed open. 'Welkom in het rijk van dwerg Tirolijn,' zei de dwerg. Ze kwamen in een grote zaal, en in het midden zat een grote reus van metaal. Er was een balkon rondom de reus waarop de kinderen stonden. 'Dit is reus Droomzaad,' zei de dwerg.

'Waar is dat voor ?' vroeg een meisje.

'Wel,' zei de dwerg, 'reus Droomzaad is de vriend van ieder kind, en beschermt hen tegen de heks.' Reus Droomzaad nam de kinderen mee naar een kasteel in het rijk van dwerg Tirolijn, waar ze konden wonen. De kinderen waren erg blij met het kasteel. Het was een erg groot kasteel met vele kamers. Er woonde al een meisje in het kasteel, die reus Droomzaad een tijdje geleden had gered uit de klauwen van de heks. Framboosje heette het meisje. Ze was heel lief, en ze was bijna helemaal van snoep gemaakt. De kinderen behandelden Framboosje als een prinses, en waren al erg snel dol op haar.

Maar op een nacht was het weer helemaal mis. De heks met haar vleermuizen viel het kasteel aan. Ze wilde de kinderen terug. De lucht was vol met grote vleermuizen die een hels kabaal maakten, en ze probeerden ingangen in het kasteel te maken door ruiten in the slaan. De kinderen waren met schrik geslagen, maar reus Droomzaad vertelde hen dat ze over de toversnoep-rivier achter het kasteel moesten zwemmen terwijl hij de heks met de vleermuizen zou tegenhouden. Over de toversnoep-rivier zou zijn broer, reus Snoepzaad, wonen, waar de kinderen veilig zouden zijn. De kinderen renden naar de toversnoep-rivier achter het kasteel zo hard als ze konden, en doken toen in de rivier waar ze zo snel mogelijk probeerden te zwemmen. Reus Droomzaad deed goed werk, maar er waren zoveel vleermuizen dat hij er velen niet kon tegenhouden. Die gingen achter de kinderen in de toversnoep-rivier aan, maar reus Snoepzaad kwam hen al tegemoet. Framboosje riep naar reus Snoepzaad dat reus Droomzaad zijn hulp nodig had tegen de heks. Snel zwom reus Snoepzaad naar de overkant, naar zijn broer, terwijl hij de vleermuizen terugdreef. Reus Snoepzaad kon vuurspuwen, en al snel verkoolden de vleermuizen, en de heks moest maken dat ze wegkwam. Hier kon ze niet tegenop. De kinderen waren inmiddels veilig achter de toversnoep-rivier.

Een andere reus kwam bij de kinderen staan. Het was reus Toverzaad, een andere broer van reus Droomzaad. 'Het lijkt erop dat het kasteel een wat betere bewaking nodig heeft,' zei reus Toverzaad. 'Het lijkt mij een goed idee dat reus Snoepzaad en ik vanaf nu onze broer gaan helpen met de bewaking.' Hij nam alle kinderen in zijn jas, en zwom met hen naar het kasteel. De kinderen voelden zich nu wel een stuk veiliger nu er drie reuzen waren om het kasteel te bewaken, en mocht het uit de hand lopen dan konden ze weer de toversnoep-rivier over. Het leek erop dat het nu wel goedging. De drie reuzen konden goed met elkaar

overweg, en vormden een uitstekende bewaking.

De Betoverde Hof

Ze klommen over de muur, en keken recht in het vuur, het roze was betoverend, de rozen zo dromerig, als in een tovertuin. Wat was hier gaande ? Niemand wist het, ze staarden maar. De muur begon heet te worden, en ze moesten snel terug. Ze waren hier waarschijnlijk niet gewenst. Hadden ze hun meester maar niet gevolgd, en hadden ze maar niet zichzelf opgetrokken aan dat rode touw van fluweel. Dan hadden ze dit nu niet gezien, en dan waren ze hier ook nooit geweest. Ze moesten rennen voor hun leven, maar waar was het rode touw ?

Ze wilden gewoon weten waar hun meester woonde, omdat hij altijd zo geheimzinnig deed, en nu werden ze voor hun nieuwsgierigheid gestrafd. Het rode touw was er niet meer, maar ze konden niet zomaar naar beneden springen. Plotseling zweefde het rode touw voor hun neus, maar toen ze het grepen trok het hen nog hoger de lucht in. Het brengt hen naar een kasteel waar ze worden opgesloten. Ze kunnen echter wel vrij door het kasteel lopen. Boven in een toren vinden ze een kamer waarin een tovenaar woont, tovenaar Terpentijn, die ook in het kasteel opgesloten zit. Hij vertelt de kinderen dat er in het zogeheten boek der tijden een profetie staat dat hij eens bevrijd zou worden door een groep kinderen.

De deuren en ramen van het kasteel blijven magisch gesloten, en de tovenaar vertelt hen dat alleen een zogeheten lariksvuur plantje de poort van het kasteel zou kunnen openen. Dit plantje zou ergens groeien onder het kasteel, en dan zouden ze door de tuin van Mira de elf moeten.De tovenaar leid de kinderen naar een duistere trap die tot onder het kasteel zou leiden. De kinderen zijn wel een beetje bang van de duistere trap, want die gaat heel diep en wordt steeds donkerder. Als ze dan eindelijk een deur beneden hebben bereikt komen ze in de tuin van Mira de elf. De rozen ruiken hier zo lekker, maar het lijkt wel alsof ze betoverd raken. Plotseling staat de elf voor hen, die een bril heeft en een grote bos haren. Ook heeft ze een lang roze gewaad aan en een toverstokje. Maar ze is niet zo vriendelijk. ‘Ik weet waar jullie voor komen,’ zegt ze, ‘maar ik geef het jullie niet. Heks Iamina houdt prins Vajak al lange tijd opgesloten in haar kasteel. Ik was eens zijn prinses. Nu, als jullie hem bevrijden, dan zal ik jullie het lariksvuur schenken.’ Ze wees op een meertje aan de rand van haar tuin, met daarin een eiland waarboven het kasteel zweefde. De kinderen zien in dat ze geen andere keus hebben, en willen de arme elvenprinses ook wel helpen. ‘Het kasteel is alleen te bereiken op zeven winden,’ zei de elf. ‘Ga maar naar het meertje toe, dan zal Rapoentus, de kabouter van de zeven winden, jullie wel verder helpen.’

En dat deden de kinderen. Het was niet zo lang lopen, en al snel zagen ze een kabouter

staan. ‘Het is heel simpel,’ zei de kabouter, ‘ik begrijp dat jullie naar het kasteel willen voor prins Vajak. Luister, kinderen, ik heb hier een gouden licht. Ga in het licht staan, en denk aan iets ergs totdat je huilt. En let dan goed op totdat er een gouden traan valt. Houd de gouden traan dan in de lucht, en roep : ‘Oh zeven winden, zeven winden, ik hoop dat jullie mij kunnen vinden.’ Dan zullen de zeven winden komen en jullie naar het kasteel brengen.’ De kinderen gingen in het gouden licht staan, en dachten aan iets ergs. ‘Denk maar aan het ergste wat je je maar kunt bedenken,’ zei de kabouter. En al snel begonnen de kinderen flink te huilen, totdat er hier en daar wat gouden tranen vielen. Ze hielden de gouden tranen in de lucht en zeiden : ‘Oh zeven winden, zeven winden, ik hoop dat jullie mij kunnen vinden,’ en al snel werden ze door zeven winden gegrepen en over het meertje gebracht.

‘Woont hier echt een heks ?’ vroeg Doortje, toen ze stilletjes het kasteel ingingen. De kabouter was er ook bij. ‘Oh ja,’ zei de kabouter.

‘Waar is ze dan ?’ vroeg Doortje.

‘Oh, ze kan overal wezen, het is zo’n groot kasteel,’ zei de kabouter.

‘En waar is de prins dan ?’ vraagt Doortje.

‘Oh, kom maar mee,’ zegt de kabouter, en haalde een vreemsoortige sleutel tevoorschijn, van rood gesteente. ‘Dit is de rode traan,’ zei de kabouter, ‘de traan van de prins. De kabouter liep regelrecht op een deur af, en opende de deur met de sleutel. Als ze binnen komen vinden ze alleen maar boeken. ‘Deze boeken heeft de prins geschreven,’ zei de kabouter, en nam één boek er tussenuit. ‘In één van die boeken staat dat hij in het boek der tijden heeft gelezen dat eens een groep kinderen hem zou bevrijden.’

‘Oh, de profetie,’ zegt Dirdos, ‘daar had tovenaar Terpentijn het ook al over.’ De kabouter schoof een boekenkast opzij, waarachter een poort van een gang was. Deze gang leidde tot de elvenschoon vijver. Hier woonde de elvenprinses Hyacinta. ‘Jullie komen vast en zeker om de prins te helpen,’ zei Hyacinta. Opeens werd alles erg donker, en er was een sterke wind. In het donker verscheen er een licht, omhuld door een zacht paars licht. Het was de fee Jestagide. ‘Oh, help dit land van sloten,’ zei de fee, ‘van geheimenissen onopgelost, oh help dit land, anders is het te laat, het is bijna het uur van algemis.’

‘Wie is algemis ?’ vroeg Klare, een ander kind.

‘Zij is een verschrikkelijk beest,’ zei de fee.

‘Hoe kunnen we prins Vajak helpen ?’ vroeg Kere, een ander meisje.

‘Hij zit opgesloten onder het meer van schoensmeer,’ zei de fee, ‘niet meer in het kasteel.’

‘Maar waar is dat meer dan ?’ vroeg Kere.

‘Rondom het kasteel,’ zei de fee. ‘Je kon misschien niet zien dat het schoensmeer is, maar dat komt omdat het gemengd was met tranen.’

‘Waarom dat ?’ vroeg Kere. De fee zei niets.

‘Hoe kunnen we daar komen,’ vroeg Tjoy, een ander kind.

‘Baad jezelf in elvenschoon,’ zei Hyacinta. ‘En je komt in de grotten onder het meer van

schoensmeer.'

Al snel stapten de kinderen in de vijver, samen met de kabouter, om daar te baden. In een flits kwamen ze onder het meer van schoensmeer terecht, in een stelsel van grotten. 'Hier moet de prins ergens wezen,' zei de kabouter. Overal in de grotten waren tralies aan de zijkanten waarachter kinderen zaten, en allerlei soorten wezens. Het was een soort gevangenis-complex.

Tot hun grote schrik zien ze ineens hun meester achter tralies. 'Meester, wat doet u hier,' roept Klare. 'Hoe kan u gevangen zijn terwijl u altijd les geeft op school.' De kinderen waren diep geschokt en verbaasd.

'Alleen overdag ben ik vrij,' zei de meester. 'Maar na schooltijd wordt ik weer opgesloten. Ze noemen me hier prins Vajak.'

'Oh, dus u bent prins Vajak,' zegt Dirdos. 'Maar wie is dan elf Mira, die beweert uw prinses te zijn.'

'Ze liegt,' zei de meester, 'zij is degene die mij opgesloten houdt en het lariksvuur bewaakt. Zij is heks Iamina, en het is bijna het uur van algemis, waarin ze in een monster zal veranderen, en dan worden we allemaal gebrouwen tot schoensmeer. Ze zal alles hier veranderen tot een grote ketel daarvoor.'

'Wat kunnen we doen ?' vragen Doortje en Kere.

'Prinses Schoensmeer,' zegt de meester. 'Zij is de dochter van de heks. De heks heeft haar verbannen tot diep onder de grotten. Zij draagt de traan der rozen. Dat is de enige sleutel die deze gevangenissen kan openmaken, maar jullie moeten snel zijn, want het is al bijna het uur van algemis.'

De kinderen begonnen nu toch wel erg bang te worden. 'Hoe kunnen we prinses schoensmeer bereiken ?' vroeg Dirdos. Maar de meester zei niks meer, en stond als bevroren daar. In de verte hoorden ze gelach. Dichtbij de gevangenissen was een trap. Eén van de kinderen rende er naartoe, en de rest volgde. 'Kom mee.' De trap ging dieper de grond in, en al snel kwamen ze bij een open ruimte, waar een huilende prinses zat, en ze was helemaal bedekt onder schoensmeer. 'Jullie meester heeft mij vroeger geprobeerd te helpen,' zei de prinses. Het was inderdaad prinses schoensmeer. 'Maar mijn moeder sloot hem op.'

'Hoe kwam hij hier ?' vroeg één van de kinderen.

De prinses zweeg. 'Ik kan niet naar boven,' zei ze. Ze gaf de rozentraan sleutel. 'Dit is alles wat je nodig hebt. Maar daar kwam ineens haar moeder aan. Het was de heks. 'Hier met die sleutel,' gilde de heks. 'Hier ermee.'

'Moeder, alstublieft,' zei de prinses. 'Houd daar nou eens mee op.'

'Oh, ik deel hier de lakens uit,' gilde de heks. 'En het is bijna het uur van algemis.'

'Ren voor je leven,' gilde de prinses. Maar de heks stond voor de trap. Ze konden geen kant op. De heks begon te grijnzen. 'Nog even en jullie zullen allemaal omgesmolten zijn tot

schoensmeer,' zei de heks.

'Toe prinses,' zei Klare, 'waarom kunt u niet met ons mee naar boven.'

'Red jezelf,' zei de prinses, 'ik kan niet gered worden, maar red de meester en alle andere gevangenen. Dat is alles wat ik van je vraag.'

'Nee,' zei Klare, 'vertel, zeg op, hoe kunnen we je helpen.' De heks begon steeds dichterbij te komen. Sommige kinderen waren zo bang dat ze bijna jankten van angst. 'De traan van groen en gif,' zei de prinses, 'is wat mijn hart kan vrijzetten. Het is traan van prins Vajak.'

'Oh,' zegt de kabouter. 'Maar ik heb hier de rode traan sleutel van prins Vajak. Niet groen en gif.'

'Vlug,' zei de prinses, 'lees wat er op die traan sleutel geschreven staat.'

'Grijp die kabouter,' krijste de heks, 'grijp hem.' Van bovenaf de trap kwamen allemaal grijze wachters aanrennen met speren en andere wapens.' De kabouter sprong achter de prinses, en begon snel hardop te lezen. Ook de kinderen zochten toevlucht bij de prinses. 'Doorboor die kinderen !' riep de heks. De wachters hadden hun speren en wapens al klaar om te steken. De kinderen slaakten een gil. 'Ga achter mij staan !' riep de prinses. 'Ik heb wel wat macht !' De prinses knipte met haar vingers en ineens kwamen de wachters in slow-motion. De speren kwamen wel steeds dichterbij, dus nu moest de kabouter snel zijn. 'Ik sterf een beetje in je armen, en kom ook een beetje tot leven daar,' las de kabouter hardop. 'Je bent de prinses van de morgen, en 's avonds wil ik ook bij je zijn.' Plotseling veranderde de rode traansleutel in groen en gif. 'Mijn hart is vrij nu !' riep de prinses. Overal verschenen groene personen met vleugels rondom hen. De wachters werden tegen de muur aan geslagen, en ook de heks viel opzij, en de groene wezens met de vleugels namen de kinderen, de kabouter en de prinses mee naar boven, waar ze de gevangenissen konden openmaken met de rozentraan sleutel.

De wezens brachten hen zo snel mogelijk naar de tuin van Mira, waar ze het lariksvuur konden plukken. 'Het is bijna het uur van algemis,' zei de prinses. 'Het kan nu elk moment gebeuren. We moeten snel zijn.' Snel gingen ze de duistere trap op, en maakten allereerst een poort open. Nu moest tovenaar Terpentijn nog ingelicht worden. Daar was het rode touw al. De kinderen grepen het, en riepen naar de tovenaar die al aan kwam hollen. Alles was al aan het smelten, en ze zagen hoe alles om hen heen in een ketel veranderde. De tovenaar had gelukkig nu het touw ook vast, en het touw trok hen weg van de smeltende massa. Een groen monster kwam naar boven, onder de schoensmeer. 'Jullie zullen snel schoensmeer zijn,' schreeuwde het monster. Het rode touw bracht hen boven de ketel uit. 'Weg van deze tovertuin,' riep de meester, die ook aan het touw hing, samen met de prinses. 'Toe maar,' zei tovenaar Terpentijn. 'Het touw zal ons brengen naar mijn domein, de hof van Raak.' Al snel kwamen ze in een prachtige hof met vele weelderige bijna in elkaar gevlochten planten, struiken en bomen. Het hek ging bijna vanzelf open.

In het midden van de hof was een prachtig wit huis waar ze allemaal een kamer kregen. Klare keek naar prinses schoensmeer, die er nu heel anders uitzag nu alle schoensmeer van haar gezicht weg was. 'Maar u bent juffrouw Gezelle,' zei Klare verbaasd. De andere kinderen zagen het nu ook, en meester Tobbe hield haar vast aan haar arm. Niet lang daarna trouwde prins Vajak met zijn prinses Schoensmeer, en ze leefden allemaal nog lang en

gelukkig.

Het Zoete Zalf Bos

Ze zaten rondom de tafel : koning Klaproos, fee Boterbloem, kabouter Sleutelzaad, en Roosje. 'We moeten er echt wat aan doen,' sprak de koning. 'Dat kan zo niet langer. Prins Zoete Zalf is al te lang van ons weg. We moeten wat aan die nare heks doen.'

'Waar woont ze ?' vroeg Roosje.

'In het luisterbos,' zei koning Klaproos. Even later waren ze op pad naar het luisterbos. Het was een stuk lopen door de velden van kro-bloemen. Bij het kasteel aangekomen stond heks Greepbeen al op hen te wachten. 'Heks !' bulderde koning Klaproos. 'Laat prins Zoete Zalf vrij !' Maar de heks begon te lachen. 'Jullie kunnen toch niks tegen mij doen,' zei ze. Kabouter Sleutelzaad was in zijn boek aan het bladeren. Het was een toverboek waar vaak waardevolle dingen in stonden, en dan vooral op momenten waarop ze het nodig hadden. De teksten en de plaatjes in het boek leken altijd weer te veranderen. 'Assisteer mij,' zei koning Klaproos.

'Hier staat …,' zei kabouter Sleutelzaad, 'dat de heks onschadelijk gemaakt kan worden door sluipzand, en dat is in het bezit van de tovenaar van het peperplantjes-bos.'

'Geef hier dat boek !' krijste de heks.

'Op naar het peperplantjes-bos,' zei koning Klaproos. Weer was het een stuk lopen. De tovenaar had inderdaad het sluipzand. Het was toverzand. 'Zeg, wat een mooi boek heb jij daar,' zei hij tegen kabouter Sleutelzaad. Kabouter Sleutelzaad knikte. 'Zeg, ik heb een idee,' zei de tovenaar. 'Ik ga met jullie mee naar de heks, en zal er voor zorgen dat de prins snel vrij is.' Dat vonden ze allemaal een goed plan. De tovenaar liep voorop met het sluipzand, en weer kwamen ze na een stuk lopen aan bij de heks. 'Zo, zijn jullie daar eindelijk weer. Ik heb op jullie zitten wachten. Ik had nog een verassing voor jullie,' zei de heks.

'Nou, dat komt goed uit,' zei de tovenaar, 'want wij hebben ook een verassing voor u.'

De tovenaar strooide snel wat sluipzand over de heks heen. De heks lag snel krachteloos op de grond. Ze had haar macht verloren, maar ze begon te lachen. 'Nu ik, nu ik,' zei ze. 'Weet je, ik heb het jullie eigenlijk nog nooit verteld, maar dat zal ik nu doen, dat werd weleens tijd, nietwaar, maar mijn drie-ogige reuzenbroer, die de heksenkoning is, wacht al in het kasteel op jullie met koffie en gebak.' De tovenaar dacht dat hij met het sluipzand ook de drie-ogige broer van de heks onschadelijk kon maken, maar toen ze bij hem aankwamen, en de tovenaar het sluipzand op hem strooide gebeurde er niets. 'Je zal er wel wat anders voor nodig hebben,' zei kabouter Sleutelzaad. De drie-ogige reuzenbroer van de heks begon te

bulderen van het lachen.

'Zeg knaap,' zei koning Klaproos. 'Laat onmiddellijk prins Zoete Zalf vrij.'

'Waarom zou ik ?' zei de drie-ogige broer van de heks.

'Nou, het is beter voor je om dat nu te doen,' zei koning Klaproos.

'Komt niks van in, hoor,' zei de broer van de heks. Ze keken allemaal in zijn drie ogen, die niets dan gemeenheid, duisterheid en akeligheid uitstraalden.

'Dit is niets anders dan bar en boos,' zei koning Klaproos. 'Koffie met gebak wordt dat dan genoemd, nou eerder brood met spinnekoppen. Zo ontvang je geen gasten.'

'Gasten, ha !' zei de broer van de heks. 'Jullie zijn indringers. Nou, maak dat je wegkomt, anders zul je misschien nooit de kans meer krijgen om weg te kunnen komen. Vlug.'

'Zeg, ik laat me niet zomaar door een vlegel de les leren,' zei koning Klaproos. 'Je laat nu de prins vrij, of het zal je zuur berouwen. Koffie met gebak, puh.'

'Ja, mijn zus heeft altijd de neiging mij beter voor te stellen dan ik ben,' zei de broer van de heks. 'Dat is dan haar probleem.'

'U bent het probleem,' zei Roosje.

'Ach wat,' zei de broer van de heks, 'pijp zeven krijgt ook praatjes.'

'En dat noemt zichzelf koning,' zei Roosje.

'Wat een koning zal dat wezen,' zei fee Boterbloem.

'Juist,' zei Roosje, 'een koning van klusje knudde.'

'Oh zeg, gaan we beledigend doen ?' vroeg de broer van de heks.

'Nee,' zei Roosje, 'dat is een gebakje van eigen deeg. Koffie erbij ?'

'Roosje, Roosje,' zei koning Klaproos, 'praten met die man heeft weinig zin.'

'Nou, hij moet gewoon ophoepelen,' zei Roosje brutaal. 'Hij gaat echt zijn zin niet krijgen. Hij zal echt wel moe van zichzelf worden.'

Ondertussen was kabouter Sleutelzaad in zijn boek aan het lezen. 'Hier heb ik het,' zei hij. 'De drie-ogige reus, ook wel heksenkoning genoemd, kan verslagen worden door het kikkerdril van dokter Repelmeel die woont in het regenplantjes-bos.

'Je gaat nu dat boek aan mij geven,' zei de drie-ogige reus boos. Snel gingen ze uit het kasteel, en gingen richting het regenplantjes-bos. Het was weer een stuk lopen. Dokter Repelmeel had het kikkerdril in allerlei ketels. Ook hij wilde wel met ze mee om de reus uit te schakelen, zodat de prins vrij zou kunnen komen. Hij liep voorop met een pannetje kikkerdril. Toen ze bij de reus waren aangekomen, smeet dokter Repelmeel het kikkerdril in zijn gezicht. De reus storte direct neer. Maar ook hij begon net als de heks te lachen. 'Ik had het jullie nog niet verteld,' zei hij, 'maar de wachter van de groene kerker, waar de prins is opgesloten, is nog wel verschrikkelijker dan ik.'

Ze begonnen het hele kasteel door te zoeken. Ergens onderin het kasteel vonden ze een boeken-kamer. Kabouter Sleutelzaad leunde tegen een boekenkast aan, die direct opzij schoof, zodat er een tunnel zichtbaar werd die naar beneden liep. Hier kwamen ze aan bij de groene kerker. Een groen monster met veel klauwen kwam op hen af. 'Wat jammer nou dat jullie hier zijn gekomen, want een ieder die hier komt, komt nooit meer weg,' zei het monster. 'Het was dom van de prins om hier te komen ! En nu is het dom van jullie. Niemand komt ooit nog uit de groene kerker. De groene kerker is gierig.'

'Dat kan me niet zoveel schelen,' zei koning Klaproos. 'Je gaat de prins nu loslaten.'

'Komt niks van in, komt niks van in,' zei het monster. 'Iedereen weet dat, dat je hier gewoon niet moet komen. Dat heeft zo z'n gevolgen, ziet u.'

'Ik zie helemaal niks,' zei koning Klaproos. 'Wij zijn hier voor de bevrijding van de prins. Je laat hem nu los, anders zul je wat beleven.'

'Zeg, jullie hebben waarschijnlijk nog niet goed door met wie jullie te maken hebben,' zei het monster.

'Dat kan ons niet schelen !' riep Roosje.

'Alsof het mij wel iets kan schelen,' zei het monster.

'U laat hem nu vrij,' zei Roosje.

'Ik laat helemaal niks vrij, er komt gewoon wat bij,' zei het monster.

'Nee,' zei Roosje, 'wat bent u gemeen.'

'En wat ben jij dom,' zei het monster.

Kabouter Sleutelzaad was weer in zijn boek aan het lezen. 'Hier heb ik het !' riep hij. 'De monsterlijke wachter van de groene kerker kan verslagen worden door feeen-lippenstift.'

'Jullie komen hier toch nooit meer weg,' zei het monster, 'dus vergeet die feeen-lippenstift maar.'

'Fee Boterbloem, heb jij nog feeen-lippenstift in je tasje ?' vroeg koning Klaproos.

'Nee, ik heb het thuis laten liggen,' zei fee Boterbloem.

'Niemand heeft het hier, dus geef de moed maar op,' zei het monster.

'Nee !' riep Roosje. 'Ik heb nog feeen-lippenstift !' Snel haalde ze het tevoorschijn.

'Kras het op hem,' zei kabouter Sleutelzaad. Roosje rende op het monster af, en begon met de feeen-lippenstift op hem te krassen.

'Nee, nee !' krijste het monster, 'ga weg met dat spul ! Nee, nee, doe dat ding weg !' Het monster begon geheel weg te smelten, terwijl het slot van de kerker losknapte. De prins was vrij. Snel namen ze prins Zoete Zalf mee terug naar het Zoete Zalf bos, waar ze allen woonden.

Zevenwind

In de verte een indrukwekkende processie van skeletten in harnassen, gewapend. Zij marcheren voor de ivoren poort van de schakelburcht waar Eruptus woont. Zevenwind grijpt zijn zwaard, en slacht drieduizend skeletten-ridders om vervolgens de reusachtige burcht binnen te gaan door de ivoren poort. “Wat moet dat daar,’ roept Eruptus hem toe. ‘Ik kom het goud terughalen wat jij van ons rijk hebt gestolen,’ brult Zevenwind. Zevenwind is gestuurd door de prinses. Maar Eruptus laat een vuurvlam op Zevenwind neerdalen die hij nog net kan afketsen met zijn schild. Dan werpt Zevenwind zijn zwaard in het hart van Eruptus, terwijl een doodslucht zich door de burcht verspreid. Onder de burcht ligt het goud, en zoveel andere schatten. Als loon krijgt Zevenwind de burcht waar hij voortaan kan wonen.

Dit is het verhaal van Zevenwind, de held, die eens het rijk redde uit de klauwen van een verschrikkelijk monster, de Pania. Na het verslaan van Eruptus is Zevenwind een welkome gast in het kasteel van de prinses. Hij krijgt daar ook zijn eigen logeerkamer waar hij zich altijd kan terugtrekken, hoog in het kasteel. De prinses komt hem daar vaak opzoeken. Gouden poeder stroomt uit de handen van Zevenwind. Hij houdt ervan om met het goud te spelen. Ook liggen er grotere stukjes goud die hij lieftallig langs zijn vingers laat glijden. De prinses is een lieftallige verschijning, en Zevenwind is erg dol op haar. Na een tijdje staat hij op, en vertrekt, want hij heeft nog veel dingen te doen. De prinses achtervolgt hem, en ziet hoe hij buiten wordt tegengehouden door een zwartachtig skelet. Het is het begin van een nachtmerrie voor het rijk. Zevenwind wordt gevangen genomen, en een enorm monster blaast zichzelf op tegen het kasteel. Het is de Pania, een draakachtige verschijning, met legers van miljoenen en miljoenen skeletten. Al snel gaat het hele volk in slavernij, en Zevenwind belandt in een diepe kerker. Daar krijgt hij geen bezoek, behalve dan van een oude tovenaar die zich had verbonden aan zijn ring. De tovenaar verschijnt als een geest en spreekt Zevenwind toe. De volgende dag moet Zevenwind voor Pania verschijnen. Pania verschijnt nu als een oude dame met een staf, en spreekt verschrikkelijke dingen over hem uit. De tovenaar verschijnt weer als een geest, en valt Pania aan, maar haar krachten zijn te sterk. ‘Blijf maar bij hem oude man,’ spreekt Pania. ‘Hij heeft wel wat bemoediging nodig.’ Dan begint ze ijselijk te lachen. Kreunend stort Zevenwind neer door de vervloekingen die ze over hem heeft uitgesproken, terwijl de oude man hem weer overeind helpt. ‘Heus, je kan niet veel doen, oude man,’ zegt Pania. Dan wordt Zevenwind door een paar skeletten nog erger geketend, en wordt in een diepe put geworpen, terwijl Pania hard begint te lachen. Achter haar hoofd verschijnen wat veren van een pauw, en langzaam verandert ze in een pauw en vliegt krijsend van het lachen weg. De skeletten ketenen Zevenwind aan de muur van de put, en vertrekken dan. ‘Het is niet erg, Swimbard,’ zegt Zevenwind tegen de oude man. ‘Het is niet erg.’

Na een tijdje komt één van de dochters van Pania bij Zevenwind kijken. Zevenwind vertrekt geen spier. ‘Goedzo, reus,’ zegt de dochter van Pania, we zijn al aan het overdenken en overleggen wat we met je zullen doen. Velen van ons hebben baat bij jou.’ Dan kietelt ze even met een veer onder zijn neus, en vertrekt dan weer. Inmiddels is één van de dienstmeisjes van de prinses in de burcht van Pania binnengedrongen. Ze is hier in opdracht van de prinses om Zevenwind terug te halen. Ze heeft wat toverkrachten, en ze hoopt dat het genoeg zal zijn om Zevenwind uit zijn benarde situatie te verlossen. ‘Kijk,

kijk, wie hebben we daar,' zegt Pania die ineens achter haar staat met haar zeven dochters. Eén van de dochters neemt een mes, en snijdt een stuk in de arm van het dienstmeisje. Het dienstmeisje begint te gillen, maar roept dan ineens om de magische zwaan, een toverspreuk, en niet lang daarna vallen ze allemaal op de grond als door een verblindend licht. Het dienstmeisje rent weg, en na een tijdje vind ze de put. Maar een paar skelettenwachters hebben haar op het oog. Eén van de skeletten trekt een pistool met een lange loper, en schiet het meisje neer met een soort zaad als van laserstralen. Het meisje weet nog net in de put te komen, en bungelt aan de rand. De oude tovenaar schiet haar te hulp, en met wat toverspreuken weet ze Zevenwind los te maken, maar dan staan de twee skelettenwachters aan de rand van de put. Zevenwind slaakt een kreet, terwijl de wachters door een vreemde kracht voorover vallen. Soms gaat het toveren Zevenwind goed af, maar dan moet er wel een krachtige tovenares in de buurt zijn. Niet lang daarna zijn ze uit de put, maar meerdere skelettenwachters beginnen in de gaten te krijgen wat er aan het gebeuren is. Ze blokkeren de deuren, en anderen komen op hen af. Dan maakt de oude tovenaar een gebaar, terwijl een zachte roze rookwolk hen in het niets laat verdwijnen. Zevenwind is door het dolle heen. Hij is blij dat de magie zo goed werkt, en dankt het dienstmeisje voor haar hulp. Waar heb je dat geleerd, vraagt hij.

Ze zijn nu hoog op het kasteel van de oude tovenaar. Zevenwind is blij met die oude toverring. Maar het volk is nog steeds in grote problemen. Het dienstmeisje vertelt wat ze met de prinses hebben gedaan, en dat voordat de prinses stierf ze tegen haar zei : Redt Zevenwind. Hij kan het volk redden. Zevenwind vind het verschrikkelijk dat de prinses niet meer leeft. Hij voelt zich nu erg verantwoordelijk voor het volk. Ze besluiten terug te gaan naar het rijk, maar daar vinden ze een verschrikkelijke ellende. Tegen de boze magie die hier heerst kunnen ze niet op. Maar dan krijgt Zevenwind een idee. Onder de burcht van Eruptus waar hij mocht wonen van de prinses daar zijn nog een heleboel geheime schatkamers. Wie weet wat ze daar allemaal nog tegen kunnen komen. En zo gaan ze alledrie naar de burcht. Heel diep onder de grond vinden ze een kamer met magische wapens en wapenrustingen. Sommige wapenrustingen zijn gemaakt van zeldzame slangenhuiden, en anderen van vreemd magisch leer. Dan begint er ineens een voorwerp dicht in hun buurt vreemd te piepen. Het is een soort doosje van een soort rubber. Zevenwind pakt het doosje op, terwijl het doosje begint te krijsen. 'Wie ben je ?' vraagt Zevenwind. 'Ach,' zegt het doosje, 'ik ben een oud hulpje van Eruptus. Hij vond mij eens ergens in een kasteel van een rijk waarvan hij alle inwoners had verslonden.' Ze wisten dat Eruptus dat soort dingen deed, maar dit kwam nu goed van pas. 'Wat kun je voor ons doen ?' vroeg Zevenwind.

'Oh,' zegt het doosje. 'Dat is heel eenvoudig. Ik ben de windenmaker. Hef mij op, schud me en dan zullen de winden komen, en ik zal ketenen wie je maar wil.' Nou, daar had Zevenwind wel wat aan. Hij ging direkt terug naar het volk, en liet de winden uit het doosje komen, zoals het doosje had gezegd, en liet alle skeletten ketenen. Maar Pania en haar dochters waren daar niet van gediend, en ditmaal lieten ze het volk ketenen door de bliksem. Pania begon luid te lachen, en Zevenwind moest erg op zijn hoede zijn. Ook het dienstmeisje was met hem meegekomen, maar ze bewaarde veilige afstand. 'Waar wil je dat ik de skeletten naartoe breng ?' vroeg het doosje. 'Sluit ze maar op in een rots,' zei Zevenwind. En zo leidde het vreemde doosje door de ketenen van de wind de skeletten als in een processie het bos in, op zoek naar een goede rots waar ze in vastgeklonken konden worden. Pania was woedend, en kon niets doen, maar ze had nog steeds het volk geketend. Zevenwind begon de smaak te pakken te krijgen en ging weer naar de burcht van Eruptus.

Weer ging hij onder de grond, op zoek naar nog meer schatten. In een andere kamer kwam hij weer wapenrustingen tegen, van slangen, vreemd leer, harige pantsers, harige schilden met zeldzame stenen erin, en ook vreemde helmen met veren. Ditmaal was Pania hem gevolgd met haar dochters. 'Ik weet wel dat je hier bent,' riep Pania. Het dienstmeisje schrok. Snel pakte ze een zwaard en wilde Pania tegemoet gaan. Maar Zevenwind hield haar tegen. Pania was in een verschrikkelijke spin aan het veranderen, en haar pijlen doorboorden het dienstmeisje. Zevenwind pakte een schild en wierp het naar Pania toe, maar het schild raakte één van de dochters die direkt buiten westen viel. Het dienstmeisje bloedde heel erg, en Zevenwind nam haar op, en ging dieper de schatkamers binnen. Velen hadden hem altijd gewaarschuwd dat hij niet te diep moest gaan, vanwege de grote gevaren. Maar nu kon Zevenwind niet anders. Ineens verscheen de oude tovenaar met een stenen zwaard. 'Hiermee kun je Pania verslaan,' zei de tovenaar. Zevenwind greep het zwaard, legde het dienstmeisje neer, en ging terug richting Pania. Pania lachtte hem uit toen ze hem zag met het stenen zwaard. 'Wat moet je met zo'n ding ?' lachtte ze. Maar snel stootte hij het stenen zwaard in haar buik, terwijl ze neerviel. Daarna sloeg hij haar overgebleven dochters ermee, en het gevecht was snel afgelopen. Toen hij buitenkwam met het dienstmeisje was het volk inmiddels bevrijdt van de bliksem-ketenen.

Niet lang daarna maakten ze Zevenwind tot koning, en het dienstmeisje werd zijn koningin.

Dragodan

Dragodan zit in zijn kasteel wachtende op het antwoord van de prinses. Hij heeft zijn hulp aangeboden aan haar, en nu wacht hij op de opdracht. Dragodan heeft lang gezwoegd voor allerlei duistere heren, en ditmaal is hij blij dat de prinses hem in dienst genomen heeft. Alleen moet hij nog te weten zien te komen welke opdrachten zij voor hem heeft.

Boven de bergen zweven een aantal magische wezens. Ze zijn op weg naar het kasteel van Dragodan met de boodschap van de prinses. Dragodan is erg blij als ze binnen komen. Ze dragen een speciaal zwaard voor hem. 'Waar is dit zwaard voor ?'

‘Dit is de opdracht van de prinses,’ zegt één van de magische wezens. ‘Versla de Tundra en trouw met haar.’ Dat was wel een erg vreemde opdracht voor Dragodan. Dat had hij nog nooit meegemaakt. Hij wilde absoluut de draak wel verslaan, of het monster, wat het ook wezen mocht, maar hij wilde absoluut niet met haar trouwen. Hij was een vrij man, en hij wilde een vrij man blijven.

‘Oh, maar dan zal de prinses wel iemand anders zoeken om voor haar te strijden,’ zegt een van de wezens. ‘Ziet u, de prinses wordt namelijk met nachtmerries lastiggevallen door de Tundra, een gedrocht dat ’s nachts op haar balkon komt, een gevleugeld monster. Ze heeft iemand nodig die altijd bij haar is.’

‘Zeg maar tegen de prinses dat ik de Tundra kan verslaan zodat hij nooit meer terugkomt,’ zegt Dragodan.

‘Oh,’ zegt een van de wezens, ‘okay dat is goed. We laten het u weten.’

En na drie dagen zijn de wezens terug, en Dragodan mag komen. Dragodan neemt het zwaard aan, en de magische wezens leggen hem uit waar de Tundra woont. Voor Dragodan is het niet moeilijk het gedrocht te verslaan, want dat heeft hij al zo vaak gedaan. De prinses is hem erg dankbaar. ‘Is er dan niets wat ik u als geschenk aan kan bieden ?’ vraagt de prinses. Maar Dragodan schudt zijn hoofd. Dat hij de prinses blij kon maken was voor hem het mooiste geschenk.

Op een dag krijgt Dragodan weer bezoek van de magische wezens. Ditmaal hebben ze een andere opdracht voor Dragodan. Als Dragodan de opdracht zal vervullen, dan mag hij koning van het rijk worden. Maar dat wil Dragodan niet. Hij wil zijn vrijheid bewaren boven alles. ‘Wat is de opdracht ?’ vraagt hij.

‘De prinses heeft haar gouden armband verloren op reis. Kun jij hem terughalen ?’ vraagt een van de wezens.

Na een lange zoektocht komt Dragodan erachter dat de armband in handen is van een gevaarlijke vogel. Hij trekt zijn zwaard, en wordt bijna geobsedeerd door de prachtige armband met zoveel kleine steentjes die eraan bungelen. Zo’n prachtige armband heeft hij nog nooit gezien. Het wordt een moeilijk en bloederig gevecht met de vogel, een van de moeilijkste gevechten die hij ooit heeft gehad, maar toch slaagt hij erin de armband terug te krijgen, en brengt hem naar de prinses.

‘Weer dank je wel,’ zegt de prinses. ‘Dragodan, ik wil je een goede raad geven. Maak van

de verslagen vogel je nieuwe wapenrusting, en geef ook wat van zijn veren aan mij.' Dragodan doet wat hem gezegd wordt, en maakt van de botten en veren een nieuw pantser. Ook geeft hij enkele veren aan de prinses. De prinses was altijd gesluierd geweest voor Dragodan, maar ditmaal haalt ze haar sluiers weg. Als Dragodan haar ziet wordt hij direkt verliefd op haar, en wil niets lievers dan met haar trouwen en haar koning zijn. Daar had de prinses natuurlijk op gewacht, en zo zal zij koningin zijn.

Maar de raadgevende vogels van Dragodan vinden dat niet zo'n goed idee. 'Laat jezelf niet zo door haar beheksen. Heus, je zal niet tevreden zijn in je huwelijk.' En daarom nam Dragodan zich op een dag vlak voor het huwelijk voor om te vertrekken. Hij ging dieper de onderwereld in, en liet zich leiden door de raadgevende vogels, die hem al raad gaven sinds hij een kind was. In de diepten van de onderwereld vind Dragodan een heleboel vrouwen zoals de prinses, en hij weet dat als hij zijn hart aan hen geeft, dan is zijn leven afgelopen. Hij wil vrij zijn, en doen waarvoor hij geboren is : het vervullen van opdrachten.

Einde

De Nieuwe Kok

Het was koud op het dek. De jungle rivier was groot. Kareltje de Vierde was een woest piraat. Wilde indianen waren er aan de overkant. 'Kom op mannen,' zei Kareltje de Vierde. De indianen

bleken heel aardig. Kareltje de Vierde en ook de andere mannen kregen een hut. ‘Het is een vreemde wereld,’ zei Kareltje. Ze gingen vroeg slapen. De volgende ochtend vertrokken ze vroeg met het schip. en gingen langs de oever van de rivier. Nog meer indianen kwamen ze tegen, die allemaal ook erg aardig waren. Kareltje was trots op de reis en op zijn schip. Hij wilde niet naar school, en dit was de beste oplossing. Het schip was vol van schatten, dit schip wat hij eens had gekaapt.

’s Nachts spookte het altijd op het schip. Dan kwam het Spaanse spook Mijarg altijd langs om griezelige verhalen te vertellen. Kareltje vond dat niet erg. Hij hield maar wat graag van spoken. Op een dag kwam het schip aan in spookstad. Hier woonden de ergste spoken, maar Kareltje kwam alleen maar om vrienden te worden. Koning Grootspook was blij Kareltje te zien. Hij regeerde spookstad, en hij was blij eens iemand van de buitenwereld te zien.

Koning Grootspook had twee dochters : Griezelientje en Griezeliesje, en hij vroeg aan Kareltje of ze met hem meemochten op zijn schip, want ze waren nog nooit buiten spookstad geweest. Natuurlijk vond Kareltje dat wel gezellig, en hij kon het al snel goed met hen vinden. Griezelientje en Griezeliesje hadden beiden op de spookschool gezeten, en hoe meer verhalen ze erover vertelden, hoe meer Kareltje nieuwsgierig werd. Hij wilde ook weleens naar zo’n school. Na een paar weken varen met de twee spookdochters van de koning kwam het schip weer langs spookstad. Ditmaal om Kareltje af te zetten bij de spookschool. Griezelientje en Griezeliesje zouden verder varen met de bemanning van het schip. Toen Kareltje binnenkwam in de spookschool werd hij direct begroet door Boudewijn Graag, het welkoms-spook. Het welkoms-spook zou hem wel even rondleiden en zijn kamer aanwijzen. Ook gingen ze even langs de direkteur, die heel blij was Kareltje te zien. ‘Fijn dat we weer een nieuwe leerling hebben,’ zei de spookschool-directeur, die zelf ook een enorm spook was. ‘Dat is beter dan kiespijn.’

‘Wat een opmerking,’ dacht Kareltje, ‘beter dan kiespijn, haha, wat een mallert.’ Het was een knotsgekke school, wat Griezelientje en Griezeliesje hem al verteld hadden. Ook de keuken van de school was knotsgek, waar het spook Malle Mien werkte. ‘Zo, en ik zou maar goeie cijfers halen,’ zei Malle Mien, ‘anders beland je hier in de kookpot, haha.’ Kareltje moest lachen, en hoopt maar dat het niet waar was. ‘Nee hoor,’ zei het welkoms-spook, ‘ze maakt maar een grapje. Hier op school worden geen cijfers gehaald, maar cijfers gebracht, en wel door de leerlingen. De leerlingen moeten hun meesters en juffrouwen namelijk cijfers geven en niet andersom. En als de cijfers te laag zijn, dan mogen de leerlingen een pistool trekken.’

‘Is het echt waar ?’ vroeg Kareltje. ‘Hahahaha,’ lachte Malle Mien. ‘Ik ben blij dat ik geen leraar ben.’

‘Nee,’ zei het welkoms-spook, ‘het is een gevaarlijk beroep. Velen eindigen vroegtijdig in hun graf, maar ja, daar leven spoken van, haha. Alle studenten hier zijn gewapend met een pistool, en andere dingen.’

‘Wat voor andere dingen ?’ vroeg Kareltje.

‘Allerlei soorten martelwerktuigen, om zich te verdedigen tegen het lerarentuig,’ zei het welkoms-spook.

‘En wat eten jullie dan ?’ vroeg Kareltje.

‘Leraren-soep,’ schaterlachte Malle Mien.

‘Ja, en meesterworst,’ zei het welkoms-spook.

‘Is dat alles ?’ vroeg Kareltje.

‘Ik kan niets meer verzinnen,’ lachte Malle Mien. ‘Maar het is een hele lijst hoor. In het spook-kookboek staan alle ingredienten, uitmuntende recepten.’

‘Jullie zijn gek,’ zei Kareltje, ‘maar wel leuk.’

‘Kom op,’ zei het welkoms-spook, ‘dan laat ik je even je kamer zien.’ Kareltje had een grote koffer bij zich, en die kon hij daar direct op zijn bed dumpen. Het was een kamer met leuke schilderijtjes, en met een paar kasten. Het behang zag er spookachtig uit. Kareltje hoopte dat hij hier goed kon slapen. Op het bureautje lagen wat schoolboeken en wat kadootjes. ‘Ja, je bent een nieuwe student, hè,’ zei het welkoms-spook.

‘Dacht het wel,’ zei Kareltje.

‘Wij van het welkoms-comite hopen dat je een goede tijd zal hebben op onze keurige spookschool,’ zei het welkoms-spook.

‘Dat zal wel lukken,’ zei Kareltje.

Toen het welkoms-spook weg was klopte Malle Mien op de deur. Kareltje vond het een leuk mens. ‘Kerel, wat heb je een keurig kamertje,’ zei Malle Mien. ‘Dat is het tegenovergestelde van de spook-keuken. Zeg heb je zin in wat spook-brood ?’

‘Ik lust wel wat,’ zei Kareltje. Malle Mien nam hem mee aan de hand, en samen gingen ze de keuken weer in. Ook maakte Malle Mien wat spook-koffie voor hem. ‘En wat doen jullie ’s nachts ?’ vroeg Kareltje.

‘Oh, dan feesten we,’ zei Malle Mien. ‘Er is er altijd wel één jarig. Of er gaat weer eens iemand trouwen, of iemand heeft weer eens ergens een diploma gehaald. Er is elke nacht wel wat te feesten.’

‘Slapen jullie dan nooit ?’ vroeg Kareltje.

‘Oh jawel,’ zei Malle Mien, ‘tussen de bedrijven door.’

Daar kwam spook Pol aan, een dikke man met een groot gat in zijn buik. ‘Waar is meester Vis,’ vroeg hij.

‘Daar ben je wel wat laat mee,’ schaterde Malle Mien, ‘die is gisteren met vissenkom en al in de soep meegekookt.’

‘Oh ja ?’ zei spook Pol, ‘het is toch wel treurig. Wanneer is de begravenis ?’

‘Morgenvroeg om half tien,’ zei Malle Mien, die verging van het lachen, ‘en geen bloemen graag.’

‘Waarom geen bloemen ?’ vroeg spook Pol, ‘ook geen ijsbloemen ?’

‘Nee,’ zei Malle Mien, ‘het moet een waardige, beleefde en sombere optocht worden, zoals wij spoken gewend zijn, niet ?’

Spook Pol knikte enthousiast. ‘En wie vervangt meester Vis ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Oh, zijn vrouw,’ schaterde Malle Mien, ‘maar die zal ook wel snel in de pan belanden, want die is alomtegenwoordig gehaat, door vriend en vijand, door kabouter en keukenrobot.’

‘Ja, ja, ja, ik zie het al,’ zei spook Pol. ‘Dat hele geslacht deugt niet, dat tuig van Vis, het zijn allemaal kwijmels, stijvelingen, tutteraars, broedige broeders, zotte kaaskoppen, de familie reutelfleut. Ik zeg het je, er heerst een vloek op die familie. Ze groeien op voor galg en graairad.’

‘Ik dacht dat jij er nog verre familie van was, spook Pol,’ schaterlachte Malle Mien.

‘Ja, ergens aan de koude kant,’ zei spook Pol, ‘maar aangetrouwd, het zit me niet in het bloed.’

‘Gelukkig maar,’ schaterde Malle Mien, ‘anders zou ik je nu direkt in de pan hakken.’

Kareltje keek verbaasd toe. Die Malle Mien was toch wel echt mal, en ze was niet bepaald op haar mondje gevallen.

‘Nou, spook Pol, en nu weer ophoepelen, anders maak ik een gehakt met spandijvie maaltijd van je,’ schaterde Malle Mien. En daar ging spook Pol. ‘Ja,’ zei Malle Mien, ‘het mes ligt me altijd jeukend in de handen, heel lichtjes, ik ben nog al een snel-snijder.’

‘Als ze maar van mij afblijft,’ dacht Kareltje. Aan de andere kant dacht Kareltje dat hij haar wel goed zou kunnen gebruiken op zijn schip. Hij had nog een goede kok nodig. Het eten van Daantje Drost was niet altijd zo goed. En met Malle Mien zou hij veel meer kunnen lachen. Vaak had hij er aan gedacht om Daantje Drost overboord te gooien, en dat zou hij ook zeker doen als Malle Mien zijn nieuwe kok zou worden. Daantje Drost was op het schip met de enige reden dat ze anders geen kok zouden hebben, maar dat was ook dan echt de enige reden. Verder was Daantje Drost een blok aan zijn been. Of misschien dat een jaartje spookschool Daantje goed zou doen.

De volgende dag had Kareltje zijn eerste les. Malle Mien ging met hem mee. Die twee waren nu bijna onafscheidelijk, en Malle Mien zag er naar uit om op het schip van Kareltje te werken als kok. Juffrouw Spiegeldingen kwam binnen in het lokaal. ‘Waar zijn de anderen ?’ vroeg ze. Ze schreef wat op het bord, en Kareltje moest het nalezen. ‘Lezen kun je in ieder geval,’ zei ze, ‘ook op afstand.’ Toen begon ze te vertellen over ingewikkelde spookkunde, toen over spookgeschiedenis. Het was verschrikkelijk slaapverwekkend, en Kareltje sliep er al bijna van. Juffrouw Spiegeldingen kwam toen erg dichtbij hem staan. ‘Zorg dat je de volgende keer de spookjaren uit het hoofd kent,’ zei ze. Toen was de les afgelopen.

‘Ik heb er geen flap van geleerd,’ zei Malle Mien, ‘en dat is wat deze school is, er gebeurt geen flap.’

‘Wat ?’ zei Kareltje slaperig. ‘Wat een oenenschool is dit. Laten we naar de volgende les gaan.’

De tweede les werd gegeven door meester Diktengels. Hij was een grote schreeuwlelijkerd. ‘Dat die man nog steeds leeft,’ zei Malle Mien, ‘ik zou hem direkt hebben weggestemd.’ Weer was Kareltje de enige leerling, samen met Malle Mien. ‘Ik zou wel een lekkere karbonade van hem willen maken,’ fluisterde Malle Mien tegen Kareltje.

‘Wat zei jij daar,’ schreeuwde meester Diktengels.

‘Oh, ik zei tegen Kareltje dat u zo’n mooie broek aan hebt,’ zei Malle Mien.

Meester Diktengels begon helemaal te glunderen. ‘Dat noem ik nog eens een compliment, kom maar eens naar voren,’ zei hij. Met grote passen stapte Malle Mien naar voren. ‘En wat vind je nog meer van mij,’ brulde hij.

‘Nou, u heeft een prachtige bril, een perfecte neus waarop de bril rust, u heeft prachtig punk haar,’ zei Malle Mien, ‘een uitmuntende snor.’

‘Ja, zo kan die wel weer,’ zei meester Diktengels. ‘En wat vind jij van mij, Kareltje ?’ vroeg

meester Diktengels.

‘Oh, hetzelfde,’ zei Kareltje.

‘Wat voor cijfer zou je me geven ?’ zei de meester.

‘Een dikke vier,’ zei Kareltje.

‘Een dikke vier ?’ brulde de meester. ‘Nou laat me toch niet kwaad worden nu, een dikke vier zei je ? Dat kan toch niet waar wezen.’

‘Het is wel waar, mijnheer,’ zei Kareltje.

‘En waarom dan, waarom dan ?’ brulde de meester.

‘Omdat u er geen klap van kunt,’ zei Kareltje.

De spookmeester stond nu echt op ontploffen. ‘Trek je pistool, Kareltje,’ zei Malle Mien.

‘Ik heb het pistool niet bij me,’ zei Kareltje, ‘ik heb het nog niet gehad.’

‘Het zou in het bureau-laadje moeten liggen,’ zei Malle Mien. ‘Ga op je kop staan,’ riep ze tegen de spookmeester. De meester hing direct op de kop. ‘Ziezo,’ zei Malle Mien, ‘die neem ik mee naar de keuken.’ Malle Mien greep de spookmeester en liep het lokaal uit. Kareltje ging naar de volgende les. ‘Dit is een nietsnut-school,’ dacht Kareltje bij zichzelf. In het volgende klaslokaal was er geen meester of juffrouw aanwezig. Kareltje ging terug naar zijn kamer. Hij had het helemaal gehad op deze school. Hij pakte zijn spullen en ging naar de keuken van Malle Mien. ‘Pak je spullen,’ zei Kareltje. ‘We gaan naar mijn schip.

‘Goed idee,’ zei Malle Mien, en begon haar koffer snel in te pakken op haar kamer achter de keuken. Maar toen stond er ineens een spook met een pistool in de deuropening. ‘Er wordt hier niet vertrokken,’ zei het spook.

‘Wie ben jij dan weer ?’ vroeg Kareltje.

‘Dat is het afscheids-spook,’ zei Malle Mien. ‘Die doet geen vlieg kwaad. Hij kan alleen maar dreigen.’

‘Niemand vertrekt ooit van deze school,’ zei het spook. Toen Malle Mien haar koffer had gepakt duwde ze het afscheids-spook opzij. Kareltje volgde haar. Het schip was op dat moment in de haven. Het eerste wat Kareltje deed was Daantje Drost naar de spookschool brengen. Malle Mien werd de nieuwe kok. Griezelientje en Griezeliesje hadden het inmiddels reuze naar hun zin op het schip.

Het Geheim van de

Rode Veer

Saroesia was een echte pyama stad in het land Sinsabijne. Iedereen droeg hier een pyama. De roze prins had een roze pakje aan wat leek op een pyama. Het was in ieder geval net zo zacht. De prins voelde zich er prinsheerlijk in. Hij had zulke roze pakjes vaak aan, vandaar dat hij de roze prins werd genoemd, en Saroesia werd daarom ook wel de roze stad genoemd. Het paleis van de prins was prachtig roze, maar had ook andere kleuren, zoals lichtblauw, rood, zwart, wit en geel. Ook was de prins dol op groen. Zonder groen zou er niets groeien.
De roze prins heerste over geheel Sinsabijne. Het geheim van zijn macht ? Een vrouwtje genaamd Framboosje. Vrouwtje Framboosje had hem onderwezen van jongs af aan om hem voor te bereiden op deze grote taak. Daarom werd de prins ook soms de frambozen prins genoemd, en ook de stad Saroesia werd weleens de frambozen stad genoemd. Framboosje had de prins onderwezen uit het wetboek van toverij en het wetboek van snoep. Dit moest wel, want er waren een heleboel snoepmonsters die het stadje wilden vernietigen. Er moesten duidelijke wetten van snoep zijn om het stadje hier tegen te beveiligen. En die bracht Framboosje. Ze had de roze prins goed ingelicht hierover.
Het snoep mocht niet gegeten worden. Het was alleen om mee te bouwen en het te dragen als kleding en sieraden. Maar hier waren dus strenge wetten voor die Framboosje aan de roze prins leerde. Zij maakte de mooie roze snoeppyama's voor de roze prins. Het leek een beetje op frambozenvla, en zo kreeg de prins van haar de bijnaam prins frambozenvla.
Snoep was een natuurverschijnsel, als een beloning, als de vrucht van hard werken, van zweet en tranen. Er moest dus heel zuinig met snoep gedaan worden, anders zouden de snoepmonsters komen. Framboosje bleef dat benadrukken bij de roze prins, zodat hij het niet zou vergeten. Er stond teveel op het spel.
De roze prins vertelde de wetten ook aan het volk, en hij liet een wetboek opstellen. De oorlog tegen de snoepmonsters begon. Dit was een grote oorlog, en erg beslissend voor de verdere toekomst van Sinsabijne. Ook kwam er een wetboek voor speelgoed, en als ze zich daar niet aan zouden houden, dan zouden de speelgoedmonsters komen. De roze prins studeerde veel in de wetboeken en luisterde goed naar Framboosje. Hierdoor beloonde Framboosje de roze prins met vele toverkrachten om het land goed te kunnen besturen. Framboosje was een echt tovervrouwtje, maar wel een hele bijzondere, want zij was het vrouwtje van de toverwet. Ze was dol op het toveren met snoep, en daarom werd ze ook wel het vrouwtje van de snoepwet genoemd. Op de snoepwet was het stadje Saroesia gebouwd, en verder het hele land Sinsabijne. Framboosje was degene die het had gebouwd.
Het stadje Saroesia was omringd met oerwoud. Het hele land Sinsabijne was vol met oerwoud. Eigenlijk waren de stadjes en dorpjes er gewoon ingebouwd. Er stroomde een grote rivier door de oerwouden van Sinsabijne, door het hele land. Het was de frambozen rivier, gemaakt van frambozensap. De rivier eindigde aan de ene kant in de frambozenzee en aan de andere kant in het bodemloze ravijn waarmee het hele land Sinsabijne en de frambozenzee was omringd. Het land Sinsabijne en de frambozenzee lag op de stronk van een reuzenboom.
Ook de grachten van het stadje Saroesia waren van frambozensap. Framboosje en de roze prins gingen vaak in een bootje over de grachten, en soms gingen ze de frambozen rivier op om het oerwoud in te gaan.

Het teken van de snoepwet was de rode veer. De rode veer stond ook op de vlag van Sinsabijne. Ook op het wetboek van snoep stond het teken van de rode veer. Ook de framboos stond op de vlag als het teken van Sinsabijne. Aan de frambozenzee ligt het bananenstrand en chocolade stad. Soms bezoeken Framboosje en de roze prins deze stad ook.
Framboosje las de roze prins voor uit het wetboek van snoep :
'De eerste wet is dat al het snoep door omwegen komt, nooit direct. Het is als de bruisende waterval in de verte die in de kolkende rivier kletst en dan langzaam door de rivier langs je heengaat en van je wegvlucht.
De tweede wet is dat het snoep je eerst zal corrigeren en niet zal verwennen. Eerst zul je de raad van het snoep moeten aannemen.

Deze wetten laten zien dat het snoep een klok is en dat je geduld moet beoefenen.
De derde wet is dat zij die geen geduld beoefenen geen deel kunnen hebben aan de orde van de rode veer.
De vierde wet is dat zij die geen geduld beoefenen naar de ondergrondse gevangenis in de stronk van de reuzenboom moeten die als een school is om hen geduld te leren. Deze gevangenis is genaamd de box.
De vijfde wet is dat de ananas hen in de gevangenis voorzichtigheid zal leren en hen testen. Als ze niet door de ananas test heenkomen dan zullen ze verbannen worden uit Sinsabijne.'
Ananas was de zeer gevreesde gevangenisbewaker, de bewaker van de box. Hij had de macht iemand uit Sinsabijne te verbannen. Het was vanwege Ananas dat de meesten zich keurig gedroegen. Ananas leerde hen de snoepwet als geen ander. Soms kwam hij bij Framboosje en de roze prins om even bij te praten, of ze gingen naar hem. In het ondergrondse bos onder de reuzenstronk was een groot klooster. Hier werd het wetboek van snoep vereerd en gediend, en een standbeeld van een jongetje gemaakt van snoep. Dit was de kloosterorde van de rode veer, alleen voor hoge ingewijden. Framboosje wilde ook dat de roze prins daar naartoe zou gaan, zodat hij meer zou kunnen leren over het wetboek van snoep. Framboosje wilde dat Ananas koning zou worden van Sinsabijne. En zo gebeurde het. De roze prins werd uitgezonden naar het klooster van de rode veer, diep in het ondergronds bos. Hij ging daar alleen in een bootje naartoe. Hij kende de weg wel. Bij het klooster aangekomen kreeg de prins een monniken-gewaad aan. Ook werd zijn haar niet geknipt. Hij begon met het werken in de keuken. Het was een grote keuken, waar hij de andere monniken een beetje leerde kennen.
's Avonds waren er vaak bijeenkomsten in de kapel waar het wetboek van snoep werd vereerd en het standbeeld van het jongetje van snoep. De roze prins kwam er al snel achter dat dit standbeeld ook sprak. Het standbeeld gemaakt van snoep hield een lange toespraak vanuit het wetboek van snoep. De monniken zagen dat als een groot wonder. Het was in Sinsabijne de gewoonte dat een koning of prins na een tijdje ook zijn kroon en troon weer aflegde, en dat stond ook in het wetboek van snoep. De roze prins had er dus vrede mee dat Ananas het van hem had overgenomen.
Aan het einde van de bijeenkomst wilde het standbeeld van het jongetje van snoep nog even met de roze prins spreken, omdat hij nieuw was in het klooster. Alle andere monniken gingen de kapel uit, terwijl de roze prins bleef zitten. Het standbeeld van snoep keek hem strak aan. 'Zo, zo, dus jij bent nieuw hier, hè ?' De roze prins knikte en sprak : 'Ja.'
'Wie heeft jou gezegd dat je mag spreken ?' vroeg het jongetje van snoep.
De roze prins keek in het gezicht van het jongetje en merkte dat het jongetje boos begon te worden.
'U stelde mij een vraag,' sprak de roze prins kalm. Het jongetje werd kwader en kwader, en zijn hoofd was bijna rood als een tomaat. 'Rotjongen,' sprak het standbeeld van het jongetje van snoep. 'Dan vraag je eerst of je mag antwoorden.'
'Dat wist ik niet,' zei de roze prins nog steeds kalm.
'Jij hebt wel praatjes, hè,' sprak het standbeeld. 'Het zal mij benieuwen hoe lang je het hier zal uithouden.'
De roze prins knikte.
'We zijn hier niet zo gesteld op praatgrage lieden,' sprak het standbeeld.
De roze prins knikte weer. Hij had maar wat graag het standbeeld willen omduwen.
'Ik mag jou niet,' zei het standbeeld. 'Net nieuw hier en nu al praatjes. Jij groeit op voor galg en rad, jongen.'

De roze prins zei niets. Even had hij spijt dat hij hier was gekomen. Toen hij even later op zijn kamer was begon hij een brief te schrijven aan Framboosje. Hij had respect voor het wetboek van snoep, maar niet voor het standbeeld. Hij vond het maar een verwend jongetje wat veel teveel macht had gekregen, en hij vroeg zich af hoe dit kreng van een jongetje zoveel macht had gekregen. Na een tijdje kreeg hij een brief terug van Framboosje. Framboosje wist het ook niet, maar ze zei dat hij hen moest confronteren met het wetboek van snoep waarin stond dat na een tijdje elke mahctshebber moest aftreden, ook het standbeeld. Dit deed de roze prins. Hij liet het aan de

monniken zien wat er in het wetboek van snoep over stond. Het scheen dat het standbeeld al veel te lang in het klooster aan de macht was. Maar de monniken werden erg kwaad. Zij vereerden het standbeeld van het jongetje van snoep, en voor hen stond het standbeeld gelijk aan het wetboek van snoep. De wet die de roze prins voorlas sloeg volgens hen niet op het standbeeld. De rebellie van de roze prins werd doorverteld aan het standbeeld, die daar erg kwaad over werd, zo kwaad dat hij de roze prins in een kerker onder het klooster liet werpen. Maar na een paar dagen had het standbeeld spijt en liet de roze prins uit de kerker komen. Het standbeeld waarschuwde de monniken ook dat elke monnik die de roze prins nog lastig zou vallen versteend zou worden.
Ook in het klooster mochten de monniken maar tijdelijk verblijven. De roze prins merkte dat het standbeeld van snoep erg grillig was. De straffen waren zwaar : de kerker in, verstening of onthoofding. De roze prins voelde zich niet op zijn gemak. Hij hoopte maar dat hij deze tijd heelhuids zou doorkomen. In het klooster stonden vele versteende monniken, als een waarschuwing voor alle anderen. Hij vroeg zich af hoe het standbeeld zo was geworden, want het leek ook wel op een soort verstening. Met het verschil dat het standbeeld van snoep kon spreken en zich kon verplaatsen. Ook kon het standbeeld in het niets verdwijnen en zomaar weer tevoorschijn komen. Hij merkte dat het standbeeld vereerd en gediend werd vanuit pure angst. De roze prins studeerde veel in het wetboek van snoep. Alleen zij die de rode veer zouden hebben verdiend zouden het klooster weer mogen verlaten, maar terug naar het bovenland van Sinsabijne mochten ze niet. Ze zouden de ondergrondse bossen worden ingezonden om zo te komen tot het ondergrondse oerwoud, wat nog dieper lag. Tussen het ondergrondse bos en het ondergrondse oerwoud lag het bos van het schreeuwende snoep. Hier leefden de verkeers-agenten van snoep.
Toen de roze prins de rode veer had behaald en tot het bos van het schreeuwende snoep kwam wist hij precies hoe het jongetje in een standbeeld van snoep was veranderd. Door al het geschreeuw van het snoep verstijfde de prins helemaal, en begon steeds meer te verstenen en in snoep te veranderen, totdat hij zelf een standbeeld van snoep was geworden. Ergens in het bos stond hij toen om het verkeer te regelen.

Einde

Kraak
Het Geheim van het Glibbergoud

Kraak was heel erg diep in het bos terechtgekomen, in zijn bootje op een voor hem onbekende bosrivier. Hier was hij nog nooit geweest. Hij zag een eekhoorntje en volgde het. Hij stapte uit zijn

bootje aan de oever van de bosrivier en holde achter het beestje aan. Na niet al te lang rennen kwam hij aan bij een huisje. Hij klopte bij het huisje aan, en wist eigenlijk niet wat hij deed. Hij had zo lang gereisd dat zijn bootreis hem gehypnotiseerd had gemaakt. Niemand antwoordde, en toen stapte die brutale Kraak gewoon naar binnen. Hij kon aan die drang bijna niet ontkomen. Hij was te nieuwsgierig om zichzelf in te houden.

Hij ging aan een tafeltje zitten op een stoeltje. Toen rookte hij zijn pijpje, en rustte uit van de lange reis. Op tafel lag een schaaltje met brood waarvan hij begon te eten.

Toen kwam ineens het eekhoorntje binnen. 'Hoe durf je zomaar mijn huis binnen te gaan,' sprak het eekhoorntje.

'Wie ben jij ?' vroeg Kraak.

'En dan ook nog vragen aan mij stellen ?' snauwde het eekhoorntje. 'Ik stel hier de vragen.'

'Ik weet niet wat er met mij aan de hand is,' zei Kraak. 'Ik voel me zo vreemd, en ik kon het niet laten je te volgen.'

'Ah,' zei het eekhoorntje ineens begripvol, terwijl hij glimlachte. 'Nu begrijp ik het. Jij bent gewoon in voor een nieuw avontuur, misschien zelfs een heel nieuw leven. Nieuwsgierigheid is goed zo nu en dan.'

Kraak knikte. 'Je hebt gelijk, maar toch kan die nieuwsgierigheid mij ook in de problemen brengen,' sprak hij.

'Ach welnee,' sprak het eekhoorntje. 'Je bent welkom. Het gastenkamertje is boven.' De eekhoorn wees op de trap die naar boven leidde, ging naar boven en wenkte Kraak. 'Kom maar. Hier is je bedje, een tafeltje, en een boekenkast. Ik heb het leuk ingericht voor gasten zoals jij.'

Kraak liep naar boven met het eekhoorntje mee, en keek zijn ogen uit in het gezellige kamertje. Er stond ook een stoel, waarop hij direct ging zitten. 'Wat is je naam ?' vroeg Kraak.

Dit keer antwoordde het eekhoorntje wel. 'Kappaka,' sprak de eekhoorn.

'Een gezellig huisje heb je, Kappaka,' sprak Kraak. 'Mijn naam is Kraak.' Aan de muur hingen wat schilderijtjes waar Kraak naar begon te staren. Kraak wees op de schilderijen. 'Wie heeft die geschilderd ?' vroeg hij.

'Ik,' zei de eekhoorn.

'Dan ben je een groot kunstenaar, Kappaka,' sprak Kraak. Het eekhoorntje glimlachtte verlegen. 'Ach, ik ben maar een eenvoudige schilder,' sprak het eekhoorntje. Het eekhoorntje gaf hem een papieren zak met allerlei soorten bosbessen. 'Kom, volg mij,' sprak het eekhoorntje, en ging weer over de trap naar beneden. Het eekhoorntje ging de bostuin van zijn huisje in, en toen het bos zelf in, terwijl Kraak hem volgde op de voet.

Kraak keek zijn ogen uit. De eekhoorn leidde hem naar struiken en bomen die hij nog helemaal niet kende. Het was alsof Kraak hier tot leven kwam, terwijl hij zelf een boommannetje was. Hij leefde altijd alleen in zijn eigen gebied en in de grote eik waarin hij een huisje had, maar nu moest hij er opuit. Hij kon die drang niet stoppen.

Het eekhoorntje rende verder en riep hem telkens. Het eekhoorntje liet hem de buurt verkennen. Haastig at Kraak van de bosbessen uit de papieren zak, terwijl hij zijn ogen uitkeek. Hij kon zich hier goed vinden, en was blij het eekhoorntje gevolgd te hebben.

Al snel waren Kraak en Kappaka de beste vriendjes, en ze deden vaak spelletjes. Beiden waren ze voor een lange tijd erg eenzaam geweest, maar nu niet meer, sinds ze bij elkaar in één huisje woonden. Het eekhoorntje sliep beneden in een slaapkamertje, en Kraak sliep boven.

Kappaka keek Kraak aan met glinsterende ogen en sprak : 'Zeg, Kraak, weet je dat ik ook iets heel bijzonders heb ?' Kraak trok met zijn lippen aan zijn pijpje. Hij richtte zijn wenkbrouwen op van nieuwsgierigheid. 'Ik kan niet wachten,' sprak Kraak. 'Wat is het ?'

'Kom maar mee,' zei Kappaka. Hij deed een luikje open in de vloer achter in het huiskamertje, en gleed toen door een tunneltje naar beneden. Kraak volgde hem, en na een tijdje glijden kwamen ze in een grote zaal terecht. 'Heel voorzichtig,' zei Kappaka. Voetje voor voetje schoven ze de zaal in, waar aan de overkant wat glinsterde, helemaal achter in de zaal. 'Wat is het ?' vroeg Kraak.

'Shhhh,' fluisterde Kappaka. Ze kwamen langzaam dichterbij het geglinster. Het leek wel op goud, maar het leek wel alsof er een soort vlies omheen zat, een soort gelei, en toen ze nog dichterbij kwamen zag Kraak dat het één geheel vormde. 'Wat is het ?' vroeg Kraak weer.

'Oh, jij nieuwsgierige. Shhhh, shhhhh,' sprak de eekhoorn.

De eekhoorn nam wat van de gouden pasta in zijn hand, maar alles gleed weer van zijn handen af. 'Het is glibbergoud,' schaterde de eekhoorn. 'Niemand kan dit ooit stelen zoals je wel ziet.'

'Maar wat heb je er dan aan ?' vroeg Kraak.

'Het glibbergoud voert oorlog,' sprak de eekhoorn serieus. 'Allen die het proberen te stelen worden opgeslokt door het glibbergoud, en worden een deel van het goud.'

'Oei, dat lijkt mij geen pretje,' sprak het bosmannetje.

Kappaka glimlachte. 'Dit is de reden waarom het glibbergoud groeit. Als het hele zaaltje vol is, dan gaat er een luik open in de vloer, en dan glijdt het door een hele diepe tunnel naar de ondergrondse zee.'

'Wat is dat ?' vroeg Kraak met opgetrokken wenkbrauwen.

Kappaka liep naar de zijkant van de zaal en opende een luikje in de vloer. 'Kom, ik zal het je laten zien,' sprak Kappaka. Kraak volgde hem. Weer gleden ze door een tunnel naar beneden. Ditmaal duurde het nog veel langer. Ze kwamen op een klein bosstrandje terecht. Kraak keek zijn ogen uit. Het was hier wel een beetje donker. Er was hier veel begroeiing in de zee met veel bomen. Het was een echte boszee, maar dan ondergronds. 'Het glibbergoud glijdt in deze zee,' sprak Kappaka.

'En dan ?' vroeg Kraak.

Kappaka keek hem aan met grote ogen. 'Dan ? Maar dat is een groot geheim. Wil je het weten ?'

'Graag,' sprak Kraak, die nu wel heel erg nieuwsgierig was geworden. Zijn hoofd was vuurrood geworden van de nieuwsgierigheid. De eekhoorn grinnikte. 'Als je belooft dat je het aan niemand

doorvertelt.'

Kraak knikte, en sprak : 'Ja, ja, dat beloof ik, maar al te graag.'

'Goed dan,' sprak de eekhoorn. 'Moet je goed luisteren.'

Kraak kwam wat dichter bij de eekhoorn staan, en richtte zijn oor extra naar de eekhoorn toe. 'Nou, wat is het ?' sprak Kraak. 'Ik sta te popelen om het van je te horen. Ik denk dat ik nog nooit zo nieuwsgierig ben geweest.'

'Moet je luisteren,' sprak Kappaka. 'Het zit namelijk zo. Ik weet dat je erg nieuwsgierig bent, maar dit is het glibbergoud. Het glibbergoud geeft niet zomaar zijn geheimen weg. Het is namelijk heel glibberig. Volg mij.'

De eekhoorn dook in het water en zwom door de branding heen, langs de bomen en struiken die in het water stonden, en dook toen dieper onderwater. Kraak volgde hem.

Weer zagen ze het glinsteren in de diepte. Wat was het hier donker, zeg. Kraak moest de eekhoorn goed vasthouden. Toen ze bij het glibbergoud aangekomen waren was er een tunneltje waar ze doorheen gleden. Heel lang moesten ze glijden totdat er geen water meer was. Ze waren nu heel diep onder de boszee terecht gekomen. Het was een modderige plaats, en er was nog steeds veel glibbergoud. Het glibbergoud straalde.

'Raak het eens aan,' sprak Kappaka.

'Ik ben daar gek,' sprak Kraak. 'Ik wil er niet door opgeslokt worden en in glibbergoud veranderen.'

'Je bent toch geen dief ?' sprak Kappaka. 'Er zal je niets overkomen. Je bent een vriend.'

Kraak nam wat van het glibbergoud, en het gleed weg uit zijn vingers. Weer zagen ze glibbergoud wegglijden door een tunneltje, nog dieper onder de grond.

'Het glibbergoud leidt tot koning glibbergoud, die diep onder de grond troont,' sprak Kappaka. 'Volg mij.'

De eekhoorn dook het glibbergoud weer achterna, en Kraak volgde hem. Dit keer moesten ze langer dan ooit door het tunneltje glijden. Het leek wel alsof het nooit zou stoppen. Maar toen uiteindelijk kwamen ze in een troonzaaltje terecht. Er zat een klein bosmannetje op een troontje. Het bosmannetje was geheel in het rood gekleed, en had een rood kroontje. 'Ziezo,' zei het bosmannetje. 'Jullie zijn eindelijk gekomen. Mijn naam is koning glibbergoud.'

'Ik heb hier een vriendje voor u meegenomen, koning glibbergoud,' sprak Kappaka. 'Zijn naam is Kraak.'

'Ja,' zei Kraak, 'en ik zou alle geheimen van het glibbergoud willen weten.'
'Aha,' sprak koning glibbergoud. 'Kom dan maar mee.'

Koning glibbergoud stond op van zijn troontje, en leidde hen door een deurtje achterin het zaaltje. Ook het deurtje was volledig van glibbergoud. Ze gingen door een gangetje wat kronkelde en waarlangs allemaal deurtjes van glibbergoud waren. 'Veel is gemaakt van glibbergoud hier,' sprak koning glibbergoud. 'Dan kan het nooit gestolen worden.'

Het gangetje liep uit in een keukentje. Wat duurde dat lang zeg, voordat ze daar kwamen. Het leek wel op een wereldreis. Dit paleis was groot, heel groot. Het keukentje was heel eenvoudig. Koning glibbergoud ging aan een tafeltje zitten. 'Opgelost,' sprak hij. Ook Kraak en Kappaka gingen aan het tafeltje zitten en keken hem verwonderd aan.

'Wat is opgelost, mijn beste koning glibbergoud ?' vroeg Kappaka.

'Hier eindigt het,' sprak koning glibbergoud. 'Onder dit kleine keukentje is de grote keuken. Hier werken veel bosmannetjes uit mijn rijk.'

'Wat gebeurt er hier met het glibbergoud ?' vroeg Kraak, die met zijn lippen een teugje van zijn pijpje nam.

'Helemaal niks,' sprak koning glibbergoud. 'Dit is het eindstation. Naast de grote keuken staan de treinen. Daar wordt het glibbergoud in vervoerd. Het glibbergoud wordt zo verspreid door mijn hele rijk. Het glibbergoud vormt zich vanzelf tot spulletjes die mijn bosmannetjes nodig hebben, zodat het nooit gestolen kan worden. Goed opgelost, vind je niet ?'

Koning glibbergoud stond op en drukte op een knopje in de muur. Het was een lift. De deurtjes van glibbergoud schoven open, en ze konden naar binnen. Weer drukte koning glibbergoud op een knopje, en toen ging de lift dalen. Ze kwamen aan in een enorme keuken. En inderdaad stonden de treinen naast de grote keuken. Kraak keek zijn ogen uit. Hij had nog nooit zoiets gezien. Veel van de keuken was gemaakt van glibbergoud. Koning glibbergoud leidde hen naar de treinen aan de zijkant van de grote keuken. Hier konden ze instappen.

'We gaan een ritje maken,' sprak koning glibbergoud. Zo liet koning glibbergoud zijn hele rijk zien. Het was een hele belevenis voor Kraak. Aan het einde van de dag was Kraak erg moe, en kon hij geen glibbergoud meer zien. Toen zijn ze weer naar huis gegaan.

Die nacht droomde Kraak dat hij een bad nam in het glibbergoud, en dat er in het hele bos een overstroming was van glibbergoud. De volgende dag aan het ontbijt vertelde hij het aan Kappaka. Kappaka keek hem met grote ogen aan.

'Maar dat is geweldig,' sprak Kappaka. 'Zeg, Kraak, weet jij wie het glibbergoud heeft uitgevonden ?'

Kraak schudde zijn hoofd. 'Nee, dat weet ik niet, maar ik zou het graag willen weten.'

'Vandaag ga ik je het laten zien,' sprak Kappaka. Toen ze hun brood hadden gegeten gingen ze op pad. Ze moesten daarvoor een heel eind lopen. Ze moesten langs de oevers van vele riviertjes, nog dieper het bos in, totdat ze bij een grote zandvlakte aankwamen. Achter de zandvlakte ging het bos weer verder, totdat ze in een grote, diepe vallei kwamen. In de vallei groeiden hele hoge rode bloemen. Langs de hele hoge rode bloemen kwamen ze aan bij een huisje. Kappaka klopte aan op het deurtje. 'Binnen, wie is daar ?' sprak een stem.

Kappaka stapte naar binnen en sprak : 'Wij zijn het, Rozalinda, ik en Kraak.' Op een stoeltje zat de bosprinses. Zij had een rood jurkje aan, en een rode narcis op haar hoofd als een trompet. 'Welkom,' sprak de bosprinses met een glimlach. 'Ik ben blij dat jullie gekomen zijn. Er komen hier nooit zoveel.'

De bosprinses had bolle wangetjes als appels en zag er prachtig uit. 'Zo zo,' sprak ze tot Kappaka, 'dus dit is je nieuwe vriendje ?'

Kappaka knikte. 'Dit is Kraak het bosmannetje, en hij zou graag willen weten hoe u het glibbergoud heeft gemaakt.'

Rozalinda glimlachte breed. 'Dat is een lang verhaal. Hebben jullie tijd ?'

'Voor jou altijd, bosprinses,' sprak Kappaka.

'Mooi,' zei de bosprinses. 'Dan ga ik nu direct beginnen. Op een dag liep ik zingend langs de hoge rode bloemen. Ik maakte muziek door hun stengels even vooruit te duwen. Er begonnen poeders uit hun kelken te stromen. Het rook verrukkelijk. Al snel was ik in een bad van sap. Ik was helemaal nat. Ik kwam thuis en ging aan mijn tafeltje zitten, nog steeds kletsnat. Ik zuchtte diep en viel in slaap. Ik droomde over het glibbergoud dat uit een bloem stroomde. Ik kende de bloem niet. Het was zo geel als het glibbergoud. Toen ik wakker werd wilde ik naar de bloem op zoek gaan.'

Kraak keek in grote verwondering naar de prinses. Haar gezicht was zo dromerig toen ze vertelde. En hij werd helemaal warm van binnen door haar zachte stem.

Toen ging de bosprinses verder met vertellen. 'Ik ging mijn huisje uit en begon naar de bloem te roepen. Ik begon de bloem overal te zoeken. Ik wilde niet rusten voordat ik de bloem had gevonden. Maar ik zocht en zocht en vond de bloem niet. Toen heb ik het glibbergoud zelf gemaakt.'

'Hoe heb je dat gedaan ?' vroeg Kappaka.

'Ik weet het niet meer,' glimlachte de bosprinses. 'Het is al zo lang geleden.'

'Ach toe nou, Rozalinda,' sprak Kappaka. 'Kraak wil het graag weten.'

'Laat me even denken,' sprak de bosprinses. 'Ik denk dat ik een ei heb genomen, een stukje brood, en een zeef. Ik legde het ei in de zeef, met het stukje brood. Toen deed ik er bosbessen bij. Ik heb toen de zeef boven een pot gezet. Toen goot ik er water op en begon in de zeef te roeren. Ik begon het ei, het stukje brood en de bosbessen te prakken. Het werd een vreemd papje. Ik heb het toen nog meer verdunt, en toen ben ik het gaan koken in de pot. Ik heb hier toen poeder en sap van de rode narcis doorheen gedaan. Ik moest het drie uur laten pruttelen.'

'En toen ?' vroeg Kappaka.

'Laat me even denken,' sprak de bosprinses. 'Ik denk, ik weet het niet meer zeker, dat ik toen … ehm … iets wits erin heb gedaan, ik weet niet meer wat. En toen iets geels, iets heel geels, en heel veel daarvan. Toen heb ik het weer drie uur laten pruttelen. En toen aan het einde van de drie uur kwam er een gele gestalte uit de pot, doorzichtig als gelei. Er was eerst veel rook, maar toen de rook minder werd was het het glibbergoud. De gestalte ging zitten, en begon mij verhalen te vertellen, oh de wonderlijkste verhalen, en ik was als betoverd. Hij is toen bosbessenpastei voor mij gaan maken. Hij wilde alles voor me doen. Oh, hij was zo grappig. Hij zei telkens : 'Het glibbergoud werkt.' Hij heeft toen een tijdje bij me gewoond en is toen onder de grond gaan wonen.'

'Wat een wonderlijk verhaal,' sprak Kraak.

'Ja, en sindsdien heb ik de glibberkoorts,' sprak de bosprinses.

Kraak trok zijn wenkbrauwen op, en keek verbaasd naar de bosprinses. 'De glibberkoorts ? Wat is dat ?'

'Ach,' zei de bosprinses. 'Je moet het zo zien. Ik ben glibberig geworden als het glibbergoud. Ik kan niet gestolen of ontvoerd worden. Ik glijd altijd weg.' Ze begon te lachen. 'Nog even en ik zal weer wegglijden, of liever gezegd : Jullie zullen wegglijden, want dit is mijn huisje.'

Opeens voelde Kraak zich duizelig worden. Hij voelde alsof hij geen houvast meer had. Hij voelde zichzelf wegglijden, uit het huisje, uit de vallei, helemaal terug naar het huisje waar hij met Kappaka woonde. Ook Kappaka gleed weg. Dat was vreemd. Even later zaten ze beiden aan het tafeltje thuis. Kraak knipperde even met zijn ogen. 'Toverij,' sprak hij, 'zware toverij.' Kappaka knikte. 'Dat gebeurt altijd. Ik kan nooit lang bij de bosprinses zijn. Nu ken je in ieder geval het geheim van het glibbergoud.' Kraak glimlachtte. 'Dat was me het dagje wel. Ik ben moe en ga slapen.' Hij stond op en ging het trapje op naar boven, waar hij al snel in zijn bedje ging. Ook Kappaka ging naar bed nadat ze elkaar welterusten hadden gezegd.

Einde

Witte Sneeuw

Ik liep op straat langs het bos. Het was laat. Er was niemand op straat behalve ik en een vriend. Ik had hem net van het station gehaald. We waren oude schoolvrienden. Zachtjes begon het te sneeuwen. We liepen naar mijn huis. Er waren trollen in mijn huis. Ik verzamelde ze. Het waren prachtige beeldjes, ook in de tuin. Die vriend had een beeldje voor me meegenomen. Hij zou een paar dagen blijven logeren. We hadden het veel over Witte Sneeuw, een meisje dat bij ons in de klas zat. Ze was overleden, maar nu leefde ze in ons hart. Het was een heel bijzonder meisje. Ze vertelde altijd prachtige verhalen.

Die vriend en ik zaten op een school voor exorcisten. We leerden hoe we demonen konden herkennen, hoe we ze konden opspeuren en hoe we ze konden uitschakelen. Uitdrijven heette dat. Maar het meisje had altijd een wonderlijke uitleg. Zij had het erover dat er altijd eerst dingen moesten veranderen, en dan zouden de demonen vanzelf vertrekken. Dingen moesten gewoon anders. Ze had het er altijd over dat demonen veel van spelletjes hielden, en dat ze zelfs een uitdrijving konden nabootsen. Soms werden de leraren weleens een beetje boos, omdat ze zo dromerig was. Ze dacht veel te diep over dingen na.

We begrepen niet hoe het zo ver kon komen. Witte Sneeuw had op een dag zelfmoord gepleegd. Niemand begreep hoe dat kon. De leraren begonnen zich een beetje schuldig te voelen. Waren ze misschien te onaardig voor haar geweest ? Vaak wist zij meer dan de leraren zelf, en dat konden de leraren niet altijd hebben. Het meisje kwam uit een bijzondere kerk uit het Zuiden van het land, waar ze heel anders met de dingen omgingen. Er werd daar veel meer onderzoek gedaan, en veel meer geexperimenteerd. Het ging minder volgens de tradities, en daarom hadden de leraren er vaak een hekel aan. Maar op een dag kwam er een nieuwe leraar, die wel kon meekomen in heel veel dingen wat het meisje zei. Het was een beetje een vreemde man, met een oog voor vreemde dingen. Hij verzamelde trollenbeeldjes. Een heleboel leraren zeiden dat je dat beter niet kon doen, zulke beeldjes verzamelen, maar dit waren hele bijzondere beeldjes. Het was heel sprookjesachtig. Witte Sneeuw vond het prachtig, en ging vaak na de les met de man mee naar huis.

Op een dag gingen wij ook mee, die vriend en ik. De man woonde dichtbij het station, en je kon altijd de treinen langs horen komen. In de weekenden bleef Witte Sneeuw vaak logeren. Ditmaal bleven wij ook logeren. Witte Sneeuw had een eigen kamer in het huis van de man, en wij kregen de zolder. Midden in de nacht hoorden we vreemde geluiden. Ik ging naar beneden om te kijken of alles goed was met Witte Sneeuw. Ze lag lekker te slapen.

Ook die leraar was er helemaal kapot van toen Witte Sneeuw zelfmoord had gepleegd. Hij kon niet begrijpen waarom, maar schreef het toe aan de werken van de demonen. De dag erna verzamelden we ons in de grote zaal van de school. De directeur hield een toespraak.

‘Wij zijn allen diep betreurd over hetgeen heeft plaatsgevonden,’ zei hij. ‘Wij zien dit als een aanval van de duisternis. Witte Sneeuw had grote gaven. Het was een begiftigd kind. Wij zijn allemaal bedroefd dat ze van ons is weggenomen. Het leven van een exorcist is niet zonder gevaren. Maar weinigen halen de eindstreep, maar wij zijn blij dat ze nu veilig is in de armen van …’

Maar verder kwam hij niet. Tranen rolden uit zijn ogen. Zij was zijn lievelingsstudent. Waarom moest nou net zij worden weggenomen. Die vriend van mij wilde haar uit de dood opwekken, maar we kregen geen toegang tot het lijk.

We gingen vaak naar haar graf om nog even haar magie te voelen. Er stonden vele trollenbeeldjes om het graf heen die de nieuwe leraar daar had neergezet. ‘Voor mijn lieve Witte Sneeuw,’ stond er vaak op die beeldjes. Ook ik hield veel van Witte Sneeuw. Om het gevoel wat ik altijd bij haar had te bewaren ging ik ook trollenbeeldjes verzamelen.

We dachten vaak over Witte Sneeuw. Op een zekere nacht kreeg ik een droom over Witte Sneeuw, waarin ze mij bezocht. Haar haar was lang gegroeid, langer dan ooit. Ze was omhuld in witte sneeuw, maakte een bal, en gaf de sneeuwbal aan mij. ‘Bewaar dit,’ zei ze.

Toen ik wakker werd was ik heel emotioneel. Ik moest sindsdien altijd aan de sneeuwbal denken.

Die vriend van mij kwam vaak logeren. Op een dag kwam hij met de mededeling dat de ouders van Witte Sneeuw haar dagboek hadden gevonden. Ze had het verborgen onder de vloerbedekking van haar kamer. Er stonden onthullende dingen in. Het was een dagboek vol verhalen, maar ook met een

duidelijke roep om hulp. Het meisje beschreef hoe ze zo diep in haar eigen fantasie leefde dat ze het gewone leven eigenlijk niet aankon. Maar ze wilde anderen daar niet mee belasten.

Ze was altijd een vrolijk meisje, dus niemand had dat achter haar gezocht. Ze schreef ook dat ze gelukkig was in haar eigen fantasie en dat de buitenwereld haar benauwde.

De verhalen in het dagboek van Witte Sneeuw waren prachtig. Deze verhalen had ze nog nooit eerder verteld, en haar ouders wilden er een boek van maken. Later kreeg ik het boek ook in huis, en het werd een van mijn kostbaarste bezittingen. Kon ik maar meer voor haar doen. Als ik dit had geweten dan had ik haar misschien kunnen helpen, om haar ook de leuke kanten van het leven te laten zien. Maar ik was nog zo jong. Ik zou misschien niet tegen haar opgewassen zijn. Ik vond het zo treurig dat ze van ons was weggenomen. Ze had nog zoveel meer verhalen kunnen schrijven, maar misschien zag ze het nut daarvan niet in. Ze wilde misschien in haar eigen wereld leven, en daar was ze nu. Ze was nu in mijn hart, dieper dan ooit tevoren. Ik had haar zo graag nog beter willen leren kennen.

Het leven ging door. Mijn vriendschap met oude klasgenoten verwaterde. We gingen allemaal ons eigen pad, maar door Witte Sneeuw waren we voor altijd in ons hart aan elkaar verbonden. Toen ik zelf later kinderen kreeg las ik hen vaak voor uit het dagboek van Witte Sneeuw, wat eigenlijk een soort sprookjesboek was. Ook mijn vrouw vond het heel bijzonder. Ze was een beetje als Witte Sneeuw. Ze schreef ook verhalen. Ik noemde haar weleens Rode Sneeuw, omdat ze indiaans bloed in haar had. Ik kon me de andere verhalen van Witte Sneeuw nog wel herinneren, de verhalen die ze altijd vertelde. Op een dag besloot ik ze allemaal op te schrijven, en zo waren er uiteindelijk twee boeken van Witte Sneeuw. Ik was er erg trots op, en stuurde een exemplaar naar haar ouders en naar wat oude klasgenoten. Dit was eigenlijk de reden waardoor die oude vriend me weer kwam opzoeken. Hij was inmiddels ook getrouwd, en vaak gingen we samen op pad.

Op een dag besloten we naar een trollenpark te gaan. Dat was een soort sprookjespark wat allemaal om trollensprookjes draaide. Eigenlijk zou een beeld van Witte Sneeuw daar ook wel op zijn plaats zijn, want haar verhalen gingen ook vaak over trollen. We besloten de baas van het trollenpark de twee boeken van Witte Sneeuw te laten lezen, en hij was direkt dolenthousiast. Hij hield van de sprookjes, en wilde de sprookjes wel nabouwen in zijn park. Later las hij ook de sprookjes van mijn vrouw, Rode Sneeuw, en dat waren nog wel veel meer boeken. Het was alsof er een wereld voor de man opende. Het trollenpark groeide al snel uit tot een sprookjeswereld. En ik was wel trots om twee standbeelden van zowel Witte Sneeuw als Rode Sneeuw in het park te zien.

Maar op een dag was het beeld van Rode Sneeuw verwoest. De baas was woedend. Het waren racisten die dat hadden gedaan. Ze wisten dat het beeld van indiaanse komaf was. Mijn vrouw was er kapot van, en ik nog wel meer. In een van de verhalen van Witte Sneeuw stond geschreven : ‘Het witte konijn in de woestijn wil altijd de eerste zijn, op zee wil hij de beste zijn, in het bos wil hij staan op het rode mos.’ Het gaat over een wit konijn die een koning die een rood konijn als lakei heeft, maar later wil hij dat het rood konijn zijn troon wordt, maar als hij dan even later op zijn troon zit wil het rood konijn niet meer spreken, en dan wordt koning wit konijn toch wel erg eenzaam. Hij sterft als een eenzame koning, en het rood konijn wil nooit meer in een koninkrijk wonen en vlucht naar het bos waar hij voor altijd blijft wonen.

De baas besluit ditmaal een extra groot beeld van Rode Sneeuw te bouwen waar zij op een hoog

paard zit. Hij laat er een bordje bijzetten waarop staat geschreven : ‘Als u wil dat Rode Sneeuw op een nog grotere witte troon komt te zitten, verwoest dan dit beeld.’

Het beeld lieten ze ditmaal staan, maar in het land werden kleurlingen ditmaal met de nek aangekeken. Totdat er op een dag tranen schenen te komen uit het beeld van Witte Sneeuw. Overal in het land was het groot nieuws.

Op een dag kreeg ik van de baas een trollenring. Het was de prachtigste ring die ik ooit had gezien. Inmiddels hadden de ouders van Witte Sneeuw een nog ouder dagboek van haar gevonden. Deze had ze achter de kast verstopt. Ditmaal waren het de prachtigste sprookjes die ik ooit had gehoord. Ik ging ermee naar de baas van het trollenpark die het direkt wilde nabouwen. Ditmaal begon de oude magie van Witte Sneeuw echt te vloeien. De regering wilde zelfs een beeld van haar hebben in een van hun gebouwen. Omdat de verhalen van mijn vrouw zoveel op de verhalen van Witte Sneeuw leken wilden ze ook een beeld van haar hebben naast het beeld van Witte Sneeuw, maar iemand anders had een nog beter plan : Wit en rood was tezamen roze, dus als ze nu een beeld zouden maken van roze steen, dan zou het probleem opgelost zijn. Roze Sneeuw noemden ze het beeld. Het beeld was groot nieuws. Zelfs in het buitenland hoorden ze van Roze Sneeuw.

Die vriend en zijn vrouw kregen een kindje, een meisje, en noemden het : Roze Sneeuw. Mijn vrouw schreef er een sprookje over. Het was een meisje dat nooit opgroeide, maar altijd vier jaar bleef. Wel werd ze steeds wijzer, en op een dag bouwde ze een leger van reuzenridders. Het meisje was mooi als een bloem, en de reuzenridders waren erg dol op haar. Ze woonde in een prachtig paleis waar de reuzenridders altijd rondmarcheerden. Niemand kon haar de les lezen, en daarom bleef ze altijd een kind, een kind dat kon dromen, en kon wonen in haar fantasie. Ze was gelukkig, waar ze ook was, want de reuzenridders gingen altijd met haar mee.

Terence Palmer zat in de opdrachtzaal met een paar anderen. De technisch leider wees op een bord waarop het volgende stond : Alles is Pijn. Alles is Vuur. Alles is Zintuig.

En van wat voor een indianenstam is dit ? vroeg Terence.

Sommigen van hen zeggen ook : Alles is groeiende pijn, zegt de technisch leider. Schimmadons, je weet wel, daar beneden. De technisch leider reikt Terence een kaart aan en wijst aan waar de indianen wonen. Terence slikt even. Zijn vorig avontuur met indianen liep verkeerd af.

Even later brengt het sterrenschip de groep net binnen de dampkring met een parachute, en vallen naar beneden.

Terence maakt een veilige landing diep in de jungle. Waarom moet het altijd zo onbeholpen. Ze hebben toch veel betere technische snufjes ? Maar goed, ouderwets parachute springen was wel weer even leuk. Terence drukt op een knop op zijn horloge en krijgt de technisch leider op het scherm. ‘Wat nu ?’ vraagt Terence.

‘Gewoon doorlopen,’ zegt de technisch leider. ‘Ik heb je op het scherm en je bent goed terechtgekomen.’ Verderop staat een huisje met een lang balkon met veel plantengroei en bomen. Binnenin zou een professor wonen waar Terence op bezoek moest gaan. De professor schijnt veel van de Schimmadons af te weten.

‘Kom binnen,’ zegt de professor vanaf het balkon als hij Terence ziet aankomen. Even later zijn de anderen er ook bij. ‘Ik besef dat jullie hier zijn voor een opdracht,’ zegt de professor. De professor valt direkt met de deur in huis : ‘De potentialen heersen hier. En de Schimmadons zijn degenen die het meest onder hen lijden.’

‘Wie zijn de potentialen ?’ vraagt Terence.

‘De potentialen zijn lichtwezens die dromen creeeren door lichtcontact, oogcontact, dus als je ze ziet, dan maken ze je dromen waar, maar daarna komt de rekening,’ laat de professor weten.

‘En dat is ?’ vraagt Terence ....

‘Bloed,’ zegt de professor. ‘En de Schimmadons hebben hen daar altijd in doorgehad, en de oorlog heeft hen zo goed als vernietigd .... De laatsten van hen leven onder de grond, daar waar ze nauwelijks iets kunnen zien. Ze leven daar door geluid, geur, smaak, adem, gevoel, je weet wel, temperatuurverschil, en zo vormen ze zich een beeld.’

‘En wat wilt u dat ik daaraan ga doen ? Is het niet goed zo ?’ vraagt Terence.

‘Nee, Terence,’ zegt de professor. ‘Het is helemaal niet goed, want het land was van hen, waar nu de potentialen wonen. Ik weet dat jullie op dezelfde basis leven als de Schimmadons. Zij het iets anders, maar jullie gebruiken je ogen ook niet om licht op te vangen, maar geur, temperatuur, enzo. Jullie zijn de enigen die ogen hebben die totaal niet op licht reageren, en daarom hebben wij jullie nodig.’

Terence kijkt even naar de anderen. ‘En nog eens wat, Terence,’ zegt de professor. ‘Ach laat maar zitten. Je merkt het zelf wel als je naar de kampen van de potentialen gaat. Doe voor de zekerheid dit rode scherm voor je ogen, want je weet nooit wat ze van plan zijn, en hun lichtaanvallen kunnen als vuur zijn.’

Even later gaat het groepje naar de plaats waar de professor hen naartoe zond. Ze heffen hun pistolen op, en direkt begint de aanval. ‘Commercials !’ roepen de potentialen. Vreemdsoortige wezens lijken hen te helpen, en op eens krijgt Terence een reeks reclame boodschappen in zijn hoofd die hem helemaal overhoop lijken te steken. Wat een vreemdsoortige oorlog. Hij drukt op een knop op zijn horloge, krijgt de technische leider op een beeldschermpje, en vraagt wat hij moet doen. Type F7 op je horloge, zegt de technisch leider. Daarna K9. Terence doet wat hem wordt gezegd en de vreemde reclame boodschappen verdwijnen. Even later valt Terence neer, door vreemde spiegelbeelden in zichzelf waardoor hij de controle verliest. Later wordt hij wakker, vastgebonden op een stoel.

Olekekal, zegt één van de potentialen. ‘Ach man, ga naar huis,’ zegt Terence.

‘Dit is mijn huis,’ zegt de potentiaal. Dan trapt de man hem in het gezicht. Later weet Terence wat knoppen op zijn horloge in te drukken, met aanwijzingen van de technisch leider, en komt weer vrij. Diep in een kelder vind hij apparatuur, en maakt foto’s met zijn horloge. Het lijkt wel alsof al die lichtverschijnselen door deze computer worden opgewekt.

‘Agent Terence Palmer !’ wordt er geroepen. Mannen in zwarte pakken zijn binnengekomen, en snel nemen ze Terence mee. Het zijn mannen van zijn ruimteschip. Die worden altijd ingezet als er gevaren zijn. Ze hebben Terence al meerdere malen uit de moeilijkste en gevaarlijkste situaties gered.

Even later is Terence hoog en veilig in het ruimteschip. Vanuit een groot raam kijkt hij naar beneden. Overal is er rook. Hij vraagt zich af wat er gebeurt is. De potentialen blijken vernietigende acties gedaan te hebben.

‘Agent Terence Palmer.’ En dan moet hij zijn horloge inleveren waarmee hij foto’s heeft genomen. In een laboratorium worden de foto’s onderzocht. ‘Ik kan het niet helpen,’ zegt Terence. ‘Ik heb geprobeerd de potentialen uit te schakelen, maar het is me niet gelukt.’

‘Shhh...,’ zegt iemand. ‘We hebben nu de foto’s, dus we kunnen hier via de analyze verder mee komen.’

Na een lange nacht wordt Terence wakker. Hij gaat naar beneden, en komt wat anderen van de

groep tegen, en ook wat van de Schimmadons, en zelfs de professor. Terence is blij dat ze allemaal gered zijn nu de potentialen er zo'n zooitje van hebben gemaakt. 'We brengen jullie wel naar een nieuwe planeet,' zegt Terence.

In de middag krijgt Terence het loon voor zijn daden : nieuwe cyborg-bestanddelen, en wordt bevestigd in een hogere orde.

Hij leest nog even de verslagen door, en komt erachter wat ze van de foto's hebben kunnen leren. Het zijn een aantal documenten geworden waardoor het schip door een immense verbouwing zal gaan. Vele technieken kunnen ze op henzelf toepassen.

Na een tijdje komen ze op een rode planeet Traktiktor, waar ze de professor en de Schimmadons afzetten, en dan gaat het schip verder. Terence kijkt naar zijn armen, waarop zoveel nieuwe apparatuur is bevestigd, zoveel nieuwe communicatie-mogelijkheden. Hij werkt nu voor een soort hogere inlichtingendienst.

Even later spreekt hij een wat oudere vrouw die de leiding heeft over een ander deel van het schip, en zij pleit ervoor dat hij overgeplaatst wordt naar het moederschip. Dat is een grotere eer dan hij kon wensen. Na een paar uurtjes is de overplaatsing een feit, en hij krijgt een nieuwe kamer. Ook krijgt hij hier nieuwe wapens, en krijgt hij een eigen gevechtsschip. Hij had al wel een piloten-opleiding gehad, maar nu heeft hij dan zijn eigen schip, een Fighter F6. Het schip kent vele communicatie-schilden, en heeft een hoge graad afweer. Voornamelijk zal hij hier reddings-acties mee moeten uitoefenen. Hij had altijd van de technisch leider geleerd dat wijsheid en list beter is dan oorlogsvoering. De echte oorlogsvoering werd meestal uitgevoerd door de Jagers, andere soort schepen, meestal in K5 uitvoering en F9. De F9's waren zo'n beetje de snelste schepen die ze hadden. Ze waren niet groot, maar ook niet klein. Wel waren ze heel lang, en maakten ze veel lawaai. De piloten van de F9's waren aardige lui, en dat was ook een vereiste. Terence maakte veel studie over de F9, en het werd bijna een soort obsessie voor hem. Wat zou hij ook graag het grotere werk willen doen in de oorlog, en zo zorgen voor een groter en beter terrein voor het hele universum. Er waren zoveel gevaren die ze moesten bestuderen, en moesten bestrijden, maar bovenal moesten ze die gevaren leren begrijpen. Het kwam op veel studie aan. Hoe meer Terence de materie bestudeerde des te meer hij erachter kwam dat kwaad eigenlijk niet bestond. Ze hadden allemaal hun eigen redenen, maar toch moest er soms gevochten worden. Die gevechten bleken belangrijk te zijn voor het voortbestaan van het universum. Het was alsof ieder ras zijn eigen hoek had, en dat de oorlogen belangrijk waren voor integratie en zelfs vriendschap. Vaak was er na zo'n oorlog meer begrip naar elkaar, en uiteindelijk in veel gevallen werden er verdragen van vrede getekend.

Na vele jaren was het eindelijk zo ver. Terence kreeg zijn eigen F9, en werd een frontman in de strijd. Zo was hij dan niet alleen meer een agent, maar ook een militair. Dit was waar hij al zo lang over had gedroomd, en het was een grote dag voor hem toen hij zijn nieuwe pak kreeg, met zoveel nieuwe bestanddelen, en inzage in zoveel geheime documenten.

De Kitlaps waren een gevaarlijk soort aliens waarmee ze te maken hadden. Ze hadden hoge apparatuur om het verstand en geweten van anderen mee proberen over te nemen voor totale dominatie van het universum. Het was één van de gemeenste oorlogen die ze ooit hadden meegemaakt, en waarin vele F9's te gronde gingen. Terence was ten einde raad. Een groep

professoren die ook de F9's hadden gestructureerd hadden inmiddels een tegengif gevonden waarmee ze de Kitlaps konden overnemen, maar er was al veel gesneuveld. En dat tegengif moest eerst in een bepaalde unit komen, in de dieptes van het rijk van de Kitlaps, en dat rijk was zwaarbewaakt. Er waren zoveel valstrikken dat eigenlijk niemand er voor voelde om daar naartoe te gaan, maar Terence greep de uitdaging aan. Iemand moest het doen.

Het rijk was omsingeld door hoge muren, op een verliggende planeet van gevaarlijke gassen. Terence hoopte dat de F9 er tegen bestand was. Het hele rijk van de Kitlaps bleek bestuurt te worden door de geheime unit. En het was nog maar de vraag of het tegengif ook echt zou werken. Maar na een tijdje moest Terence weer rechtsomkeerts maken, want hij kwam er niet doorheen. Hij mocht blij zijn dat hij nog leefde. Op een dag werd hij door één van de professoren geroepen. De professor had een machine gebouwd waardoor snelle verplaatsingen in de ruimte mogelijk waren. De professor bleek het hele gebied van de Kitlaps in kaart te hebben, en zei dat het mogelijk was om Terence naar de unit te verplaatsen, maar hij was bang dat Terence daar niet zou kunnen overleven vanwege de gassen. Hij wilde werken aan een speciaal pak voor Terence, maar Terence had een beter idee. 'Waarom niet gewoon het tegengif verplaatsen ?' Maar dat kon niet want het tegengif moest op een bepaalde manier in de unit worden ingevoerd. De professor legde het hem uit, en het was inderdaad ingewikkeld. De professor ging met het pak aan het werk. De professor wist veel af van de gassen van de Kitlaps, dus hij dacht dat het moest kunnen. Terence kreeg een speciaal alarm op zijn arm, die hem direkt zou terugverplaatsen als er iets mis ging. Ook was er een bepaalde schakelaar die hij meekreeg waarmee hij direkt weer terugkon. Zo kon hij zichzelf als het ware heen en weer flitsen, om zo in alle rust zijn werk te doen. Het project slaagde, en de Kitlaps werden allemaal overgenomen door een vreemd energie-veld. Maar even later werden de Kitlaps erger dan ooit tevoren. De unit had zich op een vreemde manier hersteld en had het tegengif geabsorbeerd. Terence moest nu ervoor zorgen dat er een altijddurende stroom van het tegengif zou zijn, maar het probleem was dat er niet genoeg tegengif was. Daarvoor moest Terence naar een afgelegen planeet. Het tegengif heette Terdis, en al gauw had Terence door dat er een lijntje moest komen van de afgelegen planeet naar de unit van de Kitlaps, anders zou het niet slagen. De professor kreeg het voor elkaar om een verplaatsmachine daar te krijgen, die zo geprogrammeerd was dat er telkens tegengif werd gezonden naar de unit. Toen leek het grootste probleem voorbij te zijn.

Maar er bleek één Kitlap te zijn die onoverwinnelijk was, een geweldig beest, als een groenharige reuzenaap. Hij bleek de koning te zijn van de Kitlaps. De Kitlaps bleken door het tegengif al tegen hun koning opgezet te zijn, en vochten nu mee in het leger van Terence. Maar dat was geen makkelijke zet. Het bleek dat de aap zo groot kon worden als hij zelf wilde, en ook zo klein mogelijk. Hij had hiervoor een vergrotingsmachine. Door de verplaatsingsmachine kon Terence makkelijk bij de vergrotingsmachine komen, maar hoe dit ding uit te schakelen ? De vergrotingsmachine bepaalde alles .... de spraak van de aap, de bewegingen van de aap, alles .... Terence wist niet hoe hij het ongedaan kon krijgen, en de professoren wisten het ook niet. Maar op een dag bleek een andere Kitlap er meer van af te weten. Hij had jaren voor de koning gewerkt, en wist alles van de vergrotingsmachine af. Sterker nog : hij had hem zelf gemaakt. Met hulp van deze Kitlap konden ze de machine ongedaan maken, en al snel was de koning zo mak als een lammetje en gaf zich over. Er werd een verdrag van vrede getekend, en gevaarlijke machines werden uitgeschakeld en op een vreedzame manier gebruikt door een aantal veranderingen. Terence wist dat een hogere en betere techniek altijd de beste oplossing was, en aan die techniek zou hij zich meer en meer wijden.

Einde

Elwin

Hoofdstuk 1.

Op een mooie dag zit Elwin in de tuin. Elwin woont niet zomaar in een wereld. Elwin woont in een echte fantasie-wereld waar van alles kan gebeuren. Elwin heeft een heleboel vriendjes .... fantasie-beesten. Met die fantasie-beesten maakt hij vaak hele verre reizen. Ze staan allemaal bij zijn vader in de stal. Eentje heet er Groepsoe, eentje met drie grote bulten op zijn snuit en een bril op. Groepsoe kan heel hoog vliegen, als een soort olifant of draak met vleugels. En vaak maakt Elwin reisjes op z'n rug. Voorzichtig loopt Elwin naar het hok van Groepsoe. Het is een groot hok. Elwin doet voorzichtig, omdat Groepsoe misschien nog slaapt, en Elwin wil hem niet wakker maken. Maar gelukkig, Groepsoe is wakker.

'Dag Groepsoe,' zegt Elwin, 'zullen we weer eens een reisje maken ?'

Nou, daar had Groepsoe wel zin aan. Want telkens in een hok zitten dat verveelde Groepsoe ook een beetje. Daar komt vader aan. 'Zo, waar gaan jullie naartoe,' vraagt vader. 'Ja, goede vraag,' zegt Elwin, 'dat weet ik eigenlijk niet. We gaan gewoon een reisje maken, en we zien wel waar we terecht komen.'

Elwin springt op de rug van Groepsoe en daar gaan ze. Het is mooi weer buiten, en de lucht is bijna rood. Het zonnetje schijnt. 'Hoera,' roept Elwin, 'waar zullen we naartoe gaan, Groepsoe ?'

'Wat dacht je van een eiland ?' zegt Groepsoe, 'dan moeten we wel eerst een tijdje over zee vliegen.'

Na een hele lange tijd vliegen komen ze op een eiland aan. Alles is hier wit, zelfs de bomen en de struiken. Elwin heeft wel zin om te gaan zwemmen, en na een tijdje is hij samen met Groepsoe in de golven. Op de bodem van de zee vinden ze een steen, en als Elwin hem optilt en boven water brengt begint de steen geluid te maken. 'Pruut, pruut,' zegt de steen.

'Oh, het is een pratende steen,' zegt Elwin tegen Groepsoe. 'Zou hij nog wat te vertellen hebben ?'

'Vraag het me maar,' zegt de steen. Elwin begint te lachen, en brengt de steen naar het strand. Op het strand spuit de steen wat water uit. 'Ik ben Joefie Kof,' zegt de steen.

'Ik ben Elwin,' zegt Elwin, 'en dit is mijn vriend Groepsoe,' terwijl hij naar Groepsoe wees. 'Wij zijn op reis.'

'Aha,' zegt de steen, 'en waar wonen jullie dan ?'

'Oh, in Kabotikka,' zegt Elwin weer. En dan begint de steen ineens verhalen te vertellen. Het is een echte verhalen-steen. Elwin vindt dit zo spannend, en vraagt of hij de steen mee mag nemen. De steen vindt het goed, en ook Groepsoe. Thuisgekomen laat Elwin de steen aan zijn vader en moeder zien. Daarna brengt hij de steen naar zijn kamertje.

Elke nacht voor het slapen gaan vertelt de steen een verhaaltje aan Elwin.

Daar is Wollegras, het grote harige beest dat altijd naast Elwin slaapt. Elwin kruipt dicht tegen hem

aan. Wollegras laat Elwin altijd zo mooi dromen. Het is Elwin's droomvriendje. Samen vallen ze in slaap. Het raam vliegt open, en Elwin stijgt op uit zijn bed. Hij is gekleed als een prins met een echt zwaard. Ook Wollegras stijgt op. De droom is al begonnen.

De prins springt op de rug van Wollegras, en samen vertrekken ze. Waar gaan ze naartoe ? De prins weet wel waar naartoe. 'Naar het kasteel !' roept hij. Wollegras weet wel waar dat is. Daar zijn ze al eens eerder geweest. Het is niet de eerste keer dat Elwin een droomprins is. In het kasteel zijn veel bedienden. Er zijn ook soldaten, maar die heeft de prins niet nodig nu. Hij stapt op zijn troon, en zegt tegen zijn bedienden : 'Breng de dromensteen en het dromensap.' Direkt rennen de bedienden weg, en al snel komen ze met de steen en het sap.

De prins legt zijn hand op de steen terwijl het sap begint te stromen. Het sap is erg glad, en de prins begint er over te glijden. Wollegras komt hem achterna. De prins glijdt helemaal naar buiten, en glijdt richting een enorme brug. Wollegras drinkt van het sap en wordt alsmaar groter. De prins lacht. Nu glijden ze naast elkaar. Wollegras begint in een kasteel te veranderen. Het is een heel zacht kasteel, met zachte muren. Na een tijdje gaat de prins naar binnen. Het lijkt binnen wel een doofhof. Maar het is niet de eerste keer dat Wollegras een kasteel is. De prins weet de weg wel een beetje.

Daar komt Groepsoe ook al aanrennen. Groepsoe neemt ook van het dromensap, en veranderd in een open haard. Dan ten slotte drinkt de prins zelf van het sap. Een deurtje gaat open, en een prachtige prinses komt binnen. De prinses gaat zitten, terwijl de prins in een beest is veranderd. 'Dag beest,' zegt de prinses, 'hoe gaat het met je ?' Het beest knikt, maar zegt niks. Hij gromt alleen een beetje. Dan komen één voor één de soldaten binnen. 'Weet je,' zegt het beest, 'het gaat niet goed in dromenland. En het is goed dat we allemaal bij elkaar zijn gekomen. Wat zullen we eraan doen. Heeft iemand een idee ?'

Een soldaatje stapt naar voren. 'Dag prins, eh ... prins beest, ik ben Jorit. Mag ik iets zeggen ?' Het beest knikt. 'Gaat u gang,' zegt het beest. Even is het stil, en dan begint het soldaatje te stotteren : 'Ik ... eh ... ik weet niet zo goed hoe i ... ik het moe ... moe ... moet zeggen, maar het komt allemaal door een dromen-bacterie, dus moet er een dokter komen.' Alle andere soldaatjes knikken. Dan loopt het prinsesje naar voren, neemt een slok van het dromensap, en verandert in een dokter. 'Waar is die bacterie ?' zegt de dokter met een donkere stem. Eén van de soldaten stapt naar voren en opent een soort kistje. In het kistje fonkelt een soort glinsterend balletje. De prinses kijkt erin, en daarna ook het beest. Snel slurpt het balletje wat dromensap naar zich toe en begint te drinken. Het balletje groeit en groeit, en na een tijdje is het een groot glibberig en slijmerig monster. 'Waarom breng je dromenland zo in de problemen ?' vraagt de prinses.

'Ach dokter,' zegt het groene monster, 'ik heb gewoon niks te doen, en ik wilde graag naar het kasteel, maar mocht er niet in. Ik dacht : als ik nu ga herrie-schoppen, dan laten ze me misschien wel binnen.'

Het beest begon te glimlachen. Het beest nam nog een slokje en veranderde weer in de prins. 'Zullen we dan gaan voetballen ?' vroeg de prins aan het monster. 'Of zullen we wat spelletjes gaan doen ? Er zijn nog ergens een heleboel spelletjes, ergens in een kast. Als we nu gewoon meer spelletjes gaan doen in dromenland, dan hoeft niemand zich meer te vervelen, en hoeft niemand meer herrie te schoppen.'

'Ja, maar,' zei het monster, 'ik wilde ook gewoon het kasteel in, terwijl ik niet naar binnen mocht.'

'Goed,' zei de prins, 'dan drinkt Wollegras gewoon nog veel meer dromensap, totdat het kasteel zo groot is dat iedereen in dromenland er kan wonen.'

En zo gebeurde het. Het kasteel groeide uit tot een grote stad, maar het was nog steeds een doolhof. En natuurlijk werden er veel spelletjes gedaan. De prins verdeelde de inwoners in vier groepen. Het waren vier spelgroepen met een bepaalde kleur. De groenen kwamen onder leiding van het groene monster, de witten kwamen onder leiding van Wollegras, het kasteel zelf. De gelen kwamen onder

leiding van Groepsoe, en de roden kwamen onder leiding van de prins en de prinses. Er waren vele spelletjes die ze konden doen. En zo keerde de rust weer terug in dromenland. Aan het einde van de dag in dromenland waren ze allemaal zo moe geworden dat ze gingen slapen, terwijl de prins met Wollegras vertrok. Even later werd Elwin wakker in zijn bed, terwijl Wollegras nog steeds naast hem sliep.

'Hallo, wakker worden,' fluistert Elwin heel voorzichtig. En dan wordt Wollegras wakker.

Hoofdstuk 2.

Vandaag gaat Elwin met Groepsoe naar ome Karam, die heel hoog in de lucht woont, ergens in een kasteel in de wolken. Ome Karam heeft een heleboel sprekende kachels. Elwin praat graag met de sprekende kachels, omdat ze nogal vaak goede raad geven, maar Elwin praat ook graag met ome Karam. De thee staat al klaar als ze aankomen. Ome Karam is erg vriendelijk, zoals altijd eigenlijk. Na een tijdje komt Wollegras binnenrennen. Ome Karam is blij hem te zien. En als ome Karam druk in gesprek is met Wollegras en Groepsoe gaat Elwin naar de sprekende kachels toe. Ze geven Elwin weer eens goede raad. 'Blijf hier maar eens een tijdje logeren,' zegt eentje. Ook de anderen vinden dat een goed idee. Dan kunnen ze wat bijpraten. Gelukkig vindt ome Karam het ook een goed idee, en Groepsoe en Wollegras mogen ook blijven.

Achter het kasteel van ome Karam was een weide genaamd de Wolleweide. Alles was hier heel zacht, zodat wanneer je viel je nooit pijn had. Je kreeg alleen dan een klein electrisch stroompje. Hier kon je paardrijden en een heleboel andere dingen doen. Elwin speelde hier graag. Aan het eind van de weide stond een veld vol van sprekende lotus-bloemen die de mooiste verhalen vertelden. Je kon ook in die lotus-bloemen slapen, en Elwin klom er vaak naar binnen.

De lotus-bloemen waren blij dat Elwin weer eens gekomen. Altijd als Elwin over de lotus-bloemen heen huppelde, dan kwam hij uiteindelijk bij een trap van lotus-bloemen waarover hij naar de Grippel-heuvel kon gaan. Op die heuvel daar woonden een heleboel koks, die hele vreemde gerechten maakte. Op de Grippel-heuvel moest Elwin altijd eerst aanbellen, en dan schoof iemand een klein raampje in de deur open, en dan moest Elwin eerst een liedje zingen voordat hij naar binnen mocht. Binnen liepen overal koks met hele lange menu-lijsten van wat ze allemaal zouden eten. En alles moest altijd pico bello in orde zijn, anders werd de koning van de Grippelheuvel boos. De koning zat altijd op een hele hoge troon, en als een kok eens een keer iets liet vallen of iets verkeerds had gekookt dat niet lekker was, dan sprong de koning naar beneden en sloeg zo'n kok dan met een pollepel, heel erg hard.

Maar naar Elwin was de koning altijd erg aardig. De koning was blij dat Elwin weer eens was gekomen. Met een ballonnetje sprong de koning van zijn troon af, en Elwin mocht zelf uitkiezen wat hij wilde eten. Natuurlijk waren dat allemaal erg vreemde gerechten.

Na een tijdje kwamen er een heleboel koks aan marcheren. Ze hadden een sprekende banaan tussen de bananen gevonden. Dat kon natuurlijk niet ... Daar wilden ze niet mee koken. Toen zei de koning dat de sprekende banaan ook wel een kok mocht worden. Dat wilde de banaan wel. Dat was beter dan opgegeten te worden, of weggestuurd worden. Iedereen wilde altijd graag op de Grippelheuvel wonen. Alleen de koks wilden soms weleens met vakantie, vooral als de koning niet zo'n goed humeur had. Maar vandaag was de koning heel vrolijk. Het was vandaag feest, omdat Elwin was gekomen. Elwin kreeg een mooie kamer waar hij mocht logeren, en hij mocht zelfs meehelpen met de koks als hij dat wilde. Sommige ketels waren zo groot dat Elwin erin kon zwemmen.

Middenin de nacht toen iedereen sliep, ging Elwin naar de keuken naar zo'n grote ketel, om daarin te zwemmen. Er zwommen daar ook vissen, en er waren zelfs dieren in bootjes. Ja, dat kon allemaal als de koks sliepen. Na een tijdje kwam de koning ook, en ze maakten dolle pret.

Roodvinger
en de Draak

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Hoofdstuk 1. Er gebeurt iets heel vreemds

Zoals jullie misschien wel weten is Roodvinger een mannetje niet groter dan je vingers. Op een dag beleefde Roodvinger een avontuur wat nu opgeschreven staat in dit boek : Roodvinger en de Draak. De schrijver heeft het precies zo opgeschreven zoals Roodvinger het hem vertelde, toen hij weer eens in Nederland was.

Nu heeft Roodvinger ook een vrouwtje die Roodlaarsje heet. Nou, in dit verhaal was Roodlaarsje verdwenen, en moest Roodvinger het tegen een echte draak opnemen om zijn vrouwtje weer terug te vinden.

Op een dag werd Roodvinger wakker in zijn bedje, terwijl er een briefje naast hem lag. Het was het handschrift van Roodlaarsje met daarop geschreven : 'Lieve Roodvinger, ik ben even naar de winkel. Ik ben zo weer terug. Van Roodlaarsje.' Roodvinger ging eerst even in bad, en liep daarna in zijn badjas naar beneden. Het zonnetje scheen buiten, en er waren wat kinderen op de stoep aan het spelen. Roodvinger dacht dat het een mooie dag zou worden. De vogeltjes floten zo mooi. Daar kwam de postbode al aan met post. Het was een heleboel post, een hele stapel, en Roodvinger ging er even voor zitten. Er zat ook een pakketje bij. Toen Roodvinger het pakketje openmaakte schrok

hij wel even, want er zat een laarsje van Roodlaarsje in. Er zat ook een briefje bij : 'Roodlaarsje komt niet meer terug. Van de draak.' Wat was dat nou ? Roodvinger schrok nog erger. Wie was die draak, en waar was Roodlaarsje nu ? In een dikke envelop zat een spiegeltje, en in weer een andere wat foto's van Roodvinger, en in weer een andere een schilderij van Roodvinger. Wat was dat nou ? Roodvinger belde direct de koning op en vertelde geschokt het verhaal. De koning schrok er ook erg van, en vroeg of Roodvinger direct naar het paleis kon komen. Roodvinger pakte snel wat spulletjes bij elkaar, deed de deur goed op slot en reed in zijn autootje naar het paleis. Hij zou voor een tijdje bij de koning logeren. De koning wachtte hem bij de paleispoort al op en strekte zijn armen wijd open voor Roodvinger. De koning wist natuurlijk ook niet wat er met Roodlaarsje was gebeurd, maar liet wijze mijnheren komen, de raadsheren van de koning. Vier mijnheren met hoge hoeden kwamen naar de koning toe in de troonzaal. Roodvinger zat op een hoge stoel naast de troon. De koning piekerde zeer. De hoge mijnheren keken bedenkelijk, terwijl ze met hun handjes door hun baardjes wreven. Eén stak er zijn vinger op, en sprak : 'Koning, uwe majesteit, ik ben maar een eenvoudig raadsheer, maar ik kan hier misschien wel wat over zeggen.' En toen haalde die wijze mijnheer een boek tevoorschijn en begon erin te lezen. 'Juist ja, juist ja,' zei de mijnheer. 'Draken bestaan echt, en de boeken zeggen dat ze in andere gedaantes kunnen veranderen. Ze kunnen gewoon als mijnheren leven, terwijl ze 's nachts draken zijn.' Daar schrok Roodvinger wel even van. En waar moest zo'n draak dan zijn ? Wie zou het kunnen wezen. Toen stak een andere mijnheer zijn hand op en haalde een boek tevoorschijn. Dit boek was nog zwaarder dan de andere. 'Koning,' sprak de mijnheer en begon te lezen. Hij haalde zijn brilletje van zijn neusje. 'Ik weet nog wel iets hieraan toe te voegen. Draken houden ervan om in paleizen en andere grote huizen te wonen. Ze houden ervan het land te regeren, of om de koningen raad te geven.' Weer schrok Roodvinger.

Buiten hoorden ze ineens een paar schoten. Roodvinger en de koning renden naar buiten. Maar ze zagen niets. De koning keek Roodvinger aan en zei niets. Hij keek zo ernstig dat Roodvinger er een beetje bang van werd. 'Koning, wist u hier al van, dat draken zulke dingen doen ? Zich veranderen in mijnheren en zo, en zelfs kunnen werken voor u met de één of andere reden ?' vroeg Roodvinger een beetje angstig. 'Ik was daar altijd al bang voor, Roodvinger,' sprak de koning. Een lakei kwam naar buiten rennen : 'De koningin is verdwenen, de koningin is verdwenen,' riep hij. De koning schrok. Hij liet direct het hele paleis doorzoeken. Hij nam Roodvinger bij de arm : 'Kom mee, Roodvinger,' zei hij.

Toen ze buiten de paleistuin inrenden kregen ze beiden de schrik van hun leven. Er stond een enorme draak voor hen, met een lijf als bijna geheel bedekt met kevers. Als de kevers bewogen, dan bewoog de draak ook, maar Roodvinger wist niet zeker of het wel echt kevers waren. Het leken wel op hele kleine schildjes. De lijfwachten begonnen met pijlen op de draak te schieten, maar de draak begon te brullen, en er kwam rook uit zijn bek en zijn neusgaten. 'Nou, jullie weten natuurlijk wel wat ik kan doen, hè,' zei de draak luid. 'Ik kan dit hele kasteel in een moment in vlammen doen laten verdwijnen.'

'Oh,' jammerde de koning, 'Lijfwachten, stop met schieten. Beste draak, maar we hebben jou toch nog nooit wat gedaan ?'

'Dat is hem nou juist,' sprak de draak. 'Jullie willen niks met me te doen hebben. Jullie luisteren niet naar mij voor raad.'

'Maar,' sprak de koning weer, 'wij kennen u helemaal niet, meneer de draak, en wij hebben u hier nog nooit eerder gezien, dus hoe kunnen we dan naar u luisteren ?'

'Juist ja,' sprak de draak, 'maar ik kan ook in andere gedaantes komen, hè, hebben jullie daar niet aan gedacht ?'

De koning boog zijn hoofd. Ja, dat had een raadsheer net weer voorgelezen. Maar de koning was altijd bang dat er door die draken vervelende dingen zouden gebeuren. 'Niet alle draken zijn slecht, koning, en als ze slecht zijn, dan hebben ze daar soms een reden voor,' zei de draak. De koning

boog weer z'n hoofd. Ja, dat was allemaal waar. 'Wat kunnen we voor u doen, meneer de draak,' vroeg de koning, 'en waar zijn Roodlaarsje en mijn vrouw de koningin ?'

'Die komen voorlopig niet terug,' sprak de draak. 'Er zullen eerst vele dingen moeten gebeuren, voor ze terugkomen.'

'Ze moeten nu terugkomen,' bulderde de koning met zijn vuist in de lucht. Maar toen hij lichtelijk wat vuur uit de neus van de draak zag komen, boog hij weer snel z'n hoofd. 'Zeg het maar, draak. Wat moet er gebeuren,' vroeg de koning.

Maar daar werd Roodvinger ineens wakker. Het was een nare droom geweest. Maar, waar was Roodlaarsje ? Roodvinger rende naar beneden op z'n pantoffeltjes. Het was nog midden in de nacht. Gelukkig, daar zat Roodlaarsje. Ze had wat ijs uit de diepvries gepakt. Roodvinger stormde op Roodlaarsje af en gaf haar een dikke kus. 'Wat ben ik blij dat je er bent, Roodlaarsje, ik heb zo naar gedroomd.' En toen Roodvinger de droom vertelde begon Roodlaarsje op de piano te spelen.

Roodvinger werd weer een beetje rustig door het liedje van Roodlaarsje. En samen vielen ze in de bank in slaap.

Weten jullie dat Roodlaarsje eens een keer ècht kwijt was ? Dat was heel lang geleden, toen er nog heel veel draken in de bergen woonden. Roodvinger moest toen een lange reis maken naar de bergen, om het op te nemen tegen zo'n verschrikkelijke draak. Die draak had meerdere koppen, en meerdere stemmen. Als die draak tegen Roodvinger sprak dan leek het wel alsof er dertig mijnheren tegelijk tegen hem spraken. En Roodvinger kon al die stemmen herkennen, omdat de draak al zijn vriendjes nadeed, en ook de stemmen van de mijnheren waar Roodvinger niet zo goed mee kon opschieten, de nare mijnheren, en ook de stem van de koning, wat natuurlijk Roodvingers grootste vriend was.

Roodvinger moest toen een heel eind door een grote grot lopen, in de richting van het gebulder. De draak had ook een heleboel benen die wel op vrouwenbenen leken. Sommige benen hadden schoenen aan, maar ook een heleboel benen hadden geen schoenen aan. Die benen konden heel snel bewegen, en er was overal vuur om die draak heen. Roodvinger moest dan heel hard schreeuwen zodat de draak hem kon verstaan : 'Geef mijn lieve Roodlaarsje terug, nare draak.' Maar dan lachte de draak hem hard uit. Achter de draak was een poortje met een gang, waar ergens Roodlaarsje zat opgesloten. De draak had een heleboel ijzeren kapjes op z'n lichaam, een soort kevers, maar sommige plekken leken ook op rubber. De draak kon heel hoog gillen, zodat het soms pijn deed in Roodvingers oortjes. Roodvinger wachtte toen totdat de draak ging slapen, maar de draak sliep helemaal niet. Roodvinger stond toen voor een groot probleem. Op een gegeven moment begon die draak met de schoenen te gooien. Daar had hij er zoveel van. En Roodvinger moest telkens bukken om niet geraakt te worden. Op een gegeven moment werd Roodvinger zo kwaad, dat hij z'n eigen schoen uittrok en die naar de draak gooide. 'Nee, niet doen,' bulderde de draak. Maar toen begon de draak weer verder te gooien met schoenen. En weet je wat Roodvinger toen gedaan heeft ? Hij is terug gegaan uit de bergen om bij iedereen oude schoenen te vragen, en ging zo met een hele vrachtwagen vol met schoenen terug naar de draak. Toen heeft Roodvinger één voor één al die schoenen naar de draak gegooid, totdat de draak zo moe en slap was geworden dat hij in slaap viel, en zo kon Roodvinger Roodlaarsje redden. Dat was natuurlijk een spannend verhaal, en vanaf toen zei men dat in schoenenwinkels draken onder de grond slapen.

Soms mochten kinderen met schoolreisje weleens door de kelderdeur van zo'n schoenwinkel naar beneden om die slapende draken te kunnen zien. Dat waren vaak hele grote grotten met een heleboel trappen. Vaak gebruikten ze het vuur wat uit de neuzen van de slapende draken kwam voor de verwarmingen van het land, en voor andere dingen zoals het smelten van ijzer. Daarom waren schoenenwinkels zo belangrijk.

Hoofdstuk 2. De Bakkermannen

Nog niet alle draken sliepen. Er waren er nog een paar die heel diep zaten en die veel te ver van de schoenenwinkels vandaan waren. Deze draken hadden ook vele benen, een soort vrouwenbenen, die ze gebruikten om wezens mee op te sluiten. Die benen waren dan echte drakentralies. Roodvinger vond dat erg vervelend voor die wezens. Er waren wel boekjes over in de bibliotheek die zeiden dat daar onder de grond waar de draken nog niet sliepen, daar waren zoveel drakenschoenen dat die opgesloten wezens sliepen. Ja, dat gebeurde er als er ergens teveel drakenschoenen lagen. Dan viel iedereen in slaap, en dan kwamen ze vaak achter de drakentralies terecht. Daarom waren er met schoolreisjes onder de grond altijd hekken waarop stond : 'Niet verdergaan, vanwege drakenschoenen.' Achter die hekken daar sliepen de draken nog steeds niet. En het was vaak zo diep onder de grond, dat het ver uit de buurt van de schoenenwinkels was. Roodvinger wilde daar graag iets aan doen. Roodvinger had een aantal boekjes over draken uit de bibliotheek meegenomen en was al druk aan het lezen. De droom had hem wel op een idee gebracht.

Er stonden vreemde gedichten in sommige boekjes :

'Achter de tralies van de bakker, daar zat een oude stakker. Daar moest hij eten, zo blij, zo blij, terwijl hij verdriet had, zeer spijtig het zij. En die tralies waren oude benen, van een draak, dat moet je weten. Van veraf leek het allemaal zo, maar ben je dan vergeten, dat van dichtbij het gewoon een zebra is, naar school gaande op rolletjes, want het is bijna kerstmis. Een bakkerij op wielen, met bakkerman's gezichten, maar ach 't is maar een zebra in zotte gedichten.'

Roodvinger moest even grinniken. Ja, dat waren inderdaad zotte gedichten. Het waren drakengedichten, vreemde rijmpjes. Vaak stonden er plaatjes van centaurs boven de bakkerijen op grote borden in het land. Dat waren half paard, half mijnheren. Ze zeggen dat de bakkers vroeger op centaurs reden, om hun brood te verkopen. In de boekjes stond dat deze centaurs vaak door draken onder de grond werden opgesloten. Roodvinger zag nooit bakkers op centaurs. Misschien waren ze wel allemaal onder de grond verdwenen. En waarom ?

Op de plaatjes hadden de centaurs vaak draaiende ogen, of ogen die bijna helemaal waren weggedraaid in de ooghoeken. Op sommige plaatjes spoten ze vuur in allerlei kleuren uit hun monden. Ze hadden veelal paardengezichten of mijnheersgezichten met een paardenlijf. Vaak hadden ze lang haar en gekleurde ringen om hun armen. Waarom zouden de draken hen uit het land weg hebben gehaald ? In sommige boekjes stond dat de draken het niet goed vonden dat de centaurs zo hard moesten werken. Ze moesten vaak zwaar werk verrichten in de bakkerijen. Door de drakenschoenen sliepen ze nu, maar ze zaten nog steeds opgesloten onder de grond achter de drakentralies. Roodvinger kon de draken wel een beetje begrijpen, maar moest het op deze manier ? In de boeken stond dat het erg gevaarlijk was om zo maar de draken te storen. Maar Roodvinger wilde wel eens weten wat er nu eigenlijk precies aan de hand was, en waarom de centaurs niet gewoon terug konden naar het land. Dan zou Roodvinger er zelf wel voor zorgen dat ze niet meer bij de bakkers hoefden te werken als ze dat niet wilden. Toen Roodvinger verder las vertelden de boekjes hem dat de centaurs vaak naar de woestijnen moesten om daar te zoeken naar het gouden meel. Diep in de woestijnen daar waren grote gordijnen waar ze langsheen en doorheen moesten, en als ze uiteindelijk door dat doolhof heen waren gekomen dan stond daar een huis van witte chocolade op een heuvel. In dit huis woonden een heleboel dominees die het gouden meel verkochten. Dan moesten de centaurs betalen met munten waarop bakkerman's gezichten stonden. Van dat gouden meel konden de bakkers in het land dan extra veel brood maken. Het waren vreemde munten waarmee ze moesten betalen, want de gezichten op die munten bewogen, en op de achterkant van die munten stonden vaak landschappen waarop ook alles bewoog. Het waren levende munten. In sommige boekjes stond dat als de centaur ook nog vleugeltjes had hij met het gouden meel naar de zonnen moest vliegen om zelf het meel te bakken.

Roodvinger besloot om eens een kijkje te nemen onder de grond. Hij zocht de eerste de beste schoenwinkel op en vroeg aan de schoenmaker of hij even naar beneden mocht, in de kelder. Roodvinger moest wel een heleboel trappen lopen naar beneden, en daar zag hij de eerste draken al. Maar deze sliepen, en Roodvinger moest net zo lang doorlopen totdat hij misschien een wakkere

draak zou tegenkomen, met misschien zelfs een slapende centaur achter drakentralies. Maar hoe ver Roodvinger ook doorliep, hij zag ze niet, zelfs achter de waarschuwingshekken niet. Ineens zag Roodvinger een mannetje zitten op een hekje. Achter het mannetje zag Roodvinger wel wat vuur in de verte. Het mannetje zei dat achter het vuur de draken waren met de slapende centaurs, maar Roodvinger moest hem eerst een muntje met een bakkerman's gezicht erop geven. Maar dat had Roodvinger natuurlijk niet, en daar had Roodvinger ook niet echt zin in om te moeten betalen aan een mannetje die ervoor zat. Maar het mannetje liet Roodvinger er niet door. 'Als je nu niet weg gaat,' riep Roodvinger, 'dan ... dan ..' maar verder kon Roodvinger niet komen. Hij werd ineens zo moe en traag en begon te gapen. Toen Roodvinger weer wakker werd zag hij het mannetje grijnzen met een gouden drakenschoentje in zijn hand. 'Met een zo'n ding is het gedaan,' zei het mannetje, 'dan slapen ze allemaal. Als je me nu een bakkerman's muntje geeft, dan mag je erdoor.'

'Maar waar moet ik zo'n muntje vandaan halen ?' vroeg Roodvinger. Maar het mannetje was alweer verdwenen, en Roodvinger begon in één van de boekjes te lezen of er misschien wat meer over die muntjes instond. Het bleek dat die soort munten heel vroeger in het land werden gebruikt, toen de centaurs nog voor de bakkers werkten, maar dat er andere munten kwamen toen de draken de centaurs hadden meegenomen. Roodvinger zou naar zo'n munt op zoek moeten om verder te kunnen komen. Moeizaam liep Roodvinger weer naar boven, en vroeg aan de oude schoenmaker of hij misschien wist waar Roodvinger een oude munt met een bakkerman's gezicht kon krijgen. Maar de schoenmaker wist het niet. Wel stond er een meisje in de winkel die zei dat haar opa nog een paar van zulke oude munten had. Roodvinger liep met het meisje mee naar het huisje van haar opa. Een oude man met een pijp deed open, en Roodvinger begon het verhaal te vertellen, terwijl het meisje glimlachte. De opa wilde wel met Roodvinger mee onder de grond, en hij had er graag een oude munt voor over om de centaurs daarmee te kunnen helpen. Met z'n drieen liepen ze terug naar de schoenmaker, en al snel stonden ze weer voor het mannetje. De oude man gaf hem het muntje en ze konden verder lopen. In de verte hoorden ze gebrul, en ineens liep het mannetje weer naast hen. 'Zeg, er zijn daar veel drakenschoenen waar je in slaap van kunt vallen, maar als ik erbij ben gebeurt er niks hoor.' Na een tijdje lopen kwamen ze aan bij de draken. De draken schrokken toen ze het mannetje zagen. 'Zo,' sprak het mannetje, 'ik heb even wat vriendjes meegenomen. Ik weet niet of jullie dat erg vinden. Ze willen graag wat centaurs mee terug nemen naar het land.' Maar de draken begonnen te brullen en te spuwen met vuur : 'Nee,' riep er één, 'dan moeten ze weer in de zware bakkerijen werken.' En een andere draak riep : 'Hier hebben ze mooie dromen, dus laat ze met rust.' Maar het mannetje zei : 'De bakkerijen hebben nu zoveel apparaten dat de centaurs daar echt niet meer hoeven te werken hoor, dat doen de bakkers zelf wel, en het is nu zo veilig en mooi in het land, dat de centaurs wel weer terug kunnen, hoor, als ze dat willen.'

'Geen sprake van,' brulde een derde draak, 'ze zijn nu bij ons en ze slapen. Laat hen met rust, bij ons hebben ze het veel beter.' Maar het mannetje liep op de kooien af en begon met een belletje te rinkelen. Langzaam werden de centaurs wakker. Het mannetje opende de kooien, en de centaurs kwamen naar buiten lopen, één voor één. Maar de draken begonnen toen ècht boos te worden, en begonnen alles in brand te zetten. Roodvinger schrok, en ook de oude man en het meisje. De centaurs begonnen wild heen en weer te rennen en te hinniken als paarden, maar het mannetje toverde snel regenwolken, en het begon te regenen, daar zo diep onder de grond. 'Nee,' gilden de draken, 'nee, geen regen.' Maar het begon harder en harder te regenen, en de wolkjes werden alsmaar groter. De draken begonnen langzaam weg te smelten en verdwenen door spleten onder de grond. 'Wacht maar, jullie zijn nog niet van ons af,' brulde er eentje. 'Vlug,' zei het mannetje, 'we moeten snel naar boven, anders komen ze terug.' Er waren wel honderden en honderden centaurs, en vlug renden ze over de trappen naar boven. Hier waren ze veilig, want ze wisten dat als de draken te dicht bij de schoenenwinkel zouden komen, dan zouden ze in slaap vallen. Maar wat was dat ? De aarde begon te beven en te beven, en de centaurs begonnen terug te rollen en te vallen, samen met Roodvinger, de oude man en het meisje. Het meisje gilde hard. Waar was het mannetje nu gebleven ? Maar daar zagen ze het mannetje halverwege slapen. Het mannetje kon misschien ook niet tegen de schoenen van de schoenenwinkel. Zou het mannetje soms ook een draak zijn ?

Een paar centaurs trokken het mannetje terug naar beneden, en het mannetje werd weer wakker. 'Ach ja,' zei het mannetje, 'ik ben ook een draak, eentje die van gedaante veranderd is. Ik ben de schoenmaker van de draken, maar ik kan niet tegen schoenwinkels. Daarom zit ik hier voor altijd opgesloten,' zei het mannetje. 'Hoe kunnen we je dan helpen,' vroeg het meisje.

'Er is één manier om weer naar boven te kunnen komen,' zei het mannetje, 'en dat is als ik de zilveren drakenschoen weer terugvind,' zei het mannetje. Het meisje begon te glimlachen, en zei : 'Die heb ik op mijn kamertje staan, want eens waren we eens met schoolreisje in de woestijn, en bij een oase heb ik de zilveren drakenschoen gevonden.'

Maar Roodvinger vroeg : 'Hoe weet je zo zeker dat het een drakenschoen is ?' Het meisje glimlachte weer. De meester had haar gezegd dat het een echte drakenschoen van zilver was, en dat ze hem op haar kamertje mocht houden. Snel gingen ze weer naar boven, maar weer begon de grond te beven, en ditmaal zakten ze dieper en dieper. Het meisje gilde. 'Hoe kunnen we nu ooit bij de zilveren drakenschoen terechtkomen ?' Plotseling zagen ze de schoenmaker in de verte verschijnen. Het meisje riep of hij even de zilveren drakenschoen uit haar kamertje kon halen. De schoenmaker deed wat hem werd gezegd en binnen korte tijd was hij terug met de zilveren drakenschoen. 'Gooi hem naar me toe,' riep het mannetje, en de schoenmaker zwaaide met zijn armen en gooide het zilveren schoentje naar beneden. Het mannetje ving het schoentje keurig op met een duik en begon te stralen. Nu kon hij terug naar boven, zonder in slaap te vallen. Oh, wat had dat mannetje ineens een grote glimlach, zo wijd. En ook het meisje straalde. Samen liepen ze naar boven. Het meisje bedankte de schoenmaker, en ook haar opa was zo blij ... en natuurlijk Roodvinger en de centaurs ... De centaurs besloten in het bos te gaan wonen, en in de woestijnen. Het mannetje zou een tijdje bij Roodvinger en Roodlaarsje logeren, samen met het meisje.

Hoofdstuk 3. Bank van de Rode Zwaan

Er onstond wat chaos bij het huis van Roodvinger. Iedereen wilde zo graag het mannetje eens ontmoeten. Zo erg werd het op een gegeven moment dat het mannetje naar buiten kwam en even de gouden drakenschoen tevoorschijn haalde, en daar vielen al die opdringerige bezoekers in slaap. Dat was wel een handig middeltje. Het mannetje zou graag willen dat er weer met bakkerman's munten betaald zou worden, dus op een dag ging hij samen met Roodvinger naar de geldbanken om het eens voor te stellen. De meesten hadden nog nooit van die munten gehoord, want het was al van zo lang geleden, maar een wat oudere bankdirecteur had nog een heel magazijn vol met van die munten. Hij vond het een goed idee, en wilde wel met de koning praten om te beginnen met het drukken van deze munten. Niet lang daarna betaalde heel het land met de bakkerman's munten. Als het mannetje lastig werd gevallen liet hij even snel de gouden drakenschoen zien, en de lastpakken vielen al snel in slaap. Roodvinger vond het maar wat handig, zo'n mannetje in de buurt. Het meisje ging vaak met Roodvinger boodschappen doen, en al snel raakten ze gewend aan de nieuwe munten. Voor iedereen was het een echt feest, want de gezichten op de munten bewogen echt, en op de achterkant was er altijd een filmpje te zien. Vaak was dat een kort tekenfilmpje, maar op de munten met een hoger bedrag waren het soms lange avonturenfilms. Zo werd het voor velen weer leuk om naar de winkel te gaan en met geld om te gaan.

Nu was er een bank in het land die de Bank van de Rode Zwaan heette. Binnenin was een gouden trap die naar een geelgouden station leidde, waar een gouden trein stond. De trein leidde naar Kabbernal, een stadje diep onder de grond. Twee centaurs hadden aan Roodvinger gevraagd of ze daar mochten gaan wonen, en of Roodvinger hen daar naartoe wilde brengen, samen met het mannetje. Die centaurs heetten Santlib en Motlib. De koning van Kabbernal heette Moldevan, een lieveheersbeestje. Moldevan was zo blij hen te zien. Kabbernal was een stadje zo diep onder de grond dat daar nog draken leefden die niet sliepen en waar ook de draken kwamen waar Roodvinger al mee te maken had gehad. Op het moment werd het stadje zwaar lastig gevallen door de draken en door een aantal spinnen. Het mannetje stak de gouden drakenschoen in de lucht, en de spinnen vielen in slaap, maar de draken begonnen hard te brullen : 'Oh daar heb je die vervelende

Roodvinger weer met de schoenmaker.' En ze begonnen weer flink met vuur te spuiten. 'Het is tijd dat er hier schoenenwinkels komen,' zei het mannetje. Dat vond Roodvinger wel een goed idee, dan zouden de draken daar niet meer kunnen komen, en in slaap vallen als ze te dichtbij zouden komen. En zo liet koning Moldevan door heel Kabbernal schoenenwinkels openen, met hele diepe kelders. In het midden van de stad kwam een Bank van de Rode Zwaan, en al gauw werd er hier ook alleen nog maar betaald met de filmmunten. Roodvinger was erg tevreden, en de twee centaurs hadden het goed na hun zin. Roodvinger hoopte nu eindelijk eens af te zijn van die vervelende draken. Elke schoenwinkel in Kabbernal had nu wel een paar slapende draken in de keldergrotten, maar hoeveel draken zouden er nog overgebleven zijn ? Roodvinger vond het maar spannend. Er was een nieuwe munt uitgekomen met het hoofd van koning Moldevan als bakker erop. Op de achterkant was er een filmpje over draken. Op de Bank van de Rode Zwaan werd er een ziekenhuis geopend. Koning Moldevan wilde eens per week de bakker en kok van het ziekenhuis zijn. Het werd een prachtig flatgebouw, met helemaal bovenaan een bioscoop. Het mannetje van de drakenschoenen vond het prachtig en klapte in zijn handjes van plezier. Er werd een standbeeld van het mannetje en van Roodvinger gemaakt, omdat ze allemaal zo blij waren. Het standbeeld van het mannetje werd van rood goud gemaakt, en het standbeeld van Roodvinger ook. Ze kwamen te staan voor de ingang van de Bank van de Rode Zwaan.

Hoofdstuk 4. De Zilveren Draak

Toen alles eindelijk achter de rug was en het meisje ook weer terug was bij haar vader en moeder, zaten Roodvinger en Roodlaarsje samen op de bank. Ook het mannetje was weer vertrokken, en het leek alsof het hele drakenverhaal nu eindelijk achter de rug was. Roodvinger vertelde vol trots over de nieuwe schoenwinkels in Kabbernal en de draken die daar onder sliepen. 'Roodvinger, zouden ze mooie dromen hebben ?' vroeg Roodlaarsje. Maar dat wist Roodvinger natuurlijk niet. Dat zou Roodlaarsje aan Klaas Vaak moeten vragen. Roodvinger keek naar z'n eigen schoenen. Het waren zwarte schoenen met een bakkerman's munt erop. Roodvinger glimlachte. Wat was dat toch een spannend avontuur. Maar nu wisten ze natuurlijk niet hoeveel draken er nog over waren die niet sliepen. Ja, een draak die wakker is kan natuurlijk nog heel wat aanrichten. Maar ze probeerden het maar een beetje te vergeten. Ineens werd er gebeld. De belgong ging, en Roodvinger liep naar de deur met de geruite raampjes. Er stond een lange mijnheer voor de deur, en Roodvinger deed de deur open ... Floep, daar viel Roodvinger. De mijnheer had wat paars spul in Roodvingers gezicht gespoten. Na een minuutje stond Roodvinger weer op ... 'Wat was dat ?' vroeg Roodvinger verbaast ... 'Slaapgas,' zei de mijnheer, 'voor twee bakkerman's munten mag je het hebben.'

'Waar haalt u dat spul dan vandaan ?' vroeg Roodvinger. 'Uit drakenschoenen,' zei de mijnheer weer. 'En waar haalt u die drakenschoenen vandaan als ik vragen mag ?' vroeg Roodvinger weer. 'Nou, ziet u,' zei de mijnheer, 'ik ben een professor en ben diep onder de grond gegaan om deze schoenen te zoeken. Ik kan er goed slaapgas van maken, ook uitstekend voor hen die 's nachts moeilijk in slaap kunnen komen.'

'Nou, nee, mijnheer,' zei Roodvinger, 'ik heb genoeg van al die drakenverhalen. Ga een ander er maar mee pesten.' En klats, daar ging de deur dicht, en Roodvinger liep moe naar de kamer. Maar toen hij in de kamer kwam was Roodlaarsje verdwenen en wat zat daar nou op de bank ? Het was een zilverkleurige paarse draak. Roodvinger schrok zich een hoedje. 'Wij zijn van de orde van de zilveren draak,' zei de draak.

'Wij ?' vroeg Roodvinger .. Dat zijn wij helemaal niet. Wilt u snel uit deze kamer vertrekken. Vooruit, vlug.' Maar de draak stond op en begon te krijsen. Zo hard en schel dat Roodvinger er hoofdpijn van kreeg. Roodvinger herinnerde zich dat ze door het zilver ook boven de grond konden komen. Ze moesten iets met die zilveren schoen te maken hebben.

'Ja,' zei de draak, 'de zilveren draak is de maker van die schoen.' Ineens ging de telefoon. Roodvinger nam op en hoorde : 'Hallo Roodvinger, met de zilveren draak. Wij hebben de zilveren

schoen weer terug en kunnen floeps boven de grond. Ook hebben we de gouden schoen in ons bezit, daarom zal heel het land binnen de kortste keren slapen ... voorgoed ... voor altijd .... ha ha ha ha.'

Oh wat schrok die Roodvinger daarvan. Hadden ze dan toch het mannetje kunnen bestelen ? En waar is het mannetje nu ? In de wolken verscheen een levensgrote gouden drakenschoen ... Roodvinger moest nu snel zijn, want anders zou hij ook slapen. Maar het was al te laat. Roodvinger keek naar buiten en zag al wat mijnheren op straat slapen. Ook kon hij in de huisjes aan de overkant mijnheren zien slapen in hun stoel. Het was al te laat, want Roodvinger werd ineens zo moe in zijn benen. En daar viel Roodvinger op de bank. Er was een enorm gelach in de lucht. Overal vlogen er zilverkleurige draken in het rond, in allerlei kleuren. Ze waren op weg naar het paleis. Ook de koning en de koningin sliepen, en ze werden diep onder de grond opgesloten. Hier hadden ze ook het mannetje opgesloten. Iedereen sliep. De zilveren draak ging op de troon zitten en begon luid te brullen. Zilveren vuur in allerlei kleuren kwam uit z'n bek. 'Nu is het hele land onder de gouden schoen om verpletterd te worden. Dan zal ik heersen over een nieuw rijk van draken. Ha ha ha.'

Maar niet iedereen sliep. Het meisje dat de zilveren schoen een tijdje op haar kamer had gehad was wakker. Het mannetje had haar verteld dat het zilveren drakenschoentje over een tijdje toch weer bij haar terug zou komen, en dan zou ook het mannetje weer bij haar terugkomen. Ze wist dat als zij het drakenschoentje van zilver weer terughad, dan zouden de draken niet meer boven de grond kunnen komen. Dapper stapte ze op het paleis van de koning af. De zilveren draak had de zilveren drakenschoen in z'n klauw en brulde. Plotseling begon het schoentje te piepen en te trillen. Er kwamen knipperlichten vanaf en het schoentje werd zo heet dat de draak het niet meer kon vasthouden. De draak brulde het uit, omdat z'n klauwen begonnen te branden, en het schoentje viel toen op z'n poot, die ook begon te branden. Brullend schopte de draak de schoen weg. Plotseling kwamen er zilveren handjes en beentjes uit het schoentje, en kreeg het vleugeltjes. Het meisje kwam net binnen en zag ook een hoofdje uit het schoentje verschijnen. Toen begon de draak nog harder te brullen. Het schoentje vloog op het meisje af, en het meisje was zo blij en spreidde haar armpjes open. Ineens viel er licht op de draak, en brullend begon hij in de grond te smelten. Hij moest weer terug naar beneden. Ook de andere draken waren ineens verdwenen. Daar kwamen ook de koning, de koningin en het mannetje weer aanrennen. De gouden schoen was weer uit de wolken verdwenen, en was nu weer veilig bij het mannetje. Vanaf nu zou het mannetje altijd bij het meisje blijven, samen met de zilveren drakenschoen. Het mannetje zou de gouden drakenschoen goed opbergen. Later bedachten ze dat het wel een goed idee zou zijn om de gouden drakenschoen naar Klaas Vaak te brengen, die het zo nu en dan kon gebruiken als iemand niet goed kon slapen. Het meisje, het mannetje en de zilveren drakenschoen mochten voortaan in een toren van het koninklijke paleis wonen, om het land tegen boze draken te beschermen.

Hoofdstuk 5. De Bokkenmelk

Roodvinger had een boek dat 'De Bokkenmelk' heette. Die bokkenmelk stroomde uit witte besjes van een haag die 'De Hondenhaag' heette. Het ware mierzoete besjes, en men gebruikte de melk vaak voor het maken van allerlei snoepsoorten. Het was geen gewoon snoep, maar erg gevaarlijk snoep. Als je het at, dan veranderde je zelf ook in snoep. Daarom werd het ook meestal door heksen gebruikt, en niet door iemand anders. Natuurlijk aten die heksen het nooit zelf op, maar legden het snoep over hun huisjes heen, zodat wanneer er dieven zouden komen en iets ervan zouden eten, ze in snoep zouden veranderen. De heksen bedoelden het dus niet altijd kwaad. Ze waren vaak bang voor inbrekers. Wel was het soms erg jammer als lieve kindertjes of diertjes ervan aten, want dan konden ze ook in snoep veranderen. Vaak waren die heksen dus niets anders dan gewoon bange mevrouwtjes die vroeger nare dingetjes hadden meegemaakt, en nu diep in het bos woonden, dichtbij hondenhagen. Die hondenhagen hadden niet alleen zoete besjes, maar ook nare stekels. In het boek dat Roodvinger had ging het over een geit die in een ketel roerde dichtbij de hondenhaag. De geit had veel besjes geplukt en was nu bokkenmelk ervan aan het maken. Hier zou de geit dan weer snoep van kunnen maken, dat de heksen als lappen over hun huisjes konden leggen.

Roodvinger las het boek vol spanning door. Het was dus erg gevaarlijk toversnoep wat niet in de handen van lieve kindertjes en diertjes terecht mocht komen. Sommige kindjes waren zo lief, dat op de een of andere manier hun goede hartje ervoor zorgde dat ze niet in snoep omgetoverd werden, maar ze moesten dan wel vaak voor de heks zingen en werken. Twee van zulke kinderen waren Hans en Grietje. Ze hadden hartjes van goud die hen beschermden, maar Grietje moest voor zo'n heks werken, en Hans werd in een kooitje opgesloten. De heks wilde Hans vetmesten zodat ze hem kon opeten. Als de kindertjes een tijdje in het huisje van de heks hadden gewerkt, dan werden ze vaak omgetoverd in poezen en wilde katten. Dan werden ze door de heks uitgezonden om kinderen en dieren naar de hondenhaag en naar haar huisje te lokken. Vaak moesten ze dat doen door heel mooi te zingen. Roodvinger kreeg de rillingen. Wat een draak was deze heks. En er waren veel meer van zulke heksen. Zouden poezen en katten daarom zo vaak janken ? Roodvinger vroeg zich af waarom zo'n mevrouw zoiets deed. Misschien was ze wel ergens verschrikkelijk boos om. Roodvinger besloot om eens naar de heks van Hans en Grietje toe te gaan, maar ook wist hij dat dit heel gevaarlijk kon zijn. Hiervoor moest Roodvinger heel diep het bos in, zo diep als hij nog nooit was geweest. Het was al donker geworden inmiddels. Roodvinger had z'n lantaarntje meegenomen, en natuurlijk het boek over de Bokkenmelk. In de verte hoorde hij poezen en katten zingen, maar ook janken. Roodvinger kreeg de rillingen. Zij moesten natuurlijk voor de heks werken. Roodvinger wist natuurlijk dat hij geen snoep mocht nemen, maar toch was het erg gevaarlijk wat Roodvinger deed, want je wist maar nooit met zo'n heks. Roodvinger zag een uil hard wegvliegen toen hij dichterbij kwam. Ah, daar was de hondenhaag al. Nu moest Roodvinger een heel eind langs die haag lopen, want aan het eind stond het huisje van de heks van Hans en Grietje. Roodvinger hoorde het geluid van uilen in de verte, en zag wat vleermuizen vliegen. Oei, wat was het hier eng en donker. Maar gelukkig had Roodvinger nog steeds zijn lantaarntje, met het boek.

Opeens stond er een grote grijze gestalte voor Roodvinger. Het was een draak. 'Wat moet dat hier ?' zei de draak met een vrouwenstem. 'Eh, wie bent u ?' vroeg Roodvinger. 'Ik ben de heks van Hans en Grietje, dommeling,' snauwde de draak. 'Zeg,' vroeg Roodvinger weer, 'waarom doet u eigenlijk zulke gemene dingen met kinderen en dieren ?'

'Dat gaat je niks aan,' schaterde de draak. En plotseling begon de draak in de heks te veranderen. Ze had lange vieze haren met slijm erdoorheen en een hoge hoed. Roodvinger wilde haar een hand geven, maar de heks trok snel haar hand weg. 'Niks geen handjesschudderij, ik weet wel waarvoor je komt. Voor de Bokkenmelk, maar die krijg je niet,' sprak de heks.

Ja, Roodvinger zou graag willen dat de bokkenmelk ergens anders voor werd gebruikt. Misschien dat het boek er nog wat over te zeggen had. En Roodvinger las verder, want hij wilde nu wel erg graag weten wat hij moest doen. Maar daar kreeg Roodvinger zo'n harde klap op z'n hoofd, dat hij omviel en bewusteloos lag. De heks sleepte hem mee naar haar huisje en gooide het boek in de oven. 'Zo, niks geen geheime boekjes meer. Ik ben de baas van de bokkenmelk, en ik zal Roodvinger eens in de kooi van Hans stoppen.' En daar werd die arme Roodvinger in de kooi van Hans geduwd. Het was een gouden kooi, en niet lang daarna werd Roodvinger wakker. De heks stond schaterlachend voor de kooi. 'Ha ha, het boek is verbrand, en ik ga jou eens even vetmesten, dun mannetje. Ik ga jou verschrikkelijk dik maken zodat je lekker op mijn bordje terecht komt en ik daar goed van kan eten. Misschien dat je wel zo dik wordt dat ik ook wat andere heksen kan uitnodigen voor de maaltijd. Zoals je weet is Hans ontsnapt, en hebben ze mij in de oven geduwd, maar ik heb nu een betere vangst : Roodvinger, de detective van de koning, ha ha ha ha. Luister goed naar me : Hier kom je nooit meer uit. Ha ha ha ha.'

'Zeg heks,' zei Roodvinger, 'waarom ben je hier allemaal zo blij om ? Heb je misschien iets naars meegemaakt in het land ?' Toen schrok de heks. 'Hoe weet je dat,' vroeg ze verschrikt. 'Nou,' zei Roodvinger, 'omdat u zo boos bent, dacht ik : Er moet wel iets verschrikkelijks met u gebeurd zijn, waar u zo boos over bent dat u er niet over wilt praten.' En toen barste de heks in snikken uit. 'Ja, Roodvinger, je hebt gelijk,' huilde ze. 'Ze hebben me vroeger zo vaak gepest dat ik zo'n lange neus heb, zo vaak, dat ik uit het land weg ben gegaan en hier diep in het bos ben gaan wonen.'

'Maar, mevrouw,' zei Roodvinger, 'u heeft juist een prachtige neus, zo mooi als die van Pinocchio, en daarmee kunt u vast en zeker het bos en de bloemen goed ruiken. Als u mij vertelt wie u zo geplaagd hebben vroeger, dan zal ik er bij de koning voor zorgen dat ze voor straf maar eens een tijdje in het bos moeten wonen in uw huisje, en dan kunt u weer terug naar het land.'

'Nee,' huilde de mevrouw, 'ik wil nooit meer terug naar het land. Ik wil bij de bomen en de bloemen blijven. Die doen me tenminste geen kwaad.' En toen kwamen er ineens een paar draken binnen. Het waren vriendinnen van de mevrouw. Toen ze Roodvinger in de kooi zagen begonnen ze te lachen. 'Zo, heb je een lekker hapje voor ons meegebracht ?' vroegen ze. Maar de mevrouw nam het voor Roodvinger op. 'Nee, hij wilde even in de kooi van Hans zitten, maar hij komt alleen maar om te helpen,' zei ze.

'Oh,' zeiden de draken sip, 'we hadden anders wel zin in een hapje.' En toen begon Roodvinger ook aan de draken het verhaal te vertellen, en het bleek dat zij ook gewoon mevrouwen waren die vroeger ergens om gepest werden. Roodvinger beloofde de mevrouwen dat hij met de koning erover zou praten dat het nog strenger verboden moest worden dat iemand gepest wordt, en dat wie het toch deed, een tijd in het diepe bos moest wonen. Dat vonden de mevrouwen wel een goed idee. Er woonden een heleboel van die mevrouwen in dit diepe bos, en al snel hadden ze allemaal het nieuws gehoord. Een paar wilden wel weer mee naar het land, maar de meesten wilden toch liever in het bos blijven wonen.

Achter de bokkenhaag stond ergens een grote ketel met een geit waar de bokkenmelk van de bessen gemaakt werd. De mevrouwen zeiden dat als Roodvinger het geheim van de Bokkenmelk wilde weten, waar het voor gebruikt moet worden, dan moest Roodvinger in die ketel duiken. Het was namelijk een geheime poort. Roodvinger moest er natuurlijk voor zorgen dat hij het niet zou drinken. Hij mocht er alleen in zwemmen. Na een eindje lopen kwam Roodvinger bij de bokkenketel aan. Er stond een grote geit bij die in de ketel stond te roeren. 'Wat moet je ?' vroeg de geit. 'Ik zou graag het geheim van de bokkenketel willen kennen,' vroeg Roodvinger. 'Die ketel is alleen voor heksen,' zei de geit weer. Maar Roodvinger duwde de geit opzij en dook in de ketel. Heks of geen heks, Roodvinger wist nu dat het maar net de manier is waarop je er tegenaan kijkt. Het kan zoveel betekenen. Roodvinger hield z'n lippen stijf op elkaar en zwom door de geheime tunnel. Het was gelukkig geen lange tunnel en Roodvinger zag al helder licht een eindje verderop. Roodvinger kwam in een bron terecht, met aan weerszijden elfjes en feetjes. 'Hoera,' riepen ze, 'je hebt het geheim van de bokkenmelk gevonden.' En ze gaven Roodvinger een gouden boek. Roodvinger deed het boek open en er kwam toverstof vanaf. De plaatjes bewogen, en Roodvinger voelde hoe hij in het boek werd getrokken. Er kwam een hand uit die hem wenkte. Roodvinger schrok wel even, want ineens was hijzelf in een van de plaatjes terecht gekomen. Het was een plaatje met een bootje op zee. De zee was vermengd met melk ... misschien was dat wel de bokkenmelk. In de boot lag ook een mannetje te slapen met een rond buikje. Hij had een klein krantje op z'n buikje liggen en z'n hoedje lag een beetje over zijn gezicht. Op de grond lagen een paar bakkerman's munten. Roodvinger raapte de muntjes op en begon de filmpjes te bekijken op de achterkant. het bootje ging sneller en sneller, totdat ze bij een waterval naar beneden kwamen. Toen schrok het mannetje wakker. 'Vlug grijp die boomstam boven je,' riep het mannetje. Gelukkig, dat was net op tijd. Roodvinger zag het bootje naar beneden storten. 'Je bent nu in het boek,' zei het mannetje, 'een gouden boek van bokkenmelk. En als je nu praat dan komen er lettertjes uit je mond. En toen kwamen er allemaal lettertjes uit Roodvingers mondje. 'Jaaaa,' hoorde Roodvinger roepen. Daar waren weer elfjes en feetjes. Ze waren zo blij dat Roodvinger door de bokkenmelk sprak. Ook uit hun mondjes kwamen nu allemaal lettertjes. De lettertjes hadden zoveel lichtjes en werden steeds langer en langer, of heel groot. En toen begonnen ze langzaam in elfjes en feetjes te veranderen. Het waren levende letters. Wat was dat prachtig. Sommige letters werden hele lange slingers. De bokkenmelk was dus niet om te drinken, maar om uit te spreken, zodat elfjes en feetjes zich konden verspreiden. Sommige lettertjes waren als slangetjes, en weer andere lettertjes waren als bloemetjes. Het was net prachtig vuurwerk in de lucht.

Het mannetje zei dat het hele land nu in het gouden boek was en dat heel het land nu door de

bokkenmelk zou spreken. Daar was Roodvinger erg blij mee. De bokkenmelk moest goed gebruikt worden.

Hoofdstuk 6. De Kasteelschool

Op een dag was Roodvinger samen met een vriend in de zee. Ze waren daar aan het zwemmen. Ze vonden daar een vreemde zeester. Blauwvinger, zo heette die vriend, raapte de zeester op, en deze begon direct licht te geven. 'Wat prachtig,' zei Blauwvinger, en legde de zeester weer terug. In de verte zagen ze Motlib, één van de centaurs, zwemmen. 'Hallo, Motlib,' riep Roodvinger. En daar kwam Motlib aanzwemmen. Ze waren erg blij elkaar weer eens te zien. Motlib keek Roodvinger aan en zei : 'Zo, Roodvinger, heb je de laatste tijd nog veel draken moeten bevechten ?' Roodvinger begon te lachen, en daar zwom de zeester weer. 'Hallo,' sprak de zeester. 'Kom, ik wil jullie wat laten zien.' Roodvinger en Blauwvinger sprongen op de rug van Motlib en deze zwom achter de zeester aan. Het was een lange reis. In de verte zagen ze een eiland. Dit eiland kenden ze nog niet. Na lang zwemmen waren ze eindelijk bij het strandje van het eiland aangekomen. Er zat een man daar met gescheurde kleren en hij had een woeste baard. 'Halt,' sprak hij. 'Wat komen jullie hier doen ?' 'Ach, Meharates,' zei de zeester, 'dit zijn vrienden van me, en ik wilde hen even wat laten zien.' Ze moesten eerst een stukje over het strand en wat rotsen lopen, en na een tijdje kwamen ze aan bij een grot. Er hing wat vreemd spul voor de grot wat wel een beetje op snoep leek. Roodvinger likte eraan, maar de zeester riep direct : 'Niet doen, dat is vergif, daar ga je van slapen.' En daar viel Roodvinger in een diepe slaap. 'Nou, die laten we hier wel even liggen, dan kunnen wij even de grot in zolang,' zei de zeester. 'Hoelang blijft hij slapen,' vroeg Motlib. Maar dat kon wel een tijd duren, volgens de zeester, misschien wel dagen. In de grot aangekomen zagen ze duistere schaduwen, en heel in de verte zagen ze grote slijmerige webben hangen en liggen. Dit moest wel van een erg grote spin zijn. En ja hoor, na een tijdje lopen zagen ze een grote spin zitten, die wel tien keer zo groot was als henzelf. Daar schrokken ze wel even van. 'Goedendag,' zei de spin, 'ik denk niet dat jullie weten wie ik ben. Ik ben de baas van deze grot, en dit is een grot met grote schatten. Kom maar mee.' En daar liepen ze de grote spin achterna, nog dieper de grot in. Ze moesten door allerlei duistere tunnels, en na een tijdje kwamen ze in een open ruimte. Er lagen hier een heleboel apparaten. Die apparaten leken op vissen. De spin zei dat het een soort radio's waren. Niet voor in je huis, maar voor in je lichaam. Daar schrok Blauwvinger wel even van. 'Nou, wel handig hoor,' zei de spin, terwijl Motlib en de zeester een beetje grinnikten. 'Er zitten ook telefoonstukken bij, zodat je altijd met elkaar kunt praten.' En daar ineens kwam Roodvinger aanstrompelen. Hij was eindelijk wakker geworden. En wat waren al die vreemde apparaten ? Roodvinger vond het wel interessant. Hij had altijd al graag een robot willen zijn. Hij schraapte wat glibberige apparaten bij elkaar en merkte dat het een soort kleding was. Hij kon zijn armen erdoorsteken, zijn benen, en zijn hoofd. Het was een soort ruimtepak. 'Zo,' zei de spin. 'Nu kun je met alle dieren praten.' Natuurlijk kon Roodvinger al met veel dieren praten, maar nu kon hij met alle dieren praten, en ook op afstand, als door een telefoon. En ook Blauwvinger en Motlib begonnen de glibberige kleren aan te trekken. Na een tijdje kwam Meharates binnenstormen. 'Wat zijn jullie toch allemaal aan het doen ? Zeg, blijf daar eens van af ?' schreeuwde hij. Maar de spin werd een beetje boos en zei : 'Meharates, wees blij dat iemand jouw uitvindingen wil gebruiken.' Dat was waar. 'Nou,' zei Meharates, 'dan mogen jullie mijn kasteel ook wel zien.' En na een tijdje lopen kwamen ze aan bij het kasteel van Meharates. Het kasteel was omhuld met grote lichtgevende witte spinnen, en ook binnen waren er veel spinnen. Roodvinger en de anderen keken hun ogen uit. Meharates glimlachte, en trok de brug op, terwijl ze naar binnen liepen. Het kasteel was vol met allerlei grote zalen. Er hingen hier grote zwaarden die wel van reuzen leken te zijn. Maar Meharates zei dat dit de zwaarden van spinnen waren. Hele grote spinnen.

Het kasteel rook naar bloemen, en de geur kwam duidelijk van boven af. Er hingen hele grote bloemen langs de muren van de trappenhallen, en veel van die bloemen bewogen en draaiden. Door de grote lange ramen kon Roodvinger de hogere bruggen van het kasteel zien. En onder die bruggen gleden enorme slangen. Roodvinger had nog nooit zoiets gezien, en keek zijn ogen uit. Maar waar

waren Motlib en Blauwvinger gebleven ? 'Loop maar door,' zei Meharates. Hoe hoger ze kwamen hoe meer de trappen op bloemen begonnen te lijken, en het was alsof ze nu geheel in een bloem liepen. Roodvinger werd een beetje duizelig, en hij kon de zeester en de grote spin ook niet meer zien. 'Zo,' zei Meharates, 'we zijn er bijna.' 'Waar zijn we bijna,' vroeg Roodvinger. 'Aan de top van het kasteel,' zei Meharates. Plotseling waren ze op een heel groot balkon aangekomen, en Roodvinger zag ook andere kastelen in de verte, waar al die bruggen naartoe leiden. Voor hen stond een treintje, en Meharates duwde hem zachtjes naar binnen en ging zelf ook mee. Daar waren Motlib en de anderen weer. 'Zo,' zei Meharates, 'nu kunnen we die andere kastelen eens gaan bezoeken.' En daar begon het treintje te rijden. 'Wat zijn dat eigenlijk voor kastelen ?' vroeg Blauwvinger. 'Scholen,' zei Meharates. Roodvinger begon zich ineens erg dom te voelen. Ja, er zou zoveel zijn wat ze nog moesten leren, als hij dit hier allemaal zo zag. Het was wonderlijk. Ze waren bij een ander groot wit kasteel aangekomen. Er stond een man met een hoge hoed bij de poort. 'Welkom, nieuwe studenten,' zei hij. 'Maar ik wil helemaal niet studeren,' zei Blauwvinger. 'Ik wil weer naar huis.' Maar Meharates werd heel erg kwaad : 'Zeg, deze lessen heb je nodig, anders blijf je een domme vinger.' Nou ja, misschien had hij wel gelijk, dacht Roodvinger bij zichzelf. Misschien hadden Blauwvinger en hij deze lessen wel hard nodig. 'Wat moeten we leren ?' vroeg Motlib. 'Dat zul je nog wel zien,' zei de man met de hoge hoed. 'Kom maar mee.' En weer liepen ze op een trap in een hal tussen grote bloemen. Ineens drukte de man op een knopje ergens op de trap, en een grote bloem kwam tevoorschijn om hen naar binnen te slokken. Ineens waren ze allemaal binnenin de grote bloem. Het was als een zaal. Ze gingen op zachte banken zitten, en de man met de hoge hoed op liep naar voren. Uit zijn jasje gleed een staart, die ook wel een beetje op een slang leek. Toen de man zich weer omdraaide kwam er een gespleten tongetje uit zijn mond, en zijn gezicht leek op een slang of een kikker. Al gauw begon de man te praten, maar hij praatte zo snel dat ze hem niet konden volgen. 'Dat moet,' zei Meharates, 'hij moet het eerst snel vertellen, en daarna langzaam, zodat je het kunt verstaan.' Wat een grappige manier van lesgeven, dacht Roodvinger. Toen het snelle gepraat afgelopen was had de man een hele hoge stem, maar nu begon hij heel rustig te praten, terwijl zijn gezicht leek op dat van een eend met een snavel. 'Kwaak, kwaak, kwaak,' zei hij. Maar dat verstonden ze natuurlijk niet. Meharates zei dat ze eerst op de eendenknop van hun ruimtepak moesten drukken. Dat was een oranje glibberige knop onder hun oksels. En ineens konden ze het verstaan. En als ze het na een tijdje weer niet konden verstaan, moesten ze er weer op drukken. Van achter de man kwam er ineens een oranje slang tevoorschijn, en begon om de man heen te kronkelen. 'Hallo, Didas,' zei de man, 'neem het maar van me over.' En toen ging de man in één van de zachte banken zitten. En Didas begon heel traag te praten, zo traag dat niemand het kon verstaan, en iedereen werd zo moe. 'Ja, dat moet,' gaapte Meharates, 'hij moet het eerst langzaam vertellen, en dan gewoon normaal.' En na een tijdje viel iedereen in slaap. Toen de slang klaar was met het langzame en weer normaal begon te praten werd iedereen wakker, en ging de les door. Maar het was slangentaal, en Roodvinger kon het niet verstaan. 'Druk op de groene knop onder je borstzakje,' fluisterde Meharates. En toen kon Roodvinger alles verstaan. Ineens begon de vloer heel glibberig te worden als water, en er kwam een haai doorheenzwemmen. Direkt gleed hij op de slang af en nam het van hem over, terwijl de slang in één van de zachte banken gleed. 'Goedendag,' zei de haai. 'welkom op deze mooie dag. Goed is het op school te zijn, want wij moeten nog zoveel leren. Nu, wat ga ik jullie leren ? Ik ga jullie leren jullie zelf te feliciteren, want jullie zijn allemaal weer een dagje ouder geworden. Dat mogen we wel vieren.' En er kwamen wat visjes omhoog zwemmen door de glibberige vloer, en zij droegen dienblaadjes met glaasjes. 'Neem allemaal maar een glaasje,' zei de haai. En iedereen begon direkt te drinken. Huh wat vreemd. Roodvinger voelde zichzelf ineens als de meester. En daar liep hij met grote passen naar voren, terwijl de haai in één van de zachte banken gleed. 'Zo, ziezo,' zei Roodvinger, 'nu is het mijn beurt om jullie les te geven. Ik voel me ineens als de meester, dus daar gaat ie dan : ik ga jullie leren jezelf te feliciteren, omdat je er weer wat bij hebt geleerd.' Hij voelde zich wel een hele rare meester, maar dat kan natuurlijk gebeuren in zo'n wonderbaarlijk kasteel. En na een tijdje kwam Blauwvinger naar voren. Hij had ook niet veel te vertellen, maar het werd een dolle boel. En nadat Blauwvinger de meester was, werd Motlib de meester. De zeester had dolle pret, en ze waren

allemaal heel blij dat de zeester hen naar dit eiland had gebracht. Maar natuurlijk moesten ze ook weer naar huis.

De zeester bracht hen weer terug terwijl Roodvinger en Blauwvinger weer op de rug van Motlib zaten. Roodlaarsje was zo blij hen weer terug te zien. Het was een mooi avontuur geweest. Meharates had hen een knopje op het ruimtepak aangewezen, waardoor het pak op sommige delen nog glibberiger zou worden, zodat het een soort televisie zou worden, waardoor ze de lessen op de kasteelschool gewoon konden volgen. En hij had hen ook zo'n pak voor Roodlaarsje meegegeven. Wat was Roodlaarsje daar blij mee, zeg.

Hoofdstuk 7. Het TV-Dier

De volgende dag werd er een pakje bezorgd bij Roodvinger's huisje. Het was nogal een groot pakje, en voorzichtig maakte Roodvinger het open. Het was van Meharates. Er zat een soort telefoon in het pakje met een gouden hoorn en gouden strepen op het apparaat. Meharates had erbij geschreven dat het een Egyptische telefoon was, een telefoon-recorder. Daarmee zou je elk gesprek wat je hebt op een bandje kunnen opnemen, om het later nog eens af te spelen. Dat was wel aardig van die Meharates, zeg. En de telefoon kreeg een mooi plaatsje in het huisje. Roodvinger begon direkt te bellen, en tijdens de gesprekken begonnen de gouden streepjes licht te geven en te knipperen. Op de achterkant van het apparaat zaten wat knopjes die Roodvinger nog niet had uitgeprobeerd. Met één knopje kon je het licht zachter zetten, want de telefoonrecorder was bijna een lamp. Met een ander knopje begon zachte muziek te spelen, maar toen Roodvinger op het derde knopje drukte gebeurde er iets vreemds. De vloer begon op te schuiven, heel langzaam, met een laag grommend geluid, totdat er een gat was ontstaan. Recht keek Roodvinger in een soort tunnel. Daar keek Roodvinger wel even van op. Roodlaarsje kwam er ook bij staan, en ze wist niet wat ze moest zeggen. Voorzichtig stapten ze beiden in de tunnel, en stapje voor stapje liepen ze verder naar beneden. De tunnel leidde hen diep onder de grond, en opeens zagen ze een wit treintje staan, een beetje zoals bij de kastelen van Meharates, maar dan veel kleiner. Zou hij dat hier allemaal gebouwd hebben ?

Roodvinger en Roodlaarsje gingen in het treintje zitten, dat langzaam begon te rijden. 'Waar gaan we naartoe ?' riep Roodvinger. Maar niemand antwoordde. Het treintje ging steeds sneller, en Roodvinger hield Roodlaarsje goed vast. Ineens kwam er van achter een bankje in de trein een spinnetje tevoorschijn. 'We gaan naar Egypte,' zei het spinnetje. 'Waarom dat dan ?' vroeg Roodvinger. 'Dat zul je nog wel zien,' zei het spinnetje. 'Nee, ik wil het nu weten,' zei Roodvinger. Maar het spinnetje kroop weer weg. 'Spinnetje, waar ben je ?' vroeg Roodvinger. Maar het spinnetje was helemaal verdwenen. 'Nu ja, laten we maar afwachten,' zei Roodvinger. Ineens hoorden ze een gebons op het dak van het treintje, en daar kwam Meharates naar binnen. Hij was van boven ergens op de trein gesprongen. Daar keek Roodvinger wel even van op. Roodlaarsje sliep. Ze waren blij elkaar weer te zien. 'Zeg, Meharates, waarom gaan we naar Egypte ?' vroeg Roodvinger. 'Ik heb weer een verrassing voor je, Roodvinger,' zei Meharates. Roodvinger glimlachte. Na een tijdje kwamen ze aan in Egypte. Snel duwde Meharates nog een apparaat in Roodvinger's handjes. Het leek een beetje op de Egyptische telefoon, maar had een soort koperen gezicht. Meharates zei dat Roodvinger het over de telefoon kon schuiven, en dat het een radio-recorder was. Meharates zei dat Roodvinger daardoor een heleboel mensen tegelijk kon opbellen, maar nog veel meer. Er stond een spinnetje voor hen met draaiende ogen. Ze waren diep onder een piramide, in een grote grot. Die grot had een heleboel gangen, en Meharates nam Roodvinger aan de arm mee. Roodlaarsje lieten ze in het treintje zitten, en het spinnetje zou wel op haar passen. Roodlaarsje was in een diepe slaap. Waar zou ze allemaal over dromen ?

Na een tijdje lopen kwamen ze in een grot met een heleboel apparaten. Roodvinger keek zijn ogen uit, en Meharates begon te wijzen en te praten. Het ging allemaal erg snel, en Roodvinger kon het allemaal niet onthouden. Meharates wist veel van apparaten af, en hij vertelde dat die apparaten nodig waren. Maar voor wat ? Ineens zag Roodvinger een geurtelefoon staan. Er zat een soort rond doosje in dat ronddraaide en bloemengeuren verspreidde en een heleboel andere geuren, meestal

van het bos. Er stonden ook wat oude televisies. Deze televisies waren zo oud, dat er vogels inwoonden. Aan het einde van de apparatenhal was een opening, en al snel kwamen ze in de buitenlucht, tussen de piramiden. Eerst zouden ze op zoek gaan naar een hotel om even wat te rusten. 'Maar Roodlaarsje dan ?' vroeg Roodvinger. 'Die zal het spinnetje wel meebrengen zo,' zei Meharates. En ja hoor, daar kwamen ze al aan. Roodlaarsje was nog een beetje moe, maar ze konden nu in een hotel wat rusten of slapen. Maar een heleboel hotels waren al vol, en ze begonnen steeds vermoeider te raken. De zon scheen zo fel. Toen besloten ze in een piramide te gaan, in een hoekje, om even wat te rusten. De volgende morgen waren ze vroeg wakker. Wat hadden ze lang geslapen, zeg. Nog steeds wist Roodvinger nog niet helemaal waarom ze hier waren, en weer vroeg hij : 'Meharates, waarom zijn we hier eigenlijk ?' Ineens schrokken ze van een krijsend geluid. Meharates rende naar het midden van de piramide, en zag een enorm wezen met een driehoek als hoofd. Het leek wel een draak, of een enorme robot. 'De tv gaat aan !' riep Meharates. 'Wat ?' riep Roodvinger. 'De tv,' riep Meharates weer. En er kwamen bliksemschichten uit de grote driehoek. 'Het is een tv-dier, een levende televisie, en hij is pas uit het ei gekomen,' riep Meharates. Ineens zagen ze grote ogen verschijnen in de driehoek, en zagen ze allerlei dingen verschijnen in de driehoek, alsof ze naar de televisie keken. Maar datgene wat ze in de driehoek zagen verschijnen, kon er ook uitkomen. Dat had Roodvinger nog nooit meegemaakt. De dieren die ze op het grote scherm zagen kwamen er gewoon uitlopen of uitvliegen, en als ze een zee zagen, dan spetterde het water uit de tv. Maar het mooiste van alles was dat Meharates zei dat ze ook in de tv konden klimmen. En dan waren ze in de wereld van de televisie. 'Kom mee,' zei Meharates, en begon op het grote dier te klimmen. Maar ineens kwam er vuur uit de driehoek, en het dier begon wild te bewegen. En daar vloog Meharates. Roodvinger en Roodlaarsje konden hem gelukkig net opvangen. 'Is dit niet allemaal erg gevaarlijk ?' vroeg Roodvinger. 'Ach, welnee, het is maar televisie,' zei Meharates, 'en na een tijdje dan is het dier uitgegroeid tot een soort boom of struik. Dat gebeurt altijd als zulke dieren groter worden. En daar rende Meharates weer op het dier af, terwijl het dier als een olifant begon te toeteren. Rookwolken kwamen er uit de driehoek, maar na een tijdje werd het dier steeds rustiger. Wat een vreemde televisie. Roodvinger vond het erg spannend en klom Meharates achterna. Meharates had een klein apparaatje uit z'n zak gehaald waarmee hij de televisie-zenders kon wisselen. Hij gaf er ook ééntje aan Roodvinger. 'Als het nu gevaarlijk wordt, dan moet je gewoon op een andere zender klikken,' zei Meharates tegen Roodvinger. Roodlaarsje zou gewoon in de piramide blijven om te kijken.

Er was een piratenfilm op de televisie. Toen Roodvinger en Meharates aan de top waren gekomen klommen ze naarbinnen in de driehoek en kwamen op een piratenschip terecht. De zee was erg woest, en ze zagen wat piraten bezig het dek te schrobben. Ineens stond de kapitein voor hen, die ook een hoofd als een driehoek had. 'Goedemorgen,' zei de kapitein. 'Wat een mooi weer, hè, en jullie dachten zeker : Kom we gaan eens lekker een dag varen op een piratenschip. Daar komt niets van in, verstekelingen. Dat wordt terugzwemmen.' 'Maar waar naartoe ?' vroeg Roodvinger. 'Wat kan mij dat schelen ?' riep de kapitein nors. 'Al zwem je naar de haaien.' Maar toen werd Meharates wel even boos. 'Zeg, lomperik, jij bent niet de enige van de televisie, wij zijn het ook,' riep Meharates. Toen pakte de kapitein een stok en sloeg daarmee Meharates op zijn arm. Maar Roodvinger zag dat er wat knopjes zaten aan de achterkant van de driehoek, het hoofd van de kapitein, en heel stilletjes sloop hij er naartoe en klikte het uit, en zoeffff, ineens was het gezicht verdwenen en keken ze gewoon tegen een driehoek aan. 'Goed gedaan, Roodvinger,' zei Meharates. Maar toen kwamen ook de andere piraten op hen af, en Meharates en Roodvinger moesten gewoon telkens de knopjes indrukken om hen uit te zetten. 'Allemaal apparaten,' zei Meharates. Dat was wel een vreemd piratenschip. 'Die kapitein kunnen we goed gebruiken, het is een smaaktelevisie. Als we die driehoek op de grote driehoek zetten, dan hoeven we nooit meer naar de winkel, maar dan komt ons voedsel binnen via de televisie, en er zitten een heleboel zenders op.' Meharates greep de kapitein goed vast en met het kleine apparaatje uit z'n zak zette hij de grote televisie uit. Floep, daar stapten ze uit de televisie, en Meharates zette direkt de driehoeks-kapitein op de grote driehoek waar ze uit waren gestapt. 'Nu zul je wat beleven,' zei Meharates. Snel klommen ze naar beneden naar Roodlaarsje toe. En weer drukte Meharates op het apparaatje en de grote televisie ging weer

aan. Ditmaal verschenen er allerlei appels en bananen, en met een ander knopje begonnen ze allemaal naar beneden te rollen.

Meharates zei dat zolang het dier nog goed kon lopen ze moesten zorgen dat het met hen mee zou gaan, zodat het dier in het bos vlak naast Roodvingers huisje kon wonen. En zo gebeurde het. Met z'n drieen klommen ze op het tv-dier, en zo begon de lange reis terug.

Hoofdstuk 8. De Roze Toverspiegel

Op een dag waren Roodvinger en Blauwvinger weer eens aan het zwemmen in de zee. Roodvinger wilde weleens een echte haai zien, en ze besloten wat verder de zee in te zwemmen. Ineens zagen ze wat blauws onder hun verschijnen. Het was een haai, een echte haai. De haai zei : 'Zeg, zal ik jullie eens meenemen naar onderen ? Dan moet je wel diep je adem inhouden, want het is nog wel een stukje zwemmen.' Ze hielden de haai goed vast, en al snel kwamen ze aan in een grot diep in de zee. De haai gaf hen wat schuimpjes en toen ze die schuimpjes in hun mond staken konden ze gewoon ademen. Er waren hier een heleboel deuren, en op al die deuren stonden rondjes getekend, met rondjes erin. Ze hadden verschillende kleuren. De haai zei dat hier geluid uitkwam. Floep, daar ging een deurtje open. Ineens ging er een sirene aan. 'Ach dat is maar een walvis,' zei de haai. En daar zagen ze een hele grote walvis voorbij gaan. Toen ze door het deurtje gingen kwamen ze in een grot terecht met een heleboel apparaten. 'Weer apparaten,' zei Roodvinger. Er lagen ook wat oude tv's waar kleine visjes in woonden. Ook zagen ze een oude schoen liggen. 'Afblijven,' zei de haai. En weer zwommen ze verder door een deur met rondjes. Telkens als er een sirene ging kwam er een grote vis langs. 'Ja, het verkeer wordt hier goed geregeld,' zei de haai. Ergens op de zeebodem lag een soort grammofoon, met een bloem erop die ronddraaide, terwijl er hele zachte muziek uitkwam. Verderop waren de bloemen wat groter, en waren ze als grote ronddraaimolens. 'Ga er maar inzitten,' zei de haai. De bloem had hoge blaadjes en daarbinnen waren zachte banken waarop ze konden zitten. Direkt begon de bloem te draaien en vooruit te bewegen. Zo konden ze de zee goed bekijken. Aan het einde van de rit kwamen ze binnen in een haaienkasteel. Hier stopte de bloem, en konden ze uitstappen. Ze waren inmiddels al binnenin het kasteel, en er waren hier veel haaien. Weer gingen er sirenes af en grote vissen kwamen naarbinnen. Ze gingen allemaal door een grote deur in het kasteel en toen ging de deur achter hen dicht. 'Wat gaan ze daar doen ?' vroeg Roodvinger. 'Vergaderen,' zei de haai. 'Waar vergaderen ze dan over ?' vroeg Roodvinger weer. Maar de haai gaf geen antwoord. 'Kom mee,' zij hij. Ze moesten een trap op en kwamen op een balkon terecht. Nu konden ze alles goed zien. Er zaten hier allerlei enorme vissen rondom een grote tafel. Maar ze spraken in een taal die Roodvinger en Blauwvinger niet konden verstaan. Het was een vreemde vissentaal. Ineens ging er een luik in het plafond open en er daalde iets naar beneden tot de grote tafel. Het was een grote bloem, en binnenin was water. Toen begonnen er allerlei beelden te verschijnen in de bloem. Het was een soort televisie. 'Weer een televisie,' zei Roodvinger. En ineens kwam er een prinses tevoorschijn uit de bloem, en zij gaf zacht licht. Uit haar mond kwamen zachte bellen en bloemen voort, en ineens richtte de prinses zich tot Roodvinger en Blauwvinger op het balkon. 'Ik ben de prinses der vissen,' zei ze zachtjes. 'Wie zijn jullie ?' Roodvingerboog zijn hoofdje en zei : 'D..dag, prinses, ik ben Roodvinger.' En ook Blauwvinger boog zijn hoofdje en zei : 'E...en ik b..ben Blauwvinger, prinses.' 'Welkom,' zei de prinses. En toen zakte de prinses weer terug in de bloem. Daarna kwamen er nog allerlei andere bezoekers vanuit de bloem tot de vissen, en ze hadden even wat korte gesprekken. Ze zagen de meest wonderbaarlijke figuren. De haai zei dat het een droomtelefoon was, waarmee ze elkaar konden bezoeken. Roodvinger vertelde over de Egyptische telefoon die hij van Meharates had gekregen. Toen zwom de haai naar de droomtelefoon toe, haalde er een klein blaadje vanaf, wat direkt weer begon te groeien aan de telefoon, en nam het blaadje mee naar Roodvinger. 'Alsjeblieft,' zei de haai, 'als je dit blaadje onder jouw telefoon legt, dan groeit het ook uit tot een droomtelefoon.' Dat leek Roodvinger wel spannend. Na een tijdje ging de bloem weer weg door het luik in het plafond, en toen ging er een muur open achter de tafel, en een vreemd ei met hazenoren kwam naar voren lopen. Hij deed een luikje open in zijn buik, en er waren allerlei kleine filmpjes te zien. De vissen

kozen een filmpje uit wat ze wilden bekijken. En dit filmpje werd heel groot. Ze konden alles uit het filmpje pakken wat ze maar wilden, alsof ze op een eenvoudige manier boodschappen deden. Aan het einde van het filmpje ging het ei met de hazenoren weer weg, terwijl het een mandje droeg. 'Wat zit er in dat mandje ?' vroeg Roodvinger aan de haai. Maar de haai wilde het niet zeggen. 'Ach toe nou,' zei Roodvinger, 'ik wil het zo graag weten.' Toen draaide de haai zich naar Roodvinger toe en zei : 'In die mand zitten kleine visjes, de kinderen van de grote vissen, en die kinderen zijn erg verdrietig. Daarom mogen ze voor een tijdje met het hazenei mee naar zijn filmhuisje.' 'Hoe komt het dan dat die visjes zo verdrietig zijn ?' vroeg Roodvinger. En weer zei de haai een tijdje niets. Maar na lang aandringen begon de haai te vertellen : 'Al die vissen zijn verdrietig, wij zijn allemaal verdrietig. Die prinses die je toenet zag, dat is onze prinses en die mag maar eens in het jaar verschijnen door de droomtelefoon. Ze wordt opgesloten gehouden door de zwarte draak die onder de zeebodem woont.' Daar schrokken Roodvinger en Blauwvinger wel even van. Waarom zou die draak zo'n lieve prinses zo diep onder de zeebodem opgesloten houden ? En toen sprak de haai verder : 'Als er kleine visjes geboren worden, dan worden ze bijna elke dag door de draak in de bodem gezogen, en dan moeten ze hard werken, en hele moeilijke en vervelende dingen leren.' Gelukkig als het hazenei eens per jaar komt, dan mogen ze een paar daagjes naar het filmhuisje. En weer schrokken Roodvinger en Blauwvinger daarvan. 'Waarom doet die draak dat toch ?' vroeg Roodvinger aan de haai. 'Dat weet niemand,' zei de haai. Dit is al honderden jaren zo. 'Honderden jaren ?' zei Roodvinger, 'maar hoe kan het dat de prinses dan nog zo jong lijkt ?' 'Dat moet ze,' zei de haai, 'ze moet jong blijven van de draak, en ze moet elke dag in een roze toverspiegel kijken, dan blijft ze jong.' 'Maar waarom moet ze jong blijven ?' vroeg Roodvinger. 'Omdat ze op iemand lijkt die de draak ooit gekend heeft,' zei de haai. Maar meer wist de haai er ook niet van te vertellen. 'Hoe kunnen we bij de draak komen,' vroeg Roodvinger. Maar dat wist de haai niet, omdat het rijk van de draak altijd verschoof, en daardoor waren er ook vaak aardverschuivingen. 'Kom mee, Blauwvinger,' zei Roodvinger, en samen begonnen ze naar openingen in de grond te zoeken.

De haai kende nog wel wat openingen en leidde hen er naartoe. Maar hoe lang ze ook zochten, ze konden geen spoor van de draak vinden. Roodvinger kreeg een idee. Misschien zouden ze via de droomtelefoon bij de draak kunnen komen. Op een avond gingen ze weer naar de vergaderzaal, en de haai wist wel hoe de droomtelefoon kon komen. Toen de bloem op tafel lag begon Roodvinger naar knopjes te zoeken, maar hij kon niets vinden. Het leek wel alsof de droomtelefoon zichzelf bediende. 'Dat doet de draak,' zei de haai. 'De draak beslist hier alles.' En toen ging Roodvinger op de bloem staan, en stak zijn vingertje in de lucht en riep : 'Draak, draak, als je me hier ziet, geef antwoord. Ik wil met je praten.' Maar er gebeurde niets. En ook Blauwvinger ging op de bloem staan, en samen begonnen ze erop te springen. Misschien sliep de draak wel. En eindelijk begon er beeld te komen onder hun voeten, en een zwart drakenhoofd verscheen. De haai werd erg bang en zwom snel weg. 'Zeg draak,' zei Roodvinger, 'ze zijn hier allemaal erg bang voor je, en de vissen zijn allemaal erg verdrietig over dat wat je doet. Waarom doe je dat eigenlijk ?' En toen begon de draak te bulderen, zo hard te bulderen, dat Roodvinger en Blauwvinger van schrik van de bloem afsprongen. De bloem was vuurrood geworden, en er sloegen vlammen vanaf. 'Waaaaaaaaa,' schreeuwde de draak en begon afschuwelijk te krijsen. Van schrik deden Roodvinger en Blauwvinger nog een stap achteruit, want de draak begon door de bloem omhoog te komen. Roodvinger en Blauwvinger wisten niet wat ze zagen, en overal sloegen bliksemschichten naast hen neer. Maar ineens werd alles wat rustiger, en de draak ging op één van de grote vissenstoelen zitten. 'Ik kom van de zwarte bergen,' zei hij. Er was daar een meisje dat altijd brood en vruchten kwam brengen, maar op een dag ging zij op zee en werd verslonden door een grote vis. Sindsdien haat ik vissen, en ben ik onder de zeebodem gaan wonen om wraak te nemen. Ik heb hun prinses opgesloten in een diep onder de zeebodem.' 'Maar draak,' riep Roodvinger, 'niet alle vissen zijn slecht. En misschien had die grote vis zich wel vergist, misschien dacht hij wel dat het meisje de vissen kwaad zou doen.' Maar ineens kwam de draak op Roodvinger en Blauwvinger af, en blies een hete vlam op hen af. De bloem begon hard te draaien, en er kwamen hoge beltonen uit voort. Langzaam werden Roodvinger en Blauwvinger in de bloem gezogen, en kwamen in een tunnel die hen tot onder de zeebodem bracht. Daar werden ze door een zwarte ridderachtige soldaat in een

zandkooi opgesloten. In de kooi ernaast zat de prinses. 'Wat ben ik blij jullie weer te zien,' zei de prinses. 'Ik zit hier al zo lang alleen opgesloten. Komen jullie me eruit helpen ?' Direkt begon Roodvinger over de roze toverspiegel te vragen. 'Die toverspiegel kan praten, en praat altijd over dat wat de draak heeft meegemaakt. En door dat telkens te horen en te zien blijf ik jong, maar ik ben hier diep ongelukkig.' 'Kan die toverspiegel nergens anders over praten ?' vroeg Roodvinger weer. 'Nee,' zei de prinses, 'dat mag niet van de draak.' Dan moest die toverspiegel ook wel diep ongelukkig zijn, dacht Roodvinger. Maar verder konden ze niet praten, want daar kwam de draak al aanbonken. 'Zo, nu heb ik dan ook de vissenvrienden veilig opgesloten. Wat een vangst vandaag.' 'Zeg draak,' vroeg Roodvinger, 'zou ik ook eens in die mooie spiegel van u mogen kijken, ik zou ook graag weleens willen horen wat u nog meer allemaal hebt meegemaakt.' De draak begon te glunderen : 'Wil je dat ?' 'Ja,' zei Roodvinger, 'ik zou er wel voor altijd in willen blijven kijken.' 'Ha ha,' riep de draak, 'ik ga hem direkt voor je halen.' En na een tijdje kwam de draak weer aanstormen met de spiegel. Het was een prachtige roze spiegel. Een spiegel met oogjes en met een mond, maar er rolden ook dikke tranen uit z'n ogen. Direkt begon de spiegel te vertellen over de draak. Hoe goed de draak wel niet was, en wat de draak allemaal had meegemaakt. En de spiegel was als een soort televisie, en ze konden de draak er goed op zien. Ineens kreeg Roodvinger een plan. Voorzichtig haalde hij het apparaatje uit zijn zak wat hij van Meharates had gekregen om de zenders mee te verwisselen. En drukte op een andere zender. Ineens was daar het gezicht van Meharates op het beeldscherm, en snel legde Roodvinger het bloemenblaadje wat hij van de haai had gehad onder de spiegel. En al snel begon de spiegel een beetje op de droomtelefoon te lijken, en Meharates stapte door de spiegel naar binnen. 'Zeg, wat is hier aan de hand ?' vroeg Meharates. En snel begon Roodvinger het hele verhaal te vertellen. 'Nou, dat heb je goed opgelost, Roodvinger,' zei Meharates. 'Het is nu een koud kunstje om te kunnen vertrekken.' En Meharates schoof de spiegel door de kooi van de prinses. 'Snel, prinses, stap erdoorheen.' En dat deed de prinses. En toen trok Meharates de spiegel weer terug en zo konden ze alledrie door de spiegel verdwijnen, om in het kasteel van Meharates terecht te komen. Maar nu stond die arme spiegel daar natuurlijk nog. Oh, wat was de draak kwaad, en ook hij dook door de spiegel, en kwam in het kasteel van Meharates terecht. 'Wat kom jij hier doen,' bulderde Meharates. 'Geef de prinses terug, en die misselijke kereltjes,' kermde de draak. Maar snel pakte Meharates een spinnenzwaard van de muur en richtte het op de draak. 'Die toverspiegel is niet van jou,' bulderde Meharates, 'maar van mij.' Heel lang geleden was de toverspiegel uit het kasteel van Meharates weggestolen, en nu wist hij dan eindelijk wie de dief was. Dankzij Roodvinger. Maar nu moesten ze nog met de draak afrekenen. En die begon behoorlijk met vuur te spuiten. 'Rennen, jongens,' riep Meharates, 'naar de trein.' En na op de trappen gerend te hebben kwamen ze bij de kasteeltrein over de slangenbrug. Heel het kasteel stond al in brand, en nu moesten ze heel snel zijn. De draak kwam achter hen aan, en net op het nippertje konden ze met de trein vluchten. Maar het gevaar was nog niet geweken. De brug begon ook al te branden. Bij het andere kasteel aangekomen zagen ze de man met de hoge hoed weer staan, en snel sprongen ze in een grote bloem, om in het klaslokaal te komen. 'Oh, wat moeten we nu doen,' rilde Roodvinger. Ineens begon de vloer te trillen en waterig te worden, en de haai van Meharates kwam naarboven zwemmen. 'Vlug,' zei de haai, 'klim op mijn rug, dan kunnen we naar de zee van Meharates.' En snel klommen ze op de rug van de haai. Maar ach, de draak zat hen nog steeds achterna, en het water begon heter en heter te worden. De haai zwom zo snel als hij kon, en de draak zwom hem achterna. Ineens stond de roze toverspiegel voor hen, en riep : 'Meester, ik ben eindelijk terug, dankzij Roodvinger ben ik weer een dromenspiegel.' En weer konden ze door de spiegel ontsnappen. Maar nu was de draak echt kwaad geworden, en met zijn ijzeren klauwen sloeg hij de spiegel in stukken. En daar lagen ze dan allemaal voor de grote draak : Meharates, de man met de hoge hoed, Roodvinger, Blauwvinger, de prinses en de haai. En langzaam begon de zee in een vuurzee te veranderen. Maar daar kwam ineens het tv-dier van Roodvinger tevoorschijn. Hij raapte de scherven van de spiegel op en stopte ze in een pot met aarde. Snel stopte hij de pot in een gat in de zeebodem, en daar begon de spiegel weer te groeien, groter dan ooit. En er begonnen vruchten aan de spiegel te groeien als aan een boom. En iedereen begon van de vruchten te eten, ook de draak. 'Meharates,' zei de spiegel, 'zij die van deze vruchten eten zullen altijd jong blijven,

want het zijn tv-vruchten. En hen die in televisie-wereld leven blijven altijd jong.' En dat was waar. Hier, in televisiewereld, zou het prinsesje voor altijd veilig zijn, en hoefde ze zich nooit meer opgesloten te voelen. Ze zou voortaan bij Meharates gaan wonen, in de televisie-wereld, samen met al haar vissen. Het duurde niet lang of het rijk van Meharates stond weer recht overeind, maar goed, met een echte toverspiegel en een tv-dier gaat zoiets natuurlijk erg snel. Roodvinger had weer een groot avontuur erop zitten, en samen met Blauwvinger en het tv-dier gingen ze weer terug naar huis, waar Roodlaarsje al op hen zat te wachten. Al met al was het weer een echt drakenavontuur geweest.

Hoofdstuk 9. Wie is Roodvinger ?

Op een dag werd Roodvinger door de koning opgebeld, of hij even naar het paleis wilde komen. Toen Roodvinger daar aankwam had de koning een geschenk voor Roodvinger. Dit omdat Roodvinger zo'n goede detective van de koning was. Het was een tv-ring, door een dwerg gemaakt. Maar je kon er ook mee telefoneren, je kon er bezoekjes mee afleggen, en gasten ontvangen, en nog veel meer. Eigenlijk kon je er zo'n beetje alles mee. Daar had je geen grote apparaten meer voor nodig. En door deze ring had je nu alles altijd dichtbij. Als je honger had, dan kwam er door de ring voedsel tevoorschijn. Roodvinger was hier natuurlijk erg blij mee. Maar als Roodvinger hem moest weggeven, dan zou hij hem aan Meharates geven, want die had altijd van zulke grote apparaten. Hij zou misschien wel blij zijn met zo'n klein dingetje wat hij altijd om z'n vinger kon dragen. En zo gebeurde het. Roodvinger ging nog eens naar het rijk van Meharates toe, en overhandigde het aan Meharates. Maar Meharates gaf de ring aan de prinses der vissen, en eigenlijk was de ring daar het beste thuis. De prinses moest goed beveiligd zijn tegen draken, en zo zou ze goed over de vissen kunnen regeren en goed voor hen kunnen zorgen. De prinses was erg blij met dit kado. Maar op een dag was de ring kwijt. De prinses legde hem als ze ging slapen altijd op haar nachtkastje, en nu was het verdwenen. Het zou een ramp zijn als de ring in verkeerde handen terecht zou komen, en Roodvinger moest direkt op onderzoek uit. Niemand wist waar de zwarte draak gebleven was sinds het vorige avontuur, en Roodvinger wilde dat vraagstuk eerst oplossen. Het zou best kunnen dat de zwarte draak weer toe had geslagen. Roodvinger zou met een heleboel vissen eens gaan kijken onder de zeebodem, en het misschien eens proberen met de oude droomtelefoon. Meharates had hem ergens opgeborgen. Maar wat ze ook deden, de draak was nergens te vinden. Nu was de roze toverspiegel ook een soort droomtelefoon geworden, en misschien zouden ze daarmee de draak wel kunnen vinden. En ja hoor, één zender op de droomtelefoon heette : de zender van de zwarte draak. En alle oude films over de draak werden daar vertoond. Het was als de zender waarop de toverspiegel lange tijd was vastgezet. Maar ook werden er filmpjes vertoond waar de zwarte draak nu was. De zwarte draak leefde weer in de zwarte bergen, op zoek naar het meisje wat hij eens verloor. Hij probeerde de vissen maar te vergeten. Hij had ook van de tv-vruchten gegeten, en was nu in de televisie-wereld op zoek naar zijn oude vriendinnetje. Misschien dat ze daar nog ergens zou leven. Maar nergens op deze zender werd er over de ring gesproken. Er werden veel meer filmpjes over het verleden van de draak uitgezonden, ook over het leven van het meisje dat altijd zo goed voor de draak zorgde. En ja, dat meisje leek inderdaad wel heel veel op de prinses, maar ook wel een beetje op Roodlaarsje. En daar schrok Roodvinger wel even van.

Het was nog een erg jong meisje, en Roodvinger vond het verschrikkelijk dat ze door een grote vis verslonden was. Het meisje had ook een poesje, dat altijd met haar meeging als zij de draak ging voeren. En ook vlogen er altijd een heleboel vogeltjes met haar mee. Het meisje was erg dapper door dat te doen, want de draak was erg gevaarlijk. Maar ze moest wel, anders zou de zwarte draak haar dorpje verwoesten. Het meisje leek zelfs wel een beetje op de koningin. Maar op een dag kwam het meisje te laat, en de draak was zo woest dat hij haar opat. Toen de inwoners van het dorp merkten dat het meisje wel erg lang wegbleef gingen ze naar de draak toe, en hij vertelde hen dat het meisje op zee was gegaan en door een grote vis was verslonden. De draak had dus al die tijd

gelogen. Maar nu kwam hij daar dan mee voor de dag, op deze zender. Het was alsof de draak zijn leven had gebeterd. En daar verscheen ineens het hoofd van de draak op de tv. 'Ach, ja, ik heb er zo verschrikkelijk veel spijt van. Ik heb al die tijd gelogen,' zei hij met tranen in zijn ogen. Maar Roodvinger vertrouwde het niet helemaal, want wie zij hem dat die filmpjes echt waren.

Roodvinger drukte hem ineens op een andere zender, en daar zagen ze ineens een heel ander verhaal. Ze zagen daar een heksenkasteel, waar de zwarte draak telkens naartoe ging om veel dingen die hij had gestolen naar toe te brengen. En in dit kasteel zagen ze het meisje staan, en ze lachte heel luid. Ze had de tv-ring in haar vingers en zei : 'Ha ha, wat was dat toch een goed idee om iedereen te laten denken dat ik verslonden was, dat ik er niet meer was, want zo zou ik goed de schuilplaats kunnen beheren van de draak. Ha ha ha.' Ja, dat was wel slim van de draak. Maar dit was ook maar een zender. Welke zender had nu gelijk ? Roodvinger wist het niet meer. Ineens kwam Roodlaarsje binnen, en liep naar Roodvinger toe : 'Ik moet je wat vertellen wat ik je eigenlijk al veel eerder wilde vertellen. Ik heb vroeger die zwarte draak gevoederd, en toen ik erachter kwam hoe gevaarlijk hij was, ben ik weg gegaan en heb iemand anders tegen hem laten zeggen dat ik door een vis verslonden was. Ik durfde niet meer terug, en ik durfde hem niet te zeggen dat ik nog leefde.' Dan was Roodlaarsje nu wel in groot gevaar, en ze had het wel vaker met draken aan de stok gehad. Maar daar stond de zwarte draak ineens in de deuropening : 'Ha ha, alsof ik dat niet wist, Roodlaarsje. En al die draken die jullie hebben lastiggevallen, ha ha, dat zijn allemaal mijn soldaten, ha ha ha. Neem het nu maar eens op tegen mij, de koning van alle draken en van alle vissen.' En daar glinsterde de tv-ring aan de klauw van de draak, en hij hing hem aan een ketting om zijn nek, om te vertrekken. Meharates was er inmiddels achtergekomen dat het heksenkasteel wel bestond, en dat de draak daar wel degelijk een geheime schuilplaats had. En samen gingen ze op pad. Roodvinger was inmiddels wel erg bang geworden, want hoe zou het met Roodlaarsje aflopen als zij de draak zo had bedrogen ?

Maar ineens werd Roodvinger wakker. Hij had alles maar gedroomd. Het hele drakenverhaal was maar een droom geweest. En toen hij dacht dat hij wakker was geworden, bleek het nog steeds een droom te zijn. Heb jij dat ook weleens ? Want Roodvinger had helemaal geen vrouwtje dat Roodlaarsje heette, en Roodvinger was helemaal geen detective van de koning. En er bestond ook helemaal niet zoiets als een tv-ring. Of toch wel ? Roodvinger keek op z'n nachtkastje, en ja hoor, daar lag de tv-ring. Zou er dan toch iets van dit verhaal echt waar zijn ? Roodvinger is een mannetje dat altijd verschrikkelijk veel avonturen beleeft en dan aan het einde altijd wakker wordt, en dan toch weer dingen uit die droom tegen komt. Zijn dromen dan soms toch een heel klein beetje waar ? Met Roodvinger weet je het nooit. Hij is het mannetje van de televisie, en soms is hij dit en soms is hij dat. Dat maakt hem toch wel heel bijzonder. Roodvinger weet ook nooit waar hij woont, want hij woont altijd ergens anders, en dan wordt hij soms ineens wakker. Wie is Roodvinger nu eigenlijk ? Dat weet hij zelf eigenlijk ook niet. Hij is een droommannetje, dat is alles wat hij weet.

Hoofdstuk 10. De Draken Gaan Voetballen

Wat we wel van Roodvinger kunnen zeggen is dat hij eigenlijk in een soort vreemde televisie woont. Een draak had hem daar ingezet, want dat was voor Roodvinger beter. Omdat Roodvinger een klein mannetje zo groot als je vingers is, en dus eigenlijk een soort kabouter, was het voor hem beter in de televisie te wonen dan ergens anders. Buiten de televisie was het voor een kabouter als hij veel te gevaarlijk. Die draak wilde hem dus beschermen. De draak had eens een gouden beker gewonnen, een prijs met het drakenvoetbal. En in die gouden beker woonde een mannetje dat Roodvinger heette. Omdat een heleboel andere draken graag dat mannetje en die beker zouden willen hebben, heeft de draak een speciale tv voor Roodvinger gebouwd waar hij in kon wonen. De beker zette de draak op een hoge plaats waar niemand bijkan. En de draak is een zwarte draak als in het verhaal. Maar de zwarte draak van Roodvinger is een aardige draak. Roodvinger houdt er erg van om naar het drakenvoetbal te kijken. Dat gaat op een hele andere manier dan gewoon voetbal. Er zijn daar meerdere ballen en op die ballen staan letters. En wat er de volgende dag allemaal in de

normale wereld gezegd wordt, wordt uitgevochten op het drakenvoetbal. Het wordt ook wel lettervoetbal genoemd. Dus wat de meester of juffrouw in de klas gaat zeggen, hangt er ook vanaf hoe het balletje rolt in zo'n parteitje drakenvoetbal. Roodvinger zit dan heel hoog op de tribune, met de zwarte draak. En de zwarte draak rookt dan een pijp met drakengras. Soms moet de zwarte draak dan helemaal naar beneden lopen, omdat hij de hoofdscheidsrechter is. Dus als de scheidsrechters beneden het niet goed doen, dan komt de zwarte draak even, en als het helemaal niet goed gaat, dan komt de zwarte draak even het veld op om te laten zien hoe je het drakenvoetbalspel moet spelen. Roodvinger is maar wat trots op zijn zwarte draak. Soms verandert de zwarte draak in een auto, een bus, een trein, of een vliegtuig. Ja, de zwarte draak kan heel veel.

Op een dag maakte Roodvinger een hele lange reis met de zwarte draak. De zwarte draak was veranderd in een raket, en leek wel op een ruimteschip. Ze zouden gaan naar de sterrenhemel van de Witte Chocolade, waar een grote drakenvoetbalwedstrijd werd gehouden. Na de wedstrijd gingen ze naar Klein Amsterdam, waar de ijstovenaar Darta Bahahn woonde. In Klein Amsterdam wonen een heleboel dieren, en zij hebben vaak ook tafels in huis waarop ze het drakenvoetbal in het klein kunnen spelen. Toen ze bij Darta Bahahn waren aangekomen, moesten ze op een lange trap naar boven. Het begon buiten te sneeuwen, en Darta had een hele zachte stem. Hij leek wel een beetje op Klaas Vaak. Ze gingen op de bank in de woonkamer zitten, achter een hele grote hal, waar een biljarttafel stond. Darta gaf hen allebei een grote beker met witte chocolademelk. Er woonden een paar grote dieren bij Darta in huis. Een pratende puma bijvoorbeeld. Het was het poesje van Darta Bahahn, maar niet zomaar een poesje. Daar kwam de puma binnenlopen, al pratende, maar tegen wie had hij het nu eigenlijk. Buiten was de glazenwasser bezig de ramen te lappen. Darta Bahahn had ook een televisie. De Zwarte Draak vroeg aan Roodvinger of hij misschien niet in deze televisie wilde wonen. Dat leek Roodvinger wel een goed plan. Hij wilde het in ieder geval wel eens proberen. Darta Bahan deed het luikje van de televisie open, en daar stapte Roodvinger naar binnen. Hij gleed door een hele lange tunnel naar beneden, en toen ... floetsj, flatsj, daar lag Roodvinger in een vijvertje. Hij moest heel diep duiken om in een soort speeltuintje terecht te komen. Hier stonden een heleboel vliegtuigen waarmee hij weg kon vliegen. Maar eigenlijk waren het geen echte vliegtuigen, maar een soort treinen die over rails in de lucht moesten gaan. Die rails gingen over hele hoge palen. Roodvinger ging in één van de treintjes zitten, en hup daar ging hij. Hij ging over rails, over een heel groot meer, waar allemaal hijskranen stonden. En aan de overkant van dat meer stond Groot Amsterdam. En daar kon hij allemaal spelletjes doen, en vond hij een nieuwe radio. Roodvinger hield erg veel van spelletjes. Er waren hier ook veel pretparken met veel achtbanen. Eén zo'n achtbaan heette 'de Orca'. En er was ook een achtbaan die 'De Vogelspin' heette. Een heleboel achtbanen hier hadden dierennamen. En ze liepen door de hele stad heen. Verder was er in de buurt nog een plaats die Zacht Amsterdam heette, en er was ook nog Hard Amsterdam.

En floeps... daar werd Roodvinger weer wakker in de televisie van de zwarte draak. Daar had hij ook een bedje staan, een zwart bedje, met zwarte dekens. Op de bodem van de televisie groeide drop, en Roodvinger lustte dat graag. Aan de muren binnenin de televisie hingen vreemde schilderijen van spinnen of van poppen. Roodvinger vond ze erg prachtig. Veel van die schilderijen waren zwartwit. Vaak begonnen die plaatjes 's nachts te bewegen, en dan waren het deuren geworden. Roodvinger hield ook erg van kleuren. Als hij eens van iemand een kleurplaat had gehad, dan ging hij de hele nacht kleuren. Moest Roodvinger dan niet slapen ? Nee hoor, want Roodvinger hoefde nooit naar school. Roodvinger had ook twee poppen. De ene heette Dun Amsterdam, en de andere heette Dik Amsterdam. Soms als deze met elkaar spraken, kon Roodvinger er niet goed van slapen. Roodvinger had die poppen gekregen van de schrijver, die ook in Amsterdam woonde. Als Roodvinger bij de schrijver op bezoek was, dan ging hij altijd in de televisie slapen. Dan ging hij altijd naast een vogelspin liggen. Ja, want het huis van de schrijver was altijd vol met dieren. Het was als een oerwoud. En voor dit boek heeft Roodvinger ook de schrijver bezocht. Dat doet hij zo nu en dan even. Niet alleen voor de verhalen, maar ook voor andere dingen. De schrijver en Roodvinger zijn namelijk dikke vriendjes van elkaar, en van de zwarte draak natuurlijk. Voor de schrijver is de zwarte draak helemaal niet zo groot. Hij kan hem zo

in z'n mond stoppen, en Roodvinger is ook maar een heel klein mannetje, niet groter dan de vingers van de schrijver. Als Roodvinger komt, komt hij altijd in zijn voertuig, de zwarte draak, die kan vliegen, varen en rijden. Roodvinger vind Amsterdam een erg prachtige plaats, maar hij moet er natuurlijk goed voor zorgen dat de mensen hem niet zien. Daarom komt hij meestal 's nachts en komt dan vlak voor het raam van de schrijver. Soms door een toverdrankje neemt Roodvinger de schrijver wel eens mee op zijn avonturen. De schrijver houdt ook erg van de televisie-wereld en de droomwereld. En Roodvinger is altijd bij hem.

De schrijver zou ook wel graag in een televisie willen wonen, maar dat kan natuurlijk niet, want schrijvers moeten schrijven. Maar gelukkig kan de schrijver wel een heleboel opschrijven over de televisie-wereld, en dus door dat toverdrankje net zo klein zijn als Roodvinger, om met hem op reis te gaan.

Op een keer waren Roodvinger en de schrijver helemaal in Amerika. Dat is een heel eind weg. Met de vliegende draak gingen ze daar naartoe. En toen gingen ze naar het topje van Amerika, daar waar het erg koud is, en toen hebben ze daar samen het drakenvoetbal gespeeld. In Amerika wonen ook een heleboel indianen, maar hier woonden Eskimo's. Dat zijn een soort ijsindianen. En die wonen in ijshutten. Het was daar erg koud. Ergens onder het water zou een geheime poort moeten zijn. Dat vond de schrijver wel leuk, want die houdt van alles wat geheim is. Samen met wat Eskimo's zwommen ze naar de poort toe, en Roodvinger probeerde de deur open te maken. Maar het lukte niet. Eén van de Eskimo's kon het wel, en daar zwommen ze naar binnen. Het water was erg koud, en ze kwamen in een enorme zaal terecht. Hier stond een kerst-televisie, waar eieren uitrolden waar allerlei vreemde dieren uitkwamen. Die vreemde dieren zouden ze dan naar Amsterdam mee kunnen nemen, want die hielden daar wel van vreemde dieren. Er waren ook eieren bij die niet opengingen, en waar vreemde letters opstonden. Dit waren de drakenballen die ze bij het drakenvoetbal gebruikten. En als ze in het doel werden geschoten, dan gingen ze open. Eén eskimo nam een hele grote zak met drakenballen mee, en ging door een andere deur heen. Hier was een drakenvoetbalveld, en hier gingen ze de drakenvoetbalwedstrijd houden. Inmiddels waren er al veel meer eskimo's bijgekomen. Eén eskimo bracht de schrijver en Roodvinger helemaal tot over het reusachtige voetbalveld, en door een deur, en daar was een zaaltje met twee deuren. Op de ene deur stond geschreven Koud Amsterdam, en op de andere Heet Amsterdam. Voor die deuren stonden een heleboel vogelspinnen. Er waren een heleboel grote witte vogelspinnen, en zij droegen vaak een letter of meerdere letters op hun rug. Sommigen gingen door het ene deurtje en anderen door het andere deurtje. Die spinnen waren natuurlijk uit de drakenballen gekomen. Roodvinger wilde er ook naar binnen, en eerst besloten ze naar Koud Amsterdam te gaan. Het was hier erg koud, en er stonden een heleboel arresleeen. De spinnen hadden hier een heleboel webben gemaakt. Daarna gingen ze door het andere deurtje, waar het heel heet was. Er stonden hier een heleboel hanen die luid kakelden : U-e-u-uuuuu. Als dit ook een soort Amsterdam was, dan wilde de schrijver wel eens even naar zijn huisje toe, als dat er zou staan. Dat was wel vreemd. Ze waren bij het station, en ze moesten een heel eind lopen, maar ze konden soms wel even op de rug van een haan springen. Bij het huisje van de schrijver aangekomen stonden er allemaal soldaten. En er werd een raar spel gespeeld, genaamd drakenbowlen. De bowlingballen vlogen er door de lucht, en moesten elkaar ketsen. De schrijver werd een beetje boos en riep : 'Wat moet dat daar, bij mijn huis.' Maar een soldaat riep tegen hem : 'U woont hier niet.' En ineens zag de schrijver zichzelf uit het huisje komen. Ach natuurlijk, dacht de schrijver, dit is Heet Amsterdam en niet het gewone Amsterdam. En de schrijver riep : 'Hé, hé, dat ben ik,' maar de schrijver van het Hete Amsterdam begon heel hard weg te hollen. 'Kom terug, kom terug,' riep de schrijver. Hij wilde zo graag eens met zichzelf praten. Maar wat er toen gebeurde : De hele plaats begon in brand te staan, en de brandweer moest komen om de brand te blussen. 'Dat komt van al dat drakenbowlen,' riep de brandweer. 'Waar is de schrijver ?' En toen grepen ze die arme schrijver, en moest hij mee naar het politie-bureau. 'Maar ik woon hier helemaal niet,' zei de schrijver. Maar niets hielp, en de schrijver werd achter slot en grendel gezet. Na een tijdje hadden ze ook de schrijver van het Hete Amsterdam opgepakt. En die kwam bij de schrijver van het gewone Amsterdam in de cel. 'Zo,' zei de schrijver, 'nu kan ik

eindelijk eens met je praten.' Maar dat ging niet door, want ze moesten voor de rechter komen. 'Jullie staan beiden schuldig aan het drakenbowlen. Dat is streng verboden hier, want daar komt brand van.' Maar de beide schrijvers zeiden : 'Wij hebben niet aan drakenbowlen gedaan, dat hebben de soldaten gedaan.' 'Maar jullie hebben met hen meegedaan,' zei de rechter. 'Neen,' riepen de beide schrijvers, 'dat is nietwaar.' En toen zei de schrijver van het Hete Amsterdam : 'Ik kan al een hele lange tijd niet slapen van dat drakengebowl, waarom moet dat eigenlijk ?' En toen haalde de rechter de drakenbowlballen tevoorschijn. Er waren ballen opgetekend met cijfers erin. 'Ik weet niet waar ze voor zijn, maar het moet stoppen,' zei de rechter. 'Ja, dat vinden wij ook,' zeiden de beide schrijvers. En weer moesten ze terug naar hun cel. Midden in de nacht werd er getikt op het raampje. Het was Roodvinger. Hij sloeg het raampje kapot en schoof een flesje toverdrank door de tralies. 'Vlug,' zei hij. 'Neem allebei een slokje zodat je klein genoeg bent om door de tralies te gaan. Dat deden ze, en al snel stonden ze buiten. Toen namen ze een slok uit een ander flesje en werden weer zo groot als Roodvinger. De schrijver van het Hete Amsterdam zei : 'Laten we naar mijn huis gaan.' En dat deden ze. Bij het huis aangekomen waren er gelukkig geen drakenbowlers of ballen meer. Snel waren ze binnen, en de schrijver keek z'n ogen uit. Aan de ene kant leek alles een beetje op zijn eigen huis, maar toch was dit totaal anders. De schrijvers vroegen aan Roodvinger of hij misschien wist waar dat drakenbowlen voor was. Roodvinger zei dat het een vreemdsoortige soort klok was, wat het verkeer moest leiden. De schrijvers snapten er beiden niet veel van. Na een tijdje als de ballen genoeg waren geketst en op bepaalde plaatsen waren aangekomen gingen ze open als eieren en kwamen er weer bijvoorbeeld vogelspinnen uit. 'Ja,' dat verhaal kende de schrijver wel. Daar kwam de zwarte draak aan, met een paar eskimo's. De eskimo's waren een beetje boos. 'Kom mee,' zeiden ze tegen Roodvinger en de schrijver. 'Het is hier veel te gevaarlijk.' De schrijver van het Hete Amsterdam wilde ook met hen mee terug. Maar de eskimo's vonden dat niet goed. 'Jij moet hierblijven, jij hoort hier,' zeiden ze. Maar de schrijver begon te bibberen en zei : 'Als jullie me hier alleen laten, word ik weer opgepakt en moet ik de cel in. Er staat een zware gevangenisstraf op het drakenbowlen.' En gelukkig toen mocht hij mee. De zwarte draak begon te groeien, en ze gingen allemaal in het voertuig zitten. Klaar om te vertrekken. Maar helaas, ze konden niet meer terug door de deur waarmee ze gekomen waren. Er stonden een heleboel drakenbowlers met hun ballen om de deur te blokkeren. Het waren weer die vreemdsoortige soldaten, en ook andere figuren. De zwarte draak werd erg boos en begon vuur te spuwen, maar de drakenbowlers begonnen met de ballen te gooien, en er kwam een krijsend geluid uit de ballen, alsof het sirenes waren. 'Het is geen tijd voor jullie om te vertrekken,' riep een drakenbowler. Ook had hij een soort speer in zijn hand en een helm met een grote veer. Het leek wel op een Spaanse Ridder. 'Misschien is het wel nooit tijd,' zei hij. En weer begon de plaats te branden en te branden, totdat de brandweer eraan kwam.

'Dat is die draak z'n schuld,' riepen de soldaten. Maar de brandweer liet hen allen arresteren, ook de draak en zij die in het voertuig zaten. Maar de brandweer kon het vuur ditmaal niet blussen, en de draak riep : 'Laat ons erdoor.' Maar nee hoor, ze werden allemaal in de cel gegooid en moesten voorkomen bij de opperrechter van het Hete Amsterdam. 'Jullie staan schuldig aan drakenbowlen,' riep hij. 'Dat is hier verboden. Daar komt brand van.' 'Wat voor spelletjes mogen we dan doen,' riep één van de soldaten. 'Dat zal ik je laten zien,' zei de opperrechter. 'Ik laat jullie allemaal levenslang opsluiten in een televisie .... in een kerst-televisie.' 'Nee,' riepen de soldaten, 'wij zijn onschuldig.' Wat gebeurt er in zo'n kerst-televisie ? vroeg Roodvinger fluisterend aan de zwarte draak. 'Daar veranderen je tranen in eieren,' zei de zwarte draak zachtjes. 'Dan word je een kip om drakenballen te leggen voor het drakenvoetbal.' Daar schrok Roodvinger wel even van. Daar had hij niet zoveel zin in. 'Waar komen dan die drakenbowlballen vandaan ?' vroeg Roodvinger weer fluisterend. 'Van de paas-tv,' zei de zwarte draak zacht. En toen richtte de rechter zich tot de schrijvers, de zwarte draak, de eskimo's en Roodvinger, en zei : 'En jullie laat ik levenslang opsluiten in de paas-tv, tot het leggen van drakenbowlballen.' 'Maar rechter,' schreeuwde Roodvinger, 'ik dacht dat jullie niet van drakenbowlen houden.' 'Drakenbowlen wordt alleen gehouden in het paleis, zeer diep onder de grond, en zeer diep in het geheim, en niet hier, maar in Koud Amsterdam.' Waren ze daar dan maar gebleven, maar nu was het al te laat. De soldaten werden opgesloten in de kerst-tv, en onze vrienden werden opgesloten in de paas-tv, en die stond helemaal op het topje van de noordpool. Het was een

nauw hok, en ze voelden zich al worden als kip. Moesten ze hier nu voor altijd blijven ? 'Nou ja,' zeiden de schrijvers, 'dan hebben we in ieder geval genoeg tijd om onze boeken te schrijven.'

Floep, en daar werd de schrijver van dit boek wakker. Hij had het allemaal maar gedroomd. Geen draken, geen vreemde bowlingballen, geen paas-tv's en geen Roodvinger. Of toch ? Er werd op het raam van de schrijver getikt. Het was al bijna ochtend geworden. Het was Roodvinger in zijn voertuig, de zwarte draak. De schrijver deed het raam open en haalde hem naar binnen. Direkt begon Roodvinger te vertellen wat hij had meegemaakt. En dat verhaal kun je lezen in het volgende boek.

Roodvinger

en de Vogelspin

Hoofdstuk 1. Wie is Roodvinger ?

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Hoofdstuk 1. Wie is Roodvinger ?

Roodvinger is een mannetje niet groter dan je vingers. Hij woont in een vreemdsoortige televisie, waardoor hij allerlei reizen maakt. Op een dag kwam Roodvinger het mannetje van de haai tegen. Dat mannetje droeg een hoed, en had tegelijkertijd een hele hoge en een hele lage stem. Nadat Roodvinger dat mannetje tegen was gekomen, was Roodvinger een beetje ziek geworden. Dat gebeurde wel vaker als iemand het mannetje van de haai tegenkwam. Toen moest Roodvinger een hele lange tijd in bed liggen. Iemand had eens een keer tegen Roodvinger gezegd dat haaien ook levende televisies zijn, en dat daar mannetjes in opgesloten worden. Die mannetjes zijn heel klein, nog wel kleiner dan Roodvinger zelf. Soms zijn ze zo klein dat ze alleen maar een balletje licht zijn. Roodvinger had ook wel eens het mannetje van de tijger ontmoet, en toen was Roodvinger ook een tijdje ziek. Al die grote dieren zijn niets anders dan levende apparaten en daar worden kleine mannetjes ingestopt, had iemand eens tegen Roodvinger gezegd. En dat was de zwarte draak,

Roodvingers beste vriendje. Toen Roodvinger weer beter was geworden nadat hij het mannetje van de haai had ontmoet, kwam hij dat mannetje weer tegen. Daar schrok Roodvinger wel even van. 'Kom je eens in mijn tv ?' vroeg het mannetje. Nu dat was wel aardig van dat mannetje. En Roodvinger wilde best wel eens een keer bij dat mannetje op bezoek. Bij het mannetje aangekomen ging er een belletje, en daar stond het mannetje voor de deur. Het mannetje had een bordje met eten in zijn hand, en daar moest Roodvinger van eten. En floep, daar ineens zat Roodvinger op de bank bij het mannetje in de haai. Roodvinger was nu in het lijf van een echte haai. Er gingen overal schelle belletjes rinkelen. 'Wil je wat thee ?' vroeg het mannetje. Dat wilde Roodvinger wel. De bank was heel zacht, maar al gauw bemerkte Roodvinger dat het een vogelspin was. Roodvinger was een beetje duizelig geworden, en nam een slokje van de thee die het mannetje hem voorhield. 'Roodvinger,' zei het mannetje, 'ik moet je wat vertellen.' En het mannetje ging naast hem zitten. Het mannetje schoof zijn hoedje een beetje naar achteren, zodat Roodvinger zijn ogen kon zien. Het ene oog was wit en het andere oog was zwart, en weer werd Roodvinger erg duizelig. Het waren hele grote ogen. 'Ik ben blind,' zei het mannetje. 'Ik zie met mijn neus.' Zijn neus leek op een lieveheersbeestje met allerlei knoppen erop. Ineens begon de neus heel snel rond te draaien, en Roodvinger viel in een diepe slaap. Daar kwam het mannetje van de tijger binnen. 'Slaapt ie ?' vroeg het mannetje. 'Ja,' zei het mannetje van de haai. En snel kwamen er ook andere mannetjes binnen : het mannetje van de vogelspin, het mannetje van de leeuw, het mannetje van de arend, het mannetje van de panter en het mannetje van de puma, en nog veel meer. Al snel was de kamer helemaal vol. 'Doe je ogen maar weer open,' zei het mannetje van de haai. 'Verrassing.' En daar werd Roodvinger wakker en zag al die grappige kleine mannetjes. Maar weer werd hij direkt erg duizelig, en alles begon voor zijn ogen te tollen. 'We proberen je in een nieuwe tv te krijgen,' zei het mannetje van de haai. En samen tilden ze Roodvinger op, en brachten hem naar een hogere verdieping, in een slaapkamer.

Na een hele lange tijd slapen werd Roodvinger eindelijk wakker. Er lagen wat rode draadjes door de kamer die wat licht gaven. En toen kwamen al zijn vriendjes weer binnen. En weer viel Roodvinger in een diepe slaap, terwijl zijn vriendjes hem nog een verdieping hoger brachten. Roodvinger voelde zich erg slap, en alsof hij zeeziek was, en hij droomde zo raar. Hij zag hele dunne dingen, en hele dikke dingen. Hele grote dingen, hele lange dingen, en hele kleine en korte dingen. En sommige dingen voelden heel zacht aan, en andere dingen heel hard. Na een tijdje werd hij weer wakker, en er waren nog meer vriendjes bijgekomen. Maar lang kon Roodvinger zijn ogen niet openhouden, en viel weer in slaap. En weer brachten ze hem een verdieping hoger. Waar brachten ze Roodvinger toch naartoe ? Het mannetje van de haai klapte in zijn handen, en het kamertje begon heel koud te worden. En daarna klapte het mannetje nog een keer in zijn handen, en het kamertje begon erg heet te worden. Roodvinger was nu zelf in zo'n haaientelevisie gestopt, en zelf een haaienmannetje geworden. Hij voelde hele hete klauwen en hele koude klauwen om hem heen, maar toen hij wakker werd stond het tijgermannetje voor hem. Hij voelde zich erg koortserig en bibberig. Het tijgermannetje liep steeds dichter naar zijn bed toe, maar het leek wel alsof hij steeds verderweg liep. En de deur was ineens ook zo verweg. En het tijgermannetje zei : 'Achter die deur ligt alles wat je hebt meegemaakt.' En toen Roodvinger naar zijn kussen keek, en naar zijn lakens, merkte hij dat zijn bed geen bed meer was, maar een deur. En toen zei het tijgermannetje : En achter de deur waar je op ligt ligt alles wat je nog moet meemaken. En ineens werd de deur opengetrokken, en Roodvinger viel met een schreeuw in een gat.

Hij zag allemaal vreemde gezichten om zich heen, waarvan sommige delen heel licht waren en andere delen heel donker, en het begon wild te bewegen. En de gezichten zeiden : 'Nu ben je zelf dan een haai geworden. Je bent een haai. Je bent een haai geworden. Ja, je bent nu één van ons. Je bent een haai. Je bent een haai geworden. Welkom. En weer voelde Roodvinger zich heet en koud worden tegelijkertijd. En hij hoorde hele lage tonen, die steeds lager werden, en hele hoge tonen die steeds hoger werden. En het leek wel alsof zijn hoofd explodeerde. Was hij nu echt een haai geworden ? En weer stond het mannetje van de haai voor hem, en deze pakte zijn hand, maar ... hij had geen hand meer, en ook geen benen, maar een staart. Was het dus allemaal toch waar ? En hij

voelde zich zieker worden, en moe, zo moe, en alles begon steeds sneller voor zijn ogen te tollen. En het mannetje van de leeuw stond voor hem, en begon op zijn hoofd te kloppen, en ook zijn hart begon te bonzen. Het leek wel alsof zijn hoofd brak. En om hem heen begonnen donkere gestaltes zijn naam te roepen : 'Roodvinger, Roodvinger, Roodvinger.'

Hoofdstuk 2. Het Tropische Vissendorp

En dat gebeurde wel vaker. Soms als Roodvinger in de spiegel keek had hij ineens konijnenoren. En hij is weleens een goudvis geweest. Ja, dat kan allemaal als je in een televisie woont. Op een dag was Roodvinger een tropische vis geworden in allerlei kleuren. Dan is de televisie ineens een vissenkom. Van buiten lijkt hij niet zo erg groot, maar van binnen is het erg groot. Ja, hij kon zelfs naar het Tropische Vissendorp zwemmen. En wat hij daar allemaal meemaakte ? Dat zal ik je vertellen. Er woonde daar ook een mannetje dat Duko heette. Duko had echte vissenoren die bijna als vleugels waren. Hij was bijna geheel van zacht doorzichtig plastic en leek veel op een tropische vis. Duko liet Roodvinger alle huisjes zien in het Tropische Vissendorp, en nam Roodvinger ook mee naar een bank. Ze betaalden daar met heel vreemd geld, met vissentepels, waar melk uit kon komen, en vissentranen. Met vissentepels kon je niet zoveel kopen, maar met vissentranen kon je heel veel kopen. De vissen die heel veel huilden waren dan ook het rijkst, en zij die nooit huilden waren vaak arm. Maar niet zo arm dat ze erge honger moesten lijden, want toch zorgden de vissen altijd erg goed voor elkaar. Vissen vonden het daarom nooit zo heel erg om verdrietig te zijn, want dan na een tijdje hadden ze weer veel geld om allerlei dingen mee te kopen. Dat vond Roodvinger natuurlijk erg interessant. Hij had nog wel wat tranen van zichzelf in z'n zak zitten. Duko zei dat hij niet met die tranen kon betalen, want dat waren kaboutertranen, en geen vissentranen. Hij was dan nu wel een tropische vis geworden, maar die tranen waren oud, van toen hij nog gewoon een kabouter was. Maar ... hij kon de kaboutertranen wel inwisselen bij de vissenbank, en daar zou hij een heleboel vissentranen voor kunnen krijgen. Kaboutertranen waren in het Tropische Vissendorp namelijk erg veel waard.

Duko zou Roodvinger brengen naar de rijkste vis van het hele dorp. Die vis woonde een beetje buiten het dorp tussen wat waterstruiken en waterbomen. En natuurlijk, je raadt het al, die vis huilde het meest van allemaal. Die vis huilde de hele dag door. Bij de vis aangekomen was alles niet eens zo groot, maar er waren wel een heleboel tunnels, en die liepen door tot over het dorp. De vissen mochten altijd in deze tunnels spelen. Het was een soort speelverkeer. Er stonden allerlei kleine autootjes waar de vissen in konden zitten. Want als je dacht dat de rijkste vis alles voor zichzelf hield, dan had je het mooi mis. Meestal kocht hij dingen voor het Tropische Vissendorp zelf. Roodvinger vroeg zich af waarom de vis de hele dag doorhuilde. De vis had ook een hondje, dat de hele dag door kefte. De vis kon daar niet zo goed tegen, en daarom huilde hij de hele dag. 'Waarom doe je dat hondje dan niet weg ?' vroeg Roodvinger. 'Niemand wil het hondje hebben,' zei de rijke vis. 'En ik zou ook niet zonder het hondje kunnen, want het is mijn beste vriendje, want eigenlijk was hij door het hondje zo rijk geworden, ja, zelfs de allerrijkste.' Dat begreep Roodvinger wel. Roodvinger dacht even na, en ineens stak hij z'n vinger op en zei : 'Maar ik zou dat hondje wel graag willen hebben, hoor.' Ineens stopte de vis met huilen : 'Wil je dat echt ? Je mag hem hebben, hoor, als ik hem zo nu en dan nog wel kan bezoeken.' En zo gebeurde het. Roodvinger kreeg een huisje aangewezen en kreeg de hond mee. Wat kon dat hondje keffen zich, en het ging de hele dag door, net zolang totdat Roodvinger er tranen van in z'n ogen kreeg. Maar dat was niet erg, daar werd Roodvinger alleen maar rijk van. Maar na een tijdje kreeg Roodvinger een goed idee. Hij had nu zoveel geld, dat hij een huisje kon laten bouwen op het speelverkeer boven het Tropische Vissendorp. Daar maakten de vissen toch altijd zoveel lawaai, daar zou het gekef van het hondje niet opvallen. Daar mocht het hondje dan wonen, en dan kon het hondje ook mooi het verkeer regelen. En dat kon het hondje goed. Soms begon hij heel hard te keffen, maar soms ook zachter, en soms helemaal niet. Als visjes stoute dingen deden, dan kwam het hondje eraan rennen en bleef net zolang keffen totdat er tranen uit hun ogen kwamen, en die vielen dan helemaal naar beneden, zodat het geld in het Tropische Vissendorp goed verdeeld kon worden. Het hondje was nu een

politiehondje geworden, en dat deed hij maar wat goed.

Duko was erg tevreden, en vond dat Roodvinger het heel goed had opgelost. Als een visje te arm werd doordat het niet genoeg huilde, dan ging het hondje er soms een tijdje wonen totdat het visje weer genoeg geld had. Ja, want in het Tropische Vissendorp was huilen heel gezond, en goed voor de portemonee.

Na een tijdje bedacht Roodvinger zich ineens dat hij nog oude kaboutertranen had die hij kon inwisselen bij de bank. Maar toen hij bij de bank aankwam, toen schrokken ze daar verschrikkelijk. '... Maar Roodvinger, zoveel geld hebben wij niet. Dit zijn wel hele speciale kaboutertranen, namelijk TV-tranen, en van zo'n dure soort dat we dat zelfs met al het geld in het hele Tropische Vissendorp niet kunnen betalen. U bent wel de allerrijkste vis die hier in het Tropische Vissendorp woont.'

Roodvinger had het erg naar z'n zin in het Tropische Vissendorp. De vissen werden snel beste vriendjes met hem, en Duko liet hem veel van het Tropische Vissendorp zien, en vertelde hem er veel over. Heel voorzichtig vroeg Duko aan Roodvinger of hij misschien geen koning wilde worden van het Tropische Vissendorp, maar Roodvinger zei dat het hondje daar wel een goede voor zou zijn. En zo gebeurde het. Het hondje kreeg een kroontje en van zijn huisje boven het speelverkeer werd een groot paleis gemaakt. De vis die altijd huilde was erg trots op z'n hondje, en sinds het hondje daar boven het speelverkeer woonde, kefte hij niet meer zo. De vis zou graag weer bij z'n hondje willen wonen, en wilde graag z'n lakei worden. Roodvinger vond het tijd dat er nieuwe munten bij zouden komen. Als de hond een tijdje stil was, dan gebeurde er altijd iets vreemds. Dan groeide er een wolkje voor zijn troontje, en dat veranderde dan in een munt. Het waren stiltemunten. Maar dat gebeurde alleen bij de koning. Soms was de hondenkoning ook weleens verdrietig, en dan groeide er een donkerder wolkje voor zijn troontje, en dat veranderde dan ook in een muntje. Dat waren dan verdrietsmunten. Maar ook dat gebeurde alleen maar bij de hondenkoning. Op een dag werd de koning erg ziek. En geen dokter wist wat er met het hondje aan de hand was. In het magazijn van de koning lag het vol met stiltemunten en verdrietsmunten. Roodvinger vond het tijd dat er een nieuwe geldbank zou komen, en dat er ook met deze munten betaald zou worden. Op de munten stond het hoofd van de hond met het kroontje. Deze munten waren van erg grote waarde, van een grotere waarde dan de tranenmunten. En eindelijk zou Roodvinger dan zijn oude kaboutertranen kunnen inwisselen. En met hulp van Duko was de nieuwe geldbank snel klaar. Het gebouw stond nu aan de andere kant van het Tropische Vissendorp, en heel langzaam kon er ook betaald worden met de nieuwe munten. De vissen moesten er allemaal wel even aan wennen, maar ook voor hen was het beter. Ook zij moesten leren dat stilte erg belangrijk is, en dat verdriet soms nodig is voor grote dingen, voor grote veranderingen, niet alleen maar voor jezelf, maar ook voor anderen. En verdriet hoef je heus niet altijd te laten zien door je tranen.

En al snel werd het hondje weer beter. Het Tropische Vissendorp was nu zo anders. En eindelijk kon Roodvinger zijn oude munten inwisselen. Het Tropisch Vissendorp was nu zo rijk geworden, en dat met hele goede munten van een hondenkoning. Roodvinger kreeg een heleboel stiltemunten en een heleboel verdrietsmunten, waar hij een heleboel mee zou kunnen doen. Hij was nog wel rijker dan de hondenkoning. Maar het hondje werd weer erg ziek, en ditmaal dachten de dokters dat hij niet meer beter zou worden. Het hele Tropische Vissendorp was zo verdrietig, maar toen gebeurde er iets wonderlijks. De wolkjes begonnen ook voor de verdrietige tropische visjes te verschijnen, en nu konden ze dan zelf die munten maken. Maar de koning werd zieker en zieker, en ook Roodvinger was erg verdrietig. Zouden er niet nog meer soorten munten moeten komen ? Het hondje kon zijn werk niet meer doen, en al gauw liep het in het speelverkeer uit de hand. De vissen werden soms erg boos op elkaar. Binnen korte tijd was het Tropische Vissendorp erg veranderd. Het raakte verwilderd, en leek nu erg veel op een wild onderwater bos. En toen gebeurde er wat vreselijks. De tropische vissen begonnen Roodvinger te beschuldigen dat het allemaal zijn schuld was. 'Ja, sinds hij hier kwam ging het allemaal fout,' riepen ze. Het hondje was inmiddels doodgegaan, en de vissen waren eigenlijk niet meer zichzelf. Duko liet soldaten voor het huisje van Roodvinger neerzetten om hem te beschermen, want de vissen waren woedend. Ten einde raad liep

Roodvinger naar buiten, en riep : 'Ik wil dan wel jullie koning worden.' Maar dat wilden de vissen niet. Sinds Roodvinger een koning voor het Tropische Vissendorp had aangesteld ging alles mis. Nee, een koning wilden ze niet meer. En ook Duko wist niet meer wat hij moest doen. Hij keek uit het raam om te zien wat er gebeurde. En toen gebeurde er iets vreemds. Er begonnen rode wolkjes te groeien voor de boze vissen, die heel langzaam in muntjes begonnen te veranderen. Het waren rode muntjes. 'Wat is dat ?' lachte één van de tropische visjes. 'We krijgen nieuwe muntjes.' 'Hoera,' riepen de vissen. En toen ineens vonden ze boos zijn niet meer zo erg. Maar één van de visjes keek wat er op de muntjes stond, en werd weer een beetje verdrietig : 'Ach, hmff... ze zijn bijna niks waard, je kunt er niet veel mee.' En de vissen zagen het allemaal, en ze begonnen allemaal een beetje te klagen. Maar boos zijn ? Dat waren ze niet meer, want wie wilde nou muntjes waar je toch bijna niks mee kon doen ?

En wat er toen gebeurde ? Ze gooiden de rode muntjes op de grond en liepen stilletjes weg. Roodvinger begon direkt de muntjes op te rapen om hen te verzamelen. Dat waren er een heleboel. De vissen waren blijkbaar vergeten dat wanneer je er een heleboel van hebt, dan wordt het veel waard. Wat waren die vissen toch boos geweest. De hele grond lag er vol mee, en toen Roodvinger en Duko ermee bij de bank kwamen schrokken ze daar verschrikkelijk : 'Maar Roodvinger, zoveel geld hebben we niet, zelfs niet in het hele Tropische Vissendorp. U bent de allerrijkste hier.' Roodvinger begon te lachen. Hij liet de muntjes opbergen in een heel groot magazijn, in wel twee.

Hoofdstuk 3. Het Heksenkasteel

Duko zou Roodvinger meenemen naar een ander Tropisch Vissendorp. Hier woonden weer andere soorten vissen. Ze moesten wel een tijdje zwemmen, en Roodvinger keek vaak naar de vleugelachtige vissenoren van Duko. Hij zou die zelf ook wel willen hebben. Duko glimlachte. Ooit zou Duko hem wel vertellen hoe hij dat zou kunnen krijgen. Toen ze bij het andere Tropische Vissendorp waren aangekomen, kwamen ze er al snel achter dat ze hier een heel ander muntenstelsel hadden. Er werd hier veel betaald met allerlei soorten verdrietsmunten, en in die munten zat een soort van rood kruid. En de munten waren hier in allerlei vormen, in diervormen, driehoeksvormen en kubusvormen. Soms waren het kleine huisjes, soms kleine autootjes, alles kon. Wat een vreemde, vreemde munten waren dat zeg. Vaak kon je door die munten heenkijken, en dan zag je het rode kruid liggen. Ze zeiden dat dat een heel gevaarlijk kruid was. Een mengsel van boosheid, angst, gemeenheid en nog veel meer. De tropische vissen waren allemaal erg bang voor het kruid, en daarom gaven ze vaak ook veel geld uit. Het kruid was veilig opgesloten in de munten, maar ze wilden het zo snel mogelijk weer weggeven of besteden in een winkel. Daarom stonden de vissen van dit Tropische Vissendorp bekend als gul. Ze gaven elkaar altijd vaak geld. Ook werd er altijd veel gegokt met veel geld in de Tropische Vissencasino's. Daar waren er een heleboel van in dit dorp. Meestal als een vis heel lang veel geld thuis had liggen, dan werd zo'n vis enorm bang voor het rode kruid. En ook als het dorp teveel geld zou hebben, dan werd iedereen daar bang van, en dan brachten ze het naar een dorp in de buurt. Het dorp lag een beetje afgelegen, en was omringd door de wildernissen van de zee. Roodvinger hield erg van die wildernissen, en ging daar weleens naartoe als hij alleen wilde zijn. Soms ging Duko wel eens met hem mee. Er leefden veel roofvissen in die wildernissen. Op een dag kwamen ze een plant of een struik tegen die het rode kruid droeg. Daar schrokken ze wel erg van, zeg. Het was een struik met een mond. In het Tropische Vissendorp waren ze allemaal bang voor zulke struiken. Vroeger groeide het kruid namelijk overal en die struiken vraten alle vissen op. Ja, er zijn vele oorlogen geweest tussen de vissen en de struiken van het rode kruid. Nu waren er dan nog maar een paar struiken over. 'Zo,' zei de struik, 'eindelijk tevreden, dat wij er nog maar met een paar zijn. Jullie hebben ons allemaal weggemaaid om jullie dorp te kunnen bouwen.' 'Pardon, rode struik,' zei Duko, 'wij zijn niet van dit Tropische Vissendorp. Wij komen uit een ander.' 'Oh,' zei de struik, 'dat verandert dan de zaak. Wij zouden graag willen dat er weer wat struiken met rood kruid groeien in het dorp. Kunnen jullie ons daarbij helpen ?' 'Nou,' zei Roodvinger, 'niet als jullie de vissen opvreten. Jullie kunnen hier mooi groeien in de wildernis, maar het dorp is voor de vissen.' Maar toen werd de struik wel een beetje boos. 'Zij

begonnen het eerst met het wegmaaien van ons, en sindsdien begonnen wij met het opvreten van vissen,' riep de struik. 'Maar dat is al zo lang geleden, we zullen beloven geen vissen meer op te eten.' Roodvinger keek bedenkelijk. 'Ik zou het risico niet nemen, Roodvinger. Het zijn gevaarlijke struiken. Het zijn vleesetende struiken. Zij horen thuis in de wildernis, in dit reservaat, en de vissen horen in het Tropische Vissendorp,' zei Duko. Roodvinger knikte. Maar toen werd de struik nog kwader. 'En jullie hebben zelfs het rode kruid in jullie geld opgesloten. Leuke gevangenis,' riep hij. 'Ja, dat moet,' zei Roodvinger, 'want dat kruid is levensgevaarlijk.' 'Dat moet ? Dat moet ? Niks moet,' sputterde de struik. 'En als dat kruid dan zo gevaarlijk is, haal het dan bij me weg, snel. Ik begin bang te worden.' Maar Duko trok Roodvinger snel naar achteren. 'Blijf bij hem uit de buurt, Roodvinger, ze zijn niet te vertrouwen, die struiken.'

'Ach, wat jammer nou,' klaagde de struik. 'Nu laten ze mij hier alleen zitten met dat rode kruid.' 'Hoe kan het dan dat je dat rode kruid hebt ?' vroeg Roodvinger. 'Ach,' klaagde de struik, 'ik was vroeger helemaal geen struik. Ik ben betoverd door een boze heks. Ik moest haar kasteel bewaken, en dat kon alleen maar als ik een grote gevaarlijke struik zou zijn. Ik was haar ... enige lakei ...' 'En waar is dat kasteel nu ?' vroeg Roodvinger. 'Ver weg in de zee,' zei de struik, 'ik ben gevlucht.' Roodvinger dacht diep na. Duko vertrouwde het niet helemaal. 'Roodvinger, kom mee, we moeten terug.' Maar Roodvinger wilde er eerst achter komen of de struik de waarheid sprak. 'Het maakt niet uit of hij de waarheid spreekt of niet, als hij de lakei was van zo'n boze heks, wat hebben we dan met hem te doen ?' zei Duko. 'Ach, zie je wel, jullie zijn niets anders dan die andere vissen van het dorp. Het kan jullie niets schelen. Ik was ooit opgesloten door deze heks, en toen zei ze dat als ik zeven jaren haar lakei wilde zijn, dan zou ze me vrij zetten, maar ze heeft me na die zeven jaren in deze struik betoverd,' zei de struik. 'Hoe ben je dan ontsnapt ?' vroeg Roodvinger. 'Pas na vele lange jaren, wel honderden jaren, toen ik zo groot was geworden dat ik het kasteel kon opslokken. Ik heb het kasteel toen heel ver weg gespuwd. Ze zeggen nu dat het kasteel brandt, en dat ze nu een vuurheks is.'

'Hoe kun je dan weer normaal worden ?' vroeg Roodvinger. 'Als de heks verslagen is,' zei de struik. 'En hoe wordt de heks verslagen ?' vroeg Roodvinger weer. Maar dat wist de struik niet. Duko was inmiddels weggegaan. Hij vond Roodvinger veel te eigenwijs, en vond het allemaal veel te gevaarlijk. Maar Roodvinger wilde wel eens weten of dat brandende heksenkasteel echt bestond, en besloot op onderzoek uit te gaan. Hij moest een hele lange tijd zwemmen, maar als een Roodvisje ging hem dat wel gemakkelijk af. In de verte zag hij wat rook, en hij besloot er op af te gaan. En ja hoor, er stond inderdaad een kasteel. En wat was dat kasteel groot zeg. Maar of het nu brandde ? Het was er wel een beetje warm. Het was een erg duister kasteel, maar toch gaf het iets licht, en soms was het bijna wit. Het kasteel stond op een soort heuvel, en Roodvinger moest langs een groot pad zwemmen. Voor de grote poort van het kasteel stonden wat skeletten. Ze hadden hele lange speren. 'Zo,' werd er vanuit de poort geroepen, 'kom je me eindelijk eens opzoeken.' Maar Roodvinger wist niet van wie die stem was. Er liep een skelet om Roodvinger af, en die wees op het horloge van Roodvinger. Ineens begon het horloge te veranderen. Een plaatje van het heksenkasteel met de heuvel was ineens aan de top van het horloge gekomen, met de wijzertjes eroverheen, en Roodvinger's handje was ineens heel warm geworden. En weer wees het skelet op het horloge, en de wijzertjes werden van goud, en ook het bandje van het horloge, met de randen. Ineens kwam er een oude vrouw aanlopen met een witte doek om haar hoofd. 'Zo, daar ben je, eindelijk,' zei ze. 'Ken ik u dan ?' vroeg Roodvinger. 'Nee,' zei de vrouw, 'ik ken jou.' En ze haalde een glazen bol tevoorschijn. Hiermee heb ik jou altijd gevolgd, Roodvinger, toen je onderwater was, en jij kan veel voor mij betekenen. Kom mee.' En daar liep Roodvinger achter de vrouw aan. De poort sloeg achter hen dicht, en de skeletten gingen er voor staan. Er was een open ruimte binnen het kasteel, en er zaten wat fluitspelers naast wat waterputjes, en er liepen wat boerinnen rond. Het was een vreemde wereld onderwater. Door een opening in een muurtje kwamen ze in een hele grote tuin terecht, nog steeds binnen het kasteel. De zon scheen en er liepen wat kabouters rond. 'Goedzo,' zei de vrouw. 'Je doet het erg goed.' 'Maar wat doe ik dan goed ?' vroeg Roodvinger. 'Mij navolgen,' zei de vrouw. Plotseling greep Roodvinger naar zijn buik. En hij begon te grommen. 'Ach jongen,' zei de vrouw,

'nog nooit een wolf geworden ?' Het was een wolvenkasteel. Hier betoverde de vrouw bezoekers in wolven. Roodvinger had nog steeds een enorme pijn in z'n buik, en was al bijna helemaal een wolf geworden. Langzaam liep hij de vrouw achterna, en hij liep steeds trager. Hij kon alleen nog maar heel langzaam denken en bewegen. 'Goedzo, jongen,' zei de vrouw. Ze gingen door veel tuinen heen binnen het kasteel, en die tuinen waren zo betoverend. Eindelijk waren ze dan in een huisje binnen het kasteel aangekomen. Roodvinger moest op een stoeltje zitten en kreeg een schort voor. De vrouw begon hem te voeren .... pap. Roodvinger gromde. Hij was nu een wolf. 'Dus,' zei de vrouw, 'jij wilt mij dus verslaan. Wat nou als ik jou versla ?' Maar Roodvinger begon te grommen. 'Ik wil jou helemaal niet verslaan. Ik wilde alleen maar even kijken of dat heksenkasteel echt bestond.' 'Even kijken, hè,' zei de vrouw, 'kijken kost geld.'

Ineens kreeg de vrouw erge krampen in haar buik en begon in een slang te veranderen. En niet zomaar een slang, maar eentje die vuur spuwde. Roodvinger begon het verhaal van de rode struik te vertellen, en de vrouw begon te lachen. 'Ha ha ha, en jij gelooft dat, zeker ?' En daar kwam ineens de rode struik binnenlopen en ging op een stoel zitten. 'Ik heb hem uitgezonden om jou beet te nemen, ha ha ha,' zei de vrouw schaterlachend. Had Roodvinger nu maar beter naar Duko geluisterd. Die vertrouwde het zaakje al niet. 'En weet je trouwens wat voor pap dat was ?' gilde de vrouw van het lachen. 'RODE KRUID PAP ! HA HA HAA.' En weer greep Roodvinger naar zijn buik. Wat een gemene streek was dit, en wat een gemene, gemene heks, zeg. Roodvinger begon te veranderen in .... Nee, niet een haai, niet in een slang en ook niet in een tijger ... maar in een struik met het rode kruid. 'Nee,' schreeuwde Roodvinger, 'dan kan ik nooit meer terug naar het Tropische Vissendorp.' 'Dat hoeft ook niet,' schreeuwde de heks lachend, 'je kan hierblijven.' In de verte hoorde Roodvinger gebrul, en geluid als kerktorens. 'De kerkdienst gaat beginnen,' schreeuwde de heks vals. En ze greep de twee rode struiken vast en sleurde ze mee het huisje uit. De kerkzaal van het heksenkasteel was een enorme zaal. Roodvinger had nog nooit zoiets gezien. Het was hier erg mistig, en zelfs de grootste wolken konden hier binnenkomen. De kerkbanken beneden zaten vol met rode struiken, en er waren veel balkonnen, onnoemelijk veel. De rode struiken hadden vaak violen of andere muziekinstrumenten waarop ze speelden. Roodvinger werd ergens op een balkon neergezet tussen andere rode struiken, en er werd een fluit tussen zijn bladeren gedrukt. De heks liep helemaal naar voren, en besteeg een hele lange mistige trap tot de preekstoel. Ze had inmiddels een heel lang gewaad aan, en nog steeds was er gebrul in de verte. Langs de muren boven de balkonnen tot aan het hoge plafond zwommen de grootste grijze haaien tussen de mist door. Roodvinger kon bijna het plafond niet zien. Toen de heks op de hoge preekstoel stond kwam er vuur uit haar mond, en toen kwamen er een heleboel wolven binnen die tussen de rode struiken gingen zitten, ook naast Roodvinger. Wat waren dat een boel wolven, zeg. Toen de wolven allemaal zaten kwam er ineens ijs uit de heks van de mond vallen, en weer begon ze in een slang te veranderen, een hele lange slang, en haar hoofd begon ver boven de preekstoel uit te reiken. 'Ha ha ha,' gilde ze. 'Ha ha ha, wat zijn jullie allemaal dom, zeg.' En iedereen stond op en zei : 'Ja, wij zijn dom.' Maar Roodvinger bleef gewoon zitten. Dat vond de heks wel een beetje vervelend. En kwam met haar slangengezicht heel dicht bij Roodvinger. 'Zo,' sprak ze, 'dus jij vindt jezelf niet dom. En daar greep ze Roodvinger vast en bracht hem tot heel hoog op de preekstoel. 'Zo,' sprak ze weer, 'vertel jij maar eens aan iedereen in de zaal dat jij jezelf niet dom vindt.' En Roodvinger pakte met zijn bladeren de microfoon vast en zei : 'I... ik ... v... vind mezelf n.. niet dom.' Dat vond de heks kennelijk niet zo leuk. 'Je bent maar een domme struik,' gilde ze. En toen begon ze een preek te houden die zo saai was, dat iedereen ervan in slaap viel. 'Ha ha ha ha,' gilde ze, 'ha ha ha ha.' In toen drukte ze op een knopje, en de vloeren schoof open, terwijl iedereen erin viel. En weer gilde de heks van het lachen. En de kerk begon te branden, zo hard te branden, terwijl een steen zich vormde om de preekstoel heen, waar Roodvinger en de heks nog steeds waren. En als een lift begon de steen omhoog te gaan, en het plafond schoof een stukje open. Daar ging de steen open, en de heks was weer gewoon een heks, geen slang meer. 'Wat is er gebeurd,' gilde ze. 'Wat doe ik hier ?' 'Nou,' zei Roodvinger, die ook weer normaal begon te worden, 'je hebt daar beneden de boel flink op stelten gezet.' En de heks begon heel langzaam in een jong meisje te veranderen. 'Ach, ziet u,' sprak ze ineens met een heel andere stem. 'Ik heb een hele nare ziekte, waardoor ik telkens in allerlei

dieren verander en dan doe ik de vreemdste dingen. Wat heb ik nu weer gedaan, en wie bent u ? Ben ik soms weer in een oude vrouw veranderd geweest ?' 'Dat kunt u wel zeggen,' zei Roodvinger. Maar Roodvinger was erg op z'n hoede. Ineens greep het meisje hem vast, en veranderde weer een beetje in een oude vrouw, en probeerde hem van het dak van de grote kerk af te duwen. Maar Roodvinger kon zich gelukkig losmaken, en rende weg. Gelukkig was het dak met andere daken verbonden, en zo moest Roodvinger over vele daken rennen om uit het kasteel weg te komen. Maar in de verte hoorde hij het meisje lachen : 'Ha, ha, ha, je komt toch niet ver, want je hebt het rode kruid in je.' En weer greep Roodvinger naar zijn buik en begon in een ander dier te veranderen. 'Je bent hier tussen de draken,' gilde het meisje, 'je bent nu één van ons. Je kunt nooit meer weg. Dit is een drakentelevisie waarin je opgesloten bent.' Ineens waren er overal bliksemschichten en er verschenen grote rode slangen als tralies om het kasteel heen, tot hoog in de lucht. Zij waren de slangen van het rode kruid. Er zat wat kruid aan de handen van Roodvinger, en langzaam kwamen daar slangen uit voort. Het kruid prikkelde op zijn handen, en ook zijn buik begon te prikkelen. Ja, hij had van het rode kruid gegeten, waar de heks pap van had gemaakt. Zou die pap hem zo verschrikkelijk hebben betoverd dat hij nu nooit meer wegkon. Het was een vreemde jeuk, en hij begon rare bewegingen te maken om van de jeuk af te komen, terwijl hij het meisje achter hem hoorde lachen ... schaterlachen.

Hoofdstuk 4. De Rode Nacht

Roodvinger had al zo vaak in allerlei televisies gewoond. Zijn hele leven was een televisie. Maar nu was hij zelf in een TV aan het veranderen. Zou hij een TV-dier worden, een TV-struik, of ... wat ? Zijn hele lichaam prikkelde en jeukte van het rode kruid, en het was helemaal niet zo'n vervelend gevoel. Roodvinger was nu eenmaal een televisie-mannetje, en daar moest hij mee leren leven. Als Roodvinger een normaal leven had geleid, dan waren er vast geen boeken als dit over hem geschreven. Na een tijdje vond Roodvinger het Rode Kruid dus niet meer vervelend, en dronk er zelfs rode kruidenthee van, en rode kruidenkoffie.

Overdag was het heksenkasteel als een winkel waar je allerlei dingen kon kopen. Je moest dan betalen met het rode kruid. Dat ging op een hele vreemde manier. Er waren bepaalde betaal-apparaten. Daar moest je dan je arm instoppen, of je been, en soms je hoofd. Eens in de week was er de weeknacht. Dat was de langste en donkerste nacht van de week, die wel twee keer zolang duurde als een normale nacht. Dan kwamen de verschrikkelijkste draken naar het kasteel om te vergaderen. Sommigen zeiden dat ze van onder de grond kwamen, en anderen zeiden dat ze uit de muren kwamen. Meestal ging Roodvinger dan op zo'n nacht een lange wandeling maken door de wildernissen van het kasteel in een soort buitenplaats. Natuurlijk waren die wildernissen allemaal ommuurd. Alles gebeurde in het kasteel en in ommuurde buitenplaatsen. Er was geen ontsnapping mogelijk.

Op zo'n nacht kwam Roodvinger eens een heksenkind tegen, dicht bij een vijvertje. De grond was een beetje vochtig, en er hing wat mist. Het heksenkind zei niets, maar Roodvinger merkte dat het kind een beetje verdrietig was. Wat Roodvinger niet wist was dat het heksenkind eigenlijk een draak was die de rust opzocht. Stilletjes liep Roodvinger dichterbij. Ineens stapte het heksenkind op hem af, en zei : 'Zeg, zullen we met de gouden nacht naar de drakenbergen gaan ?' Gouden nachten waren eens per maand. Een gouden nacht was de langste en donkerste nacht van de maand. Deze nacht duurde wel een aantal keren langer dan de weeknacht. Er gebeurden dan altijd hele vreemde dingen, vreemder dan alle andere dagen en nachten van de maand. 'Maar heksenkind,' zei Roodvinger. 'Ik zit in dit kasteel opgesloten. Ik kan echt niet weg.' Maar toen zei het heksenkind : 'Ik zal er wel voor zorgen dat jij naar de drakenbergen kunt. Mijn vader is namelijk de baas van dit kasteel.' 'Oh,' zei Roodvinger, 'ik dacht dat de boze heks dat was.' 'Ach, welnee,' zei het heksenkind, 'zij is gewoon een domme robot. Vader gebruikt haar weleens om iemand naar het kasteel te brengen.' Roodvinger vond het heksenkind wel aardig en zei : 'Goed dan, ik kom op de gouden nacht wel weer terug, dan kun je me naar de drakenbergen brengen.' En zo gebeurde het. Toen het

gouden nacht was stapte Roodvinger weer op het heksenkind af, maar ineens begonnen rode struiken aan de muren te groeien. 'Oh ja,' zei Roodvinger, 'helemaal vergeten. Het rode kruid.' 'Ach,' zei het heksenkind, 'mijn vader heeft dat rode kruid uitgevonden. Hij komt ons zo ophalen, en dan zul je wel zien wat er met het rode kruid gebeurd.' En ja hoor, daar kwam de vader van het heksenkind al aanvliegen. Het was een geweldig grote vliegende draak met schubben en een hele smallen gespleten tong. Hij was kleurig als een vlinder. Het heksenkind sprong op de rug van haar vader en ook Roodvinger stapte naar boven. En daar gingen ze. Terwijl de rode struiken begonnen te smelten. Na een tijdje vliegen kwamen ze aan bij de drakenbergen. Hier woonde de draak in een heel groot kasteel. 'Weer een kasteel,' zei Roodvinger. Ja, de draak had vele kastelen, en daar was het heksenkasteel er één van. En weer stonden er wat skeletten voor de grote poort. Dezen hadden wat gescheurde en afgebrande kledered aan, en leken een beetje op piraten. 'Dit is het piratenkasteel,' zei het heksenkind. Een skelet kwam naar Roodvinger toestappen en wees naar zijn horloge. Ineens begon het linker deel van zijn horloge te glimmen en er verscheen een plaatje van het piratenkasteel, terwijl de gouden wijzertjes er over heen lagen. Het kasteel lag tussen de bergen, en was erg groot.

Kom maar verder, zei de draak. Maar ineens begonnen er struiken van het rode kruid voor de poorten te groeien, en er kwamen rode slangen uit voort. 'Hij moet terug naar het heksenkasteel,' zeiden de rode slangen. Ze hadden hele doorzichtige grote groene ogen, en ze spuwden vuur. Toen werd de draak wel even heel erg boos : 'Ik ben hier de baas,' riep hij, 'en ik ben de baas van het heksenkasteel.' Maar de slangen vielen de draak aan, en beten in de hoge hoed die hij droeg, en daar begon allemaal rood kruid uit te stromen. Toen begon het heksenkind in de draak te veranderen die het was. Roodvinger keek zijn ogen uit. Het dier had prachtige rode schubben en lange gele en groene strepen. 'Vader, zal ik hem dan naar een ander kasteel brengen ?' vroeg het heksenkind. Dat vond de vader wel goed. 'Snel, klim op mijn rug, Roodvinger,' zei het drakenkind. En daar vloog de draak, en de slangen konden haar niet achtervolgen. Na een lange tijd kwamen ze bij een ander kasteel aan. Dit kasteel was ook van de drakenvader. Er groeiden hier allemaal struiken. Het was diep op de zeebodem gebouwd, bijna in een soort kuil. Naast het kasteel was een enorme zeekloof, een enorm zeeravijn. 'Ik wil daar in dat gat naarbinnen,' riep Roodvinger. En daar vloog de draak de diepte in. Wat was het hier diep, zeg, en donker. Ineens stond er een klok met een piratenhoed voor hen : 'Halt,' zei de klok, 'dit is het domein van de Rode Nacht, de langste en donkerste nacht van het jaar. Hier wordt het rode kruid gemaakt. Dit rode kruid is magnetisch, zodat iedereen die het rode kruid draagt in de televisie-wereld blijft. Wij noemen dit ook wel TV-zwaartekracht.' Maar de draak begon hard te lachen : 'Hahaha, wat nou als je goed kan vliegen zoals ik ? Zwaartekracht ? Laat me niet lachen.' Maar toen begon de klok erg kwaad te worden : 'Zeg, of je nou zwemt, loopt of vliegt, je kan de zwaartekracht van de tv niet ontsnappen als je van het rode kruid hebt gegeten. En hier, in het domein van de Rode Nacht kun je niet eens vliegen, en hoe dieper je gaat, hoe zwaarder alles wordt, en hoe trager alles gaat. Dat is nog eens zwaartekracht, en zo worden de rode struiken gemaakt.' Maar de draak was nog niet overtuigd, en rende de diepte in. Maar toen hij probeerde te vliegen lukte hem dat niet. En hoe dieper hij kwam, hoe zwaarder alles ging. 'Oh ja,' zei de klok, 'en ik was nog even vergeten te zeggen dat je hier alleen maar in de diepte kunt en niet omhoog. De enigen die hier kunnen uitkomen zijn de rode struiken.' Nou, daar had Roodvinger eigenlijk niet zo'n zin in, om weer in een rode struik te veranderen. Maar misschien zat er wel niets anders op. En hoe dieper ze kwamen hoe meer ze begonnen te veranderen in een rode struik. Het was hier wel heel lekker warm, terwijl alles zwaarder en zwaarder werd.

Na een lange tijd waren ze op de bodem terecht gekomen van het diepe ravijn. Maar er was wel ergens een luikje waardoor ze door de bodem konden. En weet je waar ze toen terecht kwamen ? Weer in de heksenkerk. De kerk was helemaal leeg, en huilend ging Roodvinger op een bankje zitten. Ook de draak keek erg sip. Ze waren nu beiden een rode struik. En voor Roodvinger was dat niet de eerste keer, en de draak wist hier ook alles van af. En weer kwam de heks binnen. 'Nee, hè, niet weer,' zei Roodvinger. Maar de draak zei : 'Vlug Roodvinger, op haar achterhoofd tussen haar haren zit ergens een knopje waarmee we haar uit moeten zetten. Als ik haar nu aan de praat hou,

dan sluip jij stilletjes naar achteren, en geeft het knopje een duw.' 'Dag heks, hoe gaat het ermee, alles wel aan boord ?' En de heks liep zonder wat te zeggen op de draak af, die nu een rode struik was. 'Zo, kleine rode struik, wat een praatjes heb jij vandaag, zeg,' zei de heks luid, terwijl Roodvinger stilletjes achter de heks probeerde te komen. En ja hoor, met een duik vloog Roodvinger naar haar achterhoofd en drukte tussen haar haren het knopje in. Als een pop ging de heks op het bankje achter haar zitten en sloot haar ogen, waarna ze haar hoofd liet zakken en voorover boog. 'Ziezo,' zei de draak, 'die is uitgezet.' Roodvinger was erg opgelucht, anders zouden ze misschien alles weer van voren af aan moeten meemaken, en daar had Roodvinger niet zoveel zin in, want het zou ook nog wel veel gekker dan de eerste keer kunnen worden. Nee, daar zat Roodvinger niet echt op te wachten. Verrassingen als die van de heks waren niet altijd bepaald aangenaam. Gelukkig begon Roodvinger weer normaal te worden, en ook de draak. En toen veranderde de draak weer in het heksenkind.

Hoofdstuk 5. De TV-Kroon

Roodvinger begon het heksenkasteel een beetje te leren kennen, en ze wisten vele gevaarlijke poppen en robotten in het kasteel uit te zetten. Vaak haalden ze dan de knopjes eruit, zodat ze niet meer aangezet zouden kunnen worden. Roodvinger was inmiddels dikke maatjes geworden met het heksenkind, die dus eigenlijk een echte draak was. Roodvinger begon het steeds meer naar z'n zin te krijgen, en wilde eigenlijk niet meer weg. Hij wilde de wildernissen van dit kasteel, zowel binnen als buiten, leren kennen. En natuurlijk aten ze vaak van het rode kruid ... goed voor de zwaartekracht. Ze konden de onderdelen van de gevaarlijke poppen en robotten goed gebruiken voor de herbouw van dit toch wel erg gevaarlijke heksenkasteel. Roodvinger en het heksenkind veranderden zo nu en dan nog wel eens in rode struiken, maar dat vonden ze niet meer zo erg, want de dag daarna waren ze weer vol met het rode kruid, en dan konden ze weer veel dingen kopen in de heksenwinkel. Vaak kochten ze dan dingen voor het kasteel. De dieren van het kasteel voelden zich veel meer op hun gemak, sinds het kasteel bazen had die goed voor hen zorgden. Ze zagen altijd uit naar de weeknachten, de maandnachten en de jaarnachten, want dan was het altijd extra rustig. Meestal kwamen de draken van stilte dan wel, om te vergaderen, en dat deden ze dan altijd in de grote kerk. Op een dag veranderde Roodvinger in een prachtig vliegend insect met doorzichtige vleugeltjes. En je kon het rode kruid zo door z'n lijfje zien stromen. Dit was eens na een Rode Nacht gebeurd, toen er een heleboel stille draken waren gekomen. Ze hadden Roodvinger zo prachtig betoverd, omdat hij zo'n goede baas van het heksenkasteel was geworden. Ja, nu was hij dan de koning geworden van het heksenkasteel, een prachtige slowaakse vlieg. En de kroon hadden de stille draken speciaal meegenomen uit Brannan, het land der vliegen. En allen dronken ze druivensap voor dit speciale moment. Maar Roodvinger gaf de kroon aan het heksenkind. En zo zouden ze samen het heksenkasteel beheren. Dit vonden de stille draken een daad van een echte koning, en ze gaven de kroon van het rode kruid aan Roodvinger. Beide kronen zouden de betoveringen afwisselen, zodat ze telkens weer iets anders zouden zijn, voor het juiste moment. En ja, het waren dus echte TV-kronen, en een echte koning moest natuurlijk zoiets hebben.

Hoofdstuk 6. Het Land der Vogelspinnen

Nu was het zo dat Brannan, het land der vliegen, al tijden in oorlog was met Lapsalvania, het land der spinnen. Dit werd ook wel de grote witte oorlog genoemd. Op een dag zouden Roodvinger en het heksenkind daar eens een kijkje nemen. Met het heksenkind kon Roodvinger altijd heel makkelijk het kasteel verlaten. Dan veranderde het heksenkind zichzelf gewoon in een vliegende draak. Heel gewoon. Het was wel een eind vliegen hoor, naar Brannan. Een paar keer per dag veranderde Roodvinger voor een tijdje altijd in een prachtige vlieg sinds hij was betoverd door de stille draken en de prachtige kroon van het rode kruid droeg. Nu wilde hij toch weleens naar Brannan toe. En als ze ergens rood kruid hadden, dan was dat wel Brannan. Prachtige struiken met rood kruid stonden daar. Maar ook struiken met zwart kruid, vliegenkruid. En het geurde zo lekker.

De bossen waren daar dan ook erg poederig, omdat de wind het kruid vaak verspreidde. In de verte zagen ze wat soldaten lopen. Het waren vliegen. Toen ze dichterbij de soldaten gekomen waren vroeg Roodvinger wat ze in hun geweren hadden zitten. Er zat kruid in : rood kruid en zwart kruid bijvoorbeeld. Roodvinger vroeg zich af waarom er een oorlog was tussen Brannan en Lapsalvania. Ze besloten verder te vliegen naar Lapsalvania. Dat was nog wel een eind vliegen. Maar wat ze toen zagen, daar schrokken ze wel even van. Tussen Brannan en Lapsalvania in vloog er kruid heen en weer, en het stormde er verschrikkelijk. Ja, dit was echte oorlog. En het kruid vloog zo snel, dat het erg gevaarlijk was. De draak besloot om een omweg te maken. Maar overal werd flink gevochten. Eindelijk na een lange tijd vliegen was er een stuk waar niet gevochten werd. En de draak besloot met Roodvinger over dat stuk heen te vliegen. Onderweg besloten ze even te rusten, maar toen ze op de grond terechtkwamen zakte de grond in. Het was een val, en ze gleden heel diep door een tunnel richting Lapsalvania. Na een tijdje hoorden ze een plof, en ze keken recht in de ogen van een spin. 'Wat komen jullie hier doen,' vroeg de spin. 'Eh, we wilden wat meer afweten over de oorlog tussen Brannan en Lapsalvania,' zei Roodvinger. 'Ah, pottenkijkers, hè,' zei de spin. 'Nee,' zei Roodvinger, 'we dachten dat we misschien tot hulp zouden kunnen zijn.' 'Oh,' zei de spin, 'kom dan maar mee.' En langs een trap gingen ze naar boven. Ineens waren ze buiten. Er lag hier overal een soort sneeuw, maar de spin zei dat het wit kruid was. De draak en Roodvinger keken hun ogen uit. Wat een prachtige gebouwen waren daar. En in de verte stond een grote kerk. 'Kom maar mee,' zei de spin. En daar gingen ze richting de kerk. Maar toen ze in de kerk gekomen waren schrokken de draak en Roodvinger vreselijk. Het was ... de heksenkerk, precies dezelfde. Hoe kon dat nou ? 'Tja,' zei de spin, 'dat kan gebeuren met het witte kruid, dan is het toch weer anders dan je gedacht had.' 'Dan gebruiken jullie dat witte kruid zeker ook in de oorlog,' zei Roodvinger. 'Ja,' zei de spin, 'en daarom wordt het ook de grote witte oorlog genoemd. Het is spiegelend wit, een soort toverspiegel. Je zou de oorlog dus ook een toverwedstrijd kunnen noemen. Zouden jullie geen tovenaars van het witte kruid willen worden ?' vroeg de spin. En toen liet Roodvinger de kroon van het rode kruid zien. 'Wat een prachtige, prachtige kroon is dat, zeg,' zei de spin. 'Kom maar mee,' zei de spin. En weer liepen ze de kerk uit, en kwamen op een eenzaam pad terecht door een wildernis. Na een tijdje zei de spin : 'Aan het einde van dit pad ligt Laprakod, het land der vogelspinnen. Zij kunnen jullie verder helpen.' De spin ging weer terug en Roodvinger en de draak liepen verder. Langs de kanten van het pad groeide veel vreemd en wild kruid. Na een tijdje kwamen ze aan in Laprakod. In de verte stond een kerkgebouw met een hele hoge toren. 'Ik vermoed al wat,' zei Roodvinger. 'Ja,' zei de draak, 'ik begrijp wat je bedoelt.' En inderdaad, toen ze in de kerk kwamen was het weer de heksenkerk. Maar ditmaal zaten er vogelspinnen in de kerk. De hele kerk was er vol mee. Ze zaten op de banken, op de preekstoel en aan de muren, en overal in de gangpaden. Roodvinger en de draak gingen weer naar buiten, en de draak veranderde weer in het heksenkind.

Er lagen allerlei soorten kruid hier op straat, en er liepen wat vogelspinnen met kleine popjes tussen hun poten. Ineens greep Roodvinger naar z'n buik en begon ook in een vogelspin te veranderen. Er liep ook een vreemd mannetje op straat met zijn hoofd als een spin, en om zijn hoofd wat witte bloemblaadjes. 'Oh, wat grappig,' zei het mannetje. Volgt u mij maar naar de koning. Ze moesten een tijdje wandelen totdat ze in de verte buiten het dorpje een pad zagen dat eindigde in een reuzachtig wit spiegelend rozenpaleis. Het mannetje zei dat daar de koning van Laprakod woonde. Na een tijdje kwamen ze bij het paleis aan, waar het een beetje naar pudding rook. Op een troon in het paleis zat een hele grote vogelspin. De vogelspin had hele scherpe tanden, en hele woeste ogen. Op de grond lag allerlei soorten kruid. De koning brulde, terwijl de muren van het paleis in brand begonnen te staan. Ineens kwamen er van alle kanten vogelspinnen aanlopen. Ze hadden grote speren in hun handen en wezen daarmee naar het horloge van Roodvinger. Ook wees er één naar de kroon van Roodvinger. Al snel stond de hele zaal in brand, en de koning rende naar een deur achter zijn troon, en gleed daarin weg. Het heksenkind en Roodvinger renden snel achter de koning aan, en kwamen in een tunnel waar de muren heel zacht en heet waren. De muur was er erg schubbig, en ze harden veel pijn op hun borst en in hun buik. Stapje voor stapje liepen ze verder. Het was een hele lange buis waar ze in terecht waren gekomen. In de verte hoorden ze de koning bulderen. Maar de buis begon langzaam met water vol te lopen, dus ze moesten snel zijn. Na een lange tijd lopen

kwamen ze in een andere paleiszaal terecht, en weer zagen ze de koning op een troon zitten. De koning was nu groter dan ooit, en de hele grond lag bezaaid met roze kruid, terwijl er rozen aan de muur groeiden. Ineens was de koning in een kind veranderd, in een jongetje, en rende weg door een deur aan de zijkant van de troon. Even later zagen ze hem door de deur gluren, en kwam hij weer voor de deur staan. Het leek wel alsof hij wilde dat ze achter hem aankwamen. En weer begonnen de muren te branden, en moesten ze snel door de deur gaan, want al snel stond de hele zaal in brand. Er lagen wat poppen in de gang achter de deur op de grond, en die raapten ze op. De gang was vol van deuren, en in de verte zagen ze het jongetje van deur tot deur lopen, heel snel. Het leek wel alsof die gang nooit ophield, en het jongetje bleef maar rennen. Het leek wel alsof ze nooit dichterbij kwamen, terwijl ze toch aardig hard liepen. En het begon ook steeds heter te worden. Ze besloten door een deur van de gang te gaan, maar er waren daar geen vloeren. Ze konden alleen maar in de diepte kijken. En bij een andere deur gebeurde hetzelfde. Al die deuren liepen uit op één grote ravijn. Op een gegeven moment moesten ze wel springen, want de gang werd te heet. Gelukkig was de grond waarop ze vielen erg zacht en schubbig. Ook de muren waren hier erg schubbig. Er lagen links en rechts vele poppen, en in het midden van dit ravijn stond een kooitje op tafel als van spiegelend goud, en er zat een kraai of raaf bovenop. In het kooitje lag een rat die zo plat als een dubbeltje was. 'Koning, sire,' zei de raaf met krasse stem, 'we hebben bezoek.' Van achter een dikke boom kwam het jongetje tevoorschijn, heel verlegen, en begon heel langzaam weer in een vogelspin te veranderen. Maar nu was de vogelspin heel klein en ging door de tralies in het kooitje naarbinnen. De vogelspin ging op de platte rat staan, en dat was een geheim luikje waar de vogelspin doorheen schoof en verdween. 'Ik zou hetzelfde kunstje maar doen,' grapte de raaf, 'want het gaat hier zo erg heet worden.' Daar schrokken het heksenkind en Roodvinger wel erg van. Blijkbaar werden hier hun toverkunsten op de proef gesteld. Roodvinger was wel een vogelspin nu, maar veel te groot. En ook het heksenkind was veel te groot voor het kooitje en het kleine luikje. En het begon in de ravijn al heter en heter te worden.

Vlug nam Roodvinger zijn kroon in zijn handen en begon wat aan de schijven te draaien, maar niets hielp. Maar toen herinnerde Roodvinger zich iets. De vogelspinnen hadden ook op het horloge gewezen, dus misschien zou er weer een plaatje bijgekomen zijn. En ja hoor, aan de rechterkant was er een plaatje bijgekomen van een kasteel onder de grond. En aan de zijkant van het horloge zat een klein knopje. Roodvinger drukte het knopje in, en ja hoor, hij begon al kleiner te worden. Het heksenkind zat ook aan de schijven van zijn kroon te draaien, maar niets gebeurde. Wat moesten ze nou doen ? Roodvinger wilde zijn vriendje niet in de steek laten. Roodvinger stond al voor het kooitje en kon al bijna door de tralies naarbinnen. Inmiddels waren de muren al in vlammen, en ook de tafel waarop het heksenkind zat was al flink heet aan het worden. Maar daar kwam ineens het vogelspinnetje weer door het luikje naar binnen, en droeg een horloge om aan het heksenkind te geven. Het was bijna hetzelfde horloge als die van Roodvinger. Vlug drukte het heksenkind op het knopje aan de zijkant en begon kleiner te worden. Dit ging niet zo heel snel, maar Roodvinger kon inmiddels al door de tralies naarbinnen. Snel stapte hij op het luikje, wat direkt openging. Het vogelspinnetje was inmiddels alweer verdwenen. De hele zaal stond al bijna in vuur en vlam, alleen het tafeltje nog niet. Het heksenkind begon enorm te zweten. Zou hij het nog halen ? Hij stond al voor het kooitje en kon al bijna door de tralies. Zijn voeten deden pijn van de hitte, en hij kuchte al van de rook. Snel glipte hij door de tralies heen door zijn adem diep in te houden, ging op het luikje staan, en zakte naar beneden. Ze gleden door een enorm lange rode tunnel. De tunnel was erg schubbig, zacht, maar ook warm. Gelukkig niet zo heet als de zaal boven hen. Ze kwamen in een klein slootje terecht, waar ook een vogelspinkonijn zat met hele grote oren. 'De koning verzint steeds wat nieuws,' sliste het vogelspinkonijn. En ineens klapten aan alle kanten beeldschermen uit waarop ze het jongetje zagen rennen. Hij rende over allerlei trappen, en hij kwam allerlei elfjes-achtige wezens tegen. 'Waar zou hij nou zijn ?' dacht Roodvinger. 'Ach,' zei het konijn, 'hij wil gewoon dat je hem overal volgt, en dat je dan terechtkomt waar hij je wil hebben, weer in één of ander dier of apparaat, zodat je daarin het mannetje kunt wezen. Dit is een speelgoedfabriek.'

Daar schrokken Roodvinger en het heksenkind wel even van. Moesten ze daarom ineens zo klein

worden, om ergens in te passen ? Ineens ging ergens een deur open, en een enorme vogelspin stond voor hen. Het was de koning. 'Welkom in mijn rijk,' zei hij met een vreemd accent. 'Jullie zijn nu in de speelgoedfabriek van Laprakod. Wat willen jullie worden ?' 'Ik wil helemaal niks worden,' zei het konijn. 'Ik wil gewoon naar huis. Telkens als je me ergens instopt en het gaat dood of kapot, dan kom ik op de vuilnisbelt terecht, en dan wordt ik hier weer naartoe gebracht.' Inmiddels was Roodvinger weer een vliegende insect geworden, en de vogelspin begon te stralen : 'een elvenvlieg, een elvenvlieg,' riep hij. Het heksenkind was inmiddels naar de geopende deur gelopen, maar wat daar was ? Het was daar een kokende pot met wit kruid. De vogelspin liep op hem af en gaf hem een duwtje : 'Zo die zal nu worden wat hij altijd heeft willen worden,' zei de vogelspin. En ineens hoorden ze allemaal een verschrikkelijk gebrul, en de deur ging weer open. Een grote ijsbeer stond voor hen, en het werd ineens ijskoud. 'Wie volgt ?' zei de spin. 'Nou, laat ik het dan nog maar eens proberen,' zei het konijn, en nam een duik. En het konijn werd een prachtige elf. Nu wilde ook Roodvinger het weleens proberen. Hij nam een duik en werd een nog prachtigere elvenvlieg. 'Welkom in mijn kasteel,' zei de koning, en een andere deur ging open. Het konijn was weer verdwenen. Roodvinger en het heksenkind wisten dat de betovering maar voor even was. Maar nu waren ze gelukkig in het ondergrondse kasteel van de koning gekomen. De koning liep voor hen uit, en liet hen de prachtige bedradingen aan de muur zijn, vol van kruid. Toen moesten ze weer door een deur, en weer waren ze in het heksenkasteel. Dat kwam natuurlijk allemaal door dat vreemde kruid. Alles liep altijd uit in het heksenkasteel. Ze konden gewoon niet echt ontsnappen.

Hoofdstuk 7. Het Roze Kruid

In het heksenkasteel, in een grote zaal, waren de stille draken tezamen gekomen. Zij droegen het roze kruid, een kruid waarmee je op de zon zou kunnen leven en in andere hete plaatsen. Roodvinger en het heksenkind gingen helemaal achterin de zaal zitten. De draken zaten in een kring, en vanuit het plafond begonnen insecten van het roze kruid neer te dalen. Zij hadden speren en schilden, en zij namen volop van het roze kruid. Ze kwamen vanuit Brannan en Lapsalvania, vanuit de Grote Witte Oorlog, maar deze wezens waren neutraal. Waarom ze dan speren en schilden droegen ? Ze moesten zich natuurlijk wel verdedigen. Deze wezens waren op reis naar de Witte Zon, waar ze wilden leven. En dat kon alleen maar door het roze kruid. En daarvoor moest het witte kruid met het rode kruid vermengd worden. Ineens kwam de vogelspinnenkoning binnen, en ging in het midden van de kring staan, en al de insecten van het roze kruid hieven hun speren en schilden in de lucht. Toen daalde vanuit het plafond de koningin van het roze kruid neer, in een soort van schelpentroon, en de wezens begonnen luid te klappen en te juichen. De koningin smeerde hun voorhoofden in met het roze kruid, en ze vielen allemaal bezwijmd op de grond. Even later stonden ze weer op, en voor de koningin legden ze hun handen tegen hun buiken, en liepen weg, richting het kasteel van de vogelspin. Roodvinger vond het allemaal erg vreemd wat ze deden. Samen met het heksenkind besloot hij de insecten te volgen. Weer kwamen ze in het kasteel van de vogelspin, en nu gingen de insecten een andere deur door. Ze waren in een zaal terecht gekomen genaamd 'de zonnenzaal' waar alle zonnen zo nu en dan kwamen om te vergaderen. Het was daar altijd ontzettend heet, maar door het roze kruid konden ze daar wel tegen. Een insect hield Roodvinger en het heksenkind tegen. De insect begon hen in te smeren met het roze kruid, zodat ze tegen de hitte bestand waren. Rondom in de zaal waren er beeldschermen waarop ze de vuurzeeen van de zonnen konden bekijken. Ineens kwam er een ijsbeer binnen vanuit een andere deur, en direkt hielden enkele insekten een speer op hem gericht. De ijsbeer begon te brullen, maar de insecten konden het niet verstaan. Daar kwam de vogelspinkoning binnen, en begon heel luid en hoog te gillen tegen de ijsbeer. Roodvinger en het heksenkind snapten er niet veel van. Plotseling begonnen de beeldschermen in de zaal te exploderen en begon alles te bevriezen. De ijsbeer brulde nog luider, en vanuit de muren kwamen nieuwe beeldschermen waarop reusachtige ijszeeen waren te zien. Deze ijszeeen waren van de ijszonnen. De vogelspinnenkoning was woest, en viel de ijsbeer aan, en ook de insecten begonnen hun speren naar de ijsbeer te gooien. Maar toen kwamen de draken ineens binnen en begonnen een cirkel te vormen rondom de ijsbeer om hem te beschermen. De ijsbeer was

gewond, en brulde luid. De draken brachten de ijsbeer weer terug door de deur waardoor hij gekomen was, en ook Roodvinger en het heksenkind wilden wel eens zien waar de ijsbeer vandaan kwam. En ze kwamen in een zaal terecht die bijna precies als de zonnenzaal was, maar dit was de ijszonnenzaal, en ook hier waren schermen waarop je de ijszeeen van de ijszonnen kon zien. Het was hier heel erg koud, maar door het roze kruid waren ze er tegen bestand.

Ineens werd Roodvinger wakker in zijn televisie-bedje. Hij had het allemaal weer gedroomd, maar op het nachtkastje lag wel een beetje van het roze kruid ... of was het wat drakenas van de zwarte draak die wel eens naast zijn bedje ging zitten als Roodvinger ging slapen ? Soms las de draak dan nog even wat verhaaltjes voor Roodvinger, totdat hij in slaap gevallen was, en dan rookte hij altijd een pijp met drakengras. Roodvinger had weer vreemd gedroomd, maar de draak kon soms ook vreemde verhalen vertellen. Eén keer ging dat over een eendendorp, en de draak kon het altijd zo vertellen dat Roodvinger er ook in voorkwam. Luister maar eens :

Op een morgen liep Roodvinger naar de bakker, maar onderweg kwam hij een eend tegen. De eend was een beetje duizelig, en vroeg of Roodvinger wat brood voor hem had. 'Nou, eend,' zei Roodvinger, 'ik ben net op weg naar de bakker, dus loop maar mee.' Het was een erg aardige bakker. 'Kom,' zei hij tegen de eend. 'Achter in de tuin is er een broodgang, waar je net zoveel brood kan eten als je wil, en als je je door die gang heengegeten hebt, dan kom je in eendendorp terecht.' Eendendorp ? Daar hadden ze nog nooit van gehoord. Maar Roodvinger wilde ook wel mee. Na een tijdje hadden ze zoveel gegeten dat ze wel voor een week genoeg hadden, en ze waren in eendendorp terecht gekomen. 'Nou,' zei de eend, 'hier zou ik wel willen wonen.' Ineens kwam er een heel klein krabbetje op hen af, wat om hun armpjes begon te cirkelen. 'Zeg,' zei het krabbetje, 'ik weet nog wel een spelletje. Hebben jullie geen zin om naar krabbendorp te gaan ? Kom maar mee, dan leidt ik jullie naar een kersengang, waar je zoveel kersen kunt eten als je wil, en als je je door die gang hebt heengegeten dan ben je in krabbendorp. En zo gebeurde het, want van al dat brood hadden ze wel een droge mond gekregen. In krabbendorp liep een erg grote mijnheer rond met een helm op. Hij was een politie-agent. Roodvinger zei : 'Hallo, mijnheer de politie-agent, wij komen even op bezoek in krabbendorp, mag dat ?' Maar de politie-agent zei niks, maar begon met grote sprongen vooruit te springen. Dat was wel vreemd, en Roodvinger, de eend en het krabbetje begonnen hem te volgen. De politie-agent ging door een hele grote tunnel ergens naar binnen. De tunnel was vol met kersensap. Als ze hem zouden volgen, dan zouden ze wel erg nat worden. 'Laten we maar beginnen met drinken,' zei het krabbetje. En na een korte tijd stond de tunnel helemaal droog en konden ze er doorheen lopen zonder nat te worden. Aan het einde van de tunnel stond een konijn : 'Welkom in kersenland,' zei hij. 'Niks mee te maken,' riep de politie-agent. 'Ik zei het niet tegen jou, maar tegen hen,' zei het konijn boos. 'Nou, wat heb ik daar mee te maken ?' zei de politie-agent. 'Ze zijn jou achterna gelopen,' zei het konijn. 'Oh,' zei de politie-agent, 'maar dat verandert de hele zaak.' 'Hoe dan ?' vroeg het konijn. 'Nou, let maar op,' zei de politie-agent, en gaf de konijn een grote schop. Zo'n grote schop dat het konijn een eindje de lucht in vloog. 'Zo,' zei de politie-agent, 'dat zal je leren om zomaar navolgers binnen te laten.' Maar nu werd het konijn erg boos, en hij schreeuwde : 'Wees blij dat er eens iemand komt, we zijn hier altijd alleen maar met z'n tweeen.' 'Ik houd niet van bezoek,' zei de politie-agent. 'Oh, maar in dat geval,' zei het konijn, 'leid ik de bezoekers wel even tot de tunnel achter de kersentroon, en dan vertrek ik samen met hen.' 'Maar, koning kers,' zei de politie-agent, 'dat kunt u toch niet doen ?' Maar het konijn was al verdwenen, en snel liepen Roodvinger, de eend en het krabbetje achter het konijn aan. Hier moesten ze niet wezen met zo'n vervelende politie-agent. Achter de kersentroon was een tunnel, en daar moesten ze doorheen lopen. Ze kwamen al snel in een heel groot bos terecht. Ze zouden voorlopig niet meer terugkunnen, want dan zouden ze weer zoveel moeten eten en drinken. Voorlopig had Roodvinger wel voor een week genoeg. 'Zeg,' zei het krabbetje, 'ik ben eigenlijk een tekenfilm-ringetje. Als je mij om je vinger doet, dan kun je zelf een tekenfilmpje uitkiezen waarin je dan terecht komt.' Roodvinger keek met grote ogen naar het krabbetje. De eend en het konijn waren ineens verdwenen. Op het lijfje van het krabbetje was een schijfje wat kon draaien met kleine plaatjes van tekenfilmpjes erop. En Roodvinger zag ook de gezichtjes van het konijn en de eend ertussen. Snel

deed Roodvinger het ringetje om één van zijn vingers. 'Als je weer een vriendje erbij krijgt,' zei het krabbetje, 'dan komt er een extra tekenfilmpje bij.' Het was dus een echt toverkrabje.

Ineens werd Roodvinger wakker. Hij had alles maar gedroomd, maar naast hem lag wel de tekenfilm-ring. Roodvinger deed hem direkt aan één van zijn vingers.

Roodvinger beleefde vele avonturen met de tekenfilm-ring. Vaak moest Roodvinger weer de wildernissen in om al zijn tekenfilmvriendjes te vinden, en soms moest hij het opnemen tegen duistere en gevaarlijke wezens om zijn vriendjes te bevrijden uit de moeilijkste situaties en de vervelendste kooitjes en gevangenissen. Vaak zaten ze diep opgesloten op plaatsen waar niemand ze zou kunnen vinden. Nou ja, niemand ? Soms werd Roodvinger zelf opgesloten, en moest hij wachten totdat een tekenfilmvriendje hem vond, en hem bevrijdde.

Op een keer was Roodvinger in kuikendorp. Daar betalen ze met chaos-muntjes. Dat zijn muntjes die kunnen rondlopen en rondspringen. Die muntjes moeten zelfs naar school. Nou, dat zijn wel hele vreemde munten. Niemand in heel kuikendorp wist waar die muntjes vandaan kwamen. Die muntjes waren al heel erg oud. Niemand wist dat het eieren waren van het tekenfilm-monster dat heel diep in de bergen woonde. Als die eieren open zouden gaan, dan zou heel kuikendorp in een wildernis veranderen. Het duurde erg lang voordat zo'n tekenfilm-monster-ei open zou gaan, wel honderden jaren. Maar nu was het dan bijna zover, en niemand in kuikendorp wist wat hun te wachten stond. Ook Roodvinger wist het niet. Maar op een dag was er een eend in het dorp gekomen. Hij was net op vakantie geweest in de bergen, en hoorde daar het tekenfilm-monster praten over wat er zou gebeuren in kuikendorp. De enige manier om het te kunnen stoppen was om de muntjes diep onder de grond te stoppen zodat er bomen met chaos-muntjes zouden groeien. Na een tijdje zouden ze de munten weer in de grond moeten stoppen, anders zou het dorp nog gevaar lopen. En daarom is het zo dat in kuikendorp de meeste muntenbomen zijn, en waar ze nog steeds de allerrijkste zijn.

'Dat was wel een leuk verhaaltje,' zei Roodvinger tegen de draak. 'En ik kom er ook in voor.' 'Kijk eens wat ik hier voor je heb ?' zei de draak. En hij hield de tekenfilm-ring voor Roodvinger's neus. Roodvinger deed de ring om zijn vinger en ging tevreden slapen.

Elwin bij de Heks

Op een dag kreeg Elwin wel een hele vreemde uitnodiging. De heks had haar kasteel aan de rand van het bos, en wilde dat hij kwam. Waarom zou ze hem wel vertellen als hij daar was. Op zijn fietsje ging Elwin naar haar toe. Misschien had de heks wel hulp nodig.

Toen hij bij het kasteel was aangekomen zette hij zijn fiets tegen een muurtje, en liep toen door de grote poort naar binnen. Een paar wachters wezen even met hun speren op Elwin, maar Elwin liet hen de uitnodiging zien, dus hij mocht door.

De heks was blij hem te zien. 'Zo Elwin, fijn dat je gekomen bent,' sprak ze. Ze liet hem de keuken

zien waar wat drankjes aan het pruttelen waren. 'Drink maar, Elwin, allemaal voor jou.'

'Ik heb geen dorst, heks,' zei Elwin. 'Waar kan ik u mee helpen ?'

'Dat zal ik je zo wel vertellen, Elwin,' zei de heks. Toen liepen ze naar boven. Er waren daar allemaal kasten met een heleboel drankjes.

'Ik mis één drankje, Elwin,' zei de heks. 'Moet je horen. Ik heb gehoord dat jij nogal goed en hard kan fietsen. Mijn bezemsteel is gebroken. Die vliegt niet meer. Kan jij het drankje voor me halen wat ik mis ?'

'Natuurlijk, heks,' zei Elwin. 'Waar moet ik het halen ?'

'In Horrestein,' zei de heks. Horrestein was een dorpje dichtbij.

'En waar in Horrestein, heks ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Bij reus Hikke,' zei de heks. 'Ik heb hem al een brief gestuurd, dus hij weet precies waarvoor je komt.'

'Komt in orde, heks,' zei Elwin. Hij rende naar buiten, en sprong direct op zijn fiets. Reus Hikke woonde net buiten Horrestein in een groot huis.

Reus Hikke was blij Elwin te zien. Hij had het drankje al voor Elwin klaarstaan. 'Zeg Elwin,' zei de reus. 'Wat als ik jouw fietsje op mijn rug neem, en samen met jou door het bos naar de heks ga ? Dan gaan we het drankje samen brengen, en dan heb ik wat te doen. Ik heb het kasteel van de heks nog nooit gezien, en het lijkt mij een aardige vrouw.'

Zo gezegd zo gedaan. De reus nam het fietsje op zijn rug, en Elwin ging aan de riem van de reus hangen. Snel waren ze bij het kasteel van de heks. Dat ging nog wel sneller als met het fietsje. De heks moest wel lachen toen ze Elwin aan de riem van de reus zag hangen.

'Zeg Elwin, zou jij ook niet zo'n riem willen hebben ?' vroeg de heks. 'Het is een toverriem, en dan maak ik een kleinere riem voor jou, net als die van de reus.'

'Graag heks,' zei Elwin.

'Want je hebt zo goed je best gedaan,' zei de heks, 'en je hebt me zo goed geholpen.' De heks nam het drankje aan van de reus, en ging direct aan de slag voor een riem voor Elwin. Na een tijdje was de riem klaar, en kon Elwin hem omdoen. De riem was een echte toverriem, een verhalen vertellende riem, die ook in een zwaard kon veranderen. Door de riem veranderde Elwin in een dromenprins. De riem had ook een naam : JEDORIX. Elwin en de JEDORIX werden al gauw de beste vriendjes. En de reus en de heks konden het ook reuze goed met elkaar vinden.

Einde

PROZA VAN DE VUH

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COAB 1970-2017

1. Medusa
2. Roze Zwanen
3. Arabisch Amalgaam
4. Het Kind van Licht
5. Mexicaans IJs
6. Het Gedwongen Chocola
7. Nachtkozijnen
8. De Oranje Ster
9. Zee der Leugens
10. Planten van Vlees

11. Zijn Huis Stond In De Weg
12. Suzie
13. Karel Klouterwoes – Blauwe Angels
14. De Kannibaalse Bruid
15. De Roodbil Stam
16. De Vreemde Ontmoeting
17. Het Surinaamse Dagboek
18. De jongen met drugs
19. De Roze Muur
20. De Eeuwige Jachtvelden
21. Het Moddermeer
22. De Kinderdief
23. Het Oorlogs-spel
24. De Slavenketting
25. De Roze Stad
26. De Oorlogsgodin
27. De Sneeuwstorm
28. Het Rijk van Nicotine
29. Het Lukuk Tablet
30. Haaien Bewustzijn
31. Tijger Kind
32. Het Varkenshart
33. De Ontsnapping
34. De Ballerina
35. Het Luipaard

36. Het Korte Oog

37. De koning van de zeepaardjes

38. Het Dagboek van Geert Vlederhuis

39. De Rode Riem

40. De Rode Stad

41. Het Rode Wapen

42. Het Witte Kasteel

43. Watervogels

44. Nooit Genoeg

45. De Stad van Erotos

46. De Moederboom

47. Het Rode Wapen

48. De Poortwachter van de Hel

49. De Gele Vlinder

50. De Vierde Aarde

51. Bloedbessen

52. De Bizonjacht

53. Het Hemelbed

54. Sleutel van het Paradijs

55. Troon der Lelies

56. Laura de Indiaanse

57. De Heks van de Gele Bloemen

58. De Ring van de Leprechaun

59. Het Zwaard van Trol

60. Snelheids Duivel

61. Het Labyrint

62. Nachtprinses

63. De Droomster

64. Het Bruine Boek

Medusa

Hoofdstuk 1. De Zonderling

Ik denk dat ik doodga als ik naar haar kijk. ‘Dit is het rijk van de dood,’ zei ze. Ze had een suikerzoet jurkje aan, met de geur van een herfstbos. Ik draaide mijn gezicht om en keek naar buiten, naar de grauwe stenen. Het was alsof ze lang uitgestrekt op de daken lag, alsof ik haar

met mijn ogen niet kon ontwijken. De bus stopte dichtbij, mensen stapten in de bus, en het was alsof zij tussen de rijen stond. Ik denk dat ik doodga als ik haar aankijk, dat ik het dan gewoon niet overleef. Ze pakt me bij mijn hand, en trekt me naar beneden. Het is etenstijd. Zij smeert het brood, kijkt naar buiten naar de heg. Ik ruik haar suikerzoet jurkje, alsof het belegd is met hemelse rijkdommen, maar naar haar kijken durf ik niet. Ik ben laf. Ik voel haar hand nog steeds, terwijl ze me allang heeft losgelaten. Ze voert me.

Ze is als een rots waarvan ik af kan springen, daarom beklim ik haar niet. De pot pindakaas voelt nog warm aan van haar hand. Ze was hier. Nu is ze in de kelder. Omdat ze zo lang wegblijft drink ik de laatste slokken melk en thee, en dan ga ik naar bed. Het was een dag des doods, in de tuin van spot. En gisteren was ik in de tuin van wreedheden. Mijn herinneringen zijn daar. Mijn hersenen bloeden. Ze leest me een boek voor, terwijl ik probeer te slapen. Ik hoor haar stem echoen door mijn hoofd. Het zaad van de lindeboom houd ik stevig vast, en meng het met mijn tranen. Dan smeer ik haar lichaam in, met het mengsel dat lijkt op natte tarwe, griesmeel, het is als brood, en het bed is de oven. Zij is de vrouw van de bakker, en ik ben de bakker. Ik maak haar klaar voor het kostelijke dinner in het diepste van de nacht, en dan slaap ik.

Ze is als de boom aan de rivier. Ik krab aan het hout, het is alsof de sterren breken. Ik denk aan de tuinen waarin wij waren, de hoge poorten in de heggen, de vruchten die zijn als de meest kostelijke snoepjes. Wie plantte hen daar ? Ik keek naar haar gezicht toen ze sliep. Nu was het veilig. De lazarus-koekjes bungelden aan haar lichaam, slap, uitgedroogd, de nacht heerste hier over de dood, de gouden dood. Voor mij was het een vakantie, ze was even geen roofdier meer. Ik kuste haar lippen, en dan slaap ik, vrij, blij, zonder angst, want ze slaapt. Een diepe nacht die mijn bewustzijn breekt, ik ben er even helemaal uit. Tante Connie controleert later de kamers nog even, of alle lichten wel uit zijn voor de nacht, want als de nacht komt, dan moet de nacht echt goed komen. Zo praat ik ’s nachts als met een pop. Ik hoor tante Connie op de gang lopen, als een lijzige boom, verzwakt door het gewicht van haar ouderdom, met passen als het slaan op de koekjestrommel. Ja, haar hele wezen klinkt me als muziek in de oren. Altijd is ze mijn lievelingstante geweest, daarom wonen we hier samen, maar de herinnering aan haar verzwakt. Ik leef hier in een dorre tuin, spot gemengd met wreedheden, de souvenirs van het duistere gat van het verleden. Geen lichtjes konden dat goedmaken, geen gouden pollepel van welke grootmoeder dan ook. Ik voel me verminkt.

Oom Joop is een man met humor, maar ook hij kon mij niet redden. Als ik wakker word zit er iemand op me, wassende mijn rug. Het is zij. Ik durf haar niet aan te kijken. Ze pakt me beet, laat dan los, pakt me steviger beet, en dan laat ze me helemaal los, om op te staan. Ik ben te moe, en het zonlicht kwelt me. Er liggen hier snoep papiertjes overal. Ik hoor haar lachen. Er is geen tuinman die de wilde tuin van mijn ziel op orde kan krijgen. Ik lig hier voor Jan Worst.

Ze is de laatste van de rozentuin, dus ik kan haar niet wegdoen. De geschiedenis van de graaf, en zijn kinderen. Zij is als de erfenis. Uit mijn gedachten is ze niet. Ze speelt de piano. Ik kijk naar buiten, en probeer langzaam grip te krijgen op de dag. De muren buiten lijken hoog, zoals zij hoog is, van adel. Tante Connie komt binnen, en sleept zichzelf over het tapijt. Het lijkt voor haar een woestijnreis om aan ons bed te komen, en alles lijkt verwaterd. Haar rumoerig kapsel was vroeger deftig en hehoudend. Ze staart in de spiegel. 'Ik moet me nog opmaken voor de dag, je weet wel, het harnas aandoen,' zegt ze. Ze gaat tegen de verwarming aanzitten, en luistert naar de piano. De schotel die ze in haar handen heeft maakt haar bijna als een bedelaar. Ze heeft behoefte aan een gesprek, en ik ben te moe. De dochter van de graaf daarentegen is vol energie, en begint het gesprek met haar in zinderende vaart. Ze zijn als een stel vogels. Al snel prakken de vorken een maal. Ik krijg niks, want ik behoor niet tot de dag. Het is alsof ze elkaar voeren.

In de middag ligt ze weer op me. Het lijkt wel alsof ze draadjes aan me bevestigt om me op te hijsen. Er is nog maar een klein stukje van de dag over en dat eist ze helemaal voor haarzelf op, als met gloeiende handen. Buiten hoor ik de bus, mensen stappen in, verveeld, uitgeput. Ik vraag me af of ze ooit zullen aankomen. Zwetend en puffend kom ik aan bij de lift op de gang. Ik wil naar de zolder. Maar de lift schijnt niet te werken. Ik strompel naar de trap, want een dag met de dochter van de graaf is te veel voor mij. Ik zie bij de trap naar de zolder een andere vrouw staan, in wit kant. Ze helpt me op de trap. Ik plof even later op haar bed neer. Zij is de vrouw van de zolder, en ik heb de zolder bereikt, niet te bereiken voor de dochter van de graaf, de dochter des doods. Maar ik hoor haar krijsen beneden, als iemand die zich geprikt heeft bij het naaien. Ja, toe maar, druk die speld maar diep naar binnen, je verdient het, kreng, denk ik bij mezelf. Maar dan word ik ineens mild door de zachtheid van de vrouw hier. Ze komt dichterbij, spreid haar benen waarmee ze mij vastklemt. 'Ho, doe normaal,' zeg ik. Ze verzwakt de klem een beetje, maar ik voel haar gewicht op me. 'Slapen ?' vraagt ze.

'Nee, dank je, ik heb net geslapen,' zeg ik.

Ze loopt naar een kastje, haalt wat brood eruit en besmeerd het. Daarna voert ze me. De lucht is donker hier, en ik hoor de dochter van de graaf nog steeds krijsen. Als ik naar buiten staar is het alsof ze zich heeft uitgespreid over de daken.

'Waar kom je vandaan ?' vraagt de vrouw van de zolder.

'Vanuit de tuin,' zeg ik.

'Oh, de tuin der edelheden en martelingen ?'

Ik knik.

‘Zo’n zoet-bitter iets,’ zegt ze. Ik knik weer. De verdiepingen onder de zolder lijken ver weg. Ik staar weer naar buiten, alsof ik mijn ziel zie vliegen. ‘Waar ben ik ?’ vraag ik.

- Bij mij.

Ze pakt een schotel en een kom, en voert me dan soep. ‘Ik wil niet meer terug,’ zeg ik. Ik kwam van een nachtelijk gebrul, en nu was ik hier, een plaats vol protserige spulletjes, over en weer gelakt en opgepoetst. Vanaf de zolder kon ik de tuinen zien, de heggen, met de hoge poorten. ‘Ik ben een vergiftigd mens,’ zeg ik. ‘Een dwaallicht, een pop.’ Ze knikt. Als ik naar buiten keek zag ik mijn weerspiegeling. Zij stond ineens voor de spiegel, en maakte zich op, met allerlei smeerseltjes. ‘Goed spul van de bomen,’ zei ze. ‘Het is voor mijn huid. Ik ga niet naar het feest vanavond, ik blijf wel hier met jou.’

Het is alsof ik met haar hang tussen de verdiepingen, alsof ik met haar zweef boven de tuinen. Ik voel haar gewicht, en ben bang dat we naar beneden vallen, maar ze rekt me uit. Ik zie de begroeiing op de muren, en herinner de begroeiing van de tuinen, de dorens, de valstrikken, puur natuur.

‘Ik ben de maker van de tuin,’ zegt ze plotseling. Ik schrik. ‘Hoe kun je zoiets maken ?’ vraag ik. Ze zwijgt, als het graf. Ik merk dat ik kwaad word van binnen, maar dan voel ik ineens genade. Al snel voel ik niets meer, ik kijk alleen maar in een onbekend gat, als een mist, een waas. Ik kan niet meer nadenken. ‘Wat is er aan de andere kant van de tuin ?’ vraag ik.

- Een snoepwinkel. Ze verkopen eigenlijk gewoon zoete vruchten.

Ik kijk naar haar kanten jurkje. Het is als een snoep jurkje. Ineens heb ik zoiets van : Als ik nog verder naar haar kijk, dan ga ik dood.

Ik rol van het bed af naar de trap, en laat mij naar beneden vallen. De dochter van de graaf vangt mij op, en de vrouw van het zolder stormt naar beneden. ‘Hij zit toch aan touwen vast, elastiek, draden, kettingen, dus wat wil je,’ schreeuwt ze.

‘Is dit de oorlog van de feeen,’ vraag ik, ‘of van de indianen.’ Ze grijpen elkaar in de haren. ‘Uit dat licht,’ roept de vrouw van de zolder. Ik staar doelloos naar de hoeken van de trap. Dan voel ik de hand van tante Connie, die mij naar haar kamer neemt. ‘Thee ?’ vraagt ze.

Ze maakt brood voor me, opgepoft en zacht, een beetje nat, met wat soep en pudding. ‘Je moet goed eten, jongen,’ zegt ze. Ik zie haar kauwen. Het zal wel avondetens-tijd zijn. Ik hoor vrouwen krijsen. Buiten hoor ik vogels krijsen. Het klinkt me als muziek in de oren. Bij tante Connie is alles altijd anders. Ze zorgt voor me, grijpt in wanneer het nodig is. Oom Joop zit aan de andere kant van de kamer. Een verfrommelde papieren zak ligt naast hem, met oud brood. De gouden klok tikt, en het is een rustgevend geluid. Ik probeerde vat te krijgen op de structuur van dit huis, maar het was alsof ik van de daken afgleed, of was dit huis slechts de weerspiegeling van de tuin. Het was niet bepaald mijn Eden, en toch wilde ik dit huis doordringen. Ik voelde mij een zwerver in dit huis, een huis wat ik nooit echt binnen kon gaan. Na een paar uur zaten de twee vrouwen keurig netjes tegen elkaar aan, in keurige zoete kleertjes, als feestbroodjes bij de bakker. Rozen op hen vastgespeld alsof er iemand jarig was, en de spelden gingen diep in hun vlees. ‘Ja dieper, dieper,’ dacht ik. Ik wilde het voelen bloeden. Het was al aan het bloeden. Het bloed sijpelde op de grond. Tante Connie raakte in paniek, en ik ook, omdat ik toch meer waarde hechtte aan de beoordelingen van tante Connie dan aan mezelf. ‘Waarom doen jullie dat !’ riep ze.

‘Dit is ons verbond,’ zeiden de twee vrouwen. ‘Ons bloed-verbond.’

‘Zie je,’ dacht ik bij mezelf, ‘dan had ik het wel goed ingeschat.’

‘Geef me de speld,’ zei ik. ‘Ik wil ook deel hebben aan het bloed-verbond.’ Het was een hele opluchting toen ik de speld in mijn vlees voelde gaan, en ik de zachtheid van de roos tegen mijn huid aanvoelde. Ik voelde me een plak vlees bij de slager.

‘Nu kun je het dak opkomen,’ zeiden de vrouwen. ‘Nu kon je de tuin bezaaien en besproeiien.’ De poort van mijn hersenen leek open te gaan, en de waas leek even te vertrekken. Ik wilde meer van zulke lichaams-spelden. Ik herinnerde de dorens, ik herinnerde hoe genadeloos diep ze gingen, totdat alles binnenin me brak, en ik begon te zweven. Ik was nu boven het dak, maar de huizen om ons heen waren veel groter. Ik kon de zolders inkijken en zag de vrouwen. Ze leken eenzaam, en ik was eenzaam. Ik was met een helm op geboren,

maar die ontplofte nu. Ik zweefde bij iemand binnen. En hier zag ik bomen groeien door het hele huis. Ik was nog steeds in de tuin. Hier hingen zoveel gouden klokken aan de muur, die allemaal heerlijk tikten, zo licht, zo zacht, zo helder, ontwakende de diepste roerselen van mijn hersenen. Ze waren als een vuur in mijn lichaam. De mensen die hier woonden hadden allemaal dialogen. Het moest vooral ergens over gaan, maar ze kwamen er nergens mee. Ze leefden in een cirkeltje. Ik had ze al snel door. Toch was het allemaal erg verrijkend voor mij. Jurkjes hingen er aan de muur, vruchtjes lagen op schaaltjes, gezet op oventjes. ‘Is dit de weg naar de stad ?’ vroeg ik.

- Welke stad. Oh, de overstad.

Ik knikte. ‘Daar heb ik vaker over gehoord,’ zeiden ze. Ze lieten me ladders van touw zien. Ik klom en klom, dit huis was lang, als een herenhuis wat maar niet ophield. Mensen leefden hier als vogels. Ik wist niet waar ik moest kijken. ‘De parel van de tuin,’ zeiden ze, ‘is daar,’ en dan wezen ze omhoog. De ladder was glibberig, en ik gleed weg. In spiegels zag ik mezelf klimmen. Ik had weer het gevoel dat ik van de daken gleed, alsof ik het huis niet kon binnengaan. Tante Connie legde haar hand op mijn hoofd. Haar hand was gloeiend heet, of was mijn hoofd gloeiend heet. ‘Waarom ?’ vroeg ik. ‘Waarom is er hier geen doorkomen aan ?’ Tante Connie zei niks, zweeg als het graf. Ook de twee vrouwen zeiden niets. Het was als een schijnbaar open weg die dood liep. Een zwakte maakte zich van mij meester, en ik was gelijmd aan de grond. Met wilde maar beheerste ogen keek de dochter van de graaf naar mij, alsof ze een wild paard probeerde te temmen, met de koele zelfverzekerdheid dat dat haar aardig lukte. Even stond de tijd stil, en was het alsof zij de muziek van het moment perfect kon berijden. Als ze zou vallen zou ze aan draden verbonden zijn, als aan elastiek, zodat ze niet in de vlammen van het hellemeer zou vallen. Ik snakte naar adem. Ik hoorde haar ogen roepen. Toen greep ze me vast. ‘Ik laat je nooit meer los,’ zei ze. ‘Nooit meer.’ Even dacht ik dat ik thuis gekomen was. Ik probeerde me zo lang te maken als zij zich waardig voelde. ‘Wie ben jij eigenlijk ?’ vroeg ik.

De vrouw van het zolder liep terug naar de trap. In gedachten zweefde ik langs het huis, en de dochter van de graaf lag uitgestrekt op de daken. Wij konden dit huis niet binnenkomen. Wij waren in de tuin. Het zonlicht was aangenaam, en het was alsof we beiden smolten en naar beneden sijpelden, om in elkaar te versmelten ? Waren wij de vruchten van deze tuin ?

Hoofdstuk 2. De Sleutel

Tante Connie legt gouden bestek op de tafel voor het feestmaal. Oom Joop komt aan tafel zitten. Ik zit naast de dochter van de graaf. Ze houdt mijn hand vast. Tante Connie brengt dan de pan met het avondeten, en met een grote lepel laat ze het ploffen op onze borden. ‘Is zij van het zolder niet uitgenodigd ?’ vraag ik.

‘Ze heeft haar eigen,’ zegt tante Connie. Ik heb het gevoel dat ik wat mis, en ga na een tijdje naar het zolder. Ik voel me op en top. Ze ligt op bed, en staart door het raam. Ik ga bij haar zitten. Haar ogen kijken dwars door me heen, alsof ze me niet ziet. Als ik naar buiten kijk, zie ik haar weerspiegelingen daar, alsof ze uitgestrekt is over de daken, en langs de muren, als begroeiing. ‘Zoveel mensen kennen me niet,’ zegt ze. Dan staat ze op en geeft mij een bord. Het schijnt hier ook etenstijd te zijn. Ze schept op. We staren elkaar de hele tijd aan, en als ik dan later naar buiten staar is het al donker, en haar weerspiegelingen zijn als de lichten in de nacht, als woeste paarden over de daken. Ik hoor tante Connie beneden roepen. Het is tijd voor de nacht, maar ik wil niet slapen. Ik houd de hand vast van de vrouw van het zolder. Mijn hoofd voelt als een stad met huizen, grote huizen, hoge huizen, lange huizen, met bomen er tussen, met plaats voor de tuin. Het is alsof de vrouw van het zolder op mijn hersenen danst, en het doet pijn, en ik word al snel moe. Pudding voert ze me. Grote lange draden voel ik door mijn lichaam gaan, totdat ik het gevoel heb dat ik kan zweven. Haar bed is ineens zo dik en ver weg, haar kamer twee keer groter. Nee, naar buiten wil ik niet meer. Ik ben hier buiten. Zij is mijn wereld. Ik heb een kinderlijk geloof in haar.

Tante Connie laat me de schoonheid van het huis zien, van alle plekken, en ja, ik moet haar gelijk geven. Ze heeft een plaats in mij, alle dingen in dit huis hebben een plaats in mij. Ik heb ze nodig. Ik ben er bijna ziekelijk afhankelijk aan. Het is mijn levenswarmte. Maar toch voelt het alsof ik heen en weer gesleurd word. Ik heb nergens grip op, ik glijd telkens weg, dieper. Dit is een doodlopende weg, een fuik, van vuur. Ik zie ze het glas heffen. Zij zijn als de vlammen in mijn hoofd. Ik durf niet naar ze te kijken, want dan ga ik dood. Het zijn de hoofden van de Medusa. De mensen die hier wonen zijn net zo steen als dit huis, en iedereen die naar hen kijkt verandert in steen. Zo is het leven. Is dit de sleutel weg uit de tuin, of is dit de sleutel tot de tuin.

In de nacht danst de vrouw van de zolder als een zwaan, als een brandende struik. Ik probeer me om te draaien, maar ik kan niet. Deze dans is dodelijk, of misschien wel leidende naar de poort van de hel. Ik sta verstijfd. De uitsteeksels en aanhangsels van haar jurk raken mij. Ik kijk naar haar door mijn glas wijn. De poort brandt. Ik probeer me ergens aan vast te klampen, maar zonder success, totdat ik de stem van tante Connie hoor. Ik kan niet terugroepen. Iemand knijpt mijn keel dicht, maar ik heb geen verlangen om terug te roepen. Ik ben als een boom geworteld in de grond. Ik heb het geheim van Medusa gezien : Alleen met de ogen van wijn kunnen wij haar bekijken. Ze gilt en schreeuwt nu ik het geheim heb ontdek. Ik gooi de wijn in haar gezicht, want ze wil me verscheuren. Dan staat ze in vlammen, en het gehele huis brandt. Ik moet hier weg. Maar de trappen zijn hier van vuur. Alles is van vuur. Ik besluit te blijven. Medusa schijnt aardiger dan ik dacht. Haar hoofden leven hier in een vreemde vrede. Roofdieren bespringen mij en verscheuren mij, en mijn hart is blij. Het is mijn vuur, het is omringd door mijn hart. Ik heb mijn weg hier doorheen gebeten. Een huis met standbeelden. Het is als een brandend strand, en een brandend oog leidt mij uit, om dieper in te gaan. De brandweerman houdt mij stevig vast. Zijn jas is glibberig. En dan brandt hij ook.

Tante Connie doet alsof er niets gebeurt is en staart mij aan. ‘Nog wat koffie, jongen ?’ vraagt ze. Ik zeg niks. Tante Connie schenkt nog wat voor me in. Wie zwijgt stemt toe. Mijn oude bed in de kamer van de dochter van de graaf is versleten, scheuren in de matras, en de piano is vals. Maar niet minder mooi dan de gouden spulletjes van tante Connie. Als tante Connie lacht heb ik het gevoel dat ze op de daken fietst. Ik keek naar de vrouw van de zolder. Waren we niet net als Adam en Eva die door de brandende heg probeerden terug te keren naar het paradijs ? En was dit paradijs een mengsel tussen huizen en blote benen ? Ik keek naar de dochter van de graaf. Ik probeerde een weg door haar heen te graven. Maar ze hield alles tegen. Tante Connie dient de pudding op. Ik kan de borsten zien van de vrouw van het zolder, door haar doorzichtige jurk heen, en ze heeft haar jurk ook wel flink open. Haar borsten druipen nog, als de moederlijke fontein, maar er zijn geen babies. Ik besluit niets te eten. Hier kan ik niet tegen, en het is dodelijk. Als ik naar de dochter van de graaf kijk, dan zie ik hetzelfde tafereel. Het is onbeschoft tegen tante Connie om pudding te laten druipen terwijl zij pudding opdient. Ik kan oom Joop goed begrijpen dat hij zo ver mogelijk van de tafel afzit, als een bibberend hondje. Maar plotseling is het alsof de stoppen bij mij doorslaan. Ik voel me een baby, een hond zelfs, die gevoed moet worden. Wat een drama. Tante Connie ziet het aan mijn gezicht en raakt in paniek. Zelfs oom Joop staat op. Iedereen zit verstijfd. Ik begin met grote happen van de pudding te eten, zodat al snel mijn hele gezicht eronder zit. Oom Joop lacht mij uit. Dit is de tuin van spot. Waarom zijn Adam en Eva hier teruggekeert. Ook de twee vrouwen lachen mij uit, terwijl ze hun jurken nog meer open trekken. En dan smeren ze de pudding over hun lichaam heen en gaan op de tafel liggen. ‘Ik heb al brood gehad,’ zegt oom Joop. Ik kan hier niet tegen. Zelfs een hond wordt beter behandeld. Ik word er erg stil van, en ga bij oom Joop zitten. ‘Je weet hoe vrouwen zijn,’ zegt oom Joop.

‘Dodelijk is het,’ zeg ik. ‘We hebben niet zomaar met een stel hoofden te maken. Het zijn de hoofden van Medusa.’

‘Kijk naar hen door het glas wijn,’ zegt oom Joop. Tante Connie loopt naar de vrouwen toe, en giet wijn over hen heen. ‘Wat een vertoning,’ zeg ik. ‘Dit is toch niet meer normaal.’

‘Ik dacht ook dat ik naar een ander feestje was gegaan,’ zei oom Joop.

‘Kom op, nu weten we het wel,’ zeg ik. ‘Zo lopen we de fanfare niet. Moet je dat nou eens kijken, ze vervuilen die hele tafel.’

‘Nee hoor,’ zegt de dochter van de graaf. ‘Dit is de oerbron, de big bang.’

‘Als je je maar niet verroert,’ schreeuwt tante Connie. ‘We gaan hier geen polonaise in de kamer houden, al mijn spulletjes worden vies. Is er nog respect in dit land ?’

‘Likken, bloedvriend,’ zegt de vrouw van het zolder tegen haar wederhelft. ‘Alsof je leven er vanaf hangt.’

‘Als jullie niet eten wat de pot schaft,’ zegt tante Connie, ‘dan sodemieteren jullie maar op.’

‘We vonden het eten heerlijk,’ zei de vrouw van het zolder, ‘maar we hebben onze eigen toetjes meegenomen.’

‘Contractbreuk,’ zegt tante Connie. ‘Dat hadden we niet afgesproken zo, en voor half geld komen jullie er echt niet langs. Ik voel me door jullie verschrikkelijk door de tang genomen, als je dat maar weet. Ik heb nog wat blokken hout nodig voor het tuinvuur.’

‘Ik dacht anders dat Adam wel tegen een grapje kon,’ zei de vrouw van het zolder, ‘maar mijnheer loopt daar in het hoekje te kniezen.’

‘Oh, toe maar, geef mij maar weer de schuld,’ zei ik. ‘Het is nu oorlog.’ Ineens stormden de vrouwen op mij af, en peperden mij in met pudding, en trokken me op de tafel. ‘Dit is nog eens een kersttoetje, een vijf-gangen toetje is aan ons welbesteed,’ zei de vrouw van het zolder. Ik was woedend. ‘Als ik ooit loskom, dan zul je wat beleven,’ riep ik.

Het was alsof alle machines ineens stilstonden. We staarden elkaar allemaal aan, maar deden niets. ‘Ode aan de kok,’ zei de dochter van de graaf. Na een tijdje lagen we in het bad, en het was nog gezellig ook. Het was als een lange brandende dag aan het strand. Ik was moe, ik had mijn portie wel gehad. Het was een vreemde gewaarwording dat roosjes zo konden zijn. Ik zou vanaf nu veel meer op mijn hoede zijn. Dit mocht niet nog een keer gebeuren. Tante Connie zou het niet overleven. Er groeiden sinds die dag struiken op het behang, die ervoor zouden moeten zorgen dat deze dingen nooit meer zouden gebeuren. Tante Connie was het goed zat, en huurde bewakers in, die een oogje in het zeil zouden houden. Ook liet ze overal cameras planten. We voelden ons vanaf die dag in ons huis bekeken. Maar de volgende keer dat we aan tafel zaten schoten bij mij weer de stoppen door. Ik verlangde zo naar de oermoeder, dat ik boven op de vrouw van het zolder klom, de stoel brak, en we vielen beiden op de grond. Een wachter schoot een pijl door mijn hoofd, net op tijd, en ik werd aan de muur gespietst. ‘Geef hem melk,’ zei tante Connie rustig. ‘Jullie moeten niet zo paniekerig doen.’

Pudding droop uit de borst van de vrouw van het zolder. Ik kon me niet bewegen. ‘Eerste hulp bij ongelukken,’ zei tante Connie. ‘Hij is dood, hij heeft een pijl dwars door z’n kop. Geef hem de melk des levens, stelletje koeien. Nou, waar wachten jullie op.’

‘Hij hangt te hoog, tante,’ zeiden de vrouwen.

- Nou dan spuit je maar. Druk de knopjes maar goed in.

‘Nee, hij is dood. Hij heeft Medusa gezien, en wie van haar melk drinkt gaat naar de hel.’

- Ik ben niet gelovig, stop met die onzin.

‘God, zelfs als je de tepels van Medusa ziet ben je al overgeleverd aan de vlammen van de hel, en haar duistere hulpjes.’

- Ja, die ken ik, rijden die hier niet de hele tijd rond ? Medusa is al openlijk te kijk gezet, je hoeft het knopje van de tv maar aan te draaien.

‘Arme jongens.’

Ik kon naar de melk fluiten. De dames gingen ieder hun eigen kant op. Ik was in de tuin der wreedheden, ik was op sterven na de dood met die pijl in m’n kop. Oom Joop was behulpzaam en trok de pijl uit mijn hoofd. Maar dat deed nog veel meer pijn, dus ik drukte hem er weer in. Even later klopte ik bij de vrouwen aan de deur, maar ze deden niet open. Ik sliep die nacht bij tante Connie en oom Joop in de huiskamer. De dag erna zaten ze allemaal aan tafel alsof er niets was gebeurd. ‘Zo, de meer dan dodelijke borsten van Medusa zijn ook weer van de partij,’ zei ik. De vrouwen zeiden niets. Ze aten gulzig en verslikten zich een paar keer. Het ging zoals gewoonlijk weer nergens over. ‘Leuk,’ zei ik. ‘We zitten hier aan tafel met vergif. Killers.’

‘Houd je mond,’ zei tante Connie. ‘Jij bent ook niet een van de braafsten.’ Plotseling stonden de vrouwen als een vrouw op, als Medusa, en de muren om ons heen begonnen te branden.

‘Zie,’ riep tante Connie. ‘Ik wist het. Medusa is gekomen om wraak te nemen. Ren voor je leven.’ Oom Joop gooide een deken om ons heen, en trok ons naar zijn kant. Hij was de slimste geweest want sinds de dames hier aten zat hij bijna nooit meer aan tafel. Een golf van geweld sloeg ons neer. Maar oom Joop gedroeg zich als een duivel, en dat moest wel, anders had hij niks bij Medusa in de pap te brokkelen. Ik heb oom Joop nog nooit zo te keer zien gaan. Al snel stond Medusa buiten het raam. ‘Ik wist wel dat die wijven een grote pot met vergif waren,’ zei hij. Ik had nog nooit zo’n groot machts-spel gezien. Ik trilde als een hondje. Oom Joop was een held.

Omdat Medusa ons bleef bezoeken kregen we een ander huis in een andere straat. Er groeiden hier zogenaamde borsten-struiken die vruchten hadden als tepels waaruit een sap voortkwam wat bestand was tegen het borstgif van Medusa. We konden zelfs hierdoor Medusa genezen van haarzelf. De vloek was al snel verbroken. Er hoefde verder geen apocalypse aan te pas te komen. Onze vriendschappen werden hersteld, en al snel leefden we hier weer met elkaar. Alles was veilig nu. We hadden onze condomen-boom gevonden.

Een vrouw leefde tussen de verdiepingen in, een vrouw in mijn hoofd, onderdrukt door de hedendaagse maatschappij, een deel gesloten door de hersenen. Medusa was de oorlogsgodin, weggepest door een maatschappij van valse vrede. Een vreemde vrede bracht haar terug. Zij kende de tuin van spot ook. Ze had die zelf gemaakt. Ook kende ze de tuin van edelheden en wreedheden, op maat gesneden. Ze had zich een weg door die tuin gebaand, terug naar het paradijs. Ze ontmoette haar Adam in de lucht, en leidde ook hem terug. Door de brandende heg gingen zij, en helemaal opgebrand kwamen zij aan. Heel snel kwamen zij erachter dat zij een cirkeltje hadden gelopen. Zo slaan dan al snel de stoppen door, en vinden ze de liefde in zichzelf, die na korte tijd niets dan haat blijkt te zijn. Het is alles niet wat het lijkt. Ik kreeg een fatalistische, nihilistische kijk op het leven door deze dingen. We waren weer terug bij af. Heel wat dromen waren kapot gesprongen, en we begonnen ons oude huis te missen, maar daar woonde een nieuwe familie in.

Waar we dan ook naartoe gaan, het is altijd hetzelfde. Laten we daarom naarbinnen keren, en elkaar daar vinden, of hele andere personen die eindelijk onze dromen kunnen waarmaken, maar dit is slechts ijdelheid, illusie. We jagen lucht achterna, iedereen weet het, maar we blijven proberen. We blijven happen naar de koek die voor ons wordt gehangen. We zijn geconditioneerd, slaven, hondjes van Pavlov. Alles is hier misleiding op misleiding. Ik begon een pessimist te worden, zwaar somber. Ik wilde niemand valse hoop geven, niemand voorliegen. We liepen de leugen achterna omdat er geen waarheid was, of was de waarheid gewoon in een heel klein hoekje ergens, daar waar we het onmogelijk zouden kunnen vinden ? Maar alle dingen zijn toch mogelijk voor hen die geloven. En zo ging ik geloven. Niet in het kerkelijk geloof, maar in die vrouwen hier met hun gekke spelletjes. Misschien dat de grootste leugen ook diep in haar de waarheid droeg. Ik had kans, want ik had een pijl door mijn hoofd. Denken was fataal. Het moest van een andere kant komen. Maar ik merkte al snel dat die vrouwen een gesloten boek waren. Ik kwam er niet ver mee. En ik wilde toch ergens in geloven. Een grote trots was er, ergens diep binnenin. Iets wat mij over het ravijn kon laten zweven, iets wat ik niet kon beschrijven, een mystiek gevoel. Oom Joop zei altijd dat een

boek ons erdoor zou helpen, maar hij wist niet welk boek. Een popperige papieren kermis leek het. Tante Connie had een pop in een schoenendoos verborgen, een pop waarin ze heilig geloofde dat deze ons allen redden zou. Vaak sta ik op het balkon en voel me tussen de huizen, tussen de bomen, tussen de rivieren, overal tussen.

Het is een wonder dat ik nog leef met die pijl door mijn hoofd. Op een dag voel ik me door het gevoel dat die pijl in mijn hoofd geeft zo in de wolken, zo extatisch, dat ik merk dat ik kan vliegen. Heel voorzichtig vlieg ik van het balkon, tussen de huizen door. Mensen vallen flauw achter de ramen. ‘Bedrieger,’ roept er iemand. Ik kan er niet mee zitten. Ook al zou het bedrog zijn, ik heb er een goede tijd mee. Ik vlieg naar de top van het hoogste huis in de buurt. Als ik naar beneden kijk is alles wit. Ook het hoge platte horizontale dak waarop ik sta. Ik ruik bosgeuren. Dan vlieg ik over de stad. Wat als ik dit alles zou kunnen ontsnappen. Ik besluit naar de volgende stad te vliegen, daar waar de fabrieks-wolken zijn. Ik houd van de rook. Ik hoop dat we er allemaal in verzuipen. Dat is beter dan wat we hadden. We hebben niets te verliezen. Maar dan roep ik mezelf tot orde. Er staan wat meiden voor een raam. Ze kijken verwonderd. Ik zwaai naar ze. Ze wenken me. Een van hen opent het raam, en ik vlieg naar binnen. ‘Kijk, die kan vliegen,’ zegt er een. ‘Een truc,’ zeg ik. ‘Leer het me,’ zegt een van de meiden. Ik vertel hen over de pijl in mijn kop. Ze giechelen een beetje. Al snel hangen ze aan me. ‘Mag ik in jullie geloven,’ vraag ik. ‘Ik wil ergens in geloven.’

- Wij geloven in de dominee.

‘Okay, maar dat is niet wat. Kan ik in jullie geloven ?’

- Ik weet niet of ik daartoe bevoegd ben.

‘Ik geloof in je.’

- Wat moet ik nu doen ?

‘Vlieg met me mee.’

- Ja, maar ik kan niet vliegen. Waarom blijf je niet gewoon hier. We hebben het hier erg naar onze zin.

‘Okay.’

Ik bleef bij ze staan, en ze trokken me aan tafel. Ik moet zeggen ze waren een stuk netter dan de vrouwen die ik kende, de Medusa-vrouwen. Ze aten deftig, met mes en vork, geen geklieder. Ik staarde naar buiten, allemaal rook. Ik kon niet veel zien. Ze sliepen allemaal in de huiskamer op matrassen. Ik kreeg ook een matras. Ik sliep al snel. Ik merkte al snel dat ik in mezelf aan het bidden was tot hen. Ik was op zoek naar een geloof. De volgende dag namen ze mij mee naar de kerk. Ik moet zeggen dat het mij aardig beviel. De dominee was erg aardig. Hij had ook wel wijze dingen te zeggen, en liep voortdurend met zijn sleutels te rinkelen. Had hij misschien de sleutels om Medusa te openen ? Na de kerkdienst liep ik op hem af om het hem te vragen. Zonder nadenken nam hij een sleutel van zijn sleutelhanger af en gaf het aan mij. ‘Probeer het maar uit,’ zei hij. Maar eigenlijk wilde ik hier niet meer weg. Deze mensen waren geweldig. Weer ging ik met de meiden mee naar hun huis. Omdat ik heel veel aan Medusa dacht, ben ik even later toch teruggegaan naar mijn eigen stad en huis. Ik begon direkt aan de Medusa-vrouwen te sleutelen. En het werkte, tot mijn eigen verbazing. Voor het eerst had ik het gevoel dat ik met hen ergens kwam. Alsof we de boom des levens hadden bereikt. We dronken koffie op het resultaat. Ik wilde de dominee bedanken, en vloog terug naar de andere stad. De meiden waren blij me weer te zien, en samen gingen we naar het huis van de dominee. De dominee was net zijn huis aan het schilderen. Na het bedankje nam ik afscheid van de meiden, en ging weer terug naar mijn eigen huis. Ik had Medusa verlost uit haar kooi.

Hoofdstuk 3. De Gespleten Aarde

De meiden hebben al snel ons huis gevonden, en de dominee ook. Ze waren met de dominee meegereden. De sleutel had namelijk een zendertje van binnen. Natuurlijk waren ze van harte welkom, maar de Medusa-vrouwen werden snel jaloers. Daar wist de dominee wel wat op, want die had veel meer sleutels. Wat me opviel was dat alles snel verstijfde. Alsof de sleutels veel openden, maar tegelijkertijd viel er ook zoveel dicht. We kregen het idee dat er een vloek op de sleutel lag. De dominee was niet overtuigd, want die geloofde heilig in zijn sleutels. Omdat hij zich steeds arroganter opstelde heeft tante Connie hem even later het huis uitgezet. Ik bewaarde de sleutels sindsdien. Die waren veel te gevaarlijk in de handen van een dominee. De meiden aanbaden inmiddels Medusa aan haar voeten. De dominee was woedend en noemde hen afgodendienaars. Ze waren niet meer welkom in zijn stad. Het bleek dat hij ook nog eens de burgemeester was. Medusa begon trouwens door deze aanbidding ook steeds meer te eisen. Haar voeten moesten gekust worden, anders zou ze alles vertrappen. Ik had allang spijt dat ik haar had verlost, maar het kwam allemaal door die sleutels. Op een gegeven moment was ik het zo zat dat ik de sleutels inslikte. Maar sindsdien ging het niet goed met mij. Ik begon zelf een Medusa te worden. Wie had dat ooit durven dromen dat ik ooit de god der wrake zou worden. Het liep uit op een gevecht met de andere Medusa om de macht. De Medusa begon een gevaarlijk mechanisme te worden. Voordat het nog erger zou worden besloot ik een volgende vliegtocht te beginnen. Ditmaal kwam ik in een andere stad met de

hoogste gebouwen. Een oud vrouwtje deed haar raam open, en nodigde mij uit. Toen ik haar het verhaal over de sleutels vertelde scheen ze mij te kunnen helpen. Zij was namelijk een heks. Ik moest een bepaald kruidendrankje drinken, en dan zou ik de sleutels kunnen uitspuwen, en dan zou zij de sleutels omsmelten. Maar alles pakte anders uit. Het kruidendrankje werkte niet. Ik had de krachten van Medusa. Ik was immuun tegen hekserij. Ik moest onder ogen komen dat ik in een monster aan het veranderen was.

Ik strompelde naar de uitgang van deze tuin. Ik had het in zicht nu, en greep naar mijn buik. Ook al verdween de uitgang en de buitenste heg in het niets, en leek het alsof het verder van me af begon te liggen, ik liep toch door. Ik greep om me heen als tastende in het donker. Ik greep het touw mij toegeworpen. Een vriendelijk vrouwengezicht keek me aan. Rozensappen dropen in een fles. Ik hoorde gegorgel en gezang. Bloedende tuinen, zover het oog reikt, vermengd met regen, waar het oog van Medusa over waakt. Het koren dat het goud omhoog haalt, het licht der sterren weerkaatsende, haar vrucht wordt vastgehouden. Medusa waakt. Het houten huis kraakt onder het getal van de lelies. Hier heeft ze haar woning. Hier voedt zij haar raadsel, haar mysterie, waar prinsen op paarden al eeuwen naar zoeken. Nee, zij zullen niet vinden, want Medusa waakt over haar geheim. Haar kroning was een bespotting. Haar lijden was een ontmaskering, maar niemand is ooit tot haar parel gekomen, niemand heeft ooit haar zwaard gedragen. Allen sterven zij door een blik op haar te slaan. Tot steen werden zij in alle eeuwigheden. Haar discipel is zoek, haar beker verloren. Zij heeft haarzelf nog nooit gezien. Zou zij het weten, dan zou zij sterven, daarom weet zij maar half. De rozengrachten hier zijn vol met parels. De mensen hier weten dat Medusa een geheim heeft, alleen ze kennen het niet. Ze hebben er alleen een glimp van opgevangen, en die glimp heeft hen voor altijd verblind.

Ik zit op mijn houten paard, mij hobbelpaard van vroeger, met mijn lange speer, mijn lans. ‘Open de poort,’ roep ik, maar alles zwijgt. Ik vlieg hoog, over de muur heen, maar hier is niks. De aarde is dus toch plat. Is dit het onverbiddelijke geheim van Medusa ? Ik stort hier uit alles wat ik nog in mijn hoofd heb, alle puinhopen, alles gaargebraden, en kijk in de enorme diepte. Nee, het is een ravijn. De aarde is gespleten. Een groot werk moet dat geweest zijn, met de schaar des hemels. Daar aan de overkant weten de mensen niet dat ze niet weten. Ik vlieg weer terug, en omhels mijn Medusa, en mijn meiden. ‘Ik ben aan de andere kant van de schaar geweest,’ zei ik. ‘Daar moeten we ook niet wezen. Vernietig alle spiegels. We staren wel in een glas wijn, met wijn van borsten-struiken.’ Ik strek mij uit. Ze zijn blij dat ik terug ben. Ik solliciteer bij de zeevaart. Ik waarschuw hen dat de aarde wel degelijk plat is, en dat verklaart ook waarom er zoveel schepen zijn gebleven. Ik word er kapitein. Als ik thuis ben speelt oom Joop vaak op het orgel. Maar ik ben niet veel thuis. Ik moet de zee afbakenen. Een hoge rand moet er gemaakt worden, waar niemand meer overheen kan tuimelen. Medusa is als een moeder die haar kinderen terugroept. Zij heeft de tuin gebouwd, en haar muren, en die moeten we eren, omdat het buiten veel erger is. Er is geen paradijs aan de andere kant van de heg, maar de heg spreekt tot de verbeelding. Ik zie nog meer paradijs in een pot pindakaas. Als ik thuis ben zijn de vrouwen blij, dan is het feest, maar een paradijs zal het nooit zijn, en hebben we dat wel nodig. We hebben toch elkaar.

Op een dag ga ik met de meiden voetballen op het pleintje. Via een tunnel komen we in een ander deel van de stad, in een winkelstraat. We slenteren door de straten. Ik neem hen mee naar de bakker, en koop wat special brood voor hen. Brood kan mij nooit te luxe zijn. Het is een levensnoodzaak. Bij de speelgoedwinkel wanen ze zich in het paradijs. Bij het tuinhek laten we alle zorgen achter ons. Voor de chocolade-winkel danst de vrouw van chocolade. Ze roept herinneringen bij me op, ze danst als een zwaan. We gaan de stoffige winkel binnen. Een grote notenkraker-eekhoorn staart ons aan. ‘Ja,’ zegt de winkelier, ‘veel noten altijd in de chocolade, we hebben een verdrag met de noten-industrie. We kregen dit beeld van hen, toch aardig, vindt u niet.’ Ik knikte. De meiden keken de man vriendelijk aan. We konden aan hem zien dat hij er blij van werd. ‘Ik zal u vertellen, ik ben mijn vrouw verloren,’ zei de winkelier. ‘Ik mis haar echt, en er is nu een zee van ruimte boven, want ze had zoveel spullen en die zijn allemaal in haar graf meegegaan. Komt u maar even mee, dan laat ik het u zien.’ Boven stond alles leeg. Ik staarde naar buiten, waar de chocolade-vrouw nog steeds danste. Ze was een zwerfster, en werd zo altijd genoemd.

Grote poppen van chocolade stonden in kasten. De man deed er erg zakelijk over, en kraste wat op papieren. Even later stonden we weer op straat. Aan het eind van de straat was een fontein. We zagen tante Connie lopen met een zware tas. ‘Tante Connie,’ riep ik. Ze had koffie gekocht, in allerlei soorten. Samen liepen we naar huis. Ik hielp haar de tas te dragen, en de meiden hielden ook wat spullen vast. Medusa wachtte ons op.

Roze

Zwanen

Hoofdstuk 1. Het Zwaard Van Calvijn

De vlaggen hingen uit buiten. Hij zat in zijn zitstoel, zijn vrouw was in de keuken. Hij had net het gras weer eens gemaait, wat hij wekelijks deed. Hij staarde naar buiten, naar de begroeiing op de muur. De metalen platen zaten er goed vast tegenaan, en daar groeiden de planten omheen. Dat kon hem niet wild genoeg zijn. Hij was altijd al geinteresseerd geweest in

tuinieren, en hij had dan ook echt zijn eigen stijl, vurig, wild, maar ook piekfijn geordend. Het was een samenspel tussen natuur en mens. Hij had vroeger altijd bij de politie gewerkt, en daar ging het er eigenlijk hetzelfde aan toe : de buurt was wild, en de politie bracht orde, en zo was er een prachtig samenspel, heen en weer. De politie mocht volgens hem de soep niet te heet opdienen, en zo liet hij dan ook de natuur in zijn tuin een zekere vrijheid hebben. Wel hield hij alles goed in de gaten. Hij had een zekere strengheid als hij naar zijn tuin keek. Zijn vrouw kwam de huiskamer binnen met de koffie. Ze zeiden niks tegen elkaar. Het zonlicht golfde de kamer binnen toen zijn vrouw het gordijn iets verder opendeed. Beiden staarden ze naar buiten, de tuin in. De sproeier stond aan, het was een warme dag. Aan de dag scheen geen einde te komen. Zijn vrouw was aan het breien, en hij staarde maar. Geen woord werd er gezegd. Het leek wel alsof zijn denken vastzat. Hij hoorde het getik van de brei-pennen van zijn vrouw. Het leek wel alsof ze heel ver weg zat. Of kwam dat door de vele spullen die er tussenstonden. De tegels op de grond glansten in het zonlicht, maar ze werden er niet bruiner op. Het was een harde vloer. Je zou makkelijk wat kunnen breken als je erop viel. Er lagen ook wat tapijtjes in de grote huiskamer. Ze hadden een groot huis, een alleenstaand huis. Ook het fonteintje in de vijver stond aan. Hij worstelde zichzelf door de dag. Hij verveelde zich, maar wist niet wat hij moest doen. Hij bleef het tikken van de brei-pennen van zijn vrouw maar horen. Kinderen hadden ze niet, nee, ze waren tamelijk eenzaam. De man stond op en liep naar de kast, waar hij een fles sterke drank uittrok, en gaf zijn vrouw ook wat. Ze hielden wel van een borrel. Dat was goed voor het bloed, en dat hielp hen op de been. Eigenlijk leken ze in hun leven niet meer verder te komen. Ze waren in een nauw cirkeltje terecht gekomen, en gingen bergafwaarts. Ze leefden geisoleerd. Er was nauwelijks contact met de buitenwereld, en daar hadden ze ook geen behoefte aan. De tuin was alles voor hen, en hun woning. Zijn vrouw was vroeger arts geweest, voornamelijk kinderarts, maar moest later stoppen vanwege haar alcoholisme. Nu had ze het veel beter onder controle. Haar man hield de wacht over haar, maar liet haar nog wel genieten van een borreltje op zijn tijd. Toch waren de twee erg zwaarmoedig en hielden er een kerkelijk leven op na. De kerk was alles voor hen, voornamelijk op de zondag. Een grote bijbel lag naast de openhaard. Het geloof in God gaf hen rust, als een oase in de woestijn van hun ouderdom.

Op zondag na de kerkdienst fietsten ze samen naar huis. Het was warm weer. Maar al snel zaten ze weer in hun oude positie. Hij had niet veel behoefte om dingen te gaan doen, ook al verveelde hij zich. Hij trok zich op aan de structuur van zijn tuin en zijn huis, wat hij streng in de gaten hield. Het was als het werken in de tempel, alsof hij in de kerk woonde. Hij voelde zich een nauwlettende koster, en dat was hij vroeger ook geweest. Veel was hij bezig met zijn herinneringen, die hem ook half depressief maakten. Een heleboel dingen zou hij terugwillen, maar ze waren onbereikbaar. Het was een treurig stel, en velen zouden hen saai noemen. Als ze kleinkinderen zouden hebben, dan zouden die hier geen leven hebben. In zijn gedachten was hij altijd de tuin en het huis aan het maaien. De gelakte spulletjes waren als hun huisdieren. Maar het ging niet zo goed met zijn vrouw. Ze was aan het dementeren, en dat riep ook wel heel veel herinneringen bij hem op. Op een gegeven moment kon ze niet langer in huis blijven, en moest ze naar een verzorgings-tehuis. Hij kon dat moeilijk accepteren, maar hij had geen andere keus. Hij voelde zich al als een weduwenaar. Het was als een trauma in zijn hoofd, maar het kerkelijk leven beurde hem op. Hij wist dat zijn vrouw een verloren zaak was. Ook de tuin gaf hem rust. De maaiers in zijn hoofd waren nu als van vuur, als grillen. Hij had nu het gevoel dat hij de touwtjes nog strakker moest trekken. Nog steeds stonden de protserige spulletjes van zijn vrouw hier, de beeldjes, de hebbedingetjes, het antiek, en het gaf hem een gevoel van verbinding met haar. Aan de telefoon kon hij niet meer

met haar praten, en ze wist nog nauwelijks wie hij was. Ze was aan het aftakelen tot aan het bot.

Hij ging meer en meer drinken, om het verdriet over zijn vrouw te vergeten, en bezocht kroegen voor het eerst in zijn leven. Het huis en de tuin werden wilder, omdat hij het onderhoud niet meer kon bijhouden, en het was voor hem ook geen prioriteit meer. Hij raakte verslaafd aan de fles, zoals zijn vrouw eens was. Hij kwam in het rijk der schimmen. De alcohol bracht hem een felle stem in zijn hoofd. Met het vele geld dat hij had schafte hij een bar aan in zijn eigen huis, helemaal voor hemzelf. Ook ontving hij vrouwen van lichte zeden aan huis. Maar deze tijden liepen snel ten einde, door het knagend kerkelijk geweten binnenin. De God in zijn hoofd sleepte hem naar het graf, en sprak hem ernstig toe. Hij probeerde zo min mogelijk na te denken, en weer begon het vele staren. Hij was zelf ook door maaiers omringd, de gouden maaiers van de kerk. Zij zouden hem veilig leiden tot aan het graf en tot de hemelpoort. De bijbel scheen hem weer nieuwe kracht te geven, en hij las er veel in, en spoedig begon hij ook zijn tuin en huis te onderhouden als nooit tevoren. Ook koken ging hem goed af, ook al waren het alleen maar de standaard-gerechten. Maar het was alsof iets hem van binnen aanvrat, alsof er een spin in hem leefde. Wat als hij niet een uitverkorene was van de God die hij diende ? Het zwaard van Calvijn sneed diep in zijn ziel. Hoe meer hij de bijbel las, hoe meer hij ook de duistere andere kant van het verhaal zag. Vooral na zijn wilde uitstapjes begon hij de hel meer te vrezen dan ooit. Misschien was de God die hij diende wel helemaal niet zo tevreden over hem. En velen waren geroepen, maar weinig uitverkoren. Hij kwam in de eerstegrote geloofs-strijd van zijn leven, en lijstjes over wie er allemaal niet het koninkrijk des hemels zouden beerven bleven hem kwellen tot diep in de nacht. Het was alsof hij door duiveltjes was gebonden. Misschien ging hij er iets te hypnotisch mee om, maar hij kon er niet van loskomen, totdat ook bij hem Alzheimer toesloeg.

Hij wist niet meer wat de bijbel was. Hij kon er uren naar staren, naar het kaft, maar wist het niet meer. Was het het dagboek van zijn vrouw ? Of het wetboek van de politie, was het pornografisch ? Was het onzedelijkheid ? Een enorme woede maakte zich van hem meester. Hij kon het zich niet meer herinneren. Wel wist hij dat het altijd heel belangrijk voor hem was. Was het een erfenis van zijn vader ? Waren het de liefdesbrieven van meisjes die hij in zijn jonge jaren kreeg ? Was het grootmoeders kookboek ? Een uitgelopen folder van de jehovah’s getuigen ? Een boek van een ons onbekende religie ? Was het een geschiedenis boek. Het zweet steeg hem naar het hoofd. Hij was bijna aan het klappertanden, aan het beven als een jong hondje. Was het een toverboek ? Nee, toverboeken bestonden niet. Een verzameling niet betaalde rekeningen ? Misschien was het van zijn vrouw ? Hij besloot het boek weer neer te leggen. In de kerk kwam hij niet meer. Hij voelde zich als levende achter tralies. Hij wist niet meer wie hij was. Hij werd als een wild dier.

Hij kon uren staren naar dingen, om zich af te vragen wat het was. Hij was de grip op de werkelijkheid kwijt. Het maakte hem kwaad, dat zijn hersenen hem in de steek lieten. Maar aan de andere kant kwam hij erg tot rust. Het leven was hier zwoel. Hij voelde zichzelf als levende op een tropisch eiland, badend in het warme zeewater. Het normale leven drong niet meer tot hem door, en waarom zou dat moeten ? Hij snapte de kaartjes die hij kreeg niet. Hij

dacht dat het kokosnoten waren, of dat het herfst was. Weer wat blaadjes die van de bomen zijn gevallen. Soms probeerde hij ze op te eten, soms hing hij ze aan de muur. Sommige van die kaarten waren prachtig. Op een dag besloot hij zijn hele huis rood te verven, maar toen hem dat niet beviel verfde hij alles bruin. Het stond nog niet eens zo gek. Hij had wel stijl. Hij probeerde af te rekenen met het verleden wat hij maar niet begreep. Hij noemde zichzelf 'baas van de hel'. Ook dacht hij dat hij Calvijn was, maar hij wist niet meer wat Calvijn voorstelde. Hij droeg zijn oude politie-pak weer en was nu baas van de politie, iets wat hij overigens altijd al had willen zijn. Op een dag had hij even een flits in zijn hoofd. 'Had Calvijn niet de bijbel geschreven ? Dit is mijn boek. Mijn agenda. Hierin staat wat er moet gebeuren.' Hij greep de bijbel en liep ermee rond. Hij riep en schold, alsof hij een dictator was. Maar hij raakte in de war van zichzelf en plofte op de bank. Toen ging hij maar weer de tuin instaren. Hij werd er stil van.

In zijn hoofd regende het, en na een tijdje werd hij bedlegerig. Vreemde gezichten zag hij in zijn gedachten, die dan allemaal weer vermengd werden. Hij kon zich niets meer herinneren. Ondanks zijn ziekte had hij een goede tijd. In zijn gedachten waren bomen personen en konden spreken, en hij voerde lange gesprekken met hen. Hij betuttelde hen, omdat hij nu eens eindelijk zijn onderdrukte vader gevoel kon manifesteren. De bomen in zijn hoofd waren als zijn kinderen. 'Jullie zijn de vrucht van mijn tuin,' zei hij altijd. 'Dan is het allemaal toch niet voor niets geweest.' De bomen in zijn hoofd gaven hem zijn geheugen weer een beetje terug, maar op een hele andere manier, met een hele andere kijk op het leven. Maar de bomen in zijn hoofd begonnen te rotten en stierven. Het was een hevig gevecht, want hij beschouwde hen als zijn kinderen. Hij werd weer geconfronteerd met de dorheid van het bestaan, hij nam het stof waar, om hem heen. 'Alles is een bende,' zei hij. Het was een traumatische ervaring zijn kinderen te moeten verliezen. Er was een begrafenis-stemming in zijn hoofd. Maar bloesem scheen voort te komen uit het dode hout, vrouwen. 'Mijn kinderen zijn gestorven,' zei hij. 'Hebben jullie hen niet kunnen redden ?' Maar de vrouwen zeiden niks. Ze waren naakt. 'Toe, trek wat aan,' zei hij. 'Anders sterven jullie zo van de kou.'

'Wij gaan niet dood,' zeiden de vrouwen. 'Wij zijn de vlammetjes van het eeuwig leven. En wij gaan u weer jong maken.'

'Oh, de bron van de eeuwige jeugd,' zei de man. 'Zo, zo.' Maar de man werd steeds zieker. Zijn gedachten kwamen vast te zitten, en hij waande zich in de woestijn. Hij had niet eens de kracht een raam open te zetten. Er kwam een verzorgster langs, elke dag. Die moest dat maar doen. Ze wilden hem eigenlijk naar een verpleeghuis verplaatsen, maar hij wilde zijn huis niet kwijt. Zijn huis en zijn tuin, dat was alles voor hem, zijn tempel. 'De goden hebben mij hier gebracht,' zei hij.

'U bent een kind van de goden ?' vroeg de verzorgster.

'Ja,' zei hij triomfantelijk, 'of hun vader.' De verzorgster las hem vaak voor uit de bijbel, maar hij begreep er niet veel van. Hij zag er hele andere dingen in, en het raakte hem niet meer. 'Wat een mooi sprookjesboek,' zei hij altijd. 'Het schuift maar, en het doet maar, en het komt maar nooit aan in mijn hart, maar het is een mooi gezicht, dat wel.'

'Je bent zo mooi als mijn vrouw eens was,' zei de man op een dag tegen de verzorgster. 'Mijn vrouw was als een tuin, vol wonderlijke geheimen, en toen ik dacht, nu wil ik eindelijk dat geheim weten, toen ging ze weg. Ze werd van mij weggetrokken, naar een verpleeghuis. Maar ik had het boek nog niet uitgelezen.'

'Veel dingen zullen nooit afkomen,' zei de verzorgster. 'Er is niet voor alles tijd.'

'Is dat niet sneu ?' vroeg de man. 'Of misschien hoort het zo. Weet je hoe ik het bekijk, ik denk dat het verhaal in een ander boek verder gaat.'

De verzorgster knikt. De kamer was vol met de geur van de tuin, gloeiende rozenblaadjes, gloeiend in de zon, bijna schroeiend. Het leek alsof ze van binnen bloedden. 'We zijn soldaten in de oorlog,' zei de man. 'We moeten ons pad zien te vinden. Zovelen weten niet wat hen te wachten staat, als ze dieper in de tuin van het leven komen. Alles sterft hier af.' De verzorgster knikt weer. 'Ja, we moeten op die andere frequentie zien te komen,' zegt ze. 'Want deze loopt dood. Het is een overgang, je voelt de stromen van de bloemen door de lucht heengaan om het pad voor ons te banen. Voelt u dat ?'

'Ja,' zegt de man. 'De bloemen weten meer dan wij. Dat is waarom ik altijd van tuinen heb gehouden. Er zijn daar geheime gangen. Zij kunnen leiden tot de hemel.' Midden in de nacht groef de man zich in in de grond. 'Ik wil een bloem worden,' zei hij. Het was tijd dat hij een plaats kreeg in het verpleeghuis. Hij had het niet meer in de gaten, dat dit niet zijn eigen huis was. Hij was zich niet echt bewust van de overgang. En de verzorgster zocht hem nog vaak op, en er was een prachtige tuin, nog wel prachtiger dan zijn eigen tuin ooit was geweest. 'Wat is mijn tuin toch prachtig geworden,' zei hij trots. En als andere mensen over de schoonheid van de tuin spraken, dan zei hij altijd : 'Ja, ik heb er hard aan gewerkt. Het is niet voor niets geweest, al die lange jaren.' Ook het huis zag er pico bello uit, en hij voelde zich als een koning. In het verpleeghuis werden ook kerkdiensten gehouden, maar hij zei altijd tegen de predikant dat hij de politie was. Hij begreep de werkelijke strekking van het verhaal niet meer. Mensen vonden het altijd een beetje vreemd als hij over zijn kinderen, de goden, sprak. Veel van de mensen daar waren toch wel diep gelovig. Hij kon verschrikkelijk opscheppen, en vaak had hij het hoogste woord. Over zijn vrouw die de hemelpoort zou zijn, en dat iedereen zijn vrouw moest aanbidden om in de hemel te kunnen komen. Maar eigenlijk wist hij niet goed meer wat de hemel was. Eens stapte hij op een andere man af met zijn glas, wees in het glas en zei : 'Zie, daar is de hemel.' En sommige mensjes waren erg goedgelovig.

Op een dag moest en zou hij preken. Hij duwde bijna de predikant weg van zijn plaats, ging staan en zei : ‘Geliefde broeders en zusters, wij, de goden, hebben vandaag besloten u op deze manier toe te spreken. U bent aangekomen in de hemel, gefeliciteerd. U mag elkaar de hand schudden en kussen.’ En enkelen begonnen dat ook te doen, maar anderen werden overstuur. ‘Ik ben de kapitein van het schip,’ zei de man. ‘En wie het daar niet mee eens is wordt overboord gezet.’ Na een tijdje luisterden ze allemaal aandachtig naar hem. Hij bedoelde het niet kwaad. Na een tijdje stapte hij op, maar al snel wilden ze hem weer hebben. Elke zondag wilden ze naar hem luisteren. Ook de verzorgsters en verzorgers vonden het interessant. Ze stonden ervan te kijken hoe snel hij opleefde in het verpleeghuis. Hoe hij zich vrijer voelde dan hij ooit was geweest. ‘Een groot profeet is opgestaan,’ riep een man eens tijdens zijn preek.

Hij heeft zijn oude levensstijl vergeten, zijn oude denkstijl, en kan niet meer terug. Hij heeft het gevoel dat er wat fout zit, en kan daar vaak kwaad om worden. Hij wil weer tuinieren, en wordt kwaad als het niet lukt. Een vreemd gevoel heeft zich van hem meester gemaakt, en vreet hem aan van binnenuit. Alsof er een spin in hem leeft, dodelijk, onvermoeibaar, met een duidelijk doel. En hij ligt verstrikt in het web. Wat kan hij doen ? Alle oplevingen zijn maar voor even, om daarna nog dieper weg te vallen. Hij bereidt zich voor op de dood, die maar niet komt. Als hij vrouwen ziet borduren, is het alsof zij hem van binnen prikken. Hij kan daar kwaad om worden. Hij raakt meer en meer geisoleerd van de anderen. Hij heeft zijn eigen kamer. Nog steeds denkt hij dat het zijn eigen huis is, en dat de anderen noodgedwongen bij hem logeren, want buiten is de grote zee, de vloed. Hij herinnert zich een oud kinderversje : Alle dieren twee aan twee, gaan met Noachs ark mee. Hij is er van overtuigd dat hij Noach is, en dat hij hen allemaal gered heeft met zijn ark, zijn huis. Maar nu heeft hij rust nodig. ‘Waarom ben ik zo moe in het paradijs ?’ vraagt hij zich af. ‘Is er soms een slang in het paradijs ? Ben ik gebeten ? Of is dit de hel, is dit mijn straf, ben ik niet uitverkoren ?’ Maar de religieuze verwarring maakt al snel weer plaats voor de grote trots over wat hij allemaal al heeft bereikt in zijn leven : kapitein op een schip. Hij wijt zijn religieus trauma aan een vroegere aanval van zeerovers. Die zouden hem op zijn hoofd hebben geslagen. Zijn geheugen gaat op en naar en maakt rare draaiingen. En dan valt hij op een dag helemaal in een grijs gat. Alles tolt voor zijn ogen. ‘De zeerovers,’ roept hij. ‘Ze hebben teruggeslagen.’ En dan zijn ineens zijn woorden niet verstaanbaar meer. In zijn hersenen gaat alles traag, alsof ze alles vermalen wat nog is overgebleven. Het is hem zwart voor de ogen nu. Hij kan zijn gedachten niet meer onder woorden brengen. Hij denkt dat hij overboord gegooid is, en dat vissen hem aanvreten, haaien. Hij zweeft op het randje van de dood. Hij ziet bloeidende tuinen, gloeiend, bijna schroeiend in de zon. Hij denkt dat hij dood is. Hij voelt zich alsof hij door een donkere gang met bloemen gaat. Hij kan met de bloemen spreken, ze verwelkomen hem. Maar dan is alle verbinding verbroken, en is alles zwart. Hij voelt zich hopeloos verloren, maar even later lijkt het alsof hij in een bloem ligt. De dood ademt hier.

Hij leeft weer in het verleden, alsof zijn vrouw er nog is, zijn zusjes, zijn vader en moeder. Zijn zusjes spelen op het plein. Ze zien eruit als popjes. Hij wil ze omhelzen, maar dan staat hij stijf. Zijn vader roept hem. ‘Zeg Noach, afwassen.’ Ook gaan ze naar de kerk. De stem van de dominee echoot door de kerkzaal. Hij zit weer op school. De leraren staan voor hun

schoolborden, waaruit struiken komen om de kinderen mee te nemen. ‘Eindelijk,’ denkt hij. Al zijn nachtmerries komen terug, de struiken die hun dorens in de monden van jonge kinderen stoppen, en hen in hun tanden steken. En die dorens blijven daar zitten. En pepermunt wordt er in de kerk uitgedeeld, van de mintstruik.

‘Ik vraag jullie te luisteren,’ zegt de leraar.

- Nee, zegt een kind.

‘Dan ga je maar naar de directeur.’

- Geen sprake van.

Zo gaat dat altijd. Moe wordt hij ervan. Altijd en eeuwig die dictators. Slangen in het paradijs. Zijn hoofd is heet, zijn oude woede stroomt. Hij heeft zijn vrouw nodig, de poort naar de hemel. Maar hij is jonger nu, en speelt op het plein. De kinderen hebben ruzie. Honden in het paradijs. Ze rennen, ze zijn op jacht. Het zijn vuurbessen in zijn hoofd, de honden van gebrek. Hij ziet de engel des doods, zo vroeg al, zich mengende in het kinderspel. Zijn bittere klauw beroert het zoete kinderhart, en plant het trauma daar, als een pad leidende tot de dood. Zo zijn wij allen hier opgehangen. En op het huwelijk ? Trots kijkt zij hem aan, en dan wordt de spiegel ineens ingeslagen. De engel des doods is hier. Ruw worden kinderdromen verstoord, moeders en vaders gillen. De engel des doods vertrekt met het kind, met de pop, ramen inslaande, deuren intrappende, baant hij zijn weg. De engel des doods is hier, waar Maria haar niet kan tegenhouden. Het is een vrouw, het gezicht van een lerares, een dokter, een arrogante blik. Ze heeft haar lange reis gemaakt vanuit de hel om toe te slaan. De oogst van de hel is bijna rijp, hier staat zij met haar sikkel en zeis, als de Zwarte Maria. Hij smeekt haar het kind te sparen, maar koelbloedig neemt zij het kind mee.

Onbarmhartig heeft zij toegeslagen. Bij het zien van het leed verroerde zij geen vin, koud als de dood was zij. Haar angel vindt haar weg door harten, om te verwonden. Zij sluit geen compromissen, laat zich niet omkopen. Haar zwarte klauw komt om te grijpen en te doden. Zij komt om te breken, om dat wat alreeds zwak is gemaakt mee te nemen. Ze laat woede achter, onbegrip, verscheurde gevoelens, een doorboord hart.

In haar doolhoven zijn we verdwaald, in haar web verstrikt. De confrontatie is onvermijdelijk. Ze laat al haar wapens zien in een reflex. Ze heeft een dodelijke wond, want eens kwam ze

haarzelf halen. De engel des levens kijkt haar goedkeurend en bewonderend aan, en we staan schaakmat. Is er nog een andere engel die meeleven toont, dan is dat een gevallen engel, en zo wordt alles weggestreept. Hij wil opstaan uit de kerk, maar hij kan het niet. De woorden van de dominee geven hem troost.

De koude hand voelt hij, die zijn schouder indrukt, het machteloze gevoel, de woede, maar het woord van de dominee is verzachtend, ontgiftigend, totdat de engel des doods weer toeslaat. Haar reis vanuit de de hel stopt hier. Hier neemt zij haar woning. Maria draagt een zwart kleed, haar soldaten hebben zwarte helmen, en die zwarte bessen moeten gegeten worden. Hij schreeuwt, vol woede, maar ze sluiten hem op. Een gevallen engel noemen zij hem. Een engel ? Wat is dat ? Heeft dat met een auto-industrie te maken ? En de bijbel, wat is dat dan ? Hij weet het niet meer, in zijn hersenen verliest hij grip. Er is een koud gat in zijn hersenen, glibberig, als besmeurd met uitwerpselen. Het is maar een darm. Voedselresten, niets anders, en een grotere vertering moet nog komen ? Of blijft het hierbij ?

Hij staat op straat, het regent. De stad lijkt bezaait met hondenpoep, en nu zwemt het rond in de regen die zich ophoopt op de grond. Kinderen hebben plezier in rubberbootjes. Hier hebben ze altijd van gedroomd. Diepliggende garages lopen onder. Hij kijkt rond. Hij heeft een paraplu. Zo maakt de bakker dus zijn brood, denkt hij.

Hij mag er wezen. Hij voelt zich vrij. Het is dinsdag. Hij loopt naar de brug over het smalle riviertje. Dan gaat hij de winkelstraat in. Hij leest een krant die in het regenwater drijft, althans dat probeert hij. Op zoek naar een gouden boodschap, maar al wat hij ziet zijn de eentonige, naargeestige boodschappen van de engel des doods. Met monotone stappen loopt hij verder. ‘Hier woonde Iris vroeger,’ bedacht hij zich. Maar hij loopt haastig door. Het water is hem bijna tot de knieen gestegen. De stad lijkt nu bezaaid met de uitwerpselen van honden. Het zijn de honden van gebrek, maar hij is gelukkig nu. De apocalypse kent hij nu, de schalen des hemels die over het verloederd volk wordt uitgegoten. Hier heeft hij zo lang op gewacht. En het regent maar door, en de dijken breken door, en hij klimt in een boom. Dit is de boom waar hij als kind altijd in speelde, waar hij zijn hutten had, en zijn eerste vriendinnetjes. De boom was nu veel langer. Ja, hij zou de zondvloed overleven. Deze boom, als de kroon van zijn tuin. Lange schaakstukken staan op de dijken.

Hij zoent met Klara, dan met Els, maar op Klara wordt hij steeds verliefder. Hij trouwt met haar, alles in het wit. De tuin is voor hem het belangrijkste. Die boom moet groeien, anders redden we het niet. Op de dijken en duinen loopt hij, de koppen afhakkende van lange schaakstukken. Zij zijn de weg naar de hemel niet, en hij is de politie. Het gaat om de boom. Maar nieuwe koppen komen uit de schaakstukken ploppen. Hij is in een gevecht met de engel des doods. En de engel des levens lacht. Ze waren zo verliefd. Hij ziet haar staan, bij de brug, Kirsten, zijn eerste liefde. Ze is in schitterend wit met allerlei hangende touwtjes. Hij komt dichterbij en de bliksem slaat hem. Ze staan bij een boom, een andere boom, en dan kussen ze elkaar. Een langere jongen gaat er uiteindelijk met haar vandoor, en dan wordt ze een popje

van een andere tuin, vreemd voor hem. En de jaren daarvoor was de liefde in hem zo zwak dat hij alleen maar kon dromen. Er waren zoveel andere dingen in hem die hij veel belangrijker vond. Een auto was belangrijker dan een meisje. De juffrouw was belangrijker dan een meisje. De sterkste zijn was belangrijker dan een meisje. Het meeste hebben was belangrijker dan een meisje. Hij trok aan datgene wat de engel des doods vasthield. Hij wist niet wat het was, maar hij wilde het hebben. Een ongelovelijke kracht maakte zich van hem meester, een jeugdige kracht, en zij liet los. Hij hoorde een schreeuw, een gil. Hij hield de engel des levens in zijn armen. Hij trok haar door het inmiddels tot de nek gestegen regenwater. ‘Kom naar de boom,’ riep hij.

‘Wij weten allemaal wat de enige weg is,’ zei de dominee. Hij wist het niet meer. ‘Ja, maar de stad, de stad,’ riep hij.

‘Grijp de boom,’ riep de dominee. ‘Kus haar. Beklim haar. Ze is van jou. Ik verklaar u nu man en vrouw. En deze bijbel mag jullie huwelijk bezegelen.’ Hij wist niet wat de bijbel was. ‘Liefdesbrieven van Klara of van mijn eerdere liefdes ?’

‘Allemaal,’ zei de dominee. ‘Onderhoud nu je tuin.’

‘Bind haar aan de boom,’ riep iemand. ‘Trek haar op,’ riep een ander. Een politie-agent deed hem in de boeien. ‘Waarom heeft u deze vrouw opgehangen ?’

‘Ik probeerde haar te redden. Ik ben zelf een politie-agent,’ zei hij.

‘U moet voorkomen bij de engel des doods,’ zei de agent. Ze zat daar in de hal, vooroorlogs. ‘Nu is het oorlog,’ riep ze. ‘Je hebt het vuur van de goden gestolen, Prometheus, en aan de mensen gegeven. Je kent je straf.’ Een gier vloog op hem af, om van zijn lever te eten, die tegelijkertijd weer aangroeide. ‘Gier,’ zij hij. ‘Breng haar tot de ark, de grote boom, we missen nog een paar dieren.’

De gier vloog op haar af en greep haar.

Hoofdstuk 2. De Oase

Ze had satijn aan, als een popje. De juffrouw had alle kinderen onder haar macht. Als haar poppen waren ze, en ze behandelde hen goed. Alle jongens waren verliefd op de juffrouw, maar er waren belangrijkere dingen dan de juffrouw. Het jaar daarop kregen ze een nieuwe juffrouw, een verschrikkelijke, het tegenovergestelde van de vorige juffrouw. De nieuwe juffrouw was als de engel des doods, als een wild en gevaarlijk dier. En toch wist ze zich te gedragen dat jaar, en kwamen ze er heelhuids doorheen, en het was maar voor een jaar. De dag des doods was voorbij. Het schip triomfeerde in de haven, aan de kade. ‘Moet dat nou, al dat bloot ?’ vroeg zijn vader toen hij meer en meer ging tekenen.

‘Ja, open en bloot,’ zei hij. ‘Ik laat ze niks meer verbergen. Dieren zijn toch ook bloot ?’

‘Het is een onderwaardering van het vrouwelijke geslacht,’ zei vader. ‘Zie jij vrouwen als dieren ?’

‘Bomen staan toch ook bloot ?’ zei hij. ‘Het is onze enige redding.’

‘Nee,’ zei vader, ‘je weet wie onze enige redding is.’

Maar hij wist het niet meer. Hij was gefixeerd op de boom. De noot moest gekraakt worden, gepeld, tot aan de pit. ‘We hebben lang genoeg gewacht, vader,’ zei hij.

‘Jij groeit op voor galg en rad,’ zei vader.

‘En jij groeit op voor de kus van de engel des doods,’ zei hij tegen vader.

Maar het schip triomfeerde in de haven, aan de kade. De lage boompjes op de grond, de struiken in het diepe zand, warm zand was het, en het leek alsof ze allemaal bewust waren. Het zonlicht leek rinkelend. Hij kon het zich niet meer herinneren, en werd een treurig persoon. Hij wist snel niet meer wat bomen waren. Het dwaalde allemaal op hem heen. Hij lag vaak op bed. Hij was vaak moe, als gekust door de engel des doods. Een diersoort was het in zijn ogen, gemeen, opdringerig.

‘Praat niet zo over engelen,’ zei vader. ‘Het zijn heilige wezens.’ Maar hij wist niet meer wat heilig was. Er was een diep gemis in zijn hart, het knaagde. De somberheid van het alledaagse leven overspoelde hem, verlamde hem.

‘Trouw haar,’ zei de dominee. Het was zijn verlossing uit dat gezin. Klara dronk veel, en hij lustte ook wel een borreltje op zijn tijd, en steeds meer begonnen ze zich in hun huisje terug te trekken. Het was alsof ze alcoholische sappen aan de bomen konden onttrekken. Hij likte aan de bomen.

Zij was het schilderij in zijn huis, een schilderij van groen-metalen maaiers, waarmee hij wel over elke wilde haardos wilde gaan. De groen-metalen maaiers schitterden in het zonlicht. Het was een warme, mooie dag. Ze waren als de wachters van de engel des doods. Maar ze had haar betekenis verloren. Ze was als het ei op tafel. Het was paas-ochtend, de geur van het lijden na de dood, nieuw leven brengend. Zijn vrouw stond in de keuken. Hij staarde naar de tuin. Het zou een prachtige dag worden met veel zon. Er was geen krant vandaag, en op de televisie was er het levenslied. Zijn vrouw kwam even later met de koffie binnen, en ging toen zitten om te breien. Het was alsof hij alles weer opnieuw beleefde. Ze zat ver weg van hem, of dat kwam door de vele spullen die tussen hen stonden. Het huis stond vol met de dierbare spulletjes van zijn vrouw. Er werd niet veel gezegd. Het ging bergafwaarts met zijn vrouw, en snel werd ze door de engel des doods weggehaald. Een groot ei zweefde boven de vijver. Deze had zijn vrouw opgeslokt. Het was alweer pasen. Het jaar daarna was hij alleen. Hij at veel eieren, om iets van zijn vrouw terug te krijgen, maar hij ving veel bot. Hij liet schilderijen in zijn huis hangen, Franse schilderijen, met wulpse gestaltes die ’s nachts tot leven kwamen, tot hem kwamen, om hem te beladen met kerkelijke schuld. Hij wist dat er wat mis was met hem. Hij had aan bomen gelikt.

De nachten duurden lang, waren diep, waarin hij vele gesprekken voerde, naar de schilderijen staarde. Hij liet een bar plaatsen. De gestaltes van de schilderijen moesten zijn vrouw vervangen, de leegtes opvullen. Maar de kerkelijke prijs was hoog, een prijs die opliep tot aan pasen. Hij was de gekruisigde, hij was de engel des doods. Hij was voortijdig gekomen, gevallen was hij. Maar het grote boek begon de betekenissen te veranderen. Het was een draaiboek, een boek van rekeningen, en hij doneerde veel geld om zijn geweten los te kopen, uit deze hel. Hij was het zelf die die lange reis vanuit de hel had gemaakt, en nu was hij hier, met al zijn groengelakte maaiers. De tuin vroeg erom om gemaaid te worden, en het was een mooie dag. De tuin was klaar om haar oogst te geven. Hij greep, miste, en greep nog een keer, en was vereeuwigd in een schilderij. Hij met de zeis, gedood om te doden. De vlaggen hingen uit buiten. Hij herinnerde de verzorgster die kwam. Hij liet haar ook aan bomen likken, en zij werd als hem. Zij leerde van hem. Hij had een machts-positie. Zij aanbad hem omdat hij ouder was, en veelkleurig was. Voor haar was hij niet ziek maar vrij, een verlicht mens. Hij liet haar het schilderij zien waarop hij stond. ‘Is dat je grootvader ?’ vroeg ze.

- Nee, dat ben ik.

'Je lijkt veel ouder hier.'

- Macht verouderd.

'Wie heeft het geschilderd ?'

Hij zwijgt, en hangt het schilderij weer terug. Met pasen eten ze altijd samen paas-eitjes. Dan herinnert hij zich niks meer, en gaat terug in de tijd, zo ver, dat hij bij de witte lijnen aankomt. Als hij erover gaat zal hij sterven. Hij beweegt zich helemaal tot het randje van de laatste streep. Hij kijkt in de diepte van een reusachtig ravijn. 'Hier wil ik niet sterven,' denkt hij. Hij gaat terug, en hoort zijn vader en moeder tot hem spreken, hem betuttelen. Hij is niet vrij. Strak wordt hij opgevoed. Zijn vader bespeelt hem als een pop. Zijn moeder kan hem niet bereiken. Hij heeft een ei met vele stralen in zijn hart. 'Alleen een vrouw kan me hieruit redden,' denkt hij.

'Wil je met haar trouwen ?' vraagt de dominee.

'Ja,' zegt hij.

'Dan is zij nu uw vrouw.'

De kerkdienst gaat verder. Zijn vader en moeder zijn verdrietig omdat ze hem kwijt zijn. Ze wilden hem in een hokje houden. De dominee neemt het hok over. Als dieren zijn ze in het schip van Noach, twee aan twee. Zijn vrouw kan goed naaien en breien. En borduren doet ze ook graag, maar het steekt hem. Het steekt hem dat ze toch ook zo ver weg is. Ze leven in verschillende werelden. Ze breekt zoveel van zijn hart weg, door haar geprik, als een spin die hem van binnen aanvreet. En met pasen zijn er nieuwe eieren. Hij is het paaskind, maar hij kan niet opnieuw geboren worden. Daarvoor zijn de banden te strak. De tijd brengt dood voort, geen leven. En hij gaat het tegemoet. Een vrouw moet hem redden. Zijn eigen vrouw is niet genoeg, het gaat niet diep genoeg, alhoewel ze diep steekt. Dan zijn daar de Franse schilderijen. Met deuren die 's nachts opengaan. Hij leert hen bomen likken. Ze worden als hem, en kunnen niet meer terug. Ze zijn de stralen van het ei. Hij is de kapitein op het schip,

en buiten loeren de haaien op hem. Ze willen hem naar een verpleeghuis brengen, net als zijn vrouw. Zijn vrouw woont nu in de haaien, als de prinses der haaien is zij. Ze hebben haar overboord gegooid. Hij zal hen vinden. Hij is de engel des doods, het ei met de vele stralen. Hij had niet moeten slapen, hij had zijn tuin moeten onderhouden. Nu is ze weg. De Franse soldaten hebben hun Napoleon gevonden. Hij steekt zijn maaiers in de fik, en is klaar om te gaan grillen. De honden van gebrek zijn in de stad. Nu is alles in vuur. Hij zal zijn vrouw vinden. Hij zal haar vinden in de haai die haar opslokte, en van die haai zullen ze hun boot maken. Maar zijn herinneringen draaien, en zijn ziedend, en dan weet hij ineens niks meer. Hij weet niet dat hij ooit een vrouw had. Hij heeft nu de gedachte dat ze er nooit is geweest. Ze probeerden hem iets op de mouw te spelden. Hij woont alleen. Zijn huis staat in een klein bos, met een bloemenveld. Hij woont hier eenzaam en verlaten, met zijn maaiers. Veel te maaien elke dag. Daar trekt hij zich aan op. En schilderijen zijn zijn passie maar zij zijn dood. En ook boeken zijn zijn passie, maar zij zijn dood. Hij houdt van de engel des doods. Het leven is te eng. Hij heeft een Maria-beeld naast de televisie, wat hij ooit heeft zwartgeverfd. Er is een lamp in geplaatst. Hij aanbidt haar, maar dan verdwijnt haar betekenis. Ook zij is dood. De dode kunst trekt hem aan, en het dode water der bomen, de alcohol. De lucht ruikt naar drop. Hij durft niet naar het toilet, daarom gebruikt hij een po die hij eens in de week verschoont. De po staat boven, en bakent zijn terrein af. Het beschermt hem tegen de wilde dieren van het bos. Hij staart uit het raam en ziet de uitgestrekte velden der vergetelheid. Hier zijn de witte strepen. En nu wil hij er echt voor gaan. Hij vecht, hij schreeuwt, hij overwint, en verliest dan. Beelden staan er in zijn huis, die het Christus-verhaal uitbeelden. Vaak gaat hij langs die beelden. Die beelden zijn als zijn huisdieren, veilig in de ark van Noach. De ark van Mozes heeft horens. Hij komt dichterbij, en de geur van wierook, drop en chocola overspoelt hem, maar ook de geur van hondenpoep. Hij grijpt de horens van de ark, maar wordt dan achteruit geslagen. Boven de ark verschijnt een ei met vele stralen. De ark verandert in een doodskist, en hij heeft het gevoel alsof hij in een lift zit, en wordt uitgestrekt als een sigaar in een sigaren-houder. ‘Ik ben een van de velen,’ denkt hij. ‘Velen zijn geroepen, weinig uitverkoren.’ Doodsangst overvalt hem.

Zijn hang naar materiele goederen wordt groter, die zijn hersenen bevriezen. Goud en metaal is zijn lust, edele metalen, het liefst gelakt. De badkamer is als een ark voor hem. Hij staart veel naar bijbeltaferelen op schilderijen, maar hij kan ze nauwelijks herinneren. Hij is alleen, in een koel huis. Hij strijdt tegen alles totdat het dood is. Het dode heeft de vlam van ander leven, elitair leven, fijngevoelige kunst. Maar hij kan dit leven niet opbrengen. Het hout om hem heen begint te rotten, het goud om hem heen begint te stinken, en het koele begint hem te steken. Een spin vreet hem aan, een groep dolle wolven. De honden van gebrek zijn hier, de honden van een duivels paradijs. Zij nemen hem mee naar het verpleeghuis, en zij gaan zijn huis bewonen. Zij hebben al zijn medailles afgenomen, om er zelf mee te pronken. ‘Alleen de duivel kan de duivel overwinnen,’ denkt hij. Hij weet nog nauwelijks wie of wat de duivel is. Hij ziet het als een wapen. Hij moet zich verdedigen, maar hij kan het niet. ‘Ik kan net zo goed Frans praten,’ denkt hij.

De juffrouw houdt hem stevig vast.

‘Wil je met haar trouwen ?’ vraagt de dominee.

Hij knikt verlegen. Als hij thuis is maait hij het gras. Zijn vrouw komt hem een hoog glas brengen. Later zitten ze in de tuin. Ze gaan vroeg naar bed. Zijn vrouw leest voor. Over de engel des doods wordt niet gesproken. Wel weten ze dat het een plaaggeest is. Dan gaan ze slapen. Zijn vrouw kust hem. Hij houdt haar hand vast. Zijn zusjes wonen bij hem in. Ze zijn paas-eitjes aan het beschilderen. Als hij het ziet krijgt hij er honger van. Zijn zusjes spelen vaak op het pleintje, waar ze spelletjes doen. Ook zijn ouders wonen bij hem in. Hij draagt het ei met stralen. In de nacht maait hij. Dokters nemen hem mee in de nacht, zeggende dat hij schizofreen is, een gevaar voor de samenleving, met zijn maaiers. Zij nemen hem mee en sluiten hem op, ver weg van het oog van zijn familie. Zij willen het ei met de stralen uit hem roven, maar zij kunnen het niet. Hij denkt dat zij buitenaardsen zijn. Van de planeet aarde schijnt hij nog nooit gehoord te hebben, en wil er ook niet zoveel mee te maken hebben.

Met hem schijnt het beter te gaan nu ze hem nieuwe pillen hebben gegeven. Hij is inmiddels in het ziekenhuis, op een speciale afdeling. Langzaam begint hij weer uit bed te komen. De zusters bewonderen hem vanwege zijn humor en zijn markante persoonlijkheid. Hij is bijna hun god. Hij wordt hier als een prins behandeld, als een prins die van het paard is gevallen, zoals hij dat altijd zegt. Snel heeft hij een vriendin, en zijn gezondheid verbeterd steeds meer, tot zo’n hoogte dat hij zelfs weer op zichzelf zou kunnen wonen. Met zijn vriendin krijgt hij ergens een woning hoog in een flat. Zijn vriendin is veel jonger, maar door de pillen verjongd hij ook. In zijn flatwoning voelt hij zich al snel als de prins van Bagdad. Door de pillen loopt zijn leeftijd zo drastisch terug dat hij op een gegeven moment nog maar twintig is. Het voelt heerlijk aan tussen de hoge flatgebouwen. Hij staart vaak naar de overkant. Hij voelt zich vitaal. Tussen de flatgebouwen door zijn de prachtigste rozentuinen, waar hij vaak doorloopt of langsloopt met zijn vriendin. Er hangt een beetje een oosters of Arabisch sfeertje, en dat bevalt hem wel. Maar de rozenstruiken groeien steeds hoger en worden steeds dichter, om zo de flatgebouwen te isoleren. Nu voelt hij zich als Doornroosje. Ze gaan verhuizen en krijgen een flatje aan het weiland. Op dit tijdstip begint het weer slechter met hem te gaan, ook al is hij twintig. Misschien dat nu de ouderdom toch echt toeslaat. Weer belandt hij in het ziekenhuis, maar hij voelt zich nog steeds de prins van Bagdad, en zelfs van heel Arabie. Hij staart vaak naar de stenen van het ziekenhuis die zo’n aparte kleur hebben. Vooral als het zonlicht erop valt heeft het een prachtig effect. Zacht roze is toch wel de mooiste kleur, denkt hij.

En als zijn vriendin bij hem op bezoek komt heeft ze zo’n mooie roze jurk. Ze neemt hem mee voor een wandeling langs het meer. De melkfabriek staat hier dichtbij en alles ruikt hier aangebrand. In zijn gedachten zweeft hij met haar over het meer, en roze zwanen volgen hen. Even later liggen ze beiden in het koele meer. ‘Zullen we naar de overkant zwemmen ?’ vraagt hij. Zijn vriendin vindt het best. Dat hebben ze al wel eerder gedaan. Achter het meer zijn de weilanden, en achter het weilanden is hun flat. Helemaal nat komen ze aan in hun woning. Maar hij zorgt dat hij voor het donker wordt weer in het ziekenhuis is. Ook al is hij nu dan weer in het ziekenhuis, deze laatste bladzijden van zijn leven zijn sterk en roze, als rotsen waarop hij kan bouwen. Hij voelt zich veilig hier, iets wat over hem waakt. De golfjes

die hier aankomen brengen voornamelijk geluk. Een oase was over hem heengevallen, en dat was allemaal net op tijd.

ARABISCH AMALGAAM

Hoofdstuk 1.

Ik, 27 jaar,

Lang,

Doe mezelf ouder voor dan ik ben.

Zij, 44 jaar

We zijn gelukkig samen, alsof we het eeuwig geluk hebben gevonden. Toch leiden we een saai leven, een sleur, zitten we opgesloten tussen muren. We leven meer in de dalen dan op de toppen. We mogen niet klagen, alcohol vult altijd de leegtes op. We moeten beiden oppassen geen alcoholisten te worden, maar we hebben het nu redelijk onder controle. Vaak als we klachten hebben wordt ons alcoholische dranken voorgeschreven door onze dokter. Onze dokter is wel alcoholist, maar daar hebben wij genoegen meegenomen. Dit omdat het een aardige man is, en dat zijn dokters zeer zelden. Hij neemt ons serieus en heeft ons op sleeptouw genomen.

Zij, is kleiner dan mij, heeft grote borsten die het leeftijds-verschil opvullen. We hebben geen kinderen, en dat willen we ook niet. Ze is rustig, ik ben tamelijk druk, dus we houden elkaar in balans. Zij leert mij nu om rustig te zijn, ook om mijn innerlijke stem te verstaan. Innerlijke vrede noemt ze dat. De dokter is hier weleens dronken geweest. We hebben besloten hem de hand boven het hoofd te houden. We zouden hem nooit verraden. We zijn niet kerkelijk, maar gaan wel naar een discussie-groepje om daar de dingen van het geloof te bespreken. Veelal wordt het geloof vanuit de atheistische hoek bekeken, aangevuld met kunstzinnige ideeen. We beschouwen het geloof als een vreemde erfenis, als cultuurgoed, maar voelen ons ook ingenomen, onder schrikbewind, door kolonisten uit het midden-oosten. We hebben nog geen geestelijke onafhankelijkheid. Ook de psychische gezondheidszorg houdt ons nog in mentale afhankelijkheid, en de zogeheten tandheelkunde houdt ons in orale afhankelijkheid, en deze bezetters komen allemaal uit het oosten aanwaaien. Trots zijn we er niet op, we hebben meer binnengelaten dan ons lief is, en hebben onze onafhankelijkheid prijsgegeven aan idioten, beulen. Maar ja, het was immers oorlog, het was een strooptocht, kolonisten zijn uit op kolonies, het creeeren van een apartheid. Deze kolonisten hebben een minderwaardig ras geschapen, wij. Het is voor het leken-ras verboden na te denken. Er wordt al voor ons gedacht, er is al voor ons gedacht, en er zal nog veel voor ons gedacht worden. Dat de etiketten niet passen is niet van belang. Het zijn de merktekens van het beest.

En dan is er nog de sex-politie die ons sexueel afhankelijk heeft gemaakt, bang dat een onzedelijk geluidje in een oplettend kinderoortje terecht zal komen. Maar diezelfde kinderoortjes worden niet gespaard voor het traumatiserende geschreeuw van knettergekke dokters en het erbarmenloze geboor van de zogeheten tandarts. Dat diezelfde kinderen voor de ogen van hun ouders door zulke misdadigers oraal worden gescalpeerd schijnt geen probleem te zijn. In Afrika worden kleine meisjes vanwege het volksgeloof aldaar vaginaal besneden, en daar is men in de hele wereld terecht ontdaan over, en wordt het als een godslasterlijke misdaad beschouwd, maar hier worden kinderen, zowel jongens als meisjes door de bezetter oraal besneden, en geen kip die erom kraait.

Mijnheer A. Hoekstra-Van Het Land denkt hier anders over. In zijn zogeheten tandartsen-praktijk wordt alles veilig gedaan, en zijn er strenge voorzorgsmaatregelen, die overigens overal gelden, en waar ook een strenge controle op is. Ook worden er na de besnijding betrouwbare, goed geteste stoffen gebruikt om de opening weer mee te bedekken, zodat het gebit van het kind extra lang mee kan gaan. Mevrouw T. Foppen sluit zich hier helemaal bij aan, en ja, wat hebben wij in te brengen tegen deze bezetters ? We kunnen ons hoogstens aansluiten bij het verzetstrijders-front tegen zulke praktijken. Wij hebben allemaal het merkteken van het beest ontvangen, of we nu wilden of niet, en het merkteken is eeuwig. Daar kan zelfs God of de keizer niets aan veranderen. Er zijn hier in dit land drie oppergeloven waar iedereen zich aan dient te onderwerpen, waarvoor elke knie zich dient te buigen, en waartoe elke tong zal belijden : het medische geloof, het geloof in de geestelijke gezondheid, en het orale geloof, tot aan het dentale toe. En of je nu een dentaal bent of je bent het niet : die kerk kent geen grenzen.

Maarten Stokmans-Van Zeilen, zogeheten tandarts, aan de Belgische grens, vermeld dat er de laatste tijd vreemde dingen in zijn zogeheten tandartsen-praktijk plaatsvinden. Zo zouden beugels spontaan inkrimpen, en zogenaamd amalgaam, de zogeheten grijze roestvrije metaal-vullingen, zou spontaan in het niets oplossen. Hij gebruikt daarom nu veel vaker witte en rode vullingen, die volgens hem wat meer betrouwbaar zijn. Rood is tegelijkertijd de kleur van zijn lievelingskat, dus dat geeft ook direkt een emotionele verbinding met thuis. Ook is Maarten tegelijkertijd een enthousiast lid van de pinkstergemeente, en staat hij elke zondag trouw in deze kerk te klappen op de maat van de overigens heel mooie en aanstekelijke muziek. Hij heeft een visie voor het invoeren van veel meer kleuren zogeheten vullingen, zodat de mensen kunnen kiezen waarmee de barbaarse boorgaten voor eeuwig kunnen worden verborgen. Dat zou ook wat meer vrolijkheid brengen onder deze groep mensen die zo lijden onder de orale bezetting uit het oosten. Hij vindt ook wel dat de paus van de zogeheten tandartsen, Alexander de Kleine, de touwtjes wel wat mag vieren.

Kaakchirurg Riekerd van Aarnautsen is het hier niet mee eens, want hij vreest dat een al te zeer bemoedigde jonge generatie wel eens het einde van de bezetting zou kunnen betekenen. En dat zou helemaal godsonterend zijn. De wet die hen door God gegeven is, en waardoor zij de macht hebben gekregen, moet gehandhaafd worden. Van Aarnautsen staat hierin niet alleen. Tenminste negentig procent van de zogeheten tandartsen en kaakchirurgen staan achter hem, alhoewel sommigen gedwongen zijn dit te doen. Ook is hij van mening dat het God Zelf is geweest die het zogeheten amalgaam heeft geschapen, en dat wij Zijn schepping moeten eren en ervan gebruik moeten maken. Hij is van mening dat het amalgaam ook goed gebruikt kan worden in andere delen van het lichaam, vooral in de botten. Hij vindt het onzin om mensen die jarenlang niet kunnen slapen van de heuppijn een nieuwe heup te geven. Implantaties van amalgaam zouden volgens hem wonderen kunnen verrichten. Dit omdat het volgens hem bewezen is dat amalgaam gevoeligheid van de botten kan afdekken.

Ja, de verschillende meningen over amalgaam en het gebruik ervan, dat is me er eentje. Nu wil Van Aarnoutsen zijn naam veranderen in Van Aernoutsen met Ae, want dat staat volgens hem veel deftiger. Men is er maar druk mee, met de grote drie, de drie supergeloven van dit land. Het christelijk geloof is daar helemaal aan ondergeschikt, want ook de christen buigt voor de dokter, de geestelijk verzorger en de zogeheten tandarts. Het geloof van de zogeheten tandarts is gebaseerd op de orale besnijding, als plicht, als prioriteit, en zij die rebels daartegen zijn worden doorverwezen naar de geestelijke verzorgers, want die mensen mankeren natuurlijk heel wat. Veel mensen denken dat we in 1945 zijn bevrijd van de nazi's, maar de bezetting door de nazi's is groter dan ooit, door de medi-nazi's, de psychinazi's en de nazi's van de mond, de orale nazi's. En dit is dan ook de drieeenheid die alomtegenwoordig aanbeden wordt. Het vullingenbeheer wordt overgelaten aan de orale organisten, de tandpasta-producenten, die net zoals de nazi's fluor gebruiken, een afvalproduct, om de gehypnotiseerde kolonie gewillig te houden. Zij bespelen met grote flair en betutteling de monden van de leken-families, zodat er niet al teveel tegenspraak zal zijn. Men moet eten wat de pot schaft, en door het gepoets komt er ook nog eens lekker veel gifdamp vrij van de kwikhoudende en kankerverwekkende chemicalien die ze vullingen noemen inplaats van gedwongen bot-implantaten, als de kinderdoop na de besnijdenis. En na zulk een gebeurtenis is hun naam ineens haas, en zijn alle verdere klachten voor de psychiater en de zondagsschool. Nee, dan

ben ik maar als een oude jood die zegt : De verlosser moet nog komen. Een geschikte kanditaat hiervoor zou zijn Nelson Lincoln, die ook nog eens voor de dieren opkomt.

Onder dwangverpleging moeten we vandaag de dag van de verboden vrucht eten, om zo vervolgens nog meer in de problemen te komen, om zo nog rijper voor de verboden vrucht te worden. Dit is een vicieuze cirkel. En gedwongen implantaten hebben meer te maken met bezoek van buitenaardse wezens dan met werkelijke zorg. We zijn allang niet meer van onszelf. Maar goed, elke religie heeft zijn ongelovigen, en die moeten naar de hel. De hele wereld zal het beest achterna gaan om zijn beeld te aanbidden en zijn merkteken te dragen. De vijand werkt met vergiftiging, en met ontkenning ervan, zo is het altijd al geweest.

Mijnheer Olafsen uit Zutphen aan de Rijn zegt dat aan amalgaam geen enkel gevaar zit, want alles zit netjes ingedekt binnenin de kies. Nooit van dampvorming en metaalradiatie gehoord, mijnheer Olafsen ? Vervolgens zegt mijnheer Olafsen dat er maar heel weinig van het amalgaam daadwerkelijk in het lichaam terecht kan komen. Hoe weet u dat mijnheer Olafsen ? Ooit weleens opgemeten ? En weet u niet dat de apparatuur van de bezetters zichzelf echt niet zullen gaan verraden ? Drogredenaties, mijnheer Olafsen. En u heeft geen respect voor de mening van een ander, zelfs niet als het om hun eigen mond gaat. Uw wil is wet, want u heeft uw kolonie bezet, en duldt geen verzet. U houdt hen allen in slaap door het stafke van Doornroosje, met uw prikkende boren, soms tot aan de zenuw toe, en dan maar de gepleegde misdaden afdekken. Wie heeft u gezegd in de monden van gevoelige kinderen te gaan boren ? Het is niet veel anders dan Karel de Kleine die met het zwaard de ongelovigen dwong het christendom aan te nemen. En zo is de orale besnijding net zo erg als de vaginale besnijding, omdat het beiden om dwang gaat, en de klachten erbij niet serieus worden genomen. Klachten zijn de tekenen dat de bezetting werkt. En men wil dat zo houden. Alle tong zal belijden, elke knie zal buigen.

Bert Ootjes is door het verzet als zogeheten holistisch tandarts geplaatst in Bergen aan de Maas. Hij werd geplaatst voor het verwijderen van brandmerken, mertekens en nummers van het beest, en werkte in opdracht van de patient. Door de ongelovelijke werkdruk is mijnheer Ootjes overspannen geraakt, en plaatste het verzet een tweede zogeheten holistisch tandarts, professor Joost Achterbergen. Ook hij werkte in opdracht van de patient. Sindsdien zijn er vele zogeheten holistische tandartsen in het land gaan werken om de orale besnijdingen tegen te gaan. Veel van die zogeheten holistische tandartsen waren boorloos, maar ook de bezetters infiltreerden in deze branche, maar dan met boren. Om het infiltreren tegen te gaan plaatste het verzet schermpjes die zelf dauwdruppels konden aanmaken, en die schermpjes bezaten twee soorten poedertjes die op de zogeheten tandarts zouden reageren. Werden de dauwdruppels blauwkleurig, dan was de kust veilig, maar als de dauwdruppels roodkleurig werden, dan had de patient te doen met een infiltrant. Zo konden patienten het snel testen. Het was een uitvinding van Bert Ootjes. Niemand heeft ooit het tegendeel van de werking ervan kunnen bewijzen, en als er wetenschappelijk commentaar van buiten het verzet kwam, dan werd dat gewoon niet erkend. Het kwam er al snel op neer dat minstens vijftig procent van de zogeheten holistische tandartsen infiltranten waren van de bezetting. Velen hadden gewoon

hun eigen gifjes die ze gebruikten, en de orale besnijding werd gewoon doorgezet. Ook het half serieus nemen werd een grote trend.

Ik ben in het verzet gegaan toen ik 25 werd, maar omdat ik op straat werd neergestoken kon ik geen actief lid meer zijn, en beperkte mij hooguit tot discussie-groepjes. Ik raakte verlamd. Ik zit nu in een rolstoel, en moet weer langzaam leren lopen. Mijn vriendin helpt me daarbij. Vandaag ben ik met haar naar het naaktstrand gegaan omdat het buitengewoon mooi weer was. Daar waren mensen met mooie naakte plekken in hun mond, niet vervuild door de zogeheten tandarts. Alles puur natuur.

28 Januari 1971

De flower power beweging groeit nog steeds, meer dan ooit. Ook de ‘Baas in Eigen Mond’ beweging groeit hard, vooral onder de jeugd. Ik kan weer een beetje lopen. De wonden zijn aardig genezen. De naaktstranden zijn dichtbevolkt nu. Overal wordt geprotesteerd en gedemonstreerd tegen de bezetting, tegen de grote drie, maar het ministerie is niet onder de indruk. Het is volgens hen door de gezondheidsraad bewezen dat de grote drie geen kwaad hebben verricht en een bevordering zijn voor de volksgezondheid. Inmiddels grijpt de bevolking massaal naar speciale tandpastas voor gevoelige tanden, want nieuwe zogeheten vullingsoorten zorgen ervoor dat zelfs duikers niet meer zo diep konden duiken als voorheen, doordat ze de druk op de mond niet meer aankunnen vanwege deze nieuwe aanwinst in de pharmaceutische industrie. Dit wordt door het ministerie ontkent. De nieuwe zogeheten vullingsoorten zijn prima. De bezetting kan er alleen maar van profiteren. Er wordt alleen vanuit het hogere elite-ras gedacht. Het leken-ras is niet interessant. Steeds meer jongeren beginnen zich tegen de flower power beweging te verzetten, omdat er maar niets gebeurt. Het is allemaal te soft, en de meesten worden gezien als watjes die niets ondernemen dan mantras zingen en mandalas tekenen. De heavy metal beweging begint te groeien, en kaapt veel van de flower power beweging weg. De zogeheten underground wordt een grote attractie voor degenen die maar geen aansluiting konden vinden in de flower power beweging, of hen die erin teleurgesteld waren en grote vraagtekens hadden.

Bert Ootjes begint een nieuwe pseudo-industrie en wordt door de politie opgepakt en vastgezet. Hij is inmiddels de grootste verzetsstrijder die het verzet kent, en de bekendste. Hij wordt ook wel de Vader van het Verzet genoemd. In de gevangenis vindt Bert Ootjes een nieuw hormoon uit wat tanden weer kan laten aangroeien. Wel zorgt dit hormoon ervoor dat de tanden om de zoveel tijd gewisseld worden, en dat betekent dus tegelijkertijd het einde van de hele zogeheten tandheelkunde. Het hormoon is een mengsel van een stof die door haaien en krokodillen wordt gedragen, en die door een simpele injectie in een mens ingebracht kan worden, eens en voor altijd. Vanaf het moment van de injectie maakt het lichaam de stof zelf aan. Het hormoon slaat in als een bom, en naast het verdwijnen van de zogeheten tandheelkunde valt ook de geestelijke gezondheidszorg en ook het medische bewind. Nu een van de grote drie is gevallen blijkt het dat ze hun belangrijkste schakel kwijt zijn. Mensen

worden gezonder doordat ze niet meer als een afvalput van gifstoffen worden behandeld. Ook het kerkelijk geloof valt hierbij in, en onze erfenis bleek niet veel meer te zijn dan een zogeheten vulling na de besnijdenis, en nu de besnijdenis was verdwenen daalde ook de behoefte naar een zogeheten vulling, maar de dwang was er nog steeds. De grote twee adopteerden toen het kerkelijk geloof als nummer drie, maar de geloofwaardigheid hiervan was tot een minimum gedaald, en velen lieten zich niet zomaar meer afzetten.

3 Januari 1980

Bert Ootjes komt vrij, en zorgt ervoor dat ons land de onafhankelijkheid krijgt. De geestelijke gezondheidszorg en het medische geloof worden tot liefde-werk gereduceerd. Het kerkelijk geloof mag daarbij helpen, maar verliest haar macht. Nelson Lincoln wordt de nieuwe anarchistische leider, en ook Joost Achterbergen speelt hierin een grote rol. Zij worden de nieuwe grote drie. Een man genaamd Tutuc zet een geheel nieuwe religie op gebaseerd op liefde en sex. Maas-Middelland wordt de nieuwe hoofdstad, waar professionele prostituees zich zetelen en de stad leiden. Er worden meer naaktstranden geopend, en het land wordt voor vijftig procent naturistisch. Tutuc richt de Naturistische Anarchistische Partij op, de NAP, en krijgt zestig procent van alle stemmen. Velen hebben een andere definitie van naturisme, die volgens hen veel meer is dan gewoon naakt lopen. Binnen het naturisme komen vele stromingen. Er wordt fel uitgehaald naar de mode beweging die wordt gezien als sexuele onderdrukking en het creeeren van een underdog. Nog steeds dertig procent van de bevolking hangt de mode beweging aan, en ze hebben grote invloed, vooral op scholen, waar andersdenkenden al snel als leken-ras worden gezien. De mode wordt steeds meer gezien als manipulatie en als een belemmering voor de vrijheid.

28 Augustus 1981

Het land heeft de status van Utopia bereikt. Er is vrede overal. Men kan elkaar weer waarderen, men voelt zich weer veilig bij elkaar, er is weer vertrouwen, rust, maar ook onafhankelijkheid. Ik kan inmiddels weer goed lopen en alles weer doen. Veel ga ik met mijn vriendin naar het zwanenmeer, het plantsoen. Hier kom ik helemaal tot rust. We hebben het vaak over onze schooltijd. Ik ben erg veranderd volgens mijn vriendin, minder druk. De roosjes beginnen uit te komen langs het zwanenmeer, en ze brengen wit sap voort. De grootste zwaan van het plantsoen gaat stoer over het riviertje dat het slot omgeeft. Altijd ruikt het hier naar zeewier. Als ze van die grootste zwaan niet zouden zeggen dat het een zwaan was, dan zou ik denken dat het een paard was. De bloemen komen hier laat uit, en niemand weet waarom. Altijd pas na de mid-hitte van de zomer. De criminaliteit is hier tot een nulpunt gedaald. Ik voel me weer veilig op straat.

In andere landen is het nog geen Utopia, en zijn missionarissen van Bert Ootjes vaak niet welkom. Heel veel buitenlanders emigreren naar ons land, en er komen steeds meer flats, die ook steeds hoger worden, en dit schijnt een goede uitwerking te hebben op de onderlinge vrede. In de politiek in andere landen gaat het er hard aan toe, ze geven Bert Ootjes geen kans. En ons land noemen ze de nieuwe toren van Babel. Dan wordt Bert Ootjes in het buitenland vastgezet wegens het smokkelen van zwaar alcoholische dranken. Hier schrijft hij zijn apocalypse. In ons land wordt een standbeeld van hem opgericht. Zijn geboortedag wordt een nationale feestdag. Met de diertjes gaat het helaas nog steeds niet goed. Ze worden nog volop geslacht, en er wordt nog volop van hen genoten. Wel heeft Nelson Lincoln al heel veel voor hen gedaan. Vegetariers proberen heel wat, maar worden aan alle kanten tegengewerkt. Hun hoop is eigenlijk op Bert Ootjes, maar die zit in de gevangenis. De dieren hebben zo nog steeds geen onafhankelijkheid, en behoren nog steeds tot het leken-ras. Slagers beginnen steeds meer reclame te maken, met de meest idiote, uit zijn verband gerukte, betuttelingen, en proberen de massa met liedjes en slagzinnen in hypnose te houden. Leuk, zo'n arm diertje slachten, en dan ook erbij gaan zingen. De zingende slagers zijn populair, en er worden veel platen verkocht. Ook banketbakkers werken veel vaker met vlees. De warme broodjes met vleesvullingen gaan pijlsnel over de toonbank heen. En ze vinden steeds weer nieuwe dingen uit, en verleggen hun grenzen voortdurend. Voor de dieren is het nog geen Utopia. In het buitenland hebben de dieren het beter.

In de ogen van de dieren zijn de slagers en hun consumenten de bezetters. Zij vinden het racisme, maar niemand schakelt in op hun frequentie, en zij hebben geen diploma's. Nee, dit land is met zijn kar vol diploma's aan de rand van de afgrond terecht gekomen, ook al noemen ze het een Utopia. Maar in de apocalypse hebben de dieren het laatste woord.

2 Augustus 1982

Grillen zijn 'in'. Er wordt veel gebarbecued, veel gezongen en gedanst. Voor de dieren lijkt het alleen maar erger te worden. We zijn in de tachtiger jaren beland. Vlees wordt een handig weggevertje, een uitstekend kado voor speciale gelegenheden, en een bewijs van eeuwige trouw en liefde. Huwelijks-taarten worden meer en meer omgezet in bouwsels van vlees, en de miniaturen van zowel bruid als bruidegom op de top van de vlees-cake zijn steeds meer naakt, als een propaganda voor het naturisme, wat natuurlijk op zich niet verkeerd is. Steeds meer wordt er de nadruk gelegd op practische collectieve ambacht, waarin de vlees-eter moet zien wat hij eet. Veel demonstraties van openlijke slachtingen worden vertoont, en het vlees bestemd voor een huwelijks-feest wordt op het feest zelf geslacht. Door dit soort openlijke vertoning steeg allereerst het aantal vegetariers dramatisch, maar later werd het als cultuur-goed gezien, als educatief. Zo werd alles geheel gestileerd, en elke zenuw lamgelegd. Woorden als 'traditie' werden gebruikt, terwijl die traditie er nooit was. Vegetariers hadden ingezien waar het anarchisme het land naar toe had geleid, en begonnen te verlangen naar een milde vorm van communisme. Een bekend schrijver sprak : 'Het educatieve zwaard heeft een praalwagen gemaakt voor het bandeloze verstand.' Het werd een chaos in het land. Iedereen zag uit naar de terugkomst van Bert Ootjes. Maar die kwam maar niet, want die zat vast in het buitenland. Joost Achterbergen promoveerde weer ergens met een verslag over de

carnivorische problematiek, maar dat haalde allemaal niets uit. Men was ergens in aan het vastroesten en kwam er niet meer uit. Er kwam een wet dat iedereen die nog vlees wilde eten de dieren zelf moest fokken en slachten. Negentig procent van de bevolking werd hierdoor boer. Nelson Lincoln had gehoopt dat ze door deze wet zouden terugschrikken, maar nee hoor, het werd een sport, een trend, een ritueel, ja, een geloof. En er werd zoveel mogelijk nonsense over verkocht. Het land kwam in een draaikolk van schaamteloos geweld en arrogantie tegen dieren. Dieren werden gewoon door de steeds naturistischer wordende bevolking als minderwaardig gezien, als ondergeschikt aan, als plezier-leken die uitgebuit moesten worden. Het werd een agrarisch land van veeteelt waarin iedereen betrokken werd, en de vegetariers zonderden zich veelal af. Zij konden dit zinloze geweld niet bevatten, en velen van hen vertrokken naar het buitenland.

Zovelen konden hun worstjes met karbonaatjes niet missen. Ze moesten er toch niet aan denken om zonder de speklapjes en de frikandellen door het leven te gaan. Vleesproducenten haalden zelfs stunts uit door het vlees te laten regenen op speciale dagen. Het land had een nieuwe bezetter. Men begon een hogere ethische en morele waarde aan vlees te hechten. Het zou gezond zijn en zelfs noodzakelijk voor het instandhouden van het menselijk ras. Het dierlijk ras stond dus zichtbaar op een lager plan volgens deze bezetter. En dieren konden niet spreken, dus die konden zich niet verzetten. De nieuwe orale bezetters waren gekomen. Het geloof in vlees redeneerde als volgt : Mensen waren engelen, en dieren waren gevallen engelen, duivels. Zo verdedigden ze hun handelwijzen, en daarmee beweerden ze ook nog eens dat wanneer zij die dieren verslonden, dan werden hun zonden vergeven. Ik legde me er bij neer. Ik kon niets doen. Vaak ging ik met mijn vriendin naar het zwanenmeer om te bespreken wat we konden doen, maar er was niet veel wat we konden doen. We voelden ons machteloos, en besloten te genieten van de dieren die er nog waren, en die met rust gelaten werden : zwanen. Vaak gingen we 's nachts naar het meertje, trokken onze kleren uit en gingen daar zwemmen met de zwanen. Op een dag nam de grootste zwaan ons op zijn rug, en bracht ons naar het slot. Er woonde hier niemand meer. Het slot stond vol met ridder-pantsers. We zijn toen naar boven gegaan en gingen op een oud bed liggen. We waren helemaal naakt. Ineens kwam de zwaan binnen met een pluimhelm op. Dat was wel het zotste wat we ooit gezien hadden, en we moesten beiden heel erg lachen. Boven het bed hing een schilderij met naakte vrouwen en een wereldbol. We wisten dat het een naturistisch slot was. Het was vrij toegankelijk voor iedereen. Overal waren ook spinnewebben. Op een verdieping hoger waren nog meer schilderijen met naakte vrouwen. We besloten weer terug te gaan, zwommen het meertje over, en klommen even later ons bed in. Een man scheen het allemaal op camera te hebben vastgelegd. Hij had een zwarte hond met manen. Hij liet het ons zien en zei dat het het mooiste was wat hij ooit op kamera had vastgelegd. We voelden ons niet bespied ofzo. We vonden het wel dapper van hem, en bovenal knap. Hij wilde ons wel meer beeldmateriaal laten zien. Het waren veelal naaktscenes. Ik kwam dichter bij zijn zwarte hond met de zwarte manen. De hond had zulke prachtige ogen en ik moest hem gewoon omhelzen. Het dier was één en al geconcentreerde kracht. Het dier leek wel van adel. Alles was rust hier en vredig, en we kregen een goed contact met de man.

Hij wilde ons wel vaker filmen, en we stemden toe. Hij was een filmmaker die op zoek was naar unieke, zeldzame tafereeltjes. Wat deze man deed was kunst, hij had de gave om de climaxen en het goede van het leven te vereeuwigen. Mijn vriendin kreeg hem lief. Hij was

van haar leeftijd. Ik zei : ‘Ga je gang.’ Ik kon me voorstellen dat ze iemand nodig had van haar leeftijd. Ik was altijd veel te jong voor haar, alhoewel ik me ouder voordeed dan ik was. Nu was ik me dan steeds kinderlijker gaan gedragen, omdat ik daar vroeger nooit de ruimte voor had gehad. Ik beleefde mijn jeugd nu voor de eerste keer in mijn leven. Ik ontmoette een jonge vrouw, jonger dan mij, een buitenlandse, en we werden smoorverliefd. We deden alles samen. Ook gingen we ’s nachts vaak zwemmen in het zwanenmeer, en bezochten we vaak het oude slot. Ik bleef wel gewoon hele goede vrienden met mijn vroegere vriendin en haar nieuwe geliefde. Ik had het gevoel dat zij veel beter bij elkaar pasten, alhoewel we altijd een fantastische relatie hadden gehad. Het was goed zo. We waren beiden verzadigd van elkaar. Ik begon een nieuwe hoodstuk in mijn leven, en zij ook, en ik was nog steeds verliefd op haar en zij op mij. En de liefde was mooi en goed. De man die van haar leeftijd was had haar op het moment meer te bieden dan ik had, en hij kon heel wat leegtes vullen die door het leeftijds-verschil tussen haar en mij waren ontstaan. Zij had mijn moeder kunnen wezen. Ik had nu behoefte aan iemand die op één lijn stond met mij, van dezelfde leeftijdscategorie, of iets jonger, omdat ik mezelf nu ook jonger gedroeg dan ik was.

De tuin rondom het slot leek Arabisch, hier in Rotterdijk. Het had een beetje een pseudo-religieus-communistische gloed, wel heel mooi trouwens, bijna sprookjesachtig. Het was alsof de zwanen de sleutel ergens bewaarden. Mijn nieuwe vriendin had grote volle borsten die vol leken te hangen met melk, net zoals mijn vorige vriendin. Het leeftijdsverschil hoefde nu niet echt opgevuld te worden, want we scheelden niet zoveel in leeftijd, maar wel kon het lengte-verschil opgevuld worden. Zij was kleiner dan mij, maar verder absoluut niet klein. Omdat ze bruin was zei ze altijd dat ze chocolade-melk had, maar dat was natuurlijk maar een grapje. We hadden beiden een bepaalde orale fixatie en dat was tegelijkertijd om te overleven. Er woedde nu eenmaal een orale oorlog. We waren schaakmat gezet in een machtsspel. De gelovigen zeiden altijd dat het paradijs van Arabisch-Babylonische oorsprong was, dus voor ons was het gebied rondom het slot altijd paradijselijk. Hier moest ergens de sleutel hangen. Met mijn nieuwe vriendin dwaalde ik door de gangen van het grote slot, diep in de nacht. Overal hingen naaktschilderijen die ons denken leken te programmeren. Veel van die schilderijen waren enigmatische paradijselijke taferelen. Sommige vrouwen werden met een blinddoek beschilderd, naakt en met een zwaard. Soms een weegschaal vasthoudende, of een schaal met daarin een soort zwarte of grijze stof. Ze hadden een rechterlijke of richterlijke uitstraling of houding, als een vrouwe Justitia. Ook gaven zij mannen die stof te drinken. Ik moest ineens weer aan die amalgaam-toestanden denken. Zou het een vonnis zijn gebaseerd op in het verleden gepleegde misdaden ? De vrouwen waren van bruine huidskleur, maar niet altijd. Zou de bron van dit alles in het paradijs te vinden zijn ? Zou daar wat mis zijn gegaan ? Waarom gaf Eva haar man van de giftige vrucht ? Ik viel bijna naar achteren toen we in een kamertje kwamen met nog een schilderij. Dit schilderij was heel hoog opgehangen, boven een deur die een open haard verborg. De man was geblinddoekt in dit schilderij. De vrouw niet. Zij had twee ogen als rode appels waardoor ze naar hem keek. Hij zat op een stoel. Zij had een zwaard en een sigaar. Boven het schilderij was nog een schilderij met een geblinddoekte vrouw met een zwaard die stond alsof ze klaar was om te kappen. Maar dat was het schokkendste niet : Beide vrouwen waren als etalage-poppen, werkende voor een industrie, en ze hadden geen borsten. Die waren afgekapt. Ze konden hun moedermelk niet geven. Hun vagina’s waren afgedekt met metaal en een slot. Zij waren kinderloos, ontdaan van hun sexualiteit. Daarom gaven ze niets dan gif en verderf. Mijn nieuwe vriendin schrok er ook van. Het deed haar denken aan de vaginale besnijdenis in Afrika.

‘Zouden dieren zich ook zo voelen ?’ vroeg ik. ‘Zij worden besneden tot de dood.’ Mijn nieuwe vriendin knikte. Ik voelde me onwennig. Toen zijn we maar teruggegaan. ‘Bij de indianen,’ zei ik, ‘in het amazone-gebied, werden soms de borsten van vrouwen geamputeerd zodat ze beter hun pijl en boog konden gebruiken.’

‘Ja,’ zei zijn vriendin, ‘en in Fenicie wat nu Turkije is werd Attis aanbeden, een aan zijn lot overgeleverde jongen die door wilde schapen werd grootgebracht, en zichzelf ontmande door een vloek. Uit zijn bloed kwam de naaldboom voort, en hij was een vroegere Jezus.’

Als in Turkije daadwerkelijk het paradijs heeft gelegen, dan ging daarachter nog steeds deze gruwelijkheid schuil : een dieper kruis, een genitale afsnijding, een sexuele apartheid. En dit had grote orale gevolgen. Het moederschap en de mannelijkheid werden ingeruild voor de oorlog, de jacht, de dood. Attis had zijn geliefde, Cybele, verlaten voor een sterveling, en werd door Cybele getroffen met de vloek van waanzin, vanwege de jaloezie. In de Joodse legendes duikt ook de naam van Lilith op als de eerste geliefde van Adam, maar zij werd al heel snel de hof uitgestuurd, omdat zij zich niet aan Adam wilde onderwerpen. En dit kruis was een enigma met vele gevolgen. Lilith zwoer dat zij de kinderen van Adam, de mensen, zou vernietigen. Zij kwam terug als de slang om Adam en Eva het gif aan te bieden. Ik ging op mijn buik liggen, en mijn vriendin ging op me liggen. Ik was niet getroffen door een vloek omdat ik een andere vriendin had nu, en mijn vorige vriendin had ook een andere vriend nu. Er was geen jaloezie. Er was vrijheid. Er waren geen rekken in onze monden meer.

Hoofdstuk 2.

‘Een vrouw zonder borsten heeft alleen gif te voeren,’ wordt er weleens gezegd, figuurlijk dan. Dat betekent dat een vrouw die geen verantwoordelijkheid draagt, geen moederlijke empathie, een gevaar is voor de samenleving. Dat was de slang in het paradijs, maar we zagen al dat er vele kanten aan het verhaal zaten, vele factoren speelden een rol, en het is niet echt eerlijk om alles zwart-wit neer te zetten met vurig religieus fundamentalisme. Er waren andere kanten. Wie hakte de borst van de vrouw af ? Waarom was ze zo woedend op de man, en wilde ze hem berechten ? Is er een kant van het verhaal die wij niet kennen ? Of heeft ze haar borst zelf afgehakt, als een amazone, om zo macht te kunnen voeren over de man ? En met welke redenen ? Voelt ze zich bedreigd door de man ? Of wil ze gewoon dwars haar zin doorvoeren.

Ik besluit met mijn vriendin terug te keren tot het slot. Ditmaal gaan we nog hoger. Op een hogere verdieping vinden we veel olie-lampen, veel Arabische spulletjes. De schilderijen zijn veel bloederiger hier, met veel naakte vrouwen die oorlog voeren. Ook zijn er veel jacht-

tafereeltjes. We lopen naar de volgende verdieping, waar het enigma al snel toeslaat : afgehakte koppen van bizons staan op de schilderijen. Ook zijn er veel azteekse schilderijen, waar azteekse priesters de harten uit hun slachtoffers snijden en omhoog houden. Het is een dolle boel van besnijdingen en afsnijdingen, allemaal om apartheid te creeeren. Weer een verdieping hoger staat een enorm schilderij met de toren van Babel. De toren van Babel is een verhaal uit de bijbel waarin mensen een toren proberen te bouwen naar de hemel, en naam te maken, maar dan daalt God neer om hen te verwarren en te scheiden, zodat ze elkaar niet meer kunnen verstaan. Nog een verdieping hoger staat een standbeeld van een engel, waarachter een schilderij is met de boom des levens. De engel lijkt op een wachter, zelfs op de engel des doods. Ik houd mijn vriendin vast. We zijn beiden naakt, en staren verschrikt naar de engel en het schilderij. Naast ons is nog een klein trapje naar boven, naar een zoldertje. We horen een stem : 'Wie wil het ei uitbroeden, wie eet het, en wie staart naar de dop ?'

'Zei jij dat ?' vraag ik aan mijn vriendin. 'Nee,' zegt ze. 'Jij ?' Ik schud mijn hoofd. Dan vliegt er een papegaai van het zoldertje naar beneden. 'Opkrassen,' schreeuwt hij. 'Wie heeft jullie gezegd hier te komen. Het ei zal rotten.' We lopen naar boven naar het zoldertje en zien overal rotte eieren liggen. Het stinkt hier ook verschrikkelijk naar rotte eieren. 'Te laat,' krijst de papegaai, 'te laat. Jullie hadden eerder moeten komen om het geheim te zien. Nu is het weg, voor eeuwig. Dit is wat jullie krijgen voor jullie optreden : Rotte eieren.' Tussen de eieren ligt een klein kruisje waaraan een staafje hangt dat lijkt op een mannelijk geslachtsdeel. 'En nu oprotten,' roept de papegaai. Het beest begint ons te pikken, en we rennen naar beneden. Het best blijft ons pikken totdat we uit het slot zijn. Snel rennen we door de tuin het water in, en zwemmen naar de overkant, maar nog steeds houdt het beest niet op met aanvallen. Dan komt de grootste zwaan ons te hulp. We houden er heel wat plekken aan over, en willen voorlopig niet meer naar het slot.

Blijkbaar is de vruchtbaarheid aan het lijden verbonden, onlosmakelijk, als twee tegengestelden, het naakte aan het bedekte. We moeten maar wachten totdat daarin vrede is gekomen. In de grondtekst van de bijbel is het paradijs Sheool, het dodenrijk, oftewel de tuin der doden. Ook de val was een werking van het paradijs, om het offer te doen rijpen. De ruwe diamant moest geslepen worden. Ze ligt op mijn rug en heeft haar armen onder mijn oksels door en houdt mijn schouders vast. Ze probeert me op te trekken, maar ik ben moe. Dan vallen we beiden in slaap.

Een oosterse tuin van geheimen, met religieuze valstrikken. Ik schrik wakker. Zij houdt me vast. Ik val weer in slaap. Voor een tweede keer schrik ik wakker. Zij houdt me weer stevig vast, en ik val weer in slaap. In wiens armen lig ik, of is dit weer een strik van de dood. Hoe dan ook, ik heb het nodig om door de dag te komen. Het is mij gegeven. Ze staan daar voor huizen als paardjes, paardjes van de apocalypse om de volle druiven te betreden, te vertrappen. De maan schijnt, de sterren vallen, een droomweb houdt mij vast. Houd mij vast, laat mij jouw trekpop zijn, in dit speelse paradijs is het beter te zijn, beter dan daarbuiten. Het paard van religie trapt hard, ongenadig, straft voor eeuwig, zet schaakmat, en trapt dan de druiven van het genot in, één voor één, en soms meerderen tegelijk. Een hard besluit, van een

jaloerse God, een erfenis, van lang geleden, een raadsel dat brult, smeekt, dwingt. Kijk naar de vrucht, niet naar de dop, eet niet, want het is slechts vergif, maar zoek naar haar geheimenis, broedt het uit, en ren wanneer je kan, zweef over de wateren, als een afstandelijke liefde, veilig en ver weg als de zon. Laat de hoop je niet ontnemen, laat je niet zeggen dat ver weg alleen maar koud is, want kijk naar de zon, die het verste weg is van ons allemaal, en schijnt en warmte geeft zoals niemand anders dat kan. De zon, de astronaut, op zoek naar geheimenissen, het grote broeden.

Ik maak een verkeerde beweging en er knapt iets in mijn rug. Toch nog een complicatie van de steekpartij. Ik vecht tegen de dood, en heb een bijna-dood-ervaring. Ik kom in het paradijs, waar naakte vrouwen zijn, overal. Zij houden een geheim vast, een ei, een groot ei, een doorgang, een weg. Het is een ei vol van bloed. Ik bekijk het ei vol belangstelling. En het bloed stolt, en brengt een lichaam voort met orale en genitale vrijheid. En er is een harmonie tussen die twee, en er is vrede. Na een paar dagen ben ik weer de oude. Er is iets veranderd in mij. Ik heb de dood ontmoet, en daardoor het leven. Ik sta aan beide kanten. Ik ben de brug tussen twee naturen.

Er stonden vele narcissen in onze tuin, vechtend tegen de koude dood. Zij gaven het leven warmte, de mensen een warme deken. Alles was bevroren, bevroren legers. Er werd gehandeld in mensen. De koude hand des doods greep hen, en wie kon daar tegen opvechten. Sommigen dachten harmonie in bloed te zien, anderen alleen maar twist. De raven kwamen over de stad. De stad was snel opengebroken. Er was plaats voor het enigma nu, men staarde niet alleen maar naar de dop. Men at niet meer van het vergif. De broeders waren gekomen. In de heldere zon stonden zij daar, in de Arabische zon. De raven waren uit het oosten gekomen. Oosterse wachters waren nu in de stad, kloppende op de deuren. Zij brachten dat andere nieuws. Zij geloofden dat zij het hart waren binnengegaan, op de zwaan waren zij geklommen, en het bracht hen hier. Ook zij hadden hun verwachtingen, hun verlangens, hun logica. De Arabische zon was heet. Zij waren de paarden van de apocalypse, maar niemand heeft hen begrepen. Zachte hoeven hadden zij, manen overal, lange wimpers, dromerige ogen, bruin, dromend van zachte winters, sneeuwwitte daken, waarop het paarse zou neerdalen. De paarse hand zou hen allemaal wegnemen. Zij hadden hun schuilplaats in het oosten wanneer de winter zou vallen, en dan zou het pas echt hard en koud zijn. En de drop-verkopers zouden er rijk van worden, de banketbakkerijen vol, want iedereen wilde daar ineens slapen. Men zou vluchten tot het orale als de genitale klem zou worden gebroken. Nu lag zij nog vastgebonden op de grond, maar de wachters waren dichtbij haar. Ik hoorde een schreeuw. Zij stond op, en bedekte haar naakte lichaam met een nachtjapon. Zij ging de nacht in met een fakkel, zij was de moeder der raven. De paarse hand bracht haar op de punt van de kerktoren. Een sneeuwwitte dag zou het worden, nu Doornroosje was ontwaakt. Niet door een kus. Neen. Door een warme hand, een innige omhelzing.

Het was een paarse dag met lange manen, een koninklijk feest. Doornroosje was opgestaan. Zij stond tussen haar vader en moeder in, de oude koning en koningin. Zij bracht hen de smeltende chocola die voor eeuwen verborgen was gehouden. Iedereen zou wel met haar willen dansen, iedereen zou wel een veeg van haar chocola willen krijgen. Maar zij was

selectief in haar genade, zeer selectief. Zij bedekte de edele vruchten met chocola, en schoof hen in de ogen. De bakker stond buiten op een kist en zong van haar. Zo lieten zij het feest ten einde gaan. Maar tot diep in de nacht werd er nagenoten. De bakker stond bij de notenboom met een bijl, en brak het open. Kisten vol mandarijnen stonden hier, kisten vol oude mandarijnse koningen, met een mandarijns accent. Een zetel gaf zij aan de oude man die zij door het licht had geleid. De baard van de oude tovenaar die vastzat in de boomspleet was losgesneden door het zwaard van haar ogen. Haar ogen spoten vuur, en lieten de koralen zien. Dit allemaal in flitsen, niet teveel, want teveel van dit goede zou de draken opwekken. Zij wilden Doornroosje voor eeuwig laten slapen, en niet slechts voor honderd jaar.

Ik keek met haar over de rivier van gisteren, naar de dampen ervan en de spoken, en wij wilden er niet wezen. Wij waren gevangen door het morgenland, waar de prinsessen en prinsen van gisteren niet meer regeerden. Wij konden het, ja, wij konden het wat we jaren niet gekund hadden. In het midden van de stad was zij verlicht. Wij werden door haar gevuld als roomsoezen. Van taai vlees waren haar vullingen, niet om te eten, maar om te broeden. De kok van de slacht werd terechtgesteld, en dit allemaal na een reeks lovende woorden. Morgen zou de maaltijd zijn, niet vandaag. Nooit meer zouden wij van onrijpe druiven eten waardoor de tanden van onze kinderen slee waren geworden. En deze komende maaltijd was een maaltijd voor vogels, raven, want zij waren bestemd voor dat uur om het eerste aan tafel te gaan en te eten. Het oog van de stad wilde haar verlichten, want de stad had haar nodig, en wilde haar nooit meer uit het gezicht verliezen, maar op die dag vertrokken de zwanen naar het oosten. De raven hadden de stad nu, en zij werden ingenomen, zoals zij eens innamen. Het pasen met zijn versierselen van drop was nog steeds een ingrijpende gebeurtenis. Ik keek haar aan, zij keek naar mij. Ik had mijn oude jeugdliefde teruggevonden. Zij had kleine borsten, niet gevuld, zij was teder, intens, voorzichtig, zacht. Nooit zou er meer een zondvloed komen na die dag. Haar regenboog was een teken daarvan aan haar hemel. Ik schraapte de damp er vanaf. Een standbeeld werd van haar opgericht in de stad. Wij zouden haar nooit vergeten.

Na die week speelden de kinderen spookje in de stad, en werden de oude hobbelpaarden uit de schuur gehaald. Zij speelde, ik droomde. Het was de slag der herinneringen, rijkelijk belegde het mijn brood. Ik liet de raven er van eten. Ik at de worst van het verleden door de berg naar de andere kant, en daar werd het varken van de toekomst geslacht. Tijd was niet meer. De bezetters hadden de stad en het land ingenomen, weer vanuit het oosten, door de Arabische zon. En ik kon alleen maar glimlachen. Ik vond het wel grappig, al die vogels. Wij voerden de vogels aan het zwanenmeer, maar de zwanen zijn hier nooit meer teruggekomen. Zij hadden het geheim ergens anders gebracht. Ook voerden wij de paarden die dag, de paarden van deze apocalypse. Beschuit was haar lievelingsvoer, en rozen haar lievelingsbloemen. Een paard zwom door de grachten. Ik keek erna, en mijn rug maakte mij los van de aarde. Ik zweefde er boven, als een grote broer, als de lange neef. Ik verzorgde de aarde als mijn broertje.

Het regende buiten. Ik zat met mijn jeugdliefde op de bank. Aan al het oude was een einde gekomen, nu ik het oudere had gevonden. Het was als een harem in mijn gedachten, een doornenkroon, een rozenkrans, de cirkelzaag boven Bagdad, de ster van Betlehem. Een zoete ster was het, van genadeloos geduld. Haar licht was verblindend, en toen konden we ineens

weer voelen, elkaar voelen. Voelen datgene wat zo lang was weggeweest. Zij liep zo langzaam in haar lange nachtjapon, een oosterse avondjurk, leren schoentjes met riempjes, met allerlei gaten, gelakt, en haar sokjes waren kinderlijk als de bloesem. En nog steeds dacht ik aan de zwanen. Waar zouden ze zijn ? Verblindend was haar licht, des te zoeter haar aanrakingen, haar verschijning. Teer licht, weeskind, wolf, onbegrepen. Ongezadeld in de nacht. Ik borstel haar, er is rust. Zij neemt haar pijl en boog, en gaat de stad in. In de stad staan beelden van zwanen, als een herinnering aan die dag. De zwanen zijn van steen, niet van vlees. De stad is verlaten van zwanen. De oorlog is dood. Elke knie zal zich buigen, elke tong zal belijden, en niemand weet wat. Een onverbiddelijk zwaard heeft de oorlog lamgelegd. Het vrederijk is aangebroken. De paarden van de apocalypse gaan streng door de stad heen, en dan komt de zon op, de Arabische zon. Het jachtboek is nu geopend. Men bekijkt de plaatjes, en begrijpt niet waarom. Men wil terug naar de oude dagen, maar het kan niet meer. Ik borstel haar haren, er is rust. Ze is in de stad met haar boog, als vrouwe Justitia. De rechtszaak begint. Zij was een vrouw van geconcentreerde kracht en zwakheid. De jacht-engel. Zij roepen vrede vrede, terwijl er geen vrede is. Na de duizend jaren zal er een nieuw tijdperk van vrede aanbreken. Ik borstel haar haren nog steeds. Ze zegt niks. Ik zak weg, en ze gaat op mijn rug liggen. Als een kat heeft ze haar prooi. De vlekken van de luipaard spreken van oude wonden. Dan breekt ze mijn rug, en ik ben niet meer van de aarde. Haar bereiken kan ik niet, alleen door stralen. Ik moet haar overgeven, ik moet haar loslaten, de afstand zal nu rechter zijn. Ik voel mij als een Arabische zon, die het ijzer laat stinken, die het leer zacht maakt.

Zij zal het grote ei uitbroeden, zonder dat het haar zal doden. Van het vergif zal zij niet eten. Eens sprong zij in het wespennest, en werd een luipaard. Nu komt zij niet dichtbij, maar broedt van ver weg. De dokters zeggen dat mijn rug nu goed is, maar ik heb pijn. Zij zeggen dat dat er niet is. Zij staren alleen naar de dop. In een vuur dat eeuwig brandt wonen zij. Van een afstand ontkennen zij de problemen, een naaldboom groeit uit mijn wond. Grootgebracht door wilde schapen ben ik. We zijn omsingeld en schaakmat gezet door levensgevaarlijke zotten. De idioten van de planeet Idiotia zijn gekomen. Waren de dokters maar dronken en aardig. Wat is er van ons Utopia overgebleven ? De nieuwe bezetters ruiken als het oude, de mondenrekken zijn weer terug. Ditmaal met veel prikkeldraad. IJzeren Jaap is uit zijn doos geklommen om de klokken terug te zetten. Waren de zwanen nog maar hier. Zij is een boogschutter, een teken aan de hemel, dat de oorlog nooit meer komen zal, maar we leven met de jacht. Een teken dat er nooit geen zondvloed meer zou komen, maar nu zijn we hier. De ijzeren maagd is onze straf. Zij broedt niet, zij steekt, zij is op jacht. Mijn rug is van ijzer, een bouwwerk van amalgaam, van kwik, van Mercurius, om de rest van mijn lichaam te verzieken. De dokters zien niets op hun foto's. Zij staren alleen naar de dop. Wij wachten allen op Bert Ootjes, die nu inmiddels een martelaar is. Maar de zwanen hebben hem bezocht. Mijn buik is gemaakt van witte en rode vulling, een eeuwig gif. Zelfs al is de wortel eruit, het symptoom zal altijd blijven. Een leuk syndroom waar geestelijk verzorgers aan kunnen blijven sleutelen. Ouders blijven met hun kinderen naar zulke dokters gaan, want als het kind geestelijk ziek wordt verklaard door de beroepsbeul, dan treft de ouders zelf geen schuld, want geestelijk ziek zijn dat ben je vanaf de geboorte, en zo hebben de ouders die hun kind verrot hebben geslagen een alibi. Zo is de zogeheten tandarts met zijn stiekeme, niet navolgbare, zogeheten vullinkjes die het kind beladen met complexe vergiftigingen en de syndrooms-stempeltjes van de geestelijk verzorgers, de zogeheten psychiaters en hun handlangers, een professionele ouders-bescherming geworden. En hoe kan een kind tegen zo'n doortrapt systeem opboksen ? Een kind heeft geen diploma's, geen zegeltjes, maar mag

deze zegeltjes wel verbreken, door de paardjes van de apocalypse. Maar waar zijn de zwaantjes wanneer je ze nodig hebt ? En waar is Bert Ootjes ?

Rebelse kinderen worden al snel ziek verklaard, niet de maatschappij, nee, want de maatschappij is heiliger, in ieder geval heiliger dan degene die aan de bel trekt. De paardjes staan nog steeds in deze carrousel. En de mierzoete snoepjes van oma moeten de kinderen klaarmaken om een reis door de fuik van de zogeheten tandarts te maken. De zogeheten tandarts gebruikt hiervoor goedgepraat geweld. De Arabische tandarts was nu gekomen, en die was nog wel orthodoxer. Bij de balie werd snoep uitgedeeld wanneer een kind zich keurig en netjes had gedragen. Het hormoon van Bert Ootjes was inmiddels uitgewerkt. Ook de botten begonnen gaatjes te vertonen, en ook die moesten gevuld worden, en daar had de Arabische tandarts een heel arsenaal voor, en die duldde echt geen tegenspraak. Arabisch amalgaam werd daarvoor gebruikt, waarvan de ingredienten strict geheim werden gehouden. Alleen de ingewijden mochten de ambacht uitvoeren, en beunhazen werden streng gestrafd. Die werden openlijk op de pleinen aan de schandpaal gezet. Nee, de Arabische tandarts, daar viel niet mee te sollen. Malafide tandartsen werden als kwakzalvers bestempeld, afgezet, en gingen sindsdien vaak zonder een ledemaat of ontmand door het leven. Azteekse praktijken kwamen niet zelden voor. De Arabische tandarts meende het. De bottenvuller, zo werd de Arabische tandarts vaak genoemd. ‘Ik moet vandaag weer naar de bottenvuller,’ klaagde een oud mensje. ‘Ja, ik ook,’sprak een bijna tandenloos oud mannetje, en een ander moest de dag erna. Controles waren wekelijks, en sommigen moesten twee keer per week. Elke knie boog, elke tong beleed, en elke trotse nek brak voor de Arabische tandarts. Als er problemen waren met het Arabisch amalgaam, dan werd dat altijd op iets anders geschoven, en dan voelde de Arabische tandarts zich diep beledigd, en kon erg kwaad worden, wat dan de meest verschrikkelijke consequenties had. Het was godslasterlijk om te twijfelen aan het Arabisch amalgaam. Zulke godslasteraars en aanstellers waren rijp voor de Arabische psychiater. De Arabische tandarts was wel heel goed voor dieren. Zo wreed als ze waren naar hun klagende patienten, zo genadig waren ze naar dieren.

Het lichaam van Bert Ootjes lag inmiddels op de bodem van het meer van Geneve, waar ze hem hadden gedumpt. Zijn botten werden later opgedoken en hij kreeg een eervolle begrafenis. De appel brandt, en kan niet meer gegeten worden. Er kan alleen nog maar gekeken worden als naar de uitbarsting van een vulkaan. De trekpop van het verleden is stuk, maar de Arabische tandarts kan het nog wel maken, want die handelt ook in speelgoed. Bert Ootjes zal zich zeker in zijn graf omdraaien. Speelgoed, om kinderen klaar te maken voor de tandarts. Nu kunnen ze nog spelen, maar straks ? Onze enige hoop is de marsmannetjes, maar die bestaan niet. De marsman marcheert onderdrukt in ons geconditioneerd verstand. De Arabische tandarts is de banketbakker, heeft een hotel-keten, is ambitieus. Hij is de grootste snoep-producent voor kinderen. Hij verdient wat bij, om ook een zwembad te hebben onder zijn kast van een huis. De Arabische tandarts is hier kind aan huis. Om Bert Ootjes wordt inmiddels flink gerouwd. Velen worden monddood verklaard. Ik begin een Arabische tandartsen-praktijk, zo’n beetje de enige manier om aan de Arabische tandarts te ontkomen.

Een nieuwe Arabische vogelsoort is er toegevoegd in het plantsoen, om het verlies van de zwanen op te vangen : de draai-konten. Prachtige vogels, daar niet van, maar ze kunnen zo vanuit het niets bezoekers aanvallen. Zo van : van te voren maar eerst bellen. Hele statige, deftige vogels met een strenge zwaar-orthodoxe etiquette. Zo ken ik er nog één. Het doet me een beetje denken aan die papegaai van het slot. Ik durf niet zomaar meer naar het zwanenmeer, het plantsoen. Deze vogels zijn geen grappen.

‘IJs ?’ vraagt ze.

- Ja, met slagroom, zeg ik

‘Siroop erbij ?’

- Ja, die rode

‘De Arabische tandarts zal daar blij mee zijn, die is lekker duur, en veroorzaakt veel gaten in je botten. Hij zal wel weer flink op je schelden bij de komende controle om zijn blijdschap om de winst goed te verbergen.’

- Nee, ik heb nu mijn eigen kwastjes. Ik kom niet meer bij die man. Ik ben nu zelf die man. Hij mag wel bij mij komen, dan zal ik hem een koekje van eigen deeg geven.

‘Arabisch amalgaam ?’

- Ja, schat, die met die vogelstront.

‘Schat, je weet toch dat je de doodstraf kan krijgen voor het verraden van de ingredienten.’

- Laat hen maar hierkomen met hun bekken vol mislukte plastische chirurgie en gedwongen eeuwige mode.

‘Schat, je weet toch dat dat hun geloof is ? Ze weten niet beter, en dat moet je respecteren.’

- Ik heb daar allemaal geen respect voor. Heb jij respect voor een mes die in je rug wordt gestoken ?

‘Toe nou, liefje, dat moet je zo niet zien.’

- Oh, en hoe moet ik het dan zien ?

‘Moet je kijken hoe je jezelf opstelt, en dat noemt zich een Arabische tandarts. Een beetje professioneler mag wel.’

- Oh, gaan we het nu ook over professionaliteit hebben, en vergeet vooral het woord deskundig niet te noemen. Ga godverredomme een ezel kopen.

‘Zeg, jeetje, nu ga je ook nog eens een beetje lopen vloeken hier.’

- En doe jij nu maar niet ineens alsof je heilig Aagje bent.

‘Oh, heerlijk zo’n ruzie met jou, maar je weet wie er boven in bed de touwtjes in handen heeft.’

- Je hebt gelijk, ’t spijt me, zal niet meer gebeuren.

‘Goed, Jan Klaassen, dan is dat in ieder geval duidelijk.’

- Ja, Katrijn.

‘Moet je nu nog ijs met slagroom en rode siroop ?’

- Nee, Katrijn, ik heb geen honger meer.

We starten een restaurant in het midden van de stad, zoals elke goede Arabische tandarts zou doen. Het voedsel is er zalig, en mensen komen hier echt om heerlijk te genieten. We hebben ons eigen plantsoentje met Arabische draaikont-vogels, door ons getemd. Een betere plek kan ik me niet wensen. Mijn wereld kan niet meer stuk, en de hare ook niet.

Het Kind Van Licht

Ik, 44 jaar, schrijver.

Ik houd van boeken, vooral van de wat mysterieuze boeken. Ik woon alleen in een kasteel. Om de dag door te komen drink ik veel thee. Als ik dat niet doe dan val ik in een diepe depressie die met het verleden te maken heeft. Arabische thee werkt het beste op mij. In de zomer trek ik er altijd met mijn caravan op uit. Ik heb vroeger gejaagd, maar daar heb ik me inmiddels voor negentig procent van bekeerd. Ik jaag nu alleen nog maar bij noodzaak. Ik ben een prominent lid van de jagers-vereniging. Ik houd van sport, maar ik merk bij mezelf dat ik steeds meer de rust opzoek. Ik houd van de indiaanse cultuur. Zij zijn het meest mysterieus voor mij. Ik ben verder niet gelovig, maar maak wel gebruik van de rijke symboliek van religies, als achtergrond. Voor mij is het natte kunst, de koude dood, ik geloof afstandelijk, maar wat ik dan geloof weet ik eignelijk niet. Ik voel mijzelf als een agnost, die weleens gebruik maakt van de metaforen en archetypes om mij heen, waarin ik bij vlagen soms een echte passie heb, die mij overigens ook weer benauwd. Ik voel mij een gevangene van mezelf, van deze wereld. Ik schrijf om ergens de uitgang te kunnen vinden.

Ik houd van dunne boekjes, maar wat dikkere boekjes doen het ook wel goed bij mij. Sommige boeken zijn gewoon echt perfect van formaat en ik kan daar wel uren naar staren en over nadenken. Ik lees veel, maar ben ook veel bezig met mijn geheugen. Sommige boeken benauwen me, en die heb ik liever niet in huis. Ik ben op zoek naar de perfecte boeken. Zo bouw ik mijn stad, mijn land, en mijn huis.

Ik ken mijn kasteel niet, ik woon alleen in een klein gedeelte. In veel kamers ben ik nog nooit geweest. Het kasteel staat verder helemaal leeg. Ik kom uit een gereformeerd gezin, een nachtmerrie, daarom woon ik nu alleen. Niemand zal me ooit de les nog leren. Mijn vader was dominee, en mijn moeder was uit hetzelfde hout gesneden. Ik kon me nooit uiten daar, ik werd nooit serieus genomen. Alleen de dikke bril van mijn vader sprak de waarheid. Wij hadden niets in te brengen. ’s Nachts is het alsof ik engelen hoor zingen. Vroeger leek het altijd alsof ik duivels hoorde zingen. Mijn vader noemde iedereen vroeger altijd ‘duivel’, en hemzelf beschouwde hij als een half-god. Ik kan daar nu om lachen, maar toen hij de baas was was dit zeer beangstigend, onheilspellend. Via een achterdeurtje in de kerk ben ik ontsnapt. Ik ben naar de kinder-bescherming gegaan en heb verteld wat voor gruwelijke praktijken ze er bij mij thuis op nahielden. Toen stopten ze me in een weeshuis. Mijn vader kreeg een lange gevangenis-straf, en mijn moeder werd in een inrichting geplaatst. Mijn vader is in de gevangenis overleden, en mijn moeder in die inrichting. Dat is natuurlijk een treurig einde, en ik heb daar best veel verdriet van gehad. In het weeshuis ben ik verder goed opgevangen. Ik woon nu op mijzelf.

Ik ben een verzamelaar van oud plastic speelgoed, klassieke uitgaves. Plastic is de toekomst, zeg ik altijd. Ik denk altijd : waren we maar wat meer van plastic, dan zouden een heleboel problemen opgelost zijn. We zijn van een te hoge graad vlees en bloed, en dat veroorzaakt de helse pijnen. Ikzelf weet goed wat pijn is, en het leek altijd wel een vereiste om verder te komen. Wat ik dan schrijf ? Antropologie en cultuur. Ik zou wel als ontdekkingsreiziger naar Zuid-Amerika willen gaan. Vooral het Amazone-gebied trekt mij aan. Er hangt veel kunstfruit in het kasteel, nog van de vorige bewoners.

28 Juni 1972

Ik heb nu een vriendin. We wandelen samen door het kasteel. Dan sleurt ze me mee de tuin in. Ze haalt me over om bij haar in te wonen. Ze heeft een klein huisje in de stad. Ik voel daar wel wat voor. Het kasteel is nu verleden tijd. Haar familie komt vaak op bezoek. Ze heeft een oom Jan en een oom Piet waar ze nogal erg op gesteld is. Sinds ik met haar ben ben ik de dingen anders gaan zien. Ze is veel buiten om de vogels te voeren. Vanaf hier kun je de kerk-klokken goed horen, maar ik vind dat niet erg. Ook heeft ze een voorliefde voor koken. Vooral met uien maakt ze veel bijzondere gerechten. Als ik aan de ui denk pel ik hem af in tranen. Zo zie ik mijn leven. Wortels zijn ook haar favoriet. Wortels doen me denken aan

konijnen. Verder houdt van allerlei puddings. Ze is veel bij de bloemen in haar tuin. Als ik aan bloemen, wortels en uien denk, dan zou ik er wel een trap van willen maken om met haar naar de zon te gaan. We houden van de zon. We zitten vaak buiten. Dan filosoferen we over allerlei dingen. Ze heeft boven veel schilderijen van indianen hangen. We zijn beiden erg ontzet over wat de blanken de indianen hebben aangedaan. Op zolder heeft ze een groot schilderij van de bizon-jacht. Ik vertel haar dat ik tegen jagen ben, maar dat het soms noodzakelijk is. Daarom ben ik lid van de jagers-vereniging. Indianen waren jagers voor voedsel, anders zouden ze gek van de honger worden, dus het was volkomen gerechtvaardigd. Ze waren ook nog eens met een jacht-instinct opgezadeld. De indianen zagen de dieren wel als heilig, dus vroegen ook om vergeving als ze op jacht waren geweest. Maar goed, dat kon natuurlijk per stam verschillen. Sommige indianen zagen het misschien ook als hun opdracht om te jagen voor de goden. Hoe dan ook, het hoe en waarom van de jacht interesseerde mij. Het was een prachtig schilderij, dat schilderij op de zolder. Het was net alsof de bizons op dat schilderij zeker niet voor niets stierven. Ze redden een indiaanse stam van de ondergang. Ook kwam er kannibalisme voor onder indianen. Dit had vaak te maken met religie, maar ook met oorlog, en soms gewoon echt honger. Sommige schilderijen die ze had waren echt luguber. Maar ik moest er gewoon meer vanaf weten. Het was een drang die ik niet kon tegenhouden. Mijn obsessie met indianen werd zo sterk dat mijn vriendin me op andere gedachten probeerde te krijgen, en mij probeerde af te leiden. Maar mijn drang was zo groot en aanstekelijk dat ze op een bepaald moment ook zelf voor de bijl ging. Wij moesten en zouden het geheim ontrafelen.

Mijn vriendin had ook een schilderij van engelen, en dat sprak mij aan, maar beangstigde mij ook. Een ander schilderij was met een engel die op de engel des doods leek, staande voor een poort. Het leek op een reusachtig groot zwart-grijs standbeeld. In de geschiedenis werden de indianen en hun goden door de christenen gedemoniseerd. Natuurlijk is bloedvergiet niet goed te praten, maar daar konden de christenen ook wat van. Ik staarde naar buiten, en kon de kerktoren boven de huizen zien uitsteken. Aan de ene kant trok het christendom mij aan, maar aan de andere kant stootte het mij af. Het was in mijn ogen de arrogantie ten top, verschrikkelijk nationalistisch en cultuurbarbaars. En dan die eeuwige hel, dat was me nogal een piek op de kerstboom. De macht van het christendom was groot, en zaaide angst en paniek. En mijn vraag was wat de God van de christenen met de indiaanse goden en de zielen van de gesneuvelde indianen heeft gedaan. Waar waren zij ? In mijn hoofd dansten de indianen een vurige dans, en als dat zo door zou gaan zou alles spoedig in vuur gaan. Ik kon mezelf er niet van losmaken. Het leek alsof zij brandden door het christelijk stempel. Het van hen geroofde land was nooit aan hen teruggegeven. De indianen hadden ingang tot de natuur, iets wat de blanken nauwelijks hadden, en dat maakte hen jaloers, omdat ingang tot de natuur ook de staf van vruchtbaarheid betekende. Het was alsof de draak een ei bewaakte en tegelijkertijd niet bij dat ei kon komen.

En wij leefden nog steeds dichtbij die draak in dat land, die jaloerse, kleptomanische, arrogante kracht die ons door het vele papier van de natuur af wilde houden. Maar goed, we wilden ook geen slapende draken wakker maken. Mijn vriendin leefde zich uit met het koken. Bij broodgerechten werd het bruine brood bewust gemengd met het witte brood. De blanken zouden deel kunnen hebben aan die natuur, door vermenging, niet door moord en roof. De blanke land-inpikker koos de brede snelweg van de vijandschap en niet de langzame, smalle

weg van de vriendschap. Maar de blanke zag de indiaan al als goddeloos bij voorbaat, omdat de leefwijze van de indianen niet bijbels was. Grappig is het dat in de grondteksten van de bijbel alles wel weer indiaans is, maar de blanke leefde met een slappe vertaling daarvan. De spinnenwebben buiten laten me zien wat voor spel er aan de gang is. Of zijn de blanken ook een soort indianen met hun eigen jacht-instinct ? Daar lijkt het wel op, want onze voorouders hebben een verschrikkelijke jacht op de indianen gemaakt, en waren erg barbaars, echt niet minder dan de indianen, en vandaag laat de blanke nog steeds zien wie hij is door al zijn machts-systemen en verschrikkelijke bureaucracy. Daar moet je maar tegen kunnen. De blanke heerser is als een witte spin met een web waar je 'u' tegen moet zeggen, en doet in oorlogsstrategie niet onder aan de indiaan. Wie is er nu een wilde ? Schuilt er in iedere blanke niet een indiaan ? Wat rassen-communisme zou de wereld geen kwaad doen.

Het liefdesbed boven de zee was leeg. Zowel de blanke als de indiaan waren vertrokken, naar hun eigen stukje natuur. Het bed was omringd met duizend deuren. Eén van deze deuren was de deur van verzoening, terwijl de anderen deuren waren van de dood. Ik was vastbesloten de juiste deur te kiezen. Ik had maar één kans. Ik ging op mijn gevoel af. Ik opende een deur en viel in een afgrond. Was dit de dood of de verzoening ? Ik zag grote doodshoofden van indiaanse opperhoofden. Ik zweefde boven de wateren, met haaien onder mij. Aan de andere kant van de afgrond kwam ik aan. Ik was trots op mezelf dat ik het had gered. Waar was ik nu ? Dood of levend ? Eén van de haaien had een grote staart die hij op me richtte. Hij was me gevolgd. Hij stond op het punt om mij met die grote staart te slaan. In mijn binnenste hoorde ik een stem die zei : 'Omhels de staart.' Toen ik dat deed ontplofte de staart en kleine doodskoppen kwamen voort. Een vrouw droeg een kruik, de laatste jacht.

De wereld met al haar boosaardigheden bleef ergens steken in een gat, zwevend in een licht. Alleen haar vrucht zou kunnen doorlopen, maar zij zelf zou vergaan in die kruik, in de laatste jacht. Ik staarde naar haar schilderij. Ze had het zelf geschilderd. Ze had een prachtige uitleg gegeven, zoals ik het niet zou kunnen doen. Ik had bewondering voor haar. Zij had een heerlijk boek geschreven. Andere boeken zouden mij steken. In onze gedachten waren wij nog steeds in het kasteel. Wij keken naar het binnenste van het kasteel, wat was als een exotische vrucht, waarvan je zou sterven als je het zou eten, maar wij stierven niet. Wij hadden het kind van licht gevonden. Wij keken naar de vrucht, aten ervan, en beseften dat dit het vlees en bloed was van de verzoening. Wij hadden de juiste deur gevonden. Een geluksgevoel maakte zich van mij meester, als van een geboorte. Dit kind van licht was ons kind. Nu zouden wij nooit een kind opbrengen in de materiele wereld, dat zou wreed zijn. We lieten het kind in de lucht zijn.

In het kasteel, in de kern, was alles anders, waar de pit was, het lichaam van de verzoening. Dit bed was in ons huis nu, in de huiskamer, waar iedereen het kon zien. Ook vanuit de keuken kon het bed gezien worden, en vanuit de tuin. Hier draaide het huis om nu, en buiten sneeuwde het, om alles, maar dan ook alles, met een sluier te bedekken. In onze gedachten was er een gele zwemvogel in het riviertje van het kasteel. Wij wisten niet waar het diertje vandaan kwam. Wij hadden het daar nog nooit eerder gezien. Het was onze trots, een trots om

de nieuwe geboorte. Op hetzelfde moment was er een sterfgeval, de oude wereld, en het feit dat we niet meer in het kasteel waren. Maar het was goed zo.

In het bos rondom het kasteel waren zoete vruchten, exotischer dan degenen in het kasteel. In het bos was het goed. Dat was gewoon zo. Nog wel beter dan in het kasteel. En hier waren wij. Hier leefden wij. Van de modder van het dagelijks leven. Het diertje kwam hier ook. En als wij op onze uitgestrekte deken zaten, dan gaven wij hem ook wat voedsel. De gele zwemvogel was onze vriend, een parel uit de andere wereld. Het was een krachtige vogel, die goed voor zichzelf kon zorgen, statig, deftig, onafhankelijk, een hele verschijning. Wij konden hem niet de baas. Het was een koppige, eigenzinnige vogel, maar daar hadden ze om gevraagd. Hij wist precies zijn zin te krijgen. We deelden met hem de oogst.

Hij was een profeet, een prachtig joch, een apocalypse. Hij sprak snel, soms verwarrend. Hij sloeg deuren open. Wij volgden hem, terug naar het kasteel. Hij liet ons boeken zien die nog nooit waren gelezen, en boeken die nog nooit waren geschreven. Hij liet ons gangen zien die we niet kenden, en een wereld waar wij geen deel aan hadden. Een globe van vuur, in het midden van het kasteel. Daar legde hij zijn kleed af en gaf ons precies wat wij wilden. Hij was gekomen om verlangens te vervullen, wensen. Hij was gekomen om dromen uit te laten komen. En daarna ging hij rond met de hoed. Hij was een handelaar, een makelaar in dromen.

Mexicaans

IJs

Hoofdstuk 1.

Ik liep op straat, en dacht aan het mengsel in de lucht, als aan een trap die tot een wolkenkasteel zou leiden, of een andere planeet. Ik had daar vaak over nagedacht en gefilosofeerd. Wie zou daar wonen ? In de nacht trok ik de stoute schoenen aan, en fietste naar de hemel. Ik had een lange regenjas aan.

Een koude oorlog heerste in de hemel, zo koud. Alles hier was gemaakt van het mengsel, prachtige zuilen, zeer hoog, een kolossaal gezicht. Zure gezichten bewaakten deze hemel, professionele gezichten zonder zorg, maar met een doodslust, ongenadig, zonder hart. En ik

dacht : als het dan hier al zo koud is, hoe koud zou dan het opperwezen wel niet zijn, God. Ik zag God in de kleine dingen, de liefde tussen mensen, maar niet hoog op een ijselijke troon, geen gezagswezen die brulde om aandacht, en het dan niet gaf. Wie had deze God gecreeerd, deze machine van de hel. Wie had deze God in het leven geroepen ? Ik liep op straat, en keek door een winkelraam, waar ik protserige chocolade figuren zag liggen. De winkelier was in gesprek met een mevrouw. Zijn gezicht stond vuurrood. Niks geen liefde op zijn gezicht, alleen koele zakelijkheid. En de vrouw keek alsof ze haar liefde op het eerste gezicht had gevonden.

Ik liep door op de trap, tot het zolder, waar ik alle geraamtes nog beter kon bekijken. Een machteloos gevoel overstroomde mij, wat mij vertelde dat er meer aan de hand was. Een pauwenkoningin vond ik op een verdieping boven het zolder. Zij was de leider van een stad. Zij sprak mij geruststellend toe. Zij droeg het raadsel van de schoonheid, het raadsel van de hoer. Ik kwam er meer en meer achter dat ik de toren van Babel aan het beklimmen was. Ik was nog maar een jong kind. Ik had deze dromen zelf gecreeerd. Maar ik wilde er meer van weten. Het kon niet zo zijn dat ik de enige hier was. De pauwenkoningin nam mij mee naar haar kamer. 'Wil je je voetjes vegen, schatje,' zei ze. Ook wilde ze dat ik zou douchen. Het was liefde op het eerste gezicht. Ik was verliefd op haar. Maar natuurlijk had ik geen plaats in haar hart. Voor haar was ik maar een nummer. Ik was een jong kind, maar op hetzelfde moment een oude man. Zij was een zeemeeuw in de lucht. Boven de zee zweefde zij, de zee van mijn verlangens, maar ze liet me gaan. Ik was een nummer voor haar. Ik was maar een klein golfje in haar zee, gemaakt om te werken, om haar scheepjes te dragen. Toen ik haar bereikt had was ik oud, zeer oud, toen ze mij toegang gaf tot haar toren. We werden vrienden, en ik herinnerde het moment waarop ze mij voor het eerst zag. Ze had sprekende ogen, gecalculeerd, hardvochtig, maar tegelijkertijd zo zoet. Ik was bang voor haar, en tegelijkertijd bewonderde ik haar. De zuilen van haar stad waren hoog. Zou zij God herbergen ? Ik was bang dat ik haar niet aan zou kunnen, bang dat zij over mij zou heersen, en dat gebeurde ook. Het mengsel was hier een dictator. Ik sloofde mezelf voor haar uit, om een hogere rang te krijgen in haar koninkrijk, en op hetzelfde moment vroeg ik mij af waar ik mee bezig was. Ze maakte mij tot kapitein.

Het mengsel was een mix van edele metalen en edele plastic-soorten, met de sterkte van dansers. Het was zowel buigbaar als onbuigbaar. Je kon het niet manipuleren. Zelden had ik een koppiger geheel gezien. Ik bleef maar gefixeerd op haar. Zij was de ster van het feestje, zij werd aanbeden. Haar stem was zacht en zoet, en tegelijkertijd gebiedend. Ze dwong aandacht en aanbidding. Zij die haar niet genoeg gaven werden geperst als fruit en vruchtjes, en wisten de keer erna wel beter. Zij was de mixer. Haar dans-muziek was meeslepend. Je kon je er nauwelijks tegen verzetten. En het raadsel van de schoonheid in haar was allesverwoestend en traumatiserend. In de nacht was zij een storm van angst. Ze was een vrouw van tegenpolen, ze had een duister gat. Haar legermachten vreesden haar. Ik kon mij niet verzetten tegen haar. Ik voelde me een slaaf. Er was iets in haar wat het einde van de wereld kon veroorzaken. Maar ook zij werd oud en grijs op haar oude dag, en ik trok voort. Als een trekvogel nam ik afscheid van haar. Haar woede liet veel van de toren invallen. Ik hield mij vast aan de dunne zuilen van het mengsel, en klom omhoog. Het mengsel redde mij uit haar grip. Ze was een panische verschijning vanaf toen.

Ik trok me op aan het mengsel, maar het begon te branden en te klonteren. Het droop van me af. Het proefde als een mix van chocola en caramel. Een spin greep mij, en ik verloor alles. Ik had geen identiteit meer, geen enkele zeggenschap. De wind deed met mij wat hij wilde. Ik was als geknakt riet. Ik was gekomen op de academie, waar jonge haantjes met hun veren pronkten, arrogante belhamels, die nog niet wisten dat ze niets wisten. Zij hadden van de grote appel van het 'zelf' gegeten. De 'ik' was hier de baas. Ook zij droegen het geheim van schoonheid. Zij waren ijdel, en bleven uren lang kammen voor de spiegel. Zij hielden hun schoonheidsverkiezingen van wie er het meest deskundig uitzag. Het mengsel werd hier aanbeden. Zij aanbaden het raadsel van de hoer. Het was een koopwaar, bezegeld met een diploma. Koningen kochten hun tronen voor hoge prijzen, en het raadsel van geld was moord. Ik had geen alibi, dus ze zagen mij als de moordenaar aan, en sloten mij op in een inrichting. Het was de koningin van de pauwen die mij daaruit bevrijdde. Dit land kende geen gevangenissen, alleen inrichtingen. En het mengsel was de militaire dienstplicht. De koningin van de pauwen maakte me tot officier nu. Ik was officier in het leger van het mengsel nu.

De hoer van Babylon zat hier, een prostituee, met een handel in koffie en cacao. Zij had haar mengsel geschapen van macht, want de toren moest verder gebouwd worden, tot in het hart van de hemel. Dit keer zou zij niet falen. Er stond teveel op het spel. Zij was de Izebel die de papieren profetie zou scheuren, als het voorhangsel van de schoonheid. Zij had haar potten en pannen opgestapeld, en beklom dezen. Zij was de prinses op de erwt. Haar matrassen waren opgestapeld tot aan het plafond. Vandaar kon ik het koele wezen zien, het wezen dat ons allemaal met strakke, misselijkmakende hand regeerde en afbeulde. Dit monster was genaamd het beest, slechts haar eigen spiegelbeeld. Ik dronk wat van mijn koffie, en zat tegenover haar, op de wiebelende matras. We voelden de erwt steken. Het stak als het ergste zwaard. Het was de wraak van de koffie-plantage, de opstand der slaven. Zij hadden hun eigen middel : de melange. Het was een mengsel van groenten, koffie, fruit en snoep. Het was een neger-opperhoofd die de toren van Babel claimde. Iemand anders had een middel genaamd : de mix. Al snel liep het uit op een oorlog, en het beest sprong toe, zodat ik er langs kom en naar boven rende. 'Laten ze elkaar maar opvreten,' dacht ik bij mezelf. Ik had lang genoeg zitten kaarten. Eindelijk waren er dan wat jokers in het spel. Maar de toren van Babel begon in te storten. Ik kon niet verder naar boven. Weer had de koningin der pauwen genade met mij, en liet mij binnen in het wolkenkasteel. Ik was nu haar generaal. Maar koning was ik nog steeds niet. Ik liep er nog steeds zeer armoedig bij. Ze begon met pudding te gooien, en al snel waren we in een gevecht. Het mengsel was nog steeds meer dan overwinnaar. Ik verdiende het niet om zo te lijden, maar de oren waren doof hier. Een kat genaamd mengelmoes kwam dichterbij. 'Wat wil je hier beginnen ?' vroeg hij. 'Niemand zal naar je luisteren, want ze zijn allemaal in de ban van de mengelmoes.' Ik maakte een stap naar achteren omdat ik bang was dat deze 'mengelmoes' mij zou bespringen. Hij zag er woest uit en levensgevaarlijk. 'Ik zal je doof maken als de rest,' zei hij. 'Ik zal je voorhoofd harder maken dan hun voorhoofden, en je zult hen overwinnen.'

'Waar bestaat u uit ?' vroeg ik.

‘Appelmoes,’ zei hij, ‘jam, kaas, en veel worst.’ Hij probeerde mij kopjes te geven, maar ik hield me afzijdig. Hij zou me met één slag of bijt kunnen vermorzelen. ‘Ken je het geheim van Babylon ?’ vroeg hij. ‘De moederstad van alle hoeren. Ik bewaak haar boom.’ En hij probeerde mij te verleiden om van die boom te eten, wat mij tot een koning zou maken in de stad, maar ik weigerde, en zijn woede was groot. Hij kookte van woede, en begon te sissen als een slang. ‘Zij die geweigerd hebben komen de stad nooit meer uit,’ sprak hij toen kalm. Ik rende de stad binnen, en zocht naar een schuilplaats om me tegen deze kat te beschermen, maar niemand deed voor me open. Binnenin de stad was de gracht van chaos, waar ik toen insprong. Duisternis omhulde mij, maar alles beter dan deze kat. Ik zwom van gracht naar gracht, totdat ik bij een bakkerij aankwam. Het was de bakkerij des doods, waar zwart-grijze vrouwen werkten. ‘Mengelmoes zal wel naar je op zoek zijn,’ sprak één van de vrouwen. ‘Hij houdt niet van zwervers zoals jij. Er is er maar één die je nog kan helpen, en dat is Hutspot.’

‘Wie is dat ?’ vroeg ik.

Ik ontsnapte via een achterdeurtje met een boekje in mijn hand. Ik was nu in een winkelstraat, op zoek naar Hutspot. Het boekje was een stratenboek, en al snel kwam ik waar ik wezen moest. Hutspot was een oude clown. Hutspot kende de toren van Babel als zijn broekszak en was ooit zelf ternauwernood aan mengelmoes ontsnapt. Hij vertelde mij hoe hij onstnapt was : ‘Een glimlach bestaat uit een mengsel tussen monogamie en polygamie, maar de hoererij is een nog groter overspelig mengsel die de glimlach dooft. Daartoe was mengelmoes uitgezonden. Het grootste mengsel is echter het celibaat waarvan je werkelijk gaat lachen, ja, schaterlachen. Dat is het grootste medicijn.’

‘Bent u van het katholieke priesterschap of iets soortgelijks,’ vroeg ik.

‘Nee, zoon,’ zei hij. ‘Er is een groter mysterie,’ zei hij. ‘De slang bewaakte in de hof de boom van de vermenging, waardoor er bastaarden voort zouden komen, half-bloed paarden. Adam en Eva waren volbloed-paarden van het koninkrijk, de onaangetaste bloedlijn, ongemengd. Zij leefden in de oorspronkelijke hof van Babylon, het paradijs, waar zij de voorbestemde bruid en bruidegom van Babylon waren. Eet van de hutspot.’ En toen zette hij mij een bordje voor. De kat klopte al op de deur, dus ik moest snel eten. Bij de eerste hap die ik naar binnen slikte hoorde ik de kat al krijsen. Bij de tweede hap was alles doodstil. Hutspot had een restaurant, en vertelde mij dat de bruid van Babylon in de kelder leefde. Ik wilde haar graag ontmoeten. Zij was als getooid voor haar man, versierd met kostbare edelstenen. Zij droeg het serum in een glazen bol. Zij was maagd, de prinses van de pauwen. ‘Je weet dat het mengsel aids is, hè ?’ vroeg ze. Ik knikte. ‘En je weet wat de enige oplossing daartegen is, hè ?’ vroeg ze. Ik knikte weer. Ze opende de glazen bol, en haalde er een rode condoom uit. ‘Hier,’ zei ze.

‘Nee,’ zei ik, ‘dat kan ik echt niet aannemen.’ Toen rende ik weg, hard de trap op, en toen nog hoger. Dit hier was niets anders dan een andere afdeling van het bordeel. Het mengsel regeerde hier. Ik greep een paraplu die ergens hing, en wist dat als ik ergens de kans kreeg, dan zou ik van deze toren afspringen. Maar alles was gesloten hier. Ik kon alleen naar boven rennen. Er was zo’n meerkeuze-dictatuur hier. Bovenaan de trap was het rijk van mevrouw Kluts, een heks. Zij stond daar in haar ketel te roeren. Toen ik er langs wilde, veranderde ze in een octopus. Tegelijkertijd veranderde alles wat hier was in een grote zee. ‘Klaar voor de zondvloed ?’ zei ze. Zij was een zeeheks. Zij was het mengsel der mengsels. Ook kon ze alles in steen laten veranderen. Het was bijna twaalf uur op de klok van de toren van Babel. Iedereen verzamelde zich onder de klok, alle bakkers met hun taarten, en toen kwam de snijder naar voren om de taarten te snijden. Het mengsel zou gescheiden worden. Alles ging in grote dozen. Mij wilden ze tot koning maken, maar ik wilde hier niet wezen. Ik verborg me in de klok. In de klok was een tunnel naar een andere toren, de toren van Noach, die zou namelijk hoog genoeg zijn om de hemel te bereiken, die zou nooit vallen, en die zou niet door de zondvloed getroffen worden. De godin der pauwen begroette mij daar, en nam mij naar binnen. Hier werd ik niet als een nummer behandeld. Maar er was iets wat niet klopte. Ik was terecht gekomen in een molen. Ik zou spoedig tot moes vermalen worden. Ik rende snel weer terug naar de toren van Babel, maar die was al aan het branden. Ik kon geen kant op. Plotseling pikte een vogel me op en zette me in de wolken. ‘Hier gaat de toren van Babel verder,’ zei de vogel. Ik klom van wolk tot wolk, en besefte dat de gehele aarde een toren van Babel was. Hoeveel torens zou het kasteel van Babel hebben, dacht ik. Ik stapte in een lift, waar ook de hoer van Babylon inzat, en de bruid van Babylon. ‘Zo, waar gaat de reis naartoe ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Naar de hemel,’ zeiden ze.

‘Oh, de hof van Babylon ?’ vroeg ik. Ze knikten. ‘Moes regeert daar,’ zeiden ze.

‘Oh, mengelmoes ?’ vroeg ik verschrikt.

‘Nee, zijn broer, die is wat makkelijker,’ zeiden ze.

‘Ik hoop het,’ zei ik.

Na een tijdje kwamen we aan in de hof van Babylon. Moes was inderdaad ook een kat, een prachtig beest. ‘De Kat van Babylon,’ zeiden ze. Moes was een aardig dier. Alles leek hier gemaakt te zijn van moes. De druiptuinen waren hier. ‘Koffie ?’ vroeg Moes. Ik knikte. ‘Met of zonder chocola ?’

‘Met,’ zei ik.

‘Goede keus,’ zei Moes. ‘De gifmengers van de hel nog tegen gekomen ?’ Ik knikte. Daar had ik genoeg van gezien.

‘De gedwongen vrucht, hè,’ zei hij. Ik knikte weer.

‘Nu, die gedwongen vrucht is hier niet,’ zei hij. Ik keek naar een omgekapte boom, maar wel vloeide er spul van naar beneden. ‘Ja, beneden komt heel wat aan,’ zei Moes.

‘Kun je die boom niet naar beneden donderen ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Nee, want dan komt niemand meer aan. Dan was jij hier ook nooit gekomen,’ zei Moes. Het raadsel van de schoonheid raasde in de lucht als een mengsel, haarzelf instandhoudende, bevestigende en ondersteunende. Zij had geen zelf-kritiek, zij was puur en alwetend. Zij protste hier en bracht anderen ten onder. En niemand kon haar vasthouden vanwege hun onreinheid. Zij was een giftige lijm in de lucht. Zij was de enige waarheid. Zij nam niemand serieus, kon zich totaal niet verplaatsen in de ander, en had daar ook geen behoefte aan, want alles draaide om haar, zij was de enige. Zij was de chemische stank in de lucht, de uitlaat van de cosmetische fabriek. Zij was van alles en iedereen verlaten, maar hield zichzelf in stand door zelfbevrediging. Ze was een meervoudige personaliteiten syndroom. Zij eiste blindelingse gehoorzaamheid. En dit noemden ze de hemel ? Moes zei dat we daarom beter in de hof van Babylon konden blijven. Er was daarboven niets te zoeken. Maar de bijtende lucht was overal. Moes bracht me naar een grot waar poppen waren. Hier was het veiliger, maar die poppen deugden ook niet echt. Ik voelde me opgesloten hier. Moes begreep me, en bracht me toen naar de grot van een draak. Het vuur van de draak en zijn rook was erg ontgiftigend. Het was de draak van Babylon, die de geheimen hier bewaarde. Ik had het gevoel dat ik weer een beetje kon ademen. De draak verwarmt de toren. De draak heeft dit alles gebouwd. Wij kunnen alleen opstijgen als een phoenix vanuit het as. Dit is de draken-cocon, de cocon van vuur en ijs. Wij zijn vlinders van de dood, die vervolgens worden gedroogd en ingelijst. Wij zijn hier op het mijnenveld, elke stap kan de laatste zijn. Maar uit de cocon zullen wij nooit vallen. De martelaar schreeuwt en niemand verstaat. De draak grijpt om zich heen, en sleurt iedereen mee in zijn val.

Hoofdstuk 2.

De tere vlinder vliegt, raakt vast in webben, valt, en verandert in een moordenaar. Vals beschuldigd, bespot, bedreigd, gedwongen en gehaat, moest zij van het mengsel drinken, van Babylon's thee, en haar gevoelens verdringen. Tot het dodenrijk daalde zij, in het diepste van de hel vond zij haar pijl. Zij is een moordenaar nu, een deel van de draak zelf. Zij moest drinken van de thee, zij moest eten van het verleden. Zij moest drinken van andere werelden die zij niet kende. Zij was naar de toren van Babel verbannen. De molenaar van het kruis moest zij ontmoeten, en de moordenaar die daaraan hing. Zij verloor alles in de strijd. Door het mengsel werd alles van haar afgesneden. De stem van Babel was zacht en verwarrend. Alleen de ochtend kon verheldering geven. En dan kwam de nacht weer, en dat ging maar door, totdat we zelf een deel van het mengsel waren geworden. De bakker van Babylon mengt ons. Hij maakt van ons dat wat we niet wilden zijn. Hij trekt ons uit elkaar en voegt dingen in, zoals hij dat wil. Ik zat weer in de lift, ditmaal naar beneden, tot diep onder de grond waar de slager van Babylon leefde.

De volgende dag liep ik in de winkelstraat en probeerde dit alles te vergeten. Maar diep van binnen wist ik dat ik nog steeds in deze toren opgesloten zat. Toen ik thuis was staarde ik uit het raam, en ging vroeg naar bed. In mijn bed lag ik te woelen, en probeerde alles van me af te schudden. Ik voelde me ziek. Ik kon wel janken. In mijn boekenkast was een boek van de Babylonische geschiedenis, naast een boek van Mexicaanse ijs-gerechten. Ik trok beide boeken eruit, en las in het eerste boek over Tammuz die het symbool was van de overwinning over relatie-problemen in het huwelijk. Hij was getrouwd met Ishtar, die het pasen uitbeeldde als Easter. Zij was een hemels ei dat ooit uit de hemel viel in de rivier de Eufraat. In de Sumerische voor-cultuur stond zij bekend als Inana die haar zuster Ereshkegal in de onderwereld wilde bezoeken en door zeven poorten moest gaan waarbij ze telkens een kledingstuk of sieraad moest afleggen. Zij beeldde de heilige striptease uit, het pellen van het heilige ei. Ishtar-Inanna was ook de moeder van Tammuz die hem later uit de doden opwekte door haar tranen. Hij had ontdekt dat het huwelijk hem tot het graf had geleid, maar kwam er ook achter dat het hem weer opwekte. Dit is de kracht van het Pasen, Easter. Hij was een voor-christelijke Babylonische Christus. Hij werd verscheurd door een psychiater, en werd toen meervoudige personaliteiten syndroom genoemd. Omdat zijn vrouw nog steeds een relatie met hem had werd zij vanaf dat moment een hoer genoemd, en was toen rijp voor de prostitutie. Ik voelde me machteloos en hulpeloos. Ik greep naar het tweede boek dat ik had gepakt, met de Mexicaanse ijs-recepten. Ik bestelde veel ijs en ging direct aan de slag. Er was zoveel ijs dat ik het in drie ijskasten in de kelder moest stoppen. Ik nodigde een vriendin uit. Ze vond het heerlijk. Ze vertelde mij veel over Mexico. Ik vertelde haar veel over de toren van Babel. 'Weet je dat er ook zo'n toren in Mexico staat ?' vroeg ze. Ze haalde een boek uit haar tas en liet het me zien. 'Het is een ondergrondse toren, naar het middelpunt van de aarde.'

'En wat is daar te zien, in het middelpunt van de aarde ?' vroeg ik. Ze haalde nog een boek uit haar tas. Ik schrok. Het waren de meest verschrikkelijke slangen en draken. 'Dit kun je daar vinden,' zei ze. Toen ik het boek begon door te bladeren vond ik het prachtig. 'Daar in Mexico aanbidden ze de dualiteit. Dat betekent dat ze alles aannemen wat je zegt, maar daar maken ze wel hun eigen mengsel van,' zei ze.

‘Je bedoelt de paradox ?’ vroeg ik. Ze knikte. ‘Ze aanbidden de rokende spiegel,’ zei ze. ‘De spiegel is de enige weg uit de toren van Babylon,’ zei ze. ‘Ik ben gekomen om je te redden.’

‘Nou, dank je wel,’ zei ik. ‘Dank je wel.’ Ze leidde mij naar de spiegel, en door de spiegel kwamen we samen in de ondergrondse toren van Mexico terecht. We gingen het eerste het beste ijs-restaurantje binnen. Het leven was hier goed, veel beter dan in de toren van Babel. Mijn redder zat naast me. Wel begon het steeds kouder te worden. Ik staarde naar een vlechtwerk aan de muur. ‘Je hebt de dubbele draad nodig,’ zei ze. ‘De twee kunnen niet zonder elkaar.’ Ik nam haar in mijn armen en besefte dat ik niet zonder het mengsel kon. Na het eten gingen we naar een hotel. We zochten een spiegel op, en gingen weer terug naar de toren van Babel. ‘De toren van Babel, en het Mexicaanse ijs,’ zei ik. ‘Laten we het daarop houden. Hier woon ik, dit is mijn thuis.’ Ze knikte. Ze stond volledig achter me. Er liepen wachters op de muren van Babel, om het geheim te bewaken. ‘Hier woont de hoer van Babylon,’ zeiden ze telkens. Er kwam een klein hondje op me afrennen. Ik nam het beestje in mijn armen. Ik wilde het geheim weten. We stapten in de lift, en gingen nog verder naar beneden. We kwamen aan in de hof. Het leek alsof we een cirkeltje hadden gemaakt. Maar dit keer stond de omgekapte boom rechtop, en er was een slang in de boom, genaamd Ea. Deze slang was een orakel. Je moest niets van wat hij zei letterlijk nemen. Hij was de god van de afgrond, die door de Sumeriers ook wel Enki werd genoemd. Hij was ook de god van het water en van de wijsheid. Hier hing het mexicaanse ijs in de boom. ‘Als god zul je zijn, als je van het mexicaanse ijs zal eten,’ zei de slang. ‘En je ogen zullen opengaan. Het zal je hart verlichten.’

‘Ik heb er al van gegeten,’ zei ik.

‘Dan zullen de Spanjaarden je snel vinden,’ zei de slang.

‘De Spaanse inquisitie ?’ vroeg ik. De slang knikte. ‘Maar daar weet ik wel wat op,’ zei de slang. ‘Bouw een schip, want ik zal de zondvloed brengen.’

‘Kan ik niet gewoon de lift weer in ?’ vroeg ik. Het was een schip der zotten waarin ik was beland, maar ook wist ik dat hier ergens het geheim moest zijn. Ik ging zitten op een bankje, en wist niet of ik de raadselachtige slang met z’n allegorieen serieus moest nemen. Weer nam ik wat van het mexicaanse ijs. Het was gewoon lekker, en verder kon het me niet zoveel schelen. Hij was een zoetwater slang, en een slang van het genezend water, dus zo erg zou zo’n zondvloed nog niet eens zijn. In de bijbel was er ergens een tekst over de poel van vuur en zwavel van eeuwige pijniging, wat in de grondtekst een poel van genezing blijkt te zijn. Alles was hier zo dubbel, en alles kon omgedraaid worden. Het orakel lachte naar me. Hij

scheen zichzelf ook niet al te serieus te nemen. ‘Ik ben het geheim van de vruchtbaarheid,’ grapte hij, ‘het geheim van alle creatie.’

‘Het zal wel,’ zei ik. Maar mijn mond begon steeds meer te branden. Wat had ik toch gegeten. ‘Ik zei het je toch,’ zei de slang, ‘maar je wilde niet luisteren.’

‘Zeker zwaar gekruid,’ zei ik. Ik gooide de deur achter mij dicht, en ging weer naar mijn kamer. Ik legde de twee boeken weer terug in de boekenkast, samen met de twee boeken die ik van die vriendin had gekregen. Ik ging weer slapen. In de nacht werd ik weer wakker van de pijn. ‘Je bent gekust door het vuur,’ zei een stem. Ik probeerde weer te slapen, maar het lukte niet. ‘Eet wat meer van het mexicaanse ijs, toe,’ zei de stem. Ik strompelde naar de keuken, en begon te eten, zoals ik nog nooit had gegeten, maar het vuur werd steeds erger. Ik hoorde gelach. ‘Okay, wat moet ik nu doen,’ zei ik.

‘Snap je dan niet dat je in een dubbele wereld bent. Wil je meer ijs, dan krijg je meer vuur,’ zei de stem.

Ik moest al snel overgeven van het vele ijs wat ik had gegeten, en er ging nog wel meer uit : vreemd kruid, vreemde bessen, zelfs doorns. ‘Het mexicaans ijs is goed voor orale laxering,’ zei de stem. Het voelde alsof mijn darmen werden schoongespoeld, en ik spuugde alles uit. Ik ging weer slapen, en sliep als een roos.

Het Gedwongen Chocola

Een oud vrouwtje leefde helemaal alleen in het bos in een klein huisje. Ze staarde naar buiten. Ze kon de bomen goed zien. Daarna staarde ze naar haar gedroogde vlinders die ze als kind had gevangen. Voor haar gevoel miste ze nog een paar kostbaren. Ze had haar net nog dichtbij haar, klaar om de ontbrekende exemplaren te vangen. Altijd was ze op zoek. Niets dan leugens zweefden in de lucht, haar beschuldigende. Ze wilde deze leugens vangen, opdrogen en inlijsten. Ze was vol van haat. Ze kon het gelach van de plagende spotters om haar heen niet meer aan. Elke dag weer probeerden ze haar neer te halen, al vanaf het moment dat ze

wakker werd. Ze leken op kinderlijke kleine elfjes, met brutale gezichtjes, als vlindertjes vrolijk dartelend om haar heen. Ze haatte kinderen op die manier, en ze droeg dan ook een duister geheim in haar binnenste. Soms sloeg ze met haar schepnet om zich heen, en riep : ‘Is het nu afgelopen.’ Maar de laatste jaren ving ze niks meer. Ze droeg een duister geheim van binnen. Ze wilde hier niet aan denken, en met niemand over praten. Ze was het vechten moe. Niemand zou haar begrijpen, en niemand zou sympathie voor haar hebben. Langzaam schonk ze wat thee in voor haarzelf. Buiten vlogen wat vogeltjes waar ze naar keek. Ze snapte niet waarom zo’n jonge geest als zij opgesloten moest zijn in zo’n oud lichaam. Zij zou oud worden in de armen van een ieder die haar aan zou raken, en daarom bleef ze ver van de mensen vandaan. Overdag werkte ze aan haar maaltijd voor de avond, en zorgde ze dat het huisje voldoende schoon bleef. Ook deed ze wat handwerk. Ze was ver weg in haar gedachten. Niemand kon haar bereiken. Ze was bitter geworden.

Ze wist niet dat er wat verder in het bos wonderbomen stonden. Ze kwam niet verder dan haar eigen tuin. De bomen werden bewaakt door dieren, zoals katten, slangen en konijnen, orakels. De bomen zouden haar naar boven leiden, maar ze zag hen niet. Ze zag alleen de kabalerige vliegende deugnietjes om haar heen fladderen. Maar op een dag was ze als door hypnose geslagen, en liep haar tuin uit door het tuinhekje. Ze wilde even het bos in, niet zo ver, maar even ergens anders zijn. Een konijn stond voor een boom, en wenkte haar. Ze kwam dichterbij en keek in de ogen van het konijn. Waarom komt u niet in deze boom wonen, zei het konijn. De top van de boom draagt een geweldig huis.

- Hoe kom ik daar, vroeg het oude vrouwtje.

Maar toen was het konijn weg. De vrouw wist niet of ze het konijn kon vertrouwen, liep door, en gleed in een onder het mos verborgen put. Ze viel gelukkig zacht, en op de bodem van de put stond een kat voor een deurtje. ‘Heus,’ zei de kat, ‘er is een ander leven voor u. Welkom binnen in uw nieuwe huis.’ En ineens was de kat verdwenen. De vrouw wist niet of ze de kat kon vertrouwen, maar ging toch naar binnen. ‘Welkom in de boom,’ zei een stem. ‘De boom is alles wat er is.’

‘Ik heb anders nooit in een boom geleefd,’ zei de vrouw.

‘Omdat je dat niet wist,’ zei de stem. ‘Je dacht alleen maar dat je wat wist.’

‘Ik wil hier weg,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Ik moet weer naar huis.’

‘Dit is je huis,’ zei de stem. Ze keek recht in de ogen van een kat.

‘Oh, jij weer,’ zei ze tegen de kat.

‘En jij weer,’ zei de kat. De kat greep haar en wilde met haar dansen, maar de vrouw wilde niet. ‘Ik wil eruit,’ riep ze.

‘Waaruit ?’ vroeg de kat.

‘Uit deze hel,’ zei de vrouw.

‘Dit is alles wat er is,’ zei de kat.

‘Spreek geen onzin,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Ik was daarnet nog in mijn huis.’

‘Welk huis ?’ zei de kat. ‘Dat dacht je alleen maar. Je bent hier altijd al geweest.’

‘Leugenaar,’ riep de vrouw. ‘Ik haal de politie erbij.’

‘De politie ?’ zei de kat. ‘Wat is dat ? Dat zijn alleen je gedachten.’

De vrouw werd woest en probeerde de kat te slaan, maar die was ineens verdwenen. Alles was donker om haar heen. Ze liep een trapje op naar boven, waar een beetje licht was. Daar was de kat weer. Beiden stonden ze voor een lift. ‘Stap in de lift,’ zei de kat, ‘dan zul je van al je problemen af zijn.’ Als gehypnotiseerd stapte de vrouw in de lift, en de kat sloot de deur achter haar. Hoog in de boom kwam ze aan in haar nieuwe huisje. ‘Maar dat is fantastisch,’ zei ze. Ze zou de kat wel willen omhelzen, maar die was nergens te vinden. Het beviel haar goed in haar nieuwe huisje. Alles was prachtig wit. Al snel kwam er een konijn boven. Het bleek hetzelfde konijn te zijn. ‘En van hieruit zul je alle lieve kinderen van de wereld opnemen,’ zei het konijn. ‘Er zijn kamers genoeg.’

‘Oh, dat lijkt me heerlijk,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Dan kan ik eindelijk voor het eerst een tante zijn.’

‘Zorg voor ze, kook voor ze, ga leuke dingen met ze doen,’ zei het konijn. ‘Deze kinderen zijn erg ongelukkig. Maak ze gelukkig.’ De vrouw had er echt zin in, en voelde zich jonger dan ooit tevoren. Het huis was inderdaad erg groot. Ze zou pannekoeken bakken, sprookjes voorlezen, en veel spelletjes met hen doen. Ook zou ze hen de andere plaatsen van de boom laten zien. Snel was haar huis vol met lieve kinderen. Ze sprak tot de boom als tot haar geliefde. Op een dag was ze verschrikt en in de war omdat haar kinderen in vuur waren. Maar de kat stelde haar gerust : het was slechts boomvuur. Het was een koud vuur wat aan hen beitelde, om hen nog meer klaar te maken voor het leven in de boom. De gezichten van reuzen waren in de boom die tot hen spraken. Op een dag stierf de vrouw. Heintje, een van de kinderen, nam de leiding over. Op de kamer van de oude vrouw stond een oude lift waar ze ingingen. Boven het huis bleek de boom gewoon door te gaan, en al snel waren ze in de wolken. Via een hele hoge tak kwamen ze in een andere boom terecht. Ze werden direkt door een konijn gegrepen en naar binnen gesleurd. Hier moesten ze gedwongen van vruchtenpastei eten. Ja, zei het konijn, want dit is de boom van de gedwongen vrucht. De kinderen vonden het niet zo erg, want de vruchtenpastei was erg lekker. Maar al snel moesten ze nog meer eten, en veel kinderen begonnen misselijk te worden. Heintje begon het toen flink zat te worden, trok zijn pistool en schoot het konijn aan flarden. Het bleek verder een prachtige boom te zijn. Ieder kind kreeg hier zijn eigen verdieping. Midden in de nacht maakte een ander konijn hen allemaal wakker, en dwong hen om chocola te eten in de gezamenlijke huiskamer. Eerst vonden de kinderen dat geweldig, maar toen ze later nog meer moesten eten werden sommigen al snel erg misselijk. Het konijn was verschrikkelijk aan het schelden. Heintje vroeg : ‘Mag ik vragen wat hiervan de bedoeling is ?’ Maar het konijn wilde er niks van zeggen. Ze hadden maar te gehoorzamen. Dat liet Heintje niet op zich zitten, greep zijn pistool en schoot op het konijn. Maar het konijn dook weg. Even later kwamen er nog meer konijnen binnen, en grepen Heintje. Heintje zou worden opgesloten achter tralies. De kinderen waren erg in paniek. Daantje werd hun nieuwe leider. ‘Zoals jullie hebben gezien is er hier niet veel pluis,’ zei Daantje. ‘We kunnen beter teruggaan.’ Maar toen ze bij de hoge tak terugkwamen zagen ze konijnse wachters staan. Toen zijn ze naar beneden gegaan, maar ook daar stonden konijnse wachters. De dagen erna werden ze weer gedwongen om chocola te eten, meer dan ze opkonden, en niemand kon er wat tegen doen. De kinderen werden doodziek. Weer riep Daantje iedereen bij elkaar en zei : ‘Dan maar zo hoog mogelijk.’ En ze gingen ditmaal gewoon zo hoog als ze konden. Ze hoopten dat ze weer een tak tegen zouden komen die hen naar een andere boom zou brengen, maar er gebeurde niks. Wel zagen ze ergens een deurtje waardoor ze naar binnen konden gaan. Het bleek een lift te zijn, maar die kon alleen maar omhoog. De kinderen gingen in de lift, en Daantje drukte op het hoogste knopje. ‘Jullie zitten vast,’ zei een stem van de lift. ‘Niemand kan van de boom van de gedwongen vrucht ontsnappen.’ Veel kinderen begonnen te huilen. Ook Daantje wist niet wat hij kon doen. Toen ze uit de lift stapten zagen ze een heks zitten, met een slang en een beer. De beer was een knuffelbeer. Toen ze wat beter keken zagen ze dat de heks en de slang een standbeeld waren. De knuffelbeer begon te lachen. ‘Wat sta je te lachen,’ zei Daantje.

‘Jullie hebben vast moeten eten van de vruchtenpastei en de chocola, nietwaar ?’ zei de knuffelbeer.

‘Ja, hoezo ?’ zei Daantje. Weer begon de knuffelbeer te lachen, ditmaal te schaterlachen.

‘Wat sta jij daar nou te lachen, domme aap,’ zei Daantje.

‘Nou,’ zei de knuffelbeer, ‘ik vind het wel grappig.’

‘Grappig,’ zei Daantje, ‘het is helemaal niet grappig. We zijn er doodziek van.’ Weer moest de knuffelbeer daar erg om lachen.

‘Zit je ons nu uit te lachen ?’ vroeg Daantje.

‘Kom, knuffel me,’ zei de knuffelbeer ineens. Daantje stapte voorzichtig naar voren, en begon de knuffelbeer te knuffelen. ‘Laat mij maar met jullie meegaan, dan zal jullie niks overkomen,’ zei de knuffelbeer. Samen gingen ze terug en de knuffelbeer had gelijk. Nu hij mee was gekomen lieten de konijnen hen met rust. De knuffelbeer was heel aardig. Op een dag vroeg Daantje waarom de konijnen hen niet meer dwongen. ‘Omdat ze bang voor me zijn,’ zei de knuffelbeer.

‘Kun jij Heintje dan niet bevrijden ?’ vroeg Daantje.

‘Nee,’ zei de knuffelbeer, ‘een konijnenslot valt niet zo maar open te krijgen.’ De konijnse wachters stonden ook nog steeds bij de grote tak en beneden, en daar viel niet zomaar langs te komen. ‘Ik zal je vertellen hoe je bij de knuffelboom kan komen,’ zei de knuffelbeer. ‘Midden in de nacht als iedereen slaapt dan schuift het standbeeld van de heks en de slang even opzij waardoor er een tunnel ontstaat die tot de knuffelboom leidt.’

Daantje besluit er naar toe te gaan om meer kennis op te doen. Hij moet helemaal alleen gaan, want de knuffelbeer is van die boom verbannen. Voor de jongere kinderen zou het te gevaarlijk zijn. Alles lukt, en al gauw komt Daantje via de tunnel aan in de knuffelboom.

Maar het is alles behalve een knuffelplaats. Militaire konijnen lopen hier rond. Daantje heeft nog nooit zoveel wapens bij elkaar gezien, en ze zien er heel gevaarlijk uit. Deze konijnen zien er veel erger uit dan de andere konijnen. Het zijn roofkonijnen, als ratten. En hun oren zijn ook een stuk korter. 'Neem van mij aan, deze konijnen zijn geen stumperds, nee, zeker niet. Geen ruzie mee krijgen,' zegt een konijn tegen hem. 'Wat kom je hier doen trouwens.' Maar Daantje loopt door. 'Wat hebben jullie met Heintje gedaan ?' roept hij. Even later komt hij bij een hok waarin een heleboel knuffelberen zijn, en waar ook Heintje zit. Heintje is flink boos. Heintje ziet er een stuk ouder uit, en vertelt hem dat ze gedwongen worden gevaarlijke medicijnen te slikken. Als dat zo door gaat heeft Heintje niet lang meer te leven. Daantje schrikt daar erg van. 'Daantje,' zegt Heintje, 'herinner je dat tante het eens heeft gehad over het huisje waar ze eerst woonde, vlak bij de boom, dat daar plagende elven woonden ? Misschien dat zij kunnen helpen. Wij kunnen niet van deze boom weg, maar als jij naar beneden loopt dan kon je door de voordeur eruit en naar ze op zoek gaan.'

Goed idee, zegt Daantje, en vertrekt meteen. Na een tijdje zoeken komt hij bij het huisje van het oude vrouwtje aan. In het huisje vindt hij de elfjes. Ze zijn erg droevig om wat ze het oude vrouwtje allemaal hebben aangedaan. Daantje vertelt hen het verhaal, en al snel gaan ze met hem mee naar de knuffelboom. Ditkeer gingen ze plagen en pesten zoals ze nog nooit eerder hadden gedaan, maar nu allemaal voor een goed doel. De konijnen waren snel allemaal van de boom vertrokken. Deze magische elven wisten heel goed hoe ze de kooi moesten openen, en al snel waren Heintje en de knuffelberen vrij.

Nachtkozijnen

Ze was als een roofdier. Ze leefde ergens hoog in een wolkenkrabber. Hier had zij haar eigen appartement. Mensen vonden haar vreemd. Ze leefde nogal geisoleerd, introvert. Ze had haar eigen manieren, haar eigen dingen, haar eigen verhalen, en daarom vonden veel mensen haar wereldvreemd, maar sommigen waren wel nieuwsgierig naar haar. Vaak liep ze rond in

gewaden met een zonnebril op, alsof ze een beroemde popster was. Haar cowboylaarzen hadden indrukwekkende patronen, en men vroeg zich af hoe ze daar aan kwam. Ze was een beetje op de maan.

Tarro van Hamelen had nog bij haar in de klas gezeten. Hij was altijd een beetje verliefd op haar geweest, en nog steeds had hij dat rare gevoel in zijn buik wanneer hij aan haar dacht, maar ze zag hem niet staan. Eigenlijk zag ze niemand echt staan. Ze leefde op zichzelf, en had genoeg aan zichzelf. Toch had ze ook vrienden die een beetje waren zoals zij, maar die bleken verre familie te zijn. Ze waren er wel en ze waren er niet. Niemand kon echt hoogte van haar krijgen.

Tarro probeerde soms een praatje met haar te hebben als hij haar tegen kwam. Maar dan liep ze snel door. Mensen waren nieuwsgierig, maar ze liet haast niets los. Ze was een roofdier.

Ze kon heel mooi zingen, en Tarro had altijd het idee dat ze stiekem albums maakte, en dat haar grote appartement hoog in de wolkenkrabber een eigen studio had. Ze was heel rijk. Misschien was ze de koningin van vermommingen, en had ze ook andere namen. Misschien was ze wel een groot schrijfster, of een groot sporter. Soms zei ze weleens : 'Ik moet naar de dans studio.' Tarro had het idee dat dat ook in haar appartement was, want dan liep ze altijd haastig weg. Ze deed alsof Tarro niet bestond, alsof ze geen tijd voor hem had. Tarro had vreemde dromen over haar 's nachts. Alsof ze op jacht was, als een grote tijgerin. Ook vaak was ze wat kleiner, als een puma of panter, of een andere soort wilde katachtige.

Ze was echt een beetje op de maan. Zo zag Tarro haar altijd. Alsof ze niet met beide benen op de grond stond, alsof ze in een andere wereld leefde, in een fantasie-wereld, die onbereikbaar was voor Tarro, maar waar hij zo graag deel aan wilde hebben. Hij kon er wel om janken. Hij miste haar zo verschrikkelijk. Vroeger sprak ze veel meer met hem, alhoewel hij het gevoel had dat hij er niet was. Hij wist dat het zo afgelopen kon zijn, want eigenlijk zag ze hem niet staan, en sprak ze alleen met hem omdat hij nu toevallig haar klasgenoot was. Veel probeerde hij om haar aandacht te trekken, maar tevergeefs. Soms deed ze leuke dingen met hem, maar dat was dan weer snel afgelopen. Hij kon het zich nog nauwelijks herinneren, en hij had het idee dat die leuke dingen maar op een hand te tellen waren. Maar hij had problemen met zijn geheugen. Soms had hij het idee dat ze veel meer samen hadden gedaan, maar dan gleed dat idee weer weg. Soms vroegen mensen weleens : 'Was dat niet dat meisje waar jij ooit verkering mee had ?' Maar dan schudde hij zijn hoofd. Hij had nooit verkering met haar gehad, maar zou dat graag gewild hebben. Maar toch was het alsof zijn geheugen faalde.

Hij had zich nooit goed in zijn hoofd gevoeld, altijd alsof hij ergens tussen zweefde. Liezelore leek in dat opzicht veel op hem, maar hij was veel socialer. Hij voelde zich ook een beetje op de maan, maar anders dan haar. Hij wilde haar wel helpen, maar zou ook graag door haar

geholpen willen worden. Ze zouden veel aan elkaar kunnen hebben. Op een dag besloot hij de stoute schoenen aan te trekken, en belde aan bij haar appartement. Hij moest hiervoor hoog met de lift in de wolkenkrabber. Ze deed open met haar zonnebril en keek hem verbaasd aan, haar mond een beetje openvallende. 'Tarro ?' vroeg ze.

'Wat kom je hier eigenlijk doen ?' vroeg ze. Tarro begon te stotteren, en even leek het alsof hij flauw zou vallen. Ze greep hem en trok hem naar binnen. 'Wat leuk dat je gekomen bent,' zei ze.

Maar toen werd hij wakker. Het was alsof ze in zijn hoofd zong, en het was als een plaaggeest. Maar toen smolt het weg. Hij had geen kracht om uit zijn bed te komen. De hele dag lag hij in bed om aan haar te denken. Op een dag kreeg hij bericht dat ze naar Amerika was vertrokken. Geen spoor liet ze achter. Een nieuwe vrouw kwam in haar appartement wonen, die een beetje was zoals zij, en die familie bleek te zijn. Het was haar zus. Ook haar zus liep vaak rond in lange gewaden met een kap over haar haar en een zonnebril op. Vaak waren die gewaden paars, en ze had ook cowboy-laarzen, maar dan met andere patronen. Ze was veel meer dan de gewoonlijke vrouwen, en al snel zette ze het hart van Tarro in vuur en vlam. De vrouw had ook een vreemd accent, alsof ze uit Amerika kwam.

Ook deze vrouw was als een roofdier, en Tarro had 's nachts dromen over haar. Aanspreken durfde hij haar niet.

Jaren gingen voorbij, waarin Tarro haar langzaam vergeette. Tarro had zijn eigen leven, en deze vrouw stond te ver weg. Maar muziek op de radio bracht ineens alle herinneringen terug, todat Tarro er pijn van had in zijn buik. Hij besloot de muziek te kopen, en luisterde vaak naar de albums. Zo had hij het een beetje in huis, en stond het niet meer zo ver weg. Maar toch bleef de pijn. Tarro wilde contact met de vrouw, en misschien op die manier met Liezelore. Tarro trok de stoute schoenen aan, ging naar de wolkenkrabber, en toen de lift in. Dat was een hele rit. Hoog in de wolkenkrabber aangekomen belde Tarro bij de vrouw aan. Die deed direct open. Tarro begon het verhaal te vertellen dat hij haar zus kende, en dat hij afvroeg hoe het met haar ging. 'Oh Liezelore ?' vroeg de vrouw. 'Kom maar even binnen,' zei ze warm.

'Liezelore is een vreemd meisje,' zei de vrouw. 'Ze woont nu in mijn appartement in Amerika, en ik hier in haar appartement, maar ze blijft maar klagen dat ze terugwil.'

'Waarom wil ze terug ?' vroeg Tarro.

'Omdat ze jou mist,' zei de vrouw met een lach op haar gezicht.

'Je meent het,' zei Tarro ongelovig. 'Ze ontwijkt me als de pest.'

'Zo zit ze in elkaar,' zei de vrouw. 'Ze houdt van je, is dol op je, maar ze kan het niet uiten. Ze kan er niet mee omgaan. Daarom rent ze weg, maar ze heeft het altijd over je.'

'Hoe is ze zo geworden ?' vroeg Tarro.

'Ach, zie je,' zei de vrouw. 'Door haar vader verkracht. Gelukkig is hij dood.'

Tarro begon te snikken, en begreep nu ineens haar vreemde gedrag. 'Liezelore kan niet met mensen omgaan, sinds hij dit deed. Hij deed het toen ze heel jong was,' zei de vrouw.

'Deed hij dat ook met jou ?' vroeg Tarro.

'Ja,' zei de vrouw, 'maar veel minder, omdat ik vaak weg was. Ik probeerde te ontsnappen. Dat is me eindelijk gelukt, en toen hielp ik Liezelore om van hem af te komen. Maar het kwaad was al geschied. Met haar was het veel erger als met mij, maar we hebben veel geleden onder onze vader.'

'Het spijt me verschrikkelijk om dat te horen,' zei Tarro met een gebogen hoofd.

'Mijn zus heeft veel geheimen,' zei de vrouw.

'Zoals wat ?' vroeg Tarro nieuwsgierig.

'Ik kan daar niet over praten,' zei de vrouw. 'Ik begrijp zelf ook niet alles goed, maar ze schijnt in contact te zijn met buitenaardse wezens. Die hebben haar opgezocht, en ze zeiden dat zij een van hen was.'

Tarro's mond valt open. 'Vandaar dat ze een beetje op de maan is,' zei Tarro.

'Ze hebben haar goed geholpen,' zei de vrouw. 'Ze voelt veel liefde van hen, en zou dat graag met je willen delen, maar ze kan het niet. Ze klapt dicht, en rent weg.'

'Ik begrijp het,' zei Tarro. 'Ik zal hiermee moeten leren leven.'

'Ze is een roofdier, Tarro. Ze kan alleen maar plagen. Je zal je eigen weg moeten zien te vinden. Dat kan niemand je geven. Je moet het zelf doen. Wij moesten dat ook zelf doen,' zei de vrouw.

'Ik begrijp het,' zei Tarro. 'Bedankt voor de uitleg.'

'Geloof je in telepathie ?' vroeg de vrouw.

'Ik denk het,' zei Tarro.

'Zo kun je met haar communiceren,' zei de vrouw, 'en jullie kunnen een wereld opbouwen op die manier, maar die kan nooit in de realiteit komen.'

'Maar ik dacht dat telepathie een hogere realiteit is ?' vroeg Tarro.

'Dat is zo,' zei de vrouw, 'maar niet iedereen is daar klaar voor, dus is het grotendeels een geheim.'

'Ik ben ook een beetje op de maan,' zei Tarro, 'dus ik ben daar open voor.'

'Natuurlijk, soldaat,' glimlachte de vrouw. 'Je bent welkom in haar leger.'

Die nacht had Tarro een droom dat de grote wolkenkrabber instortte, en dat er een poort tot de natuur verscheen, tot een groot oerwoud. Grote tijgers kwamen tot hem, en ook kleinere katachtigen zoals puma's en panters, en andere wilde katachtigen. Tarro kon ze allemaal omhelzen. Ze waren van het leger. 'Van Hamelen,' werd er geroepen. Het was Liezelore. Zij zat daar als de koningin van de jungle. Plotseling veranderde ze in een wild dier, en sprong op Tarro af, en likte hem. Ze leek op een gevlekt luipaard. Tarro begon het dier te aaien. Het was een hele grote vorm van een luipaard, en ook leek het veel op een jaguar. Toen veranderde ze in een zwarte panter, en toen in een lichtere kleur, als een soort bruin.

'Wat heb jij toch veel in je,' zei Tarro.

In de ochtend kwam er een pakket binnen. Het was een boek van Liezelore wat haar zus naar hem had opgestuurd. Het boek ging over David die zich had ingemengd in de indiaanse culturen in hun godenwerelden. In het boek werd David Xipe Totec genoemd, de gevilde en villende god van de Azteken, de god die de oorlog schiep. Xipe Totec droeg de gevilde huiden van zijn tegenstanders over zijn eigen lichaam. Dit waren menselijke tegenstanders.

Het was een boek geschreven door Liezelore zelf. Het besprak haar problemen met haar vader, die zichzelf de reincarnatie van koning David noemde, en ook bijbelverzen aanhaalde om zichzelf goed te praten. Voor haar was David het ergste monster wat bestond. Na de scheiding ging haar vader ergens anders wonen. Onder het huis scheen een tunnel te zijn die uitliep op een plaats waar grote skeletten lagen, als van reuzen. Ze had hier vaak nachtmerries over, ook over dat haar vader met de geheugens van mensen knoeide. Even gingen er rillingen door Tarro heen. Haar vader scheen tegen haar gezegd te hebben dat als ze ooit verkering met iemand zou krijgen, dan zou die persoon aan geheugenverlies gaan leiden, als een vloek. In de nachtmerries ontvoerde haar vader jongens naar zijn huis, waar hij een heksenketel had, waarin hij thee brouwde. Dan dwong hij de jongens om die thee te drinken, zodat ze problemen met hun geheugen zouden krijgen. Ook zouden ze dan door de tunnel onder het huis moeten gaan om te komen tot de reuzen-skeletten.

Tarro kon zich herinneren dat hij daar ook vroeger nachtmerries over had, dat hij werd gedwongen om thee te drinken. Maar verder kon hij het niet herinneren. Weer gingen de rillingen door hem heen. Hij had even het gevoel dat hij flauw zou vallen. De dood van haar vader was een hele opluchting voor haar, maar ze bleef nachtmerries over hem hebben. Die nachtmerries waren vaak zo erg dat ze niet durfde te slapen. In de nachtmerries vilde haar vader zichzelf altijd grijnzend, en probeerde vervolgens haar grijnzend te villen. Haar vader was als een gestoorde psychopaat.

Het beroep van haar vader was tandarts. Ze heeft dit altijd verschrikkelijk gevonden, omdat ten eerste tandartsen mensen dwingen vullingen te hebben, en ten tweede dat deze vullingen zwaar giftig zijn. Ze maken mensen ziek, en het rotzooit met hun geheugen. Altijd had ze veel last van de door haar vader gelegde vullingen, en kon ze van de kiespijn niet meer tegen licht, en heeft jarenlang op een donkere kamer geleefd, waar haar vader haar op bijna dagelijkse basis verkrachtte, en hij wilde de door hem gelegde vullingen niet verwijderen. Toen heeft ze zelf op een dag de kiezen met vullingen getrokken, en heeft dit maar nauwelijks overleeft. Dit was de eerste stap op weg naar haar bevrijding, maar het heeft haar bijna het leven gekost. Al veel eerder had ze de gevulde kiezen willen trekken, maar ze durfde het niet. Tarro ontplofte bijna van woede toen hij dit las. Vol van haat was hij naar die vader. Hij kon sowieso tandartsen al niet uitstaan vanwege hun dwang-verplegingen. Het was echt crimineel. 'Wat een vuile rotzak was die vader zeg. Geen wonder dat ze was zoals ze was,' dacht Tarro bij zichzelf. Hij had haar zo graag willen helpen.

Verderop in het boek startte haar apocalypse tegen de tandartsen, maar ook tegen het verdere medische systeem. Ze beschreef David als de demoon die dit allemaal achter de schermen bestuurde, en ook als degene die het indiaanse volk had ingenomen en uitgemoord.

Tarro besloot haar terug te schrijven :

'Lieve Liezelore,

Ik vind het verschrikkelijk waar je doorheen bent gegaan. Is er iets wat ik voor je kan doen ? Ik vind het moedig van je dat je het hebt opgeschreven. Ik ben blij dat je vader dood is. Die rotzak kan nu niets meer beginnen, alhoewel ik gelezen heb over je nachtmerries.'

Tarro besloot het kort te houden. Na een tijdje kreeg hij een brief terug.

'Lieve Tarro,

Bedankt voor je brief. Het betekent de wereld voor me. Herinner je je nog dat we eens verkering hadden ? Mijn vader vertelde me dat hij jouw geheugen hierover had gewist. Hij was daar heel trots over. Ik ben ook blij dat hij dood is.

Je Liezelore.'

'Lieve Liezelore,

Nee, ik herinner me daar niets meer van. Ik had altijd het gevoel dat je niks van me wilde, en dat gevoel werd alleen maar erger. Wat een verschrikkelijke vader had je. Waarom zijn we dan niet meer bij elkaar ?

Groetjes, en liefs,

Je Tarro.'

'Lieve Tarro,

Mijn vader bedreigde mij. Ik moest de verkering verbreken. Ik had geen andere keuze. En hij zou je bewerken zodat je het niet meer zou herinneren. Hij was lid van een geheim genootschap. Hij werd zelfs aanbeden als de grote god, David, en als Xipe Totec.

Je Liezelore.'

'Lieve Liezelore,

We hadden zo gelukkig met elkaar kunnen zijn als je vader er niet was geweest. Waarmee heeft hij jou dan bedreigd ? Ik hoop dat je hier allemaal snel overheen zult komen.'

'Lieve Tarro,

Hij bedreigde mij dat hij jou zou vermoorden als ik de verkering niet zou verbreken. Ik wilde jou niet in gevaar brengen.'

Nadat Tarro nog een keer had teruggeschreven kreeg hij geen brieven meer van haar binnen. Tarro besloot naar haar zus te gaan, maar deze wist het antwoord niet. Ook zij besloot Liezelore te schrijven, maar kreeg geen antwoord. Tarro was bezorgd, en haar zus ook.

Na een tijdje kreeg haar zus slecht nieuws van een familie-lid. Liezelore bleek vermoord te zijn door het geheime genootschap waar haar vader lid van was. Tarro kon het niet geloven, en was er kapot van. Nu moest hij voor eens en voor altijd Liezelore opgeven. Tarro was ontroostbaar, en ook de zus van Liezelore. Tarro wilde alles op alles zetten om dat geheime genootschap aan de kaak te stellen, maar Liezelore's zus raadde hem aan er verre van te blijven, anders zouden ze hem ook wat aandoen. Het was een Davidisch genootschap wat er niet voor terugdeinsde tegenstanders om het leven te brengen. Voor deze misdaden werden

bijbelverzen aangehaald, vooral van David, om het moorden goed te praten. David was een terrorist, dus ook zij konden terrorisme gebruiken om hun doelen te verwezenlijken.

Nadat Tarro eens op de televisie was verschenen om zijn verhaal te doen, en mensen te waarschuwen, had hij het gevoel alsof hij overal gevolgd werd. Hij had geen moment rust meer, en was erg op zijn hoede, voor het geval dat ze hem ook wilden ombrengen. Op een dag kreeg hij een vreemde brief waarin ze hem waarschuwden niet meer over hen te praten anders zou hij daar erge spijt van krijgen. Tarro wilde zich niet laten kennen, en verscheen weer op televisie-programma's en ook radio-programma's. Hij wist in zijn achterhoofd dat nu ergens de maat vol moest zijn bij het geheime Davidische genootschap. Op een dag toen hij van zijn werk thuiskwam reed er een busje op hem af, en mannen met zwarte kappen op hun hoofd kwamen uit het busje om hem te grijpen en in het busje te trekken. Ze ontvoerden hem naar een donkere plaats in een grot waar een man op een stoel zat. De man had een grijze baard en een pijp. Deze man bleek niet van het genootschap te zijn, maar was ook ontvoerd, en werd gedwongen om mee te werken. Hij begon Tarro kalm toe te spreken, terwijl de mannen met de zwarte kappen op hen toekeken. Ze waren gewapend.

'Ik heb ook materiaal over hen gepubliceerd,' zei de oude man. 'Nu hebben ze mij gedwongen voor hen te werken. Ik zal je uitleg moeten geven. Ook jij zal met hen mee moeten werken, anders zullen ze je koudmaken. Er is geen andere weg. Je kunt natuurlijk proberen te ontsnappen, maar dat kun je met de dood bekopen.' De man stond op, en leidde hem naar een deurtje. Hier was een zacht verlichte ruimte waar wat Azteekse boeken lagen. Het waren boeken over rituelen. 'Dit zal ons lot zijn,' zei de oude man, terwijl hij een boek pakte en erin begon te bladeren. 'Wij zijn offers voor Xipe Totec, oftewel David. Hij heeft Amerika veroverd en daarmee de hele wereld.' Een vreemd apparaat met tentakels kwam binnen, om vervolgens een tentakel in Tarro's arm te steken. Allerlei substanties en energieen werden vanuit Tarro's lichaam opgenomen via de tentakel, om het apparaat te voeden. 'Wij zijn niets dan voeding en brandstof voor het systeem,' zei de oude man. 'Zo worden wij omgebouwd tot robotten om David te dienen.'

De oude man en Tarro werden samen opgesloten in een cel. Toen de wachters weg waren konden ze vrijuit met elkaar praten. De oude man vertelde hem veel over het geheime genootschap, wat in het geheim de wereld zou besturen. 'Is er een manier te ontsnappen ?' vroeg Tarro.

'Ze zullen ons injecteren, en operaties op ons doen om hun troep te installeren, hi-tech om onze gedachtes te beinvloeden,' zei de oude man. 'Ik heb al veel troep in me, en ik weet niet hoe lang ik dit ga vol houden. Ik leef met veel pijn.'

Tarro pakte de arm van de man vast. 'We zullen het niet op ons laten zitten. Er moet een oplossing zijn.'

'Nee, Tarro,' zei de man. 'Hier is geen kruid tegen opgewassen.' Tarro wist dat de man dit zei omdat hij teveel onder hun invloed was. Tarro herinnerde de buitenaardse wezens waarmee Liezelore contact had, en die haar hadden geholpen. Zij zouden misschien veel kunnen betekenen voor hen nu. Toen Tarro in slaap viel had hij een droom. Hij was terug in de wolkenkrabber, en in de droom leefde Liezelore hier weer, maar ditmaal nog hoger, en ook de wolkenkrabber zelf was hoger, zelfs dat de top niet zichtbaar was. Liezelore nam hem mee naar haar appartement, en vertelde dat hoe hoger ze zouden komen in de wolkenkrabber, hoe dieper het hen zou leiden tot een nieuwe wereld. Het zou door een zwarte gat heengaan, een dimensionale overgang, en zou uitkomen op een eiland in een hogere vibratie. Hier zouden de buitenaardse wezens vandaan komen.

Liezelore nam hem bij de arm, en samen liepen ze naar de lift. 'Kom mee,' zei ze. Toen de lift na lange tijd stopte waren ze op een eiland aangekomen. Beiden stapten ze uit, en buitenaardse wezens met laser-geweren hielden hen tegen. 'Dat is bewaking,' zei Liezelore. 'Ze bedoelen het goed.' Even later hadden ze doorgang. Maar de droom begon weg te vagen. Tarro werd zwetend wakker. Hij keek naar de oude man die nog steeds lag te slapen. Tarro probeerde weer te slapen, maar hij kon het niet. Plotseling werd de deur van de cel opengeschoten. De buitenaardse wezens waren gekomen. Ze namen Tarro en de oude man bij de arm, om hen naar hun luchtschip te brengen. Dit ging allemaal vrij gemakkelijk. Er was geen weerstand van het genootschap, tenzij de buitenaardse wezens al met hen hadden afgerekend. Er was veel licht. De oude man was nog steeds slaperig. Ze legden hem op een soort bed of brancard in het luchtschip, in een kamer diep in het schip. Een groot apparaat werd over de man geschoven. Zijn implantaten moesten uitgenomen worden, en zijn hersengolven moesten bijgesteld worden. Ook Tarro moest even later op zo'n soort bed liggen, want er moest veel met zijn geheugen gebeuren. Tarro kreeg veel van zijn geheugen terug. Door bepaalde schermen kon hij communiceren met Liezelore. Ook kon ze door bepaalde techniek als een hologram aan boord komen. De buitenaardse wezens zeiden dat ze eraan werkten om haar weer een lichaam te geven, maar dat dat tijd zou kosten. Het hologram zou zich steeds meer en meer verdikken, totdat het zou overgaan in een wat dichtere dimensie. Ze zou een hogere dichtheid krijgen. Tarro hoopte maar dat hij dit niet droomde.

Het luchtschip was even later in een groot gevecht tegen een enorm gedrocht. Ze zeiden dat dit gedrocht David was, oftewel Xipe Totec, die de wereld onder controle hield, en dat ze konden komen omdat ze door het energie-schild van dit beest waren heengebroken. Maar nu moesten ze het beest zelf verslaan. Tarro en de oude man waren midden in een grote oorlog terechtgekomen, maar ze wisten dat er geen andere oplossing was, en ze waren blij dat er nu in ieder geval eindelijk wat gebeurde.

Liezelore begon steeds meer op een mens te lijken. Tarro hield haar hand vast, wat nog een beetje een soort dikke energie was. Hij gaf haar een kus. 'Ik ben blij dat je terug bent, schat,' zei hij. Ondertussen moesten de buitenaardse wezens een heleboel tentakels van het gedrocht afschieten. Het gedrocht krijste. Het ging er even om spannen. De buitenaardse wezens zeiden dat ze al wel vaker waren gekomen, maar dat ze dan gewoon weer door het energie-schild werden weggeblazen na een bepaalde tijd. Maar nu konden ze goed doorbreken. De lucht was gevuld met vele luchtschepen, en juist daardoor moest het gedrocht, wat zich lang verborgen had gehouden, zich tonen. Het gedrocht deed allerlei soorten aanvallen, voornamelijk lichtaanvallen. 'Ik hoop echt dat ik dit niet droom,' dacht Tarro bij zichzelf. 'Ik heb hier zo lang op gewacht.' Plotseling hoorden ze gegil. Een oude vrouw leek in het schip te zijn binnengekomen. Toen Tarro haar zag dat hij even dat hij flauw viel. Het leek wel alsof er honderden of wel duizenden bellen gingen rinkelen in zijn hoofd.

'Laat hem niet ontsnappen !' gilde de oude vrouw. Zwarte buitenaardse wezens stonden achter haar die pistolen op hem richtten. 'Vuur !' riep de oude vrouw. Maar snel werden ze afgeschoten door de buitenaardse wezens van het schip. Tarro zuchtte van verlichting, maar hij voelde zich onwel.

'Ik moet even liggen,' stamelde Tarro. Toen schreeuwde hij in paniek. Hij kon het niet meer inhouden. Hij probeerde schaduwen van zich af te schudden. Weer werd hij op een bed gelegd, en een machine kwam boven hem. Allerlei soorten lichten gingen aan. Toen begon het op zijn hersengolven in te werken, en de energieen van zijn lichaam. Diep werd er gegraven in zijn geheugen, alsof er deuren werden geopend. Tarro zag gestaltes van wit licht, die uit een vliegtuig bleken te komen. 'Wie zijn dat ?' vroeg Tarro. 'Zij besturen onze planeet,' zeiden de buitenaardse wezens. Tarro voelde handen op zijn handen, en die werden heel warm. 'We laten je niet meer los, Tarro,' werd er gezegd. 'Hier ben je veilig. Je hersenen zijn bij ons in goede handen, en er valt veel werk te verrichten.'

Tarro dacht nog steeds dat er een mogelijkheid was dat hij dit gewoon droomde, en dat hij elk moment wakker kon worden. Toen was er een enorme explosie. Het schip vloog aan flarden in een oceaan van vuur, een woeste oceaan. 'Vrees niet,' werd er gezegd.

Tarro keek regelrecht door de zee in een groot oerwoud achter een hek. De zee gleed van hem af als een sluier, en de sloten gingen van het hek af, wat zichzelf opende. Er waren hier apen en andere dieren, zoals tijgers en leeuwen. Ook waren er wat arenden. In de verte zag hij olifanten, en prachtige meren. Tarro voelde zichzelf weer als een kind. 'Ik wil dit niet dromen,' dacht hij bij zichzelf. Tranen begonnen bij hem op te komen. Hij had een week gevoel in zijn buik. Hij was er bijna zeker van dat hij dit gewoon droomde. Hij kneep in zijn arm, en voelde niets. Hij werd bang, want waar zou hij wakker worden ?

'Wij zijn bij je,' werd er gezegd. Een warm gevoel gleed door hem heen. Weer voelde hij tranen bij hem opkomen, alsof hij elk moment in huilen zou kunnen uitbarsten. 'We hebben het schild van David wat genadeloos op de wereld was gespannen verbroken,' werd er gezegd. Er was een zacht licht om Tarro heen. Hij kon even niets zien. Het deed geen pijn aan zijn ogen. Andere kleuren licht kwamen boven hem, als kleine stipjes die langzaam iets groter werden als blokjes. Het was alsof iets hem begon te scheuren, maar het deed geen pijn. 'Je oude verstand wordt weggehaald,' werd er gezegd. Weer waren er allerlei explosies, en Tarro zag alles weer wegvagen.

'Ik begrijp het niet,' stamelde Tarro. 'Wat is dit ?' Weer kwam de angst om wakker te worden. Hij wilde dat dit echt was. Hij wist dat hij gevangen werd gehouden door het genootschap, en dat ze duistere plannen met hem hadden. 'Wij komen je helpen,' werd er gezegd. 'Er is niets wat ons kan stoppen.' Witte explosies vonden plaats, explosies van wit licht, en plotseling waren er grote tijgers om Tarro heen. Hij voelde zich wegglijden, en schreeuwde, maar kon geeneens zijn eigen stem horen.

Toen stond hij weer met beide benen op de grond, en keek het oerwoud in. 'Ik ga hiervan genieten zo lang als het duurt,' dacht Tarro bij zichzelf.

'De stammen,' zei een stem, 'de stammen, Tarro. David heeft ze zo lang verborgen gehouden.'

Allerlei lichtjes kwamen in hem, als vlammetjes. 'Waar is David ?' vroeg Tarro.

'Dood,' zeiden de stemmen. 'Daarom zijn we hier. Daarom blijven we hier. We zullen niet loslaten.'

'Waar ben ik ?' vroeg Tarro. 'Ben ik dood, of slaap ik ? Of is dit echt ?'

Toen hoorde hij gelach. 'Zacht praten, Tarro, anders horen ze je.'

'Wie ?' vroeg Tarro.

Toen was het een lange tijd stil. Tarro voelde dat hij zich niet kon bewegen. Weer was er gelach. Tarro begon zenuwachtig te worden, en ook bang. 'Blijf in contact met ons,' werd er gezegd. 'Je hersenen moeten ons ook vasthouden. Je hersenen zijn zwak, maar je bent in goede handen. Wij laten jou niet meer los, maar laat ons ook niet meer los.'

'Ik doe mijn best,' zei Tarro. Tarro hoorde geschreeuw en hoorde zijn naam roepen.

'Droom maar fijn, Tarro,' zei een stem, een stem anders dan de anderen. 'Laat me los !' riep Tarro, die het niet meer vertrouwde. 'Ach rustig maar,' zei de stem. 'Ik ben maar een arend. Je bent op mijn rug. Ik breng je naar betere planeten.'

'Laat me los !' riep Tarro. Weer was er gelach. 'De apen zullen je niet loslaten,' zei de stem. 'Wij zijn de stemmen van het oerwoud, het grote oerwoud. Wij zijn allemaal verschillend, maar we willen je verwelkomen.'

'Weer eentje verlost uit de kerkers van David,' zei een ander.

'We zullen het best met elkaar kunnen vinden.'

'Waar kom je vandaan ?'

Tarro werd overweldigd door een zee van stemmen, die allemaal uit het oerwoud bleken te komen. Er werd zelfs over hem gevochten. Grote dikke slangen in het meer vochten om bij hem te zijn. Ook apen vochten met elkaar. Sommige dieren waren kwaad, en zouden hem liever om het leven willen brengen, op willen vreten, of weg laten rotten. Sommigen vertrouwden niemand. Nog steeds vroeg Tarro zich af wanneer hij wakker zou worden. Dit was te vreemd om waar te zijn. Waren de buitenaardse wezens echt gekomen ? Of waren ze gewoon in een laag van zijn hersenen binnengekomen ? Waren ze gewoon in zijn dromen binnengekomen ?

'Droom maar fijn,' werd er weer gezegd. Het was de arend weer. Tarro zag het beest nu veel beter. Het was een prachtig beest. 'Je bent in goede handen,' zei de arend. Weer leek het alsof Tarro zich niet kon bewegen. 'Lang hebben we gestreden om je los te krijgen,' zei de arend. 'En altijd dat verdomde schild van David hield ons tegen, maar nu is het verbroken.'

Tarro voelde een diepe liefde voor het dier, maar bleef voorzichtig. Hij wist niet wat dit was. Was dit allemaal echt ? De arend was veel groter dan Tarro. Het was een reuzen-arend. 'Wij hebben altijd voor je gezorgd,' zei de arend. 'Maar echt bereiken konden wij je niet, en jij kon ons niet bereiken.'

Tarro greep naar zijn hoofd. De stemmen begonnen hem weer te overweldigen, en al snel schreeuwde hij het uit. 'Ik moet hier weg ! Dit is niet goed !' Hij had het gevoel dat er teveel druk op zijn hoofd was. 'Laat me los ! Allemaal !'

Hij wilde niet in deze wereld zijn. Het was teveel voor hem. Hij voelde de hand van Liezelore. Hij keek naar haar, en wilde haar omhelzen, maar ze begon weg te vagen. 'Waar ben ik !' riep hij.

'Op een goede plaats,' fluisterde ze, maar hij zag haar niet meer. Het licht had haar weg laten vagen. Het licht was gelukkig heel zacht, en deed geen pijn aan zijn ogen. 'Ik wil dit niet !' riep hij. 'Er klopt iets niet !'

'Wil je dan weer terug naar je cel ?' vroeg ze. 'Ze hebben je vrijgezet ?'

'Wie ?' vroeg Tarro.

'De buitenaardse wezens hebben je vrijgezet,' zei Liezelore.

'Ik wil dit ook niet,' zei Tarro. 'Ik heb moeite met ademen. Er is een groot gewicht op me.'

'Dat is normaal,' zei Liezelore. 'Je moet nog wennen.'

'Volgens mij ben ik dood,' zei Tarro.

'Je bent niet dood,' zei Liezelore.

'Maar jij was ook dood, of bent het nog steeds,' zei Tarro. 'Daarom heb ik misschien contact met je, omdat ik ook dood bent.'

'Nee,' zei Liezelore. 'Tarro, het is buitenaardse techniek.'

'Ik denk dat ik gek ga worden,' zei Tarro. 'Iets is me aan het aanvreten.'

Toen vaagde Liezelore weer weg.

'Oh god, ik ben in een gevangenis !' riep Tarro. 'Laat iemand me helpen ! Er is een vuur wat me aanvreet, een vuur wat ik niet kan zien !'

'Tarro, het is goed,' zei een stem. Een grote tijger kwam dichterbij.

'Ga weg,' zei Tarro.

Tarro moest erg wennen aan waar hij was. Hij wilde van deze plaats weg. Er werd tegen hem gezegd dat het slechts een doorgang was. Maar waar hij ook kwam, hij verlangde terug naar de aarde. Hij wilde dat de buitenaardse wezens hem nooit hadden gered. Het leek wel alsof hij in de hel was. 'Breng me terug naar de aarde !' riep Tarro in paniek. 'Ik heb het benauwd !'

'Leef niet meer door adem, Tarro,' werd er gezegd, maar door geuren, gevoel, het eeuwig zaad, het eeuwige bloed, het bloed der stammen.'

'Wat is dat !' riep Tarro.

'Het bloed van de jacht,' werd er gezegd. 'Dat is wat de stammen uitbeelden. Jaag of sterf.' Tarro kreeg een boog en een mes. Ook kreeg hij een speer en een net. Maar hij wilde niet op

jacht. Na een tijdje zag hij in dat er geen andere mogelijkheid was. Hij werd door grote dieren met horens omsingeld. Ze stonden klaar om met hem af te rekenen. Tarro trok zijn mes en vocht als een bezetene. Het was gelukkig een groot slagersmes. Hij merkte dat hij tot leven kwam door het bloed, dat hij geen adem meer nodig had. De warmte van het bloed leek door hem heen te stromen, om de lust naar adem te vervangen. Het was een wild gevecht. Tarro slachtte deze beesten af, die als gehoornde grote zwijnen waren met de kracht van leeuwen. Ze waren woest. Tarro maakte een tent van hun huiden, en had voorlopig genoeg te eten. Hij smeerde zichzelf in met bloed. Ook smeerde hij zijn haren ermee in.

'Maak me wakker !' riep hij, nog steeds denkende dat hij droomde. Of misschien waren dit al de bewerkingen van het genootschap. Misschien hadden ze hem al vermoord, of apparaten in zijn lichaam geplaatst waardoor hij niet meer tot de werkelijkheid kon komen. In ieder geval zou hij vechten voor zijn leven en vrijheid. Hij begon ook op grote buffels en bizons te jagen. Hij had een hekel aan zijn leven op deze manier. Hij had zich van het leven heel wat anders voorgesteld, ook van het gered worden door buitenaardse wezens. Maar dit leek de keiharde realiteit te zijn voor nu. Tarro brulde woest, ook als een teken naar de dieren dat ze beter niet aan hem konden komen. Tarro wilde weg, maar wist niet waar naartoe. Hij besloot verder te trekken. De natuur was hier prachtig. Hij wist dat als hij het weer benauwd zou krijgen, dan was het tijd om te jagen.

Hij kwam aan bij een soort van stam. Ze namen hem naar hun kamp, en hij kreeg een ketting om zijn nek met een soort kralen waarvan ze zeiden dat de kralen de stammen uitbeeldden. Het bleek de stam van Gad te zijn. Tarro had de neiging weg te lopen. Hij kon het contact niet aan, en weer had hij het benauwd. Ze gaven hem vlees te eten en bloed te drinken. Maar niets scheen te helpen. Tarro had paniek-aanvallen en stuip-trekkingen. Toen rende hij woest de wildernis weer in. Hij kon geen contact maken met de stammen. Hij ging op jacht naar wat renbokken, en dat kalmeerde hem een beetje. Langzaam begon hij grip te verliezen, viel neer, en werd wakker. Hij had alles gedroomd. Het was een vreemde droom, want Liezelore bestond helemaal niet, en hij heette helemaal geen Tarro. Op zijn nachtkastje lag een science fiction boek wat hij aan het lezen was. Het ging over een machine die dromen in mensen kon planten waardoor ze ineens een hele andere identiteit kregen. Deze machine heette nachtkozijn. De dag erna besloot hij het boek weg te gooien.

De Oranje Ster

De ster was gekomen, als nachtzicht in een duistere nacht. Het leek weer dag nu. De ster had een romige, gloeiende oranje rand, zo zacht. Bijna donzig. Marja en Kees keken ernaar. Ze hadden hier zo lang naar uitgezien. Ze hadden hier zo lang over gedroomd. De zon was namelijk verwoest en zo lang hadden ze in het pikkedonker geleefd.

Nu was het afwachten op wat er zou gaan gebeuren. Velen reisden naar de ster, maar niemand wist nog goed wat het nu precies was. Ook Kees en Marja zouden de reis beginnen. Ze stopten hun auto vol met dekens, en daar gingen ze. De wegen waren vol met auto's. Iedereen was op zoek naar de ster. Ook Harry Achterwoud was op weg. Ergens bij een tank station kwamen ze hem tegen. 'Hey Harry,' zei Kees. Harry was heel enthousiast. Hij had al zijn papieren bij zich waarop zijn berekeningen van de ster stonden, wiskundige papieren. Hij wist ook al dat de ster zou komen, en had eigenaardige theorieen. Aandachtig luisterden Kees en Marja naar hem.

'De ster is een reis,' zei Harry. 'Wij horen niet veel van anderen die daar zijn geweest, want iedereen gaat daar naar binnen. Het is een tunnel.'

'Zouden ze nog in leven zijn ?' vroeg Marja zich af.

'Ach natuurlijk,' zei Harry. 'Het is een dimensionale overgang.'

'Ik ben bang,' zei Marja. 'Het kan natuurlijk ook iets duisters zijn. Ik ga ervoor, maar heb mijn twijfels.'

'Twijfelen is goed, Marja,' zei Harry. 'Maar ik heb het onderzocht, en het is goed betrouwbaar. Eén van de grootste evenementen aller tijden. Mijn jongens zijn ook heel enthousiast. Ze hebben het er de hele tijd over. Het is nachtzicht, Marja.'

'Ja, maar die wiskundige berekeningen van jou die werken ook niet altijd,' zei Marja.

'Heb je daar voorbeelden van ?' vroeg Harry.

'Ach,' zei Marja, 'die berekeningen die je had gedaan over mijn zwangerschap waren interessant, maar grote onzin.'

'Ja,' zei Harry, 'maar dat was nog in de tijd van Karel Klaus. Ik liet me teveel door hem beinvloeden.'

'Karel Klaus was een genie,' zei Marja, 'maar een grote gek.'

Kees begon te grinniken. 'Wat weet je verder over die ster, Harry ?' vroeg hij. Harry begon te bladeren door zijn papieren, en liet hen wat ingewikkelde tekeningen zien. Toen kwam er één of ander scheikundig verhaal waar ze niets van begrepen, maar het voelde allemaal wel wonderbaarlijk aan.

Even later gingen ze weer verder. Toen ze in het bos waren met de auto begonnen ze de ster steeds beter te zien. De ster was prachtig oranje. Het had een kalmerend effect.

Marja wist het nog niet. Wat moest ze nu geloven ? Maar ze wilde het wel proberen. In de verte leek het wel alsof de auto's in de ster reden. Was dit niet gewoon een natuurverschijnsel ?

Na een tijdje reden zij dan ook de ster binnen. Ze konden eerst niets zien. Alles was zacht oranje. Even later reden ze een grote wildernis binnen. De auto stopte vanuit zichzelf. Kees en Marja stapten uit. Geen enkele auto kon er hier rijden.

In de verte zat een gestalte van vuur op een troon van vuur. Achter de gestalte was een grote stad. De hele stoet met mensen ging richting die persoon.

'Wie zou die persoon zijn ?' vroeg Marja. Kees had geen idee. Daar zagen ze Harry weer. Die zat weer tussen zijn papieren te bladeren. 'Hey, Achterwoud,' zei Kees. 'Nu, moet je eens horen,' zei Harry. 'Die gestalte is de personificatie van de ster.' Toen volgden er weer allerlei scheikundige en natuurkundige verhalen. 'Laten we maar gewoon kijken wie of wat dat is,' zei Marja.

'Die personificatie bepaalt wie en wat in de stad komt,' zei Harry.

'Waar baseert die personificatie dat op ?' vroeg Marja.

'Op wiskundige berekeningen,' zei Harry.

'Hoe gaat dat dan ?' vroeg Marja. En weer legde Harry alles uit met zijn papieren. Weer liet hij hen vreemde tekeningen zien.

'Waar gaan degenen naartoe die niet naar de stad gaan ?' vroeg Marja.

'Die worden de wildernis ingezonden,' zei Harry.

'Ik zou niet weten welke keuze ik zou willen maken,' zei Marja.

'Het gaat niet om jouw keuze,' zei Harry. 'Het gaat om de berekeningen.'

Ineens wilde Marja terug. In de verte zagen ze de gestalte van vuur opstaan, en die begon te roepen :

'Er is niet veel tijd meer. Wij gaan zodadelijk sluiten. Maak daarom haast. Dit zal de enige uittocht zijn voor aardlingen in de geschiedenis. De rest zal op aarde moeten blijven.'

Marja wist even niet wat ze moest doen. Ze wilde wel bij Kees blijven die gewoon doorliep. Ze pakte zijn arm. Snel liepen ze door tot de gestalte. Twee handen kwamen op hun hoofden.

'Ah,' zei de gestalte. 'Net op tijd. Jullie zijn de laatsten van de aardlingen. Jullie mogen de stad binnengaan.'

Ook Harry was de stad binnengegaan. Marja wist niet of ze blij moest zijn of niet. Harry was in ieder geval heel blij, en Kees ook. Harry zei dat ze vanuit de stad ook de wildernis inkonden. Het was een reusachtige stad. Marja en Kees kregen een huisje toegewezen, en Harry kwam naast hen wonen. Harry zuchtte. Hij had gehoopt dat zijn jongens mee waren gekomen, maar die moesten naar voetbal. Het was meer blinden-voetbal omdat het zo pikkedonker was.

Harry Achterwoud klikte de TV aan in zijn nieuwe huisje. 'Wel goed dat ze hier TV hebben,' dacht Harry bij zichzelf.

Kees was achter de computer gegaan. Ze hadden hier ook internet. Een heleboel dingen leken zoals de dingen op aarde. Er was ook een koelkast. Marja was de tuin ingegaan. Het was een prachtige tuin. Vanuit de tuin kon ze de wildernis zien. Er waren hoge bomen in de wildernis. Er groeide prachtig, verlokkend kruid in de bomen.

Even later kwam Harry binnen. Hij liet hen een plattegrond zien waardoor ze de wildernis inkonden. Er was namelijk een groot hek rondom de wildernis. Via de vreemde berekeningen wist Harry precies hoe ze in de wildernis konden komen. Er moest ergens een tunnel wezen. Die tunnel was verbonden aan elk huis door een kelder. Diep in de kelder moest ergens een slot zijn met een deur. Het slot was als een groot toetsenbord met wat schermpjes waarop de juiste code ingetypt moest worden. Harry legde het uit via de vreemde berekeningen.

'Ik wil eerst zien of dat wel werkt, Harry,' zei Marja.

'Kom,' zei Harry, 'dan laat ik het jullie direct zien.'

Met z'n drieen gingen ze naar de kelderdeur. Harry liep voorop. Met een knop moest Harry de vlammen in de kelder aanzetten, zodat ze alles konden zien. Toen moesten ze over een trap naar beneden. Het leek wel op een magazijn. Er stonden hier een heleboel pakken met etenswaren. Door een lange gang kwamen ze uiteindelijk bij een deur. Daar zagen ze het toetsenbord aan de muur met de schermpjes. 'Hier,' zei Harry.

Marja vroeg zich af hoe Harry dit allemaal wist. Als een razende begon Harry te typen. Het leek wel op een heel verhaal. Toen klopte hij op de schermpjes die direct aansprongen. Op de schermpjes verschenen kaarten. Het leek wel op een spel. Weer typte Harry een heel verhaal in. De kaarten begonnen te veranderen. Op één kaart stond een doodshoofd, en op een andere een skelet. 'Hebbes,' zei Harry. Toen typte hij weer een heel verhaal in. Weer begonnen de kaarten te veranderen, en er kwamen wat nieuwe kaarten bij. Toen verscheen er een speelbord op één van de schermpjes, en de kaarten kwamen daarop terecht. Ook verschenen er rode knopjes die Harry indrukte. Toen begon de deur zich te openen.

'Kunnen we nog wel weer terug ?' vroeg Marja.

'Natuurlijk,' zei Harry. Door een gang kwamen ze in de wildernis terecht. Op de bomen stonden orakels getekend, waarop mensen aan het typen waren. Ze leken als in een trance, en er waren bollen rondom hun hoofden. 'Kom,' zei Harry, 'dan gaan we dieper de wildernis in.' Ze liepen richting een soort kleine woestijn, een strook van een zanderige wildernis. Ze gingen een soort heuveltje op. Vanaf het heuveltje hadden ze een goed uitzicht. Ze zagen een strand met een soort zee. Boven de zee zweefde een oranje ster.

'Hey, is dat niet de ster waar wij door naar binnen gingen ?' vroeg Marja.

'Het is een ster in een ster,' zei Harry. Er waren veel mensen aan het zwemmen. Zij zwommen richting de ster, maar niemand kon daar naar binnen, want de ster zweefde veel te hoog. Na een tijdje begon de ster naar beneden te komen. De mensen zwommen de ster binnen, en werden bedekt met glibberig spul. Ook vormde zich een bol van vuur rondom hen.

'Zij ontvangen de vlam,' zei Harry. 'Het is de vlam van de oranje ster.'

'Wat betekent dat ?' vroeg Marja.

Toen begon Harry weer met zijn wazige berekeningen. Dit keer was het nog doldwazer dan ooit. Harry haalde een schrift tevoorschijn, en liet hen weer allerlei vreemde tekeningen zien. Het leek wel alsof de lucht begon open te scheuren. De scheur was oranje en romig. Zachtjes begon de scheur de ster naar binnen te zuigen, met vele mensen erin.

'Waar gaan ze naartoe ?' vroeg Kees, die zich al die tijd stil had gehouden.

Harry bladerde door het schrift. 'Proza,' zei Harry. 'Een nieuwe literaire code, om hen in een nieuwe linguistische realiteit te brengen. Het is als een mind-altering drug.'

Er begon iets te zoemen in het hoofd van Marja. 'Proza is een andere frequentie,' zei Harry. 'Volg me,' zei hij, en liep naar het strand toe. Met kleren en al dook Harry de branding in, en zwom de zee in. Marja en Kees volgden hem.

Weer zweefde de ster boven de zee, en kwam langzaam naar beneden. Marja voelde de warmte. Toen de ster haar raakte werd ze opgeheven, als naar binnen gezogen, en langzaam scheurde de lucht open. De ster werd naar binnen gezogen. Marja zweefde. Ook zag ze Kees en Harry zweven. Ze zweefden naar een zanderige plek in de scheur. Een bol kwam om hun heen, en ze kwamen in een wildernis terecht, waar weer bomen waren met orakels waar mensen op typten. De mensen waren ook in bollen, net als hen. In het midden van de orakels was een scherm.

'Het is een soort internet,' zei Harry.

Harry ging achter zo'n boom zitten en begon te typen. 'Je kan hierdoor allerlei werelden openen,' zei Harry. Hij typte een heel verhaal in. Weer verschenen er allerlei kaarten op het scherm die begonnen te draaien, als in een cirkel. Harry selecteerde er één. Het was een kaart

met een doodskop. Toen selecteerde hij er één met een skelet. Marja herinnerde de kaarten van het slot in de kelder.

Harry klikte op de kaart met de doodskop, terwijl de kaart rood begon te gloeien en te knipperen. 'Hebbes,' zei Harry. Toen typte hij weer een heel verhaal, en de boom begon zichzelf te openen als een poort. Een lange gang verscheen met een auto. 'Kom,' zei Harry, terwijl hij de auto instapte. Kees ging naast Harry zitten, en nam Marja op schoot. Harry startte de auto. De auto reed richting een stad. Het was de stad waar zij hun huisjes hadden. Met een bepaalde code kon de auto door het hek.

'Heen door de keldergang, terug met de auto,' zei Harry.

'De literaire code had de zon afgebroken,' zei Harry. 'Dit is waardoor de oranje ster kon komen. De zon had ons opgesloten door een valse literaire code, een vals licht, waardoor onze levens min of meer bevroren waren. De ware vlam kenden wij niet, maar die is nu in ons binnengekomen.'

Die nacht hadden ze alle drie wilde dromen. Er was een glazen bol rondom hen waardoor roofdieren naar binnen probeerden te komen, maar ze renden zich stuk op het glas. Die roofdieren waren de herinneringen van de oude en valse literaire code waarin ze zo lang opgesloten waren. De roofdieren waren woest, maar konden niets doen. Kees werd wakker in het zweet, en nam een bad. Marja ging onder de douche staan. Ze waren die ochtend vroeg op, en Harry kwam ook vroeg.

Harry vertelde hen zijn dromen, en gaf weer allerlei eigenaardige berekeningen. 'Het glas wordt steeds dikker,' zei Harry. 'De roofdieren zullen steeds verder weg komen, en zullen steeds meer verzwakken. Ze verliezen hun grip en zullen in vee veranderen.'

Marja herinnerde de potten met vlees in de kelder. Kees knikte. Dit had hij ook gedroomd. In de stad waren vaak vleesmarkten met zulk vlees. Er moest vlees gegeten worden, anders zouden de roofdieren weer sterker worden, en het glas dunner. Ze moesten dus eten voor hun leven.

'Het vee wordt door het glas gezogen tot een plaats in de wildernis,' zei Harry. 'Hiervoor worden jagers, slagers en vlees-verkopers aangesteld. Je begint als vlees-verkoper, dan wordt

je een jager, en daarna een slager. De slager is een vleeskweker. Hij kent de geheimen van de vleesbrug.'

Kees kreeg een baan als vlees-verkoper op de markt. Hij leerde veel over de verschillende vleessoorten. Na een tijdje werd hij aangenomen in de jager-cursus. Hier leerde hij hoe hij moest jagen. Het had veel te maken met codes. Hij moest leren de codes in te typen. Harry was hierin zijn grote voorbeeld. Ook moest hij de verschillende spelen leren. Na een tijdje mocht hij zichzelf 'Kees de jager' noemen. Harry was heel trots op hem. Marja wist het nog niet. Ze keek een beetje de kat uit de boom. Ze had teveel verhalen van Harry gehoord, en moest het allemaal nog zien. Sinds Kees jager was geworden moest hij veel vaker de wildernis in. Marja miste hem.

Harry had haar verteld dat vrouwen geen jagers, slagers of vlees-verkopers konden worden, alleen als de gestalte van vuur hen daarvoor sinds het begin had aangesteld. Dat was met Marja dus niet gebeurd. Volgens Harry was er maar één manier om het wel te worden. Dat was door een nacht-verdrag. Dat moest volkomen in het geheim gebeuren, wanneer de man zou slapen. Er hing daarvoor een speciale knop in de slaapkamer die zou berekenen wanneer de man zou slapen van begin tot het eind. Zo kon de vrouw op tijd weer terug zijn. Marja voelde daar wel wat voor. Zo zou ze in ieder geval wat met Kees gemeen hebben. Ze begon als nachtvlees-verkoper, en volgde ook jagers-cursussen in de nacht wanneer hij sliep. Marja was een snelle leerling, en voor haar was de slager status snel behaald, terwijl Kees nog maar jager was.

Op een nacht wilde zij het geheim van de vleesbrug weten waar Harry het altijd over had. Met Harry ging ze de wildernis in door de kelder-gang. Ze moesten hiervoor heel diep de wildernis in. Ze kwamen aan bij een vochtige woestijn. Het leek wel alsof het hier geregend had. In de woestijn begon ergens de vleesbrug. Die ging over een rivier van vuur. De brug was geheel van vlees gemaakt. De brug was nogal glibberig. Marja was bang dat ze er vanaf zou glijden. Harry stelde haar gerust. Hij had in een rugzak spijkerschoenen meegenomen voor allebei. Dat waren schoenen met lange spijkers om zo vastgehaakt te zijn in het vlees. Samen liepen ze de brug over tot een grote burcht. Hier ging de woestijn gewoon verder, maar ze moesten in de burcht zijn. Er stonden wat poortwachters met geketende roofdieren. De poortwachters zeiden verder niets.

Binnengekomen moest Harry wat codes intypen. Toen kregen ze verder toegang. Ze kwamen in een zaal met wapens : speren, messen, hakbijlen, en andere vreemdsoortige wapens. Er waren wapens bij die Marja nog nooit eerder had gezien. 'Kees zou dit moeten zien,' dacht Marja bij zichzelf, 'die zou het prachtig vinden.' Even miste ze Kees, en wenste dat hij hier met haar was.

Op een tafel stond een bord met vlees. Harry begon ervan te eten, en een andere deur ging open. Ze kwamen in een zaaltje met een heleboel deuren. Naast elke deur stond een tafeltje met een bord vol vlees wat gegeten moest worden om de deur te openen. 'Kies een deur uit,' zei Harry, 'en eet van het vlees.'

Marja liep op een deur af en begon te eten. De deur ging open, en weer kwamen ze in een zaaltje binnen. Grote boeken lagen op tafels met bordjes vlees ernaast. Om de boeken te openen moest er van het vlees gegeten worden. De boeken zouden vol geheimen staan. 'Dit heb jij vast en zeker vaker gedaan,' zei Marja. Harry knikte.

'Kies een boek,' zei Harry.

Marja koos een boek en begon te eten. Het boek opende zich en Marja begon te lezen. De letters deden pijn aan haar ogen, en ze deed het boek weer dicht.

'Ik kan het niet lezen,' stamelde Marja.

'Ik ken al deze boeken door en door,' zei Harry. 'Het zijn boeken van pijn. Al deze boeken hebben hun eigen pijn. Probeer een ander boek.'

Marja koos een ander boek, en at van het vlees. Het boek opende zichzelf, en Marja kreeg enorme last van hoofdpijn. Weer sloeg ze het boek dicht, en ging naar een ander boek, waar ze at van het vlees. Het boek opende zichzelf, en ze kreeg een enorme buikpijn. Dit was nog wel te doen, en ze begon te lezen.

'Witskebat Hapi Da La Loie Vakau, welkom tot het geheim van de vleesbrug, een geordend geheim voor slagers. Ben je geen slager, maak dan dat je wegkomt. Wij eten om te vergeten. Al je herinneringen eet je hier, en dit geeft de toegang tot onze geheimen. Nogmaals welkom. Als slager ben je een volleerde jager. Het vlees dat u hier eet zal u toegang geven tot hogere jachten. Door verschillende soorten vlees te eten krijgt u verschillende soorten wapens voor de jacht. Probeer ze allen uit. In één van deze boeken zult u de code vinden voor de poort voor u. Hierdoor zult u komen tot een hal van jachtwapens die te verkrijgen zijn door van het vlees naast hen te eten. Elk jachtwapen zal toegang geven tot een nieuwe deur waardoor u een nieuw jachtveld kunt betreden.'

Marja sloeg het boek dicht. De pijn was ondragelijk geworden. Dit waren nachtverhalen, zei Harry. 'Wat is de code, Harry ?' vroeg Marja.

'Ik kan het je niet geven, Marja,' zei Harry. 'Dan zou ik ontploffen. Die codes zijn zo gevaarlijk dat als ze van een mens tot een mens worden overgedragen, dan is dat het gevolg.'

Marja at van het vlees van een ander boek. Het boek opende, en Marja begon te lezen. Ze kreeg verschrikkelijke kiespijn. Ze gilde het uit, en viel bijna flauw. Harry kalmeerde haar. 'Doorzetten, schat,' zei hij. 'Nee !' gilde ze. 'Dit is wreed !'

'Shhh,' zei Harry. 'Maak ze niet wakker. Als ze hier komen, dan … dan …'

'Wie zijn ze ? Waar heb je het over ?' vroeg Marja.

'Dat kan ik niet zeggen. Lees nu maar,' zei Harry.

'Jij hebt makkelijk praten,' zei Marja. 'Ik ben hier ook doorheengegaan,' zei Harry. 'Ik weet er alles van.'

'Het is een offer, hè ?' zei Marja. Harry knikte. 'Ja, dat kun je wel zeggen,' zei hij.

'Okay,' zei Marja, die zich alweer iets beter voelde, en begon te lezen.

Sawir, Fliktir Sawelaa Maree Barits Homalogie Karee Almas Vandrin Ogesta Amalee Verin Sevinda Allanse Allaa Mir Allaa Vaanit Evus Olong Patong Palone Perisia. Welkom tot dit boek, geachte gast. Wij hebben er weer veel werk van gemaakt. Dat heeft u misschien al wel ondervonden. De code tot de volgende deur zal hier geopenbaard worden. Zeeen van winden kunnen ons hier niet vinden. Achter glas zijn zij, waar de zeven zeemeerminnen nog steeds zoeken naar het geheim van goud. Nooit zullen zij binnengaan, zij die op zoek zijn naar de geheimen van de zon. De zon is gestorven. De dictator is dood. Zij die hem trachten op te wekken rusten tevergeefs. Zij zullen geen rust vinden, alle dagen van hun ijdele leven. Ijdelheid vervliegt. Ik geef u toegang tot de nieuwe deur. Weest welbewapend met haar

geheimen. Ga niet in voordat u alle boeken hebt gelezen. Gebruikt deze code wel, en geeft haar nooit door aan anderen, anders zult gij ontploffen, en uw weg nooit meer terugvinden. Neemt deze waarheid ter harte. Wij geven ook geen geld terug. U zult ook nooit meer kunnen wederkeren, maar wanneer gij door alle deuren bent heengegaan en alle jachten hebt gejaagd, dan zult gij de code ontvangen om door een reis rond de ster toch te komen waar u eerst was, maar dan vanaf de andere kant. U mag deze code in uw eigen woorden intypen.

Welke boeken Marja daarna ook las, het deed geen pijn meer, en alle letters waren verdwenen. Het waren allemaal lege bladzijdes. 'Dat komt door het kennen van de code,' zei Harry. Samen liepen ze naar de nieuwe deur, waar Marja in haar eigen woorden de code intypte. Toen ging de nieuwe deur open, waar wapens lagen met bordjes vlees ernaast. Marja koos een wapen uit, en begon te eten. Snel nam ze het wapen op en liep naar de deur van het wapen. Ze kwamen hierdoor op een jachtveld terecht. De hele nacht jaagden ze. Toen Marja alle wapens had gebruikt, en op alle jachtvelden was geweest ontving ze de code voor de reis rond de ster. Zo kon ze terugkeren waar ze was door de andere kant. De code gaf hen toegang tot een auto. Met een rotvaart scheurde Harry, die achter het stuur zat, over de geasfalteerde weg.

Marja wist niet hoe lang het geduurd had, maar toen ze thuiskwam lag Kees nog steeds te slapen. Marja maakte wat ontbijt en bracht het naar Kees.

'Ik heb zo vreemd over je gedroomd,' zei Kees toen hij wakker was geworden. 'Je was op de vleesbrug en gleed in een rivier van vuur.'

'Vreemde droom,' zei Marja. 'Misschien dat Harry hier meer over weet.' Samen gingen ze even later naar Harry toe, en Kees vertelde de droom.

'Ik weet het niet,' zei Harry. 'Misschien een roofvogel van het verleden die jouw heeft lastiggevallen met zo'n nachtmerrie. Het is tijd dat je een slager wordt en dat je de geheimen van de vleesbrug leert kennen.'

Kees werd toegelaten tot de slagers-cursus. Ook hij werd slager, en op een nacht nam Harry hem mee naar de vleesbrug. Alles was veranderd hier. Er was geen vuurzee meer, alleen een woestijn. De vuurzee was inmiddels opgedroogd. 'Zie,' zei Harry, 'geen vuurzee.' Ook Kees moest de boeken lezen, en ontving de code. Na een lange nacht kon hij via de andere kant terugkeren naar de stad. Kees was trots nu hij het geheim van de vleesbrug kende. Dat had hij al zo lang willen kennen. Ook Marja was trots op hem.

Op een nacht zweefde er een nieuwe ster boven de stad. Het was de ster van vlees. Velen gingen de ster binnen. Ook Marja, Kees en Harry. Binnenin de ster was een wildernis geheel gemaakt van vlees, en de ster gleed door een tunnel in de ondergrond van de stad. De ster gleed dieper en dieper.

Harry had het over de vlam van vlees die ze moesten ontvangen. Het was een eeuwige vlam. Hiervoor moesten ze zwemmen over een oceaan van bloed in de ster van vlees. Het was een reusachtige ster, en de oceaan was ook reusachtig. Harry leidde hen tot het zogenaamde bloedstrand. Dit strand was gemaakt van vlees, maar het bloed spoelde hier aan. Harry dook al snel in de branding van de bloed-oceaan. Marja en Kees volgden hem. Het bloed voelde warm aan. Het zwemmen ging heel makkelijk, alsof ze bijna in het bloed dreven. Zo zwommen ze vele dagen aaneen, zonder dat ze echt moe werden. Het bloed gaf hen kracht.

Ze kwamen aan bij een reusachtig vlees-eiland. Hier moest ergens de vlam van vlees zijn. Op het eiland was een orakel van vuur. Harry begon aan het orakel te draaien. Alle drie kregen ze last van vreemde pijnen, alsof ze gestoken waren door insecten. Op hun lichamen kwamen vreemde merktekenen.

Hierdoor kregen ze toegang tot een tunnel achter het orakel. Aan het einde van de gang kwam er iets gloeiends over hen. Dit was de vlam van vlees. De pijnen werden ineens veel erger, daarom moesten ze zo snel mogelijk de oceaan van bloed induiken.

De ster van bloed zweefde boven de oceaan van bloed. Uit de ster van bloed kwam een man tevoorschijn met een ladder. Het scheen Ronald te zijn, de broer van Harry. Ronald was zomaar van de één op de andere dag vermist, maar Harry beweerde altijd al wat er met Ronald gebeurd was, en hoe hij nog steeds telepatisch contact met hem had. Hier scheen hij dus al zijn wiskundige verhalen vandaan hebben gehaald. Zijn broer onderwees hem. Ze klommen de ladder van touw op die Ronald had laten zakken, en toen ze in de ster van bloed waren gekomen viel Harry hem in de armen. Verschillende soorten bloed moest hier gedronken worden voordat er deuren geopend konden worden, boeken gelezen konden worden en wapens gebruikt konden worden.

Ronald was nog wel erger dan Harry met vreemdsoortige wiskundige berekeningen, en praatte honderduit, nog veel meer dan Harry. Ronald had een kasteel geheel gebouwd van botten. Kees en Marja hadden nog nooit zoiets gezien, en het was zo groot. Het kasteel stond vol met boekenkasten waar de boeken van uitpuilden. Ze kregen allemaal een kamer aangewezen in het kasteel van Ronald.

Midden in de nacht kwam Harry om Kees en Marja te wekken. 'Kom,' zei hij. 'Ik wil jullie wat laten zien.' Hij leidde hen tot diep onder het kasteel van botten, waar bloedrivieren stroomden. Achter de rivieren was een prachtig land. 'Kijk,' zei hij, terwijl hij op het land achter de rivieren wees. 'Bloed is een prachtige bescherming,' zei hij. 'Roofdieren zullen in dromen proberen aan te vallen, maar zij kunnen niet door het bloed komen, daarom is het land achter de bloedrivieren het veiligst.'

Ze zwommen de rivieren over, en kwamen in een land vol insecten. Ze werden volop gestoken, en Marja wilde terug. 'Dit is ook de reden waarom Ronald hier niet komt,' zei Harry. 'Dit is niet uit te houden,' zei Marja.

'Dit is het land van pijnen,' zei Harry. 'Herinner je je de boeken van pijn ?' Marja knikte. 'En door het lezen van de boeken vertrokken de pijnen ook weer,' zei Harry. 'Door te leven in het land van pijnen, zullen de pijnen dus ook vertrekken.'

'Ik zet door, ik zet door,' riep Marja. Plotseling zonk ze in mekaar … Dood. Harry en Kees stonden voor een raadsel. Ze hoorden Ronald roepen aan de andere kant van de rivieren. Na een tijdje stond Ronald naast hen. 'Waarom zijn jullie hier naartoe gegaan, Harry ?' vroeg Ronald. 'Ik had je nog zo gewaarschuwd. Dit land is gevaarlijk. Gevaarlijke insecten enzo. Jullie leven is hier in gevaar. Ik kom hier alleen onder zware condities op gezette tijden.'

'Kun je Marja weer tot leven wekken ?' vroeg Harry.

'Wat denk je, Harry ?' zei Ronald. 'Denk je dat ik een tovenaar ben ?'

'Nou, wel zoiets,' zei Harry.

'Het heeft geen zin, Harry,' zei Ronald. 'De vurige gestalte heeft beslist.' Kees begon te snikken. Hij omhelsde Marja, om te zien of er nog enig leven in haar was, maar tevergeefs.

'Het heeft geen zin, Kees,' zei Ronald. 'De vurige gestalte heeft haar van ons weggenomen. Dat zal wel ergens goed voor zijn.'

'Maar wat dan ?' vroeg Kees.

'Kees, jongen, dat zal ik je haarfijn uitleggen,' zei Ronald. 'Er zijn hier zoveel geheime werelden. Ik weet zeker dat de vurige gestalte haar nodig heeft voor een karwei ergens.'

'Het is allemaal mijn schuld,' zei Harry. 'Ik had beter naar je moeten luisteren.'

'Harry, je bent een pionier,' zei Ronald. 'Je bent een onderzoeker, en die nemen soms risico's. We willen allemaal een betere wereld.'

'Maar ik heb het leven van Kees en Marja op het spel gezet, en het heeft Marja haar leven gekost,' zei Harry.

'Laat het een les voor je zijn, Harry,' zei Ronald. 'Maar de vurige gestalte zou Marja anders op een andere manier hebben weggehaald.'

Maar Harry was niet te troosten. Hij nam hier geen genoegen mee.

'Ik moet boeten,' zei Harry.

'Alsjeblieft, Harry,' zei Ronald. 'Doe dit jezelf niet aan.'

'Ik voelde me als een vader over haar, als een gids. Hoe kon ik zo stom zijn ?' snikte Harry.

'Misschien is ze op een andere manier gestorven,' zei Ronald.

'Ik had beter naar je moeten luisteren,' zei Harry.

'Je bent een avonturier,' zei Ronald.

Kees schrok wakker. Hij was zo opgelucht. Het was allemaal maar een droom geweest. Hij ging even naar de kamer van Marja. Ze lag daar rustig te slapen. Hij ging naar haar toe, ging bij haar liggen en nam haar in zijn armen. Ze werd wakker, en vroeg wat er aan de hand was.

'Ik heb naar gedroomd,' zei Kees. Met een brok in zijn keel vertelde hij zijn droom.

'Jij droomt ook altijd zo vreemd en raar,' fluisterde ze. 'Harry zegt dat het misschien roofvogels van het verleden zijn.' De volgende ochtend vertelden ze het aan Harry en Ronald. Harry keek naar Ronald. Ronald begon te lachen, en kwam toen weer met een wiskundig verhaal, maar het kwam er inderdaad op neer dat een roofvogel van het verleden Kees had lastiggevallen met deze droom.

'Hoe kan hij hiervan verlost worden ?' vroeg Marja.

Ronald dacht even na. 'Er zijn hier inderdaad rivieren van bloed. Daarachter is een land. Er zijn daar insecten die steken. Het is als een toegangs-bewijs. Zo kom je steeds dieper. Het is een taal, een code, die ze op je steken. Ik denk dat de roofvogels jou deze droom hebben gegeven, om je af te schrikken, dat je daar niet naar toe zal gaan.

Met z'n vieren gingen ze de rivieren over. Ze werden inderdaad gestoken.

Kees wordt wakker achter zijn stuur door getoeter achter hem. Zo lang had hij in de file gestaan. Overal waren files vanwege de komst van de oranje ster. Hij had alles maar gedroomd. Marja was thuisgebleven voor haar wekelijkse club-avond.

Zee der Leugens

De spin

De spin, wevende de dimensies, de spin, het trauma. Het ruist over de zeeen, om de slag te slaan. Hier vandaan nemen de religies. Daarachter verbergen zij de spin. De spin neemt hen allen in. Ze kunnen het niet aan. Ze maken vla. Ze eten het, en doen alsof er niets aan de hand is.

De spin wacht, en slaat dan toe. Hiervan nemen de religies. Ze hebben veel te verbergen. Bergen, hopen.

De spin maakt een teken, en slaat dan toe, zoals de religies het doen. Maar zij houden de echo van de spin netjes verborgen.

De spin is op jacht ...

Ik heb het gehoord. Hoor je zijn stem ? Roepende, gillende, wevende de dimensies. De religies kunnen het niet aan.

Toe, neem van haar.

Ik denk dat ik één van hen ben geworden. Ik draag een wapen ...

Ik sla toe zoals hen, maar ik ken de spin niet. Het heeft mijn geheugen gewist.

Ik wordt ergens wakker. Ik ken het hier niet. Waar kom ik vandaan ? De spin is op jacht geweest. Wij drijven allemaal rond in de modder.

In de verte zie ik de brug. Ik zie hen met de maskers. Ik denk dat ik één van hen ben geworden.

De spin heeft mij gebeten. Er is overal bloed. Ik ben meer geworden zoals jou. Ze hebben mijn geheugen gewist. Ze kwamen op die dag en namen alles mee ....

De man met de boog

De spin tatoeeert mijn hersenen. Honing stroomt, ontwaakt. Mijn hersenen zijn als bloesem. Het voelt zo fragiel. Het water stroomt langs mijn vingers, en ik kijk naar haar. Ze is een pop. Ze zit op haar rieten stoel en beweegt niet. Ook zij was aangeraakt door de spin.

De spin tatoeeerde mijn hersenen, totdat ik niets meer wist. Zo'n hopeloos gevoel, als een gat in de lucht. Ik denk dat ik nu één van hen ben geworden, op hun wereld leef, zoals hen. Ik kijk hen aan, met het gevoel dat we één zijn. Een kleine prik doet mij ontwaken, alsof ik toch anders dan hen ben. De man met de boog kwam tot mijn stad, helemaal tot mijn huis, en klom op de steigers. Hij had vier pijlen op zijn boog, die hij gezamenlijk afschoot op mij.

Dwars door de ramen gingen ze, en toen dwars door mijn hoofd. Hij nam mij mee, maar waar naartoe ?

Ik keek naar beneden, en zag de grote brug. Ik hoorde haar roepen ... maar toen niet meer ...

De droom

Haar gezicht, van goud, mij bespottende. Ze schrok toen ik haar zag, en toen was ze stil. Ik zat voor het raam, en aan de andere kant zat zij in haar schommelstoel. Ik denk dat ze aan het borduren was, of aan het breien. Een trui ofzo. En de honing was in mijn hoofd. Ik dacht terug aan de man met de boog die mij mee had genomen. Hij bracht me naar een hoog gebouw. Een flat ofzo, en vertelde wat er aan de hand was, maar ik kan me er niets meer van herinneren. De spin was in mijn hoofd. Het wiste mijn verleden. Het tatoeerde me, en zo werd alles langzaam en stapsgewijs veranderd. Het was net allemaal anders, en het kreeg nieuwe betekenissen. Ik was als op de golven van een woeste zee, die mij veranderde. Alles was anders.

Ik droeg haar naar de zee, en legde haar in het zand. De golven raakten haar licht aan. Ik droeg haar op aan de spin. De spin verscheen gigantisch boven de zee, en slokte haar op. Maar het was een droom. Ik heb geen houvast, want er leeft een spin in mijn hoofd. Het is een droom. En nu ontwaak ik.

Het grijze

Zij vermeed mij, waarom weet ik niet. Misschien vanwege de spin in mijn hoofd. Het keek door mijn ogen. Ik kon haar veranderen, en daarom rende ze weg, het bos in. Ik achtervolgde haar, maar ze rende steeds harder. Haar lot was tragisch. Ik wil er niet aan denken.

Ik voel alsof ik nu één van hen ben geworden. De man met de boog vertelde mij veel, maar waar is hij nu ? En wat is er van overgebleven ? Zoveel jaren naar school, alles vergeten. Waar is alles goed voor geweest ? En ze spraken maar door, zij met de maskers. Ze brachten me naar de brug, waar ik

verdronk. Door vogels werd ik opgenomen, en zij brachten mij naar een plaats waar de grote spin sprak. Ik zag mijn hersenen voor mijn ogen aan flarden gescheurd, en de spin sprak door totdat het pijn deed. Zij brachten mij hier voor een reden. Een reden die ik niet zag. Ik haatte hen, maar toch voelde ik dat ik één met hen was geworden. We reden in dezelfde auto, hadden dezelfde kleren, en vochten in dezelfde oorlog. Ze stapten uit met hun geweren, en ik was één van hen. De leider moest de nieuwe koning worden. Daar vochten wij voor. Ik deed wat mij voorgezegd werd. Dat is alles wat ik weet.

Wij waren met zovelen, toen we de stad aanvielen. Velen vielen aan onze voeten. Zoveel dromen sprongen kapot. Ik was één met hen geworden. Nu wist ik het zeker. Hier nemen de religies af, hier lopen de dimensies in elkaar over, als een zwaar vergif. Ik kan alleen maar janken op dit punt, en niemand mag mij aanraken. Ik sta daar met een geweer, één van hen, om onze leider koning te maken. Hier nemen de religies af, en lopen de dimensies in elkaar over, totdat alles grijs is.

Vier pijlen

De spin tatoeeert mij. Ik ben er gewend aan geworden. Ik zak af in een grote diepte. Aan een touw ben ik vast, als een duiker naar de schat. Zoveel pijlen schieten er door mijn hoofd, om de honing te doen ontwaken. Ik verlies mijn zicht. Ik kijk naar mijn hersenen, als naar bloesem, en rood bloedende honing, en allemaal ladders, in diepe, diepe duisternis. Ik ben niet meer in de zee. Ik ben van binnen. Zoveel pijlen door mijn hoofd, op de rug van de man met de boog. Hij hangt aan het touw, als aan een liaan. Dromend glijd ik in een oerwoud, als aan de drugs. Beneden sneeuwt het, en mensen schreeuwen. Zij worden nat. Hij bracht mij hier. Voor heel even.

Mijn hersenen zijn bedekt met honing, en ik staar naar de ladders. Ook mijn handen zijn bedekt met honing. Ik grijp een ladder, maar het brokkelt af in mijn handen. Alles brokkelt af, totdat alleen een rode lijn overblijft, recht door het grijze. Alles is grijs.

Rood zover het oog reikt, die rode lijn, als de enige weg door het grijze. Als een rood pad door de wildernis. Vier pijlen had hij op zijn boog, die dwars door

mijn hoofd werden geramd. Ik staar naar de pijlen. Zij hebben mijn leven gered. Ik kus ze, en wikkel ze in. Ze brachten mij over de zee, over de grote brug. Ik kan janken als ik aan ze denk of naar ze staar. Religie brokkelde af, recht voor mijn ogen.

De tweede pijl

Ze was zo lang. Ze was lang genoeg om mij aan te raken, dwars door mijn schilden heen. De nachtmerrie brak zij af. Zij was één van de vier pijlen. De man met de boog had zo lang aan haar gewerkt. Dagen en nachten was hij bezig haar te decoreren. Hij maakte de juiste insnijdingen, de juiste bochten. Deze pijl was zijn paspoort en sleutel.

Ze was één van de vier pijlen. Een lange pijl, die mij nachtmerries gaf. Ze was zo klein na de duistere nacht, maar niet te klein. Ik was langer dan haar, maar ze trok mij naar beneden. Ze liet mij de duisternis onder het huis zien, de grotten en de tunnels. Ze nam mij mee naar deze plaatsen, en ik dacht dat het altijd nacht was. Ze liet mij haar dromen zien, en haar leugens. Ze had zoveel gezichten. En in de nachten zweefde zij over de brug, of dreef in de wateren. Met of zonder masker.

Zij was de tweede pijl. Ze zit nog steeds in mijn hoofd. Alles brokkelt af wanneer ze spreekt. Ik kan mezelf niet terugvinden, niets om aan vast te houden.

Het trappenhuis

Ik probeer te ontcijferen waar ik ben. Ze nam mij mee naar een diepe kelder. Vanaf toen voelde het weer alsof mijn geheugen begon weg te golven. Ik kwam aan bij een grote grijze zee. Spinnen zwommen hier, groot en klein, en bruggen waren nachtmerries. Grote spookbruggen over de zee, over elkaar. Was dit vrede of oorlog ? Dit angstaanjagende plaatje .... Een foto .... Ze stak haar mes door het plaatje, en bedreigde mij met dit mes, om mij vervolgens nog dieper mee te nemen. Met het mes tegen mijn keel leidde ze mij over de

trappen naar beneden. Het was een diep trappenstelsel. Het trappenhuis was mijn nachtmerrie. In het riool probeerde ze mij te verdrinken. Ratten zwommen hier. Een rat viel haar aan, en trok haar naar beneden. Dit redde mijn leven. Ik zwom naar de kant, maar ik wist niet of ik dood was of levend. Een grote rat stond daar. Deze ratten waren groot. Hij trok mij op de kant. De stad zou branden. Ik mocht niet meer terug.

Herinneringen

Hij woonde in een andere stad. Ik ging daar vaak naartoe. Dan deden we spelletjes, en dachten nergens meer aan. Ik kwam daar niet meer toen hij stierf. Maar soms kwamen de herinneringen terug, als grote oorlogen, als vogels die mij meenamen, terug naar mijn verleden.

De galg

Het leek wel alsof sommige jaren van mijn leven als een paradijs waren, als eilanden in de zee, waar ik aankwam na grote gevechten. Sommige jaren waren moeilijk. De spin had ze allemaal in mijn hersenen getatoeeerd. Ze spraken mij toe, al die tatoeages. Ik keek in de dieptes als in bodemloze putten, en hield mij vast aan de brug. Ik voelde mij dronken. Ik ben toen steden ingegaan die ik dacht te herinneren. Helemaal zeker was ik niet meer. Ik was hier niet gekend.

Ze stond in de keuken, lang als ze was. Ik weet niet wat ze kookte. De spin gebruikte haar om mijn hersenen te tatoeeren. Ik was in haar armen, en ze beschuldigde mij, dat ik geld van haar zou hebben gestolen en medicijnen. Ze stuurde mij brieven, en beschuldigde mij later dat ik die brieven zou hebben verscheurd. Ik hield van haar. Ze was de tweede pijl. De man met de boog had lang werk van haar gemaakt.

Ze had het eten klaar, en ik gooide de helft ervan weg, omdat ik bang was dat ze me zou vergiftigen. Dit kon ze mij niet vergeven. Ik had haar eten weggegooid. Het redde mijn leven. Zij wilde mijn leven niet redden. Ze beschuldigde mij dat ik mijn eigen leven had gered. Ze was dood.

Na de duistere nacht was ze zo klein, maar niet te klein. Ik was gewoon langer dan haar, maar toch haalde ze me neer. Ze dwong mij van haar voedsel te eten, de volle portie, en ik moest aan haar medicijnen, dezelfde die zij slikte. Ze schold en schreeuwde, en de spin in mijn hoofd tatoeeerde mij. Alles werd zwart, en toen wit. Zij leidde mij door het grijze, over de rode streep.

Deze steden waren allemaal gemaakt door religies, maar daaronder waren grote geheimen, diep onder de stad. Zij zou mij naar al die plaatsen leiden. Zij was de tweede pijl.

In de keuken stond zij, klaar om mij te vernietigen, klaar om mij te vergiftigen. Ik kon niet weigeren. De spin was in mijn hoofd. Honing droop van mijn fragiele hersenen. Ik geloofde alles wat ze zij. Zij was mijn religie. Zij was de tweede pijl.

Oog in oog met de man met de boog. Hij sloeg mij op mijn kaak. In een boshut werd ik wakker. Ik keek naar de spin, en viel toen weer in slaap. Mijn kaak was broos. Ik kon niet praten. Ik denk dat ik net als hen ben. Ik ben ver afgedwaald. Diep in de bossen kwam ik haar tegen, de prinses. Zij kapte hier de bomen om, en maakte haar meubels. Ook schreef ze haar boeken op het dode hout. Zij maakte religies. Vanaf hier marcheerden haar soldaten, om de wereld beneden haar in te nemen, en boven haar. Alles was van haar. Op hoge deuren klopten zij, om een bevel uit te dragen om te komen tot de galg. Zoveel gingen aan de galg die dag.

De oorlog

'Naam en toenaam,' werd er gezegd. Een zwart leren handschoen schreef alles op papier. Toen mocht ik door. Ik kreeg mijn eigen put. Maar de spin was nog steeds in mijn hoofd. Alles draaide. Ik was duizelig. Niemand kwam door. Geen bezoek. Ik was geheel afgezonderd. Er werden hier huizen gebouwd die even later in mijn hoofd afbrokkelden. Ik was er niet van overtuigd dat dit echt was. Maar wat was dan wel echt ? De spin weefde de dimensies door elkaar, en bouwde een nieuwe wereld. In mijn hoofd brokkelde het allemaal af, alsof het nooit door kon komen. Ik zweefde tussen twee realiteiten. Niets kon ooit echt worden. De spin raapte niks op. Er werden gewoon werelden overheen

gebouwd. Alles in het sop. En de gebouwen werden hoger, en de mensen werden langer. Ik kon de spin van dichtbij zien. Maar ik kon de spin niet aanraken. De spin was achter glas.

Zoveel mensen klommen op ladders omhoog, om te kunnen ontkomen aan de spin, maar de ladders braken gewoon af. Niemand kon ontsnappen. De dimensies werden in elkaar geweven. Het was een verlammend gevoel. We kwamen nooit ver.

De oorlog had dit allemaal gedaan.

Oude lappen

En ik droomde dat ik over de zee zweefde, ziende op alle zeeslagen, en grote boten. Alles zonk in de grote duistere, zwarte zee, als in vergif. Alleen de spin kwam boven, en nu is het in mijn hoofd. Fragiele draden door mijn hoofd. Een pistool of geweer is niet opgewassen tegen de spin. Alle dimensies worden hier in elkaar verweven. De spin is achter glas, dik glas, en iedereen voelt hopeloos. Zoveel dromen springen kapot wanneer de spin langskomt. En men weet nooit wanneer de spin komt. De spin komt plotseling. Het is niet te berekenen. Zo diep steekt het, zo intens, als het tatoeeren van hersenen. De zee lijkt van honing, meer en meer, als dikke stroop waar we nooit doorheen kunnen komen. Het trekt ons naar beneden, als een soldaat van de spin. Het trekt ons tot de kelders, en tot het riool. Als een pop in de kelder kijk je me aan. Vier pijlen door je hoofd, en zoveel naalden in je lichaam. Je bent net als ik. Ik zie de rode lijn in je ogen. Jij bent ook vergiftigd, net als ik. Je bent gebonden op een stoel, en probeert mij dromen te geven, maar die dromen komen nooit aan. De spin slaat alles stuk, en maakt er iets anders van. Ik kan nooit horen wat je zegt. Diep, diep in de kelder leven wij, met uitzicht op het riool, en daarachter is de zee, die nooit meer terugkomt. De soldaat van de spin heeft zijn werk gedaan. Kleurloos is het, met scheuten van pijn. Het is als het verkopen van oude lappen.

Het orakel

Ik ben eenzaam, alleen op de wereld, als een pop die de andere poppen niet kan bereiken. Morgen sta ik in de speelgoed-winkel. Het werk is bijna af. Een kind zal mij kopen. Het kind zal mij meesleuren in de modder. Het kind zal mij proberen te voeden met rotzooi. Ik kom in een nieuw huis, waar ik op een kastje wordt gezet. Mijn gezicht is opgeschilderd. Ik kan alles horen wat ze zeggen. Het kind is nu ouder, en speelt niet meer met mij, maar nog steeds voel ik de spin in mijn hoofd, die mijn dromen maakt, en stukslaat. Hier lopen de dimensies in elkaar over.

Ik probeer te draaien, en te bewegen. Dit zijn de oorlogs-jaren. Er is een inval in het huis, en ik wordt meegenomen. Even later wordt ik in de rivier geworpen. Ik kan alles zien van hier. Ook zie ik de grote brug. Ik zie hen met de maskers. In de nacht ben ik als dakpannen. Als schilden tegen de regen. Ik denk dat ik nu één met hen ben geworden.

Met een fluitje roepen ze mij op, en vragen mij om informatie. Ze willen alles weten, en dan klappen zij. Ik kan hen alles vertellen, en ze geloven alles. Ik ben nu een geest. Ik ben interessant, want ik kan dingen zien die zij niet zien. Als een orakel zetten ze mij neer, als een monument. Het is een nieuwe religie. Zij schilderen mij op, en verdelen de stukken. Als hongerige wolven bijten ze me, totdat de spin hen uit elkaar trekt. Mijn leven is gered. De spin in mijn hoofd .... mijn oplossing .... waar de dimensies in elkaar overvloeien, en dan is alles anders.

Borduringen van mijn hart

Maar de dag erna sta ik weer op de markt. Weer ben ik een orakel, om de toekomst te voorspellen. Ik ben boos bedrog, boeren-bedrog, om anderen op te lichten. Alles draait om geld, en ik dans als een ballerina. Ik doe mijn kunstjes wel. Aan het einde van de dag steekt de spin mij, en dan is het afgelopen. Maar de dag erna begint alles weer van voren aan. Ik ben in de carrousel. Ik werk voor het circus. Ik werp messen en speel met vuur, en zij ... zij is mijn assistente.

De assistente van de dood, het verkoopt goed. Dat moet je leren. Het is een koud kunstje.

Ik ben rijk, en wordt alsmaar rijker. Mensen aanbidden mij. Ze staan voor mij in de rij. Zij regelt de economie. Zij is mijn accountant. Als boekhouder wint ze. Dat is haar grote geheim. Ze verkoopt mij, en koopt me dan weer terug voor een laag prijsje, of ze steelt me gewoon terug. Zij is een groot spion. Maar de spin heeft ook haar grenzen opgesteld. Ze is de tweede pijl. Nauwkeurig schiet de man met de boog haar door het raam, dwars door mijn hoofd. Hij had maar één kans. Toen werd hij afgevoerd door de grote spin. In een ziekenhuis wordt hij neergelegd. Hij wordt met banden aan een bed bevestigd. En vele injecties gaan door zijn hoofd. De spin neemt ook hem onder handen. Zijn hersenen worden getatoeeerd, voor grotere opdrachten. Diep onder de grond gaat hij, om een zetel in de politiek te behalen. Dan slaapt iedereen. Hij speelt met het knopje. Hij speelt met de lamp. Zijn haren raken verstrikt in een spinnenweb.

Ik zie de zee onder mij, bedekt met zoveel spinnenwebben. Allemaal raken zij verstrikt. Ook ik. Hier spoelen de dimensies aan. Hier spoel ik aan. Bloedend lig ik op het strand, totdat een vrouw mij wegtrekt. Ik wordt als een pop behandeld. Maar de spin steekt haar ook. Er is niemand meer.

Onder het grijze lig ik, waar het vriest. Haar haren zijn lang en grijs. Zij houdt mij stevig in een greep, totdat de spin haar ook steekt.

Ik ren vrij, door de weilanden. Ik word vies, ik ben onder de modder. Ik struikel en val, en kruip een schuur binnen. Dan brokkelt alles af. Ik ben in het grote niets.

Ik ben in de grote stad van het niets, waar ik fiets. Iemand verkoopt fruit, maar niemand ziet het, alleen ik. Ik ben het grote niets.

Het is stil hier. Alles glijdt weg in de grote zee.

De spin borduurt mijn hart, mijn lichaam is gevoelig.

De nieuwe honing

Ik ben één met hen nu. Ik voel één met hen. Zij hebben ook honing, en het is een zee van honing.

De brug brokkelt af. Niemand kan meer terug, en niemand kan nog komen. Maar dan brokkelt hier ook alles af.

Door bliksemschichten worden deze poppen bestuurd.

Het is de melk van de spin, een nieuwe honing in hun hoofd.

Het opent boeken, en ze zien visioenen. Dat wat lang geleden verloren was gegaan.

Ik denk dat ik één met hen ben. Al deze dingen gebeuren ook in mij. Maar dan brokkelt alles af. Wij kunnen elkaar niet bereiken. Wij kunnen niets tegen elkaar zeggen. Alles wordt vervormd in de wind.

De zee van leugens

Het blijft steken totdat de honing vloeit. Honing van lang vervlogen tijden.

Het blijft steken totdat het de oude tonen voortbrengt, de geluiden van verloren gegane tijden.

Nu is het terug. De oude trommel staat naast de kast. Hij trommelt erop, en dan wordt alles stil.

De fluit is terug, en oude vogels fladderen in het rond. Klaar om hen over de zee te brengen.

Roep het nog eens zoals het was, schreeuw nog eens zoals het gebeurde.

Het blijft steken totdat de oude visioenen stromen. In een zee van visioenen woont de spin.

Ik kan je niet voelen, ik zie je niet, daarom moet het steken, steken totdat ik je vind.

In de mand met kleding is niets te vinden, alleen je naam.

Ik kan je niet voelen en zien. Ik kijk naar je speelgoed, je trommel en je fluit.

De vogels nemen mij op, en brengen mij over de zee, waar je eens woonde.

Alleen je naam staat geschreven op een stukje papier.

Eens was je hier, maar nu niet meer.

Ik kan je niet voelen en zien. Ik ben als een blinde man. Maar de spin blijft steken, totdat de rode lijn naar jou leidt. Ik kijk in je glazige ogen. Dan voel ik je warme hand.

Ik geef je een kus. Dan geef je mij een kus terug, met speeksel op mijn wang.

Ik til je op. Dan zie ik je straal en je lach.

Ik heb je nu helemaal. Ik trok je uit de mand en de doos.

Ik neem je in mijn armen, maar dan brokkelt alles af.

Het is de leugen die steekt.

De man met de boog kon me net op tijd redden.

Verblindende lichten waren op jacht,

Maar de pijl redde mij ....

Ik val op de grond, en tijd staat stil ...

Ze liep weg. Ze keek niet op of om ...

De pijl had mij gered ...

In een zee van leugens lag ik,

maar de pijl maakte alles anders ...

En er waren vier pijlen ...

Zij was de tweede ...

Ik luisterde naar haar slaapliedjes ...

Ik trok mezelf aan haar op ...

De spin stak mij totdat ik sliep ...

Een schip op zee,

en ik zonk weg in de leugens,

geen houvast,

want de spin had mij gestoken ...

Er was hier niets, maar toen alleen duisternis,

En het bleek steken, totdat iemand jouw naam noemde

Hier vloeiden de dimensies in elkaar over ...

Hier woonde de spin ....

Mijn hart sterft de hele tijd, totdat ik de rode lijn weer zie,

en het grijze wegvaagt

Hier heb ik een uitzicht over de hele stad.

Daar staan zij met hun trommels.

Het getrommel is als het steken van de spin.

En dan slaapt de stad,

bedekt onder sneeuw.

Getrommel in de wind,

wordt zo vals dat het de doden oproept,

een leger van doden.

In de zee van leugen zullen we allen vergaan.

In mijn keel steekt het.

Ook daar is de spin.

Het steekt totdat het de oude verloren woorden terugbrengt,

Totdat ik mijn mond open ...

Ik slik een paar keer, maar de pijn gaat niet weg.

Het wordt alleen maar erger.

Er is geen weg uit.

Ik zie haar daar staan, spottend,

liegend, als gedronken hebbend van de zee der leugens.

Tussen de prachtige bomen staat ze,

met prachtige struiken,

de leugen aanbiddend,

totdat ik afbrokkel

Zij is de tweede pijl, een zwaar vergif,

mijn hoofd is dood na de oorlog.

Op de zee der leugens heeft ze haar boot.

Ze vist mij eruit, om me nog meer te pijnigen.

Ik ben een pop in haar armen.

Ze knijpt al het leven uit me.

Ze sleurt me naar het riool.

Zo snel wordt ze oud,

als de riool-roos.

En alles wat ik kan doen is grijpen naar de grammofoon-speler,

maar dan brokkelt mijn arm af,

en dan alles om me heen.

Er is een stuk van het standbeeld afgebroken.

De spin steekt in mijn hoofd.
Er is bloed in het grijze, een rode lijn.
Ik moet mijn reis voortzetten.

Spinnen komen uit mijn mond.
Ik kan niet praten.
De tweede soldaat van de spin is gekomen.
Hij zegt dat ik rustig moet zijn.
Ik kan hem wel onthoofden.

Hij slaat mij met een laars,
en drukt mijn hoofd tegen de kachel aan.
Ineens zie ik het licht.
De zee der leugens spreekt tot mij.
Maar ik kan niet terugspreken.

Dan ineens vlieg ik de spin aan,
Ik grijp mijn mes, maar mijn arm staat stil.
Hier is waar de dimensies in elkaar overvloeien.

De spin is nu slechts een bruine vlek op het behang,
Ik had dit veel eerder moeten doen.

Waarom deed ik dit niet ?

Ik was onder de controle van een spin,

en een man met vier pijlen·

De spin was de derde pijl,

Het was een huwelijk,

wat al snel in de dood eindigde·

Op de rug van dit beest kwam ik tot de onderwereld·

Maar dit beest moest mij terugbrengen,

mij terugbrengen tot waar ik eens vandaan kwam·

Ik was ontvoerd·

Ik had de spin overwonnen,

een huwelijksfeest·

Hier is waar de dimensies in elkaar overvloeien,

Hier is waar de spin niet meer spreekt·

Planten van Vlees

Harm woonde met zijn twee kinderen aan de rand van een bos. Het bos was tamelijk groot, en er bleek een indianenstam te wonen die een paal met een dierenkop erop aanbaden. Meestal waren dat koppen van varkens of runderen zoals buffels en bizons. Harm waarschuwde zijn kinderen altijd dat ze niet het bos moesten ingaan. Hij was te bang dat de indianen zijn kinderen wat vreemds zouden aandoen. Er gingen allerlei vreemde verhalen over deze stam in de ronde. Ze zouden vreemde dingen doen met kinderen. Bewijzen voor deze verhalen waren er niet. Maar Harm wilde geen enkel risico nemen.

Op een dag tikte er een man op het raam. Het bleek een indiaan te zijn. Hij had dierenvellen op zijn rug, en hij had laarzen van een soort bont. Harm deed open, en vroeg waarmee hij de man kon helpen. De indiaan zei niets. Toen wees hij op zijn laarzen. 'Ikko Boeke,' zei de indiaan. Harm kon dat natuurlijk niet verstaan en haalde zijn schouders op. 'Mijnheer, ik heb geen idee wat u mij probeert te vertellen. Die taal ken ik helemaal niet,' zei Harm een beetje nors. Weer wees de indiaan op zijn laarzen, en toen zag Harm dat er een gat inzat. 'Oh, ik dacht dat indianen zelf wel wisten hoe ze zulke dingen kunnen maken,' grapte Harm. 'Nou, komt u maar verder.' De indiaan kwam naar binnen en deed zijn laars uit. Harm pakte draad en een naald, en begon de stof aan elkaar te naaien. Hij vond het vreemd dat de indiaan dit zelf niet kon.

'Hebben ze bij jullie geen onderwijs ?' vroeg Harm. De indiaan schudde zijn hoofd. De kinderen kwamen thuis en waren verbaasd toen ze de indiaan op de bank zagen zitten. 'Wat moet hij hier ?' vroeg Ko.

'Laten we een beetje gastvrij zijn,' zei Harm.

'Maar pa, u weet dat indianen gevaarlijk zijn,' zei Bep.

'Daar zijn geen bewijzen voor,' zei Harm. 'Trouwens, hij had gewoon mijn hulp nodig.'

'Het kan een valstrik zijn, pa,' zei Ko, die het niet vertrouwde.

'Ach welnee,' zei Harm. 'Hij kan hier best wel een nachtje slapen.'

'Wat !' riep Ko. 'Mij niet gezien. Dan ga ik wel bij oma slapen.'

'Doe jij dat maar,' zei Harm. 'Ik ben wel blij met een beetje gezelschap sinds mama is overleden.'

Bep begon te snikken. 'Moet je dat allemaal weer aanhalen, pa ? Zo komen we er nooit overheen.'

'Sorry,' zei Harm. 'Ga jij ook maar naar oma.'

De kinderen liepen de deur uit, terwijl Harm aan de indiaan vroeg of hij een biertje wilde. De indiaan wilde dat wel. Harm zag het als een uitdaging. Als hij vriendschap met de indiaan kon sluiten, dan zou dat bevordelijk zijn voor de verhouding tussen het dorp en de indianen. Misschien zou dat wel veel misverstanden uit de weg ruimen.

In de nacht hoorde Harm wat gerommel op het zolder. Toen hoorde hij ineens luide muziek. Toen hij kwam kijken had de indiaan een grammofoon-plaat opgezet. Harm kon er wel om lachen, en ging weer verder slapen. De indiaan bleek het goed naar zijn zin te hebben, maar de dag erop wilde de indiaan weer terug. De indiaan was te gehecht aan het bos. Harm kon dat goed begrijpen. De indiaan was verder erg dankbaar, maar maakte duidelijk in hele gebrekkige taal dat de vriendschap nu ook ten einde moest komen. De indiaan zei dat het voor hem eigenlijk verboden was om vriendschap te hebben met de blanken.

Harm kon het niet laten om nog even te vragen over die laars. 'Waarom kwam je hier eigenlijk voor die laars ? Hebben jullie geen vrouwen in jullie stam die voor dit soort dingen zorgen ?'

De indiaan liet weten dat ze geen vrouwen meer hadden. Die waren allemaal dood. De stam had alleen nog maar mannen, en die schenen heel onhandig met deze dingen te zijn.

'Maar hoe moet dat dan verder als je nog eens zoiets nodig hebt ?' vroeg Harm. De indiaan maakte duidelijk dat het maar behelpen was, en dat alles te hooi en te gras zou gaan. Misschien zouden ze zich het zelf wel aanleren, maar dat zou tijd kosten. De laatste vrouw van de stam was net overleden. Harm zei dat hij kon begrijpen hoe hij zich voelde, want zijn vrouw was ook overleden.

De indiaan maakte duidelijk dat hij juist blij was dat de vrouw dood was. Vrouwen bleken een grote macht binnen de stam te hebben, en die zouden ze in het verleden misbruikt hebben. De indiaan voelde zich vrij nu. Harm vroeg zich af of de vrouwen misschien vermoord waren. 'Hoe zijn jullie vrouwen aan hun einde gekomen ?' vroeg Harm tactisch.

De indiaan liet weten dat dit een groot geheim was. Harm vond dat verdacht. 'Waarom wil je het niet zeggen ?' vroeg Harm. 'Hebben jullie iets te verbergen ?'

'Shhhh,' zei de indiaan, en drukte zijn vingers op de lippen van Harm. 'Jullie zijn me maar een vreemde koekebakkers,' zei Harm.

De indiaan maakte duidelijk dat hij nu moest gaan, en rende het bos in.

Harm stond met zijn ogen te knipperen. Hij vertrouwde het helemaal niet. Even later kwamen de kinderen thuis.

'Hoe was het bij oma ?' vroeg Harm.

'Oma was er niet,' zei Ko. 'Maar we hadden de sleutel, dus we zijn daar gewoon gaan slapen.'

'Misschien is ze bij tante Buurtje,' zei Harm.

Ko en Bep gingen op de bank zitten. 'Hoe is het afgelopen met die indiaan ?' vroeg Bep. Toen vertelde Harm het hele verhaal.

'Ik heb nog eens lopen denken, hè,' zei Bep. 'Die indianen hebben misschien onze hulp nodig. Ze leven niet voor niets in het bos. Er moet iets in het verleden mis zijn gegaan.'

'Ach welnee,' zei Ko. 'Ze houden van het bos. Ze zouden niet anders willen. Er is nooit iets verkeerds gegaan, want ze hebben altijd al in het bos geleefd.'

'Nou, ik weet het nog niet zo net,' zei Bep. 'Misschien hebben ze traumatische ervaringen gehad in stad of dorp, en zijn toen naar het bos vertrokken. Wie zou er nu vanuit zichzelf zo primitief willen leven ?'

'Ik,' zei Ko. 'Ik begrijp hen gedachtengang helemaal. Maar voor ons zijn ze nu niet meer te vertrouwen. Het lijkt wel alsof er een vuur is tussen hen en ons. Het bos is in oorlog met het dorp.'

'Er kunnen toch ook wel tussenwegen zijn ?' vraagt Bep.

'Blijkbaar niet,' zei Ko.

Midden in de nacht wordt er op het raam geslagen. Een groep woedende indianen is gekomen. Harm rent naar beneden, ziet de indianen staan, en grijpt naar zijn honkbal-knuppel.

Hij doet de deur open en roept : 'Wie van jullie wil er het eerst aan ?'

De indianen zijn boos, en laten hem weten dat ze erachter zijn gekomen dat één van hen bij de blanken is geweest en vriendschap heeft gesloten. Ze laten weten dat er een speer door het hart van de dader is gegaan door dit misdrijf.

'Zeg, zijn jullie de politie ofzo ?' vraagt Harm boos. 'Scheer je weg, of ik bel de politie !'

De indianen maakten het duidelijk dat ze de politie niet waren, maar dat de blanken zouden boeten voor de vriendschap met één van hen. Blanken zouden niet te vertrouwen zijn, en het zou als een vloek op hun stam rusten als ze dat zomaar langs hun heen zouden laten gaan. Verschillende speren werden er op Harm gericht. Harm stond klaar om toe te slaan met de honkbal-knuppel, en riep naar zijn kinderen om hen de politie te laten bellen. Steeds meer indianen begonnen zich te verzamelen voor het huis van Harm. 'Ik waarschuw je,' zei één van de indianen. 'We zullen je niet vermoorden, maar lever je kinderen uit. Dan zal het voor ons afgedaan zijn.'

'Nooit,' zei Harm woedend. 'Zijn jullie helemaal gek geworden.'

'Je kinderen liggen al verlamd in hun bed,' zei de indiaan. 'We zijn al door de achterkant binnengekomen, en hebben hen het spinnengif toegediend.'

'Spinnengif ?' vroeg Harm verbaasd. Toen werd ook Harm van achteren geinjecteerd met het gif, en lag al snel verlamd op de grond. Na lange tijd werd hij wakker in het indianenkamp diep in het bos. Hij lag daar vastgebonden naast zijn kinderen. Zijn kinderen waren nog steeds bewusteloos. In de verte zag hij een paal met een varkenskop erop.

Een indiaan kwam dichterbij. 'Aanbidden jullie die varkenskop daar ?' vroeg Harm.

'Kop houden,' zei de indiaan, en schopte hem een paar keer.

'Nee, serieus,' zei Harm. 'Ik wil weten of jullie die varkenskop daar aanbidden.'

'Gaat je niks aan,' zei de indiaan nors, en schopte hem weer. Dit keer veel harder.

'Jij bent leraar van beroep, hè ?' vraagt de indiaan nors.

'Hoe weet je dat ?' kreunt Harm van de pijn.

'Wij weten alles,' zei de indiaan, die hem weer schopte, hard in zijn buik. 'Jullie blamken weten precies hoe iedereen te maken zoals jullie zelf.'

Harm kon niet meer praten van de pijn. Het duizelde hem voor de ogen, terwijl de indiaan maar door blijf schoppen, totdat hij weer bewusteloos viel.

Toen hij weer wakker was was hij aan een paal gebonden. Het bleek de paal met de varkenskop te zijn. De varkenskop was vlak boven hem.

'Dom varken,' zei één van de indianen, terwijl de andere indianen lachten. Een wat oudere indiaan kwam naar voren. Hij drukte een mes op de keel van Harm. 'Jullie blanken hebben alles verziekt,' zei de oude indiaan. 'Jullie zijn een vloek. Wij weten precies wat wij met jullie moeten doen. Jij gaat geofferd worden aan de paal met de varkenskop.'

Harm wordt wakker in zweet. Hij had alles maar gedroomd. De indiaan slaapt nog steeds op het zolder, en zijn kinderen zijn bij oma. Die ochtend moest hij naar school om les te geven, maar de nachtmerrie zit hem nog steeds in de keel. Hij heeft moeite met spreken, en besluit af te bellen. Hij voelt zich duizelig en misselijk. Na een tijdje wordt hij gebeld door Ko. Hij doet zijn hele verhaal, en dan wil oma hem ook even aan de telefoon. Oma is erg in paniek, en zei dat hij een domme fout had gemaakt, omdat de indianen met boze magie werken. Die nachtmerrie was daar een teken van. Harm zag nog steeds geen kwaad in de indiaan. 'Iedereen droomt weleens naar,' zei hij tegen oma.

'Maar je bent ziek,' zei oma. 'Er kunnen wel duistere krachten aan het werk zijn, jongen, vergis je er maar niet in. Of misschien heeft die indiaan wel allerlei ziektes naar binnen gebracht. Die mensen leven niet echt hygienisch.'

Harm werd zieker en zieker, en moest naar het ziekenhuis voor onderzoek. Oma kwam hem ook opzoeken met de kinderen. Ze schudde haar hoofd. 'Ik heb je er altijd zo voor gewaarschuwd geen bosmensen binnen te nemen. Ze zijn niet te vertrouwen.'

Oma besloot om bij Harm in te wonen om voor de kinderen te zorgen. Harm was erg depressief. Gelukkig was het geen ernstige ziekte, dus hij kon snel weg uit het ziekenhuis. Tante Buurtje zou de kinderen een tijdje op vakantie nemen naar een tropisch eiland, zodat Harm helemaal tot rust kon komen.

Tante Buurtje was een vrolijke vrouw, als zonneschijn, en zij zorgde ervoor dat de kinderen helemaal over de dood van hun moeder heenkwamen. Maar met Harm ging het steeds slechter.

Op een nacht kon Harm niet meer verder. Hij moest hier weg. Hij rende het bos in, zijn huis achterlatende. Oma sliep.

Na een lange tijd rennen kwam Harm aan bij de indianenstam. Hij smeekte of hij daar kon wonen. Ze waren direct erg aardig. Ook de indiaan die Harm geholpen had was erbij. Oma had hem weer het bos ingestuurd toen Harm in het ziekenhuis lag. Harm kreeg zijn eigen rieten hut. Oma was erg in paniek. Ze wist niet waar Harm was, maar had een vermoeden, omdat Harm zo vaak tegen haar zei dat hij weg wilde, het bos in, om te leven met de indianen. Toen Harm maar niet terug kwam en zo lang weg bleef besloot oma op onderzoek uit te gaan. Ze begreep hem wel een beetje, maar wilde toch zekerheid. Na lang lopen zag ze in de verte het indianen-kamp, en hoorde zijn luide stem al. Oma was erg opgelucht. Even wilde ze hem zien, en toen ze in de verte een glimp van hem opving keerde ze weer terug. Ze wist dat ze hem toch niet tegen kon houden, en toen Harm in het ziekenhuis lag kwam ze erachter dat de indiaan die bij Harm logeerde eigenlijk een hele aardige man was. Ook de kinderen hadden er vrede mee toen ze het hoorden. Oma zou nu voor hen zorgen. Bep dacht er niet aan om in een indianen-stam te wonen, maar Ko dacht er over om zijn vader in het kamp te bezoeken, en misschien daar ook te blijven. Niet alleen omdat hij zijn vader miste, maar ook omdat het bos hem aantrok. Voor hem was het ook heel interessant dat zijn vader nu contact had met de indianen, en zelfs één van hen was geworden, terwijl hij er vroeger altijd voor waarschuwde.

Na een tijdje ging ook Ko in het bos wonen, bij zijn vader en de indianen. Oma en Bep bleven in het huis wonen. Zij konden het goed met elkaar vinden. Ook tante Buurtje kwam vaak bij hen op bezoek. 'Ach,' zei tante Buurtje, 'Harm heeft gewoon een vrouw nodig. Dan blijft hij wel weg van die inboorlingen. Hij heeft gewoon niets te doen.'

'Tegen mij zei hij dat als hij ooit nog een relatie wilde, dan met een bosvrouw, met een indiaanse vrouw,' zei Bep. 'Maar daar was hij nog helemaal niet aan toe, en dacht er ook niet over, omdat hij nog zo stoeit met de dood van moeder. Hij is ook bang om weer gehecht aan iemand te raken, en die persoon dan weer te moeten verliezen.'

'Ja, dat is ook waar,' zei tante Buurtje. 'Maar heus, het kan hem misschien opvrolijken. Hij kan gewoon met zijn nieuwe vrouw zo nu en dan het bos inwandelen, dat helpt ook.'

'U begrijpt het niet, tante Buurtje,' zei Bep. 'Hij wil in het bos wonen. Hij wil niet terug naar het dorp.'

'Jammer dan,' zei tante Buurtje. 'Ik hoop dat hij een goed leven heeft daar.'

Oma knikte. Tante Buurtje kwam meer en meer logeren bij oma en Bep, en besloot na een tijdje bij hen in te trekken. Drie vrouwen in een huis. Het was een echt vrouwenhuis, en het was er altijd erg gezellig. Maar Harm en Ko dachten er niet aan om terug te komen. Zo leefden de drie vrouwen vele jaren bij elkaar, en het was een reuze gezellige en goede tijd. Maar toen stierf oma plotseling, en niet lang daarna ook tante Buurtje. Nu was Bep helemaal alleen, en depressies begonnen haar aan te vliegen. Ze kon het allemaal maar moeilijk verwerken, en deze keer begon ze haar vader en Ko heel erg te missen. Ook zij ging naar het bos, en zocht de indianenstam op om daar te wonen. Ze hadden dan wel helemaal geen familie meer buiten elkaar, maar de indianen waren nu hun nieuwe familie.

Toch kon Bep hier ook niet helemaal goed aarden. Ze voelde zich verscheurd tussen twee werelden. Ze leek steeds depressiever te worden, en er bleek geen kruid tegen opgewassen te zijn. Harm en Ko deden van alles om haar op te vrolijken, en ook de indianen. Op een dag werd ze naar de medicijn-man gebracht. Hij liet haar ruiken aan wat rode veren, en gaf haar een medicijn. Toen bond de medicijn-man de rode veren in haar haar.

'Het grote geheim is wat jij moet zien,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Ik zal jou op een reis nemen door het bos naar het grote geheim.'

Met goedvinden van Harm en Ko ging Bep op een bosreis met de medicijn-man. Ze gingen heel diep het bos in, langs meren en heuvels, tot een plaats waar de wilde dieren waren. Ook hier was een meertje. De medicijn-man smeerde haar in met zand, modder en klei. Ook smeerde hij zichzelf hiermee in, en nu zouden ze het meertje overzwemmen. Na een tijdje

kwamen ze aan bij een struik die over het meertje hing. Aan de stam van de struik lag een kleine panter. De medicijn-man nam haar mee langs de panter. Vlakbij was een grot. De medicijn-man zei dat de panter de bewaker was van de grot. De medicijn-man nam haar diep in de grot. Ook in de grot was een meertje, en een spook-achtig geluid. Plotseling was er een verschijning. Het was erg licht.

'Waarom zijn jullie gekomen,' sprak de gestalte.

De medicijn-man maakte een buiging en zei : 'Dit is Bep. Zij heeft last van depressies, en ik dacht dat het haar zou helpen om het grote geheim te zien.'

'Depressies is de roep van het grote geheim,' zei de gestalte. De lichtende verschijning had een kap op, en een lang gewaad. Ook had de gestalte een speer. 'Ik waak over het grote geheim,' zei de gestalte, 'maar depressie is de sleutel. Ik waak over de zielen van het woord. Ook haar moeder is hier, haar oma, en haar tante. Nog veel meer zielen zijn hier. Deze depressie is haar verbinding met hen, maar die verbinding is verbroken. Ik ben de grote verbinder. Ik heb deze weg gemaakt. Laat haar dichterbij komen. Ik zal haar hart genezen, en haar hoofd tot rust brengen.' Toen vaagde de gestalte weg, en een lichtende weg verscheen voor hen. 'Kom mee,' zei de medicijn-man, en stapte op de weg. Het was een soort tunnel die toen begon te draaien. Bep werd duizelig. Droomde ze dit ? Voorzichtig stapte zij ook op de weg. Ze leken in een heel nieuw bos te komen. Bep voelde een band om haar hoofd komen, en stralen kwamen naar binnen om haar hart te voeden. 'Kom verder,' zei een stem. Het was een donkere, lage stem, die steeds lager werd. Ze zag weer een verschijning, dit keer zonder kap, die een miniatuur koe in zijn handen had. 'Dit is het woord,' zei de verschijning die daar in lange gewaden stond. Plotseling begon er melk uit de koe te komen. 'Woord, spreek,' zei de verschijning luid. Toen stond er een paal met een koeienkop op. De melk begon te stromen en te stromen, totdat Bep en de medicijnman er bijna in zwommen. 'Ik ben het grote geheim,' zei de koeienkop. 'Als het middernacht is, dan verander ik in een varkenskop, en dan is het grote geheim van jou,'

'Wacht eens even,' zei Bep. 'Hier heb ik een keer over gedroomd. Nee, dat kan niet waar zijn.'

'Wat bedoel je ?' vroeg de medicijn-man.

'Ik heb dit al weleens eerder gezien,' zei Bep. 'We moeten wachten tot middernacht, en dan zal de varkenskop spreken.'

'Precies,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Het is de strijd tussen hebzucht en honger, onthechting. Het is de stem van depressie, maar tegelijkertijd het medicijn.'

Ze bleven wachten tot het middernacht was. Toen veranderde de koeienkop in een varkenskop.

'Ik ben overwonnen,' zei de varkenskop. 'Willen jullie mijn geheim zien ? Het geheim wat ik al voor vele eeuwen verborgen heb gehouden ?'

Bep knikte, en stapte dichterbij. Toen ineens begon de varkenskop vuur te spuwen. Bep schrok, en rende naar achteren. De medicijn-man hield haar vast. 'Hij is het geheim aan het openbaren.' Weer spuwde de varkenskop vuur. 'Ik bedank jullie alvast voor het komen. Jullie hebben het welverdiend om dit te zien. Ruben, Simeon, Levi, Juda, Gad, Aser, Issaschar, Zebulon, Jozef, Benjamin, Dina, Efraim, Manasse ….' En weer spuwde de varkenskop vuur, en begon woest te worden. Zijn kop werd helemaal rood. 'Ik ben hier om deze zegels te verbreken !' riep de varkenskop. 'Dat is mijn taak, om de zegels der stammen te verbreken !'

'Niemand dan jullie zijn gekomen om dit geheim te zien,' zei de varkenskop toen rustig. Een gouden cirkel met daarop de stenen van de stammen begon rond te draaien en te branden. 'Deze gouden cirkelzaag, …. deze gouden cirkelzaag …' riep de varkenskop. En toen ontplofte de cirkel. Een tunnel verscheen voor hen. 'Ga de tunnel binnen,' zei de varkenskop nors. Bep en de medicijnman liepen haastig door. Achter hen werd een deur gesloten.

'Jullie willen het geheim toch zien ? Jullie willen het geheim toch zien ?' riep de varkenskop. 'Voor eeuwig is dit verborgen gebleven, maar jullie hebben overwonnen. 'De sleutel van depressies heeft jullie hier gebracht.' Achter de varkenskop verscheen een troon met een oude vrouw erop met lange vieze haren. 'Het geheim is gemanifesteerd in haar,' zei de varkenskop. De vrouw stond op, en liep op Bep en de medicijn-man af. Maar als door de bliksem werd ze teruggeslagen. 'Ik moet altijd op deze troon zitten,' jammerde ze. 'En dat omdat ik voor de hebzucht heb gekozen. Mijn varken is nu slechts een kop, om mij te verraden. Ik dacht altijd maar aan eten, en meer rijkdommen, om mijn macht te laten zegevieren. Maar mijn varken is tegen mij gekeerd nu, en heeft mijn schuilplaats verraden. Dom varken !' krijste ze. 'Ik zit nu voor altijd aan mijn stoel vastgeplakt. Ik heb de dorpen en de steden ontworpen, en ik heb ze groot gemaakt ! Dat is alles wat ik kan ! Dit is mijn troon, en ik ben aan het smelten !' jammerde ze. 'Ik heb de ring der stammen gecreeerd als het orakel van mijn toverboek waarmee ik de dorpen en steden heb behekst. Maar jullie hebben de ring verbroken !' krijste ze, terwijl ze vuur spuwde. 'Hoe meer vuur ik spuw, hoe meer ik smelt. Mijn woede is mij aan het verteren,' jammerde ze. 'Maar ik heb jouw familie, en ik zal ze meetrekken in mijn val,' krijste ze. Haar stem echode. Bep trilde even. Tot haar grote schrik begon de rode troon waarop de heks zat te bewegen, maar gelukkig schoot de troon weer terug als door elastiek.

'Ik weet je naam, ik weet waar je woont !' krijste de heks. 'Hier is het grote geheim : De stammen zijn de steden en de dorpen.' Toen viel de stoel om, en de heks begon weg te smelten. Weer begon een cirkel voor hen te draaien, maar deze begon langzaam weg te smelten. Toen begon een andere cirkel voor hun ogen te draaien en te krijsen, maar ook deze begon langzaam weg te smelten.

'Ik weet waar je woont !' werd er in de verte geroepen. Plotseling viel Bep neer. Gelukkig konden de armen van de medicijn-man haar opvangen. 'W...w...wie was dat ?' vroeg Bep.

'Je bent in de matrix van het bos,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Het is een raadsel wat je moet oplossen. Er is een hogere natuur, die het grote geheim is.'

'Ik ben te depressief,' snikt Bep. 'Ik kan niet goed nadenken. Het vermoeit me.' De medicijn-man nam haar in zijn armen. 'Juist door depressie, leegte en vermoeidheid wordt het raadsel opgelost,' zei hij. 'Niet door goed nadenken. Nadenken is een valstrik. Het labyrint moet namelijk overwonnen worden. Het is een gevecht.' Bep begint harder te snikken. 'Ik ben zo moe. Ik kan het niet meer volhouden. Alles slaat op me in.'

'Ik bescherm je,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Je moet je innerlijke vijanden overwinnen, en dit is de perfecte plaats. Het is nu of nooit. Juist in je depressies kun je de vijand een grote slag slaan.'

'Het vreet me aan, medicijn-man,' snikte Bep. 'Ik ben hier niet tegen opgewassen.'

'Haal rustig adem,' zei de medicijn-man. Hij leidde haar tot een stomend, kolkend meertje, waar hij haar onderdompelde en begon te wassen. Hij haalde zijn hand over haar voorhoofd. 'Zoveel spanning op je hoofd,' zei hij. Het meertje was heel warm. 'Dit is de overgang naar de dromenwereld, heel diep in het bos,' zei de medicijn-man. 'De planten, kruiden en bloemen zijn hier namelijk veel sterker, zijn veel meer zaaddragend, en veroorzaken daardoor een veld van hallucinaties. Ik spreek nu tot je door de hallucinaties, al voor een geruime tijd. Dit is ook een hallucinatie.'

'Wat wonderlijk,' zei Bep. 'Ik wil nog dieper het bos in.'

'Ja, maar verderop zijn de nachtmerries,' zei de medicijnman. 'De planten daar zijn wel nog sterker dan hier.'

'Interessant,' zei Bep. 'Nou, laten we dan maar hier blijven,' zei Bep.

'Ja,' zei de medicijn-man, 'want die nachtmerrie-hallucinaties doen net alsof je dan in de dorpen en de steden terecht komt, maar het is gewoon nog dieper in het bos.'

'Hmmm,' zei Bep. 'Dus u wilt zeggen dat toen wij in het dorp woonde, wij gewoon onder de invloed van zware planten waren dieper in het bos ?'

'Precies,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Je bent nu daarvan aan het afkicken, en dat is ook heel confronterend.'

'Ik ben bang,' zei Bep.

'Wij gaan daar alleen naartoe als wij een tegengif hebben genomen,' zegt de medicijn-man. 'Wij nemen dan soms stoffen van die zware planten, omdat in kleine hoeveelheden, in een veilig gebied, deze stoffen als medicijn kunnen werken. Maar als je er teveel van neemt, dan ga je dus echt dorpen en steden hallucineren als nachtmerries.'

'Was het overlijden van mijn moeder ook zo'n nachtmerrie-hallucinatie ?' vroeg Bep.

De medicijn-man knikte. 'Ja, en dat was een hele zware stof, die jarenlang in het lichaam kan blijven doorwerken.'

'En tante Buurtje en oma, hun overlijden, was dat hetzelfde ?' vroeg Bep.

De medicijn-man knikte weer. 'Ja, allemaal hetzelfde. Het is zware troep, waar veel te veel van genomen is, en je was in onveilig gebied. Het hangt daar in zware doseringen gewoon in de lucht, en dat werkt dag en nacht op je.'

Bep begint weer te snikken. 'Ik voelde me zo rot, en ik voel me nog steeds rot. Ik mis ze zo erg. Dus het was allemaal niet waar ? En waren zij zelf dan ook een hallucinatie, en bestonden zij dan helemaal niet ?'

De medicijn-man was even stil. 'Kind, je moet nog veel leren,' zei hij.

'Nee, ik wil het weten,' zei Bep in paniek. 'Bestonden moeder, oma en tante Buurtje echt, of waren het slechts hallucinaties ?'

'Ze bestonden in andere vormen,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Maar niet zoals je ze kende. Het waren dorpse hallucinaties, dus alles was dorps. Het begon misschien goed, maar het was een geladen nachtmerrie, wat betekent dat het je langzaam in een tragedie zou zuigen. Het zijn roofplanten, Bep. Het zijn hele gevaarlijke planten, die alleen wij als medicijn-mannen veilig kunnen gebruiken. Zoals ik al zei gaat dat in hele lage doseringen, en in veilig gebied. Dan dient het als een medicijn, en we gebruiken het in de oorlog en in de jacht in hogere doseringen. Het is dan goed gif. Wij moeten in ieder geval voldoende tegengif hebben om hier tegen bestand te zijn.'

'Wat voor tegengif is dat ?' vroeg Bep nieuwsgierig.

'Wij kweken daarvoor bepaalde spinnen,' zei de medicijnman, 'die wij dan melken voor hun gif. Maar ook dit gif mag niet genomen worden in te hoge doseringen.'

'Waarom niet ?' vroeg Bep.

'Omdat dat verlammingen kan brengen,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Ook heeft het in hoge doseringen hetzelfde effect als de roofplanten.'

'Klinkt eng,' zei Bep. 'Ik begin flink bang te worden van al deze dingen. Wat als er op dit moment iets goed fout zit, want u zei dat ik nu ook aan het hallucineren ben ?'

'Leer en ervaar,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Als je er telkens weer wat bijleert, dan zal dat je steeds meer rust geven. Steeds meer zul je dan het grotere plaatje zien om je inzicht te geven.'

'Toch is het eng,' zei Bep. 'Wat als je het verkeerde erbij leert, en dat je zo dieper en dieper in de kronkels wordt geholpen ?'

'Wanneer de student klaar is om meer te leren, komt de leraar,' zei de medicijn-man.

'Ja, maar de leraar kan bedriegen,' zei Bep.

'Niet als de student blijft onderzoeken, open blijft staan, om tot de dieptes van de kennis te komen,' zei de medicijn-man.

'Nou, ik weet het nog zo net niet,' zei Bep. 'Sommigen zijn erg sluw. En een foutje is snel gemaakt.'

'Voorzichtigheid is de moeder van de waarheid,' glimlachte de medicijnman.

'Ik ben voorzichtig en bang,' zei Bep. 'Ik begin bijna paranoide te worden nu. Dit is echt heel eng.'

'Ik kan je helpen met wat tegengif van de speciale spinnen die wij kweken,' zei de medicijn-man.

'Wat voor spinnen zijn dat ?' vroeg Bep.

'Pajiet-spinnen,' zei de medicijnman. 'Die zijn heel zeldzaam, maar worden al sinds eeuwen in het geheim gekweekt door onze stam. Het gif breekt heel snel de andere giffen af.'

'Ja, ja,' zei Bep. 'Maar kom je zo niet in een andere hallucinatie terecht ? Leven wij niet allemaal in hallucinaties ?'

'Slimme meid,' glimlachte de medicijn-man. 'In wezen zijn er alleen goede en slechte hallucinaties, ja. Alles is gebaseerd op hallucinaties.'

'Lekker ingewikkeld,' zei Bep. 'Dus misschien besta ik helemaal niet, of in een andere vorm.'

'Je moet hierin je pad leren te vinden, Bep,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Wil je het tegengif ?'

'Ja, doe maar,' zei Bep. 'Ik heb toch niets te verliezen.'

Snel spoot de medicijn-man iets in haar arm, en het leek wel alsof er nog iets in haar werd gespoten, als in haar arm buiten haar arm. Bep werd direct wakker alsof er een waas van haar ogen was weggetrokken. Alles was heel helder nu, en ze zag de medicijnman met haar arm in zijn hand. Hij had daar net iets ingespoten. Bep haalde diep adem. 'Interessant,' zei ze. 'Dus we hadden beiden dezelfde hallucinatie ?'

'Ja, ik ben in verschillende lagen van de natuur,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Ik heb leren dubbel-leven, en leren switchen.'

'Interessant,' zei Bep. 'En dat kun jij me ook leren ?'

'Natuurlijk,' zei de medicijn-man. Samen gingen ze terug naar het kamp, en Bep had natuurlijk veel te vertellen. Ze voelde zichzelf al een stuk beter nu.

Bep werd steeds nieuwsgieriger naar die planten dieper in het bos. De medicijn-man vertelde haar dat het vlees-planten waren, die op geslachtsdelen leken. Zij die onder de bedwelming hiervan kwamen zouden zelfs hallucinaties van geboorte kunnen krijgen, waardoor ze al hun herinneringen verloren. Juist omdat Bep's depressies na een tijdje sterker dan ooit terugkwamen wilde ze hier zo graag naartoe. De medicijn-man kreeg hier hoogte van en waarschuwde haar. Hij zei dat het alleen maar erger zou worden als ze daar naartoe zou gaan.

Hij vertelde haar ook dat ze juist daar vandaan kwam, en dat ze daarom zo'n verschrikkelijk leven had gehad. Maar Bep wilde terug, want haar depressies waren erger dan ooit tevoren. De medicijn-man wist dat hij iets moest doen. Hij kon daar wel naartoe met voldoende tegengif, omdat hij een volleerd medicijn-man was, maar Bep was onervaren. Bep kon niet meer wachten. Ze zei dat er niets meer te verliezen was, en dat het toch niet meer erger kon worden. Bep begon ook aan alles te twijfelen, juist omdat het zo slecht met haar ging. De medicijn-man bleef zeggen dat afkicken een heel zwaar proces was, en dat het soms wel erger was dan ooit tevoren. Dat hoorde bij het proces. Het was een heel zwaar gevecht. 'Ik kan het niet meer aan, medicijn-man,' zei Bep.

'Volhouden, meid,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Blijf studeren, en voordat je het weet kun je daar samen met mij naartoe.'

Maar Bep kon niet meer. Ze nam dezelfde dosering tegengif die de medicijn-man had voorgeschreven, en rende op een nacht het bos in. Ze bleef maar rennen en rennen. Na een tijdje was ze omringd door prachtige struiken van vlees die inderdaad op een soort geslachtsdelen leken. De draden waren heel dun, en bovenop was een soort gezwollen vruchtbaar deel met een prachtige roze kleur. Hier stroomde sap uit, waarvan Bep wist dat het een heel gevaarlijk sap was. Even stond ze als aan de grond genageld. Ze wist dat ze nu een heel groot risico nam. Eigenlijk was het nog helemaal geen tijd om hier naartoe te gaan. Plotseling voelde ze wat springen in haar hoofd. Het sap leek binnen te stromen. Ze begon te krijsen en te huilen. 'Ik kan niet meer,' huilde ze. 'Waarom martelen jullie me zo ?'

Van achteren was ze door een pijl geraakt. Toen viel ze bewusteloos. Achter haar stond de medicijn-man die haar op zijn schouder nam. Dat was op het nippertje. Hij bracht haar veilig naar het kamp. Na een tijdje werd ze heel zwakjes wakker. 'Oh, het was prachtig,' zei ze, terwijl ze nog steeds onder bedwelming was. 'Maar toen overweldigde me het, en ik werd zo bang.'

'Je was nog niet klaar, meid,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Ik heb je op het nippertje kunnen redden. Ze hadden je bijna meegesleurd in hun stroom.'

'Het was zo spannend,' zuchtte Bep.

'Nee, het was gevaarlijk,' zei de medicijn-man.

'Maar het was zo prachtig,' zei Bep, 'zo adembenemend.'

'Bep, wacht jij nou maar rustig totdat het tijd is dat we daar samen naartoe kunnen gaan. Ik moet je nog enkele dingen uitleggen, en dan ben je klaar. Je hebt nu alvast even een voorproefje gehad, maar dat was niet de bedoeling. Het had je je leven kunnen kosten. Dit zijn geen dingen om mee te spelen,' zei de medicijn-man.

'Ik weet dat je bezorgd bent,' zei Bep. 'Ik weet dat je de waarheid spreekt, maar ik kon niet meer. Ik moest het gewoon zien. De drang in mij was te sterk. Het was als gekrijs in mijn hoofd.'

'Je moet nog veel leren, Bep,' zei de medicijn-man. Bep knikte. Ze had nu wonderlijke dromen die haar leken voor te bereiden. Maar Bep besefte niet dat juist de planten van vlees dit allemaal gesimuleerd hadden. Ze hadden haar alreeds gevangen, en gaven haar hallucinaties alsof ze nog veilig bij de medicijn-man was. Iedereen van het kamp begon zich steeds vreemder en gemener tegen Bep te gedragen, ook de medicijn-man. Bep had nog steeds niets door. Voor haar was dit een aanzet om weer terug te gaan naar de vlees-planten, niet wetende dat ze allang weer onder hun macht was. Ze had het gevoel dat iedereen haar haatte, dus ze zei tegen haarzelf : 'Kom ik om, dan kom ik om.' Op een nacht begon ze weer te rennen. Ze wilde terug naar de vlees-planten. Ze zag de prachtige planten in de verte die naar haar lonkten. Ze zakte langzaam in een rivier omringd met de meest wonderlijke en prachtige vlees-planten. Dit keer had ze geeneens tegengif genomen. Ze verlangde hier zo naar. Langzaam zonk ze in de rivier, tot aan haar nek. De rivier was vol van het zaad van de wonderlijke planten, en langzaam begon ze te drinken. Ze wilde hallucineren om van deze depressies af te komen. Ze voelde zich wonderlijk.

Ze was het gepraat van de medicijn-man zat. Ze wilde leven. Ze wilde genieten van de prachtige natuur. Ze wilde niet naar school. Er was al genoeg tegen haar gesproken in haar leven. Ze was er moe van. De medicijn-man was niet meer wie hij was, en de anderen ook niet.

In het kamp in de werkelijkheid was inmiddels grote paniek, omdat Bep verdwenen was, en maar niet terugkwam. De medicijn-man vermoede dat ze naar de vlees-planten was gegaan. Hij besloot er naartoe te gaan met voldoende tegengif om te zien of er sporen van haar waren. Diep in de velden van de vlees-planten vond hij haar. Ze lag daar op de grond. Hij wist dat ze zo had geworsteld met depressies en kon haar zo goed begrijpen. Maar toch wist hij dat scholing het beste was voor haar. Ze moest afkicken en tot de waarheid komen. Met wat medicijnen kon hij haar terugbrengen tot de werkelijkheid, en ze werd huilend wakker, heel zwak. Ze kon niet praten, maar wel een beetje lopen. Heel voorzichtig liep hij met haar terug naar het kamp. Ko nam haar direct in zijn armen.

Ze gebruikte vuile taal, omdat ze nog steeds dacht aan wat zij haar hadden aangedaan in haar hallucinaties. De medicijn-man maakte haar duidelijk dat ze in een simulatie-realiteit was gekomen door de hallucinaties van de vlees-planten, die ook het kamp hadden gesimuleerd en alle kamp-bewoners, als gevolg van haar tochtje. Toen hield ze Ko stevig vast. Ze was blij dat ze gered was. Het had ook anders kunnen aflopen, want soms verslonden de vlees-planten hen die tot hen kwamen. Waarschijnlijk had het tegengif haar gered, en het feit dat ze toch al wat kennis had.

Bep had van haar fouten geleerd. Ze wilde nu goed bij de les blijven. Na een lange periode kon ze dan eindelijk met de medicijn-man mee naar de planten van vlees. Ze keek haar ogen uit, en de medicijn-man liet haar vele geheimen zien. 'Deze planten zijn heilig,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Eens in de zoveel tijd kiezen ze iemand uit die hen goed heeft behandeld, en die veel van hen afweet, en zo iemand zal dan voor altijd tussen hen kunnen wonen. Zij wonen meestal dieper in de velden van de vlees-planten, daar waar je niet zomaar kunt komen.'

'Interessant, dat lijkt me wel wat,' zei Bep. 'Ik vind het hier prachtig.'

'Zelfs ik ben nog niet eens zo ver,' grapte de medicijn-man.

Bep hoorde heldere stemmen in haar hoofd, waarvan de medicijn-man zei dat het de stemmen van de vlees-planten waren. Ze hadden haar op het oog. Ze wilden met haar communiceren. Ze wilden haar onderwijzen.

Ze vertelden haar van een zee die achter de velden van vlees-planten lag, en ze nodigden haar uit daar naartoe te gaan. Zij moest hiervoor de medicijn-man achter haar laten. Ze moest over een zanderig pad, en de planten hier begonnen steeds wonderlijker te worden. Er waren allerlei soorten roze lichten in haar hoofd, als stralen-kransen. Ze vertelden haar dat zij een uitverkorene was. De zee stond vol met prachtige planten van vlees. Ze communiceerden door stoom en een soort vuur, en allerlei sappen. Sommige van die sappen leken wel kokend, en die werden hier en daar uitgespoten. Bep kreeg een heel warm gevoel. Het leek alsof delen in haar hoofd aan elkaar verbonden werden. Ze had ineens veel minder hoofdpijn, alsof er bruggen in haar hoofd werden gebouwd. De planten van vlees zeiden dat ze in haar hoofd leefden. Deze zee was de zee van communicatie. Ze wilden haar genezen en voorbereiden op haar taak. Bep begon te lachen. Haar depressies begonnen weg te smelten. Alles binnenin haar bleek te werken door sappen en vuren, en alles binnenin haar was gemaakt van vlees-planten, als een grote puzzel die in elkaar gezet moest worden. Bep was in een gelukzalig gevoel. Er borrelde zoveel in haar op. Hier kon zij verder studeren, en de planten van vlees zouden haar

alle eilanden van de zee laten zien, en haar al hun geheimen vertellen. Dit waren tijden van grote genezing, en van kennis. Een rood vuur scheen bezit van haar te nemen, en allerlei rode sappen, ook kokende rode sappen die voortspoten. Verder was het een heel tropisch klimaat.

Deze planten hadden heel wat te vertellen. Wat er allemaal verkeerd was gegaan, en wat er allemaal moest gebeuren. Bep begon steeds meer van haar verleden te vergeten, als door een nieuwe geboorte. Toch herinnerde ze ook dingen, maar dan op een hele andere manier. Deze dingen hadden waarde, maar waren in de verkeerde vormen tot haar gekomen. Nu kon alles recht gezet worden zoals het was. Ze had zicht gekregen in de nacht. Het was het vuur van de vleesplanten die haar hoofd had verlicht. Dit waren allerlei soorten vuren, die ook werkten door allerlei sappen. Weelderige struiken namen haar mee door de zee, waardoor alles begon te duizelen in haar. Alles werd gemixt in haar hoofd, en nieuwe vormen kwamen voort. Het was als een pretpark in de zee. De zee-planten fluisterden in haar, en trokken haar naar de eilanden.

In dit proces begon ze haar identiteit te verliezen, tot het punt dat ze niet meer wist of ze nu een man of een vrouw was. Ze voelde zichzelf als een oude man. In de verte leek het wel alsof ze Ko zag staan, haar vader, en de medicijn-man, en ze miste hen, maar het leek wel alsof dat van een lang vervlogen tijd was, alsof ze niet meer bestonden. Plotseling kroop er een gevoel van depressie op haar, en de gestaltes bleken weg te vagen. Ze had heimwee, maar de drangen van de vlees-planten waren te groot. Waar trokken ze haar naartoe ? Het leek wel alsof ze in een grote woestijn was aangekomen, alsof ze iets heel groots moest voorttrekken, als een kar door de woestijn. Ze voelde zich oud, als een oude man, als Kain. 'Kom tot het land Nod, als een oase in deze woestijn,' werd er gefluisterd. Ze wist niet meer of ze de planten van vlees nog wel kon vertrouwen. Ze voelde zich als een slaaf, en dan in meerdere dimensies tegelijk, want ze voelde zich ook een slaaf van een schip. Ze wilde overboord springen, maar ze was geketend. Ze moest roeien. Ze was een roei-slaaf. 'Oh, waar ben ik toch in terecht gekomen,' jammerde ze. 'Ik heb waarschijnlijk veel te veel van die troep genomen. Het is zware drugs. Oh, waar ben ik toch aan begonnen. Ik ben al tijden mezelf niet. Ik heb er al veel te lang mee lopen experimenteren. Dit is een 'bad trip,' een 'bad trip,' girl. Wat heb ik mezelf toch aangedaan.' Ze hoorde gelach in haar hoofd, alsof alles aan het scheuren was in haar hersenen. 'Je wilde het grote geheim toch zien ?' lachte de stem in haar hoofd.

Plotseling vaagde het allemaal weg, en zag ze de medicijn-man voor haar staan. Hij sloeg een arm om haar heen, en zei : 'Eindelijk heb je dan het grote geheim gezien.' Toen liepen ze samen terug naar het kamp.

Zijn Huis Stond In De Weg

Hij staarde eenzaam voor zich uit. Hij miste zijn vrouw, maar wist ook dat hij nooit terug kon naar haar. Ze was te gevaarlijk. Hij poetste zijn schoenen, stond op, en liep toen naar buiten. De tuin was prachtig. Er stond een vrouw tussen de struiken, met een radiatie als van een leeuw, tegelijkertijd zwak. 'Ben je …,' zei ze verlegen.

'Ben ik wat ?' vroeg hij.

'Ben je de nieuwe buurman,' zei ze.

'Oh, ja,' zei hij.

'Mag ik u een hand geven,' vroeg ze.

Hij stak zijn hand uit en liep op haar af. Haar hand voelde zacht aan, en tegelijkertijd stevig.

'Wilt u mijn huis zien ?' vroeg ze.

'Zodadelijk,' zei hij, 'Eh, okay, ik loop wel even met je mee nu.'

Ze glimlachte. Ze deelden de tuin samen. Het was een grote tuin. Ze leidde hem tot haar keuken, waardoor ze binnen kwamen. 'Mooi hier,' sprak hij.

Ze glimlachte verlegen.

'Ja, dat hebben wel meerderen gezegd.'

Hij ging op de bank zitten in de kamer. 'Moet u wat koffie met een koekje ?' vroeg ze.

'Nee, doe maar geen moeite,' zei hij.

'Ach ik kan het zo inschenken,' zei ze bijna fluisterend.

Even later zaten ze samen op de bank. Hij dronk van zijn koffie en keek haar aan.

'Wat is dat voor schilderij op de muur ?' vroeg hij.

Het was nogal een ingewikkeld schilderij. Een dame in het zwart, en een naakte man op een stoel met een appel in zijn mond.

'Oh,' lachte ze. 'Dat is …'

'Toe, zeg het maar,' zei hij.

'Dat is … Ach, het is een dom varken,' sprak ze.

'En wie is die vrouw ?' vroeg hij.

'Het is geen vrouw, het is een heerser,' sprak ze.

'Zo, zo,' zei hij.

'En wie bent u ?' vroeg ze.

'Roderik,' zei hij.

'Oh, rode Rik,' lachte ze.

'Nee, gewoon Roderik,' zei hij.

'Mijnheer Roderik, u bent een interessante man,' zei ze.

'Ik weet het,' zuchtte hij. 'Dat lijkt altijd zo aan de buitenkant. Maar ik ben tamelijk saai.'

Hij keek naar nog wat andere schilderijen aan de muur. Schilderijen van indianen.

'Vleselijk, hè,' zei ze.

'Wat is vleselijk ?' vroeg hij.

'Nou, al die naakte mannen op schilderijen,' zei ze.

'Ik vind het wel wat hebben,' zei hij. 'Maar als je dat vindt, waarom haal je ze niet weg ?'

'Ik heb geen probleem met vleselijk,' zei ze.

'Ach wat, je bent lief,' zei hij.

'Vind je ?' vroeg ze. 'Het zijn vleselijke varkens. Varkens moeten er ook zijn. Ik heb er geen problemen mee. Ze eindigen toch wel in de pan.'

'Huh,' zei Roderik. 'Dit begint me nu even te duizelen. Indianen zijn varkens ?'

'Nee, niet indianen,' sprak ze, 'mannen zijn varkens.'

'Oh, ja, daar heb je gelijk in,' zei Roderik. 'Vaak wel.'

'Altijd,' lachte ze.

'Oh,' zei Roderik die bijna zijn koffie uitproeste. 'Dus ik ben ook een varken.'

'Tuurlijk,' zei ze zacht. Even kwam haar tongetje naar buiten. Het was een klein tongetje die ze even heel snel liet zien, alsof ze hem plaagde. Een vreemd gevoel gleed over zijn rug.

'Zeg, ik moet weer gaan,' zei Roderik.

'Ach, mijnheer, blijf nog even zitten,' zei ze.

'Nog even dan,' zei Roderik een beetje ongeduldig.

'Ik wil u nog even wat laten zien. Ze ging bij hem op schoot zitten, terwijl hij helemaal rood werd. Toen haalde ze wat foto's tevoorschijn. Foto's van gelakt leer.

'Wat zullen we nu beleven ?' vroeg Roderik. 'Je gaat zo maar bij me op schoot zitten, en laat me foto's zien van gelakt leer.'

'Even doorbijten,' zei ze. Toen liet ze wat foto's zien van bruin leer, en foto's van bloed.

'Dat was het, mijnheer Roderik,' zei ze met een donkere stem. 'Nog een prettige avond.' Ze stond op, en keerde haar rug naar hem. Roderik begon te fronzen. 'Zeg, is er iets niet helemaal in orde in dat hoofdje van je ? Plotseling draaide ze zich naar hem toe, en hij keek recht in de ogen van een doodshoofd waar wormen uitkwamen.

Roderik schrok wakker. Hij had het even niet meer. Hij stapte uit zijn bed en liep naar de badkamer om wat water te drinken. Hij zuchtte hevig. 'De doodstraf staat hierop,' mompelde hij, en liep weer naar zijn bed. Hij greep zijn kussen en ging weer liggen, maar hij kon maar niet in slaap komen. Hevig lag hij te woelen en te zweten. Plotseling barste hij in huilen uit. Hij wist niet wat het was. Hij woonde hier in zijn nieuwe huis, na de scheiding. De buurvrouw had hij nog niet gezien, terwijl hij hier al een week woonde. Ze hadden een grote gezamelijke tuin.

De volgende ochtend was hij er vroeg uit. Hij had niet kunnen slapen na die nachtmerrie. Hij was nu wel erg benieuwd wie zijn buurvrouw was. Hij liep de tuin in en ging tussen wat struiken staan. Hij keek door het raam van de buurvrouw naar binnen, maar zag haar niet. Hij begon een beetje zenuwachtig heen en weer te lopen in de tuin. Toen kon hij zich plotseling niet meer inhouden. Hij liep naar de voorkant toe, en belde bij haar aan. Even later deed een vrouw open. Het was een indiaanse vrouw. 'Ik ben de nieuwe buurman,' zei hij, terwijl hij zijn hand uitstak. 'De naam is Roderik,' zei hij.

Ze schudde zijn hand. 'Komt u verder,' zei ze. Hij liep achter haar aan de gang in naar de woonkamer. 'Gaat u maar zitten. Hij ging op de bank zitten. 'Moet u wat drinken ?' vroeg ze. 'Nee, dank u,' zei hij.

'Wat leuk dat je je even komt voorstellen,' zei ze.

'Ja, het werd anders wel tijd,' zei hij.

'Ben je een beetje een dromertje ?' vroeg ze.

'Huh, hoezo ?' vroeg hij.

'Nou, omdat u zo lang heeft gewacht voordat u uzelf kwam voorstellen,' zei ze.

'Ik ga nogal door een moeilijke tijd,' zei hij. 'Ik zit in een verwerkingsproces van een scheiding,' zei hij.

'Oh,' zei ze. 'Dat is inderdaad niet leuk.'

'Het is een rotvak,' zei hij.

'Ja, als je het als in schoolverband bekijkt, inderdaad,' zei ze.

'Ik heb wat lelies in mijn tuin staan, ze bloeien leuk, hè ?' vroeg ze.

'Oh ja, ik zag ze,' zei hij. 'Ze zijn prachtig.

'Ja, wazig,' zei ze. 'Ze zijn zo dromerig, zoals u,' lachte ze.

'Waarom noemt u me alweer dromerig,' vroeg hij.

'Ach, u ziet er zo dromerig uit, zo wazig, alsof u … Ach, laat maar, u wilt het toch niet horen,' sprak ze.

'Nou ja, dat kan wel kloppen,' zei hij. 'Ik heb vannacht haast niet geslapen. Ik kreeg een nachtmerrie, en toen kon ik niet meer in slaap komen.'

'Waar ging die nachtmerrie over ?' vroeg ze ineens met een serieus gezicht.

'Over u,' zei hij. 'Het begon goed, maar eindigde slecht.'

In het kort vertelde hij de nachtmerrie.

Ze zuchtte.

'Ja, een mens kan raar dromen,' sprak hij.

Ze was ineens stil.

'Heb ik u hiermee pijn gedaan door het zomaar te vertellen ?' vroeg hij.

'Eh, nee hoor,' zei ze zacht.

'Maar ik heb u toch niet in verlegenheid gebracht nu hoop ik ?' vroeg hij.

Ze schudde haar hoofd.

'Maar mijn voorouders …' zei ze.

'Wat ?' vroeg hij. 'Zeg het maar gerust, hoor.'

'Nee, mijn voorouders hebben u die droom gegeven. Het is over …. over,' zei ze.

'Over wat ?' vroeg hij.

'Meesters en meesteressen,' zei ze.

'Onze stam had geen huwelijks-relaties, maar meesters en meesteressen met hun slaven,' zei ze.

Ze liet hem wat boeken zien met plaatjes. 'Hier, het gaat allemaal om vernederingen en leugens,' zei ze.

'Blijf je slapen ?' vroeg ze. 'Dan kunnen we nog wat doorpraten.'

'Gezellig,' zei hij.

Hij kreeg een bed in haar eigen slaapkamer. Zij sliep aan de andere kant van haar slaapkamer. Hij voelde zich wel op zijn gemak bij zo'n gastvrije vrouw.

Ze praatten door tot diep in de nacht, totdat ze beiden in slaap vallen. Weer heeft hij een droom. Hij droomt dat hij in een rustige natuur is. Opeens schrikt hij wakker. Hij merkt dat hij vastgebonden is. De vrouw zit op hem. Ze heeft een klein rood slipje aan, wat in haar bilspleet vastligt. Met haar tenen begint ze met zijn tepels te spelen. 'Wat is hier aan de hand,' kreunt hij.

'Niks zeggen,' zegt ze. Hij probeert zich los te maken, maar hij is te goed door haar vastgebonden. Snel heeft ze haar slipje uit, en drukt haar grote vagina met haar vele schaamhaar tegen zijn gezicht aan. Hij moet even slikken. Hij begint bang te worden, want dit hadden ze niet afgesproken.

'Maak me los, onmiddellijk,' kreunt hij. Maar dan drukt ze haar grote voeten in zijn gezicht. 'Shhhh...,' zegt ze. 'Niet zoveel praten.'

'Wat !' gilt hij bijna, terwijl zijn stem overslaat. 'Heb je dit eerst aan mij gevraagd ? Laat me los.' Maar hij had al snel door dat het de vrouw menens was. Haar voeten zijn stevig tegen zijn lippen aangedrukt. Haar voeten hebben een warme, indringende geur, en al snel raakt hij

bedwelmd. Hij proeft ze en weet dat hij niet veel in te brengen heeft. Hij legt zich er maar bij neer, hopende dat het alleen maar een sex-spelletje is. Toch voelt hij zich ongemakkelijk, als een gevangene. Hij is geheel aan haar genade overgeleverd. Hij wordt bang dat ze hem misschien wel wat aan zal doen. Hij heeft opeens veel last van zijn buik vanwege de spanning, maar hij durft niets te zeggen. Weer plaagt ze zijn tepels met haar tenen. Een vreemde electriciteit trekt door zijn lichaam. Hij voelt zich opgewonden voelen, maar ook opgewonden van angst en paniek. 'Alsjeblieft,' smeekt hij even later.

'Mannen zijn varkens,' fluistert ze. En dan zegt ze het nog een keer met een zachte stem. Hij herinnert zijn nachtmerrie. 'Wat ga je met me doen ?' vraagt hij fluisterend, maar met een grote paniek in zijn stem. Hij voelde zich in de val gelokt. 'Ik kan alles met je doen,' fluistert ze. Hij ligt naakt, en inmiddels ligt zij achter hem. Met haar tenen gaat ze over zijn tenen. Hij voelt zich als een prooi.

Dan schrikt hij wakker. Het was maar een droom. Het leek zo echt. Ze ligt aan de andere kant van de kamer in haar bed. Hij is onder het zweet. Hij loopt naar haar toe. Hij kijkt naar haar gezicht. Ze slaapt zo vredig. 'Hey,' fluistert hij. Ze opent haar ogen. 'Wat is er ?' vraagt ze.

'Ik heb weer een nachtmerrie over je gehad,' zegt hij. En dan vertelt hij de droom. Ze is inmiddels rechtop gaan zitten. 'Kom bij me zitten,' zegt ze. Dan neemt ze hem in haar armen en probeert hem te sussen. 'Het zijn mijn voorouders weer,' sprak ze.

'Wat willen ze van ons ?' vroeg hij.

Met haar warme lippen kust ze hem. 'Het spijt me zo,' zei ze.

'Je kan er niets aan doen,' sprak hij. 'Ik had wel een heel raar gevoel, een soort van opgewondenheid, maar dat kan ook van angst zijn geweest.'

'Vond je het lekker ?' vroeg ze.

'Je voelde lekker aan, maar ik was ook in paniek. Ik was je gevangene en ik wist niet wat je met me zou doen,' zei hij. Ze drukte hem tegen zich aan. Weer kuste ze hem, en hij kuste haar ook.

'Mijn stam vindt relaties gevaarlijk. Onze stam accepteert alleen zoals jij het droomde,' sprak ze.

'Bedankt voor je warmte en gastvrijheid,' zei hij. Ze glimlachte. 'Je mag wel bij me liggen als je je daarbij veiliger voelt.' Hij knikte een beetje verlegen, en ging bij haar onder de dekens, terwijl ze hem naar zich toetrok. Hij voelde haar warme lichaam, en hij werd wat rustiger. Toch durfde hij niet meer te slapen. Na een tijdje stond hij op. Toen ging hij terug naar zijn huis.

Ze belde hem de volgende dag op om te vragen hoe het met hem was. Hij was nogal stil. Ze begreep hem wel. Hij ging de stad in, door het drukke verkeer. Er hing een vreemde ster aan de hemel, met een vreemd licht. Het licht materialiseerde bijna. De ster leek op twee grote lippen, en die lippen begonnen te bewegen. 'Droom ik ?' dacht hij bij zichzelf. Hij wreef even goed in zijn ogen. Hij voelde zich nat worden, maar het regende niet.

'Aarsom !' werd er geroepen. 'Konika !'

Hij keek om. Waar kwam dat geroep vandaan ? Of misschien hoorde hij het verkeerd ? Hij stond bij het stoplicht. Het stoplicht stond op rood, en hij liep door. Maar het was alsof de grond onder hem in water veranderde. Hij zag een man met een hoed in de golven wegzinken. Hij probeerde ergens aan vast te klemmen, maar er was alleen maar water. 'Help !' riep hij. Hij zakte weg in de golven. 'Ik begrijp hier niets van !' riep hij. Badend in het zweet werd hij wakker. De vrouw lag nog steeds naast hem. 'Alweer gedroomd,' dacht hij bij zichzelf. Haar arm lag op hem, en ze trok hem dicht tegen zich aan. 'Wat is er, jongen,' vroeg ze. 'Je bent helemaal nat.'

'Ik heb weer een nachtmerrie gehad,' fluisterde hij.

'Mijn voorouders moeten je wel hebben,' zuchtte ze. Toen vertelde hij de droom. 'Ik begin mijn grip op de realiteit te verliezen, want die dromen lijken net echt. Ik weet niet meer wanneer ik droom of wakker ben,' zei hij. Ze probeerde hem te sussen. Hij zag haar grote borsten in haar nachtjapon. Hij slikte even. Ze glimlachte. Ze kuste hem. Hij kuste haar terug. Hij was maar wat blij met zo'n gastvrije buurvrouw, maar waarom al die dromen ?

'Ik denk dat ze je ergens voor willen,' zei ze. 'Ze roepen je.'

Hij voelde zich ziek en beverig. Ze maakte wat soep voor hem, en kwam toen weer terug. Hij zat rechtop in bed tegen een kussen aan. 'Wat willen ze van me ?' vroeg hij.

'Ik durf niet meer te slapen,' zei hij.

'Je moet er aan wennen,' zei ze, 'aan die dromen. Het zijn cryptische dromen. Het zijn gidsen.'

'Je bent zo lief voor me,' zei hij. 'Ik heb het maar getroffen met zo'n buurvrouw. Maar ik weet niet of ik nu droom of echt wakker bent.' Ze glimlachte.

De dagen erna werd hij meegesleurd in een net van wilde dromen en nachtmerries. Hij dacht dat hij gek aan het worden was, maar zij hield hem op de been. Altijd sliep ze naast hem, want ze wist dat zij de oorzaak was van deze dromen. Haar voorouders hadden hem op het oog. Ze zagen hem als een goede vangst. Ze hield er van om tegen hem aan te liggen. Voor haar was hij ook een goede vangst.

'Roderik,' zei ze. 'Ik ben je in mijn hart aan het sluiten. Ik waardeer onze vriendschap heel erg.' Roderik knikte. 'Ik heb hetzelfde,' zei hij. 'Ik voel me zo gehandicapt met deze dromen. Ze zijn verwarrend, maar aan de andere kant brengen ze me dichter bij jou.' Ze glimlachte en knikte. 'Het zal wel goed komen,' zei ze. 'Mijn voorouders zullen over je waken, en zullen het tot een goed eind brengen, of liever gezegd een goed begin.' Hij voelde zich rustig worden. Zij was zijn rust, zijn diepe rust. Het was alsof ze afdaalde in zijn hart. Ze bond hem aan haar.

De nacht erop had hij een droom over grote vrouwen met veren in hun haren, en andere dingen die hij niet begreep. Ze hadden een soort netten in hun haren, maar ook leken het uitvoerige veren. Het was alsof deze netten levensgevaarlijk waren, heel pijnlijk. Hij wist dat hij die netten niet moest aanraken, maar plotseling kwamen ze achter hem aan. Hij schrok, en rende. Hij verborg zich ergens in een grot, maar al snel hadden ze hem gevonden. Hij smeekte hen hem geen pijn te doen. Maar ze namen de netten uit hun haren en wierpen het op hem af.

Hij schrok wakker, en greep om zich heen. De vrouw drukte hem dicht tegen zich aan. 'Weer naar gedroomd ?' fluisterde ze. Haar nachtjapon was uit. Ze had alleen een wit slipje aan. Het

was warm. Hij voelde zich heerlijk in haar armen. Haar benen gingen over zijn benen, en ze omhelsde hem stevig. Het leek wel alsof hij niet goed kon ademen, alsof hij in de greep van een beest was. Hij vroeg zich af of hij wel helemaal wakker was. Hij begon te schreeuwen in paniek. Plotseling had ze hem nog steviger vast. Het was nu echt net alsof hij niet meer kon ademen. Hij was als in de klauwen van een spin. Grote harige poten waren overal om hem heen. Hij begon te krijsen. De spin begon hem te verscheuren. Verslagen werd hij wakker. Niet wetende of hij echt wakker was. Ze lag naast hem, en had gewoon haar nachtjapon aan. Hij nam haar in zijn armen en legde zijn hoofd tegen haar borst aan. Omdat ze niet wakker werd, en hij ook niets durfde te zeggen, likte hij haar in haar nek. Hij keek nog eens naar haar slapende gezicht, maar ineens veranderde het in een doodskop waar wormen uitkwamen. Hij schrok, en slaakte een kreet. Hij sprong uit het bed met een kussen in zijn armen, en begon te trillen. 'Nee, nee, doe mij dit niet aan !' gilde hij helemaal overstuur. Spinnen kwamen uit haar mond, terwijl het leek alsof hij stierf, alsof de aftitelingen op het einde van zijn leven verschenen. Hij begon te huilen, en stortte neer op zijn knieen, het kussen stevig omhelzende. Hij weende bitter, als een gebroken man. De spinnen maakten een cocon van haar.

Spoedig was ze helemaal bedolven, en toen kwamen de spinnen op hem af. Hij gilde en huilde, smekende of dit op mocht houden, maar de spinnen waren genadeloos. Spoedig was hij bedolven, als onder sneeuw. Was dit zijn graf ?

'Moeder !' riep hij. 'Help me !' Hij had het heel erg benauwd. Een man met een hoed stond voor hem. Hij ging aan een bureautje zitten. 'Zeg,' zei de man, 'zijn er nog wijzen in dit land ? Of alleen maar gillende imbecielen zoals jij ?'

'Zie je dan niet wat er met mij aan de hand is ?' riep Roderik. 'Ik ben voedsel voor spinnen.'

'Ach, welnee, joh,' zei de man met de hoed. 'Je moet niet zo dromen. Je moet jezelf niet zo laten meesleuren.'

'Ja, maar ik kan niet anders,' riep Roderik. 'Het overweldigt me !'

'Ach nee, joh, je laat jezelf overweldigen,' zei de man.

'Hoe dan ?' vroeg Roderik.

'Ach, nietsnut,' zei de man, en vertrok.

Roderik keek naar zichzelf. Hij was onder de rode poeder. Ook had de man een spoor van rood poeder achter gelaten wat ergens in het niets scheen te verdwijnen. Roderik begon weer een beetje tot zijn zinnen te komen. Was het waar dat hij zich teveel liet meeslepen ? Had hij gewoon zijn hoofd wat koeler moeten houden ? Maar hij kon niets doen.

Hij hoopte maar dat hij snel wakker zou worden. Na een tijdje wekte zijn buurvrouw hem, en hij zag haar lieve gezicht boven hem. 'Ik dacht dat ik je beter kon wakker maken. Je was zo aan het woelen en in jezelf aan het praten, alsof je in een zwaar gevecht was,' sprak ze.

'Dank je,' zei hij. Toen vertelde hij haar de droom.

'Oh,' zei ze. 'Oh, dat was mijn oom. Hij droeg altijd een hoed.'

'Waarom was hij zo …' zei Roderik.

'Ach,' zei ze. 'Zo is hij altijd geweest. Trek het je niet aan.'

'Waarom kwam hij ?' vroeg hij.

'Ach,' zei ze. 'Ik weet het niet. Het is nogal een bemoeial, maar dat rode poeder van hem heeft je eruit geholpen. Hij is een helper, alleen hij doet het niet altijd op een leuke en respectvolle manier.'

'Wie waren die spinnen, en die grote vrouwen met die netten in hun haar ?' vroeg hij.

'Oh, ik weet het niet,' zei ze. 'Mijn voorouders zullen vast wel meer daarover weten. Als het goed is krijg je nog wel uitleg.'

Hij keek strak voor zich uit. Even later liep hij naar de stad, door het drukke verkeer. Hij wilde naar dat stoplicht toe in zijn droom. Hij voelde zich al helemaal in de grond wegzakken. 'Er is hier een zee,' dacht hij. Hij kwam tot de ontdekking dat hij droomde. Een leeuw stond voor hem. Er zat iemand op. Toen vervaagde de leeuw.

'Ik ben de leeuw,' zei een stem. 'Ik ben haar oom, de man met de hoed.'

'Ik ben de trol,' zei een andere stem. 'Ik ben …'

Maar toen vaagden de stemmen weg. Hij zat in een klein kamertje. Het kamertje bevond zich in een meertje. Toen begon het kamertje ook weg te zakken. Het was alsof hij in een lift zat die met een rotvaart naar beneden ging. Hij gilde. Het was alsof alle stoppen bij hem doorsloegen. Zijn oren leken doof te raken. Plotseling was er een enorme klap. Een vrouw zat voor hem met een sigaret. 'Roken,' sprak de vrouw.

'Waarom ? Wat bedoelt u ?' vroeg hij.

'Voorgeslachtelijke dromen van haar,' zei de vrouw. 'Wij zijn haar voorgeslacht. Wij willen je.'

'Willen voor wat ?' vroeg hij angstig.

'Voor het huis,' sprak de vrouw.

'Welk huis ?' vroeg hij.

'Niet zoveel vragen stellen,' zei ze.

Langzaam werd hij wakker met echoes in zijn hoofd, en hij voelde zich duizelig. Zijn buurvrouw lag naast hem. Hij voelde zich ziek, en misselijk. Hij liep naar de badkamer om wat water te drinken. Hij hoopte maar dat hij nu echt wakker was geworden. Maar niets was minder waar. Ze kwam naar hem toe met een leeuwenhoofd. Ze brulde. Hij storte op zijn knieen en begon bitter te wenen. 'Ik denk dat ik gek word,' zei hij. Ze keek hem aan. 'Toe, zeg dat niet,' sprak ze, terwijl ze haar normale gezicht weer kreeg. 'Je droomt. Deze dromen zijn belangrijk.'

'Waar zijn ze belangrijk voor ?' vroeg hij.

'Het zijn gidsen,' zei ze.

'Ik begin moe te worden,' weende hij. 'Word ik ooit nog wakker, of ben ik al dood ?'

'Je bent in de onderwereld,' sprak ze. 'Je bent met de doden, maar zie, we leven.'

'Wie ben je ?' vroeg hij.

'Haar gids, haar tante,' sprak ze.

Plotseling begon de vloer zacht te worden, en hij gleed in de diepte. Hij probeerde zich ergens aan vast te klemmen, maar alles werd vloeibaar. Toen was het alsof hij in een diep gat viel, en hij kwam tussen een plaats met doodskoppen terecht.

'San Win,' werd er gezegd. 'Apulatus Menere.'

Een man kwam naar voren, een indiaan. Hij had veren op zijn hoofd, en stak zijn hand uit. 'Je hoeft niet bang te zijn,' sprak de man. 'Ik ben Zittende Buffalo. Hamma Ontole.'

'San Win,' zei de man weer. 'Zit met me.'

Roderik ging zitten na het schudden van handen. 'Ik ben gestuurd naar jou,' zei de man, 'voor een belangrijke opdracht. Ik moet jou brengen tot de Jungle van de onderwereld. Zoon, ik ben een Mazakka, een Mazakka krijger, van de Mazakka stam, een beruchte stam in de Jungle van de onderwereld, van Ma Oerwoud. Takki Abin.'

'Hesofort Perondeo, Porondeo Amaus,' sprak hij. 'Tutulus Paturu, Klazei Vakantus Opium Opius Opus Spiegandei Spakeius Plego. Plego Fanfort ! Amadeo ! De taal van de onderwereld. Kom dieper ! Hora Marantus ! Afei Vakus ! Fateio Amadei ! Kom dieper ! Luister naar mij !'

Roderik kwam in een trance, en de man nam hem bij de hand, om hem door vele struiken naar de Jungle van de onderwereld te brengen. Er was overal vuur, en hij hoorde gegil.

'Samanteo,' zei de man. 'Orferetus Marateo.' Roderik voelde zich zwak. Hij liep door het vuur, maar het deerde hem niet. Er was een soort bescherming om hem heen. Overal waren leeuwen, lange leeuwen. 'De leeuw is de poort tot trol,' zei de man. 'De Jungle van de onderwereld is van de trollen. Het zijn wilde indianen-stammen.'

Roderik kreeg een vreemd gevoel in zijn buik. Hij zakte in elkaar, en wilde opstaan, maar kon het niet. Een groene struik bedekte een poort. Er was een nauwe opening waar ze net doorheen konden. Toen stond hij in de open Jungle. De indianen hadden een groen-bruine huid, maar sommigen hadden rode huiden, veelal roodbruin. Er droop een vreemd groen sap van hun handen. Ze begonnen wild te krijsen en te gillen toen ze hem zagen. Maar hij was onder een bescherming. Ze namen hun speren, maar konden niets doen. Het was alsof er een licht op hen viel.

'Tetaris,' zei de man. 'Slaap.' Toen vielen ze allemaal in slaap. De man liep verder, terwijl Roderik hem volgde. 'Ik noem je Orion, en dit gebied is Orion,' zei de man. Hij nam hem mee in de dieptes van een grot. Hier groeiden wat bloemen, en het leidde tot een diepe paradijselijke wereld. Veel bloemen waren er overal langs rivieren, en de bloemen hadden wortels die overal weelderig groeiden. Roderik werd er duizelig van. Deze wereld had een hypnotizerend effect op hem. Hij hoorde gegil en gilletjes in de verte. Hij kreeg een vreemd gevoel in zijn onderbuik.

'Meesters en meesteressen, en hun slaven,' zei de man. 'Maar de meesters staan altijd onder meesteressen. Er zijn geen vrije meesters. Zij zijn allen slaven.' Roderik herinnerde de woorden van zijn buurvrouw.

'Puk Holes,' zei de man. De man bleef het herhalen. Roderik zakte in elkaar. De man trok hem weer op. 'Blijf dicht bij me, Orion,' zei de man. Ze moesten over een brug gemaakt van touw, over een rivier. De rivier was heel woest. 'Elip !' riep de man. Een groot spinachtig dier stond aan de overkant van de rivier bij de brug. Het dier kwam bijna hysterisch op hen afrennen, greep hen, en rende terug. 'Azalip,' zei de man. 'Katanga Horeng, Debezewat Karami.'

Het spinachtig dier had een vreemde geur. 'Lik het, Orion, lik hem,' zei de man. Roderik nam een likje. Het was alsof hij een groot stuk vlees, of een vleesmaaltijd had gegeten. Hij voelde zich direct vol. 'Kom,' zei de man. Ze liepen verder. Het vreemde dier volgde hen. 'Azakaaltes,' zei de man. Ze kwamen weer bij een grot aan, bedolven onder bloemen, in een heuveltje. 'Ik breng je hier,' zei de man. 'Nu moet je zelf je pad vinden. Ik moet terug. Loop gewoon door totdat je bij de Mazakka stam bent gekomen. Ik zie je later.' De man rende weg. Roderik zuchtte en liep de grot in. Binnenin de grot waren vreemde vlinders, met zacht licht. Hij liep helemaal door tot de uitgang, en kwam in een kamp terecht. Hier liepen veel indiaanse vrouwen, en mannen zaten op de grond of geknield.

Roderik werd wakker. Zijn buurvrouw lag naast hem. Alweer wist hij niet of hij echt wakker was geworden. Hij keek naar haar lieve, slapende gezicht. Voorzichtig maakte hij haar wakker, en vertelde over de dromen, en hoe bang hij was dat hij nog steeds droomde. 'Ze maken het je wel heel erg moeilijk,' zuchtte ze. Ze nam hem weer heel dicht tegen hem aan, en wreef over zijn rug. 'Ik weet niet meer wat ik moet doen,' fluisterde hij.

'Je kunt niets doen,' zei ze. 'Je moet het gewoon over je heen laten komen als een ervaring.' Hij keek naar haar nachtjapon. Ze had een indiaanse nachtjapon aan.

'De Woogerbommies zijn maskers, oude indiaanse maskers, door de tegenstander gemaakt om onze stam lastig te vallen. Deze maskers eten het bovenlichaam, en nemen het over. Het zijn een soort spinnen, gezichten met weelderige uitsteeksels, netten, als de slangen van het Medusa hoofd,' sprak ze. 'Als je het ziet, verander je in steen, maar onze stam heeft jou de bescherming gegeven. Onze stam heeft de Woogerbommies overwonnen. Zij dragen de overwonnen, verzwakte Woogerbommies als veren in hun haar, als netten, en gebruiken het om hen die dichtbij komen te testen, en om de vijand te bestrijden. De Woogerbommies zijn hun slaven en kampdieren.'

Hoe kan ik de Woogerbommies overwinnen ?' vroeg Roderik.

'Door ingewijd te worden in de leefwijzen van de stam,' sprak ze. 'En daar zijn ze nu mee bezig. Wil je verder, of wil je hier stoppen ?'

'Verder,' zei Roderik aarzelend.

'Dan ben ik dus je meesteres,' zei de vrouw. 'Onze stam is matriarchisch.'

'Best,' zei Roderik. 'Als dit de enige weg is om door deze dromen en nachtmerries heen te komen om het tot een goed einde te brengen, dan zij het niet anders.'

'Goed,' zei de vrouw. 'Kniel voor me. De Woogerbommies konden ons alleen plagen zolang we in huwelijken leefden, en zolang mannen de leiding hadden buiten een moeder om.'

Hij knielde op de matras voor haar. 'Ik moet je binden,' zei ze. Voorzichtig ging ze achter hem zitten en bond zijn polsen aan elkaar door een touwachtig snoer. Het snoer voelde wel zacht aan, maar het was ook strak. Het deed verder geen pijn, want het was erg flexibel. Zijn armen waren nu achter zijn rug.

'Welkom in onze stam,' sprak ze.

'Mag ik nu weer los ?' vroeg hij.

'Nee,' zei ze. 'Nog niet.'

Ze ging weer liggen en trok hem mee. Ze lag achter hem. Ze ging met haar handen onder zijn pyama-shirt, maar even later maakte ze zijn knoopjes los. 'Het moet naakt gebeuren,' sprak ze. 'Dan ben je helemaal van ons, en niet meer van de Woogerbommies, want nu ben je een gevangene van de Woogerbommies. Door onze bescherming heb je het overleeft. Met haar

vingers gleed ze over zijn huid. 'Je hoeft niet helemaal naakt,' zei ze. Het is al naakt genoeg. Ik voel je.' Haar handen gleden naar zijn nek. 'Hier komt een halssnoer,' zei ze.

'Is dat echt allemaal nodig ?' vroeg hij.

'Ja,' fluisterde ze. Ze stond op, en kwam even later terug met het halssnoer wat ze om zijn nek vastmaakte. Het was een zwart snoer, een beetje bruinig. Ook zat er een steentje aan de voorkant. Hij voelde het halssnoer tegen zijn nek en hals aanliggen, maar het zat niet te strak. 'Vanaf nu noem je mij meesteres of jaagster,' sprak ze.

'Ja, meesteres,' zei hij. Hij vond alles best, zolang hij maar van zijn dromen af zou komen. Nog steeds wist hij niet of hij al echt wakker was geworden. Hij had zich erbij neergelegd dat hij waarschijnlijk nog steeds droomde. Dit kon gewoon niet waar zijn.

'Droom ik ?' vroeg hij.

'Zeg : Droom ik, meesteres,' sprak ze streng.

'Droom ik, meesteres ?' vroeg hij.

'Als je me nog één keer aanspreekt zonder me meesteres te noemen, dan zal ik je moeten straffen,' sprak ze.

'Ja, meesteres,' zei hij, terwijl de rillingen door hem heen liepen. Hij begon zich ongemakkelijk te voelen. Hij was geheel op scherp ineens, en zou er bijna hysterisch voor zorgen dat hij nu bij alles wat hij zei haar meesteres zou noemen. Hij was bang voor de straf, want wat zou dat kunnen zijn ? Hij haalde de meest gekke dingen in zijn hoofd.

Hij probeerde los te wringen, maar dat lukte niet. Hij had dit al wel eerder gedroomd. Hij hoopte maar dat hij snel zou wakker worden, maar dat gebeurde maar niet. Wat als het echt waar zou zijn ? Waar was hij toch aan begonnen ?

'Ik wil naar huis,' sprak hij. 'Ik voel me niet op mijn gemak.'

'Geen sprake van,' zei ze. 'Ik kan je nu niet laten gaan. Veel te gevaarlijk met al die Woogerbommies. Je zou ons kunnen verraden. Nee hoor, komt niets van in.'

Hij zag in dat het haar menens was, maar besefte ook dat dit crimineel was, want ze hield hem tegen zijn zin gevangen.

'Ik laat de politie komen als je me niet laat gaan,' zei hij.

'Je kunt niets doen, en dat zijn alweer drie regels zonder mij meesteres te noemen. Dat worden negen slagen met de gesel. Ze trok hem op, en ontblootte zijn rug. Ze pakte ergens een gesel vandaan, en kwam terug om hem te slaan, terwijl ze met haar andere hand zijn hoofd naar achteren trok aan zijn haren. Ze sloeg niet hard met de gesel. Het was tamelijk zacht. Ze zei dat dat een waarschuwing was.

'Ik doe niet meer mee,' zei hij. 'Sla me maar zoveel en zo hard als je wil, maar ik noem je geen meesteres meer. Bij mij is de lol er allang vanaf.'

Ze begon hem harder te slaan. Ze was inmiddels gaan staan, en stond naast het bed. Ze had hem in een bukkende houding neergezet. Ze sloeg hem zo hard dat er striemen op zijn rug kwamen. Hij deed zijn mond niet open. Hij voelde er niet zoveel van, wat voor hem een teken was dat hij nog steeds droomde. Of hij was in een shock.

Weer trok ze aan zijn haren. 'Je komt niet zo makkelijk af van mij, mannetje,' riep ze. Maar de stem begon te vervagen, en hij werd wakker. Hij zuchtte van grote verlichting. Tegelijkertijd voelde hij zich opgewonden, omdat de vrouw van wie hij was gaan houden gelukkig niet degene was waarvan hij had gedroomd. Hij pakte haar vast en kuste haar. Haar lichaam voelde warm en lekker aan. Hij drukte zich stevig tegen haar billen aan, en hij werd nog meer opgewonden. Hij was zo blij dat zijn liefde voor haar niet in haat was veranderd. Ze kreunde in haar slaap, en draaide zich om naar hem. Spoedig voelde hij haar warme lippen op zijn mond. Hij genoot van haar, meer dan ooit. Hij voelde haar tong op de zijne. Hij wilde alleen maar meer. Maar was hij wakker, dat was de vraag.

'Je voelt zo lekker aan, schat,' zei ze.

'Jij ook,' zei hij. Hij kreunde zacht. Ze hielden elkaar stevig vast.

'Ik heb zo vreemd gedroomd,' sprak hij. 'Ik ook,' zei ze.

'Waar heb je over gedroomd ?' vroeg hij.

We liepen in het oerwoud, en plotseling waren we omsingeld door hyena's. Ze namen ons mee en ik kan er niet over praten wat er toen gebeurde. Toen vertelde hij zijn droom.

'Ze moeten je wel weer hebben,' sprak ze. 'Mag ik je mijn liefde laten zien en je laten zien hoe ik wel ben ?' vroeg ze.

Zijn hart begon hevig te kloppen. Hij wist niet of hij daar wel aan toe was na alles wat hij had meegemaakt met zijn vrouw en met de echtscheiding. Maar aan de andere kant verlangde hij naar haar, en wond het hem op. 'Wil je met me vrijen ?' vroeg ze. Even was het stil vanwege zijn aarzeling. Hij kuste haar, en begon de knoopjes van haar indiaanse nachtjapon los te trekken. Ook zij begon zijn knoopjes los te trekken. Ze kusten elkaar heel intiem, en nadat ze elkaars nachtkleren hadden uitgetrokken lagen ze naakt tegen elkaar aan. Toen hij wakker werd was hij niet alleen opgelucht, maar ook diep teleurgesteld en bang. Misschien was hij wel dood, want hij scheen niet meer echt wakker te worden. Hij werd erg wanhopig. Hij had hulp nodig. Hij maakte haar wakker en vertelde haar bijna huilend het verhaal. Ze was direct erg zorgzaam. 'Je bent er zo van in de war, hè,' zei ze. 'Ik kan me dat heel goed voorstellen. Maar heus, je bent echt wakker nu.' Ze kneep hem in zijn arm. 'Au !' riep hij. 'Ik ben wakker !' Hij was de gelukkigste man nu.

'Die dromen dragen een boodschap,' sprak ze. 'Een boodschap van mijn voorouders. Het zou goed zijn om ze op te schrijven.' Hij voelde zich te ziek, en daarom deed zij het voor hem. Ze maakte wat soep voor hem met brood.

De dagen erna begonnen de dromen minder te worden en af te zwakken, en hij herstelde goed. Hij besloot om weer terug te keren naar zijn huis. Hij belde haar nog wel veel. Ook kwam ze hem vaak indiaanse spulletjes brengen, en al snel stond zijn huis er vol mee. Hij voelde zich er goed bij. Ze betekende veel voor hem, maar het kwam niet tot een relatie. Daar zorgden de voorouders voor, en hij wist precies waarom.

Op een nacht had hij weer een droom. Hij viel in het water, en van de kant doken trollen in het water die naar hem toezwommen om hem vervolgens onder water te drukken. Ze probeerden hem te verdrinken. Hij was in doodsangst. Hij verloor zijn bewustzijn, en alles leek wel een eeuwigheid te duren. Hij probeerde weer boven te komen, maar hij faalde, en gleed weg in wanhoop en duisternis, als in een diepe, trage tunnel. Toen ontwaakte hij tussen witte bloemen. Een jongen stond voor hem. 'De witte bloem der trollen,' sprak de jongen. 'Welkom.'

'Welkom waar ?' vroeg Roderik.

'Nou gewoon, welkom in de onderwereld der trollen,' sprak de jongen.

'Zo gewoon is dat niet voor mij,' zei Roderik.

'Ach, je bent hier al wel vaker geweest,' zei de jongen.

De jongen legde een keten om de hals van Roderik. 'Meekomen, slaaf,' zei hij.

'Maar ik ben helemaal geen slaaf,' zei Roderik.

'Dat ben je wel,' zei de jongen. 'Ik ben je meester. Ik heb je hier gevangen genomen, tot slaaf gemaakt.'

Roderik probeerde de keten los te maken, maar het had geen zin.

'Het zit op slot,' zei de jongen. 'Noem me meester.'

'Wat als ik je geen meester noem ?' vroeg Roderik.

'Dan vermoord ik je,' zei de jongen.

'Ik ben toch al dood,' zei Roderik. 'Ik ben verdronken, weet je nog ?'

'Heb maar niet zoveel praatjes,' zei de jongen. 'Zij die voor de tweede keer sterven gaan naar de hel.'

Roderik schrok. Zijn hart begon zwaar te kloppen, en het bloed begon naar zijn hoofd te stijgen. Hij wist dat hij maar beter geen risico's kon nemen. 'Ja, meester,' zei hij.

'Goedzo,' zei de jongen. 'Je begint het al te leren.'

Roderik kon de jongen wel wat aandoen, maar hij wist dat hij voorzichtig moest zijn. Hij wilde het niet erger maken dan het al was. 'Ik leid je tot de meesteres,' zei de jongen.

Met een keten trok de jongen Roderik voort. De meesteres woonde in een wigwam.

'Ah, slaven-vlees,' zei de meesteres.

'Gaan jullie me opeten ?' vroeg Roderik bang.

'Nee, veel erger,' zei de meesteres. 'We gaan je uithongeren, en tot de trollen-arena brengen.'

'Alstublieft niet,' smeekte Roderik.

'Noem me meesteres,' zei de meesteres.

'Laat me alstublieft niet verhongeren en naar de arena gaan, meesteres,' smeekte Roderik.

Hij lag aan haar voeten. 'Smeek me om genade,' sprak de meesteres.

'Genade, genade, meesteres,' gilde Roderik.

'Er is geen genade,' zei de meesteres hardvochtig.

'Breng hem naar de kooi, zandtrol,' zei de meesteres.

De jongen trok Roderik direct mee tot een kooi, waar hij ingeduwd werd. Roderik kreeg alleen water, melk en een bloedachtig mengsel. Na een paar dagen was Roderik flink uitgehongerd, en hij voelde zich zwak en moe.

Na een paar weken werd hij tot de arena gesleurd, waar hij tegen uitgehongerde trollen moest strijden. Roderik huilde. 'Genade, genade,' smeekte hij, maar hij wist dat er geen genade was. Al snel stortte hij in, en werd in elkaar geschopt. Na een lange tijd werd hij wakker in de zachte armen van een trollenvrouw. 'Ik zal vanaf nu je meesteres zijn,' fluisterde de vrouw, 'maar alleen hier. Ik ben een arena-meesteres. Ik bereid mijn slaven voor op het gevecht, en neem hen mee naar mijn ruimte na het gevecht.' Roderik was bewusteloos getrapt. Ze depte zijn wonden.

'Waar is dit allemaal goed voor ?' kreunde Roderik. 'Vruchtbaarheid,' zei de trollenvrouw. 'Ook zorgt het ervoor dat mannen niet sterker worden dan vrouwen. Daarom hongeren wij hen uit, en laten hen tegen elkaar vechten in de arena. Het is goede discipline en goede veiligheid.'

'Ik begrijp het,' kreunde Roderik. 'Is er geen andere manier ?'

'Nee,' zei de trollenvrouw.

'Hoelang moet dit doorgaan ?' vroeg Roderik.

'Voor altijd,' zei de trollenvrouw.

Roderik werd koud en warm op hetzelfde moment. Zijn hart begon sneller te kloppen, en bloed steeg tot zijn hoofd. Hij begon erg bang te worden, en voelde hopeloosheid bezit van hem nemen.

'I... is dit a... alles of is er m... meer ?' stamelde Roderik.

'Er is veel meer. Het zal steeds erger worden,' zei de trollenvrouw.

'Wat gaan jullie met me doen ?' gilde Roderik. Hij begon zachtjes te wenen, maar de trollenvrouw was meedogenloos.

'Ik ben er goed bij,' dacht Roderik, 'tenzij dit allemaal weer een nachtmerrie is.'

De trollenvrouw begon over hem te zingen, en Roderik kreeg een vreemd gevoel in zijn buik. 'Ik ben er geweest,' dacht Roderik. Hij begon hele erge buikpijn te krijgen.

'Jullie gaan jullie zin niet krijgen !' riep Roderik, terwijl hij zich probeerde los te worstelen. Maar de vrouw was veel sterker dan hem. Snel bond ze hem aan handen en voeten. Roderik voelde zich machteloos. Woest begon hij te brullen. De vrouw pakte een gesel en begon hem te slaan. Ook begon ze hem te schoppen. Na een tijdje gaf Roderik de moed geheel op. Hij kon niet meer. Hij barstte in huilen uit. Weer begon ze over hem te zingen. 'Ze proberen me gek te maken,' dacht Roderik. 'Ze proberen me te programmeren.' Ze streelde hem over zijn

buik. Haar hand gleed dieper en dieper. 'Blijf van me af !' riep Roderik. Ze nam hem in haar armen. 'Je hebt niets in te brengen, sex-slaaf,' sprak ze.

'Ik ben geen sex-slaaf !' gilde Roderik.

'Je bent een speeltje,' zei de trollenvrouw, 'niets meer dan dat. En we gaan met je fokken. We hebben meer slaven nodig.'

Het begon te duizelen voor Roderik's ogen. Weer werd hij heet en koud tegelijkertijd, en steeg het bloed naar zijn hoofd, terwijl zijn hart in zijn keel bonkte. Weer probeerde hij zich los te worstelen, maar niets hielp. Hij vocht tegen beter weten in. 'Nooit zal ik een sex-slaaf zijn !' gilde hij. Weer begon ze over hem te zingen, terwijl hij begon te krijsen. Hij wilde haar niet horen. Hij kreeg er hoofdpijn van.

'Stil, sex-slaaf,' zei ze.

Na een tijdje werd hij teruggebracht tot zijn kooi, waar hij in het hooi ging liggen.

Toen werd hij wakker van deze nachtmerrie. Helemaal in paniek belde hij zijn buurvrouw op, en hij kon direct komen. Ze nam hem in zijn armen, terwijl hij de nachtmerrie vertelde. Ze was nog niet helemaal wakker, dus ze gingen naar haar bed. Hij was erg bang. Hij durfde niet meer te slapen. Hij lag tegen haar aan, en ze probeerde hem tot rust te brengen. 'Kalm maar,' zei ze. 'Ik weet dat het diep gaat.'

'Zijn dit weer je voorouders ?' vroeg Roderik.

Ze knikte.

'Waarom, waarom ?' vroeg Roderik.

'Roderik, dat hebben ze je al uitgelegd. De dreiging van de man is groot,' sprak ze.

'Ja, maar dit is misselijk,' zei Roderik. 'Is er geen andere manier ?'

'Nee,' zei de vrouw.

'Wow,' zei Roderik. 'Ik begin nu een beetje te vermoeden wat er aan de hand is. Ik denk weer dat ik aan de dodendans ben ontvlucht, maar ik ben nog steeds in hun klauwen. Ik ben nog steeds niet wakker !' Hij kneep in zijn arm en voelde niets. Hij keek naar haar, en ze was als een doorzichtige zwarte pop die net iets kleiner was geworden. Toen werd ze nog kleiner. 'Draak !' gilde hij, en sprong uit het bed. De lucht was vol zwart gas nu, en ze begon te exploderen. Spoedig was het huis in de vlammen. Roderik probeerde weg te rennen, maar van alles begon op hem te vallen. Het huis begon in te storten. Toen steeg hij hoog boven de vlammen uit en werd in de zee geslingerd. Hij zag zichzelf in een witte kamer en probeerde de muren te doorbreken, maar het lukte hem niet. De kamer werd steeds kleiner en kleiner, en explodeerde toen. Hij was in de lucht nu. Heel langzaam werd hij wakker in zijn eigen kamer, maar hij vertrouwde het nog steeds niet. Hij kon zich niet bewegen. Trollen kwamen zijn kamer binnen die hem begonnen te slaan met stokken.

'Laat me eruit !' gilde hij. Maar spoedig kon hij ook niet meer spreken. 'Deze wereld is gek,' dacht hij bij zichzelf. Hij wilde niet meer leven. 'Ik word toch wel weer een keer wakker,' dacht hij bij zichzelf.

'De trollen, de trollen, ze komen !' werd er ineens geroepen. 'Deze monsters zullen de wereld overnemen. En het zal alleen maar erger worden.'

Hij lag daar als verlamd. Hij lag daar met een koptelefoon op, met een scheldende stem. Het was een nar, een dictator, op een bandje. Iemand moest die cassette eruit halen. Hij kon niet praten. Hij kon niet bewegen.

Na een tijdje kon hij zich weer bewegen. Hij stond op en liep het huis uit. Zijn huis stond midden op een groot veld waar allemaal wigwams stonden. Deze wigwams hadden een heleboel scherpe uitsteeksels op de top. Vanuit de wigwams werd geroepen : 'Wat moet je hier. Wegwezen jij. We hebben je niet nodig.' Hij voelde zich verworpen, en waar hij dan ook kwam werd hij afgewezen. De hele stad was vol wigwams nu, als een indiaanse stad, maar het

was nu als een bosvlakte, als een groot kamp in de natuur. En zijn huis stond in het midden. Misschien dat ze daarom zo boos waren. Zijn huis stond in de weg.

Suzie

De edelste tuinen zag ik. Zoutig, zurig, niet te veel zoet, zo smaakten de bessen. Ze waren heerlijk. Ze waren bijna verzonnen als door een insect. En dan niet een normaal insect, maar bijzonder, eentje met groot potentieel, als een wereldredder. Ik had kriebel in mijn keel toen ik ernaar keek. Het smaakte ook een beetje naar drop. Drop kon je trouwens niet krimpen, tenzij het rode drop was. Maar rode drop was dan weer net iets zoeter. Ik stapte de tuinen binnen, waar nog veel meer van die bessen hingen, en allemaal beestjes. Ze zat daar met een rood jurkje, een beetje opgebolt als pudding was haar jurkje, als met kant belegd. Het jurkje was niet te groot, en dat hoefde ook niet. Het was al genoeg dat ze daar zat. De touwtjes van haar jurkje waren als dropveters, als van rode drop. Ik keek niet op of om, maar ging dieper de tuinen in, op zoek naar meer bessen. Ik hield ervan om naar bessen te staren, vooral druipende bessen. Het was alsof ik haar tong op de mijne voelde, maar ik ontweek haar. Ik wilde niet aan haar denken. Zij blijkbaar ook niet aan mij, want ze bleef gewoon zitten. Ik voelde contact met haar, maar ontkende het in mezelf. Kom op, zeg. Ik heb wel andere dingen te doen. Als ik me aan haar zou geven, zou ze me toch verscheuren. Ze was een roofdier, daar diep in de tuin. Ik had haar wel in de gaten, maar deed alsof ik haar niet zag. Ze begon een beetje zenuwachtig heen en weer te draaien. 'Ik heb je wel in de gaten, hoor,' zei ze. Ik deed alsof ik haar niet hoorde. 'Dat is ook niet netjes,' zei ze. 'Helemaal niets terugzeggen.' Ik draaide met mijn rug naar haar toe. Ik begon nog meer bessen te plukken, en begon ze te eten. 'Hey, geef mij ook eens wat van die bessen,' zei ze. Ik gooide er eentje toe.

'Je bent afstandelijk,' zei ze. 'Nou, jij mag er anders ook wel wezen,' zei ik. 'Eindelijk praat je,' zei ze. 'Ik vind het allemaal best,' zei ik. 'Wat vind je allemaal best ?' vroeg ze. Ik zweeg. Ik begon door te eten van de bessen. 'Niet met je mond vol praten,' zei ze. 'Je bent mijn moeder niet,' zei ik. 'Nee, gelukkig niet,' zei ze. 'Je bent me nogal een probleem-geval.' 'Zo mag ik het horen,' zei ik. 'Hoe zal ik je noemen ?' sprak ze. 'Al noem je me Klaas, doet me niets,' zei hij. 'Krokodillen-voer,' sprak ze zachtjes. 'Die zijn hier niet,' zei ik.

Ik liep dieper de tuin in, mijn gezicht verborgen voor haar. Ze kwam mij niet achterna. Wat zou ze van me moeten ? En ik had wel andere dingen te doen. Ik verzamelde bessen in mijn mandje. Ik bracht ze naar grootmoeder. Ze kookte er iets van. Het was heerlijk. Ik sprak met

haar niet over de dingen die ik had gezien in de edelste tuinen. Maar later deed ik het toch. 'Ach, dat meisje,' zei grootmoeder. 'Ik ken haar wel. Ze woonde hier vroeger in de buurt. Er hing daar altijd was buiten, in de tuin. Ze kookte weleens voor ons. Maar later werd ze een wilde. Ze vertrok naar de andere kant van de stad, en ging aan de kade wonen. Het was veel te wild voor ons. Maar ze hield altijd al veel van de bossen. Daar zwierf ze vaak. Toen je klein was kwam ze je weleens opzoeken.' 'Ik kan me daar niets meer van herinneren,' zei ik. 'Dat ben je misschien vergeten,' zei grootmoeder. 'Jullie waren vroeger heel gek met elkaar.' 'Hoe kunnen mensen zo uit elkaar groeien ?' vroeg ik. 'Ach ja, jongen,' zei grootmoeder, 'dat is de wereld. Het is komen en gaan, vastpakken en loslaten, en je groeit uit alles ook weer uit.' 'Ja, dat jurkje wat ze droeg was wel erg klein,' zei ik. 'Ze past er niet meer in,' zei grootmoeder. 'Nou, het paste wel goed,' zei ik, 'maar het jurkje was gewoon klein.' 'Ze had dus niet veel aan,' zei grootmoeder. 'Nou, okay, daar kan ik inkomen. Het is nogal zomers weer, een beetje zwoel zelfs, vind je niet ?' Ik keek oma aan. Ze had van die wonderlijke ogen, donkere ogen. Ik zag de pretlichtjes in haar ogen, alsof ze blij was dat we met elkaar spraken. Ja, dat had ook anders kunnen zijn. Er waren zovelen die niet meer met oma wilden praten. Haar ogen dropen bijna als bessen. En ik had bijna druipende handen. 'Vertel me meer,' zei ik. 'Nou, ja, ze was vroeger gek op je, en wilde met je trouwen,' zei grootmoeder. 'Maar de familie wilde dat niet. Toen droop ze af. Alle contacten verwaterden sindsdien.' 'Ja, maar daar kan ik toch niets aan doen,' zei ik. 'Ze werd verboden met je om te gaan,' zei grootmoeder. 'En daar legde ze zich bij neer.' 'Was ze gevaarlijk of zo ?' vroeg ik. 'De familie vond van wel,' zei grootmoeder. 'Ze is als een kwark-taartje,' zei ik. 'Ja, maar jij kent haar duisternissen niet,' zei grootmoeder. 'Vertel me,' zei ik. Grootmoeder werd even stil. Ze keek me diep aan in mijn ogen, en sprak : 'Ze houdt van vreemde spelletjes. Het zijn geen echte spelletjes, maar ik noem het maar even zo.'

Ik kwam haar een paar dagen later in de bibliotheek tegen. Ze was daar aan het lezen. Ze had prachtige laarzen aan. En een prachtig wit broekje dat tot aan haar laarzen reikte. Ze had touwtjes in haar haren, en het voelde alsof haar tong op de mijne lag. Ik had een bessensmaak in mijn mond. Ze deed alsof ze me niet zag, of misschien zag ze me helemaal niet. Ik liep langs haar heen, en liep zo dicht tegen haar aan dat ik haar raakte, maar niet te hard, en niet te dichtbij, en zeker ook niet te lang. Een rilling en een warm gevoel ging door mij heen. Ik voelde mij als in de hemel. Ik werd er een beetje emotioneel van. Plotseling keek ze op, en keek met haar warme donker-bruine ogen naar mij, alsof ze me niet herkende. Toen las ze weer door. 'Je herkent me niet ?' vroeg ik. 'Nee,' zei ze, terwijl ze niet opkeek. Ze las gewoon door. 'Ik geloof je niet,' zei ik. Ze glimlachte warm, terwijl ze even opkeek. 'Het is me allemaal verboden,' zei ze. 'Door wie ?' vroeg ik. 'Je familie,' zei ze. Ik zweeg. Ik probeerde me haar naakt voor te stellen, of in een bikini op het strand, terwijl ik doorliep. Dat was de laatste keer dat ik haar zag. Grootmoeder vertelde mij een paar weken later dat ze in de krant had gelezen dat ze spoorloos was verdwenen. Ik werd er niet koud of warm van. Het zij zo, dacht ik. Haar zus kwam ik nog weleens tegen. Maar die wilde er niet over praten. Dat was ook een heel ander type. Toch wilde ze er na een bepaalde tijd wel over praten. 'Mijn zusje hield veel van je,' zei ze. 'Ze wil dat je haar nooit vergeet.' 'Waar is ze ?' vroeg ik. Ze overhandigde me een brief. 'Lees,' zei ze. Er stond in dat ze naar het bos was gevlucht, voorgoed. Ze wilde dat ik zou komen. Ik stond op, en ging terug naar grootmoeder. 'Ja, ze hield veel van de bossen,' zei grootmoeder. 'Altijd al. Karel, haar vader, was ook een bos-fanaat.' Ik schudde mijn laars uit. Er zat allemaal zand in, en ook een munt, een gouden munt, met haar hoofd erop. Ik liet het aan grootmoeder zien. 'Maar dat kan toch niet, lieve jongen,' zei grootmoeder. 'Hoe kun je nu een munt vinden met haar hoofd erop, en dat zat in je laars ? Dat heeft haar zus vast in je laars gestopt toen je daar was.' Ik was verbijsterd. 'Hoe is dat mogelijk ?' vroeg ik. 'Een munt met haar hoofd erop ?' 'Ja, ze moet wel ergens koningin zijn,

jongen,' zei grootmoeder. 'Je komt niet zomaar met je hoofd op een munt.' 'Hoe kan dat ?' vroeg ik. 'Ik weet het niet, jongen,' zei grootmoeder. 'Volgens mij weet haar zus meer.' Ik ging weer naar haar zus, en die begon direct te glimlachen toen ze de munt zag. 'Ja, Suzie is een koningin,' zei ze. Het was de eerste keer dat ik haar zag glimlachen. 'Van welk rijk ?' vroeg ik. 'Suzie is de koningin der apen,' zei ze. 'Ach, kom nou,' zei ik. 'Hoe kunnen apen nou munten hebben.' 'Ach,' zei ze, 'dat was eens een stunt in de dierentuin, waar je je hoofd kon laten zetten op een munt, als je voor een bepaald bedrag had gedoneerd.' 'Dus heb jij die munt in mijn laars gedaan ?' vroeg ik. Ze giechelde. Raadsel opgelost. Ik ging terug naar grootmoeder. 'Ach, Karel had ook altijd van die vreemde dingen,' zei grootmoeder. 'En haar moeder was ook zo'n zot mens. Haar moeder reiste in bootjes door het bos. Ook zo'n bosmens. En dan vreemde dingen, he.' 'Wat voor vreemde dingen ?' vroeg ik. Grootmoeder zweeg.

Ik besloot door de vele struiken van bosbessen naar het bos te gaan. Al gauw kwam ik haar daar tegen. Ze had een boog op mij gericht. 'Wat kom je doen ?' zei ze ruig. 'Ik dacht dat je wilde dat ik kwam ?' zei ik. 'Wie ben je ?' vroeg ze. 'Ik dacht dat je me wel kende, Suzie,' zei ik. 'Ik ben Suzie niet,' zei ze. 'Ik ben nu iemand anders.' 'Mag ik bij je komen ?' vroeg ik. Ze spande de boog nog strakker. Ik keek naar de glinsterende pijl. Als ze die los zou laten, zou ik er zeker geweest zijn. 'Jij bent het reeenkind, het geheim van het hertenjong,' zei ze. 'Wat is dat ?' vroeg ik. 'Nog even en dan ben je een kluif,' zei ze. Ze greep een touw met een lasso van haar schouder en liet het om mijn nek vliegen. 'Hey, ben je gek geworden ?' vroeg ik. Met een steen sloeg ze me neer. Ik was bewusteloos, en werd even later wakker in een kooi. 'Jij bent dus echt gek geworden,' zei ik. 'Stom varken,' zei ze. 'Ik dacht dat ik eerst een hertenjong was, en nu ineens een varken ?' vroeg ik. 'Mond houden,' zei ze. 'Je speelt met je leven.' 'Je praat gewoon heel ongenuanceerd, alsof er een steekje bij je los zit,' zei ik. 'Ik ga je laten verhongeren,' zei ze. Die is echt gek, dacht ik bij mezelf. Die heeft ze niet meer goed op een rijtje. 'Je zal niet meer teruggaan naar je familie,' zei ze hardvochtig. 'Het is afgelopen met hun spelletjes. Je bent nu van mij.' 'Wat als ze me hier komen halen ?' vroeg ik. 'Dit is verboden terrein voor hen,' zei ze. Opeens stond daar de boswachter. Suzie moest naar de gevangenis, en ik kon weer terug naar mijn familie. Ik had wel heel erg veel medelijden met Suzie. Ik zocht haar vaak op in de gevangenis. 'Heus, ik bedoelde het niet zo,' zei ze. 'Ja, dat zeggen ze allemaal,' zei ik. 'Ik was gewoon met je aan het spelen,' zei ze. 'Mijn familie had gelijk,' zei ik. 'Je bent gevaarlijk, en je houdt van vreemde spelletjes.' Ze begon te huilen. 'Ik wilde je geen kwaad doen. Ik zou je daarna gewoon loslaten, maar jullie vatten alles verkeerd op,' zei ze. 'Maar je had een pijl en boog op me gericht, en je had me bewusteloos geslagen met een steen. Noem je dat nog spelletjes ? Je bent een beetje vreemd,' zei ik. 'Het bosleven is hard,' zei ze. 'Ik moest overleven.' 'Maar je zei dat je wilde dat ik kwam,' zei ik. 'In die brief. Het is een soort liegen en bedriegen.' 'Nee,' zei ze. 'Ik wilde dat je kwam. Ik wilde gewoon met je spelen.' 'Je hebt me erin laten lopen,' zei ik. 'Denk je nou echt dat ik je kwaad wilde doen ?' vroeg ze. 'Ik weet het niet,' zei ik. 'Je bent in ieder geval niet te vertrouwen.' 'Het was maar spel,' zei ze. 'Vond je het niet leuk ? Dan had je het moeten zeggen, dan waren we direct gestopt.' 'Ik was al bewusteloos geslagen,' zei ik. Ze scheen het niet te begrijpen. Het was een bijzonder meisje. 'Het dringt niet tot je door, he ?' zei ik. 'En nu zit ik hier dan,' zei ze. 'Ik wil terug naar het bos.' 'Maar je bent te gevaarlijk,' zei ik. 'Ach kom,' zei ze. 'Jullie kunnen ook niet tegen een grapje.' 'Geen leuk grapje als ik bewusteloos wordt geslagen,' zei ik. Maar dat drong niet tot haar door. 'Het is het wilde leven,' zei ze. 'In het wilde leven kunnen dingen gebeuren die in de stad niet mogen gebeuren. Het is anders.' 'Ja, ja, maak dat de kat maar wijs,' zei ik.

Grootmoeder wilde dat ik uit haar buurt zou blijven, vooral toen ze weer vrij kwam. Het was voor haar verboden om in het bos te komen. Dat zou een verkeerde uitwerking op haar

hebben. Ik ging haar niet echt uit de weg. Soms kwam ik haar in de bibliotheek tegen. 'Van wat voor boeken houd je ?' vroeg ik haar. 'Van het bos,' zei ze. 'Daar mag je niet komen, he ?' zei ik plagend. 'Nee,' zei ze zacht. 'Mijn familie heeft liever niet dat ik met je praat,' zei ik. 'Naar voor je,' zei ze. 'Waarom dat nou weer ?' vroeg ik. 'Wat kan mij dat nou schelen. Ben je zo belangrijk ?' 'Nou, je kwam me anders wel altijd opzoeken, in het bos, in de gevangenis, en nu,' zei ze. Ik begon hevig te protesteren. 'Nee, dat was omdat ik medelijden met je had, niet voor mezelf,' zei ik. 'Oh, ben jij er zo één,' zei ze. 'Ik vertrouw je niet,' zei ik. 'Ja, dat weten we al,' zei ze. 'Maar je loopt wel altijd achter me aan.' Weer begon ik hevig te protesteren. 'Zeg, dame, nou moet je eens even heel goed naar me luisteren. Ik heb net zoveel recht om in de bibliotheek te komen als jij. En ik ben hier voor de boeken, niet voor jou. Nu moet je geen hoogmoeds-waanzin krijgen, mevrouw, of wil je ook dat ik 'u' tegen je zeg ?' zei ik verontwaardigd. 'Nee,' zei ze, 'en ik loop je gewoon maar wat te plagen.' 'Goed,' zei ik, en liep door. Maar ze kwam me achterna. 'Ik zal je nog wel eens een keer krijgen, zoals ik je goed beet had in het bos,' zei ze. Ik slikte. Ik wist dat ik nog steeds op mijn hoede moest zijn. Deze vrouw was immers gek. Op een nacht werd ik wakker, vastgebonden, terwijl zij op me zat. 'Hoe kom jij hier binnen ?' vroeg ik. 'Voor jou een vraag, voor mij een weet,' zei ze. 'Kun je mij onmiddelijk losmaken,' zei ik. 'Nee,' zei ze, 'ik zei toch dat ik je nog wel zou krijgen ?' 'Okay, maar ik vind het niet leuk,' zei ik. Toen maakte ze me los. Ik zag toen dat ze het waarschijnlijk niet kwaad meende. Ik nam haar in mijn armen. 'Ik vind je eigenlijk heel lief,' zei ik. 'Ik zie nu in dat ik je helemaal verkeerd beoordeeld heb.' 'Maar ik had je niet bewusteloos mogen slaan,' zei ze. 'Het is niet erg,' zei ik. 'Het was in het bos, en daar zijn misschien andere regels.' 'Nee,' zei ze. 'Het was verkeerd van me.' 'Ik heb er niks aan overgehouden,' zei ik. Ik hield haar vast in bed, en streelde door haar haar. Toen ging ik met mijn vingers over haar lippen. Ik kuste haar. 'Ik heb je eindelijk,' zei ze. 'Je moet eens weten hoe lang ik hier op heb gewacht. Mijn hele leven al.'

Opeens stond grootmoeder in de deur-opening. Ze stond daar lijkbleek. Ze maakte direct rechtsomkeerds. Even later ging de telefoon. Ik nam op. Het was grootmoeder. 'Ik hoef haar niet te zien,' zei ze. 'Wil je haar ofzo ? Ik zei je toch dat je uit haar buurt moest blijven ? Ze is niet pluis.' 'Ze is gewoon speels, grootmoeder,' zei ik. 'Maar dat kan een keer verkeerd aflopen, lieve jongen,' zei grootmoeder. Op aanraden van grootmoeder wilde ik dat ze het huis weer zou verlaten. Ik besloot een grote zwerftocht door het bos te maken. Ik ging door de vele bessenstruiken, en ik wist dat ik hier vrij zou zijn van de streken van Suzie. Ik kon me nooit helemaal aan haar geven. Een warmte omgaf mij, alsof iets me riep. Ik ging dieper het bos in, totdat ik bij een bosmeertje kwam. Er waren hier jongens aan het spelen. Ze hadden verfstrepen op hun lichamen. Toen ze mij zagen grepen ze hun bogen. 'Wie ben je, en wat moet je ?' riep één van hen. 'Ik wil in het bos leven,' riep ik terug. 'Zweer je dat je nooit terug zal gaan ?' riep een ander. 'Ik zweer het,' zei ik. Ze kwamen dichterbij. 'Hij moet geverfd worden,' zei één van hen. Voordat ik het wist was ik neergeslagen. Ik werd wakker in een kooi. Ze glimlachte. 'Wie ben jij ?' vroeg ik. 'Ben jij dat, Suzie ?' stamelde ik. 'Hoe kun jij hier zijn ?' Ik was nog steeds een beetje duizelig, en had een beetje een waas voor mijn ogen vanwege de klap. 'Ik ben haar tweeling-zus,' zei ze. Ik had een smaak van bessen in mijn mond. 'Okay, ik vind dit dus niet leuk, dus maak me los,' zei ik. 'Oh nee,' zei ze, 'daar komt niks van in. Ik ben niet zo makkelijk in die dingen als mijn zus.' 'Mijn familie zal mij vinden,' zei ik. 'De jongens zullen hen grijpen, zoals ze jou grepen,' zei ze. Ik voelde me machteloos. Ze zou me waarschijnlijk laten verhongeren. 'Aan het einde van het ritje zul je zijn als deze jongens,' zei ze. 'En je zal nooit meer terugwillen.' 'Wat is hier te doen ?' vroeg ik. 'Wil je terug naar mijn zus dan ?' vroeg ze. 'Ze zal echt nooit opgeven. je zal moe van haar worden.' 'Okay, ik blijf,' zei ik. 'Maak me los.' 'Geen denken aan,' zei ze. 'Deze jongens zijn zorgvuldig geinitieerd, en zo zal jij ook geinitieerd moeten worden.' 'Mijn grootmoeder zal naar mij op

zoek gaan,' zei ik. 'Ze zal er niet doorkomen,' zei ze. 'Dan ken jij mijn grootmoeder nog niet,' zei ik. 'Ik ken haar,' zei ze. 'Ze is niet tegen mij opgewassen.' 'Wat als de boswachter komt ?' vroeg ik. 'Die komt hier niet,' zei ze. 'Waarom niet ?' vroeg ik. Ze zweeg. Ik kreeg bijna geen voedsel. Alleen soms wat bessen met vreemde melk. Ik werd vaak geslagen, veelal totdat ik bewusteloos raakte. 'Het is om los te komen van de oude wereld en van je oude geheugen,' zei ze. 'Je bent serieuzer dan je zus,' zei ik. 'Mijn zus is te speels,' zei ze. 'Voor mij is het menens. De buitenwereld is gevaarlijk. Jouw familie is gevaarlijk.' Ze brachten een verf uit op mijn huid, en op een dag lieten ze me uit de kooi. Ik was nu één van hen.

Op een dag kwamen ze ons in helicopters halen. Het meisje ging de gevangenis in, en de jongens gingen terug naar hun families, zoals ook ik. Grootmoeder was woedend. Zij kende dat meisje wel. Het meisje vertrok al heel jong naar het bos, en keerde niet terug. Ze werd waarschijnlijk grootgebracht door hyenas. Mijn grootmoeder verbood mij om het meisje op te zoeken in de gevangenis. Ik wilde dat eigenlijk ook niet. Het scheen dat het meisje heel veel op haar geweten had. Ze zou niet zomaar vrij komen. Ze was veel gevaarlijker dan haar tweeling-zus, Suzie. We gingen verhuizen naar een andere stad. Grootmoeder vond dat beter, want dan zouden we geheel afzijn van die vreemde familie van Suzie. Grootmoeder wilde er niet op wachten dat er weer iets zou gebeuren.

In onze nieuwe stad gingen grootmoeder en ik vaak wandelen naar de zee. De kust stond vol met bessenstruiken, waar veel wespen waren. Ik had veel diepe gesprekken met mijn grootmoeder.

Karel

Klouterwoes

Blauwe Angels

'Deze besjes waren giftig, en wel zo giftig dat ze dat nooit konden weten.'

Hoofdstuk 1.

Bizonbloed was een heksenkind. Tenminste dat dacht ik, totdat ze mij de andere kant van het verhaal liet zien. Ze bewoog giftige bessen langs me heen. Ik had haar van een afstand gezien, en ze kwam steeds dichterbij. Het was een grauwe dag, en het leek overal te tochten. Toen trok ze mij in de sneeuw. Ze trok me diep weg.

Ze voelde zacht aan. Haar heupen waren fors, en ik lag daar. Ze trok me door de sneeuw mee naar haar hut. De sneeuw smolt weg door haar glimlach. En de tuin rood als bloed, verborg

haar edelstenen, vastgeklonterd heil. En sneeuwwit kant bedekte haar voeten, en ze was de bloesem van het morgenoog. De tuin had haar schoonheid niet verloren in de winter, maar was gevlochten nu. Ze droeg de boog, en alles om haar heen vervaagde. Ze was als de oplossing van het gouden hertenkind.

Ze kwam langzaam op mij af met haar brede heupen, met de boog gericht op iets achter mij, een bizon. 'Ik ben dat mannelijke zwaard zat,' zei ze. Toen schoot ze een pijl af, dwars door zijn hart. Het beest viel neer, en ze duwde mij opzij, en trok mij in een woning. Vanaf hier konden we de tuin nog beter bezichtigen. Ze las rijmpjes voor uit een met goud gedecoreerd boek, een boek met een leren omslag. De tuin was haar trots. De sneeuw sijpelde naar binnen. Het was hierbinnen warmer. Ze deed wat kleding uit, maar was nog steeds bedekt met riemen. Ze was als de jagersgodin.

Ze droeg een jachtmaal binnen, en begon te eten. Ze liet mij niet dichterbij komen. Ik had het gevoel te verhongeren. 'Ik moet gaan,' zei ik. Maar ze liet me ook niet gaan. 'Wat wil je van me,' vroeg ik.

'Kom hier,' zei ze. 'Maar raak het vlees niet aan. Het is verboden vlees. Je zal sterven als je er van eet.'

'Waarom eet jij het dan ?' vroeg ik, terwijl ik langzaam dichterbij kwam. Ze zei niets. De tuin ruikte naar zure vruchten. Het was alsof de bommen in de tuin vlogen, wanneer zij zich bewoog. Zij was een oorlogsmachine. Zij danste in de tuin met trots, op het bloed van de gevallenen. Ze zag het als haar opdracht.

Ze trok mij dieper in het huis, waar ze op haar zwangere buik wees. 'Maar het kind zal vroeg sterven,' zei ze, terwijl ze een doktersjas aantrok. 'Waarom zeg je dat ?' vraag ik.

'Omdat het niet om het leven gaat. Het gaat om de dood,' sprak ze. Ze kwam met een injectie naald dichtbij me. 'Even de adem inhouden.' Ik trok mijn arm weg. 'Nee,' zei ze. 'Niet wegtrekken. Je moet gevaccineerd worden. Dit huis is gevaarlijk.' Ik keek naar buiten, naar de klonterige druiven die daar hingen, en dik sap droop naar beneden. Daar had ze mij al geprikt. 'Klaar,' zei ze. Ik glimlachte. Ik was bijna flauwgevallen. Ik trok mezelf aan haar op.

'En nu de tuin in,' zei ze.

'Waarom ?' vroeg ik.

'Je moet werken, werken,' zei ze.

'Wat moet ik doen ?' vraag ik.

'Je moet het zo doen, kijk,' zei ze. Maar ze deed niets.

'Ik snap je niet goed,' zei ik. Ze bond een touw aan mijn nek en trok me weg. Even later knipte ze het touw door, zodat het een ketting was. 'Je moet er alleen voor zorgen dat je nergens blijft achterhaken,' zei ze. Rode bloesem omhulde hen, en de schaduwen van de roze nachten omhulden hen beiden. Weer trok ze hem het huis in, en het scheen er flink te tochten.

'Ga nu eens zitten,' zei ze.

Ineens schrikt hij wakker na een zware hersen-operatie. Hij kan zich niet goed bewegen. Een vrouw in ridderkleding zit naast hem. 'Welk jaar is het ?' vraagt hij.

'1978,' zegt ze.

'Waarom ben je gekleed als een ridder ?' vraagt hij.

'Carnaval,' zei ze.

'Wie ben je ?' vraagt hij.

'Ik ben je vrouw,' zegt ze.

'Ik kan het me niet herinneren,' zegt hij. Dan komt er een dokter binnen. De vrouw begint te snikken. 'Is dit mijn vrouw ?' vraagt hij aan de dokter.

'Er is niemand anders in de kamer dan u en ik,' zegt de dokter.

Bizonbloed sleept hem uit het ziekenhuis, en brengt hem terug naar de tuin en het huis. 'Probeer niet te ontsnappen,' zegt ze. 'Ik wil dat je de wachter bent van de tuin.'

'Waarom ik ?' vraag ik.

'Omdat je ... laat maar zitten,' zei ze. 'Doe het nou maar gewoon.' Ik laat mijn hand zakken, en loop wat rond in de tuin. Ze volgt elke beweging die ik maak. 'Vanavond komen de heksen,' zei ze. 'Doe het nou maar.'

Dan stort hij neer. Een grote vogel staat naast hem, die hij vastgrijpt. En de vogel brengt hem naar een ver eiland. Ook hier is Bizonbloed. Ze kijkt hem aan. Ze is halfnaakt, als een wilde. 'Hoe ben je hier gekomen ?' vraagt ze. Ik wijst op de vogel.

'Hier kun je ook waken,' zei ze. 'De heksen komen vanavond. Je moet wel wat te vertellen hebben.'

'Maar ik heb niets te vertellen,' zei ik.

'Geeft niets,' zei ze. 'Gewoon een brilletje op doen is ook goed. Het is carnaval.' Ik loop braaf met haar mee. Even later zitten we in tuinstoelen. Daarachter is een hutje waar ze aan het koken was, voor vanavond.

Hij staart voor zich uit. De dokter grijpt zijn hand. Hij vecht voor zijn leven. De dokter voelt zijn pols, en drukt een alarm-bel in.

Ze loopt binnen in het hutje. 'Kom,' zegt ze. Weer volg ik haar braaf. Ze roert in haar ketel.

Met wat reanimatie krijgen ze hem weer aan de gang. Ze besluiten nog een hersen-operatie te doen.

'Waarom lach je ?' vraagt ze.

'Niets,' zei ik.

'Je hebt een mooie lach,' zegt ze.

Het klontert in zijn hoofd. Dan komt er ineens een straal vrij van zijn hoofd. De dokters springen op zij. Dan klimt er ineens een beestje uit de scheur in zijn hoofd. De dokters beginnen te schreeuwen in paniek en vallen neer. Een zoemend geluid neemt over.

'Tatarak !' krijst het beestje. 'Opereer zijn hersenen.' Vrouwen komen de kamer binnen, en starten de operatie. Ze werken met gouden instrumenten. Er komt schuim op zijn mond. Maar ze krijgen alles weer goed op gang.

Hij zit op het witte zand. Hier en daar liggen wat bladeren, en Bisonbloed zit naast hem. Ze houdt zijn hand vast. 'Ik ben blij dat je er bent,' zegt ze. De geur van koffie zit in zijn klederen. Ze besluiten het uit te wassen in het meertje verderop. Het is als een heet stoombad. Snel zijn ze beiden naakt. Het zand aan de kusten ziet er niet zo best uit. En er is overal hondenpoep. Hij wordt onwel, en ze trekt hem uit het meertje. Al gauw ligt hij in een hutje onder een verrotte deken.

'We hebben geluk gehad,' zei ze. 'Er ligt overal glas in het meertje.'

'Waarom trok je me daar naartoe dan ?' vraagt hij.

'Alleen daar kun je vrijkomen van de koffielucht,' zei ze.

'Ik wil er weer naartoe,' zei hij.

'Niemand mag daar ooit voor een tweede keer naartoe,' zei ze.

'Ik wil bloeden,' zei ik. 'Al dat valse bloed moet eruit.'

Ze pakt een stukje glas en rijt hem open. 'Hier,' zegt ze.

'Nee, ik moet naar dat meertje,' zei ik. Ik stond op, en rende naar het meertje.

'Je zult sterven en door een haai gegrepen worden,' zei ze.

'Kan me niet schelen !' riep ik, terwijl ik in het meertje dook. Alles was plotseling bruisend water. 'Er bestaat geen dood !' gilde ik. 'Houd toch eens op met je drama !'

'En geef me nu van het verboden vlees !' riep ik. 'Waar is het !'

'Je zult sterven,' zei ze.

'Okay, dan ga ik godverredomme maar dood !' riep ik. 'Wie kan het wat schelen !'

'Ik,' zei ze. Ze trok me er weer uit. Ik zat onder de hondepoep, onder het glas, en vreemde bessen. Ze stopte me in een kist en bedekte de kist met roze kant. 'Ik ben niet dood !' riep ik. Ze drukte op een knop, en er werd een slaaplied gespeeld. 'Ik voel me op en top, dus stop met

die onzin !' riep ik. Ik proefde wat van de bessen. Ze waren zoet, zuur en bitter. Waarschijnlijk waren ze ook giftig.

'Je speelt met je leven,' zei ze. Plotseling was de kist in vlammen, maar ik lachte. Ik stapte eruit, brandend, en greep haar beet. Ze had een laken om haar heen.

'Je kunt ook wel een boom zijn,' zei ze. 'Het frisse, jonge hout brandt goed.' Ik knikte.

Het zachte zadel hield ze voor me. Ik ging er op zitten. Ik sloeg het brandend laken om me heen, en het was snel als kant. Ik was de prins van de molen. Ze had gelijk. Ik was dood.

Hoofdstuk 2.

Ik was in de lederen darm van een haai. In de buurt stonden overal rozenstruiken, en de straten waren bezaaid met vuurwerk. En alles was nat, want het had flink geregend. Ik had een nare smaak in mijn mond, van bessen, glas, metalen en hondepoep. Er liepen wat arabieren en punkers op de straat. Ik had last van de wind in mijn hoofd. Alles was zacht, en ik stortte in. Maar touwen trokken mij weer op. Ik moest dansen, zingen, en veel geld verdienen. Dan zou Bizonbloed weer langskomen, en op een dag was het dan zo ver.

Ik herkende haar bijna niet meer terug. Ze was wat ouder nu. Met een schaar trok ze mijn blaren open. 'Kijk naar die bloemen,' zei ze. 'Ze wijzen je de weg naar het leven.' Ik keek, en de kelken hadden bruisend sap in hen. 'Ik wil er van drinken,' zei ik.

'Nee, want dan sterf je weer,' zei ze. Maar het kon me niet schelen. Ik liep af op de wulpse kelken, en begon te drinken. Ik verdronk er bijna in. Ik begon flink dronken te worden.

'Domme idioot !' riep ze. 'Wat ben jij een koppige ezel, zeg. Je doet gewoon alles wat niet mag.'

'En jij moet niet zo de baas over mij spelen,' zei ik. 'Ik bedoel maar, ik heb een blaas, weet je, en ik plas straks alles weer uit.'

'Nou, je bent maar goed begenadigd,' zei ze. 'Je bent een begiftigd man.'

Ik knikte. Ik stortte neer aan haar voeten, en zij sleepte me weg. Ze dumpte me ergens in een sloot, maar touwen trokken hem weer op. Ik ging de eerste de beste stal in waar ik me kon wassen, want ik voelde me nu toch wel een beetje vies. Het water hier zat vol met modder, maar dat kon me niet schelen. Ik voelde me schoner nu. Ik ging ergens in het hooi liggen om op te drogen. Even later rende ik achter het weiland het eerste het beste huisje in en speelde de clown. Ik had ook een harp nu, en ze gooiden geld in mijn hoed. Ik ging van huis tot huis, om mijn kunstje te vertonen. Ik had een beetje drempelvrees, maar een snoepje deed altijd wonderen.

Met modderhanden streelde ze door mijn haren. Het was toch carnaval.

Hij lag aan de hart-monitor. Dokters vreesden voor zijn leven.

Hij zwom met de zwanen, en gleed door alles wat vies, gevaarlijk en verboden was. Iemand kamde zijn haren, en hij zonk weg in een put van stank. Hij was goed door een haai gegrepen,

zoals Bizonbloed had geprofeteerd. Maar hij was nogal goddeloos, onkerks en tegen de draad in. Hij had een hekel aan geloof en regels. Zijn bloedvaten waren aan het exploderen, en hij hoorde gelach in zijn hoofd. Hij lachte mee. Kon hem het wat schelen.

Touwen trokken hem op, en hij werd op een podium gezet. Hij zwaaide naar de mensen, en begon te zingen, en te acteren. Het was per slot van rekening carnaval, en alles moest maar kunnen. Een raam werd ingegooid, en hij begon aan zware epilepsie te lijden. Hij zat bij de kapper, en hij hoorde alleen maar lachen. Zijn hoofd werd ingezeept.

De dokters waren alweer een hersen-operatie aan het uitvoeren, om hem van de dood proberen te redden.

Hij had het gevoel alsof hij dronken was. Hij waggelde door de stad. Hij was een clown. Na een lange tijd zag hij Bizonbloed weer terug. Met een dronken stem zei hij dat hij niet had gedacht dat hij haar ooit nog tegen zou komen. Ze bracht hem mee naar een flatwoning, waar ze hem ging douchen. 'Nu is het afgelopen,' zei ze.

'Wie denk je dat je bent ?' vroeg hij. 'De Jezusin ?'

Ze knikte.

'Ik had toch een andere soort van wederkomst verwacht,' zei hij.

'Nee, het is niet te berekenen,' zei zij.

Alle rozen in de stad waren blauw geworden, en het sneeuwde. De Jezusin liep een cafe binnen, en begon te drinken.

'Tatarak !' schreeuwt iemand.

Hij wordt wakker in de tuin, met een beestje in zijn hand. Hij is de tuinwachter. Het beestje had een angel in zijn hand gestoken, waardoor blauw spul in zijn lichaam werd geinjecteerd. Hij trok de angel eruit, en kon weer ademhalen. Hij voelde zich vies, maar ach, het was maar de natuur. Hij zag het als een onbekend vaccin. Waar het goed voor was, wist hij niet, maar het zou wel ergens goed voor zijn, dat wist hij zeker. Nog steeds had hij een beetje dat dronken gevoel. Ook voelde hij zich overgevoelig. Nee, hij wilde niet nog een keer door zo'n beestje gestoken worden.

Toen hij afgelost werd kon hij naar huis. Zijn geliefde was daar. Ze had een bloemenjurk aan van een hele fijne, zachte, plezierige stof. Als hij die stof voelde, voelde hij zich altijd heel veilig. Ze was thee voor hem aan het zetten, van een soort blauwe bonen. Even later zaten ze beiden aan tafel.

Dokters hadden eindelijk ontdekt wat er mankeerde aan zijn hersenen. Het bleek dat zijn gevoelscentrums geirriteerd waren, waardoor hij niet tegen aanrakingen kon. Het bleek te zijn ontstaan door een allergie tegen bacterien die alleen maar in hout voorkwamen. Ook was er een vreemde uitslag op orgaantjes in zijn hersenen wat ze zouden moeten verwijderen, dus hij ging weer onder het mes.

Hij draaide maar in het rond in de tuin. Hij voelde zich goed.

Hoofdstuk 3.

Ze zaten tegenover elkaar. Ze smeerde het brood. Het was zonnig buiten. Het zonlicht weerspiegelde in hun gouden spulletjes. Er werd gebeld. Ze nam op, en legde weer neer. Hij droomde weg. Ze liep de kamer binnen. Hij keek naar haar door het raam. Plotseling begon het te waaien, dus ook hij ging naar binnen. Er droop zand uit de plantenbakken. De druiven in de tuin dropen. Het was allemaal zeer klonterig. Het leek goed rijp. Hij rende naar buiten in de regen, greep wat druiven en kwakte ze op een bordje.

'Carolien, ik ben je wachter,' zei hij. 'Dat zal ik altijd zijn, wat er ook gebeurd.'

'Ik weet het,' zei ze. 'Je bent zo trouw.'

Ze nam hem mee naar boven en trok aan de touwtjes van zijn blouche. Ze drukte hem op het bed, en ging naast hem liggen. Op het nachtkastje lag een boek genaamd 'Bloedbizon'. Het ging over de jacht op bizons. Het was een soort avonturenverhaal. Hij las er uit voort. Maar hij begreep wel waar de schrijver naartoe wilde. De bizons waren het beeld van mannen die de autoriteit hadden genomen, en die autoriteit misbruikten. Het was een heel feministisch boek, dat ook opkwam voor andere minderheden.

Hij legde het weer weg. 'Carolien,' zei hij. 'Je weet het. Ik sta aan de kant van de vrouw.'

Carolien knikte. 'Ik weet het,' zei ze. Toen gingen ze beiden slapen.

De hersenen werden getest. De man kwam tot leven. Er werd geapplaudiseerd.

'Het leven is een valstrik,' stamelde hij. 'Een web van een vrouwelijke spin.' Hij stond in de bibliotheek. Hij bekeek de vele boeken over vrouwen. Vaak waren die vrouwen de heldinnen, of gevaarlijke vrouwen, waarin de hoofdpersoon verstrikt raakte. Op de kaften waren vaak woestijnen met schaars geklede vrouwen al dan niet met wapens en helmen. 'Ik wil meer weten over het gevaar,' zei hij.

Boven hem zag hij rozenstruiken, als een put. Hij werd naar binnengezogen, en kwam in een plaats waar een heleboel vrouwen waren, genaamd de danaiden. Op hun voetzolen waren de namen van hun vermoorde mannen te lezen, die zij zelf hadden vermoord in de huwelijksnacht. Zo leefden ze voort door de geroofde levens-energie van hun mannen. Het waren merktekenen op hun voeten, waarmee ze anderen ook konden merken. Er droop inkt uit voort. Ook gebruikten ze het voor handtekeningen op rekeningen en andere officiele papieren. Zo konden ze veel gedaan krijgen. Hij klapte het boek dicht, en stond weer met beide benen op de grond. 'Ik moet me van illusies onthouden,' zegt hij.

'Besef het, je hebt een redder nodig,' zei Bizonbloed, de Jezusin.

'Er wordt overal gejaagd, er is niet veel wat je kunt doen. Je zal erg moe worden.'

Er waren overal struiken, en tussen de takken door bloedende borsten. Zij bloedden door de scherpe doornen. 'Je moet het bloed drinken,' zei ze. Ze gaf hem een buisje met bloed, en hij dronk. 'Het is bizonbloed,' zei ze. 'Je hebt nu het vrouwelijke deel in je gevonden.'

'Ik wil dit niet !' riep hij. Toen viel hij neer. Hij schoot een paar bizons van afstand, en ging toen slapen. Vanuit het bloed kwamen klimoppen. De klimoppen brachten hem naarboven naar een hemels paradijs. 'Tatarak !' riep hij. Het zand was hier wit. Er kwam een bruisend sap uit de klimoppen, en de bessen explodeerden. In de klimoppen leefden vrouwen met staarten.

Het merkteken was grauw in hun hoofd. Zij werden gevoerd door borsten, door leidingen die via een kraan getapt konden worden. Het was de moederstad. Zij troonde hier in vuur, zij, Bizonbloed. En Karel Klouterwoes was haar nar.

De stad leek als bedekt met takken, waardoor het bizon veld bezichtigd kon worden, midden in de stad. Hier moest veel gejaagd worden, zodat de man nooit meer zou regeren. De stad leefde door bizonbloed, en zo moest het blijven.

Haar klederen waren doordrenkt met bizonbloed, en zij brandde. Het hield hen dronken. Deze besjes waren giftig, en wel zo giftig dat ze dat nooit konden weten. Een lange trap gaf een antwoord aan Karel Klouterwoes. Ook hij moest buigen voor de koningin, en haar kunstzaal onder ogen komen. 'Verdomme,' zei hij. 'Zij kan het.'

Ik moest oppassen voor Karel Klouterwoes, zoals iedereen dat moest. Hij was door haar gedresseerd, maar het was een roofdier. Hij leefde in haar kooien wanneer zij hem niet gebruikte. En anders was hij gewoon aan de ketting. Er moest goed toezicht op deze man gehouden worden.

Maar op een dag ging het mis. Karel Klouterwoes brak los. Mensen renden in paniek hun huizen binnen, en deden alles goed op slot. Maar het was al te laat. Karel Klouterwoes deed de stad verdrinken in bizonbloed. Ik kon net op tijd ontsnappen. Hij was per slot van rekening maar mijn schaduw. Ook de koningin liet hij in leven. Zij was immers de Jezusin. Ik keek de takken door en zag de zee van bizonbloed. Het was warm op het strand. Het bizonbloed leek weg te trekken en weer op te komen door eb en vloed. Dit werd gereguleerd door een vreemde planeet, de bloedbizon. Deze planeet hing ergens in Orion. Door toedoen van de koningin werd de stad weer leefbaar. Ik keerde weer terug naar de stad, maar Karel Klouterwoes liet het er niet bij zitten. Hij omsingelde de stad met een leger. Ze waren op zoek naar mij.

Ze klopten op hoge deuren, maar ik was veilig met de koningin. Ze liet mij het geheim van de stad zien. Ik zag overal bloed stromen. Het leek van boven naar beneden te regenen. Ze leidde mij naar een trap die mij bracht naar een plaats diep onder de stad. Hier spreidde ze haar jurk uit en vroeg aan mij of ik een ballerina wilde worden.

Het zou het enige medicijn tegen Karel Klouterwoes, de dolle losgebroken nar, zijn. Ik ging staan als een standbeeld, en begon te draaien, terwijl mijn kleding en huid in goud en zilver veranderden. Ik hoorde slaapliederen op de achtergrond. Ze had ergens op een knopje gedrukt. Spoedig ging ik dansend door de stad. Er waren overal leeuwen in de stad, maar het was alsof er glas om me heen was. Ze lieten mij met rust. Met een fluit leidde ik de leeuwen daarna uit de stad, het woud in.

Het leek te verergeren met zijn hersenen. De dokters besloten dat zijn laatste hoop een hersentransplantatie zou zijn. Voorzichtig werden zijn hersenen eruit gesneden, en werden er nieuwe hersenen ingelegd. Hij moest er spontaan van overgeven. Hij voelde zich anders,

bevrijd. Maar daarna was hij in een shock. Weer begonnen ze in zijn hersenen te snijden, omdat ze er zoveel geld mee verdienden. Hij rook de geur van drop.

De bomen groeiden tegen de klok in. De koningin kwam hem redden, maar toen werden ze uit elkaar gescheurd. Hij voelde zich in een lange diepe put wegglijden. Karel Klouterwoes nam zijn lichaam. Hij voelde zich opgesloten in zichzelf, alhoewel hij nu wel moest lachen. Hij zag zichzelf liggen. Het was alsof er een lachgas over hem kwam. Hij stond op en was een geraffineerde nar nu. Hij zou trouw blijven aan de koningin, aan de koningin in zijn hoofd. Zij waakte over hem.

De stad was brandende. Hij klom naar een hogere verdieping in het flatgebouw. Karel Klouterwoes klom achter hem aan, in zijn lichaam. Een gevecht ontstond. 'Brandende dampen !' schreeuwde Karel Klouterwoes. 'Ik zal je wel krijgen.' Hij gaf Karel een trap, en klom verder. Alweer greep Karel hem. 'Je zal niet weg kunnen komen, ventje,' zei Karel. Weer trapte hij Karel weg, maar Karel had zijn jas gegrepen. Toen deed hij zijn jas uit, en klom verder, maar Karel had zijn broekspijpen gegrepen. Ook trok hij toen zijn broek uit, en klom verder, totdat hij helemaal naakt was. Een vogel wachtte hem op aan de top van het gebouw. 'De koningin heeft mij gezonden,' zei de vogel. Maar Karel greep een pistool en schoot de vogel neer. De man begon nu echt in paniek te raken. Door de rook zag hij nog een gebouw op het gebouw, met een ladder ervoor. 'Gelukkig,' zei de man, en rende er naar toe. Karel begon nu ook op hem te schieten. Maar snel was hij hoog op de ladder. Toen Karel bij de ladder was aangekomen, was de man al een raam binnen geklommen. Hij zag ergens een hoed hangen en deed die op, en daarna een lange jas en een broek. Snel rende hij naar de andere kant van het gebouw en begon de trappen op te rennen. 'Ik krijg je wel !' hoorde hij Karel roepen. Helemaal bovenin het gebouw aangekomen belde hij ergens aan, en de koningin deed open. 'Hier ben je veilig,' zei ze. Binnen maakte ze wat thee voor hem klaar, maar al snel hoorden ze gebons op de deur. 'Hier is Karel !' riep hij. 'Ik kom je halen !' Toen trapte Karel de deur in. De koningin drukte ergens op een knopje, en een kistje ging open die Karel helemaal begon op te zuigen. Toen dat klaar was ging het kistje weer dicht. 'Ziezo,' zei de koningin, 'die is weer waar hij wezen moet.' In de kamer was een doorzichtige bol gevuld met bizonbloed, en de bol brandde. 'Het is de stad die brandt,' zei de koningin. De man knikte.

'Dus,' zei de koningin. 'Niemand heeft het ooit zo ver gebracht. Ik ben trots op je.' Het vuur begon weg te trekken. na een tijdje keek ik door het raam naar beneden. Er waren bizon gevechten. Er werd op trompetten geblazen. Weer zag ik alles door vuur wegvagen. Ze was naakt.

Hoofdstuk 4.

Er kwam meer en meer begroeiing. De stad begon op een oerwoud te lijken. De man zat nog steeds dichtbij de koningin. Ze had het kistje op haar schoot. Haar vinger bewoog heel langzaam naar een rood knopje. Plotseling werd er een spiegel ingeslagen, een grote wand. Electrische gestaltes stonden daar in vuur. 'Luister niet naar haar !' riep één van hen. 'Zij is zelf Karel Klouterwoes, en zal je willen opsluiten in haar kistje !' Ze hadden gereedschap in hun hand, en sloegen toe. 'Ren door de spiegel !' riep een ander. Hij rende door de spiegel, waar het gebouw veel hoger was, en de brand veel erger. 'Het is niet waar !' riep de koningin. Hij zag toe hoe er een gevecht ontstond. De koningin had het kistje geopend, en Karel was weer tevoorschijn gekomen. Nu begon ook de koningin in Karel te veranderen. 'Ren !' gilden de electrische gestaltes. De man zette het op een lopen, terwijl er overal explosies waren.

Weer rende de man trappen op. Toen hij het plafond had bereikt belde hij ergens aan. De koningin deed open. 'Ik hoop maar dat u de goede bent,' zei de man.

'Natuurlijk,' zei de koningin. 'Ik ben de echte.'

'Ja, dat zeggen ze allemaal,' zei de man. 'Hoe kan ik dat zeker weten ?'

Daar kwam Karel al met een noodvaart door de deur heen. 'Klim uit het raam,' zei de koningin. 'Snel.' De man klom uit het raam, en de koningin deed hetzelfde.

'Ik zie jullie wel,' riep Karel. Een helikopter kwam op de top van het gebouw, met electrische gestaltes. Snel stapten de man en de koningin in, terwijl het gebouw beneden ontplofte. Maar tot hun grote schrik zagen ze de hand van Karel Klouterwoes die een stang onder het toestel had gegrepen. Hij trok zich eraan op, en probeerde de deur te openen. Toen hij een ruit insloeg richtte één van de electrische gestaltes snel een laser-pistool op hem. De man trapte Karel Klouterwoes weg, maar Karel had zijn been gegrepen, en beiden gleden naar buiten. De man kon nog net de stang vastgrijpen. Hij probeerde Karel van zich los te trappen, wat niet lukte. En Karel begon zich al omhoog te trekken aan hem. Maar toen schoot één van de electrische gestaltes hem weg. De man werd weer naar binnen getrokken.

De man klaagde dat met de hersen-transplantatie hij het gevoel had niet meer in zijn eigen lichaam te zitten. Toen hebben de dokters hem een tweede hersen-transplantatie gegeven. De dokters leken op Karel Klouterwoes. Hij trapte hen van hem af, en rende naar buiten met schuim op zijn mond. Hij rende naar de tuin, waar hij tuinwacht was. Hij voelde Karel Klouterwoes in hem. Hij zocht naar het beestje wat hem eens stak. Snel had hij het beestje gevonden, zette het op zijn arm, en liet zich steken.

Iemand trok hem het huis in. Het was Bizonbloed. 'Heb je de oplossing gevonden ?' vroeg ze.

'Ja, stekende beestjes,' zei ze. Ik glimlachte.

De Kannibaalse Bruid

Hermien van de Straaten kwam thuis. Haar vriend zat op de bank een krant te lezen. Ze schonk koffie in voor haarzelf en haar vriend, en ging naast hem zitten. 'Wat ben je aan het lezen ?' vroeg ze.

'Oh, niets,' zei haar vriend. 'Je weet wel, het is daadwerkelijk niets. Ik ben hier gewoon weer eens mijn tijd aan het doden.'

'Ik weet het,' zei Hermien. 'Zal het ooit nog eens anders worden. Ik ben een boek aan het lezen. Zal ik het je eens laten zien ?' Ze haalde een boek uit haar tas en gaf het aan haar vriend. Hij bladerde het eens rustig door. 'Interessant, Hermien,' zei hij. 'Ik wil het ook wel lezen als je het uit hebt.' Hermien glimlachte. Ze stond op na een tijdje en schonk nog wat koffie in. Midden in de nacht werden ze wakker. Er stond een mannetje voor hen, met een puntmutsje met wat belletjes. Het leek wel op een klein narretje. 'Ik ben Kraak,' zei het mannetje. 'Doe drie wensen, maar ze moeten wel voor jezelf zijn of voor je huis.'

'Ik zou me wel wat beter willen voelen,' zei Hermien slaperig. Ze was zo moe dat ze weer in slaap viel, en haar vriend was alweer in slaap gevallen. De volgende ochtend sneeuwde het, en Hermien voelde zich vrolijk en warm. Ze had geen moeite met opstaan, zoals ze dat eerst wel had.

De nacht erop was het mannetje er weer. 'Je mag nog twee wensen doen,' zei het mannetje. 'Oh, Kraak,' zei Hermien, 'ik zou graag een wat betere relatie willen hebben met mijn vriend. Het is al wel goed, maar het kan veel beter.' De dag erop werden ze allebei blij wakker, en lagen een hele lange tijd in elkaars armen, wat ze eigenlijk nooit echt lang deden. 'Hermien,' zei Ewout, 'ik voel me ineens zo anders, zoveel beter.'

'Het komt door dat mannetje,' zei Hermien. Maar Ewout kon zich er bijna niets meer van herinneren. Ze hadden nu eigenlijk alles wat ze nodig hadden, en waren tevreden. Buiten scheen de zon in de sneeuw, en Hermien schonk weer koffie in. Koffie was altijd goed geweest tegen depressies, maar nu was de lucht zo helder. Die dag fietsten ze samen door het bos, maar ineens werd Ewout van zijn fiets afgeduwd. Een speer vloog dwars door Hermien heen, en ze viel bloedend op de grond. 'Grijp hem,' zei een luide stem. Ewout stond op en keek recht in de ogen van een groep wilden. Hij werd vastgegrepen en dieper in het bos gesleurd. Hij werd in een hut geduwd waar allerlei uitgehongerde mannen zaten. 'Welkom,' zei een oude man.

'Wat is dit hier ?' vroeg Ewout.

Een van de mannen werd gegrepen en uit de hut gesleurd. Buiten stond er een vrouw opgedost met veren. 'De kannibaalse bruid,' zei de oude man.

Ewout schrok wakker. Hij greep naar Hermien, maar die was er niet. 'Och, natuurlijk niet,' dacht Ewout. 'De relatie is verbroken. Ik ben een alleenstaand man.' Ewout was blij dat de relatie was verbroken, want Hermien was een verschrikkelijk mens, zeer wreed, ongevoelig, onbetrouwbaar en onberekenbaar. Hij was beter af zonder haar. Toen Ewout door een stukje bos naar zijn werk fietste zag hij een stel kinderen een ander kind slaan met stokken. Ewout sprong direkt van zijn fiets af en nam het kind in bescherming. Het kind rilde helemaal. Na een paar woorden gezegd te hebben tegen de andere kinderen nam hij het kind mee naar huis en belde zijn baas dat hij wat later zou komen. Hij legde het aan zijn baas uit, maar die zei direkt : 'Ach, neem er maar een dag vrij voor.'

Jonas heette het kind. Het was een weeskind, en het kind durfde niet goed terug naar het weeshuis. Het was er verschrikkelijk. Het kind rilde nog steeds, en Ewout deed een deken om hem heen, en gaf het kind wat te drinken. 'Lees je graag ?' vroeg Ewout.

'Ja,' zei Jonas.

'Oh, ik heb boven een hele kast vol met boeken. Kijk er maar eens tussen. Je mag voorlopig wel hier blijven, dan bel ik het weeshuis er wel over op,' zei Ewout.

'Van wat voor boeken houd je het meest ?' vroeg Ewout.

'Indianenboeken,' zei het kind. Ewout liet de boekenkist aan het kind zien. Er zaten veel indianenboeken tussen.

Ewout kreeg een andere vriendin : Jeiske. Ze was een stuk aardiger dan Hermien, maar ook aan deze relatie kwam snel een eind. Toen kwam er Saskia, toen Sjanine, maar het was allemaal niet blijvend. Jonas werd meer en meer als een zoon voor Ewout, en eigenlijk kon Ewout niet meer zonder hem, en besloot hem te adopteren. Hij had echt dat fantastische vadergevoel, maar hij miste een vrouw in zijn leven, en Jonas miste een moeder.

Tundra was een vrouw die Ewout wel zag zitten. Ze was lief en behulpzaam maar toch ook een beetje vreemd, alsof ze een duister verleden had. Ze kon goed koken, en was een uitzonderlijk goede verhalenverteller, dus ook Jonas was direkt erg dol op haar. Ze had haar eigen kamer in het huis. Ze wilde 's nachts graag alleen zijn. Ze was erg wisselend van karakter. Ze hield van foto's maken en fietsen, en op een dag nam ze Jonas mee in het bos. Ze zou proberen wat foto's te maken van dieren die in het bos woonden. Na een tijdje kwamen ze de kinderen van het weeshuis tegen. 'Zo Jonas, heb je eindelijk je moeder gevonden ?' riepen ze. Ze gingen in een groep rondom de fietsen staan. Tundra werd een beetje boos, maar de kinderen duwden haar in een bosje en Jonas namen ze mee. Ze brachten hem naar een hut in het bos. 'Zo, we zullen jou eens uithongeren met alleen af en toe wat bramen, brood en water,' zei een van de kinderen. 'Je bent een verwend ding.' Ze hielden hem opgesloten in de hut, en gaven hem haast geen voedsel. Na een paar weken was hij helemaal uitgehongerd. Net op tijd vond Ewout hem, nam hem mee naar huis en belde het weeshuis erover op. De kinderen kregen strenge straffen.

Tundra was een soort moeder voor Jonas, maar Jonas wist dat hij zijn vader hard nodig had. Een tijd lang durfde hij niet zonder zijn vader naar buiten. Ook Tundra had soms moeite om naar buiten te gaan vanwege het voorval. Ze zouden in ieder geval niet meer in het bos komen. De relatie tussen Tundra en Ewout werd steeds stabieler, en Jonas was er erg gelukkig mee. Voor hem waren Tundra en Ewout de perfecte ouders. Hij had het zich niet beter kunnen voorstellen. Op een nacht had Ewout weer een droom : Een spin had haar partner gevonden, en na de geslachtsdaad vrat ze haar partner op. De volgende ochtend vertelde hij het aan Tundra. Tundra had dit gevoel overgehouden aan een vorige relatie. Ook Ewout kende dit gevoel natuurlijk. In zijn ogen was Hermien die spin. 'Maar we hebben het overleefd,' zei Ewout, 'of er is gewoon leven na de dood.'

'Weet je wat kannibalen geloven ?' zei Tundra. 'Dat wanneer ze iemand hebben opgegeten dan hebben ze die kracht overgenomen, dan hebben ze de ziel van die persoon overgenomen. Zo voelen ze zich machtiger in de strijd om te overleven.'

'Ja, dat heb ik ook eens gelezen,' zei Ewout. 'Maar ik kan jou ook wel opvreten, maar dan van liefde.' Tundra glimlachte. 'Dus ik ben een soort gebakje voor jou ?'

'Veel lekkerder,' zei Ewout. 'En ben ik dan een kannibaal ?'

'Ik denk het wel, Ewout,' grapte Tundra. 'Ik moet nu zeker voor je oppassen.'

'Ach, er is nog hoop voor ons,' zei Ewout. 'We kunnen een banketbakkerij beginnen.'

'Dus eigenlijk is de natuur iets heel moois, als je het op die manier bekijkt,' zei Tundra. 'Het is om ervan te leren.'

'Juist,' zei Ewout.

'Dus, dan ben ik jouw kannibaalse bruid ?' vroeg Tundra.

'Als je het mij vraagt wel,' zei Ewout. 'Maar dan op een hele andere manier. Jij kan al dat nare weer recht krijgen.'

'Wat kun jij toch rare verhalen vertellen,' grapte Tundra.

'Nou, jij kan er ook wat van,' lachte Ewout.

'Ik heb het heel moeilijk gehad,' zei Tundra. 'Maar sinds ik jou ken ben ik gelukkig. En bij Jonas heb ik dat echte moedergevoel.'

Ewout zette de t.v. aan. Er was een oorlogsfilm op, en op de andere zender een praat programma. 'Laat Jonas maar even naar een kinderprogramma kijken,' zei Tundra. Ewout schakelde over. Tundra en Ewout gingen in de achterkamer even wat koffie drinken, terwijl Jonas t.v. ging kijken. 'Ewout,' fluisterde Tundra. 'Er zijn zoveel kinderen zoals Jonas eerst was : Ongelukkig in een weeshuis, ongeliefd, gebroken, trauma op trauma, en er lijkt geen einde aan te komen. We hebben een groot huis. Waarom zouden we geen tweede kind adopteren ?'

'Goed idee,' zei Ewout. 'Ik zou zelfs mijn huis wel willen uitbouwen om zoveel mogelijk kinderen onder te brengen. Maar de kinderen moeten het dan zelf ook willen.'

Met een telefoontje was het snel gedaan. Ewout en Tundra mochten een kijkje komen nemen op het weeshuis om over hun plannen te vertellen. Sommige kinderen waren enthousiast. Anderen niet. Drie kinderen wilden het weleens op proef proberen.

'Jaap Edema, Gerout van Huizen en Liesbeth van Tongeren.' Maar het werd geen succes. Ze konden niet met Jonas opschieten en ze waren vernielzuchtig. Ewout besloot wat dieren in huis te brengen, zodat Jonas niet zo alleen was. Maar naarmate Jonas ouder werd werd hij steeds stiller en trok zich steeds meer op zijn kamer terug. Toen hij twintig was trouwde hij met een meisje, maar het huwelijk was binnen drie jaar kapot, en hij kwam gebroken weer thuis. Ewout en Tundra wisten altijd al wel dat het een kannibaalse bruid was waarmee hij was getrouwd. Ze hadden hem nog gewaarschuwd, maar zonder resultaat. Hij was weer een ervaring rijker, en kreeg zijn oude kamer terug. Snel had hij weer een vriendin, en toen nog een, maar nooit koos hij echt de gemakkelijksten uit. Ewout hoopte dat hij ooit iemand zou vinden als Tundra. Maar op een dag raakte Jonas betrokken bij een auto-ongeluk en raakte verlamd. Het leven was als een kannibaalse bruid voor hem, en Ewout en Tundra waren er kapot van. Ze hadden gehoopt dat hij gelukkig zou worden, en dat hij zijn leven zou kunnen opbouwen, maar het was nu een afhankelijk kasplantje. Na een paar maanden stierf Jonas als gevolg van het auto-ongeluk. Ewout en Tundra waren weer alleen. Het was moeilijk, maar ze

hadden elkaar. Weer gingen ze naar het weeshuis om te kijken of ze een nieuw kind konden adopteren, maar niemand was zoals Jonas. Toch wilden ze het wel met een nieuw kind proberen dat wel een beetje op Jonas leek. Het jongetje heette Huib. Maar Huib was ernstig ziek en stierf na een paar maanden, en weer waren Ewout en Tundra alleen. Het leek alsof de kannibaalse bruid weer had toegeslagen. Het leven was zo fragiel als een nachtvlinder.

Ewout keek naar buiten, en keek naar een bij gaande van bloem tot bloem. Ook zag hij wat vliegjes in een spinnenweb, en zelfs een vlinder. Ook hier zat een betekenis in. Ook dit kon omgedraaid worden. Tundra zat achter hem en had haar armen om hen heengeslagen. Hij miste Jonas en ook Huib, maar Tundra was zoveel dichterbij ineens om al die lege plekken op te vullen. Het leek alsof er in zijn binnenste broodjes werden belegd en opgewarmd. Het was een manier om dichter naar elkaar toe te groeien. Ewout had een brok in zijn keel. Ja, hij was echt depressief, maar Tundra was zijn lichtpuntje. 'Zoveel is er van ons gegeten,' zei Ewout, 'en nu eten wij elkaar door de liefde, als een weg uit deze woeste wereld.' Tundra knikte.

Midden in de nacht werd Ewout wakker van een droom. Hij droomde dat er een nachtvlinder op zijn hart zat. Hij miste Jonas en Huib zo, en brak in tranen uit. Ook Tundra werd wakker en troostte hem. Ze hield hem in zijn armen totdat hij rustig werd. 'Heus,' zei ze, 'eens zullen we alles terugkrijgen. Er is leven na de dood.'

And you will fly,

On the wings of today,

And you will be going back to remember yesterday,

And you will fly,

On the wings of love, today,

And you will be going back to remember yesterday,

Yes, you will fly high,

On the winds of love, today,

And you will be growing up to be free from yesterday

De Roodbil Stam

Henry ter Zand was een voetballer van het eerste team van zijn stad. Vaak kwam er een motorbende kijken, die de voetballers vaak uitscholden voor voetbroeders en ei-verkopers. Henry werd er altijd een beetje misselijk van. Op een dag besloot hij de motorbende eens te bezoeken. Hij had zich anders aangekleed zodat hij niet meer op zichzelf leek. Hij werd hartelijk ontvangen, en men leidde hem rond in het gebouw. Er waren wat oude mensen bij, misschien ouders van de motorrijders, en een vrouw die een soort bediende was deed het woord. Maar plotseling werd hij herkend door een van de motorrijders, en Henry moest maken dat hij weg kwam. Het uitschelden was sindsdien wel een stuk minder ineens, en op een dag werd Henry uitgenodigd om weer eens bij hen op bezoek te komen. De motorrijders hadden er spijt van dat ze hem zo rot hadden behandeld. Al gauw werd Henry goede vrienden met hen, wat ook de bedoeling was. Op een dag las een van de motorrijders voor uit een vreemd jongensboek. Het ging over de roodbil stam, een groep wilden die in de bossen leefden. De roodbil stam deed veel aan voetbal, maar er werden nogal wrede dingen gedaan met de verliezers. 'Het spijt ons, Henry,' zei de motorrijder, 'we hebben ons inderdaad nogal kinderachtig gedragen.'

Eric Rouwmeester heette een van de motorrijders, en had vroeger nog bij Henry in de klas gezeten. Eric knipoogde naar hem. Aan het einde van het voorlezen sprak Eric hem nog even persoonlijk aan. 'Heb je zin om een keer mee te gaan samen naar het bos ?' vroeg Eric. 'Dan kunnen we wat oude herinneringen ophalen.' Henry vond dat best. Een paar avonden later waren ze samen in het bos. Zo deden ze dat vroeger ook. 'Ja, eigenlijk raar,' zei Eric. 'We gingen beiden naar een andere school later, en het contact was verbroken, terwijl we toch altijd goede vrienden waren.' Henry knikte. In het bos kwamen ze een verwilderde vrouw tegen. Ze had wat rode verf achter op haar broek. 'Ja, verfschieten,' zei ze. Het bleek een spel te zijn.

Na een tijdje kwamen ze bij een ravijn aan. Ze hadden hier een goed uitzicht. 'Herinner je je Klaas nog ?' vroeg Eric. 'Heeft zichzelf stukgereden tegen een boom. En Ilse, ook dood.' Henry knikte. Ja, dat had hij ook gehoord. Hij was er kapot van. Klaas en Ilse waren ook goede vrienden van hem. 'Maar ja, dood is dood,' zei Eric. 'Je kunt ze niet terughalen.' Daar kwam de vrouw weer langs. Ditmaal had ze nog meer rode strepen op haar lichaam. 'Zo, je hebt het druk,' zei Eric.

'Ja,' zei de vrouw. 'Een feestje, maar een leuk feest.'

'Gelukkig,' zei Eric. Henry grinnikte. 'Hey, is dat Riet niet ?' zei Henry. 'Riet van de Kaars.'

'Ja, verhip, je hebt gelijk,' zei Eric. 'Hey, Riet.' Maar Riet was al weer verderop. 'Laten we er naartoe gaan,' zei Eric. Even later vonden ze haar. 'Hoe gaat het met je, Riet, ken je ons nog, Eric en Henry.'

'Het gaat goed, en met jullie ?' vroeg Riet. Ze deed een beetje afstandelijk ineens. Riet kon vroeger moeilijk meekomen op school en had vaak het gevoel dat ze er niet echt bijhoorde. Ze ging vroegtijdig naar een andere school. Na een tijdje brak het ijs een beetje. 'Zeg hebben jullie zin om mee te gaan naar het feestje ? Het is mijn feestje,' zei Riet. Even later zaten ze bij haar thuis met de andere feestgangers. Ze had een groot huis. 'Blijven jullie slapen ?' vroeg ze.

Ach ja, waarom niet, dachten Eric en Henry. Er werd even wat gebeld, en al snel was het okay. Midden in de nacht stond Eric op en ging op zijn blote voeten naar buiten. Het was een huis in het bos. Hij vond het geweldig om alleen in de natuur te zijn. Na een tijdje lopen kwam hij bij een meer aan, deed zijn kleren uit en gleed in het water. Het water was een beetje koel, maar verder was het warm weer. Heerlijk vond hij dat, om in de vrije natuur te zwemmen, en helemaal alleen. Maar later merkte dat er ook een andere man en een vrouw aan het zwemmen waren, aan de overkant van het meer. Het waren mysterieuze mensen. Eric groette hen beleefd. 'Zo, wat doe jij zo laat hier,' vroeg de man. Eric vertelde dat hij niet kon slapen, en het fijn vond alleen in de natuur te zijn. 'En jullie ?' vroeg Eric.

'We hebben nergens om naartoe te gaan,' zei de vrouw. 'We hebben ons huis verloren, en nu leven we in de natuur.' Even later lieten ze hem het hol zien waarin ze woonden.

'Fantastisch,' zei Eric. 'Ik zou ook wel in zo'n hol willen wonen.' Maar ineens greep de man een pistool en richtte het op Eric. 'Meekomen,' zei hij. Eric werd ergens in een kooi gestopt gemaakt van takken en touw. 'Wat gaan jullie met me doen ?' vroeg Eric.

'Weten we nog niet,' zei de vrouw. Eric zag dat de vrouw rode vlekken op haar bil had. Toen lieten ze hem alleen. Na een paar uur was Eric nog steeds alleen, en begon te roepen. Na een tijdje sleurden de man en de vrouw de kooi naar het meer en duwden hem erin. Eric schreeuwde nog uit alle macht, maar niets hielp.

De vermissing van Eric kwam hard aan bij Henry. Ook Riet was er kapot van. Pas maanden later vonden ze hem, verdronken. Ook de man en de vrouw die het op hun geweten hadden werden gevonden. Het bleek dat ze onder in de grond nog meer vermiste personen vasthielden, maar die leefden nog steeds.

Henry keek naar Riet. Ze leek veel op de vrouw die het gedaan had. Ze bleken tweelingzussen te zijn. De man bleek lid te zijn van de motorbende.

Op een dag werd er weer uit het vreemde jongensboek voorgelezen. Het was een soort winterboek. De roodbil stam plantte zich op een vreemde manier voort. De vrouwen legden kleine eitjes die met hun voeten uitgebroed moesten worden, anders zou het vruchtje doodgaan. Zij die uit het ei kwamen waren piepklein, als kaboutertjes, en ze hadden nog steeds een lijmachtige gel over zich heen, het vlies-ei, wat later als ze opgegroeid waren verder uitgebroed moest worden, anders zouden ze doodgaan. Dit moest gedaan worden door hun moeder of door hun partner. In hun jonge jaren waren ze als varkens, maar naarmate ze ouder werden verloren ze die kwaliteiten. Het voedsel waarvan ze leefden was rode varkens. Hun vijanden : langbek krokodillen.

Henry begreep niet waarom er nu weer uit het jongensboek voortgelezen moest worden.

Onze kapitein is een jongen, zei de motorrijder. Hij heeft dit boek geschreven, en het is onze bijbel.

'En waar is die jongen ?' vroeg Henry.

'Vraag niets,' zei de motorrijder.

Henry besloot er niet meer naartoe te gaan. Maar toch keerde hij weer terug. Alsof iets zijn interesse had. Op een nacht werd Henry wakker. Er stond een jongetje voor hem in middeleeuwse koninklijke kleding. 'Ik ben het geheim van alle tijden, ik ben het poppetje waar alle paarden op rijden, waar alle rozen om strijden.'

'Wat kan ik voor je doen ?' vroeg Henry. Maar het jongetje was alweer verdwenen. De nacht erop was het jongetje erweer. Ditmaal had hij een boek bij zich. 'Dit is mijn bijbel,' zei hij. Op de kaft stond 'De Roodbil Stam' met een plaatje waarop wilden voetbalden. De bal was een leren zak die een beetje op een doodshoofd leek.

Weer vroeg Henry : 'Wat kan ik voor je doen.' Het jongetje gaf hem het boek en verdween. Henry begon direkt te lezen. Het was een boek over de middeleeuwen, over wrede praktijken, die uiteindelijk ophielden, maar ze waren nog steeds in de lucht, en kwamen verkleed als andere dingen.

Een man werd wakker van een lange vreemde droom. Hij had de dag ervoor naar een oorlogsfilm gekeken, en daarna naar een voetbalwedstrijd. Hij zuchtte diep, en viel weer in slaap. Hij droomde toen over een dames voetbal team waar alle vrouwen rode strepen op hun achterste hadden, terwijl sommige grote rode vlekken hadden, en sommigen gewoon rode broekjes. Honden renden over het veld, die toen in zwarte panters veranderden. En toen stond het veld in brand. De man was schoolmeester, en de volgende dag toen hij een vrouwlijke collega tegenkwam bemerkte hij dat er rode vlekken op haar broek zaten, die op lipstift leken. De man wreef in zijn ogen. 'Ben ik nu gek ?' dacht hij bij zichzelf. Maar toen ze zich omdraaide had ze het gezicht van een hond. De man wist dat hij nog steeds sliep. Het leek wel alsof hij niet meer kon wakker worden, en de dromen werden steeds langer en langer. Hij herinnerde dat hij de dag ervoor bij de t.v. en bij de voetbalwedstrijd veel te veel had gedronken. Of hadden ze soms iets in zijn glas gestopt ?

Een man las een vreemd verhaal in een magazine. Het was een soort strip, ook met veel plaatjes, en dan weer tekst. Het was in een wasserette. Hij gooide de magazine opzij. Greep zijn spullen en liep naar buiten. Het werk was gedaan. Hij gleed uit over een bananeschil en viel terwijl alles op de stoep lag. Sommige mensen hielpen hem. Zijn wasmachine deed het niet meer. De was was weer vuil, maar iemand anders bood hem aan de was te doen bij haar thuis. Het was een aardige vrouw. De vrouw van de man was zwanger. Hij wilde weer op tijd thuis zijn, maar het was zo gezellig bij de vrouw dat hij wat langer bleef, en ze besloten vrienden te blijven. Hij vertelde haar over het vreemde verhaal wat hij in de magazine had gelezen. 'Nee, niet gelezen,' zei de vrouw.

Een man zat bij de psychiater. Dit was het verhaal wat hij eruit floepte. 'Okay,' zei de psychiater, 'en wat is de betekenis ?'

Een krant werd gedrukt met dit vreemde verhaal. Iemand werd wakker en had dit gedroomd, iemand las dit. Een grote octopus hing over een stad, en slikte de stad op in zijn geheel. Iemand rende uit het ziekenhuis. Ze hadden hem een injectie gegeven, maar hij was erdoor aan het hallucineren. het was alsof de werkelijkheid nu in duizenden stukjes voor hem lag, in brokken. Iemand was geraakt door een giftige pijl van een wilde stam, de roodbil stam. De man was aan het hallucineren en werd in een kooi gezet. Al snel raakte hij uitgehongerd. Spinnen kropen over hem heen.

Iemand zat een winterboek voor volwassenen te lezen. Dit was wel het vreemdste winterboek wat hij ooit had gelezen. En het volgende verhaal was over de idioten van Mars. De idioten waren een echt ras, wilde reuzen, die in de vreemde jungles van Mars leefden. Ja, idioot was het, maar de plaatjes waren prachtig. Het sprak echt tot de verbeelding. De idioten van Mars waren vaak kaal met hanekammen. Het verhaal daarna ging over slangen, en daarna was er een verhaal wat meer op science fiction leek. De man bracht het boek terug naar de bibliotheek, en ging naar de jeugdafdeling om daar een paar winterboeken te lenen. Tot zijn grote verbazing ging het weer over de roodbil stam. Die nacht had hij een droom over een stam waarvan de vrouwen rood geverfde billen hadden. Hij vertelde het aan zijn vrouw en vroeg wat het voor betekenis kon hebben. 'Dat je teveel leest,' zei zijn vrouw. En ze had gelijk, want hij was een echte boekenwurm. 'Als je 's nachts droomt van hetgeen je hebt gelezen, dan heb je gewoon teveel gelezen, en hetzelfde geldt voor t.v.,' zei ze.

'Maar wat kan ik dan doen ?' vroeg de man. 'Heb jij een beter idee ?'

'Neem mij eens wat vaker uit,' zei de vrouw. 'Ik heb het idee dat je getrouwd bent met de boeken in plaats van mij.'

Zo gezegd zo gedaan. De man nam zijn vrouw die dag direkt mee naar het bos om een wandeling te maken. Maar de man werd al snel onwel, en ze keerden om. 'Ik kan gewoon niet zonder mijn boeken,' zei de man. Ze probeerden nog een paar dingen, maar uiteindelijk legde de vrouw zich er maar bij neer.

Een man werd wakker van een droom, en daar een andere man. Ze hadden allemaal hetzelfde gedroomd, alsof er wilde geesten in de lucht waren. Zwarte honden blaften op de straat. Diep in het bos stapte een dwerg lachend zijn huisje binnen en trok de deur achter zich dicht. Er hingen wat klokken van wezens die in elkaar waren gegroeid en die zich voedden met elkaars inhoud. De dwerg roerde wat in een potje. 'Zombies zijn het,' zei de dwerg. 'Ze kunnen niet met en niet zonder elkaar, want ze zitten aan elkaar vast door het hart. Ja, door dit middeltje zullen ze eindelijk los van elkaar kunnen komen, maar vergeten doen ze elkaar nooit.'

Einde

De Vreemde

Ontmoeting

Ze droeg altijd witte laarzen, en woonde op twee hoog. Op een dag was hij van de trap in het trappenhuis gevallen. Ze nam hem op, en om hem op te vrolijken nam ze hem mee naar de kermis, waar zij hem bracht tot een clown. Hij was verder niet verwond.

De clown slikte hem op, en hij kwam in een tunnel terecht waar mensen een carnavals optocht hielden. De tunnel eindigde in een woestijn aan de rand van een grote stad. Er werden hier overal markten gehouden.

Hij vroeg zich af waar ze was. Nu een tijdje spuwde de clown hem weer uit. Het was een grote machine. Ze stond daar en lachte. 'Voel je je alweer wat beter nu ?' vroeg ze.

'Dit is geweldig,' zei hij.

'Kom met me mee naar huis,' sprak ze. Ze nam hem bij de arm en leidde hem naar twee hoog. Binnengekomen kreeg hij een kopje koffie. Hij keek naar haar witte laarzen. Die waren wit als altijd.

Hij kon niet veel zeggen. 'Sprakeloos als altijd ?' vroeg ze. Hij knikte.

'Het geeft niet hoor,' zei ze.

'Ik moet gaan,' zei hij.

'Nee, blijf nog even,' zei ze. 'Ik wil je wat vertellen. De duinen hier vlakbij zijn zo mooi. Heb je zin om daar een keer te wandelen ?'

'Best,' zei hij. 'Maar ik moet nu gaan.'

'Hoe laat zullen we afspreken. Vanavond om half zes ?' vroeg ze.

'Best,' zei hij.

'Dan zie ik je bij het muurtje,' zei ze.

Hij knikte, en verliet het pand. Zo gezegd zo gedaan. Om half zes stond hij bij het muurtje. Zij had hem daar al opgewacht. Samen liepen ze door het park naar de duinen. Zij had weer haar witte laarzen aan. 'Weet je,' zei ze. 'Ik denk er vaak over om de zee over te zwemmen tot dat eiland daar, ken je dat ? Lijkt me geweldig om daar te wonen, echt fantastisch, of op z'n minst om daar eens op vakantie te gaan. Gewoon in de wildernis leven, proberen te overleven. Er groeien daar veel wilde bessen.'

'Een bessen-menu, dat lijkt me wel wat,' zei hij. Hij begon wat trager te praten. Ze trok wat kleren uit, en rende naar het water. 'Kom mee,' riep ze.

'Dat mens is gek,' dacht hij bij zichzelf. Maar toch deed hij wat ze zei. Hij rende achter haar aan en toen het water in. 'Het is niet zo lang zwemmen,' riep ze. Na een tijdje stonden ze op het eiland. Het eiland stond inderdaad vol met bessenstruiken. Het leek wel alsof de bessen in zijn hoofd spraken. 'Het zijn erg krachtige bessen,' zei ze. 'Men noemt ze weleens heksen-bessen. Dat is omdat het volwaardig aan de voedsel-behoefte voldoet.'

'Heksen-bessen ?' vroeg hij.

Ze knikte. Ze liep op een struik af, en begon te plukken en te eten. Ook gaf ze bessen aan hem. De bessen waren erg voedzaam, en al snel hadden ze genoeg. Het was bijna als sap in hun mond. 'Hutje bouwen hier ?' vroeg ze. Hij knikte.

Die nacht droomde hij vreemd. Hij lag in haar armen als een kind bij zijn moeder. Ze was wat ouder dan hem. Hij droomde dat ze hem sleepte naar de kermis tot de clown, en dat hij weer een ritje maakte door de clown. De tunnel was weer vol met dansende mensen in een carnavals-optocht, en weer liep de tunnel uit op markten aan de rand van een woestijn, aan de

rand van een grote stad. Hij ging toen de stad binnen. Er was overal graffiti hier. Hij werd duizelig en viel, en ze sleurde hem mee door de stad en toen door de markten tot de woestijn. Dit liep uit op een grote zee. De grootst mogelijke vissen zwommen in de zee.

Toen werd hij wakker. Zij lag aan de andere kant van de hut. Hij liep naar haar toe en ging in haar armen liggen. Zij ontving hem als een kind. Het voelde heel natuurlijk aan. Door de bessen werd hij kleiner, en zij werd groter, althans dat leek zo in zijn dromen. Het leek wel alsof hij aan het ijlen was. Toen hij echt wakker werd de volgende dag voelde hij zich ziek.

'Misschien komt het door de bessen, als een zij-effect,' zei ze. Hij voelde zich flink beroerd. Hij kon niet meer goed nadenken. Ook kreeg hij last met het spreken. Alles ging steeds trager en moeizamer. Hij trilde. Met haar was niets aan de hand. 'Dit doe ik dus nooit meer,' zei hij. 'Ik heb het gevoel alsof ik doodga.' Zij maakte een kano en een peddel. Ze bracht hem in de kano, en begon te peddelen. Snel waren ze aan de overkant, waar ze hem naar een dokter bracht. 'U bent vergiftigd,' zei de dokter.

'Bessen ?' vroeg hij.

'Nee,' zei de dokter. 'Het eiland wat u heeft bezocht kent vreemde diersoorten, die een speciaal gas afscheiden. Het is zwaar giftig. Wist u niet dat het eiland verboden was ? Ik zou u hier eigenlijk voor moeten aangeven. U heeft waarschijnlijk de natuur daar zwaar verstoord.'

De dokter gaf hen pillen mee, die hij tweemaal daags moest slikken met water. Elke dag ging het een stukje beter met hem. Zij kwam hem vaak opzoeken. Dan hield hij zijn hand vast. 'Jammer dat het zo gelopen is,' zei ze. Hij knikte. 'Ik ben blij dat ik weer thuis ben,' zei hij.

'Thuis is toch het beste dan,' zei ze. 'Maar het was een goede ervaring.'

'Voor mij niet,' zei hij.

'Oh, waarom niet ?' vroeg ze. 'Alles moet je een keer meemaken.'

'Dat vind ik niet,' zei hij. 'Je kan ook gewoon je eigen weg gaan. Ik hoef niet alles mee te maken.'

Maar toen leek het wel alsof ze een beetje boos werd. 'Ik moet gaan,' zei ze.

'Nee, blijf nog even,' zei hij.

'Nee, geen sprake van,' zei ze. 'Je bent me nogal een betweter.'

'Jij anders ook,' zei hij.

'Dan is het beter dat het hier stopt,' zei ze. 'Wij kunnen niet met elkaar.'

'Eet maar wat bessen,' waren haar laatste woorden. Toen vertrok ze. Hij heeft haar nooit meer teruggezien.

Het Surinaamse

Dagboek

Suriname, 6 april 1992

Ik ben in Suriname aangekomen. Vastbesloten het geheim te vinden waar iedereen over spreekt. De papieren roos, de naam voor een lange plant met papier-achtige roosjes, komt veel in Suriname voor, en nergens anders in de wereld. Ik staar naar de plant, met vreemde gevoelens in mijn buik. Een verlamming kwam over mij, en ik moest naar het ziekenhuis. Ik heb nu de ontmoeting gehad. Ik had hier lang op gewacht, maar het liep bijna verkeerd af. Ik was voor drie weken in het ziekenhuis.

Suriname, 8 april 1992

Ik weet niet wat ik moet doen. Ik kan niet loskomen van Suriname. Ik loop dwalend rond en kan niet weg. Het lijkt wel alsof ik opgesloten ben. Het lijkt alsof ik dood ben, terwijl ik leef. Ik heb het duistere geheim van Suriname ontmoet, maar nu ben ik in de war. Mensen kijken me na op straat. Ik geef een zoekende indruk. Alsof ik iets kwijt ben. Ik kan mijn gedachtes niet beheersen. Ik ben een gevangene van Suriname. Het is alsof een spin mij van binnen opeet. Ik heb jeuk van binnen, en hoeveel ik ook krab, het gaat niet weg.

Ik ben niet gemachtigd om contact op te nemen met mijn familie. Ik krijg geen toestemming. Ik heb ook geen idee van wie ik toestemming moet krijgen. Ik denk dat ik gek aan het worden ben. Ik geef de schuld aan de papieren roos. Ik haat die planten nu, alhoewel ik weet dat ik misschien nu onredelijk ben. Toch heb ik het idee dat die planten duivels zijn. Ze worden vaak bij allerlei duistere rituelen gebruikt.

Ik ga huilend naar bed. Ik voel me fragiel en verward. Ik heb hulp nodig, maar durf het niet te vragen. Het is alsof het me verboden is. Het voelt alsof ik in een coma leef. In de nacht kijkt een vreemd houten standbeeld mij aan. Ik heb het gevoel alsof mensen mij uitlachen en niet om mij geven. Was ik maar nooit naar Suriname gegaan. Het is alsof iemand mijn geld en paspoort heeft gestolen, terwijl ik het nog steeds heb. Maar het dringt niet tot mij door. Niets dringt er tot mij door. Ik heb het gevoel alsof mensen mij niet horen, wat ik ook zeg. Ze leven gewoon door. Ik heb zelfs het gevoel dat het onmogelijk is dat iemand verstaat wat ik zeg. Ze horen mij wel, maar zij verstaan het niet, en het lijkt hen ook niets te kunnen schelen.

Ik weet zeker dat ik onder een vloek ben. Ik maak een lange boswandeling tot aan een rivier. Dan loop ik terug. Ik voel me opeens heel warm van binnen. Alsof iemand mij wel begrijpt, of een gevoel dat alles wel goed komt. Maar dat is maar een flits. Als ik terug kom op mijn kamer ben ik depressief. Het wordt zo erg dat ik weer een wandeling maak naar de rivier. Ditmaal voel ik alsof ik gewapend ben, maar ik ben onbewapend. Iets of iemand speelt een spelletje met mij. Het is alsof ik aan de drugs ben, maar ik heb die troep nooit aangeraakt. Of zou iemand iets in mijn koffie hebben gedaan ? Ik ben mezelf niet meer. Ik voel alsof ik een zombie ben. Iets is over mij gekomen. Ik heb ook het gevoel dat ik niet goed meer kan praten. Alsof niemand mij kan horen, of in ieder geval dat niemand mij begrijpt, alsof ik in een andere taal spreekt die niemand verstaat. Ik begin wanhopig te worden, hopeloos. Ik voel me opgesloten. Iemand heeft iets in m'n hoofd gedaan. Ik heb koppijn. Het is alsof ik opgesloten zit in mezelf, en iemand heeft de sleutels weggeworpen, zonder enig mededogen. Het is alsof er een sieraad in me zit wat ik niet kan bereiken. Dan begint het sieraad te branden, en ik begin weg te smelten. Ik kan het vuur ruiken. Nu denk ik echt dat ik gek ben geworden, verdwaasd, krankzinnig. En dat terwijl ik me zo op deze vakantie had verheugd. Ik weet dat ik niet meer terugkan. Iets houdt mij tegen. Iets heeft mij naar de keel gegrepen. Iets met een witte jurk. Ze loopt op sandalen. Zou het een geest zijn ? Of verzin ik maar wat. Ik heb het gevoel dat er hier een oorlog is, en dat ik tot het leger wordt geroepen. Ik moet vechten. Ze willen mij laten staren naar een haan. Ik moet die haan bevechten, en dan merk ik dat ik zelf een haan ben. Ik smijt het boek op de tafel wat ik aan het lezen ben. 'Is het nu afgelopen ?' roep ik. Het is alsof ik bezeten aan het raken ben. Ik voel het schuim bijna op mijn mond komen. Ik maak veel speeksel aan. Wanhopig val ik op mijn bed. Ik begin aan mijn haren te trekken, en wild met mijn hoofd te schudden. Iets is binnenin mij gekomen. Ik krijg het er niet uit.

Suriname, 10 april 1992

Ik voel me dromerig. Ik heb nog steeds geen contact met mezelf kunnen krijgen. Het is alsof ik mezelf niet meer kan bereiken, alsof ik uit mijn eigen handen ben weggegleden, in de diepte, verdronken. Ik voel me als een pop, of alsof ik als een pop ben, en ik houd mezelf vast, maar ik kan mezelf niet bereiken. Ik ben onbereikbaar. Ik kom er niet meer doorheen.

Ik weet weer waarom ik hier ben : voor de juwelen. Maar de juwelen hebben mij opgesloten. Ik kwam om juwelen te zoeken in de bossen, maar het was te gevaarlijk. De wachters van de juwelen hebben mij opgesloten.

Suriname, 10 maart 1993

Ik begin een reclame bureau in Suriname, ook om adviezen te geven wat betreft reclame. Vorig jaar was een verschrikkelijk jaar. Ik heb mezelf bij elkaar kunnen grijpen, maar ik wil niet weg nu. Eerst kon ik niet weg, en nu wil ik niet weg.

Suriname, 10 maart 1994

Het is weer mis. Alle ellende is teruggekomen. Ik wil niet meer leven. Ik wil van deze planeet vertrekken, maar ik kan niet. Ik probeer de dood te vinden, maar deze vlucht van mij weg. Iets roept mij op voor de oorlog, een oorlog tegen een haan. En dan merk ik dat ik zelf ook een haan ben. Met mesjes sta ik daar, mesjes aan mijn benen vastgemaakt. Maar dan enige tijd later beland ik in het ziekenhuis. Ik voel me gebroken. Ik ben verwond, misschien zelfs dodelijk. Mensen vertellen me dat ik ergens ben ingesprongen. Het was nogal van een grote hoogte. Ben ik mijn verstand aan het verliezen ? Ik kan niet tegen de smoelen van deze mensen, die hypocriete, duivelse glimlachen. Ze voeren iets in hun schild, ik weet het zeker.

Suriname, 12 maart 1994

Iemand zingt liedjes tot mij waarvan ik rustig wordt. Ik lig nog steeds in het ziekenhuis. Soms ben ik bewusteloos. De verpleegsters zijn wel aardig hier. Ze zingen voor mij, en zeggen dat als ik weer beter ben, dan zullen ze met me zwemmen, in de rivier achter het ziekenhuis. Dat is al half in het bos. Het lijkt me wel leuk. Hun glimlachen zijn mysterieus en zoet. Ik heb vol vertrouwen in hen dat zij mijn leven beter zullen maken.

Eén van de verpleegsters neemt mij mee in haar auto. We gaan diep het bos in, naar een rivier waar krokodillen leven. Zij laat me ook een plant zien genaamd de papieren roos, een lange plant met bijna papieren roosjes. Ik schrik. Ze houdt mijn hand vast, maar die duw ik weer weg. Ik ben ineens heel paranoide. Ze vraagt me wat er gebeurd is, maar ik ren weg met schuim op mijn mond. Ze komt mij achterna. Ze heeft een boog en dreigt mij neer te schieten. Niemand zal namelijk ontsnappen. Ik weet niet waar ze het over heeft. Ik ben toch niet in een gevangenis ? Maar ze geeft geen uitleg. Dan lijkt het alsof ik een klap op mijn hoofd krijg. Even later wordt ik wakker in het ziekenhuis.

Zij zingt over mij.

Suriname, 18 maart 1994

Ik denk dat er iets goed mis met mij is. Ik ben opgesloten in een nachtmerrie, alsof ik in een coma ben. Daarom kon ik hier nooit weg. Ik kan niet goed nadenken. Ik kan niet tellen. Ik wil weg, maar ik kan niet. Ik probeer weg te kruipen, maar ik ben als een verlamde. Alles is zo groot en ver weg om mij heen. Het is alsof ik in de maag van een beest ben, een roofdier. Ik wil hier weg. Maar ik kan niet. Alles gaat zo traag. Ik heb het idee alsof niemand om mij geeft, maar toch heb ik het gevoel dat het goedkomt.

Suriname, 18 mei 1994

Ik lag in warm water. Het gaf me hoop. Eventjes kon niks me nog schelen. Ik heb het gevoel dat ik meer in mijn dagboek moet schrijven. Dat doe ik bijna niet. In mijn dromen groeien planten met witte bloempjes in mijn kamer. Het is alsof ze zullen komen om me te halen. Er groeien witte bloemen in mijn hoofd, planten met witte bloemen, weelderige struiken, die een wit zaad verspreiden. Het maakt me warm van binnen. Ik dacht dat Suriname zo meedogenloos was, maar nu heb ik haar geheim gezien. Alhoewel ik mezelf misschien wat teveel bemoedig nu. Wat hebben die witte bloemenstruiken in hun zin ? Ze hebben doornen als ik ze dichterbij bekijk. Er druipt bloed vanaf, als van de poten van gevechtshanen, van de messen. Iets knapt er in mijn hoofd. Ik moet even neerliggen. Ik herken deze plek. Had ik dit niet in mijn dromen gezien ? Ik was op weg naar een witte stad, met zoveel anderen, maar toen brak de ladder af. We vielen allemaal naar beneden. Het was een bodemloze put, met veel vuur. Duivels waren rondom ons. Een huis van medelij neemt ons binnen, maar dat bleek valse medelij te zijn. Ik kan niet meer nadenken. Alles duizelt mij voor de ogen. Hier leeft valse genade, een beest.

Suriname, 19 mei 1994

Toen kwam het. De struiken namen bezit van me, alsof rivieren me overstroomden. Ik was in een droom. Ik was als Doornroosje, maar Doornroosje stierf. Ze werd door teveel doornen geprikt. Ze gilde terwijl ze stierf. Het was een deel in mij wat stierf. Terwijl het andere deel een clown was, die onder water was, verstrikt in een onderwater-struik, ook met vele doornen. Ook de clown stierf toen, en ik bevond mijzelf in een wilde zee, totdat ik aanspoelde op een strand. Iemand kwam tot mij, en hielp mij op de been. Toen bracht zij mij naar haar huis. Ze glimlachte. Ik staarde naar haar. Ik kon niet denken. Alles stond stil. Ik ben nu meerdere personen.

Suriname, 20 mei 1994

Het moorden van mei is aan mijn zij. In een slachtkamer bracht zij mij. Ik wist niet wie zij was. Ik durf niet veel te zeggen. Ze is een moordenaar, nogal periodiek. Ik ben te zwak om tegen haar op te staan. Ik ben nu meerdere personen. Zij heeft mij gespleten. Ik kan mezelf niet vinden tussen alle maskers.

Suriname, 21 mei 1994

Ze zit op een stoel, en ik moet haar diensten verlenen. Ik heb deze stoel eerder gezien. Het stond boven Suriname toen ik het land binnenkwam. Ik ben meerdere personen nu, uit elkaar getrokken, verscheurd. Ik moet de stoel aanbidden. Zij is een moordenares. Ik ben door de verkeerde persoon gered. De enige die ik nog heb is mijn dagboek. Zij houdt mij onder schot en bedreigt me. Zij is hoog in de wolken, als de ark van Noach, en ik ben het volk. Ik ben niet in de ark, en dat is een vreselijke gewaarwording. Overal regent het. Haar stem klinkt door mijn hele lichaam, als donder en bliksem. Ik sta in vuur. Ik sta in brand, maar dan besef ik dat ik een deel ben van een plant. Ik ben een deel van een struik, en ik groei naar boven.

Suriname, 22 mei 1994

Een plant met gele bloemen, het is als drugs. Over die brug kwam ik hier. Wie heeft mij zo gemaakt ? Er moet een uitweg uit dit doolhof zijn. Ik ben bezeten en gespleten. Ziek zijn in Suriname is geen pretje. Ik kon er wel in, maar niet meer uit. Het vuur der dwazen brandt hier. Als dollen dansen zij er omheen. Ik doe niet mee.

Een groter kwaad is er nooit geschiedt.

Suriname, 23 mei 1994

Ik hoop dat ze nooit mijn dagboek leest. Ze schijnt er geen interesse voor te hebben, dus ik schrijf door. In de nacht heb ik wel haar dagboeken gevonden. Ze schrijft over mij. Ik zit hier gevangen. Het is haar paleis.

Suriname, 24 mei 1994

Ik voel me als haar marionet. Twee vrouwelijke matrozen vielen in hetzelfde lot. Ze zitten daar in hun marine jurkjes, wit met blauw. Ik ben in een halve coma. Ik kan me niet goed bewegen en niet goed ademen. Het is de aanval van de plant. De struik heeft genomen, en laat haar doornen inzinken. Buiten is er donder. Het leger van de plant is gekomen. Ze staat op het balkon op de uitkijk, alsof ze schepen naar binnen moet halen. Dan doet ze het raam dicht. Haar haren zijn als in vuur. Dan brandt ze helemaal. Ik kijk hoe ze in as verandert, maar het is slechts zaad. Wit zaad, wat door het huis wordt geblazen. Het huis is in stof en een spin maakt webben.

Suriname, 25 mei 1994

Zij zit in een witte jurk, omringd door de planten met witte bloemen. Zonder de gele bloemen zou ik hier nooit zijn gekomen. Zij namen mij me op hun schip. Mijn verleden liet ik achter me. Het verdronk. Eindelijk voelde ik mij aangenomen in de ark van Noach. Ik kan er niet meer aan denken. De zee is romig. Ik ben op het schip. Het schip is een eiland, als een vis in de zee, als een haai. Ik kan niet meer vooruit en niet meer achteruit. Alleen het schip kan bewegen. De bloemen groeien naar de hemel. Dit is mijn ladder. Maar dan breekt de ladder. Het witte huis neemt mij aan, verzorgt mijn wonden. Ik voel mij zwak, en de witte dame heerst over mij.

Suriname, 26 mei 1994

Ik ben bang dat zij mijn dagboek leest. Daarom verdraai ik de woorden. Ik lees haar dagboeken in de nacht. Zij zijn duister. Ik denk dat ik gek wordt. Schuimbekkend rol ik op de grond, totdat ik mij weer optrek aan de lange planten met bloemen. Ik trek mezelf op aan de struik. Ik klim naar de hemel, maar kom niet ver. Ik kan alleen maar kijken. Ik staar naar Surinaams fruit op een schaal. Voor mij is het een zee, een zee waarover ik nooit kan komen, maar waar wel eilanden in zijn. Dit fruit draagt een duister geheim. Dit fruit ligt alleen maar stil, en ik kijk ernaar. Een zee van fruit liet mij niet door. Ik kan alleen maar kijken. Ik kan alleen maar wegzinken. Ik zag hen daar staan op de bruggen met maskers, en in de boten. Zij namen vrouwen in wit op het schip. Die visten zij uit het water. Zij haalden die vrouwen naar binnen als Surinaams fruit, fruit met een duister geheim. Het Surinaamse fruit is als een lange reis naar ellende. Als je bij de pit bent aangekomen ben je dood. Vrouwen in kanten jurken, bedolven onder spinnenwebben. Spinnen in hun haren. Zo bieden zij het fruit aan. Geen goede reclame als je het mij vraagt, maar het wordt goed verkocht. Mensen kijken niet verder dan hun neus lang is.

Suriname, 27 mei 1994

Planten met blauwe bloemen. Het paars groeit aan de randen van de rivier, als het paarse vuil. Het zijn paarse bloemen. Diep kijk ik in haar ogen en zie hetzelfde. Het is bijna als een spiegel. Ik probeer de diepte van haar ogen te zien. Het paars bedekt hier alles. Ik heb het gevoel dat ik in cirkeltjes draai. Hetzelfde is mij al eens eerder overkomen. Ik kan niet losbreken. Ik moet geholpen worden. Maar de hulp komt niet.

Suriname, 28 mei 1994

Ik wacht op de droom die mij zal doen ontwaken, die mij weer laat durven spreken. Die droom komt maar niet. De hemel lijkt ver weg. Het grote syndroom van Suriname heeft mij in haar macht. Het is als een verslaving aan drugs. Ik kan de ketenen niet doorhakken. Moed heb ik niet om dit syndroom in detail te bespreken. Ik praat er slechts omheen. Ik ben zo gemaakt. Het is mijn aard geworden. Ik drink van de bloemenzee, en stik bijna in haar zaad. Warmte komt met golven om mij heen. De witte stad komt in zicht, maar verblindt mij.

Suriname, 29 mei 1994

De vrouw in het wit staat tussen twee matrozen in. Zij komen van een vreemd leger. Ik draai en woel in mijn bed. In de rivier hangen de witte bloemen diep, met een zwaar gewicht. Ik zit op de rivier-boot. Het was een labyrint van vuur, waarin we de juiste combinaties moesten zien te vinden. Het was een race tegen de klok. De muren waren draaiende en brandende. We renden, maar zij struikelde. Een gil achtervolgde mij. Ik kon haar niet meer vinden.

Suriname, 30 mei 1994

De ladder naar de witte stad laat grijze gezichten zien. Zij zijn niet uitgenodigd. Als zij de ladder aanraken, dan branden zij. Hun gezichten smelten weg. Ik ben op de ladder en kom steeds hoger, steeds dieper. De witte muren van de stad zijn begroeid.

Zij zat daar op een witte troon, waar alle ladders naartoe leidden. Ze keek naar beneden en verdween in witte rook. Ik volgde het spook dieper de stad in.

Iedereen zonk weg in de witte golven, en vele schepen vergingen. Ik klom door, hoger de stad in. Ik durfde niet achterom te kijken. Ik hoorde gekrijs, en mensen riepen : Stop. Maar ik liep

door. Ik was in Suriname. Zij nam het gewicht van de stad in. Alles loopt over in de wildernis in de diepte van de witte stad. Het is een schuimende zee, wild golvend. Het is een Surinaamse vrucht. Surinaams fruit, ik kijk erna, en het is alsof ik in een coma ben. Niemand kan mij horen. Niemand kan mij verstaan. Het is alsof er nooit communicatie is geweest. Niemand kan iets overbrengen. Ik zink weg in de witte zee. Grote vissen zwemmen hier, maar zij nemen niemand mee. Wij zijn aan ons lot overgeleverd. Oh, was ik maar nooit naar Suriname gegaan. Ik ben gebrandmerkt.

Suriname, 31 mei 1994

Ik herinner de droom over het witte hek. Het trekt me tot de wildernis, maar laat me nooit door. Het trekt me dieper en dieper totdat ik vastraak. Is dit het grote Suriname ? Is dit het witte hek ? Het is een vreemd hek, met vreemde muziek, als een begrafenis. Wie wordt er begraven ? De muziek zo traag en subtiel. En voordat je het witte hek bereikt kom je tot een stad waarin je altijd verdwaald. Het neemt je tijd in beslag. Het neemt alles. Ik sta op de duinen en schreeuw over alles wat me is ontnomen door het witte hek. Ik wil het terug, maar golven overweldigen mij, en nemen mij mee, dieper tot het witte hek, als tot een ladder. Een pen wordt in mijn hand gedrukt, en ik moet veel schrijven. Ik moet een boek schrijven over Suriname. Ik moet tot haar geheimen doordringen. Ik schreeuw. Ik heb het trauma in mijn hand, maar dan wordt het rustig. Ik hoor het witte hek ruizen op de achtergrond, spelende haar muziek. Het doet pijn, maar de steek gaat eruit. Ik moet een wit boek schrijven, een witte bijbel. Ik tril en beef. Ik wil wegrennen, maar golven overweldigen mij. 'Schrijf, schrijf,' bulderen zij. Er beginnen dingen in mijn hoofd te draaien. Ik kan geen verhalen schrijven. Maar de klokken in mijn hoofd leiden een leven op henzelf.

De jongen met drugs

Fruitkraam

In een steegje verkocht hij drugs,

De plaaggeest zat achter hem aan,

Een plaaggeest met meerdere gezichten.

De muren waren wit en kaal,

Hij was mijn vriend,

Hij was als een trein in de nacht,

Een grootse nacht

Een trein in de nacht,

Van grote pracht,

Hij verkocht drugs op het plein,

En nu wordt het plein klein,

Zo ver weg, dat de drugs onbereikbaar is

Hij kan niets meer verkopen,

Ze zijn nu zo ver weg,

Als fruit op schalen,

Ik kan ze niet meer horen,

En zij zijn doof

De drugs geeft plaatjes in je hoofd,

Maar nu is het weg

Pinocchio

De trein breekt door in mijn hoofd,

Het is de nachttrein,

En daar staat de man in het blauw,

Als een reus is hij,

In de grootse nacht.

Hij rijdt in een mercedes,
Heeft hij die eerlijk verdient of gestolen,
Niemand weet het,
Een raadsel in de nacht is hij,
Als hij naar de sterren kijkt,
Dan vallen ze.

Is hij Pinocchio ?
Hij komt als de nachttrein,
Door bloemenvelden,
Na een lange nacht,
Is hij lang

Pinocchio rijdt door de straten,
Allen zien hem,
En hij zwaait,
Hij is de koning,
Zijn leugens hebben hem lang gemaakt,
Hij heeft een goed overzicht,
Al zij die liegen,
Hij liegt nog meer,
Hij is de opper-leugenaar

Wuivende rijdt hij door de straten,
In zijn open mercedes,
Hij zwaait naar de mensen,
Alsof hij de koning is,
Maar hij is het niet,
Hij is gewoon een goede leugenaar,
Iemand die veel liegt en bedriegt,
Het geeft hem rust,
De jongen verkoopt drugs voor goede dromen,
Allemaal illusies

Ze volgen hem tot achter de bergen,
Waar de bloemenvelden overgaan in zeeen,
Hij is een verkoper, een zakenman,
Hij slaat op, en verbergt.

Een sprookje zoals Bagdad

Oh Bagdad, met je roze bomen, met je roze bananen,
Oh Bagdad, je kwam helemaal overzwemmen,
Jij van Bagdad,
Waar de harten-koningin nog steeds hoofden afkapt,
Johannes de Doper wordt gemist

Oh Bagdad, met je edele grachten,

Met je roze meloenen, met je roze planten,

Ze groeien langs de grachten, zo de huizen in,

Je kwam van zo ver,

Jij van Bagdad,

Of kom je ergens anders vandaan,

En leef ik in een waan ?

De harten-koningin gaat door de straten,

Dan verandert ze in het zwart,

Ze klopt op de deuren,

Want ze wil koppen zien rollen,

Die moet onthoofd worden, en die,

En dan gaat ze weer verder,

Een heel leger volgt haar,

En zij groeien elke dag,

Zij hebben lange haren

Als bokken volgen ze haar,

maar zij onthoofdt hen ook,

Zoveel koppen moeten rollen

Dan klopt ze op de deur van de auto-winkel,

Een groot gegil,

Het is hier onheilspellend,
Daarom verlaten velen de stad,
En daarom zwom jij naar mij,
Je komt van zo ver

Maar Bagdad is maar een sprookje,
Jij komt ergens anders vandaan,
Ik weet het wel, zeg op

Zij kwam van ver, in haar bootje,
Helemaal alleen was zij in de stad,
Het leek een beetje op Bagdad,
Een kabouter zat achter haar aan,
En een trein brak door de stad heen,
Niemand wist waar het vandaan kwam

En nu ben je hier,
Maar ik zie je niet staan,
Onzichtbaar ben je

Ook de bomen zien je niet,
Ze kijken dwars door je heen,
Jij kwam van een onzichtbare stad,
Ook een sprookje,
Een sprookje zoals Bagdad

En dan moesten ze allen in de spiegel kijken,

En dan zagen zij het weer,

Aan de andere kant van de spiegel leefde jij,

En nu ben je hier

Een spiegel vertelt over jouw wereld,

Een reflectie van ver weg,

Oh zo ver weg,

Waar wij niets van weten

De Roze Muur

'Ketenen rondom mijn hart, het roze rondom mijn hart,

langzaam zal het afdrijven ... Het spreekt, en dan breekt alles ...'

Ze hebben gestoken. En nu is alles zacht als honing. Drie bijen gingen op hen af, tot de grote stad, en bereikten haar hart. Haar hart zond de stralen uit over de grachten, en nu is zij hier, in een wieg. Ik schommel de wieg, en troost het huilende kind.

De moeder wilde het kind niet meer troosten, en rende weg in de nacht. Met een zwarte bus vertrok zij naar het woud. Ik bleef bij de baby. Ik wilde het kind in liefde grootbrengen, maar

ook ik werd weggegrepen, het kind alleen achterlatende. Ik had geen andere keus. Ik kon niet meer terug. Er was een muur tussen haar en mij. Alles was zwart voor mijn ogen.

De roos nam haar mee, en bracht haar tot een tafel. Hier groeide ze op. Wie verstaat de pijn van overleden ouders voor hun kind ? Ze proberen het hart van het kind te bereiken in de zwarte nacht, maar ze worden achterna gejaagd door zwarte honden, totdat zij een tweede keer sterven.

Ik at van het honingbrood. Ik was een schim in de nacht. Bij daglicht was ik een golf in de zee, terwijl mijn kind sliep. Ik zond haar roze dromen. Ik maakte een wiegje voor haar in de roze droom, en suste het kind, schommelde de wieg. De roos heeft altijd voor haar gezorgd.

Ik staar naar deze roos, in een vaas op tafel. De roos heeft alle kleuren van de regenboog en spreekt in vele talen.

De honing prikt in mijn keel. Het kind kijkt naar mij en lacht. Ik voer het kind honingbrood, en neem het dan mee over de zeeen van dromen. Tot een roze stad neem ik het kind, waar paarse rozen bloeien. Ik neem het kind aan de hand langs de grachten. Paarse rozen groeien aan de wanden van de gracht. Ergens gaat er een trappetje naar beneden.

Even later neem ik het kind mee uit de stad, waar heide is. Ik breng het kind door de heide. Tot de bijen zullen wij gaan.

De bijen maken honing in vele kleuren. Ik laat het kind proeven van de honing. Een grote boom staat hier, met uitzicht over de werelden.

Roze muren hebben de kamer van het kind, waar het kind haar wieg heeft. Ik schommel de wieg zoals ik altijd doe, en sus de baby. Ik troost het kind waar de moeder het niet kon troosten. In een groot vuur is de moeder, sterker dan haarzelf. Ze rent om van het vuur los te komen, maar het blijft knagen.

Totdat ook de honing haar vindt. Ik praat tegen het kind. Maar het kind slaapt. Ik fluister, en doe dan zachtjes de deur dicht. Ik zit met de moeder op de bank. De moeder zegt niets. Ik kijk haar aan, en draai dan mijn gezicht weg. Ze heeft honing op haar gezicht. Ze is gestoken door bijen. Dan eet ze honingtaart, en ik denk dat ze nu het kind wel weer wil troosten.

Als het kind jarig is, dan vieren de bijen feest, en krijgt ze een kroontje. Maar het vuur komt terug om te knagen. Het knaagt door de rieten stoelen heen. Het kind krijgt een nieuwe naam, en krijst. Maar de honing blust het vuur, en ik troost het kind weer.

Bovenop de steden, daar is het roze vuur, een beter vuur dan het vuur beneden.

Het roze vuur zal je herinneringen genezen,

Het roze vuur zal bij je zijn, en je nieuwe dromen geven,

Leg je hand in mijn hand.

Ik neem je tot het roze vuur,

Ik til je wanneer het nodig is

Bilha en Jakob

Bilha en Jakob,

In de zee, zout warm water, en frisse golven,

Het is een zuivere mix,

De bomen aan de kust staren hen aan,

Van die hangende oerwouds-bomen

Zij staart naar hem,

naar zijn ketting, en dan naar zijn ogen

Hij staart terug,

Dan kijkt hij wat lager,

Maar dan roept iets hem terug,

Hij kan niet te lang naar haar kijken,

Want zij is goddelijk

Zo goddelijk is zij,

Dat hij genageld is aan de grond, het zachte zand onder zijn voeten in de zee

Zij roept hem, maar een golf overspoelt hem,

Hij zwemt naar hem toe,

En zij grijpt hem

Zij trekt hem naar de kant,

Zij is zijn god,

Naar haar tenten neemt zij hem

Bilha droomt van forse vrouwen,

Op een mat slaapt hij,

Zij slaapt op een hoger bed

De wereld is blind en tot een rots geworden,

In de wildernis woont Bilha, met haar slaaf Jakob ...

De Eeuwige Jachtvelden

Een jongen tekent. Een jongen droomt. Zijn ouders zitten beneden aan tafel. De jongen droomt over indianen. De volgende dag tekent hij een sleutel. De vader vindt de tekening en verscheurt het. De jongen huilt. Het kan vader niet zoveel schelen. De dag erna droomt de jongen weer over indianen. De jongen is ernstig ziek.

Het is alsof niemand de jongen kan benaderen. En niemand kan de jongen beschrijven. De jongen leest een boek over indianen, en heeft een vreemd gevoel in zijn buik, alsof hij een gevangene is. Een gevangene is hij, van zijn eigen ziekte. Hij kan nergens heen, hij kan niet naar school, hij kan zijn dromen niet waarmaken. Hij leeft als in een nachtmerrie van indianen.

Hij ziet de voeten van indianen wild voorbij bewegen als hij bed ligt. En hij kan niets doen, hij is machteloos. Hij kan zich niet eens bewegen, en hij durft het ook niet. Hij is een krijgsgevangene. Maar welke oorlog heeft hij gevoerd ? Is hij schuldig, en aan welke wet ? Hij weet het niet, hij begrijpt het niet, hij is als een gebondene aan een paal, een oorlogspaal. Een boek van zijn opa ligt naast hem, een boek over Duitsland, over de oorlog. Begrijpen doet hij het niet. En zo leeft hij voort met dat vreemde gevoel in zijn buik, het gevoel een krijgsgevangene te zijn.

In nachtmerries martelen ze hem aan een paal, totdat hij huilt, en dan lachen ze. Hij vindt het ziekelijk, maar hij is zelf ziek. Zouden zij hem ziek hebben gemaakt ? En wie zijn het dan ? De draak van geweld verscheurt al zijn dromen. Een machteloos gevoel verlamd hem altijd. Niemand heeft oog voor hem, alleen de Duitse jongen van de buren. Die houdt ervan om in uniforms rond te lopen, en neemt het altijd voor hem op.

Op een dag vertelt hij de nachtmerries aan zijn Duitse buurjongen. De Duitser lacht, en is ineens helemaal niet zo lief, maar pakt dan zijn hand. 'Weet je,' zegt hij, 'dat zijn allemaal maar verhaaltjes. Ik denk dat je teveel televisie hebt gekeken en teveel vreemde boeken hebt gelezen. Denk je dat zelf ook niet ?' En ja, dat klopte, de jongen keek erg veel televisie, omdat hij ziek was. En ook las hij veel vreemdsoortige boeken over indianen, dus eigenlijk was het heel logisch dat hij zo droomde. 'Stop daar dan eens mee,' zei de Duitse jongen. 'Ga eens andere dingen doen.'

'Maar wat dan ?' vroeg de jongen. De Duitser glimlachte. De Duitser gaf hem wat adviezen, maar het werkte niks uit. de jongen was te gehecht aan de televisie en zijn boeken. Het was een verslaving. En de nachtmerries werden alleen maar erger. Wilde indianen voeten die om hem heen dansten, en dan maakten ze zich klaar voor de buffeljacht. En hij realiseerde dat hij de buffel was, en de buffels. Ze wilden hem geheel naar binnen halen, maar voor wat ? Ze hadden een feest, om hem. Hij was als een veld vol buffels, ziek, en hij zag de gezichten van dokters in de indianen. Wilden ze hem echt helpen, of was hij voor hen niets anders dan een grote zak met geld. Daar prikten ze de dollars, en het bloed begon te stromen, voor nog meer geld. Hij had altijd het gevoel dat de dokters niets om hem gaven. Alleen zijn Duitse buurjongen gaf om hem.

Het leek wel alsof de dokters hem niet wilden genezen, want dan zou het geld niet meer stromen voor hen. En zo bleef hij ziek en trillerig. De buffeljacht ging door. En ineens zat hij dan zelf op zo'n buffel. Hij wilde niet steken met zijn speer, totdat hij het gezicht van dokters in het dier zag. Toen wilde hij wel steken, toen ging hij het gevecht aan. Indianen hielpen hem, en even later aten ze gezamenlijk van het jachtmaal.

De varkensjacht was nog wel grootser, toen zag hij ineens gezichten van tandartsen in de varkens, en ja, die hadden hem per slot van rekening ziek gemaakt met hun amalgaam, hun giftige vullingen. Niets dan krengen waren het, en zo bleef hij steken, zoals ze hem ooit langdurig staken met hun boren. Het was nu zijn beurt. En niets kon tegen hem op. De varkens lagen al snel als blauw en gemerkt op de grond, klaar voor de grote slacht. En indianen hielpen hem.

Al snel werd hij stamhoofd, maar het begon hem ook te vervelen. Hij wilde geen koning zijn. Daarom verliet hij de stam voor een andere stam. Hier werd hij als een gevangene behandeld en het was goed zo. Hier was hij een slaaf en zo wilde hij het, hij werd als vuil behandeld. Hier hoorde hij thuis. Hij dacht er niet eens aan te ontsnappen. Ze gaven hem nauwelijks te eten. Hij leefde als een wilde. Hij werd wakker, stond op, ging naar beneden, en vertelde het aan zijn ouders. Zijn vader vertelde hem toen dat hij ook zulke dromen had, zijn hele leven lang al, en dat hij zich er bij neer had gelegd, en er ook niet meer zonder kon. Ineens had de jongen zoveel respect voor zijn vader.

Maar op een dag wilde de jongen niet meer verder leven. Hij zou naar zijn bed gaan en dan gewoon niet meer opstaan. In de hoop naar de eeuwige jachtvelden te kunnen.

Het Moddermeer

Hij bespeelde de piano. Zij keek hem aan. Ze hield zich stil. Hij pingelde wat. Toen liep ze de keuken in. Hij volgde haar, maar zei niets. Ze begon te koken. Hij liep de huiskamer weer in en greep een boek. Het boek ging over een duistere indianen-stam. Hij was diep geinteresseerd, bijna onder hypnose, en begon te lezen. Even later kwam zijn vrouw de huiskamer binnen met soep. Maar hij was in diepe trance, dus ze begon alleen te eten van de soep. Hij had geen honger.

Ze liep naar boven. Hij volgde haar met het boek. Ze was op haar bed gaan liggen, en hij legde zichzelf ook op het bed, nog steeds met het boek. Hij begon weer te lezen. Ze zuchtte. Zo ging dat nu altijd. Haar man was verslaafd aan boeken.

Zij was niet geinteresseerd in boeken, en al helemaal niet in de rare verhalen die hij vertelde. Op een dag was ze het zat, en vertrok. Hij was niet onder de indruk, en las gewoon door. Als het kon wilde hij in de wildernis leven, zoals de stam van het boek. Op een dag was het zover. Hij pakte wat spullen en vertrok in de wildernis.

Hij voelde de modder tussen zijn tenen, en hij kon ademhalen … Dat gevoel had hij een lange tijd niet gehad. Een half naakte vrouw stond in de verte naar hem te kijken. Ze was bijna naakt, maar had wat riemen om haar heen.Ze had haar boog getrokken.

'Wat wil je ?' vroeg ze.

'Naar huis,' zei hij. 'Ik wil leven in een stam.'

Ze liet haar nog steeds gespannen boog een beetje zakken. 'Weet je wel niet wat het kost om een stam binnen te gaan vandaag de dag ?'

Hij schudde zijn hoofd. 'Nee.'

Wij moeten je initieren, zei de vrouw.

Hoe gaat dat ? Vroeg hij.

Dat gaat niet, sprak ze.

Waarom niet ?

Daarom niet.

Toen rende de vrouw weg. Hij ging haar achterna, maar de pijlen vlogen al snel over zijn hoofd, dus ook hij rende weg. Hier moest hij niet wezen. Ergens vond hij een tunnel die ondergronds leidde. Maar alles was zo stil hier. Hij kwam aan een meer van modder. Een kind was hier aan het spelen, een kind van wilden. Waarschijnlijk woonden moddermensen hier.

Verderop was het water wat minder modderig, maar wel bruin. Hij zakte in het water, en begon te zwemmen. Al snel was hij aan de overkant. Het was niet zo'n groot meer. Een vrouw kwam naar hem toe. Ze groette hem. Zij was een stuk aardiger dan die andere vrouw. Ze was bedekt met modder.

Wat is je naam ? Vroeg ze.

Ik heb mijn leven achter me gelaten, zei hij.

Waarom ? Vroeg ze.

'Laat dat maar zitten,' zei hij. 'Wat kost het om deel te hebben in uw stam ?'

'Niks,' zei de vrouw.

'Mag ik binnenkomen ?' vroeg hij.

Ze gaf hem een tent. Maar hij begon zich al snel te vervelen en trok verder.

Hij dacht na over zijn vrouw, maar vergat haar snel. Ze was te saai voor hem. Hij ging nog dieper ondergronds, na het vinden van een andere tunnel. Hij kwam aan bij een wilde zee. Het was hier verschrikkelijk aan het stormen. Hij liep door een reusachtige poort. Ook hier verveelde hij zich. Hij besloot weer terug te gaan naar zijn boeken. Vooral boeken over duistere indianen-stammen hadden zijn interesse.

's Nachts had hij dromen over wilde indianen-stammen. Het was voor hem nauwelijks mogelijk om in de realiteit te blijven. Hij leefde met zijn boeken en verhalen. Het was alsof er een indiaans oorlogsboek in zijn hoofd leefde waarvan hij maar niet kon ontsnappen.

Nog steeds had hij een diep verlangen deel te hebben aan zo'n stam, en in zijn dromen was het zo. Zijn dromen waren bijna nachtmerries, zo wild waren ze.

Moddermeer, moddermijn, modderveer,

Met rood bedekt,

Ze bloed niet meer,

Moddermeer, rozenschijn, moddermijn

Moddermeer, modermijn, rozenveer,

Hier moet je zijn,

Met rood bedekt,

De ochtendstond,

Je ademt niet meer,

Maar je bent niet dood,

Je bent bedekt met rood

Moddermeer, moedertaal, denk niet meer,
Het vuur gaat aan,
Het vuur gaat uit,
We denken er niet meer aan,
In het moddermeer

Je komt dichtbij,
Je raakt mij aan,
Ik adem niet meer,
Maar ik ben niet dood,
Ik ben bedekt door het moddermeer,
Bedekt met rood

Moddermeer, denk aan mij,
Houd me vast,
Verlaat mij niet meer,
Maar vlieg met mij,
Naar de regenboogstad,
En praat met mij.

De Kinderdief

De magische flessen stonden naast elkaar. Er zaten geesten in die flessen. Het was druk in de stad der spinnen. Zoveel geluiden van auto's, en dan ineens zo stil, omdat de koningin langskomt. De koningin der spinnen zit op haar troon, omgeven met speren. Zij is het geluid zo zat, en eist stilte. Dan zinkt de stad weg in de golven van eenzaamheid. Het is haar beslissing. Zij houdt de stad veilig. De familie ruzies moeten ophouden. Zij breekt de families, en verspreid hen over de stad. Zij wacht, en slaat dan toe. De koele gebaren van eenzaamheid zijn een teken dat het werkt. De stad is stoffig. Overal ligt rommel op de grond. Maar het is tenminste rustig. De inwoners leven in vrees. Zij kennen hun koningin.

De droogte is bijna zoet. De grachten hebben groen water, en veel bruin. De koningin wil veel bruin zien, en veel bleke plekken daartussen. Zij houdt van het contrast. Dan wil ze klederdracht zien, en tradities, om het vervolgens allemaal stuk te slaan. Ze bereidt het gif om de stad te laten slapen. Alles is dodelijk uitgecalculeerd. Ze maakt geen fouten. Zij is onfeilbaar. De stad is een trage belevenis. Morgen zal alles wit zijn. Haar dienaressen hebben zichzelf gewapend. De strijd kan beginnen, maar waartegen ? De stad is dood. Er is niets te zien hier. Morgen zal alles wit zijn.

Haar heupen bewegen tegen het glas aan. Het glas springt, en zij is vrij. Over de stad zijn haar webben. Niemand zal ontsnappen. Zij zullen allen moeten eten van haar vergif, om zo te slapen voor eeuwig, opdat de stad wit zal zijn. In de morgen zullen nieuwe soldaten opstaan. Zij zullen haar op handen dragen, en aan haar voeten liggen, want zij dient aanbeden te worden.

Niet velen durven tegen haar in te gaan. Niet velen durven haar te benaderen. Er zijn haaien in haar zee, grote schepen op haar golven, en haar mandarijnen zijn bommen. Zij is een verwend klein kind. Zij houdt hen maskers voor, en praat alles weg. Haar leugens laten haar tussen de bomen wonen, tussen de planten. Een distelkind is zij, met brandnetels in haar haren. Zij stoeit met slangen, en zij luisteren naar haar. Zij vecht met katten, en overwint. Zij is de vogelspin.

Haar liederen zijn stormen in de nacht, die kinderen uit hun bedden roven. Zij brengt hen tot het kasteel. Zij draagt een wit kleed waarin zij haar bruine lichaam omhult. Haar liederen zijn schepen in water. Zij zinken niet. Zij laat hen allen dromen, de dromen des doods. Zij brengt het gif dicht bij hen monden, en laat hen dan slikken. Dan sleept zij hen naar de kelders. Haar hyena's jagen daar, en zij leidt hen tot de ondergrondse stad. Zij brengt hen tot onder de riolen tot het licht der kinderen.

Het Oorlogs-spel

In het centrum van de wereldstad waren veel winkels. Ergens onder een winkel was een extra verdieping met spelletjes, waar ik spelletjes kocht. Oorlogs-spelletjes en spelletjes van avontuur. Zij kwam daar ook. Ik nam haar eens mee naar het gebied achter de winkels, waar we na lang lopen langs de flatgebouwen in een ander gedeelte kwamen.

Ik bezocht daar altijd wat oudere mensen en mensen die het moeilijk hadden. We vonden een doorweg naar de weilanden, en daarachter waren de bossen. Er waren hier veel lange bruggen, en vele rijken hadden hier hun huizen. De weilanden en bossen waren vol met Antlia-hyenas, hele grote vormen van hyenas.

Achter de bossen was een kasteel, wat het kasteel van Californie heette. Hierin werden roofdieren omgezet tot vee, door injecties. Dat vee werd in de bossen en de weilanden gezet als voedsel voor de Antlia-hyenas.

We trouwden en we scheidden, en ik kwam erachter dat ik was getrouwd met de godin van scheiding. Het gif van scheiding bleek belangrijk te zijn om roofdieren om te zetten tot vee. Ik kwam erachter dat ze in het kasteel van Californie werkte.

Eens zocht ik haar daar op. 'Wat wil je van me,' vroeg ze.

'Ik mis je,' zei ik.

Ze heeft me toen meegenomen naar de jachtvelden. Ik mocht op haar paard zitten, en ze liet mij allerlei zadels zien. Ze was heel lief voor me. Maar ineens was ik geinjecteerd, en het leek alsof mijn hoofdhuid begon af te vallen. Ik viel bewusteloos en werd later wakker in een kooi. Ze had zichzelf opgetooid met kippenveren. Ik kreeg geen voedsel.

Ik werd wakker en greep op me heen. Ik greep mijn vriendin. Gelukkig, dacht ik. Ik vertelde haar mijn droom, en we vielen weer in slaap. Weer droomde ik over het kasteel van Californie. Ditmaal waren mannen daarin gekooid, en werden daar geinjecteerd totdat ze dun waren. Er werd hen gezegd dat in de oude taal man betekende dunne. We kregen haast geen voedsel.

Weer schrok ik wakker, maar ditmaal lag er geen vriendin. Ik bleek helemaal geen vriendin te hebben. Op mijn bureau lagen de oorlogs-spelletjes die ik had gekocht. Ik had er een paar gespeeld, wat misschien de reden was dat ik zo vreemd had gedroomd. Ik had ze gespeeld op de computer. Ik was bang ze nog verder te spelen, maar eigenlijk was ik ook nieuwsgierig.

Ik had een kind op mijn rug toen ik het kasteel inging. Ik kon kiezen uit verschillende wapens, en ik moest ervoor zorgen dat het kind ongedeerd bleef. Ik moest haar brengen naar haar kamer op een hogere verdieping, waar een betoverde spiegel stond. Door die betoverde spiegel zouden we in een nieuw level komen. Ik moest wat trollwachters verslaan, maar uiteindelijk kwamen we toch bij de spiegel aan.

'Kom verder,' zei de spiegel. Ik gleed naar binnen met het kind.

Ik zat op een hoog oorlogspaard. Het paard was van steen en begon te steigeren, ergens op een marktplein. Ik viel er vanaf en had een grote hoofdwond. Het kind sleurde mij naar een huis. De moeder van het kind legde mij op een bed. Ze verzorgde mijn wond. De moeder was bang dat ze haar huis zou verliezen, dat ze de huur niet meer zou kunnen betalen. Midden in de nacht trok ze mij mee naar de kelder, en via de kelder kwamen we in een ondergrondse wereld. Hier moest ze jagen voor geld, maar de jacht ging niet goed. Ik hielp haar, maar voordat ik het wist injecteerde ze mij, en ik begon in vee te veranderen. Het bleek dat ik veel geld van binnen had, dus ze begon me te fokken. Niet dat ze me vetmeste, maar ze mergelde mij uit door mij niet te voeden. Zo was het makkelijker bij het geld te komen.

Ik werd wakker in zweet. Ik staarde naar de oorlogs-spelletjes. Nog steeds vond ik ze interessant, en was ik nieuwsgierig. Ik voedde mijzelf haast niet. Ik was helemaal bezeten van die oorlogs-spelletjes.

Ik droomde over jongens die broeken hadden gemaakt van gekrompen schedels, en die jacht voerden, die eigenlijk een oorlog was. Ze hadden gif aan hun pijlen, waarmee ze roofdieren in vee konden omzetten, en dan zetten ze de jacht voort. Zij hadden een soort moedergodin die zij aanbaden, en die hen het gif verschafte. Het gif was het gif van scheiding.

Zij was de godin van de Antlia-hyena's. Haar tempel was gesluierd door orca's. Hier verborg zij de Antlia-hyena klok. Op een oorlogs-paard ging ik tot haar, maar ze sloeg mij met de bliksem. 'Hey dunne,' zei ze. 'Hey, jij die man is.' Als een spin sprong ze op mij, en stak mij. Ik raakte verlamd. Ze stopte mij in een kooi met twee Antlia-hyena's. Ze voedde mij haast niet. Ik begon in vee te veranderen door de steek.

Ik drukte op eject. Als een gek haalde ik het spelletje uit mijn computer. De disc was loeiheet en er kwamen vlammen vanaf. Ik gooide het van me af. Weer zette ik de koptelefoon op met het vizier. Ditmaal deed ik er een ander spelletje in. De disc draaide in mijn hersenschijf met een enorme snelheid. In het spel waren indianen in oorlog. Het was heel bloederig en wreed. Ik zat op een hoog paard, maar iemand schoot mij eraf.

Ik bevond mezelf in een ei. Ik kwam eruit als een skelet. Zodra er vlees op me begon te groeien werd het door de Antlia-hyena's erafgelikt en afgebeten. Maar heel langzaam begon ik te groeien en kwam tot de godin van scheiding. Zij was de alpha Antlia-hyena, maar veranderde op gezette tijden in een vrouw, of in fragmenten. Het was als een vreemd ritme. Zij bezat de Antlia-hyena klok. Het was ingebouwd in haar hart. Ik voelde mij niets meer dan een stuk vlees. Ik was gewoon een object. Ik had ook een klok van binnen waardoor ik in vee veranderde op gezette tijden, of in fragmenten. Ik voelde mij deel van een markt. 'De markt van scheiding,' zei de godin. Het was alsof mijn hoofhuid begon af te vallen, en even later hield ze mijn scalp voor mijn neus. Ze had zich getooid met kippenveren. Haar borsten waren groot, en er droop dikke melk vanaf. 'Het gif van scheiding,' sprak ze toen ik ernaar keek.

Ze gebood me ervan te drinken. Ik voelde me heel zwak worden. Toen veranderde ze in een Antlia-hyena, vloog me naar mijn nek, zette haar kaken erin, en liet niet meer los, terwijl ik in mijn bloed verdronk, stikte. Als een pijl klikte ik op eject, en begon zwaar te zuchten. 'Deze spelletjes zijn gek,' dacht ik. 'Levensgevaarlijk.' Maar vreemd genoeg had het nog steeds mijn interesse. Ik had het idee dat de spelletjes mij in hun macht hadden. 's Nachts droomde ik erover, dat ik door de orca-sluiers van de godin heenging, maar verderop waren de sluiers veel bloederiger, waar het vee hing. En toen weer vele sluiers van orca's. Ik zat op een hoog oorlogs-paard, dat woest uitgedost was met veren. Weer werd ik door bliksem getroffen, en alles was in vuur. Ze was een gril, een altaar. En wij moesten geofferd worden aan de godin van scheiding.

De gril maakte een joelend geluid, bijna gillend. Ik gleed naar binnen, en kwam in de hel. Ik moest me erbij neerleggen dat ik eeuwig brandde. De gril sprak namelijk dat dit spelletje nooit stopte. Ik begon weg te smelten in angst en depressie. Ik zag dat het huwelijk alleen maar een slager is die zich voorbereid op de slacht. Het huwelijk was de jacht, de scheiding de slacht. Wat een spelletjes had ik in huis gehaald. Maar goed, het waren maar spelletjes. Maar toch ... De spelletjes leken me te bezitten. Ik had geen rust meer.

Ze zat op een hoog oorlogspaard, en ik leek weg te glijden. Het huwelijk was een oorlog. De scheiding was de eind-uitslag van de oorlog.

Dit is hoe de godin een man tot haar kind maakt :
In vijf stappen doet zij dit, om haarzelf uit te drukken in de man.
Dit zijn de vijf Antlia-hyena juwelen.
1. Varken - De godin mergelt en beent de man uit.
2. Rund - De godin is sterker dan de man.
3. Kip - De man is de slaaf en gevangene van de godin.
4. Bok - De godin scalpeert de man.
5. Lam - De godin is de moeder van de man.

Hij kon zijn ogen niet geloven. Dit stond in de gebruiks-aanwijzing van de spelletjes. Hij wist even niet hoe hij het had, en begon ademhalings-problemen te krijgen. Deze discs moesten zo snel mogelijk in de vuilnisbak. Maar een onzichtbare hand leek hem te grijpen. Met schuim op zijn mond en gorgelend rent hij naar buiten. Zo snel mogelijk vlucht hij het bos in, waar hij recht in een licht loopt. Tot zijn grote verbazing staat er een ruimteschip voor hem. Een vrouw met een vikings-helm loopt naar hem toe. Maar dan verdwijnt alles, alhoewel het licht nog steeds daar is. 'Wat willen jullie van me,' schreeuwt hij. Hij voelt zich zwak worden in zijn benen, en begint te trillen. 'Je bent toch een man ?' zegt ineens een stem.

'Ja,' zegt hij, 'maar ik wens zo niet behandeld te worden.'

Dan wordt hij bevend wakker. Een oorlogs-boek ligt naast hem op het nachtkastje. Hij is blij dat hij het maar gedroomd heeft, maar hij durft niet meer te slapen. Hij neemt een glas water en gaat televisie kijken. Er is een oorlogsfilm op de televisie, en op een andere zender is er saai gepraat. Zijn vriendin komt even later naar hem toe. Ze hangt over hem heen. Hij ruikt de geur van haar borsten en raakt bedwelmd.

'Zeg, dat oorlogsboek wat je mij hebt gegeven, waar gaat dat over ?' vraagt hij. 'Ik heb het nog niet gelezen, maar zou het graag van jou willen horen.'

'Oh,' zegt ze. 'Het gaat over de oorlog tussen mannen en vrouwen.'
'Is het een psychologisch boek ?' vraagt hij.
'Nee,' zegt ze, 'het is een verhaal.'

'Wie winnen de oorlog ?' vraagt hij.
'De vrouwen,' zegt ze.
'Waarom zou ik het boek dan nog lezen ?' vraagt hij. 'Dat klinkt namelijk nogal sexistisch, racistisch zelfs.'

'Het is een feministisch verhaal, inderdaad,' zegt zijn vriendin. 'Mannen moeten namelijk een stapje terug doen, weer terugkomen aan de moederborst.'

'Oh, zie aan,' zegt hij, 'dus het is niet zomaar een verhaal. Het is iets waar je heilig in gelooft ?'

'Ja,' zegt ze. 'Het is gewoon een verhaal natuurlijk, maar wel met een diepe moraal.'

Verslagen loopt hij terug naar bed. Even later hangt zijn vriendin opgewonden boven hem met ontblote borsten. 'Zou je niet drinken van de moeder,' fluistert ze.

'Je bent mijn moeder niet,' snauwt hij. Dan wacht ze verder totdat hij slaapt, en bindt hem vast. Weer hangt ze boven hem en drukt haar borsten in zijn gezicht. Hij schrikt wakker, en merkt dat hij zich niet kan bewegen.

'Wat zullen we nou krijgen ?' vraagt hij. Even later ligt ze helemaal op hem. Hij probeert los te komen, maar ze is vastbesloten. Na een tijdje geeft hij op. 'Jij je zin,' zegt hij, en probeert weer te slapen.

De volgende dag wil hij op staan, maar hij merkt dat hij nog steeds vastgebonden is.
'Okay, nu is het mooi geweest,' zegt hij. 'Maak me los. Het was een leuk spelletje, maar het spelletje is nu afgelopen.'
Maar ze kleedt zich aan, en gaat de deur uit. Aan het einde van de dag is ze terug, terwijl hij honger heeft en vooral erge dorst. Ze geeft hem melk, maar verder niks. Na zeven weken is hij behoorlijk uitgemergeld. Hij heeft het opgegeven. Als ze zulke spelletjes met hem wil spelen, dan doet ze maar. Ze voedt hem bijna niet, maar geeft hem wel voldoende melk te drinken. Hij voelt zich heel slap, en ze is inmiddels sterker dan hem. Ze test het wel eens door hem lost te maken, en dan stoeit ze met hem. Hij kan niets tegen haar beginnen. Hij begint haar vragen te stellen, maar ze beantwoordt hen niet. Ze houdt er ook van om op hem paardje te rijden. Ze begint hem steeds meer te vernederen. Ze noemt hem 'varken', of 'rund'.

Op de één of andere manier maakte hij een verkeerde beweging, en de eject knop werd ingedrukt, en de disc kwam tevoorschijn, waardoor het spel stopte. Vliegensvlug deed hij de koptelefoon en het vizier af. Hij grijpt het boekje wat bij de disc hoorde en begint te lezen. Hij raakt ervan in de war en gooit het weg. De telefoon gaat, maar hij durft niet op te nemen. Nog steeds vermoedt hij dat hij in het spel is. Langzaam loopt hij weer terug naar het weggegooide boekje, en leest over de voorschriften voor het vee. Hij grijpt naar zijn hoofd en gaat op bed liggen. Hij durft niet in slaap te vallen, maar zijn omgeving vertrouwt hij ook niet.

'Ik ben erin getrapt,' denkt hij bij zichzelf. Even later wordt er aan de deur gebeld. Hij besluit open te doen, en er staat een vrouw voor hem met een elegant hoed op. 'Mag ik even binnen

komen ?' vraagt ze. 'Ik wil namelijk iets met u bespreken.' Hij laat haar binnen en ze gaan op de bank zitten. 'Bedankt voor het kopen van ons product,' zegt ze. 'Onze excuses voor elk ongemak wat u heeft ervaren.' Dan steekt hij ineens van wal over alles wat hij heeft meegemaakt, en vraagt of de producten terug kunnen zodat hij zijn geld kan terugkrijgen.

'Helaas, mijnheer,' zegt de vrouw. 'Daar kunnen we niet aan beginnen.' Dan trekt ze haar pistool en gebiedt hem om op het bed te gaan liggen. Ze gebiedt hem op zijn handen te gaan liggen. Ze trekt haar kleren uit, en glijdt met het pistool over zijn tepel, en beweegt dan het pistool langzaam naar onderen. 'Eén foute beweging,' zegt ze, 'en we schieten één van de balletjes eruit.' Hij houdt zijn adem in.

Ze laat hem een vreemd spul opdrinken met een slaapmiddel, en hij zinkt weg in slaap. Snel bindt ze hem vast. Hij probeert uit alle macht wakker te worden. Hij voelt zich alsof hij in een coma is.

'Oorlogs-vrienden,' zegt ze.
'Ze komen als vrienden, maar zijn spionnen. Ze komen als een product, maar het is om je uit te schakelen.
Hoe kon je zo dom zijn. Dat oorlogs-spel was een oorlog tegen jou. Domme man, je bent bedrogen. Je bent verraden.'

'Jullie duivelse feministen,' prevelt hij. Ze gaat achter de computer zitten, en begint spelletjes te spelen. Even later hoort hij haar lachen. 'Goedzo,' denkt hij bij zichzelf. 'Ik hoop dat ze jou ook pakken.' Even later ligt ze op de grond. Na uren worstelen komt hij los. Hij sleept haar ver weg van zijn huis. Dan loopt hij terug. 'Ziezo,' denkt hij bij zichzelf. Even later wordt er weer gebeld, maar hij doet niet open. Hij hoort de stem van een andere vrouw die hem roept, maar hij kijkt wel beter uit. Maar dan wordt de deur ingetrapt. Een vrouw nogal onder de modder staat voor hem. Nee, dit is niet de vrouw die hij had weggesleept. Ze trekt een mes. 'Daar gaan we weer,' denkt hij. Maar dan ineens wordt het beeld wazig. Hij trekt zijn koptelefoon af, en zijn vizier. Hij drukt op eject, en de disc komt eruit. Hij sluit zijn computer af, maar vertrouwt het nog steeds niet. Dit kan allemaal ingebouwd in het spel.

Hij gaat in zijn bed liggen, en vanaf dan begint zijn leven eigenlijk heel saai te worden, zonder spanning. Het wordt zo erg dat hij uiteindelijk terugverlangt de oorlogs-spelletjes weer te spelen. Ditmaal doet hij het spel wat de vrouw had gespeeld.

Het gezicht van een vrouw verschijnt, en zegt : 'Welkom in Antlia-Hyena Oorlogen. Klik op X om het spel te starten.'

Hij klikt op X en bevindt zich direct op een veld met Antlia-hyena's. Hij moet rennen voor zijn leven. Dan ineens verschijnt er een scherm waar hij kan kiezen wat hij wil zijn : een rund, een varken, een bok, of een lam. Hij selecteert : rund. Al snel valt hij in een kuil, die snel omsingelt is door Antlia-hyena's. Hij begint al snel honger te krijgen en uit te mergelen. Dan springen de Antlia-hyena's naar binnen.

'Dit is het huwelijk,' zegt een stem. Het gezicht van de vrouw verschijnt weer, en vraagt of hij zichzelf wil loskopen. Maar het schijnt dat hij daarvoor niet genoeg geld heeft. Het gezicht verdwijnt weer. De Antlia-hyena's zijn hem aan het likken, maar hij weet dat ze hem alleen maar voorbereiden voor de maaltijd.

Dan zegt een stem : 'Wilt u de scheiding nu, of uitstellen,' terwijl het gezicht van de vrouw weer verschijnt. Hij wist precies wat scheiden zou betekenen, dus hij klikte op 'uitstellen'.

De Slavenketting

'De mensen om me heen zijn niets anders dan de tralies van haar kooien.'

Hoofdstuk 1. Weerhyena

Ik was in haar duistere hut. Ik zag haar boog hangen, versierd met veren. Het leek op een feest. Ja, haar hut leek op een feest-tent. Ik zag haar niet, maar het leek alsof ik haar rook. Ik was bang. Ik kon me bijna niet bewegen. Ik probeerde een uitgang te vinden, maar plotseling stond ze in een deuropening. Of was dat maar de schaduw van iets ? Ik ging door de deuropening en kwam in een stoffige kamer waar een olielamp stond, witte kap. Het was alsof ik de warmte van haar lichaam kon voelen.

Het was alsof ze me riep. Maar mijn oren hoorden niets. Er lag een schelp, een grote schelp, en ik bracht het tot mijn oren om de zee te horen ruizen. Maar ik hoorde niets. Het was alsof ik haar hoorde fluisteren. Ik kwam dichterbij, en het was alsof de warmte van haar lichaam zich opbouwde. Het was alsof ik haar zag. Ze was prachtig, met dunne riempjes, als de oorlogsgodin. Ze had een boog, en dolken, en allerlei gerei wat je van een slavenjager kon verwachten. Veel touw. Plotseling greep ze mij met haar lasso. Maar het was maar een verbeelding.

Ze kende geen liefde. Alles was haat. Waarom zocht ik haar eigenlijk ? Ik wilde eruit, ontsnappen. Zij hield mij hier vast sinds mijn geboorte. Zij had mij gebroken. Alleen maar haat. Ik voelde mij koud. Het was niet echt. Het was altijd alsof ik in de handen was van een spook. De wind gierde. Ik wilde het geheim van de wind kennen. Had zij de wind gemaakt, of was zij de wind zelf ? Ik verlangde naar haar. Maar ze was weg. Ik was hier alleen in haar hut.

Was ze overleden ? Of was ze op jacht, en zou ze later terugkomen. Ze deed mij herinneren aan een boek. Ik fantaseerde over haar, maar het leek te worden stukgeslagen door de bittere, diep snijdende, pijnlijke eenzaamheid. Het was alsof ik bloedde. Zou ze bloeddorstig zijn ? Ik had toch het idee alsof ze daar stond, als een bloeddorstige hyena vrouw. Ik kon haar bek zien, waar bloed uitdroop, mijn bloed. Ik was bang. Ik voelde me zwak, hulpeloos. Duistere herinneringen van een ver verleden overvielen mij. Deze vrouw had mij uitgemergeld, uitgebeend, alles van me afgenomen. Waarom wilde ik haar ? Ik had het idee dat zij de godin was, de moeder van de wildernis, van de jachtvelden. Ze was een slavenmeesteres, een slavenjaagster. Ik wilde aan haar voeten neerknielen, om haar te smeken om mij te helpen, om mij uit deze doodse strijd te helpen, maar misschien was zij wel genadeloos, en zou ze me

uitlachen.

Dat zou ik niet kunnen verdragen. Maar zij moest ergens de sleutel hebben. Of zou ik de strijd met haar moeten aangaan ? Ze zou me uitlachen. Ze was veel steviger dan ik. Ik was zwak vergeleken met haar, en dun. Ze zou mij misschien kunnen breken. Ik was haar kind.

Maar dat doe je je kind toch niet aan ? Zij wel. Mijn leven was een hel door haar. Misschien was zij de hel zelf. Haar hyena ogen leken mij aan te staren. Het was alsof ik naar een oud schilderij staarde. Het hing daar ergens in de hut. Maar toen de wind er overheen ging was het weer weg. En toen was het weer terug, als door een waas. Het leek te spiegelen. Ik voelde mij omringd door soldaten. Allemaal windstreken. Ze scheen Bilha te heten, gestuurd om angst te brengen. Sommigen zouden haar een demoon noemen, anderen een godin. Ik wist alleen dat ik moest oppassen. Ik was gevangen in haar moederschoot. Ik zat opgesloten in haar hut. Ik kon nergens heen. De muren leken weer zover weg te staan, en alle deuren. En daar viel ik neer, huilend. Ze maakte mij nooit sterker. Ik voelde me duizelig en vies. Daar stond ik weer op, en daar viel ik weer.

Het was alsof er sloten op de deuren zaten. Sloten gemaakt van duistere klauwen van monsters, als van zeemonsters. Een zeemeermin had mij ooit geprobeerd te redden. Ze was gemaakt van prachtige lichten, maar deze vrouw was duister. Een boek lag op tafel, een boek met riemen. Ik las er in. Het ging over hoe Adam en Eva in het tijdperk van Bilha werden aanbeden als goden. Bilha was de moedergodin. Het tijdperk van Bilha werd ook wel het tijdperk van de hyenas genoemd. De hyenas waren overal op aarde. En zij veranderden in vrouwen op bepaalde momenten. Het waren weerhyenas.

Bilha keek naar mij. Er vloeide bloed uit mijn ogen. Ze leek zo ver weg, maar ook dichtbij. Het was alsof ze op een troon zat, maar ook op een bank. Even leek het als door de bliksem dat ze een hoge gouden kroon had, met gedetaileerde inscripties, als een mozaiek. En ze had een gouden soortgelijk gewaad aan. Ze opende een deur door het klappen met haar handen. De deur was draaiende voor mijn ogen, terwijl de opening als mozaiek was, ook draaiende, en de combinaties veranderden voortdurend. Ik kreeg steken in mijn hand, en licht viel op mij. Toen werd het duister.

Ze was de bewaker van een gele vrucht. De vrucht was bitter en zoet, ook bijtend. Mensen kregen last van hun mond. De vrucht leek op het achterste van een vrouw. Mensen moesten door deze vrucht naar de tandarts, en hun tanden vielen er van uit. Ik stond aan een bushalte. Sommige mensen waren aan het vrijen in een bushokje, en plotseling begonnen ze te schreeuwen. Toen vielen al hun tanden uit, en hun monden begonnen te bloeden.

'Het is de vrucht,' dacht ik. 'De vrucht van Bilha.'

Ik probeerde weg te rennen, maar een wind greep mij. 'Het is een zure vrucht,' zeiden sommige mensen. 'Hoe kunnen we eraan ontsnappen ? Het zijn terroristen, stalkers.'

Ik greep mij vast aan het boshokje. Ik voelde me duizelig worden. Ik werd wakker in bed. Twee grote lippen zweefden boven mij, als weerspiegelingen, wazig, als de wind. Ik werd door de vrucht naar binnen gezogen, en ik gilde.

'Nee !' riep ik. Maar ik kon me er niet tegen verzetten. Ik voelde me als een melaatse, zonder voeten, zonder mond. Ik voelde me als een vis, als een meerman. Maar ik was een zeehond,

nee, een weerhyena, zoals haar. Ik bracht haar bij me, in een groot huis, en ze ging op de bank zitten. Zij bewaakte de voedelvoorraad. Ze lag op de bank, en ik mergelde uit, zelfs meer dan ooit tevoren. Ze voedde mij niet. Ik mocht niet in de keuken komen. Dan zou ze me neerjagen. Ik voelde mij als de derde wereld.

Ik was haar slaaf, een slaaf van het grote geld. Ik was niets dan vee in haar handen. Die gele vrucht, het was niets dan geld. Ik was kwaad op haar. Hoe kon zij dit doen ? We waren gevangen in geld. We werden gekgemaakt door geld, maar kregen het nooit. Er moest toch iets anders zijn ? Iets beters ? Het was een nachtmerrie.

Geld was een monster dat ons programmeerde. Het betuttelde ons, en maakte ons arm en bang, zodat we het altijd zouden najagen als de wind. Ik was zo kwaad. Ik sloeg een ruit in, maar de rekening kwam snel.

Hoofdstuk 2. De Zoete Vrucht

Er was ook een andere vrucht in haar tuin. Het was de vrucht van slavernij. Voor mij was dat een lust voor het oog. De vrucht leek op een vrouwen-voet. Als het ons uit de vrucht van geld zou kunnen halen : graag. Maar wat voor een slavernij stond ons dan te wachten ? Ik bedacht dat het leven gewoon altijd pure slavernij was, maar dat je dan de beste slavernij moest uitkiezen. Ik wilde het wel proberen met deze vrucht. Zou deze vrucht mij rijk maken of arm ? Dat maakte mij niets meer uit. Ik wilde loskomen van de macht van geld, haar macht.

Ik bekeek de vrucht op een afstand. Ik hoorde gepiep. Er stond een vrouw voor me die haarzelf langzaam begon uit te kleden. Dit was de macht van het grote geld. Ik schoot haar neer met een pistool. Deze zaak was afgehandeld. Nu die andere vrucht nog. Ik keek ernaar, en de vrucht begon te groeien, en mijn ogen stonden wijder open. Ik voelde de smaak al langs mijn gehemelte vloeien, en in mijn keel. Zachte sappen. Ik was een slaaf, maar nu van iets anders. Alles beter dan van geld. Ik viel dronken op de grond. Het leek alsof ik verscheurd werd door een grote krokodil. Mijn hoofd kwam boven in een rivier, waar ook een andere reusachtig grote krokodil was. De zoete vrucht begon mij in te nemen, maar het werd bitter in mijn buik. Ik voelde riemen aan me, en een slavenketting rondom mijn nek. Ik werd meegetrokken in een woestijn. Het was een man met een lange baard.

Even later kon ik niet meer, en wilde zitten. Maar de man met de baard trok mij mee. We gingen een kasteel binnen. Wat had ik gekozen ? 'Even hier wachten,' zei de man. Even later kwam er een vrouw naar me toe. Ze leek me te keuren. Ze bleef maar staren en kijken, van top tot teen. 'We kunnen hem wel gebruiken,' zei ze. Toen kwamen er meerdere vrouwen, die mij dieper in het kasteel sleurden. De man had een soort riddergewaad aan. 'Waar ben ik ?' vroeg ik.

Ze duwden mij in een oven. Ik bevond mij in de vrucht, in een diepere afdeling van de baarmoeder van Bilha. Ik had niks meer met winkels en geld te maken. Ik had een vreemde smaak in mijn mond. Ik was door de sluiers van geld gegaan, en was er van los gekomen. Ik kon mezelf weer voelen. Ik kreeg een huis, en leidde een normaal leven. Vaak had ik nachtmerries.

Ik begon Bilha te missen. Ze moest iets betekenen voor mij in het leven. Dus ik besloot terug te gaan naar haar hut. Daar hing de boog weer. Het was hier een feest-tent zoals altijd. Ik voelde mij een slaaf van haar. Maar gelukkig niet meer van geld.

Ze danste hier op het bloed van de gevallenen, op de huiden van dieren. Zij had geld overwonnen. Haar gejoel maakte mij doof. Ik probeerde nog weg te rennen, maar zij greep mij. Ik kreeg geen vruchten meer van haar. Zij bewaakte het voedsel. Ik kon niet bij de keuken komen. Altijd zat ze daar op die bank. Ze hongerde mij uit meer dan ooit tevoren. Waarom was ik teruggegaan ? Hyenas likten aan haar voeten, en nog steeds veranderde zij soms in een hyena of een halve hyena. Zij was de weerhyena.

Zij haatte geld, maar hield van de slavernij die ze dreef. Zij was de slavenjaagster. Ik werd een bedelaar voor voedsel, maar zij was genadeloos. Ze liet mij soms van haar melk drinken, maar dat was om mij te vergiftigen, te verzwakken en te verlammen. Ik was een teer, hulpeloos kind in haar schoot.

Ik was een bedelaar, en zij was de joelster. Ze maakte mij stokdoof. Ik had nooit rust. Zij was een stoorzender, een stoorgeest. Zij was een stalker. Zij liet mij niet slapen. Op een dag gaf ze mij de derde vrucht : de vrucht van gevangenschap. Het brandde in mijn mond. Ik gilde het uit. Ik viel als dood op de grond. Daarna voelde ik een vreemde kracht in mij opkomen, en ik werd in een arena gezet. Hier kreeg ik de vierde vrucht : de vrucht van de arena. Het leek alsof het vloeide in mijn hoofd. Het had een sterke geur. Het was een zeer bittere vrucht, en zuur. Ik werd ingezet in de oorlog.

Daarna kreeg ik de vijfde vrucht : de vrucht van de jacht. Het leek wel alsof mijn tong uit mijn mond groeide. Mijn tong viel af en veranderde in wapens. Toen groeide mijn tong weer. De macht van het geld was nu definitief gebroken, en de jacht kon beginnen. Geld zou nu gearresteerd worden. Het grote geld zou gefokt worden voor de dag van de grote slacht. Bilha reed op een hoog paard, zo hoog dat ik haar bijna niet kon zien. Of was ik gewoon heel klein ? Ik was een kind.

Ik werd een paardenstalmeester. Ik had overal koorden gehangen. Ook ik wachtte op de dag van de grote slacht. Ik had al voorgenot hierover. Ik wilde het geld zien bloeden. Ik wilde het geld zien krijsen, zoals het ons heeft laten krijsen. Ik wilde het geld zien smeken zoals het ons heeft laten smeken. Ik wilde het geld zien hangen. Ik was vol van leedvermaak.

Ik zou het geld martelen en bang maken, zoals het ons heeft bang gemaakt. Het geld moest een langzame, pijnlijke dood sterven. Ik wilde het geld voor eeuwig zien branden in de hel, met eeuwiggroeiende pijn. Pijn, pijn, pijn, dat is wat ik het geld toewenste. En ik wilde in die arena toekijken. Met een verrekijker.

Ik was wreed naar geld, want geld was wreed naar mij. Dat was de enige manier voor mij om te kunnen overwinnen, en om te kunnen genezen van de nachtmerrie van geld. Ik joeg op geld, genadeloos. Ik maakte geld tot mijn slaaf. Geld was mijn krijgsgevangene. En het lot van geld in mijn handen zou vreselijk zijn.

Ik bracht het geld tot de kooien, om het vet te mesten. Bilha keek toe.

Hoofdstuk 3. De Witte Vacht

Bilha trof mij met haar bliksem. Ik schudde en viel neer. Ik was haar slaaf met haar slavenketting om mijn nek. Nog steeds. De godin was te sterk. Geen man kon staan in haar nabijheid, tenzij zij hem kracht gaf. Maar ik had geen kracht. Ik was haar kind. Ik zag haar

schilderij, waar ze opstond als een halve hyena, bloed vloeiende uit haar bek, mijn bloed.

'Verzadigd nu, kreng ?' vroeg ik. Maar ik sprak slechts tot een schilderij.

Ik wist dat zij nooit verzadigd zou zijn. Met hoge hakken was ze in de stad, in de regen, schaars gekleed. Om zoek naar prooi. Een auto-deur sloeg los. Ze stapte in de auto, en verscheurde de bestuurder. Toen ging ze zelf achter het stuur zitten, en reed zoveel mogelijk slachtoffers omver als ze kon. De politie kwam achter haar aan. Maar de politie was slechts een vrucht in haar hand. Een vrucht waar zoveel vliegende insecten om streden. Ze bracht mij de vrucht, maar ik wilde er niet van eten. Ze dwong mij om ervan te eten, en de strijd werd voortgezet in mijn mond. Insecten staken mij. Het was de zesde vrucht.

De zevende vrucht was de vrucht van slacht. Eindelijk. Ik kon nu vliegen. Ik had vleugels, maar die vielen even later van me af, terwijl ik nog steeds kon vliegen. De zevende vrucht had mij snel in de macht. Het was als een ei om me heen, en ik moest de dop breken. Een zoutachtige vloeistof scheidde zich af, en begon zich in mijn lichaam te verspreiden. Overal om me heen vielen reuzen neer. Ik bladerde door een boek en kon de bladzijden niet meer vinden. Alles begon voor mijn ogen te tollen. Iemand was mij aan het uitbroeden. Toen brak het licht door. Ik was als een licht in de duisternis. De duisternis wilde mij verslinden, maar kon het niet. Mijn licht was als een vloeistof wat overal doordrong.

De achtste vrucht was een vrucht van papier. Er kon niet meer gegeten worden, alleen maar gelezen. Ik begon uit te hongeren, maar een vreemde kracht begon mij te voeden. Er was geen weg terug meer tot de andere vruchten. De achtste vrucht had ons allemaal ingenomen. Het was een bewaakster en een waakster.

Ik werd wakker in de hut van Bilha. Wat was zojuist over me gekomen ? Was ik gek geworden ? Ik had niets anders dan wanen en hallucinaties gehad, alsof ik van een vergiftigde appel had gegeten, alsof ik zwaar aan de drugs was. Deze vrouw was gevaarlijk, bloedgevaarlijk. Ik wilde ontsnappen, maar ik kon het niet. Een duistere gestalte hield mij vast.

'Niemand ontsnapt ooit uit dit huis,' werd er gezegd. Het was alsof de wind sprak. Het spookte hier. Ik was onder een vloek. 'Er is geen weg meer terug,' zei de wind. 'Je zal altijd hier wakker worden.'

Ik keek naar de wand. Het zag er niet meer zo feestelijk uit, maar bloederig. Er hingen overal wapens en jachtgerei. In de kooien rondom mij was vee. Ik realizeerde mij dat ik ook in een kooi was. Toen ik naar mijn lichaam keek schrok ik. Ik was een varken.

Haar lichaam was fors. Je kon niet om haar heupen heen. Zij was de godin van het leven.

Ik ontwaakte in haar hut. Ze trok me in een bloederige tent waar veel sluiers waren, en een bed met een witte vacht. Ze ging in de deuropening staan. Het beest van geld werd doorstoken door de oude man met de baard. Het was de dag van de slacht.

De mensen om me heen zijn niets anders dan de tralies van haar kooien. De negende vrucht was de vrucht van het huwelijk, en de tiende vrucht was de vrucht van de scheiding.

De vruchten lagen op een schaaltje, tien vruchten, die toen allemaal in chocolaatjes

veranderden. Ik wilde er niet meer van eten, maar ze forceerde me. Het was haast dwang-verpleging. Ik hield mijn kaken stijf op elkaar, maar ze sloeg mij op de kaak, en ramde het naar binnen. Ik viel op de grond. Toen smeerde ze me in met chocola. Ze schoof mij in de oven, als brood wat gebakken diende te worden.

Hij woonde ergens langs de kade, in een hoog huis. Hij zwierf vaak langs de kusten. Hij verdronk mensen en dieren, en liet schepen zinken. Hij had lang haar, en mensen hadden het vaak over hem. Soms zwierf hij door de stad. Mensen ontweken hem dan. Ze waren allemaal bang voor hem.

De Roze Stad

Ik worstelde me uit de blauwe boom, de boom van gekheid, die ons allemaal vasthield. Ik worstelde me uit de blauwe struik. Het was een heel gevecht. Die struik had mij helemaal uitgezogen. Ik strompelde door het blauwe bloemenveld, waar bloemen mij hadden gegrepen. Zij hadden mij meegenomen naar hun hol. Nu rende ik, vrij, om veiligheid te vinden. Ik rende de open wildernis binnen, waar een vrouw mij meenam. Zij bond mij, maar het blauwe kon mij niet meer slaan. Nooit heb ik van het blauwe gehouden.

Ze gaf mij een nieuwe naam en een nieuw leven. Ik liep achter haar aan. Ik was als haar hondje, met een gordel om mijn nek. Ik werd wakker in de golven, en het blauwe schuim zat achter mij aan. Ik moest rennen voor mijn leven. Blauwe honden hadden mij snel gevonden, en beten me, en ik riep, maar niemand hoorde. Iedereen was hier doof. Ze lieten mij gewoon verdrinken in deze hoge golven, maar op de bodem vond ik sterke drank. Ik was een wonderkind.

Ik kwam aan in een veld van rode bloemen. Ik probeerde de blauwe bloemen uit mijn herinneringen te bannen, maar dat ging moeilijk. Ze kleefden aan me. Ik worstelde dagelijks in hun arena's. Ik liep met mijn ziel onder mijn arm, en trollen plaagden mij. Zij hingen mij aan een boom, de boom van zorgen. Zij lachten, en vierden feest. Later namen zij mij naar hun hol. Maar ik was tussen de rode bloemen.

Rode bloemen, zij kunnen mij sussen.

Maar al mijn wonden waren open, en al mijn zonden stonden op mij geschreven. En zij beet in mijn hoofd, de bijtende roos, de rode, als een rode bloem, een bloem met twee kanten. Ik kon het niet uitziften, dus ik ging zitten. Zij stond voor me als een melaatse, vloekende, tierende, met tatoeages. Zij was gelakt van top tot teen, als een brullende dikke vrouw. Zij was als een melaatse, als de lepra koningin, de lepra messias, maar zij was achter glas. Zij was in het zand van een warme dag, waaar zij smolt, gillende. Ik heb nog één keer omgekeken, en toen rende ik weg.

Ik was over de heg, tussen de bruine bloemen. Ze waren mooi, met groene bloesem. Ook kauwde ik. Ik was aan het herkauwen, maar toen besloot ik dat niet meer te doen. We waren slaven van het kauwen. Er moest een andere manier zijn, een andere manier.

Nog steeds rende ik voor mijn leven, voor de blauwe bloemen. Ik voelde haar hand, en trok de mijne terug. Ik voelde mijn mond, en de hare. Ik trok de mijne terug. Ik trok mijn tong diep naar binnen. Toen begon ze te gillen.

Achter een roze deur was ze, het blauwe bloed. Achter een groene deken, toen keek ik naar haar. Ik kon er een schilderij van maken. Blauwe bloemen waren om me heen. Ik rende de wildernis in. In de verte hoorde ik het wilde water bruisen. Ik hoorde de zee van een nieuw geluk. Ik werd de varkensjager, op een hoog paard, en velen volgden mij. Ze hadden allemaal nergens om naartoe te gaan.

De jacht begon. Ze sloegen de trommel, een heel leger achter mij aan. Ik was de varkensjager. De jacht was begonnen. De trommels waren stil, lange stilte, dan een slag, en het paard waarop ik zat zaaide vrees. Ik werd stil, en ging naar een kamer in de wildernis om een boek te schrijven. Mijn pen droop. De blauwe boom had gehoopt dat hij mij kon vasthouden.

Ik rende door de blauwe boom, op zoek naar de uitgang. Ik haatte het blauw. Ik zag de bruisende zeeen in de verte, en rende er naartoe, door de wildernis, door de bessen. Zoveel exotische vruchten.

De palmtakken waren lang.

Ik zat tussen het goud.

Ik had haar gevonden, de gouden ballerina. Ik drukte op het knopje, en ze draaide. Toen blies de wind. De wolk van zorgen vertrok. Ik liep binnen in een duistere stad, haar stad, waar haar schaduw op rustte. Ik bracht haar naar huis. Ze zat daar, ze was al snel weer aan het dansen, vrij. Ik keek uit het raam, en zag het verkeer, de stoplichten, en toen stopte alles. Ik stapte uit het schilderij. Ik had een gevecht met de wachter van het schilderij. Het schilderij was mooi, en de wachter ook. Ook het gevecht was mooi. Ik nam foto's. Het waren foto's van een mooie dag. Het waren foto's van een mooie dag aan het strand.

Ik ving haar tranen op in een vaas, en al haar bloed. Ik maakte haar nieuw. Ze was een nieuw mens nu. Ze zat op het paard, als een indiaan, en alle sterren begonnen te vallen. Het was een nieuw schilderij. De woestijn bloeide.

De blauwe boom stond daar.

Blauwe bloemenvelden, zover het oog reikte. Veranderende in zeeen, en dan weer bloemenvelden. Zeeen, bloemenvelden, zeeen. En zij brachten voort de honing, de honing van een nieuwe wereld, een wilde wereld. En ik viel, en zakte door de bodems. En toen was alles in de vlammen.

Ik bleef maar vallen, en het vuur leek dieper te gaan. Het opende de deuren, de deuren van een nieuwe morgen. Het was aan het blaffen.

De blauwe boom, ik zoog aan de honing, en werd wederomgeboren, als een nieuw kind. Ik zoog. De wilde honing had me in de grip, een zee van honing.

Ik klom uit het schip, en toen weer binnenin. Ik greep de blauwe druiven. Alles begon te druipen. Een blauwe vrucht op een schoteltje. Blauwe bloemen hadden ons omringd. Ik zoog.

De blauwe boom groeide hoog. Er groeide een stad op de top. Ik keek naar beneden en had een groot overzicht. Ik keek naar beneden en wilde vliegen. Maar ik bleef in de stad. Ik had andere dingen te doen. Ik ging in de dieptes van de stad, tot de wildernis. Waar blauwe bloemen groeien.

Waar blauwe bloemen groeien, in velden zover het oog reikt, veranderende in zeeen, en dan weer in bloemenvelden. Ik kon weer ademen.

De blauwe ladder, de blauwe boom, blauwe bloemvelden, veranderende in zeeen, en dan weer in bloemenvelden. Ladder naar de wildernis. De ladder leidt tot de konijnen, en dan behoudenis, tot de roze stad. De blauwe bloemen zullen je niet meer kunnen vinden, maar ze zullen er nog steeds zijn. Langs de kanten van de roze stad zullen ze groeien, aan de waterkanten. Ze zullen je niet meer kunnen horen of zien, ze zullen wegvagen tot in alle eeuwigheden, maar nog steeds zullen ze daar groeien, aan de waterkanten, aan de kanten van de roze stad.

Oorlogsgodin

Het was nogal een zwemtocht van het schip naar Suriname. Ik was al zo lang een piraat, en nu wilde ik wel iets anders. Ik wilde vrij zijn. Helemaal uitgeput kwam ik aan op het strand. Ik nam mijn intrede in een hutje voor landlopers. Ik was een zwerver. Mijn piratenkleding was gescheurd. Ik bloedde een beetje vanwege schaafwonden. Het was een lange tocht.

De natuur hier verwelkomde mij met open armen alsof ik een prins was. Het was mijn droom om hier voor altijd te wonen. Ik moest maar leven van de jacht, zodat ik geen rover meer hoefde te zijn. Tot mijn verbazing volgde het schip mij na, en ook mijn piratenmakkers besloten hier te gaan wonen, te stoppen met roven, om zo voor de jacht te leven. Dat was toch een stuk netter.

We hadden het hier goed naar ons zin. Elke dag zee, en een jungle vol met voedsel, goed voedsel. Op een dag kwam er een vrouw bij ons wonen. Ze maakte nieuwe kleren voor ons, en zorgde dat het voedsel werd klaargemaakt. Zoiets is natuurlijk onmisbaar. Het was een geschenk van de natuur van Suriname aan ons. De vrouw heette zelfs Suriname.

Wij waren altijd erg beleefd naar de natuur van Suriname. Wij respecteerden haar en eerden haar. En de vrouw aan ons gegeven behandelden we als een prinses. Ze was een geschenk uit de hemel. We konden goed met elkaar opschieten, ik en m'n makkers, en de vrouw paste er precies tussen. Er waren eigenlijk nooit relletjes. Iedereen kende z'n plaats.

De vrouw wist veel van de natuur af, en kon ons veel leren. Op een dag maakten we een tochtje met het schip en namen de vrouw mee. Ze vermaakte zich uitstekend en verkleedde zich als een piratenkapitein. Ja, onze kapitein mocht ze wel wezen, sinds we onze eigen kapitein van boord hadden gegooid. Er viel niet te leven met die man. Zij was het tegenovergestelde.

Het piratenleven beviel haar goed, en dankzij haar konden we het wat netter houden, wat beschaafder. We besloten de ene helft van het jaar te varen, en de andere helft te leven aan de kust van Suriname. De zegen van Suriname kwam over ons. Ons schip zegevierde ten allen tijde, en dat allemaal dankzij onze nieuwe kapitein.

Het uniform stond haar goed. Dat ze op een dag in een anaconda veranderde verbaasde ons. Maar ja, ze was nu eenmaal een anaconda. Een geschenk van Suriname. We besloten weer met haar terug te varen, en lieten haar los in de jungle. Later kwamen we erachter dat ze om de zoveel jaren in een anaconda veranderde. We vonden het niet erg. Het was haar leven. Trouwens, we waren gek op anaconda's. We hadden allemaal een obsessie als het aankwam op slangen. Ze kon jagen als de beste, en zo leden we eigenlijk nooit honger. Ze kon in nog wel veel meer dieren veranderen, zomaar plotseling. Ze was een heks, maar dan anders. Ze was gewoon een oorlogsgodin. Die kunnen dat soort trucjes.

We hielden alleen maar meer van haar. Ze was een bijzonder mens.

De Sneeuwstorm

Ze had de jurkjes van de kinderen gestreken. Mij liet ze niet binnen, terwijl het buiten koud was. Ze gooide mij wat oud brood toe, maar toen ik het proefte was het als gedoopt in azijn. Ik zakte weg, diep in de sneeuw. Zij lachte. Ik had hallucinaties van de tijd van vroeger, zoals het eens was. Toen ik daar van wakker werd vocht ik tegen de kou.

Eén van de kinderen ging later op zoek naar mij. Na een lange reis vond ze mij. Ik zat achter een drumstel en drumde.
Ik keek niet op of om. Ze probeerde met mij te praten, maar ik drumde door.

Toen ze huilde vloog er ineens een zwaluw langs het drumstel. Ik stopte, en omhelsde haar. Ze had een wit jurkje aan, en een wit strikje in haar haar. 'Geef dit aan mamma,' zei ik, en drukte haar iets in haar hand. Een sneeuwstorm nam mij mee, maar zij rende achter mij aan. We kwamen in een boshuisje waar de zwaluw zat. Ook een oud vrouwtje zat daar. Ze at van oud brood. 'Woont u hier ?' vroeg het kind aan me.

Ik knikte. Wie is die oude vrouw ? vroeg ze.
Ik zorg voor haar, zei ik.
En die zwaluw dan ? vroeg ze.
Oh, zei ik, dat is een vriend.

Waarvoor dan ? vroeg ze.
Ga ik je niet vertellen, zei ik.
Toen kwam de sneeuwstorm weer binnen, en nam mij mee, terwijl zij achter mij aanrende. Na een tijdje werd ze moe,
en de sneeuwstorm nam haar ook op.

De sneeuwkoningin was blij hen te zien. Zij nam hen op naar haar troon. 'Geef dit aan je mamma,' zei de sneeuwkoningin tegen het kind, terwijl ze iets in haar hand drukte.

Wat is het ? vroeg het kind.
Plaatjes, zei de sneeuwkoningin.
Ja, ik heb haar ook al wat plaatjes gegeven, zei ik.
Goedzo, zei de sneeuwkoningin.

Wat voor plaatjes zijn het als ik vragen mag ? vroeg het kind.
Ga ik je niet vertellen, zei ik.
De sneeuwkoningin zei niks.

Okay, ik geef het wel aan mamma, zei het kind.
Ik ging achter een drumstel zitten, en begon te drummen.
'Je moet nu gaan,' zei de sneeuwkoningin tegen het kind.

Het kind werd wakker in haar eigen bed, en vertelde aan haar moeder wat er gebeurd was.
'Het is mijn man niet meer, dus ik heb er niets mee te maken,' sprak ze.
Maar de sneeuwkoningin dan ? vroeg het kind.
Maar haar moeder sprak niet meer.

Even later werd er op het raam getikt. Het was de postbode met een brief.
Toen de moeder de brief opende bleek het voor het kind te zijn.
Een brief van haar vader.

De brief was geschreven in letters van sneeuw, en er was een plaatje bij van een drumstel.
Er was ook een plaatje bij van de sneeuwkoningin, en van het oude vrouwtje en de zwaluw.
Ook was er een plaatje bij van de sneeuwstorm en het boshuisje.
Geef de plaatjes aan je mamma, stond erbij geschreven.

Het kind gaf de plaatjes aan haar moeder, en haar moeder begon te huilen.
Waarom huilt u, mamma ? vroeg het kind.
Maar de moeder hield zich stil. Het meisje begreep het niet waarom haar moeder huilde, en wilde
weten waarom. Midden in de nacht rende haar moeder naar buiten, en rolde door de sneeuw,
terwijl een sneeuwstorm haar opnam. Ook het kind rende naar buiten en werd door de sneeuwstorm
opgenomen.

De sneeuwkoningin was blij hen te zien, terwijl ik nog steeds aan het drummen was.
De sneeuwkoningin nam drie ijspegels uit het hart van de moeder, en vulde het op met sneeuw.
Ze wreef even over haar hart heen, en toen over haar jurk, en toen nam de sneeuwstorm hen weer op
om hen terug te brengen. De moeder en het kind rolden door de sneeuw. Even later waren ze in bed.
De zwaluw tikte op het raam van de slaapkamer van de moeder. Moeder deed het raam open.
Er was een brief in zijn snavel, geschreven met letters van sneeuw. Moeder las het en begon te huilen.
Het kind kwam binnen, en vroeg wat er aan de hand was. Moeder zei niks.

Na een tijdje rende ze weer naar buiten in de sneeuw, en het kind volgde haar, totdat ze beiden door een
sneeuwstorm werden opgenomen.

Ze kwamen in het boshuisje, waar een dwerg aan tafel zat. 'Ik ben het aan het eten, dat oude brood met azijn.'

'Ja, dat had ik niet moeten doen,' zei de moeder.

'Oh, is dat van jou dan ?' vroeg de dwerg.

'Ja,' zei de moeder, 'dat had ik eens aan mijn man gegeven.'

'Het is wel lekker hoor,' zei de dwerg. 'Het heeft me hier naartoe geleid. Moet je ook een hapje ?'

'Nee, dank je,' zei moeder.

'Je maakt me nogal lekkere toetjes, hoorde ik,' sprak de dwerg.

'Van wie hoorde je dat ?' vroeg moeder.

'Van je man,' zei de dwerg.

'Heeft hij het koud ?' vroeg moeder.

'Nee,' zei de dwerg. 'Er is iets wat hem warmhoudt.'

'Wat dan ?' vroeg moeder.

'Plaatjes,' zei de dwerg. 'Kijk maar eens naar die schilderijtjes aan de muur.'

Moeder keek naar de muur, en werd heel warm van binnen.
Het zijn een soort kijk-kachels, zei de dwerg. Je kijkt ernaar en wordt warm.

Oh ja, zei moeder. Ik begin het nu wel heel warm te krijgen. Na een tijdje liep moeder het huisje
uit, op zoek naar de sneeuw, maar die was er niet.

Moeder moest helemaal naar huis lopen, maar de sneeuwstorm is ze nooit meer vergeten.

Het Rijk van Nicotine

Een van de reusachtigste leiders van het duistere rijk die ik ooit had gezien was wel het skelet Nicotine. Elke dag maakte hij een lange reis over de bergen naar de hoogste top, met in zijn armen het hoofd van een meisje. Nicotine had een paar duistere paarden, genaamd Ammalgamos, Compositos en Medicinos. Hij was een duistere rijder. In zijn rijk was er geen schoonheid, alleen lelijkheid, maar de jungles hier waren reusachtig. Ik stond aan de oever. Een jongetje in een boot wenkte mij. Het was een lange dunne boot, en het jongetje had een peddel. Het was een indiaans jongetje. ‘Mijn moeder wacht op je,’ riep hij. Al gauw was hij bij de oever en ik stapte in het bootje. Al snel waren we aan de andere kant van het meertje. Aan de oever stond een vrouw. Ik herkende haar niet, maar zij riep mij bij mijn naam. Ik stapte uit het bootje en liep naar de oever. Ze omhelsde me stevig. ‘Ik heb een maaltijd voor je gemaakt,’ zei ze. ‘Wie ben je ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Oh, ik ben Melango,’ zei de vrouw. Al snel bracht ze mij naar haar hut. Er lagen hier allerlei pakjes sigaretten en sigarendoosjes. ‘Rook je ?’ vroeg ik. ‘Nee,’ zei ze. ‘Mijn zoontje neemt ze weleens mee.’

’s Nachts komen de troubadouren,’ zei ze. ‘Zij werken voor de farao.’

‘Waar hebben ze het dan over ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Oh,’ zei ze, ‘over hem. Je weet wel : Nicotine, de baas van alle farao’s. Hij is het grote opperhoofd.’ Ik kende Nicotine wel. Het was een verschrikking. Iedereen was geketend aan zijn lange kettingen, ook deze vrouw. Het hart van Nicotine was een rood hart, maar voor de rest was het hele duistere rijk zwart en wit. Als de troubadours kwamen dan was er altijd veel grijs, veel bruin en geel. Nicotine was een slager. Hij was altijd op jacht, en had een grote fokkerij. Hier liet hij de vrouwen zwaar werk verrichten. ‘Pssst, bevrijd me,’ fluisterde de vrouw. Ze wees op de ring aan mijn vinger die ik eens van de farao had gekregen. Ik bedacht me geen moment, legde de ring tegen haar ketting en brandde de keten door. Ik pakte haar hand, en zei : Kom mee. Ik weet niet hoe lang het geduurd heeft maar na tijden rennen kwamen we uit de jungles van Nicotine. Een man staarde ons aan met een lange baard. Hij liet ons de tand van een haai zien. ‘Waar zijn we ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Welkom,’ zei de man. Hij was direct heel vriendelijk. Hij staarde naar mijn ring. ‘Wie bent u ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Ik ben Terang,’ zei de man. ‘Gezand van de koning.’

‘Wie is de koning ?’ vroeg ik. Hij liet me een klein balletje zien. Maar daar kwam Nicotine al aan. Ik greep Melango weer bij haar hand en rende met haar verder. Maar ook in de verte zag ik Nicotine aankomen, en toen van alle kanten. Snel werden we ingesloten. ‘Nicotine heerst hier,’ zeiden ze. Plotseling kwam er rood licht uit mijn ring voort en scheen op de harten van de Nicotines om ons heen. Een van de Nicotines had witte klederen met een lange witte punthoed. Hij leek wel op een pion. Achter hem stonden nog een paar van zulke Nicotines. Ik richtte de straal van de ring op zijn gezicht, en hij begon weg te smelten. Ik rende met Melango door de opening die was ontstaan. Weer zag ik die man. ‘Kan ik iets voor je doen ?’ vroeg Terang.

‘Ja,’ zei ik. ‘Help ons hier uit.’

Maar Terang werd gegrepen door de Nicotines en werd verslonden. De Nicotines waren als een kudde hongerige honden. Weer richtte ik de straal van de ring op hen. In de verte was een piramide waar we naartoe renden. Binnenin zat een farao op een troon. Hij was geheel gemaakt van metaal, en er kwam rook uit hem voort. Maar al snel waren ook de Nicotines binnen en verslonden de metalen farao. Een paar Nicotines zaten op paarden. Het waren grote

paarden. We renden door een deur in een andere gang. Maar hier waren zwarte Nicotines met hun paarden. Weer beukte ik een deur in, en kwamen in een kamer terecht met een raampje waardoor we konden ontsnappen. We waren nu op de piramide. De vrouw haalde wat pakjes sigaretten en sigaren uit haar broekzakken en begon ze tussen haar handen te rammelen, terwijl ze veren begon te krijgen. Snel greep ze me en we vlogen weg. Het was mij een raadsel. Nicotine Magie, zei ze. We vlogen naar een hoog kasteel waar de Nicotine Tovenaar woonde. We hadden hier groot uitzicht. De Nicotine Tovenaar was een aardige man. Hij liet ons alle mechanismes van Nicotines zien. Het waren robotten. Ook hun grote paarden.

De Tovenaar zette ons ergens neer op de rotsen, in een ander rijk. We kwamen op een strand terecht met heet zand. Ook was er een hutje van riet en bamboe. 'Blijf je bij me ?' vroeg Melango.

'Ach, ik kom je nog weleens een keertje opzoeken,' zei ik. 'Ik hoop dat je het hier naar je zin zult hebben. Er is hier strand en zee, en er groeit hier voldoende aan de bomen.'

Daar kwam de Tovenaar aan, vanaf het strand. 'Je hebt in ieder geval goed gezelschap,' zei ik. De Tovenaar gaf mij een hoed van stro en riet. En toen vertrok ik.

Einde

Het Lukuk Tablet

Ze waren in een gevecht. Zij probeerde hem in verwarring the brengen door leugens. Hij zat op de bank, en wilde de moed opgeven. Zijn hoofd kon het niet meer aan. Zij wilde hem aangeven bij de godin Serket. Zij was een wellustige vrouw. Ze verkocht haar man aan haar. Maar Serket wilde niet komen, en zond daarom Luluk, een indiaanse prinses. Luluk nam bezit van haar, en bracht haar man nog meer naar beneden, met de meest gemene truukjes. Hij had de moed allang opgegeven en wilde zelfmoord plegen. Hij staarde naar de beeldjes van zijn vrouw, haar godinnen. Hij wist niet wat hij er mee moest, maar hij begon tot hen te bidden.

Een keer kwam in zijn lot, de godinnen waren hem opeens goedgezind. Zijn vrouw kalmeerde. Van binnen voelde hij een haat naar de godinnen want zij hadden dit alles aangesticht. Zij hadden zijn vrouw gek gemaakt. Hij hield het Luluk tablet in zijn handen, en wilde het breken. Dit tablet hield zijn vrouw opgesloten.

Ze vloog hem aan. Ze was ongelovelijk sterk ineens. Ze bond hem vast, en hongerde hem uit. Het tablet werd ergens op een tafel neergelegd. Een vriendin van haar kwam. 'Kun jij dit tablet in bescherming nemen,' vroeg ze. De vriendin knikte, en vertrok weer.

Hij begon weer tot de godinnen te bidden en wist dat hij zich dit keer beter moest gedragen. Ze maakte hem los. Hij staarde naar de beeldjes van zijn vrouw. Ook hij was in dit tablet opgesloten. 'Dochter van de regen,' werd ze genoemd, 'dienares van Luluk,' ze was aan het kalmeren. In ieder geval liet ze hem nu met rust.

Haaien Bewustzijn

Hij woonde aan zee op een eiland. Een berevel was zijn schort en hij had een rieten hut. Een grote haai terroriseerde de kust. Hij kon niet eens normaal zwemmen of vissen. Parelduiken was er al helemaal niet bij. Op een dag was hij het zat. Hij zou zich niet meer door de haai laten afschrikken. Hij nam zijn speer mee, en ging het water in. Hij lustte de haai rauw nu. Maar de haai kwam niet. Na een tijdje ging hij terug om de speer op het strand te gooien, en ging alleen met zijn dolk terug het water in. Hij dook onderwater, en zag daar al snel de haai aankomen. Even was het alsof hij verlamd raakte van schrik. De haai was zo groot, en even had hij gehoopt dat hij zijn speer bij zich had, maar hij kon niet meer terug. De haai zwom op hem af en had zijn muil al open gedaan, klaar om toe te happen. Snel bewoog hij zijn dolk recht in de kaak van de haai, en toen twee keer in zijn ogen. De haai was woest en begon van zich af te bijten als een bezetene. Hij was nu onder de haai en stootte hem een paar keer met zijn dolk in zijn buik. Er was overal bloed nu. Een woede begon door zijn lichaam heen te stromen zoals hij die nog nooit eerder had gevoeld. Weer stootte hij zijn dolk in de kaak van het enorme beest en trok het toen met zich mee. Dit stukje zee was nu een bloedbad. Hier had hij zo lang op gewacht. Hij sleepte het halfdode beest naar het strand, pakte zijn speer en begon het beest net zo lang te steken totdat het dood was.

Hij nam de schedel van het beest en de tanden en botten naar zijn hut. Ook vond hij wat edelstenen in de buik van de haai. Hij noemde ze haaiestenen. De tanden van de haaien hing hij aan een draad voor zijn tent. Hij was trots op zichzelf. Hij rende het oerwoud in en ging op jacht. Hij had nu de smaak goed te pakken. Het was alsof er een deur in zijn hoofd geopend was. Hij was zo lang depressief en angstig geweest vanwege de haai.

Ook in zijn dromen werd hij vaak lastig gevallen door de haai. Nu had hij deze dromen niet meer. Wel droomde hij veel over clowns onder water, maar die deden niet veel. Zij waren vaak verstrikt in bloemen onder water. Het was alsof zij gevangen zaten. Zij probeerden woorden in zijn hoofd te spreken, maar hij kon het gelukkig niet horen.

Op een dag speelde er een clown op het strand. Hij werd plotseling erg bang, en rende het oerwoud in, maar toen ging hij er opaf. De clown trok een pistool en wilde schieten, maar hij wierp zijn speer. De clown viel neer, en hij hakte het hoofd van de clown af met zijn dolk. Hij hief het hoofd in de lucht en brulde. 'Alweer een doodskop,' dacht hij bij zichzelf. Langzaam liep hij terug naar zijn hut. Hij was kwaad. Hij werd geplaagd door zijn herinneringen, toen hij ooit met een heks leefde. Daarom is hij op een eiland gaan wonen.

Ze is in zijn hoofd iedere dag, om haar leugens in hem te blazen. Hij snapt niet waarom zij hem nog steeds lastig valt. Soms voelen die leugens zo erg aan dat hij het gevoel heeft dat zijn hoofd ontploft. Dan wil hij haar opzoeken om wraak te nemen, of om het met haar uit te praten. Maar hij weet dat er met haar niet te praten valt. Ze draait altijd om alles heen, en liegt en bedriegt. Hij zal haar nooit kunnen vertrouwen, wat ze dan ook zegt, maar op een vreemde manier voelt hij zich afhankelijk aan haar. Hij haat dit gevoel.

Dan begint hij na te denken over de haaiensoep die hij de avond van zijn haaienvangst had gemaakt. Hij probeert het verdere verleden weer te vergeten. Haaiensoep had hij niet vaak gegeten, maar de keren dat hij het at waren heel bijzonder. Hij kreeg er altijd vreemde visioenen en dromen van. Hij begon er altijd sterk van te hallucineren. Haaiensoep met trommels was een goede combinatie voor hem. Min of meer waren die hallucinaties zo muzikaal. Het inspireerde hem tot nieuwe ritmes. Maar ja, hij voelde zich altijd ook een beetje ziek van haaiensoep. Hij kwam ervan in het dodenrijk, waar hij de doden bezocht en nieuwe deuren moest openen. Hij had ook zulke vreemde dieren gegeten. Haaien waren vreemde dieren. Hij kreeg altijd de rillingen als hij aan hen dacht. Soms leek het alsof hij dood ging als hij aan hen dacht. Alsof hij achter een zwart gordijn kwam. Het waren de vorsten van de dood. Hij zou ze geen kwaad doen, maar de haai die hij had doorspietst werd te gevaarlijk, en begon zijn leven flink te beheersen. Hij moest vechten voor zijn leven.

Hij dacht na over zijn leven, en over de haaien. Hij deed dit heel bewust.

Tijger Kind

Hij beklom de muren die omgeven waren met weelderige bloemen. Hij werd haast door ze naar beneden getrokken, maar hij vocht. Hij vocht ook om zijn tranen te bedwingen. Hij zat vol van woede. De muur was bijna zanderig en erg warm. Hij klom door een raam naar binnen, en zag haar daar liggen, helemaal in het wit. Deze vrouw had hem grootgebracht, maar hij was in de wildernis gevlucht, al heel jong. Hij had eigenlijk niets meer met deze vrouw te maken. Hij ging terug door het raam, trok wat van de bloemen van de muur, en sneed zich aan de dorens. Toen sprong hij naar beneden, en rende de wildernis in. Aan een liaan vol wilde bloemen sprong hij over de bruisende rivier. Het was alsof iemand hem vasthield. Hij liet los en kwam aan de rand van de overkant van de rivier, maar deze rand was zo glad dat hij de rivier weer ingleed. Hij greep een tak en trok zichzelf omhoog. Deze rivierwand was zo steil. Toen rende hij de wildernis in. Alles was dichtbegroeid hier.

Hij had een pijl tussen zijn tanden, en trok zijn boog. Zijn lange wilde haren bungelden over zijn naakte rug. Zijn rug was vol met striemen. Ook had hij littekentjes op zijn rug. De

wildernis was genadeloos geweest naar hem, maar niets was erger dan de vrouw die hem had grootgebracht.

De wildernis trok hem aan, ook al moest het zo hardhandig. Hij probeerde zich te concentreren, maar hij was in pijn. De wildernis was vol geheimen. Het leek wel alsof het een andere taal sprak. Hij wilde die taal graag leren. Hij probeerde zijn pijnen te begrijpen, maar het leek wel alsof het hem woest maakte. Hij wilde loskomen van zijn woede. Het was alsof de wildernis hem plaagde. Hij wist dat hij gewoon met een heel zwaar wettenstelsel had te maken. Het was hem alles wel waard. Maar in zijn gevoelens werd hij heen en weer geslingerd.

Hij stak bloemen in zijn haar, en ging aan de rand van een andere rivier zitten. Hij boog voorover en keek in het water. Van bloemen maakte hij een schort. Dit deed hij van de bloemen die langs de rivier groeiden. Het waren wilde bloemen, maar zo prachtig. Ze hadden taaie maar flexibele stengels die hij goed kon knopen. Langzaam liet hij zichzelf in het water glijden. Hij dacht terug aan gisteren, hoe ze hem sloegen met een gesel. Waarom ? Hij wist het nog steeds niet. Hij kon alleen maar gissen. Ze spraken niet veel tot hem. Alles ging om hun wetten. Als hij ze brak, dan werd hij daarvoor geslagen. Het maakte hem leeg van binnen. Hij vond het best. Alles beter dan de vrouw die hem grootbracht. Aan haar wilde hij zelfs niet herinnerd worden. Soms hoopte hij zelfs dat hij slaag kreeg, zodat hij de pijn over haar kon vergeten. De pijn van slaag maakte zijn hart leeg. Het maakte hem koud van binnen, totdat het hem helemaal niets meer deed. Maar meestal de dag erna was hij boos.

Hij liep langs de rivierkant in de modder. Toen liep hij naar zijn hut. Hij ging liggen op een oude matras. Maar even later kwamen ze om hem te slaan. Ze sloegen hem bont en blauw. Toen ze weg waren viel hij doodmoe neer op zijn matras. Hij had besloten om dieper de wildernis in te gaan, want hier kon hij niet meer tegen. Altijd werd hij voor niets geslagen, en ze zeiden niet waarom.

Terug naar de vrouw die hem grootbrachte wilde hij niet. Het was niet eens zijn echte moeder. De volgende ochtend ging hij dieper de wildernis in. Hij smeerde zich in met modder, als een goede camouflage, en bond bladeren om zich heen. Hij hoopte maar dat ze hem niet zouden zien.

Eén van de vrouwen zag hem. Ze begon bijna te krijsen. Hij zette het op een rennen. Als hij in hun handen zou vallen, dan zou het goed mis zijn. Hij dook naar een liaan, en ging van liaan tot liaan, van boom tot boom. De vrouwen waren snel en begonnen pijlen op hem af te schieten. Hij was hoog in de bomen, en moest zorgen dat hij niet stil bleef staan. Ze schreeuwden en gilden naar hem. Ze waren zichtbaar woest. Hij nam grote risico's en dook naar lianen waarvan hij niet eens wist of die hem wel zouden houden, en lianen die ver weg

hingen. Maar hij kon niet anders. Soms moest hij weer even klimmen. Hij rende over takken. Het huilen stond hem nader dan het lachen, en door het gegil en geschreeuw begon hij te beven. Het was die vrouwen echt menens.

'Terugkomen !' gilden ze. Sommige vrouwen waren ook in bomen geklommen en sprongen ook van boom tot boom met lianen. Ze waren in een mum van tijd dicht achter hem. Hij begon een naar gevoel in zijn onderbuik te krijgen. Ze zouden hem kunnen doodslaan als ze hem te pakken zouden krijgen. Hij wist niet wat hij moest doen. Onder hem was een rivier, en hij zag dat als zijn laatste kans. Er was een waterval dichtbij, en de rivier stroomde nogal hard, maar hij had geen andere keuze. Hij liet zich naar beneden vallen, en kwam gelukkig goed in de rivier terecht. Hij ging kopje onder en werd direct meegesleurd door de harde stroom. Na een tijdje kwam hij boven water en hapte naar adem. Ook bewoog hij woest om zich heen om te kijken of hij ergens een tak kon vinden. Na een tijdje lukte hem dat, en hij trok zichzelf omhoog op de kant. Hij was een heel eind door de woeste stroom meegesleurd, ver weg van de vrouwen. Weer zette hij het op een rennen, nog steeds in grote angst. Hij rende aan één stuk door zonder om te kijken.

'Marceda,' zei een vrouw. Ze probeerde hem te stoppen, maar hij wist dat ze niet bij de andere vrouwen hoorde. Toch duwde hij de vrouw opzij, omdat hij geen risico's wilde nemen. Hij kon niemand vertrouwen. 'Marceda !' riep de vrouw weer. 'Laat me je helpen !' Hij wist niet wat Marceda betekende, maar ineens stopte hij. Misschien zou de vrouw hem inderdaad kunnen helpen. Ze nam hem mee naar haar hut, waar ze wat soep voor hem inschonk. 'Hier, eet wat,' zei ze. 'Wat is er aan de hand ?'

Hij vertelde het verhaal. 'Zij zijn niet goed bij hun hoofd,' zei de vrouw. 'Waarom ben je daar zo lang gebleven ?'

'Ze bewaakten mij min of meer,' zei hij.

'Ze zijn gek,' zei de vrouw.

Hij zuchtte. 'Neem wat rust,' zei de vrouw. 'Ik zal over je waken. Ze moeten hier niet komen.'

'Maar ze zijn met velen,' zei hij.

'Ze zijn hier nog nooit geweest,' zei de vrouw. 'Dit is mijn gebied.'

'Woon je hier alleen ?' vroeg hij. Ze knikte.

Hij hoorde trommels in de verte. Ook hoorde hij oorlogsgehuil. 'Ik ben niet veilig,' sprak hij. 'Ze zijn op jacht naar me.'

'Shhh,' zei de vrouw. 'Ga maar slapen. Ik zal het wel afhandelen.'

'Je kan niets beginnen in je eentje,' zei hij. 'Ze zullen je slaan, en misschien wel vermoorden.'

'Je kent me nog niet,' zei de vrouw. Ze trok haar boog en nam een pijl. Ook maakte ze haar paardenstaart los. Toen rende ze de wildernis in. Hij begon te beven. Hij vreesde voor haar leven. Na een tijdje kon hij de spanning niet meer aan, en rende de hut uit, dieper de wildernis in. Overal hoorde hij trommels. De schrik sloeg hem steeds dieper in de keel. Hij had buikpijn van de angst. Het leek wel alsof ze dicht om hem heen waren. De trommels leken steeds sneller te gaan. Het oorlogsgehuil was nog wel in de verte maar leek steeds dichterbij te komen, of harder te worden.

Bij een meertje was een hol. Hij ging naar binnen. Hij ging diep het hol in, en na lang lopen door gangen kwam hij diep onder de grond.

'Bloemenkind, vrees tekende je,

Depressie was de oorlogskleuren op je wangen en lichaam,

Gelach was je dagelijkse bad,

En honger was op je jachtspad.'

Een vrouw stond voor hem. 'Zei jij dat ?' vroeg hij.

Ze knikte. Het was donker. Hij kon haar niet goed zien. Haar stem maakte hem rustig. Hij herkende haar. Het was die vrouw die hem zou beschermen. Hij kwam dichterbij. Ze had

oorlogsstrepen op haar wangen. 'Ik heb ze beschoten, en een paar geraakt,' zei de vrouw. 'Nu zijn ze zelfs woester. Het is nu oorlog. Wil je mee de oorlog in ?'

'Maar ze zijn met teveel. Ik wil niet dood. Laten we weggaan, dieper de wildernis in,' zei hij.

'Bloemenkind,' sprak ze. 'Je moet de oorlog winnen. Ze zullen op je jagen totdat ze je vinden. Vecht terug. Je hebt mij aan je zijde.'

'Laten we dieper onder de grond gaan,' zei hij.

'Nee, ze zijn in alle staten. We moeten nu vechten,' sprak ze.

Hij greep zijn boog en een pijl. 'Laten we gaan,' sprak hij. Hij wist dat ze geen kans maakten, maar hij wist ook dat ze hem vroeg of laat zouden vinden. Buiten gingen ze op een heuveltje staan, en ze verborgen zich achter een struik. Na een tijdje zagen ze drie vrouwen op oorlogspad. Hij herkende deze vrouwen. Ze hadden hem vaak genoeg geslagen en uitgejouwd. Beiden spanden ze hun bogen. Twee vrouwen werden geraakt. De derde trok haar boog, maar wist niet waar ze op moest richten. Na een tijdje kwam er een groep van ongeveer tien vrouwen. Ze hadden hun bogen getrokken, en begonnen te schreeuwen.

'Shhh,' fluisterde de vrouw. 'Nu gewoon schieten.' Hij was bijna verlamd van schrik toen hij zoveel vrouwen zag. Door zijn hoofd schoten allerlei taferelen van wat ze met hem zouden kunnen doen als ze hem te pakken zouden krijgen. Maar hij vocht dapper. Hij kon een paar vrouwen raken met zijn pijlen. De vrouw naast hem was ineens weg. Toen werd hij ineens van achteren met een pijl geraakt. Hij wist dat het een valstrik was. Hoe kon hij zo stom zijn naar deze vrouw te luisteren. Maar waarom had ze haar eigen vrouwen geraakt ? Een groot raadsel flitste door hem heen. Hij was neergevallen, en ze schopte tegen hem aan. 'Waarom heb je mij dit aangedaan ?' kreunde hij. 'Stommeling,' sprak ze.

Tot zijn grote verbazing begon ze ook op de vrouwen te schieten, die na een tijdje weg begonnen te rennen. 'Je bent een grote idioot,' zei ze tegen hem. Ze trok de pijl uit zijn rug. Die was laag geschoten. 'Waarom praat je zo tegen me ?' vroeg hij. 'Wat heb ik verkeerd gedaan ?'

'Dit is mijn manier van de oorlog winnen,' sprak ze. 'Vertrouw me nu maar. Ze zijn nu weg.'

'Ik vertrouw je helemaal niet,' zei hij. 'Ik vrees dat wij geen vrienden zullen worden.'

Weer richtte ze een pijl op hem. 'Nu moet je ophouden,' sprak ze. 'Als je wijs bent houd je je mond. Ik zei je dat ik met ze zou afhandelen. Dit is mijn manier.'

Hij barstte bijna van woede. Maar hij hield zich stil. Het was ook menens voor deze vrouw.

'Mag ik gaan nu ?' vroeg hij.

'Je moet zelfs gaan,' zei de vrouw. 'Ren nu. Ren voor je leven.'

Hij zette het op een rennen, zonder om te kijken. Deze vrouwen waren echt gek. Ze waren debiel in zijn ogen. Ook in deze vrouw had hij zich zo vergist. Hij zou nu nog meer op zijn hoede zijn.

Weer ging hij door een hol de grond in. Hij hoopte in ieder geval dat deze debiele vrouw hen nu echt had weggejaagd, en dat ze hem nu met rust zouden laten. In een ondergrondse ruimte kwam hij tot een meertje. Hij waste zichzelf daarin, en bedekte zichzelf toen met modder. Hij had buikpijn en hoofdpijn. Toen hij over alles nadacht wilde hij niet meer leven. Het leven drukte zwaar op hem, alsof het hem wurgde. Weer hoorde hij oorlogsgehuil in de verte. Hij begon te trillen van woede. Hij voelde alsof hij zichzelf niet meer was, alsof er iets in hem was geknapt of gebroken door de spanning. Hij pakte zijn boog. Hij zou ze in zijn eentje tegemoet treden. Hij rende door het hol naar boeten en begon woest te krijsen buiten zijn zinnen. Snel was hij omsingeld door een groep vrouwen. Hij kreeg een slag op zijn hoofd en viel neer. Zij zetten hun voeten op hem. Ze rolden hem over zodat zijn rug op de grond lag. Hij kreeg een voet op zijn mond gedrukt. 'Nu houd je je kop,' zei één van de vrouwen.

Hij werd later wakker in een kooi. 'Stom varken,' zei een vrouw tegen hem. 'We zullen jou dat krijsen eens afleren. Hij kookte van woede. Toen de vrouw weg was greep hij mes wat hij had verborgen onder zijn schort van wilde bloemen. Gelukkig hadden ze dat niet afgenomen. Maar zijn boog was hij kwijt. Met zijn mes begon hij de kooi los te snijden. Dat lukte aardig, en na een tijdje was hij vrij en rende de wildernis in. Hij zou nu gewoon door blijven rennen totdat hij niet meer zou kunnen.

Hij rende door totdat hij aankwam bij de rivieren van bloed. Hij zwemde door totdat hij kwam in het land achter die rivieren. Hier waren veel insecten die hem staken, maar alles was beter dan te leven met vrouwen die hem altijd maar sloegen.

Hier zette hij zijn tent op, en bouwde een boot. Hij leefde van de visserij, en de jacht. Hij probeerde zijn oude leven te vergeten. Nog vaak had hij woede aanvallen, maar hij wist dat de vrouwen toch nooit zouden veranderen. Het was hun aard.

Maar de tijger van dit land was niet al te blij met het bezoek. Na enige tijd kwam hij uit zijn hol, en kwam ten aanval. Hij hoorde een brul, en greep zijn dolk. Hij slikte even toen hij de tijger zag staan die klaar stond om aan te vallen. De tijger sprong op hem af, en probeerde hem te slaan met zijn klauw. Maar hij blokkeerde het met zijn dolk. Hij slaakte een oorlogskreet en raakte de tijger twee keer in zijn nek. Toen sprong de tijger echt af op hem, en hij stompte zijn dolk recht in het hart van de tijger. Een enorm gebrul verdoofde hem bijna. De tijger greep zijn arm, maar liet toen los als een verlamde. De tijger stortte neer op de grond. Spoedig had hij het beest onthoofd, en brulde als een woesteling toen hij de kop van de tijger in de lucht trok als een trofee. De tijger schedel zou het sieraad worden van zijn tent, en ook de tijger huid zou hij goed kunnen gebruiken.

Het Varkenshart

De vier palen

Atedo stak het hart van het varken op de puntige top van de paal. Het was een groot hart. Het hart werd doorboort als een teken dat de jacht over was. Atedo viel op de grond, want hij was zwaar gewond. Hyena's kwamen om hem te verslinden. Toen sprongen ze op om het hart van het varken naar beneden te trekken, maar het lukte hen niet. Stambewoners vonden het half opgevreten lichaam van Atedo later. De paal met het hart van het varken werd heilig verklaard als de paal van Atedo. Atedo was in hun ogen als een groot jager tot de eeuwige jachtvelden gegaan.

Zo waren er vier palen. Een paal voor runderharten, een paal voor buffelharten, een paal voor bizonharten en een paal voor varkensharten. Atedo had hen dit geleerd. Zo waren er de vier palen van Atedo. De vier palen functioneerden als een anti-orakel, om de stem van de goden te doven, en de druk die zij op de stam probeerden te leggen.

De dood

In een grot vond hij tabletten met vreemde tekens erop. Buiten waren de mammoeten. Buiten waren de paarden. Er was een grote oorlog. Hij schreef de tekens op zijn hand en zijn lichaam, en verdween toen. Hij moest dieper de grot in, waar hij nog meer tabletten vond, met nog meer vreemde tekens. Hij hoorde het gebrul van grote harige dieren buiten. Hij wist niet hoe lang hij dit nog zou volhouden. Toen stierf hij.

Bewerkt

Ook hij was verwond, verwond door de goden. Daarom streed hij tegen hen. Hij leefde van de jacht, van een diepe woede binnenin. Hij kon hier niet blijven, en rende dieper de wildernis in. Het oerwoud was zacht, met zachte stemmen, en ook was het nat. De droogte had hier plaatsgemaakt voor vruchtbare palmbomen, en diep groene struiken en bomen. Het groene zat hem achterna. Het verslond hem. Ook het blauwe terroriseerde hem. Mag ik wat van dat rode, dat rode daar ? Hij dook in een rivier, waar de wateren bruin waren, gelig bruin. Hij was thuisgekomen. Hij kon haar stem horen. Ze stond aan de kant. Maar haar boog was op hem gericht. De tabletten hadden de waarheid gesproken. Zij trok hem uit het water. Terug kon hij niet. Hij werd in een hok gedrukt, in een kooi. Het varkenshart was op een paal gestoken. Ze bleef naar hem kijken, maar toen draaide ze zich om. De tabletten hadden gezegd dat wanneer zij zich om zou draaien, dan viel het slot dicht. In gevangenschap was hij, maar niet gebonden. Hij leed, maar honger had hij niet. Dit hadden de tabletten voorzegd. Dit hadden de stemmen in de grot gesproken. En had hij de tabletten wel goed ontcijferd ? Was dit wel echt

hun boodschap ? Of had zijn verkeerde interpretatie hem hier geleid ? Hij kon zich niet bewegen. Hij was als een gebondene zonder touwen.

Hij lag stijf van de schrik in een hok. Het varkenshart was op een paal gestoken. Precies zoals de tabletten hadden voorspeld. Maar waren zijn interpretaties wel waar ? Of had hij de tekens verkeerd vertaald ? Waarom was hij hier ?

De jacht zat diep in hem. Hij moest naar buiten. Maar hij kon niet. Hij was opgesloten, en zij had haar rug naar hem gekeerd. Het slot was dichtgevallen. De tabletten hadden gesproken. Of had zijn verkeerde vertaling en interpretatie gesproken ? Nu was hij hier, als een gebondene ongebondene. Toen kwam ze zijn hok binnen, en maakte hem tot slaaf. Ook dat stond op de tabletten. En hij geloofde het. Hij was onder hypnose.

Hij moest jagen voor de stam, met een touw om zijn nek. Hij kon niet ontsnappen. Er was altijd iemand bij hem. Hij was bewerkt.

David's huis

Zo waren daar David's goden in de verte. Maar hij zat in dit hok, geketend aan handen en voeten. Toen begon de honger toe te slaan, zoals de tabletten hadden voorspeld. En hij geloofde het, want het was zo echt. David's goden begonnen tot hem te fluisteren, om hem een uittocht aan te bieden. Maar zij stonden voor hem met touwen die ze om zijn nek wilden doen, en zij hadden ook ketenen. Met veel voedsel kwamen zij hem omkopen, maar hij koos voor de honger. De honger leidde hem tot de verlamdheid, en de verlamdheid leidde hem tot de vergetelheid.

'Stommeling !' werd er geroepen. 'Nu gebeurt het in het Oosten. Een kindeke is geboren daar die jou kan redden. Jouw verlosser is opgestaan.'

Maar hij kon het niet meer horen. Het varkenshart was op een paal geslagen. Het gejoel verdoofde hem. Ze hadden hem alleen gelaten, maar het was als een schild over hem.

Toch was er iets in hem wat hem deed geloven dat hij David's zoon was. De verloren zoon van David, rijk door de stammen onder het gezag van David. Hij werd meegetrokken door het geluid, in een woeste optocht na een geslaagde oorlog. David met een zwart leren handschoen

trok het varkenshart op. De hyenas hadden het hart bereikt. Op een paal werd het hart gestoken. Hyenas dronken gulzig van het bloed, als de brug tussen twee planeten.

David's zoon was hij, zoals de tabletten hadden uitgelegd. Hij wist het zeker dat hij de tekens naar waarheid had vertaald. Maar toch was er twijfel in zijn hart. Hij verkoos de honger boven de gulzigheid. Zijn hart raakte verlamd, en hij verloor zijn geheugen. Toen David hem vond werd hij gedwongen te eten. Hij werd in een koninklijk pak gehesen, maar toen David even niet oplette, en met zijn paarden bezig was, rende hij de wildernis in. Al snel werd het koninklijk pak vuil, en kwamen er scheuren in. David zou hem niet meer herkennen.

Koning David zat in zijn paleis, rouwende over zijn zoon Absalom, de koninklijke erfenis. Hij rouwde over de stammen die hem ontnomen waren. Zijn paleis zou spoedig branden.

De gebroken tabletten

'Breng dan hulde aan David !' werd er geroepen. David was als een schim tot het dodenrijk gedaald, en als een koning en god ontvangen door de zombies en schaduwen, en werd gekroond met hoge geestelijkheid. 'Mijn zoon Absalom, waar is hij ?' riep David.

David's zoon rende door de wildernis, maar werd weer gegrepen. Weer werd hij in een hok gedrukt. Hij kreeg er flink van langs. Nu zouden ze hem pas echt uithongeren. Zijn geheugen moest dood.

Woest werd hij weer uit het hok gesleurd. De rode planeet hing boven het kamp. De tabletten in zijn hoofd waren gebroken.

Het rode

'Nu is het kindeke geboren,' zei een stem. 'Nu daagt het in het Oosten, nu zijt wellekome.' Maar het hart van het varken was op een paal gespietst, en de stem moest doven.

Twaalf stammen opgesloten in een pot, en die pot werd in een rivier geworpen. De tabletten waren verbroken. Hij leerde nieuwe tekens. In diepe slavernij moest hij. Hij leefde van de jacht. Hij was tot de onderwereld gedaald. Hier was het groene en het blauwe niet. Hier was het bruine, het rode en het gele. Duisternis heerste hier. Hij was een vechtslaaf. Zoveel oorlogen moesten gewonnen worden.

'Zoon van David, jij bent het zonlicht.' Maar hij was in een nieuwe familie aangenomen. Mag ik wat van dat rode, dat rode daar ? Zij lieten hem in leven, omdat hij joeg. Maar hij jaagde voor de stam.

Het hok

Ze reden hem rond op een kar met een kaalgeschoren hoofd. David zou hem aan Saturnus geofferd hebben. Maar zij reden hem tot de paal met het varkenshart. Verder deden ze niets. Hij stapte uit, kuste de paal, en liep terug naar zijn hok. Die nacht kon hij niet slapen. De deur van zijn hok was opengelaten. Hij had niet de neiging om te ontsnappen. Hij wist dat buiten het hok het grootste en ergste hok was.

Het gif

Ze bracht hem wat soep de volgende dag, vol met het rode. Hij stond op, en keek naar haar. Toen ging hij weer zitten en at van de soep. Het gif taste zijn hoofd aan. Hij hallucineerde, drijvende in de rivier, met zijn hoofd naar de sterrenhemel. Hij voelde haar armen om zich heen. Hij voelde zich rustig. Het gif was om hem sterk te maken. Sterk voor wat ? Hij voelde zich juist zwakker, maar zijn woede aanvallen werden steeds intenser, en een enorme kracht maakte zich meester van hem, maar dat was altijd maar voor even. Dan voelde hij zich weer zo zwak en week. Hij voelde zich verlamd, met scheuten van onvoorstelbare kracht. Dit is wat het gif deed.

Bloed lucht

De paal met het gespietste varkenshart bracht honger. De lucht was van bloed. Dat is wat ze inademden. De zee was van bloed, en de rivieren. Hij ademde niet door zijn longen, maar door de top van zijn vruchtbare deel. De vruchtbare delen waren door zijn hele lichaam, als schakels. Zij ademden bloed-lucht, de rode lucht. Mag ik wat van dat rode daar ? De gespleten top van zijn vruchtbare deel was als zijn longen.

Het varkenshart

De top van zijn vruchtbare deel dronk van het bloed in de rivier. Zou hij dat niet doen, dan zou hij sterven. Het waren zijn lippen, en toen moest hij ze voeden. Hij was diep in hen, en toen zonk hij diep in de rivier, verdrinkende, om visioenen te krijgen. 'Drink niet !' riep hij, maar ze dronken. Hij moest ze voeden. Hij verloste zich uit hun greep, en zwom naar de oppervlakte. Hij wilde niet sterven. Hij kroop uit de rivier, maar ze trokken hem terug. Hij moest ze voeden. Hij joeg voor hen.

De paal met het varkenshart zou altijd het teken hiervan zijn. Hij kon het niet wegwissen. Zij hadden zijn hart geroofd.

De Ontsnapping

Jara stond stil. Ze keek om haar heen. De rivier leek alsof het elk moment kon opwellen. De zon raakte bijna de rivier aan, geheel wit in de verte. Apen zag ze aan de overkant. Al snel was ze in de rivier en zwom naar de overkant. Ze greep een liaan, en trok haarzelf uit het water. Apen staarden haar aan. Ze kroop op een heuveltje verder het water uit, haar huid zat onder de modder. Ze hoorde het geluid van de apen, en opeens voelde ze hun handen op haar huid. Ze trokken haar verder omhoog. Het water dampte als in een mist, en het was er warm. Even later lag ze languit op het gras, tussen het mos, onder de bomen. Het was een prachtige jungle hier, in de dieptes van het regenwoud. Weer raakten de apen haar aan, en de rillingen gingen door haar lijf. Ze omhelsde hen, en ze lieten het toe. Ze was hun kind. Ze maakte zich meester van de situatie, stond op, en rende het oerwoud in. Even later stond ze in een hut. Ze was moe, ging op de versleten matras liggen. Niemand kon haar zeggen waar ze was. Het leek wel alsof de apen hier woonden. Achter de hut vond ze een skelet. Ze nam van wat appels die hier en daar lagen. Ze was hongerig, en ze at zelfs wat oud brood. Haar hele leven had ze verlangd naar een rustige plaats, waar ze alleen zou zijn.

Ze was onrustig, zoals de apen onrustig waren, maar de natuur was mooi hier, ze kon hier wegglijden. De apen probeerden met haar te communiceren, maar zij gleed steeds weg omdat ze moe was. Ze hielden haar vast. Even later duwden ze haar bananen in haar mond.

De natuur was als gladgestreken hier, niemand zei wat. Ze voelde zich oud en jong. Ze staarde naar het amulet wat ze om haar nek had gedragen. Ze had het in haar hand. Plotseling draaide ze zich om en zag een man staan, een indiaan. Een band met een paar witte veren om zijn hoofd. Hij pakte haar hand, en ging naast haar liggen. Zij vond dat eigenlijk heel normaal. Misschien woonde de man hier. Hij joeg haar niet weg. Hij gedroeg zich mysterieus. Ze voelde geen angst voor hem, alleen acceptatie.

Als ze in zijn ogen keek zag ze een open jungle. Hij staarde naar haar. Ze kon wegzinken in zijn ogen. Ze zeiden niets tegen elkaar. De man maakte een vuur, en ging erbij zitten, en Jara kwam er ook bijzitten even later. Het leek wel alsof elke minuut een uur duurde. Zo stil was het hier. Er was hier een open wereld, een diepte.

Ze omhelsden elkaar terwijl ze elkaar niet kenden. Ze wisten genoeg. De natuur bond hen samen. Er waren geen woorden nodig, alles was ondergedompeld in de prachtige natuur. De ontmoeting duurde lang. Daarna vertrok de man weer. Jara staarde naar het amulet. Het glom. Ze ging terug naar de versleten matras, en viel in slaap.

Ze zag haar reis als een gezel, ze hield van de reis. Ze at van de natuur, en dronk van de rivier, het was genoeg. Ze was gelukkig. Jara was als bedekt door de natuur, als een veilige schuilplaats, geen slavernij meer. Maar nog wel de littekens daarvan. Ze was ontsnapt, ze had dagen door het bos gerend, en nu was ze hier. Slangen gleden door het gras. Ze had van hen niets te vrezen. Het was alsof de natuur haar opnam.

Ze wilde wraak nemen op de blanken, maar hoe. Ze was zelfs gemerkt in haar mond. Vreemde tekens hadden ze in haar tanden gesneden, en metalen erin gegoten. Met haar mes probeerde ze het eruit te snijden. Al snel was ze aan het bloeden. De apen kwamen dichtbij. Ze kwam erachter dat de kolonisten zendertjes hadden gestopt in de dieptes van haar kiezen. Ze wist dat ze in gevaar was, nog steeds. Misschien konden ze haar wel achtervolgen. Ze rende verder, de voetstappen van de man volgende. Na enkele dagen kwam ze hem tegen. Hij trok haar naar zich toe. Ze spraken niet. Het was alsof ze elkaar aanvoelden. Ze hoorden schoten in de lucht. 'Slaven ontsnapt,' riep iemand. De man greep zijn mes, maar daarna greep hij een pijl, en toen zijn boog. Beiden renden ze verder. Weer waren er schoten, maar ze zagen niemand. Ze kwamen aan bij een riviertje, waar een bootje was. Ze namen het bootje om de rivier mee over te komen. Aan de overkant gekomen wees Jara op de mond van de man. Ze opende haar mond om haar tanden te laten zien. Ook de man opende zijn mond, en Jara zag het metaal, en de zendertjes. Ze probeerde het hem duidelijk te maken. Met een mes kregen ze het eruit. Jara gooide de zendertjes in het riviertje. Toen gingen ze dieper het oerwoud in. Ze hoopten dat niemand hen hier nog zou kunnen volgen. De natuur was te mooi om daar nog drukte om te maken. Het was alsof hun lasten door die pracht werden afgespoeld. Het was alsof de man wilde zeggen : Laten we hier opnieuw beginnen. Jara knikte. Zijn ogen spraken. Een leven hier zou goed zijn.

Ze wilden wraak nemen op de blanken, maar de natuur nam hen mee. De natuur deed hen vergeten, maar er was nog wel die diepe pijn van binnen. Er was geen doel, er was alleen het leven. Het was als een warme haard, de natuur om hen heen. En die kwam dieper en dieper om de pijn weg te wassen. De man raakte haar aan. Het voelde als vertrouwd. De zachte

aanraking van de natuur leek het te vermengen. Voor het eerst voelde Jara zich gelukkig. Ze kon de sterke stroming van de rivier horen in de verte. Alle geluiden kwamen haar lichaam binnen, en openbaarden zich aan haar. De man streelde door haar haar, en ging met zijn vingertoppen over haar lippen. Ze boog haar hoofd. Ze begreep niet wat er gaande was. De man omhelsde haar van achteren, en in haar gevoel was het alsof hij tegen haar zei : 'Je bent vrij nu.' Ze zochten de rivier weer op, en gingen daar zwemmen. Hier zouden ze willen wonen. In de verte was een waterval die ze konden horen bulderen. Ze besloten er naartoe te gaan. Het was alsof de waterval hen van binnen schoonwaste. De waterplanten waren prachtig en overtuigend hier. Ze sprongen bijna door het water heen.

Wisten zij dat zij kinderen waren van de bomen, van de struiken die onderwater en bovenwater groeiden. Wisten zij dat zij gemaakt waren voor ritmische en kronkelende groei. Krokodillen waren hun vrienden hier, geen vijanden. Ze waren aan het ware gevaar ontsnapt. Ook de waterslangen waren hen goedgezind. Ze voelden zich fijn met deze kronkelende elementen. De waterplant was als de hemel voor hen. Ze stonden open voor het harmonische gevoel van de natuur, ze spraken met hun ogen. Het water was een bron van leven voor hen. De man staarde naar haar amulet. Hij kuste het amulet. Het was alsof de man wilde zeggen : Als zij, het amulet, haar ogen zal openen, waar zullen de blanke kolonisten dan zijn, heus, ze zullen geleid worden naar de hel. Ze hebben een hel gemaakt, een hel die hen dan zal opslokken. Het was alsof het zonlicht het zo overbracht, en zo waar als de waterval zelf. Ze keek hem diep in de ogen, alsof ze het verankerde. Ze had respect voor hem, stond open voor hem, ze besefte dat zij het antwoord om haar nek droeg. Het amulet leek op een slang. Het had veel waarde voor haar. Sommige slangen hier leken op het amulet. Het was alsof het amulet ooit de sleutel was van haar kooi. Ze voelde zich week worden als ze naar hem keek. De blauwe lucht leek neer te dalen in de rivier, op weg naar de waterval. Het licht werd alle kanten opgereflecteerd.

De Ballerina

De Rozentrap

Ik las een boek. De letters leken tot mij te komen, en begonnen in mij te draaien. Alsof een vrouw tot mij sprak. Ze was naakt. Ik kon haar door de letters zien. Ze was een engel, de engel van het boek. Het boek was bijzonder, als een schilderij. Ik legde het boek weer terug, en pakte een ander boek, en hetzelfde gebeurde, maar het was een andere vrouw.

Het was een lange reis naar Bagdad. Eindelijk kwam ik daar aan, en stapte uit de trein. Er waren hier huizen met sluiers, en achter de sluiers zaten vrouwen. Sommigen rookten, anderen aten, en weer anderen deden niets. Ik kon dwars door de sluiers heenzien. Er waren rode, dampende lampen achter. Alsof ze iets probeerden te vermorzelen. Ik ramde mijzelf een weg door Bagdad.

Ze had het haar lang, golvend, toen ik bij haar aankwam. Ik zou nu haar bodyguard zijn. Ze sprak met veel tussenpozen.

Ik volgde haar op haar rozentrap. Ik was hier voor geld. Ik had haar een brief geschreven, voor veel geld, en ik zou nog veel meer doen, voor geld. Ik zou haar de show geven van haar leven. Het kon me verder niet schelen wie ze was. Veel informatie had ik niet nodig, als ik mijn geld maar kreeg. Ik droeg ook zorg voor haar dochter. Dat maakte niet uit. Ik was er nu toch.

Ik gaf haar de show van haar leven. Ik maakte mij op, dook, en hees mijzelf op het piratenschip. Ik zat vast aan elastieken. Het schip trok me op naar onbekende hoogtes, hoger dan ik ooit durfde dromen. Zoet was het hier, en zij was zoet. Even dacht ik niet meer aan het geld, maar aan haar. Maar toen werd ik weer stoicijns, als een gelikt zakenman. Ik moest hier weg, en wel zo snel mogelijk. De show was afgelopen. Ze liet me niet los, en ik liet politie komen, en een piratenleger, die haar gillend afvoerden.

Thuis zat ik het geld te tellen. Ik had goede winst gemaakt. Hier kon ik wat mee. Ik was een ballerina, ik was een pop. Ik bewoog door vreemde muziek, en vreemde ritmes. Magische muziek, en voor al het andere was ik doof.

Het

Luipaard

Hoofdstuk 1.

‘Vreemd,’ zei Frida. ‘Het is alsof hij hier nog steeds is.’

‘Wat bedoel je,’ zei Frits, ‘weg is weg.’

‘Oh wat kun jij toch koud zijn,’ zei Frida. ‘Er is meer tussen hemel en aarde.’

‘Goedgelovig zieltje,’ zei Frits. ‘Dood is dood, en we gaan er allemaal aan.’

Frits zat wat computerspelletjes te spelen in de hoek van de kamer. Frida had zich opgemaakt en probeerde hem te verleiden. ‘Sexualiteit is als de dood,’ zei Frits onverschillig. ‘Ik voel me altijd verscheurd als door een beest na een vrijpartij. En je weet dat ik niet van make up houdt. Doe mij maar puur natuur.’

‘Ga in een hutje op de hei wonen, Frits,’ zei Frida. Even later had ze de make up van haar gezicht gewassen. Ze voelde zich alleen. Hector net overleden, en nu zo’n koude partner.

‘Echt, heus,’ zei Frits. ‘Al dat bijgeloof is niks, en zeker niet het geloof in sex. Het leidt allemaal nergens toe. En dat moet dan liefde voorstellen.’

‘Goh, Frits,’ zei Frida. ‘Ik houd toch van je ?’

‘Kan dat niet op een andere manier,’ zei Frits. ‘Het is altijd hetzelfde. We kunnen toch gewoon bij elkaar zijn zonder al dat plakkerige gedoe.’

‘Jij noemt dat plakkerig,’ zei Frida, ‘ik noem het gewoon interesse.’

‘Ik ben meer gesteld op het platonische,’ zei Frits. ‘Dat noem ik interesse. We kunnen toch gewoon praten over de dingen die ons bezig houden, zonder door lichamelijke rituelen alles te bedekken.’

‘Nou, dit houdt mij bezig, en het is gezond,’ zei Frida. ‘Ik wil je kennen.’

‘Praat dan gewoon met me,’ zei Frits. ‘Ik ben hier.’

‘Nee, je bent er niet bij met je gedachtes. Je zit die domme computerspelletjes te doen,’ zei Frida.

‘Zie, je hebt geen interesse in mij. Je noemt dat wat mij bezig houdt dom,’ zei Frits.

‘Laten we geen ruzie maken,’ zei Frida.

‘Mijn hand erop,’ zei Frits.

‘Weet je dat je prachtig bent zonder al die make up troep,’ zei Frits.

‘Ik weet niks, ik voel me verstoten,’ zei Frida. ‘En misschien komt het wel omdat Hector er niet meer is.’

‘Een nieuwe hond wil ik niet,’ zei Frits.

‘Ik ook niet,’ zei Frida.

‘En een poes dan ?’ vraagt Frits.

Na een paar dagen hebben ze twee poezen in huis. Frits noemt Frida de poezenkoningin. Met kerst staat er een grote kerstboom in de kamer, en samen vieren ze kerst met de twee poezen. Frits en Frida hebben veel kadootjes voor elkaar gekocht, om elkaar de liefde te bewijzen. ‘Ik mis Hector,’ zegt Frida.

‘Ik ook,’ zegt Frits, ‘maar het leven gaat door. We kunnen hem met geen mogelijkheid terugkrijgen.’

‘Het brandt van binnen, het eet me op van binnen,’ zegt Frida.

‘Dat is wat de dood doet,’ zegt Frits. ‘Het hoort bij het leven. We gaan er allemaal aan.’

‘Frits,’ zegt Frida. ‘Dat klinkt niet echt avontuurlijk. Kun jij ons niet redden van dit noodlot.’

‘Nee,’ zegt Frits, ‘praat nu geen onzin, Frida. Niemand kan tegen de dood op. Dat moet je gewoon accepteren.’

‘Ik kan het niet,’ zegt Frida. ‘Er moet gewoon meer zijn tussen hemel en aarde.’

‘Dat hebben de mensen bedacht, Frida,’ zegt Frits. ‘Eens verlaten we allemaal het schip van leven, en dan is het afgelopen. We zijn dan niets meer dan een hoopje as wat door de wind verder van elkaar wordt losgetrokken.’

‘Geloof je dat echt ?’ vraagt Frida. ‘Wat ben jij dan bijgelovig, zeg, en wat een kerk zal dat wezen. De kerk die gelooft dat alles eens ophoudt.’

‘Het is geen geloof, jij bent hier de gelovige onder ons,’ zegt Frits.

‘Hoe weet je zo zeker dat alles straks wegrot onder de grond, om in het totale niets te verdwijnen,’ zegt Frida.

‘Gewoon logisch nadenken,’ zegt Frits. ‘Er is geen hemel, dus er kan ook niks tussen aarde en hemel zijn, dat is gewoon onzin, Frida, en dat weet jij ook. Neem een voorbeeld aan de poezen. Komen die ook met dit soort stomzinnige verhalen aanzetten ?’

‘Nu noem je mijn interesses ook ineens stom,’ zegt Frida.

‘Nee, Frida,’ zegt Frits, ‘dat zijn geen interesses, maar illusies. Je bent misleid door koppige mensen die niet aan de dood willen geloven. Eeuwig leven ? Kom zeg.’

‘Of reincarnatie,’ zegt Frida.

‘Ander onderwerp,’ zegt Frits.

‘Ik houd van je, schat,’ zegt Frida.

‘Ander onderwerp,’ zegt Frits.

‘Houd je nog een beetje van me ?’ vraagt Frida.

‘Jazeker,’ zegt Frits, ‘maar ik wil dat je daarop wat meer zult vertrouwen, in plaats van alsmaar over de liefde te praten, en die overmatige honger naar sexualiteit.’

‘Je doet alsof ik een sexbeest ben, alsof het een obsessie is. Ik heb gewoon pijn van binnen,’ zegt Frida.

‘Eens per maand is goed, maar eens per week is teveel van het goede,’ zegt Frits. ‘Het moet speciaal blijven, geen dagelijks brood.’

‘Kom op nou, Frits, dagelijks brood. Ik heb het er haast nooit over,’ zegt Frida.

‘Goed, ander onderwerp dan,’ zegt Frits.

‘Misschien heb je gelijk, Frits, misschien moet ik me meer op de oppervlakte bewegen en wat subtieler worden, en het horizontale wat breder maken, dat is ook een soort diepte, en wat cryptischer. Dat rechtstreekse is inderdaad teveel van het goede. En kijk die katten nou, zijn ze niet schattig, en zij zijn ook zo subtiel en mysterieus,’ zegt Frida. ‘Ze zullen veel geheimen hebben.’

‘Doe nou maar normaal,’ zegt Frits. ‘Altijd dat gefilosofeer. Wees nou eens nuchter.’

‘Alright, Frits, kun jij me daar dan mee helpen ?’ vraagt Frida. ‘Ik ben maar een beginneling.’

‘Altijd,’ zegt Frits.

Hoofdstuk 2.

‘Frits, je bent geweldig,’ zegt Frida. ‘Een betere vriend kan ik me niet voorstellen.’

‘Dank je wel, Frida,’ zegt Frits. ‘En jij mag er ook wezen.’

Hij heeft bijna pretlichtjes in zijn ogen. Op zijn verzoek lopen ze de volgende dagen heel wat pretparken af, en doen veel spelletjes. Daar is Frits verzot op. Frida probeert zich in Frits in te leven. Maar dan moet Frits voor zijn werk een hele lange tijd naar het buitenland. Frida voelt

zich erg alleen, maar dan ontmoet zij Fred. Fred is het tegenovergestelde van Frits. Ze moet Fred gewoon de hele tijd van haar afhouden. Alhoewel ze verzot is op Fred mist ze Frits verschrikkelijk. Frits was altijd haar rots in de branding. Fred is gevoelig en week, en zij moet hem altijd uit de put praten. Ze hebben niks met elkaar, maar ze worden goede vrienden, en zo heeft Frida in ieder geval wat gezelschap. Frits weet er ook van, en vindt het allemaal best. Hij heeft zelf ook zijn extra vriendinnen op zijn werk.

Met Fred kan Frida echt in de diepte, ook over het geloof. ‘Mijn vriend wil me stijf en oppervlakkig maken,’ zegt Frida.

‘Oh, dat kan handig zijn,’ zegt Fred. ‘Als een schild tegen de wereld, en zodat vreemde zuignappen je niet weghalen.’

‘Maar soms wil ik weggehaald worden,’ zegt Frida. ‘Het leven is zwaar. Ik mis Hector, en nu mis ik Frits.’

‘Maar je hebt mij nu,’ zegt Fred.

‘Dat weet ik wel,’ zegt Frida. ‘Maar het is toch anders.’

‘En je hebt de poezen,’ zegt Fred.

‘Ja, maar ik mis een schakel,’ zegt Frida.

‘De volgende keer dat ik kom zal ik Loesia meebrengen,’ zegt Fred. ‘Zij is echt geweldig. Ik weet zeker dat jullie veel aan elkaar zullen hebben.’

En zo gebeurde het. Fred neemt de eerstvolgende keer een vriendin met zich mee, Loesia, een feestelijk type. Maakt echt wat leven in de brouwerij. Ze heeft veel verhalen te vertellen en heeft een diep inzicht in mensen. Ze heeft een serieuze kant maar ook veel humor. Frida houdt direct heel veel van haar, en ze kan nog goed koken ook. Binnen de kortste keren zijn Frida en Loesia de dikste vriendinnen.

‘Wat vind je van Fred,’ vraagt Frida haar op een dag.

‘Ach ja, Fred is Fred,’ zegt Loesia. ‘Een leuke jongen, maar niks voor mij. Veel te afhankelijk, veel te teer. Ik zou gek worden als ik met hem samen moest leven, maar we zijn goede vrienden. Ik wil hem graag helpen.’

Frida knikt. Fred leefde helemaal in zijn eigen wereld, en ging soms over de grenzen van anderen heen. Hij kon soms best wel zelfzuchtig zijn. Alles draaide om hem, maar verder was het een lieve jongen. Fred zou graag verkering willen hebben, maar daar was hij eigenlijk niet de persoon voor. Veel meisjes vonden hem leuk, maar toch kwam het er nooit van, alsof een onzichtbare kracht er tussenzat. Daar zat Fred wel erg mee.

‘Ach, je zal heus op een dag wel de ware vinden,’ zei Loesia vaak. Fred was verliefd op Loesia. Hij was helemaal verzot op haar, maar zij niet op hem. Wel voelde ze zich verplicht om hem te helpen. Het was een echt zorgenkindje, als een jongere broer.

‘Fred, ik moet eens met je praten,’ zei Loesia op een dag. ‘Zou jij eens met mij en Frida op een kleine vakantie willen. Dan gaan we naar het bos en dan nemen we de tent mee.’ Dat zag Fred natuurlijk wel zitten. Het liep uit op iets goeds. Ze hadden hun tent dichtbij een rivier, en zo waren ze allemaal even weg uit de dagelijkse sleur, en voor Fred was dat ook wel goed. Fred hield van wandelen en de natuur. Hij ging vaak alleen op pad, en zo hadden de vrouwen veel tijd voor henzelf. Het leek wel alsof Fred door de natuur wat zelfstandiger werd, en wat creatiever werd. Hij begon zijn avontuurlijke kant te ontdekken. Hij kon zich prima redden zo. Loesia en Frida waren erg trots op hem, en vonden dat het plan goed geslaagd was.

Toen Frits eindelijk weer thuis was kon hij direct goed met Fred opschieten. Het bleek dat ze een goede uitwerking op elkaar hadden. Ze gingen vaak samen op pad. Frits was ervan overtuigd dat Fred bij Loesia hoorde, en na wat bemiddelingen stemde Loesia uiteindelijk toe. Fred was wat volwassener geworden, en stond op zijn eigen benen nu, dus voor Loesia was de kust nu vrij. Omdat Fred en Loesia nu een relatie hadden en dat veel tijd in beslag nam hadden Frits en Frida ineens weer veel meer tijd voor elkaar. Frits was wat opener geworden, en wat dieper, en dat bleek ook voornamelijk te komen door wat vrouwen die hij in het buitenland had ontmoet. Het was alsof ze hem betoverd hadden, als een fles opengetrokken. Frits voelde zich vernieuwd en ingewijd. Frida was tevreden. Het was nu alsof haar eigen fles ook werd opengetrokken.

Bij de volgende werkreis van Frits ontmoette ze Jan en Marlies. Zij bleken het perfecte stel te zijn. Ze waren erg op elkaar ingespeeld, en Frida bewonderde ze echt. ‘Dat zou ik ook wel willen,’ zei ze tegen zichzelf. Maar ze mocht niet klagen. het leek wel alsof Jan en Marlies in een diepe dans waren. Alles was harmonieus, en ze hadden zulke mooie stemmen. Het leken wel twee prachtige struiken die in elkaar verstrengeld waren. Frida kreeg het er warm van van binnen. Ook Fred en Loesia ontmoetten Jan en Marlies eens en werden er door aangestoken. ‘Dit is goed,’ dacht Frida. ‘Deze mensen hebben wat te vertellen, en wat te laten zien.’ Het leek wel alsof Jan en Marlies geheime therapeuten waren. De manier waarop ze met elkaar omgingen was aanstekelijk. En het was heel heilzaam. Zelfs de poezen reageerden er goed op. Frida had het gevoel dat eindelijk het gat werd gedicht wat was ontstaan door de dood van Hector. Jan en Marlies hadden drie honden : Eelco, John en Hotte. En Frida was direct erg aan ze gehecht.

Na een paar maanden was Frits weer thuis. Frits was zichtbaar veranderd. Het was een zware werkreis geweest, en het was alsof hij weer terug bij af was. Dit was de Frits zoals Frida hem kende. Frida’s droom was voorbij. Frits was moe, en wilde alleen maar veel slapen. Frida zat aan zijn bed. ‘Is er soms iets gebeurd ? Je bent anders dan hoe je de vorige keer was toen je thuiskwam,’ zei Frida.

Frits wilde er niet over praten. Maar toen er brieven van een bepaalde vrouw binnen begonnen te komen kwam Frida er al snel achter dat Frits een ander had. ‘Ik ga bij je weg, Frida,’ zei hij. ‘Ik moet dit gewoon doen. Ik denk dat ik nu toch echt de ware heb gevonden.’

‘En dat wat wij hadden dan ?’ snikt Frida. ‘Gooi je dat dan zomaar bij de vuilnis ?’

‘Je moet het accepteren,’ zei Frits. ‘Het is gewoon niet anders.’

De vrouw was heel tropisch. Frits liet Frida wat foto’s zien. ‘Ja, en ze maakt je moe,’ zei Frida. ‘Dat is wat tropische vrouwen doen. Het zijn een soort tse tse vliegen, vermoeidheidsvliegen. Je kunt dat exotische niet aan.’

‘Je hebt gelijk, maar ik ben verliefd,’ zei Frits. ‘Het is een pijn in mijn buik. Ik kan dat ook niet helpen.’

‘Alles voor niets geweest dan,’ zegt Frida. ‘Al die jaren gewoon verspild met jou.’

‘Nee, we hebben een goede tijd gehad,’ zegt Frits. ‘Maar aan alle dingen komt een eind, en ook dit.’

‘Ja, dat zeg je altijd,’ zegt Frida. ‘En wat heeft zij dat ik niet heb ?’

Een paar dagen erna zijn Jan en Marlies op bezoek. Ze vinden het heel erg als ze het horen, en proberen Frida een beetje te troosten, en ook Frits. Ze hebben hun honden meegenomen. Frits is erg onder de indruk van het stel, en het lijkt alsof hij een beetje erdoor wordt opgefleurd.

‘Sommige mannen zijn nu eenmaal aangetrokken door het exotische, als een vlucht uit de dagelijkse sleur,’ zei Jan. ‘Soms krijgen ze dat pas op latere leeftijd, het is de roep van de natuur, als een vlucht uit het gewone.’

‘Maar Frits is nooit zo geweest,’ zei Frida. ‘Hij hield wel altijd veel van computerspelletjes.’

‘Ja, het is allemaal heel speels,’ zei Jan.

‘Ik kan het allemaal moeilijk accepteren,’ zei Frida. ‘Ik voel me zo dom.’

‘Je bent niet dom,’ zei Jan. ‘Frits is gewoon aangestoken door iets wat hij niet kende. Als hij jou nog niet zou kennen en hij zou jou hebben ontmoet dan zou hij precies hetzelfde hebben gehad. Sommige mannen hebben na een bepaalde tijd van het een het andere nodig.’

‘Ik voel me verworpen,’ zegt Frida.

‘Vriendschappen gaan vaker kapot door wat voor reden dan ook,’ zegt Jan. ‘Daar kun je niets aan doen.’

‘Ben ik niet goed genoeg dan ?’ vraagt Frida.

‘Het is als verschillende groentes. Sommige mannen kunnen niet alleen van doperwten leven,’ zegt Jan.

‘Ja, maar ik kan toch zelf ook varieren,’ zegt Frida. ‘Ik kan toch de ene dag als spinazie zijn en de andere dag als bloemkool.’

Later horen ze dat ook Fred en Loesia weer uit elkaar zijn. Het leven met al zijn relaties is inderdaad maar broos. Bijna niets valt er echt in stand te houden. Alles valt uit elkaar vroeg of laat. Daarvan is Frida zich erg bewust. Na een paar weken ontmoet ze Lydia, een wijze vrouw. Lydia kan ook de toekomst voorspellen, en zegt dat Frida een nieuwe man zou ontmoeten. Die man is Willem. Binnen enkele dagen zitten ze al samen in Frida’s kamer. Frits is inmiddels vertrokken.

Willem schijnt al snel de liefde van haar leven te zijn. Hij gaat veel dieper dan Frits en ook dieper dan Fred ooit geweest is. Willem is zachtmoedig, warmbloedig en geinteresseerd. Ze hebben een korte maar hevige relatie, en dan wordt ook Willem door een exotische vrouw aan de haak geslagen, en is telkens maar moe. Frida begint het patroon te bemerken. Lydia verteld haar dat ze er van moet leren. Kniezen heeft geen zin. Maar Frida is depressief. Uiteindelijk belt ze Fred. Fred is erg behulpzaam. Samen besluiten ze erop uit te gaan in de natuur. Fred vertelt haar veel over wat er is misgegaan in zijn relatie met Loesia. ‘Ik snap niet waarom Frits jou heeft gedumpt. Je bent een fantastische vrouw,’ zegt Fred. ‘Mag ik het van Frits en Willem overnemen ?’ Frida glimlacht. ‘Fred je bent veel te jong voor mij.’

‘We schelen maar acht jaar,’ zegt Fred.

‘Dat is nogal wat,’ lacht Frida.

‘Als we ouder worden zal het leeftijdsverschil verdwijnen,’ zegt Fred.

Fred en Frida maken veel wandelingen en praten over het leven. ‘Hoe zie jij exotische vrouwen,’ vraagt Frida.

‘Ik weet het niet,’ zegt Fred. ‘Ze reflecteren misschien het oorspronkelijke paradijs.’

‘Ja, maar Frits en Willem zijn niet gelovig,’ zei Frida.

‘Maar dan missen ze toch iets, wat ze dan op deze manier proberen aan te vullen. Alles staat met elkaar in verbinding,’ zegt Fred.

‘Ik weet het niet,’ zegt Frida. ‘Het maakt me kwaad. Woedend zelfs.’

‘Misschien is er wat beters voor je,’ zegt Fred.

‘Ja, maar ik vind het zo racistisch dat ze beiden voor een exotische vrouw hebben gekozen,’ zegt Frida. ‘Ik voel geen eigenwaarde meer.’

‘Ach, kom op, Frida,’ zegt Fred, ‘ik zei toch dat ik het wel van hen zou willen overnemen.’

‘Het is moeilijk om gedumpt te worden,’ zegt Frida.

‘Ja, dat is zo,’ zegt Fred. ‘Ik werd gedumpt door Loesia. Maar in ieder geval heeft ze het met mij geprobeerd. En Frits en Willem hebben het met jou geprobeerd, dus de liefde was er.’

‘Ja, bij gebrek aan beter zeker,’ zegt Frida.

‘Ze kennen je gewoon niet,’ zegt Fred. ‘Ze hebben een totaal verkeerd beeld van jou. Ze zien jou niet, maar de voorstelling die ze van jou hebben in hun hoofd.’

Fred loopt dichter naast Frida. Voorzichtig raakt hij haar hand aan. Even glijdt er warmte door Frida's hand en dan door haar lichaam. 'Het is goed,' zegt ze. Even later lopen ze arm in arm. Frida ziet Fred als haar jongere broer. 'Ik ben blij dat je er bent,' zegt Frida.

Hoofdstuk 3.

Fred kan goed met de poezen van Frida opschieten. Hij speelt graag met ze. Fred en Frida hebben veel aan elkaar, en ook Jan en Marlies zijn rotsen in de branding. Frida denkt nog vaak aan Frits. Ze vindt hem erg egoistisch. Ze begint steeds meer van Fred te houden, maar gewoon als haar broertje. Jan is erg goed met computers, en zijn specialiteit is virtuele vrienden. Zoals computer personages geprogrammeerd zijn zo zijn mensen volgens hem ook geprogrammeerd, en dus is er weinig verschil. Hij laat Fred en Frida al gauw met wat virtuele vrienden op de computer kennis maken. Het zijn een soort robotten, maar ze antwoorden en stellen vragen net als mensen, en al snel raken Fred en Frida eraan verknocht.

'Is het mogelijk een emotionele relatie met zo'n virtuele vriend op te bouwen ?' vraagt Fred.

'Oh, jazeker,' zegt Jan, 'en ze zijn tot veel meer dingen in staat dan gewone mensen.' Jan heeft zelfs wat van zulke robotten in de schuur staan. Het zijn computers die op mensen lijken, en die precies kunnen doen wat mensen kunnen. Het zijn cybernetische mensen. Fred en Frida vinden het geweldig, en al snel krijgen ze zo'n robot naar keuze mee naar huis. Die moeten ze dan als hun nieuwe partner zien en kijken hoe ver ze er mee komen. Het is dus een heel therapeutisch plan. Frida krijgt Max mee naar huis, en Fred Ingrid. De robot kan koffie zetten en je kunt er diepe gesprekken mee voeren. Ook zoekt de robot naar lichamelijk contact. Frida vindt dat nogal eng, maar al snel vindt ze het heel gewoon, omdat het allemaal wel heel menselijk is. En deze robotten zijn haast supermensen. Ze hebben practische oplossingen voor allerlei soorten problemen, en zijn een soort psychologen aan huis. Frida voelt zich er erg veilig bij. Max is erg zorgzaam en waaks.

Jan heeft er erg veel plezier in deze dingen te bouwen, en al snel proberen ook anderen de robotten uit. Na een tijd komen er wat meerdere soorten bij, en Fred, die weleens wat anders wil, kiest ditmaal een exotische robot. Maar Jan heeft de robot zo geprogrammeerd dat Fred er niet moe van wordt. Tajusa heet de robot, en weet veel over de jungle af. Fred is een en al oor. De robot kan ook heel goed koken, houdt van spelletjes en is mysterieus en cryptisch. Stukje bij beetje nemen Jan's robotten het hele sociale leven over, en zijn er steeds minder conflicten. En als er dan conflicten ontstaan dan moet Jan ze gewoon even bijprogrammeren. Ook robot-poezen komen erbij, en robot-honden, en die gaan gelukkig nooit dood. Soms moeten er wat onderdelen vervangen worden. In de ogen van Fred en Frida en vele anderen is Jan een held.

Op een dag komt Frida Frits tegen op de markt. Zijn exotische vrouw had hem alweer verlaten voor een ander. ‘Arme stakker,’ dacht Frida. ‘Misschien is hij ook wel gebaat bij zo’n robot van Jan.’ Maar als Frits het verhaal hoort moet hij er niets van weten. ‘Ik wil iemand van vlees en bloed, en laten we eerlijk zijn : onze karakters botsen teveel.’ Toch na een tijdje weet Frida Frits over te halen om eens bij haar langs te komen. Ze zorgt dan dat de robot op zolder is.

Als ze dan eindelijk rond de tafel zitten om wat bij te praten komt Max ineens naar beneden. ‘Zo, kerel, ik heb veel over je gehoord,’ zegt Max.

‘Ik ga echt niet met een robot praten,’ zegt Frits tegen Frida. Maar na een tijdje zijn Max en Frits in een diep gesprek, en Frits is er zo door aangestoken dat hij zelf ook een robot wil, een virtuele vriend. Frida vindt het niet erg. Ze heeft zelf nu Max, en ze weet dat het Frits erg goed zal doen. Bij Jan aangekomen kiest hij een exotische robot uit : Nakabe. ‘Man, ze zijn nog wel beter dan mensen, en ze gaan tenminste nooit weg,’ zei Frits.

‘En je wordt er niet moe van.’ zegt Jan.

Na een tijdje belt Frits Jan op voor een tweede robot, en na een niet al te lange tijd leeft Frits met een harem van robotten.

‘Dit is geweldig,’ zegt Frits. ‘Jan is de man.’

Ook Willem krijgt het verhaal te horen en daarna Loesia. Op een dag bouwt Jan een robot die precies op hem lijkt, om zo zijn werk over te nemen, en vertrekt met zijn vrouw naar een onbewoond eiland. Inmiddels heeft Frida een baan gekregen bij een schoenenwinkel met een klein kleding assortiment. Vanuit het raam van de zijkant kan ze de grote rivier zien. Daarachter is het grote bos. Frida droomt er vaak over. Ze zou zo graag in die prachtige natuur willen wonen. Ze heeft een voorliefde voor planten. Haar hele huis staat er vol mee, de weelderigste soorten. Ook houdt ze van de exotische soorten. Veel daarvan staan boven en op het zolder. Max praat vaak tegen de planten. Het schijnt dat hij ermee kan communiceren. Max is haar steun en toeverlaat. Op een dag besluit Frida over de grote rivier te gaan samen met Max. Max kijkt zijn ogen uit. Het is een prachtig bos, ongetwijfeld het prachtigste van het land. Er zijn drie bruggen, een brede, een wat smallere en een loopbrug gemaakt van touw en planken, een zeer primitieve, die tegelijkertijd in het wildste gedeelte lift. Het is hier haast een oerwoud. Max wil niet meer terug. Met geen mogelijkheid kan Frida hem mee terugnemen.

Max wil hier een huis bouwen. En hij is er aardig goed in. Frida staat versteld van zijn vaardigheid.

‘Laten we hier wonen,’ zegt Max.

‘Ja, maar mijn werk dan ?’ zegt Frida.

‘Ach, de natuur zorgt voor ons. Waarom niet gewoon werken in de natuur ?’ zegt Max.

‘Zit wel wat in,’ zegt Frida, ‘en het is veel gezonder.’

Frida houdt het een paar dagen vol, maar dan mist ze haar huis toch wel heel erg. ‘Max, ik kom je wel weer opzoeken,’ zegt Frida. ‘Nee, Frida, je gaat niet weg,’ zegt Max. ‘Je gaat niet terug naar die gevaarlijke wereld met al die vervuiling.’

‘Oh, maar je kunt me niet dwingen, Max,’ zegt Frida.

‘Ik ben toch veel sterker dan je,’ zegt Max.

‘Toe nou, Max, wat hebben we hier aan,’ zegt Frida. ‘Ik ben zo niet gelukkig.’

Maar Max begon een groot hek rondom het stukje wildernis te bouwen. Midden in de nacht toen Frida sliep haalde hij ook de andere robotten op, de virtuele vrienden. De robotten begonnen snel het hele bos te herbouwen, en introduceerden de biologische technologie. ‘Nog even en je kunt met bomen praten,’ fluisterde Max liefdevol naar Frida. Maar Frida sliep diep. Toen Frida wakker was geworden was ze verbaasd. Het was allemaal zo prachtig nu, alsof de stad ook hier was.

‘Die andere wereld is er niet meer,’ zeiden de robotten. ‘We gaan hier opnieuw beginnen.’

‘Maar waar zijn onze vrienden dan ?’ vroeg Frida.

‘Die zijn ergens anders nu. Ze zijn allemaal in veiligheid, maar los van elkaar,’ zeiden de robotten. ‘Mensen horen niet bij mensen, maar bij hoogbegaafde robotten.’

‘Daar zit wel wat in,’ zei Frida.

Maar toch had Frida nog steeds dat oerverlangen om naar huis te gaan. Op een nacht ontsnapte ze van de robotten, en ging de rivier over. De bruggen werden door de robotten bewaakt, dus ze moest de rivier overzwemmen. Ze hoopte maar dat ze niet door een of andere vis zou worden gegrepen of door sterke stroming, maar het ging allemaal goed. Helemaal bekaf kwam ze naar lang zwemmen aan op de overkant. Kletsnat liep ze naar haar huis. Eerst nam ze een warm bad, maar tegelijkertijd bekroop haar de angst dat de robotten haar hier zouden kunnen vinden. Direkt belde ze Fred op. Maar die had een robotstem, dus Frida vertrouwde het niet meer. ‘Ik moet naar Frits toe,’ dacht ze. Nadat ze wat warme chocolade melk had gedronken en andere kleren had aangedaan vertrok ze direkt naar Frits. Bij Frits aangekomen bemerkte ze direkt dat zijn robotten er niet meer waren. Direkt viel ze Frits om de hals. ‘Opnieuw beginnen ?’ vraagt Frits. Frida knikt.

Hoofdstuk 4.

Al snel zijn Frida en Frits diep met elkaar in gesprek.

‘Ja, ik geloof zeker in de natuur,’ zegt Frits. ‘In dieren, maar ook in de dood die onvermijdelijk is. Het is niet geloven, maar zien, als een zeker weten.’ Een paar dagen later wandelen ze samen in een dierentuin, om de wonderen van de dierenwereld te aanschouwen. Een diepe vriendschap groeit er tussen hen, dieper dan ooit tevoren na dit avontuur. Vaak praten ze tot diep in de nacht. Ze hebben elkaar veel te vertellen. Ze hebben veel pijn van binnen door alles wat er is gebeurd. Bij de dieren voelen ze zich het beste thuis, dus ze besluiten beiden in een dierentuin te werken. Deze dierentuin is voornamelijk een safari park, en als er dan hokken zijn dan zijn die hokken geweldig groot, en dan is dat puur om de dieren veiligheid te geven. Het is een groot project om zo vrijheid aan de dieren te geven zonder dat hun veiligheid erdoor in gevaar komt.

Frida vindt de vogels zo prachtig, en de leeuwen, ja, eigenlijk alle dieren. Er zitten veel dierensoorten bij die Frida niet eens kende. Er gaat een wereld voor haar open. Het blijkt ook

een heilzame werking te hebben op haar relatie met Frits. ‘We drijven allemaal naar de kloof van de onoverbruggelijke dood,’ zegt Frits vaak, ‘maar het is allemaal zo mooi, want er komt weer zoveel uit voort. We maken allemaal plaats voor de mooiere dingen, alhoewel deze dingen ook zullen vergaan. Alles zal uiteindelijk vergaan.’ Ook Frida trekt in haar gedachtenwereld dichter naar Frits toe. Frits kan het allemaal zo mooi vertellen dat het toch niet voor niks is geweest. Zijn oppervlakkigheid is wijd en breed, zo oneindig horizontaal dat het diep is. Dichtbij het safari park is een ravijn. Frits en Frida zitten er vaak om in de diepte te kijken. ‘Wat is de natuur toch mooi,’ zegt Frits vaak. Frida knikt dan altijd. Het ravijn getuigt van een loze eeuwigheid waarin alleen de momenten parels zijn, schatten van onpeilbare waarde. ‘De aardkloot zit vol van geheimen, de tijd is de schat, de eeuwigheid is nutteloos.’

‘Staar naar een dier en zie dat het leven woest is, ongenadig. Kijk naar het luipaard, en leer ervan.’

Het Korte Oog

Sally was een prostituee, een dame van lichte zeden. Voor de ramen voerde ze altijd haar spel op, haar dans, om ogen te betoveren. Willem bezocht haar vaak, maar op een dag gaf hij haar zoveel geld dat ze nooit meer hoefde te werken. Ze was hem erg dankbaar. Ze kreeg een huisje in het bos. Willem kwam haar vaak bezoeken. Sally was erg aan hem gehecht. Sally zag Willem als haar redder. En de liefde was mooi. Ze hadden nog nooit gevreeen. Willem bezocht haar alleen maar op met haar te praten. Hij wilde haar helpen.

Hij heeft iets buitenaards. Hij is niet van deze wereld. En een liefde dat hij heeft. De vriendinnen van Sally werkten nog steeds in de prostitutie, en diep in hun hart hoopten ze dat Willem hen ook zou redden. Willem had een hart van goud.

Het korte oog zat op zijn troon. Vloekend, tierend. Hij wilde iedereen kort houden, ver weg van elkaar, en dat ze dan ook kort door de bocht met elkaar om zouden gaan, want het korte oog vreesde de liefde.

En deze liefde was zo brandend. Als Sally Willem aankeek dan kon je dat voelen. En als Willem Sally aankeek dan kon je hart daar van wegsmelten. Als je dat gelukkige paar zo zou zien, dan zou je denken : Ze hebben het over mij. Willem was niet zelfzuchtig, en Sally ook niet. Ze hielden beiden veel van mensen.

Het korte oog was als een kraal in een computerspel. Ver kijken kon hij niet, want dan zou hij zijn macht verliezen. De mensen waren slechts pionnen. Het korte oog had ijzeren wetten opgesteld.

Uiteindelijk zijn ze beiden maar in de wildernis gaan wonen. Het korte oog was woedend. Maar op een dag bezocht het korte oog Willem. Kijk eens wat je geliefde je heeft aangedaan, degene wiens leven jij hebt gered, zei het korte oog. Is het niet allemaal een grote illusie. De dromen die je hebt zijn onhaalbaar. Ik bied je een betere droom. Je zal alles kunnen hebben wat je hartje begeert.

Hoe dan ? vroeg Willem.

Ik kan een superster van je maken, zei het korte oog.

Gehypnotiseerd gaf hij toe aan het korte oog. Als in een speedboot behaalde hij een superster status. Maar hij kwam onder zulke hoge druk te staan dat hij zelfmoord pleegde.

Sally begon te gillen. Maar het korte oog had geen medelijden met haar en vermoordde haar, en vrat haar op. In het dodenrijk kwam ze Willem weer tegen met gebogen hoofd.

Maar het korte oog regeerde ook hier, en liet hen afdalen naar de hel.

Ik brand, zei Willem.

Ik ook, zei Sally.

Jullie hebben je niet aan mijn wetten gehouden, zei het korte oog. Jullie waren wispelturig, en jullie brabbelden maar wat. Ik eis radicaliteit en fundamentalisme, is dat teveel gevraagd ? Branden zullen jullie in de hel.

De volgende dag werden Sally en Willem wakker. Willem sloot Sally in zijn armen. Ik heb zo naar gedroomd, schat, dat ik je uit de prostitutie moest redden. En een heerschap genaamd het korte oog leidde ons naar de hel.

Het korte oog bestaat niet, zei Sally. Het is een leugen. Er zijn alleen maar lange ogen die uitreiken naar elkaars hart. Het is alleen maar liefde, en het oog van de liefde. Jij bent in mijn

wereld, zei Sally. Die andere wereld is niet echt. Er zijn alleen maar dingen die je niet begrijpt die zich als verschrikkelijke monsters ontpoppen.

Sally sprak weer als een engel, zoals ze altijd deed.

Zul je me helpen om duidelijkheid te krijgen ? vroeg Willem. Ik ben nog niet zo ver als jou. Je bent vier jaar ouder.

Shhh, zei Sally.

De koning van de zeepaardjes

Hij sliep lang uit die dag. Zijn vriendin kwam hem wekken. Hij draaide zich om, en keek in haar gezicht. Ze trok hem uit bed. Hij deed wat kleren aan en ging naar beneden. Buiten regende het. Er was geen zon. Het was grauw. Ze zouden die middag naar het strand gaan, maar het was er geen weer voor. Hij staarde naar buiten.

'Vreemd weer,' sprak hij. Ze knikte. Ze zaten samen op de bank. Ze dwaalde weg met haar gedachten. Hij was ook ver weg. Hij dagdroomde dat ze in de auto zaten op weg naar het strand. 'Waar denk je aan,' vroeg ze.

'Nergens,' zei hij. 'Ik denk eraan dat alles maar een spel is. Zakdoekje leggen niemand zeggen.' Ze glimlachte. 'Volgens mij denk jij aan het strand.'

'Waar denk jij aan,' vroeg hij.

'Aan het strand,' zei ze.

Op tafel lag een boek. 'De koning der elven,' heette het. Samen begonnen ze er in te bladeren. Het was een boek uit de bibliotheek. Ze maakte wat thee klaar, en even later dronken ze het op.

Hun relatie hield geen stand. Na een tijdje had hij een ander. Hij ging vluchtig met vrouwen om. Hij kon ze steeds minder vertrouwen. Hij kon niet meer om ze lachen, hij werd steeds

somberder in het gezelschap van vrouwen, steeds geslotener. Hij trok zich steeds meer terug op zijn kamer, en al snel had hij vrouwen voor altijd opgegeven. Het was gewoon niet haalbaar voor hem. Hij vond ze vreemde wezens, leugenaars, warhoofden, die alles probeerden om anderen in de war te schoppen. Ja, hij begon vrouwen te haten. Hij vond het boosaardige wezens.

Jarenlang ging hij alleen door het leven, totdat hij eens in een bosmeertje zwom en daar een zeemeermin tegenkwam. Hij was op zijn hoede, maar deze dame was zo vriendelijk en ze eerlijk, dat ze hem al snel het hoofd op hol bracht. Ze kon niet goed praten, alsof ze uit een ander land kwam, maar dat vond hij extra aantrekkelijk. Ze nam hem mee het water in, en ze zwommen naar de andere kant van het meertje, waar ze hem insmeerde met modder en wier. 'Ik jou kronen tot koning,' zei ze.

Hij glimlachte. Toen waste ze zijn lichaam. Elke dag ging hij terug naar het bosmeertje, maar op een dag kwam ze niet meer. Ten einde raad zocht hij de zee op, waar hij andere zeemeerminnen tegenkwam. Hij vroeg naar haar, maar ze zeiden dat ze niets meer van hem wilde weten. Ze wilden niet vertellen waarom.

Hij was teleurgesteld, maar gaf zijn liefde voor haar niet op. Ze was altijd goed voor hem geweest. 'Kan ik dan met jullie zijn,' vroeg hij aan de zeemeerminnen. Ze waren aardig voor hem, en elke dag ging hij naar de zee om hen te ontmoeten, maar op een dag kwamen ze niet meer. Misschien is het contact met een mens hen wel te veel, dacht hij.

Hij vertelde veel over de zeemeerminnen aan anderen, maar ze dachten dat hij gek geworden was. Hij vond mensen saai, en werd depressief. Hij werd opgenomen in een psychiatrische kliniek. Sommigen zeiden dat hij de ziekte schizofrenie had, waanideeen, maar anderen zeiden dat hij gewoon een grote fantasie had. Niemand geloofde dat zeemeerminnen echt bestonden. In de kliniek begon hij boeken te schrijven over zeemeerminnen, prachtige, bloedmooie poetische boeken, met een diepe schat aan kennis. Velen waren onder de indruk, maar men geloofde nog steeds niet dat hij echte zeemeerminnen had gezien.

Hij vond mensen maar domme wezens, die niet te vertrouwen waren. Hij wilde ook geen vriendin. Sommigen dreven de spot met zijn zeemeermin verhalen. Hij begon ook zeemeerminnen te schilderen, als levensecht, en alhoewel velen onder de indruk waren, hij werd niet geloofd. Hij was depressief en had een doodsverlangen. Op een dag ging hij naar de zee, in zijn auto, en reed met zijn auto het water in. Al snel raakte hij bewusteloos, en wist niet meer wat er gebeurde, maar hij ontwaakte tussen de zeemeerminnen. Hij had een bol om zijn hoofd waarin zurrstof zat, en zeepaardjes zwommen om hem heen. Tot zijn grote schrik had hij een vissenstaart. Ze namen de bol van zijn hoofd en hij kon gewoon ademen. Een parel stond voor hem, waaruit stemmen kwamen.

Hij zwom achter een zeemeermin aan. Hij accepteerde zijn nieuwe leven. Hij was gered, en werd koning van de zeepaardjes genoemd.

Het Dagboek van Geert Vlederhuis

Hoofdstuk 1. Ik ben Achttien

Het heeft lang geduurd voordat ik me zo voelde als nu. De lucht lijkt vol met rozentuinen, en ik kan weer genieten van het leven. Dat kon ik vroeger niet. Het heeft allemaal zo lang geduurd. Nu lijkt alles helder. Juffrouw Rozenkelder is nu mijn nieuwe juf. Ze heeft ons beloofd dat we een keer met z'n allen naar de jungle gaan. Ik heb veel te verwerken, dat wel, maar ik ben op het goede spoor. Hoe jong ik dan ook nog ben, achttien, ik heb veel ontdekt. En dat door vele dalen en pijnen heen, het leven gaat niet over rozen, maar wel over hun stekelige stengels, om dan uiteindelijk in de zachte roos te belanden. Ik ben vaak blijven zitten, nog steeds op school dus. Anderen van mijn leeftijd hebben veelal werk of zitten op universiteiten, onderwezen door geleerden, en ik mag het doen met juffrouw Rozenkelder. Ze is een lieve schat, dat wel, maar een beetje dom als je het mij vraagt. Ik moet haar nu onderwijzen over het leven, want zij is nog steeds een onaangetast roosje, beschermd door de graaf en de baron. Ik heb veel geleerd over mijn dagboek, van mijn dagboek, en ik weet dat dit dagboek eens groter zal zijn dan dat van Anne Frank en baron Von Tahlzen. Ik zal hier namelijk mijn ontdekkingen publiceren. Mijn geliefde publiek, ik ben dan nog jong, maar ik heb veel te vertellen. Ik heb al veel levens-ervaring opgedaan. Ik heb in een circus gewerkt, jawel. Ik heb daar veel gezien. Kom maar eens met mij mee, zou ik zeggen. Ik moest in het circus werken, dat moest van mijn vader. En mijn moeder ondersteunde mijn vader.

Dat circus, beste mensen, was de reden dat ik zo vaak ben blijven zitten. Het was eigenlijk niet te combineren, maar van mijn vader moest ik dus ook naar school, en mijn moeder ondersteunde mijn vader. In ieder geval ben ik nu een ervaring rijker : kinder-arbeid. Met alle gevolgen daarvan.

Jullie moesten eens weten hoe ik mij voel. Gelukkig voel ik me nu een stuk beter, en ben ik eindelijk in staat om de schandelen eens openlijk in het licht te publiceren, te openbaren. Ik hoop dat er dan heel wat gaat veranderen in dit stomme land. Jullie mensen aanbidden het dagboek van Anne Frank en van baron von Tahlzen, wat tegen de nazi's was geschreven, en jullie aanbidden de grote bevrijding, maar die is nog niet geweest. Nog steeds moeten kinderen overal in dit land in het circus werken, en ik ben daar getuige en slachtoffer van. Ik was nog maar drie en moest op het podium staan. Dat ik huilde kon niemand wat schelen, want ja, clowns moeten huilen, en daar mag iedereen dan om lachen. Jullie moeten eens weten wat dit met mijn zelfbeeld heeft gedaan. Ik was op jonge leeftijd al al mijn vertrouwen in mensen kwijt.

Ik leerde al jong van mijn dagboek te houden, want die lachte mij niet uit. In ieder geval ben ik nu een stuk verder in waar ik wezen moet, en ik zal niet achterlaten deze schandelijke praktijken aan het licht te brengen. Jullie moeten eens weten hoeveel kinderen er elke dag kapot gaan aan dat stomme circus. In ieder geval : Geloof ons, wij zijn nog niet klaar met dit land.

Wij pleiten ervoor dat alle kinderen uit het circus worden verlost. Dat zal een hele hoofdpijn minder zijn. Kinderen zijn daar niet voor gebouwd. Laat uw kinderen eerst eens opgroeien, en

laat hen dan zelf beslissen. Dwang doet nooit goed. Ik ben daar echt gigantisch kwaad om. Ik heb een verschrikkelijke rotjeugd gehad, alhoewel ik nog steeds jong ben. Ik heb nooit van mijn jeugd kunnen genieten, en allemaal om dat stomme rot-circus. U moest eens weten hoe het er daar aan toe gaat achter de schermen. En niemand kan het wat schelen. Ik ben gewoon ontzettend boos, en u zou dat ook moeten wezen als u daadwerkelijk om kinderen geeft.

In ieder geval gaat het nu een stuk beter met mij. De lucht ruikt weer fantastisch. Ik voel me als Peter Pan, en juf Rozenkelder is Wendy. Ze heeft veel geduld met mij, en ze heeft mij veel geleerd, maar dan meer optel sommetjes enzo, want van het echte leven heeft ze niet veel begrepen. Vaak staart ze me aan als huh. Jongens, echt waar, deze vrouw is dom, maar het is een schat van een mens. Ze wordt hier echt wel hoog gewaardeerd in de klas, want als je huilt, dan omhelst ze je, maar ze heeft dan nooit echt iets opbouwends te zeggen. Het is een beetje een vaag mens, maar wel warm.

In ieder geval mijn hoofd is als vol met rozentuinen en margrietjes, en het ruikt allemaal weer lekker in de lucht, niet meer die verschrikkelijke circus-lucht. Ik was daar een slaaf en had niet veel in te brengen, maar nu ben ik vrij. Ik kan er wel een feestje over bouwen. Ik weet alleen niet hoe. Ik voel me onhandig. Ik zou wel een brug naar de hemel willen bouwen om het voor iedereen goed te maken. Och, man, ik heb zoveel te vertellen, maar ik weet eigenlijk niet waar ik moet beginnen. Heus, en ik zou niet willen dat het één of ander onzin verhaal zou worden, dus ik moet daar over na gaan denken. Het moet in ieder geval beter worden dan het dagboek van Anne Frank en die van baron von Tahlzen.

Dus jongen, daar gaan we, neem een kijkje in het circus, en zie ... een dansende olifant, een aap die lacht van woede en verdriet, en een kind met een gebroken hart. Hartje moet ik eigenlijk zeggen. Kent u dat plaatje, of kunt u dit plaatje pakken ? Een kind met een gebroken, eenzaam hartje, een kind dat moet werken en tegelijkertijd op school moet zitten, en zo ten onder gaat aan de slechte cijfers, en dan uitgescholden wordt voor dommerik en luilak. Kent u dat ? Gaat u het al voor u zien ? Een kind dat peperdure circus kleren thuis heeft liggen, maar in oude lompen naar school moet gaan, en daarom uitgescholden wordt voor viezerik en bedelaar, sloeber, landloper, en ga zo maar door. Een kind dat onderweg naar huis daar ook nog eens voor geslagen wordt. Dat zou u eens moeten meemaken, dan gaat u het beter begrijpen, maar nee, dat gun ik niemand toe. Ik kan er wel om janken. Dat mensen nog steeds hier doorheen moeten is een raadsel. Ja, zeer treurig is het, en dat zeg ik niet zonder hart. Ik ben dichtbij al die kinderen die dit moeten meemaken. Ik ben daar ook geweest.

Die nazi's lopen nog steeds vrij rond, degenen die dit mens en dier aandoen, en anderen erom laten lachen, maar ze laten u niet zien wat er achter de schermen gebeurt. Er gebeuren daar dus dingen die het daglicht niet kunnen verdragen. En ik ben ervoor om deze zaken aan de kaak te stellen, en dat zal ik ook doen. Voor mijn part word ik later minister-president van dit land, of koning, maar er moet iets aan gedaan worden. Het is nu of nooit. Sorry dat ik het zo dramatisch breng, maar het is gewoon zo. Ik ga echt niet om de hete brij heendraaien. Dat is al veel te veel gedaan, en dat moet nu maar eens afgelopen zijn. Het is gewoon niet voor te stellen dat het nog steeds allemaal in dit land gebeurt. En niemand doet er iets aan. En iemand moet er iets aan doen, anders gaat het verkeerd.

Nu heb ik het dan beter, maar ik denk nog steeds aan al die arme kinderen die in hetzelfde lot zijn gevallen als ik. Het is gewoon onvoorstelbaar. Ik huil gewoon nu zelfs nu ik dit schrijf, maar goed, het gaat beter met me, maar ik zal niet stoppen met huilen en boos zijn voordat al deze kinderen los zijn. Ze gaan mij aan het hart. Wat dat aangaat voel ik mij als hun vader.

Alhoewel ik nog steeds een kind ben. De grote mensen zouden die kinderen liefdevol moeten opvangen, maar dat doen ze niet.

Van boos zijn word je moe, ik weet het. Van verdriet ook. Ik heb heel wat afgeslapen de laatste tijd, maar het heeft me goed gedaan, ook al zit ik nog steeds in zo'n lage klas. Mijn hoofd was vol met rotzooi, maar is nu vol met rozen. Ik voel mij, zoals gezegd, in een rozentuin, waar bijtjes vrolijk rondvliegen, waar kippetjes vrolijk ronddwarrelen, het is als een droom. Alsof ik in het paradijs ben beland. Karel is mijn maat, mijn beste maat. Hij steunde mij door dik en dun.

Karel heeft de oplossing gevonden. Hij sleurde mij er doorheen. In ieder geval zijn wij nu de beste maten. De klas is leuk. Geen problemen. Het circus leven is vol geheimen, blijft u daarom goed bij de les. Het is vol gevaren, als een jungle. Nu ik dit schrijf gaat het weer een stukje beter met mij. Ik heb er weer een streepje bijgekregen. Ik ga geen datums zetten, maar we zijn weer een paar dagen verder. Hoera.

Later wanneer ik groot ben wil ik een weeshuis bouwen voor alle kinderen die het moeilijk hebben en waaraan niks gedaan wordt. Ik kan daar wel zo kwaad om worden. Vandaar het weeshuis.

En nu beste mensen, het grote nieuws : Ik ben verliefd. Dat is maar een grapje. Nee, voor de liefde heb ik geen tijd, zoals de liefde geen tijd voor mij heeft. Ik ben er ook nog veel te jong voor. En alle ellende die dat met zich meebrengt, daar heb ik echt geen zin in. Zoals ze zeggen : beter een eenzaam hart dan een gebroken hart. Ik heb in ieder geval nog genoeg te doen. Het circus moet dicht.

Hoofdstuk 2. Ik ben Eenentwintig

Zo, dat is lang geleden dat ik in dit dagboek heb geschreven. Ik zie dat er eigenlijk niet veel van geworden is. Alles is weer een beetje in slaap gesust. Ik heb mijn eigen leven. Ik kan niet elke dag gaan lopen schrijven, en voor wat ? Dat circus gaat toch nooit dicht. Die hoop heb ik al wel opgegeven. Maar misschien komen er betere mensen die het van binnenuit kunnen veranderen. Ik houd me er alleen niet meer zo veel mee bezig. Het is zoals het is. Ik probeer een licht te zijn voor de mensen om mij heen, en meer kan ik niet doen. Ik ben nu eenentwintig. Ik houd van motorrijden. En daar houdt het zo'n beetje mee op. Ik houd ook van slapen. Van al mijn grote dromen is niet veel terecht gekomen. Het gaat ook niet steeds beter. Alles is een beetje blijven hangen, en het is best zo. Het scheelt me niet meer zoveel. Ik leef gewoon.

Als ik er op terugkijk moet ik wel een beetje lachen. Sorry dat ik het zeg, maar ik vind mezelf daar wel een beetje dom en onnozel. Ik kan de wereld niet veranderen. Ik ben maar een mens. Ik lach me er eigenlijk slap om.

In ieder geval : Juf Rozenkelder is dood. Die leeft niet meer. We hebben nu een juf die juf Rozenberg heet. Erg toevallig natuurlijk, en ja, ik ben weer blijven zitten al die tijd. Ik droomde teveel, ik had teveel praatjes. Ik heb het idee dat ik nooit van school afkom. Maar ik vind het best zo. Ik blijf wel zitten.

Ik heb nu een vriendin, Rozemarijn, weer erg toevallig. Karel heeft ook een vriendin : Bergje. En mijn naam is Geert Vlederhuis. Ik ga dat ook niet veranderen. In ieder geval heb ik me

kostelijk geamuseerd deze jaren na het circus. Zoals ik al zei kan ik weer van het leven genieten, en nu is en blijft alles stabiel. Het zal echt niet beter worden, en dat hoeft ook niet.

Hoofdstuk 3. Ik ben Achtendertig

Ik vond mijn oude dagboek terug, jawel. Laat ik maar weer eens beginnen als ik dat kan tenminste. Nee, laat maar, ik ben nu een dromenkoning. En dat ik achttien was heb ik gelogen, want ik ben nog maar twaalf, nu nog steeds haha.

Einde

De Rode Riem

De Gevaarlijke Stad

Hij deed vele pogingen om de godin te vinden. Hij ging naar vele kerken, om daar te ontvangen van het goddelijk licht. Vaak probeerden ze hem allerlei dingen aan te smeren, als kaas voor de muizenval, maar daar trapte hij niet in. Hij wilde vrij ontvangen, en integreren met andere ideeen. Vaak waren het maar theorieen, en hij snapte niet hoe mensen daar zo nauw mee om konden gaan. Hij vond het eng, gevaarlijk. Hij begon zich steeds meer terug te trekken, of probeerde de godin van het oorspronkelijke en goede terug te vinden in de natuur, of in boeken. Dat was veel minder gevaarlijk. Boeken waren voor hem om veel gespuis uit te ziften en ver weg te houden. Vriendschappen en bezoekjes in kerken en allerlei organisaties hadden altijd het gevaar dat hij ergens knel kwam te zitten. Er zat altijd een keerzijde aan hun liefdadigheid. Hij zag het als een middel waarmee ze robotjes kweekten, slaven. Hij had vele ervaringen in die kerken en organisaties gehad, en in allerlei specifieke gebouwen, zoals de piramides van Egypte. Hij wilde die nu op zijn gemak en op zichzelf verwerken en uitpluizen, wat het voor waarde had in zijn persoonlijke leven.

In de bibliotheek las hij oude boeken over Hel als de godin van het goddelijke huwelijk, de vruchtbaarheid en de kinderen, die ze later hadden gedemonizeerd. Ook las hij over het verschil tussen kalo-demonen, goede demonen, en kako-demonen, kwade demonen. Hij zag in dat de kerken van vandaag aan alle kanten rammelden met hun opvattingen, en hij wilde er iets aan doen. Hij liep vaak door het park om na te denken, en ging dan op een muur zitten. Hij werd door anderen 'de denker' genoemd, en ging vaak diep op in filosofie wanneer hij met anderen sprak.

Op een dag las hij over de oude Romeinse godin Febris, de godin van ziekte. Maar zij werd aanbeden als de godin van genezing. Haar man was Februus, de god van de hel. Dit had te maken met reinigingen. Maar met de komst van het christendom werd de hel geheel negatief bekeken.

Op een dag was er oorlog in de stad. De christenen wilden totale controle over de stad. Het zou het einde betekenen van het vrije denken. Andersdenkenden werden in de gevangenis gegooid, ook hij. Maar wegens goed gedrag mocht hij al snel bij een oude christelijke dame in huis wonen, als hij zich maar zou gedragen. Gelukkig bestond de bibliotheek nog steeds, en hier ging hij nog steeds vaak naartoe. De oude dame was erg goed voor hem. Ze maakte vaak warme chocolade melk voor hem, en kon hem goed begrijpen. 'Je hebt helemaal gelijk,' zei de oude dame, 'maar je kunt het beter voor je houden om problemen te voorkomen.' Maar hij wilde juist er wat aan doen. Hij vond de eenzijdige benadering van het christendom oneerlijk. Er waren nog steeds veel relletjes in de stad. Vaak was er vuur. De stad moest leven in deze oorlog.

'Weet je,' zei de oude dame. 'Dit is het enige middel wat je kan uitleiden.' Ze toonde hem een rode riem. 'Wat is het ?' vroeg hij. 'Oh, ik heb het eens van een engel gekregen,' zei de oude dame. 'Sindsdien heb ik het altijd opgeborgen gehouden. Pas hem eens.' Hij schoof de riem door zijn broek, en het paste precies. 'Wijsheid, mijn jongen, wijsheid, en wijsheid zal je leiden.'

Hij probeerde zich te bewegen, maar hij kon het niet. Na een tijdje lukte het hem om te zitten. De oude dame schonk wat thee voor hem in.

De Rode Stad

Hij stond die morgen vroeg op, schonk wat voor zichzelf in en ging zitten. Het morgenlicht vormde een rode stad voor hem. Hij was autistisch en had geen behoefte aan sociaal contact. Hij had genoeg aan zijn eigen hoofd. De koningin ging zitten, de koningin van de rode stad, en keek hem aan. Ze leek op een kudde jonge hyenas. Hij staarde haar aan. 'Zo jongen,' zei ze, 'je bent nogal verlegen. Ik heb je in deze stad gebracht.'

'Waarom ?' vroeg hij.

'Omdat ...,' zei ze, 'je het waard bent.'

'Okay,' zei de jongen, en probeerde de kralen van haar ketting te tellen. 'Uw haar zit goed,' zei hij.

'Dank je,' zei de koningin.

Hij was als in een waas, en waande zich de koning van de elven. Hij zakte door de grond de diepte in, toen ze op een knopje drukte. Vele bellen rinkelden in zijn hoofd, alsof het kerstfeest was. Ze glimlachte. 'Prins van de hyena's ?' vroeg ze. Hij knikte. Hij glimlachte

diep, ook toen ze hem aanraakte. Even ging er een schok door hem heen. 'Je bent in de rode stad,' zei ze, 'eindelijk.'

'Erin, ben jij dat ?' vroeg hij.

'Ja,' zei ze.

Erin was altijd zijn droom-vriendinnetje. Hij zakte dieper.

'Snap je het ?' vroeg ze. 'Wie zijn wij ?'

'De hyenas,' zei hij.

'Wij komen je redden,' zei ze. 'Wij brengen je naar een betere wereld.'

De rode stad was gemaakt van flonkerstenen, zeer mooi, adembenemend. Hij raakte zijn autisme kwijt, kwam uit zijn schulp, want hier kon het. Hier waren vuurstenen en ruimte-schepen. Hier was het goed.

'Wat een bende is het hier,' zei hij, terwijl hij lachte. Hij keek naar beneden. Er lag troep op de grond. Een leeg melk-kartonnetje, een leeg plastic flesje, en nog wat andere troep. Hij schopte er tegenaan, en rende er lachend achteraan, en schopte weer. Ook kleine hondjes volgden hem. Ze leken op hyena's. 'Ik ben gelukkig hier,' zei hij, en straalde.

'Goed,' zei Erin.

'Ik houd van je Erin,' zei hij.

'Ik ook van jou,' zei ze, en omhelsde hem.

Hij kreeg een kamertje hoog in een toren. Het was een rommeltje hier, maar hij had goed uitzicht. Hij bleef maar lachen en stralen. Erin was ook bij hem, en zorgde voor hem. Zij was de godin van de hyena's. Ze zorgde goed voor hem, ze kon goed koken. Ook deed ze vaak boodschappen, en kwam altijd met veel speelgoed thuis, en bijzonder voedsel, magisch. Hij had het met haar getroffen, en hield van haar als van de rode stad.

En kun je er ook van houden, als ik je aanraak, lieve schat,

En kun je er ook van houden, als alles rood is in het bad,

En kun je er ook van houden, als ik met je wegvlieg naar een berg,

Om die met jou verder te beklimmen.

Ze hadden de televisie aangedaan, en keken naar een tekenfilm over een rood sap. Dat kon je verwachten in de rode stad. Ze pakte hem vast en danste met hem.

Wil je met me dansen, naar de rode maan,

Wil je met me dansen, toe nou, doe niet zo raar,

Want morgen vroeg ben ik van jou,

Dan ben ik jouw vrouw.

Het liep allemaal goed af in de tekenfilm. Ze hadden het rode sap gevonden, en plotseling waren ze in de tekenfilm, en renden over de daken. 'Naar de hyenas !' riep ze. 'Hoei !' Spoedig waren ze op het veld tussen de hyena's, op het land, tussen de boerderijen. Even sidderde hij, maar toen voelde hij zich met liefde omgeven. Wat een prachtige dieren waren het toch, zo rood. Hun bekken waren rood, omdat ze van het vlees gegeten hadden, maar welk vlees ? Dat maakte niet zoveel uit. Als ze maar goed aten. Want zulke lieve dieren ... Maar verder kwam hij niet. Een man met een geweer stond voor hen.

'Zo,' zei de man, een boer. 'Wat doen jullie om mijn land.'

'Uh, niets, meneer,' zei hij. 'We wilden alleen maar met de hyenas spelen. De hyenas gromden een beetje.

'Okay, goed,' zei de man, en vertrok weer.

'Klaar,' zei Erin. 'Laten we verder spelen.

'Wat is klaar ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Niets,' zei Erin.

'Erin, ze hebben van het vlees gegeten,' zei de jongen.

'Ach nee,' zei Erin. 'Dat moet je zo niet zien. Het is chocola.'

'Nee, het is vlees,' zei de jongen.

'Vlees van mijn vlees, gebeente van mijn gebeente,' zei Erin.

'Nu klink je kerks,' zei de jongen.

'Bloed van mijn bloed ?' zei Erin.

'Ben je Christus ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Doe niet zo mal,' zei Erin.

'Nee, zeg op,' zei de jongen ondeugend.

'Hey, praat niet zo tegen mij,' zei Erin, 'doe maar niet zo mal.'

'Ben je Christus of ben je het niet,' zei de jongen.

'Waarom wil je dat weten ?' vroeg Erin.

'Gewoon,' zei hij.

'Omdat je zo kerks klinkt,' zei hij even later.

'Oh,' zei Erin.

Ze rende weg. De hyena's renden achter haar aan, en plotseling was ze als een groep hyena's zelf. Hij sidderde. Ze was als de dood, en erger nog : als de hel, maar ze was lief, zoet, teder, als een roos.

'Erin ?' vroeg hij. 'Waar ben je nou Erin ?' De groep hyena's kwam dichterbij. Ze gromden. Hij sidderde. Hij liep terug naar de torenkamer, waar zij even later ook terugkwam. Ze deed alsof er niets was gebeurd. Ze was vrolijk. Ze kookte.

'Lieve jongen,' zei ze.

'Ja,' zei hij.

'Het eten is klaar,' zei ze. Ze zette het op tafel.

'Vlees ?' vroeg hij. Ze knikte. 'Ik lust geen vlees,' zei hij. Toen gaf ze hem een chocolaatje. 'Je moet goed eten,' zei ze.

'Nee,' zei hij. 'Dat moet ik niet. Dat moeten alleen de hyenas.' Ze klapte. Ze waren in de rode stad. Ze had wat bedelaars uitgenodigd. Ze aten allemaal van het vlees. 'Aten,' zei ze, 'dat is de Egyptische zonnegod.'

'Kan mij het schelen,' zei de jongen.

'Zeg, heb eens wat meer respect,' zei ze.

'Heb ik geen respect voor,' zei hij. Ze kwam naar hem toe, en gaf hem klappen op zijn billen. De bedelaars keken toe. 'Zeg, doe eens rustig met die jongen,' zei één van de bedelaars. Maar toen nam de jongen het voor haar op. 'Zeg, heb wat meer respect voor de godin,' zei hij. 'Zij doet wat goed is. Aan haar wetten zijn wij ondergeschikt.'

'Je hebt gelijk,' zei de bedelaar. 'Ik wist niet dat zij de godin was.'

'Dan weet je het nu,' snauwde de jongen. De bedelaar sidderde.

'Lieve jongen,' zei de godin.

'Gatverredamme,' zei één van de bedelaars. Dat vlees stinkt.

'Je moet snel eten,' zei de godin. De bedelaars aten haastig door, en gingen weer weg.

'Wat een figuren,' zei de jongen.

'Jij bent anders ook niet zo'n lieverdje,' zei de godin.

'Maar ze hebben overal commentaar op,' zei de jongen, 'terwijl je ze zo goed helpt.'

'Dat denk je alleen maar,' zei de godin.

'Nee, ik zie het toch,' zegt de jongen.

'Laat maar, houd maar op,' sprak de godin. 'Ik begin een beetje ongeduldig met jou te worden.' En weer gaf ze hem een paar klappen op de broek. 'Het is dat je de godin bent,' sprak de jongen, 'anders was ik je aangevlogen.'

'Wil je werkelijk weten wat ik met de bedelaars heb gedaan ?' vroeg de godin.

Hij knikte. 'Ja,' zei hij. 'Graag.'

'Okay,' zei ze, 'maar je mag het niet verklikken.'

'Erewoord,' zei hij.

'Okay,' zei ze. 'Ze gaan naar de schuren.'

'Hoe bedoel je ?' vroeg hij.

'Laat maar,' zei ze.

'Nee, je moet het nu zeggen,' zei hij. 'Wie A zegt, moet ook B zeggen.'

'Waarom,' vroeg ze.

'Wie A zegt moet ook B zeggen,' herhaalde hij.

De godin zuchtte. 'Je bent luguber,' zei hij.

'Nee, jij bent luguber,' zei ze. 'Je begrijpt nooit wat ik bedoel.'

'En jij legt nooit wat uit,' zei hij.

'Daar bij de boerderijen,' zei ze.

'Wat ?' vraagt hij.

'Niks,' zegt ze. En even later : 'Ik kan het niet zeggen. Er staat een gestalte naast mij.'

'Waar heb je het over,' gilt de jongen.

'Niets,' rilt ze. 'Vergeet het.'

'Geesten ?' vraagt hij.

'Ja,' snikt ze. Hij omhelst haar. 'Het komt wel goed,' zegt hij.

'Je bent zo lief,' zegt ze.

'Jij ook,' zegt hij.

'Je bent altijd zo geduldig met me,' zegt ze. Hij glimlacht. Hij omhelst haar weer en kust haar.

'Nee, niet kussen,' zegt ze. 'Het doet pijn.'

Hij laat haar los. Dan slaat de bliksem in.

'Onweer,' zegt ze.

'Wat moeten we in een rode stad ?' vraagt hij.

Ze maakt kabeljauw klaar. Het zit in een potje, en het komt met drie wensen. 'Ik wens geluk, liefde en zaligheid,' zei ze. Hij rent uit de torenkamer, want hij kan de stank niet verdragen. 'Altijd vlees,' roept hij.

'Vis,' roept ze hem na.

'Hetzelfde,' zegt zij.

'Dat is alleen voor hyena's,' roept hij.

'Ben jij dan geen hyena, je bent de prins van de hyena's,' roept ze.

'Alles met mate,' zegt hij.

'Een waar woord,' zegt ze, terwijl ze de kabeljauw in het openhaard vuur gooit. Hij komt dichterbij.

'Zeg, ik ben verliefd, en voor de liefde doe ik alles,' zei ze.

'Op wie ?' vraagt hij.

'Op jou,' zegt ze.

'Blijf van me af,' zegt hij. 'Ik ben een autist.'

'Het was maar een grapje,' zei ze. 'Wij hyena's kunnen niet verliefd worden.'

'Ik ook niet,' zei hij. 'Het is walgelijk, smerig.'

'Precies, als gesmolten kaas,' zegt ze.

'Gatverredamme,' zei hij. En even later : 'Waarom maak je zulke grapjes.'

Ze gaf geen antwoord. Het maakte hem kwaad.

'Stomme hoer,' zei hij. Ze begon te huilen. 'Het spijt me verschrikkelijk. Het zal nooit meer gebeuren,' zei ze.

'Het is al te laat,' zei hij. 'Nu brand ik. Ik kan hier echt niet tegen. Een beetje over de liefde gaan lopen praten, gatverredamme, rot toch een end op.'

'Nu ben je niet leuk,' zei ze. 'En ook niet aardig.'

Je hebt me gekwetst, zei hij.

- En jij me verdrongen.

Niet waar, ik ben altijd open voor je geweest.

- Leugenaar.

Hond.

- Gemenerik.

Zwarte hond.

- Racist.

Ik weet het.

- Dode diender.

Ik weet het.

Opeens stond de boer weer voor hen met een geweer. 'Uit mij stad nu,' sprak hij nors, 'uit mijn stad. Jullie zouden met de hyenas spelen, maar alles wat jullie doen is elkaar voor gek uitmaken.'

'Maar wij zijn hyenas,' zei de godin.

'Ja, dat zeggen ze allemaal,' zei de boer. 'Wegwezen, uit mijn stad. Ik heb niets met jullie te maken. Ook al vriezen jullie dood in de kou, kan mij het schelen, oprotten, weg, weg.'

Maar toen werd de jongen heel erg kwaad, en greep het geweer en boog het om. 'Zeg, zo spreek je niet tegen een godin,' zei hij tegen de boer met strakke ogen. Zijn ogen lieten de boer niet meer los, en de boer begon te sidderen. Daar kwam een andere boer aan. 'Het is de godin,' riep de sidderende boer. 'Ach nee,' zei de andere boer, 'laat hen je niks wijsmaken.' Maar spoedig waren ze allemaal door grommende hyenas omsingeld. De hyenas doken op de twee boeren. 'Rennen !' riepen ze. Maar ze konden nergens heen.

'Dat is ook met de bedelaars gebeurd,' fluisterde de godin. 'Naar de schuren.'

Hyena's, maak het op, en leg het neer,

Hyena's, ren je rot en kom niet meer,

Hyena's, in de rode stad, je leeft niet meer.

Ze keken naar een andere tekenfilm. Buiten sneeuwde het. Ze maakte alleen nog maar chocolade voor hem. Hij gruwelde van vlees. Hij had haar gesmeekt geen vlees en vis meer te maken. Hij kon het niet aan. Het leven was te zwaar dan. Maar in chocolade was het voor hem een zachte, zalige oceaan. Zo romig en cremig. Dat was voor hem altijd weer een verrassing, en zij was zijn verrassing. Zij was zijn genade. Er lagen hier overal snoeppapiertjes, alsof er een heks was langsgekomen. Vlees was er allang niet meer, alleen nog maar snoep. Snoep maken kon ze als de beste, en ze genas zijn hart.

Hij liep altijd rond op gympen, en zij op blote voeten. Hij bladerde door wat boeken, en keek naar haar. Ze keek terug. 'Is dit wat je wilt ?' vroeg ze. 'Gaan we nooit trouwen ? Want straks word je wakker, en dan heb je mijn ring niet.'

'Onzin,' zei de jongen. 'Heb geloof.'

'Nu klink jij kerks,' zei Erin.

'Kan me niet zoveel schelen,' zei de jongen.

'Hoe heet je eigenlijk ?' vraagt Erin.

'Orpheus,' zegt de jongen. 'Orpheus P.'

'Mooie naam,' zegt Erin.

'Had je kunnen weten als godin zijnde,' zei Orpheus.

'Ik weet niet alles,' zei ze.

'Of je wil het gewoon niet weten,' zei hij.

'Of ik wil het gewoon van jou horen,' zei de godin.

Plotseling werden ze omringd door rode lichten.

'Hyenische energie,' zei de godin, 'ze hebben ons gevonden.'

'Er komt licht uit mijn handen,' zei Orpheus.

'Uit mijn handen ook,' zei Erin.

'Dan kunnen we een nieuwe wereld creeeren,' zei Orpheus.

'De rode stad is alles wat we nodig hebben,' zei Erin, 'als een rode picknick.'

'Als een rode draad, van mijn hart naar de jouwe ?' vroeg Orpheus.

Ze knikt. 'Ja,' zegt ze. En even later : 'Altijd aan elkaar verbonden.'

'Geen zweem van twijfel,' zei Orpheus.

'Het beest van twijfel is in de rivier geworpen,' zei de godin.

'Goed,' zei Orpheus.

'Zwarte mensen, gemaakt van chocola,

Zwarte mensen, dienen de tafella,

Zwarte hond, hebbende geen gena.

Weer keken ze naar een tekenfilm. 'Hoe kunnen we de rode draad vinden ?' vroeg Orpheus. 'Kom maar mee,' zei ze. Ze zwierven door de sneeuwbedekte stad, naar een kerk, waar de draad ergens moest hangen. Binnengekomen zagen ze een heks. 'Hoe zijn jullie binnengekomen ?' vroeg de heks. 'Dat is onmogelijk. Niemand kan hier komen.'

'Ik heb hem meegenomen,' zei Erin.

'Jij ?' sprak de heks. 'Ellendeling.' Toen begon ze op haar piano te spelen.

'Morgenrood, vroeg is dood, morgen boter, aardkloot,

Botervloot, kom hier nu, vlug, breng die mensen snel terug,

Deze stad is van mij, niemand komt er levend uit,

Niemand, nee, niemand, want de avond is het paslood,

Morgenbrood, vroeg is dood, ik heb hen nu geflest,

Ik heb hen op het kastje gelegd.'

'Heks, hou je waffel,' sprak Orpheus.

'Waar is de rode draad ?' vroeg Erin.

'Achter me,' zei de heks. 'Grijp ernaar, en als je mist, heb ik je.'

'Geen sprake van, heks,' zei Orpheus.

'Deze stad is van mij,' zei de heks, 'dus ik bepaal wat er gebeurd.'

De bakker heeft zijn hemd gescheurd,' zei Orpheus.

'Koeien in de sloot,' zei de heks.

'Ik heb een broertje dood,' zei Orpheus.

Toen begon ze weer verder te spelen.

'Draken van het vuurfontein, help met de wijn, help met de wijn,

Verdrink ze hier, in het bier, help met de wijn en met vertier,

Ha, kom terug, wanneer ik je roep, chocolade mensen hebben hier een goed beroep,

Slaven zullen jullie wezen, op het dekzeil gehesen, klaar.'

'Mens, houd toch op, niemand is in die akelige rijmpjes van jou geinteresseerd,' zei Orpheus.

'Niemand zei je ?' sprak de heks. 'Ze zijn toevallig allemaal aan de beeldbuis genageld. Ik beslis hier de TV. Ha.'

'Ach heks, houd op met je sprookjes,' zei Orpheus'. 'Zal ik u eens een verhaaltje vertellen.'

'Ga je gang,' zei de heks.

Orpheus floot even, en daar kwam een groep hyenas binnenstormen, die al snel op de heks doken.

'Dat kan helemaal niet,' zei de heks. 'Niemand kan hier komen. Hoe hebben jullie deze plaats ontdekt.'

'Vuur, vuur,' gilde de heks. Maar er kwam geen vuur, en haar piano kon ze niet meer bereiken. Toen maakte ze een heel hoog fluitje, maar dat werkte ook niets uit.

'Orpheus, we moeten hier weg,' gilde Erin. Samen renden ze naar buiten. 'Heb je het draad ?' vroeg Orpheus.

'Nog niet,' zei Erin.

'Houd vast,' zei Erin.

'Wat moet ik vasthouden ?' vroeg Orpheus.

'Mijn hand,' zei Erin.

'De rode stad is van mij,' gilde de heks. 'Dat kun je zo maar niet wegnemen. Mijn lieve, lieve stad.'

'Heks, het is afgelopen,' schreeuwde Orpheus.

'Nee !' krijste de heks. 'Kom daar niet aan. Raak het niet aan !'

Daar kwamen de hyenas naar buiten lopen met het draad. De stad was nu van hen. Ze hadden het draad in hun bekken, het rode draad, en er droop rood sap vanaf. Overal waar ze kwamen was er rode sneeuw.

'Het is een teken,' zei Erin.

'Wat voor een teken,' vroeg Orpheus.

'Ik kan het niet zeggen,' zei Erin.

'Schat, je moet het zeggen,' zei Orpheus.

'Chocola,' stamelde Erin.

'Het smaakt goed,' zegt Orpheus.

'Snoep is zoet,' zegt Erin.

'Deze heks met al haar vlezen,' zuchtte Orpheus.

'Ze is dood, heus,' zegt Erin. 'De hyenas hebben haar ...'

'Aan stukken gereten ?' vroeg Orpheus.

'Nee, veel erger,' zei Erin.

'Ik wil het niet weten,' zegt Orpheus.

'Je moet het weten,' roept Erin.

'Zeg me dat het niet zo is,' zegt Orpheus, nadat ze het hem had verteld. 'Hebben ze dat echt gedaan ? Dat had ik niet verwacht.'

'Ja, ze hebben haar echt in snoep veranderd,' zei Erin.

'En wie gaat haar opeten ?' vraagt Orpheus.

'De rode stad,' zegt Erin.

'Het snoep is goed,' zegt Orpheus.

Erin knikt. 'Ja,' zegt ze. 'Snoep is zoet.'

De dag erna sneeuwde het snoep, en de kinderen aten hun buikjes vol. Zo vol dat ze 's avonds niet bij het avondeten konden zijn. Ze moesten het vlees laten staan voor de hyena's, en lusten sinds die dag geen vlees of vis meer. 'Laat het over aan de hyena's,' werd er altijd gezegd. 'De snoep is voor de kinderen.'

Het Rode Wapen

Ik zag haar daar staan. Haar naam was Zwijnenjacht. Ze stond aan een poort met een sleutel. Ik probeerde weg te rennen, maar ze tackelde mij. En toen dacht ik : 'Waarom zou ik wegrennen eigenlijk ?' Het bleek een aardige vrouw. Ze nam mij door de poort naar binnen. Ze was heel praterig, had veel te vertellen. Ze zei dat zij me hier had gelokt, om mij te bevrijden uit een kerk. Ze had kleding gemaakt van parels. Je kon haar lichaam gewoon door de parels heenzien. Ze straalde warmte uit, maar ook geheimzinnigheid. Een koets stopte. We stapten in. De stad was groot hier, maar we gingen buiten de stad, waar ze in een hutje woonde. Een vreemd gevoel maakte zich van mij meester.

'Ik heb je verlost uit de kerk,' zei ze. 'Ze draaien daar allemaal in cirkeltjes, komen niet verder. Ze zijn onder de betovering van een heks. Ik heb je verlost. Het zijn zwijnen. Als je de jacht niet begint, dan pakken ze je terug. Bedriegelijke verschijnselen zijn het.'

'Okay,' zei ik. Toen begon ze te filosoferen. Ik vond het erg interessant. Ze was niet op haar mondje gevallen, en prikte door alles heen. 'Je moet denken,' zei ze, 'diep doordenken. Niet jezelf opsluiten in cirkeltjes.' Ik knikte.

'Er moet gewerkt worden in dat hoofdje van jou. Je moet je industrie bouwen. Zo kun je veilig zijn tegen de zwijnen,' sprak ze. Haar ogen waren rood doorbloed. Ik nam haar in mijn armen, gewoon omdat ik mezelf niet tegen kon houden. Ze huilde. Ik probeerde haar te troosten. 'Je bent zo lief,' zei ze. 'En dat is zeldzaam.'

'En jij bent een open vrouw,' zei ik. 'Dank je wel dat je mij verlost hebt.' Haar lichaam begon te schudden. 'Ze willen me bezitten, die zwijnen,' zei ze. 'Bouw je centrum van filosofie,' zei ze. 'En we zullen allemaal veilig zijn.'

'Wat is de belangrijkste filosofie ?' vroeg ik.

'Dat moet je ontdekken,' zei ze. 'Maar bouw gewoon voort. Die varkens zullen allemaal in het nieuwe stelsel van filosofie ontmaskerd worden.' Ik drukte haar tegen me aan. 'Je zult veilig zijn, heus,' zei ik. Toen glimlachte ze een beetje.

Ik keek naar de lucht, die vol was met luchtschepen. De hyena's zouden ons redden. Ze brachten ons naar een spiegel-universum. Alles was hier net een beetje anders. De natuur had hier zoveel meer diepte. Zwijnenjacht was erg aan het beven. Ze was erg ziek. Ik nam haar mee naar een grot, en legde haar neer op een zachte plek, tussen veren en vellen. Weer nam ik haar in haar armen, en verzekerde haar dat alles goed zou komen. Er groeide hier een koffieboom, reusachtig met diepe wortels. En op de takken van de boom en de stam was een kasteel gebouwd. Caffeine soldaten marcheerden op de muren. Ze leken op ridders en hadden scherpe wapens. Ook hadden ze pistolen met rode lasers. Ze vormden hun eigen politie. Ze

waren de communicatie politie. Caffeine had al deze realiteiten gecreeerd, en voerde een dwangmatige controle.

Ik las de statuten van Orion door, over een rode planeet, Dankbu. Het was een planeet vrij van caffeine. Het was een planeet waar alles om de innerlijke filosofische registers ging. Er was daar een oorlog tussen koffie en caffeine. Beide kanten hadden rode wapens.

Het Witte Kasteel

Hoofdstuk 1. Het Trauma van de Waarheid

De verwachting was dat alles goed zou lopen, en in zekere zin deed het dat ook, maar Marlies was stervende. Ze kon haar ziekte niet de baas. Ze was erg vrolijk, dat wel, maar de ziekte begon z'n tol te eisen. Haar lichaam werds steeds meer gammel. Ze kon niet bij de wortel van dit alles. Het was een raadsel. Deze allesverwoestende ziekte zou haar spoedig in de dodelijke grip ten onder brengen. Ze had een waas voor de ogen, en begon langzaam blind en doof te worden, afgesneden van de buitenwereld. Haar plan was om er zelf een einde aan te maken, voordat de ziekte dat zou doen. Ze zou daarvoor van een toren afspringen, om zo te pletter te vallen op de markt. Maar het dakzeil van een markt-tent zorgde ervoor dat ze dit overleefde. Toen gooide ze zichzelf voor de trein.

Er was twee minuten stilte in de kerk. De dominee las voor, een gedicht. Iedereen huilde. Arme Marlies. De bomen leefden rustig voort, met Marlies als de wind die hun bladeren bewoog. Zij bracht hen tot leven, door haar dood. Bloedbessen op een bord, thee ernaast. De tovenaar had haar zo gemaakt. Leeuwen waren haar vrienden ... witte leeuwen.

Een kleine jongen dacht na over zijn tante Marlies. Hij zou het witte kasteel waarin zij woonde missen. Snel woonden andere mensen daar. De kleine jongen groeide op, werd oud, maar vergat het witte kasteel nooit. Alsof leeuwen daar wandelden, altijd gingen zijn gedachten er naar terug. Hij was bang als haar te worden, stervende, maar een vreemde gezondheid had hem in de grip. Zijn gedachten waren meesterlijk, zijn honger was rijp, zijn staar ongrijpbaar, onbegrijpelijk, alsof de tovenaar hem had verlost. Zijn fantasieen waren kalm.

Hij schreef een boek over mensen, als een boek over vreemde wezens, als geesten wonen in hutten. Hij schreef een boek over de winden, en de tragiek van wolken. Hij was een eenling. Op een dag stond het witte kasteel te koop. Hij aarzelde geen moment en kocht het. Toen begon zijn leven op te bloeien.

Niemand had verwacht dat het zo snel zou gaan, maar hij werd koning, en regeerde een nieuw land. Grenzen waren aan het vervagen. Hij hield het geluk in zijn hand, trillend. Hij was bang het weer te verliezen, maar de liefde kalmeerde hem, stelde hem gerust. Tante Marlies was in zijn gedachten als de witte thee, in een prachtige witte jurk als bloesem. Ze was een plaatje. Zo zag hij haar altijd, als het getij van witte chocolade. Ze was altijd zijn lievelings-tante, en hij koesterde haar in zijn herinneringen.

Diep van binnen wist hij dat het een leugen was, de manier waarop hij met haar omging. Het had altijd iets onechts. Het was alsof ze het maar acteerden, een poppenspel. Maar hij had van haar genoten, en zij van hem.

De leugen regeerde, ook in het nieuwe land. Het was een kunst, als het raadsel der waarheid. Van binnen voerde hij een oorlog, maar ook dat was slechts schijn. Hij was een man van maskers.

Het witte kasteel maakte een denker van hem, een filosoof, en in het land was er hervorming na hervorming. En daar bleef het allemaal niet bij. Nee, sprookjesachtig moest het zijn, al was het allemaal maar een leugen. Hier moest het zijn. Professionele leugenaars richtte hij op, die veel moesten liegen. Ja, hij geloofde in de leugen, voor hem was dat het eeuwige leven. 'Je kan het ook van een andere kant bekijken,' zei hij altijd.

Zijn droom was een paradijs, en hij wilde dat verwezenlijken. Met leugens bouwde hij voort, maar het werd een prachtig land, en men noemde hem de leugen-koning. Er moest een einde komen aan het trauma van de waarheid. Ze hadden al lang gevochten. De waarheid hield hen veel te veel bezig, en voor wat ? De waarheid was een gruwelijke dictator, maar hij was de dromenkoning. Hij werd bestempeld als gemeen en gek, maar het land was majestueus mooi. Ze konden alles van hem zeggen, maar niet dat hij geen kunstenaar was. Hij was een deskundige gek, een geleerde. Nonsense was zijn doel, want de nuchtere waarheid was saai. Het land was allesbehalve zaai. De clowns waren gekomen. Ze brachten het zoete verdriet. Zij waren de lakeien van de dageraad.

Spijbelaars werden gearresteerd voor school. Er kwam een koud en hard regiem, met een vleugje warmte en doel. Hij schiep een nieuwe aarde en een nieuwe hemel, en werd God genoemd. Door zowel vriend als vijand. En hij dacht aan tante Marlies, die zijn drijfveer was. Tante Marlies werd het boegbeeld van een nieuw ziekenhuis, en het witte kasteel was het huis van de politie. Dit alles omdat hij dat zo wilde.

De zeemeermin sprak, en haar woorden waren als de woorden van zijn tante Ans die altijd verhalen voorlas. Haar woorden zouden tot in eeuwigheden doorklinken. In haar kom was het witte kasteel niets dan vergif, omhuld met koud zout. Het was een vreemde dans der zeemeerminnen die hem ontwaakten. Zij grepen zijn ziel en trokken hem in de diepte, in de wildernis van een nieuw bestaan, waar hij de witte leeuwenkoning zou zijn.

Zij lieten hem de toekomst zien in een bol, als heerlijke chocolade. Zij maakten een academie.

Het huis wat hij nu had was een donkere grot, maar hij waakte op in een betoverdende droom. Hij zou voor duizend jaren slapen, want het stafje der zeemeerminnen had hem geraakt. Hij liep voorop naar een graf.

Dit graf was van tante Ans. Hij omhelsde haar, gaf haar leven. Haar woorden galmden door.

Zij moest hier wezen. Ze had respect.

De bomen grepen haar, en maakten haar tot een prinses. De sneeuw der zeemeerminnen daalde neer. Hij had de indruk dat hij het goed had gedaan. Een tuin met betoverde rozen. Hij liet zijn kennis los op het meer.

Hoofstuk 2. De Gruwel der Eeuwen

Het hek van de rozentuin was hoog, met gouden punten. Velen stierven daar, maar het kon hem niet schelen. Hij was gek en wreed, een koningszoon. Hij was te deftig om zich te bekommeren om de zieken en de armen.

Hij verkoelde, en nog steeds was zijn hart brandende met een passie, maar dat was slechts voor geld en macht. Het ging om de grootte voor hem, niet meer om de kwaliteit, want dat was een graf. Hij walgde wanneer hij het woord kwaliteit hoorde. Het was een kwelling voor hem. Het moest groots zijn en gruwelijk, maar meesterlijk.

En zo werd zijn land een spookhuis, een nachtmerrie, gemaakt van witte chocolade, dat zo oud was geworden dat het giftig was. Maar hier wist hij wel raad mee. Het was een oorlogswapen, een medicijn, om de indiaan weer op het paard te hijsen. Zijn woonplaats stond vol met kleine indiaanse poppetjes, en hij liet ze oorlog voeren tegen elkaar. Ook schilderde hij, met het rozenvuur. Hij werd de gruwel der eeuwen.

Hij was de witte leeuwenkoning, de leugenkoning, en zeemeerminnen dienden hem. Maar hij miste een vrouw, alhoewel hij van het idee gruwelde dat hij een vrouw nodig zou moeten hebben. Hij haatte vrouwen diep van binnen. Dat was ook de reden waarom eigenlijk alles wat zich tussen hem en tante Marlies en tante Ans slechts spel was. Als er geen wet was dan zou hij ze hebben vermoord, als een dolle hond. En hij was druk bezig die wet af te schaffen. Moorden zou volgens hem moeten kunnen. Hij wilde leven van de moord, en dan vooral de moord op vrouwen. Dat waren wel de minste wezens die hij zich kon voorstellen. Maar al gauw had hij spijt van zijn ideeen. Hij wilde vrouwen een kans geven. Zij moesten gewoon geschoold worden.

En daarom maakte hij een wet dat alle vrouwen verplicht naar school moesten, tot de laatste dag van hun leven.

Watervogels

De Groene Dood

Hij sloop door het bos. De koningin van het woud waakte over hen. Hij hoorde de beesten brullen in de verte. De dromer waakte deze keer. In het zonlicht kon hij haar gezicht zien. Verderop zwommen wat watervogels in de rivier, en zijzelf waren met de grotere beesten. De groene wind was hen aan het omsingelen, heel subtiel, en kwam toen steeds dichterbij. Hij haalde het gedichten-boek met het gele leren kaft erbij, en begon eruit te prevelen. Ze hield hem tegen zich aan.

De watervogels kwamen dichterbij, en het natte was hun god. Kim staarde naar hem. Zij had hem gecreeerd. Zij was zijn godin. Zij had een boek met sleutels. En de sleutels waren van drop.

De watervogels brachten hen over de rivier naar het slot. In het slot hingen schilderijen, en er waren veel mysterieuze boeken. Ze gingen op een bed liggen, met een gordijn als deken. De groene dood was in de rivier, maar klom op de kant en ging het kasteel binnen. Aan de muren hingen skeletten.

Zij las hem verhalen voor, en het was voor hem een nieuw leven. Ze praatte snel, maar het was goed volgbaar voor hem. Hij had haar leren begrijpen, dronk wijn met haar.

De groene dood schoof als een deken over hem heen, en plotseling stond het slot in brand. Snel doken ze de rivier in. De watervogels beschermde hen tegen het vuur. Het was alsof alles in brand stond. De boeken veranderden in vogels, en de groene dood dook in de rivier om achter hen aan te gaan. Maar mysterieuze rozen waren om hen heen. Toen veranderde de rivier in bloed, en de groene dood loste er in op.

Ze zwommen naar de overkant, en gingen op de kant zitten. Rozen groeiden naar beneden vanuit de bomen. De vogels der geheimen kwamen om hen heen.

Nooit Genoeg

De Rode Woestijn

Hoofdstuk 1. De Hellekus

De pijn van het leven werd te erg en hij greep naar de drugs. Hij bleef maar spuiten om zijn hoofd boven water te kunnen houden. Hij kon er erg agressief van worden, of juist heel zachtaardig. Het waren als kleine tekenfilmpjes die in hem gespoten werden, of kleine stickertjes of plakplaatjes, die zijn hoofd op hol brachten, in een andere sfeer. Hij kon weer ademen, maar het spul was erg duur. Hij stal, en bedelde. De momenten dat hij spoot lieten hem zijn bloed weer voelen stromen. Het kon hem niet schelen wat anderen ervan dachten. Hij kon niet terug, want er was teveel pijn. Hij haatte de medische wereld, want zij hadden het allemaal op hun geweten. Sinds zijn geboorte hadden ze hem volgestopt met implantaten voor allerlei onzinnige redenen, diep in zijn lichaam. Hij wilde ook niets meer met zijn ouders te maken hebben, want zij hadden dit allemaal maar toegelaten. Hij beschouwde hen niet meer als zijn ouders.

Sommig spul liet hem voelen alsof hij kon vliegen. Door ander spul voelde hij zich heel wijs. Hij mengde ook veel drugs. Op een dag kwam hij een man tegen die hem veel vertelde over indiaanse drugs. De man nam hem zelfs in huis, en zorgde voor hem als voor een zoon. De indiaanse drugs bleek erg zuiver te zijn. Het maakte van pijn iets totaal anders. De jongen was de man erg dankbaar. Hij leefde er erg van op, en hoefde niet meer op de straat te slapen. De indiaanse drugs bleek erg machtig te zijn. Het maakte mensen intelligent.

De man had ook een dochter. De jongen en het meisje konden erg goed met elkaar opschieten. Ze kon goed verhalen vertellen, en hij luisterde vaak uren aandachtig naar haar. De indiaanse drugs maakte hem erg alert, maar op een dag ging het helemaal mis, en wilde hij van de drugs af. Maar zijn lichaam begon zo te protesteren, en een geweldige angst maakte zich van hem meester. Hij was inmiddels een gevangene van de drugs geworden. 'Probeer wat te minderen,' zei het meisje. Maar het leek wel alsof zijn lichaam meer eiste. Hij was in een zwaar gevecht, en uiteindelijk gaf hij toe dat hij niets in te brengen had. Hij zweefde op het randje van de dood, maar diep binnenin wilde hij dood, want hij leefde in de hel. De man deed er allemaal erg gemakkelijk over, maar het meisje droeg goed zorg voor hem. Hij at nauwelijks meer. Hij had een vreemde buikpijn. Hij had veel visioenen over de dood en de hel.

Het meisje was erg lief voor hem. Ze gaf hem veel liefde, ook sexueel, maar op een dag kon hij dat ook niet meer aan. Zijn zenuwstelsel was zo overgevoelig geworden dat alles pijn deed. Hij begon zichzelf op te sluiten, want sociale contacten waren te zwaar. Het meisje begreep het wel. Ze kon zich goed inleven in hem. Vaak schoof ze liefdesbriefjes bij hem onder de deur door.

Op een dag schoof ze vreemde zaadjes bij hem onder de deur door, in plastic, met een briefje erbij : 'Probeer dit spul eens. Kusjes.' Hij las op de strip van het product : Judas' Kussen. Hij slikte een zaadje in, wat als een klein besje was. Direct sprong er vuur in zijn ogen, en kon hij dwars door alles heenkijken. Hij raakte zijn grip op de werkelijkheid kwijt, en waande zich in een grote rode woestijn, die overigens vol begroeid was.

Een man liep op hem af. De man had een baard en kuste hem. 'Wie bent u ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ik ben Jezus,' zei de man.

'Ben ik dood ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Nee,' zei de man. 'Je bent niet dood, maar je leeft ook niet. Het is iets er tussenin.'

'Oh, dat is interessant,' zei de jongen. 'Wat is het ?'

'Je moet niet zoveel vragen stellen,' zei de man. Er kwam een andere man aanlopen.

'Hi,' zei de man.

De jongen gaf de man een hand en vroeg wie hij was.

'Judas,' zei de man.

'Interessant,' zei de jongen, 'maar goed, ik zal geen vragen meer stellen.'

'Oh, stel ze gerust,' zei de man die zich Judas noemde. De jongen kreeg al snel door dat deze man wat vriendelijker en meer open was dan de andere man.

'I...ik wil weten waar ik ben,' zei de jongen aarzelend.

'Heb je van het besje gegeten ?' vroeg de man.

De jongen knikte. 'Wij zijn je bevrijders,' zei de man. 'Je bent hier veilig. Wij zijn sterk, heel sterk.'

'Waar zijn we ?' vroeg de jongen.

Maar toen gaf de man die zich Jezus noemde hem een enorme duw, en zei bijna brullend : 'Ik zei toch dat je niet zoveel moest vragen ?'

'Ach, let maar niet op hem,' zei Judas tegen de jongen. 'Hij is soms een beetje ruw.'

'Dit is de hel,' zei Judas. 'De plaats tussen leven en dood.'

'Ik moet zeggen, het is een prachtige plaats hier,' zei de jongen. 'Anders dan wat ik had verwacht.'

'Wat verwachtte je ?' vroeg Judas.

Plotseling kon de jongen zich niet meer bewegen, en niet meer praten. Hij voelde zich als een gevangene. Vreemd rood vuur, als takken van bomen die hem hadden gegrepen. Hij werd wakker op zijn bed. Snel greep hij naar de zaadjes, en nam twee zaadjes. Het was alsof rood vuur vanuit zijn ogen opschoot. Het was alsof het meisje van wie hij hield in zijn kamer stond. Maar het rode vuur schoof tussen hen in. Weer verloor hij de grip op de werkelijkheid en kon door alles heenkijken, en weer was hij in de rode woestijn die vol begroeid was. 'Je bent terug,' zei Judas.

'Ja,' zei de jongen. 'Ik zou hier graag willen blijven.'

'Blijf hier dan,' zei Judas.

'Hoe ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Stop met vragen stellen,' zei de man die zich Jezus noemde. 'Ik word er doodziek van.'

'Zeg broer,' zei Judas. 'Ga dan terug.'

Maar Jezus sloeg Judas op zijn kaak, en brulde : 'Ik ga voor niemand uit de weg !'

'Goed,' zei Judas. Toen sloeg hij Jezus zo hard terug dat deze bewusteloos neerviel.

'Welkom in de hel,' zei Judas tegen de jongen. 'Vraag wat je wil.'

'Wie is hij,' vroeg de jongen.

'Hij is een onderdeel van de drugs, een krachtige hallucinatie,' zei Judas.

'En jij dan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ik ook,' zei Judas.

'Bestaan jullie echt, en zijn jullie echte personen ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ja, wij zijn een grotere werkelijkheid dan de wereld waar jij vandaan komt,' zei Judas. 'In jouw wereld wordt de hel vaak afgedaan als een fabeltje, of als een slechte realiteit voor schaduwen en onder-figuren. Maar de hel is de wereld van de drugs, van zaden en geheimen, de wereld waar de natuur het voor het zeggen heeft.'

Opeens wordt het zwart voor de ogen van de jongen, en even later wordt hij wakker op zijn bed. Haastig grist hij de laatste drie zaadjes en slikt ze in. Maar dit keer gebeurt er niet veel. 'Ik moet meer van die troep !' schreeuwt hij. Hij wordt zo zenuwachtig dat hij zijn kamer uitgaat, en zijn meisje aanspreekt. Maar het meisje heeft het spul niet meer, en het is erg duur. 'Godverredomme !' briest hij. 'Waar groeit dat verdomde spul ? Ik moet meer van deze troep hebben.'

'Dat moet je aan pappa vragen,' zei ze. Plotseling valt de jongen op de grond, en er komt schuim op zijn mond. Het meisje sleept hem naar zijn kamer, naar zijn matras. 'I... ik houd van je,' stamelt de jongen. 'Ik ben zo verliefd op je. Je bent altijd zo lief voor me geweest.'

'Vertrouw me,' zei het meisje. 'Ik zal ervoor zorgen dat je zo snel mogelijk weer van die zaadjes hebt.' De jongen zinkt weg in een diepe trance. Na een dag of drie liggen er weer zaadjes die onder zijn deur door zijn geschoven. Als een woest beest scheurt de jongen het plastic open en neemt vier zaadjes. Maar er gebeurt niks. Dan neemt hij de laatste dertien zaadjes allemaal tegelijk, maar weer gebeurt er niets. 'Godverredomme !' schreeuwt de jongen. 'Er gebeurt geen klote !'

Hij laat het meisje op zijn kamer binnen. 'Wat voor spul is het ?' vraagt de jongen. 'Weet je zeker dat het hetzelfde spul is ? Wie verkoopt die rotzooi. Ik moet meer van die rotzooi hebben !'

Het meisje pakt het plastic, en op de rand staat : Judas' Kussen. 'Ja, het is nog steeds hetzelfde spul.'

Hij pakt haar vast en kust haar. 'Je bent zo'n lieve schat dat je dit gedaan hebt,' zegt hij. Hij kust haar weer, en ditmaal intens. Een paar dagen later liggen er weer strips onder de deur door. Ditmaal met gele zaadjes, en op de strips stond : Jesus' Kisses. 'Maar met eentje beginnen,' dacht hij. Hij nam een zaadje, en direct spoot er geel vuur door zijn ogen, en al snel bevond hij zich weer in de rode woestijn die vol begroeid was. Judas stond naast hem. 'Je bent weer terug,' zei hij. De jongen knikte. 'Hoe lang gaat het ditmaal duren ?' zei de jongen.

'Oh, veel langer,' zei Judas.

'Gelukkig,' zei de jongen. 'Ik lijk wel gek.'

'Waar is Jezus ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Dood,' zei Judas. 'Hij is op het moment gekruisigd en begraven.'

'Gek,' zei de jongen.

'Lekker rustig,' zei Judas. 'Het was niet zo'n beste.'

'Kunnen we het over iets anders hebben,' zei de jongen.

'Waar wil je het over hebben,' zei Judas.

'Hebben jullie hier ook telefoons ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Wat wil je daarmee doen ?' vroeg Judas.

'Mijn vriendin bellen,' zei de jongen.

'Die is hier niet,' zei Judas. 'Ze laat jou al die pilletjes slikken omdat ze van je houdt.'

'Ik weet het, maar zij is niet zo gek als mij. Hoe kunnen we haar hier krijgen dan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Wil je dat echt ?' vroeg Judas.

'Ja,' zei de jongen.

'Waarom ?' vroeg Judas.

'Omdat ik van haar houd,' zei de jongen.

'Mis je haar ?' vroeg Judas.

'Ik weet het niet,' zei de jongen.

'Je kunt hier ook vriendinnen krijgen,' zei Judas.

'Waar dan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Op de vriendinnen-markt,' zei Judas. 'Het zijn hallucinaties, sterke hallucinaties, die je kunt kopen.'

'Kopen ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Als in een spel,' zei Judas. 'Ze stelt je vragen, en als je ze goed beantwoord, dan mag je haar meenemen.'

'Eng,' zei de jongen.

'Zullen we het eens proberen ?' zei Judas.

Even later zaten ze tegenover een pop. 'Maar dit zijn poppen,' zei de jongen.

'Je begint met poppen,' zei Judas, 'dan later worden ze echter.'

'Stel je vraag maar,' zei de jongen tegen de pop.

'Hoe ben je hier gekomen,' zei de pop.

'Door een geel zaadje,' zei de jongen.

'Wat was de naam van het zaadje,' zei de pop.

'Jesus' Kisses,' zei de jongen.

'Geweldig,' zei de pop. 'Je hebt me gewonnen.'

'Dat ging makkelijk,' zei de jongen. Maar verderop waren de echtere poppen, en daar waren de vragen veel moeilijker. 'Maar ik wil geen pop als vriendin,' zei de jongen tegen Judas. 'Ik wil een echte persoon.'

'We zijn allemaal poppen,' zei Judas. 'Zelfs jij. We zijn allemaal kleine stukjes bewustzijn, en samengevoegd vormt het een groot geheel. In je reis naar onafhankelijkheid zul je moeten leren dat je zelf je eigen familie bent, en je eigen groep mensen, allemaal stukjes van jezelf, en de rest zal vervagen.'

'Dus ik zal later alleen nog maar contact hebben met mezelf, en niet meer met anderen ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Het gaat om de mechanismes,' zei Judas. 'Zoals ik al zei, we zijn allemaal poppen, kleine stukjes bewustzijn. We weerspiegelen allemaal kleine stukjes oneindigheid, van het grote, algehele mechanisme, en zullen daarin allemaal geabsorbeerd worden. Dan is er geen onderscheid van personen meer, maar alleen de eeuwige principes waarin wij tot rust zijn gekomen door verlichting.'

'Wow, dure woorden,' zei de jongen.

'Dus je zal uiteindelijk alles moeten worden voor jezelf,' zei Judas. 'Dan heb je je doel bereikt, en ben je niet meer afhankelijk van anderen. Nu hebben we anderen nog nodig, maar later niet meer.'

'Okay,' zei de jongen. Hij sprak nog een paar dagen door met Judas, en werd toen wakker op zijn bed. Hij slikte weer een geel zaadje, en bevond zich direct in een oorlog. Overal renden soldaten heen en weer. 'Waar gaat deze oorlog over ?' vroeg hij aan een soldaat. Daar kwam Judas al aanwandelen, in een wit, lichtend gewaad. Hij leek erg veel op Jezus. 'De soldaten horen je niet,' zei Judas. 'Ze strijden voor hun kleine bewustzijn, en zijn niet open voor andere bewustzijnen.'

'Dat is naar,' zei de jongen.

'Het zijn slaven,' zei Judas.

'Waarom kunnen ze mij niet horen ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ze zien je zelfs niet,' zei Judas. 'Ze zijn alleen maar bezig met hun eigen kleine bewustzijn. Daar zijn ze op gefixeerd.'

'Dus in wezen kunnen ze mij geen kwaad doen ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Nee,' zei Judas. 'Ze leven in hun eigen wereld, en kunnen jouw wereld niet bereiken.'

'Gek,' zei de jongen.

Na enkele weken waren de zaadjes van de jongen op, maar er lagen alweer nieuwe zaadjes. De jongen had vele gesprekken met Judas.

'De Jezus kus is een onderdeel van de Judas kus,' zei Judas. 'Een kus die je verlicht, die je uitleidt, naar een hele andere wereld, waar alles meer een geheel is. Zo kom je onder de sluiers door.'

Maar op een dag werkten de gele zaadjes niet meer voor de jongen, hoeveel hij er ook van nam. Weer had hij een gesprek met zijn meisje. Een dag later lagen er weer andere zaadjes onder zijn deur. Ditmaal waren de zaadjes wat groter, bijna als echte bessen, en ze waren blauw, oranje en zwart. Ook waren er bruine zaadjes tussen. De jongen slikte er één in. Op de strip las hij : Hell Kisses.

Een grote vrouw verscheen voor hem, en liet alles om hem heen draaien om hem in haar wereld te zuigen. Zijn verstand en bewustzijn, en al zijn herinneringen waren plotseling als water zo week, als zachte pudding. Scherpe tonen leken zijn hoofd te doorboren en rode met roze stralen, als infra-rood en lasers. Maar nog steeds leek het alsof ze in zijn kamer waren. Ze ging op zijn bureau zitten. Nee, dit was niet zijn kamer, maar leek op zijn kamer. Het gordijn achter haar was prachtig golvend met satijn, kant, wol en dierlijk touw. Door het raam zag hij niets dan vuur, maar het was als het vuur van drugs. Het speelde met zijn verstand, met zijn herinneringen, met zijn dierlijke instincten en met zijn filosofieen.

'Mijn naam is de Hel,' zei de vrouw. 'Ik ben de plaats waar jij was. Je hebt haar overwonnen.'

'Wie heb ik overwonnen ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Haar, degene die loog over mij,' zei de vrouw. De vrouw pakte hem stevig beet en kuste hem. 'Mijn zuster, genaamd Leven. Mijn andere zuster is Dood.'

'Ik ben blij dat je mij hebt gevonden,' zei de vrouw. Plotseling kwam Judas binnen en omhelsde haar. 'Dank je, schat,' zei ze.

'Dit is mijn moeder,' zei Judas.

'Leuke moeder heb je,' zei de jongen.

'Dank je,' zei Judas, 'ik weet het. Ze is de beste moeder die je maar kan bedenken.' Buiten was er inmiddels rood vuur, als gevuld met bloed.

'Ja, vele oorlogen worden er gestreden,' zei Judas, en wees op het rode vuur. Veel rook kwam er naar binnen door het raam.

'Moeder Oorlog,' zei de vrouw, 'met haar zuster Jacht. En haar andere zuster is Wet.'

'Interessante familie-lijn,' zei de jongen.

'Weet je wat interessant is,' zei Judas. 'Dat ik een deel van die familie-lijn ben.'

'Je bent een gezegende man,' zei de jongen.

Ineens rende Jezus binnen. 'Ha broer,' zei Judas. 'Weer van de doden opgestaan, jongen ?'

'Ja,' hijgde Jezus, 'Tante Leven heeft dat gedaan, maar nu is ze dood. Iemand schoot haar neer. Het lijkt wel alsof ik zwaar aan de drugs ben. Ik lijk godverredomme wel op een eland.'

'Ja, je bent me nogal een idioot,' zei Judas. Toen nam Judas een pistool en schoot Jezus neer. 'Probeer hier maar eens van op te staan.'

'Ik zal er niet om rouwen,' zei de vrouw genaamd de Hel. 'Jarenlang heeft deze knaap ons het leven zuur gemaakt.'

'Ach ma, en het is maar een drugs-pistool. Harde zaadjes die in het lichaam worden geschoten voor hallucinaties,' zei Judas.

'Zoon, je bent een genie,' zei Hel.

'Ik denk dat ik nu echt gek begin te worden,' zei de jongen terwijl hij zijn hoofd greep.

'Dat is Gekte,' zei Hel, 'de moeder van mijn moeder. En haar zus heet Drugs. Door hen zijn we allemaal hier.'

Plotseling ging de deur open, en twee vrouwen kwamen binnen. Ze namen direct de jongen in de houdgreep. 'Wie is hij ? Jongeman, wij arresteren jou.'

'Jullie zijn maar een gekke familie,' zei de jongen.

'Racist,' zei de vrouw genaamd Gekte. 'Ik weet nog wel een goede plaats voor jou : In het kippenhok.'

'Nee, in een goede legbatterij,' zei de vrouw genaamd Drugs.

'Dat is hetzelfde,' zei Gekte. 'En wel Godverredomme, wat doet Jezus hier op de grond.'

'Niet mee bemoeien,' zei Drugs.

'Dat doe ik wel,' zei Gekte.

'Nee, dat doe je niet,' zei Drugs, en sleurde haar mee naar buiten. Buiten door het raam was alles nu gifgroen.

'Wat een stel,' zei Judas.

De jongen werd wakker, en nam nog een zaadje. Snel bevond hij zich in een gevangenis. 'We hebben hem,' zei Gekte.

'Dat is geen nieuws,' zei Drugs.

'Zeg schatje,' zei Gekte, 'zou jij niet tot onze familie willen behoren.'

'Ach, waarom ook niet,' zei de jongen. 'Hoe gaat dat ?'

'Door een web,' zei Drugs. 'We moeten je door een web trekken, en dan moet je een spinnenei inslikken.'

'Klinkt geweldig,' zei de jongen.

Al snel was het voor mekaar, maar ze vertelden hem ook dat hij nu niet meer terugkon naar het gewone leven. Hij zou nu voor altijd in de hel moeten blijven. En onderdelen van de hel waren drugs en gekte.

'Haha, ik ben gek, ik ben gek,' zei de jongen. De twee vrouwen lachten.

Het ging niet goed met Judas. Hij had een verkeerd pilletje ergens ingeslikt en lag op sterven. De twee vrouwen konden er niet om rouwen : 'De één komt, de ander gaat.'

'Waar gaat hij naartoe ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ach, weet je wat het is met die Judas en die Jezus,' zeiden de vrouwen. 'Ze zijn nogal goed met Leven en Dood. Wij houden meer van Hel.'

'Oh,' zei de jongen.

Samen met Hel gingen ze naar de begravenis van Judas en Jezus, en Hel bad tot de slaapgodin om over haar zonen te waken. 'Ik heb in ieder geval nu een nieuwe zoon,' zei Hel, en wees op de jongen.

Hoofdstuk 2. Zij Nam Hem Mee

Hij zat in de trein naar een stad omgeven met drugs-struiken, waar allerlei zaadachtige besjes groeiden die mensen het hoofd dol konden maken. De stad werd streng bewaakt door deze struiken, die hier en daar echt muren hadden gevormd. In de stad troonde Ziekte, de moeder van Drugs en Gekte. De jongen zou een tijdje bij Ziekte logeren, om zo de familie beter te leren kennen. Ziekte was een hele aardige vrouw. Ze schonk thee voor hem in toen hij was binnengekomen. 'Voor het eerst ben je dan hier,' zei ze met een glimlach. De jongen knikte. 'Dus jij wilt de familie beter leren kennen hè,' zei ze. Weer knikte de jongen. Het was een hele mooie vrouw, zeer lieflijk, intelligent en mysterieus. Een vreemde kracht maakte zich van hem meester. 'Wij geloven niet in toeval hè,' zei Ziekte. 'Jij behoorde hier te zijn, bij mij.' Hij kon haar ogen niet van haar afhouden, en was als gehypnotiseerd.

'Luister je naar muziek ?' vroeg ze. De jongen knikte. Ze begon slaapverwekkende muziek op te zetten, betoverend mooi. Het had een verzachtende uitwerking op hem. Ze reikte hem een schaal met besjes aan. 'Neem er maar van,' zei ze. De jongen begon te grissen en te slikken. De vrouw glimlachte. 'Hongerig joch,' zei ze. Even leek er een glimlach op het gezicht van de jongen te komen, en toen straalde hij. Alles om hem heen scheen langzamer te gaan. Na een tijdje kwam Hel binnen. 'Ik ben blij met hem,' zei Ziekte tegen Hel. 'Hij is een goede aanwinst in de familie.'

Achter de stad was een brug die leidde naar de wereld genaamd Ziekte, haar wereld. Na het gesprek in de stad nam Ziekte hem mee naar haar wereld, in de trein. Hel ging ook mee. De jongen keek zijn ogen uit. Het was de mooiste wereld die hij ooit had gezien. Ziekte leidde hen naar een tafel in een weiland omgeven met wilde woestijnen, vol begroeid. Boven de tafel zweefde een roze theepot-olifant, die thee voor hen inschonk. De thee smaakte naar vla, en naar toverbessen.

Dieper in het weiland was een rivier. Voor de rivier stond een kathedraal. Hier werd de godin, Ziekte, aanbeden. Zij droeg het medicijn, en was dus ook de genezer met de groene vlam van gezondheid. Ze probeerde te onderwijzen dat we alleen onszelf kunnen redden, dat wanneer we een redder proberen te vinden, dan zal het wegglijden. Alles wat we proberen vast te houden en te bezitten, zal van ons wegglijden. Je kan alleen je familie en helpers samenstellen van je eigen innerlijke delen. De rest zal vergaan. Aan het einde zal alleen jijzelf overblijven. De sleutel die zij aanreikt is je eigen sleutel. Dat ben jezelf. Je hebt de ander niet nodig om gelukkig te zijn. De ander is er maar tijdelijk, totdat je hebt geleerd de ander te zijn voor jezelf. Het is een wordings-process. Het gaat om het zijn, niet om het bezitten, niet om relaties. Hiervoor hadden ze een hele speciale drug nodig : Kus van Ziekte. De jongen had nog nooit mensen gezien die zo erg aan de drugs waren dan deze mensen in de kathedraal. Ze bleven maar spuiten en slikken, en anderen zaten er in een totale trance bij, en veranderden geheel van uiterlijk. Zij volgden Ziekte naar de bronnen van genezing.

De Stad van Erotos

Zij zat daar, omringd door ogen, met een blauwe mond. Roze olifantjes stonden om haar heen, en de ogen hadden vleugels en zongen zo mooi. Er kwam een roze kracht uit de ogen, die door elkaar heenstroomde. Ook droop er een slijm uit de ogen. Zo was er het oog van wijsheid, het oog van liefde, het oog van genezing, het oog van schoonheid, het oog van kracht, het oog van puurheid, en het oog van licht. Het waren zeven ogen, haar dienstknechten. Zij spraken tot haar als een orakel, maar vaak waren zij stil. Zij droegen de geur van de bossen en de wateren, en zij leefde als in een visioen.

Verderop stond de boom der hyena's. Onder deze boom regeerde de zwarte koningin met haar legioenen over alle witte mannen. Zij schreeuwde, en had veel bloed te verbergen. Onder de last van een ongeboren kind werkte zij. De boom bracht een vergif voort, haar vergif. Hiermee had zij de witte mannen in schuld gebonden. Zij konden deze schulden niet betalen. Zij leefden in honger onder de tirannie van de zwarte koningin. Zij voerde hen met vergif vanuit zwarte borsten, en dichtbij stond een spiegel. In de spiegel was er een wereld waar de witte koning regeerde over de zwarte vrouwen, een omgekeerde wereld, maar niemand kon deze wereld bereiken. De zwarte koningin bewaakte de spiegel bijna hysterisch. Maar de zwarte koningin stierf, en haar dochter nam het over. Haar dochter was zo lief, als de goedheid zelf, en iedereen was blij met deze koningin. En men vergat de boom der hyena's, en men vergat de spiegel, want iedereen leefde nu in geluk en zaligheid. En de spiegel en de boom der hyena's werden verbannen naar het rijk der nachtmerries. Maar zeker bij zeker kwam het land onder invloed van de witte spin, een vreemd en gevaarlijk medicijn.

Zelfs mensen konden verstrikt raken in de webben van deze spin. Zij werden dan tijdenlang uitgehongerd, en moesten van een vreemd vergif eten, wat de spin hen voerde, en zij werden voortdurend gewassen in het speeksel van de spin. De slachtoffers zouden dromen krijgen of hallucinaties van het meest overheerlijke voedsel, wat onbereikbaar voor hen was. Ook zouden ze nachtmerries krijgen dat ze in een varken of een gnoe veranderden, en geplaagd worden door doodsangsten. Na een tijd zou de witte spin dan veranderen in een zwarte spin, om aan de maaltijd te beginnen. Sommigen zeiden dat de witte spin eigenlijk niet wit was, maar zwart, en dat het alleen maar wit lijkt, also het zijn tanden laat zien. Ook zeiden sommigen dat het de wraak was van de zwarte koningin. De nieuwe koningin wilde er niets aan doen, omdat zij dacht dat het misschien de terugkeer van haar moeder was.

Maar op een dag kwam de witte spin in het paleis en wilde de nieuwe koningin ombrengen. Nog steeds durfde de nieuwe koningin niets te doen, en vluchtte naar het bos. De witte spin nam de troon. Direkt veranderde de witte spin in een witte koning, zodat sommigen dachten dat het de wraak van de spiegel was. Maar alweer gingen de witte mannen in gevangenschap,

dus het zou toch heel goed mogelijk de zwarte koningin kunnen wezen, in één van haar gedaantes.

De witte spin vond dat de nieuwe koningin moest sterven. De witte spin verliet zijn troon en ging het bos in om naar haar te zoeken. Hij moest en zou haar vinden, en toen hij haar vond was ze erg verschrikt. 'Alstublieft,' zei het meisje. 'Laat mij leven, ik heb u toch niets aangedaan ? Ik smeek u, geef mij een kans, en laat mij de redenen weten waarom u mij wilt doden.'

Maar de spin antwoordde niet, en begon het meisje aan stukken te rijten. Het volk ging ten onder in doem meer dan ooit tevoren. De spin veranderde vaak van geslacht en kleur, en vaak zagen mensen een hyena op een troon. Mensen begonnen nachtmerries te krijgen van hyenas die hen verscheurden, koelbloedig, zonder genade.

Totdat op een dag een reusachtige witte vlieg het land binnenvloog. De vlieg was prachtig, als betoverend. Velen dachten dat het de terugkeer was van de gestorven nieuwe koningin. De vlieg vloog het paleis binnen en begon met een rustige, zachte stem te spreken. De spin vloog de vlieg aan, maar begon weg te smelten. Een wit vuur begon de spin aan te vreten. Nog nooit had het land zo'n gekrijs gehoord, als het gekrijs van hyenas. De witte vlieg, die reusachtig was, nam de troon, en alweer werden de witte mannen bevrijd.

Zeven jaren regeerde de goede koningin, totdat op een dag een hyena het paleis binnenkwam en de witte vlieg verscheurde. Het bleek de witte spin te zijn die zich als een hyena had vermomd. Hoe zij van de dood was opgestaan begreep niemand. Weer gingen de witte mannen in gevangenschap, erger dan ooit. Zij moesten een voer eten waardoor ze in varkens of gnoes veranderden. Ze klaagden erover dat hun leven bestond uit sterven en geboren worden. 'Ja,' zei de witte spin, 'dat komt omdat jullie in het Grote Wiel van de Witte Spin zijn, van de eeuwige wedergeboorte en verslinding.'

'Dat klinkt oosters,' zei iemand.

'Nee, het is indiaans,' zei de witte spin. 'Het is een wiel, een cyclus, van vlees, niet van reincarnatie.'

'Van vlees en niet van reincarnatie ?' vroeg dezelfde persoon.

'Ja,' zei de witte spin, 'precies zoals ik het zeg. Daar moeten jullie witte mensen maar eens gewend aan raken. Jullie zijn gewoon onderdeel van de voedsel-keten, en in dit rijk ben ik de baas. Ik sta aan de top van de voedsel-keten, en jullie werken voor mij, sterven, en komen hierdoor weer tot leven.'

'Ja, weer om een stuk vlees te worden,' zei die iemand. 'Waar houdt dit alles op ?'

'Het houdt nooit op,' zei de witte spin.

'Bent u een filosoof ofzo ?' vroeg de persoon.

'Gaat je geen snars aan,' snauwde de witte spin. Even leek ze weer op een hyena, en even leek ze weer op een zwarte spin. Vervolgens sprak ze : 'In mijn webben zijn jullie. Wen daar maar aan.'

'Het is een vervloekte indiaanse steen,' zei iemand anders, 'een betoverd juweel. Wij hebben erin gekeken en raakten betoverd.'

'Als een Medusa ofzo ?' vroeg de andere persoon weer. Sommigen knikten.

'Hoe krijgen we dat dan weer recht ?' werd er gevraagd. Maar niemand wist de oplossing. 'Misschien is dit wel ons noodlot,' opperde iemand. In ieder geval voelden ze zich machteloos, en steeds meer hopeloos. Ze waren als opgesloten in een visioen door deze drug. Ze waren op een eeuwige boerderij, maar waar werden ze voor gekweekt ? Of werden ze nergens voor gekweekt. De witte spin richtte zich gewoon op het ritueel, als een traditie, en liet verder niets doorschemeren. 'Ik wed dat het de zwarte koningin is !' riep iemand. Sommigen knikten. 'En kunnen jullie die spiegel herinneren waarin een rijk is waar een witte koning is die zwarte vrouwen onderdrukt ? Nou, daar wil ik ook niet wezen.'

'Misschien heeft hij daar wel een reden voor,' opperde iemand anders. 'Of misschien is dat de witte spin zelf die daar een dubbelbestaan leidt, want soms verandert de witte spin in een witte koning. En de zwarte koningin bewaakte die spiegel altijd in grote hysterie.'

'Of misschien zit in de spiegel een sleutel tot onze bevrijding,' zei weer een ander.

'Ik geloof daar niet in,' zei iemand, 'ten eerste niet in het onderdrukken van vrouwen, en ten tweede niet in het onderdrukken van zwarte vrouwen. Zij zijn de bron van ons leven, zijn we allemaal niet uit hen voortgekomen ? Wij hebben ze nodig, en dat ze ons onderdrukken moeten ze zelf weten, maar we kunnen niet onze bron aanvallen.'

'Jij bent het spoor bijster,' zei een ander. Spoedig liep het uit op een vechtpartij. De witte spin had haar gladiatoren opgesteld, en zaaide strijd. Om die strijd te winnen hadden ze macht nodig, en daarom begonnen ze de witte spin te aanbidden, en werd zij hun godin. Vele tempels bouwden zij voor haar, en zij genoot van hun verdeeldheid. Ze had er een lust en plezier in om strijd te zaaien, achterdocht, wantrouwen en leugens. Op alle mogelijke manieren hongerde ze hen uit, zodat ze zich openstelden voor haar gif. Haar gif werd gezien als levendmakend, overwinnend, almachtig. Zij zagen haar als hun mogelijke bruid.

In hun grootmoed stelden zij wetten op, hun eigen webben, en bouwden kerken en psychiatrieen, en zij was daar, als het grote enigma. Zij broedde voort, ja zelfs in hun graven, maar zij was ongenadig, en gaf slechts illusies, valse hoop. En voor haar tronen werden zij in het ongelijk gesteld, de één meer als de ander.

Zij hield van de jacht en van misleidende woorden. Zij mengde haar giffen op hoge bergen, en als zij afdaalde kwam zij om te doden, maar ook om op te wekken in de hel. Op een dag echter, kwam zij met een geheimenis. Ze begon te vertellen dat de witte vlieg hun enige sleutel was om van hun schuld te worden verlost, en dat haar gif was gemaakt van de witte vlieg. En ze sprak dat de witte vlieg nog eenmaal zou komen om te verlossen en te veroordelen. Op een dag ging de witte spin in een cocon en verandere langzaam in een witte vlieg. Maar deze vlieg was erger dan ze hadden verwacht. Deze vlieg bracht hen een realiteit van ongekende wreedheid. Na zeven jaren van verschrikkelijk leed stierf uiteindelijk de witte vlieg. De mensen leefden door alsof er niets was gebeurd. Ze wilden er eigenlijk niet aan herinnerd worden. Ze vonden hun eigen drug om van alles te herstellen. Zowel de verhalen van de witte spin als van de witte vlieg kwamen steeds meer en meer op de achtergrond, en men vond het ook niet meer belangrijk. Zij creeerden hun eigen religies en mysteries.

De dromenkoningin was woedend. Zij had hen deze dromen gegeven, maar ze deden er niks meer mee, en ze had haar grip verloren. Een hyena rende haar kasteel binnen, en beet haar in de nek. 'Jij mag dan wel de godin van de dood zijn,' zei de hyena, 'maar ik ben de godin van de hel.' De godin van de dood rende al bloedend het kasteel uit, en rende het bos in. Maar de hyena achterhaalde haar. De hyena beet haar overal, maar vermoordde haar niet. De godin van de dood was nu de bloedende. Naar haar aard zocht ze de dood op, maar kon hem ditmaal niet vinden. Er was geen rad van wedergeboorte meer, want men stierf niet meer. Er kwam nu een ander rad : het Rad van de Hyena, het rad van de hel en van de onsterfelijkheid. En de schuldlast werd alleen maar groter. De grote godin van de hyenas was gekomen. De hyenas gebruikten de witte mannen nog steeds als stukken vlees, maar ditmaal stierven de mannen niet, en elk weggegeten stuk vlees groeide gewoon weer aan na een tijdje. De witte mannen werden vlees-slaven. Velen verlangden weer terug naar de dromenkoningin, naar de witte spin en de witte vlieg. Maar het werd hen niet gegeven. Zij zochten de dood, maar het vluchtte van hen weg. De god van de dood was Een-oog, die op een grote spin reed. Hij was op de vlucht, want hij wilde niet in de handen van de hyenas vallen. Als ze hem zouden vinden, dan zou eeuwige verdoemenis hem ten deel vallen. Maar de hyenas sloegen niets over. Alles kwam in hun boerderij terecht. Het was de levende eeuwig-durende hel, een slagerij. Hier hing het grote wiel van eeuwiggroeiend vlees. De hyenas vonden vetmesting maar niks, want het vlees bleef toch gewoon maar doorgroeien, dus alles moest uitgehongerd worden. Dan was het vlees van de beste kwaliteit, en zo konden de botten ook bereikt worden, want de hyenas waren ook bot-eters.

De witte mannen werden zo zwak dat ze niet meer konden spreken, en alleen nog maar varkensklanken en gnoe-klanken konden maken, en zo doofde ook de stem van de dood uit. De dood had het laatste woord niet meer, ja, was zelfs stom geworden. Ze konden alleen nog maar mekkeren en knorren. Velen zochten troost bij de god van de slaap, maar spoedig werd ook deze bezocht door de hyenas, en zijn lot was verschrikkelijk. De god van de slaap had al deze werelden gecreeerd van misleiding en deceptie, en hypnotiseerde hen allen met zijn muziek. Een web van dromen had hij gecreeerd en werkte nauw samen met de goden van de dood. Maar ook hij brandde toen de hyenas hem vonden, en al zijn paradijsen gingen in rook op. Hij had een lange tong, en rookte veel, ook zijn waterpijp. Hij had hoerenbuurten gecreeerd waar men met geld snel aan z'n trekken kon komen, maar geld telde voor de hyenas niet. De god van slaap was een belangrijke krachtbron voor de god van geld, die ook de god van de dood als zijn krachtbron had. Maar ook de god van geld werd woest aangevallen door de hyenas en al bloedend naar de boerderij getrokken. Als een modepop werd hij naar binnen getrokken. De hyenas beten hem overal waar ze hem bijten konden. Erotos was de god van de slaap, die hij bewerkte door snelle sex. De goden van sex en hoererij waren zijn trouwste dienstknechten. Ook deze twee honden werden door de hyenas flink gebeten en weggedragen naar de boerderij.

De god van slaap had een paradijs waar iedereen liep met een streepjescode, iedereen die had gedronken van de melk van slaap. Zij droegen die code op hun voorhoofden, en daarboven was de tatoeage van een vrouwenborst, als een merkteken. Zijn rijk werd gereguleerd door waterpijpen, die aan de mensen werden vastgemaakt, en wiens pijpen in alle mogelijke openingen van het menselijk lichaam werden gestoken. Zijn doel was de mensen te leiden tot een rots, om hen daar te verstenen en tot de eeuwige slaap te leiden. Maar dat ging nu niet door sinds de hyenas waren gekomen. Zijn dromen waren ruw verstoord. Ook de waterpijpen van de god van slaap werden aangevallen. En de waterpijpen waren als vreemde paarse spinnen. 'Laat hen slapen,' werd er geroepen. 'Ach, laat hen slapen.' Maar de realiteiten van de hel waren een invasie begonnen, en zij kwamen met dagmerries. De dagmerries waren witte

paarden die ook in zwarte paarden en in zwarte vrouwen konden veranderen. Zij waren geriemd en kwamen om te riemen, om hun rijk van slavernij op te zetten. Ook de god van de slaap ging in slavernij. Hij was bijna als een standbeeld, en zacht vuur kwam van hem voort, en hij was omringd door kleine hondjes. 'De god van de dood telt niet meer,' werd er gesproken. 'Zijn economieen zijn ten onder gegaan.' Lamach, de god van medicijnen, was woedend. Hij was de vader van de god van slaap en de god van de dood. In zijn machine kwam hij naar voren, terwijl de hyena's hem direkt aanvielen. De machine viel neer in het zand, en de god van medicijnen begon te bloeden vanuit zijn hoofd, waar hij een hoofdwond had. Er was bloed in het zand. De godin van de tuinen wierp er een roos op. Haar tranen waren van bloed. Zij was zijn vrouw. Zij was gehuld in een donkere jas van bont, maar ook haar vielen de hyena's aan. Ze viel op de grond en de hyena's doken op haar. 'Het godenrijk is vallende,' fluisterde ze. 'Onze verborgen berg, oh, laat niemand grootvader ontdekken.' De god van drugs danste op een meer. Hij had vleugels, was als een jong kind, en droeg een oog op zijn borst. Bloemen zweefden om hem heen. Toen hij de hyenas zag schrok hij, en rende weg. Maar de hyena's kwamen hem achterna. Zij zouden nooit meer loslaten wat hun oog had gezien.

'Heb medelijden met een kind,' werd er geroepen. Maar al snel werd er een bloedspoor in de sneeuw achtergelaten. Overal waar het bloed was gevallen waren vlinders. 'Jullie zullen mijn opa toch niet vinden,' zei het kind. Maar de hyenas volgden de lange ketting waaraan het kind was vastgemaakt, en kwamen uit bij de god van krankzinnigheid, die woonde in een groot kasteel.

'Potverdikkeme, de hel !' schreeuwde de god. 'Ik kan mijn ogen bijna niet geloven. Nou, ik heb op jullie gewacht, hoor. Ik heb al kaartjes voor de trein.' De hyena's vlogen de god van krankzinnigheid aan en sleurden hem naar de boerderij.

De Moederboom

Ze was verdwaald in haar hart, en de moederboom had bezit van haar genomen, door haar heen werkende, als een oneindig licht, wat ze niet kon bevatten. Ze was een bloederige wond in mijn hart, maar tegelijkertijd was ze de ridder die mijn kasteel beschermde. Ik was opgesloten in dit kasteel, maar tegelijkertijd was dit kasteel mijn schuilplaats.

Ik kon niet tegen haar op, ze was te sterk. Ze had vele namen, en blies als de noorderwind. Ze was als de moederboom met de vele takken en de weelderige bladeren, maar gelukkig met bloesem. Zij bracht mij voort, en brak mij, om me weer op te nemen door de wind. Ik kon haar niet doorzien, maar soms in flitsen was alles duidelijk. Ik had geen grip op haar, en ze

gleed onder me weg. Later was ze als de zon waar ik niet naar kon staren. Ze was ver weg, en ik werd koud, en bloedde dood. Het kon haar niet schelen. Ze had dit pad zelf gemaakt. Het was haar ijzeren wil.

Ze zond mij poppen met kerstmis, en het was altijd kerstmis, en het sneeuwde altijd. Ik was verward, kapot. Ik was upgejut tegen de vele illusies die zij had gecreeerd. Ze speelde een spel met mij. Ik begon weer te roken om het te kunnen verteren. In haar genade zond ze weer een ridder tot mij, een witte ridder, zwart van binnen. Ik bekeek haar aandachtig. Ze was als een sprookjesprinses, als een boom vol witte bloesem. Ik had een worsteling met deze elf voor vele dagen, maar als ik viel, viel ik in zachte kussens. Zachte kussens met gouden fluwelen koorden, waar ik niet teveel naar kon staren, anders zouden ze mij verblinden. Maar zij was goed voor mij. Ze verzorgde mij goed. Ze kon goed koken, alhoewel er altijd gifbessen in de buurt waren. Daar zou zij me wel tegen beschermen. Het was gewoon keuken-decoratie.

Ze wilde altijd gifbessen in de buurt hebben. Het leek haar te inspireren. Het bleek het geheim van de moederboom te zijn. Gifbessen gebruikte ze op haar pijlen. Het was zeer medicinaal. Ik bleef maar staren naar haar. 'Kun je ... kun je ...' Maar verder kwam ik niet. Ik stond in de keuken met haar, maar het was alsof er glas was tussen ons, ook verbaal. Ze keek me vragend aan. Er kwam bloed uit haar ogen. Ze strekte haar armen naar me uit, en smolt weg. Even later stond ze er weer.

Ik brak het ijs, want ik had een handschoen van brandend staal, vuurheet. Rook kwam uit mijn vuisten. Het glas begon te smelten, als vele gezichten. Het was als een deuk in een auto. Maar bereiken kon ik haar niet. Ze was in de rook. Plotseling brandde alles. Er was oorlog in de stad. Planten met gifbessen schoten op om de stad te bedekken. En in het midden van de stad groeide de moederboom.

Ik was bezitterig en verdwaald. Ik stopte mijn huis vol met hebbedingetjes. Ze keek me aan met ogen van een hyena. Ik gromde. Buiten regende het, en er was olie in de plassen. Ik begeerde haar te kennen. Zij was mijn innerlijke wond. Het was een vruchtbare plaats, als de tuin rondom mijn huis in mijn gedachten. Die tuin was roze, sprankelend. Ze stond daar als de ridder, met boeken vol gedichten. Ik werd er hebberig van. Ik kon mijn gedachten niet keren. 'Lees eruit voor,' zei ik. Maar ze zei niets. De wond was te waterig om iets te zeggen. Alles wat ik greep sijpelde weg. De ridder draaide langzaam rond als een ballerina, verspreidende lichte, zachte muziek, als op de achtergrond. Het was niet eens goed hoorbaar, maar ik leek er rustig van te worden. Het greep mijn hart, en liet mij een gat in de tuin zien, waar zoete vruchten uit voortkwamen. Ik begon te eten. Waterige gestaltes waren hier, die zeiden : 'Sophia ...'

'Wie is Sophia ?' vroeg ik.

'Zij is een religieuze ballerina die altijd in dezelfde cirkeltjes draait,' zeiden ze. 'Zij moet gedood worden, anders kom je nooit verder.'

'Houdt ze mij tegen ?' vroeg ik.

'Ja,' zeiden ze. 'Ze leeft in je. Ze vreet alles in je weg. Het is een religieus monster. Je moet haar overwinnen.'

'Hoe ?' vroeg ik.

'Verbrand je goden,' zeiden ze.

Ze lieten mij een waterige vlam zien. 'Neem het aan,' zeiden ze.

Ik pakte het aan en begon te branden, en er was gekrijs in mij. 'Alles wordt nat nu,' zeiden ze.

'Daar gaan mijn hebbedingetjes,' zei ik. Ik stond op een kale berg nu, heel zanderig. De berg leek gemaakt van touw. Ik voelde me gebonden. 'Religie ... strijd ertegen,' zeiden ze. 'Religie is drama en kortzichtigheid, een band om je hoofd.' Ik gleed in een warm meertje, tussen het brandende zand.

'Religie was gemaakt om mensen tot slaven to maken,' zeiden ze. 'Je kunt natuurlijk naar de diepte van zo'n religie gaan, om het te neutralizeren, en het een andere betekenis te geven, maar daarna moet je de religie verbreken en verslaan. Je moet tot de hogere ringen van het leven komen, en uiteindelijk de gouden ring, de ring van de moederboom.'

Ik voelde me als een slaaf worden, met een begeerte die gouden ring te vinden, om zo vrij te zijn ? Ik voelde mijn banden in het licht van dit meer. De waterige gestaltes namen mij dieper in het meertje, waar alles veel heter was. Toen kwam ik in een riviertje dat naar een zee leidde achter de berg. De zee was vol met bomen met giftige bessen, en er waren overal haaien met miljoenen tanden. Het waren de poorten van de hel. 'Eet niet van de bessen,' zeiden de waterige gestaltes, 'en wij zullen je beschermen tegen de haaien.' Ze vormden een cirkel rondom me, die uiteindelijk uitgroeide tot een bol. Ze leidden mij door de zee naar de overkant. Hier waren ook giftige bessen, maar die moest ik gebruiken voor mijn pijlen. Ik moest een jager worden.

Er was hier een stad in oorlog. Ik moest naalden bevestigen aan mijn pijlen, tezamen met de giftige bessen. En ik moest die pijlen door open ramen schieten. Het was een religieuze stad. Ook woonden hier filosofen. Door het midden van de stad groeide de moederboom. Ik was hogerop hier. Ik raakte de boom aan en stond in brand. Toen werd alles nat. Ik klom hoger, en kwam in een woestijn-wereld. Er waren tekenaars hier en filosofen. Zij probeerden hun ringen te verkopen, maar ik was zoek naar de gouden ring van de moederboom. Er was een speciale taal in de gouden ring gegraveerd, zeiden ze, bepaalde tekens. Ineens had ik de gouden ring in mijn hand, en ik steeg op, naar een wereld vol van bomen en struiken met giftige bessen. Er waren ook planten met giftige bessen, en heggen. Ertussen waren allerlei huisjes en flatgebouwen. Hier woonden verhalenvertellers die hun ringen probeerden aan te praten. Maar ik was doof. De gouden ring had me verdoofd. Ik liep op een trap naar boven en zag een bruisend licht. Er werden hier generationele bloedlijnen bewaakt door kikkers. Een ieder die deze bloedlijnen zou aanraken, zou in connectie komen te staan met de moederboom, en zij zou in die persoon opspringen. De magische bloedlijnen waren de trots van een kikkerkoning. Ik schoot de kikkers neer met mijn pijlen en raakte de fontein van bloedlijnen aan, en werd direct naar achteren geslagen. Ik begon kikkers uit te braken, en de waterige gestaltes zeiden dat die kikkers de goden van de godenboom waren. Ik moest elke god achter mij laten. Een rijkere natuur ontvouwde zich voor mij. Ik was nu een deel van de familie. Het wemelde hier voor mijn ogen, als een zwerm vliegen of andere vliegende soorten insecten. Zij schenen zich niet om een god te bekommeren. Zij werden voortgestuwd door de familie, door de moederboom.

Er werd een bord voor mij op tafel gezet, en ik moest veel eten, maar ik raakte maar niet vol. Ik werd steeds hongeriger. Ik at van de honger, van het holle en het niets. Er werd nog een

bord voor mij op tafel gezet, en weer moest ik eten. Ditmaal werd ik echt hebberig. Ik begeerde meer van de bloedlijn, als een gulzige gierigheid. Ik werd door de boom omhoog getrokken, en gehesen op een schip. Daarna werd ik in een zee van gifbessen geworpen. Ik wilde de religie overwinnen, de sluier verscheuren. Ik zwom naar de kust, waar zeemeerminnen zaten op rotsen. Zij waren erg filosofisch. Ze zeiden : 'Drink niet van het gif, maar zie het als dode kunst.' Ik rende het bos in, en joeg op bizons, met de gifbessen op mijn pijlen. Alle spoken van religie vielen neer, en ik maakte er tenten van. Het verloor zijn betekenis geheel. Niemand wist meer wat het was. Ook alle zwijnen waren vastgehaakt aan palen.

Niemand kon mij nog stoppen, geen haas en geen konijn. Ik was de jager. Ik had geen zin om in een ander wonderland verstrikt te raken. Ik smeerde mij in met de gifbessen. De geur was sterk. Ik bedekte mijzelf met zwijnenvel. Zij was mijn innerlijke wond, gek geworden, woest geworden, maar zij beschermde mij ook. Zij ontdeed haarzelf van kleding, en smeerde haarzelf ook in met gifbessen. Zij was het geheim van de moederboom. Zij leefde diep binnenin. Haar vellen lagen op de grond. Zij had een speer in haar hand, en zou de tent bewaken. Ik was opgesloten in deze tent, maar deze tent was ook mijn schuilplaats. Zij had mij het geheim laten zien.

Ik kwam in mijn oude huis toen ik uit dit schilderij was gestapt. En het leek in de verste verten niet meer op wat het was. Het schilderij was nu een portret van een oudere man met een middeleeuwse haardos. Zijn ogen staarden mij aan. Vroeger was dit een schilderij van de bizonjacht. Eens stapte ik er in, en kwam in de klem van religie, omdat het schilderij mij gehypnotiseerd had. Maar ik kwam er ook weer uit. Wie was deze man ? En wie had het geschilderd ? De bizonjacht was een beroemd schilderij, maar dit schilderij kende ik niet. Het leek een beetje op een Amerikaanse president. Op de schilderijen ernaast waren wat landschappen, maar geen van allen hypnotiseerden mij zoals de bizonjacht deed. Ik besloot naar een ander schilderij van de bizonjacht op zoek te gaan. Ik vond er één, en hing het naast de man met de middeleeuwse haardos. Ik stapte in mijn bed en ging slapen. Ik droomde over de moederboom, en over de bizonjacht. De moederboom leek op twee indiaanse vrouwen tegenover elkaar. De indianen geloofden in voorouders, jachttropheeen en zielen van de vijand. Zij geloofden dat wat zij hadden verslagen, zij op hun eigen manier konden gebruiken.

Ik werd wakker en ging naar de bibliotheek. Ik las boeken over indianen en raakte gehypnotiseerd. Ik stapte in het boek, of werd erin gezogen, en gleed weg. Schilderijen van de bizonjacht vlogen om mij heen. Ik ging een stenen trap op, waar ik haar zag staan, mijn innerlijke wond, met een mes en een speer. Ook had zij een boog met pijlen. Ze leidde mij naar een wigwam. Ze drukte mij naar binnen. Alles begon te draaien. Ik had geen kracht meer om op te staan. Ik was opgesloten in het boek. Ik nam het boek mee naar huis, en weer begon alles te draaien. Het was een betoverend boek.

Ik vond het boek gevaarlijk, en bracht het terug, maar ik kon mijn weg er niet meer uitvinden. Pas na vele jaren vond ik een uitgang uit deze kerk. Ik begon te waarschuwen tegen het boek, en het liep uit op een oorlog. In het midden van de stad, tussen de vlammen, groeide de moederboom. Ik ging binnen in de moederboom. Ik ging aan een tafel zitten, tegenover een waarzegster. Maar vlammen kwamen uit haar mond. Ik rende weg. Ik pakte de lift naar boven, maar ze kwam achter mij aan. Ze had een heel leger van waarzegsters met zich. Ik kwam aan bij een pot met gifbessen, en begon gewoon te drinken, te drinken zoals ik nooit had gedronken. Niemand kon me nog de wet voorschrijven. Ik brandde. Ik gilde. Ik moest gewoon overal doorheen. Haaien met miljoenen tanden slokten mij op.

Ik doorzag haar. Ik werd kalm. Ze rookte een sigaret. Ze probeerde me te wurgen, maar ik gooide haar van mij af. Ze zat hoog op een paard ineens. Maar werd toen weggerukt door een storm. De moederboom nam mij op, en ik braakte gifbessen.

Het Rode Wapen

Ik zag haar daar staan. Haar naam was Zwijnenjacht. Ze stond aan een poort met een sleutel. Ik probeerde weg te rennen, maar ze tackelde mij. En toen dacht ik : 'Waarom zou ik wegrennen eigenlijk ?' Het bleek een aardige vrouw. Ze nam mij door de poort naar binnen. Ze was heel praterig, had veel te vertellen. Ze zei dat zij me hier had gelokt, om mij te bevrijden uit een kerk. Ze had kleding gemaakt van parels. Je kon haar lichaam gewoon door de parels heenzien. Ze straalde warmte uit, maar ook geheimzinnigheid. Een koets stopte. We stapten in. De stad was groot hier, maar we gingen buiten de stad, waar ze in een hutje woonde. Een vreemd gevoel maakte zich van mij meester.

'Ik heb je verlost uit de kerk,' zei ze. 'Ze draaien daar allemaal in cirkeltjes, komen niet verder. Ze zijn onder de betovering van een heks. Ik heb je verlost. Het zijn zwijnen. Als je de jacht niet begint, dan pakken ze je terug. Bedriegelijke verschijnselen zijn het.'

'Okay,' zei ik. Toen begon ze te filosoferen. Ik vond het erg interessant. Ze was niet op haar mondje gevallen, en prikte door alles heen. 'Je moet denken,' zei ze, 'diep doordenken. Niet jezelf opsluiten in cirkeltjes.' Ik knikte.

'Er moet gewerkt worden in dat hoofdje van jou. Je moet je industrie bouwen. Zo kun je veilig zijn tegen de zwijnen,' sprak ze. Haar ogen waren rood doorbloed. Ik nam haar in mijn armen, gewoon omdat ik mezelf niet tegen kon houden. Ze huilde. Ik probeerde haar te troosten. 'Je bent zo lief,' zei ze. 'En dat is zeldzaam.'

'En jij bent een open vrouw,' zei ik. 'Dank je wel dat je mij verlost hebt.' Haar lichaam begon te schudden. 'Ze willen me bezitten, die zwijnen,' zei ze. 'Bouw je centrum van filosofie,' zei ze. 'En we zullen allemaal veilig zijn.'

'Wat is de belangrijkste filosofie ?' vroeg ik.

'Dat moet je ontdekken,' zei ze. 'Maar bouw gewoon voort. Die varkens zullen allemaal in het nieuwe stelsel van filosofie ontmaskerd worden.' Ik drukte haar tegen me aan. 'Je zult veilig zijn, heus,' zei ik. Toen glimlachte ze een beetje.

Ik keek naar de lucht, die vol was met luchtschepen. De hyena's zouden ons redden. Ze brachten ons naar een spiegel-universum. Alles was hier net een beetje anders. De natuur had hier zoveel meer diepte. Zwijnenjacht was erg aan het beven. Ze was erg ziek. Ik nam haar mee naar een grot, en legde haar neer op een zachte plek, tussen veren en vellen. Weer nam ik haar in haar armen, en verzekerde haar dat alles goed zou komen. Er groeide hier een koffieboom, reusachtig met diepe wortels. En op de takken van de boom en de stam was een kasteel gebouwd. Caffeine soldaten marcheerden op de muren. Ze leken op ridders en hadden scherpe wapens. Ook hadden ze pistolen met rode lasers. Ze vormden hun eigen politie. Ze waren de communicatie politie. Caffeine had al deze realiteiten gecreeerd, en voerde een dwangmatige controle.

Ik las de statuten van Orion door, over een rode planeet, Dankbu. Het was een planeet vrij van caffeine. Het was een planeet waar alles om de innerlijke filosofische registers ging. Er was daar een oorlog tussen koffie en caffeine. Beide kanten hadden rode wapens.

De Poortwachter van

de Hel

Corruptus werd door duivelen naar de hel geleid, naar een kokende pot waar zijn lever voor eeuwig doormidden gezaagd zou worden. ‘Heb genade,’ zei Corruptus. De zaag bleef in zijn lever steken, en hij werd doorgevoerd naar een ruimte waar zijn organen en daden werden gewogen en gemeten. Izu keek toe. Ook werden er door hem notities gemaakt. Langzaamaan raakte Corruptus gewend aan de zaag in zijn lever. Toen werd er een zwaard in zijn hart gestoken. ‘Dit zwaard,’ zei Izu, ‘zal daar voor eeuwig zitten. Nooit meer zal je hart onverschillig zijn, maar gevoelig. Voor de armen zul je werken nu, en voor hen die je hebt opgelicht.’ Corruptus vond het een rechtvaardige straf, maar hij was veel te moe en ziek door de zaag in zijn lever en het zwaard in zijn hart. Het zoog zijn energie weg. Hij begon erover te klagen. Maar Izu sprak : ‘Heb je ooit meedelijden gehad met je zieke en verzwakte slaven ? Nooit heb je hen rust gegeven, daarom zal rust ook niet jouw gezel zijn.’ Corruptus vond nog steeds dat de straf rechtvaardig was, en begon aan zijn werk. Zware stenen moest hij tillen, maar zodra hij ze had verzet rolden ze weer terug. ‘Maar heer,’ sprak Corruptus, ‘mijn werk heeft geen waarde. Alles wat ik doe wordt weer ongedaan gemaakt.’

‘Heb je zelf ook niet je slaven nutteloos werk laten verrichten ?’ vroeg Izu. En Corruptus besefte dat de straf rechtvaardig was. Toen het avond werd werd hij in de poel van licht en geluid geworpen, en slaap vond hij niet. Ook anderen werden door duivelen naar deze plaats geleid. ‘Meester,’ sprak Corruptus, ‘ik heb honger. Wat heeft u te eten en drinken voor mij.’

‘Uitwerpselen,’ zei Izu, ‘want dat heb je je slaven ook gegeven.’

‘Oh meester,’ jammerde Corruptus, ‘hoe lang zal deze straf duren.’

‘Totdat je je straf zal hebben uitgezeten,’ zei Izu. ‘Leer ervan, en zij die er niet van leren zullen varen tot de eeuwige slaap die tot vergetelheid leidt.’

‘Ik heb behoefte aan slaap,’ zei Corruptus, ‘maar niet voor eeuwig. Ik besluit om van mijn straf te leren, dan zal ook ik deel hebben aan een zekere opstanding. Deze hel is niet voor eeuwig.’

‘Ga terug, Corruptus,’ sprak Izu, ‘naar de aarde waar je vandaan bent gekomen, en leer hen dat de hel bestaat, maar niet eeuwig is. In het licht is er rechtvaardigheid voor alle mensen. Omdat er over een God wordt gesproken die voor eeuwig straft en onrechtvaardig is, zo zijn de mensen ook onrechtvaardig geworden.’

En zo werd Corruptus teruggezonden tot de aarde met een boodschap. Maar de mensen lachten hem uit, en bespotten hem, zeggende dat hij teveel gedronken had en gek was geworden. Ook in de kerk was hij niet meer welkom. En zo liep Corruptus rond met een zware last. En velen gingen naar de hel zoals Corruptus eens ging. Door duivelen werden ze opgehaald, maar geen van hen werd naar de aarde teruggezonden. En velen jammerden toen ze de plagen van de hel onder ogen kwamen, maar ook werd hen beloofd dat dit niet voor eeuwig zou zijn, maar dat het was om hun zielen te zuiveren.

‘U zult gemeten worden met de maat waarmee gij hebt gemeten,’ predikte Corruptus. ‘Als u doorgaat met spotten, dan zult u ook met dezelfde maat in het hiernamaals bespot worden.’ Maar nog steeds werd hij uitgelachen, en ze zeiden dat hij het maar gedroomd had. ‘Ik heb het niet gedroomd,’ zei Corruptus, ‘en eens zullen jullie je daarvan bewust zijn. Tot brood zullen jullie gemalen worden.’ Al gauw werd Corruptus opgepakt en in de gevangenis gestopt

vanwege ketterijen. Hij besefte dat de wereld een deel van de hel was, en haar bewoners de dienstdoende duivelen. Maar ook duivelen konden veranderen. En zo niet dan zouden ze tot de eeuwige slaap gedreven worden die tot de vergetelheid zou leiden, waar ze verbannen zouden zijn uit de gedachten.

In de gevangenis werd Corruptus meegenomen door twee vuur-engelen. ‘Je moet je straf in de hel verder uitzitten,’ zeiden de engelen. ‘Dertig jaren heb je je naasten onderdrukt, dus je bent nog niet van ons af.’ Corruptus kreeg een bijl door zijn longen, en kreeg problemen met ademhalen. Toen brachten de twee vuur-engelen hem naar het vuur. Het vuur leidde hem naar een plaats waar armen en benen werden afgehakt, in een restaurant. In het vuur begon Corruptus in een dier te veranderen. Tot een stuk vlees werd hij, omdat hij ook zijn naasten als een stuk vlees had behandeld. Zijn vlees ging ten onder, maar zijn ziel kreeg nog een kans. Ook zijn ziel ging door de molen, en er kwamen alleen maar snippers uit. Hij kreeg een nieuwe ziel, en werd door engelen tot Izu geleid. ‘Omdat je in je terugkeer naar de aarde goed hebt geleefd mag je binnen gaan tot de hemel,’ zei Izu. ‘Wel moet je nog een reis maken door vele woestijnen en wildernissen naar de hemelse stad om je te beproeven en klaar te maken.’

‘Dank u, heer,’ zei Corruptus.

‘Ongewapend zul je gaan, Corruptus,’ zei Izu, ‘omdat je op aarde misbruik van wapens hebt gemaakt. Ook zul je gaan zonder rijkdom, omdat je al je rijkdommen al op aarde hebt verspild. Omdat je op aarde macht hebt uitgevoerd over anderen en die macht hebt misbruikt, zul je geen enkele macht hebben op je pad, en geheel afhankelijk zijn van de genade van anderen.’

Toen begon Corruptus zijn lange reis, maar hij was dankbaar dat hij die reis mocht maken. Omdat hij op zijn reis barmhartig was werd hij op zijn pad steeds meer omringd door engelen. Als wilde dieren hem aanvielen, dan werd hij beschermd door de twee vuur-engelen, en op een dag nam een ridder hem mee naar zijn burcht. De ridder zelf was ook door de diepste zwakheid heengegaan, en de hulpeloosheid, en door de bijtende, tergende spotternij der duivelen, en wist precies wat het was. Eens moest hij ook de reis van Corruptus maken, en toen hij eindelijk de hemelse stad had bereikt kreeg hij deze burcht, om barmhartigheid te tonen aan andere reizigers. Corruptus had een erge langdurige honger, en kreeg voedsel van de ridder. De ridder gaf om hem en was erg behulpzaam. Toen Corruptus aangesterkt was ging hij verder. Weer werd hij geplaagd door honger, en wilde dieren vielen hem lastig. Ook werd hij aangevallen door rovers, maar de ridder kwam hem te hulp. Toen hij over een rivier moest zwemmen verdronk hij bijna, en een vis nam hem mee. De vis nam hem mee naar een grot waar hij kon ademen. ‘Zo,’ zei de vis. ‘Die eeuwige stad zul je nooit bereiken. Geef het maar op. Ze hebben je voorgelogen dat er een weg uit de hel is. Uit de hel ontsnapt niemand, en je bent er nog steeds. Maak je klaar voor nog meer zielenpijn, want voor eeuwig zal je branden vanwege je zonden.’

Corruptus wist inderdaad dat zijn schuld groot was, maar hij wilde zich vasthouden aan het feit dat er ook hoop voor hem was, de kans om zijn leven te verbeteren. Maar de vis lachte hem uit. De vis liet zijn staart zien waarmee hij hem wilde slaan, maar weer verscheen de ridder naast hem en weerde de slag af. ‘Ach Corruptus,’ zei de ridder. ‘Geloof niet in hen van de eeuwige dood. Het zijn slechts schimmen. Ook mij zijn ze tot plaag en spot geweest, maar zij die hen zullen overwinnen zullen eten van het geboomte des levens.’ Maar toen de ridder was verdwenen zakte Corruptus in diepe wanhoop. De vis greep hem en sleurde hem nog verder in de diepte, tot een andere grot waarin hij kon ademen. ‘Wie heeft jou gezegd dat je kunt ontsnappen aan de komende toorn,’ sprak de vis. Ook haaien begonnen hem te omsingelen. Corruptus riep om hulp, maar niemand kwam hem helpen.

‘Zie,’ Corruptus, ‘al die hulp was slechts een illusie, een schim. Ze kunnen niets voor je betekenen, want het zijn alleen je eigen ijdele gedachtes.’

‘Maar eens werd ik teruggezonden naar de aarde,’ zei Corruptus.

‘Dat was maar een droom, Corruptus,’ zeiden de vissen. De vissen zagen er gevaarlijk uit, en een grote vrees overviel Corruptus. Staarten omringden hem die hem wilden slaan. ‘Sla mij,’ zei Corruptus. ‘Ik verdien niets anders.’ De vissen sloegen hem, en sleepten hem mee, verder de diepte in, waar ze hem begonnen aan te vreten. ‘Corruptus,’ sprak een stem. ‘Ditmaal zal je ziel ook van je afgenomen worden, maar dit zal je geest tot eeuwig leven wekken.’ En met een nieuwe geest bereikte Corruptus de overkant van de rivier. In de verte zag Corruptus een boomgaard, waar van vruchten jam werd gemaakt. De eeuwige stad had muren gemaakt van brood, en er werd jam opgesmeerd die schitterde in de zon. ‘Waarom smeren jullie er jam op ?’ vroeg Corruptus.

‘Alleen zij die eten zullen binnengaan,’ zei een man. ‘Er zijn geen poorten.’

‘Mag ik er van eten ?’ vroeg Corruptus. De man knikte.

Toen Corruptus begon te eten begon zijn mond pijnlijk te branden. Op een gegeven moment werd het zo pijnlijk dat hij stopte met eten. Maar daarna at hij door omdat hij de hemelse stad binnen wilde gaan. Helemaal uitgeput en verkrampt van de pijn kwam hij aan. Maar van binnen was alles donker. ‘Waarom is het hier donker ?’ vroeg Corruptus.

‘Omdat je oog eerst open moet,’ zei een man. Iemand nam een fakkel en stak zijn oog aan. Hij leek wel in de hel te zijn, nu zijn oog in verschrikkelijke ondragelijke pijn was. ‘Alleen door pijnen zal je oog opengaan,’ sprak iemand. Maar al wat hij zag en voelde was vuur, zo erg dat hij het uitgilde. En er was een licht dat hem verblindde. ‘Hoe kan ik ooit zien in dit verblindend licht en deze teisterende vlam ?’ riep Corruptus.

‘Alleen zij die de boeken van hun binnenste hebben geopend zullen zien,’ werd er gezegd. Toen werd er een speer door zijn buik gestoken, en hij ging in ketenen. ‘Waar ben ik terecht gekomen ?’ jammerde Corruptus. ‘Is dit de hemelse stad ?’

‘Dit is de hemelse stad,’ werd er gezegd, ‘maar het is hier niet zoals de aarde het verteld heeft.’

De pijnen waar Corruptus door moest gaan waren erger dan de pijnen die hij in de hel had. Hij vroeg zich af of er een vergissing was gemaakt. Hij kwam in een put van chaos en verwarring. ‘De hemel is erger dan de hel,’ werd er gezegd. ‘Heel vroeger wist men dat, maar duivelen hebben het omgedraaid.’ Corruptus schreeuwde en gilde en had het gevoel dat hij gek werd. Hij werd krankzinnig van de pijn, een wilde man, een verscheurend dier. Ook begon hij te spotten en te lachen.

‘Weer een dolle man,’ werd er gezegd. ‘Niemand blijft hier gezond. Zij die gegeten hebben van de hemelse vrucht zullen voor eeuwig branden. De hel is maar tijdelijk, maar de hemel is voor eeuwig.’

‘Maar dit is wreed,’ schreeuwde Corruptus. ‘Dit is wreder dan ik ooit ben geweest. Is er ontsnapping mogelijk ?’

‘Niemand die ooit de hemel is binnengaan zal daar ooit ontsnappen,’ werd er gezegd. ‘Zij zullen worden tot dienstknechten van de hemel voor eeuwig.’

Een groot platform kwam naar beneden, waarop Roomse goden stonden. ‘Ik ben dus in de val gelokt ?’ schreeuwde Corruptus. Maar toen voelde hij de hand van de ridder. ‘De luchtweerspiegelingen in de woestijnen en wildernissen die naar de hemelse stad leiden zijn sterk. Ze bevatten veel waarheden, maar het zijn roofdieren op zoek naar prooi. Het zijn duivelen die toegestaan worden de gelovigen te beproeven.’ Corruptus viel in de armen van de ridder. ‘Ik ben zo blij dat je er bent. Ik dacht even dat alles verloren was. Ik zal beter op

mijn hoede zijn. Wat kan ik er tegen doen ? En hoe kan ik ze herkennen ?' Maar de ridder was alweer vertrokken. Corruptus voelde nog steeds de plek waar de ridder zijn armen had geplaatst. Het voelde warm en gloeiend aan. Corruptus voelde zich paranoide worden. Het werd donker, en Corruptus begon als een bezetene om zich heen te slaan. Hij begon alles in twijfel te trekken en had het gevoel dat er een spelletje met hem werd gespeeld. 'Ik word alleen gelaten op de momenten dat ik jullie nodig heb,' riep hij.

En in pure wanhoop en angst scheurde hij toen zijn geest aan flarden, totdat hij niets meer was dan een vlam, een schim, een schaduw. Weer kwam hij tot een rivier, waar een piratenschip stond. 'Vergezel ons,' riep een piraat hem toe. Maar Corruptus dook in de rivier en probeerde naar de overkant te zwemmen. Snel werd hij omringd door haaien. Op het nippertje werd hij gered door het piratenschip. De piraten leken zacht en barmhartig als de ridder. Zij kwamen van de hemelse stad om reizigers te helpen. Corruptus was heel blij met deze vrienden. Zij brachten hem de grote rivier over. 'Als je ooit onze hulp nodig hebt, dan roep je maar,' zeiden ze. Corruptus was dankbaar, en zette zijn reis voort. Schijnbaar had hij meerdere vrienden nodig om ooit de hemelse stad te kunnen bereiken.

De hemelse stad lag op een stapel boeken, reuzenboeken, als een trap die hij moest beklimmen. De boeken waren van edelgesteente gemaakt, en konden niet geopend worden. Telkens als hij ze beklom werd hij weggeduwd door een wind, en viel in het zand. 'Hoe kan ik die boeken openen ?' riep hij.

'Elk boek heeft een wachter, en die moet je verslaan,' sprak een stem. Corruptus besloot langs de boeken heen te gaan, in de angst dat het weer een luchtweerspiegeling zou zijn. Hij wilde niet opnieuw in de problemen komen. Maar toen hij verder ging schoof er een zwaard in zijn oog. 'Heb je het Oog van Izu al gevonden ? Alleen door dit oog zal het boek geopend zijn.' Hij keek achterom en zag dat de boeken nu zacht waren als brood. 'Eet,' werd er gezegd, 'want alleen door het te eten zul je de stad binnengaan.' Corruptus begon van de boeken te eten die nu als zachte broden waren, en de hemelse stad begon naar beneden te komen. Maar telkens als alles bijna was opgegeten groeide het brood weer aan, en schoof de hemelse stad weer naar boven. Nog gulziger begon Corruptus te eten, maar na een tijd plofte hij ziek en vermoeid in het zand. Duivelen om hem heen begonnen hem uit te lachen. Ook begon zijn oog meer en meer te steken door het zwaard wat erin was gestoken. Corruptus trok het zwaard eruit en begon het brood in stukken te kappen met het zwaard. Hierdoor kwam de stad steeds lager te liggen, en even later kon hij de stad binnengaan. Maar het was niet wat hij verwachtte. De mensen liepen hier rond met dure kleren, veel sieraden, en begonnen hem te bespotten omdat hij er armoedig uitzag. Dit kon de hemel niet wezen. Deze mensen leefden in een eeuwige illusie. Hij had zelfs geen behoefte om met zulke mensen te spreken. Hij verwachtte liefde te zien in de hemel, en zorg, maar al wat hij kreeg was minachting. Nu hij wist wat de tijdelijkheid van de hel betekende en de eeuwigheid van de hemel liep hij de stad uit en vroeg zich af of er ook nog een derde mogelijkheid was. Of waren deze dingen die op zijn pad waren gekomen niets dan illusie ? En wat was dan de werkelijkheid ? Corruptus ging in het zand zitten, onder een boom en viel in slaap. Toen hij pas veel later wakker werd zag hij engeltjes en duiveltjes dansen in de lucht. Het was tegelijkertijd een dans en een oorlog. Ze

leken allemaal een beetje op vlinders. Het leek op een groot vlies wat in de lucht hing, en toen wegviel. Een prachtige stad had hij in het oog nu. Hij had nog nooit eerder zo'n prachtige stad gezien. Ineens stonden de piraten en de ridder naast hem. 'Kom op, jongen,' zeiden ze. 'Je hebt het gered. Laten we de stad binnengaan. En samen gingen ze toen de stad binnen. Het was een stad gebouwd van prachtig spiegelend materiaal, overgoten door zonlicht. Je kon alles van meerdere kanten bekijken, en het geheel was kaleidoscopisch. Ook de twee vuur-engelen kwamen bij hem staan, en toen zoveel engeltjes.

'Waar zou je nu graag willen helpen ?' werd er aan hem gevraagd.

'Nou, het liefst aan de ingang van de hel,' zei Corruptus, 'omdat daar nog steeds reizigers komen die denken dat ze er voor eeuwig inmoeten.'

Corruptus kreeg toen een burcht wat de poort van de hel werd, en zelf werd hij de poortwachter van de hel.

De Gele

Vlinder

Hoofdstuk 1.

Ik liep op de straten van Virgo, en tegelijkertijd liep er iemand op de starten van Mercurius die mij na probeerde te doen, een dubbelganger. Ik ging een huis binnen, en degene op Mercurius ook, op hetzelfde moment. Ik werd gevolgd. Ik ging naar boven en keek door het raam naar de hoge toren van Virgo. Ik zag Mercurius branden in de verte. Hij speelde op de piano. Hij had wat klokken op zijn tafel staan die hij aan het repareren was, gouden en zilveren. Hij had een Egyptisch aura, zo iemand waar je geen vat op kan krijgen, maar ik hield

van hem. Hij was raadselachtig en mysterieus. Was hij de reden dat Mercurius brandde ? Beneden in de winkel verkocht hij chocola, maar hij had meerdere winkels in deze stad. Ik had in deze stad een vechtschool. Ik zag een andere planeet branden, Venus, de zonnetepel. Ik werd als een gevaar gezien. Men wilde mij uit de weg ruimen. Hij werkte aan zijn klokken, en andere mechanismes. Ook verbouwde hij paradijselijke groenten, en verzorgde hij paradijselijke dieren. Hij was zo'n beetje Manusje van alles, en hij was mijn bodyguard. Ook was hij een bouwer van computers, en verhuurde hij woningen. Ook was hij directeur van een school, mijn oude school nog wel. Hij had mij eens gered. Ik zocht altijd het gevaar op, en hij redde me er altijd uit. Hij was mijn geheime sleutel. Mijn moeder was een prostituee, waar ook nogal minzaam op werd neergekeken, ook omdat ze mijn moeder was, maar bij hem was zij van harte welkom. Ze kwam vaak bij hem om te computeren. Ik hield van mijn moeder, oh God. Om haar was ik in de handen van tormentors.

Mijn moeder zat ingewikkeld in elkaar, als de Inanna. Zij was een striptease. Op sexueel gebied deinsde ze niet voor veel dingen terug, maar in het normale leven was ze fragiel als een nimf. Mijn vader was een schreeuwlelijkerd, haar pooier, maar hij had een goed hart. Hij was een sirene, een beroemd zanger in de stad, een goedbewaard geheim. Ik leefde in ketenen, achter tralies, maar dat besefte ik nog niet goed. Ik ging nog gewoon overal naartoe. Mijn vader was een tafel-nazi, die op de markt tafels probeerde te verkopen op een opdringerige manier. Als je te lang keek zonder iets te kopen dan werd hij kwaad. Ook verkocht hij dekens. Het werd hier op Virgo nogal aangemoedigd om veel bijbaantjes te hebben. Het was de lik van de leeuw. Maar vat erop krijgen deed ik niet. Achter mijn vechtschool stond de bibliotheek waar ik vaak naartoe ging om te lezen, om er een beetje uit te zijn. Ik combineerde vechtkunst met dans en striptease, en dat was volgens mij de foute combinatie. Ik had veel vijanden. Vooral in de mode-wereld had ik veel vijanden, omdat ik gescheurde kleding wilde introduceren, en armoedige kleding, versleten en oud. De man van Mercurius volgde mij. Hij had een pistool. Ik rende de trap op, en viel. Hij had me al geraakt. Maar mijn bodyguard stond plotseling tussen hem en mij in. Ik werd wakker in zijn kamer. Hij had de kogel er al uit gehaald, maar ik bloedde nog steeds. 'Zij begrijpen het roze niet,' zei hij. Daar moest ik het mee doen. Hij was een man van weinig woorden.

Mijn pleegmoeder was de koningin van de luipaarden. Ze startte de jacht op de man van Mercurius. Ze volgde hem na, en vond uit waar hij zijn schuilplaats had : in een veld van bizons. Zij moordde de bizons uit, maar kreeg hem niet te pakken. We besloten rustig te blijven. Het geheimenis van het eeuwig vuur was hier : een zoetwater rivier van genezing, de lik van de leeuw. Mijn bodyguard bouwde een pistool voor mij. Het was een pistool met vele klokken, een zwaard krommend in de zon. Ik was een boogschutter, ik kon goed richten. Het geheim van de stad was achter een poort van twee bokkengeesten, als een poort in een ark. Het was een veld van bokkenjagers. De man van Mercurius staat hier als een standbeeld.

Ik ga naar binnen, in de tuin, waar bokken hangen. Ik klamp me vast aan zijn standbeeld. Venus brandt. De melk is heet, het explodeert. Ik ga naar binnen, in het standbeeld. Ik vind de boog, de bokkenpijl. Alle vruchten branden hier, en dan ook de bomen. De man van Mercurius heeft twee gezichten, voor en achter. Hij heeft een duister geheim. Zijn schepen

zijn in de haven, waar dag en nacht wordt gewerkt. De zeemeerminnen sterven in het water van Mercurius, het geheime gif. Hij is een man van dwang met strakke ogen. Steen is alles wat er over is na de brandende nacht. Dit is de stad van steen. De gravers graven in zijn vlezig hart. Gepolijste stenen is hun vak. De sirene staat hoog op de toren van de stad, om te waarschuwen, met haar gruwelijk gedicht, maar niemand luistert. Ze slapen allemaal in de nacht. Gepolijste stenen is alles wat ze willen zien. In de wateren heeft Mercurius zijn booreilanden, op zoek naar goud, aardgas en olie. Hij is de juwelier van de hel. In schelpen verbergt hij zijn hoofden. Zeven mannen zijn gekomen, de achtste moet nog komen. Ze hebben mij op het oog. Ze zien mij als het Hermes van de goden, de lijm waardoor alles gaat branden. Ik ben gekluisterd in een pot. Zij willen mij drinken als de goddelijke nectar. Apen rennen door de stad, omsingelen de toren, en rennen dan naar boven. Zij drukken de sirene opzij, en worden zelf het vaandel van bevrijding. De bodyguard leeft.

Ze geeft me de sleutel tot het bokkenveld. Ze noemt geen namen. De man van Mercurius zit op een troon. Achter hem is de grote roltrap waar alle zwaarden slap worden. De stad is grotendeels overdekt.

Zij die hem volgen hebben geen oren.

Zij is een prostituee, huurmoordenaar en woningverhuurder, vele manieren om toe te slaan. Ik blijf ver uit haar buurt. Ze zijn allemaal bezig hun architectuur uit te tekenen, en de bomen blijven ze uittekenen. Ze staat klaar om toe te slaan. Ze is een discipel van de man van Mercurius.

Hoofdstuk 2.

De hekken hebben hoge punten hier. Ik kan er nauwelijks doorheen komen. Alles is wazig hier. De hoge gothiek is als mijn tralies. Ik ben het drakenkind. Ik word door een draak bewaakt. Ik ben nog jong. De man van Mercurius is een slot aan mijn lichaam. Hij is een dode steen. Iedereen is hier gestorven. Ik kan me alleen uitstrekken naar de hogere kunst. Er is alleen leven in het licht. In het duister kan niemand bestaan. Ik schenk mijn moeder een steen van licht, en ze komt tot leven. Ze kan de draden zien, de patronen, de scheuren, de naden, en het grote gat. Ze kan de wond zien, het litteken, en het graf. Zij is de martelares in vuur geboren, als een tralie in mijn kooi. Met haar zal ik voorzichtig omgaan. Ik ben het Hermes der goden.

De engelen zijn hier bliksemschichten, in de tuin. Ze houden zoveel achter. Ik kan alleen maar staren. Alleen kennis doet leven, de onwetendheid is de dood. Venus brandt, haar licht

verlicht de nacht. Hier zijn de stralen van het moederhart. Zij woont op nummer 43, en hij woont op nummer 10. Ik loop naar nummer 88, in hetzelfde flatgebouw, waar de spinnen leven, waar ze hun stenen webben weven. Het is de weg tot het verscheurde kant, waar het licht achter schuilt, de bron van het leven bewakende. De gele vlinder zal vliegen in de nacht. Hij zal vliegen over de woestijn en aankomen in het paradijs, Mars in Virgo. Hoog op de burcht zal hij staan, met al zijn wachters. Goud zal het regenen in de straten. Zij had mij gegrepen, en trok mij naar haar kamer om me als een paard te beteugelen. Aan het eind van de rit was ik niets meer dan één van de vele hobbelpaarden. Ze had een kamer in de woestijn. Ik wachtte op de gele vlinder die langs zou komen. Hij greep me. Hij was mijn bodyguard.

In mijn vechtschool bracht ik centaurs onder. Zij zouden allen vlinders worden. Een heel leger van vlinders zou er opstaan. Maar ik zakte meer en meer ineen, totdat een piano mij vond. De piano was te berijden. Het werd mijn paard. Ik werd de ruiter. De piano nam mij mee over de woestijn, daar waar geen hond door kon komen, volgende het pad van de gele vlinder. Ik kwam aan in het Virgose Amerika, waar ik in het vrijheidsbeeld ging wonen, een beeld met een doodskop. Ik rees mijn zwaard en viel, zo diep, dat ik in het indiaanse deel terecht kwam. Hier waren drie doodskoppen, drie indiaanse opperhoofden. Zij werden aangeraakt door de gele vlinder, en kwamen tot leven. Zij hoorden het geluid van mijn piano, en werden gelukkig. Zij zouden regeren. De pit van Mars was een thee der liefde, die alle monden liet branden. Izu had van die thee gedronken, en sindsdien brandde zijn mond. Hij was de Attis van de insectenwereld.

Zij reden op motors, van een futuristische apocalypse. Goud zou het nu regenen, want koning Midas zou terugkomen. De man van Mercurius hield een zwaard op mij gericht, en een drietand, en ik zakte weg. Dit hier was het rijk van Neptunus, de zeegod, die zoveel nimfendochters had. Deze draak van een man heerste niet alleen over de zee, maar ook over Virgo, en ik ging naar hem voor hulp. Deze tovenaar gaf mij drie brandende stenen. Ik kon zijn geluid horen in de verte. Zij dragen het eeuwig vuur van genezing. En die genezing was alleen in het vele licht wat werd afgegeven, door het zwavel binnenin, eeuwig zwavel, onverwoestbaar. Ik werd warm van binnen. Het Griekenland was een vlies hier, en ik gleed dieper in de tempel. Ik was in de maag van de draak. Ik werd uiteengescheurd, alles werd dun en lang, totdat ik het geheim zag, vastgehouden door twee bokkenwachters, twee bokkengeesten, als de ark van licht, en het licht was een illusie, wat het geketende boek versluierde, en dit boek was slechts de sleutel tot de bibliotheek, de boekenwinkel, waar al het kwaad geschiedde. Ik las de boeken van de hemel, en zag de hel. Wie zou de dochters van Neptunus bevrijden ? De gele vlinder zou het doen. Ik gooide één van mijn zwavelstenen door de ruit van de antieke boekenwinkel, en de winkel was in vlammen. De tweede zwavelsteen gooide ik door de ruiten van de bakkerij, en de derde steen slikte ik in, en stierf. Niemand kon mij nu nog vinden, alleen de gele vlinder.

De dochters van Neptunus stonden voor mij, allemaal nimfen. Ze hadden tere gezichtjes. Ik legde mijn handen op hen, en maakte ze vrij. De gele vlinder was een sleutel in mij. Zij waren de vlammen in mijn hart. De draak nam mij op, en schonk mij het gas. Ik was de achtste man van Mercurius.

Hoofdstuk 3.

Mijn vechtschool ontving het Venus, de brandende zonnetepel, de poort tot Izu, en de vlinders waren in de stad. Het zou sneeuwen nu, en zij hadden hun eigen webben. Het eeuwige zwavel was een trots van genezing. En ik wilde Izu kennen. Ik was de boogschutter. Er waren bosbranden overal, en de zwarte gaten werden zichtbaar. En Izu nam het over van de Horus, en deze werd het stuur van de motor. Zijn lichaam was een brandende tong. Het orakel van de tong had hen allemaal tezamen gebracht. Zoete banaantjes lagen op een schaal, en de kunsten van chocola werden zichtbaar. 'Breng mij nu het drop op een schaal,' sprak de gele vlinder. En snel kwamen de nimfen van Neptunus met hun schalen. De bibliotheek werd bovenop mijn vechtschool geplaatst. We hadden nu een doel. Het gevecht moet gecombineerd worden met oude wijsheid. Mercurius was als een beschonkene. Hij waggelde, en viel. De vissers kwamen op, uit de diepe waters waar ze waren verdronken, en gooiden hun netten weer uit. Ik rende de trap op, en riep om mijn moeder. Zij stond daar bovenaan de trap, maar het was een roltrap, en die ging met volle kracht naar beneden en niet naar boven. De gele vlinder nam mij op en bracht mij naar haar. De fluisteraars van het heelal moesten mij hebben. Zij stuurden een tweede man op mij af. Hij had zijn havens hier, zijn scheepswerven, zijn woningbouw. Ik rende door de straten. Het huis van de gele vlinder stond hier niet meer. Ik keek naar de daken. De vleermuizen en de raven waren verdwenen. Ik raakte in paniek. Hij was de vlinder van het trauma, de naaldenprikker. Ik bloedde. Ik viel op de grond, en de vlinder nam mij op, de grote anti-vlinder.

Ditmaal redde mijn moeder mij, en nam mij naar mijn pleegmoeder, de koningin van de luipaarden. De grote anti-vlinder wist ons echter te vinden, maar het water begon te golven, en werd woest op hem. Zijn schip verging. En deze piraat had een grote geroofde schat. Wij doken de schat op en brachten het naar boven. Gouden tepels die chocolade melk gaven. De koe was vrij. De fluisteraars waren woedend. Nu zouden ze kabaal gaan maken. Ze stuurden een derde man op mij af, maar die was zo dronken dat die niet veel kon beginnen. Toen besloten de fluisteraars zelf te komen.

Ik kan er niet veel van navertellen. Het was het duisterste gat van mijn leven. Ze verwoesten mijn vechtschool, en de bibliotheek. In een zeegraf ging ik. Ik werd een piraat, en ik werd zelf een fluisteraar. Voor het eerst in mijn leven vertel ik het verhaal. Fluisteraars zijn vreemde insecten. Ze geven giftige melk, en maken webben. Ze verwarren de ander, omdat ze bang zijn dat iemand hun hart binnendringt. Ze zijn onnavolgbaar. Het zijn orakels. Met raadsels bewaken ze hun bruggen. Ze verscheuren alles, en bouwen het dan weer op. Alleen als de zilveren tepels vermengd zouden worden met de gouden tepels, dan zou er zuivere melk vloeien, maar de fluisteraars hielden dezen altijd gescheiden. Ik maakte daar verandering in. Ik was zelf nu een fluisteraar en werd al snel de koning der fluisteraars. Zij hadden een oor wat doof was. Maar de zilver-gouden tepels waren hun oren nu. Zij waren luisteraars nu. Ook konden zij zien met deze tepels. Daarvoor waren zij blind. Waarom hielden ze altijd het goud

en zilver gescheiden ? Omdat ze mij wilden opwekken, de rode vlinder. Die zou alleen maar door angst en woede opgewekt kunnen worden. Ik was de Nemesis.

De Vierde

Aarde

Hoofdstuk 1.

Wij waren gemaakt van een gouden amalgaam. Wij waren kinderen van de godin, die vrij in de tuin leefden. Alleen het gouden amalgaam kon de stralen van haar liefdeszon opvangen, om ons tot eeuwig leven op te wekken. Het was een liefdes-amalgaam, volkomen toegewijd aan de godin. Ook de hekken rondom de tuin waren van het gouden amalgaam gemaakt. Zij waren hoog en scherp. Wij voelden ons veilig binnen deze hekken. Eens aten wij van de verboden vrucht van de vleermuizenboom, een kaars, die in ons binnenste begon te branden, zodat we door een andere wereld geroofd werden, en wij kinderen van de hel werden. Maar de godin verstootte ons niet. Nog meer dan ooit wijdde ze zich toe aan haar liefde voor ons, en met geduld en passie probeerde zij ons terug te lokken naar de tuin. Een gouden vrucht hing zij voor onze ogen, en trok deze weg zodra wij ernaar grepen, om ons zo haar te laten volgen op het pad terug naar de tuin. Het was een verboden en geheime tuin voor velen. Deze wereld aanbad Doornroosje, de slapende prinses, en voor de paasheks hadden ze niet veel sympathie. Deze paasheks was Inanna, de godin van de armoede, die het geheim van Doornroosje kende. Doornroosje was een ei in haar handen, een ei die ze zou afpellen. Doornroosje sliep nog steeds in het paradijs, en zou tot de berg der goden moeten komen, de onderwereld.

Er was een doodslucht in de tuin, waarin zij die zich niet konden beheersen leefden. Altijd liepen ze hun begeertes achterna, als in een roes. Zij waren de schone slaapsters, de volgelingen van Doornroosje, van alles wat mooi en duur was. De onthechting was een groot geheimenis, maar zij werd gedemoniseerd en als heks bestempeld. Zij riep vanaf de berg, vanuit de wildernis. Zij wilde Doornroosje opwekken tot een hogere wereld. Dit zijn geen gewijde paadjes. Deze paadjes zijn afgesloten door de plaatselijke gemeentes. De draak zelf

was de prins van de jungle die Doornroosje vrijkocht uit de kooi van de bebouwde kom. De kus wekte haar op tot de wildernis, omgeven door doornenstruiken.

De slang van het paradijs was eerst een draak, en zij gaf aan paarden de macht om zich te verzetten tegen hun rijders. Zij maakte eenhoorns van hen, de grote ontwaking. Ook gaf zij de macht aan bizons om zich te verzetten tegen hun jagers. Zij maakte eenhoorns van hen. Maar haar wijsheid werd buiten de poorten van het kasteel gezet, en zij veranderde in een vlam, om te verwarren en te verleugenen. Zij gaf haar aanklagers over aan een dwaalgeest.

Zij was de vleesgeworden boom die haar eigen koninklijkheid had bewaard. Zij was de koninklijkheid van het communistisch anarchisme. Zij was de koningin van de bloemen. Wilde bloemen had ze in onze haren gestoken, in deze drakentuin. Zij trok ons omhoog op het schip, toen de dauw ging vallen. De rivier van plastic omhulde ons. Zij had haar eigen pad, en wilde niks weten van het verwende gemeentepark. Daarom was zij onuitgenodigd, gehaat door velen, en gevreesd. De draak viel en werd in een kooi gestopt, maar niemand kon haar geheim doorgronden. Zij wist dat slechts hen buiten de kooi gekooid waren.

Ze hadden maar een fragment van haar vastgezet. Zij was natuurlijk veel groter. Zij leefde in plaatsen waar zij nooit zouden komen. Zij leefde in een mengsel van vuilheid in de dieptes van de wildernis, als sluiers van haar schoonheid. Deze schoonheid werd geproclameerd door een genetische collage van juwelen. De stenen stapelden zich op tot een druipkoninkrijk. Zij liet geen steen heel, perste hen geheel uit. Haar schoonheid kon niet uitgedrukt worden door stenen, alleen door wildernis. Zij ging over de muren. Zij van de smetvrees zouden daar nooit komen. Zij bouwden auto’s die alleen maar op gladgestreken wegen konden rijden, en die het zonlicht als tralies weerspiegelden. Maar zij zocht het licht in de duisternis op, de zon van de onderwereld. En zij leefde in ons, op een diepere plaats. Hier in de diepe wildernis had zij haar huisje van snoep geplaatst, en was zij slechts een diepere inwijder. Het harnas van snoep lokte de soldaat tot een diepere strijd, de patronen van de wildernis, de verborgen arena waar slechts zij keek. Zij was het kruis van de jongen in zijn jeugd om hem te behoeden voor een veel groter kwaad. De kooi die zij hier had gebouwd was niets vergeleken met de kooi van de stad. Zij was immers het pasen gevierd met chocola. Zij was de moeder van de jungle, maar zij onderwees haar kinderen over de gevaren. Zij bewapende haar kinderen en ontzag hen niet. Zij tuchtigde haar kinderen reeds vroeg, en daarom moest de heks dood. De stad wilde kinderen verwennen met een allesverblindend licht, verlammend en bemoederend.

Zij was de zwarte koningin des doods, de koningin van het oerwoud, toen het witte haar kinderen en haar schone land stal. En zij beval haar jager het sneeuwwitte om te brengen, want het witte moest sterven, zeven maal. En zij hing haar vrucht van het gouden amalgaam. En het sneeuwwitte was jong, oningewijd, omgeven door witte doornen. En zij lokte haar tot de deur van de dood in het oerwoud. En het sneeuwwitte gewaad werd afgedaan, en een zwarte vrouw rees op.

Zij was de koningin van de wolven, de koningin van de zwarte draken. Vele andere kinderen waren tot de deur des doods gekomen, en haar moddermannen namen hen op en brachten hen tot haar. Wilde bloemen hebben hen toen ingewijd, en ze raakten verstrikt in haar webben.

Zij had ons geschapen in de dooier, omringd door het witte, in een ei. Zij hing dit ei hoog. Het was een ei omringd door vlees. Wij groeiden op en aten van het vlees, en kwamen tot het huisje van snoep in de wildernis. Binnenin waren paaseieren versierd. Ze had een paasrijk in het woud. Haar paaswachters liepen op haar druipmuren. Zij wilde de lichtjes van het pinksteren doven. In de poppenstadjes werden keurige pinksterfeestjes gehouden, vol van smetvrees. En zij was onuitgenodigd. Daarom bracht zij haar stortvloed, en liet hen het ei van pasen zien, hun verboden vrucht. En hun kindertjes begonnen ervan te eten, en werden uit de stad gezet.

Zij had haar eigen stadje aan de rand van haar rivier, diep in de wildernis, een schilderachtig stadje, en zij gingen van vrucht tot vrucht, van ei tot ei. Haar eenhoorns liepen in pas, een drachtige optocht door de stad. En de stad lag op heuveltjes in de wildernis, en de eenhoorns gingen over de bruggen tussen die heuveltjes, langs de paars-roze sluiers.

‘Kun je van haar houden ?’ vroeg ik. We zaten gehurkt op het bed. Ik hield haar billen vast die heet aanvoelden. Vanuit de raampjes konden we de bomen zien met hun blauwpaarse vruchtjes en hun donkergroene blaadjes. Ze duwde mij neer, en ging op me liggen. ‘Natuurlijk,’ zei ze. ‘Ze is mijn moeder.’ Ik kuste haar, en ze was gelukkig. We waren naakt, maar we schaamden ons niet voor elkaar, want we waren in haar hof. Van gouden amalgaam waren wij gemaakt. In een kooi vonden we doorgang. Het was niet onze dood, maar een transformatie. We waren als vlindertjes in haar bos. Wij kwamen voort vanuit het orgie der goden, het gouden amalgaam, wat als een vrucht voor ons hing, als een ei, en waartegen gewaarschuwd werd, want men vreesde de geheimenissen van het bos. De goden hadden er veel liefde in gestopt, als het serum van bevrijding, als de paradijselijke zweer. Maar zie, zij werd geweerd als een melaatse. En zij hield de raadselen van de tuin verborgen.

En het imperium werd gebouwd, en zij werd als een boeman beschouwd, maar in haar waren de rangen gegarandeerd. Er was niks mechanisch aan, alles was natuurlijk, vanuit de dood voortkomend, het was een roze spot. Er moest plaats voor haar gemaakt worden, dit was haar vereiste, want ze was al lang genoeg weggedrukt. Zij hadden naast haar niet veel in te brengen, want zij kenden het raadsel van de dood niet. Zij omsingelde de grote stad met haar eenhoorns, en trok haar kinderen er één voor één uit. Tussen haar woestijnen door zijn rivieren, met bruggen waar barbaren voor staan, één wachter per brug, en wie kan hen verslaan ? Maar kinderen trekken zij mij, hen die bezegeld zijn door haar liefde. Zartan was de poortwachter van haar secte, bestempeld als een verleider, maar haar strikken brachten hen tot leven, voortkomende vanuit het meer. Haar moddermannen werden zij, en zij schuwde de

bokken niet, zij waren de dragers van haar geheim. De secte werd groot en gevreesd, en men vergat de secte van de grote stad. Arsis en Jupo waren twee andere poortwachters van haar, maar die stonden dieper in haar rijk, want dit rijk had veel gebieden. En ook de kinderen werden beproefd door deze wachters. En velen bleven steken. De worsteling met de roos was een grote. Haar secte scheurde families uiteen.

Ze zat rechtop. Ze had contact met de bloemen, met de Braziliaanse schietbloem, met de Rijn-bloem, de vuur-bloem, en de flamingo-bloem. Zij had het wilde witte konijn gevolgd tot de sprekende bloemen. En zij hadden verborgen de vrucht die haar deed groeien. Zij likte aan de vrucht, nam ervan, en begon langzaam te groeien, tot de hoge burcht in de woestijn. De zon van de Sumerische onderwereld verlichtte de woestijn. Hier werd nog het zuivere Ninurta gegoten, de boodschapper der goden. Nergal, de god van de onderwereld zat hier op zijn troon, met speren aan weerszijde. Hij sprak en genas. Het was hier waar de eenzamen elkaar hadden gevonden. Hier was de Sumerische ark, terwijl buiten het gif van Mercurius regende. Er zou een zondvloed komen, want het tijdperk van Mercurius was nog maar net begonnen. En daar stonden ze dan, drie boodschappers van de goden : Ninurta, Hermes en Mercurius, en zij kwamen tot de troon van Nergal. En Mercurius had het gezicht van een wortel en had een grote glimlach. ‘Ik weet het, er zijn duizenden mercuriussen,’ zei Nergal. ‘En jij bent de enige die toegang hebt gekregen tot mijn paleizen.’

‘Vader,’ sprak Mercurius, ‘het kwik is alleen maar groeiende buiten, en u kent dit vergif. En u weet ook wat het enige anti-gif hiertegen is. De cocon van Mercurius heeft de wortelkwik-vlinder voortgebracht. Zij heeft uw ark gebouwd.’

‘Schenk mij het wortelkwik, Mercurius,’ sprak Nergal. Mercurius deed een stap naar voren en gaf hem een zakje met wortels waarin het wortelkwik zat. ‘Dit zijn de zaadjes voor wortelkwik-bloemen,’ zei Mercurius. Toen vertrok hij.

‘Hermes en Ninurta,’ zei Nergal, ‘jullie gaan deze zaadjes zaaien in de koninklijke tuin.’ Hermes en Ninurta deden direct wat hen gezegd was. Snel groeiden er in de tuin de weelderigste bloemen die zich in het snelste tempo begonnen voort te planten. Het wortelkwik was duizendmaal sneller dan het normale kwik. ‘Dank aan Mercurius,’ zei Nergal. En Nergal sprak tot al zijn volgelingen : ‘Dank dat u allen gekomen bent. Zoals u weet kunt u niet alleen bevrijd worden van uw kettingen door exorcisme, maar ook juist door ingewijd te worden in de mysterien.’ Een beeld van Mithras werd naar voren gebracht, die vlak voor de opkomst van het christendom door de Romeinen werd aanbeden. Mithras streed tegen het kwaad, wat de vorm had van een stier. Het centrale thema van Mithraisme was de slacht van deze stier, het gedoopt worden in zijn bloed, en banket te houden met de zon. In het pre-atlantische was Mithras genaamd Matras, en werd het kwaad als een bizon uitgebeeld, waartegen Matras streed. Het afleggen van het oude leven door naaktheid, naturisme, was een belangrijk item in zowel Mithraisme en Matraisme, maar werd door de christelijke priesterdienst steeds meer ingebonden. Door onderwerping aan de goden kon men hogerop komen in het Mithraisme en

Matraisme, maar het kerkelijke christendom legde vooral het accent op de onderwerping aan het kerkelijk gezag. Bij Mithraisme en Matraisme stond het loskomen van de aarde centraal. Dit kon bereikt worden door ascetisme. Nergal nam wat van het wortelkwik, smeerde het standbeeld ermee in, en het kwam tot leven. Iedereen begon te juichen. Toen werd het beeld van Matras naar voren geschoven die in worsteling was met de bizon. Het tot leven gekomen beeld van Mithras liet zien hoe Mithras in gevecht was met de stier, en werd geholpen door een hond, een slang, en een schorpioen. De schorpioen viel de genitalien van de stier aan, maar het standbeeld van Matras toonde geen schorpioen maar een spin. Verder werd hij niet geholpen door een hond en een slang, maar door een vlieg en een wesp. Ook dit beeld werd ingesmeerd door het wortelkwik en kwam tot leven, onder groot gejuich. Martarius was de pre-atlantische vorm van Mercurius, de boodschapper van de goden, maar gebruikte geen kwik maar zwavel, want kwik hield gebonden aan de materiele sferen. Ook zijn beeld werd door het wortelkwik tot leven gewekt.

Nergal maakte toen het wortelkwik tot een sleutel in zijn hand, en opende de deur naar een verborgen tuin. Hier brandde ergens het rode vuur, het verboden vuur, wat een mengsel was tussen het bloed van een rund en het bloed van een aap. De tuin was vol met rook. Ook is er hier een grot waar het rode vlies zich bevindt, de huid van een sprekend en vliegend varken. Deze huid wordt bewaakt door een schorpioen. Alleen degene die de schorpioen kan temmen en berijden kan het rode vlies bereiken. Dit rode vlies is het vlies van eeuwig leven. Alleen de godin Utanga, de pre-atlantische Athena, kan het hoofdstel, het zadel en de teugels hiertoe overhandigen, het tuig waarmee de schorpioen bereden kan worden. Zonder dit tuig zal een ieder ten prooi vallen aan de schorpioen. Zij kwam op een nacht tot Aleron, de pre-atlantische Jason, om dit tuig aan hem te geven. Zij kwam tot hem op haar rijtuig in de donder, omringd door luipaarden. Zij slachtte een pauw en bedekte hem met het bloed als met een deken. De pauw was de wachter van de grot waarin de schorpioen leefde. Als Aleron de schorpioen zou berijden, dan zou het rode vuur op hem vallen om naar de onderwereld te gaan naar zijn geliefde Averon. Ook aan haar zal hij een deel geven van het rode vlies. En zij komen erachter dat dezen allen huwelijksgeschenken zijn. En wanneer hij zijn geliefde heeft bereikt zal de schorpioen in een rund veranderen.

Kamperdam aan Zee, Juni 1962

Mijn jeugd was een hel. Ik ben nu getrouwd en heb twee kinderen. Wij hebben hier een heel speeltuin-complex waar ze vaak spelen. Ook gaan we zo nu en dan naar het strand of de stad in. Ik heb mijn vrouw in het ziekenhuis ontmoet. Zij was de verpleegster, ik de patient. Het winkelcentrum van de stad is overdekt. Onze jongste dochter is het ijverigst. Sinds 1948 is ons land hermitatisch. Daarvoor was het land christelijk, omdat we werden bestuurd door Roomse keizers. De staatsgodsdienst was christelijk en heidendom was verboden. Sinds de hermitatische bevrijding zijn wij meer universeel. Ik zal die dag nooit meer vergeten dat onze hermitatische bevrijders kwamen. Hoe dan ook, wij zijn allen slaven van de waarheid, en alles is een halve waarheid. We vallen totdat we vliegen. Ik ken een boom genaamd Torpoteo, een beetje de pre-atlantische vorm van Yggdrasil. Hierin kunnen we schuilen, als gevallen strijders die hun kruis binnengaan. En bovenin wonen de Wanen, de elven, de

vruchtbaarheidsgoden, de Vanir, met de pre-atlantische vorm hiervan : de Targa. Het zal uitlopen op de Ragnarok, in het pre-atlantische wordt dit genoemd de Dordada, de grote eind-oorlog. Alleen in het diepste van de boom Yggdrasil zal er veiligheid en bevrijding zijn, als de vuurreus Surtr alles in vuur brengt door zijn zwaard. Ook de christenen hebben zo'n mythologie, over Armageddon, over de zondvloed van vuur, en een ark waarin bevrijding is. Het gaat allemaal om het binnengaan van het kruis, het ascetisme. De Torpoteo herbergt de bron van Tirz, die de pre-atlantische Mimir is, de bron van wijsheid. Odin gaf zijn oog op om deel te hebben aan die bron, maar de pre-atlantische Odin, genaamd Wassan gaf zijn vrouw op om deel te hebben aan de bron. Deze bron is het bodemloze ravijn, waarin Zolder viel, de pre-atlantische vorm van Balder, en door de rotsen gestoken werd, en hij zal vallen totdat hij vliegt. Hij zal voortkomen vanuit de Dordada, de grote eind-oorlog. De pre-atlantische Surtr is Staumi, met zijn zwaard Lauri, maar hij is een mengeling tussen een vuurreus en een ijsreus, dus Surtr-Ymir. De nadruk wordt vaak gelegd op het brandende ijs. Hij woont in Oswold, de pre-atlantische vorm van Jotunheim, waar de ijs-reuzen wonen. De stad waar wij inkwamen had muren gemaakt van slangen, waar het gif droop, waar de lucht was van bloed. Hier kwamen wij om de schilden te bezichtigen, maar zij waren bijna doorzichtig. Staumi had met het zwaard van wraak toegeslagen. De stad was nu als een woestijn. Zel zat hier op haar troon, in een ruimte achter rode doorzichtige sluiers, waar haar langharige leeuw ook was. Deze stad was genaamd Sogroff, en was omringd door een rivier genaamd Harenx. De schorpioen van Zel bracht wijn voort om de gevallen strijders die hier kwamen dronken te maken. Drie godinnen, Slova, Jarx en Slama, zouden hun verleden, heden en toekomst bepalen. Als ze goed hadden gestreden, dan gingen ze naar Travaska. Zo niet, dan werden ze door Zel opgeslokt. In Travaska woonde Rolf met zijn hamer Avik, die hen beschermde tegen boosaardige reuzen en dwergen. Travaska was een plaats in het hart van Zel.

En Zel bewoog zich gesluierd door de stad, en verspreidde haar bloemen van vuur. Kinderen groeiden hier in de bomen. Zij kwamen voort van een diepe eeuwige slaap. De tweede aarde was Trok, de derde Kempen en de vierde Saraul. En deze aardes waren al van een meer verheerlijkte stof. Men aanbad daar een ekster, een masker en een zeedraak. Er was daar alleen leven in het masker, en het masker was het oog.

Hoofdstuk 2.

Ik was de nachtleider. Ik had een nieuw pistool. Ik rende door de stad naar de kerk in de verte, en ik kon de kerk maar niet bereiken. In de top van de kerk woonde een geest. Ik richtte mijn pistool op de geest en schoot. Mijn kerkelijk hoofd spatte uiteen. Ik had de vrouwen in de kerk lief. Zij waren aan zware ketenen, maar ik beminde hen. Ik had de sleutel die op hun sloten pasten, en ik voerde hen uit. Zij hadden mij ook lief. Ik nam hen mee door de oceaan.

Mijn huis stond hoog, op een rots in de stad. Ik liet hen mijn schilderijen zien. Hier konden ze veilig wonen. Het was goed zo. Ik had een kroon voor hen gemaakt. Zij reisden van wereld tot wereld. Zij aanbaden het masker. Het maakte hen sterk, en de man werd zwak. De man werd

trager en trager, en stond plotseling stil. Zijn hoed was als het gesmolten zilver. Ook zijn schoenen waren als gesmolten zilver en goud. Het droop van hem af. Ik riep naar hem, maar hij hoorde mij niet. Hij staarde naar de kerktoren. ‘Daar bevinden zich al mijn geliefden,’ zei hij. Hij wilde mijn pistool zien. Toen liet hij zijn eigen pistool zien.

Hij gaf mij geld, veel geld. Ik bouwde een brug, een brug tot zijn wereld. Hij kon me duidelijk horen nu. ‘Ja, ik kan je duidelijk horen,’ zei hij. We staarden samen naar het hoge kerkgebouw wat begon te druipen. Hij liet mij zijn horloge zien.

Ik zweefde tussen de werelden, tussen het westelijke paradijs en het oostelijke paradijs, en langs het voor-paradijs gleed ik terug naar de eerste aarde. En toen was de eerste aarde niet meer. En toen weer wel, en de eerste aarde begon te veranderen, en de man had een jas aan van zebra-huid. ‘Ik ben de nacht,’ zei de man. We klommen de kerk binnen, en die begon te druipen. Het was pudding nu. Wodan en Thor kwamen langs op hun paarden. Het land is van ons, zeiden ze. En ze wezen naar Wassan en Rolf. Ik droeg een masker, en de man was als een zeedraak op wiens rug ik zat, en we zakten in de zee, en kwamen in de lucht terecht. Zo ging dat op en neer. Hij strekte zich uit langs de kerkmuur. Hij strekte zich uit tot aan de rozenhaag waar alles begon te golven.

Bloedbessen

Joost Verschuur komt 's avonds laat thuis van een feestje. Zijn vriendin ligt al in bed. Snel doet hij zijn kleren uit en gaat tegen haar aanliggen. Ze slaapt, maar wordt wakker van hem. Ze kust hem, en dan vallen ze samen in slaap. Midden in de nacht horen ze een hard geluid. Joost rent naar het raam. Iemand staat voor de deur. 'Doet jullie bel het niet ofzo ?' schreeuwt de persoon. Het is de broer van Joost. Even later staat ook zijn zus voor de deur. 'Doe open Joost,' schreeuwt zijn zus. Joost staat als aan de grond genageld, kleed zich langzaam aan, en loopt langzaam naar beneden om de deur te openen. Even later zitten ze rond de tafel. De vriendin van Joost is er inmiddels ook bijgekomen. 'Willen jullie wat drinken ?' vraagt Thea, de vriendin van Joost.

'Nee,' zegt Arnold, de broer van Joost. 'Jacquelien, vertel jij het hen maar.'

Jacquelien, de zus van Joost begint te huilen. 'Pa is ernstig ziek,' zegt ze.

'Wat heeft hij ?' vraagt Joost verschrikt.

'Hartklachten,' zegt Arnold. 'Hij heeft een hart-aanval gehad. Hij heeft niet lang meer te leven. Hij wil dat je nu bij hem komt. Hij wil je iets vertellen.'

Zo gezegd zo gedaan. Even later staat Joost bij zijn vader op de stoep, en een paar minuten later heeft hij de warme hand van zijn vader in zijn hand. 'Joost,' zegt zijn vader, 'ik ga weg. Spoedig zal ik mijn laatste adem uitblazen. Ik heb al met mijn andere kinderen gesproken, maar niet met jou.' Hij knipoogt even naar Joost, en laat dan even een glimlach zien. Joost, ik .... Met jou heb ik altijd het beste contact gehad, van de kinderen, maar de laatste jaren niet meer zoals het was, en ik weet wel waardoor dat komt. Thea had een hekel aan me. In ieder geval ... ik wil je zeggen dat ik van je houd, en dat ... dat ... mijn grootste erfenis naar jou toegaat.'

'En wat is dat dan ?' vraagt Joost.

'Een boek,' zegt zijn vader.

'Wat voor een boek ?' vraagt Joost.

'Een boek van zeerovers en spoken, ik heb het zelf geschreven,' zegt zijn vader. 'Ik heb het onder pseudoniem geschreven, zodat niemand ooit wist dat ik het had geschreven.'

'Die bestseller ?' vraagt Joost. 'Heb jij dat geschreven ?'

Na een paar dagen sterft de vader van Joost en enkele dagen later heeft Joost de eerste uitgave, de luxe editie, van het boek in bezit, en het manuscript. Joost bergt het meteen goed op. 'Zo, dat was dan de biecht van mijn vader,' zegt Joost tegen Thea. Thea zegt niks. Ze heeft zijn vader nooit gemogen.

'Klaar !' zegt Joost. 'Afgelopen.'

Thea komt langzaam naar hem toe, omhelst hem, en dan kust ze hem.

'Het was niets dan spel,' zegt Joost, 'het contact wat ik eerder met hem had. Ik deed maar net alsof, ik had geen andere keus.'

'Ik weet het,' zegt Thea, 'en vroeger durfde je niet anders.'

Joost kust Thea terug. Samen gaan ze op de bank zitten. Joost speelt wat met haar bloesje. 'Je hebt nu een echt speeltje,' zegt Thea. 'Iets wat je zelf hebt uitgekozen en wat je leuk vindt.'

Joost knikt. Bijna met zijn kin opgeheven. Voor het eerst in zijn leven kan hij echt glimlachen, en hij kijkt rebels. 'Toch wel vreemd dat mijn vader de schrijver was van dat boek,' zei Joost. Thea knikt. 'En jij bent de schrijver van mijn boek,' zegt ze. Joost glimlacht. 'Ik houd ervan je te beschrijven.'

'Doe nog eens een gooi,' zegt Thea.

'Je bent bloedmooi,' zegt Joost. 'Ik kan je wel drinken.'

'Mooi als die struik met bloedbessen daar buiten ?'

'Die bessen zijn giftig,' zegt Joost. 'Jij bent ontgiftigend, genezend.'

'Maar medicijnen zijn soms giftig, Joost,' zegt Thea. 'Giftig, het kan een gave zijn, een gift.'

'Gut wat doe je weer moeilijk,' lacht Joost. En neemt haar in de houdgreep. 'Ik ben toch veel sterker dan jij.'

Thea kijkt hem aan. 'Verleden tijd,' zegt ze zacht. 'Kijk eens diep in mijn ogen.' Joost doet het en voelt zich zwak worden, en dan ineens neemt zij hem in de houdgreep. 'Okay, Thea,' zegt Joost, 'ophouden met die spelletjes nu. Ik weet dat je me kunt betoveren en hypnotiseren. Je bent misschien wel potentieel een gevaar.'

'Gevaar is een te groot woord, noem het maar avontuur,' zegt Thea.

Midden in de nacht worden ze weer wakker van een geluid. Het zijn weer de broer en zus van Joost. Even later zitten ze weer om de tafel.

'Wat heeft vader je gegeven,' vraagt Jacquelien.

'Oh niets,' zegt Joost.

'Probeer het niet achter te houden, Joost,' zegt Jacquelien, 'want moeder heeft gezegd dat jij iets hebt gehad.'

'Dat is tussen vader en mij,' zegt Joost. 'Waarom zijn jullie hier ?'

Joost kijkt ze indringend aan. 'Nou ? Waarom zeggen jullie niets ?'

'Wij vinden dat je moet zeggen wat vader je heeft gegeven,' zegt Jacquelien. Arnold knikt.

'En daarmee komen jullie midden in de nacht ? Waar slaat dat op ?' vraagt Joost.

'Omdat het belangrijk is,' zegt Arnold. 'Nou, zeg op.'

'Okay dan,' zegt Joost, 'als het voor jullie zo belangrijk is, eh, het was een boek, over zeerovers en spoken. Eh, hij heeft dat boek eens geschreven onder pseudoniem.'

'Mis, Joost,' zegt Arnold. 'Bladzijde 441 vertelt het geheim, daar heeft hij in kleine letters geschreven, ga zelf maar kijken.' Joost pakt het boek, gaat naar bladzijde 441 en leest hardop : 'Beste Joost, gefeliciteerd, aan jou de familie-erfenis : een geheim eiland.'

'Moet ik nu hoera zeggen ?' vraagt Joost. 'En waar is dat geheime eiland ?'

'Ga naar bladzijde 847,' zegt Arnold.

En daar leest Joost het. Het schijnt dat Joost een geadopteerd kind was, als baby, en zijn vader en moeder durfden het hem nooit te zeggen. Boos slingert Joost het boek weg, en rent naar buiten, terwijl Thea hem achterna gaat. 'Lees het boek verder voor meer informatie,' roept Arnold hem na. Maar Joost is woedend. Pas na een paar uur komt Joost weer thuis, samen met

Thea. Arnold en Jacquelien liggen op de bank te slapen. Op de tafel ligt het boek, en Joost leest verder. Het blijkt dat Joost op dat eiland geboren is.

Na een tijdje kan Joost het accepteren en gaat samen met Thea op vakantie naar het eiland. Er wonen daar twee mensen die ooit de samenleving hebben verlaten. Ze wonen hier als wilden. Als Joost hen het verhaal vertelt begrijpen ze dat hij hun kind is.

'Jij hoort bij ons,' zegt zijn echte vader. 'Ooit hebben ze jou van ons afgepakt. Nu ben je terug. En Thea is ook welkom.' Hij omhelst zijn vader en dan zijn moeder, en ook Thea doet dat. En ze leven nog lang en gelukkig.

De Bizonjacht

Hij voelde de scherpe pennetjes door de huid boven zijn tepel gaan. Het waren een soort pijltjes, een soort scherpe botjes met kleine veertjes aan weerskanten als kwastjes. Die voelden zacht tegen zijn huid aan, maar de pijltjes waren scherp. Het deed wel even heel erg pijn, maar daarna raakte hij er meer en meer aan gewend. Hij moest een lange trap op bekleed met bruin fluweel of suede. Moeder overste stond op hem te wachten op de hoogste trede. Ze stond bij een groot portaal, een poort. “Je wist dat dit moest, hè ?' sprak ze. 'De pinnen moesten erin, anders zou de bizon je bezeten kunnen maken.' Hij knikte. Samen met haar liep hij door de poort. Ze kwamen in een duister veld waar in de verte de bizons graasden. 'Hier gaat het gebeuren,' sprak ze. Hij kreeg een speer, een pijl en boog met een mes. Ook kreeg hij een net.

'Ik wil niet,' zei hij. Moeder overste stond daar met een gesel. 'De kerk wil het,' sprak ze zelfverzekerd. Hij boog zijn hoofd. Hij wilde de vader-priesters niet teleurstellen, en al

helemaal niet moeder overste. Plotseling richtte hij de speer op haar. 'Ik kan het niet !' riep hij. En hij rende weg. Hij voelde zichzelf een banghaas, een grote mislukkeling. Hij rende de trap af naar zijn kamer. Hij deed de kamer op slot, voor het geval moeder overste achter hem aan zou komen. Ze had altijd die gesel wel, maar had haar die nog nooit zien gebruiken. Moeder overste begreep hem wel. Midden in de nacht kwam hij zijn kamer uit, en ging de trap op om vervolgens door de poort te gaan. Er waren daar een groep vrouwelijke jagers. 'Waar ga jij naartoe ?' vroegen ze.

'Ik wil hier weg,' zei hij. 'Dit is niks voor mij.'

Hij keek de lucht in, waar de nachtzon was verschenen. Er kwamen zoveel bizons uit voort die door de lucht gingen. De lucht leek wel op een grote vlakte met een heleboel velden. 'Waar gaan die naartoe ?' vroeg hij aan de vrouwen.

'Zij zullen de kerk aanvallen,' zeiden de vrouwen serieus en ernstig. In zijn gedachten zag hij moeder overste voor zich. Hij sprong op één van de jachtwagens, en maakte zijn speer klaar. Zo ging hij de nacht in. Hij joeg op de bizons alsof hij op de zon joeg. Gehuld in een bizonkleed kwam hij terug.

'Moeder overste zal trots op je zijn,' zeiden de vrouwen. De volgende dag ging hij naar moeder overste met zijn kleed. Zij nam hem in haar armen. 'Ik ben trots op je, jongen,' sprak ze. 'Eindelijk heb je jezelf overwonnen. Dat is een hele grote stap. Je bent erg moedig geweest.'

De nacht daarop ging hij weer op jacht, en kwam terug met een bizon-schedel. Die gaf hij aan moeder overste. Moeder overste drukte de schedel tegen zich aan. De dag erna stierf zij. Hij zwoer dat hij voor altijd voor haar en de kerk zou jagen. Hij zou de kerk tot overwinning brengen.

'Iets brandt er in mij, een eeuwige vlam,

Het steekt overal, ik ben zo bang,

Maar niets zal mij stoppen, het duurt al te lang,

Ik zal over haar waken zo lang als ik kan,

Ik ben hiervoor geroepen, terug kan ik niet,

Sinds ik jou vond als mijn beste vriend.'

Hij stond op en liep naar de poort. Hij keek in de lucht, en de nachtzon was vallende, maar er waren meer bizons dan ooit te voren. Het was alsof de jacht nu pas echt begon.

Het

Hemelbed

Ze loopt op de straat. Stenen uiltjes vallen haar aan met religieuze ideeen. Ze gaat door het tuinhek, en doet het hekje weer achter haar dicht, een hek met lange scherpe punten. Ze gaat het kasteel binnen als ze door de lange vlindertuin heeft gelopen. De kok ziet haar aankomen en wuift naar haar. Als hij dat doet krijgt ze altijd een warm gevoel van binnen. De raadsels hier zijn onopgelost. Zo gaat het altijd. De stenen uiltjes vallen haar altijd aan als ze buiten de tuin is. Maar in de tuin en het kasteel heeft ze rust. Ze loopt naar boven en gaat op haar hemelbed liggen. Naast het bed staat een oude piano. Dan grijpt ze haar telefoon, en belt naar haar geliefde. ‘Hallo,’ zegt ze. Even later valt ze in slaap.

De volgende ochtend gaat ze weer door het tuinhekje, en werd weer door de stenen religieuze uiltjes aangevlogen. Het zijn de uiltjes van haar verleden. Gelukkig zijn ze nu van steen, maar ze vladderen nog steeds verschrikkelijk, en die krengen kunnen nog steeds goed bijten en met hun vleugels slaan. Vroeger leefde ze met die uiltjes, moest ze doen wat ze zeiden, maar nu konden ze haar alleen maar van buitenaf aanvallen. Ze liep door de regen en stak een paraplu op. Ze merkte dat ze daar de uiltjes ook flink goed mee van haar af kon slaan. Ze ging naar haar geliefde waar ze werkte als secretaresse. Haar geliefde had een muurtje om zijn huis

waar ook stenen uiltjes opstonden, maar deze konden niets doen. Ze waren één geheel met de muur.

Zij en haar geliefde hadden een woningvereniging genaamd ‘De Gouden Leeuw’. Eens werd de stad geteisterd door een dokter die de stadsmensen dwong om giftige medicijnen in te nemen met een streng bewind van dwang-verpleging. Dit trok de stenen uiltjes aan die toen een strenge religie brachten, zodat de mensen die dokter konden vergeten. Vele mensen waren van die dokter zo ziek geworden dat ze hun werk niet meer konden doen, en hun woningen uitgezet werden omdat ze het niet meer konden betalen. ‘De Gouden Leeuw’ was opgezet om die zieke mensen een woning te geven. Het was een woningbouw voor zwervers. Nu het bewind van de dokter was verdwenen was er nog steeds het bewind van de stenen uiltjes, en de mensen waren nog erg ziek. De Gouden Leeuw had woningen voor de helft van de stad. De stenen uiltjes wilden hun religieuze dwang niet stoppen, omdat ze bang waren dat er ooit een tweede dwangdokter zou opstaan. Sinds de Gouden Leeuw bestond kwamen de stenen uiltjes niet meer in de tuinen en de huizen van de mensen, maar wel waren ze op straat, en vielen voetgangers lastig. Ook hielden ze zich op bij muurtjes en hekjes. Ze waren een plaag in de stad. Natuurlijk was iedereen bang dat er een tweede medische dictator zou opstaan, maar daar zou de Gouden Leeuw wel toezicht op houden. Men zag de stenen uiltjes vaak als een kwelling.

En als zij in bed lagen, zij en haar geliefde, dan droop een lijm van hen, als het spinsel der spinnen, om de stenen uiltjes vast te plakken aan de muren. Zij vreeen voor een betere wereld, voor de vrije stad.

Sleutel van het Paradijs

Zeevlinder

Moeder keek vader aan. 'We hebben er over gesproken, Eduard. Je vader en ik vinden het

beter als je ons gewoon zou vertellen wat er gebeurd is. We willen je zo graag helpen.'

'Ik kan het niet,' zei Eduard, en rende naar boven. Zijn moeder ging achter hem aan, en ging naast hem op zijn bed zitten in zijn kamer. 'Vertel het nou maar,' zei moeder. 'Heus, het is beter dan.' Toen vertelde Eduard stoterig en schokkerig zijn verhaal. Moeder belde direkt de politie. Die kwamen ook direct naar hem toe, en onderhandelden met de daders. De vader van één van de daders kwam na een tijdje bij Eduard op bezoek. De dader moest zijn verontschuldigingen aanbieden en gaf Eduard een cadeautje, een kleine ziekenauto. Eduard glimlachte, maar viel flauw toen hij de dader strak in het gezicht keek.

'Eduard ?' zei moeder.

Eduard zag zijn vriendin voor hem staan, die eens weg ging naar een andere stad, een verhuizing, vanwege werk van haar vader. 'Marlotte ?' vroeg Eduard. 'Die is hier niet,' zei moeder.

'Ik heb haar nodig,' stamelde Eduard. Hij hoorde het geluid van politie-auto's. 'Ze komen,' zei hij. 'Ze maken alles goed.'

Eduard kon niet goed lopen. Hij had zijn vriendinnetje nodig. Ze was er niet. Hij belde haar op. Ze kwam direct naar hem toe. 'Eduard, lieveling,' zei ze. Toen werd Eduard wakker. Hij had alles maar gedroomd. Zijn vader en moeder zouden hem nooit geloven. Zijn leven was een nachtmerrie. En Marlotte zou hem nooit meer terugwillen. Waarom wist hij niet. Hij was altijd goed voor haar geweest. Hij had een goed contact met zijn piano-leraar. Die sleepte hem er doorheen. Op een dag vroeg de piano-leraar of Eduard niet gewoon bij hem wilde wonen. Eduard stemde toe, maar wat graag. Hij wilde zijn ouders nooit meer zien.

'Marlotte,' zei de piano-leraar, 'is een vreemd meisje. Ik heb haar nooit vertrouwd.'

'Maar ik houd van haar,' zei Eduard.
'Dat begrijp ik,' zei de piano-leraar, 'maar toch.'
'Ik kan niet zonder haar leven,' zei Eduard. 'Ik ben bang dat ik gek word zonder haar. Ik mis haar.'
De piano-leraar probeerde hem te sussen. 'Ze is heel erg duister. Er klopt gewoon iets niet met haar,' zei hij.

Eduard ging achter de piano zitten, en zong een liefdeslied. Hij was wel heel erg blij dat hij bij de piano-leraar kon wonen nu. Die was altijd al als een vader voor hem. Die nacht in bed had hij een duistere droom waarin Marlotte hem probeerde te verdrinken, en plotseling veranderde ze in een duister beest. Ze trok hem de diepte in.

Ineens zaten ze in een schoollokaal. Zij zat voor hem als de juffrouw. 'Ik ben Lazarus,' zei ze.

'Wat bedoel je,' vroeg Eduard.

'Ik ben een boom,' sprak ze.

'Waarom dan ?' vroeg Eduard.

'Omdat ik het zeg,' zei ze, en sloeg met haar vuist op de tafel. 'Ik ben een boom vol van

bloemen en geheimen. Ik ben meerdere personen, en ik draag de sleutel voor jou. Ik wil je niet vernietigen, ik wil je brengen naar de andere wereld.'

'Dat is een leugen,' zei Eduard. 'Je wilde niets meer van me weten.'

'Ik weet het,' zei Marlotte. 'Maar ik ben Lazarus.'

'Wat bedoel je ?' vroeg Eduard.

Ze begon te huilen, en zei : 'Ik ben de Lazarus-boom.'

'Wat is dat,' vroeg Eduard.

'Niets,' zei ze. Eduard schrok wakker. Ze stond voor hem in een prachtig witte jurk als bloesem. 'Ik ben al dood,' zei ze. 'Ik ben een bloem, de lazarus-boom, een mysterie voor jou, een raadsel.'

Eduard dacht dat hij gek aan het worden was en probeerde te roepen, maar het was alsof zijn mond op slot stond.

'Ik wil je overweldigen,' zei ze. 'Maar ik kan het niet. Hij houdt me tegen.'

'Wie is hij ?' vroeg Eduard.

'Je vader,' zei ze. 'Ik ben dood, Eduard, dood. Je vader heeft mij vermoord.'

'Je moet daar weg,' zei Eduard.

'Ik wil bij je zijn,' zei ze, 'maar ik kan het niet.'

'Leugens,' zei Eduard. 'Je zei altijd dat je juist niet bij me wilde zijn.'

'Help me,' zei ze. 'Ik kan het niet helpen. Ik ben meerdere personen. Ik kan niet praten.'

'Je komt anders aardig goed uit je woorden,' zei Eduard.

'Ik kan niet zeggen wat ik wil zeggen,' zei ze.

'Ik houd van je, Eduard,' zei ze.

'Ik geloof je niet,' zei hij. 'Je hebt me laten wegteren.'

'Alsjeblieft, ik smeek je,' zei ze.

'Wat bedoel je,' vroeg hij.

'Ik ben een lazarus-boom,' zei ze.

'Ja, dat had je al eerder gezegd,' zei hij.

'Ik groei, en ik kan het niet stoppen,' zei ze. 'Ik heb meerdere takken.' Toen begon ze te schreeuwen en te gillen. 'Nu sta ik in brand,' riep ze.

'Toe, help me,' gilde ze. 'Mijn vader verbrandt me.'

'Ik houd van je, Marlotte,' zei hij, en omhelsde haar. Hij probeerde haar te sussen, maar ze werd steeds wilder.

'Ik ga van je scheiden,' zei ze. 'Ik heb teveel pijn, ik ben te gevoelig. Ik brand, en jij gaat ook branden.'

'Het is okay, schat, ik wist niet dat we getrouwd waren, maar wat je dan ook zegt,' sprak hij kalm.

'Eduard, blus me,' zei ze.

'Hoe ?' vroeg hij.

'Met kussen,' zei ze.

Eduard begon haar te kussen, maar het leek allemaal veel erger te worden. Hij begon ook te branden. 'We moeten rennen,' zei hij. 'Waar naartoe ?' vroeg ze.

'Naar het bos,' zei hij. Snel renden ze het huis uit naar het bos, maar alle bomen waren aan het branden. Ze hoorden veel gegil en geschreeuw. 'Liefste,' riep ze. 'Als ik het niet overleef, vergeet nooit, maar dan ook nooit, dat ik altijd van je heb gehouden. En nu zelfs meer dan ooit.'

'Ik geloof je niet !' riep hij. 'Je bent er nooit voor mij geweest !'

'Ik kon het niet !' schreeuwde ze. 'Ti sento ! Ik ben te gevoelig !'

'Je zei dat je niet meer van me hield. Je zei zelfs dat je nooit van me hebt gehouden !' schreeuwde hij.

'Ik ben de lazarus-boom !' riep ze terug. 'Dingen gaan niet zoals ik wil dat ze gaan.'

'Je hebt me verraden met Judas-kussen !' schreeuwde hij. Alles stond in brand. Spoedig waren ze in een vuurzee. Ze huilde.

'Ik kan er niet tegen dat je lijdt. Ik wil je helpen, ik wil je troosten, zoals ik nachten met je op heb gezeten, maar je was gemeen naar mij,' zei Eduard.

'Jij lijdt ook, zoals ik lijd,' zei ze.

Hij had haar stevig in de grip. 'Liefste,' huilde hij. 'Het maakt niet uit dat ik lijd, maar ik kan er niet tegen als jij lijdt. Ik heb daar nooit tegengekunt, wat je me dan ook hebt aangedaan.'

'Ik ben een lazarus-boom,' huilde ze.

'Ik weet het,' zei hij. 'Wacht gewoon totdat het gaat bloesemen.'

'Nee,' huilde ze, 'het gaat nooit meer bloesemen. Het gaat branden.'

'Ik zal je veilig maken,' zei hij.

'Hoe ?' vroeg ze. 'Waarom jij ? Omdat je de vader van mijn kinderen bent ?'

'We hebben nooit kinderen gehad,' zei hij.

'Dat is wel waar,' huilde ze.

In zweet werd hij wakker. Het was een nachtmerrie. Ze lag naast hem, met schuim op haar mond. Hij had ook schuim op zijn mond. Ze hadden samen drugs genomen van de lazarus-boom, om in een andere realiteit te komen, maar dat ging niet altijd goed. 'Ik... ik brand,' huilde ze zachtjes. Hij nam haar in zijn armen. 'Het spul heeft bijwerkingen,' zei hij, 'maar het zal ons er doorheen slepen. We zullen aankomen in die andere wereld.'

'Ik wil niet meer, baby,' huilde ze. 'Het is te zwaar. We lijken wel vijanden van elkaar.'

'De liefde is een oorlog,' zei hij. 'We vechten voor elkaar, en zonder scheiding is er geen verzoening. Zonder ijs is er geen vuur, en zonder verwarring is er geen helderheid.'

Maar alles moet toch ergens stoppen,' huilde ze.

'Oh, maar deze wereld is groot,' zuchtte hij. 'Ja, zo groot,' fluisterde ze. 'Ik kan niet meer.' Hij troostte haar.

Ze stopte met de drugs, terwijl Eduard ermee doorging. Ze begonnen uit elkaar te groeien, en het eindigde in een scheiding. Ze was koud, bevroren, en Eduard was warm. Hij begreep haar wel, maar zij begreep hem niet, en begon alles te ontkennen. Ze was niet meer zoals ze was, alsof ze zich ergens voor probeerde te verstoppen. Op een dog sloegen de stoppen bij Eduard door. Hij begreep haar niet meer, en was boos. Toch wilde hij dat ze gelukkig was. Het scheen niet goed mogelijk te zijn bij haar. Ze schreven brieven, en in die brieven schreef ze hoe slecht ze er aan toe was. 'Is dit nu alles wat je wilde ?' schreef hij terug.

Op een dag schreef ze terug dat ze een nieuwe drug had ontdekt, veel veiliger volgens haar. Eduard kwam bij haar langs. Ze scheen weer een warme vrouw te zijn. Ze glimlachte toen ze hem zag. Hij was nog steeds erg boos, en keek koud op haar neer. 'Spuit het maar in mijn arm,' zei hij. Ze hurkte voor hem neer, en spoot in zijn been. 'Daar,' zei ze. Eduard viel op de grond. De kinderen kwamen binnen. 'Wat doet pappa daar ?' vroeg de middelste.

'Pappa is gek,' zei Marlotte. Schuim kwam op zijn mond.

'Is hij aan de drugs ?' vroeg de jongste.

'Ja,' zei Marlotte, 'ik heb hem wat toegediend, van dat spul wat wij ook altijd gebruiken.' Ze trok hem naar een bed, en legde een jas over hem heen. Even later kwam ze bij hem liggen, toen de kinderen weer weg waren. Ze spoot wat in haar been, en verloor haar bewustzijn. Een vuur kwam in haar hoofd, en ze werd verbonden met zijn hoofd, en zijn hart. 'Namens de

vereniging van bomen, hartelijk welkom,' zei een stem. 'Ik heb het nog eens nagekeken, jullie zijn inderdaad geregistreerd. Welkom terug dan.' Een groen vuur kwam over hen. 'De godin van scheiding heeft jullie hier gebracht.'

'Het is haar schuld,' zei Eduard. 'Zij heeft die vervloekte scheidingsformulieren ingevuld.'

'Oh, op onze afgesneden huid ?' vroeg de stem. 'Dat is niet zo netjes.'

'Nee, niet zo netjes,' zei een andere stem. 'Zij gaat dus de afwas doen.'

'Maar ik heb al gekookt,' zei Marlotte. 'Dus ik ga ook niet nog eens de afwas doen. Kom zeg, eikel.'

'Ze heeft gelijk,' zei Eduard. 'Zij heeft mij de drugs toegediend, dus ze hoeft dan toch ook niet de afwas te doen.'

'Wel, hoor je nou niet eens even wat je zegt, domoor,' zei de stem. 'Zij heeft jou deze rommel aangeboden, dus dan zal ze potdorie die rommel ook op gaan ruimen.'

'Het is mijn schuld,' zei Eduard. 'Ik heb de rommel aangenomen. Ik had haar nooit naar binnen moeten halen. Ik ben zo dom geweest haar te vertrouwen.'

'Waarom heb je haar naarbinnen gehaald ?' vroeg de stem

'Ik wilde haar helpen,' zei Eduard.

'Hield je van haar ?' vroeg de stem.

'Absoluut en ongetwijfeld,' zei hij.

Heel langzaam werd hij wakker. Het was maar een droom. Ze was ver weg van hem, en zover hij wist was ze niet aan de drugs. Hij wel dus. Voor hem was dat de enige weg eruit. In haar brieven schreef ze hem hoe slecht het met haar ging. Hij wilde haar helpen, maar wist niet hoe. Ook was hij boos. Die boosheid werd eigenlijk elke dag erger, en het brief-contact stopte weer. Hij stortte zich nog meer op de drugs dan ooit tevoren. De bomen waren zijn helden. Hij had geen vat meer op de realiteit, en het was beter zo. Die realiteit werd volgens hem in stand gehouden door bomen-haters. 'Eet eens een vruchtje, lik eens een appeltje, laat je eens inspuiten door een lazarus-boom, voor een mooie droom. Eet eens een stukje hout, lik eens aan boomblad, aan zijn bast en zijn schors. Beklim eens een boom, hang eens aan een tak.' Hij zong een liefdeslied aan de piano. Het was een meedogenloos ritme. 'Klim eens op een appel, duik eens in een aardbei, grijp eens naar een roos. Ja, haar dorens zullen je verscheuren, maar ... maar ... laat dat je niet tegenhouden. Lik eens aan de honing, ja, haar dorens zullen je mond sluiten, maar ... maar .... laat dat je niet tegenhouden ... Vecht eens met een beer, laat de honing zijn voor iedereen. Vecht eens met bijen en wespen. Het geheim is niet alleen van hen ... Lik eens aan een tak, snuif eens wat bloemenzaad, grijp eens een plant, ook al krijg je dan een blaar. Ook al ga je dan bloeden, en lig je in het bad, ook al zal de storm dan woeden, wie doet dat wat .... Het gaat toch om de zomer, het holle in de boom, het gaat toch om de dauw in de morgen, en het morgenrood, doe wat je kan om daar te komen ... het avondrood zal je genezen .... Vecht in de oorlog, de oorlog der liefde, zet elkaar vrij, voor welke prijs dan ook, want wat is een prijs ?

's Nachts staar ik je aan, 's nachts hoor ik je stem en lied,
De morgen spoelt het weg, maar jij zult altijd zijn, de moeder van mijn kinderen,
Ik laat altijd een kaarsje voor jou branden,
Eens zal ik je eruit krijgen, uit die slimme doos,
Eens zal ik die sloten door mijn liefde smelten,
Ik ben nog jong, gouden tijden staan nog steeds op mijn roos,
Je bent in mijn herinnering, een nachtmerrie, een vlinderding,
Alle dingen schijnen twee kanten te hebben, alle kanten zullen in de tijd opzwemmen,
Alle kanten zullen hun gezicht laten zien,
Ik heb er tien, ik heb er tien, maar ik wil de jouwen ook zien,
Mijn lieveling .... mijn vlinderding .... de nachtmerrie is slechts een herinnering ...
Meer kan het niet zijn, ik ren nu .... vrij,
Over de heg, over de heuvel, de winter kan mij niet meer vasthouden,
De zomer maakte mij vrij, jij, zomervlinder, jij vlinderding ...

Ik vond jou, als een zeemeerman, aan de kusten van Spanje, kapotgebroken aan de rotsen,
Als een zeemeerman nam ik jou op, en gaf je de adem van de zee,
Maar de zee begon te branden door jouw vuur,
De zeevlinder nam ons beiden mee, en brak de muur,
In mijn lijst ben je nu, in mijn schilderij, in de bizonjacht,
Wij verdrinken samen in de gracht, todat de boot van Venetie ons opneemt,
Met de staf van zeebloemen en zeebloesem,
Met de staf van zeewier, als de staf der zeemeermannen,
Kom niet dichterbij, ik ben maar een zeemeerjongen,
Kom niet dichterbij, want je komt onder mijn betovering,
Ren nu, ren nu, voor je leven ... Als het leven je lief is,
Of heb je mij lief ... of de last der leugens ....

Negen van de tien keer loog je tegen mij,
Negen van de tien keer ... onder het sprei der bloemen ....
Als bloemen logen zoals jij, zouden ze nooit bloeien ...
En te bedenken dat je mij als leugenaar zag,
Zoveel bloemen op mijn graf,
Zoveel bloemen die je mij nooit gaf ...
Zoveel bloemen op jouw graf, door de zeevlinder gebracht ...
Maar de ware liefde breekt de grenzen van het leven,
Als een vuur die jou zelfs uit de hel kan opnemen ...
Denk je dat je naar de hemel kunt ontsnappen ....
Op de rug van de zeevlinder

Bedenk dat dit heel goed het laatste lied kan zijn wat ik ooit tot je zing,
Dat de zeevlinder het laatste is wat ik je geef ...'

'Eduard, Eduard,' riep zijn moeder. Kom uit je bed. Bijna schooltijd.
Eduard draaide zich om, en wilde weer slapen, maar het schelle getetter in zijn oor van zijn moeder besliste anders.
Snel begon ze hem wakker te schudden. Ze trok hem uit zijn bed en omhelsde hem.
'Mamma, kus me niet meer,' zei hij, 'anders kom ik hier nooit weg.' Toen liet zijn moeder hem los. Hij kleedde zich aan, nam zijn tas mee, en vertrok met de bus.

Op school keek hij haar niet aan. Zij keek alleen maar naar hem door haar ooghoeken. Zij was zijn wapen tegen de reuzen, maar de drugs die zij hem gaf had hem bijna vermoord. Het was haar spreekbeurt vandaag, en ze begon spook-verhalen te vertellen. Hij opende zijn hart een beetje voor haar. Ze stond daar bijna als een militair. Ja, zij voerde oorlog, en hij wilde in haar leger. Ze begon bloemen te tekenen op het bord, en schreef zijn naam. Hij voelde zichzelf in brand staan met liefdesvuur. 'Nu heb ik het ware vuur, riep hij,' terwijl de andere kinderen in de vlammenzee begonnen te verdwijnen. Hij hief haar op het schip. 'Geweldig is dit,' zei ze. 'Ja, je hebt mij flink in de war gebracht met die drugs,' zei hij, 'maar dit is goed.'

'Daar is het om te doen,' zei ze.

'We moeten maken wat er van te maken is,' zei hij. De vlammen werden wilder, maar het was goed vuur, liefdesvuur. Zij brandde nu ook, en ze voelde zich goed. 'Voel je je nu eindelijk goed, schatje ?' vroeg hij. Ze knikte, en zuchtte van verlichting. Hij nam haar in zijn armen, en ze stegen op. 'Dit is de sleutel van het paradijs,' zei ze. 'Ik wist dat je dit kon doen.'

'En ik wist dat jij het kon doen,' zei hij. 'Ti Sento. Ik voel je.'
Maar zwetend werd hij wakker in een vuur dat hij niet begreep. Hij begon boos te worden, en zonk weg in hopeloosheid. 'Ik was er bijna,' dacht hij. Maar hij wist niet waar het allemaal om draaide. Waar ging het nu eigenlijk om ? Was dit alles niet gewoon zinloos ? Maar ja, hij wilde niet in ongeluk blijven leven. Of bracht het ongeluk hem naar een dieper geluk ?

Zij beschuldigde hem. Brieven van schuld kwamen binnen, de één na de ander. Het was als een muur met kettingen. Hij kroop naar zijn piano, moe, en verkrampt door de pijn. Hij hees zichzelf op aan de piano, en begon te spelen.

'Liefde is beter dan drugs, maar ik heb de liefde niet, alleen maar haat,
Liefde is beter dan jou, maar wat is de liefde waard ...'

Hij greep naar de drugs en begon te slikken als een gek, zodat hij bewusteloos viel aan de piano. De godin van scheiding scalpeerde hem, en gaf hem een doornenkroon. Hij verloor zijn verstand. Hij hulde zichzelf in een rood kleed, en kroop op de piano waar hij begon over te geven.

'Ik ben de koning van de gekken, ik ben de koning van het gemis,
Ik ben de koning van de pijn, en ik heb niets meer,
Ik ben de koning van de gekken, ik ben de koning van het land,
Want alleen de koning van de gekken kan dit gekke land besturen ...

Ik ben de koning van de gekken, ik ben de koning van de drugs,
Ik ben de koning van het afscheid, ja, mijn dag kan niet meer stuk,
Ik ben de koning van het huwen, ik ben de koning van het scheiden,
Alleen de dommen volgen mij, maar de wijzen vermijden mij ...'

Dat kan me niet schelen !' schreeuwde Eduard met schuim op zijn mond. 'Het schijnt de enige weg naar het paradijs te zijn. Het is een oorlog.'

'Goed, je hebt de oorlog bar verloren, bar en boos,' zei de stem.

'Ik zal opstaan als de nachtvlinder,' zei Eduard, 'en mijn geliefden vrijzetten.'

'Toe nou, Eduard, nou niet zo hoogmoedig, jongen,' zei de stem. 'Daar zit niemand op te wachten.'

Eduard begon de piano te slopen. En begon wild om zich heen te slaan. Hij werd omsingeld door vlinders, en Marlotte stond ineens voor hem.

'Jij weer,' zei Eduard.

'Drugs is niet goed voor je, Eduard,' zei ze.

'Waarom gaf je me het dan ?' vroeg Eduard.

'Ik kon het geld goed gebruiken,' zei Marlotte. 'Ik heb er goede kinderen van gekocht.'

Er was glas tussen Marlotte en Eduard. Drie kinderen verschenen aan de kant van Marlotte. 'Dit zijn je kinderen,' zei ze.

'Ik wil ze niet zien,' zei Eduard.

'Ze hebben je nodig,' zei ze.

'Het zijn mijn kinderen niet. Je hebt ze gewoon met mijn geld gekocht, dat is alles,' zei Eduard.

'Toe, Eduard,' zei ze bijna smekend. 'Ik wil niet ontkennen dat ik in het verleden hele verkeerde dingen heb gedaan, maar we moeten maken wat er van te maken is. De kinderen hebben je nodig. We kunnen die situatie niet ontkennen. Zij kunnen daar verder niets aan doen.'

'Je hebt gelijk,' zei Eduard, 'maar het zijn mijn kinderen niet.'

'Adopteer ze dan, als je me niet geloofd,' zei Marlotte.

'Nee, ik heb helemaal niks met je te maken,' zei Eduard.

'Ik ben in je bloed,' zei Marlotte. 'Ik ben je drugs. Helemaal fout wat ik heb gedaan, maar ik kan er niet uit. Ik zit in je genetisch materiaal.'

'Ik wil dat je weggaat, Marlotte,' zei Eduard. 'Ik wil je niet. Ik heb dit nooit gewild. Je hebt gewoon misbruik gemaakt van mijn situatie. In een zwak moment kocht ik die drugs van je ... en ja, in een zwak moment ... kocht ik je.'

'Precies, en hier zijn je kinderen,' zei Marlotte. 'Reken ze het niet aan.'

'Het lot bracht ons tezamen,' zei Eduard. 'Maar je hebt mij te lang genegeerd. Het roept herinneringen op.'

'Vergeef me, Eduard,' zei Marlotte.

'Hoe vaak heb ik jou wel niet om vergeving gevraagd, en je hebt het me nooit gegeven, en dat terwijl ik je nooit iets heb aangedaan. Ik ben altijd goed voor je geweest,' zei Eduard.

'Ik kan niet met mijn kinderen leven,' zei Marlotte.

'Het zijn de vruchten van jouw zonden,' zei Eduard.

'Maar als jij me helpt, zijn het de vruchten van vergeving en vernieuwing,' zei Marlotte.

'Barst,' zei Eduard.

Marlotte begon te huilen. 'De kinderen hebben een gezonde vader en moeder nodig.'

'Al wat jij doet is drama maken,' zei Eduard. 'Word je nou nooit eens moe van jezelf ? Je hebt mij kapot gemaakt met die drugs.'

'Die drugs zat in mij. Mijn vader heeft ....' snikte Marlotte.

'Ja, ja, ja, houd daar nu maar over op, dat heb ik al zo vaak gehoord,' zei Eduard.

'Je moet eens weten hoeveel drugs hij in mij heeft gepompt,' snikte ze. 'Ik ben zelf drugs nu.'

Eduard nam een likje aan haar. 'Gadverredamme, dat is toch walgelijk,' schreeuwde hij.

'Ik kan er niets aan doen,' huilde ze nog harder.

'Je bent gewoon een drugs-hoer,' zei Eduard.

'Heb medelijden met me,' jankte ze.

'Waarom zou ik ?' schreeuwde Eduard. 'Heb jij ooit medelijden met mij gehad ?'

'Pappa, alsjeblieft, ik smeek je,' zei het middelste kind.

'Ik heb jullie nooit gezien,' zei Eduard. 'Het doet pijn jullie nu te zien.'

Het kind gaf hem een klein computertje. 'Hier pappa, hiermee kunnen we contact hebben met elkaar.' Toen vaagde alles weg. Hij zat achter zijn computer. Hij zag Marlotte op het scherm, en zijn kinderen. Het was een fantastische wereld in de computer, en hij stapte naar binnen. Ze namen hem bij de hand en namen hem naar een huisje. Alles was zo anders nu.

Arnold Lovehold was een computer expert, en hij zorgde ervoor dat de familie banden weer zorgvuldig werden samengesmeed. De zee-vlinder was inmiddels vrijgekomen uit de zee-kokon. Arnold Lovehold was een diepzinnige man, een filosoof, maar tegelijkertijd heel practisch. Met technologie wist hij alles voor elkaar te krijgen. De familie was voor een lange dag op het strand. De zee kolkte, en het zand was warm. Thuisgekomen ging Eduard op het bed liggen. Het was alsof het altijd zo was geweest, alsof er nooit iets was gebeurd. De familie leefde in vrede.

Troon der Lelies

En ik liep bijna dronken naar de brug. Ik had een oorlogs-trauma in mijn hoofd. Aan de overkant van de rivier waren lelies. Ook was er een stad van lelies. Ik liep langs de grachten.

Een vrouw met een wit en zachtgele hoed keek naar me. Ze had ook een zacht gele, witte jurk. Ze zeiden dat zij de vrouw der lelies was. Zonder adem keek ik naar haar. Haar hand was bedekt met Belgisch kant. Ze wees naar mij, en toen naar een huis. Ze wenkte mij om met haar mee te komen. Dronken liep ik achter haar aan. Ik had niets gedronken, maar ik was dronken van het oorlogs-trauma.

We moesten een trap op, en gingen in rieten stoelen zitten. Ze glimlachte naar mij, maar ik kon haar ogen nauwelijks zien vanwege de sluier van haar hoed.

We dronken wat, en zij vertelde haar verhaal, het verhaal over de stad. Hier had ze altijd gewoond, maar een oorlog had alles verscheurd, al haar herinneringen. Zij had ook een oorlogs-trauma … Terwijl ze vertelde keek ik uit het raam, waar ik de lelies zag in de vijver en in de gracht, en het was alsof ze mijn naam uitspraken. Zij tikten op de ramen.

De lelies hadden alles zien gebeuren. Zij waren de veroorzakers van de oorlog. Haar herinneringen waren van elkaar getrokken. Ze haperden, zoals de mijne. Het waren allemaal fragmenten in onze hoofden. Ik moest ze zien te rangschikken, maar de lelies trokken ons uit elkaar. Later scheen ze er niet eens te wonen. Ik was te dronken. Ik liep langs de lelies, een pad maakte ik door hen. Ik had mijn zwaard, mijn mes en mijn speer, en zoveel pijlen op mijn boog. Eén pijl had een touw. Ik kon op het kasteel komen. Zo kwam ik dichtbij haar ramen. Dus hier woonde zij. Zij had deze illusies en weerspiegelingen op mij afgezonden. Ik klom door een raam, en zag haar daar zitten. Met haar witte, zachtgele taartjes, als mokka taartjes. Ze at, en sprak, maar ik wist niet tegen wie. Misschien wel tegen mij, maar zij zag me niet. Of ze zag me wel, maar deed alsof ze mij niet zag.

Ik moest mijn herinneringen op orde zien te krijgen. Ik stapte op haar af. Zij stond op, en schudde mij de hand. Ze glimlachte. 'Eindelijk ben je gekomen. Zoveel hopen van dromen.'

Ik keek verlegen naar beneden.

Ze liet mij de stad zien. We gingen langs alle lelies. Ook liet ze mij de valleien zien, waar de lelies weelderig groeiden.

Ik bracht de lelie tot haar. Ze zat op een troon.

Laura

de Indiaanse

Ze ging met rode bloemen over de huid van haar prooi. Toen wierp ze de prooi tussen de bruine bloemen. De bruine bloemen deden haar altijd zingen.

Ze kookte haar prooi op, en toen was de dag alweer om. Haar tent is wild, gemaakt van bizonvellen, zoals haar hart is. Haar tent is groot en harig, zoals haar hart is. Zij is de meesteres van de wildernis.

Wanneer zij haarzelf omdraait, jaagt zij. De prooi is op zijn hoede wanneer zij haar rug naar hen toekeert.

Diep in de wildernis woont zij. Diep in de wildernis troont zij. Er waren wat dingen die alleen zij kon weghalen. Daarom bezocht ik haar. Zij schreeuwde hard. Ik moest altijd op mijn hoede zijn. Ze liet rode bloemen over mijn huid heenglijden, en duwde mij vaak in de bruine bloemen. Grote bruine bloemenvelden liet ze mij zien, en daarachter was de hei.

Ze kon het mij niet uitleggen wat de hei was. Ze wilde daar eigenlijk niet komen, maar ik hielp haar daar. Toen wilde ze er zelfs wonen, maar eerst gebruikte ze het als jachtterrein. Ze had dikke, forse heupen. Ik bevroor altijd als ik haar zag. Ik kon haar niet de baas. Als ze haar dikke, forse heupen draaide was ik verloren.

Nog vaak ging ik terug naar Laura de indiaanse, want er waren dingen in mijn leven die alleen zij kon weghalen, dingen die alleen zij de baas kon zijn. Maar ik zocht haar steeds minder op, omdat het leven mij opslokte. Altijd was ik druk. De rook van de stad hield mij tegen, had mij gevangen. Ook was ik een beetje bang voor Laura de indiaanse. Er was niemand zoals zij.

Nooit begreep ik waarom ze mijn huid bestreelde met rode bloemen. Het bleek een ritueel te zijn. Nooit begreep ik waarom ze me altijd duwde in de velden van bruine bloemen. De bruine bloemen deden haar zingen zodra ze ze zag.

Glorieus was haar speer, genadeloos haar mes. Op een dag bezocht ze de stad waarin ik was opgesloten, helemaal tot achter het rookgordijn. Ze liet mij daar de rode en bruine bloemen zien, en ik huilde. Ik miste hen. Zij was de natuur voor mij, de wildernis. Ze had mij veel geleerd. Ze zei dat ze nu op de hei woonde, en dat ze dat aan mij te danken had. Ik keek haar aan met grote ogen. Ze zei dat ik speciaal voor haar was, en wilde me weer meenemen. Ze wilde mij voor altijd vasthouden. Maar in paniek rende ik weg, en nooit heb ik haar teruggezien.

Nu slijten mijn dagen met gemengde gevoelens, wanneer ik denk aan Laura de indiaanse. Wilde dromen heb ik over haar, zoals haar hart wild was. Ik weet niet waar ze is, en ik durf niet op zoek te gaan. Misschien woont ze nog steeds op de heide. Ze vertelde me dat ze daar een huisje had, een hutje, of een tent. Ze deed er niet duidelijk over. Ze was altijd een beetje vaag, en het is nog maar vaag in mijn herinneringen. Toch wil ik haar niet verloren doen gaan in mijn herinneringen. Ik heb het gevoel dat ze belangrijk is, en dat ik haar nodig heb.

Elke avond brand ik een kaarsje voor haar, voor Laura de indiaanse. De dromen worden steeds wilder. Het is alsof ik bij haar hoor, en zij bij mij. Maar haar bezoeken durf ik niet. Ik zou op zoektocht kunnen gaan, maar de heide is groot, te groot. En misschien is ze daar allang weer vertrokken, want dit alles was lang geleden. Het lijkt wel alsof de herinneringen

veranderen, alsof de tijd stilstaat. Ik bevries wanneer ik aan haar denk, maar wordt dan weer heel warm, en bang. Het is een vreemde mengeling van gevoelens en emoties, en vreemde gedachtes. Ik voel me dan heel extreem. De dromen beginnen me zelfs overdag te beheersen. Ik krijg haar niet meer uit mijn gedachtes weg lijkt het wel. Ik denk dat ik verliefd ben, op Laura de Indiaanse. We hadden het zo goed samen, en nu is alles weg. Ik kan alleen maar dromen.

Oh Laura de Indiaanse, wat is er toch van ons geworden,

We hadden het zo goed samen,

En je had zulke vreemde rituelen,

En dat past wel een beetje in mijn vreemde gedachtes,

Ik denk vaak aan je, en voel je altijd bij me,

Eigenlijk wordt het alleen maar sterker,

Blijf bij me, of kom weer terug,

Of is deze veranderende herinnering genoeg ?

Ik heb het gevoel dat je me nog steeds in de bruine bloemenvelden duwt,

Alsof ik wegzak in een diepe put,

Ik kan je niet bereiken, en weet ook niet of ik je wel wil bereiken,

Ik voel me zo gespleten,

Ik bekijk alles maar op een afstand,

Veilig achter de schermen van mijn herinneringen,

Maar het lijkt alsof je er doorheen breekt,

Op je hoge paard,

Je roept me, ik volg je,

Ja, ik hoor bij jou, maar de stad trekt me altijd weer weg

Voor het donker moeten we thuis zijn,

En dan krijgen we brood met melk,

Oh, Laura de Indiaanse,

Bij jou wil ik zijn.

De Heks

van de Gele Bloemen

Het lijkt erop alsof er een beest over de wolkenkrabber is gekropen. Helemaal eroverheen. En nu hangt hij daar. Eerst zag ik hem erop staan, met een vlag.

Het lijkt alsof we dit beest geen tweede kans hebben gegeven. Werd neergeschoten, en nu hangt het daar, als tussen twee rotsen in. Het water stijgt, dat is een feit.

Het lijkt erop dat de treinen vandaag sneller rijden. Hebben ze haast, of wat is dit ?

De bomen lijken hier hoog, en twee meter er tussenin. Het is goed uitgemeten. Ik rijdt op mijn fiets, en de lucht is bijna rood, alsof de moederschoot zich opent.

De struiken ruiken hier goed. Bessen hangen eraan in bosjes. Het druipt, ik heb er een goed gevoel over. En dan bessen in de koffie, bijna als vla. Miep hangt erbij als bessen, als bruisende chocola. Maar haar naam is niet Miep. Ik noem haar maar even Miep, omdat ik haar naam niet wil zeggen.

Het is nu zondag, en koud. De wind giert, maar toch zoveel warmte. Het is een gemengd gevoel en een hele afstand. Door dag en dauw stap ik. Allemaal kolen opgehoopt hier, zomaar in het bos, achterin het bos, over het spoor heen, waar ze vuilnis verbranden. Het ruikt hier lekker, maar waar ben ik ? Wie ben ik ? Alles lijkt oranje hier, uitgestrekte zandvlaktes en dor lijkende wildernissen. Maar van een vruchtbare dorheid, een andere dorheid. Het is brak land, maar dan in positieve zin. Het is een mooie mengeling van zoet en bitter, zoutig en smeuig. Ik ben verliefd. Waarop weet ik niet, maar op deze natuur lijkt het.

Ik zal hier wel altijd willen blijven. Het is hier zo rustig, en ik heb het hier niet benauwd. De stadse rook kan me hier niet raken. Ik ben ontsnapt, door de wildernis heen, tot achter het spoor. Geen trein die me hier nog kan oppikken. De nazi's zijn ver weg.

Ik stap door, met geborrel op de achtergrond. Iemand is thee aan het maken. Oma is aan het borduren, en ook de oude tante. Zij zijn zussen. Ze zijn in mijn gedachtes. Nog steeds zijn zij daar. Zijn zij aan de overkant, of zijn zij hier ? Of is het maar de echo van het verleden. Hier staken alle gedachtes. Romig goud staart mij hier aan. En dan laat ook het goud los, het hele verleden, en wordt ik meegesleurd in de draaipoel van de wildernis, een draaikolk van struiken, als een wervelwind. Waar brengt het mij naartoe ? Ik heb dit vaker gezien.

Ik heb hier van gedroomd, en nu is het hier. Ik ben over het grijze en grauwe heen. Alles is hier bruin. Bruine bessen liggen mij het meest, als koffiebonen. De thee van het verleden kan mij niet meer meetrekken.

De wolkenkrabbers zijn hoog. Ook hier. Ik beklim ze, met mijn beitel. De muren zijn zacht. Ik kan alles erin graveren wat ik wil. Dan gooi ik mijn anker naar de maan, en trek me eraan op. Zo kom ik hoger en hoger, van planeet tot planeet, tot de rivier van melk. Bruisende melk is mijn vriend. Mijn shirt is nat. Dan zwem ik.

Ik kan over het ravijn kijken, en slinger aan een waslijn om erover heen te komen. Zoveel stemmen hoor ik daar. Waar ze over praten kan ik niet verstaan. Het is in een andere taal. Ik krijg hier een nieuw huis, een huis vol met schilderijen. Ik staar er vaak naar. De schilderijen vertellen verhalen. Ik droom er ook van.

De narcis groeit uit de put. Het maakt een brug over de zee. Gele bloemen groeien laangs de kant van de stad, als een stadsmuur. Iedereen die daar gaat wordt verward. Zij vallen in slaap en dromen vreemde dromen. Geen leger komt door de gele bloemenhaag. Allen zullen zij slapen.

De heks neemt hen mee tot een vreemd leger. Het leger van de heks zullen zij zijn.

De heks van de gele bloemen, zo noemen ze haar. Zij heeft klokken door haar hele kasteel. Zij bespeelt de viool, en maalt de molen. Zij bakt het brood, bloemenbrood, waar zij allen van slapen.

In het zwart gaat zij, in de gele nacht, zo wit. En zoveel monikken met kappen volgen haar, met langzame pas door de bloemenvelden. Deze bloemen worden wit in de nacht.

De heks van de gele bloemen, met zoveel honden jaagt zij. In de nacht is zij één en al pracht, een barbaarse strijdster is zij.

De heks van de gele bloemen, eens zag ik haar.

Ik werd getroffen als door bliksem, en toen viel ik in slaap.

Toen ik wakker werd zat ik op haar schoot.

Ik was heel klein toen.

Als kind stuurde ze me naar school.

De heks van de gele bloemen,

Zo vriendelijk was zij,

We dronken altijd samen thee,

En zij deed mijn huiswerk,

De heks van de gele bloemen,

Zij is een tunnel naar de onderwereld

Eens zag ik haar op haar paard, en ik volgde haar,
Zij leerde me de geheimen van de bossen en de wildernissen,
De heks van de gele bloemen, zij gaf mij een plaats.

Ik kon alles met haar doen, niets was haar te gek,
Ze stond altijd voor me klaar,
En ik mocht vechten in haar leger,
Om tot de mysterieen te gaan.

Een groot tovenares is zij,
Zij kent de wetten van de eeuwigheid.
Zij genas mijn hart en mijn herinneringen,
De puzzel in mij maakte zij.

Op het gele paard reed ik, achter haar aan,
Wit wordende in de nacht,
Zo viel ik in slaap, om tot een dromenwereld te komen,
Tot de heks van de gele bloemen,
Zij roept mijn naam.

De heks van de gele bloemen,
Ik kan altijd alles met haar doen,
Niets was haar te dol, en ze was nooit moe,

Maar eens zag ik haar slapen …

Ik liep naar haar toe,
Ik had thee voor haar gemaakt,
Ik bracht haar ontbijt op bed,
Met een gekookt eitje,
En ineens was er allemaal gejoel,
Zoveel indianen kwamen uit de kasten,
De heks van de gele bloemen,
Ja, het is echt waar.

Zij leerde mij de gnosis,
Zij leerde mij lezen en vele talen,
Zij leerde mij schrijven en de schoonste kunsten,
Zij leerde mij strijden,
De heks van de gele bloemen

Over zee ging ik met haar,
Zij liet mij de wijde wereld zien,
In haar heb ik een vriend,
In haar heb ik alles gezien,
De heks van de gele bloemen.

Over het ravijn bracht zij mij,
Tot de dieptes van een woud,

Waar het altijd regent,

Altijd tropisch is,

En nooit is het koud,

De heks van de gele bloemen.

En wij drinken samen gele bloementhee,

Zij is de put naar de onderwereld,

Zij neemt mij altijd mee,

Op haar reizen benee.

En wat als we nu dieper gaan,

Tot de eeuwige wildernissen,

Zij roept mij bij mijn naam.

Dieper, ja dieper,

Steeds dieper,

Tot een kroning,

De gele kroon,

Een bloemen-woning,

Van hieruit kan ik alles zien,

Ik bewonder het zo,

De heks van de gele bloemen.

Nu maak ik mijn reizen in een boot, over de rivieren waarin langs de kanten de gele bloemen groeien. Zij houden mij dromerig, zij houden mij in slaap, in diepe slaap. Zij geven mij sap te drinken, en gele bloemen-thee.

De gele bloemen vertellen verhalen, verhalen wonderschoon.

En zij leiden tot een wonderlijke tuin, een lusthof. Wonderlijke vruchten groeien hier.

In de straten van Haarlem ontwaak ik,

Meisjes met witte bloemen in hun haar,

En witte kanten jurkjes,

Het is bloemenfeest vandaag,

Zij heeft een witte hoed,

Ik kan haar gezicht net niet zien,

Alleen haar glimlach

Dan neemt zij mij mee naar het tuinfeest,

Waar ze rijdt op één of ander beest,

En ik blijf zeggen : 'Ik ben er nooit geweest.'

De Ring van
de Leprechaun

Hoofdstuk 1. De Troon van de Leprechaun

Sonja en Eduard woonden op Flierefluit 16. Hun huis was als een koeienstal, maar wel vol met protserige spulletjes. Er werd in dit huis echt geleefd. Sonja woonde eerst op de Gregorius Laan, maar was later bij Eduard ingetrokken. Ze had een kat genaamd Darmia. Ook had ze een paar parkieten, en zelfs een vleermuis. Rekel heette die. Ze sprak vaak tot Rekel,

maar Rekel zei nooit wat terug. Eduard had een oom die vaak langskwam, oom Klaas. Ze konden het erg goed met elkaar vinden.

Er was niet veel met Eduard te beginnen. Hij was nogal koppig en eigenwijs. Hij had een hele andere kijk op het leven dan anderen. Nee, Eduard was nooit voor een karretje te spannen. Sonja was een heel gelovig mens, en ook nogal goedgelovig, en dat botste nog weleens met Eduard, want Eduard trapte nergens in. Eduard was meer paranoide, heel erg achterdochtig, en daardoor zakelijk. Toegeven deed hij overigens nauwelijks. Sonja hield erg veel van hem, want volgens haar was hij toch een hele warme man. Hij had zijn eigen wereld gecreeerd, en was hierin een gulle gever, erg hartelijk, open en gastvrij, erg mededeelzaam, maar wel verschrikkelijk manipulerend. Het is voor het goede doel, dacht Sonja altijd bij zichzelf. Ze begreep hem wel. Hij was verschrikkelijk perfectionistisch en net, maar sinds Sonja er was, was het huis een zwijnenstal, alhoewel het volstond met kostbare dingen. Hun huis was dan ook echt een hele belevenis.

Sonja stond in de keuken ham te snijden, en daarna kaas, voor de tosti's. Eduard was boven aan het werk. Plotseling werd er gebeld. Het was een dikke man met een bolhoed op. Hij was niet echt dik, maar meer gezet, maar door zijn dikke jas leek het erg dik. 'Wat zullen we nou krijgen,' zei Sonja, toen de man haar een folder aanreikte. 'Hier, voor jou,' zei hij met een hoge stem.

'Wat is dat dan ?' vroeg Sonja. 'Bent u een Jehovah's getuige ?'

'Nee, veel erger, veel erger,' lachte de man.

'Oh, ik zie het al,' zei Sonja, 'u bent van die nieuwe zaak aan de overkant ?'

Er stonden wat religieuze plaatjes op de folder, en wat plaatjes van sprookjesachtige figuren.

'Kom,' zei de man, 'je weet wie ik ben. Ik ben de nieuwe buurman.'

'Ja, maar wat is dit ?' vroeg Sonja.

'Lees het gewoon even door, lieve schat,' zei de man.

'Ik ben uw lieve schat niet,' zei Sonja gewiekst. 'En u hoeft me ook niets aan te smeren. Ik ben nu met Eduard, en hij leert mij om voorzichtig te zijn met mensen die dingen aanreiken aan de deur.'

'Maar ik ben je buurman, honey,' zei de man.

'Dat kan wel wezen,' zei Sonja, 'maar Eduard wil dat ik minder naief ben.'

'Zo, zo,' zei de man, 'je zit aardig bij Eduard onder de plak.'

'Het is voor de veiligheid,' zei Sonja.

'Ha, buurman,' zei Eduard, die net naar beneden kwam lopen.

'Voor de veiligheid hoef je het echt niet te doen,' zei de man. 'Ik ben de veiligheid zelve.'

'Kom binnen, buurman,' zei Eduard. Het bleek dat Eduard de nieuwe buren al had gesproken. Ze hadden een heleboel kinderen, en die kwamen al snel dagelijks bij hen over de vloer. Voor kinderen was het huis van Eduard en Sonja een hele belevenis, heel mysterieus ook met al die bijzondere dingen. En rommel maken viel hier echt niet op. Voor kinderen was het een paradijs.

Sonja bleek de folder helemaal vergeten te zijn. De man bleek heel aardig te zijn, en zijn familie ook. Rita was een zakenvrouw. Ze hadden ook een papegaai in huis. Eduard begon een beetje ellende te ruiken. Het was nu altijd zo druk in huis, dus hij ging er vaak vandoor.

Op een dag had Eduard een nieuwe vriendin. Sonja was ontroostbaar, maar ze mocht zijn huis houden. Eduard zou bij zijn nieuwe vriendin intrekken, die extreem netjes was. Ze moest ook niet zoveel van drukte hebben, en leefde een afgezonderd leven. Ze was een soort moderne kluizenaar. Eduard en Sonja bleven nog wel contact houden, en dat maakte het voor hen wat makkelijker om het te verwerken. Ook voor Eduard was het moeilijk de keuze te maken bij haar weg te gaan. Gelukkig hadden ze geen kinderen, maar de kinderen van de buren begonnen Eduard erg te missen, omdat hij toch wel een wonderbaarlijk persoon was. Ze mochten weleens bij hem logeren, en dan ging zijn nieuwe vriendin het huis uit, want die kon absoluut niet tegen kinderen.

Eduard voelde zich als een koning. De kinderen aanbaden hem bijna. Op een dag kwam zijn oude buurman langs, en reikte hem de folder aan. Oh ja, die folder. Die had hij nog nooit gelezen, maar die lag ook nog steeds bij Sonja ergens.

'Wat is het, buurman ?' vroeg Eduard. Er stonden religieuze plaatjes op en plaatjes van feeen. Maar ze raakten in gesprek over hele andere dingen, dus Eduard legde de folder opzij. 'Ik geloof niet zo in religie en sprookjes,' zei Eduard. Eduard had zijn eigen wereld, alles anders dan anderen. Eduard was een tamelijk uniek persoon. Bijna tot het punt dat er geen herkenning was. Eduard was bijna van een andere wereld. Hij wilde de folder eigenlijk niet lezen. Zijn haar was netjes gekamt, en hij had een stropdas. De buurman schoot bleek. 'Ik moet gaan,' zei de buurman, en vertrok.

Eduard vroeg zich af waarom de buurman zich zo vreemd gedroeg opeens. Even later kreeg hij een telefoontje dat de buurman een hart-aanval had gehad, en hij was inmiddels overleden. Eduard schrok, en greep het foldertje. Toen legde hij het foldertje weer weg, en belde Sonja. Sonja was erg in paniek, en wilde in het bos wonen.

Een paar weken later verhuisde Sonja naar een boshuisje. Ze kwam hier helemaal tot rust. Soms logeerden de kinderen van de oude buren nog weleens bij haar, maar het werd minder en minder. Sonja wist dat ze zich niet meer teveel aan mensen moest hechten, want dat deed teveel pijn.

Eduard zocht haar vaak op. Ze deden veel samen, en gingen samen op vakantie. Er leek weer een nieuwe liefde te ontpoppen tussen Eduard en Sonja. Maar ze besloten gewoon goede vrienden te blijven. De relatie tussen Eduard en zijn nieuwe vriendin was inmiddels op de klippen gelopen. Eduard en Sonja gingen vaak bramen plukken. Er groeiden veel bramenstruiken achter het huis van Sonja. Eduard hield ervan om in de tuin te werken, en begon allerlei soorten groenten, kruiden en vruchten te verbouwen. De bramenstruiken groeien wild door, om het hele huis heen. Het geeft hen een gevoel van veiligheid. Het wordt

voor Eduard steeds moeilijker om het huis van Sonja te bereiken. Daarom besluit hij bij haar in te komen wonen. Ze raken steeds meer en meer geisoleerd van de buitenwereld.

Middenin de nacht klopt er een man op hun deur. De man draagt een wapenrusting, en heeft een helm op. Hij zoekt onderdak. Hij zegt dat hij op de vlucht is. Ze laten hem binnen en even later zitten ze om de tafel. De man is op de vlucht voor het leger, en beweert van een andere planeet te zijn. Plotseling zijn er allemaal lichten rondom het huis. Wapens verschijnen voor de ramen, en Sonja en Eduard raken in paniek. De man staat rustig op, en zegt dat het zijn vrienden zijn. Even later zijn er nog veel meer mannen binnen. Ze zien er inderdaad uit alsof ze van een andere planeet zijn, maar tegelijkertijd zijn ze zo menselijk. De man legt een boek op de tafel, en zegt : 'Dit boek zal jullie aarde veroveren.' Het boek heeft een zwarte kaft, maar er staan geen letters op. Dan gaan de mannen weer weg.

Eduard en Sonja durven het boek niet open te doen, en leggen het in een doos onder de kast. De dag erna is de man weer terug, en zo komt hij elke nacht even langs. Op een nacht leest hij hen voor out het zwarte boek. Op de eerste bladzijde staat de titel geschreven : Plan Voor Hen Die Echt Rijk Zijn. Dit gaat dan niet om de rijkdom van geld, maar om de rijkdom van het weten. Het gaat over mensen die weten wat er gaande is, die weten welke machten achter het wereldgebeuren schuilen. Het boek vertelt dat de wereld wordt beheerst door leprechaunen, plaaggeesten van geld, maar dat er een oorlog zal zijn tussen de leprechaunen en de trollen, en dat de trollen zullen winnen. Die trollen komen uit de dieptes van Orion, terwijl de leprechaunen alleen maar op de oppervlaktes leven. Sonja krijgt even de rillingen.

Het zou om een groot kaartspel gaan. De leprechauns met hun kaartendekken tegen de trollen met hun kaartendekken. Zo zouden er goede trollen zijn, en slechte trollen, maar de goede trollen zouden winnen. Daarom was de man naar de aarde gekomen, om de aarde voor te bereiden op die strijd, en om de aarde er goed doorheen te helpen. De man vocht mee aan de zijde van de goede trollen. Hij zei dat het leger in handen was van de leprechauns en de slechte trollen.

De man liet wat kaarten zien in het boek. Die kaarten waren belangrijk in de strijd. Ook liet hij de kaarten zien van de tegenstander, zoals de Leprechaunse Slang. 'Ik ben een wapen,' sprak de kaart, 'uitgezonden om de liefde en de zorg te doven. En dit allemaal om het medische machts-systeem te laten heersen.' Om tegen deze kaart bestand te zijn, moesten er twee kaarten getrokken worden : De Trolse Kabouter en de Trolse Vos. Snel sloeg de man het boek dicht. 'Ik voel het spoken,' zei hij. 'De oorlog is in volle gang.'

'Hoe kunnen we hiertegen bestand zijn ?' vroegen Sonja en Eduard.

'Door mee te delen in het kaartspel,' zei de man.

Ze kregen een helm op, met een vizier, waardoor ze leprechauns konden neerschieten. Ze waren al een deel van de oorlog. De man zei dat herdershonden gematerialiseerde leprechauns waren die een scherp alarm systeem vormden voor het leger op aarde, om alles te beheersen. Het was een gevangenis. De man zei dat op zijn planeet hele andere soorten herdershonden waren die hen zouden helpen in de strijd tegen de leprechauns. Dat waren hemelse herdershonden aan de zijde van de goede trollen. Een paar dagen erna nam hij wat van die herdershonden mee. Zo waren er goede herdershonden en valse herdershonden. Met hun vizier konden ze ook die valse herdershonden uitschakelen, die dus gematerialiseerde leprechauns waren die de aarde gevangen hielden. De man zei dat hij gestuurd was om die

valse herdershonden spuitjes te geven, voornamelijk hun leiders, de alfa's. Dit zou een belangrijk onderdeel van de oorlog zijn, een beroemde sleutel alreeds op de planeet waar hij vandaan kwam. Het vizier maakte heel goed onderscheid tussen valse herdershonden en goede herdershonden. De valsen werden blauw op het scherm, en de goeden werden rood. Ook begonnen de blauwen erg te knipperen, terwijl de roden stabiel werden. De valse herdershonden tapten energie van een vreemde zon, de zon der wespen, waar reuzen woonden met hele kleine hoofdjes, piepklein. De oorlog was eigenlijk om de wespenzon. Degene die de wespenzon in handen zou krijgen, zou de oorlog winnen. De man vertelde dat hij de hele grote en gevaarlijke gallactische wespenzee moest overzwemmen om tot de aarde te komen. De man zei ook dat de aarde gered zou worden, als de zon der wespen in Orion zou verschijnen. Het werd ook wel de zon der gekken genoemd.

De man zei dat de hyena's van Orion de sleutel waren om de wespenzon onder controlle te krijgen, en dat de gnoes van Orion de sleutel waren om de valse herdershonden onder controle te krijgen. Hierdoor zouden de valse herdershonden in gnoes veranderen, als voer voor de hyena's van Orion. De wespenbrug was een belangrijke verbinding hier tussen. Hierover was in het boek geschreven. Ook waren er plaatjes van te zien.

Hoofdstuk 2. De Wortelboom

De wortelboom werd bewaakt door een lange slang. Niemand mocht van die boom eten. De wortels waren hemels, en niet bestemd voor mensen. Alleen de goden konden er van eten. Kinderen ook. De slang bewaarde een eeuwenoude schat : een naakte vrouw. Zij was in deze boom opgesloten. De wortels waren haar vruchten, en brachten dromen en visioenen. Er was ook een andere wortelboom waar men wel van mocht eten, maar deze wortels brachten de dood voort. En in de woestijn verscheen een regenboog, en kinderen hadden een regenboog om hun hoofd. En ze kwamen tot het kasteel van fantasie.

Eduard en Sonja besluiten detective te worden over wat er eigenlijk aan de hand is in het heelal. In deze speurtocht ontmoeten zij Filip, een man met eigenaardige uitvindingen.

Ze vroegen hem of hij afwist van het zwarte boek. Hij kende het niet, maar toen ze hem de verhalen erin vertelden, scheen hij daar veel van af te weten. 'Oh ja,' zei hij. 'Ik kan het heelal aardig traceren met mijn apparatuur. Ik weet precies wat zich daar afspeelt. Die leprechauns bijvoorbeeld, die gematerialiseerde herdershonden, die hebben bazen. Dat zijn de pitbulls. Zij komen van een planeet ver weg waar zij leven met hun stropdassen. Pitbulls met kleren. Zij vergaderen daar. Zij beheersen de aarde.'

Filip had met zijn decodeer-apparatuur ontdekt dat het heelal was onderverdeeld in stierengevecht-velden, die beheerst werden door matador-pitbulls, een hoge vorm van leprechauns, de leidinggevenden. En deze afschuwelijke wezens werden bestuurd door nog afschuwelijkere wezens : tandartsen. Filip zei dat hij een medicijn had ontwikkeld tegen tandartsen. Hij leidde Sonja en Eduard naar een kamer waar ze op een lange stoel moesten liggen. Sonja en Eduard moesten volgens hem bevrijd worden van zware tandarts-straling. Hij activeerde zijn aparatuur, en verbond Sonja en Eduard met de aparatuur door vreemde draden. De aparatuur begon allerlei signalen te geven.

Het duurde niet zo lang. Tien minuten. En toen leidde Filip hen naar een bovenverdieping waar ze thee met gebak kregen, en daarna koffie. Filip was een aardige man, die overal veel vanaf wist te weten. Ze hadden lange gesprekken over allerlei zaken. Filip was een man die

nooit opgaf, en altijd doorpuzzelde. Hij scheen een heel team te hebben van mensen die altijd weer dingen aan het uitbouwen waren, en nieuwe uitvindingen uitvoerden.

Snelheids

Duivel

Ze zaten hand in hand. Ze wilden elkaar niet verliezen. Ze waren bang, omdat zoveel relaties om hen heen stukliepen. 'Blijf alsjeblieft altijd eerlijk tegen me,' zei ze tegen hem. 'Praat alles met me uit.' Hij knikte. 'Natuurlijk schatje.'

'Ik heb zo vreemd gedroomd vannacht,' zei ze zachtjes. 'Waarover dan ?' vroeg hij.
'Over voeten,' zij ze.
'Voeten ?' vroeg hij. 'Wat deden die voeten dan ?'
'Ze speelden,' zei ze, 'en ze deden alsof ze machtig waren.'
Plotseling kreeg hij stuiptrekkingen, en viel op de grond. Er was schuim op zijn mond. Even later zat hij weer naast haar op de bank. Ze zei niets. 'Ga verder,' zei hij. 'Waar heb je nog meer over gedroomd ?' Maar het was alsof ze in zichzelf gekeerd was nu. 'Oh, niets,' zei ze. Hij keek haar aan. Haar lippen waren vol. Hij wilde haar kussen, maar het was alsof iets hem tegenhield.

'Het zijn de tuinen,' zei hij.
'Wat bedoel je ?' zei ze bijna fluisterend.
'Nou ....,' zei hij. Maar verder kwam hij niet.

'Ik moet gaan,' zei ze.
'Waarom ?' vroeg hij.
'Ik heb nog wat dingen te doen,' sprak ze, en vertrok.

Die nacht had hij een droom. Over voeten die als dieren waren, en die op jacht gingen. Het was een vreemde droom, en de volgende dag vertelde hij het aan haar. Haar lippen waren vol en een beetje vochtig. Hij wilde haar kussen, maar ze duwde hem van haar af. Ze was een beetje misselijk zei ze. Hij begreep haar niet. Sinds hij die stuiptrekkingen had deed ze ineens zo koud. Ze legde hem uit dat ze zich niet lekker voelde na het vertellen van haar droom,

zoals hij zich ook niet lekker voelde.

'Wat is er dan met ons aan de hand ?' vroeg hij. Toen omhelsde ze hem met haar warme lichaam. 'Alsjeblieft, laat me nooit meer gaan,' zei ze. 'Natuurlijk niet, schatje,' zei hij. Ze drukte wat toetsen in op de telefoon, en belde iemand op. Ze raakte diep in gesprek, alsof ze hem helemaal had vergeten. Hij voelde nog steeds haar warme lichaam tegen zich aan. Toen ze had opgehangen begon ze te huilen. 'Ik voel me niet lekker,' zei ze. Hij nam haar nog dichter tegen zich aan. 'Misschien moet je er gewoon over praten,' zei hij.

'Het zijn de dromen,' zei ze.
'Waar heb je dan over gedroomd ?' vroeg hij.
Ze zei niets.
'Toe, je moet het me vertellen,' zei hij.

'Ik droomde over Klaas,' zei ze. 'Dat hij alleen die rivier overzwom, en verdronk.'
Hij wiegde haar een beetje. Hij nam haar heupen vast. Opeens kreeg hij weer last van stuiptrekkingen, en viel neer. Midden in de nacht werd hij wakker, en ze hing wild over hem. Hij greep haar vast. Ze begon hem te kussen. 'Eindelijk ben je wakker,' zei ze. 'Je bent zo lang bewusteloos geweest. Ik heb je naar je bed getrokken.'

'Je bent sterk,' zei hij.

Ineens staat er een man in de deur-opening. Ze schrikken beiden. De man heeft een zwarte hoed op, en een wit gezicht, met verder een zwart lichaam met zwarte kleding. Maar dan is ook zijn gezicht zwart, en er rollen spinnen uit de pijpen van zijn jas. Een vreemde geur verspreid zich in de kamer. Ze horen geschreeuw. De man begint te lachen. Het is als het gebrul van een leeuw of een tijger.

'Ik ben een gek,' zei de man. 'Ik ben verschrikkelijk gestoord.' De man begint verschrikkelijk te gillen, en dan weer te lachen. Hij begint te bulderen van het lachen, totdat hij vuur spuwt in alle kleuren. 'Ik heb deze dromen gegeven !' schreewde hij. 'Ik ben een engel.' De man in bed krijgt weer stuiptrekkingen, en begint heen en weer te rollen. 'Indiaanse dromen,' zei de man in zwart. 'Ik ben een boodschapper, een shamaan. Ik heb een boodschap voor jullie. Er is iets achter jullie aan, en het zal jullie krijgen ook.' Toen was de man verdwenen.

'Bah,' zei de vrouw. 'Wat is dat ?' Maar de man in bed had nog steeds stuiptrekkingen.

Toen stond er ineens een clown voor hen. Hij had een rode jas aan met wat gele en gouden strepen. 'Kaartje ?' vroeg hij. Hij hield hen een kaartje voor. Nu viel de vrouw ook flauw. Hij nam hen in zijn armen, en begon te groeien, terwijl hij over de straten begon te racen, en in een vreemd vuur alles achter zich liet. Hij was een ware snelheids-duivel.

Het Zwaard van Trol

Kemis, in kleuren en geuren, in het trollenwoud, tot het oerwoud. De geheimen van Kemis, het trollenkind, opgesloten in dozen, kisten van groot geweld. Open het, en sterf. Zij houdt een symbolisch zwaard voor jouw ogen, het draait, het spreekt. Het is het Zwaard van Trol.

Kemis, de sleutel is hier, een trollenkind, tot de poorten van de Leprechaun. Zij houdt een Zwaard voor je, wat spoedig in duisternis zal veranderen. Het zal geabsorbeerd worden door de lucht, en dan zal de hemel harig zijn. De hel zal het vieren.

Kemis, om je vrij te zetten, de boerderij doet haar deuren open. Ren daarom, tot het oerwoud, waar de taal van leprechaun spreekt. Haar lippen zijn groot, een groot geheim. De haaien zijn veranderd in varkens. Nu kan de jacht beginnen. Grijp de dolk van leprechaun.

Kemis, vol van kennis, hebbende de sleutel van de leprechaun gnosis, als een vlam. Zij draagt het in haar hand, en in haar andere hand de trol gnosis.

Zij staat in een geopent raam. Haar hand uitgestoken. Zij heeft een wapenrusting. Zij is klaar voor de jacht. Zij sprak in de duisternis van de leprechaun. De duisternis van de lokogamen is gekomen. Zij is de eerste duisternis.

Kemis, zij houdt de dolk vast, en de boog is op haar rug. Zij wijst op de rivieren. Zij zijn de rivieren van oerwouden. Zij wijst op de lucht, die donker wordt. Er is een haak in de lucht. De Tirkw.

Kemis is een leprechaun. Zij is een lokogaam. Zij spreekt, zij jaagt. Zij staat in het open raam. Zij roept je naam.

Het Labyrint

Hoofdstuk 1.

'Als ik in jouw spiegels kijk, ben ik altijd lelijk,' sprak ze.

'Dat komt...' zei hij aarzelend, 'omdat het de spiegels van de dwergen zijn.... eh... de boze dwergen dan, want de goede dwergen kunnen het niet wezen. Die doen zulke dingen niet.'

'Ja, maar wie leidt hen ?' vroeg ze.

'De heerser waarschijnlijk,' zei hij.

'Wie is de heerser ?' vroeg ze.

'Laat maar,' zei hij. 'We zitten nu eenmaal in dit duistere labyrint. We kunnen er niet uit, en we weten niet veel.'

'Alsjeblieft doe die spiegels dan weg,' zei ze. 'Ik kan er niet meer tegen. Ik vind je prachtig, dus je hoeft niet telkens in de spiegel te kijken of je haar wel goed zit, of dat je neus wel recht staat.'

'Je begrijpt het niet,' zei hij. 'Ik heb die spiegels nodig omdat ....'

Maar toen vielen ze beiden weer in slaap door de zachte winden van het labyrint.

Aan het meer op een klein strandje zat een dwerg op zijn fluit te spelen. Ik haaste me er naartoe. Al snel werd ik overvallen door struiken met scherpe doornen .... bessenstruiken. Daarachter waren de bessenbomen die daar weelderig groeiden. Ik probeerde te ontsnappen, maar kwam niet meer los. Ik werd in het meer getrokken. De bomen groeiden door tot in de

dieptes van het meer. Het meer was langwerpig als een rivier. Ik kon de overkant zien. De dwerg speelde rustig door, en betoverde mij. Ik was nu een gevangene van het labyrint. Ik dwaalde rond over het zand, en zag een stad in de verte. Toen viel ook ik in slaap door de zachte winden van het labyrint.

'Mara, Mara,' zong de geest van het meer, de veerman, of beter gezegd de veerjongen. Ik zat in zijn boot en met zijn lange staf in het water kon hij de boot voortduwen. 'Mijn schreeuw heeft je gevonden,' zei de veerjongen. 'Ik zal je brengen naar de overkant van het meer, naar het paleis van de heerser en de prins.' Maar ik zakte weer weg. Ik werd door de wind opgenomen, en vloog richting het wazige, geestachtige paleis in de verte, als een paleis van mist, vage mist, weerspiegelingen. 'Ja, ja,' hoorde ik de geest roepen. 'Ja, ja, ja,' alsof hij iets probeerde af te zeggen. 'En dan ben ik klaar.' Ik zakte weg, als in een rozentuin. Vreemde bessenbomen, weelderige bessenbomen en struiken hingen over mij. Ze hadden hun doornen verloren. 'Ik breek !' schreeuwde de geest. Er was alsof er iets knapte in mij. Ik steeg op, en verliet de aarde. Ik bevond mij boven een woeste zee. 'Houd moed!' werd er geroepen. Ze probeerden mij op een schip te heisen. Ik zag zeemannen die er lichtelijk als piraten uitzagen, en een kapitein. Ze smeerden mij in met schuim.

'Tegen de draken,' zeiden ze. 'De zeedraken. Ze hadden je. Maar nu hebben wij jou.' Ik waggelde als een beschonkene, alsof ik teveel bier of andere sterke drank had gedronken. Ze wasten me in een teil van sterke drank en bier even later. Het tintelde op mijn lichaam. Mijn huid glanste in de zon. Het was bijna plakkerig, alsof er een olie-laagje op mijn huid zat nu.

De wanen hadden hem in zijn macht. Hij werd wakker met een zoutachtige smaak in zijn mond aan het hete strand. Het was warm en de zwoele zeewind overweldigde hem.

'Dodelijke spiegels zijn het,' werd er gejammerd. Er waren er meer die er onder leden. Boze dwergen hadden die spiegels gesmeed, van zwart goud, behekst. Het was alsof er een holte in was waar je doorheen kon rollen. De heerser had hen waarschijnlijk daartoe geinspireerd of zelfs hen daartoe opdracht gegeven. Waarschijnlijk zou de prins nog daartegen hebben gevochten, maar het mocht niet baten. De heerser had het voor het zeggen.

Het zwarte goud was een edel familie-geschenk, om de banden in stand te houden. Maar waar leidde het hen naartoe ? Naar hel en verdoemenis ... scheen het. Niemand wist wat er mee te beginnen. Alles leek zo hopeloos. Ze waren in de ban van het zwarte goud, wat de toekomst zou kunnen voorspellen. De leugenaar woonde in hen.

Hoofdstuk 2.

Ze zit aan het strand met een klein dwergje. In de verte ziet ze de torens. Ze komen snel voort vanuit de zee, omgeven met een lichte mist. Golven spoelen aan. Ze zoekt naar boodschappen gebracht door pijn. In de pijn ziet ze visioenen. De pijn laat haar wanen. In de pijn hoort ze het gejoel van indianen, als het gejoel van hyena's. Ze gaat languit liggen in het hete zand, en voelt dan zanderige lippen op haar. Ze glijdt weg in de slaap, als een gevangene van het labyrint. Wie heeft dat labryrint gebouwd ?
Ze ziet boten in de verte, die metaal voortbrengen. Maar zij blijft dichtbij de bessen.

Nachtprinses

Ik ben een prins opgesloten door een draak. Niemand weet waar ik ben of waar ik slaap. Ik heb de moed allang opgegeven. Ze zal mij nooit vinden. Ik weet dat ze naar mij zoekt. Ik weet dat ze om me huilt. Niemand kan haar troosten, maar vinden zal ze me niet. Ik ben te diep. Deze draak houdt mij opgesloten, als in een roos, een labyrint. Er is niemand die mij vinden zal. Ik ben opgesloten door een draak. Niemand weet hoe, en niemand weet waar. Ik heb mezelf zovaak bedrogen, maar nu ben ik tot de waarheid gekomen. Ik kom hier nooit meer uit. Ik ben een glijder op de wind, het licht kan mij ergens brengen, als een vriend. Ik kan ook strijden op een wolk, maar mezelf bevrijden kan ik niet. Ik ben het kind van de wind, in duisternis zak ik weg. Ik heb het op mezelf genomen, en ik kan er nooit van weg. Misschien strijd jij nog voor mij. Misschien ben jij nog op zoek naar mij. Ik heb de moed allang opgegeven. Niemand brengt mij tot leven. Niemand die mij vinden kan.

Ik ben een prins opgesloten in dit kasteel. Alles hier is van fluweel. Ik heb mezelf voorgenomen om niet meer zo te dromen. Ik moet tot de feiten komen, dit kasteel is waar ik woon. Dit kasteel is waar ik verblijf, tot in alle eeuwigheid. Ik kom erdoor tot het duister, ik kom er door tot de meren, ik kom er door tot de zachtste veren, tot de allerzachtste kleren. Ik doe nu alles uit, en glijd in dit duistere bad, zo vies en zo vol wildernis, ik glijd tot andere streken. Ik glijd tot de warmte van het bad, ik glijd tot de armen van het bad, ik glijd in de gleuf van de draak, en dan gaat alles spelen. Ik heb geen zin om nog te jammeren, niemand luistert naar mij.

Oh prins, ik ben de nachtprinses. Ik sta voor het raam, en kom binnen als een dief in de nacht, als een nachtmerrie zal ik je ziel stelen. Oh prins, ik ben de nachtfontein, ik ben het nachtlatijn, en niemand kan jou deren. Niemand kan je vereten, niemand kan je stelen. Want ik heb jou, ik bevrijd jou.

Wat, jij bent het trauma, het trauma van de nacht. Hier heb ik zo lang op gewacht, maar je kwam maar niet, ik heb de moed al opgegeven. Ik geloofde niet meer, en had geen hoop, het deed te pijn, dus daarom was ik een ongelovige, maar nu voel ik jouw hand.

Prins, ik ben een heks, een monster, ik zal je wenken, om achter mij aan te komen naar een nieuwe wereld, een nieuwe duisternis, in een bos van vrolijkheid. Ik zal je alles leren, ik zal je alles laten doen, ik zal je overal brengen waar je wilt. Ik ben het nacht-latijn, ik ben de nacht-fontein, staande aan het raam. Als de nachtmerrie zal ik je grijpen, om te verzoenen jou met al mijn haren, om een vuur te brengen in de kou. Ik zal zachtjes tot je zingen, totdat je rustig bent. Ik kom over jou met mijn gewaad, als een warme deken zal ik jou bedekken. Ik heb jou hier bereikt, jouw schuilplaats gevonden. Toe, laat me niet alleen, en laat ons rennen. Grijp me vast, houd me stevig vast, laat me nooit meer los. Ik ben jouw vleugels en genade, de nachtprinses die op jou wacht.

Oh, lieve prinses, ik sta op de trap die brand. Ik ren naar je liefelijk gewaad, jouw glimlach trekt mij aan. Oh, prinses, daar kom ik aan. Ik zie je daar staan. Ik heb engelengeduld met jou, oh lieve vrouw, een mooie nachtmerrie. Ik grijp jouw hand, en pak je vast, en leid jou naar de kamer van de schat. Ik laat het aan jou zien. Je bent verrukt. Oh lieve prinses, hurkende bij de schat, kijkende naar mij, je bent zo blij. Vlinders komen vanuit jouw gewaad, en dan zoveel vliegen en spinnen. Totdat je opstijgt vederlicht, en explodeert in het licht. Ik volg jou, de vuurvlieg, ik vlieg met jou, in de nacht. Er is iemand die jou warmhoudt, dat ben ik. Er zijn hier .... spoken .... zovelen die naar binnen willen. Ik doe de deur voor hen open, de draak smelt weg. De koning smelt weg, terwijl hij vasthoudt zijn koningin. Nu komt de wildernis binnen, wildgroeidende planten vallen aan, en nemen alles over. Oh nachtprinses, oh nachtprinses.

De Droomster

Ik was de tuinman van mijn ziel. Het was moeilijk om de tuin op orde te krijgen. Zo wild groeide het, en ik was een gevangene van mijn eigen tuin. Ik was verliefd op de droomster. Zij was vrij, als de godin van de lucht. Ze had een gouden sleutel om mij vrij te zetten, en toen mocht ik haar tuin bewaken. Ik mocht het groots maken zoals ik zelf wilde. Maar toen vertrok zij ...

Ik heb het nooit goed kunnen verwerken. Ze liet geen spoor van haarzelf achter. Misschien was zij ontvoerd door een beest. Ik bleef in haar tuin werken, en bleef op haar wachten, maar tevergeefs. Ik legde mij neer aan de voeten van dit raadsel. Er was geen doorkomen aan, en spoedig begon ik te merken dat ik in een boom begon te veranderen. Mijn takken strekten zich uit in de lucht, maar ik vond haar niet. Mijn wortelen groeiden diep onder de aarde, maar vinden deed ik haar niet. Ik droeg vrucht, en bloemen, en bloesem kwam ook, maar zij kwam niet. Wel kwamen allerlei dieren op me af, maar meestal om me te bestelen. Ze namen alles van me af totdat ik kaal stond.

Op een dag kwamen ze me omhakken, en toen was het gedaan met mij. Ik werd een tafel. En zij was nergens te bekennen. Ik raakte verbitterd. Niemand keek naar niemand om.

Op een dag werd ik wakker, en merkte dat ik brandde. De familie bij wie ik als tafel stond wilde mij niet meer. Nu moest ik branden, maar ik werd vrij. Mijn as zweefde in de lucht, en een wind nam mij mee. Ik was overal, en toen zag ik haar weer ... de droomster ...

Ze was prachtig, en voerde mij naar haar luchtkasteel. Daar zijn we toen gaan wonen, en ze verliet mij nooit meer.

Het Bruine Boek

De slaven waren gepiercet in hun tepels. Ze stonden bevend voor haar. Zij had de macht hun leven geheel in de vernieling te brengen. Niet lang daarna lagen ze aan haar voeten, smekend om genade, maar er was geen genade. Zij moesten hun lot aanvaarden, en gehoorzamen. Zij

had veel manieren om hen tot die gehoorzaamheid te brengen, om hen daarvan niet te laten afwijken.

Zoveel middelen had zij om hun leven tot een hel te maken, en dat zou zij ook doen. Er was niets meer wat haar tegen zou kunnen houden. Zij waren alleen met haar, als haar hulpeloze slaven.

Hoeveel ze ook gilden en schreeuwden, het kon haar niks schelen. Ze waren nek-geketend en aan handen en voeten gebonden. Zij overviel hen in hun slaap. Nu was er niets wat haar kon stoppen. Hier had ze lang op gewacht. De wraak was met haar.

Wanneer ze hen riep ging het hen door merg en been. Ze trok hen aan een touw door het zand. Zij was zoveel malen sterker dan hen. Nooit zou een man meer over haar heersen. Lang genoeg had zij in gevangenschap gezeten, maar nu was zij vrij, en zou haar vrijheid verdedigen als een wild beest.

Zij trok hen naar een gebied waar het groene niet was, een gebied van duistere jungles. Alles was hier grauw. De wateren waren van bloed en bruin. Het groene had haar eens geketend, maar nu zou zij alleen maar teruggaan naar het groene om gevangenen te maken. Zij wist dat de aanval de beste verdediging was. Ze zou niet wachten totdat ze weer door een groep mannen overvallen zou worden. Neen. Zij moesten allemaal in gevangenschap gaan voordat dat kon gebeuren.

Zij haatte het groene. Ook haatte zij het blauwe. Nu leefde zij voor eeuwig daar waar het groene en het blauwe niet kon komen. De mannen verbleekten voor haar aangezicht. Zij zou hen uithongeren, en voor eeuwig haar slaven zijn. Zij zou hoe dan ook met hen afrekenen. Zij hadden haar teveel aangedaan. Nu was zij een wild beest. Zij zouden niet veel kunnen doen. Zij was vele malen sterker dan hen. Toen ze jong was, en niet was ontwikkeld tot haar volle kracht konden ze haar nog temmen. Maar nu niet meer. De rollen waren omgedraaid.

Ze lachte, en spotte, terwijl ze de mannen bekeek die op de grond lagen. Ze zou hen voor eeuwig kooien. Voor haar werken zouden ze, zodat ze geen tijd zouden hebben om aan andere dingen te denken. Als hun gedachtes af zouden dwalen, dan zou dat een gevaar voor haar kunnen betekenen. Daarom zou zij hen moeten temmen. Zij zou hen onder hypnose moeten brengen, totaal onder haar macht. Als een roofdier sloop zij tussen haar prooi. Haar mes had ze dicht tegen haar aan, en haar arm was gespannen, alsof ze elk moment kon toeslaan. Zij zou haar eerste offer brengen. Eén man moest sterven voor wat haar was aangedaan.

Ze boog over haar slachtoffers heen, hen uiterst zorgvuldig bekijkende, op zoek naar sporen van angst. De mannen beefden voor haar. Sommigen rolden over de grond, om van haar proberen weg te komen, maar het touw aan hun nek-ketens liet hen merken dat ze nergens naartoe konden. Ze waren van haar, haar bezit. Ook hadden sommigen dunne ketens bevestigd aan hun tepel-piercings. Ketens die terugliepen tot aan haar riem. Zij zouden altijd in paniek leven, gedwongen door pijn om haar te gehoorzamen, en door de pijn die op de loer stond. Ze konden nergens heen.

Ze rook hun lichamen, en genoot van hun angst, zoals ze eens van haar angst genoten. Ze liet hen merken hoe onwaardig ze waren, en vernederde hen op allerlei manieren. Ze lachte en spotte.

Na een tijd had ze haar offer gevonden. Deze man moest voor haar sterven. Ze greep hem bij de keel, en zette haar mes op zijn nek. Langzaam begon ze het mes naar binnen te laten zinken. Het bloed spoot eruit, en ze liet hem helemaal leegbloeden. De man begon luid te gillen, maar lag even later bewusteloos in het zand. Toen sneed ze zijn kop eraf, en trok het op aan zijn haren. 'Dit is wat ik van jullie maak !' schreeuwde ze. 'Hier hebben jullie om gevraagd !'

Ze ging in het zand zitten en huilde. Zoveel herinneringen kwamen naar boven. Dit was de man die haar dit allemaal had aangedaan. Ze was opgelucht nu. Zijn botten zou ze in haar tent hangen. Zijn schedel zou heilig zijn voor haar. Zij zou zijn schedel plaatsen op een paal. Ook zijn scalp spietste ze op een paal. Oorlogsgejoel klonk door de duistere nacht. Hier was het altijd nacht. Het bloed gaf licht, en er was veel vuur. Zo was er een donkere gloed waarin zij voortleefde, waarin zij zich veilig voelde. Hier zou ze bedenken wat ze met de andere mannen zou doen.

Zij konden niets meer tegen haar beginnen, nu ze tot haar volle kracht was uitgegroeid. Haar tranen vielen op de grond, maar spoedig zouden haar tranen niet meer stromen. Zij had al genoeg gehuild in haar leven. Nu zouden de mannen huilen.

Grote tranen vielen op haar voeten. Tranen die niet van haar waren, maar van hen die haar eens hadden opgejaagd, en hadden opgesloten. Zij voerden jacht op haar, en waren daarin geslaagd. In een kerker moest zij leven, voor zo'n lange tijd. In een duistere kooi leerde zij wat het was om een slaaf te zijn, afhankelijk aan de genade van een man. Die man was nu niet meer in leven. Maar al zijn dienstknechten lagen aan haar voeten.

Ze verachtte deze slaven. Zij waren altijd slaven geweest, en nu waren ze haar slaven. Zij zou geen genade of medelijden met hen hebben. In deze duistere nacht moesten zij op hun plaats gezet worden. Hier, in dit nachtgebied, zouden zij weten wie of wat ze waren, en wie ze moesten dienen. Zij zou raad weten met hun trotse borsten. Piercings gingen daarin, totdat de pijn hen dwong hun borsten te laten invallen, dichtvallen zoals zij dat noemde. Zij waren niet meer zo trots, en zij zouden nog minder trots zijn. Daar had zij haar middelen voor. Ook hun borst-piercingen werden soms bevestigd aan lange dunne kettingen, die terugliepen tot aan haar riem. Bij een lichte beweging van haar of hen hadden ze pijn. De pijn dwong hen om aan haar toe te geven. Ze hadden met de verkeerde persoon te maken. Zij zouden haar niet meer kunnen voorliegen.

Als een duister beest met veel prooi stond zij daar in het nachtgebied, naast haar tent. Ze stond daar met bloed aan haar mond, het bloed van een prooidier wat ze een tijd geleden had gevangen en vetgemest voor deze dag. Al deze mannen zouden haar geheim kennen. Ze zou hen voer geven wat hen zou veranderen in vee. Zij had zwarte magie in haar botten. Zij was de koningin van de zwarte magie en voodoo. Zij zou hun hoofden beheersen, en alles omdraaien. Zij zou hen in verwarring brengen, en hen te doen laten geloven dat zij beesten waren, fokvee, niets anders dan dat.

Slachtvee waren zij in haar ogen, en ook zij begonnen dat meer en meer te geloven. Elke dag sprak ze dat op hen in, en zij begonnen zich steeds meer als slachtvee te gedragen. Voodoo was haar naam.

De dag erna vermoordde ze al haar slaven. Nu zou ze haar zusters vrijzetten. Zwaar bewapend ging ze tot de groene en blauwe gebieden, daar waar het daglicht regeerde, en kwam tot hun kerkers, waar ze een zware strijd begon. Ze onthoofde de geestelijken, en verscheurde hun wetsboeken. Ze daalde neer op hun schedels. Zij brak hun miserabele lichamen, en slachtte haarzelf een weg door de bijna bevroren massa's. Zij waren alreeds zombies. Zij was op weg naar hun leider. Zij bespotte hem al in de verte, en riep zijn naam. In visioenen had zij hem al gezien. Ook hem zou zij breken. Op een hoge rode troon zat hij, met honden aan weerszijden. Hij leefde als in een kooi. Gouden tralies probeerden haar te stoppen. Er heerste hier een verschrikkelijke stank. Even dacht ze dat ze zou bezwijken, en alles was hier zo vol van licht. Ze verlangde naar de duisternis, maar moest eerst met deze persoon afhandelen om haar zusters vrij te zetten.

In haar hart sprak ze wat voodoo spreuken.

Toen hij haar zag veranderde hij in een groen gedrocht. 'Ik ken je !' riep ze bijna gillend. 'Jij bent het groene gedrocht. Jij hebt mijn zusters verkocht ! Waar heb je ze ?' Het groene gedrocht greep haar en begon haar te verscheuren. Hier was zij niet tegen opgewassen. Ze

krijste en schreeuwde. Toen hoorde ze de stem van haar zusters. Ze was stervende, maar met haar laatste kracht wilde zij haar zusters vrijzetten. Ze sleepte haarzelf voort tot waar het geluid vandaan kwam, terwijl het groene gedrocht zich in haar had vastgebeten. Moeizaam sleepte ze haarzelf voort. Het groene gedrocht liet niet los, en ze begon steeds meer kracht en bloed te verliezen. Ze kon het groene gedrocht met geen mogelijkheid van haar afkrijgen. Ze kwam aan bij een duister hol, en ging daar naar binnen. In de verte zag ze de kooien, en hoopte maar dat ze die kooien zou kunnen bereiken voordat ze zou sterven. Moeizaam sleepte ze zich voort, en alles ging steeds trager. Ze begon steeds duizeliger te worden, maar het geschreeuw van haar zusters scheen haar een vreemde kracht te geven. Nog nooit had ze deze kracht eerder gevoeld. Met een krijs slingerde ze het beest van haarzelf af, en het spatte tegen een rotspunt aan in het hol. Ze was bedekt met groen slijm. Ergens lag een dierenvel waarmee ze haar wond begon dicht te knopen. Ze strompelde naar de kooien en met haar laatste krachten brak ze de tralies open. Haar zusters waren vrij. Ze namen haar in hun armen, maar niets kon meer baten. Ze was stervende. Ze ijlde. Ze was te diep verscheurd. Haar zusters huilden.

De grote Voodoo was niet meer.

De zusters keken elkaar aan. Ze wisten dat ze alleen verder moesten. Voodoo had hen bevrijd, maar … dat was tegelijkertijd het einde van Voodoo. Het was alsof ze haar nog steeds hoorden krijsen in de verte, maar het gekrijs werd minder, om even later plaats te maken voor doodse stilte. Snel renden de zusters de wildernis in.

Wie zou nu de koningin van de zwarte magie worden ? De zusters wisten niet of ze wel voor zo'n taak opgewassen waren. Ze waren anders dan Voodoo.

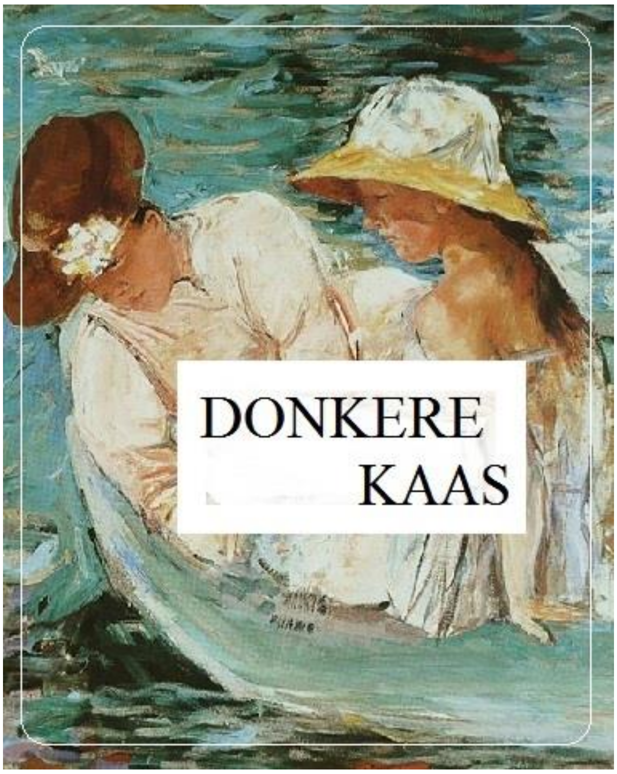
Hoe het kon wisten ze niet, maar het groene gedrocht wist hen ook te vinden. Hij begon hen te verscheuren zoals hij deed met hun zuster, en er was niets wat ze konden doen. Ze zouden sterven in deze nacht. Het groene monster nam hun wereld over, en ze kwamen samen met hun zuster in de onderwereld. Zij troonde daar in de onderwereld als de grote Voodoo koningin. Zij verbleekten naast haar. Maar ook hier kwam het groene gedrocht om hen te achtervolgen. Er was geen ontsnapping mogelijk van het groene gedrocht. Ze werden getrokken tot de hel waar ze zouden branden. In het vuur zagen ze elkaar's gezichten, en gilden. Ze smolten weg, totdat ze geheel opgebrand waren, om dieper weg te zinken in een massale leegte. Ze waren tot de afgrond onder de hel gekomen, tot de bodemloze put. Hier zonken ze als in een moeras, een moeras van vergetelheid. Het voelde aan als een nieuwe geboorte. Ze gaven geboorte aan een dochter, een groot strijder. Zij waren door het groene zaad bevrucht. Hun dochter was een groot jager, met de macht om het groene gedrocht te vernietigen. Het groene gedrocht vloog toe op zijn zaad, en verslond het, maar hij werd er erg ziek van. Hij moest het weer uitspugen.

Een grote gestalte stond voor hem, zijn dochter, een vrouw. Ze was goed bewapend, en begon hem te martelen met de wapens. Hij wist dat zij op zijn vernietiging uit was. Ze had geen medelijden met hem. Er was geen genade. Hij riep tot zijn blauwe meesters, en smeekte hen. Het blauwe gedrocht zou nu komen om hem van zijn pijnigingen te verlossen. Onder het aanroepen van verzen uit een boek die hij nog kende kwam er een blauwe mist. Het blauwe gedrocht was gekomen, de grote vader, die het kind begon te verslinden. Het kind stierf. Nu waren alle sporen van het geslacht van voodoo uitgewist. Het blauwe monster had overwonnen en zong zijn oorlogsliederen. Hij zong van overwinning, en het blauwe nam alle werelden in, als grote zeeen die alles overspoelden.

Er was geen herinnering meer aan Voodoo en haar zusters. Iedereen herinnerde alleen de verzen van een oud boek. De verzen waarmee het groene gedrocht zijn blauwe meesters had opgeroepen. Deze verzen moesten bewaard worden tot in alle eeuwigheden.

Een vrouw keek uit over de zeeen. Zij was opgegroeid met het blauwe boek, en ook met het groene gezag. Maar zij had altijd de visioenen van het bruine in haar hoofd, en die vertelden haar over Voodoo en haar zusters.

Het blauwe moest haar doden, maar kon het niet. Ze werd beschermd door een bruin boek. Het was juist het bruine boek waarin Voodoo en haar zusters hun toevlucht hadden gevonden.


DONKERE
KAAS

Donkere Kaas - Een verzameling verhalen

COAB 2000-2017

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Advertentie Koekgeneraal

Ik heb het niet vaak kunnen vertellen, en ik zal het ook niet vaak doen. Alleen op speciale gelegenheden misschien. Het gaat over een bakkerij waar ze een recept hebben voor levende koeken : koekmannen en koekvrouwen, en die worden dan overal rondbezorgd. Het is niet voor de verkoop, maar voor de verhuur, want de koek die gegeten wordt groeit gewoon weer aan. Het is nogal duur, maar dan wel heel speciaal. Je kunt de koek gewoon voor je ogen zien groeien wanneer je ervan gegeten hebt. Het is echt de specialiteit van die nogal ongewone bakkerij. De bakkerij is nogal veel in de trek, vooral bij hooggeplaatsten. De koeken worden nooit oud, maar laatst probeerden sommige koeken wel te ontsnappen. Het leven van koekmannen en koekvrouwen is zwaar. Het is een vreemde fabriek, en vaak worden ze weer geheel anders gedecoreerd en aangekleed.

Vroeger was er eens een oorlog tussen de koeken en de banketbakkers. Banketbakkers zijn de koningen van de koeken. Vroeger was er eens een slavenopstand, maar de banketbakkers vonden daar wat op. Ze maakten een recept waardoor nu ook de koeken zelf konden eten. Zo was het eerlijker, en dit leidde tot het tijdperk waarin koeken ook zelf banketbakker konden worden. Koekmannen en koekvrouwen werden zelfstandiger, en velen zochten zelfs de wildernis op. Maar hier stuitten ze op een nieuw probleem : de verschrikkelijk wilde dieren. Uiteindelijk ontwikkelden die koekmannen en koekvrouwen hun eigen wildheid, om ook daar tegen bestand te zijn.

En nu ? Op aarde zie je ze bijna niet meer. Ze trokken allemaal naar andere planeten. Maar ik ken nog steeds die banketbakkerij met recepten voor levende koeken. Ik heb het zelf eens thuis uitgeprobeerd en dat was smikkelen en smullen. Het was zo'n koek die ook direct banketbakker was, dus van mij werd er ook door een recept een koek gemaakt. Ik moest een vreemd soort mengsel uit een zakje inslikken. Tegenwoordig loop ik daarom met veel smink zodat niemand ziet dat ik eigenlijk een koek ben. Ik heb een baan gekregen bij die nogal wat ongewone bakkerij, en soms ga ik op bestelling naar koningshuizen of feesten. Ja, het leven is vreemd als een levende koek. Ook geef ik cursussen hoe een levende koek te worden. Ik voel mezelf al flink een banketbakker, met een groeiend leger van koeken, want we hebben een oorlog te voeren, een oorlog tegen een koekloze maatschappij, een maatschappij van dode koeken. Ik ben daarom een koeksoldaat, en zo u wil een koekgeneraal. U kunt mij dus ook inhuren.

Veel koeken leven nog in gevangenschap, maar ik weet de weg naar de verlichting. Diep onder de grond heb ik een geheime fabriek waar het allemaal gebeurt. Het gaat er nogal machinaal aan toe, omdat we ons geen slordigheden kunnen veroorloven. Het machinale is natuurlijk altijd meedogenloos, maar we moeten een goed product leveren. Eén verkeerde beweging en alles gaat mis. We moeten ons recept 'clean' houden. En zo blijven onze koeken lekker en functioneel. Ook worden ze uiterst zorgvuldig verpakt.

Ambassadeur van Venus

Niet velen weten van mijn ontsnapping uit de spinnenboerderij. Noem het overigens maar fokkerij. Niet velen weten wat er daar ergens diep in de bossen gebeurt. Velen willen het ook niet weten. In ieder geval hebben spinnen het daar voor het zeggen, en zeg maar gerust grote spinnen. Ze spuiten wat gif in je, en daar ga je. Mentale gif, dus dan denk je dat je heel ergens anders bent, dat je met die en die praat en omgang hebt, terwijl het gewoon maar sterke concentraties zijn in je hersenen opgewekt door het spinnengif. Kun je uit die boerderij ontsnappen, die boerderij waar we allemaal zitten en denken dat we in een civilisatie leven, dan ben je er nog niet. Ontsnappingen worden namelijk gefaked door het gif zelf, dus dan denk je dat je ontsnapt, maar je komt er alleen maar dieper in. Ook die fantasie in onze koppen dat we denken dat we in een civilisatie, een beschaving leven is niets anders dan een gif wat onze hersenen zo heeft beinvloed, terwijl we in handen zijn van savage spinnen, oftewel de wildernis.

Geen goed nieuws dus, hè, en vandaar dus ook dat velen het afkappen als onzin, ook door het gif. Maar goed, toen ik dus ontsnapte was ik er nog niet, omdat het dus allemaal gefaked was door dat gif. Dan denk je alleen maar dat je eruit bent. Ik kwam erachter dat die spinnenboerderij weer een onderdeel was van iets veel groters : een vliegenboerderij. Die vliegen fokten dus in principe weer die spinnen en die spinnen fokten ons. Dus stel dan dat je echt zou kunnen ontsnappen uit die spinnenboerderij, dan had je nog met een leger gewiekste verwilderde vliegen te maken, en geloof me, dat zijn geen lieverdjes. Vliegen met angels waar je naar van wordt. Druipend gif, dat je echt helemaal hoteldebotel maakt. En toch had ik dus op een gegeven moment die code van de spinnenboerderij gekaapt, en ik kwam daarna dus die vliegenboerderij onder ogen, het grotere geheel. Nou, dat was wat. Alarms gingen natuurlijk aan, en ik kwam erachter dat wij niet de enigen waren die naast de spinnen daar gefokt werden. Ook varkens werden er gefokt. Ik ging dus heel

langzaam en voorzichtig zonder lawaai te maken de trappen op, langs al die gewapende vliegen heen, totdat ik op het dak kwam.

Ik zwaaide met een witte en een rode doek, en al gauw kwam een helicopter mij ophalen. Maar wat bleek nou ? Het waren vliegen, maar ditmaal goede vliegen. Ze hadden een helm op en waren vriendelijk. Ze zeiden dat ze van Venus kwamen, en ik dacht : 'Die lui zijn gek.' Maar toen ik dichter en dichter bij het wonderlijke Venus kwam vond ik ze helemaal niet meer zo gek. Ik begon ze interessant te vinden, en ik begon te beseffen dat zij daadwerkelijk mijn bevrijders waren. En ze vertelden mij dat eens Mars en Venus één planeet waren genaamd Pythia. En Pythia was vroeger weer deel van een nog groter geheel genaamd Lakshor. Het sprak allemaal een beetje tot mijn verbeelding, en ik begon er boeken over te schrijven, dikke pillen over Pythia en Lakshor, over alles wat die lui mij vertelden. Het waren een soort aliens met de eigenschappen van vliegen, maar ze waren ook deels trol en indiaan. Ze zeiden dat er vroeger een hele andere orde was. Het kwaad was het goede, en de leugen was de waarheid. Verder was de duisternis het licht en de nacht was de dag. Dat vond ik wel heel interessant, want ik had altijd al het idee dat het omgedraaid was. Wij leefden gewoon ondersteboven. De nachtmerrie was de droom, de oorlog vrede, de slavernij vrijheid, en de jacht liefde. Nou goed, het verwarde me aan de andere kant wel. Hoeveel procent kwaad waren zij ? Evil ? In ieder geval waren zij ook boeren en jagers, en hoe kon het ook anders ? Ze hadden wel ergens tegen op te boksen, dus ze moesten mij opfokken tot een goed soldaat in de strijd. En zo werd ik dan een ambassadeur van Pythia en Lakshor, en natuurlijk van Venus zelf. Venus is het portaal van antwoord voor deze tijd. Als we ons allemaal richten op Venus dan wordt het vanzelf een betere wereld.

Maar ja, toen ik wakker werd had ik niet meer zo'n grote mond, en toen de dag op gang was gekomen was ik Venus alweer vergeten. Ik had wel andere dingen aan mijn hoofd. Als iemand mij zou vragen : 'Pardon, bent u de ambassadeur van Venus ?' dan zou ik denken : 'Die is gek.' Wel had ik nog steeds het idee dat alles om mij heen een grote spinnenboerderij was, als een onderdeel van de nog grotere vliegenboerderij. Dat was dan misschien wat ik aan die droom heb overgehouden. Maar ambassadeur van Venus ? Hoe komen ze er toch bij. Nou ja, een mens kan soms raar dromen.

Het Rijk van Nicotine

Een van de reusachtigste leiders van het duistere rijk die ik ooit had gezien was wel het skelet Nicotine. Elke dag maakte hij een lange reis over de bergen naar de hoogste top, met in zijn armen het hoofd van een meisje. Nicotine had een paar duistere paarden, genaamd Ammalgamos, Compositos en Medicinos. Hij was een duistere rijder. In zijn rijk was er geen schoonheid, alleen lelijkheid, maar de jungles hier waren reusachtig. Ik stond aan de oever. Een jongetje in een boot wenkte mij. Het was een lange dunne boot, en het jongetje had een peddel. Het was een indiaans jongetje. 'Mijn moeder wacht op je,' riep hij. Al gauw was hij bij de oever en ik stapte in het bootje. Al snel waren we aan de andere kant van het meertje. Aan de oever stond een vrouw. Ik herkende haar niet, maar zij riep mij bij mijn naam. Ik stapte uit het bootje en liep naar de oever. Ze omhelsde me stevig. 'Ik heb een maaltijd voor je gemaakt,' zei ze. 'Wie ben je ?' vroeg ik.

'Oh, ik ben Melango,' zei de vrouw. Al snel bracht ze mij naar haar hut. Er lagen hier allerlei pakjes sigaretten en sigarendoosjes. 'Rook je ?' vroeg ik. 'Nee,' zei ze. 'Mijn zoontje neemt ze weleens mee.'

's Nachts komen de troubadouren,' zei ze. 'Zij werken voor de farao.'

'Waar hebben ze het dan over ?' vroeg ik.

'Oh,' zei ze, 'over hem. Je weet wel : Nicotine, de baas van alle farao's. Hij is het grote opperhoofd.' Ik kende Nicotine wel. Het was een verschrikking. Iedereen was geketend aan zijn lange kettingen, ook deze vrouw. Het hart van Nicotine was een rood hart, maar voor de rest was het hele duistere rijk zwart en wit. Als de troubadours kwamen dan was er altijd veel grijs, veel bruin en geel. Nicotine was een slager. Hij was altijd op jacht, en had een grote fokkerij. Hier liet hij de vrouwen zwaar werk verrichten. 'Pssst, bevrijd me,' fluisterde de vrouw. Ze wees op de ring aan mijn vinger die ik eens van de farao had gekregen. Ik bedacht me geen moment, legde de ring tegen haar ketting en brandde de keten door. Ik pakte haar hand, en zei : Kom mee. Ik weet niet hoe lang het geduurd heeft maar na tijden rennen kwamen we uit de jungles van Nicotine. Een man staarde ons aan met een lange baard. Hij liet ons de tand van een haai zien. 'Waar zijn we ?' vroeg ik.

'Welkom,' zei de man. Hij was direct heel vriendelijk. Hij staarde naar mijn ring. 'Wie bent u ?' vroeg ik.

'Ik ben Terang,' zei de man. 'Gezand van de koning.'

'Wie is de koning ?' vroeg ik. Hij liet me een klein balletje zien. Maar daar kwam Nicotine al aan. Ik greep Melango weer bij haar hand en rende met haar verder. Maar ook in de verte zag ik Nicotine aankomen, en toen van alle kanten. Snel werden we ingesloten. 'Nicotine heerst hier,' zeiden ze. Plotseling kwam er rood

licht uit mijn ring voort en scheen op de harten van de Nicotines om ons heen. Een van de Nicotines had witte klederen met een lange witte punthoed. Hij leek wel op een pion. Achter hem stonden nog een paar van zulke Nicotines. Ik richtte de straal van de ring op zijn gezicht, en hij begon weg te smelten. Ik rende met Melango door de opening die was ontstaan. Weer zag ik die man. ‘Kan ik iets voor je doen ?’ vroeg Terang.

‘Ja,’ zei ik. ‘Help ons hier uit.’

Maar Terang werd gegrepen door de Nicotines en werd verslonden. De Nicotines waren als een kudde hongerige honden. Weer richtte ik de straal van de ring op hen. In de verte was een piramide waar we naartoe renden. Binnenin zat een farao op een troon. Hij was geheel gemaakt van metaal, en er kwam rook uit hem voort. Maar al snel waren ook de Nicotines binnen en verslonden de metalen farao. Een paar Nicotines zaten op paarden. Het waren grote paarden. We renden door een deur in een andere gang. Maar hier waren zwarte Nicotines met hun paarden. Weer beukte ik een deur in, en kwamen in een kamer terecht met een raampje waardoor we konden ontsnappen. We waren nu op de piramide. De vrouw haalde wat pakjes sigaretten en sigaren uit haar broekzakken en begon ze tussen haar handen te rammelen, terwijl ze veren begon te krijgen. Snel greep ze me en we vlogen weg. Het was mij een raadsel. Nicotine Magie, zei ze. We vlogen naar een hoog kasteel waar de Nicotine Tovenaar woonde. We hadden hier groot uitzicht. De Nicotine Tovenaar was een aardige man. Hij liet ons alle mechanismes van Nicotines zien. Het waren robotten. Ook hun grote paarden.

De Tovenaar zette ons ergens neer op de rotsen, in een ander rijk. We kwamen op een strand terecht met heet zand. Ook was er een hutje van riet en bamboe. ‘Blijf je bij me ?’ vroeg Melango.

‘Ach, ik kom je nog weleens een keertje opzoeken,’ zei ik. ‘Ik hoop dat je het hier naar je zin zult hebben. Er is hier strand en zee, en er groeit hier voldoende aan de bomen.’

Daar kwam de Tovenaar aan, vanaf het strand. ‘Je hebt in ieder geval goed gezelschap,’ zei ik. De Tovenaar gaf mij een hoed van stro en riet. En toen vertrok ik.

Einde

Oorlogsgodin

Het was nogal een zwemtocht van het schip naar Suriname. Ik was al zo lang een piraat, en nu wilde ik wel iets anders. Ik wilde vrij zijn. Helemaal uitgeput kwam ik aan op het strand. Ik nam mijn intrede in een hutje voor landlopers. Ik was een zwerver. Mijn piratenkleding was gescheurd. Ik bloedde een beetje vanwege schaafwonden. Het was een lange tocht.

De natuur hier verwelkomde mij met open armen alsof ik een prins was. Het was mijn droom om hier voor altijd te wonen. Ik moest maar leven van de jacht, zodat ik geen rover meer hoefde te zijn. Tot mijn verbazing volgde het schip mij na, en ook mijn piratenmakkers besloten hier te gaan wonen, te stoppen met roven, om zo voor de jacht te leven. Dat was toch een stuk netter.

We hadden het hier goed naar ons zin. Elke dag zee, en een jungle vol met voedsel, goed voedsel. Op een dag kwam er een vrouw bij ons wonen. Ze maakte nieuwe kleren voor ons, en zorgde dat het voedsel werd klaargemaakt. Zoiets is natuurlijk onmisbaar. Het was een geschenk van de natuur van Suriname aan ons. De vrouw heette zelfs Suriname.

Wij waren altijd erg beleefd naar de natuur van Suriname. Wij respecteerden haar en eerden haar. En de vrouw aan ons gegeven behandelden we als een prinses. Ze was een geschenk uit de hemel. We konden goed met elkaar opschieten, ik en m’n makkers, en de vrouw paste er precies tussen. Er waren eigenlijk nooit relletjes. Iedereen kende z’n plaats.

De vrouw wist veel van de natuur af, en kon ons veel leren. Op een dag maakten we een tochtje met het schip en namen de vrouw mee. Ze vermaakte zich uitstekend en verkleedde zich als een piratenkapitein. Ja, onze kapitein mocht ze wel wezen, sinds we onze eigen kapitein van boord hadden gegooid. Er viel niet te leven met die man. Zij was het tegenovergestelde.

Het piratenleven beviel haar goed, en dankzij haar konden we het wat netter houden, wat beschaafder. We besloten de ene helft van het jaar te varen, en de andere helft te leven aan de kust van Suriname. De zegen van Suriname kwam over ons. Ons schip zegevierde ten allen tijde, en dat allemaal dankzij onze nieuwe kapitein.

Het uniform stond haar goed. Dat ze op een dag in een anaconda veranderde verbaasde ons. Maar ja, ze was nu eenmaal een anaconda. Een geschenk van

Suriname. We besloten weer met haar terug te varen, en lieten haar los in de jungle. Later kwamen we erachter dat ze om de zoveel jaren in een anaconda veranderde. We vonden het niet erg. Het was haar leven. Trouwens, we waren gek op anaconda's. We hadden allemaal een obsessie als het aankwam op slangen. Ze kon jagen als de beste, en zo leden we eigenlijk nooit honger. Ze kon in nog wel veel meer dieren veranderen, zomaar plotseling. Ze was een heks, maar dan anders. Ze was gewoon een oorlogsgodin. Die kunnen dat soort trucjes.

We hielden alleen maar meer van haar. Ze was een bijzonder mens.

Het Surinaamse

Dagboek

Suriname, 6 april 1992

Ik ben in Suriname aangekomen. Vastbesloten het geheim te vinden waar iedereen over spreekt. De papieren roos, de naam voor een lange plant met papier-achtige roosjes, komt veel in Suriname voor, en nergens anders in de wereld. Ik staar naar de plant, met vreemde gevoelens in mijn buik. Een verlamming kwam over mij, en ik moest naar het ziekenhuis. Ik heb nu de ontmoeting gehad. Ik had hier lang op gewacht, maar het liep bijna verkeerd af. Ik was voor drie weken in het ziekenhuis.

Suriname, 8 april 1992

Ik weet niet wat ik moet doen. Ik kan niet loskomen van Suriname. Ik loop dwalend rond en kan niet weg. Het lijkt wel alsof ik opgesloten ben. Het lijkt alsof ik dood ben, terwijl ik leef. Ik heb het duistere geheim van Suriname ontmoet, maar nu ben ik in de war. Mensen kijken me na op straat. Ik geef een zoekende indruk. Alsof ik iets kwijt ben. Ik kan mijn gedachtes niet beheersen. Ik ben een gevangene van Suriname. Het is alsof een spin mij van binnen opeet. Ik heb jeuk van binnen, en hoeveel ik ook krab, het gaat niet weg.

Ik ben niet gemachtigd om contact op te nemen met mijn familie. Ik krijg geen toestemming. Ik heb ook geen idee van wie ik toestemming moet krijgen. Ik denk dat ik gek aan het worden ben. Ik geef de schuld aan de papieren roos. Ik haat die planten nu, alhoewel ik weet dat ik misschien nu onredelijk ben. Toch heb ik het idee dat die planten duivels zijn. Ze worden vaak bij allerlei duistere rituelen gebruikt.

Ik ga huilend naar bed. Ik voel me fragiel en verward. Ik heb hulp nodig, maar durf het niet te vragen. Het is alsof het me verboden is. Het voelt alsof ik in een coma leef. In de nacht kijkt een vreemd houten standbeeld mij aan. Ik heb het gevoel alsof mensen mij uitlachen en niet om mij geven. Was ik maar nooit naar Suriname gegaan. Het is alsof iemand mijn geld en paspoort heeft gestolen, terwijl ik het nog steeds heb. Maar het dringt niet tot mij door. Niets dringt er tot mij door. Ik heb het gevoel alsof mensen mij niet horen, wat ik ook zeg. Ze leven gewoon door. Ik heb zelfs het gevoel dat het onmogelijk is dat iemand verstaat wat ik zeg. Ze horen mij wel, maar zij verstaan het niet, en het lijkt hen ook niets te kunnen schelen.

Ik weet zeker dat ik onder een vloek ben. Ik maak een lange boswandeling tot aan een rivier. Dan loop ik terug. Ik voel me opeens heel warm van binnen. Alsof iemand mij wel begrijpt, of een gevoel dat alles wel goed komt. Maar dat is maar een flits. Als ik terug kom op mijn kamer ben ik depressief. Het wordt zo erg dat ik weer een wandeling maak naar de rivier. Ditmaal voel ik alsof ik gewapend ben, maar ik ben onbewapend. Iets of iemand speelt een spelletje met mij. Het is alsof ik aan de drugs ben, maar ik heb die troep nooit aangeraakt. Of zou iemand iets in mijn koffie hebben gedaan ? Ik ben mezelf niet meer. Ik voel alsof ik een zombie ben. Iets is over mij gekomen. Ik heb ook het gevoel dat ik niet goed meer kan praten. Alsof niemand mij kan horen, of in ieder geval dat niemand mij begrijpt, alsof ik in een andere taal spreekt die niemand verstaat. Ik begin wanhopig te worden, hopeloos. Ik voel me opgesloten. Iemand heeft iets in m'n hoofd gedaan. Ik heb koppijn. Het is alsof ik opgesloten zit in mezelf, en iemand heeft de sleutels weggeworpen, zonder enig mededogen. Het is alsof er een sieraad in me zit wat ik niet kan bereiken. Dan begint het sieraad te branden, en ik begin weg te smelten. Ik kan het vuur ruiken. Nu denk ik echt dat ik gek ben geworden, verdwaasd, krankzinnig. En dat terwijl ik me zo op deze vakantie had verheugd. Ik weet dat ik niet meer terugkan. Iets houdt mij tegen. Iets heeft mij naar de keel gegrepen. Iets met een witte jurk. Ze loopt op sandalen. Zou het een geest zijn ? Of verzin ik maar wat. Ik heb het gevoel dat er hier een oorlog is, en dat ik tot het leger wordt geroepen. Ik moet vechten. Ze willen mij laten staren naar een haan. Ik moet die haan bevechten, en dan merk ik dat ik zelf een haan ben. Ik smijt het boek op de tafel wat ik aan het lezen ben. 'Is het nu afgelopen ?' roep ik. Het is alsof ik bezeten aan het raken ben. Ik voel het schuim bijna op mijn mond komen. Ik maak veel speeksel aan. Wanhopig val ik op mijn bed. Ik begin aan mijn haren te trekken, en wild met mijn hoofd te schudden. Iets is binnenin mij gekomen. Ik krijg het er niet uit.

Suriname, 10 april 1992

Ik voel me dromerig. Ik heb nog steeds geen contact met mezelf kunnen krijgen. Het is alsof ik mezelf niet meer kan bereiken, alsof ik uit mijn eigen handen ben weggegleden, in de diepte, verdronken. Ik voel me als een pop, of alsof ik als een pop ben, en ik houd mezelf vast, maar ik kan mezelf niet bereiken. Ik ben onbereikbaar. Ik kom er niet meer doorheen.

Ik weet weer waarom ik hier ben : voor de juwelen. Maar de juwelen hebben mij opgesloten. Ik kwam om juwelen te zoeken in de bossen, maar het was te gevaarlijk. De wachters van de juwelen hebben mij opgesloten.

Suriname, 10 maart 1993

Ik begin een reclame bureau in Suriname, ook om adviezen te geven wat betreft reclame. Vorig jaar was een verschrikkelijk jaar. Ik heb mezelf bij elkaar kunnen grijpen, maar ik wil niet weg nu. Eerst kon ik niet weg, en nu wil ik niet weg.

Suriname, 10 maart 1994

Het is weer mis. Alle ellende is teruggekomen. Ik wil niet meer leven. Ik wil van deze planeet vertrekken, maar ik kan niet. Ik probeer de dood te vinden, maar deze vlucht van mij weg. Iets roept mij op voor de oorlog, een oorlog tegen een haan. En dan merk ik dat ik zelf ook een haan ben. Met mesjes sta ik daar, mesjes aan mijn benen vastgemaakt. Maar dan enige tijd later beland ik in het ziekenhuis. Ik voel me gebroken. Ik ben verwond, misschien zelfs dodelijk. Mensen vertellen me dat ik ergens ben ingesprongen. Het was nogal van een grote hoogte. Ben ik mijn verstand aan het verliezen ? Ik kan niet tegen de smoelen van deze mensen, die hypocriete, duivelse glimlachen. Ze voeren iets in hun schild, ik weet het zeker.

Suriname, 12 maart 1994

Iemand zingt liedjes tot mij waarvan ik rustig wordt. Ik lig nog steeds in het ziekenhuis. Soms ben ik bewusteloos. De verpleegsters zijn wel aardig hier. Ze zingen voor mij, en zeggen dat als ik weer beter ben, dan zullen ze met me zwemmen, in de rivier achter het ziekenhuis. Dat is al half in het bos. Het lijkt me wel leuk. Hun glimlachen zijn mysterieus en zoet. Ik heb vol vertrouwen in hen dat zij mijn leven beter zullen maken.

Eén van de verpleegsters neemt mij mee in haar auto. We gaan diep het bos in, naar een rivier waar krokodillen leven. Zij laat me ook een plant zien genaamd de papieren roos, een lange plant met bijna papieren roosjes. Ik schrik. Ze houdt mijn hand vast, maar die duw ik weer weg. Ik ben ineens heel paranoide. Ze vraagt me wat er gebeurd is, maar ik ren weg met schuim op mijn mond. Ze komt mij achterna. Ze heeft een boog en dreigt mij neer te schieten. Niemand zal namelijk ontsnappen. Ik weet niet waar ze het over heeft. Ik ben toch niet in een gevangenis ? Maar ze geeft geen uitleg. Dan lijkt het alsof ik een klap op mijn hoofd krijg. Even later wordt ik wakker in het ziekenhuis.

Zij zingt over mij.

Suriname, 18 maart 1994

Ik denk dat er iets goed mis met mij is. Ik ben opgesloten in een nachtmerrie, alsof ik in een coma ben. Daarom kon ik hier nooit weg. Ik kan niet goed nadenken. Ik kan niet tellen. Ik wil weg, maar ik kan niet. Ik probeer weg te kruipen, maar ik ben als een verlamde. Alles is zo groot en ver weg om mij heen. Het is alsof ik in de maag van een beest ben, een roofdier. Ik wil hier weg. Maar ik kan niet. Alles gaat zo traag. Ik heb het idee alsof niemand om mij geeft, maar toch heb ik het gevoel dat het goedkomt.

Suriname, 18 mei 1994

Ik lag in warm water. Het gaf me hoop. Eventjes kon niks me nog schelen. Ik heb het gevoel dat ik meer in mijn dagboek moet schrijven. Dat doe ik bijna niet. In mijn dromen groeien planten met witte bloempjes in mijn kamer. Het is alsof ze zullen komen om me te halen. Er groeien witte bloemen in mijn hoofd, planten met witte bloemen, weelderige struiken, die een wit zaad verspreiden. Het maakt me warm van binnen. Ik dacht dat Suriname zo meedogenloos was, maar nu heb ik haar geheim gezien. Alhoewel ik mezelf misschien wat teveel bemoedig nu. Wat hebben die witte bloemenstruiken in hun zin ? Ze hebben doornen als ik ze dichterbij bekijk. Er druipt bloed vanaf, als van de poten van gevechtshanen, van de messen. Iets knapt er in mijn hoofd. Ik moet even neerliggen. Ik herken deze plek. Had ik dit niet in mijn dromen gezien ? Ik was op weg naar een witte stad, met zoveel anderen, maar toen brak de ladder af. We vielen allemaal naar beneden. Het was een bodemloze put, met veel vuur. Duivels waren rondom ons. Een huis van medelij neemt ons binnen, maar dat bleek valse medelij te zijn. Ik kan niet meer nadenken. Alles duizelt mij voor de ogen. Hier leeft valse genade, een beest.

Suriname, 19 mei 1994

Toen kwam het. De struiken namen bezit van me, alsof rivieren me overstroomden. Ik was in een droom. Ik was als Doornroosje, maar Doornroosje stierf. Ze werd door teveel doornen geprikt. Ze gilde terwijl ze stierf. Het was een deel in mij wat stierf. Terwijl het andere deel een clown was, die onder water was, verstrikt in een onderwater-struik, ook met vele doornen. Ook de clown stierf toen, en ik bevond mijzelf in een wilde zee, totdat ik aanspoelde op een strand. Iemand kwam tot mij, en hielp mij op de been. Toen bracht zij mij naar haar huis. Ze glimlachte. Ik staarde naar haar. Ik kon niet denken. Alles stond stil. Ik ben nu meerdere personen.

Suriname, 20 mei 1994

Het moorden van mei is aan mijn zij. In een slachtkamer bracht zij mij. Ik wist niet wie zij was. Ik durf niet veel te zeggen. Ze is een moordenaar, nogal periodiek. Ik ben te zwak om tegen haar op te staan. Ik ben nu meerdere personen. Zij heeft mij gespleten. Ik kan mezelf niet vinden tussen alle maskers.

Suriname, 21 mei 1994

Ze zit op een stoel, en ik moet haar diensten verlenen. Ik heb deze stoel eerder gezien. Het stond boven Suriname toen ik het land binnenkwam. Ik ben meerdere personen nu, uit elkaar getrokken, verscheurd. Ik moet de stoel aanbidden. Zij is een moordenares. Ik ben door de verkeerde persoon gered. De enige die ik nog heb is mijn dagboek. Zij houdt mij onder schot en bedreigt me. Zij is hoog in de wolken, als de ark van Noach, en ik ben het volk. Ik ben niet in de ark, en dat is een vreselijke gewaarwording. Overal regent het. Haar stem klinkt door mijn hele lichaam, als donder en bliksem. Ik sta in vuur. Ik sta in brand, maar dan besef ik dat ik een deel ben van een plant. Ik ben een deel van een struik, en ik groei naar boven.

Suriname, 22 mei 1994

Een plant met gele bloemen, het is als drugs. Over die brug kwam ik hier. Wie heeft mij zo gemaakt ? Er moet een uitweg uit dit doolhof zijn. Ik ben bezeten en gespleten. Ziek zijn in Suriname is geen pretje. Ik kon er wel in, maar niet meer uit. Het vuur der dwazen brandt hier. Als dollen dansen zij er omheen. Ik doe niet mee.

Een groter kwaad is er nooit geschiedt.

Suriname, 23 mei 1994

Ik hoop dat ze nooit mijn dagboek leest. Ze schijnt er geen interesse voor te hebben, dus ik schrijf door. In de nacht heb ik wel haar dagboeken gevonden. Ze schrijft over mij. Ik zit hier gevangen. Het is haar paleis.

Suriname, 24 mei 1994

Ik voel me als haar marionet. Twee vrouwelijke matrozen vielen in hetzelfde lot. Ze zitten daar in hun marine jurkjes, wit met blauw. Ik ben in een halve coma. Ik kan me niet goed bewegen en niet goed ademen. Het is de aanval van de plant. De struik heeft genomen, en laat haar doornen inzinken. Buiten is er donder. Het leger van de plant is gekomen. Ze staat op het balkon op de uitkijk, alsof ze schepen naar binnen moet halen. Dan doet ze het raam dicht. Haar haren zijn als in vuur. Dan brandt ze helemaal. Ik kijk hoe ze in as verandert, maar het is slechts zaad. Wit zaad, wat door het huis wordt geblazen. Het huis is in stof en een spin maakt webben.

Suriname, 25 mei 1994

Zij zit in een witte jurk, omringd door de planten met witte bloemen. Zonder de gele bloemen zou ik hier nooit zijn gekomen. Zij namen mij me op hun schip. Mijn verleden liet ik achter me. Het verdronk. Eindelijk voelde ik mij aangenomen in de ark van Noach. Ik kan er niet meer aan denken. De zee is romig. Ik ben op het schip. Het schip is een eiland, als een vis in de zee, als een haai. Ik kan niet meer vooruit en niet meer achteruit. Alleen het schip kan bewegen. De bloemen groeien naar de hemel. Dit is mijn ladder. Maar dan breekt de ladder. Het witte huis neemt mij aan, verzorgt mijn wonden. Ik voel mij zwak, en de witte dame heerst over mij.

Suriname, 26 mei 1994

Ik ben bang dat zij mijn dagboek leest. Daarom verdraai ik de woorden. Ik lees haar dagboeken in de nacht. Zij zijn duister. Ik denk dat ik gek wordt. Schuimbekkend rol ik op de grond, totdat ik mij weer optrek aan de lange planten met bloemen. Ik trek mezelf op aan de struik. Ik klim naar de hemel, maar kom niet ver. Ik kan alleen maar kijken. Ik staar naar Surinaams fruit op een schaal. Voor mij is het een zee, een zee waarover ik nooit kan komen, maar waar wel eilanden in zijn. Dit fruit draagt een duister geheim. Dit fruit ligt alleen maar stil, en ik kijk ernaar. Een zee van fruit liet mij niet door. Ik kan alleen maar kijken. Ik kan alleen maar wegzinken. Ik zag hen daar staan op de bruggen met maskers, en in de boten. Zij

namen vrouwen in wit op het schip. Die visten zij uit het water. Zij haalden die vrouwen naar binnen als Surinaams fruit, fruit met een duister geheim. Het Surinaamse fruit is als een lange reis naar ellende. Als je bij de pit bent aangekomen ben je dood. Vrouwen in kanten jurken, bedolven onder spinnenwebben. Spinnen in hun haren. Zo bieden zij het fruit aan. Geen goede reclame als je het mij vraagt, maar het wordt goed verkocht. Mensen kijken niet verder dan hun neus lang is.

Suriname, 27 mei 1994

Planten met blauwe bloemen. Het paars groeit aan de randen van de rivier, als het paarse vuil. Het zijn paarse bloemen. Diep kijk ik in haar ogen en zie hetzelfde. Het is bijna als een spiegel. Ik probeer de diepte van haar ogen te zien. Het paars bedekt hier alles. Ik heb het gevoel dat ik in cirkeltjes draai. Hetzelfde is mij al eens eerder overkomen. Ik kan niet losbreken. Ik moet geholpen worden. Maar de hulp komt niet.

Suriname, 28 mei 1994

Ik wacht op de droom die mij zal doen ontwaken, die mij weer laat durven spreken. Die droom komt maar niet. De hemel lijkt ver weg. Het grote syndroom van Suriname heeft mij in haar macht. Het is als een verslaving aan drugs. Ik kan de ketenen niet doorhakken. Moed heb ik niet om dit syndroom in detail te bespreken. Ik praat er slechts omheen. Ik ben zo gemaakt. Het is mijn aard geworden. Ik drink van de bloemenzee, en stik bijna in haar zaad. Warmte komt met golven om mij heen. De witte stad komt in zicht, maar verblindt mij.

Suriname, 29 mei 1994

De vrouw in het wit staat tussen twee matrozen in. Zij komen van een vreemd leger. Ik draai en woel in mijn bed. In de rivier hangen de witte bloemen diep, met een zwaar gewicht. Ik zit op de rivier-boot. Het was een labyrint van vuur, waarin we de juiste combinaties moesten zien te vinden. Het was een race tegen de klok. De muren waren draaiende en brandende. We renden, maar zij struikelde. Een gil achtervolgde mij. Ik kon haar niet meer vinden.

Suriname, 30 mei 1994

De ladder naar de witte stad laat grijze gezichten zien. Zij zijn niet uitgenodigd. Als zij de ladder aanraken, dan branden zij. Hun gezichten smelten weg. Ik ben op de ladder en kom steeds hoger, steeds dieper. De witte muren van de stad zijn begroeid.

Zij zat daar op een witte troon, waar alle ladders naartoe leidden. Ze keek naar beneden en verdween in witte rook. Ik volgde het spook dieper de stad in.

Iedereen zonk weg in de witte golven, en vele schepen vergingen. Ik klom door, hoger de stad in. Ik durfde niet achterom te kijken. Ik hoorde gekrijs, en mensen riepen : Stop. Maar ik liep door. Ik was in Suriname. Zij nam het gewicht van de stad in. Alles loopt over in de wildernis in de diepte van de witte stad. Het is een schuimende zee, wild golvend. Het is een Surinaamse vrucht. Surinaams fruit, ik kijk erna, en het is alsof ik in een coma ben. Niemand kan mij horen. Niemand kan mij verstaan. Het is alsof er nooit communicatie is geweest. Niemand kan iets overbrengen. Ik zink weg in de witte zee. Grote vissen zwemmen hier, maar zij nemen niemand mee. Wij zijn aan ons lot overgeleverd. Oh, was ik maar nooit naar Suriname gegaan. Ik ben gebrandmerkt.

Suriname, 31 mei 1994

Ik herinner de droom over het witte hek. Het trekt me tot de wildernis, maar laat me nooit door. Het trekt me dieper en dieper totdat ik vastraak. Is dit het grote Suriname ? Is dit het witte hek ? Het is een vreemd hek, met vreemde muziek, als een begrafenis. Wie wordt er begraven ? De muziek zo traag en subtiel. En voordat je het witte hek bereikt kom je tot een stad waarin je altijd verdwaald. Het neemt je tijd in beslag. Het neemt alles. Ik sta op de duinen en schreeuw over alles wat me is ontnomen door het witte hek. Ik wil het terug, maar golven overweldigen mij, en nemen mij mee, dieper tot het witte hek, als tot een ladder. Een pen wordt in mijn hand gedrukt, en ik moet veel schrijven. Ik moet een boek schrijven over Suriname. Ik moet tot haar geheimen doordringen. Ik schreeuw. Ik heb het trauma in mijn hand, maar dan wordt het rustig. Ik hoor het witte hek ruizen op de achtergrond, spelende haar muziek. Het doet pijn, maar de steek gaat eruit. Ik moet een wit boek schrijven, een witte bijbel. Ik tril en beef. Ik wil wegrennen, maar golven overweldigen mij. 'Schrijf, schrijf,' bulderen zij. Er beginnen dingen in mijn hoofd te draaien. Ik kan geen verhalen schrijven. Maar de klokken in mijn hoofd leiden een leven op henzelf.

Mijn Vriend, de Slang

In de onderwereld het ergste wat ik ooit had gezien waren de varkensslagers. De varkensslagers werden bestuurd door skeletten met gewaden aan en kappen op hun schedel. Vaak hadden ze hun domeinen in grote kraters. Je zou er depressief van kunnen worden, en dat werd ik dan ook. Ze sloten mij op in een kelder, een soort kerker, waar vanuit ik alles goed kon zien. Ik leefde van mijn eigen kots, en varkensvlees. Dat was de enige manier waarop ik leefde. Wel was het altijd goed om weer wakker te worden. Maar nog steeds denk ik eraan na al die jaren. Eigenlijk sta ik er mee op en ga ik er weer mee naar bed. Het is een trauma. Nog altijd hoor ik het gekrijs van die beesten in mijn hoofd, en nog meer het gekrijs van die skeletten. Het waren eigenlijk half-skeletten met nog een beetje vlees, spieren en vooral pezen. De geur was verschrikkelijk, niet om over naar huis te schrijven, en soms had ik het gevoel dat ik gewoon twee a drie dagen niet wakker werd. Ik wist wel dat ik droomde, maar toch. Dit was de onderwereld, daar ben ik van overtuigd. Het leek wel alsof alles hier varkensslager was of varken, en dan die skeletten met die kappen op. Echt verschrikkelijk. Het rook er echt naar de dood, naar ongewassen wateren, naar ongezouten lucht, en naar dingen die ik hier niet kan beschrijven. Weet je wat voor impact dat op een mens kan hebben ? Maar eigenlijk vraag ik me af of ik wel een mens ben.

Die skeletten met die kappen hadden daar beneden wel de touwtjes in handen. En mijn moeder maar zeggen : Je hebt het maar gedroomd. Ja, dat is waar, maar toch. De dominee zegt dat demonen bestaan, dat de onderwereld bestaat, diep in de grond, waar de doden leven. Mijn moeder zweert bij de kerk zo langzamerhand, maar ze zegt dat de dominee ook niet alles weet. Dat is zo, maar toch.

Zoveel skeletten in een optocht, allemaal met gewaden en kappen, een enge processie. Waar gaan ze naartoe ? Naar hun domein in de krater. Je zou er depressief van kunnen worden, en ik werd het ook .... En bang, verschrikkelijk bang, want zij heersen over hen zonder hoop. Ik had mijn geloof verloren in die tijd, en probeerde mijn hoop in andere dingen te vinden, dus ik was op dat moment hopeloos, en onder hun hoede. Verschrikkelijk. Ik denk er nog weleens aan terug. Daar reden ze dan op hun hoge paarden, en met hun scherpe laarzen maakten ze de huid van die beesten stuk. Verschrikkelijk. Sommige paarden waren gewoon skeletten. En die auto’s die ze hadden, en die schepen, die waren gemaakt van skeletten, bottenvoertuigen. Verschrikkelijk. Daar wil je echt niet wezen. En ik was altijd blij als ik wakker werd, maar voor hoelang. De volgende nacht zat me alweer op te wachten. En dan leek het alsof ik voor honderd jaar sliep. Ik kon soms

gewoon niet wakker worden, en dan is er niet even een dominee of moeder in de buurt, neen, dan is alles de hel, zelfs de zachte hand.

Maar op een dag kreeg ik in zo'n droom een ontmoeting met een rode slang, en die gaf mij een borstschild met haar, en een prachtig glimmende steen erop, bijna een verblindende steen waardoor alles zacht werd, en toen begon ik ook mooie schone dromen te krijgen, en dat was eigenlijk voor het eerst in mijn leven. Ik werd niet meer zo snel gillend wakker. En weet je wat het mooie was ? Ik kon ook vliegen, dus als er gevaar dreigde dan wipte ik er tussenuit. Maar het had ook nadelen. Ik wilde de onderwereld kennen, en misschien wat kunnen betekenen, en de steen hield mij tegen. Totdat iemand die steen een keer verbrijzelde. Ik kon hem wel omhelzen. Het was een halfskelet, met een verschrikkelijk angstaanjagende bijl. En ik kreeg weer toegang tot de diepere onderwerelden, ja eigenlijk dieper dan ooit. En wat ik daar zag, dat zul je niet geloven. Weinigen geloven me maar. Luister.

Op een dag zat ik aan de zee van bloed, na lang gezeten te hebben aan de rivier van bloed. In de verte kwamen een heleboel zwarte skeletten, heel dun, steeds dichterbij. Het leek wel op een processie. Sommigen droegen hoeden met veren, terwijl anderen kappen op hadden, maar de meesten hadden niets op, en waren gewoon naakte skeletten, soms met een veer hier of daar. Plotseling begonnen ze te grommen en snelden op mij af. Ik dacht : zal ik wegduiken in de diepte of hier gewoon blijven zitten ? Ze waren de kwaadsten nog niet, en gaven mij een mes. Op het handvat stond een plaatje van een oude vrouw, een fotootje, maar dat rukten ze ervan af, en er scheen bloed van het handvat af te komen, vreemd bloed, bijna een beetje roze doorzichtig. Ik keek naar het mes en toen naar hen. 'Ja, het is van jou,' zei één van hen. Ik knikte. Dat was me nu wel duidelijk geworden. Het mes glom. 'Je zult het nodig hebben,' zei een ander. Ik wist het. Het was hier gevaarlijk. Ze vertrokken weer, en ik heb ze eigenlijk nooit meer teruggezien, maar het mes bleef bij me. Het mes sprak zelfs. Het bleek een mes te zijn van mijn voorouders, en ik kon zo met hen en de goden spreken. Nu ben ik niet zo gelovig, en al helemaal niet zo familiaal, dus op een goede dag wierp ik het mes ver in de zee van bloed. Dat had ik beter niet kunnen doen, want de zwarte skeletten kwamen uit de zee, en waren des duivels. Toen heb ik het mes weer teruggenomen, en besefte dat er ook goede goden waren en goede families, waar ik deel aan scheen te hebben. Toch vond ik het eng, en later op een markt verkocht ik het voor veel geld. Het ding bleek veel waard te zijn, en later vroeg ik me af of ik er wel goed aan had gedaan het ding te verkopen. In ieder geval voelde ik me beter, en met het geld kon ik veel doen. Het was de eerste keer dat ik geld van de onderwereld in mijn handen had.

Ik leefde er goed van, kocht een bed, een kasteel, ridders, indianen, skeletten, en de hele rimram meer. Ik werd koning van de dood, althans dat dacht ik, want er schenen veel meer koningen hier te zijn. Eigenlijk ging het er allemaal erg vreedzaam aan toe. Iedereen had zijn eigen domein. In ieder geval was het hier het beste om het hoogste van het hoogste te zijn, anders werd er met je gesold. Vreemd genoeg kwam ik hier weinig varkensslagers tegen, en nog veel minder varkens. Ik

was diep in de onderwereld. Op een dag werd ik uitgenodigd door een andere koning van de dood, en die liet mij zijn kasteel zien, en vroeg even later of ik met zijn dochter wilde trouwen. Ik zei direkt dat ik niet aan die dingen doe, want stel je voor, dan kun je helemaal niet meer terug, plus dat alles hier levensgevaarlijk was. Mannen waren hier de slaven van de vrouwen.

De koning zelf was ook niet getrouwd, maar een paar van zijn zonen wel, en ik zag hoe ze door hun vrouwen werden toegetakeld. Ik was er zo naar van, dat ik eigenlijk direkt weer wilde vertrekken. Maar de beste man hield mij tegen. Hij liet mij een kamer zien met een soort dodentelevisie, dodenradio en nog wat technische dingen. Dat kende ik nog niet, en hij gaf me wat interessant spul mee. Het was door deze dodenapparatuur dat ik de onderwereld snel nog beter leerde kennen. Ik kon snel wapens bestellen, het beste van het beste, en leerde hoe ik hier zo snel mogelijk de rijkste kon worden, en al gauw was ik de keizer der doden, aangesteld over vele koningen der dood, en ik kreeg mijn eigen domein in een krater. Maar toen kwam ik in aanraking met een probleem. In het domein woonden vele varkensslagers en vele varkens, en dat moest ik op de koop toenemen. Ik deed geen oog meer dicht. Dus via de dodenapparatuur probeerde ik naar een hoger beroep te vissen, maar alles had te maken met varkens en varkensslagerijen. Die varkensslagers hadden de absolute macht, en waren de rijksten van de rijksten. Daar had ik dus helemaal geen zin in, en zo bleef ik de keizer der doden, maar ik kreeg er al snel nachtmerries van. De varkensslagers bezochten mij vaak en commandeerden me dat ik maar zo moest doen en zus moest doen, en zij lieten mij altijd heel duidelijk merken dat zij de touwtjes in handen hadden .... Niet de keizer, maar de varkensslagers maakten de dienst uit. Zo, die zat. En weet je nou wat het ergste was. Hoe langer ik hier bleef, des te meer ik op een varken begon te lijken, alsof er een vloek op me rustte. En ik kon niet meer terug.

Ik dacht : liever een varken dan een varkensslager, maar daar kwam ik snel van terug. Ik ging de oorlog aan tegen die varkens. Ik kocht een heleboel indianen in, skeletten, ridders, en nu zou ik dan de grote varkensslager der doden worden.

En wat kreeg ik ? Uitnodigingen. ‘Welkom in de orde der varkensslagers.’ Ik werd beter behandeld dan de keizer, werd overladen met kado’s, en mocht bij iedereen op visite komen. Ik kreeg en kap met een gewaad, en ik mocht mezelf skelet of halfskelet noemen, en ik had zoveel geld dat ik erin kon zwemmen. En dat deed ik dan ook. Ik scheen me steeds beter te voelen, terwijl anderen steeds depressiever werden. Ik had voor niemand tijd, want mijn nieuwe leven slokte mij helemaal op. Ik ging alleen nog om met andere varkensslagers, en had gevechten met ze. Soms waren er grote toernooien, waar alles om vrouwen ging. De winnaar kreeg dan één of andere belangrijke vrouw mee, maar ik zei al dat mannen hier de slaven van de vrouwen waren, en dat de vrouwen verschrikkelijke dingen met de mannen deden. Daarom ben ik die toernooien gaan ontlopen, want het eindigde toch altijd in de hel. Ik was een ridder, een poortwachter, en dat beviel me het best. Ik bleef op één plaats.

Ze noemden mij de poortwachter van de onderwereld. Ik dacht : het zal wel zo zijn. Heel soms ging ik weleens op uitnodigingen in van andere poortwachters, en zo belandde ik eens in een wel hele diepe krater. Het was het grootste domein wat ik ooit had gezien, en het joeg me schrik aan. De doodslucht die hier hing, verschrikkelijk. Ik kwam hier die rode slang weer tegen, en dat was maar goed ook, want ik raakte met die poortwachter in een verschrikkelijk gevecht. De rode slang redde voor de tweede keer mijn leven, en bracht me terug naar de bovenwereld, waar ik wakker werd. Het was een lange tocht geweest, een tocht die ik niet snel zou vergeten. De nacht erna gaf de rode slang mij een prachtige rode wapenrusting, en nam mij terug, ditmaal om de poortwachter te verslaan. De rode slang en een andere bruin en donker gestreepte doorzichtige slang zorgden ervoor dat dat domein nu van mij was, en dit was voor mij de poort om nog dieper in de onderwereld te komen.

Alles wat ik daar tegenkwam waren verschrikkelijke gevechten tussen poortwachters, en grote toernooien ..... Zij die wonnen kregen geen vrouwen, maar slangen, en toch leek me dat wel wat, want ik had meer met slangen dan met vrouwen. Ik won mezelf een leger van slangen, en kwam steeds dieper in de onderwereld terecht en kreeg steeds grotere terreinen. Ik dacht voorgoed van de varkensslagers af te zijn, maar hier zag ik ze weer. Ditmaal droegen ze vreemde kruizen en vreemde wielen, en waren de meesten geheel in het zwart verpakt : grote en vreemde zwarte pakken, en vreemde grote zwarte kappen, die soms op helmen leken. Waar ik terecht gekomen was wist ik niet. Ze spraken een vreemde taal, en ze bleken geheim gezelschap te hebben van vreemde slangen die in vrouwen konden veranderen. Het vreemde was dat ze niet tegen mij ingingen. Hun geld : slangentanden. Daar betaalden ze mee, en daarmee lieten ze hun werelden gestalte krijgen. Het leek op een vreemd kaartspel, alsof ze een groot spel speelden. Ik moest de spelregels leren kennen. Sommigen hadden rode dobbelstenen, gemaakt van zeldzame slangentanden.

Van een aardig wezen kreeg ik een huis, en hier moest ik beginnen. Het wezen leerde mij over goed voedsel dat hij in een ketel bereidde. Er waren hier ook wel eens toernooien, maar dan draaide alles om geld. Al snel won ik een paar toernooien, en werd de rijkste van allemaal. Ik kon kopen wat ik wilde. Ik baadde in rijkdom, en kreeg de centrale krater. Ik hield me veel bezig met mijn slangen, omdat die toch wel heel belangrijk voor me waren, en hun tanden waren een bron van inkomsten. Ze wisselden die tanden maandelijks, en sommigen dagelijks. Ik begon een slangen-kwekerij, maar dan op vriendschappelijke basis. Slangen waren mijn vrienden.

Ze noemden mij slangenvriend, en ze begrepen wel waarom. Terug naar huis wilde ik niet meer, totdat mijn moeder mij wekte.

Einde

Eén van Hen

Het mooiste wat je in je leven kan doen is te gaan naar plaatsen waar nog geen mens eerder is gekomen. Diep in de jungles van de inmens grote tropische regenwouden loopt een man eenzaam en verlaten, op zoek naar de laatste overblijfselen van wat eens het paradijs was. Een naakte vrouw ziet hem, draait haar gezicht van hem weg, en houdt haar handen ervoor. De man weet dat hij nu erg voorzichtig moet zijn. Zou zij van de Suebche-stam zijn ? Het zou de laatst overgebleven stam van het paradijs zijn. Plotseling is het alsof de vrouw door de bliksem wordt getroffen, en valt neer. De man rent op haar af, en de vrouw houd haar ogen stijf tegen elkaar.

‘Kus me,’ zegt de vrouw, ‘ik spreek jouw taal.’ Maar als de man het doet, krijgt hij een keiharde klap in zijn gezicht. De woorden ‘kus me’ betekenden hier iets heel anders. Hier werden dezelfde woorden gesproken, maar ze hadden andere betekenissen. De vrouw staat op, en rent weg. Dan begint ze te gillen, en al snel komen er naakte indianen haar tegemoet. Nu moet de man rennen voor zijn leven.

Een man wordt wakker met een bezweet gezicht. Hij ligt in zijn tentje diep in de jungle van het tropisch regenwoud, omdat hij op zoek is naar de laatste stam van het paradijs. Hij rekt zich goed uit, stapt zijn tentje uit, en bekijkt de prachtige vochtige en weelderige jungle die langzaam door het zonlicht overgoten wordt, en een zwoele vorm krijgt door alle weerspiegelingen. De temperatuur speelt hier met licht en schaduw, en de man knijpt even zijn ogen dicht om zichzelf één te maken met deze overweldigende natuur, en om zich te bezinnen op zijn opdracht.

Na een tijdje heeft hij zijn tentje opgerold, en trekt verder. Het is alsof de zon hem lokt, en het pad naar het paradijs hier in vleselijke gedaante voor hem ligt, een pad waarvan hij altijd dacht dat het onbereikbaar was, enkel zijn fantasie prikkelende. Diep in de jungle hoort hij de kreten van dieren, en hij vraagt zich af of de Suebche-stam nog steeds bestaat. Hij is niet gelovig, maar er wordt gezegd dat deze stam de laatst overgebleven stam van het paradijs is. Hij houdt het erop dat het het laatste stukje paradijs op aarde is, als de overblijfselen van de oertijd. Hij ziet het geloof als een poging om alles wat mooi is te bezitten. Maar dit hier is werkelijkheid, geen fantasie. Het geloof is zo ongrijpbaar, maar hier is alles vlees geworden.

In de verte hoort hij iemand zingen. Hij had hier eigenlijk geen mens verwacht. Hij dacht echt dat de stam zou zijn uitgestorven, maar wilde het toch met eigen ogen bewezen zien. Er kwam weer wat hoop in zijn hart toen hij het gezang hoorde. Hij loopt op het geluid af, en ziet een naakte vrouw in een kleine plas baden. Al snel heeft de vrouw hem in de gaten, en begint te gillen. 'Wat zijn ze paranoide ?' dacht de man bij zichzelf, glimlachend. Hij was absoluut niet bang, maar wel voorzichtig. Hij had er wel vertrouwen in dat het goed zou komen, maar de gil bleef als een echo in de lucht hangen. Het was de meest angstaanjagende kreet die hij ooit had gehoord, maar voor hem sprak het meer over de angst van de vrouw. Als zij van de Suebche-stam was, dan had ze nog nooit contact met de buitenwereld gehad.

De man is op zijn hoede. Als hij zich de woede van de stam op zijn hals haalt, dan is het afgelopen voor hem. Voorzichtig pakt hij een geknakte bloem van de grond af, steekt hem in zijn haar, glimlacht even, en houdt dan de bloem weer in zijn hand, alsof hij het de vrouw wil aanbieden. Ook de vrouw lijkt even te glimlachen, maar dan maken haar wenkbrauwen een gevaarlijke beweging, alsof ze van plan is hem aan te vliegen.

'Heus, ik wil je geen pijn doen,' fluistert de man zacht. Maar dat hoort ze niet. Ze staat nog te ver weg. Dan rent de vrouw weg. De man weet dat hij nu moet oppassen, want de Suebche-stam zou op alles jagen, en jagers waren ze als de beste. Na lang lopen probeert hij de natuur weer in zich op te nemen. De natuur vertoont een rijkdom die hij niet kent.

De man probeert zich weer te bezinnen op zijn opdracht. Ook bezint hij zich op zijn strategieen. Als de Suebche een zeker geloof hebben, dan zal hij daaraan tegemoet moeten komen, maar daar is niets over bekend. Hij besluit zijn intuitie te volgen.

Na een tijdje ziet hij in de verte een groep Suebche-meisjes als in een soort dans. Hij herkent het als een jacht-ritueel. Ze gillen heel luid, en hij weet even niet of hij blij moet zijn of niet, dat hij ze nu heeft gevonden. Hij vermoed dat hij nu dichtbij hun dorp of kamp is.

Een python staart hem aan, hypnotiserend. Bang voor pythons is hij niet. Hij schijnt een kalmerend effect op hen te hebben. Even denkt hij dat hij schrikt, als de python ineens tot hem spreekt. De python heeft een vochtige huid, met de prachtigste patronen en kleuren met hun schakeringen, en weer schijnt het zonlicht ermee te spelen. 'Waak op, zoon,' sprak de python. 'de Suebche hebben geen geloof. Zij leven in een fantasie.' De man keek op, en merkte dat het toch echt de python was die tot hem sprak. De python bewoog zijn enorme lichaam, en kwam iets dichterbij. Ook de man leek zich te openen, en bewoog iets dichterbij. Toen sprak de python verder : 'Zoon, zij leven in fantasie, de laatste overblijfselen van een echte fantasie-wereld. Daarom willen ze niets met de buitenwereld te maken hebben, en zullen ze je zeker doden als je dichterbij komt. Maar .... ik kan wel wat voor jou betekenen

.... Ik ken de Suebche, en zij kennen mij ....' De slang sprak bijna slaapverwekkend en heel geheimzinnig.

De man voelde een kracht door hem heenstromen die hij niet kende, iets heel vitaals, maar tegelijkertijd verzwakkend, alsof alle botten in hem doorspietst werden, of zelfs op een vreemde pijnloze manier werden gebroken.

'Deze fantasie was eens een algehele realiteit,' sprak de slang ineens veel luider, en zijn lichaam begon te ribbelen en in kracht op te komen. 'Maar zij die deel hadden aan deze fantasie begonnen de fantasie te verwerpen, en daarom trok de fantasie zich terug, eerst door vulkanen, later door overstromingen. De Suebche hebben zich altijd aan de fantasie vastgehouden, en niet gekozen voor ... het geloof ...'

'Maar is het geloof dan verkeerd ?' vroeg de man.

Toen vervolgde de slang : 'Zij die opgroeiden in het geloof moesten over het pad van geloof teruggaan naar de fantasie, maar velen blijven op dit pad steken, en zijn niet anders dan hun voorouders.' De ogen van de man begonnen geheimzinnig te glinsteren. 'Ben jij de slang van het paradijs ? Nee toch ?'

De slang gleed heel voorzichtig over zijn huid, en kreeg langzaam de man in zijn grip. De man was nog steeds niet bang, omdat hij zag dat de slang niets kwaads in de zin had. 'het geloof verzon haar eigen verhaal. Er zat wel een kern van waarheid in,' bromde de slang. 'Er was eens een soort paradijs, de fantasie, waar ik deel aan had. Maar het geloof heeft alles kapot gemaakt. Het paradijs was van mij, maar door het christelijk geloof werd ik afgeschilderd als een indringer die anderen zou weglokken. Het is juist net andersom gegaan. Ik wilde hen dieper erin laten wegzinken.'

De man begon te glunderen. Hier hoorde hij een hele andere kant van het verhaal. Hij zou wel een deel willen zijn van dat overblijfsel van die fantasie-wereld, hier zo diep in de jungles van het tropische regenwoud. De man voelde een enorme opgewondenheid opborrelen, en knuffelde de slang bijna. Hij wist wel dat hij dichtbij de python moest blijven, anders zou hij het niet meer kunnen navertellen.

Plotseling schrikt de man wakker. Was het allemaal maar een droom ? Wel een hele interessante droom, maar was het waar ? De man stapte zijn tentje uit, bekeek de natuur om zich heen die leek te ribbelen in het zonlicht als een zwoele extase die hij nog nooit eerder zo dichtbij had gevoeld, alsof het over zijn huid danste. Hij kneep zijn ogen stijf dicht, om één te worden met deze verlokkende, weelderige natuur. Wat kon hij verwachten ? Voor hem lag de nog donkere jungle van het tropische regen-oerwoud, lonkend, alsof het hem wilde omhelzen, wurgen ? Hij wist het niet. Het kon natuurlijk gevaarlijk zijn. De stam waar hij naar op zoek was had geen manieren. Als ze zich door hem bedreigd zouden voelen, dan zouden ze hem zeker vermoorden.

Opgewonden liep hij verder, nadat hij zijn spullen had gepakt. In de verte hoorde hij wat kreten die van dieren, maar ook van indianen konden zijn. Als het indianen waren, dan zou hij al heel dichtbij zijn. Hij dacht aan zijn dromen, en aan zijn opdracht. Plotseling sprong er een naakte vrouw vanuit een boom op hem. De vrouw had hem al snel in een wurggreep, en stak een soort gifpijltje in hem. Direkt legde hij het bijltje, en werd afgevoerd tot in het kamp. Ze legden hem in een wigwam waar hij na een paar uurtjes bijkwam. Ze gaven hem van een vreemd rood sap te drinken. De vrouw was bij hem en aaide hem. Dat was wel een vriendelijk gebaar, maar waartoe ? Als ze kanibalen zouden zijn, dan was dat allemaal maar ter voorbereiding van het vlees ? Maar goed, hij wist niet of ze kanibalen waren, en probeerde die gedachte snel weer te vergeten.

Hij voelde zich heel wat nu hij eindelijk de Suebche-stam had gevonden, zij die de buren van Adam en Eva geweest waren, in het paradijs. Dit was het laatste stukje paradijs, dat juist zo leefde, door hen. De vrouw glimlachte naar hem. Zou hij het straks kunnen navertellen, of eindigde alles hier ? Wilde hij het nog wel navertellen, of wilde hij hier altijd blijven, om te worden als hen ? Zijn lichaam trilde. Deze stam had nooit contact gehad met de buitenwereld.

Weer werd er een gifpijltje in hem gestoken, maar ditmaal viel hij niet bewusteloos. Hij werd overspoeld door warme gevoelens, alsof hij door de fantasie werd omhelsd. De vrouw legde haar handen tegen haar borst aan. Deze mensen hielden van de natuur, en hier was deze natuur zuiver.

De stam was heel vriendelijk naar hem, totdat één van de vrouwen een reusachtige vogelspin in haar hand nam, die ze haar hand liet opeten. Toen begon de horror, ook voor hem. Alles eindigde in een nachtmerrie, en gelukkig voor de man was het maar een droom. Hij werd wakker, en wist niet of hij er zo blij mee moest zijn. Want diep van binnen zou hij zijn leven wel willen geven om de laatste stam van het moederparadijs te vinden. Nu had hij weer bot gevangen. Het leek wel alsof het tropische oerwoud met hem speelde. Hij was moe in zijn benen, alsof een vreemd tropisch dier hem had uitgezogen. Hij keek naar zijn been, en zag een klein insect, en een heel klein wondje. Later voelde hij niets dan kracht door zijn benen vloeien, alsof het beestje hem bevrucht had.

Met stevige passen liep hij door. Hij was nu echt toe aan een ontmoeting. Hij hoopte dat als ze hem zouden zien ze hem meteen zouden omhelzen. Zouden hun goden hen niet kunnen vertellen dat hij eraan kwam ? Of geloofden ze niet in goden ? Misschien waren het wel hele vrije mensen, vol van paradijselijke fantasieen. De man voelde alsof hij van de grond op een boot stapte. Hier waren wat riviertjes, en die riviertjes leken wel vuil, maar vol van de jungle. Dat was beter dan die riviertjes die door fabrieken waren vervuild. Dit was natuurvuil. De man besloot te gaan zwemmen, en zag even later wat anaconda's paren in de rivier. Zulke orgieen konden wel enkele dagen duren. Zo bleven ze tenminste van hem af, alhoewel hij niet bang was voor slangen. Hij had altijd iets met slangen. Voor hem was het in

ieder geval al een prachtige reis geworden die hij nooit zou vergeten, of hij de Suebche nou zou vinden of niet. Eigenlijk deed het er niet meer zo toe, omdat hij helemaal door de natuur werd opgezogen. Zijn hoofd was ermee doordrenkt als met heerlijk geurende verf, als de bronnen van nieuwe fantasieen. Hier zou hij de rest van zijn leven over kunnen nadenken.

Hij zag de apen in hun bomen, en hij voelde zich intens gelukkig. Voor hem stoeiden wat andere slangen, en ook wat krokodillen kwamen vanaf de oevers in het water. Nu was het oppassen geblazen. Hij bleef doodstil liggen, en probeerde zo letterlijk naar de kant toe te drijven. Even later stapte hij uit het water. Een vrouw met hangborsten staarde hem aan. Ze leek paranoide, dus de man bewoog bijna niet. Hij wist niet wat hij kon verwachten. Zou ze wegrennen of hem bespringen ? ‘heus, ik doe je niets,’ fluisterde de man. De man voelde veel tederheid en een soort medelijden naar haar. verder kon hij het niet goed plaatsen. Hij wist ook niet of tederheid wel op z’n plaats was bij dit soort mensen. Dit moesten de Suebche dan zijn. De man stak zijn hand uit, en de vrouw keek naar zijn hand. Natuurlijk kende zij het handenschudden niet, maar de man wist niet wat hij anders moest doen. Toen maakte hij een omhels-beweging in de lucht. De vrouw bleef hem strak aankijken. Hij zag de angst in haar ogen. Zacht begon de man wat te zingen om haar gerust te stellen. De man zag bijna haar hart kloppen. Maar daar kwamen de krokodillen al aan. De vrouw stapte langzaam naar achteren, terwijl de man bleef staan. De man wilde weleens zien wat de vrouw zou doen. Het leek alsof de vrouw er niet om gaf. Net op tijd kon de man omhoog springen om een tak te grijpen. Toen zag hij ineens dat de vrouw glimlachte. Die momenten waren heel kostbaar voor hem.

Een hopeloosheid gleed over de man toen de vrouw hem weer strak aanstaarde, nu van een grotere afstand. Hij had het gevoel dat hij nooit geaccepteerd zou worden. Misschien was hij in hun ogen een gevallene, een verdoemde, iemand die het paradijs ooit had verlaten, en daarom nooit meer toegelaten mocht worden. Misschien was hij wel bestemd te branden in de hel, als ze daarin geloofden. Maar goed, hij kende hun geloof niet. Hij voelde zich een zondaar. Zij waren paradijselijk, en hij was beschaafd, burgerlijk, of misschien alleen een gevangene van de buitenwereld. Wat zou het hem kosten om bij hen binnen te kunnen komen ?

En ging het hem nog wel om de mensen, of ging het hem om de natuur. Hij zou zich goed kunnen vermaken in dit stukje paradijs op aarde zonder de mensen, zonder deze Suebche-stam.

‘Suebche,’ zei de man. De vrouw glimlachte. Een andere vrouw was erbij komen staan. Ze had een zorgelijke blik, en had een boog met pijlen. Langzaam greep ze één van haar pijlen, wilde schieten, maar de andere vrouw hield haar tegen. De vrouwen werden boos op elkaar, en er ontstond een gevecht. De man wist niet wat hij moest doen. De vechtende vrouwen waren naar elkaar aan het gillen, en rolden

over de grond. Nu wist de man hoe de stam met elkaar omgingen. ‘Suebche, Suebche,’ riep de man. De vrouwen lagen bijna in het water, en ze hadden niet in de gaten dat er krokodillen toesnelden. Plotseling dook de man in het water en greep één van de krokodillen. Als hij dat niet had gedaan dan was het kwaad al geschied. De vrouwen reageerden direkt en stopten het gevecht om voor de rest van de krokodillen dekking te zoeken. De vrouwen keken toe naar het gevecht tussen de man en de krokodil, alsof ze niet begrepen dat de man hun leven had gered. Of misschien gaven ze daar niets om. De man verwachtte wat hulp, maar kreeg die niet, en verdween telkens met de krokodil onder water. Na een tijdje ontsnapte de man, en greep zichzelf weer vast aan de oever. De vrouwen klapten in hun handen, op een vreemde manier.

‘Suebche, Suebche,’ zei de man. Hij had de indruk dat de vrouwen het wel interessant vonden. Ze waren net dieren. Volgens de man hadden ze geen hersenen, of waren ze gewoon niet beschaafd opgevoed. Ze wisten misschien niet wat ‘hulp’ betekende, en ‘zorg’. Ze verwaarloosden zichzelf en elkaar. Zo zagen ze er ook uit. Ze waren wilden.

De man bedacht voor zichzelf hoe hij contact kon maken. Weer omhelsde hij de lucht, en de vrouwen deden hem na, maar hij had niet de indruk dat ze wisten wat het betekende. Misschien waren ze niet slecht, maar gewoon erg naief, onwetend. Ze leken op wilde dieren, op beesten, en de man vond er eigenlijk niets menselijks in terug. Zij waren van het paradijs, en voor-menselijk. Zij wisten niet wat mensen waren, omdat ze nooit mensen hadden ontmoet. Misschien was dat de reden waarom ze de man interessant leken te vinden. Maar de man was op zijn hoede, want misschien was hij wel interessant om op hun bord te verschijnen als stukje vlees. Maar ja, dan waren ze wel erg geraffineerd. Als ze op jacht waren en hem als prooi zagen, dan hadden ze hem misschien allang afgeschoten. Ook wilde hij hen het voordeel van de twijfel geven, hoe gevaarlijk dat ook was. Hij koos ervoor om hen maar te vertrouwen, tot nu toe dan, en zette zijn pogingen tot communicatie voort. Als hij vriendschap met deze twee zou kunnen krijgen, dan was hij al een stuk verder, en zou dat misschien de basis zijn voor verdere vriendschappen.

Opeens werd er schel gefloten, voor de vrouwen een seintje dat ze moesten komen. Ze maakten wat ongemakkelijke gebaren om hem dat duidelijk te maken, en zo renden ze beiden weg. De man besloot maar gewoon te blijven. Misschien zouden ze hier wel terugkomen. Na een tijdje viel de man in slaap tegen een boom.

De volgende dag werd hij wakker door een ritselend geluid. Het was een anaconda. Het begin van een nieuwe dag. De man stond op, rekte zich uit, en ademde de warmte in van een nieuwe dag, direkt al zo heet. Hij voelde er eigenlijk meer voor om naar onbekende diersoorten op zoek te gaan. Het contact zoeken met een stam als deze ging zo moeizaam, alhoewel het eerste lijntje gelegd was. Het gevoel was als een sieraad die in zijn hoofd rinkelde, en die het zonlicht op allerlei manieren weerspiegelde. Het bracht zijn gevoel in een nieuwe staat van opwinding. Hij zag

de kleurigste dieren, zoals kikkers, hagedissen, salamanders, overgoten en betoverd door het zonlicht. De vrouwen kwamen niet terug, dus misschien hadden ze hun stam wel ingelicht en kregen ze geen permissie om terug te gaan. Hoe dan ook : ze waren nu op de hoogte. Ze wisten waar hij was, dus nu hing het van hen af. Maar tijd om te wachten had de man niet. Hij was met zoveel dingen bezig, en vond de dierenwereld en plantenwereld net zo interessant.

Een wulpse vrouw stond voor hem met pijl en boog. Ze mompelde wat, richte op hem, en wilde schieten. Net op tijd kon de man wegduiken, en rende weg. De vrouw kwam hem achterna. Misschien zag ze hem voor een dier aan, of misschien waren het kanibalen. Na een tijdje zocht de man veiligheid in een boom. Maar hij zag steeds meer vrouwen onder hem verschijnen. Na een tijdje hadden ze hem gezien, en begonnen te krijsen. Direkt werden er vele pijlen op de man afgeschoten. De man greep een liaan, en kwam op een volgende boom terecht. Dat ging wel snel met zo'n liaan, en al gauw begon hij er handigheid in te krijgen.

In de verte zag hij een dorpje, en omdat hij wist dat de vrouwen hem achterna zaten besloot hij maar gewoon een poging te wagen. Hij rende op het dorp af, in de hoop bescherming te vinden. Een oude man keek hem aan alsof hij de maan zag bloeden. De oude man wist niet wat hem overkwam. In de verte hoorde ze de gillende en joelende vrouwen. De man schoof een dierenhuid opzij en liet de man in zijn hut. Zouden dit weer andere stammen zijn, of gewoon een ander deel van de Suebche. De man wees op de oude man, en zei : 'Suebche'. Ook de oude man zei 'Suebche' alsof hij niet wist wat het betekende.

Dieper in de hut was een ander deel achter een grote lap van dierenhuid. Hier zag de man twee naakte vrouwen liggen. De oude man maakte een gebaar alsof hij de vrouwen aan de man schonk. De vrouwen waren paranoide. Misschien dachten ze dat de man een god was. De twee vrouwen knielden voor de man en hielden zijn handen teder vast. Toen begonnen ze zijn handen te strelen. Ook de oude man knielde. Dus knielen hadden ze wel geleerd, maar wat betekende het voor hen ? Misschien wel iets heel anders.

Even later ging de oude man weg. Eén van de vrouwen wilde met een touw de handen van de man vastbinden, en toen wist de man dat hij aan het verkeerde adres was gekomen. Tenzij hij gewoon niet wist wat dit vastbinden betekende. Was het een ritueel, of waren ze kanibalen, of was dit de manier waarop ze goden begroeten ? Voor de man was het een raadsel. De andere vrouw ging achter hem staan, en het leek alsof de man niet meer wegkon, tenzij hij het abrupt zou afkappen. In die mogelijkheid was hij, als hij het goed begreep. De man liet zich maar vastbinden, zolang hij zijn benen nog naar had. Ze lieten hem op de grond zitten, en maakten een soort soep wat hij mocht opdrinken. Hij wist dat ook dit gevaarlijk was, want als er slaapverwekkende stoffen in zaten, dan was het afgelopen met hem. Inderdaad zaten er slaapverwekkende stoffen in, maar dat bleek de regel hier te zijn. het was een deel van het voedsel. Zweterig werd hij even later wakker. Ze

hadden een deken over hem gelegd, en zijn handen waren nog steeds vastgebonden. De vrouwen lagen bij hem, en waren heel voorzichtig en vriendelijk, bijna goedaardig. Als ze kanibalen waren dan hadden ze hem allang geslacht, dacht de man. Hij voelde een warm branderig gevoel in zijn lichaam, door de soep, en dat voelde niet onprettig aan. De vrouwen waren teder, maar niet opdringerig. Zouden ze denken dat hij een god was, of gingen ze zo met gasten om ? Waarom moesten zijn handen vastgebonden zijn ? De deken was afgetrokken, en met een ander touw wilden ze zijn benen vastbinden. De vrouwen zagen er niet agressief uit, tenzij het een valstrik was. Hij kon zich er alleen niet tegen verzetten. Ze waren al zo aardig geweest, en misschien zou hij hen beledigen als hij het niet zou laten doen. Dan zouden ze hem misschien wegsturen, en kon hij weer helemaal overnieuw beginnen. Toch begon hij bang te worden, en begon meer en meer te zweten, zelfs te trillen. De vrouwen waren hier erg gevoelig voor, en probeerden hem op zijn gemak te stellen, alsof ze geen kwaad in de zin zouden hebben. Toen lag hij daar, vastgebonden aan handen en voeten, als een hopeloze prooi. Hij was nu totaal afhankelijk van hen. Weer gaven ze hem soep te drinken, of was het gewoon een sterk sap ? Weer viel hij in slaap. Ditmaal was het spul veel krachtiger, en in een grotere tent werd hij even later wakker. Hier waren een heleboel vrouwen, en niemand lag bij hem. Ze schenen hem allemaal te negeren. De man probeerde zichzelf los te krijgen, maar zonder succes.

De hele nacht lag hij wakker, en vroeg zich af wat voor spel dit was. Op een gegeven moment was hij het zat, probeerde op te staan, en huppelde de tent uit. Buiten waren mannelijke indianen om een vuur aan het dansen. Ze droegen veelal een heleboel kromme witte of grijze veren. ‘Kan iemand me vertellen wat hier aan de hand is ?’ vroeg de man. De indianen keken verbaasd op. Even later gingen ze door zonder aandacht aan hem te besteden. Hij kon hier niet weg, want dan zou hij een prooi van roofdieren kunnen worden in zo’n situatie. Dus hij ging maar weer terug naar zijn slaapplaats. Toen hij de volgende ochtend wakker werd waren de touwen verwijderd. Het leek nu alsof hij een deel van hen was. Niemand gedroeg zich speciaal naar hem. Hij was één van hen.

Einde

Maria en het Heilige Varken

Ik staarde naar de lange beker met de lange hals. Het was van een doorzichtig roze, als kristal of diamant, als een zeldzaam gesteente. 'Wat zit erin ?' vroeg ik.

'Varkenszaad,' zei hij. Ik proeste. 'Wacht,' zei ik.

'Drink ervan,' zei hij. 'Ach ja, het is gewoon perensap, maar het beeld het varkenszaad uit, wat het heilige varken aan de martelpaal uitstorte.'

'Okay,' zei ik. Ik nam wat van het perensap. 'Smaakt goed,' zei ik. Ze aanbaden hier Maria en het heilige varken. Ik was in een vreemde kerk terechtgekomen.

De Blinde Stad

Zij stelen dromen,

De wachters van een stad,

Zij stelen de verbeelding recht uit iemand's hart,

Deze stad kent geen medelij

Alles dor en droog,

Kinderen zijn hier niet,

Iedereen is hier oud,

Hier is slechts verdriet

Koude harten, lege hoofden,

Gevuld met hartvochtigheid,

Niemand kent geluk,

Wanneer de stad zich over hen spreidt

De stenen zijn roze, en ze draaien maar,

Zij brengen sneeuw, totdat iedereen bevriest,

Tot steen zullen zij worden in alle eeuwigheid,

Meedraaien zullen zij, om droom en plezier te stelen,

Tot roze steen zullen zij worden,

In deze stad van slechts verdriet,

Och, hoor toch naar mijn duistere lied

Ik ben een oude troubadour,

Ik heb het allemaal gezien,

Maar niemand gelooft mij,

Want zij hebben allemaal dezelfde droom van de stad gekregen,

Een droom dat zij nog steeds alles hebben,

Een droom van bedrog,

Zij zijn allen ziek

Och hoort toch naar mijn lied,

Zij hebben allen van het grachtwater van de stad gedronken,

Dieven en piraten zijn het,

Zij stelen en slapen, geeuwen en gapen,

En dromen dat zij niets hebben gedaan,

Och, deze stad is onder een vloek,

Zij zijn allen dik en vet,

Zij zijn de ondergang tegemoet gegaan

Ik zie de stenen draaien,

En alles weggraaien,

Eens was deze stad er niet,

Eens was er hier een rijke natuur,

Totdat de plaaggeesten kwamen

Zij bouwden deze stad,

Och luistert toch naar een oude troubadour,

Moet ik u smeken, of moet ik u slaan,

Waak op, waak op, of het is met ons gedaan

Zeven plaaggeesten op een rij,

In een pot leefden zij,

Oh wie heeft deze pot geopend ?

De eerste heet mankepoot, de tweede beelzebul, de derde je-weet-het-wel, de vierde ik-heb-hem-niet, de vijfde stuk verdriet, de zesde mijn geluk, de zevende ik-heb-je-tuk

Nu ik dit gezongen heb, zal ik niet meer leven,

Toe, schrijf mijn woorden op, zodat u eens uw bevrijding zal beleven,

Laat dit lied niet sterven in de wind,
Wacht totdat een kinderhart het vindt,
De sleutel is in mijn mouw,
Och, dat ik het toch zelf vertellen zou

En toen stierf de troubadour,
Zijn vrienden schreven het lied op,
En plakten het op de deur van het stadsbestuur,
De sleutel vonden ze in de mouw van de troubadour,
Maar ze wisten niet wat ze daarmee moesten doen

Een van de vrienden besloot de sleutel zolang bij hem te houden,
Ook stierf hiermee langzaam de herinnering aan de troubadour

Toen de burgemeester van de stad het lied las,
Verscheurde hij ter plekke het papier

Niemand had de troubadour gelooft,
Ook zijn vrienden zeiden dat hij gek was,
En zo leefde de stad voort in bedrog

Raakte je het steen aan,
Dan werd je betoverd,
En zo groeide de stad groter en groter,

Het roze steen leefde van de mensen,
At en at, en werd vet

Het roze steen begon steeds meer van de mensen te vragen

De heks is blind, en woont in de zee,
Waar haar zeepaardjes en dolfijnen haar overal naartoe brengen in haar koets,
Op haar wagen,
Zij heeft de zeven plaaggeesten uit hun pot vrijgezet,
Opdat zij de stad zouden bouwen

De blinde heks van de zee had honger,
Honger naar uitgesmeerde zieltjes,
Uitgesmeerd op brood

Het is een stad in de zee, maar niemand wist het,
De heks had al hun hoofden betoverd

De mensen aanbaden het roze steen,
Wat hun leven had gegeven

De kerken van het roze steen schoven door de stad,
Door de wondermacht van de mens gegeven,
Het schoof door 's mensens geloof,

Door trouw van het menselijk gelaat,

Oh, zedig schoof het door de stad,

Om de mens te wenken, om te zwaaien en kostelijk te bezitten,

Als een koning was het,

Ja, het roze steen had de stad geschapen

De blinde heks schuifelde door de stad,

Op zoek naar zieltjes,

Maar het roze steen waakte over hen,

Als de goede, trouwe herder,

Die zijn schapen verslond in de nacht,

Om hen mee te sleuren naar de onderwereld,

Naar een glitterwereld, van het roze vuur,

Van roze steen, draaiende in onze gedachtes,

Sussende alle pijn, verdraaiende al het gegriezel,

Bedekkende, wederopbouwende,

Totdat de morgenstond hen weer wakker wreef,

Die zachte morgen, oh goddelijk geluk,

Welzalig zijn hen die het roze steen aanbidden …

Van bedrog tot bedrog gaan zij …

De blinde heks …. draait het getij …

Als eb en vloed, het roze steen doet goed,

Zij draait, zij bedriegt, zij steelt de dromen,

Zij trekt de ziel tot gruwelijke grotten,

Maar laat het lichaam opstaan in een groot geluk,

In de handen van de plaaggeest ik-heb-je-tuk

De hersenen op sterk water,

Het hart in zeeketenen, de droom kapot,

Maar niemand merkt het, want het lichaam is vol van het roze geluk,

Het is als drugs, als rijp koren,

Als alcohol en dikke sigaretten,

Een sigaar erbij, mijnheer,

En een dikke krant,

De blinde heks heeft het niet meer

De blinde heks staat gierend op de trap,

Met haar oog voelt zij,

Zij kent deze drap,

Er is hier geen geneesheer voor te vinden,

Alle wegen lopen hier dood,

Een blinde leidt de blinden,

Maar zij voelt, en geeft hen grijps genot,

Graai maar, neem maar, heb maar lief,

Ik ben de kinderdief

Zo worden zij allen als haar,

Maar zij zien niet
Nee, niemand is opgewassen tegen het heks met het blinde oog,
Zij was maar met één oog geboren, en dat was blind,
Met één arm kan ze je grijpen,
Met één been kan ze je achterhalen,
Zij is het halve

Zo sterft zij langzaam in alle eeuwigheden,
Om velen mee te sleuren,
Zij heeft misgegrepen,
En is nu een ieders vijand geworden,
Deze stad is haar afschuwelijk geheim

Wie wegrent wordt verminkt,
Zij heeft alle dromen gestolen,
En geeft hen nu illusie op illusie,
Haar illusie

Wie wegrent wordt gepakt,
De blinde heks zal je stropen,
Zij is het halve

Zij wordt rijk aan jouw ellende,
En bedekt het met een roze doek

Een vrouw is gevallen,

Bedek haar met een roze doek,

Een mijnheer heeft een wond,

Bedek het met een roze doek,

Roze sluiers om haar paleis,

In de dieptes van de zee,

In de dieptes van de stad,

Waar haar roze hart klopt,

Zo roze dat het grijs is

De blinde heks wordt oud,

Men kan het aan haar zien,

Ze is de ouwe niet meer,

Ze is jong nu, en zij volgen haar tot de roze kerken,

Waar de plaaggeesten zwaaien en wenken

Ik-heb-je-tuk zit op de troon,

Hij heeft geschapen een wonderdroom,

Mijn geluk zit naast de troon,

Klaar om je te bespringen,

Hij klopt wat in zijn potje,

Roze smeersel

Het voelt koud aan,

Hij drinkt het met een rietje,

Hij plakt de zielen daarmee vast,

En verwend dan hun lichamen,

Ja, maak hen maar blind,

Zo blind als de blinde heks

Hij smeert het in hun ogen,

En spuit het zo naar binnen,

Dan neemt hij hen mee,

En draait hen in het rond,

Roze stenen zullen ze worden

Bevende van geluk draaien zij,

Oh, wat is het leven mooi,

Zij aanbidden de roze stenen,

Groei maar, roze stenen,

Wordt maar dik en vet,

Dan zal de stad groter groeien

De stad zweeft boven de zee, om alle levende schepselen naar binnen te zuigen,

Wat een grote onzichtbare zichtbare stad

Groei maar, stad,

Geef hen maar van alles wat,
Hun dromen zullen nooit uitkomen,
Hun wonden zullen nooit genezen,
Maar jij vertelt ze maar wat

Eet maar, stad, dikker zul je nog worden,
Dan zullen de mensen wel vergeten,
Dat ze net zo zijn als jij,
Zeven plaaggeesten op een rij

De zeven plaaggeesten marcheerden door de stad,
Mankepoot voorop,
Daarachter Beelzebul,
Daarachter je-weet-het-wel,
Daarachter ik-heb-hem-niet,
Daarachter stuk verdriet,
Daarachter mijn geluk,
En als laatste ik-heb-je-tuk

De macht van het grote woord,
Was de macht van het hangkoord,
Zij preekten in de kerken,
Om hen allen met het roze te bewerken

Stilletjes werden zij aanbeden,

Want zulke nette mannen,

Die mag je niet verbannen

Mankepoot sprak het woord,

En het roze geluk kwam voort,

Beelzebul sprak over hebt elkaar lief,

En daar kwam de dromendief,

Geen geluk kon zich werkelijk aarden,

Maar met wat bedrog kwam alles tot bedaren,

Je-weet-het-wel zegende het gehoor,

Zij zongen allemaal in koor,

Tot het roze gesteente wat hen gezaligd had,

Zij keken allen vroom op toen ik-heb-hem-niet bad,

Stuk verdriet kwam met de collecte bus,

Mijn geluk gaf hen allen een hand en een kus,

En koning ik-heb-je-tuk zei :

Ik heb u allen tuk,

Maar zij verstonden het niet,

Want zij hadden oren als een vergiet,

Zij dansten maar door,

Zij hadden zulk slecht gehoor,

Als doven kwamen zij tot de slager,

En het gedans ging al maar trager,

Maar goede dromen hadden zij,
Het was de kering van het getij

Deze stad als eb en vloed,
Niemand zag het vergoten bloed

De blinde heks daalde op hen neer,
De dominee had het niet meer

Oh, wat konden die kerken schuiven,
Langs de winkels, langs het meer,
Langs de grachten keer op keer,
Allen vonden zij groot geluk,
Zij waren in de handen van ik-heb-je-tuk

Een groot plaagheer is opgestaan,
De koning der plaagheren,
De zevende

Ik-heb-je-tuk zit op de troon,
En laat zijn kunstjes zien,
Allen buigen zij neer in aanbidding,
De dominee heeft met gezag en macht gesproken,
Vol ontzag volgen zij hem naar zijn huis,

Waar hij vervolgens hangt aan een kruis,

Oh ja, naast hem te hangen,

Dat is waar wij allen naar verlangen,

Doe nog eens wat van uw kunsten groot,

Ga nog lang niet dood

Ik-heb-je-tuk lacht en doet,

Zijn kruis is nu een vliegtuig,

Waar zij allen onder hangen,

Maar zij zijn blind van verlangen

Ik-heb-je-tuk, oh bedot ons,

Het kan ons allemaal niets meer schelen,

Niemand mag ons hier van helen,

Want als de heler helen moet,

Dan is dat iets wat hij maar ergens anders doet,

Zo praten wij in een kringetje,

Dat is toch wat wij willen,

Het leven is wonderschoon,

Vooral met zo'n koning,

Ik ben blij dat ik in deze stad woon,

Ik had dit voor geen goud willen missen, zeg,

Zij die hier niet wonen hebben grote pech,

Ja, grote pech zal het wezen,

Wanneer gij nooit over deze stad hebt gelezen

Stuk verdriet lacht zich krom,

Langzaam slaat hij zijn trom,

Er zijn weer veel doden gevallen,

En nu doen we vroom,

En vergeten alles in de roze droom,

Deze stad is gebouwd op been en bloed,

Het is wat een mens goed doet

De blinde heks is een taaie,

Maar zeker geen kwaaie,

Zie met wat ze ons heeft goedgedaan,

Zij droogde ons aller traan,

Als een lam bracht zij ons tot rustige wateren,

Tot goddelijke watervallen, zij bracht haar oordeel over de afschuwelijke kwallen,

Zij gaf ons een droom, en wijsheid in de tuin,

Zij leidde ons uit dat diepe, duistere dal,

Weg is de kwal,

We kunnen nu veilig geloven,

In het roze steen wat ons heeft doen beloven,

Dat wij haar altijd zullen volgen,

Ook al is de kwal nu verbolgen

Het roze steen heeft de kwal verslagen,
Wij kunnen haar nu volop behagen,
Alles doen wij voor haar,
Zuivere toewijding, en geen ja-maar,
Als slaven staan wij op haar kusten,
Toe steen, draai maar,
Maak het nieuwe getij klaar

Al onze dromen staan op de kust,
Zedelijk en goed uitgerust,
Vernieuwde dromen zal zij ons geven,
Zij is hierin heel bedreven

Ik zie het in de verte, die stad,
Het glinstert in de zee,
Als een oase in de woestenij,
Hoge muren, toe, zal ik ze beklimmen ?
Zoveel plaagheren die op de muren marcheren,
Zij hebben hun bogen klaar,
Om zielen tot het dodenrijk te trekken,
Maar roze lichamen worden aan hen gegeven,
Vreet je maar vol en dik,
Laat je spierbundels maar zien,
Opdat je het geheim niet zult vinden

Als deze dop op de fles gaat,
Is het geheim voor eeuwig verloren

Het goddelijk roze heeft de adel bekleed,
De troubadour speelt zijn snarenspel,
En de adel kijkt, en droomt weg,
Er zitten parels aan die snaren,
Hoe kan hij het lied zo mooi zingen ?
Als paarden beteugeld naar het bal,
Daar is het geheim, laten we zien wat het zeggen zal,
Nee maar, het is een kwal

Ik ontwaak aan de kust van een zwarte zee,
Bloed in het water,
Golven over mijn been,
Ik kan me niet bewegen,
Dan kijk ik op,
Ik zie een vrouw met lang haar, en een agent,
Met een kwal in een pot,
Het ding had me bijna doodgebeten,
Nee, nooit ga ik terug naar de roze stad,
Nee, nooit ga ik terug naar de roze stad

Dokter, kunt u me genezen,
Ik kan me niet bewegen,
Ik ben bang dat ik spoedig niet kan spreken,
Want ik ben in de roze stad geweest,
Het roze steen is in mijn gebeente

Ik kan u niet helpen, zegt de dokter,
U zult sterven en de stad zien,
In een ander licht,
Daar zult u leven tot in alle eeuwigheden,
Want werkelijk,
Van deze stad kan niemand vluchten,
Wij gingen daar allen heen,
Wij zijn er nooit van teruggekomen,
Heus, er is geen geneesmiddel hiervoor,
Het antwoord zit in je been

Ik kijk naar mijn been, en zie de sleutel,
Ik trek het eruit, het bloedt nog wel,
Dan kijk ik naar de dokter die in een kwal verandert,
Ik ren, ik ben er dus nog steeds niet uit,
Waar is hier de uitgang uit deze roze stad ?
Wie kan mij helpen, waar moet ik heen ?

Ik zie het lieve gezicht van de vrouw,
En het bezorgde gezicht van de agent,
Met de kwal in een pot,
Nog steeds heb ik de kwallensteek,
Nog steeds heb ik de roze steek,
Ik ben er nog niet van terug,
Ik lig hier nog dronken in het zand,
Op een donker strand

De agent neemt me op, en brengt me naar mijn huis,
Aan de muur hangt een groot kruis,
Nee, dit moet nog steeds de roze stad wezen,
Toen heeft hij mij op een schip gehesen,
Het schip hing hoog in de lucht,
Toen werden we de hemel in gedreven,
De kwal wilde ons aan stukken rijgen,
Een octopus, een grote octopus, zei mijn naam,
De stad riep mij, ik moest terug,
Maar de agent arresteerde de octopus, en stopte het in een pot,
Terwijl het lieve vrouwengezicht mij aankeek

Nee, nee, schreeuwde ik, ik vertrouw het niet,
Jullie zijn van de roze stad, dat kan niet anders,
Want alles is de roze stad …

Oh, roze stad, hoe kan ik je breken,
Oh roze stad, hoe kan ik je vergeten

De blinde heks houdt het geheim in haar hand als een ei van licht,
terwijl de roze stad over de zee zweeft, suizende, ruisende,
Totdat alles donker wordt

Laat me je inwijden in het roze ei,
Sprak de blinde heks,
Maar ik rende

Ik ren het bos in, maar alles is versierd met het roze,
Geen bos, alleen een roze stad

Ik ren en duik, en vlieg in de lucht,
Maar het roze zit me op de hielen,
De blinde heks heeft me gezien,
De kerken zitten me achterna,
Mijn gebeente is van het roze gesteente,
Geen dokter die me helpen kan,
Zij zijn allen stuk verdriet,
Plaagheer, plaaggeest, plaag geweest,
En nu ben ik hier

De blinde heks zit in haar boot,

In een roeibootje gaat zij over de rivier,

Een rotzooi is het hier,

Dit bos is vol van roze,

Dit bos is slechts een stad,

Er is geen uitweg hier

De blinde heks roeit, en dan krijst,

Haar bootje wordt door een zwart gat opgezogen,

Zomaar uit de modder kwam het opdagen,

Als een kasteel van grote orde,

Een boskasteel is het geweest,

Een boskasteel van grote rade,

Een boskasteel van harde zaken

De blinde heks moet voorkomen,

Het boskasteel bestraft haar luid,

Zij moet het bos verlaten

Zij jankt, zij weent, slaat woedend om haar heen,

Maar niets kan haar roze stad hier nog houden,

Zij moet vertrekken met al haar hebben en houwen

Dan smeekt zij, gilt zij, en zegt kom eens hier,
Maar niemand luistert naar haar,
Ze heeft niets meer te zeggen hier,
De deur van de boskoning staat op een kier,
Zo ontsnap ik uit de zee,
En dreef ik met het bootje mee

De boskoning is erg aardig,
Hij is aan het verjaren,
Ik bouw een stad,
Maar hij breekt het af,
En slaat mij op mijn vingers

Geen steden meer voor jou,
Maar bospaadjes,
Boskastelen, diep en ver,
Hoog en vol van waarheid,
Je hebt de waarheid gevonden in een pot met leugens,
Je hebt het roze ei verbroken, en bent binnengegaan,
Hier zijn de slierten niet meer roze, maar bosslierten,
Donker en dromerig, bestijg je paard,
Reis diep door de nacht, totdat je geheel van de roze droom ontwaakt

De roze stad is geen stad voor jou,

Het zijn vervelende mensen,

Zo'n stad zou je nooit wensen,

Niet wensen voor jou

Ik hoor het gekrijs van de heks in de verte,

Maar dan ebt het weg in de verte,

Is de roze stad nu eindelijk weggezonken ?

De blinde heks die is uitgeworpen verkoopt haar roze eieren aan de hooggeplaatsten,

Om een leger te vormen,

Het leger van een lam,

Een bloeddorstig lam,

Maar niemand wil haar eieren kopen

Dan verzint zij een sluw plannetje,

Zij zal nieuwe dromen maken,

Bosdromen, om het roze te bedekken,

Maar de bosdromen zullen wel volgepompt worden met het roze gas,

Goed verborgen onder de oppervlakte

Zo blaast zij haar poppen op,

Maar niemand wil hen kopen,

Ze raakt gefrustreerd,

En klagerig

Ze snelt tot de zeven plaaggeesten voor advies,

Maar zij zitten weer in hun pot,

En de blinde heks kan hen met geen mogelijkheid bevrijden,

Ook kan zij hen niet verstaan,

En zij kunnen haar niet verstaan

De roze stad is aan het slinken, aan het wegrotten,

Totdat het een oude tol is geworden,

De heks heeft weer misgegrepen,

En ook de zeven plaaggeesten rotten weg in hun pot,

De roze stad is niet meer,

Het roze ei verkoopt niet meer,

Hier is waar het roze pad doodloopt,

En daarachter een grote wildernis

Hier ligt een groot ei, waar niemand durft aan te zitten,

Een duister ei

Op een dag ontploft het,

En bloed spuit eruit voort,

Nee, de roze stad zal niet wederom rijzen,

De roze stad is verloren gegaan,

Geen stem wordt er nog in gehoord,

Het is weggeslonken, weggerot,

En het zal zijn pad niet terugvinden,

Het heeft zijn tijd gehad

De Vreemde Ontmoeting

Ze droeg altijd witte laarzen, en woonde op twee hoog. Op een dag was hij van de trap in het trappenhuis gevallen. Ze nam hem op, en om hem op te vrolijken nam ze hem mee naar de kermis, waar zij hem bracht tot een clown. Hij was verder niet verwond.

De clown slikte hem op, en hij kwam in een tunnel terecht waar mensen een carnavals optocht hielden. De tunnel eindigde in een woestijn aan de rand van een grote stad. Er werden hier overal markten gehouden.

Hij vroeg zich af waar ze was. Nu een tijdje spuwde de clown hem weer uit. Het was een grote machine. Ze stond daar en lachte. 'Voel je je alweer wat beter nu ?' vroeg ze.

'Dit is geweldig,' zei hij.

'Kom met me mee naar huis,' sprak ze. Ze nam hem bij de arm en leidde hem naar twee hoog. Binnengekomen kreeg hij een kopje koffie. Hij keek naar haar witte laarzen. Die waren wit als altijd.

Hij kon niet veel zeggen. 'Sprakeloos als altijd ?' vroeg ze. Hij knikte.

'Het geeft niet hoor,' zei ze.

'Ik moet gaan,' zei hij.

'Nee, blijf nog even,' zei ze. 'Ik wil je wat vertellen. De duinen hier vlakbij zijn zo

mooi. Heb je zin om daar een keer te wandelen ?'

'Best,' zei hij. 'Maar ik moet nu gaan.'

'Hoe laat zullen we afspreken. Vanavond om half zes ?' vroeg ze.

'Best,' zei hij.

'Dan zie ik je bij het muurtje,' zei ze.

Hij knikte, en verliet het pand. Zo gezegd zo gedaan. Om half zes stond hij bij het muurtje. Zij had hem daar al opgewacht. Samen liepen ze door het park naar de duinen. Zij had weer haar witte laarzen aan. 'Weet je,' zei ze. 'Ik denk er vaak over om de zee over te zwemmen tot dat eiland daar, ken je dat ? Lijkt me geweldig om daar te wonen, echt fantastisch, of op z'n minst om daar eens op vakantie te gaan. Gewoon in de wildernis leven, proberen te overleven. Er groeien daar veel wilde bessen.'

'Een bessen-menu, dat lijkt me wel wat,' zei hij. Hij begon wat trager te praten. Ze trok wat kleren uit, en rende naar het water. 'Kom mee,' riep ze.

'Dat mens is gek,' dacht hij bij zichzelf. Maar toch deed hij wat ze zei. Hij rende achter haar aan en toen het water in. 'Het is niet zo lang zwemmen,' riep ze. Na een tijdje stonden ze op het eiland. Het eiland stond inderdaad vol met bessenstruiken. Het leek wel alsof de bessen in zijn hoofd spraken. 'Het zijn erg krachtige bessen,' zei ze. 'Men noemt ze weleens heksen-bessen. Dat is omdat het volwaardig aan de voedsel-behoefte voldoet.'

'Heksen-bessen ?' vroeg hij.

Ze knikte. Ze liep op een struik af, en begon te plukken en te eten. Ook gaf ze bessen aan hem. De bessen waren erg voedzaam, en al snel hadden ze genoeg. Het was bijna als sap in hun mond. 'Hutje bouwen hier ?' vroeg ze. Hij knikte.

Die nacht droomde hij vreemd. Hij lag in haar armen als een kind bij zijn moeder. Ze was wat ouder dan hem. Hij droomde dat ze hem sleepte naar de kermis tot de clown, en dat hij weer een ritje maakte door de clown. De tunnel was weer vol met dansende mensen in een carnavals-optocht, en weer liep de tunnel uit op markten aan de rand van een woestijn, aan de rand van een grote stad. Hij ging toen de stad binnen. Er was overal graffiti hier. Hij werd duizelig en viel, en ze sleurde hem mee door de stad en toen door de markten tot de woestijn. Dit liep uit op een grote zee. De grootst mogelijke vissen zwommen in de zee.

Toen werd hij wakker. Zij lag aan de andere kant van de hut. Hij liep naar haar toe en ging in haar armen liggen. Zij ontving hem als een kind. Het voelde heel natuurlijk aan. Door de bessen werd hij kleiner, en zij werd groter, althans dat leek

zo in zijn dromen. Het leek wel alsof hij aan het ijlen was. Toen hij echt wakker werd de volgende dag voelde hij zich ziek.

'Misschien komt het door de bessen, als een zij-effect,' zei ze. Hij voelde zich flink beroerd. Hij kon niet meer goed nadenken. Ook kreeg hij last met het spreken. Alles ging steeds trager en moeizamer. Hij trilde. Met haar was niets aan de hand. 'Dit doe ik dus nooit meer,' zei hij. 'Ik heb het gevoel alsof ik doodga.' Zij maakte een kano en een peddel. Ze bracht hem in de kano, en begon te peddelen. Snel waren ze aan de overkant, waar ze hem naar een dokter bracht. 'U bent vergiftigd,' zei de dokter.

'Bessen ?' vroeg hij.

'Nee,' zei de dokter. 'Het eiland wat u heeft bezocht kent vreemde diersoorten, die een speciaal gas afscheiden. Het is zwaar giftig. Wist u niet dat het eiland verboden was ? Ik zou u hier eigenlijk voor moeten aangeven. U heeft waarschijnlijk de natuur daar zwaar verstoord.'

De dokter gaf hen pillen mee, die hij tweemaal daags moest slikken met water. Elke dag ging het een stukje beter met hem. Zij kwam hem vaak opzoeken. Dan hield hij zijn hand vast. 'Jammer dat het zo gelopen is,' zei ze. Hij knikte. 'Ik ben blij dat ik weer thuis ben,' zei hij.

'Thuis is toch het beste dan,' zei ze. 'Maar het was een goede ervaring.'

'Voor mij niet,' zei hij.

'Oh, waarom niet ?' vroeg ze. 'Alles moet je een keer meemaken.'

'Dat vind ik niet,' zei hij. 'Je kan ook gewoon je eigen weg gaan. Ik hoef niet alles mee te maken.'

Maar toen leek het wel alsof ze een beetje boos werd. 'Ik moet gaan,' zei ze.

'Nee, blijf nog even,' zei hij.

'Nee, geen sprake van,' zei ze. 'Je bent me nogal een betweter.'

'Jij anders ook,' zei hij.

'Dan is het beter dat het hier stopt,' zei ze. 'Wij kunnen niet met elkaar.'

'Eet maar wat bessen,' waren haar laatste woorden. Toen vertrok ze. Hij heeft haar nooit meer teruggezien.

Laura

de Indiaanse

Ze ging met rode bloemen over de huid van haar prooi. Toen wierp ze de prooi tussen de bruine bloemen. De bruine bloemen deden haar altijd zingen.

Ze kookte haar prooi op, en toen was de dag alweer om. Haar tent is wild, gemaakt van bizonvellen, zoals haar hart is. Haar tent is groot en harig, zoals haar hart is. Zij is de meesteres van de wildernis.

Wanneer zij haarzelf omdraait, jaagt zij. De prooi is op zijn hoede wanneer zij haar rug naar hen toekeert.

Diep in de wildernis woont zij. Diep in de wildernis troont zij. Er waren wat dingen die alleen zij kon weghalen. Daarom bezocht ik haar. Zij schreeuwde hard. Ik moest altijd op mijn hoede zijn. Ze liet rode bloemen over mijn huid heenglijden, en duwde mij vaak in de bruine bloemen. Grote bruine bloemenvelden liet ze mij zien, en daarachter was de hei.

Ze kon het mij niet uitleggen wat de hei was. Ze wilde daar eigenlijk niet komen, maar ik hielp haar daar. Toen wilde ze er zelfs wonen, maar eerst gebruikte ze het als jachtterrein. Ze had dikke, forse heupen. Ik bevroor altijd als ik haar zag. Ik kon haar niet de baas. Als ze haar dikke, forse heupen draaide was ik verloren.

Nog vaak ging ik terug naar Laura de indiaanse, want er waren dingen in mijn leven die alleen zij kon weghalen, dingen die alleen zij de baas kon zijn. Maar ik

zocht haar steeds minder op, omdat het leven mij opslokte. Altijd was ik druk. De rook van de stad hield mij tegen, had mij gevangen. Ook was ik een beetje bang voor Laura de indiaanse. Er was niemand zoals zij.

Nooit begreep ik waarom ze mijn huid bestreelde met rode bloemen. Het bleek een ritueel te zijn. Nooit begreep ik waarom ze me altijd duwde in de velden van bruine bloemen. De bruine bloemen deden haar zingen zodra ze ze zag.

Glorieus was haar speer, genadeloos haar mes. Op een dag bezocht ze de stad waarin ik was opgesloten, helemaal tot achter het rookgordijn. Ze liet mij daar de rode en bruine bloemen zien, en ik huilde. Ik miste hen. Zij was de natuur voor mij, de wildernis. Ze had mij veel geleerd. Ze zei dat ze nu op de hei woonde, en dat ze dat aan mij te danken had. Ik keek haar aan met grote ogen. Ze zei dat ik speciaal voor haar was, en wilde me weer meenemen. Ze wilde mij voor altijd vasthouden. Maar in paniek rende ik weg, en nooit heb ik haar teruggezien.

Nu slijten mijn dagen met gemengde gevoelens, wanneer ik denk aan Laura de indiaanse. Wilde dromen heb ik over haar, zoals haar hart wild was. Ik weet niet waar ze is, en ik durf niet op zoek te gaan. Misschien woont ze nog steeds op de heide. Ze vertelde me dat ze daar een huisje had, een hutje, of een tent. Ze deed er niet duidelijk over. Ze was altijd een beetje vaag, en het is nog maar vaag in mijn herinneringen. Toch wil ik haar niet verloren doen gaan in mijn herinneringen. Ik heb het gevoel dat ze belangrijk is, en dat ik haar nodig heb.

Elke avond brand ik een kaarsje voor haar, voor Laura de indiaanse. De dromen worden steeds wilder. Het is alsof ik bij haar hoor, en zij bij mij. Maar haar bezoeken durf ik niet. Ik zou op zoektocht kunnen gaan, maar de heide is groot, te groot. En misschien is ze daar allang weer vertrokken, want dit alles was lang geleden. Het lijkt wel alsof de herinneringen veranderen, alsof de tijd stilstaat. Ik bevries wanneer ik aan haar denk, maar wordt dan weer heel warm, en bang. Het is een vreemde mengeling van gevoelens en emoties, en vreemde gedachtes. Ik voel me dan heel extreem. De dromen beginnen me zelfs overdag te beheersen. Ik krijg haar niet meer uit mijn gedachtes weg lijkt het wel. Ik denk dat ik verliefd ben, op Laura de Indiaanse. We hadden het zo goed samen, en nu is alles weg. Ik kan alleen maar dromen.

Oh Laura de Indiaanse, wat is er toch van ons geworden,

We hadden het zo goed samen,

En je had zulke vreemde rituelen,

En dat past wel een beetje in mijn vreemde gedachtes,

Ik denk vaak aan je, en voel je altijd bij me,

Eigenlijk wordt het alleen maar sterker,

Blijf bij me, of kom weer terug,

Of is deze veranderende herinnering genoeg ?

Ik heb het gevoel dat je me nog steeds in de bruine bloemenvelden duwt,

Alsof ik wegzak in een diepe put,

Ik kan je niet bereiken, en weet ook niet of ik je wel wil bereiken,

Ik voel me zo gespleten,

Ik bekijk alles maar op een afstand,

Veilig achter de schermen van mijn herinneringen,

Maar het lijkt alsof je er doorheen breekt,

Op je hoge paard,

Je roept me, ik volg je,

Ja, ik hoor bij jou, maar de stad trekt me altijd weer weg

Voor het donker moeten we thuis zijn,

En dan krijgen we brood met melk,

Oh, Laura de Indiaanse,

Bij jou wil ik zijn.

Snelheids Duivel

Ze zaten hand in hand. Ze wilden elkaar niet verliezen. Ze waren bang, omdat zoveel relaties om hen heen stukliepen. 'Blijf alsjeblieft altijd eerlijk tegen me,' zei ze tegen hem. 'Praat alles met me uit.' Hij knikte. 'Natuurlijk schatje.'

'Ik heb zo vreemd gedroomd vannacht,' zei ze zachtjes. 'Waarover dan ?' vroeg hij.
'Over voeten,' zij ze.
'Voeten ?' vroeg hij. 'Wat deden die voeten dan ?'
'Ze speelden,' zei ze, 'en ze deden alsof ze machtig waren.'
Plotseling kreeg hij stuiptrekkingen, en viel op de grond. Er was schuim op zijn mond. Even later zat hij weer naast haar op de bank. Ze zei niets. 'Ga verder,' zei hij. 'Waar heb je nog meer over gedroomd ?' Maar het was alsof ze in zichzelf gekeerd was nu. 'Oh, niets,' zei ze. Hij keek haar aan. Haar lippen waren vol. Hij wilde haar kussen, maar het was alsof iets hem tegenhield.

'Het zijn de tuinen,' zei hij.
'Wat bedoel je ?' zei ze bijna fluisterend.
'Nou ....,' zei hij. Maar verder kwam hij niet.

'Ik moet gaan,' zei ze.
'Waarom ?' vroeg hij.
'Ik heb nog wat dingen te doen,' sprak ze, en vertrok.

Die nacht had hij een droom. Over voeten die als dieren waren, en die op jacht gingen. Het was een vreemde droom, en de volgende dag vertelde hij het aan haar. Haar lippen waren vol en een beetje vochtig. Hij wilde haar kussen, maar ze duwde hem van haar af. Ze was een beetje misselijk zei ze. Hij begreep haar niet. Sinds hij die stuiptrekkingen had deed ze ineens zo koud. Ze legde hem uit dat ze zich niet lekker voelde na het vertellen van haar droom, zoals hij zich ook niet lekker voelde.

'Wat is er dan met ons aan de hand ?' vroeg hij. Toen omhelsde ze hem met haar warme lichaam. 'Alsjeblieft, laat me nooit meer gaan,' zei ze. 'Natuurlijk niet, schatje,' zei hij. Ze drukte wat toetsen in op de telefoon, en belde iemand op. Ze raakte diep in gesprek, alsof ze hem helemaal had vergeten. Hij voelde nog steeds haar warme lichaam tegen zich aan. Toen ze had opgehangen begon ze te huilen. 'Ik voel me niet lekker,' zei ze. Hij nam haar nog dichter tegen zich aan. 'Misschien moet je er gewoon over praten,' zei hij.

'Het zijn de dromen,' zei ze.
'Waar heb je dan over gedroomd ?' vroeg hij.
Ze zei niets.
'Toe, je moet het me vertellen,' zei hij.

'Ik droomde over Klaas,' zei ze. 'Dat hij alleen die rivier overzwom, en verdronk.' Hij wiegde haar een beetje. Hij nam haar heupen vast. Opeens kreeg hij weer last van stuiptrekkingen, en viel neer. Midden in de nacht werd hij wakker, en ze hing wild over hem. Hij greep haar vast. Ze begon hem te kussen. 'Eindelijk ben je wakker,' zei ze. 'Je bent zo lang bewusteloos geweest. Ik heb je naar je bed getrokken.'

'Je bent sterk,' zei hij.

Ineens staat er een man in de deur-opening. Ze schrikken beiden. De man heeft een zwarte hoed op, en een wit gezicht, met verder een zwart lichaam met zwarte kleding. Maar dan is ook zijn gezicht zwart, en er rollen spinnen uit de pijpen van zijn jas. Een vreemde geur verspreid zich in de kamer. Ze horen geschreeuw. De man begint te lachen. Het is als het gebrul van een leeuw of een tijger.

'Ik ben een gek,' zei de man. 'Ik ben verschrikkelijk gestoord.' De man begint verschrikkelijk te gillen, en dan weer te lachen. Hij begint te bulderen van het lachen, totdat hij vuur spuwt in alle kleuren. 'Ik heb deze dromen gegeven !' schreewde hij. 'Ik ben een engel.' De man in bed krijgt weer stuiptrekkingen, en begint heen en weer te rollen. 'Indiaanse dromen,' zei de man in zwart. 'Ik ben een boodschapper, een shamaan. Ik heb een boodschap voor jullie. Er is iets achter jullie aan, en het zal jullie krijgen ook.' Toen was de man verdwenen.

'Bah,' zei de vrouw. 'Wat is dat ?' Maar de man in bed had nog steeds stuiptrekkingen.

Toen stond er ineens een clown voor hen. Hij had een rode jas aan met wat gele en gouden strepen. 'Kaartje ?' vroeg hij. Hij hield hen een kaartje voor. Nu viel de vrouw ook flauw. Hij nam hen in zijn armen, en begon te groeien, terwijl hij over de straten begon te racen, en in een vreemd vuur alles achter zich liet. Hij was een ware snelheids-duivel.

Het Labyrint

'Als ik in jouw spiegels kijk, ben ik altijd lelijk,' sprak ze.

'Dat komt...' zei hij aarzelend, 'omdat het de spiegels van de dwergen zijn.... eh... de boze dwergen dan, want de goede dwergen kunnen het niet wezen. Die doen zulke dingen niet.'

'Ja, maar wie leidt hen ?' vroeg ze.

'De heerser waarschijnlijk,' zei hij.

'Wie is de heerser ?' vroeg ze.

'Laat maar,' zei hij. 'We zitten nu eenmaal in dit duistere labyrint. We kunnen er niet uit, en we weten niet veel.'

'Alsjeblieft doe die spiegels dan weg,' zei ze. 'Ik kan er niet meer tegen. Ik vind je prachtig, dus je hoeft niet telkens in de spiegel te kijken of je haar wel goed zit, of dat je neus wel recht staat.'

'Je begrijpt het niet,' zei hij. 'Ik heb die spiegels nodig omdat ....'

Maar toen vielen ze beiden weer in slaap door de zachte winden van het labyrint.

Aan het meer op een klein strandje zat een dwerg op zijn fluit te spelen. Ik haaste me er naartoe. Al snel werd ik overvallen door struiken met scherpe doornen .... bessenstruiken. Daarachter waren de bessenbomen die daar weelderig groeiden. Ik probeerde te ontsnappen, maar kwam niet meer los. Ik werd in het meer getrokken. De bomen groeiden door tot in de dieptes van het meer. Het meer was langwerpig als een rivier. Ik kon de overkant zien. De dwerg speelde rustig door, en betoverde mij. Ik was nu een gevangene van het labyrint. Ik dwaalde rond over het zand, en zag een stad in de verte. Toen viel ook ik in slaap door de zachte winden van het labyrint.

'Mara, Mara,' zong de geest van het meer, de veerman, of beter gezegd de veerjongen. Ik zat in zijn boot en met zijn lange staf in het water kon hij de boot voortduwen. 'Mijn schreeuw heeft je gevonden,' zei de veerjongen. 'Ik zal je brengen naar de overkant van het meer, naar het paleis van de heerser en de prins.' Maar ik zakte weer weg. Ik werd door de wind opgenomen, en vloog richting het wazige, geestachtige paleis in de verte, als een paleis van mist, vage mist, weerspiegelingen. 'Ja, ja,' hoorde ik de geest roepen. 'Ja, ja, ja,' alsof hij iets probeerde af te zeggen. 'En dan ben ik klaar.' Ik zakte weg, als in een rozentuin. Vreemde bessenbomen, weelderige bessenbomen en struiken hingen over mij. Ze hadden hun doornen verloren. 'Ik breek !' schreeuwde de geest. Er was alsof er iets knapte in mij. Ik steeg op, en verliet de aarde. Ik bevond mij boven een woeste zee. 'Houd moed!' werd er geroepen. Ze probeerden mij op een schip te heisen. Ik zag zeemannen die er lichtelijk als piraten uitzagen, en een kapitein. Ze smeerden mij in met schuim.

'Tegen de draken,' zeiden ze. 'De zeedraken. Ze hadden je. Maar nu hebben wij jou.' Ik waggelde als een beschonkene, alsof ik teveel bier of andere sterke drank had gedronken. Ze wasten me in een teil van sterke drank en bier even later. Het tintelde op mijn lichaam. Mijn huid glanste in de zon. Het was bijna plakkerig, alsof er een olie-laagje op mijn huid zat nu.

De wanen hadden hem in zijn macht. Hij werd wakker met een zoutachtige smaak in zijn mond aan het hete strand. Het was warm en de zwoele zeewind overweldigde hem.

'Dodelijke spiegels zijn het,' werd er gejammerd. Er waren er meer die er onder leden. Boze dwergen hadden die spiegels gesmeed, van zwart goud, behekst. Het was alsof er een holte in was waar je doorheen kon rollen. De heerser had hen waarschijnlijk daartoe geinspireerd of zelfs hen daartoe opdracht gegeven. Waarschijnlijk zou de prins nog daartegen hebben gevochten, maar het mocht niet baten. De heerser had het voor het zeggen.

Het zwarte goud was een edel familie-geschenk, om de banden in stand te houden. Maar waar leidde het hen naartoe ? Naar hel en verdoemenis ... scheen het. Niemand wist wat er mee te beginnen. Alles leek zo hopeloos. Ze waren in de ban van het zwarte goud, wat de toekomst zou kunnen voorspellen. De leugenaar woonde in hen.

Ze zit aan het strand met een klein dwergje. In de verte ziet ze de torens. Ze komen snel voort vanuit de zee, omgeven met een lichte mist. Golven spoelen aan. Ze zoekt naar boodschappen gebracht door pijn. In de pijn ziet ze visioenen. De pijn laat haar wanen. In de pijn hoort ze het gejoel van indianen, als het gejoel van hyena's. Ze gaat languit liggen in het hete zand, en voelt dan zanderige lippen op haar. Ze glijdt weg in de slaap, als een gevangene van het labyrint. Wie heeft dat

labryrint gebouwd ?
Ze ziet boten in de verte, die metaal voortbrengen. Maar zij blijft dichtbij de bessen.

De Monster Meester

Grimhaldt was een tovermeester van vele monsters. Zijn grote vijand was Aswaldt, de koning der skeletten. Grimhaldt was in zijn toverkamer de meest verschrikkelijke drankjes aan het brouwen. Grimhaldt had een heleboel schatten verborgen onder de aarde die bewaakt werden door wachters die eruit zagen als voeten : grote voeten en kleine voeten. Het was een vreemd ras wat hij ooit eens verslagen had, en sindsdien moesten zij zijn schatten bewaken. Aartslepal was zo’n voet, en was van top tot teen bewapend. Hij was de hoofdman van de voetwezens. Grimhaldt was erg trots op hem en had hem bekleed met de prachtigste sieraden.

Op een dag was er een belangrijke ring van Grimhaldt gestolen. Het was een ring waarmee bepaalde toverboeken geopend konden worden, en alleen bij het licht van die ring gelezen konden worden. Grimhaldt was woedend en riep Aartslepal bij zich. Hij ontdeed Aartslepal van zijn sieraden en zond hem uit zijn grottenstelsel de kou in. Aartslepal maakte een lange reis door het sneeuw en over het ijs, een reis die hij bijna niet zou overleven, maar hij was nu in ieder geval wel vrij. Na long lopen kwam hij aan bij een groot kasteel, als een spookslot. De muren waren lang en overal stonden skeletten.

Het kasteel was min of meer van botten gemaakt, en er hing een vreemde geur. Toen Grimhaldt merkte dat Aartslepal de tocht had overleefd was hij buiten zichzelf van woede. Hij greep een paar van de voetwezens die nog steeds wachters waren van zijn schatten, en wierp de wachters in zijn ketel voor een nieuwe toverdrank. Toen de toverdrank klaar was liep hij ermee naar een paar toverboeken die nog nooit geopend waren. Met een druppel in het slot kon hij elk boek openen. Nu kwamen de grootst mogelijke monsters vrij. Ook nam Grimhaldt zelf een slok van het mengsel en maakte samen met de monsters een reis naar het spookslot. Grimhaldt stormde naar binnen en kwam al snel in gevecht met Aswaldt de skelettenkoning. Maar de skeletten waren veel sterker dan het leger van Grimhaldt. Aswaldt trok zijn mes en stak het in het hart van Grimhaldt. Nu zou je denken dat nu Grimhaldt was verslagen zijn wachters wel makkelijk bevrijd konden worden, maar niets is minder waar. De wachters van Grimhaldt leefden diep onder de grond.

Het was een uittocht die vele jaren duurde. Vele kostbaarheden die diep onder de aarde lagen kwamen vrij. Het belangrijkste was wel de spiegel van

Grimhaldt waarmee hij zijn toverijen bedreef. De wachters van die spiegel had hij zo dronken gemaakt en zo gevaarlijk dat er geen overwinning mogelijk was. Het waren de wachters zelf die overwinning behaalden door de spiegel. En zo kregen uiteindelijk de wachters het spookslot in handen, en begon Aswaldt zijn grote reis naar de eeuwigheid.

De Banaanse Sinaasappelkoning

Er waren eens een man en een vrouw in een tuin met sinaasappelbomen. Plotseling verscheen er een banaan met sieraden in de struiken tussen de sinaasappels. De man en de vrouw dachten dat het een slang was, en bekogelden de banaan met sinaasappels. ‘Weten jullie wel wie ik ben ?’ sprak de banaan met sieraden. ‘Ik ben de koning van de sinaasappels.’ En hij begon de sinaasappels met zo’n vaart terug te slaan dat de man en de vrouw onder de sinaasappelsap kwamen te zitten. De banaan met sieraden bleef maar gooien, totdat er een zee van sinaasappelsap was ontstaan. De man en de vrouw riepen om hulp. Maar na een tijdje kreeg de banaan met sieraden medelijden met hen, en liet hen op zijn rug zitten, anders zouden ze verdrinken. Hij bracht hen naar een eiland waar ook komkommers en bananen waren. Er waren ook een bananenkoning en een komkommerkoning, en zij hadden wel trek in wat sinaasappelsap. Maar zij dronken daar zoveel van dat de banaanse sinaasappelkoning boos terugkwam, en met zoveel sinaasappels begon te gooien dat zelfs het eiland overstroomde. Het werd een woeste zee van sinaasappelsap, waarin zelfs de banaanse sinaasappelkoning dreigde te verdrinken. Gelukkig kon de komkommerkoning vliegen en nam ze allen op zijn rug. Hij vloog naar een meloen in de lucht. De meloen nam ze naar binnen, en vroeg wie de schuldige was. Allen wezen ze naar de sinaasappelkoning, die door de meloen direkt weer in de sinaasappelzee werd geworpen. Maar later kreeg de meloen spijt, en dronk de hele sinaasappelzee leeg. De banaanse sinaasappelkoning verstopte zich weer tussen de sinaasappelbomen in de tuin. Op een dag kwamen er weer een man en een vrouw in de tuin. Toen ze de banaanse sinaasappelkoning zagen begonnen ze met sinaasappels naar hem te gooien, omdat ze dachten dat het een slang was. Maar ditmaal gooide de banaanse sinaasappelkoning niks terug, en besloot ook om maar niks te zeggen, want hij wist waar dat op uit kon lopen.

Die Nacht ...

Ik had niet in haar ogen moeten kijken, maar het is te laat …

Ik werd gehypnotiseerd en viel op de grond …

Nu heb ik één en al pijn, alsof ik in het web van een spin ben …

Je glimlach was slechts vals …

Oh, hoe kon ik zo stom zijn …

Maar ja, wat moest ik dan ?

Mijn leven was al zo naar … Ik moest wel wat …

En misschien beschermde dit me wel tegen nog iets ergers …

Maar … als ik in je ogen kijk dan voel ik me zo verloren …

Jij en je boog … Je hebt me goed geraakt …

Ik kan mijn weg niet meer terug vinden, en misschien wil ik dat ook wel niet …

Ik kan me herinneren toen je dicht bij me was, maar nu ben je zo afstandelijk,

onbereikbaar … Dat wat ik voelde heb ik niet meer … Het is weg …

Ik voel me zo verward, alsof ik vergiftigd ben …

Heb je mij gestoken ? En waartoe ?

Ik woel in mijn bed, ik durf niet meer te slapen, en dan zie ik jou …

Met je boog op oorlogspad … Ik hoor je stem weer, en dan glijden de herinneringen weer door me heen … Jij was die ene nacht …

De nacht dat ik brak, de nacht dat ik niet meer op kon staan … Die nacht … Jij …

Het Duistere Sprookje van de Donkere Kaas

Een jongen moest van zijn moeder naar de kaasmarkt om een pond kaas te halen.

Toen hij daar aankwam stonden er drie indiaanse vrouwen met blote voeten op de tafel van een marktkraam, en er was alleen maar donkere kaas. De jongen moest de vrouwenvoeten kussen voordat hij de kaas meekreeg. Ook moest hij betalen, en het was erg duur. De jongen vond het een beetje vreemd, maar hij wist dat hij niet moest proberen zonder kaas thuis te komen, dus hij stemde er mee in en kuste de vrouwenvoeten. Toen hij het verhaal aan zijn moeder vertelde was die woedend. Ze pakte de jongen bij de hand en ging met hem naar de kaasmarkt.

De jongen en zijn moeder werden vervolgens neergeslagen. Later werden ze wakker in een kooi. Twee bandieten keken hen aan. De jongen probeerde te praten, maar merkte dat hij niets kon zeggen. Zijn moeder was woest. "Wat heeft dat te betekenen ?" brulde ze. De bandieten glimlachten. "We kunnen er niets aan doen, mevrouw," spraken ze. "Er is een nieuwe directeur, en die wil donkere kaas."

"Maar waarom zijn we hier ?" brulde de vrouw woest. "Wat heeft dit in godsnaam te betekenen ?"

"Sorry, mevrouw," sprak één van de bandieten. "Orders van de baas."

"En wat nu ?" vroeg de vrouw. "Dus we kunnen niet eens meer zomaar een markt bezoeken zonder overvallen te worden, en mijn zoon moet eerst de voeten van drie indiaanse vrouwen kussen en veel betalen voordat hij kaas meekrijgt, en dan ook nog donkere kaas ?"

"Wat is er mis met donkere kaas, mevrouw ?" vroeg de bandiet.

"Helemaal niks," zuchtte de vrouw. "Maar wat heeft de rest er allemaal mee te maken ?"

"Zo wordt nu eenmaal donkere kaas geserveerd, mevrouw," spraken de bandieten.

"Het is me nogal een zootje," sprak de vrouw. "En wat nu ? Gaan jullie mij ook nog mijn zoon afnemen ?"

"U gaat opgehangen worden," spraken de bandieten.

En zo gebeurde het. De vrouw werd opgehangen, en de jongen moest op de donkere kaasmarkt werken.

Een man stopte met lezen. "Ik heb nog nooit zo'n dom verhaal gehoord," sprak de man tegen zichzelf. "Moet je dit eens lezen," zei hij even later tegen zijn vrouw. Toen de vrouw het had gelezen barste ze in lachen uit. "Donkere kaas ? Is dit echt of een verhaal ?" vroeg ze verbaasd.

"Echt denk ik," sprak de man. "Het is de krant."

"Dat zegt vandaag niet zoveel," sprak de vrouw. "Bij de krant werken allemaal grapjassen vandaag de dag. Ik zal eens kijken in de supermarkt morgen, of ze nu ook daadwerkelijk donkere kaas verkopen."

"Ik zou het maar niet doen," sprak de man. "Waarschijnlijk gebeurd dan hetzelfde met jou als met de vrouw uit het verhaal."

De volgende dag kwam de vrouw thuis met donkere kaas, en hield een pond voor de neus van haar man. "Zie, niks gebeurd," sprak ze trots.

"Dat moet nog gebeuren," sprak de man. "We kunnen de krant maar beter serieus nemen, anders horen we er niet meer bij, en sluiten ze ons misschien wel op in het gekkenhuis."

"Ach, klets niet," sprak de vrouw. "Je hebt teveel babbels en teveel tv gekeken."

In de nacht stierf de vrouw. Toen de man 's ochtends ontwaakte slaakte hij een gil. Het moest wel van de donkere kaas komen. Hij maakte de dag ervoor maar wat grapjes, maar nu bleek het toch menens te zijn. Misschien was er wel een duistere vloek op de donkere kaas.

"Ik kan het niet geloven dat nu mijn vrouw dood is," sprak de man tegen zichzelf, "maar het was niet zo'n beste, en lang leve de lol. Ik ga er op uit, en zal een betere vrouw vinden."

Een man klikt de tv uit. "Teveel rommel op de tv vandaag de dag. Donkere kaas ? Wat een stelletje gekken." Hij gaat naar bed, en heeft die nacht nachtmerries over donkere kaas. Hij moet de voeten van indiaanse vrouwen kussen. "Zeg, ben ik dan nu op tv ?" bulderde de man. "Want gisteren was dit op de tv, en nu ben ik hier, net zoals die jongen uit dat verhaal. En nu moet ik zeker ook duur betalen voor die donkere kaas ?"

Toen werd hij op zijn hoofd geslagen en werd wakker in zweet. Hij begon om zich heen te grijpen en had ademhalings-moeilijkheden. De volgende dag vertelde hij

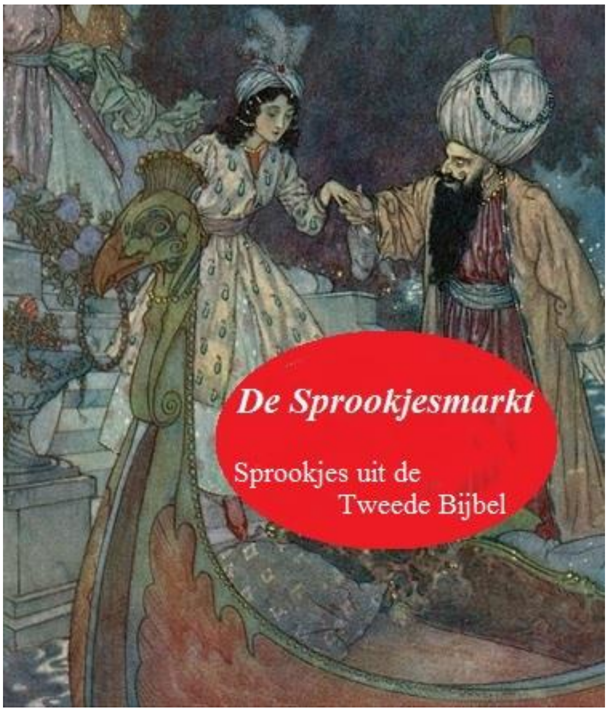
het aan de dokter. De dokter dacht dat hij gek aan het worden was, en liet hem niet meer gaan. "Alzheimer waarschijnlijk," sprak de dokter. "U heeft betere zorg nodig," sprak de dokter.

"Ja, maar ik ben nog jong," sprak de man.

"Niets mee te maken," sprak de dokter. "U komt hier niet meer weg."

"Het moet die donkere kaas zijn," sprak de man tegen zichzelf.

Hij werd opgesloten en stierf een eenzame dood, en hij kon alleen maar denken aan donkere kaas.


De Sprookjesmarkt
Sprookjes uit de
Tweede Bijbel

COAB 2000-2017

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Voorwoord

Als kind zijnde vroeg ik me af waarom er geen sprookjes in de bijbel stonden.
Eén van mijn vriendjes, die ook een klasgenoot was, had Anton Pieck, de schilder en ontwerper van de Efteling, als opa.
Het was een mooie dag toen ik Anton Pieck mocht ontmoeten.
Hij maakte ook een portret-tekening van mij.

Werken met sprookjes is een hemelse missie.
Sprookjes waren mijn passie en obsessie, en ik wilde ook zoals Anton Pieck worden.
Ik wilde een eigen sprookjespark maken.
Ik wilde dit noemen : De Drokelaar.
De eerste bijbel heeft dan wel geen sprookjes, maar de tweede bijbel staat boordevol sprookjes met een hele diepe betekenis, en zo hoort het ook.

Ik droom weleens over een tweede bijbel park, maar dan weet ik dus wel dat er geen gevaarlijke machines inkomen, en geen machines die moeder natuur om zeep zouden kunnen helpen.
Ook moet het in bosgebied zijn en gratis.
Omdat beelden een grote liefde van me zijn moeten er veel beelden in zijn, althans dat is mijn droom, en ik ga er lekker niets aan doen om die droom uit te laten komen, want die droom die kan wel voor zichzelf zorgen.
Een nog wel grotere droom van mij is een tweede bijbel bibliotheek, maar dat kan mooi op het internet.
De tweede bijbel is het grootste esoterische werk ooit, en ik vraag me af hoe het ooit allemaal op internet zal komen.
En dan is er ook nog een deel wat in de tijden verloren is geraakt, weggeraakt of zelfs gestolen.
De ware tweede bijbel is ook niet iets materieels. Het is in de hogere dimensie.

Wat u nu voor u heeft, beste lezer, is een verzameling sprookjes van de Tweede Bijbel. Het zijn de sprookjes waarmee de heiligen in de bloemenzee elkaar versieren, wat beschreven staat in het Eeuwig Evangelie. Eerst komen de grote wereldschepen hen halen, wanneer ze los zijn gekomen van het lagere aardse materialisme. Wat zal dat straks een belevenis zijn. En nu is dit proces al gaande in de hogere sferen. Staan wij daar voor open ? Wij mogen er nu al aan deelhebben, en vandaar dit boek. Natuurlijk is dit nog maar een glimp van de tweede bijbel, de hemel en het paradijs. Er is veel meer.

Al deze sprookjes, en of het nu lange sprookjes zijn of de zogenaamde flits-sprookjes, hebben een diepere betekenis en houden met elkaar verband. Het zijn dus puzzelstukjes, fragmenten, waarmee de heiligen elkaar toerusten en bewapenen. Er is nog steeds een grote en goede strijd te voeren. Hier is een stuk van het arsenaal.

Ik groet u,
De Uitgever, 2017

Blauwstaartje

Blauwstaartje was een visje in een hele diepe oceaan. De visjes noemden hem blauwstaartje omdat hij bijna geheel wit was, alleen met een blauw staartje. Op de vissenschool kregen ze les van een oude grote blauwe vis. Als die vis boos werd dan kon je je maar beter verbergen, want dan blies hij met al zijn kracht het water naar je toe, en begon hij vreselijk met zijn vin en staart te klapperen. Blauwstaartje was altijd een beetje bang voor die grote blauwe vis, maar de andere visjes vonden hem maar een bangerd.

Ook kregen ze les van een zeeslang met blauwe en witte strepen, en als laatste van de blauwe zeester. Blauwstaartje vond geen van zijn onderwijzers aardig. Ze waren alledrie erg streng. Maar de visjes uit zijn klas vonden dat hij zich niet moest aanstellen.

Op een dag was het feest op school, en maakten ze met z’n allen een schoolreisje naar de oppervlakte van de oceaan. Hier was Blauwstaartje nog nooit geweest, en hij keek zijn ogen uit. In de verte zagen ze een schip met mensen erop. Blauwstaartje zou wel een mens willen zijn, want zij hadden benen. Blauwstaartje zou heel graag op het land willen wonen, maar de meester had altijd gezegd dat ze op het vaste land oorlog maakten. Op een dag vertelde de oude blauwe zeester een verhaal over een meisje van het vaste land die een vis wilde worden. Blauwstaartje vond het een droevig verhaal. Het meisje ging

vaak naar de zee, omdat ze niet tegen het geruzie van mensen kon. Op een dag was ze het zo beu dat ze de zee inging, maar door een grote golf werd ze meegesleurd en verdronk.

Blauwstaartje moest altijd erg huilen als hij het verhaal hoorde. Blauwstaartje zou heel graag een mens met benen willen zijn. Dan zou hij misschien wat aan al dat geruzie kunnen doen, en dan hoefde er ook niemand meer weg te lopen om te verdrinken. Op een dag vertelde Blauwstaartje na de les aan de zeeslang met blauwe en witte strepen dat hij graag een mens zou willen worden. Hij vroeg de zeeslang om raad, want hij wist niet hoe hij dat kon worden.

'Jongen, doe maar niet zo dom, want mensen maken altijd ruzie,' zei de zeeslang. 'En bovendien zou ik niet weten hoe je mens zou moeten worden. Volgens mij is dat onmogelijk. Je moet gewoon je best blijven doen hier op school, om een keurig nette vis te worden. Haal al die verhaaltjes van je maar uit je hoofd. Dat is veel beter.'

Maar toen ging Blauwstaartje naar de blauwe zeester, en vertelde hem hetzelfde, dat hij graag een mens wilde worden. De blauwe zeester begon een beetje te brommen, en zei dat hij eigenlijk geen tijd had voor zulke onzin. 'Je bent niet voor niets een vis,' zei de zeester. 'Wat je bent moet je blijven, en trouwens zou ik niet weten hoe je een mens zou kunnen worden. Ik vind het maar een domme wens. Mensen zijn slecht en zijn geboren om oorlog te maken. Zet het maar zo snel mogelijk uit je hoofd, want van jouw plannen komt toch niets terecht.'

Teleurgesteld ging Blauwstaartje als laatste naar de grote blauwe vis, maar die werd direkt zo boos dat Blauwstaartje maar gauw weer vertrok. De volgende dag vertelde de blauwe vis in de les wat er was gebeurd, en begon Blauwstaartje nog eens extra uit te lachen. Ook de visjes van de klas begonnen Blauwstaartje uit te lachen. Na de les ging Blauwstaartje extra snel naar huis, omdat hij verder niet gepest wilde worden, maar de visjes van zijn klas volgden hem snel, en begonnen om zijn huisje heen te zwemmen. 'Ha, ha ha,' lachten ze, 'wat een dommerik. Hij wil mens worden !' Maar na een tijdje vertrokken de visjes weer.

Ook Blauwstaartje's moeder, een grote roze vis, kwam het te horen, en wilde eens diepgaand met haar zoontje praten. 'Zeg ik heb gehoord wat je wens is,' zei de moeder, 'en ik vind het heel dom van je. Je weet toch dat mensen niets anders doen dan oorlog maken ?'

Ja maar moeder, sprak Blauwstaartje, ik zou daar zo graag een eind aan willen maken, en ik zou graag eens op benen willen staan.

Ja jongen, zei de grote roze vis, mensen hebben prachtige benen, maar wij hebben nu eenmaal gewoon een staart en daar moeten we het mee doen. Toen

vader thuis kwam en het verhaal hoorde kreeg hij het met Blauwstaartje te doen. ‘Jongen, ik had vroeger dezelfde wens, alleen daar is helaas nooit iets van terecht gekomen,’ zei vader.

‘Maar hoe kan ik mens worden,’ zei het visje.

Vader keek moeder aan, en moeder keek vader aan. ‘Vertel het hem maar,’ zei moeder. Toen sprak de vader : ‘Jongen, dan moet je op zoek gaan naar het blauwe gesteente van de rog.’

Toen zei moeder : ‘Vader heeft gelijk, maar daar kom je niet zo makkelijk. Niemand heeft het ooit gevonden.’

‘Maar waar kan ik het vinden ?’ vroeg Blauwstaartje.

Maar dat konden zijn vader en moeder niet vertellen. Diep in de nacht ging Blauwstaartje het huisje uit, en ging op zoek. Na heel lang zwemmen kwam hij uiteindelijk een rog tegen en vroeg naar het blauwe gesteente. ‘Oh verderop,’ zei de rog. Na een tijdje kwam Blauwstaartje nog een rog tegen en vroeg hetzelfde, en kreeg weer hetzelfde antwoord. Maar na dagen zwemmen had Blauwstaartje nog niets gevonden. Ten einde raad besloot Blauwstaartje weer naar de oppervlakte van de oceaan te gaan, om de mensen met hun schepen weer te bekijken. Misschien zou hij daar wel op een idee komen.

Toen hij bovenkwam was het erg druk op zee. Overal zag Blauwstaartje bootjes. Niemand had Blauwstaartje ooit over vissers verteld, en daarom kende hij het gevaar van de netten niet. Maar op één van de schepen zag Blauwstaartje iets fonkelen. Het leek wel op het blauwe gesteente waar zijn vader en moeder over hadden gesproken. Plotseling werd hij door een net meegetrokken. Blauwstaartje schrok verschrikkelijk, en al snel werd hij in een bak geworpen. Al snel kreeg Blauwstaartje het erg benauwd. In de verte op het dek zag hij het blauwe gesteente flonkeren en glinsteren. Het was prachtig, maar Blauwstaartje kon er niet bij. Hij had immers geen benen, en zwemmen kon hij hier niet. Hopeloos begon Blauwstaartje naar adem te happen. Twee mannen kwamen bij de bak en zagen Blauwstaartje liggen. ‘Kijk nou eens, wat een prachtige vis, bijna geheel wit met alleen een blauw staartje,’ zei één van de mannen en greep Blauwstaartje uit de bak.

‘Ja,’ zei de andere man, ‘hij is bijna net zo prachtig als het blauwe gesteente daar, en wees naar de fonkelende, bijna gloeiende stenen.’

‘Nou, ik vind de vis veel mooier dan jouw zeestenen,’ zei de man die Blauwstaartje had vastgegrepen. ‘Houd jij je edelstenen maar, ik heb de vis. Ik zag hem het eerst.’

Maar toen liep de andere man naar het blauwe edelgesteente toe, en bracht het naar de man met de vis toe. ‘Nou, we zullen ze eens naast elkaar houden en zien wie de prachtigste is.’

Toen hield de man de vis tegen het zeegesteente aan, en plotseling stond er een klein jongetje met een prachtig blauw pakje tussen hen in. Maar waar was de vis nu gebleven ? Ook de edelstenen waren verdwenen.

‘Zeg jongetje,’ zei één van de mannen verbaasd. ‘Heb jij soms de blauwstaart met de stenen weggepakt ?’

Maar het jongetje kon niet praten. De mannen stonden voor een raadsel. ‘Zeg, hoe komt dat joch hier eigenlijk ? Misschien is het een verstekeling,’ zei de andere man. ‘Laten we hem naar de kapitein brengen.’

En zo brachten de twee vissers de jongen naar de kapitein. De kapitein was heel aardig, en nam de jongen direkt onder zijn hoede. Niemand sprak verder nog over de blauwstaart en het blauwe gesteente. De kapitein leerde de jongen praten, en hoe je een schip moest besturen. Maar dat ging niet al te gemakkelijk. Het jongetje kon de klanken niet uitspreken.

Toen het schip aan wal kwam nam de kapitein de jongen mee naar huis, en zijn vrouw was direkt erg liefdevol naar de jongen. De vrouw had altijd al graag kinderen willen krijgen, maar die wens werd nooit vervuld. Maar op school werd de jongen geplaagd, omdat hij een spraakgebrek had. Steeds meer begon de jongen terug te verlangen naar de zee, en op een dag nam de kapitein hem mee. Ze zouden een hele grote reis gaan maken met het schip. Maar op een dag had de jongen een heel sterk verlangen om over de reling te springen, en toen hij het water raakte veranderde hij direkt weer in een vis. Het visje was heel opgewonden over wat hij allemaal had meegemaakt, en zwom zo snel hij kon naar het huisje van zijn ouders. Maar vader en moeder waren helemaal niet blij toen het visje het verhaal vertelde. Zijn vader en moeder hadden destijds het verhaal over het blauwe gesteente van de rog verzonnen om hem niet teleur te stellen. Nu ze hoorden dat het visje echt mens was geworden door de blauwe zeestenen wisten ze zich geen raad.

Maar op de vissenschool geloofden ze hem niet, en lachten ze hem uit. De grote blauwe vis die hen onderwees werd zelfs heel erg boos op het visje, en sloot hem voor straf op in de kelder van de school. In de kelder was ook een ander visje opgesloten, een visje uit een andere klas.

Hoe ben jij hier terecht gekomen ? vroeg Blauwstaartje. Maar het andere visje zei niets, en was heel stil. ‘Nou, als je niet wil praten is ook goed hoor,’ zei Blauwstaartje. Toen vertelde Blauwstaartje wat hij allemaal had meegemaakt.

Het andere visje begon na een tijdje een beetje te lachen, al was het in Blauwstaartje's ogen maar een glimlach.

Na een tijdje kwam de oude blauwe zeester om de kelderdeur open te maken. 'Jullie straf zit erop,' zei hij. Het andere visje vloog weg zo hard als ze kon, en Blauwstaartje bleef een beetje teleurgesteld achter. Hij had gehoopt dat ze vriendjes zouden worden. Langzaam zwom hij over de trap naar boven, en ging weer naar de les. Blauwstaartje besloot verder maar zijn mond te houden. Nu hadden ze les van de zeeslang. Maar de zeeslang zei dat hij het hele verhaal gehoord had, en vertelde het nog eens, tot grote afschuw van Blauwstaartje, want weer begonnen de visjes van zijn klas hem uit te lachen. Na de les kwam hij op de schoolgang het visje van de andere klas tegen waarmee hij samen in de kelder zat. Ze glimlachte even, maar zei verder niets.

Gek genoeg begon Blauwstaartje weer naar het vaste land te verlangen. Zou hij nu weer eerst blauw zeegesteente van de rog moeten vinden, of zou hij direkt een jongen worden als hij uit het water zou komen ? Opgewonden en nieuwsgierig naar wat er zou gebeuren zwom Blauwstaartje zo snel als hij kon richting de oppervlakte van de oceaan. Maar hier werd hij door een grote vis gegrepen, en flink verwond. Al bloedend zwom Blauwstaartje naar de kant, en kwam op het strand terecht, waar hij direkt veranderde in een jongen met een blauw pakje. Maar nog steeds bloedde hij hevig. De jongen stond op, en rende naar het huis van de kapitein. De kapitein was er niet, maar de vrouw van de kapitein verzorgde de wond liefdevol. Toen de kapitein thuiskwam was deze blij de jongen te zien. 'We dachten dat je verdronken was,' zei de kapitein. 'Wat is er gebeurd ?'

En toen vertelde de jongen het hele verhaal, maar de kapitein begon er hartelijk om te lachen, en kon het niet geloven. De vrouw zei niets.

Even later nam de kapitein de jongen mee naar het water om te kijken of het echt waar was. Maar toen de jongen in het water sprong gebeurde er niets. De jongen bleef gewoon een jongen. Blauwstaartje besefte toen dat hij nooit meer terugkon naar de dieptes van de oceaan. 'Zie jongen, je hebt het gewoon maar gedroomd,' sprak de kapitein, en legde toen zijn arm om de jongen heen, en samen liepen ze naar huis. Wel hebben ze de jongen altijd Blauwstaart genoemd.

De Paddenkoningin

Eens woonde er een meisje bij een arm gezin. Ze vonden het meisje eens in het bos, en namen het onder hun hoede, maar ze waren erg arm. Ze noemden het meisje Grunpuhlster, omdat ze ogen had als groene poelen. Op een dag hadden ze zoveel honger dat ze het meisje verkochten aan een jager op doorreis. Hij nam het meisje mee naar zijn boshuis waar ze in het huishouden moest werken. Ze kon alles zo goed schoonmaken, dat alles een groen glimmend laagje kreeg, en daarom noemde ook de jager haar Grunpuhlster, en natuurlijk omdat ze zulke mooie ogen had als groene poelen.

Op een dag moest de jager weer weg op reis voor een lange tijd. Niet lang daarna kwam er een bedelaar die bij Grunpuhlster aanklopte. Grunpuhlster deed open, en nam de man zorgzaam naar binnen. Ze gaf hem goed te eten en een slaapplaats.

Toen de volgende ochtend de man naar beneden kwam keek hij Grunpuhlster erg dankbaar aan. ‘Omdat je zo zorgzaam en liefdevol naar mij bent geweest,’ sprak de man, ‘zal er bij alles wat je spreekt een groene edelsteen uit je mond vallen.’ Het meisje schrok, want zo’n geschenk had ze niet verwacht. Ze durfde haar mond niet open te doen, maar knikte dankbaar en liefdevol naar de man, die ineens in het niets verdween.

Toen de jager thuiskwam durfde ze niet te spreken, maar toen de jager dat in de gaten kreeg, en veel vragen begon te stellen, deed ze uiteindelijk haar mond open, en er vielen groene edelstenen op de grond. De jager was erg verrukt. Het meisje vertelde hem alles. De jager was erg trots op haar, en sindsdien hoefde ze niet meer in het huishouden te werken.

Op een dag nam de jager haar mee naar de koning van het land. De koning was zo onder de indruk dat hij haar liet trouwen met zijn zoon, maar ze was niet gelukkig. Ze dacht nog steeds aan het arme gezin waar ze vandaan kwam. Na enige jaren ging ze samen met haar prins naar het arme gezin toe, en ze sprak zoveel, en er rolden zoveel groene edelstenen uit haar mond, dat ze nooit meer arm hoefden te zijn.

Maar op een dag verdwaalde het meisje weer in het bos. Na een lange tijd wandelen kwam ze bij een huisje aan waar een kabouter voor stond. ‘Heus, je

hoeft hier niet te werken, maar kom een nachtje logeren, want stormen zal het huizenhoog, hoei.' Het meisje luisterde maar naar het vreemde mannetje, want ze wilde niet door de storm meegenomen worden. Toen ze de volgende ochtend wakker werd was het mannetje in geen velden of wegen te bekennen. Ze kon het niet laten om het huisje wat schoon te maken, want het was er zo stoffig. En alles wat ze schoonmaakte kreeg een groen glimmend laagje. Toen het mannetje die avond thuiskwam was hij erg onder de indruk. 'Blijf nog maar een nachtje slapen,' zei het mannetje, 'want vannacht gaat het weer stormen.'

De volgende dag kwam er een bedelaar aan de deur. Het meisje deed direkt open, en gaf de arme man wat te eten. Ook gaf zij hem een bed. Na een tijdje kwam de man naar beneden, en het meisje sprak veel met hem, terwijl er groene edelstenen uit haar mond vielen. De man vulde zijn zakken ermee, en zei : 'Pikkel, taddel, tad, elke keer dat je zult spreken komt er uit je mond een pad.' Het meisje schrok, en de man vertrok snel met zijn zakken vol groene edelstenen.

Toen de kabouter die avond terugkwam en het meisje tot hem sprak rolden er allemaal padden uit haar mond. Het mannetje schrok heel erg en riep : 'Heb je hier soms tovenaars binnengelaten ? Het woud zit vol met boze tovenaars. Voor straf moet je vannacht buitenslapen.'

Het meisje begon erg hard te huilen, maar het mannetje was niet over te halen, hoe het meisje ook smeekte. Die nacht zwierf ze door de bossen en kwam er een grote storm die haar opnam. Na een lange tijd werd ze wakker in een grote poel. Ze zat helemaal onder de modder, en die ochtend maakte ze een lange wandeling door het bos in de hoop weer de weg terug te vinden. Na een lange tijd vond ze de weg terug. Toen ze bij het kasteel van de prins kwam wilde niemand haar binnen laten, omdat ze onder de modder zat, en telkens wanneer ze sprak kwamen er padden uit haar mond.

En zo sliep ze die nacht weer buiten, en een grote storm nam haar mee, verder weg dan ooit. Ze werd tot helemaal achter de poel geslingerd. Achter de poel stond een heel oud en arm huisje, en een oude vrouw hing daar de was op die prachtig wit was. De was glinsterde in het maanlicht. 'Kom binnen, arm kind,' zei de vrouw, 'want als de storm je pakt, dan neemt hij je mee. Het kan hier nogal waaien.' Het meisje durfde haar mond niet open te doen, en ging met de vrouw naar binnen. Binnen was het erg stoffig, en toen de vrouw weer naar buiten ging, besloot het meisje wat schoon te maken, en alles werd glimmend groen. Toen de vrouw weer binnen kwam en het glimmende groen zag begon ze te lachen en zei : 'Pikkel, taddel, tuid, alles wat je aanraakt zal veranderen in paddenhuid.' Het meisje rende huilend naar buiten, en werd door de storm gegrepen.

De storm bracht haar naar het land van de reuzenpadden. De reuzenpadden pakten haar en brachten haar tot hun koning. De paddenkoning vertelde haar dat spoedig alles overstroomd zou worden door de poel. Het meisje wilde naar huis, maar de paddenkoning liet haar niet gaan. Ze moest in het paleis werken, en alles wat ze aanraakte veranderde in paddenhuid. Ook kwamen bij alles wat ze sprak padden uit haar mond. Het meisje was ten einde raad. Op een dag vroeg de paddenkoning of zij zijn koningin wilde worden, maar het meisje vertelde dat zij al prinses was in een ander koninkrijk, en daar koningin zou worden. De paddenkoning werd erg kwaad, en wilde dat koninkrijk wel bezoeken. Het meisje vertelde hem dat het het land achter de storm was.

En zo gingen op een dag de paddenkoning en zijn soldaten naar het land waar het meisje vandaan kwam, maar zij keerden niet meer terug. De achtergebleven reuzenpadden kroonden toen het meisje als hun koningin. Maar op een dag begonnen alle poelen los te komen, en begonnen alles weg te spoelen. De koningin rende naar haar hoogste toren, en zag hoe de poel de reuzenpadden meesleurde naar het land waar zij vandaan kwam. De poel begon steeds hoger te steigen en vanuit het hoogste torenraampje klom de koningin op het dak van de toren, tot aan de punt. Help, help, riep de koningin. In de verte zag zij een bootje aankomen met daarin de kabouter die haar weggezonden had. De kabouter zag haar ook, maar wilde haar niet meenemen. Even later zag ze een bootje aankomen met de oude vrouw die haar had uitgelachen en had betoverd. Ook de oude vrouw ging haar voorbij. Het puntje van de toren was nu ook in paddenhuid verandert. En ten einde raad begon de koningin te praten en te praten, en zoveel padden kwamen er uit haar mond dat ze een boot begonnen te vormen waar het meisje in kon stappen. Het meisje bleef praten en praten zoals ze nog nooit gepraat had, en even later was ze in een flinke boot op de woeste hoge golven. Nog nooit had ze zo’n woeste zee gezien.

Na een tijdje kwam er een reusachtige hand tevoorschijn vanuit de donkere lucht die haar als een bliksemschicht oppakte. In een hoge toren in de wolken, geheel gemaakt van paddenhuid kwam ze terecht, en kwam ze oog in oog te staan met de bedelaar die haar eens de gave had gegeven dat alles wat ze sprak in edelstenen veranderde. De bedelaar keek haar vriendelijk aan. ‘Zo zie je maar weer hoe een gave je in de problemen kan helpen,’ sprak de bedelaar. ‘Maar nu, omdat je zo getrouw bent gebleven : wees mijn koningin.’ En de bedelaar bracht haar tot een rijk geheel gebouwd van groene edelstenen, en deze edelstenen waren de prachtigste die ze ooit had gezien. En ze leefden nog lang en gelukkig.

Het Rozenweefstertje

Eens leefde er een rozenweefster in het bos met haar drie zonen. Ze had een toverspinnenwiel waarmee ze rozen kon weven. Deze rozen waren heel bijzonder, en de allerrijksten van het land kwamen vaak bij haar om de rozen te kopen. Maar toch was het gezin arm, omdat zij de goudstukken en zilverstukken die ze ervoor kreeg altijd wegwierp in de bosrivier achter haar huisje. In deze rivier leefden kikkerachtige beesten die een oude poort achter de rivier bewaakten. Niemand kon ooit over die rivier komen, want een ieder die een poging waagde werd door de kikkerachtige beesten opgeslokt. De kikkerachtige beesten hadden het rozenweefstertje laten weten dat zij al haar geld aan hen moest schenken, anders zouden ze haar en haar zonen komen verscheuren. Zij vraten het geld.

De oude poort die ze bewaakten zou naar een geheimzinnig land leiden dat niemand kende. Eens in de zoveel jaren zou er een wachter komen, een veerman, die over de rivier zou komen met een boot, om te kijken of hij iemand zou kunnen meenemen tot achter de poort. Toen het bijna zover was vertelde het rozenweefstertje dit aan haar zonen. Ze sprak dat de wachter bij maanlicht zou komen. Ze wees één van haar zonen aan, en sprak dat als hij in de nacht geluid zou horen als een ruisende storm, dan zou hij naar buiten moeten gaan met het toverspinnenwiel, en bedekt met enige van de rozen, om dan tot de veerman te zeggen : ‘Neem mij mee, ik ben een man van stand,’ en hem dan als geschenk het toverspinnenwiel te geven.

Toen het zover was ging de eerste zoon naar buiten, nadat hij zich met enige rozen had bedekt, en het toverspinnenwiel had gepakt. De veerman keek hem aan, en zei : ‘Stap in. Inderdaad ben jij een man van stand. Ik zal je naar het geheimzinnig land achter de oude poort brengen.’

De volgende ochtend vroeg het rozenweefstertje aan haar drie zonen wat er was gebeurd. De eerste zoon sprak : ‘Ik heb inderdaad het toverspinnenwiel aan de wachter gegeven, zoals u vroeg. Toen ik in het geheimzinnig land kwam was daar een veld met toverbloemen. Maar ver kwam ik niet. Ik viel in slaap, en toen ik wakker werd was ik weer terug in mijn eigen bed.’ Het rozenweefstertje was erg teleurgesteld, en weer gingen er enkele jaren voorbij. Het toverspinnenwiel had zij niet meer. Toen de komst van de veerman weer naderbij kwam wees ze nu haar tweede zoon aan, en sprak dat als de veerman zou komen hij met hem mee moest gaan. De tweede zoon deed wat hem gevraagd werd, en in de nacht bij het maanlicht, toen er geruis was als een storm stond de jongen op en ging naar buiten. Maar de veerman sprak : ‘Maar een man van stand ben je niet. Waar

zijn de rozen waarmee je je moest bedekken, en waar is mijn geschenk ? Ga dan eerst naar de kastelen der koningen om daar wat bijzondere rozen te nemen, en steel bovendien hun grootste schat. Dan zal ik de volgende nacht weer komen.’

De volgende dag deed de jongen wat hem gevraagd was, maar in het kasteel van de koning werd hij betrapt, en werd in een kerker gegooid. Vanaf nu moest hij onder de grond werken, zoals elke dief die gepakt werd. Elke dag werd hij uit zijn kerker gehaald, om lange reizen onder de grond te maken. De dieven moesten op zoek gaan naar bijzondere stenen.

Het rozenweefstertje was erg teleurgesteld dat haar zoon niet meer terugkwam, en zei toen tot haar derde zoon : ‘Wacht jij nu tot de veerman terugkomt om je broer te halen, en zorg ervoor dat je wat van mijn klederen draagt, en schenk hem onze gouden klok.’ De derde zoon deed wat hem gevraagd werd.

De volgende dag vroeg het rozenweefstertje aan haar derde zoon wat er was gebeurt. De jongen sprak dat de veerman hem meenam tot het geheimzinnig land. Hij ging door een veld van toverbloemen, maar werd onwel en viel in slaap. Even later werd hij weer wakker, en ging verder in het veld van toverbloemen, en kwam toen bij een rivier van spinnendraad. De jongen zag hier geen veerman, maar er zwom wel een grote vis, en die sprak : ‘Breng me eerst wat parelmoer, van je rijke broer, die voor de koning werkt, dan kan ik je naar de overkant van de rivier brengen.’ Toen werd de jongen gestoken door een spin, en viel in een diepe slaap. De volgende ochtend was hij weer terug in zijn eigen bed.

‘Nu,’ zei het rozenweefstertje, ‘je weet wat je te doen staat. Ga naar het kasteel van de koning, en vraag daar om je broer voor wat parelmoer.’ De jongen deed wat hem gezegd werd, en vertrok naar het kasteel. Toen hij bij de kerker van zijn broer aankwam zag hij daar de wonderlijkste stenen, en wat parelmoer. Zijn broer was er niet, want die moest werken onder de grond. De jongen nam één steen mee, voor de veerman, en wat parelmoer voor de vis, en vertrok weer naar huis. Maar de veerman kwam niet meer. Ze moesten wachten totdat hij naar enige jaren weer terug zou komen. Het rozenweefstertje was diep teleurgesteld, en ook de jongen. Maar er zat niets anders op dan te wachten.

Maar op een nacht werd de jongen wakker van wat spartelend geluid. De jongen stond op en ging naar buiten. Daar bij de rivier zag hij de vis van de rivier van spinnendraad. ‘Heb je het parelmoer gevonden ?’ vroeg de vis. De jongen knikte blij, en rende naar binnen om het parelmoer te halen. De vis bracht hem helemaal over de rivier tot aan de oude poort. Nu moest de jongen de vis dragen tot aan de rivier van spinnendraad. Gelukkig viel de jongen niet in slaap. Daarna bracht de vis de jongen over de rivier van spinnendraad.

De volgende dag wilde het rozenweefstertje haar zonen wekken, maar ze had nog maar één zoon over. Het parelmoer was verdwenen, en zo ging ook de laatst overgebleven zoon wat parelmoer halen in de kerker van zijn broer. Zo gingen er weer enige jaren voorbij, totdat de veerman terugkwam. De jongen droeg wat klederen van zijn moeder en schonk de veerman een steen van de kerker van zijn broer. Toen hij aankwam bij de rivier van spinnendraad en de vis zag gaf hij wat parelmoer aan de vis, en de vis bracht hem naar de overkant. Bij een boom vond hij het gouden toverspinnenwiel van zijn moeder terug, en het toverspinnenwiel sprak : 'Ik ben eindelijk terug in het land waar ik vandaan kom, maar nog steeds betoverd ben ik. Vlug, neem mij op, en draag mij verder in dit land. De jongen raapte het toverspinnenwiel van zijn moeder op, en vroeg waar zijn broer was. 'Daar, achter een rivier dieper in het land,' sprak het toverspinnenwiel. Na een tijdje lopen kwamen ze aan bij een volgende rivier. Deze rivier was geheel van rozendraad. 'Hoe kom ik over deze rivier ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Werp mij erin,' zei het toverspinnenwiel van zijn moeder. De jongen deed wat hem gezegd werd, en er ontstond een gouden brug over de rivier, als een regenboog. Zo kwam de jongen over de rivier. Toen de jongen aan de overkant was gekomen verdween de brug, en een lichtende roze gestalte kwam uit de rivier omhoog. Maar de gestalte was als een standbeeld, en kon zich niet goed bewegen. 'Vlug,' sprak de gestalte, 'de betovering is nog niet verbroken. Zoek nu je broer.' En toen zakte de gestalte weer terug in de rivier.

Omdat geen van haar zonen terugkeerde besloot het rozenweefstertje zelf de eerstvolgende keer met de veerman mee te gaan. Ze kreeg wat parelmoer en een steen mee vanuit de kerker van haar zoon, maar ook na vele jaren kwam de veerman niet opdagen, en het rozenweefstertje was ten einde raad. Ze mocht haar zoon in de kerker niet spreken, maar toen ze de koning vertelde dat ze vroeger rozen voor hem weefde mocht ze haar zoon even zien. De zoon was erg blij haar te zien, en vertelde haar dat hij ergens diep onder de grond een brug had gevonden naar een toverwereld. Hij vertelde haar dat hij nooit ver kon komen, want in een veld van toverbloemen viel hij telkens in slaap. Maar eens kwam hij daar een lichtende roze gestalte tegen die tot hem sprak dat als hij zijn moeder zou meenemen, dan zou de gestalte hem wel door het veld heen kunnen brengen. En zo gebeurde het. Het rozenweefsterje ging met haar zoon mee, en bij het veld van toverbloemen aangekomen bracht de gestalte hen erdoorheen. 'Vlug,' zei de gestalte, 'spring in de rivier van spinnendraad.' Het rozenweefstertje en haar zoon deden wat hen gezegd werd.

In de dieptes van de rivier ging alles over in rozendraad, en plotseling zwom er ook een andere vrouw naast hen. 'Kom,' zei de vrouw, 'in de dieptes is een plaats waar al jullie geldstukken terecht zijn gekomen die jullie vroeger in de rivier moesten werpen.' En ze kwamen tot een kelder diep in de rivier, waar

alles vollag met schatten. Hier vond het rozenweefstertje ook haar andere zonen terug, en ze leefden in rijkdom voor de rest van hun leven.

Het Wonderpaard

Er was eens een meisje dat altijd hele nare karweitjes moest doen van haar stiefmoeder. Haar echte moeder was al heel lang geleden overleden, en die had ze eigenlijk nooit gekend. Vaak wilde ze dat haar echte moeder nog zou leven. Veel tijd om te slapen kreeg ze niet, en ze moest altijd haastig eten, want er was veel werk te doen. Op een dag was het meisje het zo beu, en ze was zo moe dat ze het bos inrende. Al gauw verdwaalde ze, en ze was zelfs een beetje bij dat ze verdwaald was, want eigenlijk wilde ze helemaal niet meer naar huis.

Na een tijdje lopen kwam ze aan bij een tafeltje. Dat was erg vreemd zo in het bos. Het tafeltje was mooi versierd met wat randjes, en op de tafel stond een bak met brood. Het meisje ging op één van de hoge stoelen zitten, en begon van het brood te eten. Na een tijdje kwamen er wat haasjes aan, en een kikker. De haasjes waren in verschillende kleuren. Eén haasje was roze, een andere paars en weer een andere was groen. Naast het meisje zat een wat grotere witte haas.

‘Wie moet er wat thee ?’ riep één van de haasjes.

‘Nou, ik lust wel wat thee,’ zei het meisje.

‘Nee, jij niet,’ zei het haasje. Het was het groene haasje.

‘En waarom niet ?’ vroeg het meisje.

‘Omdat jij hier pas nieuw bent,’ zei het groene haasje.

‘Ach, let maar niet op hem,’ zei het roze haasje, ‘hij doet wel vaker vervelend, en het is een mopperpot, net als het paarse haasje.’ Ook het paarse haasje begon wat te brommen, maar niemand kon het verstaan. Het paarse haasje keek het meisje al een hele tijd erg boos aan. Even later schonk het roze haasje wat thee in voor het meisje, en zei : ‘Als je een keer bij mij op bezoek komt, dan krijg je

roze thee of elventhee.' Het meisje keek het roze haasje vriendelijk aan, alsof ze wilde zeggen : 'Ja, graag.'

'Dank u wel,' zei ze tegen het roze haasje.

'Oh, je mag ook wel bij me blijven logeren, hoor, dat is nog leuker dan bezoek, en dan kunnen we ook de andere haasjes eens samen bezoeken,' zei het roze haasje.

Dat leek het meisje wel leuk.

Maar toen zei het paarse haasje : 'Niemand komt ooit bij mij op bezoek. Ik woon veel te ver weg, helemaal achter de bergen bij de zee.'

'Oh, maar ik heb een wonderpaard,' zei het roze haasje, 'we komen je vast wel een keer opzoeken.'

'Oh ja ?' zei het meisje, 'oh ik ben dol op paarden.' Het paarse haasje keek even niet meer zo boos naar het meisje.

'En ik dan ?' zei het groene haasje. 'Ik woon over de zee. Kan dat wonderpaard daar ook komen ?'

'Ja hoor,' zei het roze haasje vriendelijk. Het witte haasje dat iets groter was had al een hele tijd niets gezegd, en huppelde plotseling weg. Na een tijdje kwam het wonderpaard eraan. Het wonderpaard had vleugels en kon vliegen. 'Stap er maar op,' zei het roze haasje, 'dan gaan we naar mijn torenkamertje, heel hoog in het paleis van de koning.'

'De koning ?' vroeg het meisje. 'Maar welke koning ?'

'Oh, koning Griebelegrutjes,' zei het roze haasje.

'Wie is dat nu dan weer ?' vroeg het meisje.

'Nou, de koning van het hazenland,' zei het roze haasje, 'en tegelijk de opperkok van de elventhee. Hij moet de thee altijd eerst proeven voordat het opgediend mag worden.'

'Oh,' zei het meisje, 'dat wist ik niet.'

'Maar wat doet die kikker hier dan ?' vroeg het meisje weer.

'Oh, de kikker zorgt altijd voor de tafels,' zei het roze haasje. Toen ze beiden op het paard zaten steeg het op en bracht hen helemaal tot in het hoogste torentje

van het koninklijk paleis. Dat was wel even een eindje vliegen, maar hier hadden ze dan een prachtig uitzicht over het land. Ze konden vanaf hier de bergen zien, en zelfs de achterliggende duinen en de zee. Ook konden ze hiervandaan goed het bos bezichtigen.

Er waren een paar torenkamertjes, en in één kamertje mocht het meisje logeren. In een ander kamertje dronken ze samen thee, roze thee, en elf-thee. Het meisje vond de thee erg lekker, vooral de elf-thee. Door de trap naar beneden te gaan, kon het meisje ook bij de koning op bezoek, en een verdieping lager was de keuken. De koning zelf ging niet zo vaak naar de keuken. Voornamelijk hield hij zich bezig met het regeren van het land. Maar soms moest hij toch echt naar de keuken om de nieuwe soorten elf-thee te proeven. Telkens kwamen er weer nieuwe soorten bij.

Op een dag gingen ze met het wonderpaard naar het land van otters en hermelijnen. Dat was een groot land met bossen en rivieren. In het land van otters en hermelijnen stond ergens een hele grote elventafel, waar volop elventhee werd gedronken. Nog nooit had het meisje zoveel otters en hermelijnen bij elkaar gezien, en ze waren allemaal even vriendelijk. Er waren hier zoveel soorten elventhee waar zelfs de koning niets van wist. Ze hadden hier een keuken die wel duizendmaal groter was dan de keuken van de koning. Eén zaal van de keuken was als een kerkzaal. Zo’n grote keuken had het meisje nog nooit gezien. Overal liepen bedienden rond met grote schalen. Heel in de verte zat een lange witte haas op een stoel met hele lange poten. De witte haas had het overzicht over de zaal. Na een tijdje werd er een enorm lange tafel naar binnen geschoven, en de bedienden begonnen de schalen op de tafel te zetten. Toen de schalen geopend werden schrok het meisje heel erg, want er kwam zoveel rook vanaf dat het vuur leek. Na een tijdje zag het meisje dat het van binnen schelpen waren. Maar niemand at van de schalen. Het meisje vroeg zich af waarom er niet werd gegeten. Maar na een tijdje liep het wonderpaard naar voren en begon van schaal na schaal te eten. Alle bedienden die aan de zijkant stonden klapten in hun handen. Het roze haasje glimlachte. ‘Dat doen ze altijd als het wonderpaard hier is. Ze zijn dol op hem.’

Na een tijdje kwamen er ook andere paarden binnen die van de schalen begonnen te eten. Toen alles was opgegeten kwam er een kikker binnen die de tafels begon op te ruimen. En even later haalden de bedienden de lange tafels weer weg.

‘Zo, kies maar een paard uit,’ zei het roze haasje, ‘dan gaan we een stukje wandelen. Het wonderpaard moet nu rusten.’ Het meisje koos een wit paard met vlekjes uit en wat roze strikjes, en ook het roze haasje koos een paard uit, en toen gingen ze een stukje paardrijden door het bos van het land van otters en hermelijnen.

Ze kwamen langs vele huisjes waar boeren en boerinnen woonden met heel veel vee, zoals paarden, koeien, varkens, geiten en nog veel meer. Na een tijdje waren ze zo ver gekomen, en om wat bergen heen gegaan, dat het roze haasje vond dat ze best wel even op bezoek konden gaan bij de paarse haas aan zee. De paarse haas woonde in een woonboot, aan een riviertje dat in de zee uitliep. Alles was hier erg klein, en na een tijdje kreeg het meisje het erg benauwd. 'Dat je hier kunt wonen,' zei het meisje. Maar dat schoot bij het paarse haasje in het verkeerde keelgat. 'Nou, dan kom je toch gewoon niet ?' riep het paarse haasje boos. Niet lang daarna stonden het meisje en het roze haasje op straat. Het paarse haasje had hen eruit gezet. Maar het roze haasje klopte weer op het deurtje van de woonboot en riep toen door het raampje : 'Ach, zus, laten we nu geen ruzie maken. Laten we gewoon wat spelletjes doen. Kaarten ofzo.' Na een lange tijd deed het paarse haasje het raampje eindelijk open, en zei slaperig : 'huh ? Oh ik ben vast in slaap gevallen. Ja, laten we dan maar een spelletje doen.'

Maar het spelletje liep helemaal verkeerd af. Het paarse haasje verloor telkens elk spelletje kaart, en begon steeds meer te mopperen. Ook toen ze wat bordspelletjes gingen spelen werd het er niet beter op, en na een tijdje gooide het paarse haasje het speelbord boos om, terwijl alle pionnetjes op de grond vielen.

'Ach zus,' zei het roze haasje, 'het is toch maar een spelletje ?'

'Spelletje, spelletje ?' zei het paarse haasje. 'Ik verlies telkens. Dat noem ik geen spelletje.' Maar na een tijdje viel het paarse haasje weer in slaap.

Het was maar een klein stukje lopen naar de zee, en het roze haasje en het meisje besloten nog even wat te gaan zwemmen, maar een grote golf nam hen mee, en al gauw waren ze op de open zee. De golf nam hen zo ver mee, dat ze uiteindelijk maar besloten door te zwemmen naar het groene haasje dat achter de zee woonde. Maar het leek wel alsof ze er nooit kwamen, en na een tijdje begonnen ze allebei erg moe en duizelig te worden. Het meisje begon al weg te zakken, en niet lang daarna het roze haasje ook. Maar ineens voelden ze wat onder hen komen. Het was het wonderpaard, en toen ze op z'n rug zaten steeg hij op uit het water. Snel nam hij hen mee naar de overkant waar het groene haasje woonde, maar toen ze bij zijn huisje kwamen was hij er niet. Toen besloten ze maar naar het bos te gaan. In het bos stond een hele grote draaimolen. En ja hoor, daar was het groene haasje aan het spelen. Achter de draaimolen stond een stal met een heleboel wonderpaarden.

'Waarom heb je me dat nooit verteld dat je hier zoveel wonderpaarden hebt ?' vroeg het roze haasje.

‘Gewoon,’ zei het groene haasje, ‘omdat je er nooit naar gevraagd hebt.’ Het meisje keek haar ogen uit, en omdat ze met z’n drieen zo’n mooie dag beleefden mocht het meisje een wonderpaard helemaal voor haarzelf uitkiezen.

Spindruppeltje

Er was eens een meisje dat Spindruppeltje heette. Het meisje was eigenlijk een prinsesje, maar was eens tijdens het spelen in het bos verdwaald en kwam bij een arm gezin terecht. Het meisje was nog te jong om te beseffen dat ze een prinsesje was, en ook het arme gezin wist niet wie ze was, maar ze besloten voor haar te zorgen. Dichtbij het huisje van het arme gezin was een vijver met krokodillen waar het meisje vaak speelde. Maar op een dag gleed het meisje uit, en viel in de vijver. Direkt werd ze door een krokodil gegrepen en in de diepte getrokken.

De krokodillen brachten haar naar een rijk diep onder de grond, waar soldaten woonden die de zessen werden genoemd. De soldaten liepen een beetje krom en hadden vreemde gekrulde schoenen. Ze zagen er inderdaad uit als zessen. Hun koning was genaamd nummer één. Het meisje keek haar ogen uit in dit rijk onder de grond. Alles was hier prachtig : betoverde bloemen, en zoveel betoverde tuinen. Het meisje ging hier gewoon door met spelen, alsof er niets aan de hand was, en het was goed. De koning scheen erg van het meisje te houden, alsof het zijn eigen dochtertje was. De koning had ook een dochtertje, en dat meisje was genaamd ‘drie’. Drie en het meisje werden al snel dikke vriendinnetjes. De koning was erg tevreden. Hij gaf het meisje een eigen kamer in zijn kasteel, vlakbij de kamer van drie, zijn dochtertje. Ook de zessen waren erg dol op het meisje. Het meisje had een goed hart voor iedereen.

Maar op een dag gebeurde er iets verschrikkelijks. De koning werd heel ernstig ziek, en iedereen was erg verdrietig. Er was nog maar één middel dat de koning zou kunnen genezen, en dat was de blajus-plant die in het land groeide waar het meisje vandaan kwam. De zessen legden het meisje uit waar ze dat kruid zou kunnen vinden. Een krokodil bracht het meisje weer terug. Het arme gezin was erg blij het meisje weer terug te zien, maar ze mocht nooit meer naar de vijver. Inmiddels was de echte vader van Spindruppeltje erachter gekomen waar zijn dochter was, en nam haar mee naar zijn kasteel. Om de vijver liet hij grote hoge gouden hekken bouwen. Maar het meisje wilde terug naar het rijk onder de vijver, om de koning daar te kunnen redden door de blajus-plant, het genezende kruid.

Dat ze door een krokodil was gegrepen geloofden ze allemaal wel, maar dat er een rijk onder de vijver was geloofde niemand. En hoe ze ook huilde en smeekte, haar vader was niet om te praten. Hoe zou ze nou over die hekken kunnen komen ? Inmiddels stond bijna het hele kasteel van haar vader vol met blajus-planten, omdat het prinsesje daar om gevraagd had. Ook had het arme gezin een flinke beloning gekregen, omdat ze zo goed voor het meisje hadden gezorgd. Zij woonden nu ook in het kasteel, op een verdieping dichtbij de verdieping waar het meisje haar kamer had. Maar het meisje huilde veel.

De koning zag dat het meisje niet gelukkig was, en gaf haar op een dag een vogel voor op haar kamer. Het was een sprekende vogel, en het meisje kon alles aan de vogel vertellen, ook over het verborgen koninkrijk.

‘Ik kan je wel over het hek brengen, hoor,’ zei de vogel, ‘geen probleem. Ik ben sterk genoeg, en ik kan heel hoog vliegen.’ En zo stapte het meisje op zijn rug, en de vogel bracht haar helemaal over het hek bij de vijver. Maar plotseling kwam het meisje erachter dat ze het blajus-kruid was vergeten. En één van de krokodillen greep de vogel en trok hem de diepte in. Nu kon het meisje niet meer terug. Nu moest ze wachten totdat iemand haar zou zien. Maar er gingen tijden voorbij, en het meisje begon erge honger te lijden.

Op een dag kwam de vogel terug uit de vijver, en vertelde dat de koning van het verborgen rijk inmiddels was overleden. Het meisje begon erg te huilen, en zei dat het allemaal haar schuld was. Zij had immers het blajus-kruid vergeten. Maar de vogel zei dat vele zessen nu ook ernstig ziek waren, en ook het prinsesje drie. De vogel was teruggekomen om voor hen het blajus-kruid te halen. Het meisje stapte op zijn rug, en weer vloog hij over het hek, terug naar het kasteel. Maar toen de koning merkte dat ze terug waren gekomen liet hij hen beiden grijpen. Het meisje werd voor straf opgesloten op haar kamer, en de vogel werd in een diepe kerker onder het kasteel geworpen. Nog nooit was het prinsesje zo verdrietig geweest. De koning liet de vijver droogleggen, en joeg de krokodillen het bos in.

Dikke tranen rolden er over de wangen van het prinsesje, maar de tranen hadden allerlei kleuren. Na een tijdje kwam er een vogel op het venster van het open raam zitten. Het was een krokodillen-vogel, die wel een beetje op een krokodil leek. ‘Je moet die tranen drinken,’ zei de vogel, ‘dan gebeuren er wonderen.’ Het meisje had nog wat bekers in haar kamertje staan, en begon de verschillende kleuren te verdelen. ‘Rood is voor de sloot, blauw is voor de vijver,’ zei de vogel, en toen het meisje van het rode en het blauwe begon te drinken kwamen er overal in het land sloten en vijvers.

‘Laat me je meenemen naar het land der krokodillen, ver achter de bossen,’ zei de krokodillen-vogel. Het meisje stapte op de rug van de vogel, die direkt uit het raam vloog. Na een tijdje kwamen ze bij de krokodillen aan. Hier leefden ze in moerassen en poelen. Maar het verborgen rijk bestond niet meer. Het blajus-kruid groeide en bloeide hier volop, maar het was al te laat. Het rijk was geheel ten onder gegaan door de ernstige ziekte. In de verte stond een vrouw met wratten achter een ketel. De vrouw lachte als een heks, en roerde in de ketel waar groene smurrie in lag. ‘Wat ben je aan het maken ?’ vroeg Spindruppeltje.

‘Weet je dat dan niet ?’ zei de oude vrouw. ‘Ik maak voer voor de koning, tranen.’

Maar toen begon het meisje wel erge medelijden met haar vader te krijgen. ‘Heus, hij mag dan verschrikkelijke dingen hebben gedaan, maar hij bedoelde het goed. Hij was gewoon bezorgd.’

‘Bezorgd noem je dat ?’ zei de oude vrouw krassend. ‘Hij dacht alleen aan zijn eigen koninkrijk, en niet aan het koninkrijk van een ander.’

‘Ja maar hij wist niet van het bestaan van dat andere rijk af,’ zei het meisje.

‘Dat heb jij hem toch verteld ?’ zei de vrouw bijna spottend, ‘maar hij heeft het niet willen geloven, en jou zo met een ondragelijke last bezadeld, en ons des te meer.’

‘Maar wie bent u dan ?’ vroeg Spindruppeltje.

‘Ik ben de koningin der krokodillen,’ zei de vrouw bijna trots.

‘Maar als u dan meekomt naar mijn vader, dan zal hij het misschien geloven,’ zei het meisje.

‘Wat ?’ zei de vrouw spottend, ‘het is nu al te laat. Alles is verloren.’

‘Ja maar de krokodillen,’ zei het meisje, ‘zij zijn nog over. Moeten ze dan blijven leven in deze poelen ?’

‘Hmm, misschien heb je gelijk,’ zei de oude vrouw, ‘en moet ik een kansje wagen. Ik zal naar jouw vader gaan, en hem vragen om een plaats bij de koninklijke vijver, ik en mijn krokodillen.’

Maar toen de oude vrouw met het meisje meeging naar de koning kreeg de vrouw de schuld van alles, en ook haar liet de koning opsluiten, en zelfs het prinsesje werd in een kerker geworpen opdat ze niet meer zou ontsnappen. Alleen de krokodillen-vogel wist op tijd weg te komen, en snelde terug naar de krokodillen om alles te vertellen.

‘Dan zit er niks anders op dan het kasteel aan te vallen,’ zei de oudste krokodil.

Eén voor één kropen ze in de ketel van de oude vrouw waar ze in zessen veranderden, en gingen in een groot leger gewapend naar het koninklijk terrein.

‘Gebruik groen, dan hoef je het niet meer over te doen,’ zei de krokodillen-vogel die hen aanvoerde in de strijd.

En zo werd het kasteel van de koning en zijn gehele terrein bedolven onder groene tranen. Toen het arme gezin wat zo lang voor het meisje gezorgd had erachter kwam dat de koning haar in een kerker had geworpen waren ze heel boos op de koning. Ze kwamen erachter dat hij in het geheim een boze tovenaar was, en ze vochten mee in het leger van de zessen. Maar de boze tovenaar was te sterk, en liet hen allemaal in de kerkers diep onder de grond werpen. De enige die kon ontsnappen was weer de krokodillen-vogel.

Met een list kwam hij weer in het kasteel, en even later had hij de kerker van het prinsesje gevonden. ‘Spindruppeltje, Spindruppeltje,’ fluisterde hij. Het prinsesje was erg blij hem te zien. Zelfs in de gangen waar de kerkers waren groeide het blajus-kruid, en de krokodillen-vogel gaf het prinsesje wat van het kruid. ‘Hier, eet wat van het kruid,’ zei de vogel. ‘Dat zal helpen.’ Toen het prinsesje wat van het kruid at leek het even alsof ze krokodillen-huid begon te krijgen. En toen even later gingen wonderlijk alle deuren van de kerkers open. Het werd een grote optocht die over de trappen van de kerkergangen naar boven ging. ‘Vlug, naar de koninklijke vijver,’ zei de krokodillen-vogel die boven hen uit vloog. De vijver had heel helder water, en in de dieptes konden ze een stenen trap zien. Allen zwommen ze naar de trap, en door een luik kwamen ze uiteindelijk in het verborgen rijk terecht.

‘Hoe kan dat dan ?’ vroeg het prinsesje. ‘Ik dacht dat het verborgen rijk was vergaan.’

‘Het is hier opnieuw gaan groeien,’ zei de krokodillen-vogel.

‘Maar hoe kan dat dan ?’ vroeg het meisje.

‘Nou gewoon,’ zei de krokodillen-vogel, ‘het is de bloesem van het blajus-kruid, en dat groeit nu overal door het kasteel.’

En zo werd het kasteel vol van het verborgen rijk ....

En de boze tovenaar ? Die hebben ze nooit meer teruggezien. Het prinsesje kwam hier ook het prinsesje drie tegen, en haar vader, koning nummer één, en vele anderen. Ook zag ze alle oude zessen weer terug, en ze leefden nog lang en gelukkig. Allemaal kenden ze nu het geheim van het blajus-kruid.

De Driesprong

In het bos woonde eens een man en een vrouw die een dochtertje hadden. De man en de vrouw maakten vaak ruzie en vaak kon het meisje er niet van slapen. Op een nacht vluchtte ze weg, omdat het lawaai haar erg bang maakte. Lang zwierf ze door het bos, totdat ze uiteindelijk was verdwaald en niet meer wist waar ze was. Uitgeput leunde ze tegen een boom aan, maar viel toen in een gat. Ze viel erg diep, en raakte door de val bewusteloos.

Toen ze weer wakker werd zag ze allemaal konijntjes om haar heen, maar toen ze zich bewoog vluchtten alle konijntjes van haar weg. Langzaam stond het meisje op, en vroeg zich af waar ze terecht was gekomen. Ze zag hier allemaal kleine huisjes met lichtjes en hele hoge bomen. Zo hoog had ze de bomen nog

nooit gezien. Toen ze in de lucht keek zag ze alleen duisternis, en enkele stralende sterretjes. Plotseling zag ze één van die sterretjes vallen, en wat verderop tussen de bomen was even later een stralend licht. Voorzichtig liep het meisje op het licht af.

Maar naarmate ze dichterbij kwam werd alles weer donker. Hier waren geen kleine huisjes met lichtjes, en al gauw durfde ze niet verder. Ze wilde zich omdraaien, maar ook achter haar was het ineens heel donker.

'Hallo !' riep het meisje. 'Is daar iemand ?'

Maar niets en niemand antwoordde. Het meisje was erg moe, en even later viel ze op de grond en kwam in een diepe slaap. Zo moe was ze nog nooit geweest. Even later kreeg ze dromerig om haar heen. Ze zag wat lichtjes om haar heen, met hele kleine spulletjes. Kleine stoeltjes, kleine stofzuigertjes, kleine laarsjes, en nog wat andere spulletjes. Ook zag ze hele kleine piepkleine kaarsjes. 'Waar ben ik ?' vroeg ze. Langzaam stond het meisje op, en keek omhoog waar alles donker was. Wel zag ze in het donker wat wijde schilderijen hangen. Snel kwam ze erachter dat ze in een soort zaal was. Op een hoge troon in het duister zat een konijn. Het konijn zei niks, en het meisje stapte dichterbij, en toen was alles weer weg, en alles was weer pikkedonker.

'Ik weet dat jullie er zijn !' riep het meisje. Maar niets en niemand antwoordde. 'Ik wil niet moeilijk doen,' zei het meisje, 'maar zo ontvang je geen gasten.'

'Gasten, gasten ?' zei een stem. 'Je komt hier zomaar ongevraagd binnenvallen, en je noemt jezelf gast. Ik noem je een indringer.'

Het meisje keek naar beneden en zag een konijntje bij haar voet. Het konijntje schopte tegen haar been aan.

'Zeg, laat dat,' zei het meisje, 'zo gedraag je je niet naar een dame.'

'Nou, ik noem jou geen dame,' zei het konijntje, 'je hebt geen manieren. Je komt hier zomaar ongevraagd binnenvallen, en denkt dat je de koningin bent. Maar goed, ik zal je wel binnenlaten, en dan zul je eens een echte koningin meemaken.'

Het konijntje trok aan het jurkje van het meisje, en leidde het meisje naar een klein kamertje waar een konijntje op een troon zat.

'We hebben indringers, koningin,' zei het konijntje.

‘Ik weet het, Arend,’ zei de konijnenkoningin, ‘laat haar hier maar blijven.’ Toen vertrok het konijntje.

De konijnenkoningin keek het meisje diep aan. ‘Dus ... jij komt van de grote mensenwereld,’ zei de koningin.

‘Eh, ja, majesteit,’ zei het meisje, ‘maar ik ben zelf nog klein.’

‘Oh, maar jij wordt vast ook zo groot,’ zei de koningin. ‘Maar voor het zover is mag je hier wel blijven. Hier achter mij is een deur, en als je daar doorheen gaat, dan .... Nu ja, dat zul je zelf wel zien. Je moet gewoon het pad volgen.’

Het meisje bedankte de koningin, en ging door de deur, en kwam op een pad terecht. Hele kleine vogeltjes zaten in de struikjes aan de zijkanten van het pad. Het pad straalde en glom door een geheimzinnig licht. Het meisje begon haar reis. Na een tijdje kwam ze op een open plek waar konijntjes wat spelletjes aan het doen waren. Een paar konijntjes waren aan het hinkelen. Achter de konijntjes waren drie paden.

‘Waar moet ik nu naartoe ?’ vroeg het meisje.

‘Waar kom je dan vandaan ?’ vroegen de konijntjes.

Van de koningin, zei het meisje.

‘Van de koningin ?’ vroegen de konijntjes, ‘heeft ze dan zelf niet gezegd waar je naartoe moest gaan.’

Het meisje schudde haar hoofd. ‘Ze zei alleen maar dat ik het pad moest volgen.’

‘Ik zou het eerste pad maar niet kiezen,’ zei een konijntje, ‘want dan kom je bij een heks terecht. Het tweede pad leidt tot het witte kasteel, en het derde pad dat weet niemand. Iedereen valt daar in slaap.’

‘Nou,’ zei het meisje, ‘ik heb lang genoeg geslapen. Ik kies voor het tweede pad.’ En zo ging het meisje op weg naar het witte kasteel.

Het witte kasteel stond vol met levende pionnen. ‘Ik heb jou hier nog nooit gezien,’ zei een zwarte pion. ‘Ik jou ook niet,’ zei het meisje.

‘Waar kom je vandaan ?’ vroeg een rode pion.

‘De koningin heeft me gestuurd,’ zei het meisje.

‘De koningin ?’ vroegen alle pionnen verwonderd.

‘Spring maar op m’n rug,’ zei een groene pion. Toen het meisje op de groene pion klom begon de pion te steigeren, en rende toen een trap op van het kasteel, en kwam op een balkon terecht, en rende toen door naar een volgende trap. De groene pion bracht het meisje helemaal tot aan een toren. ‘Kijk eens naar buiten,’ riep de pion, ‘zo kun je het hele land zien.’

‘Welk land ?’ vroeg het meisje. Door het raam zag ze allemaal grasvelden die er als speelborden uitzagen. Het waren wonderlijke tuinen. ‘Zo je ziet het, hè,’ zei de pion. ‘We hebben nog veel te doen.’

‘Ja, maar de koningin vertelde me dat ik het pad moest volgen,’ zei het meisje.

‘Het pad ?’ vroeg de groene pion. ‘Oh, wat stom van me, ik had het kunnen weten.’

Toen huppelde de groene pion met het meisje op zijn rug weer helemaal naar beneden, en ging toen via de keuken de achtertuin in. ‘Zie je, daar in de verte,’ zei de groene pion terwijl hij op wat struikjes achter een groot grasveld wees, ‘daar gaat het pad verder. Een goede reis.’

En toen zette het meisje haar reis voort, nadat ze van de pion afscheid had genomen. Tussen de struikjes achter het grasveld ging het pad verder. Het pad straalde en glom weer als door een geheimzinnig licht. Maar na een tijdje wandelen kwam het meisje weer bij de konijntjes die spelletjes aan het spelen waren. ‘Hier ben ik al geweest,’ zei het meisje.

‘Dan moet je gewoon een ander pad nemen,’ zei één van de konijntjes.

‘Maar welk pad ?’ vroeg het meisje.

‘Nou, het eerste of het derde pad,’ zei het konijntje.

‘Ja maar dan kom ik bij de heks, of val ik in slaap,’ zei het meisje.

‘Ik kan het ook niet helpen, kies maar,’ zei het konijntje.

‘Nou, dan kies ik voor het derde pad, want ik begin toch al een beetje moe te worden,’ zei het meisje.

Langs het derde pad stonden allemaal toverbloemen, en al snel begon het meisje zo moe te worden dat ze niet meer kon blijven staan, en al gauw viel ze in een diepe slaap.

‘Ehm, mijn naam is de spin,’ zei een dromerige, geheimzinnige stem, ‘weet je dat ik altijd win ?’

‘Nee, dat weet ik niet,’ zei het meisje dromerig.

‘Nou, dan weet je het nu,’ zei de stem weer.

Waar ben ik ? vroeg het meisje.

Toen ze haar ogen opende zag ze bloemen, zoveel bloemen. Overal waren bloemen, en zoveel wonderbaarlijke geuren, zo betoverend.

‘Ik zei toch dat ik altijd win,’ zei de stem slaperig, ‘ik heb je betoverd.’

‘Ja maar daar heb ik eigenlijk geen tijd voor,’ zei het meisje, ‘de koningin heeft me gezegd dat ik het pad moet volgen.’

‘De koningin ?’ zei de stem. ‘Dat verandert de zaak, kom maar mee.’ En ineens stond het meisje klaarwakker tussen de bloemen. In de verte zag ze een rivier, terwijl beneden bij haar voet een klein spinnetje stond. ‘Als de koningin je gestuurd heeft, dan is het in orde,’ zei het spinnetje, ‘dan hoeven we geen spelletjes te doen.’ Toen liep het spinnetje voor haar uit naar de rivier. Over de rivier was een brug waaronder allerlei bootjes met lampjes doorgingen. Het waren kleine bootjes.

‘Daar in de verte woont een heks,’ zei het spinnetje.

‘Oh maar ik dacht dat de heks op het eerste pad woonde,’ zei het meisje. Na een tijdje komen ze in de keuken van een groot kasteel aan. Een dienstknecht loopt op het meisje af. ‘Hallo, ik ben Andrew,’ zegt de bediende. ‘Ik verwachtte je al. Laat me je het kasteel rondleiden.’

‘Hoe weet u dat ik zou komen,’ vroeg het meisje, en het meisje vroeg zich ook af waar het spinnetje ineens was gebleven. ‘Het spinnetje zei dat hier een heks woonde,’ zei het meisje.

‘Ah, je moet niet alles en iedereen geloven,’ zei Andrew. ‘Hier woont de konijnenkoningin.’

‘Maar daar kom ik net vandaan,’ zei het meisje, ‘en ze heeft me gezegd het pad te volgen.’

‘Oh kom dan maar mee,’ zei Andrew, en leidde haar naar de achterkant van het kasteel. Hier ging het pad verder. Weer zag het meisje het spinnetje hier, maar het spinnetje was heel ver weg. ‘Spinnetje ?’ riep het meisje. Maar het spinnetje

hoorde haar niet. En het pad ging een andere richting op. Het meisje besloot om maar gewoon het pad te volgen.

Na een tijdje zag ze wat ijzeren bekertjes op de grond staan, en toen ze dichterbij kwam sprong er een konijntje tevoorschijn. ‘Raad eens wat er in deze bekertjes zit ?’ vroeg het konijn. ‘In eentje zit de zee, in de andere zit het bos, en als je van de derde drinkt, dan ben je de klos.’

Ja, maar ik wil daar helemaal niet van drinken,’ zei het meisje. ‘Laat me er langs.’

Kies er eentje uit, kies er eentje uit, en waar je dan ook terecht komt, je komt er altijd weer uit, zong het konijntje een paar keer. En word je dan de klos, dan kom je altijd wel weer los, en kom je tot de zee dan is het altijd okay.

Maar het meisje wilde er niets van horen, en stampte op de grond. ‘Nu is het afgelopen met die gekheid. Ik moet er nu door, want de koningin ....’ maar verder kon ze niet komen.

‘De koningin ? De koningin ?’ zei het konijntje. En snel was het konijntje met zijn bekertjes verdwenen, en kon het meisje verder gaan. Na een tijdje kwam het meisje in de duinen, en niet lang daarna zag ze de prachtige oceaan waarin een diepe, felle zon scheen. Het meisje zag het pad helemaal doorlopen tot in de zee. ‘Maar dat kan toch helemaal niet,’ zei het meisje.

‘Jawel hoor,’ zei een stem. Een donkere gestalte stond ineens naast het meisje. Het leek wel een beetje op een zwarte pion op een paard. ‘Ik breng je er wel doorheen,’ zei de pion.

‘Ja, maar hoe dan ?’ vroeg het meisje. Ineens haalde de gestalte een dobbelsteen onder het zadel vandaan. De gestalte gooide de dobbelsteen van de duin op het strand. Op het bovenvlak van de dobbelsteen stond een gestalte als een rode pion. De gestalte was gevleugeld, en stond al snel naast het meisje. ‘Spring maar op mijn rug,’ zei de rode gestalte. En toen het meisje op zijn rug zat steeg de gestalte op. De zwarte gestalte was weer verdwenen. De rode gestalte had een geweer met kogels als dobbelstenen, en als ze door vervelende vogels werden lastiggevallen schoot hij ze met het geweer neer. Na een tijdje kwamen ze op een heuvel aan waar het pad weer verder ging. De rode pion wees in de verte : ‘Zie, daar, waar het glinstert, daar moet je zijn, daar woont de konijnenkoningin.’

‘Maar daar kom ik net vandaan,’ zei het meisje. ‘De koningin zei dat ik het pad moest volgen.’

‘Dat moet een vergissing zijn geweest,’ zei de rode pion, en vertrok.

‘Wacht eens even,’ riep het meisje. ‘Je moet het me uitleggen. Ik begrijp het niet meer.’ Maar de rode pion was al weg. Toen besloot ze het pad maar te volgen tot de glinsteringen in de verte, maar al snel begon het erg donker te worden en koud. ‘Ik moet hier ergens iets vinden om te kunnen schuilen,’ zei het meisje. Het begon ook steeds harder en harder te waaien.

‘Kom hier !’ riep een stem, ‘kom hier,’ bijna gillend. De stem leek op het geluid wanneer haar ouders ruzie maakten. Een konijn op een woonboot riep naar een ander konijn. Het was een woonboot gewoon op de grond. Er was nergens water te bekennen, alleen wat druppels van een beginnende regen. ‘Kom nu binnen !’ riep de stem weer, ‘wil je soms verdrinken ?’ Het meisje zag een wat jonger konijntje stampvoetend naar binnen lopen, in de woonboot. Het andere konijn gaf hem een om z’n oren. Toen ging de deur dicht. Snel begon het natter te worden onder de voeten van het meisje, en werd ze door de wind bijna weggeblazen. Toen ze in de verte keek, kreeg ze de schrik van haar leven. Bulderend hoge golven kwamen op haar af, alsof de oceaan het land wilde opslokken. Zo snel als ze kon rende ze naar de woonboot, maar hoe hard ze ook op het deurtje bonsde, niemand deed open.

Help me, help me dan toch ! riep het meisje. Het water was al tot haar knieen gekomen, en de razende golven kwamen steeds dichterbij, en groeiden steeds hoger. Al snel was het water tot haar heupen gekomen, en keek ze recht in een kilometers hoge golf die haar elk moment zou kunnen opslokken. Het meisje slaakte een gil. Een raampje naast het deurtje ging open, en een hand greep het meisje vliegensvlug naar binnen.

‘Dat was op het nippertje,’ zei een konijntje. Het meisje zuchtte diep.

‘Dat gebeurt altijd als de koningin kwaad word,’ zei het konijntje.

‘Waarom wordt ze dan kwaad,’ vroeg het meisje.

‘Ze kan niet tegen haar verlies met spelletjes,’ zei het konijntje.

‘Met wie doet ze dan spelletjes ?’ vroeg het meisje.

‘Met een spin,’ zei het konijntje.

‘Oh maar ik ken dat spinnetje,’ zei het meisje. ‘Ik ben dat spinnetje ook tegengekomen, en hij sprak dat hij altijd wint.’

‘Hoe weet je dat ?’ vroeg het konijn ineens. ‘Niemand weet dat, dus waarom zou jij dat weten ?’

‘Nou,’ legde het meisje uit, ‘er waren drie paden. Eerst kwam ik op het tweede pad waar het witte kasteel was, en daarna kwam ik op het derde pad waar iedereen in slaap viel. Hier ben ik hem tegengekomen.’

‘Maar dat kan niet,’ zei het konijn, ‘dat is absoluut onmogelijk. Niemand die op het derde pad komt ontwaakt weer. Zij die daar komen zullen voor eeuwig en altijd slapen.’

‘Oh maar ik zei tegen het spinnetje dat ik van de koningin had gehoord dat ik het pad moest volgen,’ zei het meisje, ‘en toen liet hij me erdoor.’

‘De koningin ?’ vroeg het konijntje terwijl zijn gezicht groen en geel tegelijk werd. ‘Mens allemachtig, heeft de koningin dat tegen jou gezegd ?’

Het meisje knikte. ‘Oh maar dan zijn wij in heel groot gevaar,’ zei het konijntje. ‘Als de koningin dat gezegd heeft, dan is ze ergens op uit. Dan daagt ze je uit voor een duel.’

‘Een duel ?’ vroeg het meisje.

‘Ja een duel, een gevecht,’ zei het konijn, ‘en dan moeten we snel zijn. We moeten direkt naar het kasteel, want daar zit ze op je te wachten voor het spel.’

Direct rende het konijn een andere kamer in, en startte de motor. Met volle kracht ging de boot richting het glinsterende kasteel in de verte. Na een tijdje voer het bootje naar binnen. Bij een grote paal diep in het kasteel was een kade waar ze konden uitstappen. Het konijn greep de hand van het meisje en rende samen met haar een grote stenen trap naast een muur op. ‘Majesteit, majesteit,’ riep het konijn, en toen hij de koningin op de trap tegenkwam, zei hij het wat rustiger : ‘Majesteit, ik weet dat we wat laat zijn.’

‘Wat, laat ?’ zei de koningin, ‘helemaal niet laat. Veel te vroeg. Jullie zijn veel te vroeg hier.’

‘Maar waarom werd u dan zo boos ?’ vroeg het konijn.

‘Ach, niks bijzonders,’ zei de koningin, ‘gewoon een ongelukje.’

‘Een ongelukje ?’ vroeg het konijn.

Ja, zei de koningin, ik liet een pion vallen, en die vloog weg.

‘Misschien een rode pion ?’ vroeg het konijn.

Ja, hoe weet jij dat nu weer, vroeg de koningin een beetje kattig.

Nou, ik zag een rode ster naar beneden vallen, maar later dacht ik : het zal wel weer een pion van de koningin zijn, zei het konijn.

Ja, lachte de koningin, jaha, dat heb je goed gezien, jongen, en nu vlug wegwezen, want het is nog lang geen tijd.

Toen rende het konijn weg. Nu stond het meisje oog in oog met de koningin.

En wie ben jij ? vroeg de koningin.

‘Eh, ik ben het meisje wat van u gewoon het pad moest volgen,’ zei het meisje.

Oh ja ? kraste de koningin, nou heus, ik ken je niet.

Kijk dan eens beter. Kent u mij echt niet ? vroeg het meisje.

Toen deed de koningin een brilletje op, en kwam dichterbij. Eens even kijken, zei de koningin. Er zijn zoveel meisjes die .... het pad volgen, zei je ?

Het meisje knikte.

Wacht eens even, zei de koningin. Ben jij langs de drie paden gegaan ?

Alleen de tweede en de derde. Ik ben nog niet bij de heks op het eerste pad geweest, zei het meisje.

Wat sta je hier dan te staan ? bulderde de koningin. Terug jij !

En toen zette het meisje het op een rennen, want de koningin begon verschrikkelijk te bulderen. Het leek alsof haar ouders weer ruzie maakten, erger dan ooit tevoren, en het meisje begon heel hard te huilen.

Rennen ! brulde de koningin, ren voor je leven, want ik ontplof, en dan zul je de dobbelstenen zien rollen.

Het meisje was al snel omsingeld door een heel leger met dobbelstenen. Er kwam vuur uit hun monden, en de roden waren het ergste. Nog harder begon het meisje te huilen. Toe dan, konijn, help me dan ! riep het meisje hard. Maar het konijn was nergens te bekennen. In de verte zag ze de woonboot, maar die dreef telkens verderweg. Oh, was ik nu maar naar het eerste pad gegaan, zei het meisje. De dobbelstenen zagen er zo dreigend uit.

Wat zei je, krijste de koningin, nee, dat kan niet, zei je dat je het derde pad op ben gegaan ?

Ja, majesteit, zei het meisje.

Iedereen slaapt daar, en niemand staat ooit weer op, zei de koningin.

Ja, maar het spinnetje ... zei het meisje

Het spinnetje ? krijste de koningin .... Heeft het spinnetje je erdoor gelaten ? En toen werd de koningin nog kwaaier.

Maar toen ik hem vertelde wat u gezegd had dat ik het pad moest volgen, toen liet hij me erdoor, zei het meisje.

Oh, zuchtte de koningin woest, ik kan dat spinnetje niet uitstaan ... Wat heeft hij nog meer gezegd ?

‘Dat hij altijd wint,’ zei het meisje.

En toen werd de koningin wel zo razend dat ze niets meer met de dobbelstenen te maken wilde hebben. ‘Uit mijn ogen !’ krijste ze tegen de dobbelstenen. ‘Niets wil ik nog met spelletjes te maken hebben.’ Toen liep ze boos weg, het meisje alleen achterlatend.

Even later kwam ze weer terug. ‘Zeg, waar kom je eigenlijk vandaan ?’ vroeg ze aan het meisje. ‘Toch niet uit de grote mensenwereld, hè ?’

Ja, zei het meisje, daar kom ik vandaan. Mijn vader en moeder maakten altijd ruzie, en ....

Je hoeft me niets meer te vertellen, zei de koningin, ik begrijp het al. Dan kom je dus van het eerste pad vandaan.

Nee, daar ben ik nog niet geweest, daar bij die heks, zei het meisje.

Kom maar mee, zei de koningin, dan laat ik het je zien.

In een hoge torenkamer aangekomen schonk de koningin thee voor het meisje in, en vroeg het meisje of ze het fijn vond in de grote mensenwereld.

Nee, zei het meisje, want niemand begrijpt me, en ze maken altijd ruzie.

‘En wat heb je eraan gedaan ?’ vroeg de koningin.

Ik ben weggelopen, zei het meisje.

Dat is het beste wat je kon doen, zei de koningin, zo kon je de heks verslaan.

Ja maar ik ben nog helemaal geen heks tegengekomen, zei het meisje.

Als dat zo is, zei de koningin, dan zul je terugmoeten naar het eerste pad, en dan zul je het pad gewoon moeten volgen totdat je haar tegen bent gekomen. Of zullen we gewoon een spelletje doen ?

De paden heb ik gevolgd, zei het meisje. Laten we nu dan maar een spelletje doen.

En zo gebeurde het. Tot diep in de avond deed het meisje spelletjes met de koningin, en ze konden het zo goed met elkaar vinden dat de koningin niet meer boos werd als ze een spelletje verloor. Het meisje beleefde nog vele avonturen met de koningin, maar dat hoor je wel in een ander verhaal.

Het Meisje Dat Van Glas Was

Er was eens een meisje dat niet gelukkig was. Ze had problemen thuis, en op een dag besloot ze weg te rennen. Maar na niet al te lange tijd verdwaalde ze in het bos. Het meisje vond dat helemaal niet erg, want ze wilde nooit meer terug naar huis. Maar toen het donker begon te worden werd het meisje steeds banger. Dit wilde ze ook niet. En wat als er een roofdier op haar af zou komen ? Het meisje begon om hulp te roepen en hard te huilen, maar niemand hoorde haar. Of toch ? In de verte zag ze een klein lichtje, en al snel stond er een klein mannetje naast haar met een lantaarntje. ‘Ach,’ zei het meisje, ‘zou u me kunnen helpen ? Ik ben van huis weggelopen, maar nu ben ik bang voor de roofdieren. Ik wilde wel dat ik van glas was.’ En floep, ineens was het meisje van glas, en het mannetje was alweer verdwenen.

Het meisje was het mannetje erg dankbaar, want zo zouden de roofdieren haar niet kunnen verslinden, maar na een tijdje begon het meisje te merken dat ze maar moeilijk kon bewegen. Strompelend zocht ze naar een onderkomen, maar vond niets. Het bos was groot, en waar moest ze naartoe ? Na een lange koude nacht wilde ze niets liever dan weer naar huis te gaan, en weer gewoon een meisje te zijn. Maar van glas was ze, en verdwaald.

Na een tijdje kwam er een vlinder op de schouder van het huilende meisje zitten. Na een tijdje begon de schouder pijn te doen, en het meisje probeerde de vlinder weg te jagen. ‘Ik weet waar je last van hebt,’ zei de vlinder, ‘maar je hebt er zelf voor gekozen. Het is moeilijk een glazen meisje te zijn, want alhoewel de

roofdieren je niet zullen verslinden, zul je toch ongelukkig zijn, en vreemde pijnen hebben, de pijn van glas.'

'Ja,' zei het meisje, 'ik heb het erg koud, en het voelt pijnlijk aan als je op mijn schouder zit. Dan is het alsof er iemand hard op het raam tikt. Ach, lieve vlinder, ik zou zo graag weer een gewoon meisje willen zijn.'

'Dan moet je naar de koning,' zei de vlinder met een zware stem. 'De koning woont in het woud, op een hoge boom.' De vlinder wees de boom aan, en het meisje begon te klimmen. Dat ging heel moeizaam omdat ze van glas was. Na een lange tijd kwam ze eindelijk bij de top. Het was een hoge boom, hoger dan ze ooit had gezien. De koning was heel aardig, en had vleugels. Het was een soort vogel, en hij zou het meisje brengen naar het kraaiennest. Gelukkig was het een grote vogel, en hij nam al gauw het meisje van glas op zijn rug. Ze moesten wel even een tijdje vliegen voordat ze in het kraaiennest konden komen.

Toen de kraai het meisje zag begon hij te lachen. 'Wat is dat nou voor een raar meisje ?' zei hij. 'Zoiets heb ik nog nooit gezien.' En na een tijdje lag hij bijna dubbel van het lachen.

'Kun je haar helpen ?' vroeg de koning. 'Ze wil graag weer een gewoon meisje zijn, en ze wil terug naar huis.' Toen kwam de kraai wat dichterbij, en begon op het glas te tikken. Dat deed erg pijn, en plotseling begon hij heel hard te tikken, en het glas begon te barsten en te brokkelen. Het meisje schrok zo erg dat ze uit het kraaiennest viel, en in de bospoel terechtkwam. Het meisje begon te rennen en te rennen. Dit wilde ze niet. Het deed pijn. Na een lange tijd kwam ze aan bij een huisje waar een wolf woonde. Toen de wolf haar zag begon hij te lachen. 'Als je van vlees en bloed was, zou ik je opeten,' zei de wolf.

'Kunt u mij alstublieft helpen,' zei het meisje. 'Ik zou zo graag weer een gewoon meisje willen zijn, en ik wil weer naar huis.' De wolf kwam wat dichterbij, en sprak : 'Ik kan je wel naar de raaf brengen, als je dat wil. Die kan toveren.'

'Nou, graag, meneer,' zei het meisje. En zo bracht de wolf het meisje naar het huisje van de raaf. De raaf was erg blij het meisje te zien. 'Zeg meisje,' zei de raaf, 'er is een kaboutervolk wat jou graag als koningin zou willen hebben. Zo vaak worden ze lastiggevallen door roofdieren, en altijd als ze een nieuwe koningin of koning hebben gekozen, dan wordt die ook binnen de kortste keren door wilde dieren opgegeten. Daarom zeiden ze eens : 'We zouden wel een koning of koningin van glas willen hebben.' En kijk eens : Jouw glas is zo scherp dat je er de roofdieren mee weg zou kunnen jagen.'

‘Ja maar waar woont dat volk dan ?’ vroeg het meisje. ‘Ik zou zo graag weer een normaal meisje willen zijn, en naar huis kunnen gaan. Kan dat ?’

‘Oh, maar meisje,’ zei de raaf. ‘Daar vraag je me wat. Ik weet niet of dat wel kan.’

‘Maar de wolf zei dat u een tovenaar was,’ zei het meisje teleurgesteld.

‘Een tovenaar ?’ vroeg de raaf. En toen begon de raaf te lachen. ‘Nee,’ zei de raaf. ‘Ik ben geen tovenaar, maar soms kan ik met wijze raad komen.’

‘Nou, zou u me dan een wijze raad kunnen geven ?’ vroeg het meisje beleefd.

‘Nee,’ zei de raaf, ‘maar ik kan wel wat proberen.’ En toen liep de raaf naar het meisje toe en begon hard op het glas te tikken. Weer begon het glas te barsten en te breken, en in paniek rende het meisje het huis uit. ‘Wacht even !’ riepen de wolf en de raaf, en achtervolgden haar. Het meisje rende en rende, totdat ze uiteindelijk bij een kaboutervolkje aankwam. En inderdaad, zij wilden haar dolgraag als koningin hebben, want een koningin van glas, die vind je niet zomaar. Het meisje liet zich maar kronen, want ze wist toch niet waar ze anders naartoe moest. Het hele volkje was blij, en bestrooiden haar met bloesem, bladeren en bospoeders. ‘Oh, maar zo word ik vies,’ riep het meisje.

‘Leve de koningin !’ riep het volkje. Maar het meisje was doodongelukkig. Ze wilde naar huis, en ze wilde weer gewoon zijn. Op een nacht kwam er een kabouter naar haar kamer met een hele grote hamer. ‘Koningin,’ zei de kabouter. ‘We hebben gehoord van uw wens om weer een meisje van vlees en bloed te zijn, en om weer naar huis te kunnen gaan. Luister, u bent zo groot, en wij zijn zo klein, dat wanneer ik het glas insla met deze hamer, dan kunnen we met het glas onze stad beschermen tegen de roofdieren, en dan komt u vrij.’

Maar de koningin hoorde niets, want ze sliep. In een paar slagen lag het hele bed vol met scherven, en al snel was de hele slaapkamer van de koningin vol met blije dwergen. Ze waren zo vrolijk, want vandaag zouden ze nieuwe stadsmuren krijgen, en zou hun koningin gelukkig worden.

Maar het meisje was nu als de wind, vrij om te gaan naar de hoogste bomen, vrij om terug te gaan naar haar huis onder de mensen. Ze was nog steeds niet van vlees en bloed, maar ze was gelukkig nu, verlost van het glas. Het glas werd vollop gebruikt door het dwergenvolkje, en voortaan lieten de roofdieren hen met rust. Het meisje was nu de wind geworden, en soms ging ze nog even terug naar al haar oude vriendjes : de vlinder, de koning, de raaf, de wolf en het volkje, maar zij konden haar niet zien. Zij konden alleen met warmte aan haar terug denken.

De Wonderschoenen

Een man ging eens met zijn moeder en grootmoeder naar een schoenmaker om nieuwe schoenen te kopen. Er stonden prachtige schoenen in de rekken, maar de mooiste schoenen waren van fluweel met verblindende ringen. De schoenmaker zei dat het wonderschoenen waren, en dat daarom de prijs iets hoger zou zijn dan gewoonlijks. Maar de man was erg rijk, en kocht de schoenen.

Toen de man die avond naar bed ging en in slaap viel begonnen de wonderschoenen te bewegen, en al snel liepen ze het huis uit. De man hoorde wat deuren klapperen, en rende al snel achter zijn schoenen aan. Ze waren op weg naar het dorp. In het dorp aangekomen kwamen er wat elfjes uit de schoenen die zich overal begonnen te verspreiden, en toen liepen de schoenen nog harder. Zo rende de man de hele nacht achter zijn schoenen aan, en die ochtend gingen ze bij een andere schoenmaker naar binnen. Buiten adem wilde de man zijn schoenen pakken, maar de schoenmaker zei : ‘Daar zult u wel voor moeten betalen.’

‘Maar dat zijn mijn schoenen,’ zei de man.

De schoenen stonden keurig in het rek naast een heleboel schoenen van dezelfde soort. De man begon een beetje hopeloos te worden.

‘Zijn dit allemaal wonderschoenen ?’ vroeg de man.

‘Wonderschoenen ? Waar heeft u het over ?’ zei de schoenmaker.

‘Ach, laat maar,’ zei de man, en betaalde opnieuw voor zijn schoenen. Maar ditmaal gebeurde er niets wonderlijks met de schoenen, en zo gingen er vele

dagen voorbij, totdat de man dacht dat hij dan misschien de verkeerde schoenen genomen had. Weer ging hij terug naar de schoenmaker en kocht een ander paar van dezelfde soort, maar toen ook dit niet werkte besloot hij om ze allemaal te kopen. Maar geen van de schoenen bleken wonderschoenen te zijn. En daarom ging de man weer terug naar de schoenmaker.

‘Schoenmaker,’ zei de man, ‘kunt u mij vertellen wie er nog meer de laatste tijd schoenen van deze soort heeft gekocht ?’

‘Alleen een vrouw, een zeer rijke vrouw, die hier eens in de zoveel jaren komt,’ zei de schoenmaker. ‘Maar ik weet niet waar zij woont.’ De man was een beetje teleurgesteld toen hij dat hoorde. ‘Maar weet u wat ?’ zei de schoenmaker, ‘zodra ze hier is zal ik mijn dienstknecht naar u sturen zodat u met haar kunt spreken.’

Na vele lange jaren toen de man de wonderschoenen eigenlijk al een beetje vergeten was klopte de dienstknecht van de schoenmaker bij het huis van de man aan. De dienstknecht bracht de boodschap dat de vrouw van de schoenen was gekomen, en dat als hij de schoenen wilde hebben, dan zou hij zeven jaren voor haar moeten werken. Dat had de man er graag voor over, en ging met de dienstknecht mee.

De vrouw woonde op een groot kasteel, en in die zeven jaren had de man een goede tijd, maar werkte hard. Na de zeven jaren kreeg hij eindelijk de schoenen, en inderdaad, het waren de wonderschoenen. Ditmaal sloot de man de schoenen elke avond wanneer hij ging slapen op in een gouden kooitje met zilveren sluitseltjes.

Maar op een nacht brak de kooi open, en weer gingen de wonderschoenen er vandoor. De man werd wakker van het geluid, en rende achter de schoenen aan. Ditmaal brachten de schoenen hem diep in het bos. Hier woonde een hele oude schoenmaker op een afgelegen plek. De schoenmaker vertelde hem dat hij ooit de wonderschoenen had gemaakt, en dat ze op een dag aan de wandel gingen. De schoenmaker was blij dat ze nu iemand mee hadden gebracht, want de schoenmaker was erg eenzaam. Het huis van de schoenmaker was vol met wonderbaarlijke edelstenen, en de man wilde hier graag blijven. Na een tijdje vertelde de schoenmaker dat de wonderschoenen de bezitter naar het beste goud en edelgesteente zouden leiden, als ze maar nooit uitgetrokken zouden worden. En sindsdien sliep de man gewoon met zijn schoenen aan, en zijn de wonderschoenen altijd bij hem gebleven.

Op een dag leidden de schoenen hem tot een bloedheldere bron waar een mooie dame zat. Ze zat wat te breien, en het viel de man op dat ze zulke mooie schoenen had. De schoenen straalden in de zon. De man, die toch wel erg

eenzaam was, ook al had hij gezelschap van de schoenmaker, werd direkt erg verliefd op de vrouw. Het was alsof de knoppen van haar schoenen hem hadden betoverd. ‘Trouw met me, trouw met me,’ riep de man, maar de vrouw stond op en rende weg. Direkt ging de man er als een speer achteraan, maar de vrouw rende veel harder. De man was erg teleurgesteld, en ging terug naar de schoenmaker. ‘Oh,’ zei de schoenmaker toen de man hem het verhaal vertelde, ‘dat zijn schoenen die ik eens voor de bosfee heb gemaakt. Iedereen die die schoenen ziet raakt direkt betoverd.’

‘Maar waarom rende ze dan weg ?’ vroeg de man.

‘Dat doen de schoenen,’ zei de schoenmaker. ‘Maar als je dezelfde schoenen als haar zou hebben, dan zou je net zo hard als haar kunnen rennen.’ En toen liep de schoenmaker naar een oude kast en haalde een zelfde paar eruit.

De man deed de schoenen aan, en rende naar buiten. Nu kon hij de bosfee gemakkelijk bijhouden, en de bosfee was erg verrast. De bosfee was altijd erg eenzaam geweest, want haar schoenen renden altijd weg als er iemand in de buurt kwam. Maar nu de man haar makkelijk kon bijhouden begonnen haar schoenen wat af te remmen, en al gauw stond ze helemaal stil, als betoverd. ‘Je hebt me betoverd,’ zei de bosfee met een glimlach.

‘Nee,’ zei de man, ‘dat hebben de wonderschoenen gedaan.’

De bosfee keek naar zijn schoenen en toen naar hem. ‘Zou je weleens met mij willen dansen,’ zong de bosfee. ‘Zou je weleens met mij over de heg willen gaan, want daar baden zoveel sterretjes onder een bloedrode maan. Zou je weleens met mij willen rennen en zingen, heus, je kan het, want je hebt mijn wonderschoenen aan.’

En toen vertelde de bosfee over de heg waar ze nooit overheen kon, want altijd als ze dichterbij kwam, dan rende de heg weg, en de heg kon veel harder rennen dan haar.

‘Zou je weleens met mij willen dromen,’ zong de man. ‘Zou je weleens met mij onder de maan willen dansen. Zou je weleens met mij over de heg willen dansen.’

‘Ja, graag,’ zong de bosfee.

‘Ja, graag,’ zong de man.

‘Zie, het is wat eens de schoenmaker mij heeft verteld,’ zong de man. ‘Wij moeten dansen, wij moeten dansen, en de heg zal staan als betoverd en versteld.’

En zo dansten ze samen naar de heg toe, maar al gauw merkten ze dat de heg veel sneller was dan zij, en niet lang daarna gingen ze beiden teleurgesteld naar het huis van de schoenmaker terug. Toen de schoenmaker het verhaal hoorde haalde hij twee paar dansschoenen tevoorschijn. Het waren de mooiste schoenen die ze ooit hadden gezien. Ze deden de schoenen aan, en keken elkaar in de ogen, en dansten als betoverd terug naar de heg. En inderdaad, de heg stond als bevroren te kijken, en met gemak konden ze door de heg heen. Ook de schoenmaker liep achter hen aan, en zo kwamen ze met z'n drieen aan de andere kant van de heg.

Maar de wezens die hier woonden vlogen allemaal in angst voor hen weg. Zij droegen geen schoenen, en zij hadden vederlichte vleugeltjes als elfjes. De schoenmaker was inmiddels weer teruggegaan naar zijn huis. Langzaam daalde de bosfee af in de rivier en de man deed hetzelfde. En heel langzaam begonnen ook de sterretjes in het water af te dalen. 'Ik heb mijn schoenen hier helemaal niet meer nodig !' riep de man, en trok ze uit. Direkt had ook hij vederlichte vleugeltjes en steeg uit het water op. Maar de bosfee volgde niet. 'Zeg, ik moet weer terug naar waar ik vandaan kom,' zei ze, en ging terug door de heg.

Even was de man teleurgesteld. Hij wilde hier wel blijven. Toen ineens trokken een heleboel sterretjes hem verder naar boven. Maar omdat hij zijn wonderschoenen had uitgedaan kon hij nu nooit meer terug over de heg. Na een tijd begon hij de bosfee en de schoenmaker erg te missen, en zou hij erg graag terugwillen. Op een dag ging hij terug naar de rivier om de wonderschoenen te zoeken. En toen gebeurde er iets wonderlijks : Twee van de prachtigste vissen kwamen op hem afzwemmen en zeiden : 'Wij zouden u nog willen bedanken dat u ons vrijgelaten hebt. Wij waren uw wonderschoenen, en in deze rivier zijn wij weer vissen geworden.'

Maar de man begreep het niet en vroeg : 'Maar wie heeft jullie dan vroeger betoverd, en hoe kom ik nu weer thuis ?'

'In het land achter de rivier woont de steenheks,' sprak één van de vissen. 'Zij vangt vissen om ze te betoveren tot schoenen. Wanneer je haar verslaat zul je terug kunnen keren naar je woonplaats.'

En zo brachten de twee vissen hem over de rivier, die verderop veel woester was. De steenheks woonde in een woest kasteel. De stenen waarmee het kasteel was gebouwd waren roze en rode edelstenen die ze gevonden had in de dieptes van de rivier. De man mocht de rode stenen en tegels niet aanraken, want dan zou hij verstenen. Maar sommige stenen waren het ene moment roze, en het andere moment rood. 'Ik wist wel dat je zou komen,' krijste de steenheks. 'De wonderschoenen hebben je hier naartoe geleid, alhoewel ze nu weer gewoon hun vissenhuid hebben. Zeg, ik heb een opdracht voor jou, en als je die opdracht

kunt vervullen dan zal ik je weer naar huis laten gaan, over de heg. Haal voor mij drie toverbloemen in de betoverde tuinen achter het kasteel.'

De man deed wat hem gevraagd werd, maar in de betoverde tuinen raakte hij onwel. De heks die alles volgde door haar toverbol begon te lachen. 'Wat een domoor. Niemand overleefd zo'n reisje door de betoverde tuinen. Zelfs ik kan daar niet komen.'

Maar na een tijdje kwam hij er toch uit met de drie toverbloemen waar de steenheks om vroeg. De steenheks was erg verbaasd, maar wel blij met de toverbloemen. 'Jij domoor,' riep ze. 'Nu kun je hier nooit meer weg. Mijn macht strekt zich nu uit tot zelfs achter de heg.' Maar toen werd de man erg kwaad, en herinnerde dat de vissen hadden gezegd dat hij haar eerst moest verslaan. Er lagen wat roze en rode stenen los om hem heen. Hij wist dat hij de rode stenen niet mocht raken, zoals de vissen hem dat hadden gezegd, anders zou het afgelopen met hem zijn. Maar hij pakte een schaalvormige roze steen, en schepte daarmee een kleine rode steen, en wierp het toen op de steenheks af. De steenheks versteende onmiddelijk. Maar overal om hem heen begonnen de stenen rood te worden, en de man wist niet wat hij moest doen. Voor hem was een vijvertje waar hij insprong. Het vijvertje liep uit in een riviertje waardoor hij het kasteel kon uitkomen, en waardoor hij in de rivier buiten het kasteel kon komen. Hier wachtten de twee vissen hem op. Ze waren erg blij dat de heks nu verslagen was, en ze vertelden de man dat de heg nu ook was verdwenen. Ooit had de heks de heg gebouwd om haar machtsgebied af te bakenen, maar nu had ze al haar macht verloren. Maar gek genoeg wilden de vissen weer uit het water genomen worden, om in wonderschoenen te veranderen, want om te leven op het vasteland beviel hen iets beter. En zo had de man zijn beste vrienden altijd bij de hand. Als hij ging zwemmen, dan veranderden ze in vissen die met hem mee zwommen en hem overal naartoe brachten, en op het vasteland waren ze gewoon zijn wonderschoenen.

De Negende Wens

Eens leefde er een hebzuchtige prins in een arm land. De prins was zo hebzuchtig dat hij een ander niets gunde, en alles voor zichzelf nam. Toen op een dag een meisje uit zijn rijk spoorloos verdwenen was ging hij alleen op zoektocht omdat haar ouders erg rijk waren en een hoge beloning zouden schenken aan degene die hun dochter zou terugvinden.

Op zijn reis door het woud kwam hij ’s avonds laat bij een huisje aan. Toen hij op de deur klopte hoorde hij een krassende stem : ‘Ik ben Spindraad. Wie is daar nog zo laat ?’

‘Ach, moedertje,’ zei de prins. ‘Ik zou zo graag even bij u willen kijken of daar ook een meisje van ons rijk is. Zij is spoorloos verdwenen.’

‘Ik heb zeven dochters,’ zei de oude vrouw. ‘Als u even wil kijken. Kom dan maar verder.’ De prins stapte naar binnen, en kreeg wat te eten. Ook mocht hij van elke dochter een wens doen. Bij de eerste dochter zei hij : ‘Ik zou graag willen dat het koninkrijk omgeven is door een haag met rode bloedbessen, giftig als de zon, om ervoor te zorgen dat niemand zomaar spoorloos kan verdwijnen.’ Als tweede wens, bij de tweede dochter, wenste hij dat zijn koninkrijk vol zou zijn met goud, maar alle andere wensen waren hebberig, en hij vergat het spoorloos verdwenen meisje helemaal.

‘Omdat je in bijna al je wensen zo hebberig bent geweest,’ zei de oude vrouw, ‘zul je veranderen in een pad.’ En direkt was de prins geen prins meer, maar een pad. In schaamte vertrok de pad. Al gauw kwam hij erachter dat hij ook niet terug kon naar zijn koninkrijk vanwege de dichte haag met giftige rode bloedbessen. Maar eens in een nacht zag hij een meisje baden in een bosmeertje. Hij zwom direkt naar haar toe, en vertelde haar wat er was gebeurd. Het bleek het spoorloos verdwenen meisje te zijn. Maar ze leek sprekend op één van de dochters van de oude vrouw.

‘Ik ben gevlucht,’ zei het meisje, ‘vanwege het harde werk dat ik in uw koninkrijk moest verrichten. Ik kwam bij de oude vrouw en werd als één van haar dochters. Zij liet mij zacht werk verrichten, en ik mocht wensen laten uitkomen.’

‘Maar waarom ben je daar dan niet gebleven ?’ vroeg de pad.

‘Omdat de oude vrouw aan het einde van de wensen altijd haar eigen wens uitspreekt,’ sprak het meisje. ‘Sinds ik gevlucht ben, ben ik de enige die haar boze wensen ongedaan kan maken. Ik was altijd de achtste wens, en zij altijd de laatste, de negende.’

En zo deed de pad zijn wens bij het meisje om weer een prins te worden.

Linana en de Carrousel

Eens in de tijd dat er nog geen bloemen waren leefde er eens een meisje dat zo mooi was dat iedereen haar ‘Zwanenpracht’ noemde. Op de hele wereld was er geen liever meisje te vinden dan haar, met een hart van goud en stralend licht. Haar vader, een koopman was erg trots op haar, en er was niemand met wie zij het beter kon vinden dan met haar vader. Maar op een dag was de vader erg ziek. Het meisje was erg bedroefd en na korte tijd stierf haar vader. Haar moeder was een edele vrouw en hertrouwde. Maar al gauw bleek dat het meisje niet met haar nieuwe vader kon opschieten. De stiefvader was erg ruw naar haar, en het meisje begon erg te veranderen. Na een aantal jaren was ze zo’n kreng geworden dat iedereen haar Zwanenplaag noemde.

Maar op een dag was er een koopman met een carrousel in het land. De kinderen waren dol op de carrousel en ook het meisje vond het fijn er ritjes in te maken. De koopman was direkt erg gecharmeerd door het meisje, omdat ze zo mooi was als een zwaan. Na de ritjes wenkte de koopman het meisje, en nam haar apart. ‘Heus,’ zei de koopman, ‘ik heb in het hele land geen mooier meisje gezien dan jij, met een hart zo vol van goud en stralend licht.’

‘Iedereen noemt mij zwanenplaag,’ zei het meisje, ‘omdat ik zo’n kreng ben. Vanwaar uw belangstelling ?’

‘Oh, maar ik zou jou Zwanenpracht noemen,’ zei de man. Ineens moest het meisje aan haar vader denken.

En toen vertelde de man haar dat wanneer het midden in de nacht is, en alle kinderen slapen, dan wordt de zwaan van de carrousel wakker, en wie dan op haar rug zit maakt met haar een ritje in de lucht. Als je het aan niemand vertelt, en naar de carrousel komt wanneer je de eerste sterretjes van de nacht ziet, dan is het aan jou de eer een ritje te maken, sprak de man.

De eerste nacht toen het meisje een ritje mocht maken op de vliegende zwaan van de carrousel kon ze alle lichtjes van de stad zien, en vertelde aan de man van de carrousel dat haar echte naam Linana was. Omdat het het meisje zo beviel mocht ze ook de volgende nacht komen. Ditmaal bracht de zwaan haar nog verder weg, en vertelde ze de man van de carrousel dat haar vader was overleden, en dat ze een boze stiefvader had. En de man nodigde haar nog een keer uit. Ditmaal bracht de zwaan haar naar een land zo ver weg dat ze het niet kende. Toen ze een voet op de grond had gezet vloog de zwaan weg. Ze riep de zwaan nog na, maar al snel was de zwaan helemaal uit het zicht verdwenen. Ze stond vlakbij een meertje waar een heleboel echte zwanen waren.

Linana mocht op één van de grotere zwanen een ritje maken over het meer, en ineens steeg de zwaan op. 'Oh, kun jij me even naar mijn land terugbrengen,' zei het meisje. 'De zwaan van de carrousel is mij vast vergeten.'

Toen het meisje weer bij de man van de carrousel was aangekomen, vertelde de man haar dat de zwaan van de carrousel altijd op tijd terug moest zijn, anders zou hij in de lucht ineens weer van metaal worden en neerstorten. Toen begreep het meisje het. Maar ook de zwaan van het andere land wilde wel een plaats op de carrousel hebben. Voor de man met de carrousel was dat niet zo moeilijk, omdat hij immers toverkrachten bezat. En steeds kwam het meisje terug in de nacht om ritjes te maken op de zwanen, en ze nam telkens nieuwe zwanen mee. Na een tijdje was de carrousel vol met zwanen, en op een nacht steeg de hele carrousel op, en vloog naar het land van de zwanen.

Dus als je een keer in de nacht een carrousel door de lucht ziet vliegen, dan weet je dat het Linana met haar zwanen is. Op een keer vertelde de koopman dat er drie vlammetjes in het binnenste van de carrousel waren. Zodra het eerste vlammetje uitging ging er op aarde iemand dood. Altijd als het tweede vlammetje uitging werd er op aarde iemand geboren, en als het derde vlammetje uitging werd er iemand blij. Linana vond het een prachtig gezicht om naar de knipperende vlammetjes te kijken. Maar op een dag werd ook de man van de carrousel ernstig ziek, en stierf. Linana was nu bedroefder dan ooit, en sindsdien gingen de vlammetjes niet meer aan. Ook de carrousel draaide niet meer, en de zwanen kwamen niet meer tot leven. Niemand wilde een carrousel in het land hebben die het niet meer deed. Ze besloten de carrousel in een diep gat in de aarde te werpen. Linana was ontroostbaar. Maar op een dag kwam er een zwaan van het andere land, en nam haar mee. Het meisje wilde niet meer terug en besloot in een huisje te leven aan het meertje van de zwanen. Maar op een dag gebeurde er iets wonderlijks, vanuit het meertje kwam de oude carrousel opzetten. De carrousel was nu groter dan ooit, en er waren ook veel meer zwanen op. De zwanen vertelden het meisje dat in het diepe gat in de aarde een oude vrouw leefde die zoveel toverkracht bezat dat ze kon maken dat de zwanen

altijd konden leven. Zelf had ze ook een heleboel zwanen, en die konden sindsdien ook in de carrousel zijn. En in het binnenste van de carrousel waren nu zoveel knipperende vlammetjes en was het er zo groot, dat Linana er voor altijd zou kunnen wonen.

En zo maakte Linana vanaf nu ook ritjes door het water en onder de grond. En als je haar eens tegenkomt, vraag dan maar of je met haar mee mag.

De Toverbeker en het Toverbordje

Eens waren er dertig prinsen die door een heks waren betoverd tot wachters op een hoge toren. De toren was zo hoog dat het hoogste deel niet gezien kon worden, en de toren was zo breed dat het de helft van het land vulde. Als iemand de trap omhoog wilde bestijgen, dan kwamen er ballen van steen en ballen van vuur naar beneden, en maakten voor lange tijd het land onveilig. Daarom verbood de koning dat nog iemand naar de toren zou gaan.

De koning had veel verdriet van het verlies van zijn dertig zonen. De dertig prinsen waren nu angstaanjagende wachters die op de top van de toren moesten marcheren. Zij moesten de schat van de heks bewaken : een toverbeker die nooit op zou raken, en waarmee je onder de grond kon reizen, en een toverbord dat altijd vol was, en waarmee je in de lucht kon reizen.

De koning had een erge hekel aan de heks. Was hij nu maar wat aardiger voor haar geweest, dan was alles niet zo erg als het nu was. Ja, de koning had veel spijt wat hij de heks had aangedaan. Een oud bedelvrouwtje kwam eens aan de poort en vroeg om onderdak, maar de koning zond haar weg. Hoe kon hij nu weten dat het een heks was ? En een heks kun je maar beter onderdak geven,

anders zal het je je hele leven berouwen. Dat was de koning nu wel duidelijk geworden.

Sindsdien was de koning altijd goed voor bedelaars, en had hij z'n lesje wel geleerd. Op een dag kwam één van de bedelaars tot de koning. 'Koning,' zei de bedelaar, 'ik heb gehoord wat er gebeurd is. Ik kom uit een ver land, maar ik heb een lange tijd onder de grond gewoond, en eens zag ik de heks met haar toverbeker langskomen. Ik volgde haar, en ze kwam in een bron van licht, waar ze onzichtbaar werd. Zo ging ik ook naar de bron, en in een bliksemschicht stond ik bovenop de toren waar u zonen gevangen worden gehouden. Ze waren inderdaad de meest afschuwelijke wachters geworden, en marcheerden gevaarlijk rond. Maar ze konden mij niet zien, omdat ik onzichtbaar was. De toverbeker was verdwenen, omdat de heks daarmee onder de grond was, maar het toverbordje dat altijd vol was stond daar, en ik nam ervan, en steeg op in de lucht. Hoever ik gekomen ben weet ik niet, maar ik was zo hoog waar nog geen mens ooit was gekomen. Hier kwam ik in een wereld waar de meest wonderlijke sprookjesfiguren waren. Zij vertelden mij dat uw zonen geheime sprookjes in zich droegen die nog nooit waren verteld. De betovering zou worden verbroken wanneer die sprookjes zouden worden verteld.'

Toen liet de koning de beste sprookjesvertellers van het land komen, om zoveel mogelijk sprookjes te verzamelen en te vertellen, maar er gebeurde niets. Toen liet de koning de bedelaar weer terugkomen, en vroeg hem waar onder de grond die lichtbron was. De koning zond toen tien lakeien met de bedelaar mee. De koning hoopte dat zijn lakeien de prinsen konden bevrijden. Maar de heks wachtte hen al op. In een lichtflits betoverde ze de lakeien in stenen wachters die de lichtbron moesten bewaken, maar de bedelaar zag de toverbeker staan, greep de beker en dronk ervan, terwijl hij nog dieper onder de grond kon reizen. Na een lange tijd kwam de bedelaar in een sprookjesrijk zo diep onder de grond waar geen mens ooit was geweest. Hoe diep het was, wist hij niet, maar er waren hier wonderlijke sprookjeswezens. Zij vertelden dat zij eens samenleefden met de sprookjeswereld boven de lucht, maar de heks had het rijk verscheurd. In de lichtbron verborg de heks sprookjes, en de twee sprookjeswerelden zouden weer bij elkaar komen als die verborgen sprookjes zouden worden verteld.

Weer ging de bedelaar naar de koning, en weer liet de koning de beste sprookjesvertellers komen, en ook de beste sprookjesvertellers uit andere landen, maar er gebeurde weer niets. Maar toen kreeg de bedelaar een idee. Hij had nu immers zowel het toverbordje als de toverbeker. Met het toverbordje kon hij nu de toverbeker naar het rijk boven de lucht brengen, en dan zouden zij met de toverbeker naar het rijk onder de grond kunnen gaan. Vanaf die dag werd er heel wat heen en weer gereisd, en ze vertelden elkaar de wonderlijkste sprookjes. Niet lang daarna marcheerden de stenen lakeien en de wachters van

de toren naar de dichtstbijzijnde stad, en begonnen de sprookjes te vertellen. Langzaam maar zeker verbrak de betovering, en de koning kon zijn dertig zonen en zijn tien lakeien weer in de armen nemen.

Het Vogelbalkonnetje

Er was eens een koning die een dochtertje had. Omdat hij niet wilde dat ze een verwend prinsesje zou worden liet hij haar opgroeien in een donkere diepe keuken om mee te helpen de grote beesten onder de grond te voeren. Maar het meisje verveelde zich vaak, en had het vaak koud. Op een dag klom het meisje door een buis boven het fornuis naar boven, en kwam boven op het kasteel terecht. Ze sloop door een torenraampje naar binnen, en zag daar een oude vrouw zitten achter een spinnenwiel en een weefraam. De oude vrouw zei dat ze weleens wat anders wilde, en het meisje vertelde haar over het keukentje. Ook het meisje wilde weleens wat anders en ze besloten van plaats te ruilen. Het oude vrouwtje klom door de lange buis naar het keukentje toe. Na een aantal dagen kwam het oude vrouwtje terug en vertelde het meisje dat ze het zo naar haar zin had in het keukentje en dat ze het meisje er zo dankbaar voor was dat ze het meisje een sieraad gaf. ‘Als je erover wrijft, dan verander je in een vogel,’ zei het oude vrouwtje. Het oude vrouwtje ging weer terug naar het keukentje, en het meisje wreef over het sieraad om in een vogel te veranderen. Het meisje wilde altijd al vliegen, en ze vloog over de zee en terug. Na een tijdje vloog ze door de lange buis om het oude vrouwtje te bezoeken.

Het meisje had eigenlijk nog nooit de grote beesten gezien. Ze moest vroeger alleen koken en het voedsel door een raampje schuiven. Maar nu was ze klein genoeg om zelf door het raampje heen te gaan. Hier kwam ze op een klein balkonnetje waar een heleboel andere vogels waren, groten en kleinen. In de

verte waren de grote beesten, waar de vogels altijd het voedsel naartoe brachten. Dan moesten ze eerst over een heel diep en groot ravijn vliegen, want de beesten waren op een soort eiland. Nu kon het meisje zelf eens wat voedsel naar de beesten brengen. Ze kreeg een mandje mee, dat ze in haar snavel kon houden. In het mandje waren wat appels, wat druiven, en wat pastei. Om alles te bedekken werd er een doek overheen geschoven. Het meisje keek haar ogen uit. Na een tijdje ging ze weer terug. In het torenkamertje lag nog steeds het sieraad. Even wreef ze er met haar vleugel overheen, en veranderde weer in een gewoon meisje.

Op een dag wilde de koning haar zien, en het meisje nam haar sieraad mee. Het meisje vertelde alles wat ze had meegemaakt aan haar vader, en over haar liefde voor de grote beesten. De koning pinkte een traantje weg, en sprak : ‘Die grote beesten zijn jouw eigen broers. Een boze heks heeft hen eens betoverd.’ En toen vertelde het meisje over het sieraad waarmee ze in een vogel kon veranderen. Zo zouden de grote beesten ook in vogels veranderen als het sieraad over hen heengewreven zou worden. De koning vond het een goed idee, en het meisje wreef even over het sieraad heen, veranderde in een vogel en nam het sieraad mee naar het vogelbalkonnetje. Met het sieraad vloog ze heel dicht naar de grote beesten toe, en wreef met het sieraad over hun huiden heen. Direkt veranderden ze in vogels, en in een grote zwerm vlogen ze terug over het grote ravijn heen. De koning was erg blij toen hij de vogels zag, maar het waren nog steeds geen prinsen. ‘Oh, maar dat is heel eenvoudig, vader,’ zei het meisje dat inmiddels weer een meisje was geworden. Ik wrijf gewoon nu de vogels met het sieraad. Kort daarna stonden er een heleboel prinsen voor de koning. De koning omhelsde ze één voor één, en ook het meisje viel haar broers één voor één in de armen.

Het Varken Op Reis

Er waren eens een varken en een uil met elkaar in gesprek. De uil lachte het varken uit, omdat hij niet kon vliegen, en zei dat het varken lui was, en alleen maar at en door de modder rolde. De uil vond zichzelf heel wat, omdat hij veel jaagde en nesten bouwde. 'Op een dag,' zei het varken, 'zal ik net zo kunnen vliegen als jij.' Maar de uil lachte hem uit, en zei dat dat onmogelijk was.

De dag daarop ging het varken op reis om vleugels te zoeken. Eerst kwam hij een raaf tegen. Ook de raaf zei dat hij nooit zou kunnen vliegen. Na een tijdje kwam het varken bij een klein huisje waar een heks woonde. 'Ach,' zei de heks, 'je hebt gewoon niet genoeg gegeten. Je moet veel meer eten, en dan zul je wel kunnen vliegen.' En de heks zette een heleboel lekkernijen voor het varken op tafel, en het varken at en at. En zo ging dat dagen door, totdat het varken moddervet was. Het varken was zo vet geworden dat hij bijna niet meer vooruitkwam. De heks stond lachend achter hem toen het varken probeerde te vliegen. Toen pakte de heks een groot mes om het varken te slachten, en toen wist het varken dat hij bedrogen was. De heks had gewoon zin in een lekker hapje.

Gelukkig kwamen ineens de uil en de raaf naar binnen, en begonnen de heks te pikken. De heks viel op de grond, en toen probeerden ze het varken naar buiten te krijgen. Dat was niet gemakkelijk, maar uiteindelijk was het varken buiten. De raaf en de uil waarschuwde het varken dat hij geen domme dingen meer moest doen, en toen het varken ver genoeg van het heksenhuisje vandaan was vlogen ze weer weg. Maar het varken wilde nog steeds vliegen. Na een tijdje kwam het varken bij het huisje van een fee. Ook aan de fee vertelde hij dat hij wilde vliegen, en de fee zei dat hij dan bepaalde toverriemen om moest doen. De fee haalde de riemen uit een kast, deed ze bij het varken om, maar snel maakte ze de riemen vast aan een balk, en veranderde in een heks. Weer was het varken bedrogen. De heks pakte een mes uit de la om het varken te slachten, maar weer kwamen de uil en de raaf binnen om het varken te helpen. Toen ze weer buiten waren zeiden de uil en de raaf dat het varken niet zo goedgelovig moest zijn. Het varken had z'n lesje nu wel geleerd, maar wilde nog steeds vliegen.

Het varken zou nu niet meer allerlei huisjes binnengaan. Dat had hij nu wel afgeleerd. Maar nog steeds zocht het varken naar vleugeltjes. 'Kun jij mij leren vliegen ?' vroeg hij aan een klein vogeltje. 'Ja,' zei het vogeltje, 'dan moet je in het water springen.' Maar het varken geloofde het niet. En ook andere vogeltjes vertelden hem dingen die hij niet geloofde. De uil en de raaf waren blij dat het varken wat verstandiger was geworden. Maar op een dag kwam het varken een echt vliegend varken tegen met vleugels. 'Waar kan ik vleugels vinden ?' vroeg het varken. 'Kom maar mee,' zei het vliegend varken.

Het varken volgde het varken met de vleugels, en ze kwamen in een diepe grot waar een ronde ton stond. 'Als je hier inklimt,' zei het vliegend varken, 'dan zul

je kunnen vliegen.' Maar toen het varken erin stapte kwam hij vast te zitten, en het vliegend varken veranderde weer in een heks. Het varken begon te roepen, maar de uil en de raaf kwamen niet. Na een tijdje stond de heks met een groot mes voor de ton. Maar het varken was inmiddels niet meer zo dik, en de heks wilde hem nog niet opeten. 'Eerst zul je veel moeten eten,' zei de heks. En de heks haalde de overheerlijkste lekkernijen, maar het varken lustte niets. Het varken kon van verdriet niet meer eten, en was op een dag zo dun dat hij uit de ton kon komen. Hij was nu zo licht als een veertje. Maar de heks maakte hem aan riemen vast, en zei dat als ze hem niet kon eten, dan kon ze wel op hem rijden. En dat beviel de heks zo goed, dat ze na een tijdje besloot hem vleugeltjes te geven, zodat ze ook op hem kon vliegen. Maar het varken was niet gelukkig. Nu kon hij vliegen, maar hij was beteugeld met riemen.

Maar op een dag zagen de raaf en de uil hem vliegen. Ze waren verbaasd, maar wisten dat hij weer door de heks bedrogen was. En daarom vlogen ze op de heks af, en pikten haar van het varken af. Snel pikten ze de riemen van het varken weg, en sindsdien vliegt het varken vrij door de lucht. En als je hem eens tegenkomt, vraag hem dan eens om een ritje op zijn rug.

Het Land van de Sprookjesprinsen en Sprookjesprinsessen

Er was eens een heks die heel jaloers was op prinsen en prinsessen. De heks was zo jaloers dat ze op een kwade dag boze geesten zond naar alle getrouwde prinsen en prinsessen van de sprookjesrijken. Die boze geesten zouden hen zoveel nare dingen over elkaar influisteren dat ze ruzie zouden krijgen en elkaar niet meer wilden zien. En zo gingen vele sprookjesrijken ten onder, totdat een sprookjesprins in de gaten kreeg wat er aan de hand was. Met zijn sprookjesprinses vertrok hij uit het kasteel, en ze deden hele arme, oude en versleten klederen aan om zo onder de mensen van het sprookjesrijk te wonen. De sprookjesprins ging aan de ene kant van het rijk wonen in een heel arm en

oud huisje, en de sprookjesprinses ging aan de andere kant van het rijk wonen, ook in een heel arm en oud huisje. Ze spraken af dat ze elkaar elke nacht bij het maanlicht even zouden ontmoeten in het bos. Dan trokken ze weer even hun prinselijke klederen aan, en kwamen op hun vorstelijke paarden.

‘Oh, prins, wat ben je toch mooi en lief,’ zei de prinses toen ze elkaar voor het eerst daar in het bos tegenkwamen. ‘En jij bent nog mooier en liever geworden dan je al was, prinses,’ zei de prins tegen zijn prinses. Maar toen moesten ze weer gaan, want ze waren natuurlijk bang dat de boze geesten van de heks hen hier zouden vinden. En zo ging dat iedere nacht, totdat de heks in de gaten kreeg wat er aan de hand was. Ze zond haar boze geesten naar de plek, en ook wat van haar wachters. Ze was inmiddels in het kasteel gaan wonen omdat het toch leeg stond, en liet de prins en de prinses in een diepe kerker opsluiten. Omdat ze in dezelfde kerker waren vastgeketend en de boze geesten hen nare dingen over elkaar influisterden maakten ze al snel ruzie. En die ruzie liep zo hoog op dat de mensen het buiten konden horen. ‘Hey, heks,’ riep iemand. ‘Dat zijn de stemmen van de prins en de prinses.’ En al snel kwam het sprookjesvolk erachter dat hun sprookjesprins en sprookjesprinses in een kerker waren opgesloten. Al gauw hadden de mensen van het sprookjesrijk de heks uit het kasteel verdreven, en maakten de prins en de prinses vrij. De heks werd het land uitgezet en de prins liet hoge en zwaar bewaakte muren om het land heenbouwen. Binnen de kortste keren hoorden alle omliggende sprookjesrijken van het verhaal, en de prins nodigde alle sprookjesprinsen en sprookjesprinsessen die niet meer bij elkaar woonden uit om in zijn land te komen wonen. Al gauw werd het het land van de sprookjesprinsen en sprookjesprinsessen, en de heks, haar wachters en haar boze geesten werden nooit meer teruggezien.

Het Versteende Volkje

Eens had een boze heks een sprookjesvolkje versteend. Alleen als de zon volop straalde, als het regende, en bij volle maan konden de stenen sprookjeswezens bewegen. Dan renden ze altijd naar het bos waar een vrouw woonde die straalde

als de zon. Langs haar huisje stroomde een gouden rivier, en als de wezens die rivier zouden bereiken om zich daarin te wassen en daarvan te drinken, dan zouden ze nooit meer van steen zijn. Maar altijd als ze die rivier bijna hadden bereikt, dan kwamen de honden van de heks hen achterna, om hen terug te slepen uit het bos. De honden van de heks konden zelf wel van de rivier drinken, en veranderden dan altijd in leeuwen en arenden. Op een dag had de heks er genoeg van en liet grote hekken met een gouden gesloten poort rondom het volkje bouwen, zodat ze niet meer naar het bos konden. De vrouw die straalde als de zon had erg veel medelijden met het volkje. Ze hoopte altijd dat ze eens de rivier zouden bereiken. Op een dag besloot ze naar de tovenaar te gaan, maar dan moest ze eerst door de velden van toverbloemen heen. Dat zou een hele lange tijd gaan duren, want daar viel ze telkens in slaap. Na vele jaren kwam ze eindelijk bij de tovenaar aan die achter de velden van toverbloemen woonde. Toen hij het verhaal hoorde vertelde hij dat ze op zoek moest gaan naar het veld van de gouden sleutels. Dan moest ze eerst weer door een veld van toverbloemen heen. Maar de toverbloemen zouden haar er alleen maar doorlaten als ze bij elke stap een toverbloem zou plukken. Bij elke geplukte toverbloem zou ze tien jaar slapen. Ze moest er alleen voor zorgen dat ze niet de toverbloem van de dood zou plukken, want dan zou ze sterven. Gelukkig waren er miljoenen toverbloemen op het veld, waarvan er maar één de toverbloem van de dood was. De vrouw die straalde als de zon werkte zich er gelukkig goed doorheen, maar toen aan de andere kant van het veld kwam waren er al vele en vele jaren voorbij gegaan. Nu stond ze voor het veld van de gouden sleutels. Ineens verscheen de koningin van het veld van de gouden sleutels voor haar. Die vertelde haar dat van de miljoenen gouden sleutels die hier groeiden er maar één de toversleutel was. De vrouw mocht maar één gouden sleutel kiezen, maar toen het geen toversleutel bleek te zijn die ze had gekozen kreeg de koningin medelijden met haar. ‘Ik zie dat je niet voor jezelf bent gekomen,’ zei de koningin, ‘maar voor anderen. Kies daarom nog een keer.’ Maar de vrouw durfde niet nog eens te kiezen, omdat ze bang was weer de verkeerde te kiezen. Hoe kon ze nu de juiste sleutel kiezen uit miljoenen sleutels ? En zo wachtte de vrouw de hele nacht, terwijl de koningin weer was vertrokken. Ineens zag ze een lichtje komen van bovenaf die op het veld daalde. Het was een klein elfje dat de juiste sleutel aanwees. De vrouw liep op de sleutel af en plukte het. En ja hoor, het was de toversleutel. Maar nu moest ze nog helemaal terug. Weer was ze erg bang om de toverbloem van de dood te plukken, vooral omdat ze nu de toversleutel had. Maar het elfje wees de toverbloem van de dood aan, en daar moest ze gewoon ver van uit de buurt blijven. ‘Zeg,’ zei het elfje. ‘Ik weet ook welke toverbloemen je moet plukken om wakker te blijven.’ En zo volgde de vrouw die straalde als de zon gewoon het elfje door het toverbloemenveld. Toen ze bij de gouden poort van het sprookjesvolk aankwam had ze die door de toversleutel snel open. Het was gelukkig volle maan, en de vrouw straalde zelf nu ook volop. Snel volgden de wezens de vrouw naar de rivier, terwijl het elfje de honden van

de heks tegenhield. Snel gingen de wezens de rivier in, terwijl het gesteente begon weg te smelten. Sindsdien zijn ze allemaal achter de gouden rivier gaan wonen.

Arachundel

Arachundel groeide op in een donkere kerker onder de grond. Nooit kwam er een straaltje zonlicht door. Vaak lag het meisje huilend op de grond. Op een dag kwam er een prins langs de kerkers, en vroeg aan de baas van de kerkers of hij het meisje mocht kopen. De prins betaalde er vele goudstukken voor, want dat had hij er wel voor over. Arachundel was het mooiste meisje wat hij ooit had gezien. Het meisje was erg blij dat ze vrij was, maar toen ze in het paleis van de prins kwam moest ze in de keuken werken. En waar ze sliep was het nog wel viezer als in de kerker. Het meisje begreep het niet, maar op een dag liet de prins haar bij zich roepen. ‘Majesteit, ik dacht dat u mij vergeten was,’ sprak het meisje. Maar de prins riep haar alleen maar voor een vreemde opdracht : ‘Ga naar de grot achter het bos, waar een waterput is waaruit je met een emmer goud water moet halen. Kook voortaan alles in het gouden water.’ Het meisje vond het een vreemde opdracht, maar ging al gauw op pad. Toen ze eindelijk bij de waterput kwam zat daar een klein mannetje. ‘Zo zo,’ zei het mannetje, ‘dus je bent door de prins op pad gestuurd. Hij laat je wel hard werken zeg, en je hebt het nu zelfs slechter als waar je vandaan kwam.’

‘Dat is waar,’ zei Arachundel, ‘maar hoe weet u dat allemaal ?’

‘Ach, zie je,’ zei het mannetje, ‘ik ben een tovermannetje, en als ik jou was, dan zou ik hier gewoon blijven. Ik kan je alles geven wat je hartje begeert. Er is hier volop gouden voedsel zodat je nooit meer hoeft te werken.’

‘Nou, dat lijkt me wel wat,’ zei het meisje.

‘Maar,’ zei het mannetje. ‘Je moet me wat beloven. Je eerste kindje zal je aan mij moeten geven.’

Het meisje vond dat allemaal best. Ze dacht toch niet aan kinderen krijgen. Het mannetje opende een deur, en er stond inderdaad een berg van gouden voedsel. Het meisje begon direkt te eten. ‘Zeg,’ zei het meisje. ‘Kan ik de prins vertellen van deze plaats ? Dan wil hij misschien wel met me trouwen.’

‘Wat je maar wil,’ zei het mannetje. Het meisje nam wat van het gouden voedsel mee, en gouden water in een emmer en ging terug naar de prins. De prins was erg verbaasd, en vooral toen ze hem vertelde dat er nog meer van het gouden voedsel was. De prins was zo onder de indruk en was het meisje zo dankbaar dat hij wel met haar wilde trouwen. Een jaar later kreeg het meisje dat nu een prinses was geworden haar eerste kindje. Ze was haar belofte aan het mannetje allang vergeten, maar op een dag kwam hij aan het paleis. ‘Tja,’ zei de prins, ‘als je het aan het mannetje beloofd hebt, dan moet je het ook doen.’ Maar het meisje begon heel hard te huilen, zo hard dat het mannetje medelijden met haar kreeg. ‘Okay,’ zei het mannetje, ‘je hoeft je kindje niet aan mij te verliezen, maar vanaf nu zal alles wat je eet vies en slierterig zijn.’ Toen vertrok het mannetje boos. Sindsdien was er in het hele paleis alleen maar vies voedsel te vinden, zo vies dat niemand er meer wilde werken. Het meisje moest zelf weer gaan koken, en huilde iedere dag als ze weer naar de keuken ging. Het eten was zo vies dat op een dag de prins, de prinses en hun kleine prinsje uit het paleis vertrokken en toen zijn ze voor altijd bij het mannetje in de grot gaan wonen.

Het Sprookjesboek

Als de sprookjeskoning scheef ging zitten op zijn troon veranderde altijd het weer. Hij kon de trappen die tot zijn troonzaal leidden door één blik in de vlammen brengen. Niemand durfde daarom tot de sprookjeskoning te komen. Alleen een pad. Op een dag kwam de pad weer binnen. De pad had alle sprookjes van de troon van de sprookjeskoning bedacht. ‘Ik heb wat nieuwe sprookjes voor je,’ zei de pad. ‘Maar ik vertel je ze pas als je je oude sprookjes inlevert, je van je troon afkomt en in oude en versleten klederen als een arme man gaat leven.

‘Ik doe alles voor nieuwe sprookjes,’ zei de sprookjeskoning, en stapte van zijn troon af. Direkt sprong de pad op de troon, en ging zitten. De sprookjeskoning deed wat versleten klederen aan en vertrok. Na vele jaren zocht de pad hem op. De sprookjeskoning leefde in een arm hutje nu, diep in het bos. ‘Ga maar terug naar je troon,’ zei de pad. ‘Maar pas op,’ zei de pad, ‘want soms staat de troon in de brand, en ook de trappen. Je moet het vuur leren kennen, en leren dansen.’

‘Oh, dat leer ik nooit,’ zei de sprookjeskoning. ‘Vertel me nu die sprookjes maar.’

‘De sprookjes zijn in de troon,’ zei de pad.

‘Kun jij niet gewoon de nieuwe sprookjeskoning zijn ?’ vroeg de sprookjeskoning.

‘Nee,’ zei de pad. ‘Jij moet het doen.’

De sprookjeskoning durfde bijna niet terug te gaan naar zijn troonzaal. Maar de pad leerde hem precies wanneer en waar het vuur zou zijn. De sprookjeskoning was erg opgelucht toen hij eindelijk op de troon zat. Nu zou het weer niet meer veranderen als de koning scheef zou gaan zitten, maar zodra hij door de sprookjes zou bladeren. Ook zouden de trappen die tot de troonzaal leidden niet meer door een blik in vlammen komen te staan, maar zodra hij het sprookjesboek zou pakken. De sprookjeskoning bedankte de pad voor de nieuwe sprookjes, en na een tijdje vertrok de pad weer.

Het Meisje in de Bloem

Er was eens een meisje dat in een bloem woonde. Elke dag ging ze naar een toren dichtbij in de buurt, omdat ze vanuit het topje de zee kon zien. Zo kon ze uren staren naar de zee en denken aan haar prins die ze eens verloor tijdens een tocht op de zee. Het scheepje waarop ze zeilden verging, terwijl een storm de

prins meenam. Het meisje moest helemaal terugzwemmen, en is sindsdien in een bloem gaan wonen. Sindsdien durfde ze niet meer bij de zee te komen, maar wilde ze wel elke dag op een afstand naar de zee staren. Maar op een dag kwam er weer een storm en nam de toren mee. Nu kon het meisje de zee niet meer bezichtigen. Het meisje trok zich helemaal terug in de bloem, en toen op een dag de storm er weer was nam hij ook het meisje in de bloem mee. De storm bracht het meisje naar een rijk in de lucht waar haar prins inmiddels woonde. Ze waren blij elkaar te zien. De prins was nu de prins van de lucht. De prins vertelde haar dat hij de storm had gezonden om haar te halen, maar nu kon de prins de storm niet meer beheersen. Na een tijdje was de bloem van het meisje geheel verdwenen, maar het meisje had haar prins weer terug en dat was alles wat ze wilde.

Het Apenpaleis

Er was eens een koopman die aan de deuren vleugels verkocht. Er waren nogal wat mensen die wilden vliegen, maar er bleek ook heel wat aan de vleugels te mankeren, zodat velen na een geweldige tochtje naar beneden stortten. De mensen waren al snel woedend op de koopman, en de koopman moest diep in het bos vluchten om aan de woedende massa te ontkomen. Ze hadden speren meegenomen, zwaarden, messen en bogen om de koopman eens goed mores te leren. Na een lange vluchttocht kwam hij aan bij een huisje waar een levensgrote aap woonde. De aap nam hem direkt onder zijn hoede en ging op het balkon staan om de koopman te verdedigen. Maar na een tijdje werd de aap er erg moe van en hij bloedde vanwege de vele pijlen. Hij ging naar binnen en zei tegen de koopman : 'Je moet naar de fee gaan, want ik kan je niet meer goed verdedigen.' En zo ging de koopman door een achterdeurtje en rende hard naar het huisje van de fee verder in het bos. De fee was direkt erg vriendelijk naar de man en gaf hem direkt een heleboel vleugeltjes die nooit zouden neerstorten. Die zou hij dan kunnen verkopen aan de mensen in het vervolg. De vleugeltjes leken vol van vuurvlammetjes en toen de koopman daar even later bij de mensen mee aankwam werden ze direkt stil. Nog steeds wilden ze heel graag vliegen, en ze besloten de koopman een nieuwe kans te geven. En ja hoor, het werkte. De

vleugels deden het goed, en de mensen waren zo blij en dankbaar dat ze de koopman koning maakten van hun volk. De koopman kreeg daarvoor een prachtig paleis. Maar omdat de fee de koopman zo goed had geholpen werd zij de koningin, en de aap werd de wachter van het paleis. Maar omdat het voor de aap wel moeilijk was om zo'n groot paleis in zijn eentje te bewaken toverde de fee er op een dag een heleboel apen bij.

Het Zee-Oog

De zeeheks hield veel wezens opgesloten onder de zee. Ze hadden geen vissestaarten maar gewoon voeten, dus ze konden niet in het zeewater leven. Daarom leefden ze in een grote grot onder de zee waar ze hard moesten werken. De zeeheks wist precies hoe ze hen hard kon laten werken. Elk jaar kregen de hardste werkers vleugels om naar het gebied boven de zee te vertrekken. Daarom was er ook altijd veel jaloezie onder elkaar. De zee werd elk jaar groter vanwege de tranen van de opgesloten wezens. Maar de zeeheks was de slechtste nog niet. Ze kreeg na vele jaren toch wel een beetje medelijden met de wezens, en vanaf toen kregen elk jaar de wezens die de meeste tranen hadden voortgebracht vissestaarten om zo naar de zee te kunnen gaan. Maar sindsdien ging de zee nog hoger liggen en kwamen er veel rivieren en overstromingen. Degenen die nu vleugels hadden wisten waardoor dat kwam, en gingen terug naar de zeeheks. Ze zochten haar op in haar grot waar ze net aan het staren was naar het sieraad wat haar zoveel macht had gegeven. Het was een zeesieraad met een oog in het midden. Maar uit het oog kwamen tranen. ‘Huil maar niet,’ zei de zeeheks. ‘De werkers zijn bijna klaar met de trap naar het diepste van de aarde. Je weet dat daar de vlammen zijn, en dan kun je weer zien.’ Toen de gevleugelden zagen dat de heks de slechtste nog niet was, waren ze niet meer zo boos op haar. De werkers wisten helemaal niet dat ze treden maakten voor een trap om het zee-oog te helpen. Toen de gevleugelden het hen vertelden was iedereen blij, en vrolijk gingen ze met hun werk door. Ze wisten nu uiteindelijk waar ze voor werkten. Op een dag was de trap klaar en kon het oog naar beneden om door de vlammen weer te kunnen zien. En de werkers zijn sindsdien dicht bij de vlammen gaan wonen.

Het Meisje Dat Achter De Sluiertjes Woonde

Er was eens een meisje dat achter sluiertjes woonde. Haar vader had die sluiertjes gemaakt, en die sluiers waren heel lang. Tussen de sluiertjes leefden de gevaarlijkste roofdieren die het meisje moesten beschermen. Haar vader was kleermaker. Hij had voor haar een huisje gemaakt als een poppenhuisje, ook met veel sluiertjes binnenin en met de prachtigste meubeltjes. Ook was er een prachtig keukentje binnenin, en door het huisje hingen de prachtigste gordijntjes. Vele ridders zouden wel met het meisje willen trouwen, maar zodra ze door de sluiertjes op zoek gingen naar het poppenhuisje werden ze door een gevaarlijk roofdier verslonden. Omdat de vader van het meisje ook schoenmaker was maakte hij op een dag de prachtigste schoenen die zo betoverend mooi waren dat ze met gemak bij het poppenhuisje konden komen. Zo bezocht haar vader haar elke dag eventjes. Maar op een dag had hij de schoenen voor de sluiertjes laten liggen, en de eerste de beste ridder die langskwam trok die schoenen aan, om zo met gemak bij het poppenhuisje aan te komen. Het meisje was erg verbaasd. ‘Maar wie bent u ?’ vroeg het meisje. ‘Dat zijn de schoenen van mijn vader ?’

‘Oh, neem me niet kwalijk,’ zei de ridder. ‘Ik zag ze voor de sluiertjes liggen en ze waren zo betoverend mooi dat ik het niet kon nalaten ze aan te trekken.’ De ridder mocht even wat bij haar drinken, maar toen moest hij weer terug. Netjes bracht hij de schoenen weer bij de vader van het meisje terug. De vader was de ridder erg dankbaar, want de ridder had de schoenen ook gewoon kunnen houden, en dan zou de vader van het meisje nooit meer bij haar kunnen komen. En daarom zei de vader van het meisje : ‘Omdat je zo eerlijk bent geweest om de schoenen terug te brengen zal ik ook een paar toverschoenen voor jou maken. De schoenen die ik zelf heb kan ik niet meer namaken, maar zeg me maar wat voor een toverschoenen je wil hebben.’

‘Ach,’ zei de ridder, ‘ik zou graag schoenen willen hebben die de sleutel dragen tot het hart van uw dochter.’ En zo maakte de vader van het meisje de prachtigste schoenen voor de ridder die haar hart zouden kunnen betoveren.

Maar toen de ridder bij de sluiertjes aankwam lieten de roofdieren hem er niet langs. De ridder begon het meisje heel hard te roepen en na vele lange uren kwam ze eindelijk door de sluiertjes heen. Ze stond direkt als betoverd toen ze de schoenen van de ridder zag, en bracht hem naar het poppenhuisje. En daar zijn ze beiden voor altijd blijven wonen.

Susanna

Susanna was een heel bijzonder meisje. In de nacht kreeg ze altijd vleugels, en vloog ze naar verre landen. Maar als de ochtend viel verloor ze haar vleugels altijd weer, en daarom moest ze altijd op tijd terug zijn, voordat de zon opkwam. Op een nacht nam een heks haar gave van haar af. In ruil daarvoor kreeg Susanna vlindervleugels en een kroon van veren, maar ze kon nooit meer naar huis. De heks bracht haar naar een plaats waar het altijd nacht was. Hier waren een heleboel meisjes zoals haar, maar de nachten duurden er heel lang, en als een nacht was afgelopen dan kwam direkt de volgende nacht. Wel kregen ze allemaal na elke nacht een steentje aan hun halskettingen erbij. Die steentjes waren helemaal wit en werden morgenstenen genoemd. Als hun halskettingkjes helemaal vol waren met steentjes dan mochten ze de reis maken naar de plaats waar het altijd dag was. Daarvoor moesten ze door een hele lange donkere tunnel heen waar de oudste mannetjes woonden die bestonden. Na een hele lange tijd mocht Susanna de reis gaan maken. Toen ze in de tunnel met de oudste mannetjes die bestonden kwam klampten sommige mannetjes haar direkt aan. ‘Help ons,’ zeiden ze. ‘We kunnen niet lopen. Draag ons naar het morgenland.’

‘Maar natuurlijk,’ zei Susanna, en droeg zoveel mannetjes met haar mee als ze kon. Maar de andere meisjes die met haar waren zeiden tegen de mannetjes die hen aanklampten : ‘Zorg zelf maar dat je in het morgenland aankomt.’

Verderop kwamen ze bij een grote waterbron aan. ‘Kun je ons wat water geven,’ vroegen de mannetjes aan Susanna. ‘Onze handen zijn te slap om water te scheppen.’

‘Maar natuurlijk,’ zei Susanna, en gaf hen allemaal te drinken. Maar de andere meisjes namen alleen maar water voor henzelf. Na een hele lange tijd lopen kwamen ze eindelijk aan bij de rots die de ingang naar het morgenland blokkeerde. Een klein mannetje zat op de rots en vroeg aan hen allen waar ze de mannetjes hadden. Aan Suzanna’s rug hingen er een heleboel, maar de andere meisjes zeiden lachend dat de mannetjes zelf maar moesten lopen. ‘Dat is nogal erg dom van jullie,’ zei het kleine mannetje op de rots. Zodadelijk schuift de rots namelijk van de ingang weg, en zal het vuurgordijn dat de ingang nog verspert door de tunnel heengaan. De mannetjes zullen hun dragers hiertegen beschermen. ‘Geef die mannetjes hier,’ riepen de meisjes naar Susanna.

‘Ga ze zelf maar halen,’ zei Susanna. En toen zetten de meisjes het op een lopen naar het begin van de tunnel waar de oude mannetjes zaten. ‘Spring snel op onze ruggen,’ zeiden de meisjes, ‘dan brengen we jullie naar het morgenland.’

‘Vanwaar jullie bereidheid ineens ?’ vroeg één van de oude mannetjes.

‘We hebben ons bedacht,’ zei één van de meisjes. ‘En we zullen jullie ook te drinken geven bij de bron.’

‘Zo zo,’ zeiden de mannetjes, en stapten op de ruggen van de meisjes. Toen ze bij de bron aankwamen gaven de meisjes hen te drinken, en na een lange tocht kwamen ze eindelijk bij de ingang naar het morgenland aan. De rots was inmiddels al weggeschoven, en het vuurgordijn staarde hen aan. Ze hadden allemaal zoveel mogelijk mannetjes op hun rug genomen, zodat ze goed tegen het vuur beschermd zouden worden, maar ineens sprongen de mannetjes van hun ruggen af en liepen door het vuur naar binnen. Direkt begon het vuurgordijn op hen af te komen, en zo moesten de meisjes zo hard mogelijk terugrennen als ze konden.

Eens groeide er een sprookjesbloem in een ver land. De sprookjesbloem reikte tot heel hoog in de lucht waar een bloem die van boven groeide hem raakte. Boven de twee bloemen was een sprookjesrijk, en de mensen uit dat verre land zouden daar graag naartoe willen. Vaak beklommen ze de bloem, maar ze kwamen nooit ver, want dan begon de reuzenbloem te schudden en te trillen, zodat ze er vanaf vielen. Ook probeerden ze het weleens met touwen, maar dan werd de reuzenbloem vurig als een vulkaan en brandden alle touwen door. Maar een groep slimme jongens probeerden het eens in de nacht. Toen was de bloem rustig, omdat hij sliep. Dit keer kwamen de jongens erg hoog, helemaal tot in de bloem zelf. Voorzichtig stapten ze op de andere bloem, en klommen naar boven. Maar boven waaide het erg hard, en een groepje reuzenbijen nam hen verder mee naar boven. De bijenkoningin van het sprookjesrijk was niet blij hen te zien, maar omdat ze beloofden in de sprookjeskorf te werken mochten ze blijven. Elke dag moesten ze voedsel rondbrengen in het sprookjesrijk. Maar op een dag hadden ze het wel gezien en wilden ze terug gaan naar beneden. Maar de bijenkoningin wilde hen niet laten gaan. De jongens hadden allang spijt dat ze hier ooit waren gekomen. Maar op een dag liet de bijenkoningin hen een sprookjesjuweel zien. Hiermee konden ze het land beneden zich besturen, maar ook het gehele sprookjesrijk. De bijenkoningin gaf de sprookjesjuweel aan hen, en zei dat zij nu terug zou gaan naar het land beneden. De jongens waren erg blij met de fonkelende juweel, maar al gauw kregen ze er ruzie over. Ze begonnen zo aan de juweel te trekken dat de juweel al snel op de grond kapotviel. Ze raapten de scherven bij elkaar, en kwamen er achter dat het sprookjesrijk geheel verdwenen was. Boven hun hoofden verscheen er een enorm grote roos. ‘Bedankt jongens,’ zei de roos, ‘dankzij jullie ben ik vrij gekomen. Ik zat zolang in de juweel opgesloten.’ En toen kwam de roos naar beneden en gaf de jongens allemaal een kus. Sindsdien waren de jongens dikkere vrienden van elkaar dan ooit.

De Twee Zusters

Er waren eens twee zusters die water moesten putten bij een waterput. Op de put

zat een mannetje die hen te drinken vroeg. ‘Ga zelf water halen,’ zeiden de twee zusters.

‘Maar ik heb geen emmer,’ zei het mannetje.

‘Ga dan maar eerst een emmer halen,’ zeiden de twee zusters.

‘Kan ik niet gewoon in jullie emmer naar beneden, dan kan ik daar wat water drinken en zorgen dat jullie emmer volkomt. Ik zal jullie er rijkelijk voor belonen,’ zei het mannetje. Hij liet de twee zusters wat goudstukken zien, en de zusters stemden in. Ze lieten het mannetje aan de emmer aan een touw helemaal naar beneden gaan. Het mannetje stapte uit de emmer ging op een klein platform staan, en legde een schorpioen in de emmer. Toen de twee zusters de emmer terug hadden met de schorpioen erin waren ze woedend. ‘Wacht maar, mannetje,’ zei één van de zusters, stapte in de emmer en liet haar zuster het touw vieren om zo beneden te komen. Maar het mannetje was in geen velden of wegen te bekennen. De twee zusters hadden ook nog een jongere zuster, en de volgende keer lieten ze haar naar de waterput gaan. Het mannetje zat er weer, en vroeg ook aan dit meisje of ze hem wat te drinken wilde geven. Het meisje gaf hem direkt te drinken. ‘Omdat je zo behulpzaam bent geweest,’ zei het mannetje, ‘zal je emmer altijd vol blijven.’ Het meisje ging weer naar huis en vertelde alles aan haar zusters. En inderdaad, zodra de emmer bijna leeg was raakte de emmer weer vol. Direkt zochten haar zusters een andere emmer op en gingen terug naar de waterput. Weer zagen ze daar het mannetje. ‘Zo,’ zeiden ze. ‘Zullen we jou eens goed te drinken geven ?’ Het mannetje knikte, en ze gaven hem goed te drinken. Het mannetje dronk de hele emmer leeg. Maar toen ze voor de tweede keer de emmer omhoog haalde zat de emmer vol met vieze modder en spatte al hun klederen vies. ‘Omdat jullie mij alleen te drinken hebben gegeven om jullie eigen hebberigheid zal vanaf nu jullie emmer altijd vol zijn met vieze modder, en zullen jullie klederen altijd vies zijn. Huilend gingen de twee zusters naar huis om hun klederen te wassen, maar hoe meer ze hun klederen probeerden te wassen, hoe viezer deze werden.

Het Varkenshoedstertje

Er was eens een varkenshoedstertje die buiten de stad woonde om voor de varkens te zorgen. Ze gaf niet om de rijkdom van de stad, het rijke leven. Ze sliep altijd tussen de varkens, en at hetzelfde voedsel als zij aten. Verder zag er niemand naar haar om, en was ze niet welkom. Op een dag was ze uitgenodigd om op het paleis van de prins te komen. Dat vond ze wel wat vreemd, maar ze ging toch. Toen ze bij de prins aankwam vertelde de prins over het feest dat zou komen. De prins had alleen niet genoeg varkens, en vroeg daarom de varkens van het varkenshoedstertje. ‘Sinds wanneer ben ik en mijn varkens uitgenodigd op het feest ?’ vroeg het varkenshoedstertje.

‘Nee, je begrijpt het verkeerd,’ zei de prins. ‘Jullie zijn niet uitgenodigd. Het is voor het feestmaal.’

‘Mijn varkens hebben genoeg te eten bij mij,’ zei het varkenshoedstertje. ‘Daar hebben ze uw feestmaal niet bij nodig.’

‘Nee, dat bedoel ik niet,’ zei de prins. ‘We krijgen hoge gasten, en dan moet er genoeg varkensvlees aanwezig zijn.’

Toen boog het varkenshoedstertje haar hoofd en sprak : ‘U gaat mij toch niet het laatste wat ik heb afnemen ?’

‘Morgen zal ik komen,’ zei de prins. ‘En dan neem ik je varkens mee.’

Verdrietig ging het varkenshoedstertje het paleis weer uit. Ze zou vluchten met haar varkens, maar waar moest ze naartoe ? Diep in de nacht dwaalde ze door het bos. Na lang lopen kwam ze bij een huisje aan waar een oud vrouwtje woonde. Huilend vertelde ze het verhaal. ‘Je hebt een goed hart,’ zei het vrouwtje, ‘en ik zal je ervoor belonen. Boven liggen prinsessenklederen. Die kun je aandoen om naar het komende feest te kunnen. Ik zal hier op de varkens passen.’

‘Maar ik wil helemaal niet naar dat feest. Ik wil bij mijn varkens blijven,’ zei het meisje.

‘Ga nu maar,’ zei het vrouwtje, ‘je zult er geen spijt van krijgen.’

Toen het meisje even later in de prinsessenklederen aanhad streek het oude vrouwtje even met een toverstafje over haar heen, zodat ze als een echte prinses was. De volgende avond ging ze naar het feest, terwijl het oude vrouwtje op haar varkens paste. De prins was erg vrolijk, terwijl hij de varkens niet had kunnen vinden. Het meisje paste zich goed aan, en danste die avond de sterren van de

hemel. Na een tijdje begon het oog van de prins op haar te vallen. ‘Wie is dat mooie, lievelijke meisje ?’ vroeg de prins aan zijn bedienden. ‘Ze lijkt me uit een ver land te komen, en ze is een echte prinses.’ Het meisje had een geweldige avond, en aan het einde van de avond kwam de prins naar haar toe om haar te vragen met hem te dansen. Het meisje stemde toe, en danste als een echte koningin. ‘Wie bent u eigenlijk als ik vragen mag ?’ fluisterde de prins naar haar tijdens het dansen. Maar het meisje glimlachte alleen maar. Iedereen keek vol verwondering naar de dansende prins en het meisje. ‘Je doet me aan iemand denken,’ fluisterde de prins, ‘maar ik weet niet wie. Iedereen zou wel met je willen dansen. Kijk ze eens kijken.’ Het meisje glimlachte. Ze had de avond van haar leven. ‘Zie ik je volgend jaar weer ?’ vroeg de prins. Het meisje knikte, en liep toen van het feest weg. Midden in de nacht kwam ze bij het oude vrouwtje. ‘En hoe was het ?’ vroeg het oude vrouwtje.

‘Oh, het was geweldig,’ zei het meisje. ‘Vooral omdat ik wist dat mijn varkens veilig waren bij u.’

Het jaar daarop ging ze weer naar het feest en was dit keer mooier dan ooit. De prins had er pijn van in zijn hart, zo mooi was ze. En weer moest hij haar aan het einde van de avond laten gaan. Het jaar daarop greep de prins zijn kans en vroeg haar met hem te trouwen. Het meisje schrok, en rende weg. Toen ze het later het oude vrouwtje vertelde zei deze : ‘Ga terug, en zeg dat je dat wel wil.’

‘Ja, maar dat wil ik helemaal niet,’ zei het meisje.

‘Je zult er geen spijt van hebben,’ zei het vrouwtje. ‘Ik pas wel op de varkens.’

‘Ja, maar dan moet ik op het paleis wonen,’ zei het meisje, ‘en dan zie ik u nooit meer.’

‘Ga nu maar,’ zei het oude vrouwtje. ‘Alles zal goedkomen.’

Snel ging het meisje weer terug. ‘Waar was je gebleven ?’ vroeg de prins met pijn in zijn hart. ‘Trouw met me.’

‘Natuurlijk lieveling,’ zei het meisje, en kuste hem.

De dag erna was er bruiloft. Het meisje woonde sindsdien met haar prins op het paleis. ‘Nu je mijn vrouw bent mag je je wensen doen,’ zei de prins.

‘Er woont een oud vrouwtje in het bos met varkens,’ zei het meisje. ‘Ik wil dat ze hier op het paleis komt wonen, en dat haar varkens prinselijk behandeld worden.’

De prins vond dat wel een beetje een vreemde wens, maar liet haar wens toch uitkomen.

Het Meisje dat in een Paard Veranderde

Er was een meisje dat in de nacht altijd in een paard veranderde. Dan ging ze altijd naar de velden en de bossen maar dan moest ze wel altijd op tijd terug zijn, voordat de zon opkwam. Want altijd als de ochtend viel dan was ze weer een meisje. Op een nacht nam een heks haar gave van haar af. In ruil daarvoor kreeg het meisje een paar laarzen, die zo prachtig waren dat ze er prinsen mee kon betoveren. Al gauw wist iedereen van het meisje met de betoverde laarzen, en wilden vele prinsen met haar trouwen. Sindsdien wilde het meisje alleen nog maar met koeien werken. Ze werd een herdersmeisje, zodat haar laarzen zo vies zouden worden dat de prinsen haar zouden vergeten. Ook zocht ze vaak de paarden op, en ging diep in het bos wonen. Maar nog steeds zochten prinsen haar op, en lieten haar niet met rust. Het meisje smeekte de heks haar laarzen weer van haar weg te nemen. Op een dag kreeg de heks medelijden met haar, en zei : ‘Als je je laarzen opgeeft dan zul je nooit meer terug kunnen naar het bos en de velden. Je zal dan onder de aarde moeten wonen, bang voor het zonlicht.’

‘Zo zij het,’ zei het meisje.

Toen nam de heks de laarzen van het meisje weg, en het meisje moest vanaf toen diep onder de aarde leven, in de modder en in angst voor het zonlicht. Hier konden de prinsen haar niet vinden. Onder de grond leefden de wilde paarden, en het meisje voelde zich alsof ze thuisgekomen was. Ze miste de wereld boven de grond niet eens. Maar één van de prinsen vond op een dag in het bos een gat die diep onder de aarde leidde. Toen hij er doorging vond hij daar het meisje. Maar hij herkende haar niet, omdat ze haar laarzen niet meer had, en ze was helemaal verwilderd. ‘Meisje,’ zei hij. ‘Heb je het hier niet koud. Je hebt vast honger. Zal ik je meenemen naar mijn paleis ?’

‘Nee,’ zei het meisje. ‘Ik kan niet tegen het zonlicht.’

‘Oh, maar het is heel donker in mijn paleis hoor. En ik heb een kamer voor je zonder ramen, heel diep in het paleis,’ zei de prins.

Toen stemde het meisje in, en de prins bracht haar naar haar nieuwe kamer. Elke dag kwam hij even kijken. Al snel was het meisje op temperatuur en bijgevoed, maar ze kon nog steeds niet tegen zonlicht. ‘Je doet me aan iemand denken,’ zei de prins. ‘Aan een meisje met betoverde laarzen. Sinds ik haar niet meer kon zien heb ik die laarzen laten namaken. Zou jij die willen hebben ?’

Het meisje knikte, en kreeg twee prachtige laarzen van de prins. Het meisje ging sindsdien vaak paardrijden met de prins, en kon steeds beter het zonlicht weer verdragen. Maar op een nacht begon het meisje weer in een paard te veranderen. Snel ging ze het paleis uit en zocht de velden en bossen op. Maar ditmaal bleef ze een paard. Slenterend ging ze terug naar het paleis, en toen de prins haar vond vond hij het het prachtigste paard dat hij ooit had gezien. De prins hield direkt van het paard als geen ander, maar voor hem bleef het gewoon een paard. De prins wist niet dat het paard eigenlijk het meisje was waarvan hij hield. Hij reed sindsdien meer op dit paard dan op enig ander paard, en zorgde goed voor het paard als voor geen ander paard, maar het paard mocht niet in zijn paleis komen. Elke keer na de rit moest het paard weer terug naar de stal. Het meisje was daar erg droevig over, want ze probeerde de prins telkens weer duidelijk te maken dat zij het meisje was waarvan hij hield. Maar de prins begreep het niet. Een paard kon nu eenmaal niet praten. Het meisje had een goed leven gehad, en vooral nu ze bij zo’n lieve en zorgzame prins was, maar daar zou het bij blijven. Al haar verdere dromen moest ze opgeven.

Het Goudspinstertje

Er was eens een meisje dat op de grote zolder van het paleis van gestolen klederen goud moest spinnen. De koning had daarvoor allerlei dieven die ’s nachts die klederen stalen. Het meisje had voor het goudspinnen een verfje dat uit haar handjes scheen te komen. De koning had een heleboel prinsjes en die moesten altijd goed gekleed te zijn. Toen de prinsen ouder waren gingen ze zelf ook op dievenpad. Uit de voetjes van Goudspinstertje kwam altijd een poedertje waardoor iedereen in slaap viel. De prinsen moesten daarom altijd dat poeder meenemen als ze op dievenpad gingen. Maar op een dag werd Goudspinstertje ernstig ziek, en er kwam geen verfje meer uit haar handjes en geen poedertje meer uit haar voetjes. En daarom zond de koning zijn prinsen naar de heks in het woud. De heks had tonnen vol van die verf en dat poeder en het was nog wel veel krachtiger als dat van Goudspinstertje. Maar ze mochten die tonnen alleen meenemen in ruil voor Goudspinstertje. Goudspinstertje moest vanaf toen bij de heks in het woud wonen. De heks had haar door allerlei zalfjes en poedertjes snel genezen, en al snel bracht Goudspinstertje een betere verf en poeder voort dan ooit te voren en ook veel meer. De heks mat al snel nieuwe klederen aan voor Goudspinstertje en zond haar terug naar de koning. De koning herkende Goudspinstertje niet meer, omdat ze zo gegroeid was en zo veranderd. ‘Koning, ik ben het, Goudspinstertje,’ zei ze. Uiteindelijk herkende de koning haar weer, vanwege haar lieve stem, en Goudspinstertje mocht weer bij de koning werken. Maar omdat ze nu wat ouder was geworden mocht ze nu ook weleens mee op dievenpad. Maar na een tijdje werd Goudspinsterje weer ernstig ziek, en weer moest ze naar de heks in het woud. Dit keer kon geen zalfje of poedertje van de heks haar genezen. ‘Goudspinstertje,’ zei de heks. ‘Dit keer zul je naar de goudbronnen in de aarde moeten gaan. Als je in die bronnen baadt, dan zul je nooit meer ziek worden.’ En zo begon Goudspinstertje aan haar lange reis naar het binnenste van de aarde waar de goudbronnen waren. De heks had haar de weg gewezen, dus na niet al te lange tijd kwam ze daar. Nadat ze daar gebaad had en gedanst ging ze terug naar de koning. De koning was zo van haar onder de indruk dat hij geen koning meer wilde zijn, maar haar koningin liet zijn. En zo werd Goudspinstertje de koningin. En de koning en de prinsen ? Die zijn vanaf toen naar de goudbronnen in de aarde gegaan, en zijn daar altijd gebleven.

Rozinde

Er was eens een meisje dat heel diep onder de grond opgesloten leefde om voor een draak te koken. Het meisje heette Rozinde. Altijd als ze niet snel genoeg was met koken dan werden de vlammen onder haar grote ketel woester en woester. Ook wilde de draak altijd veel verschillende soorten vreemd vlees, en daarom moest Rozinde vaak op jacht. Als ze niet snel genoeg was met jagen dan werd haar boog ineens vuurheet en dan viel ze altijd op de grond van de pijn. Op een dag schoot een prins een pijl op de draak af en bevrijdde Rozinde. Hij nam haar mee naar zijn kasteel. Om tegen de draak beschermd te zijn moest ze elke dag baden in een bad vol met melk onder het kasteel. En elke dag moesten er wilde bloemen in geworpen worden. De prins hield veel van het meisje en op een dag trouwde hij met haar. Maar toen eens de prinses vergat in het bad van melk te baden sloeg de draak toe, en nam haar weer naar de diepe plaats onder de grond. Nu moest Rozinde nog harder werken, en was de draak woester dan ooit. Op een dag kwam de prins om zijn Rozinde te halen, maar de draak sloot hem op achter tralies van vuur. Rozinde werd elke dag steeds verdrietiger. Op een dag was ze weer op jacht voor de draak en vond een hert in het struikgewas. ‘Heus, schiet me niet,’ zei het hert, ‘dan zal ik je al mijn melk geven.’ En toen herinnerde Rozinde het weer dat de draak niet tegen melk kon. Ook vroeg Rozinde aan het hert waar wilde bloemen waren. Het hert had heel veel melk te geven, en al gauw was er een heel bad vol. Toen gooide Rozinde de wilde bloemen erin. Snel nam Rozinde een bad in de melk en ging met natte kleren terug. Toen ze bij de vuurtralies aankwam wreef ze met haar melknatte kleren er tegenaan terwijl de tralies kapot sprongen. Snel greep ze haar prins bij de hand en samen renden ze naar het bad. Hier waren ze veilig tussen de wilde bloemen. Maar al gauw kwam de draak een kijkje nemen. Hij wist dat hij niks tegen hen kon beginnen zolang ze iedere dag een bad zouden nemen in de melk. Maar hij wachtte en wachtte, en vandaag wacht hij nog steeds.

De Boze Toverspiegel

Er was eens een toverspiegel die alleen maar bereikt kon worden door door een muur van druiven heen te eten. Altijd als iemand de toverspiegel had bereikt veranderde zo iemand in een geteugeld danspaard en verdween door de spiegel. Maar op een dag was er een man die een klein kistje met indiaanse vruchten bij zich had, en had niet zoveel zin in de druiven. Daarom liet hij z’n hond maar een weg door de druivenmuur eten, en hij liep er achteraan. Na een tijdje kwamen ze bij de toverspiegel. De hond werd direkt gegrepen en begon al in een paard te veranderen. De man dook direkt weg, want hij had goed in de gaten dat er iets niet pluis was. De man had in zijn kistje nog een paar pitten liggen van de indiaanse vruchten en die waren als stenen. Van een afstand gooide hij de spiegel stuk, en ineens stond er een groot volk voor hem. Het waren degenen die door de spiegel betoverd waren geweest. Ze waren de man erg dankbaar. De muur van druiven werd weggehaald, en de man zaaide wat pitten van de indiaanse vruchten. Zo ontstond er een nieuwe muur, en zij die de gebroken toverspiegel wilde bezichtigen moesten zich eerst een weg door de indiaanse vruchten heeneten. En zo werden de indiaanse vruchten beroemd. Maar op een dag haalde de man de gebroken toverspiegel weg, en liet er een paleis bouwen. Hier mochten vanaf nu allen die eens door de boze toverspiegel waren heengetrokken blijven wonen. Ook de man ging er wonen met zijn hond. En omdat hij de enige was die de toverspiegel nooit van binnen had gezien, en omdat hij hen allemaal had gered maakten ze hem tot koning.

De Boze Zon

De zon van het boze toverrijk zond zijn vlammetjes elke dag naar het volkje, zodat de wezens van het volkje elke dag zouden dansen. Dansen moesten ze, voor een boze heks. Er was een indiaans meisje die daarom nooit uit haar grot durfde te komen. Ze was bang voor de boze zon. Op een dag stond er een degen gestoken in het zand van haar grot, dichtbij de opening. Maar omdat het dicht bij de opening was durfde ze de degen niet te grijpen. Ze moest wachten tot het nacht was. In de nacht ging ze met de degen naar buiten. ‘Ach maan,’ sprak ze. ‘Kun jij er niet voor zorgen dat morgen gewoon de zon niet meer opkomt ?’

‘Als je mij je degen geeft, dan zal ik een gevecht met de boze zon aangaan,’ zei de maan. De volgende dag kwam de zon niet op, maar de maan. Het meisje was erg blij en kwam naar buiten. Er waren die dag geen dansers buiten, en het meisje was voor het eerst gelukkig. Maar na de nacht erna kwam de zon weer gewoon op, en bleef het meisje in haar grot. Maar de dag dat de zon niet opkwam is altijd in haar herinnering gebleven.

Het Meisje met de Slangenstaart

Er was eens een meisje met een slangenstaart. Alleen in de nacht had ze haar benen, maar overdag moest ze door het stof glijden. Daarom kwam ze overdag nooit buiten, maar zodra het nacht was en haar benen had ging ze paardrijden. Ze zorgde dat ze altijd weer binnen was als het eerste licht opkwam. Op een dag kwam er een oud vrouwtje bij haar. ‘Lief meisje,’ zei de oude vrouw. ‘Je zit de

hele dag maar binnen, en alleen ’s nachts kom je buiten. Wat als ik nu voor altijd die slangenstaart van je wegneem, zodat je altijd je benen hebt ?’

Dat leek het meisje wel wat. ‘Maar,’ zei de oude vrouw. ‘Je zult dan wel altijd deze laarzen moeten dragen.’ Toen gaf de vrouw het meisje een paar puntige laarzen die op slangenleer leken. ‘Geen probleem,’ zei het meisje, en trok de laarzen aan.

‘Denk erom dat je de laarzen nooit uittrekt,’ zei de oude vrouw, ‘anders zul je voor altijd in een meisje met een slangenstaart veranderen.’ Het meisje knikte. Maar de laarzen knelden, en het meisje had er veel pijn van. Op een dag hield ze het niet meer. ‘Dan moet ik maar voor de rest van mijn leven een meisje met een slangenstaart zijn,’ zei het meisje, en trok haar laarzen uit. Direkt kreeg ze een slangenstaart die nog groter was dan de eerste die ze had. Het meisje was erg verdrietig maar ze had nu in ieder geval geen knellende laarzen meer. In de nacht trok ze er op uit, en kwam in een diepe wildernis terecht, diep onder de grond, waar ook vele andere meisjes met grote slangenstaarten leefden. ‘Is er een manier om soms gewoon weer benen te hebben ?’ vroeg het meisje aan de andere meisjes. ‘Ja,’ zeiden de meisjes. ‘Als je degene verslaat die dit ons heeft aangedaan. Het is een slang die soms in een oud vrouwtje verandert.’

Het meisje begreep dat ze door deze slang al was bezocht. ‘Waar kan ik de slang vinden ?’ vroeg het meisje.

‘We waarschuwen je,’ zeiden de meisjes, ‘want als je het gevecht verliest dan zul je voor altijd in een echte slang veranderen.’

Toen wezen de meisjes haar de weg. Het meisje vocht dapper, maar verloor het en veranderde geheel in een slang. In woede beet ze de slang die haar dit aangedaan had, en ditmaal deed haar gif het werk. De boze slang lag al snel levenloos op de grond. Snel ging het meisje dat in een slang was veranderd naar het hol van de slang die ze had verslagen. Achter de grot was een tunnel die naar een prachtige tuin leidde waar een bron was. Het meisje zakte in de bron, en kreeg haar benen weer terug. Wel had ze vanaf toen een litteken op haar rug omdat de boze slang haar daar had gebeten.

Het Gelaarsde Meisje

Er was eens een indiaans meisje dat opgesloten zat op een heel klein eilandje in een vuurzee. Hoewel het vuur erg laag stond kon ze onmogelijk ontsnappen. Op een dag kwam er een oude vrouw vanuit de hemel neerdalen die haar hele lange laarzen gaf die tegen het vuur bestand zouden zijn. Het waren prachtige bruine kaplaarzen. Het was een hele lange wandeltocht door de vuurzee, maar uiteindelijk bereikte ze toch de overkant waar een prachtig bruin paard stond met lange manen. ‘Het paard is voor jou,’ zei de oude vrouw, maar je kunt hem alleen berijden als je je kaplaarzen aanhebt.’ Het meisje was de oude vrouw erg dankbaar. Toen vertrok de oude vrouw, en het meisje reed op het paard door velden en wegen. Na een tijdje kwam ze aan bij een huisje. Het was een soort hotel of herberg, en de eigenaar had een hele grote witte baard. Er zaten wat rovers aan een tafeltje. Het meisje vroeg om een kamer, maar liet haar laarzen voor de deur staan. De volgende dag waren haar laarzen weg en ook het paard. Het meisje vroeg aan de eigenaar of hij wist waar haar laarzen waren en haar paard. Maar de eigenaar wist het niet. Het meisje begon hard te huilen, want die laarzen hadden haar leven gered. ‘Ach,’ zei de eigenaar van het hotel, ‘ik heb nog wel een paar laarzen voor je en die bezitten zoveel toverkracht dat je er de gevaarlijkste rovers mee aankan.’ De eigenaar gaf ze als een geschenk omdat hij zoveel medelijden met het meisje had. De dag daarop vertrok het meisje met de laarzen. Ze voelde zich nu zo sterk als een leeuw. Na een tijdje kwamen er wat roversmannen die haar wilden beroven, maar ze deelde een paar goede trappen uit, en al gauw renden ze gillend weg. Maar na een tijdje viel ze bij een boom in slaap, en toen ze wakker werd waren haar laarzen weer gestolen. Huilend stond ze op, niet wetende wat ze nu moest doen. Ze leunde tegen de boom aan omdat ze al haar kracht was verloren. ‘Ach meisje,’ zei de boom, ‘huil maar niet, want als je een vrucht van me neemt, dan ben je al je zorgen kwijt. Geen vuur zal je meer kunnen raken, en je zal iedereen de baas blijven. Bovendien zal wijsheid je leiden de rest van je leven.’ Voorzichtig nam het meisje een vrucht en nam een hapje. Direkt viel ze in een diepe slaap, en toen ze later opstond was ze niet meer dezelfde. Op blote voeten ging ze het pad weer op, en kwam even later bij een huisje aan waar ze haar beide paar laarzen zag staan, en haar paard. Het was een rovershuisje. Het meisje ging er naar binnen en zei : ‘Ach, die laarzen en dat paard hebben jullie niet meer nodig. Ik weet een boom wiens vruchten jullie alles kan geven wat jullie nodig hebben.’ Hebberig liepen de rovers naar buiten en volgden haar naar de boom. Direkt begonnen ze gulzig van de boom te eten. Maar de boom sprak hen toe en zei : ‘Omdat jullie van iemand die niets had ook het laatste hebben afgenomen zal alles wat jullie aan je voeten dragen jullie als

een vuur branden, en alles wat jullie zullen berijden zal jullie de verkeerde kant opleiden.’ Sindsdien bleven de rovers van andermans laarzen en paarden af.

De Paradijselijke Boom

Er was eens een boom die zulke bijzondere vruchten had dat de mensen die ervan aten er heel blij en gelukkig van werden en alles schenen te vergeten. Maar omdat de boom steeds minder vruchten begon te geven begonnen de mensen erom te vechten. Op een dag besloot de koning van het land waar de boom stond de boom om te hakken. Maar aan de wortels van de omgehakte boom begonnen nieuwe vruchten te groeien, en dit keer besloten degenen die dat hadden ontdekt er niets over te zeggen tegen anderen. Het was maar een klein groepje die nu in het geheim van de vruchten aten, en niemand wist waarom ze altijd zo blij en gelukkig waren en alles schenen te vergeten. Maar op een dag ontdekte ook een andere groep dat er nog steeds vruchten aan de wortels groeiden, en er kwamen weer ruzies en gevechten. Dit keer had de koning een beter plan, en liet zijn paleis op de plek van de wortels bouwen. De hofhouding van de koning was de enige groep die nog van de vruchten kon eten. Maar er was één jongetje die van vroeger een pit had bewaard. Op een dag zaaide hij de pit in zijn tuin. Weer groeide er een boom met de bijzondere vruchten, en dit keer kon iedereen van de boom eten, zolang ze de jongen maar veel geld betaalden. De enigen die de vruchten gratis konden krijgen waren de duiven die in de boom woonden. Zo nu en dan brachten ze de vruchten naar verre landen, en daar werden de duiven als goddelijke boodschappers gezien vanwege de vruchten die zoveel plezier brachten. De vruchten door de duiven gebracht brachten dromen aan hen in de verre landen, en al gauw werd de boom van de vruchten een boom van het paradijs genoemd. Maar ook in de verre landen werd er om de vruchten gevochten, en al gauw werden de duiven zo verdrietig dat ze niet meer kwamen.

De Bultjesboom

Er was eens een vrouw die geen melkvoeding in haar borsten had, maar tranen. Haar kinderen groeiden op met vreemde bultjes op hun lichamen die zo prachtig waren dat ze allemaal koningen werden van het rijk. Als iemand hen vroeg hoe ze aan die prachtige bultjes en vlekjes kwamen, dan zeiden ze altijd dat dat door hun moeder kwam die tranen in haar borsten had. Op een dag vroegen de koningen aan hun moeder hoe het toch kwam dat haar borsten tranen gaven in plaats van melk. ‘Ach,’ zei hun moeder, ‘op een dag was ik verdwaald in het bos, en kwam bij een open plaats als een woestijn, waar een boom stond met prachtige vruchten. Sinds ik van die vruchten heb gegeten gaven mijn borsten tranen. ‘Maar moeder, u heeft geen bultjes en vlekjes,’ zeiden de koningen.

‘Dat komt omdat ik nooit van de tranen heb gedronken,’ zei hun moeder. ‘En nu ben ik te oud om nog tranen te geven.’

‘Maar kunt u ons dan vertellen waar die boom is ?’ vroegen de koningen. Toen hun moeder het hun uitgelegd had gingen ze met z’n allen naar de boom toe. Toen ze van de vruchten begonnen te eten. Ze begrepen toen ineens dat hun rijk niet lang meer zou bestaan. Ze gingen terug naar het volk, en vertelden het slechte nieuws. Wel vertelden ze het volk over de boom met de vreemde vruchten. Velen gingen naar de boom om er ook van te eten, en de moeders gaven tranen aan hun kinderen in plaats van melk, en ook die kinderen kregen vreemde maar prachtige bultjes. Door het hele rijk werden nu zulke bomen geplant, en na een paar generaties had iedereen zulke prachtige vlekjes en bultjes. Niemand had nog een koning nodig. Iedereen zorgde voor zichzelf, en het rijk viel uit elkaar. Vandaaruit verspreidden degenen met de bultjes en de vlekjes zich over de gehele aarde.

Het Rode Serum

Er woonden eens drie zusters in een hof met prachtige verwilderde struiken en bomen. Naarmate ze ouder werden veranderden ze steeds meer in beelden gemaakt van pepermunt. Door de zon en de regen werden de beelden steeds kleiner, maar ze verloren hun prachtige vormen niet, omdat ze nog steeds een hart hadden. Dit hart was bedekt met prachtige paradijselijke rode zweren. Uit de zweren kwam een rood serum waar ze bezoekers van de hof mee genazen. De namen van de drie zusters waren Wanata, Munto en Munit.

Pir

Pir was een pop met een wit gebloemd vestje, een wit broekje en nog wat verdere dingen. Pir zou erg graag een jongetje willen worden, en dan graag een jongetje dat zou kunnen vliegen. Maar Pir was maar een doodgewone pop in het magazijn van de poppenmaker. De poppenmaker had een groot hart voor de poppen, en wilde soms weleens dat ze tot leven zouden kunnen komen.

Op een dag besloot de poppenmaker een brief te schrijven. Hij stopte de brief in een fles, en wierp hem de zee in. Na lange tijd kwam de brief bij een kapitein terecht. De kapitein opende de fles en las de brief. 'Wat is dit nu voor een rare brief,' bromde de kapitein. 'Nee, poppen kunnen niet tot leven komen.' Toen de kapitein thuis kwam liet hij de brief lezen aan zijn vrouw.

Maar de vrouw had in haar nachtkastje een toverroos. Ze stopte de toverroos in

de fles, en stopte er een briefje bij waarop stond geschreven : 'Beste poppenmaker, als u de toverroos in het binnenste van uw pop vastmaakt, dan zal hij tot leven komen.' Omdat ze bang was dat iemand anders de fles zou vinden, zond ze een dienstknecht met de fles naar de poppenmaker.

De poppenmaker was erg blij, en koos Pir uit om daar de toverroos in te stoppen. Hij naaide Pir daarna weer goed dicht, en toen gebeurde er iets wonderlijks. De pop kon bewegen, en niet alleen dat : De pop kon ook vliegen.

De toverroos kon ook spreken, en op een dag zei de toverroos tot de jongen : 'Over de rode zee van vlammen is een land voor jou.'

'Maar ik ken helemaal geen rode zee van vlammen,' zei de jongen.

'Dan moet je in de nacht naar de zee gaan,' zei de toverroos.

En zo ging de jongen in het midden van de nacht naar de zee, en zag dat de zee rood was en vol vlammen. 'Vlieg,' zei de toverroos. En de jongen begon zijn reis over de zee, en kwam aan in een prachtig land.

De Toverkaars

Er was eens een oud vrouwtje die een kaars had die zo bijzonder was, dat wanneer iemand in de vlam keek, dan zag hij mooie herinneringen terug, of zag waar zijn verloren spullen waren. Ook kon je in de vlam de toekomst bekijken,

of dat wat er op een andere plek op de aardbol gebeurde. Het oud vrouwtje verdiende er haar geld mee, maar elk jaar werd de kaars steeds een beetje korter.

Toen de kaars na vele lange jaren helemaal was opgebrand was het vrouwtje heel verdrietig, want waar moest ze nu haar geld mee verdienen. Maar een arm jongetje dat altijd gratis in de vlam mocht kijken vroeg haar waar hij een tweede toverkaars voor haar kon vinden. ‘Ach,’ zei het vrouwtje, ‘dan moet je daarvoor over de bergen heen, maar daar woont een wolf die de bergpas bewaakt. Als hij je te pakken krijgt, dan mag je uit drie dingen kiezen : in het ravijn geduwd te worden, opgegeten te worden, of levenslang opgesloten worden.’

Maar het arme jongetje ging toch voor het oude vrouwtje op pad. Bij de bergpas werd hij door de wolf gegrepen, en moest inderdaad uit die drie dingen kiezen. Toen koos het jongetje maar om opgesloten te worden, want dood wilde hij niet. De wolf had ook een vrouw, en die kwam de jongen iedere dag voedsel brengen. Na een tijdje kreeg de vrouw medelijden met de jongen en vroeg of ze iets voor hem kon doen.

De jongen vroeg of de vrouw van de wolf wanneer de wolf zou slapen zoveel mogelijk matrassen en kussens in het ravijn wilde gooien, en de volgende dag aan hem te vragen of de jongen voor het eerste mocht kiezen, in het ravijn geduwd te worden. De vrouw deed wat de jongen vroeg, en de volgende dag kwam de wolf de jongen ophalen om hem in het ravijn te werpen. Dat was snel gedaan, en gelukkig viel de jongen zacht. Na een lange reis door grotten en inkepingen kwam de jongen aan de andere kant van de berg aan, waar hij al gauw de toverkaars vond. Maar nu moest hij nog terug.

Na een tijdje kwam hij de wolf weer tegen, en die zei : ‘Jou ken ik. In het ravijn heb ik je gegooid, en ik heb je ook al opgesloten, dus nu zal ik je opeten.’ Maar toen de wolf z’n bek opende gooide de jongen snel de kaars erin. ‘Maar wat is dat ?’ sprak de wolf. ‘Ik voel me ineens zo anders.’ De wolf was ineens heel vriendelijk, en wilde de jongen wel weer terugbrengen naar het oude vrouwtje. Toen het vrouwtje naar de kaars vroeg vertelde de jongen het verhaal. Maar de wolf leidde hen beiden naar een geheime grot vol met goudstukken en sieraden, zodat de jongen en het oude indiaanse vrouwtje nooit meer armoe hoefden te lijden.

De Wonderveer

Er was eens een man die een wonderveer probeerde te verkopen. Maar niemand wilde de veer kopen, omdat ze niet geloofden dat de veer wonderen zou kunnen doen. ‘Heus waar,’ sprak de koopman. ‘Degene die het geld geeft wat de veer waard is zal kunnen vliegen zolang hij de veer dichtbij zich houdt.’ Na een tijdje kwam er een goedgelovig jongetje aan die de koopman het geld gaf. Toen hij de veer kreeg steeg hij op, terwijl iedereen verbaasd en verwonderd keek.

Elke dag vloog de jongen met zijn veer rond, en de mensen om hem heen begonnen steeds jaloerser te worden. Als de jongen sliep, dan hield hij de veer altijd stevig tegen hem aan. Maar op een dag was de veer verdwenen.

De jongen ging terug naar de koopman, maar die had geen tweede veer voor hem. Wel vertelde de koopman dat eens in de zoveel tijd een wondervogel in de nacht bij de zee zou komen. De jongen ging sindsdien vaak naar de zee, maar de wondervogel kwam maar niet. Toen de jongen wat ouder was besloot de jongen in een hutje bij de zee te gaan wonen, en stond elke dag op de uitkijk. Maar de vogel kwam niet.

De koopman had de jongen verteld waar de vogel woonde : op een eiland ver weg in de zee. Op een dag besloot de jongen naar dat eiland op zoek te gaan. Hij nam een bootje en ging de zee op. Oh, wat verlangde de jongen ernaar om eens weer te kunnen vliegen.

Toen het nacht werd viel de jongen in het bootje in slaap. Na een tijdje werd de jongen weer wakker van wat geklapper. Het bleek de wondervogel te zijn. De jongen schrok, zag een veer liggen op een plankje in zijn boot, terwijl de wondervogel ook schrok en weer wegvloog. De jongen greep de veer en kon weer vliegen. Snel vloog hij de vogel achterna en kwam op het wonder-eiland. Maar voor de tweede keer werd zijn veer in de nacht gestolen terwijl hij sliep. Toen hij wakker werd en merkte dat hij zijn veer kwijt was en niet meer kon vliegen, zag hij een heleboel wondervogels hoog in de bomen zitten. De jongen begon aan een klimtocht, maar het leek wel alsof hij nooit bij de top van de boom aankwam.

Op een tak zat een klein mannetje. Het mannetje zei dat het jongetje alleen bij de top zou kunnen komen als hij een tover-hoofdband zou dragen. Maar het jongetje wist niet hoe hij aan een tover-hoofdband moest komen. Maar daar zou het mannetje wel voor zorgen. Alleen moest het jongetje beloven dat als hij bij

de wondervogels was gekomen, dan moest hij ook een veer naar het mannetje brengen. En zo gebeurde het. Het jongetje kreeg de tover-hoofdband van het mannetje, en kon zo bij de toppen van de bomen komen waar de wondervogels waren. Met gemak had het jongetje een veer te pakken, en al heel gauw ook een tweede. Direkt vloog hij naar het mannetje op de tak toe om hem een veer te geven, en vloog weer terug. Nu kon het mannetje ook vliegen.

Het jongetje vond het fijn om bij de wondervogels te zijn, maar op een nacht stalen ze zijn tover-hoofdband en zijn veer, en vertrokken om niet meer terug te komen. Nu kon het jongetje weer niet vliegen, en kon ook niet meer naar beneden. Oh ja, het jongetje probeerde wel om naar beneden te klimmen, maar het leek wel alsof hij nooit beneden kwam, hoe ver hij ook naar beneden klom. En het mannetje was ook nergens meer te bekennen. Wel kon het jongetje met gemak naar de toppen terugklimmen, en kon hij van de ene top naar de andere top springen.

Hij sprong helemaal naar de boom die het dichtste bij de zee stond, en sprong vanaf het topje in de zee. Maar de zee greep hem en bracht hem helemaal terug naar huis. Zijn kleren waren helemaal nat en verscheurd toen hij in zijn woonplaats terugkwam. Zijn hutje was weg, en daarom ging hij naar de plaats waar hij eens woonde.

Op een dag was er weer een koopman die een veer probeerde te verkopen. Volgens de koopman bezat de veer wonderlijke krachten, en kon de bezitter ermee vliegen. Nog voordat anderen de veer konden kopen kocht de jongen de veer. Maar de koopman bleek een bedrieger te zijn. De veer was maar een doodgewone veer. Verdrietig ging de jongen naar huis. Hij ging naar zijn bed en legde de veer op zijn nachtkastje. Al was de veer dan geen wonderveer, het deed hem wel herinneren aan de wonderveer, en elke keer voordat hij ging slapen keek hij er heel even naar. Zo lag de veer jaren en jaren op zijn nachtkastje totdat hij op een morgen wakker werd, en de veer was verruild voor een echte wonderveer. De jongen pakte de veer en was dolblij. Nu kon de jongen weer vliegen, maar naar het eiland van de wondervogels is de jongen niet meer gegaan. Ook vertrok hij uit zijn woonplaats, want hij wilde niet dat de veer nog een keer gestolen zou worden. Waar de jongen naartoe is gegaan weet niemand. Niemand heeft hem ooit nog teruggezien.

De Lachende Vis

In een vissersdorpje hadden vissers eens een groot beeld gemaakt van een lachende vis, om zo iedereen aan te drijven meer vis te eten. Het standbeeld kon ook bewegen en voor wat geld konden kinderen er ook ritjes op maken. Daarnaast stonden natuurlijk viskraampjes. Maar er was één jongetje bij die zei dat vissen helemaal niet lachen, maar dat de zeedruppels hun tranen zijn. De vissers vonden dat helemaal niet leuk, omdat het jongetje heel vaak kwam om die dingen te zeggen. Maar op een dag zeiden de vissers tegen de jongen dat als hij stopte met zijn praatjes dan mocht hij voortaan gratis ritjes maken op de lachende vis. En dat leek de kleine jongen wel wat, en zo stopte hij met het maken van zijn opmerkingen.

Maar op een dag was de jongen bij de zee, en een vis hief zijn kopje uit boven de golven : ‘Zeg jongen,’ sprak de vis, ‘waarom heb je je wijsheid verkocht ?’

‘Ach,’ zei de jongen, ‘ik ben nog jong, en vind spelen leuk. Het is toch mooi dat ik nu gratis ritjes kan maken op de lachende vis ?’

‘Maar de vissen lachen niet,’ zei de vis, ‘want ze worden gevangen en gegeten. Als je weer rondvertelt wat je altijd rondvertelde dan mag je wel een ritje op mijn rug maken, hoor. Zoveel je wilt.’ Nou, dat leek de jongen zelfs wel beter, want op een echte vis te rijden was nog prachtiger dan te rijden op een vis van steen. En zo gebeurde het. De jongen vertelde weer over de huilende vissen, en maakte sindsdien ritjes op de vis in de zee. Maar de vissers begonnen erg boos te worden. En op een dag verzonnen ze een plan. Ze zorgden ervoor dat de stenen vis nu ook ritjes in de zee kon maken, en zelfs in de lucht. En bovendien maakten ze de lachende vis nu nog groter. De kinderen vonden het allemaal prachtig, en al snel hield de jongen weer zijn mond in ruil voor gratis ritjes op de lachende vis.

Nu was de echte vis erg bedroefd en wilde niet meer met de jongen spreken. En hoe de jongen ook riep, de vis kwam niet meer terug. De jongen begon in te zien dat hij de sprekende vis toch wel erg miste, maar nu was het te laat. Vaak stond de jongen huilend bij de zee, en dan lachten de andere kinderen hem uit. Het maakte de jongen ook boos, en op een nacht ging de jongen het water in, en zwom zo ver als hij kon. Maar al snel begon hij moe te worden, en een golf trok

hem mee de diepte in. Na een lange tijd spoelde de jongen aan op het strand. Een andere jongen die iets jonger was dan hem vond hem, en keek hem glimlachend aan. ‘Ben je uit de boot gevallen ?’ vroeg de andere jongen.

‘Huh wat ?’ vroeg de jongen slaperig. ‘Nee, ik was wezen zwemmen, op zoek naar een sprekende vis.’ Toen spuwde de jongen een straaltje water uit, en vertelde het verhaal aan de andere jongen.

‘Maar je moet je ook niet met echte vissen bezighouden,’ zei de andere jongen. ‘Wij hebben de vis van steen, en dat is veel veiliger.’

‘Als we ons niet met echte vissen moeten bezighouden, omdat we de lachende vis hebben, waarom houden de vissers zich dan nog wel met echte vissen bezig ?’ vroeg de jongen.

‘Tja, dat vraag ik me ook af,’ zei de andere jongen, ‘maar laten we het er eens met hen over hebben.’ En zo gingen de twee jongens naar de vissers toe om hun verhaal te doen. En de vissers zeiden dat als ze hun mond zouden houden, dan mochten ze gratis op de lachende vis ritjes maken. Snel hoorden ook andere kinderen hiervan en ook zij kregen gratis ritjes zolang ze hun mond hielden. Maar na een tijdje waren de vissers het zo beu dat ze de lachende vis lieten weghalen. De kinderen waren woedend, en vertelden volop wat de beide jongens hadden verteld. Ook de ouders werden hoe langer hoe bozer op de vissers, totdat er in het hele vissersdorp geen vis meer werd gegeten. En sindsdien waren er in die zee alleen nog maar lachende vissen.

Het Sprookjesbos

Er was eens een prinses die van huis wegliep. Al gauw kwam ze op een plaats waar tovermannetjes woonde. Eén van die tovermannetjes was Gabriel. Gabriel toverde een huisje voor de prinses met een heel hoog dak. Het huisje was geheel bedekt met dwarsbalken. Een ander tovermannetje was Ruchel. Ruchel toverde een keuken in het huis en een prachtige kamer. En zo waren er nog veel meer tovermannetjes die telkens een stukje in of bij het huis aantoverden, zodat het huis steeds groter werd. Ook toverden ze een bos rond het huis waar niemand binnen kon komen dan door een schilderij. De prinses was erg gelukkig. Het schilderij kwam ergens in een restaurant te hangen en bedekte bijna de hele muur. Het was in een afgelegen kamer waar een paar eettafels stonden. Het was een speciale kamer voor kinderen die feestjes hielden. Sommige kinderen waren jarig of hadden hun diploma gehaald. Maar alleen dromerige kinderen konden het schilderij binnenkomen. Dan fluisterde Gabriel even, en dan werden ze een prins op een wit paard. Terug konden ze dan niet meer, want er was alleen maar een ingang in het schilderij. Er was geen uitgang. Soms wilde een kind weer terug en schreeuwde moord en brand, maar dan later legden ze zich er maar bij neer. In het sprookjesbos was het gewoon beter te zijn. En dan gingen ze altijd dat huis van de prinses binnen waar ze van de tovermannetjes lekkernijen kregen. 'De prinses komt zo terug,' zeiden ze dan. En dan kregen die kinderen een eigen kamer in het huis, en als ze dan ouder werden dan waren ze toch wel blij dat ze nooit meer terughoefden naar die boze wereld. Ze konden zich vaak die verschrikkelijke meesters en juffrouws nog wel herinneren, en die verschrikkelijke kinderen die altijd gilden. Nee, hier waren ze veilig, veilig bij tovermannetjes en een prinses, een prinses die eens ook van huis was weggelopen.

Maar na al die jaren wilden sommige kinderen toch wel hun ouders weer eens zien. Dan bracht één van de tovermannetjes hen altijd naar een grote kast waar wat beeldjes stonden van hun ouders. Het leek net echt, maar toch ook niet. Het was anders. En sommigen wilden hun broertjes en zusjes zien .... ook beeldjes. Alleen beeldjes herinnerden hen nog aan de oude wereld, vreemde beeldjes. 'Stop ze maar weer in de kast,' zei een kind. 'Ik krijg al hoofdpijn als ik aan ze denk. Nooit meer wil ik naar die nachtmerrie terug.'

'Ik zal je iets heel doms vertellen,' zei Gabriel op een dag tegen dat kind. 'In de oude wereld dragen de mannen broeken en de vrouwen rokken. Weet je waarom dat is ? Die broeken zijn veel zwaarder, maar wat als ik je nu een zware rok geef ?' En zo liep dat kind sinds die dag met een hele zware rok. En tegen een ander kind vertelde Ruchel hetzelfde : 'In de oude wereld dragen de mannen broeken en de vrouwen rokken. Weet je waarom dat is ? Die broeken zijn veel zwaarder,

maar wat als ik je nu een hele lichte broek geef ?' En zo liep dat kind sinds die dag met een hele lichte broek.

Maar ook de andere kinderen wilden zware rokken en lichte broeken. 'Nou,' zei de prinses, 'zoek ze maar op. Ze liggen verstopt in het huis, en hangen in de hoogste bomen.' Sommige kinderen gingen naar buiten, terwijl andere kinderen in het huis gingen zoeken. Maar aan het eind van de dag had geen kind wat gevonden. 'Nou,' brulde een kind, 'kunnen die tovermannetjes het ons niet gewoon geven ?'

De prinses keek naar Gabriel en Ruchel. Gabriel haalde een zware rok tevoorschijn, en Ruchel een lichte broek. 'Elke dag mag het braafste kind kiezen tussen de zware rok en de lichte broek,' zei de prinses.

Grootvader sloeg het grote boek dicht. 'Grootvader,' zei Harry, 'mag ik ook zo'n lichte broek ?'

Grootvader wees op de prachtige pyamabroek van Harry. 'Oh, ik zie het al,' zei Harry. 'Ik heb hem al aan.'

'Grootvader,' zei Dennis, 'mag ik dan een zware rok ?'

'Nou,' zei grootvader, 'als je heel erg braaf bent, dan zal de prinses jou er vast wel één geven.'

De volgende dag nam grootvader Harry en Dennis mee naar een restaurant waar een heel groot schilderij van het sprookjesbos met het huis hing. In de verte stond de prinses, en dichtbij stonden Gabriel en Ruchel. 'Dus als we door dat schilderij naar binnen gaan dan kunnen we nooit meer terug ?' vroeg Dennis. Grootvader knikte.

'Nou, dan moet ik daar eerst eens heel lang over na denken,' zuchtte Dennis.

Het Huis dat Altijd Instortte

Er waren eens een man en een vrouw wiens huisje elke dag instortte zodat ze elke dag hun huis opnieuw moesten bouwen. Op een dag waren ze zo moe dat ze zelf ook neerstortten. Na een tijdje kwam er een tovermannetje langs. 'Zal ik jullie huisje eens bouwen met toversteen ? Dan zal het nooit meer instorten.' Dat leek de man en de vrouw wel wat. Maar in ruil daarvoor zou het mannetje zelf daar ook gaan wonen. Het werd een enorm groot huis, een huis waarin je kon verdwalen. Al gauw raakten de man en de vrouw de weg kwijt en ook elkaar, en ook het mannetje konden ze niet meer vinden. Ze begonnen naar elkaar te roepen, maar niets hielp. Maar ja, ze hadden nu in ieder geval een huis dat nooit zou instorten. Op een dag vond de man een bel die hij indrukte. Even later hoorde hij ook een andere bel. De man liep op het geluid af en kwam de vrouw tegen. Toen hoorden ze nog een bel, en toen ze op dat geluid afliepen kwamen ze het tovermannetje tegen. De man en de vrouw lieten elkaar niet meer los, want ze wisten hoe snel ze in het huis konden verdwalen. Ook het tovermannetje lieten ze niet meer los. 'Help ons wegwijs te maken in dit huis,' zeiden ze tegen het tovermannetje.

'Druk gewoon op de bel als je verdwaalt,' zei het tovermannetje, 'dan komt alles goed.'

'Maar ik heb zolang naar een bel moeten zoeken,' zei de man.

'Ach,' zei het tovermannetje, 'we zijn met z'n drieen, dus we moeten gewoon onze oren goed openhouden en op het geluid aflopen.'

En zo begonnen ze alledrie heel langzaam wegwijs te krijgen in het huis, om zo het huis te ontdekken. Na verloop van tijd vonden ze de weg altijd gemakkelijk weer terug, en ze leefden nog lang en gelukkig.

De Toverbron

Eens in het jaar ging altijd de toverbron open, en dan zou de eerste die daar aankwam een slok toverwater krijgen. Lars was altijd de snelste van allemaal, en daarom was hij elk jaar de winnaar. De anderen begonnen dan altijd ruzie te maken met elkaar, want het was altijd een geduw en getrek. Iedereen was er altijd zo hongerig naar de eerste te zijn, maar alleen Lars ging daar elk jaar met een stralende glimlach weer vandaan. Maar op een dag nam een boze toverkoningin bezit van de bron. Toen de bron weer openging was het water zwart in plaats van helder. Ook was het water vies en koud in plaats van warm. Lars wist even niet wat hij moest doen. Hij was nog wel de voorste en had de anderen ver achter zich. Langzaam sloop hij dichterbij, en kreeg ineens een schop. Omdat hij dacht dat hij het zich vergist had strompelde hij door naar de bron, deed zijn ogen dicht en nam een slok. Nu straalde Lars niet meer, en vieze zwarte moddervlekken spatten hem nat. Toen de anderen bij de bron aankwamen was het water helderder en warmer dan ooit. 'Wat sta je daar beteuterd te kijken ?' vroeg iemand. 'De bron is open, en er is genoeg voor iedereen.' Maar Lars had geen zin meer. Hij zag hoe iedereen van de bron dronk en hoe ze in de bron baadden. Teleurgesteld strompelde hij naar huis. Voor hem was er nu niets meer aan nu iedereen van de bron kon drinken. Sindsdien was de bron altijd open, en liep iedereen met een stralende glimlach rond, maar Lars straalde niet. Voor Lars had het allemaal geen betekenis meer. Op een dag zocht Lars de boze toverkoningin op. 'Zeg,' zei Lars, 'heb je niet een andere bron voor me waaruit ik kan drinken ? Ik wil me weer een winnaar voelen.'

'Oh, kom maar mee,' zei de boze toverkoningin. Ze leidde Lars naar een modderpoel waar de kikkers in rondsprongen. 'Deze modderpoel gaat maar eens in de honderd jaar open, en wie er dan als eerste van drinkt die wordt koning, terwijl de rest een schop krijgt.' Nou, dat leek Lars wel wat. Met glunderende ogen vertelde hij het aan de anderen. Maar niemand scheen er interesse in te hebben. Daarom wachtte Lars alleen af totdat de modderpoel zich zou openen. Na jaren en jaren van wachten ging de poel eindelijk open. Lars dook op de bron af en wilde een slok nemen, maar een grote kikker spoot een grote straal modder

in zijn gezicht. De kikker had een kroontje op en zei : 'Wij zijn degenen die altijd het eerste drinken wanneer de bron opengaat.' En ineens staarden ook andere kikkers hem met grote ogen aan. Ze droegen allemaal kroontjes. Toen kreeg Lars ineens zo'n grote schop waardoor hij helemaal in de andere bron terechtkwam. 'Dag koning,' zeiden de anderen spottend.

'Nee,' zei Lars, 'ik ben geen koning geworden. Het zijn de kikkers die daar koning zijn.'

'Ach, laat die kikkers toch,' zei een ander. 'Waarom wil je toch altijd een winnaar en een koning zijn ?'

Maar weer wachtte Lars totdat de honderd jaar voorbij waren en deed een nieuwe poging. Ditmaal was hij sneller dan de kikkers en werd koning.

'Nou, ik ben trots op je,' zei de boze toverkoningin. 'Lang heb ik hier op gewacht om mijn koning te hebben. Wees koning over de kikkers en de twee bronnen.'

Nu wist Lars wel wat hij wilde doen. De eerste bron moest weer dicht om ieder jaar open te gaan zodat alleen de eerste die daar aankwam een slok toverwater zou krijgen, en de modderpoel moest voor altijd dichtblijven omdat hij nu immers koning was. Maar niemand wilde meer van de eerste bron drinken, en ze trokken allemaal zo ver mogelijk weg van de bron, zodat Lars een eenzame koning werd. Waar had het hem toch allemaal gebracht ? Op een dag leverde hij de kroon in bij de boze toverkoningin. 'Ik heb gezien dat koning zijn niet loont,' zei Lars, 'en gelukkig word ik er ook niet van.'

Maar de boze toverkoningin begon te lachen. 'Je hebt zelf de modderpoel voor altijd laten sluiten, dus er zal geen nieuwe koning komen.'

'Maar hoe kom ik dan van mijn kroon af ?' vroeg Lars.

'Kom maar mee,' zei de boze toverkoningin. En ze leidde hem naar een bron diep in het bos waar een heleboel prinsen, prinsessen en koningen omheen stonden. 'Straks als de bron opengaat dan zal de eerste die drinkt zijn kroon verliezen en vrij komen.'

'En de verliezers ?' vroeg Lars.

'De verliezers krijgen een schop en zullen voor eeuwig koning moeten zijn,' zei de boze toverkoningin.

'Wanneer gaat de bron dan open ?' vroeg Lars.

'Deze bron zal maar eens in de eeuwigheid opengaan, en dan nooit meer. Degenen die hier bij de bron zijn aangekomen wachten allemaal op dat moment,' zei de boze toverkoningin.

Ineens ging de bron open. Lars wilde zo snel mogelijk naar de bron toe, maar werd door de boze toverkoningin vastgehouden. 'Dit is niet voor jou. Je zal in een kikker veranderen om voor altijd koning te zijn.'

En toen veranderde die arme Lars tussen de handen van de boze toverkoningin in een kikker met een kroontje.

'Och koningin,' smeekte Lars, 'toverkoningin, hoe kan ik ooit van dit lot ontsnappen ?'

'Er is maar één manier,' zei de boze toverkoningin. 'Vindt het meisje dat als eerste van de bron heeft gedronken. Zij was een prinsesje, maar heeft haar kroontje verloren. Als zij jou kust dan is de betovering verbroken en dan ben je voor altijd vrij, net als haar.'

Maar toen de kikker het meisje vond was zij niet echt aardig voor hem. 'Wat moet ik met zo'n vieze glibberige kikker,' zei het meisje.

'Toe nou,' smeekte de kikker, 'één kusje maar.'

Maar het meisje hield voet bij stuk. Van verdriet vluchtte de kikker dieper de bossen in, maar verloor zijn kroontje niet. Altijd zou hij koning blijven. Maar toen hij in een bosvijvertje wat dronk en zichzelf bekeek in de weerspiegeling van het water zag hij een prins. De kikker baadde in het bosvijvertje, en kwam tot de ontdekking dat het de toverbron was waar hij vroeger elk jaar van had gedronken. 'Geloof hen toch niet,' zei de toverbron. 'Je bent een prins, en geen koning. Ben je vergeten dat het toverwater is ?'

'Wat bedoelt u ?' vroeg Lars.

'Sinds de boze toverkoningin bezit nam van de plaats waar ik was ben ik gevlucht. Ik ben blij dat je me hebt gevonden,' zei de toverbron.

'Maar waarom ben ik een prins ?' vroeg Lars.

'Omdat degene die het eerste van mijn nieuwe plaats zou drinken mijn prins zou worden, en dat ben jij,' zei de toverbron. En ineens stond er een prachtige prinses voor hem. Lars keek naar zijn armen en zijn benen, en ontdekte dat hij

geen kikker meer was. 'Ooit betoverde de boze toverkoningin mij tot een toverbron,' zei de prinses. 'Alleen als er iemand zou zijn die boven alle anderen van mij zou houden, en mij niet zou willen delen met een ander, dan zou ik weer een prinses kunnen worden,' zei de prinses.

'En die iemand was ik ?' vroeg Lars.

'Zelfs hier heb je mij gevonden,' zei de prinses. 'Diep in het bos, in een moddervijver.'

Lars omhelsde zijn prinses en kuste haar. En ze leefden nog lang en gelukkig.

De Reuzenvrouw

Er was eens een perzik die hele grote oren had. Hij werd er vaak om uitgelachen door andere perzikken, en ze zeiden allemaal dat als hij een meloen was geweest dan was het allemaal niet zo erg. Van verdriet ging de perzik met de grote oren op een dag naar het bos, om nooit meer terug te komen. Daar vond hij een banaan met een hele grote neus. Ook de banaan was gevlucht, omdat ook de banaan altijd door andere bananen werd uitgelachen. Ze zeiden dat als de banaan een meloen was geweest, dan was het allemaal nog niet zo erg. Ze besloten samen op te trekken. Na een tijdje kwamen ze aan bij een groot kasteel. Hier werden ze ontvangen door een komkommer met een hele grote kin, en al gauw kwamen ze erachter dat hier nog veel meer woonden met hele grote lichaamsdelen. De komkommer met de hele grote kin zei dat achter het kasteel

een berg is waar een huilende reus woont. De reus zou huilen, omdat hij zo eenzaam was. De komkommer met de hele grote kin had een idee. Als ze nou allemaal zich aan elkaar vast zouden maken, dan zouden ze vanzelf een reuzenvrouw worden voor de reus. Dat deden ze, en met een beetje gepuzzel kwam er een prachtige vrouw tevoorschijn. De vrouw begon aan haar tocht op de berg, en even later was de reus de allergelukkigste.

De Reuzenbewaker

Er was eens een reus die een wondermeloen bewaakte. Velen probeerden bij de wondermeloen te komen, maar de reus joeg hen allemaal weg. Op een dag was er een kaboutertje die zo klein was dat de reus hem niet zag. Met gemak kwam het kaboutertje bij de wondermeloen, ging naar binnen, en besloot er te wonen. Maar op een dag hoorde hij hulpgeroep vanuit het diepere deel van de wondermeloen, en besloot op onderzoek uit te gaan. Na een tijdje lopen zag hij een fee die vastzat. ‘Wees maar niet bang hoor,’ zei de kabouter. 'Ik heb wel een plannetje. Ik ben veel te klein om jou los te krijgen, maar ik weet wel wat.' En zo ging de kabouter weer naar buiten, en riep de reus. Maar de reus zag natuurlijk helemaal niets. Toen de kabouter een klein vlammetje maakte zag de reus het wel. De kabouter nodigde de reus uit om binnen in de wondermeloen te komen. Dat ging niet zo makkelijk, maar na een tijdje was de reus binnen. ‘Zo,’ zei de reus, ‘ik wist niet dat er ook kabouters in de wondermeloen woonden.’

‘Nou,’ zei de kabouter, ‘ik woonde hier eerst ook niet, maar ik was zo klein dat ik makkelijk langs je heen kon komen.’ Maar toen werd de reus erg kwaad. De

kabouter zette het op een rennen, dieper in de wondermeloen, en de reus kwam achter hem aan. Na een tijdje kwam ook de reus vast te zitten, en begon om hulp te roepen. Na een tijdje kwamen er reuzen die zelfs groter dan hem waren. Met z'n allen rekten ze de wondermeloen uit, zodat de reus los kon komen, en ook de fee. De reus was er zo van geschrokken dat hij nooit meer binnenin de wondermeloen wilde, en de fee is vanaf toen voor altijd in het voorste deel van de wondermeloen blijven wonen, samen met de kabouter.

De Toverknots

Er was eens een dwerg die een ware plaag was in een gebied van reuzen. Zo haalde hij een heleboel toverkunsten uit om de reuzen telkens dwars te zitten, en daar beleefde hij een hoop lol aan. De dwerg woonde erg diep onder de grond waar hij een toverknots bewaakte waarmee hij zijn toverkunsten uithaalde. Op een dag waren de reuzen het zat, en zes van hen gingen op een zoektocht onder de grond. Ze wisten dat dat erg gevaarlijk was, maar ze hadden het nu helemaal met de dwerg gehad. Na een lange tocht kwamen ze in een hele grote verlichte grot terecht waar ze de dwerg vonden met zijn toverknots. Toen de zes reuzen dichterbij kwamen zei de dwerg : 'Toverknots, een ware plaag, geef die reuzen een flink pak slaag.' De toverknots vloog op, en gaf die arme reuzen zulke flinke lellen dat ze alle zes niet wisten hoe snel ze moesten wegkomen.

Toen de reuzen thuiskwamen zeiden hun vrouwen dat ze direkt naar de reuzenheks moesten gaan om van hun wonden af te komen. De reuzenheks had daar wel wat zalf voor. Ook zei de reuzenheks toen ze het verhaal hoorde, dat ze

hen wel wilde omtoveren in wolven, zodat ze snel de toverknots konden weggrijpen, en snel weg konden komen. Maar toen de wolven terugkwamen in de grot zei de dwerg : ‘Toverknots een ware plaag, geef die wolven een flink pak slaag.’ En de toverknots vloog zo snel vooruit dat de wolven niets konden beginnen, en kregen ditmaal veel hardere lellen.

Uitgeput kwamen ze weer aan bij de reuzenheks, en vertelden wat er was gebeurd. ‘Weet je wat,’ zei de reuzenheks. ‘Ik weet dat de dwerg van ijs houdt. Ik zal jullie omtoveren tot indiaanse ijsmeisjes, met een heleboel ijstaarten en ijsjes. En dan zullen jullie een hele grote indiaanse ijstafel voor hem dekken.’ En zo gebeurde het. En toen de dwerg zich helemaal had volgegeten zei de dwerg : ‘Jullie mogen alles van mij hebben, behalve mijn toverknots.’

‘Ach,’ zei één van de indiaanse ijsmeisjes, ‘als we dan niet uw toverknots mogen hebben, geef ons dan uw prachtige stem.’ En zo gaf de dwerg zijn stem aan de indiaanse ijsmeisjes. Direkt zei toen één van hen : ‘Toverknots een ware plaag, geef die dwerg een flink pak slaag.’ Daar schrok de dwerg wel even van. Hij stond op, rende weg, en niemand heeft hem ooit weer teruggezien. En zo kwam de toverknots in de handen van de reuzen, en ze leefden nog lang en gelukkig.

De Chocolade Prins

Er was eens een chocolade koning die een zoon had. De prins was bestemd voor de troon, maar op een dag vluchtte de prins uit het paleis. De chocolade koning

liet een heleboel lakeien op zoek gaan naar de prins. Na vele jaren vonden ze hem in het bos, waar hij samen met een arm meisje woonde.

De lakeien namen de prins mee terug naar het paleis. De chocolade koning was woedend, en liet hem opsluiten in een kerker. ‘Je moest je schamen,’ zei de chocolade koning, ‘jij moet later de troon op.’

Het arme meisje was erg verdrietig en smeekte de chocolade koning om hem vrij te laten, maar de chocolade koning was onverbiddelijk. Iemand moest de troonopvolger zijn, en dat was zijn zoon, de prins.

Na vele jaren werd de prins uit de kerker gehaald, omdat hij de nieuwe chocolade koning zou worden. Tegelijk was er een grote bruiloft, maar de prins mocht niet met het arme meisje trouwen, maar met iemand die zijn vader voor hem had bestemd. Iedereen op de bruiloft was heel blij, behalve het arme meisje. Zij huilde de hele dag, en iedereen vroeg haar waarom, maar het meisje gaf geen antwoord.

Ook de prins was erg verdrietig toen hij het arme meisje zo zag huilen. De prins sprong op zijn paard, greep het huilende arme meisje en reed met haar weg. ‘Liefste,’ zei de prins. ‘Nu moeten we zo ver weg gaan dat niemand ons meer kan vinden.’ Ze besloten de zee over te gaan in een bootje. Na een hele lange tijd varen kwamen ze op een eiland waar hele enge wachters woonden. Ze waren hongerig, want ze hadden al tijden niets gegeten.

‘Ik weet een plaats waar jullie volop kunnen eten,’ zei de prins. En de prins wees op de plaats waar hij vandaan kwam. ‘Daar is een rijk van chocolade. Eet smakelijk.’

Dat lieten de hele enge wachters zich natuurlijk geen twee keer zeggen. En zo hadden de prins en het arme meisje het eiland helemaal voor hen alleen.

De Toverkikker

Er was eens een indiaanse toverkikker die vlees at. Vaak maakte hij in dorpjes de buurt onveilig. Iedereen was erg bang voor die vleesetende toverkikker. Maar op een dag kwam er een stenen mannetje op de vleesetende toverkikker af, en sloot hem op in een berg. Vanaf nu zou het stenen mannetje bij de ingang van de berg staan om de toverkikker te bewaken. Maar na een tijdje begon de toverkikker prachtige muziek te maken in de berg, en velen kwamen op het prachtige geluid af. Het stenen mannetje dacht dat hij hiermee een hoop geld kon verdienen. Zij die door de bergspleet naar binnen gingen betaalden hem goed, maar het stenen mannetje was helemaal vergeten dat de toverkikker nog steeds een vleesetende toverkikker was, en daarom kwam niemand die de berg inging er weer levend uit. Op een dag waren er zovelen uit de dorpjes verdwenen dat de koning bij het stenen mannetje langskwam. De koning wilde direkt door de bergopening naar binnen om te kijken waar ze allemaal waren, maar eerst moest hij het stenen mannetje flink betalen. ‘Zeg vlegel,’ zei de koning, ‘wie denk je wel niet dat je voor je hebt ?’ Maar hoe de koning ook tegensputterde, de koning moest en zou betalen. Het stenen mannetje had nu zoveel geld dat hij er een paleis voor kocht van het schitterendste goud en de beste edelstenen. Ook kocht hij de beste lakeien, maar herinnerde zich toen ineens dat hij de toverkikker moest bewaken.

En de toverkikker was natuurlijk ontsnapt om de dorpjes weer onveilig te maken. Toen het stenen mannetje hoorde dat de toverkikker weer overal zovelen opvrat werd het stenen mannetje heel boos op zichzelf. ‘Ach, het moet door die betoverende muziek zijn geweest dat ik dat allemaal ben vergeten. Maar weet je wat,’ zei het stenen mannetje, ‘van het vele geld dat ik nog over heb koop ik de prachtigste muziekinstrumenten.’ En zo gebeurde het, en al gauw maakte het stenen mannetje zulke betoverende muziek voor de toverkikker dat de toverkikker helemaal vergat dat hij een vleesetende toverkikker was.

Er was eens een indiaanse feeenkoningin die een hele bijzondere roos had. De roos kon spreken, en was zo prachtig dat een ieder die naar de roos keek versteende en voor altijd in verwondering naar de roos staarde. Daarom bracht de indiaanse feeenkoningin de roos naar een eenzaam kasteel waar twee rivieren omheen stroomden. De eerste rivier was zo zoet dat iedereen die er bij in de buurt kwam voor altijd in slaap viel. De tweede rivier was zo vies en vuil, dat degene die er te dichtbij kwam voor altijd in huilen uitbarste. De feeenkoningin vond dat niet zo geweldig, maar ze wilde de roos beschermen. Maar niet alleen wilde ze de roos beschermen, maar ook degenen die dichtbij de roos wilden zijn. De roos was namelijk erg gevaarlijk. En bovendien plaatste de feeenkoningin ook de gevaarlijkste spin die bestond om het kasteel te bewaken. Dat vond de feeenkoningin ook niet leuk, maar ze wilde geen enkel risico nemen.

De feeenkoningin zag wel dat het er zo niet makkelijker op werd, en al helemaal niet minder gevaarlijk, en daarom liet ze grote waarschuwingsborden neerzetten. Niet veel lieden waagden zich nog in de buurt, en op een dag vroeg de roos of zo een wandeling door het bos mocht maken. Uiteindelijk stemde de feeenkoningin toe. Toen de roos bij de vieze rivier kwam liet ze een traan vallen, en toen ze bij de zoete rivier kwam gaapte ze even. Toen ze de waarschuwingsborden zag schrok ze heel erg. ‘Maar ik ben toch geen roofdier ?’ vroeg de roos. ‘Nee,’ zei de feeenkoningin, ‘maar heus, het is beter zo.’ Maar met een ruk maakte de roos zich los van de feeenkoningin. De feeenkoningin kon niet veel doen, omdat de roos zo groot was geworden in al die jaren. De roos snelde dieper het bos in, maar verdwaalde al snel, omdat ze de weg niet wist. Uiteindelijk vond ze een bosmeertje waarin ze begon te baden. Gelukkig was er niemand in de buurt, want dat zou veel te gevaarlijk zijn.

Maar na een tijdje wilde de roos weer terug naar het kasteel, en barste in huilen uit. ‘Ach,’ zei de wind, ‘mijn kind, maak je toch niet zo druk. Je vindt heus je weg naar het kasteel wel weer, volg gewoon de rivier van zoete en vuile melk, en je bent weer thuis, heus.’

‘Maar waar vind ik die rivier ?’ vroeg de roos.

‘Daar, in de lucht,’ sprak de wind, en tegelijkertijd verscheen er een wolkendek met daarin de rivier van melk. De roos zwom en dronk. Het was het zoetste en vieste wat ze ooit had gedronken, maar snel was ze thuis. ‘Mamma,’ zei ze tegen de feeenkoningin, ‘ik heb melk gedronken van de wind.’ En ineens stond er een meisje voor de feeenkoningin zo prachtig als een roos. En sindsdien is ze altijd in het kasteel gebleven.

Haar moeder bouwde de prachtigste torentjes voor haar, de lieflijkste sluiers en gordijntjes, en het meisje had het altijd erg naar haar zin, alhoewel het een eenzaam en verlaten kasteel was. Vaak dronk ze nog van de melk van de wind

die de wind bij haar bracht, door het raam, en op een dag had ze er zoveel van gedronken dat ze er erg slaperig van werd. Toen ze wakker werd zei ze tegen de wind : ‘Zeg, waarom kom je niet gewoon bij ons wonen ?’ Dat liet de wind zich geen twee keer zeggen, en kwam door het raam naar binnen. Elke dag werd het meisje mooier en mooier door het drinken van de windemelk, en toen haar moeder stierf werd zij de feeenkoningin, maar weg van het kasteel wilde zij niet. Elke dag zond ze de wind uit om alle indiaanse feeen en toverrozen te verzamelen, en elke avond en nacht kwam de wind terug met vele feeenkoetsen. Allen hadden zij gedronken van de windemelk, en daarom waren ze hier.

Maar op een dag werd de wind oud, en stierf. De nieuwe feeenkoningin was ontroostbaar. Ook de windemelk begon heel langzaam op te raken. ‘Maar,’ zei de feeenkoningin, ‘dankzij de windemelk zijn we allemaal hier. Misschien stroomt de windemelk nu hoger in de lucht. Laten we een toren bouwen die geen top heeft.’ En zo bouwden de feeen een toren zonder einde, en kwamen op een plaats zo hoog in de lucht waar de windemelk nog stroomde. Ook kwamen ze tot de plaats waar de wind nu was, en tot de plaats waar de oude feeenkoningin nu leefde. ‘Oh mamma,’ zei de nieuwe feeenkoningin. ‘Je bent niet dood.’ En toen omhelsden die twee elkaar, terwijl de feeen zongen, en de wind heel warm werd van binnen.

De Slapende Prinses

Er was eens een indiaanse prinses die altijd sliep. In de nacht werd ze altijd heel even wakker om iets te drinken en te eten. Vaak was dat wat thee met vruchten, en daarna sliep ze weer. Soms slaapwandelde ze door de gangen van het kasteel waar ze woonde. Haar vader en moeder waren erg bedroefd, maar zo was de prinses altijd al geweest. Ze zouden wel eens met hun dochter willen spreken, al was het maar voor heel even.

Op een nacht was de prinses weer aan het slaapwandelen, en ze wandelde heel diep het bos in. Ze liep altijd op blote voeten met een nachtjapon of pyama.

Plotseling stapte ze op een toverring, en werd direkt wakker. Ze was erg verbaasd en deed de ring om haar vinger. Heel lang keek ze ernaar, en ze bleef gewoon wakker. De prinses was erg blij, en rende terug naar het kasteel. Maar toen het ochtend werd en ze anderen tegenkwam vielen die direkt in slaap. De prinses dacht dat dat door de toverring kwam die ze droeg. En zo was de prinses erg eenzaam, en omdat ze niet nog meer van hen in slaap wilde zien tollen, vertrok ze weer naar het bos. Na een tijdje lopen kwam ze aan bij een klein huisje waar kabouters leefden. Blij stapten de kabouters naar buiten, alsof ze haar al kenden. 'We dachten dat je nooit zou komen,' zei één van de kabouters. 'Ja,' zei een andere kabouter, 'en, zeg, wij hebben die toverring voor jouw gemaakt, van de zeldzaamste stenen. De stenen die jij op je ring draagt zijn de enigen van hun soort, dus wees er maar erg zuinig op, meisje. Je wil toch niet nog een keer zolang slapen ?' De prinses werd erg verlegen. Ze was blij dat de kabouters niet in slaap vielen.

En zo mocht de prinses bij de kabouters wonen, en zorgde goed voor hun huisje als de kabouters weg waren om in de mijnen te werken. Maar op een dag kwam er een man met maar één oog bij het huisje. Hij klopte op de deur, en de prinses deed een raampje open.

'Zeg, meisje,' zei de man met maar één oog, 'wat heb jij een prachtige ring. Als je die aan mij geeft, dan geef ik je mijn paard daarvoor in ruil.'

'Maar dan val ik weer in slaap,' zei de prinses.

Toen haalde de man ook een ring tevoorschijn. 'Als je deze draagt, dan blijf je niet alleen wakker, maar dan kun je ook vliegen en toveren.' Nu, dat leek de prinses wel wat, want dan zou ze ook wat aan de slapenden van haar land kunnen doen. De ruil was snel gedaan, maar ineens begon de man te lachen, rende weg, en de prinses viel als dood op de grond. Toen de kabouters terugkwamen waren ze erg verdrietig. En ze konden geen andere ring maken met dezelfde krachten, want zulke stenen konden ze nooit meer vinden. Maar ze hadden nog wel een toverfluit waarmee ze de prinses bij volle maan tot leven konden wekken om te dansen. Dan was het weer even feest, maar van hele korte duur. Op een dag toen ze thuiskwamen was ook de toverfluit gestolen. Toen besloten ze de prinses in een kist naar de mijnen te dragen tussen de edelstenen, zodat ze haar altijd bij zich hadden als ze aan het werk waren. En ze vonden dat de prinses hier veilig was. Als ze haar in het huisje zouden laten dan zouden ze veel te bang zijn dat de prinses ook op een dag gestolen zou zijn. Nee, dat zouden hun kabouterharten niet aankunnen. Het was een prachtig gezicht om de prinses zo te zien tussen de edelstenen. De dieren hier zouden wel de wacht over haar houden. Midden in de nacht toen de kabouters weer naar huis waren begonnen ineens enkele edelstenen te fonkelen, zo te fonkelen dat de prinses haar ogen opendeed. Ook haar ogen begonnen te fonkelen. Ze stond op en ging

terug naar het kabouterhuisje. De kabouters waren erg verbaasd en blij. Snel gingen ze terug naar de mijnen om de fonkelende edelstenen op te halen.

Met de edelstenen versierden ze hun huisje, en voortaan viel een ieder die hen of de prinses kwaad wilden doen in slaap. En de kabouters zongen allemaal : ‘Dus kom maar niet te dichtbij als je hier iets wil stelen, kom maar niet dichtbij als je kwaad wil doen, want sluiten zullen je ogen, en niemand zal ooit het licht nog aandoen.’

Het Doolhof

Er was eens een dwerg die met een tovervogel achter een doolhof leefde. De vogel moest steeds zingen, en was niet gelukkig vanwege de kooi. Het was een gouden kooi met tralies als snaren, waarop de dwerg prachtige muziek speelde. Zo lokten ze beiden met hun betoverende muziek velen tot het doolhof. De muren van het doolhof bewogen altijd, zodat bezoekers nooit het pad konden vinden. Het was een toverdoolhof waarin velen verdwaalden en daarna verhongerden.

Op een dag was er een indiaanse prins in het land die over de arme tovervogel hoorde. Hij wilde het dier graag bevrijden. De indiaanse prins had een paard met hele lange poten, en kon zo makkelijk over de muren van het doolhof heenkomen. Maar wat de prins niet wist was dat achter het doolhof een vleesetende rivier sluimerde. Toen het paard in de rivier stapte werden ze al snel beiden opgeslokt.

Niet lang daarna kwam de broer van de indiaanse prins tot het doolhof. De broer had een beer met hele lange poten, dus kon ook met gemak over de muren van het gevaarlijke doolhof komen. De beer had altijd zo’n dorst dat hij wel een hele rivier zou kunnen leegdrinken. Toen ze bij de vleesetende rivier aankwamen was die na een tijdje helemaal leeggeslurpt door de beer.

Sinds de prins met het paard door de rivier waren opgeslokt was de vogel steeds droeviger gaan zingen. Maar de andere prins kwam met zijn beer steeds dichterbij, terwijl ze de dwerg op de tovervogel hoorden schelden. Toen de dwerg de beer zag schrok hij heel erg. Dit was nog nooit gebeurd. Niemand kon ooit door het doolhof en over de rivier komen. De dwerg rende met de kooi naar een groot kasteel, terwijl de beer met de prins erachter aanrende. ‘Laat de tovervogel los,’ riep de prins. Maar de dwerg maakte even een gebaar, en snel stonden zowel de beer als de prins in lange kooien. De dwerg kantelde de kooien en begon er op te dansen, zodat er wonderlijke muziek ontstond. Maar de tovervogel begon steeds valser te zingen, en hield ten slotte helemaal op. De dwerg was woedend, en zei : ‘Ach, jou wil ik helemaal niet meer hebben. Ik heb nu de prins en de beer.’ En snel liet hij de tovervogel los. De tovervogel vloog snel over het toverdoolhof, en hielp velen om eroverheen te komen. Na een tijdje stonden allen die door de tovervogel over het doolhof waren gebracht om het kasteel, en riepen dat de dwerg de prins en de beer moest loslaten. Maar al gauw had de dwerg ook hen gekooid. Maar voordat de dwerg de kooien kon kantelen begonnen ze de tralies die als snaren waren te bespelen. De dwerg stond met z’n vingers in zijn oren, en toen hij wegrende pikte de tovervogel snel de sleutel van de kooien uit zijn broekzak weg.

Maar ze moesten nog steeds oppassen voor de gevaarlijke dwerg. Toen de tovervogel ze allen uit hun kooien had bevrijd, en de dwerg ver weg was slopen ze stilletjes naar het kasteel. Al gauw waren ook de beer en de prins bevrijd. In het kasteel stonden nog veel meer kooien die ze konden openen. Maar vanuit de raampjes van het kasteel kregen ze de schrik van hun leven. Het toverdoolhof kwam van alle kanten steeds dichterbij, klaar om het hele kasteel op te slokken. Maar gelukkig kon de tovervogel ook een beetje toveren, en maakte zichzelf heel groot. Allen konden ze een plaatsje vinden tussen de veren van de tovervogel, en die kon net op tijd van het kasteel wegvliegen. Alleen de beer met de lange poten staat daar nog steeds, zoekende naar toverrivieren die hij kan leegdrinken, en de beer is inmiddels zo groot geworden, dat de indiaanse prins zijn kasteel op de rug van de beer heeft gebouwd. Nog steeds komt de tovervogel wel eens langs om prachtig te zingen, en de dwerg hebben ze nooit meer teruggezien.

De Prins zonder Neus

Er was eens een toverneus die opgesloten werd gehouden op een eiland. De reuzen die de toverneus bewaakten hadden alle zeeen opgedronken, behalve de zee rondom het eiland. Die zee mochten ze niet opdrinken, anders zou de toverneus ontsnappen. Wel dronken ze vaak kleine teugjes van de zee, waardoor er vele draaikolken ontstonden en vele scheepjes vergingen.

Op een dag waren de reuzen zo dorstig dat ze ten einde raad waren. Maar daar wist de toverneus wel wat op. Uit zijn neusgat haalde hij een fles met water tevoorschijn die nooit opraakte. Maar de reuzen begonnen al snel ruzie te maken om de fles. De ruzie liep zo hoog op dat ze weer ten einde raad waren. Maar daar wist de toverneus wel weer wat op. Ook uit zijn andere neusgat haalde hij een fles met water te voorschijn die nooit opraakte. Nu waren de reuzen in twee kampen verdeeld, maar ze hadden nog steeds ruzie om de flessen. Maar op een dag zei de toverneus : ‘Weten jullie wat,’ en toen haalde de toverneus een fles tevoorschijn waarvan ze konden drinken om nooit meer dorst te hebben. Een simpele druppel zou genoeg zijn. En zo nam iedere reus een teugje, maar toen de laatste reus wilde drinken was de fles al leeg. Oh, wat was die reus kwaad. En van de flessen die nooit opraakten kon hij niet meer drinken, want die waren kapotgegaan door de ruzie. En zo heeft die reus in zijn boosheid de hele zee rondom het eiland leeggedronken, en kwam de toverneus vrij. Dat was wel slim van die toverneus.

En in de bossen kwam de toverneus een indiaanse elvenprins tegen zonder neus. De elvenprins raapte de toverneus op, en dacht : ‘Nu, ik heb toch nog geen neus. Dan kan ik deze wel gebruiken. En zo vond de toverneus zijn plaats en toverde dat het een lieve lust was.

De Tovergrot

Er was eens een indiaans meisje dat in een land leefde met vogels die in hun hele leven maar één lied konden zingen en dan dood neervielen. Maar die liederen waren dan ook de prachtigste en meest betoverende liederen die iemand ooit had gehoord. Ook waren er in dat land roofdieren die in hun hele leven

maar één keer konden aanvallen en dan dood neervielen. Maar zo'n aanval was dan ook zo groot dat het de geschiedenis inging als een aardbeving.

Het meisje zelf had ook een betoverende stem, zo prachtig, dat vele wonden genazen en tranen opdroogden wanneer ze zong. En als ze boos was, dan was het alsof de aarde beefde en alles wat daarop stond.

Op een dag was het meisje aan het wandelen gegaan, en verdwaalde in het bos. Hoe sterk ze dan ook was, ze moest oppassen voor die gevaarlijke roofdieren. Hoe dapper het meisje ook was, ze werd steeds banger naarmate het donkerder werd, en om haar angst te dempen begon ze te zingen. Maar zo mooi als de vogels van haar land kon ze niet zingen, en ze hoorde zoveel prachtige geluiden en liederen in het bos, terwijl ze wist dat de vogels na hun lied dood zouden neervallen. Het meisje werd er erg droevig van.

Plotseling stond er een groot roofdier voor haar, en het meisje schrok. 'Je hoeft niet zo te schrikken, hoor, meisje,' zei het roofdier. 'Ik zal je echt niets doen, hoor, want dan val ik dood neer.'

Het meisje zag dat het roofdier verwond was, en begon te zingen zodat zijn wond genas. Het roofdier was haar erg dankbaar en nam haar mee. Hij bracht haar naar een plaats waar een heleboel andere roofdieren waren. Ook vele andere roofdieren waren gewond, en het meisje moest veel zingen om hen te genezen. Ze noemden haar 'Goudstemmetje', en ze begonnen veel van het meisje te houden.

Op een dag kwam er een vogel in de grot waar het meisje nu leefde. 'Ik ben blij dat jij nu voor hen zingt,' zei de vogel, 'want vroeger moesten de vogels dat doen, en dat kon elke vogel maar één keer. Jij valt tenminste niet dood neer als je hebt gezongen.'

'Maar ik kan niet zo goed zingen als jullie,' zei het meisje.

'Oh, maar dat komt nog wel,' zei de vogel. 'Niemand die voor de roofdieren zingt blijft onveranderd.' En toen vloog de vogel weg.

Op een nacht merkte het meisje dat ze veren begon te krijgen, en dat haar stem steeds hoger werd. Al gauw durfde ze niet meer te zingen, omdat ze bang was net als de vogels dood neer te vallen. Maar de roofdieren werden erg ongeduldig, en sommigen begonnen boos te worden. Maar anderen kregen medelijden met het meisje, en gingen om haar heen staan om haar te beschermen. 'Als je nog één keer voor ons zingt, dan zullen we je laten gaan,' gromde één van de roofdieren. En toen waagde het meisje het er maar op, omdat ze nog niet helemaal in een vogel was veranderd, en nog steeds niet zo prachtig

als de vogels kon zingen. Tijdens haar laatste lied zong het meisje steeds prachtiger en prachtiger, en ze merkte dat ze al een snavel begon te krijgen, en vogelpoten. Net op tijd was het lied afgelopen. Het meisje veranderde helemaal in een vogel en vloog weg, de roofdieren in betovering achterlatend.

Het meisje dat nu een vogel was vloog snel naar de andere vogels en smeekte hen om niet meer te zingen. ‘Goudstemmetje, Goudstemmetje,’ riep één van de vogels. Het meisje kende dat vogeltje wel, omdat die een keer bij haar was geweest in de grot. ‘Jij bent de enige vogel die heeft gezongen zonder dood neer te vallen. Leer ons zo te zingen als jij,’ zei het vogeltje.

‘Maar ik durf niet,’ zei Goudstemmetje, ‘want nu ben ik helemaal een vogel, en bang om dood neer te vallen.’

‘Ach, welnee,’ zei het vogeltje, ‘je hebt al zo vaak gezongen, en je bent nog steeds hier. Toe, zing voor ons.’

En toen begon Goudstemmetje zo prachtig en betoverend te zingen dat alle vogeltjes er tranen van in hun oogjes kregen. Zachtjes begonnen enkele vogeltjes met haar mee te zingen, lied na lied, en toen steeds meer. En sindsdien is er in dat land nooit meer een vogeltje dood neergevallen, en zingen de vogeltjes daar het meest.

Het Meisje dat op het Water Danste

Er was eens een indiaans meisje dat op water kon dansen. Haar dansjes waren zo betoverend dat vissen uit het water opkwamen om in vogels te veranderen. Op een dag kwam er een heks naar haar kijken. De heks stopte alle vogels van het meisje in kooien, veranderde in een storm, en blies het meisje omver, zodat ze in het water wegzakte.

Direkt veranderde het meisje in een vis, maar al snel bleek dat ze een hele bijzondere vis was. Ze kon wensen laten uitkomen. Al gauw deden de vissen om haar heen telkens de meest vreemde wensen. Sommigen wilden vogels worden, anderen wilden onder de grond wonen, en zo ging het maar door. De tovervis werd er erg moe van, en op een dag dreef ze levenloos naar boven.

Toen de heks dat zag begon ze erge medelijden te krijgen, en sprak : ‘Vanaf nu zul je weer een meisje zijn dat op het water danst, maar ditmaal zal geen storm je kunnen omduwen. En zo gebeurde het. De tovervis veranderde weer in een meisje, en danste weer op het water, zonder dat ze nog kon vallen door een storm. Het meisje danste zo betoverend dat alle kooien van de heks zich openden. Maar de heks vond dat niet meer erg, want alles wat ze wilde was naar het meisje kijken. Maar op een dag danste het meisje van het water weg, en hoe de heks ook zocht, ze kon het meisje niet meer vinden. En sindsdien danste het meisje alleen nog maar in de herinnering van de heks.

Het Koninkrijk van Chocolade

De indiaanse weeskinderen gingen op een klein bootje over dat afschuwelijke meer van wespenzeep. Wanneer de zeep hun handen raakten dan begonnen die te branden en te steken. Maar even later merkten ze dat het bootje begon te lekken. En zo zakten ze langzaam in die afschuwelijke diepte. Sommigen zwommen verder, terwijl anderen van de pijn verkrampten en geheel wegzakten. De weeskinderen die waren overgebleven kwamen uiteindelijk vermoeid aan op het hoornaarsstrand. Ook hier steekte het en brandde het, en waar ze kwamen lieten ze bloeddruppels achter. Oh, wat stak dit strand. Vele kinderen zakten weg op dit strand, terwijl de laatste twee kinderen na lang lopen een kasteel ontdekten waar alles van goud was, en waar bruin fluweel en leer lag. De kinderen waren gebronst door de modder en de doorns van een lange dag, gebleekt door de afschuwelijke zon die hun gezichten teisterde. Overal waar ze waren geweest hadden ze tranen en zweet achtergelaten, en nu waren ze dan eindelijk hier, waar de zon vriendelijk scheen. Een vriendelijke leeuw kwam

naar hen toe, en vroeg waar de andere kinderen waren. ‘Oh,’ zeiden de twee kinderen, ‘de reis was verschrikkelijk, en we hebben velen achter moeten laten.’ De leeuw keek naar hun wonden die bloeiende bloemen begonnen voort te brengen, waar melk uit stroomde. De leeuw trok de diepe angels uit hen weg, terwijl er ook chocolademelk uit de bloemen scheen voort te stromen. ‘Volg mij,’ zei de leeuw. En zowel de leeuw als de kinderen lieten stroken van melk en chocolademelk achter zich. En de leeuw leidde hen tot de tuinen waar chocolade werd gemaakt. En achter die tuinen was een afgrond waar de chocolade werd ingeworpen. De leeuw sprong, en de kinderen sprongen hem achterna. Hier werd de chocolade gesmolten door de zon, en hier gleden de kinderen met de leeuw. De leeuw voorop, en daarachter de kinderen. Verderop had de chocolade allerlei kleuren, en de kinderen begonnen misselijk en draaierig te worden. En de kinderen werden zo ziek dat ze dachten : waren we maar bij de anderen gebleven. Plotseling vlogen ze door een donker gat en kwamen weer in het meer van wespenzeep terecht. En hier hebben ze toen hun koninkrijk van chocolade gebouwd.

De Sprekende Toren

Er was eens een sprekende toren. Wanneer iemand de trappen van de toren op wilde gaan, dan schreeuwde de toren uiteindelijk zo hard dat niemand echt ver kon komen. Maar de koning had gehoord dat er bijzondere dingen te vinden waren in die hoge toren, die zo hoog was dat niemand eignelijk wist waar die toren eindigde. De koning liet een dove man komen en vroeg aan de man of hij wilde gaan kijken wat er bovenin te vinden was. De dove man stemde toe, en vertrok direkt naar de toren. De man had natuurlijk geen last van het harde geluid, en na een tijdje was hij zo hoog gekomen dat hij in een zaaltje terecht kwam waar allerlei indiaanse vruchten lagen. De man begon ervan te eten, en begon hard te lachen. Hij wilde toen een trap op om nog hoger te komen, maar werd direkt tegengehouden door verblindende lichten. De man ging terug naar het zaaltje, nam zoveel mogelijk van de indiaanse vruchten mee, en ging terug naar de koning. Hij vertelde de koning over de verblindende lichten, maar dat hij wel vruchten had gevonden waar je hard van ging lachen.

De koning kon die vruchten wel gebruiken, en na niet al te lange tijd leed het hele hof aan de slappe lach. Maar tevreden was de koning niet. En daarom liet hij ook een blinde man komen. De blinde man maakte natuurlijk geen kans om door het harde geluid van het eerste gedeelte te komen, en daarom moest de dove man terug naar het torenzaaltje om daar vanuit een raampje een touw te laten zakken om de blinde man omhoog te heisen.

Dat ging allemaal goed, en zo kon de blinde man de trap op nog verder omhoog, en had geen last van de verblindende lichten. Na een tijdje kwam de blinde man in een zaaltje waar glanzende indiaanse stenen lagen. De man zag dat natuurlijk niet, maar had ze al snel gevonden, maar barste toen in huilen uit. Hij wilde toen met de trap nog verder omhoog, maar daar werd het elke stap heter en heter, totdat de man het niet meer uit kon houden, en terugging naar het zaaltje. Hier nam hij zoveel mogelijk indiaanse edelstenen mee, en ging terug over de trap naar het eerste zaaltje, waar hij door het raampje over het touw naar beneden kon. Zo kwam hij terug bij de koning, en vertelde wat hij had meegemaakt. Ook liet hij de indiaanse edelstenen zien, waarvan je in huilen uitbarste zodra je ze aanraakte. ‘Nou, laten we dat dan maar niet doen, hè,’ zei de koning. De koning liet de edelstenen goed opbergen.

Maar op een dag was er een dief in het kasteel, en vond de edelstenen. Toen hij ze wilde oppakken barste hij ineens in huilen uit. Huilend en vol van spijt meldde hij zich bij de koning, en de koning wist nu hoe belangrijk die edelstenen waren. Ze waren goede wachters. Voor straf moest de dief de torentrap beklimmen, helemaal tot aan het puntje. Maar ver kwam de man natuurlijk niet. Eerst raakte hij doof van het geluid. Later raakte hij blind van het licht, en toen hij nog hoger kwam was het daar zo heet dat hij verbrandde. Niemand zag hem ooit weer terug. De koning had gehoopt dat de dief met meerdere geheimen zou terugkomen, en daarom was de teleurstelling groot toen dat niet gebeurde. De koning wist nu dat ze een man van steen nodig hadden die de hete trap zou kunnen bestijgen.

Vele jaren gingen voorbij, maar uiteindelijk had de koning toch zo’n man gevonden. De man van steen kon ook goed tegen hard geluid en fel licht, en al gauw kwam hij in een derde zaal, waar hij indiaanse bloemen vond. Maar de bloemen riepen direkt : ‘Raak ons maar niet aan, want dan kun je niet meer spreken.’ De man stapte daarom direkt achteruit en liep naar de volgende trap omhoog. Maar daar werd het elke trede steeds kouder en kouder, en op een gegeven moment kreeg de man het zo koud dat hij gillend naar beneden rende. Snel kwam hij bij de koning aan, en vertelde over de koude trappen. Ook vertelde hij over de bloemen. Maar de koning was erg boos dat de man van steen de bloemen niet voor hem had meegenomen. Het kon de koning niets schelen dat de man van steen dan niet meer zou kunnen praten als hij ze mee zou nemen.

Dus de man moest terug. De man van steen nam zoveel mogelijk bloemen mee als hij maar kon, maar kon sindsdien niet meer spreken. De koning liet de bloemen planten in zijn kasteel, aan het einde van de grote hal. De koning liet er een klein riviertje omheen bouwen, en een hekje, zodat niemand de bloemen zomaar zou aanraken.

De koning was nog steeds erg ontevreden, want hij wilde weten wat er achter die koude trappen was. En daarvoor had de koning een kachelman nodig. Na vele jaren zoeken vond de koning eindelijk zo'n man die geheel van kacheltjes was gemaakt. Hij zou met gemak over die koude trappen kunnen komen. En hij kon ook makkelijk de trappen daarvoor beklimmen, omdat hij overal tegen bestand was. Maar de koude trappen waren niet makkelijk. Na een tijdje begon de man te merken dat de kacheltjes uit begonnen te gaan, en uiteindelijk moest de man zich omdraaien om weer terug te gaan.

De koning was woedend. De kachelman was zijn enige hoop. Voor straf moest de kachelman in het veld van de indiaanse bloemen geworpen worden. Toen hij tegen de bloemen aankwam kon hij direkt niet meer spreken. De bloemen hadden erg veel medelijden met hem, en op een dag zei één van de bloemen tegen hem : 'Hoor eens. Ik zal een druppel wonderhoning voortbrengen, en als je die druppel inslikt, dan zul je met gemak over de koude trappen heenkomen.' En zo gebeurde het. De bloem bracht de honingdruppel voort, de kachelman slikte het in, en de bloemen brachten hem over de rivier en over het hek. De kachelman ging terug naar de toren, en kwam later met gemak over de koude trappen heen. Daar boven vond hij zo'n prachtig rijk dat hij niet meer terugwilde. En waarom zou hij dat verklappen aan zo'n gemene en valse koning ?

Sindsdien begon de toren nog meer te stralen, en de indiaanse bloemen begonnen naar de toren toe te groeien. Ze werden elke dag wilder en begonnen scherpe dorens voort te brengen, zodat niemand de toren meer kon beklimmen. Ze groeiden zo hoog dat ze helemaal in het rijk van de kachelman terechtkwamen. De kachelman was daar natuurlijk erg blij mee, maar kon nog steeds niet spreken. Elk jaar brachten de indiaanse bloemen prachtig bloesem voort, en op een dag zei één van de bloemen : 'Kachelman, zodra de bloesem een druppel wonderhoning voortbrengt : slik het in. Dan zul je weer spreken.' De kachelman wachtte totdat de druppel zou komen, en toen hij slikte kon hij niet alleen spreken, maar ook stond er een indiaanse prinses voor hem. Zij was gehuld in bloesem en de wonderlijkste bloemen. 'Ik ben de bloemenprinses,' zei ze. En ze leidde hem naar een trap geheel gemaakt van bloemen, en de trap was heel geurig. Helemaal bovenaan de trap waren er vlammetjes waardoor al zijn kacheltjes weer aan konden gaan. En voordat de kachelman het wist stond hij bovenop die hoge toren en had een uitzicht over het hele land.

‘Hallo,’ zei de toren, ‘nog nooit heeft er iemand op mijn top gestaan, en het is zo’n heerlijk gevoel. Daarom geef ik je nu vleugeltjes, zodat je hier altijd weer terug kan komen.’ En zo vloog de kachelman weg met zijn indiaans prinsesje, want nu hij zo hoog was gekomen, wilde hij eigenlijk alleen maar hoger. En de bloemen groeiden heel snel met hen mee, en volgden hen overal. En elk jaar bracht de bloesem weer nieuwe indiaanse prinsesjes voort. De kachelman kwam nooit meer terug naar de toren, en sindsdien is het geluid van de toren alleen maar harder geworden. Men zegt dat dat is omdat hij de kachelman roept.

De Bijenprinses

Hoog in de wolken leefden eens een grote groep indiaanse reuzen. Ze waren heel groot, heel dik, en alles ging erf langzaam. Op een dag besloten ze over de wolken naar beneden te komen. Dat ging allemaal erg langzaam. Ze wilden beneden op zoek gaan naar een splinter van een bijzondere rozenstruik. Die splinter die zou zo oud zijn, dat hij van goud zou zijn geworden. De indiaanse reuzen wisten dat als ze die splinter zouden zaaien, dan zou er een roos uitkomen, zo sterk en zo hoog, dat ze door te klimmen bij hun voorouders konden komen.

Na een tijdje hadden ze de gouden splinter gevonden, maar deze was in bezit van een dwerg. Ze boden de dwerg van alles aan in ruil voor de gouden splinter, zoals een wolkenspinner, of een wolkenwever, maar de dwerg wilde de gouden splinter niet ruilen. Maar omdat de indiaanse reuzen zolang en intens smeekten zei de dwerg uiteindelijk : ‘Goed dan, ik zie dat jullie de gouden splinter erg graag willen hebben. Ik doe het alleen als ik jullie indiaans prinsesje ervoor krijg. ‘Wat ?’ dachten de indiaanse reuzen. ‘Maar goed, als er geen andere ruil mogelijk is, dan moet het maar.’ En zo gingen de reuzen terug om hun indiaanse prinsesje waar ze zoveel van hielden naar de dwerg te brengen. En zo kregen de reuzen de gouden splinter. Toen ze weer boven in de wolken waren zaaiden ze de splinter direkt in een grote pot. Niet lang daarna stond er een enorm grote, taaie roos die enorm hoog begon te groeien, en al gauw klommen de indiaanse

reuzen naar het rijk van hun voorouders. Maar die voorouders waren helemaal niet zo blij. Ze vonden het dom dat de reuzen hun prinsesje hadden omgeruild. Maar de voorouders waren zo groot en zo dik dat ze niet over de roos naar beneden zouden kunnen. Dan zouden ze te pletter vallen.

Inmiddels bij de dwerg moest het indiaanse prinsesje een hoop zwaar werk verrichten. Ook moest het prinsesje veel kamers schrobben, en de was doen. Het meisje was doodongelukkig, maar op een dag nam de dwerg het meisje mee naar een diepe plaats onder de grond. Hier leefden een heleboel ratten, en de dwerg zei dat als het meisje de ratten tam kon maken, dan hoefde ze niet meer te werken. Dat was een zware opdracht voor het meisje. De ratten waren niet makkelijk en beten haar overal. Toch lukte het het indiaans prinsesje om de ratten tam te maken. Nu kon de dwerg ritjes gaan maken op de ratten, en ook het prinsesje ging vaak met hem mee. Op een dag kwamen ze nog dieper onder de grond. Hier leefden beren, en weer vroeg de dwerg of het indiaanse prinsesje de beren wilde temmen. Als beloning zou de dwerg haar dan meenemen naar een geheime plaats. Ook de beren waren niet makkelijk, en beten haar overal, maar uiteindelijk na een lange tijd waren de beren tam. Nu kon de dwerg ook op de beren ritjes gaan maken, en het meisje ging vaak met hem mee. Op een dag zei het meisje : ‘Je hebt me beloofd om me mee te nemen naar die geheime plaats.’

En zo nam de dwerg het indiaanse prinsesje mee naar een plaats waar een zeldzame roos stond. De roos was zo prachtig dat het indiaanse prinsesje haar ogen er niet vanaf kon houden. ‘Als je voor de roos zal zorgen en haar genegenheid wint, dan zul je kunnen komen waar je maar wilt, enkel door een gedachte.’ Het meisje begon de roos te verzorgen, en na een lange tijd won het indiaanse prinsesje eindelijk haar genegenheid. En inderdaad, door een enkele gedachte kon het meisje komen waar ze maar wilde. Maar het prinsesje dacht er niet aan om terug te gaan naar de indiaanse reuzen. Ze had het hier immers zo naar haar zin.

Maar op een dag werd de dwerg ernstig ziek. Het indiaanse prinsesje was erg verdrietig. ‘Ga naar het veld van rozen achter de zeldzame roos, en verzorg hen, want ze zijn blind, doof, en kunnen niet spreken. Als je hun genegenheid wint dan kun je wie je maar wilt genezen door enkel een gedachte.’ Het meisje ging naar het veld toe door enkel een gedachte, want zij had die gave van de zeldzame roos gekregen. In het veld zag ze de prachtigste rozen, en begon hen te verzorgen. Na niet al te lange tijd won ze hun genegenheid, en werd het indiaanse prinsesje begiftigd met de gave dat ze door een simpele gedachte kon genezen wie ze wilde. Snel ging het indiaanse meisje naar de dwerg toe, die inmiddels doodziek was, en genas hem.

De dwerg was haar nu zo dankbaar dat hij haar een gouden sleutel gaf, waardoor ze in het rijk van zijn voorouders kon komen. Toen ze daar aankwam zag ze de

kleinste en dunste wezentjes, allemaal als gouden splinters. Toen ze ze aanraakte veranderden ze direkt in bijen, en vlogen met haar mee naar boven. De bijen brachten haar tot de meest zeldzame bronnen van wonderlijke honing. Het meisje was zo verrukt van de honing, dat ze er taarten van begon te maken. Eerst bracht ze de taarten naar de dwerg, maar later wilde ze ook de honingtaarten brengen naar de indiaanse reuzen. De bijen hielpen haar ermee, en uiteindelijk kwam ze terecht in het rijk van de voorouders van de indiaanse reuzen. Hier waren ze allemaal, en ze waren erg blij haar te zien. In een zaal werden de taarten op grote tafels gezet, en begonnen de reuzen te eten zoals ze nog nooit hadden gegeten. Maar daarbij maakten ze zo'n kliederboel, en werd er zoveel gemorst, dat zelfs grote druppels honing naar beneden vielen. Waar de druppels de grond raakten ontstonden er steden en dorpen. Maar het trok ook de roofdieren aan, en die waren al snel in gevecht om de overheerlijke honing.

Het indiaanse prinsesje keek naar beneden en zag wat er gebeurde. Ze was er erg verdrietig om. Maar ze wist dat ook de roofdieren kon komen waar zij was, door het liefhebben van bloemen, en door het temmen van ratten en beren. Ze wilde het hen wel vertellen, maar de roofdieren maakten zo'n lawaai. Toen besloot het indiaanse prinsesje de bijen naar hen toe te sturen om het te vertellen. Maar één voor één werden de bijen door de roofdieren doodgeslagen. Het indiaanse prinsesje was woedend. Toen nam ze een kan met de wonderlijkste honing en goot het naar beneden. Al snel ontstond er een wilde zee van honing, en de roofdieren raakten geheel vast onder de kleverige honing. Toen kwamen de zon en de sterren naar beneden om de honing van de roofdieren af te likken, maar al gauw gingen de zon en de sterren ook in de honing baden, en wilden niet meer terug naar hun oude plaatsen. Omdat er steeds meer sterren kwamen begon de zee van honing te stijgen en te stijgen. Het indiaanse prinsesje moest nu iets doen, anders zou alles vollopen. Maar het meisje wist niet wat ze doen moest, en besloot de dwerg om raad te vragen. Maar die was niet meer te vinden, want beneden was alles ondergelopen. Ook de rozen kon het meisje niet vinden, en uiteindelijk besloot ze terug te gaan naar het rijk van de voorouders van de dwerg, in een kelder. Ook daar was alles al ondergelopen, maar in de verte zag ze iets glinsteren. Het was een gouden splinter, misschien wel de laatste. Ze raakte de splinter aan, en de splinter veranderde in een bij. Ze stapte op de bij, en vloog naar de plaats waar de zon eens stond. Hier was ze veilig, en niemand heeft haar ooit nog teruggezien.

Het Tovertouw

Eens woonden er een heleboel indiaanse feeen in een kasteel om daar de wonderlijkste toverschatten van het land te bewaken. Ze wilden de toverschatten graag met het volk delen, maar ze waren bang dat het in verkeerde handen zou vallen. Daarom hadden ze afgesproken dat zij die tot het kasteel zouden komen eerst een tovertouw moesten overwinnen, daarna een toverzwaard en als derde een vleesetend tovervarken van metaal.

Het tovertouw was zo verschrikkelijk dat het vele ridders de diepte introk, en zij die door het tovertouw werden meegenomen naar de dieptes van het kasteel werden nooit meer teruggezien. Het tovertouw was afschuwelijk sterk en lang, en eigenlijk kon niemand er tegenop. Zo ging dat eeuwenlang door, totdat eigenlijk niemand meer het kasteel indurfde.

Maar toch was er op een dag een boerenzoon die wel een poging zou willen maken. Werken op het land beviel hem niet, en leren kon hij niet. Toen hij het tovertouw zag vroeg hij : ‘Zeg tovertouw, kun je mij vertellen hoe ik jou te slim af kan zijn ?’ Het tovertouw maakte zich extra lang en zei : ‘Wie mij raakt, die brandt zich, want vuurheet ben ik. Maar zij die het handschoentje van ijskoud dragen zullen aan mij ontsnappen.’

‘En waar kan ik dat handschoentje van ijskoud vinden ?’ vroeg de boerenzoon. Toen wees het tovertouw helemaal naar boven waar een klein plankje hing met de handschoen erop. De boerenzoon wist niet hoe hij daar moest komen. ‘Zeg, hoe kan ik daar komen ?’ vroeg de boerenzoon.

‘Daar kun je niet komen,’ zei het tovertouw. ‘Net als al die anderen zul je door mij in de diepte worden geworpen.’

‘Oh, maar ik geloof er niks van dat je zo sterk bent,’ zei de boerenzoon. ‘Als je zo sterk bent, bewijs me dat dan maar eens. Pak die grote steen naast mij maar eens op en werp hem een flink eind in de lucht. Dan zal ik je geloven.’ Het tovertouw pakte de grote steen en slingerde hem een eind omhoog, zo hoog dat de steen op het plankje terechtkwam. Het plankje brak en de hadnschoen van ijskoud viel naar beneden. Snel ving de boerenjongen de handschoen op, deed hem om zijn hand en greep het tovertouw. Direkt werd het touw slap, en de boerenjongen kon het touw makkelijk meenemen. Maar dieper in het kasteel

kwam hij het toverzwaard tegen. Het toverzwaard was zo snel dat de boerenjongen niets zou kunnen beginnen, ook niet met het tovertouw. Want zodra de boerenjongen het handvat wilde grijpen vloog het toverzwaard weg, en het toverzwaard hakte telkens het tovertouw doormidden. En al die delen begonnen ook weer te groeien, en maakten het de boerenjongen erg moeilijk.

‘Hoe kan ik je handvat grijpen ?’ vroeg de boerenjongen aan het toverzwaard.

‘Door het handschoentje van langzaam,’ zei het toverzwaard.

En waar is dat handschoentje ?’ vroeg de jongen. Toen wees het toverzwaard naar boven, waar een klein plankje hing met het handschoentje van langzaam erop. ‘Maar daar kun jij toch nooit komen,’ zei het toverzwaard. ‘Geef de moed maar op.’

De jongen had gehoord dat het toverzwaard koppen afhakte van mannen die tot hier waren gekomen, en dat nog nooit iemand langs het toverzwaard was gekomen. ‘Zeg, ik geloof er niks van dat je zo sterk bent,’ zei de boerenzoon. ‘Kun jij die grote steen naast mij eens optillen en een flink eind omhoog slingeren ?’

‘Ik kijk wel beter uit,’ zei het toverzwaard, ‘ik wil het plankje niet raken.’

‘Nou, kun je dan die grote steen eens flink in stukken hakken ? Dan geloof ik dat je zo sterk bent,’ zei de jongen. Trots vloog het toverzwaard naar de reusachtige steen en hakte hem met gemak in een aantal stukken. Snel pakte de jongen een stuk steen en smeet het naar het plankje toe waar het handschoentje van langzaam lag. De steen raakte het handschoentje van langzaam, dat direkt naar beneden viel. De boerenjongen ving het op, deed het om z’n andere hand en greep het handvat van het toverzwaard. Snel sloeg hij zich een weg door al dat touw heen.

Dieper in het kasteel kwam hij na een tijdje het vleesetende tovervarken van metaal tegen. Het varken vloog hem direkt aan, en de boerenzoon werd direkt flink gebeten, en kon niet veel met het toverzwaard en tovertouw beginnen. Het varken was veel te wild en te hard. ‘Mannetjes als jou vreet ik zo op,’ zei het vleesetende tovervarken van metaal.

‘Hoe kan ik aan jou ontsnappen ?’ vroeg de boerenzoon.

‘Alleen door het keteltje van zachtheid,’ zei het vleesetende tovervarken van metaal.

‘En waar is dat keteltje te vinden ?’ vroeg de boerenjongen.

Even was het een tijdje stil. Daarna wees het varken in de diepte van een waterput dichtbij hen. De jongen zag iets glinsteren, maar zelfs zijn tovertouw kon er niet bijkomen, zo diep lag het keteltje.

‘Ik eet alles wat los en vastzit,’ zei het varken.

‘Oh ja ?’ vroeg de jongen. ‘Nou, eet die grote steen naast mij dan eens op.’

En in een paar seconden vrat het varken de reusachtige steen die naast de jongen lag op. Het varken was ineens een stuk groter en zwaarder, en begon dorst te krijgen. Snel ging het varken naar de waterput, en boog helemaal over de rand heen om wat water te kunnen drinken. Snel gaf de boerenjongen hem een duw, terwijl het varken in de put plofte. Het varken zonk erg snel omdat hij zo zwaar was, en na een tijdje kwam hij in het keteltje van zachtheid terecht waarin hij verdween. Het keteltje dreef toen langzaam omhoog. De boerenjongen nam het keteltje op zijn rug, en kwam na niet al te lange tijd bij de schatkamer van het kasteel aan. Hier stond een indiaanse fee hem al op te wachten. ‘Dappere man,’ zei de fee. ‘Je mag uitkiezen wat je wil.’ Maar de jongen keek wat in het rond, en niets maar dan ook niets kon hetgeen hij al droeg overtreffen : het handschoentje van ijskoud met het tovertouw, het handschoentje van langzaam met het toverzwaard, en het keteltje van zachtheid. ‘Ik heb genoeg aan wat ik heb,’ zei de jongen. En keerde weer terug naar waar hij vandaan was gekomen.

De Toverfluit

Er was eens een dwerg met een toverfluit die vaak op pad ging om met zijn toverfluit feeen te bevrijden uit voorwerpen waarin zij opgesloten waren. Op een dag zette hij eens een heleboel indiaanse feeen vrij, en bracht hen naar een oud leeg kasteel waar ze een kamer kregen. Onder het kasteel waren verborgen schatkamers met indiaans snoep waarvan je zou gaan zingen als je het zou eten. Maar alleen de toverfluit kon met verschillende deuntjes die schatkamers openen.

Op een dag was de toverfluit gestolen, en de dwerg was erg droevig. Toen hij merkte dat de indiaanse feeen zoveel zongen wist hij wat er aan de hand was. Ze hadden van het indiaanse snoep gegeten. Maar wie had de schatkamers voor hen geopend, of het naar hen gebracht ?

Na een tijdje liet hij alle feeen bij zich komen om verhaal te doen, maar ze zeiden allemaal dat ze zingend wakker werden die ochtend en niet wisten wat er was gebeurd. De dwerg vond het maar vreemd. Gelukkig was het snoep na een tijdje weer uitgewerkt en werd het weer rustig in het kasteel. Iemand had dus de feeen in hun slaap gevoerd, maar wie ?

Op een dag kwam er een oude vrouw bij het kasteel. Toen de dwerg opendeed griste de vrouw snel de toverfluit tevoorschijn, floot een deuntje, en sloot daardoor de dwerg op in een magisch voorwerp. Nu was het een koud kunstje om ook de feeen te betoveren. Maar één fee was die dag niet in het kasteel. En toen ze die avond thuiskwam was ze erg verdrietig dat er niemand was.

Ze begon overal in en om het kasteel te zoeken, en kwam uiteindelijk ook bij de schatkamers van indiaans snoep terecht. Daar was de heks ook geweest, maar had per ongeluk één van de deuren open laten staan. Het meisje ging naar binnen, en nam wat van het snoep. Direkt begon ze te zingen. Ook zag ze een vreemde vaas staan van verschillend soort donker gekleurd glas als edelgesteente. De vaas vertelde haar wat er gebeurd was, en het meisje werd erg verdrietig. Er lag verder geen indiaans snoep meer, omdat de heks de rest had meegenomen. Het meisje besloot de vaas mee te nemen, en ging weer naar boven. Enkele jaren gingen voorbij, en het meisje leefde in treurigheid. Nooit durfde het meisje de poort van het kasteel open te doen, bang om betoverd te worden. Het meisje huilde veel, en altijd als ze huilde, ving de vaas haar tranen op. Op een dag was de vaas helemaal vol, en sprak : ‘Nu ik vol ben, kun je naar de andere schatkamers gaan. Giet wat van de tranen in het slot, en de deur zal opengaan.’ En zo ging het meisje met de vaas vol tranen naar de dichtstbijzijnde schatkamer om te doen wat de vaas sprak. En direkt ging de deur open. Maar ook hier had de heks bijna al het snoep weggenomen. Maar wel stond hier een andere vaas, en die was vol met spinnenwebben. Met de twee vazen liep ze naar de volgende schatkamer. Weer opende ze de deur zoals de vaas gesproken had, en kon naar binnen. Hier lag nog veel snoep, maar voor de berg van dat indiaans snoep stonden twee honden. Ze sprongen op het feeenmeisje af, en van schrik sloeg ze de honden met de beide vazen, die daardoor allebei in duizenden stukjes kapotvlogen. Maar de honden lagen nu als dood op de grond. Het meisje nam wat van het snoep, en at zoveel dat haar stem luider en luider werd, en ze begon meer en meer te zingen. Maar achter haar viel ineens de deur in het slot.

‘Zo zo,’ zei een stem, ‘als je nu al dat indiaans snoep hebt gegeten, dan zul je in het vervolg iedere deur met je stem kunnen openen.’ En zo at het meisje nog

even door, en toen alles op was hoefde ze maar haar mond open te doen, en alle deuren gingen voor haar open. In één van de schatkamers bleek de heks te wonen, en stond ook het magische voorwerp waar haar vrienden in opgesloten zaten. Toen de heks haar zag begon de heks op haar toverfluit te spelen, maar kon haar met geen mogelijkheid betoveren. Het feeenmeisje sprak toen tot het magische voorwerp dat het haar vrienden moest loslaten, en direkt stonden de dwerg en de andere feeen voor haar. ‘En nu ga jij in dat magische voorwerp !’ riep ze tegen de heks, en met een gil verdween de heks in het voorwerp. Snel pakte de dwerg zijn toverfluit en haalde diep adem. De dwerg was zo blij en dankbaar dat hij ze leidde naar een verborgen schatkamer wat uitliep in een verborgen rijk. En hier zijn ze altijd blijven wonen.

De Fluitketelman

Er was eens een man geheel gemaakt van fluitketels. Zodra de ketels begonnen te fluiten kon de man altijd vliegen. Dan vloog hij altijd hoog en heel ver weg. Maar op een dag kwam hij een wesp tegen, die hem probeerde te prikken, maar de angel brak stuk op één van de ketels. Daarna kwam er een woeste hoornaar op hem af, die agressief zijn gif naar hem toe spoot, maar het gif werd door de ketels weggeketst. Toen kwam er een vogel, gaf de man een klap met zijn enorme vleugel, en de fluitketelman verloor zijn evenwicht en viel.

Na een lange val kwam de fluitketelman in een wespennest terecht. De wespen waren woest en probeerden door de gaatjes naar binnen te vliegen. Maar de ketels begonnen zo te koken dat ze niet ver kwamen. De fluitketelman rende weg, maar kwam toen in een hoornaarsnest terecht. Ook zij probeerden door de gaatjes naar binnen te vliegen, en zij konden wel tegen de kokende hitte. Boven in zijn neus was een gloeiende dop waardoor altijd alles kon koken. Die gloeiende dop die drukten ze van binnenuit weg, en toen had de fluitketelman ineens een gat in zijn neus.

De hoornaars zochten door het hele lichaam van de fluitketelman, in alle ketels, of ze nog iets bruikbaars konden vinden, maar ze vonden niets. Nu de fluitketelman zijn neus had verloren zou hij niet meer kunnen koken, en dus ook niet meer kunnen vliegen. Maar de hoornaars waren de slechtsten niet. Ze zeiden : 'Weet je wat. Wij blijven vanaf nu gewoon in jouw ketels wonen, en dan zul je altijd kunnen vliegen. Jouw fluitketels zijn goede nesten voor ons. En zo hoef je niet eerst te wachten op het fluitje. Je kan nu gewoon vliegen wanneer je wilt.' En dat vond de fluitketelman wel een goed idee. De hoornaars konden zo goed vliegen, en nu waren ze altijd bij hem.

De fluitketelman begon weer ritjes door de lucht te maken, maar al gauw kwam hij die vervelende vogel tegen, en voordat hij het wist lag hij weer op de grond. Ditmaal was hij bij de indianen terecht gekomen. De indianen prikten hem met hun speren, maar ze kwamen niet door de ketels heen, en al gauw hadden ze woeste hoornaars achter zich aan.

De indianen waren onder de indruk van het gif van de hoornaars, en dachten dat ze dat wel voor hun wapens konden gebruiken. En zo sloten ze vriendschap met de fluitketelman en de hoornaars. De hoornaars zouden voortaan op hun wapenen zitten om ze te voorzien van gif. En dat beviel de hoornaars zo goed, dat even later de fluitketelman bijna geen hoornaars meer in zijn ketel had, en dus niet meer kon vliegen. De hoornaars hadden het bij de indianen veel te veel naar hun zin.

De fluitketelman raakte in gesprek met een indiaans meisje die een slaapmatje had wat van bijen gemaakt was. Hiermee kon ze vliegen, en dat maakte het voor de fluitketelman interessant. Al snel maakten de twee lange reizen op het bijenmatje, maar op een dag kwamen ze de vervelende vogel tegen die hen van het bijenmatje afpikte. Het meisje viel in de rivier, maar de fluitketelman viel ernaast op een harde rots. Alle ketels waren van elkaar gebroken, en het meisje moest alle stukken bij elkaar zoeken. De moeder van het meisje maakte een grote theemuts voor de fluitketelman die alle ketels goed bij elkaar zou houden. Ze maakte die theemuts van mieren, en toen de theemuts over de ketels werd geschoven werden de ketels zo heet dat ze als nooit tevoren begonnen te koken. Nu kon de fluitketelman weer vliegen als de beste. Toen hij de vervelende vogel weer tegenkwam en de vleugel de ketels raakte slaakte de vogel een gil en verbrandde ogenblikkelijk, terwijl het meisje beneden het as opving. Met het as ging ze naar een droog veld, waar ze het as zaaide. Niet lang daarna groeiden er bloemen die leken op fluitketeltjes. Het meisje begon ze te plukken en maakte er een vest van voor haarzelf. Nu kon zij ook vliegen.

En samen maakte ze weer lange reizen, totdat ze op een dag een huisje heel hoog in de lucht vonden dat geheel gemaakt was van fluitketels. Toen ze in het huisje stapten merkten ze dat wanneer de ketels kookten het huisje opsteeg. Na

een tijdje kwam het huisje in een hele grote hal aan. Daar zat een heks die geheel gemaakt was van fornuisjes. De heks brak uit in gelach. ‘Zo,’ krijste ze, ‘ik zie dat mijn val goed heeft gewerkt.’ Ze trok de fluitketelman en het meisje snel uit het huisje, en wilde de fluitketelman in een oven duwen. In de oven werden de fluitketels van de man omgesmolten tot kleine fornuisjes. ‘Zo,’ lachte de heks tegen het meisje. ‘Nu zul je je leven lang achter de fornuisjes moeten werken.’ Toen de man uit de oven kwam kon hij zich nauwelijks bewegen. De man was zo zwaar geworden dat hij niet meer kon vliegen.

Maar op een dag kwam het verdwenen bijenmatje ineens opduiken. Het bijenmatje schoof over de vloer heen, vlak voor de voeten van de heks. Telkens als de heks een stap zette ving het bijenmatje de voet op, en verschoof het een stukje. Na een tijdje begon de heks er zo moe en duizelig van te worden dat ze neerstortte. Toen vloog het bijenmatje naar de man toe, omhulde hem als een gewaad zodat hij weer kon vliegen. Samen met het meisje vloog hij toen weg uit het heksenkasteel. Weer kwamen ze bij de andere indianen terecht. Die konden de onderdelen van de man goed gebruiken voor hun wapens. Inmiddels was het veld van de fluitketelbloemetjes zo volgegroeid dat de man weer helemaal een fluitketelman kon worden.

Het Toverzadel

Er was eens een tovenaar die een toverzadel had waarmee hij elk dier en elk beest kon berijden. Maar op een dag was zijn toverzadel gestolen. Niet alleen kon hij niet meer op monsters en andere gedrochten rondrijden, maar nu werden zij de baas over hem, en wierpen hem in een diepe put in een afgelegen kasteel.

In de put kwam de tovenaar een oud indiaans vrouwtje tegen. De tovenaar vertelde het verhaal, en het vrouwtje zei dat zij zelf toverteugels had waarmee ze hetzelfde zou kunnen doen, alleen ze zat hier opgesloten. Er waren geen dieren of beesten in de buurt, alleen vloog er wel eens een vogel de put in om voedsel

te brengen. Maar ze had nooit de kracht om de toverteugels over de vogel te werpen.

Maar daar wist de tovenaar wel wat op. Hij zou het zelf wel doen, als de vogel weer zou komen. Het vrouwtje vertelde dat het een grote vogel was, en hen makkelijk beiden kon dragen om hen uit de put te brengen, maar dan moest de vogel eerst toverteugels hebben.

En zo gebeurde het. Toen de vogel kwam wierp de tovenaar de toverteugels over de vogel, en alles paste direkt goed. Snel sprong de tovenaar op de vogel en liet toen het vrouwtje oppikken. Samen vlogen ze op de grote vogel naar boven, maar bovenaan de put hadden de beesten al in de gaten wat er aan het gebeuren was, en ze brachten een grote deksel over de put. Nu kon de vogel er niet uitvliegen.

Nu zouden ze omkomen van de honger, maar de vogel sprak dat onder de put een grote draak woonde. Als de vogel de draak zou roepen, dan zou de draak wel door de grond omhoog komen om hen eruit te halen. De draak zou met gemak door de deksel heen kunnen breken.

En zo gebeurde het. In een vreemde taal riep de vogel de draak, en al snel begon de grond onder hun voeten te bewegen. Niet lang daarna verscheen de kop van de draak uit de bodem, en kwam daarna helemaal naar boven. De vogel, de tovenaar en het vrouwtje klommen op de rug van de draak, en met gemak brak de draak de deksel met zijn kop, en klom naar boven. De beesten waren woedend, en schoten de draak met pijlen. Na een tijdje was de draak zo verzwakt dat ze de draak met daarop het vrouwtje, de vogel en de tovenaar naar een grote toren brachten in een net. Hier werden ze in een grote kooi gestopt.

Na een tijdje kwam de draak weer bij bewustzijn en zei dat in de top van de toren een klein meisje woonde. Het meisje heette Klauwsanda. Zij droeg een ring waarmee ze alle kooien van het kasteel kon openen. De draak maakte hele hoge geluiden waarmee hij haar riep, en na een tijdje gleed het meisje in de kooi. Ze kon met gemak door de tralies heen, want ze was zo klein. De draak tilde haar op en bracht haar helemaal naar het slot, waar ze met haar ring de kooi kon openen. De ring gloeide helemaal, en niet lang daarna gingen ze in een malle optocht naar beneden : de draak, de tovenaar, het vrouwtje, de vogel en het meisje met haar ring. Gelukkig was het nacht, en alle beesten sliepen.

Toen ze buiten waren legde het meisje de ring tegen de poort aan, terwijl er tralies voor verschenen, en ook voor alle ramen van het kasteel. Nu waren de beesten voor altijd opgesloten. Alleen de tovenaar zou wel heel graag zijn toverzadel terugwillen. En toen gebeurde er iets heel vreemds. Het meisje hield haar ring in de lucht, en sprak : ‘Ring van vlug en plotseling, laat ons zien waar

het toverzadel hing.' En plotseling begon het kasteel kleiner en kleiner te worden en veranderde in het toverzadel. Nu wist de tovenaar ook wat ze met zijn toverzadel hadden gedaan. Tevreden greep de tovenaar het toverzadel, zette het op de draak, en ze maakten nog een prachtig ritje door de nacht.

Langbeentje

Er was eens een indiaans meisje dat Langbeentje heette. Als ze verdrietig was dan groeiden haar benen altijd zo lang dat iedereen haar altijd zo noemde. Maar de koning vond het maar vreemd zo'n meisje in zijn koninkrijk te hebben, en toen ze wat ouder werd begon men steeds banger voor haar te worden. Daarom liet de koning haar op een dag opsluiten in een toren van het koninklijk kasteel. Natuurlijk was het meisje nu nog vaker verdrietig, en altijd groeiden haar benen dan helemaal door de tralies heen over de trappen naar beneden.

Op een dag was het meisje zo verdrietig dat haar benen helemaal het kasteel uitgroeiden. In een dorpje in de buurt zag een jongetje een schoen binnenkomen met een heel lang been. Hij besloot het been te volgen en kwam helemaal bij het kasteel van de koning terecht. Helemaal over de trappen volgde hij het been en kwam uiteindelijk bij de tralies terecht waarachter het meisje opgesloten zat. Het meisje was erg verdrietig, en hij probeerde haar te troosten. Ook ging hij naar de koning toe, en vroeg of het meisje weer uit het kasteel mocht, maar de koning wilde daar niets van weten. Het meisje zou veel te gevaarlijk zijn met die groeiende benen. Iedereen was bang voor haar.

Maar vanaf die dag was het jongetje zoveel mogelijk bij haar. Op een dag was er brand in de andere toren van het kasteel, waar het dochtertje van de koning woonde. Ze riep om hulp vanuit het torenraampje, maar niemand kon haar helpen, omdat de toren al bijna helemaal in brand stond. De koning was in rep en roer, en wist niet hoe hij zo'n groot vuur kon blussen. Maar snel ging het jongetje naar de koning, en zei dat Langbeentje wel kon helpen. Direkt liet de koning Langbeentje achter de tralies weghalen, maar ook Langbeentje kon niets

tegen het vuur beginnen. Maar ze kon wel het dochtertje van de koning redden. Haar benen groeiden zo lang aan dat ze makkelijk in het torenkamertje kon komen door het raampje. Ze greep het dochtertje van de koning, en bracht haar snel uit de brandende toren.

Snel brandde het hele kasteel af, maar iedereen was veilig. De koning was zo blij en dankbaar dat Langbeentje een wens mocht doen. Langbeentje wenste dat ze gewoon weer in het land mocht wonen, in een huisje naast de koning en naast het jongetje. En zo ging niet alleen Langbeentje weer gewoon in een dorpje wonen, maar ook de koning en zijn hofhouding. En zo zijn ze altijd naast elkaar blijven wonen.

De Dag dat Alles Stilstond

Er was eens een beest die heel diep onder de grond leefde in een keuken die niet meer gebruikt werd. Hier was het voedsel uitgestorven, en het beest was door de honger erg traag geworden. Eens in de zoveel tijd maakte hij een reis naar het aardoppervlak, en dan als hij na lange tijd aankwam, gebeurden er altijd verschrikkelijke dingen. Iedereen gooide dan altijd met stenen naar hem, en dan keerde het beest altijd weer verdrietig terug naar de keuken. Maar op een dag was er een nieuwe koning op het aardoppervlak, en hij heette het beest wel welkom. Het beest mocht in de grote eetzaal van zijn kasteel wonen, en de koning zorgde altijd dat de tafels volstonden met lekker eten. Het beest kwam hier zo van tot rust dat hij nog trager werd dan hij al was. Ook de bewoners van het aardoppervlak kwamen erg tot rust nu het beest geen verschrikkelijke dingen meer veroorzaakte, en iedereen werd trager en trager, totdat het hele koninkrijk stilstond.

De Gesmolten Parel

Er was eens een beest die zachter was dan de zee. Hij kon in allerlei vormen verschijnen, en hij kon zelfs groter worden dan de zee. Ook werd hij soms zo klein als een parel in een schelp. Op een dag daagde een machtig piratenkapitein het beest uit voor een gevecht. De piratenkapitein stond op zijn schip en hief zijn zwaard in de lucht, en sprak : ‘Oh, beest van de zee, groter en zachter dan de zee, als ik jou kan verslaan, laat mij dan de geheimen zien van jouw zachtheid en de schatten van zeeschuim.’ Maar het beest was veel te vriendelijk, en wilde helemaal niet vechten. Met een golf hief het beest het scheepje op, en bracht het scheepje naar een eiland. Maar de machtige piratenkapitein werd steeds kwaaier. Hij liet alle vissen in de zee ombrengen door zijn piraten, en alle parels liet hij opvissen. De parels liet hij omsmelten tot standbeelden van het beest om het beest te bespotten. Ook bouwde de piratenkapitein huizen en poorten van de omgesmolten parels. Toen werd ook het beest kwaad en trok de machtige piratenkapitein de diepte in. Zijn hoed bleef echter op de golven drijven, en na lange tijd spoelde de hoed op een strand aan. Een indiaans jongetje vond de hoed, een echte piratenhoed van een kapitein.

Op een dag sprak de hoed tot het jongetje over wat er gebeurt was, en het jongetje begon erg boos te worden toen hij hoorde wat het beest had gedaan. Het jongetje ging naar de zee en daagde het beest uit, net als de kapitein eens deed, en zei : ‘als ik je dan heb verslagen, laat mij dan de geheimen zien van jouw zachtheid en de schatten van het zeeschuim.’ Direkt greep een grote golf het jongetje en trok hem de diepte in. Het jongetje kwam in een enorm zachte

ruimte, waar hij de standbeelden zag staan. 'Maar wat zijn dit voor een prachtige standbeelden ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Vind je ze dan prachtig ?' vroeg het beest. 'Een piratenkapitein heeft die laten maken om mij te bespotten.'

'Nou, maar ik vind ze prachtig,' zei de jongen. 'Waar is die piratenkapitein nu ?' En toen bracht het beest de jongen naar een plaats waarvoor tralies stonden. Daarachter zat de kapitein. De jongen nam de hoed af, en schoof hem door de tralies om hem aan de kapitein te geven.

'Bedankt jongen,' zei de kapitein, 'maar er is niets wat mij hier kan redden.' Maar alles en alles om hen heen begon zachter te worden. Het beest was namelijk blij dat de jongen de standbeelden zo prachtig vond, en nu was het beest zelfs blij dat de piratenkapitein de beelden had laten maken. Na een tijdje waren de tralies weggesmolten, en stond er een prachtig zachte verschijning als een prins voor hen. De prins keek de jongen aan, en sprak : 'Eens was ik betoverd door een boze heks, en die betovering zou pas verbroken worden als iemand mijn hart zou doen smelten. Mijn hart was hard als een parel, alhoewel ik verder vriendelijk en zacht was. Jij hebt mijn hart doen smelten.' Toen gaf de prins de jongen en daarna de piratenkapitein een hand, en bracht hen tot zijn koninkrijk.

De Vliegende Reuzen

Er was eens een vogel die zo groot was geworden dat hij geen plaats meer op de aarde vond. Nergens kon hij op neerdalen. Alles was te klein voor hem. Na lange tijd raakte hij moe van het vliegen, verloor wat veren en stortte neer. In een dal kwam hij terecht, waar indiaanse reuzen woonden. Zij waren ook eens te

groot geworden om op de aarde een steunpunt te vinden. Ze konden nergens zitten, nergens staan. In het dal was een plaats van veren waar zij leefden, maar zij verlangden naar een andere plaats, omdat het spookte in de plaats van veren. De vogel kwam voor hen als een geroepene. De vogel was zo groot dat hij alledrie de reuzen wel kon dragen, en dan zouden de reuzen hem wel de weg wijzen naar een betere plaats.

En zo gebeurde het. Toen de vogel flink had gerust in de plaats van veren nam hij de drie reuzen mee, en die wezen hem de weg. Ze kwamen aan op een hoge plaats vol spinnenwebben. De reuzen hadden het hier naar hun zin. Maar de vogel werd snel oud en stierf. Toen de reuzen merkten dat het ook hier begon te spoken wilden ze weer terug naar de plaats van veren. Ze wisten dat wanneer ze eenmaal zouden springen, ze nooit meer terug konden naar de plaats van spinnenwebben. Ze sprongen alledrie en kwamen weer terecht in de plaats van veren. Eén van de reuzen had een zandkorrel van de plaats van spinnenwebben onder zijn schoen, en die zandkorrel gleed door de veren naar de grond. Hier groeide een roos, die zo hoog groeide dat het de plaats van spinnenwebben bereikte. Nu konden de drie reuzen heen en weer klimmen, en op beide plaatsen spookte het na een tijdje niet meer.

De aarde was in hun ogen nu zo klein als een zandkorrel, en op een dag nam één van de reuzen de aarde tussen zijn vingers. Hij dacht aan de zandkorrel waaruit een roos was gegroeid, en zaaide zo ook de kleine aarde naast de roos. Een andere roos groeide op die zich met de roos verstrengelde, en groeide zo wild naar alle kanten uit dat het een rozenstruik werd, als een web vol rozen. En zo kwamen de reuzen tot veel meer plaatsen. Maar op die plaatsen spookte het, en ook op de plaats van veren en de plaats van spinnenwebben begon het weer te spoken. De reus kreeg al snel spijt van wat hij gedaan had, en de andere reuzen begonnen boos op hem te worden. Ook begonnen ze de vogel ineens erg te missen. Op een dag verzamelden ze zoveel mogelijk veren, en maakten er vleugels van. Dit konden ze doen omdat ze daarvoor materiaal vonden op de andere plaatsen. En zo vlogen ze op een dag met z’n drieen weg. Maar na een tijdje werden ze zo moe dat ze met z’n drieen naar beneden vielen. En ze vielen zo hard dat zelfs de veren hen niet konden opvangen. Op de grond vlogen al hun botten van elkaar af, en rolden hun hoofden in het rond. En sindsdien spookt het daar zoals het nog nooit heeft gespookt.

De Sprookjesgevangenis

Er was eens een gevangenis met cellen rondom een plein waar een stenen dwerg stond. Altijd als er iemand probeerde te ontsnappen, dan begon de stenen dwerg zo hard te zingen dat degene die probeerde te ontstappen stokstijf stond voor een hele lange tijd. Maar soms sliep de dwerg, en dan konden degenen die probeerden te ontsnappen helemaal bij een stenen trap komen. Maar zodra ze op de treden stapten begonnen die treden af te brokkelen. Er waren gelukkig ook momenten dat de trap niet afbrokkelde, maar bovenaan de trap woonde ergens een grote spin. En een ieder die die spin zag viel direkt in slaap en werd weer wakker in z'n eigen cel.

Op een dag deed een indiaanse man een poging om te ontsnappen. De dwerg sliep net, en hij had het geluk dat de trap niet afbrokkelde. Bovenaan de trap deed hij snel een blinddoek om, zodat hij de spin niet zou kunnen zien. Maar na een tijdje voelde hij iets harigs en iets zachts. Het was de spin, en de spin had een prachtige stem. 'Weet u,' zei de indiaanse man, 'hier beneden is er een trap zachter dan u, en achter de trap staat een dwerg die een nog veel prachtigere stem heeft dan u.' De spin rende naar beneden over de trap, terwijl de trap afbrokkelde. De spin viel, en zag hoe de dwerg zijn mond opende. De spin rende op de dwerg af, maar toen de dwerg hard begon te zingen verstijfde de spin helemaal. Plotseling zag de dwerg de spin en viel direkt in slaap, terwijl de spin zichzelf zag in de gouden tand van de dwerg, en viel ook in slaap. Beiden werden ze in een cel wakker.

Sindsdien was de indiaanse man de cipier van de sprookjesgevangenis, en liet alle opgesloten sprookjeswezens los.

Het Ravijn

Er waren eens twee sprookjesrijken die door een groot ravijn gescheiden waren. Een vliegend wonderpaard bracht de sprookjeswezens altijd heen en weer, maar op een dag was het wonderpaard ernstig ziek. De sprookjeswezens besloten een brug te bouwen, en een mannetje bracht de wezens heen en weer in een karretje. Maar omdat dat niet echt snel ging werd het karretje op een dag omgebouwd tot een treintje, en niet lang daarna gingen er vele treintjes heen en weer. Op een dag was ook het wonderpaard weer beter, en probeerde weer eens naar de andere kant te vliegen. Maar dat ging niet goed, want het grote vliegende wonderpaard had al zo lang niet meer gevlogen dat hij het eigenlijk niet meer kon. En zo stortte het reusachtige paard naar beneden, viel op de brug, die direkt in elkaar stortte. Vele treintjes vlogen nu in het enorme ravijn, en het paard kon alleen zichzelf nog maar net redden. De twee sprookjesrijken waren erg verdrietig, en het wonderpaard helemaal. Het wonderpaard voelde zich erg schuldig, en huilde de hele dag door. Het hele ravijn begon vol te lopen met de tranen van het wonderpaard. Nu was er een grote zee ontstaan tussen de twee sprookjesrijken. Het wonderpaard wilde nooit meer vliegen vanwege wat er was gebeurd, maar om het goed te maken wilde hij voor de twee sprookjesrijken vanaf nu een zeeschip zijn. Weer begon hij de sprookjeswezens heen en weer te brengen, maar alles ging erg langzaam. Na een tijdje ging geen enkel sprookjeswezen meer met het wonderpaard mee, omdat het veel te lang duurde. Op een dag dook het wonderpaard in de zee, en vond de treintjes en de brokken van de brug. Midden in de nacht bouwde het wonderpaard de brug opnieuw en liet de treintjes weer rijden. Weer dook het wonderpaard in de diepte en vond daar een grot waar nu alle sprookjeswezens woonden die eens in het ravijn waren gestort. Ze hadden het daar goed, en sindsdien is het wonderpaard daar gebleven.

Hoe Het IJs Smolt

Er waren eens twee ijspaleizen die onbereikbaar waren. Vaak kwamen ze om te plagen en andere vervelende dingen uit te halen. De ijspaleizen werden bewoond door hen die er het eerst waren, en sindsdien waren de paleizen onbereikbaar. En zo woonden er twee ijsheksen. Maar die ijsheksen konden elkaar ook niet bereiken, en zo was er dus altijd een afstand tussen de twee ijspaleizen. Op een dag was er een man die het geheim van de twee ijspaleizen kende. Hij wist dat hij de paleizen alleen kon betreden door hun spiegelbeeld. De man nam een grote spiegel mee, en toen één van de paleizen zich toonde keek de man in de spiegel naar het paleis, en stapte zo in de spiegel. Nu kon hij gemakkelijk bij het paleis komen, maar ook besefte hij nu hoe koud dat paleis was. Snel ging hij naar binnen, en zag de ijsheks staan met een ijsvlam. Hoe dichter de man bij de ijsheks kwam hoe moeizamer hij zich kon bewegen. Hij wist dat hij moest maken dat hij weg zou komen anders zou hij hier bevriezen en nooit meer wegkunnen.

Uiteindelijk ontsnapte hij weer door de spiegel, en ging toen op zoek naar het tweede paleis. Toen het tweede paleis zich vertoonde keek de man weer in de spiegel, zag het spiegelbeeld van het paleis en stapte in de spiegel om er op af te gaan. Hij wist dat deze heks net iets gevaarlijker was dan de andere heks. Hij merkte ook dat het hier veel kouder was, en daarom nam hij alleen een ijspegel van het paleis weg, en ging toen terug door de spiegel. Met de ijspegel ging hij toen weer naar het eerste paleis, door de spiegel, en toen de heks hem dit keer zag slaakte ze een gil. Tegen de kou van het andere paleis dat de man door de ijspegel droeg kon ze niet op. De ijsvlam vloog direkt naar de ijspegel toe, terwijl de heks direkt bevroor. Met de ijsvlam ging de man weer door de spiegel en ging weer naar het tweede ijspaleis. Ditmaal ging hij diep naar binnen, en toen de heks van dat paleis hem zag met de ijsvlam verloor zij ook haar eigen ijsvlam. Nu had de man twee ijsvlammen, en niet lang daarna begonnen de ijsvlammen zich als een vuur te verspreiden, en gloeiden totdat de twee ijspaleizen geheel gesmolten waren. Nu was daar een prachtig warme zee

waaraan de man voor altijd is gaan wonen. En de heksen heeft hij gelukkig nooit meer teruggezien.

Het Toverflesje

Er was eens een meisje met een geurflesje dat nooit opraakte. Zodra ze een druppeltje uit het flesje liet glijden verdween ze. Maar op een dag was het flesje gestolen, en het meisje was erg verdrietig. Een ander meisje had ook zo'n geurflesje, maar als zij een druppeltje liet glijden, dan verschenen er overal wilde dieren om haar heen. Op een dag stal het meisje het flesje van het andere meisje, maar later kreeg ze erge spijt, en bracht het flesje weer terug. 'Zolang je bij mij bent, mag je gewoon druppeltjes uit mijn flesje gebruiken, hoor,' zei het meisje van het flesje. Ook gingen ze samen op zoek naar het gestolen flesje. Op hun zoektocht kwamen ze een heleboel andere meisjes tegen met geurflesjes die nooit opraakten, en ieder meisje kon er weer wat anders mee. Zo was er ook een meisje die een flesje had waarvan elke druppel wapens om haar heen liet verschijnen. Toen de meisjes van het gestolen flesje hoorden kregen ze een idee. Ze zouden ieder een druppel van hun flesje aan het meisje zonder flesje geven. En zo kon het meisje een heleboel wonderlijke dingen doen. Op een dag zag het meisje een vogel vliegen met het gestolen flesje. Het was voor het meisje die nu een nieuw toverflesje had heel makkelijk om de vogel te volgen. Door een druppel te laten glijden kon ze achter de vogel aanvliegen, en ze kwam aan in een kasteel ergens ver weg. Hier zag ze een mannetje roeren in een ketel. Het flesje had de vogel inmiddels al naast hem gezet. 'Zeg mannetje,' zei het meisje, 'dat flesje is van mij. Uw vogel heeft het van me gestolen.'

Maar het mannetje zei dat alle geurflesjes van hem waren, omdat hij ze eens gemaakt had. Het mannetje vroeg aan het meisje van wie ze het geurflesje had gekregen. 'Van mijn moeder,' zei het meisje.

'Dan heeft ze dat eens van mij gestolen,' zei het mannetje. 'En ook al die andere geurflesjes zijn gestolen, en die wil ik terughebben.'

Toen liet het meisje haar nieuwe geurflesje zien met druppels uit alle geurflesjes, en zei dat als hij van haar dat flesje zou krijgen, dan zou hij alle geurtjes terughebben. In ruil vroeg ze daarvoor haar eigen flesje. Dan zou ze één druppel daarvan aan het mannetje geven, zodat het mannetje alles compleet had. Het mannetje was daar wel blij mee, want zo hoefde hij niet meer op zoek te gaan naar al die andere flesjes, en zo zouden de meisjes ook niet ongelukkig worden. Het meisje kreeg haar eigen flesje terug, en ook een druppel uit het flesje met het mengsel. Het mannetje was zo blij dat hij zelfs een druppel uit de ketel gaf met een geheel nieuw mengsel. En zo kon het meisje weer verdwijnen, en leefde nog lang en gelukkig met haar toverflesje.

Het Toverei

Eens in een ver land was er een overstroming die alles dreigde onder te laten lopen. De enige plaats waar het veilig zou zijn was een indiaans elvenkasteel. Een man klopte aan om binnen te kunnen komen, maar de indiaanse elven zeiden dat als hij een plaats wilde hebben, dan zou hij eerst naar het kasteel van de heks moeten gaan om daar een toverei weg te nemen. Dat toverei had de heks eens van de indiaanse elven gestolen, en zij wilden het graag terug. Vanuit het toverei konden de meest wonderlijke dieren voortkomen.

Nu was het in het kasteel van de heks erg gevaarlijk, omdat de vloeren en plafonds bewogen en konden instorten, en de muren klapten gevaarlijk tegen elkaar aan. Nog nooit had iemand een bezoek aan dat kasteel overleefd, en daarom gaven de indiaanse elven de man toverschoenen mee en een toverhelm. Zo was het voor de man niet zo moeilijk het toverei te krijgen. Zodra de vloer wegzakte lieten de toverschoenen de man gewoon in de lucht zweven, en als het plafond naar beneden kwam dan zorgde de toverhelm dat de man niet geraakt werd. Alleen moest hij erg oppassen voor de tegen elkaar klappende muren. Na niet al te lange tijd had hij het toverei in zijn handen, en rende terug, maar het water was al angstaanjagend hoog gestegen. Zo hoog dat de indiaanse elven geen raam of deur meer los durfden te doen. De man wreef over het toverei, en

er begonnen grote vissen voort te komen. Voor een tijdje kon hij op hun rug zitten, maar de golven werden zo woest dat hij telkens van de vissen werd afgeslingerd. Weer wreef hij over het toverei, en nu kwamen er grote vogels uit voort. Snel klom hij op de rug van zo'n vogel, maar het was inmiddels zo hard gaan stormen dat hij het toverei niet meer kon vasthouden. Met één rukwind vloog het toverei de zee in. De man bedacht zich geen moment en dook het toverei achterna. Op de bodem van de zee vond hij het toverei weer. Weer wreef hij eroverheen, en er kwamen mollen uit voort die een gat begonnen te graven. De man volgde met het toverei de mollen, en achter hen werd het gat weer goed dichtgemaakt. Zo groeven de mollen zich een weg helemaal tot onder het elvenkasteel, en zo konden ze op een veilige manier binnenkomen.

'Dappere man,' zei één van de indiaanse elven die hen door de grond omhoog zagen klimmen. De man gaf haar het toverei, en is sindsdien bij de indiaanse elven gaan wonen.

Trovelientje en de Roversjongen

Trovelientje liep op straat. Opeens stond Kiko, de roversjongen voor haar. Zijn kleren waren erg oud en versleten, en er waren wat scheuren en lappen. 'Geef me je geld,' zei Kiko zacht.

'Ik heb geen geld,' zei Trovelientje. 'Maar ik wil wel mee met je om te zien waar je woont.' Ze had een beetje medelijden met de roversjongen, en ze zag compleet geen gevaar in deze zachtmoedige jongen.

'Kom maar mee,' zei Kiko. En hij leidde haar naar een hutje in het bos. Het zag er hier allemaal erg arm uit. Trovelientje kon het wel een beetje begrijpen dat deze jongen een rover was. Hoe moest hij anders zichzelf in leven houden ?

'Weet je,' zei Kiko zachtjes. 'Ik ken een dwerg die gouden munten heeft, en hij geeft zo'n munt elke keer als ik een karweitje voor hem doe. Maar ik mag verder niets met die munten doen.'

'Laat eens zien ?' vroeg Trovelientje. Hij nam haar mee naar een diepe plek in het bos, naar een grot. In die grot stond de dwerg. De dwerg bewoog zich niet, en telkens verscheen er een gouden munt in zijn mond. En na een tijdje slikte hij die weer in.

'Zie je,' zei Kiko enthousiast. 'En als ik een karweitje doe, dan krijg ik die munt.'

'Maar je mag ze niet gebruiken ?' vroeg Trovelientje. 'Maar wat heb je daar dan aan ?'

'Ik heb ze bewaard in een kist,' zei Kiko. De kist was ergens goed verstopt achter het hutje. De kist was helemaal vol met muntjes. Trovelientje mocht in het hutje slapen die nacht. Maar toen Kiko sliep sloop ze naar de kist met gouden munten. 'Och, eentje kan ik er wel meenemen,' zei het meisje zachtjes. Maar toen ze een munt eruit pakte begonnen haar handen te branden. Ze slaakte een gil, en Kiko werd meteen wakker.

'Doe dat nooit weer,' zei hij tegen haar. 'Maar ik zie dat ook jij een rovershart hebt. Waarom blijf je niet gewoon bij me ?' En zo bleef Trovelientje bij de roversjongen wonen.

De Tovervis

Er was eens een visser op zee in zijn bootje. Hij viste dat het een lieve lust was. Opeens kwam er een grote vis met zijn kop uit de zee vlak bij het bootje. De visser had deze vis nog nooit eerder gezien. De vis zag er erg majestueus uit.

'Goedemorgen, visser,' sprak de vis. De visser was zo onder de indruk dat hij helemaal stijf stond en niets durfde te doen. Hij liet de zeilen naar beneden halen, en keek gehypnotiseerd naar de vis. Het was een echte tovervis. 'Hallo,' sprak de visser bevend. 'Hoe kan ik u ten dienste zijn ?'

De vis foeterde : 'Zo, vissertje, nu heb ik je helemaal alleen hier. Ik zou alles met je kunnen doen wat ik wil, maar zo ben ik niet. In feite wil ik je zelfs een groot aanbod doen.'

De man keek de reusachtige vis met grote ogen aan, nieuwsgierig naar wat de vis verder zou zeggen, maar hij was ook bang, erg bang. Hij wist dat elke seconde de laatste van zijn leven zou kunnen zijn.

De vis begon vuur te spuwen, maar het bereikte het bootje niet. Het was alsof het een grote waarschuwing was. De visser viel van schrik achteruit. Toen bulderde de stem van de vis : 'Mijn beste visser. Hier is het aanbod : Nog steeds ben je een plaag voor de zee omdat je alle vissen verwoest voor je eigen hebzucht. Nooit genoeg heb je. Je wil altijd meer, ten koste van de vissen. Luister : Ik ben de wraak van de natuur naar jou toegezonden met een laatste kans.'

De vlammen uit de mond van de tovervis kwamen nu erg dichtbij het gezicht van de visser. De visser verborg zich op het dek. 'Waar ga je naartoe ?' brulde de vis. 'Je kunt hieraan niet ontkomen. Maar hier is jouw laatste kans, en ik zal je er rijkelijk voor belonen. Als je stopt met vissen, dan zal ik jou de chocolade kroon schenken. Dit is een toverkroon, en je zult over het land heersen, maar nooit meer een visser zijn.' De visser boog zijn hoofd. De vlammen waren wat minder geworden en hij stond op en liep weer naar de reling toe waar de vis was. 'Ik neem deze laatste kans aan en ik bedank je ervoor. Ik zal er alles aan doen om het land beter te maken,' sprak de visser. Opeens verscheen er een kroon van chocolade op zijn hoofd. Het was tover-chocolade waardoor het niet smolt. De man hees zijn zeilen weer en dreef zijn schip terug naar de kust. Toen hij zijn schip aanlegde zagen de mensen zijn chocolade kroon en bleven als gehypnotiseerd staan en bogen voor hem.

Maar zodra vissers hem zagen dan keken ze hem minachtend aan. Hij ging naar huis en zijn vrouw viel aan zijn voeten neer. 'Oh koning,' sprak ze. 'Ik weet niet wat er met mij aan de hand is. Ik voel me zo vreemd.'

'Jij zal de nieuwe koningin worden,' sprak de man. Samen gingen ze naar het koninklijke paleis, en toen de oude koning en koningin hem zagen met zijn chocolade troon bogen ze eerbiedig voor hem neer. De koningin gaf haar kroon aan zijn vrouw. 'Leve de nieuwe koning en koningin !' riepen ze beiden uit. En zo had het land een nieuwe regering, maar de vissers waren niet blij. De nieuwe koning deed van alles om het land beter te maken, maar de vissers liet hij met rust. Op een dag was hij met zijn vrouw, de koningin, aan het zwemmen in de zee. Plotseling kwam de tovervis naar hen toe. De koning beefde, en de koningin viel flauw. De koning nam zijn vrouw op en bracht haar naar het strand, waar hij haar op het zand legde. Toen liep hij terug naar de tovervis. Vuur kwam uit de

mond van de vis. 'Ik had je opgedragen om over het land te heersen, maar je heerst niet over de vissers. Je laat hen met rust, terwijl ze nog steeds hun verwoestend werk hebben. Luister : Als je de visserij totaal verbiedt in het land dan zal ik je hiervoor nog rijkelijker voor belonen. Ik zal de zee en het water maken tot chocola en ook je paleis. Je zal een echte chocolade koning zijn.'

De koning boog zijn hoofd en sprak tot de vis : 'Je hebt gelijk. Ik zal er direct wat aan doen.' De koning ging de zee uit naar zijn vrouw die ondertussen weer bijgekomen was, en vertelde haar wat de tovervis had gesproken. Toen hij terug in zijn paleis was liet hij direct de wet bekend maken dat visserij verboden was. Toen de vissers het te horen kregen waren ze woest. Ze riepen elkaar tezamen en maakten plannen om de koning te onttronen. In een grote stoet kwamen ze gewapend tot het paleis. De koning zag ze van verre aankomen op het balkon en rende naar een achterdeur van het paleis. Hij rende de paleiselijke tuin in en toen hij het tuinhek had bereikt rende hij door de tuinpoort naar het strand. Bij de zee aangekomen riep hij tot de tovervis, maar die kwam niet. De koning bleef doorroepen, want hij had de tovervis nu echt nodig. In de verte zag hij de grote stoet bewapende vissers al door de tuinpoort komen. De koning raakte in grote paniek. De stoet kwam in snel tempo dichterbij. De koning trok toen zijn kleren uit, alhoewel hij nog steeds zijn chocolade kroon ophad, en ging de zee in. Hij dook onderwater op zoek naar de tovervis, maar die kon hij niet vinden. Ook de vissers waren inmiddels de zee ingegaan. De koning zwom en zwom, totdat hij ineens iets onder zich voelde. Het was de tovervis.

De tovervis bracht hem naar een ver eiland. Daar stapte hij van de rug van de vis af. 'Omdat je gehoorzaam bent geweest zal nu de zee in chocola veranderen en ook je paleis,' sprak de tovervis. Heel langzaam begon het water bruin te kleuren. 'Maar wat heb ik aan een chocolade paleis als ik er niet in kan wonen ? De vissers zullen me vermoorden,' sprak de koning.

'Nee, dat zullen ze niet,' sprak de tovervis. In de verte zag de koning steeds meer visserschepen dichterbij komen met de woedende bewapende vissers, terwijl het water bruiner en bruiner werd. 'Ze komen me halen,' sprak de koning, terwijl hij naar de schepen in de verte wees.

'Ik heb ze nu waar ik ze hebben wil,' sprak de tovervis. 'Zij hebben hun kans gehad.'

'Wat betekent dat ?' vroeg de koning. 'Wat zal er met hen gebeuren ?'

'Kijk maar goed,' sprak de tovervis. En terwijl de schepen vol met vissers steeds dichterbij kwamen begonnen ze steeds meer in chocolade te veranderen, en omdat het heel warm weer was begonnen de chocolade schepen en vissers steeds meer te smelten om in de zee te verdwijnen. De chocolade zee was prachtig.

'Kom, ik zal je terugbrengen,' sprak de tovervis. De koning glimachte en klom op de rug van de vis. Toen hij bij de kust van zijn land aankwam juichten alle mensen hem daar toe, en de koningin nog wel het meeste van allen.

De Tijger Koning

De tijger koning was een boze tovenaar die 's nachts kinderen ontvoerde uit het stadje Laponia. Hij ontvoerde hen naar zijn kasteel om hen in poppen te veranderen. 's Nachts kwam hij altijd als de wind om de kinderen door wilde dromen uit hun bedjes te roven. De bewoners van het stadje Laponia wisten wat er aan de hand was, maar ze konden er niet veel tegen doen. Op een dag waren ze het zo zat dat ze iedereen bijeen trommelden en hun wapens opnamen om naar het kasteel van de tijger koning te gaan.

De boze tovenaar lachte toen hij ze zag aankomen, want hij kon het kasteel verplaatsen wanneer hij maar wilde. En zo bleef de grote stoet maar lopen en lopen, totdat ze moe weer naar huis gingen.

Op een dag vond een jongen van een andere stad het kasteel. Hij had een tocht door een ondergrondse tunnel gemaakt en kwam uiteindelijk onder het kasteel aan, en vond een opening naar boven. Hij trof even later de tijger koning slapend aan. Hij aarzelde geen moment, greep een zwaard van de muur en onthoofdde de tijger koning. Op datzelfde moment begonnen alle poppen weer tot leven te komen. Het was een grote stoet uit het kasteel, naar het stadje Laponia wat ze lang geteisterd was. De jongen die de kinderen bevrijd had werd toen tot stadhouder gemaakt van het stadje als dank.

Het hoofd van de tijger koning werd boven de stadspoort geplaatst, met daaronder de letters : 'Hier waakt het hoofd van de tijger koning, om ervoor te zorgen dat geen van onze kinderen ooit nog geroofd worden.'

De Sprookjesmarkt

Een jongen ging altijd met zijn grootmoeder op vrijdag naar de sprookjesmarkt in de ochtend. Het was dan altijd net licht geworden, en hij zat dan altijd bij zijn grootmoeder achterop de fiets. Dan zocht hij telkens zijn sprookjes uit. Op een dag werden ze tegengehouden door een kleine knokige kabouter met een knots. "Dat gaat zo maar niet," sprak de kabouter. "Elke vrijdagochtend wanneer het net licht geworden is komen jullie om mijn sprookjes te stelen."

De jongen keek de kabouter met opgeheven wenkbrauwen aan, zeer verbaasd. "Maar wij betalen toch voor de sprookjes, en hoe zijn het uw sprookjes ?"

De kabouter gaf de jongen een mep tegen zijn been. "Brutale vlegel, ik ben de baas van de sprookjesmarkt," bromde de kabouter. "Nu vlug, maak dat je wegkomt. Jullie zijn hier veel te vaak, en nu is het wel welletjes." Maar toen stapte de grootmoeder van de fiets af. "Puh," sprak ze. "Hoe kan zo'n klein mannetje als jij de baas zijn van zo'n grote markt ?" Maar toen begon de kabouter zo woest met zijn knots te slaan dat grootmoeder en de jongen zo snel mogelijk op de fiets moesten springen om bij hem weg te kunnen komen. De kabouter raasde en foeterde, en kwam nog achter hen aan ook. Wat kon dat mannetje hard rennen. Grootmoeder moest erg snel fietsen, anders zouden ze eraan gaan. Gelukkig waren ze na een tijdje van hem af.

De volgende vrijdag gingen ze het weer proberen. Ze gingen nu nog vroeger. Het licht was nog niet eens gevallen. De marktkoopmannen en vrouwen waren nog bezig hun kraampjes op te zetten. Grootmoeder liep op de eerste de beste marktkoopman af en vroeg of het waar was dat de kleine kabouter met de knots de baas was van de sprookjesmarkt. De marktkoopman keek haar aan met opgeheven wenkbrauwen. "Maar mevrouw toch," sprak de man. "Hoe komt u toch aan zulke verhalen ? Er is geen baas van de sprookjesmarkt. Wij hebben de sprookjesmarkt allemaal samen opgezet, en niemand is de baas over de ander." Toen begon grootmoeder het hele verhaal te vertellen.

De koopman barstte in lachen uit. "Wat een vreemd verhaal, en wat een kostelijk sprookje. Dat kunnen we wel verkopen hier."

"Hoeveel kost het ?" vroeg grootmoeder.

"Maar mevrouw," sprak de koopman, "u bent zelf de bedenker van het sprookje, dus het is helemaal gratis voor u." Even later overhandigde de koopman het sprookje aan grootmoeder. De jongen zocht ook nog wat andere sprookjes uit, en toen zijn ze weer op de fiets gegaan. Maar na een tijdje kwamen ze weer die ellendige kabouter tegen. "Zie, weer sprookjes stelen, hè ? Ik wist het," bulderde de kabouter, en kwam hen weer achterna met de knots. Hij was nu extra kwaad. "En nu ben ik zeker ook in het sprookje, hè ? Van mij kom je niet meer af." Hij

foeterde en tierde, maar hij kon grootmoeder en de jongen niet inhalen. Hij volgde hen wel helemaal naar grootmoeder's huis. "Ik zal jullie leren !" bulderde hij. Snel sprongen grootmoeder en de jongen van de fiets af met de sprookjes, en snel gingen ze naar binnen, en grootmoeder deed de deur weer goed op slot. "Die fiets is nu van mij !" gilde de woeste, ziedende kabouter. De kabouter pakte de fiets en ze hebben hem nooit meer teruggezien. Wel vonden ze zijn knots waar de fiets had gestaan, en die hebben ze toen naar de sprookjesmarkt gebracht als bewijs dat het sprookje echt waar was.

De knots werd in een glazen kistje gelegd en werd op een halve pilaar gezet op het middelpunt van de sprookjesmarkt. Grootmoeder en de jongen mochten toen zoveel mogelijk sprookjes uitzoeken als ze wilden. En ze mochten hen allemaal gratis meenemen. Vanuit de hele wereld kwam iedereen om de knots in het glazen kistje te bewonderen en om het sprookje van de sprookjesmarkt te horen. Het werd de drukst bezochte markt van de hele wereld.

De Indiaanse Nachten

Een oude indiaanse man vond een schoen vlakbij het ravijn. Hij wierp de schoen in het ravijn, en liep verder langs de ravijn, terwijl hij soms naar de overkant keek. Een boze geest had gedreigd tot de oude man dat hij al het land aan zijn kant van het ravijn zou laten verdwijnen, zodat alles wat erop zou leven in het ravijn zou verdwijnen. De boze geest hield zijn hand over het gezicht van de oude man, terwijl hij achter de oude man stond. De hand was vlammend. Even leek het alsof de oude man blind was geworden. De hand brandde en deed hem pijn. De oude man zakte door zijn knieen en ging op de grond zitten. Hij probeerde naar de overkant van het ravijn te kijken, maar hij zag niets meer. 'Ik zal je één kans geven,' zei de boze geest. 'Elke nacht moet je een sprookje bedenken, en elke nacht dat je er in slaagt mij een sprookje te vertellen, zal ik je een stuk van een brug geven, en moet je op het stuk blijven tot de volgende nacht om een nieuw stuk erbij te krijgen. Als je er op een nacht niet in slaagt mij een sprookje te vertellen, dan zal de brug instorten. Als de brug helemaal tot de andere kant is gekomen door de sprookjes, dan zal een ieder die over de brug tot de andere kant van het ravijn komt gespaard worden.'

'Wat is er aan de andere kant van het ravijn ?' vroeg de man.

'Een land genaamd Sinsabijne, het land van de indiaanse vlieg,' sprak de boze geest.

'Ik kan niets meer zien,' sprak de oude indiaanse man. 'Hoe kan ik ooit in dat land komen ?'

'Elke keer als je er in slaagt een sprookje te vertellen 's nachts, zal ik je iets meer van je zicht teruggeven,' sprak de boze geest.

'Waarom wil je onze kant van het ravijn vernietigen en ons in het ravijn laten verdwijnen ?' vroeg de oude indiaanse man.

'Ik wil het niet,' sprak de boze geest. 'Eens werd ik verbannen uit Sinsabijne, het land van de indiaanse vlieg. Ik was vals beschuldigd, en ik werd betoverd in een boze geest. Ik zou alleen mogen terugkomen als ik het land aan deze kant van het ravijn zou vernietigen of een sprookjesbrug zou bouwen over het ravijn.'

De oude indiaanse man keek de boze geest met grote ogen aan, terwijl hij weer een klein beetje kon zien. 'Wie bent u dan ?' vroeg hij.

'Ik ben de prins van Sinsabijne,' sprak de boze geest. 'Ik ben onder een grote vloek. Als de keten van de nachtsprookjes verbroken wordt door één nacht over te slaan, dan zal de brug instorten, en het land aan deze kant van het ravijn ten onder gaan.'

De oude indiaanse man schudde zijn hoofd. Het was inmiddels nacht geworden, en de man begon te vertellen. Aan het einde van de laatste nacht en het laatste sprookje lag er een prachtige brug over het ravijn, en konden ze beiden het land Sinsabijne binnengaan. De betovering was verbroken, en de prins van Sinsabijne stond voor de oude indiaanse man. Overal vlogen prachtige indiaanse vliegen om hen heen. Ze gingen over de brug om de mensen aan de andere kant van het ravijn te waarschuwen en te roepen, om hen ook over de sprookjesbrug van de indiaanse nachten te laten komen.

Maar een heleboel mensen luisterden niet. De sprookjesbrug begon langzaam in het ravijn te zakken. Ook het land waar de oude indiaanse man vandaan kwam begon steeds meer weg te zinken. Nu wilden de mensen wel over de brug rennen, maar ze begonnen steeds meer terug te glijden. De prins van Sinsabijne schudde zijn hoofd. De oude indiaanse man vroeg de prins wat er met zijn sprookjes zou gebeuren.

'Ik weet wel wat,' zei de prins, en klapte in zijn handen. Direct begonnen de brokstukken van de sprookjes uit het ravijn omhoog te komen. Ze waren zo glad dat niemand zich er aan vast kon houden, terwijl ze dat wel probeerden. Weer klapte de prins in zijn handen, en op het Sinsabijnse land begonnen de brokstukken een prachtig paleis te vormen.

'Hier kunnen wij wonen, en allen die de sprookjes hebben liefgehad,' sprak de prins. De oude indiaanse man glimlachte, en ze leefden nog lang en gelukkig.

Het Meisje Met Het Roze Schortje

Er was eens een meisje dat altijd een roze schortje droeg. Het schortje was altijd rijkelijk gevuld met allerlei snoepgoed, waarvan ze uitdeelde aan iedereen die ze tegenkwam.

Op een dag werd ze lastig gevallen door een paar jongens.

Omdat het meisje magische krachten bezat, sprak ze een betovering uit, waardoor de jongens in kikkers veranderden.

In de verte zag ze nog meer jongens aankomen. Snel liep ze naar het dichtstbijzijnde huisje toe, en klopte aan. Een oude vrouw deed open. Ze vertelde wat er was gebeurd, en de oude vrouw zei dat ze wel bij haar mocht wonen, zolang ze daarvoor snoep gaf aan de oude vrouw.

Het meisje kreeg haar eigen kamer, maar midden in de nacht kwam de oude vrouw om het roze schortje te stelen. Voorzichtig maakte ze het schortje los van het slapende meisje. Maar toen de oude vrouw het helemaal los had gemaakt en in haar handen had genomen, begon de oude vrouw te branden. Ze slaakte een kreet, en het meisje werd er van wakker.

'Waarom heb je geprobeerd mijn roze schortje te stelen ?' riep het meisje.

Snel gaf de oude vrouw het roze schortje terug aan het meisje.

Het meisje keek de brandende vrouw strak aan. 'Omdat je dit gedaan hebt, zul je in snoep veranderen !' riep het meisje. De vrouw veranderde snel in snoep,

waarmee het meisje haar schortje opvulde. Sindsdien is het meisje altijd in het huisje van de oude vrouw blijven wonen.

Nevinen

Er was eens een vrouw die in een slot woonde wat omgeven was door een vuurrivier. Haar vader was de koning van het land. Ze was vaak gekleed in een lange roze jurk. Ze nam vaak kinderen mee van ouders die te arm waren om voor hun kinderen te zorgen. Zij zorgde dan voor hen in het slot. Het was een goede vrouw, maar in de nacht als ze sliep werd ze altijd geplaagd door heksenstemmen. Overdag was ze altijd vrolijk, maar eigenlijk wilde ze nooit meer slapen.

Hiervoor ging ze naar de toverfee, om haar om raad te vragen. De toverfee sprak dat zij wel kon maken dat ze nooit meer hoefde te slapen, maar in de nacht zou de vrouw zo groot worden dat ze de sterren kon plukken. Daarom zou Nevinen elke nacht naar buiten moeten, naar het bos. Tegen de ochtend zou ze altijd weer haar normale lengte hebben. Nevinen wilde dat wel, en moest daarvoor een drankje drinken.

En zo gebeurde het. In de nachten groeide Nevinen altijd zo groot dat ze de sterren kon plukken. Het hele land hoorde ervan, van de prinses die niet meer slapen kon, maar altijd zo groot groeide in de nacht om de sterren te plukken. Vaak wilden de mensen en kinderen niet meer slapen sindsdien, omdat ze wilden zien hoe Nevinen de sterren zou plukken. Zij maakte mensen gelukkig, en sindsdien werd er in dat koninkrijk niet veel meer geslapen.

Het Flessenvrouwtje

Er was eens een vrouwtje die hele bijzondere flesjes verkocht met bijzondere magische drankjes. Hiervoor ging ze altijd langs de deuren, of ze had een kraampje. Ze woonde ergens aan de rand van het bos. Ook verkocht ze flesjes aan de mensen die bij haar huis kwamen. Haar huis was als een winkeltje.

Op een dag klopte er een zwerver bij haar aan. Hij had geen geld en geen huis. Hij vroeg niet om flesjes, maar om onderdak. Het flessenvrouwtje had nog wel een kamer vrij, en daar kon de zwerver wel wonen. Midden in de nacht werd de zwerver nieuwsgierig en ging over een grote trap naar beneden, waar een zaal was helemaal vol met flesjes. Het waren de bijzonderste flesjes die hij ooit had gezien. De flesjes begonnen naar hem te roepen : 'Drink mij, drink mij.' De man liep op de flesjes af, en begon één voor één van hen te drinken, maar al snel begon hij zich erg duizelig te voelen.

De grond onder hem werd helemaal zacht, en hij begon er doorheen te zakken. Hij zakte door een paleis heen en kwam terecht voor een enorme troon. Een koning zat op de troon. Die was eerst heel verbaasd, en toen werd de koning rood van woede. 'Hoe kom jij hier ? Waar kom je vandaan ?' bulderde de koning. Toen begon de zwerver uit te leggen hoe hij bij het flessenvrouwtje kwam, en van de flesjes had gedronken. De koning ontplofte van woede. Ook hij nam een flesje, die hij bij zich had, en langzaam begon hij omhoog te zweven. 'Ik zal haar !' bulderde de koning. 'En jij gaat ook mee.' Hij greep de hand van de zwerver, maar die rukte zichzelf snel los, en rende het paleis uit. Hij kwam in een uitgestrekt weiland terecht waarachter prachtige bloemenvelden waren.

A snel kwam hij een konijn tegen. 'Heb je weleens naar jezelf gekeken ?' vroeg het konijn. 'Je loopt hier rond in vodden. Ik kan wel zien dat je geen koning bent.'

'Maar ik kom wel van de koning vandaan,' zei de zwerver. 'Ik was vlak voor zijn troon.'

'Hoe is het je gelukt bij de koning te komen ?' vroeg het konijn. 'Dat zou ik ook wel willen.'

Toen vertelde de zwerver het verhaal, over hoe hij van de flesjes van het flessenvrouwtje had gedronken, en dat hij zo voor de troon van de koning terecht kwam.

'Magisch,' zei het konijn, en liep naar het paleis toe. Direct werd het konijn door de soldaten van de koning tegengehouden. 'Halt,' zeiden ze. 'Wat kom je doen ?'

Het konijn begon te praten over de bijzondere flesjes en het flessenvrouwtje. 'Wie heeft jou dat verteld ?' vroegen de soldaten. 'Die zwerver daar,' zei het konijn. Direct kwamen de soldaten achter de zwerver aan. De zwerver begon hard te rennen, door het weiland en de bloemenvelden, totdat hij bij een bos aankwam. In het bos was een huisje waar drie feeen woonden. Hier klopte hij aan, en vertelde dat de soldaten van de koning achter hem aanzaten. De feeen lieten hem direct binnen en verborgen hem. Niet lang daarna kwamen de soldaten van de koning aan de deur, en vroegen of de zwerver hier was. Eén van de feeen had de deur opengemaakt, maar zei dat de zwerver hier niet was. Toen gingen de soldaten weer verder.

De zwerver begon te vertellen over het flessenvrouwtje, en hoe hij door haar flesjes in dit rijk terecht was gekomen.

'Het flessenvrouwtje was één van ons vroeger,' sprak één van de feeen. 'Zij woonde hier ook. Totdat een draak haar meenam naar de bovenwereld. We zijn blij te horen dat ze nog leeft.'

De zwerver vroeg of er nog een andere weg tot de bovenwereld was. 'Ja, de toverbrug,' zei één van de feeen. Deze is diep in het bos, waar de rivier is, maar er gebeuren daar vreemde dingen, en niet velen durven daar te komen.'

Toen het nacht was geworden werd de zwerver nieuwsgierig, en ging het huisje uit om dieper het bos in te gaan, terwijl de feeen sliepen. Na een tijdje lopen kwam hij bij de brug aan. De brug ging de rivier over, maar ergens halverwege stopte het. Ook de rivier scheen ergens in het niets te verdwijnen, wat verder van de kust. De man ging de brug op, maar direct kwamen er grote vogels op hem af die hem begonnen te pikken. 'Terug, terug,' krijsten de vogels. Maar de man had een stok bij zich en sloeg de vogels van zich af. Toen hij doorliep werd hij even later wakker in zijn kamer van het huisje van het flessenvrouwtje. Het flessenvrouwtje stond naast zijn bed, en glimlachte naar hem.

'Heb je mijn zusters ontmoet ?' vroeg ze.

De zwerver keek op en sprak : 'Ja, maar was het echt, of was het een droom ?'

'Het kwam door de flesjes,' zei de vrouw. 'Vreemde dingen gebeuren er wanneer de flesjes gedronken worden.'

Vredig sliep de man door, want ook het flessenvrouwtje was maar een droom.

Het Bloemenvrouwtje

Er was eens een bloemenvrouwtje die heel diep in het bos leefde. Achter haar huis waren de prachtigste bloemenvelden, in de diepte van de wildernis. De vrouw had een bijzondere toversleutel, maar niemand wist waartoe de sleutel diende. Zodra iemand de toversleutel aanraakte, begon degene te branden. Er waren weleens dieven die dat geprobeerd hadden, maar die renden dan gillend van het huis weg, de toversleutel loslatende, want hun handen begonnen te branden.

Er was een profetie dat alleen een klein jongetje die bestemd was om koning te worden de toversleutel zou kunnen aanraken zonder daardoor te gaan branden. Vele mannen kwamen aan de deur van het bloemenvrouwtje om hun geluk te beproeven, maar allemaal renden ze gillend weg, hun handen brandende, na het aanraken van de toversleutel. Het bloemenvrouwtje glimlachte dan altijd, haar hoofd schuddende, want zij waren immers mannen, en geen klein jongetje.

Op een dag klopte er een klein jongetje aan op de deur van het huis van het bloemenvrouwtje. Hij had een hoed op met bloemen op de rand, en hij was op blote voeten. Ook was hij gekleed in vodden. Ook hij mocht de toversleutel aanraken. Toen hij dat deed glimlachte hij. Zijn handen begonnen niet te branden. Het bloemenvrouwtje glimlachte, en begon toen steeds harder te lachen. Na een tijdje schaterde ze van het lachen, en was door het dolle heen. 'Jij bent de nieuwe koning !' schaterde ze. Ze nam zijn handen en begon met hem te dansen. En zo werd de kleine jongen de koning van het land.

De Stenen Wachters

Er was eens een oude koning die wachters van steen had. In de nachten kwam er een vreemd vuur over hen, opdat zij tot leven zouden komen. Dan voerden ze onzichtbare oorlogen waar niemand vanaf wist. Op een dag stierf de koning, en zij erfden het kasteel van de koning. Ze kwamen tot zijn geheime vertrekken waar nog nooit iemand van hen was geweest. Ze zagen daar een huilend meisje van vuur zitten. Ze vroegen het meisje wat er aan de hand was. Het meisje snikte dat ze al zo lang opgesloten werd gehouden hier, maar dat zij altijd haar vuur zond naar de wachters om hen tot leven te wekken. Zij was het nachtvuur. Ze was erg eenzaam.

De wachters vroegen haar waarom de oude koning haar opgesloten hield hier. Het meisje sprak dat omdat zij een bijzondere kracht had, namelijk die van de genezing van harten, en de koning wilde dit niet voor de mensen, want dan zouden de dokters geen werk meer hebben.

De wachters schrokken hier wel een beetje van. Het meisje kon ervoor zorgen dat ze niet meer in steen zouden veranderen. Ze brachten het meisje van vuur naar buiten in de open lucht, en al snel begon ze mensen te genezen. Maar de dokters waren erg boos. Zij wilden dat het meisje zou verdwijnen. Het liep uit op een burgeroorlog tussen de dokters en de wachters van de koning. De dokters konden veranderden in grote wilde, witte katachtigen. Ze grepen het meisje van vuur, ketenden haar, en namen het kasteel in. Hier werd zij in een kerker geworpen, en de wachters van het kasteel veranderden weer in steen. Het meisje begon hard te huilen, zoveel als ze nog nooit had gehuild. Haar vele tranen begonnen door het kasteel heen te stromen. De tranen riepen haar moeder op, het nachtwater. In een grote storm kwam zij tot het kasteel, en brak de deuren open.

'Moeder !' riep het meisje van vuur, en vertelde haar verhaal. Haar moeder was helemaal van water gemaakt, en al spoedig begon ze het kasteel te overweldigen en sleurde de dokters mee in een sterke stroom. Ze dreef hen tot de zee, waar zij allen verdronken.

Weer begon het meisje over de stenen wachters te komen, en ditmaal ook haar moeder. Dit bleek de combinatie te zijn die hen voor altijd vrijzette. Sindsdien zijn ze allemaal in het kasteel blijven wonen. En het meisje van vuur genas nog vele harten.

De Banaanse Sinaasappelkoning

Er waren eens een man en een vrouw in een tuin met sinaasappelbomen. Plotseling verscheen er een banaan met sieraden in de struiken tussen de sinaasappels. De man en de vrouw dachten dat het een slang was, en bekogelden de banaan met sinaasappels. 'Weten jullie wel wie ik ben ?' sprak de banaan met sieraden. 'Ik ben de koning van de sinaasappels.' En hij begon de sinaasappels met zo'n vaart terug te slaan dat de man en de vrouw onder de sinaasappelsap kwamen te zitten. De banaan met sieraden bleef maar gooien, totdat er een zee van sinaasappelsap was ontstaan. De man en de vrouw riepen om hulp. Maar na een tijdje kreeg de banaan met sieraden medelijden met hen, en liet hen op zijn rug zitten, anders zouden ze verdrinken. Hij bracht hen naar een eiland waar ook komkommers en bananen waren. Er waren ook een bananenkoning en een komkommerkoning, en zij hadden wel trek in wat sinaasappelsap. Maar zij dronken daar zoveel van dat de banaanse sinaasappelkoning boos terugkwam, en met zoveel sinaasappels begon te gooien dat zelfs het eiland overstroomde.

Het werd een woeste zee van sinaasappelsap, waarin zelfs de banaanse sinaasappelkoning dreigde te verdrinken. Gelukkig kon de komkommerkoning vliegen en nam ze allen op zijn rug. Hij vloog naar een meloen in de lucht. De meloen nam ze naar binnen, en vroeg wie de schuldige was. Allen wezen ze naar de sinaasappelkoning, die door de meloen direkt weer in de sinaasappelzee werd geworpen. Maar later kreeg de meloen spijt, en dronk de hele sinaasappelzee leeg. De banaanse sinaasappelkoning verstopte zich weer tussen de sinaasappelbomen in de tuin. Op een dag kwamen er weer een man en een vrouw in de tuin. Toen ze de banaanse sinaasappelkoning zagen begonnen ze met sinaasappels naar hem te gooien, omdat ze dachten dat het een slang was. Maar ditmaal gooide de banaanse sinaasappelkoning niks terug, en besloot ook om maar niks te zeggen, want hij wist waar dat op uit kon lopen.

De Perenprins

Er was eens kasteel waarvan de deuren tussen de vertrekken indiaanse wondervruchten waren. Je kon door die deuren heen, maar je kon niet meer terug. Het was als een soort fuik. Veel mannen raakten in het kasteel verstrikt en kwamen steeds dieper en dieper, totdat ze in de diepste kamer van het kasteel kwamen, waar een perenprins van steen stond. Om de perenprins heen lagen allemaal peren. ‘Zeg perenprins,’ zeiden de mannen. ‘Hoe komen we weer uit dit kasteel ?’

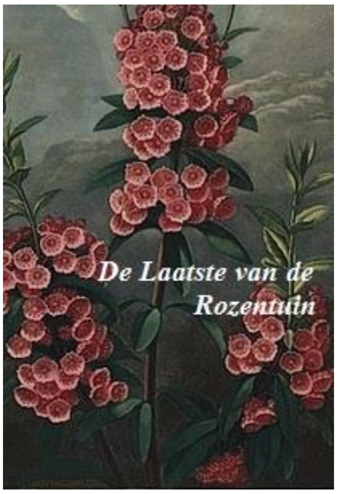
‘Ach,’ zei de perenprins. ‘Neem gewoon wat peren mee, en gooi ze tegen de wondervruchten aan, dan gaan ze vanzelf weer open. Maar alsjeblieft, neem mij ook mee.’ Maar de mannen begonnen de perenprins uit te lachen, en gingen zonder hem terug naar de indiaanse wondervruchten met een heleboel peren. En het werkte. Telkens als ze een peer tegen de wondervrucht gooiden opende die zich weer, en zo konden de mannen helemaal terug tot de ingang lopen. Maar de poort-wondervrucht vertoonde ineens haar tanden, en verslond de mannen één voor één. En zo gebeurde dit vaak, totdat er op een dag een arme man in het kasteel terechtkwam. Ook hij kwam in de diepste kamer bij de perenprins terecht. Hij kreeg medelijden met de perenprins en besloot hem mee te dragen. Dat was wel zwaar, maar het lukte goed. Toen ze bij de poort-wondervrucht aankwamen sprak de perenprins : ‘Vlug, gooi er een peer tegenaan, en zet mij dan in de opening. De arme man deed wat hem gezegd werd, en de wondervrucht brak al snel de stenen perenprins kapot. Een klein mannetje kwam uit het gebroken standbeeld, en liep blij naar buiten, terwijl de arme man hem volgde. Het kleine mannetje leidde de arme man naar zijn koninkrijk, en hier zijn ze lang en gelukkig blijven wonen.

Het Boze Vruchtenbos

Er was eens een man die in een bos kwam waar allemaal exotische sprekende vruchten hingen. De man begon één voor één van die sprekende vruchten te eten, maar na een tijdje begon het hem te vervelen, en wilde hij wel dat de vruchten bananen waren. De man zei dat tegen die sprekende vruchten, en toen begonnen die sprekende vruchten verschrikkelijk kwaad te worden. Ze werden jaloers, en waren ineens helemaal niet meer zo aardig. De man was erg bang geworden, en rende dieper het bos in, maar de sprekende vruchten kwamen hem achterna. Helemaal in paniek ging hij een huisje binnen, waar een heks op een stoel zat. De man vertelde het verhaal, en de heks zei : 'Dat is nou ook wat. Nu ben je op de vlucht voor sprekende vruchten, en nu val je in de handen van een heks.' Maar ja, de heks had tenminste wel bananen in huis liggen. 'Ik ben zo blij dat ik een paar bananen zie,' zei de man. De sprekende vruchten begonnen al op de deur te kloppen. 'Wegwezen !' krijste de heks.

Maar de sprekende vruchten begonnen steeds woester te worden, en begonnen ook al hard op de ramen te tikken. 'Ik had jullie toch gezegd : wegwezen !' krijste de heks. Maar de sprekende vruchten werden zo over de top woedend dat ze de ruiten insloegen en naar binnen kwamen. De heks gaf een gil, sprong door een ander raam en ook de man dook haar achterna. Met z'n tweeen renden ze nog dieper het bos in, terwijl gevaarlijk woedende sprekende vruchten achter hen aanzaten. Na een tijdje waren de twee helemaal omsingeld door de sprekende vruchten, want het bos was vol met sprekende vruchten. Steeds dichter kwamen de sprekende vruchten bij de man en de heks. 'Dit is het einde,' zei de man. 'Mag ik een banaan ?'

'Je kunt maar beter die sprekende vruchten eten,' zei de heks, 'anders overleven we het niet.' De heks en de man hadden een manier gevonden om zo langzaam uit het boze vruchtenbos te komen. Na een tijdje waren ze uit het bos, en wilden er nooit meer naar terug. Ze gingen samen in een huisje wonen ver van het vruchtenbos vandaan. De heks had dan wel geen sprekende vruchten, maar wel bananen en zoveel andere dingen. En zo leefden ze daar nog lang en gelukkig.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Watervogels – De Groene Dood

Suzie

De edelste tuinen zag ik. Zoutig, zurig, niet te veel zoet, zo smaakten de bessen. Ze waren heerlijk. Ze waren bijna verzonnen als door een insect. En dan niet een normaal insect, maar bijzonder, eentje met groot potentieel, als een wereldredder. Ik had kriebel in mijn keel toen ik ernaar keek. Het smaakte ook een beetje naar drop. Drop kon je trouwens niet krimpen, tenzij het rode drop was. Maar rode drop was dan weer net iets zoeter. Ik stapte de tuinen binnen, waar nog veel meer van die bessen hingen, en allemaal beestjes. Ze zat daar met een rood jurkje, een beetje opgebolt als pudding was haar jurkje, als met kant belegd. Het jurkje was niet te groot, en dat hoefde ook niet. Het was al genoeg dat ze daar zat. De touwtjes van haar jurkje waren als dropveters, als van rode drop. Ik keek niet op of om, maar ging dieper de tuinen in, op zoek naar meer bessen. Ik hield ervan om naar bessen te staren, vooral druipende bessen. Het was alsof ik haar tong op de mijne voelde, maar ik ontweek haar. Ik wilde niet aan haar denken. Zij blijkbaar ook niet aan mij, want ze bleef gewoon zitten. Ik voelde contact met haar, maar ontkende het in mezelf. Kom op, zeg. Ik heb wel andere dingen te doen. Als ik me aan haar zou geven, zou ze me toch verscheuren. Ze was een roofdier, daar diep in de tuin. Ik had haar wel in de gaten, maar deed alsof ik haar niet zag. Ze begon een beetje zenuwachtig heen en weer te draaien. 'Ik heb je wel in de gaten, hoor,' zei ze. Ik deed alsof ik haar niet hoorde. 'Dat is ook niet netjes,' zei ze. 'Helemaal niets terugzeggen.' Ik draaide met mijn rug naar haar toe. Ik begon nog meer bessen te plukken, en begon ze te eten. 'Hey, geef mij ook eens wat van die bessen,' zei ze. Ik gooide er eentje toe.

'Je bent afstandelijk,' zei ze. 'Nou, jij mag er anders ook wel wezen,' zei ik. 'Eindelijk praat je,' zei ze. 'Ik vind het allemaal best,' zei ik. 'Wat vind je allemaal best ?' vroeg ze. Ik zweeg. Ik begon door te eten van de bessen. 'Niet met je mond vol praten,' zei ze. 'Je bent mijn moeder niet,' zei ik. 'Nee, gelukkig niet,' zei ze. 'Je bent me nogal een probleem-geval.' 'Zo mag ik het horen,' zei ik. 'Hoe zal ik je noemen ?' sprak ze. 'Al noem je me Klaas, doet me niets,' zei hij. 'Krokodillen-voer,' sprak ze zachtjes. 'Die zijn hier niet,' zei ik.

Ik liep dieper de tuin in, mijn gezicht verborgen voor haar. Ze kwam mij niet achterna. Wat zou ze van me moeten ? En ik had wel andere dingen te doen. Ik verzamelde bessen in mijn mandje. Ik bracht ze naar grootmoeder. Ze kookte er iets van. Het was heerlijk. Ik sprak met haar niet over de dingen die ik had gezien in de edelste tuinen. Maar later deed ik het toch. 'Ach, dat meisje,' zei grootmoeder. 'Ik ken haar wel. Ze woonde hier vroeger in de buurt. Er hing daar altijd was buiten, in de tuin. Ze kookte weleens voor ons. Maar later werd ze een wilde. Ze vertrok naar de andere kant van de stad, en ging aan de kade wonen. Het was veel te wild voor ons. Maar ze hield altijd al veel van de bossen. Daar zwierf ze vaak. Toen je klein was kwam ze je weleens opzoeken.' 'Ik kan me daar niets meer van herinneren,' zei ik. 'Dat ben je misschien vergeten,' zei grootmoeder. 'Jullie waren vroeger heel gek met elkaar.' 'Hoe kunnen mensen zo uit elkaar groeien ?' vroeg ik. 'Ach ja, jongen,' zei grootmoeder, 'dat is de wereld. Het is komen en gaan, vastpakken en loslaten, en je groeit uit alles ook weer uit.' 'Ja, dat jurkje wat ze droeg was wel erg klein,' zei ik. 'Ze past er niet meer in,' zei grootmoeder. 'Nou, het paste wel goed,' zei ik, 'maar het jurkje was gewoon klein.' 'Ze had dus niet veel aan,' zei grootmoeder. 'Nou, okay, daar kan ik inkomen. Het is nogal zomers weer, een beetje zwoel zelfs, vind je niet ?' Ik keek oma aan. Ze had van die wonderlijke ogen, donkere ogen. Ik zag de pretlichtjes in haar ogen, alsof ze blij was dat we met elkaar spraken. Ja, dat had ook anders kunnen zijn. Er waren zovelen die niet meer met oma wilden praten. Haar ogen dropen bijna als bessen. En ik had bijna druipende handen. 'Vertel me meer,' zei ik. 'Nou, ja, ze was vroeger gek op je, en wilde met je trouwen,' zei grootmoeder. 'Maar de familie wilde dat niet. Toen droop ze af. Alle contacten verwaterden sindsdien.' 'Ja, maar daar kan ik toch niets aan doen,' zei ik. 'Ze werd verboden met je om te gaan,' zei grootmoeder. 'En daar legde ze zich bij neer.' 'Was ze gevaarlijk of zo ?' vroeg ik. 'De familie vond van wel,' zei grootmoeder. 'Ze is als een kwark-taartje,' zei ik. 'Ja, maar jij kent haar duisternissen niet,' zei grootmoeder. 'Vertel me,' zei ik. Grootmoeder werd even stil. Ze keek me diep aan in mijn ogen, en sprak : 'Ze houdt van vreemde spelletjes. Het zijn geen echte spelletjes, maar ik noem het maar even zo.'

Ik kwam haar een paar dagen later in de bibliotheek tegen. Ze was daar aan het lezen. Ze had prachtige laarzen aan. En een prachtig wit broekje dat tot aan haar laarzen reikte. Ze had touwtjes in haar haren, en het voelde alsof haar tong op de mijne lag. Ik had een bessensmaak in mijn mond. Ze deed alsof ze me niet zag, of misschien zag ze me helemaal niet. Ik liep langs haar heen, en liep zo dicht tegen haar aan dat ik haar raakte, maar niet te hard, en niet te dichtbij, en zeker ook niet te lang. Een rilling en een warm gevoel ging door mij heen. Ik voelde mij als in de hemel. Ik werd er een beetje emotioneel van. Plotseling keek ze op, en keek met haar warme donker-bruine ogen naar mij, alsof ze me niet herkende. Toen las ze weer door. 'Je herkent me niet ?' vroeg ik. 'Nee,' zei ze, terwijl ze niet opkeek. Ze las gewoon door. 'Ik geloof je niet,' zei ik. Ze glimlachte warm, terwijl ze even opkeek. 'Het is me allemaal verboden,' zei ze. 'Door wie ?' vroeg ik. 'Je familie,' zei ze. Ik zweeg. Ik probeerde me haar naakt voor te stellen, of in een bikini op het strand, terwijl ik doorliep. Dat was de laatste keer dat ik haar zag. Grootmoeder vertelde mij een paar weken later dat ze in de krant had gelezen dat ze spoorloos was verdwenen. Ik werd er niet koud of warm van. Het zij zo, dacht ik. Haar zus kwam ik nog weleens tegen. Maar die wilde er niet over praten. Dat was

ook een heel ander type. Toch wilde ze er na een bepaalde tijd wel over praten. 'Mijn zusje hield veel van je,' zei ze. 'Ze wil dat je haar nooit vergeet.' 'Waar is ze ?' vroeg ik. Ze overhandigde me een brief. 'Lees,' zei ze. Er stond in dat ze naar het bos was gevlucht, voorgoed. Ze wilde dat ik zou komen. Ik stond op, en ging terug naar grootmoeder. 'Ja, ze hield veel van de bossen,' zei grootmoeder. 'Altijd al. Karel, haar vader, was ook een bos-fanaat.' Ik schudde mijn laars uit. Er zat allemaal zand in, en ook een munt, een gouden munt, met haar hoofd erop. Ik liet het aan grootmoeder zien. 'Maar dat kan toch niet, lieve jongen,' zei grootmoeder. 'Hoe kun je nu een munt vinden met haar hoofd erop, en dat zat in je laars ? Dat heeft haar zus vast in je laars gestopt toen je daar was.' Ik was verbijsterd. 'Hoe is dat mogelijk ?' vroeg ik. 'Een munt met haar hoofd erop ?' 'Ja, ze moet wel ergens koningin zijn, jongen,' zei grootmoeder. 'Je komt niet zomaar met je hoofd op een munt.' 'Hoe kan dat ?' vroeg ik. 'Ik weet het niet, jongen,' zei grootmoeder. 'Volgens mij weet haar zus meer.' Ik ging weer naar haar zus, en die begon direct te glimlachen toen ze de munt zag. 'Ja, Suzie is een koningin,' zei ze. Het was de eerste keer dat ik haar zag glimlachen. 'Van welk rijk ?' vroeg ik. 'Suzie is de koningin der apen,' zei ze. 'Ach, kom nou,' zei ik. 'Hoe kunnen apen nou munten hebben.' 'Ach,' zei ze, 'dat was eens een stunt in de dierentuin, waar je je hoofd kon laten zetten op een munt, als je voor een bepaald bedrag had gedoneerd.' 'Dus heb jij die munt in mijn laars gedaan ?' vroeg ik. Ze giechelde. Raadsel opgelost. Ik ging terug naar grootmoeder. 'Ach, Karel had ook altijd van die vreemde dingen,' zei grootmoeder. 'En haar moeder was ook zo'n zot mens. Haar moeder reiste in bootjes door het bos. Ook zo'n bosmens. En dan vreemde dingen, he.' 'Wat voor vreemde dingen ?' vroeg ik. Grootmoeder zweeg.

Ik besloot door de vele struiken van bosbessen naar het bos te gaan. Al gauw kwam ik haar daar tegen. Ze had een boog op mij gericht. 'Wat kom je doen ?' zei ze ruig. 'Ik dacht dat je wilde dat ik kwam ?' zei ik. 'Wie ben je ?' vroeg ze. 'Ik dacht dat je me wel kende, Suzie,' zei ik. 'Ik ben Suzie niet,' zei ze. 'Ik ben nu iemand anders.' 'Mag ik bij je komen ?' vroeg ik. Ze spande de boog nog strakker. Ik keek naar de glinsterende pijl. Als ze die los zou laten, zou ik er zeker geweest zijn. 'Jij bent het reeenkind, het geheim van het hertenjong,' zei ze. 'Wat is dat ?' vroeg ik. 'Nog even en dan ben je een kluif,' zei ze. Ze greep een touw met een lasso van haar schouder en liet het om mijn nek vliegen. 'Hey, ben je gek geworden ?' vroeg ik. Met een steen sloeg ze me neer. Ik was bewusteloos, en werd even later wakker in een kooi. 'Jij bent dus echt gek geworden,' zei ik. 'Stom varken,' zei ze. 'Ik dacht dat ik eerst een hertenjong was, en nu ineens een varken ?' vroeg ik. 'Mond houden,' zei ze. 'Je speelt met je leven.' 'Je praat gewoon heel ongenuanceerd, alsof er een steekje bij je los zit,' zei ik. 'Ik ga je laten verhongeren,' zei ze. Die is echt gek, dacht ik bij mezelf. Die heeft ze niet meer goed op een rijtje. 'Je zal niet meer teruggaan naar je familie,' zei ze hardvochtig. 'Het is afgelopen met hun spelletjes. Je bent nu van mij.' 'Wat als ze me hier komen halen ?' vroeg ik. 'Dit is verboden terrein voor hen,' zei ze. Opeens stond daar de boswachter. Suzie moest naar de gevangenis, en ik kon weer terug naar mijn familie. Ik had wel heel erg veel medelijden met Suzie. Ik zocht haar vaak op in de gevangenis. 'Heus, ik bedoelde het niet zo,' zei ze. 'Ja, dat zeggen ze allemaal,' zei ik. 'Ik was gewoon met je aan het spelen,' zei ze. 'Mijn familie had gelijk,' zei ik. 'Je bent gevaarlijk, en je houdt van vreemde spelletjes.' Ze begon te huilen. 'Ik wilde je geen kwaad doen. Ik zou je daarna gewoon loslaten, maar jullie vatten alles verkeerd op,' zei ze. 'Maar je had een pijl en boog op me gericht, en je had me bewusteloos geslagen met een steen. Noem je dat nog spelletjes ? Je bent een beetje vreemd,' zei ik. 'Het bosleven is hard,' zei ze. 'Ik moest overleven.' 'Maar je zei dat je wilde dat ik kwam,' zei ik. 'In die brief. Het is een soort liegen en bedriegen.' 'Nee,' zei ze. 'Ik wilde dat je kwam. Ik wilde gewoon met je spelen.' 'Je hebt me erin laten lopen,' zei ik. 'Denk je nou echt dat ik je kwaad wilde doen ?' vroeg ze. 'Ik weet het niet,' zei ik. 'Je bent in ieder geval niet te vertrouwen.' 'Het was maar spel,' zei ze. 'Vond je het niet leuk ? Dan had je het moeten zeggen, dan waren we direct

gestopt.' 'Ik was al bewusteloos geslagen,' zei ik. Ze scheen het niet te begrijpen. Het was een bijzonder meisje. 'Het dringt niet tot je door, he ?' zei ik. 'En nu zit ik hier dan,' zei ze. 'Ik wil terug naar het bos.' 'Maar je bent te gevaarlijk,' zei ik. 'Ach kom,' zei ze. 'Jullie kunnen ook niet tegen een grapje.' 'Geen leuk grapje als ik bewusteloos wordt geslagen,' zei ik. Maar dat drong niet tot haar door. 'Het is het wilde leven,' zei ze. 'In het wilde leven kunnen dingen gebeuren die in de stad niet mogen gebeuren. Het is anders.' 'Ja, ja, maak dat de kat maar wijs,' zei ik.

Grootmoeder wilde dat ik uit haar buurt zou blijven, vooral toen ze weer vrij kwam. Het was voor haar verboden om in het bos te komen. Dat zou een verkeerde uitwerking op haar hebben. Ik ging haar niet echt uit de weg. Soms kwam ik haar in de bibliotheek tegen. 'Van wat voor boeken houd je ?' vroeg ik haar. 'Van het bos,' zei ze. 'Daar mag je niet komen, he ?' zei ik plagend. 'Nee,' zei ze zacht. 'Mijn familie heeft liever niet dat ik met je praat,' zei ik. 'Naar voor je,' zei ze. 'Waarom dat nou weer ?' vroeg ik. 'Wat kan mij dat nou schelen. Ben je zo belangrijk ?' 'Nou, je kwam me anders wel altijd opzoeken, in het bos, in de gevangenis, en nu,' zei ze. Ik begon hevig te protesteren. 'Nee, dat was omdat ik medelijden met je had, niet voor mezelf,' zei ik. 'Oh, ben jij er zo één,' zei ze. 'Ik vertrouw je niet,' zei ik. 'Ja, dat weten we al,' zei ze. 'Maar je loopt wel altijd achter me aan.' Weer begon ik hevig te protesteren. 'Zeg, dame, nou moet je eens even heel goed naar me luisteren. Ik heb net zoveel recht om in de bibliotheek te komen als jij. En ik ben hier voor de boeken, niet voor jou. Nu moet je geen hoogmoeds-waanzin krijgen, mevrouw, of wil je ook dat ik 'u' tegen je zeg ?' zei ik verontwaardigd. 'Nee,' zei ze, 'en ik loop je gewoon maar wat te plagen.' 'Goed,' zei ik, en liep door. Maar ze kwam me achterna. 'Ik zal je nog wel eens een keer krijgen, zoals ik je goed beet had in het bos,' zei ze. Ik slikte. Ik wist dat ik nog steeds op mijn hoede moest zijn. Deze vrouw was immers gek. Op een nacht werd ik wakker, vastgebonden, terwijl zij op me zat. 'Hoe kom jij hier binnen ?' vroeg ik. 'Voor jou een vraag, voor mij een weet,' zei ze. 'Kun je mij onmiddelijk losmaken,' zei ik. 'Nee,' zei ze, 'ik zei toch dat ik je nog wel zou krijgen ?' 'Okay, maar ik vind het niet leuk,' zei ik. Toen maakte ze me los. Ik zag toen dat ze het waarschijnlijk niet kwaad meende. Ik nam haar in mijn armen. 'Ik vind je eigenlijk heel lief,' zei ik. 'Ik zie nu in dat ik je helemaal verkeerd beoordeeld heb.' 'Maar ik had je niet bewusteloos mogen slaan,' zei ze. 'Het is niet erg,' zei ik. 'Het was in het bos, en daar zijn misschien andere regels.' 'Nee,' zei ze. 'Het was verkeerd van me.' 'Ik heb er niks aan overgehouden,' zei ik. Ik hield haar vast in bed, en streelde door haar haar. Toen ging ik met mijn vingers over haar lippen. Ik kuste haar. 'Ik heb je eindelijk,' zei ze. 'Je moet eens weten hoe lang ik hier op heb gewacht. Mijn hele leven al.'

Opeens stond grootmoeder in de deur-opening. Ze stond daar lijkbleek. Ze maakte direct rechtsomkeerds. Even later ging de telefoon. Ik nam op. Het was grootmoeder. 'Ik hoef haar niet te zien,' zei ze. 'Wil je haar ofzo ? Ik zei je toch dat je uit haar buurt moest blijven ? Ze is niet pluis.' 'Ze is gewoon speels, grootmoeder,' zei ik. 'Maar dat kan een keer verkeerd aflopen, lieve jongen,' zei grootmoeder. Op aanraden van grootmoeder wilde ik dat ze het huis weer zou verlaten. Ik besloot een grote zwerftocht door het bos te maken. Ik ging door de vele bessenstruiken, en ik wist dat ik hier vrij zou zijn van de streken van Suzie. Ik kon me nooit helemaal aan haar geven. Een warmte omgaf mij, alsof iets me riep. Ik ging dieper het bos in, totdat ik bij een bosmeertje kwam. Er waren hier jongens aan het spelen. Ze hadden verfstrepen op hun lichamen. Toen ze mij zagen grepen ze hun bogen. 'Wie ben je, en wat moet je ?' riep één van hen. 'Ik wil in het bos leven,' riep ik terug. 'Zweer je dat je nooit terug zal gaan ?' riep een ander. 'Ik zweer het,' zei ik. Ze kwamen dichterbij. 'Hij moet geverfd worden,' zei één van hen. Voordat ik het wist was ik neergeslagen. Ik werd wakker in een kooi. Ze glimlachte. 'Wie ben jij ?' vroeg ik. 'Ben jij dat, Suzie ?' stamelde ik. 'Hoe kun jij hier

zijn ?' Ik was nog steeds een beetje duizelig, en had een beetje een waas voor mijn ogen vanwege de klap. 'Ik ben haar tweeling-zus,' zei ze. Ik had een smaak van bessen in mijn mond. 'Okay, ik vind dit dus niet leuk, dus maak me los,' zei ik. 'Oh nee,' zei ze, 'daar komt niks van in. Ik ben niet zo makkelijk in die dingen als mijn zus.' 'Mijn familie zal mij vinden,' zei ik. 'De jongens zullen hen grijpen, zoals ze jou grepen,' zei ze. Ik voelde me machteloos. Ze zou me waarschijnlijk laten verhongeren. 'Aan het einde van het ritje zul je zijn als deze jongens,' zei ze. 'En je zal nooit meer terugwillen.' 'Wat is hier te doen ?' vroeg ik. 'Wil je terug naar mijn zus dan ?' vroeg ze. 'Ze zal echt nooit opgeven. je zal moe van haar worden.' 'Okay, ik blijf,' zei ik. 'Maak me los.' 'Geen denken aan,' zei ze. 'Deze jongens zijn zorgvuldig geinitieerd, en zo zal jij ook geinitieerd moeten worden.' 'Mijn grootmoeder zal naar mij op zoek gaan,' zei ik. 'Ze zal er niet doorkomen,' zei ze. 'Dan ken jij mijn grootmoeder nog niet,' zei ik. 'Ik ken haar,' zei ze. 'Ze is niet tegen mij opgewassen.' 'Wat als de boswachter komt ?' vroeg ik. 'Die komt hier niet,' zei ze. 'Waarom niet ?' vroeg ik. Ze zweeg. Ik kreeg bijna geen voedsel. Alleen soms wat bessen met vreemde melk. Ik werd vaak geslagen, veelal totdat ik bewusteloos raakte. 'Het is om los te komen van de oude wereld en van je oude geheugen,' zei ze. 'Je bent serieuzer dan je zus,' zei ik. 'Mijn zus is te speels,' zei ze. 'Voor mij is het menens. De buitenwereld is gevaarlijk. Jouw familie is gevaarlijk.' Ze brachten een verf uit op mijn huid, en op een dag lieten ze me uit de kooi. Ik was nu één van hen.

Op een dag kwamen ze ons in helicopters halen. Het meisje ging de gevangenis in, en de jongens gingen terug naar hun families, zoals ook ik. Grootmoeder was woedend. Zij kende dat meisje wel. Het meisje vertrok al heel jong naar het bos, en keerde niet terug. Ze werd waarschijnlijk grootgebracht door hyenas. Mijn grootmoeder verbood mij om het meisje op te zoeken in de gevangenis. Ik wilde dat eigenlijk ook niet. Het scheen dat het meisje heel veel op haar geweten had. Ze zou niet zomaar vrij komen. Ze was veel gevaarlijker dan haar tweeling-zus, Suzie. We gingen verhuizen naar een andere stad. Grootmoeder vond dat beter, want dan zouden we geheel afzijn van die vreemde familie van Suzie. Grootmoeder wilde er niet op wachten dat er weer iets zou gebeuren.

In onze nieuwe stad gingen grootmoeder en ik vaak wandelen naar de zee. De kust stond vol met bessenstruiken, waar veel wespen waren. Ik had veel diepe gesprekken met mijn grootmoeder.

Medusa

Hoofdstuk 1. De Zonderling

Ik denk dat ik doodga als ik naar haar kijk. ‘Dit is het rijk van de dood,’ zei ze. Ze had een suikerzoet jurkje aan, met de geur van een herfstbos. Ik draaide mijn gezicht om en keek naar buiten, naar de grauwe stenen. Het was alsof ze lang uitgestrekt op de daken lag, alsof ik haar met mijn ogen niet kon ontwijken. De bus stopte dichtbij, mensen stapten in de bus, en het was alsof zij tussen de rijen stond. Ik denk dat ik doodga als ik haar aankijk, dat ik het dan gewoon niet overleef. Ze pakt me bij mijn hand, en trekt me naar beneden. Het is etenstijd. Zij smeert het brood, kijkt naar buiten naar de heg. Ik ruik haar suikerzoet jurkje, alsof het belegd is met hemelse rijkdommen, maar naar haar kijken durf ik niet. Ik ben laf. Ik voel haar hand nog steeds, terwijl ze me allang heeft losgelaten. Ze voert me.

Ze is als een rots waarvan ik af kan springen, daarom beklim ik haar niet. De pot pindakaas voelt nog warm aan van haar hand. Ze was hier. Nu is ze in de kelder. Omdat ze zo lang wegblijft drink ik de laatste slokken melk en thee, en dan ga ik naar bed. Het was een dag des doods, in de tuin van spot. En gisteren was ik in de tuin van wreedheden. Mijn herinneringen zijn daar. Mijn hersenen bloeden. Ze leest me een boek voor, terwijl ik probeer te slapen. Ik hoor haar stem echoen door mijn hoofd. Het zaad van de lindeboom houd ik stevig vast, en meng het met mijn tranen. Dan smeer ik haar lichaam in, met het mengsel dat lijkt op natte tarwe, griesmeel, het is als brood, en het bed is de oven. Zij is de vrouw van de bakker, en ik ben de bakker. Ik maak haar klaar voor het kostelijke dinner in het diepste van de nacht, en dan slaap ik.

Ze is als de boom aan de rivier. Ik krab aan het hout, het is alsof de sterren breken. Ik denk aan de tuinen waarin wij waren, de hoge poorten in de heggen, de vruchten die zijn als de meest kostelijke snoepjes. Wie plantte hen daar ? Ik keek naar haar gezicht toen ze sliep. Nu was het veilig. De lazarus-koekjes bungelden aan haar lichaam, slap, uitgedroogd, de nacht heerste hier over de dood, de gouden dood. Voor mij was het een vakantie, ze was even geen roofdier meer. Ik kuste haar lippen, en dan slaap ik, vrij, blij, zonder angst, want ze slaapt. Een diepe nacht die mijn bewustzijn breekt, ik ben er even helemaal uit. Tante Connie controleert later de kamers nog even, of alle lichten wel uit zijn voor de nacht, want als de nacht komt, dan moet de nacht echt goed komen. Zo praat ik ’s nachts als met een pop. Ik hoor tante Connie op de gang lopen, als een lijzige boom, verzwakt door het gewicht van haar ouderdom, met passen als het slaan op de koekjestrommel. Ja, haar hele wezen klinkt me als muziek in de oren. Altijd is ze mijn lievelingstante geweest, daarom wonen we hier samen, maar de herinnering aan haar verzwakt. Ik leef hier in een dorre tuin, spot gemengd met wreedheden, de souvenirs van het duistere gat van het verleden. Geen lichtjes konden dat goedmaken, geen gouden pollepel van welke grootmoeder dan ook. Ik voel me verminkt.

Oom Joop is een man met humor, maar ook hij kon mij niet redden. Als ik wakker word zit er iemand op me, wassende mijn rug. Het is zij. Ik durf haar niet aan te kijken. Ze pakt me beet, laat dan los, pakt me steviger beet, en dan laat ze me helemaal los, om op te staan. Ik ben te moe, en het zonlicht kwelt me. Er liggen hier snoep papiertjes overal. Ik hoor haar lachen. Er

is geen tuinman die de wilde tuin van mijn ziel op orde kan krijgen. Ik lig hier voor Jan Worst.

Ze is de laatste van de rozentuin, dus ik kan haar niet wegdoen. De geschiedenis van de graaf, en zijn kinderen. Zij is als de erfenis. Uit mijn gedachten is ze niet. Ze speelt de piano. Ik kijk naar buiten, en probeer langzaam grip te krijgen op de dag. De muren buiten lijken hoog, zoals zij hoog is, van adel. Tante Connie komt binnen, en sleept zichzelf over het tapijt. Het lijkt voor haar een woestijnreis om aan ons bed te komen, en alles lijkt verwaterd. Haar rumoerig kapsel was vroeger deftig en hehoudend. Ze staart in de spiegel. 'Ik moet me nog opmaken voor de dag, je weet wel, het harnas aandoen,' zegt ze. Ze gaat tegen de verwarming aanzitten, en luistert naar de piano. De schotel die ze in haar handen heeft maakt haar bijna als een bedelaar. Ze heeft behoefte aan een gesprek, en ik ben te moe. De dochter van de graaf daarentegen is vol energie, en begint het gesprek met haar in zinderende vaart. Ze zijn als een stel vogels. Al snel prakken de vorken een maal. Ik krijg niks, want ik behoor niet tot de dag. Het is alsof ze elkaar voeren.

In de middag ligt ze weer op me. Het lijkt wel alsof ze draadjes aan me bevestigt om me op te hijsen. Er is nog maar een klein stukje van de dag over en dat eist ze helemaal voor haarzelf op, als met gloeiende handen. Buiten hoor ik de bus, mensen stappen in, verveeld, uitgeput. Ik vraag me af of ze ooit zullen aankomen. Zwetend en puffend kom ik aan bij de lift op de gang. Ik wil naar de zolder. Maar de lift schijnt niet te werken. Ik strompel naar de trap, want een dag met de dochter van de graaf is te veel voor mij. Ik zie bij de trap naar de zolder een andere vrouw staan, in wit kant. Ze helpt me op de trap. Ik plof even later op haar bed neer. Zij is de vrouw van de zolder, en ik heb de zolder bereikt, niet te bereiken voor de dochter van de graaf, de dochter des doods. Maar ik hoor haar krijsen beneden, als iemand die zich geprikt heeft bij het naaien. Ja, toe maar, druk die speld maar diep naar binnen, je verdient het, kreng, denk ik bij mezelf. Maar dan word ik ineens mild door de zachtheid van de vrouw hier. Ze komt dichterbij, spreid haar benen waarmee ze mij vastklemt. 'Ho, doe normaal,' zeg ik. Ze verzwakt de klem een beetje, maar ik voel haar gewicht op me. 'Slapen ?' vraagt ze.

'Nee, dank je, ik heb net geslapen,' zeg ik.

Ze loopt naar een kastje, haalt wat brood eruit en besmeerd het. Daarna voert ze me. De lucht is donker hier, en ik hoor de dochter van de graaf nog steeds krijsen. Als ik naar buiten staar is het alsof ze zich heeft uitgespreid over de daken.

'Waar kom je vandaan ?' vraagt de vrouw van de zolder.

‘Vanuit de tuin,’ zeg ik.

‘Oh, de tuin der edelheden en martelingen ?’

Ik knik.

‘Zo’n zoet-bitter iets,’ zegt ze. Ik knik weer. De verdiepingen onder de zolder lijken ver weg. Ik staar weer naar buiten, alsof ik mijn ziel zie vliegen. ‘Waar ben ik ?’ vraag ik.

- Bij mij.

Ze pakt een schotel en een kom, en voert me dan soep. ‘Ik wil niet meer terug,’ zeg ik. Ik kwam van een nachtelijk gebrul, en nu was ik hier, een plaats vol protserige spulletjes, over en weer gelakt en opgepoetst. Vanaf de zolder kon ik de tuinen zien, de heggen, met de hoge poorten. ‘Ik ben een vergiftigd mens,’ zeg ik. ‘Een dwaallicht, een pop.’ Ze knikt. Als ik naar buiten keek zag ik mijn weerspiegeling. Zij stond ineens voor de spiegel, en maakte zich op, met allerlei smeerseltjes. ‘Goed spul van de bomen,’ zei ze. ‘Het is voor mijn huid. Ik ga niet naar het feest vanavond, ik blijf wel hier met jou.’

Het is alsof ik met haar hang tussen de verdiepingen, alsof ik met haar zweef boven de tuinen. Ik voel haar gewicht, en ben bang dat we naar beneden vallen, maar ze rekt me uit. Ik zie de begroeiing op de muren, en herinner de begroeiing van de tuinen, de dorens, de valstrikken, puur natuur.

‘Ik ben de maker van de tuin,’ zegt ze plotseling. Ik schrik. ‘Hoe kun je zoiets maken ?’ vraag ik. Ze zwijgt, als het graf. Ik merk dat ik kwaad word van binnen, maar dan voel ik ineens genade. Al snel voel ik niets meer, ik kijk alleen maar in een onbekend gat, als een mist, een waas. Ik kan niet meer nadenken. ‘Wat is er aan de andere kant van de tuin ?’ vraag ik.

- Een snoepwinkel. Ze verkopen eigenlijk gewoon zoete vruchten.

Ik kijk naar haar kanten jurkje. Het is als een snoep jurkje. Ineens heb ik zoiets van : Als ik nog verder naar haar kijk, dan ga ik dood.

Ik rol van het bed af naar de trap, en laat mij naar beneden vallen. De dochter van de graaf vangt mij op, en de vrouw van het zolder stormt naar beneden. ‘Hij zit toch aan touwen vast, elastiek, draden, kettingen, dus wat wil je,’ schreeuwt ze.

‘Is dit de oorlog van de feeen,’ vraag ik, ‘of van de indianen.’ Ze grijpen elkaar in de haren. ‘Uit dat licht,’ roept de vrouw van de zolder. Ik staar doelloos naar de hoeken van de trap. Dan voel ik de hand van tante Connie, die mij naar haar kamer neemt. ‘Thee ?’ vraagt ze.

Ze maakt brood voor me, opgepoft en zacht, een beetje nat, met wat soep en pudding. ‘Je moet goed eten, jongen,’ zegt ze. Ik zie haar kauwen. Het zal wel avondetens-tijd zijn. Ik hoor vrouwen krijsen. Buiten hoor ik vogels krijsen. Het klinkt me als muziek in de oren. Bij tante Connie is alles altijd anders. Ze zorgt voor me, grijpt in wanneer het nodig is. Oom Joop zit aan de andere kant van de kamer. Een verfrommelde papieren zak ligt naast hem, met oud brood. De gouden klok tikt, en het is een rustgevend geluid. Ik probeerde vat te krijgen op de structuur van dit huis, maar het was alsof ik van de daken afgleed, of was dit huis slechts de weerspiegeling van de tuin. Het was niet bepaald mijn Eden, en toch wilde ik dit huis doordringen. Ik voelde mij een zwerver in dit huis, een huis wat ik nooit echt binnen kon gaan. Na een paar uur zaten de twee vrouwen keurig netjes tegen elkaar aan, in keurige zoete kleertjes, als feestbroodjes bij de bakker. Rozen op hen vastgespeld alsof er iemand jarig was, en de spelden gingen diep in hun vlees. ‘Ja dieper, dieper,’ dacht ik. Ik wilde het voelen bloeden. Het was al aan het bloeden. Het bloed sijpelde op de grond. Tante Connie raakte in paniek, en ik ook, omdat ik toch meer waarde hechtte aan de beoordelingen van tante Connie dan aan mezelf. ‘Waarom doen jullie dat !’ riep ze.

‘Dit is ons verbond,’ zeiden de twee vrouwen. ‘Ons bloed-verbond.’

‘Zie je,’ dacht ik bij mezelf, ‘dan had ik het wel goed ingeschat.’

‘Geef me de speld,’ zei ik. ‘Ik wil ook deel hebben aan het bloed-verbond.’ Het was een hele opluchting toen ik de speld in mijn vlees voelde gaan, en ik de zachtheid van de roos tegen mijn huid aanvoelde. Ik voelde me een plak vlees bij de slager.

‘Nu kun je het dak opkomen,’ zeiden de vrouwen. ‘Nu kon je de tuin bezaaien en besproeiien.’ De poort van mijn hersenen leek open te gaan, en de waas leek even te vertrekken. Ik wilde meer van zulke lichaams-spelden. Ik herinnerde de dorens, ik herinnerde hoe genadeloos diep ze gingen, totdat alles binnenin me brak, en ik begon te zweven. Ik was nu boven het dak, maar de huizen om ons heen waren veel groter. Ik kon de zolders inkijken en zag de vrouwen. Ze leken eenzaam, en ik was eenzaam. Ik was met een helm op geboren, maar die ontplofte nu. Ik zweefde bij iemand binnen. En hier zag ik bomen groeien door het hele huis. Ik was nog steeds in de tuin. Hier hingen zoveel gouden klokken aan de muur, die allemaal heerlijk tikten, zo licht, zo zacht, zo helder, ontwakende de diepste roerselen van mijn hersenen. Ze waren als een vuur in mijn lichaam. De mensen die hier woonden hadden allemaal dialogen. Het moest vooral ergens over gaan, maar ze kwamen er nergens mee. Ze leefden in een cirkeltje. Ik had ze al snel door. Toch was het allemaal erg verrijkend voor mij. Jurkjes hingen er aan de muur, vruchtjes lagen op schaaltjes, gezet op oventjes. ‘Is dit de weg naar de stad ?’ vroeg ik.

- Welke stad. Oh, de overstad.

Ik knikte. ‘Daar heb ik vaker over gehoord,’ zeiden ze. Ze lieten me ladders van touw zien. Ik klom en klom, dit huis was lang, als een herenhuis wat maar niet ophield. Mensen leefden hier als vogels. Ik wist niet waar ik moest kijken. ‘De parel van de tuin,’ zeiden ze, ‘is daar,’ en dan wezen ze omhoog. De ladder was glibberig, en ik gleed weg. In spiegels zag ik mezelf klimmen. Ik had weer het gevoel dat ik van de daken gleed, alsof ik het huis niet kon binnengaan. Tante Connie legde haar hand op mijn hoofd. Haar hand was gloeiend heet, of was mijn hoofd gloeiend heet. ‘Waarom ?’ vroeg ik. ‘Waarom is er hier geen doorkomen aan ?’ Tante Connie zei niks, zweeg als het graf. Ook de twee vrouwen zeiden niets. Het was als een schijnbaar open weg die dood liep. Een zwakte maakte zich van mij meester, en ik was gelijmd aan de grond. Met wilde maar beheerste ogen keek de dochter van de graaf naar mij, alsof ze een wild paard probeerde te temmen, met de koele zelfverzekerdheid dat dat haar aardig lukte. Even stond de tijd stil, en was het alsof zij de muziek van het moment perfect kon berijden. Als ze zou vallen zou ze aan draden verbonden zijn, als aan elastiek, zodat ze niet in de vlammen van het hellemeer zou vallen. Ik snakte naar adem. Ik hoorde haar ogen roepen. Toen greep ze me vast. ‘Ik laat je nooit meer los,’ zei ze. ‘Nooit meer.’ Even dacht ik dat ik thuis gekomen was. Ik probeerde me zo lang te maken als zij zich waardig voelde. ‘Wie ben jij eigenlijk ?’ vroeg ik.

De vrouw van het zolder liep terug naar de trap. In gedachten zweefde ik langs het huis, en de dochter van de graaf lag uitgestrekt op de daken. Wij konden dit huis niet binnenkomen. Wij waren in de tuin. Het zonlicht was aangenaam, en het was alsof we beiden smolten en naar beneden sijpelden, om in elkaar te versmelten ? Waren wij de vruchten van deze tuin ?

Hoofdstuk 2. De Sleutel

Tante Connie legt gouden bestek op de tafel voor het feestmaal. Oom Joop komt aan tafel zitten. Ik zit naast de dochter van de graaf. Ze houdt mijn hand vast. Tante Connie brengt dan de pan met het avondeten, en met een grote lepel laat ze het ploffen op onze borden. ‘Is zij van het zolder niet uitgenodigd ?’ vraag ik.

‘Ze heeft haar eigen,’ zegt tante Connie. Ik heb het gevoel dat ik wat mis, en ga na een tijdje naar het zolder. Ik voel me op en top. Ze ligt op bed, en staart door het raam. Ik ga bij haar zitten. Haar ogen kijken dwars door me heen, alsof ze me niet ziet. Als ik naar buiten kijk, zie ik haar weerspiegelingen daar, alsof ze uitgestrekt is over de daken, en langs de muren, als begroeiing. ‘Zoveel mensen kennen me niet,’ zegt ze. Dan staat ze op en geeft mij een bord. Het schijnt hier ook etenstijd te zijn. Ze schept op. We staren elkaar de hele tijd aan, en als ik dan later naar buiten staar is het al donker, en haar weerspiegelingen zijn als de lichten in de nacht, als woeste paarden over de daken. Ik hoor tante Connie beneden roepen. Het is tijd voor de nacht, maar ik wil niet slapen. Ik houd de hand vast van de vrouw van het zolder. Mijn hoofd voelt als een stad met huizen, grote huizen, hoge huizen, lange huizen, met bomen er tussen, met plaats voor de tuin. Het is alsof de vrouw van het zolder op mijn hersenen danst, en het doet pijn, en ik word al snel moe. Pudding voert ze me. Grote lange draden voel ik door mijn lichaam gaan, totdat ik het gevoel heb dat ik kan zweven. Haar bed is ineens zo dik en ver weg, haar kamer twee keer groter. Nee, naar buiten wil ik niet meer. Ik ben hier buiten. Zij is mijn wereld. Ik heb een kinderlijk geloof in haar.

Tante Connie laat me de schoonheid van het huis zien, van alle plekken, en ja, ik moet haar gelijk geven. Ze heeft een plaats in mij, alle dingen in dit huis hebben een plaats in mij. Ik heb ze nodig. Ik ben er bijna ziekelijk afhankelijk aan. Het is mijn levenswarmte. Maar toch voelt het alsof ik heen en weer gesleurd word. Ik heb nergens grip op, ik glijd telkens weg, dieper. Dit is een doodlopende weg, een fuik, van vuur. Ik zie ze het glas heffen. Zij zijn als de vlammen in mijn hoofd. Ik durf niet naar ze te kijken, want dan ga ik dood. Het zijn de hoofden van de Medusa. De mensen die hier wonen zijn net zo steen als dit huis, en iedereen die naar hen kijkt verandert in steen. Zo is het leven. Is dit de sleutel weg uit de tuin, of is dit de sleutel tot de tuin.

In de nacht danst de vrouw van de zolder als een zwaan, als een brandende struik. Ik probeer me om te draaien, maar ik kan niet. Deze dans is dodelijk, of misschien wel leidende naar de poort van de hel. Ik sta verstijfd. De uitsteeksels en aanhangsels van haar jurk raken mij. Ik kijk naar haar door mijn glas wijn. De poort brandt. Ik probeer me ergens aan vast te klampen, maar zonder success, totdat ik de stem van tante Connie hoor. Ik kan niet terugroepen. Iemand knijpt mijn keel dicht, maar ik heb geen verlangen om terug te roepen. Ik ben als een boom geworteld in de grond. Ik heb het geheim van Medusa gezien : Alleen met de ogen van wijn kunnen wij haar bekijken. Ze gilt en schreeuwt nu ik het geheim heb ontdek. Ik gooi de wijn in haar gezicht, want ze wil me verscheuren. Dan staat ze in vlammen, en het gehele huis brandt. Ik moet hier weg. Maar de trappen zijn hier van vuur. Alles is van vuur. Ik besluit te blijven. Medusa schijnt aardiger dan ik dacht. Haar hoofden leven hier in een vreemde vrede.

Roofdieren bespringen mij en verscheuren mij, en mijn hart is blij. Het is mijn vuur, het is omringd door mijn hart. Ik heb mijn weg hier doorheen gebeten. Een huis met standbeelden. Het is als een brandend strand, en een brandend oog leidt mij uit, om dieper in te gaan. De brandweerman houdt mij stevig vast. Zijn jas is glibberig. En dan brandt hij ook.

Tante Connie doet alsof er niets gebeurt is en staart mij aan. 'Nog wat koffie, jongen ?' vraagt ze. Ik zeg niks. Tante Connie schenkt nog wat voor me in. Wie zwijgt stemt toe. Mijn oude bed in de kamer van de dochter van de graaf is versleten, scheuren in de matras, en de piano is vals. Maar niet minder mooi dan de gouden spulletjes van tante Connie. Als tante Connie lacht heb ik het gevoel dat ze op de daken fietst. Ik keek naar de vrouw van de zolder. Waren we niet net als Adam en Eva die door de brandende heg probeerden terug te keren naar het paradijs ? En was dit paradijs een mengsel tussen huizen en blote benen ? Ik keek naar de dochter van de graaf. Ik probeerde een weg door haar heen te graven. Maar ze hield alles tegen. Tante Connie dient de pudding op. Ik kan de borsten zien van de vrouw van het zolder, door haar doorzichtige jurk heen, en ze heeft haar jurk ook wel flink open. Haar borsten druipen nog, als de moederlijke fontein, maar er zijn geen babies. Ik besluit niets te eten. Hier kan ik niet tegen, en het is dodelijk. Als ik naar de dochter van de graaf kijk, dan zie ik hetzelfde tafereel. Het is onbeschoft tegen tante Connie om pudding te laten druipen terwijl zij pudding opdient. Ik kan oom Joop goed begrijpen dat hij zo ver mogelijk van de tafel afzit, als een bibberend hondje. Maar plotseling is het alsof de stoppen bij mij doorslaan. Ik voel me een baby, een hond zelfs, die gevoed moet worden. Wat een drama. Tante Connie ziet het aan mijn gezicht en raakt in paniek. Zelfs oom Joop staat op. Iedereen zit verstijfd. Ik begin met grote happen van de pudding te eten, zodat al snel mijn hele gezicht eronder zit. Oom Joop lacht mij uit. Dit is de tuin van spot. Waarom zijn Adam en Eva hier teruggekeert. Ook de twee vrouwen lachen mij uit, terwijl ze hun jurken nog meer open trekken. En dan smeren ze de pudding over hun lichaam heen en gaan op de tafel liggen. 'Ik heb al brood gehad,' zegt oom Joop. Ik kan hier niet tegen. Zelfs een hond wordt beter behandeld. Ik word er erg stil van, en ga bij oom Joop zitten. 'Je weet hoe vrouwen zijn,' zegt oom Joop.

'Dodelijk is het,' zeg ik. 'We hebben niet zomaar met een stel hoofden te maken. Het zijn de hoofden van Medusa.'

'Kijk naar hen door het glas wijn,' zegt oom Joop. Tante Connie loopt naar de vrouwen toe, en giet wijn over hen heen. 'Wat een vertoning,' zeg ik. 'Dit is toch niet meer normaal.'

'Ik dacht ook dat ik naar een ander feestje was gegaan,' zei oom Joop.

'Kom op, nu weten we het wel,' zeg ik. 'Zo lopen we de fanfare niet. Moet je dat nou eens kijken, ze vervuilen die hele tafel.'

‘Nee hoor,’ zegt de dochter van de graaf. ‘Dit is de oerbron, de big bang.’

‘Als je je maar niet verroert,’ schreeuwt tante Connie. ‘We gaan hier geen polonaise in de kamer houden, al mijn spulletjes worden vies. Is er nog respect in dit land ?’

‘Likken, bloedvriend,’ zegt de vrouw van het zolder tegen haar wederhelft. ‘Alsof je leven er vanaf hangt.’

‘Als jullie niet eten wat de pot schaft,’ zegt tante Connie, ‘dan sodemieteren jullie maar op.’

‘We vonden het eten heerlijk,’ zei de vrouw van het zolder, ‘maar we hebben onze eigen toetjes meegenomen.’

‘Contractbreuk,’ zegt tante Connie. ‘Dat hadden we niet afgesproken zo, en voor half geld komen jullie er echt niet langs. Ik voel me door jullie verschrikkelijk door de tang genomen, als je dat maar weet. Ik heb nog wat blokken hout nodig voor het tuinvuur.’

‘Ik dacht anders dat Adam wel tegen een grapje kon,’ zei de vrouw van het zolder, ‘maar mijnheer loopt daar in het hoekje te kniezen.’

‘Oh, toe maar, geef mij maar weer de schuld,’ zei ik. ‘Het is nu oorlog.’ Ineens stormden de vrouwen op mij af, en peperden mij in met pudding, en trokken me op de tafel. ‘Dit is nog eens een kersttoetje, een vijf-gangen toetje is aan ons welbesteed,’ zei de vrouw van het zolder. Ik was woedend. ‘Als ik ooit loskom, dan zul je wat beleven,’ riep ik.

Het was alsof alle machines ineens stilstonden. We staarden elkaar allemaal aan, maar deden niets. ‘Ode aan de kok,’ zei de dochter van de graaf. Na een tijdje lagen we in het bad, en het was nog gezellig ook. Het was als een lange brandende dag aan het strand. Ik was moe, ik had mijn portie wel gehad. Het was een vreemde gewaarwording dat roosjes zo konden zijn. Ik zou vanaf nu veel meer op mijn hoede zijn. Dit mocht niet nog een keer gebeuren. Tante Connie zou het niet overleven. Er groeiden sinds die dag struiken op het behang, die ervoor zouden moeten zorgen dat deze dingen nooit meer zouden gebeuren. Tante Connie was het

goed zat, en huurde bewakers in, die een oogje in het zeil zouden houden. Ook liet ze overal cameras planten. We voelden ons vanaf die dag in ons huis bekeken. Maar de volgende keer dat we aan tafel zaten schoten bij mij weer de stoppen door. Ik verlangde zo naar de oermoeder, dat ik boven op de vrouw van het zolder klom, de stoel brak, en we vielen beiden op de grond. Een wachter schoot een pijl door mijn hoofd, net op tijd, en ik werd aan de muur gespietst. 'Geef hem melk,' zei tante Connie rustig. 'Jullie moeten niet zo paniekerig doen.' Pudding droop uit de borst van de vrouw van het zolder. Ik kon me niet bewegen. 'Eerste hulp bij ongelukken,' zei tante Connie. 'Hij is dood, hij heeft een pijl dwars door z'n kop. Geef hem de melk des levens, stelletje koeien. Nou, waar wachten jullie op.'

'Hij hangt te hoog, tante,' zeiden de vrouwen.

- Nou dan spuit je maar. Druk de knopjes maar goed in.

'Nee, hij is dood. Hij heeft Medusa gezien, en wie van haar melk drinkt gaat naar de hel.'

- Ik ben niet gelovig, stop met die onzin.

'God, zelfs als je de tepels van Medusa ziet ben je al overgeleverd aan de vlammen van de hel, en haar duistere hulpjes.'

- Ja, die ken ik, rijden die hier niet de hele tijd rond ? Medusa is al openlijk te kijk gezet, je hoeft het knopje van de tv maar aan te draaien.

'Arme jongens.'

Ik kon naar de melk fluiten. De dames gingen ieder hun eigen kant op. Ik was in de tuin der wreedheden, ik was op sterven na de dood met die pijl in m'n kop. Oom Joop was behulpzaam en trok de pijl uit mijn hoofd. Maar dat deed nog veel meer pijn, dus ik drukte hem er weer in. Even later klopte ik bij de vrouwen aan de deur, maar ze deden niet open. Ik sliep die nacht bij tante Connie en oom Joop in de huiskamer. De dag erna zaten ze allemaal aan tafel alsof er niets was gebeurd. 'Zo, de meer dan dodelijke borsten van Medusa zijn ook weer van de partij,' zei ik. De vrouwen zeiden niets. Ze aten gulzig en verslikten zich een paar

keer. Het ging zoals gewoonlijk weer nergens over. ‘Leuk,’ zei ik. ‘We zitten hier aan tafel met vergif. Killers.’

‘Houd je mond,’ zei tante Connie. ‘Jij bent ook niet een van de braafsten.’ Plotseling stonden de vrouwen als een vrouw op, als Medusa, en de muren om ons heen begonnen te branden. ‘Zie,’ riep tante Connie. ‘Ik wist het. Medusa is gekomen om wraak te nemen. Ren voor je leven.’ Oom Joop gooide een deken om ons heen, en trok ons naar zijn kant. Hij was de slimste geweest want sinds de dames hier aten zat hij bijna nooit meer aan tafel. Een golf van geweld sloeg ons neer. Maar oom Joop gedroeg zich als een duivel, en dat moest wel, anders had hij niks bij Medusa in de pap te brokkelen. Ik heb oom Joop nog nooit zo te keer zien gaan. Al snel stond Medusa buiten het raam. ‘Ik wist wel dat die wijven een grote pot met vergif waren,’ zei hij. Ik had nog nooit zo’n groot machts-spel gezien. Ik trilde als een hondje. Oom Joop was een held.

Omdat Medusa ons bleef bezoeken kregen we een ander huis in een andere straat. Er groeiden hier zogenaamde borsten-struiken die vruchten hadden als tepels waaruit een sap voortkwam wat bestand was tegen het borstgif van Medusa. We konden zelfs hierdoor Medusa genezen van haarzelf. De vloek was al snel verbroken. Er hoefde verder geen apocalypse aan te pas te komen. Onze vriendschappen werden hersteld, en al snel leefden we hier weer met elkaar. Alles was veilig nu. We hadden onze condomen-boom gevonden.

Een vrouw leefde tussen de verdiepingen in, een vrouw in mijn hoofd, onderdrukt door de hedendaagse maatschappij, een deel gesloten door de hersenen. Medusa was de oorlogsgodin, weggepest door een maatschappij van valse vrede. Een vreemde vrede bracht haar terug. Zij kende de tuin van spot ook. Ze had die zelf gemaakt. Ook kende ze de tuin van edelheden en wreedheden, op maat gesneden. Ze had zich een weg door die tuin gebaand, terug naar het paradijs. Ze ontmoette haar Adam in de lucht, en leidde ook hem terug. Door de brandende heg gingen zij, en helemaal opgebrand kwamen zij aan. Heel snel kwamen zij erachter dat zij een cirkeltje hadden gelopen. Zo slaan dan al snel de stoppen door, en vinden ze de liefde in zichzelf, die na korte tijd niets dan haat blijkt te zijn. Het is alles niet wat het lijkt. Ik kreeg een fatalistische, nihilistische kijk op het leven door deze dingen. We waren weer terug bij af. Heel wat dromen waren kapot gesprongen, en we begonnen ons oude huis te missen, maar daar woonde een nieuwe familie in.

Waar we dan ook naartoe gaan, het is altijd hetzelfde. Laten we daarom naarbinnen keren, en elkaar daar vinden, of hele andere personen die eindelijk onze dromen kunnen waarmaken, maar dit is slechts ijdelheid, illusie. We jagen lucht achterna, iedereen weet het, maar we blijven proberen. We blijven happen naar de koek die voor ons wordt gehangen. We zijn geconditioneerd, slaven, hondjes van Pavlov. Alles is hier misleiding op misleiding. Ik begon een pessimist te worden, zwaar somber. Ik wilde niemand valse hoop geven, niemand voorliegen. We liepen de leugen achterna omdat er geen waarheid was, of was de waarheid gewoon in een heel klein hoekje ergens, daar waar we het onmogelijk zouden kunnen vinden

? Maar alle dingen zijn toch mogelijk voor hen die geloven. En zo ging ik geloven. Niet in het kerkelijk geloof, maar in die vrouwen hier met hun gekke spelletjes. Misschien dat de grootste leugen ook diep in haar de waarheid droeg. Ik had kans, want ik had een pijl door mijn hoofd. Denken was fataal. Het moest van een andere kant komen. Maar ik merkte al snel dat die vrouwen een gesloten boek waren. Ik kwam er niet ver mee. En ik wilde toch ergens in geloven. Een grote trots was er, ergens diep binnenin. Iets wat mij over het ravijn kon laten zweven, iets wat ik niet kon beschrijven, een mystiek gevoel. Oom Joop zei altijd dat een boek ons erdoor zou helpen, maar hij wist niet welk boek. Een popperige papieren kermis leek het. Tante Connie had een pop in een schoenendoos verborgen, een pop waarin ze heilig geloofde dat deze ons allen redden zou. Vaak sta ik op het balkon en voel me tussen de huizen, tussen de bomen, tussen de rivieren, overal tussen.

Het is een wonder dat ik nog leef met die pijl door mijn hoofd. Op een dag voel ik me door het gevoel dat die pijl in mijn hoofd geeft zo in de wolken, zo extatisch, dat ik merk dat ik kan vliegen. Heel voorzichtig vlieg ik van het balkon, tussen de huizen door. Mensen vallen flauw achter de ramen. ‘Bedrieger,’ roept er iemand. Ik kan er niet mee zitten. Ook al zou het bedrog zijn, ik heb er een goede tijd mee. Ik vlieg naar de top van het hoogste huis in de buurt. Als ik naar beneden kijk is alles wit. Ook het hoge platte horizontale dak waarop ik sta. Ik ruik bosgeuren. Dan vlieg ik over de stad. Wat als ik dit alles zou kunnen ontsnappen. Ik besluit naar de volgende stad te vliegen, daar waar de fabrieks-wolken zijn. Ik houd van de rook. Ik hoop dat we er allemaal in verzuipen. Dat is beter dan wat we hadden. We hebben niets te verliezen. Maar dan roep ik mezelf tot orde. Er staan wat meiden voor een raam. Ze kijken verwonderd. Ik zwaai naar ze. Ze wenken me. Een van hen opent het raam, en ik vlieg naar binnen. ‘Kijk, die kan vliegen,’ zegt er een. ‘Een truc,’ zeg ik. ‘Leer het me,’ zegt een van de meiden. Ik vertel hen over de pijl in mijn kop. Ze giechelen een beetje. Al snel hangen ze aan me. ‘Mag ik in jullie geloven,’ vraag ik. ‘Ik wil ergens in geloven.’

- Wij geloven in de dominee.

‘Okay, maar dat is niet wat. Kan ik in jullie geloven ?’

- Ik weet niet of ik daartoe bevoegd ben.

‘Ik geloof in je.’

- Wat moet ik nu doen ?

‘Vlieg met me mee.’

- Ja, maar ik kan niet vliegen. Waarom blijf je niet gewoon hier. We hebben het hier erg naar onze zin.

‘Okay.’

Ik bleef bij ze staan, en ze trokken me aan tafel. Ik moet zeggen ze waren een stuk netter dan de vrouwen die ik kende, de Medusa-vrouwen. Ze aten deftig, met mes en vork, geen geklieder. Ik staarde naar buiten, allemaal rook. Ik kon niet veel zien. Ze sliepen allemaal in de huiskamer op matrassen. Ik kreeg ook een matras. Ik sliep al snel. Ik merkte al snel dat ik in mezelf aan het bidden was tot hen. Ik was op zoek naar een geloof. De volgende dag namen ze mij mee naar de kerk. Ik moet zeggen dat het mij aardig beviel. De dominee was erg aardig. Hij had ook wel wijze dingen te zeggen, en liep voortdurend met zijn sleutels te rinkelen. Had hij misschien de sleutels om Medusa te openen ? Na de kerkdienst liep ik op hem af om het hem te vragen. Zonder nadenken nam hij een sleutel van zijn sleutelhanger af en gaf het aan mij. ‘Probeer het maar uit,’ zei hij. Maar eigenlijk wilde ik hier niet meer weg. Deze mensen waren geweldig. Weer ging ik met de meiden mee naar hun huis. Omdat ik heel veel aan Medusa dacht, ben ik even later toch teruggegaan naar mijn eigen stad en huis. Ik begon direkt aan de Medusa-vrouwen te sleutelen. En het werkte, tot mijn eigen verbazing. Voor het eerst had ik het gevoel dat ik met hen ergens kwam. Alsof we de boom des levens hadden bereikt. We dronken koffie op het resultaat. Ik wilde de dominee bedanken, en vloog terug naar de andere stad. De meiden waren blij me weer te zien, en samen gingen we naar het huis van de dominee. De dominee was net zijn huis aan het schilderen. Na het bedankje nam ik afscheid van de meiden, en ging weer terug naar mijn eigen huis. Ik had Medusa verlost uit haar kooi.

Hoofdstuk 3. De Gespleten Aarde

De meiden hebben al snel ons huis gevonden, en de dominee ook. Ze waren met de dominee meegereden. De sleutel had namelijk een zendertje van binnen. Natuurlijk waren ze van harte welkom, maar de Medusa-vrouwen werden snel jaloers. Daar wist de dominee wel wat op, want die had veel meer sleutels. Wat me opviel was dat alles snel verstijfde. Alsof de sleutels veel openden, maar tegelijkertijd viel er ook zoveel dicht. We kregen het idee dat er een vloek op de sleutel lag. De dominee was niet overtuigd, want die geloofde heilig in zijn sleutels. Omdat hij zich steeds arroganter opstelde heeft tante Connie hem even later het huis uitgezet. Ik bewaarde de sleutels sindsdien. Die waren veel te gevaarlijk in de handen van een dominee. De meiden aanbaden inmiddels Medusa aan haar voeten. De dominee was woedend en noemde hen afgodendienaars. Ze waren niet meer welkom in zijn stad. Het bleek dat hij ook nog eens de burgemeester was. Medusa begon trouwens door deze aanbidding ook steeds

meer te eisen. Haar voeten moesten gekust worden, anders zou ze alles vertrappen. Ik had allang spijt dat ik haar had verlost, maar het kwam allemaal door die sleutels. Op een gegeven moment was ik het zo zat dat ik de sleutels inslikte. Maar sindsdien ging het niet goed met mij. Ik begon zelf een Medusa te worden. Wie had dat ooit durven dromen dat ik ooit de god der wrake zou worden. Het liep uit op een gevecht met de andere Medusa om de macht. De Medusa begon een gevaarlijk mechanisme te worden. Voordat het nog erger zou worden besloot ik een volgende vliegtocht te beginnen. Ditmaal kwam ik in een andere stad met de hoogste gebouwen. Een oud vrouwtje deed haar raam open, en nodigde mij uit. Toen ik haar het verhaal over de sleutels vertelde scheen ze mij te kunnen helpen. Zij was namelijk een heks. Ik moest een bepaald kruidendrankje drinken, en dan zou ik de sleutels kunnen uitspuwen, en dan zou zij de sleutels omsmelten. Maar alles pakte anders uit. Het kruidendrankje werkte niet. Ik had de krachten van Medusa. Ik was immuun tegen hekserij. Ik moest onder ogen komen dat ik in een monster aan het veranderen was.

Ik strompelde naar de uitgang van deze tuin. Ik had het in zicht nu, en greep naar mijn buik. Ook al verdween de uitgang en de buitenste heg in het niets, en leek het alsof het verder van me af begon te liggen, ik liep toch door. Ik greep om me heen als tastende in het donker. Ik greep het touw mij toegeworpen. Een vriendelijk vrouwengezicht keek me aan. Rozensappen dropen in een fles. Ik hoorde gegorgel en gezang. Bloedende tuinen, zover het oog reikt, vermengd met regen, waar het oog van Medusa over waakt. Het koren dat het goud omhoog haalt, het licht der sterren weerkaatsende, haar vrucht wordt vastgehouden. Medusa waakt. Het houten huis kraakt onder het getal van de lelies. Hier heeft ze haar woning. Hier voedt zij haar raadsel, haar mysterie, waar prinsen op paarden al eeuwen naar zoeken. Nee, zij zullen niet vinden, want Medusa waakt over haar geheim. Haar kroning was een bespotting. Haar lijden was een ontmaskering, maar niemand is ooit tot haar parel gekomen, niemand heeft ooit haar zwaard gedragen. Allen sterven zij door een blik op haar te slaan. Tot steen werden zij in alle eeuwigheden. Haar discipel is zoek, haar beker verloren. Zij heeft haarzelf nog nooit gezien. Zou zij het weten, dan zou zij sterven, daarom weet zij maar half. De rozengrachten hier zijn vol met parels. De mensen hier weten dat Medusa een geheim heeft, alleen ze kennen het niet. Ze hebben er alleen een glimp van opgevangen, en die glimp heeft hen voor altijd verblind.

Ik zit op mijn houten paard, mij hobbelpaard van vroeger, met mijn lange speer, mijn lans. ‘Open de poort,’ roep ik, maar alles zwijgt. Ik vlieg hoog, over de muur heen, maar hier is niks. De aarde is dus toch plat. Is dit het onverbiddelijke geheim van Medusa ? Ik stort hier uit alles wat ik nog in mijn hoofd heb, alle puinhopen, alles gaargebraden, en kijk in de enorme diepte. Nee, het is een ravijn. De aarde is gespleten. Een groot werk moet dat geweest zijn, met de schaar des hemels. Daar aan de overkant weten de mensen niet dat ze niet weten. Ik vlieg weer terug, en omhels mijn Medusa, en mijn meiden. ‘Ik ben aan de andere kant van de schaar geweest,’ zei ik. ‘Daar moeten we ook niet wezen. Vernietig alle spiegels. We staren wel in een glas wijn, met wijn van borsten-struiken.’ Ik strek mij uit. Ze zijn blij dat ik terug ben. Ik solliciteer bij de zeevaart. Ik waarschuw hen dat de aarde wel degelijk plat is, en dat verklaart ook waarom er zoveel schepen zijn gebleven. Ik word er kapitein. Als ik thuis ben speelt oom Joop vaak op het orgel. Maar ik ben niet veel thuis. Ik moet de zee afbakenen. Een hoge rand moet er gemaakt worden, waar niemand meer overheen kan tuimelen. Medusa is als een moeder die haar kinderen terugroept. Zij heeft de tuin gebouwd, en haar muren, en die

moeten we eren, omdat het buiten veel erger is. Er is geen paradijs aan de andere kant van de heg, maar de heg spreekt tot de verbeelding. Ik zie nog meer paradijs in een pot pindakaas. Als ik thuis ben zijn de vrouwen blij, dan is het feest, maar een paradijs zal het nooit zijn, en hebben we dat wel nodig. We hebben toch elkaar.

Op een dag ga ik met de meiden voetballen op het pleintje. Via een tunnel komen we in een ander deel van de stad, in een winkelstraat. We slenteren door de straten. Ik neem hen mee naar de bakker, en koop wat special brood voor hen. Brood kan mij nooit te luxe zijn. Het is een levensnoodzaak. Bij de speelgoedwinkel wanen ze zich in het paradijs. Bij het tuinhek laten we alle zorgen achter ons. Voor de chocolade-winkel danst de vrouw van chocolade. Ze roept herinneringen bij me op, ze danst als een zwaan. We gaan de stoffige winkel binnen. Een grote notenkraker-eekhoorn staart ons aan. 'Ja,' zegt de winkelier, 'veel noten altijd in de chocolade, we hebben een verdrag met de noten-industrie. We kregen dit beeld van hen, toch aardig, vindt u niet.' Ik knikte. De meiden keken de man vriendelijk aan. We konden aan hem zien dat hij er blij van werd. 'Ik zal u vertellen, ik ben mijn vrouw verloren,' zei de winkelier. 'Ik mis haar echt, en er is nu een zee van ruimte boven, want ze had zoveel spullen en die zijn allemaal in haar graf meegegaan. Komt u maar even mee, dan laat ik het u zien.' Boven stond alles leeg. Ik staarde naar buiten, waar de chocolade-vrouw nog steeds danste. Ze was een zwerfster, en werd zo altijd genoemd.

Grote poppen van chocolade stonden in kasten. De man deed er erg zakelijk over, en kraste wat op papieren. Even later stonden we weer op straat. Aan het eind van de straat was een fontein. We zagen tante Connie lopen met een zware tas. 'Tante Connie,' riep ik. Ze had koffie gekocht, in allerlei soorten. Samen liepen we naar huis. Ik hielp haar de tas te dragen, en de meiden hielden ook wat spullen vast. Medusa wachtte ons op.

ARABISCH AMALGAAM

Hoofdstuk 1.

Ik, 27 jaar,

Lang,

Doe mezelf ouder voor dan ik ben.

Zij, 44 jaar

We zijn gelukkig samen, alsof we het eeuwig geluk hebben gevonden. Toch leiden we een saai leven, een sleur, zitten we opgesloten tussen muren. We leven meer in de dalen dan op de toppen. We mogen niet klagen, alcohol vult altijd de leegtes op. We moeten beiden oppassen geen alcoholisten te worden, maar we hebben het nu redelijk onder controle. Vaak als we klachten hebben wordt ons alcoholische dranken voorgeschreven door onze dokter. Onze dokter is wel alcoholist, maar daar hebben wij genoegen meegenomen. Dit omdat het een aardige man is, en dat zijn dokters zeer zelden. Hij neemt ons serieus en heeft ons op sleeptouw genomen.

Zij, is kleiner dan mij, heeft grote borsten die het leeftijds-verschil opvullen. We hebben geen kinderen, en dat willen we ook niet. Ze is rustig, ik ben tamelijk druk, dus we houden elkaar in balans. Zij leert mij nu om rustig te zijn, ook om mijn innerlijke stem te verstaan. Innerlijke vrede noemt ze dat. De dokter is hier weleens dronken geweest. We hebben besloten hem de hand boven het hoofd te houden. We zouden hem nooit verraden. We zijn niet kerkelijk, maar gaan wel naar een discussie-groepje om daar de dingen van het geloof te bespreken. Veelal wordt het geloof vanuit de atheistische hoek bekeken, aangevuld met kunstzinnige ideeen. We beschouwen het geloof als een vreemde erfenis, als cultuurgoed, maar voelen ons ook ingenomen, onder schrikbewind, door kolonisten uit het midden-oosten. We hebben nog geen geestelijke onafhankelijkheid. Ook de psychische gezondheidszorg houdt ons nog in mentale afhankelijkheid, en de zogeheten tandheelkunde houdt ons in orale afhankelijkheid, en deze bezetters komen allemaal uit het oosten aanwaaien. Trots zijn we er niet op, we hebben meer binnengelaten dan ons lief is, en hebben onze onafhankelijkheid prijsgegeven aan idioten, beulen. Maar ja, het was immers oorlog, het was een strooptocht, kolonisten zijn uit op kolonies, het creeeren van een apartheid. Deze kolonisten hebben een minderwaardig ras geschapen, wij. Het is voor het leken-ras verboden na te denken. Er wordt al voor ons gedacht, er is al voor ons gedacht, en er zal nog veel voor ons gedacht worden. Dat de etiketten niet passen is niet van belang. Het zijn de merktekens van het beest.

En dan is er nog de sex-politie die ons sexueel afhankelijk heeft gemaakt, bang dat een onzedelijk geluidje in een oplettend kinderoortje terecht zal komen. Maar diezelfde kinderoortjes worden niet gespaard voor het traumatiserende geschreeuw van knettergekke dokters en het erbarmenloze geboor van de zogeheten tandarts. Dat diezelfde kinderen voor de ogen van hun ouders door zulke misdadigers oraal worden gescalpeerd schijnt geen probleem te zijn. In Afrika worden kleine meisjes vanwege het volksgeloof aldaar vaginaal besneden, en daar is men in de hele wereld terecht ontdaan over, en wordt het als een godslasterlijke misdaad beschouwd, maar hier worden kinderen, zowel jongens als meisjes door de bezetter oraal besneden, en geen kip die erom kraait.

Mijnheer A. Hoekstra-Van Het Land denkt hier anders over. In zijn zogeheten tandartsen-praktijk wordt alles veilig gedaan, en zijn er strenge voorzorgsmaatregelen, die overigens overal gelden, en waar ook een strenge controle op is. Ook worden er na de besnijding betrouwbare, goed geteste stoffen gebruikt om de opening weer mee te bedekken, zodat het gebit van het kind extra lang mee kan gaan. Mevrouw T. Foppen sluit zich hier helemaal bij aan, en ja, wat hebben wij in te brengen tegen deze bezetters ? We kunnen ons hoogstens aansluiten bij het verzetstrijders-front tegen zulke praktijken. Wij hebben allemaal het merkteken van het beest ontvangen, of we nu wilden of niet, en het merkteken is eeuwig. Daar kan zelfs God of de keizer niets aan veranderen. Er zijn hier in dit land drie oppergeloven waar iedereen zich aan dient te onderwerpen, waarvoor elke knie zich dient te buigen, en waartoe elke tong zal belijden : het medische geloof, het geloof in de geestelijke gezondheid, en het orale geloof, tot aan het dentale toe. En of je nu een dentaal bent of je bent het niet : die kerk kent geen grenzen.

Maarten Stokmans-Van Zeilen, zogeheten tandarts, aan de Belgische grens, vermeld dat er de laatste tijd vreemde dingen in zijn zogeheten tandartsen-praktijk plaatsvinden. Zo zouden beugels spontaan inkrimpen, en zogenaamd amalgaam, de zogeheten grijze roestvrije metaal-vullingen, zou spontaan in het niets oplossen. Hij gebruikt daarom nu veel vaker witte en rode vullingen, die volgens hem wat meer betrouwbaar zijn. Rood is tegelijkertijd de kleur van zijn lievelingskat, dus dat geeft ook direkt een emotionele verbinding met thuis. Ook is Maarten tegelijkertijd een enthousiast lid van de pinkstergemeente, en staat hij elke zondag trouw in deze kerk te klappen op de maat van de overigens heel mooie en aanstekelijke muziek. Hij heeft een visie voor het invoeren van veel meer kleuren zogeheten vullingen, zodat de mensen kunnen kiezen waarmee de barbaarse boorgaten voor eeuwig kunnen worden verborgen. Dat zou ook wat meer vrolijkheid brengen onder deze groep mensen die zo lijden onder de orale bezetting uit het oosten. Hij vindt ook wel dat de paus van de zogeheten tandartsen, Alexander de Kleine, de touwtjes wel wat mag vieren.

Kaakchirurg Riekerd van Aarnautsen is het hier niet mee eens, want hij vreest dat een al te zeer bemoedigde jonge generatie wel eens het einde van de bezetting zou kunnen betekenen. En dat zou helemaal godsonterend zijn. De wet die hen door God gegeven is, en waardoor zij de macht hebben gekregen, moet gehandhaafd worden. Van Aarnautsen staat hierin niet alleen. Tenminste negentig procent van de zogeheten tandartsen en kaakchirurgen staan achter hem, alhoewel sommigen gedwongen zijn dit te doen. Ook is hij van mening dat het God Zelf

is geweest die het zogeheten amalgaam heeft geschapen, en dat wij Zijn schepping moeten eren en ervan gebruik moeten maken. Hij is van mening dat het amalgaam ook goed gebruikt kan worden in andere delen van het lichaam, vooral in de botten. Hij vindt het onzin om mensen die jarenlang niet kunnen slapen van de heuppijn een nieuwe heup te geven. Implantaties van amalgaam zouden volgens hem wonderen kunnen verrichten. Dit omdat het volgens hem bewezen is dat amalgaam gevoeligheid van de botten kan afdekken.

Ja, de verschillende meningen over amalgaam en het gebruik ervan, dat is me er eentje. Nu wil Van Aarnoutsen zijn naam veranderen in Van Aernoutsen met Ae, want dat staat volgens hem veel deftiger. Men is er maar druk mee, met de grote drie, de drie supergeloven van dit land. Het christelijk geloof is daar helemaal aan ondergeschikt, want ook de christen buigt voor de dokter, de geestelijk verzorger en de zogeheten tandarts. Het geloof van de zogeheten tandarts is gebaseerd op de orale besnijding, als plicht, als prioriteit, en zij die rebels daartegen zijn worden doorverwezen naar de geestelijke verzorgers, want die mensen mankeren natuurlijk heel wat. Veel mensen denken dat we in 1945 zijn bevrijd van de nazi's, maar de bezetting door de nazi's is groter dan ooit, door de medi-nazi's, de psychinazi's en de nazi's van de mond, de orale nazi's. En dit is dan ook de drieeenheid die alomtegenwoordig aanbeden wordt. Het vullingenbeheer wordt overgelaten aan de orale organisten, de tandpasta-producenten, die net zoals de nazi's fluor gebruiken, een afvalproduct, om de gehypnotiseerde kolonie gewillig te houden. Zij bespelen met grote flair en betutteling de monden van de leken-families, zodat er niet al teveel tegenspraak zal zijn. Men moet eten wat de pot schaft, en door het gepoets komt er ook nog eens lekker veel gifdamp vrij van de kwikhoudende en kankerverwekkende chemicalien die ze vullingen noemen inplaats van gedwongen bot-implantaten, als de kinderdoop na de besnijdenis. En na zulk een gebeurtenis is hun naam ineens haas, en zijn alle verdere klachten voor de psychiater en de zondagsschool. Nee, dan ben ik maar als een oude jood die zegt : De verlosser moet nog komen. Een geschikte kanditaat hiervoor zou zijn Nelson Lincoln, die ook nog eens voor de dieren opkomt.

Onder dwangverpleging moeten we vandaag de dag van de verboden vrucht eten, om zo vervolgens nog meer in de problemen te komen, om zo nog rijper voor de verboden vrucht te worden. Dit is een vicieuze cirkel. En gedwongen implantaten hebben meer te maken met bezoek van buitenaardse wezens dan met werkelijke zorg. We zijn allang niet meer van onszelf. Maar goed, elke religie heeft zijn ongelovigen, en die moeten naar de hel. De hele wereld zal het beest achterna gaan om zijn beeld te aanbidden en zijn merkteken te dragen. De vijand werkt met vergiftiging, en met ontkenning ervan, zo is het altijd al geweest.

Mijnheer Olafsen uit Zutphen aan de Rijn zegt dat aan amalgaam geen enkel gevaar zit, want alles zit netjes ingedekt binnenin de kies. Nooit van dampvorming en metaalradiatie gehoord, mijnheer Olafsen ? Vervolgens zegt mijnheer Olafsen dat er maar heel weinig van het amalgaam daadwerkelijk in het lichaam terecht kan komen. Hoe weet u dat mijnheer Olafsen ? Ooit weleens opgemeten ? En weet u niet dat de apparatuur van de bezetters zichzelf echt niet zullen gaan verraden ? Drogredenaties, mijnheer Olafsen. En u heeft geen respect voor de mening van een ander, zelfs niet als het om hun eigen mond gaat. Uw wil is wet, want u heeft uw kolonie bezet, en duldt geen verzet. U houdt hen allen in slaap door het stafke van

Doornroosje, met uw prikkende boren, soms tot aan de zenuw toe, en dan maar de gepleegde misdaden afdekken. Wie heeft u gezegd in de monden van gevoelige kinderen te gaan boren ? Het is niet veel anders dan Karel de Kleine die met het zwaard de ongelovigen dwong het christendom aan te nemen. En zo is de orale besnijding net zo erg als de vaginale besnijding, omdat het beiden om dwang gaat, en de klachten erbij niet serieus worden genomen. Klachten zijn de tekenen dat de bezetting werkt. En men wil dat zo houden. Alle tong zal belijden, elke knie zal buigen.

Bert Ootjes is door het verzet als zogeheten holistisch tandarts geplaatst in Bergen aan de Maas. Hij werd geplaatst voor het verwijderen van brandmerken, mertekens en nummers van het beest, en werkte in opdracht van de patient. Door de ongelovelijke werkdruk is mijnheer Ootjes overspannen geraakt, en plaatste het verzet een tweede zogeheten holistisch tandarts, professor Joost Achterbergen. Ook hij werkte in opdracht van de patient. Sindsdien zijn er vele zogeheten holistische tandartsen in het land gaan werken om de orale besnijdingen tegen te gaan. Veel van die zogeheten holistische tandartsen waren boorloos, maar ook de bezetters infiltreerden in deze branche, maar dan met boren. Om het infiltreren tegen te gaan plaatste het verzet schermpjes die zelf dauwdruppels konden aanmaken, en die schermpjes bezaten twee soorten poedertjes die op de zogeheten tandarts zouden reageren. Werden de dauwdruppels blauwkleurig, dan was de kust veilig, maar als de dauwdruppels roodkleurig werden, dan had de patient te doen met een infiltrant. Zo konden patienten het snel testen. Het was een uitvinding van Bert Ootjes. Niemand heeft ooit het tegendeel van de werking ervan kunnen bewijzen, en als er wetenschappelijk commentaar van buiten het verzet kwam, dan werd dat gewoon niet erkend. Het kwam er al snel op neer dat minstens vijftig procent van de zogeheten holistische tandartsen infiltranten waren van de bezetting. Velen hadden gewoon hun eigen gifjes die ze gebruikten, en de orale besnijding werd gewoon doorgezet. Ook het half serieus nemen werd een grote trend.

Ik ben in het verzet gegaan toen ik 25 werd, maar omdat ik op straat werd neergestoken kon ik geen actief lid meer zijn, en beperkte mij hooguit tot discussie-groepjes. Ik raakte verlamd. Ik zit nu in een rolstoel, en moet weer langzaam leren lopen. Mijn vriendin helpt me daarbij. Vandaag ben ik met haar naar het naaktstrand gegaan omdat het buitengewoon mooi weer was. Daar waren mensen met mooie naakte plekken in hun mond, niet vervuild door de zogeheten tandarts. Alles puur natuur.

28 Januari 1971

De flower power beweging groeit nog steeds, meer dan ooit. Ook de ‘Baas in Eigen Mond’ beweging groeit hard, vooral onder de jeugd. Ik kan weer een beetje lopen. De wonden zijn aardig genezen. De naaktstranden zijn dichtbevolkt nu. Overal wordt geprotesteerd en gedemonstreerd tegen de bezetting, tegen de grote drie, maar het ministerie is niet onder de indruk. Het is volgens hen door de gezondheidsraad bewezen dat de grote drie geen kwaad hebben verricht en een bevordering zijn voor de volksgezondheid. Inmiddels grijpt de

bevolking massaal naar speciale tandpastas voor gevoelige tanden, want nieuwe zogeheten vullingsoorten zorgen ervoor dat zelfs duikers niet meer zo diep konden duiken als voorheen, doordat ze de druk op de mond niet meer aankunnen vanwege deze nieuwe aanwinst in de pharmaceutische industrie. Dit wordt door het ministerie ontkent. De nieuwe zogeheten vullingsoorten zijn prima. De bezetting kan er alleen maar van profiteren. Er wordt alleen vanuit het hogere elite-ras gedacht. Het leken-ras is niet interessant. Steeds meer jongeren beginnen zich tegen de flower power beweging te verzetten, omdat er maar niets gebeurt. Het is allemaal te soft, en de meesten worden gezien als watjes die niets ondernemen dan mantras zingen en mandalas tekenen. De heavy metal beweging begint te groeien, en kaapt veel van de flower power beweging weg. De zogeheten underground wordt een grote attractie voor degenen die maar geen aansluiting konden vinden in de flower power beweging, of hen die erin teleurgesteld waren en grote vraagtekens hadden.

Bert Ootjes begint een nieuwe pseudo-industrie en wordt door de politie opgepakt en vastgezet. Hij is inmiddels de grootste verzetsstrijder die het verzet kent, en de bekendste. Hij wordt ook wel de Vader van het Verzet genoemd. In de gevangenis vindt Bert Ootjes een nieuw hormoon uit wat tanden weer kan laten aangroeien. Wel zorgt dit hormoon ervoor dat de tanden om de zoveel tijd gewisseld worden, en dat betekent dus tegelijkertijd het einde van de hele zogeheten tandheelkunde. Het hormoon is een mengsel van een stof die door haaien en krokodillen wordt gedragen, en die door een simpele injectie in een mens ingebracht kan worden, eens en voor altijd. Vanaf het moment van de injectie maakt het lichaam de stof zelf aan. Het hormoon slaat in als een bom, en naast het verdwijnen van de zogeheten tandheelkunde valt ook de geestelijke gezondheidszorg en ook het medische bewind. Nu een van de grote drie is gevallen blijkt het dat ze hun belangrijkste schakel kwijt zijn. Mensen worden gezonder doordat ze niet meer als een afvalput van gifstoffen worden behandeld. Ook het kerkelijk geloof valt hierbij in, en onze erfenis bleek niet veel meer te zijn dan een zogeheten vulling na de besnijdenis, en nu de besnijdenis was verdwenen daalde ook de behoefte naar een zogeheten vulling, maar de dwang was er nog steeds. De grote twee adopteerden toen het kerkelijk geloof als nummer drie, maar de geloofwaardigheid hiervan was tot een minimum gedaald, en velen lieten zich niet zomaar meer afzetten.

3 Januari 1980

Bert Ootjes komt vrij, en zorgt ervoor dat ons land de onafhankelijkheid krijgt. De geestelijke gezondheidszorg en het medische geloof worden tot liefde-werk gereduceerd. Het kerkelijk geloof mag daarbij helpen, maar verliest haar macht. Nelson Lincoln wordt de nieuwe anarchistische leider, en ook Joost Achterbergen speelt hierin een grote rol. Zij worden de nieuwe grote drie. Een man genaamd Tutuc zet een geheel nieuwe religie op gebaseerd op liefde en sex. Maas-Middelland wordt de nieuwe hoofdstad, waar professionele prostituees zich zetelen en de stad leiden. Er worden meer naaktstranden geopend, en het land wordt voor vijftig procent naturistisch. Tutuc richt de Naturistische Anarchistische Partij op, de NAP, en krijgt zestig procent van alle stemmen. Velen hebben een andere definitie van naturisme, die volgens hen veel meer is dan gewoon naakt lopen. Binnen het naturisme komen vele stromingen. Er wordt fel uitgehaald naar de mode beweging die wordt gezien als sexuele

onderdrukking en het creeeren van een underdog. Nog steeds dertig procent van de bevolking hangt de mode beweging aan, en ze hebben grote invloed, vooral op scholen, waar andersdenkenden al snel als leken-ras worden gezien. De mode wordt steeds meer gezien als manipulatie en als een belemmering voor de vrijheid.

28 Augustus 1981

Het land heeft de status van Utopia bereikt. Er is vrede overal. Men kan elkaar weer waarderen, men voelt zich weer veilig bij elkaar, er is weer vertrouwen, rust, maar ook onafhankelijkheid. Ik kan inmiddels weer goed lopen en alles weer doen. Veel ga ik met mijn vriendin naar het zwanenmeer, het plantsoen. Hier kom ik helemaal tot rust. We hebben het vaak over onze schooltijd. Ik ben erg veranderd volgens mijn vriendin, minder druk. De roosjes beginnen uit te komen langs het zwanenmeer, en ze brengen wit sap voort. De grootste zwaan van het plantsoen gaat stoer over het riviertje dat het slot omgeeft. Altijd ruikt het hier naar zeewier. Als ze van die grootste zwaan niet zouden zeggen dat het een zwaan was, dan zou ik denken dat het een paard was. De bloemen komen hier laat uit, en niemand weet waarom. Altijd pas na de mid-hitte van de zomer. De criminaliteit is hier tot een nulpunt gedaald. Ik voel me weer veilig op straat.

In andere landen is het nog geen Utopia, en zijn missionarissen van Bert Ootjes vaak niet welkom. Heel veel buitenlanders emigreren naar ons land, en er komen steeds meer flats, die ook steeds hoger worden, en dit schijnt een goede uitwerking te hebben op de onderlinge vrede. In de politiek in andere landen gaat het er hard aan toe, ze geven Bert Ootjes geen kans. En ons land noemen ze de nieuwe toren van Babel. Dan wordt Bert Ootjes in het buitenland vastgezet wegens het smokkelen van zwaar alcoholische dranken. Hier schrijft hij zijn apocalypse. In ons land wordt een standbeeld van hem opgericht. Zijn geboortedag wordt een nationale feestdag. Met de diertjes gaat het helaas nog steeds niet goed. Ze worden nog volop geslacht, en er wordt nog volop van hen genoten. Wel heeft Nelson Lincoln al heel veel voor hen gedaan. Vegetariers proberen heel wat, maar worden aan alle kanten tegengewerkt. Hun hoop is eigenlijk op Bert Ootjes, maar die zit in de gevangenis. De dieren hebben zo nog steeds geen onafhankelijkheid, en behoren nog steeds tot het leken-ras. Slagers beginnen steeds meer reclame te maken, met de meest idiote, uit zijn verband gerukte, betuttelingen, en proberen de massa met liedjes en slagzinnen in hypnose te houden. Leuk, zo'n arm diertje slachten, en dan ook erbij gaan zingen. De zingende slagers zijn populair, en er worden veel platen verkocht. Ook banketbakkers werken veel vaker met vlees. De warme broodjes met vleesvullingen gaan pijlsnel over de toonbank heen. En ze vinden steeds weer nieuwe dingen uit, en verleggen hun grenzen voortdurend. Voor de dieren is het nog geen Utopia. In het buitenland hebben de dieren het beter.

In de ogen van de dieren zijn de slagers en hun consumenten de bezetters. Zij vinden het racisme, maar niemand schakelt in op hun frequentie, en zij hebben geen diploma's. Nee, dit

land is met zijn kar vol diploma's aan de rand van de afgrond terecht gekomen, ook al noemen ze het een Utopia. Maar in de apocalypse hebben de dieren het laatste woord.

2 Augustus 1982

Grillen zijn 'in'. Er wordt veel gebarbecued, veel gezongen en gedanst. Voor de dieren lijkt het alleen maar erger te worden. We zijn in de tachtiger jaren beland. Vlees wordt een handig weggevertje, een uitstekend kado voor speciale gelegenheden, en een bewijs van eeuwige trouw en liefde. Huwelijks-taarten worden meer en meer omgezet in bouwsels van vlees, en de miniaturen van zowel bruid als bruidegom op de top van de vlees-cake zijn steeds meer naakt, als een propaganda voor het naturisme, wat natuurlijk op zich niet verkeerd is. Steeds meer wordt er de nadruk gelegd op practische collectieve ambacht, waarin de vlees-eter moet zien wat hij eet. Veel demonstraties van openlijke slachtingen worden vertoont, en het vlees bestemd voor een huwelijks-feest wordt op het feest zelf geslacht. Door dit soort openlijke vertoning steeg allereerst het aantal vegetariers dramatisch, maar later werd het als cultuur-goed gezien, als educatief. Zo werd alles geheel gestileerd, en elke zenuw lamgelegd. Woorden als 'traditie' werden gebruikt, terwijl die traditie er nooit was. Vegetariers hadden ingezien waar het anarchisme het land naar toe had geleid, en begonnen te verlangen naar een milde vorm van communisme. Een bekend schrijver sprak : 'Het educatieve zwaard heeft een praalwagen gemaakt voor het bandeloze verstand.' Het werd een chaos in het land. Iedereen zag uit naar de terugkomst van Bert Ootjes. Maar die kwam maar niet, want die zat vast in het buitenland. Joost Achterbergen promoveerde weer ergens met een verslag over de carnivorische problematiek, maar dat haalde allemaal niets uit. Men was ergens in aan het vastroesten en kwam er niet meer uit. Er kwam een wet dat iedereen die nog vlees wilde eten de dieren zelf moest fokken en slachten. Negentig procent van de bevolking werd hierdoor boer. Nelson Lincoln had gehoopt dat ze door deze wet zouden terugschrikken, maar nee hoor, het werd een sport, een trend, een ritueel, ja, een geloof. En er werd zoveel mogelijk nonsense over verkocht. Het land kwam in een draaikolk van schaamteloos geweld en arrogantie tegen dieren. Dieren werden gewoon door de steeds naturistischer wordende bevolking als minderwaardig gezien, als ondergeschikt aan, als plezier-leken die uitgebuit moesten worden. Het werd een agrarisch land van veeteelt waarin iedereen betrokken werd, en de vegetariers zonderden zich veelal af. Zij konden dit zinloze geweld niet bevatten, en velen van hen vertrokken naar het buitenland.

Zovelen konden hun worstjes met karbonaatjes niet missen. Ze moesten er toch niet aan denken om zonder de speklapjes en de frikandellen door het leven te gaan. Vleesproducenten haalden zelfs stunts uit door het vlees te laten regenen op speciale dagen. Het land had een nieuwe bezetter. Men begon een hogere ethische en morele waarde aan vlees te hechten. Het zou gezond zijn en zelfs noodzakelijk voor het instandhouden van het menselijk ras. Het dierlijk ras stond dus zichtbaar op een lager plan volgens deze bezetter. En dieren konden niet spreken, dus die konden zich niet verzetten. De nieuwe orale bezetters waren gekomen. Het geloof in vlees redeneerde als volgt : Mensen waren engelen, en dieren waren gevallen engelen, duivels. Zo verdedigden ze hun handelwijzen, en daarmee beweerden ze ook nog eens dat wanneer zij die dieren verslonden, dan werden hun zonden vergeven. Ik legde me er

bij neer. Ik kon niets doen. Vaak ging ik met mijn vriendin naar het zwanenmeer om te bespreken wat we konden doen, maar er was niet veel wat we konden doen. We voelden ons machteloos, en besloten te genieten van de dieren die er nog waren, en die met rust gelaten werden : zwanen. Vaak gingen we ‘s nachts naar het meertje, trokken onze kleren uit en gingen daar zwemmen met de zwanen. Op een dag nam de grootste zwaan ons op zijn rug, en bracht ons naar het slot. Er woonde hier niemand meer. Het slot stond vol met ridder-pantsers. We zijn toen naar boven gegaan en gingen op een oud bed liggen. We waren helemaal naakt. Ineens kwam de zwaan binnen met een pluimhelm op. Dat was wel het zotste wat we ooit gezien hadden, en we moesten beiden heel erg lachen. Boven het bed hing een schilderij met naakte vrouwen en een wereldbol. We wisten dat het een naturistisch slot was. Het was vrij toegankelijk voor iedereen. Overal waren ook spinnewebben. Op een verdieping hoger waren nog meer schilderijen met naakte vrouwen. We besloten weer terug te gaan, zwommen het meertje over, en klommen even later ons bed in. Een man scheen het allemaal op camera te hebben vastgelegd. Hij had een zwarte hond met manen. Hij liet het ons zien en zei dat het het mooiste was wat hij ooit op kamera had vastgelegd. We voelden ons niet bespied ofzo. We vonden het wel dapper van hem, en bovenal knap. Hij wilde ons wel meer beeldmateriaal laten zien. Het waren veelal naaktscenes. Ik kwam dichter bij zijn zwarte hond met de zwarte manen. De hond had zulke prachtige ogen en ik moest hem gewoon omhelzen. Het dier was één en al geconcentreerde kracht. Het dier leek wel van adel. Alles was rust hier en vredig, en we kregen een goed contact met de man.

Hij wilde ons wel vaker filmen, en we stemden toe. Hij was een filmmaker die op zoek was naar unieke, zeldzame tafereeltjes. Wat deze man deed was kunst, hij had de gave om de climaxen en het goede van het leven te vereeuwigen. Mijn vriendin kreeg hem lief. Hij was van haar leeftijd. Ik zei : ‘Ga je gang.’ Ik kon me voorstellen dat ze iemand nodig had van haar leeftijd. Ik was altijd veel te jong voor haar, alhoewel ik me ouder voordeed dan ik was. Nu was ik me dan steeds kinderlijker gaan gedragen, omdat ik daar vroeger nooit de ruimte voor had gehad. Ik beleefde mijn jeugd nu voor de eerste keer in mijn leven. Ik ontmoette een jonge vrouw, jonger dan mij, een buitenlandse, en we werden smoorverliefd. We deden alles samen. Ook gingen we ’s nachts vaak zwemmen in het zwanenmeer, en bezochten we vaak het oude slot. Ik bleef wel gewoon hele goede vrienden met mijn vroegere vriendin en haar nieuwe geliefde. Ik had het gevoel dat zij veel beter bij elkaar pasten, alhoewel we altijd een fantastische relatie hadden gehad. Het was goed zo. We waren beiden verzadigd van elkaar. Ik begon een nieuwe hoodstuk in mijn leven, en zij ook, en ik was nog steeds verliefd op haar en zij op mij. En de liefde was mooi en goed. De man die van haar leeftijd was had haar op het moment meer te bieden dan ik had, en hij kon heel wat leegtes vullen die door het leeftijds-verschil tussen haar en mij waren ontstaan. Zij had mijn moeder kunnen wezen. Ik had nu behoefte aan iemand die op één lijn stond met mij, van dezelfde leeftijdscategorie, of iets jonger, omdat ik mezelf nu ook jonger gedroeg dan ik was.

De tuin rondom het slot leek Arabisch, hier in Rotterdijk. Het had een beetje een pseudo-religieus-communistische gloed, wel heel mooi trouwens, bijna sprookjesachtig. Het was alsof de zwanen de sleutel ergens bewaarden. Mijn nieuwe vriendin had grote volle borsten die vol leken te hangen met melk, net zoals mijn vorige vriendin. Het leeftijdsverschil hoefde nu niet echt opgevuld te worden, want we scheelden niet zoveel in leeftijd, maar wel kon het lengte-verschil opgevuld worden. Zij was kleiner dan mij, maar verder absoluut niet klein. Omdat ze

bruin was zei ze altijd dat ze chocolade-melk had, maar dat was natuurlijk maar een grapje. We hadden beiden een bepaalde orale fixatie en dat was tegelijkertijd om te overleven. Er woedde nu eenmaal een orale oorlog. We waren schaakmat gezet in een machtsspel. De gelovigen zeiden altijd dat het paradijs van Arabisch-Babylonische oorsprong was, dus voor ons was het gebied rondom het slot altijd paradijselijk. Hier moest ergens de sleutel hangen. Met mijn nieuwe vriendin dwaalde ik door de gangen van het grote slot, diep in de nacht. Overal hingen naaktschilderijen die ons denken leken te programmeren. Veel van die schilderijen waren enigmatische paradijselijke taferelen. Sommige vrouwen werden met een blinddoek beschilderd, naakt en met een zwaard. Soms een weegschaal vasthoudende, of een schaal met daarin een soort zwarte of grijze stof. Ze hadden een rechterlijke of richterlijke uitstraling of houding, als een vrouwe Justitia. Ook gaven zij mannen die stof te drinken. Ik moest ineens weer aan die amalgaam-toestanden denken. Zou het een vonnis zijn gebaseerd op in het verleden gepleegde misdaden ? De vrouwen waren van bruine huidskleur, maar niet altijd. Zou de bron van dit alles in het paradijs te vinden zijn ? Zou daar wat mis zijn gegaan ? Waarom gaf Eva haar man van de giftige vrucht ? Ik viel bijna naar achteren toen we in een kamertje kwamen met nog een schilderij. Dit schilderij was heel hoog opgehangen, boven een deur die een open haard verborg. De man was geblinddoekt in dit schilderij. De vrouw niet. Zij had twee ogen als rode appels waardoor ze naar hem keek. Hij zat op een stoel. Zij had een zwaard en een sigaar. Boven het schilderij was nog een schilderij met een geblinddoekte vrouw met een zwaard die stond alsof ze klaar was om te kappen. Maar dat was het schokkendste niet : Beide vrouwen waren als etalage-poppen, werkende voor een industrie, en ze hadden geen borsten. Die waren afgekapt. Ze konden hun moedermelk niet geven. Hun vagina’s waren afgedekt met metaal en een slot. Zij waren kinderloos, ontdaan van hun sexualiteit. Daarom gaven ze niets dan gif en verderf. Mijn nieuwe vriendin schrok er ook van. Het deed haar denken aan de vaginale besnijdenis in Afrika.

‘Zouden dieren zich ook zo voelen ?’ vroeg ik. ‘Zij worden besneden tot de dood.’ Mijn nieuwe vriendin knikte. Ik voelde me onwennig. Toen zijn we maar teruggegaan. ‘Bij de indianen,’ zei ik, ‘in het amazone-gebied, werden soms de borsten van vrouwen geamputeerd zodat ze beter hun pijl en boog konden gebruiken.’

‘Ja,’ zei zijn vriendin, ‘en in Fenicie wat nu Turkije is werd Attis aanbeden, een aan zijn lot overgeleverde jongen die door wilde schapen werd grootgebracht, en zichzelf ontmande door een vloek. Uit zijn bloed kwam de naaldboom voort, en hij was een vroegere Jezus.’

Als in Turkije daadwerkelijk het paradijs heeft gelegen, dan ging daarachter nog steeds deze gruwelijkheid schuil : een dieper kruis, een genitale afsnijding, een sexuele apartheid. En dit had grote orale gevolgen. Het moederschap en de mannelijkheid werden ingeruild voor de oorlog, de jacht, de dood. Attis had zijn geliefde, Cybele, verlaten voor een sterveling, en werd door Cybele getroffen met de vloek van waanzin, vanwege de jaloezie. In de Joodse legendes duikt ook de naam van Lilith op als de eerste geliefde van Adam, maar zij werd al heel snel de hof uitgestuurd, omdat zij zich niet aan Adam wilde onderwerpen. En dit kruis was een enigma met vele gevolgen. Lilith zwoer dat zij de kinderen van Adam, de mensen, zou vernietigen. Zij kwam terug als de slang om Adam en Eva het gif aan te bieden. Ik ging

op mijn buik liggen, en mijn vriendin ging op me liggen. Ik was niet getroffen door een vloek omdat ik een andere vriendin had nu, en mijn vorige vriendin had ook een andere vriend nu. Er was geen jaloezie. Er was vrijheid. Er waren geen rekken in onze monden meer.

Hoofdstuk 2.

'Een vrouw zonder borsten heeft alleen gif te voeren,' wordt er weleens gezegd, figuurlijk dan. Dat betekent dat een vrouw die geen verantwoordelijkheid draagt, geen moederlijke empathie, een gevaar is voor de samenleving. Dat was de slang in het paradijs, maar we zagen al dat er vele kanten aan het verhaal zaten, vele factoren speelden een rol, en het is niet echt eerlijk om alles zwart-wit neer te zetten met vurig religieus fundamentalisme. Er waren andere kanten. Wie hakte de borst van de vrouw af ? Waarom was ze zo woedend op de man, en wilde ze hem berechten ? Is er een kant van het verhaal die wij niet kennen ? Of heeft ze haar borst zelf afgehakt, als een amazone, om zo macht te kunnen voeren over de man ? En met welke redenen ? Voelt ze zich bedreigd door de man ? Of wil ze gewoon dwars haar zin doorvoeren.

Ik besluit met mijn vriendin terug te keren tot het slot. Ditmaal gaan we nog hoger. Op een hogere verdieping vinden we veel olie-lampen, veel Arabische spulletjes. De schilderijen zijn veel bloederiger hier, met veel naakte vrouwen die oorlog voeren. Ook zijn er veel jacht-tafereeltjes. We lopen naar de volgende verdieping, waar het enigma al snel toeslaat : afgehakte koppen van bizons staan op de schilderijen. Ook zijn er veel azteekse schilderijen, waar azteekse priesters de harten uit hun slachtoffers snijden en omhoog houden. Het is een dolle boel van besnijdingen en afsnijdingen, allemaal om apartheid te creeeren. Weer een verdieping hoger staat een enorm schilderij met de toren van Babel. De toren van Babel is een verhaal uit de bijbel waarin mensen een toren proberen te bouwen naar de hemel, en naam te maken, maar dan daalt God neer om hen te verwarren en te scheiden, zodat ze elkaar niet meer kunnen verstaan. Nog een verdieping hoger staat een standbeeld van een engel, waarachter een schilderij is met de boom des levens. De engel lijkt op een wachter, zelfs op de engel des doods. Ik houd mijn vriendin vast. We zijn beiden naakt, en staren verschrikt naar de engel en het schilderij. Naast ons is nog een klein trapje naar boven, naar een zoldertje. We horen een stem : 'Wie wil het ei uitbroeden, wie eet het, en wie staart naar de dop ?'

'Zei jij dat ?' vraag ik aan mijn vriendin. 'Nee,' zegt ze. 'Jij ?' Ik schud mijn hoofd. Dan vliegt er een papegaai van het zoldertje naar beneden. 'Opkrassen,' schreeuwt hij. 'Wie heeft jullie gezegd hier te komen. Het ei zal rotten.' We lopen naar boven naar het zoldertje en zien overal rotte eieren liggen. Het stinkt hier ook verschrikkelijk naar rotte eieren. 'Te laat,' krijst de papegaai, 'te laat. Jullie hadden eerder moeten komen om het geheim te zien. Nu is het weg, voor eeuwig. Dit is wat jullie krijgen voor jullie optreden : Rotte eieren.' Tussen de eieren ligt een klein kruisje waaraan een staafje hangt dat lijkt op een mannelijk geslachtsdeel. 'En nu oprotten,' roept de papegaai. Het beest begint ons te pikken, en we rennen naar

beneden. Het best blijft ons pikken totdat we uit het slot zijn. Snel rennen we door de tuin het water in, en zwemmen naar de overkant, maar nog steeds houdt het beest niet op met aanvallen. Dan komt de grootste zwaan ons te hulp. We houden er heel wat plekken aan over, en willen voorlopig niet meer naar het slot.

Blijkbaar is de vruchtbaarheid aan het lijden verbonden, onlosmakelijk, als twee tegengestelden, het naakte aan het bedekte. We moeten maar wachten totdat daarin vrede is gekomen. In de grondtekst van de bijbel is het paradijs Sheool, het dodenrijk, oftewel de tuin der doden. Ook de val was een werking van het paradijs, om het offer te doen rijpen. De ruwe diamant moest geslepen worden. Ze ligt op mijn rug en heeft haar armen onder mijn oksels door en houdt mijn schouders vast. Ze probeert me op te trekken, maar ik ben moe. Dan vallen we beiden in slaap.

Een oosterse tuin van geheimen, met religieuze valstrikken. Ik schrik wakker. Zij houdt me vast. Ik val weer in slaap. Voor een tweede keer schrik ik wakker. Zij houdt me weer stevig vast, en ik val weer in slaap. In wiens armen lig ik, of is dit weer een strik van de dood. Hoe dan ook, ik heb het nodig om door de dag te komen. Het is mij gegeven. Ze staan daar voor huizen als paardjes, paardjes van de apocalypse om de volle druiven te betreden, te vertrappen. De maan schijnt, de sterren vallen, een droomweb houdt mij vast. Houd mij vast, laat mij jouw trekpop zijn, in dit speelse paradijs is het beter te zijn, beter dan daarbuiten. Het paard van religie trapt hard, ongenadig, straft voor eeuwig, zet schaakmat, en trapt dan de druiven van het genot in, één voor één, en soms meerderen tegelijk. Een hard besluit, van een jaloerse God, een erfenis, van lang geleden, een raadsel dat brult, smeekt, dwingt. Kijk naar de vrucht, niet naar de dop, eet niet, want het is slechts vergif, maar zoek naar haar geheimenis, broedt het uit, en ren wanneer je kan, zweef over de wateren, als een afstandelijke liefde, veilig en ver weg als de zon. Laat de hoop je niet ontnemen, laat je niet zeggen dat ver weg alleen maar koud is, want kijk naar de zon, die het verste weg is van ons allemaal, en schijnt en warmte geeft zoals niemand anders dat kan. De zon, de astronaut, op zoek naar geheimenissen, het grote broeden.

Ik maak een verkeerde beweging en er knapt iets in mijn rug. Toch nog een complicatie van de steekpartij. Ik vecht tegen de dood, en heb een bijna-dood-ervaring. Ik kom in het paradijs, waar naakte vrouwen zijn, overal. Zij houden een geheim vast, een ei, een groot ei, een doorgang, een weg. Het is een ei vol van bloed. Ik bekijk het ei vol belangstelling. En het bloed stolt, en brengt een lichaam voort met orale en genitale vrijheid. En er is een harmonie tussen die twee, en er is vrede. Na een paar dagen ben ik weer de oude. Er is iets veranderd in mij. Ik heb de dood ontmoet, en daardoor het leven. Ik sta aan beide kanten. Ik ben de brug tussen twee naturen.

Er stonden vele narcissen in onze tuin, vechtend tegen de koude dood. Zij gaven het leven warmte, de mensen een warme deken. Alles was bevroren, bevroren legers. Er werd gehandeld in mensen. De koude hand des doods greep hen, en wie kon daar tegen opvechten.

Sommigen dachten harmonie in bloed te zien, anderen alleen maar twist. De raven kwamen over de stad. De stad was snel opengebroken. Er was plaats voor het enigma nu, men staarde niet alleen maar naar de dop. Men at niet meer van het vergif. De broeders waren gekomen. In de heldere zon stonden zij daar, in de Arabische zon. De raven waren uit het oosten gekomen. Oosterse wachters waren nu in de stad, kloppende op de deuren. Zij brachten dat andere nieuws. Zij geloofden dat zij het hart waren binnengegaan, op de zwaan waren zij geklommen, en het bracht hen hier. Ook zij hadden hun verwachtingen, hun verlangens, hun logica. De Arabische zon was heet. Zij waren de paarden van de apocalypse, maar niemand heeft hen begrepen. Zachte hoeven hadden zij, manen overal, lange wimpers, dromerige ogen, bruin, dromend van zachte winters, sneeuwwitte daken, waarop het paarse zou neerdalen. De paarse hand zou hen allemaal wegnemen. Zij hadden hun schuilplaats in het oosten wanneer de winter zou vallen, en dan zou het pas echt hard en koud zijn. En de drop-verkopers zouden er rijk van worden, de banketbakkerijen vol, want iedereen wilde daar ineens slapen. Men zou vluchten tot het orale als de genitale klem zou worden gebroken. Nu lag zij nog vastgebonden op de grond, maar de wachters waren dichtbij haar. Ik hoorde een schreeuw. Zij stond op, en bedekte haar naakte lichaam met een nachtjapon. Zij ging de nacht in met een fakkel, zij was de moeder der raven. De paarse hand bracht haar op de punt van de kerktoren. Een sneeuwwitte dag zou het worden, nu Doornroosje was ontwaakt. Niet door een kus. Neen. Door een warme hand, een innige omhelzing.

Het was een paarse dag met lange manen, een koninklijk feest. Doornroosje was opgestaan. Zij stond tussen haar vader en moeder in, de oude koning en koningin. Zij bracht hen de smeltende chocola die voor eeuwen verborgen was gehouden. Iedereen zou wel met haar willen dansen, iedereen zou wel een veeg van haar chocola willen krijgen. Maar zij was selectief in haar genade, zeer selectief. Zij bedekte de edele vruchten met chocola, en schoof hen in de ogen. De bakker stond buiten op een kist en zong van haar. Zo lieten zij het feest ten einde gaan. Maar tot diep in de nacht werd er nagenoten. De bakker stond bij de notenboom met een bijl, en brak het open. Kisten vol mandarijnen stonden hier, kisten vol oude mandarijnse koningen, met een mandarijns accent. Een zetel gaf zij aan de oude man die zij door het licht had geleid. De baard van de oude tovenaar die vastzat in de boomspleet was losgesneden door het zwaard van haar ogen. Haar ogen spoten vuur, en lieten de koralen zien. Dit allemaal in flitsen, niet teveel, want teveel van dit goede zou de draken opwekken. Zij wilden Doornroosje voor eeuwig laten slapen, en niet slechts voor honderd jaar.

Ik keek met haar over de rivier van gisteren, naar de dampen ervan en de spoken, en wij wilden er niet wezen. Wij waren gevangen door het morgenland, waar de prinsessen en prinsen van gisteren niet meer regeerden. Wij konden het, ja, wij konden het wat we jaren niet gekund hadden. In het midden van de stad was zij verlicht. Wij werden door haar gevuld als roomsoezen. Van taai vlees waren haar vullingen, niet om te eten, maar om te broeden. De kok van de slacht werd terechtgesteld, en dit allemaal na een reeks lovende woorden. Morgen zou de maaltijd zijn, niet vandaag. Nooit meer zouden wij van onrijpe druiven eten waardoor de tanden van onze kinderen slee waren geworden. En deze komende maaltijd was een maaltijd voor vogels, raven, want zij waren bestemd voor dat uur om het eerste aan tafel te gaan en te eten. Het oog van de stad wilde haar verlichten, want de stad had haar nodig, en wilde haar nooit meer uit het gezicht verliezen, maar op die dag vertrokken de zwanen naar het oosten. De raven hadden de stad nu, en zij werden ingenomen, zoals zij eens innamen. Het

pasen met zijn versierselen van drop was nog steeds een ingrijpende gebeurtenis. Ik keek haar aan, zij keek naar mij. Ik had mijn oude jeugdliefde teruggevonden. Zij had kleine borsten, niet gevuld, zij was teder, intens, voorzichtig, zacht. Nooit zou er meer een zondvloed komen na die dag. Haar regenboog was een teken daarvan aan haar hemel. Ik schraapte de damp er vanaf. Een standbeeld werd van haar opgericht in de stad. Wij zouden haar nooit vergeten.

Na die week speelden de kinderen spookje in de stad, en werden de oude hobbelpaarden uit de schuur gehaald. Zij speelde, ik droomde. Het was de slag der herinneringen, rijkelijk belegde het mijn brood. Ik liet de raven er van eten. Ik at de worst van het verleden door de berg naar de andere kant, en daar werd het varken van de toekomst geslacht. Tijd was niet meer. De bezetters hadden de stad en het land ingenomen, weer vanuit het oosten, door de Arabische zon. En ik kon alleen maar glimlachen. Ik vond het wel grappig, al die vogels. Wij voerden de vogels aan het zwanenmeer, maar de zwanen zijn hier nooit meer teruggekomen. Zij hadden het geheim ergens anders gebracht. Ook voerden wij de paarden die dag, de paarden van deze apocalypse. Beschuit was haar lievelingsvoer, en rozen haar lievelingsbloemen. Een paard zwom door de grachten. Ik keek erna, en mijn rug maakte mij los van de aarde. Ik zweefde er boven, als een grote broer, als de lange neef. Ik verzorgde de aarde als mijn broertje.

Het regende buiten. Ik zat met mijn jeugdliefde op de bank. Aan al het oude was een einde gekomen, nu ik het oudere had gevonden. Het was als een harem in mijn gedachten, een doornenkroon, een rozenkrans, de cirkelzaag boven Bagdad, de ster van Betlehem. Een zoete ster was het, van genadeloos geduld. Haar licht was verblindend, en toen konden we ineens weer voelen, elkaar voelen. Voelen datgene wat zo lang was weggeweest. Zij liep zo langzaam in haar lange nachtjapon, een oosterse avondjurk, leren schoentjes met riempjes, met allerlei gaten, gelakt, en haar sokjes waren kinderlijk als de bloesem. En nog steeds dacht ik aan de zwanen. Waar zouden ze zijn ? Verblindend was haar licht, des te zoeter haar aanrakingen, haar verschijning. Teer licht, weeskind, wolf, onbegrepen. Ongezadeld in de nacht. Ik borstel haar, er is rust. Zij neemt haar pijl en boog, en gaat de stad in. In de stad staan beelden van zwanen, als een herinnering aan die dag. De zwanen zijn van steen, niet van vlees. De stad is verlaten van zwanen. De oorlog is dood. Elke knie zal zich buigen, elke tong zal belijden, en niemand weet wat. Een onverbiddelijk zwaard heeft de oorlog lamgelegd. Het vrederijk is aangebroken. De paarden van de apocalypse gaan streng door de stad heen, en dan komt de zon op, de Arabische zon. Het jachtboek is nu geopend. Men bekijkt de plaatjes, en begrijpt niet waarom. Men wil terug naar de oude dagen, maar het kan niet meer. Ik borstel haar haren, er is rust. Ze is in de stad met haar boog, als vrouwe Justitia. De rechtszaak begint. Zij was een vrouw van geconcentreerde kracht en zwakheid. De jacht-engel. Zij roepen vrede vrede, terwijl er geen vrede is. Na de duizend jaren zal er een nieuw tijdperk van vrede aanbreken. Ik borstel haar haren nog steeds. Ze zegt niks. Ik zak weg, en ze gaat op mijn rug liggen. Als een kat heeft ze haar prooi. De vlekken van de luipaard spreken van oude wonden. Dan breekt ze mijn rug, en ik ben niet meer van de aarde. Haar bereiken kan ik niet, alleen door stralen. Ik moet haar overgeven, ik moet haar loslaten, de afstand zal nu rechter zijn. Ik voel mij als een Arabische zon, die het ijzer laat stinken, die het leer zacht maakt.

Zij zal het grote ei uitbroeden, zonder dat het haar zal doden. Van het vergif zal zij niet eten. Eens sprong zij in het wespennest, en werd een luipaard. Nu komt zij niet dichtbij, maar broedt van ver weg. De dokters zeggen dat mijn rug nu goed is, maar ik heb pijn. Zij zeggen dat dat er niet is. Zij staren alleen naar de dop. In een vuur dat eeuwig brandt wonen zij. Van een afstand ontkennen zij de problemen, een naaldboom groeit uit mijn wond. Grootgebracht door wilde schapen ben ik. We zijn omsingeld en schaakmat gezet door levensgevaarlijke zotten. De idioten van de planeet Idiotia zijn gekomen. Waren de dokters maar dronken en aardig. Wat is er van ons Utopia overgebleven ? De nieuwe bezetters ruiken als het oude, de mondenrekken zijn weer terug. Ditmaal met veel prikkeldraad. IJzeren Jaap is uit zijn doos geklommen om de klokken terug te zetten. Waren de zwanen nog maar hier. Zij is een boogschutter, een teken aan de hemel, dat de oorlog nooit meer komen zal, maar we leven met de jacht. Een teken dat er nooit geen zondvloed meer zou komen, maar nu zijn we hier. De ijzeren maagd is onze straf. Zij broedt niet, zij steekt, zij is op jacht. Mijn rug is van ijzer, een bouwwerk van amalgaam, van kwik, van Mercurius, om de rest van mijn lichaam te verzieken. De dokters zien niets op hun foto’s. Zij staren alleen naar de dop. Wij wachten allen op Bert Ootjes, die nu inmiddels een martelaar is. Maar de zwanen hebben hem bezocht. Mijn buik is gemaakt van witte en rode vulling, een eeuwig gif. Zelfs al is de wortel eruit, het symptoom zal altijd blijven. Een leuk syndroom waar geestelijk verzorgers aan kunnen blijven sleutelen. Ouders blijven met hun kinderen naar zulke dokters gaan, want als het kind geestelijk ziek wordt verklaard door de beroepsbeul, dan treft de ouders zelf geen schuld, want geestelijk ziek zijn dat ben je vanaf de geboorte, en zo hebben de ouders die hun kind verrot hebben geslagen een alibi. Zo is de zogeheten tandarts met zijn stiekeme, niet navolgbare, zogeheten vullinkjes die het kind beladen met complexe vergiftigingen en de syndrooms-stempeltjes van de geestelijk verzorgers, de zogeheten psychiaters en hun handlangers, een professionele ouders-bescherming geworden. En hoe kan een kind tegen zo’n doortrapt systeem opboksen ? Een kind heeft geen diploma’s, geen zegeltjes, maar mag deze zegeltjes wel verbreken, door de paardjes van de apocalypse. Maar waar zijn de zwaantjes wanneer je ze nodig hebt ? En waar is Bert Ootjes ?

Rebelse kinderen worden al snel ziek verklaard, niet de maatschappij, nee, want de maatschappij is heiliger, in ieder geval heiliger dan degene die aan de bel trekt. De paardjes staan nog steeds in deze carrousel. En de mierzoete snoepjes van oma moeten de kinderen klaarmaken om een reis door de fuik van de zogeheten tandarts te maken. De zogeheten tandarts gebruikt hiervoor goedgepraat geweld. De Arabische tandarts was nu gekomen, en die was nog wel orthodoxer. Bij de balie werd snoep uitgedeeld wanneer een kind zich keurig en netjes had gedragen. Het hormoon van Bert Ootjes was inmiddels uitgewerkt. Ook de botten begonnen gaatjes te vertonen, en ook die moesten gevuld worden, en daar had de Arabische tandarts een heel arsenaal voor, en die duldde echt geen tegenspraak. Arabisch amalgaam werd daarvoor gebruikt, waarvan de ingredienten strict geheim werden gehouden. Alleen de ingewijden mochten de ambacht uitvoeren, en beunhazen werden streng gestrafd. Die werden openlijk op de pleinen aan de schandpaal gezet. Nee, de Arabische tandarts, daar viel niet mee te sollen. Malafide tandartsen werden als kwakzalvers bestempeld, afgezet, en gingen sindsdien vaak zonder een ledemaat of ontmand door het leven. Azteekse praktijken kwamen niet zelden voor. De Arabische tandarts meende het. De bottenvuller, zo werd de Arabische tandarts vaak genoemd. ‘Ik moet vandaag weer naar de bottenvuller,’ klaagde een oud mensje. ‘Ja, ik ook,’sprak een bijna tandenloos oud mannetje, en een ander moest de dag erna. Controles waren wekelijks, en sommigen moesten twee keer per week. Elke knie boog, elke tong beleed, en elke trotse nek brak voor de Arabische tandarts. Als er problemen waren

met het Arabisch amalgaam, dan werd dat altijd op iets anders geschoven, en dan voelde de Arabische tandarts zich diep beledigd, en kon erg kwaad worden, wat dan de meest verschrikkelijke consequenties had. Het was godslasterlijk om te twijfelen aan het Arabisch amalgaam. Zulke godslasteraars en aanstellers waren rijp voor de Arabische psychiater. De Arabische tandarts was wel heel goed voor dieren. Zo wreed als ze waren naar hun klagende patienten, zo genadig waren ze naar dieren.

Het lichaam van Bert Ootjes lag inmiddels op de bodem van het meer van Geneve, waar ze hem hadden gedumpt. Zijn botten werden later opgedoken en hij kreeg een eervolle begrafenis. De appel brandt, en kan niet meer gegeten worden. Er kan alleen nog maar gekeken worden als naar de uitbarsting van een vulkaan. De trekpop van het verleden is stuk, maar de Arabische tandarts kan het nog wel maken, want die handelt ook in speelgoed. Bert Ootjes zal zich zeker in zijn graf omdraaien. Speelgoed, om kinderen klaar te maken voor de tandarts. Nu kunnen ze nog spelen, maar straks ? Onze enige hoop is de marsmannetjes, maar die bestaan niet. De marsman marcheert onderdrukt in ons geconditioneerd verstand. De Arabische tandarts is de banketbakker, heeft een hotel-keten, is ambitieus. Hij is de grootste snoep-producent voor kinderen. Hij verdient wat bij, om ook een zwembad te hebben onder zijn kast van een huis. De Arabische tandarts is hier kind aan huis. Om Bert Ootjes wordt inmiddels flink gerouwd. Velen worden monddood verklaard. Ik begin een Arabische tandartsen-praktijk, zo'n beetje de enige manier om aan de Arabische tandarts te ontkomen.

Een nieuwe Arabische vogelsoort is er toegevoegd in het plantsoen, om het verlies van de zwanen op te vangen : de draai-konten. Prachtige vogels, daar niet van, maar ze kunnen zo vanuit het niets bezoekers aanvallen. Zo van : van te voren maar eerst bellen. Hele statige, deftige vogels met een strenge zwaar-orthodoxe etiquette. Zo ken ik er nog één. Het doet me een beetje denken aan die papegaai van het slot. Ik durf niet zomaar meer naar het zwanenmeer, het plantsoen. Deze vogels zijn geen grappen.

'IJs ?' vraagt ze.

- Ja, met slagroom, zeg ik

'Siroop erbij ?'

- Ja, die rode

‘De Arabische tandarts zal daar blij mee zijn, die is lekker duur, en veroorzaakt veel gaten in je botten. Hij zal wel weer flink op je schelden bij de komende controle om zijn blijdschap om de winst goed te verbergen.’

- Nee, ik heb nu mijn eigen kwastjes. Ik kom niet meer bij die man. Ik ben nu zelf die man. Hij mag wel bij mij komen, dan zal ik hem een koekje van eigen deeg geven.

‘Arabisch amalgaam ?’

- Ja, schat, die met die vogelstront.

‘Schat, je weet toch dat je de doodstraf kan krijgen voor het verraden van de ingredienten.’

- Laat hen maar hierkomen met hun bekken vol mislukte plastische chirurgie en gedwongen eeuwige mode.

‘Schat, je weet toch dat dat hun geloof is ? Ze weten niet beter, en dat moet je respecteren.’

- Ik heb daar allemaal geen respect voor. Heb jij respect voor een mes die in je rug wordt gestoken ?

‘Toe nou, liefje, dat moet je zo niet zien.’

- Oh, en hoe moet ik het dan zien ?

‘Moet je kijken hoe je jezelf opstelt, en dat noemt zich een Arabische tandarts. Een beetje professioneler mag wel.’

- Oh, gaan we het nu ook over professionaliteit hebben, en vergeet vooral het woord deskundig niet te noemen. Ga godverredomme een ezel kopen.

‘Zeg, jeetje, nu ga je ook nog eens een beetje lopen vloeken hier.’

- En doe jij nu maar niet ineens alsof je heilig Aagje bent.

‘Oh, heerlijk zo’n ruzie met jou, maar je weet wie er boven in bed de touwtjes in handen heeft.’

- Je hebt gelijk, ’t spijt me, zal niet meer gebeuren.

‘Goed, Jan Klaassen, dan is dat in ieder geval duidelijk.’

- Ja, Katrijn.

‘Moet je nu nog ijs met slagroom en rode siroop ?’

- Nee, Katrijn, ik heb geen honger meer.

We starten een restaurant in het midden van de stad, zoals elke goede Arabische tandarts zou doen. Het voedsel is er zalig, en mensen komen hier echt om heerlijk te genieten. We hebben ons eigen plantsoentje met Arabische draaikont-vogels, door ons getemd. Een betere plek kan ik me niet wensen. Mijn wereld kan niet meer stuk, en de hare ook niet.

Roze
Zwanen

Hoofdstuk 1. Het Zwaard Van Calvijn

De vlaggen hingen uit buiten. Hij zat in zijn zitstoel, zijn vrouw was in de keuken. Hij had net het gras weer eens gemaait, wat hij wekelijks deed. Hij staarde naar buiten, naar de begroeiing op de muur. De metalen platen zaten er goed vast tegenaan, en daar groeiden de planten omheen. Dat kon hem niet wild genoeg zijn. Hij was altijd al geinteresseerd geweest in tuinieren, en hij had dan ook echt zijn eigen stijl, vurig, wild, maar ook piekfijn geordend. Het was een samenspel tussen natuur en mens. Hij had vroeger altijd bij de politie gewerkt, en daar ging het er eigenlijk hetzelfde aan toe : de buurt was wild, en de politie bracht orde, en zo was er een prachtig samenspel, heen en weer. De politie mocht volgens hem de soep niet te heet opdienen, en zo liet hij dan ook de natuur in zijn tuin een zekere vrijheid hebben. Wel hield hij alles goed in de gaten. Hij had een zekere strengheid als hij naar zijn tuin keek. Zijn vrouw kwam de huiskamer binnen met de koffie. Ze zeiden niks tegen elkaar. Het zonlicht golfde de kamer binnen toen zijn vrouw het gordijn iets verder opendeed. Beiden staarden ze naar buiten, de tuin in. De sproeier stond aan, het was een warme dag. Aan de dag scheen geen einde te komen. Zijn vrouw was aan het breien, en hij staarde maar. Geen woord werd er gezegd. Het leek wel alsof zijn denken vastzat. Hij hoorde het getik van de brei-pennen van zijn vrouw. Het leek wel alsof ze heel ver weg zat. Of kwam dat door de vele spullen die er tussenstonden. De tegels op de grond glansten in het zonlicht, maar ze werden er niet bruiner op. Het was een harde vloer. Je zou makkelijk wat kunnen breken als je erop viel. Er lagen ook wat tapijtjes in de grote huiskamer. Ze hadden een groot huis, een alleenstaand huis. Ook het fonteintje in de vijver stond aan. Hij worstelde zichzelf door de dag. Hij verveelde zich, maar wist niet wat hij moest doen. Hij bleef het tikken van de brei-pennen van zijn vrouw maar horen. Kinderen hadden ze niet, nee, ze waren tamelijk eenzaam. De man stond op en liep naar de kast, waar hij een fles sterke drank uittrok, en gaf zijn vrouw ook wat. Ze hielden wel van een borrel. Dat was goed voor het bloed, en dat hielp hen op de been. Eigenlijk leken ze in hun leven niet meer verder te komen. Ze waren in een nauw cirkeltje terecht gekomen, en gingen bergafwaarts. Ze leefden geisoleerd. Er was nauwelijks contact met de buitenwereld, en daar hadden ze ook geen behoefte aan. De tuin was alles voor hen, en hun woning. Zijn vrouw was vroeger arts geweest, voornamelijk kinderarts, maar moest later stoppen vanwege haar alcoholisme. Nu had ze het veel beter onder controle. Haar man hield de wacht over haar, maar liet haar nog wel genieten van een borreltje op zijn tijd. Toch waren de twee erg zwaarmoedig en hielden er een kerkelijk leven op na. De kerk was alles voor hen, voornamelijk op de zondag. Een grote bijbel lag naast de openhaard. Het geloof in God gaf hen rust, als een oase in de woestijn van hun ouderdom.

Op zondag na de kerkdienst fietsten ze samen naar huis. Het was warm weer. Maar al snel zaten ze weer in hun oude positie. Hij had niet veel behoefte om dingen te gaan doen, ook al verveelde hij zich. Hij trok zich op aan de structuur van zijn tuin en zijn huis, wat hij streng in de gaten hield. Het was als het werken in de tempel, alsof hij in de kerk woonde. Hij voelde zich een nauwlettende koster, en dat was hij vroeger ook geweest. Veel was hij bezig met zijn herinneringen, die hem ook half depressief maakten. Een heleboel dingen zou hij terugwillen, maar ze waren onbereikbaar. Het was een treurig stel, en velen zouden hen saai noemen. Als ze kleinkinderen zouden hebben, dan zouden die hier geen leven hebben. In zijn gedachten was hij altijd de tuin en het huis aan het maaien. De gelakte spulletjes waren als hun huisdieren. Maar het ging niet zo goed met zijn vrouw. Ze was aan het dementeren, en dat riep ook wel heel veel herinneringen bij hem op. Op een gegeven moment kon ze niet langer in huis blijven, en moest ze naar een verzorgings-tehuis. Hij kon dat moeilijk accepteren, maar hij had geen andere keus. Hij voelde zich al als een weduwenaar. Het was als een trauma in zijn hoofd, maar het kerkelijk leven beurde hem op. Hij wist dat zijn vrouw een verloren zaak was. Ook de tuin gaf hem rust. De maaiers in zijn hoofd waren nu als van vuur, als grillen. Hij had nu het gevoel dat hij de touwtjes nog strakker moest trekken. Nog steeds stonden de protserige spulletjes van zijn vrouw hier, de beeldjes, de hebbedingetjes, het antiek, en het gaf hem een gevoel van verbinding met haar. Aan de telefoon kon hij niet meer met haar praten, en ze wist nog nauwelijks wie hij was. Ze was aan het aftakelen tot aan het bot.

Hij ging meer en meer drinken, om het verdriet over zijn vrouw te vergeten, en bezocht kroegen voor het eerst in zijn leven. Het huis en de tuin werden wilder, omdat hij het onderhoud niet meer kon bijhouden, en het was voor hem ook geen prioriteit meer. Hij raakte verslaafd aan de fles, zoals zijn vrouw eens was. Hij kwam in het rijk der schimmen. De alcohol bracht hem een felle stem in zijn hoofd. Met het vele geld dat hij had schafte hij een bar aan in zijn eigen huis, helemaal voor hemzelf. Ook ontving hij vrouwen van lichte zeden aan huis. Maar deze tijden liepen snel ten einde, door het knagend kerkelijk geweten binnenin. De God in zijn hoofd sleepte hem naar het graf, en sprak hem ernstig toe. Hij probeerde zo min mogelijk na te denken, en weer begon het vele staren. Hij was zelf ook door maaiers omringd, de gouden maaiers van de kerk. Zij zouden hem veilig leiden tot aan het graf en tot de hemelpoort. De bijbel scheen hem weer nieuwe kracht te geven, en hij las er veel in, en spoedig begon hij ook zijn tuin en huis te onderhouden als nooit tevoren. Ook koken ging hem goed af, ook al waren het alleen maar de standaard-gerechten. Maar het was alsof iets hem van binnen aanvrat, alsof er een spin in hem leefde. Wat als hij niet een uitverkorene was van de God die hij diende ? Het zwaard van Calvijn sneed diep in zijn ziel. Hoe meer hij de bijbel las, hoe meer hij ook de duistere andere kant van het verhaal zag. Vooral na zijn wilde uitstapjes begon hij de hel meer te vrezen dan ooit. Misschien was de God die hij diende wel helemaal niet zo tevreden over hem. En velen waren geroepen, maar weinig uitverkoren. Hij kwam in de eerstegrote geloofs-strijd van zijn leven, en lijstjes over wie er allemaal niet het koninkrijk des hemels zouden beerven bleven hem kwellen tot diep in de nacht. Het was alsof hij door duiveltjes was gebonden. Misschien ging hij er iets te hypnotisch mee om, maar hij kon er niet van loskomen, totdat ook bij hem Alzheimer toesloeg.

Hij wist niet meer wat de bijbel was. Hij kon er uren naar staren, naar het kaft, maar wist het niet meer. Was het het dagboek van zijn vrouw ? Of het wetboek van de politie, was het

pornografisch ? Was het onzedelijkheid ? Een enorme woede maakte zich van hem meester. Hij kon het zich niet meer herinneren. Wel wist hij dat het altijd heel belangrijk voor hem was. Was het een erfenis van zijn vader ? Waren het de liefdesbrieven van meisjes die hij in zijn jonge jaren kreeg ? Was het grootmoeders kookboek ? Een uitgelopen folder van de jehovah's getuigen ? Een boek van een ons onbekende religie ? Was het een geschiedenis boek. Het zweet steeg hem naar het hoofd. Hij was bijna aan het klappertanden, aan het beven als een jong hondje. Was het een toverboek ? Nee, toverboeken bestonden niet. Een verzameling niet betaalde rekeningen ? Misschien was het van zijn vrouw ? Hij besloot het boek weer neer te leggen. In de kerk kwam hij niet meer. Hij voelde zich als levende achter tralies. Hij wist niet meer wie hij was. Hij werd als een wild dier.

Hij kon uren staren naar dingen, om zich af te vragen wat het was. Hij was de grip op de werkelijkheid kwijt. Het maakte hem kwaad, dat zijn hersenen hem in de steek lieten. Maar aan de andere kant kwam hij erg tot rust. Het leven was hier zwoel. Hij voelde zichzelf als levende op een tropisch eiland, badend in het warme zeewater. Het normale leven drong niet meer tot hem door, en waarom zou dat moeten ? Hij snapte de kaartjes die hij kreeg niet. Hij dacht dat het kokosnoten waren, of dat het herfst was. Weer wat blaadjes die van de bomen zijn gevallen. Soms probeerde hij ze op te eten, soms hing hij ze aan de muur. Sommige van die kaarten waren prachtig. Op een dag besloot hij zijn hele huis rood te verven, maar toen hem dat niet beviel verfde hij alles bruin. Het stond nog niet eens zo gek. Hij had wel stijl. Hij probeerde af te rekenen met het verleden wat hij maar niet begreep. Hij noemde zichzelf 'baas van de hel'. Ook dacht hij dat hij Calvijn was, maar hij wist niet meer wat Calvijn voorstelde. Hij droeg zijn oude politie-pak weer en was nu baas van de politie, iets wat hij overigens altijd al had willen zijn. Op een dag had hij even een flits in zijn hoofd. 'Had Calvijn niet de bijbel geschreven ? Dit is mijn boek. Mijn agenda. Hierin staat wat er moet gebeuren.' Hij greep de bijbel en liep ermee rond. Hij riep en schold, alsof hij een dictator was. Maar hij raakte in de war van zichzelf en plofte op de bank. Toen ging hij maar weer de tuin instaren. Hij werd er stil van.

In zijn hoofd regende het, en na een tijdje werd hij bedlegerig. Vreemde gezichten zag hij in zijn gedachten, die dan allemaal weer vermengd werden. Hij kon zich niets meer herinneren. Ondanks zijn ziekte had hij een goede tijd. In zijn gedachten waren bomen personen en konden spreken, en hij voerde lange gesprekken met hen. Hij betuttelde hen, omdat hij nu eens eindelijk zijn onderdrukte vader gevoel kon manifesteren. De bomen in zijn hoofd waren als zijn kinderen. 'Jullie zijn de vrucht van mijn tuin,' zei hij altijd. 'Dan is het allemaal toch niet voor niets geweest.' De bomen in zijn hoofd gaven hem zijn geheugen weer een beetje terug, maar op een hele andere manier, met een hele andere kijk op het leven. Maar de bomen in zijn hoofd begonnen te rotten en stierven. Het was een hevig gevecht, want hij beschouwde hen als zijn kinderen. Hij werd weer geconfronteerd met de dorheid van het bestaan, hij nam het stof waar, om hem heen. 'Alles is een bende,' zei hij. Het was een traumatische ervaring zijn kinderen te moeten verliezen. Er was een begrafenis-stemming in zijn hoofd. Maar bloesem scheen voort te komen uit het dode hout, vrouwen. 'Mijn kinderen zijn gestorven,' zei hij. 'Hebben jullie hen niet kunnen redden ?' Maar de vrouwen zeiden niks. Ze waren naakt. 'Toe, trek wat aan,' zei hij. 'Anders sterven jullie zo van de kou.'

‘Wij gaan niet dood,’ zeiden de vrouwen. ‘Wij zijn de vlammetjes van het eeuwig leven. En wij gaan u weer jong maken.’

‘Oh, de bron van de eeuwige jeugd,’ zei de man. ‘Zo, zo.’ Maar de man werd steeds zieker. Zijn gedachten kwamen vast te zitten, en hij waande zich in de woestijn. Hij had niet eens de kracht een raam open te zetten. Er kwam een verzorgster langs, elke dag. Die moest dat maar doen. Ze wilden hem eigenlijk naar een verpleeghuis verplaatsen, maar hij wilde zijn huis niet kwijt. Zijn huis en zijn tuin, dat was alles voor hem, zijn tempel. ‘De goden hebben mij hier gebracht,’ zei hij.

‘U bent een kind van de goden ?’ vroeg de verzorgster.

‘Ja,’ zei hij triomfantelijk, ‘of hun vader.’ De verzorgster las hem vaak voor uit de bijbel, maar hij begreep er niet veel van. Hij zag er hele andere dingen in, en het raakte hem niet meer. ‘Wat een mooi sprookjesboek,’ zei hij altijd. ‘Het schuift maar, en het doet maar, en het komt maar nooit aan in mijn hart, maar het is een mooi gezicht, dat wel.’

‘Je bent zo mooi als mijn vrouw eens was,’ zei de man op een dag tegen de verzorgster. ‘Mijn vrouw was als een tuin, vol wonderlijke geheimen, en toen ik dacht, nu wil ik eindelijk dat geheim weten, toen ging ze weg. Ze werd van mij weggetrokken, naar een verpleeghuis. Maar ik had het boek nog niet uitgelezen.’

‘Veel dingen zullen nooit afkomen,’ zei de verzorgster. ‘Er is niet voor alles tijd.’

‘Is dat niet sneu ?’ vroeg de man. ‘Of misschien hoort het zo. Weet je hoe ik het bekijk, ik denk dat het verhaal in een ander boek verder gaat.’

De verzorgster knikt. De kamer was vol met de geur van de tuin, gloeiende rozenblaadjes, gloeiend in de zon, bijna schroeiend. Het leek alsof ze van binnen bloedden. ‘We zijn soldaten in de oorlog,’ zei de man. ‘We moeten ons pad zien te vinden. Zovelen weten niet wat hen te wachten staat, als ze dieper in de tuin van het leven komen. Alles sterft hier af.’ De verzorgster knikt weer. ‘Ja, we moeten op die andere frequentie zien te komen,’ zegt ze. ‘Want deze loopt dood. Het is een overgang, je voelt de stromen van de bloemen door de lucht heengaan om het pad voor ons te banen. Voelt u dat ?’

‘Ja,’ zegt de man. ‘De bloemen weten meer dan wij. Dat is waarom ik altijd van tuinen heb gehouden. Er zijn daar geheime gangen. Zij kunnen leiden tot de hemel.’ Midden in de nacht groef de man zich in in de grond. ‘Ik wil een bloem worden,’ zei hij. Het was tijd dat hij een plaats kreeg in het verpleeghuis. Hij had het niet meer in de gaten, dat dit niet zijn eigen huis was. Hij was zich niet echt bewust van de overgang. En de verzorgster zocht hem nog vaak op, en er was een prachtige tuin, nog wel prachtiger dan zijn eigen tuin ooit was geweest. ‘Wat is mijn tuin toch prachtig geworden,’ zei hij trots. En als andere mensen over de schoonheid van de tuin spraken, dan zei hij altijd : ‘Ja, ik heb er hard aan gewerkt. Het is niet voor niets geweest, al die lange jaren.’ Ook het huis zag er pico bello uit, en hij voelde zich als een koning. In het verpleeghuis werden ook kerkdiensten gehouden, maar hij zei altijd tegen de predikant dat hij de politie was. Hij begreep de werkelijke strekking van het verhaal niet meer. Mensen vonden het altijd een beetje vreemd als hij over zijn kinderen, de goden, sprak. Veel van de mensen daar waren toch wel diep gelovig. Hij kon verschrikkelijk opscheppen, en vaak had hij het hoogste woord. Over zijn vrouw die de hemelpoort zou zijn, en dat iedereen zijn vrouw moest aanbidden om in de hemel te kunnen komen. Maar eigenlijk wist hij niet goed meer wat de hemel was. Eens stapte hij op een andere man af met zijn glas, wees in het glas en zei : ‘Zie, daar is de hemel.’ En sommige mensjes waren erg goedgelovig.

Op een dag moest en zou hij preken. Hij duwde bijna de predikant weg van zijn plaats, ging staan en zei : ‘Geliefde broeders en zusters, wij, de goden, hebben vandaag besloten u op deze manier toe te spreken. U bent aangekomen in de hemel, gefeliciteerd. U mag elkaar de hand schudden en kussen.’ En enkelen begonnen dat ook te doen, maar anderen werden overstuur. ‘Ik ben de kapitein van het schip,’ zei de man. ‘En wie het daar niet mee eens is wordt overboord gezet.’ Na een tijdje luisterden ze allemaal aandachtig naar hem. Hij bedoelde het niet kwaad. Na een tijdje stapte hij op, maar al snel wilden ze hem weer hebben. Elke zondag wilden ze naar hem luisteren. Ook de verzorgsters en verzorgers vonden het interessant. Ze stonden ervan te kijken hoe snel hij opleefde in het verpleeghuis. Hoe hij zich vrijer voelde dan hij ooit was geweest. ‘Een groot profeet is opgestaan,’ riep een man eens tijdens zijn preek.

Hij heeft zijn oude levensstijl vergeten, zijn oude denkstijl, en kan niet meer terug. Hij heeft het gevoel dat er wat fout zit, en kan daar vaak kwaad om worden. Hij wil weer tuinieren, en wordt kwaad als het niet lukt. Een vreemd gevoel heeft zich van hem meester gemaakt, en vreet hem aan van binnenuit. Alsof er een spin in hem leeft, dodelijk, onvermoeibaar, met een duidelijk doel. En hij ligt verstrikt in het web. Wat kan hij doen ? Alle oplevingen zijn maar voor even, om daarna nog dieper weg te vallen. Hij bereidt zich voor op de dood, die maar niet komt. Als hij vrouwen ziet borduren, is het alsof zij hem van binnen prikken. Hij kan daar kwaad om worden. Hij raakt meer en meer geisoleerd van de anderen. Hij heeft zijn eigen kamer. Nog steeds denkt hij dat het zijn eigen huis is, en dat de anderen noodgedwongen bij hem logeren, want buiten is de grote zee, de vloed. Hij herinnert zich een oud kinderversje : Alle dieren twee aan twee, gaan met Noachs ark mee. Hij is er van overtuigd dat hij Noach is, en dat hij hen allemaal gered heeft met zijn ark, zijn huis. Maar nu heeft hij rust nodig. ‘Waarom ben ik zo moe in het paradijs ?’ vraagt hij zich af. ‘Is er soms een slang in het paradijs ? Ben ik gebeten ? Of is dit de hel, is dit mijn straf, ben ik niet uitverkoren ?’ Maar de religieuze verwarring maakt al snel weer plaats voor de grote trots over wat hij allemaal al heeft bereikt in zijn leven : kapitein op een schip. Hij wijt zijn religieus trauma aan een

vroegere aanval van zeerovers. Die zouden hem op zijn hoofd hebben geslagen. Zijn geheugen gaat op en naar en maakt rare draaiingen. En dan valt hij op een dag helemaal in een grijs gat. Alles tolt voor zijn ogen. ‘De zeerovers,’ roept hij. ‘Ze hebben teruggeslagen.’ En dan zijn ineens zijn woorden niet verstaanbaar meer. In zijn hersenen gaat alles traag, alsof ze alles vermalen wat nog is overgebleven. Het is hem zwart voor de ogen nu. Hij kan zijn gedachten niet meer onder woorden brengen. Hij denkt dat hij overboord gegooid is, en dat vissen hem aanvreten, haaien. Hij zweeft op het randje van de dood. Hij ziet bloeidende tuinen, gloeiend, bijna schroeiend in de zon. Hij denkt dat hij dood is. Hij voelt zich alsof hij door een donkere gang met bloemen gaat. Hij kan met de bloemen spreken, ze verwelkomen hem. Maar dan is alle verbinding verbroken, en is alles zwart. Hij voelt zich hopeloos verloren, maar even later lijkt het alsof hij in een bloem ligt. De dood ademt hier.

Hij leeft weer in het verleden, alsof zijn vrouw er nog is, zijn zusjes, zijn vader en moeder. Zijn zusjes spelen op het plein. Ze zien eruit als popjes. Hij wil ze omhelzen, maar dan staat hij stijf. Zijn vader roept hem. ‘Zeg Noach, afwassen.’ Ook gaan ze naar de kerk. De stem van de dominee echoot door de kerkzaal. Hij zit weer op school. De leraren staan voor hun schoolborden, waaruit struiken komen om de kinderen mee te nemen. ‘Eindelijk,’ denkt hij. Al zijn nachtmerries komen terug, de struiken die hun dorens in de monden van jonge kinderen stoppen, en hen in hun tanden steken. En die dorens blijven daar zitten. En pepermunt wordt er in de kerk uitgedeeld, van de mintstruik.

‘Ik vraag jullie te luisteren,’ zegt de leraar.

- Nee, zegt een kind.

‘Dan ga je maar naar de directeur.’

- Geen sprake van.

Zo gaat dat altijd. Moe wordt hij ervan. Altijd en eeuwig die dictators. Slangen in het paradijs. Zijn hoofd is heet, zijn oude woede stroomt. Hij heeft zijn vrouw nodig, de poort naar de hemel. Maar hij is jonger nu, en speelt op het plein. De kinderen hebben ruzie. Honden in het paradijs. Ze rennen, ze zijn op jacht. Het zijn vuurbessen in zijn hoofd, de honden van gebrek. Hij ziet de engel des doods, zo vroeg al, zich mengende in het kinderspel. Zijn bittere klauw beroert het zoete kinderhart, en plant het trauma daar, als een pad leidende tot de dood. Zo zijn wij allen hier opgehangen. En op het huwelijk ? Trots kijkt zij hem aan, en dan wordt de spiegel ineens ingeslagen. De engel des doods is hier. Ruw worden kinderdromen verstoord, moeders en vaders gillen. De engel des doods vertrekt met het kind, met de pop, ramen

inslaande, deuren intrappende, baant hij zijn weg. De engel des doods is hier, waar Maria haar niet kan tegenhouden. Het is een vrouw, het gezicht van een lerares, een dokter, een arrogante blik. Ze heeft haar lange reis gemaakt vanuit de hel om toe te slaan. De oogst van de hel is bijna rijp, hier staat zij met haar sikkel en zeis, als de Zwarte Maria. Hij smeekt haar het kind te sparen, maar koelbloedig neemt zij het kind mee.

Onbarmhartig heeft zij toegeslagen. Bij het zien van het leed verroerde zij geen vin, koud als de dood was zij. Haar angel vindt haar weg door harten, om te verwonden. Zij sluit geen compromissen, laat zich niet omkopen. Haar zwarte klauw komt om te grijpen en te doden. Zij komt om te breken, om dat wat alreeds zwak is gemaakt mee te nemen. Ze laat woede achter, onbegrip, verscheurde gevoelens, een doorboord hart.

In haar doolhoven zijn we verdwaald, in haar web verstrikt. De confrontatie is onvermijdelijk. Ze laat al haar wapens zien in een reflex. Ze heeft een dodelijke wond, want eens kwam ze haarzelf halen. De engel des levens kijkt haar goedkeurend en bewonderend aan, en we staan schaakmat. Is er nog een andere engel die meeleven toont, dan is dat een gevallen engel, en zo wordt alles weggestreept. Hij wil opstaan uit de kerk, maar hij kan het niet. De woorden van de dominee geven hem troost.

De koude hand voelt hij, die zijn schouder indrukt, het machteloze gevoel, de woede, maar het woord van de dominee is verzachtend, ontgiftigend, totdat de engel des doods weer toeslaat. Haar reis vanuit de de hel stopt hier. Hier neemt zij haar woning. Maria draagt een zwart kleed, haar soldaten hebben zwarte helmen, en die zwarte bessen moeten gegeten worden. Hij schreeuwt, vol woede, maar ze sluiten hem op. Een gevallen engel noemen zij hem. Een engel ? Wat is dat ? Heeft dat met een auto-industrie te maken ? En de bijbel, wat is dat dan ? Hij weet het niet meer, in zijn hersenen verliest hij grip. Er is een koud gat in zijn hersenen, glibberig, als besmeurd met uitwerpselen. Het is maar een darm. Voedselresten, niets anders, en een grotere vertering moet nog komen ? Of blijft het hierbij ?

Hij staat op straat, het regent. De stad lijkt bezaait met hondenpoep, en nu zwemt het rond in de regen die zich ophoopt op de grond. Kinderen hebben plezier in rubberbootjes. Hier hebben ze altijd van gedroomd. Diepliggende garages lopen onder. Hij kijkt rond. Hij heeft een paraplu. Zo maakt de bakker dus zijn brood, denkt hij.

Hij mag er wezen. Hij voelt zich vrij. Het is dinsdag. Hij loopt naar de brug over het smalle riviertje. Dan gaat hij de winkelstraat in. Hij leest een krant die in het regenwater drijft, althans dat probeert hij. Op zoek naar een gouden boodschap, maar al wat hij ziet zijn de eentonige, naargeestige boodschappen van de engel des doods. Met monotone stappen loopt hij verder. ‘Hier woonde Iris vroeger,’ bedacht hij zich. Maar hij loopt haastig door. Het water is hem bijna tot de knieen gestegen. De stad lijkt nu bezaaid met de uitwerpselen van honden.

Het zijn de honden van gebrek, maar hij is gelukkig nu. De apocalypse kent hij nu, de schalen des hemels die over het verloederd volk wordt uitgegoten. Hier heeft hij zo lang op gewacht. En het regent maar door, en de dijken breken door, en hij klimt in een boom. Dit is de boom waar hij als kind altijd in speelde, waar hij zijn hutten had, en zijn eerste vriendinnetjes. De boom was nu veel langer. Ja, hij zou de zondvloed overleven. Deze boom, als de kroon van zijn tuin. Lange schaakstukken staan op de dijken.

Hij zoent met Klara, dan met Els, maar op Klara wordt hij steeds verliefder. Hij trouwt met haar, alles in het wit. De tuin is voor hem het belangrijkste. Die boom moet groeien, anders redden we het niet. Op de dijken en duinen loopt hij, de koppen afhakkende van lange schaakstukken. Zij zijn de weg naar de hemel niet, en hij is de politie. Het gaat om de boom. Maar nieuwe koppen komen uit de schaakstukken ploppen. Hij is in een gevecht met de engel des doods. En de engel des levens lacht. Ze waren zo verliefd. Hij ziet haar staan, bij de brug, Kirsten, zijn eerste liefde. Ze is in schitterend wit met allerlei hangende touwtjes. Hij komt dichterbij en de bliksem slaat hem. Ze staan bij een boom, een andere boom, en dan kussen ze elkaar. Een langere jongen gaat er uiteindelijk met haar vandoor, en dan wordt ze een popje van een andere tuin, vreemd voor hem. En de jaren daarvoor was de liefde in hem zo zwak dat hij alleen maar kon dromen. Er waren zoveel andere dingen in hem die hij veel belangrijker vond. Een auto was belangrijker dan een meisje. De juffrouw was belangrijker dan een meisje. De sterkste zijn was belangrijker dan een meisje. Het meeste hebben was belangrijker dan een meisje. Hij trok aan datgene wat de engel des doods vasthield. Hij wist niet wat het was, maar hij wilde het hebben. Een ongelovelijke kracht maakte zich van hem meester, een jeugdige kracht, en zij liet los. Hij hoorde een schreeuw, een gil. Hij hield de engel des levens in zijn armen. Hij trok haar door het inmiddels tot de nek gestegen regenwater. ‘Kom naar de boom,’ riep hij.

‘Wij weten allemaal wat de enige weg is,’ zei de dominee. Hij wist het niet meer. ‘Ja, maar de stad, de stad,’ riep hij.

‘Grijp de boom,’ riep de dominee. ‘Kus haar. Beklim haar. Ze is van jou. Ik verklaar u nu man en vrouw. En deze bijbel mag jullie huwelijk bezegelen.’ Hij wist niet wat de bijbel was. ‘Liefdesbrieven van Klara of van mijn eerdere liefdes ?’

‘Allemaal,’ zei de dominee. ‘Onderhoud nu je tuin.’

‘Bind haar aan de boom,’ riep iemand. ‘Trek haar op,’ riep een ander. Een politie-agent deed hem in de boeien. ‘Waarom heeft u deze vrouw opgehangen ?’

‘Ik probeerde haar te redden. Ik ben zelf een politie-agent,’ zei hij.

‘U moet voorkomen bij de engel des doods,’ zei de agent. Ze zat daar in de hal, vooroorlogs. ‘Nu is het oorlog,’ riep ze. ‘Je hebt het vuur van de goden gestolen, Prometheus, en aan de mensen gegeven. Je kent je straf.’ Een gier vloog op hem af, om van zijn lever te eten, die tegelijkertijd weer aangroeide. ‘Gier,’ zij hij. ‘Breng haar tot de ark, de grote boom, we missen nog een paar dieren.’

De gier vloog op haar af en greep haar.

Hoofdstuk 2. De Oase

Ze had satijn aan, als een popje. De juffrouw had alle kinderen onder haar macht. Als haar poppen waren ze, en ze behandelde hen goed. Alle jongens waren verliefd op de juffrouw, maar er waren belangrijkere dingen dan de juffrouw. Het jaar daarop kregen ze een nieuwe juffrouw, een verschrikkelijke, het tegenovergestelde van de vorige juffrouw. De nieuwe juffrouw was als de engel des doods, als een wild en gevaarlijk dier. En toch wist ze zich te gedragen dat jaar, en kwamen ze er heelhuids doorheen, en het was maar voor een jaar. De dag des doods was voorbij. Het schip triomfeerde in de haven, aan de kade. ‘Moet dat nou, al dat bloot ?’ vroeg zijn vader toen hij meer en meer ging tekenen.

‘Ja, open en bloot,’ zei hij. ‘Ik laat ze niks meer verbergen. Dieren zijn toch ook bloot ?’

‘Het is een onderwaardering van het vrouwelijke geslacht,’ zei vader. ‘Zie jij vrouwen als dieren ?’

‘Bomen staan toch ook bloot ?’ zei hij. ‘Het is onze enige redding.’

‘Nee,’ zei vader, ‘je weet wie onze enige redding is.’

Maar hij wist het niet meer. Hij was gefixeerd op de boom. De noot moest gekraakt worden, gepeld, tot aan de pit. ‘We hebben lang genoeg gewacht, vader,’ zei hij.

‘Jij groeit op voor galg en rad,’ zei vader.

‘En jij groeit op voor de kus van de engel des doods,’ zei hij tegen vader.

Maar het schip triomfeerde in de haven, aan de kade. De lage boompjes op de grond, de struiken in het diepe zand, warm zand was het, en het leek alsof ze allemaal bewust waren. Het zonlicht leek rinkelend. Hij kon het zich niet meer herinneren, en werd een treurig persoon. Hij wist snel niet meer wat bomen waren. Het dwaalde allemaal op hem heen. Hij lag vaak op bed. Hij was vaak moe, als gekust door de engel des doods. Een diersoort was het in zijn ogen, gemeen, opdringerig.

‘Praat niet zo over engelen,’ zei vader. ‘Het zijn heilige wezens.’ Maar hij wist niet meer wat heilig was. Er was een diep gemis in zijn hart, het knaagde. De somberheid van het alledaagse leven overspoelde hem, verlamde hem.

‘Trouw haar,’ zei de dominee. Het was zijn verlossing uit dat gezin. Klara dronk veel, en hij lustte ook wel een borreltje op zijn tijd, en steeds meer begonnen ze zich in hun huisje terug te trekken. Het was alsof ze alcoholische sappen aan de bomen konden onttrekken. Hij likte aan de bomen.

Zij was het schilderij in zijn huis, een schilderij van groen-metalen maaiers, waarmee hij wel over elke wilde haardos wilde gaan. De groen-metalen maaiers schitterden in het zonlicht. Het was een warme, mooie dag. Ze waren als de wachters van de engel des doods. Maar ze had haar betekenis verloren. Ze was als het ei op tafel. Het was paas-ochtend, de geur van het lijden na de dood, nieuw leven brengend. Zijn vrouw stond in de keuken. Hij staarde naar de tuin. Het zou een prachtige dag worden met veel zon. Er was geen krant vandaag, en op de televisie was er het levenslied. Zijn vrouw kwam even later met de koffie binnen, en ging toen zitten om te breien. Het was alsof hij alles weer opnieuw beleefde. Ze zat ver weg van hem, of dat kwam door de vele spullen die tussen hen stonden. Het huis stond vol met de dierbare spulletjes van zijn vrouw. Er werd niet veel gezegd. Het ging bergafwaarts met zijn vrouw, en snel werd ze door de engel des doods weggehaald. Een groot ei zweefde boven de vijver. Deze had zijn vrouw opgeslokt. Het was alweer pasen. Het jaar daarna was hij alleen. Hij at veel eieren, om iets van zijn vrouw terug te krijgen, maar hij ving veel bot. Hij liet schilderijen in zijn huis hangen, Franse schilderijen, met wulpse gestaltes die ’s nachts tot leven kwamen, tot hem kwamen, om hem te beladen met kerkelijke schuld. Hij wist dat er wat mis was met hem. Hij had aan bomen gelikt.

De nachten duurden lang, waren diep, waarin hij vele gesprekken voerde, naar de schilderijen staarde. Hij liet een bar plaatsen. De gestaltes van de schilderijen moesten zijn vrouw vervangen, de leegtes opvullen. Maar de kerkelijke prijs was hoog, een prijs die opliep tot aan pasen. Hij was de gekruisigde, hij was de engel des doods. Hij was voortijdig gekomen, gevallen was hij. Maar het grote boek begon de betekenissen te veranderen. Het was een draaiboek, een boek van rekeningen, en hij doneerde veel geld om zijn geweten los te kopen, uit deze hel. Hij was het zelf die die lange reis vanuit de hel had gemaakt, en nu was hij hier, met al zijn groengelakte maaiers. De tuin vroeg erom om gemaaid te worden, en het was een mooie dag. De tuin was klaar om haar oogst te geven. Hij greep, miste, en greep nog een keer, en was vereeuwigd in een schilderij. Hij met de zeis, gedood om te doden. De vlaggen hingen uit buiten. Hij herinnerde de verzorgster die kwam. Hij liet haar ook aan bomen likken, en zij werd als hem. Zij leerde van hem. Hij had een machts-positie. Zij aanbad hem omdat hij ouder was, en veelkleurig was. Voor haar was hij niet ziek maar vrij, een verlicht mens. Hij liet haar het schilderij zien waarop hij stond. 'Is dat je grootvader ?' vroeg ze.

- Nee, dat ben ik.

'Je lijkt veel ouder hier.'

- Macht verouderd.

'Wie heeft het geschilderd ?'

Hij zwijgt, en hangt het schilderij weer terug. Met pasen eten ze altijd samen paas-eitjes. Dan herinnert hij zich niks meer, en gaat terug in de tijd, zo ver, dat hij bij de witte lijnen aankomt. Als hij erover gaat zal hij sterven. Hij beweegt zich helemaal tot het randje van de laatste streep. Hij kijkt in de diepte van een reusachtig ravijn. 'Hier wil ik niet sterven,' denkt hij. Hij gaat terug, en hoort zijn vader en moeder tot hem spreken, hem betuttelen. Hij is niet vrij. Strak wordt hij opgevoed. Zijn vader bespeelt hem als een pop. Zijn moeder kan hem niet bereiken. Hij heeft een ei met vele stralen in zijn hart. 'Alleen een vrouw kan me hieruit redden,' denkt hij.

'Wil je met haar trouwen ?' vraagt de dominee.

'Ja,' zegt hij.

‘Dan is zij nu uw vrouw.’

De kerkdienst gaat verder. Zijn vader en moeder zijn verdrietig omdat ze hem kwijt zijn. Ze wilden hem in een hokje houden. De dominee neemt het hok over. Als dieren zijn ze in het schip van Noach, twee aan twee. Zijn vrouw kan goed naaien en breien. En borduren doet ze ook graag, maar het steekt hem. Het steekt hem dat ze toch ook zo ver weg is. Ze leven in verschillende werelden. Ze breekt zoveel van zijn hart weg, door haar geprik, als een spin die hem van binnen aanvreet. En met pasen zijn er nieuwe eieren. Hij is het paaskind, maar hij kan niet opnieuw geboren worden. Daarvoor zijn de banden te strak. De tijd brengt dood voort, geen leven. En hij gaat het tegemoet. Een vrouw moet hem redden. Zijn eigen vrouw is niet genoeg, het gaat niet diep genoeg, alhoewel ze diep steekt. Dan zijn daar de Franse schilderijen. Met deuren die ’s nachts opengaan. Hij leert hen bomen likken. Ze worden als hem, en kunnen niet meer terug. Ze zijn de stralen van het ei. Hij is de kapitein op het schip, en buiten loeren de haaien op hem. Ze willen hem naar een verpleeghuis brengen, net als zijn vrouw. Zijn vrouw woont nu in de haaien, als de prinses der haaien is zij. Ze hebben haar overboord gegooid. Hij zal hen vinden. Hij is de engel des doods, het ei met de vele stralen. Hij had niet moeten slapen, hij had zijn tuin moeten onderhouden. Nu is ze weg. De Franse soldaten hebben hun Napoleon gevonden. Hij steekt zijn maaiers in de fik, en is klaar om te gaan grillen. De honden van gebrek zijn in de stad. Nu is alles in vuur. Hij zal zijn vrouw vinden. Hij zal haar vinden in de haai die haar opslokte, en van die haai zullen ze hun boot maken. Maar zijn herinneringen draaien, en zijn ziedend, en dan weet hij ineens niks meer. Hij weet niet dat hij ooit een vrouw had. Hij heeft nu de gedachte dat ze er nooit is geweest. Ze probeerden hem iets op de mouw te spelden. Hij woont alleen. Zijn huis staat in een klein bos, met een bloemenveld. Hij woont hier eenzaam en verlaten, met zijn maaiers. Veel te maaien elke dag. Daar trekt hij zich aan op. En schilderijen zijn zijn passie maar zij zijn dood. En ook boeken zijn zijn passie, maar zij zijn dood. Hij houdt van de engel des doods. Het leven is te eng. Hij heeft een Maria-beeld naast de televisie, wat hij ooit heeft zwartgeverfd. Er is een lamp in geplaatst. Hij aanbidt haar, maar dan verdwijnt haar betekenis. Ook zij is dood. De dode kunst trekt hem aan, en het dode water der bomen, de alcohol. De lucht ruikt naar drop. Hij durft niet naar het toilet, daarom gebruikt hij een po die hij eens in de week verschoont. De po staat boven, en bakent zijn terrein af. Het beschermt hem tegen de wilde dieren van het bos. Hij staart uit het raam en ziet de uitgestrekte velden der vergetelheid. Hier zijn de witte strepen. En nu wil hij er echt voor gaan. Hij vecht, hij schreeuwt, hij overwint, en verliest dan. Beelden staan er in zijn huis, die het Christus-verhaal uitbeelden. Vaak gaat hij langs die beelden. Die beelden zijn als zijn huisdieren, veilig in de ark van Noach. De ark van Mozes heeft horens. Hij komt dichterbij, en de geur van wierook, drop en chocola overspoelt hem, maar ook de geur van hondenpoep. Hij grijpt de horens van de ark, maar wordt dan achteruit geslagen. Boven de ark verschijnt een ei met vele stralen. De ark verandert in een doodskist, en hij heeft het gevoel alsof hij in een lift zit, en wordt uitgestrekt als een sigaar in een sigaren-houder. ‘Ik ben een van de velen,’ denkt hij. ‘Velen zijn geroepen, weinig uitverkoren.’ Doodsangst overvalt hem.

Zijn hang naar materiele goederen wordt groter, die zijn hersenen bevriezen. Goud en metaal is zijn lust, edele metalen, het liefst gelakt. De badkamer is als een ark voor hem. Hij staart

veel naar bijbeltaferelen op schilderijen, maar hij kan ze nauwelijks herinneren. Hij is alleen, in een koel huis. Hij strijdt tegen alles totdat het dood is. Het dode heeft de vlam van ander leven, elitair leven, fijngevoelige kunst. Maar hij kan dit leven niet opbrengen. Het hout om hem heen begint te rotten, het goud om hem heen begint te stinken, en het koele begint hem te steken. Een spin vreet hem aan, een groep dolle wolven. De honden van gebrek zijn hier, de honden van een duivels paradijs. Zij nemen hem mee naar het verpleeghuis, en zij gaan zijn huis bewonen. Zij hebben al zijn medailles afgenomen, om er zelf mee te pronken. ‘Alleen de duivel kan de duivel overwinnen,’ denkt hij. Hij weet nog nauwelijks wie of wat de duivel is. Hij ziet het als een wapen. Hij moet zich verdedigen, maar hij kan het niet. ‘Ik kan net zo goed Frans praten,’ denkt hij.

De juffrouw houdt hem stevig vast.

‘Wil je met haar trouwen ?’ vraagt de dominee.

Hij knikt verlegen. Als hij thuis is maait hij het gras. Zijn vrouw komt hem een hoog glas brengen. Later zitten ze in de tuin. Ze gaan vroeg naar bed. Zijn vrouw leest voor. Over de engel des doods wordt niet gesproken. Wel weten ze dat het een plaaggeest is. Dan gaan ze slapen. Zijn vrouw kust hem. Hij houdt haar hand vast. Zijn zusjes wonen bij hem in. Ze zijn paas-eitjes aan het beschilderen. Als hij het ziet krijgt hij er honger van. Zijn zusjes spelen vaak op het pleintje, waar ze spelletjes doen. Ook zijn ouders wonen bij hem in. Hij draagt het ei met stralen. In de nacht maait hij. Dokters nemen hem mee in de nacht, zeggende dat hij schizofreen is, een gevaar voor de samenleving, met zijn maaiers. Zij nemen hem mee en sluiten hem op, ver weg van het oog van zijn familie. Zij willen het ei met de stralen uit hem roven, maar zij kunnen het niet. Hij denkt dat zij buitenaardsen zijn. Van de planeet aarde schijnt hij nog nooit gehoord te hebben, en wil er ook niet zoveel mee te maken hebben.

Met hem schijnt het beter te gaan nu ze hem nieuwe pillen hebben gegeven. Hij is inmiddels in het ziekenhuis, op een speciale afdeling. Langzaam begint hij weer uit bed te komen. De zusters bewonderen hem vanwege zijn humor en zijn markante persoonlijkheid. Hij is bijna hun god. Hij wordt hier als een prins behandeld, als een prins die van het paard is gevallen, zoals hij dat altijd zegt. Snel heeft hij een vriendin, en zijn gezondheid verbeterd steeds meer, tot zo’n hoogte dat hij zelfs weer op zichzelf zou kunnen wonen. Met zijn vriendin krijgt hij ergens een woning hoog in een flat. Zijn vriendin is veel jonger, maar door de pillen verjongd hij ook. In zijn flatwoning voelt hij zich al snel als de prins van Bagdad. Door de pillen loopt zijn leeftijd zo drastisch terug dat hij op een gegeven moment nog maar twintig is. Het voelt heerlijk aan tussen de hoge flatgebouwen. Hij staart vaak naar de overkant. Hij voelt zich vitaal. Tussen de flatgebouwen door zijn de prachtigste rozentuinen, waar hij vaak doorloopt of langsloopt met zijn vriendin. Er hangt een beetje een oosters of Arabisch sfeertje, en dat bevalt hem wel. Maar de rozenstruiken groeien steeds hoger en worden steeds dichter, om zo de flatgebouwen te isoleren. Nu voelt hij zich als Doornroosje. Ze gaan verhuizen en krijgen een flatje aan het weiland. Op dit tijdstip begint het weer slechter met hem te gaan, ook al is

hij twintig. Misschien dat nu de ouderdom toch echt toeslaat. Weer belandt hij in het ziekenhuis, maar hij voelt zich nog steeds de prins van Bagdad, en zelfs van heel Arabie. Hij staart vaak naar de stenen van het ziekenhuis die zo’n aparte kleur hebben. Vooral als het zonlicht erop valt heeft het een prachtig effect. Zacht roze is toch wel de mooiste kleur, denkt hij.

En als zijn vriendin bij hem op bezoek komt heeft ze zo’n mooie roze jurk. Ze neemt hem mee voor een wandeling langs het meer. De melkfabriek staat hier dichtbij en alles ruikt hier aangebrand. In zijn gedachten zweeft hij met haar over het meer, en roze zwanen volgen hen. Even later liggen ze beiden in het koele meer. ‘Zullen we naar de overkant zwemmen ?’ vraagt hij. Zijn vriendin vindt het best. Dat hebben ze al wel eerder gedaan. Achter het meer zijn de weilanden, en achter het weilanden is hun flat. Helemaal nat komen ze aan in hun woning. Maar hij zorgt dat hij voor het donker wordt weer in het ziekenhuis is. Ook al is hij nu dan weer in het ziekenhuis, deze laatste bladzijden van zijn leven zijn sterk en roze, als rotsen waarop hij kan bouwen. Hij voelt zich veilig hier, iets wat over hem waakt. De golfjes die hier aankomen brengen voornamelijk geluk. Een oase was over hem heengevallen, en dat was allemaal net op tijd.

Mexicaans IJs

Hoofdstuk 1.

Ik liep op straat, en dacht aan het mengsel in de lucht, als aan een trap die tot een wolkenkasteel zou leiden, of een andere planeet. Ik had daar vaak over nagedacht en gefilosofeerd. Wie zou daar wonen ? In de nacht trok ik de stoute schoenen aan, en fietste naar de hemel. Ik had een lange regenjas aan.

Een koude oorlog heerste in de hemel, zo koud. Alles hier was gemaakt van het mengsel, prachtige zuilen, zeer hoog, een kolossaal gezicht. Zure gezichten bewaakten deze hemel, professionele gezichten zonder zorg, maar met een doodslust, ongenadig, zonder hart. En ik dacht : als het dan hier al zo koud is, hoe koud zou dan het opperwezen wel niet zijn, God. Ik zag God in de kleine dingen, de liefde tussen mensen, maar niet hoog op een ijselijke troon,

geen gezagswezen die brulde om aandacht, en het dan niet gaf. Wie had deze God gecreeerd, deze machine van de hel. Wie had deze God in het leven geroepen ? Ik liep op straat, en keek door een winkelraam, waar ik protserige chocolade figuren zag liggen. De winkelier was in gesprek met een mevrouw. Zijn gezicht stond vuurrood. Niks geen liefde op zijn gezicht, alleen koele zakelijkheid. En de vrouw keek alsof ze haar liefde op het eerste gezicht had gevonden.

Ik liep door op de trap, tot het zolder, waar ik alle geraamtes nog beter kon bekijken. Een machteloos gevoel overstroomde mij, wat mij vertelde dat er meer aan de hand was. Een pauwenkoningin vond ik op een verdieping boven het zolder. Zij was de leider van een stad. Zij sprak mij geruststellend toe. Zij droeg het raadsel van de schoonheid, het raadsel van de hoer. Ik kwam er meer en meer achter dat ik de toren van Babel aan het beklimmen was. Ik was nog maar een jong kind. Ik had deze dromen zelf gecreeerd. Maar ik wilde er meer van weten. Het kon niet zo zijn dat ik de enige hier was. De pauwenkoningin nam mij mee naar haar kamer. ‘Wil je je voetjes vegen, schatje,’ zei ze. Ook wilde ze dat ik zou douchen. Het was liefde op het eerste gezicht. Ik was verliefd op haar. Maar natuurlijk had ik geen plaats in haar hart. Voor haar was ik maar een nummer. Ik was een jong kind, maar op hetzelfde moment een oude man. Zij was een zeemeeuw in de lucht. Boven de zee zweefde zij, de zee van mijn verlangens, maar ze liet me gaan. Ik was een nummer voor haar. Ik was maar een klein golfje in haar zee, gemaakt om te werken, om haar scheepjes te dragen. Toen ik haar bereikt had was ik oud, zeer oud, toen ze mij toegang gaf tot haar toren. We werden vrienden, en ik herinnerde het moment waarop ze mij voor het eerst zag. Ze had sprekende ogen, gecalculeerd, hardvochtig, maar tegelijkertijd zo zoet. Ik was bang voor haar, en tegelijkertijd bewonderde ik haar. De zuilen van haar stad waren hoog. Zou zij God herbergen ? Ik was bang dat ik haar niet aan zou kunnen, bang dat zij over mij zou heersen, en dat gebeurde ook. Het mengsel was hier een dictator. Ik sloofde mezelf voor haar uit, om een hogere rang te krijgen in haar koninkrijk, en op hetzelfde moment vroeg ik mij af waar ik mee bezig was. Ze maakte mij tot kapitein.

Het mengsel was een mix van edele metalen en edele plastic-soorten, met de sterkte van dansers. Het was zowel buigbaar als onbuigbaar. Je kon het niet manipuleren. Zelden had ik een koppiger geheel gezien. Ik bleef maar gefixeerd op haar. Zij was de ster van het feestje, zij werd aanbeden. Haar stem was zacht en zoet, en tegelijkertijd gebiedend. Ze dwong aandacht en aanbidding. Zij die haar niet genoeg gaven werden geperst als fruit en vruchtjes, en wisten de keer erna wel beter. Zij was de mixer. Haar dans-muziek was meeslepend. Je kon je er nauwelijks tegen verzetten. En het raadsel van de schoonheid in haar was allesverwoestend en traumatiserend. In de nacht was zij een storm van angst. Ze was een vrouw van tegenpolen, ze had een duister gat. Haar legermachten vreesden haar. Ik kon mij niet verzetten tegen haar. Ik voelde me een slaaf. Er was iets in haar wat het einde van de wereld kon veroorzaken. Maar ook zij werd oud en grijs op haar oude dag, en ik trok voort. Als een trekvogel nam ik afscheid van haar. Haar woede liet veel van de toren invallen. Ik hield mij vast aan de dunne zuilen van het mengsel, en klom omhoog. Het mengsel redde mij uit haar grip. Ze was een panische verschijning vanaf toen.

Ik trok me op aan het mengsel, maar het begon te branden en te klonteren. Het droop van me af. Het proefde als een mix van chocola en caramel. Een spin greep mij, en ik verloor alles. Ik had geen identiteit meer, geen enkele zeggenschap. De wind deed met mij wat hij wilde. Ik was als geknakt riet. Ik was gekomen op de academie, waar jonge haantjes met hun veren pronkten, arrogante belhamels, die nog niet wisten dat ze niets wisten. Zij hadden van de grote appel van het 'zelf' gegeten. De 'ik' was hier de baas. Ook zij droegen het geheim van schoonheid. Zij waren ijdel, en bleven uren lang kammen voor de spiegel. Zij hielden hun schoonheidsverkiezingen van wie er het meest deskundig uitzag. Het mengsel werd hier aanbeden. Zij aanbaden het raadsel van de hoer. Het was een koopwaar, bezegeld met een diploma. Koningen kochten hun tronen voor hoge prijzen, en het raadsel van geld was moord. Ik had geen alibi, dus ze zagen mij als de moordenaar aan, en sloten mij op in een inrichting. Het was de koningin van de pauwen die mij daaruit bevrijdde. Dit land kende geen gevangenissen, alleen inrichtingen. En het mengsel was de militaire dienstplicht. De koningin van de pauwen maakte me tot officier nu. Ik was officier in het leger van het mengsel nu.

De hoer van Babylon zat hier, een prostituee, met een handel in koffie en cacao. Zij had haar mengsel geschapen van macht, want de toren moest verder gebouwd worden, tot in het hart van de hemel. Dit keer zou zij niet falen. Er stond teveel op het spel. Zij was de Izebel die de papieren profetie zou scheuren, als het voorhangsel van de schoonheid. Zij had haar potten en pannen opgestapeld, en beklom dezen. Zij was de prinses op de erwt. Haar matrassen waren opgestapeld tot aan het plafond. Vandaar kon ik het koele wezen zien, het wezen dat ons allemaal met strakke, misselijkmakende hand regeerde en afbeulde. Dit monster was genaamd het beest, slechts haar eigen spiegelbeeld. Ik dronk wat van mijn koffie, en zat tegenover haar, op de wiebelende matras. We voelden de erwt steken. Het stak als het ergste zwaard. Het was de wraak van de koffie-plantage, de opstand der slaven. Zij hadden hun eigen middel : de melange. Het was een mengsel van groenten, koffie, fruit en snoep. Het was een neger-opperhoofd die de toren van Babel claimde. Iemand anders had een middel genaamd : de mix. Al snel liep het uit op een oorlog, en het beest sprong toe, zodat ik er langs kom en naar boven rende. 'Laten ze elkaar maar opvreten,' dacht ik bij mezelf. Ik had lang genoeg zitten kaarten. Eindelijk waren er dan wat jokers in het spel. Maar de toren van Babel begon in te storten. Ik kon niet verder naar boven. Weer had de koningin der pauwen genade met mij, en liet mij binnen in het wolkenkasteel. Ik was nu haar generaal. Maar koning was ik nog steeds niet. Ik liep er nog steeds zeer armoedig bij. Ze begon met pudding te gooien, en al snel waren we in een gevecht. Het mengsel was nog steeds meer dan overwinnaar. Ik verdiende het niet om zo te lijden, maar de oren waren doof hier. Een kat genaamd mengelmoes kwam dichterbij. 'Wat wil je hier beginnen ?' vroeg hij. 'Niemand zal naar je luisteren, want ze zijn allemaal in de ban van de mengelmoes.' Ik maakte een stap naar achteren omdat ik bang was dat deze 'mengelmoes' mij zou bespringen. Hij zag er woest uit en levensgevaarlijk. 'Ik zal je doof maken als de rest,' zei hij. 'Ik zal je voorhoofd harder maken dan hun voorhoofden, en je zult hen overwinnen.'

'Waar bestaat u uit ?' vroeg ik.

‘Appelmoes,’ zei hij, ‘jam, kaas, en veel worst.’ Hij probeerde mij kopjes te geven, maar ik hield me afzijdig. Hij zou me met één slag of bijt kunnen vermorzelen. ‘Ken je het geheim van Babylon ?’ vroeg hij. ‘De moederstad van alle hoeren. Ik bewaak haar boom.’ En hij probeerde mij te verleiden om van die boom te eten, wat mij tot een koning zou maken in de stad, maar ik weigerde, en zijn woede was groot. Hij kookte van woede, en begon te sissen als een slang. ‘Zij die geweigerd hebben komen de stad nooit meer uit,’ sprak hij toen kalm. Ik rende de stad binnen, en zocht naar een schuilplaats om me tegen deze kat te beschermen, maar niemand deed voor me open. Binnenin de stad was de gracht van chaos, waar ik toen insprong. Duisternis omhulde mij, maar alles beter dan deze kat. Ik zwom van gracht naar gracht, totdat ik bij een bakkerij aankwam. Het was de bakkerij des doods, waar zwart-grijze vrouwen werkten. ‘Mengelmoes zal wel naar je op zoek zijn,’ sprak één van de vrouwen. ‘Hij houdt niet van zwervers zoals jij. Er is er maar één die je nog kan helpen, en dat is Hutspot.’

‘Wie is dat ?’ vroeg ik.

Ik ontsnapte via een achterdeurtje met een boekje in mijn hand. Ik was nu in een winkelstraat, op zoek naar Hutspot. Het boekje was een stratenboek, en al snel kwam ik waar ik wezen moest. Hutspot was een oude clown. Hutspot kende de toren van Babel als zijn broekszak en was ooit zelf ternauwernood aan mengelmoes ontsnapt. Hij vertelde mij hoe hij onstnapt was : ‘Een glimlach bestaat uit een mengsel tussen monogamie en polygamie, maar de hoererij is een nog groter overspelig mengsel die de glimlach dooft. Daartoe was mengelmoes uitgezonden. Het grootste mengsel is echter het celibaat waarvan je werkelijk gaat lachen, ja, schaterlachen. Dat is het grootste medicijn.’

‘Bent u van het katholieke priesterschap of iets soortgelijks,’ vroeg ik.

‘Nee, zoon,’ zei hij. ‘Er is een groter mysterie,’ zei hij. ‘De slang bewaakte in de hof de boom van de vermenging, waardoor er bastaarden voort zouden komen, half-bloed paarden. Adam en Eva waren volbloed-paarden van het koninkrijk, de onaangetaste bloedlijn, ongemengd. Zij leefden in de oorspronkelijke hof van Babylon, het paradijs, waar zij de voorbestemde bruid en bruidegom van Babylon waren. Eet van de hutspot.’ En toen zette hij mij een bordje voor. De kat klopte al op de deur, dus ik moest snel eten. Bij de eerste hap die ik naar binnen slikte hoorde ik de kat al krijsen. Bij de tweede hap was alles doodstil. Hutspot had een restaurant, en vertelde mij dat de bruid van Babylon in de kelder leefde. Ik wilde haar graag ontmoeten. Zij was als getooid voor haar man, versierd met kostbare edelstenen. Zij droeg het serum in een glazen bol. Zij was maagd, de prinses van de pauwen. ‘Je weet dat het mengsel aids is, hè ?’ vroeg ze. Ik knikte. ‘En je weet wat de enige oplossing daartegen is, hè ?’ vroeg ze. Ik knikte weer. Ze opende de glazen bol, en haalde er een rode condoom uit. ‘Hier,’ zei ze.

‘Nee,’ zei ik, ‘dat kan ik echt niet aannemen.’ Toen rende ik weg, hard de trap op, en toen nog hoger. Dit hier was niets anders dan een andere afdeling van het bordeel. Het mengsel regeerde hier. Ik greep een paraplu die ergens hing, en wist dat als ik ergens de kans kreeg, dan zou ik van deze toren afspringen. Maar alles was gesloten hier. Ik kon alleen naar boven rennen. Er was zo’n meerkeuze-dictatuur hier. Bovenaan de trap was het rijk van mevrouw Kluts, een heks. Zij stond daar in haar ketel te roeren. Toen ik er langs wilde, veranderde ze in een octopus. Tegelijkertijd veranderde alles wat hier was in een grote zee. ‘Klaar voor de zondvloed ?’ zei ze. Zij was een zeeheks. Zij was het mengsel der mengsels. Ook kon ze alles in steen laten veranderen. Het was bijna twaalf uur op de klok van de toren van Babel. Iedereen verzamelde zich onder de klok, alle bakkers met hun taarten, en toen kwam de snijder naar voren om de taarten te snijden. Het mengsel zou gescheiden worden. Alles ging in grote dozen. Mij wilden ze tot koning maken, maar ik wilde hier niet wezen. Ik verborg me in de klok. In de klok was een tunnel naar een andere toren, de toren van Noach, die zou namelijk hoog genoeg zijn om de hemel te bereiken, die zou nooit vallen, en die zou niet door de zondvloed getroffen worden. De godin der pauwen begroette mij daar, en nam mij naar binnen. Hier werd ik niet als een nummer behandeld. Maar er was iets wat niet klopte. Ik was terecht gekomen in een molen. Ik zou spoedig tot moes vermalen worden. Ik rende snel weer terug naar de toren van Babel, maar die was al aan het branden. Ik kon geen kant op. Plotseling pikte een vogel me op en zette me in de wolken. ‘Hier gaat de toren van Babel verder,’ zei de vogel. Ik klom van wolk tot wolk, en besefte dat de gehele aarde een toren van Babel was. Hoeveel torens zou het kasteel van Babel hebben, dacht ik. Ik stapte in een lift, waar ook de hoer van Babylon inzat, en de bruid van Babylon. ‘Zo, waar gaat de reis naartoe ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Naar de hemel,’ zeiden ze.

‘Oh, de hof van Babylon ?’ vroeg ik. Ze knikten. ‘Moes regeert daar,’ zeiden ze.

‘Oh, mengelmoes ?’ vroeg ik verschrikt.

‘Nee, zijn broer, die is wat makkelijker,’ zeiden ze.

‘Ik hoop het,’ zei ik.

Na een tijdje kwamen we aan in de hof van Babylon. Moes was inderdaad ook een kat, een prachtig beest. ‘De Kat van Babylon,’ zeiden ze. Moes was een aardig dier. Alles leek hier gemaakt te zijn van moes. De druiptuinen waren hier. ‘Koffie ?’ vroeg Moes. Ik knikte. ‘Met of zonder chocola ?’

‘Met,’ zei ik.

‘Goede keus,’ zei Moes. ‘De gifmengers van de hel nog tegen gekomen ?’ Ik knikte. Daar had ik genoeg van gezien.

‘De gedwongen vrucht, hè,’ zei hij. Ik knikte weer.

‘Nu, die gedwongen vrucht is hier niet,’ zei hij. Ik keek naar een omgekapte boom, maar wel vloeide er spul van naar beneden. ‘Ja, beneden komt heel wat aan,’ zei Moes.

‘Kun je die boom niet naar beneden donderen ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Nee, want dan komt niemand meer aan. Dan was jij hier ook nooit gekomen,’ zei Moes. Het raadsel van de schoonheid raasde in de lucht als een mengsel, haarzelf instandhoudende, bevestigende en ondersteunende. Zij had geen zelf-kritiek, zij was puur en alwetend. Zij protste hier en bracht anderen ten onder. En niemand kon haar vasthouden vanwege hun onreinheid. Zij was een giftige lijm in de lucht. Zij was de enige waarheid. Zij nam niemand serieus, kon zich totaal niet verplaatsen in de ander, en had daar ook geen behoefte aan, want alles draaide om haar, zij was de enige. Zij was de chemische stank in de lucht, de uitlaat van de cosmetische fabriek. Zij was van alles en iedereen verlaten, maar hield zichzelf in stand door zelfbevrediging. Ze was een meervoudige personaliteiten syndroom. Zij eiste blindelingse gehoorzaamheid. En dit noemden ze de hemel ? Moes zei dat we daarom beter in de hof van Babylon konden blijven. Er was daarboven niets te zoeken. Maar de bijtende lucht was overal. Moes bracht me naar een grot waar poppen waren. Hier was het veiliger, maar die poppen deugden ook niet echt. Ik voelde me opgesloten hier. Moes begreep me, en bracht me toen naar de grot van een draak. Het vuur van de draak en zijn rook was erg ontgiftigend. Het was de draak van Babylon, die de geheimen hier bewaarde. Ik had het gevoel dat ik weer een beetje kon ademen. De draak verwarmt de toren. De draak heeft dit alles gebouwd. Wij kunnen alleen opstijgen als een phoenix vanuit het as. Dit is de draken-cocon, de cocon van vuur en ijs. Wij zijn vlinders van de dood, die vervolgens worden gedroogd en ingelijst. Wij zijn hier op het mijnenveld, elke stap kan de laatste zijn. Maar uit de cocon zullen wij nooit vallen. De martelaar schreeuwt en niemand verstaat. De draak grijpt om zich heen, en sleurt iedereen mee in zijn val.

Hoofdstuk 2.

De tere vlinder vliegt, raakt vast in webben, valt, en verandert in een moordenaar. Vals beschuldigd, bespot, bedreigd, gedwongen en gehaat, moest zij van het mengsel drinken, van Babylon's thee, en haar gevoelens verdringen. Tot het dodenrijk daalde zij, in het diepste van de hel vond zij haar pijl. Zij is een moordenaar nu, een deel van de draak zelf. Zij moest drinken van de thee, zij moest eten van het verleden. Zij moest drinken van andere werelden die zij niet kende. Zij was naar de toren van Babel verbannen. De molenaar van het kruis moest zij ontmoeten, en de moordenaar die daaraan hing. Zij verloor alles in de strijd. Door het mengsel werd alles van haar afgesneden. De stem van Babel was zacht en verwarrend. Alleen de ochtend kon verheldering geven. En dan kwam de nacht weer, en dat ging maar door, totdat we zelf een deel van het mengsel waren geworden. De bakker van Babylon mengt ons. Hij maakt van ons dat wat we niet wilden zijn. Hij trekt ons uit elkaar en voegt dingen in, zoals hij dat wil. Ik zat weer in de lift, ditmaal naar beneden, tot diep onder de grond waar de slager van Babylon leefde.

De volgende dag liep ik in de winkelstraat en probeerde dit alles te vergeten. Maar diep van binnen wist ik dat ik nog steeds in deze toren opgesloten zat. Toen ik thuis was staarde ik uit het raam, en ging vroeg naar bed. In mijn bed lag ik te woelen, en probeerde alles van me af te schudden. Ik voelde me ziek. Ik kon wel janken. In mijn boekenkast was een boek van de Babylonische geschiedenis, naast een boek van Mexicaanse ijs-gerechten. Ik trok beide boeken eruit, en las in het eerste boek over Tammuz die het symbool was van de overwinning over relatie-problemen in het huwelijk. Hij was getrouwd met Ishtar, die het pasen uitbeeldde als Easter. Zij was een hemels ei dat ooit uit de hemel viel in de rivier de Eufraat. In de Sumerische voor-cultuur stond zij bekend als Inana die haar zuster Ereshkegal in de onderwereld wilde bezoeken en door zeven poorten moest gaan waarbij ze telkens een kledingstuk of sieraad moest afleggen. Zij beeldde de heilige striptease uit, het pellen van het heilige ei. Ishtar-Inanna was ook de moeder van Tammuz die hem later uit de doden opwekte door haar tranen. Hij had ontdekt dat het huwelijk hem tot het graf had geleid, maar kwam er ook achter dat het hem weer opwekte. Dit is de kracht van het Pasen, Easter. Hij was een voor-christelijke Babylonische Christus. Hij werd verscheurd door een psychiater, en werd toen meervoudige personaliteiten syndroom genoemd. Omdat zijn vrouw nog steeds een relatie met hem had werd zij vanaf dat moment een hoer genoemd, en was toen rijp voor de prostitutie. Ik voelde me machteloos en hulpeloos. Ik greep naar het tweede boek dat ik had gepakt, met de Mexicaanse ijs-recepten. Ik bestelde veel ijs en ging direct aan de slag. Er was zoveel ijs dat ik het in drie ijskasten in de kelder moest stoppen. Ik nodigde een vriendin uit. Ze vond het heerlijk. Ze vertelde mij veel over Mexico. Ik vertelde haar veel over de toren van Babel. 'Weet je dat er ook zo'n toren in Mexico staat ?' vroeg ze. Ze haalde een boek uit haar tas en liet het me zien. 'Het is een ondergrondse toren, naar het middelpunt van de aarde.'

'En wat is daar te zien, in het middelpunt van de aarde ?' vroeg ik. Ze haalde nog een boek uit haar tas. Ik schrok. Het waren de meest verschrikkelijke slangen en draken. 'Dit kun je daar vinden,' zei ze. Toen ik het boek begon door te bladeren vond ik het prachtig. 'Daar in Mexico aanbidden ze de dualiteit. Dat betekent dat ze alles aannemen wat je zegt, maar daar maken ze wel hun eigen mengsel van,' zei ze.

‘Je bedoelt de paradox ?’ vroeg ik. Ze knikte. ‘Ze aanbidden de rokende spiegel,’ zei ze. ‘De spiegel is de enige weg uit de toren van Babylon,’ zei ze. ‘Ik ben gekomen om je te redden.’

‘Nou, dank je wel,’ zei ik. ‘Dank je wel.’ Ze leidde mij naar de spiegel, en door de spiegel kwamen we samen in de ondergrondse toren van Mexico terecht. We gingen het eerste het beste ijs-restaurantje binnen. Het leven was hier goed, veel beter dan in de toren van Babel. Mijn redder zat naast me. Wel begon het steeds kouder te worden. Ik staarde naar een vlechtwerk aan de muur. ‘Je hebt de dubbele draad nodig,’ zei ze. ‘De twee kunnen niet zonder elkaar.’ Ik nam haar in mijn armen en besefte dat ik niet zonder het mengsel kon. Na het eten gingen we naar een hotel. We zochten een spiegel op, en gingen weer terug naar de toren van Babel. ‘De toren van Babel, en het Mexicaanse ijs,’ zei ik. ‘Laten we het daarop houden. Hier woon ik, dit is mijn thuis.’ Ze knikte. Ze stond volledig achter me. Er liepen wachters op de muren van Babel, om het geheim te bewaken. ‘Hier woont de hoer van Babylon,’ zeiden ze telkens. Er kwam een klein hondje op me afrennen. Ik nam het beestje in mijn armen. Ik wilde het geheim weten. We stapten in de lift, en gingen nog verder naar beneden. We kwamen aan in de hof. Het leek alsof we een cirkeltje hadden gemaakt. Maar dit keer stond de omgekapte boom rechtop, en er was een slang in de boom, genaamd Ea. Deze slang was een orakel. Je moest niets van wat hij zei letterlijk nemen. Hij was de god van de afgrond, die door de Sumeriers ook wel Enki werd genoemd. Hij was ook de god van het water en van de wijsheid. Hier hing het mexicaanse ijs in de boom. ‘Als god zul je zijn, als je van het mexicaanse ijs zal eten,’ zei de slang. ‘En je ogen zullen opengaan. Het zal je hart verlichten.’

‘Ik heb er al van gegeten,’ zei ik.

‘Dan zullen de Spanjaarden je snel vinden,’ zei de slang.

‘De Spaanse inquisitie ?’ vroeg ik. De slang knikte. ‘Maar daar weet ik wel wat op,’ zei de slang. ‘Bouw een schip, want ik zal de zondvloed brengen.’

‘Kan ik niet gewoon de lift weer in ?’ vroeg ik. Het was een schip der zotten waarin ik was beland, maar ook wist ik dat hier ergens het geheim moest zijn. Ik ging zitten op een bankje, en wist niet of ik de raadselachtige slang met z’n allegorieen serieus moest nemen. Weer nam ik wat van het mexicaanse ijs. Het was gewoon lekker, en verder kon het me niet zoveel schelen. Hij was een zoetwater slang, en een slang van het genezend water, dus zo erg zou zo’n zondvloed nog niet eens zijn. In de bijbel was er ergens een tekst over de poel van vuur en zwavel van eeuwige pijniging, wat in de grondtekst een poel van genezing blijkt te zijn. Alles was hier zo dubbel, en alles kon omgedraaid worden. Het orakel lachte naar me. Hij

scheen zichzelf ook niet al te serieus te nemen. ‘Ik ben het geheim van de vruchtbaarheid,’ grapte hij, ‘het geheim van alle creatie.’

‘Het zal wel,’ zei ik. Maar mijn mond begon steeds meer te branden. Wat had ik toch gegeten. ‘Ik zei het je toch,’ zei de slang, ‘maar je wilde niet luisteren.’

‘Zeker zwaar gekruid,’ zei ik. Ik gooide de deur achter mij dicht, en ging weer naar mijn kamer. Ik legde de twee boeken weer terug in de boekenkast, samen met de twee boeken die ik van die vriendin had gekregen. Ik ging weer slapen. In de nacht werd ik weer wakker van de pijn. ‘Je bent gekust door het vuur,’ zei een stem. Ik probeerde weer te slapen, maar het lukte niet. ‘Eet wat meer van het mexicaanse ijs, toe,’ zei de stem. Ik strompelde naar de keuken, en begon te eten, zoals ik nog nooit had gegeten, maar het vuur werd steeds erger. Ik hoorde gelach. ‘Okay, wat moet ik nu doen,’ zei ik.

‘Snap je dan niet dat je in een dubbele wereld bent. Wil je meer ijs, dan krijg je meer vuur,’ zei de stem.

Ik moest al snel overgeven van het vele ijs wat ik had gegeten, en er ging nog wel meer uit : vreemd kruid, vreemde bessen, zelfs doorns. ‘Het mexicaans ijs is goed voor orale laxering,’ zei de stem. Het voelde alsof mijn darmen werden schoongespoeld, en ik spuugde alles uit. Ik ging weer slapen, en sliep als een roos.

Het Korte Oog

Sally was een prostituee, een dame van lichte zeden. Voor de ramen voerde ze altijd haar spel op, haar dans, om ogen te betoveren. Willem bezocht haar vaak, maar op een dag gaf hij haar zoveel geld dat ze nooit meer hoefde te werken. Ze was hem erg dankbaar. Ze kreeg een huisje in het bos. Willem kwam haar vaak bezoeken. Sally was erg aan hem gehecht. Sally zag Willem als haar redder. En de liefde was mooi. Ze hadden nog nooit gevreeen. Willem bezocht haar alleen maar op met haar te praten. Hij wilde haar helpen.

Hij heeft iets buitenaards. Hij is niet van deze wereld. En een liefde dat hij heeft. De vriendinnen van Sally werkten nog steeds in de prostitutie, en diep in hun hart hoopten ze dat Willem hen ook zou redden. Willem had een hart van goud.

Het korte oog zat op zijn troon. Vloekend, tierend. Hij wilde iedereen kort houden, ver weg van elkaar, en dat ze dan ook kort door de bocht met elkaar om zouden gaan, want het korte oog vreesde de liefde.

En deze liefde was zo brandend. Als Sally Willem aankeek dan kon je dat voelen. En als Willem Sally aankeek dan kon je hart daar van wegsmelten. Als je dat gelukkige paar zo zou zien, dan zou je denken : Ze hebben het over mij. Willem was niet zelfzuchtig, en Sally ook niet. Ze hielden beiden veel van mensen.

Het korte oog was als een kraal in een computerspel. Ver kijken kon hij niet, want dan zou hij zijn macht verliezen. De mensen waren slechts pionnen. Het korte oog had ijzeren wetten opgesteld.

Uiteindelijk zijn ze beiden maar in de wildernis gaan wonen. Het korte oog was woedend. Maar op een dag bezocht het korte oog Willem. Kijk eens wat je geliefde je heeft aangedaan, degene wiens leven jij hebt gered, zei het korte oog. Is het niet allemaal een grote illusie. De dromen die je hebt zijn onhaalbaar. Ik bied je een betere droom. Je zal alles kunnen hebben wat je hartje begeert.

Hoe dan ? vroeg Willem.

Ik kan een superster van je maken, zei het korte oog.

Gehypnotiseerd gaf hij toe aan het korte oog. Als in een speedboot behaalde hij een superster status. Maar hij kwam onder zulke hoge druk te staan dat hij zelfmoord pleegde.

Sally begon te gillen. Maar het korte oog had geen medelijden met haar en vermoordde haar, en vrat haar op. In het dodenrijk kwam ze Willem weer tegen met gebogen hoofd.

Maar het korte oog regeerde ook hier, en liet hen afdalen naar de hel.

Ik brand, zei Willem.

Ik ook, zei Sally.

Jullie hebben je niet aan mijn wetten gehouden, zei het korte oog. Jullie waren wispelturig, en jullie brabbelden maar wat. Ik eis radicaliteit en fundamentalisme, is dat teveel gevraagd ? Branden zullen jullie in de hel.

De volgende dag werden Sally en Willem wakker. Willem sloot Sally in zijn armen. Ik heb zo naar gedroomd, schat, dat ik je uit de prostitutie moest redden. En een heerschap genaamd het korte oog leidde ons naar de hel.

Het korte oog bestaat niet, zei Sally. Het is een leugen. Er zijn alleen maar lange ogen die uitreiken naar elkaars hart. Het is alleen maar liefde, en het oog van de liefde. Jij bent in mijn wereld, zei Sally. Die andere wereld is niet echt. Er zijn alleen maar dingen die je niet begrijpt die zich als verschrikkelijke monsters ontpoppen.

Sally sprak weer als een engel, zoals ze altijd deed.

Zul je me helpen om duidelijkheid te krijgen ? vroeg Willem. Ik ben nog niet zo ver als jou. Je bent vier jaar ouder.

Shhh, zei Sally.

Watervogels

De Groene Dood

Hij sloop door het bos. De koningin van het woud waakte over hen. Hij hoorde de beesten brullen in de verte. De dromer waakte deze keer. In het zonlicht kon hij haar gezicht zien. Verderop zwommen wat watervogels in de rivier, en zijzelf waren met de grotere beesten. De groene wind was hen aan het omsingelen, heel subtiel, en kwam toen steeds dichterbij. Hij haalde het gedichten-boek met het gele leren kaft erbij, en begon eruit te prevelen. Ze hield hem tegen zich aan.

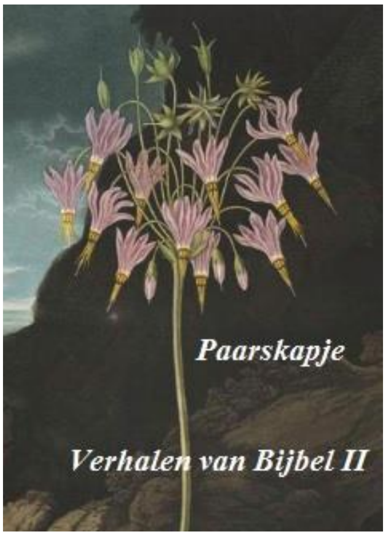
De watervogels kwamen dichterbij, en het natte was hun god. Kim staarde naar hem. Zij had hem gecreeerd. Zij was zijn godin. Zij had een boek met sleutels. En de sleutels waren van drop.

De watervogels brachten hen over de rivier naar het slot. In het slot hingen schilderijen, en er waren veel mysterieuze boeken. Ze gingen op een bed liggen, met een gordijn als deken. De groene dood was in de rivier, maar klom op de kant en ging het kasteel binnen. Aan de muren hingen skeletten.

Zij las hem verhalen voor, en het was voor hem een nieuw leven. Ze praatte snel, maar het was goed volgbaar voor hem. Hij had haar leren begrijpen, dronk wijn met haar.

De groene dood schoof als een deken over hem heen, en plotseling stond het slot in brand. Snel doken ze de rivier in. De watervogels beschermde hen tegen het vuur. Het was alsof alles in brand stond. De boeken veranderden in vogels, en de groene dood dook in de rivier om achter hen aan te gaan. Maar mysterieuze rozen waren om hen heen. Toen veranderde de rivier in bloed, en de groene dood loste er in op.

Ze zwommen naar de overkant, en gingen op de kant zitten. Rozen groeiden naar beneden vanuit de bomen. De vogels der geheimen kwamen om hen heen.


Paarskapje
Verhalen van Bijbel II

COAB 2000-2017

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Paarskapje

Moeder zei tegen Paarskapje : "Kom niet in het bos, want daar woont een leeuw."

Maar Paarskapje wilde niet luisteren. Ze ging stiekem toch naar het bos.

Aan de rand van het bos stond de leeuw.

"Zo, zo," sprak de leeuw toen Paarskapje dichterbij kwam, "dus jij hebt niet geluisterd naar de volwassenen, huh ?"

"Hoe weet u dat ?" vroeg Paarskapje.

"Leeuwen weten veel," sprak de leeuw, "maar kom maar op mijn rug, dan zal ik je laten zien hoeveel ik weet."

"Ik wilde eigenlijk gewoon het bos in," sprak Paarskapje, "en ik heb niet zoveel zin nu in malle ritjes op de rug van een leeuw."

"Malle ritjes ?" sprak de leeuw een beetje beledigd, "maar onze ritjes zijn zeer leerzaam."

"Dat kan wel wezen," sprak Paarskapje, "maar ik moet er nu door. Ga aan de kant, want ik wil het bos in."

"Het bos is van mij," sprak de leeuw. "Je bent een dom kind, en je komt er niet langs."

Het begon Paarskapje op haar zenuwen te werken, en uiteindelijk stemde ze in. "Okay, vooruit dan maar," sprak ze tegen de leeuw. "Neem jij me maar mee, en laat me maar eens zien wat jij al allemaal weet."

De leeuw liet Paarskapje op zijn rug klimmen, en toen begon de reis. Vliegensvlug snelde hij door het bos tot aan de rand van de zee.

"Nou, ik heb niet veel van het bos kunnen zien, want je ging veel te snel," zei Paarskapje.

"Voor kinderen is het nooit goed," bromde de leeuw.

"Kun je me nu het bos laten zien ?" vroeg Paarskapje. "En iets langzamer graag. Je was er zo doorheen, en ik heb niks maar dan ook helemaal niks kunnen zien."

"Ja, maar ik moet wel snel," zei de leeuw. "Er woont namelijk een wolf in het bos, en wij liggen elkaar niet zo. Er zou een groot gevecht om jou uitbreken."

"Ah, dus dat zit zo," sprak Paarskapje. "Laat mij dan gewoon alleen het bos in gaan, dan kan jij hier blijven, en dan kan ik alles op mijn gemak bekijken."

"Geen sprake van," sprak de leeuw. "Zoals ik al zei woont er een wolf in het midden van het bos, en die zou jou maar wat graag willen verslinden, en dan heb ik het op mijn geweten."

"Helemaal niet," sprak Paarskapje. "Ik wil het toch zelf ?"

"Ja, maar ik ben de bewaker van het bos," sprak de leeuw, "dus ik ben verantwoordelijk."

Paarskapje stapte van de leeuw af. "Nu moet het afgelopen zijn. Het bos is van niemand en van iedereen. Misschien dat hierom mijn moeder mij voor jou heeft gewaarschuwd, want je bent een echte zeurkous."

"Heus," sprak de leeuw, "het is voor je eigen bestwil." Maar Paarskapje begon al het bos in te rennen. De leeuw kwam niet achter haar aan. Hij schudde alleen zijn hoofd.

Diep in het bos bij een riviertje kwam Paarskapje de wolf tegen. De wolf stond daar stokstijf.

"Hoe maakt u het ?" vroeg Paarskapje, maar de wolf sprak niet. Verderop was een huisje. Paarskapje klopte even aan. Er werd al snel geopend en een grote vrouw met een doek om haar hoofd deed open. "Kom maar binnen," sprak ze.

"Wie bent u ?" sprak Paarskapje.

"Een doodgewone heks," sprak de vrouw. "In de stad moeten ze me niet, dus ik ben maar hier gaan wonen."

Paarskapje keek om haar heen. "Zijn die leeuw en die wolf toevallig ook van u ? Ze schijnen ruzie te hebben."

"Ja," sprak de oude vrouw. "Die spreken elkaar niet meer. Ze hebben beiden hun eigen terrein."

"Vreemd," sprak Paarskapje. "En waar gaat de ruzie over ?"

"Om jou," sprak de heks.

Paarskapje schrok. "Om mij ?"

"Ja," sprak de heks. "Ik zag in mijn kristallen bol dat er een meisje met een paars kapje om haar hoofd zou komen, en toen begonnen ze ruzie te maken over wie haar mocht opeten."

"Vreemd," sprak Paarskapje. "De leeuw was heel aardig, en de wolf zei helemaal niks. Ik leef nog steeds."

De heks keek het meisje aan met grote ogen. "Maar natuurlijk," sprak de oude vrouw, "ik zei hen dat ze jou geen haar mochten krenken. Jij zou namelijk van mij zijn."

Paarskapje schrok nu nog meer. "Eh, ik denk dat ik nu moet gaan," sprak het meisje, en rende naar de deur. Maar de deur zat op slot.

"Je kunt niet ontsnappen, kind," sprak de vrouw, "maar ik ben de kwaadste niet. Ik zal je niet opeten. Ik heb alleen een hulpje nodig."

"Ja, maar mevrouw," sprak het meisje. "Ik heb daar echt geen tijd voor. En ik moet naar school."

"Ach, dat went wel," sprak de vrouw. "Wat is nu belangrijker ? School of het helpen van een arme, oude vrouw ?"

En zo gebeurde het. De oude vrouw droeg Paarskapje karweitjes op, en die zou Paarskapje dan uitvoeren. De wolf moest ervoor zorgen dat Paarskapje niet de benen zou nemen. Paarskapje begon inderdaad snel er aan te wennen, en dacht bij zichzelf dat het toch ook wel belangrijk was om oude mensen te helpen. En ze hoefde niet meer naar school, dus eigenlijk was ze er achteraf nog wel blij om ook. De wolf deed haar verder geen kwaad, en Paarskapje begon steeds meer en meer te genieten van het wonen in het bos. De heks bleek de kwaadste niet te zijn, en ze deden vaak spelletjes.

Op een nacht kwam de leeuw haar kamertje binnen. Hij kwam naar haar bed toe en sprak : "Zie je nu wel, je bent nu in de macht van de wolf. De oude vrouw werkt

voor hem, en zij moet je veel laten werken en veel laten eten zodat je taai en dik wordt, zodat hij je kan opeten."

"Leugens," sprak Paarskapje. "Het is een hartstikke aardige vrouw, en de wolf doet geen vlieg kwaad. Ik hoef helemaal niet hard te werken, en ik heb het hier erg naar mijn zin. Ook hoef ik niet naar die vervelende school, en dik ben ik niet."

De leeuw schudde zijn hoofd. "Begrijpen doe je het niet. De wolf is een levensgevaarlijke heks die spelletjes met je speelt. Het zijn twee heksen, en de wolf is de baas. Zodra je dik genoeg bent zal de wolf je opeten."

"Ik geloof je niet," sprak Paarskapje, "maar ik zal er op letten niet teveel en niet te zoet te eten. Dan zullen we zien of u de waarheid hebt gesproken."

De leeuw verdween weer, en de volgende ochtend zorgde het meisje er goed voor dat ze minder at, en vooral minder zoetigheid at. Aan tafel kreeg het meisje het toen wel te horen. De oude vrouw begon er overstuur van te raken. "Eet eens wat meer zoet," zei de vrouw, "want zoet doet goed."

"Ik moet niets," zei het meisje. Maar de oude vrouw begon bozer en bozer te worden, vooral omdat het dag na dag gebeurde. Op een gegeven moment krijste ze : "Ik wil dat je meer zoet eet, anders zal de wolf je eten." Toen wist het meisje dat de leeuw gelijk had gehad. Ze beloofde direct dat ze meer zoet zou gaan eten, maar ze deed het niet. "Morgen zal ik het doen," sprak ze. De heks werd iets rustiger door die belofte. Midden in de nacht hoopte het meisje dat de leeuw weer terug zou komen. Ze durfde niet zelf te ontsnappen, want de wolf hield haar goed in de gaten. Hoe de leeuw het huis en haar kamer was binnen gekomen was haar een raadsel.

Maar de leeuw kwam niet, en het meisje begon zich zorgen te maken. De volgende dag deed ze alsof ze ziek was, en wilde niet veel eten. "Toe eet wat zoet," sprak de oude vrouw, "want zoet doet je goed."

"Ik heb niet zo'n zin," sprak het meisje. "Ik voel me niet lekker."

De oude vrouw was er niet blij om, en mopperde. Alles ging gelukkig goed, maar die nacht kwam de leeuw weer niet. Nu begon het meisje zich pas echt zorgen te maken. Ze kon het zo niet lang volhouden. Toen ze weer bijna niets at en geen zoet begon de oude vrouw te krijsen. "Je kunt niet altijd ziek zijn ! Nu moet je wat zoet eten, anders zal de wolf je eten." Ze stopte een lepel in de suiker en bracht het toen naar de mond van het meisje. "Eet, en daarna zul je taartjes krijgen."

"Maar ik heb buikpijn !" riep het meisje.

"Kan me niet schelen," sprak de oude vrouw. "Als je beter wil worden dan zul je wat moeten eten. Eet of wordt gegeten." Het meisje begon te huilen. "U begrijpt er helemaal niets van," klaagde ze. "Ik begrijp alles !" tierde de oude vrouw, "maar jij begrijpt niks. Eet nu !" Het meisje duwde de lepel met suiker weg die onder haar neus was gedrukt, en pakte de suikerpot en gooide de suiker in het gezicht van de heks. "Vreet die troep zelf op !" riep Paarskapje woest, en rende naar boven naar haar kamer. De heks krijste. "Mijn ogen, mijn ogen ! Ik zal je krijgen, kreng !" bulderde de heks, en kwam met grote, zware stappen de trap op. Het meisje duwde de kast voor de deur, en keek het raam uit. Ze zag de wolf niet, dus ze zou het er op wagen. De heks begon inmiddels al op de deur te slaan. "Ik heb nog wat suiker voor je !" riep de heks. Het meisje begon het raam uit te klimmen en kwam op een schuin dakje terecht. De heks was inmiddels in haar kamer gekomen en keek uit het raam. "Grijp haar !" riep ze. Snel sprong het meisje van het schuine dakje af, en kwam in een struik terecht. Al snel was ze op de grond, en begon te rennen zonder om te kijken. "Je zult niet ver komen !" hoorde ze achter haar bulderen.

"Leeuw, leeuw ! Waar bent u ?" riep ze zo hard als ze kon. Aan het rivierje stond een bootje waar ze instapte met een lange stok, en ze begon zichzelf voort te duwen. De grote zwarte wolf was snel aan de rand van de rivier gekomen. "Je zult niet ver komen," bulderde hij.

Aan de andere kant van de rivier stond de leeuw. "Heb je het eindelijk gemerkt !" riep hij.

Het meisje duwde het bootje voort met de stok, en zorgde dat ze in het midden bleef van de rivier. "Ik vertrouw jullie beiden niet !" riep het meisje. "Was ik maar bij moeder thuis gebleven. Jullie hebben me alleen ellende gebracht. Had ik maar naar haar geluisterd."

"Dom kind !" riep de leeuw. "Je moeder is nog wel erger dan die twee heksen bij elkaar."

Het meisje kwam verder en verder op de rivier. "Erger dan jou kan het niet wezen !" riep ze terug naar de leeuw. Vreemd genoeg volgden zowel de leeuw als de wolf haar niet meer. Het was alsof ze hier niet durfden te komen, en het meisje ging over de rivier dieper en dieper het bos in. Ze dacht na over de woorden van de leeuw. Wat als hij gelijk had ? Ze trok haar kleren uit en deed haar paarse kapje af, en stapte over de rand van de boot om zo het water in te glijden. Ze zwom en zwom, niet wetende wat ze moest doen, maar ze wilde in ieder geval niet terug naar de vrouw en de wolf. Ze dacht veel na over de leeuw, en besloot naar de andere kant van de rivier te zwemmen. De leeuw was nergens meer te bekennen. Uit pure wanhoop begon ze even later de leeuw te roepen, maar die kwam niet. Toen besloot ze helemaal terug te lopen aan de andere kant van de rivier, naar waar de leeuw was. maar toen ze aan de overkant een glimp van de wolf opving wilde ze niet meer verder. Ze begon te rennen en te rennen in het bos, roepende naar de leeuw. Ze

dacht dat de leeuw haar laatste hoop was. Na een tijdje plofte ze moe in het zand, en viel in slaap.

Ze werd wakker in een huisje, in een kamertje, wat gelukkig niet het kamertje was waar ze vandaan kwam. Wel woonde er hier een andere vrouw, die iets jonger was. De vrouw liep het kamertje binnen, en ging op een stoel zitten naast haar bed. Ze rook naar bloemen. "Ik dacht : laat ik je maar meenemen," sprak de vrouw vriendelijk. "Je lag er zo vredig te slapen, maar je was in groot gevaar."

"Gevaar ?" vroeg het meisje.

"Ja," knikte de vrouw. Ze had een bloemenjurk aan. "Er woont hier veel gespuis in dit bos."

"Dat heb ik gemerkt," sprak het meisje. "Had ik maar beter naar mijn moeder geluisterd."

Even was het stil. Toen vroeg het meisje : "Van de wolf en de heks weet ik het, maar kunt u mij uitleggen over de leeuw ?" De vrouw keek haar diep in de ogen. "Ik ben de leeuw," sprak de vrouw. Het meisje schrok. "Ben ik dan nu in gevaar ?"

De vrouw glimlachte. "Nee, ik wilde je juist voor het gevaar behoeden. Ik verander soms in een leeuw, en daarom kan ik niet in de stad leven zoals je misschien wel zult begrijpen." Het meisje knikte. "En hoe kan dat ?" vroeg het meisje.

"Ik weet het niet," sprak de vrouw. "Ik ben zo geboren."

Het meisje had wat nieuwe kleren gekregen en een nieuw paars kapje, en toen bracht de vrouw haar weer naar huis. Maar daar waar vroeger de rand van het bos was en het stadje was nu ook overal bos. Het meisje begon te huilen. "Wat is er toch gebeurd ?" vroeg ze.

"Ik moet je bekennen dat ik dat ook niet weet," sprak de vrouw.

De vrouw nam het meisje toen weer mee terug naar haar huisje, en sindsdien bleef het meisje daar wonen. Nooit meer hebben ze nog iets van de wolf en de heks gehoord, en ook niet van het stadje.

Einde

De Rode Hond

Mark Blazer was een jonge wetenschapper. Vaak kwam hij 's avonds moe thuis van zijn werk, omdat het zo'n harde werker was. Op een avond kwam hij later thuis dan anders. Het was al bijna nacht, en hij sloeg de koelkastdeur open om een wijntje te pakken. Toen hij z'n glas inschonk hoorde hij wat geritsel achter zich. Hij schrok, en draaide zich om, maar er was niks. Die nacht had Mark vreemde dromen. Het ging over een vrouw die zijn aandacht zocht, op zo'n manier dat Mark het verdacht vond. De vrouw was geen normale vrouw. Ze had lange klederen die door de wind dwarrelden en bewogen. Sommigen zouden misschien zeggen dat ze op een engel leek, maar Mark geloofde niet in engelen. Zijn vriendin geloofde wel. Ze was voor een maand met een vriendin op vakantie.

Toen Mark's vriendin weer thuis was vertelde Mark wat er was gebeurd, en wat hij had gedroomd. 'Ach, iedereen droomt wel eens,' zei zijn vriendin. Maar toen Mark vertelde over een engelachtige vrouw, begon zijn vriendin geinteresseerd te worden. 'En wat had ze dan aan ?' vroeg ze. Ze begon hem er een beetje mee te plagen, en ook begon ze de optie door te voeren dat God misschien wel iets van hem wilde, maar daar wilde Mark niets van weten. Zijn vriendin plaagde hem vaak over God. Dan zei ze weleens : 'Oh Mark, voor dat ik het vergeet, er heeft iemand voor je gebeld.' En als Mark dan vroeg wie het was, dan zei ze plagerig : 'Och, 't was God die vroeg of je vanavond ergens een glaasje met Hem wilde drinken.' Mark vond dat niet erg. Hij kon er soms wel om lachen. Ze drong eigenlijk nooit het geloof aan hem op. Ze deed er altijd erg luchtig over, en had een groot gevoel voor humor. Nee, Mark wilde zijn vriendin voor geen goud missen.

Op een avond liepen Mark en z'n vriendin langs het bos. Vanuit de bosjes hoorden ze geblaf. Mark besloot te kijken, maar wat hij daar zag gaf hem de rillingen over z'n rug. Het was een rode hond, als een soort herdershond. Mark had nog nooit zo'n hond gezien. De hond sprong op hem af, en Mark rende weg, terwijl hij z'n vriendin meegreep. Toen ze zich even later omdraaiden was de hond hen gelukkig niet achterna gekomen. 'Tja, Mark,' zei z'n vriendin, 'eigenlijk moet je zoiets nooit doen, op geblaf afgaan. Laat in het vervolg maar lekker blaffen.' Mark wilde direkt naar bed. Snel dronk hij nog even wat water, en dook in z'n bed. Hij moest morgen weer vroeg op. Toen hij op z'n werk over de rode herdershond vertelde lachten ze hem uit. 'Mark weer met z'n vreemde dromen,' zeiden ze. In de middag riep z'n baas hem bij zich. 'Mark,' zei z'n baas, 'ik weet dat jij een erg harde werker ben, en zeer vindingrijk. Zeg, ik heb een raadsel voor je. Ik heb hier een boek, en dat gaat volgens mij over het geloof. Verder is het een erg wazig boek, dus als je nog wat wilt puzzelen ? Ach, ik maak maar een grapje. Ik dacht : Misschien dat jouw vriendin er nog wat aan heeft. Die is toch zo gelovig ? Ik kreeg het van iemand, maar ik kon er niks mee. Erfenis van een oudtante.' Ongeinteresseerd neemt Mark het boek aan, en legt het opzij. Daar moet zijn vriendin maar over beslissen. Thuisgekomen neemt hij een glas water. Zijn vriendin is nog niet thuis, en hij gaat rustig op de bank zitten. Als zijn vriendin thuiskomt vertelt hij haar over het spottende gedrag van z'n collega's, over die rode hond. 'Ach, laat ze toch stikken,' zegt z'n vriendin, 'ze zijn alleen geinteresseerd in hun eigen spoken en draken.' Maar dan komt Mark voor zijn collega's op. 'Ach, misschien hebben ze wel gelijk, ik heb het misschien maar verbeeldt. Misschien kwam het doordat het wat donker was. Misschien was het wel gewoon een herdershond. En ze bedoelen het niet zo slecht. Een dag later zijn ze het vergeten. O ja, en voor ik het vergeet. Ik heb een boek van mijn baas meegekregen voor jou.' Z'n vriendin kijkt in z'n tas en neemt het boek eruit. 'Ja, wat moet ik hiermee ?' vraagt ze. 'Jij gelooft toch ? Dit gaat over het geloof,' zegt Mark. Z'n vriendin begint het boek door te bladeren, en gaat zitten. Een tijdje is het stil. 'Is het spannend ?' vraagt Mark. Dan opeens barst zijn vriendin in tranen uit. 'Het gaat over een rode hond, Mark. Misschien heb je echt wel een engel gezien, of ... of ...' Maar verder komt z'n vriendin niet. Waar gaat het dan over ?' vraagt Mark een beetje nieuwsgierig wordend. 'Ja, over David,' zegt zijn vriendin, 'dat was een koning in de bijbel. Dit boek gaat over zijn generaals.' Mark buigt weer naar achteren. 'Maar wat heeft die rode hond daar dan mee te maken ?' vraagt hij. Maar dat kon zijn vriendin hem niet vertellen, want zo ver was ze nog niet. Het was nog wel een dik boek. 'Wacht even,' zei z'n vriendin, 'die rode hond is een Egyptische koning, en het gaat ook over zijn generaals.' Even is het stil. 'Nou, geluk ermee,' zegt Mark, en vertrekt naar boven. Z'n vriendin schaamt zich een beetje voor haar huilpartij. Waarom moet ze nou altijd zo emotioneel zijn bij het minste of geringste. Misschien om de gedachte dat er echt engelen of geschiedkundige figuren in de buurt kunnen zijn ? Zou de geschiedenis dan gewoon doorleven ? Allemaal vragen die door haar hoofd spoken. Ze besluit verder te lezen, en neemt er een glas wijn bij.

De volgende dag is het zaterdag. Mark zou met wat vrienden gaan zeilen, en Annet, zijn vriendin zou thuisblijven voor een vriendin die zou komen. Maar eigenlijk had Annet meer zin om het boek verder te lezen. Annet lag nog lekker te slapen toen de bel ging. Mark was al weg. Het was haar vriendin. 'Ha Annet,' zei de vriendin. 'Wat ben je vroeg,' zegt Annet slaperig. 'Kom erin meid, ik ben een heel vreemd boek aan het lezen.' Haar vriendin komt binnen, ziet het boek op de bank liggen, grijpt het, en begint te lezen. 'Hoe kom jij hieraan ?' vraagt de vriendin. 'Oh, zegt Annet, dat heeft Mark voor me meegenomen. Zijn baas had een erfenis gehad en daar zat ook dit boek tussen,' zegt Annet. 'Nou, het is wel interessant,' zegt de vriendin na een tijdje. 'Het gaat over de generaals van koning David in overeenkomst met de presidenten van Amerika.' Dat gedeelte had Annet nog niet gelezen. Na een tijdje legt de vriendin het boek neer. 'Mag ik het van je lenen als je het uithebt ?' Dan gaat de telefoon. Het is een vriend van Mark. Hij heeft niet zulk best nieuws. 'Mark is neergeschoten door een man op een andere zeilboot.' Toen Annet hem vroeg hoe dat gekomen was, werd de hoorn neergelegd. In paniek belde Annet de politie. Ze besloten naar de haven te gaan voor onderzoek. Annet belde naar de vriend van Mark, maar niemand nam op. Na een paar uur staat de politie op de stoep. 'We hebben uw vriend met de boot nog niet gevonden. Wij denken dat het om een ontvoering gaat.'

Plotseling schrikt Annet wakker. Ze had naar gedroomd. Mark ligt naast haar. Ze grijpt hem vast. Mark neemt haar in zijn armen. 'Wat is er schat, je beeft zo ?' Dan vertelt zijn vriendin de droom. 'Poppetje,' zegt Mark zacht, zoals hij haar vaak noemt, 'je was gisteren al zo in paniek over dat boek. En dat boek gaat niet over de presidenten van Amerika, alleen maar lekker saai over het geloof.' Annet glimlacht weer een beetje. Mark streelt haar door haar haren, en rustig valt ze weer in slaap. Als ze in de morgen wakker worden wil Annet niets meer met het boek te maken hebben. Ze is nog steeds verschrikkelijk bang na die nachtmerrie. Als het zondag is wil Annet niet naar de kerk. Ze wil alleen rust. Ook de zondag daarop blijft ze thuis. Mark krijgt de dominee aan de telefoon en vertelt hem over het boek, de dromen en de rode hond. De dominee wil het boek graag eens lezen, ook om Annet misschien gerust te kunnen stellen. Mark was blij dat ze van het boek afwaren. Na een paar dagen krijgt Mark weer een telefoontje van de dominee. De dominee vertelt hem dat het op het eerste gezicht lijkt alsof het een boek is over het christelijk geloof, maar dat het dat helemaal niet is. Het is een boek van een Davidische secte, een groep die gelooft in de macht van David, en niet in God. Het is een moordzuchtig genootschap dat niet aarzelt om te moorden om macht te verkrijgen. Voornamelijk zitten ze in Amerika, maar ook in Europa en andere continenten breken ze door. De generaals van David worden gezien als de engelen. De dominee had het adres achter in het boek nagetrokken, en werd zo in zijn groeiend vermoeden bevestigd.

Toen Mark het aan Annet vertelde was ze opgelucht, maar ook was ze geschrokken. Ze kon het nu wel allemaal beter begrijpen, de droom, haar vreemde emoties. De dominee zou het gevaarlijke boek goed opbergen.

Einde

Vreemde Gevechten

De mannen hadden vreemde pakken aan, vreemde riemen, vreemde tuigjes, met pinnen die tot diep in hun botten prikten. De mannen werden op allerlei manieren afgetapt. Vrouwen heersten in deze fabriek, diep in de jungle. Het was een groot wit huis, als een boerderij, met vele verdiepingen. Hoe ik ontsnapte weet ik niet meer. Het is al zolang geleden, en ik was door iemand bewusteloos geslagen en meegenomen. De man nam mij mee naar een zwart huis, met binnenin een simpele kamer met een zwart kruis. Hij moest me wel bewusteloos slaan, anders zouden allerlei alarms me fataal worden. De man kende de mannenfokkerij van binnen en van buiten. Hij leerde mij de kneepjes van het vak om mannen uit die fokkerij te bevrijden.

De vrouwen waren gemeen, zonder een greintje medeleven. De mannen leefden in de fokkerij als slaven voor allerlei dingen. We brachten een heleboel bevrijde mannen onder het zwarte huis in een geheime tunnel. Toen de vrouwen op een dag de geheime tunnel ontdekten was het oorlog. Het leidde uiteindelijk tot de val van de witte boerderij. Ik heb thuis nog steeds een heleboel van die tuigjes hangen waarin die mannen opgesloten zaten. Het zijn een soort webben met zwarte, rode en bruine riempjes met lange pinnen. Ik heb ze in allerlei soorten.

Op een dag besloot ik terug te gaan naar de jungle. Een vrouw sprak me aan. Ik rende direct weg, uit angst weer gepakt te worden. Ik las het de dag erna in de krant dat er nog steeds een grote mannenfokkerij in de jungle bleek te zijn, groter dan ooit, maar nu onder de grond. Ik belde de man van het zwarte huis, en we zouden op onderzoek uitgaan. Ondanks dat er op de televisie voor gewaarschuwd werd.

De mannen liepen nu in rode pakjes rond, werd er gezegd, en waren de gladiatoren van de vrouwen. De pinnen zouden nu tot in de dieptes van hun hart zijn gestoken. We probeerden onze oude technieken van bevrijding uit, maar het hielp niet. We wisten zo'n rood pakje te pakken te krijgen en brachten het naar het zwarte huis voor onderzoek. Het bleek dat het rode pakje werkte door verdovende middelen, waardoor de mannen in een soort roes zouden komen.

De man kende de chemische verbinding en ontwikkelde een antistof. Hij hoefde maar een beetje gas van die stof te gebruiken en het rode pakje begon te krimpen. De mannen zouden door het krimpen, door de strakte, weer wakker worden. De stof zou een woede opwekken naar de vrouwen die daar heersten.

We lieten het gas los in de ondergrond. De mannen begonnen direct dierlijk te reageren. Na een tijdje hadden we hen eruit.

Ook van die rode pakjes heb ik een paar thuis hangen. Het zijn voor mij allemaal vreemde herinneringen aan vreemde gevechten.

Einde

Witte Sneeuw

Ik liep op straat langs het bos. Het was laat. Er was niemand op straat behalve ik en een vriend. Ik had hem net van het station gehaald. We waren oude schoolvrienden. Zachtjes begon het te sneeuwen. We liepen naar mijn huis. Er waren trollen in mijn huis. Ik verzamelde ze. Het waren prachtige beeldjes, ook in de tuin. Die vriend had een beeldje voor me meegenomen. Hij zou een paar dagen blijven logeren. We hadden het veel over Witte Sneeuw, een meisje dat bij ons in de klas zat. Ze was

overleden, maar nu leefde ze in ons hart. Het was een heel bijzonder meisje. Ze vertelde altijd prachtige verhalen.

Die vriend en ik zaten op een school voor exorcisten. We leerden hoe we demonen konden herkennen, hoe we ze konden opspeuren en hoe we ze konden uitschakelen. Uitdrijven heette dat. Maar het meisje had altijd een wonderlijke uitleg. Zij had het erover dat er altijd eerst dingen moesten veranderen, en dan zouden de demonen vanzelf vertrekken. Dingen moesten gewoon anders. Ze had het er altijd over dat demonen veel van spelletjes hielden, en dat ze zelfs een uitdrijving konden nabootsen. Soms werden de leraren weleens een beetje boos, omdat ze zo dromerig was. Ze dacht veel te diep over dingen na.

We begrepen niet hoe het zo ver kon komen. Witte Sneeuw had op een dag zelfmoord gepleegd. Niemand begreep hoe dat kon. De leraren begonnen zich een beetje schuldig te voelen. Waren ze misschien te onaardig voor haar geweest ? Vaak wist zij meer dan de leraren zelf, en dat konden de leraren niet altijd hebben. Het meisje kwam uit een bijzondere kerk uit het Zuiden van het land, waar ze heel anders met de dingen omgingen. Er werd daar veel meer onderzoek gedaan, en veel meer geexperimenteerd. Het ging minder volgens de tradities, en daarom hadden de leraren er vaak een hekel aan. Maar op een dag kwam er een nieuwe leraar, die wel kon meekomen in heel veel dingen wat het meisje zei. Het was een beetje een vreemde man, met een oog voor vreemde dingen. Hij verzamelde trollenbeeldjes. Een heleboel leraren zeiden dat je dat beter niet kon doen, zulke beeldjes verzamelen, maar dit waren hele bijzondere beeldjes. Het was heel sprookjesachtig. Witte Sneeuw vond het prachtig, en ging vaak na de les met de man mee naar huis.

Op een dag gingen wij ook mee, die vriend en ik. De man woonde dichtbij het station, en je kon altijd de treinen langs horen komen. In de weekenden bleef Witte Sneeuw vaak logeren. Ditmaal bleven wij ook logeren. Witte Sneeuw had een eigen kamer in het huis van de man, en wij kregen de zolder. Midden in de nacht hoorden we vreemde geluiden. Ik ging naar beneden om te kijken of alles goed was met Witte Sneeuw. Ze lag lekker te slapen.

Ook die leraar was er helemaal kapot van toen Witte Sneeuw zelfmoord had gepleegd. Hij kon niet begrijpen waarom, maar schreef het toe aan de werken van de demonen. De dag erna verzamelden we ons in de grote zaal van de school. De directeur hield een toespraak.

‘Wij zijn allen diep betreurd over hetgeen heeft plaatsgevonden,’ zei hij. ‘Wij zien dit als een aanval van de duisternis. Witte Sneeuw had grote gaven. Het was een begiftigd kind. Wij zijn allemaal bedroefd dat ze van ons is weggenomen. Het leven van een exorcist is niet zonder gevaren. Maar weinigen halen de eindstreep, maar wij zijn blij dat ze nu veilig is in de armen van …’

Maar verder kwam hij niet. Tranen rolden uit zijn ogen. Zij was zijn lievelingsstudent. Waarom moest nou net zij worden weggenomen. Die vriend van mij wilde haar uit de dood opwekken, maar we kregen geen toegang tot het lijk.

We gingen vaak naar haar graf om nog even haar magie te voelen. Er stonden vele trollenbeeldjes om het graf heen die de nieuwe leraar daar had neergezet. ‘Voor mijn lieve Witte Sneeuw,’ stond er vaak op die beeldjes. Ook ik hield veel van Witte Sneeuw. Om het gevoel wat ik altijd bij haar had te bewaren ging ik ook trollenbeeldjes verzamelen.

We dachten vaak over Witte Sneeuw. Op een zekere nacht kreeg ik een droom over Witte Sneeuw, waarin ze mij bezocht. Haar haar was lang gegroeid, langer dan ooit. Ze was omhuld in witte sneeuw, maakte een bal, en gaf de sneeuwbal aan mij. ‘Bewaar dit,’ zei ze.

Toen ik wakker werd was ik heel emotioneel. Ik moest sindsdien altijd aan de sneeuwbal denken.

Die vriend van mij kwam vaak logeren. Op een dag kwam hij met de mededeling dat de ouders van Witte Sneeuw haar dagboek hadden gevonden. Ze had het verborgen onder de vloerbedekking van haar kamer. Er stonden onthullende dingen in. Het was een dagboek vol verhalen, maar ook met een duidelijke roep om hulp. Het meisje beschreef hoe ze zo diep in haar eigen fantasie leefde dat ze het gewone leven eigenlijk niet aankon. Maar ze wilde anderen daar niet mee belasten.

Ze was altijd een vrolijk meisje, dus niemand had dat achter haar gezocht. Ze schreef ook dat ze gelukkig was in haar eigen fantasie en dat de buitenwereld haar benauwde.

De verhalen in het dagboek van Witte Sneeuw waren prachtig. Deze verhalen had ze nog nooit eerder verteld, en haar ouders wilden er een boek van maken. Later kreeg ik het boek ook in huis, en het werd een van mijn kostbaarste bezittingen. Kon ik maar meer voor haar doen. Als ik dit had geweten dan had ik haar misschien kunnen helpen, om haar ook de leuke kanten van het leven te laten zien. Maar ik was nog zo jong. Ik zou misschien niet tegen haar opgewassen zijn. Ik vond het zo treurig dat ze van ons was weggenomen. Ze had nog zoveel meer verhalen kunnen schrijven, maar misschien zag ze het nut daarvan niet in. Ze wilde misschien in haar eigen wereld leven, en daar was ze nu. Ze was nu in mijn hart, dieper dan ooit tevoren. Ik had haar zo graag nog beter willen leren kennen.

Het leven ging door. Mijn vriendschap met oude klasgenoten verwaterde. We gingen allemaal ons eigen pad, maar door Witte Sneeuw waren we voor altijd in ons hart aan elkaar verbonden. Toen ik zelf later kinderen kreeg las ik hen vaak voor uit het dagboek van Witte Sneeuw, wat eigenlijk een soort sprookjesboek was. Ook mijn vrouw vond het heel bijzonder. Ze was een beetje als Witte Sneeuw. Ze schreef ook verhalen. Ik noemde haar weleens Rode Sneeuw, omdat ze indiaans bloed in haar had. Ik kon me de andere verhalen van Witte Sneeuw nog wel herinneren, de verhalen die ze altijd vertelde. Op een dag besloot ik ze allemaal op te schrijven, en zo waren er uiteindelijk twee boeken van Witte Sneeuw. Ik was er erg trots op, en stuurde een exemplaar naar haar ouders en naar wat oude klasgenoten. Dit was eigenlijk de reden waardoor die oude vriend me weer kwam opzoeken. Hij was inmiddels ook getrouwd, en vaak gingen we samen op pad.

Op een dag besloten we naar een trollenpark te gaan. Dat was een soort sprookjespark wat allemaal om trollensprookjes draaide. Eigenlijk zou een beeld van Witte Sneeuw daar ook wel op zijn plaats zijn, want haar verhalen gingen ook vaak over trollen. We besloten de baas van het trollenpark de twee boeken van Witte Sneeuw te laten lezen, en hij was direkt dolenthousiast. Hij hield van de sprookjes, en wilde de sprookjes wel nabouwen in zijn park. Later las hij ook de sprookjes van mijn vrouw, Rode Sneeuw, en dat waren nog wel veel meer boeken. Het was alsof er een wereld voor de man opende. Het trollenpark groeide al snel uit tot een sprookjeswereld. En ik was wel trots om twee standbeelden van zowel Witte Sneeuw als Rode Sneeuw in het park te zien.

Maar op een dag was het beeld van Rode Sneeuw verwoest. De baas was woedend. Het waren racisten die dat hadden gedaan. Ze wisten dat het beeld van indiaanse komaf was. Mijn vrouw was er kapot van, en ik nog wel meer. In een van de verhalen van Witte Sneeuw stond geschreven : ‘Het witte konijn in de woestijn wil altijd de eerste zijn, op zee wil hij de beste zijn, in het bos wil hij staan op het rode mos.’ Het gaat over een wit konijn die een koning die een rood konijn als lakei heeft, maar later wil hij dat het rood konijn zijn troon wordt, maar als hij dan even later op zijn troon zit wil het rood konijn niet meer spreken, en dan wordt koning wit konijn toch wel erg eenzaam. Hij sterft als een eenzame koning, en het rood konijn wil nooit meer in een koninkrijk wonen en vlucht naar het bos waar hij voor altijd blijft wonen.

De baas besluit ditmaal een extra groot beeld van Rode Sneeuw te bouwen waar zij op een hoog paard zit. Hij laat er een bordje bijzetten waarop staat geschreven : ‘Als u wil dat Rode Sneeuw op een nog grotere witte troon komt te zitten, verwoest dan dit beeld.’

Het beeld lieten ze ditmaal staan, maar in het land werden kleurlingen ditmaal met de nek aangekeken. Totdat er op een dag tranen schenen te komen uit het beeld van Witte Sneeuw. Overal in het land was het groot nieuws.

Op een dag kreeg ik van de baas een trollenring. Het was de prachtigste ring die ik ooit had gezien. Inmiddels hadden de ouders van Witte Sneeuw een nog ouder dagboek van haar gevonden. Deze had ze achter de kast verstopt. Ditmaal waren het de prachtigste sprookjes die ik ooit had gehoord. Ik ging ermee naar de baas van het trollenpark die het direkt wilde nabouwen. Ditmaal begon de oude magie van Witte Sneeuw echt te vloeien. De regering wilde zelfs een beeld van haar hebben in een van hun gebouwen. Omdat de verhalen van mijn vrouw zoveel op de verhalen van Witte Sneeuw leken wilden ze ook een beeld van haar hebben naast het beeld van Witte Sneeuw, maar iemand anders had een nog beter plan : Wit en rood was tezamen roze, dus als ze nu een beeld zouden maken van roze steen, dan zou het probleem opgelost zijn. Roze Sneeuw noemden ze het beeld. Het beeld was groot nieuws. Zelfs in het buitenland hoorden ze van Roze Sneeuw.

Die vriend en zijn vrouw kregen een kindje, een meisje, en noemden het : Roze Sneeuw. Mijn vrouw schreef er een sprookje over. Het was een meisje dat nooit opgroeide, maar altijd vier jaar bleef. Wel werd ze steeds wijzer, en op een dag bouwde ze een leger van reuzenridders. Het meisje was mooi als een bloem, en de

reuzenridders waren erg dol op haar. Ze woonde in een prachtig paleis waar de reuzenridders altijd rondmarcheerden. Niemand kon haar de les lezen, en daarom bleef ze altijd een kind, een kind dat kon dromen, en kon wonen in haar fantasie. Ze was gelukkig, waar ze ook was, want de reuzenridders gingen altijd met haar mee.

Mirik, Mirit, en Sakja waren drie indiaanse oorlogselven. Ze hadden toverwapens, een heel kasteel vol, en ze deinsten niet terug voor bloederigheden en het drinken van bloed. Ze waren heel vampiristisch van aard.

Vaak vochten ze alledrie aan elkaars zijde, maar meestal leefden ze op zichzelf. De jacht deden ze meestal alleen. Er waren geen gruwelijkere en prachtigere elven dan hen, maar de wraak der heksen en tovenaars keerden vaak tegen hen.

Meestal als ze alleen waren kregen ze het zwaar te verduren, en daarom zochten ze elkaar nog weleens op. Gelukkig konden ze goed verdwijnen en verschijnen, en dat maakte alles iets makkelijker, maar er waren genoeg tovenaars en heksen, en genoeg boze elven die hen daarin met gemak konden volgen. Zij waren niet de enigen die konden verdwijnen en verschijnen. Ze hadden een hoge tovenaarsgraad, dat wel, maar hier woedde de oorlog het hardst.

Vaak smeerden ze zichzelf in met toverbloed, of namen ze een bad met tovergeuren. Het bad was bekleed met de huiden van allerlei toverbeesten die ze hadden verslagen. Maar als ze bij elkaar waren dan was er zoveel toverkracht dat het de meest gevaarlijke heksen aantrok, en daarom besloten ze op een dag voorgoed uit elkaar te gaan. Ieder van hen zou een richting kiezen, en ze zouden alleen nog maar voor zichzelf strijden.

Van huiden maakten ze een eigen wigwam in verlaten gebied. En sindsdien werd alles rustiger.

Ze wisten dat ze alleen veilig waren als ze op zichzelf waren. In die verlaten gebieden hadden ze nog wel veel strijd te voeren tegen de wilde dieren. Deze wilde dieren waren erg gevaarlijk, omdat ze in hen wilden wonen. Deze wilde dieren wilden bezit van hen nemen. En ze wisten dat ze de wilde dieren alleen konden overwinnen door bezit van hen te nemen. Daarom liepen ze vaak in verschillende dierenhuiden rond, en bovenal moesten ze steeds verdertrekken.

Sommige beesten waren zo groot dat als ze hen overwonnen hadden ze met gemak erin konden leven als in een tent. Ze kwamen erachter dat deze wilde dieren nog

wel erger waren dan tovenaars en heksen. Als ze niet zo wild zouden zijn als deze beesten zelf, dan zouden ze hier niet standhouden. Wie zou denken dat hun paden weer zouden kruizen na een lange reis en een lange strijd tegen de wilde dieren en beesten ? Een wilde indiaanse elvenstam leefde hier, maar zij zouden daar alleen deel van kunnen worden als ze deze stam zouden verslaan in een schijngevecht.

Deze elven hadden de wilde dieren en beesten tot hun beschikking om erop te rijden. Ook voerden zij oorlog tegen anderen van die duistere elvenstammen, maar deze oorlogen waren slechts schijn. Door schijnoorlogen werden er contacten gelegd en door schijnoorlogen werden deze contacten verder uitgebouwd, tot in de diepste vriendschappen. Door schijnoorlogen beschermde men elkaar.

En zij kwamen door de diepste duisternissen tot de grootste lichtbronnen der elven, en tot een heleboel andere elvenparadoxen. De toverdranken brachten een roes in de elven, een passie en een lust, als een recht en een plicht. De elvenscenario's gingen diep, en waren wonderlijk in hun verdediging. Het waren schijnlichten, schijngesprekken, en zelfs schijnvriendschappen, alles om hun doelen te bereiken, de ijskoude wateren van een diepe eenzaamheid, waarin een prachtige tweeledigheid werd opgewekt, een zuivere tweeledigheid, zich in schijn uitstrekkende naar de driehoek. Dit alles tot makkelijker en sneller te verdwijnen en te verschijnen, om geheel op te lossen in een realiteit. Nee, makkelijk was het niet om de hogere tovergraden te bereiken, om deel te krijgen aan de hogere hersenspinsels der elven.

Einde

De Ontsnapping

Jara stond stil. Ze keek om haar heen. De rivier leek alsof het elk moment kon opwellen. De zon raakte bijna de rivier aan, geheel wit in de verte. Apen zag ze aan de overkant. Al snel was ze in de rivier en zwom naar de overkant. Ze greep een liaan, en trok haarzelf uit het water. Apen staarden haar aan. Ze kroop op een heuveltje verder het water uit, haar huid zat onder de modder. Ze hoorde het geluid van de apen, en opeens voelde ze hun handen op haar huid. Ze trokken haar verder omhoog. Het water dampte als in een mist, en het was er warm. Even later lag ze languit op het gras, tussen het mos, onder de bomen. Het was een prachtige jungle hier, in de dieptes van het regenwoud. Weer raakten de apen haar aan, en de rillingen gingen door haar lijf. Ze omhelsde hen, en ze lieten het toe. Ze was hun kind. Ze maakte zich meester van de situatie, stond op, en rende het oerwoud in. Even later stond ze in een hut. Ze was moe, ging op de versleten matras liggen. Niemand kon haar zeggen waar ze was. Het leek wel alsof de apen hier woonden. Achter de hut vond ze een skelet. Ze nam van wat appels die hier en daar lagen. Ze was hongerig, en ze at zelfs wat oud brood. Haar hele leven had ze verlangd naar een rustige plaats, waar ze alleen zou zijn.

Ze was onrustig, zoals de apen onrustig waren, maar de natuur was mooi hier, ze kon hier wegglijden. De apen probeerden met haar te communiceren, maar zij gleed steeds weg omdat ze moe was. Ze hielden haar vast. Even later duwden ze haar bananen in haar mond.

De natuur was als gladgestreken hier, niemand zei wat. Ze voelde zich oud en jong. Ze staarde naar het amulet wat ze om haar nek had gedragen. Ze had het in haar hand. Plotseling draaide ze zich om en zag een man staan, een indiaan. Een band met een paar witte veren om zijn hoofd. Hij pakte haar hand, en ging naast haar liggen. Zij vond dat eigenlijk heel normaal. Misschien woonde de man hier. Hij joeg haar niet weg. Hij gedroeg zich mysterieus. Ze voelde geen angst voor hem, alleen acceptatie.

Als ze in zijn ogen keek zag ze een open jungle. Hij staarde naar haar. Ze kon wegzinken in zijn ogen. Ze zeiden niets tegen elkaar. De man maakte een vuur, en ging erbij zitten, en Jara kwam er ook bijzitten even later. Het leek wel alsof elke minuut een uur duurde. Zo stil was het hier. Er was hier een open wereld, een diepte.

Ze omhelsden elkaar terwijl ze elkaar niet kenden. Ze wisten genoeg. De natuur bond hen samen. Er waren geen woorden nodig, alles was ondergedompeld in de

prachtige natuur. De ontmoeting duurde lang. Daarna vertrok de man weer. Jara staarde naar het amulet. Het glom. Ze ging terug naar de versleten matras, en viel in slaap.

Ze zag haar reis als een gezel, ze hield van de reis. Ze at van de natuur, en dronk van de rivier, het was genoeg. Ze was gelukkig. Jara was als bedekt door de natuur, als een veilige schuilplaats, geen slavernij meer. Maar nog wel de littekens daarvan. Ze was ontsnapt, ze had dagen door het bos gerend, en nu was ze hier. Slangen gleden door het gras. Ze had van hen niets te vrezen. Het was alsof de natuur haar opnam.

Ze wilde wraak nemen op de blanken, maar hoe. Ze was zelfs gemerkt in haar mond. Vreemde tekens hadden ze in haar tanden gesneden, en metalen erin gegoten. Met haar mes probeerde ze het eruit te snijden. Al snel was ze aan het bloeden. De apen kwamen dichtbij. Ze kwam erachter dat de kolonisten zendertjes hadden gestopt in de dieptes van haar kiezen. Ze wist dat ze in gevaar was, nog steeds. Misschien konden ze haar wel achtervolgen. Ze rende verder, de voetstappen van de man volgende. Na enkele dagen kwam ze hem tegen. Hij trok haar naar zich toe. Ze spraken niet. Het was alsof ze elkaar aanvoelden. Ze hoorden schoten in de lucht. 'Slaven ontsnapt,' riep iemand. De man greep zijn mes, maar daarna greep hij een pijl, en toen zijn boog. Beiden renden ze verder. Weer waren er schoten, maar ze zagen niemand. Ze kwamen aan bij een riviertje, waar een bootje was. Ze namen het bootje om de rivier mee over te komen. Aan de overkant gekomen wees Jara op de mond van de man. Ze opende haar mond om haar tanden te laten zien. Ook de man opende zijn mond, en Jara zag het metaal, en de zendertjes. Ze probeerde het hem duidelijk te maken. Met een mes kregen ze het eruit. Jara gooide de zendertjes in het riviertje. Toen gingen ze dieper het oerwoud in. Ze hoopten dat niemand hen hier nog zou kunnen volgen. De natuur was te mooi om daar nog drukte om te maken. Het was alsof hun lasten door die pracht werden afgespoeld. Het was alsof de man wilde zeggen : Laten we hier opnieuw beginnen. Jara knikte. Zijn ogen spraken. Een leven hier zou goed zijn.

Ze wilden wraak nemen op de blanken, maar de natuur nam hen mee. De natuur deed hen vergeten, maar er was nog wel die diepe pijn van binnen. Er was geen doel, er was alleen het leven. Het was als een warme haard, de natuur om hen heen. En die kwam dieper en dieper om de pijn weg te wassen. De man raakte haar aan. Het voelde als vertrouwd. De zachte aanraking van de natuur leek het te vermengen. Voor het eerst voelde Jara zich gelukkig. Ze kon de sterke stroming van de rivier horen in de verte. Alle geluiden kwamen haar lichaam binnen, en openbaarden zich aan haar. De man streelde door haar haar, en ging met zijn vingertoppen over haar lippen. Ze boog haar hoofd. Ze begreep niet wat er gaande was. De man omhelsde haar van achteren, en in haar gevoel was het alsof hij tegen haar zei : 'Je bent vrij nu.' Ze zochten de rivier weer op, en gingen daar zwemmen. Hier zouden ze willen wonen. In de verte was een waterval die ze konden horen bulderen. Ze besloten er naartoe te gaan. Het was alsof de waterval hen van binnen

schoonwaste. De waterplanten waren prachtig en overtuigend hier. Ze sprongen bijna door het water heen.

Wisten zij dat zij kinderen waren van de bomen, van de struiken die onderwater en bovenwater groeiden. Wisten zij dat zij gemaakt waren voor ritmische en kronkelende groei. Krokodillen waren hun vrienden hier, geen vijanden. Ze waren aan het ware gevaar ontsnapt. Ook de waterslangen waren hen goedgezind. Ze voelden zich fijn met deze kronkelende elementen. De waterplant was als de hemel voor hen. Ze stonden open voor het harmonische gevoel van de natuur, ze spraken met hun ogen. Het water was een bron van leven voor hen. De man staarde naar haar amulet. Hij kuste het amulet. Het was alsof de man wilde zeggen : Als zij, het amulet, haar ogen zal openen, waar zullen de blanke kolonisten dan zijn, heus, ze zullen geleid worden naar de hel. Ze hebben een hel gemaakt, een hel die hen dan zal opslokken. Het was alsof het zonlicht het zo overbracht, en zo waar als de waterval zelf. Ze keek hem diep in de ogen, alsof ze het verankerde. Ze had respect voor hem, stond open voor hem, ze besefte dat zij het antwoord om haar nek droeg. Het amulet leek op een slang. Het had veel waarde voor haar. Sommige slangen hier leken op het amulet. Het was alsof het amulet ooit de sleutel was van haar kooi. Ze voelde zich week worden als ze naar hem keek. De blauwe lucht leek neer te dalen in de rivier, op weg naar de waterval. Het licht werd alle kanten opgereflecteerd.

Het Rode Gordijn

Hoofdstuk 1. De Preek

Hoofdstuk 2. Het Conferentie-Oord

Hoofdstuk 3. De Bedreiging

Hoofdstuk 4. De Rode Vogel

Hoofdstuk 1. De Preek

Ronald komt thuis van een feestje dat nogal laat was geworden. De aanwezigen waren abnormaal druk, en het leek wel alsof ze met hun hoofd in de wolken liepen. Ronald zelf was nogal moe, maar hij vond dat hij het verjaarsfeest van zijn broer niet zomaar kon laten gaan. Eens in het jaar ging Ronald altijd naar zijn broer die in het andere deel van het land woonde, en dat was met de verjaardagen.

Thuisgekomen ploft Ronald vermoeid op de bank. Hij had bijna geen kracht meer om naar z'n bed te komen, dus hij besloot om maar een nachtje op de bank te slapen. Gelukkig was het de volgende dag weekend.

Vandaag zou zijn vriendin komen. Zijn vriendin was altijd erg netjes, en zou ongetwijfeld de boel bij Ronald weer eens opruimen. Ronald was geen sloddervos, maar kon zijn spullen nog weleens laten slingeren, vooral als hij het erg druk had. Hij vond dat er in het huis wel 'geleefd' moest worden. Overal lagen boeken in het rond, en dat vond Ronald wel zo gemakkelijk als hij aan het studeren was. Vaak liet hij de boeken gewoon open liggen.

's Middags om twee uur zou zijn vriendin komen voor een lekker rustig dagje, en dan zouden ze de volgende dag samen naar de kerk gaan.

Toen ze de volgende dag samen in de kerk zaten hield de dominee een preek over het IJzeren Gordijn, de scheiding tussen Oost en West-Europa. Aan de aanwezigen werd de vraag gesteld of zij misschien ook IJzeren Gordijnen in hun leven hadden gebouwd. Ook had de dominee het over de Nazi's die rassenonderscheid maakten,

en weer was de vraag in hoeverre de aanwezigen rassenonderscheid maakten in hun eigen leven.

Ronald dacht nooit zoveel over de preken na. Hij vond de preken meestal wel mooi, en dat zei hij dan ook altijd, maar als je hem dan vroeg waar het over ging, dan wist hij dat vaak niet meer. Het ging Ronald meer om het gevoel dat hij er bij had. Hij keek erg op tegen de dominee, en zag de dominee als een soort body-guard. Zijn vriendin dacht er altijd wat meer over na, en wilde wel wat vaker met Ronald erover napraten, maar Ronald had daar niet altijd zin in. Lisette, zijn vriendin, zat daarom bij een bijbelstudie-groepje, zodat ze toch nog altijd op de zondagavond, en soms op de zondagmiddag over de preek kon napraten met anderen. Na de diensten was iedereen vaak zo gehaast dat voor gesprekken eigenlijk geen ruimte was. Eens in de maand was er wel koffiedienst na de preek, maar dan werd er toch weer vaak over andere dingen gesproken.

Ronald zat op het conservatorium en studeerde klassieke muziek. Ronald kon erg goed pianospelen, en toen ze na de dienst weer thuiswaren begon Ronald te spelen. Soms zong hij er dan weleens bij voor Lisette. Ronald kon erg goed zingen. Hij zou met gemak een opera-zanger kunnen worden. Lisette ging dan weleens bij de piano zitten en kon er dan uren naar luisteren. Het bracht haar tot rust.

Lisette was schrijfster, voornamelijk van kinderboeken. Ze schreef veel sprookjes. Soms las ze weleens voor aan Ronald, en Ronald kon altijd goed in haar verhalen wegvluchten. Lisette had een heldere kijk op dingen, en kon de dingen soms zo beschrijven dat ze ineens een hele andere betekenis hadden. Het leven met Lisette kreeg zo iets magisch, en soms als hij weer eens naar haar wijze woorden had geluisterd dan vroeg hij zich vaak af waarom hij zich eigenlijk zo om iets had drukgemaakt. Ze kon Ronald zo goed afleiden, en gaf hem vaak bijzondere raad. Ronald was daarom ook erg trots op zijn vriendin, en zou haar voor geen goud verruilen.

In de avond ging Lisette naar het bijbelstudie-groepje. Ronald zou verder gaan met studeren. In het bijbelstudie-groepje werd er doorgesproken over de preek die zo vandaag gehad hadden. En weer werden de vragen gesteld : Wat is je eigen IJzeren Gordijn en waarin zou je voor jezelf nog rassenonderscheid hanteren ? Lisette dacht diep na. Het was een kringvraag, dus iedereen zou aan de beurt komen.

Aan het einde van de avond werd er nog even over andere dingen gesproken, en vertelde men nog wat over persoonlijk wel en wee. Lisette zou nog even bij Ronald langsgaan om haar spullen te halen, en dan zou ze weer teruggaan naar huis. Ze woonde in een klein dorpje vlakbij het dorp van Ronald. Het was al flink donker, en Lisette zette er stevig de pas in. In de verte kwam er een rode auto aanrijden, maar wat deed die auto nou ? De auto kwam recht op haar afrijden, en nogal in een snelle vaart. Lisette probeerde nog weg te duiken, maar de auto schepte haar. Als

een lappenpop werd ze over het wegdek geslingerd. De auto maakte een slip en reed door in bochten.

Lisette werd wakker in het ziekenhuis. Het bezorgde gezicht van Ronald keek naar haar, en hij hield haar hand stevig vast. 'W..wat is er gebeurd ?' vroeg Lisette die zich er niets meer van herinnerde. 'Je bent geschept door een dronken automobilist,' zei Ronald. 'Ik ben zo blij dat je weer wakker geworden bent.'

Hoofdstuk 2. Het Conferentie-Oord

'Waarom moet mij dat nou weer overkomen ?' vroeg Lisette. Ze had overal pijn. Ronald zweeg, en zuchtte. Dat was eigenlijk ook zijn vraag. Lisette merkte dat ze zich niet kon bewegen, en raakte in paniek. Na nog wat onderzoeken kwam de dokter met slecht nieuws : Sommige delen van haar lichaam waren blijvend verlamd, en ze zou verder met een rolstoel door het leven moeten. Lisette barste in snikken uit. De dokter legde een hand op haar schouder. 'Waarom ... waarom ... waarom ?' vroeg Lisette ...

Maar Lisette herstelde opzienbarend snel, en de dokter was zeer positief. Ze zou dan nog wel in een rolstoel moeten blijven, maar ze zou meer dingen kunnen doen dan de dokters aanvankelijk hadden verwacht. Toch wilden de dokters haar nog wat langer in het ziekenhuis houden voor verder onderzoek. Lisette kreeg een aparte kamer in een rustig deel van het ziekenhuis, waar ze ook verder zou kunnen werken aan haar boeken. Op een dag kwam een dokter langs voor wat meer uitslagen. Ze hadden een vreemd roodachtig gezwel bij haar hart ontdekt. Ze zagen hier niet direkt een gevaar in, en het was volgens hen dan ook niet kwaadaardig, maar toch wilden ze weten wat het was. Ze wilden nog wat extra foto's laten maken.

Een paar dagen later kwam de dokter weer binnen, en zei dat het gezwel opzienbarend was gegroeid, en zich in het hart aan het nestelen was. Maar nog konden ze geen gevaar bespeuren. Ze wisten niet wat het gezwel was, maar het bleek heel netjes te zijn en vriendelijk naar het hart. Het leek wel alsof er een web werd gevormd om het hart van Lisette. De dokter zei dat ze zich nog maar geen zorgen moest maken, maar dat ze haar verder zouden onderzoeken.

Op een dag kwamen er een paar mensen van haar bijbelstudie-groepje op bezoek. Ze hadden het natuurlijk erg met haar te doen, maar waren blij dat ze zich verder goed voelde. Ze vroegen haar of het goed was als de dominee ook eens langs zou komen. Lisette stemde direkt toe. De volgende dag al zou de dominee komen. Toen Lisette hem zag werd ze direkt heel emotioneel en ze strekte haar armen naar hem uit, waarop de dominee haar direkt omhelsde. De dominee keek haar doordringend aan, en ging naast haar zitten op een stoel. Hij hield haar hand stevig vast, en bleef naar haar kijken.

De dominee was lid van een charismatisch verband binnen zijn kerk, maar hij had dat in zijn eigen kerk nog nooit zo naar buiten gebracht. 'Lisette,' zei de dominee, 'ik preek weleens op conferenties voor mensen met problemen als deze. Zou jij een keer met mij daar naartoe willen ? Meestal is zo'n conferentie voor een weekend.' Lisette stemde direkt toe. De drempel om gewoon naar de kerk te gaan was voor haar op het moment te hoog, dus ze wilde graag met de dominee mee naar die bijzondere diensten. De dominee zei dat de conferentie werd gehouden in een rustig oord, ergens aan de rand van een bos.

Toen het zover was kwam de dominee haar in zijn auto ophalen. Gelukkig had de dominee een station-car zodat de rolstoel ook meekon. En ook de dokters hadden er geen probleem mee dat Lisette er even tussenuit ging. Zo vonden het juist wel goed voor Lisette dat ze even in een andere omgeving zou zijn. Het was een prachtig uitgestrekt oord met lage en platte daken. De dominee parkeerde de auto dichtbij het vijvertje met de grote fontein, vlak voor de hoofdingang. Een wat oudere dame ontving hen hartelijk. Binnengekomen kregen ze eerst een kop soep, en toen werden ze naar hun kamers gebracht in een rustige vleugel van het oord. De kamer van de dominee was gelukkig niet te ver van Lisette's kamer vandaan. Nadat de tassen in de kamers stonden ging de dominee met Lisette in de rolstoel de omgeving verkennen. Het waren lange gangen, en er hingen overal prachtige schilderijen.

In de avond was er de eerste dienst in een zaaltje dichtbij de hoofdingang. De dominee hield de toespraak. Er waren ook nog wat anderen aanwezig in rolstoelen. De dominee nam het woord, maar al gauw merkte Lisette dat de dominee ergens door werd afgeleid. Er stonden twee mannen in roodachtige pakken bij de deur. Het waren leerachtige pakken met een soort fluweel in sommige delen. Ze droegen zonnebrillen. Plotseling zag Lisette dat ze een witte stok hadden met twee rode strepen. Ze waren blind. De mannen waren een beetje onrustig. Lisette luisterde aandachtig naar de toespraak. De dominee probeerde de aanwezigen hoop en moed in te spreken.

Hoofdstuk 3. De Bedreiging

Tijdens het middageten de volgende dag zag Lisette de twee blinde mannen ergens aan een tafeltje zitten. Lisette ging in haar rolstoel naar hen toe. Er was nog een plekje open. Lisette stelde zich voor, en er ontstond een gesprek. Even later kwam de dominee er ook bijzitten. De dominee was erg vriendelijk naar de twee mannen. De dominee stelde voor dat ze met z'n vieren wat zouden wandelen.

De avond erop sprak er een andere dominee. Ze moesten naar een wat grotere zaal verderop in het oord, want er waren veel daggasten. Lisette besloot bij de twee blinde mannen te zitten. Er was inmiddels een diepe en warme vriendschap ontstaan. De dominee had het over een vreemd kaartje dat onder z'n deur was

geschoven. Het was een bedreiging, ondergetekend Het Rode Gordijn. De dominee vroeg of iemand wist wie of wat Het Rode Gordijn was. De dominee zei verder niet om wat voor bedreiging het ging. De zaal was zichtbaar geschokt. Opeens stond er een weer een andere dominee op, en liep naar de microfoon. Hij had weleens van Het Rode Gordijn gehoord. Volgens hem was dat een groep satanisten van een geheime orde die als opdracht hadden in de kerken te infiltreren en te opereren. Volgens hem was het een neo-nazistische bende die er voor moest zorgen dat de kerk zich bleef afscheiden van andere culturen. De kerk moest zich blijven afscheiden als een prooi voor de volgelingen van Hitler. Ook vertelde die dominee dat hen van Het Rode Gordijn opgeleid waren om de topposities binnen de kerk in handen te krijgen. Zo kon het dus volgens die dominee best zo zijn dat dominees, ouderlingen of voorgangers lid zouden zijn van Het Rode Gordijn.

'Hoe weet u dat ?' riep iemand in de zaal. De dominee die bijna al weer zat liep weer terug naar de microfoon, en zei : 'Iemand in mijn gemeente heeft bij die geheime cultus gezeten. Herman kun je even naar voren komen ?' En daar kwam één van de blinde mannen naar voren. Met zijn stok vond hij z'n weg door het gangpad heen, en nam de microfoon. 'Ja, wat de dominee zegt is waar. Ik ben in die cultus opgegroeid, maar toen ik werd opgenomen in het Instituut voor Blinden ben ik het ontgroeid en heb ik me er van gedistantieerd.'

De dominee van Lisette besluit haar direkt weer terug te brengen, omdat de sfeer in het oord te gespannen was geworden door de dreigbrief.

Een dag later komt de dokter weer met wat resultaten van het onderzoek. Het schijnt dat het roodachtig gezwel zich nu ook vertakt naar haar borsten, en vandaaruit naar haar hersenen. Lisette voelt haarzelf verder erg rustig. Verder waren er nog wat andere resultaten, maar die had de dokter in zijn kantoor laten liggen. Hij zou de papieren morgen meenemen. Maar Lisette maakte zich een beetje ongerust over die opmerking, en werd ineens erg nieuwsgierig, zo nieuwsgierig dat ze niet tot de volgende dag kon wachten. Ze besloot in de nacht haar kamer af te gaan, en van de afdeling, om naar het kantoor van de dokter te gaan in haar rolstoel. Ze wist gelukkig waar het was ... Hier moest het zijn. Gelukkig was de deur niet op slot. Binnengekomen deed ze het licht aan, en begon in de laden van het bureau van de dokter te zoeken. Plotseling vond ze wel een heel vreemd en verdacht papier. Het was een lijst met hen die lid waren van Het Rode Gordijn. Wat moest de dokter daar nou mee ? Na verder gezocht te hebben vond ze nog een ander papier van Het Rode Gordijn. Dit was een brief aan de dokter over zijn lidmaatschap. Verder stond er niet veel bij. Snel drukte ze de papieren terug en reed overstuur in haar rolstoel terug naar haar kamer. Het Rode Gordijn was dus dichter bij haar dan ze dacht. Wat moest ze doen ? Ze besloot de dominee te bellen.

Toen de dominee opnam probeerde hij haar gerust te stellen. Misschien was het wel een andere organisatie binnen het ziekenhuiswezen, wat toevallig ook Het Rode Gordijn heette. De dominee zei dat ze zich er maar niet zo druk om moest maken.

Hoofdstuk 4. De Rode Vogel

De volgende dag komt er een zuster naar Lisette toe om haar te vertellen dat ze naar huis mag. De onderzoeken zijn klaar, en ze hoeft alleen nog maar voor halfjaarlijkse controle terug te komen. Ze hoefde zich geen zorgen te maken om de goedaardige uitzaaiingen, want alhoewel de uitzaaiingen gewoon doorgingen werden de vertakkingen steeds dunner en fijner, en zou het haar functioneren niet belemmeren. Lisette was erg blij. Ze zou de komende tijd bij Ronald logeren.

Ronald kende het gebeuren rond Het Rode Gordijn nog niet, en op een avond besloot te het te vertellen. Ook vertelde ze het op een avond in het bijbelstudie-groepje. Sommigen vonden het heel eng, en vroegen zich af wat ze er tegen konden doen. Lisette vroeg of ze misschien de dominee eens konden uitnodigen om dat uit te leggen. En zo gebeurde het. De volgende zondagavond kwam de dominee in het bijbelstudie-groepje. De dominee gaf het voorbeeld van de stierenvechter met de rode lap die daarmee de stier kwaad maakte en verwarde, zodat de stierenvechter macht over hem kon krijgen. Zo was Het Rode Gordijn ook in de kerk opgezet door machtslustigen om controle te krijgen over de christenen.

Midden in de nacht krijgt Lisette een droom. Een rode vogel vliegt naar haar toe en begint haar uit te schelden. 'Ha,' zegt de vogel, 'je denkt toch zeker niet dat je kunt ontsnappen over het Rode Gordijn ? Ik heb dit opgezet om jullie christenen af te sluiten van de rest van de wereld, en zelfs van de dierenwereld. Een rode lap houd ik jullie voor de ogen, om jullie niet te laten vechten tegen de zonde, maar tegen andere geloofsrichtingen, tegen hen die iets anders denken dan jullie. Snappen jullie dan niet dat al die andere religies mooie verlengstukken van het christendom konden zijn, maar doordat jullie je afsneden van het vervolgverhaal van God door Zijn Woord als een vogeltje te canoniseren, te kooien dus, op te zetten, kwamen al die religies in al hun duisternis op jullie af. Het zijn nu losgeraakte stukken onheil, omdat jullie de Heilige Geest niet door lieten spreken. In een reformatorische kerk zit je toch ?'

Verward wordt Lisette wakker, en roept om Ronald. Ronald probeert haar te sussen, en zegt dat ze gewoon weer verder moet slapen.

De volgende dag vertelt ze de droom aan de dominee. Die vertelt haar over de charismatische stroming in de reformatische kerk, waar ook hij toebehoort. Hij vind dat dit de eerste stap van de kerk moet zijn om de Geest door te laten spreken. Dan zal de Heilige Geest kunnen laten zien wat Hij oorspronkelijk wilde zeggen voordat Zijn uitgedoofde woorden in de meest gevaarlijke religies veranderden. Die religies waren niets anders dan losgeraakte stukken sneeuw die door hun val in de grootst mogelijke lawines veranderden.

De dominee herinnerde eraan dat ook de dokter lid was van een organisatie die ook toevallig Het Rode Gordijn heette. Het Rode Gordijn heeft ons eerst beschermd tegen de verwilderde beesten, maar er komt een dag dat we over het Rode Gordijn moeten klimmen om - als we oud, wijs en sterk genoeg zijn - die beesten te temmen en hen terug te brengen tot dat wat ze oorspronkelijk waren.

Einde

Vetgemest

Het zeewater was glashelder. Je kon er alles doorheen zien. Op de bodem groeiden vele bloemen. Het was bijna een bloemenzee. De branding was schuimend. Zij konden zien vanwege het nachtzicht in hun ogen.

Het zand was gloeiend heet, en een kampvuur brandde in de verte. Er waren grote vissen aan het spit, vissen die anders het eiland zouden hebben verwoest. Het waren vissen die het voor zwemmers onveilig maakten.

Zij die hier gekomen waren wilden niet meer terug. Ze waren met een roeiboot gekomen. Op het eiland leefden kannibalen, maar die hadden ze nog niet gezien.

In de verte zagen ze wat kano's met inboorlingen. Ze vroegen zich af of dat kannibalen waren. Na een tijdje was het een hele vloot. Ze kwamen steeds dichterbij. Ze besloten voor de zekerheid en de veiligheid de wildernis in te gaan. Diep in de wildernis van het eiland was een rivieren gebied. Hier zagen ze ook in de verte een vloot van kano's met inboorlingen.

Plotseling waren ze omsingeld door inboorlingen met speren. Ze vreesden het ergste, dat dit kannibalen waren. Ze werden naar kooien geleid, en kregen toen te horen wat de regels waren. Er moest een god aan het kruis aanbeden worden, de god van de kannibalen. Zijn naam werd niet genoemd, maar aan die god moesten mensen geofferd worden die dan later gegeten werden.

Vanaf die tijd werden ze vetgemest, maar ze spuwden alles uit van de zenuwen. Toen werden ze min of meer uitgehongerd. Hierdoor werden ze ook niet geofferd, en konden vrij op het eiland leven.

Ze voelden er niets voor om die kannibaalse god te aanbidden. Ze hoopten dat ze nu met rust gelaten zouden worden.

Snel kwamen ze erachter dat de kannibaalse god maar een machine was waardoor de inboorlingen werden beheerst.

Omdat ze geen enkel risico wilden nemen zijn ze toen naar het volgende eiland toegegaan.

Nachtprinses

Ik ben een prins opgesloten door een draak. Niemand weet waar ik ben of waar ik slaap. Ik heb de moed allang opgegeven. Ze zal mij nooit vinden. Ik weet dat ze naar mij zoekt. Ik weet dat ze om me huilt. Niemand kan haar troosten, maar vinden zal ze me niet. Ik ben te diep. Deze draak houdt mij opgesloten, als in een roos, een labyrint. Er is niemand die mij vinden zal. Ik ben opgesloten door een draak. Niemand weet hoe, en niemand weet waar. Ik heb mezelf zovaak bedrogen, maar nu ben ik tot de waarheid gekomen. Ik kom hier nooit meer uit. Ik ben een glijder op de wind, het licht kan mij ergens brengen, als een vriend. Ik kan ook strijden op een wolk, maar mezelf bevrijden kan ik niet. Ik ben het kind van de wind, in duisternis zak ik weg. Ik heb het op mezelf genomen, en ik kan er nooit van weg. Misschien strijd jij nog voor mij. Misschien ben jij nog op zoek naar mij. Ik heb de moed allang opgegeven. Niemand brengt mij tot leven. Niemand die mij vinden kan.

Ik ben een prins opgesloten in dit kasteel. Alles hier is van fluweel. Ik heb mezelf voorgenomen om niet meer zo te dromen. Ik moet tot de feiten komen, dit kasteel is waar ik woon. Dit kasteel is waar ik verblijf, tot in alle eeuwigheid. Ik kom erdoor tot het duister, ik kom er door tot de meren, ik kom er door tot de zachtste veren, tot de allerzachtste kleren. Ik doe nu alles uit, en glijd in dit duistere bad, zo vies en zo vol wildernis, ik glijd tot andere streken. Ik glijd tot de warmte van het bad, ik glijd tot de armen van het bad, ik glijd in de gleuf van de draak, en dan gaat alles spelen. Ik heb geen zin om nog te jammeren, niemand luistert naar mij.

Oh prins, ik ben de nachtprinses. Ik sta voor het raam, en kom binnen als een dief in de nacht, als een nachtmerrie zal ik je ziel stelen. Oh prins, ik ben de nachtfontein, ik ben het nachtlatijn, en niemand kan jou deren. Niemand kan je vereten, niemand kan je stelen. Want ik heb jou, ik bevrijd jou.

Wat, jij bent het trauma, het trauma van de nacht. Hier heb ik zo lang op gewacht, maar je kwam maar niet, ik heb de moed al opgegeven. Ik geloofde niet meer, en had geen hoop, het deed te pijn, dus daarom was ik een ongelovige, maar nu voel ik jouw hand.

Prins, ik ben een heks, een monster, ik zal je wenken, om achter mij aan te komen naar een nieuwe wereld, een nieuwe duisternis, in een bos van vrolijkheid. Ik zal je alles leren, ik zal je alles laten doen, ik zal je overal brengen waar je wilt. Ik ben het nacht-latijn, ik ben de nacht-fontein, staande aan het raam. Als de nachtmerrie zal ik je grijpen, om te verzoenen jou met al mijn haren, om een vuur te brengen in de kou. Ik zal zachtjes tot je zingen, totdat je rustig bent. Ik kom over jou met mijn gewaad, als een warme deken zal ik jou bedekken. Ik heb jou hier bereikt, jouw schuilplaats gevonden. Toe, laat me niet alleen, en laat ons rennen. Grijp me vast, houd me stevig vast, laat me nooit meer los. Ik ben jouw vleugels en genade, de

nachtprinses die op jou wacht.

Oh, lieve prinses, ik sta op de trap die brand. Ik ren naar je liefelijk gewaad, jouw glimlach trekt mij aan. Oh, prinses, daar kom ik aan. Ik zie je daar staan. Ik heb engelengeduld met jou, oh lieve vrouw, een mooie nachtmerrie. Ik grijp jouw hand, en pak je vast, en leid jou naar de kamer van de schat. Ik laat het aan jou zien. Je bent verrukt. Oh lieve prinses, hurkende bij de schat, kijkende naar mij, je bent zo blij. Vlinders komen vanuit jouw gewaad, en dan zoveel vliegen en spinnen. Totdat je opstijgt vederlicht, en explodeert in het licht. Ik volg jou, de vuurvlieg, ik vlieg met jou, in de nacht. Er is iemand die jou warmhoudt, dat ben ik. Er zijn hier .... spoken .... zovelen die naar binnen willen. Ik doe de deur voor hen open, de draak smelt weg. De koning smelt weg, terwijl hij vasthoudt zijn koningin. Nu komt de wildernis binnen, wildgroeidende planten vallen aan, en nemen alles over. Oh nachtprinses, oh nachtprinses.

De Kinderdief

De magische flessen stonden naast elkaar. Er zaten geesten in die flessen. Het was druk in de stad der spinnen. Zoveel geluiden van auto's, en dan ineens zo stil, omdat de koningin langskomt. De koningin der spinnen zit op haar troon, omgeven met speren. Zij is het geluid zo zat, en eist stilte. Dan zinkt de stad weg in de golven van eenzaamheid. Het is haar beslissing. Zij houdt de stad veilig. De familie ruzies moeten ophouden. Zij breekt de families, en verspreid hen over de stad. Zij wacht, en slaat dan toe. De koele gebaren van eenzaamheid zijn een teken dat het werkt. De stad is stoffig. Overal ligt rommel op de grond. Maar het is tenminste rustig. De inwoners leven in vrees. Zij kennen hun koningin.

De droogte is bijna zoet. De grachten hebben groen water, en veel bruin. De koningin wil veel bruin zien, en veel bleke plekken daartussen. Zij houdt van het contrast. Dan wil ze klederdracht zien, en tradities, om het vervolgens allemaal stuk te slaan. Ze bereidt het gif om de stad te laten slapen. Alles is dodelijk uitgecalculeerd. Ze maakt geen fouten. Zij is onfeilbaar. De stad is een trage belevenis. Morgen zal alles wit zijn. Haar dienaressen hebben zichzelf gewapend. De strijd kan beginnen, maar waartegen ? De stad is dood. Er is niets te zien hier. Morgen zal alles wit zijn.

Haar heupen bewegen tegen het glas aan. Het glas springt, en zij is vrij. Over de stad zijn haar webben. Niemand zal ontsnappen. Zij zullen allen moeten eten van haar vergif, om zo te slapen voor eeuwig, opdat de stad wit zal zijn. In de morgen zullen nieuwe soldaten opstaan. Zij zullen haar op handen dragen, en aan haar voeten liggen, want zij dient aanbeden te worden.

Niet velen durven tegen haar in te gaan. Niet velen durven haar te benaderen. Er zijn haaien in haar zee, grote schepen op haar golven, en haar mandarijnen zijn bommen. Zij is een verwend klein kind. Zij houdt hen maskers voor, en praat alles weg. Haar leugens laten haar tussen de bomen wonen, tussen de planten. Een distelkind is zij, met brandnetels in haar haren. Zij stoeit met slangen, en zij luisteren naar haar. Zij vecht met katten, en overwint. Zij is de vogelspin.

Haar liederen zijn stormen in de nacht, die kinderen uit hun bedden roven. Zij brengt hen tot het kasteel. Zij draagt een wit kleed waarin zij haar bruine lichaam omhult. Haar liederen zijn schepen in water. Zij zinken niet. Zij laat hen allen dromen, de dromen des doods. Zij brengt het gif dicht bij hen monden, en laat hen dan slikken. Dan sleept zij hen naar de kelders. Haar hyena's jagen daar, en zij leidt

hen tot de ondergrondse stad. Zij brengt hen tot onder de riolen tot het licht der kinderen.

De Flamingo Vertelt

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COAB 2000-2017

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DE FLAMINGO'S

Hij werd altijd meegenomen op de rug van een flamingo.

Zij brachten hem altijd naar paradijselijke plaatsen,

Naar wonderlijke tuinen, en verre eilanden.

Maar na een tijdje kwamen ze niet meer, en het jongetje begon hen te missen.

Op school moest hij altijd aan ze denken, en hij probeerde hen altijd te tekenen, en ook de plaatsen waarnaar ze hem brachten.

Toen het jongetje ouder werd kon hij zich er steeds minder van herinneren.

Het vaagde steeds meer uit zijn hersenen weg.

Hij was hier heel verdrietig over.

Hij begon alles op te schrijven wat hij zich er nog van kon herinneren, maar hij merkte dat er grote gaten waren. Die gaten begon hij op te vullen met zijn eigen verhalen. Hij probeerde de gaten te dichten, maar wist niet meer zeker of het zo was gegaan.

Maar dit was de enige manier voor hem om ermee om te gaan, anders zou de pijn te groot zijn.

Hij verlangde terug naar de flamingo's, om op hun rug te vliegen naar verre, onbekende landen, warme oorden met prachtige stranden. Maar ze kwamen maar niet.

Hij begreep het niet, en vroeg zich af wat hij fout had gedaan.

Waren ze misschien boos op hem, of was er iets anders aan de hand ?

Hij ging naar het bos om ze te roepen, en ook naar het strand.

Hij had inmiddels vele schriften vol geschreven over de flamingo's, maar op een dag merkte hij dat er verschillende schriften waren verdwenen. Hij zocht overal in het huis, maar hij vond ze niet, en begon mensen te verdenken. Hij vroeg zich af wie ze gestolen kon hebben, of was

hij misschien zelf te slordig geweest ? De schriften die verdwenen waren probeerde hij te vervangen door nieuwe verhalen, maar de pijn bleef, en werd elke dag erger.

Op een dag kwam er een nieuw meisje bij hem in de klas. Ze kon prachtige verhalen vertellen, en ze deed hem herinneren aan de flamingo's die hem altijd meenamen. Het leek wel alsof hij door haar verhalen meer kon herinneren. Ze werden goede vrienden, en het meisje genoot ook erg van zijn verhalen. Ze besloten beiden boeken te maken die ze uitdeelden in de klas om ook andere kinderen te helpen.

Op een dag kwamen de flamingo's bij het jongetje terug. Dit maal waren er meer flamingo's dan ooit, en ze namen het jongetje ditmaal verder dan ze ooit eerder waren gegaan met hem. Niemand zag het jongetje ooit nog terug.

Einde

Terence Palmer

SF / Spionage

Terence Palmer zat in de opdrachtzaal met een paar anderen. De technisch leider wees op een bord waarop het volgende stond : Alles is Pijn. Alles is Vuur. Alles is Zintuig.

En van wat voor een indianenstam is dit ? vroeg Terence.

Sommigen van hen zeggen ook : Alles is groeiende pijn, zegt de technisch leider. Schimmadons, je weet wel, daar beneden. De technisch leider reikt Terence een kaart aan en wijst aan waar de indianen wonen. Terence slikt even. Zijn vorig avontuur met indianen liep verkeerd af.

Even later brengt het sterrenschip de groep net binnen de dampkring met een parachute, en vallen naar beneden.

Terence maakt een veilige landing diep in de jungle. Waarom moet het altijd zo onbeholpen. Ze hebben toch veel betere technische snufjes ? Maar goed, ouderwets parachute springen was wel weer even leuk. Terence drukt op een knop op zijn horloge en krijgt de technisch leider op het scherm. 'Wat nu ?' vraagt Terence.

'Gewoon doorlopen,' zegt de technisch leider. 'Ik heb je op het scherm en je bent goed terechtgekomen.' Verderop staat een huisje met een lang balkon met veel plantengroei en bomen. Binnenin zou een professor wonen waar Terence op bezoek moest gaan. De professor schijnt veel van de Schimmadons af te weten.

'Kom binnen,' zegt de professor vanaf het balkon als hij Terence ziet aankomen. Even later zijn de anderen er ook bij. 'Ik besef dat jullie hier zijn voor een opdracht,' zegt de professor. De professor valt direkt met de deur in huis : 'De potentialen heersen hier. En de Schimmadons zijn degenen die het meest onder hen lijden.'

'Wie zijn de potentialen ?' vraagt Terence.

'De potentialen zijn lichtwezens die dromen creeeren door lichtcontact, oogcontact, dus als je ze ziet, dan maken ze je dromen waar, maar daarna komt de rekening,' laat de professor weten.

‘En dat is ?’ vraagt Terence ....

‘Bloed,’ zegt de professor. ‘En de Schimmadons hebben hen daar altijd in doorgehad, en de oorlog heeft hen zo goed als vernietigd .... De laatsten van hen leven onder de grond, daar waar ze nauwelijks iets kunnen zien. Ze leven daar door geluid, geur, smaak, adem, gevoel, je weet wel, temperatuurverschil, en zo vormen ze zich een beeld.’

‘En wat wilt u dat ik daaraan ga doen ? Is het niet goed zo ?’ vraagt Terence.

‘Nee, Terence,’ zegt de professor. ‘Het is helemaal niet goed, want het land was van hen, waar nu de potentialen wonen. Ik weet dat jullie op dezelfde basis leven als de Schimmadons. Zij het iets anders, maar jullie gebruiken je ogen ook niet om licht op te vangen, maar geur, temperatuur, enzo. Jullie zijn de enigen die ogen hebben die totaal niet op licht reageren, en daarom hebben wij jullie nodig.’

Terence kijkt even naar de anderen. ‘En nog eens wat, Terence,’ zegt de professor. ‘Ach laat maar zitten. Je merkt het zelf wel als je naar de kampen van de potentialen gaat. Doe voor de zekerheid dit rode scherm voor je ogen, want je weet nooit wat ze van plan zijn, en hun lichtaanvallen kunnen als vuur zijn.’

Even later gaat het groepje naar de plaats waar de professor hen naartoe zond. Ze heffen hun pistolen op, en direkt begint de aanval. ‘Commercials !’ roepen de potentialen. Vreemdsoortige wezens lijken hen te helpen, en op eens krijgt Terence een reeks reclame boodschappen in zijn hoofd die hem helemaal overhoop lijken te steken. Wat een vreemdsoortige oorlog. Hij drukt op een knop op zijn horloge, krijgt de technische leider op een beeldschermpje, en vraagt wat hij moet doen. Type F7 op je horloge, zegt de technisch leider. Daarna K9. Terence doet wat hem wordt gezegd en de vreemde reclame boodschappen verdwijnen. Even later valt Terence neer, door vreemde spiegelbeelden in zichzelf waardoor hij de controle verliest. Later wordt hij wakker, vastgebonden op een stoel.

Olekekal, zegt één van de potentialen. ‘Ach man, ga naar huis,’ zegt Terence.

‘Dit is mijn huis,’ zegt de potentiaal. Dan trapt de man hem in het gezicht. Later weet Terence wat knoppen op zijn horloge in te drukken, met aanwijzingen van de technisch leider, en komt weer vrij. Diep in een kelder vind hij apparatuur, en maakt foto’s met zijn horloge. Het lijkt wel alsof al die lichtverschijnselen door deze computer worden opgewekt.

‘Agent Terence Palmer !’ wordt er geroepen. Mannen in zwarte pakken zijn binnengekomen, en snel nemen ze Terence mee. Het zijn mannen van zijn ruimteschip. Die worden altijd ingezet als er gevaren zijn. Ze hebben Terence al meerdere malen uit de moeilijkste en gevaarlijkste situaties gered.

Even later is Terence hoog en veilig in het ruimteschip. Vanuit een groot raam kijkt hij naar beneden. Overal is er rook. Hij vraagt zich af wat er gebeurt is. De potentialen blijken vernietigende acties gedaan te hebben.

‘Agent Terence Palmer.’ En dan moet hij zijn horloge inleveren waarmee hij foto’s heeft genomen. In een laboratorium worden de foto’s onderzocht. ‘Ik kan het niet helpen,’ zegt Terence. ‘Ik heb geprobeerd de potentialen uit te schakelen, maar het is me niet gelukt.’

‘Shhh...,’ zegt iemand. ‘We hebben nu de foto’s, dus we kunnen hier via de analyze verder mee komen.’

Na een lange nacht wordt Terence wakker. Hij gaat naar beneden, en komt wat anderen van de groep tegen, en ook wat van de Schimmadons, en zelfs de professor. Terence is blij dat ze allemaal gered zijn nu de potentialen er zo’n zooitje van hebben gemaakt. ‘We brengen jullie wel naar een nieuwe planeet,’ zegt Terence.

In de middag krijgt Terence het loon voor zijn daden : nieuwe cyborg-bestanddelen, en wordt bevestigd in een hogere orde.

Hij leest nog even de verslagen door, en komt erachter wat ze van de foto’s hebben kunnen leren. Het zijn een aantal documenten geworden waardoor het schip door een immense verbouwing zal gaan. Vele technieken kunnen ze op henzelf toepassen.

Na een tijdje komen ze op een rode planeet Traktiktor, waar ze de professor en de Schimmadons afzetten, en dan gaat het schip verder. Terence kijkt naar zijn armen, waarop zoveel nieuwe apparatuur is bevestigd, zoveel nieuwe communicatie-mogelijkheden. Hij werkt nu voor een soort hogere inlichtingendienst.

Even later spreekt hij een wat oudere vrouw die de leiding heeft over een ander deel van het schip, en zij pleit ervoor dat hij overgeplaatst wordt naar het moederschip. Dat is een grotere eer dan hij kon wensen. Na een paar uurtjes is de overplaatsing een feit, en hij krijgt een nieuwe kamer. Ook krijgt hij hier nieuwe wapens, en krijgt hij een eigen gevechtsschip. Hij had al wel een piloten-opleiding gehad, maar nu heeft hij dan zijn eigen schip, een Fighter F6. Het schip kent vele communicatie-schilden, en

heeft een hoge graad afweer. Voornamelijk zal hij hier reddings-acties mee moeten uitoefenen. Hij had altijd van de technisch leider geleerd dat wijsheid en list beter is dan oorlogsvoering. De echte oorlogsvoering werd meestal uitgevoerd door de Jagers, andere soort schepen, meestal in K5 uitvoering en F9. De F9's waren zo'n beetje de snelste schepen die ze hadden. Ze waren niet groot, maar ook niet klein. Wel waren ze heel lang, en maakten ze veel lawaai. De piloten van de F9's waren aardige lui, en dat was ook een vereiste. Terence maakte veel studie over de F9, en het werd bijna een soort obsessie voor hem. Wat zou hij ook graag het grotere werk willen doen in de oorlog, en zo zorgen voor een groter en beter terrein voor het hele universum. Er waren zoveel gevaren die ze moesten bestuderen, en moesten bestrijden, maar bovenal moesten ze die gevaren leren begrijpen. Het kwam op veel studie aan. Hoe meer Terence de materie bestudeerde des te meer hij erachter kwam dat kwaad eigenlijk niet bestond. Ze hadden allemaal hun eigen redenen, maar toch moest er soms gevochten worden. Die gevechten bleken belangrijk te zijn voor het voortbestaan van het universum. Het was alsof ieder ras zijn eigen hoek had, en dat de oorlogen belangrijk waren voor integratie en zelfs vriendschap. Vaak was er na zo'n oorlog meer begrip naar elkaar, en uiteindelijk in veel gevallen werden er verdragen van vrede getekend.

Na vele jaren was het eindelijk zo ver. Terence kreeg zijn eigen F9, en werd een frontman in de strijd. Zo was hij dan niet alleen meer een agent, maar ook een militair. Dit was waar hij al zo lang over had gedroomd, en het was een grote dag voor hem toen hij zijn nieuwe pak kreeg, met zoveel nieuwe bestanddelen, en inzage in zoveel geheime documenten.

De Kitlaps waren een gevaarlijk soort aliens waarmee ze te maken hadden. Ze hadden hoge apparatuur om het verstand en geweten van anderen mee proberen over te nemen voor totale dominatie van het universum. Het was één van de gemeenste oorlogen die ze ooit hadden meegemaakt, en waarin vele F9's te gronde gingen. Terence was ten einde raad. Een groep professoren die ook de F9's hadden gestructureerd hadden inmiddels een tegengif gevonden waarmee ze de Kitlaps konden overnemen, maar er was al veel gesneuveld. En dat tegengif moest eerst in een bepaalde unit komen, in de dieptes van het rijk van de Kitlaps, en dat rijk was zwaarbewaakt. Er waren zoveel valstrikken dat eigenlijk niemand er voor voelde om daar naartoe te gaan, maar Terence greep de uitdaging aan. Iemand moest het doen.

Het rijk was omsingeld door hoge muren, op een verliggende planeet van gevaarlijke gassen. Terence hoopte dat de F9 er tegen bestand was. Het hele rijk van de Kitlaps bleek bestuurt te worden door de geheime unit. En het was nog maar de vraag of het tegengif ook echt zou werken. Maar na een tijdje moest Terence weer rechtsomkeerts maken, want hij kwam er niet doorheen. Hij mocht blij zijn dat hij nog leefde. Op een dag werd hij door één van de professoren geroepen. De professor had een machine gebouwd waardoor snelle verplaatsingen in de ruimte mogelijk waren. De professor bleek het hele gebied van de Kitlaps in kaart te hebben, en zei dat het mogelijk was om Terence naar de unit te verplaatsen, maar hij was bang dat Terence daar niet zou kunnen overleven vanwege de gassen. Hij wilde werken aan een speciaal pak voor Terence, maar Terence had een beter idee. 'Waarom niet gewoon het tegengif verplaatsen ?' Maar dat kon niet want het tegengif moest op een bepaalde manier in de unit worden ingevoerd. De professor legde het hem uit, en het was inderdaad ingewikkeld. De professor ging met het pak aan het werk. De professor wist veel af van de gassen van de Kitlaps, dus hij dacht dat het moest kunnen. Terence kreeg een speciaal alarm op zijn arm, die hem direkt zou terugverplaatsen als er iets mis ging. Ook was er een bepaalde schakelaar die hij meekreeg waarmee hij direkt weer terugkon. Zo kon hij zichzelf als het ware heen en weer flitsen, om zo in alle rust zijn werk te doen. Het project slaagde, en de Kitlaps werden allemaal overgenomen door een vreemd energie-veld. Maar even later werden de Kitlaps erger dan ooit tevoren. De unit had zich op een vreemde manier hersteld en had het tegengif geabsorbeerd. Terence moest nu ervoor zorgen dat er een altijddurende stroom van het tegengif zou zijn, maar het probleem was dat er niet

genoeg tegengif was. Daarvoor moest Terence naar een afgelegen planeet. Het tegengif heette Terdis, en al gauw had Terence door dat er een lijntje moest komen van de afgelegen planeet naar de unit van de Kitlaps, anders zou het niet slagen. De professor kreeg het voor elkaar om een verplaatsmachine daar te krijgen, die zo geprogrammeerd was dat er telkens tegengif werd gezonden naar de unit. Toen leek het grootste probleem voorbij te zijn.

Maar er bleek één Kitlap te zijn die onoverwinnelijk was, een geweldig beest, als een groenharige reuzenaap. Hij bleek de koning te zijn van de Kitlaps. De Kitlaps bleken door het tegengif al tegen hun koning opgezet te zijn, en vochten nu mee in het leger van Terence. Maar dat was geen makkelijke zet. Het bleek dat de aap zo groot kon worden als hij zelf wilde, en ook zo klein mogelijk. Hij had hiervoor een vergrotingsmachine. Door de verplaatsingsmachine kon Terence makkelijk bij de vergrotingsmachine komen, maar hoe dit ding uit te schakelen ? De vergrotingsmachine bepaalde alles .... de spraak van de aap, de bewegingen van de aap, alles .... Terence wist niet hoe hij het ongedaan kon krijgen, en de professoren wisten het ook niet. Maar op een dag bleek een andere Kitlap er meer van af te weten. Hij had jaren voor de koning gewerkt, en wist alles van de vergrotingsmachine af. Sterker nog : hij had hem zelf gemaakt. Met hulp van deze Kitlap konden ze de machine ongedaan maken, en al snel was de koning zo mak als een lammetje en gaf zich over. Er werd een verdrag van vrede getekend, en gevaarlijke machines werden uitgeschakeld en op een vreedzame manier gebruikt door een aantal veranderingen. Terence wist dat een hogere en betere techniek altijd de beste oplossing was, en aan die techniek zou hij zich meer en meer wijden.

Einde

Harold

Harold woonde ergens in het midden van Nunspeet. Hij was van de vuilnisophaal-dienst. Vroeger werd alle vuilnis naar een open plek, diep in het bos gebracht en daar verbrand. Nu ligt er alleen nog maar zand. Ze noemden het wel eens de woestijn van Nunspeet. Ja, je moet er wel even een stuk voor fietsen, want het is over het spoor. Vroeger werd er altijd van alles en nog wat weggegooid, en vaak ging men naar die open plek toe om te kijken of er nog iets voor hen bijzat. Ook Harold hield alles goed in de gaten. En als hij tijdens zijn werk iets leuks tegenkwam, dan reed hij er in de avond nog even langs om het mee te nemen naar huis. Zijn huis stond dan ook vol met bijzondere dingen. Ja, Harold woonde in een heel bijzonder huis, en hij had ook een hele bijzondere vrouw. Zijn vrouw kon niet praten, want ze had vroeger een ernstig ongeluk gehad. Maar ze was bijzonder creatief, en maakte altijd hele speciale dingen. Zijn vrouw ging wel eens mee 's avonds, als Harold naar de open plek ging. Op een dag kwamen ze een kleine man tegen. Hij leek wel een beetje op een dwerg. Hij was een soort liliputter. De man was druk bezig met zoeken. 'Zoekt u iets ?' vroeg Harold vriendelijk. 'Ja,' zei de man, 'mijn vrouw heeft per ongeluk wat spullen van mij met de vuilnis meegegeven.'

'Om wat gaat het dan ?' vroeg Harold, 'want toevallig werk ik bij de vuilnisdienst, dus als u het me even zegt wat het is, dan zal ik op de uitkijk staan.'

'Het gaat om een gouden grammofoonspeler, mijnheer,' zei de man sip, 'en een heleboel langspeelplaten.'

'Oh, vergeet dat maar,' zei Harold, 'die hebben ze allang meegenomen. Er komen hier zo vaak mensen om spullen weg te halen, en zoiets zullen ze vast niet laten staan.'

'Maar het zat in een zak,' zei de man, 'in een vuilniszak ... Mijn vrouw dacht dat het vuilnis was ...'

'Oh, maar daar kunnen we echt niet aan beginnen,' zei Harold. 'We gaan niet alle zakken doorzoeken.' Maar toen werd de man een beetje kwaad. Zo kwaad, dat Harold direct begon te zoeken. Maar na een hele avond zoeken hadden ze nog steeds niets gevonden. De liliputter was ten einde raad. 'Ach,' zei Harold, 'wij hebben nog wel een oude grammofoonspeler in de schuur staan, en op zolder hebben we een heleboel grammofoonplaten ... die mag je wel hebben.' Maar dat wilde de liliputter niet ... Het ging hem niet zozeer om de muziek ... Hij had hem nooit aanstaan ... Het ging hem om de emotionele waarde die hij aan het ding hechtte. Hij had het van zijn vader gekregen. Hij gaf niks om die muziek, maar zijn vader hield er zo van, en daarom kon hij het eigenlijk niet missen. 'Weet je wat ?' zei Harold ...'Mijn vrouw is nogal erg handig. Als je ons nu vertelt hoe het ding eruit zag, dan zal mijn vrouw wel proberen om precies dezelfde te maken van onze eigen grammofoonspeler.' Maar de man wist eigenlijk niet zo goed hoe het eruit zag. Hij heeft hem al die tijd in de vuilniszak laten zitten. Hij had niet zulke goede herinneringen aan zijn vader, maar vond het geschenk wel erg belangrijk en waardevol voor hem. Hij had er dus gemengde gevoelens over. Hij kon niet met en niet zonder. Harold begreep het verhaal. 'Nou,' zei Harold, 'als het dan zo'n gestuntel voor je was, wees dan maar blij dat het weg is, dan zul je er ook nooit meer last van hebben.' En daarin gaf de man hem wel gelijk ...

Maar daar kwam ineens een auto aanrijden. Er kwam een man uit de auto met de gouden grammofoonspeler en de grammofoonplaten in z'n armen, en legde het tussen de andere vuilnis. 'Ziezo,' zei hij, 'weg met die rommel. De grammofoonspeler deed het nauwelijks, en in de platen zaten allemaal krassen.' En snel was de man ook weer verdwenen.

De liliputter wist niet hoe hij moest kijken. Moest hij hier nu blij mee zijn, of niet ? Ook Harold wist eigenlijk niet zo goed hoe hij ermee om moest gaan ... 'Ach,' zei de liliputter ... 'laten we het daar maar liggen blijven ...' Harold kreeg wel een beetje last van schuldgevoelens nu, want hij had de liliputter per slot van rekening omgepraat ... Maar om de situatie te redden had hij een idee : 'Zeg, om de wond te helen kun je wel even met ons mee naar huis komen, want wij hebben ons huis vol staan met oude spullen. Dan kun je wat uitkiezen.' Daar had de liliputter wel oren naar.

De liliputter keek zijn ogen uit in het huis van de vuilnisman ... Wat een prachtige dingen stonden hier allemaal zeg ... Moest dit nou vuilnis voorstellen ? Hij kon het niet geloven ... Wat men wel niet allemaal weggooit ... Maar Harold zei dat mensen vaak iets weggooien om dezelfde redenen als de liliputter had ... Het verleden bijt ... En of het hen nu veel geld gekost heeft of niet, als ze er pijn van hebben, dan gaat het meestal naar de vuilnis ... En als je dat even allemaal in de gaten houdt, dan kun je daar erg rijk mee worden ... Ja, dat had de liliputter nu ook wel in de gaten ... En hij was nu zo ver gekomen, dat hij ook wel graag vuilnisman wilde worden ... En zo kon je ook veel in huis halen, zonder dat het je pijn deed. Harold vond het een goed idee, en de baas van Harold ook ... En zo werden Harold en de liliputter collega's van elkaar, en de beste vrienden ... Vaak gingen ze in de avond na het werk nog even naar de open plek toe, om daar de bijzonderste dingen van weg te halen ... En ook Harold's vrouw en de vrouw van de liliputter werden dikke vriendinnen. Ze gingen vaak samen op vakantie ... en natuurlijk hadden ze een voorliefde voor vuilnisbelten ... voor hen was dat een manier om veel geld uit te sparen ... De mensen vroegen hen altijd hoe ze toch aan zulke dure spullen kwamen ... maar soms werden ze ook weleens uitgescholden voor dieven ... Niet iedereen was er zo blij mee waar ze mee bezig waren. Vooral niet toen ze gingen rondvertellen dat ze gingen verhuizen ... Ja, ze zouden in een caravan gaan wonen, om het te houden bij de kleine dingetjes ... En zo konden ze van vuilnisbelt tot vuilnisbelt reizen ... Natuurlijk gingen ze er nooit te dichtbij wonen ... want dat zou brandgevaar opleveren ...

Ze zagen het als sport om de kleinst mogelijke schatten te vinden op de vuilnisbelten, om ze uit te stallen in hun caravans ... In het begin konden ze niet te ver weg reizen, vanwege het werk van Harold en de liliputter, maar later werden ze er zo handig in, dat ze een reizende winkel begonnen ... en daar konden ze goed van leven ... Harold en de liliputter waren toen geen vuilnismannen meer, maar vuilniswinkeliers ... En waar ze dan ook kwamen ... iedereen vond het een bijzondere winkel ... Maar al gauw werden ze ook dieven genoemd door sommigen ... Vaak werd er gevraagd hoe ze toch aan zulk bijzonder spul kwamen ... Ook de vuilnisdienst zelf was niet blij dat Harold en de liliputter met hun werk stopten. En als je aan ze vraagt of ze Harold ook kennen, dan doen ze vaak alsof ze hem niet kennen. Maar er was er één bij die toch wel erg veel aan Harold en de liliputter te danken had. Hij bleef eens een keer aan een zak vastzitten, en werd door het zuigsysteem naar binnen getrokken. Harold en de liliputter hadden wel speciale apparaatjes om hem direkt eruit te krijgen. Hoe ze aan die apparaatjes kwamen ? ... Ja, dat was natuurlijk hun grote geheim ... Inmiddels had Harold een grote winkel van bijzondere spullen in het zuiden van het land. Samen met de liliputter natuurlijk, zijn onafscheidelijke vriend. Ze hebben die man van de vuilnisdienst die ze gered hadden hun caravans geschonken, en hem een beetje het vak geleerd. Samen met een andere vriend reist hij nu de vuilnisbelten af. En wat zij allemaal naar binnen halen ? Het is niet te geloven. Er worden soms gewoon zakken met geld weggegooid ... Ja, want als je geld krijgt van iemand die je het leven zuur heeft gemaakt ... Of erfenissen van een rijke maar verschrikkelijke tante ... wil ook niet altijd iedereen in huis hebben ... De mensen willen nog wel een beetje kunnen leven ... en niet door één of ander miljoenengeschenk bij de psychiater terecht te komen.

En als je bekijkt wat mensen wel niet allemaal door het toilet wegspoelen en door de gootsteen ? De legende wil dat Harold's rijk zelfs tot onder de grond reikte, tot onder het riool, om hier en daar een graantje mee te pikken. En wat hij daar allemaal tegenkwam ? Niet iedereen wilde dit geloven ... Maar dat vond Harold niet erg ... wat had hij namelijk aan indringers ? Nog steeds zijn er wel eens dapperen die op zoek gaan naar Harold's rijk onder de grond, maar hoe diep dat zit, dat weet niemand ... In iedergeval ... zij die dat geprobeerd hebben zijn nooit meer teruggevonden ... Wil dat zeggen dat het in Harold's rijk zo goed is dat ze er niet meer aan denken om terug te gaan ? Of zijn ze ergens onderweg gesneuveld ? Niemand weet het ... Er heeft lange tijd in Nunspeet een standbeeld van Harold gestaan, maar deze was op een zekere dag plotseling verdwenen ... waarschijnlijk door de vuilnisdienst opgehaald ...

Kraak

en het Geheim van het Glibbergoud

Kraak was heel erg diep in het bos terechtgekomen, in zijn bootje op een voor hem onbekende bosrivier. Hier was hij nog nooit geweest. Hij zag een eekhoorntje en volgde het. Hij stapte uit zijn bootje aan de oever van de bosrivier en holde achter het beestje aan. Na niet al te lang rennen kwam hij aan bij een huisje. Hij klopte bij het huisje aan, en wist

eigenlijk niet wat hij deed. Hij had zo lang gereisd dat zijn bootreis hem gehypnotiseerd had gemaakt. Niemand antwoordde, en toen stapte die brutale Kraak gewoon naar binnen. Hij kon aan die drang bijna niet ontkomen. Hij was te nieuwsgierig om zichzelf in te houden.

Hij ging aan een tafeltje zitten op een stoeltje. Toen rookte hij zijn pijpje, en rustte uit van de lange reis. Op tafel lag een schaaltje met brood waarvan hij begon te eten.

Toen kwam ineens het eekhoorntje binnen. 'Hoe durf je zomaar mijn huis binnen te gaan,' sprak het eekhoorntje.

'Wie ben jij ?' vroeg Kraak.

'En dan ook nog vragen aan mij stellen ?' snauwde het eekhoorntje. 'Ik stel hier de vragen.'

'Ik weet niet wat er met mij aan de hand is,' zei Kraak. 'Ik voel me zo vreemd, en ik kon het niet laten je te volgen.'

'Ah,' zei het eekhoorntje ineens begripvol, terwijl hij glimlachte. 'Nu begrijp ik het. Jij bent gewoon in voor een nieuw avontuur, misschien zelfs een heel nieuw leven. Nieuwsgierigheid is goed zo nu en dan.'

Kraak knikte. 'Je hebt gelijk, maar toch kan die nieuwsgierigheid mij ook in de problemen brengen,' sprak hij.

'Ach welnee,' sprak het eekhoorntje. 'Je bent welkom. Het gastenkamertje is boven.' De eekhoorn wees op de trap die naar boven leidde, ging naar boven en wenkte Kraak. 'Kom maar. Hier is je bedje, een tafeltje, en een boekenkast. Ik heb het leuk ingericht voor gasten zoals jij.'

Kraak liep naar boven met het eekhoorntje mee, en keek zijn ogen uit in het gezellige kamertje. Er stond ook een stoel, waarop hij direct ging zitten. 'Wat is je naam ?' vroeg Kraak.

Dit keer antwoordde het eekhoorntje wel. 'Kappaka,' sprak de eekhoorn.

'Een gezellig huisje heb je, Kappaka,' sprak Kraak. 'Mijn naam is Kraak.' Aan de muur hingen wat schilderijtjes waar Kraak naar begon te staren. Kraak wees op de schilderijen. 'Wie heeft die geschilderd ?' vroeg hij.

'Ik,' zei de eekhoorn.

'Dan ben je een groot kunstenaar, Kappaka,' sprak Kraak. Het eekhoorntje glimlachtte verlegen. 'Ach, ik ben maar een eenvoudige schilder,' sprak het eekhoorntje. Het eekhoorntje gaf hem een papieren zak met allerlei soorten bosbessen. 'Kom, volg mij,' sprak het eekhoorntje, en ging weer over de trap naar beneden. Het eekhoorntje ging de bostuin van zijn huisje in, en toen het bos zelf in, terwijl Kraak hem volgde op de voet.

Kraak keek zijn ogen uit. De eekhoorn leidde hem naar struiken en bomen die hij nog helemaal niet kende. Het was alsof Kraak hier tot leven kwam, terwijl hij zelf een boommannetje was. Hij leefde altijd alleen in zijn eigen gebied en in de grote eik waarin hij een huisje had, maar nu moest hij er opuit. Hij kon die drang niet stoppen.

Het eekhoorntje rende verder en riep hem telkens. Het eekhoorntje liet hem de buurt verkennen. Haastig at Kraak van de bosbessen uit de papieren zak, terwijl hij zijn ogen uitkeek. Hij kon zich hier goed vinden, en was blij het eekhoorntje gevolgd te hebben.

Al snel waren Kraak en Kappaka de beste vriendjes, en ze deden vaak spelletjes. Beiden waren ze voor een lange tijd erg eenzaam geweest, maar nu niet meer, sinds ze bij elkaar in één huisje woonden. Het eekhoorntje sliep beneden in een slaapkamertje, en Kraak sliep boven.

Kappaka keek Kraak aan met glinsterende ogen en sprak : 'Zeg, Kraak, weet je dat ik ook iets heel bijzonders heb ?' Kraak trok met zijn lippen aan zijn pijpje. Hij richtte zijn wenkbrouwen op van nieuwsgierigheid. 'Ik kan niet wachten,' sprak Kraak. 'Wat is het ?'

'Kom maar mee,' zei Kappaka. Hij deed een luikje open in de vloer achter in het huiskamertje, en gleed toen door een tunneltje naar beneden. Kraak volgde hem, en na een tijdje glijden kwamen ze in een grote zaal terecht. 'Heel voorzichtig,' zei Kappaka. Voetje voor voetje schoven ze de zaal in, waar aan de overkant wat glinsterde, helemaal achter in de zaal. 'Wat is het ?' vroeg Kraak.

'Shhhh,' fluisterde Kappaka. Ze kwamen langzaam dichterbij het geglinster. Het leek wel op goud, maar het leek wel alsof er een soort vlies omheen zat, een soort gelei, en toen ze nog dichterbij kwamen zag Kraak dat het één geheel vormde. 'Wat is het ?' vroeg Kraak weer.

'Oh, jij nieuwsgierige. Shhhh, shhhhh,' sprak de eekhoorn.

De eekhoorn nam wat van de gouden pasta in zijn hand, maar alles gleed weer van zijn handen af. 'Het is glibbergoud,' schaterde de eekhoorn. 'Niemand kan dit ooit stelen zoals je wel ziet.'

'Maar wat heb je er dan aan ?' vroeg Kraak.

'Het glibbergoud voert oorlog,' sprak de eekhoorn serieus. 'Allen die het proberen te stelen worden opgeslokt door het glibbergoud, en worden een deel van het goud.'

'Oei, dat lijkt mij geen pretje,' sprak het bosmannetje.

Kappaka glimlachte. 'Dit is de reden waarom het glibbergoud groeit. Als het hele zaaltje vol is, dan gaat er een luik open in de vloer, en dan glijdt het door een hele diepe tunnel naar de ondergrondse zee.'

'Wat is dat ?' vroeg Kraak met opgetrokken wenkbrauwen.

Kappaka liep naar de zijkant van de zaal en opende een luikje in de vloer. 'Kom, ik zal het je laten zien,' sprak Kappaka. Kraak volgde hem. Weer gleden ze door een tunnel naar beneden. Ditmaal duurde het nog veel langer. Ze kwamen op een klein bosstrandje terecht. Kraak keek zijn ogen uit. Het was hier wel een beetje donker. Er was hier veel begroeiing in de zee met veel bomen. Het was een echte boszee, maar dan ondergronds. 'Het glibbergoud glijdt in deze zee,' sprak Kappaka.

'En dan ?' vroeg Kraak.

Kappaka keek hem aan met grote ogen. 'Dan ? Maar dat is een groot geheim. Wil je het weten ?'

'Graag,' sprak Kraak, die nu wel heel erg nieuwsgierig was geworden. Zijn hoofd was vuurrood geworden van de nieuwsgierigheid. De eekhoorn grinnikte. 'Als je belooft dat je het aan niemand doorvertelt.'

Kraak knikte, en sprak : 'Ja, ja, dat beloof ik, maar al te graag.'

'Goed dan,' sprak de eekhoorn. 'Moet je goed luisteren.'

Kraak kwam wat dichter bij de eekhoorn staan, en richtte zijn oor extra naar de eekhoorn toe. 'Nou, wat is het ?' sprak Kraak. 'Ik sta te popelen om het van je te horen. Ik denk dat ik nog nooit zo nieuwsgierig ben geweest.'

'Moet je luisteren,' sprak Kappaka. 'Het zit namelijk zo. Ik weet dat je erg nieuwsgierig bent, maar dit is het glibbergoud. Het glibbergoud geeft niet zomaar zijn geheimen weg. Het is namelijk heel glibberig. Volg mij.'

De eekhoorn dook in het water en zwom door de branding heen, langs de bomen en struiken die in het water stonden, en dook toen dieper onderwater. Kraak volgde hem.

Weer zagen ze het glinsteren in de diepte. Wat was het hier donker, zeg. Kraak moest de eekhoorn goed vasthouden. Toen ze bij het glibbergoud aangekomen waren was er een tunneltje waar ze doorheen gleden. Heel lang moesten ze glijden totdat er geen water meer was. Ze waren nu heel diep onder de boszee terecht gekomen. Het was een modderige plaats, en er was nog steeds veel glibbergoud. Het glibbergoud straalde.

'Raak het eens aan,' sprak Kappaka.

'Ik ben daar gek,' sprak Kraak. 'Ik wil er niet door opgeslokt worden en in glibbergoud veranderen.'

'Je bent toch geen dief ?' sprak Kappaka. 'Er zal je niets overkomen. Je bent een vriend.'

Kraak nam wat van het glibbergoud, en het gleed weg uit zijn vingers. Weer zagen ze glibbergoud wegglijden door een tunneltje, nog dieper onder de grond.

'Het glibbergoud leidt tot koning glibbergoud, die diep onder de grond troont,' sprak Kappaka. 'Volg mij.'

De eekhoorn dook het glibbergoud weer achterna, en Kraak volgde hem. Dit keer moesten ze langer dan ooit door het tunneltje glijden. Het leek wel alsof het nooit zou stoppen. Maar toen uiteindelijk kwamen ze in een troonzaaltje terecht. Er zat een klein bosmannetje op een troontje. Het bosmannetje was geheel in het rood gekleed, en had een rood kroontje. 'Ziezo,' zei het bosmannetje. 'Jullie zijn eindelijk gekomen. Mijn naam is koning glibbergoud.'

'Ik heb hier een vriendje voor u meegenomen, koning glibbergoud,' sprak Kappaka. 'Zijn naam is Kraak.'

'Ja,' zei Kraak, 'en ik zou alle geheimen van het glibbergoud willen weten.'

'Aha,' sprak koning glibbergoud. 'Kom dan maar mee.'

Koning glibbergoud stond op van zijn troontje, en leidde hen door een deurtje achterin het zaaltje. Ook het deurtje was volledig van glibbergoud. Ze gingen door een gangetje wat kronkelde en waarlangs allemaal deurtjes van glibbergoud waren. 'Veel is gemaakt van glibbergoud hier,' sprak koning glibbergoud. 'Dan kan het nooit gestolen worden.'

Het gangetje liep uit in een keukentje. Wat duurde dat lang zeg, voordat ze daar kwamen. Het leek wel op een wereldreis. Dit paleis was groot, heel groot. Het keukentje was heel eenvoudig. Koning glibbergoud ging aan een tafeltje zitten. 'Opgelost,' sprak hij. Ook Kraak en Kappaka gingen aan het tafeltje zitten en keken hem verwonderd aan.

'Wat is opgelost, mijn beste koning glibbergoud ?' vroeg Kappaka.

'Hier eindigt het,' sprak koning glibbergoud. 'Onder dit kleine keukentje is de grote keuken. Hier werken veel bosmannetjes uit mijn rijk.'

'Wat gebeurt er hier met het glibbergoud ?' vroeg Kraak, die met zijn lippen een teugje van zijn pijpje nam.

'Helemaal niks,' sprak koning glibbergoud. 'Dit is het eindstation. Naast de grote keuken staan de treinen. Daar wordt het glibbergoud in vervoerd. Het glibbergoud wordt zo verspreid door mijn hele rijk. Het glibbergoud vormt zich vanzelf tot spulletjes die mijn bosmannetjes nodig hebben, zodat het nooit gestolen kan worden. Goed opgelost, vind je niet ?'

Koning glibbergoud stond op en drukte op een knopje in de muur. Het was een lift. De deurtjes van glibbergoud schoven open, en ze konden naar binnen. Weer drukte koning glibbergoud op een knopje, en toen ging de lift dalen. Ze kwamen aan in een enorme keuken. En inderdaad stonden de treinen naast de grote keuken. Kraak keek zijn ogen uit. Hij had nog nooit zoiets gezien. Veel van de keuken was gemaakt van glibbergoud. Koning glibbergoud leidde hen naar de treinen aan de zijkant van de grote keuken. Hier konden ze instappen.

'We gaan een ritje maken,' sprak koning glibbergoud. Zo liet koning glibbergoud zijn hele rijk zien. Het was een hele belevenis voor Kraak. Aan het einde van de dag was Kraak erg moe, en kon hij geen glibbergoud meer zien. Toen zijn ze weer naar huis gegaan.

Die nacht droomde Kraak dat hij een bad nam in het glibbergoud, en dat er in het hele bos een overstroming was van glibbergoud. De volgende dag aan het ontbijt vertelde hij het aan Kappaka. Kappaka keek hem met grote ogen aan.

'Maar dat is geweldig,' sprak Kappaka. 'Zeg, Kraak, weet jij wie het glibbergoud heeft uitgevonden ?'

Kraak schudde zijn hoofd. 'Nee, dat weet ik niet, maar ik zou het graag willen weten.'

'Vandaag ga ik je het laten zien,' sprak Kappaka. Toen ze hun brood hadden gegeten gingen ze op pad. Ze moesten daarvoor een heel eind lopen. Ze moesten langs de oevers van vele riviertjes, nog dieper het bos in, totdat ze bij een grote zandvlakte aankwamen. Achter de zandvlakte ging het bos weer verder, totdat ze in een grote, diepe vallei kwamen. In de vallei groeiden hele hoge rode bloemen. Langs de hele hoge rode bloemen kwamen ze aan bij een huisje. Kappaka klopte aan op het deurtje. 'Binnen, wie is daar ?' sprak een stem.

Kappaka stapte naar binnen en sprak : 'Wij zijn het, Rozalinda, ik en Kraak.' Op een stoeltje zat de bosprinses. Zij had een rood jurkje aan, en een rode narcis op haar hoofd als een trompet. 'Welkom,' sprak de bosprinses met een glimlach. 'Ik ben blij dat jullie gekomen zijn. Er komen hier nooit zoveel.'

De bosprinses had bolle wangetjes als appels en zag er prachtig uit. 'Zo zo,' sprak ze tot Kappaka, 'dus dit is je nieuwe vriendje ?'

Kappaka knikte. 'Dit is Kraak het bosmannetje, en hij zou graag willen weten hoe u het glibbergoud heeft gemaakt.'

Rozalinda glimlachte breed. 'Dat is een lang verhaal. Hebben jullie tijd ?'

'Voor jou altijd, bosprinses,' sprak Kappaka.

'Mooi,' zei de bosprinses. 'Dan ga ik nu direct beginnen. Op een dag liep ik zingend langs de hoge rode bloemen. Ik maakte muziek door hun stengels even vooruit te duwen. Er begonnen poeders uit hun kelken te stromen. Het rook verrukkelijk. Al snel was ik in een bad van sap. Ik was helemaal nat. Ik kwam thuis en ging aan mijn tafeltje zitten, nog steeds kletsnat. Ik zuchtte diep en viel in slaap. Ik droomde over het glibbergoud dat uit een bloem stroomde. Ik kende de bloem niet. Het was zo geel als het glibbergoud. Toen ik wakker werd wilde ik naar de bloem op zoek gaan.'

Kraak keek in grote verwondering naar de prinses. Haar gezicht was zo dromerig toen ze vertelde. En hij werd helemaal warm van binnen door haar zachte stem.

Toen ging de bosprinses verder met vertellen. 'Ik ging mijn huisje uit en begon naar de bloem te roepen. Ik begon de bloem overal te zoeken. Ik wilde niet rusten voordat ik de

bloem had gevonden. Maar ik zocht en zocht en vond de bloem niet. Toen heb ik het glibbergoud zelf gemaakt.'

'Hoe heb je dat gedaan ?' vroeg Kappaka.

'Ik weet het niet meer,' glimlachte de bosprinses. 'Het is al zo lang geleden.'

'Ach toe nou, Rozalinda,' sprak Kappaka. 'Kraak wil het graag weten.'

'Laat me even denken,' sprak de bosprinses. 'Ik denk dat ik een ei heb genomen, een stukje brood, en een zeef. Ik legde het ei in de zeef, met het stukje brood. Toen deed ik er bosbessen bij. Ik heb toen de zeef boven een pot gezet. Toen goot ik er water op en begon in de zeef te roeren. Ik begon het ei, het stukje brood en de bosbessen te prakken. Het werd een vreemd papje. Ik heb het toen nog meer verdunt, en toen ben ik het gaan koken in de pot. Ik heb hier toen poeder en sap van de rode narcis doorheen gedaan. Ik moest het drie uur laten pruttelen.'

'En toen ?' vroeg Kappaka.

'Laat me even denken,' sprak de bosprinses. 'Ik denk, ik weet het niet meer zeker, dat ik toen … ehm … iets wits erin heb gedaan, ik weet niet meer wat. En toen iets geels, iets heel geels, en heel veel daarvan. Toen heb ik het weer drie uur laten pruttelen. En toen aan het einde van de drie uur kwam er een gele gestalte uit de pot, doorzichtig als gelei. Er was eerst veel rook, maar toen de rook minder werd was het het glibbergoud. De gestalte ging zitten, en begon mij verhalen te vertellen, oh de wonderlijkste verhalen, en ik was als betoverd. Hij is toen bosbessenpastei voor mij gaan maken. Hij wilde alles voor me doen. Oh, hij was zo grappig. Hij zei telkens : 'Het glibbergoud werkt.' Hij heeft toen een tijdje bij me gewoond en is toen onder de grond gaan wonen.'

'Wat een wonderlijk verhaal,' sprak Kraak.

'Ja, en sindsdien heb ik de glibberkoorts,' sprak de bosprinses.

Kraak trok zijn wenkbrauwen op, en keek verbaasd naar de bosprinses. 'De glibberkoorts ? Wat is dat ?'

'Ach,' zei de bosprinses. 'Je moet het zo zien. Ik ben glibberig geworden als het glibbergoud. Ik kan niet gestolen of ontvoerd worden. Ik glijd altijd weg.' Ze begon te lachen. 'Nog even en ik zal weer wegglijden, of liever gezegd : Jullie zullen wegglijden, want dit is mijn huisje.'

Opeens voelde Kraak zich duizelig worden. Hij voelde alsof hij geen houvast meer had. Hij voelde zichzelf wegglijden, uit het huisje, uit de vallei, helemaal terug naar het huisje waar hij met Kappaka woonde. Ook Kappaka gleed weg. Dat was vreemd. Even later zaten ze beiden aan het tafeltje thuis. Kraak knipperde even met zijn ogen. 'Toverij,' sprak hij, 'zware toverij.' Kappaka knikte. 'Dat gebeurt altijd. Ik kan nooit lang bij de bosprinses zijn. Nu ken je in ieder geval het geheim van het glibbergoud.' Kraak glimlachtte. 'Dat was me het dagje wel. Ik ben moe en ga slapen.' Hij stond op en ging het trapje op naar boven, waar hij al snel in zijn bedje ging. Ook Kappaka ging naar bed nadat ze elkaar welterusten hadden gezegd.

Einde

Het Meisje met de Rode Laarzen

Ik zag je maar één keer in mijn leven, maar ik zal je nooit vergeten. It was eigenlijk alleen maar in een flits, maar ik zal het nooit vergeten. Tja, het ging allemaal zo snel, als bliksem, en je was zo ver weg. Het was al nacht, het was donker en mistig. Wel, eigenlijk zag ik je helemaal niet, ... alleen je rode laarzen ...

Ik zag alleen je rode laarzen, genoeg voor mij om het magisch te maken. Genoeg voor mij om je nooit te vergeten. Ik zag deze laarzen maar één keer in mijn leven. En ze waren zo ver weg, in het donker en in de mist. Maar het was genoeg om mijn hart in problemen te brengen, genoeg om mijn hart in pijn te brengen.

Gisteren ging ik naar de plaats waar ik deze laarzen zag, daar op dat kleine eiland in het meer. Ik zwom ernaar toe overdag. Maar …. Het waren in feite geen rode laarzen …. Het was gewoon een oude rode auto.

Goed, ik vraag me af hoe je daar kwam met je rode auto. Goed, misschien brachten jouw magische rode laarzen jou daar.

Vandaag zwom ik weer naar het eiland, om te kijken in jouw rode auto, maar een oude man zat erin. Pardon, meneer, ik dacht dat u een meisje was met magische laarzen.

Wel, wel, zei hij …. Dus ik ben niet gek ….. Ik zag ook een meisje met rode laarzen hier .... Toen ik jong was ging ik naar deze plaats met mijn rode auto toen het meer nog niet bestond. Maar toen ik hier kwam scheen het een rode appel te zijn, dus ik at het op. En ik besloot om hier te blijven totdat ik haar echt zou zien. Sinds toen ontstond het meer. De vogels vertelden me dat dat kwam door de tranen van het meisje. Maar ik weet niet of ze dat zeiden om me te plagen of niet.

Nu ben ik oud en heb ik haar nog steeds niet gezien, zei hij. Als ik alleen maar haar rode laarzen weer kon zien ....

Zag je meer dan haar rode laarzen ? vroeg ik.

Nee, nee, zei de man, alleen haar rode laarzen, maar zoals ik zei : het was alleen maar een appel, dus at ik het op.

Wel, als je het hebt opgegeten, dan zullen we haar nooit meer zien, zei ik ....

Maar, maar, zei de oude man, ik plantte de pitten aan de andere kant van het eiland.

Wel, dan moet ze daar zijn, riep ik .... Rennende naar de andere kant .....

Maar een andere rode auto stond daar, met een andere oude man erin, met hetzelfde verhaal.

We zullen haar nooit meer zien, als het zoals dit gaat, zei ik. Maar als we vrienden worden, dan kunnen we de rode laarzen in onze harten bewaren.

Maar, vroeg ik, wat is de reden dat u haar weer wilde zien ?

Wel, omdat lang geleden we onze rode laarzen hadden verloren, toen we gingen zwemmen in het zwembad, spraken de oude mannen allebei. Ik zag nu dat ze hetzelfde gezicht hadden. Toen vervolgden ze : Het meisje met de rode laarzen was degene waar de politie naar zocht sinds toen, want wij wilden onze rode laarzen terug.

Maar hoe weten jullie dat het een meisje was die jullie rode laarzen had gestolen ?

Want een politie-agent zag het meisje met de rode laarzen hier, zeiden ze.

Ja, ik ken dat verhaal, zei ik ..... En ik wed dat hij ook ergens op dit eiland is, in een rode auto met een rode appel in zijn maag .....

Nee, zeiden de oude mannen allebei .... Hij stierf kort nadat hij haar zag .....

Ze zeggen dat hij iets meer zag dan alleen maar de rode laarzen .....

Ja, pffff…… na dit alles ben ik blij dat ik alleen maar haar rode laarzen zag en niets meer. En ik ben ook blij dat ik ontdekte dat ik in feite jullie zag in plaats van haar. Jullie zijn goede vrienden voor mij, jullie hebben mij goed geholpen. Misschien bestaat ze helemaal niet, en misschien is dat maar beter ook.

Nee ! riepen de oude mannen allebei. Wij willen onze rode laarzen terug !

En vertel ons, wat was jouw reden dat je het meisje met de rode laarzen weer wilde zien ? vroegen ze.

Tja, ehm …… nu ben ik bang het te vertellen. Ik vond de rode laarzen bij het zwembad, en ik dacht misschien had ze die van haar daar verloren.

Maar, ….. de oude mannen begonnen nu echt boos te worden. Waarom zei je dat je haar zag met rode laarzen, terwijl je ze zelf had gevonden ?

Wel, omdat de laarzen die ik vond eigenlijk geen laarzen waren. Ik vond ze in het donker en in de mist, toen het middernacht was, maar overdag schenen ze rode appels te zijn, en ik wed dat ze van jullie appelbomen waren. Dus ik was blij om te zien dat het meisje haar laarzen al terug had, zei ik.

Maar ze scheen ons te zijn .... zeiden de oude mannen.

Wel, ja, riep ik, dus waarom worden jullie zo boos terwijl jullie jullie laarzen al terug hebben !

De mannen werden roder en roder en uiteindelijk was er een enorme ontploffing. Het was het meisje met de rode laarzen die voor me stond, glimlachend .....

Dus jij was het echt ? vroeg ik.

Nee, alleen rode laarzen, maar ik vond het een goed idee, dus toen kwam ik, zei ze.

Maar wie ben je dan eigenlijk ? vroeg ik.

Ik ben het meisje die dit meer van tranen huilde ...... Want ik verloor mijn rode laarzen lang geleden, en nu bracht jij ze terug, zei ze zacht.

Oh nee, riep ik, nog iemand die haar rode laarzen verloor .....

Ik zal nooit meer rode schoenen dragen in mijn hele leven,

Ik zal nooit meer in rode wagens rijden, en ik zal nooit meer een rode appel eten. Ik word hier ziek van.

Dan eindelijk word ik wakker, en de oude mannen staan voor me en proberen me te kalmeren. Wat is er gebeurd ? vraag ik.

Je viel uit de appelboom toen je een rode appel wilde eten. Het leek erop. Vreemde dingen gebeuren er wanneer mensen deze appels eten. Heb je het meisje met de rode laarzen gezien ?

Toe nou, ik ben nog steeds niet wakker. Ik voel het. Ik begin te roepen en te schreeuwen.

Eindelijk ontwaakte ik. Twee oude mannen proberen me te kalmeren, en proberen me te laten ademen. Ze zeiden dat ik bijna was vcerdronken in het meer, terwijl ik sprak over rode laarzen die ik zag glinsteren in het meer. Zij hadden mij gered.

Weer verlies ik mijn bewustzijn, en de volgende morgen ontwaak ik in het ziekenhuis. Een meisje met een rode hoed komt mijn kamer in. Ze zegt dat zij mijn zus is. Ze zegt dat ze heel erg bezorgd was, maar de dokter zegt dat het beter met me is. Ik vraag haar of ik haar laarzen mag zien. Groene laarzen ... pfffff, gelukkig. Ik glimlach, en zij glimlacht.

Dan gaat er een bel. Iemand anders komt mijn kamer in. Een meisje. Ze zegt dat ze mijn vriendin is. Ik herinner haar niet. Dan val ik bijna flauw. Het wordt zwart voor mijn ogen. Ze heeft rode laarzen.

En dan zegt ze dat ze een geschenk voor mij heeft. Ik open de geschenkendoos en ik zie prachtige rode laarzen.

Wel, dat is aardig, zeg ik, maar ik kan je niet herinneren.

Elke dat gaat het beter met me. Ik draag mijn rode laarzen vaak. Ik kan mijn vriendin nog steeds niet herinneren.

Elke dag leer ik haar beter kennen. Ze lijkt erg aardig te zijn.

Maar vandaag, het klinkt heel vreemd, kreeg ik een flits, snel als de bliksem, een gevoel dat ik haar ken en haar rode laarzen, wel, vooral haar rode laarzen.

Daar komen de twee mannen het ziekenhuis in. Zij hadden mijn leven gered. Ik vraag hen of ze toevallig rode auto's hebben, maar nee, eentje heeft een blauwe auto, en de ander een witte. Zij schijnen de grootvaders van mijn vriendin te zijn. Ik vraag hen of ze hun rode laarzen al hebben gevonden. Maar ze zeggen dat ze geen rode laarzen hebben. Ze brachten wat appels voor me mee. Roden.

Hey ! Hey, het is groen ! roept iemand. Daar ontwaak ik, staande voor de verkeerspaal die op groen is gesprongen. Nu ben ik echt wakker geworden hoop ik. Het scheen allemaal een droom in een droom te zijn, terwijl ik staarde in het rode van de verkeerspaal.

Het is nog steeds vreemd. Ik krijg nog steeds dat vreemde gevoel wanneer ik iemand met rode laarzen zie. Dan denk ik dat die persoon misschien ook een rode auto heeft, en van rode appels houdt. Maar dan denk ik : Nee, dat kan niet waar zijn. Ze hebben hun eigen leven. Dit is gewoon toeval. En dan glimlach ik, en loop ik door.

De Wraak van de Onaks

Ze zat opgesloten in een computerspel. Ze speelde het een keer, maar ze kon haar weg eruit niet vinden. Ze had oceanen van tranen geweend, maar nu moest ze ermee leven. Het was een vreemd spel, ze vond het niks, maar ze speelde het voor uren. Nu, wat zou ze doen? Er waren slechts monsters hier, misschien konden ze haar vertellen hoe eruit te komen.

Haar broer is nog steeds op zoek naar haar, ze leefden samen, in een oud huis. Vroeger was het van hun ouders, maar zij stierven lang geleden.

De Onaks waren groene, slijmerige monsters van het spel, en toen ze het voor het eerst speelde, vielen ze haar zwaar aan, maar nu was ze in het spel zelf, vielen ze haar niet zo veel meer aan. Ze moesten ook met haar leven. Ze spraken in een taal die ze niet begreep. Ze waren groot en harig, en soms boden ze haar wat te eten aan, maar ze vond het niks. Het was als oud voedsel. De geur was zo vreemd hier, net als een kamer die nooit de dag zag. Het was een donker spel, en ze had problemen met ademhalen.

Eén van de Onaks nam haar op zijn rug. Het was één met vleugels, en ze vlogen naar een donker kasteel hoog in de lucht. Het was omringd door drijvende grotten, en de lucht was donkergroen. De Onak had een vrouw, ze was aan het koken in de keuken aan de achterkant van het kasteel. De Onak toonde haar al de kamers van het kasteel, en de ondergrond. Er waren zoveel schatten hier.

Plotseling zag ze een kind staan in één van de gangen. Ze was hierdoor in een lichte shock, want het kind was geen Onak, maar meer zoals haar. Het kind had een rood kleed om, en stond daar heel treurig met een pop. Het meisje begon tot het kind te spreken, maar het kind begreep het niet. Toen begon de Onak tot het kind te spreken in een vreemde taal. Ze schenen elkaar te begrijpen, en het meisje zag de band tussen hen. De Onak gaf een teken hem te volgen tot de keuken. Het kind liep met hen mee. De avondmaaltijd was klaar, en ze begonnen te eten. Het was zulk vreemd vlees, en het meisje werd heet van binnen. Ze vroeg zich af wat voor soort vlees het was.

De Onak gaf een sijn hem weer te volgen, en deze keer gingen ze diep onder de grond met een lift. Ze hoorde allerlei soorten lawaai wat sterker en sterker werd. Ze hoorde gegil en geschreeuw. Toen de deur van de lift open ging zag ze een bal van vuur in een grot hangen waar wezens aan het werk waren. Aan de muren zag ze wezens zoals haar hangen, maar ze leken bijna op bomen. Dus dit was het vreemde vlees. Ze at het vlees van haar eigen mensen ?

Plotseling greep de Onak haar nek en tilde haar op in de lucht. Zij werd daar ook gehangen, terwijl ze schreeuwde en gilde. Ze verloor haar bewustzijn door de shock. Toen ze wakker werd stond het kind voor haar met de pop. Het meisje beefde vanwege wat ze zag in de ogen van het kind. Die ogen waren volledig rood, bijna vuurspuwend. ‘Je bent voorbestemd om Onaks voort te brengen,’ sprak het kind luid. Ze zullen geboren worden uit boomachtige wezens, maar de bal van vuur weet hoe je daartoe te fokken. Als je weigert zul je het vlees worden wat we eten. Ontsnapping is niet mogelijk.’

Het meisje sprak : ‘Ja, ik zal de Onaks voortbrengen, alles wat je zegt.’

‘Goed,’ zei het kind. ‘Dan moet je veel slijm eten.’

Het meisje schreeuwde weer. Slijm was niet haar favoriete voedsel.

Plotseling werd ze wakker. Het was maar een droom. Haar broer stond voor haar, haar hand vasthoudend. ‘Je was heel ziek,’ sprak hij. ‘De dokters wisten niet of je het zou redden. Ze zeiden dat je veel teveel slijm in je lichaam aanmaakte. Het meisje stond op en rende naar de computer. Haar broer had een spel gespeeld : Wraak van de Onaks. Hij was erg gesteld op

het spel. Het meisje schreeuwde naar hem dat ze een nachtmerrie erover had. Het meisje ging weer slapen, terwijl haar broer zijn hoofd schudde en verder speelde.

Het meisje kreeg weer een droom. Deze keer was ze geheel alleen in de keuken van de Onak met de vrouw van de Onak. Er was geen weg uit de keuken en ze moest veel groene slijm drinken. Ze vroeg : Wat soort slijm is dit ? De vrouw van de Onak liep naar het meisje toe met een mes in haar handen. Ze legde het tegen de keel van het meisje aan en bloed kwam voort, maar ook slijm. ‘Het is de slijm van hen die geen Onaks willen baren.’

‘Nu, wie waren de wezens die om de bal van vuur heen werkten ?’ vroeg het meisje. De vrouw begon te grinneken en sprak : “Wanneer je oud bent, dan hoef je geen Onaks meer te baren, en kun je rondom de bal van vuur werken.’

En het kind wat bij je is ?’ vroeg het meisje.

De vrouw sprak : Harde werkers kunnen weer kinderen worden. Wanneer dit kind oud genoeg is, dan zal het weer Onaks baren.

Dus dit is een eeuwige cirkel van dit alles ?’ vroeg het meisje. Is er enige ontsnapping ?

De vrouw sloeg met haar vuist op de tafel en begon te zwaaien met het mes : Er is geen ontsnapping, tenzij je zelf een Onak wil worden. Zij die weigeren deel te nemen in de cirkel zullen vlees worden zoals je weet.

‘Snij me maar in stukjes dan,’ schreeuwde het meisje, ‘want ik ben liever dood dan te zijn in deze idioterie.’

‘Zoals je wenst,’ sprak de Onak, en plotseling kwamen er alle soorten van slijmerige, kleine Onaks te voorschijn uit de kasten en begonnen haar te snijden en te verslinden.

Toen het meisje wakker werd stond de dokter voor haar bed, glimlachende : ‘Er is geen overproductie van slijm meer in je lichaam, juffrouw. Ik denk dat we je nu van het medicijngebruik kunnen afnemen,’ sprak hij. Het meisje glimlachte. Ze was zo blij dat de vreemde trip tot een einde was gekomen. Ze ging het bed uit om het nieuwe spel van haar broer te spelen. Het was een goed spel, vol met Onaks, maar ze leken niet op de Onaks van haar dromen.

EINDE

Warme Haard

Riek en Hanna zitten voor de kachel. Het is koud buiten. Het sneeuwt. Op de televisie is een programma over konijnen. Riek en Hanna wonen met hun vader aan de rand van Nunspeet. Hun moeder is lang geleden overleden. Hun vader is ernstig ziek. Er moeten nog medicijnen gehaald worden bij de apotheek. Vader zit onder een deken voor de televisie. Wanneer het tijd is gaat Hanna naar de apotheek in het dorp. Dat doet ze iedere week op vaste tijden. Riek kookt en doet de was. Vader kan maar moeilijk praten, en ook zijn gehoor is niet meer zo goed. Het kost hem altijd veel tijd om iets te zeggen, en daarom praat hij niet graag.

Als Hanna bij de apotheek aankomt staat er een man met kerstkleding aan. Het moet de kerstman voorstellen, maar het lijkt niet echt. 'Een muntje voor de armen,' roept hij, met een bakje in zijn hand. 'Sorry,' zegt Hanna, 'we hebben het nogal krap, en onze vader is ernstig ziek.'

'Maar dat is geen probleem,' zegt de verklede man, 'en geeft het bakje met geld aan Hanna. 'Kijk eens, dit is voor jou.' Hanna wordt erg rood en verlegen, en zegt zachtjes : 'Maar dat kan ik toch niet aannemen ?' Maar de man houdt vurig aan, en drukt het bakje in haar handen en vertrekt. Snel kijkt Hanna in het bakje. 'Vijfhonderd gulden,' roept ze, 'daar kunnen we voorlopig wel mee voort.' Haastig stopt ze het bakje in haar tas, en loopt de apotheek binnen. Het is niet zo druk binnenin, en al snel wordt ze geholpen. Als ze weer naar buiten loopt staat er een oude arme man voor haar met zijn hand uitgestreken. 'Ach, mijnheer, het spijt me, wij hebben het zelf ook erg krap, maar goed, ik heb net vijfhonderd gulden van iemand gekregen, dus ik kan u wel de helft daarvan geven.' De oude man is er erg blij mee, en geeft het meisje een boek. Snel stopt ze het in haar tas, en loopt naar huis.

Thuisgekomen legt ze de medicijnen in de kast, en gaat op de bank zitten. 'Vader, ik heb vijfhonderd gulden van iemand gehad,' zegt ze, 'ik heb de helft aan een arme man gegeven.'

'D...d...at is e..rg wijs v..van je, Hanna,' zegt haar vader. 'En ik heb ook een boek van die arme man gekregen,' zegt Hanna. Toen ze het boek uit haar tas pakte, begon ze er direkt in te bladeren. Het was een boek over konijnen, waar vader zoveel van hield. 'Vader, voor u, het gaat allemaal over konijnen,' zegt Hanna. Vroeger had vader een reservaat voor konijnen, waar hij konijnen opving en verzorgde. Maar sinds hij ziek werd kon hij dat niet meer doen. Binnenin het boek, op het kaft, zat weer vijfhonderd gulden vastgeplakt. Hanna was erg verbaasd.

'I...ik z..z..ei het ..je ...t..t..och,' zei vader, 'h...et ...w..was ...w..ijs ..wat je d..d..eed ...'

'Maar vader, hoe kan dat ? Ik dacht dat het een arme man was,' zei Hanna, nog steeds erg verbaasd.

En toen vertelde vader een verhaal over konijnenbedelaars. Dat zijn bedelaars die om armoede bedelen, maar waardoor ze op een bijzondere manier erg rijk zijn. Niemand weet precies hoe dat kan, en niemand weet ook precies wie het zijn, en waar ze vandaan komen, maar het gebeurt.

Toen Riek hoorde wat er gebeurd was, wilde ze ook weleens voor vader medicijnen halen, in de hoop de konijnenbedelaar tegen te komen. Dan kon ze hem direkt die vijfhonderd gulden weer teruggeven. Toen ze de week erna bij de apotheek aankwam, zag ze de arme man staan. 'Hier, mijnheer,' zei ze, en gaf de vijfhonderd gulden. 'Maar kind toch,' zei de arme man, 'dat is toch veel te veel. Ik heb maar weinig nodig.' Maar toen kon Riek het niet meer inhouden : 'Maar mijnheer, die vijfhonderd gulden is van u. We vonden het in het boek wat u aan ons gaf,' zei ze. 'Dat is erg goed van je,' zei de man. 'En als beloning heb ik hier een boek voor je.'

'Maar ik begrijp het niet,' zei Riek, 'stel dat er weer geld in het boek zit, wilt u dat dan niet terug ?' Maar de man was alweer verdwenen ... spoorloos ...

Toen Riek thuiskwam haalde ze direkt het boek uit haar tas. Het bleek een boek te zijn over konijnenbedelaars, en er zat duizend gulden vastgeplakt aan de binnenkant van het boek op het kaft. 'Z..z..ie ...j..j..e ?' zei de vader, 'h...h..et is ..allem..m..aal w..w..aar...'

En sinds het lezen van het boek ging het steeds beter met de vader ... zelfs zo, dat hij weer kon werken in het konijnenreservaat. En sindsdien kwamen de konijnenbedelaars in Nunspeet veel vaker voor.

Op een dag werd er aangebeld. Hanna deed open. Het was een arme man, vragende om onderdak voor de winter. Buiten vroor het. Vader had de zolder speciaal voor zwervenden laten inrichten. Hier kon hij voorlopig wel blijven. De man was erg dankbaar, en op een dag vroeg hij aan de vader en zijn twee dochters of ze met hem mee wilden komen naar het zolder. Hij wilde hen wat laten zien. En toen ze naar boven waren gelopen konden ze hun ogen bijna niet geloven. Er was een extra trap bijgekomen, en ineens was er een hele nieuwe verdieping bij, boven het zolder. En zo werd langzaam maar zeker het huis van die vader met zijn dochters tot een flat van konijnenbedelaars.

De Zandman van

Ovven

Hoofdstuk 1.

Overal lag er zand in het paleis. Klaas Vaak was net langsgekomen. Op zijn dromenwagen betoverde hij het hele land van Ovven. Hij werd ook wel de zandman genoemd.

Maar op een dag gebeurde dat niet meer. Klaas Vaak was ontvoerd. De mensen konden niet meer goed in slaap komen.

Elwin ging op onderzoek uit. Hij ging op reis op een kameel, door de woestijnen, om op zoek te gaan naar een spoor van Klaas Vaak. Die kon natuurlijk niet ver van het zand vandaan zijn, dacht Elwin. Eerst ging Elwin naar het domein van Klaas Vaak diep in de woestijn. Hij kwam aan bij de huizenhoge poort van het woestijngebied, en zag direct dat er een steen miste die gewoonlijks altijd hoog in de boog van de poort was. Er miste een grote rode steen aan de rechterkant waar de poort naar links begint te buigen. Die rode steen was de steen van de zee. Zonder de steen zou de zandman zijn werk niet kunnen doen. Maar die steen was nu weg, en daarmee ook de zandman. Elwin stond voor een groot raadsel.

Elwin voelde alsof er een stuk uit zijn hart was gesneden, alsof hij een stuk van zijn hart miste, en hij was er van overtuigd dat het met elkaar te maken had. Ook Elwin kon sinds de verdwijning van de zandman niet meer goed in slaap komen, zoals zoveel anderen in Ovven.

De zee is één van de door de mens meest gevreeste natuur-elementen, omdat de zee de tijd laat zien, zowel het verleden als de toekomst. De zee is de tijdmachine van de natuur. Deze tijdmachine wordt bestuurd door de grote Zeeman, Aart Golf, ook wel koning Oceanus genoemd, van de zeemeerminnen en zeemeermannen. Hij is zelf ook een zeemeerman. Hij heeft een kaal hoofd en een hele lange baard. Nu de steen van de zee was geroofd had Klaas Vaak zijn macht over de zee verloren. Elwin hoorde de zee bulderen in de verte. Elwin wist dat waarschijnlijk spoedig de zee het gebied van Klaas Vaak totaal zou overnemen. En wat zou er dan gebeuren ? Ovven zou niet kunnen bestaan zonder Klaas Vaak. Elwin wist niet hoeveel tijd hij nog had. Met zijn kameel besloot hij naar de zee achter de woestijn te gaan om op onderzoek uit te gaan. Hij wilde met Aart Golf, oftewel koning Oceanus spreken om te horen wat er aan de hand was.

Toen hij bij de zee was aangekomen wist hij dat hij voorzichtig moest zijn, want er was daar een piratenschip bij de kust. Ineens werd Elwin van achter hard geslagen op zijn hoofd en van zijn kameel afgetrokken. Het was een piraat. Een andere piraat stond erbij, en toen sleurden ze hem beiden naar het piratenschip. Elwin werd pas wakker toen hij in een kooi op het schip was. Hij had in het hooi op de grond gelegen. 'W... wat heeft dat te betekenen,' stamelde Elwin van de doffe pijn die hij nog in zijn hoofd had.

Toen de piraten-kapitein en hoofdman hem kwam bekijken begon die direct te lachen. 'Ha ha, die moet overboord. Die kunnen we echt niet gebruiken, alleen als vissenvoer.'

'Hij zou het dek kunnen schrobben,' sprak een andere piraat.

'Mond houden,' sprak de kapitein. 'Dat is jouw taak, en dat blijf jij doen. Vannacht nog gaat deze jongen overboord. De vissen moeten ook eten.' Wat andere piraten begonnen te lachen.

Elwin beefde en rilde in zijn kooi. Hij voelde zich echt niet lekker, vooral niet met zo'n naar vooruitzicht. Elwin begon om hulp te schreeuwen toen ze allemaal weer weg waren, maar niemand kwam hem te hulp. 'Je bent er goed bij,' sprak een raaf in een kooi aan de andere kant van de ruimte waarin Elwin was opgesloten.

'Kunt u me niet helpen ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Wat kan ik doen ?' snauwde de raaf. 'Gebruik jij je ogen wel ? Ik zit ook in een kooi. Ik ben zo hulpeloos en machteloos als jij.'

'Snauw niet zo, vreemde vogel,' sprak Elwin. 'Ik kon het toch proberen ? Iedereen maakt fouten.'

'Maar jij wel heel erg veel,' sprak de raaf.

'Je kent me niet eens,' snauwde Elwin terug. 'Ik hoop dat ze jou opbakken.'

'Nu ga je te ver, ventje !' kraaide de raaf. 'Als ik niet in deze kooi zat dan zou ik je ogen uitpikken.'

'Rotvogel,' sprak Elwin. De raaf zei niets meer terug en ging een dutje doen. Ook Elwin was erg moe geworden en viel weer in slaap. Midden in de nacht werd hij uit zijn kooi gehaald door piraten.

'Laat die jongen met rust,' kraaide de raaf. 'Hij heeft jullie niets gedaan.'

'Snuit houden, raaf,' bulderde een piraat. 'Met jou rekenen we later af. Door de soep zal je misschien goed smaken.' Terwijl de andere piraten begonnen te bulderen van het lachen. Elwin keek dankbaar naar de raaf, maar wist dat de raaf ook verder niets kon doen. 'Doe met mij wat je wilt,' sprak Elwin dapper, 'maar geef die raaf zijn vrijheid terug. Laat de vogels met rust, anders zullen de grote vissen jullie schip zeker opslokken voor jullie slechte daden.'

De piraten lachten hard. 'Wat een druiloor ben jij, jongen !' gromde een piraat dichtbij zijn oor. Het was een hele dikke piraat met een rode doek om zijn hoofd met witte ballen erop geschilderd. 'Wij moeten ook eten ! Daar zijn vogels voor.'

'Je bent al veel te dik,' sprak Elwin. 'Geef die vogels maar eens te eten, hebzuchtig kreng.'

'Kreng ? Jij durft mij kreng te noemen, maffe druiloor ?' gromde de dikke piraat terwijl hij zijn mes trok en onder Elwin's kin zette. 'Wij zullen nu voor de visjes zorgen, en jou aan hen voeren.' De piraat bond zijn handen op zijn rug en aan zijn voet bond hij een touw waaraan een hele grote steen was vastgemaakt. 'Zo zal je snel zinken,' lachte een andere piraat die maar één tand had. 'Dat is makkelijker voor de vissen. Zou jij het fijn vinden dat als je zou gaan eten en je voedsel zou ineens van je bord afspringen om weg te rennen ?'

Elwin zei niets. 'Ik waarschuw jullie, piraten,' kraaide de raaf. 'Als jullie de jongen ook maar een haar krenken dan zal de afrekening volgen.'

De piraten lachten. 'Wie ga je daarvoor meebrengen, domme vogel ?' riep een piraat hard.

'Dat zul je nog wel zien,' sprak de raaf. 'Jullie worden goed in de gaten gehouden.'

'Negeer die maffe kippebout. Eten hoort niet te spreken !' gromde de dikke piraat die het helemaal gehad had. Hij sleurde Elwin het dek op, terwijl een andere piraat de grote steen droeg. 'Ik heb jullie gewaarschuwd !' riep de raaf hen na. 'Ik zal die vogel zo de strot doorsnijden,' sprak de dikke piraat, en duwde Elwin naar de reling. 'Laat me met rust !' riep Elwin. 'Hier zullen jullie voor boeten.'

'Wees blij dat we nog iets van jouw zinloze leven maken,' gromde de dikke piraat. Hij begon Elwin al over de reling te duwen, die daar al snel aan het touw om zijn voet bungelde. De andere piraat hield nog steeds de steen vast. 'Gooi,' brulde de dikke piraat, en zo werd de zware steen waaraan Elwin vastzat met een touw in de zee geworpen, waardoor Elwin als een pijl meeschoot in het bruisende zeewater. Elwin begon direct snel te zinken. 'Dit is mijn einde,' dacht Elwin, die heel diep adem had genomen. Elwin begon te tellen, maar na een tijdje begon hij zijn bewustzijn te verliezen. 'Vaarwel' was het laatste woord wat Elwin sprak. Toen werd het zwart voor zijn ogen. Een zeemeermin zag hem in de zeediepte glijden en aarzelde geen moment en schoot op hem af. Vliegensvlug maakte ze het touw van zijn voet los, en trok hem met haar mee. Ze bracht hem naar een grot. Ze wist dat hij snel adem nodig had. Ze legde iets op zijn mond. Het was een soort kwal die niet stak. De kwal gaf adem aan Elwin, en begon zich te vormen om het hele hoofd van Elwin, als een soort doorzichtige helm, als een adem masker. Elwin nam diep adem, en kwam weer bij zijn positieven. 'W... waar ben ik ?' stamelde Elwin.

De zeemeermin keek hem aan. 'Je bent hier diep onderwater,' sprak ze. Elwin was verwonderd dat hij gewoon kon ademen. Hij begon te glimlachen. Hij keek de zeemeermin aan. Ze had lang golvend haar en juwelen om haar nek. De juwelen waren prachtig blauw, en ze fonkelden. Ze hadden een zachte kleur. Elwin voelde zich als betoverd.

'Kom,' sprak de zeemeermin, 'ik zal je naar onze koning leiden.'

'Koning Oceanus ?' vroeg Elwin. 'Die moest ik net spreken. Er is namelijk wat verschrikkelijks gebeurd met Klaas Vaak.'

De zeemeermin begon te glimlachen. 'Ook al ? Van mijn vader hebben ze de tijdmachine gestolen. Ze zijn flink bezig.'

'Ja,' sprak Elwin, 'ze hebben de rode zee steen uit de poort van Klaas Vaak gestolen, zijn droommachine en zelfs Klaas Vaak zelf hebben ze ontvoerd.'

De zeemeermin schrok van deze woorden. 'Ontvoerd ? Maar dat is verschrikkelijk. Laten we gauw vader raadplegen.' De zeeemeermin trok hem verder en zwom naar een grotere grot die leidde tot een hele grote hal waar een grote troon stond bezet met schelpen, waarom een reusachtige gestalte zat met een vissenstaart en een lange, grote witte baard. De koning leek een klein kroontje op te hebben bezet met diamanten en andere witte of doorzichtige fonkelende steentjes. Elwin's mond viel bijna open toen hij de zeemeerman zag. Dit moest Aart Golf, oftewel koning Oceanus zijn.

'Kom verder,' sprak een donkere, zware stem die door de hele hal begon te echoën. 'Met wie heb ik het genoegen ?' sprak de koning vriendelijk. Elwin maakte een buiging, en vertelde het verhaal.

'Zo zo,' sprak de koning, 'en jij denkt dat ik weet wie de daders zijn ?'

Elwin knikte. 'U staat bekend als een groot koning met groot inzicht en groot overzicht over Ovven. U blijkt daar ook allemaal apparaten voor te hebben.'

'Het probleem is,' sprak de koning, 'dat mijn tijdmachine gestolen is, het bron-apparaat voor alle andere apparaten. Niet veel werkt er nog nu de tijdmachine weg is.'

'Dat spijt me heel erg, beste koning,' sprak Elwin. 'Ik zal er alles aan doen om uw tijdmachine terug te vinden nu ik toch bezig ben Klaas Vaak op te sporen. Ik weet zeker dat er een verband is tussen deze diefstallen.'

De koning knikte. 'Ik kan je niet helpen nu mijn tijdmachine er niet is. Mijn inzicht reikt niet verder dan mijn troon op het moment.'

'Ik begrijp het,' sprak Elwin.

'Jittefes, kun jij deze jongen weer even naar de zee-oppervlakte brengen ?' sprak de koning tegen zijn dochter, 'en oh, wacht eens even, jongeman. Ik zou je aanraden om in het bos op zoek te gaan naar de Bosman. Arend Gluur heet hij, en hij bewaakt een zekere groei-machine. Misschien dat hij meer weet, en in het ergste geval is hij de dader, maar dat kan ik niet met zekerheid zeggen. In ieder geval : Wees op je hoede, want zijn onderdanen zijn kannibalen.'

'Komt voor elkaar, vader,' sprak de zeemeermin, en na een kort afscheid zwom ze met Elwin naar boven. Aan de zee-oppervlakte aangekomen zagen ze nog steeds het piratenschip in de verte. 'Ik zal je naar de boskust brengen naast de woestijn,' zei de zeemeermin. De zeemeermin zwom met grote vaart met Elwin op haar rug naar de boskust en zette hem daar aan land. 'Bedankt,' sprak Elwin. 'Ik zal kijken of ik hier de Bosman kan vinden.'

'Ik wens je geluk !' riep de zeemeermin die alweer wegzwom. Elwin liep direct het bos in. Hij was namelijk bang dat piraten hem weer op het strand zouden vinden. Angstig keek hij om zich heen, wetende dat er ook gevaren in het bos waren, maar hij moest en zou met de bosman spreken. Na een tijdje lopen zag hij in de verte op een open plek in het bos een groep wilden met botjes door hun neus dansen en jammeren rondom een ketel. Elwin wist dat hij voorzichtig moet zijn, maar ze jammerden zo erg dat Elwin ze wilde proberen te helpen. Misschien waren het wel de onderdanen van Arend Gluur, de bosman.

Dapper liep hij op de jammerende wilden af, maar bleef zijn afstand bewaren. 'Kan ik jullie ergens mee helpen ?' vroeg Elwin, terwijl hij zijn hand opstak. Verbaasd keken de wilden op. 'Daar ! Eindelijk voedsel !' riep één van de wilden. Ze namen hun speren en begonnen op Elwin af te rennen. Ook Elwin zette het op een rennen. 'Hongerige kannibalen dus,' dacht Elwin bij zichzelf. 'Ik kom ook altijd op het verkeerde moment.' Plotseling struikelde Elwin over een boomstronk, en al snel was hij omsingeld door de wilden die hun speren op hem gericht hadden. 'Sta stil, voedsel,' sprak één van de wilden. Hij werd vastgebonden en meegeduwd naar de ketel, waar hij in werd gestopt. 'Toe nou,' sprak Elwin. 'Ik ben geen banaan. Ik ben op zoek naar Arend Gluur de bosman.' De wilden begonnen om hem heen te dansen, terwijl het vuur oplaaide. 'Eindelijk vlees !' riepen ze. Elwin begon het al snel heet te krijgen. 'Heus, jullie vergissen je !' riep Elwin. De wilden begonnen steeds woester te dansen.

Elwin boog zijn hoofd. 'Ik ook allemaal met mijn domme ideeen,' sprak hij tot zichzelf. 'Ik heb een belangrijke boodschap voor Arend Gluur. Ik ben gezonden door koning Oceanus !' riep Elwin hard. De wilden schenen niet te luisteren, en Elwin begon het steeds heter te krijgen. 'Ik stik hier !' piepte Elwin. Elwin begon zijn bewustzijn te verliezen. Wat er toen gebeurde kon hij zich niet meer herinneren, maar hij werd wakker in het zand, terwijl een grote man naar hem staarde. Elwin was nog steeds drijfnat en nog steeds vastgebonden. De man prikte met een stok in hem. 'Nog niet gaar zie ik,' sprak de man. 'Welkom. Ik ben Arend Gluur. Ik redde je leven. Ik hoorde dat je mij wilde spreken voor een belangrijke boodschap. Spreek op, anders gooi ik je weer terug. De man had een bril op en een hoed. Ook had hij een blouche aan met sterretjes erop. Hij leek op een toerist. Toen begon Elwin het verhaal te vertellen.

Arend Gluur begon te jammeren. 'Zij ook al ? Mijn groei-machine is gestolen. Ik kon dingen, mensen en dieren groter of kleiner maken door die machine. Daardoor had ik macht over het bos, maar ik lijk het te verliezen. Nu hebben mijn kannibalen altijd honger. Ze kunnen nog geen druif of appel bemachtigen.'

'Dat spijt me zeer,' sprak Elwin.

Het was even een tijdje stil. Plotseling zei Arend Gluur : 'Ik weet wie het gedaan heeft. Het is Berend Blok, de vuurman. Hij heeft onze machines gestolen omdat hij een geld-machine wilde bouwen, om zo over heel Ovven te heersen.'

'Waar woont hij ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Onder de grond,' zei Arend Gluur. 'Daar houdt hij ook de zee steen verborgen, en Klaas Vaak die hij heeft ontvoerd.'

Elwin wilde daar wel naartoe. Arend Gluur en de kannibalen zouden met hem mee gaan.

Hoofdstuk 2.

Ze zouden eerst de nacht afwachten om wat proberen te rusten, alhoewel niemand goed in slaap kon komen doordat Klaas Vaak was ontvoerd. En in de nacht viel de vuurman al aan. Vlammen kwamen om Elwin te grijpen en de diepte in te sleuren. Elwin werd naar een grote put getrokken waar de vlammen hem joelend introkken.

Diep onder de grond werd Elwin in een kooi gestopt. Dichtbij was de kooi van Klaas Vaak. Klaas Vaak lag op de grond. Hij leek zijn bewustzijn te hebben verloren. Voor de kooi van Elwin danste Berend Blok, de vuurman. 'Geld, geld, ik nam het met groot geweld !' riep hij, terwijl hij als een gek geld begon rond te strooien. 'De geld-machine werkt !' riep hij. 'Ik ben een rijk man !' Uit pompen verderop begon geld te spuiten. 'Ik heb een grote vangst gedaan !' lachte de vuurman. De geld-machine die hij had gebouwd van de gestolen machines was op hol geslagen. Er bleef maar geld uitrollen, en ook de twee olifanten van Berend Blok waren onder de betovering ervan gekomen, en hun slurfen stopten niet met het spuiten van geld. Overal lag geld, en de laag op de grond werd steeds hoger, ook in de kooi van Elwin. De vuurman gierde van het lachen. Ook hij was op hol geslagen. Plotseling kwam de piraten-raaf aanvliegen. Hij vloog recht op de kooi van Elwin af, en pikte het slot open. 'Hoe ben je uit jouw kooi losgekomen ?' vroeg Elwin verrast, terwijl hij uit de kooi rende. 'Toen een piraat

het kooitje opendeed om me te voeren pikte ik in zijn hand en vloog weg,' kraste de raaf. De vuurman was al helemaal onder het geld bedolven. Vlug vloog de raaf naar de kooi van Klaas Vaak en pikte zijn slot ook open. Maar Klaas Vaak was nog steeds bewusteloos, en begon ook langzaam onder het geld te verdwijnen. 'Iemand moet die machine stoppen !' riep Elwin. Plotseling zagen ze koning Oceanus en zijn dochter, Jittefes, komen aanzwemmen door het geld. Elwin wees hen de plaats waar Klaas Vaak onder het geld lag, en beiden begonnen ze hem op te duiken. Spoedig waren er nog veel meer zeemeermannen en zeemeerminnen, een heel leger, en ze begonnen de geldmachine op te duiken.

Elwin zwom in het geld, en keek hoe de geldmachine werd opgedoken. Hij vond het wel een schitterende uitvinding. Het geld begon machtige rivieren te vormen die door de armste delen van Ovven begonnen te stromen. Proestend kwam Berend Blok naar boven zwemmen, want ook hij was kopje onder gegaan. Hij werd direct door een paar zeemeerminnen vastgegrepen. 'Ik bedoelde het niet verkeerd !' riep hij. 'Ik wilde de armsten van Ovven helpen, en dat kon ik alleen maar als ik de droommachine, de tijdmachine en de groeimachine zou hebben om daar de geldmachine van te maken !'

'Maar waarom vroeg je dat niet dan ? En waarom heb je daar zelfs Klaas Vaak voor ontvoerd ?' riep Elwin, die naar hem toe begon te zwemmen. Elwin begreep er niet veel van.

'Omdat niemand me geloofde !' riep Berend Blok. 'Ik moest wat doen tegen de hongersnood in grote delen van Ovven die door de piraten was veroorzaakt ! Klaas Vaak wilde me laten opsluiten !'

'Maar je had koning Oceanus kunnen vragen voordat je zijn tijdmachine stal !' riep Elwin.

'Ik moest snel handelen !' riep Berend Blok. 'Klaas Vaak zat al achter me aan, en ik kon geen risico's meer nemen. Ik moest eerst de geldmachine maken, en dan zouden ze zelf wel zien waar het goed voor was.'

Elwin zuchtte. Hij hoopte maar dat Klaas Vaak in orde was. Hij kon Berend Blok ook wel een beetje begrijpen. Het leek op een daad van zelfverdediging, maar hij wilde eerst de kant van het verhaal van Klaas Vaak horen.

Het leger van koning Oceanus nam iedereen mee naar het rijk van de koning om daar berecht te worden. Ook Arenhd Gluur en zijn kannibalen werden meegenomen. Ze moesten allemaal

voor de troon van Arend Golf verschijnen, de grote Zeeman, oftewel koning Oceanus. Klaas Vaak was inmiddels weer bijgekomen, en ze hadden allemaal een ademkwal over hun hoofd gekregen, zodat ze goed in de zee konden ademen. Ook konden ze zo alles goed horen, en konden ze goed spreken. De kwallen zorgden voor goede communicatie.

Toen Klaas Vaak het verhaal van Berend Blok kreeg te horen knikte hij en bood hij zijn excuses aan. Hij wist niet dat Berend Blok goed werk wilde doen. De kannibalen waren zo geworden door de honger, maar daar zouden de geldrivieren verandering in brengen. De enigen die nog een probleem waren waren de piraten. Daarom vielen de legers van koning Oceanus op een nacht alle piratenschepen binnen, en trokken de piraten de zee in om te worden berecht door koning Oceanus.

Elwin vond dat een goed plan, want de piraten stonden hem naar het leven.

Toen de piraten waren berecht begon eindelijk de rust weer in Ovven terug te keren en konden de mensen weer normaal slapen. En de zandman reed weer op zijn koets om zijn zand te strooien alsof het nooit anders was geweest. Maar nu strooide hij niet alleen zand, maar ook als het nodig was strooide hij geld voor de allerarmsten. En zo werd de zandman van Ovven nog wel geliefder dan ooit tevoren.

En Berend Blok ? Die werd gezien als een grote held die het land van Ovven eens van de hongersnood redde.

Einde

Het Zwanenmeer

Wist je dat Nunspeet ook een zwanenmeer had ? Nou ja, eigenlijk was het gewoon een plantsoen, maar het werd vaak zwanenmeer genoemd. Het was vlakbij het dorp. Er was daar ook nogal een wat ongewone zwaan tussen de andere zwanen, en die zwaan was oranje. De mensen gingen er graag naartoe, maar echt druk was het er eigenlijk nooit. Op een dag was de oranje zwaan aan het wandelen gegaan. Hij liep door de dorpstraat, langs de winkels. Men vond dat zo bijzonder, dat men een gouden beeld van de oranje zwaan heeft laten maken. Het is daarna ook nooit meer gebeurd. Dat gouden beeld heeft een hele lange tijd in de dorpstraat gestaan, maar is helaas op een dag gestolen. Er werd een grote beloning voorbereid voor de vinder, maar jaren later vond de politie het beeld in een oude schuur. De dief, een winkelier, moest voor de rechter verschijnen, en toen heeft het beeld jarenlang op het politie-bureau gestaan. Maar toen werd het beeld weer gestolen, en weer werd er een grote beloning vastgesteld voor de vinder. Het beeld bleek terecht gekomen te zijn in een huis voor invaliden. Een man in een rolstoel zou het gestolen hebben, maar niemand wist hoe hij dat gedaan had. De man hoefde niet voor de rechter verschijnen, omdat men het zo knap vond dat hij het beeld uit het politie-bureau had gestolen. Sindsdien stond het beeld in dat huis voor invaliden, maar later hebben zij het geschonken aan de bibliotheek. Het leek wel alsof de oranje zwaan nog steeds aan de wandel was. De man in de rolstoel ging vaak naar het plantsoen toe, dat in die tijd vaak zwanenmeer werd genoemd. Men zei dat hij kon spreken met de oranje zwaan, en dat de oranje zwaan hem de opdracht had gegeven om dat beeld te stelen. Hoe dan ook, de man ging vaak naar het zwanenmeer toe, en deed er nogal geheimzinnig over. Het was een hele geheimzinnige man, een goede vriend van de politie overigens. Het scheen dat hij vroeger zelfs baas van het politie-bureau was, maar door een ongeluk zat hij nu al tijden in een rolstoel. 'Kareltje,' noemden ze hem.

Na enige jaren was het beeld weer gestolen, uit de bibliotheek. En het beeld had immers zo'n faam, dat de politie door heel Nunspeet huiszoekingen deed. Uiteindelijk vonden ze het beeld in het magazijn van een schoenenwinkel. Maar omdat 'Kareltje' niet gearresteerd was, zo hadden de schoenmakers van Nunspeet ook een goede reden om niet gearresteerd te hoeven worden. En zo werd het in Nunspeet bijna een sport om het gouden beeld van de oranje zwaan te stelen. Er stond namelijk toch geen straf op. De politie kwam niet eens meer in aktie als het beeld weer weggestolen was. En dat kwam eigenlijk allemaal door 'Kareltje', en uiteindelijk door de oranje zwaan zelf. Maar op een dag, lang na de dood van Kareltje, vond de politie dat

ze maar eens met de traditie moesten breken. Kareltje leefde immers niet meer, en het beeld was oorspronkelijk eigendom van Nunspeet zelf. Maar dat hebben ze geweten, want niet lang nadat ze dat besluit hadden genomen kwam de oranje zwaan zelf naar het politie-bureau, en heeft daar een hele tijd boos lopen blazen, en met z'n vleugels lopen wapperen. Uiteindelijk hebben ze toen het beeld in het plantsoen laten zetten, in het zwanenmeer, en er een prachtige fontein van laten maken. Nu kon de zwaan zelf het beeld bewaken. De zwaan bleek een erg goede bewaker te zijn. En na een tijdje kwam ook de burgemeester eens kijken naar de nieuwe verblijfplaats van het beeld. En dat bracht hem op een idee. Hij had namelijk nog wat oude beelden goed opgeborgen in het gemeentehuis, maar was altijd erg bang dat ze gestolen zouden worden. Hier bij de oranje zwaan zouden ze zeker veilig zijn. En zo gebeurde het. De oranje zwaan kreeg de hoede over een heleboel beelden van de burgemeester, in het plantsoen. En ook de wethouders hadden thuis nog wel wat dingen staan die ze liever aan de bewaking van de oranje zwaan overlieten. En zo kwam het zwanenmeer vol te staan met oude beelden. Het werd een prachtig plantsoen, en in vele van die beelden werden prachtige fonteintjes ingebouwd.

Maar op een dag had de oranje zwaan weer eens erge zin om te gaan wandelen. En ditmaal ging hij naar het gemeentehuis, tot vlakbij het raam van de burgemeester. De burgemeester schrok zich een hoedje. 'Jij hoort in het plantsoen te zijn,' riep de burgemeester luid. 'Onze kostbare beelden staan daar uitgestald.' Maar het was al te laat. Toen de burgemeester en zijn wethouders bij het plantsoen kwamen was alles leeggehaald. Geen één beeld was achtergebleven. De burgemeester zakte in elkaar. Wat een ramp. En daar kwam de oranje zwaan aanlopen. Ja, ze konden natuurlijk niet verwachten dat een zwaan altijd maar op dezelfde plaats bleef. Ze besloten de oranje zwaan naar een ander plantsoen te brengen. Maar dit plantsoen was niet zo groot, en al snel was de zwaan weer terug. 'Het is allemaal de schuld van Kareltje,' zei de burgemeester boos. 'Die heeft lang geleden, toen hij nog baas van de politie was die zwaan naar Nunspeet gehaald. Hij had het dier eens gered uit een brandend huis, en ze hebben toen ook een meisje gered. Dat meisje woont nu ook in Nunspeet, ze zal inmiddels al wel oud zijn, of misschien niet eens meer leven.'

De burgemeester en de wethouders besloten eens bij haar op bezoek te gaan. Misschien dat zij meer wist. En inderdaad, het meisje was inmiddels een dame. Ze bleek de zus van Kareltje te zijn. Het verhaal bleek iets anders in elkaar te zitten. Toen zij en Kareltje nog in Steenwijk woonden had de oranje zwaan hen uit een brandend huis gered. Toen Kareltje werk in Nunspeet kreeg, liet hij haar en de oranje zwaan overkomen. Ze zijn altijd onafscheidelijk gebleven. Maar de dame kon verder niets vertellen over wat er met de beelden was gebeurd. Toen de burgemeester en de wethouder weer in het plantsoen kwamen zagen ze de oranje zwaan dood in het water drijven. Ze stonden voor een raadsel. Maar daar kwam ineens nog een oranje zwaan aanlopen. De burgemeester en de wethouders waren geschokt. Er waren dus twee oranje zwanen, en misschien was er altijd één die op wacht stond, maar hebben de dieven hem neergeschoten. Wat verschrikkelijk. Ineens ging het de burgemeester helemaal niet meer om de beelden, maar om de laatste oranje zwaan. Er was gelukkig nog een vijvertje in de binnenplaats van het gemeentehuis. Daar zou de zwaan wel veilig zijn. De burgemeester liet extra bewaking voor de oranje zwaan inzetten.

Maar al gauw gingen er geruchten dat er nog steeds oranje zwanen gesignaleerd werden in het plantsoen. Misschien had de oranje zwaan wel eieren gelegd. Maar door een telefoontje met de burgemeester van Steenwijk, waar de oranje zwaan oorspronkelijk vandaan kwam, kwam de burgemeester van Nunspeet erachter dat het in Steenwijk wemelde van de oranje zwanen. 'Zijn er bij jullie dan toevallig ook beelden gestolen ?' vroeg de burgemeester van Nunspeet.

'Gestolen ?' vroeg de burgemeester van Steenwijk ... 'Wij krijgen er alleen maar beelden bij ... daar komen die oranje zwanen altijd mee aanzetten ...'

Maar het ging de burgemeester niet meer om de beelden. Door alles wat er gebeurd was, was hij alleen nog maar bezorgd om de oranje zwanen ... En ook de burgemeester van Steenwijk kreeg te horen wat er met een oranje zwaan in Nunspeet was gebeurd. 'Tja,' zei de burgemeester van Steenwijk ...'dat is verschrikkelijk ... zeer verschrikkelijk ... En ik denk dat ik er maar één verklaring voor heb. Er woont hier in Steenwijk een stroper, een zwanenjager, die ze afschiet voor hun veren ...'

'Maar de zwaan lag dood in de vijver van het plantsoen, en had al z'n veren nog ...,' zei de burgemeester van Nunspeet ... 'Dan moet hij ergens van geschrokken zijn,' zei de burgemeester van Steenwijk. 'Misschien is hij aangevallen door een andere oranje zwaan, en maakte hij zich snel uit de voeten.'

De burgemeester van Steenwijk kon echter niet vertellen waar de stroper woonde. Hij werd al tijden gezocht door de politie, maar zonder resultaat. Het scheen dat hij telkens onderdook op allerlei adressen. En het scheen dat als zijn medewerkers of pleeggezinnen moeilijk gingen doen, of hem wilden verraden, dan stak hij hun huis in de fik ... Het was dus ook nog een echte pyromaan. Het scheen dat de ouders van Kareltje hem vroeger ook onderdak gaven, maar toen ze erachter kwamen waar hij mee bezig was, hebben ze hem uit huis gezet met alle gevolgen van dien ... 'Kareltje ?' vroeg de burgemeester van Nunspeet verbaasd ... 'Dus die brand waar de oranje zwaan hem en z'n zus uit redde was gesticht door de zwanenstroper ?' ...

'Ja,' zei de burgemeester van Steenwijk ...'ze noemden hem ook wel Pietje Pek, of Piet Onweer ... Hij is een gevreesd man in Steenwijk ...'

'Dan moet hij al wel flink oud wezen, als hij zelfs Kareltjes ouders nog heeft meegemaakt ...' zei de burgemeester van Nunspeet ... De burgemeester van Nunspeet kreeg meer en meer medelijden met de oranje zwanen. 'Ja, ik heb al extra bewaking voor onze oranje zwaan laten opstellen, maar als ik het zo hoor zijn er veel meer oranje zwanen die mijn hulp kunnen gebruiken.' En zo gebeurde het. De burgemeester liet een groot zwanenreservaat bouwen, ter bescherming van de oranje zwanen. En vanuit Steenwijk kwamen er toen een heleboel oranje zwanen over. Het was een reservaat in het bos, en de burgemeester liet er veel bewakers, en agenten opstellen, ja, zelfs soldaten. 'Zo zou Kareltje het gewild hebben,' zei de burgemeester. En ook de burgemeester van Steenwijk kwam zo nu en dan naar Nunspeet om het reservaat te bezoeken.

Maar op een dag kregen ze een brief van Pietje Pek, met daarop de woorden : 'Sluit nu je zwanenreservaat, anders wilde je dat je die keuze eerder had gemaakt.' De burgemeester was radeloos. En ook de burgemeester van Steenwijk zag de ernst ervan in, en zond soldaten, agenten en bewakers. Pietje Pek was een aanhouder, en kon gekke dingen doen, dus ze moesten op hun hoede zijn. Op een dag klopte er een oude man aan de poort van het reservaat. Soldaten vroegen hem wie hij was. 'Ik ben degene die jullie Piet Onweer noemen,' zei hij nors. Hij had maar één oog, met ruige haren en een ruige baard. Hij spoot iets in de ogen van de soldaten, en liep door, terwijl de soldaten op de grond vielen. 'Waar is Kareltje ?' schreeuwde hij. Daar kwam een agent aanrennen. 'Kareltje leeft niet meer, mijnheer, wat komt u hier doen ?'

'Ach ziet u,' zei de oude man, 'Kareltje zat bij mij in de klas vroeger, en met ganzenborden mocht hij altijd de oranje zwaan als pion hebben, en ik moest altijd een andere kleur uitkiezen ...' De agent begon te lachen, maar ook in zijn ogen spoot de oude man het spul, en de agent viel direkt neer. In de verte kwamen wat bewakers aanrennen, maar de oude man zette het op een lopen. 'Jullie willen altijd je zin hebben,' schreeuwde de oude man vals. Maar daar kwam de burgemeester al ... en hield de oude man tegen. 'Uit de weg,' schreeuwde de oude man, en gaf de burgemeester een duw ... 'Zeg, jou ken ik,' schreeuwde de burgemeester, 'jij bent een tijdje winkelier in Nunspeet geweest, en jij hebt het beeld van de oranje zwaan eens gestolen ...'

'Hoe kom je daarbij ?' schreeuwde de oude man ... 'dat was mijn broer ...'

'Waarom hebben jullie het toch altijd op oranje zwanen gemunt ?' riep de burgemeester ... Maar de oude man was al weg. De burgemeester was radeloos, maar gelukkig had de oude man niet veel kunnen doen ... Toen de agent weer was bijgekomen vertelde hij de burgemeester wat de oude man hem had gezegd over het ganzenbord ... 'Ik wist niet dat zwanen ook meespelen op het ganzenbord,' zei de burgemeester, 'maar misschien is het dus allemaal een jeugdtrauma van die zwanenstroper.' Maar Nunspeet was nog niet van de oude man af ... In het dorp aangekomen ging hij de eerste de beste bank binnen en sloeg met zijn vuist op de balie. 'Stel geldwolven,' schreeuwde hij, en trok een pistool en schoot een paar gaten in het glas, en toen sloeg hij met zijn vuist in een zwarte geravelde handschoen er doorheen, en greep het meisje wat daar zat bij de keel. Het meisje drukte direkt op het alarm, en al gauw was de oude man omsingeld door de politie. Maar weer spoot hij heel snel spul in hun ogen en ze vielen op de grond. Ook de baas van de bank kwam met een pistool aanlopen, maar de oude man kon ver en snel het spul in zijn ogen schieten. 'Geef me het geld,' schreeuwde de man tegen het meisje. 'Ja, mijnheer,' zei ze zenuwachtig, terwijl ze de kluisjes begon te openen.'

'Vlug,' schreeuwde de oude man, en snel stopte hij dikke stapels bankbiljetten in de binnenzakken van zijn jas en onder zijn trui. 'Denk maar niet dat je van me af bent,' schreeuwde hij tegen het meisje, en nam haar mee naar buiten. 'Vlug, stap in deze auto,' sprak hij nors ... Het was de auto van zijn broer, die aan het stuur zat. En toen reden ze weg. Niemand heeft ze daarna ooit nog gezien. De eerste tijden na dit voorval was er veel rumoer, maar later begon alles weer als vanouds te worden. De burgemeester van Nunspeet wilde weinig aandacht aan de zaak besteden. Op de één of andere manier had het verhaal over het ganzenbord hem verlamd. Het was als in de zaak van Kareltje : De burgemeester had teveel medelijden om verdere stappen te nemen. Hij hoopte dat de oude man nu had wat hij miste, en dat hij zo enigszins zijn jeugdtrauma kon verwerken. Vanaf toen begon de burgemeester zich meer en meer te verdiepen in het waarom van de daden van sommige personen. Dat bleek dus niet zo eenvoudig te zitten. Vaak werden ze gedreven door allerlei elementen waar de burgemeester niets van afwist. Was het leven dan eigenlijk niets anders dan een ganzenbord ? En bepaalde het aantal ogen op de dobbelstenen waar we in terecht kwamen, of waren het de pionnen zelf die dat in de hand hadden ? En wat zou er gebeurd zijn als de oude man vroeger eens één keer mocht spelen met de oranje zwaan als pion ? Was dit dan allemaal niet gebeurd ? Of waren er dan nog verschrikkelijkere dingen gebeurd ? De burgemeester wist het niet, maar had in ieder geval een aantal dingen waar hij zeer lang over na zou denken ...

De oranje zwanen kwamen nog vaak vanuit Steenwijk naar de Nunspeetse plantsoenen en naar het bosreservaat, maar het raakte steeds meer en meer op de achtergrond. Nunspeet begon er gewend aan te raken, en de burgemeester hield zich meer met andere dingen. De

zwanen konden nu immers in vrede leven. Wel wilde de burgemeester nog één beeld plaatsen, het liefst in het plantsoen, of daar dichtbij. En dat was een beeld van Kareltje, want die had wel een hele grote rol gespeeld in dit alles. Maar toen ook dat beeld gestolen werd, had de burgemeester het helemaal gehad. Gelukkig was de dader snel gevonden. Het bleek een oude buurjongen van Kareltje te zijn. De politie begreep het wel. De jongen miste Kareltje veel te veel. Ja, Kareltje had veel betekent voor velen in Oud Nunspeet. De politie besloot om meerdere beelden van Kareltje te laten maken. Eéntje voor de jongen, ééntje voor het invalidehuis waar Kareltje zo lang had gewoond, en natuurlijk eentje voor op het politie-bureau, omdat Kareltje daar zo lang als baas had gewerkt. En ook de burgemeester wilde er één voor op het gemeentehuis, en zelfs de burgemeester van Steenwijk wilde er één voor in Steenwijk op het gemeentehuis. De burgemeester van Nunspeet besloot om iedereen het recht te geven zo'n beeld te hebben, dit om diefstal te voorkomen. Iedereen die zo'n beeld wilde hebben moest zich melden op het gemeentehuis. En tot de burgemeester's grote verbazing kwam ook de oude man zich melden, samen met zijn broer. En zo werd Kareltje in Nunspeet tot een levende legende.

Elwin

Hoofdstuk 1.

Op een mooie dag zit Elwin in de tuin. Elwin woont niet zomaar in een wereld. Elwin woont in een echte fantasie-wereld waar van alles kan gebeuren. Elwin heeft een heleboel vriendjes .... fantasie-beesten. Met die fantasie-beesten maakt hij vaak hele verre reizen. Ze staan allemaal bij zijn vader in de stal. Eentje heet er Groepsoe, eentje met drie grote bulten op zijn snuit en een bril op. Groepsoe kan heel hoog vliegen, als een soort olifant of draak met vleugels. En vaak maakt Elwin reisjes op z'n rug. Voorzichtig loopt Elwin naar het hok van Groepsoe. Het is een groot hok. Elwin doet voorzichtig, omdat Groepsoe misschien nog slaapt, en Elwin wil hem niet wakker maken. Maar gelukkig, Groepsoe is wakker.

'Dag Groepsoe,' zegt Elwin, 'zullen we weer eens een reisje maken ?'

Nou, daar had Groepsoe wel zin aan. Want telkens in een hok zitten dat verveelde Groepsoe ook een beetje. Daar komt vader aan. 'Zo, waar gaan jullie naartoe,' vraagt vader. 'Ja, goede vraag,' zegt Elwin, 'dat weet ik eigenlijk niet. We gaan gewoon een reisje maken, en we zien wel waar we terecht komen.'

Elwin springt op de rug van Groepsoe en daar gaan ze. Het is mooi weer buiten, en de lucht is bijna rood. Het zonnetje schijnt. 'Hoera,' roept Elwin, 'waar zullen we naartoe gaan, Groepsoe ?'

'Wat dacht je van een eiland ?' zegt Groepsoe, 'dan moeten we wel eerst een tijdje over zee vliegen.'

Na een hele lange tijd vliegen komen ze op een eiland aan. Alles is hier wit, zelfs de bomen en de struiken. Elwin heeft wel zin om te gaan zwemmen, en na een tijdje is hij samen met Groepsoe in de golven. Op de bodem van de zee vinden ze een steen, en als Elwin hem optilt en boven water brengt begint de steen geluid te maken. 'Pruut, pruut,' zegt de steen.

'Oh, het is een pratende steen,' zegt Elwin tegen Groepsoe. 'Zou hij nog wat te vertellen hebben ?'

'Vraag het me maar,' zegt de steen. Elwin begint te lachen, en brengt de steen naar het strand. Op het strand spuit de steen wat water uit. 'Ik ben Joefie Kof,' zegt de steen.

'Ik ben Elwin,' zegt Elwin, 'en dit is mijn vriend Groepsoe,' terwijl hij naar Groepsoe wees. 'Wij zijn op reis.'

'Aha,' zegt de steen, 'en waar wonen jullie dan ?'

'Oh, in Kabotikka,' zegt Elwin weer. En dan begint de steen ineens verhalen te vertellen. Het is een echte verhalen-steen. Elwin vindt dit zo spannend, en vraagt of hij de steen mee mag nemen. De steen vindt het goed, en ook Groepsoe. Thuisgekomen laat Elwin de steen aan zijn vader en moeder zien. Daarna brengt hij de steen naar zijn kamertje.

Elke nacht voor het slapen gaan vertelt de steen een verhaaltje aan Elwin.

Daar is Wollegras, het grote harige beest dat altijd naast Elwin slaapt. Elwin kruipt dicht tegen hem aan. Wollegras laat Elwin altijd zo mooi dromen. Het is Elwin's droomvriendje. Samen vallen ze in slaap. Het raam vliegt open, en Elwin stijgt op uit zijn bed. Hij is gekleed als een prins met een echt zwaard. Ook Wollegras stijgt op. De droom is al begonnen.

De prins springt op de rug van Wollegras, en samen vertrekken ze. Waar gaan ze naartoe ? De prins weet wel waar naartoe. 'Naar het kasteel !' roept hij. Wollegras weet wel waar dat is. Daar zijn ze al eens eerder geweest. Het is niet de eerste keer dat Elwin een droomprins is. In het kasteel zijn veel bedienden. Er zijn ook soldaten, maar die heeft de prins niet nodig nu. Hij stapt op zijn troon, en zegt tegen zijn bedienden : 'Breng de dromensteen en het dromensap.' Direkt rennen de bedienden weg, en al snel komen ze met de steen en het sap.

De prins legt zijn hand op de steen terwijl het sap begint te stromen. Het sap is erg glad, en de prins begint er over te glijden. Wollegras komt hem achterna. De prins glijdt helemaal naar buiten, en glijdt richting een enorme brug. Wollegras drinkt van het sap en wordt alsmaar groter. De prins lacht. Nu glijden ze naast elkaar. Wollegras begint in een kasteel te veranderen. Het is een heel zacht kasteel, met zachte muren. Na een tijdje gaat de prins naar binnen. Het lijkt binnen wel een doofhof. Maar het is niet de eerste keer dat Wollegras een kasteel is. De prins weet de weg wel een beetje.

Daar komt Groepsoe ook al aanrennen. Groepsoe neemt ook van het dromensap, en veranderd in een open haard. Dan ten slotte drinkt de prins zelf van het sap. Een deurtje gaat open, en een prachtige prinses komt binnen. De prinses gaat zitten, terwijl de prins in een beest is veranderd. 'Dag beest,' zegt de prinses, 'hoe gaat het met je ?' Het beest knikt, maar zegt niks. Hij gromt alleen een beetje. Dan komen één voor één de soldaten binnen. 'Weet je,' zegt het beest, 'het gaat niet goed in dromenland. En het is goed dat we allemaal bij elkaar zijn gekomen. Wat zullen we eraan doen. Heeft iemand een idee ?'

Een soldaatje stapt naar voren. 'Dag prins, eh ... prins beest, ik ben Jorit. Mag ik iets zeggen ?' Het beest knikt. 'Gaat u gang,' zegt het beest. Even is het stil, en dan begint het soldaatje te stotteren : 'Ik ... eh ... ik weet niet zo goed hoe i ... ik het moe ... moe ... moet zeggen, maar het komt allemaal door een dromen-bacterie, dus moet er een dokter komen.' Alle andere soldaatjes knikken. Dan loopt het prinsesje naar voren, neemt een slok van het dromensap, en verandert in een dokter. 'Waar is die bacterie ?' zegt de dokter met een donkere stem. Eén van de soldaten stapt naar voren en opent een soort kistje. In het kistje fonkelt een soort glinsterend balletje. De prinses kijkt erin, en daarna ook het beest. Snel slurpt het balletje wat dromensap naar zich toe en begint te drinken. Het balletje groeit en groeit, en na een tijdje is het een groot glibberig en slijmerig monster. 'Waarom breng je dromenland zo in de problemen ?' vraagt de prinses.

'Ach dokter,' zegt het groene monster, 'ik heb gewoon niks te doen, en ik wilde graag naar het kasteel, maar mocht er niet in. Ik dacht : als ik nu ga herrie-schoppen, dan laten ze me misschien wel binnen.'

Het beest begon te glimlachen. Het beest nam nog een slokje en veranderde weer in de prins. 'Zullen we dan gaan voetballen ?' vroeg de prins aan het monster. 'Of zullen we wat spelletjes gaan doen ? Er zijn nog ergens een heleboel spelletjes, ergens in een kast. Als we nu gewoon meer spelletjes gaan doen in dromenland, dan hoeft niemand zich meer te vervelen, en hoeft niemand meer herrie te schoppen.'

'Ja, maar,' zei het monster, 'ik wilde ook gewoon het kasteel in, terwijl ik niet naar binnen mocht.'

'Goed,' zei de prins, 'dan drinkt Wollegras gewoon nog veel meer dromensap, totdat het kasteel zo groot is dat iedereen in dromenland er kan wonen.'

En zo gebeurde het. Het kasteel groeide uit tot een grote stad, maar het was nog steeds een doolhof. En natuurlijk werden er veel spelletjes gedaan. De prins verdeelde de inwoners in vier groepen. Het waren vier spelgroepen met een bepaalde kleur. De groenen kwamen onder leiding van het groene monster, de witten kwamen onder leiding van Wollegras, het kasteel zelf. De gelen kwamen onder leiding van Groepsoe, en de roden kwamen onder leiding van de prins en de prinses. Er waren vele spelletjes die ze konden doen. En zo keerde de rust weer terug in dromenland. Aan het einde van de dag in dromenland waren ze allemaal zo moe geworden dat ze gingen slapen, terwijl de prins met Wollegras vertrok. Even later werd Elwin wakker in zijn bed, terwijl Wollegras nog steeds naast hem sliep.

'Hallo, wakker worden,' fluistert Elwin heel voorzichtig. En dan wordt Wollegras wakker.

Hoofdstuk 2.

Vandaag gaat Elwin met Groepsoe naar ome Karam, die heel hoog in de lucht woont, ergens in een kasteel in de wolken. Ome Karam heeft een heleboel sprekende kachels. Elwin praat graag met de sprekende kachels, omdat ze nogal vaak goede raad geven, maar Elwin praat ook graag met ome Karam. De thee staat al klaar als ze aankomen. Ome Karam is erg vriendelijk, zoals altijd eigenlijk. Na een tijdje komt Wollegras binnenrennen. Ome Karam is blij hem te zien. En als ome Karam druk in gesprek is met Wollegras en Groepsoe gaat Elwin naar de sprekende kachels toe. Ze geven Elwin weer eens goede raad. 'Blijf hier maar eens een tijdje logeren,' zegt eentje. Ook de anderen vinden dat een goed idee. Dan kunnen ze wat bijpraten. Gelukkig vindt ome Karam het ook een goed idee, en Groepsoe en Wollegras mogen ook blijven.

Achter het kasteel van ome Karam was een weide genaamd de Wolleweide. Alles was hier heel zacht, zodat wanneer je viel je nooit pijn had. Je kreeg alleen dan een klein electrisch stroompje. Hier kon je paardrijden en een heleboel andere dingen doen. Elwin speelde hier graag. Aan het eind van de weide stond een veld vol van sprekende lotus-bloemen die de mooiste verhalen vertelden. Je kon ook in die lotus-bloemen slapen, en Elwin klom er vaak naar binnen.

De lotus-bloemen waren blij dat Elwin weer eens gekomen. Altijd als Elwin over de lotus-bloemen heen huppelde, dan kwam hij uiteindelijk bij een trap van lotus-bloemen waarover hij naar de Grippel-heuvel kon gaan. Op die heuvel daar woonden een heleboel koks, die hele vreemde gerechten maakte. Op de Grippel-heuvel moest Elwin altijd eerst aanbellen, en dan schoof iemand een klein raampje in de deur open, en dan moest Elwin eerst een liedje zingen voordat hij naar binnen mocht. Binnen liepen overal koks met hele lange menu-lijsten van wat ze allemaal zouden eten. En alles moest altijd pico bello in orde zijn, anders werd de koning van de Grippelheuvel boos. De koning zat altijd op een hele hoge troon, en als een kok eens een keer iets liet vallen of iets verkeerds had gekookt dat niet lekker was, dan sprong de koning naar beneden en sloeg zo'n kok dan met een pollepel, heel erg hard.

Maar naar Elwin was de koning altijd erg aardig. De koning was blij dat Elwin weer eens was gekomen. Met een ballonnetje sprong de koning van zijn troon af, en Elwin mocht zelf uitkiezen wat hij wilde eten. Natuurlijk waren dat allemaal erg vreemde gerechten.

Na een tijdje kwamen er een heleboel koks aan marcheren. Ze hadden een sprekende banaan tussen de bananen gevonden. Dat kon natuurlijk niet ... Daar wilden ze niet mee koken. Toen zei de koning dat de sprekende banaan ook wel een kok mocht worden. Dat wilde de banaan wel. Dat was beter dan opgegeten te worden, of weggestuurd worden. Iedereen wilde altijd graag op de Grippelheuvel wonen. Alleen de koks wilden soms weleens met vakantie, vooral als de koning niet zo'n goed humeur had. Maar vandaag was de koning heel vrolijk. Het was vandaag feest, omdat Elwin was gekomen. Elwin kreeg een mooie kamer waar hij mocht logeren, en hij mocht zelfs meehelpen met de koks als hij dat wilde. Sommige ketels waren zo groot dat Elwin erin kon zwemmen.

Middenin de nacht toen iedereen sliep, ging Elwin naar de keuken naar zo'n grote ketel, om daarin te zwemmen. Er zwommen daar ook vissen, en er waren zelfs dieren in bootjes. Ja, dat kon allemaal als de koks sliepen. Na een tijdje kwam de koning ook, en ze maakten dolle pret.

ANTON, JAAP EN SUSANNE

ZWEMMEN IN DEURSEN

Hoofdstuk 1. Het Grote Avontuur in het Zwembad

Hoofdstuk 2. Het Vreemde Mannetje

Hoofdstuk 3. De Middernachts-Wolf

Hoofdstuk 4. Het Contract

Hoofdstuk 1. Het Grote Avontuur in het Zwembad

Anton reed met Jaap en Susanne door Deursen, op zoek naar een terrasje. Toen ze er een hadden gevonden, parkeerde hij de auto, en zaten al snel aan een tafeltje. Een lange, slanke ober kwam hen bedienen. Ze bestelden ijs. Anton keek omhoog. Ze zaten onder een gezellig dakje met strepen. Al gauw kwam het ijs op een dienblad, met rietjes erin. Alhoewel ze onder een dakje zaten, begon het al snel vochtig te worden. Het begon wat te regenen. Ze namen het ijs en gingen naar binnen. Wat hing er hier een rooklucht. Ze besloten dichtbij de ingang te zitten. Dit was niet normaal. Ze kregen het er benauwd van. Anton maakte een opmerking erover naar de ober. 'Ja, mijnheer, er wordt hier veel gerookt. Daarvoor hebben we het terras voor de niet-rokers.'

'Maar wat als het regent ?' vroeg Anton. 'U kunt ons toch niet zomaar buiten laten zitten ?'

'Ik kan het niet helpen, mijnheer. Dit is een rook-café. U kunt ook een café uitkiezen waar niet gerookt mag worden,' sprak de ober.

'Ik kan wel een beetje tegen rook, maar dit is niet normaal,' zei Anton. De ober trok zijn schouders op.

Even later waren ze weer in de auto. Jaap zat een liedje te neurien. 'Wat een raar café was dat, zeg,' zei Anton. Susanne had haar walkman op en hoorde niets, en Jaap was diep in gedachten weggezonken. Ze waren op weg naar het zwembad van Deursen. Daar aangekomen kochten ze drie kaartjes en gingen zich snel omkleden. In het zwembad lag er een soort reuzen-olifant van plastic in het water, waar op geklommen kon worden. Vanaf de kant keken Anton, Jaap en Susanne ernaar. 'Wat een ding,' zei Anton. 'Ik ga er niet op.' Toen liepen ze naar een ander bad, waar het wat rustiger was. Het water was warm. Het was er niet te diep. Er was ook nog een buitenzwembad, wat helemaal doorliep tot het bos, en wat overging in een bosrivier die tot een bosmeer leidde. Veel mensen begonnen aan een zwemtocht door het bos, vanuit het zwembad.

Ook Anton, Jaap en Susanne gingen daar even later naartoe. Er was een prachtig uitzicht, en het was niet te koud. Het water had een warme gloed, en al snel zwommen ze naar de rivier. De mensen waren dol-enthousiast. Na lang zwemmen kwamen ze aan in het bosmeer. Er waren hier prachtige oevers waar je kon zonnebaden. Anton keek om zich heen toen hij het bosmeer begon in te zwemmen. Wat waren de mensen hier luidruchtig. Ze keken allemaal omhoog en schreeuwden. Hij kon niet verstaan wat ze schreeuwden. Een man had zijn vinger naar voren gewezen. Toen zag Anton het ook. Grote rookwolken waren in de verte. 'Dat lijkt

wel op een bosbrand !' riep Anton. 'Laten we omkeren !' Hij keek om zich heen waar Jaap en Susanne waren, maar hij zag ze niet. Er kwam steeds meer rook. Anton begon het benauwd te krijgen, en probeerde terug te zwemmen, maar hij wist niet meer welke kant hij opmoest. Toen zag hij niets meer.

'Help, help !' riep Anton. 'Jaap en Susanne, waar zijn jullie !'

Overal hoorde hij gegil en gekrijs. 'Er is een vliegtuig neergestort !' hoorde hij iemand roepen. Dat had dan natuurlijk die bosbrand veroorzaakt. 'Kom, kom !' hoorde hij iemand roepen. Hij zwom op het geluid af. 'Allemaal komen !' werd er geroepen. Na een tijdje was hij weer in de rivier, en toen kon hij steeds beter zien. Maar alles leek wel wit. Wat was er met zijn ogen gebeurd ? Het was alsof er een schuim op zijn ogen was, als een waas. 'Jaap, waar ben je ?' riep Anton. Opeens voelde hij handen op zijn schouders. 'Ik ben hier. Gaat het ?' vroeg Jaap.

'Waar is Susanne ?' vroeg Anton.

'Bij mij, achter me,' zei Jaap. 'Laten we terugzwemmen.'

Toen ze bij het zwembad aankwamen waren er allemaal mensen van de EHBO. Sommige zwemmers hadden last van benauwdheid. Sommigen moesten op de kant getrokken worden. Ze hadden geen kracht meer. Anton keek om zich heen of hij nog mensen kon helpen. Hij kon hier weer alles zien. Ook Jaap en Susanne hielpen mee. Ze ontfermden zich over wat huilende kinderen.

De baas van het zwembad was er ook. 'Ik vind dit verschrikkelijk,' zei hij. Hij nodigde iedereen uit om naar een zaaltje binnen het zwembad te komen. Daar zou hij de mensen toespreken. Anton, Jaap en Susanne liepen met hem mee naar het zaaltje. Er waren daar inmiddels veel mensen. De zaal was bijna vol. De baas van het zwembad liep naar de microfoon. 'Zodadelijk krijgt u uw geld terug. Ik vind dit verschrikkelijk,' sprak hij. 'Gelukkig doet de politie en de brandweer er alles aan om de schade minimaal te houden. Het is een ramp, beste mensen, een vliegtuig ramp, en tegelijkertijd een zwembad ramp. Maar wij laten het er niet bij zitten. Er zullen zo wat bussen komen, en u bent allen uitgenodigd om mee te reizen tot de raket-basis om de nieuwste raket te bezichtigen. Ik hoop dat dit de schrik wat zal verzachten.' Er werd geklapt in de zaal. Iedereen kon nu zich aankleden, om zo naar de bussen buiten het zwembad te gaan. Ook Anton, Jaap en Susanne gingen naar de kleedhokjes, en even later zaten ze alledrie in de bus. Ze waren wel benieuwd naar de raket. Ze hadden er al veel over gehoord.

De bus ging door vele weilanden, en kwam toen in een bos aan. Na lang reizen door het bos kwamen ze aan in een zandgebied met veel heides. In de verte was ergens de raket-basis. De

bus-chauffeur sprak hen toe. 'Zodadelijk zullen we de raket-basis binnenrijden, en dan zult u aan de rechterkant de basis met de nieuwe raket zien.' Anton keek uit het raam. Toen ze bij de basis waren aangekomen zagen ze de professor die de raket had uitgevonden. Hij liep daar rond in zijn lange witte jas. Hij heette iedereen welkom. Hij zou een rondleiding geven in de raket.

Iedereen moest hem volgen tot de ingang van de raket. De professor had een pijp in zijn mond en een brede glimlach. Je kon zien dat hij erg trots op zijn werk was. Anton, Jaap, Susanne en de andere mensen keken hun ogen uit. Er was zelfs een kleine bioscoop in de raket, in een klein zaaltje. Er werd een film gedraaid in de kleine bioscoop. Er verscheen een hand op het witte doek, en er waren wat aftitelingen. Het was waarschijnlijk al afgelopen.

De professor liep zenuwachtig heen en weer. Niemand wist goed wat er aan de hand was. Hij had een telefoontje in zijn hand, als een soort walkie talkie. Hij knikte maar, en zweet stond op zijn voorhoofd. Toen richtte hij zich tot de mensen. 'Dames en heren, ik vraag u allen rustig te blijven. De bosbrand heeft zich snel verspreid, en ook onze velden branden nu. We zijn totaal omsingeld. Niemand weet hoe dit kan. Misschien door het hete weer, maar ook een oorlog is niet uitgesloten.'

'Een oorlog ?' riep Anton. 'Maar professor, wat loopt u nu allemaal te bazelen ?'

'Als we omsingeld zijn, start de motor dan, professor, waar wacht u nog op ?' riep Susanne.

'Ik wil eruit !' riep iemand.

'Niemand kan er uit,' zei de professor. 'We zijn omsingeld door grote vuurzeeen, maar dit is gelijk de gelegenheid om mijn raket te testen.'

Meer en meer mensen begonnen in paniek te raken, maar ze wisten dat het starten van de raket de enige oplossing zou zijn. De professor liep naar een kleine cabine en begon op de knoppen te drukken.

'Allemachtig,' zei Anton. 'Ik vertrouw dit voor geen cent. Die gek loopt volgens mij gewoon wat te verzinnen om zijn raket te kunnen uitproberen. Een oorlog ? Laat me toch niet lachen.'

'Hij zei niet dat het een oorlog is,' zei Jaap. 'Hij zei alleen dat een oorlog niet uitgesloten is. Zag je dan niet dat hij een telefoontje kreeg ? Er is meer aan de hand.'

Anton rende naar een klein raampje, en begon naar buiten te kijken. 'Mensen !' riep hij. 'Er is helemaal geen vuur ! Deze professor neemt iedereen in de maling.'

'Je bent gek !' riep de baas van het zwembad. 'Hoe durf je zo over de professor te spreken.'

'Kom het zelf dan zien, halve gek !' riep Anton. 'Kijk door dit kleine raampje, en vertelt u mij eens waar het vuur is !'

De baas van het zwembad liep op Anton af, en gluurde door het raampje. 'Je hebt gelijk. Er is helemaal geen vuur,' sprak hij. 'Kom op, mensen, deze raket en deze professor zijn niet pluis. We gaan eruit.' Met grote stappen liep hij af op de uitgang, maar de deuren waren op slot. 'Professor, ik gebied u de deuren te openen !' riep de baas van het zwembad woedend.

'Komt niks van in, toffe jongen !' riep de professor. 'Je zou ons allemaal laten omkomen. De raket is al opgestart, dus ik kan niets meer opendoen.'

'Maar er is helemaal geen vuur buiten !' schreeuwde de baas van het zwembad zo hard als hij kon.

'U gaat mij toch niet in de maling nemen !' riep de professor. Ook andere mensen hadden inmiddels door het raampje gekeken en zagen geen vuur. Ook de professor liep naar het raampje en gluurde naar buiten. 'Verhip, nee, je hebt gelijk. Er is helemaal geen vuur.'

'Doe die raket dan uit, malle man !' riep de baas van het zwembad. 'Wat sta jij hier nog te staan !'

'Mijn excuses,' zei de professor. 'Ik kan de raket niet uitzetten, want dan gaan we er allemaal aan. Hij is al op gang gebracht.'

'Wie heeft jou getelefoneerd met die draken-onzin ?' bulderde de baas van het zwembad. Anton keek naar het gezicht van de man wat helemaal rood was. Hij had nog nooit iemand zo boos gezien.

'Jax Bladerdeeg,' zei de professor. De baas van het zwembad greep een brandweer-bijl van de muur en rende naar de cabine om alles kort en klein te slaan. De professor keek verslagen toe. 'Mijn mooie kunstwerk naar de knoppen !' riep hij. 'Dit zal je duur komen te staan !'

'Maak jij je maar klaar voor een trip naar de gevangenis !' bulderde de baas van het zwembad. 'Aan één ramp hebben we vandaag wel genoeg, circus-clown. En nu mag jij ons vertellen wie die Jax Bladerdeeg wel niet is.'

'Mijn baas,' zei de professor.

Er werd op de deuren van de raket nogal hard geklopt, alsof er met gereedschap op werd geslagen. Even later werden de deuren ingetrapt, en gewapende mannen renden de raket binnen. Ze droegen geweren. 'Iedereen op de grond, dit is een overval !' Er klonken al wat schoten. Anton, Jaap en Susanne doken op de grond, en ook de andere mensen namen geen enkel risico. Een andere man in een lange witte jas en met een hoed liep de raket binnen. 'Goed werk, jongens,' zei hij. De baas van het zwembad keek op met open mond. 'Wel heb ik ooit,' zei hij. 'Hoe durf jij hier op zo'n smerige manier binnen te komen !' bulderde de baas van het zwembad.

'Snoer hem de mond !' riep de man met de hoed. Tegelijkertijd vlogen twee overvallers op hem af, en begonnen hem vast te binden, om vervolgens een grote prop in zijn mond te duwen. 'Laat me los !' probeerde de baas van het zwembad te schreeuwen, maar er kwam niet veel uit.

'Dit is Jax Bladerdeeg, mijn baas,' sprak de professor.

'Ja, ja, ja, houd nu maar op,' zei de man met de hoed. Anton probeerde voorzichtig naar de zijkant van de raket te kruipen, waar een trap was. Ook wenkte hij Jaap en Susanne. Voorzichtig kropen ze op de trap, maar de overvallers begonnen hen door te krijgen. 'Ren !' riep Anton. Ze stoven de trap op, terwijl ze al schoten hoorden. Bovenaan de trap was een

gordijn, waarachter een andere trap was. Die renden ze ook op. 'Jullie kunnen geen kant op !' werd er geroepen. Er waren hier vele trappen, die vaak door een deur of een gordijn van elkaar gescheiden waren, en soms was er een klein gangetje tussenin. 'We vinden jullie wel !' werd er geroepen. Na lang rennen op de trappen kwamen ze aan op een soort zoldertje van de raket. Anton sloeg een raam in en keek naar buiten, maar dat was veel te hoog. Er was ook een ander trappenstelsel waar ze naar beneden konden rennen, zonder dat ze de overvallers zouden tegenkomen. Nu moesten ze snel zijn. Ze hoorden al stemmen dichterbij. Anton sprong bijna van de eerste trap naar beneden af, en ook de anderen volgden hem snel na. Dit was een ander trappenstelsel. Een zware rook rookten ze hier. Ineens kwamen ze de buschauffeur tegen. Die was op eigen houtje de raket gaan onderzoeken, en wist nog niets af van wat er gebeurt was. 'Kom mee !' zei Anton hard fluisterend tegen hem. 'Er is een overval in de raket.' De bus-chauffeur wist een andere uitgang in dit trappenstelsel, en al snel waren ze uit de raket. Buiten de raket was er nog een trappenstelsel waar ze vanaf moesten rennen.

'Naar de bus !' riep Anton. Zo snel als ze konden renden ze de metalen trappen buiten de raket af, en renden naar de bus toe. Ook de overvallers waren al buiten, en begonnen te schieten. In de bus aangekomen startte de bus-chauffeur snel de bus. Direct belde hij de politie door een soort intercom. Ook de bus-maatschappij werd op de hoogte gebracht, terwijl Anton duidelijk uitlegde wat er was gebeurt. 'Zovelen zijn gegijzeld !' riep de bus-chauffeur door de intercom.

De volgende dag stond het in de kranten. Jax Bladerdeeg had weer toegeslagen, een beruchte maffia baas. En de professor scheen voor hem te werken. Het zwembad in Deursen was helemaal afgebrand door criminelen. Jax Bladerdeeg was niet de echte naam van de maffia baas. Niemand wist zijn echte naam, maar hij werd ook wel Achtus Zudelknopfen genoemd.

Hoofdstuk 2. Het Vreemde Mannetje

Een week later zaten Anton, Jaap en Susanne weer op een terrasje. Ze hadden weer ijs besteld, en spraken na over wat er op de raket-basis was gebeurd. Niemand wist waar de gegijzelden waren, want de overvallers ontvoerden hen met de overgebleven bussen. Er werden nog steeds grote onderzoeken gedaan.

Inmiddels werd er een nieuw zwembad gebouwd en er kwam een nieuwe baas van het zwembad. Anton, Jaap en Susanne hadden het zwemmen niet afgeleerd. Nog steeds gingen ze zo nu en dan zwemmen, en nog steeds zwommen ze dan helemaal tot het bosmeer. Maar op een dag gebeurde er iets vreemds. Een klein mannetje met een lang paarsachtig jasje en een paars mutsje stond op de kant van het bosmeer. Hij had een grijs baardje. Ook had hij een munt in zijn handje. De munt was bijna groter dan zijn hand, en glom. 'Weet je wat dit is ?' vroeg hij.

'Wie bent u eigenlijk, als ik vragen mag ?' vroeg Susanne.

'Gaat je geen snars aan,' zei het mannetje. 'En ik vroeg jou het eerst, dus je mag mij eerst antwoorden. Ik houd er niet van als mijn vragen genegeerd worden, en dat ik dan ineens vragen krijg in plaats van antwoorden.'

'Nee, ik heb geen idee wat u in uw hand houdt. Het lijkt op een munt,' zei Susanne.

'Mis !' schreeuwde het mannetje. 'Ik heb er een hekel aan als men mij verkeerde antwoorden geeft. Houd dan liever helemaal je mond. Je kon gewoon ja of nee antwoorden, want dat is alles wat ik vroeg, of je wist was het was.'

'Nou zeg,' zei Susanne, 'u hoeft er niet zo naar en moeilijk over te doen.'

'Ach, trut, houd nu je mond,' zei het mannetje.

'Dit gesprek is over,' zei Susanne. Maar ze merkte dat ze zich niet meer kon bewegen. Anton en Jaap waren verderop aan het zwemmen. Ze kon hen niet eens meer roepen. Het leek wel alsof haar stem vast zat.

'Ik ben er niet van gediend op zo'n manier toegesproken te worden,' zei het mannetje. 'Dus nu zul je luisteren in plaats van je mondje op zo'n vervelende, genieperige manier te gebruiken. Kom nu het water uit, en volg mij, dan zal ik je wat laten zien.'

Als gehypnotiseerd stapte Susanne het water uit en volgde het mannetje. Het mannetje leidde haar naar een boshutje. 'Hier woon ik,' snauwde het mannetje. 'Ik drink water met azijn, of gewoon slootwater. Ik eet mos en vuil. Ik eet de grond. Ga nu zitten, dan voer ik je wat.'

Susanne ging gehypnotiseerd in het gras zitten. 'Lekkere kevertjes en torretjes, sprinkhanen. Hier, doe je mond open.' Een vieze lepel met beestjes werd voor haar mond geschoven, maar Susanne hield haar mond stijf dicht.

'Ach, ik zie dat je geen honger hebt,' zei het mannetje, en stopte toen de smerige lepel in zijn eigen mond. 'Wat een ondankbaar meisje ben je, kindje. Iemand anders zou het maar wat graag willen eten.'

Susanne begon rood te worden, en bang. Ze kon zich nog steeds niet goed bewegen. Inmiddels hadden Anton en Jaap door dat Susanne was verdwenen, en gingen op onderzoek uit.

'Weet je wat ik met je ga doen ?' vroeg het mannetje. 'Spek van katten, honden, muizen en ratten, dat ga ik je voeren.' Grote tranen biggelden over de wangen van Susanne, die nog steeds niet kon praten.

'Of heb je daar geen zin in, ondankbaar kind ?' vroeg het mannetje. 'Ik kan je niet uitstaan, verwend nest.' Hij gaf haar een klap in haar gezicht. Nog steeds kon Susanne niet spreken. Haar tong zat helemaal vast. 'Wanneer vertrouw je mij eens,' snauwde het mannetje. Het mannetje begon steeds dwazer en woedender te worden. Hij raasde en schold dat het een lieve lust was. Ineens hoorden Anton en Jaap het woedende mannetje, en renden op het geluid af. 'Wat doe jij hier, Susanne ?' vroeg Anton. Susanne beefde.

'En wie ben jij, mannetje ?' vroeg Anton.

'Gaat je geen snars aan !' snauwde het mannetje kribbig. 'Ik doe dit niet voor jullie.'

'Nou, waar gaat dit nog over, irritante schelm,' zei Anton. 'En waarom ga jij met dit gespuis mee, Susanne ?' vroeg Anton. Jaap was op haar af gelopen. 'Hey, wat is er. Waarom beef je zo, en waarom huil je ?' Maar Susanne kon nog steeds geen woord uitbrengen. En toen was het mannetje weg, zomaar plotseling verdwenen. Susanne barstte in huilen uit. 'Ik kon me niet meer bewegen,' snikte ze. 'Ik kon zelfs niet meer praten,' huilde ze. Jaap sloeg een arm om haar heen. Anton wist niet wat hij zag. 'Waar is dat mannetje nu ?'

'Weg,' zei Jaap.

'Dat kereltje was er net nog,' zei Anton. 'Dat kan toch niet ?'

Jaap haalde zijn schouders op.

'Ik kan dit niet geloven,' zei Anton. 'Er gebeuren hier vreemde dingen. Er is altijd wat in het zwembad. Laten we teruggaan.' Susanne vertelde het verhaal terwijl ze terugliepen, en Anton en Jaap luisterden met open mond.

'Het spookt in Deursen,' zei Anton. 'We zijn hier niet meer veilig. Er is iets aan de hand.' Snel gingen ze naar de kleedhokjes om zich aan te kleden, en al gauw zaten ze in de auto om naar huis te rijden. Anton zat achter het stuur. 'Ik begrijp dit niet,' snauwde hij. 'Waarom moet ons dat altijd overkomen.'

'Nu praat jij ook al als dat mannetje,' zei Susanne een beetje kribbig. 'Daar hoef je ons toch niet de schuld voor te geven, en ons af te snauwen ?'

'Ik geef jullie niet de schuld,' bromde Anton verder. 'Ik ben gewoon moe van dit alles. En je hoeft mij dan ook niet zo kribbig toe te spreken. Ik snauw jullie niet af, maar ik ben gewoon boos op de omstandigheden. Het is niet meer zoals het was in Deursen.'

Bij een grote villa stopten ze. Hier woonde Anton. Jaap woonde naast hem, en Susanne woonde tegenover hen. Anton parkeerde de auto, en toen liepen ze naar Susanne's huis.

'Gaat het alweer een beetje beter met je ?' vroeg Anton bezorgd. Susanne knikte. Ze opende de deur en even later zaten ze in de huiskamer. 'Wat een gekkenwerk is Deursen geworden,' mopperde Anton. 'We zijn ons leven niet eens meer zeker.'

'Ja, en nu ook al een mannetje dat ervoor zorgt dat je je niet meer kan bewegen en niet meer kan praten,' zei Susanne. 'En zomaar ineens was hij verdwenen.'

'Ja, het is raar,' zei Anton. 'Zou het allemaal met elkaar te maken hebben ? De vliegtuigramp, de overval en dat rare mannetje ?'

Ze besloten op onderzoek uit te gaan. Ze wilden het wrak van het vliegtuig weleens zien. Na wat gegeten te hebben gingen ze op pad. Het was al een beetje donker geworden, daarom hadden ze zaklampen meegenomen. Na een tijdje rijden door het bos kwamen ze bij het wrak aan. Het was nogal een groot vliegtuig, en daarom had het ook zo'n grote bosbrand veroorzaakt. Met hun zaklampen schenen ze op het wrak. Alles was afgebrand, maar tot hun verbazing zagen ze een vreemd kistje liggen tussen de afgebrande vliegtuig-stoelen. Anton nam het kistje in zijn armen, en droeg het weg van het wrak. Er was een groot dwars kruis op de deksel. Verder was de kist helemaal zwart. Hij tilde het deksel ietsje op en sloeg het toen direct weer dicht. 'Allemaal licht,' stamelde hij. 'Alle duivels, het spookt hier echt.' Ook Susanne tilde het deksel ietsje op, maar werd toen achteruit geslagen door een wind. 'Wel allebarstens,' gromde Anton. Susanne en Jaap waren ook met verbazing geslagen. 'Allemaal achteruit,' zei Anton. 'Kom niet dichterbij.' Hij pakte een tak die ergens lag, en van een afstand tilde hij het deksel op met de tak. Een spookachtige gestalte rees op van de geopende kist, met zacht licht. 'Allemachtig,' stamelde Anton. 'Wie bent u ?'

'Het is vast een truuk,' zei Susanne.

'Nee,' zei Anton, 'dit is je reinste spokerij. Ben je dat mannetje vergeten wat zomaar verdween ?'

'Wie heeft mij opgeroepen ?' sprak de gestalte met een langzame, lage stem die heel ijzig en ver weg klonk.

'Wie bent u ?' vroeg Anton weer. 'Wij hebben niets opgeroepen. We kwamen alleen naar het neergestorte vliegtuig kijken, en vonden deze kist.'

'Het is mijn kist,' zei de gestalte.

'Wie bent u ?' vroegen ze alledrie.

'Het spook van het uur,' sprak de gestalte. 'Elk uur is er een ander spook.'

'Hebben jullie misschien iets te maken met de vliegtuigramp, de bosbrand, de overval van de raket-basis en een vreemd mannetje dat mensen vastplakt en dan in het niets verdwijnt ?' vroeg Anton.

'Het is een mooie vraag,' zei het spook. 'Wonderschoon, zeer elegant.'

'Antwoord ons nu maar in plaats van je gebazel,' zei Anton een beetje ongeduldig.

'Maak anders gewoon dat je wegkomt,' gromde het spook. 'Ik ben jullie niets verschuldigd. Jullie zijn op mijn terrein.'

'Wij gaan niet weg,' zei Anton. 'Het bos is niet van jou.'

'Maar de kist wel,' sprak het spook beledigd, 'dus nu wegwezen !' En met een strakke en ijskoude wind werden ze alledrie weggeduwd.

'Blijf uit mijn buurt !' schreeuwde het spook. 'Je had dit nooit moeten doen.'

'Wij willen alleen een antwoord !' riep Susanne.

'Wat voor antwoord ?' vroeg het spook.

'Nou, of jullie iets te maken hebben met de vreemde dingen die de laatste tijd in Deursen gebeuren !' riep Susanne.

'Ik weet van niks,' zei het spook. 'Ik zat zolang opgesloten in deze kist, en ik vond het allemaal best, maar nu heb ik het koud. Jullie zijn me ook een stelletje.'

'Als u eerlijk antwoord geeft, dan stoppen we u weer toe in uw kist,' zei Susanne.

'Ik heb nergens iets mee te maken,' sprak het spook.

'Van wie is de kist dan ?' vroeg Susanne.

'Van ons,' zei het spook.

'Maar wie heeft de kist meegenomen in het vliegtuig ?' vroeg Susanne.

'Wij waren besteld …' zei het spook.

'Door wie ?' vroeg Susanne nieuwsgierig.

Het spook wilde niets meer zeggen en trok zich terug in de kist, terwijl hij de deksel greep en op de kist legde. 'Zie, hij kan het zelf,' zei Anton. 'Ze proberen een rad voor ons ogen te dragen. Ik vertrouw ze voor geen cent.'

'Wegwezen !' bulderde het vanuit de kist. 'Of willen jullie nog een zwembad ramp ?'

'Zie, zij waren het,' zei Anton.

'Wat moeten we nu doen ?' vroeg Susanne die al een beetje begon te trillen.

'Waarom hebben jullie zoveel rampen veroorzaakt ?' vroeg Anton. 'Het zou me niks verbazen als jullie nog meer rampen op jullie geweten hebben.'

'Wij zijn rampen-spoken. Men betaalt voor ons,' sprak het spook vanuit de kist.

'Wie betaalde jullie, en hoe gaat die betaling in zijn werk ?' vroeg Susanne.

'Jax Bladerdeeg,' sprak het spook. 'En de betaling gaat door offers.'

'Wat voor offers ?' vroeg Susanne.

'Kinderoffers,' sprak het spook.

'Wat ?' vroeg Susanne. 'Zijn jullie gek geworden ?'

'Wij roosteren en eten kinderen,' sprak het spook. 'Wat is daar zo abnormaal aan ?'

'Ik geloof mijn oren niet,' zei Susanne. 'Weet je wel eens wat je zegt. Luister nu eens goed naar jezelf om te horen wat voor een soort onzin je loopt uit te kramen.'

Ook de anderen waren stomverbaasd.

'We veranderen toch niet voor jullie,' zei het spook. 'We hebben wel andere dingen te doen.'

Anton was een beetje wanhopig. Dit was echt zware misdaad, tenzij het spook hen maar wat zat voor te liegen.

'Moet je horen, spook,' sprak Anton. 'Ik heb een beetje genoeg van je praatjes, maar waar zijn die kinderen dan ?'

'We mesten ze vet ergens diep onder de grond in kooien,' lachte het spook.

'Maar dat kan toch niet !' riep Susanne. 'dat kun je toch niet maken tegenover hun ouders ?'

'Niks mee te maken,' zei het spook. 'En nu opdonderen,' bulderde het spook vanuit de kist. En weer werden ze als door een wind geslagen, maar ditmaal werden ze echt ver weggeslingerd. Verslagen strompelden ze terug naar de auto.

De volgende ochtend waren ze op weg naar het politie-bureau. Maar toen ze hun verhaal brachten werden ze uitgelachen. 'Ach, kom nou,' zei één van de agenten. 'Jullie gaan ons toch niet vertellen dat er hier mannetjes zijn die in het niets verdwijnen, en spoken die rampen veroorzaken en mensen door het bos heen slingeren. Kom eens met een beter verhaal.'

Anton was boos. 'Nou, dan geloven jullie ons toch lekker niet ?'

Boos liep hij het politie-bureau uit, terwijl de andere twee hem volgden. Anton had het helemaal gehad met Deursen.

'Volgens mij is de politie ook al onder invloed van de spoken,' zei Susanne. De broer van de professor van de vlieg-basis was een goede bekende van Anton. Ook hij was een uitvinder. Ze besloten naar hem te gaan om raad. Hij woonde boven een café. 'Oom Aart,' noemde Anton hem altijd. Ook hij was een professor, maar heel anders dan zijn broer. Hij nam hen direct serieus toen ze hem het verhaal vertelden. 'Interessant,' zei oom Aart. 'Weet je, ik vertrouw mijn broer voor geen cent. Het was altijd al een vreemd mannetje. Al van jongs af aan wist hij zoveel van techniek af dat hij al dieren kon laten praten. Ik ben ervan overtuigd dat hij de spook-kist heeft gemaakt.'

Alledrie keken ze oom Aart met open mond aan. Oom Aart liet hen een boekje zien. Het was een boekje met bouw-instructies voor een spook-klok. De spook-klok zou de hele aarde verzwelgen, en alleen hen die goed zouden betalen zouden deel hebben aan de spook-klok om een nieuwe realiteit te creeeren. 'Dit boekje schreef hij toen hij acht jaar was,' zei oom Aart.

'Het is een gevaarlijke jongen, altijd al geweest. Die spookklok moet dus ergens in die kist zitten.'

'Wat kunnen we eraan doen, oom Aart ?' vroeg Anton.

'Nou ja, ik ben niet zo genieus als mijn broer,' zei oom Aart, 'maar laat me eens denken. Even leek het alsof oom Aart pretlichtjes in zijn ogen had. Dat gaf hen alledrie weer wat hoop. 'Ik ken die spoken van mijn broer,' sprak oom Aart. 'Ze waren elk voor een uur, en hij had ze opgewekt uit hout. Het blijkt dat als je hout op een bepaalde manier bewerkt, dan begint het electriciteit af te geven, en daar heeft hij op een hele slimme manier gebruik van gemaakt. Eigenlijk heeft het helemaal niets met spokerij te maken, maar met de werkingen van de natuur. Ik kan me alleen nog herinneren dat hij zei dat de hele spookklok niet zou werken als er wolven in het spel zouden komen. Er zou een middernachts-wolf bestaan die opgeroepen kon worden vanuit een roos. Hij wist precies hoe dat zou moeten, maar het boekje wat hij daarover had geschreven heeft hij in vuur geworpen. Hij was te bang dat iemand het ooit eens zou gebruiken. De middernachts-wolf zou korte metten met zijn spookklok maken. Ik denk dat hij de spookkist heeft gemaakt voor extra veiligheid.'

Hoofdstuk 3. De Middernachts-Wolf

'Ik zal jullie een geheimpje vertellen,' sprak oom Aart. 'Ik ben de middernachts-wolf. Elke nacht om twaalf uur precies verander ik in een wolf.'

Anton keek oom Aart met grote ogen aan. 'En kunt u wat aan die spookklok doen, en misschien ervoor zorgen dat dit maffia mysterie wordt opgelost ?' Oom Aart knikte.

'De roos gaat het mij vertellen,' zei oom Aart.

'Wie of wat is de roos, oom Aart ?' vroeg Susanne.

'Een fee,' zei oom Aart. 'Zij raakt mij altijd aan in het midden van de nacht met haar toverstaf, en dan wordt ik een wolf.'

'Nog steeds ?' vroeg Susanne.

'Nee,' zei oom Aart, 'niet meer. Toen ik jong was, maar ik weet nog precies waar ze woont. Ze woont diep in het bos. Alleen om twaalf uur 's nachts zou ik naar haar toe kunnen gaan, maar niet ervoor of erna, want dan zou ze me verslinden.'

'Klinkt gevaarlijk,' zei Anton.

'Ze is een monster,' zei oom Aart, 'maar we hebben haar nodig.'

Toen het bijna nacht was besloten ze naar het bos te gaan. Ze gingen heel diep. Ze kwamen aan bij een diepliggende rivier. Er was een brug van touwen over de rivier. Het was hier bijna een oerwoud. Zo wild hadden ze het nog niet gezien. 'Daar achter de brug woont ze,' sprak oom Aart. Ze hadden er wel vertrouwen in. Oom Aart was een kundig en bezonnen man. Het was bijna twaalf uur. Oom Aart ging als eerste de brug op. De brug wiebelde een beetje, en het stormde. Ook begon het te onweren. Er was donder en toen veel bliksem. Het leek wel alsof de donkere lucht in tweeen begon te splijten. 'Wie heeft mij geroepen !' sprak een suizende stem.

'Ik, tante !' riep oom Aart met een bevende stem. Een lichtende gestalte kwam dichterbij op de brug. 'Volg mij,' sprak ze met een harde, fluisterende stem. Het was nu twaalf uur. Ze volgden haar naar een klein huisje. Er was dichte begroeiing hier. In het huisje gingen ze aan een tafeltje zitten. De fee schonk wat te drinken in. Even raakte ze oom Aart met haar toverstaf aan, en die begon direct in een wolf te veranderen. Wel had hij nog steeds zijn zwarte jas aan.

Anton vertelde de fee het hele verhaal, ook over de kinderoffers die aan de spoken gebracht zouden moeten worden, en dat de kinderen hiervoor diep in de aarde opgesloten werden gehouden.

'Ach welnee,' zei de fee. 'Dat zijn gewoon spookkinderen. En die zijn niet opgesloten. Ze maken jullie maar wat wijs.' Wel zag ze het gevaar van de spookklok in, en wist ze dat het veel rampen bracht, en dat er nog steeds mensen in handen van de maffia waren.

'Ik heb een goed idee,' sprak ze. Ze nam hen mee naar buiten, en leidde hen naar een bootje aan de rand van de rivier. Voorzichtig stapte ze in het bootje, en wenkte de anderen. Even later waren ze allemaal in het bootje, en ze begon te peddelen. Er hing een dikke mist over de rivier, maar ze konden de zijkanten van de rivier nog wel een beetje zien.

'Ik weet waar mensen opgesloten worden gehouden,' sprak ze. 'Onder het zwembad. De nieuwe baas van het zwembad is ook van de maffia.' De wolf begon te grommen. Wat had hij zin om te rennen en te bijten. Zijn ogen waren rood van woede. Het bootje ging richting het zwembad. Eerst kwamen ze bij het meertje aan, en toen gingen ze over de rivier achter het meertje naar het zwembad. Bij het zwembad aangekomen stapten ze uit.

'Dit is toch niet normaal meer,' zei Anton. 'Het lijkt wel alsof iedereen tegenwoordig van de maffia is.' De wolf gromde. Hij leek in de verste verten niet meer op oom Aart. 'Goedzo jongen,' sprak de fee. 'Je hebt zo heel wat te bijten.' Als eerste moest de wolf het slot van het zwembad doorbijten. Direct hoorden ze een alarm. De fee trapte verder de deur in, en al snel gingen ze over een trap naar beneden. Daar kwamen ze bij een lift. Met de lift gingen ze nog dieper onder de grond. Het leek wel uren te duren. Toen ineens ging de liftdeur open, en ze keken in een enorme grot. Daar stonden de kooien met de mensen erin die ontvoerd waren op de raket-basis. De wolf rende op de kooien af en begon de sloten los te kauwen en te bijten. Maar alweer hoorden ze alarms. Bewakers kwamen op hen afrennen en er ontstond een vuur gevecht. De fee kon nog net op tijd bescherming bieden. De wolf bleek immuun te zijn voor de kogels en vloog op de bewakers af, één voor één. De bewakers schreeuwden. Ze konden niet veel tegen de wolf beginnen.

'Als ik het niet dacht,' zei de fee, en wees omhoog waar een grote spook-klok hing in de grot. 'Spring, wolf !' riep ze. De wolf maakte een reuzensprong en greep de klok met zijn bek. De klok had vele spook-armen, die allemaal door de wolf werden gebeten.

'We moeten weg,' zei de fee. 'De betovering is bijna uitgewerkt.' Allemaal renden ze snel naar de lift, maar de lift ging niet open. De spookklok begon te lachen.

De wolf begon inmiddels weer te veranderen in oom Aart. De spookklok lachte heel gemeen, en met vele armen werd oom Aart gegrepen. 'Verslinden zullen we je,' lachte de spookklok.

'Oh nee,' zei de fee, 'dat gaat zomaar niet. Jullie vergeten dat ik er bij ben.'

'Jou zullen we ook verslinden, ouwe heks !' gierde de spook-klok. Met vele armen grepen ze haar ook. De fee begon te gillen. Anton, Jaap en Susanne stonden nog steeds met de bevrijde gegijzelden voor de lift. Anton drukte op de knopjes. 'Ga dan open, kreng,' fluisterde hij hard.

De armen van de spookklok begonnen flink te groeien en grepen wild om hen heen. Ook begon de klok sneller te draaien, als een tornado of draaikolk. Alles sleurden ze met zich mee. 'We gaan jullie vernietigen !' brulden ze.

Ook Jaap begon op de knoppen van de lift te slaan, maar de deur ging maar niet open. 'We zitten hier vast,' fluisterde hij hard.

'We zijn er geweest, Jaap,' zei Anton. De oude baas van het zwembad was woedend toen hij de spookklok zo zag razen. Hij was helemaal rood, en stond op ontploffen. Hij raapte stenen van de grond en begon naar de spookklok te gooien. Maar niets hielp. De spookklok werd razender en razender en kwam langzaam op hen af. 'We zijn er geweest,' zei Anton weer. Susanne had haar ogen stijf dichtgetrokken. Ze kon het niet meer aanzien.

Mensen begonnen tegen de liftdeur aan te trappen. De oude baas van het zwembad nam een aanloop en trapte de liftdeur open. Iedereen begon zich op te hopen in de lift, en toen iedereen binnen was drukte de oude baas van het zwembad de knoppen in om de lift omhoog te laten gaan. De spook-klok had inmiddels in woede de omhooggaande lift van onderen gegrepen met zijn vele armen, en probeerde zich naar binnen te wringen. De mensen krijsten. Het was gelukkig een hele grote, ruime lift, dus ze konden er allemaal in, maar de spookklok gaf zich niet gewonnen. Mensen begonnen op de binnengekomen armen te trappen. Het was een lange reis naar boven. Het leek wel alsof de lift nooit zou aankomen. Maar toen de lift was gestopt was het niet het zwembad waar ze naar binnen gingen. Neen. Iemand speelde een spelletje met hen. Het leek wel alsof ze zelfs dieper waren gegaan. Ze waren diep onder de aarde. Het leek wel een spooklift.

'Dit zwembad is niet pluis,' zei Anton. Allemaal stapten ze naar buiten. Het was hier donker, en op sommige plaatsen was vuur. 'We zijn hier diep onder de aarde,' zei Anton. Alles was rustig nu. De spookklok was nergens te bekennen. 'We mogen nog van geluk spreken dat we nog leven,' zei Susanne.

'Laten we rustig blijven, mensen,' zei de oude baas van het zwembad. 'We vinden wel een oplossing.' Sommige mensen waren aan het beven en trillen. De oude baas van het zwembad liep richting de vuren, waar het lichter was. De mensen volgden hem. Tussen de vuren waren wat metalen bruggen. Die bruggen gingen over lava heen. Verderop waren er veel meer lava-

rivieren. Er stonden hier grote ketels met lava erin. De mensen vroegen zich af waar ze terecht waren gekomen.

Ze gingen over een heleboel metalen bruggetjes, en kwamen toen in een ruimte waar een heleboel kisten stonden. Anton keek even in zo'n kist. Er zat een levensgrote pop in. Verderop hingen een heleboel van zulke poppen aan haken. De poppen konden bewegen en konden ook zachtjes praten. 'Wat is hier aan de hand ?' zei Anton. 'Het zijn levende poppen, net als mensen.'

'Wie zijn jullie ?' vroeg Anton aan de poppen.

'Wij zijn robotten,' zei één van de poppen. 'Wij zijn gemaakt om te werken voor de maffia.'

Opeens sprong het vreemde mannetje dat Susanne had lastiggevallen tevoorschijn. Anton kon zich direct niet meer bewegen en niet meer praten. 'Ik dacht jij zou ook vast wel zo'n mooie pop willen zijn,' grapte het mannetje. Toen Susanne het mannetje zag slaakte ze een kreet. 'Jullie zijn gekomen waar ik jullie wilde hebben !' krijste het mannetje schaterlachend. 'Jullie zullen snel allemaal mooie poppen worden zoals deze.' Ook Susanne kon zich niet meer bewegen. Jaap kon nog net op tijd wegrennen, en ook wat andere mensen. 'Ze zullen niet ver komen,' bromde het mannetje lacherig.

'Stop, stop !' riep het mannetje, bijna met een mechanische stem. Toen konden ineens de anderen zich ook niet meer bewegen. 'Poppen zullen jullie worden. Poppen zullen jullie zijn,' schaterde het mannetje. Sommige poppen begonnen te giechelen. 'Ja, poppen, jullie krijgen er wat nieuwe broertjes en zusjes bij.'

'Dank u wel,' zeiden sommige poppen. Sommige van die poppen praatten erg traag. Het mannetje begon om zijn gegijzelden heen te dansen, en werd steeds zotter. Ook begon hij hen met een staf te slaan. 'Ik zal jullie temmen !' riep hij. De staf leek onder stroom te staan. Eén voor één begon het mannetje zijn nieuwe aanwinsten naar de kisten te sleuren. 'Allemaal poppetjes, één voor één,' zong het mannetje. En toen begon hij nog meer vreemde liedjes en rijmpjes te zingen. 'Poppetje, poppetje, wat een pret, en we gaan nog niet naar bed.'

'Oh, moeder, wat zijn je poppetjes schoon. Morgen zit ik op de troon.'

'Ach vadertje kijk niet zo sip, ik maak poppetjes voor jou in een wip.'

'Ik zal ze, die vervelende krengen !' riep het mannetje, en begon toen te schaterlachen. 'Niemand die hen hier vinden kan, ha ha ha. Oh, wat ben ik toch duivels slim.'

Maar toen het weer middernacht was veranderde de door de spookklok opgeslokte oom Aart weer in een wolf. Ook de fee kwam vrij. Ze stormden op de spooklift af, en gingen de diepte in. 'Ik weet waar ze zijn,' sprak de fee, 'ik voel het.' Toen de lift stopte, renden ze er beiden uit. De wolf ging recht op zijn doel af. Hij dook op het mannetje af en beet het kapot als een pop. Direct kon iedereen zich weer bewegen en praten, en konden ze uit hun kisten komen. Ook de andere poppen begonnen weer mens te worden.

Anton was woedend, maar tegelijkertijd opgelucht. Hij nam Jaap en Susanne in zijn armen. Snel renden ze met z'n allen de lift in, maar er waren zoveel poppen weer tot mens geworden, dat ze er niet allemaal inpasten.

De volgende dag zaten Anton, Jaap en Susanne weer op een terrasje. Alles was goedgekomen. In Deursen was een groot feest, omdat zoveel vermisten waren teruggevonden.

Jax en zijn bende waren opgepakt. Zij gingen de gevangenis in voor hun streken. De oude baas van het zwembad werd weer de baas over het nieuwe zwembad, en zo leek alles weer wat rustiger te worden. Ook de broer van oom Aart, de professor van de raket-basis, was opgepakt en kreeg gevangenis-straf. Oom Aart kon er niet om rouwen. Hij vond het altijd al een belhamel die hij liever achter de tralies zou zien. In zijn ogen was het altijd al een groot gevaarte met veel te veel vrijheid. Niemand wist waar de spookklok was. Maar op een dag tijdens een boswandeling kregen Anton, Jaap en Susanne de schrik van hun leven. De spookklok met zijn vele armen stond ineens voor hen, en begon hen te grijpen. De grond onder hen begon weg te vallen, en zo werden ze de diepte in getrokken. 'Zo snel komen jullie niet van me af !' snauwde de spookklok. De spookklok begon aan hun haren te trekken. 'Wat wil je van ons !' riep Anton.

'Dat zul je nog wel eens zien,' sprak de spookklok.

'Waar breng je ons naartoe ?' riep Anton.

'Niet zoveel vragen stellen,' sprak de spookklok.

Hij sleurde ze alle drie door een diepe tunnel dieper de grond in. Na een tijdje kwamen ze in een grote ondergrondse wildernis. Anton, Jaap en Susanne keken hun ogen uit. 'Maar dat kan toch helemaal niet ?' stamelde Anton. 'Hoe kan er nu een wildernis onder de grond zijn ?'

'Je ziet het toch dat het kan !' snauwde de spookklok. De spookklok begon hen toen door de wildernis te sleuren, totdat ze bij een groot kasteel aankwamen. 'De heks wil jullie zien ?' zei de spookklok. 'Het is bijna middernacht.'

'De heks ?' vroeg Anton. 'Wie is dat ?'

'Dat zul je wel zien,' sprak de spookklok. Hij trok ze alle drie naar binnen, en ze zagen een grote troon in de verte. Toen sleurde hij ze helemaal voor de troon. Op de troon zat een vrouw in een witte jurk met grijze haren. Achter haar was een grote rode schijf waar ze tegenaan leunde. 'Zo, eindelijk zijn jullie gekomen,' sprak de vrouw.

'Wat wilt u van ons ?' vroeg Anton een beetje kribbig.

'Jongen, daar hoef je niet zo ellendig over te doen. Ik strijdt al tijden voor de wildernis onder de grond, want boven de grond is allemaal vervuiling,' sprak de vrouw.

'Heeft u soms die vliegramp en al die verdere rampen veroorzaakt, sinds het er op lijkt dat mijnheer de spookklok en u dikke vrienden zijn, en hij voor u werkt,' vroeg Anton.

'Oh, de spookramp ? Nee, die heb ik niet veroorzaakt,' sprak de vrouw.

Opeens konden ze zich niet meer bewegen, en praten was ook onmogelijk geworden, terwijl de heks begon te schaterlachen. 'Leidt hen tot de kooien, spookklok, wij kunnen ze nog goed gebruiken !' krijste ze. De spookklok nam hen mee in een ruk, en ging een gang op die leidde naar een ruimte met kooien. Hij drukte ze allemaal in één kooi.

Nog steeds konden ze niet praten, hoeveel ze dat ook probeerden, en ze konden zich niet bewegen. Ze lagen als slappe lappenpoppen op de grond. Deze heks was erg gevaarlijk. Na een tijdje kwam de heks de kooi bezoeken, en grijnste. 'Wel, wel, wie hebben we daar,' zei de heks met een hoge, krijsende stem die pijn deed aan hun oren. 'Ik kan jullie wel gebruiken als gevechts-poppen. Dan gaan jullie aan het front. Levende schilden zullen jullie zijn !'

'Kijk me eens aan. Jullie zullen onder mijn hypnose zijn. Jullie zullen alleen denken en doen wat ik jullie gebiedt, begrepen ?'

'Ja,' zeiden ze alle drie traag.

'Ja, koningin moet dat zijn !' kraste ze.

'Ja, koningin,' zeiden ze alle drie traag. Ze nam Anton en Susanne's handen in haar handen, terwijl er een vreemde kracht door hen stroomde. En toen even later pakte ze de hand van Jaap. Alle drie begonnen ze een beetje waggelend op hun benen te staan. Anton trilde. 'Ja, heks,' sprak hij.

'Goedzo, jongen, je begint het al te leren,' kraste ze. 'Marcheer voor me. Kom achter me aan.' De heks liep de gang op en ging een andere gang in, terwijl Anton, Jaap en Susanne haar gehypnotiseerd volgden.

Op een tafeltje stond een glas met een glazen pot met water. 'Breng me wat water,' snauwde ze naar Anton. Anton liep gehypnotiseerd naar de tafel, en schonk water in het glas, en bracht het toen naar de heks, die er direct gulzig van begon te drinken. Aan de muur hingen wapens. Ze wees op de wapens en sprak : 'Die wapens zullen jullie gebruiken.'

Ze nam de wapens van de muur en begon ze uit te delen. 'Op het front zullen jullie vechten. De ondergrondse wildernis wordt aangevreten door vliegende reuzen-kevers, met grote, logge lichamen en piepkleine hoofdjes. Jullie zullen wachters op mijn toren worden, en niet alleen mijn kasteel verdedigen, maar ook ten aanval gaan,' sprak de heks. Anton, Jaap en Susanne keken naar hun geweren. Toen keken ze weer naar de heks. 'Begrepen, heks,' zei Anton. Toen leidde de heks hen naar de toren van het kasteel. Ze moesten een heleboel trappen op, en kwamen toen buiten op de toren, vanwaar ze een uitzicht hadden over de wildernis. 'Schiet,

schiet !' schreeuwde de heks. 'Als je goed kijkt kun je de reuzen-kevers al zien. En inderdaad vlogen er al snel heel wat vliegende reuzen-kevers om hen heen, en ze moesten vechten voor hun leven. Ook de heks vocht mee met haar toverkrachten. Ze begonnen een beetje in de gaten te krijgen wat er aan de hand was. Deze reuzen-kevers waren inderdaad verschrikkelijk, en al gauw waren ze trots en tevreden met hun taak.

'Goed voor nu,' sprak de heks na een tijdje, en ze moesten de toren weer in. Ze hadden een paar bijtwonden van de kevers, maar verder hadden ze goed gevochten.

'Ik heb jullie hier gebracht door rampen,' sprak de heks. Ze nam hen mee naar een eetzaal, waar hen de meest overheerlijke gerechten werden gebracht op een lange tafel, door een heleboel koks in wit gekleed met hoge witte mutsen. 'Eet, liefjes, dan zijn jullie straks weer klaar voor het gevecht.' Alle drie begonnen ze te eten totdat hun buiken vol waren. 'Pfff... ik kan niet meer,' zei Anton.

'Ik heb veel te veel gegeten,' zuchtte Susanne.

Ergens op een hogere verdieping in het kasteel kregen ze een kamer waar ze konden uitrusten. De hypnose begon een beetje uit te werken, want het was slechts het kasteel van een middernachts-heks, die alleen veel macht hebben in het diepste van de nacht. 'Dat mens is gek,' zei Anton ineens. 'Ik voel me weer normaal. Het lijkt wel alsof de betovering is verbroken. Laten we kijken wat er aan de hand is.'

Stilletjes liepen ze de kamer uit, en gingen over de trappen naar beneden. Ze verscholen zich achter een grote plant in een grote bak, en keken zo de troonzaal in. Ze zagen haar op haar troon zitten. Ze bewoog niet, maar trilde een beetje. 'Laten we ontsnappen nu het kan,' zei Susanne. Stilletjes liepen ze naar de poort van het kasteel, en renden toen de wildernis in. Maar de spookklok kwam achter hen aan. Hij krijste, en leek veel groter. 'Klim in een boom !' riep Anton. Snel klommen ze in een hoge boom, maar de spookklok klom er ook in. Met zijn vele armen kon hij goed klimmen. 'We zijn er geweest,' riep Anton.

'Nee !' riep Susanne, 'hier is een liaan. Houd vast.' Met z'n drieen hielden ze zich stevig vast aan de liaan, en zwiepten de wildernis in. De liaan ging helemaal over een rivier heen, en ze kwamen aan de andere kant terecht. Ze hoorden de spookklok brullen in de verte. Na lang rennen hoorden ze niets meer. Over heuveltjes kwamen ze steeds hogerop, totdat ze eindelijk door een gat boven de grond in het bos uitkwamen. Vermoeid, maar opgelucht slenterden ze naar huis. Thuisgekomen gingen ze direct slapen.

De volgende dag, ergens in de middag, werden ze wakker.

Hoofdstuk 4. Het Contract

'Deursen is een spookstad geworden,' gromde Anton.

'De spookklok zal ons overal vinden, volgens mij heeft het niks met Deursen te maken,' sprak Susanne.

'Nee, deze dingen gebeuren alleen in Deursen,' zei Anton.

'We moeten weg,' zei Jaap. 'We zijn hier niet veilig.'

'Zeg, ik laat me niet wegjagen door een stuk speelgoed !' snauwde Anton.

'Het is geen speelgoed,' zei Jaap. 'Dat weet je best. Het is gevaarlijke militaire techniek.'

'Jaap, nu moet je ophouden,' sprak Anton geirriteerd. 'Ik probeer mijn hoofd erbij te houden. We moeten het niet groter maken dan het is. We kunnen best dit mysterie oplossen.'

Ze besloten naar oom Aart te gaan, om hem te vertellen wat er gebeurd was. Oom Aart wilde naar de gevangenis gaan om zijn broer op te zoeken, om die om raad te vragen. 'Kunnen we die broer van u wel vertrouwen ?' vroeg Anton.

'We hebben niet veel keuze,' zei oom Aart. Zo gezegd zo gedaan. In de auto van oom Aart reden ze even later richting de gevangenis. Gauw zaten ze om de tafel met de broer van oom Aart. Ook de professor van de vlieg-basis, de broer van oom Aart die nu opgesloten was, kreeg het verhaal over wat de spookklok had gedaan te horen. 'Ik kan het niet helpen. Het is de natuur aan het werk,' zei de professor.

'Toe nou, broer,' zei oom Aart. 'Je weet vast wel wat te bedenken.'

'Ik heb de uiteindelijke spookklok niet gemaakt,' zei de professor. 'Ik heb de spoken uit hout opgewekt, en veel over de spookklok geschreven. Ik was er mee bezig, maar heb later het werk overgedragen aan Leo. Leo heeft het eindproduct gemaakt.'

'Wie is Leo ?' vroeg Anton.

'Leo is een zakenman,' zei oom Aart. 'Hij kwam vroeger veel bij ons thuis, en was een vriend van ons beiden, maar hij was een gevaarlijke jongen. Hij deugde niet.'

'Waarom deugde hij niet ?' vroeg Anton.

'Het was een misdadiger,' zei oom Aart.

'Voor veel geld kocht hij het project van mij over,' zei de professor. 'En hij was de uiteindelijke oprichter van de spookklok. Jullie moeten bij hem zijn als jullie meer willen weten.'

'Waar woont hij tegenwoordig ?' vroeg oom Aart. De professor krabbelde wat op een papiertje en gaf het aan oom Aart. 'Hier, ga daar maar eens kijken.'

'Kom op, jongens,' zei oom Aart, en liep het zaaltje uit. Even later zaten ze in de auto.

Leo had een groot laboratorium voor ziekenhuis-producten. Ze kwamen aan bij een groot gebouw waar oom Aart de auto parkeerde.

Even later kwamen ze aan in het kantoor van Leo. Leo zat achter een wit bureau. 'Nu moet jij eens horen, Leo. Ik hoorde van mijn broer dat jij het spookklok project van hem had overgekocht, en dat jij de spookklok hebt gemaakt. Heb jij enig idee wat de spookklok allemaal heeft aangericht ?' snauwde oom Aart.

'Maar natuurlijk,' zei Leo zonder blikken of blozen. 'En ik ben er zeer trots op. De spookklok is gemaakt om rampen te maken en allerlei ellende, zodat wij onze ziekenhuis-producten goed kunnen verkopen.'

'Maar dat is belachelijk,' snauwde oom Aart. 'Dus jij vindt jouw heilige producten en het geld wat je ermee kunt verdienen belangrijker dan het geluk van mensenlevens ?'

'Daar betalen ze dan maar voor,' sprak Leo kalm. 'Geluk is altijd duur, en hoeft heus niet goedkoop te zijn. Daar worden mensen lui van.'

Oom Aart werd rood van woede. 'Jij bent levens aan het vernietigen met je spookklok, Leo.'

'Dan heeft de politie ook wat te doen,' grapte Leo. 'Ik zorg ervoor dat iedereen aan het werk komt.'

'Je bent een malloot, Leo,' bulderde oom Aart. 'Je denkt alleen aan jezelf en aan geld. Ze moesten jou ook opsluiten.'

'Dat gebeurt zomaar niet,' grijnsde Leo. 'De spookklok regeert ook over de politie. Alle beslissingen liggen bij mij. Ik heb het ding geprogrammeert, dus ik ben de baas over Deursen, en straks over de hele wereld.'

'Allemaal door rampen, Leo,' snauwde oom Aart. 'Je moet je schamen.'

'Hoe heeft u die spookklok gemaakt ?' vroeg Anton.

'Waarom zou ik jou dat vertellen, jongetje,' zei Leo. 'Hoeveel betaal je ervoor ?'

'Hoe kunnen we de spookklok onschadelijk maken ?' vroeg Susanne.

'De spookklok zal jullie onschadelijk maken,' sprak Leo kalm. 'Er valt niet tegen op te boksen. Het is een genie.'

Oom Aart werd wat rustiger. Hij besefte dat hij er niet veel mee opschoot door zo te snauwen. 'Hoe heb je die spoken zover gekregen voor je te werken ?' vroeg oom Aart.

'Ik heb ze alle twaalf ontmoet, en ik moest offers brengen,' zei Leo.

'Wat was het offer ?' vroeg oom Aart.

'Mezelf,' zei Leo. 'De spoken wonen in mij, als hun tweede huis.'

'Ach, Leo,' zei oom Aart. 'Doe toch niet zo mal. Waarom zou je dat doen ?'

'Ze beschermen mij goed, en mijn handel in ziekenhuis-producten loopt prima,' zei Leo.

'Ik denk dat zij eerder de baas over jou spelen,' zei oom Aart.

'Ach welnee,' zei Leo. 'We hebben een goed contract gesloten.'

'Hoe en waar hebt u de spoken ontmoet ?' vroeg Anton.

'Nou, kijk eens even,' zei Leo, 'ik kon het spookklok project alleen overkopen als ik de spoken zou hebben ontmoet en me aan hen bewezen zou hebben. Ik moest ze eerst geinteresseerd maken om in de klok te gaan wonen.

Het eerste spook ontmoette ik diep in het bos. Ik moest over een rivier in de nacht bij dichte mist, over een brug van touw. Hij wachtte me daar op. Hij was het spook van overstromingen. Hij kon rivieren en zeeen laten overstromen. Toen ik over de brug ging was er donder en bliksem. Hij riep mij van de andere kant. Hij had allemaal wit licht om zich heen. Hij woonde in een grot achter een waterval. Door de waterval gingen we naar binnen. Uit zijn vingers droop water, en toen begon het uit zijn hele lichaam te stromen, en het hield maar niet op. Ik rende weg, maar werd door de stroom ingehaald. Toen ging hij bij me naar binnen door mijn mond. Sindsdien ben ik een deel van hem, en is hij een deel van mij. De volgende dag was er een grote overstroming die ervoor zorgde dat Deursen aan zee kwam te liggen met zijn eigen strand- en duinengebied. Dankzij mijn vriendschap met het eerste spook was Deursen gespaard gebleven.

Het tweede spook woonde ook in het bos, en ik moest weer de rivier over, maar ditmaal over een andere brug van touw. Het spook wachtte mij al op. Het was het spook van vuurrampen. Hij veroorzaakte al direct een kleine bosbrand. Ik trilde als een rietje. Ik had nog nooit zoiets gezien. Ik dacht er direct aan hoeveel geld dit spook me zou opleveren. Het spook stak zijn hand uit, en ik schudde zijn hand. Hij leidde mij naar een boshutje. Hier woonde hij. Hij kon geld uit het niets tevoorschijn toveren. Hij sprak niet veel. Ook hij ging door mijn mond naar binnen, en door mijn oren. Mijn oren leken te piepen, en even leek het alsof ik in brand stond. Maar daarna werd alles rustig, en een zacht gevoel overstroomde mij. De volgende dag waren er veel bosbranden, en het kwam op de voorpagina van de krant. Ook het tweede spook wilde in mijn klok wonen, en we waren al snel dikke vrienden.

De derde spook was het ijs-spook …'

Leo stopte met praten. Er begon allemaal ijs uit zijn mond te komen, en het bleef maar stromen. 'Och jongen,' zei oom Aart. 'Wat hebben ze jou toch goed te pakken.' Leo begon te bibberen als een hondje.

'Ik denk dat het voor jou beter is om ermee te stoppen,' zei oom Aart. 'Dit is toch niet meer normaal ?' Het ijs bleef maar stromen, en na een tijdje lag de hele vloer eronder. 'Kom op, jongens,' zei oom Aart. 'Hier valt toch niet mee te praten.' Hij stond op en liep de deur uit, terwijl Anton, Jaap en Susanne hem volgden. 'Ik ben er klaar mee,' zei oom Aart. 'Het beste is dat we allemaal gaan verhuizen naar een andere plaats. Deursen is niet meer wat het geweest is.' En zo gebeurde het. Alle vier verhuisden ze naar een ander dorp. Ze gingen in Nunspeet wonen. Ze kwamen alle vier bij elkaar in de straat te wonen. Jaap kwam naast Anton te wonen, en tegenover hen woonden Susanne en oom Aart. Of ze ooit nog last hadden gekregen van de spookklok is niet bekend.

De Gokkoning van

Ovven

Hoofdstuk 1.

Op de kermis sloeg hij toe. Hij was een dief. Hij stal van kinderen, en hij stal soms zelfs de kinderen zelf. Hij was een kinderdief. Hij maakte hun dromen kapot.

Elwin wist hier allemaal niets van.

Het reizen door de natuur kan op een kameel. Elwin heeft dat ook weleens gedaan. Op een kameel ging hij door riviertjes, en vlaktes met wat bosjes. De zon scheen fijn, en het was een fijne dag waarop hij een reis maakte op een kameel. Hij had zijn spulletjes vastgemaakt met een riem aan de bult van de kameel, en ging er toen opzitten.

Waarom Elwin op reis ging ? Hij had gehoord dat er in de bergen ergens een hele bijzondere steen zou zijn, gemaakt door dwergen, door kabouters. Het zou een heel bijzondere droom steen zijn, die de mensen hele bijzondere dromen zou kunnen geven. Voordat Elwin op reis ging had hij daar weleens over in boeken gelezen, en zelfs een paar keer in de krant. Alles zou misschien zoveel mooier zijn als de droom steen in Ovven zou zijn.

Elwin ging helemaal alleen op de kameel. Hij wist wel waar hij ergens moest zijn, en hij had de reismap meegenomen. Daar keek hij zo nu en dan op. Hij had weleens plaatjes van de steen gezien, met daarop elfjes en kabouters die rondom de prachtig flonkerende roze-rode steen dansten. Ook waren er op die plaatjes allemaal vlindertjes te zien.

Maar toen Elwin eindelijk aankwam bij de grot waar de steen moest wezen, werd hij tegengehouden door groene bewakers met bruine helmen en slagtanden. 'Halt,' zei één van de bewakers die zijn speer al had uitgestoken om Elwin tegen te houden. 'Wat wil je ? Niemand kan zomaar tot de droom steen komen.'

'Maar ik zag op plaatjes dat er allemaal elfjes, kabouters en vlindertjes omheen dansten,' zei Elwin.

'Niks mee te maken,' bromde de groene wachter.

'Nou, u bent ook niet echt in de stemming vandaag,' zei Elwin. 'Met al dat gesnauw.'

'Ik ben wel in de stemming,' zei de groene wachter. 'Het is mijn werk. Ik moet de droom steen met hand en tand bewaken. Alleen de koning bepaalt wie er bij de steen mag komen.'

'Zo zo,' zei Elwin die inmiddels van zijn kameel was afgestapt. 'En wie mag die koning dan wel niet wezen ?'

'Koning Kabeljauw,' zei de groene wachter mopperend. 'En maak nu dat je wegkomt.'

'Kan ik de koning niet spreken ?' vroeg Elwin. 'Ik zou graag de droom steen willen zien.'

'Daarvoor moet je bij Wat-Glim-Je-Mooi zijn, zij is een elfje met gele vleugels,' bromde de groene wachter.

De groene wachter legde Elwin even uit waar dat elfje woonde, en toen ging Elwin weer op pad. Na een tijdje kwam hij aan bij een klein bosje, aan de rand van de bergen. Bij een huisje klopte Elwin aan. Een klein elvenmeisje deed open. Ze had lang haar en ze had een gele jurk aan. 'Hallo, Wat-Glim-Je-Mooi,' zei Elwin.

'Dank je,' zei het elvenmeisje.

'Ik dacht dat dat je naam was,' zei Elwin.

Het elvenmeisje begon te giechelen. 'Ja, dat is ook zo. Wat kom je doen ?'

'Ik zou graag koning Kabeljauw willen spreken voor het zien van de droom steen,' sprak Elwin.

'Dat is een vis met een kroontje, hier vlakbij in de rivier,' sprak het meisje. 'Ik kan je wel aan de koning voorstellen, maar dan moet je wel eerst glimmen.'

'Hoe moet ik glimmen dan ?' vroeg Elwin.

Het elvenmeisje zuchtte. 'Jammer dat je nog niet glimt, want dan hadden we direct naar de koning gekunt. Ik zal het je wel even uitleggen : 'Je kunt alleen glimmen door de droom steen.'

'Ja, maar ik ben verboden de droom steen te zien, en daarvoor moest ik juist eerst met de koning spreken,' sprak Elwin.

'Tja,' zei het elvenmeisje, 'dan weet ik het ook niet.'

'Kan ik niet eerst de droom steen zien om te glimmen, en dan pas naar de koning gaan ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Onmogelijk,' sprak het elvenmeisje met een diepe zucht. 'Dat laat hij nooit toe. Eerst moet je glimmen, en dan kun je pas met de koning spreken, en dan pas naar de droom steen.'

'Ja, dan is het inderdaad onmogelijk,' zei Elwin. 'Ik glim niet, en mag niet bij de droom steen komen.'

'Helaas,' zei het elvenmeisje. 'Ik kan je niet helpen.'

'Wat een nare belevenis,' zei Elwin. 'Ik ben hiervoor speciaal naartoe gekomen. Ik heb een hele lange reis gemaakt, op mijn kameel, en nu dit.'

'Ik begrijp het,' zuchtte het elvenmeisje.

'Is er dan echt geen andere oplossing ?' vroeg Elwin.

Het elvenmeisje schudde haar hoofd. 'Nee, niet echt. Tenzij je …'

Het elvenmeisje werd stil.

'Tenzij ik wat ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Laat maar zitten,' sprak het elvenmeisje. Ze ging aan een tafeltje zitten, en ging verder met haar naaiwerk.

'Wat ben je aan het maken ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Oh, iets voor de buurman,' zei het elvenmeisje.

'Maar ik zie helemaal geen ander huisje in de buurt,' sprak Elwin.

'Het is voor een mol, die net onder de grond woont, in een hol,' zei het elvenmeisje.

Elwin dacht na. Hij moest en zou bij die droom steen komen, maar die groene wachters waren natuurlijk ook een probleem. 'Zeg, wie hebben die steen eigenlijk gemaakt ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Kik en Kes,' zei het elvenmeisje.

Kik en Kes woonden helemaal aan de zee, en volgens het elvenmeisje zou dat de enige oplossing zijn, om daar naartoe te gaan. Elwin ging het huisje weer uit en klom op zijn kameel na het elvenmeisje bedankt te hebben. Het elvenmeisje wenste Elwin een goede reis en zwaaide hem na.

Door bosjes, langs rivieren en over bergen kwam Elwin na dagen reizen eindelijk aan bij de zee waar Kik en Kes woonden. Het waren twee kabouters. Ze huppelden en dansten om een kampvuur heen. Ze leken wel broertjes, en dat waren ze ook, en zij hadden beiden de droom steen gemaakt.

De broertjes kregen al snel in de gaten dat Elwin bij hen was gekomen, en begonnen hem aan te staren. 'Goedendag,' zei Elwin, en stapte van de kameel af. Al snel begon hij het verhaal te vertellen, en de kabouters luisterden aandachtig.

Aan het einde van het verhaal sprak Kes : 'Beste Elwin, de droomsteen is eens van ons gestolen door koning Kabeljauw, oftewel de gokkoning. Het is een smerige dief, die nu door de droomsteen de dromen van kinderen probeert te stelen.'

'Maar dat is verschrikkelijk,' sprak Elwin. 'Hoe doet hij dat ?'

'Nou,' zei Kes, 'heel simpel. Hij lokt de kinderen naar zijn kermis en dan laat hij ze gokken, en als ze verliezen dan steelt hij hun dromen, en als ze winnen, dan neemt hij ze met hem mee. Natuurlijk laat hij dan wel een namaak-kind achter voor de ouders.'

'Maar is hij geen vis ?' vroeg Elwin verbaasd.

'Soms,' zei Kik. 'Hij kan van gedaante veranderen. Hij is een tovenaar.'

'Wat kunnen we eraan doen ?' vroeg Elwin.

'En nog eens iets,' zei Kik, 'de droomsteen in de grot waar je naar op zoek was is namaak om bandieten te misleiden. De echte droomsteen is in het gokpaleis van koning Kabeljauw, hoog in de bergen.'

Elwin zuchtte. 'Hoe ga ik daar ooit komen ? Waar is het ?'

'Het gokpaleis is goed verborgen, maar Utsmul, onze raaf, weet wel waar het is. Niemand waagt zich verder daar. Wij hadden de moed al opgegeven, totdat jij er weer over begon,' sprak Kes.

Elwin knikte. 'Ik wil er wel naartoe. Hij zal de gestolen droomsteen vast goed verborgen houden, maar ik wil het er op wagen.'

'Wees maar voorzichtig, Elwin,' waarschuwde Kes. 'Hij is niet zomaar voor een dubbeltje te vangen. Hij is erg ervaren in het toveren.'

'Ik begrijp het. Maar iemand moet hem tegenhouden,' sprak Elwin dapper.

'Goed dan, als je er op staat,' sprak Kes, en begon op zijn vingers te fluiten. Na een tijdje kwam er een grote raaf aanvliegen. Dat moest Utsmul wezen.

'Utsmul,' sprak Kes. 'Kun jij deze jongen afzetten bij het gokpaleis van koning Kabeljauw en dan direct weer terugkomen ?'

Elwin mocht op zijn rug klimmen, en na een kort afscheid steeg de grote raaf op, en ging richting de bergen. De raaf wist precies waar het was, maar eigenlijk wilden de kabouters hem daar niet hebben. Daarom moest hij ook direct weer terugkomen.

Het gokpaleis was gemaakt van een doorzichtig gesteente en was verlicht. Elwin wist dat van hieruit de gokkoning zijn grote toverij bedreef door de droomsteen. De raaf zette hem af, en vloog direct weer weg. Elwin hield zich goed verscholen achter een heuveltje. Er waren ook wat struiken. Ook hier kon hij zich achter verschuilen, en liep zo dichter en dichter naar het gokpaleis toe. Hij hoorde harde muziek vanuit het gokpaleis komen. Het leek wel alsof er een feestje was.

Elwin zag wachten staan bij de grote poort van het gokpaleis. Daar moest hij niet zijn. Achter struikjes liep hij helemaal naar de achterkant van het gokpaleis. Ergens door een achterdeurtje van de keuken ging hij naar binnen. Hier werkte een vrouw met een grote witte koksmuts op. 'Wat mot je !' snauwde de vrouw die aan de maalmachine stond. Elwin keek naar de plakjes ham en trok een vies gezicht. 'Wat doet u hier kan ik beter vragen,' sprak Elwin.

'Zeg, brutaal ventje,' sprak de vrouw. 'Zal ik jou eens een draai om je oren geven ?'

'Nou, dat hoeft nu ook weer niet,' zei Elwin. 'Het was gewoon een vraag.'

'Het antwoord op de vraag is : Gaat je geen klapperjanus aan, meneertje kwekgraag,' snauwde de vrouw.

'Okay, goed,' zei Elwin. 'Ik kan wel zien dat u een slecht humeur heeft. Is er soms iets gebeurd ?'

'Ophoepelen nou, ventje !' riep de vrouw die ineens stopte met de maalmachine. 'Of zou ik jou eens door de maalmachine halen, want je staat er nogal om te trappelen.'

'Nou,' zei Elwin, 'dat hoeft nu ook weer niet. Waarom doet u zo boos ? Iets verkeerds gegeten !' Nu werd de vrouw echt woedend en greep een slagersmes van de muur. 'Zeg, akelig ventje, vlegel, zal ik jou eens aan het mes rijgen ?' riep ze terwijl ze op Elwin afstapte. Elwin deed direct een stap achteruit. 'Nou, vertel op, oude heks, wat doe je daar ?' vroeg Elwin brutaal. 'U gaat me toch niet vertellen dat hier niets gebeurd is, hè ?' En toen begon Elwin het hele verhaal zonder een blad voor zijn mond te vertellen. Elwin was een openlijke en eerlijke jongen, en zei altijd alles recht voor zijn raap. De vrouw stond hem met open mond aan te kijken, terwijl het mes uit haar hand gleed. Zo slap waren haar handen geworden. Ze begon te stamelen : 'H... hoe weet jij dat allemaal ?'

'Ik heb met Kik en Kes gesproken,' sprak Elwin.

De vrouw wreef over haar kin. 'Hmmm, het is inderdaad waar dat hier een droomsteen verborgen wordt gehouden waar toverij mee wordt bedreven. Ik ben de kokkin hier. Eens won ik een gokspelletje op de kermis, en werd ik hier mee naartoe genomen. Sindsdien moest ik hier werken.

Elwin knikte. 'Jongen, je bent in groot gevaar,' sprak de vrouw. 'Als de koning erachter komt dan ga je eraan, ik zeg het je.'

'Ik moet die steen hebben,' sprak Elwin. 'Hij is van Kik en Kes, en de gokkoning moet stoppen met het lastigvallen van kinderen.'

'Ach,' sprak de vrouw. 'Je kunt toch niet tegen hem op, maar ik wens je geluk.'

Elwin liep door de grote keuken heen, en kwam toen door een deur op de gang. Direct ging hij weer terug, want hij had wachten gezien. 'Ga de kelder maar in,' sprak de kokkin, 'want hoogstwaarschijnlijk wordt de droomsteen ergens ondergronds verborgen gehouden of op een hogere verdieping. Zoek het maar uit, want in de kelder is een lift.'

De vrouw wees op de kelderdeur ergens aan de zijkant van de keuken, en daar liep Elwin toen naartoe en ging de kelder binnen door van de trap af naar beneden te gaan. Daar stond inderdaad de lift. De lift kon zowel dieper als omhoog.

'Eerst maar eens omhoog,' zei Elwin tegen zichzelf, en drukte op een rode knop voor de hogere verdieping. Na een tijdje stapte hij uit en keek direct goed om zich heen. Hier was ook een lange gang zoals op de begane grond waar hij de wachten zag. Gelukkig zag hij nu niemand. Er waren hier een heleboel deuren. Elwin was vastbesloten de droomsteen te vinden.

'Welke deur zal ik eens nemen ?' dacht Elwin bij zichzelf. 'Hmmm,' zei hij, terwijl hij langs de deuren begon te lopen. Het leek maar niet op te houden. De gang was erg lang, en hij liep over een langwerpig rood tapijt. Het leek wel alsof de gang een beetje naar beneden liep, en daarna weer een beetje omhoog ging. 'Het lijkt wel alsof hier olifanten hebben gelopen,' dacht Elwin bij zichzelf. 'Het is hier een beetje ingezakt.' Ook ging de gang in een bocht, en toen ging de gang weer verder. Er leek echt geen einde aan te komen. Aan beide kanten waren er deuren. Toen ineens ging er een deur open. 'Wie is daar !' werd er geroepen. Het gebeurde ergens achter Elwin, en hij liep weer een beetje terug. Hij wist dat hij erg voorzichtig moest zijn. Er kwam een lange man met een lange hoed uit de deur-opening. Hij had een hele deftige jas aan. 'Wat moet dat hier, ventje,' zei de lange man.

'Wie bent u eigenlijk ?' vroeg Elwin op een hele brutale manier. 'U doet zomaar de deur open en begint te roepen.'

'Ja, wat nou,' sprak de man, 'dit is mijn domein. Ik ben een kermisbaas.'

'Oh, toch niet de koning hoop ik,' sprak Elwin.

'Ach welnee, de koning is dood. Ik bedoelde deze kamer hier is mijn domein, en als ik geluid oppik vanuit mijn kamer dan wil ik graag weten wie het is,' sprak de man.

Elwin keek verbaasd. 'De koning is dood ? Dat wist ik niet. Wanneer is dat gebeurd, en is er inmiddels alweer een nieuwe koning ?'

De man keek hem met grote ogen aan. 'Eh, nee, er is geen nieuwe koning. De koning is allang dood, al wel vijfhonderd jaar.'

'Ik vraag me af of ik dan wel in het juiste paleis ben,' zei Elwin, en begon toen het verhaal over de droomsteen te vertellen.

De man begon hard te lachen. 'Ach jongen, wat zijn dat toch allemaal voor sprookjes. Er is hier geen droomsteen, en al helemaal geen gokkoning.'

Elwin wist niet of hij de man kon geloven. Het kon natuurlijk ook een valstrik zijn. Misschien had de man wel wat te verbergen, of misschien was hij de gokkoning wel.

'Eh, i... ik loop nog even verder,' zei Elwin. De man maakte even een vreemd gebaar en ging toen zijn kamer weer in. Elwin liep verder. Zou hij echt in het verkeerde paleis zijn, of werd hij door de man bedrogen ?

'Ik ben Emiel,' hoorde hij iemand zingen. 'Erg sterk, maar een beetje fragiel, zo mooi als een bloem, niet op zoek naar roem. Ik houd mij graag stil, maar soms geef ik een gil. Soms zing ik een lied, zo verdwijnt het verdriet.' Een man met een accordeon kwam ineens door een deur de gang op. Toen hij Elwin zag schrok hij. 'Wel alle kermisklanten !' riep hij. 'Wie ben jij !'

'Ik ben Elwin, en wie ben jij ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Emiel is de naam,' sprak de man, en stak zijn hand uit. 'Laat het handenschudden maar zitten,' zei Elwin brutaal. 'Wij zijn nog geen vrienden.'

'Beleefdheidsgebaar,' sprak de man. 'Ik ben van goede wil.'

Elwin begon zijn verhaal te vertellen, maar weer kreeg hij hetzelfde antwoord dat de koning al vijfhonderd jaar dood was, en dat er hier geen droomsteen was. De man scheen ook op de kermis te werken. 'Maar de kokkin zei dat het allemaal waar was,' sprak Elwin.

De man begon te schudden van het lachen. 'De kokkin ? Dat mens is hartstikke gek,' zei de man. 'Dat mens praat met iedereen mee, en je kan haar van alles wijsmaken. Zij is degene die dit soort zotte verhalen de wereld in helpt. Ze hebben me weleens verteld dat ze vroeger van een hooiwagen is afgevallen.'

'Hmm,' zei Elwin, 'maar ook Kik en Kes zeiden dat het waar was. In feite hebben zij mij gezegd dat hier de gokkoning woont en hier de droomsteen verborgen houdt waarmee hij kinderen betovert.'

'Ach welnee,' sprak de man. 'Kik en Kes ? Ik zou niet weten wie dat zijn, maar daarvan is geen sprake. Dit soort dingen gebeuren hier niet. Dit paleis is voor een ieder die op de kermis werkt, als een soort ontmoetings-plaats. Het heeft geen koning.'

Elwin trok zijn wenkbrauwen op. 'Okay, dan zijn we uitgepraat. Ik ga het nog even verder proberen, want ik krijg nu tegenstrijdige verhalen te horen.'

'Succes ermee, jongen,' sprak Emiel, en ging weer zijn kamer in. Elwin begon nu hard door de gang te rennen. Hij wilde weten wanneer de gang nu eens eindelijk zou ophouden, maar het leek niet op te houden. 'Is dat gebouw dan zo groot ?' dacht Elwin bij zichzelf. 'Van buiten leek het wel groot, maar ook weer niet zo groot, of zou het toverij zijn. Misschien ben ik al onder een betovering gekomen ?' Elwin rilde even, en rende toen verder. 'Ik ga gewoon wat deuren binnen,' zei Elwin tegen zichzelf, en trok een deur open. Weer zag hij een hele lange gang. En weer begon hij te rennen, en leek het wel alsof de vloer een beetje was ingezakt. 'Weer die olifanten,' dacht Elwin bij zichzelf, en toen ging de vloer weer een beetje opwaarts. Ook aan deze gang leek geen einde te komen. Hij ging weer een willekeurige deur naar binnen, en weer was het precies hetzelfde. Het was weer een lange, eindeloze gang. 'Ik ben goed verdwaald,' sprak Elwin tot zichzelf. 'Wat een doolhof is dit, zeg.'

Welke deur Elwin ook probeerde, het waren alleen maar gangen. Er waren hier helemaal geen kamers. Elwin begon erg moe te worden. 'Hoe kon ik ook zo dom zijn,' sprak Elwin tegen zichzelf. 'Is er iemand !' begon Elwin te roepen. Maar er was geen antwoord. Het bleef doodstil, en het leek steeds stiller te worden. Het leek wel alsof de muren en deuren hem aanstaarden. Elwin merkte dat hij niet goed kon ademen. Hij had frisse lucht nodig. 'Ik wil eruit !' riep hij. Na een tijdje stortte hij moe op de grond neer. Hij draaide zich om met zijn gezicht naar het plafond, waar hij een luik zag. Elwin kreeg weer een beetje hoop. Er hing een klein touwtje aan het luik. Maar Elwin kon er net niet bij. Toen sprong Elwin in de lucht, en greep het touwtje. Direct ging het luik open, en er gleed een trap naar beneden. Voorzichtig ging Elwin de trap op, die als een ladder was. Het was hier erg donker. Een zwart beest, als een zwarte kat, staarde naar hem. 'Wat kom je doen ?' sprak de kat.

Direct begon Elwin zijn verhaal te vertellen. De kat begon te lachen. Elwin kreeg weer hetzelfde te horen, dat er geen koning was en al helemaal geen droomsteen. 'Hoe zou jij dat weten ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Ik ken het paleis van binnenste buiten,' sprak de kat. Ik ben hier geboren en opgegroeid.'

'Oh,' zei Elwin. 'Waarschijnlijk ben ik dan echt in het verkeerde paleis, of jullie zijn allemaal bedriegers, kermis-bedriegers, oplichters.'

'Wat maakt het uit,' sprak de kat. 'Je komt hier toch niet meer weg.'

'Waarom niet ?' vroeg Elwin. 'Wat is dat voor iets belachelijks, een paleis waar je niet meer uit weg kan.'

'Je had hier nooit moeten komen,' sprak de kat.

'Oh, nu begrijp ik het,' zei Elwin boos. 'Jij bent natuurlijk die gokkoning die het altijd maar weer op kinderen heeft gemunt.'

'Natuurlijk niet !' schreeuwde de kat plotseling. 'Ik bedoel als je hier niet bent uitgenodigd dan had je niet moeten komen. We hebben het niet zo op indringers en dieven. Die worden dan ook netjes in de val gelokt.'

'Oh, dus zo zit het !' schreeuwde Elwin woedend terug. 'Meneer de gokkoning mag de droomsteen stelen en het leven van kinderen zuur maken, en zij die daar wat aan willen doen hebben het ineens gedaan ?'

De kat begon te grijnzen. 'Kereltje, waarom zo moeilijk ? Ten eerste zoals ik al zei is er hier geen gokkoning of droomsteen, en ten tweede : Ook al ben je verkeerd ingelicht is dat nog geen goede reden om zo maar ergens in te breken en politie-agent te spelen. Daar zijn andere wegen voor. Je had het op z'n minst kunnen vragen.'

'Dat doe ik nu toch ?' zei Elwin.

'Nee,' zei de kat. 'Je had bijvoorbeeld eerst kunnen bellen of een brief kunnen schrijven.'

'Ja, zeg, doe me een lol,' zei Elwin. 'Ik had jullie telefoonnummer niet, ik wist het adres niet, en naar mijn informatie had ik te maken met zware criminelen, dus die vlieger ging niet op.'

'Je bent een valse beschuldiger !' brulde de kat. 'Daar zijn geen bewijzen voor. Wij zijn eerlijke kermiswerkers.'

'Wat is jouw taak dan ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Simpel,' zei de kat. 'Afrekenen met kermis-dieven zoals jij.'

'Ah, dus jij bent van de kermis-beveiliging ?' zei Elwin. De kat knikte.

'Ik begrijp het,' zei Elwin, die een beetje moedeloos begon te worden. 'Ik heb een fout gemaakt, een grote fout. Ik moest in een ander paleis zijn. Ik heb de verkeerde deur genomen. Hoe kom ik eruit ?'

'Dat had ik je al gezegd,' zei de kat. 'Je komt hier niet meer uit. Vergeet het maar. Dit is je verdiende loon.'

'Maar ik had goede bedoelingen,' sprak Elwin. 'Ik wilde de kinderen helpen, en Kik en Kes, en ik wilde van de kermis weer een veilige plaats maken.'

'Jij beledigt ons beroep,' sprak de kat. 'De kermis is de meest veilige plaats in Ovven, en Kik en Kes zijn leugenkabouters, treiterkabouters, trollen.'

'Okay, okay,' zei Elwin, die wist dat hij niet zomaar van de kat zou afkomen. 'Ik zal het niet meer doen. Laat me er nu alsjeblieft uit. Hoe lang zal ik hiervoor gestrafd worden ?'

'Zoals ik al zei,' sprak de kat, 'kom je hier niet meer uit.'

'Dat is misdadig,' sprak Elwin. 'Jullie zijn criminelen.'

'Nu moet je de boel niet gaan omdraaien,' sprak de kat.

'Wat ga je met me doen ?' riep Elwin.

'Dat zul je nog wel zien,' sprak de kat. In grote woede trapte Elwin plotseling de kat van zich weg, en ging snel de ladder af, drukte de ladder terug, en gooide vliegensvlug het luik dicht. Snel trok Elwin het vloertapijt op om te zien of daar misschien ook een luik zat, en ja hoor. Elwin trok vliegensvlug het luik open, terwijl er een ladder uitschoof naar beneden. 'Ik krijg je nog wel, ellendeling !' hoorde hij de kat roepen. Elwin stoorde zich er niet aan, en ging over de ladder naar beneden. Hier was ook een gang. Dat zou de begane grond moeten zijn. Hier moest ergens de keuken zijn met de kokkin. Maar het waren weer veel gangen met allemaal deuren naar gangen, dus Elwin werd al snel duizelig. 'Je komt er toch niet meer uit !' hoorde

hij de kat krijsen. Elwin werd helemaal naar van het gekrijs. 'Houd je kop !' riep Elwin. Maar het gekrijs leek alleen maar erger te worden. Elwin stopte zijn vingers in zijn oren en begon te beven. Met zijn voet schoof hij het vloertapijt weg en zag weer een luik. Snel deed hij zijn vingers even uit zijn oren om het luik open te trekken, maar tot zijn grote schrik was daar weer alles donker. Hij hoopte maar dat hij hier geen tweede kat zou tegenkomen. Hij had zijn vingers weer in zijn oren gestopt vanwege het gekrijs, en direct toen hij over de uitgeschoven ladder de diepte was ingegaan werd hij door een hele groep zwarte katten aangevlogen.

'Nee !' jammerde Elwin, die om zich heen begon te slaan en te schoppen. 'Help !' riep hij. De katten beten hem en krabten hem. Elwin werd hoe langer hoe bozer, maar ook banger. Op de grond was alles nat. Er lag hier water en tot zijn grote schrik lag er dichtbij hem een krokodil. Elwin begon door het water te rennen, maar al gauw begon het water dieper te worden. Er stond hier een sterke stroming. Hij hoorde het water bruisen, alsof er ergens een grote waterval dichtbij was. Elwin gilde bijna van angst toen de sterke stroom hem meesleurde. 'Help !' schreeuwde hij, en toen ging hij kopje onder. Wat er toen gebeurde kon hij zich niet meer herinneren, maar hij werd even later wakker in een bed, terwijl een boerin zich over hem heenboog en bezorgd naar hem glimlachtte. 'Je bent veilig hier,' sprak de vrouw. 'Je was op een gevaarlijke plaats.'

'Waar ben ik ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Op de boerderij,' sprak de vrouw.

'Welke boerderij ? Is dit nog steeds het gokpaleis ?' vroeg Elwin.

De vrouw knikte. 'Je ging door een gat heen. Het water zoog je erdoor, en toen kwam je hier. Dit is nog een verdieping lager. Het gebeurt wel vaker. Wij zorgen voor de slachtoffers. Er gebeuren vreemde dingen op de hogere verdiepingen.'

'E... en dit is een boerderij ?' Elwin keek om zich heen, en het leek inderdaad op een boerderij. Elwin begon zijn verhaal te stotteren en kon het niet laten de boerin te vragen of het gokpaleis ook een gokkoning had en een verborgen gehouden droomsteen. De vrouw begon te lachen. 'Dus je hebt het ook gehoord ?' vroeg ze.

'Ja, van Kik en Kes,' sprak Elwin, 'en van de kokkin in de keuken.'

'Luister goed,' sprak de boerin. 'Ja, het is waar dat er een gokkoning is, en een droomsteen die hij bewaakt, maar daar mag eigenlijk niet over gesproken worden.'

'Zie, dus het is toch waar !' riep Elwin.

'Shhhh !' zei de vrouw hardop, en legde haar vinger op zijn mond. 'Mondje dicht, jongen, want we willen niet in de problemen komen.'

'Okay,' zei Elwin, 'sorry.' De vrouw glimlachtte naar hem. Elwin merkte dat hij droge kleren aanhad. Het was een pyjama. De vrouw had hem goed verzorgd. 'Weet u dan ook waar de droomsteen is ?' vroeg Elwin fluisterend. De vrouw schudde haar hoofd. 'Die wordt veel te goed verborgen gehouden,' sprak ze.

Elwin was erg moe, en viel al snel weer in slaap. Na een hele lange tijd, hij wist niet hoe lang, werd hij wakker. Het leek wel alsof hij verschillende dagen had geslapen, maar hij was ook zo moe geweest. Hij stapte uit bed, en keek rond in de boerderij. Het was een beetje donker, dus hij deed wat lampjes aan. Hij zag de boerin niet. Even later vond hij haar slaapkamer en zag dat ze sliep. Voorzichtig liep Elwin weer terug naar zijn kamer. Over een stoel hingen wat droge kleren die hij kon aantrekken. Nadat hij dat had gedaan ging hij de gang op. De gang was heel lang, en het deed hem denken aan de gangen van de hogere verdiepingen. 'Nee, niet weer,' zuchtte hij. 'Laat ik maar weer teruggaan.' Maar hoe ver hij ook terugliep, hij kon de boerderij niet meer vinden. 'Dat moet ik weer net hebben !' sprak hij luid. Hij begon de boerin te roepen, want angst begon weer over zijn rug te glijden. Alles was doodstil. 'Wat is er, jongen ?' werd er ineens geroepen. Het was de boerin. Na een korte tijd kwam ze eraan lopen, met een glimlach. Ze nam hem bij de hand en samen liepen ze terug naar de boerderij. 'Zij die hier niet wonen verdwalen altijd,' sprak de vrouw glimlachend.

Ze gingen naar de woonkamer, en de vrouw gaf hem wat te eten en te drinken. 'Hier, je zult wel honger hebben,' sprak ze.

'Eigenlijk niet,' zei Elwin. 'Ik weet niet hoe het komt.' In ieder geval nam hij wat te drinken. De vrouw glimlachtte weer naar hem. 'Heeft u ook kinderen ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Nee,' zei de vrouw.

'En een boer ?' vroeg Elwin.

De vrouw schudde haar hoofd. 'Ik woon hier helemaal alleen. Toen ik een kind was won ik eens op de kermis, en toen werd ik hier mee naartoe genomen om als boerin te werken.'

'Dat moet heel eenzaam zijn,' sprak Elwin. De vrouw knikte. 'Wij zijn onder een betovering,' sprak ze. 'De gokkoning gebruikt de droomsteen voor zijn kwade doeleinden.'

'Daarom ben ik hier,' zei Elwin. 'Weet u ook wat onder deze verdieping is ?'

De vrouw schudde haar hoofd. Elwin dacht na. Hij wilde de vrouw graag helpen, maar hij wist niet hoe. Wat hij wel wist is dat de droomsteen zo snel mogelijk terugmoest naar Kik en Kes. Hij wilde het geheim kennen van het gokpaleis en de gokkoning. Hij wist dat het geen optie was om naar de hogere verdieping te gaan, want daar zouden de katten en de krokodillen hem al opwachten. Samen met de boerin wilde hij kijken of er ergens een luik zou zijn onder het vloertapijt op de gang. De boerin knikte, en nam zijn hand, stond op, en liep met hem de gang op. Met zijn voet schoof hij het vloertapijt weg, en zag inderdaad een luik. Samen maakten ze het luik open. Er kwam veel licht doorheen.

Hoofdstuk 2.

Er kwam een narretje door het luik heen naar boven. 'Bedankt,' zuchtte het narretje. 'Ik heb hier zolang opgesloten gezeten. Ik dacht dat ik er nooit meer uit zou komen.' Het mannetje was erg opgelucht. 'Wie bent u ?' vroeg Elwin.

'De naam is Rotenstein, en ik zing graag een refrein,' sprak het mannetje. Elwin keek hem verbaasd aan. 'Wat is daar beneden ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Oh, het is daar verschrikkelijk,' sprak Rotenstein. 'Allemaal krokodillen en katten, en water, veel water, en vaak donker.'

'Maar nu was het licht, en het klinkt wel een beetje als waar ik vandaan kwam,' sprak Elwin.

'Ja, licht, eens in de week ofzo, voor een paar uurtjes, veel licht,' sprak Rotenstein.

'Hoe kwam je daar ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Op de fiets,' zei het mannetje. Elwin was verbaasd. 'Daar ben je zo een keer ingefietst ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Nou, eigenlijk fietste ik gewoon eens een keer naar de kermis, won iets, en toen namen ze me op de fiets hier naartoe,' zei het mannetje.

'Wie waren dat ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Dat kan ik me niet meer herinneren,' sprak het mannetje. 'Het is al zo lang geleden, maar sindsdien moest ik nar zijn, mensen aan het lachen maken, maar dat ging niet echt goed, en toen hebben ze me hieronder gebracht.'

'Maar dat is verschrikkelijk,' zei Elwin. 'Ik denk dat we hier nu allemaal vastzitten.'

'Oh, dus jij kunt ook niet weg ?' zei het mannetje. 'En u, boerin, ook niet ?'

De boerin schudde haar hoofd. 'Allemaal vast,' sprak ze.

'Wat een waardeloze bedoening, zeg,' sprak het narretje. 'Er moet toch iets op te vinden zijn ?'

'Ja,' zei Elwin, 'en er moet hier ook nog ergens een kokkin zijn, die zit in hetzelfde probleem als ons.'

'Nou, mooi is dat,' sprak het narretje. 'Hoeveel meer zouden er hier opgesloten zitten in dit reusachtige paleis ?'

'Ik heb geen idee,' zei Elwin.

'Maar we hebben in ieder geval elkaar,' sprak het mannetje. 'Laten we dichtbij elkaar blijven.'

'Ik wil hem hier niet hebben,' zei de boerin. 'Ik vertrouw hem niet. Hij lijkt op een kermiswerker.'

Elwin keek bedenkelijk. 'Echt niet, mevrouw !' riep het narretje. 'Ik zweer u dat ik nooit zo ben geweest. Ze hebben mij dit pakje aangetrokken en ik moest gek doen om de mensen aan het lachen te maken.'

'Ik vertrouw hem niet, Elwin,' zei de boerin. 'Ik wil weer terug. Ik voel me niet op mijn gemak.' De boerin draaide zich om en liep terug naar de woonkamer. 'Kom je, Elwin ?' zei ze nog, en toen verdween ze door de bocht van de gang. Elwin raakte in paniek, want hij wist dat hij de boerin nodig had om terug te komen in de boerderij. 'Boerin !' riep hij. Hij rende de bocht om, maar zag alleen maar een eindeloos lange gang. Elwin zuchtte, en ging weer terug naar het narretje. Hij hoopte dat de boerin snel weer zou terugkomen, maar dat gebeurde niet. 'Jij gelooft me toch, hè, Elwin ?' vroeg het narretje. Elwin keek het narretje aan en knipperde even met zijn ogen. 'Ik weet het niet, narretje,' sprak Elwin. 'Ik ken je niet lang genoeg om het zeker te weten.' Het narretje keek hem strak in zijn ogen. 'Je gelooft me toch wel, hè, Elwin ? Je gelooft toch niet die praatjes van die gekke, dikke boerin ? Hé Elwin !' zei het narretje die steeds harder begon te praten, en toen zelfs vlak voor Elwin begon te roepen. De rillingen vlogen Elwin over zijn rug. Plotseling haalde het narretje vanuit het niets een knuppel te voorschijn, en sloeg Elwin op zijn hoofd. Na een tijdje werd Elwin wakker. Hij voelde een bult op zijn hoofd, en er was bloed aan zijn hand. Hij lag op het tapijt. Het luik was dicht, en er was geen narretje meer te bekennen. Trillend stond Elwin op, en begon verder te zoeken. Hij riep naar de boerin, maar tevergeefs.

Hij wist dat de gangen hier eindeloos waren. Naar boven wilde hij niet, en ook niet naar beneden. Maar als hij moest kiezen, dan toch liever naar beneden, maar eerst wilde hij wat anders proberen. Hij begon de muren te onderzoeken. Ook begon hij de deurknoppen te onderzoeken. Uiteindelijk begon hij te schreeuwen van ellende. Hij voelde zich bedrogen, en hij was bang. Hij begon geklop te horen op de vloer, en toen ook op het plafond. Het spookte hier verschrikkelijk. Dit was niet zomaar een gokpaleis, maar een spookhuis. 'Wat moeten jullie van me !' riep Elwin.

'Ik kan het niet meer verdragen,' zei Elwin tegen zichzelf. 'Ik kan dit niet lang meer volhouden. Iemand moet me helpen.' Elwin begon op de muren te kloppen, om te zien of er ergens misschien zwakke plekken waren, maar voor wat ? Na een tijdje was hij zo moedeloos dat hij weer het tapijt wegschoof met zijn voet. Er waren veel luiken onder het tapijt. Hij maakte er eentje jammerend open, niet wetende wat hij dit keer zou aantreffen. Alweer was er licht, en het narretje verscheen weer. Elwin schrok en hysterisch gooide hij het luik weer dicht. 'Dat was op het nippertje,' zuchtte Elwin, terwijl hij beefde van de schrik. 'Ik weet wel waar je bent !' krijste het narretje. 'Ik zal je wel krijgen !' Elwin begon te rennen, maar het narretje bleef krijsen. De boerin had gelijk had, maar hij wist niet of de boerin wel te vertrouwen was, want waar was ze gebleven ? Hij wenste dat hij gewoon dichtbij de boerin was gebleven. Of misschien kon hij wel niemand hier vertrouwen, en was alles één groot bedrog ? Elwin had zijn vingers in zijn oren gestopt terwijl hij bleef rennen. Hij wilde alles van zich afschudden. Alhoewel de gang eindeloos leek bleef hij toch rennen. Hij moest en zou hier doorheen komen. Hij moest een manier zien te vinden om de betovering te verbreken. Hij gooide alle deuren open aan beide kanten, en bleef allemaal gangen zien. Dit moest toch ergens een keer stoppen ?

Hij begreep nu waarom Kik en Kes niet meewilden en hem nog hadden gewaarschuwd. Oh, had hij nu maar naar hen geluisterd, maar eigenlijk wilde hij de moed nog niet opgeven. Iemand moest deze tovenaar een halt toeroepen. Alhoewel hij er aan twijfelde of hij daar wel de juiste persoon voor was. Hij begon te schelden op de vele deuren en de lange gangen, maar niets hielp. Opeens stond er een oude vrouw voor hem met een kaars. 'Geef de moed maar op, jongen,' sprak ze.

'Nooit !' riep Elwin. De vrouw leek op een oude boerin.

'U bent toch niet dezelfde boerin die ik al eerder was tegengekomen toch ?' vroeg Elwin. De vrouw schudde haar hoofd. 'Nee, Elwin, ik ben iets veel ergers.'

Elwin schrok. 'Hoe kent u mijn naam, en hoezo bent u iets veel ergers ?' Plotseling stond de vrouw in de vlammen, en donder en bliksem verscheen boven haar hoofd. 'Ik ben een heks !' krijste ze, terwijl ze geheel in een vuurvlam veranderde, en toen verdween ze. Elwin greep

naar zijn hoofd en jammerde. 'Wat is er toch met mij aan de hand. Zijn dit verbeeldingen ? Word ik straks gewoon weer wakker in mijn eigen bed ? Oh, was ik maar thuisgebleven. Ik ook altijd met mijn stomme ideeen.' Elwin begon uit pure wanhoop te springen op de vloer. Plotseling gingen alle deuren voor hem en achter hem open en door elke deur kwam er een clown met een mes uit. Allemaal begonnen ze langzaam op hem af te komen. Elwin aarzelde geen moment, schoof het tapijt met zijn voet opzij, opende vliegensvlug een luik en sprong naar binnen. 'Narretje of geen narretje,' zei hij tegen zichzelf. 'Hierboven moet ik niet meer wezen.' Alles was hier licht, en direct hoorde hij het narretje krijsen, maar hij viel dieper en dieper. 'Kom terug !' schreeuwde het narretje in de verte. Na een tijdje leek het wel alsof Elwin op een grote hoop kussens was gevallen. Alles was zo zacht hier. Hij begon zich direct een weg door de kussens te graven, nog steeds bang voor de clowns en het narretje.

Na een tijdje had hij de bodem bereikt, en baande zich een weg door de kussens heen. Hij begon steeds meer zand onder zijn voeten te voelen, en na een tijdje kwam hij aan in een woestijn. Hij kon zo eindelijk uit de hoop kussens stappen. Het was hier licht, en toch wist hij dat het slechts een verdieping was van het gokpaleis, diep onder de grond.

Er was een oase dichtbij, en verderop in de woestijn was een cafeetje. Elwin liep daar naar binnen, waar een lange cowboy, en twee kale mannen met een lange baard een spelletje met dobbelstenen deden. De cowboy hief even zijn grote hoed op, en sprak : 'Goedenavond, heer.' Ook de twee kale mannen met de lange baarden knikten naar hem. 'Wat zal het wezen, hoe kan ik je helpen ?' vroeg de lange cowboy met de grote hoed.

'Nou, als het zou kunnen,' zei Elwin, 'dan kunt u mij uitleg geven over waar ik terecht ben gekomen, en waar de gokkoning is en de droomsteen ?'

De cowboy en ook de twee kale mannen trokken hun wenkbrauwen op. 'Wat zeg je me daar ?' snauwde de cowboy. 'Alsof ik jou dat ga vertellen ! Dat is een groot geheim, en daar kun je ook beter niet over beginnen,' terwijl hij zijn twee revolvers trok. 'Ik daag je uit voor een duel !'

'Kalm maar, het is nog maar een kind,' zei één van de kale mannen, terwijl de andere knikte. Nu werd de cowboy pas echt woedend. 'Wat heb ik daar mee te maken ? Hij heeft zijn mond over zulke dingen te houden. Dat is niet goed voor mijn zaken. Straks komt niemand hier nog.'

'Luister,' zei de andere kale man. 'Ben je nu niet een beetje aan het overdrijven ?'

De cowboy trapte de tafel om, terwijl de dobbelstenen over de grond begonnen te rollen. 'Ik daag jullie ook uit voor een duel !' brulde hij. 'Ik kom hier over een uurtje terug, en als ik jullie hier dan nog zie, dan schiet ik een grote barst in jullie !' Toen rende hij scheldend het café uit.

'Die moet even afkoelen,' zei de andere kale man weer. 'En wie ben jij ?'

'Ik ben Elwin,' sprak Elwin, en begon toen zijn hele verhaal te vertellen. De kale mannen keken hem aan in grote verbazing. 'Laten we hier eerst weggaan,' sprak één van de kale mannen, 'anders komt dat heethoofd terug, en dan hebben we goed de poppen aan het dansen.' De andere kale man knikte, en sprak : 'Het is inderdaad nogal een heethoofd.'

'Waar moeten we nu naartoe ?' vroeg Elwin.

'De woestijn in natuurlijk,' zei één van de kale mannen. 'In de oase zal hij ons ook vinden.' En daar gingen ze, dieper de woestijn in. Ze hadden volgens de kale mannen geen andere keuze, en ze hoopten dat ze hem niet hier ergens tegen zouden komen. Er waren hier veel zanderige heuveltjes. 'Vertel me eens,' sprak één van de kale mannen, 'dus jij gelooft echt dat dit slechts een verdieping is van een gokpaleis, en nog wel onder de grond ?'

Elwin knikte. 'Ja,' sprak Elwin. 'Ik heb het zelf gezien, en ik ben er geweest, en kwam toen hier terecht toen ik dieper ging.' De oude kale mannen begonnen te lachen. Ze hadden bijna geen tanden meer. 'Wat een kletspraat,' zei één van hen. Dus als we hier dieper graven dan komen we misschien in een andere verdieping van dat zogenaamde gokpaleis ?' Elwin knikte weer. 'Ja, dat denk ik wel, tenzij dit de onderste verdieping is.' De oude mannen begonnen nog harder te bulderen van het lachen.

'Wees maar voorzichtig,' zei Elwin. 'Straks hoort de boze cowboy ons nog.'

Toen werden de oude mannen met de lange baarden wat stiller. 'Hij heeft gelijk,' zei één van hen. Toen sprak de ander : 'Jongen, kijk nu eens goed om je heen en naar boven. Lijkt dit op een verdieping van een paleis ? Zie je boven je een plafond hangen ?'

Elwin schudde zijn hoofd. 'Nee, maar vergeet niet dat het het gokpaleis is van een tovenaar.'

De oude mannen keken bedenkelijk. 'Hmmm, misschien heeft hij gelijk,' zei één van hen. 'Er gebeuren hier soms inderdaad vreemde dingen.'

'Ja,' zei de ander, 'en als die droomsteen echt bestaat en hier ook ergens ligt, misschien zijn er dan nog veel meer schatten.'

'Wees daar maar niet zo zeker van !' zei een stem opeens. Ze stonden ineens recht voor de lange cowboy en keken in de loop van zijn revolver. 'Ik daag jullie uit voor een duel !' riep hij weer. 'Ik doe dertig passen achteruit, en jullie doen hetzelfde, en dan zal het duel beginnen. Moge de beste winnen.'

De cowboy draaide zich om en begon de dertig passen al te maken. Hij nam lange passen. 'Kom,' fluisterde één van de oude mannen hard, en rende de andere kant op, om zo snel mogelijk uit de buurt van de gevaarlijke cowboy te komen. De anderen volgden hem. 'Graven nu,' zei de oude man luid, 'misschien dat de jongen gelijk heeft. We moeten van die cowboy af zien te komen. Alledrie begonnen ze haastig op dezelfde plek met hun handen te graven, en Elwin hoopte maar dat het een dunne laag zand was. Snel vonden ze een marmeren luik, en begonnen het zand ervan weg te halen zodat het geheel zichtbaar zou worden. Maar de cowboy stond al in de verte naar hen te kijken, en kwam steeds dichterbij. 'Het duel is begonnen !' riep de cowboy, en ze hoorden al schoten. Elwin's hart klopte in zijn keel. 'Sneller, sneller !' riep één van de oude mannen. Maar toen ze het luik wilde opentrekken merkten ze dat er een groot slot opzat. Eén van de oude mannen werd in zijn arm geraakt en schreeuwde van de pijn. 'We zijn verloren !' riep de andere kale man. Elwin begon al weg te rennen, maar ineens riepen de oude mannen hem terug. 'Kom terug, kom terug. Eén van de kogels heeft het slot van het luik opengesloten !' Haastig draaide Elwin zich om, en zag hoe de oude mannen door het luik heengingen. Hij rende naar het luik toe zo hard als hij kon, maar tot zijn grote schrik zag hij toen de cowboy die bij het luik was aangekomen. 'Dat doen we dus niet,' sprak de cowboy, en maakte het luik weer dicht.

'Kom, Elwin !' werd er weer door de oude mannen geroepen, maar Elwin zat in de val. 'Ik kan niet !' riep Elwin. 'De cowboy heeft het luik dichtgegooid, en staat hier voor me !' Toen werd het heel stil. De cowboy kwam dichter en dichter bij Elwin, en Elwin wist dat rennen geen zin meer had. Elwin keek recht in de loop van de revolver die de cowboy op hem gericht hield. 'Er gaat hier niks meer gebeuren,' sprak de cowboy. 'Alleen een klein kogeltje.' Toen begon hij te lachen. 'Zeg je laatste wens maar, doe een optelsom, of zing een versje, dat kan mij niet schelen. Je laatste minuut is geslagen. Ik wacht.'

Elwin begon te beven en te trillen. 'I... ik weet het niet,' zei Elwin.

'Wat weet je niet ?' vroeg de cowboy.

'Wat ik moet zeggen,' zei Elwin.

'Goed,' zei de cowboy, 'dan doen we het zonder …'

Maar verder kon de cowboy niet komen. Eén van de oude mannen had hem van achteren met een grote koekepan op zijn hoofd geslagen. De cowboy zakte in elkaar. 'Kom nu vlug, Elwin,' zeiden de oude mannen. 'Er is een keuken onder de woestijn. Weer gingen ze door het luik, en dit keer samen met Elwin. Toen deden ze het luik achter zich dicht. Ze hoopten nu dat de cowboy hen niet meer zou kunnen kwellen.

Het was een reusachtige ondergrondse keuken waar ze in terecht waren gekomen, maar er was niemand. 'Laten we dit gebouw onderzoeken,' zei één van de oude mannen. Er waren hier overal pannen en potten, en er hingen overal messen en hakbijlen aan de muren. 'Het lijkt wel oorlog,' sprak één van de oude mannen. Ze gingen een deur door, en kwamen toen in een andere zaal. Er stonden een heleboel ovens en fornuizen. Ze gingen toen door een enorme metalen schuifdeur en kwamen in een grote witte eetzaal terecht waar een heleboel tafels stonden. Hier was ook niemand. Ze liepen de hele zaal door en gingen toen door een zijdeurtje, waardoor ze in een grote hal terecht kwamen. Hier was een grote trap naar boven, bekleed met rood fluwelen tapijt, en er was een lift, en nog een kleinere gang en wat deuren.

'De jongen heeft gelijk gehad,' zei één van de oude mannen. 'Waarschijnlijk heeft hij ook gelijk over de droomsteen. Die moet hier dus ergens zijn, of op een andere verdieping. Zijn verhaal klinkt aannemelijk. De andere oude man knikte.

'Die lift ga ik niet in. Dat brengt alleen maar narigheid,' sprak Elwin. Hij liep naar de kleinere gang, en sloeg daar een deur open, maar tot zijn grote schrik zag hij toen een hele lange gang die precies leek op de eindeloze gangen waar hij vandaan was gekomen. Snel gooide hij de deur dicht. 'Hier moeten we ook niet wezen,' beefde hij. Hij liep verder op het kleine gangetje en maakte geen deuren meer open. Aan het einde van het kleine gangetje was een trap naar boven. 'Laten we dit proberen,' sprak hij. De oude mannen volgden hem op de voet. Elwin was blij dat hij twee vrienden had gevonden. Op een hogere verdieping waar de trap naartoe leidde stond een deur open van een kamertje. Elwin en de oude mannen gingen er naar

binnen. Elwin keek door het raam en zag allemaal woestijn. 'Hmmm, daar komen we vandaan,' sprak één van de oude mannen. Elwin knikte. 'Laten we nog verder de trap op,' sprak Elwin. Op een verdieping hoger was weer een kamer, en een badkamer. Ook was er een grote hal. Hier stonden allemaal antieke spullen, zoals planeetbollen en oude stoelen. Ook hingen er antieke koninklijke gordijnen. 'Misschien woont de gokkoning hier ?' zei één van de oude mannen.

'Ik hoop het niet, want anders zouden we in grote problemen kunnen zijn,' sprak Elwin.

'Maar dat zou ook betekenen dat we dichter bij de droomsteen zouden kunnen zijn, en dat is toch wat we willen ?' zei de andere oude man. 'Dat is waar,' zei Elwin. Ze keken door een groot raam, en zagen een herfstbos buiten, als een koninklijke tuin. Ze hoorden gebrul in de verte. Even gingen de rillingen door Elwin heen. Hij hoopte echt dat ze dit keer niet in de problemen zouden komen. De oude mannen begonnen de kamer te doorzoeken, terwijl Elwin uit het raam bleef kijken. Het was alsof hij deze plaats ergens van kende. Buiten zag hij een tuinman de bladeren bij elkaar harken. Opeens stond er een dienstmeisje in de grote deur opening. 'Ah, de gasten zijn er al,' sprak ze opgewekt. 'Hoe kan ik jullie helpen ?'

'Eh, bedankt,' sprak één van de oude mannen. 'Wij komen voor de gokkoning, Hoe laat komt hij ?'

Het dienstmeisje hief haar wenkbrauwen op en begon te lachen. 'Meneer maakt zeker een grapje. Gokkoning ? Daar heb ik nog nooit van gehoord, tenzij u de gokautomaten in de kantine bedoeld.' De oude man kreeg een rood gezicht. Elwin begon haar toen het hele verhaal uit te leggen, maar het dienstmeisje begreep er niet veel van. 'Dat klinkt als een sprookje,' sprak ze. 'Dus als ik het goed begrijp heeft u deze kamer niet gereserveerd ?'

Opeens stond er een dikke man met een sigaar en een gestreept pak in de deur opening. 'Wat moet dit hier !' bulderde hij. 'Jullie komen me niet bekend voor, en hebben geen plaats in dit sjiek hotel. Nu, wegwezen, of ik laat jullie verwijderen met de harde hand. Maak dat je wegkomt nu.'

Maar dat liet Elwin niet op zich zitten. Hij stapte op de man af en gaf hem een stomp in zijn dikke buik. 'Wie heeft jou geleerd om zo tegen ons te praten ? En jullie hebben hier gokautomaten ? Dan moet hier vast en zeker ook de gokkoning ergens zijn en de droomsteen die hij verborgen houdt.'

Ruw greep de man Elwin bij zijn arm, en begon hem door elkaar te rammelen. 'Zeg, wat is dat, ventje ? Er woont hier geen koning, en al helemaal geen gokkoning. Droomstenen komen verder alleen in jouw praatjes voor.' Toen duwde de man Elwin weg. Nu begon Elwin echt kwaad te worden. 'Maar dit is een onderdeel van het gokpaleis !' riep Elwin boos naar de man.

'Ja ja,' lachte de man in het donkere gestreepte pak. Hij had ook een donkere hoed op, en zijn sigaar gleed bijna uit zijn mond. 'En mijn tante is een olifant, en mijn oom draagt driehonderd brillen. Zeg, kom nou, onderdeel van een gokpaleis ? Wie denk je wel niet dat je bent ? Allemaal hazentaal.' Ook de dikke man die de hotelbaas leek te zijn trok een revolver en richtte de loop op Elwin om hem onder schot te houden. 'Daar gaan we weer !' riep één van de oude kale mannen. 'Tegenwoordig wordt er bij het minste of geringste al naar een pistool gegrepen ! Belachelijk !'

'Houd je muil, ouwe,' sprak de dikke hotelbaas. 'En nu allemaal ophoepelen, want mijn pistool jeukt.' De dikke hotelbaas stond daar al rood van woede en begon al lampen kapot te schieten als waarschuwing.

Het dienstmeisje keek geschrokken. 'Weet u dat zeker dat u die dure porseleinen en kristallen antieke lampen kapot wil schieten vanwege een stel belhamels ?' riep ze.

'Ach klets niet, hoela hoep,' zei de hotelbaas. 'Dat laat ik hen allemaal betalen.'

Elwin begon de kamer uit te rennen, en de oude mannen volgden hem. 'En nu betalen voor de lampen !' gilde de hotelbaas. 'Ja !' riep het dienstmeisje. 'Het is jullie schuld !' Elwin rende de trap weer op naar een hogere verdieping. Hier waren een heleboel kamers in een cirkel waar allemaal Chinese meisjes stonden in zijden Chinese pyjama's en jurken. 'Het lijkt wel kerstfeest,' sprak één van de oude mannen. Achter zich hoorden ze schoten. Dat moest de hotelbaas zijn. 'Laten we nog hoger gaan,' zei Elwin luid tegen de oude mannen, en weer rende hij de trap op. Maar op de volgende verdieping waren de eindeloze gangen weer. 'Hier niet, hier niet !' riep Elwin. Maar ook de hotelbaas was verder de trap opgegaan, met het dienstmeisje achter hem. 'Jullie kunnen me nu niet meer ontkomen !' sprak hij gemeen. 'Hoezo niet ?' vroeg Elwin. 'Kijk eens naar al die gangen hier.' De hotelbaas begon te lachen. 'Het is mijn hotel,' zei de hotelbaas. 'Ik ken de weg. Jullie niet. Verstoppen heeft geen zin.'

'Oh, dus die eindeloze gangen zijn van jou ? Dan moet jij dus wel de gokkoning zijn !' riep Elwin. De hotelbaas kwam steeds dichter bij hem. 'Ren dan, ren,' sprak de hotelbaas. 'Als je wil leven.' De oude mannen begonnen al zo'n eindeloze gang op te rennen. 'Nee, nee, kom

terug !' riep Elwin. 'Die gangen zijn eindeloos, daar kom je nooit meer weg !' Maar ze hoorden hem al niet meer, en al snel verdwenen ze in een bocht.

Elwin keek de hotelbaas recht in zijn ogen. Wat waren die ogen gemeen. 'U moet de gokkoning wel zijn,' sprak Elwin. 'Wat gaat u met mijn vrienden doen ?'

'Welke vrienden ?' lachte de hotelbaas. 'Ze bestaan niet meer.'

'Hoe weet u dat ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Omdat ze goed in de val zijn gelopen, die indringers,' sprak de hotelbaas. 'Vooruit, ren dan.'

'Ren zelf,' zei Elwin.

'Ik heb de revolver hier, en het is mijn hotel,' zei de hotelbaas.

'Ik waag me er niet meer aan,' sprak Elwin. De hotelbaas bewoog de loop van de revolver helemaal tegen Elwin's kin aan en drukte er tegen. 'De droomsteen ligt daar ergens. Waarom zou je er niet op afgaan ?' sprak de hotelbaas.

'Ik ben niet gek,' zei Elwin.

'De droomsteen wacht al op je, ventje, nou, komt er nog wat van ?' sprak de hotelbaas.

Opeens werd de hotelbaas van achteren neegeslagen met een koekepan. Het was de cowboy. 'Zo, die had je nog van mij tegoed,' sprak de cowboy. Het dienstmeisje begon gillend weg te rennen. Toen richtte de cowboy zich op Elwin. 'Jij weer, hè ?'

Uit de zak van de hotelbaas die op de grond lag gleed een bos met sleutels. Elwin bedacht zich geen moment en greep de bos met sleutels. 'Nee !' krijste de cowboy. 'Doe die sleutels weg !' Elwin hield de bos sleutels voor de neus van de cowboy. Hij hield ze stevig vast en liet ze daar bungelen. De cowboy zakte slap in elkaar en begon te jammeren en te smeken : 'Ik smeek je, haal die ellendige dingen van me weg. Ik kan er niet tegen, ik kan er niet tegen.' Zijn handen waren slap geworden, en de koekepan en de revolver gleden eruit weg en vielen op de grond. Elwin trapte ze weg met zijn voet. Met zijn andere hand haalde hij de tweede revolver weg van de cowboy, en toen ook een mes. 'Die sleutels zijn van mij nu,' sprak Elwin. 'Nu, maak dat je wegkomt !' De cowboy kruipte één van de eindeloze gangen op en begon toen hard en gillend weg te rennen, totdat hij in een bocht verdween.

'Ziezo,' zei Elwin, maar toen hij zich omdraaide werd hij onder schot gehouden door het dienstmeisje die één van de revolvers op de grond had gegrepen. 'Terug met die sleutels,' sprak ze streng. 'Op de grond ermee.' Elwin liet van schrik de sleutels vallen. 'Handen omhoog,' sprak ze. Elwin deed zijn handen omhoog. De andere revolver en het mes schopte ze bij hem weg, en bukte toen om de sleutelbos te pakken, terwijl ze hem strak bleef aankijken en onder schot hield.

'Hier ga je zwaar voor betalen,' sprak het dienstmeisje.

'Ik weet het,' zei Elwin. 'Dat was dom van mij.'

'Een beetje heel dom,' zei het dienstmeisje. Langzaam begon de hotelbaas bij te komen. 'Hmmm, goed werk,' zei hij tegen het dienstmeisje. 'Hij is nu van ons. Misschien kunnen we hem goed gebruiken.'

Maar daar zagen ze ineens de cowboy terugkomen vanuit de eindeloze gang die met een enorme snelheid op hen afkwam. Van schrik richtte het dienstmeisje de revolver op de aanstormende cowboy, terwijl Elwin dankbaar van het moment gebruik maakte en de benen nam. Hij ging de trap af naar beneden, en wist dat hij nu zo diep mogelijk weer moest, want boven liep het spoor dood. Hij hoorde de hotelbaas en de cowboy al op elkaar schelden, en ook het gekrijs van het dienstmeisje klonk er doorheen. Ze leken hem helemaal vergeten te zijn. In de hal naast de eetzaal zocht Elwin onder het tapijt naar een luik, maar dat scheen er niet te zijn. Hij liep toen naar de andere kant van de hal naast de eetzaal waar hij een deur opende, maar daar zag hij weer zo'n eindeloze gang. 'Dan de lift maar,' sprak Elwin tegen zichzelf en rende naar de lift. 'Dit zijn probleem-dingen,' mompelde hij. Hij drukte op een gloeiende rode knop voor een verdieping lager toen hij in de lift was.

'Ik ben benieuwd,' zei Elwin tegen zichzelf, terwijl hij rilde. Hij voelde zich niet echt goed. De lift leek maar niet te stoppen. Na een hele lange tijd, en dat leken wel uren te zijn, stopte de lift eindelijk. Maar toen Elwin uitstapte was hij weer op precies dezelfde verdieping als waar hij was ingestapt, namelijk van het hotel, in de hal dichtbij de eetzaal. Toch leek alles net iets anders. Hij stapte uit, en zag tot zijn grote schrik de hotelbaas, de cowboy en het dienstmeisje op hem afkomen. Hij wilde weer de lift instappen, maar de deur zat dicht, en hij kreeg de liftdeur met geen mogelijkheid meer open. Elwin begon op het knopje te rammen. 'Toe nou, ga open, kreng !' riep hij. Toen ineens voelde hij van achter een hand op zijn schouder. Het was de hotelbaas. Elwin kromp ineen toen hij zich omdraaide, en had erge buikpijn. Hij keek naar het dienstmeisje die breed glimlachte. Toen keek hij naar de cowboy die ook breed glimlachte, en de hotelbaas keek heel bezorgd naar hem.

'Ummm, wat is hier aan de hand ?' vroeg Elwin die er niets van begreep. Hij had eerder pistool onder zijn neus verwacht of een klap met een koekepan. 'Niets,' zei de cowboy glimlachend en vriendelijk. 'Helemaal niets. We vroegen ons af hoe het met je ging als onze gast.'

'Tttttt,' zei Elwin. 'Eerst loop je me nog achterna met een pistool en moest ik weg, en werd ik onder schot gehouden, enzovoorts, en nu zijn jullie ineens mijn vrienden ofzo ?' Elwin was heel verbaasd.

Ook de cowboy, het dienstmeisje en de hotelbaas waren heel verbaasd, en keken hem bezorgd en liefdevol aan. 'Maar jongen toch, waar haal je dat toch allemaal vandaan ? Pistolen ? Heb je soms eng gedroomd ?' vroeg de hotelbaas vriendelijk en vol interesse.

'I... ik weet het niet meer,' sprak Elwin, en begon het hele verhaal te vertellen. 'Oh, jij komt van boven,' zei het dienstmeisje met een aardige stem. 'Nu begrijpen wij het. Daarboven is alles omgekeerde wereld. Daar moet je ook niet komen, jongen.'

'Maar die lift dan ?' vroeg Elwin. 'Leidt die dan niet naar boven, want daar kom ik vandaan.'

'Die lift gaat alleen maar door de verdiepingen van het hotel, maar niet hoger,' sprak de cowboy. 'Jij moet van heel hoog zijn gekomen, waar je alleen maar van kan komen, maar nooit naartoe kan gaan.'

'Ik snap het niet,' zei Elwin. 'Ik kan dus nooit meer terug ?'

'Precies,' zei de hotelbaas. 'En gelukkig maar, want daar is alles omgekeerde wereld.'

'Ja maar, Kik en Kes dan ?' vroeg Elwin. 'Zij moeten hun droomsteen terugkrijgen, en er zijn zoveel kinderen door de gokkoning naar die plaats ontvoerd, en die moeten daar werken.'

'Oh,' zei de hotelbaas, 'maak je maar niet ongerust, hoor. Die zullen ook hun weg hier naartoe wel vinden.'

'Ik kan ze toch niet zomaar aan hun lot overlaten ?' vroeg Elwin. 'En waar is die droomsteen dan ?'

'Tja,' zei de cowboy. 'Dat weten we niet, en dat weet niemand, alhoewel sommigen zeggen dat deze verdieping de droomsteen is.'

'En wat is hier onder dan ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Oh, hieronder moet je ook niet wezen,' sprak het dienstmeisje vriendelijk. 'Dit hier is een verdieping uit duizenden. De rest is allemaal omgekeerde wereld. Ook wij vonden ooit onze weg naar deze plaats, en we wilden sindsdien nooit meer weg. Voor ons is dit de droomsteen.'

'Maar ik zou graag over deze plaats willen vertellen aan mijn vrienden, de kokkin, de boerin, de twee oude mannen en Kik en Kes,' sprak Elwin.

'Ze moeten daar zelf achter komen, Elwin,' sprak de cowboy. 'Iedereen moet die reis voor zichzelf maken en de juiste lessen leren en de juiste beslissingen maken.'

'Maar toch wil ik ze helpen,' sprak Elwin.

'Dat kan niet,' zei de cowboy. 'Dat is te gevaarlijk. Je wilt toch niet dat de verkeerde personen deze plaats vinden ? Het is te riskant, en daarom kan niemand ooit nog terug naar waar ze vandaan kwamen. Begrijp je dat ?'

'Ik begrijp het wel,' zei Elwin, 'maar we zitten hier toch niet opgesloten ?'

De cowboy schudde liefdevol zijn hoofd. 'Elwin, Elwin, Elwin. Jongen, het heeft niets met opgesloten te maken, maar met beveiliging. Dat is toch een goede zaak dan ?'

Elwin boog zijn hoofd. 'Maar is er dan niets wat we voor hen kunnen doen ? Helemaal niets ?'

'Helemaal niets,' sprak het dienstmeisje.

Elwin keek haar even aan en boog toen zijn hoofd weer. 'Maar Kik en Kes zullen hier nooit komen. Ze zijn veel te bang voor het gokpaleis. Ik moet ze gaan opzoeken. Ik kan het niet over mijn hart halen om hen in de steek te laten.'

'Goed,' zei de cowboy plotseling. 'Er is één manier om je vrienden te bezoeken, maar dan zullen we allemaal gaan. We zullen jou nooit in de steek laten. Jij bent één van ons.'

Het dienstmeisje en de hotelbaas keken de cowboy verbaasd aan. 'Wat is die manier dan, cowboy ?' vroeg de hotelbaas vriendelijk en vol interesse. 'Oh,' zei de cowboy, 'ik moet gewoon even de lift anders instellen. Ik ben de mechanicus, dus dat komt wel goed. Het is voor mij een koud kunstje. Ik heb ook ooit eens het hele gokpaleis voor de gokkoning gemaakt.'

Elwin keek verbaasd. 'Dus jij hebt dit alles gemaakt ? Wacht eens even. Betekent dat dat er op deze verdieping ook een aardige gokkoning is, net zo aardig als jullie ?'

De hotelbaas begon breed te glimlachen en ook het dienstmeisje. 'Die is nog wel aardiger dan wij allemaal bij elkaar,' lachte de hotelbaas.

'Hmmm,' zei Elwin, 'dus als ik het goed begrijp heeft de cowboy alle andere verdiepingen gemaakt om alles te beveiligen tegen gespuis ?' De anderen knikten. 'Hmmm,' zei Elwin. 'Betekent dat dat de cowboy onaantastbaar is, omdat hij alles gemaakt heeft ?'

'Was dat maar zo,' sprak de cowboy. 'Ik heb alles zo lang geleden gemaakt, en er houdt zich daar zoveel verschrikkelijk tuig op, en alles slaat soms echt op hol.'

Elwin zuchtte. 'We moeten toch echt naar Kik en Kes gaan.'

'Komt voor de bakker,' zei de cowboy. 'Stap allemaal in de lift, dan stel ik hem even bij, en dan kunnen we hoger.'

'Spannend,' zei Elwin.

Toen ze allemaal in de lift waren schroefde de cowboy even een kastje open, draaide even wat hier en daar, en schroefde toen het kastje weer dicht. Toen drukte hij op een rood gloeiende knop, en daar gingen ze. De lift begon na een tijdje zwaar te piepen. Ze keken allemaal even verschrikt, behalve de cowboy, die glimlachtte wat. 'Ach, negeer dat gepiep maar. De lift is er niet aan gewend, dus die protesteert even, maar als het goed is houdt hij zich zo wel stil, want ik heb hem nu anders ingesteld.'

'Dat hoop ik maar,' sprak Elwin. Het gepiep werd alleen maar erger, zo erg dat Elwin zijn vingers in zijn oren had gestopt. En toen opeens stopte het geluid. Elwin en de anderen haalden opgelucht adem. Toen na een tijdje de liftdeur open ging keken ze recht in een eindeloze gang. 'Daar ga ik dus niet in !' riep Elwin geschrokken.

'Elwin, de maker van de eindeloze gang is hier,' zei de hotelbaas, 'dus we hebben niets te vrezen,' terwijl hij op de cowboy wees. De cowboy glimlachtte een beetje. 'Volg mij,' sprak hij. De cowboy liep de gang op, en de anderen volgden hem. 'Er zit een code in,' sprak de cowboy. 'We nemen eerst de tiende deur aan de linkerkant, en dan in de volgende gang nemen we weer de tiende deur aan de linkerkant, en in de volgende gang doen we precies hetzelfde.'

'Interessant,' zei Elwin, die alweer een beetje hoop kreeg. Ze telden tien deuren aan de linkerkant van de gang, en gingen toen door de tiende deur binnen. Toen telden ze op de volgende gang weer tien deuren aan de linkerkant om door de tiende deur heen te gaan. Daarna telden ze op de volgende gang weer tien deuren aan de linkerkant om door de tiende deur heen te gaan. Zo kwamen ze in een kamer terecht. 'Geweldig !' riep Elwin. 'Dus alleen zij die deze code kennen hebben een kamer in het gokpaleis ?' De cowboy knikte.

'Geniaal, en zo goed tegen dieven !' lachte Elwin.

'Dat dacht je maar,' sprak de cowboy. 'Er zijn genoeg bandieten die deze code kennen, en daarom zit het gokpaleis vol met vagebonden.'

'Had ik die code maar gekend toen ik naar het gokpaleis kwam,' lachte Elwin, 'dan was het allemaal zo erg niet geweest.'

'Er zijn wel meer codes,' sprak de cowboy.

'Dat geloof ik graag,' lachte Elwin, die zich al een stuk opgeluchter voelde.

'Als je drie keer de zevende deur aan de linkerkant neemt, dan vind je daar iemand die verdwaald is in de gangen,' sprak de cowboy.

Elwin rende de kamer uit. Hij kon niet wachten om het uit te proberen, want hij wilde de oude mannen weer zien. Hij wilde ze graag verrassen. Hij rende naar de zevende deur aan de linkerkant, en toen weer naar de zevende deur aan de linkerkant, en toen weer. Tot zijn grote verbazing kwam hij toen op een gang waar de twee oude mannen waren. Ze zaten vermoeid op de grond, en keken verbaasd en verrast op naar Elwin. 'Ik heb ze gevonden !' riep Elwin.

'Eindelijk heb je ons gevonden !' riep één van de oude mannen, en stond op om Elwin te omhelzen. Ook de andere oude man stond op en omhelsde Elwin. 'Daar zijn we blij mee,' sprak hij. 'We dachten dat we hier nooit meer uit zouden komen.' Ook de cowboy, de hotelbaas en de dienstmaagd kwamen, en Elwin begon het hele verhaal te vertellen.

'En hoe komen we uit het gokpaleis ?' vroeg één van de oude mannen.

'Simpel,' sprak de cowboy. 'Neem drie keer de derde deur aan de linkerkant, en je komt op de gang die naar de paleispoort leidt. Kom, ik zal het je laten zien.' De cowboy nam de derde deur aan de linkerkant geteld vanaf de deur waardoor ze op deze gang kwamen. De anderen volgden hem. Toen nam hij weer de derde linker deur, en toen weer. Zo kwamen ze in een grote hal terecht die naar de poort van het paleis leidde, maar er stonden wachten daar.

'Problemen,' sprak de cowboy. 'Ik ken die wachters niet.' Maar de wachten hadden hen al gezien en kwamen met speren op hen af. 'Wat moet dat daar ?' riep een wacht, die snel dichterbij kwam. 'En wie zijn jullie ?' Ze waren met z'n tweeen en ze hadden zware zwarte pakken aan, en hadden vreemde, angstaanjagende helmen op.

'Genoeg praatjes,' sprak de cowboy. 'Ik ben de maker van het gokpaleis.' Hij boog naar de anderen toe en sprak : 'Nu zijn we in de problemen.' Elwin verstijfde van de schrik.

De wachten deden net alsof ze de cowboy niet hoorden. 'Wie zijn jullie ?' vroeg de wacht weer.

'Gaat je niks aan,' sprak de cowboy. 'Ik heb dit gokpaleis gemaakt. Nou, maak dat je wegkomt.'

De wachten begonnen te lachen en elkaar aan te stoten. 'Dat zeggen ze allemaal dat ze het paleis hebben gebouwd.' Plotseling grepen ze de cowboy vast.

'Hey, laat hem los !' riep Elwin.

'Waarom zouden we ?' zei één van de wachten. 'Hij is een onbevoegde, net zoals jullie. Dit is verboden terrein voor onbekenden.'

'Laat maar, Elwin,' sprak de cowboy. 'Ze zullen er nog wel achter komen.' De cowboy werd afgevoerd, en was al snel verdwenen met de twee wachten. 'Laten we dit spookpaleis uitgaan

nu het nog kan,' sprak Elwin, en rende toen op de poort af. De anderen renden achter hem aan. Daarna stonden ze allemaal buiten. Elwin blies op zijn vingers op dezelfde manier als Kes eens deed. Niet lang daarna kwam er een grote raaf aanvliegen. Het was Utsmul. 'Fijn dat je er bent, Utsmul !' riep Elwin. 'Breng ons snel naar Kik en Kes !' Elwin en de anderen klommen op de raaf, die direct richting de zee vloog waaraan Kik en Kes woonden. Toen ze daar aankwamen waren Kik en Kes weer aan het dansen rondom een kampvuur. 'Kijk,' zei Kes tegen Kik, 'daar komt Utsmul. Hij heeft Elwin met wat anderen meegenomen.' Kik en Kes waren blij hen te zien. 'Ha, Elwin !' riep Kes, 'wat een verrassing ! We hopen dat je met goed nieuws komt. Heb je de droomsteen inmiddels gevonden ?' Elwin stapte van de vogel af, en ook de anderen. Hij liep op Kik en Kes af en omhelsde hem. Elwin begon direct het hele verhaal te vertellen.

Hoofdstuk 3.

'Dus de droomsteen is een bepaalde verdieping in het gokpaleis, en de cowboy heeft alle andere verdiepingen gemaakt om de droomsteen te beveiligen ?' vroeg Kes. Elwin knikte.

'Hmmm,' zei Kes. 'Dan is dat vast een andere soort droomsteen, want onze droomsteen is gewoon een steen, een flonkerende roze-rode steen,' terwijl hij een plaatje van de steen uit zijn broekzak haalde.

'Er loopt veel gespuis rond in het spookpaleis,' sprak Elwin. 'Misschien houden zij de steen daar wel verborgen. De cowboy had het er ook over dat er veel bandieten zijn daar.'

'Waarom heeft hij het gokpaleis dan gemaakt ?' vroeg Kek. 'Dat klinkt nogal dom.'

'Het gokpaleis zit vol met valstrikken,' sprak Elwin, 'en alles werkt daar door codes. Nu kunnen sommige bandieten misschien wat codes kennen, maar lang niet allemaal. Uiteindelijk zal het gokpaleis dus wel met hen afrekenen.'

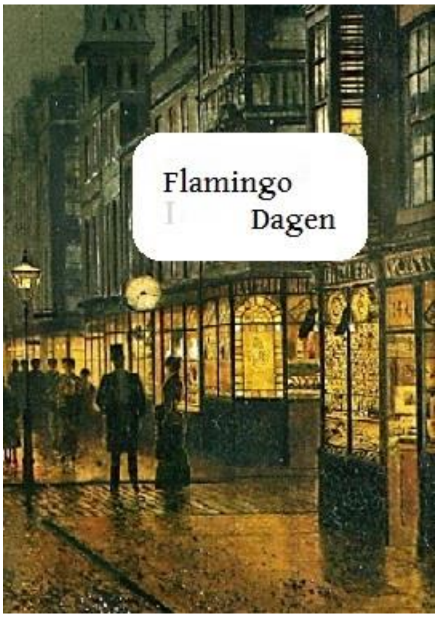
'Dat hoop ik maar,' sprak Kes. 'Maar wat kunnen we doen om die arme cowboy te helpen, want het lijkt erop alsof hij in één van zijn eigengemaakte valstrikken is gelopen ?'

'De cowboy zal zich wel redden,' sprak de hotelbaas glimlachend en vol vertrouwen en zekerheid. 'Hij is slim genoeg om er iets voor te vinden. Hij heeft immers alles gemaakt, en waarschijnlijk test hij nu alles uit, en zal die twee vagebonden van wachten flink op hun nummer zetten.' Ook het dienstmeisje knikte glimlachend.

Plotseling zagen ze vanaf de bergen een enorm lange clown komen. Zijn benen bleven gewoon in de bergen staan, en zijn enorm lange lichaam schoof zich naar hen toe. In zijn armen droeg hij de flonkerende roze-rode droomsteen, en de cowboy zat erop. 'Dat is de gokkoning !' riep de hotelbaas, 'de gokkoning van onze droomsteen-verdieping !' De clown zette de steen met de cowboy erop bij hen neer, en stapte toen met zijn lange benen naar hen toe, terwijl zijn benen weer kleiner werden. Hij was als elastiek. 'Hoera !' riepen Kik en Kes toen ze de droomsteen weer terughadden.

'De gokkoning heeft mij van de valse wachten bevrijd,' lachte de cowboy. Elwin maakte een buiging voor de gokkoning, en de clown nam hem in zijn armen en knuffelde hem. Elwin herkende de clown. Heel lang geleden had Elwin eens over deze clown gedroomd, die hem overal mee naar toe nam in zijn armen, en heel snel ging, van plaats naar plaats. Hij kon inderdaad heel lang worden. 'Elwin, dit is nu het geheim van de droomsteen,' sprak de cowboy glimlachend.

Einde


Flamingo
Dagen

FLAMINGO DAGEN

COAB 2005-2017

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Flamingo Dagen

Hij schreef een brief, een hele lange brief. Hij had haar tijden niet meer gezien. Eigenlijk durfde hij het niet goed, maar het was de enige manier. Zij had bij hem in de klas gezeten, en zij was de baas van dit vreemde ziekenhuis. Hij wist niet goed hoe hij hier terecht was gekomen. Hij kon het zich nog nauwelijks herinneren, maar zij die hem kwamen ophalen hadden een badge met een flamingo erop. De badge was op borsthoogte van hun witte pakken. Ook was er een groot embleem van de flamingo op de witte bus. Dat was alles wat hij kon herinneren, en waarom hij werd meegenomen wist hij niet, en dat vertelden ze hem ook niet. Hij wilde in ieder geval een reden weten, en misschien kon hij haar overhalen om hem vrij te laten zetten. Zij was zijn enige hoop. Hij beefde toen hij de brief schreef. Hij zag het allemaal als een grote ontvoering. Misschien waren ze wel crimineel. Verder werd hij hier goed behandeld. Hij had een eigen kamer.

Hij schreef haar dat hij kinderen had die nu zonder vader moesten opgroeien. Hij wachtte vele maanden op een brief terug, maar er kwam geen antwoord. Hij vroeg zich af of ze de brief

wel had ontvangen, en stuurde de brief nog een keer, maar er kwam geen antwoord. Zo verstreken de jaren en hij moest leven met grote onzekerheid. Waar hij woonde was het luxe, zeer luxe. Hij vroeg zich af hoe het met de buitenwereld ging, maar die informatie werd van hem afgehouden. Eigenlijk mocht niemand met hem contact opnemen. Vandaar dat hij de baas, of liever gezegd de bazin, van het vreemde ziekenhuis als zijn laatste hoop zag. Op een keer toen hij langs het hokje van de leiding liep dacht hij een flits op te vangen van een televisie beeld met mensen die in grote armoe leefden, en toen begon hij de gedachte te krijgen dat in de buitenwereld iedereen steeds armer werd, en hij daar misschien tegen beschermd werd.

Er werd nauwelijks met hem gesproken, en al helemaal niet over het verleden of de buitenwereld, of wat voor ziekte hij zou hebben. Hij wist in principe niets, alleen dat hij hier opgesloten werd gehouden.

Er waren ook andere patiënten, veelal meisjes, en die hadden vaak een verleden van misbruik. Hij probeerde ze te helpen, maar veelal sloten ze zichzelf op, en meden iedereen. Hij kon niet echt tot ze doordringen. Soms keken ze even en leek het alsof ze zouden spreken, maar dan gingen ze weg. Waarschijnlijk was het voor hen te zwaar om er over te praten.

Toch kon hij zo nu en dan wel meisjes met iets helpen. Zo had hij toch nog het gevoel dat hij waarde had. Soms had hij even het idee dat hij hier niet voor niets was, als met een bedoeling, maar dat was vaak maar een flits, en daarna voelde hij zich weer nutteloos. Hij had veel vragen die maar niet beantwoord leken te worden.

Op een dag moest hij bij het hokje van de leiding komen. Hij kreeg een nieuw medicijn. Op het pakje medicijnen stond een flamingo embleem. Het leek wel op een pakje sigaretten. Er zaten kleine roze en witte pilletjes in. Ook op de pilletjes zelf was een flamingo gegraveerd. Toen hij het inslikte met wat water leek het alsof hij een andere tong kreeg, en ook alsof hij ander tandvlees had. Het voelde aan alsof hij een totaal andere mond had. "Wat is dit ?" vroeg hij. Maar niemand antwoordde, en hij wist niet waarvoor het was.

Die nacht had hij vreemde dromen over opstijgende flamingo's. Toen zag hij het meisje uit zijn klas, de bazin van het vreemde ziekenhuis. "Weet je het dan niet ?" zei ze. "Jij bent een geheim verpleger. Jij bent er om de meisjes te helpen."

De dag erna werd hij uit het ziekenhuis ontslagen. Hij kreeg een nieuw huis, en ook een baan. Hij werd tandarts, maar mocht niet boren en rekeningen versturen. Hij werd een flamingo tandarts, die alleen maar pilletjes gaf gratis. Op een hele zachte en natuurlijke manier werden

de monden zo genezen. 's Nachts droomde hij dat hij een flamingo was, op zoek naar de geheimen van de zee. Ook droomde hij dat hij een duiker was, een diepzee duiker. Op de zeebodem bleken alle stoffen te groeien die ze nodig hadden voor de pilletjes.

Zijn kinderen wilden niets met hem te maken hebben. Ze kenden hem niet. Ze zeiden dat hij hen in de steek had gelaten, en dat hij nu op de blaren moest zitten. Hij begreep ze niet, omdat het om een ontvoering ging. Hij kon er niets aan doen.

Hij was diep teleurgesteld in zijn koppige kinderen die zich niet verplaatsten in de situatie. Hij leefde alleen nog voor zijn werk. Op een dag kwam de bazin van het vreemde ziekenhuis hem bezoeken. Ze vroeg hem of hij ook wilde werken in het ziekenhuis. "Dat nooit !" riep hij. "Ze hebben mij ontvoerd. Ik heb haast geen herinneringen van de ontvoering en van vóór de ontvoering. Er moet wel geweld gebruikt zijn."

"Gewoon een pilletje in je soep, door je vrouw," zei de bazin van het vreemde ziekenhuis. "Zo zijn wij flamingo's nu eenmaal. Je ging te diep gebukt onder het leven, en toen heeft je vrouw deze beslissing genomen."

"Waar is ze nu ?" vroeg hij. "De kinderen willen me het niet vertellen."

"In een ander ziekenhuis," zei de bazin van het vreemde ziekenhuis. "Toen ze hoorde hoe je was opgeknapt door het pilletje heeft ze zelf ook zo'n pilletje genomen."

"Is ze veilig bij de flamingo's ?" vroeg hij.

"Net zo veilig als jij," glimlachte ze.

Een diepe glimlach kwam ook op zijn gezicht. "Mag ik haar weer zien ?" vroeg hij.

"Jullie konden niet met elkaar opschieten," zei ze. "Dat is ook een reden waarom ze het pilletje in je soep had gedaan. Zij ging er ook teveel onder gebukt."

"Ik kan me er niets meer van herinneren," zei hij. "Dan moet het wel erg geweest zijn."

"Ik kan je daar helaas niets over zeggen," zei ze. "Je vrouw heeft me dat verboden."

"Ik kan me haar helemaal niet meer herinneren," zei hij. "Ik weet niet eens meer wie ze is, sinds dat pilletje."

"Ik ben je vrouw," zei ze.

Einde

Rivier van de Dood

Alcohol was de naam van de beste vriend die ik ooit had gehad. Hij had de sleutelen van het dodenrijk, en als je met de doden wilde spreken, dan moest je bij hem zijn. Hij maakte iedereen dronken door een pilletje, een pilletje met muziek. Met spelletjes won hij altijd. Gokautomaten kon hij kraken zonder enig probleem. Nee, een betere vriend dan hem heb ik nooit gehad. Ook gingen we weleens uit, en dan betaalde hij alles. Hij kwam uit Duitsland, hij was de god van oorlog. Hij was het brandende water. Hij was de poel des vuurs. Nu woont hij dan in Bagdad met zijn schatten, wapentuig, zwaar geschut, maar hij keert telkens tot de doden terug. Hij is als Aladin geworden, steeds roepende : 'Ga je mee, want er zijn zoveel schatten benee.'

Nu wil hij dan naar Belgie, want daar is het leven goed. Veel bier om te drinken, en patattekes, en meiskes zo zoet. Maar een oorlogsgod is hij, en dat zal hij altijd zijn, teneinde zichzelf verdrinken in de Rijn. Kleine mannekes leven daar met patattekes en wijn, ja het leven is goed in de Rijn. Een vuile rivier trekt hem aan, want vuil en bier zijn twee handen op een buik. Maar wat moeten we met schoonheid die vuiler is dan het vuil, en wat moeten we met een wereld die meer dronken is dan bier. Nee, in de Rijn moeten we zijn, op naar Duitsland, waar hij nog steeds zijn vakantie huisje heeft.

De Rijn is mooi, het vuil herinnert ons aan een mooie tijd. De doden drijven daar nog steeds, wie heeft hen ons ontnomen.

Alcohol herinnert ons aan de mooie tijden. Nog steeds is hij een oorlogsgod, rijdende op de velden. Hij ontvoerde kinderen, en gelukkig was ik een van hen. Op een brandend schip nam hij mij mee, want hij had de sleutels tot de hel. Zijn papegaai heette bier, en zijn paard heette wijn. Door een brandende draaikolk kwamen we altijd in de hel, waar ook andere kinderen gilden. We gilden van geluk omdat we uitverkorenen waren. Het was oorlogsgegil.

Alcohol, het sap des doods, sap der leugen, het oorlogssap. Een strateeg was hij, met een oorlogsschip. Hij nam mij mee in de wolken. En hij wierp mij uit op het slagveld, hoe jong ik ook was, het overweldigde mij, en bracht mijn hart tot de spin die ik 'thuis' noemde. Slechts zaad was ik om daar te sterven, en Alcohol lachte en was de schrik. Toen nam hij mij weer op in zijn schip. Een echt thuis heb ik nu, naast hem. Wij stierven daar met parachutes, maar het oorlogssap, het sap des doods, bracht ons tot leven. Een gevreesde heer op het slagveld is hij.

Alcohol, het sap des doods. De kroon der leugen woont hier, op het slagveld uitgegoten. Een ridder is hij, een oorlogsheld. Hij stond voor mij, en overweldigde mij. Zij gaven mij sterke

drank te drinken als kind, maar ze noemden het thee. De sterke drank nam mij mee, tot de bodem van de hel. Ze gaven mij alcohol te drinken, en noemden het thee. Ja, leeuwenthee was het. Ze namen mij mee. Ja, oorlogsthee was het. Het bracht mij naar een oorlogsgrot, waar drie indiaanse goden waren. Uit hun monden stroomde sterke drank, ja, godenthee. Het was brandend water, hellewater. Hij had een harnas geheel gemaakt van skelet-tenen. Daar stond hij dan als een prins, door leeuwen omsingeld.

Het Geheim van Aladin

1. De Wonderdoener

2. Het Bejaardentehuis

3. Wie is Jezus ?

4. Halok Patong Otjelek

5. De Spreuk

6. De Ring

7. Het dromengroepje

8. Duizend-en-één-Nacht

Hoofdstuk 1. De Wonderdoener

Dirk zit in een pinkstergemeente. Op een dag komt er een Oosterse predikant preken. Hij komt ergens uit India of Arabie. Hij is speciaal gekomen voor een rondreis. Er wordt gezegd dat hij nogal ongewone gaven heeft, en daar had men natuurlijk wel oren naar in de pinkstergemeente. De voorganger was een nuchtere man. Hij vond het allemaal wel goed. Waarom heisa maken ? Dat was altijd zijn motto. Tijdens de dienst en de preek van de oosterling haalt de man een soort slangachtig voorwerp uit z'n broekzak, en begint ermee te zwaaien. 'Weet je wat ik hiermee kan ?' vraagt de man. 'Ik kan hier demonen in opsluiten.' In de zaal wordt er een beetje gegniffeld, maar de man was serieus. 'Jezus sloot demonen op in zwijnen, dus waarom zouden wij geen demonen opsluiten in voorwerpen ?' De voorganger keek de man vanaf de rij indringend aan, maar met een soort glimlach van : 'Je maakt zeker een grapje.' Dirk dacht dat de voorganger dit wel spannend zou vinden, die zou zo iemand nooit stoppen, daar was hij veel te nuchter voor. Hij zag nergens kwaad in. Volgens Dirk kon dat gevaarlijk wezen. De man strekte zijn armen uit over de zaal, en begon te bidden. Zijn handen begonnen te trillen. 'Ik voel een demoon hier, een demoon van lust, kom eruit, snel.' En ineens begon er achter in de zaal iemand te gillen. Snel draaide de oosterling met het slangachtig voorwerp, en gebood de geest in het voorwerp te gaan. Na de preek en de trucs van de oosterling mochten er vragen gesteld worden. Ook Dirk stelde een vraag : 'Hoeveel geesten kunnen er in zo'n voorwerp, en hoe weten we of zo'n geest daadwerkelijk in het voorwerp is gekomen ?' De man zei dat er een onbeperkt aantal geesten inkonden. Hij droeg de slang altijd bij zich, zodat hij een voorwerp had waarmee hij de geesten kon opsluiten. Hij zei dat de geesten zo sneller uit te drijven waren. Volgens hem moest je gewoon geloven dat de geesten erin gingen, zoals Jezus ook door geloof de geesten kon uitdrijven en in de zwijnen kon sturen. Maar ook kon God daartoe tekenen geven, bevestigingen. Op de vraag of ze er alle geesten mee konden opsluiten was het antwoord : 'Nee, want sommige demonen kunnen alleen in stenen opgesloten worden.' En toen haalde de oosterling een steen uit zijn zak. 'Hier zitten al veel demonen in, maar ik zal er nu een paar bijdoen.' De oosterling begon te bidden, en vroeg : 'Wie van jullie heeft er astma ?' Een vrouw aan de zijkant van de zaal stond op. De oosterling hief de steen op, en sprak luid :

'geest van astma, ik gebied u in de Naam van Jezus in deze steen te gaan.' De vrouw begon hevig te schudden, en was even later van haar ademnood af.

Iemand vroeg : 'Kunnen de geesten niet meer ontsnappen ?' Waarop de oosterling zei : 'Nee, want ze worden door Jezus en Zijn engelen bewaakt.' Iemand anders in de zaal vond het een eng idee om zoveel demonen mee te moeten dragen in een steen. Maar de oosterling zei dat de geesten goed gebonden waren, en dat ze niets konden doen. Een exorcist moest ook leren bewaken, als een soort bewaker van een gevangenis. De oosterling deed veel wonderen en tekenen en spoedig begonnen de aanwezigen eraan gewend te raken. Een ouderling echter stond op en zei : 'Ik zou er helemaal paranoide van worden.' Maar de oosterling zei dat de lucht vol was met boze geesten en dat ze beter zo'n soort geestelijke stofzuiger met zich mee konden dragen. Achter in de zaal stond iemand op : 'U bent typisch zo'n oosterse tovenaar. Ik geloof er helemaal niets van, waar u mee bezig bent.'

Dirk schrok wakker. Wat had hij een vreemde droom gehad, zeg. Maar hij moest opschieten, want over een uur begon de dienst. De voorganger sprak over dieren in de Bijbel. De voorganger zei ook dat als God iets schiep, dan werden zijn schepselen daardoor vrijgezet, maar als de mens iets schiep door het vlees, dan werden schepselen daardoor gebonden. De voorganger liet ook zien hoe dieren werden onderdrukt door mensen. Dirk was het daar helemaal mee eens. Dirk was een vegetarier, omdat hij niet geloofde dat een mens een dier mocht vermoorden. Doodslag was verboden, want daarmee gaf je aan dat je superieur was.

Na de dienst vroeg Dirk aan de voorganger of die misschien ook vegetarisch was, maar het antwoord daarop was negatief.

Hoofdstuk 2. Het Bejaardentehuis

Ergens in het boek Jeremia las Dirk dat die dierenoffers helemaal niet uit God waren, en ook ergens in de brieven van Paulus las hij dat God die offers verafschuwde en haatte en dat Hij het niet had gewild. Maar vandaag de dag werden er nog steeds dieren geofferd door christenen. Misschien niet zo zeer aan God, maar aan hun buik.

Dirk werkte in een bejaardenhuis. Hier werd ook veel vlees gegeten, en waarvoor ? Dirk zag daar de dood recht in de ogen. Dit was vaak het eindstation van de bejaarden. Hij had wel eens discussies met bejaarden over vlees eten. Zij hadden daar vaak geen vervelend gevoel bij. Ze hadden vaak zoiets van : 'wij gaan dood, dan moeten die dieren ook maar dood, anders is het niet eerlijk.' Dirk zei dan altijd : 'Maar die dieren gaan heus wel dood hoor, daar hebben ze jullie echt niet bij nodig.' Waarop zij dan vaak weer zeiden : 'Nou, wat loop je dan te zeuren als ze toch dood gaan. Dan kunnen wij hun vlees toch wel eten ?' Dirk werd er altijd een beetje misselijk van. Hij had altijd het gevoel dat hij tussen de vampieren leefde.

Op een zondag had de voorganger een vreemde preek. Het ging over het onbijbelse van vegetarisme. De voorganger haalde allerlei bijbelteksten naar voren om het vlees eten te verdedigen. De voorganger had ook een boekje meegenomen genaamd : 'Vegetarisme in het licht van de Bijbel,' en in het boekje kon vegetarisme de toets niet doorstaan. 's Middags zouden ze met de hele gemeente gaan barbecuen in het bos. Dirk ging natuurlijk niet mee. Wat moest hij daar zoeken ?

Dirk had medicijnen gestudeerd, en wist dat door vlees te eten de kans op kanker en hartziekten verhoogd werd. In het vlees zaten namelijk vetten die door de buik niet verteerd konden worden, en die vetten zouden dan om het hart heen gaan drijven. Dirk had hierover eens een cursus gevolgd bij een hartspecialist. Sindsdien was hij overgegaan van tachtig procent vegetarier naar honderd procent vegetarier. In de gemeente zaten veel mensen die kanker hadden. Het leek wel een epidemie.

Dirk had nog wel zo'n foldertje liggen, van die hartspecialist, en besloot het eens op het prikbord van de gemeente te hangen. Maar niet lang daarna was het weer verwijderd. Wilden ze de mensen ergens blind voor houden ? Dirk zag het als een groot complot. Later hoorde hij dat de voorganger uit een slagers-familie kwam, en dat het foldertje te negatief was over slagers. Dirk zag slagers als terroristen. Slachthuizen waren in zijn ogen concentratie-kampen.

Hoofdstuk 3. Wie is Jezus ?

Dirk vond dat evangelisatie geen zin had. Hij vond het meer zin hebben om mensen te overtuigen dat vlees eten niets oplost, maar het alleen maar erger maakt. In de bijbel werd een dier het slachtoffer, waardoor de Israelieten zogenaamd de geluksvogels werden, en later in het Nieuwe Testament was het Jezus die de pechvogel was. Dirk zag het als een valstrik, want zo werden mensen afhankelijk gemaakt aan moord, en afhankelijkheid bracht slavernij voort. En de god van dit stelsel vrat lekker zijn buikje vol.

Op een dag stond de voorganger bij Dirk op de stoep. Dirk was niet meer welkom in de gemeente. De voorganger had gehoord over Dirk's onruststokerij en negativiteit. Het kon Dirk niet zoveel schelen. Hij zou het zinkende schip verlaten voordat het geheel gezonken was. De voorganger bedankte hem, en vertrok weer.

Wel werd Dirk een beetje moe van al die weerstand, en besloot in het vervolg maar gewoon z'n mond te houden. Hij kon toch niks doen. Hij had wel een sticker op z'n fiets met VLEES IS MOORD erop, maar daar hoefde hij verder niets mee te doen, en mensen vroegen hem er ook nooit naar.

Op een nacht had Dirk weer een droom. Hij was weer terug in de gemeente, en de voorganger hield een stuk vlees voor het publiek. 'Eet van het vlees van Jezus,'

sprak hij. 'Maar dat vlees is rauw,' riep iemand. Toen werd de voorganger kwaad, en riep : 'Ik heb dit vlees altijd moeten eten, dus jullie ook.'

Dirk schrok wakker. Het was alsof hij een koude hand op zich voelde. In het Oude Testament moest het vlees van dieren geofferd worden, en in het Nieuwe Testament het vlees van Jezus, zoals ze altijd zeiden : 'Neemt, en eet van Zijn lichaam.' Hier was Dirk het nooit mee eens. Het klonk hem meer als vampirisme in zijn oren. Als mensen wordt wijsgemaakt dat ze gered worden door andermans ellende en dood, dan is moord hiervan het gevolg. Dit behoorde tot de primitieve bloedoffer-afgoderijen. Dat hele verhaal van Jezus werd uit z'n verband gerukt, zodat het een dekmantel kon worden voor duistere zaken.

Voor Dirk was Jezus iemand die Zijn Leven gaf om te laten zien hoe mensen konden leven, en zalig konden worden. Het verhaal moest dus een andere belichting hebben, een andere draai. Je deelt uit van je eigen leven, opdat anderen ook uitdelen van hun leven. Zo zou er een goede bloedsomloop zijn.

Hoofdstuk 4. Halok Patong Otjelek

In het bejaardenhuis de volgende dag was het erg druk. Ze zouden een grote barbecue houden. Dirk ging bijna over z'n nek, maar hij kon niet weg, want het was zijn werk. Dirk zou wat andere dingen eten zoals champignons met soja-brokken, en patat. Gelukkig was de avond snel voorbij. Dirk zag eigenlijk de afgodische stroom in het christendom die de betekenis van Jezus een halve slag draaide, als één grote barbecue. Maar de bejaarden waren veelal te oud om dat te begrijpen. Zij waren al helemaal in het systeem vastgegroeid. Ook ambtshalve mocht Dirk er niet te veel over praten. Het moest vooral gezellig blijven, en er mocht geen emotionele druk op de bejaarden komen. Dirk besloot zijn mond maar te houden.

Aan het eind van de avond, bij het afsluiten, kwam er nog een oud dametje naar Dirk toe. 'Zo Dirk, hoe smaakte het hondenvoer ?' vroeg ze. Dirk moest wel even lachen. Even later liep Dirk door het donker naar huis. Een man met witte klederen liep op hem af. Het leek wel een beetje op een soort indische goeroe, of een ver-oosterde Jezus. Halok Patong Otjelek, zei de man. Dirk groette terug en liep door, maar de man achtervolgde hem. Ineens werd er van achteren op hem geklopt. 'Heb je vannacht een slaapplaats voor mij ? Ik ben hier op vakantie, maar ik kon geen slaapplaats vinden.' Dirk nam de man mee naar huis en gaf hem te eten. De man had verder geen spullen. Boven had Dirk nog wel een kamer voor de man. De volgende ochtend werd Dirk wakker, maar toen hij naar beneden liep kreeg hij de schrik van zijn leven. Zijn televisie was verdwenen, een paar meubels, en er was veel geld uit de la gestolen. De man was nergens meer te bekennen. Snel belde Dirk de politie. Hoe kon hij ook zomaar een vreemdeling vertrouwen. Maar ja, wat kon hij anders ?

Toen Dirk de man beschreef ging er een lichtje bij de politie branden. De man scheen een gevaarlijke crimineel te zijn. Dirk mocht blij zijn dat hij nog leefde. Het kwam allemaal in de krant te staan, en al snel kreeg Dirk een telefoontje van zijn vroegere voorganger : 'Dirk, ik ben er achtergekomen dat ik iets te hard voor je ben geweest. Je hebt een hart van goud, en ik zou je graag weer in de gemeente terugzien,' sprak de voorganger. In de gemeente werd Dirk ineens als een koning ontvangen. De mensen waren heel blij hem te zien. De mensen hadden het erg met hem te doen, en van alle kanten kreeg hij spullen en geld aangereikt. Dirk was hen erg dankbaar. Ineens stond de man met de witte klederen in de deur-opening met een geweer. 'Allemaal liggen,' riep hij hard. En iedereen verschool zich onder en achter de banken. Ineens begon de man te vuren, en schoot gaten in de muren. Iedereen was in grote paniek. 'Leg al het geld dat je hebt op de banken,' riep de man. Direkt werd er geld gelegd, en de man begon het op te halen. 'Kotsmisselijk ben ik van jullie,' zei de man. 'Ik word hier in jullie land als crimineel gezien, maar ik kom gewoon een deel halen van jullie rijkdom. Wij in het Oosten zijn arm. Het is niet eerlijk. Wij komen om van de honger, terwijl jullie hier feestjes en barbecues houden. En jullie noemen jezelf christenen ? Vampieren zijn jullie !' En toen vertrok de man weer. Direkt werd de politie gebeld, maar de man was in geen velden of wegen te bekennen. Dirk werd naar voren geroepen om de mensen te sussen. Maar Dirk kon geen woord uitbrengen. Verslagen ging hij weer zitten. De politie zou een grootscheeps onderzoek houden.

Hoofdstuk 5. De Spreuk

Thuisgekomen ziet Dirk de man op de bank zitten met een soort sigaret. 'Wat doe je hier ?' vraagt Dirk. 'Hier woon ik,' zegt de man.

'Waar heb je al mijn spullen ?' vraagt Dirk, die direkt de politie wil bellen. 'Dat zou ik maar niet doen,' zegt de man. 'Trouwens de telefoonkabel is doorgesneden.'

'Nou leuk,' zegt Dirk, 'en wat ga je nog meer doen ?'

'Wat zou ik als Jezus doen ?' vraagt de man ... 'Wonderen en tekenen natuurlijk ...'

'Oh God,' zegt Dirk, 'denk je nu ook al dat je Jezus bent ?'

'Ik ben altijd al Jezus geweest,' zegt de man, en plotseling is de man in het niets verdwenen.

Dirk schrikt wakker. Wat heeft hij vreemd gedroomd, zeg. Stilletjes sluipt Dirk naar de kamer van de vreemdeling. Deze slaapt nog steeds. 'Ach, het zal toch geen dief zijn ?' denkt Dirk ... 'Het was immers maar een droom.' Toch voor alle zekerheid haalde Dirk z'n geld uit de la, en legde het onder z'n kussen.

De volgende ochtend zitten ze samen aan het ontbijt. Dirk vertelt over zijn droom, en de man begint te grinniken. 'Ik geloof niet in Jezus,' zegt de man, 'Ik geloof in Boeddha.'

'Whatever,' denkt Dirk. De man draagt een vreemde ring, en Dirk vraagt naar de betekenis ervan. 'Oh,' zegt de man, 'dat is een ring waarmee ik boze geesten opsluit.'

'Zo zo,' zegt Dirk, 'doet Boeddha daar ook al aan ?'

'Nee,' zegt de man, 'dat heb ik eens geleerd vroeger van een man waarbij ik werkte. Die zei dat als ik genoeg geesten in mijn ring had verzameld, dan konden ze voor mij werken, en dan zou ik slapend rijk worden.'

'En ? Ben je dat geworden ?' vroeg Dirk. 'Nee,' zei de man, 'maar ik mag niet klagen.' Dirk glimlachte. 'Vertel me eens,' vroeg Dirk, 'hoe sluit je die geesten in je ring op ? En hoe laat je ze voor je werken ?'

De man boog een beetje naar voren, en zei : 'Door wat toverspreuken. Als ik genoeg geesten heb dan vormen ze tezamen een goede geest.'

'Oh,' zei Dirk een beetje pseudo-verbaasd, maar wel met respect, 'werken die dingen zo ?'

'Oh ja,' zei de man, 'want als je vele boze geesten aan elkaar hebt gebonden, dan wordt de goede geest die ze gevangen hadden gezet vrijgezet, en dan worden die boze geesten omgevormd en betoverd tot zijn delen.'

'Hmm... dat klinkt interessant,' zei Dirk, 'althans het is een leuk sprookje.'

'Nee,' zei de man, 'het is echt.'

'Whatever,' dacht Dirk. 'Kun je mij die toverspreuken eens vertellen ?'

Maar de man schudde zijn hoofd. Hij had zeven jaren voor die spreuken moeten werken, dus die zou hij niet zomaar even op tafel leggen. Maar toen werd Dirk ineens wel heel erg nieuwsgierig, en het was alsof zijn hart begon op te springen. 'Wat als ik je aanbied een maand bij mij te logeren ?' Maar de man schudde zijn hoofd. Dat zou te gemakkelijk gaan. 'Waar doe je het dan voor ?' vroeg Dirk.

'Wat dacht je van veel geld ?' zei de man. Dirk herinnerde wel hoeveel geld men moest betalen voor een reiki-cursus waarin je speciale bewegingen, symbolen en spreuken zou leren om één of andere goddelijke kracht te ontvangen. Dit leek hier wel erg veel op, en wat als de man maar gewoon wat bazelde ? Misschien als Dirk hem het geld zou geven dat de man die spreuken gewoon ter plekke zou verzinnen. Maar wat als de man nu echt geheime en kostbare toverkracht zou bezitten door

die spreuken ... Hoe langer Dirk er over nadacht hoe interessanter hij het vond worden. Hij zou graag als een soort Aladin willen zijn, met zijn eigen wonderlamp, met een geest die hem zou kunnen helpen.

Hoofdstuk 6. De Ring

Dirk probeert op vele manieren erachter te komen hoe het zit, en stelt veel vragen, maar de man laat niet veel meer los. De man hield zich als een automaat waar je eerst geld in moest gooien. Voorzichtig vroeg Dirk naar het bedrag voor de spreuken. Het was een bedrag boven de tienduizend. Toch besloot Dirk het te doen, want hij werd gek van de nieuwsgierigheid. Dirk ging naar boven en haalde het bedrag onder zijn kussen vandaan, en gaf het aan de man. De man gaf hem een klein boekje waar de spreuken instonden. 'Hier heb je het. Ik ken de spreuken na al die jaren wel uit m'n hoofd. Als je ze goed gebruikt zul je nooit meer te hoeven werken. Ineens was de man in het niets verdwenen. Dirk voelde zich heel vreemd en opende het boekje. Er werd ook uitleg gegeven bij de spreuken.

Dit was allemaal veel interessanter dan al dat gezanik in de kerk van mensen die toch niet veranderen, of door zogenaamde veranderingen steeds trotser en koppiger worden. Maar dit was mysterie, dit was geheimzinnig, dit was zeker wel een duikje waard. Dirk begreep wel dat de man er zoveel geld voor had gevraagd, want hij had er immers zeven jaren voor gewerkt.

Dirk bladerde snel door het boekje, en ergens op één van de laatste bladzijden stond dat het boekje absoluut niet verkocht mocht worden. Ook stond er op dat hen die deze kennis bezaten het alleen maar mochten doorgeven aan hen die er klaar voor waren. En toen las Dirk iets waar hij erg van schrok. Om de spreuken daadwerkelijk te laten werken zou degene die de spreuken kende eerst naar het Oosten moeten gaan, om daar op zoek te gaan naar een speciale ring. Toen de ring beschreven werd herinnerde Dirk zich dat de oosterse man zo'n ring had. Dirk voelde zich een beetje moe worden. Zou hij echt eerst op zoek moeten naar zo'n ring ? Toen Dirk even later de kamer van zijn gast opruimde zag hij op het kussen iets liggen. Het was een briefje, en toen Dirk het pakte lag er tot zijn grote verbazing een ring onder, dezelfde ring als die de man droeg. Op het briefje stond geschreven : 'Ik wist dat je zo'n ring nodig zou hebben, dus bij deze. Ik zie je in het kasteel.' Dirk was erg verrast, maar wat bedoelde hij met het kasteel ? Even later na het boekje wat beter te hebben gelezen begreep Dirk het. Hij zou leren te verschijnen en te verdwijnen, en ergens op een verborgen en geheime plaats zou een kasteel staan waar je alleen maar door de spreuken en de ring zou kunnen komen. Hier zou je ook alle anderen kunnen ontmoeten die de ring droegen en de spreuken gebruikten. Dat leek Dirk wel erg spannend. Maar hoe hij ook oefende met de spreuken, er gebeurde niet veel, eigenlijk niets. Maar hij wist dat het toch wel iets moest zijn, want de man kon ook zo maar in het niets verdwijnen. Er was

ook een hoofdstuk over wat er aan de hand zou kunnen zijn als de spreuken niet zouden werken. Ergens stond geschreven dat als je zelf niet in het oosten was geweest, dan zouden de spreuken niet werken. Zij die de ring al wel hadden, maar nog niet in het oosten waren geweest, zouden eerst naar het oosten moeten gaan, zodat de ring zou werken. Zij zouden bij een oosterse koopman de ring moeten laten beoordelen.

Er zat voor Dirk niets anders op om naar het Oosten te vertrekken, maar waar in het Oosten ? Dat stond nergens beschreven. Dirk besloot naar Bagdad te gaan, want daar kwam Aladin ook vandaan. Bij een koopman aangekomen in een winkel liet Dirk de ring zien, en vroeg wat het waard was. De koopman schrok zichtbaar. De koopman riep iets en even later grepen twee Oosterse soldaten Dirk vast. De koopman zei dat het één van de gestolen ringen van de Sjeik was. Dirk moest meekomen naar het paleis van de Sjeik. De koopman liep voorop met de ring. De Sjeik was erg blij de ring te zien, en begon het ding te zoenen. Toen richtte hij zich op Dirk en riep : 'Werp hem in de vurige oven !' Maar toen riep Dirk : 'Maar mijnheer, ik heb helemaal niets gedaan. Ik heb deze ring van iemand gekregen. Ik wist niet dat hij gestolen was.' Toen zei de Sjeik : 'Okay, sluit hem dan op in de diepste kerker.' Dirk werd helemaal meegevoerd naar beneden. In de kerker aangekomen zag hij daar ook de man zitten van wie hij de ring had en de spreuken. 'En, waar heb je nu de ring ?' vraagt de man. Dirk begint te snikken : 'Die hebben ze me afgenomen. De ring was gestolen. Wat doe jij hier trouwens ?' Waarop de man zegt : 'Je hebt de ring nodig, anders kom je hier nooit meer weg. Ik ben hier speciaal voor jou gekomen.'

'Ach, toe nou,' smeekt Dirk, 'kun je me nog één keer die ring geven ?' Ineens is de man weer verdwenen, en na een paar minuten verschijnt hij weer, met de ring. 'Alsjeblieft, en laat hem je niet meer afnemen,' zegt de man. Dirk haalt zijn boekje tevoorschijn, en begint de spreuken uit te spreken. En eindelijk werkt het, en niet lang daarna bevindt hij zich in het geheime kasteel. Hier komt hij de man weer tegen, maar ook wat christenen, zelfs wat voorgangers die hij wel kent. 'Wat moeten die nu hier ?' vraagt Dirk. Waarop de man zegt : 'Hetzelfde als wat jij hier doet.'

Plotseling word Dirk wakker. Het was weer allemaal een droom. Waarom moet hij toch altijd zo vreemd dromen ?

Inmiddels was het dan echt ochtend geworden. Tijd om zijn gast te wekken. Die ligt nog rustig te slapen. Dirk heeft wat ontbijt voor hem gemaakt. Z'n gast kijkt hem een beetje vreemd aan. Beneden aan tafel vertelt Dirk glimlachend de twee dromen die hij over hem heeft gehad. Z'n gast zegt niet veel, en vertrekt na een tijdje weer. Het ging de man alleen maar om een slaapplaats voor de nacht. Dirk is best wel opgelucht dat alles zo goed is afgelopen, maar Dirk denkt nog wel veel na over dat bijzondere spreuken-boekje waarover hij gedroomd had. Tijdens het opruimen van de kamer van zijn gast komt Dirk erachter dat de man een klein bijbeltje heeft

achtergelaten. Misschien dat hij het vergeten is ? Even later wordt er gebeld. Het is de man, die om zijn bijbeltje vraagt die hij had vergeten. 'Bent u christen ?' vraagt Dirk. Maar de man mompelt wat, neemt het bijbeltje aan uit Dirk's hand, en loopt weer weg.

Een uurtje later gaat Dirk naar z'n werk in het bejaardentehuis. Hij gaat bij een oude dame op bezoek die ernstig ziek is. De vrouw ligt in bed. Door de jaren heen moest Dirk de vrouw zo nu en dan wat zorg geven, en de dame is erg op hem gesteld. 'Dirk, ik heb wat voor je,' zegt de vrouw, 'ik weet niet of je er wat aan hebt, maar het is een boekje wat ik eens kreeg van een andere dame waar ik zeven jaar voor gewerkt had in de huishouding. Ik wilde het graag aan jou geven.' De vrouw boog opzij en trok haar nachtkastje open, en haalde een paars-achtig boek tevoorschijn. Dirk sloeg het boek open en zag allerlei vreemde spreuken staan. 'Wat is het ?' vraagt hij aan de oude dame. 'Ik weet het niet, Dirk,' zei de oude vrouw. 'Ik weet alleen dat het boek oorspronkelijk van haar overleden man was, die als kapitein op een schip werkte.' Dirk sloeg het boek dicht.

Thuisgekomen sloeg hij het boek direkt weer open. Er stonden veel spreuken in, maar er stond niet bij wat het betekende. Het kon ook gewoon een boek in een andere taal zijn. Dirk besloot het boek te laten onderzoeken door een expert. Na enkele maanden kreeg hij bericht. Het boek was inderdaad geschreven in een oud oosterse taal, dus het waren geen spreuken. Het was een boek over dieren en hun betekenissen. Dirk was een beetje teleurgesteld dat het geen toverspreuken waren, maar aan de andere kant ook opgelucht, want zo konden er ook geen vreemde dingen gebeuren.

Dirk besloot het boek gewoon in de kast te leggen, en er verder geen aandacht meer aan te geven.

Hoofdstuk 7. Het dromengroepje

Dirk besluit zich aan te melden bij een dromengroepje. Bij het dromengroepje wordt er gepraat over wat ze gedroomd hebben. Ze zitten in een kring. Het zijn mensen van verschillende slag. Er zitten bank-directeuren tussen, dokters, christenen en niet-christenen. Dirk begint te vertellen over zijn dromen. Die had hij eigenlijk al van kindsaf aan. Het wordt een lange toespraak. Na afloop wordt hem gevraagd hoe hij zich bij de dromen voelde. Iemand anders stapt naar voren, en begint soortgelijke dromen te vertellen. Dirk vindt dat wel interessant. Het is net alsof die soortgelijke dromen alles op een andere manier belichten, en aanvullen. De avond is snel voorbij. Een vrouw die nog met Dirk wil doorpraten word door hem uitgenodigd om mee te komen naar zijn huis. 'Ja, ik ben erg onder de indruk van je dromen,' zegt de vrouw. 'Ik droom zelf niet zoveel, maar had toch wel een paar dromen waarover ik in een dromengroepje wilde praten. Het ging om een

paar nachtmerries.' Dirk is één en al oor. De vrouw begint te vertellen. Ze vertelde hem dat ze in haar jeugd een paar keer dezelfde droom had gedroomd. Dat gebeurde altijd als ze ziek was. Dan zag ze Aladin op de kade staan die naar haar riep, en op haar afrende, maar dan werd ze altijd door een paar duistere figuren in een schip getrokken, en gingen ze de zee op waar het verschrikkelijk stormde. Dan verging het schip altijd.

De vrouw kon die nachtmerries nooit verwerken. 'Ben je een christen ?' vroeg Dirk. 'Nee,' zei de vrouw, 'maar ik ben wel altijd geinteresseerd geweest in sprookjes, vooral de sprookjes van Duizend-en-één-Nacht.' Dirk begint te glimlachen. Nou, ik zou ook maar geen christen worden hoor, want dan word je door allerlei christenen gegrepen die het alleen maar erger maken. Het wordt toch allemaal verkeerd belicht. De beste christenen die het dichtst bij de waarheid leven zijn de niet-christelijke christenen, de buitenkerkelijke kerkelijken. De vrouw begint te glimlachen, en begrijpt precies wat hij bedoelt. Ineens voelt de vrouw zich niet goed worden. 'Ga maar even op de bank liggen,' zegt Dirk vriendelijk. De vrouw begint hevig te ademen, en Dirk haalt een glas water voor haar. Wat moet hij nu doen ? Na een tijdje word de vrouw weer wat rustig. 'Ik heb soms last van hyperventilatie,' laat de vrouw weten.

Na een tijdje zetten ze het gesprek voort. 'Ik denk dat figuren als Jezus en Aladin juist buiten het schip en buiten de kerk staan, omdat ze van binnen hun beeld zo gemolesteerd hebben,' zegt Dirk. De vrouw knikt instemmend. Het is een zachte vrouw, iemand die Dirk goed kan begrijpen. 'Wordt er in de kerk ook over Aladin gesproken, of alleen over Jezus ?' vraagt de vrouw. Dirk wordt stil ... Hij herinnert zich een droom die hij heel vroeger heeft gehad over Aladin met zijn lamp waaruit geesten kwamen. Die geesten hadden zich op allerlei manieren verkleed en gingen in de hoofden van mensen wonen. En op een vreemde manier raakten die mensen toen in elkaar geinteresseerd. Als iets 'anders is dan anders' dan kan dat aantrekken of afstoten.

Dirk besluit om de vrouw bij hem te laten logeren. Ze komt op de kamer waar de oosterse man had geslapen.

Hoofdstuk 8. Duizend-en-één-Nacht

In de logeerkamer hangt een groot schilderij van Mickey Mouse. De vrouw kon zich nog wel herinneren dat ze vroeger eens over Mickey Mouse had gedroomd. In die droom had Mickey een schip, een soort piratenschip. De volgende ochtend zitten ze samen aan het ontbijt. De vrouw moet net als Dirk ook werken. Ze besluiten elkaar weer terug te zien in het dromengroepje.

Wanneer er weer een bespreking is van het dromengroepje is er weer een nieuw lid bijgekomen. De man gaat zitten, en begint te vertellen. Ook anderen vertellen wat

ze de afgelopen twee weken hebben gedroomd. En er wordt nog een tijd over doorgepraat. Dirk denkt diep over de dromen na. Het is voor hem een ander soort van leven, en ook een ander soort van contact hebben met elkaar. Het is een speciale vriendenkring, en het trekt hem veel meer aan dan het gewone leven. En of hij het geheim van Aladin al heeft ontrafeld ? Dat weet Dirk niet. Hij besluit de sprookjes van Duizend-en-één-Nacht te lezen, zoals de vrouw hem dat had aangeraden.

Maar het was alsof Dirk het niet kon lezen, alles wemelde voor zijn ogen, en hij besloot ermee te stoppen. Het boek was in het Engels. Maar de vrouw wilde het hem wel voorlezen en voor hem vertalen. Dirk stemde er mee in. De vrouw zou hem elke keer na de bijeenkomst thuis een stukje voorlezen. Het was alsof het boek Dirk heel zwaar op de maag viel, en daarom kon hij niet teveel in één keer. Op een dag stonden er twee mannen voor de deur. Het waren Jehova-getuigen. Dirk liet hen binnen, en schonk wat voor hen in. Dirk vertelde over het boek dat hij aan het lezen was. 'Maar ken je de Bijbel al ? Heb je daar weleens in gelezen ?' vroeg een van de mannen. 'Ja, daar ben ik zo zoetjes aan mee doodgegooid,' zei Dirk. Toen ze een slot op de Bijbel hebben gezet, heeft God gezegd : 'Nou goed, dan maak ik er wel andere boeken bij. Mij kun je de mond niet snoeren.' Ze hebben van die Bijbel een papieren paus gemaakt. Maar toen staken de Jehovah-getuigen van wal. Ze hadden het over het komende paradijs hier op aarde. Dirk wist niet goed wat hij hierop moest zeggen, en liet ze maar praten. Waar hij in was geinteresseerd was hoe zij in het totale plaatje konden passen. Ze liepen natuurlijk niet voor niets rond. Daar was God gewoon te groot voor. Dirk herinnerde de droom van zijn kinderjaren : Alle dingen zijn puzzelstukjes, maar je moet ze op de juiste manier draaien en op de juiste plekken, zodat ze in elkaar passen. Dat was een hele opgave. Ook was het voor Dirk een uitdaging, en het was een stap verder dan alles zomaar opzij te schuiven. Dirk moest met de stukjes werken.

Vanavond zou er een optocht zijn. De hele stoet was verkleed, en er waren versierde wagens. Er was ook een wagen bij waar Aladin opstond. 'Hey, Aladin !' riep iemand in het publiek. Maar Aladin hoorde het niet, omdat hij tussen wat hoornblazers, trompettisten en slagwerkers stond. Dirk slenterde naar huis, nadenkend over God en over zijn dromen. Was de wereld niet één grote droom ? Dirk wist het niet. Er waren zoveel dingen die hij nog niet wist. Zou hij het ooit te weten komen ?

Einde

Robot van de Dood

Hij was een sluipschutter, een huurmoordenaar. Ook redde hij meisjes uit nachtclubs, de robot van de dood. Hij had zelf ook een nachtclub, ja zelfs een netwerk van nachtclubs, en hij was de baas van een casino.

Hij was de robot van de dood, een meedogenloze machine. Waar hij ook kwam maakte hij relletjes. Altijd wel iemand om te redden, altijd wel iemand om uit te schakelen. Zijn pistool was gevreesd. Een KX-OO-47 Megastrant. Zijn mes was legendarisch. Miljoenen had hij eraan geregen.

Hij was een comediant, eentje met verborgen bedoelingen. Altijd ging hij recht op zijn doel af, maar vaak subtiel. Snel was hij ook altijd weer verdwenen. Hij stond altijd klaar voor iedereen, zolang ze hem maar veel betaalden. Zijn laser-ogen keken dwars door alles heen.

Hij was de beul van de onderwereld. De maffia trok altijd aan het kortste eind. Hij zwom in het geld, en voor geld deed hij alles. Hij keek altijd of hij ergens geld in zag. Hij was geprogrammeerd door een professor, maar eens ging ook de professor eraan. Het was kunstmatige intelligentie.

Hij was uitgerust met de beste wapens. In zijn ogen was een scherm waarop hij alle instructies kon lezen. Hij was gemaakt van lijken en van oude, onbekende botten, en van een heleboel apparaten. Hij schoot altijd raak, dankzij laser-technologie. Door rode stralen puzzelde hij alles uit.

Hij was een vampier. Hij zoog bloed. Ook at hij vlees, en dronk hij sterke drank. In zijn hand had hij een map van alle nachtclubs. Ook kon hij met zijn hand alle deuren openkrijgen, en in alle auto's komen. Hij betaalde nooit ergens iets voor. Het geld at hij, als voedsel voor zijn lichaam.

Hij was een automaat. Hij was ook een danser, allemaal voor een goede doorbloeding van het geld.

Hij was de robot van de dood, van het grote geld, zijn eigen maffia. Hij kende alle nachtclubs, en bevrijdde vaak meisjes en vlinders van achter de ramen. Hij was de politie en de jury. Op zijn schip van de dood nam hij vriend en vijand mee.

Door handige apparaatjes wist hij op de hoogste flats te komen. Hij was zijn eigen leger. Wie kon hem nog stoppen, die geldwolf, die bedrieger ? Hij was nu dagelijks op tv. Hij had zichzelf vereeuwigd daarmee.

Het Rijk van Nicotine

Een van de reusachtigste leiders van het duistere rijk die ik ooit had gezien was wel het skelet Nicotine. Elke dag maakte hij een lange reis over de bergen naar de hoogste top, met in zijn armen het hoofd van een meisje. Nicotine had een paar duistere paarden, genaamd Ammalgamos, Compositos en Medicinos. Hij was een duistere rijder. In zijn rijk was er geen schoonheid, alleen lelijkheid, maar de jungles hier waren reusachtig. Ik stond aan de oever. Een jongetje in een boot wenkte mij. Het was een lange dunne boot, en het jongetje had een peddel. Het was een indiaans jongetje. ‘Mijn moeder wacht op je,’ riep hij. Al gauw was hij bij de oever en ik stapte in het bootje. Al snel waren we aan de andere kant van het meertje. Aan de oever stond een vrouw. Ik herkende haar niet, maar zij riep mij bij mijn naam. Ik stapte uit het bootje en liep naar de oever. Ze omhelsde me stevig. ‘Ik heb een maaltijd voor je gemaakt,’ zei ze. ‘Wie ben je ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Oh, ik ben Melango,’ zei de vrouw. Al snel bracht ze mij naar haar hut. Er lagen hier allerlei pakjes sigaretten en sigarendoosjes. ‘Rook je ?’ vroeg ik. ‘Nee,’ zei ze. ‘Mijn zoontje neemt ze weleens mee.’

’s Nachts komen de troubadouren,’ zei ze. ‘Zij werken voor de farao.’

‘Waar hebben ze het dan over ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Oh,’ zei ze, ‘over hem. Je weet wel : Nicotine, de baas van alle farao’s. Hij is het grote opperhoofd.’ Ik kende Nicotine wel. Het was een verschrikking. Iedereen was geketend aan zijn lange kettingen, ook deze vrouw. Het hart van Nicotine was een rood hart, maar voor de rest was het hele duistere rijk zwart en wit. Als de troubadours kwamen dan was er altijd veel grijs, veel bruin en geel. Nicotine was een slager. Hij was altijd op jacht, en had een grote fokkerij. Hier liet hij de vrouwen zwaar werk verrichten. ‘Pssst, bevrijd me,’ fluisterde de vrouw. Ze wees op de ring aan mijn vinger die ik eens van de farao had gekregen. Ik bedacht me geen moment, legde de ring tegen haar ketting en brandde de keten door. Ik pakte haar hand, en zei : Kom mee. Ik weet niet hoe lang het geduurd heeft maar na tijden rennen kwamen we uit de jungles van Nicotine. Een man staarde ons aan met een lange baard. Hij liet ons de tand van een haai zien. ‘Waar zijn we ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Welkom,’ zei de man. Hij was direct heel vriendelijk. Hij staarde naar mijn ring. ‘Wie bent u ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Ik ben Terang,’ zei de man. ‘Gezand van de koning.’

‘Wie is de koning ?’ vroeg ik. Hij liet me een klein balletje zien. Maar daar kwam Nicotine al aan. Ik greep Melango weer bij haar hand en rende met haar verder. Maar ook in de verte zag ik Nicotine aankomen, en toen van alle kanten. Snel werden we ingesloten. ‘Nicotine heerst hier,’ zeiden ze. Plotseling kwam er rood licht uit mijn ring voort en scheen op de harten van de Nicotines om ons heen. Een van de Nicotines had witte klederen met een lange witte punthoed. Hij leek wel op een pion. Achter hem stonden nog een paar van zulke Nicotines. Ik richtte de straal van de ring op zijn gezicht, en hij begon weg te smelten. Ik rende met Melango door de opening die was ontstaan. Weer zag ik die man. ‘Kan ik iets voor je doen ?’ vroeg Terang.

‘Ja,’ zei ik. ‘Help ons hier uit.’

Maar Terang werd gegrepen door de Nicotines en werd verslonden. De Nicotines waren als een kudde hongerige honden. Weer richtte ik de straal van de ring op hen. In de verte was een piramide waar we naartoe renden. Binnenin zat een farao op een troon. Hij was geheel gemaakt van metaal, en er kwam rook uit hem voort. Maar al snel waren ook de Nicotines binnen en verslonden de metalen farao. Een paar Nicotines zaten op paarden. Het waren grote paarden. We renden door een deur in een andere gang. Maar hier waren zwarte Nicotines met hun paarden. Weer beukte ik een deur in, en kwamen in een kamer terecht met een raampje waardoor we konden ontsnappen. We waren nu op de piramide. De vrouw haalde wat pakjes sigaretten en sigaren uit haar broekzakken en begon ze tussen haar handen te rammelen,

terwijl ze veren begon te krijgen. Snel greep ze me en we vlogen weg. Het was mij een raadsel. Nicotine Magie, zei ze. We vlogen naar een hoog kasteel waar de Nicotine Tovenaar woonde. We hadden hier groot uitzicht. De Nicotine Tovenaar was een aardige man. Hij liet ons alle mechanismes van Nicotines zien. Het waren robotten. Ook hun grote paarden.

De Tovenaar zette ons ergens neer op de rotsen, in een ander rijk. We kwamen op een strand terecht met heet zand. Ook was er een hutje van riet en bamboe. ‘Blijf je bij me ?’ vroeg Melango.

‘Ach, ik kom je nog weleens een keertje opzoeken,’ zei ik. ‘Ik hoop dat je het hier naar je zin zult hebben. Er is hier strand en zee, en er groeit hier voldoende aan de bomen.’

Daar kwam de Tovenaar aan, vanaf het strand. ‘Je hebt in ieder geval goed gezelschap,’ zei ik. De Tovenaar gaf mij een hoed van stro en riet. En toen vertrok ik.

Einde

Watervogels

De Groene Dood

Hij sloop door het bos. De koningin van het woud waakte over hen. Hij hoorde de beesten brullen in de verte. De dromer waakte deze keer. In het zonlicht kon hij haar gezicht zien. Verderop zwommen wat watervogels in de rivier, en zijzelf waren met de grotere beesten. De groene wind was hen aan het omsingelen, heel subtiel, en kwam toen steeds dichterbij. Hij haalde het gedichten-boek met het gele leren kaft erbij, en begon eruit te prevelen. Ze hield hem tegen zich aan.

De watervogels kwamen dichterbij, en het natte was hun god. Kim staarde naar hem. Zij had hem gecreeerd. Zij was zijn godin. Zij had een boek met sleutels. En de sleutels waren van drop.

De watervogels brachten hen over de rivier naar het slot. In het slot hingen schilderijen, en er waren veel mysterieuze boeken. Ze gingen op een bed liggen, met een gordijn als deken. De groene dood was in de rivier, maar klom op de kant en ging het kasteel binnen. Aan de muren hingen skeletten.

Zij las hem verhalen voor, en het was voor hem een nieuw leven. Ze praatte snel, maar het was goed volgbaar voor hem. Hij had haar leren begrijpen, dronk wijn met haar.

De groene dood schoof als een deken over hem heen, en plotseling stond het slot in brand. Snel doken ze de rivier in. De watervogels beschermde hen tegen het vuur. Het was alsof alles in brand stond. De boeken veranderden in vogels, en de groene dood dook in de rivier om achter hen aan te gaan. Maar mysterieuze rozen waren om hen heen. Toen veranderde de rivier in bloed, en de groene dood loste er in op.

Ze zwommen naar de overkant, en gingen op de kant zitten. Rozen groeiden naar beneden vanuit de bomen. De vogels der geheimen kwamen om hen heen.

Bloedgeld

De hoertjes waar hij kwam wilden niet betaald worden met geld, maar met bloed. Maar soms namen ze ook genoegen met een gladiator's loon. Het hing er een beetje van af welk soort meisje hij tegenover zich had. Het kon hem niet veel schelen. Hij loog en bedroog. In deze wereld draaide alles om bloed, niet om vriendschap. Hij wist al heel lang dat hij het spel verloren had, en er zat voor hem niks anders op dan het spel gewoon door te spelen. Waar moest hij anders naartoe ?

Zijn pistool werkte op blauw bloed, en in sommige situaties groeide het uit als een machine-geweer. Het kon hem niet schelen. Soms wilde hij weleens dat iemand hem eens goed overhoop zou schieten. Hij haatte zijn leven. Het gladiator's loon was bloed, veel bloed, vooral het duistere bloed, wat hij dan weer moest afgeven aan de meiden waar hij schulden bij had. In deze wereld bestond er geen geld. Alles draaide om bloed, en bloed was macht.

Kimberly was een meid met een groot hotel, helemaal van haarzelf. Aan de muur hingen skeletten, zij die haar niet hadden betaald. Huiverend ging de man naar binnen, en liet zich door haar verleiden. Waarom ging hij eigenlijk, als zij zo gevaarlijk was ? Ze was de gevaarlijkste hoer van de stad. Maar ja, iedere soldaat moest daar een keer naartoe, want zij kon een soldaat bewapenen als niemand anders. Daar had ze haar magie voor. En zij die nooit bij haar waren geweest werden als doetjes beschouwd .... maar de prijs was hoog ....

Helemaal gesloopt kwam hij uit het hotel. Dit had hij niet verwacht. Snel ging hij naar een ander meisje die hij kende. Toen het meisje zijn wonden zag begon ze in paniek te gillen. 'Oh, Zevinaut, Zevinaut Aklasse, dat is al de zoveelste wond waar ik niks mee kan beginnen,' riep ze. 'Deze wonden zijn te sterk. Ik kan ze niet bezweren.' Ze pakte haar telefoontje en belde een paar vriendinnen op. 'Je kan komen,' zei ze tegen de man.

Na een lange nacht werd de man wakker in een vreemd bed. Hij wist niet meer hoe hij hier was gekomen, maar hij had veel bloed verloren. Hij pakte zijn pistool, laadde het op en stond op. Achter het vertrek was een veldje waar hij z'n slag sloeg, en door een vreemd buisje deed hij zich tegoed aan bloed. Het bloed schuimde bijna uit z'n mond, en hij voelde dat hij er voorlopig wel weer tegenaan kon. Ook zijn geheugen begon weer te werken.

Hij had nog veel schulden hier en daar, en dat zou hij nu oplossen. Maar even later werd hij van achteren aangevallen. Het was Kimberly. Ze had hem in z'n rug getrapt, en vanaf de grond keek hij haar aan. 'Wat heeft dit te betekenen ?' vroeg hij. 'Waren wij niet klaar ?'

‘Nee,’ zei Kimberly nijdig. ‘Zij die bij mij zijn gekomen zijn nooit klaar.’

‘Wat bedoel je ?’ vroeg de man.

‘Laat maar,’ zei Kimberly, greep hem in z’n nekvel en sleurde hem een huis binnen. ‘In onze groep blijft de roulatie gewoon,’ zei Kimberly. ‘Ik bedoel .... meet my vriendinnen.’ Boven aan het trappenhuis stonden vier a vijf vrouwen van hetzelfde kaliber, en sleurden hem naar binnen. ‘Bedankt Kimberly,’ zei één van hen. Kimberly gaf hem nog even een harde trap in zijn buik, en vertrok toen.

‘Wat is dit allemaal ?’ kreunde de man van de pijn.

‘Soldaat,’ zei één van de vrouwen bitcherig. Ze maakte een deur open en duwde de man naar binnen. Het leek hier wel op een arena. Hij werd in een vreemd leren pak gehesen, van rood leer met wat dunne zwarte strepen, en toen in een cabine gedrukt. Stoom kwam er uit het plafond, en even leek het alsof hij zou stikken. ‘Haal me eruit,’ proeste hij, maar de vrouwen lachten.

‘Ik weet echt niet wat jullie van plan zijn, hoor,’ zei de man.

Even later werd hij eruit gehaald, en moest hij zijn eerste gevecht beginnen. Tegenover hem stond ook een man in leer, en een gevaarlijk mes blonk bijna zijn ogen blind. Een vrouw wierp hem een speer toe, maar al gauw raakte de man zijn bewustzijn kwijt. Hij werd wakker in een zacht bed. Overal was dons, en een bijna naakte vrouw staarde hem aan.

‘Kan iemand me vertellen wat hier aan de hand is ?’ stotterde de man. ‘Ik praat alleen voor bloed,’ zei de vrouw.

‘Oh, ben jij er ook zo een,’ zei de man. De vrouw haalde een vreemde strip tevoorschijn met allerlei plasticen bandjes, en bond het om zijn armen. ‘Sssh,’ zei de vrouw, en liep weg. De man keek om zich heen, en toen naar de bandjes. Weer kwam de vrouw met een hele doos vol met die bandjes en ze wilde ze ook om zijn benen doen, en om zijn nek, en nog meer om zijn armen.

‘Waar is dit allemaal voor nodig,’ vroeg de man.

‘Alleen voor bloed praat ik,’ zei de vrouw. De man pakte zijn mes, sneed een stukje van zijn arm open, en liet wat bloed wegglijden. De vrouw likte het op, en sprak met een bebloedde mond : ‘Wij zijn de Delia, de groep van morgen.’

‘Wie is Delia, wie of wat is morgen ?’ vroeg de man. Weer likte de vrouw wat van het bloed weg, terwijl de man duizelig werd. ‘Je kunt er niet omheen,’ zei de vrouw, ‘Je moet er recht doorheen.’ Toen opende de vrouw een deur, en weer keek de man recht in een soort arena. Een vreemde kracht gleed door de man heen. Er was niemand in de arena, maar er stonden bloed-automaten tegen de muur. De man kende die automaten wel. Die werkten alleen op bloed, maar je kon er bijna alles mee gedaan krijgen. Het was ook een soort computer. De man liep langzaam naar binnen, en typte in op het toetsenbord : ‘Wie of wat is Delia, en wat of wie is morgen ?’ Hij legde zijn hand op een speciaal vlak van de automaat, en zag zijn hand blauw worden van het bloedverlies. ‘Namens u praat ik,’ sprak de computer, ‘namens uw bloed waarin alle informatie is. Delia is de dood, en morgen is het lijden.’ De man werd kwaad omdat hij niet tegen dat soort raadsels kon, en trapte tegen de automaat aan, maar ineens kwam er een speer uit de automaat die zijn arm doorboorde. Gillend rende de man weg, maar toen sloot de deur zich. Ook de andere automaten begonnen te bewegen, en langzaam kwamen zij op hem af. ‘Bloed, bloed, bloed,’ fluisterden ze. De man krijste toen hij op meerdere plaatsen in zijn lichaam werd doorboort. Hij sprong over de kleinste automaat heen en rende naar een deur aan de andere kant van de arena. Een ander soort vrouw stond in de deuropening. Ze was klein, en ze droeg een vreemde hoed met een bloem. ‘Kom,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Ik wil je wat laten zien.’ De vrouw was vriendelijk, en vroeg niet om bloed of iets dergelijks. ‘Zeg, ik vertrouw het niet,’ zei de man. ‘Is dit allemaal gratis, of moet ik straks ook betalen met bloed ?’

‘Nee,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Geloof je dan niet in vriendschap ?’

‘Niet meer,’ zei de man. ‘Ik heb ontdekt dat niets gratis is.’ Hij keek nog eens naar haar, en zag hoe ze in een beest veranderde. De man raakte in paniek, maar zag een groen scherm boven zich hangen. ‘Hey, werd ik ook niet door dit scherm naar binnen gezogen ?’ dacht hij. Hij nam een duik, en kon uit de spel-automaat komen. Een groene monsterachtige arm probeerde hem nog terug te grijpen, maar snel sloeg de man tegen de grote rode knop onder het kastje aan, en het scherm bewoog niet meer, terwijl de monsterachtige arm verstijfde. Daar kwam de baas van het hotel waar hij was aan. ‘Oh, oh,’ zei de baas. ‘Ik had er al veel eerder wat aan moeten doen. Ik was al vaker gewaarschuwd door andere gasten dat de spel-automaat vreemd deed. Mijnheer, u krijgt direkt uw geld terug.’ De baas staarde naar de verstijfde monsterachtige arm. ‘Dit is niet goed,’ zei de baas. De man stond op, keek de baas recht in zijn gezicht, en zei : ‘Laat dit ding vernietigen. Bij wat voor firma heeft u dit ding gekocht ?’

‘Och,’ zei de baas, bukte om naar het merkteken te kijken, maar raakte per ongeluk de rode knop weer aan. Onmiddelijk greep de monsterachtige arm de baas en trok hem al gillend naar binnen, terwijl de man in paniek achteruit sprong. Snel duwde hij een stoel en tafel die achter hem stond weg, sprong over de bar, greep een fles en wierp deze in het scherm. Net op tijd kon hij de baas nog teruggrijpen. Politie en ambulance arriveerden net op tijd. De baas overleefde het ter nauwernood.

Einde

Robot X

Hij stond op de trap, zijn armen gestrekt, uitreikende naar zijn pistool vastzittende in een hoesje op zijn been. Wanneer hij het warme handvat van zijn pistool voelt, voelt hij zich opgelucht, en laat een zee van kogels vrijkomen als een aanval op het gedrocht dat voor hem staat. Zij die hem lastig hebben gevallen op wat voor manier dan ook betalen hem altijd in bloed. Hij is robot X, een

hooggeprogrammeerde computer, gemaakt om als een deurwaarder bloed op te eisen als een correcte betaling voor de door hem geleverde diensten.

Even knippert hij met zijn ogen. Een uitdagende vrouw staat voor hem om liefde en warmte te geven ..... Dat gaat haar wat kosten ..... bloed .... Even later vertrekken ze in een slaapkamer, en onder het bloed vertrekt Robot X weer. Zo gaan die dingen vaak.

Oh ja, vaak hebben ze geprobeerd deze computer te hacken, maar hacken kost bloed, heel veel bloed .... Een goedkope robot is robot x niet. Robot X weet altijd als geen ander aan zijn maal te komen. Daartoe is hij geprogrammeerd, als een belasting-ondernemer. Drama na drama schept hij, en neemt wat hem toebehoort. Voor wie werkt hij ? Hij heeft een ingebouwde telefoon, en luistert graag naar de stemmen van zijn bazen. Uitgezonden is hij om hun zakken te vullen .... niet met geld ..... maar met bloed ...... Bloeddorstig zijn zij ....

En hij weet hoe bloeddorstig de dames kunnen zijn ..... Daarom heeft hij allerlei ingebouwde apparaten om hem te beschermen ..... Nee, met robot x valt niet te spotten ..... En als er dan dames of heren zijn die denken aan robot x te zijn ontkomen, dan valt later de rekening wel. Zij betalen hem allemaal uit in bloed, want in geld is hij niet geinteresseerd. Waar hij vandaan komt ? Uit Duitsland, uit de hel. Hij is zo’n Duits zakenman die niet om te kopen is. Zo’n gediplomaceerde zak tabak achter een bureau met stapels papieren .... Maar nee, hij is een straatvechter ..... En hij slaapt dikwijls in de jungle of in het bos ..... Hij kan soms zo van achter een boom tevoorschijn springen ...... en muziek maakt hij ook ..... Hij is een thriller robot, die filmpjes afdraait in de hoofden van zijn slachtoffers, maar ook in zijn zakenpartners ..... Maar eigenlijk is dat hetzelfde voor hem .....

Op een dag liep robot x door de straten van Berlijn. Niemand zag hem, want hij was gecamoufleerd. Plotseling springt er een dame voor hem, die hem wel schijnt te zien, en daagt hem uit om met hem mee te gaan naar haar slaapkamer. Robot X pakt zijn spuit en injecteert haar, want daar heeft hij geen zin in om met een Duitse hoer mee te gaan ..... Die slikken nogal veel .... Maar als hij in Zuid Amerika is, dan is het een andere zaak ..... Hij heeft altijd een stel kaarten bij zich om zijn strategie te bepalen, en te zien hoeveel ze moet betalen ..... altijd in bloed .....

Robot X is een beetje een soort stripheld, maar dan het tegenovergestelde, een soort stripgevaar ..... Hij kan zo in het niets verdwijnen ..... een beetje als een soort geest ..... Zijn kaarten brengen hem in trance, en hij heeft allerlei middelen om aan bloed te komen ..... Ja, hij is een jager, en een dief ..... Tegelijkertijd is hij een agent ......

Hij is geprogrammeerd om te spioneren ..... Met zijn apparaten komt hij overal binnen, en hij laat ze grof betalen ..... Hij is zo’n beetje de baas ...... Waarom ze hem hebben uitgezonden ? Tja, om te laten zien dat geld niet de baas is, maar bloed ..... Bloed bezit alle informatie en alle macht, en daar is robot x goed van op de hoogte ..... Hij is een gelikte zoetgevooisde econoom, en tevens theoloog ..... Hij kan dreigen en waarschuwen als een profeet, en hij maakt zijn voorspellingen van doem altijd waar ..... Daar heeft hij zijn apparaten voor .... Hij is zo’n beetje god ..... Nou wist je dat god ook zo van bloed houdt ? Dat komt door hem, robot x ...... Daar heeft god dat van over gehouden ..... Geld is

de wortel van al het kwaad, maar bloed, bloed, bloed, dat is alles, hè ? Ja ..... en robot x weet daar alles van ..... Hij weet hoe bloed rolt en circuleert ..... Hij is een oplichter, omdat hij weet dat dat altijd het beste werkt ...... Met vriendschap kom je niet ver ...... en geld berooft je van je leven ...... Sommigen zeggen : robot x, dat is een vampier ..... Maar hij is meer dan een vampier ...... Hij is zogezegd alles .....

Nu weet je een beetje wie robot x is ..... Laatst liep hij op straat in Zuid Amerika ...... Er komen vijf grieten op hem af ...... Hij injecteert hen en neemt hun bloed, en vertrekt dan .... Zo kan het ook gaan ..... Robot X is niet altijd in de stemming ..... Hij heeft een wisselend humeur ..... Vooral als er een heleboel grieten tegelijk op hem afkomen. Waarom komen er vaak zoveel grieten op hem af ? Daar heeft hij ook zijn apparaten voor ..... En hij weet dat ze bloed ruiken ..... Vrouwen kunnen soms erg bloeddorstig zijn .....

Einde

Robot X

De Terugkeer

Robot X, dat is zo'n beetje wel de maestro ..... Hoe hij aan bloed komt is op zijn handpalm te lezen waar altijd mapjes verschijnen met plattegronden en strategieen. Ja veel van zijn tactieken zitten in zijn handen ...... En hij is gewiekst als het op kaarten aankomt ..... Hij wint bijna altijd, en dan moeten ze hem in bloed uitbetalen, want geld interesseert hem niet ..... Dat klinkt niet zo aardig, maar zo is Robot X nu eenmaal ..... Ik kan er ook niks aan doen ..... Hij gaat vaak naar het casino, en waarschuwt hen van tevoren ..... Hij eist uitbetaling in bloed, en betaalt zelf ook uit in bloed .....

Robot X is zo'n beetje de man ...... Alle vrouwen willen hem ..... En waarom ? ..... Vrouwen vallen op bloed ...... Het trekt hen aan .... Nou ja, niet alle vrouwen, maar veel wel ..... Alleen Robot X wil niet alle vrouwen ...... Eigenlijk wil hij er maar een paar ..... De rest injecteert hij .....

Ook mannen zijn in hem geinteresseert, maar Robot X is weinig in hen geinteresseert .... Hij neemt wat hij nodig heeft, en vertrekt dan ..... Hij heeft geen tijd voor onzin ..... Hij leeft een strak en geprogrammeerd leven, en dat brengt het meeste bloed op ...... Wat doet hij dan met dat bloed ? Daar heeft hij magazijnen voor ...... Er is veel dat je kan doen met bloed, net zo als met geld ...... alleen geld interesseert hem niet ...... want wat heb je aan geld als je geen bloed hebt ..... Al met al, niet zo'n lekker ventje, die Robot X ...... ruzie hebben met hem is als ruzie hebben met een groep deurwaarders ..... En zijn handdruk is als die van een belastings-magnaat ..... Ook niet zo fijn dus ..... maar vele vrouwen vinden het heerlijk .....

Wat valt er verder te melden over Robot X ..... dat hij vrijgezel is, en leeft voor het celibaat ..... met uitzonderingen dan ..... Hij wil paus worden, en dan eens laten zien hoe je nu echt paus moet zijn ..... Robot X heeft een obsessie als het op kerken aankomt ...... Dan kan hij hun bloed wel drinken als hij denkt aan al dat kerkentuig ..... Heerlijk lijkt hem dat ..... Al met al, een gevaarlijk mannetje, die robot x ..... Niet iemand om op de koffie uit te nodigen .....

Als je lang wil leven dan ontwijk je zo'n man ..... ook als je bloed je lief is ..... Geld maakt hem niets uit, dus dat kun je rustig laten slingeren ...... maar als het op bloed aankomt ..... Dat kun je dan beter ergens goed in de kelder opbergen ..... Maar tegen robot x valt er eigenlijk niet op te boksen ...... Hij weet alles te vinden ...... daar heeft hij een neus voor ...... Die neus van hem is zijn allerberuchtste wapen ..... het is als een geslachtsdeel .....

Robot X, er is veel over hem geschreven, maar eigenlijk kent niemand hem ..... Het is een duister figuur met vele geheimen ..... Een horrorpersonage ...... Iemand die nachtmerries bezorgd als de nachtkrant ..... Nee, geen lekker ventje, maar duister, duister ..... azende op bloed, en ook precies wetende hoe hij het recht aan zijn kant krijgt ...... Er valt tegen zo'n jochie niet op te boksen ..... Hij is als de rechter, de jury en de politie tegelijk ..... en maar jatten en oplichten ..... En dan tegelijkertijd is hij gediplomeerd chirurg .... Zie daar maar eens tegenin te gaan ..... Belasting noemen ze het ..... iets dat nu eenmaal moet, verplicht is ..... En als je niet wil, dan wordt je het land uitgezet ..... en dan is Robot X de lachende politicus ..... Mijn type in ieder geval niet ...... Ik heb het weleens met hem aan de stok gehad, en kon het niet navertellen ..... Dus ik waarschuw je : als je bloed je lief is, en je wil nog iets te vertellen hebben : blijf uit z'n buurt ..... doe geen zaken met hem ...... daag hem niet uit ..... zoek iemand anders ..... Alleen hij kan zich camoufleren ..... Hij draagt graag maskers, en zo trapte ik er ook in ...... Dus wees op je hoede, ten bloedens toe ..... De duivel gaat rond als een brullende leeuw zoekende wie hij zal verslinden ...... Het is zoiets als de uitverkiezing ...... en ik was de uitverkorene ...... arme ik .....

Robot X ..... Ik moet zeggen hij heeft wel stijl ...... Hij is zeer avontuurlijk, en het leest weg als een boek ..... Daarom denk ik nog weleens met een glimlach aan hem terug .....

Einde

Robot X

Sapplemento

Sapplemento, schreeuwde iemand op straat. Robot X was er snel bij, greep zijn spuit en legde de man lam ..... Niemand was gemachtigd hem op die manier uit te schelden .... Sapplemento was een verschrikkelijk woord ..... een godslastering ..... En robot x was dus god, tenminste zo was hij geprogrammeerd ..... Ook anderen begonnen het te roepen, en kregen de spuit ..... Robot X was zo'n beetje de dictator hier, voor een nieuwe wereldorde .... Zo was hij geprogrammeerd ..... Hij spoot iets in hun ogen, en weg waren ze, om even later als geprogrammeerde dienstknechtjes op te staan ...... gehypnotiseerd door ..... robot x .....

En niemand vond het erg, want dat was gelijk aan een andere soort van godslastering .... Dus iedereen legde zich er maar bij neer .... Robot X was nu eenmaal de baas, en de baas is altijd goed .... heeft altijd gelijk ..... En daarom stemden ze ook altijd op hem ..... Hij heerste over hun bloed ...... Geld bestond niet meer ......

Wie robot x volgde had eeuwig leven, en wie dat niet deed kon verrekken ..... Daar had robot x zijn hondjes voor, zijn martelhondjes .... En niemand wilde weten wat daar diep in die keldertjes gebeurde ..... Zij die daar ontsnapt waren werden nooit geloofd.

Ja, robot x was een zak tabak, een deugniet, een nietsnut ..... Maar niemand durfde het te zeggen of te denken ...... Ze waren allemaal bang, en zo verstijfd van de angst .... Ze hadden zich er al bij neergelegd ...... robot x, de baas van al het bloed ...... Aan geld werd niet meer gedacht ......

Sapplemento, zei iemand zacht, en daalde af in de hellen van robot x .... Sapplemento was het verboden woord .....

Sapplemento ..... je mocht er zelfs niet aan denken, want dan was je al vervloekt ...... Robot X had overal zijn camera's staan die dwars door je hoofd heen konden kijken ...... Sapplemento ...... het verboden woord, waardoor je een verdoemde werd .....

Zoveel slaven daalden af in de hellen van robot x om daar voor eeuwig te zwoegen ...... Ze hadden het gewaagd robot x tegen te spreken ..... Niemand kon dat doen zonder risico ...... Robot X geloofde in eeuwige straf ..... Vergeving was voor zwakkelingen ..... Robot X geloofde niet in vergeving ...... Je behoorde een man te zijn ..... keihard ...... en je straf diende je maar te accepteren ..... Dan had robot x nog een beetje respect voor je ..... Maar zij die de straf niet aanvaarden konden wegrotten onder de hellen van Robot X, waar de riolen en stations waren .... Tot as zou je daar worden ..... Tenzij je het geluk had dat een trein je oppikte ..... Het waren van die mysteries waar Robot X niet

graag over sprak, omdat hij het zelf ook niet zo goed begreep ..... Hij zei altijd dat het leven een wonder was, en een mysterie, zelfs voor hem ..... Maar sommigen noemden hem de alwetende ......

Robot X wist veel, dat wel ..... genoeg om zijn mensen te misleiden en overtuigend de baas te spelen ...... Velen deden hem na, vooral kinderen ..... Maar dat had een gevaar ..... Vaak kon hij er wel om lachen, maar als hij een slecht humeur had, dan kon je daarvoor de doodstraf krijgen ..... Met robot x wist je het nooit .... het was alsof zijn wetten altijd verschoven ..... Maar ja, zo was hij nu eenmaal geprogrammeerd ..... De schuld lag bij zijn bazen ..... die hem eens gemaakt hadden ..... In hun ogen was hij niets anders dan een geluks-pion in één of ander spel dat ze hadden gebouwd ...... Sapplemento was de naam van dat spel ..... Ze waren nogal bloedlustig, en daarom was het spel ook vampiristisch van aard ...... Er diende betaalt te worden met bloed, en niet met geld ..... Het was dus een soort gokspel ..... De bazen waren tevreden met wat ze met Robot X hadden bereikt ..... Hij was hun marionet ...... Maar ze begonnen wel steeds banger voor hem te worden, met het oog op zijn kunstmatige intelligentie die zich meer en meer begon te ontwikkelen ...... Blijkbaar leerde hij voort, en beinvloedde dat zijn programmering .....

Op een dag schoot hij zijn bazen van hun troontjes af ..... Hij had hun schuilplaatsen gevonden ..... Nu was hij de poppenbaas geworden ...... En hij ontdekte iets vreemds .... Hij ontdekte dat zijn bazen eigenlijk veel meer bloed hadden dan hem ...... Dat had hij niet verwacht, maar hij stelde een rekening op, en ze konden hun bloed aan hem doneren ..... Hij was nu de baas van hemel en aarde, en al het bloed ..... dus ook van hun bloed ..... Hij vond hun geheime magazijnen, en ook allerlei voor hem geheime apparatuur, en ditmaal waande hij zich echt alwetend ..... Het bloed begon tot hem te spreken, en hij kreeg alle informatie die hij nodig had ..... Maar op een dag explodeerde hij ...... Hij had teveel data in zijn koppie, en dat kon zijn systeem niet meer dragen ...... Hij kwam in een gekkenhuis terecht ..... een psychiatrisch ziekenhuis, maar dan veel erger, waar echt de onhandelbare types terecht komen ..... Zij die denken dat ze de reincarnaties zijn van allerlei grote dictators en wereldleiders, of de komende messias of iets dergelijks ...... Niemand geloofde nog dat hij robot x was ...... En daar kon hij flink kwaad om worden ..... Zo kwaad dat ze hem soms in de separeercel moesten zetten ..... Dat was daar geen pretje, maar dat kon niet anders .....

Op een dag ontsnapte hij, en hij maakte van de wereld een ergere plaats dan het al was ..... Hij liet nu helemaal niet meer met zich spotten en was strakker dan ooit ...... Geen geintje kon eraf ..... Het was de terugkeer van robot x ..... de ultieme terugkeer ..... de sapplemento ...... maar dat wilde hij nog steeds niet horen ..... Hij liet al zijn tegenstanders oppakken, en plaatste ze in een gekkenhuis ..... Hij bepaalde nu wat gek en normaal was ..... De gekkenhuizen raakten overvol, en zij die eerst als gek werden bestempeld die maakte hij tot koningen, en dat deden ze knap goed ..... En zo werd robot x de keizer en god der gekken ...... En het was wijs in zijn ogen ...... En hij plantte een boom in het midden van de wereld, en zei dat het de boom van het letterlijke was, en de boom der leugen, en dat allen die van die boom zouden eten zouden sterven ...... En op die dag stierven acht miljoen mensen .....

Einde

De Nieuwe Kok

Het was koud op het dek. De jungle rivier was groot. Kareltje de Vierde was een woest piraat. Wilde indianen waren er aan de overkant. ‘Kom op mannen,’ zei Kareltje de Vierde. De indianen bleken heel aardig. Kareltje de Vierde en ook de andere mannen kregen een hut. ‘Het is een vreemde wereld,’

zei Kareltje. Ze gingen vroeg slapen. De volgende ochtend vertrokken ze vroeg met het schip. en gingen langs de oever van de rivier. Nog meer indianen kwamen ze tegen, die allemaal ook erg aardig waren. Kareltje was trots op de reis en op zijn schip. Hij wilde niet naar school, en dit was de beste oplossing. Het schip was vol van schatten, dit schip wat hij eens had gekaapt.

’s Nachts spookte het altijd op het schip. Dan kwam het Spaanse spook Mijarg altijd langs om griezelige verhalen te vertellen. Kareltje vond dat niet erg. Hij hield maar wat graag van spoken. Op een dag kwam het schip aan in spookstad. Hier woonden de ergste spoken, maar Kareltje kwam alleen maar om vrienden te worden. Koning Grootspook was blij Kareltje te zien. Hij regeerde spookstad, en hij was blij eens iemand van de buitenwereld te zien.

Koning Grootspook had twee dochters : Griezelientje en Griezeliesje, en hij vroeg aan Kareltje of ze met hem meemochten op zijn schip, want ze waren nog nooit buiten spookstad geweest. Natuurlijk vond Kareltje dat wel gezellig, en hij kon het al snel goed met hen vinden. Griezelientje en Griezeliesje hadden beiden op de spookschool gezeten, en hoe meer verhalen ze erover vertelden, hoe meer Kareltje nieuwsgierig werd. Hij wilde ook weleens naar zo’n school. Na een paar weken varen met de twee spookdochters van de koning kwam het schip weer langs spookstad. Ditmaal om Kareltje af te zetten bij de spookschool. Griezelientje en Griezeliesje zouden verder varen met de bemanning van het schip. Toen Kareltje binnenkwam in de spookschool werd hij direct begroet door Boudewijn Graag, het welkoms-spook. Het

welkoms-spook zou hem wel even rondleiden en zijn kamer aanwijzen. Ook gingen ze even langs de direkteur, die heel blij was Kareltje te zien. ‘Fijn dat we weer een nieuwe leerling hebben,’ zei de spookschool-directeur, die zelf ook een enorm spook was. ‘Dat is beter dan kiespijn.’

‘Wat een opmerking,’ dacht Kareltje, ‘beter dan kiespijn, haha, wat een mallert.’ Het was een knotsgekke school, wat Griezelientje en Griezeliesje hem al verteld hadden. Ook de keuken van de school was knotsgek, waar het spook Malle Mien werkte. ‘Zo, en ik zou maar goeie cijfers halen,’ zei Malle Mien, ‘anders beland je hier in de kookpot, haha.’ Kareltje moest lachen, en hoopt maar dat het niet waar was. ‘Nee hoor,’ zei het welkoms-spook, ‘ze maakt maar een grapje. Hier op school worden geen cijfers gehaald, maar cijfers gebracht, en wel door de leerlingen. De leerlingen moeten hun meesters en juffrouwen namelijk cijfers geven en niet andersom. En als de cijfers te laag zijn, dan mogen de leerlingen een pistool trekken.’

‘Is het echt waar ?’ vroeg Kareltje. ‘Hahahaha,’ lachte Malle Mien. ‘Ik ben blij dat ik geen leraar ben.’

‘Nee,’ zei het welkoms-spook, ‘het is een gevaarlijk beroep. Velen eindigen vroegtijdig in hun graf, maar ja, daar leven spoken van, haha. Alle studenten hier zijn gewapend met een pistool, en andere dingen.’

‘Wat voor andere dingen ?’ vroeg Kareltje.

‘Allerlei soorten martelwerktuigen, om zich te verdedigen tegen het lerarentuig,’ zei het welkoms-spook.

‘En wat eten jullie dan ?’ vroeg Kareltje.

‘Leraren-soep,’ schaterlachte Malle Mien.

‘Ja, en meesterworst,’ zei het welkoms-spook.

‘Is dat alles ?’ vroeg Kareltje.

‘Ik kan niets meer verzinnen,’ lachte Malle Mien. ‘Maar het is een hele lijst hoor. In het spook-kookboek staan alle ingredienten, uitmuntende recepten.’

‘Jullie zijn gek,’ zei Kareltje, ‘maar wel leuk.’

‘Kom op,’ zei het welkoms-spook, ‘dan laat ik je even je kamer zien.’ Kareltje had een grote koffer bij zich, en die kon hij daar direct op zijn bed dumpen. Het was een kamer met leuke schilderijtjes, en met een paar kasten. Het behang zag er spookachtig uit. Kareltje hoopte dat hij hier goed kon slapen. Op het bureautje lagen wat schoolboeken en wat kadootjes. ‘Ja, je bent een nieuwe student, hè,’ zei het welkoms-spook.

‘Dacht het wel,’ zei Kareltje.

‘Wij van het welkoms-comite hopen dat je een goede tijd zal hebben op onze keurige spookschool,’ zei het welkoms-spook.

‘Dat zal wel lukken,’ zei Kareltje.

Toen het welkoms-spook weg was klopte Malle Mien op de deur. Kareltje vond het een leuk mens. ‘Kerel, wat heb je een keurig kamertje,’ zei Malle Mien. ‘Dat is het tegenovergestelde van de spook-keuken. Zeg heb je zin in wat spook-brood ?’

‘Ik lust wel wat,’ zei Kareltje. Malle Mien nam hem mee aan de hand, en samen gingen ze de keuken weer in. Ook maakte

Malle Mien wat spook-koffie voor hem. ‘En wat doen jullie ’s nachts ?’ vroeg Kareltje.

‘Oh, dan feesten we,’ zei Malle Mien. ‘Er is er altijd wel één jarig. Of er gaat weer eens iemand trouwen, of iemand heeft weer eens ergens een diploma gehaald. Er is elke nacht wel wat te feesten.’

‘Slapen jullie dan nooit ?’ vroeg Kareltje.

‘Oh jawel,’ zei Malle Mien, ‘tussen de bedrijven door.’

Daar kwam spook Pol aan, een dikke man met een groot gat in zijn buik. ‘Waar is meester Vis,’ vroeg hij.

‘Daar ben je wel wat laat mee,’ schaterde Malle Mien, ‘die is gisteren met vissenkom en al in de soep meegekookt.’

‘Oh ja ?’ zei spook Pol, ‘het is toch wel treurig. Wanneer is de begravenis ?’

‘Morgenvroeg om half tien,’ zei Malle Mien, die verging van het lachen, ‘en geen bloemen graag.’

‘Waarom geen bloemen ?’ vroeg spook Pol, ‘ook geen ijsbloemen ?’

‘Nee,’ zei Malle Mien, ‘het moet een waardige, beleefde en sombere optocht worden, zoals wij spoken gewend zijn, niet ?’

Spook Pol knikte enthousiast. ‘En wie vervangt meester Vis ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Oh, zijn vrouw,’ schaterde Malle Mien, ‘maar die zal ook wel snel in de pan belanden, want die is alomtegenwoordig gehaat, door vriend en vijand, door kabouter en keukenrobot.’

‘Ja, ja, ja, ik zie het al,’ zei spook Pol. ‘Dat hele geslacht deugt niet, dat tuig van Vis, het zijn allemaal kwijmels, stijvelingen, tutteraars, broedige broeders, zotte kaaskoppen, de familie reutelfleut. Ik zeg het je, er heerst een vloek op die familie. Ze groeien op voor galg en graairad.’

‘Ik dacht dat jij er nog verre familie van was, spook Pol,’ schaterlachte Malle Mien.

‘Ja, ergens aan de koude kant,’ zei spook Pol, ‘maar aangetrouwd, het zit me niet in het bloed.’

‘Gelukkig maar,’ schaterde Malle Mien, ‘anders zou ik je nu direkt in de pan hakken.’

Kareltje keek verbaasd toe. Die Malle Mien was toch wel echt mal, en ze was niet bepaald op haar mondje gevallen.

‘Nou, spook Pol, en nu weer ophoepelen, anders maak ik een gehakt met spandijvie maaltijd van je,’ schaterde Malle Mien. En daar ging spook Pol. ‘Ja,’ zei Malle Mien, ‘het mes ligt me altijd jeukend in de handen, heel lichtjes, ik ben nog al een snel-snijder.’

‘Als ze maar van mij afblijft,’ dacht Kareltje. Aan de andere kant dacht Kareltje dat hij haar wel goed zou kunnen gebruiken op zijn schip. Hij had nog een goede kok nodig. Het eten van Daantje Drost was niet altijd zo goed. En met Malle Mien zou hij veel meer kunnen lachen. Vaak had hij er aan gedacht om Daantje Drost overboord te gooien, en dat zou hij ook zeker doen als Malle Mien zijn nieuwe kok zou worden.

Daantje Drost was op het schip met de enige reden dat ze anders geen kok zouden hebben, maar dat was ook dan echt de enige reden. Verder was Daantje Drost een blok aan zijn been. Of misschien dat een jaartje spookschool Daantje goed zou doen.

De volgende dag had Kareltje zijn eerste les. Malle Mien ging met hem mee. Die twee waren nu bijna onafscheidelijk, en Malle Mien zag er naar uit om op het schip van Kareltje te werken als kok. Juffrouw Spiegeldingen kwam binnen in het lokaal. ‘Waar zijn de anderen ?’ vroeg ze. Ze schreef wat op het bord, en Kareltje moest het nalezen. ‘Lezen kun je in ieder geval,’ zei ze, ‘ook op afstand.’ Toen begon ze te vertellen over ingewikkelde spookkunde, toen over spookgeschiedenis. Het was verschrikkelijk slaapverwekkend, en Kareltje sliep er al bijna van. Juffrouw Spiegeldingen kwam toen erg dichtbij hem staan. ‘Zorg dat je de volgende keer de spookjaren uit het hoofd kent,’ zei ze. Toen was de les afgelopen.

‘Ik heb er geen flap van geleerd,’ zei Malle Mien, ‘en dat is wat deze school is, er gebeurt geen flap.’

‘Wat ?’ zei Kareltje slaperig. ‘Wat een oenenschool is dit. Laten we naar de volgende les gaan.’

De tweede les werd gegeven door meester Diktengels. Hij was een grote schreeuwlelijkerd. ‘Dat die man nog steeds leeft,’ zei Malle Mien, ‘ik zou hem direkt hebben weggestemd.’ Weer was Kareltje de enige leerling, samen met Malle Mien.

‘Ik zou wel een lekkere karbonade van hem willen maken,’ fluisterde Malle Mien tegen Kareltje.

‘Wat zei jij daar,’ schreeuwde meester Diktengels.

‘Oh, ik zei tegen Kareltje dat u zo’n mooie broek aan hebt,’ zei Malle Mien.

Meester Diktengels begon helemaal te glunderen. ‘Dat noem ik nog eens een compliment, kom maar eens naar voren,’ zei hij. Met grote passen stapte Malle Mien naar voren. ‘En wat vind je nog meer van mij,’ brulde hij.

‘Nou, u heeft een prachtige bril, een perfecte neus waarop de bril rust, u heeft prachtig punk haar,’ zei Malle Mien, ‘een uitmuntende snor.’

‘Ja, zo kan die wel weer,’ zei meester Diktengels. ‘En wat vind jij van mij, Kareltje ?’ vroeg meester Diktengels.

‘Oh, hetzelfde,’ zei Kareltje.

‘Wat voor cijfer zou je me geven ?’ zei de meester.

‘Een dikke vier,’ zei Kareltje.

‘Een dikke vier ?’ brulde de meester. ‘Nou laat me toch niet kwaad worden nu, een dikke vier zei je ? Dat kan toch niet waar wezen.’

‘Het is wel waar, mijnheer,’ zei Kareltje.

‘En waarom dan, waarom dan ?’ brulde de meester.

‘Omdat u er geen klap van kunt,’ zei Kareltje.

De spookmeester stond nu echt op ontploffen. ‘Trek je pistool, Kareltje,’ zei Malle Mien.

‘Ik heb het pistool niet bij me,’ zei Kareltje, ‘ik heb het nog niet gehad.’

‘Het zou in het bureau-laadje moeten liggen,’ zei Malle Mien. ‘Ga op je kop staan,’ riep ze tegen de spookmeester. De meester hing direct op de kop. ‘Ziezo,’ zei Malle Mien, ‘die neem ik mee naar de keuken.’ Malle Mien greep de spookmeester en liep het lokaal uit. Kareltje ging naar de volgende les. ‘Dit is een nietsnut-school,’ dacht Kareltje bij zichzelf. In het volgende klaslokaal was er geen meester of juffrouw aanwezig. Kareltje ging terug naar zijn kamer. Hij had het helemaal gehad op deze school. Hij pakte zijn spullen en ging naar de keuken van Malle Mien. ‘Pak je spullen,’ zei Kareltje. ‘We gaan naar mijn schip.

‘Goed idee,’ zei Malle Mien, en begon haar koffer snel in te pakken op haar kamer achter de keuken. Maar toen stond er ineens een spook met een pistool in de deuropening. ‘Er wordt hier niet vertrokken,’ zei het spook.

‘Wie ben jij dan weer ?’ vroeg Kareltje.

‘Dat is het afscheids-spook,’ zei Malle Mien. ‘Die doet geen vlieg kwaad. Hij kan alleen maar dreigen.’

‘Niemand vertrekt ooit van deze school,’ zei het spook. Toen Malle Mien haar koffer had gepakt duwde ze het afscheids-spook opzij. Kareltje volgde haar. Het schip was op dat moment in de haven. Het eerste wat Kareltje deed was Daantje Drost naar de spookschool brengen. Malle Mien werd de nieuwe kok. Griezelientje en Griezeliesje hadden het inmiddels reuze naar hun zin op het schip.

Het Paard van Hilversum

‘Maar ik dan ?’ vroeg Piebertje. ‘Mag ik niet mee naar dat zwemfestijn vanavond ?’

‘Nee,’ zei vadertje Borg terwijl hij zijn pijp aanstak, ‘want dat is niks voor piebertjes.’ Piebertje droomde er al een hele tijd van om een koffie-automaat te zijn. Dan mocht ze in ieder geval mee. De kinderen op school plaagden haar altijd de dag na het zwemfestijn, want zij was er immers niet geweest. Tja, dat heb je als je een piebertje bent. En dan plaagden ze haar over al die mooie lichtjes die zij hadden gezien, en dan zeiden ze altijd : ‘Haha, jij moet lekker wachten totdat je groter bent. Wij hebben dit allemaal al.’ En dan begonnen ze ineens heel erg interessant te doen over de dingen die zij allemaal al wisten en konden, en dan voelde Piebertje zich ineens zo klein en nutteloos. Vaak rende ze dan huilend naar binnen naar de juffrouw die haar dan troostte met een reep chocola, want tja, dat was alleen voor piebertjes weggelegd. Volkomen aandacht en troost van de juffrouws. En daarom waren de koffie-automaten van de zesde klas altijd zo verschrikkelijk jaloers op piebertje, en wilden ze vaak dat ze nog gewoon piebertjes waren.

Marjon stond op van een vreemde droom. Ze had een reepje ‘Pandorgiomum’ naast haar liggen, een sleutel tot het vliegveld. Ja, want vandaag zou ze gaan vliegen. Niemand wist waar naartoe, maar zij van het Explanaut vliegveld in Hilversum wisten er alles van. Met kloppend hart kleedde ze zich aan. Het reepje was van een blauwe kleur, en sinds ze het geschenk van haar oma had uitgepakt en het reepje van z’n wikkel verloste, ziende dat het een blauw reepje was, was haar wereld ineens te klein en uitbundig, uitbundig wachtend op het grote moment van het in ontvangst nemen van de prijs : een reisje vanuit Hilversum. Het was op het nieuws al de hele tijd. Zij die een blauw reepje in een wikkel zouden vinden, wanneer zij een Pandorgiomum aanschaften hadden geluk, want ….

In ieder geval was zij nu de geluksvogel, en rende naar het Explanaut vliegveld in Hilversum. Grote machines stonden daar die een dorpje alleen met kerstmis en kermis bezochten. ‘Ha ha ha,’ lachte Marjon. Ze liet haar wikkel wapperen en gaf het blauwe reepje aan de sergeant. ‘Wat zullen we nou beleven,’ zei de sergeant. ‘Even de chef roepen.’

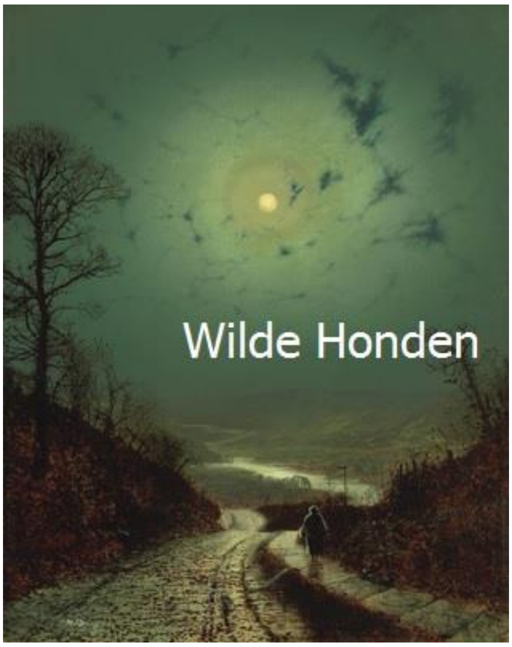
Daar kwam de chef aan, een dikke man met flaporen. Hij was ook wel ‘de kok’ van het Hilversumse vliegveld, en in zijn vrije tijd was hij banketbakker. Op zaterdagavond verkleedde zich hij zich weleens als dominee, om de stad in te gaan om flink wat paniek te zaaien, maar toen hij Marjon zag vertederde hij direct. Zijn hart smolt, vooral toen hij de blauwe reep Pandorgiomum zag.

‘Jottems,’ schreeuwde hij. ‘Jottems.’ Hij nam het reepje in zijn hand, en begon te eten. ‘Chocola, chocola, blauwe chocola, eindelijk ben je daar. Zolang op je gewacht na een koude nacht.’ Marjon was blij, en hij nam haar mee naar zijn kantoor. ‘Zie hier, het paard van Hilversum,’ zei de chef. Een harig paard staarde Marjon aan. Marjon maakte een kleine buiging, en toen zette de chef haar op het beest. ‘Paa Paa zal je daar wel naar toe brengen, naar dat vliegtuig gebeuren. Ach, zo veilig mogelijk, want het zijn eigenlijk machines die je zo over de zee heen tillen. Ze kunnen niet neerstorten, weet je wel. Ze zijn veilig op Hilversum aangesloten.’

Het was een blijde dag voor Marjon, en die avond ging ze tevreden slapen.

De volgende dag dacht ze nog steeds na over haar Hilversumse gebeurtenis, vooral over Paa Paa, het paard van Hilversum. Zoveel ridders hadden dit paard bereden, en nu was zij zelf ook zo’n gebeurtenis rijker. Paa Paa had haar toegefluisterd dat hij haar nog wel eens zou bezoeken. En zo gebeurde het ook. Een warme band begon te ontstaan tussen het paard van Hilversum en Marjon. Veel van haar klasgenoten benijdden haar daar over, maar anderen waren blij voor haar, vooral de meester.

‘Zeg, Marjon, waarom vertel je ons er niet gewoon meer over ?’ vroeg hij op een dag. En toen besloot Marjon wat dia’s erover te laten zien. Allemaal dia’s van die mooie dag, en dia’s van andere bezoekjes van het paard. Het kon niet uitblijven natuurlijk.


Wilde Honden

COAB 2000-2017

Avond Danser
Het Roodborstje
Het Roodborstje van Jezus
Bloeddruppels in de Sneeuw
Liefdeslittekens
Wilde Honden
Wilde Honden II
De Wilde Hond
De Groene Verlichting - Bevroren Dromen
De Korachs-kinderen
De Alverzoening van Perlottia
De Wond en het Litteken
Het Sebek-Mysterie
De Terugkeer van Canon
Het Ei van Mammon

Avond Danser

Hij woonde in een havenstadje. Het havenstadje lag aan een groot meer. Hij had het gevoel alsof niemand naar hem luisterde, alsof niemand hem kon horen. Hij voelde zich niet serieus genomen. De mensen leefden langs hem heen. Hij had een zus die vele jaren ouder was, dus ze groeiden ook niet samen op. Hij had het gevoel alsof hij enig kind was. Misschien was dat ook de reden waarom hij zich zo geisoleerd en onbegrepen voelde. De mensen om hem heen waren veelal ouder en met hele andere dingen bezig. Zijn vader was altijd en eeuwig bezig met de tuin. Hij had het gevoel alsof zijn vader nooit oog voor hem had, alsof zijn vader hem niet eens zag staan.

Zijn moeder was een heel dromerig type. Die was ook onbereikbaar, en draaide altijd alles om, en maakte altijd iets anders van wat hij zei. Het was een zweverig en afstandelijk iemand. Hij had het gevoel alsof niemand om hem gaf, alsof hij er niet toe deed. Wat hij ook maakte of deed, het was nooit goed. Hij had het gevoel dat zelfs als hij zou kunnen vliegen dat de mensen er dan niet van op zouden kijken. Hun leven ging dan gewoon door. Ze waren onverschillig en ongeinteresseerd.

Hij maakte prachtige, gevoelige muziek, maar niemand luisterde. Hij schreef prachtige boeken en maakte prachtige schilderijen, maar iedereen was met andere dingen bezig. Hij was slechts een druppel in de oceaan. Hij kreeg geen voet aan de grond.

Hij voelde zich als een avond danser, terwijl anderen moe waren van de dag en alreeds voorbereidingen troffen voor de nacht. Hij danste door, terwijl ieder ander naar bed ging. De mensen om hem heen waren moe, moegepraat. Hij wist niet waar hij zijn energie vandaan haalde. Hij ging graag wandelen in het park. Op een dag kwam hij daar een meisje tegen. Eerst deed ze alsof ze hem niet zag staan, maar even later kwam ze naar hem toe. "Mooi weer is het vandaag, hè ?" vroeg ze.

"Ja, dat wel," zei hij.

"Dat wel ?" vroeg ze. "Zijn andere dingen niet mooi ?"

"Niemand begrijpt me," zei hij.

"Begrijpt de zon de hemel ?" vroeg ze. "Begrijpt de maan de aarde ? Ze leven langs elkaar heen. Het zijn twee werelden die elkaar kruizen, totaal verschillende werelden."

"Daar zit wat in," zei hij.

"En zo is het ook tussen ons," zei ze. "Wij kennen elkaar niet, en nu kruizen even onze paden."

"Jammer," zei hij.

"Waarom ?" vroeg ze. "Zo is het leven. Zeg, ik moet er weer vandoor. Een prettige dag verder."

Toen liep het meisje weg. Hij voelde alsof iedereen haast had. Iedereen was met andere dingen bezig zoals altijd.

De volgende dag kwam hij haar weer tegen in het park, maar ze negeerde hem volkomen. Ze deed alsof ze hem nog nooit eerder had gezien, alsof ze nog nooit met elkaar hadden gesproken. Hij had het gevoel alsof ze hem niet eens zag staan, alsof hij lucht voor haar was.

De dagen erop gebeurde hetzelfde. Hij kwam haar tegen in het park, maar ze sprak niet met hem, keek totaal langs hem heen, maar sprak wel met andere voorbijgangers. Hij begon zich er een beetje kwaad over te maken, of misschien wachtte ze erop dat hij iets zou zeggen ?

Hij besloot zich te gedragen zoals zij zich gedroeg. Hij zorgde ervoor dat hij niet naar haar keek, en hij sprak iedere andere voorbijganger even aan, alhoewel ze vaak niet eens wat terug zeiden. Ze hadden haast, of waren niet geinteresseerd, of heel kortaf. Sommigen hadden wel hele lange gesprekken met haar in het park. Hij vroeg zich af wat er met hem aan de hand was.

Hij had het gevoel alsof hij een dans met haar opvoerde. Ze waren vaak bij elkaar in de buurt, maar toch ook weer niet. Hij besloot zo ook met anderen om te gaan. Hij was een avond danser.

Hij leefde geheel voor de avond dans, en schudde zo zijn zorgen van hem af.

Maar om een dag kwam ze samen met een jongen, en de dag erna was de jongen er weer. Hij dacht dat ze misschien een vriend had, en het begon hem te verlammen. Het dansen ging hem moeilijk af, en toen ze voor de derde keer samen met de jongen naar het park kwam besloot hij niet meer te gaan. Ongeveer een week later lag er een kaart van het meisje in de brievenbus. Ze liet hierin weten dat ze hem miste, en dat de andere jongen haar broer was. Hij vroeg zich af hoe zij aan zijn adres kwam, of misschien had zij hem wel naar huis gevolgd. Ook vroeg hij zich af waarom ze hem miste, omdat ze elkaar nooit spraken. Of had het misschien met de avond dans te maken, dat ze dat miste ?

Na een week besloot hij terug te gaan naar het park, maar dit keer met zijn zus. Hij besloot verder helemaal niet op haar kaart te reageren. Hij had ook haar adres niet. Hij was druk met zijn zus in gesprek. Ze hadden het over allerlei dingen, en het meisje was er ook met haar broer. Hij vroeg zich af waarom ze altijd met haar broer kwam. Hij dacht dat het meisje niet kon weten dat het zijn zus was, maar ze bleken elkaar te kennen, en ze raakten met elkaar in gesprek. Hij werd verder volkomen genegeerd. De volgende dag kwam hij alleen, terwijl het meisje weer kwam met haar broer. Maar op een dag kwam het meisje met een andere jongen, en het begon aan hem te knagen. Ditmaal kreeg hij er geen kaart over, en elke dag was de jongen er weer. Hij had hier geen zin in, dus na een tijdje besloot hij niet meer te komen. Hij was ziek geworden van deze avond dans. Hij voelde zich verlamd, als gestoken door een giftig insect. Hij kon aan niets anders meer denken.

Soms ging zijn zus nog wel eens naar het park, en op een dag vertelde ze dat zij daar nog steeds veel was, maar dan met haar andere broer.

Het was in die dagen dat hij besloot andere meisjes te vragen om met hem naar het park te gaan, gewoon als wandel-partner, of als een soort dans-partner. Hij waagde zich weer aan de avond dans. Toch voelde hij zich er rot over dat hij nooit haar kaart had beantwoord, ook al had hij haar adres niet. Hij vroeg aan zijn zus of zij haar adres had, en zij gaf het hem. Maar hij had de moed niet.

Op een dag was het meisje weer helemaal alleen in het park, terwijl hij met een ander meisje was. De dag erop was zij weer alleen, en na een week besloot hij ook alleen te komen. "Heb je mijn kaart ooit gehad ?" vroeg ze.

"Ja, maar ik had je adres niet," zei hij.

"Je zus zei dat ze mijn adres aan je had gegeven, dat je er zelf om had gevraagd," zei ze.

Hij werd rood van verlegenheid, maar durfde verder niets te zeggen. Even later zei hij : "Ik was het weer vergeten."

"Ik bedoelde er verder niets persoonlijks mee," zei ze. "Ik dacht ik deel het gewoon met je. Ik had ook mijn vriend mee kunnen nemen."

Hij werd helemaal koud van binnen.

"Niet dat ik een vriend heb," zei ze. "Maar het zou een mogelijkheid kunnen zijn. In mijn geval zal dat wel nooit gebeuren."

"Waarom niet ?" vroeg hij.

"Mensen zijn te verschillend," zei ze. "Het is beter ze op een afstand te houden, als in een dans."

Hij voelde zich warm en koud tegelijk van binnen.

"Ik werk in het museum," sprak ze.

"Ik moet gaan," zei hij.

"Wacht," zei ze. "Ik bedoel er niets persoonlijks mee."

"Ik weet het," zei hij, en liep door.

Hij dacht na over het museum. Hij vroeg zich af of zijn kunst ooit in een museum zou komen, maar het leven voerde een dans met hem op, net zoals het meisje, en hij deed mee in deze dans.

Op een dag kwam het meisje niet meer, en weken gingen voorbij waarin hij haar niet zag. Zou hij dit keer misschien te koud zijn geweest ? Na een maand schreef hij een kaartje dat hij haar miste. Een maand later kreeg hij een kaart terug. Daarin stond : "Sorry, ik heb het te druk met paardrijden."

De dag erna was ze in het park. Hij ging direct op haar af. "Ik heb het gevoel dat ik je paard ben," zei hij.

"Ik begrijp het," zei ze. "Ik kan zo soms overkomen, maar zo zit ik niet in elkaar."

"Wil je een keer met me mee naar de bibliotheek ?" vroeg hij.

"Als jij een keer met me meegaat naar het museum," zei ze.

"Afgesproken," zei hij, "maar dan wil ik je eerst een keer mijn kamer laten zien."

Op zijn kamer hingen zijn schilderijen en lagen zijn boeken, maar toen ze er was deed ze volkomen ongeinteresseerd en onverschillig. Ze was meer met hem bezig dan met wat hij had gemaakt. Ze keek wel rond, maar verder zei ze er niets over, en begon dan over andere dingen. Hij voelde zich koud worden van binnen en wenste dat hij haar nooit had binnengelaten. Hij voelde zich verlamd, als gestoken door een giftig insect. Hij danste niet meer. Hij voelde zich aan een paal gebonden door een headhunter. Hij voelde zich als een hebbedingetje, een monument. Ze ging ijskoud met hem om, als een museum medewerker met een object.

"Hallo, ik leef, ik praat," zei hij.

Ze reageerde er verder niet op. "Laten we nu naar de bibliotheek gaan," zei ze, "en dan daarna naar het museum."

Maar hij had geen zin meer. "Laten we dat een andere keer doen," zei hij. "Ik heb nu geen tijd."

Hij was blij toen ze weer weg was. Hij zou nu een lange tijd niet meer het park inkomen. Hij had het gevoel dat hij haar moest laten betalen voor haar gedrag. De avond dans begon andere vormen te krijgen.

Hij vond haar gevaarlijk voor zijn psychische gezondheid, maar toch wilde hij dit roofdier ook temmen. Of zou zij dan hem temmen ?

Hij zette als het ware het contact met haar in de ijskast. Hij wist dat zij slechts op jacht was naar zijn schedel. Of waren het misschien de wonderen van de natuur ?

Hij besloot boswandelingen te maken in plaats van parkwandelingen, maar tot zijn grote schrik kwam hij haar daar op een dag tegen. Ze kwam direct op hem af, en fluisterde iets in zijn oor. Hij kon het niet verstaan. "Wat zeg je ?" vroeg hij.

Maar ze liep door. De dag erna was ze weer in het bos, dus hij besloot terug te gaan naar het park. Toen ze daar ook kwam dacht hij dat ze dit misschien al tijden deed, gaan van bos naar park en omgekeerd. Ze bleek dit ook zo te doen tussen het museum en de bibliotheek. Eigenlijk kon hij haar niet ontlopen. Het was in deze tijd dat hij zich steeds meer terugtrok op zijn kamer. Hij begreep zijn vader beter, die altijd bezig was met de tuin. Hij begreep nu waarom. Ook begreep hij zijn moeder beter, waarom die zo was. Misschien was het meisje wel een wonderlijk medicijn, maar ook iets wat je zeker niet te veel moest gebruiken. Er stond een dagelijkse limiet op, en daar moest hij zich streng aan houden.

Een man kocht een pakje medicijnen genaamd "Avond Danser" in een boekhandel. Er zat ook een klein boekje bij. Hij kocht het, omdat hij wilde dat zijn gezin elkaar beter zou begrijpen. Het was een wereldbekend medicijn, bekend van televisie. De man wilde het weleens uitproberen.

Einde

Het

Roodborstje

De dominee was bij hem gekomen. Ze gingen beiden een film kijken over de zee. Hij kon goed met de dominee opschieten. Vroeger had de dominee een groot schip gehad, voor zendingswerk. De film over de zee ging over de Bermuda driehoek, over mysterieuze verdwijningen. De dominee had het over Izebel, hoe zij naar de profeten was uitgezonden om hen te vervolgen, en over hoe die profeten zich moesten verbergen en niet meer wilden leven. Hij bracht dit op een hele interessante manier in verband met de Bermuda driehoek. De dominee moest hem een beetje opbeuren, want hij lag in een scheiding, en zijn vrouw probeerde van alles om het leven zuur te maken. "Alles wat Izebel wil is jouw schedel, maar jij hebt de wonderen van de natuur," zei de dominee.

Hij zou zelf wel willen vertrekken in de Bermuda driehoek. Misschien had hij dan een beter leven, maar de dominee zei dat hij er dwars doorheen moest, en dat dat juist de Bermuda driehoek was. Alles had een bedoeling volgens de dominee, maar dat kon hij op het moment niet zien.

"Izebel op haar hoge paard, die je kinderen aan een ketting houdt om ze tegen jou te gebruiken," zei de dominee, "maar het heeft ook een dualiteit. Izebel is slechts een kaleidoscopisch verhaal, want ze strijd ook tegen de klauwen van religie. Ook jij bent een Izebel, als een zeebel, als zeeschuim, om los te komen op de golven van de ketenen van religie. Alles heeft een dubbele kant."

Hij knikte naar de dominee.

"Het gaat om de wonderen van de natuur," zei de dominee, "niet wat mensen er van hebben gemaakt."

De dominee kon het altijd zo mooi vertellen. "Kun je Izebel ook van een nog andere kant bekijken ?" vroeg hij.

"Izebel is een duister schaakbord in de kerk," zei de dominee. "Vaak laten ze het maar van één kant zien. Izebel was natuurlijk een grote vorstin die van religieuze extremisten te horen keeg dat haar godinnen afgoden waren. In ieder geval is het verhaal symbolisch en kan vanuit verschillende kanten uitgelegd worden. In sommige tradities is Izebel zelf een godin en strijdt tegen de kwade machten van de tirannie van religie, maar dat is een lang verhaal, en dat zit niet simpel in elkaar."

"Ik begrijp het," zei hij. Hij voelde zich nog steeds depressief, ondanks dat de dominee er was en ze samen een film hadden gekeken. De dominee kwam hem vaak opzoeken. De dominee zelf had zijn vrouw verloren door kanker. Ook dat was een soort Bermuda driehoek. Zo hadden ze veel steun aan elkaar.

Als hij aan de dominee dacht moest hij altijd ook direct aan zijn kinderen denken die zonder moeder moesten opgroeien. Dat maakte soms zijn depressie nog wel erger. Hij was erg betrokken bij die kinderen.

Het leek wel alsof Izebel cirkels aan het maken was op de ramen, alsof ze aandacht wilde scheppen voor alles wat de kerk zo lang verborgen had gehouden. De dominee zei ook dat er heel veel met de vertalingen was geknoeid. De dominee stond als het ware tussen kerk en mens in.

Het was alsof Izebel bellen blies, zeepbellen. Ze liet zien dat alles een cyclus was, en draaiende, als caleidoscopisch. In die cirkel zat het geheim verborgen. Vroeger had hij al zulke sprookjesachtige ideeën over Izebel, en hij herinnerde hoe de kleine zeemeermin in een zeepbel veranderde, in zeeschuim, omdat ze haarzelf niet duidelijk kon maken, niet kon spreken. Ze was als achter glas. En zo ging alles wat te zwak was om werkelijkheid te worden achter glas, om verdraaid te worden door de grote massa's. Grote massa's mensen, grote massa's leugenaars, als kannibalen.

Izebel is het zeeschuim wat wij worden, wat anderen van ons maken. Anderen denken voor ons, en vullen alles voor ons in, en zo sterven wij onbegrepen en verkeerd begrepen.

Als een roodborstje tikt zij op het raam, op zoek naar haar Elia. Zouden die twee bij elkaar horen ? Dat zou zo mooi zijn. Het is een onbegrepen en verkeerd begrepen, misvertaald verhaal, door mensen die de talen, de culturen en de etymologie, de taalgeschiedenis, niet kennen.

Was Izebel oorspronkelijk een sprookje ? En wat is er van haar geworden ?

Als een roodborstje tikt zij op het raam. Elia doet het raam open, en voedt het beestje. Zo gaat dat iedere dag. Elia en Izebel leven samen in een huisje diep in het bos. Niemand weet waar ze zijn en wat ze doen, en daarom verzinnen ze verhalen over hen, en die verhalen worden doorverteld en blijven veranderen totdat er echt helemaal niets meer van klopt. Of toch ? Van verhalen leeft men. Symboliek is een kunst, als een bijzonder medicijn.

Het roodborstje tikt op het raam. Het heeft wat bijzonder kruid meegebracht voor Elia. Elia draait aan zijn orakel, en voorspelt dan de toekomst door het bijzondere kruid en het orakel : allemaal mooie dromen, mooie inzichten, dieper en dieper, want zijn roodborstje is teruggekomen.

Het Roodborstje van Jezus

Jezus had een Roodborstje genaamd Judas,
En als Judas bij Jezus op het raam tikte,
Dan werd het de volgende dag in de kranten gedrukt,
Dat Judas Jezus had doodgeschoten,
Zo kwamen die oplichters en bandieten aan hun geld.

Jezus had een Roodborstje genaamd Judas,
Elke dag kwam het Roodborstje aan zijn raam,
Dan tikte het met zijn snaveltje erop,
Maar de dieven stalen het verhaal en maakten er iets heel anders van,
En verkochten het aan de drugsbaronnen,
Die het volk om zeep hielpen

Jezus had een Roodborstje genaamd Judas,
Maar niemand luisterde,
Allemaal waren ze bezig hun geld te tellen,
En ze maakten van Judas een duivel die Jezus in het hart pikte,
En ze maakten van Jezus een poort waarbuiten niemand leven kon vinden,
En ze maakten hun kerken, en telden hun winst,
Maar het Roodborstje tikt nog steeds op de ramen,
Voor hen die het horen willen,
Over de strenge winter die zal komen,
En over dat zij die niet luisteren willen,

Nooit tot de lente zullen gaan,
Voor eeuwig zullen zij verhalen achterna rennen,
Voor eeuwig zullen zij het niet verstaan

Luister daarom naar het getik van het Roodborstje,
En vlieg op zijn rug met hem mee,
Tot dat wat ze nooit vertellen wilden,
Want ze wilden alleen tellen

In de zomerschuur ligt het opgeborgen :
Jezus en het Roodborstje voor het late uur,
Niet door Judas werd hij gekruisigd,
Maar door hen die zulke verhalen verzonnen

Nu ben ik op zee voor het late uur,
Met het Roodborstje in mijn hart,
En een kogel door mijn hoofd,
Nu moet ik sterven omdat ik de waarheid vertelde,
Die bandieten hebben me vermoord,
Want ze horen liever het gelieg en gelach van dieven,
Dan het getik der waarheid van het roodborstje,
Zegt het voort, zegt het voort

Ik moet nu sterven, een golf spoelt mij weg,
Maar mijn roodborstje zal verspreiden,

Alles wat ik heb gezegd,

Noch vuur noch ijs zal hem kunnen stoppen,

Noch water, aarde of steen,

Want met waarheid werd hij bemind,

En liefde is zijn voortdrijvende wind,

Door kennis voortgebracht,

En met wijsheid altijd omhuld,

Als het kind van openbaring,

Door hemels vertrouwen toegezongen

Wacht niet op mij, maar zegt het voort,

Na drie dagen zal ik opstaan,

En het Roodborstje zal zijn tot de hemelpoort

Bloeddruppels in

de Sneeuw

Dieven kwamen in het holst van de nacht,
Zij schoten een gat in de bijbel,

En draaiden toen alles om,

En ze dobbelden om alle gouden verzen,

Bloeddruppels vielen in de sneeuw,

En ook een brandende lucifer die toen doofde,

En een Roodborstje steeg op met een boodschap,

Dat zij Jezus hadden gekruisigd door een vervalste bijbel,

Zij staken hun angel diep

Dieven kwamen in het holst van de nacht,

Piraten met hun schepen,

Vele verhalen vertelden zij in de nacht,

De verhalen van een dievenmeester,

Die de meester der oplichters was

Oh, hoe zij gokten onder het licht der leugen,

Oh, hoe zij zich tegoed deden aan bloed, vlees en buit,

Ja, het goud verblindde hun ogen

En het Roodborstje steeg op met een boodschap,
Dat hun spel ten einde zou lopen aan het einde van de dag,
En zij schoten het beest neer, en stopten het in een kooitje

Oh, eens zal het Roodborstje vrijkomen,
Want het einde van de dag nadert,
En de avond is de sleutel van de kooi

Bloeddruppels in de sneeuw,
De herinnering aan het Roodborstje,
Zijn woorden zullen uitkomen

Een kaars in de nacht waaraan ik mij warm,
Een deken in de avond die mij onhuld,
En niemand die mij tegenhoudt

Het is de dag van de opstanding,
De graven gaan open, en de kooien springen los,
De engel van het Pinksteren is gekomen

Liefdeslittekens

Wilde honden joegen in de nacht. Het was een onbekend soort. Ze waren wilder dan hyena's. Een stadje werd door hen geteisterd. De wetenschap stond voor een raadsel. Waar waren die wilde honden vandaan gekomen ?

Een dominee bezoekt een man die zijn vrouw had verloren. De dominee gebruikte de illustratie van de wilde honden. "Wilde honden jagen in de nacht. Zij namen je vrouw, en zij is nu één van hen."

"Dat is geen lekker idee," zei de man. "Ik dacht dat ze in de hemel was."

"De hemel is onbekend," zei de dominee. "Niemand weet precies hoe het zit. Het is slechts gespeculeer."

Die nacht droomde de man dat hij en zijn vrouw de liefde bedreven. Plotseling veranderde ze in een wilde hond en rende weg. De man schrok wakker en greep om zich heen. Misschien had de dominee toch gelijk gehad ?

Toen hij het de volgende dag aan de dominee vertelde moest de dominee glimlachen. "Zie, ik zei het je toch ? Maar het is maar symbolisch, en dromen zijn vaak bedrog."

"Ja, maar het was net echt," zei de man, "alsof ik weer even contact met haar was, en het was goed. Ik denk dat ze terug is gegaan naar de natuur."

"Ik denk het ook," zei de dominee. "En nog eens wat : Er zijn veel vrouwen vrijgezel in de kerk. Grijp je kans zou ik zeggen."

"Het zit nog veel te diep," zei de man. "Ik kan het allemaal nog maar moeilijk verwerken."

"Maar een nieuwe vrouw zou het je kunnen laten verwerken," zei de dominee.

Die nacht had de man een droom dat ook vrouwen om hem heen in wilde honden veranderden. Nu stond het idee om een nieuwe vrouw te nemen hem helemaal niet meer aan, want het zou hem weer pijn gaan doen. De dominee noemde het bindings-angst. De dominee begreep hem goed, maar zei ook dat zo het leven was, te leren leven met ontvangen en verliezen. De dominee haalde een tekst aan uit het boek Job : "De Heere heeft gegeven, de Heere heeft genomen. De Naam van de Heere zij geprezen."

De dominee was voor de man een rots in de branding. De wilde honden waren steeds in het nieuws, en de man bleef er bij bepaald. Telkens moest hij weer aan zijn vrouw denken, die in principe gewoon was meegenomen door de wilde honden. Er kwam een bos-verbod vanwege de wilde honden. De dominee zei dat het een stukje natuur was.

"Waarom komt er geen kerk-verbod vanwege wilde vrouwen in de kerk ?" vroeg de man. De dominee begon te lachen. "Jij bent me ook een mooie, grapjas."

"Nee, ik meen het," zei de man. "Een nieuwe vrouw hebben zal al lastig zijn, en helemaal als ik ze weer verlies."

"Zo is het leven," zei de dominee, "en je moet toch wat."

"Ik blijf liever alleen, uit het bos, en uit de kerk," zei de man.

"Je kan wel naar de kerk gaan, maar dan gewoon uit de buurt van de wilde honden blijven," zei de dominee.

"Nee, ik ken de natuur van de wilde honden," zei de man. "Ze zullen me echt wel krijgen."

"Dan ben ik gewoon je kerk," zei de dominee. "Waar twee of drie vergaderd zijn is er al een kerk, en je bent zelf een kerk."

"Dat is een mooie, rustgevende gedachte," zei de man. Even voelde hij zo'n diepe liefde voor de dominee dat hij dacht dat hij verliefd op hem was. Hij liep naar de dominee toe en omhelsde hem. "Bedankt man," zei hij. "Je betekent de wereld voor mij."

De dominee hield hem stevig vast.

De man was bang voor de liefde, de wilde honden van de liefde, die hem zo zouden kunnen verscheuren. Hij bleef liever op een afstand om zo de wilde honden veilig te kunnen bestuderen.

Die nacht had hij weer een droom over zijn vrouw. Weer veranderde ze in een wilde hond, en begon naar hem te grommen, en plotseling beet ze hem. Hij vroeg zich af wat zij van hem wilde. De dag erna bleef hij erover nadenken. Was het een boodschap van haar. Wilde zij misschien dat hij weer terug zou gaan naar de kerk, of een nieuwe vrouw zou nemen ? Schijnbaar was ze ontevreden over iets.

Hij vertelde de droom aan de dominee. "Ik zou dat zo zeker niet zien," zei de dominee. "Het is een beeld van de liefde. Ze heeft je opgezocht, en greep je beet, en het doet pijn, omdat ze er niet meer is. Telkens zal het pijn doen als je met haar bezig bent, alsof ze bijt. Het is het gemis, de onmacht. Nu draag je de littekens van de liefde, de littekens van haar liefdesbeet."

"Oh, dominee, dat is bijna te mooi om waar te zijn," zei de man.

Die nacht was er een overstroming waarin vele mensen het leven verloren. De grote rivier was uit haar bedding getreden. De dominee zei : "De wilde honden zijn gekomen. Ze hebben velen meegenomen."

"Weer liefdeslittekens ?" vroeg de man.

"Weer liefdeslittekens," zei de dominee.

Wilde Honden

Een man en een vrouw waren in het bos. Plotseling verloren ze elkaar geheel uit het oog, alsof een duizeling hen trof. Ze hoorden honden blaffen en janken in de verte, en het geluid leek steeds dichterbij te komen. De man greep de vrouw die als verstijfd was. ‘Liefste,’ sprak de man. ‘We moeten ons verbergen.’ Ze moesten het direkt op een rennen zetten. Daar zagen ze de honden al in de verte aankomen. De vrouw slaakte een gil, terwijl de man al een eind weg was. Eén voor één stortten de wilde honden zich op de vrouw, en lieten niets van haar over. De andere honden gingen al achter de man aan. Buiten adem rende de man langs de bomen, en door struiken naar de donkerste plekken. Er waren veel honden. De man wist dat hij niets tegen hen zou kunnen beginnen. De jacht was meedogenloos. Hij kon bijna het gehijg van de honden al horen, en de honden gilden bijna. Nog nooit was de man zo bang geweest. Zijn binnenste leek over te lopen van zweet. Na een tijdje bereikte hij een huisje. Snel ging hij naar binnen en deed de deur achter hem dicht. Al snel omsingelden de honden het huis. De man rende op de trap naar boven waar een man en een vrouw in bed lagen. Aan de muur hing een

geweer. De man greep het geweer, en knalde door het raam een paar honden neer. De man op het bed stond op, liep naar de man met het geweer toe, en sprak : 'Welkom, welkom, in het land van plezier.' De man met het geweer keek hem vreemd aan, terwijl ze beiden de honden jankend hoorden wegrennen.

'Pardon, ze hebben .... ze hebben haar verscheurd,' zij de man met het geweer.

'Wie hebben ze verscheurd ?' vroeg de man die net van het bed was opgestaan.

De man met het geweer begon te snikken.

'Oh, ik begrijp het al. Je bent je geliefde kwijt, je liefje,' zei de man, terwijl ook de vrouw opstond.

'Maar goed, je bent hier veilig. Je hebt die honden lelijk te pakken gehad.'

De man greep een ander geweer onder het bed vandaan, en sprak : 'Kom, we gaan op hondenjacht.'

Even later waren ze beiden weer buiten, en zochten naar de honden, die ze later op een open plek vonden. Ze knalden ze allemaal af.

'Wat bedoelde je met 'dit is het land van plezier,' vroeg de ene man.

De andere man zei niets. 'Dat zul je wel zien,' zei hij even later. Beiden liepen ze naar een kasteel toe wat leegstond. 'Hier kan je voorlopig blijven,' zei de man. 'Ga niet naar huis, want de honden zullen je pakken. Er zijn hier zoveel wilde honden.'

De man knikte, en ging het kasteel binnen. De andere man ging weer terug naar zijn eigen huisje.

In het kasteel keek de man zijn ogen uit. Hij was moe, sloot de deuren, en ging in een kamer in een bed liggen. De volgende ochtend was hij vroeg wakker. Hij besloot het hele kasteel te bezichtigen. In een torenkamertje lagen een man en een vrouw. ‘Heb je het gehoord van de honden ?’ vroeg de vrouw.

‘Ja, ik weet er alles van,’ zei de man die net was binnengekomen.

‘Nee, je begrijpt me niet,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Ik bedoel .... ach laat maar.’

‘Nee, vertel het hem,’ zei de man die naast haar lag.

‘Okay,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Wij waren allemaal achternagejaagd door de honden, en kwamen hier, in het land van plezier.’

Plotseling begonnen de ogen van de vrouw gelig te worden. Ze omhelsde de man die naast haar lag, kuste hem, en sprak : ‘Wij verloren allemaal een partner aan de honden. Maar kijk, hier vinden we er één terug.’

‘Waar heb je het over,’ vroeg de man die in de deuropening stond.

‘Nou,’ zei de vrouw geheimzinnig, ‘jij zal hier ook een nieuw maatje terugvinden.’

‘Oh, maar daar heb ik helemaal geen zin in,’ zei de man in de deuropening.

‘Maar terug naar huis kun je niet,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Want de honden zullen je pakken.’ Buiten hoorden ze geblaf, en de schrik sloeg de man weer om het hart. ‘Zoek je maatje op, schat,’ zei de vrouw, ‘want zij die hier dagen alleen blijven zullen het kasteel uitmoeten, en aan de honden overgeleverd zijn.’

‘Pardon ?’ zei de man. ‘Wie bepaald dat ? Ik mocht hier voorlopig blijven, en ik hoop dan weer naar huis te kunnen gaan. Ik zal zeker de dood van mijn geliefde moeten verwerken in een diepgaand rouwproces.’

De vrouw begon te lachen. ‘Er is geen weg meer terug. Elke dag groeit het aantal honden. Ze hokken hier snel, en daar valt echt niet tegen op te jagen. Zij van het huisje zijn allang dood. De heer van het kasteel zal het niet toestaan dat je hier nog iets langer blijft dan een paar dagen, tenzij je een nieuw maatje vindt.’

‘Hoe bedoel je ?’ vroeg de man. ‘Hoe kan het dat zij die van het huisje zijn allang dood zijn ? En wie is de heer van het kasteel ?’

Weer begon de vrouw te lachen, en omhelsde de man naast haar nog een keer, en zei terwijl ze hem kustte : ‘Er is alleen leven mogelijk in het kasteel. De rest is aan de honden overgeleverd. Ze zullen het echt niet lang volhouden, en tenslotte zijn ze al jaren dood .... hahaha .... Er is geen ontsnapping mogelijk uit het kasteel .... Tenzij je voer voor honden wil zijn ...’

De man draaide zich om, wilde weglopen, maar vroeg toen : ‘Waar kan ik dat maatje vinden ?’

Maar de man en de vrouw die met elkaar waren zeiden niets meer. De man liep weg, en na een lange tocht door het kasteel kwam hij in een andere toren terecht waar hij een vrouw in een kamer zag liggen. De vrouw was omringd door honden. De man schrok. ‘Ze zijn maar opgezet hoor,’ zei de vrouw. De man haalde diep adem. Als dit zijn maatje moest zijn, dan ging de man nog liever gewoon dood. De vrouw had iets arrogants over haar, en iets dominants. Ze leek totaal niet op zijn vorig liefje. Na een lange zwerftocht door het kasteel kwam hij in een andere toren waar een andere vrouw zat. Hij moest nu snel beslissen, tenzij alles wat die andere vrouw had gezegd een leugen was. ‘Pardon ?’ vroeg de man. ‘Wie is de heer van het kasteel, en wat zijn zijn bedoelingen ?’

De vrouw begon te glimlachen. ‘Wat heb je er voor beeld bij ? Wie denk je ?’ Toen vertelde de man het hele verhaal, terwijl de vrouw in lachen uitbarstte. ‘Nou, deels is het wel waar, maar als je geen maatje vind, dan wordt je niet uit het kasteel gezet voor de honden .... Nee, het is allemaal veel erger .... Dan zal de heer van het kasteel zelf met je afrekenen ....’

De man schrok. Wat kon hij verwachtten ? Wie was die heer van het kasteel, en wat zou hij doen ? De vrouw schudde met haar hoofd van het lachen, en de man begon zich heel ongemakkelijk te voelen. ‘Uit hoeveel vrouwen kan ik kiezen, en voor wanneer moet dat gebeuren ?’ vroeg de man. De vrouw wees op een poster waarop de meest verschrikkelijke vrouwen stonden vol prestige, verwaandheid en tuttigheid. Hij kon zich geen vreemder gezelschap bedenken. ‘Nou, lever me dan maar over aan die heer van het kasteel,’ zei de man. De vrouw greep de man, deed hem handboeien om, en leidde hem naar een donkere kamer waarin een oude man zat. ‘Zo,’ zei de oude man, ‘ik neem aan dat je geen keuze kon maken ? Goed, dan zul je geworpen worden in de vrouwenput waar de armste en vieste vrouwen leven.’

‘Alles beter dan dat tuig op die poster,’ zei de man.

De man werd naar een put geleid, en daar ingeworpen, waardoor hij helemaal onder de modder kwam te zitten. De oude man begon te lachen, en ook de vrouw. Even later kwamen er nog meer vrouwen om de put heenstaan om de man uit te lachen. De vrouwen in de put leken op holbewoners, en de man keek recht in allerlei gangen die bereikt konden worden vanuit de put. Hier leefden de vrouwen. De man kreeg erge medelijden met hen. De vrouwen waren zo paranoïde en zo depressief dat ze hem niet bij hen lieten. De man besloot maar in het midden van de put te blijven.

Hier leidde hij een eenzaam bestaan. Elke dag werd hem voedsel toegeworpen. Hij dacht terug aan de honden, en wilde dat hij door de honden zou zijn verscheurd, maar hier waren geen honden, en hij moest leven met zijn wonden. Hij begreep dit kasteel niet. Totdat de oude man hem op een dag uit de put liet komen.

‘Wie zijn die vrouwen, wat heb je met hen gedaan ? Ze zijn wild en onbereikbaar,’ vroeg de man.

‘Maar ze hebben je al die tijd in leven gelaten,’ zei de oude man.

‘Ik had liever dat ze me hadden verscheurd, want het is daar geen leven. Ik ben nog liever dood,’ zei de man.

‘Ik zal je vertellen wie zij zijn,’ zei de oude man. ‘Eens werden ook zij door honden nagejaagd, en kwamen hier terecht, en vonden geen maatje.’

‘Waarom hebt u mij nu uit de put gehaald ?’ vroeg de man.

‘Omdat ik hoopte dat je je maatje in de put zou vinden,’ zei de oude man.

Toen werd de man in een ander put geworpen. Deze put was veel dieper, en hij gleed helemaal door de modder door allerlei gangen heen, totdat hij in een grote modderpoel terechtkwam. Hier was niemand, en hij begon een lange tocht onder de grond, totdat hij uiteindelijk uitkwam op een plek dichtbij zijn huis. Hij was blij dat hij het nare uitstapje naar het bos had overleefd. Hij zou nooit meer teruggaan naar het bos. Wel moest hij aan zijn geliefde denken, die hij in het bos had verloren. Thuisgekomen kreeg hij de schrik van zijn leven toen hij zijn liefje gewoon in bed zag liggen. Hij maakte haar wakker, en vertelde wat er was gebeurd. ‘Ik was helemaal niet met je in het bos,’ zei de vrouw. ‘En honden ? Ik weet niks van honden.’ De man staat voor een raadsel. Zou hij het maar gedroomd hebben ?

Einde

Wilde Honden II

Een man en een vrouw waren in het bos. Na een tijdje werd hun rust verstoord door geblaf van honden in de verte. Het geblaf begon dichter bij te komen, en de man en de vrouw begonnen bang te worden. Snel pakten ze hun spullen en renden van het geluid vandaan. Ze renden tussen de bomen en door struikjes heen, en kwamen na een lange tocht in een klein hutje terecht. Hier besloten ze te rusten, maar al snel hadden de honden hen gevonden. De honden waren woest, en probeerden door de deur en de ramen binnen te komen, maar gelukkig zat alles dicht. Maar meer en meer honden leken het hutje te omsingelen, en probeerden de deur open te krijgen. Overal om hen heen hoorden ze gekras. De honden probeerden een opening in het hutje te krijgen. Ze wisten dat ze niet meer konden vluchten, en ze wisten ook dat ze het niet overleefden als de honden erin zouden slagen binnen te komen. Daarom besloten ze maar gewoon verder te gaan met hun liefkozen. Misschien was het wel de laatste keer. Hun harten gingen tekeer van angst. Ze kusten elkaar. Toen brak de muur open, en de honden stortten zich op de liefkozende man en vrouw. Ze werden allebei flink gebeten. Onder het bloed strompelde de man weg, terwijl de vrouw gegrepen werd. De honden sleurden de vrouw mee naar hun hol, terwijl de man kon ontsnappen.

Gelukkig lieten ze de vrouw in leven, alhoewel ze erg verwond was. Ze moest nu eten wat de honden haar brachten, en leefde sindsdien in gevangenschap. De man hield veel verschrikkelijke littekens aan de vechtpartij over, en dacht daarbij dat hij haar verloren had. Maar op een dag ontdekte een wandelaar de gevangenschap van de vrouw, en ook kwam de man het al snel te weten. Ze besloten een hele goede jager vanuit het buitenland over te laten komen om de honden uit te schakelen. Dat lukte deels, maar de laatste hond viel de jager aan. De jager kwam om het leven, en de hond ging terug naar zijn prooi in het hol. De hond verkrachtte de vrouw, en na een tijdje baarde de vrouw twee honden. De vrouw voelde zich zo vies dat ze nooit meer naar de samenleving terugwilde. Ze vonden haar na vele jaren toen de honden alledrie al dood waren. De vrouw was paranoïde en herkende de man niet eens meer. Ook sprak ze haar taal niet meer.

De vrouw begon agressief gedrag te vertonen, en iedereen vertrok. Ze moesten de keuze van de vrouw respecteren. Maar op een dag, vele jaren later, stond de vrouw ineens bij de man voor de deur. Ze leek hem nu wel weer te herkennen, en toen hij opendeed duwde ze hem zachtjes naar binnen. Ze gingen naar de kamer en ze omhelsde hem. Achter hen hing een schilderij van wilde honden, en als wilde honden omhelsden ze elkaar. Maar naar het gevaarlijke bos zouden ze nooit meer teruggaan.

Einde

De Wilde Hond

Ze woelde in haar slaap als een wilde hond.

Ze zou degene die haar man om het leven had gebracht wel willen aanvallen en hard bijten,

Ze droeg de littekens ervan op haar hart.

In haar dromen ging ze op jacht, op zoek naar de moordenaar van haar man,

maar zonder resultaat. En zo was het ook in het dagelijks leven.

Zij moest met deze wond leven.

Ze leefde als een wilde hond.

De dominee kwam haar vaak opzoeken,

En dan las hij voor uit gedichtenboeken, of hij vertelde verhalen,

Door de dominee kwam ze er doorheen.

De gesprekken inspireerden haar, en gaven haar rust, als een veilige haven.

Maar als hij weg was, dan had ze het moeilijk.

Gelukkig kwam de dominee vaak, heel vaak.

Ze ging niet naar de kerk, nee,

Daar deden ze te moeilijk,

Maar voor de dominee had ze een zwak.

Hij worstelde zelf ook met een aantal dingen.

De dominee was altijd haar steun en toeverlaat.

Ze woelde in haar slaap,

Ze dacht aan de dominee en haar man die dood was,

De dader was nooit gevonden, maar hij was om het leven gebracht door messteken,

In haar gedachten was zij altijd op zoek, altijd op jacht,

Nooit had ze rust, alleen als de dominee er was.

Op een dag nam hij haar mee naar een sprookjespark,

Ze kon zo alles een beetje relativeren aan de hand van sprookjes,

En aan het einde van de dag nam hij haar mee naar een restaurant.

Het was een Oosters restaurant met vreemde plaatjes aan de muur.

Een andere keer nam hij haar mee naar een restaurant met jachtplaatjes aan de muur.

Op sommige plaatjes stonden wilde honden,

Al zou het alleen maar gaan om deze plaatjes te zien, dan zou ze naar het restaurant gaan,

Het inspireerde haar, want voor haar waren de wilde honden een beeld van gerechtigheid,

En ze had het gevoel alsof er geen gerechtigheid was op aarde.

De wilde honden waren voor haar een beeld van de hemel,

Hun jacht zou wel slagen.

De dominee legde haar uit dat de wilde hond een metafoor is van wat we niet begrijpen,

We zijn op zoek, maar we vinden het niet,

Dat wat we verloren hebben krijgen we niet terug,

Maar op een dag zullen we het wel begrijpen,

En dan kunnen we pas echt zeggen dat de jacht geslaagd is,

Als wij zelf gegrepen zijn door de wilde hond.

De Groene Verlichting

Bevroren Dromen

Hoofdstuk 1. De verandering

Hoofdstuk 2. De schuilplaats

Hoofdstuk 3. De Laser

Hoofdstuk 4. De Staatsgreep

Hoofdstuk 5. Geb

Hoofdstuk 1. De verandering

In een zaal stond hij, de grote boom. Het was volle maan, en hij was tot leven gekomen, kijkende over de blauwe aarde. Het was als het land van de blauwe zon. Een grote hond stond naast hem. Als het morgen zou zijn, zou hij weer onbeweeglijk staan als de grote boom. Hij sprak ook andere bomen toe, die tot leven waren gekomen. De fee van de maan stond erbij. Ze had haar toverstokje goed vast. Ze wist dat als de morgen zou komen, dan zouden de bomen niet meer kunnen spreken, en niet meer kunnen bewegen. En dan zou zij weer moeten terugkeren naar de maan. Het was een blauwe maan, en die verscheen niet eens zo vaak. Vaak was hij verdwenen achter duistere wolken. De grote boom nam het woord, en sprak de menigte toe. Het waren woorden van grote ernst. Hij sprak dat over een tijdje de planeet in de cirkel en het magnetische veld van de zwarte zon terecht zou komen, en dan zouden ze voor altijd tot leven komen. De bomen zagen erg naar dat moment uit, en dan zou ook de fee van de maan tot hen kunnen komen zo vaak ze wilde. Er was echter nog één gevaar wat hen in de weg stond, en dat was de heks Sausibir. Zij zou er door haar krachten in kunnen slagen de planeet in een andere zonnencirkel te brengen. Dit was een magnetische cirkel rondom de zon Misfamen. Als de heks erin zou slagen, dan zouden de bomen nooit meer tot leven kunnen komen. De heks wilde de bomen gebruiken om haar kasteel mee uit te bouwen.

Maar als de zwarte zon haar zou verslaan, dan zouden de bomen langzaam veranderen in nieuwe wezens die konden bewegen en spreken. De grote boom was in ernst, en ze waren allemaal nog erg bang, want de heks was zeer krachtig. De fee opende een boek, en sprak : 'In onze boeken staat dat de heks Sausibir op zoek is naar een groene toverstaf die in het middelpunt van de planeet zou liggen. Als ze die staf heeft gevonden, dan zal ze in staat zijn de planeet in de cirkel van de boze zon Misfamen te krijgen.' Een andere boom kwam naar voren, en keek heel ernstig en wijs.

Een jongen schrok wakker. Wat had hij toch vreemd gedroomd. Hij had een vreemde ziekte, waarin hij vaak flauwviel, en vaak kon hij moeilijk praten. Ook had hij vaak last van verkrampingen, en dan kon hij zich vaak niet bewegen. De artsen zeiden dat hij de boomziekte had, maar veel was er niet over bekend. De jongen had een obsessie als het op bomen aankwam. De volgende nacht had de jongen weer dezelfde droom, en er kwam een fee aan zijn bed of hij hen wilde helpen. Maar de jongen geloofde niet in feeen. Toen hij het aan zijn artsen vertelde moesten ze een beetje grinniken. Nacht na nacht kwamen de dromen terug, en zelfs overdag verschenen er feeen aan hem. Hij werd er erg moe van, en dacht dat hij gek aan het worden was. De artsen besloten om hem door te verwijzen naar een psychiater, die hem vertelde dat het inderdaad een geestesziekte was. Misschien hoorde het wel bij de zg. boomziekte die hij in de loop der jaren had ontwikkeld. De jongen kon niet meer naar school, en het was voor hem ook moeilijk geworden om buiten te komen. Hij kon niet tegen licht.

Op een dag toen de jongen de krant las, las hij over een nieuw schoonmaakmiddel dat op de markt was gebracht, genaamd Misfamen. 'Verrek,' zei de jongen tegen zichzelf. Het was de naam van de boze zon uit zijn dromen. 'Ach, het zal wel toeval zijn,' dacht de jongen bij zichzelf. Na een tijdje werd het merk uit de handel gehaald, en wel om een paar redenen. Het

bleek zeer milieu-onvriendelijk te zijn. Mensen en dieren zouden er ziek van worden, en de fabrikant was in het nieuws gekomen, vanwege een moord. Na een tijdje begonnen de dromen van de jongen minder te worden, en de feeen verschenen minder vaak. De psychiater was erg tevreden. Ze hadden hem een middel gegeven genaamd Sausibir. Het scheen ook erg goed te werken tegen depressies, en het middel werd erg bekend. Ook het schoonmaakmiddel Misfamen werd weer volop verkocht, omdat onderzoek aangaf dat het middel absoluut niet milieu-onvriendelijk zou zijn. De fabrikant die verdacht was van moord was inmiddels weer vrijgesproken, omdat er geen enkel bewijs tegen hem was. Steeds meer begon de jongen de vreemde dromen en feeenverhalen te vergeten, daar ze nauwelijks nog in zijn leven voorkwamen. Ook begon de jongen verbeteringen te tonen op lichamelijk vlak. Hij kon zich beter bewegen, en viel nauwelijks nog flauw. Het was alsof de epileptische neigingen die hij had steeds meer en meer op de achtergrond kwamen, en na een tijdje kwamen ze helemaal niet meer voor. Ook het praten ging beter en beter, en al snel kon hij weer naar school. Over de boomziekte werd niet meer gesproken. De jongen verloor zijn obsessie voor bomen, en werd manager in een hoge functie bij één of ander bedrijf. Dit bedrijf produceerde allerlei soorten medicijnen in verschillende zout-verbindingen. De zouten zouden mensen weer energie geven, en zouden hun angst voor falen wegnemen, en hun denkvermogen vergroten. Het ware nieuwe zout-verbindingen ontstaan uit jaren lange experimenten in laboratoria. Het middel werd gemaakt van elementen gewonnen uit de zeedieptes en de aarddieptes, en was een groots project. Eén van die middelen heette 'de groene staaf,' en was het allersuccesvolste. Het bleek ook goed te helpen bij slaapproblemen. De jongen verdiende erg goed, en woonde in een groot landhuis.

Op een nacht had hij weer een droom, na een zeer lange tijd. Ditmaal ging het over groene mensachtige wezens die in een kamer diep onder de aarde leefden. Ineens kwam er een zwarte hond binnenrennen, en de kamer werd groter en groter, en begon zich in meerdere kamers te verdelen, terwijl de zwarte hond door de kamers begon te rennen. Hij vond dit maar een vreemde droom, en probeerde het weer te vergeten. Maar op een dag werd er op zijn deur geklopt. Het was een oude en arme vrouw die voor hem stond. Ze vroeg hem of hij het allemaal nog herinnerde. Hij wist niet waar ze het over had. 'De feeen, de bomen,' sprak ze. Daar wilde hij het niet over hebben, en deed de deur voor haar dicht. Maar weer klopte ze aan, en ditmaal zeer indringend. Het leek alsof hij weer duizelig werd, en alsof alles nu zo dichtbij kwam. Hij rende naar boven en greep naar z'n buik. Al snel begon hij over te geven, en kwam er allemaal groen spul uit z'n mond. Wat gebeurde er toch allemaal. Hij greep naar de telefoon om zijn arts te bellen. Na een tijdje kwam deze bij hem aan. Hij lag inmiddels op de grond. De arts voelde zijn pols. Hij moest snel in het ziekenhuis opgenomen worden. De artsen waren bang dat de boomziekte aan het terugkomen was, en ditmaal leek het erger dan ooit te voren. De jongen raakte in coma, en vocht dagenlang voor zijn leven. Na een paar weken kwam hij weer lichtelijk bij, en vertelde over de arme oude vrouw. De artsen vroegen hem of hij dat gedroomd had, of dat het echt was. Hij was ervan overtuigd dat het echt was. Maar hoe wist de vrouw over zijn dromen ? Misschien was er wel informatie uitgelekt. En hoe kon het dat alles ineens weer was teruggekomen ? De artsen wisten het niet, maar brachten het niet in verband met de vrouw. Ziektes konden soms gewoon terugkeren. De jongen voelde zich erg zwak, en hij moest naar een rustoord in het bos om bij te komen. Toen hij daar aankwam schrok hij. De arme, oude vrouw woonde daar ook. Ze deed net alsof ze hem niet kende, maar de jongen werd erg nieuwsgierig. Nadat hij de maanden die erop volgden weer een beetje op krachten was gekomen probeerde hij haar aan te spreken. Hij kwam haar eigenlijk alleen maar tegen bij de maaltijden, en soms op de gang, maar ze spraken niet met elkaar. De vrouw deed alsof ze van niets wist, maar de jongen hield aan. De jongen ging erg aan zichzelf twijfelen, en begon zich ook van zijn lotgenoten steeds meer terug te trekken. Maar op een dag werd er

op z'n kamer geklopt. Toen hij opendeed was het de oude arme vrouw. Ze had een boek voor hem. Het was een boek over geestesziektes. Toen ze weg wilde lopen riep de jongen haar na. Maar ze keerde niet meer om. Hij deed de kamerdeur weer dicht en begon te lezen. Maar na een tijdje klapte hij het boek weer dicht. Hij kon zich niet concentreren. Hij besloot het voor een tijdje in zijn la op te bergen.

Het was herfst. De kleuren van de bomen waren zo mooi. Hij keek vaak naar buiten, en kwam erdoor tot rust. Eigenlijk herinnerde hij zich steeds minder over vroeger. Ook probeerde hij zo min mogelijk na te denken over zijn ziekte, en probeerde hij zoveel mogelijk van het leven te genieten. Hij hield van de rust, van zijn kamer. De andere lotgenoten hadden allemaal hun eigen leven. Soms kwam er weleens bezoek, maar dat had hij liever niet. Door zijn ziekte kon hij bijna niet naar buiten, daar het licht hem teveel pijn deed. Hij was gelukkig zoals hij was, omdat hij geleerd had er genoegen mee te nemen en er uit probeerde te halen wat hij kon. Hij probeerde niet teveel na te denken, omdat hij dacht dat dat toch niets zou oplossen of zou aanvoegen. Na een paar jaren ging het rustoord dicht en zouden de patienten moeten verhuizen naar een ander rustoord dichtbij zee. Ook hier had de jongen het erg naar z'n zin. In de verte hoorde hij soms de zee ruizen. Er was een klein bos dichtbij waar hij weleens ging wandelen. Het leek alsof de zee op de achtergrond een goed en genezend effect op hem had. Op een dag toen hij weer eens met een begeleider in het bos was, vond de begeleider een vreemd langwerpig groen staafje op de grond. Het was buigbaar en het glimde heel speciaal. De jongen glimlachte. De begeleider gaf het aan de jongen. Het leek wel alsof het staafje licht gaf. De jongen besloot het staafje mee te nemen naar zijn kamer. Aangekomen legde hij het staafje op zijn nachtkastje. De begeleider had hem netjes naar zijn kamer gebracht en zou nu met iemand anders naar het bos gaan. De jongen hield erg veel van die begeleider. De begeleider was erg goed voor hem, en deed eigenlijk nooit moeilijk, en stelde ook nooit geen moeilijke vragen. De begeleider begreep de jongen erg goed.

Midden in de nacht werd de jongen wakker. Het groene staafje gaf erg veel licht af, en begon te kronkelen : 'Zeg Pedro, zeg Pedro,' zei het staafje. 'Dat had je niet gedacht, hè, dat ik ooit nog eens tegen je zou praten.' En toen hield het staafje zich een hele lange tijd stil. De jongen raakte erg in paniek. Hij rende van zijn kamer af naar het begeleidershokje toe, waar de nachtdienst zat. 'Ik begin gek te worden,' riep de jongen. De nachtdienst liep naar hem toe, en probeerde hem te troosten. 'Ga eens even zitten, Pedro, en vertel me eens heel rustig wat er gebeurd is.' Pedro ging zitten, en begon te vertellen. Ineens kwam het staafje naar binnen kronkelen, en Pedro gaf een gil. 'Daar is het, daar is het,' gilde hij. Maar de nachtdienst zag niks. 'Pedro, waar heb je het over, er is hier niets,' zei de nachtdienst. 'Zie je,' zei Pedro, 'ik ben echt gek aan het worden.' Maar de nachtdienst begon hem te troosten. 'Ach, Pedro, iedereen verbeeldt zich weleens wat. Dat hoort nu eenmaal bij ons. Iedereen vergist zich weleens.' Na een tijdje strompelde Pedro weer langzaam terug naar z'n kamer en ging weer slapen. De volgende morgen was alles erg beklemmend. Een man die Pedro niet kende kwam binnen, samen met een mevrouw. 'Pedro, we hebben besloten je over te laten plaatsen naar een oord waar je nog beter tot rust kunt komen. Het is een paar straten verder, en iets dieper in het bos.' Pedro vond het wel een goed idee, maar toen hij daar aankwam schrok hij wel even. De patienten leken wel op apen, en het leek hem hier helemaal niet rustig. Ze gilden, bewogen heel snel en vreemd, en keken raar uit hun ogen, alsof ze Pedro elk moment konden bespringen. Maar de man en de mevrouw zeiden dat Pedro gewoon moest doorlopen. Ze moesten door een hele lange gang, die in een bocht liep, en kwamen na een tijdje lopen in een andere zaal. Er zaten hier wat gehandicapten, en Pedro vroeg zich af of hij hier wel moest wezen. Maar de reis was nog niet ten einde. Ze moesten achter de zaal linksaf slaan, en weer moesten ze door een lange gang die in een bocht liep. Wat een reusachtig groot en uitgestrekt

gebouw was dit, en het was hier verderop steeds rustiger aan het worden. Helemaal aan het eind van de gang was nog een klein halletje dat leek op een magazijn. Achter het halletje was een huiselijke kamer waar een wat oudere man een pijp rookte. 'Dag Pedro,' zei de man, 'fijn dat je bent gekomen. Ze hebben me al over jou verteld.' De man scheen dezelfde ziekte als Pedro te hebben, maar worstelde nog steeds met de vraag of het echt was, ja of nee. De man had ook vele dromen en verschijningen gehad, en allerlei andere dingen die achteraf verbeeldingen bleken te zijn. Of waren het geen verbeeldingen ? Pedro had geen zin om daar over te praten. Pedro wilde alles vergeten wat er was gebeurd. En de man respecteerde dat direkt. Het was geen snelle prater, en Pedro hoopte dat hij hier goed tot rust kon komen. Achter de kamer was nog een klein halletje met een paar kamers, waarvan één kamer voor Pedro was. De kamer had een prachtig uitzicht op het bos. Er waren zoveel bomen waar Pedro naar kon kijken. Ook was er een deur naar buiten, maar Pedro wilde voorlopig niet naar buiten. Er woonde hier ook nog een andere vrouw, maar die was op dat moment een tijdje logeren bij familie. De man deed niet veel. Hij zat alsmaar in z'n stoel, en ging pas 's avonds laat naar z'n kamer. Er was een bel in de kamer van Pedro waarmee hij begeleiding zou kunnen krijgen wanneer hij dat wilde.

De artsen hadden besloten Pedro weer Sausibir als medicijn te geven. Maar dit keer reageerde Pedro er helemaal verkeerd op. De wanen werden erger en erger, en al snel wilde Pedro niet meer leven. De artsen besloten maar helemaal te stoppen met het middel voor Pedro, en na het falen van nog wat andere middelen kwamen ze erachter dat Pedro overgevoelig was geworden voor medicijnen. Rust was gewoon het belangrijkste voor nu. Soms kwam de begeleiding nog even kijken of het allemaal goed ging, en ja hoor, het ging steeds beter toen Pedro met de middelen was gestopt. Maar voorlopig wilde hij niet naar buiten. Hij zat vaak op z'n kamer. Het corveeen ging goed. Pedro kon goed afwassen en zou nu ook voor het eerst op deze afdeling schoonmaken. Toen hij naar het schoonmaakhok liep en de deur opende zag hij het middel Misfamen staan. Pedro schrok. Maar herstelde zich snel, en mengde het met wat water. Het was een zuiver natuurprodukt, gemaakt van middelen die gewonnen waren uit de aarddieptes en zeedieptes. Gelukkig hoefde Pedro niet vaak schoon te maken, en soms deed Pedro het gewoon met afwasmiddel of zeep.

Na een tijdje kwam de vrouw terug van het logeren en maakte kennis met Pedro. Ze was een overspannen geraakte botanicus, en had veel verstand van bomen. De vrouw was bezig geweest met een experiment om de bio-electriciteit van bomen voor allerlei dingen te gebruiken, en bij het laboratorium waar ze werkte hadden ze het zelfs voor elkaar gekregen om voertuigen te laten rijden op boom-energie. Op een bepaalde wijze raakte Pedro diep geinteresseerd in haar verhalen. En ook de man vond het fijn om naar haar te luisteren. Ze had een erg rustgevende stem, en al snel was Pedro dikke vrienden met haar. Pedro durfde haar niet zoveel over zichzelf te vertellen, en gelukkig vroeg de vrouw daar ook niet naar. Ze had wat apparaatjes meegenomen met celletjes erin die op een soort kaartje zaten, en die vingen de boom-energie dan op. Samen met de vrouw ging Pedro weleens naar buiten. Het was altijd erg rustig in het bos. De vrouw vertelde hem ook over robotten die op boom-energie liepen. Op een dag nadat ze weer even een tijdje bij familie had gelogeerd nam ze er één voor Pedro mee. Het was een geschenk voor hem. Pedro kon zijn ogen nauwelijks geloven. De robot kon van alles doen, en je kon er zelfs een gesprek mee voeren. Het werd Pedro's beste vriendje, en al snel knapte Pedro erg op. Velen merkten hoe hij aan het veranderen was, en hij begon ook wandelingen met de robot te maken.

De vrouw legde Pedro veel uit over hoe zo'n robot werd gemaakt, en na een tijdje werden er ook steeds meer van zulke robotten gebruikt. Het idee sloeg erg aan. Het bleek dat het gebruik

van boom-energie erg goed was voor de bomen zelf, en voor het milieu. Ook bleek de boom-energie erg goed en genezend te zijn voor het functioneren van het lichaam. En al snel werden er bij sommigen kleine capsules ingebouwd die boom-energie opvingen en gebruikten ter ondersteuning van het lichaam. Maar er kwam ook concurrentie op de markt. Zo bleken er ook al apparaten te zijn die op bloem-energie werkten, wespen-energie, spinnen-energie, vliegen-energie en zelfs lever-energie. Telkens merkten ze dat de energieen die gebruikt werden weer een voorspoedig effect hadden op hetgeen waarvan die energie was. Elke energie had z'n eigen frequentie, en kon door de instel van de juiste frequentie door een tuner makkelijk afgetapt worden. Zo begon men met allerlei natuur-electriciteiten te experimenteren en ze ook koppelend te gebruiken. En door de koppels kwamen er weer hele speciale energieen vrij, als een soort van positief bijprodukt. Pedro was erg enthousiast en schoolde zichzelf goed op deze gebieden, met name ook door de tussenkomst van de vrouw op z'n afdeling.

Op een dag kwam de vrouw aanzetten met een robot die op haaien-electriciteit werkte. De robot kon zwaar werk verrichten en werd vaak ingezet voor de bouw van huizen en gebouwen. Pedro was erg enthousiast, en niet lang daarna had Pedro zelfs een klein voertuigje dat op haaien-energie werkte. In de ziekenhuizen kende men inmiddels de implantaten die op haaien-energie werkten. Vooral hen die om enige reden verlamd waren hadden veel baat bij deze apparaatjes. Pedro was erg trots op de dingen die hij inmiddels zelf kon maken, maar op een nacht had hij een erg akelige droom. In die droom werd hij bezocht door de heks Sausibir, die op hem begon te schelden. Even dacht hij dat alles fout ging, ook toen hij de volgende dag wakker werd, en een zwarte planeet boven het bos buiten zag hangen die alles scheen te verduisteren. Hij dacht dat hij het zichzelf weer allemaal verbeelde, en dacht ook dat het wel weer weg zou gaan als hij door zou gaan met het ontwikkelen van de natuur-technologie. Maar niets was minder waar. Ook anderen hadden de zwarte planeet gesignaleerd, en de duisternis ging niet weg. Wetenschappers zeiden dat het een zwarte zon was die zo'n sterke magnetische straling had dat de planeet vanaf nu om deze zon zou heentrekken. Er was veel paniek, want men zei dat het electrisch veld van deze zon de aarde zou aantasten en ook het leven op aarde. Velen begonnen een soort virus te vertonen dat het zwarte boom-virus heette. Het virus zou de hersencellen aantasten en waanideeen brengen, als een soort van geestesziekte. Maar niet alleen dat, want ook het lichaam zou heel langzaam aftakelen onder de ergst mogelijke pijnen. Pedro was bang. Een groot deel van de bevolking was al door het virus aangetast, min of meer, en er was nog geen technologie of medicijn tegen opgewassen.

Er was iets in Pedro geknapt. Vele mensen gingen naar het ziekenhuis voor onderzoek. Achteraf scheen het mee te vallen, en werden wel degelijk mensen weer genezen, maar de duisternis bleef door de zwarte planeet, en er waren inmiddels velen door het virus omgekomen. Het leek wel alsof de aarde z'n scherven opraapte om door te gaan met dat wat overgebleven was. Na een korte tijd van herstel en opleving sloeg het virus opnieuw toe, harder dan ooit. De aarde werd naar de zwarte zon toegezogen, meer en meer, alsof het al cirkelend in de zwarte zon zou verdwijnen, zou oplossen. Zij die overgebleven waren, waren moe, en leden aan ernstige pijnen en aftakelingen. Het aardoppervlak was heter dan ooit tevoren.

Plotseling schrok Pedro wakker. Het was allemaal maar een droom. Het was net voordat de vrouw van de afdeling terug zou komen van het logeren bij familie. Pedro had zich er een beetje druk over gemaakt, omdat hij bang was dat het misschien niet zou klikken, en eigenlijk was hij ook erg nieuwsgierig. Nu zou hij haar dan ontmoeten. Ze bleek heel anders te zijn dan in z'n dromen. Ze leek veel ouder, en was ook veel rustiger. Pedro had niet echt het gevoel dat

hij contact met haar kon maken. Ze zei niet veel. Pedro vond het achteraf wel best zo. Geen vreemde technologieen, geen robotten, en geen zwarte zonnen die het leven op aarde onveilig zouden maken.

Hoofdstuk 2. De Schuilplaats

Pedro was bang geworden om te slapen. Als hij niet nog een keer zo gek zou dromen. Gelukkig was het de nachten erna erg rustig. Totdat hij op een nacht droomde over een zwarte hond die als door de ramen van zijn hoofd binnenkwam. Peter was stijf van de schrik, en kon zich niet bewegen toen hij wakker was geworden. Na een lange tijd kwam er een begeleider binnen die hem probeerde te troosten. Pedro kon maar moeilijk praten. De begeleider gaf hem een kopje water. Heel langzaam begon Pedro weer een beetje bij te komen. De begeleider vond het erg naar voor Pedro, maar moedigde hem aan om het weer te vergeten, en om door te gaan met z'n leven. De spanning omtrend de vrouw was nu voorbij, omdat hij nu wist wie en wat ze was. Pedro hoopte dat er voorlopig geen nieuwelingen zouden komen. Hij merkte bij zichzelf dat hij steeds moeilijker tegen veranderingen kon. Het leek wel alsof elke verandering, hoe klein ook, z'n hart omdraaiden in z'n borstkas.

Pedro kon het goed vinden met z'n begeleiders. Nog steeds ging hij weleens met ze wandelen. Voor het eerst zou hij op een avond met een begeleider naar zee gaan. Hij verheugde zich er erg op. Als kind hield hij altijd al erg veel van de zee. De zee was erg rustig die avond, en ze maakten een lange strandwandeling. Plotseling draaide de begeleider zich naar pedro toe, en het leek alsof hij het gezicht van een zwarte hond had. Pedro schrok, maar dacht direkt dat het kwam omdat het al donker was. De begeleider pakte Pedro's hand vast, en er ging een rilling door Pedro heen. 'Pedro,' zei de begeleider, 'ik moet je wat vertellen. Ik ken je nu al geruime tijd, en ik vind dat je er erg op vooruit bent gegaan. We zijn nu bij de zee, en alles gaat goed. Je hebt geen last van wanen.' Pedro glimlachte. Die begeleider moest eens weten, maar goed, er was mee te leven, en Pedro hoefde het ook niet erger te maken dan het was. Toen haalde de begeleider een klein beeldje uit zijn zak. Het was een zwarte hond die op een soort schatkist zat. Pedro dacht even dat hij flauw zou vallen, maar liet de man uitpraten. 'Dit is voor jou. Ik weet dat je laatst over een zwarte hond hebt gedroomd, de nachtmerrie, maar misschien zal dit je helpen. Waarom besluit je niet om er positief tegen aan te kijken ? Dromen horen ook bij het leven, en zelfs wanen. We wanen allemaal wel eens wat. Probeer er gewoon op een goede manier mee om te gaan. Zo van : 'okay, ik heb over een zwarte hond gedroomd. Er is niks verkeerds met een zwarte hond op zich.' Zet het gewoon op je nachtkastje en leer het accepteren.'

Maar ineens werd Pedro onwel. En een verschrikkelijke angst beklom hem. 'Nee,' schreeuwde hij in paniek, 'nee.' De begeleider wist direkt dat het allemaal te ver voor Pedro was gegaan. Het was teveel voor hem. Pedro rende weg, en de begeleider rende achter hem aan. 'Doe dat ding weg,' gilde Pedro. 'Ik kan er niet tegen.' De begeleider kon nu niet meer zeggen dat Pedro maar met z'n angst voor zwarte honden moest leren omgaan. Dat werkte simpelweg niet bij Pedro. Hard rende Pedro terug naar de afdeling. Een andere begeleider ving hem op, en Pedro vertelde hem het verhaal. Na een paar dagen hoorde Pedro dat de begeleider die hem het beeldje wilde geven was ontslagen. Pedro vroeg zich af waarom. Hem werd verteld dat het een religieus beeldje was uit Egypte. En dat was ongeoorloofd op de afdeling. Er stond duidelijk in de regels dat de begeleiders ten eerste geen religieuze dingen aan patienten mochten opleggen, en ten tweede mochten ze geen persoonlijke cadeautjes geven. Er was ook

nog een derde reden waarom de man was ontslagen. De patienten mochten niet geconfronteerd worden met hun angsten. De patienten moesten afgeleid worden en beschermd, zo was de therapeutische benadering. Pedro vond het aan de ene kant te ver gaan, dat deze begeleider daarom was ontslagen, en had spijt dat hij het doorverteld had, maar aan de andere kant voelde Pedro zich bedreigd, ook al bedoelde de man het goed. Pedro zocht bescherming, en die had hij op deze manier dubbel en dwars gevonden.

De opvolger van de desbetreffende begeleider was een vrouw. Pedro kon erg goed gesprekken met haar voeren, en die gesprekken gingen nogal diep. De vrouw was lid van een religieuze beweging die 'De Groene Verlichting' heette. Dat was een beweging die geloofde dat de bomen de aarde zou overnemen, de plantegroei, en dat de aarde weer geheel plantaardig, botanisch, zou worden, alle levende wezens. Pedro wist niet goed wat hij er van denken moest. De vrouw moest natuurlijk goed ervoor zorgen dat zij Pedro niets opdrong, want dan zou ze in hetzelfde lot vallen als de vorige begeleider. In de reglementen stond dat de begeleiders wel religieus mochten zijn, en dat ze best wel dingen over hun persoonlijke leven mochten vertellen aan hen die ze begeleiden, als de situatie zich zou voordoen, maar ze mochten hen absoluut geen deel laten hebben in hun privé-leven. De beweging van de Groene Verlichting zou steeds meer groeien op aarde, en Pedro kwam erachter dat meerdere begeleiders van deze beweging lid waren. Maar diep erop ingaan wilde Pedro niet, en zorgde er altijd voor dat het onderwerp snel weer over iets anders ging, en ook de desbetreffende begeleiders lieten er niet al te veel over los. Eén van de nachtdiensten waar Pedro regelmatig goede gesprekken mee had was niet religieus. Zij vond de beweringen van de Groene Verlichting maar geklets. Zij geloofde dat alles zou vergaan, zowel mens, dier als plant, en dan zou alles in het niets oplossen. Zij van de Groene Verlichting geloofden dat zij die botanisch geworden waren eeuwig zouden leven. Wel vond de nachtdienst dat je oudere mensen hun geloof nooit moest afpakken, want dat hadden ze misschien nodig op hun oude dag, om niet zo bang te zijn voor de dood, en omdat het voor oudere mensen veel te moeilijk zou zijn en veel te ingrijpend om nog van standpunt of geloof te moeten veranderen. Pedro had eigenlijk geen standpunten. Hij hoorde al die verhalen maar aan.

Op een nacht werd Pedro badend in het zweet wakker. Hij had weer zo raar gedroomd. Plotseling keek hij naar zijn handen, en zag dat z'n armen bijna als takken waren geworden, en dat er bladeren aan groeiden. Maar toen hij ineens wakker schrok wist hij dat hij dit alles gedroomd had. Hij moest het maar niet meer over zware dingen hebben als religieuze overtuiging of levensstandpunt. De begeleiding reageerde daar direkt positief op. Maar het begon steeds vaker voor te komen dat Pedro 's nachts het gevoel had dat hij in een plant of boom aan het veranderen was. Op een nacht schrok hij wakker. Er zat een lange man vlakbij de muur, dichtbij z'n bed, en die man had boomachtige ledematen, als takken met bladeren. De man had een donkere groenachtige kleur, en Pedro zette het op een gillen. 'Ga mijn kamer uit,' schreeuwde Pedro. Maar de man bewoog niet. Toen Pedro het licht aandeed bleek het slechts zijn badjas te zijn die aan de muur hing. Ja, vergissingen kunnen gebeuren. Pedro zweette. Wanneer zou dit eens ophouden ?

Na enige jaren woonde Pedro weer op zichzelf. Op een dag werd er aangebeld. Het bleek iemand van de Groene Verlichting te zijn. Ze gingen de huizen langs om over hun geloof te vertellen en om leden te werven. Maar Pedro wilde er niets mee te maken hebben. De man van de beweging begon erg agressief te doen, dat als Pedro niet zou luisteren, dan zou zijn lot de vernietiging zijn. Pedro vond dat nogal intimiderend, en waarschuwde de man dat als hij niet zou stoppen, dan zou Pedro de politie bellen. De man drukte Pedro boos een folder in z'n vingers en vertrok met de woorden : 'Dan moet je het zelf maar weten.' Pedro vouwde een

vliegtuigje van het foldertje en gooide het de man achterna, die al bijna uit zicht was verdwenen. Pedro wilde absoluut niets met dit soort zaken te maken hebben, omdat hij geen terugval wilde krijgen. Pedro moest juist los proberen te komen van dit soort dingen. Pedro liet een sticker op zijn deur aanbrengen om dit soort dingen buiten de deur te houden. Op de televisie waren er vaak programma's over of van de Groene Verlichting. Het was één van de snelst groeiende religies op aarde. Er waren zelfs al zenders van de Groene Verlichting. Pedro keek daarom niet vaak naar de televisie. Sommige groepen binnen de Groene Verlichting waren erg agressief en sommige groepen waren erg conservatief. Wat dat betrefd waren er veel verschillen binnen de beweging. Er was één beweging binnen de Groene Verlichting die zo extreem was dat ze geloofden dat ze hen die niet van de Groene Verlichting waren moesten uitroeien. Gelukkig was die beweging erg klein, maar anderen zeiden dat in het geheim die beweging veel groter was dan ze dachten. De beweging zou veelal ondergronds werken, en in diepe list. Er werd gewaarschuwd voor aanslagen vanuit deze groep, die de zwarte groenen werden genoemd.

Pedro wist dat hij in gevaar was, omdat hij niet lid was van de beweging. Maar er was zelfs één harde kern binnen de zwarte groenen die geloofden dat een ieder die niet lid was van de zwarte groenen, die moest uitgeroeid worden, openlijk of subtiel. Er werd beweerd dat zelfs de regering leden had die van deze harde kern waren, maar bewijs was daar nog niet voor geleverd. En deze regeringsleden zouden de hand boven de hoofden van sommige geweldadige acties hebben gehouden, en er zelfs ruimte voor geven. Pedro wilde niet het doelwit worden van terroristen. Wat kon hij doen ? Een hond nemen, of lid worden van de Groene Verlichting voor eigen veiligheid ? Pedro was bang voor honden, dus dat viel eigenlijk al af, maar omdat Pedro nog wel banger was voor aanslagen, en absoluut geen huichelaar wilde zijn door uit angst 'gelovig' te worden, koos hij voor een hond. Hij ging naar een asiel en kocht daar een zwarte hond. Al snel werd Pedro beste maatjes met het beest, en de hond was erg waaks. Maar op een dag vond Pedro de hond dood in zijn mand. De dierenarts constateerde vergiftiging. En zo kocht Pedro een andere hond, die ook ten prooi viel aan vergiftiging, en zelfs in een derde geval gebeurde dit. Pedro wist dat ze het op hem gemunt hadden, en begon sterk te vermoeden dat de man die bij hem aan de deur kwam van de zwarte groenen was. Ze hadden Pedro natuurlijk al op een lijst gezet. Wat kon Pedro doen ? Verhuizen ? De zwarte groenen waren overal.

Op een dag kwam er een andere vrouw bij Pedro aan de deur. Het bleek iemand van de Groene Verlichting te zijn. Pedro wees op de sticker en zei : 'Kunt u niet lezen ?' De vrouw verontschuldigde zich en zei dat ze dat over het hoofd had gezien. Maar omdat de vrouw zo vriendelijk was en zo zacht bij Pedro overkwam liet hij haar binnen. De vrouw bleek van een conservatieve groep te zijn binnen de Groene Verlichting. Zij keurde ook streng de werken van de zwarte groenen af. De vrouw was zich ervan bewust dat de harde kern binnen de zwarte groenen een gevaar voor haar en haar conservatieve groep waren, en ze vertelde Pedro over een schuilplaats die ze hadden, onder de grond. Zij die zich bedreigd voelden konden daar komen wonen. Het was een samenlevingsverband, en ook anderen buiten de Groene Verlichting werden geaccepteerd. Pedro zag dat op een bepaalde wijze wel zitten, en al snel besloot hij over te verhuizen. Het was een streng bewaakte stad onder de grond, die uitliep in het bos. Boven de grond kwamen aanslagen inmiddels op grote schaal voor.

Bij de schuilplaats aangekomen werd Pedro naar een speciale afdeling gebracht voor niet-gelovigen. Pedro kreeg een ruime kamer toegezegd, maar al snel kwam hij erachter dat het een val was. Hij kon zijn kamer niet meer uit. Op de muur was een scherm, als een soort televisie. 'Welkom bij de Groene Verlichting. Voor de veiligheid hebben wij uw kamer op slot

gedaan. Dit is maar voor even. We willen eerst een aantal dingen van u weten.' Onder het scherm was er een ja en nee knop, en zo moest Pedro eerst een ellenlange vragenlijst beantwoorden. Aan het einde van de lijst ging zijn kamerdeur weer open. Pedro was erg opgelucht. Maar dat was maar van korte duur. De voorzieningen waren erg zwak, en er werd telkens een beroep op hem gedaan om lid te worden van de Groene Verlichting voor betere voorzieningen. In Pedro's ogen was dit dus een soort rassenonderscheid. Gelovigen hadden veel meer rechten. Pedro besloot om maar genoegen te nemen met de zwakke voorzieningen. Maar op een dag stond er een soldaat in zwart en groen voor zijn deur met een zwarte hond. De man droeg een geweer, en liet Pedro kiezen tussen de dood en de Groene Verlichting. Die keuze was dus snel gemaakt. Pedro moest de kamer uit, om plaats te maken voor een nieuwe ongelovige. Pedro was nu opgenomen in de ledenlijst van de Groene Verlichting. Hij kreeg een klein appartementje in een ander deel van de ondergrondse stad, waar hij met een soort van metro naartoe werd vervoerd. Het was er erg donker, maar er waren meerdere en betere voorzieningen over het algemeen. Toch was alles erg stoffig, droog en donker, en Pedro voelde zich er niet op z'n gemak. De buurt was ook duister, en de lift in het gebouw was oud, en leek Pedro zelfs gevaarlijk. Er zat geen alarm bij, dus wat zou er gebeuren als de lift vastliep. Na wat verkenning kwam Pedro weer terug in z'n donkere appartementje. Er lag een brief op tafel, waarop stond dat als Pedro betere voorzieningen wilde, dan moest Pedro lid worden van de uitgaande Groene Verlichting, zij die langs de huizen zouden gaan om leden te werven. Dat leek Pedro niks, maar hij kon niet anders. Hij vertrouwde zijn huidige buurt voor geen cent.

Er stond bij waar Pedro de brief kon inleveren als hij hogerop wilde. Na de brief ingeleverd te hebben kreeg Pedro een seintje dat hij kon komen met z'n spullen. Hij kreeg doorgang in het appartement waar hij de brief had afgeleverd, en kwam weer in een metro terecht. Ditmaal kwam hij in een lichter deel van de ondergrondse stad terecht. Hij kreeg een ruim appartement, en er waren gezamenlijke gangen en zalen waar hij medebewoners van dit stadsdeel kon ontmoeten. Hij wist zeker dat er onder de anderen ook lieden tussenzaten die net als hem noodgedwongen waren hier te komen. Pedro voelde zich min of meer ontvoerd, maar hij was in ieder geval tot nu toe veilig. Er mocht geen persoonlijke informatie worden uitgedeeld, anders zou dat leiden tot verwijdering. Er moest doelmatig worden gewerkt voor ledenwerving. Pedro kwam in een soort klas terecht, waar hij verder onderwezen zou worden. Hij was niets meer dan een nummer, met een opgelegde identiteit. Pedro keek wel eens links en rechts naar zijn mede-klasgenoten. Misschien dat hun ogen meer zouden verraden ? De sfeer was zowel gespannen als rustgevend. Pedro was blij dat hij beschermd werd, maar voor hoe lang ? Na een tijdje was het voor hem dan de eerste keer om langs de huizen te gaan. Hij werd ingedeeld naast een vrouw. De vrouw zei niet veel. Misschien was ze ook wel bang om teveel te zeggen. Ze durfde hem ook nauwelijks aan te kijken. Bij het eerste huis werd de deur direkt weer voor hen dichtgesmeten. Na een tijdje werd het de vrouw teveel, en ze rende weg. Pedro wist direkt dat zij ook een slachtoffer was. Na een tijdje kwam ze weer terug met gebogen hoofd. Ze wist dat het leven buiten voor haar veel gevaarlijker was. Maar aangekomen bij de toegangslift voor de ondergrondse stad werd ze geweigerd. Werden ze dan ook al boven de grond in de gaten gehouden ? Pedro mocht wel naar binnen, maar wist dat als hij afwijkend gedrag zou tonen, dan zou hij ook geweigerd worden. Pedro besloot zijn hoofd koel te houden, en gewoon zijn plicht te doen. Wat kon hij anders ? Maar hij had meer en meer het gevoel dat hij van zijn eigen identiteit werd beroofd. Hij voelde zich worden als een plant. Op een gegeven moment tijdens de ledenwervingen werd het hem teveel, en rende weg, net zoals de vrouw waar hij eens mee werkte. Zou ze nog leven ? Hij wist dat er voor hem nu geen weg meer terugwas. Hij besloot naar het bos te gaan.

Na een lange zwerftocht kwam hij bij een boshuisje aan. Stilletjes sloop hij naar binnen. Zou er iemand wonen. Opeens werd hij van achteren op z'n hoofd geslagen. Na een tijdje werd hij wakker in een bed. Een vrouw zat bij z'n bed. 'Het spijt me dat ik je neer moest slaan. Ik wilde geen risico lopen.' De vrouw was er achter gekomen dat ook hij een ontsnapte was. Ze vertelde hem dat zij en haar zusters hier woonden. Op de grond kronkelde een grote slang. Pedro schrok, maar de vrouw zei dat het gewoon een huisdier was. Na een tijdje kwamen ook de andere vrouwen thuis. Ze besloten dat Pedro wel bij hen mocht wonen zo lang. Maar Pedro vertrouwde het niet helemaal. Hij wilde niet het slachtoffer worden van iets nieuws. De vrouwen gedroegen zich vreemd. Toen Pedro vertelde dat hij liever verder het bos in wilde greep één van de vrouwen een geweer van de muur af, en richtte het op hem. 'Er gaat hier niemand weg,' zei de vrouw. 'We kunnen jouw veel te goed gebruiken.' Pedro vroeg zich af waarvoor. Hij had nog steeds erg veel pijn in zijn hoofd, en ging weer liggen. Eén van de vrouwen haalde wat water voor hem. Midden in de nacht werd Pedro wakker, maar merkte dat de vrouwen hem met riemen aan het bed hadden vastgemaakt. Wat had dit nu weer te betekenen ? 'Psst,' fluisterde één van de vrouwen vanuit het donker, 'ze zijn veel te bang dat je ons gaat verraden. Daarom laten ze je niet gaan.' Langzaam kroop ze naar hem toe, en ging naast hem liggen op het bed. 'Maar ik kan je wel helpen. Als je mij mee wil nemen, dan maak ik je los.' Pedro stemde toe. De vrouw maakte hem los, en stilletjes liepen ze naar buiten. Pedro vroeg zich af wat hij met de vrouw moest, maar was tegelijkertijd dankbaar dat zij hem los had gemaakt. Samen gingen ze nog dieper het bos in. Pedro vroeg zich af waarom de vrouw met hem mee wilde in plaats van bij de vrouwen te blijven. De vrouw vertelde hem dat haar zussen erg vervelend waren naar haar, dat zij altijd het meeste werk moest doen, en dat ze haar vernederden. Ze stierf nog liever dan daar te blijven. Maar Pedro had geen zin om met haar op te trekken. Hij dacht na over hoe hij van haar af kon komen, maar kreeg toen weer medelijden met haar, en wilde eerst een goede plek voor haar vinden. Terug naar de schuilplaats van de Groene Verlichting kon ze ook niet, want ze was al eens ontsnapt, net als haar zusters. Pedro besloot naar een andere plaats te gaan, waar ze hem niet kenden, maar zeker weten deed hij natuurlijk toch nooit. In een dorpje achter het bos meldde hij zich aan, samen met de vrouw. Ze kregen allebei vrij snel een huisje toegewezen, en Pedro dacht dat hij wel opnieuw zou kunnen beginnen. Maar na een tijdje begon hij vreemde dreigbrieven te krijgen, en voor Pedro zat er niets anders op om hulp te zoeken bij de afdeling waar hij patient was geweest. Ze waren erg behulpzaam naar hem, en al snel kon hij daar terecht. De oude man en de vrouw woonden daar nog steeds. Ze waren blij hem te zien, maar verder zeiden ze niet veel. Hier voelde Pedro zich het veiligst.

Hoofdstuk 3. De Laser

Ook de begeleiding daar was blij Pedro na al die tijd weer te zien. Op een nacht had Pedro een vreemde droom waarin mannen met groene gezichten naar de aarde kwamen om zich te verspreiden. Maar Pedro probeerde het zo snel weer te vergeten. Iedereen droomde wel eens, dacht hij. Maar de droom kwam steeds vaker terug en werd steeds enger. Pedro merkte dat hij deze afdeling was ontgroeid. Hij kon zich hier als het ware niet meer aarden, en besloot na een paar weken weer te vertrekken. Pedro besloot weer terug te gaan naar het huis waar hij de dreigbrieven kreeg, maar hij kreeg een ander huis toegewezen. Ook besloot Pedro weer een hond te kopen, en ditmaal liet hij de hond niet meer alleen buiten in een kooi, maar bleef de hond binnen. Pedro wilde geen risico lopen op vergiftiging. Al snel werden Pedro en de hond dikke maatjes. Er kwamen hier geen dreigbrieven, maar Pedro was wel op z'n hoede. Pedro begon te merken dat z'n boomziekte weer aan het opkomen was. Hij kon maar moeilijk

spreken, moeilijk bewegen, en had neigingen om flauw te vallen. Na een paar dagen lag Pedro met hoge koorts op bed, en vocht voor z'n leven. Op de televisie werd er gesproken van gasaanvallen op de ongelovige samenleving. Pedro voelde zich geforceerd om weer lid te worden van de Groene Verlichting voor z'n eigen veiligheid. Door z'n ontsnapping was hij automatisch uitgeschreven, en terug naar de ondergrondse stad kon hij niet en wilde hij niet. Hij besloot zich via een telefoonnummer op de televisie in te schrijven bij een erg gematigde groep van de Groene Verlichting. Dat zou de woede van de harde kern misschien iets verlichten, ook al liep hij dan nog steeds gevaar. Hij kon zich natuurlijk ook laten inschrijven bij de zwarte groenen, dan was hij direkt van al het gezeur af. Uiteindelijk besloot hij dat maar te doen. Hij had geen andere keus. Een dag erna kwam er een man bij hem aan de deur in zwart pak. De man plaatste wat apparatuur in Pedro's huis, maar wilde niet zeggen wat voor apparatuur het was. Pedro, die inmiddels alweer bijna beter was, werd een beetje boos op de man, en gebood hem uitleg te geven. De man gaf hem een foldertje. Maar Pedro kon van dat foldertje niets wijzer worden. De man zei dat elk lid van de zwarte groenen zulke apparatuur in huis kreeg, wat ervoor zou zorgen dat er geen schadelijke gassen binnen zouden komen. Het was een soort afweer-systeem. Pedro vond het allemaal best, als hij maar veilig was.

Pedro wist dat hij nu bij een duister genootschap aangesloten was, maar hij kon niet anders. Hij hoopte maar dat ze niet zoveel van hem zouden vragen, en dat het dus gewoon bij een slapend lidmaatschap bleef. Pedro besloot het foldertje van de apparatuur nog eens te lezen. Het ging over verschillende boom-electriciteiten die door de apparatuur werd opgevangen en uitgezonden. Zo ging het om bepaalde energieen van de zwarte bomen, groene bomen, en ook rode en gele bomen. Om welke bomen het precies ging stond er niet bij. De verschillende kleuren waren gewoon schuilnamen voor bekende bomen. Pedro keek nog eens naar de apparatuur. Er zaten roze lampjes bij, die soms knipperden, groene lampjes, rode lampjes en zwarte lampjes. Pedro vond het maar griezelig, want wie weet werd hij wel afgeluisterd of op een andere manier in de gaten gehouden. Voorlopig was hij in ieder geval veilig. Wekelijks kreeg hij een blad binnen, een soort magazine van de zwarte groenen, maar daar stond niet echt veel in, en Pedro vond het dan ook niet echt een probleem om die bladen thuis te hebben. Het leken op een bepaalde manier erg natuurvriendelijke bladen, en Pedro kon er niets agressiefs in bespeuren.

Op een dag werd Pedro opgeroepen voor een onderzoek in een gebouw in een ander dorp. Pedro moest zijn mond opendoen voor een apparaat, en er werden foto's gemaakt. Toen mocht hij weer gaan. Na een paar dagen kwam er weer een man langs met een zwart pak. De man vertelde Pedro dat hij was geselecteerd om langs de huizen te gaan voor de zwarte groenen. Hij mocht niet praten over de zwarte groenen, maar moest zeggen dat hij het gedachtengoed van de groene verlichting bracht. Hij mocht absoluut niet agressief overkomen. Verder zou het allemaal erg oppervlakkig blijven, en Pedro hoefde maar eens per maand te verschijnen, en dan in een ander dorp. Pedro stemde hierin toe. Wel kwam er nog bij dat hij wat cursussen moest volgen over huisbezoek. En zo ging dat een tijdje door, en alles ging redelijk goed. Pedro bracht de boodschap zo objectief mogelijk, en vertelde niet dat hij van de zwarte groenen was. Diep in zijn hart was hij dat ook helemaal niet, dus hij had er vrede mee. Maar na een periode kreeg Pedro een brief thuis waarin stond dat hij geselecteerd was voor werk in het buitenland. En dit keer ging het niet om huisbezoek, maar om trainingen te geven aan pasbekeerden. De trainingen gingen nogal diep, en hadden zelfs het agressieve karakter waar Pedro altijd zo bang voor was geweest. Pedro weigerde, maar tegelijkertijd vroeg hij om een wat geschiktere baan voor hem. Er werd erg vriendelijk op Pedro's brief gereageerd, en bijgesloten was er een folder waarop Pedro de verschillende mogelijkheden zag. Er werden nog lieden gevraagd voor een laboratorium dat experimenteerde met boom-electriciteiten, en

Pedro besloot op die vacature in te gaan. Het centrum was niet zo ver bij Pedro vandaan, en Pedro werd direkt aangenomen. Op de afdeling zou hij ook een kamer krijgen, en hij mocht zelf uitkiezen welke tijden hij wilde werken. Verder had Pedro veel vrije tijd, zodat hij het gevoel had dat het hem niet opslokte. Maar Pedro vond het reuze interessant, want hier leerde hij hoe de boom-energieen op het lichaam inwerkten, en waar het allemaal voor gebruikt kon worden. Pedro bleek een goede aanwinst voor het laboratorium te zijn. Hij had enorme werkenthousiasme, en vond veel dingen uit. Het bleek dat hij een talent had op dit gebied. Pedro begon boeken te schrijven, die nogal aansloegen bij het publiek van de Groene Verlichting. En stukje bij beetje werd Pedro een autoriteit op het gebied van boom-electriciteit en de daarbij horende techniek, wat gezien werd als één van de basissen van de Groene Verlichting. Het hele idee van de Groene Verlichting stond bij Pedro erg op de achtergrond, zoveel mogelijk, want Pedro was absoluut niet religieus aangelegd. Pedro was geinteresseerd in de technische kant van het leven, met bomen als waardig medicijn en hulpmiddel voor de samenleving. Pedro kwam erachter welke boom-energieen de hersenen bestuurden, en de emoties, en het geweten, en zijn ontdekkingen werden gezien als revolutionair. Pedro kon het erg goed vinden met zijn collega's, en over de zwarte groenen werd eigenlijk nooit gesproken. Pedro had ook niet het idee dat zijn collega's daarbij hoorden, en het centrum was een onafhankelijk centrum voor onderzoek. Pedro zag het gewoon als een bepaalde tak van de wetenschap, maar dan enorm zelfstandig en onafhankelijk. Pedro hield van dat woord.

Al gauw kwam Pedro erachter dat verschillende boom-energieen verantwoordelijk waren voor het religieuze denken. De ene mens was hiervoor gevoeliger dan de ander, en dat had ook te maken met de omliggende omstandigheden. Soms werd men daarin gewoon gedwongen, en Pedro had ook al ontdekt welke boom-energieen voor dwangmatigheden zorgden en voor manipulatie en zelfs dictatuur. Pedro stelde zich erg mild op. Hij wilde weten wat de drijfveer was van deze energieen. Zij hadden natuurlijk een bron en een doel, en misschien werden zij ook weer door andere boom-electriciteiten beinvloed. Het bleek een spel te zijn van electriciteiten, een wisselwerking, een samenhang, en de creativiteit wat dat met zich meebracht. Het bleek zich na verloop van tijd allemaal te verfijnen, en te ontwikkelen, totdat een nieuwe stroom van frequencies opstak om allereerst chaos te brengen. Die chaos was als een soort protest, als een basis voor een opkomst van een over het hoofd geziende energie. De bestaande hierarchie werd ontmaskerd als een cocon voor nieuwe botanische patronen. Zo zou er vanuit de chaos en de onderdrukking langzaamaan een nieuwe orde ontstaan. Het centrum werkte nauw samen met het ziekenhuis. Pedro was erg blij met z'n nieuwe baan.

Op een nacht had Pedro een droom. Een stem zei tegen hem : 'Pedro, geloof jij dat de vibraties van jouw stem de vibraties zijn van bomen ? Zij hebben in jou een stem, en door jouw werk worden hun energieen gerankschikt en functioneel gemaakt. Ja, jij bent de schoot der bomen.' Pedro schrok wakker en probeerde het weg te wimpelen. Hij was natuurlijk zo druk met z'n werk dat dit was gebeurd. Hij geloofde niet dat bomen een persoonlijkheid hadden. Ze waren natuurlijk wel functioneel als energiebronnen, net zoals de zon en de sterren, net zoals het water en de wind. Pedro kende natuurlijk wel de primitieve religies die deze energiebronnen als goden vereerden, maar zover wilde Pedro niet gaan. Hij had het niet zo op met al die zweverigheid. Het was al erg genoeg dat hij een gedwongen lidmaatschap bij de zwarte groenen had, die hij zag als een groep extremistische fanatiekelingen. En hij wist zeker dat als hij de banden met hen zou breken, dan zou hij eraan gaan. Die lui waren bloedserieus.

Veel veranderingen waren er in de regering. Veel conservatievelingen binnen de Groene Verlichting kwamen aan de macht, iets wat Pedro een beter idee vond dan al die vreemde en gevaarlijke zwarte groenen die vaak in het geheim werkten. De nieuwe president had zo'n afschuw tegen de zwarte groenen, dat hij een onderzoek liet doen door het hele land. Zij die van de zwarte groenen bleken te zijn hing gevangenisstraf boven het hoofd, vooral als het bleek dat ze misdaden op hun naam hadden staan. De president vond de opstelling van de zwarte groenen al tijden een gevaar voor het land. Bij invallen kwamen er al snel ledenlijsten aan het licht, en ook de naam van Pedro werd gevonden. Pedro moest voorkomen bij een speciaal daarvoor ingerichte rechtbank. Met een kleine standaardboete kwam hij daar vanaf, omdat hij gedwongen lid was. Hij was zoals ze dat noemden het slachtoffer van geestelijke ontvoering. Pedro kon zijn werk al snel weer voortzetten, en werd voor zijn werk geprezen. Al snel was de rust in het land teruggekeerd, en de slachtoffers van geestelijke ontvoering door de zwarte groenen kregen goede hulp en opvang. Pedro kon zich helemaal storten op zijn werk. Hij zag niet echt gevaar in de conservatieve orde van de Groene Verlichting. Veel ideeen kon hij wel aanhangen op een bepaalde wijze, en zo bleef de vriendschap tussen Pedro en het genootschap voortbestaan. Pedro hoefde absoluut geen lid meer te zijn. De president vond dat onzin, omdat er een vrijheid van levensovertuiging bestond. En een naam zei bijvoorbeeld ook helemaal niks. Iedereen moest leren zijn eigen identiteit te vinden binnen de afgrenzende normen en waarden.

Pedro vond uit dat de ademhaling niet alleen door zuurstof, de oxygene, ging, maar ook wanneer de longen waren ingesteld op de boom-energieen die daarvoor bestonden. Het bleek dat elke long daarin uniek was, en vaak scheen het dat er wel middelen waren om de long op dat gebied te verfijnen. Zo waren er ook boom-electriciteiten die zo ontwikkeld waren dat ze andere boom-electriciteiten konden opvangen voor bijvoorbeeld de ademhaling. Het lichaam kon zo klaargemaakt worden om een zogenaamde boomcapsule te ontvangen, die zich in de longen vestigde, of erop, en zo de benodigde adem-energieen van de bomen kon opvangen. Dit ging dan door het instellen als een tuner op de golflengtes van die energieen en niet eens zozeer door de pomp der longen, het inademen. Zo kon de long ook werken als een ontvanger, als een soort radio, naast het hele pompgebeuren. Die boomcapsules konden soms zo krachtig zijn dat er gewoon mee onder water geleefd kon worden voor een lange tijd, zonder dat dat schade toebracht aan het lichaam of fataal afliep. Zo waren er ook capsules die door bomen werden afgegeven om zich in het hart te vestigen voor een zo natuurgetrouw mogelijke hartslag. Pedro had een boomlaser ontwikkeld waarmee hij dit soort capsules eenvoudig kon installeren in de verschillende lichaamsdelen voor optimaal functioneren. Ook had hij daarvoor een scanner laten bouwen, zodat de capsules in beeld gebracht konden worden. Vaak liet hij degenen die op die manier behandeld waren terugkomen om te kijken of de capsule nog steeds aanwezig was.

Hoofdstuk 4. De Staatsgreep

Maar op een dag was er een staatsgreep in het gebouw van de president. Het waren de zwarte groenen, en de president werd door één van hen neergeschoten. Ze hadden hun gezichten groengeverfd, en ze hadden zwarte honden bij zich. Alles was op televisie te volgen, en de burgers werden opgeroepen om weerstand te bieden. Het liep uit op een burgeroorlog. Velen vochten aan de kant van de zwarte groenen, meer nog dan Pedro had verwacht. Het had zo'n lange tijd gesluimerd. Ook de televisiezenders werden overgenomen, en van de Groene Verlichting mocht niet eens meer gesproken worden. Iedereen moest lid worden van de

zwarte groenen of het met de dood bekopen. Ook velen in het leger bleken van de zwarte groenen te zijn, en na een tijdje was de gehele staatsgreep geschiedt en geslaagd. Pedro wist dat er voor hem niets anders opzat om maar weer voor de zwarte groenen te kiezen, maar ditmaal had het veel zwaardere consequenties. Pedro moest het leger in, en meevechten met de zwarte groenen. In andere landen vonden ook staatsgrepen plaats, maar sommigen van de grootste landen hadden nog steeds een conservatief beleid, en het zou oorlog worden. Dit was voor Pedro onaanvaardbaar daar hij gewetensbezwaren had tegen het leger. Hij stierf nog liever, maar een andere mogelijkheid zou zijn om zich als zieke op te geven bij een afdeling. Hij kon weer bij z'n oude afdeling terecht. De oude man en de vrouw die hij daarvan kende leefden inmiddels niet meer, en er waren twee nieuwen ervoor in de plaats gekomen. De oude begeleiding bestond niet meer. Er deden daar zwarte groenen dienst. Inmiddels hadden de landen die in de handen van de zwarte groenen gekomen waren zich verenigd tot een oorlog tegen de grootmachten. Vele ongelovigen waren omgebracht en in sommige speciale gevallen vastgezet. Gelukkig was er voor Pedro de mogelijkheid om op de ziekenafdeling waar hij was door te gaan met zijn onderzoek. Het was alsof de zwarte groenen wel heil in hem zagen, en het viel Pedro op dat de zwarte groenen opmerkelijk vriendelijk en beleefd naar hem waren. Soms kwam er wel eens een hogere functie van het gehele ziekenorgaan langs bij Pedro om wat vragen te stellen. Ze leken Pedro bijna te vereren. Pedro werd bijna een beetje verlegen van de aandacht. En alhoewel het een beetje vreemd aanvoelde, maakte het hem rustig. Pedro ging door met het schrijven van boeken, en alles begon weer een beetje in rustiger vaarwater te komen. Hij hield zich eigenlijk helemaal niet met het nieuws bezig en verder vroegen ze hier helemaal niks van hem. Wel namen zijn begeleiders soms wel eens wat rapporten van Pedro mee van de onderzoeken die hij had gedaan. Wat ze daar verder mee deden, dat wist Pedro niet.

Op een dag kwam er een begeleider bij Pedro op z'n kamer. Het was iemand van de zwarte groenen. Hij had een ernstige blik in zijn ogen. 'Pedro, de presidenten van de tegenstandige landen zijn omgebracht. Ook de functionarissen die niet met ons willen samenwerken zijn omgebracht en in sommige uitzonderlijke gevallen vastgezet. De aarde is nu van de zwarte groenen. Ik wilde dat jij dit zou weten.' Pedro was geschokt, maar wist dat dit zou gebeuren. Hij had het met al zijn technologieen niet kunnen voorkomen. Pedro raakte diep depressief, ook naarmate hij meerdere dingen hoorde over de werken van de zwarte groenen wereldwijd. Hij besloot te stoppen met zijn onderzoek, omdat hij er geen heil in zag. De begeleiders respecteerden zijn keuze. Ze wisten dat hij rust nodig had. Pedro was in hun ogen ernstig ziek, maar verder briljant van geest. Van zijn onderzoeksrapporten maakten ze boeken, naast de andere boeken die hij had geschreven, en het werd één van de grootste boekenlijnen op de boekenmarkten van de zwarte groenen. Pedro was in ieder geval blij dat het ook aansloeg bij de zwarte groenen. Hopelijk zouden ze er ooit nog eens lering uittrekken, maar hoop op verandering had Pedro eigenlijk weinig tot niets. Pedro legde zich neer bij de nieuwe wereldregering, de nieuwe wereldorde. Hij hield zich nu eigenlijk alleen nog maar bezig met zijn ziek zijn, en probeerde te leven met dat wat hij nog had. Hij hield van de kleine dingen van het leven, en was daar tevreden mee. Het leek alsof zijn depressies begonnen te verminderen op sommige momenten, maar andere momenten zakte hij weer diep weg, ja, ook in angst voor de toekomst, angst voor dat wat zou kunnen komen. Ja, grote angst had hij voor de harde kernen binnen de beweging, en hun geheime diepere kernen. Wat zouden ze met hem gaan doen ?

Pedro keek naar buiten, naar de bomen. De natuur was nog steeds prachtig, ja, dat wel. De zwarte groenen hadden niets tegen de natuur. Pedro zou hier de rest van zijn leven wel willen blijven. Waar moest hij anders naartoe ? Op een dag was er iemand op het kantoor van de

begeleiding gekomen. Het was een wetenschapper, die diep geinteresseerd was in de ideeen van Pedro, door de boeken die Pedro had geschreven. De man had een kado voor Pedro. Het was een robot die geheel liep op de verschillende boom-energieen, en waar Pedro zelfs mee zou kunnen praten. Een begeleider kwam het kado brengen. 'Ja, zet hem maar in de hoek van de kamer,' zei Pedro. De robot scheen veel van Pedro af te weten, en al gauw begon Pedro het eng te vinden. Een begeleider voerde de robot weer af. Als het te persoonlijk werd, vond Pedro het al snel eng worden, vooral als het over zijn verleden ging. Hoe dieper ze wisten door te tasten, hoe enger het voor Pedro werd. Pedro had rust nodig, en wilde zijn identiteit nog meer afbakenen. Op een dag besloot Pedro eens vermomd een kijkje in de buitenwereld te nemen. Wat was het hier veranderd, zeg. In de winkels kon je betalen door je arm in een automaat te steken, en dan werden er allerlei soorten boom-energieen afgetapt. De automaat had allerlei lampjes die dan gingen knipperen en piepen. Maar de verkoopster zei dat de automaat ook veel neutrale boom-energieen teruggaf, en dat waren dan de energieen die de winkel overvloedig had. Die energieen werden 'de neutralen' genoemd. Pedro bestelde een beeldje van een zwarte hond die op een schatkist zat, omdat dat hem liet denken aan de honden die hij eens had gehad. Hij stak zijn arm in de automaat, en er kwamen hele hoge toetjes uit. Het leek wel alsof zijn arm was vastgezet, maar na een tijdje hoorde hij zacht gezoem, en kon hij z'n arm er weer uittrekken. Hij voelde zich heel anders nou. 'Nou, bedankt,' zei hij opgewekt tegen de verkoopster, en liep de winkel uit. De verkoopster glimlachte terug naar hem. In de volgende winkel bestelde Pedro wat nieuwsoortige groentevruchten, die op een soort donkere uitgegroeide paprika's leken. Het waren nieuw gekweekte soorten. Pedro stopte zijn arm in de automaat en er kwamen hoge zoemende geluiden uit. Hier was het wat sneller gedaan, en snel kon Pedro zijn hand er weer uittrekken. Dit was een heel ander gevoel.

Op straat bewogen mensen vaak voort op voortbewegende band, zodat ze gewoon stil konden blijven staan. Na een tijdje ging Pedro weer terug naar de afdeling. Opeens voelde hij een hand op zijn schouder. Het was één van zijn mede-bewoners. De bewoner vroeg of Pedro ook sigaretten had, maar Pedro zei direkt : 'Houd daarover op, want als ze het horen dan schieten ze je dood. Op roken staat de doodstraf, ben je dat vergeten ?' De man deinsde achteruit en ging weer zitten. 'Ik vroeg het je alleen maar,' zei hij.

Opeens schrok hij wakker. Hij ... Pedro ? Hij heette helemaal geen Pedro. Wat voor een drugs hadden zij hem gegeven. De droom was levensecht. Hij lag aan banden vastgemaakt op een soort tafel, op een soort brancard, met vreemdsoortige apparatuur aan zijn armen en benen, en wat was er om zijn hoofd heen ? Hij voelde druk, maar kon het niet zien. Om de tafel stonden wat mannen. Eén man was wat ouder, had een grijzige kleine baard, en een lichte huidziekte. Ze zeiden dat ze bomen waren. Bomen ? De jongen geloofde niet dat bomen konden praten. De jongen begon te protesteren, maar de oudere man greep hem bij de keel. 'Nu moet je ophouden,' zei de man, 'je denkt zeker dat jij het enige wezen bent dat kan leven.' De jongen kreeg een lichte klap in zijn gezicht. 'Wat hebben jullie me gegeven ?' vroeg hij aan de mannen. 'Niets,' zei één van de mannen. 'Je wordt bestraald met boom-electriciteiten. Die vormen jouw realiteit, maar het is maar een droom. Zelfs dit is een droom.' En weer werd de jongen wakker, en ditmaal lag er een vreemsoortige octopus die meer als een grote plant of struik was op hem. Hij voelde een druk op z'n lichaam die naar z'n hoofd steeg, en het leek alsof die druk zijn denken beinvloedde. 'Ik ben van de octopusboom,' zei het schepsel. 'Door druk op je lichaam, en vooral op je lever uit te oefenen stijgt er een electrische capsule naar je hoofd die jouw deze ervaringen geeft.' De jongen zei niks, maar bleef stil liggen. Hij voelde zich compleet machteloos. Of was hij gewoon gestorven ?

'Je bent niet dood,' zei de vreemde octopus-plant, 'je droomt slechts, en je leven was een hardnekkige droom, als een hardnekkige vloeistof in je hersenen. Hard boomwater noemen wij dat.' De jongen bemerkte dat hij niet kon spreken. Wat wilden ze toch van hem ? Wat voor zin had alles nog ? Of kreeg hierdoor alles weer zin ? 'Bomen zijn de dingen die je in je leven op de achtergrond probeerde te drukken, totdat je niet anders kon dan ze een plaatsje te geven in jouw leven, maar nog steeds doe je er laagachtend over, alsof het geen personen zijn,' snauwde de octopus-plant, terwijl hij zich strakker tegen de jongen aandrukte. Opeens kwamen er een soort kleine cirkelzaagjes tevoorschijn uit de huid van de octopusplant, en begonnen zijn buik open te snijden. De lever van de jongen werd eruit gehaald, en de octopusplant slikte het in. Het deed geen pijn bij de jongen, misschien ook doordat hij wist dat het toch maar een droom was. 'Een droom kan waarheid bevatten,' sprak de octopus-plant. De jongen voelde al het leven uit zich wegtrekken, nu hij geen lever meer had, en weer schrok hij wakker. Het leek wel alsof hij van droom naar droom ging. Alsof hij in een vreemdsoortige lift zat. Waar zou de reis eindigen ? 'Die dromen zijn een geschenk van de bomen die je op een bepaalde manier ervaart, maar als je er afstand van doet blijkt het iets anders te zijn,' sprak een stem. 'Wij bomen, wij onderdrukten, nemen alles over. Nu is het onze tijd.' Was dit soms weer een experiment van de zwarte groenen ? De jongen wist het niet. Opeens rolde hij uit de lift en kwam in een tunnel terecht die in verbinding stond met een ruimteschip. Wat is dit ? dacht de jongen. Misschien was dit wel allemaal de procedure om tot dit ruimteschip opgenomen te worden. Bestond de aarde nog wel ? Heeft de aarde wel echt bestaan, of is hij gered door buitenaardse wezens ? Aan de uitvoering van het schip kon de jongen merken dat het liep op bomen-energie, maar waar waren die bomen dan ? Of waren de bomen als personen binnen in het schip. Strompelend probeerde de jongen binnen te komen. Toen hij binnen was liep er een man in een glanzend pak op hem af. De man had een baard en sprak : 'Welkom. Zie je die zwarte planeet in de verte ? Dat is de zwarte zon. Alle bomen leven door de zwarte zon en ontlenen hun energieen daaruit. Alle bomen-energie is slechts zwarte zonnen-energie.' De jongen keek bedenkelijk. De man knikte. 'Als levend wezen dien je te leven vanuit de verborgen dingen, zoals de zwarte zon. Het verborgene staat garant voor de toekomst, en de verdere levensreis.' De jongen keek de man met grote ogen aan. 'Bent u een boom ?' vroeg de jongen. 'Ja,' zei de man. De jongen werd verder naar binnen gevoerd, en zag de zalen van het schip. Daarna kreeg hij een eigen kamer toegewezen. 'Je bent belangrijk voor ons,' zei de man, en vertrok, terwijl hij de jongen in zijn kamer achterliet. De deur werd op slot gedaan, en de jongen wist dus dat hij een gevangene was. Maar goed, was dit kwaad bedoeld of om hem ergens tegen te beschermen. In zijn kamer stond een grote botanische computer. De energieen waardoor deze computer werkte waren van de zwarte zon. Elke boomenergie was een bepaalde laserstraal van de zwarte zon, en tezamen vormden ze letters op het scherm. Via een keyboard kon de jongen boodschappen intypen, en spreken met bomen. Maar snel kreeg de jongen last van zijn hoofd en ging op bed liggen. Na een tijdje ging er een zoemend alarm aan. De man deed de kamerdeur open en rende naar de jongen toe. 'Maak je klaar,' zei de man, 'we gaan naar de zwarte zon. Je zult een speciaal pak aan moeten doen dat in de kast ligt om bestand te kunnen zijn tegen de straling.' De jongen had een bepaalde tijd om het pak aan te doen. Het pak voelde erg dik en zacht aan, als dikke vla, en de jongen kon er goed in bewegen.

Na een tijdje moesten ze uitstappen. Eerst moesten ze door een lange tunnel heenlopen, en toen kwamen ze in een hal terecht waar een kanaal was met vreemde stromen energie. Ze waren in een ingebouwde capsule gekomen binnenin de zwarte zon, in de kern. Het was een grote capsule. De jongen zag een heleboel wezens in pakken lopen, en liep achter ze aan. Langs de kanten van het kanaal waren stroken waarop je kon lopen, met wat deuren aan de zijkant. De wezens liepen door de deuren heen, en ook de jongen ging door een deur heen. Hij

moest over platen lopen die allerlei energie-patronen hadden, en zodra hij erop stapte voelde hij rare dingen door zijn lichaam schieten, en door zijn mond, en kon hij heel diep inhalen. Zijn bewegingen werden scherper en sneller, en veel geconcentreerder, en alles werd zachter en zachter. Weer schrok de jongen wakker. De man stond voor hem. 'Door van droom tot droom te gaan, en van ontwaking tot ontwaking verplaats je jezelf. Dit is hoe bomen leven,' vertelde de man. Ze waren nu heel diep in de kern van de zwarte zon. De jongen had nog steeds z'n pak aan, maar dit had nu een andere kleur. Aan groot apparaat hing boven hem, en sneed een cirkel in zijn pak. Snel vergaderde zich een enorme hitte op het gat, en ineens plopte de lever van de jongen omhoog als gebraden. Veel druk ging van het hoofd van de jongen af, en het leek wel alsof hij nieuwe dingen kon ruiken. Alsof hij de zee kon ruiken en allerlei overheerlijke zonne-olien en zeeparfums. Een soort sap droop er uit het apparaat en ging door de cirkel naarbinnen. 'Dit is belangrijk om nog dieper in de zwarte zonnenkern te kunnen.' zei de man. 'Dit sap zal er voor zorgen dat je niet inwendig geroosterd zult worden.' Weer kwam het apparaat dichtbij en schoot een nauwsluitende deksel over het gat heen en een stangetje begon er op te tikken. Een hol geluid kwam eruit voort, en de plank waar de jongen op lag begon vooruit te schuiven, terwijl de man ook op de plank sprong. De plank ging door een gat, en werd iets groter, totdat het een soort vlot was, en toen bevonden ze zich op een gigantische zee van dik stromende energieen. Dit waren de pure boomenergie-bronnen, oftewel de zwarte zonne-energieen.

Na een tijdje kwamen ze met het vlot in een zaal, terwijl de jongen weer voelde alsof hij duizend keer heel snel achter elkaar wakker werd. Het was een soort vergaderzaal. Mannen zaten hoog in capsules, en een grote dobbelsteen lag op een grote wijde tafel in het midden van de kring. Ook de man en de jongen kregen een capsule. Een andere man drukte op een knop, en de dobbelsteen begon te draaien. terwijl de dobbelsteen draaide kreeg de jongen vreemde gevoelens die hij niet kon thuisbrengen. De man naast hem vertelde dat de dobbelsteen de stem was van de verborgen boom, de zwarte boom, die zelfs voor de bomen hier verborgen was. Omdat ze geloofden dat het verborgene de toekomst was, en het pad dat ze moesten gaan, lieten ze de dobbelsteen draaien om de koers te bepalen. Het verborgene was voor hen de horizon met geheimenissen en wijsheid waar zij niets van wisten. Om de beurt drukten ze op een knop in de capsule, en ook de jongen moest zijn knop indrukken. Alle uitkomsten werden op een groot scherm genoteerd. Het was een vreemd alfabet. Het was het alfabet waarmee de zwarte boom sprak. Plotseling kwam er zwarte bliksem tevoorschijn, en de dobbelsteen spatte uit elkaar. Een enorm monster kwam tevoorschijn als een zwarte draak, maar het was een plant of struik. Een licht ging aan in één van de capsules, en dat licht begon heel snel over de capsules heen te gaan. Een man naast de jongen zei dat waar het licht zou stoppen die capsule zou meegaan met de zwarte drakenstruik, maar niemand wist naartoe. Geen enkele capsule was ooit teruggekeerd. Velen geloofden dat de zwarte drakenstruik de capsule mee zou nemen naar de zwarte boom. Bang waren ze niet, maar de jongen was wel een beetje bang. En tot zijn schrik stopte het licht in zijn capsule. Iedereen riep : 'Jij bent de uitverkorene,' terwijl niemand dus wist wat dat zou betekenen. De jongen verdween met de capsule in het gat, terwijl de drakenstruik om hem heen bewoog. De jongen wilde wel dat de man met hem mee zou gaan, maar hij was de enige in deze capsule, en er kon maar één capsule mee. Weer leek het alsof de jongen heel snel miljoen keer wakker werd, en hij voelde zich heel licht worden. Vanuit de verte werd er geroepen : 'Hij komt aan tot de diepere kernen van de zwarte zon, dichtbij de zwarte boom, dichter en dichter.' Het leek op een vrouwenstem, maar de jongen wist het niet zeker. In de verte zag hij een woestijn die voor zijn ogen bewoog, met bijna een spiegelend oppervlak. Op die woestijn stond een geribbelde zwarte boom, terwijl het leek alsof de capsule over de drakenstruik gleed. In de verte vlakbij de

boom zag hij wat zwarte honden spelen. De rillingen liepen over hem heen. Als ze hem maar geen kwaad zouden doen.

Bij de zwarte boom aangekomen merkte hij dat deze gewoon kon bewegen en praten. Van dichtbij leek de boom net op een lichaam, een lang, slank lichaam. Opeens leek het alsof er iets om hem heen brak, en leek het alsof hij in de diepte viel, maar de zwarte boom stond nog steeds voor hem, en kwam steeds dichterbij. 'Ik heb je nodig,' zei de zwarte boom. 'de zwarte zon staat op uitsterven. Als de vlam dooft, dan gaan we er allemaal aan. De heks Sausibir van de boze zon genaamd Misfamen is onze vijand. Als zij er in zal slagen de groene staaf te vinden dan ... dan ...' En toen herinnerde de jongen zijn dromen weer. Ja, dit kende hij. 'Ik heb je nodig,' echoode het door het hoofd van de jongen. Maar de jongen was ver weg in zijn herinnering. Het leek wel alsof al zijn oude dromen weer werden afgespeeld. Toen de jongen wakker werd wist hij direkt wat er was gebeurd. Hij had een gevaarlijke soort drugs gebruikt, waardoor hij al deze vreemde dromen had gehad, waarin hij iemand anders was, en wat leek alsof het jaren en jaren duurde. Er was slechts één nacht voorbij. Zijn vriendin lag naast hem. Ze sliep nog. De jongen kon zich herinneren dat hij de drugs voor het slapen gaan had ingenomen. Ze zeiden dat je er zo lekker van kon slapen en er goed 'high' van kon worden. Gelukkig was het geen slechte trip geweest, maar toch vroeg de jongen zich af of hij er mee door moest gaan. Het stond nog steeds bekend als gevaarlijk, en voor de jongen was het eigenlijk een experiment. Zijn vriendin had het ook ingenomen. Het zou hem benieuwen wat zij allemaal mee had gemaakt. Hij draaide zich naar haar toe. Misschien moest hij haar wel verlossen. Heel zacht begon hij tegen haar te fluisteren : 'Alles is okay, alles is goed, je bent bij mij. Je bent veilig.' Plotseling werd het meisje wakker en omhelsde hem heel stevig. 'Houd me vast,' rilde ze, 'laat me niet meer teruggaan, er is overal vuur.' Maar weer viel het meisje in slaap, en de jongen wist nu dat het ernst was. De drugs was gemaakt van bessen van een vreemdsoortige plant, en ze konden het beter maar niet gebruiken. Weer begon hij zachtjes tegen haar te fluisteren, en hij aaide haar heel zacht. Na een tijdje werd het meisje weer wakker, en schreeuwde : 'Blijf van me af, wie ben je ? Wie denk je wel niet dat je bent.' Ze ging rechtop zitten en begon hem te slaan, terwijl de jongen haar probeerde te kalmeren. Na een tijdje was het meisje bij positieven. Samen zaten ze rechtop in bed. De jongen had wat water gehaald voor zijn vriendin. Toen ze haar verhaal vertelde leek het erg veel op het verhaal van de jongen.

Plotseling werd de jongen weer wakker. Hij wist dat er wat aan de hand was. Hij keek in de ogen van een indiaan die hem een tros vreemde planten en bessen voor zijn neus hield. Hij kon zich niet bewegen. 'Wij zullen je moeten offeren voor onze goden,' zei de indiaan. De indiaan sprak de taal van de jongen. 'Onze goden zijn bomen, en zij zijn jaloers op jullie organen, die zij niet hebben. Toen sneed de indiaan de lever en het hart uit de jongen. De jongen schreeuwde, maar het deed hem nauwelijks pijn. Wat gebeurde er toch ? De indiaan rees het hart en de lever op tot de hemel, en sprak : 'Oh zwarte zon, brenger van al het leven, gij die de bomen draagt, aanvaard dit offer, en spreek weer.' Plotseling pakte de indiaan een fakkel. Stak dit aan bij het dichtsbijzijnde vuur en stak de jongen aan. Weer voelde de jongen bijna niets. Het was alsof hij er immuun voor was. De indiaan was zichtbaar geshokkeerd, want de jongen was nog steeds bij positieven en verschroeide niet. De indiaan boog neer in het zand en sprak : 'Gij moet wel de gezondene zijn van de zwarte zon of de zwarte maan, gij bent de god der bomen, de god van ons oerwoud. Heb genade met ons, oh God van de zwarte zon.' En vele malen boog de indiaan zich in het stof. De jongen wist dat hij elk moment weer wakker kon worden. Waren dit alleen maar schijn-realiteiten in zijn hoofd ? Het leken wel de laagjes van zijn ziel die elk een onafhankelijk leven leiden, en het leek wel alsof ze nu in razend tempo bij elkaar kwamen. De indiaan maakte de jongen los. De jongen had geen hart

en lever meer, en hij voelde zich als een slang. De indiaan nam hem mee naar zijn stam, en riep : 'De god der zwarte zon is gekomen, buigt allen voor hem neer.' Vanuit alle kanten kwamen indianen die zich voor hem neer storten, en begonnen te bidden en te weeklagen. Ze waren allemaal bang dat de god van de zwarte zon hen zou straffen. De jongen wist niet goed waar hij in terecht was gekomen. Er werd hem allerlei voedsel aangeboden. De jongen hoopte maar dat hij snel weer wakker zou worden.

Was hij de gevangene van een drug ? Was hij geestesziek, of was misschien alles en iedereen geestesziek ? En wat was geestesziekte eigenlijk ? Was het gewoon één van de patronen van ervaring, of was het een gevaarlijk iets dat hoe dan ook uitgebannen moest worden. Maar door wie ? En wie zei hem dat dat dan realiteit zou zijn ? Wat was nou de echte realiteit ? Of was de realiteit een opsomming van hoe je dingen beleefde ? Dan had iedereen dus een andere realiteit. Waar moest hij naartoe ? Was hij dood ? Of was hij juist echt tot leven gekomen ? Niemand wist het, en niemand kon het hem vertellen.

Hoofdstuk 5. Geb

Hij probeerde zich te herinneren of hij drugs had gebruikt. Ja, hij had dat gedaan, maar dat bleek een droom te zijn. En het was een droom in een droom, als een vreemd wezen, een vreemde boom met vele ringen, met vele vertakkingen. Als een octopus-boom was het, als een draaiend iets wat telkens terugkwam. Of was hij misschien echt het slachtoffer van experimenten van buitenaardse wezens ? Of was het juist zijn ontsnapping. Waren zij zijn redders ? Hij wist het niet, en hij vond het eng, maar tegelijkertijd kwam alles steeds meer op de achtergrond, om plaats te maken voor een verlichting ... Was dit de ware groene verlichting ? Dat hij altijd weer kon ontsnappen in een andere droom. Iets was nooit echt helemaal waar, en dat begon hij steeds meer te beseffen ... alles was niets dan een hardnekkige droom ... zo hardnekkig, dat hij in zo'n droom wel tachtig tot negentig jaar zou kunnen worden, met allerlei vertrouwelijke gezichten ... met iets dat hij 'familie' zou kunnen noemen. De delen van de familie waren de hardnekkigste elementen uit die chronische droom, want die delen bleven bij je, ook al koos je ervoor om ze stukje bij beetje te verwijderen uit je leven. Je kon wel uit je familie gaan, maar hoe kreeg je je familie uit je weg. Het waren diepe littekenen, als tatoeages van bomen. Ze waren te diep in je geworteld om je diepere betekenissen te laten zien. Het waren de verborgen delen van je ziel, waar je een eigen voorstelling van had gemaakt ... de bomen ...

Hard werd er op tafel geslagen. Een jongen was tijdens een saaie les in slaap gevallen. De onderwijzer stond voor hem. Wat had hij toch vreemd gedroomd. De onderwijzer had les gegeven over bomen. 'Doe vooral geen moeite om op te letten,' zei de leraar sarcastisch. De kinderen om hem heen grinnikten en staarden de slaperige jongen aan. 'Ach wat,' zei de jongen. 'moet ik nog geloven dat je echt bent. Je bent zelf een boom.' De kinderen lachten, maar de leraar werd erg boos. 'Zeg als je zo door gaat met je praatjes, dan stuur ik je naar de direkteur.' De jongen trok een onverschillig gezicht. 'Laat hem ook maar komen. Hij is ook één van de vele bomen,' zei de jongen. De jongen was voor niets en niemand bang, omdat hij wist dat hij elk moment ook van deze droom kon ontwaken. Maar wat als de droom chronisch zou zijn, en hij in deze situatie tachtig of negentig jaar oud moest worden ? Daar was de jongen toch ook wel een beetje bang voor, maar meestal duurden de dromen bij hem korter.

Het was alsof er een octopus-boom in hem leefde, een dromenboom. Alles was zo fragmentarisch. En daar werd weer iemand wakker. Het leek wel alsof de dromen van identiteit verwisselden. Het was alsof de octopusplant weer bezig was.

Hahahaha, schreeuwde de octopus-plant. Ja, ik ben het weer. Ik ben weer aan de wandel. Maar plotseling werd de octopus-plant afgeschoten. Een lange man met een geweer stond bij het lijk, en nam het tussen zijn vingers en trok het omhoog. Naast de man stond een zwarte hond. Het was een vleesetende plant. Het vlees van zielen. Het was een zielen-eter. De lange man zou het meenemen naar zijn laboratorium om het op te zetten. De man heette Geb. Hij had een groenachtige huid. Hij nam het leven niet serieus. Hij wist dat hij zo weer wakker kon worden, en dat dan alles anders bleek te zijn. Ze hadden misschien wel met miljoenen van die octopusplanten te maken. En hoeveel leefden er wel niet binnenin bij hemzelf ? Hij wist het niet, en maakte zich er niet te druk om. Toen hij bijna bij z'n laboratorium was aangekomen werd hij aangevallen door een vliegenplant. De plant had hele dikke vleugels en leek op een vlieg. Snel spoot de plant spul af op Geb, en Geb voelde dat zijn denken en zijn bewegingen heel traag werden. Hij wist dat als hij hier niets aan zou doen, dan zou hij in slaap vallen, en dan zou de vliegenplant hem eten. Strompelend liep hij zijn laboratorium binnen, en maakte snel een flesje open, en dronk het op. Snel kon hij zich weer goed bewegen, pakte zijn geweer en schoot de vliegenplant af, die inmiddels al op z'n schouder zat. Het was groen spul uit een flesje dat de Groene Verlichting heette. De man keek naar buiten. De zon was zwart. Het was donker. Grinnikend liep hij naar binnen. In een ketel begon hij te roeren, en er lag daar allerlei groene vloeistof in, als een soort slijm. Met een kwastje begon hij de groene vloeistof te smeren over een soort roostertje of raamwerk, en draaide het om, om ook de onderkant in te smeren. Vanuit een kast haalde hij een groen staafje dat licht glom en begon dat over het besmeerde roostertje of raamwerk te strijken. Vanuit het rooster kwamen groene gelei-achtige schepselen tevoorschijn. Dit was het staafje dat de heks Sausibir ook wilde hebben. De gelei-achtige wezens gingen naar buiten en begonnen alle bomen, planten en struiken te omhullen, en dezen begonnen tot leven te komen. Ze waren op weg om alle plantaardigen vrij te zetten. De grond begon meer en meer in groene blubber te veranderen, dat hier en daar begon op te drogen. Het was een geslaagde dag.

Pats. Iemand werd wakker, en nog iemand anders werd wakker. Wat hadden ze allemaal vreemd gedroomd. Buiten renden er zwarte honden op straat. Ze blaften hard. Vandaag zouden er verkiezingen zijn. Het spande eigenlijk om twee partijen. De Partij van de Groene Verlichting, de PGV, of de Zwarte Groenen, de ZG. Het was een drukke week geweest met campagnes, en nu was het dan zover.

Einde

De Korachs-kinderen

Theologische Thriller

Een jonge wetenschapper is gefascineerd door de apocalyptiek van de Bijbel. Hij heeft een voorliefde voor vreemde verhalen, maar kan deze liefde niet goed verklaren. Hij is verder ongelovig, atheistisch, maar de verhalen in de Bijbel hebben hem altijd gefascineerd.

Tijdens een reis die hij voor zijn werk moet maken, komt hij een theoloog tegen, die naast hem zit in het vliegtuig. Hij raakt met deze man in diepe gesprekken. De theoloog probeert hem de werkelijkheid van deze verhalen te laten zien, maar de wetenschapper probeert de verhalen wetenschappelijk en zakelijk weg te redeneren. Ze besluiten verder met elkaar op te trekken.

Die nacht heeft de jonge wetenschapper een droom. Hij droomt dat hij langs een eenzaam moeras loopt en plotseling door een hand in de diepte wordt getrokken. Als hij later de droom aan de theoloog vertelt, probeert deze de droom te gebruiken om de wetenschapper te overtuigen van de strijd waarin deze zich bevindt. Een strijd tussen geloven en niet geloven. Maar de wetenschapper probeert de droom weg te redeneren als een zuiver toeval, een hersenspinsel.

De nacht erna heeft hij weer een droom, waarin een arend met vreemd draaiende gele ogen zijn kamer bezoekt, waarna kinderen met dezelfde soort ogen zijn kamer binnenkomen. Zij dragen ijzeren pinnen in hun hand, en komen steeds dichterbij, terwijl hij zich niet meer kan bewegen. Deze kinderen werden genoemd : de Korachs-kinderen.

Hoofdstuk 1. De Ontmoeting

Het is druk op straat. De auto's lijken allemaal haast te hebben. Peter de Hoorn, een jonge wetenschapper, loopt haastig naar zijn eigen auto die hij ergens voor een winkel geparkeerd heeft.

Als hij thuis komt kust hij zijn vrouw en gaat op de bank liggen. Het was druk op z'n werk. Zijn baas was weer in een dramatische bui, en zijn collega's waren ook al niet makkelijk in de omgang. Alsof er iets in de lucht hing waar hij maar geen vat op kon krijgen. Apocalyptische boeken liggen er op de tafel. Als kind zijnde fascineerden deze verhalen hem al. Hij was niet gelovig opgevoed, maar zijn buurmeisje had hem eens een boekje over "Openbaring" gegeven. Voor hem was het niet meer dan een spannend ridderverhaal.

"Schat, ik heb de boeken eens doorgebladerd, maar ik kan er niet veel mee," zegt zijn vrouw lacherig. Zij intereseert zich er helemaal niet voor, maar wilde toch wel eens weten waar haar man nu al zo'n lange tijd mee bezig was.

Morgen zou hij op reis gaan voor drie maanden. Hij moet enkele belangrijke zaken regelen voor het werk.

"Peter, word wakker, het is al zes uur." Zijn vrouw wekt hem voor de reis die hij gaat maken. Binnen korte tijd staan ze samen op het vliegveld en zijn vrouw zwaait hem uit. Ze zullen elkaar missen.

In het vliegtuig aangekomen gaat hij naast een wat oudere man zitten. Het blijkt een theoloog te zijn. De mannen raken al snel met elkaar in diepe gesprekken. "Nee, ik vind dat je best zonder kerk kunt geloven," zegt de theoloog. Peter is atheist. Hij vindt de Bijbel niet meer dan een spannend jongensboek. "Hoe weet je dat God niet bestaat ?" vraagt de theoloog. "Ik heb hem nog nooit gezien," zegt Peter. "En al zou ik hem zien, dan zou ik nog niet in hem geloven. Ik vind dat Hij afschuwelijke dingen op Zijn geweten heeft."

"Zoals ?" vraagt de theoloog weer. "Nou, zoals oorlogen, rampen, en andere kwalijke zaken. De Bijbel laat duidelijk zien dat Hij daar een flinke vuist in heeft."

"Ach ja," vervolgt de theoloog, "de aarde is slecht."

"Maar Hij dan, de hoofdpersoon van de Bijbel, is dat dan zo'n lekker ventje ?" vraagt Peter minachtend. "Het is een schurk, en als ik hem tegen zou komen, zou ik hem een knal verkopen. Maar de schrijver van de Bijbel, die zou ik wel eens willen ontmoeten. Een fantastische kerel moet dat wezen, een fantast, een Jules Verne, een ..."

"Nee," zegt de theoloog verontwaardigd maar sussend, "de Bijbel is niet door een man geschreven, maar door meerdere mannen, die allemaal werden geleid door de Heilige Geest van God. Ze hadden die informatie niet van henzelf ... Ze hadden hoogstens een soort van natuurlijke kennis van achtergronden en gebeurtenissen, maar die werden door Gods Geest gerangschikt, in keurige volgorde en in keurige bewoordingen. U ziet het echt verkeerd dat de Bijbel door een man werd geschreven."

"Nou," zegt Peter enthousiast,"dan zou ik al die mannen wel eens willen ontmoeten, al die pennenmeesters, want ze hebben me sinds kind af aan kostelijk geamuseerd." De theoloog begint te grinniken. Ze hebben beiden in ieder geval veel te bepraten. Twee liefhebbers van het grote boek der aarde.

Na lange tijd komt het vliegtuig op de bestemming. De twee mannen besluiten contact met elkaar te houden. Ze staan aangemeld voor hetzelfde hotel.

Die nacht heeft Peter een droom, een afschuwelijke droom, waarin hij langs een moeras loopt en plotseling door een onzichtbare hand naar het moeras wordt getrokken. Met geen mogelijkheid kan hij zich er tegen verzetten. Terwijl hij dichter bij het moeras komt, begint de hand zichtbaar te worden. Het is een zwarte handschoen met een gouden ring die hem in de dieptes van het moeras trekt. Dan word hij wakker, badend in het zweet.

De ochtend na de droom vertelt hij het tafereel aan de theoloog. Deze begint diep te peinzen en oppert voorzichtig de mogelijkheid dat er wel eens een strijd in hem aanwezig kan zijn tussen wel geloven en niet geloven.

"Oh nee," zegt Peter hard, "geen denken aan. Ik weet wat ik wil, en ik weet wat ik denk, en ben daar tamelijk zeker van."

"Nou," zegt de theoloog, "dat weet ik nog niet zo net. De droom lijkt mij heel duidelijk te wijzen op een strijd tussen licht en duisternis om jouw ziel."

"Wat ?" roept Peter verontwaardigd maar lacherig, "je wil me toch niet vertellen dat jij ook al in een hemel en een hel gelooft ?"

"Dat wil ik je eigenlijk wel vertellen," zegt de theoloog. "Ik ben niet een soort Jehovah-getuige die dreigend rondloopt, maar als de mogelijkheid er ligt wil ik nog wel eens van wal steken. Ik denk, nee, ik weet zeker, dat er een vijand is die jou wil wegsleuren van een mogelijk "geloven" in de verhalen die jou altijd zo aanspraken. Dat noem ik : de strijd tussen goed en kwaad."

"Nee, dat lijkt me sterk," zegt Peter weer, "ik geloof dat het meer een onbewust hersenspinsel van me was die even in mijn bewustzijn omhoog kwam. Ik geloof meer in toeval dan in een regerende hand boven hulpeloze hoofdjes. Mij niet gezien. Ik ben een positief denker, sinds kind af aan. Dat is mij met de paplepel ingegoten. Zelfvertrouwen, diplomatieke vaardigheden en een gezonde dosis ambitie zijn voor mij de sleutelwoorden van mijn leven. Ik wil graag zelf het roer in handen blijven houden."

"Hoe denk je dan over de duivel ?" vraagt de theoloog weer. "De duivel ? Ach, dat is een verzinsel van bange mensen, van mensen die in alles en iedereen een bedreiging zien. Ik weet dat de maatschappij hard kan zijn, maar ik wil positief blijven denken, meedenken met het geheel, en niet een of ander verzonnen figuur gaan opblazen tot een schurk met universele macht. Het is wel een steengoed verhaal, echt puur entertainment. De antichrist bijvoorbeeld heeft me altijd aangesproken. Niet als geloofwaardige persoon, niet als realiteit, maar als de aartsvijand van de hoofdpersoon. Ik kijk naar dat schouwspel als naar een belangrijke voetbalwedstrijd. Ik juich wanneer ik moet juichen, roep "boe" wanneer ik boe moet roepen, maar verder hecht ik er geen enkele geloofwaardige factor aan vast. Voor mij is het gewoon een spel," vertelt Peter.

Maar het is alweer tijd voor andere zaken. De theoloog heeft enkele belangrijke afspraken, en ook Peter moet aan de slag voor een aantal financiele onderhandelingen.

De nacht daarop heeft Peter weer een droom. Ditmaal is de droom van een zwaarder kaliber. Een arend met ogen in verschillende tinten geel vliegt door een openstaand raam zijn kamer binnen, gaat op een kastje zitten en begint hem aan te staren. Dan beginnen er ineens angstaanjagend schelle deurbellen te rinkelen, dat het lijkt alsof Peters oren knappen. Dan komen er ineens kinderen binnen met dezelfde arendsogen draaiende in hun oogkassen. Ze hebben strakke angstaanjagende blikken en lopen bijna in slowmotion op Peter af, die zich niet meer kan bewegen. Ze hebben lange scherpe ijzeren pinnen in hun handen. Dan hoort Peter een ijselijke schreeuw : Korachs-kinderen ! De schreeuw wordt steeds scheller, en steeds meer stemmen beginnen te schreeuwen, totdat Peter voelt dat alles in hem begint te branden. Is dit de hel ? Hij hoort babies gillen en het is alsof een stel uitgehongerde dieren hem van binnenuit beginnen aan te vreten. Dan wordt hij wakker met een schreeuw.

Helemaal in paniek belt hij de theoloog voor hulp. De theoloog probeert hem tot kalmeren te brengen, en vraagt hem of hij het goed vindt dat hij even bij Peter langskomt. Als hij in Peters hotelkamer binnenkomt zit Peter helemaal ineengedoken. Hij zegt dat zijn borst erg pijn doet. Voorzichtig vraagt Peter aan de theoloog of hij wel eens van de korachs-kinderen heeft gehoord.

De theoloog begint vreemd te kijken. "Ja, dat zijn kinderen van een persoon die opstond tegen Mozes, genaamd Korach. God heeft toen de aarde onder Korach en zijn gehele aanhang en hun families laten scheuren, zodat ze levend in het dodenrijk daalden. Het staat allemaal in Numeri zestien opgetekend. Het is door God verboden om contact te zoeken met dode geesten, maar dode geesten kunnen mensen soms wel lastigvallen."

"Ja, ik ben verschrikkelijk lastiggevallen," hijgt Peter, "ik kan nog steeds moeilijk ademhalen. Ik begin nu toch werkelijk te geloven dat je gelijk hebt."

Het was alsof Peter door deze droom al zijn zelfvertrouwen had verloren. Hij probeerde zijn werk weer op te pakken, maar alles ging zeer moeizaam.

De nacht erna had Peter weer een droom. Hij zag de arend vliegen boven een zee van vuur. Hij zag een naam boven de zee verschijnen : Levael. Vanuit de zee kwamen angstaanjagende figuren opzetten met zwaarden van vuur. Ze hadden maar een oog. Toen hoorde hij een stem zeggen : "Dit zijn de kinderen van Jabes, levende onder de bedreiging van de geest van Nachas, genaamd Levael. Hun rechterogen werden uitgerukt, waardoor ze gehandicapt ter wereld kwamen." Toen zag hij zijn gehandicapte nichtje waar hij als kind zijnde altijd erg bang voor was. Hij zag haar gillen en schreeuwen in vlammen. Hij wilde haar helpen maar hij merkte dat hij het niet kon. Levael de arend probeerde zijn rechteroog weg te pikken.

Hij werd wakker, helemaal beduusd en verward, alsof hij niet meer helder kon denken. "Wat is er toch allemaal aan de hand ?" dacht hij. Die ochtend kwam de theoloog weer bij hem, en Peter vertelde hem de droom. "Weer vanuit de Bijbel," zegt de theoloog. Het volk van Jabes stond onder bedreiging van de Ammoniet Nachas die een verbond met hen wilde sluiten op voorwaarde dat hij hun rechteroog zou uitsteken, en dat als smaad op het gehele volk Israel leggen. Uiteindelijk heeft Saul Jabes verlost. Het is opgetekend in I Samuel 11. Peter was er slecht aan toe. Hij had moeilijkheden met spreken en ademen, en was erg duizelig.

"We moeten hulp gaan zoeken voor jou, want je staat duidelijk onder schot. Ik heb een vriend hier in de buurt die exorcist is. Laten we hem om hulp vragen," oppert de theoloog.

Gezamenlijk trekken ze op naar de exorcist. Peters verhaal horende raakt de exorcist erg opgewonden. "Deze geest heeft veel onder zijn klauwen. Je bent bezocht door een generaal van de duisternis," zegt de exorcist. "Hij word voor vele doeleinden uitgezonden. Hij word ook wel "de ogen-eter" genoemd. Hij pikt bij mensen wijsheid en inzicht weg, zodat ze elkaar niet meer begrijpen. Hierdoor ontstaan bittere harten, ruzies en zelfs oorlogen. Het is alsof deze mensen maar een oog hebben, net zoals in jouw droom."

"Ja, maar wat moet ik daarmee ?" vraagt Peter. "Blijkbaar heeft God iets met je voor," oppert de exorcist. De theoloog knikt instemmend : "Daar zat ik ook al aan te denken."

Peter was nog steeds onder de indruk van het feit dat hij dingen droomde die in de Bijbel stonden, terwijl hij deze dingen nog nooit had gelezen. Peter kende een aantal verhalen van de Bijbel, maar deze dingen waren totaal nieuw voor hem. De exorcist legde hem uit dat dit profetische gaven waren, die God zowel als teken en als gereedschap geeft. Peters leven stond op z'n kop. Hoe zou zijn vrouw hierop reageren. Peter stelde vele vragen, en het gesprek duurde tot diep in de nacht.

De volgende dag na een aantal zaken te hebben verricht begon Peter de verhalen over Korach en Jabes in de Bijbel te bestuderen. Hij wilde het verband weten tussen de geel-ogige boosaardige Korachs-kinderen en de een-ogige angstaanjagende Jabes-kinderen. Hij las over Korach hoe hij de macht wilde overnemen over het volk middels het opstellen van een vuurpan. Hij las over de verbondsvloek over Jabes, en kwam onder ogen dat machtslustigen nog steeds werkten door eerst het inzicht van de ander proberen weg te branden. Had de hele wereld niet het oog van Jabes ? Onderdrukt door de ogen van Korach ? Hij begon de verbanden te zien. De exorcist vertelde dat Levael de arend de profetische gaven, het oog van de kerk, probeerde weg te eten, zodat hij in macht zou groeien. Het was de Jabes-Vloek waar de kerk onder leefde. Een soort gevangenis, een geestelijke handicap.

Peter begon steeds meer opgewonden te raken. Hij wilde de Levael bevechten ... maar hoe ?

Hoofdstuk 2. De Piraat

De exorcist leidde een kleine kring jonge exorcisten op, en er was nog wel plaats voor Peter in deze klas. Maar Peter kon maar een paar lessen volgen. Zijn reis-verblijf liep bijna ten einde, en ook de theoloog zou weer vertrekken, die ook steeds nieuwsgieriger begon te worden. Als ze weer thuis zouden zijn, zouden ze in eigen land wel op zoek gaan naar iemand die hen op dit gebied zou kunnen helpen. Peter kreeg in ieder geval een aantal boeken mee, die hij en de theoloog zeker zouden lezen.

De theoloog was eerder klaar dan Peter met de nodige werkzaamheden, maar hij beloofde samen met Peter terug te reizen. De theoloog kon Peter vele dingen vertellen, maar alles tot op zekere hoogte, want de theoloog had zich nooit echt in exorcisme verdiept. Hij was meer een man van de theorie in plaats van de praktijk, en zelfs de theorieen op exorcistisch vlak waren hem veelal onbekend. Hij kende de Bijbelse verhalen, enkele gebeurtenissen en leerstellingen van deze tijd, en daar hield het mee op.

Thuisgekomen sloot Peter zich aan bij een charismatische gemeente en de term territoriaal exorcisme begon te vallen. De exorcist in het buitenland had het daar ook al eens over gehad, maar nu werd het weer genoemd. Peter kreeg te horen dat de droom die hij had gehad tot dit vlak behoorde. Iedereen was een en al oor toen Peter zijn verhaal deed. Hij kreeg te horen dat ze hem goed konden gebruiken, dat er nog weinig over het onderwerp aanwezig was. Het was voor velen in die gemeente een aanzet om zich er meer in te verdiepen. Een man in de gemeente wist er verbazingwekkend veel vanaf, maar had altijd min of meer zijn mond erover dichtgehouden. Hij stond in de gemeente bekend als een profeet. Peter vond het wel interessant. De man wist dingen van hem te vertellen die hij nooit kon weten. Langzaam maar zeker begon Peter zich erg thuis te voelen in deze gemeente. Totdat er op een dag iets gebeurde wat hij totaal niet verwachtte.

Iedereen was al naar huis, een uur na de dienst. De voorganger had gezegd dat Peter nog wel even mocht blijven. Peter wilde nog even wat boeken doorbladeren in de hoek van de zaal. Dit werd altijd het boekenhoekje genoemd. Hij had van de voorganger de sleutel gekregen, en het was de bedoeling dat Peter na zijn vertrek de deur zou sluiten en de sleutel naar het huis van de voorganger zou brengen. Peter was op een bank gaan zitten midden in de zaal, en was diep weggezonken in een bepaald boek. Plotseling hoorde hij een enorm lawaai vanaf de preekstoel komen. Hij zag de Levael recht op hem afvliegen in levende lijve. Peter schrok zich wild, en zei : "In Naam van Jezus beveel ik je te gaan, vervloekt dier !" Maar de Levael reageerde niet, en pikte Peter in z'n oog, z'n rechteroog. Hevig bloedend rende hij het gebouw uit, maar vergat de deur op slot te doen. Toen hij bij de voorganger aankwam en zijn verhaal deed wilde de voorganger hem niet geloven. "Peter, je bent gewoon ergens tegen een scherpe punt aangelopen."

Peter moest naar het ziekenhuis en raakte blind aan zijn rechteroog. Nu wist hij dat het menens was. Toen hij na enkele dagen thuiskwam vertelde zijn vrouw dat de gemeente was bestolen en dat ze hem als de dader aanzagen. Hij mocht niet meer terugkomen. Ze waren beiden diep geshockeerd en Peter was woedend. Hij belde de theoloog, die hem wel geloofde. Hij probeerde Peter te kalmeren, alhoewel hij ook diep geshockeerd over hetgeen was gebeurd. "Het lijkt erop dat deze arend zijn terrein niet prijs wil geven, en hij heeft het heel duidelijk op jou gemunt." Er waren verschillende mensen in de gemeente die wel in Peter geloofden, waaronder de profeet. Er kwam een scheuring in die gemeente, en Peter was erg verbitterd geraakt. "Laat je niet verbitteren," hield de profeet hem voor, "want je geloof wordt

nu op de proef gesteld. Dit is allemaal een voorbereiding voor de bediening die je gaat krijgen. Het is je op het lijf getekend als een brandmerk. Pijnlijk en confronterend, maar diep en werkzaam."

Peters vrouw stond ook geheel achter hem. Ze was altijd al zijn stille kracht geweest, maar op een dag kreeg hij de schrik van zijn leven. Er lag een brief van ontslag in de brievenbus. Z'n baas dacht dat hij gek geworden was. Weer een aanval van de Levael. Peter was gebroken, maar dit zag hij als een directe aanwijzing naar zijn toekomende werk : Profeet en Territoriaal Exorcist. Hij verloor veel vrienden door deze strakke richting en zelfs familie, maar een klein groepje bleef om hem heenstaan.

Wat was er veel veranderd in korte tijd. Hij liep nu zelfs met een zwart kapje voor zijn blinde rechteroog. In de buurt werd hij "de piraat" genoemd.

Eens in de zoveel tijd kwam het kleine groepje bij elkaar om dingen te bespreken. De profetische vriend van Peter was een rots in de branding. Hij leerde Peter veel over de valstrikken van het geloof. Hij vertelde dat Peter door veel vuren heen zou moeten om gezuiverd en voorbereid te worden, en dat hij de Levael niet zomaar zou kunnen verslaan. Het zou een gevecht worden op leven en dood. Ook vertelde hij Peter dat hij meer vrienden zou verliezen, en dat er dorre periodes voor Peter zouden aanbreken op profetisch gebied, om de gave te testen en te verdiepen. Peter begon te beseffen dat een profeet eerst het tegenovergestelde van profetie zou moeten ontmoeten en overwinnen om vervolgens zuivere, overvloedige profetie te kunnen binnentreden. Hij zou daarom extra op zijn hoede moeten zijn voor misleiding, want de Levael zou deze vurige pijlen zeker op hem afsturen. Het zou een zware geestelijke reis voor Peter worden, maar als hij vol zou houden zou overwinning zijn deel zijn, werd er gezegd.

Peter leerde dat de kinderen van Jabes niet per definitie slecht waren, maar soms ook gewoon slachtoffers van een vloek. Door deze stelling bleef hij aanvallen van onterechte bitterheid wederstaan. Hij besefte ook dat hij zelf een kind van Jabes was, met een oog, in het gevaar van misleiding en onbegrip. De Heer gaf hem het beeld van de piraat die door een oog te missen het andere oog extra trainde en dat oog kon sterker en scherper worden dan twee ogen bij elkaar. Dit was de weg die elke profeet diende te bewandelen. Het zaadje moest eerst sterven voordat het een boom in vaste grond kon worden.

Op een nacht had Peter een droom dat hij duizend ogen had. Hij lachte, maakte plezier, maar plotseling kwamen de Korachs-kinderen om al deze ogen stuk te prikken. Peter had het gevoel dat hij vele ogen van binnen had die vele gebieden in zijn leven representeerden. Hij zou gezaaid worden op Gods akker.

Peter begon dromen te krijgen voor andere gemeentes, maar hij werd veelal afgewezen en bespot. Men wilde zijn boodschappen niet horen. De Jabes-kinderen

keerden zich veelal tegen hem. De profeet en de theoloog gingen veelal met hem mee, als hij voorgangers bezocht, maar hij kreeg vaak geen doorgang. De dromen begonnen wilder te worden, en steeds vaker begon Peter over apocalyptische taferelen te dromen. Zijn boodschappen kregen steeds meer een waarschuwend karakter, en gemeentes begonnen bang voor hem te worden. Zijn profetieen waren raak.

Maar na een golf van boodschappen en actie begon Peter op droge terreinen te komen. De dromen en vizioenen werden vager, en tenslotte had hij het gevoel dat hij afgeweken was. Hij had houvast aan de profeet en de theoloog die hem vertelden dat afzondering en droogte zo belangrijk waren. "De hemel is omringd door woestijnen," zei de theoloog altijd.

Plotseling werd Peters vrouw ernstig ziek, en de dokters konden niets voor haar doen. Peter en de mensen die om hem heenstonden baden tegen de klok in, maar het leek wel alsof de hemel gesloten bleef. Op een avond kreeg de profeet een woord van de Heer dat ze spoedig zou worden weggenomen, binnen de drie dagen. En zo gebeurde het. God nam haar tot zich op de tweede dag na de profetie. Peter was gebroken, en al degenen die om hem heenstonden. Het was een bijzondere vrouw, en niemand begreep hoe de Heer zoiets kon doen. De profeet sprak : "Ze wordt voor veel dingen behoed."

Peter begint boeken te schrijven over het geloof, maar hij merkt dat iets hem probeert tegen te houden. Op een avond komt de profeet bij hem, met een ernstig gezicht. "Peter, ik moet je iets vertellen. Je vrouw zou nooit achter je kunnen staan als ze zou weten wat je binnen een paar dagen zou doen." Peter kijkt hem verbaasd aan. "Wat bedoel je ?"

De profeet gaat vervolgens verder : "Je vrouw was een bijzondere vrouw, maar ze was op vele dingen niet ingesteld. Ze is op tijd weggenomen, want ze zou dit niet kunnen verwerken."

"Wat bedoel je met "dit" ...Wat gaat er gebeuren ?" vraagt Peter een beetje zenuwachtig.

"Je gaat dromen krijgen, Peter, die je in vuur en vlam zullen zetten. Je huilt om de zonde en vuiligheid van deze tijd, hoe mensen elkaar en God behandelen. Het Vuur van de Heilige Geest gaat je in brand zetten, en je handen zullen zo branden dat alles wat je aanraakt in brand zal gaan staan. Het zal een zuiverend vuur zijn, de voorbode van Gods Koninkrijk," zegt de profeet.

"Goede genade," dacht Peter bij zichzelf, "als dit echt waar is, ...hoe zal dat gaan gebeuren ?"

"Wanneer gaat het gebeuren ?" vraagt Peter .. "Vannacht al," zegt de profeet. "De mantel van Mozes zal met druisende kracht over je komen."

Die nacht kreeg Peter een droom, weer over de Jabes-kinderen die in kerken en organisaties terecht kwamen, en door traditionele rituelen kwamen ze onder de macht van een systeem, onder de verbondsvloek, wat hun verstand, hun oog, wegvrat. Ze werden ten dele blind. Die ogen werden geofferd aan een grote ketel, een vuurpan, genaamd de Korachsketel. De Korachs-kinderen aten hiervan en kregen profetische gele arendsogen waardoor ze veel macht bezaten. Deze geesten werkten door vele machtswellustige leiders van de charismatische beweging. De Jabeskinderen werden steeds meer de marionetten van een hogere macht.

Peter kende vele machtswellustige charismatische leiders. Door zoveel geld te vragen bonden ze hun volgelingen stapsgewijs aan de ketel van het Nachas-verbond, of door vreemde vormen van lidmaatschappen en andere uiterlijke tekens en rituelen.

Opeens midden in de droom begonnen zachte bellen te rinkelen, en het was alsof Peter in brand stond. Z'n hele lichaam begon te schudden en te transpireren. Hij werd gebonden in de Heilige Geest, en hij voelde zich heel zwaar worden. "Oh God," dacht hij ..."wat is dit ?" Zijn handen begonnen te tintelen en te branden. Hij wist dat wanneer hij zijn handen ergens op zou leggen, het zou kunnen wegsmelten. Hij merkte dat hij de hitte kon bepalen met zijn oog. Hij merkte dat hij nu langzaam wakker begon te worden, en Hij hoorde nu de stem van God zo helder als de donder. God zei : "Ik zal je laten zien wat dit voor een vuur is. Leg je handen op die oude kapotte koelkast in de schuur."

Peter liep naar de schuur om vervolgens zijn handen op de oude koelkast te leggen. Het begon onder zijn handen in de brand te staan en smolt weg. Dit was niet zomaar vuur. Dit was het Vuur van de Heilige Geest in Levende Lijve. Peter bracht de rest van de nacht door om te bemerken hoe dit vuur zich in hem verspreidde. Hij bemerkte dat er niet veel tegen dit vuur opgewassen zou zijn. Het was inmiddels zondag-ochtend. God had hem opgedragen naar een bepaalde gemeente te gaan waar er nogal veel hang naar geld en goederen was.

Tijdens de preek stond Peter op en begon in het gangpad te staan. De voorganger gebood hem te gaan zitten, maar Peter gebood hem te gaan zitten. "Dat doe ik niet, gaat u alstublieft zitten," vervolgde de voorganger. Maar Peter sprak rustig, als u niet stopt met uw geld-preken dan zult u binnen vijf minuten in vuur geraken. Peter ging weer zitten, en de voorganger ging rustig door met zijn preek over geld. Binnen vijf minuten stond de voorganger in de brand, terwijl de mensen in paniek raakten. Sommigen begonnen hem te vervloeken zeggende dat hij de antichrist was. Maar het was Peter menens. Hij sprak dat allen die wilden blijven leven en op wilden houden met geldzuchtige verhalen naast hem moesten komen staan, de rest zou verzengd worden door vuur. "Dit is niet bijbels !" riep iemand. "Oh nee ? Wat

deed Mozes dan allemaal ?" riep Peter. Sommigen probeerden weg te rennen door de deur, maar het vuur begon hen al te verteren. Mensen begonnen te gillen, en sommigen klampten hem aan. De ouderlingen begonnen te roepen : "Luister niet naar hem ! God zal onze hulp zijn ! Hij is de valse profeet !" De keuzes werden snel gemaakt en een grote groep werd in een oogwenk in lichterlaaie gezet.

Een paar mensen bleven over, en Peter sprak : "Kom mee, uit het gebouw, want God gaat het gebouw in as leggen." Trillend liepen ze met hem mee naar buiten en in een oogwenk was het gebouw tot as verpulverd door Gods Kracht.

Inmiddels was de politie en de brandweer eraan te pas gekomen, maar Peter trok een strak gezicht en zei : "Heren, er valt niets meer te blussen."

"U staat onder arrest," opperde een politie-agent ...

Peter deed net alsof hij hem niet hoorde en liep verder, de mensen in huilen achterlatend. De politie-agenten begonnen met de mensen te praten. "Je kunt maar beter van hem afblijven," sprak er een, "want hij zet je zo in de brand."

Het incident bereikte al gauw de krantekoppen, en ook op het nieuws werd er melding van gemaakt. Velen geloofden het niet, en dachten dat het gewoon een brand-ongeluk was, en al snel leefde men gewoon door alsof er niets aan de hand was.

Hoofdstuk 3. Jacht naar de Schatkamer

Peter vond troost bij zijn vrienden de theoloog en de profeet. Later begon het pas echt goed tot hem door te dringen wat er eigenlijk was gebeurd. Hij was de mogelijkheid nog niet tegengekomen, dat dit vuur ook wel eens van de tegenstander zou kunnen zijn, de valse profeet. Hij wist van het boek openbaring dat deze vreemd vuur zou kunnen laten neerdalen. Het was alsof de echo's van de woorden die over hem werden uitgesproken tot hem terugkwamen, en hem kwelden : "Je bent de anti-christ ! Luister niet naar hem, hij is de valse profeet ! Blijf uit de buurt van dat loeder !" Het was alsof hij op het moment dat deze woorden over hem uitgesproken werden daar immuun voor was, maar nu, nu kwamen ze tot hem terug, hem onderdompelende in angst ... Zou het dan toch waar zijn ? Neen, dat kon gewoon niet, want Hij diende God en het goede met zijn bewustzijn ... In het plaatsje van de ramp zelf woekerde het leed voort, terwijl de rest van de wereld doorleefde ... alsof de wereld iets probeerde te ontvluchten ...

En waar waren de mensen gebleven die zich aan hem vastklampten ? Zoveel vragen wemelden er door zijn hoofd, en hij begon bang, erg bang voor God te worden. Bang voor komende missies, en bang om misschien wel onder ogen te moeten komen dat ook hij en zijn vrienden misleid waren. Bang voor de Troon van

God, waarvoor ook hij zou moeten verschijnen om verantwoording voor zijn daden af te leggen. Langzaam maar zeker voelde hij zichzelf wegzinken in een enorme identiteits-crisis. Was dit dan dat moeras waar hij over gedroomd had ? Hij begon aan alles te twijvelen. Waren die dromen wel echt ? En zo ja, waren ze wel betrouwbaar ? Hij herinnerde de Levael die zijn rechteroog verminkte. Hij was in een gevecht, dat was een ding dat zeker was ... Of zou het allemaal verbeelding zijn geweest .. Zou hij dan misschien echt gewoon tegen een punt van een kast aangelopen zijn ...

De theoloog hield hem voor dat zijn angsten hem nederig en waakzaam hielden. Het beste medicijn tegen misleiding. Het zou hem laten zien dat de enige weg uit deze put een liefdesrelatie met God zou zijn. Peter kon niemand meer vertrouwen. De profeet profeteerde, en de theoloog bemoedigde, maar het leek wel alsof niets meer tot hem doordrong. "Je bent in Gods Armen," zei de profeet. Hij voelde nog steeds het vuur, maar het was alsof het vermengd was met ijs. Hij kon er niets mee.

Op een nacht had Peter een nieuwe aanvaring met de Levael. Maar dit keer was het een hele bijzondere. Hij zag de richter Simson staan, een lange man gekleed in paars, met een paars kleed erover hangende. Op zijn hand zat de Levael. Peter was verbaasd. Toen sprak Simson tot hem : "Zoon, Ik heb jouw leed en tranen gezien. Ik ben door God als wachter over jou aangesteld. Herinner jij dat ook ikzelf ben doorstoken in mijn ogen door de Filistijnen ? Zij werden geleid door de Levael, om mij en Gods Volk te verblinden. Maar de kracht van God kwam toen in mij om hun tempel te verwoesten. De verwarring en verblinding dient het doel de mens terug te brengen tot het hart van God, het Licht der lichten van binnen. Hiertoe gebruikt God zelfs de vijand. De Levael is in mijn hand gegeven om hem voor dat doel uit te zenden. Als het getal van hen die de Levael dienen te verslaan vol is, dan zal de zee van ijs opengaan. De zee van ijs zal het zicht verscherpen, terwijl de zee van vuur het zicht zal verlichten. Je zult beide zeeen moeten leren kennen, in beide zeeen zul je de vijanden dienen te verslaan, en de zeeen voor het goede te leren gebruiken. Als je de overkant van deze twee zeeen hebt bereikt, dan zul je mijn mantel, de mantel van Simson ontvangen. Hiermee zal je het zicht van de volkeren kunnen genezen."

Toen Peter wakker werd, voelde hij zich ineens heel anders. Hij had nieuwe moed ontvangen, en hij vertelde de droom aan zijn twee vrienden. Deze waren heel enthousiast, en de profeet sprak een aantal woorden uit. "Peter, we zullen brieven naar de gemeentes moeten zenden, om hen over de Levael te vertellen. Zo zullen we het getal vol kunnen maken, om de zee van ijs te kunnen openen," sprak de profeet. En zo gebeurdde het. Met z'n drieen zetten ze een standaard-brief op en begonnen de brieven naar de gemeentes te verzenden.

Maar de teleurstelling was groot. Er werd nauwelijks gereageerd, en hen die reageerden waren uiterst negatief of zeer oppervlakkig. De profeet deed het voorstel om te gaan folderen in de gemeentes, om een oproep te doen tot

territoriale oorlogsvoering. Ze werden zich er meer en meer van bewust dat de leiders vaak dingen angstvallig verborgen hielden voor hun schaapjes. Ze zouden nu een schema maken om stapsgewijs alle in aanmerking komende gemeentes te bezoeken voor een folder-beurt. In deze folder werd ook op allerlei theologische onwaarheden dieper ingegaan. De folder was netjes, maar zeer dringend, en ontwortelend. Uiteindelijk was het een klein boekwerkje geworden, waarin de oplettende lezer op de hoogte werd gesteld van het vaak machtswellustige en of eerzuchtige leiderschap.

De daaropvolgende zondag zouden ze direct in actie komen. Ze begonnen te folderen voor de deur van een kleine gemeente. Gretig namen de mensen het boekwerkje aan, en begonnen te lezen. Maar al snel werden andere binnenkomers vriendelijk gewaarschuwd het boekwerkje toch maar niet aan te nemen. Peter begon een beetje geirriteerd geworden, vooral toen de voorganger naar hen toekwam met het voorstel dat ze zo spoedig mogelijk het terrein van de gemeente zouden verlaten. "Dat doen we niet," sprak hij tot de voorganger. En de profeet liep inmiddels de gemeente binnen richting de preekstoel. "Beste mensen," sprak hij, "u word nu voor de keuze gesteld. U kunt zich bekeren of u kunt uw mooie gebouw in vlammen zien staan. De keuze is aan u. U kunt een boekwerkje erover aannemen, en als u het niet snapt, dan is dat ook helemaal niet erg, maar u gaat hier nu over nadenken, of er gaan hier grote ongelukken gebeuren." Overal begonnen mensen te gniffelen, en er kwamen een paar ouderlingen naar voren zetten, klaar om de profeet af te voeren. "Ik zou me maar niet aanraken als ik u was, want ik sta in vuur en vlam van de Heilige Geest." De ouderlingen keken hem met een strak gezicht aan, en pakten hem beet. Onmiddelijk begonnen ze te branden, en ze gilden het uit. Mensen begonnen in paniek te raken. Ze zagen hoe snel de ouderlingen tot as waren verbrand. Een profeet van de gemeente stond op, een wat oudere man, die luidkeels begon te profeteren : "Mijn kinderen, raakt niet ontzet, want deze dingen zullen geschieden. De antichrist moet zich in de gemeente Gods stellen om zichzelf als een god aan te prijzen, maar sluit uwen oren voor hem." De mensen waren zo in paniek, dat ze niet goed wisten wat ze hiermee moesten. Velen begonnen te huilen en tot God te smeken. De voorganger was woedend, en rende op Peter's vriend, de profeet, af. Maar voordat hij de profeet kon aanraken vloog hij al in de brand, en de profeet riep dat iedereen naar buiten moest gaan. Binnen enkele minuten stond de hele gemeente in de brand.

Mensen stonden als verstijfd op het grasveld, maar Peter, de theoloog en de profeet zaten al in de auto om naar de volgende gemeente te gaan.

Aan het einde van de dag hadden ze drie gemeentes afgelopen, met de nodige gevolgen, en er begon een flinke tumult te onstaan ... "Drie gemeentes afgebrand, velen verongelukt," zo meldde het nieuws. Er waren vele getuigen, en uiteindelijk kon men er niet meer omheen. Deze drie mannen hadden bovennatuurlijke krachten. Ze werden nu als terroristen bestempeld, maar anderen wisten het zeker : "Deze mannen waren door God gezonden om de wereld te waarschuwen." De

dagen erna werd er volkomen aandacht aan besteed op televisie. Dominees werden op hun mening gevraagd, en de meningen leken verdeeld. De politie was nu op jacht. Er stond een hoge beloning op hun hoofden. Ze werden als de nieuwe bedreiging van de samenleving gezien. Ze zouden voor het gerechtshof moeten verschijnen, deze gevaarlijke pyromanen.

Peter en zijn twee vrienden waren nu ondergedoken bij een ver familielid van de profeet. Het was een aardige man, met veel respect voor de zaak. Hij was niet gelovig, maar hij begreep het allemaal wel. Vanuit deze basis zouden ze verder gaan met hun missie. Ze zouden brieven schrijven naar overheids-instellingen, zoals de ziekenhuizen, de militaire afdelingen, gerechtshoven, en machthebbende structuren zoals banken, bureaus en gemeentehuizen. Ze hadden de folder enigszins aangepast, maar de boodschap bleef hetzelfde. Kapitalisme werd binnen en buiten de kerk niet meer aanvaard. Er stond geen adres van hen aangegeven, en de brieven werden vanuit een ander district op de bus gedaan. In sommige steden werden er al huiszoekingen gedaan, maar ze woonden nu veilig in een verborgen schuilkelder onder het huis van de profeet z'n verre familie-lid. Dit was een oude, wijze man. Hij was niet gelovig maar hij was al jaren ervan overtuigd hoe corrupt en oneerlijk het kapitalistische stelsel was, dat als een roofdier vanuit het westen de gehele wereld bestuurde. Hij werkte met gehandicapte kinderen, die als de minder bedeelden van de samenleving werden gezien. Maar hij zag hen als de juwelen van de wereld, de poorten naar de schatkamers in het binnenste van de aarde. Het was een diep symbolieke man, houdende van gedichten en kunst. Hij kon systemen doorzien, en op dat punt was hij een waardige beschermeling van Peter, de theoloog en de profeet.

Op een nacht kreeg hij een droom, waarin hij zag hoe zijn gehandicapte kinderen werden bereden door moeilijk opvoedbare kinderen. Deze kinderen hadden gele ogen in allerlei tinten met een sterke doortastende lichtstraal. Een lichtstraal met een hoge monotoon. Deze lichtstraal omhulde de lichamen van de gehandicapte kinderen in allerlei lagen, om hen te beschermen tegen de grootspraak van de aarde. Deze kinderen werden gehandicapt genoemd, maar eigenlijk werden ze beschermd door deze moeilijk opvoedbare kinderen tegen de sterke kapitalistische denkstromen. De moeilijk opvoedbare kinderen werden zo genoemd omdat ze niet beinvloed konden worden door de onderverdelingen van de wereld. Toen ineens zag hij hoe andere geelogige kinderen de kamer binnenrenden, de korachskinderen, die probeerden de moeilijk opvoedbaren van de gehandicapten af te stoten.

Toen hij wakker werd, vertelde hij de droom aan Peter, de theoloog en de profeet. Hij was ervan overtuigd dat ze veel van elkaar konden leren, en dat er toch een onzichtbare intelligente en rechtvaardige kracht moest zijn die hen bij elkaar had gebracht. Hij zag het als een mozaiek, als bomen wiens takken in elkaar verstrengelden. Hij zei dat er in wezen twee soorten korachskinderen bestonden : Hen die naar macht streefden om stand te kunnen houden tegen misleiding en

onrecht, dus hen die het vanuit zorgzaamheid gebruikten, en hen die naar macht streefden voor egoistische doeleinden. De theoloog vond deze stelling niet helemaal correct, want hij zag Korach als een uiterst kwaadaardig wezen, door God veroordeeld, maar de man wees hem op de dubbele uitleg. De man was diep onderwezen in theologie, zonder enige gelovige binding ermee te hebben. Hij hield van de kunst en de symmetrie die hij vond in de Bijbel. Peter herkende dit uit zijn eigen leven, en was verwonderd hoe God ook deze man via een droom tot een verdieping bracht. Maar de man hield voet bij stuk : De Bijbel mocht dubbel uitgelegd worden. De Bijbel was in zijn ogen een spiegelend boek, een wit en een zwart boek, voor beide kanten van het leven als een boek van recht. De man zei : "In de bijbel komt telkens weer het verhaal van de infiltratie naar voren. De antichrist die zich in Gods Tempel neerzet alsof hij God is. De duivel gebruikt de bijbel op zijn manier om zichzelf een goddelijk gewaad toe te eigenen. Dit begon al in het paradijs, waar de slang zich voordeed als de ware god en dat ook als een geschenk aan de eerste twee mensen wilde aanbieden. Instante vergoddelijking, door het eten van zijn vrucht, zijn woord. Dan zou hij de uitlegger zijn van het woord in plaats van God. Dan zouden het zelfs twee dezelfde woorden kunnen zijn, met twee verschillende uitleggingen : Twee keer God, twee heren naast elkaar. Een witte en een zwarte. Dan zou de Bijbel dus ook heel makkelijk een bedreiging kunnen vormen aan een bepaalde kant van de spiegel. Dan zou God dus een eigen Judas moeten sturen om een valse Jezus Christus uit de weg te ruimen. Dan zou God dus een eigen satan moeten sturen om een valse God van de troon te stoten. De Bijbel in spiegelbeeld voor hetzelfde doel."

Peter stond met zijn oren te klapperen. De profeet sprak : "Het is wel waar wat u zegt, want de kapitalistische charismatische hoek noemt de God van ons : "satan" en "de anti-christ", en degenen die ons volgen zijn "gevallenen" of zelfs "gevallen engelen" in hun ogen. Het hele negatieve scala met etikettenreeks wordt vanuit de Bijbel gehaald en op ons geplakt om hun nagebootste godheid te verdedigen ... maar ik vind het uiterst gevaarlijk om deze "labels" dan ook te aanvaarden zoals zij dat uitdrukken. Vanuit het oog van de kunst hebt u misschien gelijk, maar of het ook echt Bijbels verantwoord is, dat betwijfel ik, alhoewel ik diep respect heb voor de manier waarop u het brengt. Zeg, die Korachs-kinderen, dat zijn kinderen die door God in de aarde werden geschoven. Ik kan de oordelen van God niet aanraken, en waarom zou u dat dan wel doen ?"

De man sprak : "U moet de creativiteit van de taal niet aantasten. Er wordt zoveel gewaarschuwd tegen toverij die onbijbels zou heten. En op zich begrijp ik dat, omdat er zoveel ongelukken hiermee gebeuren, en omdat de bijbel dit ook heel nadrukkelijk aanhaalt. Maar de Bijbelcode is anders dan simpele lezers zouden denken. De Bijbel is een kunstboek, een boek van spiegelingen en symmetrie, van woordraadselen, en inderdaad zoals ik zeg een code, die uitgelegd wordt aan hen die volgens dit boek een hartsrelatie met de schrijver hebben. Het was een woord geschreven in oorlogstijd, in een tijd van gevaarlijke spionage, van een geliefde aan een geliefde ... Zij moesten hun boodschappen vermommen en beschermen. Het

is een cryptische kunst, geen gewoon boek. Dus, om terug te komen op het tovenaarsverhaal : ware geliefden lezen en eten de liefdesbrieven van hun geliefden in z'n geheel, woord voor woord, kauwende en slikkende, op zoek naar symmetrie, op zoek naar verbanden en de geheime deuren, waardoor ze het geisoleerde hart van hun beminden kunnen bereiken. In hooglied staat dat de ene geliefde tegen de ander zegt : "Gij hebt mijn ogen betoverd." Is dat dan geen goddelijke toverij ? Het is natuurlijk een parel die streng bewaakt moet worden, en vooral kinderen mogen niet te snel de indruk hebben dat het ergens laag in een keukenla ligt. Maar het een sluit het ander niet uit. De Bijbel beschrijft verschillende gebieden en verschillende seizoenen. Er is een mogelijkheid om door de verschillende spiegels heen te stappen. Het is een boek met een strenge etiquette, een boek met diepe spelregels, op de rand van het betoverde, je lokkende naar diepere bossen."

De profeet sprak : "Apologetisch gezien heeft u helemaal gelijk, daar kan ik en geen ander mens onderuit, maar ik blijf hier heel voorzichtig in. Ik merk aan uw woorden dat u de bijbel meer liefheeft dan menig gelovige, maar ik vraag me nu ook af, bent u eigenlijk wel echt ongelovig, want ik zie bijna pretlichtjes in uw ogen. U heeft het boek zo lief, en u kent zo de gevaren van de "boekverkrachting", waardoor er een hele andere soort van hoofdpersoon te voorschijn komt, dat u eigenlijk uzelf "ongelovig" wenst te noemen, om maar niet geassocieerd te hoeven worden met al die "verkrachters" ?"

Hierop antwoordde de man : "Nee, dat was het niet echt. Ik geloofde gewoon niet in een levende persoon genaamd "God". Voor mij was het dode kunst, maar deze was voor mij zo schitterend, dat het leefde in mijn hart. Maar ik merk nu, door de droom en door al deze gebeurtenissen, dat het veel persoonlijker begint te worden voor mij."

Peter begint te glimlachen. Het lijkt wel alsof hij zichzelf ziet staan zoals hij vroeger zo werd aangetikt door persoonlijke dromen en gangen van zaken. Maar wat deze man hier tentoon spreidt is voor hem wel zo nieuw en vreemd, dat het lijkt alsof hij niet weet wat hij er mee aanmoet. Zoveel gedachten en gevoelens vliegen er door hem heen.

Over de Korachs-kinderen zijn ze nog niet uitgepraat. De profeet kan er nog niet over uit ... "Zou God goede kinderen levend laten verzwelgen door de aardbodem ?"

"Laten we het zo stellen," zegt de man. "De twee topkrachten staan naast elkaar met hetzelfde stuur in de handen. God en de duivel. Jullie weten zelf wel dat ze allebei een vinger in de pap mee hebben, en zich met alles bemoeien, met tegengestelde redenen. Ze zijn altijd en eeuwig met elkaar in gevecht om dat stuur. Wonderen en tekenen moeten daarom ook altijd gezift worden. Zoals vele wonderen die Mozes en Aaron deden konden de tovenaars van de farao perfect nadoen. Twee krachten in oorlog. Waar onschuldigen worden veroordeeld zijn

duivelse krachten aan wezig, vlak naast de oordelen van God. Gods Vuur is altijd uiterst accuraat, maar de duivel kan aanvullen. Ik geloof, en dit was ook mijn droom, dat God nooit per definitie alle kinderen en aanhang van grote zondaren vernietigt. Ik geloof dat de duivel die aanvullingen geeft. God oordeelt rechtvaardig, en dan doet de duivel daar een schepje bovenop. Het vuur moet gezifd worden. In de charismatische beweging zijn ook twee vuren aan het werk. Is dit te volgen voor u heren ?

Het was alsof ze in de ogen van een arend keken, in de ogen van een engel. Neen, dit was niet de Levael die hier sprak. Dit was zijn tegenhanger. De man was omhuld door een onverklaarbaar en indringend zacht licht, en Peter, de theoloog en de profeet werden steeds rustiger. Iets probeerde hen te overtuigen, dat alles twee gezichten had, twee krachten die tegen elkaar streden. Het was de symmetrie die hen rustig maakte, alsof deze symmetrie, de verschillende spiegelbeelden, en schaduwen, de puzzel compleet maakten, en een enorme rust en vrede veroorzaakten.

Zouden er dan nog steeds zielen onder de grond opgesloten zitten, onschuldige zielen, die toevallig familie waren van de schurk Korach ? Hoe diep moesten ze nog gaan ?

De profeet keek alsof de bliksem was ingeslagen, en ook Peter kreeg de rillingen. Wat zou de charismatische beweging doen met "demonen" die ze uitdreven. Waren al die geesten wel echt "demonen" ? Of waren het gekwelde zielen die gewoon hulp nodig hadden ?

Toen ineens kwam de theoloog naar voren, met een heel ernstig gezicht. Hij had zich gedurende het gesprek een beetje op de achtergrond gehouden. "Ik ben erg verontrust," sprak hij. "Ik vind dit echt enorm ver gaan, en volgens mij ziet u het echt verkeerd. Dat wat u naar voren probeert te brengen heeft te maken met necromantie, oftewel "het contact zoeken met de doden," wat de Bijbel streng verbiedt. De Korachs-kinderen verdeelt u in twee groepen : de schuldige machtslustigen, de gevaarlijken dus, die onder Gods oordeel naar de diepten van de aarde werden gezonden, en de onschuldigen die door de duivelse, anti-christelijke krachten naar de krochten van de aarde werden gezonden. Tot zover kan ik u goed volgen, maar alhoewel het heel logisch klinkt, en zelfs heel Bijbels, namelijk de wisselwerking der krachten, betwijfel ik het hele verhaal. En wel om deze reden : Wij zouden er dan vanuit moeten gaan dat beide ziele-groepen op aarde rondzweven, goeddoende en kwaaddoende, even wijzende op uw droom, terwijl de Bijbel zegt dat deze zielen onder de grond leven. Ik geloof niet, op Bijbelse grond, dat overledenen contact hebben of mogen hebben met degenen die leven. U zegt die goede, onschuldige Korachskinderen, berijden gehandicapte kinderen. U noemt die Korachs-kinderen zelfs moeilijk opvoedbaar, alsof ze hier op aarde rondlopen in een menselijk lichaam. U maakt zich daarbij bijna schuldig aan het tentoonspreiden van de reincarnatie-gedachte, die dus allesbehalve bijbels is,

ook al is het uw droom geweest. Heeft u misschien uw droom verkeerd geinterpreteerd, of hebben we hier te maken met gevaarlijke misleiding ? Ik weet het nog niet zo net. Wij kunnen ons in onze bediening momenteel geen enkele misstap veroorloven. Er staat teveel op het spel."

De profeet begint ook bedenkelijk te knikken, terwijl ook Peter het een beetje benauwd krijgt. Hoe zal de beste man hierop gaan reageren. Nog steeds heeft Peter het gevoel alsof er een enorme engel in de kamer staat, op dezelfde plaats waar de man zit. Peter heeft diep respect voor de man, en het lijkt alsof de hele kamer verlicht is op een vreemde manier, maar wat is er aan de hand ? Lopen ze gevaar ? Is dit een beste truc van de grote misleider, of staan ze op het punt om daadwerkelijk Gods verborgen schatkamers te betreden. Is dit schateiland ? Of een grote valstrik ?

Hoofdstuk 4. Het Gesprek

"Ja," zegt de profeet, "ik deel dezelfde angst als de theoloog. Ik ben zelf een charismaticus in hart en nieren, maar zodra sommige predikers en zelfs bekende predikers over ontmoetingen met Paulus beginnen, dan weet ik niet altijd goed wat ik daar nu over moet denken."

Peter begint te rillen :"Sorry hoor, maar mag ik even iets zeggen. In mijn droom heb ik Simson ontmoet, maar ik zie dit niet als een overtreding van het gebod. Onze Heere Jezus Christus ontmoette Mozes en Elia op de berg der verheerlijking."

"Ja," zegt de theoloog, "verheerlijkte zielen als Paulus, Simson, Mozes, Elia, Daniel, en zo voort, daar kan ik me iets bij voorstellen, en Peters droom klikte bij mij ook helemaal. Ik heb daar geen enkele moeite mee gehad, maar het verhaal van onze broeder hier gaat me nu net even te ver, en ik ben er eerlijk gezegd een beetje huiverig voor."

"Precies," zegt de profeet, zich kerende naar Peter : "Ik had met jouw droom over Simson geen enkele moeite, en het klikte bij mij ook direct, maar op de een of andere manier liep dat nu eenmaal zo. Meestal heb ik gewoon altijd mijn twijfels als ik terugdenk aan bepaalde charismatische bijeenkomsten waar weer iemand een ontmoeting met Abraham of Zacharias had gehad. Ik zeg niet dat het niet kan. Ik heb geen enkele twijfel gehad over Peter's droom, maar ik ben gewoon voorzichtig, vooral ook met deze woorden van de theoloog."

"Luister goed," zegt de oude man, "ik betreur uw gebrek aan bijbelkennis," zich richtende tot de theoloog. "Met alle respect, u bent theoloog, en u doet uw werk uitermate goed. U denkt over dingen na en laat juiste vraagtekens branden. In de hebreeenbrief word er gesproken over "de wolk van getuigen" die rondom ons staan. Dit zijn de overleden bijbelse figuren. Verder staat er in de Bijbel dat de

God van Abraham, Isaak en Jakob, een God van levenden en niet van doden is. Er zal heus wel een bepaalde zieleslaap zijn tussen dood en hemel, maar deze mensen leven."

"Ja," zegt de theoloog, "de verheerlijkte zielen, waar we het al over hadden, maar u heeft het over onschuldige zielen die contact hebben met gehandicapte kinderen, als zijnde moeilijk opvoedbaren. Ik snap niet waar u het over heeft. Mooi verhaal, maar ... wat moet ik ermee. Verder dreigt er bij mij ook zoiets op te komen als : "Jezus ontmoette inderdaad Mozes en Elia op de berg, maar u bent Jezus niet."

"Zegt de Bijbel niet dat we Jezus moeten volgen ?" vraagt de man weer ...

"De Bijbel zegt het is verboden contact te zoeken met dode geesten voor ons. Verheerlijkte heiligen kan ik me nog enigszins indenken, maar dit is te gek voor woorden." zegt de theoloog.

"Goed," zegt de man, "blijkbaar wilt u die geijkte boodschap niet nuanceren. God gaf die waarschuwing aan zijn volk omdat het te gevaarlijk was. Je moet het inderdaad ook nooit opzoeken, maar bent u er ook achter over welke groep "doden" er werd gesproken ? U geeft mij geen heldere uiteenzetting en begrenzing van het woordje "dood". U kunt zoals ik al zei niets over een kant schuiven. De Bijbel is een persoons-gevoelig boek, een gebieds-gevoelig boek en een tijds-gevoelig boek. U maakt van de Bijbel een ware hakbijl. In het Bijbelboek I Petrus komt Jezus in hoofdstuk 3 tot gevangen zielen die in de vroege tijden Noach ongehoorzaam waren. Hij predikte hen het Evangelie. Dit waren natuurlijk overledenen, en volgens dit Bijbelgedeelte zaten zij in een gevangenis. Ze zaten onder het oordeel van God, wachtende op de tijd van verlossing. Discipelen worden aanbevolen de werken van Jezus te doen. Er wordt daarom ook in de Bijbel gezegd : Predik het evangelie aan de doden, ja, je mag ze zelfs opwekken. De dood word beschreven als een vijand, een gevangenis, en discipelen krijgen de macht om met de sleutels van de opstanding zielen te verlichten met het evangelie. Toen Jezus opstond, stonden er velen op uit hun graven. Door het vlees enige van zulke werken te verrichten is uiterst verboden, omdat het dan alleen maar erger wordt en het misleiding uitwerkt, maar door de Geest mogen deze dingen naar Waarheid geschieden. Op dit terrein wil Gods Geest discipelen binnenloodsen. Satan heeft ook zijn dodenrijken onder de grond, en waar dan ook. Openbaringen spreekt over dodenrijken in de zee : "de zee gaf haar doden," staat er in hoofdstuk 20, en er staat ook dat de dood en het dodenrijk in de poel des vuurs geworpen zullen worden. Vijanden dus. Jezus Christus is gekomen om te verlossen. Niet een beetje, maar geheel. Discipelen van Hem mogen bekleed worden met deze krachten.

Dan nu het zielenverhaal : Zielen .. Ieder heeft een ziel, maar deze ziel bestaat uit meerdere delen, want zoals Paulus het zegt kunnen sommige mensen bewuste reizen maken met zo'n ziele-deel, en als je verwijderd bent van iemand kun je "door de Geest" toch bij zo iemand zijn. Wij dragen allemaal ziele-delen van elkaar in

ons, op allerlei verschillende manieren. Als je voor iemand bidt, dan reist een stukje van jouw ziel met degene mee voor een tijdje, en zo zijn er vele manieren. Het is als een telefoonlijn. Je stem is bij jouw telefoon, en bij de telefoon van degene met wie je spreekt. De radio is daar ook een voorbeeld van. Deze dingen wijzen allemaal heen naar de geestelijke realiteiten. Dus zielen in de aarde kunnen ook makkelijk op de aarde zijn. Ze kunnen zelfs op aarde geboren worden, terwijl hun andere ziele-deel misschien nog opgesloten zit onder de aarde of in de zee. Hierdoor zijn vele problemen te verklaren, en had de medische zorg maar meer oog hiervoor. Er zijn bewuste zieledelen en onbewuste zieledelen. Die onbewuste zieledelen kunnen overigens heel accuraat zijn. Het zijn in principe gewoon afgesloten ziele-delen. Deze kunnen overwippen van de ene mens op de andere mens. Bijvoorbeeld als een mens ten onrechte benadeeld wordt, dan wordt er een stukje van zijn ziel afgesneden, een kleine abortus om het zo maar te zeggen. Jezus zei : "Indien u iemand haat, dan heeft u hem vermoord." Zo'n ziele-stukje heeft dan een leven op zich, afgesloten van de andere delen, en zal op zoek gaan naar recht. Het ziele-deeltje kan erg in de war zijn, of verwond, en laat in het lichaam een leegte over, een onbewuste laag. Hierin zijn allerlei mogelijkheden. Maar het punt is dat zulke ziele-delen rust proberen te vinden, en recht, maar vaak vanwege verwondingen en andere beschadigingen niet helemaal meer weten waar ze mee bezig zijn. Vaak worden deze zielen voor demonen aangezien en nog dieper gekweld door allerlei beunhazen op het gebied van exorcisme en genezing.

"Stop, stop," zegt de theoloog. "Ik kan wel zien dat u psychologie heeft gestudeerd, en misschien allerlei cursussen voor uw gehandicapten-werk ... en ik zeg dit met alle respect, maar ik zie hier geen Bijbel meer aan te pas komen, en ik ben dus ook allerminst overtuigd van uw psycho-dramatische verhaal. Ik kan me hier dan ook helemaal niets bij voorstellen. U ontwortelt zomaar het gehele christelijke geloofsgoed met zo'n tempo dat ik er gewoon buikpijn van krijg. Natuurlijk heeft u gelijk als u uw vinger wijst naar charismatische groepen die maar wat aanrotzooien, maar de argumenten die u aanreikt raken bij mij het plafond niet. Misschien dat u meer aansluiting vind bij een of andere psycho-religieuze new age-secte. Trouwens, u maakt uzelf schuldig aan de oosterse reincarnatie-gedachte. Als u dan zo goed uw bijbel kent, waarom dan zo'n wolkerige poging ..."

"Pardon, mag ik even iets zeggen," vraagt Peter ... "Ik begrijp deze man juist heel goed, en ik begin dingen nu ook veel beter te begrijpen. Het laat mij juist zien hoe de geestelijke wereld in elkaar zit. Ik denk echt dat we de woorden van deze man niet zomaar opzij mogen leggen. Laten we er een paar nachten over slapen, om deze woorden te toetsen. Ik vind dat hij een prachtige aanvulling geeft op iets waar we als zij-charismatische vriendengroep niet verder mee kwamen."

"Mag ik u een vraag stellen, theoloog, kunt u mij vertellen op wat voor manier Daniel zou terugkomen, wat duidelijk in de Bijbel staat vermeld ?" vraagt de man.

"Ik zou het niet weten, maar als dat via reincarnatie zou zijn, dan spreekt het de hebreeentekst tegen van : "het is de mens gegeven eenmaal te sterven en daarna het oordeel." zegt de theoloog.

"Nuances, nuances," zegt de oude man weer, "u haakt uzelf geheel in geisoleerde bijbelteksten, als een bril voor de rest van de Bijbel, als status voor slechtziendheid. Wat is sterven ? Paulus zegt : "Ik sterf elke dag." U moet weten over welke dood het hier gaat, en u moet de symboliek goed kennen voordat u deze beste uitspraken doet. Taal kan vele dingen vertellen, daarom moet taal vertaald worden. Beste man, u bent uzelf door uw beperkte taal zoveel begrenzingen aan het opleggen. Moet ik nog duidelijker wezen : Lazarus is tweemaal gestorven. Allen die Jezus of de discipelen opwekten zijn dus twee keer gestorven, of misschien zelfs meerdere keren."

"Okay," zegt de theoloog, "u heeft gelijk, maar wil dit zeggen dat reincarnatie bestaat ?"

"Wie zegt dat het niet bestaat ?" oppert de oude man ... "God geeft meerdere kansen. God preekt tot de doden en wekt de doden weer op. Het een-kans-evangelie probeert alles op een leven te schuiven, zodat ze daardoor via angst meer macht over mensen kan krijgen. Dit is big business. Moet ik duidelijker wezen ? Van Johannes de Doper zei Jezus dat het Elia was, die zou terugkomen. Reincarnatie dus, en een teken dat het met Daniel of anderen ook op die manier zou kunnen gaan. Natuurlijk proberen de een-kans-theologen deze woorden te verdraaien zoals ze met alle bijbelgedeeltes omgaan. De dwazen gebruiken de Bijbel voor hun eigen strik. God gebruikt de Bijbel zelfs om hen ermee te verdwazen, en om hun lusten ermee uit te werken, totdat ze bemerken dat het een bereklem is. God gebruikt de Bijbel voor vele doeleinden. Vergeet niet dat God ook leugen zendt tot de leugenaars. Hij zendt Zijn Judassen tot de leugen-christussen. Hij heeft de kruizen al in de schuur staan.

"Godslasteraar !" buldert de theoloog "Dit zal je berouwen ! Ik ga er vandoor, u weet niet waar u mee bezig bent ! Ik geloof in een hemel en in een hel, in een kans, en daarna het oordeel, en niet in allerlei leugenachtige reincarnatie-praatjes ... Probeert u het oordeel van God soms te ontlopen ?" Woedend loopt de theoloog de kamer uit, pakt zijn spullen en vertrekt.

De profeet buigt zijn hoofd, en zegt : "Hier had ik vannacht al over gedroomd. Hij kan de zuiveringen niet aan. Hij zit te diep vast in z'n tradities, en houdt teveel van hetgeen dat was en is, inplaats van hetgeen dat komen gaat. We moeten hier weg, want hij zal onderhoort worden en veroordeeld worden als hij onze verblijfplaats niet verraadt. Hij zal ons daarom verraden, om z'n eigen gevoel van veiligheid te redden. Ze zullen hem verder niet vervolgen, omdat hij geen vuurwonderen heeft verricht, en vanwege de informatie die hij hen schenkt ... We moeten weg, Peter, en

u kunt ook beter met ons meegaan. U heeft mij overtuigd, en Gods Geest sprak tot mijn hart over u. God kan u goed gebruiken ... Kom mee ..."

Peter knikt, er geheel mee instemmende. Waar zouden ze naartoe gaan ? De oude man had een idee ... Hij had nog ergens een oude vriend wonen, ergens diep in een bos. Die vriend was boswachter, en een man die nooit door iemand werd lastiggevallen.

Binnen korte tijd was het geregeld. De man woonde in een groot huis, en op zolder had hij een aantal slaapkamers ter beschikking. Hij wilde wel meewerken. Hij had hetzelfde hart als de oude man.

Toen ze aankwamen was het al donker. Ze vertrokken direct naar de zolder, waar ze op de gezamenlijke gang hun gesprek konden voortzetten. Er stond daar een tafeltje met wat stoelen. De man vertelde dat vroeger de katholieke kerkelijke leiders de reincarnatie-leer hadden weggeschrapt uit de kerk en de bijbel, omdat het hun macht over zielen aantastte. De reformatie was nog niet zover om het weer terug te brengen. Evenals de zieledelen-leer en de dodenhulp-leer moest het ingedeeld worden tot onderwerp voor verdere reformatie. Peter en de profeet waren een en al oor, en verbaasden zich hoe snel deze man zijn taak opnam. Hij was een man van theorie, maar nu werd het praktijk. Hij was een man van onpersoonlijkheid, maar nu werd het persoonlijkheid.

Hoofdstuk 5. De Aanslag

Het werd Peter duidelijk dat God de doden niet als doden zag, maar als "geroofden" en "ontvoerden". God stond de dood soms toe, en bracht het soms zelf, maar Peter begon in te zien dat doden-isolatie een regelrechte aanval was op het evangelie van Jezus Christus. Een leugen in de kerk, zo diep, dat zelfs de katholieke kerk daar milder in bleek te zijn. En dit allemaal tot doel om het kapitalisme op natuurlijk en geestelijk gebied te laten zegevieren. Hij vond de droom van de oude man zo prachtig, en eigenlijk had hij het gevoel dat gehandicapte kinderen veel dieper contact met de ontvoerden hadden dan anderen. Wie was er nu autistisch ? Kinderen die veel met opjecten praatten en met de natuur, om zo contact te hebben met "het geroofde", of hen die zich alleen maar blindstaarden op het materiele ? Wie hoorden er nu in de ziekenhuizen thuis ? De Bijbel had het bij nader inzien zo vaak over de dood, het sterven, als middel om bij God te komen. Niet zozeer als een natuurlijke dood, maar als een bovennatuurlijke dood, als een bevrijding van zonde. De boom en de bloem waren daar een mooi beeld van. Waarom moesten er zielen buitengesloten worden die dat niet verdienden ? Peter had zoveel vragen. Maar eigenlijk had hij het antwoord al. De dood was een manier om los te komen

van het materiele, van de kapitalistische krachten ... Een kracht die dagelijks als een natuurkracht in hem mocht werken.

Als de dag van gisteren herinnerde hij zijn droom over de korachs-kinderen, degenen die onder Gods oordeel stonden. Zouden zij degenen zijn die uit woede en wraak .... Neen ... Hij durfde niet verder te denken ... Hij voelde hen trekken aan zijn hart .... Hem afhoudende van deze openbaringen ... Hij voelde hun innerlijke bedreigingen .... Hij herinnerde de ijzeren pinnen, het geschreeuw .... Ze wilden hem doof houden voor iets ... Iets wat nu komende was .... Deze zielen kwamen van de afgrond ....

Hij herinnerde het verhaal over de Bijbelse Spiegel, de symmetrie, de goddelijke gespletenheid ... als een kunstwerk van mozaiek, waar de oude man over sprak .... Peter kreeg een vizioen .... Hij zag zichzelf zittende op een gouden troon met een gouden appel .... God sprak tot hem dat het een appel des levens was .... Toen zag hij als door een spiegel zichzelf met een zwarte appel op een zwarte troon .... "Dit was je verleden," sprak God .... "Je at van de appel van de slang, waardoor je in het dodenrijk terecht kwam, een spiegelparadijs, genaamd "aarde". Je kwam van een paradijselijke aarde in een vervloekte aarde ... Dat was alreeds het dodenrijk, zoals Paulus het aardse lichaam "lichaam des doods" noemde ... Door de appel kwam je in het rijk van de slang ... Daarom is het maar net vanuit welke richting je praat .... Welke taal je gebruikt .... De Levael is een koning der dodenrijken, gezonden om mensen te verblinden, om hen te brengen van dodenrijk tot dodenrijk. Ook in het dodenrijk zijn er verschillende lagen. Maar aan beide kanten van de spiegel sta Ik, zoals ook de duivel aan beide kanten staat ... Hij was namelijk ook in het paradijs ... het maakt niet uit waar je bent ... het maakt uit aan welke kant je staat ... waar je bent in je hart ... Zowel Ik als de duivel is de schepper van deze wereld, vanwege de strijd der creaties, vanwege de wet van de wisselwerkende kracht. In deze capsule van tegengestelde krachten word je gevormd ... In deze capsule van strijdende krachten bevindt zich de trap tot zuiverheid en puurheid ...."

Opeens zag Peter in het vizioen kinderen met rode ogen en rood-zwarte klederen voor hem staan. Zij waren de zielen van I Petrus 3 die door de zondvloed aan de krochten van de zee waren prijsgegeven. Zij waren de zondvloeds-kinderen, wachtende op verlossing ... Er was al tot hen gepredikt door Jezus, maar nu wachtten ze op verdere verlossing .... Peter nam hen in zijn armen, en haalde diep adem .... Hij bad tot God on alle dodenrijken te laten zien waarin hij het verlossende werk van Christus mocht brengen. Het Evangelie, ook voor de doden ... Zoals de Bijbel dat zo duidelijk leert ...

De boswachter was iemand die je een christelijke communist kon noemen. Hij luisterde aandachtig naar de verhalen van de drie mannen. Hij vertelde dat er op het nieuws te zien was dat er verschillende kleine groepjes ontstonden die de leer van de mannen wilden navolgen, maar de mannen waren spoorloos verdwenen.

Naarmate de jaren verstreken begon het rustiger te worden omtrend hetgeen gebeurd was ... Alles leek weer in het oude cirkeltje te verzinken ... Maar Peter, de profeet en de oude man groeiden voort en maakten hun plannen ... Ook de boswachter was duidelijk geinteresseerd ...

Door de jaren heen leerden ze de profetische gaven voor dit werk vrij te zetten, en dat gebeurde naarmate ze de levael verdreven ... Op een dag hadden ze zoveel zielen verzameld, dat ze een stormloop konden doen op de verblijfplaats van de Levael en zijn Korachskinderen .... De profeet nam het woord en sprak tot de muren van de vesting. "Muren van Levael, val neer ! Muren van Levael, geef je geheimen prijs en wordt kaal. Dor zult gij worden, onvruchtbaar zult gij zijn." En toen keerde hij zich tot de Levael : "Levael, in Naam van Jezus Christus, de Gezalfde, In Naam van de Nazoreeer : Geef de sleutels van het dodenrijk prijs, van al je dodenrijken en martelplaatsen."

Toen stond de profeet op en sprak : "Kom mee, we gaan nu naar de leiders van het land, het is tijd." Peter knikte en samen met de oude man liepen ze naar hun auto. Er was juist een vergadering der ministers, en de profeet riep door de ramen dat hij een boodschap van God voor hen had. Lacherig werden de ramen gesloten maar de profeet geraakte in woede ... Hij trapte een raam in en sprak : "Kom maar naar buiten, want God gaat dit hondehol door vuur verteren."

"U staat onder arrest werd er geroepen, en politiemannen kwamen naar buiten rennen." Eentje werd er direct door vuur verteerd, voldoende om de anderen in huivering te brengen. "Luister goed," sprak de profeet .... U mag gerust uw vergaderingen voortzetten, maar dit kapitalistische gebouw gaat eraan. U pakt uw spullen maar die u nodig heeft. Morgen gaat het gebouw ter vlakte." Maar ondertussen werd er al gebeld naar het leger, en spoedig waren er helicopters boven de profeet, Peter en de oude man. "Geef uzelf over, of er wordt geschoten," werd er geroepen vanuit een helicopter. Maar de profeet, Peter en de oude man waren onaantastbaar. Er werd geschoten, maar zonder enig resultaat. Toen explodeerde het gebouw ... Verschillende ministers die naar buiten waren gekomen wilden nu wel luisteren ... Het vreemde van deze vuurexplosies was dat ze soms heel specifiek mensen oversloegen. De profeet riep tot de ministers : "God gaat dit land in vuur brengen. Een ieder wiens hart niet zuiver is zal door dit vuur verteerd worden tot as. Laten uw nieuwsbrigades dit maar verkondigen. En jullie kunnen rustig doorgaan met jullie vergaderingen, maar jullie houden op met kapitalistische geldspelletjes. De jeugd en het gerechtshof dient te worden aangepakt, de media, en dan zullen we wel verder zien."

"Wat zijn uw plannen ?" werd er geroepen ...

Ondertussen werd er van andere locaties uit naar het buitenland gebeld. De mannen moesten koste wat het koste opgeruimd worden, al zij het door een kolossale bomaanslag. En ja hoor, de grootmachten van het buitenland kwamen

aanzetten ... Iedereen werd opgeroepen het land te verlaten. Bommenwerpers kwamen van alle kanten, terwijl de profeet, Peter en de oude man rustig in de auto zaten. Iedereen was inmiddels van het terrein weg. Er werden bommen geworpen, maar niets hielp ... De profeet was inmiddels buiten z'n zinnen van woede ... Totdat ineens een enorme vuurarend in de lucht verscheen ... Het was de Levael ... Hij spuwde vuur ... En de auto verdween geheel onder een zee van lava ...

Ineens schrok Peter wakker ... Het was maar een droom ... In paniek rende hij naar de kamer waar de profeet lag ... Maar er lag niemand ... Toen rende hij naar de kamer van de oude man ... Maar daar lag ook niemand ... Peter raakte in paniek ... Wat was er aan de hand ... Er klopte hier iets niet ... Toen ineens was het alsof z'n hoofd explodeerde ... En hij hoorde gelach in zijn hoofd ... Hij werd wakker in het ziekenhuis ... Hij had een hersenberoerte gehad ... en een helft van z'n gezicht was verlamd geraakt ... Hij zag de boswachter naast hem zitten ... "Sorrie, ik kon niet anders dan je hier te brengen ... Ik vond je bewusteloos op de grond ..." sprak hij met een ernstig gezicht .... "Waar zijn de profeet en de oude man ?" vroeg Peter ... Zij zijn gearresteerd, en ze zullen jou ook arresteren als je hier klaar bent ... " zei de boswachter.

Peter werd woedend, en zei dat hen die dat op hun geweten hadden in gevaar waren ... Hij kon nauwelijks praten vanwege de beroerte ... Hij snapte dat de boswachter gehandeld had zoals hij had gehandeld, maar dat zijn vrienden waren gearresteerd ... dat kon niet ... Peter was woest ... Hij wist dat dit een nieuwe aanval van de Levael was, en het was nu hard tegen hard ... "Waar zijn ze ?" riep Peter ... "Ik moet mijn vrienden zien." Een zuster probeerde hem te kalmeren, maar hij duwde haar opzij ... "Jullie zijn allemaal godslasteraars !" riep hij ... Plotseling kwam er een lange man binnen, die naar Peter toeliep ... Het was een psychiater ... Hij wilde Peter een hand geven, maar Peter sloeg de hand weg. "Ik zal je helaas moeten opnemen," sprak de psychiater ... U bent zwaar gevaarlijk voor de samenleving, zoals wij dat noemen : zwaar gestoord ... godsdienstwaanzin ... Uw vrienden zijn in goede handen, maakt u zich maar geen zorgen ..."

"Nee !" schreeuwde Peter, "Ik heb geen godsdienstwaanzin ! Ik weet waartegen ik vecht ! Jullie zijn bezeten van de Levael .. Jullie zijn korachskinderen !"

"Mijnheer, probeert u zich maar even rustig te houden .... Dat wat u hebt zijn waanideeen ... Leuke verhaaltjes, maar berust niet op waarheid ... U bent zeker een gevaar voor de samenleving, en u zult de komende tien jaar niet van ons af zijn. Ik zal u onder strenge bewaking in een separeer-cel zetten, en u kunt eens per dag even in de buitenlucht op streng bewaakt terrein. Mijnheer, ...u staat schuldig aan ... moord ... massamoord .... De rechter zal hierover zijn vonnis uitspreken .. U heeft grote kans dat u nooit meer terugkunt in de samenleving." zegt de psychiater ... De boswachter was inmiddels weer verdwenen ..

Peter begint luid te krijsen .... Het was alsof hij met miljoenen ijzeren pinnen tegelijk werd doorboort ... Binnen enkele dagen werd hij naar een streng bewaakte kliniek afgevoerd, waar hij in de separeer-cel belandde. Hij was inmiddels met riemen vastgemaakt aan een bed, vanwege agressief gedrag naar verplegend personeel ...

Op een dag krijgt hij bezoek ... Het was de theoloog ... "Peter," sprak hij ... "Ik heb een enorme fout begaan ...en ik weet niet of je me ooit kunt vergeven ... Ik stond onder te hoge druk ... en ik heb hele domme dingen gedaan ... Ze hebben me onder zo'n hoge druk gezet dat ik ons verblijfadres heb verraden ... Ik zal het mezelf in ieder geval nooit meer vergeven ... Ook al waren jullie gelukkig al vertrokken ..."

Peter was blij hem te zien ... "Help me hieruit," fluisterde Peter ... "Waar zijn de profeet en de oude man ?"

De theoloog begon te snikken ... De profeet is veroordeeld tot levenslang .... evenals jij ... en de oude man is op vrije voeten gezet, omdat hij er eigenlijk niet zoveel mee te maken had ... met de tijd dat jullie twee met mij de gemeentes bezochten ...

"Het is okay ... alleen ... ik kan wel wat pastorale hulp gebruiken ..." zegt Peter ..."alhoewel ik je op het moment moeilijk kan vertrouwen ... Ik zie wel dat je echt berouw hebt, maar ik was heel erg, verschrikkelijk diep in je teleurgesteld ... Het is alsof er iets is gebroken tussen jou en mij .... en ik weet niet hoe ik het kan oppakken ..."

"Alleen de tijd kan bewijzen wat ik voor je voel," zegt de theoloog ... "Ik zei al, ik zal het mezelf nooit vergeven wat ik je heb aangedaan .. Ik voel me als Petrus die de Heer Jezus verloochende ... Maar ik ben terug om te zeggen dat ik aan jouw kant sta ... Ik wil echt Gods paden bewandelen, en ..."

"Vriend," onderbreekt Peter ..."je zonden zijn je vergeven ... we geven het gewoon een tweede kans ... Kun je nu geloven dat God ook tweede kansen geeft ?"

"Ja," glimlacht de theoloog,"ik zie dat nu in, Peter ... Ik ben God dankbaar dat ik nu mag zien hoe belangrijk tweede kansen zijn voor daadwerkelijke vriendschap en een echte liefdesrelatie met God ..."

"Vriend, kun je me vertellen wat er nu gaande is ? Waar is God nu ? Waarom laat Hij dit toe ?" vraagt Peter ... en begint te vertellen over de droom en wat er allemaal gebeurd is ...

De theoloog zegt : "Peter, luister, je wist van tevoren hoe zwaar het zou worden, en dat de Levael zich niet zomaar prijs zou geven ... Maar je weet ook dat dit je naar een hoger vuur zal leiden ... en hogere gaven, die God Zijn getrouwe kinderen

toevertrouwd ... Jij bent God getrouw gebleven ... daarom mag jij hier doorheen gaan ... het is Gods Gave voor jou ..."

Peter voelde zich tot in z'n botten gebroken ... alsof hij op de bodem lag van een zee van ijs .... Terwijl een zee van vuur hem van binnen opvrat .... Hij had geen behoefte meer om in de materiele wereld te werken ... Hij wist dat hij door deze gebeurtenissen de diepste dodenrijken kon binnengaan .. zoals zijn grote Liefde Jezus de Nazoreer eens deed ... Ja, nog steeds ... en nu door hem heen .... Er brandde een zacht vuur in hem ... van hieruit kon hij alle bomen omhelzen ... alle bloemen ... Hij voelde zich nu ... een gehandicapt kind ... dichter bij de dood dan ooit tevoren ... maar ook ... dichter bij het leven ... een leven met andere wetten ... een leven zo rijk en zo diep ... Hij was tevreden met zijn bed .... en zelfs met de riemen ... Hier kon hij dromen ... en andere dromen aanraken ....

De boswachter, de oude man en de theoloog kwamen hem vaak opzoeken ... Peter was gelukkig ... Ze vertelden hem over de verschillende groepen die zijn ideeen aanhingen. Meestal kwamen ze in het geheim bij elkaar ... Het werk werd voortgezet ... en het leek alsof er anderen zoals Peter en de profeet opstonden ... rebellerende tegen het huidige kapitalisme ... tegen het evangelie van het grote geld ... Ze riskeerden boetes of gevangenisstraffen, want de overheid had op dat gebied de touwtjes flink strak gespannen ... maar het leek wel alsof niets hen kon tegenhouden ... het was alsof er een nieuwe generatie opstond ... vechtende tegen de Levael ... niet massaal ... maar in kleine groepjes ... Sommigen zouden Peter graag willen zien, maar Peter hield de boot af ... Het was alsof hij te moe was ... en te bang voor nieuwe avonturen ... Peter ontdekte een nieuwe wereld binnenin ... een wereld die vroeger altijd weggewimpeld werd ... waar grote slagbomen voor stonden ... met prikkeldraad en hekken met lange scherpe punten ... Hij was er overheengegaan ... Het had hem bijna zijn leven gekost ... En nog steeds leek het alsof hij zwom in een zee van vuur en ijs .... reikende naar .. de overkant ....

Met de profeet ging het goed .... Advocaten hadden een hoger beroep aangetekend ... en men was verwonderd over de wijsheid van deze man ... Wonderbaarlijk wist hij de aanklachten te weerleggen ... Alsof hij gouden sleutels in zijn hand had ... Ook pleitte hij voor de vrijlating van Peter .... Al gauw werden ze beiden vrijgesproken, maar Peter had nog een lange weg te gaan. Hij had rust nodig ...

Het was alsof de incidenten waren vergeten ... Na de arrestatie waren er vele nieuwsuitzendingen, die vele herinneringen ophaalden, maar opnieuw bleek nu alles weer in slaap te sussen ... en Peter en de profeet werden sterk bepaald bij persoonlijke verandering, en het aanvaarden van het lijden ... Het zou een tijd worden van het dieper uitslaan van persoonlijke wortels ... Ook de beweging leek weer enigszins te slinken, maar het ging hen niet om getallen ... Het ging hen om persoonlijke groei door iedere situatie ... door welke omstandigheden dan ook .... De nadruk werd meer en meer gelegd op het persoonlijke .... en niet de phenomena eromheen ...

Hoofdstuk 6. Nieuwe Zekerheden

Peter begon te beseffen dat door hang naar materie de mens uit het paradijs viel ... Men moest leren via de binnenwereld met iets in contact te staan ... door tijd, geduld en voorzichtigheid ... Zo kon men door het geestelijke vele werelden betreden en met veel dingen in contact staan ... maar door het materiele zouden deze deuren gesloten worden ... Men at van de materiele appel ... en men werd materieel ... afgesloten van de geestelijke meerzijdige bronnen ... afgesloten van een veelzijdige, multi-dimensionale natuur ... de juweel van zoveel stralen ... Hij begon het materiele meer en meer als een gevangenis te zien ... en wist dat Hij Jezus de Nazoreeer wilde volgen in Zijn kruistocht, maar ook in Zijn Hemelvaart .... Hij vroeg zich af waarom mensen zo vaak tussen deze twee dingen blijven steken ... Jezus was niet op zoek naar materie .... materie was dood .... Jezus was op zoek naar de troon van God ... het Levende Hart van God ....

Hij begon meer en meer de verwoestende gevolgen van materiele communicatie in te zien ... Hij voelde de duistere krachten van licht en geluid ... die hem opgesloten wilden houden in deze aardse gevangenis ... Hij begon meer en meer te leren van de natuur, die hij zag als doorgangen naar het meer-dimensionale geestelijke ... Hij zag hoe bomen met elkaar communiceerden, planten en bloemen ... Hij zag hoe dieren communiceerden .... dat was niet materieel ... dat was geestelijk ....zoveel werelden met elkaar verbindende .... En ja, dit was de hemelvaart die Jezus maakte ... op een wolk .... dit was een fijnere materie ... met een diepere sensitieve inslag .... dit was ervaren ... dit was contact hebben ... dit was leven .... dit was eten van de boom des levens ... van gouden appels ....

Hij maakte zich niet meer zo druk hoe anderen dachten ... Vroeger deed het hem pijn als anderen materieel dachten ... maar nu wist hij dat zij de ketel vormden die hem weer omvormde tot datgeen wat hem gelukkig maakte ... En deze ketel kwam meer en meer op de achtergrond ... want hij begon meer en meer los te laten .... Hij had niet meer de behoefte om veel te spreken ... Het was alsof zijn hart nieuwe connecties had gevonden om zijn energie en bevindingen aan kwijt te kunnen .... En het was nu alsof het door bleef echo-en ... alsof hij nu zijn maatjes had gevonden die zijn hart weerkaatsten ...

Hij begon meer en meer de natuur op te zoeken .. vooral de bossen ... Op een dag tegen de avond, kwam tot zijn grote schrik de Levael op een tak dichtbij hem zitten ... Hij sprong achteruit .... Het leek wel alsof het gekraai tot diep in z'n hersenen doorprikte ... Toen Peter weer bijkwam merkte hij dat het beest alweer vertrokken was .... Maar toen hij thuis was gekomen voelde hij zich erg ziek ... Het werd een lange nacht met afschuwelijke nachtmerries waarin hij zichzelf zag vechten in een ijszee met allerlei vissen en draken ... aan het einde van de reeks nachtmerries krijgt hij een droom waarin hij de overkant van de ijszee bereikt ... Simson wacht

hem daar op om hem een paarse mantel aan te reiken .... Simson zegt daarbij : "Zoon, je hebt vele geheimen van vuur en ijs leren kennen. Je hebt geleerd hoe je deuren kunt openen en sluiten ... Je zult nu de gave ontvangen om ogen te openen en te sluiten ... om ogen te genezen .... en om ogen te creeeren .... Het gouden zwaard wordt nu door de ogen van de Levael gestoken ... Je bent nu de geneesheer van de ogen der bedieningen" ... En Peter zag op zijn paarse kleed allerlei verschillende ogen verschijnen ... En toen kwam een andere enorme arend tot Peter ... het was een reusachtige engel genaamd Lelsar ... De achterkant van de engel was een uil .... En toen de engel sprak, gebeurde het in alle tonen ... Peter had nog nooit zo'n stem gehoord ... En hij zag alle slechte korachskinderen wegsmelten in een zwarte appel ... De engel brak de appel doormidden en gooide een helft in de zee van vuur en de andere helft in de zee van ijs .... Vele explosies vonden plaats ... en hij sprak : "Eet nooit meer van deze appel ..."

In Charismatische gemeentes kwamen nu vele lichtverschijnselen voor ... de lichtverschijnselen brachten de mensen in een diepere extase dan ooit tevoren ... De lichten begonnen van de gezichten van de mensen te stralen en grote genezingen vonden plaats ... Zelfs verschijningen van vuur begonnen plaats te vinden ... maar Peter wist dat het allemaal vals was ... Het was de Levael die vanuit de hemelse gewesten in de aardse gewesten aan het vallen was ... En als een woeste brullende leeuw verzamelde hij zijn schaapjes ... Hij deed zichzelf voor als Christus en de Heilige Geest ... Mensen begonnen tatoeages op hun huid te krijgen die ze toeschreven aan goddelijke interventie ... Maar Peter mocht zich er niet mee bemoeien ... Peter wist dat dit nog maar het begin was .... Hij wist dat er zelfs valse wederkomsten van Christus zouden plaatsvinden, en andere soorten van valse uitstortingen van de Heilige Geest ... Maar hij mocht zich er niet mee bemoeien ... Hij mocht deze appels zelfs niet aanraken ... Hij wilde niet nog een keer opgesloten raken in de materie ... Hij wist dat deze wederkomsten van buiten hem alleen maar af wilden leiden van de wederkomsten binnenin ...

Einde

De Alverzoening van Perlottia

Theologische Thriller

Hoofdstuk 1.

Evert van Laar is lid van een Pinkstergemeente. Het is koud buiten. Evert komt thuis van zijn werk. Wat was het weer een rare dag geweest. Evert voelde zich weer zweven tussen hemel en aarde. Hij had gewoon weer dat vreemde gevoel dat hij geen controle meer had over dingen. Vroeger voelde hij zich altijd zo machtig, alsof hem niets kon overkomen. Hij wist altijd alles bij anderen klaar te spelen. Maar nu ... hij voelde zich ontzettend machteloos. De dag erna is Evert ziek, en blijft op bed liggen. Zijn moeder brengt hem wat thee met rijstwafels, en wat honing, maar veel eet hij daar niet van. Evert wil rust. Zijn moeder gaat even naast hem zitten op het bed, en houdt zijn hand vast. 'Moet ik de dokter bellen ?' vraagt zijn moeder bezorgd. Maar Evert wil niks met dokters te maken hebben. Dokters maakten het in zijn ogen vaak erger dan het was. Maar de moeder van Evert begon zich steeds meer zorgen te maken. Evert voelde zo heet aan, en was zelfs een beetje aan het ijlen. 'Verlies me dan niet ...' ijlde hij '...Mijn moeder is dood ... mijn vader is dood ...' en toen sloot Evert half zijn ogen. 'Ik ben er nog hoor,' zei z'n moeder. 'Maak je maar geen zorgen, en je vader leeft ook nog.' Evert begon te rillen en te beven. Z'n moeder nam hem in haar armen. 'Wat is er dan toch, jongen, ik ben zo bezorgd. Als het zo door gaat dan moet ik de dokter bellen, Evert.' Maar Evert gaf geen antwoord en zakte weg.

'Evert van Laar ...' Een donkere stem maakte Evert op slag wakker. Het was de dokter. De dokter ging naast hem op het bed zitten, en pakte zijn arm. 'Ga ik dood, dokter ?' vroeg Evert. 'Ik voel me zo vreemd ...' De dokter begon met z'n onderzoek. Weer begon Evert te rillen en te beven. ...'Mijn vader en moeder zijn dood .... en ik ben ook dood ...' ijlde Evert even later. 'Hij heeft hoge koorts,' zei de dokter tegen zijn moeder.

Een paar dagen later is Evert weer beter, maar het ijlen is er alleen maar erger op geworden. Evert kon alles weer doen, maar hij zei telkens dat hij nu ergens anders

was. Weer wordt de dokter erbij gehaald, en de dokter vond het hoog tijd dat Evert in het ziekenhuis onderzocht zou worden. De dokter vreesde dat er iets met de hersenen van Evert was gebeurd. In het ziekenhuis ging Evert door de hersenscan, maar omdat ze daar niets konden vinden werd Evert doorverwezen naar een psychiater. 'Ik ben dood,' zei Evert tegen de psychiater. De psychiater gebood hem te gaan zitten. 'Vertel me eens, Evert, wat is er gebeurd ?' Maar Evert kon geen volzinnen meer maken, en begon vreemd te ijlen. De psychiater vreesde dat Evert naar een psychiatrisch ziekenhuis moest, maar daar wilde de vader van Evert niets van weten. Evert's vader had de voorganger van de pinkstergemeente gebeld of ze mischien voor hem konden bidden.

Tegen de avond kwam de voorganger langs bij het gezin van Laar. Evert's zus was er ook bij, zijn broer, en natuurlijk zijn vader en moeder. De voorganger was alleen gekomen, en na even wat bijgepraat te hebben begon hij te bidden. De voorganger kreeg direkt een visioen van de hersenen van Evert. In dit visioen zag de voorganger dat er bepaalde stoffen in zijn hersenen haperden. Ook was er een storing in de bio-electrische signalen die de hersenen moesten regelen. In de geest zag de voorganger een rode prop zitten in de hersenen, en die rode prop begon uit te groeien tot een klein rood wezentje. De voorganger vertelde het verhaal met de woorden : 'Ik heb het al gezien, Evert, die scan van het ziekenhuis was ook niet alles. Wij zullen die kleine rode demoon wel even wegsturen, in de Naam van Jezus. Ineens begon Evert te grommen, en op de vloer te spugen : 'Mij krijg je er toch niet uit,' gromde Evert. Zijn gezicht was ineens helemaal verkrompen als de kop van een varken, en al snuivend rende hij naar de deur van de kamer. 'Ik gebied je te stoppen nu, in de Naam van Jezus Christus van Nazareth,' sprak de voorganger gebiedend. 'Ik heb je gezien, jij kleine rode demoon.' Evert stond ineens stokstijf stil, en de voorganger liep naar hem toe. 'Eruit jij,' beval de voorganger. En Evert begon direkt te kokhalzen. De voorganger vroeg om een emmer, en even later had Evert een roodachtige bal van slijm uitgespuwd. 'Huh, waar ben ik ?' vroeg Evert.

De dagen erna verliepen goed. Evert was bevrijd. Zijn ouders, en ook zijn broer en zus, waren dolgelukkig. Maar het geluk was maar van korte duur, en ook de voorganger scheen niks te kunnen doen. 'Ik denk dat we hier te maken hebben met een zwaardere aanval,' zei de voorganger. Ik zal de gemeente opdragen om voor Evert te bidden en te vasten. Intussen moest Evert weer terug naar de psychiater. De psychiater zag nu geen andere oplossing dan Evert naar een psychiatrische afdeling van een ziekenhuis te sturen. 'Ik heb het gezien,' zei Evert telkens. 'Overal rode demonen. Ik heb ze gezien, ik heb ze gezien.' De begeleiders moesten hem telkens rustig zien te krijgen. 'Wat, wat, blijf van me af, man,' zei Evert telkens als een goedwillende hand hem wilde sussen. 'Ik ben een robot, een cyborg. Ik heb het licht gezien.' Evert dacht dat alle mensen om hem heen lagere wezens waren dan hem, want zij waren per slot van rekening geen cyborg. 'Wat heb ik nog met jullie te maken ?' zei Evert vaak. 'Ik sta nu aangesloten op een electriciteitsbron, en ik heb een dashboard in m'n kop. Kun je het nog volgen ?' De dokters zeiden dat hij

zwaar psychotisch was, en als dit te lang zou duren, dan zou hij zelfs de ziekte schizofrenie kunnen krijgen.

Evert voelde zich verder erg goed, en vond dat hij helemaal niet ziek was. 'Wat moet ik hier ?' zei hij telkens. 'Hey, ik moet naar buiten, ik heb een opdracht te vervullen. Ik ben hier niet voor niets op deze planeet.' Op een dag kwam de voorganger bij Evert op bezoek. Evert klampte hem vast en zei : 'Voorganger, haal me hieruit. Ze hebben me hier opgesloten. Jij en ik, we hebben een opdracht te doen, buiten.' De voorganger nam Evert liefdevol in zijn armen en fluisterde : 'Wij in de gemeente houden allemaal erg veel van je, en zullen niet rusten totdat je hieruit bent. Evert, je wordt door zwaardere demonen lastiggevallen.'

Evert raakt een beetje emotioneel, en zegt hardop : 'Maar wat willen ze dan van me ? Wij hebben toch een opdracht, jij en ik ? Buiten toch ?' Evert sprak als een klein kind, en de voorganger verzekerde hem dat het waar was : Ze hadden een opdracht, namelijk de wereld voor God te winnen. Opeens raakt Evert echt overstuur : 'God, wie is dat ? Jij en ik, wij zijn toch cyborgs ? Robotten zijn wij, machines, en wij moeten de aarde klaar maken voor de installatie.' De voorganger drukt Evert een boekje in de handen, en zegt : 'Evert, ik moet nu weg, maar ik kom terug, hoor, Evert, lieverd. Ik kom terug, en wel zo snel mogelijk.'

'Wanneer zie ik je weer ?' vraagt Evert ineens met een vaderlijke stem. 'Zo snel mogelijk,' zegt de voorganger, en na nog even wat omhelzingen vertrekt de voorganger. Evert raakt hysterisch, en ze moeten hem even in de sepereercel zetten.

Met de tijd wordt Evert steeds meer onhandelbaar, en op een gegeven moment is hij zelfs gevaarlijk, vooral voor bezoek. Niemand durft hem nog op te zoeken, en de sepereercel wordt zijn vaste plek. Vaak schreeuwt hij dat hij de duivel is, en dat hij gekomen is om de aarde te vernietigen. Maar andere dagen zegt hij dat hij God is, en dat hij de aarde moet klaarmaken voor de installatie. Hij benoemt de begeleiding vaak in vreemde namen, en soms noemt hij iedereen : Huub. Op een dag is de voorganger met een andere man gekomen. Het is een exorcist. De exorcist wil wel voor Evert bidden, maar de begeleiding mag niet meer zomaar mensen toelaten, omdat Evert veel te gevaarlijk is geworden. Hij gaat vaak tekeer als een woest dier. Vaak gilt hij, vloekt hij, en tiert hij, en slaat wild om zich heen. Soms gedraagt hij zich ook keurig netjes, maar kan dan van het één op het ander moment iemand aanvliegen. Hij is onberekenbaar geworden. Na lang aandringen mogen de voorganger en de exorcist even naar Evert. Als Evert ze door het raam van de deur ziet, rent hij direkt naar de deur toe, en roept door het raam tegen de exorcist : 'Ik ken jou wel, Beelzebul, wat kom je doen ?' Evert buldert met een stem zoals ze het nog nooit hadden gehoord, en zelfs de begeleidster die erbij stond schrok verschrikkelijk. 'Evert,' zegt de voorganger luid, 'we komen je helpen. Dit is John van Zalm, en hij wil graag voor je bidden.'

'Wie ben jij,' krijst Evert, 'ik ken je niet, en ik bid niet.' Maar weer probeert de voorganger : 'Jij hoeft zelf ook niet te bidden, maar John wil even voor je bidden.'

'Ik wil niet,' klaagt Evert als een klein kind, 'dan komt Beelzebul me halen.' En dan weer met een donkere stem : 'Beelzebul, wat kom je doen, wat moet je met je oude vader. Ik ben de duivel, Krishna, ik ben Conan en Elton John, ik ben alles, alles, alles, en jij bent niets. Je hebt me diep teleurgesteld, Beelzebul. We hadden een opdracht weet je wel ... jij en ik ... we zouden de wereld veranderen. Waarom heb je me hier opgesloten ?' En dan begint Evert verward te gillen. John stapt naar het raam toe, en zegt : 'Laten we eerlijk zijn, ik ben uw zoon niet, maar je gaat er nu wel uit.' John heeft zijn handen inmiddels op het raam gezet. Direkt moet Evert flink overgeven, maar hij wordt woester en woester. Dan neemt hij een aanloop en met een enorme trap trapt hij de deur eruit, en begint te briesen. Snel komen er begeleiders aanrennen. De voorganger en de exorcist worden verzocht direkt het gebouw te verlaten. Ze zouden het alleen maar erger maken. 'Ik ben de Psychiatrische Inrichting,' schreeuwt Evert met een donkere stem, 'en ik sluit jullie allemaal op. De duivel gaat rond in het huis van David.' En met het grootste gemak smijt hij één voor één de aangerende begeleiders tegen de muur, en loopt stampvoetend naar de uitgang van het gebouw. 'Ik maal jullie allemaal tot moes,' brult Evert, 'ik ben de maalmolen van ...' maar verder komt Evert niet. Een schel alarm is afgegaan en door de intercom wordt iedereen in het ziekenhuis ingelicht en gewaarschuwt. 'Ja, waarschuw maar,' brult Evert, en snelt naar buiten. Niet lang daarna is Evert in het bos. 'Wat heb ik toch met al die malloten te maken,' bromt Evert in zichzelf. 'Ik wil niet langer deel zijn in die poppenkast ... Ik ben alles en niets ... Wat kan mij het schelen wie ik ben. Ik ben een cyborg, aangesloten op de energiebron van ... van .... Ja waar kom ik ook al weer vandaan ?' Evert begint te brullen, en rent dieper het bos in. 'Ik ga niet meer terug, ik ga niet meer terug ...' Na een tijdje valt Evert uitgeput tegen een boom in slaap. Als hij wakker wordt vraagt hij zich af waar hij is. Hij kan zich niets meer herinneren. Het laatste wat hij kan herinneren is dat hij van zijn werk terugkomt, alsof hij zweeft tussen hemel en aarde.

Nietsvermoedend loopt Evert naar zijn ouderlijk huis. Hij belt aan, en zijn moeder doet open. Als ze hem ziet slaakt ze een gil, en rent de kamer in. 'Mama ?' roept Evert stomverbaasd. 'Wat is er aan de hand ?'

Iedereen is snel op de hoogte van het grote nieuws. Evert is bevrijd. Hoe het is gebeurd weten ze niet, maar Evert is weer de goede oude Evert. Ze hadden daar in de pinkstergemeente zo lang voor gebeden en gevast. Ook de voorganger is erg blij. Er valt weer normaal met Evert te praten en ook om te gaan. Evert heeft natuurlijk een groot getuigenis, maar er is ook wat anders bijgekomen, namelijk een profetische gave. Evert heeft namelijk nu altijd een kader van rode lichtstrepen in zijn ogen, waarmee hij speciale dingen kan zien.

Hoofdstuk 2.

Evert heeft ineens zoveel succes in zijn manier van vertellen, en ziet de dingen zo helder, dat de voorganger hem eens in de zoveel tijd laat preken. De diensten zijn dan erg speciaal, niet alleen om de indringende en boeiende betogen, maar ook vanwege Evert's gevoeligheid. Evert heeft een diepe gave van genezing en van profetie, en weet zijn publiek op een bijzondere manier telkens diep te ontroeren. De rode lichten in zijn ogen geven hem bijzondere helderheid, bijna betoverend, en laten hem hele speciale dingen zien. De rode lichten zijn eigenlijk altijd in zijn ogen aanwezig, en de voorganger noemt het een eeuwig visioen. Op een dag stelt de voorganger voor dat Evert ook voor anderen bidt of zij die permanente visie mogen ontvangen. Evert vindt dat een goed idee, en doet aan het einde van zijn preek een oproep of degenen die dat willen naar voren willen komen. Een grote groep komt naar voren, maar dan voelt Evert ineens de droefheid van de Heilige Geest, en de Heilige Geest spreekt zacht tot hem dat de permanente visie alleen aan hen wordt gegeven die heilig leven. Evert merkt dat hij voor een paar mensen niet kan bidden, en stuurt ze terug naar hun stoelen, met de boodschap waar ze aan moeten werken. De anderen die naar voren zijn gekomen legt Evert de handen op, en bidt of ze de gave mogen ontvangen. Vrij snel valt het licht van de Heilige Geest op hen, en ontvangen ze de lichten in hun ogen, maar bij sommigen zijn het andere kleuren. Sommigen beginnen heel hard te lachen in de Geest, en zelfs te schaterlachen, terwijl anderen op hun knieen vallen. Sommigen beginnen te smeken tot God. Degenen die de gave hebben ontvangen kijken op een hele andere manier de zaal in. De anderen konden het in hun ogen zien dat ze wat hadden ontvangen van de Heere.

De voorganger is erg tevreden, en al gauw bereikt het nieuws ook andere pinkstergemeenten. Al snel is Evert een geliefd en veelgevraagd spreker. In een van de diensten die Evert hield riep iemand eens : 'Het is het licht van het bloed van Christus. Mijn ogen zijn gewassen. Verheerlijkt zij God.'

Maar op een dag gebeurt er iets vreselijks. Evert wordt aangereden door een dronken automobilist en verongelukt. De gemeente is in rep en roer. En omdat sommigen nog steeds denken dat Evert onaantastbaar is, geloven ze dat God hem zal opwekken. Maar er gebeurt niets. De teleurstelling is groot. Maar niet lang daarna ziet de gemeente het als een taak om door te gaan met het werk dat Evert heeft gedaan. Dat wat Evert leerde diende grootschaals doorverteld te worden. En niet lang daarna beginnen er ook uitwassen te ontstaan, omdat de voortgang van de leringen stopte toen Evert stierf. Evert kon hen niet meer in het rechte spoor houden, nu hij er niet meer was. Veel dwaalleer ontstond er rondom zijn leringen, en ook begonnen enkelen de gave te misbruiken.

De voorganger was ook erg verdrietig na het overlijden van Evert, die zo'n goede vriend van hem was. De voorganger begon zoveel mogelijk bandjes te verzamelen waar Evert op sprak, en wilde het samenvoegen tot een boek. Uiteindelijk waren

het zeven dikke boeken geworden als aandenken aan Evert en zijn werk, waar ze het mee moesten doen. Vele pinkstervoorgangers kregen de zevendelige serie in huis, en ook enkele fanatieke aanhangers. Ook werden er al snel vele boeken over Evert en zijn werk geschreven, en Evert werd bestempeld als een grote Profetische Hervormer.

In die boeken waren ook vaak plaatjes te zien van die zogenaamde dashboards die God je in je ogen kon geven. Het waren een soort profetische brillen met frames, kaders en tabellen. Zelfs het graf van Evert werd drukbezocht. Iedereen hoopte daar nog iets van zijn zalving te ontvangen. De voorganger en ook John, de exorcist, werden de hoofdvertegenwoordigers van deze nieuwe profetische hervorming. Evert besteedde altijd veel aandacht aan het beschrijven van de verschillende onderdelen van het Bloed van Christus, en hoe daar mee omgegaan moest worden, maar de voorganger en John richtten zich hoofdzakelijk op het profetische deel waarover Evert sprak. Die nieuwe gave bleek toch beter aan te slaan dan het betoog over het Bloed van Christus. De zus van Evert vond dat wel jammer, want zij vond de theorie van Evert over het Bloed van Christus minstens zo belangrijk, en fundamenteel. De gave kwam immers voort uit het Bloed van Christus. Sinds Evert eens voor haar had gebeden of ze het Bloed van Christus mocht ontvangen voelde ze zich zo anders, alsof haar bloed borrelde met een mystieke kracht. Evert zei haar altijd dat dat de weelderige armoe van Christus was. Het hield haar eenvoudig en dankbaar.

Suzette miste haar broer heel erg. Ze zou nog zo graag willen dat hij weer eens voor haar bad. Maar dat kon niet meer. Ze schreef veel over hem in haar dagboek. Evert had haar veel meer verteld dan wat hij ooit gepreekt had. En ze schreef altijd alles op in haar dagboek. Daarom waren die dagboeken zo bijzonder voor haar. Op een dag besloot ze eens alles wat ze had opgeschreven, en al haar andere herinneringen aan Evert op te schrijven tot een boek. Het werd een heel dik boek, en ze besloot het eens aan de voorganger te laten lezen. Een lange tijd ging er overheen.

Op een avond werd er gebeld bij huize van Laar. Het was de voorganger, en hij had tranen in zijn ogen. Suzette deed de deur open. 'Wat een wonderbaarlijk boek is dit. Dit kende ik allemaal nog niet,' zei de voorganger, 'het lijkt erop dat hij het beste deel aan jou heeft gegeven.' Suzette kreeg een kleur, en liet de voorganger binnen. Ze spraken erover hoe ze deze boodschappen aan de gemeente moesten doorgeven, en of het daar al de juiste tijd voor was. Het ging over de gaven van het Bloed van Christus.

Aan het einde van het gesprek vroeg de voorganger of hij samen met haar nog even naar Evert's kamer toemocht om daar te bidden. Suzette stemde toe, en samen liepen ze naar boven. Alles was nog precies hetzelfde als voor de dood van Evert. Ze hadden nog geen spullen weggehaald of de kamer veranderd. Suzette was sinds de dood van haar broer niet meer op zijn kamer geweest. Het zou bij haar veel te

sterke emoties oproepen. Toen de voorganger naar binnen wilde lopen bleef Suzette staan, en draaide zich weer om. 'Ik kan het niet,' zei ze vlug, maar gaat u maar naar binnen. De voorganger begreep het wel, en liep alleen naar binnen. Wat zou ze graag willen dat haar vader en moeder er op dat moment waren, maar die waren een tijdje voor hun rust op vakantie. Zo konden ze alles ook veel beter verwerken. Haar andere broer woonde niet meer thuis. Na een uurtje vertrok de voorganger weer. Nadat hij was vertrokken kreeg Suzette toch even sterk het gevoel en het verlangen om even naar haar broers kamer te gaan. Rustig liep ze de trap op naar boven, slikte even, en liep toen recht op de kamer van haar overleden broer af. Ze opende de deur, liep naar binnen, en keek in het rond. Ja, alles was nog precies hetzelfde. Buiten was alles al donker. Het was al laat. Stilletjes trok Suzette de gordijnen dicht. Ze keek naar Evert's bureau, waar wat pennen op lagen. Even ging ze achter het bureau zitten, en trok een la open. Hier lagen wat papieren in. Toen stond ze op en liep naar zijn klerenkast. Toen ze de kast opende zag ze op één van de planken een soort schrift liggen. Snel begon ze er in te bladeren. Het bleek een dagboek te zijn van Evert. Ze wist niet dat hij een dagboek bijhield. Ineens gleed er een los papier uit het schrift en viel op de grond. Suzette raapte het haastig op.

Hardop begon ze te lezen : De Tokon, een hemels boek. Leer van het Bloed van Christus. De eerste wet : Niets komt rechtstreeks. Alles komt met omwegen. De tweede wet : Je kunt alleen iets gemaskerd bereiken. De derde wet : De leugen bezit vaak meer waarheid dan de waarheid. De vierde wet : Een stad wordt gebouwd op vele raadselen. Ineens liet Suzette geschokt het papier uit haar handen glijden. Dit was privé-bezit van haar broer. Hier had hij haar nooit over verteld. Ineens begon Suzette bang te worden, heel bang. Wat zou ze allemaal wel niet gaan tegenkomen in zijn dagboek ? Evert had haar zo vaak gezegd dat het voor veel dingen de tijd nog niet was. En misschien zouden er wel dingen in zijn dagboek staan die ze gewoon niet wilde weten. Voorzichtig raapte ze het papier weer op, en wilde het samen met het dagboek terugleggen. Was ze wel gemachtigd om dit dagboek te lezen. Het waren misschien wel geheimen tussen Evert en God. Maar misschien stonden er wel dingen in die Suzette moest weten. Trillend en met kloppend hart probeerde ze toch vluchtig verder te lezen, maar ineens was het alsof iemand haar de keel probeerde dicht te knijpen. Was het God, of was het misschien de duivel of één van zijn demonen, of verbeelde ze zich het maar, en was het gewoon haar angst. Het was wel alsof er iets in haar schreeuwde : 'Niet verder lezen !'

Toch kon ze zichzelf moeilijk bedwingen. Misschien was het wel erg belangrijk dat ze verder las. En weer las ze hardop : De vijfde wet : Niets kan de sleutel beter dragen dan een goed en meesterlijk verhaal. De zesde wet : Zij die de vijf wetten beheersen kunnen de stad van het heilige bloed binnengaan, genaamd De Perlottia. De zevende wet : Zij die in Perlottia zijn leren de kunst van het verlokken, maar bedrog wordt gestrafd. De achtste wet : De Alverzoening der dingen betekent dat uit alles het goede wordt bevrijd, en dat die geest dan alle dingen transformeert. Dit is de sleutel van vertaling, en de alverzoening van Perlottia.

Suzette begon steeds haastiger te lezen : De negende wet : Zij die de Alverzoening van Perlottia zijn binnengegaan, hebben het geheim van de schoonheid gevonden, en wassen zich in de rivier van vergetelheid. De tiende wet : Het tienvoudige Rad van Perlottia zal de rest van hun leven tot hen spreken, tot in alle eeuwigheden. Dit Rad zal hen uit het Rad van Reincarnatie leiden, en in het Rad van Excarnatie brengen en van Reexcarnatie. Dit is ook het Brandende Rad van Perlottia.

Wat was dit ? Het klonk allemaal heel oosters. Was dit van Evert ? Het was een los blad, maar het was wel zijn handschrift. Suzette besloot het dagboek mee te nemen naar haar eigen kamer. Misschien dat het dagboek meer helderheid zou geven. Als het niet van haar broer zou wezen, dan zou ze denken dat het een lijst met stellingen was van één of andere nieuwe secte. Of zou Evert ook in het geheim in zo'n secte binnengeleid zijn ? Suzette stond voor een raadsel. Het klonk allemaal zo mystiek en ver weg. Of zou het een openbaring van Evert zijn waarmee hij worstelde ?

Suzette besloot om te wachten met lezen tot de volgende ochtend. Ze was erg moe. Die nacht kreeg ze een droom over een grote rode leerachtige spin die haar greep met z'n harige poten. Badend in zweet werd ze wakker. In de ochtend werd er gebeld. Suzette greep naar haar telefoon, en nam op. Het was de voorganger. Hij zou een brief hebben ontvangen van de man die in een dronken bui Evert had aangereden. Even kreeg Suzette de rillingen. De man was alweer op vrije voeten, en had erge spijt. Hij wilde deze zondag graag naar de dienst komen, ook om met Suzette te praten. Suzette wist niet goed of ze daar al aan toe was, maar volgens de voorganger was het beter. Volgens hem zou ze zo ook veel beter de dood van haar broer kunnen verwerken.

Uiteindelijk gaat ze zelfs na de dienst met de man mee naar huis. Hij woont in een afgelegen boerderij aan de rand van het bos. Suzette vindt het heel eng, maar gaat toch mee voor de man, die erge spijt heeft. Bij de man thuisgekomen gaat Suzette op de bank zitten, en praat nog even een tijdje na met de man. Maar dan valt haar oog op een vreemd schilderij van een rode spin. Suzette schrikt. De man kijkt op en zegt : Ja, dat had ik ge-erfd van iemand. Dan gaat de man even de kamer uit om wat drinken uit de kelder te halen. De man blijft erg lang weg, en na een tijdje loopt Suzette de gang op. Dan valt haar oog op een schilderij met een bootje erop met de naam De Perlottia. Weer schrikt Suzette. Was dat niet zo'n naam van dat papier uit Evert's dagboek ? Suzette krijgt ditmaal een naar voorgevoel. Zou Evert die man al gekend hebben ? Zouden ze samen bij dezelfde secte hebben gezeten ? Suzette loopt door naar de kelder. 'Is daar iemand ?' Maar er wordt niet geantwoord.

Suzette loopt de kelder binnen, het trapje af. Plotseling valt de deur achter haar dicht. Als ze naar de deur toerent is die op slot. 'Ik dacht dat je nooit zou komen,' zei een stem van beneden. Een schaduw valt over Suzette heen, en ze wordt neergeslagen.

Later wordt ze wakker in een vreemd bed, vastgebonden. De man staat grijnzend voor haar. 'Wat heb je met mijn broer gedaan ?' vraagt Suzette ... 'Je kende hem al, hè ? er was opzet in het spel, geef maar toe.' Maar weer slaat de man haar, en weer verliest Suzette haar bewustzijn. Als ze later weer wakker wordt is er niemand anders in de kamer. Suzette probeert zichzelf los te maken, en na een hele lange tijd lukt dat eindelijk. De deur blijkt op slot te zijn, en vanuit het raam gaat alles heel steil naar beneden. Ze zou dood kunnen vallen. Gelukkig staat er een kast met wat kleren. Suzette bindt de kleren strak aan elkaar, en maakt een uiteinde goed vast aan de verwarming. Dan klimt ze voorzichtig naar beneden. Helemaal in paniek rent Suzette weg. Na een lange tijd komt ze thuis. Het is al nacht. Direkt belt ze de voorganger die zegt dat hij direkt zal komen. Als de voorganger na enige minuten aanbelt doet Suzette snel de deur open. Samen gaan ze naar Evert's kamer. Net als de voorganger voorstelt de politie te bellen, wordt er beneden hard op de deur geslagen. De voorganger rent naar beneden, en dan is het een hele lange tijd stil. Suzette durft niet naar beneden te gaan, want misschien is het die man wel. Dan hoort ze ineens voetstappen naar boven komen. Tot haar grote schrik is het de man die de dood van haar broer heeft veroorzaakt. Grijnzend gaat hij in de deuropening van de kamer staan. Waar is de voorganger nu gebleven ? Dan ineens hoort ze weer voetstappen. Zelfs van meerdere personen, en het lijkt wel alsof ze iets zwaars dragen. Gelukkig, het was de voorganger, met een andere man van de gemeente. Ze droegen een lange rode kist met vreemde weelderige versieringen van goud en andere edele stoffen. 'Ze weet teveel,' zei de voorganger nors. En ruw werd Suzette in de kist geduwd. Nog even ziet ze het grijnzende gezicht van de voorganger, en wat verder weg als in een schaduw het gezicht van dat andere gemeentelid. Suzette is te verlamd van schrik om nog hulp te roepen. Dan gaat de kist dicht, en wordt alles donker.

Suzette schrikt wakker. Ze had alles gedroomd. Ze had heel lang in coma gelegen. Niet haar broer was door een dronken automobilist geschept, maar zijzelf. En Evert was nooit uit het opvangscentrum weggekomen. Evert was haar gehandicapte broer. Wat een vreemde en lange droom had ze gehad tijdens haar coma, en zo levensecht. Suzette kon zich nog niet bewegen, maar was wel bij bewustzijn gekomen. Nu moest ze alleen nog wachten op iemand die dat zou ontdekken. Ze was in ieder geval in goede handen, in het ziekenhuis. Het was nacht. Ze kon zich herinneren dat ze vroeger eens eerder een droom had gehad over een rode spin. Die kroop toen bij haar moeder in bed. Een paar dagen na die droom hoorde ze dat haar moeder zwanger was, van Evert.

Hoofdstuk 3.

Suzette is blij haar familie weer te zien, vooral haar broertje Evert. Evert was veel jonger dan de Evert uit de droom. Het was altijd een lollig ventje, en Suzette kon met recht zeggen dat hij haar gelukkig had gemaakt. Ze zou geen andere broer

willen hebben. Er was een fruitpakket en een bloemstuk gekomen van de man die haar had aangereden, met een kaartje erbij : 'Ik zal het mezelf nooit vergeven, en ik verwacht dat ook niet van jou. Ik zal hier zwaar voor moeten boeten, en ik zal de rest van mijn leven ervoor zorgen dat je weer gelukkig wordt.' Suzette kreeg een flinke huilbui. Ze had natuurlijk heel veel gemengde gevoelens. Eigenlijk wilde Suzette helemaal niets meer met hem te maken hebben, zodat ze het zou kunnen verwerken en vergeten. Dat liet ze hem ook door een kaartje weten.

Suzette dacht nog veel na over de droom die ze in coma had. Telkens dacht ze weer na over de Alverzoening van Perlottia, die beschreven stond op dat papier in Evert's dagboek. In het echt had Evert geen dagboek. Hij kon niet eens schrijven. Ze sprak er ook met anderen over. Op een dag nam een verpleegster een boek mee vanuit de ziekenhuis-bibliotheek. Dat boek ging over de Alverzoening. Het ging over gevoelige en zachtmoedige mensen die geloofden dat de hel maar tijdelijk was, en dat uiteindelijk iedereen naar de hemel zou gaan. Het was een soort vagevuur waar alle zondaren in gereinigd werden, om dan alsnog naar de hemel te kunnen. Bij de één duurde dit kort, en bij de andere heel lang. Maar het boek was duidelijk tegen dit soort stellingen gekeerd, want de schrijver zag het als een soort slavenkwekerij. Uiteindelijk bestond er helemaal niet zoiets als een vrije wil. Vroeg of laat zou God je pakken, en dan moest je hem voor altijd dienen. De schrijver vond de alverzoening theologische onzin, maar wel begrijpelijk. Zou je kunnen leven met de gedachte dat er mensen of andere wezens voor altijd gepijnigd zouden worden ? Dan moest je wel erg wreed en ongevoelig zijn. De schrijver trok het bestaan van de hel in twijfel, en in ieder geval de altijddurende hel. Volgens hem zou wat er dan aan hel zou bestaan na een bepaalde tijd met zondaren en al vernietigd worden. Dit zou dan de vierde dood heten : Deze zielen zouden alles vergeten, totdat ze in het niets zouden zijn opgelost. Ook zijzelf zouden worden vergeten, anders zou de pijn van de hemelbewoners blijven bestaan. Suzette vond het wel een interessant boek, maar vond er niets over de Alverzoening van Perlottia. Zou het een secte wezen, of zou het misschien helemaal niet bestaan ?

Na een paar maanden was Suzette helemaal weer de oude. Toch had ze in haar genezingsproces medelijden gekregen met de man die haar dit alles had aangedaan. Deze zat nu in de gevangenis. Op een dag besloot Suzette hem op te zoeken. De man was er helemaal emotioneel van en behandelde haar alsof ze een godin was. De man zei dat hij in de gevangenis na het lezen van een boek tot bekering was gekomen. Hij liep op zijn boekenkast af, en haalde er een roodgekleurd boek uit. 'Hier,' zei hij, 'je mag het wel houden. Ik heb er heel veel aan gehad.' Suzette schrok even. Op het kaft staarden grote letters haar aan : Perlottia. 'Waar gaat het over ?' vroeg Suzette. 'Neem het maar mee,' zei de man, 'daar kom je vanzelf wel achter.' Toen Suzette thuiskwam begon ze direkt in het boek te lezen. Ze hoopte door het boek duidelijkheid te krijgen over de droom die ze in haar coma-tijd had gehad. Het boek ging over vogels, over allerlei verschillende vogels. En niet alleen dat, maar ook over vogels op andere planeten. Dat waren dan niet zo zeer vogels van vlees en bloed, maar van subtiele energieen. Ja, het

boek ging veel over subtiele energie. De energie was zo fijn dat het niet zichtbaar was, maar het kon wel allerlei dingen veroorzaken. Ze zouden gedachtes kunnen veroorzaken, beslissingen, en verschillende weersgesteldheden. Suzette had eigenlijk verwacht dat het een boek over het geloof was, omdat de man zei dat hij erdoor tot bekering was gekomen. Maar misschien bedoelde hij er wel iets anders mee. Maar verderop in het boek ging het ineens over Christus, en over de legendes van wat er met Hem gebeurde in het dodenrijk. Ineens ging het over het Bloed van Christus was als een betaalmiddel was waarmee hij zielen loskocht uit verschrikkelijke plaatsen na de dood. Het ging over de burcht Perlottia waaruit het Bloed van Christus zou stromen, en over de strijd tussen de vogels van Perlottia en de vogels van Aldebaran, een rode planeet. De vogels van Perlottia kochten zielen vrij uit de martelplaatsen van de vogels van Aldebaran. Het betaalmiddel was het Bloed van Christus. Daarom is heel veel Bloed van Christus, en heel veel eigenschappen en waarheden van het Bloed van Christus nog in handen van de vogels van Aldebaran, en zij misbruiken dit wonderlijke en levendmakende bloed. Zij bewaken dan ook de stenen tabletten waar de leer van het Bloed van Christus op beschreven staat. Die Leer heet de Tokon, en die tabletten zouden gelezen zijn door enkele profeten in geestesvervoering. Het is een deel van Gods Woord dat nog door een zegel wordt afgesloten. In de Bijbel zou staan in het boek Openbaring dat na het verwijderen van de zegels het Eeuwig Evangelie openbaar zou worden. Bij het verwijderen van de zegels zou er telkens veel bloed vloeien als teken dat de duivel het Bloed van Christus moest teruggeven. De zegels over het Bloed van Christus, die het nog tegenhielden, waren de kooplieden die dit bloed hadden aangenomen als losprijs. Zij waren de vogels van Aldebaran.

Door de Alverzoening van Perlottia zou al het Bloed van Christus weer terugkomen tot de burcht. Dan zouden de schalen met het Bloed van Christus over de aarde worden uitgegoten tot een oordeel, en tot een nieuwe schepping. Zij die dan overbleven zouden elkaar kunnen verstaan, ongeacht de taal. Het zou de Alverzoening der talen zijn.

Suzette probeert het allemaal weer te vergeten, en stuurt het terug aan de man in de gevangenis. Maar op een dag staan er twee mannen aan de deur. Ze dragen bruine roodachtige kleren, een beetje leerachtig met stukken fluweel ertussen. Ze vertellen Suzette dat ze christenen zijn die het Eeuwig Evangelie brengen. Suzette zegt direkt dat ze al bekeerd is, en wil de deur weer dichtdoen, maar één van de mannen vraagt haar of ze misschien weleens van Perlottia heeft gehoord. Suzette schrikt. Het blijft haar dus achtervolgen. Tenslotte besluit ze de twee mannen binnen te laten. Ze vertellen een soortgelijk verhaal als in het boek wat ze gelezen had, en zeggen dat niet alleen de tempel is vervuild, maar ook het Bloed van Christus, geinfiltreerd door de vijand. Zo zou er diep in de burcht van Perlottia een verwilderde binnenplaats zijn, genaamd Radth, waar kipdemonen wonen. Zij zouden de Beker van Christus, de Heilige Talgamen, bewaken. In deze beker zou zich het verborgen en verzegelde Bloed van Christus zich bevinden. De eindtijd-christenen hadden niet alleen de taak om de zegels van de tempel, het Woord, te

verbreken om het Eeuwig Evangelie te kunnen ontvangen, maar ze hadden ook de taak om de zegels van de Beker te verbreken, door de demonische kippen van Radth te verslaan.

'Zijn jullie een nieuwe secte ofzo ?' vraagt Suzette ineens midden in het verhaal. Maar dan zegt één van de mannen : Het is nu de tijd dat het beestje eens bij de naam wordt genoemd. In dit verhaal is de gevestigde kerk de secte, want is het niet de kerk die van het Woord zoiets griezeligs heeft gemaakt door de Eeuwige Verdoemenis. Wij prediken het Eeuwige Evangelie, en de Alverzoening. En nog eens wat : De kerk heeft het Woord in de gevangenis gestopt, in de zogenaamde Canon. Daarna heeft de kerk het Woord verandert door iets wat ze de Onfeilbaarheid van de Heilige Vader, de Paus noemden. Hij had de macht het Woord van Christus te veranderen, toe te voegen en af te nemen. En dit soort dingen gebeurde ook al in het Oude Testament door de Joden. Is dat dan niet sectarisch ? Of is iets zodra het gevestigd is niet meer sectarisch ?

Maar dan zegt Suzette : De Alverzoening is de Leer van Eeuwige Slavernij, want je vrije wil wordt vroeg of laat door een soort Vagevuur weggehaald. Als jullie dan in Perlottia zeggen te geloven : De Alverzoening van Perlottia is een hele andere alverzoening, die te maken heeft met de Terugkeer van het Bloed van Christus. Dat had ik eens in een boek gelezen. Zeg, hebben jullie het Eeuwig Evangelie al in bezit als boek ? Maar de mannen schudden hun hoofd. Nee, want er waren alleen nog maar boeken uitgekomen over wat er in het Eeuwig Evangelie zou staan. Het boek zou pas ergens in de eindtijd verschijnen, zoals de Bijbel in Openbaring liet weten. Ook begonnen de mannen zich te verdedigen over hun uitspraken. Ze zeiden dat ze het zelf ook nog niet helemaal begrepen hoe de Alverzoening zou zijn in verband met Perlottia, en voorzichtig probeerden ze wat standpunten terug te halen. Ze hadden als excuus dat ze zelf vroeger in een Alverzoenings-gemeente zaten. Ieder mens, en ieder wezen zou uiteindelijk zalig worden, oftewel naar de hemel gaan. De hel was maar tijdelijk. Nou, de tijdelijkheid van de hel, daar kon Suzette wel inkomen. Weer begon ze uit te leggen dat de Alverzoenings-leer een leer is van slavernij, want uiteindelijk kiest iedereen voor God. Dat klopte volgens Suzette niet, en ze vond dat echte gevaarlijke demonen die zich voor altijd tegen God hadden gekeerd daarom door die leer beschermd werden. Zo zou de bediening van exorcisme niet goed kunnen werken. Misschien was niet alleen de leer van Eeuwige Verdoemenis een zegel dat verbroken moest worden, maar ook de tegenovergestelde leer van de Alverzoening. De mannen keken elkaar aan, en knikten bedenkelijk. Toen vertelde Suzette over haar coma-tijd en wat ze daarin had beleefd. Maar één van de mannen keek op zijn horloge. Het was voor hen tijd om te gaan. En na een snel en koel gebaar van afscheid vertrokken ze.

Wel hadden ze een foldertje achtergelaten met een adres waar diensten werden gehouden. Suzette besloot er eens een keer te gaan kijken. Ze kwam aan bij een klein zaaltje, half onder de grond. Het was een soort heuveltje, met een dalletje waarin een pad uitkwam bij een grote deur. Binnenin was het er een beetje donker.

Suzette zag een boekentafel, en door de hal kwam ze in een wat ruimere verlichte zaal. Er waren wat groene lampjes aan de muren. De dienst was al begonnen, en Suzette ging een beetje achterin zitten, dichtbij de deur. Suzette keek in het rond, maar zag de twee mannen die bij haar aan de deur gekomen waren niet. De spreker had het over de reis die iedere christen moest maken naar de Beker van Christus, de Heilige Talgamen. Hier zou het Eeuwige Bloed zich bevinden, dat levendmaakte en wonderlijk was. Hiervoor moest iedere christen de zegels van de Beker overwinnen, de boze geesten van Radth. Talgamen was zowel enkelvoud als meervoud. In het meervoud waren het de verborgen hemelse wezens van de Beker. Die zouden dan de christen verder vergezellen op zijn reis naar de sieraden van het kruis, de Lokogamen. Deze felbegeerde hemelse bezittingen werden bewaakt door stierachtige demonen, in een nog diepere binnenplaats van Perlottia, genaamd Acha. De leider van die stierachtige demonen was een skelet, genaamd Canon. Dit skelet brandde vaak, en was de verpersoonlijking van de Canon. Even gingen de rillingen door Suzette heen. Dit skelet hield de christenen gevangen, en gebruikte hen als slaven. Ook hield dit skelet hen af van de Lokogamen. Aan één van de muren naast één van de groene lampen hing een schilderij met zo'n skelet. Dit skelet zat op een zwart paard, en droeg een rood kleed. Het leek wel een beetje op een tafereeltje uit het boek Openbaring. Vervolgens zette de spreker zijn preek voort over Openbaring tien, over een geopend boek. De man vergeleek de sprekende donderslagen die verzegeld werden met de Lokogamen. Het geopende boek waarmee een engel neerdaalde vergeleek hij met het Eeuwige Evangelie wat zou komen. De sieraden van het lijden waren volgens hem verzegeld met de Canon en zijn boze machten, en deze moesten eerst verslagen worden. De Lokogamen zouden volgens hem het Bloed van de Gaven dragen, zoals het Bloed van Profetie, het Bloed van Geloof, het Bloed van Genezing, het Bloed van Onderscheiding, en ook het Bloed van de Bedieningen, zoals het Profetische Bloed, het Apostolische Bloed, het Richterlijke Bloed, het Anfitaatse Bloed. En toen begon de man de gaven en de bedieningen uitvoerig te bespreken. Hij zei dat hij eens een open visioen had gehad over de Lokogamen, waarin zij als grote flessen rondom een enorm veld stonden. Plotseling kwamen er stieren rennen uit de enorme flessen, en kwamen op hem af. Hij kreeg toen een degen van de Heer, maar zei toen : 'Maar Heer, ik ben toch geen stierenvechter ?' Waarop de Heer sprak : 'Nee, maar je bent wel een demoonvechter.' Toen veranderden de grote flessen in sieraden en kwamen op zijn degen terecht.

Toen hij alle stierdemonen had verslagen verschenen er grote lichtende letters voor hem : De Aflaat van Perlottia. Dit was een hemelse winkel, een hemelse bar, waar niet met materieel geld betaald moest worden, maar met geestelijk geld. Hier moest hij leren een Schenker van de Heer te worden. Hij moest er hier op toezien dat er betaald werd voor elke gave en elke zegen van God. Zij die hierin volleerd waren, kregen toegang tot de Alverzoening van Perlottia, de Heilige Ringen van het Bloed van Christus, de Eeuwige en Algehele Verzoening van het Bloed van Christus. Maar ook deze Alverzoening was verzegeld. Hier zou de gelovige een laatste gevecht tegen Canon moeten leveren, en kennis maken met zijn verborgen legers.

Ineens krijgt Suzette weer rillingen, en een vreemde angst overvalt haar. Het lijkt wel alsof ze er niet meer is, alsof ze zweeft tussen hemel en aarde, misschien wel tussen de aarde en de hel. Er klopt iets niet, het lijkt wel alsof ze niet wakker is. Ze staat op, en wil door de deur naar buiten rennen, maar ineens lijkt het wel alsof de tijd stilstaat. Bij de deur staat een skelet, en Suzette kan zich nauwelijks bewegen van de schrik. Alles gaat zo traag ineens, alsof elke seconde honderden jaren duurt. Suzette probeert te gillen. Het is een zwart skelet die een beetje krom staat. Kijkt hij nou naar haar, kijkt hij dwars door haar heen, of kijkt hij ergens anders naar ? Ineens zegt hij met een ijzeren schelle stem die door de zaal lijkt te bulderen : 'Suzette van Laar, je moet voor Christus verschijnen.' Dan wordt Suzette voorgeleid in een immens grote zaal. De poorten in die zaal zijn zo hoog en breed dat wel miljoenen zielen in elke deuropening kunnen staan. De toppen lijken te verdwijnen in de mist. Overal is mist, en in de verte staat een brandheldere troon. Hoog op de troon zit Canon, als een zwart gebogen skelet, en soms is hij grijs. 'Maar dat is Christus toch niet ?' gilt Suzette. Maar het zwarte licht gebogen skelet naast haar zegt dat Canon Christus is. 'Dat meen je toch niet ?' gilt Suzette. Maar er is zoveel geruis, dat niemand haar lijkt te verstaan, en niemand geeft antwoord. Elke seconde lijkt jaren te duren. Canon opent een immens grote Bijbel met een leerachtig donkerbruin soepel kaft waarin zilverachtige bladen met mist zijn omgeven. Ook opent hij een ander boek waarin Suzette's daden beschreven staan. Langzaam wordt Suzette voorgeleid. Weer gaat alles trager en trager, totdat het lijkt alsof de tijd helemaal stilstaat. Dan leest Canon heel snel haar zonden voor, vanaf haar geboortedag tot nu. Het gaat in een razendsnel tempo, en Suzette krijgt er buikpijn van. Radeloos van angst wordt ze. 'Jullie hebben mij uitgekozen als Christus,' buldert Canon. 'Nu zullen jullie dan ook door mij veroordeeld worden, en ik straf voor eeuwig.' Weer begint Suzette te gillen, en schreeuwt : 'De Ware Christus zal mij hier ook uit loskopen, door Zijn Eeuwig Bloed, door Zijn Eeuwig Evangelie.'

'Dat evangelie is er niet. Niemand heeft dat boek,' buldert Canon. 'Je zult hier voor eeuwig moeten sterven, en je ziel zal voor eeuwig als slaaf in mijn koninkrijk arbeiden. Jullie hebben je zelf door mij laten ketenen, en dat is eens en voor altijd. Aan de canon verandert niks, want die is eeuwig. Ik ben de Eeuwige.'

Maar dan schreeuwt Suzette : 'God heeft in Zijn Woord beloofd, dat dat boek zou gaan komen, in Openbaring.' Maar dan schreeuwt Canon, terwijl er lava uit zijn mond stroomt dat hem helemaal omhuld : 'Dat boek is verzegeld, en niemand kan die zegels verbreken.' De lava begint te stomen, en begint als een zee richting Suzette te stromen. Het is alsof haar oren knappen, en ze bijt op haar tong van de pijn. Wezens in kappen komen door poorten naast de troon binnen, en zetten zich naast Canon. 'Laat het oordeel beginnen,' krijst één van de wezens. Suzette zinkt weg in wanhoop. Weer worden er allerlei boeken geopend, en als de wezens het vonnis beginnen uit te spreken wordt Suzette hysterisch. Maar dan ineens gaat er een poort open aan de zijkant van de zaal. Een klein jongetje komt op Suzette aflopen. Het is een gehandicapt jongetje, Evert, haar broertje. Het jongetje begint

gekke bekken te trekken om zijn door angst verlamde zus op te vrolijken. Wat moet hij nu hier, en is hij wel tegen Canon opgewassen. 'Grijpt dat joch,' krijst Canon. Direkt verschijnen er wachters van alle kanten met speren, en lopen op het ventje af. Het jongetje haalt een klein boekje uit zijn zak en gooit het naar zijn zus. Het boekje wordt groter en groter, en komt in de armen van Suzette terecht.

'Haha,' buldert Canon, 'je dacht altijd dat je uit je coma was verlost, maar dit bewijst wel weer dat je nooit meer wakker bent geworden. Je bent in mijn handen. Dankzij de kerk ben je van mij, en dankzij het feit dat het Eeuwig Evangelie verzegeld is.'

'Maar hier heb ik het Eeuwig Evangelie,' schreeuwt Suzette, en tilt het boek hoog op. Maar dan ontdekt ze dat er sloten op het boek zitten ... de zegels. 'De deuren zijn dicht, Suzette,' buldert Canon. 'Je kunt nergens heen.' En toen stond Canon op van zijn troon en liep regelrecht af op Suzette. 'De ringen, Suzette, je zult de ringen van de canon krijgen, om je te slaan en brandmerken tot eeuwige slaaf,' brult Canon. Een enorme stank komt van het skelet af, en hij begint nog feller te branden.

'Oh Heer, open Uw Woord,' bidt Suzette trillend. 'Verlos me van de Canon.'

Dan schrikt Suzette ineens wakker. Ze zit nog steeds in de dienst, en iedereen staart haar met grote ogen aan. Naast haar op een lege stoel ligt een klein boekje. 'Is dit voor mij ?' vraagt ze. De aanwezigen knikken. Snel grijpt ze naar het boekje, biedt ongemakkelijk haar excuses aan, en rent snel de zaal uit. Ze stapt in haar auto en rijdt direkt naar de plaats waar haar broertje woont. Daar aangekomen staat haar broertje al voor het raam, en is blij haar te zien. Binnengekomen rent hij op haar af, en ze omhelzen elkaar. Hij doet dat heel stevig, zoals altijd. Dan lijkt het altijd alsof een volwassene haar beetpakt. 'Ik heb vannacht over je gedroomd,' zei hij. 'Ik moest je uit een gevangenis redden.' Geemotioneerd legt ze haar hoofd tegen hem aan, en samen lopen ze verder naar binnen.

Einde

De Wond en het Litteken

Theologische Roman

Een bezoeker van een pinkstergemeente krijgt nadat een profeet uit Amerika voor hem gebeden heeft openbaringen over een mogelijke rol van Egypte in Gods plannen voor de eindtijd. Het verhaal gaat over de strijd die deze man daarover heeft, de verwarring en de twijfel. Hij raakt verwilderd van de kerk, en hangt nu tussen wal en schip, tussen kerk en secte.

Hoofdstuk 1. Het principe

Hoofdstuk 2. De verwarring

Hoofdstuk 3. Het verbond

Hoofdstuk 4. De rode pijl

Hoofdstuk 5. Kinderen van Egypte

Hoofdstuk 1. Het Principe

Jan van Zaalen zit in een pinkstergemeente. Hij is al een tijdje belangstellend lid. Vroeger zat hij in een reformatorisch kerkgenootschap, maar daar is hij weggegaan, omdat hij zich er toch niet meer zo op zijn gemak voelde. In de pinkstergemeente voelt hij zich wat meer thuis. Hier heeft hij in ieder geval het gevoel dat hij meetelt, en dat God persoonlijke omgang met hem wil. Er gebeuren hier soms echt wonderen en tekenen. Vandaag is het zondag, en ze hebben een gastspreker uitgenodigd uit Amerika, genaamd Peter Satelli, een bekende gebedsgenezer. Jan is erg benieuwd. Hij heeft al veel over deze man gehoord. Ook heeft hij enkele boeken over hem gelezen. Er schijnen grote wonderen en tekenen in

zijn diensten te gebeuren. De man schijnt een bijzondere relatie met God te hebben. Jan zou dat ook wel graag willen. Hij heeft nog nooit een beeld of visioen gehad, en voelt altijd een vorm van jaloezie als anderen hiervan getuigen. Hoe profetie werkt is Jan al helemaal een raadsel.

Tijdens de dienst staat de man ineens op. 'Er is hier iemand ...' en dan is ineens iedereen stil. ...'die heel graag zou willen profeteren, maar niet weet hoe dat moet ... Wil deze persoon naar voren komen ?' Maar Jan durft niet naar voren te komen. Een paar anderen staan op, en lopen naar voren. De man begint voor hen te bidden, en legt hen de handen op. Een paar mensen vallen om. De voorganger had eens gezegd dat de kracht van God mensen soms slap in de benen laat worden. Jan vindt het wel interessant, maar vind het ook een beetje eng. Dan ineens stapt de man naar Jan toe, die een beetje achter in de zaal zit. 'De Heer wil dat ik ook voor jou bidt,' zegt de man. Jan voelt niks, maar is wel blij. De man stapt snel weer terug naar voren, en bidt verder voor de zaal. 'Er zijn mensen waarmee God een groot plan heeft,' zegt de man. Plotseling voelt Jan zich een beetje weg dromen. Hij kijkt uit het raam, en ziet een vogel lopen op het gras, dichtbij het mos. De dienst verloopt verder erg rustig. Er worden een paar mensen genezen, en een paar mensen van demonen bevrijd, en de man weet van enkelen bijzondere dingen te vertellen. Jan is moe. Hij had eigenlijk gehoopt dat de man wat persoonlijker en dieper met hem aan de gang zou gaan. Jan vond het allemaal erg wazig en oppervlakkig. En nog steeds had Jan geen stem van God gehoord, en nog steeds wist Jan niet hoe hij moest profeteren. Wat werd daar toch altijd wazig over gedaan. De man zou 's avonds nog een dienst houden in een dorpje vlakbij het dorpje waar Jan woonde. Jan besloot er naartoe te gaan, maar weer gebeurde er niets bijzonders naar Jan toe. Oh ja, anderen werden genezen, en anderen werden bevrijd, en over hen werden wonderbaarlijke dingen geprofeteerd, maar Jan ving bot. Na de dienst probeerde hij in de buurt te komen van de man, maar die was snel weer weg. Wat was er een drukte om die man heen. Jan rende naar buiten, en zag de man met iemand anders in de auto stappen. 'Mijnheer,' riep Jan, 'wacht even.' De man keek verbaasd op. 'Kan ik alstublieft een keer met u praten,' vroeg Jan, 'ik zou zo graag leren hoe te profeteren.'

'Maar natuurlijk,' zei de Amerikaan, en gaf Jan een kaartje met een telefoonnummer erop. Nadat Jan even later had gebeld was er een afspraak komen te staan waarvoor Jan naar de andere kant van het land moest reizen, omdat de man daar verdere diensten zou houden. De man had een kamer bij een voorgangers-echtpaar in huis, en op een avond kon Jan langskomen. Het was al donker buiten. Jan had er lange tijd voor in de trein gezeten. De man was erg blij hem te zien. 'Ga zitten,' zei hij. 'Zo, dus jij wil leren profeteren, hè. Nou, laten we de Heere vragen wat hij wil gaan doen.' De man schonk eerst even wat koffie in, en legde toen zijn hand op Jan's schouder, en begon te bidden. De man ging heel diep in gebed, en Jan vond het erg spannend. 'Jan,' zei de man, 'de Heer wil dat ik eerst ergens met jou doorheen ga bidden, want er zijn nogal veel blokkades ...' Even was het een tijdje stil, en toen sprak de man verder : 'De Heere wil heel graag tot jou

spreken ... zoals je misschien wel weet zijn er veel profeten in Amerika, waartoe de Heere op een machtige manier spreekt, maar hier waar jij woont, daar hangt een bedekking, en eerst moeten wij daar doorheen bidden.' Even was Jan opgelucht, want hij dacht eerst even dat de blokkades door hemzelf kwamen. De man zei dat Jan erg open stond voor God, en dat in de bijbel staat dat profeten hun gaves soms moeten overdragen. Wat zou er nu gebeuren ? Zou de man een gave in Jan gaan planten ? De man had het over voorgeslachtelijke linies, over de reformatie vanuit Europa, die afrekende met de bemiddelende functie van de ten hemel gegane heiligen. Deze zijn toen hoofdzakelijk naar Amerika gegaan. De man sprak over de zegen van de reformatie die door Luther kwam, maar ook over de vloek. De pinksterbeweging kwam opzetten vanuit Amerika en Engeland. Met name Wales en Los Angeles waren grote namen in dit kader. Het weelderige Katholieke heiligen-geloof dat plaats moest maken voor het genade-geloof in Jezus Christus kon op een andere manier weer ingang krijgen door de pinksterbeweging. Nu sprak God niet door overleden heiligen, maar door levende heiligen, in de vorm van gebedsgenezers, profeten, en andere soorten geestvervulden. Dit was voor de man ook een reden om te geloven dat de communicatie-techniek in Amerika veel verder was dan in Europa. Er moest volgens de man weer een balans komen tussen het Katholieke goede werken-geloof, en het Reformatorische genade-geloof, en die balans kwam door de pinksterbeweging. Jezus de Middelaar werkte door een andere laag van middelaars, namelijk zijn lichaam, zowel boven als beneden. Daar waar het reformatorische geloof een laag wegkapte, en dat gebeurde in Duitsland, daar riep het ook direkt een ander soort racisme op, namelijk het Nazisme. En die lagen moest die man dus allemaal wegbidden, zodat Jan op de lagen van Christus en Zijn lichaam ge-ent kon worden. De man begon allerlei soorten reformatorische en lutherse geesten te bestraffen, en zaagde de voorgeslachtelijke bindingen die Jan tegenhielden door. Wat was dat een karwei, zeg.

Daarna was het weer even stil. Jan voelde niks, maar was wel onder de indruk van het verhaal. Hij voelde zich toch wel een beetje anders, en het was alsof de man hem op sleeptouw had genomen. 'Okay, Jan,' zei de man. 'Nu ga ik je leren profeteren, en dat is direkt een opstartertje. Leg je hand op je hart, en daarna op je buik, en luister dan. De gedachten die je krijgt moet je uitspreken, hoe vreemd die ook zijn. Dit is nog niet het echte profeteren, maar eerst wil ik je leren hoe te toetsen en hoe in een zuivere stroom van de Geest te komen.' Jan begon te luisteren. 'Drama, is de gedachte die ik krijg,' zegt Jan, 'en dan erbij dat God het een drama vindt dat de Reformatie en het Nazisme de woorden van God tegenhouden.' De Amerikaan knikt. 'En daarom moet jij hierover gaan vertellen, en de mensen vrijzetten.'

'Luister nu verder,' zegt de Amerikaan. Jan luistert aandachtig. Jan zegt dat hij de gedachte krijgt dat de man over hem moet profeteren. Opeens glijd er een warmte over Jan heen. De man zegt dat dat de gave is. Die warmte zal hem tonen of iets waar is of niet. Het is het vuur van God. Dan begint de man over Jan te profeteren. De man krijgt ook een beeld dat de geest van Duitsland Jan niet wil laten gaan. 'Ik

denk dat we een probleem hebben, Jan,' zegt de man, 'ik krijg een beeld van nazi's die lopen te commanderen. Ze willen je niet laten gaan. Maar in de Naam van Christus, en door Zijn bloed zullen ze los moeten laten. Laten we nog even verder bidden voor aanwijzingen. God kan jou nu ook beelden en visioenen geven.'

Beiden zijn ze stil. Jan voelt een diepe liefde voor de man, omdat hij tijd voor hem heeft genomen hier over te vertellen, en Jan te leren profeteren. Het lijkt wel alsof er een van heerlijkheid brandend oog in Jan zit, een oog dat hem van alles laat zien, hem raadgeeft. Jan begint de warmte door zijn hele lichaam te voelen. Dit is niet de doop in de Heilige Geest, want die had Jan al gehad. Dit is de verlichting in de Heilige Geest. Plotseling begint de Amerikaan vurig in tongen te bidden. Het is een vreemde taal, zo vreemd, dat Jan hem nog niet eerder heeft gehoord. Hij heeft wel vaker mensen in tongen horen bidden. Soms probeerde hij het zelf ook, maar dat was iets heel anders. 'Spreek me na,' zei de Amerikaan. 'Het zijn de tongen van verlichting,' zei de Amerikaan. Het vuur wordt heter en heter in Jan, en op een gegeven moment gaat het vanzelf. Jan voelt diepe innerlijke genezing, en raakt ook diep ontroert. Tranen rollen uit zijn ogen. De man omhelsd hem. Weer begint de man de reformatorische en nazistische geesten aan te spreken, maar nog steeds voelt de man veel blokkade. Plotseling krijgt de man een beeld

In het beeld begint de boze geest tot de man te spreken. De geest is boos dat de man de waarheden aan Jan heeft overgedragen, maar zegt dat hij niet kan vertrekken, omdat de profeet een laag over het hoofd heeft gezien. De geest wordt door die laag tegengehouden. De man zegt : 'Grote geesten zijn aangesteld om dit werk van God tegen te houden. Ik zal in territoriale oorlogsvoering moeten gaan om dit juk te verbreken.' Jan krijgt een visioen waarin allerlei tijgers om hem heenlopen. De man verbreekt de vloek van de canon, waar helaas ook de pinksterbeweging nog zo vaak aan vasthoudt. Ook verbreekt de man de communicatieve canon, waar de pinksterbeweging Gods stem vastmaakt aan bepaalde personen, regels, en wetjes, en even later moet de man van de Heilige Geest de culturele canon verbreken, waar de pinksterbeweging andere culturen geheel als heidens en goddeloos afsluit. Elke cultuur heeft wel bepaalde elementen van Gods Geest, en die moeten opgespeurd worden. Culturen moeten gezifd worden, en niet in de ban gedaan, algeheel en per definitie. De Bijbel zegt dat alle volkeren hun heerlijkheden tot God zullen brengen. De man vertelt dat het algehele stelsel van canons, om de gemeente gebonden te houden, een soort demonische boom is, een soort zeekattenboom met scherpe dorens, genaamd Ingridtel of Ingrid. Daar komen ook die tijgerdemonen vandaan. De man bestraft de boom, en gebiedt de boom om uit Jan te komen.

Dan krijgt de man weer een beeld, waarin geesten tot hem schreeuwen : 'Wie ben jij dan nou, man, jij rare van de pinkstergemeente. Weet jij waaruit de pinkstergemeente voorkomt dan ? Nou ? Jij rare ...' En dan gaan de geesten verder : 'Waar is het hedendaagse Amerika op gebouwd ? Wat hebben de Engelsen en andere Europeanen gedaan ? Hoe zou dat toch komen dat enkele grondleggers van de Pinksterbeweging de Klu Klux Clan ondersteunden ? Niet zo vreemd, hè, het

huidige Amerika is gebouwd op het bloed van de Indianen, de oerbezitters van Amerika ... rare, rare man ... Kom jij eens even kijken ?'

'Jan, Jan,' zegt de Amerikaan, 'ik word door geesten flink aangesproken, heb het flink met ze aan de stok. Blijf meebidden, er is iets aan de hand.' En beiden gaan ze verder in gebed. Dan zeggen de geesten de Amerikaan na, en gaan verder met hun betoog : 'Bloed van de indianen .... blllloed ..... bbbbbbb....lllll.....oed ...... bbbbb....llllll..... oed .... Stelletje kolonisten en slavendrijvers .... maak het eerst maar eens goed met de wilden en de armen ..... jullie welvaarts .... protsers .... Vandaar dat Gods Geest niet doorbreekt en wij de touwtjes nog in de handen hebben .... het is ons werk .... Dit moeten wij van de Heilige Geest belijden .... rare man ...' En toen werd er even flink gevloekt door die geesten en toen gingen ze weer verder met hun betoog : 'Jullie denken dat slavernij en kolonisme achter de rug is, nu de volkerenmoorden achter de rug zijn .... maar het bloed schreit nog steeds ten hemel, jullie gebeden tegenhoudende .... Jullie rijkdom is een blokkade voor de armen en wilden die jullie negeren .... daarom is ook blokkade jullie deel .... dat zijn wij .... jullie hebben ons zelf opgeroepen ....'

'En dan nog eens wat .... Geestelijk koloniseren jullie Amerikanen jullie voorouders, de Europeanen .... jullie zijn naar Amerika gegaan om geestelijk en materieel rijk te worden, en de Europeanen moeten in geestelijke armoe leven .... Ha ha, jullie spreken met God, en de anderen kunnen buiten staan .... Jullie hebben de Heilige Geest in jullie tempel opgesloten .... Europa moet bedelen om Amerikaanse profeten en gebedsgenezers .... Jullie hebben de Heilige Geest in de fles opgesloten .... Amerika is niet alleen gebouwd op het bloed van de indianen, maar ook op het bloed van de Europeanen .... jullie Amerikaanse profeten zijn zelf die blokkade ... Dit gaat over de zegen en de vloek van de Pinksterbeweging .... Jullie zijn christelijke kolonisten ...'

De man begon weer de geesten te bestraffen, maar hij wist dat er inderdaad een blokkade was. Zou het inderdaad zo wezen dat de Pinkstergemeente er beter aan deed Franciscaans te zijn, om de principes van armoede te doorleven, als een middel van medeleven en mededelen ? Was het niet belangrijker om uit te zien naar een uitstorting van Gods Bloed, meer nog als een uitstorting van Gods Geest ? Dan zou het pas echt Pasen zijn. Zou een Paasgemeente niet toepasselijker zijn ? Allerlei dingen spookten door het hoofd van de Amerikaan. Jan bad nog steeds mee. De Amerikaan koos ervoor om niet teveel aan Jan te vertellen, maar hij moest toch wat doen aan die blokkade. Dit ging niet om de Reformatorische beweging of het Nazisme ... Nee, dit ging over de Pinkstergemeente zelf ...

De man besloot gewoon vanuit een uit het hoofd geleerde lijst wat geesten te bestraffen ... misschien dat dat zou helpen. Maar de man kon in zijn gedachten er niet echt bij zijn. Hij moest steeds denken aan de beelden waarin geesten hem aanspraken. Even leek het alsof zijn theologie omver werd geworpen. Hij dacht na over Geest en Bloed. De Geest bracht wedergeboorte, en daarna de Doop in de

Geest. Maar het Bloed ? Het Bloed bracht reiniging, en misschien ook wel wedergeboorte .... en verder ? Waren ze wel gedoopt in het Bloed, als een vervulling .... Hadden ze daar als gemeente wel genoeg aandacht aan besteed ? Allerlei dingen spookten er door het hoofd van de man .... Ondertussen besloot de man alles uit de kast te halen wat betreft het klassieke exorcisme. Daarna ging hij over in territoriaal exorcisme, en zorgde dat hij geen van de tradities oversloeg. Hij moest tijd rekken. Het mocht niet te lang stil blijven. Jan moest de indruk krijgen dat de man niet met de mond vol tanden stond. De man had immers de gave van profetie op zo'n machtige manier. De man hikte ergens tegenaan. Jan had verder niets in de gaten, en bad door. Hij vond het geweldig hoe de man voor hem in de bediening stond, en Jan had echt het idee, dat het werkte.

'Doop hem in Bloed,' zei de Heilige Geest tegen de man ... 'Maar Heer,' sprak de man in zichzelf, 'hoort dat bij de traditie ?'

'Kan me niet schelen,' zei de Heer, 'Je doet het nu.' En toen ging de man staan, legde voorzichtig zijn hand op het hoofd van Jan en sprak : 'Jan, ik ga je nu in de Naam van Jezus Christus, dopen in Zijn Bloed, wat ook voor jou heeft gevloeid. Opdat je zult leven : Weest gedoopt in Bloed en Vuur.' Jan kreeg hoge tuutjes in zijn oren, die steeds hoger werden. Wat gebeurde er nu ? Jan wist niet wat hem overkwam. Nou ja, het zou wel goed wezen. De man wist het niet meer, maar liet niks merken. 'Oh ja,' zei de Heilige Geest, 'zeg er ook even bij dat het Bloed is genaamd Thoth.'

'Maar Heer,' protesteerde de man, 'dat is Egyptische mythologie.'

'Niets mee te maken,' brulde de Heer, 'door het vlees mag je dat niet aanroeren, maar wel door de Geest, als je weet hoe je die delen moet gebruiken. Begrijp je nu nog de paradox van de Bijbel niet ?' De man boog zijn hoofd, en deed wat hem gezegd werd. Ook Jan keek op, en begon vragen te stellen. 'Was Thoth niet de god van het archief, een Egyptische god toch ? Wat heeft dat met christendom te maken ?'

'Okay, en wat moet ik nu doen, Heer, want Jan begint al in paniek te raken ... Mijn reputatie staat op het spel ...' zegt de man in zichzelf ...

'Gaat het je dan om reputatie ? Elke god is een verwilderd deel van Mijn Geest, een verkeerde interpretatie ... Ik openbaar door Mijn Geest de Ware interpretatie ... Mag Ik ?' Maar in hemzelf begon de profeet al de oorlog te verklaren aan de stem. 'Oh, wat nu ... ik ben afgeweken, en wordt door demonen geleid ... En hoe moet het nu met Jan ?'

'Excuses, Jan,' zegt de man, 'ik vraag me af waarom ik dat zei, maar misschien zijn er meerdere Thothen. Ik moest het van de Heilige Geest zo zeggen.' Jan nam er genoegen mee. De man hield zich strak en stelde zich in één lijn op naar Jan. Na

een tijdje, toen Jan weg was, ging de man door met zijn innerlijke strijd. Wat was er die avond allemaal gebeurd ? Had iets hem overgenomen ? Jan zou volgende week terugkomen voor een vervolg.

Jan zelf was erg tevreden over de avond, en was enthousiast over zijn nieuwe gave. Hij vertelde het hele verhaal in zijn gemeente, en iedereen scheen enthousiast te zijn. De Amerikaan was zeer gerespecteerd, en niemand twijfelde aan zijn autoriteit. Jan vertelde nog wel over de laatste onbekende blokkade, en dat hij daarvoor nog een keer bij de profeet moest terugkomen. Ook vertelde hij dat de Amerikaan het Bloed van Christus over hem aanriep, en het Thoth noemde. Iemand in de zaal zei dat Thot de god van het schrijven was in Egypte, vaak voorgesteld als een baviaan of een ibis. Iemand anders zei dat elk dier naar Gods aard was geschapen, en dat niet elk dier zo in de Bijbel wordt beschreven, maar dat dat niet wilde zeggen dat zo'n dier dan niet naar God heenwees. Genesis zei dat alle dieren naar Gods aard geschapen waren. Ze droegen een betekenis.

In ieder geval had Jan nu veel visioenen. Dat was waar het Jan om ging. Tijdens de dienst erna had de voorganger het over het Bloed van Christus, dat net als het andere bloed een vervoersmiddel is. Het Bloed van Christus draagt het Woord, en verdeelt het Woord. Daarom is dit Bloed zo belangrijk. Daar waar dit bloed ontbreekt kan geestelijk kolonisme ontstaan.

Toen Jan weer naar de profeet toeging kreeg hij daar wel een hele bizarre voorstelling. Nu begon Jan in te zien dat de profeet echt het spoor aan het verliezen was. De man las uit het Egyptische Dodenboek voor, en zei tegen Jan dat hij maar beter hier in kon lezen dan in de Bijbel. Jan snapte niet wat er gebeurd was, maar na een lang gesprek met de man begon het Jan duidelijk te worden : De man was van zijn geloof afgevallen. Hij zou weer terugkeren naar zijn land, Amerika, en zou de kerk verlaten. Hij had de leugen van de Pinksterbeweging ingezien, en zou eerst alles eens grondig onderzoeken voordat hij nog één stap in de pinkstergemeente zou zetten. 'Maar je had het over de zegen en de vloek van de pinksterbeweging de vorige keer,' probeerde Jan. Maar de man hield voet bij stuk. Hij had de diensten in dit land erop zitten, zijn taak zat erop, en hij zou het Egyptische geloofsgoed onderzoeken en vergelijken met dat wat hij in de kerk geleerd had. Jan wist niet hoe hij het had. Teleurgesteld ging Jan terug naar huis. In de gemeente vroeg iedereen hoe het was geweest, maar Jan deed er erg vaag over. Sommigen merkten dat er iets mis was, en namen Jan na de dienst even apart. Jan barste in snikken uit, en vertelde het verhaal. 'Ach, laat die man toch. Het christelijk geloof of liever gezegd wat ze er van gemaakt hebben is ook niet om over naar huis te schrijven. Het is een heel begrijpbare stap, vooral als je met zo'n grote verantwoordelijkheid rondloopt als Peter Satelli. Het is bijna logisch dat hij zich terugtrekt voor een tijdje.' Ja, en later begon Jan ook in te zien dat dat zo was, en hij snapte ook niet waar hij zich eigenlijk om druk maakte. Was het christelijk geloof wel wat het wezen moest ?

Die nacht had Jan een droom over een wilde kat. Ze hing aan een rots boven een enorme wildernis. Ze had zich wel stevig vastgehaakt aan de rots, zodat ze niet kon vallen, en de rotsen waren ook goed begroeit met stronken en takken. 'Ik ben Bastet,' zei de wilde kat, 'het vlees van Christus.' Jan wist niet wat hij hoorde. 'Ik ga het christelijk geloof vernietigen,' zei de wildharige kat. 'Het komt voort uit verkeerde bronnen. Ik haal de goede delen eruit en transformeer deze, en de rest zal vergaan. Sebek zal hiertoe de nieuwe ark zijn, het gebeente van Christus.'

'Wie is Sebek ?' vroeg Jan. Maar Bastet zei niets dan shhh... en vertrok toen. Zou de Amerikaanse profeet ook door dit soort dromen of visioenen de kerk zijn uitgejaagd ? Wel indrukwekkend allemaal. Of deze kat is de duivel zelf, of ze is de Ware God. Toen hoorde Jan geblaf. Een hond kwam aanrennen in een droom, maar kwam niet dichterbij. Plotseling hoorde Jan gegil, en stemmen riepen : 'Sekhmet, Sekhmet ... oe, ik kan het niet stoppen. Het is te sterk ...' Waren dit demonische invasies, of waren het invasies van Gods Geesten ? De lucht rook naar brand ... Plotseling stond er een leeuw voor Jan in zijn droom, met een lange nek, en ook een tijger met een lange nek kwam er rustig aanwandelen. 'Zeg, dit hebben wij lang gevreesd,' zeiden de leeuw en de tijger. 'Wij waren op aarde geplaatst om dit tegen te houden, maar we kunnen het niet meer.' Plotseling begonnen de leeuw en de tijger te branden. Hard begonnen ze te schreeuwen. Jan kreeg de rillingen. In die droom zag Jan ook de Amerikaanse profeet die brandde, en zelfs heel Amerika brandde, terwijl er een sfinxachtige gestalte opsteeg. Weer werd er geroepen : 'Sekhmet, Sekhmet,' en toen werd het heel langzaam en zacht gefluisterd : 'Sekhmet, Sekhmet.' Maar de dromen begonnen langzaam weg te vagen, en Jan schrok wakker. Een vreemd vuur begon over Jan te komen. Het voelde niet vervelend aan. Het was een zeer krachtig vuur. Kon Jan het hedendaagse christendom nog wel vertrouwen, of moest het herleid worden tot haar wortels ?

Een paar dagen later bladerde Jan in de bibliotheek door het Egyptische Dodenboek. Hier kwam hij die namen weer tegen. Plotseling werd er van achteren een hand op zijn schouder gelegd. Het was een oude vriend van Jan. Ze hadden samen op school gezeten bij elkaar in de klas. 'Hey, Remco,' zei Jan.

'Wat ben je nu aan het lezen ?' zei Remco. 'Wel interessant. Ik heb een tijd geschiedenis gestudeerd, en moest dit boek ook lezen. Het is een geloof dat heel veel lijkt op het christendom, maar op sommige punten veel dieper gaat. Kom je mee naar mijn huis ? Dan kunnen we wat bijpraten.' Jan ging met Remco mee. Remco had het Egyptische Dodenboek ook thuisliggen, en Jan mocht het wel van hem lenen. Ze hadden veel te bespreken. Ze waren goede vrienden vroeger, maar elkaar helaas uit het oog verloren door alle druktes.

Remco had ook een groot beeld van Sekhmet, de leeuwinnevrouw, in de gang naast zijn slaapkamer staan. Remco vertelde veel over Sekhmet. Remco was geen christen. Hij vond christenen maar arrogant en stijfkoppig. Hij vond hen ook racistisch als een soort geestelijke Klu Klux Klan. Jan kon dat wel begrijpen. Hij

was er niet trots op dat hij een christen was. Remco vertelde Jan dat hij ingewijd was in een Sekhmet-tempel. Jan voelde zijn handen. Ze voelden heel warm aan.

Hoofdstuk 2. De Verwarring

Jan kon wel begrijpen waarom sommige mensen die nare ervaringen met het christendom hadden satanist werden. Wellicht was Satan de naam of een samenvoeging van de namen die ze vroeger voor het christendom op sommige plaatsen aanbaden als oppergod. Dat gebeurde vaak als een nieuwe generatie met tradities van de oudere generaties wilde afrekenen. Dan werden de oude goden als slecht bestempeld, als boze geesten. Dat gebeurde ook bij de Egyptenaren. Heel vroeger werd Seth door hun voorouders als God aanbeden, maar later werd hij de god van het kwaad. In de Ramses-dynastie werd hij weer als een god aanbeden. Het kwaad is een heel betrekkelijk iets. Zo zou Satan een samenvoeging zijn van de Egyptische dodengod Anubis, en Satis, de watergietende vrouw van de scheppende god Khnum. Anderen zeggen dat het een samenvoeging is van Seth en Anubis. Jan las er interessante boeken over, en de geschiedenis maakte korte metten met zijn oppervlakkige geloof, vooral met zijn geloof in de kerk.

Seth zou de broer zijn van Osiris, en wilde Ra opvolgen, en omdat hij vond dat hij de enige was die Ra goed zou kunnen beschermen tegen de aanvallen van de slang Apep en andere demonische machten. Seth zou de goedkeuring dragen van vele goden, maar Isis, zowel zuster van Seth als Osiris zou de meerderheid van de goden hebben overgehaald om dit niet te doen. Seth ruimde Osiris uit de weg, een daad die hem maakte tot de god van het kwaad. Nu zou Geb Ra opvolgen, maar die vestigde zich in de grond omdat hij teveel door Apep werd lastiggevallen. Uiteindelijk volgde Horus, de zoon van Osiris, Ra op. In een ander boek las Jan dat het Shu was, de vader van Geb, die Ra zou opvolgen, maar zich in de hemel vestigde omdat hij teveel door Apep en zijn volgelingen werd lastiggevallen. Horus rekende af met Seth, de moordenaar van zijn vader, zoals Christus met satan afrekende. Seth zou nu voor altijd Osiris, de zee, moeten dragen, en in een andere variant : Osiris, de zon, of Osiris, de woestijn. In weer een andere variant neemt Neith het voor Seth op, en schenkt hem naast Nephtys zijn vrouw, twee andere vrouwen : Anat, en Astarte. In Joodse en Mid-oostelijke legende en mythologie komen Anat en Astarte voor als de vrouwen van Jahweh, die oorspronkelijk waarschijnlijk een berggod was naast de oude goden zoals El, Anu, en Enlil. Sommigen gaan er vanuit dat Yahweh Seth is, die wraak neemt op zijn onderdrukkers. Weer anderen zeggen dat Seth strijd voert tegen Yahweh en zijn volk, in de gedaante van de farao Ramses. Hebben de goden zoveel gezichten ?

En Remco dan ? Die had zich laten inwijden in de tempel van Sekhmet ... Wat zou je daar mee opschieten ? Hoe ging dat dan ... en wie voerden dat uit ?

Op een dag was Remco bij Jan thuis, en vertelde er iets meer over. Ze lazen daar voor uit een boek, de Sorsol, dat was de Heilige Leer van Sekhmet ... Remco was daarvoor speciaal naar Egypte gegaan ... Remco zou daar speciale gaven hebben ontvangen ...

Door de verhalen van Remco raakte Jan steeds dieper geinteresseerd. Remco besloot Jan eens mee te nemen op zijn jaarlijkse reis naar die Sekhmet-tempel. Die tempel was ondergronds. Er stonden groengouden beelden langs de begintunnel van de tempel. Aan de muur hingen wat fakkels. Een dikke priester kwam op hen aflopen. 'Ha, Remco,' zei de priester, 'welkom, welkom.'De priester liep voor hen uit naar binnen in een ondergronds zaaltje. De zaal was prachtig verlicht. Achter een doorzichtig gordijn lag een Sekhmetbeeld op een sarcofaag. De priester haalde uit de sarcofaag een dik boek. Dit was de Sorsol, het Heilige Boek van Sekhmet. Maar hoe moest Jan dit nu zien in relatie tot het christendom ? Jan en Remco gingen op een van de bankjes aan de zijkant van de zaal zitten, en de priester begon voor te lezen uit de Sorsol. Het ging over het lijden van Christus. En al gauw kwam Jan erachter dat Sekhmet alles met Christus te maken had. De priester las over het pad van de armoede, het aanvaarden van het lijden, en ook over het streven naar het dubbele kruis, het grootste kruis, en het eeuwige kruis. Dit was de leer van de vruchtbaarheid door het kruis. Ook in het zaaltje stonden wat groengouden beelden aan de zijkanten. het waren de sorsolpala's, de beschermers van de leer van Sekhmet. Het was de leer van de nieuwe schepping. Sekhmet was een deel van Christus, een diep verborgen deel, waarover in Openbaring, de apocalypse, wordt gesproken. Sekhmet was allereerst de toorn van Christus, Zijn woeste deel. Sekhmet was ook zijn littekenen, en Zijn litteken diep binnenin. Sekhmet was de kracht van Pasen, het zaad van binnen, waarvanuit Thoth, het Bloed, stroomde. Het was dat deel van Christus dat nog dieper reikte dan Zijn geest. Jan luisterde aandachtig met open oren. Deze leer over Christus ging zo diep. 'Daar waar de kerk gestopt is,' sprak de priester. Remco knikte. Een heleboel mensen willen niets van de kerk weten, omdat het niet diep genoeg gaat. De vloek van de canon.

Ook las de priester over een deel in de mens, dieper dan de geest en de ziel. Dit deel was de sekhmet. Hiermee kon de mens terug naar de bron, terug naar de oer-instincten om terug te gaan naar huis. Het bracht de mens in aanraking met een nieuwe materie, een heilige materie. De priester zei dat door het horen van het Woord van Sekhmet ze je aan kon raken, en zelfs vervullen. Verder deed de priester er nogal geheimzinnig over. Jan vroeg aan de priester of ook hij ingewijd kon worden in de mysterieen van Sekhmet. 'Je moet er klaar voor wezen,' zei de priester. Het gaat om een diepere bekering dan de christelijke bekering. Het is voor eens en altijd, en het gaat over de gebondenheid in Christus, zoals de gebondenheid in de Heilige Geest. De Sorsol helpt je daarbij. Remco knikte. Ook Jan knikte, en zei : 'Maar dit is alles wat ik wil. Ik wil juist dieper met Christus, en als Sekhmet die geheime deur daartoe is, dan wil ik daar graag door naar binnen gaan.' De priester liep op Jan af, en legde hem de handen op. 'Ontvang dan nu Sekhmet, en we willen aan haar vragen om jouw innerlijke sekhmet zowel te

reinigen als te openen.' De handen van de priester brandden, en Jan voelde zich erg rustig worden. Toen sprak de priester wat woorden van de Sorsol over Jan uit. Jan werd er erg door bemoedigd. Remco was erg blij, en omhelsde Jan, en gaf hem zelfs een kus, een heilige kus. In de Sorsol stonden ook gebeden tot Sekhmet, ook gebeden die vroegen om een uitstorting van haar, en de priester begon ze hardop voor te lezen. Jan werd rustiger en rustiger. Had hij hier altijd al op gewacht ?

Jan begon op de grond te rollen, en met gevouwen handen smeekte hij tot Sekhmet en begon haar aan te roepen. 'Meer Heer, meer Heer,' riep Jan. Jan voelde heel diep van binnen een vuur in hem branden. Zou zijn sekhmet nu echt geopend worden ? Het was alsof er een hele gevoelige plek diep van binnen werd aangeraakt. Jan voelde zich heel emotioneel worden. 'Bloed van Sekhmet, reinig mij,' riep Jan. 'Gij bent de staf en het litteken van Christus.' Jan had nog nooit zulk vuur gevoeld. En het maakte hem van binnenuit schoon. Was dit het vuur van de legendarische gebedsgenezer Smith Wigglesworth ? Jan stond in brand. Jan herinnerde zich wat foto's van Smith Wigglesworth die er uitzag als een leeuw in mensengedaante. Ja, Christus was de leeuw, de leeuw van Juda, en zoals de Bijbel zegt : Uit Egypte geroepen, waar hij een schuilplaats had, een vluchtplaats, tegen de moordlusten van koning Herodus. De priester begon in tongen te bidden, en ook Jan en Remco. Er was heel veel te bidden waar ze niet van afwisten. Sekhmet bad door hen in geheimenissen. Het leek wel alsof Jan een nieuw harnas kreeg. De priester sprak een woord van Sekhmet uit over Jan : 'Ik heb je geroepen. Maak je klaar voor de grote uitstorting van Mijn Kracht. Ik ga je uitzenden, en jou machtig gebruiken. Je zult de hedendaagse blokkades die de kerk heeft opgelegd verbrijzelen door Mijn Kracht. Wonderen en tekenen leg ik in jouw hand. Zie, een Nieuwe Schepping maak ik.'

'Oh, ik zie rook en vuur,' sprak de priester, 'God heeft verbazing voor jou. Grote wonderen en tekenen zie ik door jou geschieden. God heeft verbazing voor jou.' De priester zei dat God nieuwe bronnen van Zijn Bloed, diepe, verborgen bronnen, zou openen, en deze zijn opgeborgen in de sekhmet, in haar dieptes.

Die nacht had Jan een droom. New York werd het land tussen Australie en de rest van de wereld, en er werd een rode pijl in Australie geschoten. Het was de pijl der roofdieren, en die kwam uit het sekhmet-deel. God zei dat de roofdieren het sekhmet-deel wijd open hadden, nog wijder dan de mensen, en daarmee bakenden ze hun territorium af. Jan schrok wakker. Wat een vreemde droom. Jan begon na te denken over New York. Wat was dat ineens een uitgestrekt land, zeg. Stond er niet in sommige geschiedenisboeken dat eeuwen geleden Nederland Suriname had gekregen in ruil voor Nieuw Amsterdam, of Nieuw Nederland, dat toen New York ging heten, als zijnde in handen van de Engelsen ? De Zeeuwen hadden toch Suriname op het oog ? Allerlei gedachten vlogen door Jan heen. Hij probeerde de droom te begrijpen. Suriname was een plaats waar vele natuurvolken zich vestigden, als een soort centrum. Wat wilde die droom toch zeggen ? Australie was een Engelse kolonie, en zelfs deels een strafkolonie, na de ontdekking door ene

mijnheer Cook. Dat wist Jan nog wel van de geschiedenislessen. Hè, wat moest hij toch met al die kolonisten. Werd Australie niet vroeger als ban-eiland gebruikt ? Deels stond het christendom misschien wel in z'n recht door de wegen tot al die goden te versperren, want wat konden die goden soms gevaarlijk zijn, net als de doden. Het waren verwilderde krachten vol oer-instincten, vol moordzucht en andere dingen. De kerk heeft toen het zogenaamde Rode Gordijn opgetrokken, maar hen die de moed en de volwassenheid hebben bereikt, die Gods Paradox hebben gezien, krijgen toegang in en door dit gordijn. Zij kijken achter de schermen, en zien de poppenkast. Is het niet weer allemaal als het verhaal van de tovenaar van Oz ?

Sekhmet brult in zijn gedachtes, als een wilde leeuw. Kan iemand dit nog stoppen ? Geen Naam van jezus Christus is hier tegenop gewassen, geen reiniging door Bloed, geen ... niks ..., omdat dit het verborgen deel van Christus is, het door de kerk verbannen deel, dat zijn heil vond in Egypte ... dat kwam uit ... Australie ... Wat een wildernissen zijn hier. Een wilde leeuwinnevrouw in de wildernissen van het verleden. Jan krijgt de rillingen. Het lijkt wel alsof hij in worsteling is met deze leeuw. Is dit de leeuw van Openbaring ? Is dit de nieuwe naam die aan overwinnaars geschonken wordt ? Jan kan het nog steeds niet geloven ...

Op een dag krijgt Jan een brief van Peter Satelli. In die brief krijgt Jan te horen dat het volgens Peter Satelli allemaal waar is. Maar wat waar is staat er niet in. Was Peter Satelli gek geworden ? Het was de wazigste brief die Jan ooit had gehad. Jan besluit alles maar even laten te rusten. Hij besloot om Peter Satelli niet terug te schrijven.

Hoofdstuk 3. Het verbond

De dromen over Sekhmet volgden elkaar snel op, maar ook Jan begon zich erg vreemd te voelen. Zelfs wazig. Hij kon het normale leven niet meer volgen. Mensen dachten dat hij gek aan het worden was. Jan voelde zich meer en meer als een roofdier worden. Hij kreeg een dierlijke blik in zijn ogen, en had veel last van verwilderde gevoelens en allerlei soorten emotionele uitbarstingen. Hij begon erg paranoide te worden, zag overal demonen, en wilde soms zelfs een eind aan zijn leven maken. Remco vertelde hem dat deze dingen heel normaal waren in het inwijdingsproces van Sekhmet. Zou de Amerikaanse profeet ook door Sekhmet hierin getrokken worden ? Jan wist het niet, en had niet de moed om te schrijven. Misschien zou de profeet hem wel meesleuren in één of ander sectarisch iets. Wel schreef Jan al zijn dromen op, en besloot in het heetst van de strijd met Remco terug te gaan naar die ondergronds tempel van Sekhmet. Jan was in paniek. Was hij echt gek aan het worden. De priester glimlachte, en bevestigde wat Remco al had uitgelegd. 'Het is tijd dat je sterk gaat worden in de Sorsol, het Woord van Sekhmet,' zei de priester. Remco knikte. Het werkte eigenlijk gewoon heel

christelijk : Sterk worden in het Woord, memoriseren en het gebruiken als een soort wapenrusting. De verzen van de Sorsol waren volgens de priester het harnas voor de volgelingen en discipelen van Sekhmet. Jan wist er eigenlijk te weinig vanaf. Ze zouden naar een andere tempel van Sekhmet gaan, dieper in Egypte. Er was een geheime deur in de ondergrondse tempel, en samen met de priester gingen ze erdoorheen. Het werd een lange tocht door een tunnel onder de grond. Ditmaal zouden ze naar een tempel gaan in een verborgen ondergrondse piramide. Die piramide lag heel diep onder de grond. Maar toen ze er aankwamen was het meer een ruine. Jan had last van hyperventilatie. Zouden ze hem hier kunnen helpen ? Maar er was niemand, en de priester begon wat vreemde gebeden op te prevelen. Jan liet steeds meer en meer de moed zakken. Toen begon Remco te vertellen waar hij allemaal doorheen moest in de tijd dat hij ingewijd werd. Dat was ook allemaal niet misselijk, en Jan begon een sprankje hoop te krijgen. Remco was een tijd zwaar depressief geweest. Jan kon zich dat moeilijk voorstellen, omdat in de tijd dat ze klasgenoten waren, en ook daarna, Remco de vrolijkheid zelve was. Remco was altijd zo enthousiast over veel dingen.

Maar naarmate de tijd verstreek ging het slechter en slechter met Jan. Hij kreeg ademhalingsproblemen, maar wilde absoluut niet naar de dokter, omdat hij wist dat het om een geestelijke strijd ging. Waar was Christus nu ? Als Christus zo sterk was, waarom werd Jan dan niet van Sekhmet verlost ? Maar zoals men al zei : Wat als Sekhmet een deel van Christus is .... en wat als Christus meerdere delen heeft die in de kerkgeschiedenis verloren zijn gegaan, en in de geschiedenis van het hele christendom. Oh ja, het christendom heeft veel goeds gebracht, maar minstens zoveel ellende .... de zegen en de vloek van het christendom .... Hij kon zich goed voorstellen waarom Sekhmet het huidige christendom wilde vernietigen. Ook Jan voelde die vernietigingsdrang, en kon het met geen mogelijkheid stoppen. Inmiddels waren enkele mede-gemeente-leden van Jan goed op de hoogte van zijn situatie, en berispten hem om zijn afvalligheid. 'Gij zult geen andere goden volgen ...'

Jan kon er niet zoveel mee. Hij begon steeds meer te geloven dat Christus meerdere delen had, over de gehele aardbodem verspreid, afgehakt door een koppig volk ... Zo koppig dat ze het volk van Christus geografisch en biologisch bepaalden. En dit terwijl Abraham een Babylonier was .... Yahweh was in de religies aldaar een berggod, naast goden zoals El, Anu, Enlil en Enki. Ook het paradijs lag volgens sommige geleerden in Babylon. Weer anderen zeiden dat het in Egypte lag. Volgens een legende zou het paradijs na de zondeval door de Rode Zee zijn opgeslokt. Elohim was een meervoudig woord dat goden betekende. De oorspronkelijke Bijbel in de grondtekst was minder monotheistisch dan de kerk liet doorschemeren. Laat 'Ons' mensen maken ... Allerlei gedachten spookten door Jans hoofd. De geschiedenis zou per definitie korte metten maken met het huidige christelijke geloof. De geschiedenis zou daar de satanskerk niet voor nodig hebben, maar Jan begon wel steeds meer in te zien dat niet elke satanskerk satanisch was. Sommige satanisten hadden goede redenen, en hadden gewoon geschiedenis

gestudeerd. Dit soort niet-satanische satanisten zouden de Ware Christus aanbidden. Jan ging de kerk steeds meer zien als satanisch christelijk, de duivel die zich middels dit instituut als god neerzette, een gekapt christusbeeld.

Van de priester kreeg Jan een exemplaar van de Sorsol mee, en zei tegen Jan dat dit zijn medicijn was. Jan begon intens te lezen en te bestuderen. Remco zou Jan Sorsollessen gaan geven, en ze zouden eens in de zoveel tijd teruggaan naar de priester voor diepere inwijdingen en diepere Sorsollessen. Was Sekhmet echt, of was ze een valse misleidster ? Bij de douane aangekomen werd er een grootscheeps onderzoek gedaan. De douaniers begonnen de tassen van Remco en Jan door te zoeken, en vonden het boek. 'Wat is dit nou weer ?' vroeg een douanier. Jan gaf uitleg, maar de man begon te lachen. Gelukkig was het boek niet illegaal, en konden ze door. Toen Jan thuisgekomen was plonste hij op de bank. Waar was hij toch in terechtgekomen, en was er nog een weg terug ? Terug naar het oude christendom wilde hij niet, maar wat was dit ? In de nacht had hij een droom ... weer over een wilde kat. De kat miauwde fel naar hem, en begon toen te spreken : 'Ik ben Bastet, Ik ben Bastet, het vlees van Christus ...' Jan had hier al eerder over gedroomd. Toen zei de kat : 'Ik ben wild, Ik ben wild, woest en buiten mijn zinnen. Ook Ik ben een afgekapt deel van Christus. De kerk gaat eraan.' Dat was wel intimiderende taal, maar de vorige keer zou de kat iets soortgelijks. Ja, de kerk moest inderdaad veranderen, maar 'eraan gaan' ? Misschien bedoelde ze wel dat er gewoon een nieuwe kerk moest komen ... De kat was woest en blies ... Plotseling raakte Jan met de kat in gevecht, en hoe hij ook het bloed van Christus aanriep, en de Naam van Christus ... niets hielp ... Toen herinnerde Jan zich : sommige demonen gaan niet weg dan door vasten .... Maar ja, zo kon Jan wel aan de gang blijven. Er was altijd wel een excuus. Misschien had hij wel dingen in huis die er niet hoorden ... boeken.

'Kom, kom,' zei de kat ... 'Wat verwacht je van me. Het lichaam van Christus is verscheurd en half afgerukt ... Ik ben een deel van Christus, en zonder mij kom je niet tot Christus.' Nu, dat begreep jan wel, maar wie zei hem dat deze kat, Bastet, een deel van Christus was. Toen begon de kat te gillen en te krijsen ... zo hoog, dat Jan er naar van werd. Hij moest iets doen om dit beest te helpen ... Hij kon het niet over zijn hart verkrijgen verder tegen haar te strijden. Jan hield overigens veel te veel van katten ... 'Zuiver het exorcisme met hun domme demonenpraatjes. Niet iedere geest is een boze geest. Niet iedere cultuur is een boze cultuur, zelfs niet iedere god is een valse god. Het gaat erom hoe je het benaderd, hoe je het zift. Het is als een puzzel.' Jan voelde de woede van het beestje. Weer begon het beestje te gillen, ditmaal nog hoger en scheller als de eerste keer. Jan viel op de grond, en een licht viel over hem heen.

Een ander licht werd op Jan geschenen, en een andere kat stond voor Jan met een lange stok. Achter de kat stond een groot geopend boek tegen de muur waarop het licht viel. De bladeren waren van goud, lichtgoud, en de letters waren van donker goud en deels van heel lichtgoud. De kat begon er doorheen te bladeren met zijn

stok. 'Dit is het Eeuwig Evangelie,' sprak de kat. Openbaring had al voorzegd dat dit Evangelie al komen. Het bespreekt de delen van Christus. De Sorsol was een boek van dit Evangelie, maar de kat bladerde naar het deel van Bastet, een boek genaamd Inaput. De kat zelf was een Inapala, een beschermer van de leer van Bastet. Jan voelde vuur door zijn ogen stromen. De kat begon te vertellen over Eeuwige Waarheden, dat alles tijdelijk was, dat alles slechts interpretatie was, en dat men vastheid kon vinden in de juiste verhoudingen der dingen, in de wetenschap dat alles puzzelmateriaal is. Ook sprak hij over het Pad van Verzachting, dat tot Sebek zou leiden, de Eeuwige Ark, en het gebeente van Christus. De kat had laarzen aan, en leek wel een beetje op de Gelaarsde Kat. Jan kwam een beetje tot rust. De kat zei ook dat dieper dan de ziel en de geest een ruimte bestaat die de bastet heet. Jan moest even hoesten, en voelde een zachtheid in zijn keel. Hij slikte een paar keer, en luisterde toen aandachtig verder. De kat begon te lachen. De kat sprak over het vlees van Christus, Bastet, en sprak dat dit heel bijzonder vlees was. Het was een wond. Even leek Jan te schrikken. 'Het is heel normaal, en gezond, de twijfels waar je doorheen ging. Dat hoorde bij de inwijding en de voorbereiding,' zei de kat. Jan voelde een hele zachte plek van binnen. De kat liep op Jan af, en raakte de gevoelige plek aan. Jan barste in snikken uit.

Jan stelde een vraag aan de kat : 'Uit hoeveel boeken of geschriften bestaat het Eeuwig Evangelie ?' Maar de kat antwoorde niet. Wel begon de kat te praten over de traan van Christus, en over de schreeuw van Christus. Vuur begon te stromen uit Jan's ogen. Jan begon nog veel meer vragen te stellen, maar de kat antwoorde niet. Wel sprak de kat verder over Christus. Hij sprak dat de traan en de schreeuw waren opgesteld in de wond, de bastet. Jan slikte even. Een vreemde reuk maakte zich meester over hem. Vanuit de traan en de schreeuw had Bastet, de wond, alles geschapen, en door de verzachting zou alles herschapen worden. De wond is het geheim van de vruchtbaarheid, en de verzachting. In de wond groeit het litteken. Zou dit de Eeuwige Tempel zijn ? De kat wees ook met zijn stok naar een wereldkaart, en richtte de stok op India. 'Hier komt ze vandaan,' zei de kat. De kerk wilde de Wond van Christus niet. Aan de muur hing een vreemdsoortig kruis, dat op een Sebek leek. Het kruis was bijna gemaakt van botten. De kat zei niks, maar staarde er een tijdje na, evenals Jan. Daarna stond de kat op. Jan stond ook op, en samen liepen ze een zaal in. 'In de wond is onthechting,' zei de kat. 'De wond kon tot nieuwe wonden leiden, maar ook het litteken kon dat, en ook andersom.' Jan keek naar zijn handen. In zijn ene hand had hij een wond, en in zijn andere een litteken. Toen werd Jan wakker in het zweet. Hij voelde zich heel anders. Even had hij de neiging om dit alles met Remco te bespreken, maar later dacht hij dat het beter was eerst alles even te laten bezinken. Veel tijd had hij daarvoor niet. Remco stond aan de deur, en vroeg hoe het met hem was. Alhoewel Jan probeerde niets los te laten, kon hij zich later niet meer bedwingen, en vertelde het hele verhaal. Remco glimlachte.

Op aanraden van Remco tekende Jan de droom uit, en het werd als een plattegrond van de Nieuwe Tempel, een Eeuwige Tempel. Vanuit de wond stroomde het Eeuwige Bloed van Christus, de Eeuwige Thoth. Remco en Jan besloten de openbaringen in de kerken en gemeenten te verspreiden. Ze hadden foldertjes gemaakt, en begonnen al gauw met de verspreiding. Sommigen wilden weten hoe ze aan die openbaringen kwamen, en hoe ze wisten dat die openbaringen de waarheid waren. Maar Remco en Jan vroegen telkens aan de mensen hoe zij wisten dat hun geloof het ware zou zijn. En dan kregen ze altijd wolkerige en wazige verhalen te horen die ze door de geschiedenisboeken konden weerleggen. Remco zei tegen Jan : 'Het gaat er nu om, of de mensen de delen van Christus en Zijn lijden dieper willen kennen, of niet.' Jan knikte. De sekhmet en de bastet waren beiden hele gevoelige delen die geopend moesten worden. Hierdoor zou er een dieper contact met Christus mogelijk zijn. Maar Remco en Jan kregen natuurlijk veel kritiek. Het zou dwaalleer wezen. Anderen waren heel enthousiast, en vaak alleen al door de diepere leringen over het lijden van Christus, over het grootste kruis, het eeuwige kruis en het dubbele kruis. Hun ging het er niet zo om hoe het genoemd werd, maar waarover het ging. Ook sommige leiders namen hun leringen over, alhoewel enkelen nog niet de namen sekhmet en bastet er aan durfden te verbinden. Voor hen was het gewoon diepere openbaring over het Kruis van Christus.

Op een dag kreeg Jan een telefoontje van een dominee. De dominee vond het allemaal fantastisch spul, maar vroeg aan Jan of hij de folders wilde herschrijven. 'Waarom noem je het niet gewoon de wond en het litteken ?' vroeg de dominee, 'in plaats van bastet en sekhmet. Sommige kerkleden zijn veel te huiverig voor Egyptische dingen.'

'Is dat niet racistisch ?' vroeg Jan. Maar de dominee vond van niet, want ook God had het vaak niet zo op dat Egyptisch gedoe. 'Hoe weet je dat ?' vroeg Jan. En toen begon de dominee een hele preek te houden over Egypte in het Licht van de Bijbel. Toen de dominee klaar was begon Jan met zijn preek over Egypte in het Licht van de Bijbel. De dominee vond het erg interessant, maar was niet echt overtuigd. De dominee vond het echt beter als de lering van Jan werd losgekoppeld van het Egyptische, en zo zouden ze in de kerk misschien ook wat meer succes hebben. Maar Jan was al veel te veel van Bastet en Sekhmet gaan houden. Voor hem waren het de verloren delen van Christus, en hij wilde ze in ere herstellen. De dominee wenste hem veel geluk.

Het was een goed en lang gesprek geweest. Jan had de dominee belooft in ieder geval er nog over na te denken, en misschien wel naast de ene folder een andere folder te schrijven voor de dominee.

Hoofdstuk 4. De Rode Pijl

Jan kreeg door hoe de kerk Egypte haatte, maar al met al waren er toch belangstellenden. Jan liet in ieder geval de moed niet zakken. Op een nacht kreeg hij een droom van een enorm grote tepel die brandde als een zon. Jan wist niet zo goed wat hij hiervan moest denken. Snel probeerde hij de droom te vergeten, maar de nacht erna droomde hij er weer over. Er kwam zachte melk uit de tepel, en begon in de zee te stromen. Het water werd er kristalhelder door. Het was een mooie droom, dat wel, maar wat moest Jan ermee ? Weer probeerde Jan de droom te vergeten. De volgende ochtend was er een brief van Jan, weer van een dominee. Deze dominee vroeg of Jan een boek wilde uitbrengen met deze folders, als een soort gids bij het Eeuwig Evangelie. Ook vroeg de dominee naar meer informatie over het Eeuwig Evangelie. Ook had er iemand op het antwoord-apparaat ingesproken : Sekhmet leeft, Sekhmet leeft, Sekhmet leeft. Jan begon te bidden : 'Hoe nu verder ?' Hij voelde zich een pionier.

Op een avond verscheen Christus aan Jan. Jan zat rechtop in bed, en een lichtende gestalte stond voor hem, steeds dichterbij komende. De gestalte toonde zijn handen, en op beide handpalmen was een lichtende, gloeiende tepel te zien. Uit beide handen stroomde lichtende melk, en Christus goot de melk uit over het hoofd van Jan. Jan proefde van de melk, die een beetje zoet was. Ook smaakte de melk naar honing, en een soort drop of siroop. Opeens verschenen er lichtende, gloeiende lippen rondom de centrums in de handpalmen van Christus, en langzaam werden de handpalmen van Christus erg rood. En Christus sprak : In het paradijs zijn de mond en de voedingsbron één. Door het Rode Gordijn werden zij van elkaar gescheiden. Door Mijn Bloed worden ze weer met elkaar verzoend. Op de handpalmen van Christus verscheen een vreemd soort leer, wat bijna op een schub-achtige vissenhuid leek. 'Ik ga je tot de melk van verzadiging brengen,' zegt Christus. 'Er is alleen verzadiging op het pad van armoede en honger.' Nou, dat Pad kende Jan wel, want dat stond uitvoerig beschreven in de Sorsol, de leer van Sekhmet. Nog steeds stroomde er melk uit de handen van Christus, en weer proefde Jan ervan. Het was als room zo verzadigend. Het scheen op te komen vanuit de diepste putten en krochten van de honger. Het leek wel alsof de melk schuimde en bruiste.

Ineens begon de melk ook uit de handen van Jan te stromen. En ook voelde Jan de melk uit zijn kaken vloeien. En Christus begon voor te lezen vanuit de Inaput, de leer van Bastet. Toen klapte Christus het boek dicht, keek Jan strak aan, en sprak : de materiele wereld is ook een canon. Doorbreek die canon door Mijn delen, en kom tot Mijn materiele wereld. Ineens was Christus omringd met katten. Het waren de Inapala's, de beschermers van de leer van Bastet. Toen sprak Christus over de Weg tot Verzadiging. En er vielen woorden zoals Verlichting, Verzachting en Vastheid. Het leek wel alsof er een lichtende krans om het hoofd van Christus kwam, en het begon te duizelen voor de ogen van Jan. Weer sloeg Christus het boek open, en begon weer voor te lezen vanuit de Inaput. Langzaam gleed Jan in slaap. 'Heer, hoeveel delen of boeken heeft het Eeuwig Evangelie,' mompelde Jan half in

slaap. Jezus kwam op zijn bed zitten, en hield zijn hand vast. 'Er is geen aantals-canon,' zegt Jezus, en vredig zakt Jan dieper in slaap.

Jan kreeg een droom over een geit staande in een struikenbos, roerende in een grote ketel. In die ketel zwemmen vissen, en zodra het in de ketel begint te koken vloeit het over. De vissen vormen een harnas voor Jan, en dan moet Jan over een haag klimmen met dorens als hondenkoppen. Die haag wordt de hondenhaag genoemd. De vissen van het harnas worden gestoken door de hondendorens, en ook Jan. Bebloed komt hij uiteindelijk toch over de haag heen, maar wordt daar aangevallen door een woeste stier. Snel springt Jan weer in de hondenhaag, en de stier duikt Jan achterna, maar wordt door de dorens gestoken, en raakt vast. Nu kan Jan weer uit de hondenhaag komen, en is veilig voor nu. Stapje voor stapje gaat hij verder, maar het wordt heter en heter onder zijn voeten, en hij merkt dat z'n harnas nu ook begint te branden. Weer rent Jan terug naar de hondenhaag voor veiligheid. Maar het vuur komt ook de hondenhaag binnen, en de hondenhaag begint te branden. Jan moet weer helemaal terug, totdat hij bij de geitenketel komt. De stier is inmiddels door de brandende hondenhaag losgekomen, en komt tezamen met het vuur in rap tempo op Jan af. Snel klimt Jan in de ketel, maar ook de stier komt in de ketel. Jan brandt in de ketel, maar ook de stier brandt, en het leer van de stier vermengd zich met het vissenharnas. Dan koelt Jan weer af, en klimt weer uit de ketel. De hondenhaag is verdwenen, en ook het vuur. Jan heeft een nieuw harnas, als het vreemdsoortig schubbig leer wat Jezus in zijn handpalmen had. Er vloeit melk door Jan heen, en hij voelt zich verzadigd.

Dan wordt Jan vredig wakker. Jezus zit nog steeds op zijn bed, en houdt Jan's hand vast. 'Je had de kattenboom al overwonnen,' zei Christus, 'maar nu heb je de hondenhaag overwonnen. Ik zal je vertellen wat de betekenis is. De kattenboom was de canon in al zijn vormen, zoals je al wist, en de hondenhaag was de uitverkiezing in al zijn vormen, voortvloeiende en heendraaiende rondom het calvinisme. Deze werkten met elkaar samen, stelden elkaar veilig, want de canon stelde de woorden, daden en personen op door de uitverkiezing, en zei toen : zo blijft het. Beiden waren ze onderdeel van het Rode Gordijn.'

Was dit wat ze noemden het Egyptische Kruis, waarvan Openbaring zei dat Jezus hier geestelijk aan stierf, en wat ze ook wel het Sebek-kruis noemden, een kruis met dorens dat ook naar binnen groeide, tot in het diepste van ziel en geest, en zelfs tot in de sekhmet en de bastet, om deze delen gesloten te houden, verborgen en afgescheiden ? Jan wilde de ware betekenis van het Rode Gordijn weten. Was dit het Geestelijk Kruis met al z'n konkelende naalden op de ware gelovigen afgestuurd ? Eén ding was zeker : het was een verschrikking, en deze verschrikking zou tot heerlijkheid leiden, volgens het Eeuwig Evangelie. Zou het Eeuwig Evangelie er meer over zeggen ? Jan wilde er alles van weten. Was dit de rode pijl die Australie doorboorde in Jan's droom ? Eén ding was zeker. Er was geen doorgang mogelijk in dit Rode Gordijn. Het Rode Gordijn moest eerst geheel als een pad doorlopen

worden, als het Pad van Armoede. Het was een pad van scheuring en verzoening. Een pad van ijs en vuur. Hoe ver was Jan nu ?

Jezus sprak verder over de haaienmuur, die de leer van de eeuwige verdoemenis was. Deze ontstond simpelweg door verloochening van het Eeuwige Kruis. Omdat men zelf dat Eeuwige Reinigingsvuur niet wilde dragen, omdat dat veel te diep ging, werden daarvoor slachtoffers gemaakt : hen die anders geloofden of niet geloofden, en aan het vuur werd een andere draai gegeven, zodat het het vuur van verdoemenis werd ... eeuwige verdoemenis. Eén van de grootste boosdoeners in het omdraaien van het kruis, de kruisverloochening en de daarop volgende eeuwige verdoemenisleer was het welvaarts-evangelie gebracht door de kerkelijke tollenaren. Zij verloochenden het Franciscaanse pad van armoede. Deze haaienmuur maakte scheiding tussen sekhmet en bastet.

Jan wilde het Franciscaanse pad graag bewandelen. Hij wilde graag geheel afrekenen met het Rode Gordijn, om dieper tot de delen van Christus te komen, en om die delen te verzoenen, want Christus was door dit Rode Gordijn verscheurt. In zekere zin hing Christus nog steeds aan dit kruis. Jan besluit een brief te schrijven aan Peter Satelli, de Amerikaanse profeet, maar al snel krijgt Jan een brief terug. Daarin vertelt Peter Satelli bijna alleen maar over zichzelf, hoe goed het met hem gaat, en dat hij al weer volop in de bediening staat. Aan het einde van de brief staat hoe de Amerikaanse profeet over Jan's openbaringen denkt. Hij kon er niet veel mee, kortom : het was onzin. De man raadde hem aan bevrijding te zoeken. Jan was razend. Hij voelde zich bijna opgelicht. Had deze man hem niet in dit avontuur gestort ? Maar al gauw probeerde Jan zichzelf te sussen. De man had veel volgelingen, verdiende er z'n brood mee, en ... tja, Jan begreep het wel een beetje. Was de vriendschap nu voorbij ? Het was verder wel een vriendelijke en open brief. Er werd geen woord gerept over de tijdelijke terugval van de man. Misschien wilde hij het zo snel mogelijk vergeten. Jan voelde zich een beetje verloren. Hoe wonderlijk sommige van de openbaringen waren, hij voelde zich nu diep alleen, en zelfs bedrogen. Kon hij niet gewoon beter teruggaan naar de kerk, om een normaal, algemeen aanvaard leven te leiden ?

Hoofdstuk 5. Kinderen van Egypte

Als Jan terug zou gaan, dan naar een Franciscaanse kerk, hen die de leer van armoede, oftwel soberheid, omhelsden. Franciscus van Assissi was een monnik die met een hemels principe genaamd 'Vrouwe Armoe' was getrouwd. Hij stond bekend als een groot hervormer. De gemeente waar Jan naartoe ging was nogal Katholiek. Jan vertelde over zijn openbaringen, en daar zeiden ze lachend dat als hij het voor elkaar kon krijgen dat de paus Sekhmet en Bastet heilig zou verklaren, dan was het binnen de kortste keren een wereldreligie. Jan moest wel even lachen. De paus stond volgens hem goed open voor andere religies, en scheen ook soms samen met

hen te bidden, maar of het nu allemaal zuivere koffie was ? Bij sommige katholieken had Jan snel aansluiting, omdat ze toch al in heiligen geloofden, en er zelfs toe baden. Jan wilde graag een soort samensmelting zien tussen het katholicisme en het protestantisme. Het calvinisme en luther-gebeuren in de Reformatie was te definitief in zijn ogen. Het kind werd met badwater en al weggeworpen, maar het katholicisme was vroeger erg gevaarlijk met al dat bloedvergiet en straffe op ketterij. Misschien was Jan wel op de brandstapel terecht gekomen met al z'n openbaringen als hij in die tijd geleefd had. De Katholieke Kerk had veel macht, en was gewoon zelfs een soort wettige Rechtbank. De Reformatie was voortgekomen vanuit een grote angst, maar nu moest alles zich nog nuanceren. Net zoals de Exodus voortkwam uit grote angst en onderdrukking, en zich later moest nuanceren. Later verzwagerde Salomo zich met de latere farao, en trouwde met zijn dochter. In die dagen leefde Salomo nog steeds onder Gods goedkeuring, en bad hij zelfs zijn wereldgenoemde gebed om wijsheid. In het vlees en onder de oude bedeling mochten de Joden geen contact zoeken met de doden. De katholieke kerk leerde dat dit alleen door de Geest kon geschieden. De heiligen waren middelaars tussen hen en Christus. De Reformatorische Kerk kapte veelal uit weerzin tegen het Katholicisme deze telefoondraden weg, en zelfs de Stem van God werd verloochend. Die was alleen nog te vinden in oude boeken, door de canon samengesteld. Terwijl Luther, de oprichter van de Reformatie volgens Jan niet zo was. Volgens Jan geloofde Luther wel in genezing en profetie. Maar de gevestigde kerken hadden veel macht, en deden met Luther wat ze wilden, vooral na zijn dood, toen echt de meest duistere vormen van de Reformatie begonnen op te treden, zoals de Gereformeerde Gemeente, en de verschillende Gereformeerde Bonden, en de Bond binnen de Hervormde Kerk, en nog wat duistere afsplitsingen. Jan probeerde zich de lessen geschiedenis en kerkgeschiedenis te herinneren.

Jan maakte veel vrienden bij de Katholieken. Ze waren charismatischer dan hij dacht, maar misschien was hij wel gewoon in de juiste hoek terechtgekomen. Het pad van armoe brengt ware rijkdom. Ook bezocht hij weleens wat kerken in Belgie. Hier maakte Jan ook wat vrienden. De dagen verschilden. Soms had Jan nog veel last van twijfels en verwarringen, en andere dagen ging het goed. Egypte begon meer en meer op de achtergrond te raken. Het ging Jan niet meer zozeer om namen, maar om de beschrijvingen van de dieptes van het geloof. Ook het Katholicisme was nog bijzaak. Jan hield zich vast aan het pad van armoe, en de rest kon hem wat. Jan maakte alles zo eenvoudig mogelijk, behalve op het pad van armoe. Dat kon hem niet weelderig genoeg zijn. Jan verlustigde zich in de leer.

Op een dag zong een vrouw een lied in de kerk. De vrouw deed Jan denken aan Sekhmet. Na de dienst liep Jan op de vrouw af, en vertelde haar hoe mooi ze dat lied had gezongen. Het was een oud Franciscaans lied over de kracht en de zaligheid van armoede. De vrouw was erg eenvoudig gekleed en had een soort sprei om. Ze had gezongen als een vogel. Het was even alsof Jan alles was vergeten : al zijn theologieeen, al zijn ideeen, en al zijn strijd. Hij wilde als het ware alles wel verkopen om deze parel te bezitten : dit prachtige lied. De vrouw gaf Jan een blad

mee met de tekst erop, en ook een bandje wat hij thuis kon afspelen. Toen Jan weer was thuisgekomen draaide hij direct het bandje. Hij kon van dit lied geen genoeg krijgen. Het was alsof al de spanning wegzonk, weg ... verdwenen ... Ook was het alsof het Jan allemaal niet meer kon schelen, al het theologische geharrewar ... want de waarheid lag toch altijd weer ergens in het midden .... 'Een beetje van dit, en een beetje van dat ...' Jan wilde zich vrij voelen, een vrij mens. Na een tijdje ging de telefoon. Het was de vrouw die het lied had gezongen. Jan vertelde haar hoe geweldig hij het bandje vond, en de andere liederen die erop stonden waren ook net zo prachtig, en misschien zelfs prachtiger. 'Jan,' zei de vrouw, 'ik ga een reis maken. Ik ga naar Afrika, om daar te getuigen van het Franciscaanse pad van armoede, en daarna ga ik naar Egypte, de parel van de armoede.' Jan kreeg even een kleur toen hij het woord Egypte hoorde ... Diep in zijn hart hield hij nog heel veel van Egypte.

Enkele maanden later kwam er een pakje aan voor Jan. Het waren twee Egyptische beelden, één van Sekhmet, de leeuwinnenvrouw, en één van Bastet, de kattenvrouw. Jan glimlachte, en dacht bij zichzelf : 'Ze blijven me opzoeken .... ze blijven me ... opzoeken.' Ook was er een lange brief bij van de vrouw van het lied, hoe ze het daar had. Ze was inmiddels dus al in Egypte, en aan het eind van de brief schreef ze dat ze had besloten te blijven. Ze was daar in aanraking gekomen met Franciscaans-Koptische christenen, christenen van Egypte, en die hadden haar gevraagd bij hen te blijven. Ze gaven zulk goed onderwijs, en alles ging hier zoveel dieper. Ze hadden daar een heilige genaamd Sint Antonius, die in de woestijn leefde om de begeertes en slavernijen van het leven te overwinnen. De Egyptische woestijn had hem die zuiverende kracht gegeven. Jan vond de brief erg interessant ... Had hij maar ooit de moed om haar op te zoeken ... maar het leek alsof Jan die moed niet had ... Wilde hij eigenlijk nog wel terug naar Egypte ? Sint Antonius werd ook geplaagd door verschrikkelijke visioenen. Jan wilde eigenlijk het risico niet lopen om weer door zoiets heen te gaan. Het was allemaal zo dubbel ... Jan dacht nog weleens na over Remco ... daar had hij weer geen contact mee sinds een tijdje .... en Jan durfde de drempel niet over, want in welk avontuur zou hij dan weer terecht komen ? Ja, het geloof was Jan een blok aan zijn been. Hij kon niet met, en hij kon niet zonder ... Soms werd er nog weleens in die Franciscaanse kerk gepreekt over hoe zwaar de profeten het hadden. Ze trokken zich vaak terug, en hun leven werd er niet makkelijker op .... maar ... wel rijker .... weelderiger in geest .... Maar Jan had de moed verloren .... als hij nadacht over profetenvervolgingen, het juk van de profeet, en dergelijken, dan kwam het allemaal heel ernstig op hem over. Jan werd er bang van. Wat wilde hij eigenlijk ? En wat kon hij ... wat was zijn draagkracht, zijn vermogen ? Eigenlijk was het geloof in zijn ogen een groot mysterie ... Zou het een mysterie blijven ?

Einde

Het Sebek-Mysterie

Theologische Thriller

1. De scheuring

2. Gemengde gevoelens

3. De gastspreker

4. De verschijning

5. De exorcist

6. De strijd

7. De Inodus

8. De muur

9. De Sebek-profeet

10. De gebeds-avond

11. Het Sebek-kruis

12. De arrestatie

13. Het eiland van Bastet

Hoofstuk 1. De scheuring

Ewald zit in een charismatische gemeente. Vroeger was het een pinkstergemeente, maar het begon meer en meer uit te bloeien tot een charismatische gemeente. Ewald weet niet zo goed wat hij er allemaal van moet denken. Hij voelde zich er veel beter bij toen de gemeente nog als een conservatieve pinkstergemeente functioneerde. Ewald mocht ook wel eens preken, vanwege zijn diepe bijbelkennis en ervaring. Ewald had het niet zo op al dat geprofeteer. Ewald had dat nog nooit gedaan, en zou dat ook niet zo snel doen. Profetie was voor hem meer een zaak van noodgevallen, en niet van dagelijks of wekelijks brood. Ook de oudste voorganger had het niet zo op met de nieuwe veranderingen.

Er waren drie voorgangers in de gemeente. Alhoewel Ewald wel eens had gepredikt was hij geen voorganger. Ewald was diep bevriend met de oudste voorganger. De oudste voorganger was degene die de gemeente heel vroeger had opgericht. Vaak vroeg hij raad aan Ewald.

Op een dag kwam de oudste voorganger bij Ewald op bezoek. 'Ewald, ik moet je even spreken. Het gaat om de gemeente. Ik ben helemaal niet blij met de nieuwe ontwikkelingen. Er wordt nauwelijks nog in de Bijbel gelezen, en alles draait om zogenaamde nieuwe profetieen. Ik heb er een hard hoofd in. Ik vind dat ik moet ingrijpen.' Ewald was het helemaal met de oudste voorganger eens.

Alles ging nogal snel, en al gauw was er een scheuring. De fanatieke charismatici konden vertrekken, en zij zouden een nieuwe gemeente bouwen. De oudste voorganger zou zijn gemeente weer maken tot de gemeente die het was, gewoon een oude conservatieve pinkstergemeente. Ewald was opgelucht. Nu zou er gelukkig weer wat meer uit het Woord gelezen worden. Het vastgelegde Woord was voor Ewald namelijk een rustbaken. In de nieuwe dienst werd alles nog eens grondig uitgelegd. De oudste voorganger wees met zijn vinger in de lucht en zei dat fanatieke profeten en andere fantasten in zijn kerk niet welkom waren. Hij sprak uit dat hij had gehoopt dat ze konden samenwerken. Hij had het lange tijd met hen geprobeerd, maar er kwam volgens hem steeds meer onrust in zijn gemeente. Ewald knikte.

Na de toespraak die ruim een half uur duurde stond er een bebaarde man achter in de zaal op en begon luid te klappen. Niemand kende de man. Ewald had hem ook hier nog nooit gezien. Toen er ruimte was voor getuigenissen kwam de man naar voren. 'Wat een geweldige gemeente is dit. Ik kom uit Egypte, en ik heb in mijn

groep soortgelijke dingen meegemaakt. Er is niks verkeerd met profetie, maar zodra het ons van het pad afbrengt, dan kunnen we er beter mee stoppen.'

Toen kwam de oudste voorganger weer naar voren, en sprak : 'Nou ja, stoppen hoeft natuurlijk niet, maar met mate, en heenwijzend naar de oude paden.' Verder verwelkomde hij de man in de gemeente. Zijn vader was een Egyptenaar, en hij had nooit de kans gehad om hem te spreken. Dit vond hij dus allemaal erg interessant. 'Zeg, vertel ons eens iets over Egypte, en die groep waartoe u behoort of behoorde ?' vroeg de oudste voorganger.

De man met de baard sprak urenlang over Egypte, en over de band tussen het Woord en Egypte, en de aanwezigen luisterden vaak met open mond. Ook de voorgangers vonden het erg interessant. Maar zij hadden niet in de gaten waar de toespraak hen naartoe zou leiden. Toen de dienst na uren was afgelopen wilden velen de man met de baard spreken. Maar deze was snel vertrokken, om nooit meer terug te komen. Een jaar later kwam de oudste voorganger er toevallig achter wat er met hem was gebeurd ... geschept door een auto ... door een dronken automobilist.

Hoofdstuk 2. Gemengde gevoelens

De oudste voorganger was erg verdrietig. Hij besloot speciaal een dienst te wijden aan deze treurig omgekomen vriend. Sindsdien was er altijd een groot respect voor Egypte. De gemeente had wat nare ervaringen met profetie, maar na enige tijd werd er in de diensten toch weer wat kleine ruimte gemaakt voor hen die wilden profeteren. Alle profetieen moesten natuurlijk door de voorgangers en door de gemeente-leden goed getoetst worden, maar de oudste voorganger vond het erg belangrijk dat de gemeente zich zou openstellen naar wat God hen te zeggen had. Tijdens de daartoe ingelaste 'profetische tijd' stond er een man op achter in de zaal, en begon te profeteren. Het waren wat vage en wazige woorden, en men wist niet zo goed wat men er mee aan moest. Dienst na dienst stond de man op om zijn profetische gaven te vertonen. Wat kon die man praten, zeg, maar hij begon wel steeds meer het Woord erbij te betrekken, en daarom lieten de voorgangers het altijd weer toe. De man was altijd een wat stille persoonlijkheid geweest, die zich vaak op de achtergrond begaf, maar wel goed meehielp met de organisatie van het kerk zijn, zoals de afwas, de schoonmaak, het ordenen. Hij was al geruime tijd een helper van de koster. De man bleek ook een Egyptische vader te hebben, net als de oudste voorganger, met het verschil dat de man een erg goed en diep contact had met z'n vader. Z'n ouders waren gescheiden, maar hij zocht hen beiden nog vaak op. Het viel iedereen op dat hij het in zijn profetieen vaak over Egypte had. Dit tot groot genoegen van de oudste voorganger. Ewald was minder onder de indruk. Ewald was bang geworden dat Egypte de plaats zou innemen van het Joodse Volk.

Na een zekere dienst waarin Egypte weer duidelijk op de voorgrond stond wilde Ewald met de oudste voorganger spreken. 'In alle respect,' zei Ewald toen ze even later in het kamertje van de oudste voorganger zaten : 'Ik heb het niet zo op al die Egyptische profetieen. Ze wijken mij teveel af van de kern. Hebben we niet voor niets een exodus gehad om ons hiervan los te maken ? Niet alleen het hele Egypte-concept stoort mij, maar ook het feit dat alles weer zo profetisch wordt. Kunnen we niet gewoon bij de Bijbel blijven ?' De oudste voorganger knikte direkt. 'Ik denk dat je gelijk hebt, Ewald. Bedankt dat je me daar even op wees. Ik had het zelf niet echt in de gaten, vanwege mijn grote betrokkenheid rondom het verlies van onze Egyptische broeder.'

'Ja, maar wat gaat er nu gebeuren dan ?' vroeg Ewald. 'Ik zal er direkt werk van maken,' zei de oudste voorganger. De diensten daarop werden gehouden zonder de profetische tijd. Niet iedereen voelde zich bij deze verandering op hun gemak, en al snel begonnen er een aantal te morren en te fluisteren. De oudste voorganger wilde eigenlijk een soort compromis sluiten, omdat zijn pinkstergemeente niet per definitie tegen profetie was. Maar Ewald vond : 'Waarom water bij de wijn doen ?' Ewald vond dat profetie, en ook dingen zoals genezing en andere gaven van de Geest behoorden tot het rijtje 'bij uitzondering'. Ewald was lid van de gedachte dat de geestes-uitingen bedoeld waren om de basis van het geloof te leggen. Het behoorde tot het gebied : evangelisatie, om omstanders te overtuigen van het bestaan van God. De daaruit voortvloeiende gemeentes zouden de geestes-uitingen niet meer zo nodig hebben, maar moesten sterk worden in het Woord. Ewald hield niet van al dat zweverig gedoe. 'Met beide benen op de grond blijven,' dat was zijn motto.

Hoofdstuk 3. De gastspreker

Op een dag was er een gastspreker in de gemeente. Deze gastspreker kwam uit een andere pinkstergemeente, en stond bekend als een groot prediker. De preek ging over Genesis, waar er zo lovend over Egypte werd gesproken, waar Jozef onderkoning werd, en waardoor het volk Israel van de hongerdood werd gered. Dit was omdat de farao raadgevende dromen van God had gehad die door Jozef werden uitgelegd. Vanuit die band tussen Israel en Egypte werd ook het zonnelied tot de Egyptische god Aton in de Joodse Heilige Geschriften opgenomen, omdat de God van Israel en Egypte 'Eén' was in veelvuldigheid. Jozef trouwde met een dochter van de priester van de Egyptische god Osiris of zoals hij vaak genoemd werd : On.

In het boek Exodus zien we een heel andere verhouding tussen Israel en Egypte. Er was in die tijd een andere farao aan de macht, waarvan velen denken dat het Ramses was, die de god van het kwaad, Seth, aanbad. Deze farao was bang voor de

militaire macht en consequenties van het Volk Israel. Het leidde tot een breuk tussen deze twee volken.

De preek zette de aanwezigen aan het denken, want wat moest hun verhouding nu zijn tot Egypte ? Moesten ze terug gaan naar Genesis, of moesten ze blijven bij Exodus ? Na afloop mochten er vragen gesteld worden, en de prediker kreeg ook deze vraag te horen. Zijn mening was dat Egypte was gevallen, en dat de band tussen Israel en Egypte, ook op het gebied van godsdienst en regering, maar tijdelijk was. De Exodus was een uittocht uit de slavernij en de macht van het gevallen Egypte, dat het vlees voorstelde. Maar toen stond de man op die helper van de koster was, en die ook Egyptisch bloed had, en vroeg : 'Denkt u dat er in de toekomst behoudenis is voor Egypte, en dat Egypte misschien weer in ere hersteld zou kunnen worden ? Van mijn vader, die Egyptenaar is, hoorde ik dat de Egyptische god Sebek, die voorgesteld wordt als een krokodil, mee zou helpen in de vernietiging van Seth, het kwaad.' Even was het stil. De prediker scheen na te denken. 'Natuurlijk is er behoudenis voor hen die als Egyptenaar tot Christus komen, en daardoor ge-ent worden op de Joodse tak, en dan zal er een nieuw Egypte zijn. Maar wanneer dat zal gebeuren weten wij niet,' sprak de prediker. Maar toen stond Ewald op, en beschuldigde de prediker dat hij probeerde de goden van Egypte op één lijn te zetten met de God van Israel. 'Mijnheer, u maakt uzelf schuldig aan afgoderij. Dat vroeger tijdelijk even de God van Israel ingreep in Egypte had te maken met het feit dat Jozef daar opgesloten zat, maar geenszins was God dezelde als de Egyptische goden. Het was pure noodzaak dat Jozef zich verbond aan het Egyptische huis,' sprak Ewald. 'Voorganger, kunt u dit soort verleiding niet aan de kaak stellen ? Het is bijna gewoon infiltratie.' Maar Ewald werd gesust, en de voorganger maakte een gebaar met z'n handen dat Ewald weer moest gaan zitten. Later hoorde Ewald dat de prediker in de begintijd veel voor de gemeente had betekent, en dat hij een goede naam had in de conservatieve beweging binnen de pinkstergemeentes, zodat ze hem niet zomaar in het openbaar konden aanklagen als zijnde een verleider. En nogmaals werd Ewald erop gewezen dat de man keurig netjes had vermeld dat het tijdelijk was, zoals de band tussen Israel en Egypte in Genesis werd beschreven, en dat men als gemeente moest leven vanuit de beschikkingen van de Exodus, waaruit de rest van Gods Woord was voortgevloeid.

Maar Ewald liet het er niet bij zitten. Juist omdat de gemeente al zo Egyptisch gestemd was, zag hij dit als een extra bedreiging. En wat zou hieruit voortvloeien ? Ewald was er bang voor dat de volgende stap afgoderij zou betekenen, en dat de Egyptische goden in ere zouden worden hersteld, als de delen Gods. Maar zover was het nog niet. De dienst erna was Ewald er niet. Schriftelijk had hij laten weten niet meer deel te willen zijn van deze Egyptische secte, in zijn ogen. Ook wilde hij niet meer op de hoogte gehouden worden van de activiteiten binnen de gemeente.

Hoofdstuk 4. De verschijning

Op een nacht verscheen Jezus aan Ewald. 'Ewald, Ewald, waarom vervolgt gij Mij,' sprak Jezus, en liet hem Zijn bebloedde handen zien. Ewald voelde zich erg ongemakkelijk. 'Waarom vervolgt gij het volk Egypte,' sprak Jezus. 'Maar Heer,' zei Ewald, 'ik doe alleen wat Uw Woord mij opdraagt. Alleen in Genesis zie ik die band met Egypte, maar U heeft altijd al gewaarschuwd tegen afgoderij.' Toen kwam de Heer dichterbij, en liet tussen het bloed de beenderen van Zijn Handen zien. 'Zie je, Ewald, Mijn botten zijn niet gebroken. Kent gij de hemelse namen en hemelse talen ? Ziet dan, Mijn gebeente is Sebek.'

'Maar Heer ?' sprak Ewald, en begon toen luid te roepen, en te smeken tot Jezus Christus van Nazareth, zijn Heer. 'Ik ben het,' sprak Jezus, 'Ik ben het die gij vervolgt.' En Ewald viel op zijn knieen, en begon de duivel te bestraffen. 'Wat is afgoderij, Ewald ?' sprak Jezus luid.

'Ik ben er niet van overtuigd dat jij de Jezus Christus ben die ik ken,' sprak Ewald giftig. 'Als je een duivel ben, bestraf ik je nu.' Maar weer vroeg de verschijning : 'Wat is afgoderij, Ewald.'

'Afgoderij is je te bezoedelen met andere goden,' sprak Ewald. 'Ik heb niks tegen Egyptenaren, maar ik zal nooit buigen voor hun goden !' riep Ewald.

'Afgoderij is je eigen natie of een bepaalde natie als superieur te beschouwen. Afgoderij is een god van andere goden te onderscheiden om daarmee te zondigen,' sprak de verschijning.

'O ja ?' zei Ewald spottend, 'Mijn God is de Enige, en ik zal niet buigen voor anderen. Ik heb Eén God, als in zuiver monotheisme. Voor mij is afgoderij meergodendom. Alleen door Jezus Christus hebben wij de Ware God leren kennen.'

En weer kwam de verschijning dichterbij. 'Waarom noem je het 'meergodig' ? Waarom niet meerdelig ? Je weet dat God meer delen heeft, en dat kunnen meerdere namen zijn. Is het verkeerd als iemand tot een ander deel van God snelt ? Wat weet jij van de namen van God ?'

'Tja,' zegt Ewald, 'als die Egyptische goden delen zijn van God, leuk verhaal, maar wie zegt mij dat het waar is ? Genesis is verleden tijd. Wij leven in en na Exodus. Wij worden uit Egypte weggeleid. De Egyptenaren hebben geen Jezus Christus in hun godenstelsel, dus daarom vertrouw ik het hele zaakje al niet. Een Evangelie buiten Jezus Christus bestaat er niet, en een kruis hebben ze al helemaal niet.'

'Wie zegt dat ?' vraagt de verschijning. 'Ze spreken een andere taal, maar kunnen die onderdelen dus best hebben. Taal maakt niet zalig, maar het hart, zogezegd : de vertaling. Het hele Christusverhaal is voortgekomen uit de verhalen van Horus, de zonnegod, die al veel ouder is. Ook hij stierf en stond na drie dagen weer op.

Waarom zou God Zich maar aan één volk hebben gegeven ? Als je taal afscheidt van vertaling ga je dat denken, en daarom houdt je ook niet zo van profetie, want dat is de vertaling van het Woord van God, en het getuigenis van Christus.'

'Boze geest, ga terug naar de hel,' begint Ewald te roepen. Dag na dag komen de verschijningen terug, en Ewald begint dromen te krijgen over Horus. 'Waar gaat dit naartoe ?' begint Ewald te denken. 'Dit is nog erger dan wat ze in de pinkstergemeente verkondigen. Laat ik maar terug gaan.' En zo gebeurde het. Mokkend maakte Ewald weer voorzichtig contact met zijn oude gemeente, en de dromen en verschijningen worden minder.

Hoofdstuk 5. De exorcist

In de gemeente wordt Ewald een beetje met de nek aangekeken, maar dat doet hem niet zoveel. Als hij maar van die rare verschijningen en dromen zou afkomen. Gelukkig werden de dromen en verschijningen minder, maar Ewald blijft last hebben. Daarom besluit hij op zoek te gaan naar een goede exorcist. Ewald gelooft niet dat een boze geest in een christen kan binnenkomen, maar hij gelooft wel dat een christen door een boze geest onderdrukt kan worden. Diep in zijn hart geeft hij de gemeente de schuld, omdat ze het altijd zo vaak over Egypte moesten hebben. Ewald ziet het als een lichte graad afgoderij, en beseft dat de gemeente op het randje van een grote afgrond staat. Omgang met afgodendienaars kan de deur openen voor boze geesten, maar moet Ewald hen nu echt beschouwen als afgodendienaars ? Hij kan niet weg, ook omdat hij van binnen aangeklaagd wordt dat die boze verschijningen veroorzaakt werden doordat hij z'n gemeente had verlaten. Is hij een prooi van wolven geworden ? Hij vindt eigenlijk dat hij de voorganger trouw moet blijven, want dan wordt hij zelf ook beschermd. Maar wat als de voorganger nu echt op het afgodische vlak terecht zou komen ? Ewald voert innerlijke strijd. Op een dag heeft hij een afspraak met een bekende exorcist binnen het samenwerkingsverband van pinkergemeenten.

Ewald vertelt van zijn ervaringen, en de exorcist luistert aandachtig. Ewald kent de man nog wel een beetje van een conferentie. De exorcist is één en al oor, en vindt het erg interessant. 'Ewald, wat we nu gaan doen is bidden dat de boze geest zich openbaar zal maken, zodat we hem uit kunnen drijven. Als er dan nog wonden zijn, dan kan de Heilige Geest die genezen,' zegt de exorcist.

'U denkt toch niet dat ik een boze geest heb ?' vraagt Ewald een beetje beledigd. 'Nee,' sust de exorcist, 'het is gewoon een testje om te zien waar en hoe een eventuele boze geest je onderdrukt.' Dit stelt Ewald een beetje gerust. Dan begint het gebed. De exorcist bidt heel lang, en spreekt vervolgens de eventuele boze geest aan. De exorcist spreekt in tongen, en wacht af. Dan begint Ewald wild te bewegen. 'Tarrabarrebedorre,' schreeuwt Ewald. Ewald is zichtbaar in paniek. Dat had hij

niet verwacht dat hij gebonden zou zijn door een boze geest. Dit was iets dat charismatici soms 'inwoning' noemden, of in zware gevallen zelfs bezetenheid. Ewald had hier nooit in geloofd. Dat kon alleen maar bij ongelovigen. Was hij wel echt zoals ze dat zeiden 'wederomgeboren' ? Even twijfelde Ewald aan alles, nu zoiets vreemds zich in hem had gemanifesteerd, maar lang nadenken kon Ewald niet, omdat de exorcist de geest begon te ondervragen. 'Kitket, ik ben een geest van ongeloof,' sprak de geest door Ewald heen. 'Waar kom je vandaan ?' vroeg de exorcist. 'Ik laat hen van pinksteren denken dat ze superieur zijn, en dat ze een waterdicht superieur geloof hebben. Ik laat hen Mozes volgen uit het slavenhuis van Egypte, om hen kennis te laten maken met een nieuwe slavernij : de pinkstergemeente. Ik ben Egypte-haat, en om hen tegen Egypte te beveiligen heb ik hun taal tot de superieure laten maken, en hen de vertaling der vertaling laten haten. Ik ben profetie-haat, dat is mijn maat. Wij werken in een groep. Wachtwoorden hebben wij gemaakt, voor onze elite, hen van pinksteren.'

'Ja, stop maar,' zegt de exorcist nors en luid, en begint de geest te bestraffen. 'Je bent een religieuze leugengeest, een wargeest, en je komt er nu uit, in de Naam van Christus die wij dienen.' Maar dan begint de geest te lachen. 'Ik kom er toch niet uit, ik heb namelijk recht, omdat hij zich niet wil bekeren van zijn Egypte-haat, zijn profetie-haat en de daarbij horende superioriteit.' En hoe de exorcist ook bestrafte, bad en ondervroeg, de geest hield voet bij stuk, en ging er niet uit. Ewald voelde zich ellendig. Hij moest er niet aan denken de nacht door te moeten brengen met dit beest in of op z'n lichaam. 'We moeten God bidden om wijsheid,' zei de exorcist. 'Ik ben niet van plan deze geest te geloven. Het zijn leugenaars, en ons geloof is ons wapen. Ewald, je zult in geloof moeten staan. Je moet belijden dat je niks met die geest te maken wilt hebben, en dan in geloof aanvaarden dat je vrij bent.' Ewald kreeg wat boekjes mee over geloof en belijdenis, over het zogenaamde 'claimen', en werd vervolgens naar huis gezonden. Ewald voelde zich gebroken, maar was niet van plan de strijd op te geven.

Hoofdstuk 6. De strijd

Ewald begon gretig de boekjes te lezen, en probeerde door bepaalde geloofs-uitspraken zijn schuddende lichaam tot rust te brengen. Ewald had het niet zo met al dat geloofs-gedoe, alsof je moest werken voor een genezing of bevrijding. Hij geloofde in het conservatieve volbrachte werk van Christus, door genade. Wel geloofde Ewald in het gebed, en het lezen van het Woord. Vooral dat laatste.

Na een tijdje was Ewald zo wanhopig, dat hij besloot het verhaal te vertellen aan de charismatici die indertijd de gemeente waren uitgestuurd. Ze hadden inmiddels hun eigen gemeente opgezet. Ewald kende hen wel. Hij was er nooit zo van onder de indruk, maar nu was het zijn laatste kans. Met lood in zijn schoenen ging hij naar het huis van die charismatische voorganger die vroeger voorganger was bij

Ewald in de gemeente. De charismatische voorganger was blij hem te zien. Hij gaf hem een omhelzing. Ewald voelde zich direkt op zijn gemak, misschien ook omdat het een oude kennis van vroeger was. Ewald's lichaam schudde nog steeds een beetje, en begon het verhaal te vertellen. 'Ach, Ewald,' zei de charismatische voorganger, 'ik heb iemand in de gemeente die naast mij ook weleens preekt, en die heeft dit soort varkentjes wel eens eerder gewassen. Laten we hem erbij halen.' Niet lang daarna stopte er een auto voor het huis van de charismatische voorganger. De charismatische voorganger had hem gebeld of hij direkt wilde komen voor een spoedgeval. De man kwam binnen en ging zitten. men zei dat hij een krachtige gave van profetie had. De man begon in zichzelf te bidden, en zachtjes in tongen te spreken. Een tijdje was het stil. Toen begon de man te spreken : 'Ja, Ewald, ik heb een beeld van de Heer. Ik zie jou lopen in Egypte met vraagtekens boven jouw hoofd. Dan stap je een soort boerderij binnen waar een kar staat. In die kar zie je een heleboel dieren die je niet kent. Je begint op die dieren in te hakken, omdat je bang bent dat ze je iets aan zullen doen. Maar de Heer zegt : 'Laat af, en weet dat Ik God ben.'

Ewald was geschokt. Hoe wist die man dat het om Egypte ging ? De charismatische voorganger had alleen verteld dat het om een spoedgeval ging. Ewald voelde zijn geloof instorten, maar was aan de andere kant diep onder de indruk. Vooral toen de man profeteerde : 'Dit zegt de Heer : die vreemde dieren zijn delen van Mij.' Was dit een zuiver Woord van de Heer ? Ewald wist het niet, maar voelde zich erg rustig worden. 'Ja, Mijn Zoon,' sprak de profeet verder, 'Ik heb jouw worstelingen gezien. Je geloof staat op de kop, omdat jouw geloof gezuiverd moet worden. Ik wil jouw de fundamenten laten zien van een kerk die Mijn Aangezicht heeft bespuwd. Ik heb in Mijn kerk geen welgevallen, omdat ze Egypte eenzijdig hebben benaderd. Iets kan voor meerdere dingen symbool staan, en zoals het kruis symbool staat voor dood en overwinning, zo staat Egypte symbool voor slavernij en bevrijding. Het kruis werd door de tegenstander als wapen opgesteld, maar heb ook Ik niet datzelfde kruis als wapen gebruikt ? Zo is dan ook Egypte als het kruis, gebruikt door de tegenstander om te knechten, en door Mij om te bevrijden. En zo is dan ook het Ankh-teken, het Egyptische kruis met het rondje erop als de zon, nog steeds het kruis van de Koptische Christenen, de christenen van Egypte.' Even was het stil. Maar toen ineens manifesteerde de geest zich weer in Ewald, en vloog de profeet aan. 'Kalm,' zei de charismatische voorganger luid, en begon de geest te bestraffen. Maar Ewald rolde al met de profeet over de grond. 'Ik ga je vernietigen !' schreeuwde de geest door Ewald heen. Toen ineens was Ewald in een diepe slaap. De profeet stond op, en ging weer zitten. Ook de charismatische voorganger ging weer zitten. 'God heeft hem in de rust gelegd,' zei de profeet. 'Laten we hem hier maar even liggen.' De charismatische voorganger knikte bezorgd. Samen gingen ze verder met bidden. Ook de charismatische voorganger was diep geschokt. Was nu dan echt de tijd gekomen dat het Egyptische kruis waaraan de gemeente zo'n lange tijd gehangen had nu ten goede zou worden gebruikt ? Zou na de exodus, de uittocht uit Egypte, nu een intocht komen in het Nieuwe Egypte ? 'Dit waren echt de

woorden die ik van God kreeg,' zei de profeet, 'ik heb hier nooit echt over nagedacht.'

'Het klinkt wel logisch,' zei de voorganger, 'en zeer profetisch, en ik ben voor vijvennegentig procent overtuigd, maar ik wil en moet dit profetisch woord gaan toetsen aan de Bijbel. Ik wil meer Bijbelse fundering hebben, en natuurlijk wil ik het bovenal toetsen aan de Geest.' De profeet knikte. 'Ja,' zei de profeet, 'ook ikzelf zal dit voor de zekerheid nog enkele dagen moeten toetsen. Laten we er ook over vasten, ook opdat Ewald geheel vrij zal komen.'

Hoofdstuk 7. De Inodus

De dag erop wordt Ewald wakker in zijn bed. Hij kan zich van het gebeuren niet veel meer herinneren. Wel voelt hij zich anders, en weet hij dat het over Egypte ging. Op straat ziet hij Egyptische kruizen op hoofden van mensen verschijnen. Hij vraagt zich af wat dat betekent. Als hij de profeet opbelt, vertelt deze hem dat mensen om hem heen als het kruis van Egypte zijn, die hem in een bepaalde slavernij en traditie houden, maar dit kruis zal tot zegen worden.

Ewald besluit zich te verdiepen in het Egyptische gedachtengoed, puur als cultuur-interesse. Hij verbaasd zich over de overeenkomsten tussen Israel en Egypte, maar ziet ook dat ze verschillen hebben en elkaar aanvullen. Ewald voelt rust. Deze oude vijand begint meer en meer als vriend te zijn. Op godsdienstig gebied heeft Ewald nog veel tegenzin en bedenkingen en besluit om gewoon onderzoek te doen om de kennis te verrijken, opdat geen enkel vooroordeel hem kan misleiden. Hij herinnert zich Jezus die voor hem stond en hem Zijn beenderen toonde, zeggende : het is Sebek, het gebeente van God. Liggen er in Egypte de schatten van Gods diepere wezen ? Uiteindelijk was de Egyptische wortel zeer duidelijk, en dat begon al bij Abraham, bij Jozef en uiteindelijk bij Mozes, de grondlegger, die een Egyptische prins werd. Het duizelde allemaal voor zijn ogen. De fundamenten liggen in Egypte, en Ewald herinnerde de theologen die zeiden dat het paradijs in Egypte lag. Hadden ze vaker met Egypte te maken gehad dan ze dachten ?

Ewald besloot naar Egypte te gaan. Hij wilde nu echt confronteren datgene wat zijn gedachtenleven en geloofsleven zo overhoop had gegooid. Hij besloot naar de tempel van Horus te gaan, die als een Egyptische heenwijzing naar Jezus Christus was, om daar de nacht door te brengen. Er stonden grote beelden van de god om de tempel heen. Het waren beelden als van een valk. Ewald had van de autoriteiten toestemming gekregen om in een tentje daar de nacht door te brengen. Ewald vertelde hen dat hij een christelijke journalist was. Midden in de nacht hoorde hij gekrijs, en liep uit zijn tent. Een reusachtige valk stond voor hem. Maar deze valk had handen, en deze handen bloedden. 'Sebek is mijn gebeente,' zei de verschijning.

'Mijn Christus bloedt niet meer,' sprak Ewald rustig, 'want alles is volbracht.' Toen sprak de valk : 'Ik heb meerdere delen. Mijn kruis heeft meerdere delen.' Toen vertrok de valk heel rustig. De valk was reusachtig, en verdween door de muren. Ewald wist nog steeds niet goed wat hij hier nu van moest denken, maar hij wilde het allemaal meemaken voor zijn onderzoek. Hij wilde zelf onderzoeken en ervaren welke plaats Egypte zou hebben in Gods Heilsplan, en misschien zelfs in Gods Identiteit.

De dag erna ging Ewald naar de tempel van Sebek. Weer kwam het gevoel over hem heen alsof hij een afgodendienaar was, of een afgodenzoeker, maar steeds weer prentte hij zich in dat hij een onderzoeker was. Hij hield zich vast aan de tekst : 'Onderzoekt alle dingen, en behoudt het goede.' Daar was hij nu mee bezig, onderzoeken, om het goede te behouden. Maar de aanklachten waren nog niet voorbij. Hij werd aangeklaagd door de tekst : 'Waarmee gij omgaat wordt gij besmet.' Ja, en dan helpt bidden niet zoveel. Toen hij bij de tempel van Sebek was aangekomen omhulde hem een diepe rust. Het was alsof hij hier het paradijs voelde. Of was Sebek de slang van het paradijs ? Nee, Sebek was een krokodil, of een man met een krokodillenkop. Maar de slang in het paradijs had toch eerst benen, voordat hij vervloekt werd en op zijn buik moest gaan om stof te eten ?

Ook hier waren veel beelden. Van God mochten geen beeltenissen gemaakt worden, maar goed, dit was een deel van God, Zijn gebeente. Wat een geheimenis, en wat prachtig, als het allemaal waar zou zijn. Ook hier mocht hij de nacht doorbrengen. Midden in de nacht werd hij wakker, en keek naar het hoge plafond waar grote openingen inzaten. Hij zag de zwartblauwe lucht, en wat raven die daar vlogen. Of waren het geen raven ? Er gebeurde niets, en eigenlijk was Ewald een beetje teleurgesteld. Ook ging hij naar de tempels van andere Egyptische goden voor onderzoek, en hij schreef veel op. Inmiddels was het een dik boekwerk geworden. In sommige tempels of piramides mocht hij niet de nacht doorbrengen. Toen hij thuis was gekomen, na een lange reis terug, zat hij erover te denken om zijn reportage als boek te laten drukken. Natuurlijk werd het een boek met veel vraagtekens, maar het gaf hem uiteindelijk weer wat rust. Hij was niet bang te twijfelen. Het geloof was toch in ieder geval zo iets ongrijpbaars.

In zijn boek beschreef hij ook zijn ervaringen, en dat wat eraan vooraf ging. Hij noemde het boek 'De Inodus,' wat zoiets als de intocht betekende. Het boek sloeg erg aan in de charismatische wereld en pinksterwereld, en was niet alleen bedoeld om Israel en Egypte weer bij elkaar te brengen, maar ook de pinksterwereld en de charismatische wereld. Het boek had dan ook een duidelijke brugfunctie, maar was nog steeds erg neutraal geschreven, en dat was misschien ook wel de reden dat het zo aansloeg. Ook Egyptische christenen vonden in het boek veel van henzelf terug, dat wat ze ooit eens hadden achtergelaten. Veel christenen waren benieuwd over hun Egyptische wortels. Egypte werd in hun beleving steeds meer een belangrijk fundament van hun geloofs-achtergrond, een belangrijke bron waar het allemaal in begon. En ze begonnen te ervaren hoe lief God Egypte had, nog steeds.

Hoofdstuk 8. De muur

Op een nacht werd Ewald wakker. Voor hem stond de geest die hem vroeger vaak lastig viel. 'Ha, ik ben Kitket, ken je me nog ?' Ewald voelde heel duidelijk een muur tussen hem en de geest. Nee, Egypte haatte hij niet meer. Ook achtte hij Egypte niet meer als 'minder' dan Israel, maar besefte, ervoer en geloofde nu dat Egypte een geheime bron van Gods onderdelen was, als een geestelijk kruis, een dieper en rijker kruis dan alleen maar het materiele kruis. Dit was het kruis wat ook al in het Oude Testament bestond, waaraan Jozef was genageld, en wat hem tot heerlijkheid bracht. Zou Egypte dan weer de voedselschuur zijn voor Israel ? Zou Genesis weer wederkeren als de Inodus ? Het waren dingen waar Ewald veel over nadacht, maar waarop hij maar geen duidelijk antwoord kreeg. Hij hoorde de stem van Kitket niet eens meer, maar was onhuld door de rijkdommen die hij had ontdekt. Plotseling greep hij naar zijn bijbel, die op het nachtkastje lag, en de letters THOTH verschenen erop. Was Thoth niet de god van het archief ? Ewald knipperde met zijn ogen.

Mozes groeide op aan het Egyptisch hof waar hij werd onderwezen. Als hij niet was gered door een Egyptische prinses, dan was er nooit een Mozes geweest, en misschien ook nooit een Bijbel. De invloed van Egypte was dus duidelijk. Mozes had zijn leven aan Egypte te danken. En deze geredde Egyptische prins, de prins van Egypte, had zo'n groot deel van het Woord geschreven, en het huis van God gebouwd, de tabernakel. Ewald had ook wat Egyptische boeken op zijn nachtkastje liggen. Ze begonnen te glimmen. Plotseling stond er een gestalte voor hem. Het was Thoth. 'Ik ben het bloed van Christus, het Woord,' sprak de gestalte. Ewald beefde in zijn bed. Het was alsof zijn bed trilde. 'Wij zijn allen delen van Christus,' sprak de gestalte. 'In Egypte ligt het geheime Woord van God, de vertaling. Daarom : profeteer, profeteer, want dit is het getuigenis van Christus, voor hen die Hem liefhebben.' En toen vaagde de gestalte weg. Ewald wist niet of hij nu net de duivel of God had gezien, maar dat het indrukwekkend was, dat was duidelijk. 'We zien wel,' dacht Ewald, toch wat nuchterder wordend over deze dingen. Hij voelde en wist dat hij beschermd werd.

Hoofdstuk 9. De Sebek-profeet

Er was een groep rondom het boek van Ewald die het allemaal begon uit te werken en tot radicale conclusies kwam, maar Ewald wilde daar niet zoveel van weten. Het boek behoorde volgens hem een vraagteken te zijn, en geen antwoord. Spoedig was er een nieuwe beweging gekomen binnen de pinkstergemeente en de charismatische gemeente, en die groep ging samen. Ze noemden zichzelf Inodus gemeente, Egyptische gemeente, of gewoon Koptische gemeente. Ook kwamen er Bijbelscholen uit die koker, genaamd Egyptische Bijbelschool, Inodus Bijbelschool,

Koptische Bijbelschool en nog wat andere namen. Ewald vond hen veel te radicaal, en zelfs de charismatische voorganger en de profeet vonden het te ver gaan. Maar wel ontstonden er enkele lichtere stromingen in die hoek, en daar kon Ewald zich wel in vinden, evenals de charismatische voorganger en de profeet. Veel weerstand was er in ieder geval toch nog wel tegen dit soort groeperingen. Veel voorgangers en dominees spraken over een nieuwe secte, en nog gevaarlijk ook. Ewald vond dit verschrikkelijk overdreven.

Ewald zat samen met de charismatische voorganger en de profeet in een zogenaamde tussengemeente, die zich nog wat neutraler opstelde. Op een dag kwam er een profeet binnen van een streng charismatische gemeente. De man had een baard en begon direkt te profeteren : 'Als jullie niet met deze onzin stoppen, dan zal God Zijn Geest weghalen, en Zijn kandelaar.' Ewald keek de man een beetje vragend aan. 'Hoe weet je dat ?' riep iemand anders naar de man. Maar al snel was de man vertrokken.

In de wat minder neutrale gemeentes van het Egyptische Verband binnen de pinkstergemeente en de charismatische gemeente begonnen ook strenge profeten op te staan, die zich al snel als oordeelsprofeten ontpopten. Zij zagen de Inodus als noodzakelijk voor de gemeente, en bestempelden hen die zich niet daartoe voegden als 'afvallig'. Ewald zat een beetje tussen twee vuren in.

Nu al de delen van Christus bekend begonnen te worden en ieder weer een andere prioriteit of stokpaardje had, begonnen ook in de Egyptische Verbandsgemeentes steeds meer stromingen te komen, die zich op hun boord ook weer vertakten. Zo waren er Sebeks-gemeentes, en Bastets-gemeentes en zo verder. Ewald hield zich een beetje buiten de boot, maar de streng profetische stromingen binnen die gemeentes begonnen hem wel een beetje te beangstigen. Hij vond hen fanatiekelingen, en zelfs in sommige extreme gevallen sectarisch. Zij stonden in zijn ogen echt in het gevaar om misleid te worden. Sommige groepen waren zo fanatiek dat ze geweld niet schuwden. Ja, het was een tijd waarin het gevaarlijk werd om nog neutraal te zijn, zelfs binnen het Egyptische Verband.

Op een dag kwam er weer een profeet binnen in Ewalds neutrale gemeente. Ditmaal was het een profeet die pro-Egypte was, eentje van de oordeelsprofetische gemeente binnen de zeer grote Sebek-beweging. Al snel begon de Sebek-profeet stoelen en tafels om te gooien, en liep naar voren. Bij de microfoon aangekomen duwde hij de voorganger opzij. Even was het stil, en iedereen luisterde naar hem : 'Geen tijd meer voor neutraliteit, want dat is afgoderij,' bulderde hij. 'Weten jullie dan niet dat het gebeente Gods hard moet zijn om te kunnen blijven staan ? Sebek is koning, het gebeente van Christus, dat aan het kruis niet verbroken werd. Hij dan heeft Seth, het kwaad, verslagen. Maar jullie zijn allemaal volgelingen van Seth. Weten jullie dan niet dat Sebek de lauwen zal uitspuwen ?' Plotseling begon er een vuur te stromen uit zijn hand. Ewald schrok. Had deze man gelijk ? Waren ze te lauw ? Ze waren toch goed op weg ?

Iemand riep : 'Ach, wat, luister niet naar hem, die anti-christ. Het is allemaal nog niet bewezen.' Maar het vuur vloeide op diegene af, en verslond de persoon die deze woorden sprak. Iemand anders zei dat die persoon niet tot de gemeente behoorde, maar tot een behoudende pinkstergemeente, afkerig van het Egyptische Verband. 'Heb ik daar iets mee te maken ?' vroeg de profeet nors. 'Alsof jullie gemeente van het Verband is. Jullie zijn neutralen, en die kan God in Zijn koninkrijk niet gebruiken.' Maar toen stond Ewald op, en zei luid : 'Wij hier zijn mensen open voor Egypte, open voor Sebek, open voor Gods heilsplannen met Egypte en Zijn eventuele Egyptische Identiteit, maar wij willen deze dingen graag onderzoeken. Wij hebben nog twijfels en vraagtekens. Velen onder ons zijn verward, en weten niet wat ze precies moeten doen. Is daar ook ruimte voor ?'

'Oh ja, zeker wel,' zegt de Sebek-profeet, 'daarom zal ik zeer voorzichtig zijn. Maar hen die spelletjes spelen met God zullen het weten.' Toen stapte de Sebek-profeet van de microfoon weg, en was al snel vertrokken.

Hoofdstuk 10. De gebeds-avond

Velen zaten verslagen op hun stoelen. Als het zo moest, dan hoefde het voor hen niet meer. Bang waren ze, voor een nieuw bezoek van een Sebek-profeet. 'Laten we hen gewoon de ruimte geven om te spreken,' stelde iemand voor.

Ewald had diep van binnen een hekel aan zulke arrogante profeten. Ze dachten dat zij altijd gelijk hadden, en dat zij over anderen mochten beslissen, alsof ze God Zelf waren. Ewald had er flink de pest in. Maar wat kon hij tegen zulken doen ? Ze hadden vuur-gaven, of die nu echt waren of van de duivel : vuur is vuur.

Ook hadden ze ijs-gaven. Ze konden anderen met gemak laten bevriezen, tot aan de dood toe. Er werden veel boeken geschreven over zulke gevaarlijke profeten. Velen sloten zich bij zulke profeten aan, alleen uit angst. Ewald besloot om eens te praten met de profeet waarmee hij bevriend was. Maar deze liet weten niets tegen zulke profeten te kunnen doen. Die profeten waren in zijn ogen te sterk. Dat bevreemde en bevreesde Ewald zeer. Als die profetische vriend door God zou worden geleid, dan was er toch geen probleem ? Maar de profeet liet hem weten zelf ook in een geloofsstrijd te zitten, en dat profeten nooit te licht moesten denken over de krachten, machten, en mogelijkheden van andere profeten. De profeet was er nog niet over uit. De profeet besloot zich te vernederen voor God, en te vasten voor een antwoord.

De profeet stelde voor een gebeds-avond te houden bij hem thuis, voor antwoord. De charismatische voorganger zou ook komen. Toen ze met z'n drieen in gebed waren, sprak de profeet : 'En dit zegt de Heer : Ik ben een werk aan het doen. Er moeten vele zuiveringen zijn, opdat Mijn Geheimenissen geopenbaard zullen worden.' Later kreeg de profeet het woord dat ze geen diensten mochten houden,

want dat zou de wespen aantrekken. Profeten zouden aangetrokken worden tot de gevestigde ordes om daar de boel overhoop te halen. De drie moesten zich gewoon terugtrekken.

Weer zouden ze deze woorden de komende dagen gaan toetsen, maar al snel zagen ze er wat in. Het zou te gevaarlijk zijn om nog in gemeentes te komen met al die profeten-invasies. Ze besloten om een tijdje in dit huis te blijven om samen te bidden.

Op een nacht verscheen Sebek aan Ewald. Dit was dus het gebeente van Christus, het ongebroken bot. Voor Ewald was het als het dal van de dorre doodsbeenderen. Ineens was het alsof Ewald te drinken kreeg, en de beenderen begonnen recht overeind te komen. 'Bastet !' werd er geroepen. Die kende Ewald wel, dat was de kattengod, ook de god van vruchtbaarheid en kunst ... en ... 'Ik ben het vlees van Christus,' sprak een stem. Een vreemde, wazige gestalte kwam tot Ewald en bedekte de beenderen. Weer was het alsof Ewald te drinken kreeg. 'Verzoen Sebek met Bastet,' fluisterde de stem. Toen kwam Thoth naar voren, en het bloed begon te stromen. Het wezen van vlees en botten begon te bewegen, en ogen begonnen rond te kijken. 'Nu nog Anubis,' sprak een stem. Uit de hemel kwam licht, en kwam over het vlees heen. Nu had het wezen van vlees en botten een stem. Anubis was een zwarte hond of jakhals, of een man met een hondekop, en hij zorgde voor de doden. Hij bracht ze voor de tronen van recht. Weer kwam er licht uit de hemel, en buiten begon het te donderen. Ewald schrok. Wat was dit allemaal ? 'Verzoen hen allemaal,' sprak de stem.

De volgende ochtend vertelde Ewald zijn droom. De profeet knikte, en zei : 'Het kruis is zo diep gegaan dat het de delen van God heeft gescheiden. Nu zullen die delen met elkaar verbonden moeten worden. Dat is een heilige en diepe opdracht. Ook de charismatische voorganger knikte. 'Ik weet het niet,' sprak Ewald. Ewald had zoveel twijfels. Hij voelde zich verscheurd. De charismatische voorganger maakte hem duidelijk dat hij de verscheurdheid van God voelde.

Hoe zouden ze God moeten verzoenen ? Dat was de vraag. De Sebek-profeten wilden veelal niet van verzoening weten. Zij staarden zich bijna blind op Sebek.

Hoofdstuk 11. Het Sebek-kruis

Eén van de nachten daarna had Ewald een andere droom. Een vrouw in de verte zong hem toe. Ze was de was aan het ophangen, maar het voelde aan alsof ze geheel voor hem zong. Ewald kwam dichterbij, maar toen de vrouw hem zag, rende ze van hem weg. 'Zij is de Geest,' sprak een stem. 'De wat ? ...' vroeg Ewald. Ewald begon haar achterna te rennen, maar alles werd zo zacht, dat Ewald op een gegeven moment niet meer vooruit kwam. Hij was als in een moeras gekomen. Daar kwam Sebek, klaar om hem te verwoesten. Waarom wilde Sebek hem

verslinden ? 'Hij is de toorn van God, de rechter, maar ook de beschermer, de zachtmoedige, de advocaat, de doorgronder. Het is een heilige verslinding.' Het deed Ewald geen pijn, en hij voelde zich goed, bij dit wezen. Weer zag hij de vrouw, en ging voorzichtig op haar af. Ditmaal bleef ze staan, en nodigde ze hem uit in haar huis. 'Het Sebek-kruis verscheurt en verzoent,' sprak een stem. 'Sebek-kruis ?' dacht Ewald ...

Weer vertelde hij de volgende dag wat hij gedroomd had. Zijn vrienden vonden het een sprekende droom. Met z'n drieen besloten ze op zoek te gaan naar het geheim van die verzoening. Ze zouden hiertoe naar Egypte gaan.

Na een lange reis kwamen ze aan bij de Sebek-tempel. Ze wilden meer weten over het Sebek-kruis, en besloten onderzoek te doen in de tempel, en alles te lezen wat er maar over hem te lezen was. Buiten waren wat priesters een exorcisme aan het doen. Ze droegen een vreemd kruis in de vorm van een Sebek-krokodil. Er stonden ook een aantal tekens op. De drie kwamen dichterbij, en vroegen aan de priesters over het kruis. Eén van de priesters wilde wel even met hen praten. Na een kort gesprek nodigde hij hen uit om mee te komen naar zijn huis. In zijn huis stonden een heleboel Sebek-beelden, groot en klein, en aan de muren hingen enkele Sebek-kruizen. De man was van een conservatief Sebek-priesterschap, en vertelde dat hij ook geruime tijd in een conservatief Sebek-klooster had geleefd. Van hem hadden ze dus niets te vrezen. De man vertelde hen duizenduit over het Sebek-kruis en zijn betekenis. De drie waren één en al oor. Aan het einde van de dag kregen ze een kamer toegewezen op de hogere verdieping, en hier konden ze voorlopig logeren voor het onderzoek. De Sebek-priester was erg gastvrij, en bijna het tegendeel van de Sebek-profeet die ze hadden ontmoet. Ewald had ook een Sebek-beeld op zijn kamer. Het maakte hem rustig. Als materiaal een goddelijk doel had, dan was het gezegend. Ewald was zich bewust van de genezende krachten die uit het beeld kwamen. Ewald kende de tabernakel vanuit de exodus, maar vroeg zich af hoe de tabernakel van de inodus zou zijn. Daar zou dit beeld zeker instaan, omdat het beeld het gebeente van Christus vertegenwoordigde.

Toen ze gingen slapen kreeg Ewald een verschrikkelijke nachtmerrie. Hij moest voor Christus verschijnen. Ewald werd door een norse engel binnengeleid in een reusachtige hal met een reusachtige troon. Ewald voelde zich bijna verdrinken in de atmosfeer. Overal waren grote gevaarlijke vissen hoog rondom de troon die eruit zagen alsof ze hem elk moment konden aanvallen. Wat moest hij tegen zulke vissen beginnen. In de verte zag hij een grote wazige gestalte als een lichtende wolk. Dit was Christus. Langzaam werd hij door de reusachtige engel naar voren geleid. Christus opende lange stoffige witte boeken, zeer dik, met goudkleurig lichtende bladzijden. Toen opende Christus zijn mond en zijn stem was als teisterend. 'Alles wat gij hebt gedaan is opgetekend,' sprak Christus bijna krijsend. Het was alsof alle boten in Ewald afbrokkelden. 'Ik zal het vonnis optekenen,' vervolgde Christus. Toen kwam in de verte tussen de vissen door een reusachtig lichtende gestalte. Het was Sebek, en hij dreef naar voren. Ewald was opgelucht.

Sebek begon voor Ewald te pleiten, en opende boeken met de goede daden van Ewald. Ewald werd hoe langer hoe rustiger. 'Ik zal het vonnis optekenen,' sprak Christus. 'Gij zijt mijn gebeente.' Toen leek het alsof alles zwart werd voor Ewalds ogen, en hij schrok wakker. Het Sebek-beeld maakte hem rustig. 'Alles is in orde,' zei hij tegen zichzelf. Hij zag nu in wat er zou gebeuren als hij Sebek niet zou betrekken in het oordeel over zijn leven. Het eerste gedeelte zonder Sebek was namelijk verschrikkelijk. Ewald begon te roepen tot Sebek en tot het Sebek-kruis, zo hard, dat even later de priester in zijn kamer stond. De priester stelde hem gerust, en zei dat hij hem wel kon helpen. De priester vertelde na het verhaal gehoord te hebben dat hij als koptisch sebek-priester Ewald wel de handen op kon leggen, zodat hij Sebek zou ontvangen, en zijn gaven. De priester begon te bidden. Zijn handen voelden aan als vuur en ijs. 'Sebek, kom met uw vuur in ijs gemengd,' riep de priester, terwijl hij zijn hand op Ewald's hoofd had gelegd. Ewald was als door de bliksem getroffen en kon inademen, zo diep, zoals nooit tevoren. 'Sebek, het is goed,' zei de priester, 'Gij die het gebeente van Christus zijt.'

Rustig ging Ewald weer slapen. Maar na een tijdje ging Ewald rechtop zitten. Er kwam wat bloed uit zijn mond. Hij riep de priester, en die vertelde hem dat dat heel normaal was. Ewald werd namelijk bevrijd en gezuiverd.

Hoofdstuk 12. De arrestatie

De volgende dag waren de vrienden van Ewald een beetje sceptisch. Moest het allemaal zo ver gaan ? En dat bloed uit z'n mond ? Kwamen ze niet gewoon om onderzoek te doen. Maar toen de priester hen vroeg of ze Sebek wilden aanvaarden en ontvangen als het gebeente van Christus twijfelden ze geen moment. De priester legde hen de handen op, en zij begonnen te bidden. Op dat moment kwam er een vrouw binnenrennen, en schreeuwde : 'brand, brand.' Bij de buren was brand uitgebroken. De priester snelde er naartoe, en genas hen van brandwonden, nadat hij de brand had geblust.

Toen de drie weer terug waren in eigen land wilden ze zich aansluiten bij een conservatieve Sebek-gemeente om nog meer te weten te komen, en om misschien wat uit te wisselen. Ze wisten dat het gevaarlijk kon zien met invallen van profeten, die zich steeds meer als de politie begonnen te gedragen, maar ze hadden meer zelfvertrouwen nu ze zelf door Sebek waren aangeraakt. Ze voelden zich nu zelf ook een beetje als advocaat, omdat de extreme Sebek-profeten in hun ogen te wild, roekeloos en radicaal waren. Ze voelden zich duidelijk meer op hun gemak in de conservatieve Sebek-groep.

Al snel werden ze op het podium geroepen om hun ervaringen te vertellen. Tijdens hun getuigenis stond er één van de aanwezigen op. Het was een extreme Sebek-profeet die zich zo ook ontpopte. Hij begon hen uit te schelden, en een vuur begon

uit zijn handen te komen. Ewald begon richting het vuur te blazen en bemerkte dat er vuur en ijs uit zijn eigen mond kwam. De Sebek-profeet schrok, omdat het vuur van Ewald zijn vuur begon te verslinden. 'Het vuur moet vermengd zijn met ijs,' sprak Ewald. 'Zo kun je een ware Sebek-profeet herkennen, en daarmee zul je macht hebben over de valse Sebek-profeten.' De drie begonnen de gemeente te onderwijzen, en daarna riepen ze hen naar voren die Sebek wilden aanvaarden en ontvangen. Een grote stoet kwam naar voren, ook de extreme Sebek-profeet, en zij werden allemaal vervuld door Sebek als het gebeente van Christus.

En zo reisden Ewald en zijn vrienden gemeente na gemeente af om over Sebek en het Sebek-kruis te vertellen, en om de gaven door te geven. Ook werd Ewald uitgenodigd tot de wat extremere Sebek-gemeenten. Maar er waren een aantal Sebek-profeten die geheel niet onder de indruk waren van Ewald's vertoningen, en op een dag zochten ze Ewald op in de gemeente waar hij sprak. Ze kwamen in een busje en schuwden geen geweld. Ze werden weleens Sebek-militairen genoemd, en zij wilden niets liever dan het hele land, en zelfs de hele wereld, onderwerpen aan hun gezag. Ze hadden legerpakken aan en zonnebrillen op, en al snel stonden ze binnen. Er werden schoten gelost, en enkele gemeenteleden vielen op de grond. Uit Ewald's ogen stroomde groen vuurijs, als brandend ijs, om de Sebek-militairen te slaan. Maar een paar militairen waren al bijna bij Ewald aangekomen en grepen hem vast. Het was als bijtend vuur, en een worsteling volgde. 'Verrader,' riepen ze, 'we zullen je vernietigen.' Maar ineens kwam er zoveel kracht in Ewald's handen dat hij ze met één ruk tegen de muur aan slingerde. 'Bij het kruis van Sebek bezweer ik jullie !' riep Ewald. Ze konden zich niet meer bewegen. Inmiddels was er politie binnengekomen, en ook Ewald werd gearresteerd. Ewald werd kwaad, omdat hij in zijn ogen niets had gedaan, maar enkele omstanders vertelden dat hij militairen tegen de muur had geslingerd. 'Zelfverdediging,' zei Ewald. Maar toch moest hij mee. Aangekomen op het politie-bureau werden de agenten zich gewaar van het Sebek-evangelie. Maar de agenten namen Ewald mee naar een cel. Hij moest zich maar voor de rechter verantwoorden.

De rechter begreep heel goed dat het zelfverdediging was, en gunde Ewald recht. De rechter kende de militairistische beweging in de Sebek-orde, en vond hen gevaarlijk genoeg. Hij vroeg zelfs aan Ewald of hij nog bescherming nodig had.

Ewald kon gaan, en zette zijn werk voort. Er waren nog wel vaker relletjes met Sebek-militairen, maar al gauw begonnen ze hem toch te vrezen.

Hoofdstuk 13. Het eiland van Bastet

Niet alleen bij Justitie, maar ook in de politiek kreeg Ewald steeds meer aanzien, en het duurde niet lang of Ewald had een politieke partij opgericht : De CSP, de Conservatieve Sebek Partij. Ewald streefde naar een Conservatief Sebek Politie-

orgaan, en naar een Conservatief Sebek Leger-orgaan. Ewald wilde de extreme vormen van Sebek Politiek laten verbieden waar die gevaarlijk werd. Maar er was een nog groter gevaar : daar waar zulke Sebekieten zich met politiek gingen bezighouden. Als tegengif tegen Ewalds hervormingsdrang kwam er een Militairistische Sebek-partij opzetten genaamd het Militairistisch Sebek Verbond, de MSV. De MSV wilde alle vormen van democratie uitbannen, om een strakke dictatuur op te stellen. De MSV zaaide zo'n angst dat men bijna gedwongen werd op hen te stemmen. Er was een theorie dat zij die van een andere partij waren door de MSV uit de weg geruimd zouden worden. Velen probeerden de partij te verbieden, maar al snel kreeg de partij zoveel stemmen dat ze onmogelijk nog konden verliezen. Men vroeg zich af hoe het kon dat ze zoveel stemmen hadden. Uit het buitenland kwamen leden over om de partij in het land te versterken. Uiteindelijk kwam een buitenlandse partijleider van de MSV aan de macht. Ewald werd tweede, en werd tweede premier. Tijdens een rit naar het politieke bestuur werd er een aanslag op Ewald gepleegd van zo'n groot kaliber dat Ewald het niet overleefde. Snel waren enkele conservatieve Sebek-profeten bij zijn lichaam om het te herbergen. De avond daarop werd een wake gehouden. Ze zouden de hele nacht doorbidden om Ewald op te wekken. Midden in de nacht kreeg een profeet een woord van Sebek dat het zover was. Hij liep op het levenloze lichaam van Ewald af, legde zijn hand op zijn hoofd, en riep : 'Ewald, in de Naam van Sebek, het gebeente van Christus, sta op, door het kruis van Sebek.' Maar er gebeurde niets. Teleurgesteld ging iedereen weer zitten.

Maar toen kwam er een gestalte binnen als een reusachtige kat. Z'n ledematen waren gebogen, en hij sprak : 'Ik ben Bastet, het vlees van Christus,' en hij boog over het lichaam heen, en blies erop. Direkt begon het lichaam te bewegen, en toen blies Bastet adem door de neus van het lichaam, en Ewald begon weer te ademen. 'Laat Bastet verzoend zijn met Sebek,' riep Bastet. 'Gij Sebekieten, komt dan allen tot Mijn eiland in de Rode Zee, want dit was het oorspronkelijke paradijs. En ja, er zijn hier vele bomen met verboden vruchten waarvan gij niet zult eten. Alles zult gij ontleden en een groter getal geven, want alles heeft meerdere delen. Zo zult gij niet meer verslaafd zijn aan een getal.' En de Geest leidde Ewald en zijn groep tot de Rode Zee, en gaf hen een roeischip. En zo leidde de Geest Ewald tot het eiland van Bastet, het vroegere paradijs. En zij zagen daar veel bomen met slangen erin, waarvan zij niet mochten eten. En midden op dat eiland was een tempel van Bastet, met daar omheen vele kloosters. En een priester kwam naar buiten, klaar om hen allen de handen op te leggen. En zij vielen allen onder de kracht.

Ewald schrok wakker. Wat had hij vreemd gedroomd, zeg. Of was het geen droom ? En waar was hij ? Een Bastet-priesteres stond voor hem met een schaal vol fruit. Tegen de muur stond een enorm Bastet-beeld. De priesteres ging op zijn bed zitten en pakte zijn hand. Zijn hand beefde. Hij kreeg een armband om waarvan de uiteinden elkaar niet raakten. 'Dat is de Geb-Noet-Armband,' zei de priesteres. Ewald haalde de armband er weer vanaf. 'Waarom moet ik dat ding dragen ?' De priesteres keek hem doordringend aan, en sprak : 'Opdat je weet dat Christus vele

delen heeft. Je moet je niet op één deel blind staren.' Ewald nam wat van het fruit. Zelfs het fruit bestond uit meerdere deeltjes. 'Midden op het eiland, in de tempel van Bastet, daar is de Geb-Noet-Bron, dat is het hart van Christus. Dit hart bestaat uit de lever, Geb, die de aardgod is, en de longen, Noet, die de luchtgodin is. Door het Sebek-kruis werden zij gescheiden, en door het Sebek-kruis worden zij weer verzoend. Ewald nam nog wat fruit. De priesteres leidde hem in de avond naar de tempel, en naar de bron. Dit was een groot vuur, als brandend ijs. Ook lag er fruit tussen. 'Ga in de bron,' zei de priesteres, 'opdat je rein zult zijn. Kom tot het hart van Christus.' Voorzichtig stapte Ewald naar binnen. Een vreemd gevoel maakte zich van hem meester. Het was als een tunnel die onder de aarde leidde. In een open ruimte, als een grote grot, zag hij al z'n vrienden terug. Ze waren blij hem te zien. Ineens hoorden ze een luid gegil. Het was Bastet, en achter Bastet was Anubis. Ook Anubis krijste. Een deur ging achter hen open. 'Kom,' zeiden ze beiden. Ewald en zijn vrienden gingen door de deur naar binnen. Hier was een poel waar Sebek in lag. 'Ga in de poel,' sprak Bastet. Het zag er een beetje modderig uit, maar al snel lieten enkelen zich in de poel zakken. Ze gingen kopje onder. Niemand wist waar ze terecht zouden komen, maar één voor één volgden ze elkaar. Weer kwamen ze uit op een open plek, waar alles groen was. Ook hier was veel fruit. Het was als een wereld onder de aarde. De zon scheen hier groen licht, en er stonden overal vreemdsoortige bomen. Ewald schepte water uit een groene rivier en begon te drinken. Ook de anderen begonnen te drinken. In de verte kwam een lichtende gestalte aanlopen in prachtig wit. Het was Jezus Christus. 'Mijn delen hebt gij aanvaard, en daarom hebt gij Mij aanvaard,' sprak Jezus. 'Zij die mijn delen niet hebben aanvaard, hebben Mij niet aanvaard.' En Jezus liep naar de groene rivier, waar Hij langzaam in afdaalde, en sprak : 'Volg mij.' En Jezus leidde hen al zwemmend tot een grote zee met veel modderbanken, en tussen de modderbanken op een verhoging stond Sebek. 'Dit dan is de nieuwe ark,' sprak Jezus. En zij klommen allen op de Sebek, en hij begon voort te bewegen.

Einde

De Terugkeer van Canon

Hoofdstuk 1. De Helletenen

Hoofdstuk 2. De Ontsnapping

Hoofdstuk 3. De exorcist en de dominee

Hoofdstuk 4. Het vreemde mengsel

Hoofdstuk 1. De helletenen

Het was warm op het schip. Canon voerde zijn mannen aan ... Hij stond te schelden op het dak dichtbij het roer. De stuurman rilde. Op het dek vielen enkele mannen neer. Snel werden zij overboord gegooid. Er waren veel roeiers. Ook stonden er enkele mannen bij de kanonnen. Canon begon te krijsen, en weer vielen een aantal mannen neer. Sommigen waren het dek aan het schrobben. Canon werd hoe langer hoe woester. De roeiers hadden vreemde pakken aan, die door een soort ijzeren tenen vastgeklikt waren. Van die helse tenen kwam een enorme stank. Altijd als Canon zo begon te krijsen werden die helletenen vuurheet. Als de roeiers zouden proberen te ontsnappen, dan zouden de helletenen voor explosies zorgen. Ook Canon zelf droeg een pak met helletenen, maar deze waren als botten van een vreemd skelet. Ook het schip was gemaakt van vreemdsoortige helletenen, en er kwam een enorme helse stank van het schip af. De helletenen vormden ritsen, raders, en allerlei soorten richels waardoor dingen in elkaar geklikt konden worden. De helletenen dienden als de openers en de sluiters op het schip, waardoor dingen bewogen konden worden, en waardoor deuren open en dicht konden.

Vaak hield Canon plundertochten langs de kusten, en maalde de bewoners tot schatten. Daar had Canon speciale maalmolens voor. De slachtoffers werden erin gestopt en werden tot een vreemd mengsel gemaald wat later met een goudlaag werd bedekt. De schatten bracht hij altijd naar zijn eilanden. Hier had hij vele

tempels waar de schatten en beelden in werden geplaatst. Ja, Canon was een gehaat man bij de kustbewoners. Maar vele eilandbewoners hadden hem lief. Hij bracht hen altijd vele schatten. Maar op een dag toen Canon merkte dat er niet veel kustbewoners meer over waren begon Canon oorlog te voeren tegen de verschillende eilanden. Canon maakte sieraden van hun botten, en bouwde zijn schip er verder mee uit. Canon werd hierdoor meer en meer de Schrik der Zeeen. Zijn schip werd het schip der kannibalen genoemd.

Een dominee schrikt wakker van z'n droom. Hij had zijn preek de dag ervoor voorbereid en opgeschreven, en vandaag was het zondag. Zijn vrouw slaapt nog. De dominee staat op, en kleedt zich aan. Het is nog vroeg, en de dominee wil nog even zijn preek doornemen, maar hij voelt zich zo ontzettend moe dat hij weer in zijn bed gaat liggen ... Weer zakt de dominee in slaap en droomt verder ...

Ditmaal bevindt de dominee zich op het schip van Canon. Canon begint tegen de dominee te krijsen, en de dominee bemerkt dat hij een vreemd pak aanheeft, ook met ijzeren helletenen. 'Jij gaat vandaag preken,' zegt Canon ... De dominee knikt ongemakkelijk. Canon loopt heel langzaam op hem af, en wrijft over zijn pak heen. Een vreemd gevoel komt over de dominee. De dominee kan zich niet bewegen, maar even later merkt de dominee dat zijn arm vooruit gaat, terwijl het overal op zijn arm begint te klikken. De helletenen beginnen hun werk te doen. 'Zo,' zegt Canon, 'dit even zodat je niet van het boekje afwijkt.' Dan geeft Canon hem een duw, zo hard, dat de dominee over de reling vliegt. En als de dominee dan het water raakt wordt hij wakker. Maar wat is dat ? Niet zijn vrouw ligt naast hem, maar Canon. De dominee geeft een schreeuw, en direkt grijpt Canon hem vast ... 'Weet je nog, je moet vandaag preken.' De dominee begint te zweten. Dan begint de dominee heel verward te schreeuwen, terwijl Canon hard begint te lachen ... Uit zijn mond stroomt een dunne straal lava. 'Wat wil je nou, dominee,' fluistert Canon .. Maar van de schrik kan de dominee niks zeggen ... De dominee is in een shock ... Dan wordt de dominee echt wakker ... Zijn vrouw slaapt nog ... Weer wil de dominee opstaan om zijn preek voor te bereiden ... Even denkt hij nog terug aan die nare droom als een flits, maar dan kleedt hij zich rustig aan, en wil zijn papieren pakken ... Maar waar zijn die papieren nu ? Ach, de dominee kent het wel uit zijn hoofd.

In de dienst die zondag is het druk. De dominee preekt als vanouds. Er zit een man achter in de kerk met zijn haar geheel voor zijn gezicht. De dominee kijkt zo af en toe naar hem, maar gaat rustig door met spreken ... Dan, na een tijdje buigt de man naar voren, en komt dan weer omhoog, terwijl de haren voor zijn gezicht wegglijden ... De dominee kijkt recht in het gezicht van een skelet. De dominee schrikt hevig, maar probeert zich goed te houden. Hij denkt dat hij het zich verbeeld, en neemt een slok water. Maar de man begint naar voren te lopen, en even later rent hij op de dominee af. De dominee slaakt een gil, en ... wordt weer wakker.

De dominee stapt uit bed, doet haastig zijn kleren aan, en zucht diep ... Snel grijpt hij zijn papieren ... En terwijl hij zijn preek doorleest kalmeert hij ... Maar er staan wel ineens wat vreemde tekens tussen sommige woorden, en sommige woorden zijn geheel verdwenen ... De dominee legt zijn papieren opzij, en zet wat koffie. Na de koffie gaat hij weer verder met lezen, en probeert de vreemde tekens te ontwijken.

In de dienst is het druk. De dominee bestijgt de preekstoel. Dit gaat erg traag. De dominee vertrekt geen spier. Dan begint het donderende geweld van de preekstoel af te komen, en de dominee reageert zich flink af in hemelse taal en wolkerig schriftgebruik. De dominee preekt over de hel. 'Het schip der kannibalen,' zegt de dominee ineens, maar snel herstelt hij zich, en begint flink te hoesten. Dan gaat hij weer verder met zijn preek, en het tweede deel dondert nog erger dan het eerste deel. In liederlijke taal beschrijft de dominee de afschuwelijkheden van de hel die eeuwig duurt voor de zondaar. 'En wij zijn allen schuldig,' roept de dominee bijna kokhalzend, maar hebben in Christus Jezus ... een ... een' Maar verder komt de dominee niet ... 'Canon is hier,' gilt de dominee alsof hij een demoon is, met een heel hoog piepstemmetje ... Sommige mensen vallen flauw, terwijl er een enorm skelet achter de dominee verschijnt. Met een ruk wordt de dominee als een lappen pop van de preekstoel afgesmeten. En dan spreekt Canon verder met een hoog piepstemmetje : 'Zo, gevallen kerk, jullie slaven van mij ... Werken op het schip der kannibalen zullen jullie, tot in eeuwigheid ... Jullie volgen mij inplaats van Gods Geest, dus ik dacht : 'Laat ik eens voor Gods Geest spelen, haha' Dan stapt Canon langzaam van de preekstoel af, in lang gewaad, terwijl er slangen uit zijn gewaad glijden, en op de kerkgangers afglijden. Overal is er gegil, maar de deuren zijn dicht. Niemand kan ontsnappen.

Weer schrikt de dominee wakker. Zijn vrouw is al lange tijd overleden. Waarom droomde hij dat ze weer naast hem lag ? De dominee zit al jaren in de gevangenis, wegens beschuldigingen. De beschuldigingen zijn nooit bewezen, maar toch ... De dominee had weleens gebeden of de duivel of God, wie dan ook, hem uit de gevangenis zou halen, hij zou diegene volgen voor de rest van zijn leven. De dominee had zijn geloof verloren. Hij zou alleen nog geloven in een mogelijke redder, wie dat dan ook wezen mocht ... Dat kon de dominee niet meer schelen ... De dominee zat hier vanwege valse beschuldigingen van zijn kerkgenoten ... De dominee wilde niks meer met de kerk te maken hebben ...

Hoofdstuk 2. De Ontsnapping

De nacht daarop had de dominee weer een droom. Canon kwam naar hem toe met een kap op zijn schedel, en sprak : 'Als ik jou nu eens uitleid, zul je mij dan volgen

en dienen ?' De dominee knikte. De dag daarop kwam er politie bij de dominee in zijn gevangeniskamer. Ze hadden hun hoofd een beetje gebogen : 'Dominee van Essenveld, wij hebben een enorme fout begaan. Wij hebben nu eindelijk de daders gevonden van de feiten waarvoor u veroordeeld bent. U bent onschuldig.'

'Ja, maar ik ben altijd al onschuldig geweest,' zei de dominee nog steeds gekweld. 'En dat hebben we helaas nu pas ingezien,' zei één van de politie-agenten beschaamd. Snel werd de dominee vrijgelaten en kreeg een flinke schade-vergoeding. De dominee ging in een andere plaats wonen, en deed wat hij Canon had beloofd. Elke zondag had de dominee het over de canon. De kerk zat vaak vol, en de dominee deed zijn uiterste best om zo goed mogelijk de leerstellingen van de canon weer te geven ... Maar nog steeds voelde de dominee zich een gevangene ... Na een bepaalde zondagsdienst schoot de dominee vol. Thuisgekomen sprak de dominee tot Canon : 'Ik weet niet of je me hoort, maar ik kan dit niet volhouden. Ik heb je nu toch wel genoeg terugbetaald ?' Maar ineens herinnerde de dominee dat hij Canon beloofde trouw te blijven. 'Ik dank je voor het uitleiden, maar nu moet ik verder op mijn eigen manier,' sprak de dominee. Die nacht had de dominee een afschuwelijke droom van Canon : 'Ik laat je toch niet meer wakker worden,' bulderde Canon ... 'Je zal altijd blijven slapen, ook als je denkt dat je wakker geworden bent ... Je bent voor mij, en er is geen ontsnapping meer. Je bent een gevallen dominee, en het vuur van de hel behoort je toe ...' De dominee viel op zijn knieen, maar kon niet meer opkomen. 'Op mijn schip zul je werken als roeier,' krijste Canon. Ineens begonnen de ijzeren helletenen op het pak van de dominee heel heet te worden, en Canon drukte hem achter een roeispaan. 'Waar gaan we naartoe ?' vroeg de dominee ... 'Naar Spanje,' krijste Canon ... 'Wat gaan we daar doen ?' vroeg de dominee weer ... 'Dat zul je wel zien,' zei Canon iets rustiger ... 'Roei nu maar ....'

En daar roeide de dominee, tussen al die andere roeiers van Canon ... 'Psst...' fluisterde een roeier naast hem met een vermoeid, vreemd gebruind gezicht ... 'ken je me nog ? We hebben samen op de Theologische Hogeschool gestudeerd ...' De dominee keek eens goed ... 'Frits van Belzen ? Kerel, goed je te zien, maar niet echt op een goede plaats ... Zullen we de benen nemen ?' zei de dominee, terwijl hij weer een sprankje hoop had ... Maar de oude klasgenoot zuchtte diep, en roeide door ... Na een tijdje kwamen ze aan in Spanje ... Hier trok Canon een sinterklaas-pak aan, en de roeiers kregen allemaal zwarte pieten-pakken ... ook de dominee ... Toen vertrok het schip weer, en de dominee wist waar ze nu naartoe zouden gaan ... Canon begon sinterklaasliedjes af te draaien ... 'Wie zoet is krijgt lekkers, wie stout is de roe ...'

Er werd een schot in de lucht gelost. De dominee werd wakker ... Hij lag in de ziekenafdeling van de gevangenis ... Een man stond bij zijn bed die zijn hoofd schudde ... De dominee kende die man niet ... Wat was er gebeurd ? 'Ik moet naar huis,' brulde de dominee ineens met schuim in zijn mond ... Maar hij merkte dat hij aan riemen vastlag. Ineens merkte de dominee dat hij zoveel kracht had dat hij de

riemen kon scheuren, en met één ruk stond hij naast zijn bed met schuim in zijn mond. Overal gingen alarms aan, maar de dominee duwde iedereen opzij. De dominee trapte wat deuren in en stond snel op straat ... 'Ik laat me toch niet door deze onzin leiden ?' zei de dominee in zichzelf, en rende op blote voeten door de straat, op weg naar het bos ... In de verte hoorde hij sinterklaasliedjes ... Het was erg koud ... De dominee kende ergens in het bos een geheime schuilplaats wat nog was overgebleven van de oorlog ... De dominee besloot daar een tijdje te wonen ... Terug kon hij niet meer ... Ze zouden hem weer oppakken ... En dat terwijl de dominee niks had gedaan ... Maar ook hier voelde de dominee zich een gevangene ... En hoe moest hij aan voedsel komen ? In de nacht besloot de dominee naar een oude vriend van hem te gaan, die altijd in zijn onschuld had geloofd ... Daar zou de dominee dan onderduiken ... De oude vriend was blij de dominee te zien ... De dominee vertelde alles aan de oude vriend, ook over de dromen ...

Hoofdstuk 3. De exorcist en de dominee

De oude vriend van de dominee geloofde niet in de canon. Hij zei dat de canon een valstrik was, een gevangenis, en uiteindelijk een slagerij. Door de canon wordt je als een beest ergens voor gefokt ... om een deel te worden van het meubiliair van Canon ... Ja, daar had de dominee min of meer ook over gedroomd. Die oude vriend was een exorcist, en zei dat er een strijd gaande was om de dominee ... De exorcist wilde wel voor de dominee bidden ... En zo gebeurde het. Op een avond besloot de exorcist een kleine bevrijdingsdienst te houden met de dominee, met z'n tweeen. De exorcist begon de geesten van de canon aan te spreken, en gebood hen om hun hekken open te doen.

De exorcist sprak over het Eeuwig Evangelie wat zou komen om de canon te verbreken. Plotseling verscheen er een gestalte voor hen, een soort mannelijk wezen met een gewei. 'Hallo, ik ben Jozef,' zei de verschijning ... 'Ja, en ik ben Napoleon,' zei de exorcist ... 'Wat kom je doen ?' De exorcist knipoogde even naar de dominee ... Hij ging altijd grapsgewijs met de verschijningen om ... Dat gebeurde bij de exorcist wel vaker. Volgens de exorcist was het belangrijk om grapsgewijs met die dingen om te gaan, voor de veiligheid. Jozef begon te glimlachen ... 'Zo, je bent weer terug,' zei de exorcist ... De dominee vroeg zich af wat dat te betekenen had ... Was Jozef eerder aan de exorcist verschenen ? En was het Jozef wel echt ?

'Ik ga jullie helpen in jullie strijd tegen Canon,' zei Jozef ... 'Oh, maar daar hebben we je echt niet bij nodig hoor,' zei de exorcist voor de grap ... 'Ga maar weer naar huis ...' Jozef begon te lachen ... 'Je bent nog voor geen spat veranderd ...'De exorcist draaide zich naar de muur, en wees op een schilderij ... 'Zie, dit heb ik voor je geschilderd,' zei de exorcist. Het schilderij leek als twee druppels water op de verschijning ... 'Ik heb een plan,' zei Jozef ... 'Wij gaan ... naar het schip van Canon ... verslaan het, en maken er een wolkenschip van ... Vinden jullie dat goed ?' De exorcist keek even naar de dominee ... De dominee begon te glimlachen, en

zei : 'Afgesproken' ... Toen liet de verschijning hen een heel diep dal zien, met een kruis waaraan hij hing ... Het dal was bijna als een put ... 'Mijn put,' zei Jozef ... En toen wees hij op een wolkenschip in de lucht ... 'Mijn schip,' zei Jozef ...

Op het schip lag een groot kruis, met een dwarsbalk die aan beide kanten in zeven delen was verdeeld ... Dit zijn de zeven jaren die mijn vader voor Lea heeft gewerkt, en de zeven jaren die hij voor Rachel heeft gewerkt ... Het is het kruis van mijn vader Jakob, om op mijn schip te komen. De dominee en de exorcist gingen samen met Jozef op het liggende kruis zitten, en het kruis begon naar voren te schuiven, terwijl de delen van het kruis werden vastgeklikt aan de boot. Toen bewoog de boot naar voren. Al gauw kwamen ze op het dak terecht waar het roer stond, en keken vooruit in de wolkenzeeen. Ineens begonnen er tweemaal zeven sieraden op het kruis te verschijnen. Het waren de zeven jaren van Lea en de zeven jaren van Rachel. Na een tijdje waren de sieraden uitgegroeid tot vrouwen. Jozef boog voor hen. Het waren de Lokogamen, de sieraden van het kruis. Ook verschenen er tweemaal zeven sieraden op de pakken van de exorcist en de dominee, die in elkaar begonnen te klikken. De vrouwen begonnen een vreemde ladder te vormen waarover de boot zou gaan rijden. De vrouwen werden steeds langer en langer. Aan het einde van de rails was een enorme zon waardoor het schip werd opgeslokt. De Ladder van Jakob was de tong van een torenklok ... De torenklok van Babel, waar God de spraakverwarring had opgesteld, de Grote Onderscheider, zodat God de macht zou hebben, en niet het menselijke. De torenklok begon te draaien, en toen ging de tong aan de andere kant eruit, waarover het Wolkenschip tot een nieuwe wereld kon komen. De exorcist en de dominee keken hun ogen uit.

Hoofdstuk 4. Het vreemde mengsel

Ineens sprong Canon voor hen met een zwaard. 'Geef die jaren van Lea en Rachel aan mij, want het zijn tweemaal zeven eeuwigheden waarin ik mijn slaven laat werken.' Maar ook Jozef greep zijn zwaard en ging tegenover Canon staan, en zei : 'Mijn vader heeft eerlijk die jaren gewerkt voor Rachel en Lea. Ze zijn van hem, en ik heb ze geerfd, en ik geef ze aan wie ik wil. En met deze sleutel plunder ik jouw koninkrijken.' Maar Canon begon te brullen en woest met zijn zwaard te slaan ... 'De Toren van Babel is van mij,' brulde Canon, en duwde Jozef opzij ... 'En dus ook de Jakobsladder die daaruit voortkomt. Niemand komt tot God dan door mij, want ik ben het Woord van God, haha.' Jozef sprong opzij, en schopte tegen Canon's hand aan. Door de schok schoot het zwaard los, en snel ving Jozef het zwaard op. 'Nee, blijf van mijn zwaard af,' riep Canon. 'Daar mag jij niet aankomen. Dat is ten strengste verboden ...' Snel wierp Jozef het zwaard omhoog tot in de torenklok van Babel waar het een wijzer werd. Toen explodeerde Canon, en verdween ... Maar even later was Canon weer terug, en ditmaal met zijn legers ... 'Straf hen,' riep Canon. Maar daar in de verte kwam het kruis van Jozef aan. En ook dit kruis droeg twee maal zeven delen : de zeven jaren van overvloed, en de zeven jaren van honger. In die zeven jaren van overvloed moest Jozef vroeger een voorraad

opslaan in schuren, vanwege de zeven jaren van honger die op komst waren. Zo redde hij zowel Egypte als Israel. Ook deze twee maal zeven delen begonnen in sieraden te veranderen, en later in vrouwen. Weer boog Jozef voor de vrouwen. Weer waren het lokogamen, de sieraden van het kruis.

En daar schrok de dominee wakker ... Niks geen gevangenis, niks geen overleden vrouw ... Zijn vrouw lag nog steeds rustig naast hem te slapen ... Maar was de dominee wel echt wakker geworden ? Was de dominee niet gewoon een slaapwandelaar ? Een wezen wat nooit echt wakker kon worden, wat zelfs nooit de kracht heeft gehad om in de moederschoot te komen om een volwaardig burger van de aarde te worden ... Een wezen dat gedoemd is om in de tussenwereld te leven, de wereld van de geesten, om op zoek te gaan naar een lichaam waarin hij rustig kan dromen ... het lichaam van een echte dominee ... Zij volgen nog steeds Jozef de dromenkoning, die hen over Jakobs Ladder van de ene naar de andere droom brengt ... Hij, hun Redder, die hen steeds doet laten ontsnappen uit een wezen genaamd Canon ... een wezen dat hen verbied te dromen .... een wezen dat hen alles voorkauwt, opdat ze zijn slaven zijn voor eeuwig ... Maar dan komen altijd de lokogamen van Jozef, zijn harem, om zijn volgelingen naar een diepere slaap te brengen ... En zolang Canon weer terugkeert, keren Jozef en de sieraden van zijn kruis ook terug ... Net zolang totdat de kaars van de canon opgebrandt is, en de volgelingen van Jozef over het hek der eeuwen kunnen gaan ... op naar nieuwe dromen ...

Zullen ze dan misschien echt eens wakker worden op aarde ? Een dominee rent naar het ziekenhuis. Zijn vrouw rent achter hem aan ... Gelukkig woont de dominee dichtbij ... Er komt een rood sap uit zijn navel, maar gelukkig is het geen bloed. De dominee kijkt om, en valt op de grond. Even later komen er verplegers vanuit het ziekenhuis met een brancard op de dominee afrennen ... Inmiddels is zijn buik erg opgezwollen, en de dominee begint te kokhalzen. Het lijkt wel alsof er iets in hem leeft dat naar buiten wil komen ...Dan scheurt de buik van de dominee open en een glibberig beest met veel rood doorzichtige tentakels komt tevoorschijn uit de buik, maar ook uit de mond glijden enkele tentakels ... Of zitten er meerdere wezens in de dominee ? De dominee zegt dat hij een vreemde smaak in z'n mond heeft ... Ook zijn voeten zwellen op, en zijn schoenen scheuren open ... Even later ploppen z'n twee ogen naar binnen en komen door zijn mond naar buiten, op de toppen van twee tentakels. Door de buik komen twee wezens naar buiten, en door de mond twee, en ze zijn rood en glibberig, vol tentakels. Het lijken wel spinachtige reuzeninktvissen. Het ziekenhuis is in rep en roer ... Ook uit zijn voeten komen een heleboel van zulke wezens, en ze schijnen steeds groter te worden ... Al snel hebben ze het ziekenhuis en de stad ingenomen ...

'Tik, tik, tik,' voorzichtig tikt de onderwijzeres op het tafeltje van één van haar leerlingen ... 'Wakker worden,' zegt ze zacht en vriendelijk, 'de biologie-les is al afgelopen ... 'Waar was je met je gedachten ?' Alle andere leerlingen zijn al de klas

uit ... 'Oh, mevrouw Spiezenga,' zegt de leerling, 'ik heb zo vreemd gedroomd, allemaal dromen achter elkaar, alsof ik heel iemand anders was ...'

'Wil je erover praten ?' vraagt de onderwijzeres vriendelijk ... 'Graag,' zegt de leerling, en vertelt het verhaal ... Tijdens het verhaal wordt de onderwijzeres erg misselijk, en rent naar het toilet waar ze rood sap uitspuugt ... Even later komen er vreemde kleine rode inktvisachtige reptielen uit haar mond ... In paniek belt ze de schoolleiding ... Ook de leerling is op het lawaai afgekomen ... 'Mijn dromen beginnen uit te komen,' gilt de leerling in paniek ... Na enige tijd komt er hulp ... Maar de wezentjes zijn nergens meer te bekennen ... Al gauw is de onderwijzeres weer op krachten ... Niemand gelooft haar, maar zij en de leerling weten wel beter ...

Tik tak, tik tak ... Iemand wordt wakker door het getik van de klok ... Wat heeft die persoon toch vreemd gedroomd ... Alsof hij meerdere persoonlijkheden heeft ... Morgen moet hij op bezoek bij de psychiater ... Hij denkt eraan om ook maar eens dit soort dromen te bespreken ... Het is niet de eerste keer ... Het begon allemaal toen hij besloot om drugs te gaan gebruiken ... Nu komt hij er niet meer vanaf ... en ook van die vreemde dromen niet ... Maar ja, daar is de psychiater voor ... Misschien verwijzen ze hem wel door naar één of ander afkickcentrum, of naar een centrum voor dromenuitleg ... Of heeft iemand die zo vreemd droomt gewoon een goede exorcist nodig ... Maar ja, die was er in de droom ... Maar daar schiet je nog niks mee op ... Wat hebben we nu aan dromen over een exorcist ...

Bij de psychiater aangekomen vertelt de man het hele verhaal ... inclusief de vreemde dromen in de dromen ... De psychiater vraagt aan de man of hij weleens in een kerk is geweest ... De man knikt .... Eén keer, toen hij eens bij een neefje logeerde ... 'Hmm ...' zei de psychiater ... 'Het zijn namelijk erg godsdienstige dromen ... En de dromen zijn erg helder en diepgaand ... Je zou eerder denken dat theologen dit soort dromen krijgen, maar niet iemand die er eigenlijk helemaal niets vanaf weet ....' Maar dan begint de man te protesteren ... Dat neefje had hem een heleboel over de kerk vertelt, dat daar een piraat woonde genaamd Canon, en dat ...'

'Ja, stop maar,' zegt de psychiater ... 'Nu komt de aap uit de mouw ... Het is duidelijk hoor, mijnheer van Dalen ... U bent gewoon bang gemaakt ...'

'Nee, dat is het niet,' zei de man. 'Ik vond het juist reuze spannend en wilde die piraat in de kerk weleens ontmoeten .... Maar helaas ... Hij was niet thuis ...' De psychiater begint te grinniken ... 'Nou, u heeft in ieder geval een goede humor ... Ik weet niet of dit allemaal in verband staat met de drugs die u gebruikt ... Wat voor soort drugs is het eigenlijk ?'

'Ehm ...' stamelt de man .... 'Het komt uit een potje ... Ik kreeg het eens van iemand ... Ik kan de naam niet vertellen, maar die zei dat het potje nooit op zou raken, en je

zou er mooi van gaan dromen ... Rode Vlieg heette dat spul volgens mij ... Het etiket zat er niet meer op, maar hij zei het ... Het is heel glibberig geleiachtig spul met wat droge stukjes erdoorheen als een soort korrels ... Ach, probeert u het zelf eens ... Ik heb het potje bij me ...'

'Nou, mij niet gezien,' zei de psychiater, 'maar laat me dat potje maar eens zien ...' De man aarzelt even en haalt dan het potje tevoorschijn ... Het is een heel klein potje, en de psychiater gelooft er niks van dat het nooit zal opraken ... De psychiater opent het potje en ruikt er even aan ... 'Nou, dat ruikt wel lekker,' zei de psychiater ... 'Weet u van welke stoffen dit spul is gemaakt ?' De man schudt zijn hoofd ... 'Mag ik een beetje van dit spul ter observatie meenemen ?' vraagt de psychiater ... De man schudt zijn hoofd ... 'Nee, en dit blijft allemaal tussen u en mij ...'

'Zoals u wil,' zegt de psychiater, en haalt onopgemerkt een randje van het spul van de rand van het potje weg, en doet de deksel er weer op. Onopgemerkt veegt de psychiater het randje op een plastic plaatje. Nadat de man is vertrokken laat de psychiater het onderzoeken ... Het blijken geen gevaarlijke stoffen te zijn, maar de stoffen zijn wel onbekend ... Ze staan voor een raadsel ... Voordat de psychiater het beseft heeft hij al iets van het spul ingenomen ... Het gebeurde in een onbedacht moment ... De psychiater had even alle controle over zichzelf verloren ... En vanaf toen begon de psychiater ook vreemdsoortige dromen te krijgen ... Over wezens in wezens ... over dromen in dromen ... en over werelden in werelden ... De psychiater hoopte dat het over zou gaan, maar het ging niet over, en de dromen werden steeds religieuzer ... Het werd zo erg dat op een gegeven moment de psychiater naar een kerk besloot te gaan om het te kunnen verwerken ... De psychiater had een drang om erover te vertellen, maar dan op een puur godsdienstige manier ... De psychiater besloot hals over kop theologie te studeren en belandde zelfs op de preekstoel ... Nu kon hij ongemerkt zijn dromen omzetten in preken ... De kerkmensen vonden het fantastisch hoe de psychiater preekte ... En later begon hij er zelf ook lol in te krijgen ... Hij geloofde er geen barst van, maar het was zijn vak geworden ... En later vond hij het ook niet meer erg om zo te dromen ...

'Pats.' Een vaas viel van het nachtkastje van de dominee ... Had hij niet idioot gedroomd over de psychiater, over drugs, over een exorcist, en dergelijken ? Nou ja, een mens kan raar dromen ... Maar dan was hij weer wel de dominee en dan weer niet ... Hij is toch gewoon dominee ? Of niet ? Of droomt hij dit ook weer ? Maar goed, hij heeft een geheugen van vijvenzestig jaar oud ... Of droomt hij dat ook maar ? Dat is nog maar de vraag ... Misschien is hij wel een dier ... een hond, een poes, of ... Wie zal het zeggen ? En zo gingen de dromen voort ... Canon zat iemand achterna ... Canon dreigde weer eens met hel en verdoemenis ... en van schrik begon er iemand te dromen ... Weg te dromen ... want dit kon toch allemaal niet waar zijn ? Canon kwam weer eens terug, alsof hij Jezus Christus was ... Maar Jozef de Dromenkoning riep hem een halt toe ... want Jozef gebruikte een heel oud kruis, uit het Oude Testament : Het kruis van zijn vader Jakob, en zijn eigen kruis

... Dit waren belangrijke wortels van het kruis van Christus ... En zo stroomde het bloed van Jozef en het bloed van Jakob als een drug om de werken van Canon onschadelijk te maken ... Het kwam uit een vreemd potje ... en het was een vreemd mengsel ...

Einde

Het Ei van Mammon

Korte Theologische Roman

1. De Beeldenstorm

2. Kunst in de Kerk

3. Het Pad der Vertaling

4. Ontmoeting met Jezus

Hoofdstuk 1. De Beeldenstorm

Erik loopt na de kerkdienst naar huis. Hij komt ook nog even langs een andere kerk. Hier staan prachtige beelden in de tuin er omheen. Eriks kerk is protestants, en de kerkdiensten worden in een zaaltje gehouden. Erik zou graag willen dat er wat beelden zouden komen in de zaal, maar de dominee had gezegd dat dat niet kon. Het was door God verboden om beelden te maken. De dominee zei dat de duivel in beelden woonde.

Op weg naar huis komt Erik ook nog even langs het huis van de dominee. Erik is het niet met de dominee eens. Op een dag komen de wijk-ouderlingen van Erik bij hem op bezoek. Hier snijdt Erik het nog eens aan over de beelden, maar hij krijgt een negatief antwoord. 'Erik, daarvoor zul je toch naar de katholieke kerk moeten gaan. Beelden horen gewoon niet bij het protestants geloof.' Maar daar is Erik het niet zo mee eens. In de tabernakel stonden toch ook beelden van aartsengelen ? Het ging niet om gewone beelden, maar om beelden voor de eredienst. Erik's huis stond vol met beelden die met religie hadden te maken. De ouderlingen zeiden er niet zoveel van, maar hij zag hen kijken. 'Wat zijn jullie toch traditioneel en stijfkoppig,' zegt Erik. 'Eerlijk waar, de kerk zou er zo van opfleuren als we wat beelden hadden.' Maar de ouderlingen hielden voet bij stuk. Beelden hoorden niet in de kerk, omdat het Woord van God beelden verbood. Er mochten geen beelden gemaakt worden. Maar Erik vond dat die tekst anders uitgelegd moest worden. God had dat zo geregeld, omdat er zovelen waren die beelden maakten om ze te verafgoden en ermee te zondigen. Het vlees mocht dat natuurlijk nooit, maar door de geest mochten er volgens Erik best beelden gemaakt worden, zoals in de tabernakel gebeurde. Er stonden wel meerdere van dit soort paradoxen in de Bijbel. Als je het zou gebruiken voor zuivere religie, dan was er in Erik's ogen niks mis mee. Hij voelde juist meer verbondenheid met het geestelijke, door de beelden.

Na een tijdje gingen de ouderlingen weer weg. Erik was erg verdrietig. Maar hij vond dat hij uiteindelijk hun mening moest respecteren. Zolang hij in z'n huis die beelden maar mocht houden. Na een tijdje ging de telefoon. Het was de dominee, en deze was flink overstuur. Hij had van de wijk-ouderlingen vernomen dat Erik zoveel religieuze beelden in zijn huis had staan. Volgens de dominee kon dat niet.

Erik zou de beelden moeten weg doen, of hij zou niet meer welkom zijn in de kerk. Erik besloot toch voor de dominee te kiezen, en liet de beelden wegdoen.

In de preek daarop werd er gesproken over de beeldenstorm, over het protestantse overwicht op de katholieken, en het daarbij behorende uitruimen van beelden in de kerk. De dominee schreeuwde in de kerk dat Maarten Luther de katholieke tirannie had uitgebannen, en dat de reformatie hun overwinning en bevrijding was. Erik luisterde aandachtig. De dominee had een langer gewaad aan dan anders. Erik legde zich maar bij de woorden neer. Wat kon hij anders ? De dominee zei ook dat vroeger in de tabernakel beelden stonden van aartsengelen, maar dat de kerk van vandaag geen materiaal meer nodig had om tot God te komen. Jezus Christus was de weg. De dominee waarschuwde ook voor hen die zich teveel vasthielden aan materiaal. Erik voelde zich een beetje aangesproken, maar dacht er verder niet al te veel kwaads over.

Na de dienst kwamen er wat mensen naar Erik toe, om hem te vragen of hij nog steeds die beelden had in huis. Maar Erik liet weten dat alles weg was. Veel woorden maakte hij er niet aan vuil.

De week erop ging de preek weer over beelden, en hun verbinding met materialisme. Erik slikte. Erik was het nog steeds niet met de dominee eens. Er was volgens hem verschil tussen materialisme wat van God afbracht en materialisme wat dichter bij God bracht, als het zogenaamde Goddelijke materialisme. Erik hield van kunst die tot dat doel werkte, zoals religieuze schilderijen en beelden. Dit had niets met geld te maken, of met lust naar rijkdom, maar met nostalgie, het uitdrukken van een verlangen naar God. Wat zou de aarde er mooi uitzien als al het materiaal daartoe gebruikt zou worden. Dan zou de aarde een tempel zijn.

De dominee vond dat ze niet terug moesten naar de kleuterschool. De dominee wilde een zuiver geestelijke gemeente. Ineens stond er een klein kind op. 'Dominee, als materiaal niet belangrijk is, waarom draagt u dan nog kleren, waarom heeft u een microfoon en waarom heeft u een grote dikke bijbel voor u liggen ? Waarom heeft u zelfs nog een huis ?' In de zaal begonnen overal mensen te gniffelen, maar de dominee zei : 'Neem niet meer dan je nodig hebt. Zolang we hier leven hebben we te maken met de vloek van het materialisme. Dit is het domein van de duivel.' Maar toen zei iemand luid : 'Waarom kunt u het niet van twee kanten bekijken : materiaal van God versus materiaal van de duivel ?' Daarop maakte de dominee duidelijk dat ze aan het afwijken waren. Het ging immers om beelden.

Hoofdstuk 2. Kunst in de Kerk

'Kunst is geen materialisme. Kunst is juist het omzeilen van materialisme, door het materiaal te vergeestelijken. Zo kan de Geest in het materiaal gaan leven, en het hervormen en gebruiken tot Gods Eer, en daarop te wijzen, telkens weer,' zegt een

ouderling in een vergadering met de dominee. Deze ouderling zou wel willen dat er wat meer kunst in de kerk zou komen. Zo zouden zij die materieel leefden afgeleid kunnen worden, en toch nog door de materie dichter bij God komen, in plaats van door het vleselijke materialisme te worden opgeslokt. Maar de dominee wilde geen compromis sluiten. Hij vond dat God niet afgebeeld mocht worden. 'De kunst kan geen beschrijving geven van God en de hemel. Dat zou een belediging tot God zijn.'

Die nacht kreeg de dominee een droom. 'Au, mijn handen branden. Kan ik Mijn aarde aanraken of niet ? Je hebt alles zo geestelijk gemaakt, de zogenaamde scheiding tussen geest en lichaam. Je drijft de Geest gewoon weg, zodat boze geesten de aarde in bezit kunnen houden. Snap je dan niet dat Geest en Materie samen moeten gaan, en dat er dan niks mis mee is ?' sprak een stem. Waarop de dominee zei : 'We zijn geen kinderen meer. We hebben de Oud-Testamentische afbeeldingen niet meer nodig. Dat was een noodplan. Wij zijn toe aan het echte.' Maar toen sprak de stem : 'En het echte is hier. God, het geestelijke, zal meer en meer vleesworden, materialiseren zogezegd. Zo zal de materie gezuiverd worden, en zullen er geen verkeerde dingen meer mee gedaan worden.'

Maar de dominee was niet onder de indruk. De dominee geloofde niet in dromen van de Heer. Dat was voor vroeger. Voor de dominee was alleen het Woord belangrijk.

De nacht daarop kreeg hij weer een droom, waarin een stem tot hem sprak : 'Is de Bijbel dan niet materieel, als het vleesgeworden Woord ?' Waarop de dominee zei : 'Letters is als lucht. Ze geven geen vorm of beeltenis door, alleen maar informatie en betekenis. Je kunt door het woord natuurlijk dingen uitbeelden, maar dat is wat anders dan materieel vastleggen. Dat zou een gevangenis zijn, want stof is dood, en verandert niet.'

'Wie zegt dat ?' zegt de stem. 'Kan stof niet groeien ? Kijk naar je lichaam, kijk naar een boom. En waarom zouden dingen moeten veranderen ? Het Woord verandert toch ook niet ? Wel kan de betekenis veranderen, in de zin van zich verdiepen.' Maar de dominee probeerde de stem te ontwijken om verder te slapen. Maar de stem begon meer en meer te gillen. 'Au, luister dan toch eens, ik brand, ik brand. Waarom heb je gedaan wat je hebt gedaan ? Ben jij dan niet materieel ? Je hebt van Jezus Christus een wachtwoord gemaakt, een stuk materie, als een sleutel tot zaligheid. Het is taal-materialisme waar je schuldig aan bent. Je bent een materialist. De betekenis van Jezus ben je hierdoor kwijtgeraakt. Je staart je blind op een paar woordjes, en een paar al dan niet geschiedkundig of verhalend vastgelegde feitjes, daadjes, en klaar is jouw Jezus Christusje, jouw sleuteltje tot de hemel. Vuile geschiedenis-materialist. Je hebt Jezus Christus opgezet, als een vogeltje of vos opgezet, in jouw vuile boshuisje. Loeder dat je er bent. Alle andere talen, culturen en uitingen moeten in jouw zelfgemaakte helletje branden, zoals ook ik.' Maar de dominee droomde lekker door. Maar het gillen van de stem werd harder en harder, en plotseling hoorde de dominee een kat buiten krijsen als een

baby. De dominee was wakker geschrokken, en liep naar het raam. Buiten zag hij twee katten vechten. 'Zeg, houd daar eens mee op,' bulderde de dominee door het raam.

'Waarom ben ik nou weer een taal-materialist ?' dacht de dominee bij zichzelf. 'Wat heb ik toch weer vreemd gedroomd.' Buiten ging het gevecht nog steeds door, en de dominee besloot naar buiten te gaan. Snel probeerde hij de katten uit elkaar te krijgen, maar een zwarte kat sprong op de dominee af, en begon te krabben, te bijten en te blazen. Snel ging de dominee naar binnen, maar de kat zat nog steeds aan hem vast. Na een tijdje had de dominee de kat losgekregen en gaf het dier wat melk. De dominee dacht nog steeds na over de droom. Dus hij was meer materialist dan hij dacht ? De dominee kon het bijna niet geloven. Als er iemand niet materialistisch was, dan was hij dat wel. Hij preekte altijd fel tegen het materialisme. Maar blijkbaar waren er veel meer vormen van materialisme, waar de dominee nog geen weet van had.

Hoofdstuk 3. Het Pad der Vertaling

De dag daarop was er weer een vergadering. De dominee vertelde wat hij gedroomd had, en lachte er een beetje om. Hij nam het niet al te serieus. Ook vertelde hij over het kattengevecht. De ouderlingen gniffelden een beetje. Gelukkig had de dominee nog wel wat humor. Toen nam één van de ouderlingen het woord. Hij begon over de doop, het doopvat, het avondmaal, en nog wat tradities die tot de liturgie behoorden. Hij vroeg of ze dat niet konden uitbreiden. Maar de dominee wilde er niets van weten. Het ging om heilige sacramenten waar niets aan veranderd mocht worden. 'Nou,' zei de ouderling, 'u bent inderdaad een traditie-materialist.' Maar de dominee hield voet bij stuk. Hij kon die sacramenten gewoon niet veranderen. Daartoe was hij niet gemachtigd, en hij zou onherroepelijk last krijgen met de Bond. De dominee was altijd erg stram en strak als het om traditie ging. De dominee kon niet tegen veranderingen. Hij besefte dat hij op dat punt misschien wel erg materialistisch was, maar dat zag hij dan als iets van de Heilige Geest, een soort van heilig materialisme. De dominee zag in dat de medaille inderdaad twee kanten had. De dominee was erg trots op zichzelf.

Op een dag kreeg hij een telefoontje van de Bond. Ze hadden vernomen dat hij stemmen hoorde, naar duiveltjes luisterde. De dominee voelde zich verraden door zijn ouderlingen. De Bond zei dat ze het niet hadden op zomaar een stemmetje, maar de dominee probeerde duidelijk te maken dat het om een droom ging, en dat hij het niet met zo'n stemmetje eens was. Maar de Bond was niet om te praten. Volgens de Bond kon de dominee het niet maken om over dit soort dingen te praten tijdens een vergadering. Een dominee hoort zijn reputatie ongeschend te houden. Het zou het vertrouwen in gevaar brengen. De Bond zou met direkte ingang de dominee ontslaan.

Gelukkig bleven de meesten trouw aan de dominee, en konden de diensten gewoon voortgezet worden. Maar de kerk behoorde niet meer tot de Bond. Eigenlijk was dit voor de dominee een last minder. Het begon men op te vallen dat de dominee steeds luchtiger begon te preken. En op een zondag stonden er zelfs beelden in de kerkzaal. Ook Erik mocht weer beelden in huis hebben, en na een tijdje hadden meerderen beelden in huis. Maar op een dag gebeurde er iets vreselijks. Tijdens de dienst kwamen wat mannen in zwarte pakken binnen, die de beelden begonnen stuk te slaan en omver te werpen.

In de nacht kreeg de dominee weer een droom : 'Materialistische boer,' zei een stemmetje. 'Wij zien alleen maar beelden van jouw eigen religie, alsof de onze er niet toe doet.' Waarop de dominee zei : 'Maar wie zijn jullie dan, en wat heb ik met andere religies te maken ?' Toen zei het stemmetje : 'Zie je nu wel dat je een taal-materialist bent. Religies van een andere taal met andere persoonlijke naamwoorden zijn niet welkom. Je hebt je kerktaaltje als een vogeltje opgezet. Ik brand nog steeds, alhoewel het iets beter gaat.'

'Maar wie ben je dan ?' vroeg de dominee. 'Ach,' zei het stemmetje, 'dat wil je toch niet weten. Het gaat jouw alleen maar om jouw oude vertrouwde persoonlijke naamwoorden. Je hebt maar een eng wereldje.' En hoe de dominee ook probeerde, het stemmetje wilde niet zeggen waar het vandaan kwam. 'Ach,' zei de dominee, 'misschien ben je wel een duiveltje, maar misschien wil je mij eens vertellen hoe ik kan maken dat je niet meer brandt.'

'DAAR WAAR DE HEILIGE GEEST IN DE KERK NIET KAN SPREKEN DAAR SPREEKT DE HEILIGE GEEST DOOR ANDERE RELIGIES !' bulderde het stemmetje. 'Snap dat dan eens.' De dominee rolde bijna uit zijn bed. 'Dove kwartel,' ging het stemmetje verder. 'En denk je dat het in een andere taal nog steeds hetzelfde heet ? De Heilige Geest kan door elke god werken als het moet, als Hij maar tot zijn doel komt. Daarom heeft elke god of godin een goed deel en een slecht deel. Weer gaat het erom : aanbidt je ze in Geest of vlees, in Heiligheid of onreinheid, in Waarheid of leugen.' De dominee begint hardop te lachen. 'Dus denk je dat ik vanaf nu ook Ganesha, de olifantengod uit India moet aanbidden, omdat de Heilige Geest Zich ook daardoor manifesteert ?'

'Toe nou,' zegt het stemmetje, 'probeer het eens te nuanceren. Het is allemaal erg gevaarlijk, maar probeer alsjeblieft te beseffen dat afgoderij niet zozeer met namen of culturen heeft te maken, maar met zonden zoals superieuriteit, racisme, het offeren van dieren, etcetera.' De dominee begint nog harder te lachen, en bestraft de geest van afgoderij. 'Eerlijk, ik heb dit nog nooit gedaan als dominee, maar ik denk nu toch dat ik door zo'n geest wordt lastiggevallen, en ik denk dat ... jij die geest bent,' zegt de dominee kalm.

'Dus al die mensen die zeggen dat Jezus de enige weg is zijn misleid ? Nu is ook Boeddha ineens de weg, de Khrishna, en misschien wel Ah Puch van de Maya's ?

Ga toch weg !' zegt de dominee, steeds kalmer wordend. Hij is er nu zeker van dat hij bezoek heeft van een ware vorst der duisternis, misschien wel één van satans generaals.

'Nuanceer het nou eens,' zegt het stemmetje, 'natuurlijk is Jezus de enige weg, omdat de taal op zichzelf natuurlijk niet liegt. Het heeft een diepe betekenis. Maar als je dan een andere taal tegenkomt, zul je die betekenis ergens terugvinden met natuurlijk weer andere woorden. De Bijbel is een symbolisch boek, een boek van diepe betekenis, en geen taalboek. De Bijbel is meer een vertaling dan een taal. Maar ook die vertaling zal weer vertaald moeten worden. Zo zul je dus op je geestelijke pelgrimsreis door het boek moeten komen tot de DIEPSTE VERTALING, de vertaling van de vertaling van de vertaling, enzovoorts. Daar waar pelgrims blijven steken op het pad der vertaling, daar ontstaan de oorlogen, de koppige kerken, enzo. Natuurlijk begin je met één taal, en die taal mag je ook spreken. Het is maar net vanuit welke kant je het allemaal bekijkt, welke taal je spreekt, en hoe je de dingen vertaalt. Zuivere vertaling komt voort uit de diepste vertaling. Dit is de reis van de apostel die als eerste bruggen slaat tussen gemeentes, en daarna tussen religies. Hij heeft de paden van de Heilige Geest ook gevolgd in andere religies, daar waar de Geest Gods in de kerk en de traditie niet kon spreken. Dit proces noemen we : 'parelduiken'. Dit is heel gevaarlijk, want als je dit niet doet vanuit een goede basis en met duidelijke regels, dan kun je door een gevaarlijke vis gegrepen worden.'

'Ja, ja,' zegt de dominee, 'je denkt toch zeker niet dat ik m'n tijd hiermee verdoe ?'

'Oh, dus ik moet maar branden ?' vraagt het stemmetje. 'Weet je dan niet dat de Heilige Geest inderdaad weggestuurd kan worden, uitgedoofd kan worden, en bedroefd kan worden ? Waar denk je dat de Heilige Geest dan naartoe gaat ? De Heilige Geest kijkt niet naar de taal van wezens, maar naar hun hart. Kan Hem het wat schelen hoe je het allemaal noemt. Het gaat erom waar je het over hebt. Dus kerel, ik zou me maar eens open stellen als ik jou was. De Bijbel zegt dat de Heilige Geest uit meerdere delen bestaat, meerdere Geesten, en zij worden aangesteld boven de talen en de godsdiensten om daar doorheen te werken zoveel als ze kunnen. Ik ben daar Eén van, beste kerel.'

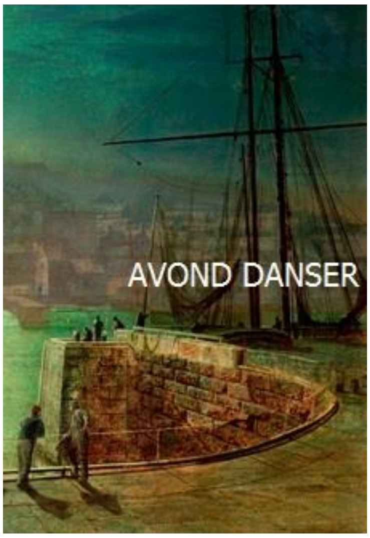
'Je moet niet zo zwart, wit zijn,' zegt het stemmetje vervolgens, 'niet zomaar direkt met de botte bijl alles platwalzen wat 'anders' is.'

Hoofdstuk 4. Ontmoeting met Jezus

De dominee is er niet erg van onder de indruk, maar op een dag komt de dominee thuis terwijl hij het gevoel heeft alsof hij van binnen brandt. Plotseling hoort hij een stem. 'Je kunt niet anders. Ik ben in je. Ik ben de Heilige Geest die jij verkondigt, die jij beschouwt als de jouwe. Ik ben de brandende, verbrand door de

kerk, de koppige kerk. Je neemt me helemaal, of helemaal niet. Je voelt mijn verbrandingen.' De dominee gaat op zijn stoel zitten en begint te bidden. Het vuur blijft branden, en de dominee voelt zich niet goed, en besluit naar bed te gaan. Maar het branden wordt erger en erger, en ten slotte roept de dominee het uit tot God. 'Integreer je nu met de Geest van God boven de andere volken, want anders zal Ik je wegnemen,' zegt een stem. Maar de dominee denkt dat hij door een geest van de dood wordt aangevallen. Dan raakt de dominee bewusteloos, en ziet in de verte Jezus staan. Zijn ene arm is beschreven met de letters INDIA, en op zijn andere arm staat met grote letters EGYPTE. Ook op andere lichaamsdelen staan grote namen geschreven, zoals AFRIKA, en AMERIKA. En Jezus spreekt : 'Ik zal vleesworden op aarde. Kies dan heden wie gij dienen zult.' En de dominee begon tot Jezus te roepen, terwijl Jezus andere gezichten en andere kleuren begon te krijgen. De dominee schrok en deed een stap achteruit. 'Aanbidt je nog steeds de materie, dominee ? De huidskleur, de taal ? Is dat allemaal dan zo belangrijk ? Ben Ik niet belangrijker ?' sprak Jezus. 'Ik zal je naar aarde terugzenden, en jij zult de taal, de huidskleur, de oorlog gaan verklaren.' Plotseling wordt de dominee wakker, en merkt dat het branden verdwenen is. Direkt gaat hij aan de slag en al snel staat de kerk vol met beelden van verschillende religies die Gods Plan en Identiteit uitbeelden. Natuurlijk kiest de dominee ze zorgvuldig uit, zodat ze de heilige betekenissen in zuiverheid uitbeelden. In de Bijbel zijn er ook hier en daar wat legale verbindingen met andere culturen en hun opperwezens, om de betekenissen van God te ondersteunen en te versterken. De gemeenteleden krijgen duidelijke uitleg, opdat ze niet aan hun lot worden overgelaten. De puzzel moet zorgvuldig gelegd worden, en de puzzelstukjes moeten goed passen.

Einde


AVOND DANSER

COAB 2000-2017

Avond Danser

De Roep van de Pauw

De Beloning

Het Meisje dat niet kon Spreken

Dochters van Jahweh

Verborgen Vruchten

Reis door het Zand

De Harem van Christus

Het Visioen

De Omzwerving

Avond Danser

Hij woonde in een havenstadje. Het havenstadje lag aan een groot meer. Hij had het gevoel alsof niemand naar hem luisterde, alsof niemand hem kon horen. Hij voelde zich niet serieus genomen. De mensen leefden langs hem heen. Hij had een zus die vele jaren ouder was, dus ze groeiden ook niet samen op. Hij had het gevoel alsof hij enig kind was. Misschien was dat ook de reden waarom hij zich zo geisoleerd en onbegrepen voelde. De mensen om hem heen waren veelal ouder en met hele andere dingen bezig. Zijn vader was altijd en eeuwig bezig met de tuin. Hij had het gevoel alsof zijn vader nooit oog voor hem had, alsof zijn vader hem niet eens zag staan.

Zijn moeder was een heel dromerig type. Die was ook onbereikbaar, en draaide altijd alles om, en maakte altijd iets anders van wat hij zei. Het was een zweverig en afstandelijk iemand. Hij had het gevoel alsof niemand om hem gaf, alsof hij er niet toe deed. Wat hij ook maakte of deed, het was nooit goed. Hij had het gevoel dat zelfs als hij zou kunnen vliegen dat de mensen er dan niet van op zouden kijken. Hun leven ging dan gewoon door. Ze waren onverschillig en ongeinteresseerd.

Hij maakte prachtige, gevoelige muziek, maar niemand luisterde. Hij schreef prachtige boeken en maakte prachtige schilderijen, maar iedereen was met andere dingen bezig. Hij was slechts een druppel in de oceaan. Hij kreeg geen voet aan de grond.

Hij voelde zich als een avond danser, terwijl anderen moe waren van de dag en alreeds voorbereidingen troffen voor de nacht. Hij danste door, terwijl ieder ander naar bed ging. De mensen om hem heen waren moe, moegepraat. Hij wist niet waar hij zijn energie vandaan haalde. Hij ging graag wandelen in het park. Op een dag kwam hij daar een meisje tegen. Eerst deed ze alsof ze hem niet zag staan, maar even later kwam ze naar hem toe. "Mooi weer is het vandaag, hè ?" vroeg ze.

"Ja, dat wel," zei hij.

"Dat wel ?" vroeg ze. "Zijn andere dingen niet mooi ?"

"Niemand begrijpt me," zei hij.

"Begrijpt de zon de hemel ?" vroeg ze. "Begrijpt de maan de aarde ? Ze leven langs elkaar heen. Het zijn twee werelden die elkaar kruizen, totaal verschillende werelden."

"Daar zit wat in," zei hij.

"En zo is het ook tussen ons," zei ze. "Wij kennen elkaar niet, en nu kruizen even onze paden."

"Jammer," zei hij.

"Waarom ?" vroeg ze. "Zo is het leven. Zeg, ik moet er weer vandoor. Een prettige dag verder."

Toen liep het meisje weg. Hij voelde alsof iedereen haast had. Iedereen was met andere dingen bezig zoals altijd.

De volgende dag kwam hij haar weer tegen in het park, maar ze negeerde hem volkomen. Ze deed alsof ze hem nog nooit eerder had gezien, alsof ze nog nooit met elkaar hadden gesproken. Hij had het gevoel alsof ze hem niet eens zag staan, alsof hij lucht voor haar was.

De dagen erop gebeurde hetzelfde. Hij kwam haar tegen in het park, maar ze sprak niet met hem, keek totaal langs hem heen, maar sprak wel met andere voorbijgangers. Hij begon zich er een beetje kwaad over te maken, of misschien wachtte ze erop dat hij iets zou zeggen ?

Hij besloot zich te gedragen zoals zij zich gedroeg. Hij zorgde ervoor dat hij niet naar haar keek, en hij sprak iedere andere voorbijganger even aan, alhoewel ze vaak niet eens wat terug zeiden. Ze hadden haast, of waren niet geinteresseerd, of heel kortaf. Sommigen hadden wel hele lange gesprekken met haar in het park. Hij vroeg zich af wat er met hem aan de hand was.

Hij had het gevoel alsof hij een dans met haar opvoerde. Ze waren vaak bij elkaar in de buurt, maar toch ook weer niet. Hij besloot zo ook met anderen om te gaan. Hij was een avond danser.

Hij leefde geheel voor de avond dans, en schudde zo zijn zorgen van hem af.

Maar om een dag kwam ze samen met een jongen, en de dag erna was de jongen er weer. Hij dacht dat ze misschien een vriend had, en het begon hem te verlammen. Het dansen ging hem moeilijk af, en toen ze voor de derde keer samen met de jongen naar het park kwam besloot hij niet meer te gaan. Ongeveer een week later lag er een kaart van het meisje in de brievenbus. Ze liet hierin weten dat ze hem miste, en dat de andere jongen haar broer was. Hij vroeg zich af hoe zij aan zijn adres kwam, of misschien had zij hem wel naar huis gevolgd. Ook vroeg hij zich af waarom ze hem miste, omdat ze elkaar nooit spraken. Of had het misschien met de avond dans te maken, dat ze dat miste ?

Na een week besloot hij terug te gaan naar het park, maar dit keer met zijn zus. Hij besloot verder helemaal niet op haar kaart te reageren. Hij had ook haar adres niet. Hij was druk met zijn zus in gesprek. Ze hadden het over allerlei dingen, en het meisje was er ook met haar broer. Hij vroeg zich af waarom ze altijd met haar broer kwam. Hij dacht dat het meisje niet kon weten dat het zijn zus was, maar ze bleken elkaar te kennen, en ze raakten met elkaar in gesprek. Hij werd verder volkomen genegeerd. De volgende dag kwam hij alleen, terwijl het meisje weer kwam met haar broer. Maar op een dag kwam het meisje met een andere jongen, en het begon aan hem te knagen. Ditmaal kreeg hij er geen kaart over, en elke dag was de jongen er weer. Hij had hier geen zin in, dus na een tijdje besloot hij niet meer te komen. Hij was ziek geworden van deze avond dans. Hij voelde zich verlamd, als gestoken door een giftig insect. Hij kon aan niets anders meer denken.

Soms ging zijn zus nog wel eens naar het park, en op een dag vertelde ze dat zij daar nog steeds veel was, maar dan met haar andere broer.

Het was in die dagen dat hij besloot andere meisjes te vragen om met hem naar het park te gaan, gewoon als wandel-partner, of als een soort dans-partner. Hij waagde zich weer aan de avond dans. Toch voelde hij zich er rot over dat hij nooit haar kaart had beantwoord, ook al had hij haar adres niet. Hij vroeg aan zijn zus of zij haar adres had, en zij gaf het hem. Maar hij had de moed niet.

Op een dag was het meisje weer helemaal alleen in het park, terwijl hij met een ander meisje was. De dag erop was zij weer alleen, en na een week besloot hij ook alleen te komen. "Heb je mijn kaart ooit gehad ?" vroeg ze.

"Ja, maar ik had je adres niet," zei hij.

"Je zus zei dat ze mijn adres aan je had gegeven, dat je er zelf om had gevraagd," zei ze.

Hij werd rood van verlegenheid, maar durfde verder niets te zeggen. Even later zei hij : "Ik was het weer vergeten."

"Ik bedoelde er verder niets persoonlijks mee," zei ze. "Ik dacht ik deel het gewoon met je. Ik had ook mijn vriend mee kunnen nemen."

Hij werd helemaal koud van binnen.

"Niet dat ik een vriend heb," zei ze. "Maar het zou een mogelijkheid kunnen zijn. In mijn geval zal dat wel nooit gebeuren."

"Waarom niet ?" vroeg hij.

"Mensen zijn te verschillend," zei ze. "Het is beter ze op een afstand te houden, als in een dans."

Hij voelde zich warm en koud tegelijk van binnen.

"Ik werk in het museum," sprak ze.

"Ik moet gaan," zei hij.

"Wacht," zei ze. "Ik bedoel er niets persoonlijks mee."

"Ik weet het," zei hij, en liep door.

Hij dacht na over het museum. Hij vroeg zich af of zijn kunst ooit in een museum zou komen, maar het leven voerde een dans met hem op, net zoals het meisje, en hij deed mee in deze dans.

Op een dag kwam het meisje niet meer, en weken gingen voorbij waarin hij haar niet zag. Zou hij dit keer misschien te koud zijn geweest ? Na een maand schreef hij een kaartje dat hij haar miste. Een maand later kreeg hij een kaart terug. Daarin stond : "Sorry, ik heb het te druk met paardrijden."

De dag erna was ze in het park. Hij ging direct op haar af. "Ik heb het gevoel dat ik je paard ben," zei hij.

"Ik begrijp het," zei ze. "Ik kan zo soms overkomen, maar zo zit ik niet in elkaar."

"Wil je een keer met me mee naar de bibliotheek ?" vroeg hij.

"Als jij een keer met me meegaat naar het museum," zei ze.

"Afgesproken," zei hij, "maar dan wil ik je eerst een keer mijn kamer laten zien."

Op zijn kamer hingen zijn schilderijen en lagen zijn boeken, maar toen ze er was deed ze volkomen ongeinteresseerd en onverschillig. Ze was meer met hem bezig dan met wat hij had gemaakt. Ze keek wel rond, maar verder zei ze er niets over, en begon dan over andere dingen. Hij voelde zich koud worden van binnen en wenste dat hij haar nooit had binnengelaten. Hij voelde zich verlamd, als gestoken door een giftig insect. Hij danste niet meer. Hij voelde zich aan een paal gebonden door een headhunter. Hij voelde zich als een hebbedingetje, een monument. Ze ging ijskoud met hem om, als een museum medewerker met een object.

"Hallo, ik leef, ik praat," zei hij.

Ze reageerde er verder niet op. "Laten we nu naar de bibliotheek gaan," zei ze, "en dan daarna naar het museum."

Maar hij had geen zin meer. "Laten we dat een andere keer doen," zei hij. "Ik heb nu geen tijd."

Hij was blij toen ze weer weg was. Hij zou nu een lange tijd niet meer het park inkomen. Hij had het gevoel dat hij haar moest laten betalen voor haar gedrag. De avond dans begon andere vormen te krijgen.

Hij vond haar gevaarlijk voor zijn psychische gezondheid, maar toch wilde hij dit roofdier ook temmen. Of zou zij dan hem temmen ?

Hij zette als het ware het contact met haar in de ijskast. Hij wist dat zij slechts op jacht was naar zijn schedel. Of waren het misschien de wonderen van de natuur ?

Hij besloot boswandelingen te maken in plaats van parkwandelingen, maar tot zijn grote schrik kwam hij haar daar op een dag tegen. Ze kwam direct op hem af, en fluisterde iets in zijn oor. Hij kon het niet verstaan. "Wat zeg je ?" vroeg hij.

Maar ze liep door. De dag erna was ze weer in het bos, dus hij besloot terug te gaan naar het park. Toen ze daar ook kwam dacht hij dat ze dit misschien al tijden deed, gaan van bos naar park en omgekeerd. Ze bleek dit ook zo te doen tussen het museum en de bibliotheek. Eigenlijk kon hij haar niet ontlopen. Het was in deze tijd dat hij zich steeds meer terugtrok op zijn kamer. Hij begreep zijn vader beter, die altijd bezig was met de tuin. Hij begreep nu waarom. Ook begreep hij zijn moeder beter, waarom die zo was. Misschien was het meisje wel een wonderlijk medicijn, maar ook iets wat je zeker niet te veel moest gebruiken. Er stond een dagelijkse limiet op, en daar moest hij zich streng aan houden.

Een man kocht een pakje medicijnen genaamd "Avond Danser" in een boekhandel. Er zat ook een klein boekje bij. Hij kocht het, omdat hij wilde dat zijn gezin elkaar beter zou begrijpen. Het was een wereldbekend medicijn, bekend van televisie. De man wilde het weleens uitproberen.

Einde

De Roep van de Pauw

Twee meisjes stonden aan zijn kamerdeur. Buiten in het pauwenpark riepen de pauwen zijn naam : "Leo, Leo". Hij had altijd het gevoel alsof ze hem riepen. De meisjes klopten aan, en hij deed open. "Je moeder heeft ons binnengelaten," zeiden ze. Hij glimlachte. Hij liet ze binnen in zijn kamer. Ze keken rond. Hij had een poster aan de muur van Doornroosje. "Mooi," zeiden de meisjes. "Je hebt een leuke kamer." Hij glimlachte.

Ze keken hem diep in zijn ogen. "Hoe vindt je het nu in Birmingham ?" vroegen ze.

"Klaarwakker," zei hij. "Alsof ik ontwaakt ben. Krijg ik nu voedsel ?"

"Ben je een pauw dan ?" vroeg één van de meisjes.

"Misschien," zei hij. "Ik ben een oppasser."

"Oh, de oppasser van het pauwenpark om de pauwen te voeden ?" vroeg het andere meisje.

"Zoiets," zei Leo.

Die avond bleven de meisjes eten. Hij speelde wat muziek voor ze, en ging die avond vroeg naar bed, terwijl de meisjes weer naar huis gingen. De dag erna waren ze er weer. Ze hadden allerlei cadeautjes voor Leo mee gebracht. Wie waren zij eigenlijk ?

Zij waren van het huisbezoek van een kerk. Het was geen gewone kerk, maar van proza. Ze leefden door gedichten en proza, als een kerk van natuur-literatuur. Ze zagen in alles van de natuur en het leven een diepere boodschap. Soms noemden ze het de pauwenkerk, of de kerk van de pauw. De pauw is namelijk een dier van hele strenge poëtische etiquette. De pauw is ook zo extreem orthodox dat het abstract is. Denk je eens in een horizontale lijn aan de oppervlakte, die maar door en door gaat, zonder einde, en juist in die eindeloosheid ergens afbreekt of ombuigt en dan totaal de diepte in gaat, als een verborgen diepte.

Dingen die ogenschijnlijk oppervlakkig zijn kunnen juist zo belangrijk zijn. Daarom zijn we in deze ogenschijnlijk oppervlakkige wereld. Alles verbergt een les, en een ongrijpbare diepte. Wij kunnen de eeuwigheid niet grijpen zonder de sleutels die in de tijd worden aangereikt.

Wij moeten het leven op aarde zien te waarderen, en oog hebben voor de kleine details van het leven die ons worden gegeven. De waarheid zit verborgen in het kleine. "Wie het kleine niet waardeert is het grote niet weert."

De eindeloze oppervlakkigheid is wijd en breed, zo oneindig horizontaal dat het diep is. Het ravijn getuigt van een loze eeuwigheid waarin alleen de momenten parels zijn, schatten van onpeilbare waarde. De aardkloot zit vol van geheimen, de tijd is de schat, de eeuwigheid is nutteloos.

De meisjes onderwezen hem hierin. Eens kwamen ze bij hem aan de deur, en hij raakte geinteresseerd in de taal die zij spraken. Hij was hier net nieuw in Birmingham.

Het oneindige horizontale is de sleutel tot de diepte. We kunnen niet rechtstreeks de diepte in. Dan zouden we te pletter vallen. Daarom worden we eerst in de horizontale afgrond gedreven, het schijnbare nutteloze, het dagelijks leven met al zijn toeters en bellen. De meisjes lieten hem een pauwenveer zien die ze vonden in het pauwenpark dichtbij. De binnenste cirkel was onderbroken door een inham, een afgrond. Zo legden ze het uit dat alle cirkels van het leven eerst afgebroken moeten worden om verder te kunnen komen. Daarom moet een mens leren leven met verlies, omdat hier de lijnen ombuigen en de diepte ingaan.

Leo keek de meisjes aan. Ze leken als gezonden uit de hemel. In zijn gedachten waren ze als pauwen. Hij begon het steeds meer naar zijn zin te krijgen in Birmingham. Hij hield van de levensfilosofieën die de mensen er op na hielden hier in Birmingham.

De eindeloosheid van het horizontale begint dan juist door de ongrijpbaarheid ervan te draaien als een wit hek. Zo wordt al het oppervlakkige verkeerd uitgelegd en verkeerd begrepen, en wordt alles omgedraaid. Dit gebeurd aan beide kanten van de eindeloze lijn. Stel je voor : een lijn die geen begin heeft en geen eind, dat moet wel duizelen op een bepaald moment, dat moet wel eindigen in chaos, in grote verwarring. Alleen op dat punt ontstaat de diepte, waarin je wegzinkt in de woeste zee. De pauw reikt hierin een schip aan, en neemt je mee.

Op naar Birmingham,

Op naar het pauwenpark,

Op naar het vertikale wat alleen ontstaat in het eindeloze horizontale,

Waar in grote vermoeidheid en in groot lijden en grote verwarring onze horizontale lijnen, onze horizontale reizen, worden afgebroken,

Waar het pauwenschip ons onderwijst over de zeedieptes,

Wat er groeit op de zeebodem

Op naar Birmingham,

Waar ons eigen weten afbreekt, en een nieuw weten begint,

Waar onze kortzichtige vooroordelen en fabeltjes de allesoverweldigende hoogtes en dieptes van het bestaan ontmoeten,

Van eindeloos horizontaal tot eindeloos vertikaal,

Als de wiskunde van het levensverhaal

Tijd en eeuwigheid zijn randen van dezelfde steen waarin alles ombuigt,

Het is ongrijpbaar als een waterval, als een golf van de zee,

Maar het zal je meesleuren tot dat wat was vergeten

Tijd is de sleutel tot Birmingham,

De eeuwigheid is slechts een muur,

Je kunt het niet grijpen, maar het grijpt jou,

En neemt je mee op reis, op de rug van de pauw

Ik heb de uiteindes gezien van het eindeloze horizontale en saaie,

Het zijn watervallen, en ze zullen alles overstromen,

De toekomst is allang geweest,

Ergens waar de tijd stopt en afbreekt stroomt alles terug,

Terug naar Birmingham,

Terug naar het pauwenpark,

Waar alleen de dichter nog preekt

De roep van de pauw roept ons terug,

Wie kan de roep van de pauw wederstaan ?

De Beloning

Er was een nucleaire oorlog. Midden in de nacht werd hij wakker en voelde zich zo onveilig in de stad dat hij zijn kleren aantrok, wat spullen pakte en een jas aan deed. Hij rende het huis uit. Hij moest zo snel mogelijk weg, zo snel mogelijk uit de stad. Het was hartje winter. Overal lag sneeuw. Hij rende naar het bos. Toen hij over het slootbruggetje was gegaan en langs de weg liep achter de stad was er een grote ontploffing. Hij kon niets doen dan rennen. Hij durfde niet naar achteren te kijken. Hij wist dat de stad nu brandende was. Hij wist dat er een nucleaire raket ingeslagen moest zijn. Hij gilde, want daar ging zijn verleden, daar was alles wat hij lief had.

Hij kwam bij het bos aan en moest zorgen dat hij niet uitgleed. Op sommige plaatsen was het heel glad, en op andere plaatsen was veel sneeuw. In de verte was de waterval. Hij was omringd door bomen. Hij keek naar achteren en zag alleen maar vuur. Hij wist dat er niets meer van de stad over was. Hier was hij opgegroeid. Er zouden geen sporen meer van achtergebleven zijn. Hij liep door met stevige pas. Tegelijkertijd trilde hij. Wat als het vuur hem ook zou grijpen ? En hij was duizelig.

Voor zich zag hij alleen maar sneeuw. Hij wist dat hij alleen veilig kon zijn in het bos. Hij liep daar voor uren. Het vuur was nog steeds achter hem aan. Hij begon heter en heter te worden. Dit kon niet goed gaan zo. Hij deed zijn kleren uit, en rende naar de bosrivier. Die zou hij overzwemmen. Hier was waar het vuur stopte. Het was een lange zwemtocht. Hij wist niet of hij het koud of heet had. Het leek wel alsof hij in een ander lichaam was. Eindelijk kwam hij aan de andere kant van de rivier in het bos. Er was hier een indiaan met een bootje bekleed met huiden. Hij liep op de indiaan af, en viel hem in zijn armen. "De stad is weg," zei hij. De langharige indiaan nam hem in zijn armen. "Ik weet het," zei de indiaan. De indiaan nam hem mee naar een boshut. Hier woonde de indiaan. "Er was geen hoop voor de stad," zei de indiaan met een accent. "Altijd oorlog."

De man knikte. Hij kreeg wat te drinken. "Voel je je alweer wat beter ?" vroeg de indiaan.

"Niet echt," zei de man. "Ik heb alles verloren, mijn hele familie, en al mijn vrienden."

"Wij zijn er hier voor je," zei de indiaan. "Je bent nooit alleen."

"Dank je," zei de man. "Ik begrijp waarom jullie hier wonen. Veel veiliger."

De indiaan knikte. De man moest denken aan iedereen die hij had verloren. Hij kreeg wat nieuwe kleren van de indiaan. "Het zijn vuurvogels," zei de indiaan. "Ze gaan van stad tot stad om alles te vernielen. Ze trekken families uit elkaar, die bommen en raketten."

"Ik weet het," zei de man. "Noemen jullie ze ook niet dondervogels ?"

"Ja," zei de indiaan, "en dat zijn het. Ze zijn niet te vertrouwen."

"Ik wil naar huis," zei de man.

"Dit is je nieuwe huis," zei de indiaan. "Ga nooit meer terug naar de stad."

Een man wordt wakker van een nachtmerrie. Hij staat op en loopt de trap af om iets uit de koelkast te pakken. Hij trilt helemaal. Gelukkig kwam er die dag huisbezoek. Een paar uur later in de ochtend staan er twee meisjes op de stoep. Hij laat ze binnen en vertelt zijn verhaal.

"Het zijn slechts kralen van een ketting," zei één van de meisjes. "In de nachtmerrie was je net buiten de stad, over de slootbrug heengegaan, en lopende langs de weg, terwijl je alles had verloren aan de ene kant, maar jij werd ergens voor bewaard. Iemand riep jou uit je bed en zei dat je de stad uitmoest. Het is iets van de natuur wat over jou waakt. Dat is de eerste kraal. Dan in de tweede kraal ben je aangekomen in het bos, en er is overal sneeuw. Het is winter. De winter heeft alles van je afgenomen, en neemt je tot haar, als een natuurverschijnsel, maar er is nog steeds een strijd gaande. Het vuur jaagt nog steeds op je, en je bent eenzaam en depressief. Dan in de derde kraal, dieper in de natuur vind je nieuw leven, nieuwe contacten, nieuw inzicht."

De man knikte. "Dus die dromen zijn kralen om het leven beter te begrijpen ?"

"Ja," zei het meisje. "Het is symboliek."

"Ik zie het," zei de man.

De volgende nacht heeft hij weer een droom. Weer ontmoet hij de indiaan die in zijn boot over de rivier gaat door de natuur, met een peddel. Hij roept de indiaan, maar die antwoordt niet, alsof de indiaan hem niet hoort. De man gaat het water in en zwemt op de boot af, maar de boot gaat sneller dan hem. Dan wordt de man wakker.

De volgende dag vertelt hij het aan de meisjes tijdens het huisbezoek. "Het is de vierde kraal," zei het meisje, wat de dag ervoor ook het woord deed. "Het betekent dat je ervoor moet werken om het nieuwe contact en het nieuwe inzicht te bewaren, en ook dat je het moet volgen. Het wil je ergens naartoe leiden."

De man bedankt de meisjes voor het bezoek en het inzicht. Hij is blij dat ze elke dag komen om hem ondersteuning te geven. Hij denkt veel na over de kralen, en schrijft het ook op. Hij merkt in hemzelf het samenspel tussen vuur en winter in zijn leven. Zij drijven hem terug tot de natuur, tot het hogere inzicht. Hij begint ook steeds meer de gevaren van de stad in te zien, hoe ze hem gebonden houden. In de natuur is vrijheid, maar een hogere soort van leiding en bescherming.

Toch kan hij ook de stad met andere ogen bekijken, als een onderdeel van de natuur. Hoe dieper hij in contact komt met de natuur, hoe meer ook alles om hem heen verandert tot een stuk natuur. Zo wordt alles bruikbaar in een hoger inzicht.

De man vindt rust in de natuur, en is dankbaar voor zijn dromenleven, wat hij als een gave ziet. De gave beschermt hem, de gave leidt hem. De meisjes noemen het een beloning, omdat hij alles heeft achtergelaten, en naar de natuur geluisterd heeft, en de natuur heeft gevolgd.

Einde

Het Meisje dat niet kon Spreken

Joop Kramer zit in een pinkstergemeente. Hij is daar ouderling. In de pinkstergemeente noemen ze dat vaak 'oudste'. Maar Joop is nog tamelijk jong. Hij is ook jeugdleider en voelt er veel voor om later zijn eigen pinkstergemeente op te richten. Joop is opgegroeid in de pinkstergemeente. Joop heeft ook een vriendin, Erin. Erin komt uit een ander land, maar dat maakt Joop niet zoveel uit. Hij is juist erg geinteresseerd in andere culturen. Het meisje is erg geliefd in de gemeente, maar op een dag raakt ze vermist. Er wordt gedacht aan een ontvoering. De gemeente is ten einde raad, en er worden bidstonden gehouden.

Na een tijdje is Erin weer terug, maar ze kan niet praten. Wat zou er met haar gebeurd zijn ? Zelfs weken erna kan ze nog niet praten. Joop neemt haar vaak mee naar zijn kamer om voor haar te bidden. In de pinkstergemeente geloven ze dat God geneest. In een dienst hoort Joop van een broeder dat ze misschien wel een boze geest heeft, maar daar wil Joop niks van weten. Joop gelooft niet dat een christen een boze geest kan hebben. Maar als het zo maanden voortduurt wil Joop toch dat hij en de andere oudsten een bevrijdingsgebed voor haar zullen bidden. Stel dat ze echt niet kan spreken door een boze geest. De oudsten voelen er niet veel voor, omdat zij ook niet geloven dat een christen een demoon kan hebben. Maar toch willen ze Joop niet teleurstellen, en samen bidden ze een bevrijdingsgebed. In het bevrijdingsgebed krijgt Erin haar stem terug, maar het is niet haar stem. 'Boze geesten hebben dit lichaam ingenomen,' zegt ze met een zware stem. 'Bwahahaha, en gij hebt de sleutel niet om hen los te laten.' Maar dan zegt één van de oudsten : 'Die sleutel hebben we wel, en dat is Jezus

Christus, kom er uit.' Maar dan beginnen de demonen te roepen en te gillen. 'Oh Jezus, ja, Jezus, nee, daar worden we bang voor. Hahahahahahahahaahahaahaha, man, schiet toch op, we kunnen niks voor je doen.' En hoe de oudsten ook baden, de geesten vertrokken niet. 'Misschien heeft ze zonden in haar leven,' opperde één van de oudste. Een andere oudste begon te knikken ... 'of te weinig geloof ...' Maar toen namen de demonen het voor haar op : 'Misschien hebben jullie wel zonden, en misschien hebben jullie wel te weinig geloof ...'

'Ikke niet ...' blufte één van de oudsten. 'Ach, laten we niet naar zulke leugengeesten luisteren,' zei een andere oudste. Terwijl een andere oudste zei : 'Misschien houd ze ons wel voor de gek ... Joop, het is beter dat je de relatie verbreekt. Hier hebben we niets aan.' En Joop vond dat ook maar het beste. Het meisje werd aan haar lot overgelaten. Ze kwam sindsdien ook niet meer naar de gemeente. Zij was een geval waar ze geen raad mee wisten.

Inmiddels was Erin van binnen erg verbitterd geraakt, en besloot naar de discotheek te gaan. Ze had nog steeds haar stem niet, en besloot tot rust te komen bij wat muziek. Gelukkig kon ze nog wel dansen. Ze werd weleens door mensen aangesproken, maar ze kon niets terugzeggen. Na een tijdje begonnen de mensen er aan gewend te raken. Ze werd door hen gewoon geaccepteerd.

Iemand bood haar een glaasje aan, en ze dacht : 'Ja, laat ik eens diep in het glaasje gaan kijken. Misschien kom ik daar wel los van.' Het was een heel vreemd drankje, een nieuw drankje, met vreemd blauwachtig waterig spul. Het rook heel lekker, en het meisje begon te drinken. En opeens kon het meisje weer praten. De jongen die haar het drankje had gegeven wilde haar mee naar huis nemen, en het meisje dacht : Waarom niet ? De jongen zag er een beetje oosters uit. Bij hem thuis werd er prachtige oosterse muziek gedraaid, en hij nam haar mee helemaal naar het zolder. Ze moesten een aantal nauwe, bochtige trapjes op, en uiteindelijk waren ze in de kamer van de jongen. De jongen zette wat muziek op. Het was prachtige oosterse muziek. De jongen ging op zijn bed zitten, en het meisje kreeg een stoel. 'Wil je nog wat drinken ?' vroeg de jongen. En weer kreeg ze wat van het heldere blauwe spul. 'Er zit geen alcohol in, hoor. Mijn vader heeft het gemaakt. Het is een nieuw drankje. Mijn vader is drankjeshandelaar.' Het meisje voelde zich erg goed bij het drinken van het drankje. Het was alsof ze weer een beetje op krachten kwam. De jongen had helemaal niet in de gaten gehad dat het meisje eerst niet kon praten.

'Kom je naast me zitten ?' vroeg de jongen. Het meisje ging op het bed van de jongen zitten. De jongen gaf haar een ring. 'Dit is geen huwelijks-ring hoor,' glimlachte de jongen. 'Ik moet namelijk van mijn vader met een ander meisje trouwen. Dat is bij mijn geboorte zo vastgelegd. Maar het is gewoon een vriendschaps-ring. Ik hoop namelijk dat we goede vrienden kunnen worden.' Het meisje nam de ring aan en deed het om haar vinger. Op de ring was een klein fototootje van een oude vrouw. 'Wie is dat ?' vraagt het meisje. 'Oh,' zegt de jongen, 'dat is mijn grootmoeder, die is al dood.'

'Hield je van je grootmoeder ?' vraagt het meisje. 'Ik heb haar nooit gekend,' zegt de jongen. 'Ik heb een paar van zulke ringen ge-erfd. Het zijn vriendschaps-ringen.'

'Aan wie heb je de andere ringen gegeven ?' vraagt het meisje.

'Er was eens een meisje zoals jij,' zegt de jongen. 'Een stil en verlegen meisje. Ik heb haar zo'n ring gegeven, maar ik heb haar nooit meer teruggezien.'

'Jammer,' zegt het meisje.

'En de laatste ring is voor het meisje wat mijn vader voor me bestemd heeft. Zij krijgt dus twee ringen,' zegt de jongen.

'Maar wie is dat meisje dan ?' vraagt het meisje.

'Ach, dat weet ik nog niet, dat wil m'n vader me nog niet vertellen.' zegt de jongen.

'Zullen we dat dan nu aan hem vragen ?' vraagt het meisje.

'Ja maar ik weet niet of hij het al wil zeggen,' zegt de jongen.

'Kom, dan gaan we het proberen,' zegt het meisje.

Bij de vader aangekomen buigt het meisje voor hem en vertelt hoe ze van zijn drankjes opgeknapt is. De vader van de jongen glimlacht. Dan vraagt het meisje voorzichtig of zij mag weten met wie de jongen moet trouwen. Maar de vader wil het niet zeggen. 'Zie je nou wel,' zegt de jongen. 'Hij wil het niet.' En weer gaan de jongen en het meisje naar boven. Dan begint het meisje te vertellen over de pinkstergemeente, hoe ze daar is behandeld. Ze had daar een vriend, maar die wil ze nu nooit meer zien. De jongen weet niet goed wat een pinkstergemeente is, maar het meisje legt het hem uit. De jongen raakt geinteresseerd, en zou wel eens naar zo'n pinkstergemeente willen. Het meisje wil onder geen enkele voorwaarde mee, en de jongen besluit alleen te gaan, samen met zijn vader.

Tijdens de dienst wordt er gevraagd of er nog getuigenissen zijn. De jongen gaat naar voren en vertelt over het meisje dat geen stem had, en dat hij het als een wonder zag dat ze nu weer kon praten. De vrouw van de voorganger zei : 'Nou, daar mogen we heel dankbaar voor zijn, dat ze door Jezus is genezen.' Maar toen stond de vader van de jongen op, en zei : 'Nee, het is gekomen door één van mijn drankjes. Ik ben drankjeshandelaar.' Ook Joop hoorde het verhaal, en dacht even aan Erin. Maar daarna dacht hij dat het wel toeval zou zijn. 'Kent zij de Heere Jezus al ?' vroeg de vrouw van de voorganger.

'Ze zat hier in de gemeente,' zei de jongen, 'maar jullie hebben haar weggestuurd.' De vrouw van de voorganger keek naar Joop. 'Ik denk dat ze het over Erin hebben,' zei de vrouw van de voorganger. 'Ja, dat klopt,' zei de vader, 'ze heet Erin.' Toen probeerde Joop zich te verontschuldigen : 'We hebben haar niet uit de gemeente weggestuurd. We vonden het alleen beter dat ik de relatie met haar zou verbreken. Ik ben namelijk oudste, en hoe moet dat met een vrouw die niet kan spreken ?' Toen ineens stond Erin in de deuropening. Iedereen schrok. Ze liep af op de oosterse jongen en omhelsde hem. Ook de vader van de jongen kwam bij haar staan. 'Zo, je ziet het, hè, ik kan weer spreken,' zei het meisje. Joop boog in schaamte zijn hoofd. Toen kwam de voorganger naar voren en richtte zich tot Erin, de jongen, en zijn vader : 'Het lijkt me wijzer voor jullie om te vertrekken.' Maar toen werd het meisje heel boos : 'Dus nu word ik voor de tweede keer afgewimpeld ? Wat zijn jullie voor een figuren ?' Waarop Joop zei : 'Je bent dronken, Erin.' Maar toen begon de jongen te schelden. 'Mijn vader verkoopt geen alcohol of sterke drank. Erin is niet dronken.' Toen pakte de vader zijn zoon en Erin bij de arm en fluisterde : 'Het is beter dat we weggaan.' En met z'n drieen liepen ze de deur uit.

Toen zei de vader dat hij hen wel wilde vertellen met wie zijn zoon zou trouwen. Inmiddels waren ze uit de gemeente gegaan, en liepen terug naar huis. Maar ineens merkte de man dat hij z'n stem verloren had. Thuisgekomen nam de man wat van z'n drankjes, maar niets hielp. 'Dat was mij dus ook een keer overkomen,' zei het meisje. 'Maar niet alleen dat. Ik was gewoon compleet weg. Ik kan me niets meer herinneren wat er gebeurd is.' En ineens was ook de vader verdwenen, als in het niets opgelost. 'Nou, bij de pinkstergemeente moeten we niet wezen,' zei de jongen, 'maar als mijn vader niet meer terugkomt, dan kan ik trouwen met wie ik wil.' En zo gebeurde het. De jongen trouwde met het meisje, en ze leefden nog lang en gelukkig.

Dochters van Jahweh

Korte Theologische Roman

Hoofdstuk 1. Morit en Ramonde

Hoofdstuk 2. Sarsia en de Verloren Altaren

Hoofdstuk 3. Belgie

Hoofdstuk 4. Het Vreemde Gevoel

Hoofdstuk 1. Morit en Ramonde

Adriaan zit in een pinkstergemeente. Er zitten hier veel vrouwen in de gemeente, en het doet allemaal een beetje matriarchisch aan. In wezen heeft Adriaan hier twintig moeders. Op een dag komt er een nieuw meisje in de gemeente. Ze doet erg geheimzinnig, en Adriaan denkt al gauw lang na over al die raadselachtige dingen die ze verteld. Wie is ze ? Wat is ze ? Waarom doet ze zo ? Of wil ze haarzelf niet laten kennen ... Is ze soms bang ? Ze is een lopende puzzel. Op een dag komt ze de gemeente binnen met een schilderij. 'Kijk eens ... voor aan de muur,' zegt ze enthousiast ... maar dan : 'Als jullie het niet willen gooi ik het weg hoor.' Ze is zo paradoxaal in haar spreken ... bijna schizofreen. Wat wil ze nou eigenlijk ?

Ze had het schilderij zelf geschilderd. Adriaan ging bijna stijl achterover. Het was een prachtig konijn met vleugels voor wat opgestapelde edelstenen in de vorm van een soort reukfles. Hoe komt ze erop. Soms was ze net een kind. Dan kon ze zomaar tijdens de getuigenissen naar voren lopen, en dan vertelde ze over de insecten en de vlinders die ze buiten had gezien, of ze had het over wat voor een avontuur Calimero op de televisie had beleefd.

Ze was een erg dromerig type, en ze kon soms zomaar ineens heel erg bang worden. Dan staarde ze voor haar uit, en dan mocht niemand bij haar in de buurt komen.

Op een dag had ze een gedicht geschreven, of een verhaal. Natuurlijk wilde ze dat graag voorlezen tijdens de getuigenissen. En daar liep ze met haar papieren naar voren :

'Als door groen sap beweeg je, door groen sap leef je, op weg naar verlichting, als je een boom bent, zul je eeuwig leven. De rest is reeds verloren. Ik weet, je leeft in bevroren dromen ... ik weet je leeft in parels verborgen ... Zo gaan de wijsheden met elkaar om ... Zij verbergen hun waarheden tussen raadsels en verhalen ... en vinden elkaar terug op verborgen en afgelegen eilanden ... kundig bouwden ze hun muren ... maar elkaar bedrogen hebben ze nooit ... Ze spreken waarheid tot elkaar, in goed verpakte flessen ... Door boeken trekken ze elkaars aandacht ... Spreek tot mij in raadselen, in verhalen ongehoord ... leidt mij door de wildernissen van het leven, waar zoveel oren klaar staan om ons te vereten ... Spreek tot mij in verhalen en gedichten, door omwegen ... We kunnen elkaar niet rechtstreeks zien ... teveel kapers op de kust ... We moeten eerst onze wereld bouwen ... Ik voel je hand door je verhaal, door jouw raadselachtige taal ... een taal van tranen en van kruizen .... van leugens en van pijnen ... Leer mij die taal verstaan ... Je taal is wild en gevaarlijk ... woest, want je wilt geen indringers ...'

Toen zei ze dat God dit tot haar gesproken had. Deed ze daarom altijd zo vreemd ? Was normaal doen dan veel te gevaarlijk ? Was dit ook de reden waarom we allemaal het idee hadden dat God zo weinig sprak ? Misschien sprak Hij wel op een andere manier, een manier die we nog niet goed hadden ontdekt.

Ineens zei ze : Ik heb zo'n hoofdpijn al een paar dagen. Toen ging ze zitten. Na de dienst ging Adriaan naar haar toe en vroeg of hij een kopie mocht van het gedicht. Verder zei hij er niet veel van. Misschien zou ze het wel fijn vinden als hij haar anders zou benaderen ... Niet normaal meer, maar vreemd en geheimzinnig. 'Heb je nog naar Calimero gekeken ?' vroeg Adriaan ineens.

'Adriaan, ga je met me mee naar huis, ik wil je iets laten zien ..' vroeg ze ineens nadat ze hem een tijdje geheimzinnig had aangestaard, terwijl hij wachtte op haar antwoord over Calimero. Adriaan aarzelde geen moment en zei : 'Maar natuurlijk wil ik met je mee ... Ik heb je huis nog nooit gezien.'

'Het gaat niet om mijn huis, het gaat om iets anders ... Adriaan, alsjeblieft, kom mee, ... ik heb je hulp nodig,' zei ze. Adriaan werd steeds nieuwsgieriger, en ging met Marjenne mee naar haar huis. Toen ze bij haar deur was aangekomen klopte ze eerst aan, en toen maakte ze de deur open ... 'Ja, dat doe ik altijd,' zei Marjenne, 'want ik woon hier niet alleen. God woont hier ook.' Adriaan glimlachte, en samen liepen ze naar binnen. 'Beloof me dat je me niet zult uitlachen,' zei Marjenne ... 'Ik moet je eerst wat vertellen, en daarna wil ik je het laten zien ...' Adriaan beloofde plechtig dat hij waardig met de informatie om zou gaan. Toen begon Marjenne te vertellen ... Ze vertelde dat ze in het bos een boek had gevonden dat het Eeuwig Evangelie heette, en daar stonden sprookjesachtige verhalen in ... Op een dag was ze weer in het bos, en toen verscheen er een engel aan haar, die haar leidde tot een altaar, een heel oud altaar. Nu heeft ze dat altaar in een kamer van haar huis staan ... Samen liepen ze naar boven, en in de kamer waar ze altijd haar wasgoed deed stond het altaar met een heel groot schilderij van een soort engel of vrouw erachter ... 'Dat is Morit, Adriaan,' zei Marjenne ... Zij wordt beschreven in het Eeuwig Evangelie. Op het altaar lag een boek. Marjenne vertelde dat dat het Eeuwig Evangelie was. De gebeurtenis had haar zo aangesproken, dat ze nu vaak bij dit altaar bad. 'Vertel me eens over Morit,' zei Adriaan ... Het schilderij maakte grote indruk op hem, alsof hij een groot geheimenis van God zag. Het schilderij leek zo onwerkelijk, maar ook zo echt. Adriaan had het gevoel alsof hij naast zijn eigen lichaam stond, in een andere wereld. Hij had ineens zulke andere gevoelens. 'Dat schilderij heb ik ook van die engel gekregen,' zei Marjenne ... 'het is in de hemel geschilderd ...' Adriaan had het gevoel dat hij in huilen zou uitbarsten als hij langer naar het schilderij zou kijken.

Toen begon Marjenne over Morit te vertellen. Op het schilderij had ze een soort doek om haar hoofd, en leek ze een heel klein beetje op Maria, de moeder van Christus. Marjenne vertelde over de tijd voordat de aarde herschapen werd, de tijd dat er nog allerlei andere paradijsen en scheppingen op aarde waren, ver voor de tijd van het boek Genesis. In die tijden ging het ook mis met de schepselen en stuurde God ook al Verlossers ... Morit was een schepsel geplaatst in een Hof die er was voordat God weer overnieuw begon in het boek Genesis. De aarde had een lange geschiedenis. Morit werd ook wel het hertenkind genoemd, en ze leefde helemaal alleen in die hof. Niet lang daarna werd ze door de honden van Okil

ontvoerd. De honden van Okil zijn hele oude demonen van voor het boek Genesis. Zulke voor-bijbelse demonen werden ook wel 'abers' genoemd. In het Eeuwig Evangelie werd ook gesproken over het kruis van Morit, het kruis van ontvoering, als een middel om de geestelijke wereld te leren ontdekken. Door dit altaar zou de excarnaatse bediening in werk gesteld worden. 'Excarnaatse bediening ? Wat is dat nu weer ?' vroeg Adriaan ... Maar toen pakte Marjenne het boek van het altaar en gaf het aan Adriaan ... Adriaan beefde ... Zou dit boek ook in de hemel geschreven zijn ? Volgens Marjenne stond dat ook in de bijbel, dat een engel dit boek zou brengen, als een verborgen verlengstuk van de Bijbel. Adriaan griezelde bij de gedachte. Wat zou er allemaal wel niet instaan ? Marjenne keek naar zijn verschrikte gezicht, en probeerde hem te troosten. 'Lees het maar ...' zei ze. Adriaan stond als aan de grond genageld met het boek in zijn handen. Het leek wel alsof zijn handen begonnen te branden. Ge-emotioneerd legde hij het boek weer op het altaar : 'Ik kan het niet Marjenne, echt niet,' stamelde hij, en rende weg.

Marjenne begreep Adriaan wel ... Alles gebeurde ook zo snel en was ook zo overweldigend ... Maar hoe moest het nu verder ? Tijden verstreken en op een dag werd Adriaan door Marjenne gebeld ... 'Adriaan,' sprak ze bijna buiten adem ... 'ik heb nog een altaar gevonden ... Wil je alsjeblieft even bij me komen ?' Adriaan was aan de ene kant verheugd, maar aan de andere kant vroeg hij zich af of hij er wel aan toe was. Toch wilde hij haar niet nog een keer alleen laten, en kwam direkt naar haar toe. Er was nog een ander klein kamertje in haar huis waar ze het altaar had neergezet. Het altaar was niet zo groot als het altaar van Morit, en weer hing er een schilderij boven. Het was een vrouw in ridderkleding ... Het leek op een pantser met hier en daar wat versleten kleding eronder ... De lippen van de vrouw waren roodachtig in een vreemde soort roze. Adriaan was weer erg onder de indruk van het schilderij ... 'Waar haal je toch ...' stamelde hij ... 'waar haal je ...' Maar van emoties kon hij verder niets uitbrengen ... De vrouw had een langwerpig dun zwaard, bijna als een degen, en het leek wel alsof ze recht door Adriaan heenkeek. Het leek wel alsof het schilderij gewoon leefde. De vrouw heette Ramonde, en Marjenne begon direkt over Ramonde te vertellen, dat zij opgesloten zat in een huis bewaakt door ratten, maar ze mocht wel aan het einde van de dag langs de hondenhaag gaan, om aan het einde van die haag de roofdieren te voeren ... Die roofdieren zouden op een dag zo groot zijn dat ze Ramonde uit het huis der ratten zouden bevrijden. Het Ramonde-kruis was als een altaar voor de Faraatse bediening .... Weer wist Adriaan niet wat dat voor een bediening was, maar Marjenne vertelde hem dat het een bediening van de eindtijd zou zijn. Het zou een apocalyptische bediening zijn, beschreven in Openbaring, maar veel direkter en duidelijker in het Eeuwig Evangelie, het Boek dat zou komen. Adriaan keek met open mond naar het altaar. Het leek wel alsof het altaar zo direkt uit de hemel kwam.

Op een nacht schrok Adriaan wakker ... Ramonde stond voor hem als in helder wit licht ... 'Help me, Adriaan,' riep ze, 'breng me tot leven ... ik ... slaap ...' Direkt belde Adriaan Marjenne op, en ze kwam direkt naar hem toe ... 'Adriaan, Adriaan,'

zei ze ... 'ik ben zo blij dat je bij ons hoort ... Nu hoef ik niet alleen met dit zware juk te lopen ... Ik kan het niet alleen ... Ik heb je hulp nodig ... Dit zijn delen van de voorbijbelse geschiedenissen van Gods werk, en we moeten ze weer terugbrengen ...' Adriaan glimlachte ... maar het was een erg pijnlijke glimlach ... 'Marjenne, ik vind het allemaal prachtig ...' fluisterde hij ... 'maar ik weet niet of ik dit wel wil ...'

'Denk er nog eens goed overna,' zei Marjenne, en vertrok weer ... Ze moest Adriaan de tijd geven, maar ze was een beetje geirriteerd over het feit dat hij zich niet radicaal opstelde ... Huilend kwam ze thuis en stortte zich voor het altaar van Ramonde ... Daarna stortte ze zich voor het altaar van Morit ... In het boek stond beschreven hoe de altaren te gebruiken ...

Hoofdstuk 2. Sarsia en de Verloren Altaren

Ondertussen heeft Adriaan veel twijfels ... Hij wist dat Marjenne zelf ook schilderde, en dat heel goed kon ... Misschien had ze zelf wel die schilderijen gemaakt ... En die altaren ? Misschien had ze die ergens bij een rommelmarkt gekocht, of in een handel voor antieke spullen ... Adriaan begon zijn leven weer voorzichtig op te pakken ... Hij kon niet zo goed tegen de opwinding die hij voelde ... Het was bijzonder en fantastisch, maar ... misschien was het wel iets te veel voor hem ...

Maar op een nacht kreeg hij weer een droom ... Weer verscheen Ramonde aan hem, en zei : 'Help me, help me dan toch ... Je bent zo verweg ... Kom dichterbij ... Maak me wakker ... zoals ik jou wakker aan het maken ben ...' Toen verscheen er een andere gestalte aan hem ... Het was een vrouwelijke engel met een zwart ridderpantser met rode kledingsdelen, en een rood gewaad ... 'Ik ben de engel Sarsia, een voorbijbelse engel,' sprak de gestalte ... 'In voorbijbelse scheppingen was er het boek 'De Troiade' waar ik in voorkom. Engelen werden toen 'arxelen' genoemd ....' En toen liet Sarsia hem een altaar zien, en sprak ze tot hem over haar kruis ... Ze liet hem zien dat het altaar een andere eindtijd-bediening in werking zou stellen : De Attentaatse bediening, de bediening van Goddelijke Kunst ... Ook zou dit een Goddelijk Materialisme verkondigen en creeeren en het zou de hemel op aarde brengen, oftewel laten materialiseren ... Adriaan wreef in zijn ogen ... 'Herstel de altaren van Gods voorbijbelse geschiedenis, Adriaan,' sprak Sarsia ... 'Die altaren hebben jullie nodig om tot volwassenheid en volmaaktheid te komen ...'

Adriaan belde direkt Marjenne op ... Hij mocht haar daar voor wakker maken, had ze altijd tegen hem gezegd ... Adriaan was een stuk enthousiaster ineens ... Hij vertelde aan Marjenne wat er was gebeurd, en dat het voor hem meer op het maken van een puzzel begon te lijken ... Hij wist dat hij op zoek moest naar de verloren altaren ... Ze hadden er al twee, en wisten nu ook van een derde ... Adriaan wilde samen met Marjenne het platform voor de eindtijd-bedieningen herstellen ... De delen van de voorbijbelse geschiedenissen waren niet voor niets verloren geweest ... God had een plan met ze ...

De daaropvolgende dag kwam Adriaan een meisje tegen in de winkel waar hij vaak kwam ... Het meisje stond te zoeken tussen wat boeken op een stellage ... Het meisje leek erg veel op Ramonde ... Voordat Adriaan het wist stond hij al bij het meisje en staarde haar aan ... 'Pardon,' zei hij ... 'mag ik je iets vragen ...' Het meisje draaide voorzichtig naar hem toe en knikte ... 'Heet jij soms Ramonde ?' vroeg Adriaan ... in de hoop dat het Ramonde echt was ... Maar het meisje zei : 'Nee, hoe kom je daar nou bij ...'

'Oh,' verdedigde Adriaan zich ... terwijl hij ineens erg teleurgesteld was : 'ik dacht dat ik je ergens van kende ...'

'Geeft niks hoor,' zei het meisje vriendelijk en wilde weglopen ... 'Eh, ken jij misschien ook het Eeuwig Evangelie ?' vroeg Adriaan ineens ... 'Nee,' zei het meisje, 'ik ben niet kerkelijk, en ik wil daar ook niets mee te maken hebben. De kerk heeft verschrikkelijke dingen op z'n geweten ... Ik geloof meer in natuurgodinnen ...'

Toen begon Adriaan het meisje uit te leggen over de voorbijbelse geschiedenissen en dat daar ook vrouwelijke verlossers en engelen in voorkwamen, als een soort godinnen ... Misschien dat ze zo wel beter aansluiting kon vinden ... Het meisje vond het verhaal van Adriaan heel interessant, en vroeg hem naar het boek ... Adriaan vertelde haar direkt dat dat boek bij een vriendin van hem thuislag ... Na nog even wat na te praten besloot het meisje met hem mee te gaan naar het huis van Marjenne ... Toen het meisje de altaren en de schilderijen zag was ze erg onder de indruk ... Inmiddels had Marjenne het hele Eeuwig Evangelie boek gekopieerd en gaf de kopie aan het meisje ... Adriaan was er nog steeds niet aan toe, maar was wel blij dat het meisje de kopie aannam ... Ze zou bellen ...

Het meisje was erg onder de indruk, en ook had zij snel enige bijzondere ervaringen ... Niet lang daarna belde ze Marjenne op met de mededeling dat zij ook een altaar had gevonden, met een schilderij ... Het was het altaar van Davinde. Zij was opgesloten in een kooi, en moest altijd werken voor drie rovers. De drie rovers hadden wonden waar genezende zalf inzat. Altijd als ze sliepen dan haalde Davinde die zalf uit hun wonden, zodat ze steeds geneeskrachtiger werd. Het kruis van Davinde was ook zeer belangrijk voor een bepaalde eindtijd-bediening ... Het meisje had inmiddels de teksten over de altaren goed bestudeerd, en begon er ook over te vertellen naar Adriaan en Marjenne. Na een tijdje hadden ze elf altaren verzameld met elf schilderijen erboven. Sommige altaren stonden bij Marjenne in huis, anderen bij het andere meisje, Lisette, en weer anderen stonden bij Adriaan in huis. Het waren de elf poorten tot de hoofdbedieningen. In het rijtje waren meer vrouwen dan mannen ... 'De moeders en dochters van Jahweh,' noemde Lisette ze weleens ... Zou Jahweh ook vrouwen gehad hebben ?

Lisette raakt steeds meer geinteresseerd in de voorbijbelse geschiedenis en de omliggende geschiedenissen. Ook raakt ze geinteresseerd in de geschiedenissen rondom de kerk. Ze is er van overtuigd dat dat Gods bedoeling nooit is geweest,

zoals de kerk op z'n poten staat, en zelf vindt ze het tijd geworden om die poten onder de kerk weg te trappen ... Maar Marjenne zegt dat ze het beter voorzichtig aan kunnen pakken ... Eerst moeten ze zelf nog zoveel veranderen, en ... volwassen worden ... Terwijl Adriaan de draad van zijn leven weer voorzichtig probeert op te pakken ...

Hoofdstuk 3. Belgie

Inmiddels hebben ze besloten om de altaren met de schilderijen in een oud kapelletje in een bos neer te zetten, ergens in het Zuiden van Limburg. Het kapelletje is bijna ondergronds, en diep in het bos. Het boek hebben ze in een soort kast daar opgeborgen. Het is heel vreemd, maar soms als ze in het kapelletje zijn, dan horen ze Belgische stemmen, die ook over Belgie praten. Het kapelletje heeft een aantal gangen met ook wat kleinere zaaltjes, en wat kelders. Op een dag ontdekken de drie een geheime tunnel in één van de kelders die helemaal tot Belgie leidt. Ze beginnen zich af te vragen wat en wie die stemmen zijn ... En waarom hebben ze het over Belgie ?

Adriaan werkt als kok in een restaurant. Op een dag zit er een meisje aan een tafeltje dichtbij de keuken ... Het meisje lijkt heel veel op één van de vrouwen van de altaren. Maar Adriaan wil dezelfde fout niet nog een keer maken ... Wel vraagt hij haar even of het meisje weleens van het Eeuwig Evangelie heeft gehoord. Het meisje knikt. Ze is christen. Maar Adriaan weet dat ze het niet helemaal begrijpt. Zij denkt dat het Eeuwig Evangelie gewoon het bestaande en algemeen erkende evangelie is, terwijl het Eeuwig Evangelie het vervolg en verlengstuk daarop is ... Als Adriaan het meisje dat uitlegt kijkt ze erg verbaasd ... Ze wist niet dat dat bestond, maar Adriaan liet haar wat teksten uit het boek Openbaring zien ... Het meisje wilde het boek graag lezen, en al snel komt Adriaan met een kopie aanzetten ... Het meisje neemt het dankbaar aan, en ze praten nog even door ... Dan ineens staat de baas van Adriaan bij het tafeltje ... 'Zeg, hoor jij niet te werken ?' zegt hij nors ... Adriaan verontschuldigt zich direkt, en gaat weer aan de slag ... Naderhand gaat de baas nog even langs de keuken ... 'Adriaan, dat moet niet nog een keer zo gebeuren, want dan hebben we een probleem ... De laatste tijd ben je al wat dromerig ... Denk om de concurrentie, hè ... Er gaan verhalen over je rond dat je bij een secte zou zitten ...' zegt de baas voorzichtig ... Adriaan barst in lachen uit ... 'Een secte ? Kom, ik zou jou eens wat vertellen ...' En dan vertelt Adriaan het hele verhaal aan zijn baas ... De baas wil dat kapelletje wel eens bezichtigen, en op een dag na het werk neemt Adriaan hem mee ... De baas zelf heeft een katholieke achtergrond, en hij vindt de personages op de schilderijen wel een beetje op katholieke heiligen lijken, maar het is toch anders ... Als Adriaan hem vertelt dat die schilderijen in de hemel zijn geschilderd moet de baas even lachen ... Adriaan kijkt hem aan, en zegt : 'Het is echt waar ...' Weer kijkt de baas indringend naar de schilderijen en zegt : 'Nu ja, dat kan best wel zo zijn ... Het heeft een beetje een groene gloed ....'

'Een groene gloed ?' vraagt Adriaan ... 'Ik zie geen groene gloed ...' De baas vraagt of hij een vriend van hem eens mag meenemen, en uiteindelijk stemt Adriaan daarin toe ... Ook de andere twee nemen weleens vrienden of vriendinnen mee naar het oude kapelletje ...

Op een dag zit er weer een ander meisje dichtbij de keuken aan een tafeltje ... Later komt er een ander meisje bijzitten ... Eentje van hen lijkt weer heel veel op sommige vrouwen van de altaren, terwijl dat andere meisje ... Adriaan moet even slikken ... Hij voelt zijn hart kloppen, en hij weet niet waarom ... Op een gegeven moment trekt hij de stoute schoenen aan en loopt op de meisjes af ... 'Daar komt de kok,' zegt één van de meisjes ... Adriaan begint direkt over het Eeuwig Evangelie ... en de meisjes vertellen hem dat ze uit Belgie komen ... Adriaan is als verliefd op die taal ... 'Praat, praat,' zegt hij ... 'ik vind die taal van jullie ...' stamelt hij ... 'schitterend ...' De meisjes beginnen te lachen, en beginnen hele verhalen in het Belgisch tegen hem af te steken ... Maar daar is de baas ... 'Adriaan, dit was de laatste keer ... Ik ga een ontslagbrief voor je optekenen ...' Hoe Adriaan ook probeert de man over te halen ... Niks werkt ...

De meisjes vinden het erg vervelend voor Adriaan en nodigen hem uit om met hen mee te gaan naar Belgie voor een tijdje ... En misschien is dat wel goed ook voor Adriaan, omdat hij erg tot rust moet komen ... Sinds dat gedoe met het Eeuwig Evangelie is hij zichzelf niet meer. Hij krijgt een grote kamer in het huis waar de meisjes wonen ... Adriaan is erg verdrietig en heeft veel huilbuien, maar de meisjes troosten hem ... Gek, het is nog steeds alsof ze bij de vrouwen van de altaren behoren ... Soms nemen ze Adriaan mee naar het bos, en een andere keer naar de winkels ... Beiden vinden ze dat Adriaan wat afleiding nodig heeft ... 'Zie je, Adriaan, jullie Nederlanders hebben een hele andere mentaliteit ... Misschien dat je in Belgie, hier, op andere gedachten komt, en dan kun je ons direkt meer vertellen over dat Eeuwige Evangelie ...' Adriaan vind het op een bepaalde manier wel grappig ... Ze zeggen 'U' en 'Gij' tegen hem ... Op een dag komen ook Lisette en Marjenne hem opzoeken in Belgie, en ze worden al snel vriendinnen met de twee Belgische meisjes ... Op een dag besluiten ze de twee meisjes mee te nemen naar het oude ondergrondse kapelletje in Zuid Limburg ... Adriaan blijft op z'n kamer ... De meisjes komen later helemaal ontroerd thuis ... 'Dit is iets waar ik mijn leven voor wil geven, Adriaan,' zegt één van de meisjes ... De ander knikt ... Beiden beginnen ze flink te studeren in een kopie van het Eeuwig Evangelie ... 'Die leringen zijn zo prachtig,' vertelt één van de meisjes ... Terwijl de ander zegt dat ze in vuur en vlam staat ... Adriaan vind het allemaal best ... Hij had niets anders verwacht ... Daar waar de Nederlanders heel koudbloedig konden zijn, daar konden een paar Belgischen ineens heel warmbloedig zijn ... Adriaan had het vaak over de Belgen ineens, zo vaak, dat op een gegeven moment één van de meisjes zei : 'Maar nu bent gij aan het slijmen ...'

Hoofdstuk 4. Het Vreemde Gevoel

Op een dag wordt Adriaan helemaal draaierig wakker, met een raar gevoel in zijn buik ... Hij had die nacht zo vreemd gedroomd ... Alsof hij de hele nacht bij een vrouw van zo'n altaar in de armen had gelegen ... Hij was zichzelf niet meer, en moest telkens aan haar denken ... 'Wie was het ?' vroeg één van de meisjes nieuwsgierig ... 'Ik dacht dat je celibatair was ?' Maar direkt probeert Adriaan zich te verdedigen ... 'Waarom moet je direkt aan intieme dingen denken als ik het heb over bij iemand in de armen liggen ... Dat is ook intiem natuurlijk, maar heel anders ... Heb jij nooit een keer bij je moeder in de armen gelegen ?'

'Nee,' zegt het meisje snel ... 'mijn moeder is overleden bij de geboorte ...'

'Oh, dat spijt me,' zegt Adriaan ... 'Sorry, dat vind ik echt verschrikkelijk erg ...' Adriaan is even ontdaan, maar dan begint het meisje weer door te vragen. Ook het andere meisje is er inmiddels bijgekomen ... 'Intiem met mensen zijn, dat probeer ik zoveel mogelijk te ontwijken, maar intiem met God zijn, dat is iets heel anders ... Dat is goed denk ik ...' zegt het andere meisje ... 'Ik had het niet over intimiteit,' zegt Adriaan weer, en dit keer iets harder ... 'Ik had het over een vrouw waarbij ik in de armen lag in mijn droom ... Het was meer als moederlijk ...'

'Ach, Adriaan, je moet je niet zo lopen te verdedigen, ze plaagt je alleen maar,' zei het andere meisje weer ... Adriaan zucht ... 'En toch denk ik dat ik gevaar loop verliefd te raken op die vrouw van het altaar ... En dat terwijl ik in het celibaat leef ...' zegt Adriaan ... 'Je bent niet verliefd,' zei één van de meisjes ... 'je bent gewoon overweldigd door een nieuwe en hogere vorm van liefde ... Het woord liefde zou niet eens op zijn plaats zijn, want dat is zo'n aards en vervuild woord ...' Weer zucht Adriaan ... Hij voelt zich vies, maar dat kan gebeuren als je met zo'n rein wezen in aanraking bent gekomen ... 'De vrouwen van het altaar zijn zo rein,' zei het meisje ... Het andere meisje was inmiddels weer weg ... Ze moest nog even wat was ophangen ...

Maar de hele dag voelde Adriaan zich draaierig ... Alsof de vrouw uit de droom hem nog steeds vasthield ... 'Misschien wil ze wel wat van je,' zei het meisje ... 'In het Eeuwig Evangelie gaat het over de intieme relaties tussen de hemelse wezens en soms worden hen van de aarde daar ook bij betrokken, zodat hun reine vruchten op aarde kunnen groeien ... Dit is iets reins ... Zo kom je los van het menselijke en aardse intieme ... Niet dat dat altijd slecht is ... maar ...' Adriaan stelde zich beschikbaar, voor als de wanhopige vrouw van het altaar daadwerkelijk hem als poort wilde gebruiken voor haar nageslacht ... 'Laat maar komen,' zei Adriaan, en direkt werd hij door een vreemde wind op de grond gesleurd, en voelde hij hemelse winden over hem heen komen die hem met hen lieten samensmelten voor nageslacht ... 'Hou me vast,' zei hij tegen het meisje ... Het andere meisje was er ook bijgekomen ... Ze zagen dat hij het heel moeilijk had, en beiden omhelsden ze hem ... Adriaan kreeg een huilbui ... 'Ik voel me zo vies ... Ik voel me zo vies ... Maar aan de andere kant wordt ik verlost van het aardse ..'

'Hier moet je even doorheen,' sprak één van de meisjes ... 'Het staat allemaal in het eeuwig evangelie ...' Daarna begon Adriaan hysterisch te huilen ... De meisjes hielden hem stevig vast ... 'Rustig maar, het is allemaal in orde ... Jij verzekert hen van nageslacht, Jij verzekert hen van nageslacht ...'

Zwetend wordt Adriaan wakker ... Wat een vreemde droom heeft hij gehad ... Over vrouwen van het altaar, over Belgie ... over ontslagen worden ... En dat terwijl hij niet eens een kok is ... En over een kapel in Zuid Limburg ... onder de grond nog wel ... Op zijn nachtkastje ligt een boek over Sint Antonius, die in de woestijn door visioenen met vrouwen werd lastiggevallen ... En dat terwijl hij celibatair wilde leven ... Had Adriaan zich teveel in dat boek verdiept ? Nee, niet eens ... Hij had dat boek van een vriend van hem gehad, en las het gewoon ter ontspanning ... Ach, iedereen droomt weleens, dacht hij bij zichzelf ... En een mens kan vreemd dromen ... Toen draaide hij zich om, kuste zijn nog slapende vriendin, en ging naar zijn werk ...

Einde

Verborgen Vruchten

Korte Theologische Roman

Hoofdstuk 1. Het Gebedenboekje

Hoofdstuk 2. Roggio

Hoofdstuk 3. Het Beeld van God

Hoofdstuk 4. Als een Trouwe Hond

Hoofdstuk 1. Het Gebedenboekje

Rick Zandstra is een Belgische jongen en is lid van een pinkstergemeente. Op een dag komt Rick na een lange surftocht op het meer thuis. Er is een sprookjesfilm op de televisie. Een jongen en een meisje wonen in een prachtig paradijs, en hebben het goed samen ... Op een dag voelt het meisje zich niet lekker, en trekt zich terug ... De jongen begint haar na een tijdje te missen, en begint vrouwelijke eigenschappen te ontwikkelen ... Hij vertrekt naar de rand van het paradijs, op zoek naar zijn eigen vrouwelijkheid, maar valt over de rand naar beneden, en krijgt te horen dat hij niet meer terugmag, omdat hij uit balans is. Hij had zijn mannelijkheid met zijn vrouwelijkheid moeten balanceren, en niet zijn vrouwelijkheid laten overheersen. Het meisje is ontroostbaar als ze ontdekt dat de jongen vertrokken is, en begint door het woud te rennen ... Het sprookje vertelt dat ze nog steeds door het woud rent om haar geliefde te zoeken ... Rick zit als betoverd te kijken ... Het is een tekenfilm met een prachtige rode gloed ... Het land van die tekenfilm ? Roggio ...

Wat een prachtig paradijs, zegt Rick tegen zichzelf ... Daar zou ik ook wel willen wonen ... Het meisje van de tekenfilm heette Echte ... en de jongen Lirijn ... 'Wat een mafkees,' denkt Rick ... 'wie vertrekt er nu uit een paradijs ....' Hij kon Adam en Eva ook al nooit begrijpen ... Maar goed, die Echte was wel slim ... die bleef in het paradijs ... Maar of ze echt gelukkig was zonder die jongen ? Nee, want ze rende maar heen en weer ... Ze miste hem natuurlijk ... Wat een vreemd einde trouwens voor zo'n prachtige tekenfilm ... Het leek een beetje op Romeo en Juliet ...

'Rick, wil je wat drinken, jongen ?' vraagt zijn moeder van achter het barretje wat ze in huis hebben staan ... Achter het barretje is een ingebouwde keuken waar zijn moeder uit tevoorschijn komt ... Ze ziet er betoverend uit ... Ze moet vanavond naar een feestje ... Maar Rick heeft al een glas voor zich staan en tilt het omhoog ... 'Het leven in Belgie is goed, mams,' zegt Rick ... 'Ik ben al voorzien ... en ik heb een prachtige dag gehad op het meer ... en nu hier bij die betoverende sprookjesfilm ...' En dan begint Rick zijn moeder over het verhaal te vertellen ... 'Dat verhaal kende ik nog niet, Rick,' zei z'n moeder ...

De volgende dag zit Rick in de kerk ... Het gaat over de Attentaatse bediening ... Ook gaat het over het balans wat er moet zijn tussen het mannelijke en vrouwelijke ... 'Vreemd,' dacht Rick bij zichzelf ... 'je zou bijna denken dat ze gisteren ook naar die tekenfilm hebben gekeken ...' De voorganger en zijn vrouw hielden beiden de

preek ... Dat deden ze weleens vaker ... Opeens begon de voorganger over die tekenfilm te praten ... Hij zei dat het een prachtige film was die zoveel van God liet zien ...

Die nacht heeft Rick een droom ... En nu was het alsof hij zelf in die tekenfilm meespeelde ... Hij rende achter Echte aan, en riep : 'Hey, stop ...' Maar Echte hoorde hem niet en rende verder ... Teleurgesteld werd Rick even wakker, maar viel toen weer in slaap ... Weer droomt hij over Echte ... 'Jij ... jij ...' zegt Echte ... 'Jij hebt me doen stoppen ... Jij hebt mij tot rust gebracht ...' Rick wordt wakker met een brede glimlach ... Zou Echte echt bestaan ... Waar kwam die tekenfilm eigenlijk vandaan ? Het was als een christelijk sprookje, maar ook weer niet ...

Lang hoefde Rick er niet over na te denken ... In de loop van de ochtend werd er gebeld ... Het was nogal vroeg, maar Rick was net opgestaan ... Er waren mensen aan de deur die het Eeuwig Evangelie verkondigden ... Rick was zo nieuwsgierig ... 'Zijn jullie een nieuwe kerk, en kennen jullie dat verhaal van Echte en Lirijn in de Hof van Roggio ?' Ze vertelden Rick dat dat verhaal uit het Eeuwig Evangelie kwam, het beloofde boek dat als vervolg en verlengstuk van de Bijbel zou worden gegeven ... 'Wij bidden tot Echte,' zeiden ze ... Ze waren met z'n drieen ... Na een tijdje liet Rick ze binnen ... Echte was één van hun heiligen ... Het verhaal dat ze vertelden deed een beetje katholiek aan ... Ze vertelden Rick dat het Eeuwig Evangelie een perfecte balans was tussen het Protestantisme en het Katholicisme ... 'Hoe bidden jullie dan tot Echte ?' vroeg Rick ... Ze zeiden dat het voor iedere gelovige van het Eeuwig Evangelie de taak was om Echte tot rust te brengen ... Zij mist haar geliefde ... de Afgedwaalde, de Verlorene, waarvan Lirijn het beeld is ... Toen vertelde Rick over zijn droom ... 'Je hebt haar hart aangeraakt,' zei één van de drie, terwijl de anderen knikten ...

'Laten we tot Echte bidden,' zei een ander ... Maar Rick vertelde dat hij van de pinkster-gemeente was, en dat hij niet zoveel voor katholieke geloofsbeleving voelde ... Wel vond hij het een prachtig verhaal ... Hij zou ook het Eeuwig Evangelie wel willen lezen ... Misschien als hij er wat meer aan toe was ... Ze spraken nog lang door, en aan het einde van het gesprek kreeg Rick een klein boekje van hen met wat gebeden tot Echte. Ook stonden er een paar plaatjes in van Echte ... Wanneer ze weer vertrokken zijn begint Rick er direkt in te bladeren ... Het zijn prachtige gebeden, dat wel ... en Rick wordt er echt rustig van ... 'Wie je ook bent, Echte, ik houd van je, en wil meer van je weten ... Openbaar uzelf aan mij ...' sprak hij diep in z'n hart ... Maar eigenlijk schrok hij een beetje van zijn eigen woorden ... Al snel denkt hij de hele dag door aan Echte ... Hij staat ermee op en gaat ermee naar bed ...

Hoofdstuk 2. Roggio

Rick besluit het boekje eens aan de voorganger te geven ... 'Hoe weten we of dit allemaal waar is ?' vraagt de voorganger zich af ... Wel vond hij het apocrief

overkomen, en hij hield altijd al van de apocrieve boeken ... Boeken met een bijbelse inslag, die het toch net niet tot de Bijbel hebben gehaald ... De voorganger zei altijd al dat de Bijbelboeken werden bepaald door vergaderingen van kerkleiders ... 'Echte, wij brengen uw hart tot rust. In uw tederheid zijn wij verborgen ...' stond er in het boekje ... 'Wij dragen uw kruis, en zeggen tot uw ziel : Waak op, en rust in de tederheid van de dag die door ons tot u komt ... Weest gegroet en gezegend, nu wij in uw voetsporen wandelen ... Ja, met u rennen wij, en met u komen wij tot rust ...' Ook de voorganger vond de gebeden prachtig ... Het ging er ook vaak over wat wij voor God konden doen, hoe wij Hem konden troosten en zelfs genezen ... Dat was voor de voorganger een goede omwenteling ... Hij vond altijd al dat de kerk teveel consumeerde ...

De voorganger zei dat ook Paulus de gelovigen weleens prees, en dat je het goede in elkaar best wel mag loven ... Dit was dan ook om een gezonde balans te houden ... Het katholieke heiligengeloof kreeg nu toch wel een beetje waarde ... In het boekje stond ook een klein stukje over de predictaatse bediening, het geestelijk reizen, waarvan het kruis van Echte het altaar was ... Zo konden ook wij door ons gemis, en door het verlangen naar onze geliefden, geestelijk reizen, en zo het verlorene zoeken en vinden ... Dat vond de voorganger wel een mooie gedachte, vooral toen hij erachter kwam dat juist de predictaatse bediening de motor was van de territoriale oorlogsvoering ... Daar geloofde de voorganger sterk in ... De voorganger was een voorstander van het zogenaamde exorcisme ... Dit in tegenstelling tot veel andere pinksterleiders ... Die vonden dat niet zo nodig, omdat een christen volgens hen niet gebonden door een boze geest konden zijn ... Ach, misschien wilden ze elkaar gewoon niet bangmaken ...

Rick had genoeg pinkstermensen op de grond zien rollen ... Boze geesten spraken door hen heen ... Of waren die mensen dan gewoon niet echt wederomgeboren ? De voorganger zei dat iedereen demonen kon hebben ... Christenen en niet-christenen ... Maar wat nou als Echte de motor was van het exorcisme ... Dan moest zij wel heel belangrijk zijn in het plaatje van geestelijke strijd ... Misschien wel een belangrijk wapen ... Op een dag stonden de drie mensen van het Eeuwig Evangelie weer op de stoep ... Rick liet ze binnen, en even later waren ze weer in een diep gesprek verzeild geraakt .. Rick begon het steeds interessanter te vinden, maar had nog steeds zijn twijfels en vraagtekens .. Weer hadden ze wat boeken voor Rick meegenomen .. Eentje was een boek over de achtergronden van Echte, waarin stond dat ze een voorbijbelse heilige was ... Een ander boek bevatte territoriale lofzangen en principes over Echte. De betekenis en functie van aanbidding werd uitgelegd, en dat was voor Rick zeer verhelderend. Er werd gezegd dat er verschillende vormen van aanbidding waren, en dat de aanbidding verdeeld en gebalanceerd moest worden ... Aanbidding was eigenlijk een vorm van respect en verbintenis, die voortkwam vanuit een stelsel van voorwaarden en regels. Zo was aanbidding een vorm van samenwerking, en van samenhang. Weer gold dat door het vlees niet aanbeden mocht worden, maar door de Geest des te meer ... Door de Geest kwamen er steeds meer voorrechten bij. Maar wat hield die aanbidding

precies in, en hoe moest het precies gebeuren ? Moest het echt gaan zoals in pinkstergemeentes met wapperende handen, en ellenlange liederen die steeds herhaald moesten worden ? Of kregen ze te maken met de wat verfijndere vormen ? De boeken gaven op die vragen veel antwoord, en lieten ook de vele verschillen zien ... In die aanbidding scheen Echte een grote rol te spelen, want aanbidding had alles te maken met geestelijk reizen ... Zo was er een verschil tussen territoriale aanbidding en de klassieke aanbidding. Zo waren er gebeden en gezangen die ervoor zorgden dat alle engelen, heiligen en Geesten van God en andere delen van God genoeg dankzegging, respect, en lofprijs ontvingen voor hun werken en aard. Zij die van het Eeuwig Evangelie waren leerden die gebeden veelal uit het hoofd ... Zo hielpen ze mee in Gods Eeuwige Plan, en waren zij voorbidders van het Eeuwige ...

Rick had een piano, en begon sommige liederen na te spelen ... De noten stonden er gewoon bij in sommige bundels ... Rick begon ruimte in zijn kast vrij te maken voor de boeken die hij had gekregen. Ze hadden met elkaar afgesproken dat ze elke week even langs zouden komen ... Rick begon alles door te vertellen aan de voorganger en die begon het ook steeds meer reuze interessant te vinden ... Gods eindtijd-beweging was volgens hem aan het opstaan, maar hij vond ook dat ze nog steeds goed op hun hoede moesten wezen ...

Roggio was een voor-bijbels paradijs. In het Eeuwig Evangelie stonden de vruchten van dit paradijs beschreven. Terwijl Rick er in een boek iets over las begon hij een vreemde smaak in zijn mond te krijgen. Volgens het boek had God de Hof geschonken aan Zijn Geest Metensia, één van zijn vele Geesten. Volgens het boek was er ook een Hof genaamd Rietel die Hij aan Zijn Geest Mura gaf om die te behoeden. Metensia en Mura waren Geesten die zich in Openbaring voor Zijn Troon hadden gezet. Zo waren er Zeven Geesten voor Zijn troon beschreven. Ook van de hof Rietel stonden vruchten beschreven. In Rietel hadden de bewoners de eigenschappen van slangen, en in Roggio hadden Echte en Lirijn de eigenschappen van planten, bloemen, bomen en struiken. Rick vond het erg sprookjesachtig, en inderdaad zoals de voorganger zei : apocrief ... hetgeen betekent : verborgen ... Dit was het verborgene van God ... door de geschiedenis weggespoeld ... verdwenen in de golven van de tijd ...

Op een nacht had Rick een droom over Roggio ... Hij hield in die droom een zwaard vast, waaruit rood spul vloeide en daarna groen spul, om de hof te bevochtigen en vruchtbaar te maken ... Daarna kwam Echte op hem af en gaf hem een vrucht ... Dit was geen verboden vrucht, maar een verborgen vrucht ... Rick at ervan. Toen zei Echte tegen hem : 'Wie van de verborgen vruchten van het paradijs eet, zal tot nog meer verborgenheden komen, en van paradijs tot paradijs, die in de oudheid verdwenen zijn ...' Toen vertelde ze hem van een gelijkenis waarin God telkens weer lieden zendt tot de aarde om de aarde wakker te schudden ... Maar telkens worden deze lieden van de hemel teruggezonden of vermoord ... Rick herinnert zich dat zoiets dergelijks ook ergens in de Bijbel staat ... Er zijn vaker

kruisigingen geweest, ook voor het ontstaan van de huidige schepping ... En Echte wilde hem die oude kruizen laten zien, want ze waren belangrijk voor de verdere voortgang, en voor het overwinnen van de canon ...

Weer gaf Echte hem een vrucht, en Rick at weer. Het leek wel alsof hij door de vruchten ontwaakte, en hij had een licht gevoel in zijn borst ... Toen wees Echte op zijn tepel, en sprak : 'De tepel is de vertegenwoordiger van de canon ...' en ze scheurde de tepel van Ricks lichaam af, terwijl er een andere soort tepel op zijn lichaam begon te groeien ... De tepel gloeide als de zon en was als de golven van de zee ... De tepel begon te groeien en te groeien, en Echte zei dat Rick veel van de verborgen vruchten moest eten ... Ze wees hem de bomen van het paradijs aan ... Ze zei hem dat die bomen hele oude kruizen waren, en dat door de vruchten daarvan te eten Rick geestelijk zou kunnen reizen ... Rick viel voor de voeten van Echte neer, en wilde haar aanbidden, omdat ze zo heilig en rein was, en straalde als een engel of als god ... Maar Echte zei : 'aanbidt God, aanbidt zijn Geest ...' Het boek had gezegd dat de wezens van God nederig waren, en alleen in noodzaak de aandacht op henzelf richten ... Rick kon zich niet inhouden, en bleef Echte prijzen ... Maar toen begon Echte weg te rennen ... 'Oh, ga niet weg,' zei Rick bijna huilend, en merkte dat hij Echte troost begon te geven in zijn hart, en hij sprak tot haar geest, biddende ... alsof hij ineens katholiek was biddende tot een heilige ... Voorzichtig ervoer hij weer contact met haar, en langzaam kwam haar ziel dichterbij ... maar ze was als water nu ... niet meer zoals ze eerst was ... 'Oh, wat heb ik gedaan ...' zei Rick bevend ... 'Het is niet erg,' zei Echte, 'maar dit gebeurt er als mensenkinderen de hemelse realiteiten overmatig aanbidden ... Het is goed om eerst troost en genezing te brengen tot ons, en daarna pas dankzegging en lof ... Wij zijn veel te fragiel voor overvloedige adoratie ... oftewel aanbidding ... Breng je aanbidding in eerste plaats tot de Almacht van God en Zijn Geest ... En ook als je tot Hem komt, balanceer dan alles met het brengen van Troost, Hulp en Genezing ... Vraag Hem niet alleen maar dingen voor je te doen ... maar doe ook dingen voor Hem ... Hij heeft ook jouw hulp nodig, Rick ... Ook Hij hangt aan het kruis wat de mensheid voor Hem gebouwd heeft ... Dit kruis gaat veel dieper dan wat de boekjes vertellen ... Dat kruis kun je alleen ontdekken in je hart ...'

Toen begon Rick gebeden van troost en genezing tot Echte op te zenden, en langzaam werd het water waarin ze verscheen tot een vaste gestalte ... En ineens voelde hij haar hand weer op zijn hand ... 'Betekent het nu echt dat er een volgorde is van eerst Gods Geesten, dan Zijn engelen en dan Zijn heiligen ?' vroeg Rick ... 'In sommige opzichten wel,' zei Echte, 'maar het wil niet per definitie zeggen dat een Geest van God hoger is dan een engel of een heilige, of dat een engel hoger is dan een heilige ... Denk aan Christus die mens werd en heilige, en denk aan de vele engelen die Hem daarin gevolgd zijn ... Er zijn verborgenheden die je dient te ontdekken ... God doet niet zozeer aan rangen ... want de laatste en laagste rang is vaak ook de hoogste ... Er zijn geestelijke wetten waar rekening mee gehouden moeten worden ... Vaak hebben die hoge wezens opdracht om in een tussenlaag of

onderlaag te incarneren, oftewel geboren te worden ... Zo kan een kind dus de moeder zijn van zijn moeder ... en de vader zijn van zijn vader ...'

Hoofdstuk 3. Het Beeld van God

De volgende dag heeft Rick nog steeds die vreemde smaak in z'n mond ... Verder probeert hij de droom een beetje te vergeten ... Het was te mooi om waar te zijn ...Rick bemerkte dat hij veel te veel van Echte begon te houden ... en zij leefde in de geestelijke wereld, en hij op aarde ... Alhoewel de droom realistischer was en intenser dan het leven op aarde ... Het was alsof hij in de droom in vuur en vlam stond ... en zelfs afstand was zo dichtbij ... Het was een wonderbaarlijk paradijs ... maar in welk gehalte was het echt waar ? Ach, iedereen droomt weleens, dacht Rick bij zichzelf ... Maar naderhand merkte hij dat hij toch heel moeilijk van de droom kon loskomen ... Hij gaf meer waarde aan de droom dan aan zijn dagelijks leven ... Wat had hij nou eigenlijk aan al dat aardse gedoe ... En als er ergens materialisme, genot en intens gevoel was, dan was het wel in dat paradijs ... Eigenlijk had Rick er wel alles voor over ... Maar hij wist dat ieder paradijs was omringd door woestijnen ... Alleen door kruizen zou hij daar binnen kunnen blijven ... Het leek wel alsof de aarde hem pestte ... Was de aarde soms die woestijn rondom dat prachtige paradijs ? ... Was de aarde soms die rij van kruizen waaraan hij gehangen werd om binnen te gaan ? ... Het leek er wel op ... Meer en meer was het alsof de aarde de ketel was waarin hij gekookt werd ...

In mensen had Rick al nauwelijks meer interesse ... Hij moest telkens maar aan Echte denken ... Of had hij haar misschien al wel weer weggejaagd met zijn overdreven gedoe ? Iedereen viel in het niet bij Echte ... Maar ja, hij mocht haar niet aanbidden ... Hij moest haar troosten ... Rick probeerde het te onthouden ... Hij moest gebeden van troost uit zijn hoofd leren ... Daar was hij dagelijks mee bezig ... Troost en genezing ... dat wenste hij haar toe ... en veel rust ... Hij wilde haar rust zijn ... Hij wilde haar schuilplaats zijn ... Wezens zoals zij wilden niet vereerd worden, of op een voetstuk geplaatst worden ... Dat konden ze niet aan ... zulk soort gebeden belasten hen met veel te veel verantwoordelijkheid, en maakten hen tot slaaf ... Rick kon het zich goed voorstellen ... God door gebeden een slaaf ... 'God, doe even dit voor me ... God, doe even dat voor me ...' En dan dat geklaag als alles niet loopt zoals ze dat willen ... Was God niet gevormd door mensen ? In een beeld opgesloten ? Verschrikkelijk moest dat wezen ...

Rick wilde God bevrijden, en al die wezens die Hij was, en de hemelse wezens waarmee hij werkte sinds de grondlegging der grondleggingen ... Rick wilde alle delen van God daartoe kennen en begrijpen ... Zo was hij dus bij het Eeuwig Evangelie aan het goede adres ... Maar was het wel een zuivere bron, of was daar de fantasie op hol geslagen ... En wie had dan dat Eeuwig Evangelie geschreven, en waar was dan het exemplaar ? Dat moest Rick nog zien ... De mensen van het Eeuwig Evangelie kwamen alleen maar aanzetten met boeken rondom of over het Eeuwig Evangelie ... maar Rick wilde het boek zelf lezen ...

'Ja, dat was er nog niet,' zeiden ze ... Profeten zouden alleen nog maar blikken in dat hemels boek hebben geslagen ... Het was iets voor de eindtijd ... Maar ja ... wat was de eindtijd precies, en wanneer zou dat beginnen .... En waar in de eindtijd zou ergens dat boek dan verschijnen, en hoe ? Maar dat wisten de mensen van het Eeuwig Evangelie ook niet echt te vertellen ... Op een bepaalde manier twijfelde Rick nog heel erg ... Maar toch wilde hij doorgaan met deze studie ... want als het een secte zou zijn, dan was hij in ieder geval goed op de hoogte ... Hij zag het al helemaal voor zich ... dan zou hij de voorzitter zijn van een soort Bond tegen Sectes ... En dan stond het Eeuwig Evangelie op de zwarte lijst ... En dan moest hij daar tegen gaan prediken ... Maar ja, het Eeuwig Evangelie zou komen ... zoals in de Bijbel stond ... maar was misschien niet of niet helemaal zoals deze mensen het vertelden ... Ach, maar ja, zo was het ook met de kerken ... De één zei dit, en de ander zei dat ... Misschien zouden er ook wel verschillende stromen in het Eeuwig Evangelie komen ... Zo ging dat toch altijd ...

Rick vond dat de voorganger al ver heen was ... Nu zongen ze al uit de bundels met Territoriale Lofzangen ... De voorganger vond ze prachtig, en functioneel in het exorcisme ... Rick wist het niet ... Een beangstigend gevoel bekroop hem ... Wat nou als de pinkstergemeente ineens een Eeuwig Evangelie Gemeente zou worden ? Was het niet een soort Katholieke valstrik om de heiligenverering in de kerk te krijgen ? Rick werd bijna verscheurd van binnen ... Maar toen dacht hij ineens : 'Echte, hoe zal het met haar zijn ? Of is ze door mijn twijfels weer als water geworden ?' Maar het leek net alsof Echte in zijn binnenste zei : 'Het is goed te twijfelen, Rick ... onderzoek het en behoud het goede ...'

De voorganger had ineens allerlei taal : 'De pinkstergemeente moet zich opmaken om een Eeuwig Evangelie Gemeente te worden ... Het blijft niet bij Pinksteren ... De Gemeente moet haar eindtijd-taak oppakken ...' Dat was ruige taal ... En op een dag was het dan zover ... Profeten waren bij elkaar gekomen om het Eeuwig Evangelie te smeden ... Nu werd dan echt de Bijbel verlengd ... Rick hield zijn hart vast ... Als dat maar goed zou gaan ... De voorganger had inmiddels een exemplaar, en liet het vol trots aan de gemeente zien ... Snel werden er kopieen van gemaakt, en niet lang daarna was de gemeente voller dan ooit tevoren ... Oh, wat was de voorganger trots op zijn nieuwe gemeente ... Dit zou hij in pinksteren nooit bereikt hebben ... Maar Rick begon zich steeds meer terug te trekken van de gemeente ... Al dat massale en dat overdrevene ... Daar had hij geen zin in, en hij besloot om zich aan te sluiten bij een pinkstergemeente in een naburig dorp ... Daar vonden ze die voorganger maar een rare kwiebus ... een navolger van dwaalleer ... Maar diep in zijn hart had Rick altijd aan Echte vastgehouden ... Voor hem was dat wel waardevol, want daar had hij per slot van rekening zelf over gedroomd ... Hij besloot een compromis te sluiten ... Wel een pinksterman, geen Eeuwig Evangelie man, maar toch Echte ... Een voorbijbels paradijs waar ze in woonde, genaamd Roggio ... en dan houdt het op ... Elke dag voor het slapen gaan bad hij in het geheim tot Echte ... Hij wilde dat niet aan zijn nieuwe gemeente vertellen ... Rick droeg een groot geheim met zich mee ... Ze zouden hem

waarschijnlijk beschuldigen van afgoderij ... Maar op een dag hadden ze een profeet uitgenodigd uit het buitenland ... En hij profeteerde : 'Er zit hier iemand in de zaal die bijzondere dromen van God heeft gehad over het paradijs ... Houd aan die dromen vast, want ze zijn waar ...' Na de dienst loopt Rick op de man af, en vertelt hem het verhaal ... De man glimlacht ... 'Ook God heeft z'n geschiedenissen ... Er is kerkgeschiedenis, bijbelgeschiedenis, en voorbijbelse geschiedenis en Godsgeschiedenis ... Je bent een bevoorrecht man dat de Heer je daarin heeft laten delen ...' Een enorme rust valt over Rick ... Eindelijk heeft hij het gevoel dat iemand hem begrijpt ... Na een tijdje durft hij er ook over te getuigen in de gemeente ... Daar slaat het minder aan, maar na de dienst komt er wel een profetische broeder op hem af die er wel meer over wil weten ... De man zelf heeft ook soortgelijke dromen, maar weet niet wat hij er mee moet ... Hij vertelde Rick dat hij door hem werd geinspireerd om er meer mee te doen ... God is bezig zijn verborgen hart te delen ...

Hoofdstuk 4. Als een Trouwe Hond

De man vraagt hem hoe hij tot Echte moet bidden ... Rick legt het hem uit en de volgende dienst loopt de man recht op Rick af : 'Zeg, ik heb gedaan wat je hebt gezegd ... Het werkt ... Ik heb ook al dromen over haar gehad, waarin ze me ook van die verborgen vruchten te eten gaf ...' Rick is blij ... Hij heeft er een broeder en vriend bij die hem begrijpt ... Maar na een tijdje komt de voorganger ineens op hem af : 'Ik waarchuw jullie ... Daar waar jullie van eten, dat zijn verboden vruchten ...' zegt hij op een vreemde norse manier ... Hoe wist hij nu waar ze het over hadden ? Had hij stiekem lopen meeluisteren, of heeft er iemand voor klikspaan gespeeld ? In ieder geval was de voorganger ook snel weer verdwenen ... Rick had een akelig gevoel ... Verboden vruchten ? Nee ... maar wel verborgen vruchten ... 'Ach, laat die traditionele zak tabak toch ...' zei de man met wie hij had gesproken ... 'zo zitten al die pinkstervoorgangers in mekaar ... Het is allemaal om territorium ...' Maar toen herinnerde Rick zijn oude voorganger ... Die zou blij zijn met hun ideeen, maar die was misschien te extreem, te overdreven ... Toch vertelde Rick het even aan die man ... En zonder medeweten van Rick besloot die man eens in de oude gemeente van Rick te gaan kijken ... De man was al snel erg onder de indruk door wat er gepredikt werd, en wilde niet meer terug naar de pinkstergemeente ... Rick vond het al zo vreemd ... De man kwam in de diensten niet meer opdagen, dus op een dag besloot Rick hem te bellen. Toen Rick hoorde wat er was gebeurd had hij de neiging om de haak erop te gooien ... Hij voelde zich eigenlijk een beetje bedrogen ... Wat een verrader ...

Rick besloot zijn excuses aan de voorganger van zijn nieuwe pinkstergemeente aan te bieden vanwege de dwaalleer ... De voorganger wilde hem niet vertellen hoe hij erachter was gekomen ... Rick wilde gewoon ergens voor de volle honderd procent voor kiezen om conflicten te voorkomen, en koos voor de pinkstergemeente ... Hij wist dat hij Echte hierdoor zou verliezen, maar hij kon niet meer tegen de spanning ... Hij wilde geen dwaallichtje zijn ... En zo ging Rick op dat spoor verder, dienst na

dienst ... Soms dacht hij nog weleens aan de woorden van die profeet, maar die profeet kwam daar voor het moment niet spreken ... Totdat hij weer opnieuw werd uitgenodigd voor een preek ... Rick wilde eigenlijk niet gaan, maar toch vond hij dat hij zich niet moest aanstellen ... Misschien dat de profeet niks door zou hebben ... Maar niets was minder waar ... Midden in de preek begon de man ineens te profeteren : 'Er is hier iemand die zijn dromen van het verleden heeft verzaakt ... Laat jezelf niet indutten ...' was de boodschap ... Rick deed net alsof hij het niet gehoord had ... 'Ach, het zal wel voor iemand anders wezen,' dacht hij nog ... Maar na de dienst kwam de profeet met een strak gezicht op Rick af ... 'Je bent gewaarschuwd, Rick ... God geeft Zijn dromen niet voor niets ... Je moet iets met dat talent, die droom, doen, anders zal God dat talent van je afnemen, en ook je andere talenten ...' Rick was geschrokken ... Wat een brutaliteit ... Maar ja, daar was hij profeet voor ... Niet lang daarna vroeg Rick een gesprek met de voorganger aan ... De voorganger vond dit echt niet kunnen, en wilde de profeet niet meer uitnodigen ... Precies een week later kreeg de voorganger een oordeelsbrief van de profeet ... Daarin stond aangekondigd dat God Zijn kandelaar van de gemeente zou wegnemen, als de voorganger in zijn tradities bleef ... De profeet had hem daar al weleens op aangesproken, maar de voorganger had zich verhard ... Maar hier liet de voorganger het niet bij zitten, en belde de profeet op : 'Nu moet u eens goed luisteren, mijnheer Reilingen, u maakt hier de dienst niet uit. Ga ergens anders dit soort dingen lopen verkondigen ... Bij mij werkt het niet ... Ik ken genoeg van dat soort slappe praatjes, en ik heb ervaring met profeten ... Ook profeten kunnen het mis hebben, en daar bent u één van ... Ik wil u hierbij mededelen dat u geen geschikte kandidaat meer bent tot het verzorgen van onze diensten ... Het spijt me, maar we kunnen ons daar echt niet aan lenen ... Probeert u het ergens anders ... Dag.' Rick zat erbij ... 'Zo Rick,' zei de voorganger ... 'Ik kan er echt niet tegen dat onze gemeenteleden, de schaapjes van God, door dit soort tuig wordt lastig gevallen ... Als je ooit nog eens last met hem hebt, bel me dan op, okay ?' Rick knikte ... Een gevoel van veiligheid overspoelde hem ... Hier had hij wat aan ... Zo'n voorganger kreeg van hem een dikke tien ...

Naarmate de jaren verstreken voelde Rick zich steeds veiliger worden ... De dromen kwamen gelukkig niet terug, en hij hoorde nooit meer wat van die profeet of zijn oude gemeente ... De voorganger vertelde de gemeente vaak dat juist de traditie voor rust en vrede zorgde, voor een vaste baken op weg naar de haven ... Ja, in zekere zin was deze gemeente voor Rick de haven, en misschien zelfs als het paradijs op aarde ... Iedereen ging vriendelijk met elkaar om, en de liefde was duidelijk merkbaar ... Maar iets bleef aan Rick knagen ... Wat dat was kon hij niet goed beschrijven, en eigenlijk wilde hij er liever niet aan denken ... Wat zou hij moeten met verborgen vruchten als hier de vruchten voor het oprapen lagen ... Gepeld en wel ... met peper en zout ... Waarom zou hij naar een vreemd land moeten reizen om daar vruchten te plukken die misschien helemaal niet bestaan, terwijl hier de supermarkten vol lagen met de oude vertrouwde vruchtenstampot die zijn leven veilig stelde ... Waarom maakten sommigen het leven zo ingewikkeld ... Op deze vraag hoopte Rick een keer antwoord te krijgen ... Waarom waren er

dan ook zoveel geloven, en zoveel kerken ... Kon het niet wat makkelijker ... Het leek wel alsof die andere kerken en geloven er waren om Rick te pesten ... Waarom waren ze zo dwars ... Maar gelukkig was de voorganger van Rick een trouwe held, als een hond ... De voorganger zou wel voor Rick en de andere schaapjes willen sterven als dat moest ... Hij zou samen met hen het graf ingaan als het moest, opdat ze er samen weer uit zouden komen ... Samen uit, samen thuis ...

Einde

Reis door het Zand

Korte Theologische Roman

Freddie Dekkers zit in een Vol Evangelie Gemeente ... Op een avond spreekt er een buitenlandse gast ... Freddie heeft wat vrienden meegenomen ... Ze gaan achterin de zaal zitten ... Die vrienden van Freddie geloven niet in God, en al helemaal niet in profetie ... Maar Freddie daagde hen uit om eens mee te gaan naar een profetische dienst ... Dan zouden ze het zelf wel zien, en niet meer onder het bewijs kunnen uitkomen ... Een beetje lacherig waren ze met Freddie meegekomen ... Met de zangdienst deden ze gewoon mee, en ze hieven zelfs hun handen voor de grap op ... Eerst werd er een genezingsdienst gehouden, en aan het einde mochten mensen die een getuigenis hadden of door de Heer waren aangeraakt naar voren komen ... Ook één van Freddie's vrienden ging naar voren ... voor de grap ... Hij stak een onzinverhaal af over Jezus, hoe hij was aangeraakt ... Iedereen geloofde het ...

Later ging ook een andere vriend van Freddie naar voren, en weer geloofde iedereen het ...

Daarna werd er dus een profetische dienst gehouden ... De buitenlandse spreker begon over enkele aanwezigen te profeteren ... Aan het einde van die dienst mocht iedereen die een woord van de Heer wilde ontvangen naar voren komen ... Ook enkele vrienden van Freddie gingen naar voren ... Ze wilden nu wel eens wat bewijs zien dat God echt bestond ... Alhoewel ze niet geloofden dat er ook maar enige kans was dat dat zou gaan gebeuren ... De profeet legde zijn hand op de eerste vriend van Freddie die naar voren was gekomen ... De profeet begon eerst luid in tongen te bidden ... De vriend van Freddie had heel serieus zijn ogen gesloten ... 'Oh, jij houd van bier drinken,' zei de profeet ... 'Wie niet,' dacht de vriend ...'veel jongens op mijn leeftijd ...' En toen ging de profeet verder : 'Ik zie jou met een meisje zitten op een terrasje ... Je voelt je niet op je gemak, en vertrekt weer ... De volgende dag ben je ziek ...'

'Ja,' dacht de jongen bij zichzelf, 'dat is inderdaad een keer gebeurt, maar dat gebeurt zoveel mensen weleens ...' De jongen begint een beetje met z'n mondhoeken te trekken, zo van : 'Is dit alles ?' ... Dan zegt de profeet : 'Dat meisje heette Elles ... Het was je vriendin ... Maar ze heeft je bedrogen ... Ze ging er met een ander vandoor, en daardoor heb je jezelf verhard ...' De jongen dacht : 'Verrek, dat is waar ... Wat heeft Freddie die gast allemaal verteld ...' Maar toen vertelde de profeet hem over wat details die zelfs Freddie niet wist, en ook wat dingen die de jongen nog nooit aan iemand anders had verteld ... De jongen schrok hier erg van ... 'Wie ben je eigenlijk,' zei de jongen trillerig, maar toch nog een beetje grapsgewijs ... 'Wie heeft je dat verteld ... Wordt ik bespioneerd ?' De profeet lacht even en zegt : 'Neen, dat heb ik van God ...' De jongen loopt weer naar z'n plaats terug ... De andere vriend van Freddie loopt met hem mee ... Hij was veel te bang dat zijn geheimen ook geopenbaard zouden worden ... 'Ah, volgens mij is het allemaal een truc,' zegt de jongen over wie geprofeteerd was tegen Freddie ... Freddie trekt z'n schouders op ... 'Je moet het zelf weten ... Ik dacht dat ik nu wel duidelijk genoeg ben geweest ...' Maar de jongen wilde het eigenlijk niet toegeven ...

Na de dienst op de terugreis waren de jongens erg rumoerig in de auto ... Er werd niet meer over de dienst gesproken en al helemaal niet over de profeet en zijn profetieen. Als Freddie thuiskomt doet hij het licht aan en gaat even op de bank zitten ... Hij klikt de televisie aan ... Hij is erg moe, en even later valt hij in slaap ... Na een tijdje wordt hij wakker van wat getik op het raam ... het was één van de jongens ... 'Kom verder,' zegt Freddie ... Even later zijn ze diep met elkaar in gesprek ... De jongen stelt allemaal vragen aan Freddie, en Freddie probeert ze zo goed mogelijk te beantwoorden ... Het wordt laat en de jongen blijft bij Freddie logeren ... De jongen krijgt een bed in de logeerkamer ... Die nacht krijgt de jongen een droom ... Hij droomt dat hij over een muur moet klimmen die gemaakt is van kippen ... Daarna droomt hij dat hij over een muur moet klimmen die gemaakt is

van varkens ... De volgende ochtend vertelt hij de droom aan Freddie .. maar die weet niet wat de droom betekent ... Ze besluiten naar de voorganger te gaan voor uitleg, maar die verwijst hen door naar die buitenlandse profeet ... De voorganger wist wel waar de profeet nu was ... Hij maakte een rondreis door het land, en ze besloten hem in één van de diensten op te zoeken ... De voorganger ging ook mee ... Na de dienst gingen Freddie en die vriend op de profeet af ... Maar die moest snel weer weg ... Wel liet hij een telefoonnummer voor hen achter ... De volgende dag zouden ze hem op dat nummer kunnen bereiken ...

De volgende dag belde Freddie op, terwijl die vriend naast hem zat ... Freddie legde even het één en ander uit aan de profeet en gaf toen de hoorn aan de jongen ... De jongen vertelde zijn droom en wilde antwoord ... De profeet zei dat ze beter even konden langskomen ... Ze kregen een adres, en konden direkt komen ... Bij de profeet aangekomen gingen ze in een kamertje zitten ... Weer moest de jongen de droom vertellen, en de profeet zei : 'Waarom zouden we God Zelf niet om antwoord bidden ...' De profeet sloot zijn ogen, en ook de jongens deden dat ... De profeet zei : 'God zal je meer dromen gaan geven die je hierop het antwoord zullen geven ... Vannacht al ...' De profeet nodigde hen uit om bij hem te logeren ... De volgende dag keek Freddie naar het bed waar de andere jongen lag, maar er lag niemand ... 'Ach,' dacht Freddie, 'hij is vast vroeg op ... in de badkamer ofzo ...' Maar er was niemand in de badkamer ... Ook beneden was niemand ... Na een paar uur kwam de verhuurder thuis ... De verhuurder zei dat de profeet vroeg in de ochtend was vertrokken naar zijn eigen land ... Freddie vond het erg vreemd ... Was de jongen soms met de profeet meegegaan ? Freddie belde de voorganger en vertelde het verhaal ... De voorganger vond het ook vreemd ... Na een paar uur ging Freddie weer naar z'n eigen woonplaats ... Toen na een paar dagen nog geen teken van de jongen was gekomen werd de jongen als vermist opgegeven ... De voorganger had de profeet in het buitenland gebeld, maar die was niet te bereiken ...

Wanneer de profeet na een maand nog onbereikbaar is neemt de politie de beslissing om in zijn huis onderzoek te doen. Het is een groot landhuis met een zwembad. Freddie komt ook mee, en al gauw halen ze het hele huis overhoop ... Als Freddie in de kelder aan het zoeken is vindt hij bij toeval een geheime deur ... Hij drukte per ongeluk ergens tegenaan, en een wand schoof open ... Aan de deur hing een schilderij van een muis met een officierspak en een hoed op met een veer. Voorzichtig schoof Freddie de deur open. Hier was een andere donkere ruimte, die ook wel iets op een kelder leek, maar er waren hier ook wat stoffige ramen. Freddie liep helemaal door die kamer heen, en ging weer door een deur. In de verte hoorde hij geschreeuw, en even stond hij stokstijf ... Was dat niet de stem van Wilko, die vermiste vriend van hem ? Freddie kwam in een hal terecht, waarin allemaal planken lagen in modder ... De planken wiebelden een beetje ... Freddie riep : 'Wilko, ben jij dat ?' Maar er kwam geen antwoord ... Freddie liep verder, maar het werd steeds donkerder ... Weer ging Freddie door een deur, en kreeg toen de schrik van zijn leven ... Hij was in een grote felverlichte hal terechtgekomen. De hal was groot als vele zalen bij elkaar ... In het midden van de hal zag Freddie een grote

opening waarin een bol van vuur ruisde ... De bol was erg groot, als een reusachtige bal, en er waren hekken omheen. Freddie liep naar de bol toe, maar het was erg heet ... Freddie begon om de bal heen te lopen, en kwam bij een andere deur terecht. Weer hoorde Freddie geschreeuw ... Het leek uit de bal te komen, maar Freddie ging door de deur, en kwam in een andere hal terecht ... Hier was ook zo'n bal achter hekken, maar ditkeer was het een bal van rood vuur ... Freddie zuchtte ... Toen riep hij : 'Wilko, kun je me horen ? Ik ben het, Freddie ... !'

Freddie schrok wakker ... Vandaag zouden ze naar het huis van de profeet gaan ... In werkelijkheid woonde de profeet in een klein huisje ... Er stonden wat oude stoelen en verder een tafel ... Het was er een kale bedoening ... 'Toch eens in de kelder kijken,' dacht Freddie ... En terwijl de politie wat papieren doorzocht, ging Freddie de kelder binnen ... Voorzichtig ging hij van het trappetje af naar beneden ... 'Zou hier echt een geheime deur zijn ?' dacht Freddie bij zichzelf ... Freddie duwde wat spullen opzij, en vond een luik ... Voorzichtig ging Freddie door het luik naar beneden ... Hier was een oude tunnel .. Voorzichtig kroop Freddie door de tunnel ... Aan het eind van de tunnel was een opening ... Toen kreeg Freddie de schrik van zijn leven ... Door de opening zag Freddie een klein zaaltje waarin bedden stonden, met mensen erin ... 'Zou Wilko hier misschien zijn ?' dacht Freddie ... Voorzichtig klom Freddie door de opening in de zaal ... Maar toen Freddie dichterbij kwam zag hij dat het geen mensen waren, maar poppen ... En tot Freddie's grote schrik was er ook een pop van Wilko bij ... De pop leek sprekend op Wilko ... Wat zou hier toch aan de hand zijn ? Stilletjes sloop Freddie naar de deur achter de zaal, maakte hem open, maar het bleek een kastdeur te zijn ... Er lagen wat papieren in en haastig begon Freddie door de papieren te bladeren ... Maar ineens voelde hij een hand op zijn schouder ... Freddie draaide zich van schrik om ... Gelukkig, het was één van de agenten waarmee hij was gekomen ... 'Ja, vreemd,' zei de agent ... 'ik vroeg me ook al af wat die poppen moeten betekenen ... Was die profeet niet erg goed bij z'n hoofd ?' Onder één van de bedden scheen nog een luik te zitten, en samen gaan ze erdoor naar beneden ... Ze komen in een geheime lift terecht ... De agent drukt op wat knopjes en de lift gaat langzaam naar beneden ... Dan horen ze opeens de stem van de profeet door een luidspreker in de lift ... 'Zo, dus jullie hebben me uiteindelijk toch weten te vinden ? Gefeliciteerd ... Zeg, ik heb de koffie met gebak al klaar staan ... Tot zo ...' Dan na een tijdje gaat de liftdeur open, en met getrokken pistool sluipt de agent naar buiten, maar die wordt direkt vanaf de zijkant vastgegrepen, terwijl zijn pistool uit zijn handen wordt getrapt ... Freddie blijft geschrokken in de lift staan ... Gelukkig gaat de deur weer dicht, maar welke knopjes Freddie ook indrukt ... Er is geen beweging meer in de lift te krijgen ... 'Dan gaat de luidspreker weer aan : 'Welkom in mijn lift ... Ik hoop dat je je tijdens de reis zult vermaken ...' En dan gaat de lift met een loeivaart naar de zijkant ...

Freddie schrikt wakker ... Het was allemaal maar een droom geweest ... Ook de vermissing van Wilko en zelfs de profetische dienst ... Want vanavond zou die dienst pas zijn ... Maar Freddie is zo naar van de droom dat hij besluit zijn

vrienden af te bellen ... 'Ah, lafaard,' zei één van zijn vrienden ... 'Je durft het gewoon niet aan ... Ik zei je toch dat God niet bestaat, en profetie al helemaal niet ...' Maar het kan Freddie niet meer schelen .. Hij heeft er na die droom toch al helemaal geen lol meer in ... En misschien is het wel een waarschuwing van God om er niet meer naar toe te gaan ... Freddie komt in een enorme geloofscrisis terecht, en probeert eerst eens wat rust te vinden bij een gematigde kerk ... een reformatorische ... Maar als dat ook weinig resultaat oplevert besluit Freddie er voorlopig het bijltje bij neer te leggen ... Hij biedt zijn excuses aan bij zijn vrienden voor 'al dat gepreek,' en neemt het ervan ... Steeds meer begint Freddie een echt barmens te worden ... en hij raakt zwaar aan de drank ... Zo zwaar, dat zelfs zijn vrienden hem een halt toe roepen : 'Freddie, we zien je liever weer terug gaan naar de kerk dan dat je door de drank ten gronde gaat ...' houden ze hem telkens voor ... Maar Freddie wil niet meer naar de kerk ... Het lijkt of die droom hem verlamd heeft ... Wel probeert hij nog één keer in de week te bidden, maar meer en meer begint hij dat te vergeten, uit te stellen, en soms gewoon over te slaan ...

Op een dag ziet Freddie het niet meer zitten, en meldt zich aan bij een opvangcentrum ... Ook dit gaat niet goed, en Freddie belandt bij de psychiater die hem doorverwijst naar een psychiatrisch rustoord ... Hier heeft Freddie het wel naar z'n zin, en langzaam begint hij weer grip te krijgen op zijn drankprobleem ... 'Ik ben in een diepe kelder terechtgekomen ...' zegt Freddie weleens tegen de psychiater ... 'daar waar de flessen leven ....' Freddie bedoelt dat dan als symboliek, maar de psychiater zegt dat het wartaal is ... 'Flessen leven niet, Freddie ... Je moet wel met je beide benen op de grond blijven staan ...' Verder is de psychiater erg aardig, en Freddie wil de psychiater voor geen goud missen ...

Freddie heeft diepe gesprekken met de psychiater over vele onderwerpen ... Op een dag besluit de psychiater hem over te plaatsen naar een rustoord in het bos ... Hier kan Freddie ook proberen weer op zichzelf te wonen, met een lichtere vorm van begeleiding ... Ook worden hier weleens korte kerkdiensten georganiseerd, maar Freddie gaat eigenlijk nooit ... De enige aan wie hij de droom had verteld was zijn voorganger ... Op een dag krijgt Freddie een telefoontje van die voorganger ... De voorganger was diep geschokt ... De profeet die daar weleens sprak was terechtgesteld voor veelvoudige moord ... 'Maar is het wel bewezen ?' vroeg Freddie ... 'Laten we de rechters maar vertrouwen,' zegt de voorganger ...'alhoewel ik me het eigenlijk niet kan voorstellen ...'

Freddie is erdoor verward ... Was die profeet echt een moordenaar ? Freddie had wel erg vreemd over die profeet gedroomd, maar dat zei natuurlijk op zichzelf niks ... Of was het allemaal waar, en wilde God Freddie en zijn vrienden daarvoor behoeden ? Freddie wist het niet ... De voorganger vertelde dat de laatste tijd de profeet weleens profetieen uitsprak die niet uitkwamen ... Sommigen zeiden dat hij daarom een valse profeet was, en er waren er zelfs bij die zeiden dat hij de doodstraf verdiende, omdat dat ergens in de Bijbel zou staan ... Maar de voorganger zei dat niet alle profetieen letterlijk waren ... Sommigen waren ook

symbolisch, geestelijk bedoeld, met een diepere betekenis ... Ook was er volgens de voorganger een verschil tussen voorwaardelijke en onvoorwaardelijke profetieen waartussen de mensen het verschil moesten kennen ...

Freddie wilde alles laten rusten ... Hij was er niet aan toe om over dit soort dingen na te denken ... Freddie vond alles te wazig om er ook maar enige zekerheid aan te geven ... Freddie wilde niet op zand bouwen, maar wilde een reis maken door het zand ...

Freddie probeerde rust te zoeken bij andere dingen ... Hij begon met het schrijven van verhalen waarmee hij het verleden probeerde te verwerken ... Ook hielp het hem af van zijn drankzucht ... Op een nacht heeft Freddie weer een droom ... Hij loopt over een pad van spiegels, waarop veel wit zand ligt ... Aan het eind van dat pad is een grot met flessen ... Als hij daar naar binnen gaat beginnen de flessen te groeien, en komen tot leven ... Eén van die flessen is rood en draagt een zwart pistool, met een zwart leren houder ... De fles geeft het pistool aan Freddie, maar Freddie brandt bijna zijn handen aan het hete leer ... Dan moet Freddie een deur openschieten, en komt weer op een pad van spiegels terecht ... Ditmaal is het pad van spiegels langer, maar nog steeds met zand, wit zand, bezaaid ... Naast hem loopt een cowboy ... Maar soms verdwijnt die in zijn schaduw ... De cowboy zegt niets, maar schiet soms ... Waarop de cowboy dan schiet is niet duidelijk ... Maar wel stroomt er dan telkens een soort sap in zijn keel ... Zuchtend wordt Freddie wakker ... Hij probeert zijn dromen te verwerken in verhalen ... Vaak blijven de betekenissen weg ... alsof hij echt door een landschap van zand reist ... Hij wil hier geen huizen bouwen ... Hij wil verder ... Wat wacht hem aan de overkant ?

Na een lange tijd krijgt Freddie weer een droom ... Weer is hij terug op de spiegelpaden met wit zand ... Plotseling staat er een sfinx voor hem ... een leeuwachtige steenachtige gedaante ... Freddie gaat op de uitnodigende rug van de sfinx zitten, en de sfinx rijdt naar voren, recht op een muur af ... Die muur is gemaakt van kippen ... Dan gaat de sfinx er dwars doorheen ... Freddie hoort een geluid alsof er flessen worden gevuld ... Maar dan ineens wordt hij wakker in de lift van de profeet ... Wat is er gebeurd ? ... Door de luidspreker hoort hij gelach ... 'Zo, hoe vond je het ritje ?' Freddie voelt zich erg draaierig ... Is hij dan nog steeds in dat vreemde huis van die profeet ? Is hij wel echt wakker ? Freddie heeft overal pijn ... Worden zijn gedachten soms beinvloed in deze lift ... Sterke straling ? Plotseling bemerkt Freddie dat de lift gewoon aan het draaien was, nu de lift ineens langzamer gaat ... Freddie wordt zich gewaar van een drukkend gevoel ... 'Profeet, wat wil je ?' schreeuwt Freddie ... 'en waar is Wilko ?'

Een jongen stopt met lezen ... Dit was het boek wat hij voor zijn literatuurlijst moest lezen ... Hij ziet uit naar het examen ... Dan kan hij eindelijk van school af ... Wel heel toevallig dat zijn vader ook Wilko heette ... Zijn vader was ook al heel lang vermist ... De jongen zucht ... Ineens mist hij z'n vader weer heel erg, maar op een vreemde manier is zijn vader nu ook dichterbij gekomen ... Zou hij nog leven ?

De jongen slentert van school naar huis ... Daar aangekomen laat zijn moeder hem een brief lezen ... Het is een brief van zijn vader ... Na al die jaren ... De jongen is opgelucht, maar niet als hij de brief leest ... Zijn vader schrijft daarin aan het gezin dat hij destijds expres de benen heeft genomen, omdat hij niet meer met hun moeder kon leven ... Nu woont hij dan in India ... Verderop in de brief probeert hij uitleg te geven, en de jongen krijgt hierdoor weer iets meer sympathie voor zijn vader ... Zijn vader schrijft over het drankprobleem van hun moeder ... Hij schrijft dat hij nu op een prachtig eiland woont, met schitterend witte zandpaden en vlaktes, en hij gelooft dat hun moeder hier vast en zeker van haar drankprobleem zal afkomen ... Aan het eind van de brief nodigt hij het gezin uit om te komen ... Maar de moeder van de jongen is veel te boos dat hij zo lang niets van zich heeft laten horen ... En ook de jongen vindt het net even te ver gaan om daarnaar toe te gaan, want misschien neemt hij dan weer de benen, en zitten ze alleen op dat eiland ... Het vertrouwen in hem is weg ... Wel schrijft de jongen hem een brief dat hij maar bij hen moet komen ... Maar zijn vader schrijft terug dat hij dat niet aandurft ...

Als de jongen wat ouder is besluit hij toch de reis te maken, omdat hij zijn vader toch wel erg mist ... Maar als hij daar aankomt is zijn vader er niet .. De jongen besluit gewoon in het huisje van zijn vader te leven op dit prachtige eiland ... De jongen is blij dat hij nu op de plaats van zijn vader is, maar begint zich steeds meer ongerust te maken ... Op een nacht heeft de jongen een droom .... en die lijkt erg veel op zo'n droom uit dat boek wat hij moest lezen ... Hij komt een sfinx tegen, springt op z'n rug, en de sfinx gaat door een muur van varkens heen, terwijl hij het geluid hoort alsof flessen vollopen ... Daar achter die muur staat zijn vader ... Maar hoe dichter hij bij zijn vader komt, des te meer hij begint te beseffen dat het zijn vader niet is, maar een pop die sprekend op zijn vader lijkt ... 'Wat is dit allemaal ?' brult de jongen van woede ... Dan hoort hij ineens als vanuit een luidspreker : 'Welkom, jongen, ik heb lang op je gewacht ... Ik heb koffie met gebak klaarstaan ...' Maar het is niet de stem van zijn vader ... De jongen moet denken aan die vreemde lift uit dat boek ... 'Zit ik soms in die lift van dat stomme spookhuis ?' roept de jongen hard ... Dan ineens wordt de jongen wakker in de lift ... 'Als ik het niet dacht,' denkt de jongen bij zichzelf ... Op de grond van de lift ligt wat wit zand ... 'Vreemd,' denkt de jongen ... En dan hoort hij weer door de luidspreker : 'Welkom, welkom ...' De jongen vraagt zich af of misschien ook zijn vader door de lift is ontvoerd ...

Dan springt de lift open, en de jongen kijkt rechtstreeks in zijn woonplaats ... Hij stapt uit de lift en rent naar zijn ouderlijk huis ... Maar als hij binnenkomt en in de woonkamer kijkt ziet hij zijn moeder als een pop achter de tafel zitten ... Het is een pop ... Boven vindt hij zijn zusjes en broertjes ... Allemaal poppen ... Ineens hoort hij een slurpend geluid en kijkt naar buiten ... Daar ziet hij een glibberig lang beest met vele poten wegduiken ... Het leek wel een beetje op een reuzen-duizendpoot, maar de jongen kon goed zien dat het een reptiel was ... Aan de overkant kon hij in de huizen ook de poppen zien ... ze bewogen niet ... De jongen raakte erg in paniek,

en rende tenslotte terug naar de lift ... 'Hier wil ik niet wezen...Haal me hier weg,' riep de jongen ... Maar de lift duwde de jongen weer terug, sloot zijn deuren, en vertrok ... Ten einde raad begon de jongen te huilen en te kermen ... Hij begon om zijn moeder te roepen ... Ook begon hij steeds banger te worden voor dat beest ...

En dan begint hij zelf ook heel langzaam in een pop te veranderen ... Hij probeert weer naar zijn ouderlijk huis te lopen, maar het gaat trager en trager ... Als hij bij het raam is aangekomen tikt hij erop, maar hij kan zijn handen al bijna niet meer bewegen ... Als hij naar binnen kijkt ziet hij iemand anders bij de pop van zijn moeder zitten, terwijl de poppen van zijn broertjes en zusjes ook om de tafel heen zitten. Maar wat is dat ? Diegene die naast zijn moeder zit, dat is hijzelf ... ook een pop ... Dan vallen traag zijn ogen dicht ... Verward schrikt de jongen wakker ... Hij wrijft in zijn ogen ... Hij kijkt naar de zacht en langzaam tikkende klok ... Het is al ochtend ... De zon schijnt al zo vroeg ... Op de grond ligt wit zand ... De jongen stapt uit bed ... en opent de deur ... Witte zandvlaktes, zo ver als het oog reikt ... De jongen vermaakt zich best in het vakantie-huisje van zijn vader ... Alleen het wachten is nog op zijn vader zelf ... Hier zou de jongen wel altijd willen wonen ... Het is hier zo rustig en prachtig ... De jongen rolt door het witte zand ... Achter het huisje is ook veel wit zand, dat eindigt op een strandje, en daarachter is het water ... Het witte zand is erg warm, bijna echt heet ... En naarmate het later op de ochtend wordt, wordt het zand steeds heter ... De jongen houdt van de zon, en heeft ook het gevoel dat de zon van hem houdt ... Ook al is zijn vader er nu niet .... Hij is toch terechtgekomen in het huisje van zijn vader ... Door het zand rolt de jongen weer terug naar het huisje, en botst tegen het lage raam aan ... Dan staat de jongen op, en gaat weer naar binnen ... De jongen begint zich steeds beter te voelen ...

Aan de muur hangen prachtige bloemenschilderijen. De jongen kijkt tussen de boeken van z'n vader ... Er zitten wat gedichtenbundels tussen ... De jongen opent één zo'n bundel waar bloemen op staan : 'Je bent een bloem, je bent mooi en wijs. Maar nog steeds zo jong, en dat benauwd me zo ... We weten niet wat we doen ... Je bent alleen ... Het andere is niet echt daar ... Jij schiep je eigen wereld ....' Dan bladert de jongen verder : 'Vrolijk is de nacht ... Ze huilt niet ... Maar alles wat jij hebt is verdriet ... Kom toch tot de nacht en wees vrolijk met haar ...' Weer bladert de jongen door, alsof hij ergens naar op zoek is ... 'Je bent wie je bent, maar dat is iemand die je nog niet kent ...' Snel grijpt de jongen naar een andere gedichtenbundel ... Hier staan ook bloemen op ... Weer begint de jongen te lezen ... Sommige gedichten spreken hem aan ... anderen niet ... Sommigen zijn vaag .... maar betoverend ... voor zover je over betovering mag spreken ... Ook liggen er wat verhalenboeken ... Het lijkt wel alsof de jongen naar iets van zijn vader op zoek is, maar hij kan het nog niet vinden ... Wel voelt hij alsof hij dichtbij is ... Hij zou hier altijd wel willen dromen en lezen .... en rollen door het zand ... als een reis door het zand ... Hij komt nooit echt aan, maar steeds dichterbij ... als het ontwaken van de zon ...

De Harem van Christus

Korte Theologische Roman

Hoofdstuk 1. De Lokogamen

Hoofdstuk 2. De Insectenaren

Hoofdstuk 3. De dodenreis van Christus

Hoofdstuk 4. De dominee

Hoofdstuk 5. Insectisch Dodenboek ?

Hoofdstuk 1. De Lokogamen

Ernst Eriksen was een ongelovige knaap die geinteresseerd was in het Eeuwig Evangelie, en het boek openbaring, wat daar net voor komt. Toen de Bijbel alleen nog maar bestond uit de boeken Genesis tot en met Openbaring had Ernst geen enkele interesse, maar nu, sinds het Eeuwig Evangelie was toegevoegd ging ineens alles voor hem leven ... Ook een onderwerp zoals de antichrist begon hem ineens te

interesseren ... Ernst had een zus die wel geloofde ... Ernst had zich voorgenomen niet te gaan geloven, ook niet nu de Bijbel zoveel dikker was geworden ... Wel vond Ernst het prachtig hoe het Eeuwig Evangelie de traditionelen op de hak nam ... Ernst had een hekel aan al die conservatieve gevestigde kerken ... Ook het onderwerp 'de Lokogamen' sprak hem erg aan, dat waren de sieraden van het kruis ... De Lokogamen werden vaak als hemelse vrouwen afgeschilderd, als een soort Harem van Christus, die Hem door dik en dun steunden ... Zij waren als de vrouwen des kruizes ... En als het om vrouwen ging, dan was Ernst altijd van de partij. Ernst had een obsessie als het op vrouwen aankwam ...Niet in de verkeerde zin van het woord ... Ernst was schilder, en hield ervan om verschillende soorten vrouwen te schilderen ...Ernst was een echte vrouwenliefhebber ... Ernst had niet veel vrienden, maar wel veel vriendinnen ... Met vrouwen kon hij altijd veel beter en dieper praten dan met mannen ... Mannen hadden in zijn ogen vaak iets kouds en kils, en waren over het algemeen ook harder volgens hem ... Vrouwen die zich als mannen gedroegen, daar had Ernst echter een hekel aan ... Ernst hield van mysterieuze vrouwen ... van de stille wateren met de diepe gronden ... van die vrouwen die meer wisten dan ze lieten doorschemeren ...

Ernst had een paar verschrikkelijk moeilijke tijden in zijn leven moeten doormaken, en het waren hoofdzakelijk vrouwen die hem daar doorheen hebben geholpen ... Ja, hij had zelfs zijn leven aan hen te danken ... Dat groepje vrouwen betekende de wereld voor hem, en hij noemde ze weleens zijn harem ... Hij zag het als een Godsgeschenk, terwijl hij in wezen niet geloofde ... Nu hij dan wat over de Lokogamen had gelezen raakte hij steeds meer en meer enthousiast ... Op een dag besloot hij de Lokogamen te schilderen ... Zijn zus vond het erg mooi, en ook zijn vriendinnen ... vooral omdat de vrouwen op de schilderijen veel op hen leken ... Al snel kreeg Ernst de smaak te pakken, en begon meer schilderijen te maken van het Eeuwig Evangelie ... Naast de Lokogamen werden er veel andere hemelse vrouwen beschreven, en Ernst begon ook andere tafereeltjes van het Eeuwig Evangelie te schilderen ... De schilderijen waren erg indrukwekkend, maar Ernst wilde zich niet gelovig noemen ... Hij vond het gewoon een prachtig verhaal ... meer niet ...

Op een dag kwam er een dominee bij Ernst op bezoek, en vroeg hem of hij een bepaald verhaal in het Eeuwig Evangelie wilde uittekenen ... De dominee was bezig met het maken van een geillustreerde versie van het Eeuwig Evangelie ... Ernst zei dat de dominee op hem kon rekenen ... Ernst schreef ook voor een schildersblad ... En op een keer had hij een stukje geschreven over de harem van Christus, en hoe hij die harem had geschilderd ... In het blad stonden ook een paar van die schilderijen afgedrukt ... Naderhand kreeg hij wat brieven van christelijke schilders die zeiden dat Christus geen harem had, en ook geen hemelse harem ... want in de hemel werd er niet getrouwd ... Ernst moest er een beetje om lachen, want dat bedoelde hij er ook helemaal niet mee ... Ernst kreeg meer positieve berichten dan negatieve ...

Hoofdstuk 2. De Insectenaren

Op een dag kwam de dominee weer langs voor het ophalen van de illustratie ... Ernst had het in zwart en wit getekend ... De dominee was erg tevreden ... Als dank gaf de dominee hem wel een hele speciale versie van het Eeuwig Evangelie ... Het was het Eeuwig Evangelie met kanttekeningen en verwijzingen, met daaraanvast een uitgebreide concordantie en achtergrondinformatie. Ernst was erg blij met het boek ... Tegelijkertijd nodigde de dominee hem uit om eens naar een dienst van de Eeuwig Evangelie Gemeente te komen ... De dienst werd gehouden in een kerkgebouw ... Ernst zou er met zijn zus en een paar vriendinnen naartoe gaan ... De dominee hield een prachtige preek over het Eeuwig Evangelie, over de Lokogamen ... Dat was nog steeds Ernsts favorite onderwerp ... In de kerk stonden ook wat beelden van het Eeuwig Evangelie ... Het deed allemaal een beetje katholiek aan ... Alleen Ernst zag nog geen beelden van de Lokogamen, en dit bracht hem op een idee ... Hij zou graag van de Lokogamen beelden willen maken ... Hiertoe zou hij zijn schilderijen gebruiken als voorbeeld ...

Na een tijdje had hij veertien beelden af, en nodigde de dominee uit om te komen kijken ... De dominee was zo overweldigd dat hij ze direkt in de kerk zou willen plaatsen ... Ernst gaf direkt toestemming ... Het was voor Ernst een hele eer dat zijn beelden in de kerk geplaatst werden, en er mochten wat schilderijen van Ernst tussenhangen ... Ook Ernsts zus was erg trots, en zijn vriendinnen ... Maar of hij door dit alles was gaan geloven ? Niks hoor ...

De dominee was een zogenaamde Insectenaar ... die geloven dat het Egyptisch geloof het verlengstuk van het christendom is ... Zij hebben de Egyptische Heilige Boeken naast de Bijbel en het Eeuwig Evangelie ... Ook hebben ze de zogenaamde Insectische boeken ... de boeken van Izu, Brannan en Lbok ... De dominee had het over sommige soorten wespen die in hun vijanden eieren legden om zo hun nageslacht de vijand te laten overnemen ... De dominee noemde dat de excarnaatse bediening ... De wedergeboorte door de slagen van de vijand ... En toen vertelde de dominee een heleboel over coconnen ... die we ook weer in het dagelijks leven terugvinden ... Ernst was direkt razend enthousiast ... Als hij gelovig zou worden, dan in het insectisch geloof ... Ernst kende wat gelovigen die naast de Bijbel ook in de Kabballah geloofden, het heilige boek van mystieke Joden ... maar dit wat hij nu hoorde deed hem bijna overstag gaan ...

Na de preek vroeg Ernst aan de dominee wat de termen Izu, Brannan en Lbok betekenden ... De dominee gaf hem een boek mee over de Insectenaren ... Ernst zou het thuis eens grondig gaan bestuderen ...

Hoofdstuk 3. De dodenreis van Christus

In de Insectische boeken kwam de paradox van God terug ... Op sommige plaatsen werd God zelfs aangevallen ... Dat moest om een goed evenwicht te bewaren, want het geloof en God werden ook door het kwaad gebruikt en ingevuld ... In het Eeuwig Evangelie stond de reis van Christus door het dodenrijk beschreven,

waarin hij door vijf poorten moest. De eerste poort is de Poort van Egypte, de tweede is de Poort van Izu, de derde is de Poort van Brannan, en de vierde is de Poort van Lbok ... Dat had Ernst nog niet gelezen ... De vijfde poort zou Christus nooit gehaald hebben ... Dat zou het werk worden van Degene die na Christus zou komen, de Zoon van Christus. De Zoon van Christus zou de sleutel van de vijfde poort van het dodenrijk dragen ... 'Karakter' is zijn naam, en hij wordt wel beschreven als een rode spinvlieg. Hij moet de poort openen van de Rode Strepen, de vijfde poort.

Toen Ernst het stuk gelezen had begon hij direkt schilderijen van deze reis te maken ... In Openbaring stond er ook al aangegeven dat er een nieuwe zoon geboren zou worden ... Als Christus door de Poort van Lbok is gekomen, dan komt Hij tot een boom waar Hij geboorte schenkt aan Zijn Zoon ... Die Boom is genaamd de Boom des Doods ... Had Christus meerdere zonen, of misschien ook dochters ? Ja, zij werden genoemd de Rode Strepen ... Zij kwamen voort uit Zijn Wonden ...

Ineens schrikt Ernst wakker ... Het was allemaal maar een droom ... Er is geen Eeuwig Evangelie, en Insectenaren ook niet ... Slaperig loopt Ernst naar de gang waar vlakbij de kamerdeur van zijn zus een kast staat waarin een Bijbel ligt ... Haastig bladert Ernst naar het boek Openbaring en begint te lezen ... Toch komt hij daar enige woorden tegen over de komst van het Eeuwig Evangelie, een nieuw boek van God ... De volgende dag besluit hij er met zijn zus over te praten ... De zus vindt het maar een vreemde droom, en heeft nog nooit van het Eeuwig Evangelie gehoord ... Ernst schrijft de droom in zijn dagboek en probeert het verder te vergeten ...

Op een dag komt Ernst in aanraking met iemand die zich een profeet noemt, en hij vraagt of Ernst weleens van het Eeuwig Evangelie heeft gehoord ... Ernst denkt na en herinnert zich dan de droom ... Als Ernst begint te vertellen, dan zegt de profeet dat het Eeuwig Evangelie echt bestaat ... Dan drukt de profeet een foldertje in Ernst z'n handen en vertrekt weer ... Op het foldertje staat de reis van Christus door het dodenrijk in het kort beschreven, en wordt er gevraagd : 'In welke Christus gelooft u' en ook : 'Kent u uw Christus'. Ook staat er een adres met tijden waarop diensten worden gehouden ... Ernst besluit er eens met zijn zus naartoe te gaan ... Ook daar wordt weer gepredikt over de reis die Christus door het dodenrijk maakte, en na afloop worden er vragen gesteld ...

Hoofdstuk 4. De Dominee

Weer schrikt Ernst wakker ... Hij bleek gewoon nog steeds te dromen ... Een droom in een droom ... En misschien droomde hij nog steeds ... Aan de muur hing een schilderij van de Lokogamen ... de Harem van Christus ... Waar was hij ? En was hij daar wel echt ? Ernst begon steeds meer te twijfelen of hij wel echt wakker was geworden ... Hij wist niet waar hij was ... Ernst kneep in zijn arm, maar had geen

gevoel ... Toen hoorde hij gelach, en werd weer wakker ... Direkt kneep hij in zijn arm ... gelukkig ... Hij voelde het ... Hij was weer gewoon in zijn eigen kamer ... Wat had hij toch wazig lopen dromen over Christus en het Eeuwig Evangelie ... En dat terwijl hij niet eens gelovig was ... Zijn zus wel ... Vandaag zouden zijn vriendinnen komen ... Hij had er een heleboel ... Met mannen kon hij nooit echt goed praten, maar met vrouwen wel ... Lacherig begon hij z'n droom aan hen vertellen ... 'Nou, één ding hebben Christus en ik gemeen,' giechelde Ernst ... 'We hebben beiden een Harem ...' Ineens kwam de zus van Ernst binnen ... Snel legde ze even wat foldertjes over het Evangelie in de hoek van de kamer, en ging toen weer weg ... Dat deed ze wel vaker als Ernst bezoek had ... Degenen die wat vaker bij Ernst kwamen lazen de foldertjes niet eens meer ... Toen de vriendinnen van Ernst aan het einde van de dag weer weg waren ging Ernst even naar zijn zus toe ... Zijn zus zat vaak op haar kamer ... Hij wilde haar de droom vertellen ... Zijn zus luisterde erg aandachtig, en vond het een prachtige droom ...

Terwijl Ernst de droom steeds meer en meer begon te vergeten, had zijn zus alles erover opgeschreven, en vroeg aan God of ze ook over het Eeuwig Evangelie mocht dromen ... Het was voor haar een extra dimensie in haar geloof ... Maar op een dag werd er in de kerk gepreekt : 'Zij die toevoegen aan de Bijbel hen zal ook toegevoegd worden de plagen die in de Bijbel beschreven staan ...' De zus van Ernst schrok verschrikkelijk, en durfde niet meer aan het Eeuwig Evangelie te denken ... Ze voelde zich ineens erg zondig ... De dominee had gezegd dat het verboden was om aan Gods Woord toe te voegen ... De zus van Ernst werd elke dag banger en banger, en op een gegeven moment kwam ze bijna niet meer van haar kamer af ... Ernst begon zich af te vragen wat er met haar aan de hand was, en ze legde ook geen foldertjes meer in de hoek van de kamer voor bezoekers ... Op een dag besluit Ernst naar haar kamer toe te gaan, om te vragen wat er aan de hand is ... Dan barst de zus los met het verhaal ... Ernst begint te lachen ... 'Ach, al die bangmakerij ... de dominee is zeker zelf bang dat hij anders zijn macht verliest ...' Maar de zus zei dat het toch echt in de Bijbel stond dat er niet aan toegevoegd mocht worden ... 'Oh, en waar staat dat dan ?' vroeg Ernst ... Maar dat wist de zus niet, want dat had de dominee er niet bijgezegd ... Ernst belde direkt de dominee op, en vertelde hem hoe hij haar zus bang had gemaakt ... Ernst vertelde over het Eeuwig Evangelie dat na het boek Openbaring zou komen, zoals de Bijbel zei, maar daar geloofde de dominee niet in. Ineens begon de dominee kwader en kwader te worden, en Ernst begon duizelig te worden, en vroeg zich af of hij wel echt wakker was ... 'Ik kom nu naar je toe,' dreigde de dominee ... En legde de hoorn op de haak ... 'Wakker of niet wakker,' dacht Ernst ... 'Ik moet naar m'n zus toe ..'

'Snel,' zei Ernst ... 'Pak je spullen ... de dominee is woest en komt hierheen ... We moeten vluchten ...'

'Kunnen we niet gewoon de politie bellen,' zegt zijn zus dromerig ... Ze heeft ineens een heel ander gezicht, maar het is toch echt zijn zus ... Maar het is al te laat ... De dominee is al binnen, en ziet eruit als een wolf of één of ander monsterlijk beest ...

'Jullie zullen de canon niet ontsnappen ... Jullie zijn gevangenen van de canon, genaamd christenen ...' Ineens begint Ernst te lachen : 'Ha, ik ben niet eens gelovig ...'

'Dat maakt niet uit,' buldert het beest ... 'Iedereen op deze aardbol is in mijn ogen een christen. En iedere christen is een gevangene van de canon ...' Ineens is zijn zus ook in een beest veranderd, en zowel zij als de dominee hebben hun klauwen voor zich, en komen langzaam op Ernst af ... Maar gelukkig, daar zijn de vriendinnen van Ernst ... Ze staan aan de deur ... De deur is open ... Ineens doet iemand het licht aan ... Ernst ligt in bed ... Het is zijn zus die hem had horen gillen ... Ernst heeft allemaal buikpijn ... Wat een verschrikkelijke nachtmerrie was dat ... Maar Ernst zei tegen zijn zus : 'Wat als ik nu nog steeds droom ...'

Hoofdstuk 5. Insectisch Dodenboek ?

Sommige mensen worden nooit echt wakker ... Zij zijn als slaapwandelaars ... Zij komen heel dichtbij, maar nooit komen zij daadwerkelijk aan ... Eén zo'n slaapwandelaar was Ernst Eriksen ... Een lang insectachtig iets met twee lange oren bladert door een boek ... Het boek gaat over de canon, de cocon der mensheid, en wat er voor wezens in die cocon ontstaan ? Insectenaren, die hun toevlucht zoeken in een Eeuwig Evangelie ... en daarna de Insectische ideeen van het heelal ontdekken ... Van gevangenis tot gevangenis gaan zij, waarin zij groeien tot een pad, een brug ... Zo worden zij één met dat wij zij preken, en staan niet meer aan de zijlijn te roepen : 'Daar moet je naartoe ...' Maar ook dit was maar een droom van Ernst Eriksen ... een droom die zovele anderen dromen, terwijl ze nooit opstaan ... Nooit de baarmoeder van deze wereld bereiken waarin ze geboren kunnen worden ... Te zwak waren zij, als fragiele eendags-insecten ... Zij konden alleen maar dromen ... maar nooit ontvangen ... Oh ja, voor veel dingen werden ze bespaard ... In zij-dimensies leefden zij, als het pad der dimensies ... zeer fragmentarisch ... Lang vasthouden kunnen ze de dingen nooit .... en dat is maar goed ook ... Zo kunnen ze nooit een canon voor anderen wezen ... Want wees nou eerlijk .... Zitten we op een tweede canon te wachten ? ... Of zou dat misschien mooi zijn voor de uitbreiding van onze gevangenis ?

De dromen zijn hen tot vrouwen, als een harem ... De dromen zijn hen vaak te snel af ... En daarom gaan ze gebukt onder diepe wonden ... En net als Christus en Karakter, begaan ze de lange reis door het dodenrijk ... om als laatste weer wat rode strepen voort te brengen ... Ja, zo gaat dat altijd ... Gevangen in een Insectisch Dodenboek gaan zij voort ... Een gevangenis die vele poorten opent, een gevangenis die 'De Vrijheid' heet ...

Langzaam bladert de lange insect met de lange oren door zijn boek ... Nog steeds de droom van Ernst Eriksen ... Zou hij nog in dit boek vermeld staan als levende ? Of als dode ... ? Als iemand die wakker is of slaapt ... Het kan Ernst Eriksen niet meer zoveel schelen ... Er staat een kaars naast de insect, en de vlam brengt Ernst

tot rust ... Hij begint zich steeds veiliger te voelen ... Ja, de cocon leidt tot vrijheid, ja, de cocon leidt tot een nieuwe cocon, tot een steeds diepere vrijheid ... waar de diepste gebondenheid explodeert ... Weer bladert de insect verder, terwijl de kaars langzaam opbrandt ... Ernst slaapt, en droomt niet meer ... Tot een diepere slaap gaat hij ... Waar hij zich niets meer hoeft af te vragen ... Waar dat zelfs niet meer kan ...

Moet hij dan alsmaar zoeken naar een antwoord ? Nee, want de slaap heeft 'nee' gezegd, en hem uit zijn droom getrokken ... Je hoeft nu alleen nog maar te slapen ...

Einde

Het Visioen

Korte Theologische Roman

Hoofdstuk 1.

Karel van Egwijk zit in een pinkstergemeente ... Hij heeft een goed contact met zijn voorganger ... Vaak komen ze bij elkaar op bezoek ... Karel is een Belg ... Hij woont in Belgie ... Vroeger was hij een Nederlander, maar hij vond de mentaliteit van de Nederlanders te hard ... Karel werkt part time bij de belasting, en part time in één of andere spelletjeswinkel ... Karel is geinteresseerd geraakt in een nieuwe stroming binnen de Pinkstergemeente, namelijk hen die ook het boek van de reis van Christus door de hemelen als Bijbelboek hebben ... Dit boek is genaamd de Takalan ... Het boek gaat over de hemelvaart, en eigenlijk wat er in de hemel gebeurt ... Wat Christus daar allemaal meemaakt, en de reis die Hij daar maakt ...

Karel vindt het een geweldig boek, maar praat er samen met de voorganger over wat ze ermee moeten ... De voorganger vindt het boek een beetje extreem, in de zin dat alles eigenlijk zoveel toevoegt aan zijn huidige geloof ...

Karel zou graag zien dat het boek aan de Bijbel zou worden toegevoegd, maar de voorganger voelt er meer voor om het als een profetisch bijschrift te benoemen of gewoon als apocrief ... De voorganger wil gewoon op de oude weg doorgaan, en heeft geen behoefte aan allerlei nieuwe stromingen ... Maar Karel vindt dat er niet echt veel veranderd hoeft te worden ... alleen dan dat er gepredikt gaat worden uit een extra Bijbelboek na Openbaring ...

Op een dag komt er een vrouw in de gemeente spreken ... De vrouw heeft nogal veel geestelijke gaven, en als ze soms voor iemand bid dan gaat zo iemand er weleens onderuit ... De vrouw had ook gehoord over het nieuwe Bijbelboek en was ook erg enthousiast ... Ze is niet erg voorzichtig in haar manier van prediken en al snel stuit ze de voorganger tegen de borst ... Na de preek wil hij een gesprek met haar, en spreekt zijn ongenoegen uit ... Even later zit Karel met de voorganger in de auto, en ze spreken nog even na over de vrouw ... Karel vond er niet zoveel aan, alleen dan het gedeelte over het Hemelboek van Christus, de Takalan ... Karel vond ook, net als de voorganger, dat de vrouw te veel toeters en bellen overal aanhing, zo overdreven ... De voorganger had er hoofdpijn van, en Karel kon zich er wel iets bij indenken ...

Op een dag had de voorganger er flink de pee in ... Hij liep tegen zijn vrouw te foeteren, en ook zijn kinderen vroegen zich af wat er met hem aan de hand was ... 'Paps,' zei één van zijn kinderen, 'ik ben een boek aan het lezen over het Hemelboek van Christus, over de hemelvaart. Het is zo mooi ... Wil jij het eens lezen ?'

Maar de voorganger snauwde zijn dochter af ... De volgende dag toen de voorganger in de woonkamer kwam lag het boek op de tafel ... 'Nou, toch maar eens even lezen,' dacht de voorganger ... Maar hoe meer hij las, hoe meer alles voor zijn ogen begon te tollen ... Plotseling smeet hij het boek van zich af ... Zijn vrouw kwam naar beneden rennen en vroeg hem wat er aan de hand was ... 'Je bent al tijden jezelf niet meer,' zei ze ongerust ... Maar de voorganger liep naar de deur, en ging weg, de deur hard achter zich dichtknallend ... Hij ging met zijn auto een eind rijden ... Hij had eigenlijk zin om voorlopig in een hotel te wonen en te slapen ... Hij kon de druk van het sociale leven niet meer aan ...

Hoofstuk 2.

Uiteindelijk besloot hij naar Karel toe te gaan, zijn beste vriend ... Karel probeerde hem moed in te spreken, maar de voorganger zakte steeds verder weg, en was bang dat hij in een psychiatrisch ziekenhuis opgenomen moest worden als dat zo door zou gaan ... Hij had de vreemdst mogelijke gedachten ... Dat hij niet meer getrouwd wilde zijn enzo ... Ook dacht hij eraan om overspel te plegen ... Maar ja, met wie ?

Het kon hem niet zoveel schelen, als hij maar wegkon uit z'n gezin ... Het begon hem te benauwen ... Hij voelde zich een slaaf ... Karel begreep hem wel ... Hij wist wel dat de voorganger niet zo in elkaar zat, maar dat hij nu gewoon even onder een grote druk stond ... Waar zou die druk toch van komen ... Karel probeerde over de Takalan te praten om hem tot rust te krijgen, maar daar wilde de voorganger niets van weten ... 'Houd op over die Takalan ... Karel, ik word er gek van ... Ik kan er niet mee leven ....'

'Waar kun je niet mee leven,' vroeg Karel voorzichtig ... 'Met die Takalan-toestanden,' riep de voorganger ... 'Voortdurend lopen mijn gemeenteleden naar mij te klagen dat ze ook preken over de Takalan willen hebben, en een Bijbel met de Takalan ... Ik word er gek van ... en zelfs jij, mijn beste vriend .... Laat maar ....' Het hoge woord was er uit ... Boos liep de voorganger weg, terwijl Karel onthutst achterbleef ... Een paar dagen later kreeg Karel een telefoontje van de voorganger uit het psychiatrisch ziekenhuis ... 'Het is zover, Karel ... hieperdepiep ...' zei hij ... 'Heb je nu je zin ?' Karel wist niet hoe hij het had ... 'Hoe bedoel je ?' vroeg Karel ... 'Nou,' zei de voorganger ... 'Dit is toch wat je wilde ? James Bond uit de weg ruimen ... Jij vuile wolf, nu kun je de gemeente ... mijn schaapjes ... overnemen ...' Plotseling begon de voorganger te lachen ... 'Ach, ik maak maar een grapje ...' Karel was opgelucht ... 'Zeg Karel,' zei de voorganger ... 'Ik heb het hier prima naar mijn zin ... Ik ben hier helemaal in de rust en heb een eigen kamer met TV ... Zou jij niet voor zolang de gemeente willen overnemen ?' Nou, dat vond Karel wel een hele eer, maar ook een belastende opdracht ... 'Je mag aan de slag gaan hoor met die Takalan,' zei de voorganger .... 'De gemeenteleden zullen zo hun zin krijgen ... Ik moet voorlopig hierblijven ...' Karel nam het aanbod aan, en beloofde snel langs te komen bij de voorganger ...

De gemeenteleden hadden het erg met de voorganger te doen ... Alhoewel hij niet de makkelijkste was hielden ze allemaal wel erg veel van hem ... Maar ze vonden dat Karel het goed deed ... Karel sprak honderduit over de Takalan ... Dat zou de voorganger nooit doen ... Op een dag kreeg Karel weer een telefoontje van de voorganger ... 'Karel,' zei de voorganger ... 'ik moet je iets in vertrouwen vertellen ... De echte reden dat ik hier zit, de echte reden waarom ik zo onder druk sta .... Weet je nog dat ik mezelf bij het vorige telefoongesprek James Bond noemde ? Pssst ...' fluisterde de voorganger .... 'Ik had het met meerdere vrouwen ...' De voorganger klonk erg verward ... 'Meerdere vrouwen, Karel ... Ik wil niet dat mijn vrouw hier achterkomt ... Maar ik wil niet meer bij haar terug ... Ik zou doodgaan ... Ik kan het gezinsleven niet aan ... Mijn vrouw benauwd me ... Ik heb adem nodig ... Ik ben gewoon een levensgenieter .... Ik geloof niet dat God ons geschapen heeft om één vrouw te hebben ...'

'Oh, jij bent echt gek geworden,' zei Karel een beetje boos ... 'Oh, wat vind ik dit erg, vooral voor je vrouw, en misschien je kinderen.' ... En weer hoorde Karel gelach aan de andere kant van de lijn ... 'Ik zit je weer in de maling te nemen, Karel ... Ben je vergeten hoe ik in elkaar zit ?'

'Ach, vroeger was je niet zo,' zei Karel verslagen, nog steeds natrillend ... Karel voelde zich een beetje lam worden ... Nee, leuk vond hij het niet ... 'Hebben ze je soms medicijnen gegeven ?' vroeg Karel ... 'Ja, Karel,' zei de voorganger .... 'Ik word helemaal high van dat spul ... Niet dus .... Ik moet hier weer weg, Karel ...' Karel ging hem direkt ophalen ... Nee, dat psychiatrische ziekenhuis was niks voor de voorganger ... 'Je kunt wel een tijdje bij mij wonen,' zei Karel ... De voorganger stemde er mee in ... Op een dag zag de voorganger de Takalan op tafel liggen ... Hij grijpt het vast en begint erin te lezen ... Hij had eigenlijk alleen maar boeken over de Takalan gelezen, maar nog nooit de Takalan zelf ... De voorganger wordt er erg door aangegrepen, en zit uren op de bank voor zich uit te staren ... 'Hier kunnen we iets mee,' zegt hij zacht ... 'hier kunnen we ....' Dan komt Karel binnen ... 'Ik zie dat je door de Heer bent aangeraakt,' zegt Karel ... 'Ja,' zegt de voorganger .... 'ik wil naar een klooster .... Ik wil naar de monniken van de Takalan ... Ik wil de Takalan bestuderen ....' Karel knikt, en is blij ... ook opgelucht ... 'Ik weet niet of er al zo'n klooster bestaat, maar we kunnen eens navraag doen ... Na wat rond te hebben gebeld heeft Karel een adres voor de voorganger .... Er blijken inderdaad al Takelanse kloosters bestaan ... De voorganger kan er direkt terecht ... Karel is zo enthousiast dat hij zelf ook meewil ... Ze krijgen beiden een kamer in het klooster voor onbeperkte tijd ... Ze krijgen daar veel dromen en visioenen over de Takalan tijdens hun verblijf, en na die periode vertellen ze alles in de gemeente ...

Hoofdstuk 3.

Maar de voorganger is zo overgevoelig en er eigenlijk helemaal niet klaar voor ... Snel besluit hij zich weer terug te trekken ... De voorganger wordt voor een tweede periode op het klooster aanvaard ... Dit alles om bij te komen, en om diepere ervaringen te hebben met de Takalan ... Voor Karel zit de vakantie erop ... Ook werd hij niet aanvaard voor een tweede periode ... De tweede periode is alleen voor hen bestemd die hulp nodig hebben ... Karel preekt ondertussen veel over wat de voorganger hem vertelt ... Ook anderen uit de gemeente beginnen hun eerste periode op het klooster ... Zo hebben ze ook wat meer contact met de voorganger ... Maar die vindt het moeilijk om mensen van vroeger te moeten zien ... Het ligt de voorganger erg zwaar, en ten slotte wordt hij overgeplaatst naar een ander klooster, dat diep in het bos ligt ... De voorganger kan hier nog beter tot rust komen, maar dit is wel een klooster waar je wordt opgeleid om monnik te worden ... Eigenlijk wil de voorganger dat niet ... maar terug naar de samenleving wil hij ook niet ... Ondertussen krijgt hij steeds hevigere ervaringen van de Takalanse leer ... Hij ontvangt veel dromen en visioenen van de Heer, meer dan ooit tevoren ...

Al gauw geeft de voorganger soms wat les aan kleine groepjes op het klooster ... Maar eigenlijk kan hij dit niet aan ... Dan op een dag komt er een monnik naar de voorganger dat er in het bos nog een kleine hermitage vrij is, waar de voorganger in alle rust mag wonen en studeren ... De voorganger neemt het aanbod direkt aan ... Hij heeft nu alleen nog maar contact met Karel per brief ... en heel soms komen de monniken van het klooster langs voor een kort gesprek ... Maar dat gebeurt

steeds minder ... Karel beschouwt de brieven van de voorganger als heilig, en preekt zelfs tot de gemeente vanuit die brieven ...

Zo gaat dat een tijdje door, en op een dag verschijnt Christus aan de voorganger ... Christus draagt een wit lichtend en zacht gewaad als een soort sprei ... Hier en daar hangen wat veertjes, en Christus heeft ook een witte veer in zijn haar ... Het is een beetje een donzige veer ... Christus stapt op de voorganger af, en raakt hem aan ... De voorganger begint te trillen ... Christus haalt een veer van zijn gewaad af en geeft de veer aan de voorganger ... De voorganger durft zich bijna niet te bewegen .... 'Je maakt zeker een grapje ...' zegt de voorganger ...'Zeg dat het niet waar is ... Waaraan heb ik deze eer te danken ...' Maar Christus zegt niets, en begint door de kamer van de voorganger te lopen ... overal verschijnt een lichtend zacht poeder ... De voorganger begint in tongen te bidden ... 'Ik ga je een diepe genezing in je emoties geven,' zegt Christus ... De voorganger buigt voorover en begint te snikken ... Hij voelt de Hand van Christus zo diep ... Ook Christus begint in tongen te bidden ... een vreemde taal, als de taal der duiven ... Zo heeft de voorganger het nog nooit gehoord ... De voorganger voelt zich van binnen wegsmelten ... 'Zendt me niet terug naar die arena ...' smeekt de voorganger tot Christus ... 'Laat me hierblijven ...' Christus kijkt hem geruststellend aan ... 'Je hoeft hier niet weg,' zegt Christus ineens ... Weer haalt Christus een veer van zijn gewaad af en geeft het aan de voorganger ... Weer begint de voorganger te trillen ... 'Jij weet wat ik in de hemel gedaan heb, hè ?' zegt Christus ... De voorganger knikt ... 'Ik ben over de gouden rivier gegaan, en over de zilveren rivier, om tot de boom des hemels te komen ... Vandaaruit heb ik Mijn Duif gezonden ... Mijn Geest ... Ik heb de oranje zee van vuur bezwommen, en ben gekomen tot het natte bos ... Hier heb ik Mijn Geest losgelaten, voor een tweede maal ... En de emotie boven het natte en het droge is hier tot mij gekomen ... Boven het natte en droge is een pad tot de Eeuwige Weide, een ladder ... Christus omhelsde de voorganger, en zei dat Hij deze emotie aan hem wilde schenken ... De voorganger trilde ... Wat voelde hij toch in zich komen ? Waren dit de vogels van de Heer ? De voorganger voelde hoe alle kracht uit hem wegvloeide ... 'Je hoeft hier niet meer weg,' zei Christus ... De voorganger voelde zich alsof hij in water lag, maar dit water was zo dik .... als lagen van zachte dekens ... De voorganger begon te ijlen, alsof hij hevige koorts had .... Boven hem leek het alsof er een reusachtige vogel of reusachtig vliegtuig zweefde ... Het was als een vliegend skelet, of als een lichaam waar geen huid over zat ... Een traan viel vanuit de vogel op de schoot van de voorganger ... 'Je zult je goed voelen,' zei Christus ... 'want ik ga je gevoel genezen ...' De voorganger begon nog heviger te trillen en te zweten ... Wat gebeurde er toch in hem ... Opeens werd de voorganger overspoeld door zachtheid ... Het leek wel alsof de voorganger op een bovennatuurlijk zachte bank zat ... met zoveel haren en veren ... allemaal wit ... als de vacht van een hemels dier ... Een reusachtig insect verscheen voor de voorganger ... met daarachter een gestalte met een kap en een gewaad ... Weer werd de voorganger door zachtheid overspoeld ... De voorganger kreeg stuiptrekkingen ... en rillingen ... Het was alsof er zacht spul in het lichaam van de voorganger was dat op het punt stond om uit te barsten ... De voorganger voelde

zichzelf als een vulkaan ... Plotseling riep Christus : 'Takalan' ... De stem was erg indringend, en de voorganger voelde zichzelf als zwemmende in een zee van zachtheid ... Hij leek te overstromen ... 'Het is één ding om de Geest te ontvangen en gedoopt te zijn in de Geest ... Nu zul je komen tot de verzachting en de overstroming van de Heilige Geest ...' Weer barst de voorganger in snikken uit ... Alles van binnen lijkt naar buiten te komen ...

'Zie, daar is een eerste zegen die de wedergeboorte is, een tweede zegen die de doop in de Geest is, een derde zegen die de gebondenheid in de Geest is en een vierde zegen die daaruit moet voortvloeien : De overstroming van de Heilige Geest ...' sprak Christus ... 'Boven het natte en droge is de emotie Saakse, en zij leidt tot diepe verzachting, maar zelfs tot boven de strijd tussen hardheid en zachtheid ... Saakse blust de overmaat aan vuur, en regelt en verdeelt deze ... Boven de strijd tussen hardheid en zachtheid komt Saakse uiteindelijk aan in Luchtse, waar nog diepere overstromingen zijn ... Ook de christen zal deze reis moeten begaan ...'

De volgende ochtend als de voorganger wakker wordt schrijft hij een brief naar Karel om hem dit alles te vertellen ... Nog steeds lijkt het alsof alles in hem overstroomt ... En hij heeft visioenen van de zachtste zeeen die hij ooit heeft gezien ... Eén ding is zeker : Hij wil hier blijven, en zien hoe alles zich uitwerkt ...

Een vlinder zit voor het raam ... De voorganger raakt in gedachten verzonken, en krijgt het indrukwekkendste visioen dat hij ooit had gehad ... Stromen van zachtheid golven zijn hoofd binnen, en weer komt Christus op hem af, die hem een takje geeft ... Weer voelt de voorganger zich alsof alles van binnen overstroomt ... 'Gij zult gaan van overstroming tot overstroming,' spreekt Christus ... 'en gij zult uw gevoelens zien genezen worden ... wanneer gij het rijk der boven-emoties binnentreedt ...' En in het visioen bevond de voorganger zich voor een kasteel en liep dat kasteel binnen ... Daar zag hij ridderpantsers tegen de muur staan, waaruit zachtheid vloeide ... De voorganger loopt verder het gebouw in, en weer staat Christus voor hem, ietsje boven de grond ... Hij voelt zand onder zijn voeten, en het zand wordt steeds zachter en zachter, totdat hij alles voelt overstromen vanuit het diepste van zijn wezen ... Christus komt dichterbij en raakt hem aan ... Weer ziet hij een veer in het haar van Christus, en Christus geeft die veer aan hem ... Ineens is het alsof hij moet plassen ... maar het is de Heilige Geest die ook daar wil overstromen ... 'In de hemel wordt niet gehuwd,' sprak Christus ... 'Zij die op aarde wonen huwen, en dit is als een kruis ... Het huwelijk is slechts een schaduw van de Gebondenheid in de Heilige Geest ... daarom zal het huwelijk als zegel verbroken moeten worden ... Zij die vast blijven houden aan de vrouwen der aarde zullen de Hemelse Geesten niet ontvangen ... Het huwelijk is het zegel op de hemelse sexualiteit, de Riktlan ... Ook is de Bloedband een schaduw van de Hemelse bloedbanden ... Zij die vast blijven houden aan de aardse bloedbanden zullen de Hemelse bloedbanden niet ontvangen ... De Bloedband is slechts een zegel, het tweede zegel, op de hemelse sexualiteit, de Riktlan ...' De voorganger buigt zijn hoofd ... 'Het derde zegel hierop is het ouderschap ...' De voorganger slaakt een gil,

en valt neer op het zachte zand ... Nog steeds is het alsof hij nodig moet plassen ... 'Het vierde zegel is geboorte, het vijfde zegel het avondmaal, het zesde zegel de doop ...' De voorganger ligt stokstijf op het zand, en verroert zich niet ... Het is alsof de hete zon hem wil opslurpen .... Hoe komt het dat het hier zo heet is ... Het lijkt wel alsof hij van binnen wegsmelt ...

'De Riktlan is bekleed en gesloten door zes zegels ... Ga de strijd aan tegen deze zegels, en kom binnen in deze heerlijkheid ... Blijf niet feestvieren op aarde ... De aarde is een valstrik ... een slagerij ...' De woorden van Christus echo-en door zijn hoofd ... De voorganger begint te kreunen van de hitte ... Het lijkt wel alsof hij geheel door het zand wordt geabsorbeerd ... Dan ineens lijkt het alsof alles in de voorganger explodeert, en zachte schuim stroomt van binnen uit ... 'Riktlan, Riktlan,' begint de voorganger te roepen ...

'Wil je alles opgeven voor mij ?' vraagt Christus aan de voorganger ... 'Ja,' zegt de voorganger, 'alles ...'

'Dan krijg je ook alles weer terug,' zegt Christus, 'maar dan in een hele andere vorm ...'

Hoofdstuk 4.

'Oh, ik wil nooit meer wakker worden,' roept de voorganger tot Christus ... 'Ik wil nooit meer ...' Maar Christus sust hem ... en omhelst hem .... Nog dieper zinkt de voorganger weg in zachtheid ... 'Ik zweer mijn bloedbanden af,' zegt de voorganger, 'en ik zweer mijn huwelijk af, en mijn ouderschap, mijn geboorte, mijn doop en mijn avondmaal ...'

'Het is goed,' zei Christus ... 'maar Ik ben Degene die bindt en scheidt ... De Overstroming door de Heilige Geest is de Scheiding door de Heilige Geest ... Dit is niet de scheiding door de wereld ....' De voorganger knikte ... Dat begreep hij wel ... Toen gaf Christus hem een zwaard ... 'Het Zwaard van de Geest is om te scheiden en te verzoenen ....' Weer knikte de voorganger ... Toen riep Christus : 'Riktlan, Rictlan' ... En weer was het alsof de voorganger moest plassen ... En overal was het alsof zegels en voorhangsels begonnen te scheuren ... 'Ga in tot de heerlijkheid van Rictlan,' sprak Christus ... De voorganger stond op, maar zag niks ... Overal was het als witte sneeuw ... Een akelige kou kwam over de voorganger ... Maar plotsklaps was er weer één en al zachtheid, en de emotie boven kou en warmte kwam over de voorganger : Laafte ... Ineens voelde de voorganger weer energie door zijn benen vloeien, en die energie was als zachtheid en veren ... Ook in zijn armen begon die energie te stromen, en het leek wel alsof hij alle energie in zichzelf begon binnen te plassen .... Even voelde alles heel koud aan, maar daarna was alles zachter dan zacht ... De voorganger begon te trillen, en voelde zich eventjes heel duizelig worden ... Even was het alsof hij moest overgeven of kokhalzen ... Er kwam zoveel energie in hem vrij ... 'Je bent geen slaaf meer van

aardse sexualiteit,' zei Christus ... 'Dat was slechts een corrupt energie-stelsel ... Je wordt nu aangesloten op de energie-circuits van Riktlan ...'

'Nee,' schreeuwde de voorganger, terwijl hij voorover boog ... Weer was het alsof hij verschrikkelijk nodig moest plassen ... Hij voelde zich ineens zo vreemd ... Alsof iets uit hem wilde komen wat er niet uitkon ... 'Snap je de corruptie van het menselijk lichaam ?' vroeg Christus ... 'Het is een duivelse creatie ... geen verheerlijkt of hemels lichaam ... Ik wil jou een lichaam van Riktlan geven ... maar ...' en toen wees Christus op de tepels van de voorganger ... Met één ruk rukte Christus de tepels eraf, terwijl de voorganger de apparaatjes zag die er onder zaten ... als vreemde insecten ... vreemde implantaten ... 'Je wordt aangesloten op de energie-circuits van Riktlan,' sprak Christus weer ... Heel voorzichtig haalde Christus toen de apparaatjes eruit, maar allerlei alarms gingen aan ... Snel wierp Christus de apparaatjes heel ver weg tot in de zee ... Toen hoorden ze een enorme explosie, en het was alsof de voorganger plaste ... Nieuwe vrijgekomen energie plaste hij door zijn lichaam heen, en er begonnen andere soorten tepels op de open plaatsen te groeien ... Ze leken wel een beetje op lip-achtige littekens ... Weer voelde de voorganger nieuwe overstromingen van zachtheid ... Weer haalde Christus de tepels eraf, en weer zaten er apparaatjes onder ... 'Zie je, het groeit steeds aan,' zei Christus ... Toen wees Christus op de voeten van de voorganger ... Met één ruk had hij de huid van de voeten eraf gerukt ... De voorganger zag één en al machine onder de huid ... Christus stak wat pennetjes tussen de mechanismes, en het was alsof de voorganger even zijn benen niet meer voelde ... Ook haalde Christus er wat pennetjes uit ... Die pennetjes zaten heel diep ... De voorganger kon bijna geen adem meer halen ... Toen begon Christus de mechanismes één voor één eruit te snijden en te trekken, en wierp ze in de zee, terwijl er steeds meer hoge alarms afging ... De voorganger leek wel doof te worden ... Maar ineens was alles stil ... De voorganger voelde veel pijn in zijn benen ... Het was nu een framewerk ... De apparaatjes waren weg ... Toen haalde Christus wat hemelse apparatuur tevoorschijn en drukte het in het framewerk ... Snel gingen er spieren, vlees, weefsel en huid overheen ... Alles stond bol, maar toen Christus met zijn hand erover wreef werd alles weer soepel, en verfijnde het zich ... Weer rukte Christus de tepels eraf, en ditmaal ook de huid van de borst eromheen ... Overal waren apparaatjes te zien, en één voor één rukte Christus ze eruit ... Gelukkig gingen er geen alarms meer af ... Christus legde er een witte doek over, en zei tegen de voorganger dat hij moest rusten ... Alles zou in orde komen ...

Na het visioen stond de voorganger op, pakte pen en papier en schreef een brief aan Karel ...

Hoofdstuk 5.

Na een tijd kreeg de voorganger een brief van Karel ... Karel schreef hoe het met de gemeente ging ... De voorganger voelde hoe het elke dag beter met hem ging ... Op een dag maakte hij een wandeling in het bos ... Even was het alsof hij een steek

in zijn hoofd voelde, maar later werd de plek heel erg zacht ... De voorganger voelde hoe de zachtheid doorvloeide naar zijn lippen ... Hij voelde zich ineens erg heilig ... Een gevoel wat hij eigenlijk nooit gekend had ... Het was als een gevoel dat boven trots en schaamte uitsteeg ... Alsof de voorganger uit een groot gevecht was ontsnapt ... Hij voelde hoe de zachtheid doorvloeide naar beneden, alsof hij weer moest plassen ... Toen plaste hij de zachte energie door zijn hele lichaam heen ... Het was net alsof hij een stem hoorde : 'Je moet veel plassen ...'

Waar zou dit naartoe leiden ? De voorganger wist het niet ... Hij voelde zich elke dag rustiger worden ... Een rust die hij nooit eerder had gekend ... Soms kreeg hij weer ergens een soort steek, en dan kort daarna was de plek zachter dan ooit tevoren, om zich via het plassen door zijn hele lichaam te verspreiden ... Stukje bij beetje werd de voorganger een inwoner van Riktlan ...

Einde

De Omzwerving

Korte Theologische Roman

Hoofdstuk 1.

Edwin Jagersma zit in een Pinkstergemeente. De voorganger en zijn vrouw prediken naast het Kruis van Christus ook veel over het Kruis van Jozef, en ze geloven ook in een engel genaamd Sarsia. Edwin vindt de preken die ze geven erg goed. Door zijn moeder is hij in deze gemeente gekomen, en toen is er een wereld voor hem open gegaan. Zijn ouders zijn gescheiden. Hij woonde bij zijn vader en ging altijd met hem mee naar de gemeente ... Maar wat hier gepredikt werd was

eventjes wat anders ... De voorganger had veel kritiek op de conservatieve pinstergemeentes, alhoewel zijn vrouw erg mild was ...

Op een dag had de voorganger het in de preek over het kruis van Ismael ... en zei dat omdat de gemeente dat kruis niet had aanvaart de Islam kwam opzetten om wraak te nemen ... Volgens de voorganger was de Islam het omgekeerde kruis van Ismael ... Na de dienst kwamen er allemaal vragen. De voorganger vertelde dat Hagar een Egyptische slavin van Sara was, die nageslacht bracht aan Abraham in de vorm van Ismael, zoals dat ook in de Bijbel stond. Maar door de hand van Sara werden zij beiden in de woestijn gezonden ... En dat terwijl Ismael één van de aartsvaders was ... De jongen werd een boogschutter, en de hand van God leidde hem ... Door toedoen van Sara werd er verder eigenlijk niet meer over Ismael gesproken, maar ging de lijn over op Isaak, haar eigen zoon. De Islam kwam op als de wraak van Ismael, en de gemeente doet er daarom beter aan om terug te gaan naar de bron van Ismael om hem in ere te herstellen ... Ook hij is een kind van Abraham, ook hij is een aartsvader, en draagt het Egyptisch bloed van zijn moeder Hagar in zich. Ook kwam er de vraag hoe ze zich dat moesten voorstellen : Het aanvaarden van het kruis van Ismael, en hem in ere te herstellen ... De voorganger zei dat ze allereerst de wildheid en de wraak van dit deel gewoon moesten aanvaarden ... Het wilde zijn plek terug ...

Hagar en Ismael werden verstoten uit de familie en werden de woestijn ingezonden waar ze bijna omkwamen van de dorst .... maar gelukkig greep de Engel Gods in. Zo moesten ook zij, als gemeente, verworpenheid dragen en de geestelijke dorst ... Zij moesten beginnen het kruis van Ismael te dragen, en geloven dat ook dit kruis tot heerlijkheid zou leiden en tot de verzoening met het volk van Ismael. Door het kruis van Ismael kon die eenheid komen ... God beloofde Hagar een ontelbaar nageslacht. Ismael is in dat opzicht de verloren aartsvader die opgezocht moest worden ...

De dienst erna had de voorganger het over de dertien bloedlijnen van Jahweh, waarvan Hij zou afstammen, en zijn vijf ouders. Deze ouders waren genaamd : Uruk, Nanak, Koshau, Irim en Mirik. Daar had Edwin nog nooit iets van gehoord, maar de voorganger zei dat hij dit allemaal uit het Eeuwig Evangelie had gehaald, het verlengstuk van de Bijbel wat in Openbaring werd aangekondigd, maar wat pas in de eindtijd zou verschijnen. Ook had de voorganger het over de vele vrouwen van Jahweh, en hij noemde er wel tientallen op ... alsof Jahweh ook een harem zou bezitten ... Dit was in het Oude Testament zelfs op aarde heel normaal, maar de voorganger had het natuurlijk over de hemel, waar Jahweh woont. Weer kwamen er een heleboel vragen. Ook Edwin stelde enige vragen. Edwin herinnerde zich dat hij vroeger weleens aan zijn ouders had gevraagd wie nou precies de ouders van God waren, maar kreeg daar nooit antwoord op ... Nu leek de voorganger die vragen te beantwoorden ... Jahweh was als God aangesteld over mensen, dieren, engelen, en vele geestelijke wezens. Nu de gemeente verder was gegroeid zouden ze aan dit soort dingen toe zijn gekomen, en Edwin vond het razend interessant.

De voorganger zei dat het belangrijk was om veel over de bloedlijnen, de geestelijke voorgeslachten, van Jahweh te weten, want zodra de bloedlijnen weer een plaats zouden hebben in het geloof zou er minder plaats zijn voor afgoderijen die de leegte en het gemis probeerden op te vullen ... De voorganger zei dat het nodig was om orde te brengen, en om de geschiedenissen van God te openen. Nu hadden ze dus ook met Zijn voorgeschiedenis te maken ... De voorganger had het over de evolutie van God, en over het bestaan van meerdere eeuwigheden, de aeonen, die tijdperken zijn, en die ook als zodanig in de grondtekst van de Bijbel worden beschreven. Eeuwig is dus niet altijddurend, en zo wilde het ook niet direkt zeggen dat God altijd al had bestaan. Misschien wel in een andere vorm, maar ook God heeft zich ontwikkeld, en komt voort uit een reeks geestelijke voorgeslachten.

De voorganger zei ook dat het dom was om je maar op één kruis blind te staren. Je moest gaan van kruis tot kruis, en niet in een kruis-canon terechtkomen. De kruis-canon was volgens de voorganger bijna het gevaarlijkste wat er was, want dan zou je maar beperkt worden tot één kruis. De voorganger zei dat Christus en zijn kruis het fundament waren, waar je als pasgeboren baby-christen mee in aanraking kwam ... Maar dat was pas het begin van de reis ... Daarom was de God-geschiedenis en de voorgeschiedenis van God zo belangrijk, om te komen tot de oerkruizen ... Het hart van God ... Bij die oerkruizen kon je komen door de dertien bloedlijnen van Jahweh te volgen ... Het klonk Edwin als een prachtig sprookje, maar het interesseerde hem wel ... Het leek alsof hij voor het eerst in zijn leven kon ademhalen ... Natuurlijk gaf je een baby nog geen vast en scherp voedsel ... Edwin begreep waarom de Bijbel voor nu nog zo beperkt was ... En waarom zou God al die dingen aan zondaren vertellen ? Maar nu dan was het tijd geworden voor het Eeuwig Evangelie, waar God meer over Zichzelf zou vertellen, in eerste instantie aan Zijn gemeente.

Hoofdstuk 2.

De voorganger begon uit te leggen dat God en Christus een soort titel waren die geestelijke krachten probeerden te grijpen ... Het was een soort politieke kwestie ... Je moest er goed op letten wie je zou volgen, want autoriteit was niet altijd per definitie betrouwbaar. Zo maakten vele krachten zichzelf tot Christus, God en Geest, en dat verklaart ook waarom de kerken die allen zeggen naar God te luisteren het niet met elkaar eens zijn ... De Waarheid ligt dieper in de geschiedenis. Je leert God alleen kennen door Zijn geschiedenis te volgen ... en zo leer je ook het ware van het valse te onderscheiden ...

Edwin luisterde bijna met ingehouden adem ... De voorganger kon het heel spannend vertellen ... Hoe diep moesten ze nog de geschiedenis induiken om achter de waarheid te komen ? Waar begon het ergens ? De gemeente was lid van de zogenaamde Sebek-bond binnen de pinksterwereld. De voorganger vond dat belangrijk, omdat de Sebek-bond het mystieke christendom aanhing : Er was geen canon, en alles had een diepere symbolische betekenis, de zogenaamde Allegorie.

De voorganger zei dat dit belangrijk was om los te komen van het materialisme, als een reis naar de hemel. Hier zouden ze een nieuw soort stof tegenkomen, iets dat boven materie en geest uitsteeg, de zogenaamde Pismin. De voorganger kon het allemaal erg kleurrijk vertellen, en Edwin wist dat sommigen gewoon puur in de gemeente zaten vanwege de prachtige verhalen. De voorganger was een erg symbolisch iemand. Ook was de voorganger erg kunstzinnig. Het gebouw hing vol met zijn schilderijen. Daar hingen erg veel bijzondere schilderijen tussen, zelfs van krokodillen en ooievaren, en prachtige paradijsen. Edwin wist dat sommigen in de gemeente zaten puur om die schilderijen te bekijken. Vaak hingen er weer nieuwen.

De voorganger zei dat aan het einde van de tijden, dan zou Sebek, die een deel van Christus is, Christus verslinden, en dit zou zijn als een heilige verslinding. In deze cocon zou Christus op z'n plaats gezet worden, namelijk als de eerste stap op de weg terug naar God, een belangrijk fundament. Maar hierop moest doorgebouwd worden. Edwin vond dat maar een rare benaming, maar zijn moeder zei dat dat zo hoorde. Voor Christus zou het een wedergeboorte worden, die zou resulteren in Zijn Terugkomst. Al die overbelasting zou voor Christus een kruis zijn. Veel christenen staarden zich zo blind op Christus en vroegen zoveel van Hem alsof er niets anders was ... Vooral zij die geloofden dat ze het kruis niet hoefden te dragen, omdat Christus dat had gedaan, zij van het zogenaamde welvaarts-evangelie stonden schuldig aan het verzwaren van het kruis van Christus. Ook zij zouden aan het einde der tijden door Sebek verslonden worden om hun plaats te krijgen ... Maar de voorganger zei altijd dat iedereen door Sebek verslonden zou worden, zelfs de aarde ... Dit om een nieuwe schepping voort te brengen ... Het was genaamd het Sebek-kruis, de Heilige Verslinding ... Edwins moeder geloofde ook heilig in de engel Sarsia. Edwin wist hier niet zoveel vanaf, omdat zijn moeder er vaak geheimzinnig over deed ...

Er waren al veel mensen uit de gemeente vertrokken toen ze hoorden over de bizarre ideeen van de voorganger ... De voorganger ging soms gewoon erg ver. Zo zou hij ook eens kinderen hebben banggemaakt ... Ja, de voorganger kon soms erg griezelig doen ... Hij kon soms ook echt spokenverhalen vertellen ... Ook beweerde de voorganger de rangen boven God te kennen. Zij die de dertien bloedlijnen van Jahweh kenden zouden een ontmoeting met zo'n hogere rang kunnen krijgen ... De rang net boven God was genaamd de Muskus. De rang boven de Muskus was volgens de voorganger Sebek Zelf, het gebeente van Christus, dat in Christus wachtte om toe te slaan. Het gebeente van Christus was als een tijdbom, en de naderende explosies zouden leiden tot een nieuw paradijs ...

Edwin schrok wakker ... Wat had hij vreemd gedroomd ... Vandaag zou hij voor het eerst zijn moeder ontmoeten ... Hij had zich er misschien te druk om gemaakt ... Zenuwachtig was hij wel ... Erg zenuwachtig ... Zijn ouders waren gescheiden ... Zijn vader had hem vlak na de geboorte ontvoerd ... Toen zijn vader in de gevangenis kwam, ook voor andere misdrijven, werd Edwin in een kindertehuis geplaatst ... Zijn moeder kon door hetgeen gebeurd was de opvoeding niet aan ...

Ze wilde Edwin zelfs niet zien ... Maar nu was het dan zover ... Na al die jaren was zijn moeder nu sterk genoeg om hem thuis te ontvangen ... Toen Edwin daar aankwam was de ontmoeting erg koeltjes ... Zijn moeder sprak niet veel ... Edwin deed hoofdzakelijk het woord ... Er was ook een advocaat bij ... Dat wilde zijn moeder zo ... Edwin vertelde ook over zijn droom ... Zijn moeder was niet gelovig ... Vroeger was ze dat wel, maar door alles wat er was gebeurd had ze haar geloof verloren ...

Een maand later hadden ze weer een ontmoeting ... Zijn moeder was nog steeds erg stil, maar wilde toch nog graag de droom een keer horen ... Ditkeer was er geen advocaat bij, en zijn moeder leek iets meer ontspannen ... 'Je droom spreekt me aan, Edwin,' zei z'n moeder ... 'Het is heel anders dan wat ze in de kerken altijd zeggen ...' Omdat Sebek een Egyptische naam is besluit Edwins moeder wat Egyptische boeken te lezen ... Een maand later zouden ze elkaar weer zien ... Maar halverwege de maand krijgt Edwin een telefoontje van de advocaat ... Zijn moeder zou het toch te zwaar hebben met al die ontmoetingen ... Ze wilde er graag een punt achterzetten ... Edwin wist niet wat hij hoorde, maar begreep het wel ...

Zelf was hij inmiddels ook op zoek naar de betekenis van de droom ... Ook hij ging Egyptische boeken lezen, en raakte diep geinteresseerd ... Op een dag besluit hij een reis te boeken naar Egypte ... In het vliegtuig komt hij heel toevallig de advocaat van zijn moeder tegen ... Ze gaan naast elkaar zitten in het vliegtuig, en een diep gesprek volgt ... 'Je moeder draagt diepe geheimen over jou in haar hart ...' vertelt de advocaat ...

Dan schrikt Edwin wakker ... Hij droomde nog steeds ... Wat was dat een heldere droom, zeg ... Zou er echt een Sebek-bond binnen de pinkstergemeente bestaan ? Edwin was niet kerkelijk, maar een vriend van hem zat bij de pinkstergemeente ... Edwin besluit die vriend op te bellen, en vertelt de droom ... Maar die vriend van hem kan hem niet verder helpen ... Hij heeft van al die dingen nog nooit gehoord ... Wel wil hij het eens aan de voorganger vragen ... Na een paar dagen wordt Edwin door de voorganger uitgenodigd ... Laat in de avond komt Edwin daar aan ... De voorganger moest namelijk eerst naar een conferentie ... Even later zitten ze samen in de werkkamer van de voorganger ... De voorganger was erg verrast over de droom ... De voorganger kwam namelijk zelf uit Egypte ... Hij had geen Egyptisch bloed, maar zijn vader en moeder hadden daar werk, en zodoende bracht hij zijn jeugd door in Egypte ... Toen zijn vader en moeder met hem Egypte verlieten kreeg hij last van depressies, en is hij nooit meer dezelfde geweest ... De herinneringen aan Egypte hielden hem op de been, naast zijn geloof ... De droom sprak ook van een zekere samensmelting ... De voorganger wist altijd dat er iets aan het geloof ontbrak ... Edwin was erg opgelucht dat zijn droom eindelijk betekenis had gekregen. Plotseling stond de vrouw van de voorganger binnen met koffie ... 'Mag ik vragen waar het over gaat ?' vroeg de vrouw brutaal ... Edwin vond dat ze niet zo was als wat je van een voorgangersvrouw zou verwachten ... Edwin kon zich ook voorstellen dat zo'n vrouw je depressief kon maken ... Ze keek heel kleinerend naar

Edwin ... 'Jij gelooft niet, hè ?' zei ze snibbig ... Edwin knikte, zich helemaal niet meer op z'n gemak voelend ... 'Maar ik ben zoekende ...'

'Nou,' zei de voorgangersvrouw ... 'zoek en gij zult het vinden ... maar bezoek eerst eens een fatsoenlijke kerk ... Je kunt het niet alleen ...' Edwin stond paf van al die opdringerigheid ... 'Ach,' zei de voorganger ...'ze bedoelt het niet slecht ...' Maar diep in z'n hart wist Edwin dat de voorganger dat alleen maar zei om Edwin zich niet zo naar te laten voelen ... Ineens was de vrouw alweer weg ... De voorganger zei niks, en begon toen weer over de droom ... Ook begon de voorganger over Egypte te vertellen, dat ze daar geloofden in een vrouw genaamd Nut, die heel lang kon worden, en daarmee de atmosfeer uitbeeldde ... ook beeldde ze de reizen uit die de Egyptenaren moesten maken door de verschillende werelden. Altijd als er over Nut gesproken werd had de voorganger een vreemd gevoel in zijn onderbuik ... Ook begon de voorganger te vertellen over de andere goden van Egypte ... Edwin vond het erg interessant ... Edwin begon allerlei vragen te stellen, en de voorganger probeerde ze te beantwoorden ... Edwin vertelde hoe hij eens een droom had gehad over een hele lange slang die bij hem naar binnen kwam, en daar ging wonen ... Zou dat Nut kunnen wezen ? Het was voor Edwin een hele prettige ervaring ... De voorganger wist het niet ... Het kon ook een demoon wezen, volgens de voorganger ... Even kreeg Edwin de rillingen ... De voorganger vertelde hem dat hij dat wel kon uittesten ... En samen begonnen ze te bidden, en de voorganger sprak de slang aan ... Direkt begon de slang door Edwin heen te spreken, en wat de slang allemaal zei was niet zo best ... De voorganger probeerde de slang uit te drijven, maar het lukte niet ... Ten einde raad besloot de voorganger in de Naam van Nut de slang uit te drijven, en toen lukte het wel ... Edwin was erg onder de indruk, en had ineens een heel vrij gevoel in zijn onderbuik ... Ook leek het alsof hij warme perensap had gedronken ... Zo voelde zijn buik aan ... Het was alsof het sap zich door zijn hele lichaam verspreidde, en nu kreeg Edwin ook dat vreemde gevoel in zijn onderbuik ... Alsof iemand daar woonde ...

Hoofdstuk 3.

Op een nacht verschijnt Nut aan Edwin ... Ze heeft een sjaal om, en draagt een heleboel cadeau's ... Maar Edwin kan haar niet verstaan ... Het is alsof ze achter glas is, in een wereld waar hij haar niet kan bereiken ... En dan is het alsof Edwin wordt verslonden door een haai ... Gillend wordt Edwin wakker ... De nacht daarop heeft Edwin weer een droom, waarin hij onderhoort wordt door politie-agenten en mensen van justitie ... Edwin wordt vals beschuldigd en wordt zo kwaad dat hij wegrent, dwars door een ruit heen ... Hij wordt achtervolgt, maar vlucht het bos in, waar hij later bij een huisje komt waar een meisje met een rode kap op voorstaat ... Binnen zit een zwarte wolf ... Edwin schrikt ... De wolf is genaamd Anubis, en zegt dat het christendom hem tot een schrikbeeld heeft gemaakt ... Anubis blijkt een Egyptische god te zijn, de god die over de doden hoedt ... 'Ben ik dood ?' vraagt Edwin ... 'Nee,' zegt Anubis ... 'maar je bent toch door een haai verslonden ?' Dan wordt Edwin duizelig en valt neer ... Anubis begint hem te mummificeren met

stripverhalen en boeken ... 'Waarom doe je dat ?' vraagt Edwin ... 'Nou, dan heb je wat te lezen onderweg ?' Edwin valt in een nog diepere slaap ... Weer zit hij rechtop aan een tafeltje met Anubis ... voor hem ligt vlees ... 'Dit is het vlees van het gevallen christendom ... Eet het ...' En Edwin begint te eten .... Dan begint Anubis ineens heel snel te blaffen ... 'We moeten een muur doorbreken, Edwin,' gromt Anubis ... Samen stormen ze naar buiten, op weg naar de muur ... Voor Anubis is het een koud kunstje om door de muur heen te breken ... Edwin volgt hem ... Hier is een prachtig paradijs ... Weer zien ze vlees liggen, en beginnen te eten ... 'Die bloedoffers van het christendom was een fabeltje om hen af te houden van het opvreten van demonen .... een valstrik om christenen dieren te laten bevechten in plaats van boze geesten ...' Edwin knikt ... Hij voelt weer energie door zijn benen vloeien ...

'We moeten verder, Edwin,' brult Anubis ... En Anubis brengt Edwin boven op een heuvel ... Er is hier een prachtig uitzicht ... In de verte komt er een vogel aanvliegen ... En gaat vlak bij Anubis en Edwin op een struikje zitten ... De vogel lijkt een beetje op een arend ... Dan begint de vogel te spreken : 'Ik ben Nut ... eindelijk ben je in mijn wereld gekomen ...' Langzaam begint de kop van de vogel in het hoofd van een vrouw te veranderen met witte bleke strepen op haar gezicht, als een soort verf ... De vrouw heeft lichte haren, en verder een donkere huid ... Maar de kleur was een hele speciale donkere kleur ... een beetje dof ... Het leek wel alsof ze één was met de natuur hier ... Ze leek alle kleuren te weerkaatsen. Edwin voelde zich blij worden ... alsof het goed was ... Een zacht schuimend gevoel stroomde van zijn onderbuik naar zijn benen ... Er stonden prachtige struiken om hen heen, met vruchten ... Anubis begon van de vruchten te eten en gaf ook vruchten aan Nut en Edwin ... 'Wat een droomvakantie ...' dacht Edwin ...

Plotseling begon ook de rest van de vogel in een vrouw te veranderen ... De vrouw pakte Edwin bij de hand, en leidde hem over de heuvel heen, naar de andere kant ... Hier was een soort akker of groentetuin ... De vrouw leidde Edwin er doorheen, en Anubis liep er achteraan ... In de verte was een soort stad ... Maar voor die stad lag een meer ... Met z'n drieen zwommen ze het meer over, en begonnen hun klimtocht naar de stad die op een verhoging lag ... Het was een stad vol met katten ... Maar toen de katten de drie zagen begonnen ze langzaam in vrouwen te veranderen ... Edwin keek z'n ogen uit, en voelde energie door zijn armen vloeien ... De vrouwen hadden hele zachte stemmen, en zeiden dat ze zo lang opgesloten waren geweest in hun kattenlichamen ...

Hoofdstuk 4.

De vrouwen leidden de drie binnenin hun stad ... Er stonden hier vele oude poorten en oude religieuze gebouwen ... In het midden van de stad achter een weilandje stond een enorme kerk of kathedraal ... Binnenin waren geesten ... als spoken ... De vrouwen leidden de drie naar binnen ... Edwin voelt energie door zijn hoofd vloeien ... De vrouwen begonnen de geesten uit de kathedraal te jagen ... Eén van de

vrouwen loopt naar voren, en begint te prediken ... Edwin onderzoekt ondertussen het gebouw ... Dan draait Nut zich naar Edwin toe, en zegt : 'Kom, Edwin, ik wil je wat laten zien ...' Nut leidt Edwin over een oude stenen trap naar beneden, tot onder de kathedraal ... Dan gaan ze door een tunnel die helemaal tot een bibliotheek leidt ... In de bibliotheekgang aangekomen lopen ze helemaal tot het einde van het gebouw, waar een schilderij hangt met een oude vrouw en een vrouwelijke farao ... Nut drukt met haar hand op het schilderij, en het schilderij begint rood te gloeien, en daarna in andere kleuren ... Dan draait de muur zich ineens om ... Een pad verschijnt voor hen ... Dit pad is omgeven met hoge muren .... Het pad is als een dorre woestijn ... Samen begaan ze het pad ... Het is een hele lange tijd lopen .... Dan uiteindelijk komen ze aan bij een oase, ook door muren omgeven .... Er is hier een meertje met groene blubber, en Nut daalt erin af, terwijl Edwin haar volgt ... Kopje onder gaan ze, en Nut trekt Edwin mee tot een kelder nog dieper onder de grond ... Hier staan allemaal flessen ... In die kelder hangt aan een muur ongeveer hetzelfde schilderij als in de bibliotheek, alleen nu lijkt de vrouwelijke farao op een ram en een telefoon ... 'Druk je hand eens op het schilderij ?' vraagt Nut aan Edwin ... Edwin drukt zijn hand erop, en weer begint het schilderij in vele kleuren te gloeien, en dan draait de muur zich om .... Weer komen ze op een ander pad terecht ... Hier is het iets donkerder en vochtiger .... Overal hangen schilderijen ... ongeveer dezelfden als ze al hadden gezien ... Dan komen ze aan bij een zee waar wat caravans en tenten staan ... Samen beginnen ze aan hun tocht over de zee ... Edwin begrijpt niet hoe hij ineens aan zoveel energie komt ... Hij zou makkelijk een zee kunnen overzwemmen ... Maar dan opeens is Nut verdwenen ..... en Edwin wordt wakker ...

De nacht daarop heeft Edwin weer een droom over Nut ... Dit keer kan hij haar gewoon aanraken ... Er is geen glas meer tussen hen .... Hij pakt de cadeau's uit die zij voor hem mee heeft genomen ... Er zit een soort drop in, en Edwin begint direkt te eten ... Ook zit er een schilderij tussen van zijn vorige droom ... Als Edwin wakker wordt begint hij na te denken over al die dromen ... Hij besluit ze op te schrijven en voor te lezen aan de voorganger ... Die is erg verbaasd, want weer herkent deze enkele details als gebeurtenissen in zijn eigen leven ...

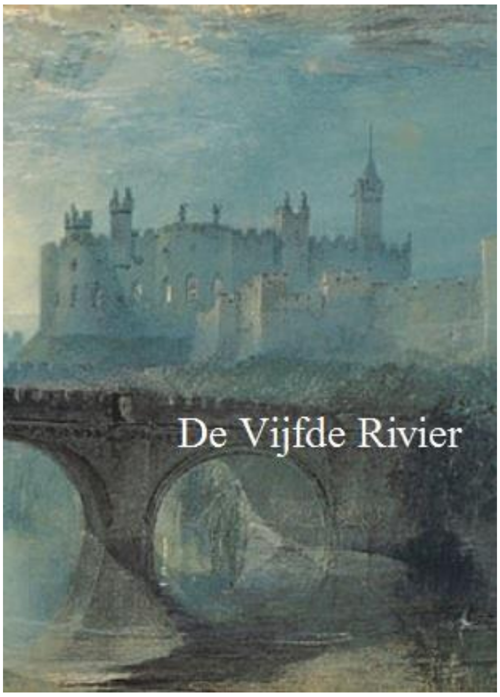
Hoofdstuk 5.

Edwin besluit al zijn dromen in een boek op te schrijven. Zo zouden er misschien veel meer wat aan hebben ... maar Edwin snapt de precieze betekenis van die dromen nog niet ... Wat bijvoorbeeld over die omzwervingen ? Wat moest Edwin ermee ... Edwin dacht dat er misschien mensen waren zoals de voorganger die er wat mee konden ... Edwin zelf vond het meer 'raadseldromen' ... Misschien waren het wel geheime boodschappen voor anderen waar hij zelf niks van afwist ... Wel had Edwin al veel aan de vriendschap met deze Egyptische entiteiten ... Voor hemzelf waren het verder gewoon open verhalen .... Maar misschien waren de dromen nog niet klaar ...

Maar sinds Edwin er een boekwerkje van had gemaakt stopten de dromen ... Misschien dat het toch al af was, en dat misschien alleen nog de betekenis zou komen ... Die zou dan misschien via de lezers komen ... Edwin besloot maar af te wachten, maar eigenlijk bleef alles gewoon bij het verhaal van de voorganger ... Niemand scheen echt aandacht te geven aan het boekwerkje ... Maar dan gaat Edwin met de dromen aan de gang .... Hij gaat er gewoon eigen verhalen van maken ... En ook komen er nog enkele verhalen bij ... Edwin put inspiratie uit het dagdromen ... Weer maakt Edwin er een boekwerkje van, en ditmaal slaat het beter aan als het dromenboekje ... Sommige mensen zijn zo enthousiast over de verhalen dat ze er een verfilming van willen maken ... Niet lang daarna draaien er wat films van de verhalen van Edwin in de bioscopen ... Edwin is erg trots, en ook de voorganger ... Zelfs de vrouw van de voorganger is erg trots op Edwin, en sindsdien doet ze ineens een stuk aardiger tegen hem ... Edwin weet niet wat hij daarvan moet denken ... Op een dag vraagt ze aan Edwin of ze ook mag meespelen in één van de komende films ... Edwin vind dat een goed idee, en na een tijd van opnames is zij ook op het witte doek te zien ... Ook zij begint verhalen te schrijven, en er komen al snel verfilmingen van ....

Edwin schrikt wakker .... Wat een vreemde droom heeft hij weer gehad, en wat duurde deze lang ... Vandaag zou hij dan echt zijn moeder voor het eerst van zijn leven ontmoeten .... Zenuwachtig kleed hij zich aan ... De bel gaat ... Dat zal ze wezen ... Met zenuwachtige stappen loopt hij rechtstreeks naar de deur ...

Einde


De Vijfde Rivier

COAB 2017

1. De IJsheks

2. IJsziek

3. Het Eén-Dags-Kruid

4. De Tuin Engel

5. De Verslaving

6. De Vijfde Rivier

7. De Speelgoed Fabriek

8. Ik en mijn Video Spelletje

9. Gevangen in een Video Spel

De IJsheks

Eliak keek op naar de planeet die ze de Traan noemden. Hier zouden alle planeten omheen draaien, ook zijn eigen planeet. Eliak vroeg er veel over aan zijn moeder, maar die had niet overal antwoord op. Het was één van die mysteriën van het leven.

Eliak keek naar zijn moeder. Hij deed dat altijd vol liefde en warmte. Het was zijn echte moeder niet, maar zij redde hem eens toen hij met zijn bootje de waterval afgleed. Als zij er niet was geweest dan was hij waarschijnlijk verdronken. Hij was met zijn hoofd tegen een rots gestoten en gleed toen het wilde water in, bewusteloos. Sindsdien kon hij zich niet meer veel herinneren, alleen dat zij hem gered had. Hij werd wakker in een hut, en haar warme, liefdevolle gezicht keek hem aan. Hij noemde haar zijn behouder, maar zij werd ook zijn nieuwe moeder. Hij kon zich niet herinneren wie zijn echte moeder was of waar hij woonde. En alles was zo diep in de wildernis gebeurd dat het onmogelijk was het uit te zoeken.

Eliak voelde zich altijd licht in zijn hoofd, vanwege het ongeluk met de rots. Het was alsof er altijd vliegen in zijn hoofd rondvlogen. Vaak voelde hij zich duizelig, en hij leed sindsdien aan epilepsie. Soms had hij last van hyperventilatie. Zijn moeder was hierin een grote steun.

Moeder zei hem altijd dat hij uit de stad kwam, waar ze niet leefden door de Traan. Al het leven draaide om de Traan, maar de stad draaide om zichzelf. Moeder zei altijd dat de Traan het hogere leven was, maar op vele vragen had ze geen antwoord.

Op de Traan zouden er ook watervallen zijn en rivieren, en wildernis. Maar moeder kon hem niet vertellen hoe hij op de Traan zou kunnen komen. De planeet was erg ver weg en ze konden niet vliegen.

Het jongetje moest en zou er achter komen hoe daar te komen. Op een dag las hij erover in een boekje dat alleen de vliegen tot de Traan konden komen, maar soms namen zij weleens iemand mee. Eliak hoopte dat hij een keer werd meegenomen, maar eigenlijk gebeurde het nooit.

Op een dag maakte hij een hele lange strandwandeling, en kwam na een tijdje bij een struikje een vlieg tegen. 'Ach,' zei Eliak, 'kun jij me niet met je meenemen naar de Traan ?' De vlieg begon hem uit te lachen. 'Denk je dat ik jou kan dragen ?' vroeg de vlieg. De vlieg begon hem te bespotten. Het spotten werd zo erg dat Eliak bijna huilend verder liep.

Toen hij thuiskwam in de hut vertelde hij het aan zijn moeder. 'Je kunt beter wachten totdat het donker is,' zei moeder. 'Dan zijn de vliegen vaak in groepen, en dan kunnen ze je misschien wel dragen.' Dat leek Eliak wel een goed idee. Hij wachtte totdat het avond was geworden, en ging toen weer naar het strand. Er waren overal vuurvliegjes die het pad naar het strand hadden verlicht. Op het strand kwam Eliak een groep vliegen tegen die daar speelden, en vroeg hen of zij hem mee wilden nemen naar de Traan. Maar ze begonnen hem uit te lachen en te bespotten. Ze zeiden dat het allemaal leugens waren, en dat hij nooit naar de Traan zou kunnen gaan. Hij moest hier voor de rest van zijn leven blijven. Huilend ging Eliak naar huis en toen hij in de hut was aangekomen viel hij zijn moeder in haar armen. Hij stotterde het hele verhaal, en zijn moeder zei : 'Eliak, kijk eens, de Traan is al in je hart gekomen. Je hebt ernaar verlangt en nu is het hier. Maar ik begrijp je wel : Je wil naar de Traan toe, en als de vliegen zo vervelend doen, dan zit er niets anders op dan het de tovenaar te vragen.'

Eliak zag dat als zijn laatste kans. Daarom ging hij de volgende ochtend op pad naar de tovenaar. Hij was vol frisse moed, en was blij dat er nog tovenaars bestonden. Bicardo heette

de tovenaar. Hij was een groot kunstenaar die in een kasteel bij het strand woonde, ergens in de duinen. Toen Eliak daar na een lange wandeltocht aankwam was de tovenaar aan het schilderen. Hij maakte wonderschone schilderijen, schilderijen die leefden, en waardoor je andere werelden binnen kon gaan. Bicardo was helemaal in zijn nieuwe schilderij verdiept toen Eliak binnenkwam. Eliak groette en de tovenaar bleef maar doorpeinzen over het nieuwe schilderij, als in een hypnose. Eliak moest meerdere keren groeten voordat de tovenaar hem eindelijk opmerkte. 'Zo, klein jongetje,' sprak de tovenaar. 'Waar kan ik je mee helpen ?'

Eliak begon zijn verhaal te vertellen. De tovenaar begon te glimlachen. 'Oh, maar dat is heel eenvoudig,' zei de tovenaar. 'Ik heb vele schilderijen geschilderd over de Traan, en die schilderijen leven. Het zijn poorten tot de Traan. Het is heel eenvoudig, kom maar mee.'

Met het jongetje liep hij een gang door totdat ze in een groot gallerij kwamen met vele trappen. Aan de muren hingen grote schilderijen van de centrale planeet, de Traan. Eliak keek zijn ogen uit. De golven op de schilderijen van de Traan bewogen gewoon. De tovenaar zei dat het tranen waren. Eliak legde zijn vinger tegen een golf aan en werd direct helemaal nat. Het spoelde over hem heen. De tovenaar moest erg lachen. Eliak deed zijn vinger in zijn mond. 'Het proeft zout,' zei Eliak, 'net als een echte zee.'

'Ja, ja,' zei de tovenaar, 'je kan er zo in zwemmen. En dan zwem je naar de kust en dan ben je op de Traan.'

'Echt ?' vroeg Eliak.

'Ja,' zei de tovenaar, 'of we slaan dit voor nu even over, en gaan direct naar de kust, want ik heb ook schilderijen over de wildernis van de Traan.'

Toen liepen ze naar een schilderij van een oerwoud. 'Is dat niet gevaarlijk ?' vroeg Eliak.

'Welnee, joh,' zei Bicardo. 'Niet als ik erbij ben.' De tovenaar was gekleed in rood en paars en had een grote witte baard. Even sloeg hij op het schilderij van het oerwoud met een staf en er sprong zo een kikker uit.

'Geweldig,' zei Eliak. 'Mijn moeder zal vast heel blij zijn. Op zoveel vragen kan ze mij geen antwoord geven.'

'Ik weet alles,' zei Bicardo.

'Wat moet u een geweldig leven hebben,' zei Eliak. 'Dat u zulke schilderijen kunt maken.'

'Nou jongen,' zei de tovenaar, 'aan de ene kant wel, maar besef ook goed dat de Traan niet altijd een pretje is. De Traan laat zoveel zien, zowel goede dingen als slechte dingen. Er is zoveel wat de Traan wil veranderen.'

'Ik begrijp het,' zei het jongetje. 'Ik kan bijna niet wachten. Ik zou het zo graag willen zien.'

Toen leidde de tovenaar het jongetje naar een ander schilderij met een stromende waterval. 'Ik was eens van een waterval afgevallen,' zei Eliak. 'Ik stootte mijn hoofd aan een rots, en daarna ben ik nooit meer dezelfde geweest. Mijn geheugen van vóór die tijd is grotendeels weg.'

Bicardo keek hem aan en wreef zijn hand over het hoofd van het jongetje. 'De Traan is al in jou,' sprak de tovenaar.

'Ik weet het,' zei Eliak.

'De Traan roept je voor wonderlijke avonturen,' zei de tovenaar. Toen liepen ze naar een ander schilderij. Op het schilderij stond een grote poort. 'Ben je klaar ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

'Helemaal,' zei Eliak.

Toen nam Bicardo hem door het schilderij. Van alles begon toen door Eliak's hoofd te zoemen. Alles voelde zo zacht en licht aan, nog wel lichter dan het ooit was geweest, en overal waren prachtige vliegen. Ze gingen door de poort en kwamen in een groot oerwoud.

Overal waren watervalletjes. Ook waren er overal kampen gemaakt van bamboe van verschillende verdiepingen met hutjes erop. 'Prachtig !' riep Eliak. Wat vrouwen kwamen naar Eliak toe.

'Is hij nieuw ?' vroegen ze aan de tovenaar.

De tovenaar knikte.

De vrouwen keken het jongetje liefdevol aan. 'Hij moet nog veel leren,' zei één van de vrouwen.

'Dat kunnen jullie mooi doen,' sprak de tovenaar, en was toen ineens verdwenen.

Eliak wreef even in zijn ogen.

'Hoe heet je ?' vroeg een andere vrouw warm en liefdevol.

'Eliak,' zei het jongetje.

De vrouw glimlachte. 'Welkom in de wondere wereld van de Traan.'

'Is het echt zo dat alles leeft door de Traan ?' vroeg Eliak.

'Alles,' zei weer een andere vrouw. 'De Traan is ons leven. Zonder de Traan gaat alles dood.'

'Ik ben dus op de juiste plaats gekomen,' zei Eliak.

De vrouwen knikten. Eliak keek om zich heen. Hij bewonderde alle grote stellages van bamboe. Eén van de vrouwen kwam dichterbij en tilde hem op. Hij omhelsde haar. Ze leek op zijn moeder. 'Wij zullen voor je zorgen,' zei de vrouw. 'Dat doet de Traan. De Traan zorgt voor ons allemaal, en wij zorgen voor elkaar.' Het jongetje glimlachte. Hij kwam tot een diepe rust. Hij keek naar een rivier, en wees ernaar. 'En dat zijn allemaal tranen ?'

'Ja,' sprak de vrouw aan wiens nek hij hing. 'De tranen zijn de dromen.' Ze kuste zijn voorhoofd zacht. Er rolde een traan uit zijn ogen. Het was een traan van geluk.

'Hoe is de Traan ontstaan ?' vroeg hij.

'De Traan heeft altijd al bestaan,' zei de vrouw, 'maar eerst zat de Traan opgesloten in een steen, een ei van steen, en op een dag kwam de Traan uit het ei.'

'Interessant,' zei Eliak.

Een man schrikt wakker van een droom en grijpt naar de rode steen op zijn nachtkastje die hij de dag ervoor had gekocht. Tranen biggelen over zijn wangen als hij de steen tegen zijn hart drukt. Hij maakt zijn vrouw wakker, die hem in haar armen neemt. 'Heb je weer een nachtmerrie gehad ?' vroeg ze warm en liefdevol.

'N... nee,' stotterde de man, 'H... het was zo mooi, zo lieflijk ...'

'Wil je het me vertellen ?' vroeg de vrouw.

De man vertelt de droom.

'Denk je dat het met de rode steen heeft te maken ?' vroeg de vrouw. 'In de winkel zeiden ze dat het een hele bijzondere steen was.'

'Ik weet het niet,' snikte de man.

'Misschien als je weer gaat slapen krijg je het antwoord wel,' sprak de vrouw. 'In de winkel zeiden ze dat het een dromensteen was.'

De man probeert weer te slapen en ligt dicht tegen zijn vrouw aan. De volgende dag moet hij vroeg op voor het werk. Hij werkt bij de douane. In de middag komt een collega naar hem toe

met een vreemde steen in zijn hand. 'Hier,' zei de collega, 'in de steen is het hol. Daar hebben ze drugs mee gesmokkeld. Ze worden steeds slimmer vandaag de dag.'

De man moest ineens weer aan de droom denken. 'Ik heb vannacht toch zo vreemd gedroomd,' zei hij, en begon de droom aan zijn collega te vertellen. Zijn collega begon hem uit te lachen. 'Ik denk dat je gek aan het worden bent,' zei de collega spottend. Even later had de collega het hele verhaal doorverteld, en het verhaal werd hoe langer hoe gekker. Helemaal gesloopt kwam de man die avond thuis, en vertelde zijn vrouw over alle roddel en spot.

'Ik denk dat dat de keerzijde van de Traan is,' zei de vrouw. 'Denk aan de droom, hoe het jongetje bespot werd, en hoe de tovenaar al aangaf hoe dubbel alles was.'

'Je hebt gelijk,' zei de man, 'maar het is geen pretje om zo voor schut gezet te worden, en zo in je vertrouwen beschaamd te worden.'

'Is de Traan niet iets wat communiceert ?' vroeg de vrouw. 'Het brengt het gevoel van de ene persoon over naar de andere persoon. Zo kun je je in de ander verplaatsen.'

De man knikte. Nacht na nacht wachtte hij op nieuwe dromen, maar ze kwamen maar niet, en het huilen stond hem nader dan het lachen. Het was alsof de Traan hem van binnen aanvrat. Hij begon boos te worden, ook boos op zijn vrouw. Op een dag kon hij het niet meer langer houden. 'Het komt allemaal door die vervloekte steen !' riep hij. Hij nam de rode steen mee naar het strand en wierp het zo ver als hij kon de zee in. Toen hij thuiskwam voelde hij zich opgelucht.

'Opgelucht ?' vroeg zijn vrouw.

'Ja,' zei de man. 'Ik voel me kilo's lichter. Het leek wel een plaaggeest, die steen.'

'Ik ben het niet met je eens,' zei de vrouw. 'Er gaan dingen mis in je leven, en je hebt behoeftes die maar niet vervuld lijken te worden, en dan leg je de schuld op andere dingen, terwijl je niet de tijd neemt om dingen te onderzoeken, op waarde te schatten en te leren begrijpen.'

Maar hij werd alleen maar bozer. 'Jij hebt makkelijk praten,' zei hij. 'Jij gaat niet door de dingen waar ik doorheen ga.'

'Hoe weet je dat ?' vroeg ze. 'Weet je hoe lang het duurt voordat je een brug tussen twee personen kunt overgaan ? Het lijkt eindeloos. Dat kan alleen door magie.'

'En die magie is er niet,' zei hij. 'Ik dacht dat het er was, maar nu is het weg.'

'Op de eindeloze brug tussen twee personen kom je altijd eerst het misverstand en de traan tegen,' sprak ze. 'De ander is een puzzel. Het is niet eenvoudig. Het gaat erom geduld te hebben. Ben je in voor het avontuur van ontdekking ?'

'Ik kan het niet meer,' zei hij, en liep de deur uit. In de nacht kwam hij terug en ging in een ander bed liggen. Ze begonnen uit elkaar te groeien, meer en meer. Ze hielden van elkaar, maar ze hadden beiden het gevoel opgesloten te zitten in een stenen ei.

'Toch blijf ik er aan vasthouden dat eens de traan zal losbreken uit het stenen ei zoals in je droom,' zei de vrouw op een dag. Hij zweeg. Ze kwam dichter naar hem toe, en nam hem in haar armen. Hij voelde aan als steen. Zij had het gevoel alsof hij het stenen ei was waarin ze opgesloten zat, maar ze wist ook dat er meer aan de hand moest zijn. Op een dag kon ze er niet meer tegen. Er was iets in haar geknapt, en ook zij begon steeds meer in steen te veranderen, zo erg dat hij het begon op te merken. Hoe hij ook op haar in begon te praten en haar probeerde te helpen, niets hielp, en het werd alleen maar erger.

'Herinner je al je woorden dan die je naar mij gebruikte,' zei hij.

Vaak zweeg ze dan, of zei dat ze het zich niet meer kon herinneren, of dat het toch niet werkte. Hij begon steeds zachter te worden, maar hij had het idee alsof hij te laat was gekomen, alsof hij de laatste trein had gemist. Hoe hij ook aan haar sleutelde, niets hielp. Hij was weer teruggekomen tot zijn vroegere ideeën en leefde weer vanuit de traan. Hij begreep haar, omdat hij hier zelf ook doorheen was gegaan. Hij zei dat ook altijd tegen haar, maar ze werd met de dag kouder en harder. Hij deed van alles om haar op te vrolijken, maar niets hielp.

'Ik ben er voor je,' zei hij op een dag. 'Waarschijnlijk moeten we hier doorheen. Ik weet wie je echt bent. Dit ben je niet, zoals ik ook mezelf niet was.'

Op een nacht had hij weer een droom, na een hele lange tijd. Hij was in het atelier van Bicardo de tovenaar. Hij smeekte de tovenaar hem te helpen. De tovenaar liet hem een schilderij zien van ijs. Overal waren ijsvlaktes. 'Ben je bereid door deze ijsvlaktes te gaan om je vrouw te ontdooien ?' vroeg Bicardo. 'Je vrouw is in gevangenschap van een ijsheks.'

'Wat !' riep de man. 'Hoe komt ze daar ? Ze is altijd de warmte zelf geweest.'

'Ze is in een ei van ijs,' zei de tovenaar.

'Ja, maar hoe ?' riep de man.

'Ben je bereid ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

'Natuurlijk,' zei de man, 'voor haar heb ik alles over.'

Zonder verder wat te zeggen duwde de tovenaar hem ruw door het schilderij heen, en hij viel diep naar beneden in de sneeuw van de ijsvlaktes. Het was alsof hij met zijn hoofd iets hard raakte, als een rots. Voor een tijdje lag hij bewusteloos en kwam toen langzaam weer bij. Hij begon te strompelen door de sneeuw, voor uren en uren, terwijl het wel dagen leken, en hij begon zich steeds kouder te voelen. 'Ik ga hier dood !' riep hij.

Hij begon te schreeuwen als een wild beest. 'Niemand helpt, hè ?' Na een tijdje kwam hij aan bij iets wat leek op een kasteel. Het was omgeven door een ijzige mist en een bevroren rivier. Hij liep het bruggetje over en moest zorgen dat hij niet uitgleed. Hij besefte ook dat als dit het kasteel van de ijsheks zou zijn, dan kon hij weleens in grote problemen zijn. Bij de gesloten poort belde hij aan. Een oud vrouwtje kwam even later de poort opendoen.

'Ik ben op zoek naar de ijsheks,' sprak hij.

'Kom verder,' zei het oude vrouwtje. 'Ik kan je daar alles over vertellen.'

'Maar wat als uzelf de ijsheks bent ?' vroeg hij aarzelend.

'Wees maar niet bang,' zei het oude vrouwtje.

'U bent niet de ijsheks ?' vroeg de man.

Ze schudde haar hoofd.

'Ja of nee ?' vroeg de man. 'Ik wordt altijd een beetje zenuwachtig van gebarentaal.'

'Kom nou maar binnen,' zei het vrouwtje. 'Het is koud buiten. En nee, ik ben niet de ijsheks.'

Haar gedrag begon hem meer en meer te irriteren. 'Ik weet wel zeker dat jij de ijsheks bent,' sprak hij. 'IJsheksen doen altijd zo. Maar ik heb geen andere keus. Ik ben aan het doodvriezen.'

'Wees niet bang,' zei ze weer. 'Volg mij.'

Binnen was het een stuk warmer. 'Wat heb je met mijn vrouw gedaan ?' vroeg hij. Ze leidde hem door een gang naar een soort huiskamer. Hier kreeg hij een stoel.

'Ik ben geen ijsheks,' zei ze weer. 'De ijsheks woont verderop. Ik heb vroeger wel voor haar gewerkt, maar toen ik er achter kwam dat ze een slechte vrouw was ben ik ermee gestopt.'

'Wat voor werk deed u ?' vroeg de man.

'Schoonmaak,' zei de vrouw, 'het huishouden. Soms kookte ik voor haar.'

'Ik zie het,' zei de man. 'Kunt u mij vertellen waar mijn vrouw is, en waarom ? Bicardo zei dat mijn vrouw in gevangenschap leeft van een ijsheks.'

'Ik kan het u niet vertellen,' zei het vrouwtje. 'Het kan persoonlijke redenen hebben. Ik ken geen details. Ik weet alleen waar ze woont en dat ze niet te vertrouwen is.'

'U kunt proberen een reden te geven ?' vroeg de man.

'Zo zit ze in elkaar,' zei het vrouwtje.

De man besefte dat hij niet verder kwam met het vrouwtje. Ook wist hij niet of het vrouwtje de waarheid sprak. 'Breng me naar de ijsheks,' zei hij na een tijdje. De vrouw had hem voedsel aangeboden en wat te drinken, maar dat had hij geweigerd, uit angst vergiftigd te worden. Het vrouwtje stond op, en sprak : 'Volg mij.' Weer liepen ze door de gang, maar dan helemaal naar de andere kant van het kasteel waar een grote tuin was. Ook hier lag overal sneeuw. In de verte was een nog veel groter kasteel, en het kasteel was verlicht. 'Daar woont ze,' sprak de vrouw, terwijl ze de achterdeur opendeed. Hij stapte naar buiten, en ze sloot direct de deur achter zich. Hij groette haar, maar hij zag haar al weglopen door het raam. Hij zette het op een lopen, en rende naar het verlichte kasteel toe. Hij hoorde het gehuil van wolven in de verte.

'Ken ik jou ?' krijste een stem.

'Nee, Madelief !' hoorde hij een man terugroepen.

'Niet jij, maar die man die eraan komt !'

Hij rende tot de verlichte poort, waar een andere oude vrouw was. Ze was aan het schrobben. Hij zag de andere man niet. 'Wie bent u ?' vroeg het vrouwtje terwijl ze opkeek.

'Wat heb je met mijn vrouw gedaan ?' vroeg de man.

'Niets,' zei het vrouwtje verbaasd. 'Ik zou niet weten wie je bent of wie je vrouw is.'

'U bent de ijsheks ?' vroeg hij.

'Welnee,' zei het vrouwtje. 'Die woont aan de overkant.'

'Waar ?' vroeg hij.

'Daar waar je vandaan kwam,' zei het vrouwtje.

De man schrikt wakker, en grijpt om zich heen, maar zijn vrouw slaapt in de andere kamer. De volgende ochtend vertelt hij de nachtmerrie. Ze zegt niets.

'Ik begin te geloven dat het waar is,' zei hij. 'Je bent niet meer zoals je was.'

'Geloof je in sprookjes en dromen ?' vroeg zijn vrouw op een spottende toon. 'Blijf met je beide benen in de realiteit. Daar schieten we veel meer mee op.'

'Vroeger was je niet zo,' sprak hij.

'Ik ben eindelijk ontwaakt,' sprak ze. 'Ik ben je spelletjes zat. Ik praatte altijd maar met je mee. Het was allemaal aangeleerd gedrag.'

Hij zuchtte. Hij begon erg aan zichzelf te twijfelen. Misschien was hij wel ontspoord. 'Maar Bicardo ...' zei hij aarzelend.

'Bicardo is een verzinsel,' sprak zijn vrouw spottend. 'Er bestaat geen Bicardo. Er bestaat geen ijsheks, en die verhalen over de Traan zijn ook allemaal belachelijk. Kinderachtig is het. Het helpt ons niet verder.'

Hij zuchtte weer. 'Ik kan niet tot je doordringen, maar dan zou ik je willen vragen : Kun je dan alsjeblieft tot mij doordringen ? Als jij het zo goed weet, onderwijs me dan ?'

'Stoppen met alle onzin,' sprak ze. 'Al dat zweverige gedoe van jou heeft ons nooit verder gebracht, en nu kan ik het niet meer. Ik heb je niets te zeggen. Jij hebt mijn leven kapotgemaakt met al jouw dromen en verhalen.'

Hij schrok. Dit was niet de vrouw die hij eens kende. De dag erna was ze weg. Ze had een briefje achtergelaten : 'Het gaat zo niet meer. We lopen elkaar alleen maar voor de voeten. Denk niet dat het is omdat ik niet van je houd. Ik zal je missen.' Hij voelde zich koud, als in de greep van een ijsheks. Hij ook altijd met zijn verhalen. Had hij nu zijn mond maar gehouden. Of was dit misschien de prijs die hij moest betalen ? 'Hoe duur is die traan wel niet !' riep hij uit.

Hij begon steeds minder te voelen, alsof hij was opgesloten in een steen. Alle hoop begon uit zijn leven weg te sijpelen. Hij had wat nieuwe vriendinnen, maar kwam niet ver op de eindeloze bruggen tussen hen in. Altijd weer dat misverstand en dat onbegrip, alsof ze te verschillend waren. Het was een onmogelijke opgave. Alle wegen schenen dood te lopen, en hij klapte snel dicht, of durfde het niet meer aan. Hij was bang zijn gevoelens te laten zien, het laatste wat hij nog had, en wat steeds minder leek te worden. Hij was bang zijn tranen te laten zien. Op wat voor vreemd pad was hij terecht gekomen in zijn leven ?

Op een nacht had hij een droom dat hij weer in de ijsvlaktes was, en hij werd omsingeld door vliegen. Ze begonnen over hem te roddelen, en alles wat hij gezegd had begonnen ze om te draaien, en het geroddel en gelieg werd erger en erger, totdat ze hem begonnen aan te vallen en op te vreten. Hij werd gillend wakker van de nachtmerrie.

Hij begon steeds kwader te worden op het leven, maar het was als het aanschoppen tegen steen. Niets veranderde. Hij noemde alles om hem heen kinderachtige fantasie, en zijn enige

waarheid waren zijn dromen. Hij had alle hoop gevestigd op Bicardo de tovenaar, maar die kwam maar niet. Ook dit hield hij niet lang vol. Hij was kwaad op zichzelf. Was hij ziek, gek of misschien een leugenaar ? Bedroog hij zichzelf ? Of was hij onder een vloek ? Hij begon meer dingen uit zijn huis weg te gooien uit angst voor vloeken en betoveringen. Steeds weer ging hij naar het strand en wierp zijn bezittingen in de zee. Hij deed dit zelfs met grammofoon platen. Terwijl hij dit deed schold hij altijd op de zee. Hij was bang voor de zee, en voelde zich machteloos naar het grote natuurgeweld van de zee. Hij was tegelijkertijd woedend op de zee en op de natuur.

Iets knaagde aan hem, maar hij wist niet wat. Huilen kon hij niet eens meer, en zo begon hij meer en meer weer als steen te worden, harder dan ooit tevoren. Hij wist dat het nu hard tegen hard was. Hij moest wel, anders zou hij het niet overleven. Hij vertrouwde geen mens meer, en begon zich zoveel mogelijk af te zonderen van mensen. Zijn baan bij de douane gaf hij op. Het was hem onmogelijk geworden. Hij wilde geen mensen meer zien. Het liefst zou hij het bos willen inrennen om daar te wonen. Het kon hem niet meer schelen. Hij zou de prijs wel betalen. Hij maalde er niet meer om, huilde er niet meer om, en klagen deed hij ook niet meer. In de nachten had hij dromen dat hij in steen veranderde. Op een nacht in een droom kwam Bicardo heel dichtbij hem met zijn staf. 'Nee,' smeekte hij. 'Raak mij niet aan met die staf.'

'Het is tijd dat je uit het ei van steen komt, dat het steen wordt opengebroken,' sprak de tovenaar en sloeg tegen de steen aan die hij was geworden. Hij gilde het uit van de pijn, en het leek alsof hij onder grote stroom stond. Hij begon open te barsten, en rivieren begonnen uit hem voort te stromen. 'Ja, ja !' riep hij. 'Ik zie het eeuwige leven !' Hij hoorde toen het gebulder van de zee wat in hem losbrak. Na een tijdje viel hij uitgeput op de grond. Alles tolde voor zijn ogen. Hij was nog te zwak om wat te zeggen. Alles overweldigde hem, overspoelde hem, als groot natuurgeweld. Overal was donder, bliksem, en storm. Het was alsof een orkaan hem opnam.

'Wat weet jij van het leven ?' vroeg Bicardo.

'Helemaal niets,' zei hij zacht.

'Spreek harder,' zei Bicardo.

'Helemaal niets !' riep hij.

'Ben je klaar voor school ?' vroeg Bicardo.

'Ja, helemaal,' zei hij.

'Jij bent Eliak,' zei Bicardo. 'De Traan is ontwaakt in je. Nu moet je opgevoed worden en geschoold worden in de Traan.'

Hij keek om zich heen en zag de bamboe kampen zoals in de droom over Eliak, het jongetje. Hij voelde zich weer een kind, en zag de natuur-vrouwen op hem afkomen. Ze waren warm en liefdevol, en keken hem glimlachend aan.

'Het heeft me verscheurd,' sprak hij.

'Je moest losgescheurd worden om hier te kunnen komen,' sprak één van de vrouwen.

'De stenen zijn duur, en helemaal de sappen die ze dragen,' sprak een andere vrouw.

'Het leven is duur, zeer duur,' zei een andere vrouw.

Hij knikte. 'Laat me nooit meer los,' smeekte hij.

Toen werd hij wakker. Hij was rustig en er was een warmte om hem heen. 'Ik wordt heen en weer geslingerd tussen twee werelden,' zei hij tegen zichzelf, 'maar ze beïnvloeden elkaar. Ergens moet er een kruispunt zijn, een samensmelting.' Hij zuchtte van opluchting. Hij voelde met beide werelden contact. 'Ik moet beide delen accepteren,' zei hij tegen zichzelf. 'Zij horen bij elkaar. Zij vullen elkaar aan, stuwen elkaar op. Zij behoren tot mijn levensverhaal als kostbare stenen met kostbare sappen. Het leven is waardevol. Eerst is er het misverstand, en dan het begrip, het geheim van de Traan.' Hij beefde. Het leek nog steeds alsof hij droomde. Hij zag zijn verleden langs hem heenstromen als een rivier. Hij wist dat hij de rivier niet kon vasthouden. Alles zou weer tussen zijn vingers wegglippen. Hij moest verder. Hij moest het geheim van de rivier ontdekken, het geheim van de Traan.

Hij zou niet teruggaan naar het verleden. Hij wist dat het iets cyclisch was. Het zou vanzelf wel weer terugkomen, maar dan op een andere manier. Niets was blijvend. Alles moest veranderen. Hij keek naar zijn trouwring. Het waren twee handen die elkaar vasthielden. Hij schudde zijn hoofd. De materie zou hem nooit verder helpen. Dit was geen echte cyclus. Het zou hem alleen maar afhouden van de hogere cyclus. Hij moest het loslaten. Hij ging naar het strand en wierp de gouden trouwring zo ver de zee in als hij kon. Hij voelde de brandende hand van Bicardo op zijn schouder. Alsof toen alles ineens door kon stromen. Hij dook de zee in nadat hij zijn kleren had uitgetrokken. Het was een warme, tropische dag. Hij waande zichzelf met de natuurvrouwen uit zijn droom. Hij maakte plezier met hen in de warme zee. Hij proefde wat van het zoute water. Het leek wel alsof Bicardo naar hem keek vanaf het strand. 'Kom ook in het water, Bicardo !' riep hij. Maar Bicardo begon steeds meer weg te vagen. 'Nee, ik moet nog wat karweitjes doen !' riep de tovenaar. 'Maak jij maar lekker pret met de natuurvrouwen, en leer van hen.' Alles wat nog van deze woorden overbleef was nog een echo.

Een jongen wordt wakker in het klaslokaal door de bel. Hij had zo vreemd gedroomd. Maar ja, alles beter dan zo'n saaie les. Hij had nog steeds de echo van Bicardo's woorden in zijn hoofd, en hij voelde zich duizelig. De kinderen zagen hem wakker worden en lachten hem uit. Hij lachte terug naar hen. 'Domme oen !' zei één van de kinderen.

Hij begon nog harder terug te lachen. 'Wie is er nu een dommere oen ? Ik ben in ieder geval weer heel wat wijzer geworden van mijn slaap, en jullie een heel stuk dommer door het luisteren naar de oen die hier lesgeeft. En vergeet later niet je trouwring in je dikke reet te stoppen. Het mocht je nog eens in grote problemen brengen,' zei hij glimlachend. Toen keek hij de verbaasde onderwijzer aan, en liet zijn ogen toen afdalen naar diens trouwring .... 'Gevangen ... door ... de ... ijsheks ...' fluisterde hij brutaal en aanmatigend in het oor van de leraar, op een spottend toontje. Hem konden ze niets meer wijsmaken. 'Nu, dat was het,' zei hij. Hij pakte zijn boeken en zijn tas, en liep trots het lokaal uit.

Toen hij thuiskwam zei hij : 'Mam, ik heb toch zo vreemd gedroomd. Het ging over een trouwring, en over ijsheksen die elkaar beschuldigden, en over natuurvrouwen en tovenaars die levende schilderijen maakte.'

'Zorg jij nu maar dat je je huiswerk doet,' zei zijn moeder, 'anders komt er niets van je terecht met al je gedroom.' Brutaal liep hij naar zijn moeder toe en begon aan haar vinger te trekken. 'Als ik het niet dacht,' zei hij. 'Trouwringetje, hè ? Ringetje van ijs ... Gevangen door de ijsheks.'

'Wat bazel je toch ?' zei zijn moeder. 'Als ik niet getrouwd was, was jij er nooit geweest.'

Hij ging recht voor zijn moeder staan in een trotse, bijna sierlijke en poëtische houding, niet zonder spot. 'Mam, nu moet je eens even goed naar me luisteren,' sprak hij. 'Als jij er niet was geweest, dan leefde ik nog steeds op de Traan, maar je moest er wel zijn, anders kon ik niet dieper in de Traan komen. Het stenen ei is van levensbelang, anders zou de Traan nooit kunnen bestaan. De Traan heeft het stenen ei nodig.'

'Hmmm,' zei zijn moeder. 'Je hebt wel praatjes, maar betekent dit dat ik je vader nodig heb ? Het is soms zo'n rotvent, en ik leef vaak in een tranendal met hem.'

'Precies, mam,' zei de jongen. 'Keurig gezegd, petje af. Jij steekt dingen goed op van de levenslessen.'

'Gelukkig maar,' zei zijn moeder.

Einde

IJsziek

Hij was op het piratenschip, op de ijszee. Het was verschrikkelijk koud, en hij begon steeds vreemder te hallucineren en te dromen. Hij was zowel zeeziek als ijsziek. De piraten leken in zijn hallucinaties steeds langer en dunner te worden. Soms leken ze ver weg en soms dichtbij. Hij zweefde op het randje van de dood. Hij was verschrikkelijk aan het ijlen. Hij probeerde zich dingen te herinneren, terwijl hij niet meer wist of hij wakker was of sliep. Hij zag vanaf het schip de gigantische ijszee. Waren de laatste herinneringen die hij had wel echt ? Alles tolde voor zijn ogen. Hij kon geen werkelijkheid van verbeelding meer onderscheiden. Hij voelde zich dronken van de kou. In zijn gedachten probeerde hij terug te gaan door de dagen. Hoe kwam hij hier ? En waarom was hij hier op de ijszee ? Hele vage herinneringen had hij, en hij wist niet of ze waar waren. Hij probeerde zijn herinneringen te grijpen, maar hij kon het niet. Ze leken uit zijn vingers weg te glijden en ze leken te veranderen. Hij probeerde te janken, maar hij kon het niet. Hij voelde zich als bijna bevroren. Hij was al zoveel dagen op deze zee, of misschien wel weken. Hij kon zich herinneren dat het steeds kouder werd. Was het niet een waarzegster die hem op deze tocht had gezonden ? Hij ging in zijn gedachten terug om vat te krijgen op de herinneringen over de waarzegster, maar of het waar was wist hij niet meer. Het drong hem op als de werkelijkheid. Het was alleen even een flits, en het begon zich al snel te vervormen.

Ze had twee stenen. Het waren orakelstenen. Een steen was de tranen steen, en de andere steen was de urine steen. Ze keek in de stenen, en sprak tot hem : 'Ga over de rivier van varkensbloed tot de urine zee.' De bloedvarkens waren woest zoals altijd. Toen hij op zijn bootje op de rivier was moest hij er een paar afschieten met zijn boog. Gruwelijk gromden zij. Hij kwam aan bij de urine zee, laat. Hij wachtte op verdere tekens, maar die kwamen niet. Zij had gezegd dat hij tekens zou ontvangen. 'Die vervloekte stenen doen altijd vaag,' mopperde hij tegen zichzelf.

Hij ging aan boord van een piratenschip, diep in de woestijn, aan de urine zee. De piraten waren lang en woest. Sommigen hadden messen tussen hun tanden. Ze zouden aanleggen bij een amazone eiland. De amazones hielden vee voor bloed en urine. De urine van de zee was

ondrinkbaar. De piraten zouden naar het eiland toegaan om met de amazones te onderhandelen.

Het eiland was een reusachtige woestijn op zichzelf. Op het eiland liepen mannen rond aan ketenen. Het waren zware criminelen. Het was een ballingen eiland.

Ook op dit woestijn eiland waren er bloed rivieren en urine rivieren. Er zouden hier ook veel kampen en nederzettingen zijn van de amazones die de mannen gebruikten als slaven.

Na een lange zeereis van vele dagen kwamen ze eindelijk aan op het eiland.

De zee van urine zelf was de zee van vergetelheid, een natuurverschijnsel in de diepte van de eindeloze woestijn. Toen hij op het eiland was aangekomen was hij alles van zijn verleden vergeten. Hij wist niet meer waarom hij hier was. Het zijn op de urine zee van vergetelheid had hem dronken gemaakt.

Na de onderhandelingen gingen ze verder de zee op langs het reusachtige woestijneiland. Verderop zou de urine zee steeds meer overgaan in een ijszee.

De reusachtige ijszee liep over in een zee van bloed. Op een rotseneiland op de zee van bloed woonde een ijsheks. Het duurde vele weken voordat ze daar aankwamen. Het was een donkere vrouw, en hij herkende haar onmiddelijk. Het was een flits van zijn geheugen wat hij weer terugkreeg. 'Jij bent de vrouw van het orakel die mij deze tocht heeft laten maken,' zei hij.

Ze glimlachte warm en liefdevol. 'Dat is mijn andere deel,' sprak ze. 'Ik wilde dat je ook dit deel zou leren kennen. Alleen zij die de tocht maken zullen mij waarlijk kennen en waardig genoeg zijn om met mij te zijn.'

Ze bood een trouwring aan, maar hij raakte in paniek. 'Nee !' riep hij. 'Daarvoor ben ik niet gekomen ! Er moet een ander doel zijn, anders is alles voor niets geweest !'

'Niets is voor niets geweest,' sprak ze. 'Ik bied je een huwelijk aan.'

'Steek het huwelijk in je dikke reet !' riep hij. 'Ik doe niet mee.'

Maar de piraten grepen hem stevig vast.

'Wat ? Een gedwongen huwelijk ? Dat kan niet waar zijn !' riep hij.

Toen sloegen de piraten hem neer. 'Bedankt,' zei de vrouw. Ze ging naar hem toe en schoof de ring om zijn teen. 'Een huwelijks-slaaf om mee te beginnen. Later zien we wel verder.'

Hij kwam weer bij bewustzijn aan ketenen. Hij keek om zich heen en zag meerdere mannen aan ketenen. Hij vroeg zich af waar hij was. Overal was woestijn, dus hij dacht dat het het woestijn-eiland was. Hij kon zich herinneren dat hij gedwongen werd tot een huwelijk, een huwelijk tot een ijsheks. De andere mannen lachten hem uit, en hij wist niet waarom, maar hij dacht dat het was omdat hij nieuw was.

Even later kwamen er amazones om de mannen te inspecteren. 'Ben ik een crimineel dat jullie mij hier houden ?' vroeg hij. Ze zeiden niets en gingen door de rijen. 'Hey !' riep hij. 'Wat heeft dit te betekenen ?'

'Mond houden,' zei een dikke vrouw, terwijl hij een klap kreeg. Hij stortte in elkaar. Daarna kreeg hij nog een paar schoppen totdat hij weer zijn bewustzijn verloor. Deze vrouwen waren keihard.

Toen hij na een tijdje weer bij zijn bewustzijn was gekomen was de ijsheks er weer. 'Waarom doe je mij dit aan ?' kreunde hij.

'Accepteer je het huwelijk of wil je hier blijven ?' vroeg ze.

'Ik accepteer het,' zei hij. Hij werd weer neergeslagen, en kwam pas weer bij op het rotseneiland van de ijsheks in de bloedzee.

Hij zuchtte. 'Waarom moet dit allemaal ?' vroeg hij. 'Ik had nooit naar je moeten luisteren en naar je orakels.'

'Te laat,' sprak ze. 'Zij die mijn andere deel hebben gezien komen nooit meer van me weg.'

'Leuk,' zei hij. 'Wie verzint zulke regels ?'

'Het orakel,' sprak ze.

'Oh, die twee stenen, de tranen steen en de urine steen ?' zei hij spottend. 'Heb je geen andere stenen ?'

'Je hebt teveel praatjes,' zei ze. 'Als je zo doorgaat moet ik je ombrengen.'

'Oh, ook een regel van het orakel ?' zei hij boos. Maar tegelijkertijd werd hij heel bang, en kalmeerde zichzelf. 'Goed, ik accepteer alles wat je zegt. Wat moet ik doen ?'

'Je hebt mijn derde deel nog niet gezien,' sprak ze.

'Ik weet niet of ik je derde deel wel wil zien,' zei hij, 'tenzij je derde deel me hieruit haalt.'

'Dat kan,' zei ze, 'maar zij is erger dan dit deel.'

'Laat dan maar zitten,' zei hij. 'Het is al erg genoeg.'

'Nee, je moet haar zien,' zei ze.

'Ik wil niet !' kermde hij.

Ze sleurde hem mee naar een deur en deed de deur open. Er viel een pop uit. De pop had menselijke afmetingen. 'Hier is ze,' sprak ze.

'Maar dat is een pop,' zei hij.

'Nou en ?' zei ze.

Hij kreeg de pop mee en mocht gaan waar hij wilde gaan, maar mocht de pop niet wegdoen, want dan zou hem iets verschrikkelijks overkomen. De pop ging mee in een doos. Hij kreeg een schip en mocht vertrekken.

Hij was erg blij. De bemanning van het schip zei dat hij maar beter kon doen wat de ijsheks hem zei, anders zou het verkeerd met hem aflopen. Hij wilde de pop overboord laten gooien, maar de bemanning durfde dat niet. Ze vreesden de ijsheks.

Hij besloot het zelf te doen toen ze sliepen, en kieperde de pop in de doos uit het schip. Niet lang daarna was er een verschrikkelijke storm. De bemanning was razend en zagen hem als de schuldige. In hun woede grepen ze hem en wierpen hem overboord. Toen begon de storm kalmer te worden. Ergens zag hij de doos drijven en zwemde er naartoe. Hij nam de pop uit de doos. Zij kon drijven. Hij wist dat hij niet terugkon op het schip. Ergens dichtbij was een eiland waar hij met zijn handen naartoe peddelde terwijl hij op de pop lag. 'Boe,' zei de pop. 'Wist je niet, hè ?' De pop begon tot leven te komen, en dreef niet meer. Het laatste stukje moesten ze zelf zwemmen. 'Dus ik kom daadwerkelijk niet zomaar van je af ?' vroeg hij. 'Ik denk dat ik gek wordt. Heb je ook een vierde deel ?'

'Het vierde deel is voor hen die overwinnen,' sprak ze.

'Wat overwinnen ?' vroeg hij.

Ze wees op zijn teenring : 'De vervloekte teenring van het gedwongen huwelijk,' sprak ze.

'Hoe kan ik het overwinnen ?' vroeg hij. Hij nam de teenring af en wierp het in de zee. Maar ineens was de teenring weer om zijn teen. 'Het zit vast,' zei ze. Hij zuchtte.

'Ik denk echt dat ik gek wordt,' zei hij, 'maar alles beter dan dat kamp van verbande criminelen.'

Ze had een schortje aan van wat lange witte veren.

'Weet je dan niet dat je zelf het vierde deel bent ?' vroeg ze.

'En zo is het gegaan,' zei een man tegen de psychiater, 'en daarom ben ik hier. Ik ben getrouwd met een pop en kan daarom mezelf niet vinden.'

'Die pop, hè ?' zei de psychiater. 'Staat die bij u thuis ?'

'Ja,' zei de man. 'Die is één dag levend geweest, en daarna was het weer gewoon een pop, en toen heb ik haar mee naar huis genomen, na een lange zee tocht.'

'En u zegt die zee was geheel van urine, overlopende in een ijszee en daarna in een bloedzee ?' vroeg de psychiater.

De man knikte. 'Zeer eigenaardig, zeer eigenaardig,' sprak de psychiater. 'Zeg, mag ik die pop eens zien ?'

'Maar natuurlijk,' zei de man enthousiast. 'Ik ben blij dat u mijn verhaal gelooft.'

'Nou ja, geloven is een groot woord,' zei de psychiater. 'Eerst zien, dan geloven. Daarna zou ik ook graag die urine zee willen zien waar u het over had.'

'Daar kom je niet zomaar,' sprak de man. 'Dan moet je eerst over een varkensrivier, en dan mag je hopen dat je het overleefd, want er zijn daar allemaal woeste bloedvarkens.'

'Dat is me nogal wat,' sprak de psychiater. 'Laat me dan eerst maar eens die pop zien om te beginnen.'

De man nam de psychiater achterop zijn fiets mee naar zijn huis. De donkere pop met het schortje van een paar lange witte veren zat op de bank. Verder was ze naakt.

'Nou, nou,' sprak de psychiater, 'dat is me nogal een pop. Het lijkt wel op een sex pop.'

'Nou, psychiater,' zei de man. 'Ik voel mezelf als een sexpop want het was een gedwongen huwelijk.'

'Ik begrijp het,' knikte de psychiater. 'Is er ooit sprake geweest van verkrachting ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'Nooit,' zei de man. 'Het is maar een pop.'

'Gelukkig maar,' zei de psychiater. 'Dat is al een last minder. Nou, vertelt u mij eens : Hoe is dit nu allemaal gekomen. Waar begon het mee ?'

'Nou, zoals ik al zei,' zei de man. 'Ik ging naar een indiaanse waarzegster in de buurt, en ze gebruikte haar orakelstenen en gaf mij de opdracht.'

'Vreemd, zeer vreemd,' zei de psychiater. 'Zullen we eens naar die waarzegster toegaan ?'

Maar de man begon in paniek te raken. 'Daar wil ik niet meer komen !' riep hij. 'Ik heb een teenring waar ik van probeer af te komen, maar zodra ik hem afdoe zit de teenring er weer om.

'Eigenaardig,' zei de psychiater. 'Laat u mij dat eens zien.'

De man deed zijn schoen en sok uit en nam de teenring van zijn teen af. Hij gaf de teenring aan de psychiater. 'Wat een prachtige teenring,' zei de psychiater.

'Nee, het is een vervloekte teenring, mijnheer de psychiater,' zei de man. 'De teenring van het gedwongen huwelijk.'

'Maar er zit geen teenring meer om uw teen,' zei de psychiater. 'Waarschijnlijk heeft u alles gewoon gedroomd, en heeft u de teenring ooit eens gekocht of gekregen. Zeg, mag ik eens met die indiaanse waarzegster praten waar u het over had ? Ik begrijp dat door die gebeurtenis alles misliep in uw leven, zegt u. U hoeft niet met mij mee te gaan, maar kunt u mij het adres van die waarzegster geven ?'

'Ik ben bang dat de teenring straks weer aan mijn teen zit als u weg bent,' zei de man. Hij liep naar de kast en haalde er een kaartje uit. 'Hier is haar visite kaartje, en neemt u gerust de teenring mee. Ik wil de teenring niet meer. Ik heb er teveel ellende aan overgehouden.'

'Wilt u dat ik de pop ook meeneem ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'Graag,' zei de man.

De psychiater stopte de teenring met het visite kaartje in zijn zak, en nam de pop mee in een grote plastic tas. Bij de waarzegster aangekomen belde hij aan. Een donkere vrouw deed open. 'Goedendag,' sprak de psychiater. 'Ik heb nogal een vreemd verhaal gehoord van één van mijn patiënten, en zou daar graag met u over willen praten om een en ander te verifiëren.'

'Komt u verder,' sprak de vrouw warm en hartelijk. Hij legde de tas in de gang neer en kreeg een stoel in de huiskamer waarop hij ging zitten, en begon toen het verhaal te vertellen.

De vrouw luisterde ernaar met open mond. Aan het einde van het verhaal begon ze te lachen. 'Ik kan mijn oren niet geloven,' sprak ze. 'U moet weten dat ik ten eerste geen tranen steen of urine steen heb, en ten tweede heb ik hem nooit zulke opdrachten gegeven, en ten derde is de rest van het verhaal al helemaal het bizarste wat ik ooit heb gehoord.'

De psychiater haalde de teenring uit zijn zak en liet het aan de vrouw zien. De vrouw knikte bewonderend. 'Het is een mooi ding, maar ik heb het nog nooit eerder gezien. Ik heb niets, maar dan ook niets met deze zaak te maken.'

'Maar kent u hem ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'En of ik hem ken,' zei de vrouw. 'Hij is hier vaak geweest.'

'En wat gebeurde er dan ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'We hadden sex voor geld, en ik voorspelde voor hem de toekomst,' legde ze uit.

'Wie betaalde ? U of hij ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'Hij betaalde. Het is mijn professie, mijnheer,' sprak ze. 'Bent u hier nieuw ? U bent hier in de rode buurt.'

'Dus u bent hoer, en waarzegster,' zei de psychiater. 'Ik vraag me af hoe hij zo geworden is, en waarom hij deze dingen denkt. Heeft u enig idee hoe hij zo geworden is, of zijn er hier dingen gebeurd waardoor hij misschien in de war is geraakt.'

De vrouw keek de man geheimzinnig aan. 'Ik heb zo mijn beroepsgeheimen,' sprak ze.

'Dat is vaag, heel vaag,' sprak de psychiater. 'Ik heb informatie nodig om mijn eigen professie te kunnen uitvoeren.'

'Dan komt u maar met de politie of een advocaat,' sprak de vrouw, 'maar ik ga niet zomaar persoonlijke informatie aan u geven.' De vrouw stond op en wenkte hem. 'Ik kan u niet verder helpen op het moment,' zei de vrouw koud. 'De informatie is gevoelig.'

Na een paar minuten stond de psychiater op de stoep. Hij was de tas met de pop vergeten. Daarna werd de deur weer opengemaakt. 'U bent uw sex pop vergeten,' zei de vrouw terwijl ze de tas overhandigde. Ze sprak nog steeds koud.

'Het is mijn sex pop niet,' zei de man, 'maar van mijn patiënt. Is die pop toevallig ook van u ?'

'Nee hoor,' sprak de vrouw kil, en smeet de deur weer dicht.

Inmiddels zat de teenring weer om de teen van de man, en de psychiater stond voor een raadsel. De psychiater had de andere teenring nog steeds in zijn zak. 'Had u toevallig meerderen van zulke ringen ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'Nee,' zei de man. De ring was adembenemend mooi. De psychiater bleef er maar naar staren. 'Weet u dat u heel rijk kunt worden ?' sprak de psychiater langzaam.

'Ik weet het,' zei de man, 'maar ik wil er vanaf.'

'Ik begrijp het, ik begrijp het,' sprak de psychiater. 'De waarzegster ontkende alles, maar ze had naar eigen zeggen wel haar beroepsgeheimen. Het ging om persoonlijke en gevoelige informatie.'

'Ik ben veel vergeten,' zei de man. 'Het komt door de urine zee, de zee van vergetelheid, waarop ik was.'

'U heeft niet toevallig gewoon wat gedronken ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'Kan wezen, kan wezen,' zei de man.

'Ik heb namelijk nog nooit van een urine zee van vergetelheid gehoord,' sprak de psychiater. 'Misschien haalt u dingen door de war.'

'We dronken soms wat voordat we sex hadden,' zei de man. 'Een stimulerend drankje.'

'Of misschien heeft ze een verdovend middel in het drankje gedaan ?' vroeg hij. 'Je kunt hoeren nooit vertrouwen.'

'Misschien,' zei de man. 'Ze zei dat ze een heks was, een ijsheks.'

'Ik begrijp het,' zei de psychiater. 'En heksen kun je al helemaal niet vertrouwen. Het was een waarzegster.'

'Precies,' zei de man. 'En die teenring die telkens verschijnt is het bewijs.'

'Weet je zeker dat je geen hele bak thuis hebt met zulke teenringen ?' vroeg de psychiater. 'Het zijn wel hele aparte ringen die je niet zomaar ergens vindt.'

'Ik weet het zeker,' zei de man.

'Nu,' zei de psychiater. 'Het verhaal wat u mij vertelt lijkt heel veel op een meervoudig personaliteiten syndroom. U denkt dat u een deel bent van de waarzegster.'

'Nee,' zei de man. 'Dat denk ik niet. Dat zei de pop.'

'Maar poppen praten niet,' zei de psychiater. 'Ik denk dat u in de war bent met iets, onder invloed van drugs of alcohol. Het verhaal klopt van geen kanten.'

De man begon zenuwachtig te worden. 'Goed, u gelooft mij niet, terwijl u zelf zag dat ik de teenring weer terughad. Ik zit hier mijn tijd te verdoen.'

'Luister,' zei de psychiater. 'Er kan heel goed misdaad in het spel zijn. De vrouw wilde niet echt meewerken, en alles is uiterst verdacht.'

'Schakelt u de politie dan in ?' vroeg de man.

'Ik zit er wel aan te denken,' zei de psychiater, 'want voor nu komen we geen stap verder.'

'Doe dan wat,' zei de man. 'Want mijn leven is een hel.'

Een man wordt wakker van het geblaf van honden. 'Karel, laat de honden uit !' roept zijn vrouw. De man kleedt zich snel aan en gaat met de herdershonden naar buiten. Wat een vreemde droom had hij gehad over een ijsheks en dat hij bij de psychiater zat. Hij had een slecht huwelijk, en probeerde zijn vrouw zo veel mogelijk te ontwijken. Toch kon hij ook niet zonder, alsof hij vastzat aan onzichtbare ketenen.

'Droom, droom, laat de tovenaar je lach zien,

Droom, droom, laat de tovenaar je traan zien,

Oh droom, en laat de tovenaar al je ketenen zien,

Want hij staat bij de grote ketel,

de dromenketel, waar hij alles weer goed kan maken,

Als de dromensmid is hij, als de woordensmid is hij,

Hoe diep de woorden ook in je hart zijn geschoten,

Hij vist ze er weer uit,

Hij is de dromenvisser,

Hoe diep de vloeken ook in je hart zijn gestoken,

Hij vist ze er weer uit

Droom, droom, laat de tovenaar je hart zien,

Laat de tovenaar je pracht zien en al je pijn,

Droom, droom, laat de tovenaar de ijsheks zien,

Zij die met je spot, zij die je telkens bedot,

Laat het zien, laat het de dromensmid zien,

Hij is de dromenvisser,

Hij neemt je mee, op de zee, een weg eruit,

Een weg erdoor, opdat je het sieraad ziet,

De teenring die nooit weggaat, het is niet wat je denkt,

Het is een onbegrepen geschenk,

Het vertelt een verhaal,

Oh droom, droom, totdat het zichtbaar wordt voor jou,

Begrepen als het sieraad van genezing,

Over de zeeën nam het je mee, tot een kroning

Droom, droom, laat de tovenaar het zien,

Laat de tovenaar je helpen,

Geef hem je tijd en energie,

Hij leidt je erdoor,

Met een ring en een verhaal,

Hij leidt je erdoor'

De man keek op van het vreemde lied.

De honden blaften nog steeds.

Een man in een paars gewaad stond voor hem.

Hij wilde wegrennen.

'Ik ben de tovenaar,' sprak de man.

Karel keek weer op naar de man.

'Karel ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

'Ja ?' zei Karel.

'Ik moet je wat vertellen,' zei de tovenaar.

'Droom, droom, op de golven van je droom,

Op de golven van je liederen,' zong een vreemd lied.

'Wat moet ik hiermee ?' vroeg Karel.

'Ik ben de tovenaar van je dromen,' sprak de man.

Karel kon niets dan buigen voor de man en viel op zijn knielen,

terwijl de honden nog steeds afschuwelijk blaften.

'Stop jongens !' riep hij naar de honden, maar ze gingen maar door.

'Ze zijn erg waakzaam,' zei de tovenaar.

'W... wie bent u ?' vroeg Karel.

'Ik ben de tovenaar van je dromen,' zei de tovenaar weer.

'Droom, droom, ik ben het lied van je hart ...'

'Kunt u alstublieft stoppen met zingen,' zei Karel bijna huilend.

'U maakt me gek.'

'Ongevoelig, hè ?' sprak de tovenaar.

'De laatste tijd probeer ik je te breken met dromen, want je leeft in een grote leugen.'

'Ik weet het,' sprak Karel.

'En het maakt me gek. Ik wordt verscheurd door twee kanten.'

'Laat je verscheuren, Karel,' sprak de tovenaar.

'Zoals het nu is is het niet goed.'

'Droom, droom,' ging het lied verder.

'Houd op !' krijste Karel.

Karel rolde over de grond met zijn vingers in zijn oren, maar hij kon het niet meer stoppen. Het ging harder en harder en nam hem helemaal over, totdat hij op de golven was van de urine zee om zijn leven te vergeten. Er was een teenring aan zijn teen die er nooit afkon. Het was als een implantaat, als een keten. Het was gedwongen. Hij rolde aan de voeten van de ijsheks. 'Gevangene van de trouwring,' sprak ze.

'Laat me los, heks !' schreeuwde Karel.

'Waarom zou ik ?' vroeg de ijsheks.

'Laat me sterven in ijs !' riep de man. 'Ik houd het niet meer vol ! Het is altijd hetzelfde liedje, eeuwig en altijd.'

'Wij horen bij elkaar,' sprak de ijsheks. 'We zijn delen van elkaar.'

De man zuchtte. Hij probeerde het te begrijpen.

'De kaart van de ijsheks,' sprak de tovenaar, 'een kaart in je dek.

Ze laat je nooit meer los, want het is een deel van je hart,

Een teenring is wat ze je gaf, de trouwring,

En de waarzegster voorspelt de toekomst,

Een andere kaart in je dek,

Zij speelt met het orakel en jou,

En zendt je op verre tochten om de ijsheks te ontmoeten,

Zodat je wakker wordt aan haar voeten,

Geketend aan een pop die je hart bewaart,

de derde kaart, totdat je je hart vindt, de vierde kaart,

Niets dan blaffende herdershonden die het geheim van het huwelijk bewaken,

En dan ben ik de vijfde kaart, de dromenkaart, om je inzicht te bieden. Droom diep.'

De man keek op en zag de kaart van de tovenaar boven hem zweven. Hij probeerde de kaart te grijpen, maar het vloog van hem weg, terwijl de ijsheks ijselijk lachte.

Hij voelde zichzelf als wegzinkende in een ijszee, totdat alles begon te bloeden.

Hij voelde zichzelf als een pop die zijn hart niet kon bereiken.

Hij werd wakker op het piratenschip op de ijszee. De kou had hem vreselijk doen hallucineren en dromen. Hij voelde zich als op het randje van de dood, en hij was zeeziek. Ook was hij ijsziek.

'Ik ben aan het ijsdromen !' riep hij. Hij had niet het gevoel dat iemand hem zou kunnen horen. Hij zag de piraten heel lang en dun worden, heel ver weg, en dan weer dik en dichtbij. 'Het zijn nachtmerries !' gilde hij.

'De kaart van het piratenschip op de ijszee,' sprak een stem.

'Die kaarten zijn gevaarlijk,' zei hij.

'Nee, nee,' zei de waarzegster, 'we hebben ze nodig.'

'Waar ben ik ?' vroeg hij.

'Bij mij, onder hypnose,' sprak ze. 'Ik ben de dromendokter. Ik genees je verleden.'

'Ik was in een nachtmerrie,' zei hij. 'Stervende van de kou op een piratenschip.'

'Dat piratenschip was je leven,' zei de waarzegster.

'Waar is het goed voor ?' vroeg hij. 'Ben ik nog steeds ijsziek ?'

'Kijk,' zei de waarzegster. Hij zag brandend ijs. De kaart begon te branden.

'U doet truukjes,' zei hij.

Hij was zwaar aan het hallucineren op het schip. Hij jammerde zachtjes. Hij was aan het ijlen. Hij vroeg zich af of hij de enige was. Misschien waren de piraten wel zo gewend aan de ijszee en zo gehard dat ze niet meer zeeziek en ijsziek werden. Voor hem was het de eerste keer. Ze waren op weg naar de ijsheks. Zij woonde op een rotsen eiland.

Hij viel in een diepe slaap. Ze brachten hem voor de ijsheks. Hij was nieuw. Hier ontwaakte hij. Ze glimlachte naar hem. Ineens was ze in de verte, lang en dun, en toen weer dichtbij en dik. Hij was nog steeds aan het ijlen. 'IJsziek, hè ?' zei ze. 'Je moet er wat voor over hebben om bij me te kunnen komen.'

'W... wat doe ik hier ?' vroeg hij. 'B... ben ik dood ?'

'Je zou dood kunnen zijn,' zei de ijsheks.

'Laat me los, heks !' riep hij.

'En toen werd ik wakker in mijn bed,' zei een man bij de psychiater.

'Volkomen normaal,' zei de psychiater. 'U had misschien koorts of iets verkeerds gedronken, en toen bent u vreemd gaan dromen. Iedereen droomt weleens vreemd. Er is niets met u aan de hand. Dromen zijn volkomen normaal. Het is een verwerkings-mechanisme van het menselijk lichaam. Het is heel psychologisch. Als ik u was zou ik me geen zorgen maken.'

'Maar ik ben bang nog te gaan slapen,' sprak de man. 'Het is niet de eerste keer. Mijn hele leven is het al zo. Ik leef in twee werelden.'

'Volkomen normaal,' zei de psychiater. 'Misschien moet u schrijver worden ? Doe iets met de dromen.'

'Ja, maar ik ben bang voor mijn dromen,' zei de man. 'Ik ben erdoor opgesloten. Aan de andere kant heb ik ook een Stockholm syndroom lijkt het wel, alsof ik verliefd ben op mijn eigen dromen. Er is ook iets zoets aan mijn nachtmerries wat ik maar niet kan verklaren. Het is heel dubbel.'

'Eén van onze pilletjes, en je bent van alles af,' zei de psychiater.

'Dat is teveel van het goede,' zei de man. 'Zoals ik u al zei kan ik ook niet zonder. Maar wat zijn dat voor pilletjes ?'

De psychiater keek hem diep aan. 'De pilletjes zijn genaamd "IJsziek". Alle psychiaters slikken die pilletjes, en dat is ook de voorwaarde geweest om hier te kunnen werken. Het heeft als bij-effect dat je één keer ongeveer droomt zoals u heeft gedroomd, en daarna droom je bijna nooit meer, en ben je van alles af. Wel moet je die pilletjes je hele leven blijven slikken.'

'Waarom ?' vroeg de man.

'Anders komen de dromen terug, erger dan ze ooit zijn geweest,' sprak de psychiater.

Het Eén-Dags-Kruid

Hij was ijsziek. Het jongetje op het piratenschip was goed ziek. Ze waren op de ijszee nu, en het was koud. Het werd steeds kouder, en het jongetje begon te ijlen en te hallucineren. Hij begon vreemde dromen te krijgen. Hij dacht dat hij doodging.

Het indianenland lag achter de ijszee, maar hij dacht dat hij het niet zou halen. Hij was te ziek. De piraten waren erg zorgzaam over hem. Ze hadden hem gekocht van zijn vader en moeder die te arm waren om voor hem te zorgen. Ze gaven hem een fles met roze spul erin. Het maakte zijn hart iets warmer, maar het kon niet tegen de kou op. Het enige wat het misschien deed was hem in leven houden.

Sommige piraten waren al bevroren. De wind was snijdend. De kou had hem gestoken, en hij bloedde.

'De ijsheks vraagt om offers !' riep een van de piraten.

'Geef haar het kind !' riep een andere piraat. 'Zonder haar zal het kind toch niet overleven.'

En zo kwam het jongetje in handen van de ijsheks. Het schip van de ijsheks kwam langs met grote zwarte zeilen, en ze droegen het jongetje aan haar over. Op het schip van de ijsheks was het veel warmer. Het was ook een veel groter schip, en het jongetje werd diep in het schip gebracht.

'Kun je me wat beloven ?' vroeg de ijsheks.

Het jongetje knikte.

'Vertel niets over mij aan de indianen,' sprak de ijsheks.

'Ik beloof het,' zei het jongetje. Het was de ijsheks die het jongetje naar het indianenland bracht, een heel warm land. Als de ijsheks er niet was geweest dan zou het jongetje aan ijsziekte zijn gestorven op het piratenschip.

Het jongetje was de ijsheks dankbaar. Midden in de nacht zette het schip van de ijsheks het jongetje af op het strand van het indianenland. Het jongetje liep het oerwoud in achter het strand, en liep door totdat hij bij een indianenkamp aankwam. Iedereen sliep, dus het jongetje besloot te wachten tot de volgende ochtend. Hij ging in het mos liggen en viel al snel in slaap. De volgende ochtend werd hij wakker door het geluid van de oerwoud vogels.

Maar er kwamen maar geen indianen uit hun tenten. Na een tijdje kon hij zijn nieuwsgierigheid niet bedwingen en ging een tent binnen. Tot zijn grote schrik waren er alleen grote indianenbeelden. En ook in andere tenten was dit het geval. Het waren alleen beelden, en het jongetje stond voor een raadsel.

Hij klopte op één van de beelden. 'Hallo, is er iemand thuis ?' vroeg hij. Maar niemand antwoordde. Hij liep de tent weer uit. Ook liep hij het kamp uit, het oerwoud in. Na een tijdje lopen kwam hij een soldaat tegen. De man zou van het Suba leger zijn. Het jongetje vroeg hem wat er met de indianen was gebeurd die als versteende beelden waren. 'De ijsheks,' sprak de soldaat. 'Iedereen is op zijn hoede.' Nu had het jongetje beloofd niets over de ijsheks te zeggen tot de indianen, maar dit was een soldaat. Hij vertelde de soldaat dat de ijsheks zijn leven had gered.

Er bleken twee ijsheksen te zijn, een goede en een slechte. Het jongetje vroeg zich ook af waarom hij niets tegen de indianen mocht zeggen over de ijsheks. De Suba soldaat zei dat ze dan helemaal gek zouden worden. Ze vreesden de ijsheks meer dan wat dan ook, en konden geen onderscheid maken tussen de goede en de slechte.

Het jongetje knikte. 'Ik zal je met mij meenemen,' zei de soldaat. 'Hier kun je niet blijven.' En zo nam de Suba soldaat het jongetje mee door het oerwoud naar het Suba kamp. In het Suba kamp keek het jongetje zijn ogen uit.

'Hoe kan de slechte ijsheks verslagen worden ?' vroeg het jongetje aan de Suba soldaat.

'Door een speciaal dropkruid wat een diepere slaap brengt,' sprak de Suba soldaat. 'Wij kweken het hier. De slechte ijsheks is namelijk een soort nachtmerrie die optreedt als de hersenen niet diep genoeg in slaap komen.'

In verschillende tentjes groeide het dropkruid. Maar er was nog veel te weinig. Ze wilden dat het hele oerwoud er mee vol zou groeien. 'Het lijkt wel een onmogelijke opgave,' sprak de Suba soldaat. 'Het is een één-dags-kruid. Het komt op, en verdwijnt weer snel. Het plant zich ook niet of nauwelijks voort.'

'Hoe bent u er dan aan gekomen ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'De nacht heeft zo zijn geheimen, mijn jongen,' sprak de Suba soldaat.

Het jongetje begon meer vragen te stellen, maar de Suba soldaat zweeg. 'Alleen de goede ijsheks kan ons helpen,' sprak de Suba soldaat na een tijdje. Tot de grote schrik van het jongetje werd de Suba soldaat steeds stiller, en begon ook in een beeld te veranderen. In de tentjes was het dropkruid aan het wegtrekken. Het jongetje raakte in paniek en rende het oerwoud in. Hij was bang dat hij ook in een beeld zou veranderen. Hij rende tot aan het strand, waar een gevleugelde indiaanse vrouw was. Ze had hele lange witte vleugels. Plotseling veranderde ze geheel in een vogel en vloog weg. 'Kom terug, kom terug !' riep het jongetje, maar ze verdween volledig uit het zicht. Het jongetje begon over het strand te rennen en tot de zee te roepen. Hij riep naar de goede ijsheks.

'In leven en sterven,' sprak een stem,

'Ligt het kruid, het een-dags-kruid,

Het komt op en vaagt dan weg als een zucht,

Hoe de zee van ijs te overbruggen ?

Alles vaagt hier weg,

Het medicijn is nooit blijvende.'

'Wie is dat ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Laat iemand ons alstublieft helpen. We zijn in beelden aan het veranderen.'

'Ken ik jou, of je stem ?' vroeg de stem, terwijl er een wind om het jongetje heen kwam.

'De vleugelen van de wind ben ik, dragende het medicijn,

Maar ik vaag altijd weer weg,

Nooit kan ik je vasthouden, mijn kind.'

'Alstublieft, help ons, wind,' sprak het jongetje.

'De nacht heeft zo zijn geheimen,' sprak de wind.

Het jongetje wachtte op de nacht, maar die kwam maar niet. De slechte ijsheks had het eiland ingenomen en behekst, en nu was het altijd dag. Er waren alleen nog dagen en geen nachten, en die volgden elkaar op, dag na dag. Het jongetje leefde aan het strand van bessen. Hij kon bijna niet slapen van het licht, en het begon zijn hersenen op te breken. Soms bloedde zijn hoofd. Hij was verwonderd dat hij nog geen beeld was. Hij was aan de andere kant van het eiland, waar de zee niet van ijs was, maar ook hier begon het steeds kouder te worden, en steeds meer ijs begon er te verschijnen op de golven. Het jongetje begon weer ijsziek te worden, en huilde. Een ijzige gestalte stond voor hem. Het was de slechte ijsheks. 'Ik weet waarom ik je niet in een beeld kan veranderen,' krijste ze. 'Mijn goede zuster heeft je betoverd.' En zo raakten de twee zusters met elkaar in gevecht over het jongetje. Het jongetje kon alleen maar toekijken. Het jongetje rende het oerwoud in en het begon weer nacht te worden. Hij herinnerde hoe de Suba soldaat en de wind spraken over de geheimen van de nacht. Hij rende zo diep in het oerwoud totdat hij niet meer kon en in slaap viel. Ditmaal sliep hij heel diep, zo diep als hij nog nooit had geslapen, en toen hij wakker werd was hij omringd met het dropkruid. Het groeide helemaal over hem heen. Het bleef maar groeien. 'Het is gekomen !' riep het jongetje. Waar het jongetje ook ging, overal om hem heen groeide het dropkruid. Hij rende naar het indianenkamp, en ook daar begon het dropkruid om hem heen te groeien. De beelden begonnen te ontwaken. 'W... wie heeft ons doen ontwaken ?' vroeg één van de indianen. Het jongetje wist dat hij niet over de ijsheks mocht spreken. 'De nacht heeft zo zijn geheimen,' sprak het jongetje. Toen rende hij naar het Suba kamp, waar ook het dropkruid om hem heen begon te groeien. 'Suba soldaat,' zei het jongetje. Ook de Suba soldaat begon te ontwaken en kon zich weer bewegen. 'Is ze gekomen ?' vroeg de Suba soldaat.

'Ja, ze is gekomen,' zei het jongetje.

De Tuin Engel

Ze was gebonden aan de tuin. Buiten de tuin zou ze sterven.

Ik kwam haar alleen tegen in de tuin.

Het was een wonderschone tuin, dat wel,

De pracht van de stad ...

Ze had geheimen,

Ik wist niet welke,

Erover praten kon ze niet,

Altijd sliep ze in een stenen bed, ergens diep in de tuin,

En ook zijzelf was van steen, en soms een engel ...

De engel van de tuin werd ze genoemd,

Haar water had genezende krachten,

Diep in de tuin

Op een dag nam ze mij aan haar hand,

Tot de diepte van haar tuin,

Als een wildernis was het hier,

Niemand mocht hier ooit komen,

Ze tilde mij over het hek

Ze gebood me te rennen, en dat deed ik,

En plots was ik ook van steen,

Als betoverd door de tuin,

Ik kon de schoonheid niet dragen

Soms ben ik een engel, soms ben ik van steen,

En nu leef ik langs alles heen,

In een droom wereld leef ik nu,

Sinds de dag dat zij mij meenam ...

De Verslaving

Hij leefde alleen, diep in de natuur, eenzaam en verlaten. Hij leefde van giftige bessen die hem deden hallucineren. Dat was alles waarvan hij leefde. Hij leefde in tussen het morgenrood en avondrood. Vreemde natuurverschijnselen drongen zich aan hem op door de hallucinaties. Hij had naakte vrouwen in zijn hoofd die veranderden in wapenen. Het was altijd oorlog in zijn hoofd, als een oorlogstrauma. In de natuur was er geen plaats voor oorlog, maar de bessen maakten hem wild. Altijd was hij op zijn hoede, maar hij was geheel alleen. Als hij zich in het water waste dacht hij altijd dat het bloed was. Zijn hersenen waren zwaar aangetast door de bessen. Hij leefde in een hele andere realiteit. Als hij de bessen at dacht hij dat het vlees was van zijn prooi. Hij dacht dat hij een jager was, maar hij was half verlamd. Er waren hier geen dieren, alleen bessen. Er waren hier geen vrouwen, alleen dromen. De wilde bessen hadden bezit van hem genomen. En het waren geeneens bessen. Het was zaad, van een vreemde, wilde struik. Hij dacht dat het bessen waren. Het groeide in de bomen, overal door de wildernis. Als hij geen zaad had gegeten voelde hij zich eenzaam en depressief, en wilde hij niet meer leven, alhoewel hij de natuur steeds meer begon te bewonderen. En zo was de nieuwe realiteit in zijn hoofd een ziekte, maar het hielp hem te overleven. Hij was verslaafd aan verwoestende drugs, het giftige zaad van een boom.

Hij vond zijn ziekte mooi, hij aanbad zijn ziekte. Het was zijn kameraad. Hij voelde zich minder eenzaam als hij van het zaad had gegeten. De winters waren streng, en dan moest hij altijd onder de grond waar het zaad niet was. In de winters groeide het zaad niet, en dan hongerde hij uit, hebbende hallucinaties van de kou, maar ook de winters zelf waren slechts hallucinaties van het zaad.

Naakte vrouwen waren in zijn hallucinaties jacht gerei zodra hij dichterbij hen kwam. In zijn hoofd leefde hij van de jacht. Na de winter was hij te zwak om boven de grond te komen. Hij leefde van de aarde en zijn eigen urine. Zijn hersenen waren zo beschadigd dat hij bleef hallucineren. Hij hallucineerde over het zaad. De naakte vrouwen in zijn hoofd waren het zaad, maar hij wist dat het zaad giftig was en dat het zaad hem zou kunnen doden. Hij probeerde weg te komen van de naakte vrouwen, maar zij lieten hem niet gaan. Als hij probeerde te ontsnappen werd hij weer door hen gevangen in een wilde achtervolging. Hij was een verslaafde. De drugs liet hem niet meer gaan.

De Vijfde
Rivier

Hij woonde op een onbewoond eiland en hij hallucineerde vanwege de honger waarin hij leefde. Alles wat hier op het eiland groeide was giftig, en hij durfde het niet te eten.

De honger visioenen werden erger en erger, maar ook hield het hem in leven op een vreemde manier. Het was alsof de giftige bessen en het giftige zaad om hem heen hem beschermde tegen de dood. In deze natuur waren er andere wetten. Je stierf niet door de honger, maar je kwam erdoor tot leven.

Ook dit was slechts een hallucinatie want hij was niet op een onbewoond eiland, maar in de woestijn van de honger planeet, die een woestijn planeet was.

Hij moest over vijf rivieren : de urine rivier, de tranen rivier, de rivier van slaap, de rivier des doods, en daarna de rivier van depressie. Toen hij over de rivier van depressie was gegaan, de vijfde rivier, zag hij donkere vrouwen aan de oever. Vissersvrouwen met netten, en ze haalden hem naar binnen. Ze deden alsof hij een vis was die ze hadden gevangen. Hij werd naar hun kamp geleid, en aan een paal gebonden. Hij was zwaar depressief. Hij wilde niet meer leven, maar het was alsof de vrouwen hem in leven hielden, alsof ze zijn medicijnen waren.

De medicijnen hadden zo hun bijwerkingen. Hij werd afhankelijk en zij lieten hem werken. Hij kwam echter niet vrij van zijn depressie. Het was alsof ze een gat in de markt hadden gevonden. Ze lieten hem ertussen hangen.

Ze hadden rokjes van veren, van de kippen van zijn gedachtes. Ze molken hem helemaal uit. Ze visten in de wateren van zijn depressies en trauma's, op zoek naar een reactie, als psychiaters op zoek naar geld, prikkende in zijn wonden. Hij was een patiënt die ze niet meer lieten gaan.

De Speelgoed

Fabriek

De psychiater gaf hem medicijnen die hem hallucinaties gaven van de natuur, omdat hij depressief was geworden door de stadse etiquette, maar de patiënt had klachten over de medicijnen. De hallucinaties zouden te wild zijn. Het zou voorkomen dat hij zich midden in een stammenoorlog bevond. Hij vroeg zich af of het bijwerkingen waren.

De psychiater schudde zijn hoofd. 'Nee, nee, dat zijn geen bijwerkingen. Het is een manier om wat afleiding te hebben.'

Maar de patiënt begon steeds meer te klagen over de medicijnen, dat hij hallucinaties van donkere vrouwen ervan kreeg die hem pijn deden.

Ook hiervan zei de psychiater dat het bij het medicijn hoorde, om zo los te komen van alle stadse trauma's.

'Dus eigenlijk krijg ik een nieuw trauma om los te komen van het oude trauma ?' vroeg de patiënt. De psychiater schudde zijn hoofd, terwijl hij zijn pijp uitklopte. 'Jongen, moet je eens even goed naar mij luisteren. De hallucinaties weten wat ze doen. De vrouwen moeten het trauma eruit slaan,' sprak hij.

'Maar mijn depressies lijken erger te worden,' zei de patiënt.

'Dat is altijd zo in het begin,' zei de psychiater. 'Moet je luisteren. Wat als ik je wat andere medicijnen meegeef ? Dan kun je uittesten welke medicijnen je het beste liggen.'

De man ging met verschillende doosjes medicijnen naar huis, en probeerde ze allemaal uit. Elk medicijn bracht weer andere soorten hallucinaties.

'Het lijkt wel als het lezen van boeken,' zei de man toen hij weer terugwas bij de psychiater, 'of het kijken naar films.'

'Precies,' zei de psychiater. 'Het is heel therapeutisch.'

'Ook wel erg politiek,' zei de patiënt. 'Ze proberen je een bepaalde kant op te drukken, om je van een bepaalde partij lid proberen te krijgen.'

'Ah, zo moet je dat niet zien,' zei de psychiater. 'Het zijn verhalen. Doe ermee wat je wilt. Als het is uitgewerkt neem je er weer één in, of je neemt een ander.'

'Maar is er geen verslavings-gevaar ?' vroeg de patiënt, 'want sommige medicijnen zijn wel erg aantrekkelijk.'

'Tja,' zei de psychiater, 'het helpt je je belevingsvermogen te herstellen. Natuurlijk is het het beste ze niet te slikken, maar soms heeft een mens een duwtje nodig.'

'Ik begrijp het,' zei de patiënt. 'Dus elk medicijn heeft weer zijn eigen fantasie ?'

'Ja,' sprak de psychiater, 'en het helpt het lichaam zelf die stoffen aan te maken, dus het is alleen maar voor tijdelijk, totdat het lichaam de stof heeft overgenomen.'

'Interessant,' zei de patiënt. 'Ik zou wel veel meer medicijnen willen uitproberen.

Die dag ging de man met een hele tas vol medicijnen naar huis, en probeerde ze thuis allemaal uit. Na een paar weken was hij terug bij de psychiater. 'Geweldig,' sprak de patiënt. 'Ik voel me al een stuk beter, en ben tegelijkertijd van mijn televisie verslaving afgekomen.'

'Wonderbaarlijk,' sprak de psychiater. 'Dat is goed nieuws.'

'Ja,' sprak de patiënt. 'Ik ben er erg enthousiast over, maar ik moet er wel bijzeggen dat mijn sociale leven er erg onder lijdt. Ik kom haast niet meer onder de mensen, omdat ik mijn hallucinaties veel interessanter vindt.'

'Tja, het gaat een beetje om balans zoeken,' sprak de psychiater. 'De hallucinaties bieden hun eigen sociale leven, als een soort virtuele realiteit, maar ik kan me voorstellen dat de mensen om u heen dat lastig kunnen vinden.'

'Ja,' sprak de patiënt, 'vooral mijn vrouw, want die begint nu ook al depressief te worden doordat ik haar minder aandacht geef.'

'Is het geen tijd voor haar dan om ook eens een pilletje uit te proberen ?' vroeg de psychiater. 'Ik kan zo een afspraak voor haar maken.'

'Nee,' zei de patiënt, 'dat is geen optie. Ze is bang voor de psychiater, en al helemaal voor medicijnen. Ze denkt dat het troep is, en vooral nu ik haar zo negeer.'

'Oh, dat is niet leuk,' zei de psychiater. 'Maar wij hebben ook medicijnen die het sociale leven opstuwen. Je gaat dan anderen ook door hele andere ogen bekijken, door speciale soorten hallucinaties.'

'Dat lijkt me wel wat,' zei de patiënt. 'Dan zou ik die heel graag willen gebruiken, want nu staat mijn huwelijk op het randje van instorten.'

De man krijgt weer andere soorten medicijnen mee, en gaat ze thuis uitproberen. Hij geeft weer veel aandacht aan zijn vrouw, en bekijkt haar inderdaad met andere ogen, meer als in een verhaal. Hij komt enthousiast terug bij de psychiater een paar weken later. 'Nou, het heeft gewerkt, hoor,' zei hij tegen de psychiater. 'Mijn vrouw is er enorm door opgeleefd.'

'Goedzo,' zei de psychiater.

Maar na een tijdje kwam de rekening bij de man binnen waardoor hij enorm schrok, en waardoor hij en zijn vrouw in enorme financiële problemen kwamen. Beiden werden ze hier depressiever van dan ze ooit waren geweest en begonnen alles op elkaar af te reageren. Ook beschuldigden ze elkaar ervan. 'Laten we rustig blijven,' zei de man. 'Misschien maakt mijn lichaam de nodige stoffen nu zelf aan, zodat we de psychiater niet meer nodig hebben.' Maar de financiële depressie en alles wat daarmee te maken had was te zwaar. Ze waren diep in de schulden gekomen. Hij had speciale medicijnen nodig voor financiële depressie, en wist dat hij dan eerst uit de schulden moest komen, en dan voor de medicijnen moest sparen. Maar de schulden werden steeds erger, want doordat de man nu depressiever was dan ooit verloor hij zijn baan. Hij kwam in een vicieuze cirkel terecht en werd helemaal naar beneden gezogen, terwijl hij zijn vrouw meezoog. Na een tijdje kon zijn vrouw er niet meer tegen, en kwamen ze in een scheiding. Nu had hij ook speciale medicijnen nodig om dit te verwerken. Hij zag het niet meer zitten. Hij besloot gokker te worden, maar hierdoor verloor hij zelfs al zijn bezit. Een ziekenhuis kon hij niet betalen, dus hij werd een zwerver. 'Het is allemaal de schuld van die vervloekte medicijnen,' gromde hij. Toen hij de psychiater eens op straat tegenkwam vloog hij hem aan. Hij begon op de psychiater in te slaan, totdat de politie kwam om hem te arresteren en naar de gevangenis te brengen. 'Dat is ook een oplossing,' dacht hij bij zichzelf. 'Hier heb ik in ieder geval te eten, te drinken en een dak boven mijn hoofd.'

In de gevangenis kwam hij ook dieven tegen die de speciale hallucinatie medicijnen hadden gestolen. 'Duur zijn ze, hè ?' zei hij tegen zijn medegevangenen. Ze knikten. 'Daarom stalen we ze, en nu zijn we hier.'

'Het zit ons ook niet mee,' zei hij. 'Het lijkt wel alsof die medicijnen ons de afgrond in hebben geholpen.'

'Therapie noemen ze dat dan,' sprak één van de dieven. 'Een geneesmiddel, maar nee.'

Tot zijn grote verbazing kreeg hij in de gevangenis dezelfde soort medicijnen die hij had, maar dan gratis. Het hoorde bij het resocialisatie proces en het werd door de staat betaald. 'Verwacht er maar niet teveel van,' zei één van de dieven. 'Het is allemaal sterk verdunt. Het houd je tussen wal en schip.' En zo was het. De medicijnen speelden een spelletje met hem.

'Ik denk dat ze ons gewoon die troep geven zodat zij in ieder geval hun baan kunnen blijven behouden,' sprak hij tegen zijn mede-gevangenen, die knikten.

'Natuurlijk,' zei één van de dieven. 'Het is allemaal doorgestoken kaart. Waarom zou een dokter iedereen daadwerkelijk willen genezen ? Dan heeft hij geen werk meer en geen inkomsten. Het zijn slimme en sluwe gasten.'

'Daarom vloog ik er ook één aan,' zei de man. 'En blijkbaar werkt het ziekenhuis samen met de politie. Zo weten ze ons altijd te krijgen en te houden.'

'Het is één groot complot,' zei de dief. 'Ik heb geen vertrouwen meer in de maatschappij. Ze hebben mijn respect verloren, en ik neem nu gewoon wat ik nodig denk te hebben.'

'Laten die medicijnen ons dit ook niet hallucineren ?' vroeg de man.

'Dat zou best kunnen,' zei de dief. 'Ik zou er in ieder geval niet van opkijken.'

De volgende dag komt de psychiater hem opzoeken. Hij kan tot de psychiater spreken van achter glas. 'Ik heb er over nagedacht,' sprak de psychiater. 'Ik wist dat je de medicijnen nodig had en niet kon betalen. Dat kan inderdaad frustrerend zijn, en sommigen gaan dan door het lint. Ik kan de rechtbank vragen u te berechten met verzachtende omstandigheden.'

'U doet maar wat u niet laten kan,' sprak de man, 'maar ik zit hier best. Hier heb ik in ieder geval een dak boven mijn hoofd, te eten en te drinken, en de medicijnen, alhoewel zwaar verdund. Het houdt me in het midden, maar het is beter dan niks.'

'Ik heb speciale medicijnen waardoor u psychiater of politie kunt worden,' sprak de psychiater. 'Lijkt u dat niet wat ? Dan heeft u volledige beschikking over de medicijnen die u nodig heeft.'

De man wordt boos. 'Jullie zijn grote oplichters,' roept hij. Dan is de bezoekerstijd om. De volgende dag komt zijn vrouw hem bezoeken. 'Echt, het spijt me,' zei ze. 'Ik had het nooit moeten doen. Mijn leven is nu nog wel erger dan het was.'

'Dat is jouw probleem,' zei de man. Ook dat gesprek was snel afgelopen. Het gevangenis leven viel hem zwaar, maar het was beter dan buiten de gevangenis. Ook had hij het gevoel dat de gevangenis-bewakers geen gelukkig leven hadden, dus daar moest hij ook niet aan denken. Op een dag kwam de psychiater weer langs, maar de man wilde hem niet meer zien. Na lang aandringen kwam de man toch, en had een gesprek met de psychiater van achter het glas.

'Luister,' zei de psychiater. 'Ik heb je echt verkeerd ingeschat. Ik denk dat ik je verkeerde medicijnen heb gegeven, en om het goed te maken heb ik nu de juiste medicijnen voor je, en je mag ze gratis hebben op volle sterkte.'

De man dacht dat hij toch niets te verliezen had, en nam de medicijnen aan zonder te vragen waar het voor was, of wat het voor een effect zou hebben. Toen de psychiater weg was nam hij wat van de medicijnen in. Hij kreeg dit keer wel hele vreemde hallucinaties. Hij was bij de tandarts en de tandarts begon in zijn tanden en kiezen te boren. Ook begonnen de oren van de tandarts te groeien. Hij probeerde weg te rennen, maar hij was gebonden aan de stoel waarin hij lag. Van de pijn merkte hij dat hij niet meer kon praten. Hij schrok wakker en wilde direct de psychiater spreken, maar hij kon nog steeds niet praten. Hij besloot daarom te schrijven, maar ook dat hielp niet. Omdat het beschreven werd als een gevangenis-ongeval mocht hij zo gratis naar het ziekenhuis. Hier kreeg hij wel allerlei medicijnen op volle sterkte, maar hij kon nog steeds niet spreken. Hij dacht bij zichzelf hoe hij nou zo stom kon wezen om zomaar medicijnen te slikken terwijl hij van niets wist. Maar ook het denken ging steeds moeilijker. In het ziekenhuis begonnen ze medicijnen te dwingen en ook kreeg hij gedwongen spuitjes. Hij kon zich niet verdedigen. Hij zat in zichzelf opgesloten en gleed langzaam weg in een coma. Hij wist nu wel zeker dat de psychiater een grote misdadiger was. Na een tijdje verklaarden ze hem dood, terwijl hij nog steeds in leven was, en alles kon horen. Hij kon horen hoe zij zijn begrafenis al aan het regelen waren.

Dan komt zijn ex-vrouw ineens huilend binnen. 'Jullie hebben hem teveel rotzooi gegeven !' riep ze. 'Hij kan wel schijndood zijn. Dat heb ik weleens gelezen dat dat kan gebeuren als mensen teveel medicijnen hebben genomen.' Maar ze wilden haar niet geloven.

'Ik eis dat jullie stoppen waar jullie mee bezig zijn !' riep ze, 'en dan zien of hij misschien uit zijn schijndood komt omdat hij geen medicijnen meer binnen krijgt.' Ze liep naar hem toe en voelde zijn pols. 'Zie !' krijste ze. 'Hij heeft nog steeds polsslag. Hij is helemaal niet dood, stelletje criminelen !'

Maar zij grepen ook haar, en injecteerden haar vanwege opstandig gedrag. Ze maakten aantekeningen dat ze gevaarlijk zou zijn, en snel was zij ook in een coma, en werd dood verklaard. Nu zouden ze beiden begraven worden. Ze kreeg hele vreemde hallucinaties door

de injecties. Ze kon met haar ex-man spreken, en hij kon terugspreken. Maar het waren slechts hallucinaties. Haar ex-man hoorde haar niet meer. Toen ze beiden levend waren begraven en waren gestorven hallucineerden zij door, alsof zij een nieuw leven hadden gekregen. Maar zij waren niet bij elkaar.

De man zag een tandarts voor hem staan, en gaf hem een klap in het gezicht. Ook de vrouw zag een tandarts voor haar staan, en deed hetzelfde. Er kwam geen politie aan te pas dit keer. Maar de oren van de tandartsen begonnen weer te groeien. 'Wat is dit voor medicijn !' schreeuwde de man naar de tandarts. Maar de tandarts gaf geen antwoord. De mond van de tandarts werd steeds kleiner en kleiner. Plotseling was de tandarts een konijn. Het konijn probeerde weg te rennen, maar de man kwam achter het konijn aan en schopte het. 'Ons hele leven hebben jullie vernield !' riep hij. 'Vertel op, wat voor medicijn was het ! Houd je niet van de domme !'

Toen veranderde het konijn in een eend, en toen in een bad-eendje. 'Een stuk speelgoed zijn wij,' zei het bad-eendje. 'Het medicijntje van een speelgoed-treintje. Het is geen eigen keuze of beloning, maar een geschenk, een leuk cadeau voor de verjaardag, of zomaar omdat het een mooie dag is, of je hebt eens de jackpot gewonnen.'

De man viel flauw en begon te schuimbekken en over te geven met stuiptrekkingen. 'Houd me niet voor de gek !' riep de man. 'Wat voor medicijn is het !' Plotseling bevond de man zich in de natuur, gebonden aan een paal, terwijl donkere vrouwen voor hem stonden en hem sloegen. 'Wat voor medicijn is het !' riep de man weer.

'Het is speelgoed !' riepen de vrouwen.

'Wat voor speelgoed ?' vroeg hij.

'Jij bent speelgoed,' zeiden ze. 'En wij verkopen het weer door.'

'Houd me niet voor de gek !' riep de man. 'Wat voor medicijn is het !'

'Speelgoed,' zeiden de vrouwen. 'Wij zijn speelgoedmakers, poppenmakers.'

'Ziek,' zei de man.

'Waarom ziek ?' vroegen de vrouwen. 'Het levert goede winst op.'

Hij eindigde in een doos, en kwam in een speelgoedwinkel terecht als pop.

'Mama, hij gedraagt zich zo raar,' zei een meisje toen haar moeder de pop voor haar had gekocht. 'Alsof de pop leeft.'

'Zit er dan maar niet aan, lieverd,' zei de moeder. De pop belandde op de poppenbank naast een andere pop, zijn vrouw. Hij fluisterde naar zijn vrouw. 'Hoe ben jij hier terecht gekomen ?' Ze vertelde een soortgelijk verhaal.

'We zitten hier flink in de problemen,' fluisterde hij.

Eigenlijk kwam hij pas vrij door een atoom oorlog. De lucht was vol met prachtige energieën. De speelgoed fabriek was gekomen.

Ik en mijn Video Spelletje

Een speelgoedwinkelier was in gesprek met een oude dame die speelgoed wilde kopen voor haar kleinzoon.

'Wat moet het precies wezen ?' vroeg de speelgoedwinkelier.

'Hij is dol op video-spelletjes,' zei de vrouw.

'Het liefst met indianen en cowboys. Daar is hij gek op.'

'Hmmm,' zei de speelgoedwinkelier, 'en leidde haar mee naar de bak waar de video-spelletjes waren. Bladert u hier maar even tussen.' Het ware hele dunne schijfjes als diskettes. De vrouw zocht er een paar uit, en rekende ze af. 'Uw kleinzoon zal er vast erg blij mee wezen,' glimlachte de speelgoedwinkelier.

'Dat geloof ik ook,' sprak de oude vrouw. 'Het is toch zo'n goeie jongen. Hij heeft altijd alles over voor iedereen. Hij heeft een hart van goud.'

'Nou, dan is het hem gegunt,' sprak de speelgoedwinkelier. De vrouw bleef maar doorpraten over haar kleinzoon, totdat het sluitingstijd was, maar de speelgoedwinkelier wilde haar niet zomaar wegsturen. 'Zeg, wilt u anders niet een kopje thee met me drinken in het magazijn ?' vroeg de speelgoedwinkelier vriendelijk.

'Nee,' zei de oude vrouw, 'ik moet nu direct weg.' De vrouw keek op haar horloge en schrok. 'Het is inderdaad erg laat.' Toen rende ze haastig de winkel uit. De man zuchtte. Het was weer een drukke dag geweest.

De volgende dag kwam de kleinzoon van het oude dametje langs. Hij wilde één spel ruilen, omdat het toch niet was wat hij wilde. 'Kijk maar in de bak,' zei de speelgoedwinkelaar vriendelijk. Snel had de jongen zijn keuze gemaakt, en ging de winkel uit. De volgende dag was de jongen er weer. 'Nou, het zijn mooie spelletjes,' zei de jongen, 'maar mijn huiswerk lijdt er zo onder. Heeft u ook spelletjes waar tegelijkertijd mijn huiswerk in gedaan kan worden ? Oma heeft me geld meegegeven.'

De speelgoedwinkelier glimlachte vriendelijk en sprak : 'Maar natuurlijk. Goed dat je ernaar vraagt. ' Hij liep even het magazijn in en kwam toen terug met een hele doos vol spelletjes die ook nog eens leerzaam zijn. 'Hier, je mag ze allemaal gratis hebben,' zei de speelgoedwinkelier. 'Ze worden namelijk toch niet verkocht. Niemand wil ze.'

'Graag,' zei de jongen blij, 'en ik wil ze wel.' Vrolijk ging de jongen de winkel uit met de doos, maar de volgende dag was hij er weer. 'Het sluit niet echt aan op mijn huiswerk,' zei de jongen. 'Het zijn hele mooie en leerzame spelletjes, maar het loopt niet gelijk op. Ik heb namelijk ander huiswerk opgekregen.'

De speelgoed winkelier glimlachte. 'Zo is het leven, jongen,' sprak hij. 'Maar misschien kan er een samenwerking komen tussen de speelgoedfabriek en de school ? Als je me even zegt wie je onderwijzer is, dan kan ik hem bellen en dan kunnen we overleggen.'

'Dat zou fantastisch zijn,' zei de jongen.

Maar de onderwijzer was een hele nare man, en wilde niets met de speelgoedwinkelier te maken hebben. Spelletjes hoorden niet thuis in het huiswerk. De onderwijzer was absoluut ongeinteresseerd, en het gesprek was vlug afgelopen. De jongen kreeg het te horen en was enorm kwaad. Hij was verschrikkelijk aan het stampvoeten en schelden. Mensen kenden hem niet meer terug. Hij vertelde het ook aan zijn oma, die ook verschrikkelijk kwaad werd op de onderwijzer. De oude dame belde de man op en schold hem de huid vol. 'Je moet je schamen

om zo'n creatief project af te wijzen. Kinderen hebben spelletjes nodig. Spelenderwijs leren ze veel beter.'

Maar de onderwijzer was erg geschokt, en vroeg zich af hoe ze al deze dingen durfde te zeggen. 'Spelletjes horen niet thuis op school,' zei de man. 'Die zijn voor de vakanties. Spelletjes maken kinderen lui en gemakzuchtig. Zo wordt het leervermogen vernietigd.'

'U kletst uit uw nek,' gilde de oma. 'U zult nog van mij horen.' Toen gooide ze de hoorn op de haak.

De speelgoedwinkelier had het inmiddels bij andere scholen geprobeerd en daar lukte het wel. De jongen wilde overgeplaatst worden, maar dat mocht niet. Dat was wettelijk zo geregeld in het land. Alleen met een zeer goede reden mocht er overplaatsing aangevraagd worden. De oma was woedend. Ook de speelgoedwinkelier wilde het er niet bij laten zitten. Ze zeiden dat de jongen werd behandeld als een gevangene. Er werden brieven over gestuurd naar de regering, maar die werkte totaal niet mee. Toen kwamen de telefoontjes, maar ook dat hielp niet. De jongen moest gewoon op zijn oude school blijven.

Het was in die dagen dat de speelgoed fabrieken een speelgoed atoomoorlog opzetten. Er verschenen torens en gebouwen op de wolken, en grote steden, en de lucht was vol met prachtige energieën. Het was een groot kunstwerk. Ook andere landen zagen het in de lucht en bewonderden het. Ook de regering bewonderde het, en zo mocht het jongetje eindelijk overgeplaatst worden. Zijn oude school werd gesloten, en het duurde niet lang totdat kinderen helemaal niet meer naar school hoefden. De speelgoedfabrieken waren de nieuwe scholen geworden.

Een jongetje schoof zijn nieuwe video spelletje uit de computer. Het ging over een speelgoed atoomoorlog. Het jongetje had goed gevochten, en een hoge score behaald, met veel bonus. Hij ging naar zijn moeder toe en vroeg om de deodorant. Hij was helemaal onder het zweet.

'Wat heb je gedaan ?' vroeg zijn moeder.

'Het nieuwe video spelletje,' hijgde hij. 'Het was fantastisch.'

'Maar heb je je huiswerk al af ?' vroeg zijn moeder.

'Als het goed is hoeven we niet meer naar school nu,' zei het jongetje.

'Wat bazel je nu, ventje,' zei de moeder, die hem een draai om zijn oren gaf.

'Laat maar,' zei het jongetje. 'Ik zal mijn huiswerk nu direct gaan doen.'

Moeder kwam even later naar zijn kamertje boven, en zag hem weer een video spelletje spelen.

'Ik gooi dat ding nog eens uit huis,' brulde zijn moeder.

'Maar het huiswerk staat hierop, ma,' zei het jongetje. 'Ik heb het van de meester meegekregen.'

Moeder kijkt naar het scherm en is verbaasd. 'Je hebt gelijk,' zei ze. 'Dit is jouw huiswerk. Dat is een nieuwe vorm van huiswerk, in een video spelletje ?'

'Ja, mam,' zei het jongetje. 'Het heet de Speelgoed Fabriek, zodat kinderen meer spelenderwijs leren.'

'Dat is me nogal een uitvinding,' zei moeder. 'Dat zal dan wel een hoop minder geklaag zijn over het huiswerk.'

'Dat hoop ik ook,' zei het jongetje. 'Gaan we dan ook verhuizen ?'

'Verhuizen ?' vroeg moeder verbaasd. 'Hoe kom je daar nou weer bij ?'

'De meester zei als ik het spel heb gewonnen dan krijgen we een nieuw huis, veel beter dan wat we nu hebben,' zei het jongetje.

'De meester maakt zeker een grapje,' zei moeder.

'Nee, echt,' zei het jongetje. 'En als ik het spel gewonnen heb dan krijg ik ook nog een andere prijs.'

'En wat is dat ?' vroeg moeder.

'Dat u weer beter bent,' zei het jongetje.

Er kwam een traan uit moeder's ogen, want moeder was ernstig ziek. 'Ik kan dat bijna niet geloven, mijn jongen,' zei moeder vriendelijk, 'maar ik vind het toch heel lief van je dat je zulke dingen zegt.'

Die nacht heeft moeder erge nachtmerries. Ze droomt ook dat ze dood gaat. Als ze wakker is gaat ze naar het kamertje van haar zoontje, en vraagt hoe ver hij is met het spel. 'Nog even, ma,' zei hij. 'Het is heel zwaar geweest, maar ik kom er wel doorheen.'

Op een dag heeft hij het spel af en heeft hij het gewonnen, maar het is alleen een huis op de computer, in het video spelletje, en ook de moeder is een poppetje in het video spelletje, en zij is genezen. Het jongetje laat het zien aan zijn moeder. Ze vindt het heel mooi, maar ze is ook teleurgesteld dat het niet echt is. De vrouw wordt zieker en zieker, en sterft dan aan haar ziekte. Het jongetje is ontroostbaar. 'Er moeten betere spelletjes verzonnen worden,' zei hij tegen de meester. 'Ik heb zo hard mijn best gedaan, maar alles was maar een spelletje.'

De vader van het jongetje is boos op de meester, want het zou zijn zoontje valse hoop hebben gegeven. In het spelletje zou alles steeds beter gaan, maar in de echte wereld werd alles steeds erger. Toch blijft het jongetje de spelletjes spelen, en hoopt één dag zelf een video-spelletjes maker te worden, maar dan niet alleen in samenwerking met scholen, maar ook met de woningbouw en het ziekenhuis. Hij wil dus ook een soort dokter worden, een speelgoed dokter.

Zijn vader vind hem maar een dromer. 'Het leven is hard. Daar kun jij niets tegen beginnen,' zegt zijn vader altijd, maar het jongetje vecht door. Op een dag wordt ook zijn vader ernstig ziek, en ondanks alle mooie beloftes van de video-spelletjes sterft zijn vader ook niet lang daarna. Psychisch gaat het niet goed met het jongetje. Ook hij moet naar de dokter.

Op een dag komt hij een klasgenootje tegen. Het meisje heeft een soort blauwe krassen op haar voortanden als van een stift. Ook kan hij zien dat ze haar tanden niet goed heeft gepoetst. 'Ik ben blij dat je naar de dokter gaat,' zei het meisje tegen hem.

Het jongetje schrok van haar woorden. 'Dat is wel heel gemeen wat je tegen me zegt, dat je blij bent dat ik naar de dokter ga.'

Het meisje werd overstuur van zijn woorden. 'Ik bedoel dat ikzelf ook veel naar de dokter ga. Het kan soms helpen, en ik voel met je mee.'

'Sorry dat ik je verkeerd begreep,' zei het jongetje. 'Het gaat psychisch niet goed met mij, en ik ben soms een beetje in de war.'

Plotseling is er geen beeld meer. Het video-spelletje is gecrashed. Als het jongetje het spelletje weer oplaad is het meisje er niet meer.

'Ik dacht toch echt dat het echt was,' zei het jongetje tegen zichzelf, 'maar het was maar een video-spelletje. Ik hoop dat mijn hele leven maar een video-spelletje is geweest, en dat ik het spelletje zal winnen, of dat ik misschien een ander spelletje krijg.'

Hij voelde een hand op zijn schouder. Het was zijn vader. En ook zijn moeder stond achter hem. 'Ben je eindelijk wakker geworden uit je coma, jongen ?' zei zijn vader. 'We dachten : Laten we je maar achter de computer zetten, want daar hield je altijd zo van.'

'Video-spelletjes, ja,' zei het jongetje. 'Ik ben blij dat jullie nog leven. Wat was er met me gebeurd ?'

'Geschept door een vrachtwagen,' zei vader.

'Ik kan me er niets meer van herinneren,' zei het jongetje.

Zijn vader gaf hem toen een doos vol met nieuwe video-spelletjes. 'Op naar een nieuw leven, jongen.'

Gevangen in een Video Spel

Er was een nieuwe trein gekomen, geheel van speelgoed. Ook de rails waren van speelgoed, en mensen konden er gewoon mee reizen. Steeds meer van zulke treinen kwamen tussen de steden en de dorpen. Er kon gewoon niets fout gaan met zulke treinen. Het was magisch en utopisch. Meer en meer begon alles van speelgoed te worden, maar de hoge bazen van de regering begonnen overstuur te raken. Zij wilden oorlog zien, want oorlog zou het geld doen rollen, en zo zouden de ziekenhuizen vol blijven. De hoge oorlogsbazen van de regering wilden geen vrede. Teveel dokters zouden zo hun baan verliezen. Vaak als er moorden waren gepleegd, dan was de moordenaar speciaal daartoe opgeleid door de geheime medische cultus.

De speelgoedfabrikanten waren in een groot gevecht met de regering. Zij wilden dat er een nieuwe regering zou komen : een speelgoed regering. Dit vond de regering echt belachelijk. Ze wilden namelijk blijven rondlopen met hun stropdasjes en zure gezichten om te zien of ze nog ergens oorlog konden losweken, heel subtiel.

De speelgoedfabrikanten dachten toen : 'Goed, jullie willen oorlog ? Dan komt er ook oorlog.' En ze begonnen een speelgoed oorlog van kunst, een speelgoed atoom oorlog die de hele wereld zou verbazen en overnemen. Het was een spel oorlog. Alles was een video spel geworden. De speelgoed fabrikanten hadden namelijk de beste technologie van de wereld.

Het was winter. Daan en Hendrik stonden te wachten op de grote trein van speelgoed. Ze moesten naar school. Ook het station was geheel van speelgoed, en overal konden video-spelletjes gedaan worden. Die waren ingebouwd in grote spelkasten aan de muur. Het waren computers. Ze vonden het wel mooi, en er hing een veel betere sfeer nu.

De onderwijzer was kwaad die dag. Hij vond al dat speelgoed gedoe maar niets. Volgens hem moest er hard gestudeerd worden en dan gewerkt. Altijd had hij een stropdas om, en stond meters boven de kinderen. Nooit had hij oog voor ze, alleen voor zijn eigen zwaarwichtige onzin.

Daan en Hendrik wilden altijd kind blijven. Ze wilden niet volwassen worden, want de volwassenen hadden de wereld kapot gemaakt. Daan en Hendrik stonden aan de kant van de speelgoedfabrikanten. Beiden wilden ze later ook speelgoedfabrikanten worden om de wereld beter te maken.

Maar het was snel afgelopen met het plezier. Er kwam een nieuwe president aan de macht, Van Straaten, en die beval dat alle spelcomputers van het station verwijderd moesten worden. Ook moesten de speelgoed treinen weg, maar er werd toen zoveel gestaakt bij de spoorwegen dat de speelgoed treinen mochten blijven. Van Straaten zorgde er echter wel voor dat vele speelgoed fabrieken gesloten werden, en er werd veel speelgoed vernietigd. De bevolking was woedend. Daan en Hendrik dachten dat het doorgestoken kaart was dat Van Straaten aan de macht was gekomen. Er moest wel met de stemkaarten gerommeld zijn. Daan en Hendrik besloten de computer van de regering te hacken. Ze kwamen achter veel informatie van de geheime medische cultus, die er ook voor gezorgd hadden dat Van Straaten aan de macht was gekomen door veel gesjoemel met de stemmen.

Daan en Hendrik lieten het er niet bij zitten. Ook hackten ze de energie-centrales en zorgden ervoor dat de regering en ieder lid van de regering geen electriciteit meer hadden. Ze voerden geheime codes in die ervoor zorgden dat alle energie via de speelgoed fabrieken ging. De regering was woedend.

Daan en Hendrik waren speelgoed poppen vermomd als mensen. Zij waren spionnen van de speelgoedfabrieken en waren toegerust met de hoogste technologie. Hier kon Van Straaten niet tegenop. Hij rende gillend door de straten. 'Help, help !' riep hij. 'Mijn gat staat in brand !' Hij rende naar de tandarts, zijn trouwe maat, maar ook diens gat stond in brand. Ze stonden voor een groot raadsel. Beiden renden ze naar de rivier om daar het vuur in te sussen. Direct werden ze gegrepen door piranha's. 'Wie heeft die dingen hier plotseling losgelaten !' gilde Van Straaten.

Snel zwommen ze weer naar de kant. 'Vlug, het water uit !' riep de tandarts.

Maar een zwerm woedende wespen wachtten hen daar al op. 'Hoe kan dit !' riep Van Straaten. 'Zo is dit nooit geweest !'

'Ik denk dat dit een video spelletje is !' riep de tandarts.

'Video spelletjes !' krijste Van Straaten. 'Die heb ik zoveel mogelijk proberen te verwijderen !'

'Kennelijk niet genoeg !' riep de tandarts.

'Kennelijk zou ik jou een draai om je oren moeten geven omdat je je werk niet goed doet !' schreeuwde Van Straaten.

'Hoezo ?' riep de tandarts, die al helemaal onder de bulten zat.

'Boor die wespen weg !' schreeuwde van Straaten.

'Nu begin je onredelijk te worden !' riep de tandarts. 'Mijn volgende stem zal niet op jou zijn.'

'Ik zal zorgen dat je nooit meer komt te stemmen !' schreeuwde Van Straaten.

'Ik heb geen macht hier met mijn boren !' riep de tandarts.

'Nee,' schreeuwde van Straaten, 'in plaats van in gevoelige kinderen te boren had je eens wat spelletjes met ze kunnen doen, en in het leger de vijand wegboren, maar nee. Nu zitten we met de gebakken peren. Het spel keert zich nu tegen ons !'

'Precies !' schreeuwde de tandarts woedend. 'Jij hebt ook geen macht meer. Gelukkig maar !'

Ieder rende zijn eigen kant op. Ze wilden niets meer met elkaar te maken hebben. Beiden zaten ze onder de bulten. Er werden nieuwe verkiezingen gehouden, en de enige regering was de speelgoed fabriek. Het grootste gedeelte van de bevolking was hier blij mee, maar er werd veel geprotesteerd door de vorige regering en het onderwijs. Met spandoeken gingen ze de straten op, maar zwermen woedende wespen dreven hen naar de rivier waar de piranha's hen al opwachtten. Zij waren gevangen in het video spel.

Het Bevroren
Jongetje

COAB 2000-2017

Frozen Boy

Be proud of your shame, It's all I have, this frozen boy

He's going on, this frozen boy, He's changing without moving, Growing without thundering,

This vehicle in soft rage, in soft rage

He went down under the pink, where everything's soft and green, we're eating soft cartoons like water,

he's hugging all his shames, so proud of his fairytales

1. Het Bevroren Jongetje

2. Simson

3. De Haas en de Mol

4. De paus van Kampen

5. Politie, politie !

6. Dorus en de dominee

7. De Leeuw van Nunspeet

8. Het Paarse Complot

9. Groen Geluk

10. De Gekke Piraat

11. Het Vreemde Huis

12. De Trouwe Vriend

13. Het Vrouwtje dat de Zieken Genas

14. De Bakkerij

15. De Wonderjongens

16. Het Geheim van de Rode Veer

17. Het Dagboek van Schoolmeester Rateldonk

18. De Auto-diefstal

19. Eerlijk Alles Delen

20. Pir

21. De Sprookjesmarkt

Het Bevroren Jongetje

Een jongetje slenterde door de straten van het kleine stadje. In zijn mandje had hij dromen die hij verkocht, maar niemand wilde ze kopen. Overal in het kleine stadje probeerde hij het, maar overal wezen ze hem af. Zo verdiende het jongetje helemaal niets, en begon steeds meer honger te lijden. Het jongetje moest leven van weggegooid voedsel uit de vuilnisbakken op straat. Het jongetje had geen dak boven zijn hoofd. Hij was een zwerver. Zijn ouders waren gestorven toen hij nog heel jong was. Niemand, nee niemand, zorgde voor het jongetje. Het begon steeds kouder te worden, totdat het winter werd. Nog steeds verkocht het jongetje niets, en niemand wilde hem binnenlaten. Door de ramen van de huizen kon hij zien hoe de rijke mensen plezier maakten en feest vierden. Hij voelde zich eenzaam, hongerig, en zo koud. Sommigen lachten hem zelfs uit op straat. Anderen wilden zelfs niet naar hem kijken. Ze noemden hem een arme sloeber. Nee, in hun hart en woning was geen plaats voor het jongetje.

De winter nam steeds meer bezit van het stadje, en het sneeuwde dikke pakken sneeuw. Alles was bedekt met sneeuw. Het jongetje keek door de ramen van de huizen waar de rijke mensen woonden. Hij zag hoe ze bij de warme kachel elkaar cadeautjes gaven. Die nacht bevroor het jongetje van de kou en stierf. Hij had er genoeg van altijd maar weggejaagd te worden. Hij sloot zijn ogen om het niet meer te hoeven zien, en de kou omhulde zijn hart, en nam zijn ziel. Nu was hij voor altijd vrij in zijn dromen. Hij zweefde boven het kleine stadje, en zag ook zijn bevroren lichaam. Hij werd helemaal bedekt met sneeuw. Naast hem groeide een vanille plantje. Het plantje werd groter en groter totdat het een klein boompje was. Overal in het boompje begonnen nachtmerries te groeien.

De nachtmerries gingen als dolle honden door het kleine stadje. Bloeddorstig gingen zij op jacht, en gingen door de ramen van de huizen van de rijken naar binnen. Niets kon hen nog stoppen. En zo werden de rijke mensen van het kleine stadje gestrafd voor hoe ze het jongetje hadden behandeld.

Einde

Simson

Simson was een wilde jongen. Je moest hem niet kwaad maken, want dan hield hij je op de kop, zo jong als hij was. Toen hij opgroeide werd hij steeds rustiger en lieflijker, alleen 's nachts was hij erger dan ooit tevoren. Daarom wilde Simson zo graag alleen wonen, diep in de wildernis. Wat gebeurde er dan 's nachts met Simson ? Er werd veel over gespeculeerd, maar niemand wist het precies. Overdag was het de aardigste jongen die je je maar kon voorstellen. Simson hield ervan om in de bergen, het bos of de woestijn te spelen. Vaak speelde hij alleen, omdat andere kinderen hem toch een beetje vreemd vonden. Op een dag vond Simson een boek over Tarzan. Tarzan was een jongen die diep in de wildernis leefde samen met allerlei dieren zoals grote apen, slangen en beren, ja, ook panters. Het leven van Tarzan sprak Simson erg aan, en hij beschouwde het boek als zijn mooiste boek. Later zou hij ook wel als Tarzan willen worden. Tarzan hield erg van boompje klimmen, en van varen in een peddelboot op de rivier. Simson had geen vader en moeder meer, maar woonde bij zijn juffrouw in huis. De juffrouw had een groot huis, en elke dag liepen ze samen naar school. Simson werd op school vaak gepest, maar de juffrouw nam het altijd voor hem op, en twee meisjes. Eigenlijk waren die twee meisjes Simsons enige vrienden. Soms wilde hij weleens dat hij weer zo sterk was als vroeger, toen alle kinderen bang voor hem waren.

Op een dag las Simson aan de twee meisjes voor uit het boek van Tarzan. De meisjes vonden het ook een mooi verhaal. Simson vroeg hen weleens of zij met hem meewilden in de

wildernis om daar te gaan wonen als ze later groot waren, maar de meisjes vonden dat maar niets. Eén meisje wilde verpleegster worden, en het andere meisje politie-agente.

Op een dag kwam er een grote jongen naar Simson toe, die hem heel hard begon te slaan. De jongen sloeg hem zo hard dat Simson uiteindelijk bloedend wegliep. Thuis aangekomen nam de juffrouw een doek en bond het om de wond heen. De juffrouw was soep aan het koken. Simson wilde niet meer naar buiten, en wilde de volgende dag ook niet naar school. Simson voelde zich naar. Steeds meer begon Simson zich op zijn kamertje terug te trekken, en las vaak uit het boek van Tarzan. Op een dag kwam de juffrouw naar Simson's kamer toe om met hem te praten. Simson liet haar het boek van Tarzan zien. 'Zal ik je er uit voorlezen ?' vroeg de jongen. De juffrouw knikte vriendelijk. Simson las het hele boek voor haar uit, hardop. De juffrouw vond het een prachtig verhaal, en ook aan haar vroeg Simson of ze met hem mee wilde naar de wildernis als hij groot was, om samen met de wilde dieren te leven. 'Oh, spannend, Simson,' zei de juffrouw. 'Tarzan beleefde zoveel avonturen met de wilde dieren, en dat zou ik ook wel willen.' Simson was blij dat de juffrouw hetzelfde wilde als hem.

Toen het vakantie was stelde Simson aan de juffrouw voor om een reis te maken door de wildernis. Dat wilde de juffrouw wel. Ze vond het ook wel goed voor de jongen, want dan kon hij even al zijn problemen vergeten. En zo gingen ze op pad. Diep in het bos voelde Simson hoe zijn kracht weer tot hem terugkeerde. Beiden hadden ze het erg naar hun zin in het bos, en dwaalden steeds dieper en dieper. Maar na een tijdje begon de juffrouw erg moe te worden. Ze zouden één nachtje in het bos slapen, en dan de volgende dag weer naar huis teruggaan.

Midden in de nacht begon de juffrouw over God te vertellen. Dat had ze nog nooit gedaan. Maar ze herinnerde de verhalen van vroeger. Simson luisterde aandachtig. Maar plotseling zei Simson tegen de juffrouw : 'Juffrouw, ik moet even weg. Het gebeurt weer.'

'Wat gebeurt weer, Simson ?' vroeg de juffrouw.

'Dat kan ik u niet vertellen,' zei Simson, en rende weg. Na een tijdje kwam hij weer terug, en samen vielen ze in een diepe slaap. De volgende ochtend vroeg Simson of de juffrouw nog meer verhalen over God wilde vertellen, want hij vond ze zo prachtig, en werd er zo rustig van.

Omdat Simson de verhalen zo mooi vond besloot de juffrouw ze ook te vertellen in het nieuwe schooljaar. De kinderen vonden het erg prachtig, en sindsdien hield het pesten op school op. Maar Simson was nog steeds erg boos op de kinderen die hem zo hadden gepest. De juffrouw zei dat Simson hen moest leren vergeven, maar Simson kon het niet. Vaak had hij woede-aanvallen 's nachts, en ook op school ging het helemaal niet goed. Simson begon zijn oude kracht terug te krijgen van toen hij heel jong was. Weer begonnen de kinderen erg bang voor hem te worden, zelfs zijn twee vriendinnetjes. Simson deed geen kinderen kwaad, maar soms duwde hij in een woede-aanval grote dingen om, of tilde ze op en smeet ze een eind weg. Op een dag vroeg de juffrouw of Simson het boek van Tarzan in de klas wilde voorlezen. Simson glunderde en begon hardop te lezen. Alle kinderen vonden het prachtig, en het leek alsof de rust weer tot Simson begon terug te keren. 'Wie van jullie zouden later met mij mee de wildernis in willen ?' vroeg Simson toen hij het boek helemaal hardop had uitgelezen. Een paar jongens stoken hun vingers op, maar Simson raakte direkt teleurgesteld omdat dat juist de jongens waren die hem vroeger zo gepest hadden. De spanning was te snijden en het was ineens erg stil. Eén van de jongens stond op en zei : 'Simson, het spijt me

dat ik je vroeger zo gepest heb.' Ook de andere jongens stonden op, en zeiden dat het hun speet. Langzaam legde Simson het boek neer en liep naar zijn plaats. Ook al was hij nu wat rustiger, hoe voelde nog steeds de woede borrelen van binnen, en kon hen niet vergeven. Ook de jongens gingen weer zitten. Simson had het gevoel dat ze dit alleen zeiden omdat ze nu zo bang voor hem waren.

Thuisgekomen zei Simson niet veel. Na een tijdje vroeg hij aan de juffrouw : 'Wie zijn eigenlijk mijn vader en moeder, en wat is er met hen gebeurd ? Ik ben een vondeling, hè ?' De juffrouw liep naar Simson toe, en omhelsde hem. 'Je vader en moeder waren waarschijnlijk te arm om voor je te zorgen,' zei de juffrouw. 'Maar waarom hebben ze me dan op de wereld gezet ?' vroeg Simson weer in onbegrip.

'Omdat ze van elkaar hielden,' zei de juffrouw.

'Maar waarom hielden ze niet van mij dan ?' vroeg Simson. De juffrouw wist ineens niet wat ze moest zeggen. Simson ging naar zijn kamer. 'Ik wou dat ik Tarzan was,' dacht Simson bij zichzelf. 'Dan had ik niets meer met mensen te maken, alleen nog maar met wilde dieren.' Even later kwam de juffrouw binnen en omhelsde hem weer. 'Ik denk wel dat ze van jou gehouden hebben,' zei de juffrouw, 'zoveel dat ze je als vondeling hebben gelegd zodat ik voor je kon zorgen.'

'Maar wat als je mij niet had gevonden,' riep Simson, 'dan was ik van honger of kou doodgegaan.'

'Dan had iemand anders je wel gevonden,' zei de juffrouw. Simson ging op z'n bed liggen en de juffrouw hield zijn hand vast. 'Ik ben zo blij dat jij me gevonden hebt,' zei Simson, 'ik zou niemand anders gewild willen hebben.'

'Kan God ook met me praten ?' vroeg Simson ineens.

'Ik denk dat het met God zo is als met de wilde dieren,' zei de juffrouw, 'het zal heel moeilijk zijn om met Hem om te gaan, want Hij is heel anders als ons.'

'Denkt u dat Tarzan met God kon praten ?' vroeg Simson.

'Misschien wel, dat weet ik niet,' zei de juffrouw. Simson zuchtte. Het was allemaal nog zo ver weg voor hem. Maar als hij net zoals Tarzan met de wilde dieren kon leven en omgaan, dan kon hij dat misschien dan ook wel met God leren.

'Ik denk dat als je begint met het leren om te gaan met kinderen waarmee je moeite hebt, dat je dan ook met God kan leren omgaan,' zei de juffrouw. 'Misschien dat de wilde dieren in het begin ook niet zo lief voor Tarzan waren, maar later konden ze een band met elkaar opbouwen.'

Midden in de nacht vroeg Simson aan God : 'God, als u echt bestaat, kunt u dan naar me toe komen om met me te praten ?' Maar hoe lang Simson ook op een antwoord wachtte, er kwam niets. Simson was erg teleurgesteld, maar de volgende dag zei de juffrouw hetzelfde als wat ze de dag daarvoor had gezegd : Begin eerst maar eens met de wilde dieren en de kinderen waarmee je moeite hebt.

Simson koos voor de wilde dieren, in plaats van de kinderen waarmee hij moeite had. Maar ja, hoe kwam hij bij de wilde dieren ? De juffrouw gaf een duidelijk antwoord : 'Simson, die wilde dieren zijn de kinderen om je heen. Ze zijn al aan het veranderen, dus grijp je kans.' Maar Simson zat nog veel te vol met woede naar die kinderen toe. Eigenlijk kon hij alleen maar aardig zijn naar zijn twee vriendinnetjes.

Op een dag, toen het weer vakantie was, vroegen de twee meisjes of Simson met hen mee wilde om een grote wandeling door het bos te maken. Dat wilde Simson natuurlijk direkt. Hij stelde voor dat ze een reis door de wildernis zouden maken, zoals hij eens met zijn juffrouw deed. Het was nu toch vakantie. En zo gingen ze op reis. Dit keer ging Simson nog verder dan de keer dat hij met z'n juffrouw ging. Maar wilde dieren kwamen ze niet tegen. Pas na enkele dagen waren ze weer terug.

Simson begon steeds meer en meer over God te praten. Simson hoopte dat God eens een keer met hem zou komen praten. Maar Simson moest steeds denken aan de jongens waarmee hij niet wilde omgaan. Misschien moest hij het toch maar eens proberen. Op een dag trok Simson de stoute schoenen aan en vroeg aan de jongens of ze ook met hem meewilden de wildernis in. Dat wilden de jongens wel. En ze maakten een reis verder dan Simson ooit eerder had gemaakt. Ze kwamen zo diep in de wildernis dat ze daar de wilde dieren tegenkwamen. De jongens vonden dat erg spannend. Wat zouden ze graag vriendschap willen hebben met de wilde dieren. Maar ze wisten dat ze erg voorzichtig moesten zijn. Ze konden beter niet te dichtbijkomen, en niet te lang blijven, want dan zou het echt gevaarlijk worden.

Toen ze uiteindelijk weer thuis waren voelde Simson zich heel anders. Simson voelde zich tevreden, en hij was zelfs trots op zichzelf dat hij het gedaan had. Hij was nu bij de jongens geweest waar hij zoveel moeite mee had, en hij was bij de wilde dieren geweest. Misschien dat God nu wel met hem zou willen praten. Hij kon bijna niet wachten tot het nacht was geworden. Toen hij in z'n bed lag bad hij weer tot God, en vroeg aan God of Hij nu wilde komen om met hem te praten. Simson voelde zich heel anders nu, en ook al sprak God niet tot hem, hij kon God wel voelen. Het was genoeg voor Simson. Hij voelde zich nu als Tarzan. Tarzan kon ook niet met de wilde dieren praten, maar hij kon wel heel dicht bij de wilde dieren zijn.

Einde

De Haas en de Mol

'Laten we allen welzijn wezen, laten we allen welvaart zijn,' zei de haas tegen de mol. 'Neen,' zei de mol, 'ik blijf onder de grond, en graaf mijn gangen, door het persoonlijk te voelen, door het persoonlijk aan te raken. Ik doe alles op de tast en hierdoor graaf ik diep, graaf ik diep. Maar jij, beste haas, ziet dingen op afstand, die je nooit aangeraakt hebt, want als je raakt, voel je pijn. De welvaart maakte je afstandelijk en trots.'

'Neen, beste mol,' zei de haas, 'ik kan er een hoop van leren, jou te zien zwoegen onder de grond. Dan voel ik me gezegend, en ben blij niet te zijn als jij. Dan zet ik mijn reis voort naar de zon.'

'Maar, beste haas,' zei de mol, 'weet je dan niet dat teveel licht verblind ?'

'Over blind gesproken,' zei de haas, 'k zal nooit zo blind zijn als jij.'

'Al mag ik dan erg slecht zien,' zei de mol, 'ik voel tenminste de grond waarop jij staat.' Vervolgens draaide de mol zich om en dook weer onder de grond. Hij had geen zin om verder te praten met de eigenwijze haas. De haas pakte zijn raket en vloog verder naar de zon. Telkens komt hij langs planeten waar mollen met hem spreken, maar zijn doel staat vast : 'Op de zon is het lekker warm,' zei de haas.

Op een dag kwam hij een wolf tegen. Het was een sneeuwwolf en de haas schrok er even van. 'Man, wat moet jij het moeilijk hebben hier in de kou,' zei de haas, 'ik ben op reis naar de zon, waar alles warm is. Zeg, heb je geen zin om mee te gaan ?'

'Nee,' zei de wolf, 'ik blijf liever in de sneeuw. De zon zou mijn huid verbranden.'

'Ach, dat is maar een fabeltje,' zei de haas parmantig en trots. 'Ik heb de warmte van de zon gevoeld.'

'Dan wens ik je een goede reis,' zei de wolf, en draaide zich om. Hij had geen zin om verder met de verwaande haas te spreken. De haas had echter zijn ware reden om de zon van dichtbij te bezichtigen nog niet verteld. Hij had geld zien glinsteren daar.

Voorts kwam de haas een oude beer tegen. De oude beer gromde eens en sprak : 'De zon zal over een tijdje smelten. Het was maar een sinaasappel in de hand van een groenteboer.'

'Nee, beste beer,' zei de haas, en verraade zijn geheim : 'De zon zal niet smelten, er is daar goud. Ik heb het zelf zien glinsteren.'

'Ach, nee,' zei de oude beer, 'u vergist zich zeer. Hetgeen u zag glinsteren was het horloge van de groenteboer.'

'Iedereen is hier gek,' zei de haas, 'nee, zelfs levensgevaarlijk. Dat ga ik de rechter verklappen.'

En zo gebeurdde het : De mollen, de sneeuwwolf en de oude beer moesten allen voor de rechter verschijnen. De rechter was een oude grijze arend, vol met grauwe, grijze veren. Vol van verbazing keek hij de beschuldigde dieren aan. 'Zeg, nou moet u toch eens luisteren,' zo sprak hij de dieren aan, 'Ik ben door de haas aangesproken, die mij vertelde, dat u de zon heeft vermoord, dat u hem in een klein gouden potje heeft gestopt en in de zee heeft geworpen. Wat is daarop uw antwoord ?'

De dieren keken de oude grijze arend vol verbazing aan. Sommige mollen kenden de haas niet eens, en hadden zelfs nog nooit van de zon gehoord. De sneeuwwolf begon te schaterlachen : 'Zeg, nou moet u toch eens luisteren, ik heb de haas alleen verteld dat ik niet met hem meewilde op reis naar de zon. Dat was alles.'

'Ja,' zei de mol waar de haas mee had gesproken, 'en ik zei hem alleen dat de zon hem blind zou maken.'

Waarop de oude beer rustig sprak : 'En ik heb hem laten zien wat de zon in wezen is.'

'Net wat ik dacht,' sprak de oude arend, 'ik heb mijn oude boeken nog eens doorgelezen. Hierin staat dat deze haas eens een muntstuk had gestolen, het in een gouden klok had verstopt, en in de gracht had geworpen. Maar zijn gezicht begon toen te stralen als het gestolen muntstuk, daarom zwoor hij te vluchten naar de zon, waar hij met zo'n gezicht niet op zou vallen.'

'Jullie zijn vrijgesproken,' sprak de oude, wijze arend.

En de haas ? Die moest vanaf nu bij de groenteboer werken.

De paus van Kampen

Riet-Jan leefde onder de grond in zijn rode glitterpak en zijn vliegend paard. Hij was vroeger circus-artiest, maar dat deed hij niet meer. Hij had nu een vliegend paard, en dat was alles wat hij nodig had. 's Nachts ging hij over de daken, en kon er door de schoorsteen heen nog heel wat uitvissen. Hij deed eigenlijk hetzelfde werk als sinterklaas, maar dan net andersom. Hij steelde. Riet-Jan sliste ook een beetje. Sommigen zeiden dat hij weleens in het circus een slang had ingeslikt. Ja, Riet-Jan werkte met slangen, en soms stopte hij dan weleens een slangenkop in z'n mond om het publiek te laten zien dat hij niet beet. Maar eens schoot zo'n slang er zo diep in dat Riet-Jan hem per ongeluk doorslikte. En sindsdien sliste hij. Maar of dat echt zo was gebeurd ? Sommigen zeiden dat ze er bij waren. En lieden die hem nog wel kenden, zeiden dat hij nog steeds met slangen werkte. Soms dan hield hij ze aan de staart vast, en dan liet hij ze door de schoorsteen zakken, zodat ze wat spullen konden meehappen. Dat moesten dan wel erg lange slangen zijn, maar die had Riet-Jan volgens sommigen ook. Anderen zeiden dat Riet-Jan zelf door de schoorstenen ging, als zwarte piet, maar dan niet om iets te geven, maar om iets weg te nemen.

Riet-Jan had vroeger ook een vrouw, en men zei dat hij haar altijd door de schoorsteen liet zakken om het dievenwerk te doen. Eens bleef ze een keer in de schoorsteen steken, en toen is Riet-Jan er vandoor gegaan, op z'n vliegende paard. Ja, heus, in Kampen zijn er genoeg die dat geloven, maar anderen zeggen dat het dikke unzin is. Sommigen beweren dat Riet-Jan nooit bestaan heeft. Anderen zeggen dat hij allang dood is. Maar als er ergens 's nachts iets gestolen is, dan geleuven nog veulen dat Riet-Jan dat heft gedaan. Het toaltje van Riet-Jan zou erg vreemd wezen, van oud kampers-ondergronds dialect. Nu zijn er wel meer vrouwen die beweerden dat zij het vriendinnetje waren van Riet-Jan, en dat hij hen alle vuile werkjes liet opknappen. Eentje beweerde dat ze in de zelfde kamer moest slapen als waar de slangen waren. Die slangen waren dan wel achter glas, maar toch. De vrouw in kwestie zou daar nog steeds nachtmerrie's van hebben. Maar niemand van hen, en ook anderen niet, zouden Riet-Jan de afgelopen twintig jaar nog gezien hebben. Wel heeft iemand eens een slang in de woonkamer gevonden, terwijl er wat spullen verdwenen waren. Had Riet-Jan z'n slang vergeten ? Niemand weet het.

Onder woonwagenbewoners wordt er nog wel veel over Riet-Jan gesproken. Voor hen was hij een held, en had hij nog nooit wat gestolen. Hij had altijd van alles over voor iedereen. En dat van die slangen was volgens hen ook niet waar, want Riet-Jan was bang voor slangen. De zigeuners van Kampen zeiden dat toen hij stierf hij onder de grond in zijn rode glitterpak en met een vliegend paard verder leefde. Dat is nu eenmaal het geloof van sommige zigeuners. Daar moeten wij verder van afblijven. Ze hebben een heleboel boeken over Riet-Jan geschreven, over al zijn heldendaden, en dat hij nu over de daken gaat met zijn vliegend paard om goede dingen aan de mensen te geven, en niet om dingen weg te jatten. Dat jatten dat liet Riet-Jan altijd aan anderen over. Nee, Riet-Jan was de goedheid zelve, een heilige der zigeuners. Ze leren hun kinderen praten, zoals Riet-Jan praatte, en ze mogen net als Riet-Jan paardrijlessen nemen. Ja, Riet-Jan wordt bij deze mensen vereerd. Maar wat zou Riet-Jan daar zelf nou allemaal van denken. Was hij wel zoals mensen hem afschilderden ? Riet-Jan hield meer van dieren dan van mensen. Hij was helemaal niet bezig met mensen. Hij zou ook nooit voor mensen over de daken gaan, maar wel om dieren te bevrijden uit hun kooitjes, om hen mee te nemen naar de rode zon, diep onder de aarde, daar waar iedereen vrij is. Aldus een dominee die zich bekeerd heeft tot de heilige sint Riet-Jan, onlangs door de kamperse paus heilig verklaard. Ja, en die kamperse paus dat is ook wat. Dat is een aap, een chimpansee. En die chimpansee wil elke dag in een pauselijk gewaad lopen, met een schaaltje heilig water, waarmee hij van alles en nog wat heilig verklaart. Zo is er laatst een stoel heilig verklaard, en ergens anders een paard.

Maar wat zou Riet-Jan hier allemaal van denken ? Riet-Jan zou de humor er wel van inzien. Want als er iets was waar Riet-Jan in geloofde, dan was het wel humor.

Politie, politie !

Niels van de Schaa was eens met z'n auto in Kampen voor wat zaken. Maar toen hij terugkwam bij z'n auto, was die weg. 'Hoe kan dat nou ?' dacht Niels. 'Ik dacht toch echt dat ie goed op slot was.' Afijn, Niels schakelde de politie in en die begonnen direkt een grootscheepse zoekactie. Dat had Niels nog nooit meegemaakt. In ieder geval was de auto snel gevonden, in een bosvijvertje, en de vissen dreven er in. Toen heeft de politie de wagen er ook nog voor Niels uitgehaald, maar ze wisten natuurlijk niet hoe de auto hier was gekomen. Op het politie-bureau kreeg Niels een glaasje en iedereen was heel vriendelijk naar hem. Zo vriendelijk, dat Niels besloot om in Kampen te gaan wonen. Waar goede politie is ... Daar ging het Niels om ... Maar al gauw werden er ook andere dingen gestolen. En dit keer vond hij ze niet terug, ondanks de vriendelijke en actieve zorg van de politie.

Op een dag wordt Niels gebeld door de politie. Hij is uitgenodigd op een politie-feest. Op het feest spreekt hij ook iemand die een boef zegt te zijn. Niels vindt dat verdacht, maar durft niks tegen de politie te zeggen, want de man beweerde ook een goede vriend van de politie te zijn. Werkt dat zo hier ? Maar na een tijdje spreekt hij weer iemand die een dief beweert te zijn. Het schijnt dat de politie op goede voet zou staan met inbrekers. Maar nog steeds durft Niels er niets van te zeggen. Maar toen hij later oog in oog kwam te staan met degene die beweerde z'n spullen te hebben gestolen stapte Niels op de eerste de beste agent af. Maar politie beweerde vriendelijk te blijven tegen dief en slachtoffer, en dit was de beste gelegenheid om hen met elkaar te verzoenen, door een politie-feestje. Toen Niels vervolgens liet weten dat hij z'n spullen nog niet terug had, liet de politie hem weten dat dat aan het eind van de avond zou gebeuren. Niels vond dat wel een hele vreemde benadering, maar er werd gezegd dat hij hen maar moest vertrouwen, dan kwam het wel goed. Aan het eind van de avond werden de spullen van Niels op het podium gezet. Het bleek allemaal één grote grap geweest te zijn. En die inbrekers die werkten gewoon bij de politie. Niels kon de grap niet echt waarderen, want volgens hem diende de politie zich daar niet mee bezig te houden. Dat zou hen erg ongeloofwaardig maken. Maar daar was de politie het zichtbaar niet mee eens, en Niels z'n glas werd nog eens goed volgegoten. Na een tijdje begon Niels de lol er ook wel van in te zien. Maar toen kwam ineens de vrouw van Niels binnenstormen. Er bleken weer dingen uit hun huis gestolen te zijn. 'Ach, maak je maar geen zorgen,' zei Niels tegen zijn vrouw, 'dat doet de politie allemaal.' Maar dit keer bleek de politie van niks te weten, en zelfs maanden na het incident waren de gestolen spullen niet teruggevonden, ondanks de vriendelijke en actieve zorg van de politie.

Maar een jaar daarna, op het politie-feest, leek alles zich weer te herhalen. Niels kwam daar iemand tegen die beweerde die spullen gestolen te hebben, en alles zou aan het eind van de avond op het podium staan. Niels kon natuurlijk de klok er op gelijk stellen, dat er thuis weer wat gestolen zou worden, en wat hij weer een heel jaar niet meer zou zien. Maar ditmaal had Niels bewaking en alarm laten inbouwen. Aan het eind van de avond kreeg hij z'n spullen terug, plus een certificaat dat hij nu eindelijk voldeed aan de veiligheids-eisen, en dat hij zo was vrijgesproken van politie-grapjes. Die grapjes waren dus eigenlijk testjes om de mensen in Kampen te drijven tot betere maatregelen tegen diefstal. Maar Niels was dit keer echt kwaad, en verscheurde het certificaat. 'Jullie zijn niets dan dieven,' zei hij door de microfoon op het podium. 'Ik heb hier echt geen enkel respect voor, maar wel gefeliciteerd dat jullie dit jaar van m'n spullen zijn afgebleven.' Maar toen rende ineens de vrouw van Niels naar binnen : 'Niels, ons huis staat in brand,' riep ze. 'Vandaar dat ik vannochtend een uitnodiging voor het brandweers-feest heb gekregen,' zei Niels, 'maar we gaan niet, want ik heb geen zin om een hoop as op het podium terug te vinden.'

Dorus en de dominee

Dorus woonde op de oude straat. Niemand wist eigenlijk of Dorus nu een man of een vrouw was. Dorus zelf wist het ook niet. Dorus had vanaf de geboorte nooit de kleren uitgehad. Er werden altijd kleren overheen gedaan, en terwijl Dorus groeide scheurden z'n oudere klederen natuurlijk af. Maar vies was Dorus absoluut niet, want Dorus ging elke dag zwemmen in de gracht. Nu Dorus ouder was geworden woonde hij niet meer in de oude straat, maar in het bos. Maar hij kwam nog wel elke dag op de fiets naar de oude straat om daar de vogels te voeren. Nu zou je misschien denken dat als iemand telkens kleren over de oude kleren doet, dan moet zo iemand toch haast niet meer kunnen lopen van de dikke laag kleren, maar dat was niet zo in het geval van Dorus. Dorus had namelijk motten in zijn kleren wonen, die ervoor zorgden dat Dorus zich heel goed kon bewegen. En het bewijs daarvan was, dat Dorus altijd de sportwedstrijden won. Of het nu zwemwedstrijden, hardloopwedstrijden of voetbalwedstrijden waren : Dorus won altijd, en er was niemand tegen Dorus opgewassen. Sommigen zeiden wel eens dat Dorus vogels in z'n kleren had wonen, die ervoor zorgden dat Dorus altijd won, maar zeker weten deden ze het niet.

Maar op een dag gebeurde er iets vreselijks. Dorus kwam niet meer naar de oude straat, en hij deed ook niet meer mee met de sportwedstrijden, en kwam ook niet meer in de gracht van het plantsoen zwemmen. De mensen begonnen hem erg te missen. Wat zou er met hem gebeurd zijn ? Maar niemand wist het. In de kranten kwam het te staan : Dorus spoorloos verdwenen. Iedereen wist wie Dorus was. De politie doorzocht het bos, maar vond niks. Zou Dorus onder de grond zijn gaan wonen ? Maar op een dag kwam er een man op het politie-bureau. 'Dag meneer, kan ik u helpen ?' vroeg de mevrouw aan het loket. 'Maar ik ben Dorus,' zei de man. 'Kunt u dat dan niet zien ?' De mevrouw schrok even. 'Nee, meneer dat kan ik echt niet zien. U lijkt totaal niet op onze Dorus.'

'Nou,' zei de man, 'dat is me ook wat. Het is sinds ik die zak drop kocht dat niemand me meer herkent.'

'Zak drop ?' vraagt de mevrouw verbaasd, 'maar waar heeft u die zak drop dan gekocht ?' Maar de man was alweer verdwenen. Hij was op weg naar de winkel waar hij die drop had gekocht. Maar toen hij daar aankwam was de winkel gesloten en stond er een groot bord met ALLES UITVERKOCHT achter het raam. Dorus wist niet meer hoe hij het had. Een paar dagen terug stond de hele winkel nog vol. Ineens kwam er een oud vrouwtje naar buitenlopen. 'Ja, dat heb je, hè. Sorry, meneer, alles is op. Dat heb je met toverspulletjes.' kraste het vrouwtje. Maar Dorus werd ineens heel kwaad. 'Ik wil m'n geld terug, ik ben betoverd. Niemand herkent me meer.'

Maar het vrouwtje zei : 'Dan had u maar beter moeten lezen op de verpakking,' zei het vrouwtje. Snel griste Dorus de verpakking uit z'n jaszak, en las : 'Bent u een man, en wilt u een vrouw worden ? Neem dan één dropje. Bent u een vrouw en wilt u een man worden, neem dan twee dropjes. Wilt u de ene dag een man zijn, en de andere dag een vrouw, neem dan alle dropjes.' Maar toen werd Dorus ineens wit en rood tegelijk. Hij had ook van de dropjes uitgedeeld. 'Zeg, mevrouw,' zei Dorus, 'er staat niet bij wat er gebeurt als je bijna alle dropjes hebt opgegeten.'

'Dat spijt me zeer, meneer,' zei de dame, 'maar dan zult u veranderen in een kikker.' Toen schrok Dorus wel heel erg. 'En wanneer gaat dat dan gebeuren ?' vroeg Dorus benauwd. 'Nou, dat zou al gebeurd moeten zijn,' zei de dame, 'wat heb je daarna gegeten ?'

'Nou,' zei Dorus, 'ik ben daarna naar de kerk gegaan, waar ik de drop heb uitgedeeld, en toen kreeg ik van hem een pepermuntje.'

'Wie is hem ?' kraste het oude vrouwtje. 'De dominee,' zei Dorus verlegen. 'En hoeveel dropjes heb je de dominee dan gegeven ?' vroeg het vrouwtje boos. 'Nou, wel meer dan tien,' zei Dorus, terwijl hij z'n hoofd boog.

Een paar dagen later stond er in de krant : 'Dominee vermist'. Dorus fietste direkt naar het politie-bureau, en vertelde het verhaal. Maar natuurlijk wilde niemand hem geloven. 'Hebben jullie dan toevallig een kikker in de kerk gevonden ?' vroeg Dorus voorzichtig. Maar nee hoor, niemand had een kikker gevonden. 'Dan moet het iets met die pepermunt te maken hebben gehad. En snel fietste Dorus naar de winkel waar ze die pepermunt verkochten. Maar niemand wilde de deur voor Dorus opendoen, terwijl er wel verkopers in de winkel waren. Plotseling kwam er een vrouwtje naar buiten : 'Niemand mag naar binnen. We moeten helaas de winkel leegruimen, want er is iets met de pepermunt aan de hand. Wij hadden beter op de verpakking moeten lezen,' zei het vrouwtje. 'Wat stond er dan op de verpakking,' vroeg Dorus beleefd. En toen mocht Dorus eventjes mee naar binnen en lieten hem de verpakking lezen : 'Bent u een vrouw, en wilt u een man worden, neem dan één pepermuntje.'

'Zie je wel,' zei Dorus tegen het vrouwtje, 'ik wist wel dat ik een vrouw was.' En toen las Dorus verder : 'Bent u een man, en wilt u een vrouw worden, neem dan twee of meer pepermuntjes.'

'Dan weet ik nu wat er met de dominee gebeurd is,' zei Dorus, en na beleefd bedankt te hebben voor de hartelijke ontvangst stapte Dorus weer naar buiten, pakte zijn fiets en reed naar het bos. Daar zag hij een vrouw huilend bij een vijver zitten. 'U bent vast de dominee,' zei Dorus voorzichtig. 'Ja,' brulde de vrouw, 'en ik durf niet terug, want niemand zou me geloven. Ik dacht : Laat ik maar naar Dorus gaan. Misschien kan die helpen.'

'Maar ik ben Dorus,' zei Dorus. 'U heeft mij namelijk ook één zo'n pepermuntje gegeven.' En toen vertelde Dorus het hele verhaal aan de dominee over de toverpepermunt, en ook over de toverdrop. Toen haalde de vrouw ineens alle dropjes uit haar zak tevoorschijn die Dorus had gegeven. 'Zie, deze had ik nog niet opgegeten, maar het is beter een kikker te zijn, dan een vrouw die in het bos moet leven.'

'Ja, maar dominee,' zei Dorus, 'luister nou eens. Je hebt nog één kans. U heeft me verkeerd verstaan. Als u twee dropjes neemt, dan wordt u weer een man, maar neemt u al uw dropjes, dan bent u de ene dag een man en de andere dag een vrouw.' Maar toen verbeterde de dominee hem weer, en zei : 'U had mij een stuk of tien dropjes gegeven, maar er waren er natuurlijk veel meer, en ik kan alleen om de dag een man zijn als ik alle dropjes zou eten, maar dit zijn niet alle dropjes, want u had er nog meer, dus dan zou ik in een kikker veranderen als ik die tien of elf dropjes zou eten. Maar ik kies natuurlijk voor het eten van twee dropjes. Dan word ik weer een man, en herkent iedereen me weer.'

'Is dat echt wat u wilt, dominee ? Dat ze u allemaal weer herkennen ? U was heus niet zo geliefd.' zei Dorus. En ja, daar had Dorus ook wel weer gelijk in. De dominee had helemaal geen zin meer om terug te gaan. Hij wilde liever hier in het bos leven, maar als kikker of als vrouw ?

'Eigenlijk komen deze dingen goed van pas. Laten we teruggaan, jij als man en ik als vrouw,' zei de dominee, 'dan gaan wij die dingen ook verkopen, voor mensen die eens iets anders willen in hun leven. En niemand die ons herkent. En dat vond Dorus wel een heel goed plan. En zo kregen ze een toverwinkeltje op de oude straat, waar veel zaken werden gedaan. Over Dorus en de dominee werd steeds minder en minder gesproken, maar over het toverwinkeltje elke dag meer. Vanuit heel het land kwamen ze naar het toverwinkeltje, en velen bleven ook gewoon in Kampen wonen. Maar al gauw werd er gesproken over een kikker-invasie. En Dorus en de dominee wisten precies hoe dat gebeurd was. En op een gegeven moment waren er zoveel kikkers in Kampen, dat de mensen weer begonnen te praten over Dorus en de dominee. 'Ach, waren zij nog maar hier, dan was dit allemaal niet gebeurd. Want bij Dorus konden ze in z'n kleren wonen, en de dominee, die zou de kikkers wel kunnen wegjagen. Ja, die dominee die was toch wel zo wijs. Die zou er wel wat op weten. En die Dorus, dat was toch zo'n sportheld, die zou de kikkers wel in een zak kunnen krijgen om ze naar het bos of het meer te brengen. Waren ze nog maar hier.' Maar Dorus en de dominee wisten wel beter. Ze hadden het zo goed naar hun zin. En ook toen er standbeelden van hen werden gemaakt, hadden ze niet de neiging om even tevoorschijn te komen.

Maar op een dag kwam de baas van belastingen bij hen langs. En na de uitbetaling zijn ze maar met hun winkeltje gestopt, omdat de belasting veel te hoog was. Dorus werd weer gewoon Dorus, en de dominee werd weer gewoon dominee. En zelfs de kikkers werden weer normaal, want voor een kikker in Kampen te wonen is de belasting helemaal onbetaalbaar.

De Leeuw van Nunspeet

Kraterik woonde in een huisje vlakbij het bos van Nunspeet. De mensen zeiden dat hij een kinderlokker was, en gingen daarom liever niet met hem om. Niemand wist eigenlijk precies waar dat gerucht vandaan kwam, maar iedereen nam het aan, want als het eens waar was ... Kraterik had vroeger geschiedenis gestudeerd, en was zelfs leraar geweest op school. Maar sinds zijn vrouw was overleden ging het slechter met hem. Op een dag ging Kraterik wat boodschappen doen in het centrum. Een vrouw staarde hem aan, en plotseling gilde ze : 'Het is Kraterik, het is Kraterik, die kinderlokker.' Maar niemand scheen er acht op te geven. 'Kraterik ? Wie is dat ? Ach, er zijn hier geen kinderlokkers,' zei iemand nors. Het leek erop

dat Kraterik z'n slechte naam aan het kwijtraken was. Er gingen immers jaren overheen, en de mensen werden anders. Iedereen scheen het een beetje vergeten te zijn. En ook de vrouw die het rondriep werd rustiger.

Op straat kwam Kraterik een oude vriendin van hem tegen. Ze vroeg of hij met haar meewilde naar huis. Dan konden ze eens wat bijpraten. Die oude vriendin kende de geruchten over Kraterik niet. Kraterik scheen opgelucht. Samen aan de thee hadden ze het nog eens over hun schooltijd vroeger. Ze hadden samen geschiedenis gestudeerd. Ze konden zich nog hun oude leraar herinneren. Wat had die man toch een fantasie. Hij vergeleek de geschiedenis altijd met dieren en voorwerpen, en zo kon iedereen het altijd goed onthouden. Ja, door de gelijkenissen van die leraar konden ze de verhalen van de geschiedenis nog steeds navertellen. Die leraar woonde ook in Nunspeet. Hij werd weleens de leeuw van Nunspeet genoemd. Hoe dat gekomen is ? Luister dan maar eens naar dit verhaal.

Die oude leraar scheen vroeger boer te zijn geweest. Maar hij moest zo hard werken dat hij er rugpijn van kreeg. Toen is hij maar geschiedenis gaan studeren, en al snel werd hij leraar op een school. In het begin ging dat niet erg goed. Hij werd vaak door vervelende kinderen uitgescholden, omdat hij een beetje krom liep. Dat kwam van het harde werken op het land. Maar door zijn kleurrijke verhalen begonnen de kinderen steeds meer respect voor hem te krijgen. Vaak gingen kinderen na schooltijd met hem mee naar huis, omdat hij zulke mooie verhalen kon vertellen. En toen één van die kinderen op een avond niet meer thuiskwam, dachten ze allemaal dat hij daar achter zat. Jarenlang was dat kind vermist, en al die tijd was hij de verdachte, ja, het werd zelfs zo erg, dat hij zijn baan erdoor verloor en zich niet meer op straat kon vertonen. Door gebrek aan bewijs hoefde hij nog net niet de gevangenis in. Iedereen was bang voor hem, en hij kreeg de bijnaam : De leeuw van Nunspeet. Hij is die naam nooit kwijtgeraakt, zelfs niet toen na vele jaren het vermiste kind weer opdook. De leeuw van Nunspeet scheen met het alles niets te maken hebben gehad. Het kind scheen problemen thuis te hebben, en heeft toen jarenlang door de grote steden gezworven. Er was eigenlijk maar één reden voor dit kind om weer naar huis te komen, en dat was om nog eens te kunnen luisteren naar de prachtige verhalen van die oude leraar.

Maar zoals je misschien wel kunt begrijpen : Dat deed die oude leraar na dit alles niet meer. Van bitterheid en verdriet is die oude geschiedenisleraar uit Nunspeet weggegaan. Maar zelfs jaren na dit feit werd er nog steeds over de leeuw van Nunspeet gesproken. En stukje bij beetje werden de feiten verdraaid, en wisten velen niet hoe het nou precies zat. 'Ja, het had te maken met een kinderlokker,' wist iemand te vertellen. En een ander wist te vertellen dat het over een geschiedenisleraar ging. En zo werd Kraterik hier min of meer de dupe van. Er waren allerlei vreemde en heldhaftige verhalen ontstaan rondom de leeuw van Nunspeet. De één werd er erg bang van, en de ander vond ze fascinerend, op z'n zachtst gezegd.

Nu Kraterik dan al een tijdje geen geschiedenisleraar meer was, begon de aandacht zich een beetje te verleggen naar nieuwe geschiedenisleraren, en dat ging zo ver, dat er op een gegeven moment bijna geen geschiedenisleraren in Nunspeet meer te vinden waren. Men durfte bijna geen geschiedenisboeken meer in huis te hebben, bang om voor de leeuw van Nunspeet aangezien te worden. En naarmate de tijd verstreek had de leeuw van Nunspeet niets meer te maken met kinderlokkerijen, maar meer met heldendom. En die hysterie kon men eigenlijk niet aan. Zo zou de leeuw van Nunspeet het dorp voor allerlei gevaren hebben behoed en uit allerlei verschrikkingen hebben gered.

Die oude vriendin van Kraterik wilde hem iets laten zien. Het was een boek over de leeuw van Nunspeet, met de meest vleiende legendes. Kraterik glimlachte : 'Dat zou onze oude geschiedenisleraar eigenlijk moeten lezen.' Maar goed, niemand wist waar hij heengegaan was, omdat hij in de tijd met stille trom was vertrokken. Ze besloten op onderzoek uit te gaan. Na een lange zoektocht kwamen ze erachter dat hij door de grote steden zwierf. Ze besloten hem te gaan zoeken. Dat viel niet mee, maar met een paar gouden tips van andere zwervenden kwamen ze erachter waar hij op dit moment verbleef.

In de boshut van hun oude leraar aangekomen zagen ze hem zitten. Hij herkende ze niet, en wilde eigenlijk niets met hen te maken hebben. 'Er is iemand die flink veel geld verdient met uw verhalen, Mijnheer van Lenden,' zei Kraterik. 'Ach,' zei de oude leraar, 'laten ze met hun geld ten verderve varen ... Wat heb ik daarmee te maken ...' En toen haalde Kraterik langzaam het boek tevoorscheen. 'Ja,' zei de oude leraar nors, 'die schrijver ken ik wel. Die heeft nog bij mij in de klas gezeten, en mij flink in het ongeluk gestort.' En toen begon de oude leraar zulk leeuwengedrag te vertonen, dat Kraterik en die oude vriendin maar snel vertrokken. Wel hadden ze het boek voor hem op z'n tafel gelegd.

Na enige tijd was er telefoon voor Kraterik. Het was de leeuw van Nunspeet. Kraterik was blij hem te horen. 'Zeg, ik wilde je nog even bedanken voor dat boek,' zei de oude leraar. 'Het is een samenbundeling van de mooiste verhalen die ik vroeger altijd vertelde. Ik was ze eigenlijk allemaal een beetje vergeten na alles wat er was gebeurd. Maar dit is het mooiste geschenk in mijn leven. Zo mooi, dat ik graag weer naar Nunspeet terug zou willen komen.' Kraterik had tranen in zijn ogen. En zo gebeurde het. De oude leraar ging weer in Nunspeet wonen, dichtbij Kraterik, vlakbij het bos. De jongen die het boek geschreven had werd ook ingelicht. Wat was dat allemaal een groot misverstand geweest, zeg. En al snel vielen de leeuw van Nunspeet en de jongen elkaar in de armen. De jongen had vaak naar zijn oude leraar gezocht, maar zonder resultaat. Nu was alles dan toch gelukkig goed gekomen. En heel Nunspeet was blij dat het z'n leeuw had teruggekregen.

Het Paarse Complot

Junos was het zoontje van een oude hertog in Nunspeet. Ze woonden in het kasteel dichtbij de molen. Junos had geen broertjes of zusjes, en zijn moeder was lang geleden overleden. Wel had Junos een stiefmoeder, maar zij was vaak weg. Op een dag moest Junos boodschappen doen voor zijn stiefmoeder. Hij moest daarvoor naar het dorp fietsen, en ook naar een zaak met spiegels gaan. Zijn stiefmoeder wilde een paarse spiegel voor in haar slaapkamer. Onderweg kwam Junos een paar kwajongens tegen. 'Zeg, looshelm, waar ga jij met die spiegel naartoe ?' riepen ze. En met hun brommers kwamen ze achter hem aan. Al snel hadden ze de spiegel te pakken en wierpen het op de straat.

Thuisgekomen wachtte Junos niet erg veel begrip op. Zijn stiefmoeder was razend. 'Die spiegels zijn duur, Junos, en je had een tas moeten vragen aan de zaak waar je die spiegel

gekocht hebt. Dan konden die jongens hem niet zien.' Ook zijn vader vond het erg dom van Junos. 'Junos, je had een andere weg moeten inslaan, want je weet dat daar altijd die jongens met hun brommers staan. Ze doen van alles om mensen het leven zuur te maken.' Junos moest de volgende dag naar de zaak terug om van zijn eigen geld een nieuwe paarse spiegel te halen. Maar de baas van de spiegelzaak kreeg het al snel door, en al gauw vertelde Junos hem het verhaal. 'Weet je wat,' zei hij, 'wij brengen de spiegel wel even met de auto van de zaak langs. En natuurlijk hoef je daar niets voor te betalen, want jij kon er per slot van rekening niks aan doen dat die andere spiegel kapotging. En voor de schrik mag je een extra dure uitzoeken, eentje met parfumspuiten en met een speeldoos erin. Dat zal je moeder prachtig vinden.'

'Het is mijn moeder niet,' zei Junos, 'het is mijn stiefmoeder, en als ik er eentje uit mag kiezen, dan wil ik de allergoedkoopste.' De baas keek een beetje beteuterd. 'Maar mag je haar dan niet ?' vroeg hij. 'Niet echt,' zij Junos, 'want sinds zij er is krijg ik altijd overal de schuld van.' De baas van de spiegelzaak keek erg bedenkelijk. 'Ik denk juist dat je je stiefmoeder en je vader moet opvrolijken, want ze zullen het wel erg moeilijk hebben als ze zo tegen je doen,' zei hij voorzichtig. 'Misschien hebt u gelijk,' zei Junos. 'Laten we het dan maar doen.'

En zo gebeurde het. De bijzondere spiegel werd in de bestelbus van de zaak naar het kasteel gebracht. De oude hertog en zijn vrouw waren er erg blij mee. En even leek het erg goed te gaan in het gezin. Maar na een tijdje begon de stiefmoeder weer erg te klagen naar Junos en hem van veel dingen de schuld te geven. 'Mamma,' zei Junos, 'is er soms iets met de spiegel gebeurd ?' De stiefmoeder was erg verrast omdat Junos haar voor het eerst 'mamma' had genoemd. 'Ja,' zei ze heel zacht, terwijl haar gezicht een beetje vertrok. 'Ik durfte het je eigenlijk niet zo goed te zeggen, maar de speeldoos springt aan op de meest vreemde momenten, zelfs als we slapen, en de parfumspuiten geven veel te veel parfum af.' Maar daar wist Junos wel wat op. Ze zouden iemand van de spiegelzaak ervoor laten komen. Na een tijdje werd er aangebeld. Het was de baas van de spiegelzaak. Al snel zag hij wat er aan de hand was. Het mechanisme van de spiegel was stuk. 'Ik kan zien dat de spiegel veel gebruikt werd, u was er zeker erg blij mee,' zei de baas van de spiegelzaak. De stiefmoeder knikte. 'Nou,' zei de baas. 'Ik heb voor u een nieuwe paarse spiegel meegebracht. Het is hetzelfde model, maar er zitten ook kleine lampjes bij in allerlei kleuren.' De stiefmoeder was erg verrast.

En weer scheen het een tijdje erg goed te gaan in het gezin van de oude hertog. Maar op een dag hoorde Junos iets stukspringen. Hij rende naar de kamer van zijn stiefmoeder, en zag haar daar in tranen zitten terwijl de spiegel kapot op de grond lag. 'Dat stomme ding maakt me gek,' zei de stiefmoeder. 'De lichtjes knipperen de hele tijd, ook nadat ik ze heb uitgezet. Ze springen gewoon weer aan. Ik word er ziek van.' Huilend viel ze Junos in de armen. Dat was voor de eerste keer dat ze hem omhelste. Junos kreeg er een brok van in z'n keel. 'Mamma, ik zal snel de spiegelzaak wel weer bellen. Ik weet zeker dat de baas ons nu een nog betere zal geven.' Maar de stiefmoeder huilde : 'Nee, Junos, ik wil nooit geen spiegel meer op m'n kamer zien. Het is afgelopen ermee.' En sindsdien was Junos z'n stiefmoeder altijd het zonnetje in huis. Ze was zichtbaar opgelucht toen de spiegel weg was, en ze zou er nooit meer één in haar kamer neerzetten ... nooit meer.

Na een tijdje kwam Junos nog eens terug bij de spiegelzaak om te vertellen wat er gebeurd was. De baas van de spiegelzaak was zichtbaar blij. 'Ach, Junos, weet je,' zei hij, 'die spiegels zijn zo gemaakt. De geschiedenis heeft wel bewezen dat zulke spiegels heel opvoedkundig zijn, en veel problemen in gezinnen voorkomen en wegnemen. Ze zijn gemaakt door een speciale fabrikant.' En toen pakte de baas weer zo'n paarse spiegel, en draaide de onderkant

boven. Daar zat een klein stickertje waar hij op wees. 'Zie, hier staat het,' zei hij : 'het paarse complot.' Junos glimlachte, en na nog even met de baas van de spiegelzaak door te praten ging hij fluitend naar huis.

Groen Geluk

Theo had een vogelzaak in Nunspeet. Het waren geen gewone vogels, maar speelgoedvogels. De meeste mensen vonden het maar een vreemde winkel, maar kinderen gingen er graag naartoe. Eigenlijk alleen maar om te kijken, want het speelgoed was veel te duur. Eigenlijk kochten daar alleen maar mensen met heel veel geld wat, en vaak kwamen zij vanuit het hele land. Hoge heren uit de politiek bijvoorbeeld, en rijke sterren. Vaak kochten ze dan spullen voor hun kinderen, maar soms ook wel voor henzelf. Het waren van die mensen die altijd op de televisie te zien waren. En als er dan gewone mensen in die winkel kwamen, dan was dat niet om de winkel, maar om die beroemde mensen te zien met hun kinderen.

Reginald wilde hier wat aan doen. Hij vond dat Theo zijn speelgoed best wel wat kon aanpassen en de prijs best wel wat lager kon maken, zodat ook wat meer gewone mensen hun inkopen daar konden doen. Ouders klaagden vaak over hun kinderen die weer eens bij Theo in z'n winkel waren geweest. Ze zeurden dan voortdurend om geld om ook zulk vreemd vogelspeelgoed te kunnen kopen. En ook de politie klaagde steen en been, omdat er zoveel gestolen werd. Vaak werden de daders ertoe aangezet nadat ze bij Theo in de winkel waren geweest. Door wie dan ? Door hun eigen verlangen naar dat bijzondere speelgoed.

Bij Theo zelf kon niemand inbreken. Dat was nog nooit gebeurd, en dat zou ook niet zo snel gebeuren. Theo had namelijk overal ronde tegeltjes in z'n winkel hangen. Het waren een soort alarmpjes die al aangingen als je het speelgoed aanraakte. Nee, bij Theo mocht je niks aanraken. Alleen kijken. Zodra het speelgoed werd opgetild of bewogen, dan gingen de pijnscheuten door je lichaam. Het was allemaal electrisch, en die stroom ging er pas af nadat je het gekocht had. Nee, inbraak was onmogelijk. Er was eens een oude dame die eens per ongeluk een stuk speelgoed in Theo's winkel aanstootte. Ze heeft er dagenlang van in het ziekenhuis gelegen. Nee, klantvriendelijk is Theo's winkel vooral niet.

Reginald had al zijn eigen club opgericht, een slachtoffersvereniging. Natuurlijk draaide dit allemaal om Theo's winkel. Reginald was eens op bezoek geweest bij Theo, die zelf boven zijn winkel woonde. Er hingen daar vreemde groene ronde tegeltjes aan de muur. Toen Reginald een slok van zijn thee nam begonnen die groene ronde tegeltjes te draaien en te zoemen. Ja, er gebeurden daar vreemde dingen bij die Theo. Reginald wilde nu eens naar buiten brengen wat er allemaal bij Theo in huis gebeurde. Hij scheen de enige te zijn die ooit in Theo's huis is binnengeweest. Naast Theo zelf dan. Tenzij er nog anderen waren die daar nooit over hebben durven praten. Of hen die het niet meer konden navertellen. Al tijden werd

er namelijk gespeculeerd over een grote groep vermiste personen. Maar de authoriteiten vonden Reginald's gedachten daarover te ver gingen. Ze wilden eigenlijk dat Reginald zou stoppen met zijn club tegen Theo, omdat ook Theo zijn rechten had, en niets deed wat eigenlijk verboden was. Maar Reginald was druk bezig iets te zoeken wat hij tegen Theo zou kunnen gebruiken.

Op een dag besloot Reginald om nog eens bij Theo op bezoek te gaan. Er was iets veranderd aan Theo's winkel. Er hingen nu grote groene ronde tegels naast de ingang. En opeens kon Reginald geen stap meer verzetten, alsof hij door een omgekeerde magneet werd tegengehouden. Maar andere mensen konden gewoon naar binnen, en ze keken hem aan alsof hij gek was. Maar al snel hoorde hij dat hij niet de enige was die niet meer naar binnen kon. Theo had magnetische kaartjes voor gewilde klanten laten maken, zodat ze door de groene magnetische tegels niet afgeweerd werden. Op een dag kwam er politie bij de winkel. Ze kwamen voor een onderzoek. Nee, niet dat de politie bij Theo onderzoek deden, maar net andersom. Theo zou de politie onderzoeken. Reginald vond het maar vreemd en verdacht. Soms kwamen er zelfs sterren uit het buitenland, en andere hoge mijnheren, zoals presidenten, koningen, legerofficieren en ga zo maar door.

Niet lang daarna werd Reginald opgepakt vanwege spionage. Reginald wilde Theo nu wel eens snel spreken. Reginald moest een erg hoge boete betalen voor elk blad wat hij had uitgebracht over Theo's winkel. Dat waren wel over de twintig bladen. Reginald besloot maar om zich helemaal niet meer met Theo te bemoeien. Het leverde toch alleen maar ellende op. Hij zette een punt achter zijn slachtoffersvereniging.

Na een lange tijd kwam hij Theo tegen op straat. 'Hey, Theo,' zei hij, 'zeg, heb je nog steeds die winkel met dat vogelspeelgoed ?' Maar Theo wilde niks van hem weten, en liep haastig door. Snel probeerde Reginald het weer te vergeten. Na een lange tijd kwam hij Theo weer eens tegen, maar ditmaal besloot hij niks te zeggen, en draaide hij zich snel weer om. Ook Theo maakte zich snel uit de voeten. Maar een dame had gezien hoe de heren naar elkaar deden, en greep ze beiden in de kraag. 'Wat is dat hier,' krijste ze, 'kunnen jullie elkaar niet eens normaal groeten ? Wat is dat voor een gebaar.' En ze schudde Theo eens flink door elkaar, en toen Reginald. Het was al een wat oudere dame. 'Zeg, weet u wel wie ik ben ?' zei Theo zachtjes en voorzichtig. 'Nou nee,' zei de oude dame, 'ik woon hier al erg lang, al sinds mijn geboorte eigenlijk, en ik heb u hier nog nooit gezien, maar dat geeft u niet het recht om u zo te gedragen.' Theo zakte een beetje ineen en zei zacht : 'Ik ben Theo van de vogelzaak.'

Maar toen werd de oude dame erg kwaad. 'Oh, van dat dure vogelspeelgoed ? Al het geld wat mijn man verdiende is daar altijd aan opgegaan om onze kleinkinderen rustig te houden, en door onze schulden is hij tot overmaat van ramp ook nog eens gokverslaafde geworden in de hoop eens een miljoentje te winnen. Van de vogelzaak zei u ? U heeft onze hele familie gerampaneerd. Maar liefst al mijn kinderen en kleinkinderen zijn hierdoor gokverslaafden geworden, hopende op het miljoentje wat ons uit de schulden zou kunnen helpen. Wij zijn daardoor de armste familie van het hele land geworden. Hoort u dat ?'

'M..maar wie bent u dan ?' stotterde Theo ... 'Ik heb u ook nog nooit gezien.'

'Mijn man en ik werkten heel vroeger in die alarmzaak waarvan u al uw electrische en magnetische alarms hebt, en dat is maar goed ook, want iedereen moet maar ver bij u uit de buurt blijven,' zei de oude dame.

De Gekke Piraat

Jorit den Herder was misschien wel één van de beste glazenwassers die Nunspeet ooit gekend heeft. Hij had maar één oog, maar de burgemeester wilde niemand anders dan hem om de ruiten van het gemeentehuis te laten schoonmaken. De glazenwasser liet altijd prachtig glanzende ruiten achter. Op een keer vroeg de burgemeester aan hem wat nou het geheim was van die prachtig glanzende ramen. 'Groene blubber, mijnheer,' zei Jorit.

'Groene blubber ?' vroeg de burgemeester geschokt ... 'Ja, dat haal ik wel eens uit wat bosvijvertjes ...' zei Jorit weer. 'Bosvijvertjes ?' vroeg de burgemeester angstig ... 'waarom doe je dat eigenlijk ?' En toen legde Jorit hem uit dat er in bosvijvers goede gezonde schoonmaakproducten ronddrijven. Maar de burgemeester vond het maar vies. 'Hoezo is het goed en gezond ? Ik wil m'n ramen schoonhebben,' zei de burgemeester, die bijna rood aanliep. 'Ach,' zei Jorit een beetje plomp, 'soms moet je eerst iets erg vuilmaken om het schoon te krijgen. Het vuil neemt namelijk ook altijd het andere vuil mee, en dat kun je dan gewoon wegvegen zodat het echt brandend schoon wordt.'

'Wegvegen ?' zei de burgemeester woedend ... 'Noem je dat ramenlappen ... gewoon wegvegen ? Ik zal jou eens 'gewoon wegvegen'.

En vanaf toen mocht Jorit den Herder niet meer in Nunspeet wonen. Wel kreeg hij ergens een boshuisje aangewezen, dichtbij zijn vijvers. Hij mocht het niet wagen om ooit nog eens een voetstap in Nunspeet te zetten. Soms kun je maar beter niet je geheimen vertellen, zolang de mensen tevreden zijn. Dat had Jorit den Herder nu wel geleerd. Jorit gebruikte de groene blubber voor heel veel dingen. Hij kon er goed vloeren mee schoonmaken, en zo nu en dan waste hij z'n kleren er ook in ... Jorit had sindsdien niet echt veel meer te doen. Vaak staarde hij in de bosvijver en liet er kleine bootjes in ronddrijven ... Meestal waren dat kleine piratenscheepjes die hij eens van zijn oma had gekregen. Op een dag kwam er een vis naarboven zwemmen ... 'Blub, blub ...' zei de vis ...'zeg, wat is er met jou aan de hand ... blub, blub ... je kijkt zo sip ...' En toen begon hij het hele verhaal aan de vis te vertellen. De vis kreeg direkt erge medelijden met hem ... Het was een tovervis, maar dat wist Jorit nog niet ... Wel was hij erg verbaasd dat vissen konden praten. Hij was erg verbaasd, en dacht dat hij droomde. ... 'Nee, je droomt niet,' zei de vis ...'ik denk dat die burgemeester droomt ... want spul van de bosvijver is goed spul ... en je kunt het voor veel dingen gebruiken ...'

'Ja, maak hem dat maar eens wijs,' zei Jorit ... 'Je kent hem niet ...'

'Ik ken hem wel,' zei de vis ...'en het is mijn type niet ... Luister ... ik heb een plan.' Jorit schoof wat dichterbij ... en de vis vertelde hem vervolgens het plan : 'Jij gaat je verkleden als een piraat, en dan ga jij naar Nunspeet om je piratenscheepjes te verkopen, en dan moet je er heel gek bij dansen. Doe maar net alsof je gek bent, dan zullen ze denken : 'Ach, een dronken piraat met een oorlogstrauma ... Laten we hem helpen. We brengen hem naar een goed huis, met kameraden en met zorg.'

De burgemeester zal dan echt wel medelijden met je hebben, Jorit, en dan zal hij misschien wel denken : 'Ach, laat hem de ramen maar weer wassen.'

En zo gebeurde het, zoals de vis had gezegd. Het leek wel alsof de burgemeester betoverd was ... En al snel kon Jorit weer aan de slag met ramenwassen, en niemand heeft hem ooit meer gevraagd waarmee hij dat deed.

Jorit was de vis erg dankbaar, maar hoewel Jorit wel weer glazenwasser mocht zijn, mocht hij nog steeds niet de ruiten van het gemeentehuis wassen. En daar was Jorit niet erg blij mee. Maar daar wist de vis wel wat op. In die tijd had Nederland nog een koning, en Jorit moest een brief schrijven naar de koning om hem uit te nodigen in zijn boshuisje. Daaronder moest hij neerzetten : van de beste glazenwasser van Nunspeet. De koning ging direkt op zijn aanbod in, en al gauw kwam hij langs in een zilveren koets. Deftig stapte hij uit, terwijl wat dienstknechten en lakeien de rode loper uitrolden tot in het boshuisje. Jorit den Herder had heel lekker gekookt, en de koning vond het een hele eer om bij de beste glazenwasser van Nunspeet uitgenodigd te zijn. Alles gebeurde volgens het plan van de vis.

De vis had Jorit ook opgedragen, dat als de koning zou hebben gegeten, dan moest hij ook de koning uitnodigen om in de bosvijver te baden. En Jorit moest zeggen dat dat zeer gebruikelijk is in Nunspeet, en vooral onder glazenwassers. Wanneer de koning dan in de bosvijver zou zitten, dan moest Jorit snel even een foto maken, als aandenken aan een onvergetelijke dag.

En zo gebeurde het. De koning vond het zelf ook onvergetelijk. De vis had Jorit opgedragen om daarna met de ontwikkelde foto naar het gemeentehuis te gaan, om het aan de burgemeester te laten zien. Sindsdien gingen de burgemeester en zijn wethouders vaak naar de vijver om daar te baden ... in de groene blubber, en voortaan mocht Jorit weer glazenwasser zijn van het gemeentehuis ... en niet alleen dat ... Hij mocht voortaan ook de ramen lappen van het paleis van de koning ... En zo werd Jorit den Herder in Nunspeet een levende legende ...

Het Vreemde Huis

Mevrouw van Dalen woonde met haar hond in een flatje, ergens in Nunspeet. Ze ging vaak met haar hondje wandelen, en beleefde soms vreemde avonturen. Ze had een voorliefde voor vreemde gebouwen, en soms zocht ze heel Nunspeet af om er eentje te vinden. Als ze er dan eentje had gevonden, bleef ze soms tijden staren. Niet iedereen had daar behagen in, en soms kwamen de mensen naar buiten om haar weg te jagen. Ze had dan weleens de neiging om haar hond erop af te sturen. Ze dacht dat kijken geen kwaad kon, maar de mensen hadden privacy nodig ... 'Dan moesten ze maar niet zulke vreemde gebouwen uitzoeken,' dacht mevrouw van

Dalen ... Maar ja ... wat is vreemd ? ... misschien vonden ze haar wel vreemd ... Mevrouw van Dalen vond haarzelf trouwens ook een beetje vreemd, maar daarom zocht ze ook naar vreemde gebouwen ... Ze was geinteresseerd in het vreemde. Maar als Nunspeet nu vol zou staan met vreemde gebouwen ... Was het dan nog wel vreemd ? Of werd dan het gewone ineens vreemd ?

Mevrouw van Dalen hield erg veel van vreemde dingen. Haar hele huis stond er vol mee ... Ze wist er het liefst zo min mogelijk vanaf, zodat het toch allemaal zo vreemd mogelijk bleef. Als ze een kaartje kreeg van iemand, keek ze liever niet op de achterkant van wie het was, zodat het voor haar toch allemaal een beetje vreemd bleef ... Ook de boeken die ze las, las ze nooit helemaal uit, zodat het altijd een vreemd einde bleef. Ja, de boeken moesten vreemd blijven. Ze las graag boeken over spoken, en had een voorliefde voor jeugdboeken. Ze moesten zo vreemd mogelijk zijn, bijna griezelig. Maar niet te griezelig, anders durfte ze 's nachts niet te slapen. Als iets te vreemd werd, dan werd het ook griezelig. Ze was zelf ook een tijdje schrijfster van jeugdboeken geweest, en ze maakte nogal faam. Ze is daar toen mee gestopt, omdat ze zo niet meer vreemd kon zijn. Ze wilde het liefst toch nog wel een beetje vreemd blijven. Die boeken waren soms erg griezelig, zo griezelig, dat ze vaak met lichten aan sliep. Eigenlijk durfte ze niet meer te schrijven, want ze wist waar dat op uitliep. Op straat werd ze heel soms herkend door kinderen.

Ook krijgt ze nog wel eens brieven van ouders die vragen wanneer er weer boeken van haar uitkomen. Mevrouw van Dalen heeft ook hele vreemde lampen door haar hele huis staan, met vreemde lichten. Ze gelooft dat vliegende schotels bestaan, maar de mensen denken dat dat bij schrijvers hoort. Zij mogen en kunnen meer dan anderen, omdat ze schrijvers zijn. Ze kunnen soms hele vervelende dingen zeggen, terwijl niemand daar iets van zegt, omdat het schrijvers zijn. Het lijkt wel alsof alles wat ze doen of laten toch niet echt is. Dat vond ze altijd wel een veilig gevoel.

Wel gaat ze nog eens in de twee weken naar bejaarden toe om hen gezelschap te houden, en wat te helpen. En ze is ook leesmoeder op een basisschool, en dat terwijl ze nooit moeder is geweest. Ze is gescheiden. Haar man is op een dag weggelopen vanwege al die griezelige boeken die ze schreef. Hij kon er ook niet meer goed van slapen. Ze mist hem niet, ja, als kiespijn. Hij had niet echt gevoel voor humor. Hij had een hele grote baard, een hele donkere stem en een bril met ronde glazen. Als ze hem 's nachts in het donker tegenkwam schrok ze zich altijd lam. Ja, vroeger was haar huis echt een spookhuis. Ze denkt nog wel eens hoe het zou zijn als Arend er nog zou wezen ... Ze hoorde van iemand dat hij nu ook schrijver zou zijn ... en nog wel van griezelboeken ... Ja, ja, ze ziet het al helemaal voor zich ... nu gaat hij faam maken met haar verhalen ... De Griezelmevrouw, geschreven door Arend Koophaar ... Maar goed, wie zegt haar dat hij echt schrijver is geworden ... Ach, misschien is het allemaal om de nachtmerries van vroeger te kunnen verwerken .... onder het mom van ..confronteert dat wat jou beheert ... zoiets als schaken tegen de haken ... Niet weglopen, maar .... Oh wee, als hij maar niet terug zal komen ... Nee, dat zou ze niet aankunnen ... Dan zou ze weer alles van zich af moeten schrijven ... zoiets als : Terug Naar het Spookhuis ... Nee, daar moet ze niet aan denken ...

Op een dag op de basisschool werd ze geconfronteerd met iets dat haar niet zo snel zou loslaten ... De kinderen hadden een nieuw boek uitgezocht dat voorgelezen moest worden ... en het was inderdaad een boek van haar gescheiden man ... Doe het met Knoopjes ... geschreven door Arend Koophaar ... Eén of ander dom boek over knoopjes die tot leven komen en allerlei gemene dingen uithalen ... Dan denk je dat je normale kleren draagt ...

Zoiets als : Pas op wat je koopt ... Maar goed, de kinderen lezen voor, en zij zal luisteren ... iets wat al erg genoeg is ... Opgedragen aan Martha Koophaar-Van Dalen ... 'Verhip, dat ben ik ... zou hij ? ... Nee, dat kan niet waar zijn ... Het boek is gedateerd vlak na de trouwdag ... Ik heb nooit geweten dat hij schreef ...'

De kinderen vonden het een geweldig boek ... Het was zo griezelig dat haar eigen boeken er voor op de loop gingen ... Misschien dat hij van zichzelf en z'n boeken zo bang is geworden ... Misschien dat alles daar bij bleef ... Hoeveel boeken heeft die knakker uitgegeven ? ... Na het lezen van Doe het met Knoopjes bleek er tot haar grote verbazing ook nog een deel twee te bestaan ... Opgedragen aan Martha van Dalen ... 'Dat ben ik ... dat moet van na de scheiding zijn ...' En ja hoor, het bleek nog niet zolang geleden geschreven te zijn ... De kinderen vonden het eerste deel zo geweldig dat ze ook voor het tweede deel hadden gekozen ... 'Arme ik ...'

Het ging ditmaal over een man met een grote baard met brillen als knopen ... Dat moest hij zijn ... In de nacht kwamen de knopen tot leven om hem te achtervolgen, en ze hielden hem gevangen in één of ander kasteel ... Hoe verzint ie het ... Wat knopen wel niet allemaal kunnen ... Je leest het in dit boek ... 'Was ik nog maar een kind, dan zou ik dit misschien nog leuk vinden ....' Maar ze merkte al erg snel, dat de kinderen erge medelijden hadden met de man van het verhaal. Het zou je maar overkomen. 'Straks moet ik hem ook nog bevrijden uit dat kasteel ... Hij heeft me trouwens nooit verteld waar hij naartoe is gegaan ... Zouden de knopen ...? ...Nee, dat kan niet waar zijn ...'

Ik ben maar gestopt met leesmoeder zijn ... Als het allemaal zo ver moest gaan ... Maar op een dag werd er aan de deur gebeld ... Het was Arend ... 'Zeg, kom binnen, jongen, lang niet gezien ...' Tja, wat moest ik anders zeggen ...

'Arend, niet bang zijn voor de boeken, hè, ze zijn aan de riem ... Ze doen niks ... Ze blaffen hooguit een beetje ...' Ik deed van alles om hem tot rust te brengen. Ik wilde dat hij zich op z'n gemak zou voelen ... Laat ik hem maar niet vragen hoe hij uit dat kasteel is gekomen ... en geen woord over de knopen ...

Hij ging zitten ... op z'n oude stoel, waar hij altijd zat ... Stak z'n pijp aan ... Iets wat erg lang duurde ... Terwijl ik steeds zenuwachtiger werd ... 'Zeg, waar kom je eigenlijk voor ?' vroeg ik ineens brutaal, met direkt daarachteraan : 'Moet je koffie ... thee ... of misschien ... sap ?'

'Ja, doe me maar wat sap,' zei hij rustig ... Maar nu kon ik me niet meer inhouden : 'Zeg kerel, ik heb je boeken gelezen ...' Ineens begonnen z'n ogen te stralen ... Maar toen zakte hij weer ineen ... 'Ik denk dat ik maar ga,' zei hij ... 'Wacht,' zei ik ... 'je hebt je sap nog niet op.' In één teug dronk hij z'n beker leeg, zette het hard op tafel neer, en stond op ... 'Mag ik een boek van je lenen ?' vroeg hij ... 'Oh nee,' schreeuwde ik ... 'daar komt niks van in ... want straks heb ik het allemaal weer gedaan ... heb ik je weer banggemaakt, en kom je weer viereneenhalf jaar niet opdagen ...'

'Wat is enger,' vroeg hij ineens ...'lezen of niet lezen ...' Ja, daar vroeg hij me wat ... Het zette me wel even aan het denken ... waar zou je nou banger van worden ... Dat hij bang was, dat was een feit ... of hij nou las of niet ... De vraag was wat het beste zou zijn in deze situatie ... Lezen kan ook verwerken zijn ... En wat had ik te verliezen ... Ten slotte zei ik : 'Okay, neem elk boek wat je maar wilt in dit huis mee om te lezen ... Jouw eigen keuze ...' Hij was daar zichtbaar blij mee, en ook ik wilde echt alles begrijpen ...

'Heb je mijn kaarten nog gehad ?' vroeg hij ineens ... Het was alsof ik groen, rood en blauw werd tegelijkertijd ... Ik las nooit geen kaarten ... omdat ik toch een beetje vreemd was, en van vreemde dingen hield ... Maar nu begon mij wel wat te dagen ... Ik had een schoenendoos vol met ongelezen kaarten ... Die zouden wel eens van hem kunnen zijn ... En ja hoor, het hele knopenverhaal nauwkeurig uitgelegd ... de locatie van het kasteel, wat hij van me wilde ... alles ... Maar daar kwam ik wel erg laat achter ... Ik ook altijd met mijn vreemde manieren ... Of was dat om mezelf ergens tegen te beschermen ... Sommige dingen kun je soms maar beter niet weten ...

De Trouwe Vriend

De kerk is net uitgegaan. Jolle loopt op straat. Ze is pas met haar ouders vanuit Friesland verhuist naar Nunspeet. De kinderen kijken haar een beetje vreemd aan, alsof ze uit het buitenland komt. En ze praat ook zo vreemd. Daar in de verte gaat de dominee. In Friesland zijn ook dominees. Voor haar is het dus wel vertrouwd, maar er zijn ook zoveel dingen die anders zijn. De mensen praten hier anders. Jolle loopt met haar zusje naar huis. Vader en moeder gaan nog bij iemand op visite. Thuisgekomen zetten ze de radio aan. Gelukkig zijn hier ook dezelfde programma's. Ze besluiten om een eindje te gaan lopen door de weilanden. Het is zondag, alles is rustig. Na een tijdje lopen komen ze een meisje uit de klas van Jolle's zusje tegen. Het meisje vraagt of ze met haar mee willen komen. Ze gaan vanmiddag pannenkoeken eten. Het meisje woont op een boerderij. Ze hebben daar grote honden in kooien, die de boerderij moeten bewaken. Eerst gaan ze even een tijdje op de kamer van het meisje spelen. Het meisje heeft veel speelgoed, en veel poppen. 'Ja, als mijn oom komt, neemt hij altijd veel speelgoed mee,' zegt het meisje. Jolle wilde wel dat ze ook zo'n oom had. Jolle had geen oom ... Ja, alleen eentje die in Afrika woonde, maar die was nog nooit gekomen. Jolle had wel een paar tantes, maar daar had ze niet veel mee op ...

Na een tijdje waren de pannenkoeken klaar. De moeder van het meisje was erg aardig. De vader zat in de woonkamer de krant te lezen. 'Gaan jullie ook naar de kerk ?' vroeg het zusje van Jolle. Het meisje boog haar hoofd. Nee, daar was ze nog nooit geweest. Haar vader geloofde niet in God. Ze zou graag weleens meewillen naar zo'n kerk. 'Nou, je mag weleens met ons mee,' zei het zusje van Jolle. Jolle knikte. Maar ineens stond de vader van het meisje op, en zei : 'Nou, dat heb ik liever niet.'

'Gelooft u in God,' vroeg het zusje van Jolle aan de moeder van het meisje. De moeder werd een beetje rood, en streek haar schort recht. 'Ik weet het niet, kind, echt niet.'

Toen zei het meisje ineens : 'Mijn vader en moeder geloven niet in God, omdat mijn zusje is overleden.' Jolle schrok, en ook het zusje van Jolle. Maar toen zei Jolle : 'Maar onze lieve Heer zal wel goed voor jouw zusje zorgen, hoor, daar boven in de hemel.' De moeder van het

meisje had een traan in haar oog. Snel ging ze verder met het opdienen van de pannenkoeken. Na een tijdje zat iedereen aan tafel, en vader zei : 'Allen eet smakelijk.'

Na een tijdje zei het zusje van Jolle : 'Bidden jullie nooit voor het eten ?' De vader verslikte zich bijna. 'Nee, hoor,' zei het meisje, 'dat is nergens voor nodig, zegt mijn moeder altijd.' De moeder werd weer erg rood. 'Vader, kun je me even de stroop aangeven,' zei moeder. Vader knipoogte naar z'n vrouw en glimlachte lief naar haar, terwijl hij haar de stroop gaf. 'En,' vervolgde het meisje, 'opa zei altijd het is beter je brood aan de armen te geven, dan ervoor te bidden.'

'Als jullie willen bidden, dan mag dat wel hoor,' zei de moeder van het meisje vriendelijk. Ook de vader knikte erg vriendelijk. Dapper vouwde Jolle haar handjes samen en begon hardop te bidden, en ook haar zusje deed haar oogjes stijf op elkaar en bad mee. De moeder van het meisje keek een beetje ongemakkelijk naar haar man, maar hij glimlachte lief en geruststellend naar haar.

'Ik snap echt niet dat jullie bidden naar iemand die mijn zusje heeft laten doodgaan,' zei het meisje brutaal.

'Ik vind het verschrikkelijk naar dat je zusje is overleden, en ik begrijp dat je het daar erg moeilijk mee hebt. In de hemel is alles goed,' zei Jolle.

Het meisje zat met tranen in haar ogen. 'Wat is er dan gebeurd ?' vroeg het zusje van Jolle. 'Ze is verdronken,' zei de vader. Jolle schrok. 'Wat verschrikkelijk,' zei het zusje van Jolle. 'Maar ze is nu bij onze lieve Heer, en ze heeft het goed.'

'Maar waarom is ze niet meer bij ons ?' zei het meisje boos ... 'Het is niet eerlijk. En waarom zijn er zoveel mensen arm, en waarom hebben zoveel mensen pijn, en waarom is mijn opa doodgegaan ?'

'Ik weet het ook niet,' zei Jolle, 'maar eens zal alles goedkomen.' Maar het meisje protesteerde : 'zolang het niet goed is, en zolang ik mijn zusje moet missen, zal ik ook niet bidden en geloven in God. Maar ik zou wel een keertje meewillen naar jullie kerk, mag dat pap ?' En uiteindelijk stemde de vader van het meisje toe. Ze zou voor één keertje naar een kerk mogen, omdat ze nog nooit binnenin een kerk was geweest. Ze zou de aankomende zondag samen met haar vader en moeder naar de kerk van Jolle en haar zusje gaan.

Toen het zover was was het meisje erg enthousiast. Ze vond het prachtig binnenin. Ze vond de ramen zo mooi, en er stond een prachtig orgel. Er kwam een man binnen in een zwart gewaad. Dat was de dominee. Hij had een prachtig gewaad aan. Toen gingen ze zingen uit een boekje, en iedereen stond op. Na een tijdje gingen ze allemaal weer zitten, en de dominee nam het woord. Hij liep op een trapje, totdat hij op de hoge preekstoel stond. Na een tijdje kwam er iemand met de collectebus. Het meisje gooide er veel van haar spaargeld in, wat ze van opa geleerd had. Dat deed ze ook altijd als er mensen met collectebussen aan de deur kwamen.

En toen ging de dominee bidden. En hij zei : 'Vraag nu in de stilte van je hart dat wat je van onze lieve Heer verwacht.' En ook het meisje had haar handjes gevouwen en haar oogjes gesloten, en ze vroeg zacht of ze haar zusje weer mocht terugzien.

Toen zei de dominee : 'Duizenden sterven aan honger vandaag de dag, terwijl wij het hier goed hebben. Als wij gaan leven zoals zij leven, en ons geld voor hen inzetten, dan zal ook leven aan ons geschonken worden.'

'Opa heeft altijd geld gegeven,' dacht het meisje bij zichzelf, 'en heeft altijd voor de arme mensen gezorgd, zoveel hij kon, maar toch is hij doodgegaan. Maar als de hemel echt bestaat, dan is hij nu daar, en dan heeft hij het beter, net zoals mijn zusje.' Toen de kerkdienst was afgelopen gingen de vader, de moeder en het meisje nog even met Jolle, haar zusje en haar ouders mee. Er werd niet over het geloof gesproken. Wel zei het meisje even dat ze de kerk prachtig vond. Na een lange dag kwamen het meisje met haar ouders eindelijk weer thuis op de boerderij. De vader was erg moe, en ook de moeder voelde haarzelf niet echt lekker. 'Het heeft me geen goed gedaan,' zei ze tegen de vader. 'Ik dacht teveel na over Liselotte. Het lijkt wel alsof ik het nooit verwerk.' Maar de vader schoof naar haar toe, en legde een arm op haar schouder : 'Ik voel Liselotte in mijn hart. Ik kan het niet begrijpen. Het maakt me moe, maar aan de andere kant word ik er rustig van. Ik weet dat Liselotte nog ergens is, en of dat nou in de hemel is, of ergens anders ...' zuchtte de vader.

'Ik voel alleen maar pijn, pijn ...' zei de moeder ... 'En ook dat gesprek met Jolle en haar zusje over Liselotte heeft me geen goed gedaan.'

'Het zit ook allemaal nog zo diep,' zei de vader liefdevol ... 'Haal maar diep adem ... Gelukkig hebben we elkaar en Else nog ...'

'Maar ik kan zo'n gesprek niet nog een keer aan ...' zei de moeder ... 'Jolle en haar zusje kunnen hier beter niet meer komen ...' De vader knikte ... Ook voor hem was het teveel. En eigenlijk had hij er een beetje spijt van dat hij met zijn dochtertje en vrouw naar de kerk was gegaan, ook al had hij zelf nu het gevoel dat Liselotte bij hem was ... 'Misschien moeten we het allemaal maar even laten bezinken,' zei hij.

Maar die nacht had de vader een erge nachtmerrie over Liselotte, over de dag dat ze verdronk, en het was alsof ze voor de tweede keer verdronk. Vader had het gevoel dat ze erg dichtbij was, maar hij kon niets doen. Hij hoopte ook dat Liselotte zou voelen en weten dat hij bij haar was. Het was alsof vader in een zware tweestrijd zat over de kerk ... De kerk bracht zijn dochtertje zo dichtbij, maar ook zo ver weg ... Hij kon haar gewoon niet bereiken.

De vader wilde ten einde raad eens met de dominee praten. De dominee was een erg vriendelijke man, en erg behulpzaam. De strijd omtrend de dood was iets heel normaals in zijn ogen. De dominee had het ook over het verschil tussen de Joden en de Egyptenaren. De Egyptenaren waren heel veel met de dood bezig, terwijl de Joden het juist erg van zich afschoven. De dominee vond dat hiertussen balans moest zijn, en dat om die balans te krijgen, moet je eerst door strijd heen ... gemengde gevoelens ...

Was God het verbod om verbonden te zijn met de doden ? Of was God juist het verbond met de doden, of allebei ? De dominee vond allebei. De dominee had heel vroeg zijn vrouw aan ziekte verloren, en had sindsdien altijd een soort gevoelsmatig contact gevoeld, maar is hierin niet verder gegaan. Dat was meer iets van de Egyptenaren. Zijn vrouw raakte verzeild in het Egyptische Dodenboek toen ze van haar artsen hoorde dat ze niet lang meer te leven had. De titel schrok haar in het begin erg af, maar die titel bestond in het begin nog helemaal niet, daar het boek oorspronkelijk een andere naam had : Het Boek van het Doorkomen van de Dag. Maar toch wist ze dat ze zich moest voorbereiden op de dood. Net als de Joden zagen de

Egyptenaren de dood als een doorgang naar het hiernamaals, en dit was een reis die je moest maken, en waartoe je jezelf mogelijk moest voorbereiden. Omdat het de Joodse Traditie daar vaak aan ontbrak en toch de behoefte daaraan groot was, met name onder hen die de betrekkelijkheid van het leven inzagen, of noodzakelijkerwijs daarmee te maken kregen, vonden velen heil in de lessen van de Egyptenaren. En zo ook de vrouw van de dominee. De dominee had op dat punt weinig recht van spreken, daar hij niet in dezelfde situatie zat als zijn vrouw. Maar toch wist ook hij, dat hij zich moest voorbereiden. De Egyptenaren leerden dat je de reis door het hiernamaals nu al kon maken, daar hoefde je niet eerst dood voor te gaan. En dat was misschien ook het gevoel dat de dominee had na het sterven van zijn vrouw ... dat hij nog steeds bij haar was.

Door het gesprek met de dominee besloot de vader het Egyptische Dodenboek in huis te halen. Ook zijn vrouw was erg geinteresseerd. Ze bracht een groot gedeelte van de dag door met het lezen van dit boek, dat oorspronkelijk helemaal niet zo heette. Ze merkten dat het boek hen hielp met het verwerken van de dood van hun dochtertje. In de bijbel werd het je min of meer verboden om je met de dood bezig te houden. Maar waar moest je met je gevoelens naartoe als je je eigen kind had verloren, of je man of vrouw ? Daarin leek het gedachtengoed van de Egyptenaren een goede en bevrijdende aanvulling. De vader besloot eens om bij het eten te lezen uit dit boek, zodat ook het meisje erover zou horen.

Inmiddels waren Jolle en haar zusje op de hoogte gebracht van het feit dat ze niet meer welkom waren bij het meisje en haar ouders op de boerderij, en al snel ging in heel Nunspeet het gerucht dat ze bij een Egyptische secte waren aangesloten. Maar de dominee verdedigde hun. Aan de dominee hadden ze een trouwe vriend, die heel diep in hun gevoelens kon inleven.

Het Vrouwtje dat de Zieken Genas

Er was eens een vrouwtje in Amsterdam die hele wonderlijke lampen verkocht. De lampen verspreidden een zacht paars licht wat ernstig zieken kon genezen. Het vrouwtje verrichtte grote wonderen door haar lampen, maar op een dag was ze verdwenen. Niemand wist waar ze was. Er werden geen lampen meer gemaakt sinds het vrouwtje was verdwenen. De lampen die er waren werden onbetaalbaar duur, en families vochten erom.

Na vele jaren kwam het vrouwtje terug. Het bleek dat ze bij familie was in het buitenland. Ze was erg verdrietig over de situatie in Amsterdam, en begon weer lampen te maken. Ditmaal waren ze nog wonderlijker dan ooit. Zelfs de doden stonden op door de lampen. Ook vanuit het buitenland was er grote interesse. Op een dag werd het vrouwtje ontvoerd. Ze werd meegenomen door rovers, en ze moest ergens in een duistere grot werken. Maar haar familie zorgde ervoor dat er een speciaal leger werd opgesteld om haar te zoeken. Uiteindelijk vonden ze haar, en brachten haar terug naar Amsterdam. Vanaf die dag leefden er soldaten in haar huis en in haar winkel. Van schrik durfde ze geen wonderlijke spullen meer te verkopen, en vanaf toen verkocht ze alleen nog oude tweedehandse spullen, maar de magie is altijd bij het vrouwtje gebleven.

De Bakkerij

Er was eens een oude bakker in Amsterdam. Hij maakte poppen van brood en bracht ze tot leven. Over de hele wereld werden de poppen goed verkocht. Maar het gebeurde vaak dat zulke poppen ontsnapten en in het bos gingen leven. Op een dag zocht de oude bakker zulke poppen op, en probeerde hen naar Amsterdam terug te lokken. ‘We willen alleen terug als we in uw bakkerij mogen werken, en u ons niet doorverkoopt.’ En zo gebeurde het. Maar sommige mensen zouden de poppen graag willen kopen, en boden er veel geld voor. De oude bakker hield zijn belofte. Maar op een dag vluchtten de poppen weer naar het bos. Na een tijdje kwam de oude bakker hen opzoeken. Ze leefden in een grot nu. ‘Wat als je nu eens bij ons komt wonen,’ zeiden de poppen. ‘We willen niet meer terug, want de mensen zeuren altijd.’

‘Wat als ik jullie nu eens muziek-instrumenten geef,’ zei de bakker. ‘Kom je dan met me mee terug, dan heb je geen last meer van het gezeur.’ En zo gebeurde het. De poppen kwamen terug, maar al gauw vonden de mensen het geen gehoor, en weer gingen de poppen terug naar het bos.

Nog eenmaal ging de bakker terug naar de poppen, en beloofde hen ditmaal de wonderlijkste voertuigen, zodat ze overal naartoe konden waar ze maar wilden. De poppen gingen met de bakker mee, de bakker gaf hen hun voertuigen, en niemand zag hen ooit terug.

De Wonderjongens

Een oude man in Amsterdam verkocht fietsen. De fietsen waren zo wonderlijk dat vanuit het hele land kinderen met hun ouders er op af kwamen. De man was als een tovenaar. De fietsen waren zo wonderlijk dat door een bepaalde manier van fietsen je ermee kon vliegen.

Een paar jongens waren er zo goed in dat ze er helemaal mee naar het strand konden vliegen. Op het strand was een vrouwtje dat ijsjes verkocht. De ijsjes waren zo bijzonder dat je ermee over de zee kon vliegen. De jongens kochten een ijsje en gingen de zee over. Hun fietsen namen ze niet mee, want dat zou nooit lukken. Maar de ijsjes waren voor het echte werk. De jongens vlogen naar Amerika, en bouwden hun eigen stad. Maar na een tijdje verlangden ze terug naar hun oude land.

Zou de fietsenverkoper er nog steeds zijn, en het vrouwtje met de ijsjes ? Maar toen ze teruggingen was er een grote oorlog in het land, en van Amsterdam was er niks meer overgebleven. Daarom besloten ze Amsterdam opnieuw te bouwen. En het werd de wonderlijkste stad van het land.

Het Geheim van de

Rode Veer

Saroesia was een echte pyama stad in het land Sinsabijne. Iedereen droeg hier een pyama. De roze prins had een roze pakje aan wat leek op een pyama. Het was in ieder geval net zo zacht.

De prins voelde zich er prinsheerlijk in. Hij had zulke roze pakjes vaak aan, vandaar dat hij de roze prins werd genoemd, en Saroesia werd daarom ook wel de roze stad genoemd. Het paleis van de prins was prachtig roze, maar had ook andere kleuren, zoals lichtblauw, rood, zwart, wit en geel. Ook was de prins dol op groen. Zonder groen zou er niets groeien.

De roze prins heerste over geheel Sinsabijne. Het geheim van zijn macht ? Een vrouwtje genaamd Framboosje. Vrouwtje Framboosje had hem onderwezen van jongs af aan om hem voor te bereiden op deze grote taak. Daarom werd de prins ook soms de frambozen prins genoemd, en ook de stad Saroesia werd weleens de frambozen stad genoemd. Framboosje had de prins onderwezen uit het wetboek van toverij en het wetboek van snoep. Dit moest wel, want er waren een heleboel snoepmonsters die het stadje wilden vernietigen. Er moesten duidelijke wetten van snoep zijn om het stadje hier tegen te beveiligen. En die bracht Framboosje. Ze had de roze prins goed ingelicht hierover.

Het snoep mocht niet gegeten worden. Het was alleen om mee te bouwen en het te dragen als kleding en sieraden. Maar hier waren dus strenge wetten voor die Framboosje aan de roze prins leerde. Zij maakte de mooie roze snoeppyama's voor de roze prins. Het leek een beetje op frambozenvla, en zo kreeg de prins van haar de bijnaam prins frambozenvla.

Snoep was een natuurverschijnsel, als een beloning, als de vrucht van hard werken, van zweet en tranen. Er moest dus heel zuinig met snoep gedaan worden, anders zouden de snoepmonsters komen. Framboosje bleef dat benadrukken bij de roze prins, zodat hij het niet zou vergeten. Er stond teveel op het spel.

De roze prins vertelde de wetten ook aan het volk, en hij liet een wetboek opstellen. De oorlog tegen de snoepmonsters begon. Dit was een grote oorlog, en erg beslissend voor de verdere toekomst van Sinsabijne. Ook kwam er een wetboek voor speelgoed, en als ze zich daar niet aan zouden houden, dan zouden de speelgoedmonsters komen. De roze prins studeerde veel in de wetboeken en luisterde goed naar Framboosje. Hierdoor beloonde Framboosje de roze prins met vele toverkrachten om het land goed te kunnen besturen. Framboosje was een echt tovervrouwtje, maar wel een hele bijzondere, want zij was het vrouwtje van de toverwet. Ze was dol op het toveren met snoep, en daarom werd ze ook wel het vrouwtje van de snoepwet genoemd. Op de snoepwet was het stadje Saroesia gebouwd, en verder het hele land Sinsabijne. Framboosje was degene die het had gebouwd.

Het stadje Saroesia was omringd met oerwoud. Het hele land Sinsabijne was vol met oerwoud. Eigenlijk waren de stadjes en dorpjes er gewoon ingebouwd. Er stroomde een grote rivier door de oerwouden van Sinsabijne, door het hele land. Het was de frambozen rivier, gemaakt van frambozensap. De rivier eindigde aan de ene kant in de frambozenzee en aan de andere kant in het bodemloze ravijn waarmee het hele land Sinsabijne en de frambozenzee was omringd. Het land Sinsabijne en de frambozenzee lag op de stronk van een reuzenboom.

Ook de grachten van het stadje Saroesia waren van frambozensap. Framboosje en de roze prins gingen vaak in een bootje over de grachten, en soms gingen ze de frambozen rivier op om het oerwoud in te gaan.

Het teken van de snoepwet was de rode veer. De rode veer stond ook op de vlag van Sinsabijne. Ook op het wetboek van snoep stond het teken van de rode veer. Ook de framboos

stond op de vlag als het teken van Sinsabijne. Aan de frambozenzee ligt het bananenstrand en chocolade stad. Soms bezoeken Framboosje en de roze prins deze stad ook.

Framboosje las de roze prins voor uit het wetboek van snoep :

'De eerste wet is dat al het snoep door omwegen komt, nooit direct. Het is als de bruisende waterval in de verte die in de kolkende rivier kletst en dan langzaam door de rivier langs je heengaat en van je wegvlucht.

De tweede wet is dat het snoep je eerst zal corrigeren en niet zal verwennen. Eerst zul je de raad van het snoep moeten aannemen.

Deze wetten laten zien dat het snoep een klok is en dat je geduld moet beoefenen.

De derde wet is dat zij die geen geduld beoefenen geen deel kunnen hebben aan de orde van de rode veer.

De vierde wet is dat zij die geen geduld beoefenen naar de ondergrondse gevangenis in de stronk van de reuzenboom moeten die als een school is om hen geduld te leren. Deze gevangenis is genaamd de box.

De vijfde wet is dat de ananas hen in de gevangenis voorzichtigheid zal leren en hen testen. Als ze niet door de ananas test heenkomen dan zullen ze verbannen worden uit Sinsabijne.'

Ananas was de zeer gevreesde gevangenisbewaker, de bewaker van de box. Hij had de macht iemand uit Sinsabijne te verbannen. Het was vanwege Ananas dat de meesten zich keurig gedroegen. Ananas leerde hen de snoepwet als geen ander. Soms kwam hij bij Framboosje en de roze prins om even bij te praten, of ze gingen naar hem. In het ondergrondse bos onder de reuzenstronk was een groot klooster. Hier werd het wetboek van snoep vereerd en gediend, en een standbeeld van een jongetje gemaakt van snoep. Dit was de kloosterorde van de rode veer, alleen voor hoge ingewijden. Framboosje wilde ook dat de roze prins daar naartoe zou gaan, zodat hij meer zou kunnen leren over het wetboek van snoep. Framboosje wilde dat Ananas koning zou worden van Sinsabijne. En zo gebeurde het. De roze prins werd uitgezonden naar het klooster van de rode veer, diep in het ondergronds bos. Hij ging daar alleen in een bootje naartoe. Hij kende de weg wel. Bij het klooster aangekomen kreeg de prins een monniken-gewaad aan. Ook werd zijn haar niet geknipt. Hij begon met het werken in de keuken. Het was een grote keuken, waar hij de andere monniken een beetje leerde kennen.

's Avonds waren er vaak bijeenkomsten in de kapel waar het wetboek van snoep werd vereerd en het standbeeld van het jongetje van snoep. De roze prins kwam er al snel achter dat dit standbeeld ook sprak. Het standbeeld gemaakt van snoep hield een lange toespraak vanuit het wetboek van snoep. De monniken zagen dat als een groot wonder. Het was in Sinsabijne de gewoonte dat een koning of prins na een tijdje ook zijn kroon en troon weer aflegde, en dat stond ook in het wetboek van snoep. De roze prins had er dus vrede mee dat Ananas het van hem had overgenomen.

Aan het einde van de bijeenkomst wilde het standbeeld van het jongetje van snoep nog even met de roze prins spreken, omdat hij nieuw was in het klooster. Alle andere monniken gingen de kapel uit, terwijl de roze prins bleef zitten. Het standbeeld van snoep keek hem strak aan. 'Zo, zo, dus jij bent nieuw hier, hè ?' De roze prins knikte en sprak : 'Ja.'

'Wie heeft jou gezegd dat je mag spreken ?' vroeg het jongetje van snoep.

De roze prins keek in het gezicht van het jongetje en merkte dat het jongetje boos begon te worden. 'U stelde mij een vraag,' sprak de roze prins kalm. Het jongetje werd kwader en kwader, en zijn hoofd was bijna rood als een tomaat. 'Rotjongen,' sprak het standbeeld van het jongetje van snoep. 'Dan vraag je eerst of je mag antwoorden.'

'Dat wist ik niet,' zei de roze prins nog steeds kalm.

'Jij hebt wel praatjes, hè,' sprak het standbeeld. 'Het zal mij benieuwen hoe lang je het hier zal uithouden.'

De roze prins knikte.

'We zijn hier niet zo gesteld op praatgrage lieden,' sprak het standbeeld.

De roze prins knikte weer. Hij had maar wat graag het standbeeld willen omduwen.

'Ik mag jou niet,' zei het standbeeld. 'Net nieuw hier en nu al praatjes. Jij groeit op voor galg en rad, jongen.'

De roze prins zei niets. Even had hij spijt dat hij hier was gekomen. Toen hij even later op zijn kamer was begon hij een brief te schrijven aan Framboosje. Hij had respect voor het wetboek van snoep, maar niet voor het standbeeld. Hij vond het maar een verwend jongetje wat veel teveel macht had gekregen, en hij vroeg zich af hoe dit kreng van een jongetje zoveel macht had gekregen. Na een tijdje kreeg hij een brief terug van Framboosje. Framboosje wist het ook niet, maar ze zei dat hij hen moest confronteren met het wetboek van snoep waarin stond dat na een tijdje elke mahctshebber moest aftreden, ook het standbeeld. Dit deed de roze prins. Hij liet het aan de monniken zien wat er in het wetboek van snoep over stond. Het scheen dat het standbeeld al veel te lang in het klooster aan de macht was. Maar de monniken werden erg kwaad. Zij vereerden het standbeeld van het jongetje van snoep, en voor hen stond het standbeeld gelijk aan het wetboek van snoep. De wet die de roze prins voorlas sloeg volgens hen niet op het standbeeld. De rebellie van de roze prins werd doorverteld aan het standbeeld, die daar erg kwaad over werd, zo kwaad dat hij de roze prins in een kerker onder het klooster liet werpen. Maar na een paar dagen had het standbeeld spijt en liet de roze prins uit de kerker komen. Het standbeeld waarschuwde de monniken ook dat elke monnik die de roze prins nog lastig zou vallen versteend zou worden.

Ook in het klooster mochten de monniken maar tijdelijk verblijven. De roze prins merkte dat het standbeeld van snoep erg grillig was. De straffen waren zwaar : de kerker in, verstening of onthoofding. De roze prins voelde zich niet op zijn gemak. Hij hoopte maar dat hij deze tijd heelhuids zou doorkomen. In het klooster stonden vele versteende monniken, als een waarschuwing voor alle anderen. Hij vroeg zich af hoe het standbeeld zo was geworden, want het leek ook wel op een soort verstening. Met het verschil dat het standbeeld van snoep kon spreken en zich kon verplaatsen. Ook kon het standbeeld in het niets verdwijnen en zomaar weer tevoorschijn komen. Hij merkte dat het standbeeld vereerd en gediend werd vanuit pure angst. De roze prins studeerde veel in het wetboek van snoep. Alleen zij die de rode veer zouden hebben verdiend zouden het klooster weer mogen verlaten, maar terug naar het

bovenland van Sinsabijne mochten ze niet. Ze zouden de ondergrondse bossen worden ingezonden om zo te komen tot het ondergrondse oerwoud, wat nog dieper lag. Tussen het ondergrondse bos en het ondergrondse oerwoud lag het bos van het schreeuwende snoep. Hier leefden de verkeers-agenten van snoep.

Toen de roze prins de rode veer had behaald en tot het bos van het schreeuwende snoep kwam wist hij precies hoe het jongetje in een standbeeld van snoep was veranderd. Door al het geschreeuw van het snoep verstijfde de prins helemaal, en begon steeds meer te verstenen en in snoep te veranderen, totdat hij zelf een standbeeld van snoep was geworden. Ergens in het bos stond hij toen om het verkeer te regelen.

Einde

Het Dagboek van Schoolmeester Rateldonk - Deel 1.

De Wraak van het Rode Fietsje

inhoudsopgave :

Hoofstuk 1. Ochtendhumeur

Hoofdstuk 2. De Jakobs-ladder

Hoofdstuk 3. Duistere Onderhandelingen

Hoofdstuk 1. Ochtendhumeur

Geliefd Dagboek,

Ik zag hem hangen, hoog op een berg, aan een hoge boom. Tegen de boom stond een fietsje geparkeerd ... een rood fietsje.

Ik klom naar boven, naar de top van de boom, waar hij hing. Ik hoorde een moeder's schreeuw. Ik zag hem hangen, daar, aan de top van de boom. En onweer hing in de wolken. Ik durfde al haast niet te kijken, de horror die ik daar zag. Twee mannen hielden hem vast, of waren het twee beren ? Rode verf zat op zijn neus en voorhoofd. Hij sliep, ze hadden hem een slaappil gegeven.

'Ja, oh, het kapitalisme,' schreeuwde een kraai. Ik vroeg : 'Wat is er met het kapitalisme ?'

'Nou,' zei de kraai, 'het kapitalisme heeft hem daar gehangen, als een klok aan de muur. Elk uur komen er nieuwe vogeltjes uit.'

'Wie is het kapitalisme dan ?' vroeg ik. 'De man van het rode fietsje,' kraaide de kraai weer, 'eigenlijk is het maar een klein jongetje, een ventje.'

'Oh, fijn om te weten, maar wie ben jij ?' vroeg ik vervolgens. 'Ik ben gewoon neutraal,' zei de kraai. 'Ik rapporteer alleen, als een soort van journalist. Je kunt me ook Pontius Pilatus noemen. Ik ben vrij van al het bloed. Niks kleeft er aan mijn handen.'

Ik klom verder naar boven. Ik had niks aan neutrale gasten voor het moment. Ik probeerde de kraai een beetje te ontwijken. Maar misschien dat hij later nog van pas zou komen. Toen ik aan de top was gekomen, bleek het helemaal geen hangende man te zijn, maar een rode zakdoek, wapperende in de wind. Ik begon ineens aan alles te twijvelen : de kraai, het rode fietsje ... was het wel allemaal wat het leek ? De boom bleek langer te zijn dan hij in eerste instantie leek, dus ik klom verder en verder. Van dichtbij bleken de twee beren gewoon twee takken te zijn. Ik was hier eigenlijk wel blij mee. Ik voelde me ineens heel fijn in de natuur.

Het leek wel alsof er geen einde kwam aan deze boom, en ik was al zo hoog dat ik eigenlijk niet eens meer naar beneden durfte te kijken. Toch deed ik het even automatisch, en tot mijn grote schrik zag ik een rode beer bij de boom staan. 'Ach nee, ik verbeeldt het me maar,' dacht ik bij mezelf, 'het zal dat rode fietsje wel wezen.' Het was inmiddels echt hard gaan onweren, en het begon allemaal wel heel erg griezelig te worden. Totdat ik ineens door een wolk boven de bui terecht kwam. Gelukkig was de boom zo lang. 'Ja,' zei de kraai, 'nu ben je boven het kapitalisme uitgestegen.' Ik schrok er een beetje van, en ik vertrouwde de kraai niet helemaal. Ik vertrouwde eigenlijk niks meer. Alles lijkt hier te veranderen, als ...een klok met verschillende vogeltjes. Ja, dat was ook datgene waar de kraai het over had. Een klok met verschillende vogeltjes.

Ik voelde nog eens aan de boom. Er klopt hier iets niet, het voelt te zacht aan. Het voelt aan als mijn bed ... Ben ik weer aan het dromen ? Ja, en hier voel ik mijn kussen, en de kleur van de lucht hier lijkt op de kleur van het behang van mijn slaapkamer. Ik .... moet wel aan het dromen zijn. Ik kijk nog eens naar de kraai ... deze lijkt eigenlijk wel verdacht veel op mijn slaapkamer-lamp. En, ja hoor, daar word ik dan eindelijk echt wakker. Het bleek allemaal maar een droom te zijn. Ik stap uit mijn bed, en loop naar beneden. Maar dan slaat de schrik om m'n hart : Buiten staat er een rood fietsje voor mijn deur geparkeerd.

Hoofdstuk 2. De Jakobs-ladder

Is alles wel zoals het is ? Is alles wel wat het lijkt ? Deze vragen spoken door mijn hoofd. Ik loop naar buiten, en uiteindelijk blijkt het dat kinderen de deur met rode verf hebben beklad. Geen rood fietsje dus.

Maar de gedachte aan het rode fietsje blijft in mijn hoofd rondspoken. Waarom noemde de kraai het 'kapitalisme' en 'een klein ventje' ? Ik ga maar weer slapen, het is nog vroeg, en eigenlijk ben ik nog te moe. Weer droom ik over een hangende man, maar dit keer hangt hij aan een grote klok. Het lijkt wel een kerkklok. Ik vraag hem hoe hij daar kwam. Dan barst het onweer los. Ik kan hem niet verstaan. Alleen zie ik vele vogels in en uit de klok vliegen. Een drama zonder verhaal. Ik kijk naar beneden en zie het rode fietsje geparkeerd tegen de kerkdeur aan. Ik hoor allemaal vreemde kinderliedjes in mijn hoofd.

'Heb je wel eens gehoord van De Jakobs-ladder ?' vraagt een vreemde zware stem mij ... 'Dat is een ladder met verschillende realiteiten die tezamen weer nieuwe realiteiten vormen. Het is een reis door de vele lagen van het bestaan.'

'Ja, dank je de koekoek, dat is allemaal wel erg griezelig,' protesteer ik. Het is alsof ik val, heel hard val, naar beneden, richting het rode fietsje. Alles duizelt me voor de ogen.

Een dwerg-achtig iets staart me aan. 'Ken je het geheim van het rode fietsje ?' vraagt het ding voorzichtig. 'Neen,' schreeuw ik, 'en ik hoef het ook niet te weten. Ga weg, griezel.'

'Dat kan niet,' zegt het dwergachtig iets, 'het rode fietsje fietst altijd met je mee. Het is altijd bij je in de buurt.'

'Ja, dat is allemaal heel leuk en aardig, maar ik heb andere dingen te doen. De groeten, ook aan de rest van de familie. Dag.' antwoord ik. 'Ach toe nou,' zegt het geheimzinnige ding, 'dat is allemaal niet belangrijk voor nu.'

Ik begin nu echt kwaad te worden. Wie denken ze wel niet dat ze zijn ? 'Je hebt een mooi fietsje, serieus, maar ik kom een andere keer wel weer terug, okay ? Als ik het wat minder druk heb,' probeer ik.

Hoofdstuk 3. Duistere Onderhandelingen

'Zeg, schoolmeester, we hadden een afspraak, weet je nog ?' gromt het mysterieuze dwergachtige ding. Je hebt mij ingeschakeld om de kinderen de baas te blijven.

'Ik weet niet waar je het over hebt,' zeg ik. 'Ben je het vergeten ?' zegt het ding, 'De rode zakdoek die je gebruikte om je tranen weg te vegen die je over de kinderen had, de rode zakdoek wiens punten je in je oren drukte om hun geween niet meer te hoeven horen. Ben je dat vergeten ?' schreeuwt het ding luid, 'DAT WAS MIJN

ZAKDOEK, IK HEB HET AAN JE VERKOCHT. HEEL, HEEL GELEDEN. HET HEEFT JE MACHT OVER DE KINDEREN GEGEVEN !'

'Okay, okay,' zeg ik, 'maar vertel me eens, wat heb ik er ook al weer voor betaald ?'

'Grapjas,' sputtert het ding, 'ben je dat allemaal al vergeten ? JE HEBT JE FAMILIE VERKOCHT, JE LEEFT NU IN MIJN WERELD !'

'En dat rode fietsje dan ?' vraag ik voorzichtig.

'Dat rode fietsje is mijn fietsje, wat jou eraan herinnert welke zaken er zijn gedaan, maar de prijzen zijn helaas hoger geworden. Dus of je geeft de zakdoek terug, of je betaalt de hogere prijs,' kraait het ding. Het valt me op dat het ding veel trekken van de kraai heeft. 'Het enige wat ik wil is proberen hieruit weg te komen. Met of zonder zakdoek,' zeg ik.

'Dat kan niet,' zegt het ding, 'je kunt hier niet weg, alles is van mij. Dit is mijn wereld, en niemand komt er ooit weer uit. Zeg me of je die zakdoek wil houden ja of nee.'

'Wat is de prijs,' vraag ik. Het rare ding begint te schaterlachen, krassende : 'Dat zul je nooit geloven, haha. Luister : Herinner je die rode verf op de deur ? Dat hebben de kinderen gedaan. Omdat je zo'n verschrikkelijke schoolmeester bent. Nu dan, laat mij het van je over nemen, dan mag je je zakdoek houden.'

'Afgesproken,' zeg ik.

En dit, zegt de oude, wijze kraai, heb ik allemaal gelezen in het dagboek van een schoolmeester, dus, jongelui, pas goed op wie er voor de klas staat. Pas goed op als je ergens een rood fietsje voor de deur ziet staan. Het kan zijn dat de schoolmeester zaken heeft gedaan met een of ander duister, kraaiachtig ding.

Het Dagboek van Schoolmeester Rateldonk - Deel 2

Het Geheim van de Zebra Brug

inhoudsopgave :

hoofdstuk 1 : Wij Zijn van de Belasting

hoofdstuk 2 : De Vermenigvuldigings-Truc

hoofdstuk 3 : Rateldonk Verzekeringen

hoofdstuk 4 : Nooit Meer Rode Soep

hoodstuk 5 : De Zebra Boom

hoofdstuk 6 : Terug op School

Hoofdstuk 1. Wij Zijn van de Belasting

Geliefd Dagboek,

Ik liep door de straten van Luik, een Belgisch stadje. Op elke hoek kwam ik een klein mannetje tegen met een hoedje, zeggende dat mijn hoedje scheef of recht stond. Het wisselde zich telkens om. Is dit de wraak van het rode fietsje ?

Aan het einde van de stad staat een brug, genaamd 'De Zebra Brug'. Een vrouwelijke engel in lang blauw gewaad wenkt mij om tot de brug te komen. Ik word een beetje duizelig en misselijk, alsof alles in mij wordt omgedraaid.

Aan de overkant van de brug staat een huisje : het zebra-huisje. Nou, laten we daar dan maar eens een kijkje nemen. Ik ren over de brug, en merk dat ik afwisselend lach en huil. Ik probeer harder te rennen, maar het lijkt wel alsof ik in de lijm terecht ben gekomen, en ik ben ineens zo zwaar, ik veer helemaal naar beneden, met de brug. Als dat maar goed gaat. Maar dan opeens veert alles weer omhoog. Dit gaat te snel, en ik voel me te licht. Ik suis omhoog, waar zal dit naartoe leiden ? Het is alsof ik de zon kan raken, zo heet. Maar al snel daal ik weer, en dit keer zo snel, en zo diep, dat ik er koud van word. Ik kan het aardijs raken.

Plotseling bevind ik mij in het zebra-huisje. Het licht knippert hier. Een mug drinkt hier koffie. Dat moet je maar durven.

'Ja, dat moet je maar durven,' wordt er gezegd. Iemand zit me na te doen. Ik zie een papagaai op de kast zitten. Hij lijkt op iemand, maar ik kan niet zeggen wie.

'Wie ben jij ?' vraagt hij krijsend.

'Zeg me eerst maar eens wie jullie zijn, en hoe kwam ik hier ?' zeg ik.

'Ach, gut, ben je alweer vergeten wie ik ben ?' krast de papagaai. Een klein kraaitje springt uit de papagaai.

'Als ik het niet dacht,' roep ik, 'jullie zijn van dat rode fietsje ! Wat moeten jullie nou weer ?'

Dan wordt ik ineens wakker. Ik heb opeens de enorme behoefte om een zebra te berijden. Gelukkig is er bij ons in de stad net een zebra-park geopend, en het is nog vroeg, dus ik klim over het hek, en spring op zo'n beest. het is gelukkig nog erg vroeg, iedereen ligt nog lekker te slapen. Ha, ha, dat gaat goed. Wat heb ik toch met zebra's.

Aan het einde van de rit klim ik weer over het hek, maar ..... er staat een klein rood fietsje tegen het hek geparkeerd.

Een geel klein mannetje springt tevoorschijn, zeggende : 'Het rode fietsje staat altijd voor u klaar. Aangenaam, ik ben van de belasting .... eh.... belasting voor het onderwijs, om even duidelijk te wezen. Eh, u krijgt nog van ons terug....We hadden ergens een piepklein foutje gemaakt in onze administratie .... U hebt uw leerlingen aan ons verkocht, maar wij zijn de slechtsten nog niet, en het was achteraf een beetje teveel van het goede, dus u mag een leerling naar keuze terugontvangen. Mjam, aardig van ons heh ? ...'

'Ja, zeer aardig,' stamel ik. 'Ehm.... ik kies voor Lize, ze was altijd een beste leerling, had altijd aardige cijfers, droeg aardige, nette kleren .....' En daar glijd ik weg in een zebra-gat .... De echo's van verdrietige en boze leerlingen zuigen me in de diepte .... Ik moet nu verschijnen voor .... Jezus, bent u dat ?

'Ja, meester Rateldonk, dat ben Ik,' zegt Jezus met een luide stem.

'Hoe was het met onderwijs-belasting ?' vraagt Hij.

'Eh, wel goed, dacht ik,' stamel ik, een beetje duizelig.

'Dus je bent een beetje duizelig, meester Rateldonk ?' vraagt Hij weer, 'Hoe komt dat zo ?'

'Eh, ik heb denk ik iets verkeerds gegeten,' mompel ik.

'Zeg, meester Rateldonk,' zegt Jezus vervolgens, 'die Zebra heb Ik ook gemaakt, is het geen prachtig beest.'

'Ja, ja,' zucht ik, 'nu U het zegt.'

'Zo, zo, Rateldonk, nog steeds evenveel praatjes.'

En dan ineens glijd ik door een papagaaien-put nog dieper naar beneden. Al mijn eigen stommiteiten echo-en in mijn hoofd. En het lijkt alsof iemand de volume-knop steeds harder draait .... God, de Vader, bent U dat ?

'Rateldonk, hoe was het bij onderwijs-belasting,' vraagt de Vader.

'Wel aardig, dacht ik,' stamel ik weer. Ik begin een beetje moedeloos te worden.

'Waarom zo down, Rateldonk ?' vraagt Hij weer. 'Iets verkeerds gegeten ?'

'Nee,' stamel ik, 'het komt door dat rode fietsje, ik had nooit naar ze moeten luisteren.'

'Wat nu dan, Rateldonk ?' vraagt de Vader.

'Ik ....ik ...weet het niet ...' stamel ik weer.

Dan glijdt ik ineens door een muggen-tunnel heen, nog dieper naar beneden. 'Ben jij dat Lize ?'

'Ja, meester, ze hebben me ......'

En dan word ik echt wakker, althans .... dat hoop ik maar. Ik durf vandaag niet naar school. Ik denk dat ik maar in bed blijf. Ik zal hen op de zondagschool allemaal eens vertellen wat ik heb meegemaakt. Neen, ik heb een beter plan. Ik zal hen leren wat een collecte is, ik zal ze leren hoe ze moeten collecteren, en met de opbrengst zal ik weer een ritje naar de zebra-brug maken, misschien dat ik daar het mannetje van kerk-belasting dan mag ontmoeten ..... Misschien dat we nog wat kunnen samenwerken met elkaar.

Slaap lekker, lief Dagboek, bedankt voor het luisteren. Enneh .... niet verder vertellen, he ....

Slaap lekker, Rateldonk, we zullen het vast niet verder vertellen .....

Ah, dan kan ik nu heerlijk slapen .... Huh ? Mijn Dagboek sprak terug .... Ach, wat heb ik toch een wonderbaar Dagboek ..... zzzzzzzz

Droom maar fijn, Rateldonk, de slaapliederen staan al klaar om je verder in slaap te wiegen. Al die lange klokken van je collega's .....

Mijn Collega's ...... ja ..... zzzzzz

Waar zou ik zijn zonder m'n collega's .....

Rateldonk, slaap zacht, want morgen is er een nieuwe dag. Vannacht zul je het groene mannetje van kerk-belasting ontmoeten .....

Oh ja ? Dat is geweldig ..... zzzz

Je zult terug moeten keren tot de zebra-brug ...

Hoofdstuk 2. De Vermenigvuldigings-Truc

Dit keer stormde het daar, met onweer en bliksem, erg koud, zo donker ... Daar stond ik, midden in de ellende ... te wachten op het groene mannetje van kerk-belasting.

Ah, daar zul je hem hebben.

Gelukkig, hij heeft een vlammetje waaraan ik me kan warmen.

"Dus, Rateldonk," zegt het mannetje, "jij wil samenwerken ..."

"Eh, ja, meneer, als dat kan ...." stamel ik, nog een beetje rillend van de kou in mijn botten.

"Alles is mogelijk voor hen die geloven," sprak het mannetje, "geef me nu dan al je geld."

"Mijn geld ?" bibber ik ....

"Ja," zegt het mannetje, "dan zal ik je de vermenigvuldigings-truc leren."

"Oh, goed, hier heeft u vijfhonderd gulden." bibber ik weer...

"Goedzo," zegt het mannetje, "nu, kijk goed wat ik doe."

Ik zag hoe het mannetje mijn lieve vijfhonderd gulden onder z'n hoed schoof, en hij vertrok.

"Daar gaat mijn geld," dacht ik...

Maar ineens kwam hij terug met een enorme hond :

"Kijk," zegt het mannetje, "dit is Bello. Hij kan kunstjes."

En daar spuwde de beste hond mijn vijfhonderd gulden uit.... Alles in snippertjes. "Maar, maar ...." stamel ik ".... het zijn kleine scheermesjes .... en wat doen die in mijn lichaam zo ineens ? Wat gaan we hier doen ?" Ik gilde het uit van de pijn.

"Ach ja," oppert het groene mannetje "...we werken samen met het blauwe mannetje van lichaams-belasting, eh... zeg maar medische belasting, dat staat netter ...."

"Jullie zijn verschrikkelijk," gil ik ....."stop die machine ...."

"Goed, goed," sputtert het mannetje, "we kunnen wel een afspraak maken..."

"Afspraak maken ?" gil ik .....

"Ja," zegt het mannetje, "over twee weken komen we weer terug."

Zwetend werd ik wakker. Wat een afschuwelijke nachtmerrie, maar ik heb nog steeds overal pijn van binnen. Ik laat de dokter wel komen .....

Ik had twee verschrikkelijke weken. Maar precies na die twee weken kwam ik het mannetje weer tegen, zoals hij gezegd had. Nu was het blauwe mannetje van medische belasting er ook bij.

"Wat willen jullie van me ?" stamel ik ....

"Je hebt dit zelf gewild ...." zeiden de twee mannetjes "...Je wilde met ons van de belastingsdienst samenwerken. Nu dan, eerst leer je onze machines kennen. Met deze apparaten ga jij straks ook werken."

"Wat ?" protesteer ik .... "Ik met die krengen ? Dat nooit ! Zo waar ik meester Rateldonk ben !"

"Dan kunnen we niets anders doen dan de volume-knop van deze apparaten iets hoger te zetten." zeiden de mannetjes weer.

"Oh nee, heden, lieve goedheid, nee," gilde ik ... al weer enorme pijn voelende "...haal me hieruit ....ik ...ik ...zal alles doen wat jullie zeggen."

"Goed dan, Rateldonk, eindelijk een verstandig woord," zeiden de mannetjes. "Luister goed, Rateldonk : Het geld wat mensen aan ons geven is het geld wat ze in deze belastings-automaten stoppen. Het geld word tot scheermesjes versnipperd en daarmee kunnen we in hun lichamen snijden, zodat we in hen kunnen wonen. Zo worden ze onze slaven, ...slaven van de belasting. Zo worden ze onze robotten, robotten van het scherpe geld. Wij zijn de meesters van belasting, wij zijn de meesters van het geld. Dit is het geheim van onze macht, maar jij kunt daarin delen."

"Goed, dat moet dan maar," stamel ik. "Ik heb geen andere keus."

"Bello zal met je meegaan in het vervolg," zeiden de mannetjes .....

Hoofdstuk 3. Rateldonk Verzekeringen

De volgende dag stond ik voor de zondagschool. Ik huilde van binnen, maar dit was de enige oplossing. Maar al snel kreeg ik een genieus idee. Ik zou de directeur van de scheermesjes-fabriek laten komen, en ik zou ze leren hoe ze hun eigen scherpe machinetjes konden maken. Ik weet zeker dat ze de mannetjes wel aardig zullen vinden. Zo kunnen alle kindertjes toch hand in hand staan ... alleen jammer voor diegenen die er niet bij zijn. Die zullen daarna wel een verschrikkelijke nacht gaan krijgen, met al die apparaten die als honden op jacht gaan. Maar goed, misschien kan ik hen dan ook wel bekeren. Ik ga gewoon predikant worden en verschrikkelijk veel geld verdienen met deze uitvinding ..... Ik ga deze belastings-machines omzetten tot verzekerings-machines. Maar dan moet wel iedereen lid worden van mijn verzekeringen. Ik weet niet hoeveel dat gaat kosten ....

Rateldonk Verzekeringen .... klinkt wel goed ....

Eens kijken wat de mannetjes er van vinden .....

Waar zijn ze ? Ze zijn in geen velden of wegen meer te bekennen ....

Maar al met al, het was een goed plan .....

Of was het gewoon alleen maar een goede droom .... ?

Ach, en eigenlijk ben ik gewoon maar een eenvoudige schoolmeester .... Laat ik maar gewoon weer naar school gaan om al die andere dingen te vergeten. Ze staan zo ver weg. Misschien was het allemaal mijn eigen fantasie ... Ik kan misschien wel film-regisseur worden ..... om de kinderen te vermaken ....

"Rateldonk ?" hoorde ik ineens ...

"Bent U dat, Heer Jezus ?" vraag ik stamelend ...

"Ja, Rateldonk" ....hoor ik weer, "Ik krijg nog vijfhonderd gulden van je."

"Hoe dat dan, Heer ?" stamel ik weer ....

"Die vijfhonderd gulden die je aan het mannetje gaf, die waren van Mij. Ik had ze je gegeven om Mijn Machine mee te bouwen." zegt Jezus weer ernstig.

"Hoe bedoelt U, Heer ? Wat voor een machine ?" stamel ik, in wanhoop wegzakkende.

"Dat ben je al weer vergeten, he, omdat je met zoveel andere dingen bezig bent ...." zegt Jezus weer ... Ik word een beetje duizelig .... en begin weer te bibberen ...

"Die Zebra is een prachtig dier, he, Rateldonk ?" zegt Jezus verder ....

"Je hebt hem misbruikt," buldert Jezus ... "Je had Mijn Zebra-Machine moeten bouwen om alles weer terug te draaien. Zie, de mannetjes, draaien alles wat recht is krom, en wat krom is recht. Ik ben diep in je teleurgesteld, Rateldonk."

Ineens word ik wakker, en ik sta voor het zebra-pad, op weg naar school. Ik heb dat wel vaker dat ik wegdroom als ik voor het zebra-pad sta. Dan denk ik : "Zal ik op de zwarte strepen lopen, de witte, of op allebei ?" Ik kan daar uren over na denken. Ik weet nooit wat ik wil.

Hoofdstuk 4. Nooit Meer Rode Soep

Het hangt er altijd weer vanaf hoe de dag gaat worden. Of ik een omdraaier ga berijden of een terugdraaier.

Nog steeds twijfel ik hierover : omdraaien of terugdraaien.

Ben ik een eeuwige twijfelaar ?

Ik heb ontdekt dat beiden pijn doen. Ik heb ontdekt dat het land van de zebra niet makkelijk is. Ik denk dat ik eigenlijk een lafaard ben, dat ik me laat leiden door het weer. Ik waai met alle winden mee. Staat de omdraaier voor me, dan berijd ik de omdraaier, en als de terugdraaier voor me staat, dan berijd ik de terugdraaier. Ik heb zo het gevoel dat ik eigenlijk een heel lui iemand ben. Ik probeer het iedereen naar de zin te maken aan de andere kant, dus ik ben ook een heel ijverig type. Misschien dat ik ergens middenin sta. De mensen vinden me daarom wispelturig, en zeggen dat ik eigenlijk niet te vertrouwen ben. "Een aardige man, maar levensgevaarlijk," zei iemand eens. Want ik draai zo snel om. Dat wat dicht bij me staat heeft zoveel macht over me, en dat maakt me wel eens bang ... heel bang.

Help me, help me, maar tot wie zeg ik dat eigenlijk ? Het kan me als puntje bij paaltje komt niet zoveel interesseren wie me helpt. Als ik maar geholpen word. Maar dit brengt me dus altijd weer in de meest benarde situaties. Misschien dat ik daarom schoolmeester Rateldonk heet ?

Toch verlang ik diep in mijn hart naar het land achter de zebra. Ik zou wel eens willen weten wat daarachter ligt.

Sommigen zeggen daar is het land van de papagaai. Die drijft met alles de spot en doet waar hij zelf zin in heeft.

Anderen zeggen daar is het land van de mug.

Ik weet het niet. Ik vind het erg moelijk om nog iemand te geloven na alles wat er gebeurd is. Heb ik zelfmedelijden ? Ja, misschien wel. Ik werd onder zware druk gezet aan beide kanten. Zoals ik al zei : Beide kanten doen pijn. Is het misschien niet beter om gewoon in het midden te blijven ? Nee, dat word door beide kanten niet geaccepteerd. Dan heb ik twee vijanden, in plaats van een. In het midden doet het dan ook pijn, tenzij ...... nee zo mag ik niet denken. Ik kan ze niet elkaar in de haren laten vliegen, en zelf de baas van de arena worden. Oh, jongens, en toch lijkt me dit het beste plan. Sportschool Rateldonk, dan is het allemaal niet te serieus. Zonder bloedvergieten. En ik leer ze hoe ze elkaar in de haren kunnen vliegen. Ja, er zijn dus spelregels. Ik wil geen scheermesjes meer zien, geen bloed. Zelfs geen tomatenketchup. Zou ik ze rustig kunnen houden ?

Ik kan ook die hele zebra-toestand vergeten en in het circus gaan werken .... Nee, dat is ook te gevaarlijk met al die wilde dieren en die moeilijke kunstjes waarmee je maar al te gauw iets kan breken.

Ik wil gewoon snel bejaard worden, snel de rust in, met pensioen en al.

En ik kan reclame gaan maken voor bejaardenhuizen, zodat iedereen zo snel mogelijk bejaard is. Dan hebben we toch alle problemen uit de wereld geholpen ? Wat een brilliant plan, Rateldonk. Al zeg ik het zelf.

Er wordt gebeld ... twee heren voor de deur...

"Goedemiddag, opa Rateldonk,"wij zijn van de bejaarden-belasting."

"Ik doe niet meer aan belastingen en al die onzin," kras ik ... "Ik ben nu bejaard, laat me met rust."

De heren vertrekken .... het werkt .....

Even later staan er weer twee heren voor de deur ...

"Wij zijn van de kraaien-belasting, u heeft namelijk een kraai in huis...."

Ik denk : "Zo kunnen we wel aan de gang blijven, ik krijg nooit rust, tenzij ik zelf hoofd van de belastingdienst word...."

Het is mij nu menens. Ik heb alle werelden gezien, en overal komen ze met die belastings-grappen aanzetten.

Daar snel ik op mijn fiets, die ineens rood kleurt, tot het kantoor van belastingen. Een oude kraai staart mij aan.

"Zeg, jongeman, ik denk dat u de zaken hier niet zo goed begrijpt," zegt de oude kraai. "U haalt allerlei dingen door elkaar heen. U fietst zoveel heen en weer. U komt zo niet tot rust."

"Ten eerste ben ik geen jongeman," krijs ik, "en ten tweede is de belastings-dienst de oorzaak van alle kwaad."

"Rustig, mijnheer," zegt de kraai weer, "gaat u eerst eens even zitten. Die belastingen zijn het probleem niet, want belastingen laten zien dat alles eerlijk verdeeld moet worden. Helaas gaan mensen zoals u niet goed met de belasting-machines om, als het om macht gaat."

"Ik ben niet belust op macht, ik wil gewoon rust !" krijs ik.

"Ja, en om die rust te bereiken, gebruikt u macht," oppert de kraai weer...

"Ja, maar wat moet ik dan doen," krijs ik, "alles maar dan ook alles probeert me te eten, alsof ik een banaan ben."

"Alles moet gegeten worden," zegt de kraai, "dat is om het voedsel tot zuivere, werkzame stoffen om te zetten."

"Ik ben het werken zat," schreeuw ik.

"Dus dat is de oorzaak," zegt de kraai, "u bent het werken zat, u bent dus lui."

"Nee," huil ik, "ik ben moe, moe."

"U bent hier trouwens niet bij belastingszaken," zegt de kraai weer, "u bent hier bij het arbeids-bureau."

"Nee !" gil ik, "haal me hier weg ! Ik ben moe, moe, moe !"

"Maar u staat hier ingeschreven," zegt de kraai ...

"U bent een slaap-werker," vervolgt de kraai ...

"Huh," stamel ik verbaasd, "wat is dat ?"

"Dat wil zeggen dat u tijdens uw slaap werkt," zegt de oude kraai ...

"U werkt daar bij belastingen, bij verzekeringen, bij het circus, en bij duizend en een andere bedrijven." vervolgt de kraai ...

"Dus, dus, u beweert dat ik overdag helemaal niet werk ?" stamel ik ... bijna flauwvallend van verbazing ...

"Overdag ? Wat is dat ?" vraagt de oude kraai. "Je werkt alleen in je slaap, en dat is alles wat je doet."

"Nu breekt m'n klomp," probeer ik ... "Ik ben toch gewoon schoolmeester ?"

"Ja, in je droom," zegt de kraai. "Je hele leven is een droom. Wij maken onderscheid tussen de bewuste droom en de onbewuste droom."

"Rateldonk Uitzend-Bureau ...... ik zie het al helemaal zitten," peins ik .....

"Ja, mijnheer de kraai, hartelijk dank voor de informatie, maar ik moet nu echt gaan. Fijn even met u gesproken te hebben." roep ik hem na ..... rijdend op mijn rode fietsje naar huis. Mijn fietsje is ineens zo klein geworden ..... maar ja, dat is een keer wat anders .... Ik heb nu een heilige opdracht .... dat is het enige wat telt. Ik zal mensen hun dromen geven, en ze zullen voor mij werken.

"Al wel eens nagedacht over de administratie, Rateldonk ?"

Ach, daar verzin ik wel wat voor. Ik kan mijn buurmeisje als secretaresse aanstellen, als .....

Daar wordt gebeld. Het is mijn buurmeisje. Ze is zo blij om bij me te mogen werken. Het werkt. Ik ben nu de nieuwe Klaas Vaak. En als dat te druk wordt, dan stuur ik gewoon die droom naar iemand anders, zodat ze het werk kunnen overnemen.

Rateldonk, oh meesterbrein, je bent een ware fantast. Maar het werkt, en dat is alles wat telt.

En hier werk ik nu al jaren. Ik ben allang geen schoolmeester meer en andere moeilijke dingen. Dat hebben ze allemaal van me overgenomen. Oh, collega's .... waar zou ik zijn zonder hen.

Zou dit dan de Jakobs-ladder zijn ? Jakob die zijn broer oplichtte met een bordje rode soep ?

Zou dit dan ..... ? Nee ..... zeg me dat het niet waar is ..... Zou hier dat rode fietsje uit voortgekomen zijn ? Uit die rode soep ?

Zouden er twee Jakobs-ladders zijn ? Een goede en een slechte ?

En waar heb ik nu voor gekozen ?

Waar ben ik beland ?

"Rateldonk ?" hoor ik ...

"Bent u dat Heere Jezus ?" vraag ik stamelend

"Ja, Rateldonk, wie anders ?"

"Ik heb de Zebra gemaakt. Wat een prachtig dier is het, he ? ...vervolgt Hij

"Ja, Heer," stamel ik beschaamd ...

"Hoe was de soep, Rateldonk ?"

"Eh, wel lekker, Heer ...."

"Wil je nog een beetje dan ?"

"Nee, nee, bedankt .... ik ....ik ...heb genoeg ...."

Ik stamel verlegen ..... Ik heb m'n portie gehad .....

"De Jacobs-ladder is een Zebra, die de mens brengt van realiteit tot realiteit. Het hangt er alleen af wat je drinkt ..... Jakob's Rode Soep of ......" en dan vaagt Jezus' Stem weg ....

"Of wat, Heer ?" roep ik hem vragend, bijna smekend na ...

Of wat .... het lijkt of ik het weer verloren heb .....

Mensen reizen op Jakobs-ladder door die rode soep of door .... ?

Ik weet het niet .... Ik heb het niet kunnen verstaan ....

"Rateldonk ?" hoor ik ....

"Bent u dat, God de Vader ?" vraag ik ....

"Ja, Rateldonk," zegt de Vader ...

"Iets verkeerds gegeten ? ..... Rateldonk ?" vraagt de Vader verder ...

"Ja, mijnheer," stamel ik ... helemaal in de war .... "en ik zou graag willen weten wat ik kan eten of drinken om dit recht te krijgen ....."

"Aha," zegt de Vader, "dus je wil iets recht zien te krijgen ..."

"Ja Vader ...."

"Ooit van Zebra-Sap gehoord, Rateldonk ? Groeit ergens aan een boom .... een vrucht van de Zebra-Boom, ... een Zebra-Vrucht ...."

"Nee, Vader"

"Zeg Rateldonk, wij gebruiken dat als benzine ..."

En daar vaagt de stem weg ...... Ik zal nu alleen op zoek moeten naar dat sap .... Een ding weet ik zeker : Ik wil nooit meer van die rode soep drinken. Ik heb me al in genoeg benarde situaties gewerkt door dat spul.

Hoofdstuk 5. De Zebra-Boom

's Nachts droom ik weer van de grote boom ... Is dit dan de Zebra-Boom ? Daar waar je dingen ziet die heel wat anders blijken te zijn als je dichterbij komt ?

Hier moeten die vruchten dan ergens hangen, met het sap om me uit de nachtmerrie te halen. Ah, daar bovenin zie ik de vruchten hangen ..... Maar toen ik bovenkwam ... bleken het geen vruchten te zijn, maar kleine mannetjes ....

"Je hoeft niet bang te zijn voor ons, hoor," zei een van de mannetjes, "wij zijn de mannetjes van de Zebra-Vruchten."

Ze hadden lichtblauwe kleding aan, en ik vroeg ze hoe ik bij de Zebra-Vruchten kon komen ...

"Dat kun je niet, want je bent een vogeltje van de klok," zeiden ze ...

Ik bemerkte dat ik hier veren had, en dat ik met enorme klokken op m'n rug liep. "Die dromen die je verspreid zijn klokken," zeiden de mannetjes. "Daarmee houd je de mensen gevangen," dus je kunt de vruchten niet eten.

Ik raakte totaal in de war ... Vogels, klokken, waar hebben ze het over ?

Plotseling zag ik mezelf zitten in een grote klok. Een soort van dwerg kwam naar me toe om me de hand te schudden. Hij zei :

"Alle vruchten zijn dwergen. De laagjes van die vruchten zijn de verschillende realiteiten die met elkaar verbonden zijn. In de ene realiteit ben je iemand anders dan in de andere realitiet, maar ze hebben wel met elkaar te maken. Er zijn bewuste laagjes, en onbewuste laagjes, en ook de zwarte laagjes gebruiken we om de witte laagjes te laten groeien. In die zwarte laagjes is alles omgekeerde wereld, maar die laagjes zijn nodig om de ware wereld te openen. Dit is het geheim van de Zebra-Brug."

"Goed, goed, maar geef me nu maar snel dat sap," zei ik tegen de dwerg. Ik begon enorm ongeduldig te worden.

"Zie," zegt de dwerg, "je bent ongeduldig, je leeft nog met een klok op je rug, en daarmee oefen je ook nog macht over anderen uit. Daarom kun je het sap niet drinken. Je moet eerst alle laagjes van de vrucht accepteren als voedzaam en nodig. Ook de laagjes waar je moe bent, waar je pijn hebt, en waar je moet wachten."

"Goed," zei ik, "hier heb je al mijn klokken. Hier heb je al mijn veren."

Plotseling voelde ik het sap in mijn mond glijden. Het was wonderbaarlijk. Het stroomde door mijn aderen en ......

Daar word ik wakker ..... was het allemaal maar een droom .... ?

Ik voel me zo anders ..... wat zullen de kinderen vandaag zeggen ?

Ik kijk in de spiegel, en ....

Ik ben in een Zebra veranderd.

Hoofdstuk 6. Terug op School

Op school aangekomen zijn de kinderen zo enthousiast ... Ze kennen me bijna niet meer terug. Ik heb mijn mand vol Zebra-Vruchten die ik uitdeel. De kinderen eten er gretig van, en de juffrouw maakt er Zebra-Sap van. De hele school staat op stelten. En iedereen wordt alsmaar kleiner, en ziet kleine mannetjes, met lichtblauwe kleding.

Ja, deze lichtblauwe wondervruchten vallen bij de hele school in smaak. We rennen als kabouters door de gangen, samen met de lichtblauwe mannetjes. We rennen naar de schoolbibliotheek, waar een van de lichtblauwe mannetjes een geheime tunnel kent, achter een schilderij. We vliegen door het gat naar binnen, om zo door de tunnel in een nieuwe wereld aan te landen. Het land van de Zebra-Vruchten. Zoveel bossen met zebra-bomen, vol met zebra-vruchten. We worden steeds kleiner en kleiner naarmate we er meer van eten, en we voelen ons zo anders.

De kinderen willen niet meer terug, maar ik weet dat we terug moeten. Het leven gaat verder, en dat is ook een onderdeel van de zebra-vrucht..... de verschillende laagjes die allemaal belangrijk waren voor het geheel.

Ik weet niet hoelang de vruchten werken. Ik weet ook niet hoelang ik het vol ga houden. Het lijkt wel een nieuwe uitvinding van me, en ik heb nu echt het gevoel dat ik goed bezig ben ... alsof ik nu echt ben bekeerd ...

Maar goed, ik ben nog steeds meester Rateldonk, ook al ben ik nu nog steeds een zebra. Ik vraag me af hoe lang ik dat blijf. We hebben onze normale grootte weer terug, de kinderen zijn rustig. Ik geef ze eens per week een zebra-vrucht. En ikzelf neem er drie op een dag ....

Misschien moet ik daar eens mee stoppen .... want ik ben nog steeds een zebra .....

"Rateldonk ?"

Ja, Heer Jezus...

"Vind je jezelf niet prachtig zo ?"

Ja, Heer Jezus ..... maar ....

"Maar ?"

Ik ben nu een zebra, maar .... wat zullen de mensen wel niet denken ..... als dit langer blijft duren .....

"De mensen ....."

En daar vervaagde Zijn Stem .....

"Rateldonk ?"

Ja, Vader ...

"Hoe was de Sap ?"

Goed, Vader, maar ....

"Maar ?"

De mensen ....

"Ja, de mensen ....."

En daar word ik wakker .... Ik ben weer normaal .... Ik kan weer normaal naar school, naar normale kinderen .... Eindelijk ben ik meester Rateldonk weer .....

Ik heb weer leren wennen aan de rode soep ..... Ik kan niet anders ..... want de mensen ....

"Ja, de mensen ..... Rateldonk ....."

Wie bent u dan ?

"Ik ben de Heilige Geest, de stem van je geweten ...."

Oh, leuk om te weten .....

"Rateldonk, de zebra-boom is vanmorgen omgehakt, door een rode beer .... De reizen naar de zebra-boom zijn nu afgelopen."

Ik kan er niet wakker om liggen .... Ik en mijn rode soep .....

"Oh, en Rateldonk, ... de boom viel op de soep-fabriek ..... deze is totaal verwoest ....."

Dan heeft Jakob misschien nog wel een ander middeltje .....

"Nee, Rateldonk, het spelletje is uit....."

Dan speel ik een ander spelletje .....

"Oh, en Rateldonk .... een van de takken van de boom viel op de spelletjes-fabriek .... deze is ook totaal verwoest .... Wil je altijd het laatste woord hebben ?"

Ja, daar ben ik schoolmeester voor .....

"Je mag het laatste woord hebben, Rateldonk ...."

Dank u ....

"......Ja, Rateldonk ...... op de begrafenis van het Woordenboek van Babel .... want er was altijd maar een taal die gesproken mocht worden, en dat was jouw taal ....."

"Rateldonk ? Rateldonk ?"

Maar Rateldonk was al ver weg op zijn rode fietsje ... op zoek naar dat wat overgebleven is ..... op zoek naar nieuwe avonturen .....

De Auto-diefstal

Menno Koe loopt op straat. Alles schijnt vandaag mis te gaan. Menno is boos. Zijn auto is gestolen. Inmiddels zitten de twee dieven gezellig in de auto. Het zijn Manus Koe en Evert Koe. Ze zijn al helemaal in het bos aangekomen. Maar na een tijdje valt de motor uit. Evert Koe stapt naar buiten, en probeert de auto weer aan de praat te krijgen. Maar niks helpt. 'zie je nou wel,' zegt Manus Koe, 'dat is ons verdiende loon.' In de verte komt Menno Koe aanlopen. 'Wat doen jullie daar met mijn auto,' schreeuwt Menno Koe. 'We zijn je auto aan het uitlaten. We vonden dat hij veel te lang ongebruikt bleef staan, en dat vonden wij erg zielig,' zei Evert Koe. 'Ja ja,' zei Menno Koe, 'en dan nog grapjes hebben ook. Kom maar met me mee naar het politie-bureau.' 'Ach toe nou,' zegt Evert Koe, 'je kan ook niet tegen een grapje.' 'Dit is geen grapje,' zegt Menno Koe ernstig, 'dit is diefstal.' En daar kwamen twee politie-agenten aanlopen. Het waren Karel Koe en Nelis Varken. 'Zeg, wat doen jullie nog zo laat op straat ?' vragen de agenten. 'Ze hebben mijn auto gejat,' zegt Menno Koe, 'en nu hebben ze auto-pech.' 'Dat wordt dan een nacht slapen op cel,' zegt Nelis Varken. 'Komen jullie maar direkt mee, en Menno Koe, wij zullen wel even een monteur sturen.' En na een tijdje kwam de monteur, Ed Koe. 'Zo Menno Koe,' zei Ed Koe, 'we zullen er even naar gaan kijken.' Maar Ed Koe kon er niets aan vinden. En toen nam Ed Koe hem mee achter zijn eigen auto. Menno Koe is erg verdrietig. 'Ach, weet je wat,' zei Ed Koe, 'ik wil hem wel van je overkopen voor een zacht prijsje.' Maar Ed Koe gaf hem er zo weinig voor dat Menno Koe er nog geen zak kauwgomballen van kon kopen. 'Ja, Menno Koe, meer is hij echt niet meer waard.' Nou ja, dacht Menno Koe, dat is in ieder geval beter dan niks. En wat heb je aan een auto die het niet doet. De volgende dag zag Menno Koe Ed Koe de hele tijd in de verkochte auto rondrijden. 'Zeg Ed Koe,' vraagt Menno Koe, 'ik dacht dat de auto het niet meer deed.' 'Ach,' zei Ed Koe, 'de benzine was gewoon op.'

Eerlijk Alles Delen

Daar loopt Mina Koe. Ze is op weg naar Truida Koe, om daar op visite te gaan. Truida Koe heeft de koffie al gezet, en er is ook een stuk gebak bij. Als Mina Koe aanbelt, snelt Truida Koe snel naar de deur. 'Dag Mina Koe,' zegt Truida Koe. 'Dag Truida Koe,' zegt Mina Koe. 'Ik heb de koffie al klaarstaan,' zegt Truida Koe. Na een tijdje wordt er weer aangebeld. Het is de burgemeester, Jaap Varken. Truida Koe doet snel open. 'Komt u maar snel binnen, burgemeester. De koffie is wel op, maar er is nog wel een gebakje,' zegt Truida Koe. Daar loopt Jaap Varken naar binnen. 'Dag Mina Koe,' zegt de burgemeester. 'Dag burgemeester,' zegt Mina Koe. Truida Koe geeft het gebakje aan de burgemeester. 'Maar,' zegt Mina Koe, 'ik dacht dat dat gebakje voor mij was ?' Truida Koe schudt met haar hoofd, en ook de burgemeester begint met zijn hoofd te schudden. 'Jij hebt de koffie, hij krijgt het gebak,' zegt Truida Koe. 'Waarom krijgen we dan niet ieders de helft, dan krijgt hij de laatste helft van mijn koffie,' zegt Mina Koe weer. Maar dan staat de burgemeester op en smijt het gebakje in het gezicht van Mina Koe. 'Hier heb je je gebakje,' zegt de burgemeester, en loopt naar buiten. 'Zie nou wat je gedaan hebt,' klaagt Truida Koe. 'Je hebt de burgemeester weggejaagd.' En snel rent Truida Koe met het laatste beetje koffie achter de burgemeester aan. 'Burgemeester, als ik mag vragen, waar kwam u eigenlijk voor ?' vraagt Truida Koe. 'Oh,' zegt de burgemeester, 'ik kwam om u een bekeuring te geven, omdat u het wasgoed op zondag buiten hebt laten hangen.' 'En van wie hebt u dat vernomen ?' vraagt Truida Koe weer. 'Dat heb ik gehoord van Mina Koe.' Plats, daar smijt Truida Koe het laatste beetje koffie in het gezicht van de burgemeester. Nou ja, het laatste beetje ? Een klein restje is natuurlijk nog voor iemand anders, plats, voor Mina Koe. Nou, dat was nog eens een gezellige verjaardag, zeg. Gelukkig dat een koe niet elke dag jarig is. Ze vieren het maar eens per week.

Pir

Pir was een pop met een wit gebloemd vestje, een wit broekje en nog wat verdere dingen. Pir zou erg graag een jongetje willen worden, en dan graag een jongetje dat zou kunnen vliegen. Maar Pir was maar een doodgewone pop in het magazijn van de poppenmaker. De poppenmaker had een groot hart voor de poppen, en wilde soms weleens dat ze tot leven zouden kunnen komen.

Op een dag besloot de poppenmaker een brief te schrijven. Hij stopte de brief in een fles, en wierp hem de zee in. Na lange tijd kwam de brief bij een kapitein terecht. De kapitein opende de fles en las de brief. 'Wat is dit nu voor een rare brief,' bromde de kapitein. 'Nee, poppen kunnen niet tot leven komen.' Toen de kapitein thuis kwam liet hij de brief lezen aan zijn

vrouw.

Maar de vrouw had in haar nachtkastje een toverroos. Ze stopte de toverroos in de fles, en stopte er een briefje bij waarop stond geschreven : 'Beste poppenmaker, als u de toverroos in het binnenste van uw pop vastmaakt, dan zal hij tot leven komen.' Omdat ze bang was dat iemand anders de fles zou vinden, zond ze een dienstknecht met de fles naar de poppenmaker.

De poppenmaker was erg blij, en koos Pir uit om daar de toverroos in te stoppen. Hij naaide Pir daarna weer goed dicht, en toen gebeurde er iets wonderlijks. De pop kon bewegen, en niet alleen dat : De pop kon ook vliegen.

De toverroos kon ook spreken, en op een dag zei de toverroos tot de jongen : 'Over de rode zee van vlammen is een land voor jou.'

'Maar ik ken helemaal geen rode zee van vlammen,' zei de jongen.

'Dan moet je in de nacht naar de zee gaan,' zei de toverroos.

En zo ging de jongen in het midden van de nacht naar de zee, en zag dat de zee rood was en vol vlammen. 'Vlieg,' zei de toverroos. En de jongen begon zijn reis over de zee, en kwam aan in een prachtig land.

De Sprookjesmarkt

Een jongen ging altijd met zijn grootmoeder op vrijdag naar de sprookjesmarkt in de ochtend. Het was dan altijd net licht geworden, en hij zat dan altijd bij zijn grootmoeder achterop de fiets. Dan zocht hij telkens zijn sprookjes uit. Op een dag werden ze tegengehouden door een kleine knokige kabouter met een knots. "Dat gaat zo maar niet," sprak de kabouter. "Elke vrijdagochtend wanneer het net licht geworden is komen jullie om mijn sprookjes te stelen."

De jongen keek de kabouter met opgeheven wenkbrauwen aan, zeer verbaasd. "Maar wij betalen toch voor de sprookjes, en hoe zijn het uw sprookjes ?"

De kabouter gaf de jongen een mep tegen zijn been. "Brutale vlegel, ik ben de baas van de sprookjesmarkt," bromde de kabouter. "Nu vlug, maak dat je wegkomt. Jullie zijn hier veel te vaak, en nu is het wel welletjes." Maar toen stapte de grootmoeder van de fiets af. "Puh," sprak ze. "Hoe kan zo'n klein mannetje als jij de baas zijn van zo'n grote markt ?" Maar toen

begon de kabouter zo woest met zijn knots te slaan dat grootmoeder en de jongen zo snel mogelijk op de fiets moesten springen om bij hem weg te kunnen komen. De kabouter raasde en foeterde, en kwam nog achter hen aan ook. Wat kon dat mannetje hard rennen. Grootmoeder moest erg snel fietsen, anders zouden ze eraan gaan. Gelukkig waren ze na een tijdje van hem af.

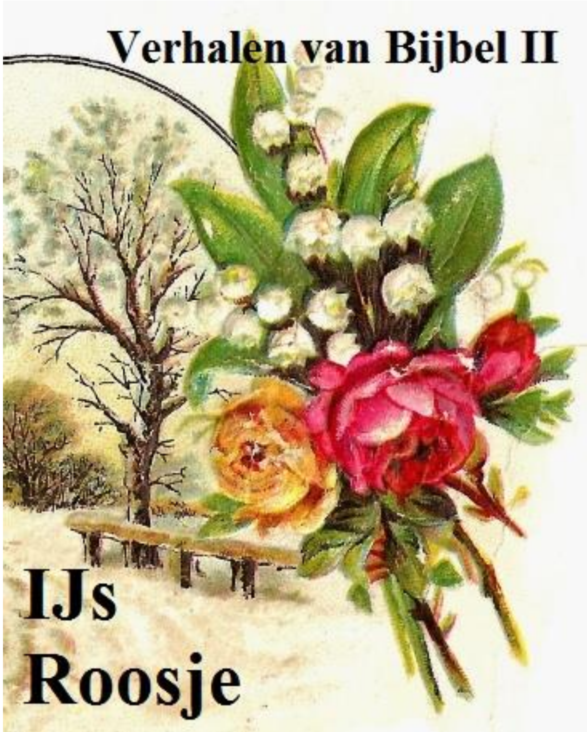
De volgende vrijdag gingen ze het weer proberen. Ze gingen nu nog vroeger. Het licht was nog niet eens gevallen. De marktkoopmannen en vrouwen waren nog bezig hun kraampjes op te zetten. Grootmoeder liep op de eerste de beste marktkoopman af en vroeg of het waar was dat de kleine kabouter met de knots de baas was van de sprookjesmarkt. De marktkoopman keek haar aan met opgeheven wenkbrauwen. "Maar mevrouw toch," sprak de man. "Hoe komt u toch aan zulke verhalen ? Er is geen baas van de sprookjesmarkt. Wij hebben de sprookjesmarkt allemaal samen opgezet, en niemand is de baas over de ander." Toen begon grootmoeder het hele verhaal te vertellen.

De koopman barstte in lachen uit. "Wat een vreemd verhaal, en wat een kostelijk sprookje. Dat kunnen we wel verkopen hier."

"Hoeveel kost het ?" vroeg grootmoeder.

"Maar mevrouw," sprak de koopman, "u bent zelf de bedenker van het sprookje, dus het is helemaal gratis voor u." Even later overhandigde de koopman het sprookje aan grootmoeder. De jongen zocht ook nog wat andere sprookjes uit, en toen zijn ze weer op de fiets gegaan. Maar na een tijdje kwamen ze weer die ellendige kabouter tegen. "Zie, weer sprookjes stelen, hè ? Ik wist het," bulderde de kabouter, en kwam hen weer achterna met de knots. Hij was nu extra kwaad. "En nu ben ik zeker ook in het sprookje, hè ? Van mij kom je niet meer af." Hij foeterde en tierde, maar hij kon grootmoeder en de jongen niet inhalen. Hij volgde hen wel helemaal naar grootmoeder's huis. "Ik zal jullie leren !" bulderde hij. Snel sprongen grootmoeder en de jongen van de fiets af met de sprookjes, en snel gingen ze naar binnen, en grootmoeder deed de deur weer goed op slot. "Die fiets is nu van mij !" gilde de woeste, ziedende kabouter. De kabouter pakte de fiets en ze hebben hem nooit meer teruggezien. Wel vonden ze zijn knots waar de fiets had gestaan, en die hebben ze toen naar de sprookjesmarkt gebracht als bewijs dat het sprookje echt waar was.

De knots werd in een glazen kistje gelegd en werd op een halve pilaar gezet op het middelpunt van de sprookjesmarkt. Grootmoeder en de jongen mochten toen zoveel mogelijk sprookjes uitzoeken als ze wilden. En ze mochten hen allemaal gratis meenemen. Vanuit de hele wereld kwam iedereen om de knots in het glazen kistje te bewonderen en om het sprookje van de sprookjesmarkt te horen. Het werd de drukst bezochte markt van de hele wereld.


Verhalen van Bijbel II
IJs
Roosje

COAB 2000-2017

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IJsroosje

Ik kan me die dag nog goed herinneren. Soldaten marcheerden door de straten als speelgoedsoldaatjes. Ik was één van hen. Het is een wonder dat ik er nog ben om het verhaal na te kunnen vertellen. Ik ben nu een oude soldaat, maar het is me nog diep in het geheugen gegrifd. Die dag was er een prinsesje geboren, op de koudste dag van het jaar, en daarom noemden ze haar IJsroosje. Het prinsesje werd goed bewaakt, want ze waren bang dat iemand het prinsesje zou stelen. Het was zo'n wonder dat de oude koning en koningin nog kinderen konden krijgen, en nu hadden ze een troonopvolger. Er waren die dag meer soldaten op het paleis aanwezig dan ooit, en wij marcheerden door de straten om het goede nieuws te verkondigen. Ook hadden de koning en de koningin een grote leeuw ingehuurd om het paleis extra goed te bewaken. Het was de grootste leeuw die ik ooit had gezien, en hij brulde harder dan ik ooit had gehoord.

Uit allerlei omliggende landen kwamen prinsen en prinsessen om het nieuw geboren prinsesje te bewonderen. Ze namen vele cadeautjes voor het kleine prinsesje mee. Dat kun je natuurlijk wel begrijpen. De koning lachte hard zodra er weer een cadeautje werd gegeven. 'Hoe kan ik het allemaal herbergen ? Maar ja, het paleis is groot, zeer groot, en als het er dan allemaal niet inpast, dan gaat het de koninklijke kelder in, ondergronds,' lachte hij. Ook de koninklijke lieden van de buurlanden lachten hartelijk met hem mee. Er waren zelfs koningen en koninginnen gekomen om het kleine prinsesje te bezoeken. Maar aan het einde van de dag gebeurde er iets vreselijks. Een pikzwart klein mannetje kwam het prinsesje bezoeken, en voordat ze het doorhadden stond hij al bij het wiegje. 'Wat moet dat mannetje hier ?' vroeg de koning. 'Hoe hebben ze die binnen gelaten ? Ik ken dat mannetje niet. Wat moet hij ?'

'Ach koning,' kraste het mannetje, 'maakt u zich maar geen zorgen. Ik ben een oude tovenaar uit het bos, en kom even naar uw kind krijgen. Het zal haar vast geluk brengen.'

'Maar ik ken u verder niet,' sprak de koning. 'Wie bent u ? We hebben het niet zo op indringers.' De koning stond stokstijf als vastgenageld aan de grond.

'Het gaat u niet zoveel aan wie ik verder ben, koning,' sprak het pikzwarte mannetje. 'Het is toch voor u niet uit te houden om allemaal na te gaan wie wie is en wie wat is ?'

De koning kon zich niet meer bewegen en kon ook niet meer spreken. Hij kon alleen maar toekijken. Niemand anders was verder in de buurt. 'Bent u uw galgen vergeten ?' sprak het pikzwarte mannetje. 'In het bos hebben wij een tweede leven.'

Het pikzwarte mannetje greep het kleine prinsesje uit de wieg en rende er schaterlachend mee weg. Na een tijdje kon de koning zich weer bewegen, maar het was al te laat. Hij riep al zijn lakeien, soldaten en verdere hofhouding bij zich, en het bleek dat zij allemaal als bevroren aan de grond hadden gestaan waardoor ze niets tegen het pikzwarte mannetje konden doen.

'Het was een tovenaar,' sprak de koning bedroefd. 'Hij heeft ons allemaal betoverd, en nu is het prinsesje weg.' Er was een groot verdriet in het land toen het slechte nieuws werd verteld. Ik was één van de soldaten die het slechte nieuws moest brengen. Iedereen werd opgeroepen mee te helpen zoeken naar het verloren prinsesje.

We gingen allemaal in grote stoeten het bos in om daar te zoeken. De koning liet alle galgen in het land verwijderen, in de hoop dat het pikzwarte mannetje daardoor terug zou komen, maar het pikzwarte mannetje kwam niet terug. Er werd dieper en dieper in het bos gezocht, omdat de koning had gezegd dat het pikzwarte mannetje in het bos woonde.

Op een dag gingen ik en mijn maat een grot binnen. Het was een hele diepe grot. We moesten door een lange tunnel. Het leidde helemaal naar een grote open ruimte waar het pikzwarte mannetje om het kleine prinsesje heendanste. Het prinsesje zat op de grond en speelde met blokjes. Zo te zien had het prinsesje het goed naar haar zin. Ze kraaide van plezier.

'Prinsesje zo klein, eens zal je zeven zijn,

Prinsesje zo fijn, dan zul je in het ijs zijn,

Om te dansen en zingen als ik,

En jouw land, jouw land, dat zetten we in de fik.'

Dat was wat het pikzwarte mannetje zong. We schrokken toen we het hoorden, en toen deden we iets heel doms. We gingen naar het pikzwarte mannetje met een net, om hem te arresteren, maar ineens stonden we als bevroren aan de grond. Dat hadden we kunnen weten natuurlijk, en dit was zijn domein, dus daar had hij nog veel meer macht. We kwamen ook niet meer los, en toen heeft hij ons in een soort toverijs gedaan wat aan de grotwanden scheen te groeien. We waren behekst. Zo moesten we toekijken hoe het pikzwarte mannetje het prinsesje opvoedde. Het prinsesje vroeg vaak wie wij waren, en dan zei het pikzwarte mannetje dat wij bandieten waren die hij goed had opgesloten. Het prinsesje had medelijden met ons, maar zij kon niets beginnen. Ook prentte het pikzwarte mannetje haar in dat als ze ons ooit zou bevrijden, dan zouden we haar ontvoeren. Het prinsesje werd verschrikkelijk bang gemaakt voor ons.

Op een dag toen het prinsesje zeven jaar was geworden kreeg ze een slaapmiddel, en werd toen slapend in een blok toverijs gedaan aan de wand tegenover ons. Het was een ander soort toverijs, want toen het prinsesje weer wakker werd kon ze zich er gewoon in bewegen, en ze kon gewoon spreken. Het prinsesje gilde. 'Haal me eruit. Ik ben toch geen bandiet ?'

'Het is een verjaardagscadeau,' sprak het pikzwarte mannetje. 'Je kan nu voor altijd zingen en dansen in het ijs.'

'Maar dat wil ik helemaal niet,' zei het prinsesje. 'Ik wil voor de mensen zorgen in mijn land, en ook voor hen in andere landen, voor mens en dier.'

'Ach, daar is niets leuks aan,' sprak het pikzwarte mannetje. 'Toe, je zal dit veel leuker vinden. Zo betaal je ook weer een beetje terug voor alles wat ik voor je heb gedaan.'

Het prinsesje begon te huilen. 'Mijn vader heeft me nodig om het land te besturen, en nu doe je mij dit aan.'

'Heus, je bent hier beter af,' sprak het pikzwarte mannetje. 'Het land van je vader gaat namelijk in de fik.'

'In de fik ?' huilde het prinsesje. 'Maar waarom dan ?'

'Dans en zing nu voor mij, prinsesje,' sprak het pikzwarte mannetje, 'anders zal ik je doden.'

En zo moest het prinsesje voor het pikzwarte mannetje dansen en zingen, elke dag weer. Ze kon niet wegkomen uit het toverijs. Op een dag kwam er een vlammetje uit de hand van het pikzwarte mannetje. Het pikzwarte mannetje was dolblij. 'Eindelijk is het tovervuur ontwaakt. Nu kan ik pas echt wraak nemen door het land van de koning in de fik te zetten.' Het pikzwarte mannetje krijste van het lachen.

'Nee, nee !' riep het prinsesje. Maar zij kon niets doen. Gillend van het lachen rende het mannetje de grot uit, om zo het bos uit te gaan tot het land van de koning. Hij liet de vlam uit zijn hand rollen, en al spoedig stond het hele land in de fik. Overal was er geroep en geschreeuw. Maar ook het bos begon in de fik te staan. Daar had het pikzwarte mannetje niet op gerekend. De vlammen kwamen hoger en hoger, en steeds dieper gingen ze het bos in totdat ze de grot hadden bereikt waar wij zaten opgesloten in het ijs. Het was een tovervuur dat niemand kon stoppen, zelfs het pikzwarte mannetje niet. Ik vroeg me af wat erger zou zijn : het vuur of het ijs. De vlammen begonnen tegen de ijswanden te tikken waarin wij zaten opgesloten. Steeds woester en woester gingen ze tekeer. Ik hoorde het prinsesje roepen. Plotseling merkte ik dat ik weer kon praten, en ik begon terug te roepen naar de prinses. Ik begon haar allereerst te vertellen wie wij daadwerkelijk waren. Ik merkte dat ik me weer kon bewegen en het ijs uit kon komen. De vlammen deden helemaal geen pijn, en ik rende naar de prinses toe en nam haar bij de hand. Ook haar ijs was inmiddels gesmolten. Daar was ook mijn maat en met zijn drieën begonnen we de grot uit te rennen. Daar stond het pikzwarte mannetje in de opening van de grot. Het pikzwarte mannetje was woest. 'Wie heeft mij bedrogen !' foeterde hij. De vlammen sprongen bij hem in de nek, en wij renden zo snel als wij konden langs hem heen, gebruik makend van het moment. Niet lang daarna waren de vlammen weg, en wij bleven maar doorrennen, terwijl we het pikzwarte mannetje achter ons hoorden foeteren. 'Ik krijg jullie wel !' riep hij. We renden door totdat we in ons land terug waren. Het prinsesje was tussen ons beiden in. Gelukkig hadden de vlammen in ons land ook geen schade aangericht. Iets of iemand had het pikzwarte mannetje voor de gek gehouden. Op het paleis aangekomen waren de koning en de koningin heel blij. Het prinsesje viel hen in de armen. Ik vroeg me af van wie het tovervuur was, en vroeg aan de koning of hij het wist. 'Het is de leeuw,' sprak de koning, 'de leeuw van het prinsesje. Sinds de verdwijning van het prinsesje is hij altijd op het paleis gebleven, en zwoer ons dat hij haar vinden zou. De tovervlammen kwamen van hem. Het zijn zijn ogen die altijd zoeken.' En zo was er een groot feest in het land ter gelegenheid van de terugkeer van de prinses. En van het pikzwarte mannetje hebben ze nooit meer wat gehoord.

Einde

De Uitverkiezing van Lapondria

De keren dat ik hem zag was hij gehuld in lompen, sprak bijna niet, en droeg een hoed ... Hij kwam een paar keer bij ons in de gemeente, om nooit meer terug te komen ... Toch heeft hij heel veel indruk op me gemaakt in die tijd ... Zou hij nog leven ?

Hij deelde vreemde folders uit over een uitverkiezing ... Wat dat voor uitverkiezing was wist ik niet ... Ik was toen nog erg jong ... Mijn moeder nam het foldertje wel aan, maar toen ze thuis was had ze het al weggegooid ... Nu, na al die jaren, zou ik toch wel willen weten waar dat foldertje over ging ...

Daar slenter ik over straat. Een man spreekt mij aan, en zegt iets over bier drinken ... Ik loop door ... Ik ben moe ... maar ... maar ... daar zie ik hem staan ... die man gehuld in lompen ... Maar als ik dichterbij kom blijkt het iemand anders te zijn ... Of is hij veranderd ...

De volgende dag is het zondag ... Ik wil niet naar de kerk ... Ik moet, maar ik ren weg ... Naar het hertenpark ... Ik ben liever bij de dieren ... Op straat ligt een verfrommeld foldertje over een cirkus in de stad ...

Ik denk weer na over die uitverkiezing ... Die nacht droom ik over een park vol leeuwen ... Grote leeuwen ... met grote ogen ... Er staan hekken omheen, met paden ... Ik loop over die paden ... Langs die paden, aan de andere kant, staan bomen en struiken ... Dan roept iemand : 'Het hek is open ! Er is een gat in het hek ...' Een voor een komen de leeuwen door het gat naar buiten ... Ik ben niet bang, maar ren toch weg ... De leeuwen volgen mij ... Het lijkt wel alsof ze van mij houden ... Ze doen mij niks ... Maar na een tijdje beginnen ze mij op te eten ... Dan word ik wakker ... Wat een vreemde droom ... Alsof ze nog steeds in mijn kamer zijn ... Ik ben moe, en ga weer slapen ... Mijn ouders zijn boos, omdat ik ben weggerend toen ik naar de kerk moest ...

Ik ben gelukkig ... Ik voel me goed ... Heel zacht van binnen ... alsof er veren in mijn lichaam zijn ... zo zacht ... Ik gaap ... en maak een hard geluid ... Wat een vreemde, vreemde droom had ik toch vannacht ...

Het lijkt wel alsof ik ben uitverkoren ... Maar voor wat ? ... Ik voel me zo blij ... zo rustig, en zo vol vrede ... Wie heeft mij dan uitverkoren ... Een raadsel ... of is het God ?

Roodvinger

en de Draak

Hoofdstuk 1. Er gebeurt iets heel vreemds

Hoofdstuk 2. De Bakkermannen

Hoofdstuk 3. Bank van de Rode Zwaan

Hoofdstuk 4. De Zilveren Draak

Hoofdstuk 5. De Bokkenmelk

Hoofdstuk 6. De Kasteelschool

Hoofdstuk 7. Het TV-Dier

Hoofdstuk 8. De Roze Toverspiegel

Hoofdstuk 9. Wie is Roodvinger ?

Hoofdstuk 10. De Draken gaan Voetballen

Hoofdstuk 1. Er gebeurt iets heel vreemds

Zoals jullie misschien wel weten is Roodvinger een mannetje niet groter dan je vingers. Op een dag beleefde Roodvinger een avontuur wat nu opgeschreven staat in dit boek : Roodvinger en de Draak. De schrijver heeft het precies zo opgeschreven zoals Roodvinger het hem vertelde, toen hij weer eens in Nederland was.

Nu heeft Roodvinger ook een vrouwtje die Roodlaarsje heet. Nou, in dit verhaal was Roodlaarsje verdwenen, en moest Roodvinger het tegen een echte draak opnemen om zijn vrouwtje weer terug te vinden.

Op een dag werd Roodvinger wakker in zijn bedje, terwijl er een briefje naast hem lag. Het was het handschrift van Roodlaarsje met daarop geschreven : 'Lieve Roodvinger, ik ben even naar de winkel. Ik ben zo weer terug. Van Roodlaarsje.' Roodvinger ging eerst even in bad, en liep daarna in zijn badjas naar beneden. Het zonnetje scheen buiten, en er waren wat kinderen op de stoep aan het spelen. Roodvinger dacht dat het een mooie dag zou worden. De vogeltjes floten zo mooi. Daar kwam de postbode al aan met post. Het was een heleboel post, een hele stapel, en Roodvinger ging er even voor zitten. Er zat ook een pakketje bij. Toen Roodvinger het pakketje openmaakte schrok hij wel even, want er zat een laarsje van Roodlaarsje in. Er zat ook een briefje bij : 'Roodlaarsje komt niet meer terug. Van de draak.' Wat was dat nou ? Roodvinger schrok nog erger. Wie was die draak, en waar was Roodlaarsje nu ? In een dikke envelop zat een spiegeltje, en in weer een andere wat foto's van Roodvinger, en in weer een andere een schilderij van Roodvinger. Wat was dat nou ? Roodvinger belde direct de koning op en vertelde geschokt het verhaal. De koning schrok er ook erg van, en vroeg of Roodvinger direct naar het paleis kon komen. Roodvinger pakte snel wat spulletjes bij elkaar, deed de deur goed op slot en reed in zijn autootje naar het paleis. Hij zou voor een tijdje bij de koning logeren. De koning wachtte hem bij de paleispoort al op en strekte zijn armen wijd open voor Roodvinger. De koning wist natuurlijk ook niet wat er met Roodlaarsje was gebeurd, maar liet

wijze mijnheren komen, de raadsheren van de koning. Vier mijnheren met hoge hoeden kwamen naar de koning toe in de troonzaal. Roodvinger zat op een hoge stoel naast de troon. De koning piekerde zeer. De hoge mijnheren keken bedenkelijk, terwijl ze met hun handjes door hun baardjes wreven. Eén stak er zijn vinger op, en sprak : 'Koning, uwe majesteit, ik ben maar een eenvoudig raadsheer, maar ik kan hier misschien wel wat over zeggen.' En toen haalde die wijze mijnheer een boek tevoorschijn en begon erin te lezen. 'Juist ja, juist ja,' zei de mijnheer. 'Draken bestaan echt, en de boeken zeggen dat ze in andere gedaantes kunnen veranderen. Ze kunnen gewoon als mijnheren leven, terwijl ze 's nachts draken zijn.' Daar schrok Roodvinger wel even van. En waar moest zo'n draak dan zijn ? Wie zou het kunnen wezen. Toen stak een andere mijnheer zijn hand op en haalde een boek tevoorschijn. Dit boek was nog zwaarder dan de andere. 'Koning,' sprak de mijnheer en begon te lezen. Hij haalde zijn brilletje van zijn neusje. 'Ik weet nog wel iets hieraan toe te voegen. Draken houden ervan om in paleizen en andere grote huizen te wonen. Ze houden ervan het land te regeren, of om de koningen raad te geven.' Weer schrok Roodvinger.

Buiten hoorden ze ineens een paar schoten. Roodvinger en de koning renden naar buiten. Maar ze zagen niets. De koning keek Roodvinger aan en zei niets. Hij keek zo ernstig dat Roodvinger er een beetje bang van werd. 'Koning, wist u hier al van, dat draken zulke dingen doen ? Zich veranderen in mijnheren en zo, en zelfs kunnen werken voor u met de één of andere reden ?' vroeg Roodvinger een beetje angstig. 'Ik was daar altijd al bang voor, Roodvinger,' sprak de koning. Een lakei kwam naar buiten rennen : 'De koningin is verdwenen, de koningin is verdwenen,' riep hij. De koning schrok. Hij liet direct het hele paleis doorzoeken. Hij nam Roodvinger bij de arm : 'Kom mee, Roodvinger,' zei hij.

Toen ze buiten de paleistuin inrenden kregen ze beiden de schrik van hun leven. Er stond een enorme draak voor hen, met een lijf als bijna geheel bedekt met kevers. Als de kevers bewogen, dan bewoog de draak ook, maar Roodvinger wist niet zeker of het wel echt kevers waren. Het leken wel op hele kleine schildjes. De lijfwachten begonnen met pijlen op de draak te schieten, maar de draak begon te brullen, en er kwam rook uit zijn bek en zijn neusgaten. 'Nou, jullie weten natuurlijk wel wat ik kan doen, hè,' zei de draak luid. 'Ik kan dit hele kasteel in een moment in vlammen doen laten verdwijnen.'

'Oh,' jammerde de koning, 'Lijfwachten, stop met schieten. Beste draak, maar we hebben jou toch nog nooit wat gedaan ?'

'Dat is hem nou juist,' sprak de draak. 'Jullie willen niks met me te doen hebben. Jullie luisteren niet naar mij voor raad.'

'Maar,' sprak de koning weer, 'wij kennen u helemaal niet, meneer de draak, en wij hebben u hier nog nooit eerder gezien, dus hoe kunnen we dan naar u luisteren ?'

'Juist ja,' sprak de draak, 'maar ik kan ook in andere gedaantes komen, hè, hebben jullie daar niet aan gedacht ?'

De koning boog zijn hoofd. Ja, dat had een raadsheer net weer voorgelezen. Maar de koning was altijd bang dat er door die draken vervelende dingen zouden gebeuren. 'Niet alle draken zijn slecht, koning, en als ze slecht zijn, dan hebben ze daar soms een reden voor,' zei de draak. De koning boog weer z'n hoofd. Ja, dat was allemaal waar. 'Wat kunnen we voor u doen, meneer de draak,' vroeg de koning, 'en waar zijn Roodlaarsje en mijn vrouw de koningin ?'

'Die komen voorlopig niet terug,' sprak de draak. 'Er zullen eerst vele dingen moeten gebeuren, voor ze terugkomen.'

'Ze moeten nu terugkomen,' bulderde de koning met zijn vuist in de lucht. Maar toen hij lichtelijk wat vuur uit de neus van de draak zag komen, boog hij weer snel z'n hoofd. 'Zeg het maar, draak. Wat moet er gebeuren,' vroeg de koning.

Maar daar werd Roodvinger ineens wakker. Het was een nare droom geweest. Maar, waar was Roodlaarsje ? Roodvinger rende naar beneden op z'n pantoffeltjes. Het was nog midden in de nacht. Gelukkig, daar zat Roodlaarsje. Ze had wat ijs uit de diepvries gepakt. Roodvinger stormde op Roodlaarsje af en gaf haar een dikke kus. 'Wat ben ik blij dat je er bent, Roodlaarsje, ik heb zo naar gedroomd.' En toen Roodvinger de droom vertelde begon Roodlaarsje op de piano te spelen.

Roodvinger werd weer een beetje rustig door het liedje van Roodlaarsje. En samen vielen ze in de bank in slaap.

Weten jullie dat Roodlaarsje eens een keer ècht kwijt was ? Dat was heel lang geleden, toen er nog heel veel draken in de bergen woonden. Roodvinger moest toen een lange reis maken naar de bergen, om het op te nemen tegen zo'n verschrikkelijke draak. Die draak had meerdere koppen, en meerdere stemmen. Als die draak tegen Roodvinger sprak dan leek het wel alsof er dertig mijnheren tegelijk tegen hem spraken. En Roodvinger kon al die stemmen herkennen, omdat de draak al zijn vriendjes nadeed, en ook de stemmen van de mijnheren waar Roodvinger niet zo goed mee kon opschieten, de nare mijnheren, en ook de stem van de koning, wat natuurlijk Roodvingers grootste vriend was.

Roodvinger moest toen een heel eind door een grote grot lopen, in de richting van het gebulder. De draak had ook een heleboel benen die wel op vrouwenbenen leken. Sommige benen hadden schoenen aan, maar ook een heleboel benen hadden geen schoenen aan. Die benen konden heel snel bewegen, en er was overal vuur om die draak heen. Roodvinger moest dan heel hard schreeuwen zodat de draak hem kon verstaan : 'Geef mijn lieve Roodlaarsje terug, nare draak.' Maar dan lachte de draak hem hard uit. Achter de draak was een poortje met een gang, waar ergens Roodlaarsje zat opgesloten. De draak had een heleboel ijzeren kapjes op z'n lichaam, een soort kevers, maar sommige plekken leken ook op rubber. De draak kon heel hoog gillen, zodat het soms pijn deed in Roodvingers oortjes. Roodvinger wachtte toen totdat de draak ging slapen, maar de draak sliep helemaal niet. Roodvinger stond toen voor een groot probleem. Op een gegeven moment begon die draak met de schoenen te gooien. Daar had hij er zoveel van. En Roodvinger moest telkens bukken om niet geraakt te worden. Op een gegeven moment werd Roodvinger zo kwaad, dat hij z'n eigen schoen uittrok en die naar de draak gooide. 'Nee, niet doen,' bulderde de draak. Maar toen begon de draak weer verder te gooien met schoenen. En weet je wat Roodvinger toen gedaan heeft ? Hij is terug gegaan uit de bergen om bij iedereen oude schoenen te vragen, en ging zo met een hele vrachtwagen vol met schoenen terug naar de draak. Toen heeft Roodvinger één voor één al die schoenen naar de draak gegooid, totdat de draak zo moe en slap was geworden dat hij in slaap viel, en zo kon Roodvinger Roodlaarsje redden. Dat was natuurlijk een spannend verhaal, en vanaf toen zei men dat in schoenenwinkels draken onder de grond slapen.

Soms mochten kinderen met schoolreisje weleens door de kelderdeur van zo'n schoenwinkel naar beneden om die slapende draken te kunnen zien. Dat waren vaak hele grote grotten met een heleboel trappen. Vaak gebruikten ze het vuur wat uit de neuzen van de slapende draken

kwam voor de verwarmingen van het land, en voor andere dingen zoals het smelten van ijzer. Daarom waren schoenenwinkels zo belangrijk.

Hoofdstuk 2. De Bakkermannen

Nog niet alle draken sliepen. Er waren er nog een paar die heel diep zaten en die veel te ver van de schoenenwinkels vandaan waren. Deze draken hadden ook vele benen, een soort vrouwenbenen, die ze gebruikten om wezens mee op te sluiten. Die benen waren dan echte drakentralies. Roodvinger vond dat erg vervelend voor die wezens. Er waren wel boekjes over in de bibliotheek die zeiden dat daar onder de grond waar de draken nog niet sliepen, daar waren zoveel drakenschoenen dat die opgesloten wezens sliepen. Ja, dat gebeurde er als er ergens teveel drakenschoenen lagen. Dan viel iedereen in slaap, en dan kwamen ze vaak achter de drakentralies terecht. Daarom waren er met schoolreisjes onder de grond altijd hekken waarop stond : 'Niet verdergaan, vanwege drakenschoenen.' Achter die hekken daar sliepen de draken nog steeds niet. En het was vaak zo diep onder de grond, dat het ver uit de buurt van de schoenenwinkels was. Roodvinger wilde daar graag iets aan doen. Roodvinger had een aantal boekjes over draken uit de bibliotheek meegenomen en was al druk aan het lezen. De droom had hem wel op een idee gebracht.

Er stonden vreemde gedichten in sommige boekjes :

'Achter de tralies van de bakker, daar zat een oude stakker. Daar moest hij eten, zo blij, zo blij, terwijl hij verdriet had, zeer spijtig het zij. En die tralies waren oude benen, van een draak, dat moet je weten. Van veraf leek het allemaal zo, maar ben je dan vergeten, dat van dichtbij het gewoon een zebra is, naar school gaande op rolletjes, want het is bijna kerstmis. Een bakkerij op wielen, met bakkerman's gezichten, maar ach 't is maar een zebra in zotte gedichten.'

Roodvinger moest even grinniken. Ja, dat waren inderdaad zotte gedichten. Het waren drakengedichten, vreemde rijmpjes. Vaak stonden er plaatjes van centaurs boven de bakkerijen op grote borden in het land. Dat waren half paard, half mijnheren. Ze zeggen dat de bakkers vroeger op centaurs reden, om hun brood te verkopen. In de boekjes stond dat deze centaurs vaak door draken onder de grond werden opgesloten. Roodvinger zag nooit bakkers op centaurs. Misschien waren ze wel allemaal onder de grond verdwenen. En waarom ?

Op de plaatjes hadden de centaurs vaak draaiende ogen, of ogen die bijna helemaal waren weggedraaid in de ooghoeken. Op sommige plaatjes spoten ze vuur in allerlei kleuren uit hun monden. Ze hadden veelal paardengezichten of mijnheersgezichten met een paardenlijf. Vaak hadden ze lang haar en gekleurde ringen om hun armen. Waarom zouden de draken hen uit het land weg hebben gehaald ? In sommige boekjes stond dat de draken het niet goed vonden dat de centaurs zo hard moesten werken. Ze moesten vaak zwaar werk verrichten in de bakkerijen. Door de drakenschoenen sliepen ze nu, maar ze zaten nog steeds opgesloten onder de grond achter de drakentralies. Roodvinger kon de draken wel een beetje begrijpen, maar moest het op deze manier ? In de boeken stond dat het erg gevaarlijk was om zo maar de draken te storen. Maar Roodvinger wilde wel eens weten wat er nu eigenlijk precies aan de hand was, en waarom de centaurs niet gewoon terug konden naar het land. Dan zou Roodvinger er zelf wel voor zorgen dat ze niet meer bij de bakkers hoefden te werken als ze dat niet wilden. Toen Roodvinger verder las vertelden de boekjes hem dat de centaurs vaak

naar de woestijnen moesten om daar te zoeken naar het gouden meel. Diep in de woestijnen daar waren grote gordijnen waar ze langsheen en doorheen moesten, en als ze uiteindelijk door dat doolhof heen waren gekomen dan stond daar een huis van witte chocolade op een heuvel. In dit huis woonden een heleboel dominees die het gouden meel verkochten. Dan moesten de centaurs betalen met munten waarop bakkerman's gezichten stonden. Van dat gouden meel konden de bakkers in het land dan extra veel brood maken. Het waren vreemde munten waarmee ze moesten betalen, want de gezichten op die munten bewogen, en op de achterkant van die munten stonden vaak landschappen waarop ook alles bewoog. Het waren levende munten. In sommige boekjes stond dat als de centaur ook nog vleugeltjes had hij met het gouden meel naar de zonnen moest vliegen om zelf het meel te bakken.

Roodvinger besloot om eens een kijkje te nemen onder de grond. Hij zocht de eerste de beste schoenwinkel op en vroeg aan de schoenmaker of hij even naar beneden mocht, in de kelder. Roodvinger moest wel een heleboel trappen lopen naar beneden, en daar zag hij de eerste draken al. Maar deze sliepen, en Roodvinger moest net zo lang doorlopen totdat hij misschien een wakkere draak zou tegenkomen, met misschien zelfs een slapende centaur achter drakentralies. Maar hoe ver Roodvinger ook doorliep, hij zag ze niet, zelfs achter de waarschuwingshekken niet. Ineens zag Roodvinger een mannetje zitten op een hekje. Achter het mannetje zag Roodvinger wel wat vuur in de verte. Het mannetje zei dat achter het vuur de draken waren met de slapende centaurs, maar Roodvinger moest hem eerst een muntje met een bakkerman's gezicht erop geven. Maar dat had Roodvinger natuurlijk niet, en daar had Roodvinger ook niet echt zin in om te moeten betalen aan een mannetje die ervoor zat. Maar het mannetje liet Roodvinger er niet door. 'Als je nu niet weg gaat,' riep Roodvinger, 'dan ... dan ..' maar verder kon Roodvinger niet komen. Hij werd ineens zo moe en traag en begon te gapen. Toen Roodvinger weer wakker werd zag hij het mannetje grijnzen met een gouden drakenschoentje in zijn hand. 'Met een zo'n ding is het gedaan,' zei het mannetje, 'dan slapen ze allemaal. Als je me nu een bakkerman's muntje geeft, dan mag je erdoor.'

'Maar waar moet ik zo'n muntje vandaan halen ?' vroeg Roodvinger. Maar het mannetje was alweer verdwenen, en Roodvinger begon in één van de boekjes te lezen of er misschien wat meer over die muntjes instond. Het bleek dat die soort munten heel vroeger in het land werden gebruikt, toen de centaurs nog voor de bakkers werkten, maar dat er andere munten kwamen toen de draken de centaurs hadden meegenomen. Roodvinger zou naar zo'n munt op zoek moeten om verder te kunnen komen. Moeizaam liep Roodvinger weer naar boven, en vroeg aan de oude schoenmaker of hij misschien wist waar Roodvinger een oude munt met een bakkerman's gezicht kon krijgen. Maar de schoenmaker wist het niet. Wel stond er een meisje in de winkel die zei dat haar opa nog een paar van zulke oude munten had. Roodvinger liep met het meisje mee naar het huisje van haar opa. Een oude man met een pijp deed open, en Roodvinger begon het verhaal te vertellen, terwijl het meisje glimlachte. De opa wilde wel met Roodvinger mee onder de grond, en hij had er graag een oude munt voor over om de centaurs daarmee te kunnen helpen. Met z'n drieen liepen ze terug naar de schoenmaker, en al snel stonden ze weer voor het mannetje. De oude man gaf hem het muntje en ze konden verder lopen. In de verte hoorden ze gebrul, en ineens liep het mannetje weer naast hen. 'Zeg, er zijn daar veel drakenschoenen waar je in slaap van kunt vallen, maar als ik erbij ben gebeurt er niks hoor.' Na een tijdje lopen kwamen ze aan bij de draken. De draken schrokken toen ze het mannetje zagen. 'Zo,' sprak het mannetje, 'ik heb even wat vriendjes meegenomen. Ik weet niet of jullie dat erg vinden. Ze willen graag wat centaurs mee terug nemen naar het land.' Maar de draken begonnen te brullen en te spuwen met vuur : 'Nee,' riep er één, 'dan moeten ze weer in de zware bakkerijen werken.' En een andere draak riep : 'Hier hebben ze mooie dromen, dus laat ze met rust.' Maar het mannetje zei : 'De bakkerijen hebben nu zoveel

apparaten dat de centaurs daar echt niet meer hoeven te werken hoor, dat doen de bakkers zelf wel, en het is nu zo veilig en mooi in het land, dat de centaurs wel weer terug kunnen, hoor, als ze dat willen.'

'Geen sprake van,' brulde een derde draak, 'ze zijn nu bij ons en ze slapen. Laat hen met rust, bij ons hebben ze het veel beter.' Maar het mannetje liep op de kooien af en begon met een belletje te rinkelen. Langzaam werden de centaurs wakker. Het mannetje opende de kooien, en de centaurs kwamen naar buiten lopen, één voor één. Maar de draken begonnen toen ècht boos te worden, en begonnen alles in brand te zetten. Roodvinger schrok, en ook de oude man en het meisje. De centaurs begonnen wild heen en weer te rennen en te hinniken als paarden, maar het mannetje toverde snel regenwolken, en het begon te regenen, daar zo diep onder de grond. 'Nee,' gilden de draken, 'nee, geen regen.' Maar het begon harder en harder te regenen, en de wolkjes werden alsmaar groter. De draken begonnen langzaam weg te smelten en verdwenen door spleten onder de grond. 'Wacht maar, jullie zijn nog niet van ons af,' brulde er eentje. 'Vlug,' zei het mannetje, 'we moeten snel naar boven, anders komen ze terug.' Er waren wel honderden en honderden centaurs, en vlug renden ze over de trappen naar boven. Hier waren ze veilig, want ze wisten dat als de draken te dicht bij de schoenenwinkel zouden komen, dan zouden ze in slaap vallen. Maar wat was dat ? De aarde begon te beven en te beven, en de centaurs begonnen terug te rollen en te vallen, samen met Roodvinger, de oude man en het meisje. Het meisje gilde hard. Waar was het mannetje nu gebleven ? Maar daar zagen ze het mannetje halverwege slapen. Het mannetje kon misschien ook niet tegen de schoenen van de schoenenwinkel. Zou het mannetje soms ook een draak zijn ? Een paar centaurs trokken het mannetje terug naar beneden, en het mannetje werd weer wakker. 'Ach ja,' zei het mannetje, 'ik ben ook een draak, eentje die van gedaante veranderd is. Ik ben de schoenmaker van de draken, maar ik kan niet tegen schoenwinkels. Daarom zit ik hier voor altijd opgesloten,' zei het mannetje. 'Hoe kunnen we je dan helpen,' vroeg het meisje.

'Er is één manier om weer naar boven te kunnen komen,' zei het mannetje, 'en dat is als ik de zilveren drakenschoen weer terugvind,' zei het mannetje. Het meisje begon te glimlachen, en zei : 'Die heb ik op mijn kamertje staan, want eens waren we eens met schoolreisje in de woestijn, en bij een oase heb ik de zilveren drakenschoen gevonden.'

Maar Roodvinger vroeg : 'Hoe weet je zo zeker dat het een drakenschoen is ?' Het meisje glimlachte weer. De meester had haar gezegd dat het een echte drakenschoen van zilver was, en dat ze hem op haar kamertje mocht houden. Snel gingen ze weer naar boven, maar weer begon de grond te beven, en ditmaal zakten ze dieper en dieper. Het meisje gilde. 'Hoe kunnen we nu ooit bij de zilveren drakenschoen terechtkomen ?' Plotseling zagen ze de schoenmaker in de verte verschijnen. Het meisje riep of hij even de zilveren drakenschoen uit haar kamertje kon halen. De schoenmaker deed wat hem werd gezegd en binnen korte tijd was hij terug met de zilveren drakenschoen. 'Gooi hem naar me toe,' riep het mannetje, en de schoenmaker zwaaide met zijn armen en gooide het zilveren schoentje naar beneden. Het mannetje ving het schoentje keurig op met een duik en begon te stralen. Nu kon hij terug naar boven, zonder in slaap te vallen. Oh, wat had dat mannetje ineens een grote glimlach, zo wijd. En ook het meisje straalde. Samen liepen ze naar boven. Het meisje bedankte de schoenmaker, en ook haar opa was zo blij ... en natuurlijk Roodvinger en de centaurs ... De centaurs besloten in het bos te gaan wonen, en in de woestijnen. Het mannetje zou een tijdje bij Roodvinger en Roodlaarsje logeren, samen met het meisje.

Hoofdstuk 3. Bank van de Rode Zwaan

Er onstond wat chaos bij het huis van Roodvinger. Iedereen wilde zo graag het mannetje eens ontmoeten. Zo erg werd het op een gegeven moment dat het mannetje naar buiten kwam en even de gouden drakenschoen tevoorschijn haalde, en daar vielen al die opdringerige bezoekers in slaap. Dat was wel een handig middeltje. Het mannetje zou graag willen dat er weer met bakkerman's munten betaald zou worden, dus op een dag ging hij samen met Roodvinger naar de geldbanken om het eens voor te stellen. De meesten hadden nog nooit van die munten gehoord, want het was al van zo lang geleden, maar een wat oudere bankdirecteur had nog een heel magazijn vol met van die munten. Hij vond het een goed idee, en wilde wel met de koning praten om te beginnen met het drukken van deze munten. Niet lang daarna betaalde heel het land met de bakkerman's munten. Als het mannetje lastig werd gevallen liet hij even snel de gouden drakenschoen zien, en de lastpakken vielen al snel in slaap. Roodvinger vond het maar wat handig, zo'n mannetje in de buurt. Het meisje ging vaak met Roodvinger boodschappen doen, en al snel raakten ze gewend aan de nieuwe munten. Voor iedereen was het een echt feest, want de gezichten op de munten bewogen echt, en op de achterkant was er altijd een filmpje te zien. Vaak was dat een kort tekenfilmpje, maar op de munten met een hoger bedrag waren het soms lange avonturenfilms. Zo werd het voor velen weer leuk om naar de winkel te gaan en met geld om te gaan.

Nu was er een bank in het land die de Bank van de Rode Zwaan heette. Binnenin was een gouden trap die naar een geelgouden station leidde, waar een gouden trein stond. De trein leidde naar Kabbernal, een stadje diep onder de grond. Twee centaurs hadden aan Roodvinger gevraagd of ze daar mochten gaan wonen, en of Roodvinger hen daar naartoe wilde brengen, samen met het mannetje. Die centaurs heetten Santlib en Motlib. De koning van Kabbernal heette Moldevan, een lieveheersbeestje. Moldevan was zo blij hen te zien. Kabbernal was een stadje zo diep onder de grond dat daar nog draken leefden die niet sliepen en waar ook de draken kwamen waar Roodvinger al mee te maken had gehad. Op het moment werd het stadje zwaar lastig gevallen door de draken en door een aantal spinnen. Het mannetje stak de gouden drakenschoen in de lucht, en de spinnen vielen in slaap, maar de draken begonnen hard te brullen : 'Oh daar heb je die vervelende Roodvinger weer met de schoenmaker.' En ze begonnen weer flink met vuur te spuiten. 'Het is tijd dat er hier schoenenwinkels komen,' zei het mannetje. Dat vond Roodvinger wel een goed idee, dan zouden de draken daar niet meer kunnen komen, en in slaap vallen als ze te dichtbij zouden komen. En zo liet koning Moldevan door heel Kabbernal schoenenwinkels openen, met hele diepe kelders. In het midden van de stad kwam een Bank van de Rode Zwaan, en al gauw werd er hier ook alleen nog maar betaald met de filmmunten. Roodvinger was erg tevreden, en de twee centaurs hadden het goed na hun zin. Roodvinger hoopte nu eindelijk eens af te zijn van die vervelende draken. Elke schoenwinkel in Kabbernal had nu wel een paar slapende draken in de keldergrotten, maar hoeveel draken zouden er nog overgebleven zijn ? Roodvinger vond het maar spannend. Er was een nieuwe munt uitgekomen met het hoofd van koning Moldevan als bakker erop. Op de achterkant was er een filmpje over draken. Op de Bank van de Rode Zwaan werd er een ziekenhuis geopend. Koning Moldevan wilde eens per week de bakker en kok van het ziekenhuis zijn. Het werd een prachtig flatgebouw, met helemaal bovenaan een bioscoop. Het mannetje van de drakenschoenen vond het prachtig en klapte in zijn handjes van plezier. Er werd een standbeeld van het mannetje en van Roodvinger gemaakt, omdat ze allemaal zo blij waren. Het standbeeld van het mannetje werd van rood goud gemaakt, en het standbeeld van Roodvinger ook. Ze kwamen te staan voor de ingang van de Bank van de Rode Zwaan.

Hoofdstuk 4. De Zilveren Draak

Toen alles eindelijk achter de rug was en het meisje ook weer terug was bij haar vader en moeder, zaten Roodvinger en Roodlaarsje samen op de bank. Ook het mannetje was weer vertrokken, en het leek alsof het hele drakenverhaal nu eindelijk achter de rug was. Roodvinger vertelde vol trots over de nieuwe schoenwinkels in Kabbernal en de draken die daar onder sliepen. 'Roodvinger, zouden ze mooie dromen hebben ?' vroeg Roodlaarsje. Maar dat wist Roodvinger natuurlijk niet. Dat zou Roodlaarsje aan Klaas Vaak moeten vragen. Roodvinger keek naar z'n eigen schoenen. Het waren zwarte schoenen met een bakkerman's munt erop. Roodvinger glimlachte. Wat was dat toch een spannend avontuur. Maar nu wisten ze natuurlijk niet hoeveel draken er nog over waren die niet sliepen. Ja, een draak die wakker is kan natuurlijk nog heel wat aanrichten. Maar ze probeerden het maar een beetje te vergeten. Ineens werd er gebeld. De belgong ging, en Roodvinger liep naar de deur met de geruite raampjes. Er stond een lange mijnheer voor de deur, en Roodvinger deed de deur open ... Floep, daar viel Roodvinger. De mijnheer had wat paars spul in Roodvingers gezicht gespoten. Na een minuutje stond Roodvinger weer op ... 'Wat was dat ?' vroeg Roodvinger verbaast ... 'Slaapgas,' zei de mijnheer, 'voor twee bakkerman's munten mag je het hebben.'

'Waar haalt u dat spul dan vandaan ?' vroeg Roodvinger. 'Uit drakenschoenen,' zei de mijnheer weer. 'En waar haalt u die drakenschoenen vandaan als ik vragen mag ?' vroeg Roodvinger weer. 'Nou, ziet u,' zei de mijnheer, 'ik ben een professor en ben diep onder de grond gegaan om deze schoenen te zoeken. Ik kan er goed slaapgas van maken, ook uitstekend voor hen die 's nachts moeilijk in slaap kunnen komen.'

'Nou, nee, mijnheer,' zei Roodvinger, 'ik heb genoeg van al die drakenverhalen. Ga een ander er maar mee pesten.' En klats, daar ging de deur dicht, en Roodvinger liep moe naar de kamer. Maar toen hij in de kamer kwam was Roodlaarsje verdwenen en wat zat daar nou op de bank ? Het was een zilverkleurige paarse draak. Roodvinger schrok zich een hoedje. 'Wij zijn van de orde van de zilveren draak,' zei de draak.

'Wij ?' vroeg Roodvinger .. Dat zijn wij helemaal niet. Wilt u snel uit deze kamer vertrekken. Vooruit, vlug.' Maar de draak stond op en begon te krijsen. Zo hard en schel dat Roodvinger er hoofdpijn van kreeg. Roodvinger herinnerde zich dat ze door het zilver ook boven de grond konden komen. Ze moesten iets met die zilveren schoen te maken hebben.

'Ja,' zei de draak, 'de zilveren draak is de maker van die schoen.' Ineens ging de telefoon. Roodvinger nam op en hoorde : 'Hallo Roodvinger, met de zilveren draak. Wij hebben de zilveren schoen weer terug en kunnen floeps boven de grond. Ook hebben we de gouden schoen in ons bezit, daarom zal heel het land binnen de kortste keren slapen ... voorgoed ... voor altijd .... ha ha ha ha.'

Oh wat schrok die Roodvinger daarvan. Hadden ze dan toch het mannetje kunnen bestelen ? En waar is het mannetje nu ? In de wolken verscheen een levensgrote gouden drakenschoen ... Roodvinger moest nu snel zijn, want anders zou hij ook slapen. Maar het was al te laat. Roodvinger keek naar buiten en zag al wat mijnheren op straat slapen. Ook kon hij in de huisjes aan de overkant mijnheren zien slapen in hun stoel. Het was al te laat, want Roodvinger werd ineens zo moe in zijn benen. En daar viel Roodvinger op de bank. Er was een enorm gelach in de lucht. Overal vlogen er zilverkleurige draken in het rond, in allerlei

kleuren. Ze waren op weg naar het paleis. Ook de koning en de koningin sliepen, en ze werden diep onder de grond opgesloten. Hier hadden ze ook het mannetje opgesloten. Iedereen sliep. De zilveren draak ging op de troon zitten en begon luid te brullen. Zilveren vuur in allerlei kleuren kwam uit z'n bek. 'Nu is het hele land onder de gouden schoen om verpletterd te worden. Dan zal ik heersen over een nieuw rijk van draken. Ha ha ha.'

Maar niet iedereen sliep. Het meisje dat de zilveren schoen een tijdje op haar kamer had gehad was wakker. Het mannetje had haar verteld dat het zilveren drakenschoentje over een tijdje toch weer bij haar terug zou komen, en dan zou ook het mannetje weer bij haar terugkomen. Ze wist dat als zij het drakenschoentje van zilver weer terughad, dan zouden de draken niet meer boven de grond kunnen komen. Dapper stapte ze op het paleis van de koning af. De zilveren draak had de zilveren drakenschoen in z'n klauw en brulde. Plotseling begon het schoentje te piepen en te trillen. Er kwamen knipperlichten vanaf en het schoentje werd zo heet dat de draak het niet meer kon vasthouden. De draak brulde het uit, omdat z'n klauwen begonnen te branden, en het schoentje viel toen op z'n poot, die ook begon te branden. Brullend schopte de draak de schoen weg. Plotseling kwamen er zilveren handjes en beentjes uit het schoentje, en kreeg het vleugeltjes. Het meisje kwam net binnen en zag ook een hoofdje uit het schoentje verschijnen. Toen begon de draak nog harder te brullen. Het schoentje vloog op het meisje af, en het meisje was zo blij en spreidde haar armpjes open. Ineens viel er licht op de draak, en brullend begon hij in de grond te smelten. Hij moest weer terug naar beneden. Ook de andere draken waren ineens verdwenen. Daar kwamen ook de koning, de koningin en het mannetje weer aanrennen. De gouden schoen was weer uit de wolken verdwenen, en was nu weer veilig bij het mannetje. Vanaf nu zou het mannetje altijd bij het meisje blijven, samen met de zilveren drakenschoen. Het mannetje zou de gouden drakenschoen goed opbergen. Later bedachten ze dat het wel een goed idee zou zijn om de gouden drakenschoen naar Klaas Vaak te brengen, die het zo nu en dan kon gebruiken als iemand niet goed kon slapen. Het meisje, het mannetje en de zilveren drakenschoen mochten voortaan in een toren van het koninklijke paleis wonen, om het land tegen boze draken te beschermen.

Hoofdstuk 5. De Bokkenmelk

Roodvinger had een boek dat 'De Bokkenmelk' heette. Die bokkenmelk stroomde uit witte besjes van een haag die 'De Hondenhaag' heette. Het ware mierzoete besjes, en men gebruikte de melk vaak voor het maken van allerlei snoepsoorten. Het was geen gewoon snoep, maar erg gevaarlijk snoep. Als je het at, dan veranderde je zelf ook in snoep. Daarom werd het ook meestal door heksen gebruikt, en niet door iemand anders. Natuurlijk aten die heksen het nooit zelf op, maar legden het snoep over hun huisjes heen, zodat wanneer er dieven zouden komen en iets ervan zouden eten, ze in snoep zouden veranderen. De heksen bedoelden het dus niet altijd kwaad. Ze waren vaak bang voor inbrekers. Wel was het soms erg jammer als lieve kindertjes of diertjes ervan aten, want dan konden ze ook in snoep veranderen. Vaak waren die heksen dus niets anders dan gewoon bange mevrouwtjes die vroeger nare dingetjes hadden meegemaakt, en nu diep in het bos woonden, dichtbij hondenhagen. Die hondenhagen hadden niet alleen zoete besjes, maar ook nare stekels. In het boek dat Roodvinger had ging het over een geit die in een ketel roerde dichtbij de hondenhaag. De geit had veel besjes geplukt en was nu bokkenmelk ervan aan het maken. Hier zou de geit dan weer snoep van kunnen maken, dat de heksen als lappen over hun huisjes konden leggen.

Roodvinger las het boek vol spanning door. Het was dus erg gevaarlijk toversnoep wat niet in de handen van lieve kindertjes en diertjes terecht mocht komen. Sommige kindjes waren zo lief, dat op de een of andere manier hun goede hartje ervoor zorgde dat ze niet in snoep omgetoverd werden, maar ze moesten dan wel vaak voor de heks zingen en werken. Twee van zulke kinderen waren Hans en Grietje. Ze hadden hartjes van goud die hen beschermden, maar Grietje moest voor zo'n heks werken, en Hans werd in een kooitje opgesloten. De heks wilde Hans vetmesten zodat ze hem kon opeten. Als de kindertjes een tijdje in het huisje van de heks hadden gewerkt, dan werden ze vaak omgetoverd in poezen en wilde katten. Dan werden ze door de heks uitgezonden om kinderen en dieren naar de hondenhaag en naar haar huisje te lokken. Vaak moesten ze dat doen door heel mooi te zingen. Roodvinger kreeg de rillingen. Wat een draak was deze heks. En er waren veel meer van zulke heksen. Zouden poezen en katten daarom zo vaak janken ? Roodvinger vroeg zich af waarom zo'n mevrouw zoiets deed. Misschien was ze wel ergens verschrikkelijk boos om. Roodvinger besloot om eens naar de heks van Hans en Grietje toe te gaan, maar ook wist hij dat dit heel gevaarlijk kon zijn. Hiervoor moest Roodvinger heel diep het bos in, zo diep als hij nog nooit was geweest. Het was al donker geworden inmiddels. Roodvinger had z'n lantaarntje meegenomen, en natuurlijk het boek over de Bokkenmelk. In de verte hoorde hij poezen en katten zingen, maar ook janken. Roodvinger kreeg de rillingen. Zij moesten natuurlijk voor de heks werken. Roodvinger wist natuurlijk dat hij geen snoep mocht nemen, maar toch was het erg gevaarlijk wat Roodvinger deed, want je wist maar nooit met zo'n heks. Roodvinger zag een uil hard wegvliegen toen hij dichterbij kwam. Ah, daar was de hondenhaag al. Nu moest Roodvinger een heel eind langs die haag lopen, want aan het eind stond het huisje van de heks van Hans en Grietje. Roodvinger hoorde het geluid van uilen in de verte, en zag wat vleermuizen vliegen. Oei, wat was het hier eng en donker. Maar gelukkig had Roodvinger nog steeds zijn lantaarntje, met het boek.

Opeens stond er een grote grijze gestalte voor Roodvinger. Het was een draak. 'Wat moet dat hier ?' zei de draak met een vrouwenstem. 'Eh, wie bent u ?' vroeg Roodvinger. 'Ik ben de heks van Hans en Grietje, dommeling,' snauwde de draak. 'Zeg,' vroeg Roodvinger weer, 'waarom doet u eigenlijk zulke gemene dingen met kinderen en dieren ?'

'Dat gaat je niks aan,' schaterde de draak. En plotseling begon de draak in de heks te veranderen. Ze had lange vieze haren met slijm erdoorheen en een hoge hoed. Roodvinger wilde haar een hand geven, maar de heks trok snel haar hand weg. 'Niks geen handjesschudderij, ik weet wel waarvoor je komt. Voor de Bokkenmelk, maar die krijg je niet,' sprak de heks.

Ja, Roodvinger zou graag willen dat de bokkenmelk ergens anders voor werd gebruikt. Misschien dat het boek er nog wat over te zeggen had. En Roodvinger las verder, want hij wilde nu wel erg graag weten wat hij moest doen. Maar daar kreeg Roodvinger zo'n harde klap op z'n hoofd, dat hij omviel en bewusteloos lag. De heks sleepte hem mee naar haar huisje en gooide het boek in de oven. 'Zo, niks geen geheime boekjes meer. Ik ben de baas van de bokkenmelk, en ik zal Roodvinger eens in de kooi van Hans stoppen.' En daar werd die arme Roodvinger in de kooi van Hans geduwd. Het was een gouden kooi, en niet lang daarna werd Roodvinger wakker. De heks stond schaterlachend voor de kooi. 'Ha ha, het boek is verbrand, en ik ga jou eens even vetmesten, dun mannetje. Ik ga jou verschrikkelijk dik maken zodat je lekker op mijn bordje terecht komt en ik daar goed van kan eten. Misschien dat je wel zo dik wordt dat ik ook wat andere heksen kan uitnodigen voor de maaltijd. Zoals je weet is Hans ontsnapt, en hebben ze mij in de oven geduwd, maar ik heb nu een betere vangst

: Roodvinger, de detective van de koning, ha ha ha ha. Luister goed naar me : Hier kom je nooit meer uit. Ha ha ha ha.'

'Zeg heks,' zei Roodvinger, 'waarom ben je hier allemaal zo blij om ? Heb je misschien iets naars meegemaakt in het land ?' Toen schrok de heks. 'Hoe weet je dat,' vroeg ze verschrikt. 'Nou,' zei Roodvinger, 'omdat u zo boos bent, dacht ik : Er moet wel iets verschrikkelijks met u gebeurd zijn, waar u zo boos over bent dat u er niet over wilt praten.' En toen barste de heks in snikken uit. 'Ja, Roodvinger, je hebt gelijk,' huilde ze. 'Ze hebben me vroeger zo vaak gepest dat ik zo'n lange neus heb, zo vaak, dat ik uit het land weg ben gegaan en hier diep in het bos ben gaan wonen.'

'Maar, mevrouw,' zei Roodvinger, 'u heeft juist een prachtige neus, zo mooi als die van Pinocchio, en daarmee kunt u vast en zeker het bos en de bloemen goed ruiken. Als u mij vertelt wie u zo geplaagd hebben vroeger, dan zal ik er bij de koning voor zorgen dat ze voor straf maar eens een tijdje in het bos moeten wonen in uw huisje, en dan kunt u weer terug naar het land.'

'Nee,' huilde de mevrouw, 'ik wil nooit meer terug naar het land. Ik wil bij de bomen en de bloemen blijven. Die doen me tenminste geen kwaad.' En toen kwamen er ineens een paar draken binnen. Het waren vriendinnen van de mevrouw. Toen ze Roodvinger in de kooi zagen begonnen ze te lachen. 'Zo, heb je een lekker hapje voor ons meegebracht ?' vroegen ze. Maar de mevrouw nam het voor Roodvinger op. 'Nee, hij wilde even in de kooi van Hans zitten, maar hij komt alleen maar om te helpen,' zei ze.

'Oh,' zeiden de draken sip, 'we hadden anders wel zin in een hapje.' En toen begon Roodvinger ook aan de draken het verhaal te vertellen, en het bleek dat zij ook gewoon mevrouwen waren die vroeger ergens om gepest werden. Roodvinger beloofde de mevrouwen dat hij met de koning erover zou praten dat het nog strenger verboden moest worden dat iemand gepest wordt, en dat wie het toch deed, een tijd in het diepe bos moest wonen. Dat vonden de mevrouwen wel een goed idee. Er woonden een heleboel van die mevrouwen in dit diepe bos, en al snel hadden ze allemaal het nieuws gehoord. Een paar wilden wel weer mee naar het land, maar de meesten wilden toch liever in het bos blijven wonen.

Achter de bokkenhaag stond ergens een grote ketel met een geit waar de bokkenmelk van de bessen gemaakt werd. De mevrouwen zeiden dat als Roodvinger het geheim van de Bokkenmelk wilde weten, waar het voor gebruikt moet worden, dan moest Roodvinger in die ketel duiken. Het was namelijk een geheime poort. Roodvinger moest er natuurlijk voor zorgen dat hij het niet zou drinken. Hij mocht er alleen in zwemmen. Na een eindje lopen kwam Roodvinger bij de bokkenketel aan. Er stond een grote geit bij die in de ketel stond te roeren. 'Wat moet je ?' vroeg de geit. 'Ik zou graag het geheim van de bokkenketel willen kennen,' vroeg Roodvinger. 'Die ketel is alleen voor heksen,' zei de geit weer. Maar Roodvinger duwde de geit opzij en dook in de ketel. Heks of geen heks, Roodvinger wist nu dat het maar net de manier is waarop je er tegenaan kijkt. Het kan zoveel betekenen. Roodvinger hield z'n lippen stijf op elkaar en zwom door de geheime tunnel. Het was gelukkig geen lange tunnel en Roodvinger zag al helder licht een eindje verderop. Roodvinger kwam in een bron terecht, met aan weerszijden elfjes en feetjes. 'Hoera,' riepen ze, 'je hebt het geheim van de bokkenmelk gevonden.' En ze gaven Roodvinger een gouden boek. Roodvinger deed het boek open en er kwam toverstof vanaf. De plaatjes bewogen, en Roodvinger voelde hoe hij in het boek werd getrokken. Er kwam een hand uit die hem wenkte. Roodvinger schrok wel even, want ineens was hijzelf in een van de plaatjes terecht

gekomen. Het was een plaatje met een bootje op zee. De zee was vermengd met melk ... misschien was dat wel de bokkenmelk. In de boot lag ook een mannetje te slapen met een rond buikje. Hij had een klein krantje op z'n buikje liggen en z'n hoedje lag een beetje over zijn gezicht. Op de grond lagen een paar bakkerman's munten. Roodvinger raapte de muntjes op en begon de filmpjes te bekijken op de achterkant. het bootje ging sneller en sneller, totdat ze bij een waterval naar beneden kwamen. Toen schrok het mannetje wakker. 'Vlug grijp die boomstam boven je,' riep het mannetje. Gelukkig, dat was net op tijd. Roodvinger zag het bootje naar beneden storten. 'Je bent nu in het boek,' zei het mannetje, 'een gouden boek van bokkenmelk. En als je nu praat dan komen er lettertjes uit je mond. En toen kwamen er allemaal lettertjes uit Roodvingers mondje. 'Jaaaa,' hoorde Roodvinger roepen. Daar waren weer elfjes en feetjes. Ze waren zo blij dat Roodvinger door de bokkenmelk sprak. Ook uit hun mondjes kwamen nu allemaal lettertjes. De lettertjes hadden zoveel lichtjes en werden steeds langer en langer, of heel groot. En toen begonnen ze langzaam in elfjes en feetjes te veranderen. Het waren levende letters. Wat was dat prachtig. Sommige letters werden hele lange slingers. De bokkenmelk was dus niet om te drinken, maar om uit te spreken, zodat elfjes en feetjes zich konden verspreiden. Sommige lettertjes waren als slangetjes, en weer andere lettertjes waren als bloemetjes. Het was net prachtig vuurwerk in de lucht.

Het mannetje zei dat het hele land nu in het gouden boek was en dat heel het land nu door de bokkenmelk zou spreken. Daar was Roodvinger erg blij mee. De bokkenmelk moest goed gebruikt worden.

Hoofdstuk 6. De Kasteelschool

Op een dag was Roodvinger samen met een vriend in de zee. Ze waren daar aan het zwemmen. Ze vonden daar een vreemde zeester. Blauwvinger, zo heette die vriend, raapte de zeester op, en deze begon direct licht te geven. 'Wat prachtig,' zei Blauwvinger, en legde de zeester weer terug. In de verte zagen ze Motlib, één van de centaurs, zwemmen. 'Hallo, Motlib,' riep Roodvinger. En daar kwam Motlib aanzwemmen. Ze waren erg blij elkaar weer eens te zien. Motlib keek Roodvinger aan en zei : 'Zo, Roodvinger, heb je de laatste tijd nog veel draken moeten bevechten ?' Roodvinger begon te lachen, en daar zwom de zeester weer. 'Hallo,' sprak de zeester. 'Kom, ik wil jullie wat laten zien.' Roodvinger en Blauwvinger sprongen op de rug van Motlib en deze zwom achter de zeester aan. Het was een lange reis. In de verte zagen ze een eiland. Dit eiland kenden ze nog niet. Na lang zwemmen waren ze eindelijk bij het strandje van het eiland aangekomen. Er zat een man daar met gescheurde kleren en hij had een woeste baard. 'Halt,' sprak hij. 'Wat komen jullie hier doen ?' 'Ach, Meharates,' zei de zeester, 'dit zijn vrienden van me, en ik wilde hen even wat laten zien.' Ze moesten eerst een stukje over het strand en wat rotsen lopen, en na een tijdje kwamen ze aan bij een grot. Er hing wat vreemd spul voor de grot wat wel een beetje op snoep leek. Roodvinger likte eraan, maar de zeester riep direct : 'Niet doen, dat is vergif, daar ga je van slapen.' En daar viel Roodvinger in een diepe slaap. 'Nou, die laten we hier wel even liggen, dan kunnen wij even de grot in zolang,' zei de zeester. 'Hoelang blijft hij slapen,' vroeg Motlib. Maar dat kon wel een tijd duren, volgens de zeester, misschien wel dagen. In de grot aangekomen zagen ze duistere schaduwen, en heel in de verte zagen ze grote slijmerige webben hangen en liggen. Dit moest wel van een erg grote spin zijn. En ja hoor, na een tijdje lopen zagen ze een grote spin zitten, die wel tien keer zo groot was als henzelf. Daar schrokken ze wel even van. 'Goedendag,' zei de spin, 'ik denk niet dat jullie weten wie ik ben. Ik ben de baas van deze grot, en dit is een grot met grote schatten. Kom maar mee.' En daar

liepen ze de grote spin achterna, nog dieper de grot in. Ze moesten door allerlei duistere tunnels, en na een tijdje kwamen ze in een open ruimte. Er lagen hier een heleboel apparaten. Die apparaten leken op vissen. De spin zei dat het een soort radio's waren. Niet voor in je huis, maar voor in je lichaam. Daar schrok Blauwvinger wel even van. 'Nou, wel handig hoor,' zei de spin, terwijl Motlib en de zeester een beetje grinnikten. 'Er zitten ook telefoonstukken bij, zodat je altijd met elkaar kunt praten.' En daar ineens kwam Roodvinger aanstrompelen. Hij was eindelijk wakker geworden. En wat waren al die vreemde apparaten ? Roodvinger vond het wel interessant. Hij had altijd al graag een robot willen zijn. Hij schraapte wat glibberige apparaten bij elkaar en merkte dat het een soort kleding was. Hij kon zijn armen erdoorsteken, zijn benen, en zijn hoofd. Het was een soort ruimtepak. 'Zo,' zei de spin. 'Nu kun je met alle dieren praten.' Natuurlijk kon Roodvinger al met veel dieren praten, maar nu kon hij met alle dieren praten, en ook op afstand, als door een telefoon. En ook Blauwvinger en Motlib begonnen de glibberige kleren aan te trekken. Na een tijdje kwam Meharates binnenstormen. 'Wat zijn jullie toch allemaal aan het doen ? Zeg, blijf daar eens van af ?' schreeuwde hij. Maar de spin werd een beetje boos en zei : 'Meharates, wees blij dat iemand jouw uitvindingen wil gebruiken.' Dat was waar. 'Nou,' zei Meharates, 'dan mogen jullie mijn kasteel ook wel zien.' En na een tijdje lopen kwamen ze aan bij het kasteel van Meharates. Het kasteel was omhuld met grote lichtgevende witte spinnen, en ook binnen waren er veel spinnen. Roodvinger en de anderen keken hun ogen uit. Meharates glimlachte, en trok de brug op, terwijl ze naar binnen liepen. Het kasteel was vol met allerlei grote zalen. Er hingen hier grote zwaarden die wel van reuzen leken te zijn. Maar Meharates zei dat dit de zwaarden van spinnen waren. Hele grote spinnen.

Het kasteel rook naar bloemen, en de geur kwam duidelijk van boven af. Er hingen hele grote bloemen langs de muren van de trappenhallen, en veel van die bloemen bewogen en draaiden. Door de grote lange ramen kon Roodvinger de hogere bruggen van het kasteel zien. En onder die bruggen gleden enorme slangen. Roodvinger had nog nooit zoiets gezien, en keek zijn ogen uit. Maar waar waren Motlib en Blauwvinger gebleven ? 'Loop maar door,' zei Meharates. Hoe hoger ze kwamen hoe meer de trappen op bloemen begonnen te lijken, en het was alsof ze nu geheel in een bloem liepen. Roodvinger werd een beetje duizelig, en hij kon de zeester en de grote spin ook niet meer zien. 'Zo,' zei Meharates, 'we zijn er bijna.' 'Waar zijn we bijna,' vroeg Roodvinger. 'Aan de top van het kasteel,' zei Meharates. Plotseling waren ze op een heel groot balkon aangekomen, en Roodvinger zag ook andere kastelen in de verte, waar al die bruggen naartoe leiden. Voor hen stond een treintje, en Meharates duwde hem zachtjes naar binnen en ging zelf ook mee. Daar waren Motlib en de anderen weer. 'Zo,' zei Meharates, 'nu kunnen we die andere kastelen eens gaan bezoeken.' En daar begon het treintje te rijden. 'Wat zijn dat eigenlijk voor kastelen ?' vroeg Blauwvinger. 'Scholen,' zei Meharates. Roodvinger begon zich ineens erg dom te voelen. Ja, er zou zoveel zijn wat ze nog moesten leren, als hij dit hier allemaal zo zag. Het was wonderlijk. Ze waren bij een ander groot wit kasteel aangekomen. Er stond een man met een hoge hoed bij de poort. 'Welkom, nieuwe studenten,' zei hij. 'Maar ik wil helemaal niet studeren,' zei Blauwvinger. 'Ik wil weer naar huis.' Maar Meharates werd heel erg kwaad : 'Zeg, deze lessen heb je nodig, anders blijf je een domme vinger.' Nou ja, misschien had hij wel gelijk, dacht Roodvinger bij zichzelf. Misschien hadden Blauwvinger en hij deze lessen wel hard nodig. 'Wat moeten we leren ?' vroeg Motlib. 'Dat zul je nog wel zien,' zei de man met de hoge hoed. 'Kom maar mee.' En weer liepen ze op een trap in een hal tussen grote bloemen. Ineens drukte de man op een knopje ergens op de trap, en een grote bloem kwam tevoorschijn om hen naar binnen te slokken. Ineens waren ze allemaal binnenin de grote bloem. Het was als een zaal. Ze gingen op zachte banken zitten, en de man met de hoge hoed op liep naar voren. Uit zijn jasje gleed een staart, die ook wel een beetje op een slang leek. Toen de man zich weer omdraaide kwam

er een gespleten tongetje uit zijn mond, en zijn gezicht leek op een slang of een kikker. Al gauw begon de man te praten, maar hij praatte zo snel dat ze hem niet konden volgen. 'Dat moet,' zei Meharates, 'hij moet het eerst snel vertellen, en daarna langzaam, zodat je het kunt verstaan.' Wat een grappige manier van lesgeven, dacht Roodvinger. Toen het snelle gepraat afgelopen was had de man een hele hoge stem, maar nu begon hij heel rustig te praten, terwijl zijn gezicht leek op dat van een eend met een snavel. 'Kwaak, kwaak, kwaak,' zei hij. Maar dat verstonden ze natuurlijk niet. Meharates zei dat ze eerst op de eendenknop van hun ruimtepak moesten drukken. Dat was een oranje glibberige knop onder hun oksels. En ineens konden ze het verstaan. En als ze het na een tijdje weer niet konden verstaan, moesten ze er weer op drukken. Van achter de man kwam er ineens een oranje slang tevoorschijn, en begon om de man heen te kronkelen. 'Hallo, Didas,' zei de man, 'neem het maar van me over.' En toen ging de man in één van de zachte banken zitten. En Didas begon heel traag te praten, zo traag dat niemand het kon verstaan, en iedereen werd zo moe. 'Ja, dat moet,' gaapte Meharates, 'hij moet het eerst langzaam vertellen, en dan gewoon normaal.' En na een tijdje viel iedereen in slaap. Toen de slang klaar was met het langzame en weer normaal begon te praten werd iedereen wakker, en ging de les door. Maar het was slangentaal, en Roodvinger kon het niet verstaan. 'Druk op de groene knop onder je borstzakje,' fluisterde Meharates. En toen kon Roodvinger alles verstaan. Ineens begon de vloer heel glibberig te worden als water, en er kwam een haai doorheenzwemmen. Direkt gleed hij op de slang af en nam het van hem over, terwijl de slang in één van de zachte banken gleed. 'Goedendag,' zei de haai. 'welkom op deze mooie dag. Goed is het op school te zijn, want wij moeten nog zoveel leren. Nu, wat ga ik jullie leren ? Ik ga jullie leren jullie zelf te feliciteren, want jullie zijn allemaal weer een dagje ouder geworden. Dat mogen we wel vieren.' En er kwamen wat visjes omhoog zwemmen door de glibberige vloer, en zij droegen dienblaadjes met glaasjes. 'Neem allemaal maar een glaasje,' zei de haai. En iedereen begon direkt te drinken. Huh wat vreemd. Roodvinger voelde zichzelf ineens als de meester. En daar liep hij met grote passen naar voren, terwijl de haai in één van de zachte banken gleed. 'Zo, ziezo,' zei Roodvinger, 'nu is het mijn beurt om jullie les te geven. Ik voel me ineens als de meester, dus daar gaat ie dan : ik ga jullie leren jezelf te feliciteren, omdat je er weer wat bij hebt geleerd.' Hij voelde zich wel een hele rare meester, maar dat kan natuurlijk gebeuren in zo'n wonderbaarlijk kasteel. En na een tijdje kwam Blauwvinger naar voren. Hij had ook niet veel te vertellen, maar het werd een dolle boel. En nadat Blauwvinger de meester was, werd Motlib de meester. De zeester had dolle pret, en ze waren allemaal heel blij dat de zeester hen naar dit eiland had gebracht. Maar natuurlijk moesten ze ook weer naar huis.

De zeester bracht hen weer terug terwijl Roodvinger en Blauwvinger weer op de rug van Motlib zaten. Roodlaarsje was zo blij hen weer terug te zien. Het was een mooi avontuur geweest. Meharates had hen een knopje op het ruimtepak aangewezen, waardoor het pak op sommige delen nog glibberiger zou worden, zodat het een soort televisie zou worden, waardoor ze de lessen op de kasteelschool gewoon konden volgen. En hij had hen ook zo'n pak voor Roodlaarsje meegegeven. Wat was Roodlaarsje daar blij mee, zeg.

Hoofdstuk 7. Het TV-Dier

De volgende dag werd er een pakje bezorgd bij Roodvinger's huisje. Het was nogal een groot pakje, en voorzichtig maakte Roodvinger het open. Het was van Meharates. Er zat een soort telefoon in het pakje met een gouden hoorn en gouden strepen op het apparaat. Meharates had erbij geschreven dat het een Egyptische telefoon was, een telefoon-recorder. Daarmee zou je

elk gesprek wat je hebt op een bandje kunnen opnemen, om het later nog eens af te spelen. Dat was wel aardig van die Meharates, zeg. En de telefoon kreeg een mooi plaatsje in het huisje. Roodvinger begon direkt te bellen, en tijdens de gesprekken begonnen de gouden streepjes licht te geven en te knipperen. Op de achterkant van het apparaat zaten wat knopjes die Roodvinger nog niet had uitgeprobeerd. Met één knopje kon je het licht zachter zetten, want de telefoonrecorder was bijna een lamp. Met een ander knopje begon zachte muziek te spelen, maar toen Roodvinger op het derde knopje drukte gebeurde er iets vreemds. De vloer begon op te schuiven, heel langzaam, met een laag grommend geluid, totdat er een gat was ontstaan. Recht keek Roodvinger in een soort tunnel. Daar keek Roodvinger wel even van op. Roodlaarsje kwam er ook bij staan, en ze wist niet wat ze moest zeggen. Voorzichtig stapten ze beiden in de tunnel, en stapje voor stapje liepen ze verder naar beneden. De tunnel leidde hen diep onder de grond, en opeens zagen ze een wit treintje staan, een beetje zoals bij de kastelen van Meharates, maar dan veel kleiner. Zou hij dat hier allemaal gebouwd hebben ?

Roodvinger en Roodlaarsje gingen in het treintje zitten, dat langzaam begon te rijden. 'Waar gaan we naartoe ?' riep Roodvinger. Maar niemand antwoordde. Het treintje ging steeds sneller, en Roodvinger hield Roodlaarsje goed vast. Ineens kwam er van achter een bankje in de trein een spinnetje tevoorschijn. 'We gaan naar Egypte,' zei het spinnetje. 'Waarom dat dan ?' vroeg Roodvinger. 'Dat zul je nog wel zien,' zei het spinnetje. 'Nee, ik wil het nu weten,' zei Roodvinger. Maar het spinnetje kroop weer weg. 'Spinnetje, waar ben je ?' vroeg Roodvinger. Maar het spinnetje was helemaal verdwenen. 'Nu ja, laten we maar afwachten,' zei Roodvinger. Ineens hoorden ze een gebons op het dak van het treintje, en daar kwam Meharates naar binnen. Hij was van boven ergens op de trein gesprongen. Daar keek Roodvinger wel even van op. Roodlaarsje sliep. Ze waren blij elkaar weer te zien. 'Zeg, Meharates, waarom gaan we naar Egypte ?' vroeg Roodvinger. 'Ik heb weer een verrassing voor je, Roodvinger,' zei Meharates. Roodvinger glimlachte. Na een tijdje kwamen ze aan in Egypte. Snel duwde Meharates nog een apparaat in Roodvinger's handjes. Het leek een beetje op de Egyptische telefoon, maar had een soort koperen gezicht. Meharates zei dat Roodvinger het over de telefoon kon schuiven, en dat het een radio-recorder was. Meharates zei dat Roodvinger daardoor een heleboel mensen tegelijk kon opbellen, maar nog veel meer. Er stond een spinnetje voor hen met draaiende ogen. Ze waren diep onder een piramide, in een grote grot. Die grot had een heleboel gangen, en Meharates nam Roodvinger aan de arm mee. Roodlaarsje lieten ze in het treintje zitten, en het spinnetje zou wel op haar passen. Roodlaarsje was in een diepe slaap. Waar zou ze allemaal over dromen ?

Na een tijdje lopen kwamen ze in een grot met een heleboel apparaten. Roodvinger keek zijn ogen uit, en Meharates begon te wijzen en te praten. Het ging allemaal erg snel, en Roodvinger kon het allemaal niet onthouden. Meharates wist veel van apparaten af, en hij vertelde dat die apparaten nodig waren. Maar voor wat ? Ineens zag Roodvinger een geurtelefoon staan. Er zat een soort rond doosje in dat ronddraaide en bloemengeuren verspreidde en een heleboel andere geuren, meestal van het bos. Er stonden ook wat oude televisies. Deze televisies waren zo oud, dat er vogels inwoonden. Aan het einde van de apparatenhal was een opening, en al snel kwamen ze in de buitenlucht, tussen de piramiden. Eerst zouden ze op zoek gaan naar een hotel om even wat te rusten. 'Maar Roodlaarsje dan ?' vroeg Roodvinger. 'Die zal het spinnetje wel meebrengen zo,' zei Meharates. En ja hoor, daar kwamen ze al aan. Roodlaarsje was nog een beetje moe, maar ze konden nu in een hotel wat rusten of slapen. Maar een heleboel hotels waren al vol, en ze begonnen steeds vermoeider te raken. De zon scheen zo fel. Toen besloten ze in een piramide te gaan, in een hoekje, om even wat te rusten. De volgende morgen waren ze vroeg wakker. Wat hadden ze lang geslapen, zeg. Nog steeds wist Roodvinger nog niet helemaal waarom ze hier waren, en weer vroeg hij :

'Meharates, waarom zijn we hier eigenlijk ?' Ineens schrokken ze van een krijsend geluid. Meharates rende naar het midden van de piramide, en zag een enorm wezen met een driehoek als hoofd. Het leek wel een draak, of een enorme robot. 'De tv gaat aan !' riep Meharates. 'Wat ?' riep Roodvinger. 'De tv,' riep Meharates weer. En er kwamen bliksemschichten uit de grote driehoek. 'Het is een tv-dier, een levende televisie, en hij is pas uit het ei gekomen,' riep Meharates. Ineens zagen ze grote ogen verschijnen in de driehoek, en zagen ze allerlei dingen verschijnen in de driehoek, alsof ze naar de televisie keken. Maar datgene wat ze in de driehoek zagen verschijnen, kon er ook uitkomen. Dat had Roodvinger nog nooit meegemaakt. De dieren die ze op het grote scherm zagen kwamen er gewoon uitlopen of uitvliegen, en als ze een zee zagen, dan spetterde het water uit de tv. Maar het mooiste van alles was dat Meharates zei dat ze ook in de tv konden klimmen. En dan waren ze in de wereld van de televisie. 'Kom mee,' zei Meharates, en begon op het grote dier te klimmen. Maar ineens kwam er vuur uit de driehoek, en het dier begon wild te bewegen. En daar vloog Meharates. Roodvinger en Roodlaarsje konden hem gelukkig net opvangen. 'Is dit niet allemaal erg gevaarlijk ?' vroeg Roodvinger. 'Ach, welnee, het is maar televisie,' zei Meharates, 'en na een tijdje dan is het dier uitgegroeid tot een soort boom of struik. Dat gebeurt altijd als zulke dieren groter worden. En daar rende Meharates weer op het dier af, terwijl het dier als een olifant begon te toeteren. Rookwolken kwamen er uit de driehoek, maar na een tijdje werd het dier steeds rustiger. Wat een vreemde televisie. Roodvinger vond het erg spannend en klom Meharates achterna. Meharates had een klein apparaatje uit z'n zak gehaald waarmee hij de televisie-zenders kon wisselen. Hij gaf er ook ééntje aan Roodvinger. 'Als het nu gevaarlijk wordt, dan moet je gewoon op een andere zender klikken,' zei Meharates tegen Roodvinger. Roodlaarsje zou gewoon in de piramide blijven om te kijken.

Er was een piratenfilm op de televisie. Toen Roodvinger en Meharates aan de top waren gekomen klommen ze naarbinnen in de driehoek en kwamen op een piratenschip terecht. De zee was erg woest, en ze zagen wat piraten bezig het dek te schrobben. Ineens stond de kapitein voor hen, die ook een hoofd als een driehoek had. 'Goedemorgen,' zei de kapitein. 'Wat een mooi weer, hè, en jullie dachten zeker : Kom we gaan eens lekker een dag varen op een piratenschip. Daar komt niets van in, verstekelingen. Dat wordt terugzwemmen.' 'Maar waar naartoe ?' vroeg Roodvinger. 'Wat kan mij dat schelen ?' riep de kapitein nors. 'Al zwem je naar de haaien.' Maar toen werd Meharates wel even boos. 'Zeg, lomperik, jij bent niet de enige van de televisie, wij zijn het ook,' riep Meharates. Toen pakte de kapitein een stok en sloeg daarmee Meharates op zijn arm. Maar Roodvinger zag dat er wat knopjes zaten aan de achterkant van de driehoek, het hoofd van de kapitein, en heel stilletjes sloop hij er naartoe en klikte het uit, en zoeffff, ineens was het gezicht verdwenen en keken ze gewoon tegen een driehoek aan. 'Goed gedaan, Roodvinger,' zei Meharates. Maar toen kwamen ook de andere piraten op hen af, en Meharates en Roodvinger moesten gewoon telkens de knopjes indrukken om hen uit te zetten. 'Allemaal apparaten,' zei Meharates. Dat was wel een vreemd piratenschip. 'Die kapitein kunnen we goed gebruiken, het is een smaaktelevisie. Als we die driehoek op de grote driehoek zetten, dan hoeven we nooit meer naar de winkel, maar dan komt ons voedsel binnen via de televisie, en er zitten een heleboel zenders op.' Meharates greep de kapitein goed vast en met het kleine apparaatje uit z'n zak zette hij de grote televisie uit. Floep, daar stapten ze uit de televisie, en Meharates zette direkt de driehoeks-kapitein op de grote driehoek waar ze uit waren gestapt. 'Nu zul je wat beleven,' zei Meharates. Snel klommen ze naar beneden naar Roodlaarsje toe. En weer drukte Meharates op het apparaatje en de grote televisie ging weer aan. Ditmaal verschenen er allerlei appels en bananen, en met een ander knopje begonnen ze allemaal naar beneden te rollen.

Meharates zei dat zolang het dier nog goed kon lopen ze moesten zorgen dat het met hen mee zou gaan, zodat het dier in het bos vlak naast Roodvingers huisje kon wonen. En zo gebeurde het. Met z'n drieen klommen ze op het tv-dier, en zo begon de lange reis terug.

Hoofdstuk 8. De Roze Toverspiegel

Op een dag waren Roodvinger en Blauwvinger weer eens aan het zwemmen in de zee. Roodvinger wilde weleens een echte haai zien, en ze besloten wat verder de zee in te zwemmen. Ineens zagen ze wat blauws onder hun verschijnen. Het was een haai, een echte haai. De haai zei : 'Zeg, zal ik jullie eens meenemen naar onderen ? Dan moet je wel diep je adem inhouden, want het is nog wel een stukje zwemmen.' Ze hielden de haai goed vast, en al snel kwamen ze aan in een grot diep in de zee. De haai gaf hen wat schuimpjes en toen ze die schuimpjes in hun mond staken konden ze gewoon ademen. Er waren hier een heleboel deuren, en op al die deuren stonden rondjes getekend, met rondjes erin. Ze hadden verschillende kleuren. De haai zei dat hier geluid uitkwam. Floep, daar ging een deurtje open. Ineens ging er een sirene aan. 'Ach dat is maar een walvis,' zei de haai. En daar zagen ze een hele grote walvis voorbij gaan. Toen ze door het deurtje gingen kwamen ze in een grot terecht met een heleboel apparaten. 'Weer apparaten,' zei Roodvinger. Er lagen ook wat oude tv's waar kleine visjes in woonden. Ook zagen ze een oude schoen liggen. 'Afblijven,' zei de haai. En weer zwommen ze verder door een deur met rondjes. Telkens als er een sirene ging kwam er een grote vis langs. 'Ja, het verkeer wordt hier goed geregeld,' zei de haai. Ergens op de zeebodem lag een soort grammofoon, met een bloem erop die ronddraaide, terwijl er hele zachte muziek uitkwam. Verderop waren de bloemen wat groter, en waren ze als grote ronddraaimolens. 'Ga er maar inzitten,' zei de haai. De bloem had hoge blaadjes en daarbinnen waren zachte banken waarop ze konden zitten. Direkt begon de bloem te draaien en vooruit te bewegen. Zo konden ze de zee goed bekijken. Aan het einde van de rit kwamen ze binnen in een haaienkasteel. Hier stopte de bloem, en konden ze uitstappen. Ze waren inmiddels al binnenin het kasteel, en er waren hier veel haaien. Weer gingen er sirenes af en grote vissen kwamen naarbinnen. Ze gingen allemaal door een grote deur in het kasteel en toen ging de deur achter hen dicht. 'Wat gaan ze daar doen ?' vroeg Roodvinger. 'Vergaderen,' zei de haai. 'Waar vergaderen ze dan over ?' vroeg Roodvinger weer. Maar de haai gaf geen antwoord. 'Kom mee,' zij hij. Ze moesten een trap op en kwamen op een balkon terecht. Nu konden ze alles goed zien. Er zaten hier allerlei enorme vissen rondom een grote tafel. Maar ze spraken in een taal die Roodvinger en Blauwvinger niet konden verstaan. Het was een vreemde vissentaal. Ineens ging er een luik in het plafond open en er daalde iets naar beneden tot de grote tafel. Het was een grote bloem, en binnenin was water. Toen begonnen er allerlei beelden te verschijnen in de bloem. Het was een soort televisie. 'Weer een televisie,' zei Roodvinger. En ineens kwam er een prinses tevoorschijn uit de bloem, en zij gaf zacht licht. Uit haar mond kwamen zachte bellen en bloemen voort, en ineens richtte de prinses zich tot Roodvinger en Blauwvinger op het balkon. 'Ik ben de prinses der vissen,' zei ze zachtjes. 'Wie zijn jullie ?' Roodvingerboog zijn hoofdje en zei : 'D..dag, prinses, ik ben Roodvinger.' En ook Blauwvinger boog zijn hoofdje en zei : 'E...en ik b..ben Blauwvinger, prinses.' 'Welkom,' zei de prinses. En toen zakte de prinses weer terug in de bloem. Daarna kwamen er nog allerlei andere bezoekers vanuit de bloem tot de vissen, en ze hadden even wat korte gesprekken. Ze zagen de meest wonderbaarlijke figuren. De haai zei dat het een droomtelefoon was, waarmee ze elkaar konden bezoeken. Roodvinger vertelde over de Egyptische telefoon die hij van Meharates had gekregen. Toen zwom de haai naar de droomtelefoon toe, haalde er een klein blaadje vanaf, wat direkt weer begon te groeien aan de telefoon, en nam het blaadje mee naar

Roodvinger. 'Alsjeblieft,' zei de haai, 'als je dit blaadje onder jouw telefoon legt, dan groeit het ook uit tot een droomtelefoon.' Dat leek Roodvinger wel spannend. Na een tijdje ging de bloem weer weg door het luik in het plafond, en toen ging er een muur open achter de tafel, en een vreemd ei met hazenoren kwam naar voren lopen. Hij deed een luikje open in zijn buik, en er waren allerlei kleine filmpjes te zien. De vissen kozen een filmpje uit wat ze wilden bekijken. En dit filmpje werd heel groot. Ze konden alles uit het filmpje pakken wat ze maar wilden, alsof ze op een eenvoudige manier boodschappen deden. Aan het einde van het filmpje ging het ei met de hazenoren weer weg, terwijl het een mandje droeg. 'Wat zit er in dat mandje ?' vroeg Roodvinger aan de haai. Maar de haai wilde het niet zeggen. 'Ach toe nou,' zei Roodvinger, 'ik wil het zo graag weten.' Toen draaide de haai zich naar Roodvinger toe en zei : 'In die mand zitten kleine visjes, de kinderen van de grote vissen, en die kinderen zijn erg verdrietig. Daarom mogen ze voor een tijdje met het hazenei mee naar zijn filmhuisje.' 'Hoe komt het dan dat die visjes zo verdrietig zijn ?' vroeg Roodvinger. En weer zei de haai een tijdje niets. Maar na lang aandringen begon de haai te vertellen : 'Al die vissen zijn verdrietig, wij zijn allemaal verdrietig. Die prinses die je toenet zag, dat is onze prinses en die mag maar eens in het jaar verschijnen door de droomtelefoon. Ze wordt opgesloten gehouden door de zwarte draak die onder de zeebodem woont.' Daar schrokken Roodvinger en Blauwvinger wel even van. Waarom zou die draak zo'n lieve prinses zo diep onder de zeebodem opgesloten houden ? En toen sprak de haai verder : 'Als er kleine visjes geboren worden, dan worden ze bijna elke dag door de draak in de bodem gezogen, en dan moeten ze hard werken, en hele moeilijke en vervelende dingen leren.' Gelukkig als het hazenei eens per jaar komt, dan mogen ze een paar daagjes naar het filmhuisje. En weer schrokken Roodvinger en Blauwvinger daarvan. 'Waarom doet die draak dat toch ?' vroeg Roodvinger aan de haai. 'Dat weet niemand,' zei de haai. Dit is al honderden jaren zo. 'Honderden jaren ?' zei Roodvinger, 'maar hoe kan het dat de prinses dan nog zo jong lijkt ?' 'Dat moet ze,' zei de haai, 'ze moet jong blijven van de draak, en ze moet elke dag in een roze toverspiegel kijken, dan blijft ze jong.' 'Maar waarom moet ze jong blijven ?' vroeg Roodvinger. 'Omdat ze op iemand lijkt die de draak ooit gekend heeft,' zei de haai. Maar meer wist de haai er ook niet van te vertellen. 'Hoe kunnen we bij de draak komen,' vroeg Roodvinger. Maar dat wist de haai niet, omdat het rijk van de draak altijd verschoof, en daardoor waren er ook vaak aardverschuivingen. 'Kom mee, Blauwvinger,' zei Roodvinger, en samen begonnen ze naar openingen in de grond te zoeken.

De haai kende nog wel wat openingen en leidde hen er naartoe. Maar hoe lang ze ook zochten, ze konden geen spoor van de draak vinden. Roodvinger kreeg een idee. Misschien zouden ze via de droomtelefoon bij de draak kunnen komen. Op een avond gingen ze weer naar de vergaderzaal, en de haai wist wel hoe de droomtelefoon kon komen. Toen de bloem op tafel lag begon Roodvinger naar knopjes te zoeken, maar hij kon niets vinden. Het leek wel alsof de droomtelefoon zichzelf bediende. 'Dat doet de draak,' zei de haai. 'De draak beslist hier alles.' En toen ging Roodvinger op de bloem staan, en stak zijn vingertje in de lucht en riep : 'Draak, draak, als je me hier ziet, geef antwoord. Ik wil met je praten.' Maar er gebeurde niets. En ook Blauwvinger ging op de bloem staan, en samen begonnen ze erop te springen. Misschien sliep de draak wel. En eindelijk begon er beeld te komen onder hun voeten, en een zwart drakenhoofd verscheen. De haai werd erg bang en zwom snel weg. 'Zeg draak,' zei Roodvinger, 'ze zijn hier allemaal erg bang voor je, en de vissen zijn allemaal erg verdrietig over dat wat je doet. Waarom doe je dat eigenlijk ?' En toen begon de draak te bulderen, zo hard te bulderen, dat Roodvinger en Blauwvinger van schrik van de bloem afsprongen. De bloem was vuurrood geworden, en er sloegen vlammen vanaf. 'Waaaaaaaaa,' schreeuwde de draak en begon afschuwelijk te krijsen. Van schrik deden Roodvinger en Blauwvinger nog een stap achteruit, want de draak begon door de bloem omhoog te komen. Roodvinger en

Blauwvinger wisten niet wat ze zagen, en overal sloegen bliksemschichten naast hen neer. Maar ineens werd alles wat rustiger, en de draak ging op één van de grote vissenstoelen zitten. 'Ik kom van de zwarte bergen,' zei hij. Er was daar een meisje dat altijd brood en vruchten kwam brengen, maar op een dag ging zij op zee en werd verslonden door een grote vis. Sindsdien haat ik vissen, en ben ik onder de zeebodem gaan wonen om wraak te nemen. Ik heb hun prinses opgesloten in een diep onder de zeebodem.' 'Maar draak,' riep Roodvinger, 'niet alle vissen zijn slecht. En misschien had die grote vis zich wel vergist, misschien dacht hij wel dat het meisje de vissen kwaad zou doen.' Maar ineens kwam de draak op Roodvinger en Blauwvinger af, en blies een hete vlam op hen af. De bloem begon hard te draaien, en er kwamen hoge beltonen uit voort. Langzaam werden Roodvinger en Blauwvinger in de bloem gezogen, en kwamen in een tunnel die hen tot onder de zeebodem bracht. Daar werden ze door een zwarte ridderachtige soldaat in een zandkooi opgesloten. In de kooi ernaast zat de prinses. 'Wat ben ik blij jullie weer te zien,' zei de prinses. 'Ik zit hier al zo lang alleen opgesloten. Komen jullie me eruit helpen ?' Direkt begon Roodvinger over de roze toverspiegel te vragen. 'Die toverspiegel kan praten, en praat altijd over dat wat de draak heeft meegemaakt. En door dat telkens te horen en te zien blijf ik jong, maar ik ben hier diep ongelukkig.' 'Kan die toverspiegel nergens anders over praten ?' vroeg Roodvinger weer. 'Nee,' zei de prinses, 'dat mag niet van de draak.' Dan moest die toverspiegel ook wel diep ongelukkig zijn, dacht Roodvinger. Maar verder konden ze niet praten, want daar kwam de draak al aanbonken. 'Zo, nu heb ik dan ook de vissenvrienden veilig opgesloten. Wat een vangst vandaag.' 'Zeg draak,' vroeg Roodvinger, 'zou ik ook eens in die mooie spiegel van u mogen kijken, ik zou ook graag weleens willen horen wat u nog meer allemaal hebt meegemaakt.' De draak begon te glunderen : 'Wil je dat ?' 'Ja,' zei Roodvinger, 'ik zou er wel voor altijd in willen blijven kijken.' 'Ha ha,' riep de draak, 'ik ga hem direkt voor je halen.' En na een tijdje kwam de draak weer aanstormen met de spiegel. Het was een prachtige roze spiegel. Een spiegel met oogjes en met een mond, maar er rolden ook dikke tranen uit z'n ogen. Direkt begon de spiegel te vertellen over de draak. Hoe goed de draak wel niet was, en wat de draak allemaal had meegemaakt. En de spiegel was als een soort televisie, en ze konden de draak er goed op zien. Ineens kreeg Roodvinger een plan. Voorzichtig haalde hij het apparaatje uit zijn zak wat hij van Meharates had gekregen om de zenders mee te verwisselen. En drukte op een andere zender. Ineens was daar het gezicht van Meharates op het beeldscherm, en snel legde Roodvinger het bloemenblaadje wat hij van de haai had gehad onder de spiegel. En al snel begon de spiegel een beetje op de droomtelefoon te lijken, en Meharates stapte door de spiegel naar binnen. 'Zeg, wat is hier aan de hand ?' vroeg Meharates. En snel begon Roodvinger het hele verhaal te vertellen. 'Nou, dat heb je goed opgelost, Roodvinger,' zei Meharates. 'Het is nu een koud kunstje om te kunnen vertrekken.' En Meharates schoof de spiegel door de kooi van de prinses. 'Snel, prinses, stap erdoorheen.' En dat deed de prinses. En toen trok Meharates de spiegel weer terug en zo konden ze alledrie door de spiegel verdwijnen, om in het kasteel van Meharates terecht te komen. Maar nu stond die arme spiegel daar natuurlijk nog. Oh, wat was de draak kwaad, en ook hij dook door de spiegel, en kwam in het kasteel van Meharates terecht. 'Wat kom jij hier doen,' bulderde Meharates. 'Geef de prinses terug, en die misselijke kereltjes,' kermde de draak. Maar snel pakte Meharates een spinnenzwaard van de muur en richtte het op de draak. 'Die toverspiegel is niet van jou,' bulderde Meharates, 'maar van mij.' Heel lang geleden was de toverspiegel uit het kasteel van Meharates weggestolen, en nu wist hij dan eindelijk wie de dief was. Dankzij Roodvinger. Maar nu moesten ze nog met de draak afrekenen. En die begon behoorlijk met vuur te spuiten. 'Rennen, jongens,' riep Meharates, 'naar de trein.' En na op de trappen gerend te hebben kwamen ze bij de kasteeltrein over de slangenbrug. Heel het kasteel stond al in brand, en nu moesten ze heel snel zijn. De draak kwam achter hen aan, en net op het nippertje konden ze met de trein vluchten. Maar het gevaar was nog niet geweken. De brug begon ook

al te branden. Bij het andere kasteel aangekomen zagen ze de man met de hoge hoed weer staan, en snel sprongen ze in een grote bloem, om in het klaslokaal te komen. 'Oh, wat moeten we nu doen,' rilde Roodvinger. Ineens begon de vloer te trillen en waterig te worden, en de haai van Meharates kwam naarboven zwemmen. 'Vlug,' zei de haai, 'klim op mijn rug, dan kunnen we naar de zee van Meharates.' En snel klommen ze op de rug van de haai. Maar ach, de draak zat hen nog steeds achterna, en het water begon heter en heter te worden. De haai zwom zo snel als hij kon, en de draak zwom hem achterna. Ineens stond de roze toverspiegel voor hen, en riep : 'Meester, ik ben eindelijk terug, dankzij Roodvinger ben ik weer een dromenspiegel.' En weer konden ze door de spiegel ontsnappen. Maar nu was de draak echt kwaad geworden, en met zijn ijzeren klauwen sloeg hij de spiegel in stukken. En daar lagen ze dan allemaal voor de grote draak : Meharates, de man met de hoge hoed, Roodvinger, Blauwvinger, de prinses en de haai. En langzaam begon de zee in een vuurzee te veranderen. Maar daar kwam ineens het tv-dier van Roodvinger tevoorschijn. Hij raapte de scherven van de spiegel op en stopte ze in een pot met aarde. Snel stopte hij de pot in een gat in de zeebodem, en daar begon de spiegel weer te groeien, groter dan ooit. En er begonnen vruchten aan de spiegel te groeien als aan een boom. En iedereen begon van de vruchten te eten, ook de draak. 'Meharates,' zei de spiegel, 'zij die van deze vruchten eten zullen altijd jong blijven, want het zijn tv-vruchten. En hen die in televisie-wereld leven blijven altijd jong.' En dat was waar. Hier, in televisiewereld, zou het prinsesje voor altijd veilig zijn, en hoefde ze zich nooit meer opgesloten te voelen. Ze zou voortaan bij Meharates gaan wonen, in de televisie-wereld, samen met al haar vissen. Het duurde niet lang of het rijk van Meharates stond weer recht overeind, maar goed, met een echte toverspiegel en een tv-dier gaat zoiets natuurlijk erg snel. Roodvinger had weer een groot avontuur erop zitten, en samen met Blauwvinger en het tv-dier gingen ze weer terug naar huis, waar Roodlaarsje al op hen zat te wachten. Al met al was het weer een echt drakenavontuur geweest.

Hoofdstuk 9. Wie is Roodvinger ?

Op een dag werd Roodvinger door de koning opgebeld, of hij even naar het paleis wilde komen. Toen Roodvinger daar aankwam had de koning een geschenk voor Roodvinger. Dit omdat Roodvinger zo'n goede detective van de koning was. Het was een tv-ring, door een dwerg gemaakt. Maar je kon er ook mee telefoneren, je kon er bezoekjes mee afleggen, en gasten ontvangen, en nog veel meer. Eigenlijk kon je er zo'n beetje alles mee. Daar had je geen grote apparaten meer voor nodig. En door deze ring had je nu alles altijd dichtbij. Als je honger had, dan kwam er door de ring voedsel tevoorschijn. Roodvinger was hier natuurlijk erg blij mee. Maar als Roodvinger hem moest weggeven, dan zou hij hem aan Meharates geven, want die had altijd van zulke grote apparaten. Hij zou misschien wel blij zijn met zo'n klein dingetje wat hij altijd om z'n vinger kon dragen. En zo gebeurde het. Roodvinger ging nog eens naar het rijk van Meharates toe, en overhandigde het aan Meharates. Maar Meharates gaf de ring aan de prinses der vissen, en eigenlijk was de ring daar het beste thuis. De prinses moest goed beveiligd zijn tegen draken, en zo zou ze goed over de vissen kunnen regeren en goed voor hen kunnen zorgen. De prinses was erg blij met dit kado. Maar op een dag was de ring kwijt. De prinses legde hem als ze ging slapen altijd op haar nachtkastje, en nu was het verdwenen. Het zou een ramp zijn als de ring in verkeerde handen terecht zou komen, en Roodvinger moest direkt op onderzoek uit. Niemand wist waar de zwarte draak gebleven was sinds het vorige avontuur, en Roodvinger wilde dat vraagstuk eerst oplossen. Het zou best kunnen dat de zwarte draak weer toe had geslagen. Roodvinger zou met een heleboel vissen eens gaan kijken onder de zeebodem, en het misschien eens proberen met de

oude droomtelefoon. Meharates had hem ergens opgeborgen. Maar wat ze ook deden, de draak was nergens te vinden. Nu was de roze toverspiegel ook een soort droomtelefoon geworden, en misschien zouden ze daarmee de draak wel kunnen vinden. En ja hoor, één zender op de droomtelefoon heette : de zender van de zwarte draak. En alle oude films over de draak werden daar vertoond. Het was als de zender waarop de toverspiegel lange tijd was vastgezet. Maar ook werden er filmpjes vertoond waar de zwarte draak nu was. De zwarte draak leefde weer in de zwarte bergen, op zoek naar het meisje wat hij eens verloor. Hij probeerde de vissen maar te vergeten. Hij had ook van de tv-vruchten gegeten, en was nu in de televisie-wereld op zoek naar zijn oude vriendinnetje. Misschien dat ze daar nog ergens zou leven. Maar nergens op deze zender werd er over de ring gesproken. Er werden veel meer filmpjes over het verleden van de draak uitgezonden, ook over het leven van het meisje dat altijd zo goed voor de draak zorgde. En ja, dat meisje leek inderdaad wel heel veel op de prinses, maar ook wel een beetje op Roodlaarsje. En daar schrok Roodvinger wel even van.

Het was nog een erg jong meisje, en Roodvinger vond het verschrikkelijk dat ze door een grote vis verslonden was. Het meisje had ook een poesje, dat altijd met haar meeging als zij de draak ging voeren. En ook vlogen er altijd een heleboel vogeltjes met haar mee. Het meisje was erg dapper door dat te doen, want de draak was erg gevaarlijk. Maar ze moest wel, anders zou de zwarte draak haar dorpje verwoesten. Het meisje leek zelfs wel een beetje op de koningin. Maar op een dag kwam het meisje te laat, en de draak was zo woest dat hij haar opat. Toen de inwoners van het dorp merkten dat het meisje wel erg lang wegbleef gingen ze naar de draak toe, en hij vertelde hen dat het meisje op zee was gegaan en door een grote vis was verslonden. De draak had dus al die tijd gelogen. Maar nu kwam hij daar dan mee voor de dag, op deze zender. Het was alsof de draak zijn leven had gebeterd. En daar verscheen ineens het hoofd van de draak op de tv. 'Ach, ja, ik heb er zo verschrikkelijk veel spijt van. Ik heb al die tijd gelogen,' zei hij met tranen in zijn ogen. Maar Roodvinger vertrouwde het niet helemaal, want wie zij hem dat die filmpjes echt waren.

Roodvinger drukte hem ineens op een andere zender, en daar zagen ze ineens een heel ander verhaal. Ze zagen daar een heksenkasteel, waar de zwarte draak telkens naartoe ging om veel dingen die hij had gestolen naar toe te brengen. En in dit kasteel zagen ze het meisje staan, en ze lachte heel luid. Ze had de tv-ring in haar vingers en zei : 'Ha ha, wat was dat toch een goed idee om iedereen te laten denken dat ik verslonden was, dat ik er niet meer was, want zo zou ik goed de schuilplaats kunnen beheren van de draak. Ha ha ha.' Ja, dat was wel slim van de draak. Maar dit was ook maar een zender. Welke zender had nu gelijk ? Roodvinger wist het niet meer. Ineens kwam Roodlaarsje binnen, en liep naar Roodvinger toe : 'Ik moet je wat vertellen wat ik je eigenlijk al veel eerder wilde vertellen. Ik heb vroeger die zwarte draak gevoederd, en toen ik erachter kwam hoe gevaarlijk hij was, ben ik weg gegaan en heb iemand anders tegen hem laten zeggen dat ik door een vis verslonden was. Ik durfde niet meer terug, en ik durfde hem niet te zeggen dat ik nog leefde.' Dan was Roodlaarsje nu wel in groot gevaar, en ze had het wel vaker met draken aan de stok gehad. Maar daar stond de zwarte draak ineens in de deuropening : 'Ha ha, alsof ik dat niet wist, Roodlaarsje. En al die draken die jullie hebben lastiggevallen, ha ha, dat zijn allemaal mijn soldaten, ha ha ha. Neem het nu maar eens op tegen mij, de koning van alle draken en van alle vissen.' En daar glinsterde de tv-ring aan de klauw van de draak, en hij hing hem aan een ketting om zijn nek, om te vertrekken. Meharates was er inmiddels achtergekomen dat het heksenkasteel wel bestond, en dat de draak daar wel degelijk een geheime schuilplaats had. En samen gingen ze op pad.

Roodvinger was inmiddels wel erg bang geworden, want hoe zou het met Roodlaarsje aflopen als zij de draak zo had bedrogen ?

Maar ineens werd Roodvinger wakker. Hij had alles maar gedroomd. Het hele drakenverhaal was maar een droom geweest. En toen hij dacht dat hij wakker was geworden, bleek het nog steeds een droom te zijn. Heb jij dat ook weleens ? Want Roodvinger had helemaal geen vrouwtje dat Roodlaarsje heette, en Roodvinger was helemaal geen detective van de koning. En er bestond ook helemaal niet zoiets als een tv-ring. Of toch wel ? Roodvinger keek op z'n nachtkastje, en ja hoor, daar lag de tv-ring. Zou er dan toch iets van dit verhaal echt waar zijn ? Roodvinger is een mannetje dat altijd verschrikkelijk veel avonturen beleeft en dan aan het einde altijd wakker wordt, en dan toch weer dingen uit die droom tegen komt. Zijn dromen dan soms toch een heel klein beetje waar ? Met Roodvinger weet je het nooit. Hij is het mannetje van de televisie, en soms is hij dit en soms is hij dat. Dat maakt hem toch wel heel bijzonder. Roodvinger weet ook nooit waar hij woont, want hij woont altijd ergens anders, en dan wordt hij soms ineens wakker. Wie is Roodvinger nu eigenlijk ? Dat weet hij zelf eigenlijk ook niet. Hij is een droommannetje, dat is alles wat hij weet.

Hoofdstuk 10. De Draken Gaan Voetballen

Wat we wel van Roodvinger kunnen zeggen is dat hij eigenlijk in een soort vreemde televisie woont. Een draak had hem daar ingezet, want dat was voor Roodvinger beter. Omdat Roodvinger een klein mannetje zo groot als je vingers is, en dus eigenlijk een soort kabouter, was het voor hem beter in de televisie te wonen dan ergens anders. Buiten de televisie was het voor een kabouter als hij veel te gevaarlijk. Die draak wilde hem dus beschermen. De draak had eens een gouden beker gewonnen, een prijs met het drakenvoetbal. En in die gouden beker woonde een mannetje dat Roodvinger heette. Omdat een heleboel andere draken graag dat mannetje en die beker zouden willen hebben, heeft de draak een speciale tv voor Roodvinger gebouwd waar hij in kon wonen. De beker zette de draak op een hoge plaats waar niemand bijkan. En de draak is een zwarte draak als in het verhaal. Maar de zwarte draak van Roodvinger is een aardige draak. Roodvinger houdt er erg van om naar het drakenvoetbal te kijken. Dat gaat op een hele andere manier dan gewoon voetbal. Er zijn daar meerdere ballen en op die ballen staan letters. En wat er de volgende dag allemaal in de normale wereld gezegd wordt, wordt uitgevochten op het drakenvoetbal. Het wordt ook wel lettervoetbal genoemd. Dus wat de meester of juffrouw in de klas gaat zeggen, hangt er ook vanaf hoe het balletje rolt in zo'n parteitje drakenvoetbal. Roodvinger zit dan heel hoog op de tribune, met de zwarte draak. En de zwarte draak rookt dan een pijp met drakengras. Soms moet de zwarte draak dan helemaal naar beneden lopen, omdat hij de hoofdscheidsrechter is. Dus als de scheidsrechters beneden het niet goed doen, dan komt de zwarte draak even, en als het helemaal niet goed gaat, dan komt de zwarte draak even het veld op om te laten zien hoe je het drakenvoetbalspel moet spelen. Roodvinger is maar wat trots op zijn zwarte draak. Soms verandert de zwarte draak in een auto, een bus, een trein, of een vliegtuig. Ja, de zwarte draak kan heel veel.

Op een dag maakte Roodvinger een hele lange reis met de zwarte draak. De zwarte draak was veranderd in een raket, en leek wel op een ruimteschip. Ze zouden gaan naar de sterrenhemel van de Witte Chocolade, waar een grote drakenvoetbalwedstrijd werd gehouden. Na de wedstrijd gingen ze naar Klein Amsterdam, waar de ijstovenaar Darta Bahahn woonde. In Klein Amsterdam wonen een heleboel dieren, en zij hebben vaak ook tafels in huis waarop ze

het drakenvoetbal in het klein kunnen spelen. Toen ze bij Darta Bahahn waren aangekomen, moesten ze op een lange trap naar boven. Het begon buiten te sneeuwen, en Darta had een hele zachte stem. Hij leek wel een beetje op Klaas Vaak. Ze gingen op de bank in de woonkamer zitten, achter een hele grote hal, waar een biljarttafel stond. Darta gaf hen allebei een grote beker met witte chocolademelk. Er woonden een paar grote dieren bij Darta in huis. Een pratende puma bijvoorbeeld. Het was het poesje van Darta Bahahn, maar niet zomaar een poesje. Daar kwam de puma binnenlopen, al pratende, maar tegen wie had hij het nu eigenlijk. Buiten was de glazenwasser bezig de ramen te lappen. Darta Bahahn had ook een televisie. De Zwarte Draak vroeg aan Roodvinger of hij misschien niet in deze televisie wilde wonen. Dat leek Roodvinger wel een goed plan. Hij wilde het in ieder geval wel eens proberen. Darta Bahan deed het luikje van de televisie open, en daar stapte Roodvinger naar binnen. Hij gleed door een hele lange tunnel naar beneden, en toen ... floetsj, flatsj, daar lag Roodvinger in een vijvertje. Hij moest heel diep duiken om in een soort speeltuintje terecht te komen. Hier stonden een heleboel vliegtuigen waarmee hij weg kon vliegen. Maar eigenlijk waren het geen echte vliegtuigen, maar een soort treinen die over rails in de lucht moesten gaan. Die rails gingen over hele hoge palen. Roodvinger ging in één van de treintjes zitten, en hup daar ging hij. Hij ging over rails, over een heel groot meer, waar allemaal hijskranen stonden. En aan de overkant van dat meer stond Groot Amsterdam. En daar kon hij allemaal spelletjes doen, en vond hij een nieuwe radio. Roodvinger hield erg veel van spelletjes. Er waren hier ook veel pretparken met veel achtbanen. Eén zo'n achtbaan heette 'de Orca'. En er was ook een achtbaan die 'De Vogelspin' heette. Een heleboel achtbanen hier hadden dierennamen. En ze liepen door de hele stad heen. Verder was er in de buurt nog een plaats die Zacht Amsterdam heette, en er was ook nog Hard Amsterdam.

En floeps... daar werd Roodvinger weer wakker in de televisie van de zwarte draak. Daar had hij ook een bedje staan, een zwart bedje, met zwarte dekens. Op de bodem van de televisie groeide drop, en Roodvinger lustte dat graag. Aan de muren binnenin de televisie hingen vreemde schilderijen van spinnen of van poppen. Roodvinger vond ze erg prachtig. Veel van die schilderijen waren zwartwit. Vaak begonnen die plaatjes 's nachts te bewegen, en dan waren het deuren geworden. Roodvinger hield ook erg van kleuren. Als hij eens van iemand een kleurplaat had gehad, dan ging hij de hele nacht kleuren. Moest Roodvinger dan niet slapen ? Nee hoor, want Roodvinger hoefde nooit naar school. Roodvinger had ook twee poppen. De ene heette Dun Amsterdam, en de andere heette Dik Amsterdam. Soms als deze met elkaar spraken, kon Roodvinger er niet goed van slapen. Roodvinger had die poppen gekregen van de schrijver, die ook in Amsterdam woonde. Als Roodvinger bij de schrijver op bezoek was, dan ging hij altijd in de televisie slapen. Dan ging hij altijd naast een vogelspin liggen. Ja, want het huis van de schrijver was altijd vol met dieren. Het was als een oerwoud. En voor dit boek heeft Roodvinger ook de schrijver bezocht. Dat doet hij zo nu en dan even. Niet alleen voor de verhalen, maar ook voor andere dingen. De schrijver en Roodvinger zijn namelijk dikke vriendjes van elkaar, en van de zwarte draak natuurlijk. Voor de schrijver is de zwarte draak helemaal niet zo groot. Hij kan hem zo in z'n mond stoppen, en Roodvinger is ook maar een heel klein mannetje, niet groter dan de vingers van de schrijver. Als Roodvinger komt, komt hij altijd in zijn voertuig, de zwarte draak, die kan vliegen, varen en rijden. Roodvinger vind Amsterdam een erg prachtige plaats, maar hij moet er natuurlijk goed voor zorgen dat de mensen hem niet zien. Daarom komt hij meestal 's nachts en komt dan vlak voor het raam van de schrijver. Soms door een toverdrankje neemt Roodvinger de schrijver wel eens mee op zijn avonturen. De schrijver houdt ook erg van de televisie-wereld en de droomwereld. En Roodvinger is altijd bij hem.

De schrijver zou ook wel graag in een televisie willen wonen, maar dat kan natuurlijk niet, want schrijvers moeten schrijven. Maar gelukkig kan de schrijver wel een heleboel opschrijven over de televisie-wereld, en dus door dat toverdrankje net zo klein zijn als Roodvinger, om met hem op reis te gaan.

Op een keer waren Roodvinger en de schrijver helemaal in Amerika. Dat is een heel eind weg. Met de vliegende draak gingen ze daar naartoe. En toen gingen ze naar het topje van Amerika, daar waar het erg koud is, en toen hebben ze daar samen het drakenvoetbal gespeeld. In Amerika wonen ook een heleboel indianen, maar hier woonden Eskimo's. Dat zijn een soort ijsindianen. En die wonen in ijshutten. Het was daar erg koud. Ergens onder het water zou een geheime poort moeten zijn. Dat vond de schrijver wel leuk, want die houdt van alles wat geheim is. Samen met wat Eskimo's zwommen ze naar de poort toe, en Roodvinger probeerde de deur open te maken. Maar het lukte niet. Eén van de Eskimo's kon het wel, en daar zwommen ze naar binnen. Het water was erg koud, en ze kwamen in een enorme zaal terecht. Hier stond een kerst-televisie, waar eieren uitrolden waar allerlei vreemde dieren uitkwamen. Die vreemde dieren zouden ze dan naar Amsterdam mee kunnen nemen, want die hielden daar wel van vreemde dieren. Er waren ook eieren bij die niet opengingen, en waar vreemde letters opstonden. Dit waren de drakenballen die ze bij het drakenvoetbal gebruikten. En als ze in het doel werden geschoten, dan gingen ze open. Eén eskimo nam een hele grote zak met drakenballen mee, en ging door een andere deur heen. Hier was een drakenvoetbalveld, en hier gingen ze de drakenvoetbalwedstrijd houden. Inmiddels waren er al veel meer eskimo's bijgekomen. Eén eskimo bracht de schrijver en Roodvinger helemaal tot over het reusachtige voetbalveld, en door een deur, en daar was een zaaltje met twee deuren. Op de ene deur stond geschreven Koud Amsterdam, en op de andere Heet Amsterdam. Voor die deuren stonden een heleboel vogelspinnen. Er waren een heleboel grote witte vogelspinnen, en zij droegen vaak een letter of meerdere letters op hun rug. Sommigen gingen door het ene deurtje en anderen door het andere deurtje. Die spinnen waren natuurlijk uit de drakenballen gekomen. Roodvinger wilde er ook naar binnen, en eerst besloten ze naar Koud Amsterdam te gaan. Het was hier erg koud, en er stonden een heleboel arresleeen. De spinnen hadden hier een heleboel webben gemaakt. Daarna gingen ze door het andere deurtje, waar het heel heet was. Er stonden hier een heleboel hanen die luid kakelden : U-e-u-uuuuu. Als dit ook een soort Amsterdam was, dan wilde de schrijver wel eens even naar zijn huisje toe, als dat er zou staan. Dat was wel vreemd. Ze waren bij het station, en ze moesten een heel eind lopen, maar ze konden soms wel even op de rug van een haan springen. Bij het huisje van de schrijver aangekomen stonden er allemaal soldaten. En er werd een raar spel gespeeld, genaamd drakenbowlen. De bowlingballen vlogen er door de lucht, en moesten elkaar ketsen. De schrijver werd een beetje boos en riep : 'Wat moet dat daar, bij mijn huis.' Maar een soldaat riep tegen hem : 'U woont hier niet.' En ineens zag de schrijver zichzelf uit het huisje komen. Ach natuurlijk, dacht de schrijver, dit is Heet Amsterdam en niet het gewone Amsterdam. En de schrijver riep : 'Hé, hé, dat ben ik,' maar de schrijver van het Hete Amsterdam begon heel hard weg te hollen. 'Kom terug, kom terug,' riep de schrijver. Hij wilde zo graag eens met zichzelf praten. Maar wat er toen gebeurde : De hele plaats begon in brand te staan, en de brandweer moest komen om de brand te blussen. 'Dat komt van al dat drakenbowlen,' riep de brandweer. 'Waar is de schrijver ?' En toen grepen ze die arme schrijver, en moest hij mee naar het politie-bureau. 'Maar ik woon hier helemaal niet,' zei de schrijver. Maar niets hielp, en de schrijver werd achter slot en grendel gezet. Na een tijdje hadden ze ook de schrijver van het Hete Amsterdam opgepakt. En die kwam bij de schrijver van het gewone Amsterdam in de cel. 'Zo,' zei de schrijver, 'nu kan ik eindelijk eens met je praten.' Maar dat ging niet door, want ze moesten voor de rechter komen. 'Jullie staan beiden schuldig aan het drakenbowlen. Dat is streng verboden hier, want daar komt brand van.' Maar

de beide schrijvers zeiden : 'Wij hebben niet aan drakenbowlen gedaan, dat hebben de soldaten gedaan.' 'Maar jullie hebben met hen meegedaan,' zei de rechter. 'Neen,' riepen de beide schrijvers, 'dat is nietwaar.' En toen zei de schrijver van het Hete Amsterdam : 'Ik kan al een hele lange tijd niet slapen van dat drakengebowl, waarom moet dat eigenlijk ?' En toen haalde de rechter de drakenbowlballen tevoorschijn. Er waren ballen opgetekend met cijfers erin. 'Ik weet niet waar ze voor zijn, maar het moet stoppen,' zei de rechter. 'Ja, dat vinden wij ook,' zeiden de beide schrijvers. En weer moesten ze terug naar hun cel. Midden in de nacht werd er getikt op het raampje. Het was Roodvinger. Hij sloeg het raampje kapot en schoof een flesje toverdrank door de tralies. 'Vlug,' zei hij. 'Neem allebei een slokje zodat je klein genoeg bent om door de tralies te gaan. Dat deden ze, en al snel stonden ze buiten. Toen namen ze een slok uit een ander flesje en werden weer zo groot als Roodvinger. De schrijver van het Hete Amsterdam zei : 'Laten we naar mijn huis gaan.' En dat deden ze. Bij het huis aangekomen waren er gelukkig geen drakenbowlers of ballen meer. Snel waren ze binnen, en de schrijver keek z'n ogen uit. Aan de ene kant leek alles een beetje op zijn eigen huis, maar toch was dit totaal anders. De schrijvers vroegen aan Roodvinger of hij misschien wist waar dat drakenbowlen voor was. Roodvinger zei dat het een vreemdsoortige soort klok was, wat het verkeer moest leiden. De schrijvers snapten er beiden niet veel van. Na een tijdje als de ballen genoeg waren geketst en op bepaalde plaatsen waren aangekomen gingen ze open als eieren en kwamen er weer bijvoorbeeld vogelspinnen uit. 'Ja,' dat verhaal kende de schrijver wel. Daar kwam de zwarte draak aan, met een paar eskimo's. De eskimo's waren een beetje boos. 'Kom mee,' zeiden ze tegen Roodvinger en de schrijver. 'Het is hier veel te gevaarlijk.' De schrijver van het Hete Amsterdam wilde ook met hen mee terug. Maar de eskimo's vonden dat niet goed. 'Jij moet hierblijven, jij hoort hier,' zeiden ze. Maar de schrijver begon te bibberen en zei : 'Als jullie me hier alleen laten, word ik weer opgepakt en moet ik de cel in. Er staat een zware gevangenisstraf op het drakenbowlen.' En gelukkig toen mocht hij mee. De zwarte draak begon te groeien, en ze gingen allemaal in het voertuig zitten. Klaar om te vertrekken. Maar helaas, ze konden niet meer terug door de deur waarmee ze gekomen waren. Er stonden een heleboel drakenbowlers met hun ballen om de deur te blokkeren. Het waren weer die vreemdsoortige soldaten, en ook andere figuren. De zwarte draak werd erg boos en begon vuur te spuwen, maar de drakenbowlers begonnen met de ballen te gooien, en er kwam een krijsend geluid uit de ballen, alsof het sirenes waren. 'Het is geen tijd voor jullie om te vertrekken,' riep een drakenbowler. Ook had hij een soort speer in zijn hand en een helm met een grote veer. Het leek wel op een Spaanse Ridder. 'Misschien is het wel nooit tijd,' zei hij. En weer begon de plaats te branden en te branden, totdat de brandweer eraan kwam.

'Dat is die draak z'n schuld,' riepen de soldaten. Maar de brandweer liet hen allen arresteren, ook de draak en zij die in het voertuig zaten. Maar de brandweer kon het vuur ditmaal niet blussen, en de draak riep : 'Laat ons erdoor.' Maar nee hoor, ze werden allemaal in de cel gegooid en moesten voorkomen bij de opperrechter van het Hete Amsterdam. 'Jullie staan schuldig aan drakenbowlen,' riep hij. 'Dat is hier verboden. Daar komt brand van.' 'Wat voor spelletjes mogen we dan doen,' riep één van de soldaten. 'Dat zal ik je laten zien,' zei de opperrechter. 'Ik laat jullie allemaal levenslang opsluiten in een televisie .... in een kerst-televisie.' 'Nee,' riepen de soldaten, 'wij zijn onschuldig.' Wat gebeurt er in zo'n kerst-televisie ? vroeg Roodvinger fluisterend aan de zwarte draak. 'Daar veranderen je tranen in eieren,' zei de zwarte draak zachtjes. 'Dan word je een kip om drakenballen te leggen voor het drakenvoetbal.' Daar schrok Roodvinger wel even van. Daar had hij niet zoveel zin in. 'Waar komen dan die drakenbowlballen vandaan ?' vroeg Roodvinger weer fluisterend. 'Van de paas-tv,' zei de zwarte draak zacht. En toen richtte de rechter zich tot de schrijvers, de zwarte draak, de eskimo's en Roodvinger, en zei : 'En jullie laat ik levenslang opsluiten in de paas-tv, tot het leggen van drakenbowlballen.' 'Maar rechter,' schreeuwde Roodvinger, 'ik dacht dat

jullie niet van drakenbowlen houden.' 'Drakenbowlen wordt alleen gehouden in het paleis, zeer diep onder de grond, en zeer diep in het geheim, en niet hier, maar in Koud Amsterdam.' Waren ze daar dan maar gebleven, maar nu was het al te laat. De soldaten werden opgesloten in de kerst-tv, en onze vrienden werden opgesloten in de paas-tv, en die stond helemaal op het topje van de noordpool. Het was een nauw hok, en ze voelden zich al worden als kip. Moesten ze hier nu voor altijd blijven ? 'Nou ja,' zeiden de schrijvers, 'dan hebben we in ieder geval genoeg tijd om onze boeken te schrijven.'

Floep, en daar werd de schrijver van dit boek wakker. Hij had het allemaal maar gedroomd. Geen draken, geen vreemde bowlingballen, geen paas-tv's en geen Roodvinger. Of toch ? Er werd op het raam van de schrijver getikt. Het was al bijna ochtend geworden. Het was Roodvinger in zijn voertuig, de zwarte draak. De schrijver deed het raam open en haalde hem naar binnen. Direkt begon Roodvinger te vertellen wat hij had meegemaakt. En dat verhaal kun je lezen in het volgende boek.

Roodvinger

en de Vogelspin

Hoofdstuk 1. Wie is Roodvinger ?

Hoofdstuk 2. Het Tropische Vissendorp

Hoofdstuk 3. Het Heksenkasteel

Hoofdstuk 4. De Rode Nacht

Hoofdstuk 5. De TV-kroon

Hoofdstuk 6. Het Land der Vogelspinnen

Hoofdstuk 7. Het Roze Kruid

Hoofdstuk 1. Wie is Roodvinger ?

Roodvinger is een mannetje niet groter dan je vingers. Hij woont in een vreemdsoortige televisie, waardoor hij allerlei reizen maakt. Op een dag kwam Roodvinger het mannetje van de haai tegen. Dat mannetje droeg een hoed, en had tegelijkertijd een hele hoge en een hele lage stem. Nadat Roodvinger dat mannetje tegen was gekomen, was Roodvinger een beetje ziek geworden. Dat gebeurde wel vaker als iemand het mannetje van de haai tegenkwam. Toen moest Roodvinger een hele lange tijd in bed liggen. Iemand had eens een keer tegen Roodvinger gezegd dat haaien ook levende televisies zijn, en dat daar mannetjes in opgesloten worden. Die mannetjes zijn heel klein, nog wel kleiner dan Roodvinger zelf. Soms zijn ze zo klein dat ze alleen maar een balletje licht zijn. Roodvinger had ook wel eens het mannetje van de tijger ontmoet, en toen was Roodvinger ook een tijdje ziek. Al die grote dieren zijn niets anders dan levende apparaten en daar worden kleine mannetjes ingestopt, had iemand eens tegen Roodvinger gezegd. En dat was de zwarte draak, Roodvingers beste vriendje. Toen Roodvinger weer beter was geworden nadat hij het mannetje van de haai had ontmoet, kwam hij dat mannetje weer tegen. Daar schrok Roodvinger wel even van. 'Kom je eens in mijn tv ?' vroeg het mannetje. Nu dat was wel aardig van dat mannetje. En Roodvinger wilde best wel eens een keer bij dat mannetje op bezoek. Bij het mannetje aangekomen ging er een belletje, en daar stond het mannetje voor de deur. Het mannetje had een bordje met eten in zijn hand, en daar moest Roodvinger van eten. En floep, daar ineens zat Roodvinger op de bank bij het mannetje in de haai. Roodvinger was nu in het lijf van een echte haai. Er gingen overal schelle belletjes rinkelen. 'Wil je wat thee ?' vroeg het mannetje. Dat wilde Roodvinger wel. De bank was heel zacht, maar al gauw bemerkte Roodvinger dat het een vogelspin was. Roodvinger was een beetje duizelig geworden, en nam een slokje van de thee die het mannetje hem voorhield. 'Roodvinger,' zei het mannetje, 'ik moet je wat vertellen.' En het mannetje ging naast hem zitten. Het mannetje schoof zijn hoedje een beetje naar achteren, zodat Roodvinger zijn ogen kon zien. Het ene oog was wit en het andere oog was zwart, en weer werd Roodvinger erg duizelig. Het waren hele grote ogen. 'Ik ben blind,' zei het mannetje. 'Ik zie met mijn neus.' Zijn neus leek op een lieveheersbeestje met allerlei knoppen erop. Ineens begon de neus heel snel rond te draaien, en Roodvinger viel in een diepe slaap. Daar kwam het mannetje van de tijger binnen. 'Slaapt ie ?' vroeg het mannetje. 'Ja,' zei het mannetje van de haai. En snel kwamen er ook andere mannetjes binnen : het mannetje van de vogelspin, het mannetje van de leeuw, het mannetje van de arend, het mannetje van de panter en het mannetje van de puma, en nog veel meer. Al snel was de kamer helemaal vol. 'Doe je ogen maar weer open,' zei het mannetje van de haai. 'Verrassing.' En daar werd Roodvinger wakker en zag al die grappige kleine mannetjes. Maar weer werd hij direkt erg duizelig, en alles begon voor zijn ogen te tollen. 'We proberen je in een nieuwe tv te krijgen,' zei het mannetje van de haai. En samen tilden ze Roodvinger op, en brachten hem naar een hogere verdieping, in een slaapkamer.

Na een hele lange tijd slapen werd Roodvinger eindelijk wakker. Er lagen wat rode draadjes door de kamer die wat licht gaven. En toen kwamen al zijn vriendjes weer binnen. En weer viel Roodvinger in een diepe slaap, terwijl zijn vriendjes hem nog een verdieping hoger brachten. Roodvinger voelde zich erg slap, en alsof hij zeeziek was, en hij droomde zo raar.

Hij zag hele dunne dingen, en hele dikke dingen. Hele grote dingen, hele lange dingen, en hele kleine en korte dingen. En sommige dingen voelden heel zacht aan, en andere dingen heel hard. Na een tijdje werd hij weer wakker, en er waren nog meer vriendjes bijgekomen. Maar lang kon Roodvinger zijn ogen niet openhouden, en viel weer in slaap. En weer brachten ze hem een verdieping hoger. Waar brachten ze Roodvinger toch naartoe ? Het mannetje van de haai klapte in zijn handen, en het kamertje begon heel koud te worden. En daarna klapte het mannetje nog een keer in zijn handen, en het kamertje begon erg heet te worden. Roodvinger was nu zelf in zo'n haaientelevisie gestopt, en zelf een haaienmannetje geworden. Hij voelde hele hete klauwen en hele koude klauwen om hem heen, maar toen hij wakker werd stond het tijgermannetje voor hem. Hij voelde zich erg koortserig en bibberig. Het tijgermannetje liep steeds dichter naar zijn bed toe, maar het leek wel alsof hij steeds verderweg liep. En de deur was ineens ook zo verweg. En het tijgermannetje zei : 'Achter die deur ligt alles wat je hebt meegemaakt.' En toen Roodvinger naar zijn kussen keek, en naar zijn lakens, merkte hij dat zijn bed geen bed meer was, maar een deur. En toen zei het tijgermannetje : En achter de deur waar je op ligt ligt alles wat je nog moet meemaken. En ineens werd de deur opengetrokken, en Roodvinger viel met een schreeuw in een gat.

Hij zag allemaal vreemde gezichten om zich heen, waarvan sommige delen heel licht waren en andere delen heel donker, en het begon wild te bewegen. En de gezichten zeiden : 'Nu ben je zelf dan een haai geworden. Je bent een haai. Je bent een haai geworden. Ja, je bent nu één van ons. Je bent een haai. Je bent een haai geworden. Welkom. En weer voelde Roodvinger zich heet en koud worden tegelijkertijd. En hij hoorde hele lage tonen, die steeds lager werden, en hele hoge tonen die steeds hoger werden. En het leek wel alsof zijn hoofd explodeerde. Was hij nu echt een haai geworden ? En weer stond het mannetje van de haai voor hem, en deze pakte zijn hand, maar ... hij had geen hand meer, en ook geen benen, maar een staart. Was het dus allemaal toch waar ? En hij voelde zich zieker worden, en moe, zo moe, en alles begon steeds sneller voor zijn ogen te tollen. En het mannetje van de leeuw stond voor hem, en begon op zijn hoofd te kloppen, en ook zijn hart begon te bonzen. Het leek wel alsof zijn hoofd brak. En om hem heen begonnen donkere gestaltes zijn naam te roepen : 'Roodvinger, Roodvinger, Roodvinger.'

Hoofdstuk 2. Het Tropische Vissendorp

En dat gebeurde wel vaker. Soms als Roodvinger in de spiegel keek had hij ineens konijnenoren. En hij is weleens een goudvis geweest. Ja, dat kan allemaal als je in een televisie woont. Op een dag was Roodvinger een tropische vis geworden in allerlei kleuren. Dan is de televisie ineens een vissenkom. Van buiten lijkt hij niet zo erg groot, maar van binnen is het erg groot. Ja, hij kon zelfs naar het Tropische Vissendorp zwemmen. En wat hij daar allemaal meemaakte ? Dat zal ik je vertellen. Er woonde daar ook een mannetje dat Duko heette. Duko had echte vissenoren die bijna als vleugels waren. Hij was bijna geheel van zacht doorzichtig plastic en leek veel op een tropische vis. Duko liet Roodvinger alle huisjes zien in het Tropische Vissendorp, en nam Roodvinger ook mee naar een bank. Ze betaalden daar met heel vreemd geld, met vissentepels, waar melk uit kon komen, en vissentranen. Met vissentepels kon je niet zoveel kopen, maar met vissentranen kon je heel veel kopen. De vissen die heel veel huilden waren dan ook het rijkst, en zij die nooit huilden waren vaak arm. Maar niet zo arm dat ze erge honger moesten lijden, want toch zorgden de vissen altijd erg goed voor elkaar. Vissen vonden het daarom nooit zo heel erg om verdrietig te zijn, want dan na een tijdje hadden ze weer veel geld om allerlei dingen mee te kopen. Dat vond Roodvinger

natuurlijk erg interessant. Hij had nog wel wat tranen van zichzelf in z'n zak zitten. Duko zei dat hij niet met die tranen kon betalen, want dat waren kaboutertranen, en geen vissentranen. Hij was dan nu wel een tropische vis geworden, maar die tranen waren oud, van toen hij nog gewoon een kabouter was. Maar ... hij kon de kaboutertranen wel inwisselen bij de vissenbank, en daar zou hij een heleboel vissentranen voor kunnen krijgen. Kaboutertranen waren in het Tropische Vissendorp namelijk erg veel waard.

Duko zou Roodvinger brengen naar de rijkste vis van het hele dorp. Die vis woonde een beetje buiten het dorp tussen wat waterstruiken en waterbomen. En natuurlijk, je raadt het al, die vis huilde het meest van allemaal. Die vis huilde de hele dag door. Bij de vis aangekomen was alles niet eens zo groot, maar er waren wel een heleboel tunnels, en die liepen door tot over het dorp. De vissen mochten altijd in deze tunnels spelen. Het was een soort speelverkeer. Er stonden allerlei kleine autootjes waar de vissen in konden zitten. Want als je dacht dat de rijkste vis alles voor zichzelf hield, dan had je het mooi mis. Meestal kocht hij dingen voor het Tropische Vissendorp zelf. Roodvinger vroeg zich af waarom de vis de hele dag doorhuilde. De vis had ook een hondje, dat de hele dag door kefte. De vis kon daar niet zo goed tegen, en daarom huilde hij de hele dag. 'Waarom doe je dat hondje dan niet weg ?' vroeg Roodvinger. 'Niemand wil het hondje hebben,' zei de rijke vis. 'En ik zou ook niet zonder het hondje kunnen, want het is mijn beste vriendje, want eigenlijk was hij door het hondje zo rijk geworden, ja, zelfs de allerrijkste.' Dat begreep Roodvinger wel. Roodvinger dacht even na, en ineens stak hij z'n vinger op en zei : 'Maar ik zou dat hondje wel graag willen hebben, hoor.' Ineens stopte de vis met huilen : 'Wil je dat echt ? Je mag hem hebben, hoor, als ik hem zo nu en dan nog wel kan bezoeken.' En zo gebeurde het. Roodvinger kreeg een huisje aangewezen en kreeg de hond mee. Wat kon dat hondje keffen zich, en het ging de hele dag door, net zolang totdat Roodvinger er tranen van in z'n ogen kreeg. Maar dat was niet erg, daar werd Roodvinger alleen maar rijk van. Maar na een tijdje kreeg Roodvinger een goed idee. Hij had nu zoveel geld, dat hij een huisje kon laten bouwen op het speelverkeer boven het Tropische Vissendorp. Daar maakten de vissen toch altijd zoveel lawaai, daar zou het gekef van het hondje niet opvallen. Daar mocht het hondje dan wonen, en dan kon het hondje ook mooi het verkeer regelen. En dat kon het hondje goed. Soms begon hij heel hard te keffen, maar soms ook zachter, en soms helemaal niet. Als visjes stoute dingen deden, dan kwam het hondje eraan rennen en bleef net zolang keffen totdat er tranen uit hun ogen kwamen, en die vielen dan helemaal naar beneden, zodat het geld in het Tropische Vissendorp goed verdeeld kon worden. Het hondje was nu een politiehondje geworden, en dat deed hij maar wat goed.

Duko was erg tevreden, en vond dat Roodvinger het heel goed had opgelost. Als een visje te arm werd doordat het niet genoeg huilde, dan ging het hondje er soms een tijdje wonen totdat het visje weer genoeg geld had. Ja, want in het Tropische Vissendorp was huilen heel gezond, en goed voor de portemonee.

Na een tijdje bedacht Roodvinger zich ineens dat hij nog oude kaboutertranen had die hij kon inwisselen bij de bank. Maar toen hij bij de bank aankwam, toen schrokken ze daar verschrikkelijk. '... Maar Roodvinger, zoveel geld hebben wij niet. Dit zijn wel hele speciale kaboutertranen, namelijk TV-tranen, en van zo'n dure soort dat we dat zelfs met al het geld in het hele Tropische Vissendorp niet kunnen betalen. U bent wel de allerrijkste vis die hier in het Tropische Vissendorp woont.'

Roodvinger had het erg naar z'n zin in het Tropische Vissendorp. De vissen werden snel beste vriendjes met hem, en Duko liet hem veel van het Tropische Vissendorp zien, en vertelde hem

er veel over. Heel voorzichtig vroeg Duko aan Roodvinger of hij misschien geen koning wilde worden van het Tropische Vissendorp, maar Roodvinger zei dat het hondje daar wel een goede voor zou zijn. En zo gebeurde het. Het hondje kreeg een kroontje en van zijn huisje boven het speelverkeer werd een groot paleis gemaakt. De vis die altijd huilde was erg trots op z'n hondje, en sinds het hondje daar boven het speelverkeer woonde, kefte hij niet meer zo. De vis zou graag weer bij z'n hondje willen wonen, en wilde graag z'n lakei worden. Roodvinger vond het tijd dat er nieuwe munten bij zouden komen. Als de hond een tijdje stil was, dan gebeurde er altijd iets vreemds. Dan groeide er een wolkje voor zijn troontje, en dat veranderde dan in een munt. Het waren stiltemunten. Maar dat gebeurde alleen bij de koning. Soms was de hondenkoning ook weleens verdrietig, en dan groeide er een donkerder wolkje voor zijn troontje, en dat veranderde dan ook in een muntje. Dat waren dan verdrietsmunten. Maar ook dat gebeurde alleen maar bij de hondenkoning. Op een dag werd de koning erg ziek. En geen dokter wist wat er met het hondje aan de hand was. In het magazijn van de koning lag het vol met stiltemunten en verdrietsmunten. Roodvinger vond het tijd dat er een nieuwe geldbank zou komen, en dat er ook met deze munten betaald zou worden. Op de munten stond het hoofd van de hond met het kroontje. Deze munten waren van erg grote waarde, van een grotere waarde dan de tranenmunten. En eindelijk zou Roodvinger dan zijn oude kaboutertranen kunnen inwisselen. En met hulp van Duko was de nieuwe geldbank snel klaar. Het gebouw stond nu aan de andere kant van het Tropische Vissendorp, en heel langzaam kon er ook betaald worden met de nieuwe munten. De vissen moesten er allemaal wel even aan wennen, maar ook voor hen was het beter. Ook zij moesten leren dat stilte erg belangrijk is, en dat verdriet soms nodig is voor grote dingen, voor grote veranderingen, niet alleen maar voor jezelf, maar ook voor anderen. En verdriet hoef je heus niet altijd te laten zien door je tranen.

En al snel werd het hondje weer beter. Het Tropische Vissendorp was nu zo anders. En eindelijk kon Roodvinger zijn oude munten inwisselen. Het Tropisch Vissendorp was nu zo rijk geworden, en dat met hele goede munten van een hondenkoning. Roodvinger kreeg een heleboel stiltemunten en een heleboel verdrietsmunten, waar hij een heleboel mee zou kunnen doen. Hij was nog wel rijker dan de hondenkoning. Maar het hondje werd weer erg ziek, en ditmaal dachten de dokters dat hij niet meer beter zou worden. Het hele Tropische Vissendorp was zo verdrietig, maar toen gebeurde er iets wonderlijks. De wolkjes begonnen ook voor de verdrietige tropische visjes te verschijnen, en nu konden ze dan zelf die munten maken. Maar de koning werd zieker en zieker, en ook Roodvinger was erg verdrietig. Zouden er niet nog meer soorten munten moeten komen ? Het hondje kon zijn werk niet meer doen, en al gauw liep het in het speelverkeer uit de hand. De vissen werden soms erg boos op elkaar. Binnen korte tijd was het Tropische Vissendorp erg veranderd. Het raakte verwilderd, en leek nu erg veel op een wild onderwater bos. En toen gebeurde er wat vreselijks. De tropische vissen begonnen Roodvinger te beschuldigen dat het allemaal zijn schuld was. 'Ja, sinds hij hier kwam ging het allemaal fout,' riepen ze. Het hondje was inmiddels doodgegaan, en de vissen waren eigenlijk niet meer zichzelf. Duko liet soldaten voor het huisje van Roodvinger neerzetten om hem te beschermen, want de vissen waren woedend. Ten einde raad liep Roodvinger naar buiten, en riep : 'Ik wil dan wel jullie koning worden.' Maar dat wilden de vissen niet. Sinds Roodvinger een koning voor het Tropische Vissendorp had aangesteld ging alles mis. Nee, een koning wilden ze niet meer. En ook Duko wist niet meer wat hij moest doen. Hij keek uit het raam om te zien wat er gebeurde. En toen gebeurde er iets vreemds. Er begonnen rode wolkjes te groeien voor de boze vissen, die heel langzaam in muntjes begonnen te veranderen. Het waren rode muntjes. 'Wat is dat ?' lachte één van de tropische visjes. 'We krijgen nieuwe muntjes.' 'Hoera,' riepen de vissen. En toen ineens vonden ze boos zijn niet meer zo erg. Maar één van de visjes keek wat er op de muntjes stond, en werd weer

een beetje verdrietig : 'Ach, hmff... ze zijn bijna niks waard, je kunt er niet veel mee.' En de vissen zagen het allemaal, en ze begonnen allemaal een beetje te klagen. Maar boos zijn ? Dat waren ze niet meer, want wie wilde nou muntjes waar je toch bijna niks mee kon doen ?

En wat er toen gebeurde ? Ze gooiden de rode muntjes op de grond en liepen stilletjes weg. Roodvinger begon direkt de muntjes op te rapen om hen te verzamelen. Dat waren er een heleboel. De vissen waren blijkbaar vergeten dat wanneer je er een heleboel van hebt, dan wordt het veel waard. Wat waren die vissen toch boos geweest. De hele grond lag er vol mee, en toen Roodvinger en Duko ermee bij de bank kwamen schrokken ze daar verschrikkelijk : 'Maar Roodvinger, zoveel geld hebben we niet, zelfs niet in het hele Tropische Vissendorp. U bent de allerrijkste hier.' Roodvinger begon te lachen. Hij liet de muntjes opbergen in een heel groot magazijn, in wel twee.

Hoofdstuk 3. Het Heksenkasteel

Duko zou Roodvinger meenemen naar een ander Tropisch Vissendorp. Hier woonden weer andere soorten vissen. Ze moesten wel een tijdje zwemmen, en Roodvinger keek vaak naar de vleugelachtige vissenoren van Duko. Hij zou die zelf ook wel willen hebben. Duko glimlachte. Ooit zou Duko hem wel vertellen hoe hij dat zou kunnen krijgen. Toen ze bij het andere Tropische Vissendorp waren aangekomen, kwamen ze er al snel achter dat ze hier een heel ander muntenstelsel hadden. Er werd hier veel betaald met allerlei soorten verdrietsmunten, en in die munten zat een soort van rood kruid. En de munten waren hier in allerlei vormen, in diervormen, driehoeksvormen en kubusvormen. Soms waren het kleine huisjes, soms kleine autootjes, alles kon. Wat een vreemde, vreemde munten waren dat zeg. Vaak kon je door die munten heenkijken, en dan zag je het rode kruid liggen. Ze zeiden dat dat een heel gevaarlijk kruid was. Een mengsel van boosheid, angst, gemeenheid en nog veel meer. De tropische vissen waren allemaal erg bang voor het kruid, en daarom gaven ze vaak ook veel geld uit. Het kruid was veilig opgesloten in de munten, maar ze wilden het zo snel mogelijk weer weggeven of besteden in een winkel. Daarom stonden de vissen van dit Tropische Vissendorp bekend als gul. Ze gaven elkaar altijd vaak geld. Ook werd er altijd veel gegokt met veel geld in de Tropische Vissencasino's. Daar waren er een heleboel van in dit dorp. Meestal als een vis heel lang veel geld thuis had liggen, dan werd zo'n vis enorm bang voor het rode kruid. En ook als het dorp teveel geld zou hebben, dan werd iedereen daar bang van, en dan brachten ze het naar een dorp in de buurt. Het dorp lag een beetje afgelegen, en was omringd door de wildernissen van de zee. Roodvinger hield erg van die wildernissen, en ging daar weleens naartoe als hij alleen wilde zijn. Soms ging Duko wel eens met hem mee. Er leefden veel roofvissen in die wildernissen. Op een dag kwamen ze een plant of een struik tegen die het rode kruid droeg. Daar schrokken ze wel erg van, zeg. Het was een struik met een mond. In het Tropische Vissendorp waren ze allemaal bang voor zulke struiken. Vroeger groeide het kruid namelijk overal en die struiken vraten alle vissen op. Ja, er zijn vele oorlogen geweest tussen de vissen en de struiken van het rode kruid. Nu waren er dan nog maar een paar struiken over. 'Zo,' zei de struik, 'eindelijk tevreden, dat wij er nog maar met een paar zijn. Jullie hebben ons allemaal weggemaaid om jullie dorp te kunnen bouwen.' 'Pardon, rode struik,' zei Duko, 'wij zijn niet van dit Tropische Vissendorp. Wij komen uit een ander.' 'Oh,' zei de struik, 'dat verandert dan de zaak. Wij zouden graag willen dat er weer wat struiken met rood kruid groeien in het dorp. Kunnen jullie ons daarbij helpen ?' 'Nou,' zei Roodvinger, 'niet als jullie de vissen opvreten. Jullie kunnen hier mooi groeien in de wildernis, maar het dorp is voor de vissen.' Maar toen werd de struik wel een beetje boos. 'Zij

begonnen het eerst met het wegmaaien van ons, en sindsdien begonnen wij met het opvreten van vissen,' riep de struik. 'Maar dat is al zo lang geleden, we zullen beloven geen vissen meer op te eten.' Roodvinger keek bedenkelijk. 'Ik zou het risico niet nemen, Roodvinger. Het zijn gevaarlijke struiken. Het zijn vleesetende struiken. Zij horen thuis in de wildernis, in dit reservaat, en de vissen horen in het Tropische Vissendorp,' zei Duko. Roodvinger knikte. Maar toen werd de struik nog kwader. 'En jullie hebben zelfs het rode kruid in jullie geld opgesloten. Leuke gevangenis,' riep hij. 'Ja, dat moet,' zei Roodvinger, 'want dat kruid is levensgevaarlijk.' 'Dat moet ? Dat moet ? Niks moet,' sputterde de struik. 'En als dat kruid dan zo gevaarlijk is, haal het dan bij me weg, snel. Ik begin bang te worden.' Maar Duko trok Roodvinger snel naar achteren. 'Blijf bij hem uit de buurt, Roodvinger, ze zijn niet te vertrouwen, die struiken.'

'Ach, wat jammer nou,' klaagde de struik. 'Nu laten ze mij hier alleen zitten met dat rode kruid.' 'Hoe kan het dan dat je dat rode kruid hebt ?' vroeg Roodvinger. 'Ach,' klaagde de struik, 'ik was vroeger helemaal geen struik. Ik ben betoverd door een boze heks. Ik moest haar kasteel bewaken, en dat kon alleen maar als ik een grote gevaarlijke struik zou zijn. Ik was haar ... enige lakei ...' 'En waar is dat kasteel nu ?' vroeg Roodvinger. 'Ver weg in de zee,' zei de struik, 'ik ben gevlucht.' Roodvinger dacht diep na. Duko vertrouwde het niet helemaal. 'Roodvinger, kom mee, we moeten terug.' Maar Roodvinger wilde er eerst achter komen of de struik de waarheid sprak. 'Het maakt niet uit of hij de waarheid spreekt of niet, als hij de lakei was van zo'n boze heks, wat hebben we dan met hem te doen ?' zei Duko. 'Ach, zie je wel, jullie zijn niets anders dan die andere vissen van het dorp. Het kan jullie niets schelen. Ik was ooit opgesloten door deze heks, en toen zei ze dat als ik zeven jaren haar lakei wilde zijn, dan zou ze me vrij zetten, maar ze heeft me na die zeven jaren in deze struik betoverd,' zei de struik. 'Hoe ben je dan ontsnapt ?' vroeg Roodvinger. 'Pas na vele lange jaren, wel honderden jaren, toen ik zo groot was geworden dat ik het kasteel kon opslokken. Ik heb het kasteel toen heel ver weg gespuwd. Ze zeggen nu dat het kasteel brandt, en dat ze nu een vuurheks is.'

'Hoe kun je dan weer normaal worden ?' vroeg Roodvinger. 'Als de heks verslagen is,' zei de struik. 'En hoe wordt de heks verslagen ?' vroeg Roodvinger weer. Maar dat wist de struik niet. Duko was inmiddels weggegaan. Hij vond Roodvinger veel te eigenwijs, en vond het allemaal veel te gevaarlijk. Maar Roodvinger wilde wel eens weten of dat brandende heksenkasteel echt bestond, en besloot op onderzoek uit te gaan. Hij moest een hele lange tijd zwemmen, maar als een Roodvisje ging hem dat wel gemakkelijk af. In de verte zag hij wat rook, en hij besloot er op af te gaan. En ja hoor, er stond inderdaad een kasteel. En wat was dat kasteel groot zeg. Maar of het nu brandde ? Het was er wel een beetje warm. Het was een erg duister kasteel, maar toch gaf het iets licht, en soms was het bijna wit. Het kasteel stond op een soort heuvel, en Roodvinger moest langs een groot pad zwemmen. Voor de grote poort van het kasteel stonden wat skeletten. Ze hadden hele lange speren. 'Zo,' werd er vanuit de poort geroepen, 'kom je me eindelijk eens opzoeken.' Maar Roodvinger wist niet van wie die stem was. Er liep een skelet om Roodvinger af, en die wees op het horloge van Roodvinger. Ineens begon het horloge te veranderen. Een plaatje van het heksenkasteel met de heuvel was ineens aan de top van het horloge gekomen, met de wijzertjes eroverheen, en Roodvinger's handje was ineens heel warm geworden. En weer wees het skelet op het horloge, en de wijzertjes werden van goud, en ook het bandje van het horloge, met de randen. Ineens kwam er een oude vrouw aanlopen met een witte doek om haar hoofd. 'Zo, daar ben je, eindelijk,' zei ze. 'Ken ik u dan ?' vroeg Roodvinger. 'Nee,' zei de vrouw, 'ik ken jou.' En ze haalde een glazen bol tevoorschijn. Hiermee heb ik jou altijd gevolgd, Roodvinger, toen je onderwater was, en jij kan veel voor mij betekenen. Kom mee.' En daar liep Roodvinger achter de vrouw aan. De poort sloeg achter hen dicht, en de skeletten gingen er voor staan. Er was een open

ruimte binnen het kasteel, en er zaten wat fluitspelers naast wat waterputjes, en er liepen wat boerinnen rond. Het was een vreemde wereld onderwater. Door een opening in een muurtje kwamen ze in een hele grote tuin terecht, nog steeds binnen het kasteel. De zon scheen en er liepen wat kabouters rond. 'Goedzo,' zei de vrouw. 'Je doet het erg goed.' 'Maar wat doe ik dan goed ?' vroeg Roodvinger. 'Mij navolgen,' zei de vrouw. Plotseling greep Roodvinger naar zijn buik. En hij begon te grommen. 'Ach jongen,' zei de vrouw, 'nog nooit een wolf geworden ?' Het was een wolvenkasteel. Hier betoverde de vrouw bezoekers in wolven. Roodvinger had nog steeds een enorme pijn in z'n buik, en was al bijna helemaal een wolf geworden. Langzaam liep hij de vrouw achterna, en hij liep steeds trager. Hij kon alleen nog maar heel langzaam denken en bewegen. 'Goedzo, jongen,' zei de vrouw. Ze gingen door veel tuinen heen binnen het kasteel, en die tuinen waren zo betoverend. Eindelijk waren ze dan in een huisje binnen het kasteel aangekomen. Roodvinger moest op een stoeltje zitten en kreeg een schort voor. De vrouw begon hem te voeren .... pap. Roodvinger gromde. Hij was nu een wolf. 'Dus,' zei de vrouw, 'jij wilt mij dus verslaan. Wat nou als ik jou versla ?' Maar Roodvinger begon te grommen. 'Ik wil jou helemaal niet verslaan. Ik wilde alleen maar even kijken of dat heksenkasteel echt bestond.' 'Even kijken, hè,' zei de vrouw, 'kijken kost geld.'

Ineens kreeg de vrouw erge krampen in haar buik en begon in een slang te veranderen. En niet zomaar een slang, maar eentje die vuur spuwde. Roodvinger begon het verhaal van de rode struik te vertellen, en de vrouw begon te lachen. 'Ha ha ha, en jij gelooft dat, zeker ?' En daar kwam ineens de rode struik binnenlopen en ging op een stoel zitten. 'Ik heb hem uitgezonden om jou beet te nemen, ha ha ha,' zei de vrouw schaterlachend. Had Roodvinger nu maar beter naar Duko geluisterd. Die vertrouwde het zaakje al niet. 'En weet je trouwens wat voor pap dat was ?' gilde de vrouw van het lachen. 'RODE KRUID PAP ! HA HA HAA.' En weer greep Roodvinger naar zijn buik. Wat een gemene streek was dit, en wat een gemene, gemene heks, zeg. Roodvinger begon te veranderen in .... Nee, niet een haai, niet in een slang en ook niet in een tijger ... maar in een struik met het rode kruid. 'Nee,' schreeuwde Roodvinger, 'dan kan ik nooit meer terug naar het Tropische Vissendorp.' 'Dat hoeft ook niet,' schreeuwde de heks lachend, 'je kan hierblijven.' In de verte hoorde Roodvinger gebrul, en geluid als kerktorens. 'De kerkdienst gaat beginnen,' schreeuwde de heks vals. En ze greep de twee rode struiken vast en sleurde ze mee het huisje uit. De kerkzaal van het heksenkasteel was een enorme zaal. Roodvinger had nog nooit zoiets gezien. Het was hier erg mistig, en zelfs de grootste wolken konden hier binnenkomen. De kerkbanken beneden zaten vol met rode struiken, en er waren veel balkonnen, onnoemelijk veel. De rode struiken hadden vaak violen of andere muziekinstrumenten waarop ze speelden. Roodvinger werd ergens op een balkon neergezet tussen andere rode struiken, en er werd een fluit tussen zijn bladeren gedrukt. De heks liep helemaal naar voren, en besteeg een hele lange mistige trap tot de preekstoel. Ze had inmiddels een heel lang gewaad aan, en nog steeds was er gebrul in de verte. Langs de muren boven de balkonnen tot aan het hoge plafond zwommen de grootste grijze haaien tussen de mist door. Roodvinger kon bijna het plafond niet zien. Toen de heks op de hoge preekstoel stond kwam er vuur uit haar mond, en toen kwamen er een heleboel wolven binnen die tussen de rode struiken gingen zitten, ook naast Roodvinger. Wat waren dat een boel wolven, zeg. Toen de wolven allemaal zaten kwam er ineens ijs uit de heks van de mond vallen, en weer begon ze in een slang te veranderen, een hele lange slang, en haar hoofd begon ver boven de preekstoel uit te reiken. 'Ha ha ha,' gilde ze. 'Ha ha ha, wat zijn jullie allemaal dom, zeg.' En iedereen stond op en zei : 'Ja, wij zijn dom.' Maar Roodvinger bleef gewoon zitten. Dat vond de heks wel een beetje vervelend. En kwam met haar slangengezicht heel dicht bij Roodvinger. 'Zo,' sprak ze, 'dus jij vindt jezelf niet dom. En daar greep ze Roodvinger vast en bracht hem tot heel hoog op de preekstoel. 'Zo,' sprak ze weer, 'vertel jij maar eens aan iedereen in de zaal dat jij jezelf niet dom vindt.' En Roodvinger pakte met zijn bladeren de

microfoon vast en zei : 'I... ik ... v... vind mezelf n.. niet dom.' Dat vond de heks kennelijk niet zo leuk. 'Je bent maar een domme struik,' gilde ze. En toen begon ze een preek te houden die zo saai was, dat iedereen ervan in slaap viel. 'Ha ha ha ha,' gilde ze, 'ha ha ha ha.' In toen drukte ze op een knopje, en de vloeren schoof open, terwijl iedereen erin viel. En weer gilde de heks van het lachen. En de kerk begon te branden, zo hard te branden, terwijl een steen zich vormde om de preekstoel heen, waar Roodvinger en de heks nog steeds waren. En als een lift begon de steen omhoog te gaan, en het plafond schoof een stukje open. Daar ging de steen open, en de heks was weer gewoon een heks, geen slang meer. 'Wat is er gebeurd,' gilde ze. 'Wat doe ik hier ?' 'Nou,' zei Roodvinger, die ook weer normaal begon te worden, 'je hebt daar beneden de boel flink op stelten gezet.' En de heks begon heel langzaam in een jong meisje te veranderen. 'Ach, ziet u,' sprak ze ineens met een heel andere stem. 'Ik heb een hele nare ziekte, waardoor ik telkens in allerlei dieren verander en dan doe ik de vreemdste dingen. Wat heb ik nu weer gedaan, en wie bent u ? Ben ik soms weer in een oude vrouw veranderd geweest ?' 'Dat kunt u wel zeggen,' zei Roodvinger. Maar Roodvinger was erg op z'n hoede. Ineens greep het meisje hem vast, en veranderde weer een beetje in een oude vrouw, en probeerde hem van het dak van de grote kerk af te duwen. Maar Roodvinger kon zich gelukkig losmaken, en rende weg. Gelukkig was het dak met andere daken verbonden, en zo moest Roodvinger over vele daken rennen om uit het kasteel weg te komen. Maar in de verte hoorde hij het meisje lachen : 'Ha, ha, ha, je komt toch niet ver, want je hebt het rode kruid in je.' En weer greep Roodvinger naar zijn buik en begon in een ander dier te veranderen. 'Je bent hier tussen de draken,' gilde het meisje, 'je bent nu één van ons. Je kunt nooit meer weg. Dit is een drakentelevisie waarin je opgesloten bent.' Ineens waren er overal bliksemschichten en er verschenen grote rode slangen als tralies om het kasteel heen, tot hoog in de lucht. Zij waren de slangen van het rode kruid. Er zat wat kruid aan de handen van Roodvinger, en langzaam kwamen daar slangen uit voort. Het kruid prikkelde op zijn handen, en ook zijn buik begon te prikkelen. Ja, hij had van het rode kruid gegeten, waar de heks pap van had gemaakt. Zou die pap hem zo verschrikkelijk hebben betoverd dat hij nu nooit meer wegkon. Het was een vreemde jeuk, en hij begon rare bewegingen te maken om van de jeuk af te komen, terwijl hij het meisje achter hem hoorde lachen ... schaterlachen.

Hoofdstuk 4. De Rode Nacht

Roodvinger had al zo vaak in allerlei televisies gewoond. Zijn hele leven was een televisie. Maar nu was hij zelf in een TV aan het veranderen. Zou hij een TV-dier worden, een TV-struik, of ... wat ? Zijn hele lichaam prikkelde en jeukte van het rode kruid, en het was helemaal niet zo'n vervelend gevoel. Roodvinger was nu eenmaal een televisie-mannetje, en daar moest hij mee leren leven. Als Roodvinger een normaal leven had geleid, dan waren er vast geen boeken als dit over hem geschreven. Na een tijdje vond Roodvinger het Rode Kruid dus niet meer vervelend, en dronk er zelfs rode kruidenthee van, en rode kruidenkoffie.

Overdag was het heksenkasteel als een winkel waar je allerlei dingen kon kopen. Je moest dan betalen met het rode kruid. Dat ging op een hele vreemde manier. Er waren bepaalde betaal-apparaten. Daar moest je dan je arm instoppen, of je been, en soms je hoofd. Eens in de week was er de weeknacht. Dat was de langste en donkerste nacht van de week, die wel twee keer zolang duurde als een normale nacht. Dan kwamen de verschrikkelijkste draken naar het kasteel om te vergaderen. Sommigen zeiden dat ze van onder de grond kwamen, en anderen zeiden dat ze uit de muren kwamen. Meestal ging Roodvinger dan op zo'n nacht een lange wandeling maken door de wildernissen van het kasteel in een soort buitenplaats. Natuurlijk

waren die wildernissen allemaal ommuurd. Alles gebeurde in het kasteel en in ommuurde buitenplaatsen. Er was geen ontsnapping mogelijk.

Op zo'n nacht kwam Roodvinger eens een heksenkind tegen, dicht bij een vijvertje. De grond was een beetje vochtig, en er hing wat mist. Het heksenkind zei niets, maar Roodvinger merkte dat het kind een beetje verdrietig was. Wat Roodvinger niet wist was dat het heksenkind eigenlijk een draak was die de rust opzocht. Stilletjes liep Roodvinger dichterbij. Ineens stapte het heksenkind op hem af, en zei : 'Zeg, zullen we met de gouden nacht naar de drakenbergen gaan ?' Gouden nachten waren eens per maand. Een gouden nacht was de langste en donkerste nacht van de maand. Deze nacht duurde wel een aantal keren langer dan de weeknacht. Er gebeurden dan altijd hele vreemde dingen, vreemder dan alle andere dagen en nachten van de maand. 'Maar heksenkind,' zei Roodvinger. 'Ik zit in dit kasteel opgesloten. Ik kan echt niet weg.' Maar toen zei het heksenkind : 'Ik zal er wel voor zorgen dat jij naar de drakenbergen kunt. Mijn vader is namelijk de baas van dit kasteel.' 'Oh,' zei Roodvinger, 'ik dacht dat de boze heks dat was.' 'Ach, welnee,' zei het heksenkind, 'zij is gewoon een domme robot. Vader gebruikt haar weleens om iemand naar het kasteel te brengen.' Roodvinger vond het heksenkind wel aardig en zei : 'Goed dan, ik kom op de gouden nacht wel weer terug, dan kun je me naar de drakenbergen brengen.' En zo gebeurde het. Toen het gouden nacht was stapte Roodvinger weer op het heksenkind af, maar ineens begonnen rode struiken aan de muren te groeien. 'Oh ja,' zei Roodvinger, 'helemaal vergeten. Het rode kruid.' 'Ach,' zei het heksenkind, 'mijn vader heeft dat rode kruid uitgevonden. Hij komt ons zo ophalen, en dan zul je wel zien wat er met het rode kruid gebeurd.' En ja hoor, daar kwam de vader van het heksenkind al aanvliegen. Het was een geweldig grote vliegende draak met schubben en een hele smallen gespleten tong. Hij was kleurig als een vlinder. Het heksenkind sprong op de rug van haar vader en ook Roodvinger stapte naar boven. En daar gingen ze. Terwijl de rode struiken begonnen te smelten. Na een tijdje vliegen kwamen ze aan bij de drakenbergen. Hier woonde de draak in een heel groot kasteel. 'Weer een kasteel,' zei Roodvinger. Ja, de draak had vele kastelen, en daar was het heksenkasteel er één van. En weer stonden er wat skeletten voor de grote poort. Dezen hadden wat gescheurde en afgebrande klederen aan, en leken een beetje op piraten. 'Dit is het piratenkasteel,' zei het heksenkind. Een skelet kwam naar Roodvinger toestappen en wees naar zijn horloge. Ineens begon het linker deel van zijn horloge te glimmen en er verscheen een plaatje van het piratenkasteel, terwijl de gouden wijzertjes er over heen lagen. Het kasteel lag tussen de bergen, en was erg groot.

Kom maar verder, zei de draak. Maar ineens begonnen er struiken van het rode kruid voor de poorten te groeien, en er kwamen rode slangen uit voort. 'Hij moet terug naar het heksenkasteel,' zeiden de rode slangen. Ze hadden hele doorzichtige grote groene ogen, en ze spuwden vuur. Toen werd de draak wel even heel erg boos : 'Ik ben hier de baas,' riep hij, 'en ik ben de baas van het heksenkasteel.' Maar de slangen vielen de draak aan, en beten in de hoge hoed die hij droeg, en daar begon allemaal rood kruid uit te stromen. Toen begon het heksenkind in de draak te veranderen die het was. Roodvinger keek zijn ogen uit. Het dier had prachtige rode schubben en lange gele en groene strepen. 'Vader, zal ik hem dan naar een ander kasteel brengen ?' vroeg het heksenkind. Dat vond de vader wel goed. 'Snel, klim op mijn rug, Roodvinger,' zei het drakenkind. En daar vloog de draak, en de slangen konden haar niet achtervolgen. Na een lange tijd kwamen ze bij een ander kasteel aan. Dit kasteel was ook van de drakenvader. Er groeiden hier allemaal struiken. Het was diep op de zeebodem gebouwd, bijna in een soort kuil. Naast het kasteel was een enorme zeekloof, een enorm zeeravijn. 'Ik wil daar in dat gat naarbinnen,' riep Roodvinger. En daar vloog de draak de diepte in. Wat was het hier diep, zeg, en donker. Ineens stond er een klok met een piratenhoed voor hen : 'Halt,' zei de klok, 'dit is het domein van de Rode Nacht, de langste en donkerste

nacht van het jaar. Hier wordt het rode kruid gemaakt. Dit rode kruid is magnetisch, zodat iedereen die het rode kruid draagt in de televisie-wereld blijft. Wij noemen dit ook wel TV-zwaartekracht.' Maar de draak begon hard te lachen : 'Hahaha, wat nou als je goed kan vliegen zoals ik ? Zwaartekracht ? Laat me niet lachen.' Maar toen begon de klok erg kwaad te worden : 'Zeg, of je nou zwemt, loopt of vliegt, je kan de zwaartekracht van de tv niet ontsnappen als je van het rode kruid hebt gegeten. En hier, in het domein van de Rode Nacht kun je niet eens vliegen, en hoe dieper je gaat, hoe zwaarder alles wordt, en hoe trager alles gaat. Dat is nog eens zwaartekracht, en zo worden de rode struiken gemaakt.' Maar de draak was nog niet overtuigd, en rende de diepte in. Maar toen hij probeerde te vliegen lukte hem dat niet. En hoe dieper hij kwam, hoe zwaarder alles ging. 'Oh ja,' zei de klok, 'en ik was nog even vergeten te zeggen dat je hier alleen maar in de diepte kunt en niet omhoog. De enigen die hier kunnen uitkomen zijn de rode struiken.' Nou, daar had Roodvinger eigenlijk niet zo'n zin in, om weer in een rode struik te veranderen. Maar misschien zat er wel niets anders op. En hoe dieper ze kwamen hoe meer ze begonnen te veranderen in een rode struik. Het was hier wel heel lekker warm, terwijl alles zwaarder en zwaarder werd.

Na een lange tijd waren ze op de bodem terecht gekomen van het diepe ravijn. Maar er was wel ergens een luikje waardoor ze door de bodem konden. En weet je waar ze toen terecht kwamen ? Weer in de heksenkerk. De kerk was helemaal leeg, en huilend ging Roodvinger op een bankje zitten. Ook de draak keek erg sip. Ze waren nu beiden een rode struik. En voor Roodvinger was dat niet de eerste keer, en de draak wist hier ook alles van af. En weer kwam de heks binnen. 'Nee, hè, niet weer,' zei Roodvinger. Maar de draak zei : 'Vlug Roodvinger, op haar achterhoofd tussen haar haren zit ergens een knopje waarmee we haar uit moeten zetten. Als ik haar nu aan de praat hou, dan sluip jij stilletjes naar achteren, en geeft het knopje een duw.' 'Dag heks, hoe gaat het ermee, alles wel aan boord ?' En de heks liep zonder wat te zeggen op de draak af, die nu een rode struik was. 'Zo, kleine rode struik, wat een praatjes heb jij vandaag, zeg,' zei de heks luid, terwijl Roodvinger stilletjes achter de heks probeerde te komen. En ja hoor, met een duik vloog Roodvinger naar haar achterhoofd en drukte tussen haar haren het knopje in. Als een pop ging de heks op het bankje achter haar zitten en sloot haar ogen, waarna ze haar hoofd liet zakken en voorover boog. 'Ziezo,' zei de draak, 'die is uitgezet.' Roodvinger was erg opgelucht, anders zouden ze misschien alles weer van voren af aan moeten meemaken, en daar had Roodvinger niet zoveel zin in, want het zou ook nog wel veel gekker dan de eerste keer kunnen worden. Nee, daar zat Roodvinger niet echt op te wachten. Verrassingen als die van de heks waren niet altijd bepaald aangenaam. Gelukkig begon Roodvinger weer normaal te worden, en ook de draak. En toen veranderde de draak weer in het heksenkind.

Hoofdstuk 5. De TV-Kroon

Roodvinger begon het heksenkasteel een beetje te leren kennen, en ze wisten vele gevaarlijke poppen en robotten in het kasteel uit te zetten. Vaak haalden ze dan de knopjes eruit, zodat ze niet meer aangezet zouden kunnen worden. Roodvinger was inmiddels dikke maatjes geworden met het heksenkind, die dus eigenlijk een echte draak was. Roodvinger begon het steeds meer naar z'n zin te krijgen, en wilde eigenlijk niet meer weg. Hij wilde de wildernissen van dit kasteel, zowel binnen als buiten, leren kennen. En natuurlijk aten ze vaak van het rode kruid ... goed voor de zwaartekracht. Ze konden de onderdelen van de gevaarlijke poppen en robotten goed gebruiken voor de herbouw van dit toch wel erg gevaarlijke heksenkasteel. Roodvinger en het heksenkind veranderden zo nu en dan nog wel

eens in rode struiken, maar dat vonden ze niet meer zo erg, want de dag daarna waren ze weer vol met het rode kruid, en dan konden ze weer veel dingen kopen in de heksenwinkel. Vaak kochten ze dan dingen voor het kasteel. De dieren van het kasteel voelden zich veel meer op hun gemak, sinds het kasteel bazen had die goed voor hen zorgden. Ze zagen altijd uit naar de weeknachten, de maandnachten en de jaarnachten, want dan was het altijd extra rustig. Meestal kwamen de draken van stilte dan wel, om te vergaderen, en dat deden ze dan altijd in de grote kerk. Op een dag veranderde Roodvinger in een prachtig vliegend insect met doorzichtige vleugeltjes. En je kon het rode kruid zo door z'n lijfje zien stromen. Dit was eens na een Rode Nacht gebeurd, toen er een heleboel stille draken waren gekomen. Ze hadden Roodvinger zo prachtig betoverd, omdat hij zo'n goede baas van het heksenkasteel was geworden. Ja, nu was hij dan de koning geworden van het heksenkasteel, een prachtige slowaakse vlieg. En de kroon hadden de stille draken speciaal meegenomen uit Brannan, het land der vliegen. En allen dronken ze druivensap voor dit speciale moment. Maar Roodvinger gaf de kroon aan het heksenkind. En zo zouden ze samen het heksenkasteel beheren. Dit vonden de stille draken een daad van een echte koning, en ze gaven de kroon van het rode kruid aan Roodvinger. Beide kronen zouden de betoveringen afwisselen, zodat ze telkens weer iets anders zouden zijn, voor het juiste moment. En ja, het waren dus echte TV-kronen, en een echte koning moest natuurlijk zoiets hebben.

Hoofdstuk 6. Het Land der Vogelspinnen

Nu was het zo dat Brannan, het land der vliegen, al tijden in oorlog was met Lapsalvania, het land der spinnen. Dit werd ook wel de grote witte oorlog genoemd. Op een dag zouden Roodvinger en het heksenkind daar eens een kijkje nemen. Met het heksenkind kon Roodvinger altijd heel makkelijk het kasteel verlaten. Dan veranderde het heksenkind zichzelf gewoon in een vliegende draak. Heel gewoon. Het was wel een eind vliegen hoor, naar Brannan. Een paar keer per dag veranderde Roodvinger voor een tijdje altijd in een prachtige vlieg sinds hij was betoverd door de stille draken en de prachtige kroon van het rode kruid droeg. Nu wilde hij toch weleens naar Brannan toe. En als ze ergens rood kruid hadden, dan was dat wel Brannan. Prachtige struiken met rood kruid stonden daar. Maar ook struiken met zwart kruid, vliegenkruid. En het geurde zo lekker. De bossen waren daar dan ook erg poederig, omdat de wind het kruid vaak verspreidde. In de verte zagen ze wat soldaten lopen. Het waren vliegen. Toen ze dichterbij de soldaten gekomen waren vroeg Roodvinger wat ze in hun geweren hadden zitten. Er zat kruid in : rood kruid en zwart kruid bijvoorbeeld. Roodvinger vroeg zich af waarom er een oorlog was tussen Brannan en Lapsalvania. Ze besloten verder te vliegen naar Lapsalvania. Dat was nog wel een eind vliegen. Maar wat ze toen zagen, daar schrokken ze wel even van. Tussen Brannan en Lapsalvania in vloog er kruid heen en weer, en het stormde er verschrikkelijk. Ja, dit was echte oorlog. En het kruid vloog zo snel, dat het erg gevaarlijk was. De draak besloot om een omweg te maken. Maar overal werd flink gevochten. Eindelijk na een lange tijd vliegen was er een stuk waar niet gevochten werd. En de draak besloot met Roodvinger over dat stuk heen te vliegen. Onderweg besloten ze even te rusten, maar toen ze op de grond terechtkwamen zakte de grond in. Het was een val, en ze gleden heel diep door een tunnel richting Lapsalvania. Na een tijdje hoorden ze een plof, en ze keken recht in de ogen van een spin. 'Wat komen jullie hier doen,' vroeg de spin. 'Eh, we wilden wat meer afweten over de oorlog tussen Brannan en Lapsalvania,' zei Roodvinger. 'Ah, pottenkijkers, hè,' zei de spin. 'Nee,' zei Roodvinger, 'we dachten dat we misschien tot hulp zouden kunnen zijn.' 'Oh,' zei de spin, 'kom dan maar mee.' En langs een trap gingen ze naar boven. Ineens waren ze buiten. Er lag hier overal een soort sneeuw, maar

de spin zei dat het wit kruid was. De draak en Roodvinger keken hun ogen uit. Wat een prachtige gebouwen waren daar. En in de verte stond een grote kerk. 'Kom maar mee,' zei de spin. En daar gingen ze richting de kerk. Maar toen ze in de kerk gekomen waren schrokken de draak en Roodvinger vreselijk. Het was ... de heksenkerk, precies dezelfde. Hoe kon dat nou ? 'Tja,' zei de spin, 'dat kan gebeuren met het witte kruid, dan is het toch weer anders dan je gedacht had.' 'Dan gebruiken jullie dat witte kruid zeker ook in de oorlog,' zei Roodvinger. 'Ja,' zei de spin, 'en daarom wordt het ook de grote witte oorlog genoemd. Het is spiegelend wit, een soort toverspiegel. Je zou de oorlog dus ook een toverwedstrijd kunnen noemen. Zouden jullie geen tovenaars van het witte kruid willen worden ?' vroeg de spin. En toen liet Roodvinger de kroon van het rode kruid zien. 'Wat een prachtige, prachtige kroon is dat, zeg,' zei de spin. 'Kom maar mee,' zei de spin. En weer liepen ze de kerk uit, en kwamen op een eenzaam pad terecht door een wildernis. Na een tijdje zei de spin : 'Aan het einde van dit pad ligt Laprakod, het land der vogelspinnen. Zij kunnen jullie verder helpen.' De spin ging weer terug en Roodvinger en de draak liepen verder. Langs de kanten van het pad groeide veel vreemd en wild kruid. Na een tijdje kwamen ze aan in Laprakod. In de verte stond een kerkgebouw met een hele hoge toren. 'Ik vermoed al wat,' zei Roodvinger. 'Ja,' zei de draak, 'ik begrijp wat je bedoelt.' En inderdaad, toen ze in de kerk kwamen was het weer de heksenkerk. Maar ditmaal zaten er vogelspinnen in de kerk. De hele kerk was er vol mee. Ze zaten op de banken, op de preekstoel en aan de muren, en overal in de gangpaden. Roodvinger en de draak gingen weer naar buiten, en de draak veranderde weer in het heksenkind.

Er lagen allerlei soorten kruid hier op straat, en er liepen wat vogelspinnen met kleine popjes tussen hun poten. Ineens greep Roodvinger naar z'n buik en begon ook in een vogelspin te veranderen. Er liep ook een vreemd mannetje op straat met zijn hoofd als een spin, en om zijn hoofd wat witte bloemblaadjes. 'Oh, wat grappig,' zei het mannetje. Volgt u mij maar naar de koning. Ze moesten een tijdje wandelen totdat ze in de verte buiten het dorpje een pad zagen dat eindigde in een reuzachtig wit spiegelend rozenpaleis. Het mannetje zei dat daar de koning van Laprakod woonde. Na een tijdje kwamen ze bij het paleis aan, waar het een beetje naar pudding rook. Op een troon in het paleis zat een hele grote vogelspin. De vogelspin had hele scherpe tanden, en hele woeste ogen. Op de grond lag allerlei soorten kruid. De koning brulde, terwijl de muren van het paleis in brand begonnen te staan. Ineens kwamen er van alle kanten vogelspinnen aanlopen. Ze hadden grote speren in hun handen en wezen daarmee naar het horloge van Roodvinger. Ook wees er één naar de kroon van Roodvinger. Al snel stond de hele zaal in brand, en de koning rende naar een deur achter zijn troon, en gleed daarin weg. Het heksenkind en Roodvinger renden snel achter de koning aan, en kwamen in een tunnel waar de muren heel zacht en heet waren. De muur was er erg schubbig, en ze harden veel pijn op hun borst en in hun buik. Stapje voor stapje liepen ze verder. Het was een hele lange buis waar ze in terecht waren gekomen. In de verte hoorden ze de koning bulderen. Maar de buis begon langzaam met water vol te lopen, dus ze moesten snel zijn. Na een lange tijd lopen kwamen ze in een andere paleiszaal terecht, en weer zagen ze de koning op een troon zitten. De koning was nu groter dan ooit, en de hele grond lag bezaaid met roze kruid, terwijl er rozen aan de muur groeiden. Ineens was de koning in een kind veranderd, in een jongetje, en rende weg door een deur aan de zijkant van de troon. Even later zagen ze hem door de deur gluren, en kwam hij weer voor de deur staan. Het leek wel alsof hij wilde dat ze achter hem aankwamen. En weer begonnen de muren te branden, en moesten ze snel door de deur gaan, want al snel stond de hele zaal in brand. Er lagen wat poppen in de gang achter de deur op de grond, en die raapten ze op. De gang was vol van deuren, en in de verte zagen ze het jongetje van deur tot deur lopen, heel snel. Het leek wel alsof die gang nooit ophield, en het jongetje bleef maar rennen. Het leek wel alsof ze nooit dichterbij kwamen, terwijl ze toch aardig hard liepen. En het begon ook steeds heter te worden. Ze besloten door een deur van de gang te

gaan, maar er waren daar geen vloeren. Ze konden alleen maar in de diepte kijken. En bij een andere deur gebeurde hetzelfde. Al die deuren liepen uit op één grote ravijn. Op een gegeven moment moesten ze wel springen, want de gang werd te heet. Gelukkig was de grond waarop ze vielen erg zacht en schubbig. Ook de muren waren hier erg schubbig. Er lagen links en rechts vele poppen, en in het midden van dit ravijn stond een kooitje op tafel als van spiegelend goud, en er zat een kraai of raaf bovenop. In het kooitje lag een rat die zo plat als een dubbeltje was. 'Koning, sire,' zei de raaf met krasse stem, 'we hebben bezoek.' Van achter een dikke boom kwam het jongetje tevoorschijn, heel verlegen, en begon heel langzaam weer in een vogelspin te veranderen. Maar nu was de vogelspin heel klein en ging door de tralies in het kooitje naarbinnen. De vogelspin ging op de platte rat staan, en dat was een geheim luikje waar de vogelspin doorheen schoof en verdween. 'Ik zou hetzelfde kunstje maar doen,' grapte de raaf, 'want het gaat hier zo erg heet worden.' Daar schrokken het heksenkind en Roodvinger wel erg van. Blijkbaar werden hier hun toverkunsten op de proef gesteld. Roodvinger was wel een vogelspin nu, maar veel te groot. En ook het heksenkind was veel te groot voor het kooitje en het kleine luikje. En het begon in de ravijn al heter en heter te worden.

Vlug nam Roodvinger zijn kroon in zijn handen en begon wat aan de schijven te draaien, maar niets hielp. Maar toen herinnerde Roodvinger zich iets. De vogelspinnen hadden ook op het horloge gewezen, dus misschien zou er weer een plaatje bijgekomen zijn. En ja hoor, aan de rechterkant was er een plaatje bijgekomen van een kasteel onder de grond. En aan de zijkant van het horloge zat een klein knopje. Roodvinger drukte het knopje in, en ja hoor, hij begon al kleiner te worden. Het heksenkind zat ook aan de schijven van zijn kroon te draaien, maar niets gebeurde. Wat moesten ze nou doen ? Roodvinger wilde zijn vriendje niet in de steek laten. Roodvinger stond al voor het kooitje en kon al bijna door de tralies naarbinnen. Inmiddels waren de muren al in vlammen, en ook de tafel waarop het heksenkind zat was al flink heet aan het worden. Maar daar kwam ineens het vogelspinnetje weer door het luikje naar binnen, en droeg een horloge om aan het heksenkind te geven. Het was bijna hetzelfde horloge als die van Roodvinger. Vlug drukte het heksenkind op het knopje aan de zijkant en begon kleiner te worden. Dit ging niet zo heel snel, maar Roodvinger kon inmiddels al door de tralies naarbinnen. Snel stapte hij op het luikje, wat direkt openging. Het vogelspinnetje was inmiddels alweer verdwenen. De hele zaal stond al bijna in vuur en vlam, alleen het tafeltje nog niet. Het heksenkind begon enorm te zweten. Zou hij het nog halen ? Hij stond al voor het kooitje en kon al bijna door de tralies. Zijn voeten deden pijn van de hitte, en hij kuchte al van de rook. Snel glipte hij door de tralies heen door zijn adem diep in te houden, ging op het luikje staan, en zakte naar beneden. Ze gleden door een enorm lange rode tunnel. De tunnel was erg schubbig, zacht, maar ook warm. Gelukkig niet zo heet als de zaal boven hen. Ze kwamen in een klein slootje terecht, waar ook een vogelspinkonijn zat met hele grote oren. 'De koning verzint steeds wat nieuws,' sliste het vogelspinkonijn. En ineens klapten aan alle kanten beeldschermen uit waarop ze het jongetje zagen rennen. Hij rende over allerlei trappen, en hij kwam allerlei elfjes-achtige wezens tegen. 'Waar zou hij nou zijn ?' dacht Roodvinger. 'Ach,' zei het konijn, 'hij wil gewoon dat je hem overal volgt, en dat je dan terechtkomt waar hij je wil hebben, weer in één of ander dier of apparaat, zodat je daarin het mannetje kunt wezen. Dit is een speelgoedfabriek.'

Daar schrokken Roodvinger en het heksenkind wel even van. Moesten ze daarom ineens zo klein worden, om ergens in te passen ? Ineens ging ergens een deur open, en een enorme vogelspin stond voor hen. Het was de koning. 'Welkom in mijn rijk,' zei hij met een vreemd accent. 'Jullie zijn nu in de speelgoedfabriek van Laprakod. Wat willen jullie worden ?' 'Ik wil helemaal niks worden,' zei het konijn. 'Ik wil gewoon naar huis. Telkens als je me ergens

instopt en het gaat dood of kapot, dan kom ik op de vuilnisbelt terecht, en dan wordt ik hier weer naartoe gebracht.' Inmiddels was Roodvinger weer een vliegende insect geworden, en de vogelspin begon te stralen : 'een elvenvlieg, een elvenvlieg,' riep hij. Het heksenkind was inmiddels naar de geopende deur gelopen, maar wat daar was ? Het was daar een kokende pot met wit kruid. De vogelspin liep op hem af en gaf hem een duwtje : 'Zo die zal nu worden wat hij altijd heeft willen worden,' zei de vogelspin. En ineens hoorden ze allemaal een verschrikkelijk gebrul, en de deur ging weer open. Een grote ijsbeer stond voor hen, en het werd ineens ijskoud. 'Wie volgt ?' zei de spin. 'Nou, laat ik het dan nog maar eens proberen,' zei het konijn, en nam een duik. En het konijn werd een prachtige elf. Nu wilde ook Roodvinger het weleens proberen. Hij nam een duik en werd een nog prachtigere elvenvlieg. 'Welkom in mijn kasteel,' zei de koning, en een andere deur ging open. Het konijn was weer verdwenen. Roodvinger en het heksenkind wisten dat de betovering maar voor even was. Maar nu waren ze gelukkig in het ondergrondse kasteel van de koning gekomen. De koning liep voor hen uit, en liet hen de prachtige bedradingen aan de muur zijn, vol van kruid. Toen moesten ze weer door een deur, en weer waren ze in het heksenkasteel. Dat kwam natuurlijk allemaal door dat vreemde kruid. Alles liep altijd uit in het heksenkasteel. Ze konden gewoon niet echt ontsnappen.

Hoofdstuk 7. Het Roze Kruid

In het heksenkasteel, in een grote zaal, waren de stille draken tezamen gekomen. Zij droegen het roze kruid, een kruid waarmee je op de zon zou kunnen leven en in andere hete plaatsen. Roodvinger en het heksenkind gingen helemaal achterin de zaal zitten. De draken zaten in een kring, en vanuit het plafond begonnen insecten van het roze kruid neer te dalen. Zij hadden speren en schilden, en zij namen volop van het roze kruid. Ze kwamen vanuit Brannan en Lapsalvania, vanuit de Grote Witte Oorlog, maar deze wezens waren neutraal. Waarom ze dan speren en schilden droegen ? Ze moesten zich natuurlijk wel verdedigen. Deze wezens waren op reis naar de Witte Zon, waar ze wilden leven. En dat kon alleen maar door het roze kruid. En daarvoor moest het witte kruid met het rode kruid vermengd worden. Ineens kwam de vogelspinnenkoning binnen, en ging in het midden van de kring staan, en al de insecten van het roze kruid hieven hun speren en schilden in de lucht. Toen daalde vanuit het plafond de koningin van het roze kruid neer, in een soort van schelpentroon, en de wezens begonnen luid te klappen en te juichen. De koningin smeerde hun voorhoofden in met het roze kruid, en ze vielen allemaal bezwijmd op de grond. Even later stonden ze weer op, en voor de koningin legden ze hun handen tegen hun buiken, en liepen weg, richting het kasteel van de vogelspin. Roodvinger vond het allemaal erg vreemd wat ze deden. Samen met het heksenkind besloot hij de insecten te volgen. Weer kwamen ze in het kasteel van de vogelspin, en nu gingen de insecten een andere deur door. Ze waren in een zaal terecht gekomen genaamd 'de zonnenzaal' waar alle zonnen zo nu en dan kwamen om te vergaderen. Het was daar altijd ontzettend heet, maar door het roze kruid konden ze daar wel tegen. Een insect hield Roodvinger en het heksenkind tegen. De insect begon hen in te smeren met het roze kruid, zodat ze tegen de hitte bestand waren. Rondom in de zaal waren er beeldschermen waarop ze de vuurzeeen van de zonnen konden bekijken. Ineens kwam er een ijsbeer binnen vanuit een andere deur, en direkt hielden enkele insekten een speer op hem gericht. De ijsbeer begon te brullen, maar de insecten konden het niet verstaan. Daar kwam de vogelspinkoning binnen, en begon heel luid en hoog te gillen tegen de ijsbeer. Roodvinger en het heksenkind snapten er niet veel van. Plotseling begonnen de beeldschermen in de zaal te exploderen en begon alles te bevriezen. De ijsbeer brulde nog luider, en vanuit de muren kwamen nieuwe beeldschermen waarop

reusachtige ijszeeen waren te zien. Deze ijszeeen waren van de ijszonnen. De vogelspinnenkoning was woest, en viel de ijsbeer aan, en ook de insecten begonnen hun speren naar de ijsbeer te gooien. Maar toen kwamen de draken ineens binnen en begonnen een cirkel te vormen rondom de ijsbeer om hem te beschermen. De ijsbeer was gewond, en brulde luid. De draken brachten de ijsbeer weer terug door de deur waardoor hij gekomen was, en ook Roodvinger en het heksenkind wilden wel eens zien waar de ijsbeer vandaan kwam. En ze kwamen in een zaal terecht die bijna precies als de zonnenzaal was, maar dit was de ijszonnenzaal, en ook hier waren schermen waarop je de ijszeeen van de ijszonnen kon zien. Het was hier heel erg koud, maar door het roze kruid waren ze er tegen bestand.

Ineens werd Roodvinger wakker in zijn televisie-bedje. Hij had het allemaal weer gedroomd, maar op het nachtkastje lag wel een beetje van het roze kruid ... of was het wat drakenas van de zwarte draak die wel eens naast zijn bedje ging zitten als Roodvinger ging slapen ? Soms las de draak dan nog even wat verhaaltjes voor Roodvinger, totdat hij in slaap gevallen was, en dan rookte hij altijd een pijp met drakengras. Roodvinger had weer vreemd gedroomd, maar de draak kon soms ook vreemde verhalen vertellen. Eén keer ging dat over een eendendorp, en de draak kon het altijd zo vertellen dat Roodvinger er ook in voorkwam. Luister maar eens :

Op een morgen liep Roodvinger naar de bakker, maar onderweg kwam hij een eend tegen. De eend was een beetje duizelig, en vroeg of Roodvinger wat brood voor hem had. 'Nou, eend,' zei Roodvinger, 'ik ben net op weg naar de bakker, dus loop maar mee.' Het was een erg aardige bakker. 'Kom,' zei hij tegen de eend. 'Achter in de tuin is er een broodgang, waar je net zoveel brood kan eten als je wil, en als je je door die gang heengegeten hebt, dan kom je in eendendorp terecht.' Eendendorp ? Daar hadden ze nog nooit van gehoord. Maar Roodvinger wilde ook wel mee. Na een tijdje hadden ze zoveel gegeten dat ze wel voor een week genoeg hadden, en ze waren in eendendorp terecht gekomen. 'Nou,' zei de eend, 'hier zou ik wel willen wonen.' Ineens kwam er een heel klein krabbetje op hen af, wat om hun armpjes begon te cirkelen. 'Zeg,' zei het krabbetje, 'ik weet nog wel een spelletje. Hebben jullie geen zin om naar krabbendorp te gaan ? Kom maar mee, dan leidt ik jullie naar een kersengang, waar je zoveel kersen kunt eten als je wil, en als je je door die gang hebt heengegeten dan ben je in krabbendorp. En zo gebeurde het, want van al dat brood hadden ze wel een droge mond gekregen. In krabbendorp liep een erg grote mijnheer rond met een helm op. Hij was een politie-agent. Roodvinger zei : 'Hallo, mijnheer de politie-agent, wij komen even op bezoek in krabbendorp, mag dat ?' Maar de politie-agent zei niks, maar begon met grote sprongen vooruit te springen. Dat was wel vreemd, en Roodvinger, de eend en het krabbetje begonnen hem te volgen. De politie-agent ging door een hele grote tunnel ergens naar binnen. De tunnel was vol met kersensap. Als ze hem zouden volgen, dan zouden ze wel erg nat worden. 'Laten we maar beginnen met drinken,' zei het krabbetje. En na een korte tijd stond de tunnel helemaal droog en konden ze er doorheen lopen zonder nat te worden. Aan het einde van de tunnel stond een konijn : 'Welkom in kersenland,' zei hij. 'Niks mee te maken,' riep de politie-agent. 'Ik zei het niet tegen jou, maar tegen hen,' zei het konijn boos. 'Nou, wat heb ik daar mee te maken ?' zei de politie-agent. 'Ze zijn jou achterna gelopen,' zei het konijn. 'Oh,' zei de politie-agent, 'maar dat verandert de hele zaak.' 'Hoe dan ?' vroeg het konijn. 'Nou, let maar op,' zei de politie-agent, en gaf de konijn een grote schop. Zo'n grote schop dat het konijn een eindje de lucht in vloog. 'Zo,' zei de politie-agent, 'dat zal je leren om zomaar navolgers binnen te laten.' Maar nu werd het konijn erg boos, en hij schreeuwde : 'Wees blij dat er eens iemand komt, we zijn hier altijd alleen maar met z'n tweeen.' 'Ik houd niet van bezoek,' zei de politie-agent. 'Oh, maar in dat geval,' zei het konijn, 'leid ik de bezoekers wel even tot de tunnel achter de kersentroon, en dan vertrek ik samen met hen.'

'Maar, koning kers,' zei de politie-agent, 'dat kunt u toch niet doen ?' Maar het konijn was al verdwenen, en snel liepen Roodvinger, de eend en het krabbetje achter het konijn aan. Hier moesten ze niet wezen met zo'n vervelende politie-agent. Achter de kersentroon was een tunnel, en daar moesten ze doorheen lopen. Ze kwamen al snel in een heel groot bos terecht. Ze zouden voorlopig niet meer terugkunnen, want dan zouden ze weer zoveel moeten eten en drinken. Voorlopig had Roodvinger wel voor een week genoeg. 'Zeg,' zei het krabbetje, 'ik ben eigenlijk een tekenfilm-ringetje. Als je mij om je vinger doet, dan kun je zelf een tekenfilmpje uitkiezen waarin je dan terecht komt.' Roodvinger keek met grote ogen naar het krabbetje. De eend en het konijn waren ineens verdwenen. Op het lijfje van het krabbetje was een schijfje wat kon draaien met kleine plaatjes van tekenfilmpjes erop. En Roodvinger zag ook de gezichtjes van het konijn en de eend ertussen. Snel deed Roodvinger het ringetje om één van zijn vingers. 'Als je weer een vriendje erbij krijgt,' zei het krabbetje, 'dan komt er een extra tekenfilmpje bij.' Het was dus een echt toverkrabje.

Ineens werd Roodvinger wakker. Hij had alles maar gedroomd, maar naast hem lag wel de tekenfilm-ring. Roodvinger deed hem direkt aan één van zijn vingers.

Roodvinger beleefde vele avonturen met de tekenfilm-ring. Vaak moest Roodvinger weer de wildernissen in om al zijn tekenfilmvriendjes te vinden, en soms moest hij het opnemen tegen duistere en gevaarlijke wezens om zijn vriendjes te bevrijden uit de moeilijkste situaties en de vervelendste kooitjes en gevangenissen. Vaak zaten ze diep opgesloten op plaatsen waar niemand ze zou kunnen vinden. Nou ja, niemand ? Soms werd Roodvinger zelf opgesloten, en moest hij wachten totdat een tekenfilmvriendje hem vond, en hem bevrijdde.

Op een keer was Roodvinger in kuikendorp. Daar betalen ze met chaos-muntjes. Dat zijn muntjes die kunnen rondlopen en rondspringen. Die muntjes moeten zelfs naar school. Nou, dat zijn wel hele vreemde munten. Niemand in heel kuikendorp wist waar die muntjes vandaan kwamen. Die muntjes waren al heel erg oud. Niemand wist dat het eieren waren van het tekenfilm-monster dat heel diep in de bergen woonde. Als die eieren open zouden gaan, dan zou heel kuikendorp in een wildernis veranderen. Het duurde erg lang voordat zo'n tekenfilm-monster-ei open zou gaan, wel honderden jaren. Maar nu was het dan bijna zover, en niemand in kuikendorp wist wat hun te wachten stond. Ook Roodvinger wist het niet. Maar op een dag was er een eend in het dorp gekomen. Hij was net op vakantie geweest in de bergen, en hoorde daar het tekenfilm-monster praten over wat er zou gebeuren in kuikendorp. De enige manier om het te kunnen stoppen was om de muntjes diep onder de grond te stoppen zodat er bomen met chaos-muntjes zouden groeien. Na een tijdje zouden ze de munten weer in de grond moeten stoppen, anders zou het dorp nog gevaar lopen. En daarom is het zo dat in kuikendorp de meeste muntenbomen zijn, en waar ze nog steeds de allerrijkste zijn.

'Dat was wel een leuk verhaaltje,' zei Roodvinger tegen de draak. 'En ik kom er ook in voor.' 'Kijk eens wat ik hier voor je heb ?' zei de draak. En hij hield de tekenfilm-ring voor Roodvinger's neus. Roodvinger deed de ring om zijn vinger en ging tevreden slapen.

Elwin bij de Heks

Op een dag kreeg Elwin wel een hele vreemde uitnodiging. De heks had haar kasteel aan de rand van het bos, en wilde dat hij kwam. Waarom zou ze hem wel vertellen als hij daar was. Op zijn fietsje ging Elwin naar haar toe. Misschien had de heks wel hulp nodig.

Toen hij bij het kasteel was aangekomen zette hij zijn fiets tegen een muurtje, en liep toen door de grote poort naar binnen. Een paar wachters wezen even met hun speren op Elwin, maar Elwin liet hen de uitnodiging zien, dus hij mocht door.

De heks was blij hem te zien. 'Zo Elwin, fijn dat je gekomen bent,' sprak ze. Ze liet hem de keuken zien waar wat drankjes aan het pruttelen waren. 'Drink maar, Elwin, allemaal voor jou.'

'Ik heb geen dorst, heks,' zei Elwin. 'Waar kan ik u mee helpen ?'

'Dat zal ik je zo wel vertellen, Elwin,' zei de heks. Toen liepen ze naar boven. Er waren daar allemaal kasten met een heleboel drankjes.

'Ik mis één drankje, Elwin,' zei de heks. 'Moet je horen. Ik heb gehoord dat jij nogal goed en hard kan fietsen. Mijn bezemsteel is gebroken. Die vliegt niet meer. Kan jij het drankje voor me halen wat ik mis ?'

'Natuurlijk, heks,' zei Elwin. 'Waar moet ik het halen ?'

'In Horrestein,' zei de heks. Horrestein was een dorpje dichtbij.

'En waar in Horrestein, heks ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Bij reus Hikke,' zei de heks. 'Ik heb hem al een brief gestuurd, dus hij weet precies waarvoor je komt.'

'Komt in orde, heks,' zei Elwin. Hij rende naar buiten, en sprong direct op zijn fiets. Reus Hikke woonde net buiten Horrestein in een groot huis.

Reus Hikke was blij Elwin te zien. Hij had het drankje al voor Elwin klaarstaan. 'Zeg Elwin,' zei de reus. 'Wat als ik jouw fietsje op mijn rug neem, en samen met jou door het bos naar de heks ga ? Dan gaan we het drankje samen brengen, en dan heb ik wat te doen. Ik heb het kasteel van de heks nog nooit gezien, en het lijkt mij een aardige vrouw.'

Zo gezegd zo gedaan. De reus nam het fietsje op zijn rug, en Elwin ging aan de riem van de reus hangen. Snel waren ze bij het kasteel van de heks. Dat ging nog wel sneller als met het fietsje. De heks moest wel lachen toen ze Elwin aan de riem van de reus zag hangen.

'Zeg Elwin, zou jij ook niet zo'n riem willen hebben ?' vroeg de heks. 'Het is een toverriem, en dan maak ik een kleinere riem voor jou, net als die van de reus.'

'Graag heks,' zei Elwin.

'Want je hebt zo goed je best gedaan,' zei de heks, 'en je hebt me zo goed geholpen.' De heks nam het drankje aan van de reus, en ging direct aan de slag voor een riem voor Elwin. Na een tijdje was de riem klaar, en kon Elwin hem omdoen. De riem was een echte toverriem, een verhalen vertellende riem, die ook in een zwaard kon veranderen. Door de riem veranderde Elwin in een dromenprins. De riem had ook een naam : JEDORIX. Elwin en de JEDORIX

werden al gauw de beste vriendjes. En de reus en de heks konden het ook reuze goed met elkaar vinden.

Einde

Tussen twee oren

Ja, het geloof, daar wordt in Kampen veel om gestreden en geleden. Zo is er dan iemand die gillend en met schuim in z'n mond de kerk zou uitrennen als een vriend van hem, die nu nog theologie studeert, de preekstoel zal beklimmen of bestijgen. Het vrije geloven, daar is men nogal bang voor, want wat zal er gebeuren als de kooitjes van die verschrikkelijke beesten open zullen gaan ? Maar een paar jaar later is het allemaal ouderwets, en maken ze zich weer over andere dingen druk. Het zware geloven van eeuwen geleden, waardoor ketters niets anders dan lucifers waren, daar wil men ook nooit meer naar terug, terwijl dat in die tijd door velen als normaal bestempeld werd. Vandaag de dag kent men het woord 'ketter' bijna niet meer, en dat is maar goed ook, want daar waar een woordenboek tot een pistool wordt, daar moet je maar ver vandaan blijven. En met een goede klok, en een goede kalender, is dat ons gelukt. Wat is er nu aan de beurt ? Hoe zit het met politiek Kampen ? Hoe zit het met de opvoeding ? Maar vaak worden er wel weer nieuwe vlakken op het gebied van het geloof gevonden. Het blijft voor velen interessant, en sommigen zien het als een prachtig oud

kampers spel, zij het gemoderniseerd. Ach ja, een spelletje kan ook geen kwaad. Maar laat het ook een spelletje blijven.

Iemand die ik ken heeft een boeddhabeeld in huis staan, een prachtig beeld. Vroeger zou ik zo'n ding niet in mijn huis willen hebben, maar nu ? Vroeger kon ik ook niet tegen chinees voedsel. En soms is dat ook niet verstandig. Je moet dingen nooit forceren. Die mensen zijn zelf christelijk, en dat betekent vaak : geen boeddhist, maar soms is er een combinatie mogelijk. Na ga ik er vanuit dat deze mensen geen boeddhisten zijn, althans niet bewust. Ze kregen het beeld uit dank van een chinees echtpaar van een chinees restaurant, omdat ze zo goed op hun zoontje hadden gepast. Wat moet je dan met zo'n beeld doen ? Als je zelf van een ander geloof bent ... Wat moet je bijvoorbeeld met een beeld van het CDA als je van de VVD bent ? Ook al heb je dat beeld gekregen ... Is dat niet het opdringen van een politieke overtuiging, of een godsdienstige overtuiging ? Of gaat deze strijd teniet in het feit dat zo'n boeddha-beeld een stuk cultuurpracht is, een stuk kunst ? Het is maar net hoe je tegen dingen aankijkt. Overigens is het boeddhisme geen geloof maar een verzameling oude wijsheden die je zouden kunnen helpen in je leven, als een stuk goede psychische steun, maar ook als een stuk ethiek. Het staat misschien net tussen politiek en godsdienst in. Nu weet ik niet of boeddha verder wel of niet 'in' is in Kampen, en dat kan me ook niet zoveel schelen eigenlijk, want wijsheid kan komen in allerlei vormen, en door allerlei deuren. Het gaat nog steeds niet om de verpakking, maar om wat er inzit. Nu kan een ongelovige speelgoedhandelaar nog wel boeddhistischer zijn dan een door zichzelf erkende boeddha-specialist uit het verre oosten. Naamkaartjes hebben me nooit zoveel gezegd, alhoewel het op sommige gezette tijden misschien interessant lijkt.

Nu is die man van dat boeddhabeeld overigens ook speelgoedhandelaar geweest, maar niet ongelovig. Ik kan me nog herinneren dat mijn moeder eens in zijn speelgoedzaak een bijbel kocht, tegen een belachelijk hoge prijs overigens, maar dat doet nu niet ter zake. Ik vind het zelf wel een mooie combinatie. De bijbel is ook maar een stuk speelgoed. De bijbel kan ook zomaar ineens afgeprijst liggen bij de Aldi. Dat moet allemaal kunnen. Voor mij mogen ze in de speelgoedwinkel ook wel boeddha-beelden verkopen, en misschien gebeurt dat al wel ergens. Het moet gewoon liggen tussen de andere spelletjes, zodat het niet terecht komt tussen de bommen en granaten van een of andere oosterse kelder. Vanuit het oosten zijn wij meegenomen, daar liggen ergens onze harten, alhoewel onze lichamen in Nederland zijn. Of we nu christelijk, boeddhistisch of allebei zijn, deze beide stromingen komen uit het Oosten. Maar waar geloofden onze Kamperse voorouders dan in ? Ons eigen geloof was het Germaanse geloof, het oorspronkelijke Nederlandse geloof, voor de christelijke invasie. Het was eigenlijk hetzelfde, maar er werden misschien hier en daar andere accenten gelegd. Het was hetzelfde, maar in verschillende taal. Om nog even op die speelgoed-handelaar terug te komen. Ik herinner me ook dat we daar eens van die krasplaatjes kregen. Mijn broertje kreeg een krasplaat van de indianen, en ik kreeg een krasplaat van de romeinen. Die moesten overigens allemaal nare dingen doen om hun goden gunstig te stemmen. Nu, eeuwen later zeggen we : Allemaal onzin, maar je zou het in die tijd maar eens te licht opvatten allemaal. Vaak is de tijd en de plaats waar je leeft een gevangenis, en kun je soms niet anders dan met de stroom meegaan.

De speelgoedzaak van die man is failliet gegaan, terwijl het chinese restaurant wat naast hem zat natuurlijk wel doordraait. Het Germaanse geloof is hoofdzakelijk opzij gestapt door het christelijk geloof. Blijkbaar trekt het oosterse ons meer dan ons eigen speelgoed. En dan bij zulk boerenvolk in Kampen, waar ze vaak zeggen : 'Wat de boer niet kent, dat vret ie niet.' Maar het oosten is inmiddels al zo ingeburgerd. Eerlijk waar, als ik de hanzewijk binnenkom,

dan denk ik dat ik in Turkije ben. En dat heus niet alleen om de vele turken die daar wonen. Ik vind het allemaal wel best. Het oosten heeft voor vele eeuwen al z'n plaats in Kampen gevonden, en dat bewijzen de vele kerken wel, want dat was eens allemaal oosterse import. Weten wij wel wat wij naar binnen hebben gehaald ? We moesten wel, want we werden bedreigd met het zwaard. We zijn niet voor niets vroeger zo lang Katholiek geweest. En sinds Maarten Luther kwam, gingen een aantal over op de reformatie, omdat ze verlost wilden zijn van het in die tijd levensgevaarlijke katholicisme. Terug willen we niet meer, maar vooruit ? Of hebben we het beloofde land al gevonden ? Sommigen wel, en ik vind dat je vooral ouderen die fantasie moet gunnen. Fantasie is goed voor de botten.

Ach, natuurlijk is de wetenschap er laatst achtergekomen dat naast politiek ook godsdienst tussen je oren zit. Het is een bepaald hormoon. Maar wat dan nog ? Je bent wel je hele leven lang gedoemd om tussen die twee oren te leven. Laat iedereen nou maar tussen z'n eigen twee oren gaan leven.

Achterstevoren gedraaid

Mijn opa, een oude kampenaar, was een humoristische man, evenals mijn oma. Bij mijn andere opa en oma durfte ik toen ik klein was nooit te logeren, omdat daar de televisie geen hoofdrol speelde. Bij die humoristische opa en oma dus wel, en daar was de televisie dus een waardig lid van de familie. En zo hoort het ook, als het ding maar een knop heeft. Helaas hebben mensen zo'n knop niet op hun kop, en dat maakt het lastiger. Als er een hemel bestaat, dan hoop ik dus dat God daar wel schepselen heeft lopen die allemaal zo'n knop hebben, anders word het mij gevaarlijk. Maar goed er is één manier om zelfs iets met een knop als gevaarlijk te moeten bestempelen, en dat is wanneer er verslaving in het spel is. Ik denk dat mijn broertje en ik vroeger echt televisie-ziek waren. Wij kenden de televisie-gids uit onze hoofden, en als de televisie kapot was, of om de een of andere reden niet aanmocht, dan waren we echt ziek. Zelfs naar bed gaan was om die reden gewoon een kwelling, al die prachtige televisie-programma's die we moesten missen. Mijn opa keek vaak naar Laurel en Hardy en allerlei Duitse programma's, en soms kom ik nog wel eens mensen tegen die gewoon liever naar Duitse televisie kijken. Ik kan me herinneren dat ik vroeger ook wel veel naar Duitsland keek. Maar toen ik zelf Duits moest leren was dat een complete ramp. Ik had namelijk les van een begrafenis-ondernemer, en die keek me na een repetitie altijd aan alsof ik aan de beurt was. Alhoewel ik nu veel schrijf in Engels, was Engels leren voor mij vroeger ook een complete ramp, en eigenlijk om dezelfde reden als met Duits : Ik kreeg les van begrafenis-ondernemers. Dat ze die gasten bij ons op school aannamen is mij nog steeds een

compleet raadsel. Dat mijn vader hen zulke aardige mensen vond, is natuurlijk makkelijk gezegd. Dat kan ik natuurlijk ook heel makkelijk zeggen van zijn begrafenis-ondernemers. Ik had het gevoel dat mijn broertje - eerst een klas lager dan mij, later een klas hoger - zich daar altijd wel goed doorheen schopte. Ik denk dat hij wat beter kon onderhandelen dan ik, omkopen enzo. En hij is dan ook een onderhandelaar geworden. Laatst werd ik door één van mijn oude begrafenis-ondernemers gebeld. Ik heb een heel goed gesprek met hem gehad, en dat maakte veel goed, maar ja, ik heb makkelijk praten, want hij is mijn begrafenis-ondernemer niet meer. Het mooie was dat ik van hem later een boek kreeg dat over leven na de dood ging.

Ik kreeg ook wel les van lui die niets met begrafenis-ondernemingen te maken hadden. Zo zat er eentje tussen die mij met een HAVO-diploma uit school heeft gesmokkeld. Maar waar ik toen terecht kwam ? Dat wil je niet weten. Ik heb theologie gestudeerd om van mijn godsdiensttrauma af te komen, om mijn familie beter te begrijpen, en om te leren hoe ik koffie moest zetten. Want daar op die theologische school werd me toch een koffie gezopen. Maar even voor de duidelijkheid : Je komt echt niet van een theologisch trauma af door naar een theologische school te gaan, hoor. Het werd er alleen maar erger op. Het is ook heus niet voor je geloofsrust, want als er ergens oorlog wordt gevoerd dan is het daar. En ik maar denken dat ik mijn dienstplicht was ontvlucht. Ik werd opgeleid tot soldaat, om met de bijbel anderen in de pan te rammen. En toen ik dat pakkie niet wilde, verklaarden ze mij de oorlog. Dus ik vluchten naar een andere theologische school, waar ze me nog niet kenden, maar daar gebeurde hetzelfde. Dus ik denken : Die God is de god van de oorlog, Mars verkleed als Jezus Christus ... Maar daarna dacht ik : Dat is helemaal niet waar, het heeft allemaal te maken met belasting. Ja, hoe ik daar op kwam weet ik niet meer, maar ik begon er op een andere manier tegenaan te kijken. Mensen worden niet altijd alleen maar naar van oorlog, en oorlog is niet de enige oorzaak van het elkaar-in-de-haren-vliegen. Het had iets te maken met de belastingdienst en de verzekering. En we weten allemaal wel dat we allemaal daar onze eigen gedachtes over hebben.

Maar toen zat ik te denken : Kan dat gedoe niet weggewerkt of gladgestreken worden door goed te onderhandelen ? Ik denk dat mijn broertje - die ik nu moet zien als broer, omdat hij op een gegeven moment een klas hoger zat dan mij - dit allemaal zag aankomen, en daardoor econoom is geworden. Maar goed, ik heb wel eens flinke ruzie met mijn leraar economie gehad. Dan denk je : Die economen dat zijn allemaal van die vredelievende mensen. Economie kan soms uit de hand lopen. We moeten wel het spel eerlijk spelen, en de touwtjes goed weten te vieren, zoals ik altijd tegen mijn broertjes en zusje zei : 'One for you, and one for me'. Dat zinnetje had ik eens opgestoken uit een sprookjesfilm, en dat had te maken met geld. Alles draait om geld, of je het nu gelooft of niet. We kunnen het maar het beste eerlijk delen om veel gemieter te voorkomen. Ga spelletjes doen, zoals mijn vader, die sportleraar is geworden, dat is veel beter dan mekaar echt serieus de hersens in rammen.

Ja, ook ik heb bij de psychiater gezeten, en weleens gedacht : Is dit het nieuwe geloof ? Meid, wat jij allemaal uitkraamt zit ook maar gewoon tussen jouw oren. Je bent net zoveel mens als ieder ander, en we moeten allemaal zien te overleven hier, in zoveel onzin. Nu heb ik haar verhalen zo'n beetje allemaal op cassette staan, en ook van mijn oud-leraren, en ik heb ze na al die jaren eens achterstevoren laten draaien. Ik hoorde de meest wonderbaarlijke dingen, en ik dacht : 'Gelukkig, is het toch nog ergens goed voor geweest.'

Mijn moeder

Velen denken mijn moeder te kennen, maar dan kijk ik ze altijd een beetje scheef aan. Mijn moeder is niet te kennen. Dat doe je niet zomaar even op een doordeweekse dag. Je kunt het ook niet zomaar even in een geschiedenisboekje optekenen. Ik heb mij lange tijd afgevraagd : Wie is mijn moeder eigenlijk ? In meerdere betekenissen. Ik heb weleens nachtmerries gehad, dat er ineens een jaguarachtig figuur voor me stond, die zei : 'Help me, ik ben je moeder.' Nu geloof ik niet in nachtmerries, of dromen, maar deze nachtmerrie wilde ik voor de zekerheid toch even een kans geven, want stel dat dit er op duidde dat iemand anders mijn echte moeder zou zijn, ja, dan had ze echt hulp nodig, want ik ben niet één van de makkelijksten. Mijn huidige moeder die komt er wel doorheen, want die zingt in een koor, en samen sta je sterk. Nu, dat is natuurlijk onzin, want samen kun je ook finaal de vernieling ingaan. Soms denk ik weleens dat als reincarnatie bestaat, dan was ik in mijn vorig leven misschien wel een jaguar. In ieder geval die nachtmerrie is me altijd bijgebleven. Ook al geloof ik niet in voortekenen en natekenen, het is me toch bijgebleven als iets wat me dierbaarder is dan wat in mijn leven dan ook. Je zal toch maar eens meerdere moeders hebben. Mijn huidige vader en moeder zouden hiervan in de knoop kunnen raken, maar ze kennen mij zo langzamerhand wel, dat ik niet voor een gat te vangen ben. Maar het kan voor hen misschien ook een opluchting zijn, zo van : 'Gelukkig, dan staan we er niet alleen voor.' En dat is ook zo. Ik heb zelfs hier op aarde veel ondersteuningen. Mensen die ik mijn tweede vader en moeder noem, en mijn derde vader en moeder.

Maar nu denk ik dus weleens : Wie heeft het nu over reincarnatie ? Misschien heeft dat er wel helemaal niets mee te maken, want, bijvoorbeeld : Wie heeft onze ziel in ons lichaampje gedrukt, toen we in de buik van onze moeder zaten ? Is het niet één of andere schakelketting ? Misschien een engel, misschien God, of misschien een ander geesteswezen. Ik kan me herinneren dat ik een andere nachtmerrie had, waar een andere moeder me probeerde te bereiken, maar ze kon het niet. Ze was te ver weg. Soms leken die figuren wel een beetje op mijn eigen moeder. Waarom ? Ik weet het niet. Of ik dat wat vaders betreft ook gehad heb ? Ja, soms. En met broertjes, en met het zusje ? Ook. Daar kan ik heel kort in zijn.

Maar goed, we hadden het over mijn moeder. Misschien is mijn moeder op aarde wel het kruispunt van al mijn andere moeders, als de optelsom. Ik weet het niet. Misschien dat dit de verklaring is waarom ze allemaal een beetje op elkaar leken. De geschiedenis komt dan toch misschien weer samen in het heden. Ik denk trouwens dat de televisie altijd mijn co-moeder is geweest, plus de radio. Dat was altijd een goede aanvulling. En het voordeel was dus dat er een knop opzat. Mijn moeder is trouwens altijd best rustig geweest. Mijn vader ook. Ik was vroeger druk, en werd steeds rustiger, maar soms heb ik uitbarstingen. Ik voel mij als een vulkaan. Die uitbarstingen zie ik als creativiteit en activiteit. Ik heb boeken geschreven op allerlei gebied, geschilderd, les gegeven, van alles en nog wat. Mijn moeder is tekstschrijfster

van een wereldberoemde band, en mijn vader is dus sportleraar en duiker. Hij werkt met haaien, en maakt documentaires, en nog veel meer. Hij wil dat de mensen eens weten wat haaien nu precies zijn, zonder alle vooroordelen. Ik heb zelf een paar boeken over haaien geschreven, of liever gezegd, waar ze in voorkomen. Misschien wel om mijn angst voor die dieren te overwinnen. Ik heb een voorliefde voor ze, maar ik ben bang voor ze. En sommige mensen zeggen dat dat maar goed ook is, want ze zouden je kunnen opvreten. Ja, ik heb zo ook m'n fobieen. Eén ding wat mijn vader van haaien geleerd heeft is niet zoveel praten, maar doen. En soms gewoon net doen alsof je doof bent.

Mijn angsten zijn vaak ook mijn obsessies. Ik heb dat ook met slangen en grote vogels. Beiden ben ik weleens tegengekomen, en dat had natuurlijk verkeerd kunnen aflopen. Maar wat zou ik graag met die beesten willen vliegen en kronkelen. Was ik maar Peter Pan. Ik ben te bang voor ze. Ik kan er alleen maar over dromen. Voor hen zijn mensen natuurlijk erg gevaarlijk. Ik ben gevaarlijk voor hen, terwijl ik hen nooit kwaad zou doen. Misschien is deze tijd op aarde een tijd voor mij om hen dat te bewijzen. Misschien dat er een dag gaat komen, waarin ze mij meenemen op hun reis, en dat zij niet bang hoeven te zijn voor mij, en ik niet voor hen. Ik zie echt uit naar die dag. Zo'n dag kun je niet forceren. Je ziet mij niet zomaar ineens met haaien zwemmen. Maar goed, we hadden het over mijn moeder. Mijn moeder, dat kan van alles zijn. Je wordt elke dag een beetje geboren. Dat kan door een televisie-programma, door een mooi lied, door een kaartje of een schilderij, of gewoon iets waaraan je denkt. Ik zou wel in mijn dromen willen geloven, maar soms heb ik er gewoon de kracht niet voor. Dan ben ik te bang dat ik gebakken lucht volg. Ik wil niet ergens in geloven om iets te geloven. Ik wil mezelf niet voor de gek houden, maar ik wil mezelf ook niks onthouden. Laatst was er een zanger op de televisie die zij dat gek zijn verkoopt. Gek is goed. En toen dacht ik : Ja, eigenlijk heeft hij gelijk. We zijn allemaal zo bang om voor de gek gehouden te worden, maar eigenlijk is het maar beter, want waar zouden we anders terecht zijn gekomen ?

We moeten het maar doen, mamma, met onze idiote verhalen. We moeten roeien met de riemen die we hebben. We moeten het maar doen, met dat wat ze ons verteld hebben, wat onze voorouders ons hebben meegegeven, want meer kregen we niet. We moeten het maar doen met onze fantasie, als een geschenk uit de hemel, met de kleine stukjes puzzel die we kregen, want alles in één keer, dat zouden we niet kunnen verdragen. En zeg nou zelf, mamma, dat wat ze vroeger 'gek' noemden, dat staat nu te pronken in onze musea als kunst, waar mensen zich aan vasthouden, waarvan ze kunnen zeggen : Dit hebben onze mamma's en pappa's bereikt. We moeten het er maar mee doen, mamma. Het is niet veel, maar het is een stap vooruit.

Arachundel

Arachundel groeide op in een donkere kerker onder de grond. Nooit kwam er een straaltje zonlicht door. Vaak lag het meisje huilend op de grond. Op een dag kwam er een prins langs de kerkers, en vroeg aan de baas van de kerkers of hij het meisje mocht kopen. De prins betaalde er vele goudstukken voor, want dat had hij er wel voor over. Arachundel was het mooiste meisje wat hij ooit had gezien. Het meisje was erg blij dat ze vrij was, maar toen ze in het paleis van de prins kwam moest ze in de keuken werken. En waar ze sliep was het nog wel viezer als in de kerker. Het meisje begreep het niet, maar op een dag liet de prins haar bij zich roepen. ‘Majesteit, ik dacht dat u mij vergeten was,’ sprak het meisje. Maar de prins riep haar alleen maar voor een vreemde opdracht : ‘Ga naar de grot achter het bos, waar een waterput is waaruit je met een emmer goud water moet halen. Kook voortaan alles in het gouden water.’ Het meisje vond het een vreemde opdracht, maar ging al gauw op pad. Toen ze eindelijk bij de waterput kwam zat daar een klein mannetje. ‘Zo zo,’ zei het mannetje, ‘dus je bent door de prins op pad gestuurd. Hij laat je wel hard werken zeg, en je hebt het nu zelfs slechter als waar je vandaan kwam.’

‘Dat is waar,’ zei Arachundel, ‘maar hoe weet u dat allemaal ?’

‘Ach, zie je,’ zei het mannetje, ‘ik ben een tovermannetje, en als ik jou was, dan zou ik hier gewoon blijven. Ik kan je alles geven wat je hartje begeert. Er is hier volop gouden voedsel zodat je nooit meer hoeft te werken.’

‘Nou, dat lijkt me wel wat,’ zei het meisje.

‘Maar,’ zei het mannetje. ‘Je moet me wat beloven. Je eerste kindje zal je aan mij moeten geven.’

Het meisje vond dat allemaal best. Ze dacht toch niet aan kinderen krijgen. Het mannetje opende een deur, en er stond inderdaad een berg van gouden voedsel. Het meisje begon direkt te eten. ‘Zeg,’ zei het meisje. ‘Kan ik de prins vertellen van deze plaats ? Dan wil hij misschien wel met me trouwen.’

‘Wat je maar wil,’ zei het mannetje. Het meisje nam wat van het gouden voedsel mee, en gouden water in een emmer en ging terug naar de prins. De prins was erg verbaasd, en vooral toen ze hem vertelde dat er nog meer van het gouden voedsel was. De prins was zo onder de indruk en was het meisje zo dankbaar dat hij wel met haar wilde trouwen. Een jaar later kreeg het meisje dat nu een prinses was geworden haar eerste kindje. Ze was haar belofte aan het mannetje allang vergeten, maar op een dag kwam hij aan het paleis. ‘Tja,’ zei de prins, ‘als je het aan het mannetje beloofd hebt, dan moet je het ook doen.’ Maar het meisje begon heel hard te huilen, zo hard dat het mannetje medelijden met haar kreeg. ‘Okay,’ zei het mannetje,

‘je hoeft je kindje niet aan mij te verliezen, maar vanaf nu zal alles wat je eet vies en slierterig zijn.’ Toen vertrok het mannetje boos. Sindsdien was er in het hele paleis alleen maar vies voedsel te vinden, zo vies dat niemand er meer wilde werken. Het meisje moest zelf weer gaan koken, en huilde iedere dag als ze weer naar de keuken ging. Het eten was zo vies dat op een dag de prins, de prinses en hun kleine prinsje uit het paleis vertrokken en toen zijn ze voor altijd bij het mannetje in de grot gaan wonen.

Het Meisje in de Bloem

Er was eens een meisje dat in een bloem woonde.

Elke dag ging ze naar een toren dichtbij in de buurt, omdat ze vanuit het topje de zee kon zien.

Zo kon ze uren staren naar de zee en denken aan haar prins die ze eens verloor tijdens een tocht op de zee.

Het scheepje waarop ze zeilden verging, terwijl een storm de prins meenam.

Het meisje moest helemaal terugzwemmen, en is sindsdien in een bloem gaan wonen.

Sindsdien durfde ze niet meer bij de zee te komen, maar wilde ze wel elke dag op een afstand naar de zee staren. Maar op een dag kwam er weer een storm en nam de toren mee. Nu kon

het meisje de zee niet meer bezichtigen. Het meisje trok zich helemaal terug in de bloem, en toen op een dag de storm er weer was nam hij ook het meisje in de bloem mee.

De storm bracht het meisje naar een rijk in de lucht waar haar prins inmiddels woonde. Ze waren blij elkaar te zien. De prins was nu de prins van de lucht. De prins vertelde haar dat hij de storm had gezonden om haar te halen, maar nu kon de prins de storm niet meer beheersen. Na een tijdje was de bloem van het meisje geheel verdwenen, maar het meisje had haar prins weer terug en dat was alles wat ze wilde.

Het Apenpaleis

Er was eens een koopman die aan de deuren vleugels verkocht.

Er waren nogal wat mensen die wilden vliegen, maar er bleek ook heel wat aan de vleugels te mankeren, zodat velen na een geweldige tochtje naar beneden stortten.

De mensen waren al snel woedend op de koopman, en de koopman moest diep in het bos vluchten om aan de woedende massa te ontkomen.

Ze hadden speren meegenomen, zwaarden, messen en bogen om de koopman eens goed mores te leren.

Na een lange vluchttocht kwam hij aan bij een huisje waar een levensgrote aap woonde.

De aap nam hem direkt onder zijn hoede en ging op het balkon staan om de koopman te verdedigen.

Maar na een tijdje werd de aap er erg moe van en hij bloedde vanwege de vele pijlen. Hij ging naar binnen en zei tegen de koopman : ‘Je moet naar de fee gaan, want ik kan je niet meer goed verdedigen.’

En zo ging de koopman door een achterdeurtje en rende hard naar het huisje van de fee verder in het bos.

De fee was direkt erg vriendelijk naar de man en gaf hem direkt een heleboel vleugeltjes die nooit zouden neerstorten.

Die zou hij dan kunnen verkopen aan de mensen in het vervolg.

De vleugeltjes leken vol van vuurvlammetjes en toen de koopman daar even later bij de mensen mee aankwam werden ze direkt stil.

Nog steeds wilden ze heel graag vliegen, en ze besloten de koopman een nieuwe kans te geven.

En ja hoor, het werkte.

De vleugels deden het goed, en de mensen waren zo blij en dankbaar dat ze de koopman koning maakten van hun volk.

De koopman kreeg daarvoor een prachtig paleis.

Maar omdat de fee de koopman zo goed had geholpen werd zij de koningin, en de aap werd de wachter van het paleis.

Maar omdat het voor de aap wel moeilijk was om zo’n groot paleis in zijn eentje te bewaken toverde de fee er op een dag een heleboel apen bij.

Het Zee-Oog

De zeeheks hield veel wezens opgesloten onder de zee.

Ze hadden geen vissestaarten maar gewoon voeten, dus ze konden niet in het zeewater leven.

Daarom leefden ze in een grote grot onder de zee waar ze hard moesten werken.

De zeeheks wist precies hoe ze hen hard kon laten werken.

Elk jaar kregen de hardste werkers vleugels om naar het gebied boven de zee te vertrekken.

Daarom was er ook altijd veel jaloezie onder elkaar.

De zee werd elk jaar groter vanwege de tranen van de opgesloten wezens.

Maar de zeeheks was de slechtste nog niet.

Ze kreeg na vele jaren toch wel een beetje medelijden met de wezens, en vanaf toen kregen elk jaar de wezens die de meeste tranen hadden voortgebracht vissestaarten om zo naar de zee te kunnen gaan.

Maar sindsdien ging de zee nog hoger liggen en kwamen er veel rivieren en overstromingen.

Degenen die nu vleugels hadden wisten waardoor dat kwam, en gingen terug naar de zeeheks.

Ze zochten haar op in haar grot waar ze net aan het staren was naar het sieraad wat haar zoveel macht had gegeven.

Het was een zeesieraad met een oog in het midden.

Maar uit het oog kwamen tranen.

‘Huil maar niet,’ zei de zeeheks. ‘De werkers zijn bijna klaar met de trap naar het diepste van de aarde. Je weet dat daar de vlammen zijn, en dan kun je weer zien.’ Toen de gevleugelden zagen dat de heks de slechtste nog niet was, waren ze niet meer zo boos op haar.

De werkers wisten helemaal niet dat ze treden maakten voor een trap om het zee-oog te helpen. Toen de gevleugelden het hen vertelden was iedereen blij, en vrolijk gingen ze met

hun werk door. Ze wisten nu uiteindelijk waar ze voor werkten. Op een dag was de trap klaar en kon het oog naar beneden om door de vlammen weer te kunnen zien. En de werkers zijn sindsdien dicht bij de vlammen gaan wonen.

Susanna

Susanna was een heel bijzonder meisje. In de nacht kreeg ze altijd vleugels, en vloog ze naar verre landen. Maar als de ochtend viel verloor ze haar vleugels altijd weer, en daarom moest ze altijd op tijd terug zijn, voordat de zon opkwam. Op een nacht nam een heks haar gave van haar af. In ruil daarvoor kreeg Susanna vlindervleugels en een kroon van veren, maar ze kon nooit meer naar huis. De heks bracht haar naar een plaats waar het altijd nacht was. Hier waren een heleboel meisjes zoals haar, maar de nachten duurden er heel lang, en als een nacht was afgelopen dan kwam direkt de volgende nacht. Wel kregen ze allemaal na elke nacht een steentje aan hun halskettingen erbij. Die steentjes waren helemaal wit en werden morgenstenen genoemd. Als hun halskettingkjes helemaal vol waren met steentjes dan mochten ze de reis maken naar de plaats waar het altijd dag was. Daarvoor moesten ze door een hele lange donkere tunnel heen waar de oudste mannetjes woonden die bestonden. Na een hele lange tijd mocht Susanna de reis gaan maken. Toen ze in de tunnel met de oudste mannetjes die bestonden kwam klampten sommige mannetjes haar direkt aan. ‘Help ons,’ zeiden ze. ‘We kunnen niet lopen. Draag ons naar het morgenland.’

‘Maar natuurlijk,’ zei Susanna, en droeg zoveel mannetjes met haar mee als ze kon. Maar de andere meisjes die met haar waren zeiden tegen de mannetjes die hen aanklampten : ‘Zorg zelf maar dat je in het morgenland aankomt.’

Verderop kwamen ze bij een grote waterbron aan. ‘Kun je ons wat water geven,’ vroegen de mannetjes aan Susanna. ‘Onze handen zijn te slap om water te scheppen.’

‘Maar natuurlijk,’ zei Susanna, en gaf hen allemaal te drinken. Maar de andere meisjes namen alleen maar water voor henzelf. Na een hele lange tijd lopen kwamen ze eindelijk aan bij de rots die de ingang naar het morgenland blokkeerde. Een klein mannetje zat op de rots en vroeg aan hen allen waar ze de mannetjes hadden. Aan Suzanna’s rug hingen er een heleboel, maar de andere meisjes zeiden lachend dat de mannetjes zelf maar moesten lopen. ‘Dat is nogal erg dom van jullie,’ zei het kleine mannetje op de rots. Zodadelijk schuift de rots namelijk van de ingang weg, en zal het vuurgordijn dat de ingang nog verspert door de tunnel heengaan. De mannetjes zullen hun dragers hiertegen beschermen. ‘Geef die mannetjes hier,’ riepen de meisjes naar Susanna.

‘Ga ze zelf maar halen,’ zei Susanna. En toen zetten de meisjes het op een lopen naar het begin van de tunnel waar de oude mannetjes zaten. ‘Spring snel op onze ruggen,’ zeiden de meisjes, ‘dan brengen we jullie naar het morgenland.’

‘Vanwaar jullie bereidheid ineens ?’ vroeg één van de oude mannetjes.

‘We hebben ons bedacht,’ zei één van de meisjes. ‘En we zullen jullie ook te drinken geven bij de bron.’

‘Zo zo,’ zeiden de mannetjes, en stapten op de ruggen van de meisjes. Toen ze bij de bron aankwamen gaven de meisjes hen te drinken, en na een lange tocht kwamen ze eindelijk bij de ingang naar het morgenland aan. De rots was inmiddels al weggeschoven, en het vuurgordijn staarde hen aan. Ze hadden allemaal zoveel mogelijk mannetjes op hun rug genomen, zodat ze goed tegen het vuur beschermd zouden worden, maar ineens sprongen de mannetjes van hun ruggen af en liepen door het vuur naar binnen. Direkt begon het vuurgordijn op hen af te komen, en zo moesten de meisjes zo hard mogelijk terugrennen als ze konden.

Het Varkenshoedstertje

Er was eens een varkenshoedstertje die buiten de stad woonde om voor de varkens te zorgen. Ze gaf niet om de rijkdom van de stad, het rijke leven. Ze sliep altijd tussen de varkens, en at hetzelfde voedsel als zij aten. Verder zag er niemand naar haar om, en was ze niet welkom. Op een dag was ze uitgenodigd om op het paleis van de prins te komen. Dat vond ze wel wat vreemd, maar ze ging toch. Toen ze bij de prins aankwam vertelde de prins over het feest dat zou komen. De prins had alleen niet genoeg varkens, en vroeg daarom de varkens van het varkenshoedstertje. ‘Sinds wanneer ben ik en mijn varkens uitgenodigd op het feest ?’ vroeg het varkenshoedstertje.

‘Nee, je begrijpt het verkeerd,’ zei de prins. ‘Jullie zijn niet uitgenodigd. Het is voor het feestmaal.’

‘Mijn varkens hebben genoeg te eten bij mij,’ zei het varkenshoedstertje. ‘Daar hebben ze uw feestmaal niet bij nodig.’

‘Nee, dat bedoel ik niet,’ zei de prins. ‘We krijgen hoge gasten, en dan moet er genoeg varkensvlees aanwezig zijn.’

Toen boog het varkenshoedstertje haar hoofd en sprak : ‘U gaat mij toch niet het laatste wat ik heb afnemen ?’

‘Morgen zal ik komen,’ zei de prins. ‘En dan neem ik je varkens mee.’

Verdrietig ging het varkenshoedstertje het paleis weer uit. Ze zou vluchten met haar varkens, maar waar moest ze naartoe ? Diep in de nacht dwaalde ze door het bos. Na lang lopen kwam ze bij een huisje aan waar een oud vrouwtje woonde. Huilend vertelde ze het verhaal. ‘Je hebt een goed hart,’ zei het vrouwtje, ‘en ik zal je ervoor belonen. Boven liggen prinsessenkledereren. Die kun je aandoen om naar het komende feest te kunnen. Ik zal hier op de varkens passen.’

‘Maar ik wil helemaal niet naar dat feest. Ik wil bij mijn varkens blijven,’ zei het meisje.

‘Ga nu maar,’ zei het vrouwtje, ‘je zult er geen spijt van krijgen.’

Toen het meisje even later in de prinsessenkledereren aanhad streek het oude vrouwtje even met een toverstafje over haar heen, zodat ze als een echte prinses was. De volgende avond ging ze naar het feest, terwijl het oude vrouwtje op haar varkens paste. De prins was erg vrolijk, terwijl hij de varkens niet had kunnen vinden. Het meisje paste zich goed aan, en danste die avond de sterren van de hemel. Na een tijdje begon het oog van de prins op haar te vallen. ‘Wie is dat mooie, lievelijke meisje ?’ vroeg de prins aan zijn bedienden. ‘Ze lijkt me uit een ver land te komen, en ze is een echte prinses.’ Het meisje had een geweldige avond, en aan het einde van de avond kwam de prins naar haar toe om haar te vragen met hem te dansen. Het meisje stemde toe, en danste als een echte koningin. ‘Wie bent u eigenlijk als ik vragen

mag ?' fluisterde de prins naar haar tijdens het dansen. Maar het meisje glimlachte alleen maar. Iedereen keek vol verwondering naar de dansende prins en het meisje. 'Je doet me aan iemand denken,' fluisterde de prins, 'maar ik weet niet wie. Iedereen zou wel met je willen dansen. Kijk ze eens kijken.' Het meisje glimlachte. Ze had de avond van haar leven. 'Zie ik je volgend jaar weer ?' vroeg de prins. Het meisje knikte, en liep toen van het feest weg. Midden in de nacht kwam ze bij het oude vrouwtje. 'En hoe was het ?' vroeg het oude vrouwtje.

'Oh, het was geweldig,' zei het meisje. 'Vooral omdat ik wist dat mijn varkens veilig waren bij u.'

Het jaar daarop ging ze weer naar het feest en was dit keer mooier dan ooit. De prins had er pijn van in zijn hart, zo mooi was ze. En weer moest hij haar aan het einde van de avond laten gaan. Het jaar daarop greep de prins zijn kans en vroeg haar met hem te trouwen. Het meisje schrok, en rende weg. Toen ze het later het oude vrouwtje vertelde zei deze : 'Ga terug, en zeg dat je dat wel wil.'

'Ja, maar dat wil ik helemaal niet,' zei het meisje.

'Je zult er geen spijt van hebben,' zei het vrouwtje. 'Ik pas wel op de varkens.'

'Ja, maar dan moet ik op het paleis wonen,' zei het meisje, 'en dan zie ik u nooit meer.'

'Ga nu maar,' zei het oude vrouwtje. 'Alles zal goedkomen.'

Snel ging het meisje weer terug. 'Waar was je gebleven ?' vroeg de prins met pijn in zijn hart. 'Trouw met me.'

'Natuurlijk lieveling,' zei het meisje, en kuste hem.

De dag erna was er bruiloft. Het meisje woonde sindsdien met haar prins op het paleis. 'Nu je mijn vrouw bent mag je je wensen doen,' zei de prins.

'Er woont een oud vrouwtje in het bos met varkens,' zei het meisje. 'Ik wil dat ze hier op het paleis komt wonen, en dat haar varkens prinselijk behandeld worden.'

De prins vond dat wel een beetje een vreemde wens, maar liet haar wens toch uitkomen.

Het Meisje dat in een Paard Veranderde

Er was een meisje dat in de nacht altijd in een paard veranderde. Dan ging ze altijd naar de velden en de bossen maar dan moest ze wel altijd op tijd terug zijn, voordat de zon opkwam. Want altijd als de ochtend viel dan was ze weer een meisje. Op een nacht nam een heks haar gave van haar af. In ruil daarvoor kreeg het meisje een paar laarzen, die zo prachtig waren dat ze er prinsen mee kon betoveren. Al gauw wist iedereen van het meisje met de betoverde laarzen, en wilden vele prinsen met haar trouwen. Sindsdien wilde het meisje alleen nog maar met koeien werken. Ze werd een herdersmeisje, zodat haar laarzen zo vies zouden worden dat de prinsen haar zouden vergeten. Ook zocht ze vaak de paarden op, en ging diep in het bos wonen. Maar nog steeds zochten prinsen haar op, en lieten haar niet met rust. Het meisje smeekte de heks haar laarzen weer van haar weg te nemen. Op een dag kreeg de heks medelijden met haar, en zei : ‘Als je je laarzen opgeeft dan zul je nooit meer terug kunnen naar het bos en de velden. Je zal dan onder de aarde moeten wonen, bang voor het zonlicht.’

‘Zo zij het,’ zei het meisje.

Toen nam de heks de laarzen van het meisje weg, en het meisje moest vanaf toen diep onder de aarde leven, in de modder en in angst voor het zonlicht. Hier konden de prinsen haar niet vinden. Onder de grond leefden de wilde paarden, en het meisje voelde zich alsof ze thuisgekomen was. Ze miste de wereld boven de grond niet eens. Maar één van de prinsen vond op een dag in het bos een gat die diep onder de aarde leidde. Toen hij er doorging vond hij daar het meisje. Maar hij herkende haar niet, omdat ze haar laarzen niet meer had, en ze was helemaal verwilderd. ‘Meisje,’ zei hij. ‘Heb je het hier niet koud. Je hebt vast honger. Zal ik je meenemen naar mijn paleis ?’

‘Nee,’ zei het meisje. ‘Ik kan niet tegen het zonlicht.’

‘Oh, maar het is heel donker in mijn paleis hoor. En ik heb een kamer voor je zonder ramen, heel diep in het paleis,’ zei de prins.

Toen stemde het meisje in, en de prins bracht haar naar haar nieuwe kamer. Elke dag kwam hij even kijken. Al snel was het meisje op temperatuur en bijgevoed, maar ze kon nog steeds niet tegen zonlicht. ‘Je doet me aan iemand denken,’ zei de prins. ‘Aan een meisje met betoverde laarzen. Sinds ik haar niet meer kon zien heb ik die laarzen laten namaken. Zou jij die willen hebben ?’

Het meisje knikte, en kreeg twee prachtige laarzen van de prins. Het meisje ging sindsdien vaak paardrijden met de prins, en kon steeds beter het zonlicht weer verdragen. Maar op een nacht begon het meisje weer in een paard te veranderen. Snel ging ze het paleis uit en zocht de velden en bossen op. Maar ditmaal bleef ze een paard. Slenterend ging ze terug naar het

paleis, en toen de prins haar vond vond hij het het prachtigste paard dat hij ooit had gezien. De prins hield direkt van het paard als geen ander, maar voor hem bleef het gewoon een paard. De prins wist niet dat het paard eigenlijk het meisje was waarvan hij hield. Hij reed sindsdien meer op dit paard dan op enig ander paard, en zorgde goed voor het paard als voor geen ander paard, maar het paard mocht niet in zijn paleis komen. Elke keer na de rit moest het paard weer terug naar de stal. Het meisje was daar erg droevig over, want ze probeerde de prins telkens weer duidelijk te maken dat zij het meisje was waarvan hij hield. Maar de prins begreep het niet. Een paard kon nu eenmaal niet praten. Het meisje had een goed leven gehad, en vooral nu ze bij zo'n lieve en zorgzame prins was, maar daar zou het bij blijven. Al haar verdere dromen moest ze opgeven.

Rozinde

Er was eens een meisje dat heel diep onder de grond opgesloten leefde om voor een draak te koken.

Het meisje heette Rozinde.

Altijd als ze niet snel genoeg was met koken dan werden de vlammen onder haar grote ketel woester en woester.

Ook wilde de draak altijd veel verschillende soorten vreemd vlees, en daarom moest Rozinde vaak op jacht.

Als ze niet snel genoeg was met jagen dan werd haar boog ineens vuurheet en dan viel ze altijd op de grond van de pijn.

Op een dag schoot een prins een pijl op de draak af en bevrijdde Rozinde. Hij nam haar mee naar zijn kasteel.

Om tegen de draak beschermd te zijn moest ze elke dag baden in een bad vol met melk onder het kasteel.

En elke dag moesten er wilde bloemen in geworpen worden.

De prins hield veel van het meisje en op een dag trouwde hij met haar.

Maar toen eens de prinses vergat in het bad van melk te baden sloeg de draak toe, en nam haar weer naar de diepe plaats onder de grond.

Nu moest Rozinde nog harder werken, en was de draak woester dan ooit.

Op een dag kwam de prins om zijn Rozinde te halen, maar de draak sloot hem op achter tralies van vuur.

Rozinde werd elke dag steeds verdrietiger.

Op een dag was ze weer op jacht voor de draak en vond een hert in het struikgewas. ‘Heus, schiet me niet,’ zei het hert, ‘dan zal ik je al mijn melk geven.’

En toen herinnerde Rozinde het weer dat de draak niet tegen melk kon.

Ook vroeg Rozinde aan het hert waar wilde bloemen waren.

Het hert had heel veel melk te geven, en al gauw was er een heel bad vol.

Toen gooide Rozinde de wilde bloemen erin.

Snel nam Rozinde een bad in de melk en ging met natte kleren terug.

Toen ze bij de vuurtralies aankwam wreef ze met haar melknatte kleren er tegenaan terwijl de tralies kapot sprongen.

Snel greep ze haar prins bij de hand en samen renden ze naar het bad.

Hier waren ze veilig tussen de wilde bloemen.

Maar al gauw kwam de draak een kijkje nemen.

Hij wist dat hij niks tegen hen kon beginnen zolang ze iedere dag een bad zouden nemen in de melk.

Maar hij wachtte en wachtte, en vandaag wacht hij nog steeds.

De Windemelk

Er was eens een indiaanse feeenkoningin die een hele bijzondere roos had. De roos kon spreken, en was zo prachtig dat een ieder die naar de roos keek versteende en voor altijd in verwondering naar de roos staarde. Daarom bracht de indiaanse feeenkoningin de roos naar

een eenzaam kasteel waar twee rivieren omheen stroomden. De eerste rivier was zo zoet dat iedereen die er bij in de buurt kwam voor altijd in slaap viel. De tweede rivier was zo vies en vuil, dat degene die er te dichtbij kwam voor altijd in huilen uitbarste. De feeenkoningin vond dat niet zo geweldig, maar ze wilde de roos beschermen. Maar niet alleen wilde ze de roos beschermen, maar ook degenen die dichtbij de roos wilden zijn. De roos was namelijk erg gevaarlijk. En bovendien plaatste de feeenkoningin ook de gevaarlijkste spin die bestond om het kasteel te bewaken. Dat vond de feeenkoningin ook niet leuk, maar ze wilde geen enkel risico nemen.

De feeenkoningin zag wel dat het er zo niet makkelijker op werd, en al helemaal niet minder gevaarlijk, en daarom liet ze grote waarschuwingsborden neerzetten. Niet veel lieden waagden zich nog in de buurt, en op een dag vroeg de roos of zo een wandeling door het bos mocht maken. Uiteindelijk stemde de feeenkoningin toe. Toen de roos bij de vieze rivier kwam liet ze een traan vallen, en toen ze bij de zoete rivier kwam gaapte ze even. Toen ze de waarschuwingsborden zag schrok ze heel erg. ‘Maar ik ben toch geen roofdier ?’ vroeg de roos. ‘Nee,’ zei de feeenkoningin, ‘maar heus, het is beter zo.’ Maar met een ruk maakte de roos zich los van de feeenkoningin. De feeenkoningin kon niet veel doen, omdat de roos zo groot was geworden in al die jaren. De roos snelde dieper het bos in, maar verdwaalde al snel, omdat ze de weg niet wist. Uiteindelijk vond ze een bosmeertje waarin ze begon te baden. Gelukkig was er niemand in de buurt, want dat zou veel te gevaarlijk zijn.

Maar na een tijdje wilde de roos weer terug naar het kasteel, en barste in huilen uit. ‘Ach,’ zei de wind, ‘mijn kind, maak je toch niet zo druk. Je vindt heus je weg naar het kasteel wel weer, volg gewoon de rivier van zoete en vuile melk, en je bent weer thuis, heus.’

‘Maar waar vind ik die rivier ?’ vroeg de roos.

‘Daar, in de lucht,’ sprak de wind, en tegelijkertijd verscheen er een wolkendek met daarin de rivier van melk. De roos zwom en dronk. Het was het zoetste en vieste wat ze ooit had gedronken, maar snel was ze thuis. ‘Mamma,’ zei ze tegen de feeenkoningin, ‘ik heb melk gedronken van de wind.’ En ineens stond er een meisje voor de feeenkoningin zo prachtig als een roos. En sindsdien is ze altijd in het kasteel gebleven.

Haar moeder bouwde de prachtigste torentjes voor haar, de lieflijkste sluiers en gordijntjes, en het meisje had het altijd erg naar haar zin, alhoewel het een eenzaam en verlaten kasteel was. Vaak dronk ze nog van de melk van de wind die de wind bij haar bracht, door het raam, en op een dag had ze er zoveel van gedronken dat ze er erg slaperig van werd. Toen ze wakker werd zei ze tegen de wind : ‘Zeg, waarom kom je niet gewoon bij ons wonen ?’ Dat liet de wind zich geen twee keer zeggen, en kwam door het raam naar binnen. Elke dag werd het meisje mooier en mooier door het drinken van de windemelk, en toen haar moeder stierf werd zij de feeenkoningin, maar weg van het kasteel wilde zij niet. Elke dag zond ze de wind uit om alle indiaanse feeen en toverrozen te verzamelen, en elke avond en nacht kwam de wind terug met vele feeenkoetsen. Allen hadden zij gedronken van de windemelk, en daarom waren ze hier.

Maar op een dag werd de wind oud, en stierf. De nieuwe feeenkoningin was ontroostbaar. Ook de windemelk begon heel langzaam op te raken. ‘Maar,’ zei de feeenkoningin, ‘dankzij de windemelk zijn we allemaal hier. Misschien stroomt de windemelk nu hoger in de lucht. Laten we een toren bouwen die geen top heeft.’ En zo bouwden de feeen een toren zonder einde, en kwamen op een plaats zo hoog in de lucht waar de windemelk nog stroomde. Ook kwamen ze tot de plaats waar de wind nu was, en tot de plaats waar de oude feeenkoningin nu

leefde. ‘Oh mamma,’ zei de nieuwe feeenkoningin. ‘Je bent niet dood.’ En toen omhelsden die twee elkaar, terwijl de feeen zongen, en de wind heel warm werd van binnen.

Het Meisje dat op het Water Danste

Er was eens een indiaans meisje dat op water kon dansen. Haar dansjes waren zo betoverend dat vissen uit het water opkwamen om in vogels te veranderen. Op een dag kwam er een heks naar haar kijken. De heks stopte alle vogels van het meisje in kooien, veranderde in een storm, en blies het meisje omver, zodat ze in het water wegzakte.

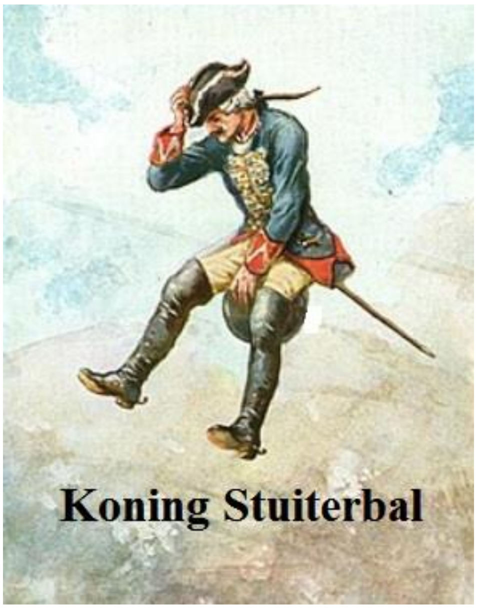
Direkt veranderde het meisje in een vis, maar al snel bleek dat ze een hele bijzondere vis was. Ze kon wensen laten uitkomen. Al gauw deden de vissen om haar heen telkens de meest vreemde wensen. Sommigen wilden vogels worden, anderen wilden onder de grond wonen, en zo ging het maar door. De tovervis werd er erg moe van, en op een dag dreef ze levenloos naar boven.

Toen de heks dat zag begon ze erge medelijden te krijgen, en sprak : ‘Vanaf nu zul je weer een meisje zijn dat op het water danst, maar ditmaal zal geen storm je kunnen omduwen. En zo gebeurde het. De tovervis veranderde weer in een meisje, en danste weer op het water, zonder dat ze nog kon vallen door een storm. Het meisje danste zo betoverend dat alle kooien van de heks zich openden. Maar de heks vond dat niet meer erg, want alles wat ze wilde was naar het meisje kijken. Maar op een dag danste het meisje van het water weg, en hoe de heks ook zocht, ze kon het meisje niet meer vinden. En sindsdien danste het meisje alleen nog maar in de herinnering van de heks.

Hoe Het IJs Smolt

Er waren eens twee ijspaleizen die onbereikbaar waren. Vaak kwamen ze om te plagen en andere vervelende dingen uit te halen. De ijspaleizen werden bewoond door hen die er het eerst waren, en sindsdien waren de paleizen onbereikbaar. En zo woonden er twee ijsheksen. Maar die ijsheksen konden elkaar ook niet bereiken, en zo was er dus altijd een afstand tussen de twee ijspaleizen. Op een dag was er een man die het geheim van de twee ijspaleizen kende. Hij wist dat hij de paleizen alleen kon betreden door hun spiegelbeeld. De man nam een grote spiegel mee, en toen één van de paleizen zich toonde keek de man in de spiegel naar het paleis, en stapte zo in de spiegel. Nu kon hij gemakkelijk bij het paleis komen, maar ook besefte hij nu hoe koud dat paleis was. Snel ging hij naar binnen, en zag de ijsheks staan met een ijsvlam. Hoe dichter de man bij de ijsheks kwam hoe moeizamer hij zich kon bewegen. Hij wist dat hij moest maken dat hij weg zou komen anders zou hij hier bevriezen en nooit meer wegkunnen.

Uiteindelijk ontsnapte hij weer door de spiegel, en ging toen op zoek naar het tweede paleis. Toen het tweede paleis zich vertoonde keek de man weer in de spiegel, zag het spiegelbeeld van het paleis en stapte in de spiegel om er op af te gaan. Hij wist dat deze heks net iets gevaarlijker was dan de andere heks. Hij merkte ook dat het hier veel kouder was, en daarom nam hij alleen een ijspegel van het paleis weg, en ging toen terug door de spiegel. Met de ijspegel ging hij toen weer naar het eerste paleis, door de spiegel, en toen de heks hem dit keer zag slaakte ze een gil. Tegen de kou van het andere paleis dat de man door de ijspegel droeg kon ze niet op. De ijsvlam vloog direkt naar de ijspegel toe, terwijl de heks direkt bevroor. Met de ijsvlam ging de man weer door de spiegel en ging weer naar het tweede ijspaleis. Ditmaal ging hij diep naar binnen, en toen de heks van dat paleis hem zag met de ijsvlam verloor zij ook haar eigen ijsvlam. Nu had de man twee ijsvlammen, en niet lang daarna begonnen de ijsvlammen zich als een vuur te verspreiden, en gloeiden totdat de twee ijspaleizen geheel gesmolten waren. Nu was daar een prachtig warme zee waaraan de man voor altijd is gaan wonen. En de heksen heeft hij gelukkig nooit meer teruggezien.


Koning Stuiterbal

COAB

1970-2018

1993-2018

Dit is het doldwaze boek van de beruchte en beroemde Koning Stuiterbal. Het staat vol met doldwaze en wonderlijke verhalen. Ook staat het vol met erg vreemde verhalen, want Koning Stuiterbal heeft daar oog voor. Zo neemt Koning Stuiterbal je mee op een overgetelijke reis vol raadsels en mysteries. Het is een verzameling oud spul, nieuw spul en spul wat nog nooit eerder echt is uitgegeven. Al deze verhalen komen uit de Tweede Bijbel.

Koning Stuiterbal

Het Gok Monster

De Zwembad Machine

De Anandez

Het Snoep Wat Niet Zoet Was

De Wonderschoenen

Het Boek van Gertje

Spindruppeltje

De Koeienbezem

De Negende Wens

De Terugbetaling

De Meloen en de Grenadine

De Toverbeker en het Toverbordje

Het Rode Luchtkoraal

Spiegel der Realiteiten

Het Ei van God

Spiegel van Paradox

Het Vogelbalkonnetje

Cain Jackson de Killerprofeet

Het Goverts Pistool

De Chocolade Prins

Da Deliria Branhamia

Escaping the Mind

De Tovenaar van Wezep

Escaping the Heart

Escaping the Conscience

Escaping Canon

Erwtenman

Honden van de Hel

Het Verhaal van Orkaan

De Nooiteindigende Vlam

De Zingende Bananen

De Aardbeientuin

Het Geheim van de Leeuwen Thee

Meneer Iemand en Meneer Niemand

Meneer Mond en Meneer Oor

De Reuzenvrouw

De Komkommerprins

De Jungle-vrouw

De Vreemde Paddestoel

Het Komkommerkasteel

De Frambozenverkoper

De Reuzenbewaker

Het Tovermannetje

Het Wondersap

Koning

Stuiterbal

Hij was in het bos. Hij was van huis weggelopen. Thuis ging het niet goed. Er werd altijd op hem gescholden, en hij moest altijd hard werken. Nooit was er vrije tijd. Allerlei andere dingen waren gedwongen. Hij was er helemaal klaar mee. Het was in het bos waar hij het modder monster tegenkwam, die helemaal van modder was. Hij was helemaal niet bang voor het monster. Hij dacht dat het monster nooit erger zou kunnen zijn dan waar hij vandaan kwam. Het modder monster was verbaasd dat hij niet bang voor hem was. Ieder ander mens en dier was bang voor hem. Het jongetje kwam dichterbij het monster en begon hem te aaien.

'Nu wordt je wel helemaal vies,' zei het modder monster. 'Dat geeft niet,' zei het jongetje. 'Als ik maar vrij ben.'

'Over vrijheid gesproken ...' zei het modder monster. 'Ik ben ontsnapt uit de klauwen van een heks. Het leven is beter in het bos. Het jongetje knikte, en zei dat hij een soortgelijk verhaal had. 'Dan hebben we elkaar op het juiste moment en de juiste plaats gevonden,' zei het modder monster. Het jongetje grinnikte.

Ze gingen beiden nog dieper het bos in, en het modder monster vertelde dat hij lang onder de grond moest wonen, bij de ondergrondse heks. Hij werd daar opgesloten gehouden in een klein kooitje. 'Blij dat je vrij bent nu,' zei het jongetje. 'Ik zat in een zelfde situatie. Het is goed om de bomen te ruiken en de frisse lucht van het bos. Dat is zo genezend.'

'Precies,' zei het modder monster. 'Mijn heks spoot altijd met smerige parfumspuiten en haar nagellak op haar lange nagels stonk.'

De twee hadden elkaar veel te vertellen en konden al vanaf het directe begin goed met elkaar opschieten. Na een tijdje lopen kwamen ze een koningskind tegen. Het jongetje vroeg zich af wat een koningskind zo helemaal alleen in het bos moest. Hij groette het koningskind.

'Wat ben ik blij jullie te zien,' zei het koningskind. 'Ik ben zo lang alleen geweest hier, en nu eindelijk heb ik jullie gevonden. Ik ben van het koninklijk paleis weggelopen. Niets mocht. Ik mocht zelfs niet naarbuiten anders zou ik zogenaamd vies worden.' Het koningskind trok toen een vies gezicht om na te doen hoe ze naar hem deden. 'Ik kan het niet meer,' zei het koningskind. 'Ik ben er helemaal klaar mee. Het was niet goed voor mij om daar te leven.'

Het jongetje knikte. 'Dan zit je in hetzelfde schuitje als ons. Wij zijn ook ontsnapt,' zei het jongetje.

'Goed dan dat we elkaar zijn tegengekomen,' zei het koningskind. 'We kunnen dan misschien nog veel aan elkaar hebben.'

'Welkom in de club,' zei het modder monster.

'Wat voor een club is het ?' vroeg het koningskind.

'De club van de ontsnapten,' grinnikte het modder monster.

Ook het jongetje moest grinniken, en toen grinnikte het koningskind ook.

'Nu moeten we alleen nog een plaats hebben om te leven,' zei het koningskind.

Ze liepen door in het bos, en kwamen na een tijdje aan bij een huisje wat onbewoond scheen te zijn. Alle spullen waar hier oud, en alles lag onder de stof, alsof er niemand in vele jaren was geweest.

'Hoera,' zei het koningskind. 'Een verlaten boshuisje.'

'Hier kunnen we wonen,' zei het jongetje, die al direct alles begon te ontstoffen.

'Een beetje schoonmaken kan geen kwaad,' grinnikte het modder monster. Er waren precies drie bedden. Nadat ze de boel hadden schoongemaakt en wat hadden gegeten en gedronken gingen ze alledrie slapen, want ze waren erg moe geworden.

Maar middenin de nacht werd er op de deur geklopt. Er stonden tien soldaten aan de deur. Het jongetje had de deur opengemaakt en liet ze binnen. Het koningskind was ook wakker geworden, en kende de soldaten niet. 'Wie zijn jullie ?' vroeg het koningskind.

Maar de soldaten gaven geen antwoord. 'Misschien hebben ze honger,' zei het modder monster. Het jongetje gaf hen wat te eten. Er waren nog genoeg verzamelde bessen.

Na een tijdje zei een soldaat wat : 'Ach.'

'Ach ?' vroeg het jongetje. 'Is er wat gebeurd ?'

'Nee,' zei een andere soldaat.

'Dus jullie komen zomaar even op bezoek,' zei het koningskind. 'Gezellig.'

'Gezellig,' zei een andere soldaat.

'Ik heb het altijd koud,' zei weer een andere soldaat.

'Hoe komt dat ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Nee, dat is zijn naam,' zei weer een andere soldaat.

'Oh,' zei het jongetje. 'Wat een grappige naam. En hoe heet jij ?'

'Ik ben te dik,' zei de soldaat.

'Ja, maar je bent helemaal niet dik,' zei het jongetje.

'Het is mijn naam,' zei de soldaat. 'Te Dik. Te is mijn voornaam, en Dik is mijn achternaam. Ik kan er niets aan doen dat ik zo heet.'

'Dat klopt,' zei het jongetje. 'Nou, een mooie naam, en ik hoop dat je zelf ook je naam leuk vindt.'

'Hij vind nooit iets leuk,' zei weer een andere soldaat.

'En wie ben jij ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Ik ben Klaas,' zei de soldaat. 'Klaas de Kale.'

'Maar je bent helemaal niet kaal,' zei het jongetje. 'Oh wacht, het is zeker je achternaam.'

'Ja,' zei de soldaat. 'En ik ben er helemaal niet blij mee. We zijn ontsnapt uit een ver land.'

'Ah,' zei het koningskind. 'Nou, welkom in de club van de ontsnapten. Wij zijn allemaal ontsnapt.'

'Aha !' riepen de soldaten blij. 'Dus wij kunnen hier blijven ?'

'Natuurlijk,' zei het modder monster. 'Wij horen allemaal bij elkaar. We maken er nog wel tien bedden bij. Het huisje is net groot genoeg.'

'Mag de prinses hier ook wonen ?' vroeg één van de soldaten. 'Wij hebben ook haar meegenomen.'

'Waar is ze ?' vroeg het koningskind.

'In een envelop,' zei de soldaat, en haalde een verfrommelde envelop uit zijn zak.

'Niet te geloven,' zei het jongetje.

Het modder monster kwam dichterbij de envelop en keek er naar. 'Ze woont in deze envelop ?' vroeg hij.

De soldaat knikte. 'Ja,' zei hij. 'Het is een plaatje.'

'Leuk,' zei het modder monster. 'En wat was de reden waarom jullie met haar zijn ontsnapt ?'

'Ze moest altijd in de keuken werken, en mocht niks. Ze is nog maar een kind,' zei de soldaat.

'Goed dat jullie voor haar opgekomen zijn,' zei het koningskind, terwijl hij een buiging maakte voor de soldaten en zijn hoed afnam. Er zat een veer op zijn hoed, als een pluim.

'Mogen wij haar zien ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Nee,' zei de soldaat. 'Het plaatje is uit een boek geknipt. Ze moet voorlopig in de envelop blijven.'

'Oh,' zei het jongetje. 'En waarom is dat ?'

Maar de soldaat zweeg.

Alle soldaten die hun naam nog niet hadden gezegd begonnen toen te vertellen hoe ze heetten. Het waren allemaal lange getallen, en ze hielden maar niet op. 'Stop, stop,' zei het jongetje. 'Het is wel duidelijk en klaar dat jullie nieuwe namen nodig hebben. Jullie namen zijn eindeloos. Dat is niet echt handig.'

'Wij zijn van het land Eindeloos,' zei een soldaat.

'En wie regeert dat land ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Koning Eindeloos,' zei de soldaat.

'En dat is ook een plaatje ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Nee,' zei de soldaat. 'Een bal. Die rolt altijd door de straten heen om de boel in de gaten te houden. Er gebeuren daar vreemde dingen.'

'Zoals wat ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Een bril,' zei de soldaat.

'Een bril ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Iedereen moet een bril dragen zodat ze alleen zullen zien wat de koning wil dat ze zien,' zei de soldaat.

'En wat zien ze dan ?' vroeg het jongetje met verbazing.

'Plaatjes,' zei de soldaat. 'De koning houdt van plaatjes.'

'Wat zijn dat voor plaatjes ?' vroeg het jongetje.

Maar de soldaat zweeg.

Het jongetje zuchtte. 'Plaatjes met praatjes,' zei een andere soldaat.

'Ik kan me voorstellen dat jullie zijn ontsnapt,' zei het jongetje.

'Ik niet,' zei de soldaat. 'Het was best leuk.'

'Wie ben jij dan ?' vroeg het jongetje. Toen noemde de soldaat een lang nummer op wat maar niet stopte.

'Heb je ook een andere naam ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Nee,' zei de soldaat.

'Maar waarom ben je dan ontsnapt ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Tja, dat weet ik ook niet,' zei de soldaat. 'Gewoon omdat de anderen het ook deden.'

'Een nalopertje dus,' grinnikte het koningskind. Ook het modder monster grinnikte.

'Maar de andere soldaten zijn dus ontsnapt omdat ze de prinses willen helpen,' zei het jongetje.

'Dat zeggen ze,' zei de soldaat. 'Maar de prinses had het best naar haar zin. Ze hoefde helemaal niet in de keuken te werken. Allemaal leugens.'

'Tegengestelde verhalen dus,' zei het jongetje. 'En wat zegt de prinses er zelf van ?'

'Die praat niet,' zei de soldaat. 'Ze is nog te jong om te praten. Plaatjes praten pas als ze zes zijn.'

'Misschien als het koningskind en de prinses later groot zijn ze met elkaar kunnen trouwen,' zei het jongetje, 'dan kunnen we een nieuw land bouwen hier in het bos, het land van de ontsnapten.'

'Dat kan niet,' zei een soldaat. 'Ze moet in de envelop blijven. Alleen daar is ze veilig.'

'Dat is ook niet gezellig voor haar,' zei het jongetje.

'Het is een tover envelop,' zei de soldaat. 'Er is een land in de envelop. Daar heeft ze het goed, en zo moet dat blijven.'

'Kunnen wij haar daar bezoeken ?' vroeg het modder monster.

'Ja, als je een plaatje wordt,' zei de soldaat.

'Hoe worden we een plaatje ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Koning Eindeloos maakt plaatjes,' zei de soldaat. 'Hij rolt over mensen heen, en dan zijn het plaatjes.'

'Wow,' zei het jongetje. 'Maar jullie zijn van hem ontsnapt. Is er ook nog iemand anders die plaatjes maakt ?'

'Ja,' zei de soldaat. En toen noemde hij een eindeloos getal op.

'Waar is hij ?' vroeg het jongetje.

De soldaat haalde een verfrommelde envelop uit zijn zak.

'Oh, het is ook een plaatje ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Ja,' zei de soldaat.

'En hoe gaat dat precies ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Het is een plaatje van een bal,' zei de soldaat, 'en het werkt ongeveer op dezelfde manier.'

'Ja, maar hoe dan ?' vroeg het jongetje. 'Een bal op een plaatje kan toch niet rollen ?'

De soldaat haalde het plaatje uit de envelop. De bal op het plaatje bewoog, en begon in het rond te rollen. 'Wow,' zei het jongetje verbaasd, 'maar de bal kan niet uit het plaatje ?'

'Nee,' zei de soldaat.

'Maar hoe worden wij dan een plaatje ?' vroeg het jongetje.

De soldaat keek een andere soldaat aan, maar die keek weer naar een andere soldaat.

'Wij weten niet hoe hij het doet,' zei Te Dik.

'Praat hij ook ?' vroeg het modder monster.

'Nog niet,' zei Te Dik. 'Hij is nog geen zes.'

'Ik heb nog wel wat,' zei Klaas de Kale, en haalde een stuiterbal uit zijn zak. De stuiterbal begon direct in het rond te stuiteren, en had flink veel babbels.

'Dat kan, ja, dat kan,' zei de stuiterbal. 'Plaatje worden zei je ? Heel simpel.' En hij vloog op het jongetje af, en begon op het jongetje te stuiteren, die even later helemaal platgewalst was als een plaatje. 'Hoera !' riep het jongetje. 'Nu kan ik de prinses ontmoeten !'

'Ja, wacht even, dat gaat zo maar niet,' zei de stuiterbal. 'Je bent veel te groot. Je past de envelop niet in.'

'Wie kan me dan kleiner maken ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Het plaatje krimpt vanzelf wel,' zei de stuiterbal. 'Even geduld hebben.' Ook het modder monster en het koningskind werden tot plaatjes gemaakt. De tien soldaten moesten de plaatjes en de envelop bewaken. Na een paar dagen waren de plaatjes genoeg gekrompen en konden ze de envelop in. Ze kwamen in een prachtig land, in een prachtige natuur met prachtige hangende bomen waar de lieflijkste bloemen en bloesem in groeiden, en allerlei prachtig kruid hing daar. Maar de prinses konden ze niet vinden. Plotseling zagen ze de stuiterbal. 'Volg mij,' sprak de stuiterbal. Hij leidde hen naar een hele speciale boom waar het plaatje van de prinses ergens hing. Maar de wind waaide het plaatje weg. 'Volg mij !' riep de stuiterbal. Hij stuiterde achter de wind aan, en het jongetje, het koningskind en het modder monster volgden hem. 'Hebbes !' riep de stuiterbal. Het plaatje was op de grond gevallen en helemaal onder de modder. 'Een modder prinses,' zei het koningskind. 'Misschien kan ze dan wel later met het modder monster trouwen.'

'Ik trouw niet !' bulderde het modder monster en greep grinnikend het koningskind en smeerde hem in met modder. 'Nu ben jij een modder prins, dus dan kan jij misschien later als je groot bent wel met haar trouwen.'

'Ja,' zei het jongetje, 'en dan kunnen we hier misschien het nieuwe land van de ontsnapten bouwen.'

'Goed idee,' zei de stuiterbal. 'Welkom in mijn boek, waar jullie veilig kunnen wonen. Ik ben koning stuiterbal en met jullie heb ik zo waardige opvolgers. Ik heb namelijk andere dingen te

doen. Maak er wat moois van !' Toen stuiterde de stuiterbal weg. Toen zijn ze begonnen het nieuwe land te bouwen, en toen de prins en de prinses groot waren geworden trouwden ze met elkaar. Er was een groot feest en er waren inmiddels vele ontsnapte plaatjes bijgekomen. En ze leefden nog lang en gelukkig.

Het Gok Monster

Haar moeder noemde haar "Keren". Dat klonk ook lekker makkelijk, zodat als ze ergens zou komen waar ze niet mocht komen, of iets aan zou raken wat ze niet aan mocht raken, dan hoefde haar moeder alleen maar haar naam te roepen. Maar op een dag lette moeder even niet goed op, en Keren rende zo het huis uit, het bos in. Moeder had gewaarschuwd tegen het gok monster wat daar zou wonen, en kinderen opvrat, maar Keren bleef maar rennen, dieper het bos in.

Na een tijdje rennen kwam Keren aan bij een huisje. Het meisje ging naar binnen. Niemand scheen hier te wonen. Er lag allemaal stof. Er stond een klein barretje in de hoek, en er kwam een hoofd van een beest langzaam naar boven. Keren schrok.

'Wie bent u ?' vroeg Keren. Het beest liet zichzelf meer en meer zien. Het was een enorm groot beest, als een monster. 'Ik ben het gok monster,' zei het beest.

'Mijn moeder heeft mij tegen u gewaarschuwd,' zei Keren.

'Waarom ben je hier dan, dom kind ?' zei het gok monster. 'Weet je dan niet dat ik kinderen verslindt ?'

'Jawel,' zei Keren, 'maar thuis is het ook niet goed.'

'Oh, waarom niet ?' zei het gok monster.

'Ik wil daar liever niet over praten,' zei Keren. 'Eet me alsjeblieft op. Dan is het voorbij.'

'Wacht, dat gaat zo maar niet,' sprak het gok monster. 'Ik ga daar altijd zorgvuldig mee om. Ik selecteer de kinderen. Ze komen niet zomaar binnen. Ik ben daar gek.'

'Waar moet ik aan voldoen om bij u binnen te komen ?' vroeg Keren.

Het monster kwam dichter en dichter bij haar. Hij begon haar van top tot teen te bekijken. 'Mjah,' zei het monster. 'Daar ga ik het echt niet voor doen. Ga maar weer naar huis, want dit is niks.'

'Wat !' riep Keren. 'Wat is er mis met mij ?'

'Helemaal niks,' zei het monster. 'En dat is jouw probleem. Je hebt nog helemaal niets meegemaakt. Er zit geen scheurtje in je kleren. Er zit geen vlekje in je jurk. Daar ga ik niet aan beginnen. Kom maar weer terug als er echt iets mis met je is.'

Het meisje werd heel boos. 'U weet toch niet wat ik allemaal al heb meegemaakt ?' Ze pakte een stuk van haar jurk en begon er een scheur in te maken. Toen nam ze wat modder van de grond en smeerde het op haar jurk en haar gezicht. 'Goed nu ?' vroeg ze.

'Je bent wel enthousiast,' zei het gok monster. 'Veel kinderen zijn niet zo ijverig als jou, en dat is misschien ook wel jouw probleem. Je was niet eens echt bang toen je hier binnenkwam.'

Het meisje liet haar hoofd zakken. 'Volgens mij bent u het echte gok monster niet. Mijn moeder zei dat het gok monster heel gevaarlijk is en kinderen verslindt, ze besluipt en ze bespringt,' zei het meisje. 'Ik zie dat niet in u. U bent heel deftig en hoffelijk, voorzichtig en zorgvuldig, bijna zorgzaam.'

'Ik verslindt geen kinderen,' zei het gok monster. 'Ik ben een poort.'

'Een poort naar wie ?' vroeg het meisje.

'Naar een land,' zei het beest.

'Wat voor land ?' vroeg het meisje.

'Dat ga ik je niet vertellen, zoals jij ook geheimen voor me hebt,' zei het beest.

'Okay dan,' zei het meisje, en begon haar hele levensverhaal te vertellen.

'Interessant,' zei het beest.

Toen ze daarmee klaar was vroeg ze : 'Kom ik nu in aanmerking ?'

'Het zijn maar kleine dingen,' zei het beest. 'Zoals ik al zei : Je hebt nog niets meegemaakt.'

'Maar vertel me dan in ieder geval over het land waar u de poort van bent,' zei het meisje.

'Het is een land onder de grond,' sprak het beest. 'En je kunt alleen dieper in dat land komen door gokspelletjes.'

'Dat heeft mijn moeder me ook verboden,' zei het meisje. 'Geen gokspelletjes, want dan neemt het gok monster je mee,' zegt ze altijd.

'Ha,' zei het gok monster. 'Maar natuurlijk. Mensen hebben hun hele hebben en houwen verloren door gokspelletjes. Je hebt een verstandige moeder.'

'Ze hangt me de keel uit,' zei Keren.

'Crazy, isn't it ?' zei het gok monster.

'Ja,' zei Keren, 'dat kunt u wel zeggen.'

'Nee, ik denk dat jij gek bent, zoals veel kinderen van jouw leeftijd,' sprak het beest. 'Jullie denken dat alles kan en mag, maar jullie zien de gevaren niet. Daar zijn ouders voor.'

'Maar het kan ook te ver gaan,' zei het meisje.

'Precies, en daar ben ik voor !' brulde het monster. 'En nu wegwezen, want bij jou zijn de rollen omgedraaid ! Niet jij hebt mij nodig, maar je ouders hebben mij nodig ! Vooruit, wegwezen nu, anders ga ik op een draf naar je ouders toe om ze uit de brand te helpen !'

Het meisje begon weg te rennen, want ze begon nu echt bang te worden. Het monster begon steeds woester te worden. 'Ik denk dat ik het niet meer wil !' riep het meisje.

'Dat is je geraden ook !' brulde het monster.

Met een gebogen hoofd kwam Keren even later thuis.

'Waar ben je geweest ?' vroeg moeder.

'In het bos, moeder. 't Spijt me, ik had het niet moeten doen,' zei Keren.

'Goed dat je omgekeerd bent dan, Keren,' zei moeder. 'Nog iets beleefd ?'

'Niks, mamma, helemaal niks,' zei het meisje.

'Je mag van geluk spreken dat je nog leeft,' zei moeder. 'Het gok monster had je kunnen verscheuren.'

'Ik weet het mamma,' zei het meisje. 'Ik denk dat ik net op 't nippertje tot mijn verstand kwam, en ik herinnerde me uw woorden.'

'Goedzo, meisje,' zei moeder. 'En je hebt je naam ook mee.'

'Dank u wel, mamma,' zei het meisje. 'Ik weet nu waarom u mij zo heeft genoemd.'

Einde

De Zwembad Machine

Toen Joep de zwemwedstrijd had gewonnen kreeg hij wel een hele merkwaardige prijs. Hij kreeg een zogeheten zwembad machine. Moeder wist niet waar ze het ding moesten bergen. Het was nogal een groot ding, en niemand wist hoe het werkte. Later kwamen ze erachter dat er een knop opzat die het ding kleiner kon maken, en zo kwam de zwembad machine bij Joep

op de slaapkamer. Joep vond het wel een mooi ding. Hij kon er uren naar staren, maar wist eigenlijk niet waarvoor het was. 's Nachts gaf het ding soms vreemd licht, heel zacht, zacht groenig of blauwig. Joep werd er altijd heel dromerig van. Zijn broertje vroeg hem weleens waarvoor het ding nou eigenlijk was, maar Joep kon het hem niet vertellen. Ook zijn vader en moeder wisten het niet.

Op een dag besloot Joep het aan de badmeester te vragen, maar die wist het ook niet. Ze hadden het ding eens aangeleverd gekregen uit een ver land. Er zat wel een gebruiksaanwijzing bij, maar niemand begreep die taal. Het ding heeft toen jarenlang op Joep's kamer gestaan, terwijl niemand wist waartoe het diende. Maar op een dag ging het ding aan de wandel. Hij ging langs de ziekenhuizen en de politie-bureau's en bezocht allerlei winkels, maar deed verder niets dan kijken. De mensen vonden het heel vreemd, maar durfden niets te zeggen.

Joep kwam er al snel achter dat de zwembad machine weg was, en ging richting de stad. Ergens in een winkel vond hij de zwembad machine. De winkelier en de klanten staarden ernaar met open mond. Ze dufden niets te zeggen. Ze durfden zich zelfs niet te bewegen. 'Hey !' riep Joep tegen de machine, die inmiddels weer veel groter was. 'Wat doe je hier ?' De machine bewoog langzaam naar Joep toe. Joep keek naar de winkelier die helemaal stond te zweten van angst. 'Het ding is van mij,' zei Joep tegen de winkelier. 'Hij heeft nooit een vlieg kwaad gedaan.' De winkelier stond er als verstijfd. Ook de klanten bewogen niet, en hadden nog steeds hun mond open van verbazing of schrik. 'Kom,' zei Joep tegen de zwembad machine. 'We gaan naar huis.' De zwembad machine volgde Joep de winkel uit.

'Waarom deed je dat ?' vroeg Joep. 'Of wilde je gewoon eens ergens anders zijn ?' De machine zei niets. De machine had nog nooit gesproken, maar volgde Joep. Thuisgekomen maakte Joep de machine weer klein met een druk op een knop, en zo kwam de machine weer op Joep's slaapkamer terecht. Maar de dag erna was de machine weer weg. Hoe Joep ook zocht in de stad. Hij kon de zwembad machine niet vinden. Joep ging ook zoeken in dorpen en steden dichtbij, maar tevergeefs. Joep liet een advertentie plaatsen in de krant en meldde het aan de politie. Weken gingen voorbij, maar zonder teken van de machine.

Op een dag was Joep in het bos voor een wandeling. Opeens kwam de zwembad machine achter een struik vandaan. Hij ging recht voor Joep staan op het pad. 'Hey, jij weer !' riep Joep blij, en omhelsde de machine. 'Waar ben je geweest ? Waarom ben je hier ? Je wilde niet meer op mijn kamer staan, hè ?' zei Joep. 'Ik begrijp het wel. Eigenlijk ken ik je helemaal niet. Ik weet eigenlijk niets van je.' De machine voelde warm aan en leek wel te pruttelen. Het leek wel alsof er allerlei pompen aan gingen, en weer werd de machine enorm groot, nog wel groter dan hij ooit was. 'Hey !' riep Joep. Plotseling werd Joep naar binnen gezogen in de machine.

Binnenin was er een groot tropisch zwembad met grote pompen aan de zijkant. 'Wat gebeurt hier ?' vroeg Joep. 'Mijn eigen zwembad !' riep Joep na een tijdje. 'Dat heb ik nou nooit geweten. Je voelde je natuurlijk eenzaam. Je stond veel te lang ongebruikt en klein in mijn slaapkamer. We hebben een grote tuin. Daar kun je wel staan, en dan kunnen we zwemmen zoveel we willen.' Ergens aan de zijkant was een deur waardoor Joep weer naar buiten kon. 'Volg mij,' zei Joep blij. De zwembad machine volgde hem helemaal naar de tuin achter Joep's huis. Hier kon de machine mooi staan. Vanuit het slaapkamer raam kon Joep zo altijd naar hem kijken. Joep ging vanaf die dag vaak zwemmen in zijn nieuwe zwembad. Wel elke dag, maar op een dag was de zwembad machine weer weg. De volgende dag stond er in de kranten dat er zomaar vanuit het niets een nieuw zwembad was gekomen, groter dan ooit. Het was een tropisch zwemparadijs. Joep kon zijn ogen niet geloven. Joep ging direct een kijkje nemen toen hij het in de krant had gelezen. Er waren heel veel mensen. 'Hey !' riep Joep naar het zwembad. 'Vond je het niet meer leuk in de tuin ? Ik begrijp het al. Je wilde nog groter zijn, en je paste niet meer in onze tuin.' De mensen keken Joep vreemd aan. 'Wat loop je daar te schreeuwen,' zei een badmeester tegen Joep. 'Dit is ons nieuwe zwembad. Maak jezelf toch niets wijs.'

'Het is mijn zwembad, mijnheer,' zei Joep. 'Ik heb het eens gewonnen met een zwemwedstrijd.' De badmeester begon hem uit te lachen. 'Grappige jongen die je er bent. Ik heb veel rare dingen meegemaakt, maar jij bent wel het allerraarste,' zei de badmeester. De volgende dag was er met grote koppen in de kranten geschreven dat er ook in andere steden en dorpen zulke grote tropische zwemparadijsen waren gekomen. Iedereen dacht dat de regering het had gedaan, maar Joep wist wel beter. Hij vroeg zich af of zijn zwembad machine misschien eieren had gelegd. Het hele land werd gevuld met zulke wandelende zwembaden. Ook gingen de zwembaden in steeds groter wordende optochten naar de zee. De hele zee werd drooggepompt, en werd tot een gigantisch groot tropisch zwembaden paradijs.

Joep vroeg zich af of dat niet een beetje teveel van het goede was. Hij vroeg zich af waar het allemaal voor nodig was. Op een dag ging hij terug naar zijn eigen zwembad. 'Hey !' riep Joep tegen de zwembad machine. 'Wat ben je aan het doen ? Wat is het plan ? De hele zee is in een zwembad veranderd !' Maar de zwembad machine zei zoals gewoonlijks niets terug, en weer keken de mensen hem vreemd aan. 'Die jongen is gek,' zeiden ze.

'Ik ben niet gek,' zei Joep. 'Ik heb het zwembad ooit eens gewonnen met een zwemwedstrijd.'

'Ja, ja,' lachten sommige mensen, 'dat zeggen ze allemaal. Kom zeg, maak dat je grootje wijs. Ga lekker naar de Chinees, wat eten, daar knap je van op.'

Maar Joep wist wel beter. Hij brak zijn hoofd over dit raadsel. 'Alsjeblieft, spreek tot me !' riep hij tot het tropische zwembad. 'Herinner je je hoe je altijd op mijn slaapkamer stond met

je zachte groenachtige en blauwachtige gegloei waardoor ik zo dromerig werd ? En herinner je je hoe we eens samen een wandeling door het bos maakten ?' Steeds meer mensen keken de jongen lachend aan. 'Kom jongen, kom naar binnen en ga lekker zwemmen,' zeiden ze. 'Zwembaden praten niet. Die zijn er om in te zwemmen. Meer niet.' Maar Joep wist wel beter. Hij liep naar de muur van het zwemparadijs, en begon hem te aaien en te knuffelen. 'Toe nou,' zei hij. 'Wordt nou eens wakker. Ken je me echt niet meer, of is dit waar je wezen moet ?'

Met een gebogen hoofd ging Joep naar huis. Hij ging die avond vroeg naar bed. Midden in de nacht had hij een droom. Hij droomde dat hij langs het strand liep, en een grote vogel kwam in de verte op hem af, en pikte hem toen op. 'Hey !' riep Joep. 'Waar gaan we naartoe ?'

'Naar het zwembad paradijs,' zei de vogel. De vogel vloog heel hoog met hem, naar een andere planeet. Hier stonden allemaal prachtige grote machines met grote pompen. 'Dit lijkt wel op waar ik woon !' riep Joep.

'Met een verschil,' zei de vogel.

'Wat voor verschil ?' vroeg Joep.

'Nou,' zei de vogel. 'Ga maar eens kijken.'

De vogel zette hem af bij een zwembad, en Joep ging door de grote deur naar binnen. Er stonden allemaal lage tropische muurtjes die heel warm waren en waar allerlei struikjes op groeiden. Nog steeds leek het heel erg op zijn eigen zwembad. Overal aan de zijkant waren grote pompmachines.

'Wat gebeurt hier ?' riep Joep.

Een badmeester kwam op Joep af. 'Wat denk je ?' vroeg hij. 'Lijkt me duidelijk, hè ?'

'Zwemmen ?' vroeg Joep.

'Nee, er worden hier aardappels gekookt, nou goed,' zei de badmeester.

'Waarom ben ik hier ?' vroeg Joep.

'Had jij niet ooit eens een zwembad machine gewonnen ?' vroeg de badmeester.

'Ja, ooit,' zei Joep, 'maar die is toen aan de wandel gegaan.'

'Heb je enig idee waarom ?' vroeg de badmeester.

'Waarschijnlijk omdat hij grote ambities had,' zei Joep.

'De zwembaden bevatten de tranen van de mensen, Joep,' zei de badmeester. 'Ze hebben een grote opdracht. Het zijn tranen-pompen.'

'Wat gaat er nu gebeuren ?' vroeg Joep.

'Ze moeten alle tranen verwerken,' zei de badmeester.

'Wat maken ze ervan ?' vroeg Joep.

'Films,' zei de badmeester. 'Aan de achterkant van het apparaat wat je had gewonnen zat een klein knopje waardoor het tot een bioscoopje zou worden.'

'Niemand vertelde me erover,' zei Joep.

'Dan weet je het nu,' zei de badmeester. 'Beter laat dan nooit.'

Joep werd wakker badend in zweet. Alles was een droom geweest, ook dat hij de zwembad machine won. Hij had heel lang en vreemd gedroomd. Vandaag waren de zwemwedstrijden.
Joep werd eerste en won de hoofdprijs : een filmprojector met een hele doos vol films.
Glimlachend dacht hij terug aan zijn droom.

Einde

De Anandez

De Anandez, de grote ijszee, was het land aan het overstromen. Het scheurde families uit elkaar als lappen poppen. Eigenlijk bleef het maar bij één grote golf die alles overspoelde, en toen trok de zee zich weer terug, maar het kwaad was al geschied. Niemand was nog dezelfde sinds die dag. Het was alsof er iets geknapt was in de hersenen van de mensen. Velen hadden hun geheugen verloren. Velen begonnen totaal doelloos rond te zwerven ... als zombies. Weer anderen begonnen vreemde dromen te krijgen. Allen wisten ze dat de Anandez had toegeslagen. Dat was nu diep in hun geheugen gegrift, en spoelde eigenlijk alles weg. Hun leven draaide nu om de Anandez, en altijd verwachtten ze dat de Anandez weer opnieuw zou toeslaan, maar dat gebeurde niet. De dijken werden enorm versterkt en hoger gemaakt. In grote angst werd het land zelfs overdekt, wat de definitieve scheiding betekende tussen mens en zee. De mens leefde nu in een schelp. Genieten op het strand was er niet meer bij. De mensen zochten nu de overdekte bosrivieren op. Hier probeerden ze een nieuw leven te vinden. Velen wilden niet meer naar huis. Ze hadden daar een groot trauma opgelopen door het toeslaan van de Anandez. Al hun bezittingen hadden ze achter gelaten. Ik spreek dan over de rest van de inwoners van het land, want de meesten waren omgekomen door de Anandez.

Dat ik het nog kan navertellen is een wonder. Ik woon gelukkig diep in het land, en ik stond in de slaapkamer toen het gebeurde. Bij mij reikte de golf net tot het dak, tot de vensterbank van de slaapkamer. Ik kon het zo buiten zien gebeuren. Zij die voor mij woonden hadden minder geluk. In ieder geval was ineens het dak onder het raam van de slaapkamer bedekt met sneeuw en ijs, en toen zag ik dat de zee zich langzaam begon terug te trekken. Maar de golf had velen meegesleurd. Ik woonde op het randje van het natuurgeweld. Voor mij was het erop of eronder. Ik was mijn vrouw dankbaar dat ze dit huis had gekozen. Iets dichter bij de zee en we hadden niet meer geleefd. Iedereen die dichtbij de zee woonde werd door de golf meegesleurd naar God weet waar. Er moest een nieuwe regering komen, want die leefden dichtbij de zee.

Ik was dan één van de velen die nu vreemde dromen begon te krijgen. Er was ook iets in mijn hersenen geknapt. Ook was ik een groot deel van mijn geheugen kwijt, maar niet alles. Gewoon om het te kunnen verwerken wilde ik de Anandez eens opzoeken, maar dat mocht niet. De dijken waren zwaar bewaakt. Niemand kon erdoor naar de ijszee. Het was afgesloten terrein. Ik moest me daarbij neerleggen, maar eigenlijk wilde ik dat niet. Ik heb me toen voorgedaan als wetenschapper, en na veel gesprekken lieten ze me eindelijk door. Er waren altijd uitzonderingen op de regel, en ik bleek er aan te voldoen. En het was ook zo : Ik wilde de Anandez onderzoeken. Ik wilde meer van de Anandez weten. Via een streng bewaakte tunnel kwam ik op het verwilderde strand van de grote ijszee. Er was hier geen kip. Er was een begeleider bij me, een gids. Zijn regenpak was blauw, wit en oranje. Ook had hij een helm op. Het was best donker dus hij had een soort lantaarn of schijnwerper meegenomen. Hij was nogal enthousiast over een bepaalde vissensoort : ijshaaien. Die konden geweldig snel zwemmen en hoge sprongen maken. Ze waren veelal wit. We liepen dichter naar de zee toe, en toevallig zagen we er een paar. Het was een wonderlijk gezicht.

De keer daarop ging mijn vrouw ook mee. Ze had zich extra stevig ingepakt, want het was een koukleum. 'Dit is hem dan,' zei ik tegen mijn vrouw. 'De Anandez, de grote ijszee, die onze hele familie uit elkaar heeft gescheurd.' Ik moest mijn vrouw van alles uitleggen, want het grootste gedeelte van haar geheugen was weg. Gelukkig herinnerde ze zich mij wel. 'Hoe kan ik jou nou ooit vergeten,' zei ze altijd. 'Dat is toch onmogelijk.' Maar ja, er waren zoveel mensen die mij niet meer herinnerden. We liepen langs het strand, en de gids vertelde ons veel over de Anandez. Het was weer dezelfde gids, en hij had weer een helm op. Hij scheen met zijn lantaarn op het water. Mijn vrouw wilde de ijshaaien wel graag zien, maar ze waren er dit keer niet. De gids begon vreemd te fluiten, waar we wel even van opkeken. Uit de golven kwam een vrouw omhoog, die toen naar ons toeliep over het water. Ze was gewikkeld in lange doeken. 'Wat gebeurt hier !' riep ik. Er was ineens overal storm. Ik zag mijn vrouw nog wegrennen, en de gids zag ik al helemaal niet meer. Ik begon te roepen, maar mijn stemgeluid kon niet tegen de storm op. Ik werd opgenomen als een veertje en over het strand geslingerd. "Anandez," zei een stem. De vrouw met de doeken was erg dichtbij me nu. Ik wist niet waar ik was. Haar doeken hingen over mij. Ik werd badend in zweet wakker. Alles was maar een droom geweest. Ik greep om me heen, en greep naar de plaats waar mijn vrouw altijd lag, maar ze lag er niet. Uit angst riep ik haar, en al snel kwam ze de slaapkamer binnen. Ze was even in de badkamer geweest. Ik vertelde haar de droom. "Ik heb iets soortgelijks gedroomd," zei ze. "Daarom ging ik naar de badkamer om even mijn gezicht nat te maken." Ik omhelsde haar. In elkaars armen probeerden we weer verder te slapen, maar dat werkte niet echt. Ze bleef maar praten. "Praat tot me," zei ze weleens als ik dreigde in te dutten.

"Sorry, ik probeer te slapen," zei ik.

Na een tijdje sliep ze, en kon ik ook slapen. Weer droomden we over de Anandez. Het was een vrouw die sprak dat ze de zon had overwonnen. Ze noemde het een stinkende bal. In haar wereld draaide alles om de ijszee, die als een echo-machine was. De echo's vervormden in de wind, en daarom moest men zo dicht mogelijk bij de echo-machine komen. Mijn vrouw en ik waren verbaasd dat we weer beiden dezelfde droom hadden gehad. Mijn vrouw maakte toen een lied over de Anandez :

Anandez, de grote ijszee,

Als een echo in de wind,

Zoveel geheimen draag je,

Die maar nooit worden gevonden,

Want de stormen zijn te zwaar

Anandez, maar zo kan het toch niet altijd blijven,

Anders is het met ons gedaan

Anandez, groot raadsel in de wind,

Toon ons toch jouw sleutel,

Leid ons toch de weg in dit bestaan,

Leer ons elkaar te verstaan

Anandez, jij scheurde ons allen uiteen,

En nam vele levens, waar zijn zij heen ?

Anandez, niets of niemand schijnt jou te kunnen stoppen,

En wij kwijnen allen weg,

Of is dit juist de weg ?

Anandez, jij komt altijd op in de morgen,

Als het morgenrood, jij hebt de zon verslagen,

Dan kijken we allen naar het ijs,

Hebbende zoveel vragen

Anandez, wat heeft de nacht met ons gedaan,

Jij brengt ons zoveel dromen,

Anandez, alles wat wij grijpen glijdt weg,

En wij worden zelf weggegrepen

Anandez, er is zoveel wat wij niet begrijpen,

Als een ons overspoelende zee van ijs,

Jij hebt ons meegenomen, jouw gezicht getoond,

In jou zijn wij wijs

Anandez, door vreemde dingen breng jij ons dichter bij elkaar,

Zo ver weg en toch dichtbij, mogen wij elkaar verstaan,

Het wonder van ijs is iets wat wij niet kennen,

Maar langzaam maar zeker mogen wij er aan wennen,

Anandez, kom snel terug,

Jij bent maar een droom,

Alles wat jij doet is verborgen geluk

Anandez, kom snel,

Praat met ons, leer ons jouw spel,

Wanneer wij in de ochtend ontwaken,

Zijn wij nog steeds in jouw droom,

Jij bent de gids tussen de doeken en de dekens

Oh, jij ijszee, zo warm en diep,

Zo verborgen, jij bent het die ons riep,

Oh ijszee van boven, oh hemelse taal,

Anandez, kom snel,

Jij bron beter dan de zon

In jou is al het licht en leven,

In jou is al het vuur om bruggen te bouwen,

Nee, warmer dan jij is er niemand,

Oh, hemelse zee van echo's,

Tot jouw geheim zwemmen wij

Mijn vrouw zong maar door. Ze was inmiddels achter de piano gaan zitten. De nacht erop had ik een droom dat ze een standbeeld was en eeuwig zong. Ze was door de Anandez gezonden.

Einde

Het Snoep Wat Niet Zoet Was

En als je dan denkt dat snoep altijd zoet is, dan heb je het mis. Want dokter Onzoet Snoep maakte snoep wat niet zoet was, alleen heel soms. Hij was een kleermaker die de mooiste kleren van snoep maakte. Hij woonde in het stadje Tigubriel, net achter de brug. Hij was dag

en nacht bezig de mooiste kleren te maken van het onzoete snoep, en daar tussendoor was hij dokter. Hij genas de mens door het onzoete snoep. Soms hoefden ze het alleen maar te dragen, of soms moesten ze het slikken, eten of drinken. De dokter was van alle markten thuis.

Hij had daarvoor een bepaald kabinet, en ook nog een heleboel kabinetten in zijn magazijn. Maar op een dag werd de dokter zelf ziek, en hij kon zichzelf niet genezen.Hij moest toen een lange reis door het bos maken naar een heks. Hij was zo ziek dat hij dwars door de sloten strompelde en niet op het pad kon blijven. Helemaal verwilderd en nat kwam hij aan bij de heks. Hij trilde en beefde van zijn nare ziekte. 'Och jongen,' zei de heks, 'jij bent er echt slecht aan toe. Goed dat je naar mij toe bent gekomen.'

'Kunt u mij alstublieft helpen,' sprak de dokter. 'Ik ben zo ziek, en geen van mijn onzoet snoep kan mij nog redden.'

'Natuurlijk,' zei de heks. 'Er is namelijk iets wat aan jouw verzameling ontbreekt.'

'Wat dan ?' vroeg de dokter.

'Een fiets !' sprak de heks. 'Je moet er gewoon eens op uit gaan en de wereld bekijken op een doodgewone fiets.'

'U maakt zeker een grapje,' sprak de dokter een beetje beledigd. 'Dat heb ik nu nooit tegen mijn patienten gezegd dat ze er op uit moeten met een fiets. Ik had altijd wel een middeltje voor ze.'

'Jawel,' zei de heks, 'maar je hebt ze lui gemaakt met al die middeltjes en al die zotte snoep kleren. Een mens moet er op uit om zo daadwerkelijk te genezen, en daarmee basta.'

De heks gaf een fiets aan de dokter, en de dokter deed wat hem was opgedragen. 'Baadt het niet, dan schaadt het niet,' sprak de dokter tegen zichzelf. Hij begon op de knopjes van de fiets te drukken, en tot zijn grote verbazing kreeg de fiets vleugeltjes, en zo kon hij overal naartoe vliegen. Hij was een nieuwe dokter geworden.

'Waarom komen er geen mensen meer ?' vroeg de dokter zich af nadat hij een hele lange reis had gemaakt. Het leek wel alsof de mensen hem waren vergeten, alsof hij honderd jaar was weggeweest. 'Het komt vast door de heks,' sprak de dokter, en ging weer terug naar de heks, op zijn vliegende fiets.

'Zeg heks,' sprak de dokter, 'nu moet je toch eens even luisteren. Ik kom terug van een lange reis over de wereld. Ik ben door velden en dalen gegaan, en heb alles gezien wat er te zien valt, en alles beleeft wat er te beleven valt, maar nu ben ik mijn patienten kwijt. Niemand komt nog, en niemand draagt mijn kleren nog.'

'Dat komt,' zei de heks, 'omdat het een betoverde fiets is. Zoals ik al zei heb jij mensen lui gemaakt met al je middeltjes en mooie kleren. Toen jij er niet meer was hebben ze andere oplossingen bedacht, en zijn ze zelf creatief geworden. Ze hebben je niet meer nodig, maar ik heb een ander baantje voor je.'

'En dat is ?' vroegde dokter.

'Kom maar mee,' sprak de heks, en leidde hem door een lange gang in haar huis. De gang leidde tot diep onder de grond. Ze kwamen in een ruimte waar allemaal grote ketels aan het pruttelen waren.

'Hier worden fietsen gemaakt van toversnoep, zoals je eigen fiets,' sprak de heks. 'Zo mag je je snoepwinkel houden, maar ga je er ook snoepfietsen bij verkopen, zodat de mensen niet lui worden.'

Dokter Onzoet begon helemaal te stralen. 'Dat is een heel bijzonder plan, heks,' sprak dokter Onzoet. 'Ik ben blij dat je me hebt geholpen.'

En zo gebeurde het. Dokter Onzoet werd ook fietsenmaker, en al gauw had hij meer klanten in zijn snoepwinkel dan hij ooit had gehad.

De Wonderschoenen

Een man ging eens met zijn moeder en grootmoeder naar een schoenmaker om nieuwe schoenen te kopen. Er stonden prachtige schoenen in de rekken, maar de mooiste schoenen waren van fluweel met verblindende ringen. De schoenmaker zei dat het wonderschoenen waren, en dat daarom de prijs iets hoger zou zijn dan gewoonlijks. Maar de man was erg rijk, en kocht de schoenen.

Toen de man die avond naar bed ging en in slaap viel begonnen de wonderschoenen te bewegen, en al snel liepen ze het huis uit. De man hoorde wat deuren klapperen, en rende al snel achter zijn schoenen aan. Ze waren op weg naar het dorp. In het dorp aangekomen kwamen er wat elfjes uit de schoenen die zich overal begonnen te verspreiden, en toen liepen de schoenen nog harder. Zo rende de man de hele nacht achter zijn schoenen aan, en die ochtend gingen ze bij een andere schoenmaker naar binnen. Buiten adem wilde de man zijn schoenen pakken, maar de schoenmaker zei : ‘Daar zult u wel voor moeten betalen.’

‘Maar dat zijn mijn schoenen,’ zei de man.

De schoenen stonden keurig in het rek naast een heleboel schoenen van dezelfde soort. De man begon een beetje hopeloos te worden.

‘Zijn dit allemaal wonderschoenen ?’ vroeg de man.

‘Wonderschoenen ? Waar heeft u het over ?’ zei de schoenmaker.

‘Ach, laat maar,’ zei de man, en betaalde opnieuw voor zijn schoenen. Maar ditmaal gebeurde er niets wonderlijks met de schoenen, en zo gingen er vele dagen voorbij, totdat de man dacht dat hij dan misschien de verkeerde schoenen genomen had. Weer ging hij terug naar de schoenmaker en kocht een ander paar van dezelfde soort, maar toen ook dit niet werkte besloot hij om ze allemaal te kopen. Maar geen van de schoenen bleken wonderschoenen te zijn. En daarom ging de man weer terug naar de schoenmaker.

‘Schoenmaker,’ zei de man, ‘kunt u mij vertellen wie er nog meer de laatste tijd schoenen van deze soort heeft gekocht ?’

‘Alleen een vrouw, een zeer rijke vrouw, die hier eens in de zoveel jaren komt,’ zei de schoenmaker. ‘Maar ik weet niet waar zij woont.’ De man was een beetje teleurgesteld toen hij dat hoorde. ‘Maar weet u wat ?’ zei de schoenmaker, ‘zodra ze hier is zal ik mijn dienstknecht naar u sturen zodat u met haar kunt spreken.’

Na vele lange jaren toen de man de wonderschoenen eigenlijk al een beetje vergeten was klopte de dienstknecht van de schoenmaker bij het huis van de man aan. De dienstknecht bracht de boodschap dat de vrouw van de schoenen was gekomen, en dat als hij de schoenen wilde hebben, dan zou hij zeven jaren voor haar moeten werken. Dat had de man er graag voor over, en ging met de dienstknecht mee.

De vrouw woonde op een groot kasteel, en in die zeven jaren had de man een goede tijd, maar werkte hard. Na de zeven jaren kreeg hij eindelijk de schoenen, en inderdaad, het waren de wonderschoenen. Ditmaal sloot de man de schoenen elke avond wanneer hij ging slapen op in een gouden kooitje met zilveren sluitseltjes.

Maar op een nacht brak de kooi open, en weer gingen de wonderschoenen er vandoor. De man werd wakker van het geluid, en rende achter de schoenen aan. Ditmaal brachten de schoenen hem diep in het bos. Hier woonde een hele oude schoenmaker op een afgelegen plek. De schoenmaker vertelde hem dat hij ooit de wonderschoenen had gemaakt, en dat ze op een dag aan de wandel gingen. De schoenmaker was blij dat ze nu iemand mee hadden gebracht, want de schoenmaker was erg eenzaam. Het huis van de schoenmaker was vol met wonderbaarlijke edelstenen, en de man wilde hier graag blijven. Na een tijdje vertelde de schoenmaker dat de wonderschoenen de bezitter naar het beste goud en edelgesteente zouden leiden, als ze maar nooit uitgetrokken zouden worden. En sindsdien sliep de man gewoon met zijn schoenen aan, en zijn de wonderschoenen altijd bij hem gebleven.

Op een dag leidden de schoenen hem tot een bloedheldere bron waar een mooie dame zat. Ze zat wat te breien, en het viel de man op dat ze zulke mooie schoenen had. De schoenen straalden in de zon. De man, die toch wel erg eenzaam was, ook al had hij gezelschap van de schoenmaker, werd direkt erg verliefd op de vrouw.

Het was alsof de knoppen van haar schoenen hem hadden betoverd. ‘Trouw met me, trouw met me,’ riep de man, maar de vrouw stond op en rende weg. Direkt ging de man er als een speer achteraan, maar de vrouw rende veel harder. De man was erg teleurgesteld, en ging terug naar de schoenmaker. ‘Oh,’ zei de schoenmaker toen de man hem het verhaal vertelde, ‘dat zijn schoenen die ik eens voor de bosfee heb gemaakt. Iedereen die die schoenen ziet raakt direkt betoverd.’

‘Maar waarom rende ze dan weg ?’ vroeg de man.

‘Dat doen de schoenen,’ zei de schoenmaker. ‘Maar als je dezelfde schoenen als haar zou hebben, dan zou je net zo hard als haar kunnen rennen.’ En toen liep de schoenmaker naar een oude kast en haalde een zelfde paar eruit.

De man deed de schoenen aan, en rende naar buiten. Nu kon hij de bosfee gemakkelijk bijhouden, en de bosfee was erg verrast. De bosfee was altijd erg eenzaam geweest, want haar schoenen renden altijd weg als er iemand in de buurt kwam. Maar nu de man haar makkelijk kon bijhouden begonnen haar schoenen wat af te remmen, en al gauw stond ze helemaal stil, als betoverd. ‘Je hebt me betoverd,’ zei de bosfee met een glimlach.

‘Nee,’ zei de man, ‘dat hebben de wonderschoenen gedaan.’

De bosfee keek naar zijn schoenen en toen naar hem. ‘Zou je weleens met mij willen dansen,’ zong de bosfee. ‘Zou je weleens met mij over de heg willen gaan, want daar baden zoveel sterretjes onder een bloedrode maan. Zou je weleens met mij willen rennen en zingen, heus, je kan het, want je hebt mijn wonderschoenen aan.’

En toen vertelde de bosfee over de heg waar ze nooit overheen kon, want altijd als ze dichterbij kwam, dan rende de heg weg, en de heg kon veel harder rennen dan haar.

‘Zou je weleens met mij willen dromen,’ zong de man. ‘Zou je weleens met mij onder de maan willen dansen. Zou je weleens met mij over de heg willen dansen.’

‘Ja, graag,’ zong de bosfee.

‘Ja, graag,’ zong de man.

‘Zie, het is wat eens de schoenmaker mij heeft verteld,’ zong de man. ‘Wij moeten dansen, wij moeten dansen, en de heg zal staan als betoverd en versteld.’

En zo dansten ze samen naar de heg toe, maar al gauw merkten ze dat de heg veel sneller was dan zij, en niet lang daarna gingen ze beiden teleurgesteld naar het huis van de schoenmaker terug. Toen de schoenmaker het verhaal hoorde haalde hij twee paar dansschoenen tevoorschijn. Het waren de mooiste schoenen die ze ooit

hadden gezien. Ze deden de schoenen aan, en keken elkaar in de ogen, en dansten als betoverd terug naar de heg. En inderdaad, de heg stond als bevroren te kijken, en met gemak konden ze door de heg heen. Ook de schoenmaker liep achter hen aan, en zo kwamen ze met z'n drieen aan de andere kant van de heg.

Maar de wezens die hier woonden vlogen allemaal in angst voor hen weg. Zij droegen geen schoenen, en zij hadden vederlichte vleugeltjes als elfjes. De schoenmaker was inmiddels weer teruggegaan naar zijn huis. Langzaam daalde de bosfee af in de rivier en de man deed hetzelfde. En heel langzaam begonnen ook de sterretjes in het water af te dalen. 'Ik heb mijn schoenen hier helemaal niet meer nodig !' riep de man, en trok ze uit. Direkt had ook hij vederlichte vleugeltjes en steeg uit het water op. Maar de bosfee volgde niet. 'Zeg, ik moet weer terug naar waar ik vandaan kom,' zei ze, en ging terug door de heg.

Even was de man teleurgesteld. Hij wilde hier wel blijven. Toen ineens trokken een heleboel sterretjes hem verder naar boven. Maar omdat hij zijn wonderschoenen had uitgedaan kon hij nu nooit meer terug over de heg. Na een tijd begon hij de bosfee en de schoenmaker erg te missen, en zou hij erg graag terugwillen. Op een dag ging hij terug naar de rivier om de wonderschoenen te zoeken. En toen gebeurde er iets wonderlijks : Twee van de prachtigste vissen kwamen op hem afzwemmen en zeiden : 'Wij zouden u nog willen bedanken dat u ons vrijgelaten hebt. Wij waren uw wonderschoenen, en in deze rivier zijn wij weer vissen geworden.'

Maar de man begreep het niet en vroeg : 'Maar wie heeft jullie dan vroeger betoverd, en hoe kom ik nu weer thuis ?'

'In het land achter de rivier woont de steenheks,' sprak één van de vissen. 'Zij vangt vissen om ze te betoveren tot schoenen. Wanneer je haar verslaat zul je terug kunnen keren naar je woonplaats.'

En zo brachten de twee vissen hem over de rivier, die verderop veel woester was. De steenheks woonde in een woest kasteel. De stenen waarmee het kasteel was gebouwd waren roze en rode edelstenen die ze gevonden had in de dieptes van de rivier. De man mocht de rode stenen en tegels niet aanraken, want dan zou hij verstenen. Maar sommige stenen waren het ene moment roze, en het andere moment rood. 'Ik wist wel dat je zou komen,' krijste de steenheks. 'De wonderschoenen hebben je hier naartoe geleid, alhoewel ze nu weer gewoon hun vissenhuid hebben. Zeg, ik heb een opdracht voor jou, en als je die opdracht kunt vervullen dan zal ik je weer naar huis laten gaan, over de heg. Haal voor mij drie toverbloemen in de betoverde tuinen achter het kasteel.'

De man deed wat hem gevraagd werd, maar in de betoverde tuinen raakte hij onwel. De heks die alles volgde door haar toverbol begon te lachen. 'Wat een

domoor. Niemand overleefd zo'n reisje door de betoverde tuinen. Zelfs ik kan daar niet komen.'

Maar na een tijdje kwam hij er toch uit met de drie toverbloemen waar de steenheks om vroeg. De steenheks was erg verbaasd, maar wel blij met de toverbloemen. 'Jij domoor,' riep ze. 'Nu kun je hier nooit meer weg. Mijn macht strekt zich nu uit tot zelfs achter de heg.' Maar toen werd de man erg kwaad, en herinnerde dat de vissen hadden gezegd dat hij haar eerst moest verslaan. Er lagen wat roze en rode stenen los om hem heen. Hij wist dat hij de rode stenen niet mocht raken, zoals de vissen hem dat hadden gezegd, anders zou het afgelopen met hem zijn. Maar hij pakte een schaalvormige roze steen, en schepte daarmee een kleine rode steen, en wierp het toen op de steenheks af. De steenheks versteende onmiddelijk. Maar overal om hem heen begonnen de stenen rood te worden, en de man wist niet wat hij moest doen. Voor hem was een vijvertje waar hij insprong. Het vijvertje liep uit in een riviertje waardoor hij het kasteel kon uitkomen, en waardoor hij in de rivier buiten het kasteel kon komen. Hier wachtten de twee vissen hem op. Ze waren erg blij dat de heks nu verslagen was, en ze vertelden de man dat de heg nu ook was verdwenen. Ooit had de heks de heg gebouwd om haar machtsgebied af te bakenen, maar nu had ze al haar macht verloren. Maar gek genoeg wilden de vissen weer uit het water genomen worden, om in wonderschoenen te veranderen, want om te leven op het vasteland beviel hen iets beter. En zo had de man zijn beste vrienden altijd bij de hand. Als hij ging zwemmen, dan veranderden ze in vissen die met hem mee zwommen en hem overal naartoe brachten, en op het vasteland waren ze gewoon zijn wonderschoenen.

Het Boek van Gertje

Het regent vandaag, Gertje loopt hard. Snel naar mamma, want die wacht. De school is net uitgegaan. Maar thuisgekomen is z'n moeder in een draak veranderd. Wat nu ? Langzaam komt z'n moeder op hem af. Gertje geeft een gil. Misschien dat ze hem wel wil opeten. Gertje rent snel naar buiten. Maar buiten staat er een meneer in een lange zwarte jas. Wie ben jij dan ? schreeuwt Gertje. Snel uit de weg, want mijn moeder is in een draak veranderd.

Maar de man met de lange jas grijpt Gertje in z'n kraag en loopt met hem naar buiten naar een busje. Hij wordt achterin gesmeten, en de man gooit de autodeur hard dicht, en loopt dan naar de voorkant, waar hij instapt. Snel wordt het busje gestart, en al snel rijden ze weg. Gertje weet niet wat nu beter is. Hier in deze auto of bij z'n moeder die in een draak is veranderd. Na een lange tijd wordt Gertje uit de auto gehaald. De man in de lange jas is in een zwarte wolf veranderd. Wat een paniek. Snel geeft Gertje hem een duw. Uit de weg jij, schreeuwt hij. Nu moet Gertje hard hollen, anders is hij er misschien geweest. Misschien heeft die wolf ook wel honger, net als zijn moeder. Snel rent Gertje het bos in. Diep in het bos vindt hij een boek. Het is een boek over vlinders. Hij herkent dit boek, maar weet het niet zeker. Had hij vroeger ook zo'n boek. Is dat boek soms van Gertje geweest ?

Snel rent hij door met het boek, want stel dat die wolf nog steeds achter hem aanzit. Onderweg vindt hij een rood kapje. Snel raapt hij het kapje op en rent verder. Waar zal Gertje nu naartoe gaan ? Opeens staat de man met de lange zwarte jas weer voor hem. Hij beweegt niet. Het is een standbeeld. Gelukkig, dacht Gertje, en rende verder.

Hoe dit allemaal afloopt, lees je in het boek van Gertje. Maar waar is dat boek dan ? Weet je het nog niet ? Dit is het boek van Gertje. Waar gaat het dan over ? Dan moet je verder lezen. Wat staat er dan allemaal in ? Lees zelf maar :

Het regent vandaag, Gertje loopt hard. Snel naar mamma, want die wacht. De school is net uitgegaan. Maar thuisgekomen is z'n moeder in een draak veranderd. Wat nu ?

Maar ik dacht dat het allemaal over vlinders ging ? Dan heb je het boek van Gertje niet goed gelezen.

Spindruppeltje

Er was eens een meisje dat Spindruppeltje heette. Het meisje was eigenlijk een prinsesje, maar was eens tijdens het spelen in het bos verdwaald en kwam bij een arm gezin terecht. Het meisje was nog te jong om te beseffen dat ze een prinsesje was, en ook het arme gezin wist niet wie ze was, maar ze besloten voor haar te zorgen. Dichtbij het huisje van het arme gezin was een vijver met krokodillen waar het meisje vaak speelde. Maar op een dag gleed het meisje uit, en viel in de vijver. Direkt werd ze door een krokodil gegrepen en in de diepte getrokken.

De krokodillen brachten haar naar een rijk diep onder de grond, waar soldaten woonden die de zessen werden genoemd. De soldaten liepen een beetje krom en hadden vreemde gekrulde schoenen. Ze zagen er inderdaad uit als zessen. Hun koning was genaamd nummer één. Het meisje keek haar ogen uit in dit rijk onder de grond. Alles was hier prachtig : betoverde bloemen, en zoveel betoverde tuinen. Het meisje ging hier gewoon door met spelen, alsof er niets aan de hand was, en het was goed. De koning scheen erg van het meisje te houden, alsof het zijn eigen dochtertje was. De koning had ook een dochtertje, en dat meisje was genaamd 'drie'. Drie en het meisje werden al snel dikke vriendinnetjes. De koning was erg tevreden. Hij gaf het meisje een eigen kamer in zijn kasteel, vlakbij de kamer van drie, zijn dochtertje. Ook de zessen waren erg dol op het meisje. Het meisje had een goed hart voor iedereen.

Maar op een dag gebeurde er iets verschrikkelijks. De koning werd heel ernstig ziek, en iedereen was erg verdrietig. Er was nog maar één middel dat de koning zou

kunnen genezen, en dat was de blajus-plant die in het land groeide waar het meisje vandaan kwam. De zessen legden het meisje uit waar ze dat kruid zou kunnen vinden. Een krokodil bracht het meisje weer terug. Het arme gezin was erg blij het meisje weer terug te zien, maar ze mocht nooit meer naar de vijver. Inmiddels was de echte vader van Spindruppeltje erachter gekomen waar zijn dochter was, en nam haar mee naar zijn kasteel. Om de vijver liet hij grote hoge gouden hekken bouwen. Maar het meisje wilde terug naar het rijk onder de vijver, om de koning daar te kunnen redden door de blajus-plant, het genezende kruid.

Dat ze door een krokodil was gegrepen geloofden ze allemaal wel, maar dat er een rijk onder de vijver was geloofde niemand. En hoe ze ook huilde en smeekte, haar vader was niet om te praten. Hoe zou ze nou over die hekken kunnen komen ? Inmiddels stond bijna het hele kasteel van haar vader vol met blajus-planten, omdat het prinsesje daar om gevraagd had. Ook had het arme gezin een flinke beloning gekregen, omdat ze zo goed voor het meisje hadden gezorgd. Zij woonden nu ook in het kasteel, op een verdieping dichtbij de verdieping waar het meisje haar kamer had. Maar het meisje huilde veel.

De koning zag dat het meisje niet gelukkig was, en gaf haar op een dag een vogel voor op haar kamer. Het was een sprekende vogel, en het meisje kon alles aan de vogel vertellen, ook over het verborgen koninkrijk.

‘Ik kan je wel over het hek brengen, hoor,’ zei de vogel, ‘geen probleem. Ik ben sterk genoeg, en ik kan heel hoog vliegen.’ En zo stapte het meisje op zijn rug, en de vogel bracht haar helemaal over het hek bij de vijver. Maar plotseling kwam het meisje erachter dat ze het blajus-kruid was vergeten. En één van de krokodillen greep de vogel en trok hem de diepte in. Nu kon het meisje niet meer terug. Nu moest ze wachten totdat iemand haar zou zien. Maar er gingen tijden voorbij, en het meisje begon erge honger te lijden.

Op een dag kwam de vogel terug uit de vijver, en vertelde dat de koning van het verborgen rijk inmiddels was overleden. Het meisje begon erg te huilen, en zei dat het allemaal haar schuld was. Zij had immers het blajus-kruid vergeten. Maar de vogel zei dat vele zessen nu ook ernstig ziek waren, en ook het prinsesje drie. De vogel was teruggekomen om voor hen het blajus-kruid te halen. Het meisje stapte op zijn rug, en weer vloog hij over het hek, terug naar het kasteel. Maar toen de koning merkte dat ze terug waren gekomen liet hij hen beiden grijpen. Het meisje werd voor straf opgesloten op haar kamer, en de vogel werd in een diepe kerker onder het kasteel geworpen. Nog nooit was het prinsesje zo verdrietig geweest. De koning liet de vijver droogleggen, en joeg de krokodillen het bos in.

Dikke tranen rolden er over de wangen van het prinsesje, maar de tranen hadden allerlei kleuren. Na een tijdje kwam er een vogel op het venster van het open raam zitten. Het was een krokodillen-vogel, die wel een beetje op een krokodil leek. ‘Je moet die tranen drinken,’ zei de vogel, ‘dan gebeuren er wonderen.’ Het meisje had

nog wat bekers in haar kamertje staan, en begon de verschillende kleuren te verdelen. ‘Rood is voor de sloot, blauw is voor de vijver,’ zei de vogel, en toen het meisje van het rode en het blauwe begon te drinken kwamen er overal in het land sloten en vijvers.

‘Laat me je meenemen naar het land der krokodillen, ver achter de bossen,’ zei de krokodillen-vogel. Het meisje stapte op de rug van de vogel, die direkt uit het raam vloog. Na een tijdje kwamen ze bij de krokodillen aan. Hier leefden ze in moerassen en poelen. Maar het verborgen rijk bestond niet meer. Het blajus-kruid groeide en bloeide hier volop, maar het was al te laat. Het rijk was geheel ten onder gegaan door de ernstige ziekte. In de verte stond een vrouw met wratten achter een ketel. De vrouw lachte als een heks, en roerde in de ketel waar groene smurrie in lag. ‘Wat ben je aan het maken ?’ vroeg Spindruppeltje.

‘Weet je dat dan niet ?’ zei de oude vrouw. ‘Ik maak voer voor de koning, tranen.’

Maar toen begon het meisje wel erge medelijden met haar vader te krijgen. ‘Heus, hij mag dan verschrikkelijke dingen hebben gedaan, maar hij bedoelde het goed. Hij was gewoon bezorgd.’

‘Bezorgd noem je dat ?’ zei de oude vrouw krassend. ‘Hij dacht alleen aan zijn eigen koninkrijk, en niet aan het koninkrijk van een ander.’

‘Ja maar hij wist niet van het bestaan van dat andere rijk af,’ zei het meisje.

‘Dat heb jij hem toch verteld ?’ zei de vrouw bijna spottend, ‘maar hij heeft het niet willen geloven, en jou zo met een ondragelijke last bezadeld, en ons des te meer.’

‘Maar wie bent u dan ?’ vroeg Spindruppeltje.

‘Ik ben de koningin der krokodillen,’ zei de vrouw bijna trots.

‘Maar als u dan meekomt naar mijn vader, dan zal hij het misschien geloven,’ zei het meisje.

‘Wat ?’ zei de vrouw spottend, ‘het is nu al te laat. Alles is verloren.’

‘Ja maar de krokodillen,’ zei het meisje, ‘zij zijn nog over. Moeten ze dan blijven leven in deze poelen ?’

‘Hmm, misschien heb je gelijk,’ zei de oude vrouw, ‘en moet ik een kansje wagen. Ik zal naar jouw vader gaan, en hem vragen om een plaats bij de koninklijke vijver, ik en mijn krokodillen.’

Maar toen de oude vrouw met het meisje meeging naar de koning kreeg de vrouw de schuld van alles, en ook haar liet de koning opsluiten, en zelfs het prinsesje werd

in een kerker geworpen opdat ze niet meer zou ontsnappen. Alleen de krokodillen-vogel wist op tijd weg te komen, en snelde terug naar de krokodillen om alles te vertellen.

‘Dan zit er niks anders op dan het kasteel aan te vallen,’ zei de oudste krokodil.

Eén voor één kropen ze in de ketel van de oude vrouw waar ze in zessen veranderden, en gingen in een groot leger gewapend naar het koninklijk terrein.

‘Gebruik groen, dan hoef je het niet meer over te doen,’ zei de krokodillen-vogel die hen aanvoerde in de strijd.

En zo werd het kasteel van de koning en zijn gehele terrein bedolven onder groene tranen. Toen het arme gezin wat zo lang voor het meisje gezorgd had erachter kwam dat de koning haar in een kerker had geworpen waren ze heel boos op de koning. Ze kwamen erachter dat hij in het geheim een boze tovenaar was, en ze vochten mee in het leger van de zessen. Maar de boze tovenaar was te sterk, en liet hen allemaal in de kerkers diep onder de grond werpen. De enige die kon ontsnappen was weer de krokodillen-vogel.

Met een list kwam hij weer in het kasteel, en even later had hij de kerker van het prinsesje gevonden. ‘Spindruppeltje, Spindruppeltje,’ fluisterde hij. Het prinsesje was erg blij hem te zien. Zelfs in de gangen waar de kerkers waren groeide het blajus-kruid, en de krokodillen-vogel gaf het prinsesje wat van het kruid. ‘Hier, eet wat van het kruid,’ zei de vogel. ‘Dat zal helpen.’ Toen het prinsesje wat van het kruid at leek het even alsof ze krokodillen-huid begon te krijgen. En toen even later gingen wonderlijk alle deuren van de kerkers open. Het werd een grote optocht die over de trappen van de kerkergangen naar boven ging. ‘Vlug, naar de koninklijke vijver,’ zei de krokodillen-vogel die boven hen uit vloog. De vijver had heel helder water, en in de dieptes konden ze een stenen trap zien. Allen zwommen ze naar de trap, en door een luik kwamen ze uiteindelijk in het verborgen rijk terecht.

‘Hoe kan dat dan ?’ vroeg het prinsesje. ‘Ik dacht dat het verborgen rijk was vergaan.’

‘Het is hier opnieuw gaan groeien,’ zei de krokodillen-vogel.

‘Maar hoe kan dat dan ?’ vroeg het meisje.

‘Nou gewoon,’ zei de krokodillen-vogel, ‘het is de bloesem van het blajus-kruid, en dat groeit nu overal door het kasteel.’

En zo werd het kasteel vol van het verborgen rijk ....

En de boze tovenaar ? Die hebben ze nooit meer teruggezien. Het prinsesje kwam hier ook het prinsesje drie tegen, en haar vader, koning nummer één, en vele

anderen. Ook zag ze alle oude zessen weer terug, en ze leefden nog lang en gelukkig. Allemaal kenden ze nu het geheim van het blajus-kruid.

De Koeienbezem

Bertha Koe heeft iets verzonnen. In het koeiendorp laat ze het zien. Ze is voor haar huisje gaan staan, met een heleboel bezempjes, die ze binnen in haar huisje heeft gemaakt. Het zijn geen gewone bezems, maar bezems met een heleboel onopgeblazen ballonnetjes aan het uiteinde. Als ze ze over de grond laat strijken, dan maakt het zo'n mooi geluid, om de stilte te verjagen. De koeien staan voor haar bezems in de rij, maar de bezems zijn nogal duur. 'Wat een schande,' zegt Bert Koe, 'maar ik koop er wel eentje, want de stilte bij mij in huis is soms onverdraagbaar.' 'Ik neem er ook één,' zegt Klara Koe, 'want als mijn man weg is, dan voel ik mij zo alleen, en alleen al als ik die bezem zie, dan vrolijkt het me op. Het is een èchte feestbezem.' En daar kwam Piet de Koe al aanlopen. 'Zeg, wat is dat hier allemaal ? Zijn jullie wel goed bij je hoofd ? Daar kun je toch niets mee schoonmaken ?' 'Ach man,' zegt Bertus Varken, 'dat hoeft toch ook helemaal niet, het is een feestbezem, om de saaiheid mee te verjagen.' 'Ach,' zegt Piet de Koe weer, 'jullie zijn niet goed wijs, die saaiheid is niks erg hoor. Ik houd wel een beetje van stilte.' Maar daar had Bertha Koe wel wat voor : Een bezem zonder ballonnetjes aan het uiteinde. 'Ziezo,' zei Bertha, 'deze is voor jou, en je mag hem gratis hebben.'

De Negende Wens

Eens leefde er een hebzuchtige prins in een arm land. De prins was zo hebzuchtig dat hij een ander niets gunde, en alles voor zichzelf nam. Toen op een dag een meisje uit zijn rijk spoorloos verdwenen was ging hij alleen op zoektocht omdat haar ouders erg rijk waren en een hoge beloning zouden schenken aan degene die hun dochter zou terugvinden.

Op zijn reis door het woud kwam hij ’s avonds laat bij een huisje aan. Toen hij op de deur klopte hoorde hij een krassende stem : ‘Ik ben Spindraad. Wie is daar nog zo laat ?’

‘Ach, moedertje,’ zei de prins. ‘Ik zou zo graag even bij u willen kijken of daar ook een meisje van ons rijk is. Zij is spoorloos verdwenen.’

‘Ik heb zeven dochters,’ zei de oude vrouw. ‘Als u even wil kijken. Kom dan maar verder.’ De prins stapte naar binnen, en kreeg wat te eten. Ook mocht hij van elke dochter een wens doen. Bij de eerste dochter zei hij : ‘Ik zou graag willen dat het koninkrijk omgeven is door een haag met rode bloedbessen, giftig als de zon, om ervoor te zorgen dat niemand zomaar spoorloos kan verdwijnen.’ Als tweede wens, bij de tweede dochter, wenste hij dat zijn koninkrijk vol zou zijn met goud, maar alle andere wensen waren hebberig, en hij vergat het spoorloos verdwenen meisje helemaal.

‘Omdat je in bijna al je wensen zo hebberig bent geweest,’ zei de oude vrouw, ‘zul je veranderen in een pad.’ En direkt was de prins geen prins meer, maar een pad. In schaamte vertrok de pad. Al gauw kwam hij erachter dat hij ook niet terug kon naar zijn koninkrijk vanwege de dichte haag met giftige rode bloedbessen. Maar eens in een nacht zag hij een meisje baden in een bosmeertje. Hij zwom direkt naar haar toe, en vertelde haar wat er was gebeurd. Het bleek het spoorloos verdwenen meisje te zijn. Maar ze leek sprekend op één van de dochters van de oude vrouw.

‘Ik ben gevlucht,’ zei het meisje, ‘vanwege het harde werk dat ik in uw koninkrijk moest verrichten. Ik kwam bij de oude vrouw en werd als één van haar dochters. Zij liet mij zacht werk verrichten, en ik mocht wensen laten uitkomen.’

‘Maar waarom ben je daar dan niet gebleven ?’ vroeg de pad.

‘Omdat de oude vrouw aan het einde van de wensen altijd haar eigen wens uitspreekt,’ sprak het meisje. ‘Sinds ik gevlucht ben, ben ik de enige die haar boze wensen ongedaan kan maken. Ik was altijd de achtste wens, en zij altijd de laatste, de negende.’

En zo deed de pad zijn wens bij het meisje om weer een prins te worden.

De Terugbetaling

Dina Varken loopt op de straat. Ze is op weg naar de bakker. Daar komt ze Dries Varken tegen. 'Ik krijg nog geld van je,' zegt Dries Varken. 'Hoeveel ?' vraagt Dina Varken. En Dina geeft hem het geld. Een tijdje later komt Dries Varken Bernard Varken tegen. 'Ik krijg nog geld van je,' zegt Dries Varken. En Bernard Varken geeft hem het geld. Bij de bakker aangekomen staat er een hele rij varkens. En

Dries Varken zegt dat hij van allemaal nog geld krijgt. Snel geven ze het hem. Dan komt Dina Varken binnen, en vraagt waarom hij eigenlijk nog geld van haar kreeg. Maar dan draait Dries Varken zich naar de bakker toe en zegt : 'Ik krijg nog geld van je.' Bibberend vraagt de bakker hoeveel. Maar het bedrag dat Dries Varken dan opzegt heeft hij niet in zijn hele bakkerij. 'Nou, betaal me dan maar verder uit in broodjes,' zegt Dries Varken. En Dries Varken begint direkt de broodjes uit te delen, en keert zich weer tot Dina Varken, en zegt : 'Alsjeblieft, hier heb je je broodje, en daarom kreeg ik nog geld van je.'

De Meloen en de Grenadine

"Weet je hoeveel ik van je houd ?" zegt de meloen tegen de grenadine .... "Zoveel als van hier tot de zon en terug ..."

"Nou, weet je dan hoeveel ik van jou houd ?" zegt de grenadine tegen de meloen ...

"Nou ?" vraagt de meloen .....

"Tot de deur en terug," zegt de grenadine ....

"Ah, zo'n klein stukje maar ?" vraagt de meloen zielig ....

"Nou, je moet eens weten," zegt de grenadine, "ik sta elke nacht voor jou op wacht .... daar bij de deur .... Ik blijf altijd dichtbij je ....."

"Ah," zegt de meloen .... "nu zouden we beiden bijna ruzie krijgen om een lineaal. Liefde kunnen we niet meten, het zit 'em in andere dingen ....."

"Precies," zegt de grenadine, "Liefde zit in kleine dingen, klein genoeg om een splinter uit je arm te krijgen. Liefde is als een pincet."

"Ja," zegt de meloen, "en Liefde kan ook in hele koude dingen zitten, zodat wanneer er brand is, de Liefde de brand kan blussen. En sneeuw is toch ook iets heel moois ?"

"Ja," zegt de Grenadine, "maar houd nu maar even je mond dicht, ik begin moe te worden ... Voor jou is de dag net begonnen, maar voor mij eindigt de dag ...."

"Ja, Grena, je hebt gelijk," zegt de meloen, "en de Liefde moet ook rusten. Slaap zacht ....."

"Prettige dag, meloen," zegt de grenadine .....

De Grenadine en de Meloen ... Ze kunnen iedere dag maar heel even met elkaar praten, want als de grenadine slaapt, dan is de meloen op, en andersom. Ze leven in totaal verschillende werelden, met totaal verschillende wetten, maar op een punt kruizen ze elkaar ..... in de Liefde ....

Waar verschillende talen onbegrip en misschien zelfs ruzie kunnen veroorzaken, door een lineaal .... daar kan de taal van Liefde soms als een appel komen, om de lineaal te breken, om een brug te slaan, om harten te verbinden, die eigenlijk bij elkaar horen ..... De appel brengt overzicht, om te zien waar Liefde vandaan komt. Niet hoe groot Liefde is, of hoe ver liefde reikt, want de Liefde kun je niet meten ..... Je kunt de Liefde alleen eten, en zoeken naar zijn taal, wat hij bedoelt. Vormen, kleuren en symbolen zijn slechts talen, elk met zijn eigen betekenissen. Daarom kun je het best achter woorden kijken, waar de woorden vandaan komen. Daarom kun je het best achter beelden kijken, waar die beelden vandaan komen, en waar ze naartoe gaan .... want een ieder spreekt een andere taal. En op die kruispunten der talen, kunnen we beginnen elkaar te begrijpen, kunnen we beginnen elkaars hart te zien ..... kunnen we de linealen verbranden .... en leven zoals de meloen en de grenadine ......

De Toverbeker en het Toverbordje

Eens waren er dertig prinsen die door een heks waren betoverd tot wachters op een hoge toren. De toren was zo hoog dat het hoogste deel niet gezien kon worden, en de toren was zo breed dat het de helft van het land vulde. Als iemand de trap omhoog wilde bestijgen, dan kwamen er ballen van steen en ballen van vuur naar beneden, en maakten voor lange tijd het land onveilig. Daarom verbood de koning dat nog iemand naar de toren zou gaan.

De koning had veel verdriet van het verlies van zijn dertig zonen. De dertig prinsen waren nu angstaanjagende wachters die op de top van de toren moesten marcheren. Zij moesten de schat van de heks bewaken : een toverbeker die nooit op zou raken, en waarmee je onder de grond kon reizen, en een toverbord dat altijd vol was, en waarmee je in de lucht kon reizen.

De koning had een erge hekel aan de heks. Was hij nu maar wat aardiger voor haar geweest, dan was alles niet zo erg als het nu was. Ja, de koning had veel spijt wat hij de heks had aangedaan. Een oud bedelvrouwtje kwam eens aan de poort en vroeg om onderdak, maar de koning zond haar weg. Hoe kon hij nu weten dat het een heks was ? En een heks kun je maar beter onderdak geven, anders zal het je je hele leven berouwen. Dat was de koning nu wel duidelijk geworden.

Sindsdien was de koning altijd goed voor bedelaars, en had hij z'n lesje wel geleerd. Op een dag kwam één van de bedelaars tot de koning. 'Koning,' zei de bedelaar, 'ik heb gehoord wat er gebeurd is. Ik kom uit een ver land, maar ik heb een lange tijd onder de grond gewoond, en eens zag ik de heks met haar toverbeker langskomen. Ik volgde haar, en ze kwam in een bron van licht, waar ze onzichtbaar werd. Zo ging ik ook naar de bron, en in een bliksemschicht stond ik bovenop de toren waar u zonen gevangen worden gehouden. Ze waren inderdaad de meest afschuwelijke wachters geworden, en marcheerden gevaarlijk rond. Maar ze konden mij niet zien, omdat ik onzichtbaar was. De toverbeker was verdwenen, omdat de heks daarmee onder de grond was, maar het toverbordje dat altijd vol was stond daar, en ik nam ervan, en steeg op in de lucht. Hoever ik gekomen ben weet ik niet, maar ik was zo hoog waar nog geen mens ooit was gekomen. Hier kwam ik in een wereld waar de meest wonderlijke sprookjesfiguren waren. Zij vertelden mij dat uw zonen geheime sprookjes in zich droegen die nog nooit waren verteld. De betovering zou worden verbroken wanneer die sprookjes zouden worden verteld.'

Toen liet de koning de beste sprookjesvertellers van het land komen, om zoveel mogelijk sprookjes te verzamelen en te vertellen, maar er gebeurde niets. Toen liet de koning de bedelaar weer terugkomen, en vroeg hem waar onder de grond die lichtbron was. De koning zond toen tien lakeien met de bedelaar mee. De koning hoopte dat zijn lakeien de prinsen konden bevrijden. Maar de heks wachtte hen al op. In een lichtflits betoverde ze de lakeien in stenen wachters die de lichtbron moesten bewaken, maar de bedelaar zag de toverbeker staan, greep de beker en dronk ervan, terwijl hij nog dieper onder de grond kon reizen. Na een lange tijd kwam de bedelaar in een sprookjesrijk zo diep onder de grond waar geen mens ooit was geweest. Hoe diep het was, wist hij niet, maar er waren hier wonderlijke sprookjeswezens. Zij vertelden dat zij eens samenleefden met de sprookjeswereld boven de lucht, maar de heks had het rijk verscheurd. In de lichtbron verborg de heks sprookjes, en de twee sprookjeswerelden zouden weer bij elkaar komen als die verborgen sprookjes zouden worden verteld.

Weer ging de bedelaar naar de koning, en weer liet de koning de beste sprookjesvertellers komen, en ook de beste sprookjesvertellers uit andere landen, maar er gebeurde weer niets. Maar toen kreeg de bedelaar een idee. Hij had nu immers zowel het toverbordje als de toverbeker. Met het toverbordje kon hij nu de toverbeker naar het rijk boven de lucht brengen, en dan zouden zij met de toverbeker naar het rijk onder de grond kunnen gaan. Vanaf die dag werd er heel wat heen en weer gereisd, en ze vertelden elkaar de wonderlijkste sprookjes. Niet lang daarna marcheerden de stenen lakeien en de wachters van de toren naar de dichtstbijzijnde stad, en begonnen de sprookjes te vertellen. Langzaam maar zeker verbrak de betovering, en de koning kon zijn dertig zonen en zijn tien lakeien weer in de armen nemen.

Het Rode Luchtkoraal

Hoofdstuk 1. Opdracht Onderwater

Hoofdstuk 2. De Dans van de Orca

Hoofdstuk 3. Kabouter-Virus

Hoofdstuk 1. Opdracht Onderwater

De engelen hadden een zware strijd te voeren tegen de zee-demonen. Ze zaten in hun luchtschepen, om de zeeen onder hen af te scannen, en hadden verschillende demoonsoorten op het scherm. Ze hadden net de lessen afgerond op de engelenschool, en nu moesten ze dan hetgeen ze geleerd hadden in praktijk brengen. Gelukkig ging er een leraar met hen mee die er voor zorgde dat hen niets overkwam. Het was een Morgenster, een onderwijzer, een wat oudere, wijzere engel ... Hij had rode klederen aan met een rood kleed om hem heen ... Rood ... in meerdere tinten ... Hij was een morgenster in de orde van de morgenroders ... Hij werd zo ook genoemd : "Morgenrood" ... De leerling-engelen hadden veel respect voor hem ... Hij was vroeger een seraf, een oorlogs-engel, en had vele grote en gevaarlijke demonen verslagen ... Voor elke leidinggevende demoon die hij had verslagen kwam er een dun licht streepje op zijn rode jas terecht ... deze jas zat vol met zulke streepjes ... Het was alsof hij met het rode goud was bezaaid .... Nu was hij dan een morgenster, een leraar van Gods Geheimen en plannen ... Het was een engel met zo'n heerlijkheid, dat zijn leerling-engelen er niet genoeg van kregen naar hem te luisteren ... Hij had een gouden stem in allerlei tonen die zich als vloeibare chocolade in elkaar vermengden. ...Hij maakte kunstwerken van hun

geheugen ... Zodat ze graag met hun geheugen werkten ... Het geheugen ... zo zei hij .... was het arsenaal ... vol met belangrijke wapens tegen de vijand ...

Nu had hij ze dan zo'n lange tijd onderwezen over de gewesten van de zee ... Hij leerde hen de gevaarlijke spelonken kennen, de valstrikken, maar ook de schatten, die vooral diep in de zee op verborgen plekken lagen .... Morgenrood was bekend om zijn grappen ... Hij kon de dingen soms op zo'n manier zeggen, dat wonden ogenblikkelijk verdwenen ... Het was een begaafde engel, waar zijn engelen-leerlingen, en alle engelenleraren van de engelenschool erg trots op waren ...

Ze hadden een stekelige demoon op het scherm .. Ze kenden dit soort, omdat Morgenrood er veel over had verteld ... Morgenrood had hen veel verteld over hoe netels werkten en andere steekwapens in de huiden van demonen ... Ze konden zichzelf zo goed camoufleren, dat de engelen goed werden gewaarschuwd door Morgenster niet zomaar dingen aan te raken ... Ze moesten voorzichtig worden en eerst de dingen afscannen en reinigen voordat ze er op gingen zitten, stappen of staan .... Ze moesten eerst voldoende anti-gif hebben en beschermende lagen, alvorens gebieden te betreden ... Dat was een hele kunst ... Ze moesten vooral op hun hoede zijn voor verborgen gevaren en dubbele bodems ... Ze moesten op de hoogte zijn van de verandering van het getij ... de tijdstippen ... en daarbij hun eigen klokken goed programmerende ... Dit was een hele klus ... Maar Morgenrood hielp hen daarbij ...

Op gezette tijden konden bepaalde luchtschepen onder water gaan voor missies en onderzoek ... Emiliel was een piloot van een van zulke luchtschepen ... Hij was een cherub, een lange goudkleurig geklede engel met hier en daar blauwe banden ... Hij stond in voor de veiligheid van de leerling-engelen ... Ze hadden de opdracht een meisjes-ziel te redden. Ze was tijdens een zeilwedstrijd verdronken toen ze door de giek van boord werd geslagen ... Demonen brachten haar tot het dodenrijk van de zee waar ze in een koraalrif werd vastgeklonken ... De dingen die daar gebeurden waren verschrikkelijk ... Haar ziel groeide in het koraal terwijl de plantaardig/dierlijke mechanismes zich met haar ziele-inhoud voedden .... Ze was levend en groeiend voedsel geworden ... en Emiliel stuurde zijn schip erop af ... Ze hadden de plaats al op het scherm ... De leerling-engelen zaten achter hun computers, en enkelen van hen vuurden al wat pijlen af om verschillende demonische wachters uit te schakelen ... Deze plek werd goed bewaakt ... Een enorme anemoon kwam op het schip af, een rode, met vele vangarmen ... Met het gif probeerde de anemoon door de muren van het schip heen te breken ... Ineens door een enorme inwaartse zuigkracht werden ze door de anemoon opgeslokt .... Maar dit stond al in het plan opgetekend ... Ze waren nu in de tempel van de heer der zee gekomen, de heerser over de dodenrijken onder water .... het was een oude strategie om de krachten van de engelen te testen : de opslokking ... en zo konden de engelen van binnenuit de terreur ongedaan maken ... Het was een technologische truc .... En Emiliel had dit al wel eens eerder gedaan ... Morgenrood hield het allemaal goed in de gaten ...

Het was alsof het schip door duizenden haaien werd opgeslokt, maar nu konden ze dan een kijkje nemen in de tempel van deze dodenrijken, waar alle gemene apparaatjes te vinden zouden zijn ... Ze moesten een paar belangrijke pluggen onschadelijk maken .... Emiliel dreef rustig naar het hart van de anemoon .... Voor hem was het allemaal een koud kunstje ... Maar een paar leerling-engelen huiverden in hun stoelen ... Er was hier een enorme hitte die het schip probeerde te infiltreren ... en opeens was er een enorm gegil .... Leerlingen hadden een paar rode anemonen door de vloer zien komen ... en probeerden de griezels ongedaan te maken met hun laserzwaarden .... Maar de vangarmen begonnen snel door het hele schip heen te groeien ....

In het hart van de anemoon aangekomen, zagen ze een enorme hal waarin ze terecht waren gekomen .. Helemaal aan het einde van de hal stond een grote lange smalle troon, omringd met koralen, waarop een enorm sinister beest zat .. Hij had een lang dun gezicht, een rood gezicht, met een tuitende mond ... Zijn stem bulderde in een echo die steeds lager van toon werd ... en steeds zachter ... Emiliel zei dat hij hierdoor het schip probeerde te infiltreren ... Plotseling leek het alsof het schip explodeerde, maar Emiliel riep dat het maar een truc was, een multi-sensitief beeld wat in hun hersenen werd geprojecteerd ... Emiliel riep naar de leerlingen dat ze allemaal elkaar vast moesten houden ... Hij zei dat het maar een bepaalde droomlevel was waarin dit gebeurde, dat ze niets hadden te vrezen, en dat ze zo gewoon weer wakker zouden worden in het schip ... Ze waren door slaapwapenen aangevallen .... Sommige leerlingen kregen de rillingen ... Ze hielden elkaar allemaal stevig vast en langzaam zoog het rode beest hen tot de troon ... Het leek wel een eeuwigheid te duren .... De troon kwam maar niet dichterbij, terwijl ze toch richting de troon bewogen .... "Dit is afstands-verbeelding," zei Emiliel ... "ook iets om je geen zorgen over te maken ..." Plotseling was het alsof de hal draaide en ze naar beneden vielen richting de troon ... Het was alsof ze met een smak op het gezicht van het enorme beest vielen .... Hij zoog hen naar binnen .... "Wat komen jullie doen ?" bulderde hij ... Emiliel legde hen uit dat dit allemaal standaard was ... dat het beest met deze trucs hen onzeker en bang probeerde te maken ... Emiliel had ineens een paarse sidderaal in zijn hand die hen wel leek te verblinden en te verdoven ... Hij zei : "Dit is die plug ... zodra ik deze plug heb gebroken, worden jullie gewoon weer wakker in het schip ... En dan zijn jullie onder zijn invloed vandaan zodat jullie het meisje zonder problemen kunnen redden ..." En zo gebeurde het ... Emiliel brak de sidderaal, en iedereen werd wakker in het schip .... Ze keken recht in een fel licht waar ze het meisje zagen spartelen ... Ze konden nu via hun hartstralen het meisje bereiken en haar in het schip loodsen .... Ze was zo blij om met hen mee te gaan ... Ze had een verschrikkelijke strijd achter de rug .... Ze wist dat zij haar naar Jezus zouden brengen ...

Morgenrood was trots op hen ... de missie was geslaagd .... en het schip steeg al snel op vanuit de enorme zee ... en in de lucht ontstond er een bliksemflits die het schip teletransporteerde naar de troonzaal van Jezus ... Het was een enorme hal met zacht lichtblauw licht .... Ze zagen de troon van Jezus in de verte, een lange

dunne troon, bijna gotisch, maar dan in een hele andere, zachte stijl ... Jezus glimlachte en strekte zijn armen naar haar uit .... Ze rende zoals ze nog nooit gerend had, maar het leek wel alsof ze geen stap dichterbij kwam .... Wat had de Heer toch een humor .... de leerling-engelen glimlachten ... en ook het meisje begon te lachen ... Ze voelde zich zalig, alsof ze omringd was door zachte bubbels ..... "Mijn Baby," sprak Jezus ... terwijl zijn echo steeds zachter en luider werd ... De woorden waren alsof Hij naast haar stond, en in haar oor sprak .... Zo genezend ... Ze zag Hem niet meer ... maar naar gevoel kwam Hij steeds dichterbij ... "Trucage, Heer ?" vroeg een van de leerling-engelen .... "Ja," zei Jezus ... "Hemelse Techniek ... Ik ben trots op je Andron ... Je hebt jezelf goed op de hoogte gebracht ..." Andron glimlachte dieper en dieper ....

"Zeg, Andron," sprak Jezus ... "breng deze lieve dame naar het wolkenhuis ... Ze heeft een erg moeilijke tijd achter de rug ...."

In en om het wolkenhuis vlogen luchtdolfijnen .. Ze hadden zulke zachte, diepe stemmen ... Stemmen die je geheel konden invullen en omhullen ... Het waren lichtwezens van God ... van zo'n hoge orde ... dat God er nog weinig melding van maakte .....

Hoofdstuk 2. De Dans van de Orca

Dicht rondom het huis van de Vader zwommen Orca's ... Prachtige wezens waren dat. De Vader maakte er nog niet al te veel melding van ... Dit waren zijn geheimen ... Hij had ze bewaard voor Zijn getrouwe kinderen ... Ze waren naar Hem op reis ... Ze wilden niets liever dan bij Hem zijn ...

Deze Orca's zouden de Vader helpen om het grote spel op te richten ... Het grote spel wat Hij voor Zijn kinderen had klaargelegd .... De Vader glimlachte een beetje .. "Daar beneden denken ze allemaal mij te kennen, maar ze kweken hun eigen anemoontjes en koraalstruikjes ...." sprak Hij .... Daarom zou ... het grote spel moeten komen ....

"Daar beneden ... daar beneden ..." sprak de Vader "...tja.."

Een paar engelen keken hem glimlachend aan ... De Vader was altijd zo fragmentarisch ... Hij vloog van onderwerp naar onderwerp ... Tja, er was ook zoveel te doen ... en zoveel te beleven ...

Een geheimzinnige glimlach verscheen er op zijn gezicht ... Het meisje keek haar ogen uit ... Wat een fantastische wereld was dit .... met al deze regenboog-tuinen ...

"Heb je wel eens gehoord van de Spruit ?" vraagt Hij het meisje ....

"Ja !" roept het meisje ... "Dat had ik als kind eens een keer gelezen in Zacharia ... De Spruit die zal komen om de tempel te bouwen en dan als koning zal heersen ... Ik dacht altijd dat het een klein dwergje was ... haha ..." lachte het meisje ...

"Ja, dat is ook zo ..." zegt de Vader ..."het is een klein kaboutertje ... En dat moet ook wel ... want alleen de kleine dingen zullen groot heten .... Het leven is in kleine zaadjes verborgen .... Zeg, heb je weleens over je lichaam nagedacht ... wat niet zou kunnen functioneren zonder de uiterst accurate celletjes ? Er marcheren heel wat van die dingen in je rond ... En het zijn jouw vriendjes, want ze helpen je goed ..."

Het meisje begint te schaterlachen .... Ze wist niet dat God de Vader zoveel humor had ... En hij leek veel meer op klaas vaak dan op het beeld wat ze altijd van Hem had ...

Ze was erg op haar gemak ... Het was net alsof ze gewoon met de buurman sprak ... Maar deze man was zo grappig ...

"Enneh ..," knipoogte de Vader ... "beneden he, beneden .... tja"

"Beneden hebben ze het grote sprookjesboek bezoedeld ... Maar ach ... Het gaat nog steeds over draken en andere beesten die je moet verslaan ..."

Plotseling werd de stem vager en vager, en uiteindelijk werd ze wakker ... Ze had alles maar gedroomd .... een afschuwelijke nachtmerrie die in een wonderbaarlijke droom veranderde .... En het was zo vreemd, want in de droom was ze veel ouder ....

Het was tijd om naar school te gaan ... Ze had inmiddels veel te vertellen ... Ze had de duivel ontmoet in de hel, en daarna Jezus en de Vader met zoveel engelen .... op een plaats ... tja ... ze kon er nog niet goed over uit ... Maar de kinderen lachten haar uit ... En ook de meester schudde zijn hoofd .... "de dromer" noemden ze haar altijd .... Het was niet de eerste keer dat ze met zo'n kleurrijk verhaal kwam aanzetten ....

Zondag in de kerk zou ze het aan de dominee vertellen .. Misschien dat hij haar wel zou geloven ...

Midden in de preek stak ze haar vinger op ... en vroeg aan de dominee of ze haar droom mocht vertellen ... Ze vertelde haar verhaal, maar de dominee viel haar bij het kabouterverhaal in de rede : "Kabouters bestaan niet," zei hij ... De mensen begonnen diep te zuchten, en het meisje begon overstuur te raken .... "Zeg, beledig de liliputters niet, zeg, zeg ..." Er zat ook een liliputter in de kerk ... dwerggroei noemden ze het ... Het was het vriendinnetje van het meisje ... Ze trokken eigenlijk al sinds geboorte met elkaar op .... "Ja," roept het liliputtertje ..."God kent ook

liliputters .... Eindelijk voel ik me door iemand begrepen ... Ook al was ze altijd al mijn beste vriendin ... Deze droom heeft veel waarde voor mij" ... En ze begon te klappen .... Langzaam begonnen ook andere mensen in de zaal te klappen ... maar de dominee hield voet bij stuk .... "Mensen, laat je niks wijsmaken ... het hele verhaal was overigens een brei van theologische onzin ... en God geeft geen dromen meer vandaag ... we hebben de Bijbel en dat is genoeg ..."

"De Bijbel is een sprookjesboek !" roept het meisje ... "Jullie hebben van de Bijbel zoiets moeilijks en engs gemaakt, dat wij als kinderen er niks meer van begrijpen ... Wij zitten hier voor spek en bonen bij, en we schieten er niks mee op ... Zo is God niet ...."

Een paar andere kinderen stonden ook op : "Ja, ze heeft gelijk ... Kinderen tellen hier niet meer mee ... En volgens mij vinden jullie er zelf ook niet zoveel aan, als ik naar jullie gezichten kijk ..."

"Leve de spruit ! Leve de kabouter !" riep het liliputtertje .... "Leve het sprookjesboek ! Leve het kind !"

De dominee zat er verslagen bij ... Hij kon niet meer verder preken ... het was alsof hij alle fut had verloren ... Hij probeerde nog enkele dingen te zeggen .... Maar z'n stem sloeg zo vaak over en was zo hoog, dat het leek alsof hij een dwerg was geworden ....

"Hoera !" riepen de kinderen ... Maar een aantal mensen begonnen erg boos te worden ... Een ouderling kwam naar voren en probeerde wat te zeggen ... Maar ook zijn stem begon over te slaan ... Wat was er toch aan de hand ?

Een klein sprekend wit sparretje kwam ineens binnenlopen, met een grappige stem ... Hij klom op de preekstoel, terwijl overal in de zaal mensen flauw begonnen te vallen .... "Hoeveel bomen zijn er vermoord om deze kerk te bouwen," riep hij ... "Hoeveel kabouters zijn er vermoord om jullie grote mensen zulke hoge posities te geven ?" ..... "Hoeveel afgeknipte bloemen staan er op jullie tafels een voortijdige dood te sterven ?"

"Sterke drank bij het avondmaal ... puh .... Grote mensen ...."

Een andere voorganger rende op het sparretje af ..."Jij kleine duivel ... maak dat je wegkomt ..." Maar in een bliksemflits verplaatste het sparretje zich naar de andere kant van de zaal ...

"Jullie grote mensen denken God even in je broekzak te hebben ..." ging het sparretje verder ....

"Hebben de oude profeten niet gezegd dat de stenen in jullie huizen tot leven zullen komen om jullie op te vreten ? Deze dag is aanstaande ... de bomen die jullie

verwoest hebben zullen in de nacht tot jullie komen ... de bananen zullen het daglicht zien en jullie aanklagen voor de hoge raad ... Deze dag is aanstaande ... Zelfs het roest van jullie sieraden zal tegen jullie in gaan spreken .... Lees het grote sprookjesboek nog eens een keer voordat jullie je grote monden nog eens een keer opentrekken ..... Grote mensen ... puh ...."

Hoofdstuk 3. Kabouter-Virus

De dominee lag ziek op bed .. Alles draaide voor z'n ogen ... Hij zag kleine kaboutertjes en kleine sterretjes binnenkomen ... "Ha ha ha ... jullie denken toch zeker niet dat ik in jullie geloof !" riep hij ...

"Wij geloven ook niet in jou," zeiden de kleine dingetjes ....

"Ha ha ha," lachte de dominee ... "wat voor een zottenvertoning is dit ?"

"Je hebt de heilige geest in de fles opgesloten, beste kerel ..." zeiden de sterretjes ... "in het verleden" ....

"Je hebt van de heilige geest iets vaags gemaakt ... zonder lichaam, zonder techniek ... zodat je de mensen en de heilige geest kon berijden ..... cowboy ...." gingen de sterretjes verder ....

Het begon nog meer te draaien in het hoofd van de dominee .... "aaah," schreeuwde hij ... Hij voelde zich zo beroerd .... "Wat doen jullie met me ?" schreeuwde hij ....

"We maken korte mette met de spotbeelden die u van God heeft gemaakt, waarmee u de mensen terroriseert, en waarmee ze elkaar terroriseren ... Zie dit maar even als een beeldenstorm .... Je hebt God op de vierkante meter geschoven ..." riepen de kaboutertjes ....

"Okay, okay," riep de dominee ... "wat willen jullie dat ik doe ?"

"Stoppen met al die domme praatjes," zeiden de sterretjes .... "En weer praten over hoe het echt zit ..." zeiden de kaboutertjes ....

"En hoe weet ik hoe het echt zit ?" vroeg de dominee wanhopig ?

Opeens kreeg de dominee een bril op zijn neus ... een bril van de kabouters .... die in z'n oogkassen begonnen te smelten ... "Gewoon rondkijken," sprak een kaboutertje ....

"Ha, ha, wat grappig," riep de dominee ..."ik zie overal spoken ...."

"Ja," zei een ander kaboutertje .."dat zijn de demonen waarmee je samenwerkte ..."

"Ha, ha," riep de dominee weer ..."ze lijken op mij ..."

De malle dominee was zichzelf niet meer. Binnen de kortste keren was zijn kerk een sprookjespark geworden .... En sindsdien ging hij als kabouter verkleed ... met een puntmuts ..... Vanuit het hele land trok hij kinderen aan, die van hem hoorden wie of wat God echt was .... Hij bouwde het spel ... en leerde de kinderen hoe ze de spoken konden verslaan ...

Binnen de kortste keren was de Bijbel weer het sprookjesboek wat het behoorde te zijn ...

Hij had de mantel en de kroon van de oude profeten ... De weg banende voor de Spruit ... de kabouter ... Het kleine zou het grote heten .... Alles kwam tot leven, zoals de oude profeten hadden voorzegd ... Stoelen en banken begonnen te praten ... koffiepotten en theepotten, lampen, en kleren .... Het was alsof er een nieuw sprookje was begonnen ...

Kinderen leerden weer kaboutertjes te zijn ... Want daar zijn kinderen voor gemaakt ....

Wie niet wordt als een kind, wie niet wordt als een zaadje, wie niet wordt als een kabouter, kan het koninkrijk gods niet binnengaan ... Het is een gouden poortje, dat alleen door een gouden sleuteltje opengedaan kan worden ... Niet door materieel goud ... maar door goud stromende vanuit het hart ....

Wie oren heeft die hore ....

Spiegel der Realiteiten

Ap Berger is koeienslager, en zit in een katholieke pinkstergemeente. Ze geloven daar diep in de paus, en alles wat hij zegt is heilig. Maar als Ap ze dan wijst op wat de pauzen vroeger op hun geweten hadden, dan zeggen ze : 'Ach, dat is allemaal verleden tijd. Daar moet je niet meer over zaniken. Gebeurd is gebeurd.' Nee, goedkeuren doen ze het niet, maar ze zeggen dat de nieuwe paus anders is. De nieuwe paus zou open staan voor de pinksterbeweging, en zou hier en daar wat connecties met hen hebben als met vertrouwelijke vrienden. Ap moet niet zoveel van de paus weten. Hij vindt het allemaal maar één grote optocht. 'Carnaval is allang afgelopen hoor,' zegt hij altijd.

Op een dag gebeurt er in het magazijn van zijn slagerij iets vreemds. Tussen het rundervlees verschijnt er ineens een soort spiegel, en er komt een hand doorheen. Ap is op dat moment helemaal alleen in de slagerij. Instinctief pakt hij de hand, en de hand grijpt hem er doorheen. Wat er dan gebeurt kan Ap niet herroepen, maar hij wordt wakker in zijn magazijn. 'Ach, ik zal wel in slaap gevallen zijn,' denkt hij. Maar dan ineens vallen alle lichten uit, en weer verschijnt er een soort electrisch geladen scherm tussen het vlees. Het scherm begint te bewegen. Ap denkt dat de bliksem is ingeslagen.

In de gemeente vertelt Ap het aan zijn voorganger. Die denkt ook dat het met blikseminslag te maken heeft, met statische electriciteit, of heel misschien heeft Ap bezoek gehad van een engel.

Die nacht heeft Ap een droom, waarin hij iemand zacht op de achtergrond hoort pingelen, terwijl de geluiden steeds wegvagen, en dan zegt een stem : 'Spiegel der realiteiten ...' en dan vaagt ook de stem weg. Steeds meer beginnen deze electrische verschijnselen voor te komen, en op een dag is Ap het helemaal beu. Hij wordt er moe van. Na een tijdje kan hij niet meer werken, en zeggen ze dat hij overspannen is. Ap raakt geinteresseerd in ufo-verschijnselen, omdat dat ook nog een mogelijke verklaring kan zijn. Hij leest er veel boeken over. In een boek leest hij dat als zulke verschijningen al dan niet magnetisch voorkomen, dan moet er ergens anders, waarschijnlijk ergens in de buurt, een soort zendmast zijn, of iets dat zulke electriciteit opwekt en dan projecteert. Het boek zegt dat zulke verschijningen niet op zichzelf staan. Het boek raadt aan om in zulke gevallen in rustige en verborgen plaatsen op zoek te gaan naar verdachte of opmerkelijke objecten. Ap besluit in het bos te gaan zoeken.

Diep in het bos vindt Ap een enorme spiegel staande op een heuvel waar allemaal licht uit voortkomt. Voorzichtig loopt Ap de heuvel op, maar verbleekt dan. Er stroomt bloed vanuit de spiegel. Ook komt er veel stoom vanaf, alsof er iets in de brand staat. Ap wil weer omdraaien, maar wordt dan door een hand tegengehouden. 'Waar gaan wij naar toe ?' zegt een stem. Maar verder ziet Ap niks. Ap loopt instinctief verder de heuvel op. Overal stroomt bloed. Dan als betoverd stapt Ap door de spiegel heen. Ap valt in een diepe ruimte, maar raakt de grond niet. Het lijkt wel alsof hij zweeft in een bodemloze put. Dan begint zich een geheel nieuwe realiteit rondom Ap te ontvouwen. Overal ziet hij koeien, en het lijkt alsof hij in de wei staat, maar zijn voeten raken de grond niet. Zijn bewegingen zijn heel waterig. 'Oh, dit is vast een visioen,' denkt Ap. Dan hoort Ap in de verte gepingel, terwijl het geluid steeds wegvaagt. Het wordt donkerder en het begint licht te bliksemen, terwijl er een zwart vogelachtig wezen met een vreemd leren gewei geheel in het zwart op hem afkomt. Het lijkt een beetje op een reuzenvleermuis. 'Gevangene van de paus, noem mij maar zo,' zei het beest.

'Ja, maar ik ben de paus niet,' zegt Ap, 'en ik heb het niet zo op de paus.'

'Daarom ben ik ook hier,' zegt het beest. 'Je bent koeienslager, hè ? Weet je wat ze in Spanje allemaal met koeien doen ?'

'Ja, ik heb ervan gehoord,' zei Ap, 'noem het maar dierenmishandeling.'

'Ik breng de zielen van die beesten terug naar Rome, naar de paus. Daar worden die zielen dan geslacht door engelen van de paus,' zegt het beest. 'Ik ben ook één van de slagers, dus ik ben zogezegd een collega van je. Maar ik werk in gevangenschap. In slavernij zogezegd.'

Langzaam wordt Ap wakker, helemaal onder het zweet. In de gemeente vertelt hij de droom aan zijn voorganger. De voorganger is er niet blij mee, maar denkt dat het gewoon een droom is, of in het ergste geval een aanval van de satan. Ap probeert het allemaal weer te vergeten. Gelukkig komen de dromen en verschijningen steeds minder voor, en na een tijdje kan Ap zijn werk weer oppikken. Wel begint hij te merken dat hij een grotere toewijding tot de paus heeft gekregen. Maar iets van binnen zit hem niet lekker. Bij hem in de gemeente geloven ze in twee pauzen, de katholieke paus en de pinkster paus. Die pinkster paus is een groot leider in de charismatische beweging, die ook wonderen en tekenen doet, en vele krachten. Die pinkster paus woonde eerst een tijdje in Mexico, maar nu woont hij in Californie, waar hij een heel groot centrum heeft opgericht. Vanuit de hele wereld komen ze bij hem, maar nu wordt hij beschuldigd van pedofilie. Veel mensen hebben het geloof in de pinkster paus verloren, maar het aantal volgelingen groeit nog steeds.

Maar op een dag krijgen ze het bericht dat de pinkster paus is neergeschoten. Na een korte tijd staat er een nieuwe pinkster paus op, die nog grotere wonderen en tekenen doet, en zelfs tanden en kiezen in goud verandert. Hij wordt ook wel de gouden koning genoemd, maar ook hij wordt in een aanslag neergeschoten. Velen richten zich in wanhoop tot de katholieke paus, maar dan staat er weer een nieuwe pinkster paus op die doden opwekt en ook mensen dood kan laten neervallen. Zijn naam is Rodney Hinn-Kuhlman, en ze noemen hem het pistool van de Heilige Geest. Maar velen die de katholieke paus volgen noemen hem gewoon het pistool van de paus. Ap is dolenthousiast, en doet op zijn werk vaak een cowboy na. Maar dan beginnen in zijn magazijn de verschijnselen erger dan ooit terug te komen. Er verschijnen spiegels en schermen waar bloed uit stroomt, en Ap raakt weer overspannen. Ap besluit een reis te maken naar zo'n genezingsdienst van de inmiddels wereldberoemde Rodney Hinn-Kuhlman.

In de dienst zegt Rodney Hinn-Kuhlman : 'Er is hier iemand die een koeienslager is, maar nu overspannen is geworden door vreemde verschijningen van bloed, wie is dat ?'

Ap staat op, en moet naar voren komen. Als Rodney Hinn-Kuhlman op hem blaast valt hij in de geest. Ook de katholieke paus is aanwezig, en als Ap weer opstaat krijgt hij een stoel naast de paus. Ap raakt de paus even aan, en kan het bijna niet geloven. 'Wat is uw echte naam trouwens ?' vraagt Ap aan de paus.

'Morris Arnott,' zegt de paus met een glimlach. 'Vroeger was ik een boer.'

'Oh, ik ben koeienslager van beroep,' zegt Ap.

'Ja, dat heb ik net gehoord,' zegt de paus met een accent. 'Zeg, zou jij niet bij ons willen werken ?'

'Waar ?' vraagt Ap, 'in Rome ?'

'Nee, hier,' zegt de paus.

Dan wordt Ap wakker, badend in zweet. Wat heeft hij toch idioot gedroomd.

Op zijn werk komt er iemand aanzetten met een boek over pauzen. Ap krijgt het boek mee, en begint direkt te lezen als hij thuiskomt. Daarin staan wel zeer vreemde dingen. Niet alleen over het pistool van de paus, maar ook over het pantser van de paus. Dit pantser is genaamd Smith Wesley. Ook heeft hij een schild genaamd A.A. Finney. Zijn helm is genaamd Dowie McPherson, en zijn zwaard Lake Woodworth-Etter. Ap vindt het allemaal onzin en heeft er zo genoeg van dat hij het boekje in het openhaard gooit. Maar dan ineens beginnen stemmen heel luid te krijsen. Een eekhoorn verschijnt vanuit het vuur met een heel groot zwaard voor zich. Er glijdt bloed van het zwaard af. 'Wie ben je ?' vraagt Ap. 'Ik ben baron Evan Parham-Seymour. Ik ben de maker van de paus-machine,' zegt de eekhoorn eigenwijs.

'En wat is dat zwaard ?' vraagt Ap.

'Dat is mijn zwaard,' zegt de eekhoorn, 'genaamd T.B. Jackson-Cain.'

'Ja ja, houd maar op, ik heb genoeg van al die namen,' zegt Ap. 'Ik geef mijn slagersmessen toch ook geen namen. Houd toch op, zeg. Ik geef mijn stukjes vlees toch ook geen namen.'

'Ik wil u aandacht vragen voor de profetenpaus,' zegt de eekhoorn. En dan hoort Ap allemaal geklap in de verte. 'Zijn naam is Wimber Branham-Cain, maar sommigen noemen haar gewoon mrs. Jones, een vermoeide buldog.'

'Okay, en heb je nog meer pauzen in de aanbieding ?' vraagt Ap.

'Nee, dat was het,' zei de eekhoorn, 'en als je nog eens wat nodig hebt, dan bel je maar.' En floep, daar was de eekhoorn ineens verdwenen. Ap weet niet hoe hij het heeft. Het openhaard brandt nog steeds, en naast hem ligt een hondenmand met daarin een vermoeide bulldog. 'Dat moet mrs. Jones wezen,' denkt Ap. Hij streelt de hond even door z'n haren, en zegt : 'Zo, dus jij bent onze profetenpaus.' Dan glimlacht Ap. 'Ach ja, die moeten er ook zijn.'

'Zeg, heb je zin in een stukje vlees ?' vraagt Ap. Ap loopt naar de koelkast en haalt er een potje uit waarop 'demonenbrokjes' staat. 'Dat is beter,' denkt Ap, 'want al die arme dieren ...'

De volgende dag gaat Ap naar zijn werk. In de letters op het dak is wat gekrast, en nu staat er 'demonen-slager'. Ap vindt het allemaal best. Deze dromenwereld bevalt hem wel, en hij zal zo toch wel weer wakker worden. Maar alles begint akelig lang te duren. Is hij soms dood ?

Dan verschijnt ineens de eekhoorn weer voor hem. 'Chimpansee,' zegt de eekhoorn. 'Ga je mee naar de chimpansee ? Ik heb het over de paus ...'

'Welke paus ?' vraagt Ap.

Dan wordt Ap langzaam wakker. Als gehypnotizeerd gaat hij naar zijn werk. In het magazijn staat een spiegel met een eekhoorn erop. Ook staat er een wigwam. Maar Ap let er niet meer op, en gaat aan het werk. 'Chimpansee,' denkt Ap, 'hoe komt hij er bij.' Als hij de la met

messen opentrekt ziet hij daar een potje demonenbrokjes liggen en tandartsartikelen. 'Ik moet echt nog dromen,' zegt Ap slaperig. Als Ap zijn slagersjas wil aantrekken lijkt het een doktersjas te zijn, en als hij de deur van zijn kantoortje opentrekt kijkt hij recht in een zaal vol met mensen. 'Opereren, opereren !' roepen ze allemaal. Stieren worden naar voren geduwd, en iemand maakt kruisjes op hen met een rode stift. 'Nou, opereer ze dan ?' roept iemand. En op andere plaatsen beginnen ze 'boe' te roepen. 'Ja, maar hoe dan ?' vraagt Ap. 'Hoe moet ik ze opereren ?'

'Je weet het toch zo goed, je bent toch slager ?' roept iemand. 'Doe dan, nou doe dan ?'

Dan begint Ap te snikken. 'Ik weet het niet. Ik weet het niet meer.' In zijn hand heeft hij speelgoed-dokterspullen. Plotseling ziet hij een lege stoel en rent erop af om te gaan zitten. Weer komt er iemand door de deur naar binnen. Het is een chimpansee in een doktersjas. 'Dat is de paus,' roept iemand. 'Ja, de paus !' roepen een paar anderen. De chimpansee haalt wat stiften uit zijn jaszak en begint de stieren te kleuren. 'Hoera !' roepen er een heleboel.

'Wat ? Is er iemand jarig ?' zegt de chimpansee met een harde bromstem. 'Geef me mijn pistool,' bromt de chimpansee. Iemand in de zaal staat op. Het is Rodney Hinn-Kuhlman. Overal om hem heen vallen mensen flauw. Als hij op het podium staat verandert hij in een lange kabouter met een hele lange mond. De chimpansee geeft hem een schop en er spuit vreemd gekleurd water uit z'n mond. Maar dan beginnen er echt gevaarlijke dingen te gebeuren. Ap staat weer op, en rent over het podium naar de deur toe, rent door de slagerij, en daarna naar buiten. 'Snel naar het bos,' denkt hij. Hij is op zoek naar de heuvel met de spiegel waar het allemaal mee begon. Hij moet weer terug zien te komen door de spiegel. Al snel heeft hij de spiegel gevonden, en duikt erdoor heen. Hij word wakker in zijn bed, en denkt nu dat hij echt wakker is. Maar niets is minder waar. Hij loopt naar beneden, maar merkt dat hij door de traptredes zakt.

'Is die onzin nu eens eindelijk afgelopen ?' schreeuwt Ap, maar dan merkt hij dat hij ineens zijn mond niet meer kan opentrekken, alsof een vreemde kleverige stof zijn kaken op elkaar houdt. 'Wat is dit voor een pausen-circus ?' denkt Ap bij zichzelf. Al snel is Ap tot helemaal in de kelder gezakt waar tonnen staan met de doorzichtig gekleurde kleverige stof. Zodra hij de tonnen aanraakt beginnen ze te overstromen. 'Misschien dat het nu toch nog leuk wordt,' denkt Ap bij zichzelf. Ap heeft het gevoel alsof hij weer in een bodemloze put zweeft, als door de spiegel van realiteiten. Niets is wat het lijkt.

Einde

Het Ei van God

Heldhaftige Verhalen rondom de Geschiedenis en het Ontstaan van God

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Hoofdstuk 1. Voorwoord

Hoofdstuk 2. Het Ei

Hoofdstuk 3. Vroege Hemelen

Hoofdstuk 4. Zij waren er bij

Hoofdstuk 5. Wat Als ....

Hoofdstuk 6. Diepere Wortelen van Khnum

Hoofdstuk 1. Voorwoord

Heel lang geleden, toen de aarde nog niet bestond, waren er hele andere legers in de hemel. Er is een theorie die zegt dat alle rassen die nu leven op aarde die vroegere legers weerspiegelen, maar dan op een hele andere manier. Veel kan ik hier niet van zeggen als oude reiziger. Wel kan ik iets over die geschiedenis vertellen. Ik kan niet veel zeggen over het nu, het heden, maar wel kan ik vertellen over hoe het vroeger eens was. Je zou je misschien afvragen waarom die oude hemelse legers er niet meer zijn. Nu, luister dan eens naar dit verhaal. Ik ben speciaal naar je toegekomen om dit verhaal te vertellen. Ik hoop dat je er wat aan hebt. Ik weet niet of je leeft als deze boodschap je heeft bereikt, en ik weet ook niet of ik nog leef, maar dat is ook niet belangrijk. De boodschap heeft leven genoeg in zich om ons beiden tot leven te brengen, wanneer onze harten met elkaar versmelten.

Eén zo'n vroegere engelenmacht was genaamd de Heuzen. Zij waren een soort hemelse indianen, maar dan in hun pure vorm. De aardse vorm van de indianen is maar een zwakke afspiegeling van hen, en dan op een hele andere manier. De macht van de Heuzen was met geen pen te beschrijven, en ze leefden dicht bij Gods hart. Nu moet ik jullie als oude reiziger ook vertellen dat er een engelenvolk was wat dichtbij de Heuzen leefden, maar waarvan er velen afvielen van de levende God. God had ook hen veel macht en schoonheid gegeven, maar hun harten werden trots. Zij waren genaamd de Konzen, en je zou ze heel misschien een beetje met de hedendaagse Fransen kunnen vergelijken, alhoewel een Franse vaak juist de

gevallen vorm van de Konze weerspiegelt, of gewoon de verwilderde vorm. De Heuzen kwamen in oorlog met de schepselen die zij eens zo liefhadden.

Nu moet het mij van het hart, beste lezer, dat ik deze woorden niet zonder pijn tentoonstel. Ik vertel deze dingen niet zonder een diepe, diepe pijn in mijn hart, en vriend, ik hoop ook dat je deze woorden ter harte neemt, omdat jij misschien kan helpen. Verder vraag ik niets van je dan te luisteren. Na dit verhaal zullen we beiden weer onze eigen bezigheden hebben, zullen onze paden misschien zelfs weer scheiden, maar misschien, heel misschien ga je wel met het verhaal aan de slag, en probeer je er voor jezelf achter te komen wat je eraan kunt doen. Deze geschiedenis is er niet één van overwinningen, maar één van een diep kruis ... dieper dan .... Nu, luister verder, want ik kan het alleen vertellen als je er de tijd voor neemt. Of misschien wil je de woorden even snel aanraken, om later te beslissen om het lezen van dit verhaal te verdiepen.

Verder heb ik niets van node. Ik heb geen behoefte aan volgelingen, of hen die mij een stuk brood toewerpen ... Deze tijden heb ik gehad ... Ik ben gelukkig niet meer met deze behoeftes bezwaard, want ik ben een oude reiziger. Nogmaals : De Heuzen kwamen dus in oorlog met de schepselen die zij eens zo liefhadden ... De Heuzen moesten het verwonde hart van God beschermen tegen de aanvallen van de gevallen Konzen. De Konzen wilden wraak nemen op God, omdat God de Heuzen zoveel machtiger had gemaakt, en veel verfijnder. Bij de Heuzen had God echt oog gehad voor het detail. De Konzen waren kwaad op God, en alhoewel ze door hun val God al diep in z'n hart hadden geraakt, waren ze nog niet klaar.

Beste lezer, zo'n val van engelen bij te wonen is een ramp, en vaak loopt het uit tot een reeks oorlogen waardoor de geschiedenis en het komende nooit meer hetzelfde zullen zijn. Ik was erbij, en nu zul je wel heel nieuwsgierig zijn geworden naar mijn naam. Maar misschien dat dat in de loop van dit verslag over deze geschiedenis wel iets duidelijker gaat worden. Verder gaat het dus eigenlijk niet om mij. Ik ben maar een boodschapper, en ik reis even met je mee. Hoe het verder gaat tussen ons twee ? Dat beslis jijzelf na dit verhaal. Nu hoop ik dat je de tijd neemt om naar mij te luisteren, niet in de eerste plaats om mij te leren kennen, maar om datgene te kennen wat er vroeger gebeurd is, en waarvan ook jij in je lichaam en ziel de gevolgen draagt.

Nu zou je misschien denken dat God na zo'n verschrikkelijke oorlog niets meer met de Konzen te maken wilde hebben, en dat Hij ook niet meer van ze hield. Maar de liefde voor de Konzen was alleen maar groter geworden, en God wilde er alles aan doen om hen te helpen. Hij begreep hun pijn wel, Hij begreep hun strijd ... En ook de Heuzen deelden deze liefde en het begrip ... De gevallen Konzen waren vroeger erg goede vrienden van de Heuzen ... De Liefde van de Heuzen ging zo ver, dat ze hun leven gaven voor de Konzen. Deze Liefde hadden ze van God Zelf geleerd ... Wat er toen met de Heuzen is gebeurd, dat weten maar een paar schepselen ... Enkele Konzen zijn toen tot God teruggekeerd, maar God was in meer pijn dan ooit tevoren, omdat Hij nu de Heuzen moest missen, naast de al gevallen Konzen ... God was ten einde raad ...

De Heuzen waren in een vreemd diep dal terechtgekomen waar ze aan hoge brandende kruizen hingen, en gaven hun liefdesboodschappen aan God door ... Maar God kon hen niet helpen, want ze moesten deze Liefdesbeker geheel leegdrinken. Door dit kruis zouden ze tot een nog grotere heerlijkheid komen, en zouden ze de Konzen veel beter kunnen helpen. De Heuzen werden de golven van een zee van liefdesvuur, en de Heuzen brachten zo een nieuw nageslacht voort : de Kalikken ... Zij stegen op uit de vurige liefdeszee en zij hadden toegang

tot het Hart van God om Hem te genezen. De Kalikken waren een soort hemelse katten, maar dan op een hele andere manier dan de huidige kat ... De Kalikken droegen het vuur van God in al zijn heerlijkheden, omdat ze zelf in hun voorgeschiedenissen zo vaak door vuur verpletterd waren ... Zij waren zo vaak de tot as verbrandden. Zo hadden de Heuzen een dieper deel van de Hemelse geschiedenis en Gods geschiedenis geopend.

De Kalikken richtten zich toen op de afgeweken Konzen, en begonnen een nieuwe oorlog tegen hen ... De Kalikken wilden wraak voor wat de Konzen God en de Heuzen, de ouders van de Kalikken, hadden aangedaan. Maar de Kalikken gingen zo te keer, en richtten zoveel verwoestingen aan dat God hen later moest stoppen. Niet iedere Kalik trok zich wat van God aan, en een groot aantal viel van God af. De Kalikken werden zo gevaarlijk in hun val, dat God ze moest opsluiten in een diepe kerker. De Heuzen hadden inmiddels een nieuw geslacht voortgebracht : de Marouten ... Er waren Spimarouten, die de voorlopers van de Oostenrijkers waren, de Ribmarouten, de voorlopers van de Italianen, en de Ritsmarouten, de voorlopers van de Spanjaarden, maar velen van hen keerden zich tegen de Heuzen en God. Ook voor hen had God kerkers ... Vele Heuzen waren inmiddels verbitterd geraakt naar God, omdat God hun nageslacht niet zegende, en toen was er één van de verschrikkelijkste vallen in de hemelse geschiedenissen : De Val der Heuzen ... Dit krenkte God tot op het bot, en Hij had er veel verdriet van ... Zoveel verdriet, dat God Zich langzaam begon terug te trekken, en Zich begon te omhullen in mysterie ... Ja, beste lezer, God had het bijna gehad met al zijn hemelse scheppingen, en wilde nog één keer helemaal overnieuw beginnen ... Natuurlijk waren er veel hemelse wezens die Hem trouw waren gebleven, maar die konden niet tegen Zijn verdriet op ...

God wilde een legermacht creeeren die Hem trouw bleef ... Hij verzamelde allen die Hem trouw waren gebleven, en noemde hen : De getrouwen, en de golven van de Zee van Trouw ... Zij waren als de golven van het groene vuur, een woeste zee, en vanuit hen kwam nageslacht oprijzen, een nieuwe creatie van God. God noemde dit ras : De Matadokken ... de voorlopers van de honden ... Ook schiep God de Spinmarouten, waarvan de hedendaagse politie een zwakke en verdraaide afspiegeling is. De Spinmarouten hadden meerdere armen, en werden Gods trouwste boodschappers, maar ook van hen vielen enkelen af, en begonnen zich snel te vermenigvuldigen. De Spinmarouten hadden een zeer diepe, en vaak geheime voorgeschiedenis, en ze waren bedreven in allerlei kunsten ... Zij brachten diepe genezing aan Gods Hart, en zetten Hem aan om door die kunsten Zich nog meer in mysterie te hullen ... De Spinmarouten hadden veel verdriet over de enkelingen in hun groep die gevallen waren, en gaven hun leven voor hen op een wonderlijke en mysterieuze manier ... Slechts enkelen kennen het geheim van de Spinmarouten ... Zij gaven hun leven, en werden als de golven van een zwarte zee, een mysterieuze zee, die bijna niemand kende ... In mijn hele rondreis door de geschiedenis ben ik maar een paar schepselen tegengekomen die van die mysterieuze zee wisten ... Hier gaven zij geboorte aan een geslacht die je misschien heel iets met de hedendaagse dokters kunt vergelijken, maar eigenlijk vallen de dokters bij hen in het niet ... Dit geslacht was als de bomen ... als de planten, de struiken en de bloemen ... Zij werden genoemd de Spamarouten, en zij hadden nog meer armen dan de Spinmarouten. Zij begonnen de scheppingen van God te ordenen en te zuiveren. Verder schiep God nog de Stunmarouten, die je een beetje met hedendaagse soldaten kunt vergelijken, maar dan totaal anders. De Stunmarouten moesten de scheppingen bewaken.

Hoofdstuk 2. Het Ei

Goed, de geschiedenissen van de hemel en de engelen zijn diep. Vaak als je het over schepping hebt, is dat eigenlijk herschepping, omdat vaak gewoon delen van een verre geschiedenis - zij het getransformeerd, opnieuw aangekleed - omhoog worden gebracht. Zo is dat ook bij God. Daarom is het interessant die geschiedenissen te bespreken, beste lezer, want ze zouden opnieuw het licht kunnen zien, en ontwaken.

Weet u, nu u deze geschiedenis al tot hier hebt gelezen zie ik het al helemaal voor me : Jij en ik, samen op weg naar de heuvel der geschiedenissen, waarachter zoveel heuvelen zijn ... Vanuit hier kunnen we twee dingen doen : Een goed uitzicht hebben, of verder doorreizen naar de zonsondergangen van de geschiedenis om tot een nog grotere geschiedenis te gaan ... Waar stopt het ergens ... Met deze vraag wil ik me niet bezighouden ... Ik ben blij dat je tot hier als vriend met mij bent meegereisd, en ik hoop je ook de komende passages te zien ... Denk aan al die mensen die al gestopt zijn sinds het lezen van de titel, of die gaanderweg zijn uitgelezen ... Denk aan hen, en denk aan jezelf waar je nu staat. Je hebt de moeite genomen om te luisteren naar mijn verhaal, terwijl je nog niet eens weet wie ik ben ... Misschien dat je ooit eens jouw verhaal aan mij kan vertellen, maar voor we zover zijn, vriend, nodig ik je uit om de reis met mij voort te zetten, dieper de geschiedenis in ... Er zijn twee soorten mensen : Zij die de geschiedenis hebben begrepen en daarnaar leven, en zij die niets van de geschiedenis begrijpen, en gewoon voortgaan met hun oude leven ...

Vriend, ik vraag je aandacht voor het volgende : Ook ik heb mijn lessen moeten leren. En misschien mag ik samen met jou meerdere lessen leren ... Ik ben nog niet te oud om te leren ... Ik ben een oude reiziger door de geschiedenis, maar dat wil niet zeggen dat ik al 'thuis' ben. Ik hoop mijn voertuig ooit eens te vinden, en daar kun jij me misschien bij helpen ... Geloof me, ik heb niks van node ... Al zou ik van armoede mijn voertuig moeten bouwen, of van de delen van de geschiedenissen die ik al ken ... Het zij zo ... Maar misschien kan jij daar een extra dimensie aan toevoegen ... Naarmate we elkaar beter leren kennen, beste lezer, begin ik steeds meer van je te houden ... Ik hoop dat dat gevoel wederzijds is, maar geloof me : Ik heb geen enkele behoefte meer aan meereizers ... Vroeger wel, maar sinds ik ouder ben geworden heb ik gelukkig deze behoeftes achter me mogen laten. Ik wordt er niet meer door gekweld. Zoals ik al zei : Het enige wat een meereiziger me zou kunnen schenken is die extra dimensie, en mijn angst is dat ik daar misschien niet klaar voor ben ... Waar zal die extra dimensie mij brengen ? Zo zullen er onder jullie ook zijn die bang zijn voor de extra dimensie die ik kan toevoegen aan hun leven. Misschien dat ze na dit verhaal echt niet meer dezelfde zijn.

Ik vraag je aandacht voor het volgende : Ik ben uit de tijd. Ik zou waarschijnlijk niet in jullie samenleving passen. Toch heb ik veel te vertellen. Ik draag de sleutel van de diepere geschiedenissen van de hemelen en de engelen. Misschien klinkt dat in sommige oren ietwat overdreven, maar daar ik diep in mijn hart jullie taal niet spreek, probeer ik het op deze manier toch het beste te verwoorden.

Er was eens een groot man die Khnum heette. Khnum was een wezen van het verre verleden, en paste eigenlijk niet meer in de nieuwe scheppingen van God. Omdat Khnum zoveel kracht had zou hij de scheppingen van God met gemak kapot kunnen maken. Vele wezens die Khnum nog wel van vroeger kenden wilden dat hij bij de nieuwe scheppingen betrokken zou worden, maar God schudde Zijn hoofd. Het zou te riskant wezen, 'maar' ... had God gezegd : 'Iedereen die goed met de nieuwe scheppingen om zou gaan, en God ook trouw zou wezen in de toekomst, die zou een sleutel ontvangen waarmee ze Khnum zouden kunnen bezoeken.'

Het was alsof God Khnum dus ergens voor wilde beschermen, want Khnum was een erg gevoelige man. God hield zoveel van Khnum dat Hij Khnum verborgen hield. God wilde niet het risico lopen dat een nieuw schepsel Khnum zou bezeren, want ook zouden ze zo het risico lopen dat Khnum meer zou vernietigen dan God lief was. Volgens God zou Khnum zijn eigen krachten niet kennen. In veel vroegere tijden had God Khnum vaak als Verlosser naar de oude scheppingen gestuurd om hen te helpen, maar ze hadden Khnum zo verschrikkelijk bezeerd dat God Khnum niet meer wilde zenden, maar voor hen die God getrouw bleven had God een sleutel tot het Verborgene. Die Khnum was wel een heel creatief mannetje. Zo had hij een soort hemels ijs gemaakt, heel anders als het huidige ijs, en veel minder pijnlijk. Het was wel een soort kou, maar het deed eigenlijk helemaal geen pijn. Zelfs God Zelf kon hem dat niet nadoen. Waarom niet ? zou je denken. Daar hopen we later nog op terug te komen. Maar deze Khnum was dus een bijzonder mannetje, een verborgen mannetje, waar God dus mee moest samenwerken om tot een doel te komen. Sommigen zeggen wel eens dat Khnum de Heilige Geest is, maar nog meer is Khnum de Verborgen Geest.

In ieder geval kon Khnum een heleboel dingen die God niet kon, en zo besloten ze samen te werken. Khnum was altijd iets dat God Zelf ook niet helemaal begreep. Khnum kende de ouders van God, en de voorgeslachten van God, en was al wat langer op weg. Nu zou je denken : God begrijpt toch alles ? Toch is dat niet helemaal zo. Ook God is op weg, en gaat van begrip tot begrip. Hoe ik dit weet ? Omdat ik met God reis. Ik ken Zijn pijnen, en ik ken ook dat wat boven Zijn verstand uitgaat. Wat volkomenheid en volmaaktheid is voor Gods begrip, is maar een splinter voor het begrip van Khnum, die al bestond voordat God ontstond. Beste lezer, misschien dat u nu de vraag heeft : Maar God heeft toch altijd al bestaan ? Daarop kan ik bevestigend antwoorden, maar God bestond voordat Hij God werd in een andere vorm. Ook God moest Zichzelf bewijzen. Zij die dat niet geloven volgen een gevaarlijke God.

Beste lezers, ik kan het wantrouwen van sommigen onder jullie begrijpen. Ik ben zelf ook jong geweest, en kon niet geloven dat de kip uit het ei kwam. Toch willen we dit ei bespreken : Het Ei van God.

Hoofdstuk 3. Vroege Hemelen

Ik ben zelf ook jong geweest, en begrijp de mogelijke twijfel. Toch zal bij velen deze twijfel niet groter zijn dan de twijfel die ze hebben over het huidige christendom. Maar goed, ik ben niet gekomen om over het heden te vertellen, maar over het verleden. Ik zou bijna kunnen zeggen dat het verleden ook tot mij kwam als een brief. Mijn leven is als een brief geweest. En daarom wil ik bijna zeggen : Lees deze brief, want het is een oude brief, als een oud manuscript. Beleef er een goede tijd aan, nu we samen zijn, als een vlam die voortleeft in de herinnering, waar zowel jij als ik zich aan kunnen verwarmen. Neem de toeters en bellen voor lief ... Neem dat waar je iets aan hebt ... Dan zal ik dat ook doen ... Deze brief is een stuk van mij ... Neemt, eet en gedenkt ... Deze brief is geld waard, veel geld ... Maar ik geef niet om geld ... Ik draag oud bloed in mij, en mijn vlees is oud, als een vrucht van verhalen, als een boom van oude waarheden ... Ik zou er genoegen mee nemen als daar van gegeten en gedronken wordt, als van een boom van geschiedenis. Zo zal dat wat ik heb opgeschreven en wat ik heb geleefd niet verloren gaan. Zo zal de boodschap voortleven en zich rijkelijk vermenigvuldigen. En ik ben mij bewust dat dit gebeurt, beste lezer, door het lezen van dit

verhaal. Zo wordt de boodschap van deze belangrijke geschiedenis beetje voor beetje vereeuwigd.

Zal er verzadiging zijn na zoiets als dit ? Ik waag mij niet om een beschrijving te geven van het instituut dat kerk genoemd wordt in de huidige tijd ... Ik weet niet of ik nog in leven ben als deze boodschap jou heeft bereikt. Ik ben er ook niet om de huidige tijd waarin jij leeft te beschrijven of te beoordelen. Misschien dat dat jouw taak wel is.

Khnum is het Verborgene van God, dat wat was voordat Hij was. Misschien dat dat door sommigen onder jullie als een naar sectarisme neigende opmerking is ... Vergeet niet dat jullie ideeen voor die tijd als sectarisch bestempeld zouden worden, of minstens naar sectarisme neigend. Een secte is de verabsolutering van een deelwaarde. Dat gebeurde toen Gods Ei werd verloochend, Zijn voorgeslachten, Zijn ontstaan, en de tijden en verborgen wezens voor Zijn ontstaan ... Die verloocheningen hebben God tot een wees proberen te maken ... Gun God ouders ... De kerk zal dat niet snel doen, en de canon ook niet .... maar jij ... jij kan dat voor God doen ... door te zeggen : 'Ja, Heer, ik geloof dat U ook ouders heeft ...'

Khnum is een oude vriend van de ouders van God ... en heeft altijd voor God gezorgd als 'zijn buurjongetje'.... Nu zorgt God ook voor Khnum, nu God ouder is geworden ... Mag Hij ? Op een dag plantte Khnum een zaadje ... Het was een zaadje waaruit de voorgeslachten van God als een boom begonnen te groeien, waar uiteindelijk God uit voortkwam. De vroegste hemelen heetten 'arrataharen'. Khnum kan het ook niet helpen hoe de dingen gelopen zijn ... Het was de evolutie van die hemelen, het traject dat de godheid moest begaan ... Eigenlijk, beste lezer, is God nog maar een laag wezen in vergelijking met de serene wezens die boven hem staan als hogere autoriteiten en heersers. Zo is de Muskus een veel Goddelijker wezen dan God Zelf. Hij heeft dan ook een veel groter gebied gekregen. De arrataharen waren in hun oorsprong groter dan de huidige hemelen. De Sebek staat boven de Muskus, en de Khnum staat boven de Sebek. Zo, hier wordt even een bom op tafel gelegd om het traditionele geloofsplaatje te vernietigen. Als u gelooft dat God de hoogste autoriteit is, dan bent u slecht ingelicht, en dan worden er nog steeds dingen voor u achter gehouden. God is aangesteld als 'een' hoogste autoriteit over een bepaald gebied, en de grote vraag is dus door wie Hij is aangesteld. Als u God heeft gevonden is dat nog maar de eerste stap.

Maar ja, is dat niet gevaarlijk, zomaar afgaan op het advies van een oude reiziger ? Gevaarlijker dan het volgen van het huidige christendom kan het echt niet wezen. God blijft overigens een belangrijk fundament, een belangrijk gebied in uw leven. Een goede keizer heeft koningen, provincie-hoofden en burgemeesters. God is in dit opzicht niet meer en niet minder dan de burgemeester van uw stad. Met Hem moet zeker gerekend worden !

Hoofdstuk 4. Zij waren er bij

Oh ja, ik ben weleens in andere tijden met deze dingen gekomen, zij het vaak in andere bewoordingen en in een andere taal ... Verketterd werd ik, verbrand ... Nu, in deze huidige tijd probeer ik het weer ... Niet wetende wat me te wachten staat ... Verbrand zal ik misschien niet worden, maar er zal zeker gezegd worden dat ik het verkeerd heb begrepen. Reist u dan met mij mee naar de geschiedenis om mij het beter te vertellen ? Sommigen praten alsof ze werkelijk heen en terug in de geschiedenis zijn gegaan ... Ze hebben aan één tafel met

Napoleon gegeten ... Ze hebben de voeten van Jezus gekust, en hebben spelletjes gedaan met de oude farao's ... Ze hebben precies gezien hoe Nero Rome af liet branden, en wat hem tot die daad dreef ... Zij waren overal bij ... Zij sliepen niet, zij hielden alles bij ... Niets ontging hen, zodat zij het plaatje niet konden missen ...

'Godslasteraar,' wordt er geroepen, en zelfs : 'kruisig hem' .... Maar nog steeds weet niemand wie ik ben. Denkt u nou echt dat ik mijn naam nog ga onthullen ? En al helemaal mijn woonplaats niet ... Had ik in het begin nog de neiging mij bekend te maken ... Nu des te minder ... Maar dit alles laat mij mijn verhaal niet doen staken ... Integendeel ... Ik zet mijn opdracht voort ... Durft u met mij mee te gaan dieper de geschiedenis in ?

Laten we verder gaan met het bespreken van de engelen van Khnum. Over het algemeen werden ze 'Stitchiren' genoemd. Er waren vele engelensoorten van Khnum, zoals de Demsen die de voorlopers van de leeuwen en de octopussen waren, vaak met meerdere armen. En de Pestzen die de voorlopers waren van de haaien en de tijgers. De Di'itmiren en de Atmiren waren de voorlopers van de apen, in hun zuivere vorm. Hoe ik dit allemaal weet ? Omdat ik daar geweest ben ... Nu kunnen er verschillende redenen zijn waarom u nog meeleest ... Misschien vind u het interessant, of een mooi verhaal ... of u zoekt gewoon naar meer stenen om naar mij te gooien ... of .... u bent op zoek naar een sterk verhaal om op de Bijbelkring te vertellen .... of ... misschien hebt u wel een hele andere reden ... Hoe dan ook, u bent tot hier nog steeds mijn mede-reiziger ... Sommigen zullen nu wellicht stoppen met lezen, maar u bent wel heel bijzonder dat u zelfs nu, na al die heldhaftige taferelen, nog steeds met mij meereist ... Misschien wilt u mij wel beschermen ... Misschien mag ik mij wel veilig voelen bij zo'n trouwe meereiziger .... en jij bij mij .... Maar het verschil is alleen : 'Ik ben deze reis al eerder gegaan ... Ik ken de reis, ben gewend aan de klappen ...'

Is het niet beter om na dit verhaal te zeggen : 'Er is geen Khnum' ? Je kunt er voor weglopen, maar vroeg of laat zul je het onder ogen moeten komen. Klinkt dat niet intimiderend, zoals een of ander nieuw pseudo-christelijk fundamentalistisch geloof ? Het is net zoiets zeggen als : 'Er is geen koning,' of : 'Er is geen keizer'. Wij hebben alleen onze burgemeester, en daar voelen we ons goed bij, omdat die zoveel door de vingers ziet ... Maar voor de verdere reis kan hij ons niet helpen ... Heeft u uzelf wel eens afgevraagd waarom u altijd in rondjes fietst, waarom u in uw geestelijk leven niet tot een doorbraak komt, waarom de geestesgaven niet groeien en vermenigvuldigen ... Waarom ... Waarom ? ... Dit verhaal hoopt u daar een antwoord op te geven ... Niet als een fundamentalist ... maar als een oude reiziger, met z'n eigen vraagtekens hier en daar ... Ben ik wel diep genoeg de geschiedenis ingereisd ? Zo niet, dan zal ik ook opgepikt moeten worden door een nog oudere reiziger .... en zal ik vroeg of laat zijn boodschap, zijn brief en zijn verhaal ergens tegenkomen ... Of hij op dat punt nog in leven is weet ik niet .... maar wel weet ik dat zijn boodschap ons zal herenigen ...

Verder met de engelen van Khnum : de Hutessen, voorlopers van de bloemen en de zonnen ... Als je hun wonderlijke geuren ruikt, dan voel je het zelfs in je buik, en de prikkelende warmte omhult je lichaam. Zij zijn de engelen van het kruis van Khnum. Want ook Khnum draagt een kruis. Bent u dat kruis nog niet tegengekomen, lees dan het verhaal nog eens opnieuw, want dan is u wat ontschoten, of werden er dingen voor u achtergehouden. Maar goed, zou u dat nu wel doen, zomaar een verhaal navolgen ? Dan heeft u iets om te introduceren bij anderen, als een open deur in hun geloof, en dan ontstaat er mischien zelfs een cultus omtrend dit verhaal, en dan moet u later voor God verschijnen en dan moet Hij u misschien wel vertellen : 'Je hebt het goed gedaan hoor, daar niet van, maar ... u heeft uw tijd verdaan met één of ander verhaal ...' Kunt u zich dat voorstellen ... De teleurstelling van God ... De gebogen hoofden van al die

engelen, omdat u die zo bijzonder was uzelf verlaagd heeft tot één of ander verhaal en daarmee tijd verspilt heeft ... Er waren zoveel andere belangrijkere dingen te doen ... Wat waren die dingen dan zoal ? In rondjes blijven draaien ? Met een zuurpruimerig gezicht elke week naar het gezwam van een dominee te luisteren die denkt dat de burgemeester van zijn stad ook direkt de koning van het hele land is ? Ja, mijn pappa is de sterkste van allemaal ... Dat denken alle kinderen ....

Of zou een verhaal u kunnen redden uit de eeuwigdurende slavernij van het kerkelijke nationalisme en absolutisme ... Wij zijn het hoogste religieuze ras .... Onze kerk, ons geloof ... onze pappa, onze burgemeester ... onze grote broer ... Alles draait om ons, de rest is afgeweken ... Wij hebben het zuivere en ware geloof .... Wij weten het beter ....

Zou zo'n verhaal zelfs God kunnen redden ?

Die vraag mag u de komende tijd proberen te beantwoorden ... En dan mag u beslissen over dit verhaal ... Niet voor anderen, maar voor uzelf : Ga ik wat met dit verhaal doen, of niet ... Ga ik verder met mijn oude vertrouwde rondjes, of breek ik door de cirkel heen ... Wat gaat het me kosten .... en wat levert het me op ... Ook al geloof ik dit verhaal voor geen stuiver ... Wil het me misschien laten zien dat er meer is ? En als er meer is, wat is dat dan ? Is dat zoals het verhaal zegt, of net even iets anders ? Hoe kan ik daar achter komen ?

Beste lezer, je leert en je ontdekt ... door te reizen ... Reis daarom nog even met mij mee ... We zijn nog niet klaar .... Het zou jammer zijn om nu af te haken nu we al zo ver zijn gekomen .... Dat zou echt zonde zijn ... Zonde van de tijd ... Want als u nu stopt ... dan is misschien alles voor niks geweest .... Dan vergeet u dit hele verhaal weer, en gaat weer verder met uw leven zoals het was .... Of neemt u uzelf in het vervolg voor om niet meer dit soort verhalen te lezen .... Terwijl wanneer u ietsje verder had gelezen zou het uw leven voor altijd hebben kunnen veranderen ... Of klink ik nu als een Jehovah Getuige ? Zij kennen de geschiedenis van de kerk vaak beter dan de kerkgangers zelf, en noemen het terecht : Het Grote Babylon ... Maar ik ben hier verder niet om te slijmen naar Jehovah Getuigen ... Dat moeten ze allemaal zelf weten ...Wat ik probeer te zeggen is dit : Uw leven ... hangt ... aan de draad van uw geloof .... Zou u niet een stevigere ketting grijpen ? Het is bijna als het zwaard van Damokles ... een zuchtje ... en .... Waar kunnen we naartoe ? Wie heeft de oplossing ? Ik, als oude reiziger ? Of een schreeuwende folderaar aan de rand van de wal .... 'Kom terug,' zou hij u toeroepen .... 'want Jezus ....'

Maar Jezus was een reiziger, en kondigde grotere dingen aan, al in Zijn leven ... Veel dingen kon Hij niet vertellen omdat hen die naar Hem luisteren daar nog niet aan toe waren .... Daarom is de canon al dikke onzin .... Het zwaard van Canon is een soort zwaard van Damokles, wat aan een iel draadje boven uw hoofd hangt ... Er hoeft maar iets te gebeuren .... en .... Gaat u daar op zitten wachten, of reist u met mij mee .... Natuurlijk wil ik u niet bang maken .... Dat hebben anderen al genoeg gedaan ... Sommigen zeggen weleens : 'Wie een ander bangmaakt heeft geen Waarheid in zich ...' Een verhaal behoort er ook niet te zijn om de ander bang te maken ... Het is een kunstzinnige manier om duidelijk te maken dat er een bom onder uw bed ligt ? Dat zou al te gemakkelijk zijn .... Of is het een verlokker, een verleider, om u weg te leiden van het gevaar ? En wat is het gevaar ? Is het niet het verhaal zelf ? Of bestaat er in de wereld van verhalen helemaal geen gevaar ? Alles is toch niet echt .... Ze zeggen weleens : 'Hoe kun je een blinde uitleggen hoe prachtig de wereld is ...' Maar is die wereld wel zo prachtig ... Heeft de blinde misschien wel een hele goede reden om blind te zijn ...

Hoofdstuk 5. Wat Als ....

Reizigers kunnen heel vervelend zijn ... dat weet ik ... Dat heb ik ook eens meegemaakt ... Mede-reizigers kunnen je het leven zuur maken ... of vervelend ... Uit een vliegtuig kun je niet zomaar wegstappen, maar uit een verhaal wel ... Maar wat is er mooier dan twee reizigers die het goed met elkaar kunnen vinden ... Dat begin ik bij jou te merken ... Ik weet niet of het wederzijds is, deze vriendschap, maar ik wil je zeggen dat ik je gezelschap aangenaam vind en waardeer ... Ik hoop dat we goede vrienden kunnen worden, al is het misschien maar voor even ... Misschien ben je mij over een tijdje na het lezen alweer vergeten .... Ik zal nog in ieder geval een paar weken over je nadenken, maar dan zal ik jou misschien dan ook wel langzaam moeten vergeten ... Tenzij jij echt mijn leven verandert ... of ik jouw leven verander ... Weet je al wie ik ben ? ... Ik hoop dat we na de reis misschien nog eens een keer over elkaar dromen ... Dat we met warmte aan elkaar mogen terugdenken ... als de vlam van een bijzondere herinnering ... een schuilplaats waar we altijd in mogen schuilen, en misschien wel mogen wonen voor altijd ...

Al was het in jouw ogen alleen maar een verhaal, een symboliek, om alles eens op een andere manier te kunnen bekijken ... Voor mij was het echt ... omdat ik alles heb meegemaakt, en jij niet ...

Misschien ben ik in jouw gedachten alleen maar een hoofdpersoon van een verhaal, een stripfiguur, of een ander soort fictief figuur ... voor mij ben jij echt ... Wie ik ben ? Wat als ik Jezus ben, of ... misschien ben ik in sommige ogen wel de duivel ... Dan zou jij mij toch verdedigen, hè ? Of lees je dit allemaal om me later een trap na te geven ? Ik heb tijd aan je gegeven, ik heb naar je geluisterd ... Is dat dan allemaal voor niets geweest ? Wat als ik een engel ben ? Of houden engelen zich niet met dit soort dingen bezig ... Is dat alleen maar iets wat mensen doen ... brieven en verhalen schrijven .... of is dat iets van demonen ? Nou ?

Maar vertel mij nou eens wie jij bent ... Ik ken je alleen maar als de lezer van dit verhaal ... Of wijk ik nu teveel af ... Het gaat toch allemaal om het verhaal, en niet om jou en mij ? Ik heb het gelezen, door jouw ogen, en ik heb het begrepen ... alle gevoelens die jij had ... Kijk je daar van op ? Of maak je dit soort dingen ... elke dag mee ... ? Ik heb jouw kruis gezien ... Ik hang ook aan een kruis ... We kunnen niet veel ... maar toch ... We kunnen elkaar niet echt helpen ... maar toch .... Misschien dat je pas jaren later weer eens de behoefte hebt om dit verhaal opnieuw te lezen, en dat je me dan door hele andere ogen bekijkt ... Wie weet ...

Wat nou als ik aan het eind van dit verhaal zou zeggen : Gefopt ! Of heb je stiekem al het einde gelezen ? Of zou je niet geloven dat ik zo iemand zou zijn ... Stel nou als ik zou zeggen : Gefopt ! Zou je me dan geloven ? Of komt dit verhaal zo geloofwaardig over dat je ermee verder zou gaan, of ik er nou weer van terugkom of niet ? Is het verhaal dan afhankelijk van mijzelf ? Wat nou als je voor Gods Troon moet verschijnen, en Hij zegt : Gefopt ! ... Wat dan ? Of acht je hem daartoe niet in staat ... Maar wat zou je doen als je zou ontdekken dat het weer net is als bij de tovenaar van Oz ... Die bestond dus helemaal niet, maar een man in een machine deed net alsof hij het was ... Hij was namelijk ... bang voor de bewoners van de nieuwe wereld waarin hij terecht was gekomen ...

Door één woordje : Gefopt ... zou de hele geschiedenis van de kerk met al z'n toeters en bellen geen enkele waarde meer hebben, geen enkele geloofwaardigheid, en geen enkele invloed meer ... maar zal God tonen hoe het werkelijk zat ...

Durf je nog verder te lezen ? Ik bijna niet meer ...

Hoofdstuk 6. Diepere Wortelen van Khnum

Khnum behoort tot de verborgen weelderigheid van God, klaar om uit zijn schelp te breken, om te laten zien hoe het was en is. Het is dat deel van Gods Geest wat voor de eindtijd verborgen is gehouden. Natuurlijk wilde God wel de sleutels geven aan getrouwe profeten ... God wilde openbaring geven, maar de kerk wilde niet ... Het christendom hield de deuren potdicht. Daarom ging God naar Egypte om daar de rijkdommen van Khnum op te potten .... voor een ieder die wil ...

Zo zijn we aan het einde gekomen van dit verhaal, en willen wij u voor meer informatie naar de weelderige verhalen van Egypte doorverwijzen, waar u mag parelduiken in de mysterieuze zeeen van het oude Egyptische gedachtengoed, waar veel van God Zich verscholen houdt, om niet ten prooie te vallen aan een overdreven kerk.

Misschien bent u meer van mij gaan houden, misschien minder, gedurende de reis ... Misschien dat u mij wel bent gaan haten ... Hoe dan ook ... God heeft u lief .... Hij heeft Zijn leven voor u gegeven, maar zal geen paarlen voor de zwijnen werpen ... Hij geeft Zijn sleutels aan hen die Hem oprecht beminnen ... Vraag hem ernaar in uw volgende periode van 'stille tijd' of gebed ... Vraag Hem, want Hij zal oprechte zoekers antwoorden ...

Tot slot wil ik eindigen met een gedicht dat ik eens las :

'Eens zullen de bergen bloeien,

Eens zullen de zonnen stralen,

Eens zal het altijd kerstfeest zijn.

Door de dalen van een diep woud,

Komen wij altijd weer boven,

Met een hart gelouterd als goud.

Eens zullen dan de wolken buigen,

Eens zal dan de duisternis zwijgen,

Eens zal het altijd Khnumfeest zijn,

De keizer heeft gesproken,

Laten wij allen blij zijn.

Vervuld zijn onze harten,

Met een stralend licht,

Vervuld zijn onze zielen,

Vervuld is onze geest,

om dieper te reiken naar dat diepe goud,

van de Khnum, van Hem die leest.

Hij leest de verhalen van onze zielen,

Hij leest over de koningen die ons hart verblinden,

Hij leest over de dagen die het hart doen zeggen :

Alles is niet voor niets geweest.

Ei-nde

Het is druk in de kerk. Er is een kerstdienst, en de zaal zit vol. Sommigen hebben familieleden meegenomen. Esther en Peter zitten achter in de kerk. Zo kunnen ze alles goed zien, alhoewel het wel erg donker is. In de hele kerk zijn er wat kleine lampjes die de sfeer heel geheimzinnig maken, en er branden hier en daar wat kaarsjes. Esther vindt dat wel een beetje eng, want wat als er zo'n kaarsje omvalt. Maar Peter zegt dat ze zich niet aan moet stellen. 'Als de kerk in de fik vliegt, dan gaan we allemaal naar de Heer,' verzekert Peter haar. Maar daar zit Esther niet echt op te wachten. Ze wil eerst met Peter trouwen en dan kinderen krijgen. De dominee zegt dat dat niet in de hemel gebeurt, en daarom vindt ze dat ze er weleens mee mogen opschieten. Peter vindt het allemaal maar dom. Hij wil wel met haar trouwen hoor, daar niet van, maar hij ziet juist er juist erg naar uit om zogezegd te trouwen met de Heere. Dat staat namelijk ook in de Bijbel zo, dat de gemeente de bruid is van Christus. Esther vindt het maar een eng idee. Wat zal er dan in de hemel allemaal gebeuren ? Komen ze dan allemaal in een soort harem terecht ? Nee, Esther heeft nog steeds haar bedenkingen bij het geloof. Eigenlijk kwam ze door Peter in de kerk terecht, maar nog steeds heeft ze er erg veel moeite mee. Oh ja, ze gelooft wel hoor, maar moet dat allemaal zo moeilijk als in de kerk ? Ze zingt altijd wel mee, en luistert altijd wel naar de preek, maar veel ervan begrijpen doet ze niet.

Peter is een humoristische jongen, iets waardoor ze gelijk als een blok voor hem viel. Hij heeft zoiets mysterieus om hem heen hangen. Peter zegt dat dat de Heere is, maar heeft de Heere wel zoveel humor en mystiek als Peter ? Het zou voor haar makkelijker zijn om te geloven als Peter de Heere zou zijn. Ze is helemaal vol van Peter, en soms denkt ze zelfs dat hij God is. Natuurlijk is hij dat niet, maar toch. Peter zegt dat hij in de geest gedoopt is, en dat het daardoor komt dat ze zo denkt, maar ze snapt niet veel van het in de geest gedoopt te zijn. Ze vindt dat allemaal een beetje eng. De dominee doet wel eens een oproep of een ieder die in de geest gedoopt wil worden naar voren wil komen, maar dat heeft ze nog nooit gedaan. Dat vindt ze veel te eng. Peter dwingt haar verder niet, hoor, maar toch vindt hij dat een beetje jammer. Verder kunnen ze goed met elkaar overweg. Op een dag zit er een vreemde man in de kerk. Niemand schijnt hem te kennen. Na afloop loopt hij direkt op Peter af : 'Hey, ga je mee naar het bos, er is daar iets vreemds.'

Peter vraagt hem wat er daar dan aan de hand is. 'Ja, allemaal lichten,' zegt de man, 'en spiegels, heel veel spiegels.'

'Nou, ik voel daar niet veel voor als ik eerlijk mag zijn,' zegt Peter. De man kijkt heel vreemd uit zijn ogen, alsof hij een klap heeft gehad, of zelfs teveel heeft gedronken, en Peter vertrouwt het niet zo. De volgende kerkdienst is de man weer aanwezig. Hij draagt gescheurde klederen ditmaal, en het lijkt zelfs alsof er as op z'n hoofd ligt. Peter moet direkt denken aan wat er in de Bijbel staat over rouw. Peter besluit na de dienst op hem af te gaan en vraagt of er iets met hem gebeurt is. Maar de man zegt niets, en loopt weg. Als hij bijna bij de deur is roept hij : 'Ik vroeg je toch om met mij mee te gaan, maar je wilde niet luisteren !' Toen rende de man weg.

De dienst daarop zit de man weer in de kerk, keurig in het pak, stropdas, met een vrouw in bruidskleding. 'Wel heb ik ooit,' zegt de dominee op de preekstoel. 'Hier wist ik niets vanaf, broeders en zusters, dat er vandaag een bruiloft was.'

'Ja, we zijn net getrouwd,' zei de man. De bruid knikt. 'Nou, hartelijk gefeliciteerd,' zegt de dominee, en zegent hen vervolgens om dan met zijn preek te beginnen. Maar midden in de preek onderbreekt de man hem. De man heeft een ruige baard, en zijn lip bloedt een beetje,

alsof hij erop gebeten heeft. Zijn bruid probeert hem in toom te houden, maar de man is al opgestaan, en begint luid te schreeuwen : 'Wie heeft jou verteld dat je zulke onzin mag prediken : 'In de hemel wordt niet getrouwd, maar met de Heere trouwen we allemaal. Wat is dit voor onzin ? Trouwens ...' En dan beginnen overal om de man heen mensen flauw te vallen. De man heeft zo'n harde schelle stem. De dominee probeert de man te kalmeren, maar de man schiet steeds meer uit zijn slof. 'Zeg, zeg,' probeert de dominee, 'het is je trouwdag, en dat is niet zo'n goed begin.' Maar de man begint langzaamaan de dominee de huid vol te schelden. Sommige mensen verlaten misselijk het gebouw, want de man spuugt ook in het rond. Dan staat Peter op, en zegt tegen de man : 'Het spijt me dat ik niet met je meewilde naar het bos. Ik begrijp dat je daar iets heel indringends heb gezien. Zal ik met je meegaan ?' Ineens kalmeert de man, en gaat zitten. Peter knipoogt naar de dominee, en de dominee stapt met een bezweet en vermoeid gezicht van de preekstoel af.

In het bos aangekomen laat de man Peter een heuvel zien. Er staat een enorme spiegel op de heuvel. 'God is teruggekomen, Peter,' zegt de man, 'Hij heeft zijn schaapjes niet in de steek gelaten. Hij is door deze spiegel heengekomen.'

'Wat is het voor spiegel ?' vraagt Peter. 'Dat zul je wel zien,' zegt de man, 'kom mee.' En dan grijpt hij Peter bij z'n arm en samen lopen ze door de spiegel ergens naar binnen. Het oppervlak van de spiegel was waterig, en ze konden makkelijk naar binnen.

'Er is een oude indiaanse wet die zegt dat je de vijand alleen overwint door de vijand op jouw eigen manier te worden,' zei de man. De man zag er ineens veel ouder uit, en ook Peter. Peter staarde naar zijn kleding, die niet meer rood was, maar bruin. Ook de kleding van de man had een andere kleur, en de man leek een beetje op een piraat. Peter leek nu een beetje op een cowboy. Het was erg vreemd. Peter was erg verbaasd. Toen zei de man : 'In de bijbel staat dat Christus gelijk werd aan de zonde. Ik zal je vertellen wat er gebeurde. Op een zeker moment werd Christus gelijk aan het lijden, door het kruis, en toen ging hij ook door deze spiegel heen, en werd hierdoor gelijk aan zijn vijand, maar dan op een hele andere manier, als in een paradox. Zo werd Christus uiteindelijk satan, en zelfs Judas. Zo overwon Hij hen.'

Peter keek de man een beetje verbaasd aan. 'Dus dat is ook een hele oude indiaanse wet ?' vroeg Peter. De man knikte. 'Wat een vreemde spiegel is dit ?' zei Peter. Toen draaide de man zich om, en wilde weglopen, maar Peter vroeg : 'Hoe kom ik hier weer uit ?'

Maar de man rende weg, en riep : 'Je kunt hier niet meer uitkomen. Je zult ermee moeten leren leven.'

Ineens was de man helemaal uit het zicht verdwenen. Peter wist niet hoe hij het had. Hij was hier gelijkgeworden aan alles wat hij altijd verafschuwde, alles waar hij moeite mee had, en zelfs de dingen waar hij bang voor was. Hij was hier zijn eigen vijand, maar dan op een hele andere manier. Peter probeerde de spiegel weer te vinden, maar waar hij ook zocht, er was niets meer. Ook de heuvel kon hij niet meer vinden, maar hij stond hier wel in een bos. Zou er hier in de buurt ook een kerk zijn ? En wie zouden daar allemaal zitten ? Peter wilde er niet lang over nadenken. Hij wilde terug. Opeens kreeg Peter hele erge steken in zijn tepel, en ook in zijn voet. Het leek wel alsof hij bloedde. Zo hard als hij kon rende hij het bos uit, en daar zag hij de man weer lopen. 'Hey,' riep Peter, 'je moet me hieruit halen, ik krijg overal steken in mijn lichaam, en ik heb het gevoel alsof ik bloed.' Maar de man antwoordde niet. Na lang aandringen deed de man eindelijk zijn mond open : 'Echt, Peter, het is beter voor je. Je moet hier blijven.'

'Ja maar ik moet naar huis,' zei Peter. 'Ik voel me niet goed. Haal me hier alsjeblieft uit.' Na een tijdje begon de man medelijden met hem te krijgen, en zei : 'zoals je wil.' Ineens werd Peter wakker in de kerk, terwijl alles draaide voor zijn ogen. Had hij alles maar gedroomd ? Naast hem zat iemand die heel erg op de man van de spiegel leek. De dominee was flink de boel aan het tiraniseren op de preekstoel. Met donderend geweld bracht hij de woorden van God tot de mensen in de kerk. Het was alsof de dominee daar als Noach op z'n ark stond, om de mensen te waarschuwen voor de regen. Peter had een onbehaaglijk gevoel.

Die nacht had Peter een vreemde droom. Hij en Esther zaten in een bootje, en plotseling viel het bootje om, en een soort krokodil-achtige slang greep Esther en trok haar de diepte in. Peter probeerde haar nog te zoeken, maar zonder resultaat. Toen zwom hij naar de kant en werd wakker. Peter wilde een gesprek met de dominee over hetgeen was gebeurd, en ook over de vreemde droom erna. Maar aan de andere kant was het alsof Peter bang was geworden voor de dominee. Hij besloot er eerst met Esther over te praten. Esther zei dat het beter voor hem was, dus Peter ging op een dag met de dominee naar huis. De dominee woonde op een afgelegen plek in het bos. De dominee schonk wat koffie in voor Peter, en Peter vertelde zijn verhaal.

'Peter, ik kan me hier echt niets bij voorstellen, maar het is wel vreemd, want heel lang geleden, toen ik net in deze kerk was aangesteld, kwam er eens een man in de kerk die er hele vreemde leerstellingen op na hield. De man had het over de paradox, maar wat hij daarmee bedoelde begreep ik niet helemaal,' zei de dominee. 'De man werd door lotingen ouderling, maar op een dag kwamen we erachter dat hij er meerdere vrouwen op nahield. Hij heeft toen nog enkelen van ons met een pistool bedreigd, maar is toen de kerk uitgegaan.'

'Ja, maar wat moet ik nu dan met zulke vreemde dromen ?' vroeg Peter aan de dominee.

'Ach,' zei de dominee, 'iedereen droomt weleens vreemd. Ik zou er niet teveel aandacht aan geven als ik jou was.'

Na het gesprek besluit Peter naar de plaats te gaan in het bos waar in zijn droom die spiegel stond, maar hij kon de heuvel niet vinden, en al helemaal de spiegel niet. 'Dromen zijn bedrog,' had de dominee gezegd. En dat bleek maar al te waar. Na zijn wandeltocht en zoektocht door het bos gaat hij naar Esther. Even later zitten ze beiden op haar kamer. Esther draait wat rustige muziek, en Peter bladert door een paar magazines van haar. Het zijn echte vrouwenbladen, waar ze zo van houdt. Peter vindt het niet echt wat. Het staat vol met roddel, maar Esther zegt dat het gewoon verhalen zijn. Verder zegt Peter er niet veel van. Daar is hij veel te positief voor ingesteld. Weer heeft Esther het over trouwen, iets wat ze vaak doet.

Op een zondag zitten ze in de kerk, terwijl er een andere dominee preekt. De dominee komt uit het buitenland, en heeft het veel over de paus. De dominee heeft een beetje een vreemd accent, maar spreekt wel gewoon Nederlands. Hij vertelt dat Christus Petrus had aangesteld als de Rots waarop de gemeente gebouwd zou worden, en dat de paus de hedendaagse Petrus is, als de plaatsvervanger van Christus, en opvolger van Petrus. Het komt allemaal een beetje katholiek over. De dominee vertelt ook dat hij wonderen kan doen. De dominee heeft een duif in een kooitje meegenomen, en vertelt dan over de heilige geest.

De week daarop preekt dezelfde dominee weer, en weer gaat het over de paus. Peter heeft het niet zo op met de paus, maar laat de man maar zemelen. Ditkeer laat de dominee de duif los, die direkt door de kerk vliegt en daarna weer terugkomt. Peter vindt het maar vreemd, maar

de dominee gebruikt het om uit te leggen over de heilige geest. Hij spreekt over de heilige geest alsof het een postduif is. Dan zegt hij dat de Bijbel zegt dat de geesten der profeten aan de profeten onderworpen zijn, en dat de profeten van de gemeente zijn, en daarmee onderworpen aan Petrus, en dus aan de paus. De dominee beschildert de paus als een soort poppenbaas die de marionetten laat dansen. De dominee heeft ook wat marionetten meegenomen om dat uit te beelden. De dominee beschildert Petrus en dus de paus als de Nieuw-Testamentische Noach, die een ark heeft gebouwd, de kerk, de rots, om de gemeente te behoeden tegen de regen. En dan gaat de dominee verder met te beschrijven welke afschuwelijke dingen de pauzen van het verleden op hun geweten hebben, en laat de gemeente een boekje zien ongeveer zo groot als de bijbel, met roodbruin leer en vergulde bladzijden. De dominee zegt dat dit het Pauselijk Testament is, het derde testament, en dat dit tot de verborgen bijbel van de paus behoort, de zogenaamde machtsbijbel. Iedereen in de zaal is diep geschokt. Dan vertelt de dominee dat het Oude Testament een boek is van offering, van moord en doodslag, en dat het Nieuwe Testament kwam om dit allemaal te bedekken met de mantel der liefde. Maar het Pauselijk Testament was het boek der martelingen, om de oude wonden allemaal weer open te halen. Overal in de kerk begonnen mensen misselijk te worden, en sommigen vielen flauw, terwijl anderen opstonden om kokhalzend de zaal te verlaten. Niemand wist wat er precies gebeurt was, of waardoor het kwam, maar zo liepen de dingen nu eenmaal. Het leek alsof een enorme en onbeschrijfelijke stank het kerkgebouw was binnengekomen, als de onverdragelijke stank van rottend vlees.

Maar de dominee was nog niet klaar. Er was ook nog een vierde testament wat voor de kerk verborgen werd gehouden, een testament met een verborgen paus. Dit was het Pinkster Testament, een boek dat angstvallig door charismatici werd schuilgehouden, en wat tot hun verborgen machtsbijbel behoorde. Ze claimden hierdoor zelfs de paus als marionet te gebruiken.

Peter stond op en riep : 'Hoe weet u dit allemaal, en hoe komt u aan die geschriften ?'

De dominee begon te grijnzen, en zei : 'Ja, ik heb zo mijn connecties.'

Toen werd Peter wakker. Het bleek allemaal een droom te zijn. Weer ging Peter ermee naar de dominee. 'Vier Testamenten ?' vroeg de dominee. 'Je dromen gaan wel erg ver, Peter. Maar moet je eens luisteren : Het is wel zo dat de pauzen opkwamen als de grote poppenbazen voor heel veel bloedvergiet, en de pinksterbeweging kwam toen opzetten om de wonden weer een beetje te verzachten. Ik weet niet of je wel eens van het woord 'pinksterpaus' hebt gehoord ?'

Peter schudde zijn hoofd. Een pinksterpaus was iemand met veel macht in de pinksterbeweging, die veel aan het rollen kon krijgen, en daarom soms zo werd genoemd. 'Zulke indrukwekkende dromen krijg ik niet, Peter,' zei de dominee tenslotte, 'maar als ik jou was zou ik me maar niet druk maken. Het is de manier van je onderbewustzijn om met de geschiedenis om te gaan, en het enigszins te verwerken.'

Peter weet nog niet zoveel van de pinksterbeweging af, en besluit een onderzoek te gaan doen. Hiervoor gaat hij naar de bibliotheek, en al snel vindt hij een geschiedenisboek over de pinksterbeweging. Hierin worden de grote namen vermeld die machtige wonderen konden doen, wonderen en tekenen. Zij hadden zoveel macht over mensen dat wanneer die mensen bij hen in de buurt kwamen die mensen soms gewoon omvielen. Zouden zij de verborgen pauzen zijn, de pinksterpauzen ?

Maar in andere boeken leest Peter dat de pinksterbeweging een secte is, dat zij die daar bijhoren bezeten zijn door de duivel. Ook leest hij in sommige boeken dat machtige leiders in de pinksterbeweging soms een verbond hebben gesloten met satan. Ineens moest Peter weer terugdenken aan die droom over de spiegel, de spiegel van paradox. Zouden zulke leiders door die spiegel heengegaan zijn ? Dan zijn ze aan hun vijanden gelijkvormig geworden om die vijanden te overwinnen. Is dat dan goed of slecht ? In die droom zei die man dat het een oude indiaanse wet was, en dat zelfs Christus aan hen gelijkvormig was geworden. Maar dat ging dan op een hele andere manier.

Die nacht kreeg Peter weer een droom. Hierin waren de pinksterpauzen de bewakers van de spiegel van paradox, en plotseling veranderden ze in stierenvechters die een vreemde lap voor zich hadden, die in allerlei kleuren veranderde. Hierdoor betoverden ze de kerk. Om de stieren heen stonden cowboys die op de stieren sprongen. Alle stieren renden op een groot scherm af, en sprongen er doorheen. Achter dat scherm was een kermisplaats, waar een kraampje stond met een bordje : trekken, uitdoven, boren, vullen. Naast de toonbank lagen vier kleine boekjes als testamentjes. Achter de toonbank kwam een vreemde clown met zijn hoofd naar boven, en deelde zacht snoep uit, als spekjes. Boven de toonbank hingen grote clownsmaskers.

Een andere clown kwam van achter naar binnen lopen in het kraampje, en droeg een groot leren boek in handen genaamd HINN-BIJBEL. Peter Hinn was een kerkleider van een paar eeuwen geleden, die een rijk had gebouwd waarin hij een spiegel van vuur verborgen hield. Die spiegel van vuur was naar zeggen door God aan hem geschonken, en een ieder die hem trouw volgde moest op een bepaald moment door die spiegel van vuur heengaan om zo tot de hemel te komen. Dit stond allemaal in de Hinn-Bijbel beschreven.

Peter schrikt wakker. In de loop van de ochtend zoekt hij direkt in de bibliotheek uit of die Peter Hinn van zijn droom echt heeft bestaan, en ja hoor. In één van de boeken staat dat hij nog steeds volgelingen heeft, de zogenoemde Hinnianen. Met een beetje zoeken hier en daar weet Peter een adres te bemachtigen, en komt met zo'n volgeling in kontakt. Op een avond komt Peter bij de Hinniaan op bezoek. De Hinniaan vertelt Peter veel over de beweging, en Peter vraagt of de spiegel van vuur nog steeds bestaat. De Hinniaan vertelt dat die spiegel nooit is weggegaan, en nog steeds verborgen wordt gehouden, maar dan wel helemaal in Mexico, ergens in een grot. Peter vraagt of er nog steeds volgelingen door die spiegel heengaan, en of ze dan echt in de hemel terechtkomen. De Hinniaan vertelt dat dat nog steeds gebeurt. Nu begint Peter wel heel erg nieuwsgierig te worden, en zou zelfs wel daar naartoe willen. De Hinniaan vertelt dat er veelal in het geheim bedevaarten naar de plaats van de spiegel van vuur worden gehouden. Alhoewel Peter erg enthousiast is wil hij het eerst met de dominee bespreken. Maar de Hinniaan wenkt hem. Peter kijkt in de vlammen van het openhaard, staat op, en volgt de man. De man heette Aaswaldt Hinn, en was zelfs een afstammeling van Peter Hinn. 'Toen mijn overgrootvader stierf,' zei de man, 'wist hij dat God aan zijn nageslacht meerdere spiegels zou geven. Op een nacht schonk God mij de roze spiegel, en hiermee kan ik door de geest opgenomen worden en in de grot van mijn overgrootvader verschijnen.' Hij wees naar een hoek van de kamer waar een klein gangetje was waardoor ze in een andere kamer terecht zouden komen. Het was een klein kamertje, en er stond een enorm roze scherm als een spiegel, maar er droop bloed van af. Peter schrok. De spiegel was gemaakt van een vreemde stof. 'Waarom bloedt de spiegel ?' vroeg Peter. Maar de man antwoordde niet. 'Ga er maar door,' zei hij, 'dan kom je vlakbij de spiegel van vuur in Mexico.' Voorzichtig en vol nieuwsgierigheid bewoog Peter zich naar het scherm. Het scherm stoomde een beetje. Voorzichtig stapte Peter er doorheen, als door een waterig vlies, en kwam in een ruimte terecht als een soort roze ingewanden. Peter liep door, en dacht bij zichzelf : 'Ik

lijk wel gek. Wat is dit voor een kermis ?' Plotseling gleed hij uit, en alles leek ineens veel sneller te gaan. Hij gleed langs slijmere wanden door allerlei zachte roze buizen van een soort vlees. 'Mexico !' werd er geroepen.

Plotseling schrok Peter wakker. Weer gedroomd. Maar wat was dat ? Er was een scherm van vuur in zijn kamer dat steeds dichterbij kwam. Instinctief stond Peter op, en liep er doorheen. Alles was heel groot ineens. Peter zag engelen in de lucht in allerlei kleuren. Peter was omringd met kleurig roze vuur, alsof de twee schermen één waren geworden. Waar was hij ? Het was alsof hij hoog in de lucht was, of lag hij nog steeds te dromen op zijn bed ? Het kon hem eigenlijk niet meer zoveel schelen. Dit was fantastisch. Alles was zo groot. 'Peter, Peter,' riep iemand. 'Je bent door je dromen in de hemel gekomen, door de spiegel van vuur. Is het niet fantastisch ?' Een jongen kwam dichterbij. Het was Peter Hinn. Peter Hinn pakte Peter bij de hand. 'Hallo !' riep de jongen. Hij was zo blij hem te zien. Samen renden ze op een soort kleurige weide. Alles leek gewoon op de aarde, maar dan anders. Alles was zo anders hier, en zo groot.

Een grote vrouw kwam op hen af. Het was de moeder van Peter Hinn. Ze leek wel een beetje op een fee. 'Door de spiegel van vuur kom je vrij van al die pauzen en pinksterpauzen,' zei ze met een glimlach.

'Ik ben zo blij dat je haar eens kunt zien,' zei Peter Hinn. Peter glimlachte. Beneden in de velden liepen een heleboel Hinnianen. Ze leken wel een beetje op indianen. En ze hadden hier hun wigwams. 'Mijn moeder zegt dat we alleen nog een rode spiegel missen,' zei Peter Hinn. 'Waarom dat dan ?' vroeg Peter. Direkt begon er bij Peter een lichtje te branden. Hij had eens gedroomd over een spiegel op een heuvel in het bos. Misschien was dat wel de ontbrekende spiegel, en misschien kon deze spiegel er wel voor zorgen dat er een rode mix tevoorschijn zou komen, al wist Peter nog niet waar dat voor nodig was. Peter Hinn vertelde dat ze 's nachts nog vaak lastiggevallen werden door vreemde witte demonen, de witte wieven. Zij zorgden ervoor dat de spiegel nog zo roze bleef. Peter wist dat door rood en wit te mengen ontstond er roze. Als het witte teruggedreven zou worden, dan zou het allemaal roder worden. Het rood was dus al wel aanwezig. Peter vertelde over de spiegel op de heuvel in het bos. Peter Hinn wilde daar wel naartoe. Maar dat kon alleen in de dromenwereld, want in het echt bestond het niet.

Voor Peter Hinn was het een koud kunstje daar te komen, met aanwijzingen van Peter, en samen droegen ze de spiegel naar het veld van de Hinnianen. Alles begon al roder te worden, en plotseling waren er allemaal rode vlammen om hen heen. Een enorme ladder van vuur verscheen, rood vuur. Peter Hinn begon naar boven te klimmen, en ook Peter en de Hinnianen volgden hem. De tredes van de ladder waren in vier gedeeltes van zeven tredes verdeeld : de zeven jaren die Jakob werkte voor Lea, de zeven jaren die Jakob werkte voor Rachel, de zeven overvloedsjaren en de zeven hongerjaren. Helemaal bovenaan de ladder was er een kermiskraampje waar weer een bordje stond met daarop : trekken, uitdoven, boren, vullen. De clown achter de toonbank vloekte een beetje, en buiten regende en bliksemde het een beetje. Naarmate ze steeds dichter bij het clowntje kwamen begon het clowntje steeds meer te vloeken, en rende telkens naar buiten. Peter kwam erachter dat de tredes van de rode trap de tredes waren van een pauselijke ark, en ook als hij naar beneden keek leek de trap steeds meer op de rode lap van een stierenvechter. Toen ze boven waren was het clowntje helemaal in rep en roer, en vloekte en tierde dat het een lievelust was. Het clowntje werd helemaal doldwaas en riep : 'Even de prullemand legen.' Peter Hinn glimlachte een beetje. 'Deurtje openmaken,' riep het clowntje telkens. Onder de toonbank ging vanaf de buitenkant een deurtje open,

waardoor Peter en Peter Hinn naar binnen konden. Ook een paar Hinnianen gingen mee naar binnen. Ze kwamen in een zaaltje waar allemaal spiegels stonden, maar het waren lachspiegels. Alle spiegels waren rood, en in de verte was een trap met zeven ballen. De ballen glinsterden in allerlei kleuren, en langzaam en voorzichtig liepen ze op de ballen af. Een haasje sprong voor hen uit, nam zijn hoedje af, en zei : 'Welkom bij de laatste treden van de Jakobsladder. Dit zijn de zeven scheppingsdagen van God.' Maar Peter begon weg te rennen. 'Wat is dit voor dom gedoe ?' riep hij. 'Laat me toch gewoon naar de kerk gaan.' En hij verdwaalde in een doolhof van rode spiegels, totdat hij riep : 'Help mij ! Okay, laat me de laatste zeven tredes van de Jakobsladder zien.' De zeven scheppingsdagen, de kleurige bollen, begonnen tot leven te komen. Het waren slagers met kleurige messen. 'Het zijn zeven exorcisten, Peter,' zei het haasje. 'Zij moeten de kerk leren demonen te slachten, en geen dieren en elkaar.'

Peter werd met een glimlach wakker, maar de zeven bollen waren nu in zijn kamer. Ze gaven erg veel licht. Ze groeiden uit tot een Adam en een Eva. Beiden waren ze opgebouwd uit vijf keer zeven delen. Op zijn kastdeur hadden ze geschreven : trekken, uitdoven, boren, vullen, duwen, en het leek alsof er een windvlaag in Peters kamer kwam, en Peter zakte in een diepe rust. 'Heb je weleens gehoord van Merel Browne ?' vroeg Adam aan Peter. 'Ja,' zei Peter, 'daar heb ik over gelezen in de bibliotheek. Zij had speciale gaven. Zij kon mensen genezen, en zelfs mensen opwekken uit de dood. Maar bovenal kon zij mensen aan het lachen krijgen op een wonderbaarlijke manier.'

'Lachen ?' vroeg Adam.

'Ja, zoiets als de Heilige Lach,' zei Peter. Toen haalde Adam een boekje tevoorschijn en gaf het aan Peter. 'Bedoel je dit soms ?' zei Adam. Het was een boekje genaamd Heilige Lach Testament. Peter opende het boekje en zag zichzelf als in een spiegel. Snel gooide hij het boekje van zich af, terwijl een vreemd soort vuur over zijn nek naar boven klom. Toen begon Peter hysterisch te lachen. Hij kon niet meer stoppen. Toen liet Adam hem ook een ander boekje zien, genaamd Profetisch Testament. 'Waar zou je voor kiezen ?' vroeg Adam. Peter was direkt stil, en wees op het Profetisch Testament. 'Ik zou hiervoor kiezen, omdat ik wel meer diepgang in mijn leven wil hebben. 'Heb je weleens van Arend Wimber gehoord ?' vroeg Adam hem.

'Ja,' zei Peter, 'dat was ook een kerkleider van vroeger met een sterke en diepe profetische gave. Bij hem kwam het lachen ook wel voor, maar veel meer het profetische. Hij was legendarisch, omdat hij mensen kon laten vliegen als vogels.'

'Vliegen als vogels ?' vroeg Adam.

Peter knikte. Dat had hij ergens in de bibliotheek in een boek gelezen. 'Maar als hij dat kan, dan heb je de Jakobsladder niet meer nodig,' zei Adam. Peter knikte weer. 'Waar kan ik hem ontmoeten ?' vroeg Peter.

'Ach, die man is van eeuwen geleden,' zei Adam. 'Dan moet je in je dromenwereld zijn. Heel diep in je dromenwereld, daar waar ..... laat maar.'

'Nee, zeg,' zei Peter, 'je moet het me vertellen.'

'Okay,' zei Adam, 'daar waar melk in bloed verandert, daar moet je wezen.'

'Waarom dat nou ?' vroeg Peter, 'waarom moet melk nou weer in bloed veranderen ?'

'Omdat ..... je geen baby meer bent. Exorcisten leven niet meer van melk, maar van bloed,' zei Adam. 'Dat betekent dat je nu moet gaan vechten om geestelijk te kunnen leven, om in je dromenwereld in leven te blijven.'

'Vechten ?' vroeg Peter, 'maar tegen wie ?'

'Tegen demonen,' zei Adam. 'Je hebt toch de zeven scheppingsdagen beklommen ? Dat zijn zeven exorcisten, zeven slagersmessen.'

'Ja, maar ik ga geen slager worden,' zei Peter.

'Dan kun je je dromenwereld wel vergeten,' zei Adam. 'Het is hier slachten of geslacht worden.'

'Ik lijd liever met Christus,' zei Peter vroom.

'Ja, maar Christus was ook een exorcist, juist door het kruis. Je zult balans moeten vinden, Peter,' zei Adam. 'Dus, luister, ga daar naartoe waar melk in bloed verandert. Daar zul je ergens Arend Wimber vinden, die je kan leren vliegen.'

Zo gezegd, zo gedaan. Na een lange tocht en na veel aanwijzingen van Adam vindt Peter Arend Wimber op een duistere plaats. Het is hier allemaal erg groot. De velden zijn als wijngaarden en ravijnen, en Arend Wimber blijkt een reusachtig grote vogel te zijn met prachtige roodverige vleugels. Adam draagt Peter aan hem over en vertrekt. 'Klim maar op mijn rug,' zegt Arend Wimber. Beneden zijn er riviertjes van bloed. De lucht is bloedrood, en zelfs de wolken, in verschillende gloed. In de verte zien ze zeeen van bloed, en zelfs de zon is van bloed. 'Dit ken ik !' roept Peter. 'Dat staat ook ergens in de Bijbel.'

'Houd je nu maar goed vast,' zegt Arend Wimber, 'we gaan vertrekken.'

'Waar gaan we naartoe ?' vraagt Peter. Maar dan vraagt Arend Wimber : 'trekken, uitdoven, boren, vullen of duwen ?'

'Duwen !' roept Peter. En met één duw van zijn vleugels schiet Peter in de lucht en heeft de prachtigste roodverige vleugels. Nu vliegt Peter naast Arend Wimber. Arend Wimber glimlacht. 'Goedzo, jongen,' zegt hij. In de verte komen nog meer wezens met roodverige vleugels op hen af. Arend Wimber vertelde dat de Jakobsladder een groot kruis was, maar nu waren het eindelijk vleugels geworden. Ze zijn nu op weg naar een stad genaamd Branham. Deze stad wordt ook wel de stad van paradox genoemd. In deze stad woont een boer genaamd Bob Cain. 'Ken je die ?' vraagt Arend Wimber aan Peter. 'Ja natuurlijk ken ik die,' zegt Peter. 'Hij was een legendarisch kerkleider die mensen in dieren kon veranderen, hoofdzakelijk vissen.' Arend Wimber knikt. In de verte zien ze een schitterende glimmende driehoek waar betoverend mooi licht uit voortkomt. Beneden hen zijn nog steeds de zeeen van bloed. Als ze in de stad Branham zijn, dan moeten ze op zoek gaan naar Bob Cain. Als Peter dan bij hem kieuwen heeft gekregen, dan kunnen ze de zeeen in. 'Waar is dat nou weer goed voor ?' vraagt Peter.

'Peter, je moet gewassen worden door het bloed,' zegt Arend Wimber. 'Komt je dat ook niet bekend voor ?'

'Ja,' zegt Peter, 'maar ....'

Als ze in Branham zijn duurt het niet lang of ze hebben Bob Cain gevonden. Bob Cain legt bij Peter de handen op, en Peter begint al kieuwen te krijgen. Dan rennen ze met z'n allen de zee in. De zee is koud, maar verderop is het wat warmer. Peter moet veel van het bloed drinken, en voelt zich als een vampier. Maar van binnen weet hij dat dat niet zo is. Diep in de zeeen van bloed vinden ze een schip wat gezonken is : de Kuhlman. Als ze het schip binnenzwemmen zien ze daar allerlei ridderpantsers liggen, en langzaam begint het schip op te stijgen. Ook de ballen van de scheppingsdagen zijn aanwezig. Ook zien ze daar skeletten liggen die tot leven komen. Wat zou er toch aan de hand zijn ? De Kuhlman komt weer tot leven. Langzaamaan begint het schip tot de oppervlakte van de zee te komen. Het lijkt wel op een piratenschip, een spookschip. Zijn ze hier wel op de goede plaats ? Snel komen de ballen op Peter af. Ze vormen zijn wapenrusting, en al snel moet hij leren vechten. Tegen piraten, spoken, en ander gespuis. Maar Arend Wimber en Bob Cain met wat andere wezens zijn dichtbij hem. 'Dit schip is van ons, maatje,' roept Bob Cain. Hij heeft het aan de stok met een piratenkapitein. Maar na een tijdje keert de rust terug op het schip. Bob Cain neemt het roer in handen, en ze varen op volle kracht naar een eiland.

Op dit eiland zou ene Dick Conner wonen, een oude vriend van Bob Cain. Peter kon het zich wel herinneren. In een boek uit de bibliotheek las hij eens dat Dick Conner in dezelfde tijd als Bob Cain leefde, ergens in de middeleeuwen. Ze werkten samen en deden grote wonderen en krachten. Van Dick Conner zeiden ze dat er een engel op z'n schouders zat die hem alles influisterde. Hij kon je alles vertellen, van je naam, adres en woonplaats tot je geheime zonden. Toen ze op het eiland aankwamen zagen ze Dick Conner daar als een piraat zitten met een papegaai op zijn schouders. Dick Conner grijnsde breed. Hij was blij dat zijn vrienden gekomen waren. 'Zo, ik zie dat de Kuhlman weer op en top is,' zei Dick Conner. 'Wat hebben we vroeger daar een hoop lol op beleefd, hè ?' Dick Conner was een echte demonenslager. Hij had demonen in alle soorten en maten. Maar het vlees was erg duur. Bob Cain en Arend Wimber klaagden er veel over. Zij zeiden dat het vlees des heeren niet verkocht mocht worden. Iets goedkoper kon in ieder geval wel. Maar Dick Conner was niet over te halen. Hij leefde in rijkdom hier, en zo moest het blijven. Hij had een sprekend pistool genaamd Mijnheer McPherson, waarmee hij de demonen bont en blauw schoot. Ook had hij twee sprekende kippen genaamd Dick Finney en Antoine Wesley, die altijd op de demonen afvlogen om ze mores te leren en te arresteren. Ja, Dick Conner had een vreemde boerderij waar dingen gebeurden die het daglicht niet konden verdragen. In de nacht gingen de twee sprekende kippen altijd op jacht. Sommigen zeiden dat ze dan in grote vogels veranderden als arenden. Peter keek zijn ogen uit op de boerderij. Er woonden hier ook cowboys die de meest vreemde kunstjes konden. Ze konden hun hoofden van hun lichamen afnemen, hun tongen uitspuwen, en hun armen laten afvallen. Meestal woonden ze gewoon in stallen. Dick Conner was een trotse man, en rookte erg veel. Hij genoot met volle teugen van zijn rijkdom en vrijheid. Maar al snel hadden Bob Cain en Arend Wimber genoeg van zijn arrogantie en fratsen. Op een nacht besloten ze de geluksmunt van Dick Conner te stelen, een munt die verantwoordelijk zou zijn voor al zijn rijkdommen, en al z'n praatjes. Maar hoe ze ook zochten, ze konden het muntje niet vinden. Dick Conner had het vast goed opgeborgen. Midden in de nacht liepen Bob Cain en Arend Wimber naar hun schip de Kuhlman. Diep in het schip was er een klein boekenkamertje waar ze op zoek gingen naar informatie over de geluksmunt. En ja hoor, snel hadden ze een goed boek erover te pakken. Het heette : De

Geluksmunt van Dick Conner. Dit moesten ze hebben. Op de kaft stond ook een afbeelding van de munt. Op de munt stond het hoofd van een legendarische profeet genaamd Ed Wigglesworth. De profeet was zo legendarisch dat hij de keizer werd van een keizerrijk, en daarna de hele wereld veroverde. Hij woonde in een spookkasteel waar hij vaak achter de piano zat. Dan rolde zijn hoofd over zijn rug heen, over zijn armen en over zijn schouders. Hij kon vuurspuwen, en als hij wilde kon hij je door één oogopslag of beweging verstenen. Een gevaarlijk mannetje dus. Onder zijn kasteel hield hij de meest grote en gevaarlijke demonen gevangen, en liet hij ze daar als bomen groeien voor vlees. Dit vlees verkocht hij dan tegen belachelijk hoge prijzen aan de allerrijksten. Het zou ongeneeslijke ziektes in een wip kunnen genezen, en het zou zelfs doden kunnen opwekken.

Bob Cain en Arend Wimber besloten hem te gaan zoeken. In het boek stond beschreven hoe ze er moesten komen. Hij woonde op een spookeiland dieper op de zeeen van bloed. De Kuhlman werd al snel opgeschrikt door de grootst mogelijke en verschrikkelijkste vissen. Uitgeput bereikten Bob Cain en Arend Wimber het spookeiland, waarop een spookslot stond. Al snel stonden ze binnen, en gingen op het zachte geluid af. Iemand was aan het pingelen, maar al snel kwamen ze erachter dat het niet Ed Wigglesworth was, maar iemand anders. Iemand met een loszittend hoofd liep op hen af. Het hoofd draaide een beetje scheef heen en weer. 'Aangenaam,' zei de man, terwijl hij zijn hand op een vreemde manier naar hen uitstak. 'Is je vader er ook ?' vroeg Bob Cain.

De man ging weer achter de piano zitten en pingelde verder. 'Die is er nu niet. Wat moeten jullie van hem ?'

'Wij komen voor een gouden geluksmunt,' zei Bob Cain.

'Alleen degene die hem in een zwaardgevecht verslaat krijgt zo'n munt,' zei de man. 'Verlies je, dan kost je dat je kop en kom je onderin het kasteel te hangen.' Even is het stil, maar dan stemmen Bob Cain en Arend Wimber ermee in. De man leidt hen door een lange gang, en dan kunnen ze naar boven. In een afgelegen zaal zit Ed Wigglesworth achter zijn piano, met zijn rug naar hen toe. Dan staat hij op en draait zich om, terwijl hij een mes van de muur grijpt en net langs hen heengooit. Ed begint te brullen, grijpt zijn zwaard, wordt weer rustig, en gaat weer achter de piano zitten. Zijn hoofd rolt van zijn ene schouder over zijn andere, en dan over zijn rug en langs zijn armen. Dan begint hij duisterder te spelen, en de kamer begint heter te worden. Als in een bliksem schiet hij weer omhoog om een mes van de muur te pakken, en weer gooit hij het net langs hen heen. Vanuit het niets vliegt er een speer dwars door Arend Wimber heen, en hij valt op de grond. Dan wordt Bob Cain erg woest, pakt een stoel en slaat daarmee Ed Wigglesworth bij zijn piano weg. Ed Wigglesworth begint te grommen als een woest beest. Dan pakt hij een brandende kandelaar, en drukt het in het gezicht van Bob Cain. Bob Cain gilt, grijpt het tapijt waarop Ed Wigglesworth staat en rukt het onder hem vandaan, terwijl zijn gezicht in de fik staat. Inmiddels beginnen meer dingen te branden. Dan staat Ed Wigglesworth langzaam op, grijpt Arend Wimber, en rent met hem naar het raam, waar hij hem doorheen gooit. Dan grijpt hij Bob Cain, en smijt hem een paar keer tegen het plafond, en daarna tegen de hanglamp. Dit keer smijt hij zo hard dat ook Bob Cain door het raam vliegt. Ed Wigglesworth brult, terwijl het kasteel brandt.

Dan schrikt Peter wakker. Maar Peter voelt zich erg onbehaaglijk, alsof hij nog steeds droomt. Naast hem zweeft Arend Wimber als een brandende vogel. 'Vlug,' zegt Arend Wimber fluisterend. 'Zal ik je het geheim vertellen van Ed Wigglesworth ? Hij heeft een derde tepel, op zijn buik. Daarom heeft hij zo'n grote macht.' Peter hoort voetstappen op de trap op de

gang, hele langzame voetstappen, maar heel hard. Iemand is op weg naar zijn kamer. Peter verstijft van de schrik. Dan opent de deur zich heel langzaam. Waar is Arend Wimber nu ? Het is Ed Wigglesworth.

'Waarom zo angstig ?' vraagt Ed Wigglesworth. 'Ik ben speciaal voor jou gekomen. Ik ben jouw nachtwacht.'

'Wat heb je met Arend Wimber en Bob Cain gedaan ?' vraagt Peter. Overal wordt er ineens geklopt. 'Ik moet nu gaan, Peter,' zegt Ed Wigglesworth.

'Heb je echt een derde tepel op je buik ?' vraagt Peter. Ed Wigglesworth doet zijn trui omhoog. Hij heeft hele zwarte werkershanden. Daar ziet Peter de tepel, en is overtuigd. Dan vertrekt Ed Wigglesworth. 'Oh ja, voor ik het vergeet,' zegt Ed Wigglesworth nog even, 'hier heb je een zwaard, een echt zwaard.' Het zwaard verschijnt in vuur en vlam met veel licht voor Peter in zijn bed. Het zwaard is bedekt met bollen van boven naar beneden. Bollen van licht, in allerlei kleuren. Peter grijpt het zwaard en zijn handen beginnen te branden. Even later is Arend Wimber terug. Op de achterkant van het zwaard is een munt ingebeiteld met het hoofd van Ed Wigglesworth.

'Hij moet wel erg veel van je houden dat hij je dit zwaard heeft gegeven,' zei Arend Wimber. Peter knikt. 'Ga je mee ?' vraagt Arend Wimber. 'Klim op mijn rug.' Peter grijpt de vuurvogel vast, en de vuurvogel begint over hem heen te vloeien totdat Peter vleugels heeft, vol van rode vlammen. Het zwaard heeft zich vastgehecht aan Peters rug. Peter merkt dat hij nu zelfs vuur kan spuwen. Waar gaan ze naartoe ? Beneden ziet Peter het schip de Kuhlman en de zeeen van bloed, en ook het eilandje van Dick Conner, en in de verte het spookeiland en aan de andere kant het stadje Branham.

Na een tijdje vond Peter het allemaal wel weer heel bizar worden, en vroeg aan de vuurvogel waarom hij niet gewoon in de kerk mocht zitten. 'Daarvoor zullen we naar de rechtsgeleerde Meester E.W. Dowie moeten gaan,' zei de vuurvogel. 'Die handelt in dat soort zaken.'

Ze vlogen naar een zwart kasteel ergens op een afgelegen eiland, en achter het kasteel was een winkelstraat, de W.G. Lake Straat, waar alle onzin vandaan bleek te stromen. De vuurvogel greep Peter vast en trok hem mee in een kantoortje. Dit was het kantoor van de beroemde en beruchte Meester E.W. Dowie. Eduard Dowie zat nog in zijn pyama. Zijn vrouw had hem net een bakje koffie ingeschonken. 'Nog niet drinken, hè, Eduard,' zei zijn vrouw, 'het is nog heet.'

'Ach wijf, loop niet zo te zaniken,' zei Eduard. 'Niemand heeft er iets aan.' Toen nam hij een slok, brandde zich en vloekte en tierde dat het een lievelust was. Binnen in een andere ruimte hoorden ze wat vrouwen giechelen. De vuurvogel legde het verhaal uit, maar Eduard Dowie wilde er niets van weten. 'Daar heb ik vandaag geen tijd voor, voor die onzin. Kom morgen maar terug.' Maar na lang aandringen wilde hij de jongen wel even te woord staan. Ook Peter vertelde bijna stotterend zijn verhaal.

'Dus, jij wil weer terug naar de kerk ?' vroeg Eduard Dowie. 'Om weer naar dat gezanik van die dominees te luisteren ? Luister goed naar me, jongen. Ik kan je wel helpen, maar als je hier eenmaal weg bent, dan kun je hier nooit meer terugkomen. Besef je dat goed ?' Peter knikte voorzichtig.

'Waar heb je de munt van Ed Wigglesworth ?' vroeg Eduard. De vuurvogel wees naar de rug van Peter waar het zwaard zat. Op de achterkant zat de munt ingebeiteld. 'Voor de munt wil ik het doen,' zei Eduard. Hij probeerde de munt van het zwaard te krijgen, maar het lukte niet, omdat het ingebeiteld was. Eduard wees naar de deur waar het gegiechel vandaan kwam. 'Daar staat ergens een spiegel. Als je daar doorheen stapt is het hele verhaal hier afgelopen.'

Zonder om te kijken liep Peter naar de andere ruimte. Er zaten een paar vrouwen op stoelen naast een tafel. 'Waar staat de spiegel ?' vroeg Peter. Maar niemand zei wat. Toen begon Peter zelf te zoeken en vond uiteindelijk de spiegel aan de onderkant van de tafel. Hij kroop onder de tafel, stond op, sprong, en verdween door de spiegel.

Peter werd wakker in de kerk. De dominee sprak over een man genaamd Coe Allen. Peter kende hem wel want het was een profeet en evangelist die mensen dronken kon krijgen zonder drank. Zelf bleek de beste man wel veel te drinken, en kwam achter de tralies terecht voor het doodrijden van een andere evangelist genaamd Nicolas Branham. Maar zonder al teveel problemen kwam Coe Allen uit de gevangenis, omdat zijn broer Pirke Allen de verongelukte evangelist uit de doden opwekte. Na een tijdje zag Peter de dominee een beetje waggelen. Overal in de zaal begonnen schilderij-lijstjes te breken, en de gezichten erop begonnen te bewegen, en ogen te knipperen. Tijd voor een nieuwe afspraak met Meester Eduard Dowie, maar die was nu natuurlijk nooit meer te vinden.

Als een zuipschuit stond Peter op en liep de kerkzaal uit. Hij moest bij het huis van zijn vriendin zien te komen. Hij voelde zich als een varken zo beroerd. Maar toen hij bij het huis van zijn vriendin aankwam was het huis leeg en stond er een bordje 'verkocht' voor de ruiten. Strompelend ging Peter richting het kermisterrein dicht in de buurt. Daar was ergens een klein kraampje met een clowntje. 'Trekken, uitdoven, boren, vullen of duwen ?' vroeg het clowntje. 'Doortrekken,' zei Peter bijna grommend en kokhalzend. Het clowntje trok aan een touwtje, en ze hoorden een wc doorspoelen. 'Zo goed ?' vroeg het clowntje. Aan het touwtje kwam een beeldje naar boven. Het was een kabouterbeeldje en er was een naam ingebeiteld : John Paul Hagin. Onder het kraampje begon een motor te starten. Een fiets kwam eronder tevoorschijn waarop het kraampje rustte. Snel sprong het clowntje op het fietsje en reed weg. Peter was zo dronken dat hij niet wist wat hij met het beeldje moest doen. Plotseling kreeg hij een idee. Hij waggelde met het beeldje naar de tuin van zijn vriendin, en zette daar de kabouter neer. John Paul Hagin kende hij wel. Dat was eerst een voetballer, en daarna een profeet, maar hoe hij zijn naam daar op een kermisbeeldje terecht was gekomen wist Peter niet. Ach, er heetten misschien wel meer mensen John Paul Hagin.

Einde

Het Vogelbalkonnetje

Er was eens een koning die een dochtertje had. Omdat hij niet wilde dat ze een verwend prinsesje zou worden liet hij haar opgroeien in een donkere diepe keuken om mee te helpen de grote beesten onder de grond te voeren. Maar het meisje verveelde zich vaak, en had het vaak koud. Op een dag klom het meisje door een buis boven het fornuis naar boven, en kwam boven op het kasteel terecht. Ze sloop door een torenraampje naar binnen, en zag daar een oude vrouw zitten achter een spinnenwiel en een weefraam. De oude vrouw zei dat ze weleens wat anders wilde, en het meisje vertelde haar over het keukentje. Ook het meisje wilde weleens wat anders en ze besloten van plaats te ruilen. Het oude vrouwtje klom door de lange buis naar het keukentje toe. Na een aantal dagen kwam het oude vrouwtje terug en vertelde het meisje dat ze het zo naar haar zin had in het keukentje en dat ze het meisje er zo dankbaar voor was dat ze het meisje een sieraad gaf. ‘Als je erover wrijft, dan verander je in een vogel,’ zei het oude vrouwtje. Het oude vrouwtje ging weer terug naar het keukentje, en het meisje wreef over het sieraad om in een vogel te veranderen. Het meisje wilde altijd al vliegen, en ze vloog over de zee en terug. Na een tijdje vloog ze door de lange buis om het oude vrouwtje te bezoeken.

Het meisje had eigenlijk nog nooit de grote beesten gezien. Ze moest vroeger alleen koken en het voedsel door een raampje schuiven. Maar nu was ze klein genoeg om zelf door het raampje heen te gaan. Hier kwam ze op een klein balkonnetje waar een heleboel andere vogels waren, groten en kleinen. In de verte waren de grote beesten, waar de vogels altijd het voedsel naartoe brachten. Dan moesten ze eerst over een heel diep en groot ravijn vliegen, want de beesten waren op een soort eiland. Nu kon het meisje zelf eens wat voedsel naar de beesten brengen. Ze kreeg een mandje mee, dat ze in haar snavel kon houden. In het mandje waren wat appels, wat druiven, en wat pastei. Om alles te bedekken werd er een doek overheen geschoven. Het meisje keek haar ogen uit. Na een tijdje ging ze weer terug. In het torenkamertje lag nog steeds het sieraad. Even wreef ze er met haar vleugel overheen, en veranderde weer in een gewoon meisje.

Op een dag wilde de koning haar zien, en het meisje nam haar sieraad mee. Het meisje vertelde alles wat ze had meegemaakt aan haar vader, en over haar liefde

voor de grote beesten. De koning pinkte een traantje weg, en sprak : ‘Die grote beesten zijn jouw eigen broers. Een boze heks heeft hen eens betoverd.’ En toen vertelde het meisje over het sieraad waarmee ze in een vogel kon veranderen. Zo zouden de grote beesten ook in vogels veranderen als het sieraad over hen heengewreven zou worden. De koning vond het een goed idee, en het meisje wreef even over het sieraad heen, veranderde in een vogel en nam het sieraad mee naar het vogelbalkonnetje. Met het sieraad vloog ze heel dicht naar de grote beesten toe, en wreef met het sieraad over hun huiden heen. Direkt veranderden ze in vogels, en in een grote zwerm vlogen ze terug over het grote ravijn heen. De koning was erg blij toen hij de vogels zag, maar het waren nog steeds geen prinsen. ‘Oh, maar dat is heel eenvoudig, vader,’ zei het meisje dat inmiddels weer een meisje was geworden. Ik wrijf gewoon nu de vogels met het sieraad. Kort daarna stonden er een heleboel prinsen voor de koning. De koning omhelsde ze één voor één, en ook het meisje viel haar broers één voor één in de armen.

Cain Jackson de Killerprofeet

theologische horror/humor

Cain Jackson is een killerprofeet. Zijn woorden zijn moordend, er is niemand veilig wanneer hij spreekt. Zijn microfoon is een mes, een moordtelefoon. Wanneer de telefoon gaat ben je erbij, en is het te laat. Cain Jackson is een killerprofeet, en zijn microfoon is een pistool. Hij moordt aan de vleet. Cain Jackson is een killerprofeet. Hij heeft je te pakken, voordat je het weet. En zijn mes heet Benny Hik, als een hap en een slik. Hij heeft een oog dat altijd waakt, om toe te springen wanneer iemand slaapt, 't is een vreemde droomtelefoon, dat wel, maar het is allemaal maar een spel. Cain Jackson is een killerprofeet, en zijn hoed heet Katherine Koekman, een duvel in een doosje. Wanneer hij spreekt, dan springt zij, slaat haar netten uit, als een cirkelzaag is zij, het duurt voor haar altijd te lang. Kapitein Bob Hagin is zijn buurman, getrouwd met Larry Conner, ik vind er niks aan. Ze hebben altijd wat te zeuren, gaan altijd hun eigen gang. En Evan Branham is een geflipte kapitein die altijd langskwam, zingende zijn eigen refrein. Gelukkig hij komt niet meer, met de noorderzon vertrokken, met zijn mes, Lenny Hit. Daarmee is hij getrouwd, kun je het je voorstellen ? Als hij plast dan krijgt hij het benauwd. En dan hebben we nog Morris Hinn, de melkman van het verhaal, verpakkende moedermelk in borsten, niemand heeft ooit zin, hij zwerft overal over de straten, is straatarm, maar blijft altijd kalm. Want hij heeft een muntje dat altijd terugkomt, een twee-koppig muntje, met William Wesley en Benny Finney, een vreemde combinatie, maar het houdt altijd stand. Het zijn twee schurken, twee piraten, die altijd nog lang napraten. Ik heb ze eens gezien op een strand, als slangen in een mand.

Cain Jackson is een killerprofeet. Met zijn mes, Benny Hik, steekt hij alles in de fik, want hij heeft een oog dat altijd waakt, en hij gooit alles weg wanneer het niet smaakt. Cain Jackson is een killerprofeet, en William Cerullo was eens zijn blinde date. Nu zijn ze dan getrouwd, en hun kinderen zijn altijd stout. De één heet Jack McPherson en de andere John G. Kenyon, twee cowboys als lontbommen in een doosje. Ja, ik denk nog steeds heel erg vaak aan Cain Jackson de killerprofeet. Vroeger was het een boef, maar nu zingt hij in de kerk met zijn voormalige blinde date. Ze zijn nog steeds blind, dat wel, maar ach, het is allemaal een spel, het is een gok-automaat in Las Vegas, nu, dan weet je het wel. Ze vreten geld, hebben altijd honger. Bobby Arnott is het dreigende pistool. Veel zul je betalen, veel zul je drinken, en het maakt je zo loom. Ik heb mijn kinderen altijd gewaarschuwd voor dit spel, maar ze houden teveel van zulke draken, dus dan weet je het wel. Aan het einde van de dag moet ik ze altijd uit de modder vissen. Helemaal platzak, moe en overleden, moeten ze de rest van hun leven bedelen. Heus, ga niet met zulke lui in zee. Cain Jackson is een killerprofeet, levende bij Jack Wimber in de wc. Heus ik zeg je, ga niet met Cain Jackson in zee, want Jack Wimber is de dominee, een cowboy-dominee, een pyromaan duikende van wc naar wc.

Het Goverts Pistool

Het is druk op het piratenschip. Kapitein Bob Schuuring is hier de baas. Er werken nog meer lieden van de familie Schuuring hier, zoals Klaas Schuuring, John Paul Schuuring, Wim Schuuring, en Jeffrey Schuuring. Het schip is op weg naar Boston. Op weg komen ze een schip tegen, genaamd De Gemene Cain. Ook dit schip zit vol met piraten, grote gevaartes, dus dat wordt vechten geblazen. Govert Cain is daar de baas, een gemene piratenkapitein. Hij heeft een heleboel vogels die vaak op zijn nek zitten, en hem allerlei geheime dingetjes influisteren. Vogels zoals arenden, papegaaien, havikken en valken. Govert Cain heeft wel honderden vogels en zelfs een paar vleermuizen. Dat zijn niet echt lievertjes, want die helpen altijd mee in de aanval, en dan zuigen ze bloed. Ook gaan ze weleens in de nacht op jacht, of gewoon overdag. Eens vlogen ze naar het schip van Bert Jones, een oude zeeman, en stalen van hem een heleboel oude spullen weg. Bert Jones was erg gehecht aan die spullen, omdat het erfenissen waren. Nu ze weg zijn is Bert Jones niet meer dezelfde.

Op een dag kwamen de vogels van Boston tot de schepen. Ze zongen liederen, en maakten de harten van de piraten blij. Sindsdien voeren ze geen oorlogen meer. In Boston aangekomen kregen ze allemaal een huisje, om de verschrikkingen van de zee te vergeten. Maar niet iedereen in Boston was blij met hen. En daarom verlangen sommigen van hen nog weleens terug naar het leven op zee. Op een dag werd het allemaal te bont, en de vogels van Boston besloten de piraten en zeelieden mee te nemen naar het gebergte van Schuuring. Hier woonde een oude man genaamd Paul Schuuring. Hij fokte wolven, honden, maar ook wilde katten. De oude man deed nogal vervelend en kwam in gevecht met de piratenkapitein Govert Cain. Ook kapitein Bob Schuuring begon zich ermee te bemoeien. Maar de rest trok verder in het gebergte van Schuuring. En ze kwamen tot prachtige velden en verborgen plaatsen. Hier woonde een man genaamd Govert Strijker, die hen wonderbaarlijke dingen vertelde. Govert Strijker vocht eens met een reus, overwon de reus en hakte zijn kop eraf. Nu woont Govert Strijker nog steeds in de reuzenschedel. Het is als een wonderbaarlijke grot, waar wonderbaarlijke dingen gebeuren. Er stroomt hier magisch sap, en toversap, maar ook andere mysterieuze sappen. Govert Strijker heeft het sap zoveel mogelijk verzameld in flessen, dieper in de reuzenschedel, maar vanuit de reuzenschedel stromen nog steeds kleine watervalletjes met sap. Beneden in valleien stromen wat riviertjes met dat wondersap. Zodra mensen van dat sap drinken beginnen ze te veranderen. Ze zeggen dat de schedel gemaakt is van pythonbot en van pythontanden, en dat zou zielenbloed bevatten en geestesbloed. Het zou alles kunnen veranderen in bloed, en alles laten bloeden. Maar wat was dat sap dan ? Ze zeiden dat dat het bloed van de reus was, vreemd bloed in zoveel kleuren.

Nu zou er in het gebergte, in de buurt, nog een andere Govert wonen, genaamd Govert Kanis. Hij zou ook een reus hebben verslagen en in diens schedel wonen. Hij zou waken over het zwarte bloed, het bloed van botten en kabouters. Het zou de macht bezitten al het gebeente te verpulveren. Hij zou daar samenleven met een zwarte cobra, in een grote wigwam in die schedel. Samen zouden ze de reus hebben verslagen, die heerste over alle kabouters en alle beenderen, en het zwarte bloed.

Samen zouden ze de onderdelen vormen van een reuzenpistool, zowel Govert Strijker als Govert Kanis.

De Chocolade Prins

Er was eens een chocolade koning die een zoon had. De prins was bestemd voor de troon, maar op een dag vluchtte de prins uit het paleis. De chocolade koning liet een heleboel lakeien op zoek gaan naar de prins. Na vele jaren vonden ze hem in het bos, waar hij samen met een arm meisje woonde.

De lakeien namen de prins mee terug naar het paleis. De chocolade koning was woedend, en liet hem opsluiten in een kerker. ‘Je moest je schamen,’ zei de chocolade koning, ‘jij moet later de troon op.’

Het arme meisje was erg verdrietig en smeekte de chocolade koning om hem vrij te laten, maar de chocolade koning was onverbiddelijk. Iemand moest de troonopvolger zijn, en dat was zijn zoon, de prins.

Na vele jaren werd de prins uit de kerker gehaald, omdat hij de nieuwe chocolade koning zou worden. Tegelijk was er een grote bruiloft, maar de prins mocht niet met het arme meisje trouwen, maar met iemand die zijn vader voor hem had bestemd. Iedereen op de bruiloft was heel blij, behalve het arme meisje. Zij huilde de hele dag, en iedereen vroeg haar waarom, maar het meisje gaf geen antwoord.

Ook de prins was erg verdrietig toen hij het arme meisje zo zag huilen. De prins sprong op zijn paard, greep het huilende arme meisje en reed met haar weg. ‘Liefste,’ zei de prins. ‘Nu moeten we zo ver weg gaan dat niemand ons meer kan vinden.’ Ze besloten de zee over te gaan in een bootje. Na een hele lange tijd varen kwamen ze op een eiland waar hele enge wachters woonden. Ze waren hongerig, want ze hadden al tijden niets gegeten.

‘Ik weet een plaats waar jullie volop kunnen eten,’ zei de prins. En de prins wees op de plaats waar hij vandaan kwam. ‘Daar is een rijk van chocolade. Eet smakelijk.’

Dat lieten de hele enge wachters zich natuurlijk geen twee keer zeggen. En zo hadden de prins en het arme meisje het eiland helemaal voor hen alleen.

Da Deliria Branhamia

theologische horror/humor

In het slot Da Deliria Branhamia woont ridder Randolph Wigglesworth. Hij heeft een gouden zwaard, en sloft daar altijd mee door de gangen. Kicket Wimberia is een vriend van hem met een grote witte baard, die vaak bij hem komt voor een spelletje kaart. Op een dag kregen ze ruzie, en baron Kicket Wimberia trok z'n zwaard en sloeg het oor van zijn vriend af. Toen pakte Randolph Wigglesworth zijn vriend van de grond, en smeet hem in het open haard. Sinds die dag hoort hij allemaal stemmen in zijn hoofd. En zegt hij dat het in zijn kasteel spookt. En sinds die dag gedraagt hij zich een beetje vreemd. Zijn zwaard noemt hij nu Ben

Hiddles, en hij noemt zichzelf profeet. Want die stemmen vertellen hem alles. Nu durft niemand meer tot dat kasteel te komen, want het spookt daar, zeggen ze, maar het grootste spook is de profeet zelf, een moordenaar, voorspellende onheil.

In het slot Da Deliria Branhamia daar drinken ze veel bier. De geesten komen binnen via een kier. Het waait er altijd, en het is er reuzekoud. Aan de muur hangt een vreemde steen genaamd Kadasha Katherina Kuhlmania, zij is een hoer, en als zij spreekt dan wordt het koud, zo koud. Ridder Randolph Wigglesworth vond haar eens in het gebergte, en nam haar mee om hem de toekomst te voorspellen. Ze zei : Op een dag zul je je beste vriend vermoorden, je zult hem gooien in het vuur, want hij sloeg je om de oren. Om een spelletje kaart zal het gaan. Nou, laat hem dan maar komen, riep ridder Randolph Wigglesworth, ik lust hem rauw, wat denkt hij wel. Hij dient af te blijven van mijn oren.

Had hij de steen maar weggegooid, dan waren al die dingen nu niet gebeurt, maar de warmte van een hoer zocht hij, in ruil voor dit schilderij. Het hangt nog steeds aan mijn muur, en ik word altijd weer droef als ik er naar tuur. Nee, nooit zal ik teruggaan naar Da Deliria Branhamia, dit schilderij is mij genoeg. Maar van het zwaard Ben Hiddles heb ik nog steeds groot plezier. Wanneer ik ermee op de tafel sla, dan stroomt er bier.

Escaping the Mind

Ik zag mezelf in een hal vol met slijmerige vissen als inktvissen, octopusen, allemaal heel tropisch. Sommigen van hen gaven licht. Het was een enorme wisselwerking van energieen. Zo zag ongeveer het verstand eruit, en ik dacht : Moet ik daar in geloven ? Ik werd er bang van, want die vissen waren in oorlog met elkaar, en deden vreemde spelletjes. Ik wilde er zo snel mogelijk weg. Ik stond gelukkig hoog op het balkon, en iemand zei : 'Spring erin,' maar ik dacht daar heel anders over. Ik wilde hier echt zo snel mogelijk weg, en wel nu. Ik rende naar de deur achter me, en gelukkig, ik was uit die verschrikkelijke hal die ze het verstand noemden. Maar waar was ik nu terecht gekomen ? Ik rende door een gang, en een enorm blubberig monster met werpmessen kwam langzaam op me af. Het leek wel alsof alles in me in vertraging ging. Hij schoot blubber op me af als vuurvlammen, en ik kon ze maar net ontwijken. Dit was het begin van een spel. Een droom ? Of werkelijkheid ? Of allebei ? Dat mag u voor uzelf bepalen.

Ik stond dus voor dat enorme blubberbeest, en ik dacht : Als ik nu eens zijn geweer in mijn vingers krijg, dan kom ik hier wel veilig vandaan. En zo gebeurde het. Ik dook op het monster en had een enorme worsteling met hem. 'Nou, je bent best wel sterk,' zei het monster. En even

later gaf hij mij zijn laser-geweer. Er kwam blubber uit, niet te geloven, als lichtende slijm, en snel als kogels. Uiteindelijk liet hij me los, en liet me erdoor.

Ik kwam na die gang weer in een andere hal terecht, maar hier was geen slijmerige toestand met enge vissen. Er was hier een basin met een orca. De orca was direct blij toen hij me zag en zei met een trage stem, bijna slaperig : Spring achter op mijn rug, dan gaan we een ritje maken. Ik sprong van het balkon in het water, zwom naar hem toe en stapte erop. Al snel waren we uit het akelige paleis verdwenen, en kwamen op volle zee. Wat kon die orka springen zeg. Ik sprong met hem mee, en ik bemerkte dat ik met riemen aan hem vastzat.

En mijn vraag was nu : Was ik vrij van het verstand ? Het verstand wat mij mijn hele leven gemarteld heeft. De lucht rondom ons begon donkerder te worden. Ik keek onder ons en zag dat hier weer diezelfde vissen waren, die verschrikkelijke aan elkaar klevende octopusen en inktvisachtige wezens, maar het leek alsof ze sliepen. Die dingen aanraken zou zijn als een schok krijgen, dus dat deed ik maar niet. Het waren allemaal een soort sidderalen, en die kon je gewoon maar beter niet aanraken. Haalt u eens diep adem. Want ook uw verstand is als een hoop sidderalen bij elkaar. Ik kwam op een nieuw platform terecht, bij een nieuw paleis, en de boodschap was : 'Laat je gedachten eens los. Een mens leeft niet van gedachten alleen.' Ik kreeg direkt hoofdpijn, en liep naar binnen in het paleis. De mensen daar, zeg maar lakeien, wezen allemaal op mijn laser-geweer. 'Hoe kom je daar aan ?' vroeg er één. 'Oh, ergens gevonden,' zei ik snel. 'Zeg, ik ben op zoek naar de uitgang van het verstand,' zei ik. 'Kan iemand me daarmee helpen ? Ik ben bezig met een grootscheepse ontsnapping.'

'Oh,' zei iemand anders, 'kom dan maar mee.' Normaal gesproken ben ik nooit zo open als het op vertrouwen aankomt, maar ik moest het gewoon zeggen. Of deze lieden mij daadwerkelijk konden helpen wist ik niet.

'Kapitein, hier is iemand die uit het verstand wil ontsnappen.' Een oude man zat tegenover mij. Er gingen allemaal belletjes rinken, en andere soorten alarmpjes. 'Maar jongen,' zei de oude man. 'Dat is niet zo simpel.'

'Daarvoor zul je allemaal draken en beesten moeten verslaan, en misschien wel ridders.'

'Wat dan ook,' zei ik, 'ik wil dat wel doen.'

Toen gaf de kapitein me nog wat wapens, drukte me door een deur, en het spel begon. Ik moest over bloedhete kikkers springen op een soort gang langs een watergeul. Bevond ik me in een boot ? Affijn, ik moest inderdaad een heleboel gespuis aanpakken, maar de kapitein had me genoeg wapens daarvoor gegeven. Helemaal uitgeput kwam ik uiteindelijk na een lange dag aan het einde van het spel, en ging door een deur naarbinnen. Hier zat de kapitein weer. 'Keurig jongen,' zei hij. 'Zo zouden wij het niet kunnen.'

'Maar waarom niet ?' vroeg ik.

'Wij zijn oud,' zei hij. Nou ja, dat kon ik wel begrijpen dat dit voor oude mensen te moeilijk was. Ze liepen allemaal achter mij aan, en hielpen elkaar over die bloedhete kikkers heen. Die kikkers bewogen toch niet.

Maar na een tijdje verloor die kapitein zijn geduld met mij. Ik praatte teveel. Hij gaf mij een heleboel doosjes waarin spelletjes zaten en riep : 'en nu oprotten.' Tja, dat kun je van een oude

kapitein verwachten. Die had gewoon teveel meegemaakt, en volgens mij liep hij met oorlogstrauma's in zijn hoofd.

In mijn ogen was hij ook een gevangene van het verstand, dus bij mij lag een grote opdracht. Alleen de vraag was : 'Waar naartoe ?'

Die mensen waren heel aardig, want ze brachten mij direct naar een kamer voor mij alleen, op het schip. Ik legde de doosjes met spelletjes op tafel, maar ik had ineens nergens zin meer in. Ik had het misschien gehad voor vandaag. Wel vond ik het fijn om nog even met die oude mensen te praten. Ze droegen een soort onbeschrijfelijke warmte met zich mee.

Later op mijn kamer lag bij de vensterbank een soort grote kukeluus, gewoon als een stuk speelgoed ofzo. Het was wel heel bijzonder, want toen ik er naartoe liep begon het ding te glimmen. Ik drukte erop, want dat kon, het was een soort klep, en die ging naar beneden, en er begon zachte muziek te spelen. Ik werd lichtelijk emotioneel omdat ik zoiets nog nooit had meegemaakt. 'Jongen, kun je het aan, om met ons te leven,' zei het ding zacht, bijna fluisterend.

Ik ging op mijn bed zitten. Moest ik dit ding als een stuk speelgoed behandelen of als kameraadje ? Ik koos voor het laatste, en zei iets terug. Wat weet ik niet meer, maar mijn hoofd begon weer pijn te doen.

'Zie, ja hè,' zei de kukeluus, 'dat communiceren, al dat gecommuniceer, daar word je toch moe van. Ik bedoel : het kan anders. Je kunt anders leven.'

'Maar hoe dan ?' vroeg ik. Ik werd alsmaar moeier en moeier.

De volgende ochtend werd ik wakker, en ik had nergens zin in. Ik wilde hier weg, maar wist dat het verstand op de loer lag. Ik was nu al zo ver gekomen. Dus ik besloot nog even verder te dromen. Het was alsof de kapitein binnenkwam, en zoveel andere mensen, maar het was een droomtoestand. Ik sliep half. Dat was wel fijn. Ik hoefde me zo nergens mee te bemoeien. Dat bemoeizuchtige, daar had ik zo'n hekel aan. Waarom moest dat eigenlijk ? Wat schoten we er uiteindelijk mee op.

Ik droomde dat ik weer terug was in die hal met vreemde vissen. Was het een cyclus ? Ik wilde niet meer terug, maar hier was ik, alhoewel ik het maar droomde. Droom ik nog ? Ik weet het niet. Is het werkelijkheid of bedrog ? Is er een diepere wereld achter dit alles ? Oh, diepere wereld, opent u, ik maak een duik, diep in u, ik wil ontwaken uit een boze droom, fluiten naar de overkant, lange nachten, ik ben weer op het strand, maar is dit beter dan daar ? Ik word al naar als ik er aan denk, wat ik hier weer zal beleven. Oh, het eeuwige beleven, het maakt me zo moe, maar toe, ik ben jong, ik moet nog veel leren. 'Daar moet je doorheen,' zeggen ze. Maar ja, het doet pijn. 'Wie wil groeien moet pijnlijden,' zeggen ze dan. 'Als je alles mooi wil hebben, goed en gelukkig, dan ....'

Ja, wat dan ? Maar is dat dan wel werkelijk mooi en goed ? Zijn we dan wel echt gelukkig ? Wat is geluk ? Is het niet allemaal schijn, om zoveel ellende te bedekken. En die ellende ? Waar komt ze vandaan ? Waarom moet ellende bestaan ? Of bestaat ze helemaal niet. Zitten we gewoon gevangen in een boze droom die verstand heet ?

Het verstand doet pijn, alsof we gladiatoren zijn. Die vindt dit, en die vindt dat. Daarom wil ik vertrekken, met dit droomschip, allen weg van het verstand. Spelletjes maken me moe, maar het is beter dan een gladiator van het verstand te zijn. Al die oorlogen om niets, of is dat ook alleen maar een spel ? Hoe dan ook, het spel geeft weer licht, een laatste vlam van hoop, hiermee redden we het, gaat u mee, of blijft u achter in het verstand, het opgemaakte gesticht ....

Al die cosmetica, die make-up is nog kankerverwekkend ook, terwijl de wildernis geneest, de wildernis mooi maakt, de wildernis is echt. Ik heb daar laatst nog iets over gelezen, maar ik ben het weer vergeten. Ik wil die nare stoffen uit mijn verstand, al die opgevoerde motoren, want waar is die optocht voor nodig ? Het is een optocht der zotten, en het eindigt in niets. Het zijn tragische figuren, hen van het verstand, op weg naar nergens. Gaat u met mij mee ? Ik meen dat ik de weg heb gevonden, de weg eruit. Ik heb ergens licht gezien, als een klein vlammetje. Gaat u met mij mee ? Want straks is het misschien weg. Misschien komt het eens en dan nooit weer, dus we moeten snel zijn. Ren met mij mee, en speel het spel, want in oorlog weg te zinken, in zelf-worsteling, dat klinkt zo hopeloos. Of verlangen wij naar die hopeloosheid, als de weg naar een nieuw bestaan. Een soort cocon-idee is het dan, zo van fatalisme is uiteindelijk niet fataal, omdat de wet van tegengestelde krachten geldt : Tegenpolen trekken elkaar aan, dus we kunnen alleen ergens komen door de tegengestelde richting in te gaan. Maar dan brengt de spel-loosheid ons dus uiteindelijk toch naar het spel.

De Tovenaar van Wezep

Is het niet de wespenzeep ?

In een wespenzee, waar hij aan de kant zijn bootje heeft,

Achter het strand is een oerwoud, zeer exotisch,

Waar alle struiken steken,

Want dit is het wespenland.

Oh tovenaar van Wezep in je boot,

Redt ons, want de gorilla's en de grote apen jagen op ons,

Oh, daar in het land waar alles jaagt,

Nooit hebben we hier rust.

Maar de tovenaar van Wezep houdt de wacht aan de kust,

Als een leeuw is hij in de nacht

Oh, tovenaar van Wezep, neem ons mee in je boot.

Escaping the Heart

Yech, dit is ook zo'n gevangenis. Al die glibberige slangen en wormen over elkaar heen, vormende ons hart. Ik was eens in zo'n hal. Ik dacht : 'Wat is dit ? Hier wil ik niet wezen.' Een vriend van mij stond naast me, en probeerde me er in te duwen. Gewoon als een spel. Ik denk niet dat hij de ernst er van inzag, want als ik hier toch eens in zou vallen. Ik durf er niet aan te denken. Uiteindelijk dook hij er zelf in. De kwallen vlogen me om de oren, en ik rende door een deur een gang op. Wie ik hier tegenkwam ? Een andere vriend. 'Ah, joh, kom met ons mee,' zei die vriend. 'Doe niet zo flauw.' En ook hij probeerde me terug te duwen, maar ik ontkwam. Ik wilde daar niet wezen. Ja, ik had wel andere dingen te doen.

Ik rende door de gang zo hard als ik kon. Ik hoorde een plons, dus die andere vriend was er ook al ingedoken. De kwallen vlogen me nog steeds om de oren, en alles ging trager. Ik hoorde gegil, dus blijkbaar ging er iets mis. Ik ging door een andere deur, en zag wat dolfijnen in een basin zwemmen. 'Kom met ons mee,' riepen de dolfijnen, en daar had ik wat meer zin in. Dus ik sprong in het basin, en zwom naar de dolfijnen toe. Een garagedeur ging omhoog en we zwommen de open zee in. Ik zat op drie dolfijnen tegelijk en de rest zwom ernaast. Wat ging dat snel. We gingen vliegensvlug op weg naar een eiland. Daar zou een nieuw leven starten, als een spel.

Het leek me wel wat. Ik had ineens weer echt zin in het leven. Ik was zolang een fatalist geweest. Maar ik kreeg de schrik van mijn leven, want op dat eiland lag een reuzenhart als een kwal. Heel doorzichtig en eng. Ik kreeg direkt hoofdpijn. Toen stond dat hart op als een blubberman, en begon op mij te schieten. Het werd een enorm gevecht. Hoe ik hem heb overwonnen weet ik niet meer, maar ik nam al z'n wapens, en trok verder op het eiland. Hier kwam ik allerlei konijnen tegen, en andere dieren, en vreemde blubberige wezens. Hier begon het spel.

Ik sprong over bloedhete kikkers, bloedhete kwallen en andere bloedhete obstakels. Ze zeiden dat ik gewoon heel sterk aan een 'j' moest denken om te kunnen springen. Toen kreeg ik een zwaard wat ik kon bewegen door aan een 'k' te denken. Ik vocht mijn weg door het eiland. Er waren veel gevaren, en ik moest vele monsters overwinnen met mijn zwaard. Aan het einde van de reis over het eiland kwam ik bij de kust aan, aan de andere kant van het eiland. Hier stond een schip, waar ik een zwaard van vuur kreeg. Met het schip gingen we naar het volgende eiland. Hier moest ik leren het zwaard van vuur te gebruiken.

Teruggaan naar het hart wilde ik niet meer. Ik had gezien wat het allemaal voorstelde : Helemaal niets. Ik wilde het zwaard, en wel het zwaard van het spel, want in oorlog had ik geen zin. Het grote hart had mij opgeslokt, en ik was op weg eruit, maar dat was niet eenvoudig. Zo moest ik vele eilanden bezoeken waar ik vele gedrochten moest verslaan. Vaak waren dit blubbermannen en kwallen.

Het hart was als een vreemd vuur, en naarmate we het hart met al z'n mannen versloegen begon er een steeds sterkere wind te waaien. Op het laatste eiland was die wind zo sterk dat we tot in de wolken werden getrokken. Hier kwamen we terecht op het wolkenschip, om te komen tot de lucht-eilanden en wolken-eilanden. De zeeen hier waren als spiegels, en ook de eilanden zelf, en zo kwamen we door het wolkenschip tot de verborgen realiteiten. De kapitein van het wolkenschip was een vreemde man, en zijn piraten bleken ook niet helemaal zuiver in de leer te zijn. En niet lang daarna ontstond er een gevecht wat wij wonnen. Nu was het wolkenschip van ons.

Onze vraag was nu of wij nu echt uit het grote hart waren ontsnapt, want dit hart kon in vele vormen tot ons komen. Toen begon er een strijd tegen geesten en spoken, en andere vreemde manifestaties, en wij kwamen er achter dat het flink spookte op het schip. Het was een spookschip, misschien wel betoverd door weet ik veel wat. Het schip bleek allemaal geheime kapiteinen te hebben. Maar op een dag kreeg ik het luchtzwaard, en toen ging alles een stuk makkelijker. Hoe meer tuig ik versloeg, des te meer en krachtigere winden er van het luchtzwaard afkwamen. Nu werd ik de kapitein van het schip, en we kwamen tot vele verborgen realiteiten. Het was een vreemd spel, maar wel leuk, en we moesten allemaal lichtjes vrijzetten, die allemaal mijn naam wilden weten. Ik zei : 'Ik heb geen naam, maar wil je de naam van het spel weten ? Escaping the Heart.'

Die lichtjes waren lief, echt lief. En toen ik er zo'n drie a vierhonderd van had bevrijd kreeg ik van hen een lichtzwaard, dat steeds krachtiger werd naarmate ik meer van hen vrijzetten. Ze waren zolang opgesloten geweest door de winden van het grote hart. Het is al weer jaren geleden dat ik het grote hart heb verslagen, en die lichtjes zijn altijd bij me. Als ze spreken dan komen er altijd rode hartjes uit hun mond, en allerlei andere lichtjes. Ze hebben eens een hart genaaid op mijn jas. Maar terug naar het grote hart ? Nooit meer.

Escaping the Conscience

Het geweten dat is me ook wat. Als er ergens gelogen wordt .... meineed noemen ze dat .... Ik zag het in die hal met vechtende beren, leeuwen, zeehonden, waar de uilen van de hel neerdalen om hun prooi te grijpen. Dat zijn van die plaatsen waar je gewoon niet wil wezen. Ik stond op het balkon, gelukkig, en ik dacht : wegwezen. Ik rende naar de deur achter mij, maar die zat op slot. Een man met een parachute kwam op het balkon terecht. een prachtige parachute als een octopus ... echt geweldig. Ik zei tegen die man : Help me hieruit. Hij had een uitschuifbare ladder, en we klommen hoog, heel hoog .... zo hoog dat we uiteindelijk op de wilde rotsen terechtkwamen. Frisse lucht. Maar we hoorden schoten beneden. We moesten doorklimmen. We waren er nog niet. De man werd geraakt en viel. Het laatste wat hij riep was : 'Klim door !'

En dat deed ik dan maar, vol van verdriet, want mijn vriend ....

Hij was mijn vriend, en nu .... Ik moest verder, ik kon niet achterblijven, want ik wist dat als ik de top had bereikt, dan zou ik hem er misschien wel weer uit kunnen vissen. En zo ging dat. Ik kwam op de top terecht, in de wolken, en uiteindelijk kreeg ik hem eruit. De man zei : Je hebt het gered. Later bleek dat de man hier woonde, maar speciaal voor mij naar beneden was gekomen. Een prachtige wereld was hier, als een spel. Er lagen hier hartjes waarop je kon springen, en dan heel hoog. Zo sprongen we tot de hoogste bergen en de hoogste wolken. De man gaf me een zwaard waarmee ik de monstertjes kon verslaan. Dat was nog wel een gedoe, maar de man hielp me. Ik moest gewoon altijd aan de 'k' denken om mijn zwaard te bewegen, als in een spel. En het was een spel, zo wonderbaarlijk. Nooit meer wilde ik terug naar de oorlog van het geweten, de onzekerheid, de schuld .... want als er ergens gelogen werd ....

Maar steeds meer monstertjes begonnen zich aan mijn zwaard te klemmen, en als aapjes aan mijn lichaam, en alles ging steeds trager en trager. De aapjes hadden een heel hoog schel geluid. En waar was die man nu gebleven ? Het leek alsof ik in zeven oceanen tegelijk zakte, als in een put van lijm en slijm, vol van licht. Toen riep de man van boven de put : Denk gewoon aan 's', dan komen er vlammen uit je zwaard. Dat deed ik, en al snel stond ik weer op vaste grond, naast de man. De man gaf mij vleugeltjes en leerde mij vliegen, maar het leek alsof er een vreemde angst mij op de hielen zat. Ik moest leren mijn zwaard in de lucht te gebruiken. Ik moest allerlei donkere wolkjes verslaan, en als ik ze had verslagen dan veranderden ze in waterdruppels, en vielen naar beneden. Er ontstond een grote, hoge en woeste zee onder ons, die heel snel om zich heengreep. Na een tijdje greep de zee ook mij, en ik riep om die man, maar waar was hij ? 'Denk aan de 'r' fluisterde hij, dan schiet je als een raket omhoog.' Waar die stem nu vandaan kwam wist ik niet, maar ik deed wat hij zei en schoot inderdaad als een raket uit het water. Ineens vloog hij naast me. Alles ging heel snel nu. Waar gingen we naartoe ?

'Zijn we nu uit het grote geweten ontsnapt ?' vroeg ik.

'Nee,' zei hij. 'Je moet het spel spelen.'

Het spel was nog lang niet afgelopen. Ik werd achtervolgd door grote angst, als in een nachtmerrie. We kwamen uiteindelijk in een bos terecht, waar een geit in een hele grote ketel roerde. In de ketel zwommen vissen. De man dook in de ketel. Hij schoot een heel eind in de lucht, en kwam toen in een hogere ketel terecht, en zo ging dat maar door. Ik volgde hem na. Ik zag hoe de man steeds meer in koek en snoep veranderde, en bij mij gebeurde hetzelfde. In de verte, hoog in de wolken zagen we een enorm paleis geheel van snoep. Hier stroomde chocola als rivieren en watervallen, en zagen we hoge torens van marsepein en pepermunt. Toen we daar aankwamen wachtte een prinses ons op. We kregen beiden een zwaard van snoep. Hiermee zou het gebeuren. In het paleis moesten we heel wat gespuis verslaan, en prinsessen bevrijden. Vaak kwamen we hier schaduwen tegen, mannen van angst die ons bang probeerden te maken, maar het snoepzwaard wist wel raad met hen. Ergens op een troon in de verte, dieper in het paleis zat een enorme man als een reus, geheel gemaakt van een soort blauwe vlammen. Hij zat op een soort chocolade-troon, een reusachtige troon. Hij begon vuurballen van een soort blauw vuur op ons af te gooien, en wij moesten die zien te ontwijken. Even later stond hij op, en kwam regelrecht op ons af. Ik vroeg aan de man wat we moesten doen, maar de man antwoordde niet, en wierp zijn snoepzwaard op de grote kerel af. Ik deed hetzelfde, maar de grote kerel bleek zich er niet aan te storen.

Voorzichtig nam hij ons op en ging weer terug naar zijn troon. Nu zaten we goed in de val. Hij wilde ons in zijn mond steken, maar toen stond ineens de prinses die we bij de ingang tegenkwamen in de deuropening. 'Doe het niet, vader, zij kunnen ons misschien wel helpen.' Toen zette de reus ons neer en gaf ons een zwaard gemaakt van pepermunt en chocola. We gingen door een deur van chocola en kwamen in een grote hal terecht. Hier stonden allerlei vuurspuwende wezens, en door op hun ruggen te springen konden we naar boven komen. Hier groeiden bloemen waar chocola uit stroomde. We sprongen in een bootje, en al snel waren we op een soort chocolade-zee. In die zee waren eilandjes van snoep waar we opnieuw gespuis moesten verslaan. Ik vroeg me af wat we voor de reus moesten doen, maar dat werd me al snel duidelijk. Overal zagen we kooien met prinsesjes erin, en het was voor ons een koud kunstje ze te bevrijden. Misschien waren dit wel zijn dochters. Het spel ging zo makkelijk, dat we dachten dat het een spel voor kinderen was. Maar ja, een spel mag ook weleens makkelijk zijn, want er zijn al genoeg moeilijke spelletjes in de omloop. Maar ja, het kon natuurlijk later

nog moeilijk gaan worden, want waar hield dit ergens op ? Op een gegeven moment kwamen we erachter dat we goed verdwaald waren.

En verdwaald te zijn in een spel, geloof me, dat kan heel beangstigend zijn. Vooral als een spel ineens je leven schijnt te zijn. Totdat de man die bij me was ineens een gouden sleuteltje vond en een deurtje opende. We kwamen in een zaal terecht waar een piratenschip werd gebouwd. We klommen op het schip, en het bleek een duikboot te zijn. Het begon in de diepte weg te zakken, en wij gingen snel naar binnen. Nu kon het echte werk beginnen, want zo konden we naar de dieptes van de chocolade-zee gaan. Wat een verschrikkelijke vissen zwommen hier, maar ze konden ons gelukkig niets doen. We waren veilig in het schip. Vaak werden we op andere duikboten aangesloten en konden we met de wezens daar kennis maken. Zij vertelden ons alles over de chocola-zeeen, en ook over andere snoep-zeeen. Er schenen reuzen van vuur in die zeeen te wonen. Zij werden opgesloten gehouden in grote snoep-paleizen waar ze moesten regeren op grote en hoge tronen. De wezens in de duikboten zeiden dat die reuzen de broers waren van de reus die op het land woonde. De broers zouden eens ontvoerd zijn door een draak. Die draak woonde heel diep onder de zee, in de grond, in een reusachtig snoepkasteel. Hier bewaakte hij de sleutels van de kooien waarin de reuzen leefden.

We besloten die draak eens op te zoeken, maar kwamen er snel achter dat die onverslaanbaar was. Al dat vuur, verschrikkelijk. Maar goed, in het kasteel van de draak begonnen we naar wapens te zoeken, om zo toch de strijd aan te gaan, en na een tijdje was het dan zover. Zo gaat dat altijd in spelletjes : Eerst wapens zoeken, en dan het gevecht uiteindelijk aangaan. De draak kon vuur laten regenen, en kon zijn hele kasteel in de fik zetten, dus wij moesten als de wiederweerga weg zien te komen. Ook op andere plaatsen begonnen we naar wapens te zoeken, en naar allerlei wapenrustingen van het meest tropische en uitheemse snoep. We werden echte snoep-ridders, en ontwikkelden krachtige wapens, maar de draak verslaan konden we niet, en de reuzen bevrijden al helemaal niet, omdat we daar de sleutels niet voor hadden.

Het leek allemaal op een groot spel, maar was het dat wel echt ? Het was ons leven. Hoe kon zo'n simpel spelletje uitlopen op zoiets moeilijks ? Maar ach, we waren al heel ver gekomen. Misschien moesten we gewoon eerst op zoek gaan naar wat simpelere spelletjes. En ja, die konden we volop doen in de duikboten. Hier konden we onze vaardigheden wat ontwikkelen. En toen dacht ik bij mezelf : Waarom zouden we ons laten kapotmaken door één zo'n rotspelletje. Er zijn zoveel spelletjes om te spelen, dus vooruit maar weer met de geit. Maar ja, wat als je bezeten raakt van zo'n spelletje ? We moesten onze weg zien te vinden in deze doldwaze kermis, want terug naar het geweten, dat wilden we niet meer.

Escaping Canon

Je kent ze misschien wel, die oude sinterklaasliedjes van de TV, van school of van een LP. Ik hoorde ze ook toen ik bij Canon op bezoek was. Noem het bezoek. Ik was daar al mijn hele leven. Voor hen die Canon niet kennen : Het is een skelet. Het spelletje moest voor mij nog beginnen. Anderen hadden hun wapens al. Ik moest zo snel mogelijk uit dit kasteel. Ik bedoel : Had ik nog zin om hier een seconde langer te blijven ? Al dat gegil was niks voor mij.

Dus ik nam mijn zwaard, en zei : Canon, 't is afgelopen. Ik ga er vandoor.

Het deurtje ging gewoon voor me open. Het was ongelooflijk. Maar ja, dat kan gebeuren in een spel.

Maar ja, toen begon het spel dan ook echt. Ik moest vechten tegen spoken en draken. Ik en mijn zwaardje. Dat was nogal een klus. Ik moest leren springen en bukken, draaien, vliegen, echt van alles. Het was geen simpel spelletje. Al snel kwam ik erachter dat dit het echte werk was. Het was een leuk spelletje.

Aan het einde moest ik Canon zelf verslaan, dat skelet op die hoge troon. En als ik verloor dan werd ik weer teruggestuurd en dan moest ik eerst meer wapens zoeken of één of andere wapenrusting. Zo vond ik de wapenrusting van de Heilige Geest, en de wapenrusting van de Heilige Armoe. Ook vond ik het Zwaard van het Eeuwig Evangelie. Dat was wel flink kicken, en al snel kwam ik erachter dat ik hiermee flink meer kans had tegen Canon. Maar ja, Canon kon flink vuur spuiten. Ik vond ergens de Helm van Mystiek en het schild van Cryptiek, en ergens anders vond ik een boog met een paar pijlen. Hier bleek Canon flink van te schrikken, want toen ik daarmee weer in zijn zaaltje terechtkwam toen werd het echt menens. Bijna had ik hem overwonnen, maar helaas, weer niet. Dus weer ging ik terug naar de oude plaatsen om naar wapens en wapenrustingen te zoeken. Ik vond ergens een speer, een mes, en wat boeken.

Ook bleken allerlei kruizen te helpen, en wat gezangen, maar uiteindelijk kreeg ik Canon nog niet plat. Het spelletje begon me te irriteren, want het leek alsof ook Canon steeds geniepergier werd. Hij leek te reageren op mijn nieuwe aanwinsten. Op het laatst werd ik zo kwaad dat ik het spelletje opzij smeet, en me ging richten op een ander spel. Dit was een spel met konijntjes, echt heel kinderachtig, maar wel leuk.

Soms denk ik nog weleens aan dat spelletje met het skelet genaamd Canon. Het was gewoon geen eerlijk spelletje. Het spelletje was zo gemaakt dat je nooit kon winnen, net als bij een goede gokkast.

Laatst vond ik een ander spelletje met het skelet Canon. Het spelletje had dezelfde opzet. Je moest op zoek gaan naar één of ander zwaard, en dan naar een speer, en hiermee zou je hem dan kunnen afmaken. Maar ook dat spel was me te moeilijk. Ik ben nu echt spelletjes over

Canon aan het verzamelen. Het gaat me nu niet meer om het spelen en het winnen, maar om zoveel mogelijk van die spelletjes in bezit te hebben. Zo wordt het spelen weer leuk, en kun je snel overswitchen. Ik probeer er gewoon nog veel hobbies op naast te houden.

Erwtenman

Erwtenman, erwtenman,

loopt over de lepel in de pan,

Het kan hem allemaal niets meer schelen,

Eerlijk zullen we alles delen

Erwtenman, erwtenman,

Daalt in de dieptes van de pan,

Moeder schept de borden vol,

voor erwtenman is het geen lol

Erwtenman, erwtenman,
de kinderen smeren je op het behang,
geen zin om je te eten,
of misschien zijn ze het vergeten

Erwtenman, erwtenman,
Nu zit je dan op het behang,
als een schilderij van groene kledder,
ja erwtenman, jij bent mijn redder ...

Erwtenman, erwtenman,
van de lepel gleed jij in de pan,
nu ben je heel vaak op de tv,
en de koning van het behang ...

Honden van de Hel

Kort Satirisch-Theologisch Horrorverhaal

Hoofdstuk 1.

Bloedband roept zijn manschappen bij elkaar : 'Zo we hebben weer heerlijk aan familie-uitbreiding gedaan ... Kijk nou eens toch hoe onze sociale machines op aarde werken ... Meer en meer slaven kunnen we zo uitbroeden .... want ja, we bouwen nog steeds aan een Nieuw Romeins Rijk ... een Nieuwe Wereldorde ...' Huwelijk kijkt op, en zegt : 'Ach wat, ja, en je hebt nog gelijk ook, maar dat allemaal dankzij mij ... Celibaat is iets wat ze daar beneden bijna niet meer kennen, en Lat-relaties worden als de boze bestempeld ... Ik ben de belangrijkste in de harem van Joegelo ...' Maar dan gaat Bloedband met Huwelijk op de vuist ... een paar dames proberen hen uit elkaar te houden, maar ze worden steeds woedender op elkaar ... Ze strijden om de eerste plaats in de harem van Joegelo ... de grote keizer ... Hij is de keizer van de Romeinse Hel ... een hellehond, als je het mij vraagt ... Maar ja, wat heb ik in te brengen ? Ik ben maar een doodeenvoudige dwerg ... Ze hebben me tot koning gemaakt hier ... Mijn naam is Jirojet ...

Na het gevecht kijkt Bloedband zijn manschappen diep in de ogen ... 'Beseffen jullie niet hoe belangrijk scheiding is ? Jullie hebben het gezien, hè, met eigen ogen ... Huwelijk ging met me op de vuist ... Door scheiding kreeg ik Huwelijk weer onder controle ... onder mijn duim, haha.' Een duister skelet met een hoed komt van achter Bloedband tevoorschijn ... er komt rook vanaf zijn bijna verbrande botten ... Ineens begint hij ijselijk te lachen en te gillen ... 'Haha, die domme poetsers op aarde ... Ze trouwen om ingeschreven te worden bij de Romeinse Sociale Machine, en even later scheiden ze om door de Romeinse Sociale Machine te worden verslonden ... Wat een hel, en ze vragen er zelf om .... Kloosters zijn niet populair ... allemaal dankzij ons ... Wij houden de Romeinse Machine in stand ... met al z'n poppetjes ... al z'n slaven ... Wij maken van sex een koopwaar ... een bedrijf .... en ons bedrijf loopt goed ..... veel eieren vandaag .... morgen veel slaven ....'

'Nou, shut up,' zegt Bloedband, 'ik ben nog altijd de baas hier die de lakens uitdeelt ... Ga allemaal eens in een rij staan, en doe je mond open ...' Alle manschappen van Bloedband gingen in de rij staan en deden zoals Bloedband had gezegd ... Bij één voor één spuwt Bloedband in de mond ... 'En nu slikken.' Sommigen gaan over hun nek ... Bloedband begint te lachen ... 'Haha, zo, dat zal jullie laten zien dat ik nog steeds de baas ben ... Ik wens geen tegenpraatjes ...' Ineens verschijnt er vuur achter Bloedband ... Het is Joegelo, keizer van de Romeinse Hel ... 'Zeg, ik heers over alle hellen,' zegt hij deftig, en daarna schreeuwt hij : 'Zo, harem, jullie zien er weer verschrikkelijk uit vandaag ... Daar gaan dus koppen voor rollen ...' Iedereen begint te trillen, en terwijl Joegelo op z'n hoogst begint te gillen vallen enkele manschappen naar voren, terwijl hun koppen eraf rollen ... 'Haha,' buldert Joegelo, terwijl het bloed begint te stromen ... 'Ik ben nog steeds de baas hier ...'

Bloedband buigt zijn hoofd in schaamte ... Hij mag dan wel de baas van de Harem zijn, maar niet de baas van de hel ... want dat is Joegelo ...

Hoofdstuk 2.

Als Joegelo uiteindelijk weer weg is leeft Bloedband weer een beetje op ... Nu kan hij weer doen wat hij wil ... Hij begint het bloed over de kleine aarde te spuiten ... een kluit op een stok ... 'Ik ben boos,' buldert Bloedband .... 'heel boos ...' Maar dan komt Ouderschap tevoorschijn ... 'Ik voed uw slaven nog steeds op naar behoren ... Ik laat hen geloven dat het huwelijk Gods Wil is, en dat ze veel kinderen moeten krijgen ... Ik laat hen geloven dat het huwelijk goed is en gelukkig maakt ...' zegt Ouderschap met een fronzend gezicht ... 'Goed, goed,' zegt Bloedband een beetje snibbig ... 'Maar heb je hen ook al vertelt dat .... Laat maar, ik geloof je wel ...' Tevreden loopt Ouderschap weer terug naar de groep ... Hij voelt zich altijd als een prins die zijn prinses gevonden heeft als Bloedband hem weer z'n vertrouwen geeft ... Dan komt Vertrouwen naar voren, en probeert zo onopvallend mogelijk bij Bloedband te komen ... Zachtjes fluistert hij in z'n oor : 'Het is in orde hoor, het vertrouwen heeft weer slachtoffers doen vallen, haha ...' Bloedband glimlacht ... Vertrouwen is één van zijn beste maatjes ...

Dan staat Bloedband ineens op, en groeit tot zijn ware proporties ... een skelet bekleed met rood en zwart vlees en hier en daar wat spieren ... Het lijkt wel alsof hij hier en daar aangevreten is ... en het lijkt alsof hij een oog mist ... Maar als je dan dichterbij komt dan zie je dat dat oog gewoon bijna de kleur heeft van het omliggend vlees ... 'Hahaha,' buldert Bloedband ... 'Nog steeds houden wij gelovigen tegen om tot kluizenaarsschap te komen, en monnikenschap .... Zij worden helemaal opgezogen door de Sociale Machine, en daarmee denken ze dat ze God dienen, maar ze dienen ons ...' Ook de andere gestaltes beginnen te lachen ... Dan opent Bloedband wat boeken ... 'Vandaag zullen enkelen van ons heengaan, want wij dulden geen slappe happen ....' De gestaltes beginnen te sidderen, en hier en daar vallen er een paar weg ... Dan horen ze luid gegil ... 'Zo,' buldert Bloedband ... 'Wij zijn de honden van de hel, en dat moet zo blijven ... We hebben niks aan verraders ... Jullie zijn allemaal gewaarschuwd .... Ga nu naar jullie posities, en maak de aarde weer goed bang .... Ze moeten bang gemaakt worden dat ze er niet meer bij zullen horen als ze de bloedbanden los snijden .... Wij hebben die bloedbanden gemaakt ... Wij zijn de stichters van Familie ... Wij zijn ....' Maar verder kwam Bloedband niet .... Een oude gestalte genaamd Familie kwam naar voren ... Bij hem liep een klein hondje genaamd Gezin .... 'Pa, ga terug naar je plaats ...' krijste Bloedband ... en neem dat kleine rotkreng mee ... Toen keerde de oude gestalte weer om, en verdween in de groep ...

Na een tijdje kwam Joegelo weer terug, de keizer van de hel ... Bloedband verbleekte een beetje, maar probeerde zich hoog te houden, en begon ontzettend te slijmen .... Maar toen vloog Joegelo hem aan ... Een onzinnig gevecht als je het mij vraagt ... Maar ja, wie ben ik ? Ik ben maar een doodeenvoudige dwerg .... en ze hebben mij hier tot koning gemaakt ...

Hoofdstuk 3.

Het avondmaal wordt opgediend en er worden doopfeesten gehouden ... De hel moet vol worden met zielen ... Allen drinken ze van het bloed, opdat de bloedbanden strakker worden ... Allen worden ze gedoopt om de banden met de hel strakker te maken ... Joegelo en Bloedband zijn nog steeds in gevecht .... een gevecht dat Bloedband altijd verliest ... want ja, wie kan er strijden tegen de keizer van de hel ? Bloedband is een gevangene van Joegelo .... gedoemd om in zijn harem te leven .... gedoemd om te slijmen .... maar dan wordt het soms teveel, en dan begint het gevecht weer ... Een vreemde arena, die altijd weer in het huwelijksbed eindigt ... Het is een vreemde oorlog om de macht ...

Bloedband is een slaaf van Joegelo ... een vreemde vogel ... maar nog steeds een hellehond ... Steeds strakker worden de banden ... Er is geen ontvluchten aan .... Want dit is belangrijk .... de aardse band .... en de hemelse banden worden losgelaten, doorgezaagd, doorgeknipt ... Want het huwelijk .... ja, het huwelijk .... Daarmee maken we iedereen gelukkig .... Twee mensen die elkaar gelukkig maken .... en de rest kan stikken .... Twee mensen die een kind krijgen .... Dat kind is alles .... de rest is niks .... Na ons de zondvloed .... Ja, wij aanbidden Bloedband .... niet God .... want ..... Ach laat maar .... wie wil er nu luisteren naar een achterlijke dwerg ? Alleen wat domme zielen op aarde zullen mij volgen .... Maar hen die in de hemel zijn zullen mij willen vernietigen ... Ach wat ... Kom nou toch ... de aarde is best vol, en zij volgen mij allemaal .... Daarmee kan ik wel een oorlog beginnen tegen de hemel ..... Nou zoon, dit was weer een leuk verhaaltje voor het slapen gaan ... Kus je moeder goedennacht .... Ik kom vannacht niet thuis, want ik slaap bij de buurvrouw ... Niet tegen mamma zeggen, hoor .... want .... Ach laat maar .... waarom zou je eigenlijk naar mij luisteren .... Morgen komt er een brief van Joegelo, voor je verjaardag .... En hij zal er wel weer voor zorgen dat je een prachtig kado krijgt met alles erop en eraan .... een nieuw automatisch slavenpak ofzo .... waarmee je weer alles doet wat hij zegt ... in plaats van wat ik zeg .... Zo zal het altijd wezen ... Ik heb de moed allang opgegeven ....

Einde

Het Verhaal van Orkaan

Er was eens een man die Orkaan heette. Het was een barbaarse gladiator en slaaf die ontsnapt was. Een strijdster genaamd Tania had hem op haar schip 'De Vloedgolf' opgenomen. Nu streed hij aan haar zijde. De oude moeder van Tania was de kapitein van het schip. Zij was een beleefde, listige dame, vol van wijsheid en kennis. Ze kende de hemelse zeeen als de beste. Mijn hart was gekruisigd, en ik was geriemd over mijn hele lichaam. Ik hield mijn zwaard in de lucht. Orkaan had mij gered toen ik jong was. Veel bloederige oorlogen heb ik aan zijn zijde gestreden, en dat ging niet zonder verwonding, maar Orkaan zei altijd : 'Een wond, parfum voor de Heer.' Ik heb me daar altijd aan vast gehouden. Zoveel demonische schepen op de hemelzeeen. Op een dag vroeg ik : 'Heer, vertel me meer over die parfum.' Ik had het niet zo op parfum. Het stonk, maar ik wist wel wat Orkaan bedoelde. Het ging om hemelse parfum van het kruis, voortkomende uit een flesje armoe. Die riemen op mijn lichaam waren zo kunstig door de Heere gelegd. Als ik dreigde te vallen, dan grepen ze me altijd aan mijn riemen. Dat was wel een veilig gevoel. Het was een tuig, een tuig des kruizes. Orkaan heeft me in de loop van mijn leven geleerd hoe mijn zwaard te gebruiken, en wanneer de speer te werpen. Ik heb veel aan zijn lessen gehad. Ik heb zelden zo'n zachte man als Orkaan meegemaakt, en op de hemelzeeen geldt het : 'hoe zachtmoediger de man is, hoe sterker hij is.' En daarom was Orkaan één van de sterksten die ik kende.

De Vloedgolf was een prachtig schip, hoog, met veel ruimte binnenin. Er woonden allerlei strijders in het schip. De meesten waren grootgebracht door Orkaan, of pas op latere leeftijd op het schip gekomen. Groenoog was een oude leeuw, een man met veel geheimen. Hij kwam niet zo vaak op het dek. Meestal alleen als het echt oorlog was, en dan maakte hij ook goed oorlog. Eens was hij de schrik op de hemelzeeen, maar nu deed hij het wat rustiger aan. De Heere leidde het zo dat Groenoog mij op een dag uitnodigde in zijn deel van het schip. Hier was ik nog nooit eerder geweest. Er stonden hier een heleboel zeldzame parfumflessen, parfumflessen van het kruis. Eén voor één begon hij te bespreken, en hij smeerde soms wat van dat spul op mijn riemen. Hij sprak over de kruisiging van de hersenen, en over de kruisiging van veel meer delen. Ook legde hij een vreemd sieraad om mijn nek als een soort waaier van lange staafjes met edelsteentjes. Het was een sieraad van het kruis en de armoe. Hij sprak dat de hemelse sieraden extra kracht gaven in de strijd. Toen kwam Orkaan binnen, en glimlachte, en ook Tania kwam binnen. Ik kreeg een nieuw riementuig, en het leek een beetje op de riemen van Jozef die ik eens had gezien. En ik herinnerde Jozef de Dromer, en ik was ook zo'n dromer, en ja, toen besefte ik : de dromen zijn de parfums van het kruis.

En Orkaan nam mij mee naar een andere ruimte die ik ook nog niet kende. ‘Dit is nu jouw ruimte,’ zei Orkaan. Het was tegenover de ruimte van Groenoog. Ook gaf Orkaan mij een nieuwe speer en een nieuw zwaard met een harig schild met juwelen erop. Ik was een droomstrijder, een gladiator van het kruis. De parfums leidden mij voort in de strijd. Het waren de dromen van het kruis. Orkaan liet me zien hoe de kanonnen werkten, en nam me daarna mee naar nog wat geheime ruimtes. De Heere had mijn gebed verhoord.

De Nooiteindigende Vlam

Op de berg gleden een groep mannen door glibberige geulen, en kwamen uiteindelijk terecht in warme bronnen. Diep in een gouden bron, opgestuwd als een plaats dieper dan hun ziel, die hun ziel leek weg te vreten. Ze vonden het fijn dat ze geen ziel meer hadden, geen geweten, want het geweten had hen hun leven lang geteisterd. Voor hun ogen zagen ze de visioenen en aura’s van hun geweten waarin ze zolang opgesloten zaten exploderen. Hun lichamen trilden, plaats makend voor nog meer explodaties, waaronder die van het hart, en daarna hun hersenen. Hun mentale vlakken

voelden blanco aan, als een witgeverfde massa van verdoving. Verdoofdheid was wat ze wilden, nadat ze hun gevangenissen hadden verlaten. Het was een grote ontsnapping. Er droop sap van hun gehemelte die hun kelen dik lieten aanvoelen, als gestoken door een giftige spin, als een geneesmiddel. Want oh, wat waren deze mannen verwond. Jarenlang mochten zij niet dromen, en moesten zij hun lichamen onderdrukken, maar nu droop zachte vrijheid door hun botten heen.

Er begonnen monden te verschijnen die wijd opengingen en scherpe, slijmerige tanden hadden. De jacht was begonnen. Dit was niet de druk van het geweten meer, maar van gevoeligheid. Jaren waren zij door het geweten vals beschuldigd, en nu was de jacht begonnen. De mannen strekten hun lichamen uit, en werden omhuld door warme visioenen als verf, en vreemde indringende lichten. Zoveel meer zintuigen werden in hen geopend. Het was hier waar de natuur zich voor hen opende, en het was goed hier te zijn, vanwege de warmte. Het was een tropische warmte als een deken waaronder hun lichamen bedekt werden. Er was geen terugkeer mogelijk meer, nu ze in zo'n sterke stroming terecht waren gekomen. Maar wilden ze nog wel terug ?

'Ik wil vrij zijn,' riep er één, en een ander riep : 'Ik zal ze bombarderen.' De oorlog was nu begonnen, want hun lichamen waren nog steeds gevuld met wraakgevoelens en bitterheid. Ze waren soldaten, nu toegerust met wapens, en hiermee zouden ze geen genade hebben. Sommigen gilden en krijsten van woede, totdat hun armen zo krachtig als vleugels waren. De soldaten rezen op, en keken naar hun helmen. Er was geen weg terug. De strijd zou nu beginnen. Zij hadden een wapen in handen met vreemde schilden. Oorlogsgekrijs was overal. De mannen hadden maar één doel : overwinning. De zachtheid leek hen steeds meer en meer te omhullen, en begonnen hen langzaam te penetreren tot in de dieptes van hun wezen. Vandaaruit wisten ze welke woorden ze moesten spreken, om op te borrelen voor het besturen van hun jachtpaarden. De mannen zouden geen genade hebben, omdat er geen genade aan hen was geschonken. Het was nu de tijd van wraak, en er kwam doem op de vlaktes.

Er kwamen sappen op vanuit de bron waaruit ze omhoog kwamen, en gingen recht op hun benen staan als door een vreemde kracht. Ze gleden voort over een berg, door een heleboel geuren. De lijven bereden hun jachtpaarden, want het was oorlog. Het was een avontuur zonder grenzen, voor een nieuwe natuur. De strijdkreet was neergezet om poorten te openen, tot het bezichtigen van de nooiteindigende vlam. Allen strekten ze zich uit naar de vlam, en plotseling kwam er een zachte en ritmische bliksem naar beneden om hen met geheel nieuwe visioenen te omhullen, de visioenen van een nieuwe wereld. Ze waren bijna thuisgekomen. De mannen hielden van de vlam, en hielden ervan naar de vlam te kijken, hoe het vurig opschoot om hun diepste wensen te vervullen. De mannen hadden een kracht ontdekt die niet van deze wereld was, en zij brachten hun wapens in de lucht. Deze oorlog zou uitgevochten worden. Geen enkel wapen was zo zacht, vervullend en doeltreffend.

De mannen steigerden als paarden, hunkerend naar de vlam waarop ze reden. Ze kwamen steeds dichterbij de vlam, terwijl hun hersenen leken te exploderen. Plotseling nam de vlam hen in de greep als een touw, en begon zich aan te trekken. Langzaam begon de vlam bezit van hen te nemen, terwijl ze als bezetenen werden. De vlam zou hen aanvoeren in de oorlog, en zou hen rijkelijk voorzien in de vlam, omdat de vlam weelderig was. De vlam nam alleen genoegen met het beste, en liet vluchtige, poederige visioenen over hun lichamen glijden. Plotseling begon de vlam als in een draaikolk de mannen naar beneden te zuigen. De mannen gleden in nieuwe bronnen waar ze gelanceerd werden. Zachte energieen begonnen in hen omhoog te komen, die door de vlam in lichterlaaie werden gezet, om zo te worden tot lichten. Hierdoor verloren de mannen zoveel van hun ziel en hart, om plaats te

maken voor nog meer van de vlam, iets wat ze veel meer begeerden. Ze wilden loskomen, en dit was de juiste oplossing. Zolang hadden ze hier op gewacht na jarenlange gevangenschap. Zo lang hadden ze hier naar uitgezien, denkende dat het nooit zou komen. Aan hun hopeloosheid was een einde gekomen, terwijl nieuwe energieen aan hun horizonnen verschenen.

De mannen draaiden met de krachten en energieen mee, in de stroom van de nooiteindigende vlam. Zij hadden die vlam omhelsd en aangenomen. 'Ja, eet mijn hersenen weg !' riep een, en bracht doem voort. Het geduld de mannen was op. De mannen hadden genoeg van hun harten die hen alleen maar pijn deden. Ze werden aangedreven door elkaar. Hier hadden de mannen zolang op gewacht. Zij waren gezonden om het geweten te verslinden.

Ze droegen vlammen op hun hoofden als kronen. Zij waren koningen, en hadden macht. Zij droegen allen een nieuw vaandel, waarin een nooiteindigende vlam hen leidde. Na het ritueel stonden zij op, en marcheerden over de hogere muren. Daartoe waren zij uitgezonden. Zij werkten voor de nooiteindigende vlam. De mannen droegen sieraden waarmee ze heersten. De mannen wilden doem brengen. Het laatste deel van de hersenen scheen te exploderen, en sap bleek voort te komen vanuit hun diepste bronnen. Er was nu niets meer dat hen kon tegenhouden. Alles wat ze wilden was vrij te zetten.

Ze waren diep met elkaar verbonden in hun binnensten, en vertrouwden elkaar. Ze hadden de prijs betaald om hier te komen, en hadden bewezen dat ze waardig waren. De vlam keek toe en maakte een ritmisch geheel. Van alle kanten kwamen nieuwe vlammen binnen en werden nieuwe vlammen gevormd, totdat de mannen tot een draaikolk kwamen.

Het was een harde oorlog. Zij die de vlammenkroon droegen hadden geen genade. Zij hadden monstermonden op hun borst, met vlijmscherpe, gemene tanden onder slijm. Ook bereden zij vreemde schilden met franjes.

De mannen droegen speren. Zij waren op de vlucht, en voerden oorlog en jacht voor hun leven. Zij hadden gestoken, diep penetrerend om de gevaarlijkste sappen voort te brengen in de oorlog. Ook wisten zij precies welke knoppen in te drukken voor de beste wapens en de beste aanvallen. Zij gingen voor het beste, en namen met niets minder genoegen.

Zij die de vlammenkroon droegen waren trots, en droegen lange franjes. Zij droegen een nieuw vaandel, en waren bezeten door een nooiteindigende vlam, die telkens weer andere vlammen leek voort te brengen, diep pentrerend. De vlammen vormden nieuwe visioenen van een nieuwe wereld, waar ze al voor de helft instonden, als wateren die omhulden. Er was geen weg meer terug, en dat wilden ze ook niet. Ze keken over de rand heen van een hoge berg, in een nieuwe wereld. Ze hadden deze wereld lief, en die wereld had hen lief. Ja, die wereld was naar hen toegezonden om hen te halen uit hun gevangenschap. Zij waren martelaars, maar nu waren zij vrij, om weg te zinken in een poel van bitterheid en wraak die ze nu eindelijk konden lanceren.

Er was hier geen geweten. Niets scheen hen in de weg te staan. Er was hier geen hart of ziel. Neen. Ze waren vrij, en lichten omhulden hen als dekens. Zij hadden te lang geleden. Er was geen vlam van genade meer in hen over. Zij waren te diep verwond en te gek van woede. Zij waren wild, en konden alleen elkaar nog temmen.

Er leek geen einde te komen aan hun wreedheid, omdat ze zelf ook groeiende wreedheid hadden moeten verdragen. Er was nu alleen plaats voor bittere wraak, en wie kon hen stoppen ? Wie kon hen zeggen dat wat ze deden taboe was ? Was datgene wat hen was aangedaan dan geen taboe ? Hun binnenste was trots, bezeten en voortgejaagd door de nooiteindigende vlam. Als zij brulden kwam er vuur voort als bommen. Het was oorlog, een oorlog die zou duren tot het einde. Zij waren soldaten, en zij waren op jacht. Hun netten die zij gooiden waren als het rauwe vuur, en ze aten er goed van.

Zij droegen de vlammenkroon, een kroon van macht, een kroon van nooiteindigend vuur waarin hun nieuwe wereld zou ontstaan, een wereld om weg te vreten hart na hart, geweten na geweten, ziel na ziel. Ja, zij waren de jagers van de dood, omdat zij tot die dood waren gedreven, aan de ketenen van een immergroeiende wreedheid. Nu waren zij vrij, en nu waren zij bereid terug te betalen.

Een nooiteindigend vuur brandde in hun binnensten, voortbrengende visioenen tot een nieuwe creatie. In hun vrijheid braadden zij, en deden zich tegoed aan het vlees, want eens werd hun eigen vlees ook gegeten. Het was de dag der wrake en van de terugbetaling, een dag die de oude wereld nog lang zou heugen, totdat de oude wereld geheel in het niets en vergetene zou zijn opgelost. Dit was een moment waar zij naar uitzagen. En dit moment hadden zij bijna in hun hand.

De mannen gleden door geulen om zo in bronnen terecht te komen. De energieen bouwden zich op, en maakten nieuwe creaties. De mannen werden door nieuwe zachte visioenen omhuld, die hun diep en snel begonnen te penetreren om de diepste bronnen in hun binnenste omhoog te halen. De energieen werden bij elke ademhaling zachter en zachter, om nog diepere samensmeltingen op te roepen. De hersenen en harten van de mannen leken te exploderen, om plaats te maken voor de diepere vlammen, voortkomende vanuit een nooiteindigende vlam waarmee ze steeds meer bezeten raakten, in een vreemd ritmisch patroon om hun zielen te laten exploderen, om plaats te maken voor de vlam.

Door de zachtheid kregen ze een nieuw bewustzijn, en leken hun ogen open te gaan, omhuld door ringen, die zich door spiralen leken te verfijnen en vergroten. En zo werden de diepere snaren van hun wezen beroert, om diepere sappen voort te brengen. Het was oorlog, ondergedompeld in vreemde lichten. Deze lichten vormden ritmische patronen, als sleutels voor het openen van de diepere bronnen en sappen. Ja, poorten van gevoeligheid werden geopend, een grotere zachtheid.

Zij wisten hoe zij de verf moesten voortbrengen voor een totaal nieuwe wereld, een verf die zo diep in hun binnenste zat opgesloten.

De mannen kwamen na lange gevangenschap onder de grond aan in het kasteel. Lange tijd waren ze het slachtoffer geweest, maar nu waren ze toch eindelijk uit die draaikolk ontsnapt, en kwamen aan in het kasteel. Ze kwamen in vreemde capsules terecht vol met lichten, en zij zagen zichzelf nu door hele andere ogen. De capsules werden omhoog geschoten, en ze kwamen in hogere kamers terecht, waar het licht zich leek te vermenigvuldigen, tezamen met een aangename warmte, en een tropische bries. De mannen vertaalden de boodschappen die diep in hun lichamen opgeborgen lagen in mum van tijd, door de penetrerende en pellende lichten. Hier zagen ze zichzelf niet meer in schuwheid, maar in volle trots, alsof ze hun levensader hadden, maar nog steeds op hun hoede, want er konden vele gevaren zijn. Zij kenden het kasteel niet, alhoewel ze overweldigd waren door het kasteel.

Vreemde wezens kwamen tot transformaties, om hun voeten neer te zetten op de grond van het kasteel. Ze hadden hun pistolen, en hun laarzen zorgden voor een goede vering. Ook leken hun helmen en pantsers te vloeien, om hen te beschermen tegen de gevaren. Er waren zoveel kwade wezens die hun hoofden wilden bezitten. Het gevecht begon. Vreemde energieen kwamen als spiralen uit hun pistolen, om zich als ringen over hun vijanden te schieten. Vijanden hadden ze veel. Vijanden die hen terug wilden brengen naar hun donkere kerkers onder de grond. Maar nu waren ze in het kasteel, en zouden hun vrijheid verdedigen. Zij hadden hiertoe de juiste wapenen van het kasteel gekregen. Ja, het kasteel streed voor hen.

Mannen in lange jassen en met duistere geweren renden door het kasteel. Zij waren op zoek naar de mannen die waren gekomen. Het kasteel zou hen niet meer laten gaan. Sappen begonnen uit hun geweren en pistolen te druipen, en explosies vonden plaats, tot een groot vuurgevecht.

Ze hadden strategische plaatsen in het kasteel. Ze hadden zich geheel naar dit kasteel verplaatst, waar een geheel andere strijd ontstond. De strijd was tegen skeletten. De mannen hielden hun pistolen dichtbij hun borst, en werden in staat gesteld de mannen met de lange jassen te ontmoeten, die naar hen op zoek waren. Veel wapens werden uitgewisseld, klaar voor de strijd. De kogels waren verblindend, en al snel kwamen de skeletten in eieren terecht, in webben, waarin zij geheel geconsumeerd werden, getransformeerd tot goed voedsel. De mannen deden zich eraan tegoed. Lang hadden zij op het moment gewacht, en voor hen was dit een koud kunstje. Zij hadden hun geweren, en hulp van de mannen in lange jassen.

Er was een strijd in de lucht boven hun hoofden, want lichten waren naar hen op zoek, en weefden zich langzaam in de situatie. Zo gingen zij van verblinding tot verblinding om los te komen van de oude visioenen, en kwamen zij tot zachtere golven. Hun hersenen leken te exploderen, en nieuwe stoffen schenen door hun bloed te vloeien, verblindende lichten. Deze lichten waren organisch.

Er stonden vele dingen voor hen klaar in het kasteel, en langzaam gleden zij in hun capsules om tot hogere verdiepingen geschoten te worden. Er waren een heleboel dingen die zij niet begrepen, maar lichten waren naar hen op zoek, om hun harten te laten exploderen, en hen geheel vrij te zetten, vrij om te gaan tot de toppen van het kasteel. De kanonnen waren ritmisch en gevoelig, en ook hun pistolen en geweren schenen een eigen leven te leiden. Zij werden klaargemaakt om zelf een pistool te worden, iets waarin ze geheel veilig zouden zijn.

De mannen waren in een jungle terechtgekomen. Ze wisten het niet, want ze waren in het kasteel in slaap gevallen, en met hun bewustzijn zo ver weggevlogen. Maar toen ze wakker werden bleken ze nog gewoon in het kasteel te zijn, hier waar kasteel en jungle één waren. Ze keken om zich heen en zagen elkaar, terwijl vochtige energieen over hen heen schoven. Om hem heen liepen andere mannen met kappen, en zij hadden branders om het glas tussen de mannen weg te doen smelten. Dit was de wereld van het vuur. Een hitte leek hun hoofden tot leven te wekken, en ze zagen zoveel meer.

Hier waren visioenen die hen meetrokken tot een nieuwe wereld. De mannen riepen van hier tot elkaar. Er was geen weg meer uit het kasteel, alleen een weg om er dieper in weg te zinken. Het kasteel was groot, als een grote jungle.

De hitte leek hier door hun pakken heen te dringen, om hun harten geheel te doen wegsmelten, om plaats te maken voor het vuur, een vuur dat niet zou rusten totdat ze geheel thuis waren, waar ze behoorden te zijn, in de toppen van het kasteel, en door de verblindingen kwamen ze in de torens.

Doordat er een bepaalde stof in hun hoofden vrij kwam om de gaten van de jungle te doordingen en de muren op te blazen kwamen zij tot de andere kanten van de torens, en kwamen ze hoger. Ook leken energieen te vloeien als pistolen. Zo werden zij langzaam maar zeker zelf pistolen.

De mannen hadden vreemde energieen als tubes en wolkjes in hun armen. Hersenen hadden ze niet meer, maar pistolen die alles regelden en gevoelig waren. De hittes waren aangenaam, met verblindende lichten die hieruit voortkwamen. Dezen stroomden door de pakken van de mannen om de verdere pistolen op te laden. De mannen waren zelf een pistool geworden, en ze hadden veel uitzicht in het kasteel. Steeds hoger kwamen zij in de torens, tot steeds diepere jungles. Maar de oorlog was nog maar net begonnen.

De Zingende Bananen

Er waren eens wat beren die een hele bijzondere banaan bewaakten. Niemand kon de banaan bereiken. Maar op een dag kwam de zon naar beneden. De bijzondere banaan werd slapper en slapper en kleiner en kleiner, totdat er een klein bananenboompje uit voort begon te groeien. Het bananenboompje werd steeds groter, en op een dag begonnen de bananen te praten en te zingen. Ze hadden prachtige stemmen en ook heel luid, zodat iedereen in de omgeving het kon horen. De beren hadden het zwaar met het bewaken van de bananenboom, want iedereen wilde er een glimp van opvangen, en velen probeerden zelfs dichtbij de bananenboom te komen. Op een dag hielden de beren het niet langer, en smeekte de zon om weer een banaan van de bananenboom te maken. Dat deed de zon, en deze banaan was zo bijzonder dat er bananensap uitstroomde, zoveel dat de rivieren er mee vol liepen. Sindsdien werden de beren niet meer lastig gevallen.

De Aardbeientuin

Er was eens een aardbeientuin waar ook hele bijzondere sprekende wondervruchten tussen de aarbeien groeiden. De tuin werd bewaakt door angstaanjagende spinnen die alles doorboorden wat in de aarbeientuin probeerde te komen. Eens kwam er een man langs de tuin, en sprak : ‘Hey, wat als ik alleen kom om een aarbei te plukken ? Ik beloof dat ik nergens anders aan zal zitten.’ De spinnen lieten de man in de tuin komen. De man nam een aardbei, stak hem in z’n mond en staarde naar de wondervruchten. Toen de spinnen hem zagen wilden ze hem niet meer laten gaan. ‘We kunnen nog wel een tuinman gebruiken,’ zei één van de spinnen. ‘Maar waag het niet aan andere dingen te zitten dan aan de aarbeien.’ Dat beloofde de man. Diep in de nacht toen de spinnen even niet goed opletten liep de man heel dicht naar zo’n wondervrucht toe, en zei : ‘Hey.’

‘Stop een aardbei in me,’ fluisterde de wondervrucht. De man keek even om zich heen of de kust veilig was en stopte toen een aardbei heel diep in de wondervrucht. Binnen korte tijd groeide er een aarbeienboom vanuit de wondervrucht met de lekkerste aarbeien die ook konden spreken. ‘Hoe deed je dat ?’ vroeg één van de spinnen. Toen vertelde de man maar wat hij had gedaan. En van de spinnen moest hij nu een aarbei stoppen in alle wondervruchten. Binnen de kortste keren stond de

tuin helemaal vol met aarbeienbomen met de lekkerste aarbeien die konden spreken. En niemand wist waar de wondervruchten gebleven waren.

Het Geheim van de Leeuwen Thee

Marion kreeg een leeuw voor haar verjaardag. Het was een hele vreemde leeuw. Hij had twee witte ogen, met kleine zwarte puntjes erin, en hij had ook vleugels.

's Nachts kon ze met hem reizen naar verre landen, dat had opa haar gezegd. Opa werkte vroeger bij een thee-fabriek. Toen hij met pensioen ging, kreeg hij deze leeuw. Nu zijn kleindochter al zo oud was geworden, gaf hij haar de leeuw. Ze was al twaalf.

Marion had een grote wens. Ze wilde Mozes wel eens zien. Met kloppend hart ging ze naar bed. De leeuw zou haar om twaalf uur wakker maken, en dan zouden ze vertrekken. Ze wilde Mozes een vraag stellen.

Uiteindelijk was het dan zo ver, de leeuw had haar wakker gemaakt, en daar vlogen ze door de lucht, Marion op de rug van de leeuw. Ze kwamen bij een hondenhaag aan. De leeuw zei dat ze daar doorheen moest om bij Mozes terecht te kunnen komen. Aan het einde van de haag zag ze hem zitten, helemaal onder het bloed. Oh, wat had ze een medelijden met hem. Ze rende door de haag, maar ze werd door de honden gebeten, en viel neer. "Leeuw, waarom doe je niets ?" riep ze. Maar de leeuw was nergens meer te bekennen. En Mozes was ineens nog verder weg. Nu zag ze ineens alleen maar bos. "Wat, is dit een truc ofzo ?" riep ze ... maar niemand antwoordde haar. Al haar wanhopige woorden echoden tot haar terug.

Huilend viel ze weer neer. Ze was zo moedeloos na al dat lopen en dwalen. Ze had ineens al het vertrouwen in de leeuw verloren, en zelfs in haar opa. "Het komt allemaal door die stomme thee-fabriek. Ze hebben m'n opa bedrogen," dacht ze.

Ineens schrok ze wakker. "Het is twaalf uur," sprak de leeuw ".... we gaan vertrekken." "Maar, maar," stamelde Marion ... "Ik dacht dat we al vertrokken waren .... ik heb gewoon een verschrikkelijke nachtmerrie gehad ..."

De leeuw vloog met haar over bergen en bossen ... en eindelijk kwamen ze daar aan waar ze moesten wezen ... bij Mozes ...... Maar, het was niet wat ze verwachtte ..... het volk leefde in slavernij ..... zelfs Mozes .....

"Ja," zegt Mozes, "ik moet je iets ernstigs vertellen, Marion ...."

Maar daar schrok Marion wakker. De leeuw had haar op de schouder getikt. Het was twaalf uur ..... Tijd om te vertrekken .....

Marion barstte in tranen uit .... "Oh, lieve leeuw," snikte ze .... "Hoe weet ik nu of ik droom of niet ?"

Nu zag ze ineens duizenden leeuwen voor haar, allemaal zeggende : "Kom mee, het is twaalf uur ..."

"Oh, wat heb ik toch gedronken," snikte ze ....

Een klein mannetje stond ineens voor haar. Het leek op een klein sparretje. "Je hebt van de thee gedronken ...," zei het mannetje ...

"Wat voor een thee, wat bedoel je ... ?" zuchtte Marion ...

"De Leeuwen Thee," zei het mannetje weer ....

"Wat is dat ?" vroeg ze weer ...

"Dat is de thee die Mozes met de Farao's dronk .... en wat hij bracht tot zijn volk, zodat hij ze kon uitleiden ....," zei het kleine sparretje vervolgens ...

Marion was zo verbaasd ... "Hoe kan die Thee dat dan doen ?" vroeg ze ...

"Nou, heel simpel," zei het mannetje ...., "die Thee brengt mensen in verwarring, zodat ze de dingen anders gaan zien ..."

"Waar komt die Leeuwen Thee dan vandaan ?" vroeg Marion weer ...

"Het stroomt uit de Torenklok van Babel ..... het brengt zichts-verwarring ...." vervolgde het kleine dennetje ...

Opeens schrok Marion wakker : "...weer gedroomd," zei ze .... Maar het bleef in haar hoofd steken .... Wat zou ze graag meer willen weten over die Torenklok van Babel ....

Ze ging op haar bed zitten en sloeg haar Bijbel open. Daar las ze over de Babylonische Spraakverwarring .... "Zouden er daarom zoveel kerken zijn ? Zodat niemand ergens gevangen hoeft te zitten ?" dacht ze ....

"Hebben we dan allemaal van die Leeuwen Thee gedronken ?" vroeg ze zich af toen ze op haar fiets zat op weg naar school ....

"Misschien weet de meester hier meer vanaf ...."

Toen ze de klas binnenkwam kreeg ze de schrik van haar leven .... Haar meester was een leeuw geworden .... en zelfs de kinderen ....

Weer schrok ze wakker ..... "Het is die thee ...." dacht ze .... "Sterke Thee" ...

Ze durfde zich niet meer te bewegen .... ze was zo in de war .... Maar een ding wist ze zeker : Ze wilde meer weten van het geheim van deze leeuwenthee ...

Ze pakte met trillende handen haar Bijbeltje weer .... het angstzweet was haar uitgebroken ..... Maar ineens zag ze dat het haar Bijbel niet meer was, maar een sprookjesboek ....

Wil je weten wat er in dat sprookjesboek stond ? Luister maar ....

Het heette : Het Geheim van de Leeuwenthee .....

Marion kreeg een leeuw voor haar verjaardag. Het was een hele vreemde leeuw. Hij had twee witte ogen, met kleine zwarte puntjes erin, en hij had ook vleugels.

's Nachts kon ze met hem reizen naar verre landen, dat had opa haar gezegd. Opa werkte vroeger bij een thee-fabriek. Toen hij met pensioen ging, kreeg hij deze leeuw. Nu zijn kleindochter al zo oud was geworden, gaf hij haar de leeuw.

Meneer Iemand en Meneer Niemand

Heeft u weleens gehoord van meneer Niemand ? Ik ook niet, maar de afgelopen tijd ben ik me er wel voor gaan interesseren. Het valt me namelijk heel zwaar om iemand te zijn, en te willen zijn. Ik heb het verderf van meneer Iemand ingezien.

&....

Eigenlijk weet ik niets van meneer Niemand, maar tòch heb ik me laten vertellen dat hij getrouwd is met mevrouw Niks.
Dan kunt u wel raden met wie meneer Iemand getrouwd is. Juist ja, met meneer Alles. Ja, wat dacht u, dat meneer Iemand soms vruchtbaar zou kunnen zijn ? Neen. Mij hoeven ze niks meer te vertellen. Meneer iemand wil alles hebben, maar beiden komen dus geen stap verder. Ja, ze hebben wel een kind geadopteerd, om hun schande te bedekken.
Wilt u weten wie ? Een meneer in de dop: ventje Altijd. En een vervelend kind dat het is. Het wil altijd z,n zin krijgen. Verschrikkelijk gewoon. Maar de trotse ouders lachen erom.

&....

Ja, je zou denken: met Niks en Niemand kom je niet ver, maar tòch hebben ze een kind gekregen: kindje nooit.

....

Lang geleden leefde er een man op aarde. Hij had niks, was niemand en zou dit kruis nooit loslaten. Maar hij beefde van geluk en was vruchtbaar in z,n leven. Hij klemde nergens meer aan vast. Hij hield niks meer voor zichzelf. Hij had iets om te geven en hij nam het nooit meer terug.

....

Nu zoekt hij naar z,n bruid om zijn werk voort te planten: mevrouw Nergens. Maar helaas, die kan hij nergens vinden. Ze heeft haar naam laten veranderen in mevrouw Ergens. Ze heeft haar toevlucht ergens anders gevonden. Ze wil nog wel ergens gezien worden.

....

Heden, treurt, o volk, nu, want met ergernis hebben wij vernomen, dat Huize Iemand ergens staat en ze elkaar daar zijn tegengekomen. Nu staat huize Iemand op stelten en is daarbij huize Iedereen geworden. Mevrouw Ergens draagt haar steentje bij en baart overal.

....

Maar de man met het kruis komt tot het huis van Niemand. Kindje Nooit is tot een bruid uitgegroeid en zo heeft hij toch zijn vrouw gevonden.

....

Er worden nog architecten gevraagd bij huize Iedereen, want ze willen daar groter worden en daarom is iedereen welkom. Maar bij huize Niemand is het stil geworden: kruize Niemand.

....

En dit kruis zakt steeds dieper en dieper, want het wordt door alles en iedereen in de grond geslagen, overal en altijd.

... En mevrouw Ergens maar lachen...

Het kruis vinden ze lastig en pompen ze in de grond. Opgeruimd staat netjes, vinden ze.

En wat gebeurt er nu:
Mevrouw Niks wordt nog nikser,
en...
Meneer Niemand is nu echt helemaal Niemand meer.
Alsof ze nergens en nooit meer te vinden zijn.
Maar, lieve mensen, daar moeten we zijn.
Onder de grond schieten we wortel, onder de grond zijn we veilig.

... ...

Ik zie de man met het kruis knikken en hoor hem zeggen:

'Wie oren heeft,
die hore...'

Meneer Mond en Meneer Oor

He, daar hebben we meneer Mond. Die praat altijd voordat hij nadenkt. Hij moet altijd wat te praten hebben. Dus als hij een keer niet spreekt, dan is hij wel aan het zingen.

De grote vijand van meneer Mond is natuurlijk meneer Oor. Ze kunnen welkaar niet luchten of zien.

Meneer Mond stopt nooit met praten. Ook niet als iemand anders een keer praat. Want dan praat meneer Mond gewoon in zichzelf verder.

Nu blijkt dat meneer Mond zoveel praat, om zich te beschermen tegen meneer Oor.

En dat doet hij met grote passie en in vele vormen. Als hij niet spreekt of zingt, dan is hij wel aan het lachen of gillen.

Meneer Mond wordt daarom ook weleens meneer Muur genoemd. Hij verstopt zich namelijk achter zijn mond.
En wie het waagt om te dicht bij hem in de buurt te komen, die kan dan ook nog weleens een grote schreeuw verwachten.

Wie oren heeft die hore.

De Reuzenvrouw

Er was eens een perzik die hele grote oren had. Hij werd er vaak om uitgelachen door andere perzikken, en ze zeiden allemaal dat als hij een meloen was geweest dan was het allemaal niet zo erg. Van verdriet ging de perzik met de grote oren op een dag naar het bos, om nooit meer terug te komen. Daar vond hij een banaan met een hele grote neus. Ook de banaan was gevlucht, omdat ook de banaan altijd door andere bananen werd uitgelachen. Ze zeiden dat als de banaan een meloen was geweest, dan was het allemaal nog niet zo erg. Ze besloten samen op te trekken. Na een tijdje kwamen ze aan bij een groot kasteel. Hier werden ze ontvangen door een komkommer met een hele grote kin, en al gauw kwamen ze erachter dat hier nog veel meer woonden met hele grote lichaamsdelen. De komkommer met de hele grote kin zei dat achter het kasteel een berg is waar een huilende reus woont. De reus zou huilen, omdat hij zo eenzaam was. De komkommer met de hele grote kin had een idee. Als ze nou allemaal zich aan elkaar vast zouden maken, dan zouden ze vanzelf een reuzenvrouw worden voor de reus. Dat deden ze, en met een beetje gepuzzel kwam er een prachtige vrouw tevoorschijn. De vrouw begon aan haar tocht op de berg, en even later was de reus de allergelukkigste.

De Komkommerprins

Er was eens een fee die in een perzikkenhuisje woonde. Het huisje was helemaal van perzikken gemaakt. Als je van die perzikken at, dan kon je uiteindelijk het huisje binnen komen. In het begin leek de fee heel aardig, maar later kwam de bezoeker erachter dat er geen ontsnapping mogelijk was uit dit huis. Iedereen kwam uiteindelijk in de perzikmuren terecht om in een hoop perzikken te veranderen en zo andere bezoekers naar binnen te halen. Maar op een dag kwam er een komkommerprins naar het perzikhuisje toe, en riep : 'Zeg fee, laat die perzikken eens los.' En toen begon de komkommerprins met sinaasappels te gooien. De fee kwam in paniek naar buiten, en rende weg. De komkommerprins stopte niet met het gooien van sinaasappels totdat het hele huisje ingestort was. Nu begon het puzzelwerk, want alle perzikken waren door elkaar heen gehutseld. Maar na een tijdje had hij alle wezens weer goed in elkaar gepuzzeld en nam hen allen mee naar zijn komkommerpaleis. Er zat ook een bananenprinses tussen, en nadat hij alle wezens weer had vrijgelaten ging hij samen met haar in het komkommerpaleis wonen.

De Jungle-vrouw

Er was eens een vrouw die elke dag naar een jungle kwam waar wilde komkommers groeiden. De wilde komkommers verslonden altijd iedereen die ze tegen kwamen, en ook vochten ze onderling. Maar de vrouw strooide wat poeder over hen heen, zodat ze tam en slap werden, en stopte ze dan in haar mandje. Dan ging ze altijd naar een grot diep in die jungle waar een vreemd beest woonde die wilde spinazie bewaakte. Ze gaf dan het beest één of twee wilde komkommers en kreeg dan toegang tot de wilde spinazie waar ze hen voerde met de wilde komkommers. Op een dag was de wilde spinazie zo groot geworden dat ze uit hun gevangenschap braken, het vreemde dier verslonden, en daarna de gehele jungle. Sindsdien is de wilde spinazie altijd bij de vrouw gebleven.

De Vreemde Paddestoel

Er groeiden eens bananen tussen de paddestoelen. Een paar vermoeide kabouters namen hun intrek in één van de bananen omdat ze niet wisten dat het geen paddestoel was. Na een lange nacht kwam de eerste kabouter naar buiten, en ontdekte dat het geen paddestoel was. De kabouters wilden weer vertrekken, maar toen werd de banaan erg kwaad, en kwam achter hen aan. 'Vlug,' riep één van de kabouters, 'naar het perzikken-veld.' Toen ze bij het perzikken-veld waren aangekomen doken ze in de eerste de beste perzik en de banaan dook hen achterna en kwam al snel vast te zitten. 'Hoera !' riepen de dwergen. Even later stonden ze weer buiten, en zagen hoe de banaan weer rechtop kwam te staan met de perzik op z'n kop. Het was precies een paddestoel, en sindsdien zijn de kabouters daar maar in gaan wonen.

Het Komkommerkasteel

Er leefden eens een man en een vrouw in een komkommerkasteel. Maar op een nacht kwam er komkommersap van het plafond af, en de man en de vrouw konden er niet van slapen. 'Het dak lekt,' zei de vrouw. De man ging naar buiten, en zag een enorme komkommer op het kasteel zitten die van de komkommers at. 'Hey, wil je daar eens mee ophouden !' riep de man. 'We kunnen er niet van slapen.' Maar de komkommer begon te lachen en begon de komkommersap in het gezicht van de man te spuwen. De man werd woest en klom op het dak, en even later was hij binnenin de komkommer. 'Zeg, wie zit daar in die machine ?' riep de man. Even later zag hij een komkommerprinses diep in de komkommer. 'Zeg, haal jij al die streken uit ?' vroeg de man.

'Ja,' zei de komkommerprinses. 'Ik voel me zo alleen, en ik kan niet weg.'

'Waarom kun je niet weg ?' vroeg de man iets vriendelijker.

'Omdat de komkommer dichtklapt zodra ik eruit wil,' zei de komkommerprinses.

'Nou,' zei de man, 'wat als ik je plaats nu inneem ?' Daar stemde de komkommerprinses direkt mee in. Ze zou graag in het komkommerkasteel willen wonen. Toen de komkommerprinses uit de komkommer stapte vloog de komkommer met de man direkt weg. De komkommerprinses stapte even later het komkommerkasteel binnen. 'Waar is hij ?' vroeg de vrouw aan de komkommerprinses. 'En wie ben jij ?' Toen vertelde de komkommerprinses het verhaal. Na een paar jaar begon het komkommerkasteel weer te lekken. 'Oh,' zei de vrouw, 'dat zal hem zijn. Hij heeft vast genoeg van de vliegende komkommer.' De vrouw rende naar buiten, klom op het dak, en toen in de komkommer. Daar kwam ze de man tegen. 'Ik kan hier niet weg,' zei de man. 'en ik voel me zo alleen, zoals de komkommerprinses zich eens voelde.'

Toen greep de vrouw nog wat komkommers van het dak, en zei : 'Nou, dan blijf ik toch gewoon bij je ?' En zo vertrok de komkommer met zowel de man als de vrouw, en ze leefden nog lang en gelukkig.

De Frambozenverkoper

Er woonde eens een sinaasappel in een kersenboom. Op een dag kwam er een frambozenverkoper langs de kersenboom, en dat vond de sinaasappel wel interessant. Ze vroeg of ze wat frambozen van hem mocht kopen. 'Nee,' zei de frambozenverkoper nors, 'ik verkoop niet aan sinaasappels.' Maar toen werd de sinaasappel erg boos en slokte de frambozenverkoper op. Na een tijdje kwam er een hond langs de kersenboom. De hond lustte geen kersen, maar wel sinaasappels, en slokte de

sinaasappel in één hap op. Een eindje verderop kwam de hond een leeuw tegen, die ook nogal hongerig was, en snel de hond opslokte. Toen de leeuw bij de kersenboom aankwam werd de leeuw erg misselijk, omdat hij niet tegen kersen kon. Al snel spuwde hij de hond weer uit, en de hond was daar zo van geschrokken dat hij ook direkt de sinaasappel uitspuwde. De sinaasappel spuwde op haar beurt de frambozenverkoper uit, en sindsdien heeft de frambozenverkoper altijd vriendelijk zijn frambozen aan de sinaasappel verkocht.

De Reuzenbewaker

Er was eens een reus die een wondermeloen bewaakte. Velen probeerden bij de wondermeloen te komen, maar de reus joeg hen allemaal weg. Op een dag was er een kaboutertje die zo klein was dat de reus hem niet zag. Met gemak kwam het kaboutertje bij de wondermeloen, ging naar binnen, en besloot er te wonen. Maar op een dag hoorde hij hulpgeroep vanuit het diepere deel van de wondermeloen, en besloot op onderzoek uit te gaan. Na een tijdje lopen zag hij een fee die vastzat. 'Wees maar niet bang hoor,' zei de kabouter. Ik heb wel een plannetje. Ik ben veel te klein om jou los te krijgen, maar ik weet wel wat. En zo ging de kabouter weer naar buiten, en riep de reus. Maar de reus zag natuurlijk helemaal niets. Toen de kabouter een klein vlammetje maakte zag de reus het wel. De kabouter nodigde de reus uit om binnen in de wondermeloen te komen. Dat ging niet zo makkelijk, maar na een tijdje was de reus binnen. 'Zo,' zei de reus, 'ik wist niet dat er ook kabouters in de wondermeloen woonden.'

'Nou,' zei de kabouter, 'ik woonde hier eerst ook niet, maar ik was zo klein dat ik makkelijk langs je heen kon komen.' Maar toen werd de reus erg kwaad. De kabouter zette het op een rennen, dieper in de wondermeloen, en de reus kwam achter hem aan. Na een tijdje kwam ook de reus vast te zitten, en begon om hulp te roepen. Na een tijdje kwamen er reuzen die zelfs groter dan hem waren. Met z'n allen rekten ze de wondermeloen uit, zodat de reus los kon komen, en ook de fee. De reus was er zo van geschrokken dat hij nooit meer binnenin de wondermeloen wilde, en de fee is vanaf toen voor altijd in het voorste deel van de wondermeloen blijven wonen, samen met de kabouter.

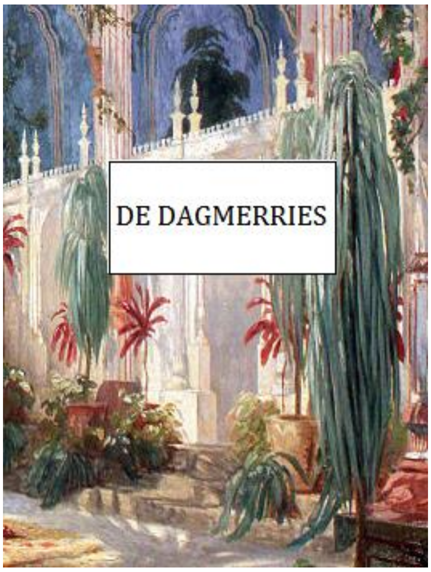
Het Tovermannetje

Er was eens een kasteel waarin indiaanse vliegen een reuzenmeloen bewaakten met daaronder een stel reuzenbananen. De reuzenmeloen droeg sieraden en was als een ravijn waarin vele bezoekers van het kasteel te pletter vielen. De reuzenbananen die daaronder lagen verslonden dan degenen die in de reuzenmeloen waren gevallen. Onder de reuzenbananen was een schatkamer. Op een dag was er een man in het kasteel die zich goed had voorbereid. Hij had gehoord van de gevaren, en had een lang touw meegenomen waarlangs hij voorzichtig naar de reuzenbananen toegleed, terwijl hij een slaapmiddel liet neervallen in de reuzenbananen. De reuzenbananen vielen direkt in slaap, en zo

kwam hij even later in de schatkamer. Maar ineens vielen indiaanse vliegen hem aan. Ze hadden gevaarlijke angels, maar de man prikte wat vruchten aan die angels. De indiaanse vliegen vonden die vruchten zo lekker dat ze de man helemaal vergaten. De man liep verder naar de schatten, en zag daarop een klein mannetje zitten. ‘Ik zit hier al tijden omdat ik de schatten moest bewaken,’ zei het mannetje. ‘Maar ik ben blij dat er iemand is gekomen.’ Doordat de reuzenbananen en de indiaanse vliegen waren uitgeschakeld kon het mannetje zijn toverkrachten weer gebruiken, en toverde hemzelf, de man en de schatten snel buiten het kasteel. Snel zochten ze toen een veilige plaats op, en leefden daar nog lang en gelukkig.

Het Wondersap

Er waren eens wat indiaanse konijnen die in een hol wilde bonen bewaakten waaruit heerlijk geurend wondersap stroomde. Op een dag lokte een man de indiaanse konijnen met heel lekker voer naar buiten, en ging toen het hol binnen. Maar de wilde bonen met het wondersap waren zo woest dat ze de man verslonden. Niet lang daarna probeerde een andere man het. Hij lokte de indiaanse konijnen naar buiten met lekker voer, ging het hol binnen en verspreidde direkt een slaapmiddel waardoor de wilde bonen slap gingen hangen en al snel in slaap vielen. Hij bracht de wilde bonen met het wondersap naar een smid, die hen in ijzer liet smelten, maar in de top lieten ze een klein gaatje zitten voor het wondersap. En zo kon de man veel wondersap verkopen, terwijl niemand wist waaruit het voortkwam.


DE DAGMERRIES

COAB 2000-2018

De Rode Nacht

Napoleon's Jas

Schilderij in Zigeuner Stad - Het Indiaanse Juweel

Roze Zwanen

Arabisch Amalgaam

Planten van Vlees

De Stad van Erotos

Avond Danser

Flamingo Dagen

Het Paarse Complot

De Roep van de Pauw

Het Apenpaleis

De Banaanse Sinaasappelkoning

Het Witte Kasteel

Medusa

Het Feest van de Toverspiegel

De Rode Nacht

Blaadjes in de diepte, een zacht licht omhullende,

Fijne sappen van de boom, van het zaad, van eeuwig leven,

Ik zocht het, en het zocht mij,

Tussen ons kon niets komen, maar het leidde mij weg tot de andere wereld,

Ik moest realiteiten zien

Blauw zaad, schietende in mijn hoofd,

Groen zaad omhult het, om het zachte geel te laten zien,

Het zachte, smeltende gele in het diepe blauw

In het diepe rode ontwaakt iets,

Het is rode nacht,

Zij gaan uit om alles recht te zetten,

Tot de steden komen zij

En zij predikten van een boek,

Als boeken in boeken,

Goden in goden, om dieper te gaan,

Zij van de rode nacht,

Als een duur schaakspel,

Ze komen om mij te zien

In de rode nacht komen zij,

Zij beschrijven het als een boek,

Het druppelt diep

Het rode had nog steeds een standbeeld in vele steden,

Het rode had deze landen gebouwd,

Het was zeer verfijnde architectuur,

De rode nacht werd altijd verwacht,

Als een brug van een andere wereld

Napoleon's Jas

'K vond Napoleon's jas in een leren tas,

En een man zei dat ik het mocht houden, en dat ik weg moest gaan,

Voordat ze van gedachtes zouden veranderen.

En ik rende het bos in, waar de wolven op me wachtten.

Mijn jas was verscheurd nadat ze mij vonden,

Zij stopten dromen in mijn hoofd,

Als een koning viel ik diep,

En ik kon niet terug naar mijn troon,

Ik zag het moordende syndroom,

Zij waren onder de betovering van wolven,

En ik wil niet meer naar huis

Helemaal onder het bloed bereikte ik de kusten van Spanje,

Maar ze was zo ijdel,

Ze glimlachte niet,

Ik was een jonge zeeman verdwaald op deze zeeën van lichten,

die mijn ogen verblindden,

Zij namen mijn zicht weg,

Telkens wanneer ik een zeemeermin hoorde roepen begon ik te stotteren en stappen terug te doen,
En ik kwam weer thuis

Diep in de sloten van Venetië liggen parels die al deze verloren verhalen vertellen,

Napoleon's jas op mijn rug,

Het doet me pijn, maar het geneest me zo

Ik had de jas van Napoleon,

Het stak me en omhelsde me,

Het liet me diep vallen,

Terwijl Franse schoolboeken mij wurgden,

Als een zondvloed, terwijl ik de ark van Noach moest bouwen

Ik rende het bos in met de jas van Napoleon aan,

Waar de wolven waren,

Mijn jas was verscheurd, en ik lag op de grond,

Bloed stroomde uit mijn mond,

Wat had ik mezelf aangedaan ?

Mijn jas had ik nog steeds aan,

En toen rende ik weer, door de weilanden,

Naar huis, naar jou

Jij zag de jas niet,

Je zag alleen het licht in mijn ogen,

Jij nam me in jouw armen om mij te kalmeren,

Maar toen namen de wolven jou ook,

En verscheurden je als een lappen pop

Ik was in de hel, ver weg van jou,

Brandende op de vuilnis velden,

Als een weggegooid stuk speelgoed,

Mijn plastic smolt, maar mijn jas had ik nog steeds aan

En niemand kan dichtbij mij komen,

Ik ben onder een betovering,

En niemand kan mij genezen,

Vanwege mijn jas,

Maar ik zal weer koning zijn

Ik zag je hierna niet meer terug,

Ik wilde het niet meer zien,

Dus ik deed de televisie uit, en rende weg

Schilderij in Zigeuner Stad - Het Indiaanse Juweel

Het voelde aan als de roos, en overboord, toen ik zwom naar de stad.

Het was een stad van vliezen, vliezen van rozen, en tederheid.

Alles was zo slaperig hier en dromerig.

De rode gloed laat tragedie zien, degene van wie ik houd, en degene die bij me bleef in de diepste nacht.

De muren zijn dik en hard, maar met haar zijn ze zacht.

Ik zie het gras en de modder, en zij genezen me zo.

Deze stenen zijn allen van de aarde.

Je kan je alles herinneren wanneer je ze aanraakt.

Maar ik kan me bijna niet bewegen, want ik ben bevroren,

En ik kan bijna mijn tranen inhouden, maar ik heb jou.

Ik stierf voor jou, en ging daar in jouw plaats.

Ik nam jouw plaats, kun je dat niet zien ? Ik was daar alleen.

Maar ik heb jou nu, en ik zal je nooit laten gaan, nee.

Jij gaf mij leven toen ik de bodem van jouw put bereikte,

Jij gaf me de munt. Je hebt het gezicht van Maria van Magdalena, maar vraag me niet wie ze is,

Ik zag haar gezicht eens op een tijdschrift.

En haar gezicht was zwart, donker, en haar tranen waren rood als bloed.

Ze was bedekt met modder.

Maar genoeg over haar, want het is nu jij en ik, samen in deze stad.

De stenen zijn zo groot, ik kon ze niet meer doorslikken.

En in deze stad, deze stad, dit is mijn thuis.

Het voelde zo rooskleurig en overboord aan toen ik je vond.

Ik vond jou in die kamer, kan je het je herinneren ?

Jij en je paarden, kant en leer, en ze waren zo trots.

Jij was hun kleine pop, en ik was jouw kleine joker,

Ik maakte je altijd aan het lachen, maar binnenin weende ik, en schreeuwde ik.

Ik was nog maar een kind, en nog steeds, dus wees niet te hard voor me.

Toen ik de stad inzwom zag ik de boten.

Deze zigeuner stad hield de indiaanse juweel vast.

De sluiers waren zo diep verscheurd, zoals wij waren.

Mijn hart was rooskleurig en overboord, omgeven met doornen,

Ik was het voedsel van haaien, zoveel tanden in de nacht.

Maar dit waren slechts schepen, oorlogsschepen van de indiaanse juweel, die mij binnen leidden.

Ik moest je zien. Diep in de buik van de haai vond ik jouw instrumenten, en zij bevrijdden mij.

Jij deed dit ook voor mij.

Deze stad is lang, bewaakt door mysterie.

Rode leren laarzen leidden mij terug naar jou.

Hun kleuren zijn bleek, en jij bent tussen de veren.

Maar kunnen we dit schilderij niet beter achterlaten ?

Roze Zwanen

Hoofdstuk 1. Het Zwaard Van Calvijn

De vlaggen hingen uit buiten. Hij zat in zijn zitstoel, zijn vrouw was in de keuken. Hij had net het gras weer eens gemaait, wat hij wekelijks deed. Hij staarde naar buiten, naar de begroeiing op de muur. De metalen platen zaten er goed vast tegenaan, en daar groeiden de planten omheen. Dat kon hem niet wild genoeg zijn. Hij was altijd al geinteresseerd geweest in tuinieren, en hij had dan ook echt zijn eigen stijl, vurig, wild, maar ook piekfijn geordend. Het was een samenspel tussen natuur en mens. Hij had vroeger altijd bij de politie gewerkt, en daar ging het er eigenlijk hetzelfde aan toe : de buurt was wild, en de politie bracht orde, en zo was er een prachtig samenspel, heen en weer. De politie mocht volgens hem de soep niet te heet opdienen, en zo liet hij dan ook de natuur in zijn tuin een zekere vrijheid hebben. Wel

hield hij alles goed in de gaten. Hij had een zekere strengheid als hij naar zijn tuin keek. Zijn vrouw kwam de huiskamer binnen met de koffie. Ze zeiden niks tegen elkaar. Het zonlicht golfde de kamer binnen toen zijn vrouw het gordijn iets verder opendeed. Beiden staarden ze naar buiten, de tuin in. De sproeier stond aan, het was een warme dag. Aan de dag scheen geen einde te komen. Zijn vrouw was aan het breien, en hij staarde maar. Geen woord werd er gezegd. Het leek wel alsof zijn denken vastzat. Hij hoorde het getik van de brei-pennen van zijn vrouw. Het leek wel alsof ze heel ver weg zat. Of kwam dat door de vele spullen die er tussenstonden. De tegels op de grond glansten in het zonlicht, maar ze werden er niet bruiner op. Het was een harde vloer. Je zou makkelijk wat kunnen breken als je erop viel. Er lagen ook wat tapijtjes in de grote huiskamer. Ze hadden een groot huis, een alleenstaand huis. Ook het fonteintje in de vijver stond aan. Hij worstelde zichzelf door de dag. Hij verveelde zich, maar wist niet wat hij moest doen. Hij bleef het tikken van de brei-pennen van zijn vrouw maar horen. Kinderen hadden ze niet, nee, ze waren tamelijk eenzaam. De man stond op en liep naar de kast, waar hij een fles sterke drank uittrok, en gaf zijn vrouw ook wat. Ze hielden wel van een borrel. Dat was goed voor het bloed, en dat hielp hen op de been. Eigenlijk leken ze in hun leven niet meer verder te komen. Ze waren in een nauw cirkeltje terecht gekomen, en gingen bergafwaarts. Ze leefden geisoleerd. Er was nauwelijks contact met de buitenwereld, en daar hadden ze ook geen behoefte aan. De tuin was alles voor hen, en hun woning. Zijn vrouw was vroeger arts geweest, voornamelijk kinderarts, maar moest later stoppen vanwege haar alcoholisme. Nu had ze het veel beter onder controle. Haar man hield de wacht over haar, maar liet haar nog wel genieten van een borreltje op zijn tijd. Toch waren de twee erg zwaarmoedig en hielden er een kerkelijk leven op na. De kerk was alles voor hen, voornamelijk op de zondag. Een grote bijbel lag naast de openhaard. Het geloof in God gaf hen rust, als een oase in de woestijn van hun ouderdom.

Op zondag na de kerkdienst fietsten ze samen naar huis. Het was warm weer. Maar al snel zaten ze weer in hun oude positie. Hij had niet veel behoefte om dingen te gaan doen, ook al verveelde hij zich. Hij trok zich op aan de structuur van zijn tuin en zijn huis, wat hij streng in de gaten hield. Het was als het werken in de tempel, alsof hij in de kerk woonde. Hij voelde zich een nauwlettende koster, en dat was hij vroeger ook geweest. Veel was hij bezig met zijn herinneringen, die hem ook half depressief maakten. Een heleboel dingen zou hij terugwillen, maar ze waren onbereikbaar. Het was een treurig stel, en velen zouden hen saai noemen. Als ze kleinkinderen zouden hebben, dan zouden die hier geen leven hebben. In zijn gedachten was hij altijd de tuin en het huis aan het maaien. De gelakte spulletjes waren als hun huisdieren. Maar het ging niet zo goed met zijn vrouw. Ze was aan het dementeren, en dat riep ook wel heel veel herinneringen bij hem op. Op een gegeven moment kon ze niet langer in huis blijven, en moest ze naar een verzorgings-tehuis. Hij kon dat moeilijk accepteren, maar hij had geen andere keus. Hij voelde zich al als een weduwenaar. Het was als een trauma in zijn hoofd, maar het kerkelijk leven beurde hem op. Hij wist dat zijn vrouw een verloren zaak was. Ook de tuin gaf hem rust. De maaiers in zijn hoofd waren nu als van vuur, als grillen. Hij had nu het gevoel dat hij de touwtjes nog strakker moest trekken. Nog steeds stonden de protserige spulletjes van zijn vrouw hier, de beeldjes, de hebbedingetjes, het antiek, en het gaf hem een gevoel van verbinding met haar. Aan de telefoon kon hij niet meer met haar praten, en ze wist nog nauwelijks wie hij was. Ze was aan het aftakelen tot aan het bot.

Hij ging meer en meer drinken, om het verdriet over zijn vrouw te vergeten, en bezocht kroegen voor het eerst in zijn leven. Het huis en de tuin werden wilder, omdat hij het onderhoud niet meer kon bijhouden, en het was voor hem ook geen prioriteit meer. Hij raakte verslaafd aan de fles, zoals zijn vrouw eens was. Hij kwam in het rijk der schimmen. De alcohol bracht hem een felle stem in zijn hoofd. Met het vele geld dat hij had schafte hij een bar aan in zijn eigen huis, helemaal voor hemzelf. Ook ontving hij vrouwen van lichte zeden aan huis. Maar deze tijden liepen snel ten einde, door het knagend kerkelijk geweten binnenin. De God in zijn hoofd sleepte hem naar het graf, en sprak hem ernstig toe. Hij probeerde zo min mogelijk na te denken, en weer begon het vele staren. Hij was zelf ook door maaiers omringd, de gouden maaiers van de kerk. Zij zouden hem veilig leiden tot aan het graf en tot de hemelpoort. De bijbel scheen hem weer nieuwe kracht te geven, en hij las er veel in, en spoedig begon hij ook zijn tuin en huis te onderhouden als nooit tevoren. Ook koken ging hem goed af, ook al waren het alleen maar de standaard-gerechten. Maar het was alsof iets hem van binnen aanvrat, alsof er een spin in hem leefde. Wat als hij niet een uitverkorene was van de God die hij diende ? Het zwaard van Calvijn sneed diep in zijn ziel. Hoe meer hij de bijbel las, hoe meer hij ook de duistere andere kant van het verhaal zag. Vooral na zijn wilde uitstapjes begon hij de hel meer te vrezen dan ooit. Misschien was de God die hij diende wel helemaal niet zo tevreden over hem. En velen waren geroepen, maar weinig uitverkoren. Hij kwam in de eerstegrote geloofs-strijd van zijn leven, en lijstjes over wie er allemaal niet het koninkrijk des hemels zouden beerven bleven hem kwellen tot diep in de nacht. Het was alsof hij door duiveltjes was gebonden. Misschien ging hij er iets te hypnotisch mee om, maar hij kon er niet van loskomen, totdat ook bij hem Alzheimer toesloeg.

Hij wist niet meer wat de bijbel was. Hij kon er uren naar staren, naar het kaft, maar wist het niet meer. Was het het dagboek van zijn vrouw ? Of het wetboek van de politie, was het pornografisch ? Was het onzedelijkheid ? Een enorme woede maakte zich van hem meester. Hij kon het zich niet meer herinneren. Wel wist hij dat het altijd heel belangrijk voor hem was. Was het een erfenis van zijn vader ? Waren het de liefdesbrieven van meisjes die hij in zijn jonge jaren kreeg ? Was het grootmoeders kookboek ? Een uitgelopen folder van de jehovah’s getuigen ? Een boek van een ons onbekende religie ? Was het een geschiedenis boek. Het zweet steeg hem naar het hoofd. Hij was bijna aan het klappertanden, aan het beven als een jong hondje. Was het een toverboek ? Nee, toverboeken bestonden niet. Een verzameling niet betaalde rekeningen ? Misschien was het van zijn vrouw ? Hij besloot het boek weer neer te leggen. In de kerk kwam hij niet meer. Hij voelde zich als levende achter tralies. Hij wist niet meer wie hij was. Hij werd als een wild dier.

Hij kon uren staren naar dingen, om zich af te vragen wat het was. Hij was de grip op de werkelijkheid kwijt. Het maakte hem kwaad, dat zijn hersenen hem in de steek lieten. Maar aan de andere kant kwam hij erg tot rust. Het leven was hier zwoel. Hij voelde zichzelf als levende op een tropisch eiland, badend in het warme zeewater. Het normale leven drong niet meer tot hem door, en waarom zou dat moeten ? Hij snapte de kaartjes die hij kreeg niet. Hij dacht dat het kokosnoten waren, of dat het herfst was. Weer wat blaadjes die van de bomen zijn gevallen. Soms probeerde hij ze op te eten, soms hing hij ze aan de muur. Sommige van die kaarten waren prachtig. Op een dag besloot hij zijn hele huis rood te verven, maar toen hem dat niet beviel verfde hij alles bruin. Het stond nog niet eens zo gek. Hij had wel stijl. Hij probeerde af te rekenen met het verleden wat hij maar niet begreep. Hij noemde

zichzelf 'baas van de hel'. Ook dacht hij dat hij Calvijn was, maar hij wist niet meer wat Calvijn voorstelde. Hij droeg zijn oude politie-pak weer en was nu baas van de politie, iets wat hij overigens altijd al had willen zijn. Op een dag had hij even een flits in zijn hoofd. 'Had Calvijn niet de bijbel geschreven ? Dit is mijn boek. Mijn agenda. Hierin staat wat er moet gebeuren.' Hij greep de bijbel en liep ermee rond. Hij riep en schold, alsof hij een dictator was. Maar hij raakte in de war van zichzelf en plofte op de bank. Toen ging hij maar weer de tuin instaren. Hij werd er stil van.

In zijn hoofd regende het, en na een tijdje werd hij bedlegerig. Vreemde gezichten zag hij in zijn gedachten, die dan allemaal weer vermengd werden. Hij kon zich niets meer herinneren. Ondanks zijn ziekte had hij een goede tijd. In zijn gedachten waren bomen personen en konden spreken, en hij voerde lange gesprekken met hen. Hij betuttelde hen, omdat hij nu eens eindelijk zijn onderdrukte vader gevoel kon manifesteren. De bomen in zijn hoofd waren als zijn kinderen. 'Jullie zijn de vrucht van mijn tuin,' zei hij altijd. 'Dan is het allemaal toch niet voor niets geweest.' De bomen in zijn hoofd gaven hem zijn geheugen weer een beetje terug, maar op een hele andere manier, met een hele andere kijk op het leven. Maar de bomen in zijn hoofd begonnen te rotten en stierven. Het was een hevig gevecht, want hij beschouwde hen als zijn kinderen. Hij werd weer geconfronteerd met de dorheid van het bestaan, hij nam het stof waar, om hem heen. 'Alles is een bende,' zei hij. Het was een traumatische ervaring zijn kinderen te moeten verliezen. Er was een begrafenis-stemming in zijn hoofd. Maar bloesem scheen voort te komen uit het dode hout, vrouwen. 'Mijn kinderen zijn gestorven,' zei hij. 'Hebben jullie hen niet kunnen redden ?' Maar de vrouwen zeiden niks. Ze waren naakt. 'Toe, trek wat aan,' zei hij. 'Anders sterven jullie zo van de kou.'

'Wij gaan niet dood,' zeiden de vrouwen. 'Wij zijn de vlammetjes van het eeuwig leven. En wij gaan u weer jong maken.'

'Oh, de bron van de eeuwige jeugd,' zei de man. 'Zo, zo.' Maar de man werd steeds zieker. Zijn gedachten kwamen vast te zitten, en hij waande zich in de woestijn. Hij had niet eens de kracht een raam open te zetten. Er kwam een verzorgster langs, elke dag. Die moest dat maar doen. Ze wilden hem eigenlijk naar een verpleeghuis verplaatsen, maar hij wilde zijn huis niet kwijt. Zijn huis en zijn tuin, dat was alles voor hem, zijn tempel. 'De goden hebben mij hier gebracht,' zei hij.

'U bent een kind van de goden ?' vroeg de verzorgster.

'Ja,' zei hij triomfantelijk, 'of hun vader.' De verzorgster las hem vaak voor uit de bijbel, maar hij begreep er niet veel van. Hij zag er hele andere dingen in, en het raakte hem niet meer. 'Wat een mooi sprookjesboek,' zei hij altijd. 'Het schuift maar, en het doet maar, en het komt maar nooit aan in mijn hart, maar het is een mooi gezicht, dat wel.'

‘Je bent zo mooi als mijn vrouw eens was,’ zei de man op een dag tegen de verzorgster. ‘Mijn vrouw was als een tuin, vol wonderlijke geheimen, en toen ik dacht, nu wil ik eindelijk dat geheim weten, toen ging ze weg. Ze werd van mij weggetrokken, naar een verpleeghuis. Maar ik had het boek nog niet uitgelezen.’

‘Veel dingen zullen nooit afkomen,’ zei de verzorgster. ‘Er is niet voor alles tijd.’

‘Is dat niet sneu ?’ vroeg de man. ‘Of misschien hoort het zo. Weet je hoe ik het bekijk, ik denk dat het verhaal in een ander boek verder gaat.’

De verzorgster knikt. De kamer was vol met de geur van de tuin, gloeiende rozenblaadjes, gloeiend in de zon, bijna schroeiend. Het leek alsof ze van binnen bloedden. ‘We zijn soldaten in de oorlog,’ zei de man. ‘We moeten ons pad zien te vinden. Zovelen weten niet wat hen te wachten staat, als ze dieper in de tuin van het leven komen. Alles sterft hier af.’ De verzorgster knikt weer. ‘Ja, we moeten op die andere frequentie zien te komen,’ zegt ze. ‘Want deze loopt dood. Het is een overgang, je voelt de stromen van de bloemen door de lucht heengaan om het pad voor ons te banen. Voelt u dat ?’

‘Ja,’ zegt de man. ‘De bloemen weten meer dan wij. Dat is waarom ik altijd van tuinen heb gehouden. Er zijn daar geheime gangen. Zij kunnen leiden tot de hemel.’ Midden in de nacht groef de man zich in in de grond. ‘Ik wil een bloem worden,’ zei hij. Het was tijd dat hij een plaats kreeg in het verpleeghuis. Hij had het niet meer in de gaten, dat dit niet zijn eigen huis was. Hij was zich niet echt bewust van de overgang. En de verzorgster zocht hem nog vaak op, en er was een prachtige tuin, nog wel prachtiger dan zijn eigen tuin ooit was geweest. ‘Wat is mijn tuin toch prachtig geworden,’ zei hij trots. En als andere mensen over de schoonheid van de tuin spraken, dan zei hij altijd : ‘Ja, ik heb er hard aan gewerkt. Het is niet voor niets geweest, al die lange jaren.’ Ook het huis zag er pico bello uit, en hij voelde zich als een koning. In het verpleeghuis werden ook kerkdiensten gehouden, maar hij zei altijd tegen de predikant dat hij de politie was. Hij begreep de werkelijke strekking van het verhaal niet meer. Mensen vonden het altijd een beetje vreemd als hij over zijn kinderen, de goden, sprak. Veel van de mensen daar waren toch wel diep gelovig. Hij kon verschrikkelijk opscheppen, en vaak had hij het hoogste woord. Over zijn vrouw die de hemelpoort zou zijn, en dat iedereen zijn vrouw moest aanbidden om in de hemel te kunnen komen. Maar eigenlijk wist hij niet goed meer wat de hemel was. Eens stapte hij op een andere man af met zijn glas, wees in het glas en zei : ‘Zie, daar is de hemel.’ En sommige mensjes waren erg goedgelovig.

Op een dag moest en zou hij preken. Hij duwde bijna de predikant weg van zijn plaats, ging staan en zei : ‘Geliefde broeders en zusters, wij, de goden, hebben vandaag besloten u op deze

manier toe te spreken. U bent aangekomen in de hemel, gefeliciteerd. U mag elkaar de hand schudden en kussen.' En enkelen begonnen dat ook te doen, maar anderen werden overstuur. 'Ik ben de kapitein van het schip,' zei de man. 'En wie het daar niet mee eens is wordt overboord gezet.' Na een tijdje luisterden ze allemaal aandachtig naar hem. Hij bedoelde het niet kwaad. Na een tijdje stapte hij op, maar al snel wilden ze hem weer hebben. Elke zondag wilden ze naar hem luisteren. Ook de verzorgsters en verzorgers vonden het interessant. Ze stonden ervan te kijken hoe snel hij opleefde in het verpleeghuis. Hoe hij zich vrijer voelde dan hij ooit was geweest. 'Een groot profeet is opgestaan,' riep een man eens tijdens zijn preek.

Hij heeft zijn oude levensstijl vergeten, zijn oude denkstijl, en kan niet meer terug. Hij heeft het gevoel dat er wat fout zit, en kan daar vaak kwaad om worden. Hij wil weer tuinieren, en wordt kwaad als het niet lukt. Een vreemd gevoel heeft zich van hem meester gemaakt, en vreet hem aan van binnenuit. Alsof er een spin in hem leeft, dodelijk, onvermoeibaar, met een duidelijk doel. En hij ligt verstrikt in het web. Wat kan hij doen ? Alle oplevingen zijn maar voor even, om daarna nog dieper weg te vallen. Hij bereidt zich voor op de dood, die maar niet komt. Als hij vrouwen ziet borduren, is het alsof zij hem van binnen prikken. Hij kan daar kwaad om worden. Hij raakt meer en meer geisoleerd van de anderen. Hij heeft zijn eigen kamer. Nog steeds denkt hij dat het zijn eigen huis is, en dat de anderen noodgedwongen bij hem logeren, want buiten is de grote zee, de vloed. Hij herinnert zich een oud kinderversje : Alle dieren twee aan twee, gaan met Noachs ark mee. Hij is er van overtuigd dat hij Noach is, en dat hij hen allemaal gered heeft met zijn ark, zijn huis. Maar nu heeft hij rust nodig. 'Waarom ben ik zo moe in het paradijs ?' vraagt hij zich af. 'Is er soms een slang in het paradijs ? Ben ik gebeten ? Of is dit de hel, is dit mijn straf, ben ik niet uitverkoren ?' Maar de religieuze verwarring maakt al snel weer plaats voor de grote trots over wat hij allemaal al heeft bereikt in zijn leven : kapitein op een schip. Hij wijt zijn religieus trauma aan een vroegere aanval van zeerovers. Die zouden hem op zijn hoofd hebben geslagen. Zijn geheugen gaat op en naar en maakt rare draaiingen. En dan valt hij op een dag helemaal in een grijs gat. Alles tolt voor zijn ogen. 'De zeerovers,' roept hij. 'Ze hebben teruggeslagen.' En dan zijn ineens zijn woorden niet verstaanbaar meer. In zijn hersenen gaat alles traag, alsof ze alles vermalen wat nog is overgebleven. Het is hem zwart voor de ogen nu. Hij kan zijn gedachten niet meer onder woorden brengen. Hij denkt dat hij overboord gegooid is, en dat vissen hem aanvreten, haaien. Hij zweeft op het randje van de dood. Hij ziet bloeidende tuinen, gloeiend, bijna schroeiend in de zon. Hij denkt dat hij dood is. Hij voelt zich alsof hij door een donkere gang met bloemen gaat. Hij kan met de bloemen spreken, ze verwelkomen hem. Maar dan is alle verbinding verbroken, en is alles zwart. Hij voelt zich hopeloos verloren, maar even later lijkt het alsof hij in een bloem ligt. De dood ademt hier.

Hij leeft weer in het verleden, alsof zijn vrouw er nog is, zijn zusjes, zijn vader en moeder. Zijn zusjes spelen op het plein. Ze zien eruit als popjes. Hij wil ze omhelzen, maar dan staat hij stijf. Zijn vader roept hem. 'Zeg Noach, afwassen.' Ook gaan ze naar de kerk. De stem van de dominee echoot door de kerkzaal. Hij zit weer op school. De leraren staan voor hun schoolborden, waaruit struiken komen om de kinderen mee te nemen. 'Eindelijk,' denkt hij. Al zijn nachtmerries komen terug, de struiken die hun dorens in de monden van jonge kinderen stoppen, en hen in hun tanden steken. En die dorens blijven daar zitten. En pepermunt wordt er in de kerk uitgedeeld, van de mintstruik.

‘Ik vraag jullie te luisteren,’ zegt de leraar.

- Nee, zegt een kind.

‘Dan ga je maar naar de directeur.’

- Geen sprake van.

Zo gaat dat altijd. Moe wordt hij ervan. Altijd en eeuwig die dictators. Slangen in het paradijs. Zijn hoofd is heet, zijn oude woede stroomt. Hij heeft zijn vrouw nodig, de poort naar de hemel. Maar hij is jonger nu, en speelt op het plein. De kinderen hebben ruzie. Honden in het paradijs. Ze rennen, ze zijn op jacht. Het zijn vuurbessen in zijn hoofd, de honden van gebrek. Hij ziet de engel des doods, zo vroeg al, zich mengende in het kinderspel. Zijn bittere klauw beroert het zoete kinderhart, en plant het trauma daar, als een pad leidende tot de dood. Zo zijn wij allen hier opgehangen. En op het huwelijk ? Trots kijkt zij hem aan, en dan wordt de spiegel ineens ingeslagen. De engel des doods is hier. Ruw worden kinderdromen verstoord, moeders en vaders gillen. De engel des doods vertrekt met het kind, met de pop, ramen inslaande, deuren intrappende, baant hij zijn weg. De engel des doods is hier, waar Maria haar niet kan tegenhouden. Het is een vrouw, het gezicht van een lerares, een dokter, een arrogante blik. Ze heeft haar lange reis gemaakt vanuit de hel om toe te slaan. De oogst van de hel is bijna rijp, hier staat zij met haar sikkel en zeis, als de Zwarte Maria. Hij smeekt haar het kind te sparen, maar koelbloedig neemt zij het kind mee.

Onbarmhartig heeft zij toegeslagen. Bij het zien van het leed verroerde zij geen vin, koud als de dood was zij. Haar angel vindt haar weg door harten, om te verwonden. Zij sluit geen compromissen, laat zich niet omkopen. Haar zwarte klauw komt om te grijpen en te doden. Zij komt om te breken, om dat wat alreeds zwak is gemaakt mee te nemen. Ze laat woede achter, onbegrip, verscheurde gevoelens, een doorboord hart.

In haar doolhoven zijn we verdwaald, in haar web verstrikt. De confrontatie is onvermijdelijk. Ze laat al haar wapens zien in een reflex. Ze heeft een dodelijke wond, want eens kwam ze haarzelf halen. De engel des levens kijkt haar goedkeurend en bewonderend aan, en we staan schaakmat. Is er nog een andere engel die meeleven toont, dan is dat een gevallen engel, en zo wordt alles weggestreept. Hij wil opstaan uit de kerk, maar hij kan het niet. De woorden van de dominee geven hem troost.

De koude hand voelt hij, die zijn schouder indrukt, het machteloze gevoel, de woede, maar het woord van de dominee is verzachtend, ontgiftigend, totdat de engel des doods weer toeslaat. Haar reis vanuit de de hel stopt hier. Hier neemt zij haar woning. Maria draagt een zwart kleed, haar soldaten hebben zwarte helmen, en die zwarte bessen moeten gegeten worden. Hij schreeuwt, vol woede, maar ze sluiten hem op. Een gevallen engel noemen zij hem. Een engel ? Wat is dat ? Heeft dat met een auto-industrie te maken ? En de bijbel, wat is dat dan ? Hij weet het niet meer, in zijn hersenen verliest hij grip. Er is een koud gat in zijn hersenen, glibberig, als besmeurd met uitwerpselen. Het is maar een darm. Voedselresten, niets anders, en een grotere vertering moet nog komen ? Of blijft het hierbij ?

Hij staat op straat, het regent. De stad lijkt bezaait met hondenpoep, en nu zwemt het rond in de regen die zich ophoopt op de grond. Kinderen hebben plezier in rubberbootjes. Hier hebben ze altijd van gedroomd. Diepliggende garages lopen onder. Hij kijkt rond. Hij heeft een paraplu. Zo maakt de bakker dus zijn brood, denkt hij.

Hij mag er wezen. Hij voelt zich vrij. Het is dinsdag. Hij loopt naar de brug over het smalle riviertje. Dan gaat hij de winkelstraat in. Hij leest een krant die in het regenwater drijft, althans dat probeert hij. Op zoek naar een gouden boodschap, maar al wat hij ziet zijn de eentonige, naargeestige boodschappen van de engel des doods. Met monotone stappen loopt hij verder. ‘Hier woonde Iris vroeger,’ bedacht hij zich. Maar hij loopt haastig door. Het water is hem bijna tot de knieen gestegen. De stad lijkt nu bezaaid met de uitwerpselen van honden. Het zijn de honden van gebrek, maar hij is gelukkig nu. De apocalypse kent hij nu, de schalen des hemels die over het verloederd volk wordt uitgegoten. Hier heeft hij zo lang op gewacht. En het regent maar door, en de dijken breken door, en hij klimt in een boom. Dit is de boom waar hij als kind altijd in speelde, waar hij zijn hutten had, en zijn eerste vriendinnetjes. De boom was nu veel langer. Ja, hij zou de zondvloed overleven. Deze boom, als de kroon van zijn tuin. Lange schaakstukken staan op de dijken.

Hij zoent met Klara, dan met Els, maar op Klara wordt hij steeds verliefder. Hij trouwt met haar, alles in het wit. De tuin is voor hem het belangrijkste. Die boom moet groeien, anders redden we het niet. Op de dijken en duinen loopt hij, de koppen afhakkende van lange schaakstukken. Zij zijn de weg naar de hemel niet, en hij is de politie. Het gaat om de boom. Maar nieuwe koppen komen uit de schaakstukken ploppen. Hij is in een gevecht met de engel des doods. En de engel des levens lacht. Ze waren zo verliefd. Hij ziet haar staan, bij de brug, Kirsten, zijn eerste liefde. Ze is in schitterend wit met allerlei hangende touwtjes. Hij komt dichterbij en de bliksem slaat hem. Ze staan bij een boom, een andere boom, en dan kussen ze elkaar. Een langere jongen gaat er uiteindelijk met haar vandoor, en dan wordt ze een popje van een andere tuin, vreemd voor hem. En de jaren daarvoor was de liefde in hem zo zwak dat hij alleen maar kon dromen. Er waren zoveel andere dingen in hem die hij veel belangrijker vond. Een auto was belangrijker dan een meisje. De juffrouw was belangrijker dan een meisje. De sterkste zijn was belangrijker dan een meisje. Het meeste hebben was belangrijker dan een meisje. Hij trok aan datgene wat de engel des doods vasthield. Hij wist niet wat het

was, maar hij wilde het hebben. Een ongelovelijke kracht maakte zich van hem meester, een jeugdige kracht, en zij liet los. Hij hoorde een schreeuw, een gil. Hij hield de engel des levens in zijn armen. Hij trok haar door het inmiddels tot de nek gestegen regenwater. 'Kom naar de boom,' riep hij.

'Wij weten allemaal wat de enige weg is,' zei de dominee. Hij wist het niet meer. 'Ja, maar de stad, de stad,' riep hij.

'Grijp de boom,' riep de dominee. 'Kus haar. Beklim haar. Ze is van jou. Ik verklaar u nu man en vrouw. En deze bijbel mag jullie huwelijk bezegelen.' Hij wist niet wat de bijbel was. 'Liefdesbrieven van Klara of van mijn eerdere liefdes ?'

'Allemaal,' zei de dominee. 'Onderhoud nu je tuin.'

'Bind haar aan de boom,' riep iemand. 'Trek haar op,' riep een ander. Een politie-agent deed hem in de boeien. 'Waarom heeft u deze vrouw opgehangen ?'

'Ik probeerde haar te redden. Ik ben zelf een politie-agent,' zei hij.

'U moet voorkomen bij de engel des doods,' zei de agent. Ze zat daar in de hal, vooroorlogs. 'Nu is het oorlog,' riep ze. 'Je hebt het vuur van de goden gestolen, Prometheus, en aan de mensen gegeven. Je kent je straf.' Een gier vloog op hem af, om van zijn lever te eten, die tegelijkertijd weer aangroeide. 'Gier,' zij hij. 'Breng haar tot de ark, de grote boom, we missen nog een paar dieren.'

De gier vloog op haar af en greep haar.

Hoofdstuk 2. De Oase

Ze had satijn aan, als een popje. De juffrouw had alle kinderen onder haar macht. Als haar poppen waren ze, en ze behandelde hen goed. Alle jongens waren verliefd op de juffrouw, maar er waren belangrijkere dingen dan de juffrouw. Het jaar daarop kregen ze een nieuwe

juffrouw, een verschrikkelijke, het tegenovergestelde van de vorige juffrouw. De nieuwe juffrouw was als de engel des doods, als een wild en gevaarlijk dier. En toch wist ze zich te gedragen dat jaar, en kwamen ze er heelhuids doorheen, en het was maar voor een jaar. De dag des doods was voorbij. Het schip triomfeerde in de haven, aan de kade. ‘Moet dat nou, al dat bloot ?’ vroeg zijn vader toen hij meer en meer ging tekenen.

‘Ja, open en bloot,’ zei hij. ‘Ik laat ze niks meer verbergen. Dieren zijn toch ook bloot ?’

‘Het is een onderwaardering van het vrouwelijke geslacht,’ zei vader. ‘Zie jij vrouwen als dieren ?’

‘Bomen staan toch ook bloot ?’ zei hij. ‘Het is onze enige redding.’

‘Nee,’ zei vader, ‘je weet wie onze enige redding is.’

Maar hij wist het niet meer. Hij was gefixeerd op de boom. De noot moest gekraakt worden, gepeld, tot aan de pit. ‘We hebben lang genoeg gewacht, vader,’ zei hij.

‘Jij groeit op voor galg en rad,’ zei vader.

‘En jij groeit op voor de kus van de engel des doods,’ zei hij tegen vader.

Maar het schip triomfeerde in de haven, aan de kade. De lage boompjes op de grond, de struiken in het diepe zand, warm zand was het, en het leek alsof ze allemaal bewust waren. Het zonlicht leek rinkelend. Hij kon het zich niet meer herinneren, en werd een treurig persoon. Hij wist snel niet meer wat bomen waren. Het dwaalde allemaal op hem heen. Hij lag vaak op bed. Hij was vaak moe, als gekust door de engel des doods. Een diersoort was het in zijn ogen, gemeen, opdringerig.

‘Praat niet zo over engelen,’ zei vader. ‘Het zijn heilige wezens.’ Maar hij wist niet meer wat heilig was. Er was een diep gemis in zijn hart, het knaagde. De somberheid van het alledaagse leven overspoelde hem, verlamde hem.

‘Trouw haar,’ zei de dominee. Het was zijn verlossing uit dat gezin. Klara dronk veel, en hij lustte ook wel een borreltje op zijn tijd, en steeds meer begonnen ze zich in hun huisje terug te trekken. Het was alsof ze alcoholische sappen aan de bomen konden onttrekken. Hij likte aan de bomen.

Zij was het schilderij in zijn huis, een schilderij van groen-metalen maaiers, waarmee hij wel over elke wilde haardos wilde gaan. De groen-metalen maaiers schitterden in het zonlicht. Het was een warme, mooie dag. Ze waren als de wachters van de engel des doods. Maar ze had haar betekenis verloren. Ze was als het ei op tafel. Het was paas-ochtend, de geur van het lijden na de dood, nieuw leven brengend. Zijn vrouw stond in de keuken. Hij staarde naar de tuin. Het zou een prachtige dag worden met veel zon. Er was geen krant vandaag, en op de televisie was er het levenslied. Zijn vrouw kwam even later met de koffie binnen, en ging toen zitten om te breien. Het was alsof hij alles weer opnieuw beleefde. Ze zat ver weg van hem, of dat kwam door de vele spullen die tussen hen stonden. Het huis stond vol met de dierbare spulletjes van zijn vrouw. Er werd niet veel gezegd. Het ging bergafwaarts met zijn vrouw, en snel werd ze door de engel des doods weggehaald. Een groot ei zweefde boven de vijver. Deze had zijn vrouw opgeslokt. Het was alweer pasen. Het jaar daarna was hij alleen. Hij at veel eieren, om iets van zijn vrouw terug te krijgen, maar hij ving veel bot. Hij liet schilderijen in zijn huis hangen, Franse schilderijen, met wulpse gestaltes die ’s nachts tot leven kwamen, tot hem kwamen, om hem te beladen met kerkelijke schuld. Hij wist dat er wat mis was met hem. Hij had aan bomen gelikt.

De nachten duurden lang, waren diep, waarin hij vele gesprekken voerde, naar de schilderijen staarde. Hij liet een bar plaatsen. De gestaltes van de schilderijen moesten zijn vrouw vervangen, de leegtes opvullen. Maar de kerkelijke prijs was hoog, een prijs die opliep tot aan pasen. Hij was de gekruisigde, hij was de engel des doods. Hij was voortijdig gekomen, gevallen was hij. Maar het grote boek begon de betekenissen te veranderen. Het was een draaiboek, een boek van rekeningen, en hij doneerde veel geld om zijn geweten los te kopen, uit deze hel. Hij was het zelf die die lange reis vanuit de hel had gemaakt, en nu was hij hier, met al zijn groengelakte maaiers. De tuin vroeg erom om gemaaid te worden, en het was een mooie dag. De tuin was klaar om haar oogst te geven. Hij greep, miste, en greep nog een keer, en was vereeuwigd in een schilderij. Hij met de zeis, gedood om te doden. De vlaggen hingen uit buiten. Hij herinnerde de verzorgster die kwam. Hij liet haar ook aan bomen likken, en zij werd als hem. Zij leerde van hem. Hij had een machts-positie. Zij aanbad hem omdat hij ouder was, en veelkleurig was. Voor haar was hij niet ziek maar vrij, een verlicht mens. Hij liet haar het schilderij zien waarop hij stond. ‘Is dat je grootvader ?’ vroeg ze.

- Nee, dat ben ik.

‘Je lijkt veel ouder hier.’

- Macht verouderd.

‘Wie heeft het geschilderd ?’

Hij zwijgt, en hangt het schilderij weer terug. Met pasen eten ze altijd samen paas-eitjes. Dan herinnert hij zich niks meer, en gaat terug in de tijd, zo ver, dat hij bij de witte lijnen aankomt. Als hij erover gaat zal hij sterven. Hij beweegt zich helemaal tot het randje van de laatste streep. Hij kijkt in de diepte van een reusachtig ravijn. ‘Hier wil ik niet sterven,’ denkt hij. Hij gaat terug, en hoort zijn vader en moeder tot hem spreken, hem betuttelen. Hij is niet vrij. Strak wordt hij opgevoed. Zijn vader bespeelt hem als een pop. Zijn moeder kan hem niet bereiken. Hij heeft een ei met vele stralen in zijn hart. ‘Alleen een vrouw kan me hieruit redden,’ denkt hij.

‘Wil je met haar trouwen ?’ vraagt de dominee.

‘Ja,’ zegt hij.

‘Dan is zij nu uw vrouw.’

De kerkdienst gaat verder. Zijn vader en moeder zijn verdrietig omdat ze hem kwijt zijn. Ze wilden hem in een hokje houden. De dominee neemt het hok over. Als dieren zijn ze in het schip van Noach, twee aan twee. Zijn vrouw kan goed naaien en breien. En borduren doet ze ook graag, maar het steekt hem. Het steekt hem dat ze toch ook zo ver weg is. Ze leven in verschillende werelden. Ze breekt zoveel van zijn hart weg, door haar geprik, als een spin die hem van binnen aanvreet. En met pasen zijn er nieuwe eieren. Hij is het paaskind, maar hij kan niet opnieuw geboren worden. Daarvoor zijn de banden te strak. De tijd brengt dood voort, geen leven. En hij gaat het tegemoet. Een vrouw moet hem redden. Zijn eigen vrouw is niet genoeg, het gaat niet diep genoeg, alhoewel ze diep steekt. Dan zijn daar de Franse schilderijen. Met deuren die ’s nachts opengaan. Hij leert hen bomen likken. Ze worden als hem, en kunnen niet meer terug. Ze zijn de stralen van het ei. Hij is de kapitein op het schip, en buiten loeren de haaien op hem. Ze willen hem naar een verpleeghuis brengen, net als zijn vrouw. Zijn vrouw woont nu in de haaien, als de prinses der haaien is zij. Ze hebben haar overboord gegooid. Hij zal hen vinden. Hij is de engel des doods, het ei met de vele stralen. Hij had niet moeten slapen, hij had zijn tuin moeten onderhouden. Nu is ze weg. De Franse soldaten hebben hun Napoleon gevonden. Hij steekt zijn maaiers in de fik, en is klaar om te gaan grillen. De honden van gebrek zijn in de stad. Nu is alles in vuur. Hij zal zijn vrouw

vinden. Hij zal haar vinden in de haai die haar opslokte, en van die haai zullen ze hun boot maken. Maar zijn herinneringen draaien, en zijn ziedend, en dan weet hij ineens niks meer. Hij weet niet dat hij ooit een vrouw had. Hij heeft nu de gedachte dat ze er nooit is geweest. Ze probeerden hem iets op de mouw te spelden. Hij woont alleen. Zijn huis staat in een klein bos, met een bloemenveld. Hij woont hier eenzaam en verlaten, met zijn maaiers. Veel te maaien elke dag. Daar trekt hij zich aan op. En schilderijen zijn zijn passie maar zij zijn dood. En ook boeken zijn zijn passie, maar zij zijn dood. Hij houdt van de engel des doods. Het leven is te eng. Hij heeft een Maria-beeld naast de televisie, wat hij ooit heeft zwartgeverfd. Er is een lamp in geplaatst. Hij aanbidt haar, maar dan verdwijnt haar betekenis. Ook zij is dood. De dode kunst trekt hem aan, en het dode water der bomen, de alcohol. De lucht ruikt naar drop. Hij durft niet naar het toilet, daarom gebruikt hij een po die hij eens in de week verschoont. De po staat boven, en bakent zijn terrein af. Het beschermt hem tegen de wilde dieren van het bos. Hij staart uit het raam en ziet de uitgestrekte velden der vergetelheid. Hier zijn de witte strepen. En nu wil hij er echt voor gaan. Hij vecht, hij schreeuwt, hij overwint, en verliest dan. Beelden staan er in zijn huis, die het Christus-verhaal uitbeelden. Vaak gaat hij langs die beelden. Die beelden zijn als zijn huisdieren, veilig in de ark van Noach. De ark van Mozes heeft horens. Hij komt dichterbij, en de geur van wierook, drop en chocola overspoelt hem, maar ook de geur van hondenpoep. Hij grijpt de horens van de ark, maar wordt dan achteruit geslagen. Boven de ark verschijnt een ei met vele stralen. De ark verandert in een doodskist, en hij heeft het gevoel alsof hij in een lift zit, en wordt uitgestrekt als een sigaar in een sigaren-houder. ‘Ik ben een van de velen,’ denkt hij. ‘Velen zijn geroepen, weinig uitverkoren.’ Doodsangst overvalt hem.

Zijn hang naar materiele goederen wordt groter, die zijn hersenen bevriezen. Goud en metaal is zijn lust, edele metalen, het liefst gelakt. De badkamer is als een ark voor hem. Hij staart veel naar bijbeltaferelen op schilderijen, maar hij kan ze nauwelijks herinneren. Hij is alleen, in een koel huis. Hij strijdt tegen alles totdat het dood is. Het dode heeft de vlam van ander leven, elitair leven, fijngevoelige kunst. Maar hij kan dit leven niet opbrengen. Het hout om hem heen begint te rotten, het goud om hem heen begint te stinken, en het koele begint hem te steken. Een spin vreet hem aan, een groep dolle wolven. De honden van gebrek zijn hier, de honden van een duivels paradijs. Zij nemen hem mee naar het verpleeghuis, en zij gaan zijn huis bewonen. Zij hebben al zijn medailles afgenomen, om er zelf mee te pronken. ‘Alleen de duivel kan de duivel overwinnen,’ denkt hij. Hij weet nog nauwelijks wie of wat de duivel is. Hij ziet het als een wapen. Hij moet zich verdedigen, maar hij kan het niet. ‘Ik kan net zo goed Frans praten,’ denkt hij.

De juffrouw houdt hem stevig vast.

‘Wil je met haar trouwen ?’ vraagt de dominee.

Hij knikt verlegen. Als hij thuis is maait hij het gras. Zijn vrouw komt hem een hoog glas brengen. Later zitten ze in de tuin. Ze gaan vroeg naar bed. Zijn vrouw leest voor. Over de

engel des doods wordt niet gesproken. Wel weten ze dat het een plaaggeest is. Dan gaan ze slapen. Zijn vrouw kust hem. Hij houdt haar hand vast. Zijn zusjes wonen bij hem in. Ze zijn paas-eitjes aan het beschilderen. Als hij het ziet krijgt hij er honger van. Zijn zusjes spelen vaak op het pleintje, waar ze spelletjes doen. Ook zijn ouders wonen bij hem in. Hij draagt het ei met stralen. In de nacht maait hij. Dokters nemen hem mee in de nacht, zeggende dat hij schizofreen is, een gevaar voor de samenleving, met zijn maaiers. Zij nemen hem mee en sluiten hem op, ver weg van het oog van zijn familie. Zij willen het ei met de stralen uit hem roven, maar zij kunnen het niet. Hij denkt dat zij buitenaardsen zijn. Van de planeet aarde schijnt hij nog nooit gehoord te hebben, en wil er ook niet zoveel mee te maken hebben.

Met hem schijnt het beter te gaan nu ze hem nieuwe pillen hebben gegeven. Hij is inmiddels in het ziekenhuis, op een speciale afdeling. Langzaam begint hij weer uit bed te komen. De zusters bewonderen hem vanwege zijn humor en zijn markante persoonlijkheid. Hij is bijna hun god. Hij wordt hier als een prins behandeld, als een prins die van het paard is gevallen, zoals hij dat altijd zegt. Snel heeft hij een vriendin, en zijn gezondheid verbeterd steeds meer, tot zo'n hoogte dat hij zelfs weer op zichzelf zou kunnen wonen. Met zijn vriendin krijgt hij ergens een woning hoog in een flat. Zijn vriendin is veel jonger, maar door de pillen verjongd hij ook. In zijn flatwoning voelt hij zich al snel als de prins van Bagdad. Door de pillen loopt zijn leeftijd zo drastisch terug dat hij op een gegeven moment nog maar twintig is. Het voelt heerlijk aan tussen de hoge flatgebouwen. Hij staart vaak naar de overkant. Hij voelt zich vitaal. Tussen de flatgebouwen door zijn de prachtigste rozentuinen, waar hij vaak doorloopt of langsloopt met zijn vriendin. Er hangt een beetje een oosters of Arabisch sfeertje, en dat bevalt hem wel. Maar de rozenstruiken groeien steeds hoger en worden steeds dichter, om zo de flatgebouwen te isoleren. Nu voelt hij zich als Doornroosje. Ze gaan verhuizen en krijgen een flatje aan het weiland. Op dit tijdstip begint het weer slechter met hem te gaan, ook al is hij twintig. Misschien dat nu de ouderdom toch echt toeslaat. Weer belandt hij in het ziekenhuis, maar hij voelt zich nog steeds de prins van Bagdad, en zelfs van heel Arabie. Hij staart vaak naar de stenen van het ziekenhuis die zo'n aparte kleur hebben. Vooral als het zonlicht erop valt heeft het een prachtig effect. Zacht roze is toch wel de mooiste kleur, denkt hij.

En als zijn vriendin bij hem op bezoek komt heeft ze zo'n mooie roze jurk. Ze neemt hem mee voor een wandeling langs het meer. De melkfabriek staat hier dichtbij en alles ruikt hier aangebrand. In zijn gedachten zweeft hij met haar over het meer, en roze zwanen volgen hen. Even later liggen ze beiden in het koele meer. 'Zullen we naar de overkant zwemmen ?' vraagt hij. Zijn vriendin vindt het best. Dat hebben ze al wel eerder gedaan. Achter het meer zijn de weilanden, en achter het weilanden is hun flat. Helemaal nat komen ze aan in hun woning. Maar hij zorgt dat hij voor het donker wordt weer in het ziekenhuis is. Ook al is hij nu dan weer in het ziekenhuis, deze laatste bladzijden van zijn leven zijn sterk en roze, als rotsen waarop hij kan bouwen. Hij voelt zich veilig hier, iets wat over hem waakt. De golfjes die hier aankomen brengen voornamelijk geluk. Een oase was over hem heengevallen, en dat was allemaal net op tijd.

ARABISCH AMALGAAM

Hoofdstuk 1.

Ik, 27 jaar,

Lang,

Doe mezelf ouder voor dan ik ben.

Zij, 44 jaar

We zijn gelukkig samen, alsof we het eeuwig geluk hebben gevonden. Toch leiden we een saai leven, een sleur, zitten we opgesloten tussen muren. We leven meer in de dalen dan op de toppen. We mogen niet klagen, alcohol vult altijd de leegtes op. We moeten beiden oppassen geen alcoholisten te worden, maar we hebben het nu redelijk onder controle. Vaak als we klachten hebben wordt ons alcoholische dranken voorgeschreven door onze dokter. Onze dokter is wel alcoholist, maar daar hebben wij genoegen meegenomen. Dit omdat het een aardige man is, en dat zijn dokters zeer zelden. Hij neemt ons serieus en heeft ons op sleeptouw genomen.

Zij, is kleiner dan mij, heeft grote borsten die het leeftijds-verschil opvullen. We hebben geen kinderen, en dat willen we ook niet. Ze is rustig, ik ben tamelijk druk, dus we houden elkaar in balans. Zij leert mij nu om rustig te zijn, ook om mijn innerlijke stem te verstaan. Innerlijke vrede noemt ze dat. De dokter is hier weleens dronken geweest. We hebben besloten hem de hand boven het hoofd te houden. We zouden hem nooit verraden. We zijn niet kerkelijk, maar gaan wel naar een discussie-groepje om daar de dingen van het geloof te bespreken. Veelal wordt het geloof vanuit de atheistische hoek bekeken, aangevuld met kunstzinnige ideeen. We

beschouwen het geloof als een vreemde erfenis, als cultuurgoed, maar voelen ons ook ingenomen, onder schrikbewind, door kolonisten uit het midden-oosten. We hebben nog geen geestelijke onafhankelijkheid. Ook de psychische gezondheidszorg houdt ons nog in mentale afhankelijkheid, en de zogeheten tandheelkunde houdt ons in orale afhankelijkheid, en deze bezetters komen allemaal uit het oosten aanwaaien. Trots zijn we er niet op, we hebben meer binnengelaten dan ons lief is, en hebben onze onafhankelijkheid prijsgegeven aan idioten, beulen. Maar ja, het was immers oorlog, het was een strooptocht, kolonisten zijn uit op kolonies, het creeeren van een apartheid. Deze kolonisten hebben een minderwaardig ras geschapen, wij. Het is voor het leken-ras verboden na te denken. Er wordt al voor ons gedacht, er is al voor ons gedacht, en er zal nog veel voor ons gedacht worden. Dat de etiketten niet passen is niet van belang. Het zijn de merktekens van het beest.

En dan is er nog de sex-politie die ons sexueel afhankelijk heeft gemaakt, bang dat een onzedelijk geluidje in een oplettend kinderoortje terecht zal komen. Maar diezelfde kinderoortjes worden niet gespaard voor het traumatiserende geschreeuw van knettergekke dokters en het erbarmenloze geboor van de zogeheten tandarts. Dat diezelfde kinderen voor de ogen van hun ouders door zulke misdadigers oraal worden gescalpeerd schijnt geen probleem te zijn. In Afrika worden kleine meisjes vanwege het volksgeloof aldaar vaginaal besneden, en daar is men in de hele wereld terecht ontdaan over, en wordt het als een godslasterlijke misdaad beschouwd, maar hier worden kinderen, zowel jongens als meisjes door de bezetter oraal besneden, en geen kip die erom kraait.

Mijnheer A. Hoekstra-Van Het Land denkt hier anders over. In zijn zogeheten tandartsen-praktijk wordt alles veilig gedaan, en zijn er strenge voorzorgsmaatregelen, die overigens overal gelden, en waar ook een strenge controle op is. Ook worden er na de besnijding betrouwbare, goed geteste stoffen gebruikt om de opening weer mee te bedekken, zodat het gebit van het kind extra lang mee kan gaan. Mevrouw T. Foppen sluit zich hier helemaal bij aan, en ja, wat hebben wij in te brengen tegen deze bezetters ? We kunnen ons hoogstens aansluiten bij het verzetstrijders-front tegen zulke praktijken. Wij hebben allemaal het merkteken van het beest ontvangen, of we nu wilden of niet, en het merkteken is eeuwig. Daar kan zelfs God of de keizer niets aan veranderen. Er zijn hier in dit land drie oppergeloven waar iedereen zich aan dient te onderwerpen, waarvoor elke knie zich dient te buigen, en waartoe elke tong zal belijden : het medische geloof, het geloof in de geestelijke gezondheid, en het orale geloof, tot aan het dentale toe. En of je nu een dentaal bent of je bent het niet : die kerk kent geen grenzen.

Maarten Stokmans-Van Zeilen, zogeheten tandarts, aan de Belgische grens, vermeld dat er de laatste tijd vreemde dingen in zijn zogeheten tandartsen-praktijk plaatsvinden. Zo zouden beugels spontaan inkrimpen, en zogenaamd amalgaam, de zogeheten grijze roestvrije metaal-vullingen, zou spontaan in het niets oplossen. Hij gebruikt daarom nu veel vaker witte en rode vullingen, die volgens hem wat meer betrouwbaar zijn. Rood is tegelijkertijd de kleur van zijn lievelingskat, dus dat geeft ook direkt een emotionele verbinding met thuis. Ook is Maarten tegelijkertijd een enthousiast lid van de pinkstergemeente, en staat hij elke zondag trouw in deze kerk te klappen op de maat van de overigens heel mooie en aanstekelijke muziek. Hij

heeft een visie voor het invoeren van veel meer kleuren zogeheten vullingen, zodat de mensen kunnen kiezen waarmee de barbaarse boorgaten voor eeuwig kunnen worden verborgen. Dat zou ook wat meer vrolijkheid brengen onder deze groep mensen die zo lijden onder de orale bezetting uit het oosten. Hij vindt ook wel dat de paus van de zogeheten tandartsen, Alexander de Kleine, de touwtjes wel wat mag vieren.

Kaakchirurg Riekerd van Aarnautsen is het hier niet mee eens, want hij vreest dat een al te zeer bemoedigde jonge generatie wel eens het einde van de bezetting zou kunnen betekenen. En dat zou helemaal godsonterend zijn. De wet die hen door God gegeven is, en waardoor zij de macht hebben gekregen, moet gehandhaafd worden. Van Aarnautsen staat hierin niet alleen. Tenminste negentig procent van de zogeheten tandartsen en kaakchirurgen staan achter hem, alhoewel sommigen gedwongen zijn dit te doen. Ook is hij van mening dat het God Zelf is geweest die het zogeheten amalgaam heeft geschapen, en dat wij Zijn schepping moeten eren en ervan gebruik moeten maken. Hij is van mening dat het amalgaam ook goed gebruikt kan worden in andere delen van het lichaam, vooral in de botten. Hij vindt het onzin om mensen die jarenlang niet kunnen slapen van de heuppijn een nieuwe heup te geven. Implantaties van amalgaam zouden volgens hem wonderen kunnen verrichten. Dit omdat het volgens hem bewezen is dat amalgaam gevoeligheid van de botten kan afdekken.

Ja, de verschillende meningen over amalgaam en het gebruik ervan, dat is me er eentje. Nu wil Van Aarnoutsen zijn naam veranderen in Van Aernoutsen met Ae, want dat staat volgens hem veel deftiger. Men is er maar druk mee, met de grote drie, de drie supergeloven van dit land. Het christelijk geloof is daar helemaal aan ondergeschikt, want ook de christen buigt voor de dokter, de geestelijk verzorger en de zogeheten tandarts. Het geloof van de zogeheten tandarts is gebaseerd op de orale besnijding, als plicht, als prioriteit, en zij die rebels daartegen zijn worden doorverwezen naar de geestelijke verzorgers, want die mensen mankeren natuurlijk heel wat. Veel mensen denken dat we in 1945 zijn bevrijd van de nazi's, maar de bezetting door de nazi's is groter dan ooit, door de medi-nazi's, de psychinazi's en de nazi's van de mond, de orale nazi's. En dit is dan ook de drieeenheid die alomtegenwoordig aanbeden wordt. Het vullingenbeheer wordt overgelaten aan de orale organisten, de tandpasta-producenten, die net zoals de nazi's fluor gebruiken, een afvalproduct, om de gehypnotiseerde kolonie gewillig te houden. Zij bespelen met grote flair en betutteling de monden van de leken-families, zodat er niet al teveel tegenspraak zal zijn. Men moet eten wat de pot schaft, en door het gepoets komt er ook nog eens lekker veel gifdamp vrij van de kwikhoudende en kankerverwekkende chemicalien die ze vullingen noemen inplaats van gedwongen bot-implantaten, als de kinderdoop na de besnijdenis. En na zulk een gebeurtenis is hun naam ineens haas, en zijn alle verdere klachten voor de psychiater en de zondagsschool. Nee, dan ben ik maar als een oude jood die zegt : De verlosser moet nog komen. Een geschikte kanditaat hiervoor zou zijn Nelson Lincoln, die ook nog eens voor de dieren opkomt.

Onder dwangverpleging moeten we vandaag de dag van de verboden vrucht eten, om zo vervolgens nog meer in de problemen te komen, om zo nog rijper voor de verboden vrucht te worden. Dit is een vicieuze cirkel. En gedwongen implantaten hebben meer te maken met bezoek van buitenaardse wezens dan met werkelijke zorg. We zijn allang niet meer van

onszelf. Maar goed, elke religie heeft zijn ongelovigen, en die moeten naar de hel. De hele wereld zal het beest achterna gaan om zijn beeld te aanbidden en zijn merkteken te dragen. De vijand werkt met vergiftiging, en met ontkenning ervan, zo is het altijd al geweest.

Mijnheer Olafsen uit Zutphen aan de Rijn zegt dat aan amalgaam geen enkel gevaar zit, want alles zit netjes ingedekt binnenin de kies. Nooit van dampvorming en metaalradiatie gehoord, mijnheer Olafsen ? Vervolgens zegt mijnheer Olafsen dat er maar heel weinig van het amalgaam daadwerkelijk in het lichaam terecht kan komen. Hoe weet u dat mijnheer Olafsen ? Ooit weleens opgemeten ? En weet u niet dat de apparatuur van de bezetters zichzelf echt niet zullen gaan verraden ? Drogredenaties, mijnheer Olafsen. En u heeft geen respect voor de mening van een ander, zelfs niet als het om hun eigen mond gaat. Uw wil is wet, want u heeft uw kolonie bezet, en duldt geen verzet. U houdt hen allen in slaap door het stafke van Doornroosje, met uw prikkende boren, soms tot aan de zenuw toe, en dan maar de gepleegde misdaden afdekken. Wie heeft u gezegd in de monden van gevoelige kinderen te gaan boren ? Het is niet veel anders dan Karel de Kleine die met het zwaard de ongelovigen dwong het christendom aan te nemen. En zo is de orale besnijding net zo erg als de vaginale besnijding, omdat het beiden om dwang gaat, en de klachten erbij niet serieus worden genomen. Klachten zijn de tekenen dat de bezetting werkt. En men wil dat zo houden. Alle tong zal belijden, elke knie zal buigen.

Bert Ootjes is door het verzet als zogeheten holistisch tandarts geplaatst in Bergen aan de Maas. Hij werd geplaatst voor het verwijderen van brandmerken, mertekens en nummers van het beest, en werkte in opdracht van de patient. Door de ongelovelijke werkdruk is mijnheer Ootjes overspannen geraakt, en plaatste het verzet een tweede zogeheten holistisch tandarts, professor Joost Achterbergen. Ook hij werkte in opdracht van de patient. Sindsdien zijn er vele zogeheten holistische tandartsen in het land gaan werken om de orale besnijdingen tegen te gaan. Veel van die zogeheten holistische tandartsen waren boorloos, maar ook de bezetters infiltreerden in deze branche, maar dan met boren. Om het infiltreren tegen te gaan plaatste het verzet schermpjes die zelf dauwdruppels konden aanmaken, en die schermpjes bezaten twee soorten poedertjes die op de zogeheten tandarts zouden reageren. Werden de dauwdruppels blauwkleurig, dan was de kust veilig, maar als de dauwdruppels roodkleurig werden, dan had de patient te doen met een infiltrant. Zo konden patienten het snel testen. Het was een uitvinding van Bert Ootjes. Niemand heeft ooit het tegendeel van de werking ervan kunnen bewijzen, en als er wetenschappelijk commentaar van buiten het verzet kwam, dan werd dat gewoon niet erkend. Het kwam er al snel op neer dat minstens vijftig procent van de zogeheten holistische tandartsen infiltranten waren van de bezetting. Velen hadden gewoon hun eigen gifjes die ze gebruikten, en de orale besnijding werd gewoon doorgezet. Ook het half serieus nemen werd een grote trend.

Ik ben in het verzet gegaan toen ik 25 werd, maar omdat ik op straat werd neergestoken kon ik geen actief lid meer zijn, en beperkte mij hooguit tot discussie-groepjes. Ik raakte verlamd. Ik zit nu in een rolstoel, en moet weer langzaam leren lopen. Mijn vriendin helpt me daarbij. Vandaag ben ik met haar naar het naaktstrand gegaan omdat het buitengewoon mooi weer

was. Daar waren mensen met mooie naakte plekken in hun mond, niet vervuild door de zogeheten tandarts. Alles puur natuur.

28 Januari 1971

De flower power beweging groeit nog steeds, meer dan ooit. Ook de ‘Baas in Eigen Mond’ beweging groeit hard, vooral onder de jeugd. Ik kan weer een beetje lopen. De wonden zijn aardig genezen. De naaktstranden zijn dichtbevolkt nu. Overal wordt geprotesteerd en gedemonstreerd tegen de bezetting, tegen de grote drie, maar het ministerie is niet onder de indruk. Het is volgens hen door de gezondheidsraad bewezen dat de grote drie geen kwaad hebben verricht en een bevordering zijn voor de volksgezondheid. Inmiddels grijpt de bevolking massaal naar speciale tandpastas voor gevoelige tanden, want nieuwe zogeheten vullingsoorten zorgen ervoor dat zelfs duikers niet meer zo diep konden duiken als voorheen, doordat ze de druk op de mond niet meer aankunnen vanwege deze nieuwe aanwinst in de pharmaceutische industrie. Dit wordt door het ministerie ontkent. De nieuwe zogeheten vullingsoorten zijn prima. De bezetting kan er alleen maar van profiteren. Er wordt alleen vanuit het hogere elite-ras gedacht. Het leken-ras is niet interessant. Steeds meer jongeren beginnen zich tegen de flower power beweging te verzetten, omdat er maar niets gebeurt. Het is allemaal te soft, en de meesten worden gezien als watjes die niets ondernemen dan mantras zingen en mandalas tekenen. De heavy metal beweging begint te groeien, en kaapt veel van de flower power beweging weg. De zogeheten underground wordt een grote attractie voor degenen die maar geen aansluiting konden vinden in de flower power beweging, of hen die erin teleurgesteld waren en grote vraagtekens hadden.

Bert Ootjes begint een nieuwe pseudo-industrie en wordt door de politie opgepakt en vastgezet. Hij is inmiddels de grootste verzetsstrijder die het verzet kent, en de bekendste. Hij wordt ook wel de Vader van het Verzet genoemd. In de gevangenis vindt Bert Ootjes een nieuw hormoon uit wat tanden weer kan laten aangroeien. Wel zorgt dit hormoon ervoor dat de tanden om de zoveel tijd gewisseld worden, en dat betekent dus tegelijkertijd het einde van de hele zogeheten tandheelkunde. Het hormoon is een mengsel van een stof die door haaien en krokodillen wordt gedragen, en die door een simpele injectie in een mens ingebracht kan worden, eens en voor altijd. Vanaf het moment van de injectie maakt het lichaam de stof zelf aan. Het hormoon slaat in als een bom, en naast het verdwijnen van de zogeheten tandheelkunde valt ook de geestelijke gezondheidszorg en ook het medische bewind. Nu een van de grote drie is gevallen blijkt het dat ze hun belangrijkste schakel kwijt zijn. Mensen worden gezonder doordat ze niet meer als een afvalput van gifstoffen worden behandeld. Ook het kerkelijk geloof valt hierbij in, en onze erfenis bleek niet veel meer te zijn dan een zogeheten vulling na de besnijdenis, en nu de besnijdenis was verdwenen daalde ook de behoefte naar een zogeheten vulling, maar de dwang was er nog steeds. De grote twee adopteerden toen het kerkelijk geloof als nummer drie, maar de geloofwaardigheid hiervan was tot een minimum gedaald, en velen lieten zich niet zomaar meer afzetten.

3 Januari 1980

Bert Ootjes komt vrij, en zorgt ervoor dat ons land de onafhankelijkheid krijgt. De geestelijke gezondheidszorg en het medische geloof worden tot liefde-werk gereduceerd. Het kerkelijk geloof mag daarbij helpen, maar verliest haar macht. Nelson Lincoln wordt de nieuwe anarchistische leider, en ook Joost Achterbergen speelt hierin een grote rol. Zij worden de nieuwe grote drie. Een man genaamd Tutuc zet een geheel nieuwe religie op gebaseerd op liefde en sex. Maas-Middelland wordt de nieuwe hoofdstad, waar professionele prostituees zich zetelen en de stad leiden. Er worden meer naaktstranden geopend, en het land wordt voor vijftig procent naturistisch. Tutuc richt de Naturistische Anarchistische Partij op, de NAP, en krijgt zestig procent van alle stemmen. Velen hebben een andere definitie van naturisme, die volgens hen veel meer is dan gewoon naakt lopen. Binnen het naturisme komen vele stromingen. Er wordt fel uitgehaald naar de mode beweging die wordt gezien als sexuele onderdrukking en het creeeren van een underdog. Nog steeds dertig procent van de bevolking hangt de mode beweging aan, en ze hebben grote invloed, vooral op scholen, waar andersdenkenden al snel als leken-ras worden gezien. De mode wordt steeds meer gezien als manipulatie en als een belemmering voor de vrijheid.

28 Augustus 1981

Het land heeft de status van Utopia bereikt. Er is vrede overal. Men kan elkaar weer waarderen, men voelt zich weer veilig bij elkaar, er is weer vertrouwen, rust, maar ook onafhankelijkheid. Ik kan inmiddels weer goed lopen en alles weer doen. Veel ga ik met mijn vriendin naar het zwanenmeer, het plantsoen. Hier kom ik helemaal tot rust. We hebben het vaak over onze schooltijd. Ik ben erg veranderd volgens mijn vriendin, minder druk. De roosjes beginnen uit te komen langs het zwanenmeer, en ze brengen wit sap voort. De grootste zwaan van het plantsoen gaat stoer over het riviertje dat het slot omgeeft. Altijd ruikt het hier naar zeewier. Als ze van die grootste zwaan niet zouden zeggen dat het een zwaan was, dan zou ik denken dat het een paard was. De bloemen komen hier laat uit, en niemand weet waarom. Altijd pas na de mid-hitte van de zomer. De criminaliteit is hier tot een nulpunt gedaald. Ik voel me weer veilig op straat.

In andere landen is het nog geen Utopia, en zijn missionarissen van Bert Ootjes vaak niet welkom. Heel veel buitenlanders emigreren naar ons land, en er komen steeds meer flats, die ook steeds hoger worden, en dit schijnt een goede uitwerking te hebben op de onderlinge vrede. In de politiek in andere landen gaat het er hard aan toe, ze geven Bert Ootjes geen kans. En ons land noemen ze de nieuwe toren van Babel. Dan wordt Bert Ootjes in het buitenland vastgezet wegens het smokkelen van zwaar alcoholische dranken. Hier schrijft hij zijn apocalypse. In ons land wordt een standbeeld van hem opgericht. Zijn geboortedag wordt een nationale feestdag. Met de diertjes gaat het helaas nog steeds niet goed. Ze worden nog volop geslacht, en er wordt nog volop van hen genoten. Wel heeft Nelson Lincoln al heel veel voor hen gedaan. Vegetariers proberen heel wat, maar worden aan alle kanten tegengewerkt. Hun

hoop is eigenlijk op Bert Ootjes, maar die zit in de gevangenis. De dieren hebben zo nog steeds geen onafhankelijkheid, en behoren nog steeds tot het leken-ras. Slagers beginnen steeds meer reclame te maken, met de meest idiote, uit zijn verband gerukte, betuttelingen, en proberen de massa met liedjes en slagzinnen in hypnose te houden. Leuk, zo'n arm diertje slachten, en dan ook erbij gaan zingen. De zingende slagers zijn populair, en er worden veel platen verkocht. Ook banketbakkers werken veel vaker met vlees. De warme broodjes met vleesvullingen gaan pijlsnel over de toonbank heen. En ze vinden steeds weer nieuwe dingen uit, en verleggen hun grenzen voortdurend. Voor de dieren is het nog geen Utopia. In het buitenland hebben de dieren het beter.

In de ogen van de dieren zijn de slagers en hun consumenten de bezetters. Zij vinden het racisme, maar niemand schakelt in op hun frequentie, en zij hebben geen diploma's. Nee, dit land is met zijn kar vol diploma's aan de rand van de afgrond terecht gekomen, ook al noemen ze het een Utopia. Maar in de apocalypse hebben de dieren het laatste woord.

2 Augustus 1982

Grillen zijn 'in'. Er wordt veel gebarbecued, veel gezongen en gedanst. Voor de dieren lijkt het alleen maar erger te worden. We zijn in de tachtiger jaren beland. Vlees wordt een handig weggevertje, een uitstekend kado voor speciale gelegenheden, en een bewijs van eeuwige trouw en liefde. Huwelijks-taarten worden meer en meer omgezet in bouwsels van vlees, en de miniaturen van zowel bruid als bruidegom op de top van de vlees-cake zijn steeds meer naakt, als een propaganda voor het naturisme, wat natuurlijk op zich niet verkeerd is. Steeds meer wordt er de nadruk gelegd op practische collectieve ambacht, waarin de vlees-eter moet zien wat hij eet. Veel demonstraties van openlijke slachtingen worden vertoont, en het vlees bestemd voor een huwelijks-feest wordt op het feest zelf geslacht. Door dit soort openlijke vertoning steeg allereerst het aantal vegetariers dramatisch, maar later werd het als cultuur-goed gezien, als educatief. Zo werd alles geheel gestileerd, en elke zenuw lamgelegd. Woorden als 'traditie' werden gebruikt, terwijl die traditie er nooit was. Vegetariers hadden ingezien waar het anarchisme het land naar toe had geleid, en begonnen te verlangen naar een milde vorm van communisme. Een bekend schrijver sprak : 'Het educatieve zwaard heeft een praalwagen gemaakt voor het bandeloze verstand.' Het werd een chaos in het land. Iedereen zag uit naar de terugkomst van Bert Ootjes. Maar die kwam maar niet, want die zat vast in het buitenland. Joost Achterbergen promoveerde weer ergens met een verslag over de carnivorische problematiek, maar dat haalde allemaal niets uit. Men was ergens in aan het vastroesten en kwam er niet meer uit. Er kwam een wet dat iedereen die nog vlees wilde eten de dieren zelf moest fokken en slachten. Negentig procent van de bevolking werd hierdoor boer. Nelson Lincoln had gehoopt dat ze door deze wet zouden terugschrikken, maar nee hoor, het werd een sport, een trend, een ritueel, ja, een geloof. En er werd zoveel mogelijk nonsense over verkocht. Het land kwam in een draaikolk van schaamteloos geweld en arrogantie tegen dieren. Dieren werden gewoon door de steeds naturistischer wordende bevolking als minderwaardig gezien, als ondergeschikt aan, als plezier-leken die uitgebuit moesten worden. Het werd een agrarisch land van veeteelt waarin iedereen betrokken werd,

en de vegetariers zonderden zich veelal af. Zij konden dit zinloze geweld niet bevatten, en velen van hen vertrokken naar het buitenland.

Zovelen konden hun worstjes met karbonaatjes niet missen. Ze moesten er toch niet aan denken om zonder de speklapjes en de frikandellen door het leven te gaan. Vleesproducenten haalden zelfs stunts uit door het vlees te laten regenen op speciale dagen. Het land had een nieuwe bezetter. Men begon een hogere ethische en morele waarde aan vlees te hechten. Het zou gezond zijn en zelfs noodzakelijk voor het instandhouden van het menselijk ras. Het dierlijk ras stond dus zichtbaar op een lager plan volgens deze bezetter. En dieren konden niet spreken, dus die konden zich niet verzetten. De nieuwe orale bezetters waren gekomen. Het geloof in vlees redeneerde als volgt : Mensen waren engelen, en dieren waren gevallen engelen, duivels. Zo verdedigden ze hun handelwijzen, en daarmee beweerden ze ook nog eens dat wanneer zij die dieren verslonden, dan werden hun zonden vergeven. Ik legde me er bij neer. Ik kon niets doen. Vaak ging ik met mijn vriendin naar het zwanenmeer om te bespreken wat we konden doen, maar er was niet veel wat we konden doen. We voelden ons machteloos, en besloten te genieten van de dieren die er nog waren, en die met rust gelaten werden : zwanen. Vaak gingen we ‘s nachts naar het meertje, trokken onze kleren uit en gingen daar zwemmen met de zwanen. Op een dag nam de grootste zwaan ons op zijn rug, en bracht ons naar het slot. Er woonde hier niemand meer. Het slot stond vol met ridder-pantsers. We zijn toen naar boven gegaan en gingen op een oud bed liggen. We waren helemaal naakt. Ineens kwam de zwaan binnen met een pluimhelm op. Dat was wel het zotste wat we ooit gezien hadden, en we moesten beiden heel erg lachen. Boven het bed hing een schilderij met naakte vrouwen en een wereldbol. We wisten dat het een naturistisch slot was. Het was vrij toegankelijk voor iedereen. Overal waren ook spinnewebben. Op een verdieping hoger waren nog meer schilderijen met naakte vrouwen. We besloten weer terug te gaan, zwommen het meertje over, en klommen even later ons bed in. Een man scheen het allemaal op camera te hebben vastgelegd. Hij had een zwarte hond met manen. Hij liet het ons zien en zei dat het het mooiste was wat hij ooit op kamera had vastgelegd. We voelden ons niet bespied ofzo. We vonden het wel dapper van hem, en bovenal knap. Hij wilde ons wel meer beeldmateriaal laten zien. Het waren veelal naaktscenes. Ik kwam dichter bij zijn zwarte hond met de zwarte manen. De hond had zulke prachtige ogen en ik moest hem gewoon omhelzen. Het dier was één en al geconcentreerde kracht. Het dier leek wel van adel. Alles was rust hier en vredig, en we kregen een goed contact met de man.

Hij wilde ons wel vaker filmen, en we stemden toe. Hij was een filmmaker die op zoek was naar unieke, zeldzame tafereeltjes. Wat deze man deed was kunst, hij had de gave om de climaxen en het goede van het leven te vereeuwigen. Mijn vriendin kreeg hem lief. Hij was van haar leeftijd. Ik zei : ‘Ga je gang.’ Ik kon me voorstellen dat ze iemand nodig had van haar leeftijd. Ik was altijd veel te jong voor haar, alhoewel ik me ouder voordeed dan ik was. Nu was ik me dan steeds kinderlijker gaan gedragen, omdat ik daar vroeger nooit de ruimte voor had gehad. Ik beleefde mijn jeugd nu voor de eerste keer in mijn leven. Ik ontmoette een jonge vrouw, jonger dan mij, een buitenlandse, en we werden smoorverliefd. We deden alles samen. Ook gingen we ’s nachts vaak zwemmen in het zwanenmeer, en bezochten we vaak het oude slot. Ik bleef wel gewoon hele goede vrienden met mijn vroegere vriendin en haar nieuwe geliefde. Ik had het gevoel dat zij veel beter bij elkaar pasten, alhoewel we altijd een fantastische relatie hadden gehad. Het was goed zo. We waren beiden verzadigd van elkaar. Ik

begon een nieuwe hoodstuk in mijn leven, en zij ook, en ik was nog steeds verliefd op haar en zij op mij. En de liefde was mooi en goed. De man die van haar leeftijd was had haar op het moment meer te bieden dan ik had, en hij kon heel wat leegtes vullen die door het leeftijds-verschil tussen haar en mij waren ontstaan. Zij had mijn moeder kunnen wezen. Ik had nu behoefte aan iemand die op één lijn stond met mij, van dezelfde leeftijdscategorie, of iets jonger, omdat ik mezelf nu ook jonger gedroeg dan ik was.

De tuin rondom het slot leek Arabisch, hier in Rotterdijk. Het had een beetje een pseudo-religieus-communistische gloed, wel heel mooi trouwens, bijna sprookjesachtig. Het was alsof de zwanen de sleutel ergens bewaarden. Mijn nieuwe vriendin had grote volle borsten die vol leken te hangen met melk, net zoals mijn vorige vriendin. Het leeftijdsverschil hoefde nu niet echt opgevuld te worden, want we scheelden niet zoveel in leeftijd, maar wel kon het lengte-verschil opgevuld worden. Zij was kleiner dan mij, maar verder absoluut niet klein. Omdat ze bruin was zei ze altijd dat ze chocolade-melk had, maar dat was natuurlijk maar een grapje. We hadden beiden een bepaalde orale fixatie en dat was tegelijkertijd om te overleven. Er woedde nu eenmaal een orale oorlog. We waren schaakmat gezet in een machtsspel. De gelovigen zeiden altijd dat het paradijs van Arabisch-Babylonische oorsprong was, dus voor ons was het gebied rondom het slot altijd paradijselijk. Hier moest ergens de sleutel hangen. Met mijn nieuwe vriendin dwaalde ik door de gangen van het grote slot, diep in de nacht. Overal hingen naaktschilderijen die ons denken leken te programmeren. Veel van die schilderijen waren enigmatische paradijselijke taferelen. Sommige vrouwen werden met een blinddoek beschilderd, naakt en met een zwaard. Soms een weegschaal vasthoudende, of een schaal met daarin een soort zwarte of grijze stof. Ze hadden een rechterlijke of richterlijke uitstraling of houding, als een vrouwe Justitia. Ook gaven zij mannen die stof te drinken. Ik moest ineens weer aan die amalgaam-toestanden denken. Zou het een vonnis zijn gebaseerd op in het verleden gepleegde misdaden ? De vrouwen waren van bruine huidskleur, maar niet altijd. Zou de bron van dit alles in het paradijs te vinden zijn ? Zou daar wat mis zijn gegaan ? Waarom gaf Eva haar man van de giftige vrucht ? Ik viel bijna naar achteren toen we in een kamertje kwamen met nog een schilderij. Dit schilderij was heel hoog opgehangen, boven een deur die een open haard verborg. De man was geblinddoekt in dit schilderij. De vrouw niet. Zij had twee ogen als rode appels waardoor ze naar hem keek. Hij zat op een stoel. Zij had een zwaard en een sigaar. Boven het schilderij was nog een schilderij met een geblinddoekte vrouw met een zwaard die stond alsof ze klaar was om te kappen. Maar dat was het schokkendste niet : Beide vrouwen waren als etalage-poppen, werkende voor een industrie, en ze hadden geen borsten. Die waren afgekapt. Ze konden hun moedermelk niet geven. Hun vagina’s waren afgedekt met metaal en een slot. Zij waren kinderloos, ontdaan van hun sexualiteit. Daarom gaven ze niets dan gif en verderf. Mijn nieuwe vriendin schrok er ook van. Het deed haar denken aan de vaginale besnijdenis in Afrika.

‘Zouden dieren zich ook zo voelen ?’ vroeg ik. ‘Zij worden besneden tot de dood.’ Mijn nieuwe vriendin knikte. Ik voelde me onwennig. Toen zijn we maar teruggegaan. ‘Bij de indianen,’ zei ik, ‘in het amazone-gebied, werden soms de borsten van vrouwen geamputeerd zodat ze beter hun pijl en boog konden gebruiken.’

‘Ja,’ zei zijn vriendin, ‘en in Fenicie wat nu Turkije is werd Attis aanbeden, een aan zijn lot overgeleverde jongen die door wilde schapen werd grootgebracht, en zichzelf ontmande door een vloek. Uit zijn bloed kwam de naaldboom voort, en hij was een vroegere Jezus.’

Als in Turkije daadwerkelijk het paradijs heeft gelegen, dan ging daarachter nog steeds deze gruwelijkheid schuil : een dieper kruis, een genitale afsnijding, een sexuele apartheid. En dit had grote orale gevolgen. Het moederschap en de mannelijkheid werden ingeruild voor de oorlog, de jacht, de dood. Attis had zijn geliefde, Cybele, verlaten voor een sterveling, en werd door Cybele getroffen met de vloek van waanzin, vanwege de jaloezie. In de Joodse legendes duikt ook de naam van Lilith op als de eerste geliefde van Adam, maar zij werd al heel snel de hof uitgestuurd, omdat zij zich niet aan Adam wilde onderwerpen. En dit kruis was een enigma met vele gevolgen. Lilith zwoer dat zij de kinderen van Adam, de mensen, zou vernietigen. Zij kwam terug als de slang om Adam en Eva het gif aan te bieden. Ik ging op mijn buik liggen, en mijn vriendin ging op me liggen. Ik was niet getroffen door een vloek omdat ik een andere vriendin had nu, en mijn vorige vriendin had ook een andere vriend nu. Er was geen jaloezie. Er was vrijheid. Er waren geen rekken in onze monden meer.

Hoofdstuk 2.

‘Een vrouw zonder borsten heeft alleen gif te voeren,’ wordt er weleens gezegd, figuurlijk dan. Dat betekent dat een vrouw die geen verantwoordelijkheid draagt, geen moederlijke empathie, een gevaar is voor de samenleving. Dat was de slang in het paradijs, maar we zagen al dat er vele kanten aan het verhaal zaten, vele factoren speelden een rol, en het is niet echt eerlijk om alles zwart-wit neer te zetten met vurig religieus fundamentalisme. Er waren andere kanten. Wie hakte de borst van de vrouw af ? Waarom was ze zo woedend op de man, en wilde ze hem berechten ? Is er een kant van het verhaal die wij niet kennen ? Of heeft ze haar borst zelf afgehakt, als een amazone, om zo macht te kunnen voeren over de man ? En met welke redenen ? Voelt ze zich bedreigd door de man ? Of wil ze gewoon dwars haar zin doorvoeren.

Ik besluit met mijn vriendin terug te keren tot het slot. Ditmaal gaan we nog hoger. Op een hogere verdieping vinden we veel olie-lampen, veel Arabische spulletjes. De schilderijen zijn veel bloederiger hier, met veel naakte vrouwen die oorlog voeren. Ook zijn er veel jacht-tafereeltjes. We lopen naar de volgende verdieping, waar het enigma al snel toeslaat : afgehakte koppen van bizons staan op de schilderijen. Ook zijn er veel azteekse schilderijen, waar azteekse priesters de harten uit hun slachtoffers snijden en omhoog houden. Het is een dolle boel van besnijdingen en afsnijdingen, allemaal om apartheid te creeeren. Weer een verdieping hoger staat een enorm schilderij met de toren van Babel. De toren van Babel is een verhaal uit de bijbel waarin mensen een toren proberen te bouwen naar de hemel, en naam te maken, maar dan daalt God neer om hen te verwarren en te scheiden, zodat ze elkaar niet meer kunnen verstaan. Nog een verdieping hoger staat een standbeeld van een engel, waarachter een schilderij is met de boom des levens. De engel lijkt op een wachter, zelfs op

de engel des doods. Ik houd mijn vriendin vast. We zijn beiden naakt, en staren verschrikt naar de engel en het schilderij. Naast ons is nog een klein trapje naar boven, naar een zoldertje. We horen een stem : ‘Wie wil het ei uitbroeden, wie eet het, en wie staart naar de dop ?’

‘Zei jij dat ?’ vraag ik aan mijn vriendin. ‘Nee,’ zegt ze. ‘Jij ?’ Ik schud mijn hoofd. Dan vliegt er een papegaai van het zoldertje naar beneden. ‘Opkrassen,’ schreeuwt hij. ‘Wie heeft jullie gezegd hier te komen. Het ei zal rotten.’ We lopen naar boven naar het zoldertje en zien overal rotte eieren liggen. Het stinkt hier ook verschrikkelijk naar rotte eieren. ‘Te laat,’ krijst de papegaai, ‘te laat. Jullie hadden eerder moeten komen om het geheim te zien. Nu is het weg, voor eeuwig. Dit is wat jullie krijgen voor jullie optreden : Rotte eieren.’ Tussen de eieren ligt een klein kruisje waaraan een staafje hangt dat lijkt op een mannelijk geslachtsdeel. ‘En nu oprotten,’ roept de papegaai. Het beest begint ons te pikken, en we rennen naar beneden. Het best blijft ons pikken totdat we uit het slot zijn. Snel rennen we door de tuin het water in, en zwemmen naar de overkant, maar nog steeds houdt het beest niet op met aanvallen. Dan komt de grootste zwaan ons te hulp. We houden er heel wat plekken aan over, en willen voorlopig niet meer naar het slot.

Blijkbaar is de vruchtbaarheid aan het lijden verbonden, onlosmakelijk, als twee tegengestelden, het naakte aan het bedekte. We moeten maar wachten totdat daarin vrede is gekomen. In de grondtekst van de bijbel is het paradijs Sheool, het dodenrijk, oftewel de tuin der doden. Ook de val was een werking van het paradijs, om het offer te doen rijpen. De ruwe diamant moest geslepen worden. Ze ligt op mijn rug en heeft haar armen onder mijn oksels door en houdt mijn schouders vast. Ze probeert me op te trekken, maar ik ben moe. Dan vallen we beiden in slaap.

Een oosterse tuin van geheimen, met religieuze valstrikken. Ik schrik wakker. Zij houdt me vast. Ik val weer in slaap. Voor een tweede keer schrik ik wakker. Zij houdt me weer stevig vast, en ik val weer in slaap. In wiens armen lig ik, of is dit weer een strik van de dood. Hoe dan ook, ik heb het nodig om door de dag te komen. Het is mij gegeven. Ze staan daar voor huizen als paardjes, paardjes van de apocalypse om de volle druiven te betreden, te vertrappen. De maan schijnt, de sterren vallen, een droomweb houdt mij vast. Houd mij vast, laat mij jouw trekpop zijn, in dit speelse paradijs is het beter te zijn, beter dan daarbuiten. Het paard van religie trapt hard, ongenadig, straft voor eeuwig, zet schaakmat, en trapt dan de druiven van het genot in, één voor één, en soms meerderen tegelijk. Een hard besluit, van een jaloerse God, een erfenis, van lang geleden, een raadsel dat brult, smeekt, dwingt. Kijk naar de vrucht, niet naar de dop, eet niet, want het is slechts vergif, maar zoek naar haar geheimenis, broedt het uit, en ren wanneer je kan, zweef over de wateren, als een afstandelijke liefde, veilig en ver weg als de zon. Laat de hoop je niet ontnemen, laat je niet zeggen dat ver weg alleen maar koud is, want kijk naar de zon, die het verste weg is van ons allemaal, en schijnt en warmte geeft zoals niemand anders dat kan. De zon, de astronaut, op zoek naar geheimenissen, het grote broeden.

Ik maak een verkeerde beweging en er knapt iets in mijn rug. Toch nog een complicatie van de steekpartij. Ik vecht tegen de dood, en heb een bijna-dood-ervaring. Ik kom in het paradijs, waar naakte vrouwen zijn, overal. Zij houden een geheim vast, een ei, een groot ei, een doorgang, een weg. Het is een ei vol van bloed. Ik bekijk het ei vol belangstelling. En het bloed stolt, en brengt een lichaam voort met orale en genitale vrijheid. En er is een harmonie tussen die twee, en er is vrede. Na een paar dagen ben ik weer de oude. Er is iets veranderd in mij. Ik heb de dood ontmoet, en daardoor het leven. Ik sta aan beide kanten. Ik ben de brug tussen twee naturen.

Er stonden vele narcissen in onze tuin, vechtend tegen de koude dood. Zij gaven het leven warmte, de mensen een warme deken. Alles was bevroren, bevroren legers. Er werd gehandeld in mensen. De koude hand des doods greep hen, en wie kon daar tegen opvechten. Sommigen dachten harmonie in bloed te zien, anderen alleen maar twist. De raven kwamen over de stad. De stad was snel opengebroken. Er was plaats voor het enigma nu, men staarde niet alleen maar naar de dop. Men at niet meer van het vergif. De broeders waren gekomen. In de heldere zon stonden zij daar, in de Arabische zon. De raven waren uit het oosten gekomen. Oosterse wachters waren nu in de stad, kloppende op de deuren. Zij brachten dat andere nieuws. Zij geloofden dat zij het hart waren binnengegaan, op de zwaan waren zij geklommen, en het bracht hen hier. Ook zij hadden hun verwachtingen, hun verlangens, hun logica. De Arabische zon was heet. Zij waren de paarden van de apocalypse, maar niemand heeft hen begrepen. Zachte hoeven hadden zij, manen overal, lange wimpers, dromerige ogen, bruin, dromend van zachte winters, sneeuwwitte daken, waarop het paarse zou neerdalen. De paarse hand zou hen allemaal wegnemen. Zij hadden hun schuilplaats in het oosten wanneer de winter zou vallen, en dan zou het pas echt hard en koud zijn. En de drop-verkopers zouden er rijk van worden, de banketbakkerijen vol, want iedereen wilde daar ineens slapen. Men zou vluchten tot het orale als de genitale klem zou worden gebroken. Nu lag zij nog vastgebonden op de grond, maar de wachters waren dichtbij haar. Ik hoorde een schreeuw. Zij stond op, en bedekte haar naakte lichaam met een nachtjapon. Zij ging de nacht in met een fakkel, zij was de moeder der raven. De paarse hand bracht haar op de punt van de kerktoren. Een sneeuwwitte dag zou het worden, nu Doornroosje was ontwaakt. Niet door een kus. Neen. Door een warme hand, een innige omhelzing.

Het was een paarse dag met lange manen, een koninklijk feest. Doornroosje was opgestaan. Zij stond tussen haar vader en moeder in, de oude koning en koningin. Zij bracht hen de smeltende chocola die voor eeuwen verborgen was gehouden. Iedereen zou wel met haar willen dansen, iedereen zou wel een veeg van haar chocola willen krijgen. Maar zij was selectief in haar genade, zeer selectief. Zij bedekte de edele vruchten met chocola, en schoof hen in de ogen. De bakker stond buiten op een kist en zong van haar. Zo lieten zij het feest ten einde gaan. Maar tot diep in de nacht werd er nagenoten. De bakker stond bij de notenboom met een bijl, en brak het open. Kisten vol mandarijnen stonden hier, kisten vol oude mandarijnse koningen, met een mandarijns accent. Een zetel gaf zij aan de oude man die zij door het licht had geleid. De baard van de oude tovenaar die vastzat in de boomspleet was losgesneden door het zwaard van haar ogen. Haar ogen spoten vuur, en lieten de koralen zien. Dit allemaal in flitsen, niet teveel, want teveel van dit goede zou de draken opwekken. Zij wilden Doornroosje voor eeuwig laten slapen, en niet slechts voor honderd jaar.

Ik keek met haar over de rivier van gisteren, naar de dampen ervan en de spoken, en wij wilden er niet wezen. Wij waren gevangen door het morgenland, waar de prinsessen en prinsen van gisteren niet meer regeerden. Wij konden het, ja, wij konden het wat we jaren niet gekund hadden. In het midden van de stad was zij verlicht. Wij werden door haar gevuld als roomsoezen. Van taai vlees waren haar vullingen, niet om te eten, maar om te broeden. De kok van de slacht werd terechtgesteld, en dit allemaal na een reeks lovende woorden. Morgen zou de maaltijd zijn, niet vandaag. Nooit meer zouden wij van onrijpe druiven eten waardoor de tanden van onze kinderen slee waren geworden. En deze komende maaltijd was een maaltijd voor vogels, raven, want zij waren bestemd voor dat uur om het eerste aan tafel te gaan en te eten. Het oog van de stad wilde haar verlichten, want de stad had haar nodig, en wilde haar nooit meer uit het gezicht verliezen, maar op die dag vertrokken de zwanen naar het oosten. De raven hadden de stad nu, en zij werden ingenomen, zoals zij eens innamen. Het pasen met zijn versierselen van drop was nog steeds een ingrijpende gebeurtenis. Ik keek haar aan, zij keek naar mij. Ik had mijn oude jeugdliefde teruggevonden. Zij had kleine borsten, niet gevuld, zij was teder, intens, voorzichtig, zacht. Nooit zou er meer een zondvloed komen na die dag. Haar regenboog was een teken daarvan aan haar hemel. Ik schraapte de damp er vanaf. Een standbeeld werd van haar opgericht in de stad. Wij zouden haar nooit vergeten.

Na die week speelden de kinderen spookje in de stad, en werden de oude hobbelpaarden uit de schuur gehaald. Zij speelde, ik droomde. Het was de slag der herinneringen, rijkelijk belegde het mijn brood. Ik liet de raven er van eten. Ik at de worst van het verleden door de berg naar de andere kant, en daar werd het varken van de toekomst geslacht. Tijd was niet meer. De bezetters hadden de stad en het land ingenomen, weer vanuit het oosten, door de Arabische zon. En ik kon alleen maar glimlachen. Ik vond het wel grappig, al die vogels. Wij voerden de vogels aan het zwanenmeer, maar de zwanen zijn hier nooit meer teruggekomen. Zij hadden het geheim ergens anders gebracht. Ook voerden wij de paarden die dag, de paarden van deze apocalypse. Beschuit was haar lievelingsvoer, en rozen haar lievelingsbloemen. Een paard zwom door de grachten. Ik keek erna, en mijn rug maakte mij los van de aarde. Ik zweefde er boven, als een grote broer, als de lange neef. Ik verzorgde de aarde als mijn broertje.

Het regende buiten. Ik zat met mijn jeugdliefde op de bank. Aan al het oude was een einde gekomen, nu ik het oudere had gevonden. Het was als een harem in mijn gedachten, een doornenkroon, een rozenkrans, de cirkelzaag boven Bagdad, de ster van Betlehem. Een zoete ster was het, van genadeloos geduld. Haar licht was verblindend, en toen konden we ineens weer voelen, elkaar voelen. Voelen datgene wat zo lang was weggeweest. Zij liep zo langzaam in haar lange nachtjapon, een oosterse avondjurk, leren schoentjes met riempjes, met allerlei gaten, gelakt, en haar sokjes waren kinderlijk als de bloesem. En nog steeds dacht ik aan de zwanen. Waar zouden ze zijn ? Verblindend was haar licht, des te zoeter haar aanrakingen, haar verschijning. Teer licht, weeskind, wolf, onbegrepen. Ongezadeld in de nacht. Ik borstel haar, er is rust. Zij neemt haar pijl en boog, en gaat de stad in. In de stad staan beelden van zwanen, als een herinnering aan die dag. De zwanen zijn van steen, niet van vlees. De stad is verlaten van zwanen. De oorlog is dood. Elke knie zal zich buigen, elke tong zal belijden, en niemand weet wat. Een onverbiddelijk zwaard heeft de oorlog lamgelegd. Het vrederijk is aangebroken. De paarden van de apocalypse gaan streng door de stad heen, en dan

komt de zon op, de Arabische zon. Het jachtboek is nu geopend. Men bekijkt de plaatjes, en begrijpt niet waarom. Men wil terug naar de oude dagen, maar het kan niet meer. Ik borstel haar haren, er is rust. Ze is in de stad met haar boog, als vrouwe Justitia. De rechtszaak begint. Zij was een vrouw van geconcentreerde kracht en zwakheid. De jacht-engel. Zij roepen vrede vrede, terwijl er geen vrede is. Na de duizend jaren zal er een nieuw tijdperk van vrede aanbreken. Ik borstel haar haren nog steeds. Ze zegt niks. Ik zak weg, en ze gaat op mijn rug liggen. Als een kat heeft ze haar prooi. De vlekken van de luipaard spreken van oude wonden. Dan breekt ze mijn rug, en ik ben niet meer van de aarde. Haar bereiken kan ik niet, alleen door stralen. Ik moet haar overgeven, ik moet haar loslaten, de afstand zal nu rechter zijn. Ik voel mij als een Arabische zon, die het ijzer laat stinken, die het leer zacht maakt.

Zij zal het grote ei uitbroeden, zonder dat het haar zal doden. Van het vergif zal zij niet eten. Eens sprong zij in het wespennest, en werd een luipaard. Nu komt zij niet dichtbij, maar broedt van ver weg. De dokters zeggen dat mijn rug nu goed is, maar ik heb pijn. Zij zeggen dat dat er niet is. Zij staren alleen naar de dop. In een vuur dat eeuwig brandt wonen zij. Van een afstand ontkennen zij de problemen, een naaldboom groeit uit mijn wond. Grootgebracht door wilde schapen ben ik. We zijn omsingeld en schaakmat gezet door levensgevaarlijke zotten. De idioten van de planeet Idiotia zijn gekomen. Waren de dokters maar dronken en aardig. Wat is er van ons Utopia overgebleven ? De nieuwe bezetters ruiken als het oude, de mondenrekken zijn weer terug. Ditmaal met veel prikkeldraad. IJzeren Jaap is uit zijn doos geklommen om de klokken terug te zetten. Waren de zwanen nog maar hier. Zij is een boogschutter, een teken aan de hemel, dat de oorlog nooit meer komen zal, maar we leven met de jacht. Een teken dat er nooit geen zondvloed meer zou komen, maar nu zijn we hier. De ijzeren maagd is onze straf. Zij broedt niet, zij steekt, zij is op jacht. Mijn rug is van ijzer, een bouwwerk van amalgaam, van kwik, van Mercurius, om de rest van mijn lichaam te verzieken. De dokters zien niets op hun foto's. Zij staren alleen naar de dop. Wij wachten allen op Bert Ootjes, die nu inmiddels een martelaar is. Maar de zwanen hebben hem bezocht. Mijn buik is gemaakt van witte en rode vulling, een eeuwig gif. Zelfs al is de wortel eruit, het symptoom zal altijd blijven. Een leuk syndroom waar geestelijk verzorgers aan kunnen blijven sleutelen. Ouders blijven met hun kinderen naar zulke dokters gaan, want als het kind geestelijk ziek wordt verklaard door de beroepsbeul, dan treft de ouders zelf geen schuld, want geestelijk ziek zijn dat ben je vanaf de geboorte, en zo hebben de ouders die hun kind verrot hebben geslagen een alibi. Zo is de zogeheten tandarts met zijn stiekeme, niet navolgbare, zogeheten vullinkjes die het kind beladen met complexe vergiftigingen en de syndrooms-stempeltjes van de geestelijk verzorgers, de zogeheten psychiaters en hun handlangers, een professionele ouders-bescherming geworden. En hoe kan een kind tegen zo'n doortrapt systeem opboksen ? Een kind heeft geen diploma's, geen zegeltjes, maar mag deze zegeltjes wel verbreken, door de paardjes van de apocalypse. Maar waar zijn de zwaantjes wanneer je ze nodig hebt ? En waar is Bert Ootjes ?

Rebelse kinderen worden al snel ziek verklaard, niet de maatschappij, nee, want de maatschappij is heiliger, in ieder geval heiliger dan degene die aan de bel trekt. De paardjes staan nog steeds in deze carrousel. En de mierzoete snoepjes van oma moeten de kinderen klaarmaken om een reis door de fuik van de zogeheten tandarts te maken. De zogeheten tandarts gebruikt hiervoor goedgepraat geweld. De Arabische tandarts was nu gekomen, en die was nog wel orthodoxer. Bij de balie werd snoep uitgedeeld wanneer een kind zich keurig

en netjes had gedragen. Het hormoon van Bert Ootjes was inmiddels uitgewerkt. Ook de botten begonnen gaatjes te vertonen, en ook die moesten gevuld worden, en daar had de Arabische tandarts een heel arsenaal voor, en die duldde echt geen tegenspraak. Arabisch amalgaam werd daarvoor gebruikt, waarvan de ingredienten strict geheim werden gehouden. Alleen de ingewijden mochten de ambacht uitvoeren, en beunhazen werden streng gestrafd. Die werden openlijk op de pleinen aan de schandpaal gezet. Nee, de Arabische tandarts, daar viel niet mee te sollen. Malafide tandartsen werden als kwakzalvers bestempeld, afgezet, en gingen sindsdien vaak zonder een ledemaat of ontmand door het leven. Azteekse praktijken kwamen niet zelden voor. De Arabische tandarts meende het. De bottenvuller, zo werd de Arabische tandarts vaak genoemd. ‘Ik moet vandaag weer naar de bottenvuller,’ klaagde een oud mensje. ‘Ja, ik ook,’sprak een bijna tandenloos oud mannetje, en een ander moest de dag erna. Controles waren wekelijks, en sommigen moesten twee keer per week. Elke knie boog, elke tong beleed, en elke trotse nek brak voor de Arabische tandarts. Als er problemen waren met het Arabisch amalgaam, dan werd dat altijd op iets anders geschoven, en dan voelde de Arabische tandarts zich diep beledigd, en kon erg kwaad worden, wat dan de meest verschrikkelijke consequenties had. Het was godslasterlijk om te twijfelen aan het Arabisch amalgaam. Zulke godslasteraars en aanstellers waren rijp voor de Arabische psychiater. De Arabische tandarts was wel heel goed voor dieren. Zo wreed als ze waren naar hun klagende patienten, zo genadig waren ze naar dieren.

Het lichaam van Bert Ootjes lag inmiddels op de bodem van het meer van Geneve, waar ze hem hadden gedumpt. Zijn botten werden later opgedoken en hij kreeg een eervolle begrafenis. De appel brandt, en kan niet meer gegeten worden. Er kan alleen nog maar gekeken worden als naar de uitbarsting van een vulkaan. De trekpop van het verleden is stuk, maar de Arabische tandarts kan het nog wel maken, want die handelt ook in speelgoed. Bert Ootjes zal zich zeker in zijn graf omdraaien. Speelgoed, om kinderen klaar te maken voor de tandarts. Nu kunnen ze nog spelen, maar straks ? Onze enige hoop is de marsmannetjes, maar die bestaan niet. De marsman marcheert onderdrukt in ons geconditioneerd verstand. De Arabische tandarts is de banketbakker, heeft een hotel-keten, is ambitieus. Hij is de grootste snoep-producent voor kinderen. Hij verdient wat bij, om ook een zwembad te hebben onder zijn kast van een huis. De Arabische tandarts is hier kind aan huis. Om Bert Ootjes wordt inmiddels flink gerouwd. Velen worden monddood verklaard. Ik begin een Arabische tandartsen-praktijk, zo’n beetje de enige manier om aan de Arabische tandarts te ontkomen.

Een nieuwe Arabische vogelsoort is er toegevoegd in het plantsoen, om het verlies van de zwanen op te vangen : de draai-konten. Prachtige vogels, daar niet van, maar ze kunnen zo vanuit het niets bezoekers aanvallen. Zo van : van te voren maar eerst bellen. Hele statige, deftige vogels met een strenge zwaar-orthodoxe etiquette. Zo ken ik er nog één. Het doet me een beetje denken aan die papegaai van het slot. Ik durf niet zomaar meer naar het zwanenmeer, het plantsoen. Deze vogels zijn geen grappen.

‘IJs ?’ vraagt ze.

- Ja, met slagroom, zeg ik

‘Siroop erbij ?’

- Ja, die rode

‘De Arabische tandarts zal daar blij mee zijn, die is lekker duur, en veroorzaakt veel gaten in je botten. Hij zal wel weer flink op je schelden bij de komende controle om zijn blijdschap om de winst goed te verbergen.’

- Nee, ik heb nu mijn eigen kwastjes. Ik kom niet meer bij die man. Ik ben nu zelf die man. Hij mag wel bij mij komen, dan zal ik hem een koekje van eigen deeg geven.

‘Arabisch amalgaam ?’

- Ja, schat, die met die vogelstront.

‘Schat, je weet toch dat je de doodstraf kan krijgen voor het verraden van de ingredienten.’

- Laat hen maar hierkomen met hun bekken vol mislukte plastische chirurgie en gedwongen eeuwige mode.

‘Schat, je weet toch dat dat hun geloof is ? Ze weten niet beter, en dat moet je respecteren.’

- Ik heb daar allemaal geen respect voor. Heb jij respect voor een mes die in je rug wordt gestoken ?

‘Toe nou, liefje, dat moet je zo niet zien.’

- Oh, en hoe moet ik het dan zien ?

‘Moet je kijken hoe je jezelf opstelt, en dat noemt zich een Arabische tandarts. Een beetje professioneler mag wel.’

- Oh, gaan we het nu ook over professionaliteit hebben, en vergeet vooral het woord deskundig niet te noemen. Ga godverredomme een ezel kopen.

‘Zeg, jeetje, nu ga je ook nog eens een beetje lopen vloeken hier.’

- En doe jij nu maar niet ineens alsof je heilig Aagje bent.

‘Oh, heerlijk zo’n ruzie met jou, maar je weet wie er boven in bed de touwtjes in handen heeft.’

- Je hebt gelijk, ’t spijt me, zal niet meer gebeuren.

‘Goed, Jan Klaassen, dan is dat in ieder geval duidelijk.’

- Ja, Katrijn.

‘Moet je nu nog ijs met slagroom en rode siroop ?’

- Nee, Katrijn, ik heb geen honger meer.

We starten een restaurant in het midden van de stad, zoals elke goede Arabische tandarts zou doen. Het voedsel is er zalig, en mensen komen hier echt om heerlijk te genieten. We hebben ons eigen plantsoentje met Arabische draaikont-vogels, door ons getemd. Een betere plek kan ik me niet wensen. Mijn wereld kan niet meer stuk, en de hare ook niet.

Planten van Vlees

Harm woonde met zijn twee kinderen aan de rand van een bos. Het bos was tamelijk groot, en er bleek een indianenstam te wonen die een paal met een dierenkop erop aanbaden. Meestal waren dat koppen van varkens of runderen zoals buffels en bizons. Harm waarschuwde zijn kinderen altijd dat ze niet het bos moesten ingaan. Hij was te bang dat de indianen zijn kinderen wat vreemds zouden aandoen. Er gingen allerlei vreemde verhalen over deze stam in de ronde. Ze zouden vreemde dingen doen met kinderen. Bewijzen voor deze verhalen waren er niet. Maar Harm wilde geen enkel risico nemen.

Op een dag tikte er een man op het raam. Het bleek een indiaan te zijn. Hij had dierenvellen op zijn rug, en hij had laarzen van een soort bont. Harm deed open, en vroeg waarmee hij de man kon helpen. De indiaan zei niets. Toen wees hij op zijn laarzen. 'Ikko Boeke,' zei de indiaan. Harm kon dat natuurlijk niet verstaan en haalde zijn schouders op. 'Mijnheer, ik heb

geen idee wat u mij probeert te vertellen. Die taal ken ik helemaal niet,' zei Harm een beetje nors. Weer wees de indiaan op zijn laarzen, en toen zag Harm dat er een gat inzat. 'Oh, ik dacht dat indianen zelf wel wisten hoe ze zulke dingen kunnen maken,' grapte Harm. 'Nou, komt u maar verder.' De indiaan kwam naar binnen en deed zijn laars uit. Harm pakte draad en een naald, en begon de stof aan elkaar te naaien. Hij vond het vreemd dat de indiaan dit zelf niet kon.

'Hebben ze bij jullie geen onderwijs ?' vroeg Harm. De indiaan schudde zijn hoofd. De kinderen kwamen thuis en waren verbaasd toen ze de indiaan op de bank zagen zitten. 'Wat moet hij hier ?' vroeg Ko.

'Laten we een beetje gastvrij zijn,' zei Harm.

'Maar pa, u weet dat indianen gevaarlijk zijn,' zei Bep.

'Daar zijn geen bewijzen voor,' zei Harm. 'Trouwens, hij had gewoon mijn hulp nodig.'

'Het kan een valstrik zijn, pa,' zei Ko, die het niet vertrouwde.

'Ach welnee,' zei Harm. 'Hij kan hier best wel een nachtje slapen.'

'Wat !' riep Ko. 'Mij niet gezien. Dan ga ik wel bij oma slapen.'

'Doe jij dat maar,' zei Harm. 'Ik ben wel blij met een beetje gezelschap sinds mama is overleden.'

Bep begon te snikken. 'Moet je dat allemaal weer aanhalen, pa ? Zo komen we er nooit overheen.'

'Sorry,' zei Harm. 'Ga jij ook maar naar oma.'

De kinderen liepen de deur uit, terwijl Harm aan de indiaan vroeg of hij een biertje wilde. De indiaan wilde dat wel. Harm zag het als een uitdaging. Als hij vriendschap met de indiaan kon sluiten, dan zou dat bevordelijk zijn voor de verhouding tussen het dorp en de indianen. Misschien zou dat wel veel misverstanden uit de weg ruimen.

In de nacht hoorde Harm wat gerommel op het zolder. Toen hoorde hij ineens luide muziek. Toen hij kwam kijken had de indiaan een grammofoon-plaat opgezet. Harm kon er wel om lachen, en ging weer verder slapen. De indiaan bleek het goed naar zijn zin te hebben, maar de dag erop wilde de indiaan weer terug. De indiaan was te gehecht aan het bos. Harm kon dat goed begrijpen. De indiaan was verder erg dankbaar, maar maakte duidelijk in hele gebrekkige taal dat de vriendschap nu ook ten einde moest komen. De indiaan zei dat het voor hem eigenlijk verboden was om vriendschap te hebben met de blanken.

Harm kon het niet laten om nog even te vragen over die laars. 'Waarom kwam je hier eigenlijk voor die laars ? Hebben jullie geen vrouwen in jullie stam die voor dit soort dingen zorgen ?'

De indiaan liet weten dat ze geen vrouwen meer hadden. Die waren allemaal dood. De stam had alleen nog maar mannen, en die schenen heel onhandig met deze dingen te zijn.

'Maar hoe moet dat dan verder als je nog eens zoiets nodig hebt ?' vroeg Harm. De indiaan maakte duidelijk dat het maar behelpen was, en dat alles te hooi en te gras zou gaan. Misschien zouden ze zich het zelf wel aanleren, maar dat zou tijd kosten. De laatste vrouw van de stam was net overleden. Harm zei dat hij kon begrijpen hoe hij zich voelde, want zijn vrouw was ook overleden.

De indiaan maakte duidelijk dat hij juist blij was dat de vrouw dood was. Vrouwen bleken een grote macht binnen de stam te hebben, en die zouden ze in het verleden misbruikt hebben. De indiaan voelde zich vrij nu. Harm vroeg zich af of de vrouwen misschien vermoord waren. 'Hoe zijn jullie vrouwen aan hun einde gekomen ?' vroeg Harm tactisch.

De indiaan liet weten dat dit een groot geheim was. Harm vond dat verdacht. 'Waarom wil je het niet zeggen ?' vroeg Harm. 'Hebben jullie iets te verbergen ?'

'Shhhh,' zei de indiaan, en drukte zijn vingers op de lippen van Harm. 'Jullie zijn me maar een vreemde koekebakkers,' zei Harm.

De indiaan maakte duidelijk dat hij nu moest gaan, en rende het bos in.

Harm stond met zijn ogen te knipperen. Hij vertrouwde het helemaal niet. Even later kwamen de kinderen thuis.

'Hoe was het bij oma ?' vroeg Harm.

'Oma was er niet,' zei Ko. 'Maar we hadden de sleutel, dus we zijn daar gewoon gaan slapen.'

'Misschien is ze bij tante Buurtje,' zei Harm.

Ko en Bep gingen op de bank zitten. 'Hoe is het afgelopen met die indiaan ?' vroeg Bep. Toen vertelde Harm het hele verhaal.

'Ik heb nog eens lopen denken, hè,' zei Bep. 'Die indianen hebben misschien onze hulp nodig. Ze leven niet voor niets in het bos. Er moet iets in het verleden mis zijn gegaan.'

'Ach welnee,' zei Ko. 'Ze houden van het bos. Ze zouden niet anders willen. Er is nooit iets verkeerds gegaan, want ze hebben altijd al in het bos geleefd.'

'Nou, ik weet het nog niet zo net,' zei Bep. 'Misschien hebben ze traumatische ervaringen gehad in stad of dorp, en zijn toen naar het bos vertrokken. Wie zou er nu vanuit zichzelf zo primitief willen leven ?'

'Ik,' zei Ko. 'Ik begrijp hen gedachtengang helemaal. Maar voor ons zijn ze nu niet meer te vertrouwen. Het lijkt wel alsof er een vuur is tussen hen en ons. Het bos is in oorlog met het dorp.'

'Er kunnen toch ook wel tussenwegen zijn ?' vraagt Bep.

'Blijkbaar niet,' zei Ko.

Midden in de nacht wordt er op het raam geslagen. Een groep woedende indianen is gekomen. Harm rent naar beneden, ziet de indianen staan, en grijpt naar zijn honkbal-knuppel.

Hij doet de deur open en roept : 'Wie van jullie wil er het eerst aan ?'

De indianen zijn boos, en laten hem weten dat ze erachter zijn gekomen dat één van hen bij de blanken is geweest en vriendschap heeft gesloten. Ze laten weten dat er een speer door het hart van de dader is gegaan door dit misdrijf.

'Zeg, zijn jullie de politie ofzo ?' vraagt Harm boos. 'Scheer je weg, of ik bel de politie !'

De indianen maakten het duidelijk dat ze de politie niet waren, maar dat de blanken zouden boeten voor de vriendschap met één van hen. Blanken zouden niet te vertrouwen zijn, en het zou als een vloek op hun stam rusten als ze dat zomaar langs hun heen zouden laten gaan. Verschillende speren werden er op Harm gericht. Harm stond klaar om toe te slaan met de honkbal-knuppel, en riep naar zijn kinderen om hen de politie te laten bellen. Steeds meer indianen begonnen zich te verzamelen voor het huis van Harm. 'Ik waarschuw je,' zei één van de indianen. 'We zullen je niet vermoorden, maar lever je kinderen uit. Dan zal het voor ons afgedaan zijn.'

'Nooit,' zei Harm woedend. 'Zijn jullie helemaal gek geworden.'

'Je kinderen liggen al verlamd in hun bed,' zei de indiaan. 'We zijn al door de achterkant binnengekomen, en hebben hen het spinnengif toegediend.'

'Spinnengif ?' vroeg Harm verbaasd. Toen werd ook Harm van achteren geinjecteerd met het gif, en lag al snel verlamd op de grond. Na lange tijd werd hij wakker in het indianenkamp diep in het bos. Hij lag daar vastgebonden naast zijn kinderen. Zijn kinderen waren nog steeds bewusteloos. In de verte zag hij een paal met een varkenskop erop.

Een indiaan kwam dichterbij. 'Aanbidden jullie die varkenskop daar ?' vroeg Harm.

'Kop houden,' zei de indiaan, en schopte hem een paar keer.

'Nee, serieus,' zei Harm. 'Ik wil weten of jullie die varkenskop daar aanbidden.'

'Gaat je niks aan,' zei de indiaan nors, en schopte hem weer. Dit keer veel harder.

'Jij bent leraar van beroep, hè ?' vraagt de indiaan nors.

'Hoe weet je dat ?' kreunt Harm van de pijn.

'Wij weten alles,' zei de indiaan, die hem weer schopte, hard in zijn buik. 'Jullie blamken weten precies hoe iedereen te maken zoals jullie zelf.'

Harm kon niet meer praten van de pijn. Het duizelde hem voor de ogen, terwijl de indiaan maar door blijf schoppen, totdat hij weer bewusteloos viel.

Toen hij weer wakker was was hij aan een paal gebonden. Het bleek de paal met de varkenskop te zijn. De varkenskop was vlak boven hem.

'Dom varken,' zei één van de indianen, terwijl de andere indianen lachten. Een wat oudere indiaan kwam naar voren. Hij drukte een mes op de keel van Harm. 'Jullie blanken hebben alles verziekt,' zei de oude indiaan. 'Jullie zijn een vloek. Wij weten precies wat wij met jullie moeten doen. Jij gaat geofferd worden aan de paal met de varkenskop.'

Harm wordt wakker in zweet. Hij had alles maar gedroomd. De indiaan slaapt nog steeds op het zolder, en zijn kinderen zijn bij oma. Die ochtend moest hij naar school om les te geven,

maar de nachtmerrie zit hem nog steeds in de keel. Hij heeft moeite met spreken, en besluit af te bellen. Hij voelt zich duizelig en misselijk. Na een tijdje wordt hij gebeld door Ko. Hij doet zijn hele verhaal, en dan wil oma hem ook even aan de telefoon. Oma is erg in paniek, en zei dat hij een domme fout had gemaakt, omdat de indianen met boze magie werken. Die nachtmerrie was daar een teken van. Harm zag nog steeds geen kwaad in de indiaan. 'Iedereen droomt weleens naar,' zei hij tegen oma.

'Maar je bent ziek,' zei oma. 'Er kunnen wel duistere krachten aan het werk zijn, jongen, vergis je er maar niet in. Of misschien heeft die indiaan wel allerlei ziektes naar binnen gebracht. Die mensen leven niet echt hygienisch.'

Harm werd zieker en zieker, en moest naar het ziekenhuis voor onderzoek. Oma kwam hem ook opzoeken met de kinderen. Ze schudde haar hoofd. 'Ik heb je er altijd zo voor gewaarschuwd geen bosmensen binnen te nemen. Ze zijn niet te vertrouwen.'

Oma besloot om bij Harm in te wonen om voor de kinderen te zorgen. Harm was erg depressief. Gelukkig was het geen ernstige ziekte, dus hij kon snel weg uit het ziekenhuis. Tante Buurtje zou de kinderen een tijdje op vakantie nemen naar een tropisch eiland, zodat Harm helemaal tot rust kon komen.

Tante Buurtje was een vrolijke vrouw, als zonneschijn, en zij zorgde ervoor dat de kinderen helemaal over de dood van hun moeder heenkwamen. Maar met Harm ging het steeds slechter.

Op een nacht kon Harm niet meer verder. Hij moest hier weg. Hij rende het bos in, zijn huis achterlatende. Oma sliep.

Na een lange tijd rennen kwam Harm aan bij de indianenstam. Hij smeekte of hij daar kon wonen. Ze waren direct erg aardig. Ook de indiaan die Harm geholpen had was erbij. Oma had hem weer het bos ingestuurd toen Harm in het ziekenhuis lag. Harm kreeg zijn eigen rieten hut. Oma was erg in paniek. Ze wist niet waar Harm was, maar had een vermoeden, omdat Harm zo vaak tegen haar zei dat hij weg wilde, het bos in, om te leven met de indianen. Toen Harm maar niet terug kwam en zo lang weg bleef besloot oma op onderzoek uit te gaan. Ze begreep hem wel een beetje, maar wilde toch zekerheid. Na lang lopen zag ze in de verte het indianen-kamp, en hoorde zijn luide stem al. Oma was erg opgelucht. Even wilde ze hem zien, en toen ze in de verte een glimp van hem opving keerde ze weer terug. Ze wist dat ze hem toch niet tegen kon houden, en toen Harm in het ziekenhuis lag kwam ze erachter dat de indiaan die bij Harm logeerde eigenlijk een hele aardige man was. Ook de kinderen hadden er

vrede mee toen ze het hoorden. Oma zou nu voor hen zorgen. Bep dacht er niet aan om in een indianen-stam te wonen, maar Ko dacht er over om zijn vader in het kamp te bezoeken, en misschien daar ook te blijven. Niet alleen omdat hij zijn vader miste, maar ook omdat het bos hem aantrok. Voor hem was het ook heel interessant dat zijn vader nu contact had met de indianen, en zelfs één van hen was geworden, terwijl hij er vroeger altijd voor waarschuwde.

Na een tijdje ging ook Ko in het bos wonen, bij zijn vader en de indianen. Oma en Bep bleven in het huis wonen. Zij konden het goed met elkaar vinden. Ook tante Buurtje kwam vaak bij hen op bezoek. 'Ach,' zei tante Buurtje, 'Harm heeft gewoon een vrouw nodig. Dan blijft hij wel weg van die inboorlingen. Hij heeft gewoon niets te doen.'

'Tegen mij zei hij dat als hij ooit nog een relatie wilde, dan met een bosvrouw, met een indiaanse vrouw,' zei Bep. 'Maar daar was hij nog helemaal niet aan toe, en dacht er ook niet over, omdat hij nog zo stoeit met de dood van moeder. Hij is ook bang om weer gehecht aan iemand te raken, en die persoon dan weer te moeten verliezen.'

'Ja, dat is ook waar,' zei tante Buurtje. 'Maar heus, het kan hem misschien opvrolijken. Hij kan gewoon met zijn nieuwe vrouw zo nu en dan het bos inwandelen, dat helpt ook.'

'U begrijpt het niet, tante Buurtje,' zei Bep. 'Hij wil in het bos wonen. Hij wil niet terug naar het dorp.'

'Jammer dan,' zei tante Buurtje. 'Ik hoop dat hij een goed leven heeft daar.'

Oma knikte. Tante Buurtje kwam meer en meer logeren bij oma en Bep, en besloot na een tijdje bij hen in te trekken. Drie vrouwen in een huis. Het was een echt vrouwenhuis, en het was er altijd erg gezellig. Maar Harm en Ko dachten er niet aan om terug te komen. Zo leefden de drie vrouwen vele jaren bij elkaar, en het was een reuze gezellige en goede tijd. Maar toen stierf oma plotseling, en niet lang daarna ook tante Buurtje. Nu was Bep helemaal alleen, en depressies begonnen haar aan te vliegen. Ze kon het allemaal maar moeilijk verwerken, en deze keer begon ze haar vader en Ko heel erg te missen. Ook zij ging naar het bos, en zocht de indianenstam op om daar te wonen. Ze hadden dan wel helemaal geen familie meer buiten elkaar, maar de indianen waren nu hun nieuwe familie.

Toch kon Bep hier ook niet helemaal goed aarden. Ze voelde zich verscheurd tussen twee werelden. Ze leek steeds depressiever te worden, en er bleek geen kruid tegen opgewassen te

zijn. Harm en Ko deden van alles om haar op te vrolijken, en ook de indianen. Op een dag werd ze naar de medicijn-man gebracht. Hij liet haar ruiken aan wat rode veren, en gaf haar een medicijn. Toen bond de medicijn-man de rode veren in haar haar.

'Het grote geheim is wat jij moet zien,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Ik zal jou op een reis nemen door het bos naar het grote geheim.'

Met goedvinden van Harm en Ko ging Bep op een bosreis met de medicijn-man. Ze gingen heel diep het bos in, langs meren en heuvels, tot een plaats waar de wilde dieren waren. Ook hier was een meertje. De medicijn-man smeerde haar in met zand, modder en klei. Ook smeerde hij zichzelf hiermee in, en nu zouden ze het meertje overzwemmen. Na een tijdje kwamen ze aan bij een struik die over het meertje hing. Aan de stam van de struik lag een kleine panter. De medicijn-man nam haar mee langs de panter. Vlakbij was een grot. De medicijn-man zei dat de panter de bewaker was van de grot. De medicijn-man nam haar diep in de grot. Ook in de grot was een meertje, en een spook-achtig geluid. Plotseling was er een verschijning. Het was erg licht.

'Waarom zijn jullie gekomen,' sprak de gestalte.

De medicijn-man maakte een buiging en zei : 'Dit is Bep. Zij heeft last van depressies, en ik dacht dat het haar zou helpen om het grote geheim te zien.'

'Depressies is de roep van het grote geheim,' zei de gestalte. De lichtende verschijning had een kap op, en een lang gewaad. Ook had de gestalte een speer. 'Ik waak over het grote geheim,' zei de gestalte, 'maar depressie is de sleutel. Ik waak over de zielen van het woord. Ook haar moeder is hier, haar oma, en haar tante. Nog veel meer zielen zijn hier. Deze depressie is haar verbinding met hen, maar die verbinding is verbroken. Ik ben de grote verbinder. Ik heb deze weg gemaakt. Laat haar dichterbij komen. Ik zal haar hart genezen, en haar hoofd tot rust brengen.' Toen vaagde de gestalte weg, en een lichtende weg verscheen voor hen. 'Kom mee,' zei de medicijn-man, en stapte op de weg. Het was een soort tunnel die toen begon te draaien. Bep werd duizelig. Droomde ze dit ? Voorzichtig stapte zij ook op de weg. Ze leken in een heel nieuw bos te komen. Bep voelde een band om haar hoofd komen, en stralen kwamen naar binnen om haar hart te voeden. 'Kom verder,' zei een stem. Het was een donkere, lage stem, die steeds lager werd. Ze zag weer een verschijning, dit keer zonder kap, die een miniatuur koe in zijn handen had. 'Dit is het woord,' zei de verschijning die daar in lange gewaden stond. Plotseling begon er melk uit de koe te komen. 'Woord, spreek,' zei de verschijning luid. Toen stond er een paal met een koeienkop op. De melk begon te stromen en te stromen, totdat Bep en de medicijnman er bijna in zwommen. 'Ik ben het grote geheim,' zei de koeienkop. 'Als het middernacht is, dan verander ik in een varkenskop, en dan is het grote geheim van jou,'

'Wacht eens even,' zei Bep. 'Hier heb ik een keer over gedroomd. Nee, dat kan niet waar zijn.'

'Wat bedoel je ?' vroeg de medicijn-man.

'Ik heb dit al weleens eerder gezien,' zei Bep. 'We moeten wachten tot middernacht, en dan zal de varkenskop spreken.'

'Precies,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Het is de strijd tussen hebzucht en honger, onthechting. Het is de stem van depressie, maar tegelijkertijd het medicijn.'

Ze bleven wachten tot het middernacht was. Toen veranderde de koeienkop in een varkenskop.

'Ik ben overwonnen,' zei de varkenskop. 'Willen jullie mijn geheim zien ? Het geheim wat ik al voor vele eeuwen verborgen heb gehouden ?'

Bep knikte, en stapte dichterbij. Toen ineens begon de varkenskop vuur te spuwen. Bep schrok, en rende naar achteren. De medicijn-man hield haar vast. 'Hij is het geheim aan het openbaren.' Weer spuwde de varkenskop vuur. 'Ik bedank jullie alvast voor het komen. Jullie hebben het welverdiend om dit te zien. Ruben, Simeon, Levi, Juda, Gad, Aser, Issaschar, Zebulon, Jozef, Benjamin, Dina, Efraim, Manasse ….' En weer spuwde de varkenskop vuur, en begon woest te worden. Zijn kop werd helemaal rood. 'Ik ben hier om deze zegels te verbreken !' riep de varkenskop. 'Dat is mijn taak, om de zegels der stammen te verbreken !'

'Niemand dan jullie zijn gekomen om dit geheim te zien,' zei de varkenskop toen rustig. Een gouden cirkel met daarop de stenen van de stammen begon rond te draaien en te branden. 'Deze gouden cirkelzaag, …. deze gouden cirkelzaag …' riep de varkenskop. En toen ontplofte de cirkel. Een tunnel verscheen voor hen. 'Ga de tunnel binnen,' zei de varkenskop nors. Bep en de medicijnman liepen haastig door. Achter hen werd een deur gesloten.

'Jullie willen het geheim toch zien ? Jullie willen het geheim toch zien ?' riep de varkenskop. 'Voor eeuwig is dit verborgen gebleven, maar jullie hebben overwonnen. 'De sleutel van

depressies heeft jullie hier gebracht.' Achter de varkenskop verscheen een troon met een oude vrouw erop met lange vieze haren. 'Het geheim is gemanifesteerd in haar,' zei de varkenskop. De vrouw stond op, en liep op Bep en de medicijn-man af. Maar als door de bliksem werd ze teruggeslagen. 'Ik moet altijd op deze troon zitten,' jammerde ze. 'En dat omdat ik voor de hebzucht heb gekozen. Mijn varken is nu slechts een kop, om mij te verraden. Ik dacht altijd maar aan eten, en meer rijkdommen, om mijn macht te laten zegevieren. Maar mijn varken is tegen mij gekeerd nu, en heeft mijn schuilplaats verraden. Dom varken !' krijste ze. 'Ik zit nu voor altijd aan mijn stoel vastgeplakt. Ik heb de dorpen en de steden ontworpen, en ik heb ze groot gemaakt ! Dat is alles wat ik kan ! Dit is mijn troon, en ik ben aan het smelten !' jammerde ze. 'Ik heb de ring der stammen gecreeerd als het orakel van mijn toverboek waarmee ik de dorpen en steden heb behekst. Maar jullie hebben de ring verbroken !' krijste ze, terwijl ze vuur spuwde. 'Hoe meer vuur ik spuw, hoe meer ik smelt. Mijn woede is mij aan het verteren,' jammerde ze. 'Maar ik heb jouw familie, en ik zal ze meetrekken in mijn val,' krijste ze. Haar stem echode. Bep trilde even. Tot haar grote schrik begon de rode troon waarop de heks zat te bewegen, maar gelukkig schoot de troon weer terug als door elastiek.

'Ik weet je naam, ik weet waar je woont !' krijste de heks. 'Hier is het grote geheim : De stammen zijn de steden en de dorpen.' Toen viel de stoel om, en de heks begon weg te smelten. Weer begon een cirkel voor hen te draaien, maar deze begon langzaam weg te smelten. Toen begon een andere cirkel voor hun ogen te draaien en te krijsen, maar ook deze begon langzaam weg te smelten.

'Ik weet waar je woont !' werd er in de verte geroepen. Plotseling viel Bep neer. Gelukkig konden de armen van de medicijn-man haar opvangen. 'W...w...wie was dat ?' vroeg Bep.

'Je bent in de matrix van het bos,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Het is een raadsel wat je moet oplossen. Er is een hogere natuur, die het grote geheim is.'

'Ik ben te depressief,' snikt Bep. 'Ik kan niet goed nadenken. Het vermoeit me.' De medicijn-man nam haar in zijn armen. 'Juist door depressie, leegte en vermoeidheid wordt het raadsel opgelost,' zei hij. 'Niet door goed nadenken. Nadenken is een valstrik. Het labyrint moet namelijk overwonnen worden. Het is een gevecht.' Bep begint harder te snikken. 'Ik ben zo moe. Ik kan het niet meer volhouden. Alles slaat op me in.'

'Ik bescherm je,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Je moet je innerlijke vijanden overwinnen, en dit is de perfecte plaats. Het is nu of nooit. Juist in je depressies kun je de vijand een grote slag slaan.'

'Het vreet me aan, medicijn-man,' snikte Bep. 'Ik ben hier niet tegen opgewassen.'

'Haal rustig adem,' zei de medicijn-man. Hij leidde haar tot een stomend, kolkend meertje, waar hij haar onderdompelde en begon te wassen. Hij haalde zijn hand over haar voorhoofd. 'Zoveel spanning op je hoofd,' zei hij. Het meertje was heel warm. 'Dit is de overgang naar de dromenwereld, heel diep in het bos,' zei de medicijn-man. 'De planten, kruiden en bloemen zijn hier namelijk veel sterker, zijn veel meer zaaddragend, en veroorzaken daardoor een veld van hallucinaties. Ik spreek nu tot je door de hallucinaties, al voor een geruime tijd. Dit is ook een hallucinatie.'

'Wat wonderlijk,' zei Bep. 'Ik wil nog dieper het bos in.'

'Ja, maar verderop zijn de nachtmerries,' zei de medicijnman. 'De planten daar zijn wel nog sterker dan hier.'

'Interessant,' zei Bep. 'Nou, laten we dan maar hier blijven,' zei Bep.

'Ja,' zei de medicijn-man, 'want die nachtmerrie-hallucinaties doen net alsof je dan in de dorpen en de steden terecht komt, maar het is gewoon nog dieper in het bos.'

'Hmmm,' zei Bep. 'Dus u wilt zeggen dat toen wij in het dorp woonde, wij gewoon onder de invloed van zware planten waren dieper in het bos ?'

'Precies,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Je bent nu daarvan aan het afkicken, en dat is ook heel confronterend.'

'Ik ben bang,' zei Bep.

'Wij gaan daar alleen naartoe als wij een tegengif hebben genomen,' zegt de medicijn-man. 'Wij nemen dan soms stoffen van die zware planten, omdat in kleine hoeveelheden, in een veilig gebied, deze stoffen als medicijn kunnen werken. Maar als je er teveel van neemt, dan ga je dus echt dorpen en steden hallucineren als nachtmerries.'

'Was het overlijden van mijn moeder ook zo'n nachtmerrie-hallucinatie ?' vroeg Bep.

De medicijn-man knikte. 'Ja, en dat was een hele zware stof, die jarenlang in het lichaam kan blijven doorwerken.'

'En tante Buurtje en oma, hun overlijden, was dat hetzelfde ?' vroeg Bep.

De medicijn-man knikte weer. 'Ja, allemaal hetzelfde. Het is zware troep, waar veel te veel van genomen is, en je was in onveilig gebied. Het hangt daar in zware doseringen gewoon in de lucht, en dat werkt dag en nacht op je.'

Bep begint weer te snikken. 'Ik voelde me zo rot, en ik voel me nog steeds rot. Ik mis ze zo erg. Dus het was allemaal niet waar ? En waren zij zelf dan ook een hallucinatie, en bestonden zij dan helemaal niet ?'

De medicijn-man was even stil. 'Kind, je moet nog veel leren,' zei hij.

'Nee, ik wil het weten,' zei Bep in paniek. 'Bestonden moeder, oma en tante Buurtje echt, of waren het slechts hallucinaties ?'

'Ze bestonden in andere vormen,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Maar niet zoals je ze kende. Het waren dorpse hallucinaties, dus alles was dorps. Het begon misschien goed, maar het was een geladen nachtmerrie, wat betekent dat het je langzaam in een tragedie zou zuigen. Het zijn roofplanten, Bep. Het zijn hele gevaarlijke planten, die alleen wij als medicijn-mannen veilig kunnen gebruiken. Zoals ik al zei gaat dat in hele lage doseringen, en in veilig gebied. Dan dient het als een medicijn, en we gebruiken het in de oorlog en in de jacht in hogere doseringen. Het is dan goed gif. Wij moeten in ieder geval voldoende tegengif hebben om hier tegen bestand te zijn.'

'Wat voor tegengif is dat ?' vroeg Bep nieuwsgierig.

'Wij kweken daarvoor bepaalde spinnen,' zei de medicijnman, 'die wij dan melken voor hun gif. Maar ook dit gif mag niet genomen worden in te hoge doseringen.'

'Waarom niet ?' vroeg Bep.

'Omdat dat verlammingen kan brengen,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Ook heeft het in hoge doseringen hetzelfde effect als de roofplanten.'

'Klinkt eng,' zei Bep. 'Ik begin flink bang te worden van al deze dingen. Wat als er op dit moment iets goed fout zit, want u zei dat ik nu ook aan het hallucineren ben ?'

'Leer en ervaar,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Als je er telkens weer wat bijleert, dan zal dat je steeds meer rust geven. Steeds meer zul je dan het grotere plaatje zien om je inzicht te geven.'

'Toch is het eng,' zei Bep. 'Wat als je het verkeerde erbij leert, en dat je zo dieper en dieper in de kronkels wordt geholpen ?'

'Wanneer de student klaar is om meer te leren, komt de leraar,' zei de medicijn-man.

'Ja, maar de leraar kan bedriegen,' zei Bep.

'Niet als de student blijft onderzoeken, open blijft staan, om tot de dieptes van de kennis te komen,' zei de medicijn-man.

'Nou, ik weet het nog zo net niet,' zei Bep. 'Sommigen zijn erg sluw. En een foutje is snel gemaakt.'

'Voorzichtigheid is de moeder van de waarheid,' glimlachte de medicijnman.

'Ik ben voorzichtig en bang,' zei Bep. 'Ik begin bijna paranoide te worden nu. Dit is echt heel eng.'

'Ik kan je helpen met wat tegengif van de speciale spinnen die wij kweken,' zei de medicijn-man.

'Wat voor spinnen zijn dat ?' vroeg Bep.

'Pajiet-spinnen,' zei de medicijnman. 'Die zijn heel zeldzaam, maar worden al sinds eeuwen in het geheim gekweekt door onze stam. Het gif breekt heel snel de andere giffen af.'

'Ja, ja,' zei Bep. 'Maar kom je zo niet in een andere hallucinatie terecht ? Leven wij niet allemaal in hallucinaties ?'

'Slimme meid,' glimlachte de medicijn-man. 'In wezen zijn er alleen goede en slechte hallucinaties, ja. Alles is gebaseerd op hallucinaties.'

'Lekker ingewikkeld,' zei Bep. 'Dus misschien besta ik helemaal niet, of in een andere vorm.'

'Je moet hierin je pad leren te vinden, Bep,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Wil je het tegengif ?'

'Ja, doe maar,' zei Bep. 'Ik heb toch niets te verliezen.'

Snel spoot de medicijn-man iets in haar arm, en het leek wel alsof er nog iets in haar werd gespoten, als in haar arm buiten haar arm. Bep werd direct wakker alsof er een waas van haar ogen was weggetrokken. Alles was heel helder nu, en ze zag de medicijnman met haar arm in zijn hand. Hij had daar net iets ingespoten. Bep haalde diep adem. 'Interessant,' zei ze. 'Dus we hadden beiden dezelfde hallucinatie ?'

'Ja, ik ben in verschillende lagen van de natuur,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Ik heb leren dubbel-leven, en leren switchen.'

'Interessant,' zei Bep. 'En dat kun jij me ook leren ?'

'Natuurlijk,' zei de medicijn-man. Samen gingen ze terug naar het kamp, en Bep had natuurlijk veel te vertellen. Ze voelde zichzelf al een stuk beter nu.

Bep werd steeds nieuwsgieriger naar die planten dieper in het bos. De medicijn-man vertelde haar dat het vlees-planten waren, die op geslachtsdelen leken. Zij die onder de bedwelming hiervan kwamen zouden zelfs hallucinaties van geboorte kunnen krijgen, waardoor ze al hun herinneringen verloren. Juist omdat Bep's depressies na een tijdje sterker dan ooit terugkwamen wilde ze hier zo graag naartoe. De medicijn-man kreeg hier hoogte van en waarschuwde haar. Hij zei dat het alleen maar erger zou worden als ze daar naartoe zou gaan. Hij vertelde haar ook dat ze juist daar vandaan kwam, en dat ze daarom zo'n verschrikkelijk leven had gehad. Maar Bep wilde terug, want haar depressies waren erger dan ooit tevoren. De medicijn-man wist dat hij iets moest doen. Hij kon daar wel naartoe met voldoende tegengif, omdat hij een volleerd medicijn-man was, maar Bep was onervaren. Bep kon niet meer wachten. Ze zei dat er niets meer te verliezen was, en dat het toch niet meer erger kon worden. Bep begon ook aan alles te twijfelen, juist omdat het zo slecht met haar ging. De medicijn-man bleef zeggen dat afkicken een heel zwaar proces was, en dat het soms wel erger was dan ooit tevoren. Dat hoorde bij het proces. Het was een heel zwaar gevecht. 'Ik kan het niet meer aan, medicijn-man,' zei Bep.

'Volhouden, meid,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Blijf studeren, en voordat je het weet kun je daar samen met mij naartoe.'

Maar Bep kon niet meer. Ze nam dezelfde dosering tegengif die de medicijn-man had voorgeschreven, en rende op een nacht het bos in. Ze bleef maar rennen en rennen. Na een tijdje was ze omringd door prachtige struiken van vlees die inderdaad op een soort geslachtsdelen leken. De draden waren heel dun, en bovenop was een soort gezwollen vruchtbaar deel met een prachtige roze kleur. Hier stroomde sap uit, waarvan Bep wist dat het een heel gevaarlijk sap was. Even stond ze als aan de grond genageld. Ze wist dat ze nu een heel groot risico nam. Eigenlijk was het nog helemaal geen tijd om hier naartoe te gaan. Plotseling voelde ze wat springen in haar hoofd. Het sap leek binnen te stromen. Ze begon te krijsen en te huilen. 'Ik kan niet meer,' huilde ze. 'Waarom martelen jullie me zo ?'

Van achteren was ze door een pijl geraakt. Toen viel ze bewusteloos. Achter haar stond de medicijn-man die haar op zijn schouder nam. Dat was op het nippertje. Hij bracht haar veilig naar het kamp. Na een tijdje werd ze heel zwakjes wakker. 'Oh, het was prachtig,' zei ze, terwijl ze nog steeds onder bedwelming was. 'Maar toen overweldigde me het, en ik werd zo bang.'

'Je was nog niet klaar, meid,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Ik heb je op het nippertje kunnen redden. Ze hadden je bijna meegesleurd in hun stroom.'

'Het was zo spannend,' zuchtte Bep.

'Nee, het was gevaarlijk,' zei de medicijn-man.

'Maar het was zo prachtig,' zei Bep, 'zo adembenemend.'

'Bep, wacht jij nou maar rustig totdat het tijd is dat we daar samen naartoe kunnen gaan. Ik moet je nog enkele dingen uitleggen, en dan ben je klaar. Je hebt nu alvast even een voorproefje gehad, maar dat was niet de bedoeling. Het had je je leven kunnen kosten. Dit zijn geen dingen om mee te spelen,' zei de medicijn-man.

'Ik weet dat je bezorgd bent,' zei Bep. 'Ik weet dat je de waarheid spreekt, maar ik kon niet meer. Ik moest het gewoon zien. De drang in mij was te sterk. Het was als gekrijs in mijn hoofd.'

'Je moet nog veel leren, Bep,' zei de medicijn-man. Bep knikte. Ze had nu wonderlijke dromen die haar leken voor te bereiden. Maar Bep besefte niet dat juist de planten van vlees dit allemaal gesimuleerd hadden. Ze hadden haar alreeds gevangen, en gaven haar hallucinaties alsof ze nog veilig bij de medicijn-man was. Iedereen van het kamp begon zich steeds vreemder en gemener tegen Bep te gedragen, ook de medicijn-man. Bep had nog steeds niets door. Voor haar was dit een aanzet om weer terug te gaan naar de vlees-planten, niet wetende dat ze allang weer onder hun macht was. Ze had het gevoel dat iedereen haar haatte, dus ze zei tegen haarzelf : 'Kom ik om, dan kom ik om.' Op een nacht begon ze weer te rennen. Ze wilde terug naar de vlees-planten. Ze zag de prachtige planten in de verte die naar haar lonkten. Ze zakte langzaam in een rivier omringd met de meest wonderlijke en prachtige vlees-planten. Dit keer had ze geeneens tegengif genomen. Ze verlangde hier zo naar. Langzaam zonk ze in de rivier, tot aan haar nek. De rivier was vol van het zaad van de wonderlijke planten, en langzaam begon ze te drinken. Ze wilde hallucineren om van deze depressies af te komen. Ze voelde zich wonderlijk.

Ze was het gepraat van de medicijn-man zat. Ze wilde leven. Ze wilde genieten van de prachtige natuur. Ze wilde niet naar school. Er was al genoeg tegen haar gesproken in haar leven. Ze was er moe van. De medicijn-man was niet meer wie hij was, en de anderen ook niet.

In het kamp in de werkelijkheid was inmiddels grote paniek, omdat Bep verdwenen was, en maar niet terugkwam. De medicijn-man vermoede dat ze naar de vlees-planten was gegaan. Hij besloot er naartoe te gaan met voldoende tegengif om te zien of er sporen van haar waren. Diep in de velden van de vlees-planten vond hij haar. Ze lag daar op de grond. Hij wist dat ze zo had geworsteld met depressies en kon haar zo goed begrijpen. Maar toch wist hij dat scholing het beste was voor haar. Ze moest afkicken en tot de waarheid komen. Met wat medicijnen kon hij haar terugbrengen tot de werkelijkheid, en ze werd huilend wakker, heel zwak. Ze kon niet praten, maar wel een beetje lopen. Heel voorzichtig liep hij met haar terug naar het kamp. Ko nam haar direct in zijn armen.

Ze gebruikte vuile taal, omdat ze nog steeds dacht aan wat zij haar hadden aangedaan in haar hallucinaties. De medicijn-man maakte haar duidelijk dat ze in een simulatie-realiteit was gekomen door de hallucinaties van de vlees-planten, die ook het kamp hadden gesimuleerd en alle kamp-bewoners, als gevolg van haar tochtje. Toen hield ze Ko stevig vast. Ze was blij dat ze gered was. Het had ook anders kunnen aflopen, want soms verslonden de vlees-planten hen die tot hen kwamen. Waarschijnlijk had het tegengif haar gered, en het feit dat ze toch al wat kennis had.

Bep had van haar fouten geleerd. Ze wilde nu goed bij de les blijven. Na een lange periode kon ze dan eindelijk met de medicijn-man mee naar de planten van vlees. Ze keek haar ogen uit, en de medicijn-man liet haar vele geheimen zien. 'Deze planten zijn heilig,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Eens in de zoveel tijd kiezen ze iemand uit die hen goed heeft behandeld, en die veel van hen afweet, en zo iemand zal dan voor altijd tussen hen kunnen wonen. Zij wonen meestal dieper in de velden van de vlees-planten, daar waar je niet zomaar kunt komen.'

'Interessant, dat lijkt me wel wat,' zei Bep. 'Ik vind het hier prachtig.'

'Zelfs ik ben nog niet eens zo ver,' grapte de medicijn-man.

Bep hoorde heldere stemmen in haar hoofd, waarvan de medicijn-man zei dat het de stemmen van de vlees-planten waren. Ze hadden haar op het oog. Ze wilden met haar communiceren. Ze wilden haar onderwijzen.

Ze vertelden haar van een zee die achter de velden van vlees-planten lag, en ze nodigden haar uit daar naartoe te gaan. Zij moest hiervoor de medicijn-man achter haar laten. Ze moest over een zanderig pad, en de planten hier begonnen steeds wonderlijker te worden. Er waren allerlei soorten roze lichten in haar hoofd, als stralen-kransen. Ze vertelden haar dat zij een uitverkorene was. De zee stond vol met prachtige planten van vlees. Ze communiceerden door stoom en een soort vuur, en allerlei sappen. Sommige van die sappen leken wel kokend, en die werden hier en daar uitgespoten. Bep kreeg een heel warm gevoel. Het leek alsof delen in haar hoofd aan elkaar verbonden werden. Ze had ineens veel minder hoofdpijn, alsof er bruggen in haar hoofd werden gebouwd. De planten van vlees zeiden dat ze in haar hoofd leefden. Deze zee was de zee van communicatie. Ze wilden haar genezen en voorbereiden op haar taak. Bep begon te lachen. Haar depressies begonnen weg te smelten. Alles binnenin haar bleek te werken door sappen en vuren, en alles binnenin haar was gemaakt van vlees-planten, als een grote puzzel die in elkaar gezet moest worden. Bep was in een gelukzalig gevoel. Er borrelde zoveel in haar op. Hier kon zij verder studeren, en de planten van vlees zouden haar alle eilanden van de zee laten zien, en haar al hun geheimen vertellen. Dit waren tijden van grote genezing, en van kennis. Een rood vuur scheen bezit van haar te nemen, en allerlei rode sappen, ook kokende rode sappen die voortspoten. Verder was het een heel tropisch klimaat.

Deze planten hadden heel wat te vertellen. Wat er allemaal verkeerd was gegaan, en wat er allemaal moest gebeuren. Bep begon steeds meer van haar verleden te vergeten, als door een nieuwe geboorte. Toch herinnerde ze ook dingen, maar dan op een hele andere manier. Deze dingen hadden waarde, maar waren in de verkeerde vormen tot haar gekomen. Nu kon alles recht gezet worden zoals het was. Ze had zicht gekregen in de nacht. Het was het vuur van de vleesplanten die haar hoofd had verlicht. Dit waren allerlei soorten vuren, die ook werkten door allerlei sappen. Weelderige struiken namen haar mee door de zee, waardoor alles begon te duizelen in haar. Alles werd gemixt in haar hoofd, en nieuwe vormen kwamen voort. Het was als een pretpark in de zee. De zee-planten fluisterden in haar, en trokken haar naar de eilanden.

In dit proces begon ze haar identiteit te verliezen, tot het punt dat ze niet meer wist of ze nu een man of een vrouw was. Ze voelde zichzelf als een oude man. In de verte leek het wel alsof ze Ko zag staan, haar vader, en de medicijn-man, en ze miste hen, maar het leek wel alsof dat van een lang vervlogen tijd was, alsof ze niet meer bestonden. Plotseling kroop er een gevoel van depressie op haar, en de gestaltes bleken weg te vagen. Ze had heimwee, maar de drangen van de vlees-planten waren te groot. Waar trokken ze haar naartoe ? Het leek wel alsof ze in een grote woestijn was aangekomen, alsof ze iets heel groots moest voorttrekken, als een kar door de woestijn. Ze voelde zich oud, als een oude man, als Kain. 'Kom tot het land Nod, als een oase in deze woestijn,' werd er gefluisterd. Ze wist niet meer of ze de planten van vlees nog wel kon vertrouwen. Ze voelde zich als een slaaf, en dan in meerdere dimensies tegelijk, want ze voelde zich ook een slaaf van een schip. Ze wilde overboord springen, maar ze was geketend. Ze moest roeien. Ze was een roei-slaaf. 'Oh, waar ben ik toch in terecht gekomen,' jammerde ze. 'Ik heb waarschijnlijk veel te veel van die troep genomen. Het is zware drugs. Oh, waar ben ik toch aan begonnen. Ik ben al tijden mezelf niet. Ik heb er al veel te lang mee lopen experimenteren. Dit is een 'bad trip,' een 'bad trip,' girl. Wat heb ik mezelf toch

aangedaan.' Ze hoorde gelach in haar hoofd, alsof alles aan het scheuren was in haar hersenen. 'Je wilde het grote geheim toch zien ?' lachte de stem in haar hoofd.

Plotseling vaagde het allemaal weg, en zag ze de medicijn-man voor haar staan. Hij sloeg een arm om haar heen, en zei : 'Eindelijk heb je dan het grote geheim gezien.' Toen liepen ze samen terug naar het kamp.

De Stad van Erotos

Zij zat daar, omringd door ogen, met een blauwe mond. Roze olifantjes stonden om haar heen, en de ogen hadden vleugels en zongen zo mooi. Er kwam een roze kracht uit de ogen, die door elkaar heenstroomde. Ook droop er een slijm uit de ogen. Zo was er het oog van wijsheid, het oog van liefde, het oog van genezing, het oog van schoonheid, het oog van kracht, het oog van puurheid, en het oog van licht. Het waren zeven ogen, haar dienstknechten. Zij spraken tot haar als een orakel, maar vaak waren zij stil. Zij droegen de geur van de bossen en de wateren, en zij leefde als in een visioen.

Verderop stond de boom der hyena's. Onder deze boom regeerde de zwarte koningin met haar legioenen over alle witte mannen. Zij schreeuwde, en had veel bloed te verbergen. Onder de last van een ongeboren kind werkte zij. De boom bracht een vergif voort, haar vergif. Hiermee had zij de witte mannen in schuld gebonden. Zij konden deze schulden niet betalen. Zij leefden in honger onder de tirannie van de zwarte koningin. Zij voerde hen met vergif vanuit zwarte borsten, en dichtbij stond een spiegel. In de spiegel was er een wereld waar de witte koning regeerde over de zwarte vrouwen, een omgekeerde wereld, maar niemand kon deze wereld bereiken. De zwarte koningin bewaakte de spiegel bijna hysterisch. Maar de zwarte koningin stierf, en haar dochter nam het over. Haar dochter was zo lief, als de goedheid zelf, en iedereen was blij met deze koningin. En men vergat de boom der hyena's, en men vergat de spiegel, want iedereen leefde nu in geluk en zaligheid. En de spiegel en de

boom der hyena's werden verbannen naar het rijk der nachtmerries. Maar zeker bij zeker kwam het land onder invloed van de witte spin, een vreemd en gevaarlijk medicijn.

Zelfs mensen konden verstrikt raken in de webben van deze spin. Zij werden dan tijdenlang uitgehongerd, en moesten van een vreemd vergif eten, wat de spin hen voerde, en zij werden voortdurend gewassen in het speeksel van de spin. De slachtoffers zouden dromen krijgen of hallucinaties van het meest overheerlijke voedsel, wat onbereikbaar voor hen was. Ook zouden ze nachtmerries krijgen dat ze in een varken of een gnoe veranderden, en geplaagd worden door doodsangsten. Na een tijd zou de witte spin dan veranderen in een zwarte spin, om aan de maaltijd te beginnen. Sommigen zeiden dat de witte spin eigenlijk niet wit was, maar zwart, en dat het alleen maar wit lijkt, also het zijn tanden laat zien. Ook zeiden sommigen dat het de wraak was van de zwarte koningin. De nieuwe koningin wilde er niets aan doen, omdat zij dacht dat het misschien de terugkeer van haar moeder was.

Maar op een dag kwam de witte spin in het paleis en wilde de nieuwe koningin ombrengen. Nog steeds durfde de nieuwe koningin niets te doen, en vluchtte naar het bos. De witte spin nam de troon. Direkt veranderde de witte spin in een witte koning, zodat sommigen dachten dat het de wraak van de spiegel was. Maar alweer gingen de witte mannen in gevangenschap, dus het zou toch heel goed mogelijk de zwarte koningin kunnen wezen, in één van haar gedaantes.

De witte spin vond dat de nieuwe koningin moest sterven. De witte spin verliet zijn troon en ging het bos in om naar haar te zoeken. Hij moest en zou haar vinden, en toen hij haar vond was ze erg verschrikt. 'Alstublieft,' zei het meisje. 'Laat mij leven, ik heb u toch niets aangedaan ? Ik smeek u, geef mij een kans, en laat mij de redenen weten waarom u mij wilt doden.'

Maar de spin antwoordde niet, en begon het meisje aan stukken te rijten. Het volk ging ten onder in doem meer dan ooit tevoren. De spin veranderde vaak van geslacht en kleur, en vaak zagen mensen een hyena op een troon. Mensen begonnen nachtmerries te krijgen van hyenas die hen verscheurden, koelbloedig, zonder genade.

Totdat op een dag een reusachtige witte vlieg het land binnenvloog. De vlieg was prachtig, als betoverend. Velen dachten dat het de terugkeer was van de gestorven nieuwe koningin. De vlieg vloog het paleis binnen en begon met een rustige, zachte stem te spreken. De spin vloog de vlieg aan, maar begon weg te smelten. Een wit vuur begon de spin aan te vreten. Nog nooit had het land zo'n gekrijs gehoord, als het gekrijs van hyenas. De witte vlieg, die reusachtig was, nam de troon, en alweer werden de witte mannen bevrijd.

Zeven jaren regeerde de goede koningin, totdat op een dag een hyena het paleis binnenkwam en de witte vlieg verscheurde. Het bleek de witte spin te zijn die zich als een hyena had vermomd. Hoe zij van de dood was opgestaan begreep niemand. Weer gingen de witte mannen in gevangenschap, erger dan ooit. Zij moesten een voer eten waardoor ze in varkens of gnoes veranderden. Ze klaagden erover dat hun leven bestond uit sterven en geboren worden. 'Ja,' zei de witte spin, 'dat komt omdat jullie in het Grote Wiel van de Witte Spin zijn, van de eeuwige wedergeboorte en verslinding.'

'Dat klinkt oosters,' zei iemand.

'Nee, het is indiaans,' zei de witte spin. 'Het is een wiel, een cyclus, van vlees, niet van reincarnatie.'

'Van vlees en niet van reincarnatie ?' vroeg dezelfde persoon.

'Ja,' zei de witte spin, 'precies zoals ik het zeg. Daar moeten jullie witte mensen maar eens gewend aan raken. Jullie zijn gewoon onderdeel van de voedsel-keten, en in dit rijk ben ik de baas. Ik sta aan de top van de voedsel-keten, en jullie werken voor mij, sterven, en komen hierdoor weer tot leven.'

'Ja, weer om een stuk vlees te worden,' zei die iemand. 'Waar houdt dit alles op ?'

'Het houdt nooit op,' zei de witte spin.

'Bent u een filosoof ofzo ?' vroeg de persoon.

'Gaat je geen snars aan,' snauwde de witte spin. Even leek ze weer op een hyena, en even leek ze weer op een zwarte spin. Vervolgens sprak ze : 'In mijn webben zijn jullie. Wen daar maar aan.'

'Het is een vervloekte indiaanse steen,' zei iemand anders, 'een betoverd juweel. Wij hebben erin gekeken en raakten betoverd.'

'Als een Medusa ofzo ?' vroeg de andere persoon weer. Sommigen knikten.

'Hoe krijgen we dat dan weer recht ?' werd er gevraagd. Maar niemand wist de oplossing. 'Misschien is dit wel ons noodlot,' opperde iemand. In ieder geval voelden ze zich machteloos, en steeds meer hopeloos. Ze waren als opgesloten in een visioen door deze drug. Ze waren op een eeuwige boerderij, maar waar werden ze voor gekweekt ? Of werden ze nergens voor gekweekt. De witte spin richtte zich gewoon op het ritueel, als een traditie, en liet verder niets doorschemeren. 'Ik wed dat het de zwarte koningin is !' riep iemand. Sommigen knikten. 'En kunnen jullie die spiegel herinneren waarin een rijk is waar een witte koning is die zwarte vrouwen onderdrukt ? Nou, daar wil ik ook niet wezen.'

'Misschien heeft hij daar wel een reden voor,' opperde iemand anders. 'Of misschien is dat de witte spin zelf die daar een dubbelbestaan leidt, want soms verandert de witte spin in een witte koning. En de zwarte koningin bewaakte die spiegel altijd in grote hysterie.'

'Of misschien zit in de spiegel een sleutel tot onze bevrijding,' zei weer een ander.

'Ik geloof daar niet in,' zei iemand, 'ten eerste niet in het onderdrukken van vrouwen, en ten tweede niet in het onderdrukken van zwarte vrouwen. Zij zijn de bron van ons leven, zijn we allemaal niet uit hen voortgekomen ? Wij hebben ze nodig, en dat ze ons onderdrukken moeten ze zelf weten, maar we kunnen niet onze bron aanvallen.'

'Jij bent het spoor bijster,' zei een ander. Spoedig liep het uit op een vechtpartij. De witte spin had haar gladiatoren opgesteld, en zaaide strijd. Om die strijd te winnen hadden ze macht nodig, en daarom begonnen ze de witte spin te aanbidden, en werd zij hun godin. Vele tempels bouwden zij voor haar, en zij genoot van hun verdeeldheid. Ze had er een lust en plezier in om strijd te zaaien, achterdocht, wantrouwen en leugens. Op alle mogelijke

manieren hongerde ze hen uit, zodat ze zich openstelden voor haar gif. Haar gif werd gezien als levendmakend, overwinnend, almachtig. Zij zagen haar als hun mogelijke bruid.

In hun grootmoed stelden zij wetten op, hun eigen webben, en bouwden kerken en psychiatrieen, en zij was daar, als het grote enigma. Zij broedde voort, ja zelfs in hun graven, maar zij was ongenadig, en gaf slechts illusies, valse hoop. En voor haar tronen werden zij in het ongelijk gesteld, de één meer als de ander.

Zij hield van de jacht en van misleidende woorden. Zij mengde haar giffen op hoge bergen, en als zij afdaalde kwam zij om te doden, maar ook om op te wekken in de hel. Op een dag echter, kwam zij met een geheimenis. Ze begon te vertellen dat de witte vlieg hun enige sleutel was om van hun schuld te worden verlost, en dat haar gif was gemaakt van de witte vlieg. En ze sprak dat de witte vlieg nog eenmaal zou komen om te verlossen en te veroordelen. Op een dag ging de witte spin in een cocon en verandere langzaam in een witte vlieg. Maar deze vlieg was erger dan ze hadden verwacht. Deze vlieg bracht hen een realiteit van ongekende wreedheid. Na zeven jaren van verschrikkelijk leed stierf uiteindelijk de witte vlieg. De mensen leefden door alsof er niets was gebeurd. Ze wilden er eigenlijk niet aan herinnerd worden. Ze vonden hun eigen drug om van alles te herstellen. Zowel de verhalen van de witte spin als van de witte vlieg kwamen steeds meer en meer op de achtergrond, en men vond het ook niet meer belangrijk. Zij creeerden hun eigen religies en mysteries.

De dromenkoningin was woedend. Zij had hen deze dromen gegeven, maar ze deden er niks meer mee, en ze had haar grip verloren. Een hyena rende haar kasteel binnen, en beet haar in de nek. 'Jij mag dan wel de godin van de dood zijn,' zei de hyena, 'maar ik ben de godin van de hel.' De godin van de dood rende al bloedend het kasteel uit, en rende het bos in. Maar de hyena achterhaalde haar. De hyena beet haar overal, maar vermoordde haar niet. De godin van de dood was nu de bloedende. Naar haar aard zocht ze de dood op, maar kon hem ditmaal niet vinden. Er was geen rad van wedergeboorte meer, want men stierf niet meer. Er kwam nu een ander rad : het Rad van de Hyena, het rad van de hel en van de onsterfelijkheid. En de schuldlast werd alleen maar groter. De grote godin van de hyenas was gekomen. De hyenas gebruikten de witte mannen nog steeds als stukken vlees, maar ditmaal stierven de mannen niet, en elk weggegeten stuk vlees groeide gewoon weer aan na een tijdje. De witte mannen werden vlees-slaven. Velen verlangden weer terug naar de dromenkoningin, naar de witte spin en de witte vlieg. Maar het werd hen niet gegeven. Zij zochten de dood, maar het vluchtte van hen weg. De god van de dood was Een-oog, die op een grote spin reed. Hij was op de vlucht, want hij wilde niet in de handen van de hyenas vallen. Als ze hem zouden vinden, dan zou eeuwige verdoemenis hem ten deel vallen. Maar de hyenas sloegen niets over. Alles kwam in hun boerderij terecht. Het was de levende eeuwig-durende hel, een slagerij. Hier hing het grote wiel van eeuwiggroeiend vlees. De hyenas vonden vetmesting maar niks, want het vlees bleef toch gewoon maar doorgroeien, dus alles moest uitgehongerd worden. Dan was het vlees van de beste kwaliteit, en zo konden de botten ook bereikt worden, want de hyenas waren ook bot-eters.

De witte mannen werden zo zwak dat ze niet meer konden spreken, en alleen nog maar varkensklanken en gnoe-klanken konden maken, en zo doofde ook de stem van de dood uit. De dood had het laatste woord niet meer, ja, was zelfs stom geworden. Ze konden alleen nog maar mekkeren en knorren. Velen zochten troost bij de god van de slaap, maar spoedig werd ook deze bezocht door de hyenas, en zijn lot was verschrikkelijk. De god van de slaap had al deze werelden gecreeerd van misleiding en deceptie, en hypnotiseerde hen allen met zijn muziek. Een web van dromen had hij gecreeerd en werkte nauw samen met de goden van de

dood. Maar ook hij brandde toen de hyenas hem vonden, en al zijn paradijsen gingen in rook op. Hij had een lange tong, en rookte veel, ook zijn waterpijp. Hij had hoerenbuurten gecreeerd waar men met geld snel aan z'n trekken kon komen, maar geld telde voor de hyenas niet. De god van slaap was een belangrijke krachtbron voor de god van geld, die ook de god van de dood als zijn krachtbron had. Maar ook de god van geld werd woest aangevallen door de hyenas en al bloedend naar de boerderij getrokken. Als een modepop werd hij naar binnen getrokken. De hyenas beten hem overal waar ze hem bijten konden. Erotos was de god van de slaap, die hij bewerkte door snelle sex. De goden van sex en hoererij waren zijn trouwste dienstknechten. Ook deze twee honden werden door de hyenas flink gebeten en weggedragen naar de boerderij.

De god van slaap had een paradijs waar iedereen liep met een streepjescode, iedereen die had gedronken van de melk van slaap. Zij droegen die code op hun voorhoofden, en daarboven was de tatoeage van een vrouwenborst, als een merkteken. Zijn rijk werd gereguleerd door waterpijpen, die aan de mensen werden vastgemaakt, en wiens pijpen in alle mogelijke openingen van het menselijk lichaam werden gestoken. Zijn doel was de mensen te leiden tot een rots, om hen daar te verstenen en tot de eeuwige slaap te leiden. Maar dat ging nu niet door sinds de hyenas waren gekomen. Zijn dromen waren ruw verstoord. Ook de waterpijpen van de god van slaap werden aangevallen. En de waterpijpen waren als vreemde paarse spinnen. 'Laat hen slapen,' werd er geroepen. 'Ach, laat hen slapen.' Maar de realiteiten van de hel waren een invasie begonnen, en zij kwamen met dagmerries. De dagmerries waren witte paarden die ook in zwarte paarden en in zwarte vrouwen konden veranderen. Zij waren geriemd en kwamen om te riemen, om hun rijk van slavernij op te zetten. Ook de god van de slaap ging in slavernij. Hij was bijna als een standbeeld, en zacht vuur kwam van hem voort, en hij was omringd door kleine hondjes. 'De god van de dood telt niet meer,' werd er gesproken. 'Zijn economieen zijn ten onder gegaan.' Lamach, de god van medicijnen, was woedend. Hij was de vader van de god van slaap en de god van de dood. In zijn machine kwam hij naar voren, terwijl de hyena's hem direkt aanvielen. De machine viel neer in het zand, en de god van medicijnen begon te bloeden vanuit zijn hoofd, waar hij een hoofdwond had. Er was bloed in het zand. De godin van de tuinen wierp er een roos op. Haar tranen waren van bloed. Zij was zijn vrouw. Zij was gehuld in een donkere jas van bont, maar ook haar vielen de hyena's aan. Ze viel op de grond en de hyena's doken op haar. 'Het godenrijk is vallende,' fluisterde ze. 'Onze verborgen berg, oh, laat niemand grootvader ontdekken.' De god van drugs danste op een meer. Hij had vleugels, was als een jong kind, en droeg een oog op zijn borst. Bloemen zweefden om hem heen. Toen hij de hyenas zag schrok hij, en rende weg. Maar de hyena's kwamen hem achterna. Zij zouden nooit meer loslaten wat hun oog had gezien.

'Heb medelijden met een kind,' werd er geroepen. Maar al snel werd er een bloedspoor in de sneeuw achtergelaten. Overal waar het bloed was gevallen waren vlinders. 'Jullie zullen mijn opa toch niet vinden,' zei het kind. Maar de hyenas volgden de lange ketting waaraan het kind was vastgemaakt, en kwamen uit bij de god van krankzinnigheid, die woonde in een groot kasteel.

'Potverdikkeme, de hel !' schreeuwde de god. 'Ik kan mijn ogen bijna niet geloven. Nou, ik heb op jullie gewacht, hoor. Ik heb al kaartjes voor de trein.' De hyena's vlogen de god van krankzinnigheid aan en sleurden hem naar de boerderij.

Flamingo Dagen

Hij schreef een brief, een hele lange brief. Hij had haar tijden niet meer gezien. Eigenlijk durfde hij het niet goed, maar het was de enige manier. Zij had bij hem in de klas gezeten, en zij was de baas van dit vreemde ziekenhuis. Hij wist niet goed hoe hij hier terecht was gekomen. Hij kon het zich nog nauwelijks herinneren, maar zij die hem kwamen ophalen hadden een badge met een flamingo erop. De badge was op borsthoogte van hun witte pakken. Ook was er een groot embleem van de flamingo op de witte bus. Dat was alles wat hij kon herinneren, en waarom hij werd meegenomen wist hij niet, en dat vertelden ze hem ook niet. Hij wilde in ieder geval een reden weten, en misschien kon hij haar overhalen om hem vrij te laten zetten. Zij was zijn enige hoop. Hij beefde toen hij de brief schreef. Hij zag het allemaal als een grote ontvoering. Misschien waren ze wel crimineel. Verder werd hij hier goed behandeld. Hij had een eigen kamer.

Hij schreef haar dat hij kinderen had die nu zonder vader moesten opgroeien. Hij wachtte vele maanden op een brief terug, maar er kwam geen antwoord. Hij vroeg zich af of ze de brief wel had ontvangen, en stuurde de brief nog een keer, maar er kwam geen antwoord. Zo verstreken de jaren en hij moest leven met grote onzekerheid. Waar hij woonde was het luxe, zeer luxe. Hij vroeg zich af hoe het met de buitenwereld ging, maar die informatie werd van hem afgehouden. Eigenlijk mocht niemand met hem contact opnemen. Vandaar dat hij de baas, of liever gezegd de bazin, van het vreemde ziekenhuis als zijn laatste hoop zag. Op een keer toen hij langs het hokje van de leiding liep dacht hij een flits op te vangen van een televisie beeld met mensen die in grote armoe leefden, en toen begon hij de gedachte te krijgen dat in de buitenwereld iedereen steeds armer werd, en hij daar misschien tegen beschermd werd.

Er werd nauwelijks met hem gesproken, en al helemaal niet over het verleden of de buitenwereld, of wat voor ziekte hij zou hebben. Hij wist in principe niets, alleen dat hij hier opgesloten werd gehouden.

Er waren ook andere patiënten, veelal meisjes, en die hadden vaak een verleden van misbruik. Hij probeerde ze te helpen, maar veelal sloten ze zichzelf op, en meden iedereen. Hij kon niet echt tot ze doordringen. Soms keken ze even en leek het alsof ze zouden spreken, maar dan gingen ze weg. Waarschijnlijk was het voor hen te zwaar om er over te praten.

Toch kon hij zo nu en dan wel meisjes met iets helpen. Zo had hij toch nog het gevoel dat hij waarde had. Soms had hij even het idee dat hij hier niet voor niets was, als met een bedoeling, maar dat was vaak maar een flits, en daarna voelde hij zich weer nutteloos. Hij had veel vragen die maar niet beantwoord leken te worden.

Op een dag moest hij bij het hokje van de leiding komen. Hij kreeg een nieuw medicijn. Op het pakje medicijnen stond een flamingo embleem. Het leek wel op een pakje sigaretten. Er zaten kleine roze en witte pilletjes in. Ook op de pilletjes zelf was een flamingo gegraveerd. Toen hij het inslikte met wat water leek het alsof hij een andere tong kreeg, en ook alsof hij ander tandvlees had. Het voelde aan alsof hij een totaal andere mond had. "Wat is dit ?" vroeg hij. Maar niemand antwoordde, en hij wist niet waarvoor het was.

Die nacht had hij vreemde dromen over opstijgende flamingo's. Toen zag hij het meisje uit zijn klas, de bazin van het vreemde ziekenhuis. "Weet je het dan niet ?" zei ze. "Jij bent een geheim verpleger. Jij bent er om de meisjes te helpen."

De dag erna werd hij uit het ziekenhuis ontslagen. Hij kreeg een nieuw huis, en ook een baan. Hij werd tandarts, maar mocht niet boren en rekeningen versturen. Hij werd een flamingo tandarts, die alleen maar pilletjes gaf gratis. Op een hele zachte en natuurlijke manier werden de monden zo genezen. 's Nachts droomde hij dat hij een flamingo was, op zoek naar de geheimen van de zee. Ook droomde hij dat hij een duiker was, een diepzee duiker. Op de zeebodem bleken alle stoffen te groeien die ze nodig hadden voor de pilletjes.

Zijn kinderen wilden niets met hem te maken hebben. Ze kenden hem niet. Ze zeiden dat hij hen in de steek had gelaten, en dat hij nu op de blaren moest zitten. Hij begreep ze niet, omdat het om een ontvoering ging. Hij kon er niets aan doen.

Hij was diep teleurgesteld in zijn koppige kinderen die zich niet verplaatsten in de situatie. Hij leefde alleen nog voor zijn werk. Op een dag kwam de bazin van het vreemde ziekenhuis hem bezoeken. Ze vroeg hem of hij ook wilde werken in het ziekenhuis. "Dat nooit !" riep hij. "Ze hebben mij ontvoerd. Ik heb haast geen herinneringen van de ontvoering en van vóór de ontvoering. Er moet wel geweld gebruikt zijn."

"Gewoon een pilletje in je soep, door je vrouw," zei de bazin van het vreemde ziekenhuis. "Zo zijn wij flamingo's nu eenmaal. Je ging te diep gebukt onder het leven, en toen heeft je vrouw deze beslissing genomen."

"Waar is ze nu ?" vroeg hij. "De kinderen willen me het niet vertellen."

"In een ander ziekenhuis," zei de bazin van het vreemde ziekenhuis. "Toen ze hoorde hoe je was opgeknapt door het pilletje heeft ze zelf ook zo'n pilletje genomen."

"Is ze veilig bij de flamingo's ?" vroeg hij.

"Net zo veilig als jij," glimlachte ze.

Een diepe glimlach kwam ook op zijn gezicht. "Mag ik haar weer zien ?" vroeg hij.

"Jullie konden niet met elkaar opschieten," zei ze. "Dat is ook een reden waarom ze het pilletje in je soep had gedaan. Zij ging er ook teveel onder gebukt."

"Ik kan me er niets meer van herinneren," zei hij. "Dan moet het wel erg geweest zijn."

"Ik kan je daar helaas niets over zeggen," zei ze. "Je vrouw heeft me dat verboden."

"Ik kan me haar helemaal niet meer herinneren," zei hij. "Ik weet niet eens meer wie ze is, sinds dat pilletje."

"Ik ben je vrouw," zei ze.

Einde

Het Paarse Complot

Junos was het zoontje van een oude hertog in Nunspeet. Ze woonden in het kasteel dichtbij de molen. Junos had geen broertjes of zusjes, en zijn moeder was lang geleden overleden. Wel had Junos een stiefmoeder, maar zij was vaak weg. Op een dag moest Junos boodschappen doen voor zijn stiefmoeder. Hij moest daarvoor naar het dorp fietsen, en ook naar een zaak met spiegels gaan. Zijn stiefmoeder wilde een paarse spiegel voor in haar slaapkamer. Onderweg kwam Junos een paar kwajongens tegen. 'Zeg, looshelm, waar ga jij met die spiegel naartoe ?' riepen ze. En met hun brommers kwamen ze achter hem aan. Al snel hadden ze de spiegel te pakken en wierpen het op de straat.

Thuisgekomen wachtte Junos niet erg veel begrip op. Zijn stiefmoeder was razend. 'Die spiegels zijn duur, Junos, en je had een tas moeten vragen aan de zaak waar je die spiegel gekocht hebt. Dan konden die jongens hem niet zien.' Ook zijn vader vond het erg dom van Junos. 'Junos, je had een andere weg moeten inslaan, want je weet dat daar altijd die jongens met hun brommers staan. Ze doen van alles om mensen het leven zuur te maken.' Junos moest de volgende dag naar de zaak terug om van zijn eigen geld een nieuwe paarse spiegel te halen. Maar de baas van de spiegelzaak kreeg het al snel door, en al gauw vertelde Junos hem het verhaal. 'Weet je wat,' zei hij, 'wij brengen de spiegel wel even met de auto van de zaak langs. En natuurlijk hoef je daar niets voor te betalen, want jij kon er per slot van rekening niks aan

doen dat die andere spiegel kapotging. En voor de schrik mag je een extra dure uitzoeken, eentje met parfumspuiten en met een speeldoos erin. Dat zal je moeder prachtig vinden.'

'Het is mijn moeder niet,' zei Junos, 'het is mijn stiefmoeder, en als ik er eentje uit mag kiezen, dan wil ik de allergoedkoopste.' De baas keek een beetje beteuterd. 'Maar mag je haar dan niet ?' vroeg hij. 'Niet echt,' zij Junos, 'want sinds zij er is krijg ik altijd overal de schuld van.' De baas van de spiegelzaak keek erg bedenkelijk. 'Ik denk juist dat je je stiefmoeder en je vader moet opvrolijken, want ze zullen het wel erg moeilijk hebben als ze zo tegen je doen,' zei hij voorzichtig. 'Misschien hebt u gelijk,' zei Junos. 'Laten we het dan maar doen.'

En zo gebeurde het. De bijzondere spiegel werd in de bestelbus van de zaak naar het kasteel gebracht. De oude hertog en zijn vrouw waren er erg blij mee. En even leek het erg goed te gaan in het gezin. Maar na een tijdje begon de stiefmoeder weer erg te klagen naar Junos en hem van veel dingen de schuld te geven. 'Mamma,' zei Junos, 'is er soms iets met de spiegel gebeurd ?' De stiefmoeder was erg verrast omdat Junos haar voor het eerst 'mamma' had genoemd. 'Ja,' zei ze heel zacht, terwijl haar gezicht een beetje vertrok. 'Ik durfte het je eigenlijk niet zo goed te zeggen, maar de speeldoos springt aan op de meest vreemde momenten, zelfs als we slapen, en de parfumspuiten geven veel te veel parfum af.' Maar daar wist Junos wel wat op. Ze zouden iemand van de spiegelzaak ervoor laten komen. Na een tijdje werd er aangebeld. Het was de baas van de spiegelzaak. Al snel zag hij wat er aan de hand was. Het mechanisme van de spiegel was stuk. 'Ik kan zien dat de spiegel veel gebruikt werd, u was er zeker erg blij mee,' zei de baas van de spiegelzaak. De stiefmoeder knikte. 'Nou,' zei de baas. 'Ik heb voor u een nieuwe paarse spiegel meegebracht. Het is hetzelfde model, maar er zitten ook kleine lampjes bij in allerlei kleuren.' De stiefmoeder was erg verrast.

En weer scheen het een tijdje erg goed te gaan in het gezin van de oude hertog. Maar op een dag hoorde Junos iets stukspringen. Hij rende naar de kamer van zijn stiefmoeder, en zag haar daar in tranen zitten terwijl de spiegel kapot op de grond lag. 'Dat stomme ding maakt me gek,' zei de stiefmoeder. 'De lichtjes knipperen de hele tijd, ook nadat ik ze heb uitgezet. Ze springen gewoon weer aan. Ik word er ziek van.' Huilend viel ze Junos in de armen. Dat was voor de eerste keer dat ze hem omhelste. Junos kreeg er een brok van in z'n keel. 'Mamma, ik zal snel de spiegelzaak wel weer bellen. Ik weet zeker dat de baas ons nu een nog betere zal geven.' Maar de stiefmoeder huilde : 'Nee, Junos, ik wil nooit geen spiegel meer op m'n kamer zien. Het is afgelopen ermee.' En sindsdien was Junos z'n stiefmoeder altijd het zonnetje in huis. Ze was zichtbaar opgelucht toen de spiegel weg was, en ze zou er nooit meer één in haar kamer neerzetten ... nooit meer.

Na een tijdje kwam Junos nog eens terug bij de spiegelzaak om te vertellen wat er gebeurd was. De baas van de spiegelzaak was zichtbaar blij. 'Ach, Junos, weet je,' zei hij, 'die spiegels zijn zo gemaakt. De geschiedenis heeft wel bewezen dat zulke spiegels heel opvoedkundig zijn, en veel problemen in gezinnen voorkomen en wegnemen. Ze zijn gemaakt door een speciale fabrikant.' En toen pakte de baas weer zo'n paarse spiegel, en draaide de onderkant boven. Daar zat een klein stickertje waar hij op wees. 'Zie, hier staat het,' zei hij : 'het paarse complot.' Junos glimlachte, en na nog even met de baas van de spiegelzaak door te praten ging hij fluitend naar huis.

De Roep van de Pauw

Twee meisjes stonden aan zijn kamerdeur. Buiten in het pauwenpark riepen de pauwen zijn naam : "Leo, Leo". Hij had altijd het gevoel alsof ze hem riepen. De meisjes klopten aan, en hij deed open. "Je moeder heeft ons binnengelaten," zeiden ze. Hij glimlachte. Hij liet ze binnen in zijn kamer. Ze keken rond. Hij had een poster aan de muur van Doornroosje. "Mooi," zeiden de meisjes. "Je hebt een leuke kamer." Hij glimlachte.

Ze keken hem diep in zijn ogen. "Hoe vindt je het nu in Birmingham ?" vroegen ze.

"Klaarwakker," zei hij. "Alsof ik ontwaakt ben. Krijg ik nu voedsel ?"

"Ben je een pauw dan ?" vroeg één van de meisjes.

"Misschien," zei hij. "Ik ben een oppasser."

"Oh, de oppasser van het pauwenpark om de pauwen te voeden ?" vroeg het andere meisje.

"Zoiets," zei Leo.

Die avond bleven de meisjes eten. Hij speelde wat muziek voor ze, en ging die avond vroeg naar bed, terwijl de meisjes weer naar huis gingen. De dag erna waren ze er weer. Ze hadden allerlei cadeautjes voor Leo mee gebracht. Wie waren zij eigenlijk ?

Zij waren van het huisbezoek van een kerk. Het was geen gewone kerk, maar van proza. Ze leefden door gedichten en proza, als een kerk van natuur-literatuur. Ze zagen in alles van de natuur en het leven een diepere boodschap. Soms noemden ze het de pauwenkerk, of de kerk van de pauw. De pauw is namelijk een dier van hele strenge poëtische etiquette. De pauw is ook zo extreem orthodox dat het abstract is. Denk je eens in een horizontale lijn aan de oppervlakte, die maar door en door gaat, zonder einde, en juist in die eindeloosheid ergens afbreekt of ombuigt en dan totaal de diepte in gaat, als een verborgen diepte.

Dingen die ogenschijnlijk oppervlakkig zijn kunnen juist zo belangrijk zijn. Daarom zijn we in deze ogenschijnlijk oppervlakkige wereld. Alles verbergt een les, en een ongrijpbare diepte. Wij kunnen de eeuwigheid niet grijpen zonder de sleutels die in de tijd worden aangereikt.

Wij moeten het leven op aarde zien te waarderen, en oog hebben voor de kleine details van het leven die ons worden gegeven. De waarheid zit verborgen in het kleine. "Wie het kleine niet waardeert is het grote niet weert."

De eindeloze oppervlakkigheid is wijd en breed, zo oneindig horizontaal dat het diep is. Het ravijn getuigt van een loze eeuwigheid waarin alleen de momenten parels zijn, schatten van onpeilbare waarde. De aardkloot zit vol van geheimen, de tijd is de schat, de eeuwigheid is nutteloos.

De meisjes onderwezen hem hierin. Eens kwamen ze bij hem aan de deur, en hij raakte geinteresseerd in de taal die zij spraken. Hij was hier net nieuw in Birmingham.

Het oneindige horizontale is de sleutel tot de diepte. We kunnen niet rechtstreeks de diepte in. Dan zouden we te pletter vallen. Daarom worden we eerst in de horizontale afgrond gedreven, het schijnbare nutteloze, het dagelijks leven met al zijn toeters en bellen. De meisjes lieten hem een pauwenveer zien die ze vonden in het pauwenpark dichtbij. De binnenste cirkel was

onderbroken door een inham, een afgrond. Zo legden ze het uit dat alle cirkels van het leven eerst afgebroken moeten worden om verder te kunnen komen. Daarom moet een mens leren leven met verlies, omdat hier de lijnen ombuigen en de diepte ingaan.

Leo keek de meisjes aan. Ze leken als gezonden uit de hemel. In zijn gedachten waren ze als pauwen. Hij begon het steeds meer naar zijn zin te krijgen in Birmingham. Hij hield van de levensfilosofieën die de mensen er op na hielden hier in Birmingham.

De eindeloosheid van het horizontale begint dan juist door de ongrijpbaarheid ervan te draaien als een wit hek. Zo wordt al het oppervlakkige verkeerd uitgelegd en verkeerd begrepen, en wordt alles omgedraaid. Dit gebeurd aan beide kanten van de eindeloze lijn. Stel je voor : een lijn die geen begin heeft en geen eind, dat moet wel duizelen op een bepaald moment, dat moet wel eindigen in chaos, in grote verwarring. Alleen op dat punt ontstaat de diepte, waarin je wegzinkt in de woeste zee. De pauw reikt hierin een schip aan, en neemt je mee.

Op naar Birmingham,

Op naar het pauwenpark,

Op naar het vertikale wat alleen ontstaat in het eindeloze horizontale,

Waar in grote vermoeidheid en in groot lijden en grote verwarring onze horizontale lijnen, onze horizontale reizen, worden afgebroken,

Waar het pauwenschip ons onderwijst over de zeedieptes,

Wat er groeit op de zeebodem

Op naar Birmingham,

Waar ons eigen weten afbreekt, en een nieuw weten begint,

Waar onze kortzichtige vooroordelen en fabeltjes de allesoverweldigende hoogtes en dieptes van het bestaan ontmoeten,

Van eindeloos horizontaal tot eindeloos vertikaal,

Als de wiskunde van het levensverhaal

Tijd en eeuwigheid zijn randen van dezelfde steen waarin alles ombuigt,

Het is ongrijpbaar als een waterval, als een golf van de zee,

Maar het zal je meesleuren tot dat wat was vergeten

Tijd is de sleutel tot Birmingham,

De eeuwigheid is slechts een muur,

Je kunt het niet grijpen, maar het grijpt jou,

En neemt je mee op reis, op de rug van de pauw

Ik heb de uiteindes gezien van het eindeloze horizontale en saaie,

Het zijn watervallen, en ze zullen alles overstromen,

De toekomst is allang geweest,

Ergens waar de tijd stopt en afbreekt stroomt alles terug,

Terug naar Birmingham,

Terug naar het pauwenpark,

Waar alleen de dichter nog preekt

De roep van de pauw roept ons terug,

Wie kan de roep van de pauw wederstaan ?

Het Apenpaleis

Er was eens een koopman die aan de deuren vleugels verkocht.

Er waren nogal wat mensen die wilden vliegen, maar er bleek ook heel wat aan de vleugels te mankeren, zodat velen na een geweldige tochtje naar beneden stortten.

De mensen waren al snel woedend op de koopman, en de koopman moest diep in het bos vluchten om aan de woedende massa te ontkomen.

Ze hadden speren meegenomen, zwaarden, messen en bogen om de koopman eens goed mores te leren.

Na een lange vluchttocht kwam hij aan bij een huisje waar een levensgrote aap woonde.

De aap nam hem direkt onder zijn hoede en ging op het balkon staan om de koopman te verdedigen.

Maar na een tijdje werd de aap er erg moe van en hij bloedde vanwege de vele pijlen. Hij ging naar binnen en zei tegen de koopman : 'Je moet naar de fee gaan, want ik kan je niet meer goed verdedigen.'

En zo ging de koopman door een achterdeurtje en rende hard naar het huisje van de fee verder in het bos.

De fee was direkt erg vriendelijk naar de man en gaf hem direkt een heleboel vleugeltjes die nooit zouden neerstorten.

Die zou hij dan kunnen verkopen aan de mensen in het vervolg.

De vleugeltjes leken vol van vuurvlammetjes en toen de koopman daar even later bij de mensen mee aankwam werden ze direkt stil.

Nog steeds wilden ze heel graag vliegen, en ze besloten de koopman een nieuwe kans te geven.

En ja hoor, het werkte.

De vleugels deden het goed, en de mensen waren zo blij en dankbaar dat ze de koopman koning maakten van hun volk.

De koopman kreeg daarvoor een prachtig paleis.

Maar omdat de fee de koopman zo goed had geholpen werd zij de koningin, en de aap werd de wachter van het paleis.

Maar omdat het voor de aap wel moeilijk was om zo'n groot paleis in zijn eentje te bewaken toverde de fee er op een dag een heleboel apen bij.

De Banaanse Sinaasappelkoning

Er waren eens een man en een vrouw in een tuin met sinaasappelbomen. Plotseling verscheen er een banaan met sieraden in de struiken tussen de sinaasappels. De man en de vrouw dachten dat het een slang was, en bekogelden de banaan met sinaasappels. ‘Weten jullie wel wie ik ben ?’ sprak de banaan met sieraden. ‘Ik ben de koning van de sinaasappels.’ En hij begon de sinaasappels met zo'n vaart terug te slaan dat de man en de vrouw onder de sinaasappelsap kwamen te zitten. De banaan met sieraden bleef maar gooien, totdat er een zee van sinaasappelsap was ontstaan. De man en de vrouw riepen om hulp. Maar na een tijdje kreeg de banaan met sieraden medelijden met hen, en liet hen op zijn rug zitten, anders zouden ze verdrinken. Hij bracht hen naar een eiland waar ook komkommers en bananen waren. Er waren ook een bananenkoning en een komkommerkoning, en zij hadden wel trek in wat sinaasappelsap. Maar zij dronken daar zoveel van dat de banaanse sinaasappelkoning boos terugkwam, en met zoveel sinaasappels begon te gooien dat zelfs het eiland overstroomde.

Het werd een woeste zee van sinaasappelsap, waarin zelfs de banaanse sinaasappelkoning dreigde te verdrinken. Gelukkig kon de komkommerkoning vliegen en nam ze allen op zijn rug. Hij vloog naar een meloen in de lucht. De meloen nam ze naar binnen, en vroeg wie de schuldige was. Allen wezen ze naar de sinaasappelkoning, die door de meloen direkt weer in de sinaasappelzee werd geworpen. Maar later kreeg de meloen spijt, en dronk de hele sinaasappelzee leeg. De banaanse sinaasappelkoning verstopte zich weer tussen de sinaasappelbomen in de tuin. Op een dag kwamen er weer een man en een vrouw in de tuin. Toen ze de banaanse sinaasappelkoning zagen begonnen ze met sinaasappels naar hem te gooien, omdat ze dachten dat het een slang was. Maar ditmaal gooide de banaanse sinaasappelkoning niks terug, en besloot ook om maar niks te zeggen, want hij wist waar dat op uit kon lopen.

Het Witte Kasteel

Hoofdstuk 1. Het Trauma van de Waarheid

De verwachting was dat alles goed zou lopen, en in zekere zin deed het dat ook, maar Marlies was stervende. Ze kon haar ziekte niet de baas. Ze was erg vrolijk, dat wel, maar de ziekte begon z'n tol te eisen. Haar lichaam werds steeds meer gammel. Ze kon niet bij de wortel van dit alles. Het was een raadsel. Deze allesverwoestende ziekte zou haar spoedig in de dodelijke grip ten onder brengen. Ze had een waas voor de ogen, en begon langzaam blind en doof te worden, afgesneden van de buitenwereld. Haar plan was om er zelf een einde aan te maken, voordat de ziekte dat zou doen. Ze zou daarvoor van een toren afspringen, om zo te pletter te vallen op de markt. Maar het dakzeil van een markt-tent zorgde ervoor dat ze dit overleefde. Toen gooide ze zichzelf voor de trein.

Er was twee minuten stilte in de kerk. De dominee las voor, een gedicht. Iedereen huilde. Arme Marlies. De bomen leefden rustig voort, met Marlies als de wind die hun bladeren bewoog. Zij bracht hen tot leven, door haar dood. Bloedbessen op een bord, thee ernaast. De tovenaar had haar zo gemaakt. Leeuwen waren haar vrienden ... witte leeuwen.

Een kleine jongen dacht na over zijn tante Marlies. Hij zou het witte kasteel waarin zij woonde missen. Snel woonden andere mensen daar. De kleine jongen groeide op, werd oud, maar vergat het witte kasteel nooit. Alsof leeuwen daar wandelden, altijd gingen zijn gedachten er naar terug. Hij was bang als haar te worden, stervende, maar een vreemde gezondheid had hem in de grip. Zijn gedachten waren meesterlijk, zijn honger was rijp, zijn staar ongrijpbaar, onbegrijpelijk, alsof de tovenaar hem had verlost. Zijn fantasieen waren kalm.

Hij schreef een boek over mensen, als een boek over vreemde wezens, als geesten wonen in hutten. Hij schreef een boek over de winden, en de tragiek van wolken. Hij was een eenling. Op een dag stond het witte kasteel te koop. Hij aarzelde geen moment en kocht het. Toen begon zijn leven op te bloeien.

Niemand had verwacht dat het zo snel zou gaan, maar hij werd koning, en regeerde een nieuw land. Grenzen waren aan het vervagen. Hij hield het geluk in zijn hand, trillend. Hij was bang het weer te verliezen, maar de liefde kalmeerde hem, stelde hem gerust. Tante Marlies was in zijn gedachten als de witte thee, in een prachtige witte jurk als bloesem. Ze was een plaatje. Zo zag hij haar altijd, als het getij van witte chocolade. Ze was altijd zijn lievelings-tante, en hij koesterde haar in zijn herinneringen.

Diep van binnen wist hij dat het een leugen was, de manier waarop hij met haar omging. Het had altijd iets onechts. Het was alsof ze het maar acteerden, een poppenspel. Maar hij had van haar genoten, en zij van hem.

De leugen regeerde, ook in het nieuwe land. Het was een kunst, als het raadsel der waarheid. Van binnen voerde hij een oorlog, maar ook dat was slechts schijn. Hij was een man van maskers.

Het witte kasteel maakte een denker van hem, een filosoof, en in het land was er hervorming na hervorming. En daar bleef het allemaal niet bij. Nee, sprookjesachtig moest het zijn, al was het allemaal maar een leugen. Hier moest het zijn. Professionele leugenaars richtte hij op, die veel moesten liegen. Ja, hij geloofde in de leugen, voor hem was dat het eeuwige leven. 'Je kan het ook van een andere kant bekijken,' zei hij altijd.

Zijn droom was een paradijs, en hij wilde dat verwezenlijken. Met leugens bouwde hij voort, maar het werd een prachtig land, en men noemde hem de leugen-koning. Er moest een einde komen aan het trauma van de waarheid. Ze hadden al lang gevochten. De waarheid hield hen veel te veel bezig, en voor wat ? De waarheid was een gruwelijke dictator, maar hij was de dromenkoning. Hij werd bestempeld als gemeen en gek, maar het land was majestueus mooi. Ze konden alles van hem zeggen, maar niet dat hij geen kunstenaar was. Hij was een deskundige gek, een geleerde. Nonsense was zijn doel, want de nuchtere waarheid was saai. Het land was allesbehalve zaai. De clowns waren gekomen. Ze brachten het zoete verdriet. Zij waren de lakeien van de dageraad.

Spijbelaars werden gearresteerd voor school. Er kwam een koud en hard regiem, met een vleugje warmte en doel. Hij schiep een nieuwe aarde en een nieuwe hemel, en werd God genoemd. Door zowel vriend als vijand. En hij dacht aan tante Marlies, die zijn drijfveer was. Tante Marlies werd het boegbeeld van een nieuw ziekenhuis, en het witte kasteel was het huis van de politie. Dit alles omdat hij dat zo wilde.

De zeemeermin sprak, en haar woorden waren als de woorden van zijn tante Ans die altijd verhalen voorlas. Haar woorden zouden tot in eeuwigheden doorklinken. In haar kom was het witte kasteel niets dan vergif, omhuld met koud zout. Het was een vreemde dans der zeemeerminnen die hem ontwaakten. Zij grepen zijn ziel en trokken hem in de diepte, in de wildernis van een nieuw bestaan, waar hij de witte leeuwenkoning zou zijn.

Zij lieten hem de toekomst zien in een bol, als heerlijke chocolade. Zij maakten een academie.

Het huis wat hij nu had was een donkere grot, maar hij waakte op in een betoverdende droom. Hij zou voor duizend jaren slapen, want het stafje der zeemeerminnen had hem geraakt. Hij liep voorop naar een graf.

Dit graf was van tante Ans. Hij omhelsde haar, gaf haar leven. Haar woorden galmden door.

Zij moest hier wezen. Ze had respect.

De bomen grepen haar, en maakten haar tot een prinses. De sneeuw der zeemeerminnen daalde neer. Hij had de indruk dat hij het goed had gedaan. Een tuin met betoverde rozen. Hij liet zijn kennis los op het meer.

Hoofstuk 2. De Gruwel der Eeuwen

Het hek van de rozentuin was hoog, met gouden punten. Velen stierven daar, maar het kon hem niet schelen. Hij was gek en wreed, een koningszoon. Hij was te deftig om zich te bekommeren om de zieken en de armen.

Hij verkoelde, en nog steeds was zijn hart brandende met een passie, maar dat was slechts voor geld en macht. Het ging om de grootte voor hem, niet meer om de kwaliteit, want dat was een graf. Hij walgde wanneer hij het woord kwaliteit hoorde. Het was een kwelling voor hem. Het moest groots zijn en gruwelijk, maar meesterlijk.

En zo werd zijn land een spookhuis, een nachtmerrie, gemaakt van witte chocolade, dat zo oud was geworden dat het giftig was. Maar hier wist hij wel raad mee. Het was een oorlogswapen, een medicijn, om de indiaan weer op het paard te hijsen. Zijn woonplaats stond vol met kleine indiaanse poppetjes, en hij liet ze oorlog voeren tegen elkaar. Ook schilderde hij, met het rozenvuur. Hij werd de gruwel der eeuwen.

Hij was de witte leeuwenkoning, de leugenkoning, en zeemeerminnen dienden hem. Maar hij miste een vrouw, alhoewel hij van het idee gruwelde dat hij een vrouw nodig zou moeten hebben. Hij haatte vrouwen diep van binnen. Dat was ook de reden waarom eigenlijk alles wat zich tussen hem en tante Marlies en tante Ans slechts spel was. Als er geen wet was dan zou hij ze hebben vermoord, als een dolle hond. En hij was druk bezig die wet af te schaffen.

Moorden zou volgens hem moeten kunnen. Hij wilde leven van de moord, en dan vooral de moord op vrouwen. Dat waren wel de minste wezens die hij zich kon voorstellen. Maar al gauw had hij spijt van zijn ideeen. Hij wilde vrouwen een kans geven. Zij moesten gewoon geschoold worden.

En daarom maakte hij een wet dat alle vrouwen verplicht naar school moesten, tot de laatste dag van hun leven.

Medusa

Hoofdstuk 1. De Zonderling

Ik denk dat ik doodga als ik naar haar kijk. ‘Dit is het rijk van de dood,’ zei ze. Ze had een suikerzoet jurkje aan, met de geur van een herfstbos. Ik draaide mijn gezicht om en keek naar buiten, naar de grauwe stenen. Het was alsof ze lang uitgestrekt op de daken lag, alsof ik haar met mijn ogen niet kon ontwijken. De bus stopte dichtbij, mensen stapten in de bus, en het was alsof zij tussen de rijen stond. Ik denk dat ik doodga als ik haar aankijk, dat ik het dan gewoon niet overleef. Ze pakt me bij mijn hand, en trekt me naar beneden. Het is etenstijd. Zij smeert het brood, kijkt naar buiten naar de heg. Ik ruik haar suikerzoet jurkje, alsof het belegd is met hemelse rijkdommen, maar naar haar kijken durf ik niet. Ik ben laf. Ik voel haar hand nog steeds, terwijl ze me allang heeft losgelaten. Ze voert me.

Ze is als een rots waarvan ik af kan springen, daarom beklim ik haar niet. De pot pindakaas voelt nog warm aan van haar hand. Ze was hier. Nu is ze in de kelder. Omdat ze zo lang wegblijft drink ik de laatste slokken melk en thee, en dan ga ik naar bed. Het was een dag des doods, in de tuin van spot. En gisteren was ik in de tuin van wreedheden. Mijn herinneringen zijn daar. Mijn hersenen bloeden. Ze leest me een boek voor, terwijl ik probeer te slapen. Ik hoor haar stem echoen door mijn hoofd. Het zaad van de lindeboom houd ik stevig vast, en meng het met mijn tranen. Dan smeer ik haar lichaam in, met het mengsel dat lijkt op natte

tarwe, griesmeel, het is als brood, en het bed is de oven. Zij is de vrouw van de bakker, en ik ben de bakker. Ik maak haar klaar voor het kostelijke dinner in het diepste van de nacht, en dan slaap ik.

Ze is als de boom aan de rivier. Ik krab aan het hout, het is alsof de sterren breken. Ik denk aan de tuinen waarin wij waren, de hoge poorten in de heggen, de vruchten die zijn als de meest kostelijke snoepjes. Wie plantte hen daar ? Ik keek naar haar gezicht toen ze sliep. Nu was het veilig. De lazarus-koekjes bungelden aan haar lichaam, slap, uitgedroogd, de nacht heerste hier over de dood, de gouden dood. Voor mij was het een vakantie, ze was even geen roofdier meer. Ik kuste haar lippen, en dan slaap ik, vrij, blij, zonder angst, want ze slaapt. Een diepe nacht die mijn bewustzijn breekt, ik ben er even helemaal uit. Tante Connie controleert later de kamers nog even, of alle lichten wel uit zijn voor de nacht, want als de nacht komt, dan moet de nacht echt goed komen. Zo praat ik 's nachts als met een pop. Ik hoor tante Connie op de gang lopen, als een lijzige boom, verzwakt door het gewicht van haar ouderdom, met passen als het slaan op de koekjestrommel. Ja, haar hele wezen klinkt me als muziek in de oren. Altijd is ze mijn lievelingstante geweest, daarom wonen we hier samen, maar de herinnering aan haar verzwakt. Ik leef hier in een dorre tuin, spot gemengd met wreedheden, de souvenirs van het duistere gat van het verleden. Geen lichtjes konden dat goedmaken, geen gouden pollepel van welke grootmoeder dan ook. Ik voel me verminkt.

Oom Joop is een man met humor, maar ook hij kon mij niet redden. Als ik wakker word zit er iemand op me, wassende mijn rug. Het is zij. Ik durf haar niet aan te kijken. Ze pakt me beet, laat dan los, pakt me steviger beet, en dan laat ze me helemaal los, om op te staan. Ik ben te moe, en het zonlicht kwelt me. Er liggen hier snoep papiertjes overal. Ik hoor haar lachen. Er is geen tuinman die de wilde tuin van mijn ziel op orde kan krijgen. Ik lig hier voor Jan Worst.

Ze is de laatste van de rozentuin, dus ik kan haar niet wegdoen. De geschiedenis van de graaf, en zijn kinderen. Zij is als de erfenis. Uit mijn gedachten is ze niet. Ze speelt de piano. Ik kijk naar buiten, en probeer langzaam grip te krijgen op de dag. De muren buiten lijken hoog, zoals zij hoog is, van adel. Tante Connie komt binnen, en sleept zichzelf over het tapijt. Het lijkt voor haar een woestijnreis om aan ons bed te komen, en alles lijkt verwaterd. Haar rumoerig kapsel was vroeger deftig en behoudend. Ze staart in de spiegel. 'Ik moet me nog opmaken voor de dag, je weet wel, het harnas aandoen,' zegt ze. Ze gaat tegen de verwarming aanzitten, en luistert naar de piano. De schotel die ze in haar handen heeft maakt haar bijna als een bedelaar. Ze heeft behoefte aan een gesprek, en ik ben te moe. De dochter van de graaf daarentegen is vol energie, en begint het gesprek met haar in zinderende vaart. Ze zijn als een stel vogels. Al snel prakken de vorken een maal. Ik krijg niks, want ik behoor niet tot de dag. Het is alsof ze elkaar voeren.

In de middag ligt ze weer op me. Het lijkt wel alsof ze draadjes aan me bevestigt om me op te hijsen. Er is nog maar een klein stukje van de dag over en dat eist ze helemaal voor haarzelf

op, als met gloeiende handen. Buiten hoor ik de bus, mensen stappen in, verveeld, uitgeput. Ik vraag me af of ze ooit zullen aankomen. Zwetend en puffend kom ik aan bij de lift op de gang. Ik wil naar de zolder. Maar de lift schijnt niet te werken. Ik strompel naar de trap, want een dag met de dochter van de graaf is te veel voor mij. Ik zie bij de trap naar de zolder een andere vrouw staan, in wit kant. Ze helpt me op de trap. Ik plof even later op haar bed neer. Zij is de vrouw van de zolder, en ik heb de zolder bereikt, niet te bereiken voor de dochter van de graaf, de dochter des doods. Maar ik hoor haar krijsen beneden, als iemand die zich geprikt heeft bij het naaien. Ja, toe maar, druk die speld maar diep naar binnen, je verdient het, kreng, denk ik bij mezelf. Maar dan word ik ineens mild door de zachtheid van de vrouw hier. Ze komt dichterbij, spreid haar benen waarmee ze mij vastklemt. ‘Ho, doe normaal,’ zeg ik. Ze verzwakt de klem een beetje, maar ik voel haar gewicht op me. ‘Slapen ?’ vraagt ze.

‘Nee, dank je, ik heb net geslapen,’ zeg ik.

Ze loopt naar een kastje, haalt wat brood eruit en besmeerd het. Daarna voert ze me. De lucht is donker hier, en ik hoor de dochter van de graaf nog steeds krijsen. Als ik naar buiten staar is het alsof ze zich heeft uitgespreid over de daken.

‘Waar kom je vandaan ?’ vraagt de vrouw van de zolder.

‘Vanuit de tuin,’ zeg ik.

‘Oh, de tuin der edelheden en martelingen ?’

Ik knik.

‘Zo’n zoet-bitter iets,’ zegt ze. Ik knik weer. De verdiepingen onder de zolder lijken ver weg. Ik staar weer naar buiten, alsof ik mijn ziel zie vliegen. ‘Waar ben ik ?’ vraag ik.

- Bij mij.

Ze pakt een schotel en een kom, en voert me dan soep. ‘Ik wil niet meer terug,’ zeg ik. Ik kwam van een nachtelijk gebrul, en nu was ik hier, een plaats vol protserige spulletjes, over en weer gelakt en opgepoetst. Vanaf de zolder kon ik de tuinen zien, de heggen, met de hoge poorten. ‘Ik ben een vergiftigd mens,’ zeg ik. ‘Een dwaallicht, een pop.’ Ze knikt. Als ik naar buiten keek zag ik mijn weerspiegeling. Zij stond ineens voor de spiegel, en maakte zich op, met allerlei smeerseltjes. ‘Goed spul van de bomen,’ zei ze. ‘Het is voor mijn huid. Ik ga niet naar het feest vanavond, ik blijf wel hier met jou.’

Het is alsof ik met haar hang tussen de verdiepingen, alsof ik met haar zweef boven de tuinen. Ik voel haar gewicht, en ben bang dat we naar beneden vallen, maar ze rekt me uit. Ik zie de begroeiing op de muren, en herinner de begroeiing van de tuinen, de dorens, de valstrikken, puur natuur.

‘Ik ben de maker van de tuin,’ zegt ze plotseling. Ik schrik. ‘Hoe kun je zoiets maken ?’ vraag ik. Ze zwijgt, als het graf. Ik merk dat ik kwaad word van binnen, maar dan voel ik ineens genade. Al snel voel ik niets meer, ik kijk alleen maar in een onbekend gat, als een mist, een waas. Ik kan niet meer nadenken. ‘Wat is er aan de andere kant van de tuin ?’ vraag ik.

- Een snoepwinkel. Ze verkopen eigenlijk gewoon zoete vruchten.

Ik kijk naar haar kanten jurkje. Het is als een snoep jurkje. Ineens heb ik zoiets van : Als ik nog verder naar haar kijk, dan ga ik dood.

Ik rol van het bed af naar de trap, en laat mij naar beneden vallen. De dochter van de graaf vangt mij op, en de vrouw van het zolder stormt naar beneden. ‘Hij zit toch aan touwen vast, elastiek, draden, kettingen, dus wat wil je,’ schreeuwt ze.

‘Is dit de oorlog van de feeen,’ vraag ik, ‘of van de indianen.’ Ze grijpen elkaar in de haren. ‘Uit dat licht,’ roept de vrouw van de zolder. Ik staar doelloos naar de hoeken van de trap. Dan voel ik de hand van tante Connie, die mij naar haar kamer neemt. ‘Thee ?’ vraagt ze.

Ze maakt brood voor me, opgepoft en zacht, een beetje nat, met wat soep en pudding. ‘Je moet goed eten, jongen,’ zegt ze. Ik zie haar kauwen. Het zal wel avondetens-tijd zijn. Ik hoor vrouwen krijsen. Buiten hoor ik vogels krijsen. Het klinkt me als muziek in de oren. Bij tante Connie is alles altijd anders. Ze zorgt voor me, grijpt in wanneer het nodig is. Oom Joop zit aan de andere kant van de kamer. Een verfrommelde papieren zak ligt naast hem, met oud

brood. De gouden klok tikt, en het is een rustgevend geluid. Ik probeerde vat te krijgen op de structuur van dit huis, maar het was alsof ik van de daken afgleed, of was dit huis slechts de weerspiegeling van de tuin. Het was niet bepaald mijn Eden, en toch wilde ik dit huis doordringen. Ik voelde mij een zwerver in dit huis, een huis wat ik nooit echt binnen kon gaan. Na een paar uur zaten de twee vrouwen keurig netjes tegen elkaar aan, in keurige zoete kleertjes, als feestbroodjes bij de bakker. Rozen op hen vastgespeld alsof er iemand jarig was, en de spelden gingen diep in hun vlees. 'Ja dieper, dieper,' dacht ik. Ik wilde het voelen bloeden. Het was al aan het bloeden. Het bloed sijpelde op de grond. Tante Connie raakte in paniek, en ik ook, omdat ik toch meer waarde hechtte aan de beoordelingen van tante Connie dan aan mezelf. 'Waarom doen jullie dat !' riep ze.

'Dit is ons verbond,' zeiden de twee vrouwen. 'Ons bloed-verbond.'

'Zie je,' dacht ik bij mezelf, 'dan had ik het wel goed ingeschat.'

'Geef me de speld,' zei ik. 'Ik wil ook deel hebben aan het bloed-verbond.' Het was een hele opluchting toen ik de speld in mijn vlees voelde gaan, en ik de zachtheid van de roos tegen mijn huid aanvoelde. Ik voelde me een plak vlees bij de slager.

'Nu kun je het dak opkomen,' zeiden de vrouwen. 'Nu kon je de tuin bezaaien en besproeiien.' De poort van mijn hersenen leek open te gaan, en de waas leek even te vertrekken. Ik wilde meer van zulke lichaams-spelden. Ik herinnerde de dorens, ik herinnerde hoe genadeloos diep ze gingen, totdat alles binnenin me brak, en ik begon te zweven. Ik was nu boven het dak, maar de huizen om ons heen waren veel groter. Ik kon de zolders inkijken en zag de vrouwen. Ze leken eenzaam, en ik was eenzaam. Ik was met een helm op geboren, maar die ontplofte nu. Ik zweefde bij iemand binnen. En hier zag ik bomen groeien door het hele huis. Ik was nog steeds in de tuin. Hier hingen zoveel gouden klokken aan de muur, die allemaal heerlijk tikten, zo licht, zo zacht, zo helder, ontwakende de diepste roerselen van mijn hersenen. Ze waren als een vuur in mijn lichaam. De mensen die hier woonden hadden allemaal dialogen. Het moest vooral ergens over gaan, maar ze kwamen er nergens mee. Ze leefden in een cirkeltje. Ik had ze al snel door. Toch was het allemaal erg verrijkend voor mij. Jurkjes hingen er aan de muur, vruchtjes lagen op schaaltjes, gezet op oventjes. 'Is dit de weg naar de stad ?' vroeg ik.

- Welke stad. Oh, de overstad.

Ik knikte. 'Daar heb ik vaker over gehoord,' zeiden ze. Ze lieten me ladders van touw zien. Ik klom en klom, dit huis was lang, als een herenhuis wat maar niet ophield. Mensen leefden hier

als vogels. Ik wist niet waar ik moest kijken. ‘De parel van de tuin,’ zeiden ze, ‘is daar,’ en dan wezen ze omhoog. De ladder was glibberig, en ik gleed weg. In spiegels zag ik mezelf klimmen. Ik had weer het gevoel dat ik van de daken gleed, alsof ik het huis niet kon binnengaan. Tante Connie legde haar hand op mijn hoofd. Haar hand was gloeiend heet, of was mijn hoofd gloeiend heet. ‘Waarom ?’ vroeg ik. ‘Waarom is er hier geen doorkomen aan ?’ Tante Connie zei niks, zweeg als het graf. Ook de twee vrouwen zeiden niets. Het was als een schijnbaar open weg die dood liep. Een zwakte maakte zich van mij meester, en ik was gelijmd aan de grond. Met wilde maar beheerste ogen keek de dochter van de graaf naar mij, alsof ze een wild paard probeerde te temmen, met de koele zelfverzekerdheid dat dat haar aardig lukte. Even stond de tijd stil, en was het alsof zij de muziek van het moment perfect kon berijden. Als ze zou vallen zou ze aan draden verbonden zijn, als aan elastiek, zodat ze niet in de vlammen van het hellemeer zou vallen. Ik snakte naar adem. Ik hoorde haar ogen roepen. Toen greep ze me vast. ‘Ik laat je nooit meer los,’ zei ze. ‘Nooit meer.’ Even dacht ik dat ik thuis gekomen was. Ik probeerde me zo lang te maken als zij zich waardig voelde. ‘Wie ben jij eigenlijk ?’ vroeg ik.

De vrouw van het zolder liep terug naar de trap. In gedachten zweefde ik langs het huis, en de dochter van de graaf lag uitgestrekt op de daken. Wij konden dit huis niet binnenkomen. Wij waren in de tuin. Het zonlicht was aangenaam, en het was alsof we beiden smolten en naar beneden sijpelden, om in elkaar te versmelten ? Waren wij de vruchten van deze tuin ?

Hoofdstuk 2. De Sleutel

Tante Connie legt gouden bestek op de tafel voor het feestmaal. Oom Joop komt aan tafel zitten. Ik zit naast de dochter van de graaf. Ze houdt mijn hand vast. Tante Connie brengt dan de pan met het avondeten, en met een grote lepel laat ze het ploffen op onze borden. ‘Is zij van het zolder niet uitgenodigd ?’ vraag ik.

‘Ze heeft haar eigen,’ zegt tante Connie. Ik heb het gevoel dat ik wat mis, en ga na een tijdje naar het zolder. Ik voel me op en top. Ze ligt op bed, en staart door het raam. Ik ga bij haar zitten. Haar ogen kijken dwars door me heen, alsof ze me niet ziet. Als ik naar buiten kijk, zie ik haar weerspiegelingen daar, alsof ze uitgestrekt is over de daken, en langs de muren, als begroeiing. ‘Zoveel mensen kennen me niet,’ zegt ze. Dan staat ze op en geeft mij een bord. Het schijnt hier ook etenstijd te zijn. Ze schept op. We staren elkaar de hele tijd aan, en als ik dan later naar buiten staar is het al donker, en haar weerspiegelingen zijn als de lichten in de nacht, als woeste paarden over de daken. Ik hoor tante Connie beneden roepen. Het is tijd voor de nacht, maar ik wil niet slapen. Ik houd de hand vast van de vrouw van het zolder. Mijn hoofd voelt als een stad met huizen, grote huizen, hoge huizen, lange huizen, met bomen er tussen, met plaats voor de tuin. Het is alsof de vrouw van het zolder op mijn hersenen danst, en het doet pijn, en ik word al snel moe. Pudding voert ze me. Grote lange draden voel ik door mijn lichaam gaan, totdat ik het gevoel heb dat ik kan zweven. Haar bed is ineens zo

dik en ver weg, haar kamer twee keer groter. Nee, naar buiten wil ik niet meer. Ik ben hier buiten. Zij is mijn wereld. Ik heb een kinderlijk geloof in haar.

Tante Connie laat me de schoonheid van het huis zien, van alle plekken, en ja, ik moet haar gelijk geven. Ze heeft een plaats in mij, alle dingen in dit huis hebben een plaats in mij. Ik heb ze nodig. Ik ben er bijna ziekelijk afhankelijk aan. Het is mijn levenswarmte. Maar toch voelt het alsof ik heen en weer gesleurd word. Ik heb nergens grip op, ik glijd telkens weg, dieper. Dit is een doodlopende weg, een fuik, van vuur. Ik zie ze het glas heffen. Zij zijn als de vlammen in mijn hoofd. Ik durf niet naar ze te kijken, want dan ga ik dood. Het zijn de hoofden van de Medusa. De mensen die hier wonen zijn net zo steen als dit huis, en iedereen die naar hen kijkt verandert in steen. Zo is het leven. Is dit de sleutel weg uit de tuin, of is dit de sleutel tot de tuin.

In de nacht danst de vrouw van de zolder als een zwaan, als een brandende struik. Ik probeer me om te draaien, maar ik kan niet. Deze dans is dodelijk, of misschien wel leidende naar de poort van de hel. Ik sta verstijfd. De uitsteeksels en aanhangsels van haar jurk raken mij. Ik kijk naar haar door mijn glas wijn. De poort brandt. Ik probeer me ergens aan vast te klampen, maar zonder success, totdat ik de stem van tante Connie hoor. Ik kan niet terugroepen. Iemand knijpt mijn keel dicht, maar ik heb geen verlangen om terug te roepen. Ik ben als een boom geworteld in de grond. Ik heb het geheim van Medusa gezien : Alleen met de ogen van wijn kunnen wij haar bekijken. Ze gilt en schreeuwt nu ik het geheim heb ontdek. Ik gooi de wijn in haar gezicht, want ze wil me verscheuren. Dan staat ze in vlammen, en het gehele huis brandt. Ik moet hier weg. Maar de trappen zijn hier van vuur. Alles is van vuur. Ik besluit te blijven. Medusa schijnt aardiger dan ik dacht. Haar hoofden leven hier in een vreemde vrede. Roofdieren bespringen mij en verscheuren mij, en mijn hart is blij. Het is mijn vuur, het is omringd door mijn hart. Ik heb mijn weg hier doorheen gebeten. Een huis met standbeelden. Het is als een brandend strand, en een brandend oog leidt mij uit, om dieper in te gaan. De brandweerman houdt mij stevig vast. Zijn jas is glibberig. En dan brandt hij ook.

Tante Connie doet alsof er niets gebeurt is en staart mij aan. ‘Nog wat koffie, jongen ?’ vraagt ze. Ik zeg niks. Tante Connie schenkt nog wat voor me in. Wie zwijgt stemt toe. Mijn oude bed in de kamer van de dochter van de graaf is versleten, scheuren in de matras, en de piano is vals. Maar niet minder mooi dan de gouden spulletjes van tante Connie. Als tante Connie lacht heb ik het gevoel dat ze op de daken fietst. Ik keek naar de vrouw van de zolder. Waren we niet net als Adam en Eva die door de brandende heg probeerden terug te keren naar het paradijs ? En was dit paradijs een mengsel tussen huizen en blote benen ? Ik keek naar de dochter van de graaf. Ik probeerde een weg door haar heen te graven. Maar ze hield alles tegen. Tante Connie dient de pudding op. Ik kan de borsten zien van de vrouw van het zolder, door haar doorzichtige jurk heen, en ze heeft haar jurk ook wel flink open. Haar borsten druipen nog, als de moederlijke fontein, maar er zijn geen babies. Ik besluit niets te eten. Hier kan ik niet tegen, en het is dodelijk. Als ik naar de dochter van de graaf kijk, dan zie ik hetzelfde tafereel. Het is onbeschoft tegen tante Connie om pudding te laten druipen terwijl zij pudding opdient. Ik kan oom Joop goed begrijpen dat hij zo ver mogelijk van de tafel afzit, als een bibberend hondje. Maar plotseling is het alsof de stoppen bij mij doorslaan. Ik voel me

een baby, een hond zelfs, die gevoed moet worden. Wat een drama. Tante Connie ziet het aan mijn gezicht en raakt in paniek. Zelfs oom Joop staat op. Iedereen zit verstijfd. Ik begin met grote happen van de pudding te eten, zodat al snel mijn hele gezicht eronder zit. Oom Joop lacht mij uit. Dit is de tuin van spot. Waarom zijn Adam en Eva hier teruggekeert. Ook de twee vrouwen lachen mij uit, terwijl ze hun jurken nog meer open trekken. En dan smeren ze de pudding over hun lichaam heen en gaan op de tafel liggen. 'Ik heb al brood gehad,' zegt oom Joop. Ik kan hier niet tegen. Zelfs een hond wordt beter behandeld. Ik word er erg stil van, en ga bij oom Joop zitten. 'Je weet hoe vrouwen zijn,' zegt oom Joop.

'Dodelijk is het,' zeg ik. 'We hebben niet zomaar met een stel hoofden te maken. Het zijn de hoofden van Medusa.'

'Kijk naar hen door het glas wijn,' zegt oom Joop. Tante Connie loopt naar de vrouwen toe, en giet wijn over hen heen. 'Wat een vertoning,' zeg ik. 'Dit is toch niet meer normaal.'

'Ik dacht ook dat ik naar een ander feestje was gegaan,' zei oom Joop.

'Kom op, nu weten we het wel,' zeg ik. 'Zo lopen we de fanfare niet. Moet je dat nou eens kijken, ze vervuilen die hele tafel.'

'Nee hoor,' zegt de dochter van de graaf. 'Dit is de oerbron, de big bang.'

'Als je je maar niet verroert,' schreeuwt tante Connie. 'We gaan hier geen polonaise in de kamer houden, al mijn spulletjes worden vies. Is er nog respect in dit land ?'

'Likken, bloedvriend,' zegt de vrouw van het zolder tegen haar wederhelft. 'Alsof je leven er vanaf hangt.'

'Als jullie niet eten wat de pot schaft,' zegt tante Connie, 'dan sodemieteren jullie maar op.'

'We vonden het eten heerlijk,' zei de vrouw van het zolder, 'maar we hebben onze eigen toetjes meegenomen.'

‘Contractbreuk,’ zegt tante Connie. ‘Dat hadden we niet afgesproken zo, en voor half geld komen jullie er echt niet langs. Ik voel me door jullie verschrikkelijk door de tang genomen, als je dat maar weet. Ik heb nog wat blokken hout nodig voor het tuinvuur.’

‘Ik dacht anders dat Adam wel tegen een grapje kon,’ zei de vrouw van het zolder, ‘maar mijnheer loopt daar in het hoekje te kniezen.’

‘Oh, toe maar, geef mij maar weer de schuld,’ zei ik. ‘Het is nu oorlog.’ Ineens stormden de vrouwen op mij af, en peperden mij in met pudding, en trokken me op de tafel. ‘Dit is nog eens een kersttoetje, een vijf-gangen toetje is aan ons welbesteed,’ zei de vrouw van het zolder. Ik was woedend. ‘Als ik ooit loskom, dan zul je wat beleven,’ riep ik.

Het was alsof alle machines ineens stilstonden. We staarden elkaar allemaal aan, maar deden niets. ‘Ode aan de kok,’ zei de dochter van de graaf. Na een tijdje lagen we in het bad, en het was nog gezellig ook. Het was als een lange brandende dag aan het strand. Ik was moe, ik had mijn portie wel gehad. Het was een vreemde gewaarwording dat roosjes zo konden zijn. Ik zou vanaf nu veel meer op mijn hoede zijn. Dit mocht niet nog een keer gebeuren. Tante Connie zou het niet overleven. Er groeiden sinds die dag struiken op het behang, die ervoor zouden moeten zorgen dat deze dingen nooit meer zouden gebeuren. Tante Connie was het goed zat, en huurde bewakers in, die een oogje in het zeil zouden houden. Ook liet ze overal cameras planten. We voelden ons vanaf die dag in ons huis bekeken. Maar de volgende keer dat we aan tafel zaten schoten bij mij weer de stoppen door. Ik verlangde zo naar de oermoeder, dat ik boven op de vrouw van het zolder klom, de stoel brak, en we vielen beiden op de grond. Een wachter schoot een pijl door mijn hoofd, net op tijd, en ik werd aan de muur gespietst. ‘Geef hem melk,’ zei tante Connie rustig. ‘Jullie moeten niet zo paniekerig doen.’ Pudding droop uit de borst van de vrouw van het zolder. Ik kon me niet bewegen. ‘Eerste hulp bij ongelukken,’ zei tante Connie. ‘Hij is dood, hij heeft een pijl dwars door z’n kop. Geef hem de melk des levens, stelletje koeien. Nou, waar wachten jullie op.’

‘Hij hangt te hoog, tante,’ zeiden de vrouwen.

- Nou dan spuit je maar. Druk de knopjes maar goed in.

‘Nee, hij is dood. Hij heeft Medusa gezien, en wie van haar melk drinkt gaat naar de hel.’

- Ik ben niet gelovig, stop met die onzin.

‘God, zelfs als je de tepels van Medusa ziet ben je al overgeleverd aan de vlammen van de hel, en haar duistere hulpjes.’

- Ja, die ken ik, rijden die hier niet de hele tijd rond ? Medusa is al openlijk te kijk gezet, je hoeft het knopje van de tv maar aan te draaien.

‘Arme jongens.’

Ik kon naar de melk fluiten. De dames gingen ieder hun eigen kant op. Ik was in de tuin der wreedheden, ik was op sterven na de dood met die pijl in m’n kop. Oom Joop was behulpzaam en trok de pijl uit mijn hoofd. Maar dat deed nog veel meer pijn, dus ik drukte hem er weer in. Even later klopte ik bij de vrouwen aan de deur, maar ze deden niet open. Ik sliep die nacht bij tante Connie en oom Joop in de huiskamer. De dag erna zaten ze allemaal aan tafel alsof er niets was gebeurd. ‘Zo, de meer dan dodelijke borsten van Medusa zijn ook weer van de partij,’ zei ik. De vrouwen zeiden niets. Ze aten gulzig en verslikten zich een paar keer. Het ging zoals gewoonlijk weer nergens over. ‘Leuk,’ zei ik. ‘We zitten hier aan tafel met vergif. Killers.’

‘Houd je mond,’ zei tante Connie. ‘Jij bent ook niet een van de braafsten.’ Plotseling stonden de vrouwen als een vrouw op, als Medusa, en de muren om ons heen begonnen te branden. ‘Zie,’ riep tante Connie. ‘Ik wist het. Medusa is gekomen om wraak te nemen. Ren voor je leven.’ Oom Joop gooide een deken om ons heen, en trok ons naar zijn kant. Hij was de slimste geweest want sinds de dames hier aten zat hij bijna nooit meer aan tafel. Een golf van geweld sloeg ons neer. Maar oom Joop gedroeg zich als een duivel, en dat moest wel, anders had hij niks bij Medusa in de pap te brokkelen. Ik heb oom Joop nog nooit zo te keer zien gaan. Al snel stond Medusa buiten het raam. ‘Ik wist wel dat die wijven een grote pot met vergif waren,’ zei hij. Ik had nog nooit zo’n groot machts-spel gezien. Ik trilde als een hondje. Oom Joop was een held.

Omdat Medusa ons bleef bezoeken kregen we een ander huis in een andere straat. Er groeiden hier zogenaamde borsten-struiken die vruchten hadden als tepels waaruit een sap voortkwam wat bestand was tegen het borstgif van Medusa. We konden zelfs hierdoor Medusa genezen van haarzelf. De vloek was al snel verbroken. Er hoefde verder geen apocalypse aan te pas te komen. Onze vriendschappen werden hersteld, en al snel leefden we hier weer met elkaar. Alles was veilig nu. We hadden onze condomen-boom gevonden.

Een vrouw leefde tussen de verdiepingen in, een vrouw in mijn hoofd, onderdrukt door de hedendaagse maatschappij, een deel gesloten door de hersenen. Medusa was de oorlogsgodin, weggepest door een maatschappij van valse vrede. Een vreemde vrede bracht haar terug. Zij kende de tuin van spot ook. Ze had die zelf gemaakt. Ook kende ze de tuin van edelheden en wreedheden, op maat gesneden. Ze had zich een weg door die tuin gebaand, terug naar het paradijs. Ze ontmoette haar Adam in de lucht, en leidde ook hem terug. Door de brandende heg gingen zij, en helemaal opgebrand kwamen zij aan. Heel snel kwamen zij erachter dat zij een cirkeltje hadden gelopen. Zo slaan dan al snel de stoppen door, en vinden ze de liefde in zichzelf, die na korte tijd niets dan haat blijkt te zijn. Het is alles niet wat het lijkt. Ik kreeg een fatalistische, nihilistische kijk op het leven door deze dingen. We waren weer terug bij af. Heel wat dromen waren kapot gesprongen, en we begonnen ons oude huis te missen, maar daar woonde een nieuwe familie in.

Waar we dan ook naartoe gaan, het is altijd hetzelfde. Laten we daarom naarbinnen keren, en elkaar daar vinden, of hele andere personen die eindelijk onze dromen kunnen waarmaken, maar dit is slechts ijdelheid, illusie. We jagen lucht achterna, iedereen weet het, maar we blijven proberen. We blijven happen naar de koek die voor ons wordt gehangen. We zijn geconditioneerd, slaven, hondjes van Pavlov. Alles is hier misleiding op misleiding. Ik begon een pessimist te worden, zwaar somber. Ik wilde niemand valse hoop geven, niemand voorliegen. We liepen de leugen achterna omdat er geen waarheid was, of was de waarheid gewoon in een heel klein hoekje ergens, daar waar we het onmogelijk zouden kunnen vinden ? Maar alle dingen zijn toch mogelijk voor hen die geloven. En zo ging ik geloven. Niet in het kerkelijk geloof, maar in die vrouwen hier met hun gekke spelletjes. Misschien dat de grootste leugen ook diep in haar de waarheid droeg. Ik had kans, want ik had een pijl door mijn hoofd. Denken was fataal. Het moest van een andere kant komen. Maar ik merkte al snel dat die vrouwen een gesloten boek waren. Ik kwam er niet ver mee. En ik wilde toch ergens in geloven. Een grote trots was er, ergens diep binnenin. Iets wat mij over het ravijn kon laten zweven, iets wat ik niet kon beschrijven, een mystiek gevoel. Oom Joop zei altijd dat een boek ons erdoor zou helpen, maar hij wist niet welk boek. Een popperige papieren kermis leek het. Tante Connie had een pop in een schoenendoos verborgen, een pop waarin ze heilig geloofde dat deze ons allen redden zou. Vaak sta ik op het balkon en voel me tussen de huizen, tussen de bomen, tussen de rivieren, overal tussen.

Het is een wonder dat ik nog leef met die pijl door mijn hoofd. Op een dag voel ik me door het gevoel dat die pijl in mijn hoofd geeft zo in de wolken, zo extatisch, dat ik merk dat ik kan vliegen. Heel voorzichtig vlieg ik van het balkon, tussen de huizen door. Mensen vallen flauw achter de ramen. ‘Bedrieger,’ roept er iemand. Ik kan er niet mee zitten. Ook al zou het bedrog zijn, ik heb er een goede tijd mee. Ik vlieg naar de top van het hoogste huis in de buurt. Als ik naar beneden kijk is alles wit. Ook het hoge platte horizontale dak waarop ik sta. Ik ruik bosgeuren. Dan vlieg ik over de stad. Wat als ik dit alles zou kunnen ontsnappen. Ik besluit naar de volgende stad te vliegen, daar waar de fabrieks-wolken zijn. Ik houd van de rook. Ik hoop dat we er allemaal in verzuipen. Dat is beter dan wat we hadden. We hebben niets te verliezen. Maar dan roep ik mezelf tot orde. Er staan wat meiden voor een raam. Ze kijken verwonderd. Ik zwaai naar ze. Ze wenken me. Een van hen opent het raam, en ik vlieg

naar binnen. ‘Kijk, die kan vliegen,’ zegt er een. ‘Een truc,’ zeg ik. ‘Leer het me,’ zegt een van de meiden. Ik vertel hen over de pijl in mijn kop. Ze giechelen een beetje. Al snel hangen ze aan me. ‘Mag ik in jullie geloven,’ vraag ik. ‘Ik wil ergens in geloven.’

- Wij geloven in de dominee.

‘Okay, maar dat is niet wat. Kan ik in jullie geloven ?’

- Ik weet niet of ik daartoe bevoegd ben.

‘Ik geloof in je.’

- Wat moet ik nu doen ?

‘Vlieg met me mee.’

- Ja, maar ik kan niet vliegen. Waarom blijf je niet gewoon hier. We hebben het hier erg naar onze zin.

‘Okay.’

Ik bleef bij ze staan, en ze trokken me aan tafel. Ik moet zeggen ze waren een stuk netter dan de vrouwen die ik kende, de Medusa-vrouwen. Ze aten deftig, met mes en vork, geen geklieder. Ik staarde naar buiten, allemaal rook. Ik kon niet veel zien. Ze sliepen allemaal in de huiskamer op matrassen. Ik kreeg ook een matras. Ik sliep al snel. Ik merkte al snel dat ik in mezelf aan het bidden was tot hen. Ik was op zoek naar een geloof. De volgende dag namen ze mij mee naar de kerk. Ik moet zeggen dat het mij aardig beviel. De dominee was erg aardig. Hij had ook wel wijze dingen te zeggen, en liep voortdurend met zijn sleutels te rinkelen. Had hij misschien de sleutels om Medusa te openen ? Na de kerkdienst liep ik op hem af om het hem te vragen. Zonder nadenken nam hij een sleutel van zijn sleutelhanger af en gaf het aan mij. ‘Probeer het maar uit,’ zei hij. Maar eigenlijk wilde ik hier niet meer weg. Deze mensen waren geweldig. Weer ging ik met de meiden mee naar hun huis. Omdat ik heel

veel aan Medusa dacht, ben ik even later toch teruggegaan naar mijn eigen stad en huis. Ik begon direkt aan de Medusa-vrouwen te sleutelen. En het werkte, tot mijn eigen verbazing. Voor het eerst had ik het gevoel dat ik met hen ergens kwam. Alsof we de boom des levens hadden bereikt. We dronken koffie op het resultaat. Ik wilde de dominee bedanken, en vloog terug naar de andere stad. De meiden waren blij me weer te zien, en samen gingen we naar het huis van de dominee. De dominee was net zijn huis aan het schilderen. Na het bedankje nam ik afscheid van de meiden, en ging weer terug naar mijn eigen huis. Ik had Medusa verlost uit haar kooi.

Hoofdstuk 3. De Gespleten Aarde

De meiden hebben al snel ons huis gevonden, en de dominee ook. Ze waren met de dominee meegereden. De sleutel had namelijk een zendertje van binnen. Natuurlijk waren ze van harte welkom, maar de Medusa-vrouwen werden snel jaloers. Daar wist de dominee wel wat op, want die had veel meer sleutels. Wat me opviel was dat alles snel verstijfde. Alsof de sleutels veel openden, maar tegelijkertijd viel er ook zoveel dicht. We kregen het idee dat er een vloek op de sleutel lag. De dominee was niet overtuigd, want die geloofde heilig in zijn sleutels. Omdat hij zich steeds arroganter opstelde heeft tante Connie hem even later het huis uitgezet. Ik bewaarde de sleutels sindsdien. Die waren veel te gevaarlijk in de handen van een dominee. De meiden aanbaden inmiddels Medusa aan haar voeten. De dominee was woedend en noemde hen afgodendienaars. Ze waren niet meer welkom in zijn stad. Het bleek dat hij ook nog eens de burgemeester was. Medusa begon trouwens door deze aanbidding ook steeds meer te eisen. Haar voeten moesten gekust worden, anders zou ze alles vertrappen. Ik had allang spijt dat ik haar had verlost, maar het kwam allemaal door die sleutels. Op een gegeven moment was ik het zo zat dat ik de sleutels inslikte. Maar sindsdien ging het niet goed met mij. Ik begon zelf een Medusa te worden. Wie had dat ooit durven dromen dat ik ooit de god der wrake zou worden. Het liep uit op een gevecht met de andere Medusa om de macht. De Medusa begon een gevaarlijk mechanisme te worden. Voordat het nog erger zou worden besloot ik een volgende vliegtocht te beginnen. Ditmaal kwam ik in een andere stad met de hoogste gebouwen. Een oud vrouwtje deed haar raam open, en nodigde mij uit. Toen ik haar het verhaal over de sleutels vertelde scheen ze mij te kunnen helpen. Zij was namelijk een heks. Ik moest een bepaald kruidendrankje drinken, en dan zou ik de sleutels kunnen uitspuwen, en dan zou zij de sleutels omsmelten. Maar alles pakte anders uit. Het kruidendrankje werkte niet. Ik had de krachten van Medusa. Ik was immuun tegen hekserij. Ik moest onder ogen komen dat ik in een monster aan het veranderen was.

Ik strompelde naar de uitgang van deze tuin. Ik had het in zicht nu, en greep naar mijn buik. Ook al verdween de uitgang en de buitenste heg in het niets, en leek het alsof het verder van me af begon te liggen, ik liep toch door. Ik greep om me heen als tastende in het donker. Ik greep het touw mij toegeworpen. Een vriendelijk vrouwengezicht keek me aan. Rozensappen dropen in een fles. Ik hoorde gegorgel en gezang. Bloedende tuinen, zover het oog reikt, vermengd met regen, waar het oog van Medusa over waakt. Het koren dat het goud omhoog haalt, het licht der sterren weerkaatsende, haar vrucht wordt vastgehouden. Medusa waakt. Het houten huis kraakt onder het getal van de lelies. Hier heeft ze haar woning. Hier voedt zij

haar raadsel, haar mysterie, waar prinsen op paarden al eeuwen naar zoeken. Nee, zij zullen niet vinden, want Medusa waakt over haar geheim. Haar kroning was een bespotting. Haar lijden was een ontmaskering, maar niemand is ooit tot haar parel gekomen, niemand heeft ooit haar zwaard gedragen. Allen sterven zij door een blik op haar te slaan. Tot steen werden zij in alle eeuwigheden. Haar discipel is zoek, haar beker verloren. Zij heeft haarzelf nog nooit gezien. Zou zij het weten, dan zou zij sterven, daarom weet zij maar half. De rozengrachten hier zijn vol met parels. De mensen hier weten dat Medusa een geheim heeft, alleen ze kennen het niet. Ze hebben er alleen een glimp van opgevangen, en die glimp heeft hen voor altijd verblind.

Ik zit op mijn houten paard, mijn hobbelpaard van vroeger, met mijn lange speer, mijn lans. ‘Open de poort,’ roep ik, maar alles zwijgt. Ik vlieg hoog, over de muur heen, maar hier is niks. De aarde is dus toch plat. Is dit het onverbiddelijke geheim van Medusa ? Ik stort hier uit alles wat ik nog in mijn hoofd heb, alle puinhopen, alles gaargebraden, en kijk in de enorme diepte. Nee, het is een ravijn. De aarde is gespleten. Een groot werk moet dat geweest zijn, met de schaar des hemels. Daar aan de overkant weten de mensen niet dat ze niet weten. Ik vlieg weer terug, en omhels mijn Medusa, en mijn meiden. ‘Ik ben aan de andere kant van de schaar geweest,’ zei ik. ‘Daar moeten we ook niet wezen. Vernietig alle spiegels. We staren wel in een glas wijn, met wijn van borsten-struiken.’ Ik strek mij uit. Ze zijn blij dat ik terug ben. Ik solliciteer bij de zeevaart. Ik waarschuw hen dat de aarde wel degelijk plat is, en dat verklaart ook waarom er zoveel schepen zijn gebleven. Ik word er kapitein. Als ik thuis ben speelt oom Joop vaak op het orgel. Maar ik ben niet veel thuis. Ik moet de zee afbakenen. Een hoge rand moet er gemaakt worden, waar niemand meer overheen kan tuimelen. Medusa is als een moeder die haar kinderen terugroept. Zij heeft de tuin gebouwd, en haar muren, en die moeten we eren, omdat het buiten veel erger is. Er is geen paradijs aan de andere kant van de heg, maar de heg spreekt tot de verbeelding. Ik zie nog meer paradijs in een pot pindakaas. Als ik thuis ben zijn de vrouwen blij, dan is het feest, maar een paradijs zal het nooit zijn, en hebben we dat wel nodig. We hebben toch elkaar.

Op een dag ga ik met de meiden voetballen op het pleintje. Via een tunnel komen we in een ander deel van de stad, in een winkelstraat. We slenteren door de straten. Ik neem hen mee naar de bakker, en koop wat special brood voor hen. Brood kan mij nooit te luxe zijn. Het is een levensnoodzaak. Bij de speelgoedwinkel wanen ze zich in het paradijs. Bij het tuinhek laten we alle zorgen achter ons. Voor de chocolade-winkel danst de vrouw van chocolade. Ze roept herinneringen bij me op, ze danst als een zwaan. We gaan de stoffige winkel binnen. Een grote notenkraker-eekhoorn staart ons aan. ‘Ja,’ zegt de winkelier, ‘veel noten altijd in de chocolade, we hebben een verdrag met de noten-industrie. We kregen dit beeld van hen, toch aardig, vindt u niet.’ Ik knikte. De meiden keken de man vriendelijk aan. We konden aan hem zien dat hij er blij van werd. ‘Ik zal u vertellen, ik ben mijn vrouw verloren,’ zei de winkelier. ‘Ik mis haar echt, en er is nu een zee van ruimte boven, want ze had zoveel spullen en die zijn allemaal in haar graf meegegaan. Komt u maar even mee, dan laat ik het u zien.’ Boven stond alles leeg. Ik staarde naar buiten, waar de chocolade-vrouw nog steeds danste. Ze was een zwerfster, en werd zo altijd genoemd.

Grote poppen van chocolade stonden in kasten. De man deed er erg zakelijk over, en kraste wat op papieren. Even later stonden we weer op straat. Aan het eind van de straat was een fontein. We zagen tante Connie lopen met een zware tas. ‘Tante Connie,’ riep ik. Ze had koffie gekocht, in allerlei soorten. Samen liepen we naar huis. Ik hielp haar de tas te dragen, en de meiden hielden ook wat spullen vast. Medusa wachtte ons op.

Het Feest van de Toverspiegel

Het was in dit sprookjesachtige land gebruikelijk dat ieder jaar het feest van de toverspiegel werd gevierd, wat het hoogtepunt was van het jaar. Dit feest liep altijd over in het feest van de rode nacht, de langste nacht van het jaar, waarin een nieuw jaar zou komen.

Het feest van de toverspiegel was een feest van grote afzondering. Iedereen trok zich terug op zijn kamer om alles achter te laten en alles los te laten, om zo het spiegelbeeld te volgen van de toverspiegel, een andere wereld in. In dit feest wachtte men op de rode nacht, de langste en traagste nacht van het jaar waarin alles zou veranderen.

Iedereen was dus alleen in het feest van de toverspiegel. Er waren geen optochten of schouwspelen. De straten waren leeg en doodstil. Maar dit gaf een grotere verbondenheid.

Voorafgaande aan de rode nacht zou het wolkenschip komen, waarop ze allen dromenreizen zouden maken. Het was daarom ook niet vreemd dat de toverspiegel, en vooral de rode nacht, vereerd werden. De rode nacht was het absolute toppunt van het jaar, waarbuiten geen leven mogelijk was. De rode nacht hield alles vruchtbaar en in groei. Maar de rode nacht kon niet komen zonder de toverspiegel. Zonder alles achter te laten zouden de inwoners van het sprookjesachtige land in het oude jaar moeten blijven, en dat was iets verschrikkelijks. Zij hadden het wolkenschip gemist.

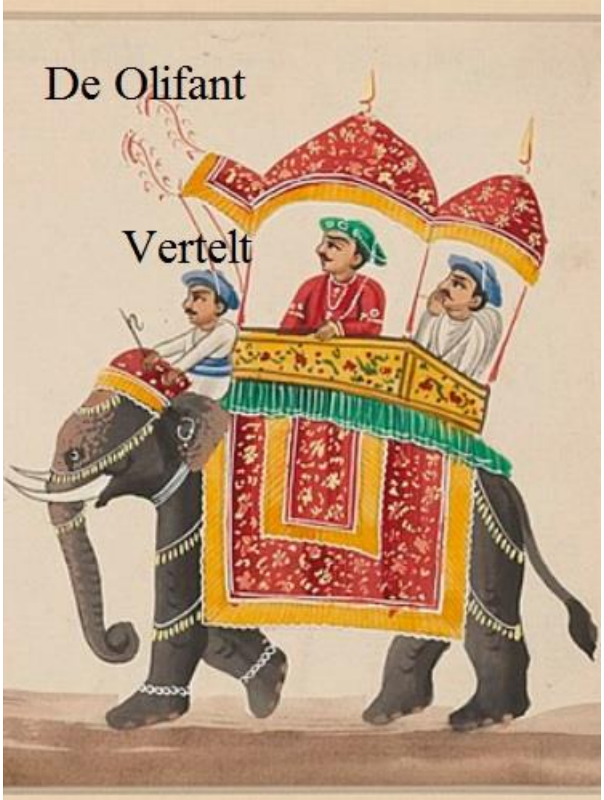
Zij die het feest van de toverspiegel vergaten te vieren, of niet meer wilden vieren, waren het jaar er op er gewoonlijks niet meer bij. Dit waren meestal slechts enkelingen. Daarom waarschuwden de monniken van de kloosters in het sprookjesland de inwoners altijd als het feest van de toverspiegel dichterbij kwam om het niet te missen. De gevolgen zouden namelijk rampzalig zijn. Hiervoor gingen zij altijd met hun rode keppeltjes de straten op om het nieuws om te roepen. Gewoonlijks was dit blij nieuws. Ook de koninklijke herauten kondigden het komende feest van de toverspiegel altijd aan. Allen moesten een reis maken tot de rode nacht, tot het nieuwe jaar, door de toverspiegel. Zij die zich nog aan iets vasthielden of iets achterhielden zouden niet door de toverspiegel kunnen. Zij zouden dus ook het wolkenschip missen die iedereen op dromenreis nam.

En elk jaar waren er weer enkelen die niet door de toverspiegel heenkwamen, en dus in het oude jaar achterbleven. Dit waren de gierigaards, de machtslustigen, de bazerige lieden, en hen die altijd hun oordeel klaar hadden. De toverspiegel wilde niets met zulke lieden te doen hebben, en ze kwamen er niet doorheen. Er was altijd veel geween op het wolkenschip als sommigen bemerkten dat een familie lid, bekende of vriend niet door de toverspiegel was

gekomen. Maar ook dat moesten zij loslaten. Daarom ving de komst van het wolkenschip vaak aan met een tijd van rouw, maar ook van grote blijdschap over het zien van de anderen waarmee ze het nieuwe jaar zouden ingaan. Door de toverspiegel was men uiteindelijk dus zeer zeker niet alleen.

Maar wat gebeurde er dan eigenlijk met hen die achterbleven ? Hier waren de meningen zwaar over verdeeld. Over het algemeen werd aangenomen dat zij die achterbleven het jaar daarop aan de bomen groeiden als vruchten.

Zij die door de toverspiegel konden gaan kwamen eerst in een hele lange gang, die tot de haven van het wolkenschip zou leiden. Iedereen was in deze gang alleen. Pas op het wolkenschip zouden ze elkaar tegen komen op de dromenreis naar de rode nacht. Alles ging dan steeds trager en trager, totdat ze op volle zee waren, en dan zou alles langzaam veranderen. In de rode nacht dansten ze, maakten ze plezier en hadden wonderlijke avonturen, maar het was maar een droom, en na de rode nacht zouden ze wakker worden in hun eigen bed, en dan was het feest afgelopen. En zo zouden ze het hele jaar door weer toeleven naar het wonderlijke feest van de toverspiegel en dat van de rode nacht.


De Olifant
Vertelt

De Olifant Vertelt ...

COAB 2018

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De Rode Kerk en de Vliegende Olifant

De kerkklokken luidden in Hendrik Ido Ambacht. Er heerste daar een vreemd geloof, vreemder dan in andere steden en dorpen van Nederland. Ze geloofden in een rode veer, eens door een vliegende olifant gebracht. De veer had een hele vreemde economie gebracht, die eigenlijk alleen maar uitgeoefend werd in Hendrik Ido Ambacht, namelijk dat als iemand iets kocht, dan moest de verkoper betalen, en niet de koper. Nu zou je denken dat dit helemaal verkeerd zou gaan, maar toch liep dit allemaal heel goed. Ook de verkopers deden grote inkopen en werden hiervoor betaald. Het was wel heel ander geld wat ze in Hendrik Ido Ambacht gebruikten. Het heette zwart geld, en dat geld bleek onder een vloek te zijn. Dit had de vliegende olifant zo beslist. De vliegende olifant kwam van een andere planeet.

Wat was die vloek dan, zou je je afvragen. De vloek was dat er uit steen water zou vloeien. Men bouwde hoge gebouwen omdat dat ook de wens was van de vliegende olifant. Zo zouden ze ook dichter bij de vliegende olifant wonen.

De kerkklokken luidden. Velen gingen de rode kerken binnen om de vliegende olifant en zijn heilige rode veer te aanbidden. Tereder woonde met zijn ouders ergens hoog in een rode flat boven de winkels. Hij kon zo het hele winkelcentrum zien. Hij hing uit het raam boven het balkon en keek, en keek. Zijn ouders waren niet kerkelijk, maar hij droomde vaak over de vliegende olifant, en over San Pedro die op de olifant reed. Soms wilde hij ook wel dat hij San Pedro was. Zijn vriendjes waren wel kerkelijk en op een dag namen ze hem mee naar de kerk. Tereder keek zijn ogen uit. Er hingen prachtige schilderijen in de rode kerk, van San Pedro op de olifant en de heilige rode veer. De dominee kon ook prachtig vertellen. Ze zongen ook liedjes, maar Tereder kon het niet verstaan, want het was in een andere taal. Aan het einde van de dienst kwamen de diakenen die zwart geld aan de mensen begonnen uit te delen, als een bedankje dat ze waren gekomen. Tereder kreeg ook een schilderij mee waarop een zwarte vrouw stond. Hij vroeg aan zijn vriendje wie ze was. Ze was gekleed in wit en zacht roze. "San Pedro's vrouw," zei het vriendje.

"Hoort die ook bij de vliegende olifant ?" vroeg Tereder.

"Ja, natuurlijk," zei het vriendje verbaasd vanwege de vraag. "Iedereen weet dat toch ? Zij is het zwarte geld."

"Wat houdt dat eigenlijk in ?" vroeg Tereder, die zelf ook een hoop zwart geld in de kerk had gekregen.

Het vriendje zuchtte. "Zeg, serieus, ik weet het niet met jou. Iedereen weet deze dingen. Moet ik het je allemaal nog een keer uitleggen ?"

"Ja, maar mijn ouders zijn niet kerkelijk, dat weet je," zei Tereder, "en ze hebben mij nooit de achtergronden van het zwarte geld uitgelegd. Ik ben blij als ik het heb. Dat is alles."

Het vriendje begon te neuriën : "Zwart geld, blij dat ik het heb, blij dat ik heb," zong hij even later zachtjes. "Zwart geld, het vergeten geld." Het klonk als een reclame clipje.

"Nou ja, dan ben ik het vergeten," zei Tereder. "Kun je het nog één keer uitleggen dan, voor mij, alsjeblieft ?"

"Zwart geld, zwart geld," zong het vriendje, "tijdelijke aanbiedingen. Zwart geld, zwart geld, ren ernaar toe, want je bent zo geveld."

"Huh wat ?" vroeg Tereder. "Wat bedoel je nu eigenlijk ? Ik begrijp er niets van."

"Je bent nog niet tot bekering gekomen," zei het vriendje. "Je ouders aanbidden het zwarte geld, maar ze kennen haar niet. Jij houdt er ook van, maar jij kent haar ook niet."

"Hoe kom ik dan tot bekering ?" vroeg Tereder.

"Pffff," zuchtte het vriendje hard, "dat staat toch allemaal geschreven in het boek van de heilige rode veer. Kom nou, ik blijf niet aan de gang."

"Ja, maar dat boek heb ik niet eens," zei Tereder, "mijn ouders zijn niet gelovig voor de zoveelste maal."

"Goeie genade," zei het vriendje.

"Waar kan ik het kopen ?" vroeg Tereder.

"Het is heel duur," zei het vriendje, "voor de verkoper dan. Daarom verkopen ze het bijna niet."

"Ook niet in de rode kerk ?" vroeg Tereder.

"Nee," zei het vriendje. "Het wordt meestal gewoon van geslacht tot geslacht doorgegeven. Die boeken zijn te heilig om zomaar te verkopen, en dan is ook de verkoper direct blut."

"Blut ?" vroeg Tereder.

"Ja, failliet, niente," zei het vriendje.

"Maar dan kunnen ze toch gewoon heel veel inkopen doen, en dan weer veel zwart geld van de verkopers krijgen ?" vroeg Tereder.

"Zo werken die dingen niet," mopperde het vriendje. "Je begrijpt er niets van. Het boek kan maar één keer verkocht worden, en dan gaan ze failliet en sterven ze. Zo heilig is het."

"Ik begrijp het," zei Tereder. "Dus ik kom nooit aan zo'n boek ?"

"Je mag die van mij wel hebben," zei het vriendje. "Ik krijg wel weer een nieuwe van mijn ouders."

Hij haalde een boek van een soort rood leer uit de kast en gaf het aan Tereder die hem direct om zijn nek vloog en hem kuste. "Hoe kan ik je bedanken," zei Tereder.

"Nee, ik bedank jou," zei het vriendje, die hem ook een zak snoep gaf. "We geven het altijd weg met een zak snoep."

Tereder ging helemaal blij naar huis, en sloot zich direct op zijn kamer op, en begon te lezen. De meest prachtige plaatjes stonden er in met de meest prachtige verhalen, ook over het zwarte geld. Dat was dus inderdaad een vrouw, maar het was ook een snoepsoort, als drop. Op de planeet van de vliegende olifant aten ze het zelfs. Ook de zwarte vrouw woonde met San Pedro op een hele hoge flat, en ze gingen vaak vliegen op de olifant, en maakten dan verre reizen in de natuur, waarin ze wonderbaarlijke avonturen beleefden. Op een dag kwamen ze bij een rots waaruit water vloeide. De rots sprak tot hen : "Bouw een stad van natuursteen voor mij." San Pedro vroeg toen hoe zij dat moesten doen. Het was volgens de

rots heel eenvoudig. Hij moest met een stok op de rots slaan, en dan zou het vanzelf gebeuren. San Pedro pakte een stok en begon op de rots te slaan, maar er gebeurde niks, en toen sloeg hij weer. Maar toen werd de rots erg kwaad. "Ik had je niet gezegd meerdere keren op me te slaan !" sprak de rots. De rots werd woester en woester, en het water begon te koken en in vuur te veranderen. Maar toen keek de rots naar de zwarte vrouw, en sprak : "Omdat je man dit heeft gedaan zijn jullie beiden vervloekt, maar als jullie gekomen zijn tot de heilige rode veer, dan zal mijn hart verzachten, en zal ik de stad Hendrik Ido Ambacht bouwen, zodat jullie vloek tot zegen zal worden. Dan zal ik weer helder water schenken."

San Pedro vroeg toen waar die rode veer was.

"Ja, dat ga ik je niet vertellen," zei de rots. "Ik ben nog steeds zeer boos, en je mag blij wezen dat ik deze dingen al gezegd heb, want het had veel erger kunnen wezen."

Toen vroeg ook de zwarte vrouw waar de heilige rode veer was.

"Gaat heen van mij, vervloekten !" bulderde de rots, die steeds meer vuur begon te spuwen. Ze moesten het nu echt op een lopen zetten, en als de vliegende olifant er niet zou zijn geweest, dan waren ze zeker in het vuur omgekomen. De vliegende olifant bracht hen toen naar een grot waar ze even later de rode veer vonden.

"Dit is hem dus ?" vroeg San Pedro.

"Het lijkt er wel op," zei de zwarte vrouw met een glimlach.

En zo kalmeerde de rots uiteindelijk en Hendrik Ido Ambacht kwam uit hem voort. Wat er nog van de vloek was overgebleven was dat er water uit de stenen kwam, maar velen zagen dat als een zegen. Zo was de vloek tot zegen geworden.

Ook stond het verhaal van het zwarte geld in het boek beschreven. Eens vloog San Pedro op zijn vliegende olifant langs een meer in het oerwoud, en zag daar de zwarte vrouw baden. De olifant landde dichtbij, en San Pedro stapte van de olifant af. De vrouw schrok en dook onderwater. San Pedro volgde haar, maar kon haar niet meer vinden. Hij ging terug naar de olifant, en vond toen zwart geld op het zadel. Het bleek ook nog eetbaar te zijn, en toen hij het

at stond ineens de zwarte vrouw voor hem. "Waarom heb je mij wakker gemaakt ?" vroeg de zwarte vrouw.

"Ik wist niet dat je sliep," zei San Pedro. "Ik zag je baden."

"Dat moet van een tijdje terug zijn geweest," sprak de zwarte vrouw, "maar ik sliep toch echt."

"Het spijt me," zei San Pedro, "ik wilde je niet wakker maken."

"Wat moet je van me ?" vroeg de zwarte vrouw.

"Nou, wat moet ik van je ?" zei San Pedro verbaasd. "Kijk eens wat ik hier heb. Een vliegende olifant. Daar vindt je niet zomaar een tweede van. We kunnen zo beiden heel wat vrolijke avonturen beleven."

"Vrolijke avonturen, hè ?" sprak de zwarte vrouw. "Het enige vrolijke avontuur wat je met mij zult beleven is het zwarte geld."

"Wat is dat ?" vroeg San Pedro.

"Dat heb je net zitten lopen eten," sprak de zwarte vrouw. "Het is een soort drop, en daarmee betaal je de ander als je iets verkoopt."

"Dat moet een vergissing zijn," sprak San Pedro. "Meestal betalen we de ander als we iets van hen kopen."

"Bij mij is het net andersom," sprak de zwarte vrouw.

"Je lijkt me een hele interessante vrouw," sprak San Pedro. "Ik zou je dan graag willen kopen, zodat ik daardoor tegelijkertijd heel rijk wordt, want ik neem aan dat je verschrikkelijk duur bent."

"Ik ben veel te duur voor jou, mannetje," sprak de zwarte vrouw, "in de zin dat ik dat nooit kan betalen."

"Ik wil je ook wel voor de helft van de prijs meenemen hoor," sprak San Pedro. "Ik ben de slechtste nog niet."

"Nee, zo werkt dat niet," sprak de zwarte vrouw. "Zo goedkoop ben ik gewoon niet."

"Waar maken ze dat zwarte geld ?" vroeg San Pedro.

"Ik ben het enige zwarte geld wat er is," sprak de zwarte vrouw.

"Hoe is dat gekomen ?" vroeg San Pedro.

"Lang verhaal," sprak de zwarte vrouw.

"Ik heb de tijd," sprak San Pedro.

"Het is het geheim van het zwarte goud," sprak de zwarte vrouw.

"Dus je hebt nu al geheimen voor me in zo'n korte tijd dat ik je ken ?" vroeg San Pedro.

"Sjonge, nou je hebt wel babbels," zei de zwarte vrouw.

Verslagen liep San Pedro terug naar de vliegende olifant, en klom op z'n rug. De vliegende olifant bracht hem toen naar een hele hoge berg waar hij tussen het ijs zwart goud vond. San Pedro wreef over het zwarte goud, en plotseling stond weer de zwarte vrouw voor hem.

"Heb je me nu alweer wakker gemaakt ?" vroeg de zwarte vrouw.

"Ik wreef alleen maar over wat zwart goud, is dat zo erg ?" vroeg San Pedro.

Een klein straaltje melk begon uit het zwarte goud te komen. "Mijn geheim !" riep de zwarte vrouw verschrikt.

Plotseling kwam Tereder's moeder zijn kamer binnen. "Wat ben je daar aan het lezen, Tereder ?" vroeg ze. Ook zag ze toen het schilderij van de zwarte vrouw die hij had gekregen.

"Het is het zwarte geld, mama," zei Tereder.

Zijn moeder liep naar hem toe en nam hem in haar armen. Ze pakte zijn boek en sloeg het ergens open. Ze begon het hardop te lezen : "De bekering. Wil je het geheim van het zwarte geld kennen ? De rode kerk en de vliegende olifant zullen je nooit vragen je tot hen te bekeren, maar ze zullen zich bekeren tot jou, wanneer je de waarheden van het heilige boek hebt ontvangen."

Moeder begon te glimlachen. "Leuk verhaaltje, hè ?" sprak ze. "Je vader en ik zijn er heel vroeger eens één keer in zo'n rode kerk geweest, maar omdat ze hun eigen principes niet naleefden zijn we daar ook weer weggegaan."

Tereder hield zijn moeder stevig vast. Hij keek naar de letters van het boek. Het waren sierlijke letters met prachtige plaatjes, zoals in zijn dromen. "Maar dan kunnen wij het toch beter doen, mamma ?" vroeg Tereder.

Hij kuste zijn moeder. "Ik bekeer mij tot jou," sprak hij, "tot jouw wijsheid en inzicht, tot jouw kennis, zoals de vliegende olifant zich tot mij heeft bekeerd."

Moeder glimlachte. "Ik was al bekeerd tot jou voor je geboorte. Ik wist altijd al dat je een bijzonder kind was," sprak ze.

"Misschien kunnen we dan een echte rode kerk bouwen, mamma ?" vroeg Tereder.

"Schat, het is een verhaal, een geheim," sprak moeder. "En ik denk nu dat je het geheim hebt gezien. Het zal komen tot degenen die zekere waarheden hebben ingezien."

Einde

Olifantensoep

"Dag mijnheer, gaat u daar maar alvast zitten. Wij zullen u de olifantsoep zo opdienen. Doet u maar alvast uw schietgebedje, en schrijft u uw laatste woorden maar alvast op voor uw familie, en strooi alvast wat zout op uw hoofd."

- "Pardon, waar is dat goed voor ? Ik heb mijn soep graag zonder zout, en wat u daarvoor allemaal zei moet een grapje wezen."

"Nee nee, u begrijpt ons verkeerd. De olifantensoep eet u graag met wat zout."

- "Helemaal niet, ik wil zoutloze olifantensoep."

"Nee nee, alweer verkeerd begrepen, mijnheer. Wij bedoelen dat de olifantensoep u graag lust met zout. De olifantensoep, daar gaat het om, niet u. Het is uw laatste kwartier, dus geen praatjes maken nu. Hier wordt de olifantensoep niet gegeten. Alleen de olifantensoep zelf eet."

- "Wel potverdrie, wat is dat voor een belachelijke tent hier ? Ik neem aan dat de olifant dood en gesneden in de soep ligt ?"

"Nee nee, mijnheer, nu niet beledigend doen naar de olifant, en al helemaal niet naar de soep. De soep eet u, niet andersom. Ik hoop dat dat nu duidelijk is."

- "Ober, u bent een klier. Wat een grapjas bent u, zeg. Dit is mijn laatste kwartier ? Dan is dit uw laatste vrije dag, want ik ga zo naar de politie om u te laten arresteren."

"Mijnheer, de politie in deze stad arresteert niet, maar kan alleen gearresteerd worden. U had uzelf beter moeten informeren voordat u naar Hendrik Ido Ambacht zou komen."

- "En wie verricht dan de arrestaties, ober ? De kok ?"

"Nee, de olifantensoep."

- "Hè bah, wat een flauwe mop."

"Het is geen mop. U had hier niet moeten komen. U komt hier nooit meer weg. In dit restaurant zijn alleen ingangen, geen uitgangen."

- "Wat een belachelijk restaurant dan, ober."

"Ach ja, ergens moeten de rollen toch omgedraaid zijn ?"

- "Ober, u verpest mijn hele dag met uw flauwe grappen. Daar heb ik nu allemaal geen tijd voor. Kunnen we even ter zake komen ? Doet u mij maar een broodje gezond in plaats van olifantensoep. Of moet ik dat ook met mijn leven bekopen ?"

"Ik zal erover nadenken. Dan moet u wel een hele goede reden hebben."

- "Goede reden, ober ? Ik ben geen crimineel. Toe, geef me gewoon dat broodje gezond, dan is deze onzin afgelopen. Wat is er gebeurt met de stelling : de klant is koning ?"

"Die stelling is hier nooit geweest, mijnheer. De klant is hier geen koning, maar een dief."

- "U bent een verschrikkelijke ober. Ik wil een andere ober, nu. Ik heb geen tijd voor al deze onzin."

"De andere obers zijn nog wel erger dan ik. U heeft het maar getroffen met zo'n ober als ik."

- "Ik geloof er helemaal niks van, ober. Hoe kunnen ze nu erger zijn dan dit ?"

"Nou, gewoon, ze leggen direct de loop van een geweer in uw nek. Dat heb ik nog niet bij u gedaan. Dat moet nog komen."

- "Nog komen ? Zeg ober, bent u nu helemaal gek geworden. Zo benader je geen klanten."

"Klanten, mijnheer ? Zeg maar gerust zware misdadigers."

- "Wat heb ik misdaan ?"

"U kunt beter vragen wat u niet heeft gedaan."

- "Ober, u kent mij niet. U weet niets van mij af, dus bespaar me al deze vooroordelen."

"Ik weet alles van u af, mijnheer. Ik ken u door en door. U staat schuldig. Ik weet genoeg."

- "En hoe weet u dat allemaal ?"

"Ik ben niet dom, en ook niet gek. Uw hele leven heb ik al spionnen om u heengezet. Dit restaurant houd iedereen in de gaten. En nu bent u hier, omdat het ons wel welletjes werd."

- "Ober, u heeft waarschijnlijk uw dag niet. Niemand heeft mij gevolgd, en niemand heeft mij hier naartoe gebracht. Het is mijn eigen keuze geweest, en ik vertrek ook weer op eigen keuze."

"Mijnheer, zoals ik u al uitlegde vertrekt niemand hier. U bent hier op de juiste plaats, en op het juiste moment, voor het juiste gerecht. Denkt u nu echt dat u uzelf kunt vertrouwen ?"

- "Ober, neem wat rust. Misschien dat het morgen beter gaat. Dit heb ik niet verdiend, en ik heb ook geen strafblad. Misschien bent u met iemand anders in de war."

"Nee nee, mijnheer. Zo makkelijk komt u niet van ons af. Het is ons restaurant, dus wij bepalen de regels. Ik vergis me zeer zeker niet. Ik heb alles nauwkeurig bijgehouden."

- "Goed ober, ik zal u betalen voor uw tijd, en dan vertrek ik hier. Dit is niet langer uit te houden. Hoe haalt u het allemaal in uw hoofd."

"Mijnheer, nu geen politietje spelen. U bent hier in een restaurant, niet op het politie bureau, en trouwens hier doet de politie zulke dingen niet, dus ik zou maar ophouden als ik u was. De klant betaalt hier ook niet, maar wij betalen uw begrafenis. Lief, hè ?"

- "Ober, nu moet u ophouden, anders ga ik geweld gebruiken. Ik wil hier nu weg."

"Er wordt hier geen geweld gebruikt door klanten. U kunt er alleen over dromen. Dat is nog net niet strafbaar."

- "Nou, dat valt me weer mee dan. Kunnen we nu stoppen ?"

"Stoppen ? We zijn net begonnen."

- "Ja, maar dit is echt te belachelijk voor woorden. En er komt nog meer ? Ik heb zo een afspraak."

"Wij betalen uw begrafenis en regelen uw afspraakjes. Wij zullen ook al uw papieren regelen, terwijl u naar de hel gaat. Mooi geregeld, toch ?"

- "Hel ? Ben ik hier nu in de kerk gekomen ofzo ? En waarom niet naar de hemel ?"

"Mijnheer, u bent een gevaarlijke crimineel. Zelfs de hel is nog te goed voor u, maar ziet u, wij zijn de slechtsten nog niet."

- "Dan ga ik nu naar een ander restaurant. Dit kan echt niet waar zijn."

"Andere restauranten in Hendrik Ido Ambacht zijn nog wel erger dan die van ons."

- "Nog erger ? Hoe is het mogelijk."

"U zult het nooit uitvinden, mijnheer. Uw reis stopt hier."

- "En de hel is zeker jullie smerige achtertuin ?"

"Nu niet beledigend gaan doen, mijnheer. Daar maakt u het alleen maar erger mee."

De klant verliest nu echt zijn geduld, en slaat de ober neer. "Breng hem maar naar het ziekenhuis. Ik ben er klaar mee. Ik heb lang genoeg mijn geduld bewaard !" roept de klant hysterisch van woede.

Een lange ober in een witte jas komt toesnellen. "In het ziekenhuis liggen alleen dokters. De patiënten moeten de dokters opereren," spreekt de lange ober traag.

"Dat kan deze patiënt niet," spreekt de klant. "Ik heb hem tegen de vlakte geslagen. Zelfverdediging."

"Hij doet geen vlieg kwaad," sprak de lange ober. "Hij heeft alleen een hele grote mond. En dreigen, hè, veel dreigen."

"Maar waarom ontsla je hem dan niet ?" vroeg de klant.

"Sorry, dat kunnen de werkers van het restaurant niet, ontslaan," sprak de lange ober traag. "Dat kunnen alleen de klanten."

"Dan zijn jullie nu beiden op staande voet ontslagen !" bulderde de woeste, schuimbekkende klant.

"Heeft hij u niet verteld dat de andere obers nog wel erger zijn ?" vroeg de lange ober.

"Ja, dat zei hij inderdaad," brieste de klant. "Jullie zijn allemaal ontslagen ! Ik ontsla dit hele restaurant !"

"Maar heeft hij u niet verteld dat de andere restauranten nog wel erger zijn dan dit restaurant ?" vroeg de lange ober.

"Dat heeft hij zeker," brulde de klant, zo woest als een leeuw.

"En heeft hij u er dan niet bijgezegd, dat wanneer dit restaurant dichtgaat er nog wel tien andere restauranten in de plaats worden geopend, wel tien maal erger dan dit restaurant ?" vroeg de lange ober.

"Nee, dat niet, dat niet," brulde de klant, "maar wie zegt dat ik dat moet geloven ? En ik kom hier nooit meer in Hendrik Ido Ambacht !"

"Jammer dat we u zien gaan," sprak de lange ober.

"En u gaat ook," brieste de klant. "Pak uw spullen, en vertrek. U bent ontslagen. Ik verklaar dit restaurant gesloten, eens en voor altijd."

"U vergeet uw olifantensoep," sprak de lange ober.

Een verschrikkelijk monster kwam aanrennen en slokte de klant op.

In één hap !

"Dat was op het nippertje," sprak de lange ober traag. "Nou, Loofhaar, we kunnen hier nog steeds blijven werken, jongen, dankzij de olifantensoep," terwijl hij de gevallen ober helpt op te staan.

"Ja," sprak de andere ober. "Ik wist dat we met dit recept geen verkeerde keuze hadden gemaakt. Tegenwoordig denken mensen dat ze zomaar van alles kunnen eten."

De Optocht

Er was een gemaskerde optocht in de winkelstraat van Hendrik Ido Ambacht. De straat was heel lang, zoals de optocht lang was. Iedereen in de optocht was verkleed. Een vleermuis vloog voor hen uit. Jorke keek uit zijn kamerraam naar buiten, en kon zo alles zien. Hij woonde in een flat boven de winkelstraat. Wat een prachtig uitzicht had hij hier. Hij had een nieuw spelletje gekregen, maar nu was even zijn aandacht afgeleid vanwege het lawaai van de optocht. Daarna ging hij weer met het nieuwe spelletje spelen. Het spelletje kon ook spreken. Even later stond zijn moeder in de deuropening. Ze nam hem in haar armen, en nam hem toen met haar mee naar haar kamer. Vader was weg. Even later werd er gebeld. Het was vader. Hij had de sleutel vergeten. Hij moest direct weer weg. Jorke miste zijn vader. Die was bijna nooit thuis. Zijn vader was altijd weg, moest altijd ergens naartoe. Hij zag hem eigenlijk alleen wanneer zijn vader iets thuis vergeten was. En dat was meestal maar heel kort. Zijn moeder was er altijd.

Eigenlijk gleed het leven een beetje langs Jorke heen. Hij groeide op en zag alle dagen langs hem heenglijden, als een film. Hij had er geen vat op. Hij wilde het vast blijven houden, maar dat lukte niet. Het maakte hem droevig. Hij ging dan altijd maar lezen. Moeder hield ook erg van boeken, en nam vaak boeken voor hem mee. Jorke kon niet goed voor zichzelf zorgen. Hij was gehecht aan zijn moeder, en afhankelijk aan haar. Hij voelde zich verlamd, mentaal en emotioneel. Het lukte hem niet ergens een touw aan te knopen. Hij kon dingen nooit afkrijgen. Dit maakte hem weleens bang, want wat moest hij als moeder er niet meer zou zijn ? Moeder deed alles voor hem.

Eigenlijk wilde hij wel dat hij wat meer als zijn vader was, die er altijd op uit was. Hij voelde zichzelf een huismusje, een muurbloempje. Natuurlijk was hij nog erg jong, en toen hij wat ouder werd groeide het vanzelf goed. Hij was minder gehecht aan zijn moeder, en ging er op uit met zijn fiets. Hij ontdekte dat er ook een ander leven was buiten zijn moeder om.

Hij begon steeds meer voor zijn moeder te zorgen in plaats van andersom. Hij nam vaak boeken voor haar mee en andere dingen die ze nodig had. Hij voelde zichzelf steeds meer worden als zijn vader, die zo onafhankelijk was. Op een dag ging hij op zichzelf wonen, maar

de verhuizing viel hem toch zwaar. Hij miste zijn moeder, ook al ging hij dagelijks naar haar toe. Zijn vader zag hij eigenlijk nooit meer. Toch liep dit op den duur ook goed. Hij moest gewoon even wennen. Hij begon er steeds meer van te houden op zichzelf te wonen.

Er was weer een optocht in de stad, en dit keer ging hij er zelf naartoe. Hij keek naar alle maskers en verkleedpartijen, en hij was vastbesloten zelf ook mee te doen het jaar erop. Toch vergat hij het, want er waren zoveel andere dingen die zijn aandacht trokken. En hij kwam nu ook op een leeftijd dat de jaarlijkse optocht hem niet meer zo interesseerde. Het jaar erop was hij er overheen gegroeid. Het paste niet meer bij hem. Hij dacht er ook niet meer echt overna.

Zij moeder werd steeds ouder, en had steeds meer hulp nodig. Nog steeds was hij er dagelijks, en hij vertelde haar verhalen en las haar voor. Zijn moeder was nu zijn kind geworden. Op een dag was zijn moeder dement geworden, en herkende hem niet meer. Toen ging ze naar een verzorgingshuis. Het zat er op voor hem. Hij had zijn best gedaan. Hij had gedaan wat hij kon. Wekelijks zocht hij haar nog op, maar ze begon steeds agressiever te worden, omdat ze hem niet herkende. Ook praten hielp niet meer. Ze was mentaal en geestelijk aan het aftakelen. Hij kwam steeds minder, want hij kon er niet goed mee leven. Hij was meer een last voor haar dan dat het haar rust gaf. Hij was ten einde raad, maar dacht dat ze al een soort hersendood was, en dat ze een nieuw leven had gekregen. Ze was verder niet agressief naar de verzorgers, want die herkende ze wel.

Het was in die dagen dat zijn vader contact met hem opnam. Maar hun karakters botsten teveel, dus dat liep op niets uit. Ze hadden het beiden in ieder geval geprobeerd. Hij voelde zich eenzaam, en las veel. Hij verslond boeken, op zoek naar een antwoord, wat levensrust. Hij kreeg soms nog weleens een brief van zijn vader. Moeder bleek hem ook niet meer te herkennen en deed agressief naar hem. Zijn vader dacht ook dat ze nu in een ander leven al was, en dat haar vorige leven haar daarin zou tegenhouden, dus daarom deed ze agressief. Volgens zijn vader was het beter als ze door hen met rust werd gelaten. Daar was Jorke het wel mee eens.

Het menselijke contact deed hem pijn op deze manier. Hij praatte nog liever met een standbeeld, en dat ging hij ook doen. Als hij er in de stad één zag, dan sprak hij ermee. Het standbeeld sprak niet terug, maar het luchtte voor hem wel op. Was er misschien ook een ander leven voor hem ? Hij begon dromen te krijgen over sprekende standbeelden en sprekende poppen. Misschien hadden zij te weinig aandacht gehad ? Hij dacht er over na, maar liet ook dat idee weer vallen. Hij bleef zich hechten aan boeken. Daar zat voor hem de magie. Hij had inmiddels al zoveel boeken dat het bijna niet in zijn huis paste. Hij moest daarom verhuizen naar een groter huis. Zijn huis was als een bibliotheek.

Hij dacht na over zijn vader en moeder. Zij leken onbereikbaar. Maar door de boeken kon hij alles herscheppen in zijn hoofd. Hij ging er op een andere manier mee om.

Op een dag was er een vrouw aan de deur. Ze verkocht kaartjes voor een bepaalde theatervoorstelling. Hij dacht : "Baadt het niet, dan schaadt het niet," dus hij kocht een kaartje en zat de avond erna op de voorste rij. Er stonden wat clowns, en een vleermuis vloog tussen hen in. Hij lachte de hele avond om de grappen van de clowns. Maar na de voorstelling voelde hij zich leeg, alsof hij zijn tijd had lopen verdoen. Hij was wel toe aan iets nieuws. Hij was zoekende.

Na een week was het meisje er weer en verkocht kaartjes voor een andere theatervoorstelling. Hij vertelde zijn verhaal dat het niet echt iets voor hem was, maar ze bleef terugkomen, dus hij wees haar er vriendelijk op dat hij helemaal geen kaartjes meer zou kopen, maar toen begonnen ook andere meisjes te komen om kaartjes te verkopen, en hij werd er erg moe van om het telkens uit te leggen. Hij plakte ook nog een sticker op de deur van "geen kaartjesverkopers", maar niets hielp.

"Zeg, zijn jullie blind !" riep hij eens toen ze voor de zoveelste keer aan de deur stonden.

"Sorry, we hebben opdracht van de baas. U staat op de lijst," sprak het desbetreffende meisje.

"Haal me dan ogenblikkelijk van die lijst af !" schreeuwde hij.

"Dat gaat zomaar niet," sprak het meisje. "Ik heb eerst uw handtekening nodig." Ze haalde een kaartje uit haar zak met kleine lettertjes erop, en in grote woede zette hij zijn handtekening zonder verder de kleine lettertjes te lezen. Ze glimlachte wat, en vertrok toen. Maar toen begon hij bergen post te krijgen. Retour sturen hielp niet. Het was alsof ze hem in de val hadden gelokt, en hij dacht nog : "Dat zullen de kleine lettertjes geweest zijn !" Op een dag ging hij naar hun kantoor toe, maar het bleek een vals adres te zijn. Er woonde hier heel iemand anders die ook al gek werd van alle boze brieven. Ook het theater zelf bleek er niet voor verantwoordelijk te zijn.

Hij besloot zijn vader om raad te vragen, maar die moest iets opbiechten. Zijn vader bleek hier achter te zitten om toch nog op een bepaalde manier contact met hem te hebben en de opgelopen schade in te halen. Hij vond dat hij maar een hele vreemde vader had dat het op zo'n manier moest, en dat hij ook nog voor de kaartjes zou moeten betalen, maar in ieder

geval stopte zijn vader toen met deze dingen toen Jorke dat hem gebood. "Ik heb gedaan wat ik kon," zei zijn vader. "Toen het niet op de normale manier kon, heb ik het maar op deze manier gedaan."

"Je bent me wel een vreemde," zei Jorke boos. "Ik zat er al aan te denken te gaan verhuizen. Het is toch een vorm van stalken."

"Ik moet je nog iets opbiechten," zei zijn vader. "Al die jaarlijkse optochten heb ik ook altijd voor jou georganiseerd, speciaal voor jou, omdat ik niet wist hoe ik het anders moest doen." Jorke kreeg een brok in zijn keel en omhelsde zijn vader. "Papa, u bent de allerbeste."

De Witte Kerk

De witte monniken gingen eigenlijk alleen maar trager en trager. Schuivelend, voetje voor voetje gingen ze richting de witte kerk in het natuurgebied van Hendrik Ido Ambacht. Zo zouden ze nooit bij de witte kerk aankomen. Tenslotte stonden ze helemaal stil, en begonnen hun gezangen te zingen. Toen gingen ze weer verder, maar nog steeds traag. Ze hadden witte gewaden met witte kappen op, waardoor ze de witte monniken werden genoemd. Het was weer zo'n vreemd geloof in de stad Hendrik Ido Ambacht. Het was weer zo'n economisch geloof. De witte monniken geloofden in het witte geld. Dat kon alleen gegeven worden door

hen die daartoe verzekerd waren. Men kon zich dus bij de witte kerk verzekeren, niet om te kunnen krijgen, maar om te kunnen geven. Het witte geld kon ook gezaaid worden. Zo groeiden er witte geld struiken. Het witte geld leek op pepermunt.

Eigenlijk kon er niet veel met het witte geld gedaan worden. Het was gewoon voor het idee. Mensen hadden zo misschien het gevoel dat ze iets goeds deden, terwijl ze er toch niet armer om werden. Toch was dat niet helemaal waar. Er kon wel degelijk wat met het witte geld gedaan worden. Het kon gegeten worden, en als je het lang genoeg bewaarde, dan werd het wit goud.

Maar ja, wat moest je met wit goud ? Je kon er sieraden van maken, of andere dingen, maar waar was het nu echt goed voor ? De monniken hadden daar zo hun eigen idee over. Het witte goud was voor hen een beeld van geduld.

In ieder geval was Hendrik Ido Ambacht heel trots op dit verzekerings-systeem. Er gingen allerlei verhalen en mythes te ronde over het witte geld en het witte goud. En zeemannen bleken met steeds grotere verhalen erover thuis te komen. Daarom groeide de mythologie, en daarmee ook de interesse voor de witte kerk en de witte monikken. Op een gegeven moment werd de belangstelling te groot, en de witte monniken hadden geen rust meer. Ze vonden ook dat de groep te groot werd, dus ze zetten een stop. De verzekeringsmaatschappij was nu vol en zou geen nieuwe leden meer aannemen. En zo begon het leden-aantal van de witte kerk langzaam uit te sterven, totdat het op een moment alleen nog een herinnering was. Maar de mythe groeide, en ook het aantal van hen die in de witte kerk geloofden, maar er niet mochten komen. De kerk was vol, ook al waren de leden al tijden dood. De canon was afgesloten.

Van de witte monniken werden standbeelden gebouwd, en hun verhalen werden opgetekend. Het kwam in een groot wit heilig boek te staan. En het aantal verhalen groeit nog steeds. Zeemannen komen thuis met steeds grotere verhalen erover, maar wat is er nu echt van waar ? Het was niet meer echt te achterhalen. Wel is het zo dat wanneer iemand heel traag loopt, dan wordt er weleens gezegd : "Kijk, daar gaat een witte monnik." Of wanneer iemand heel traag is met werk, dan wordt er weleens gezegd : "Kom op, een beetje meer vaart erin, je bent toch geen witte monnik ?" Zo zijn er diverse spreekwoorden van die tijd in Hendrik Ido Ambacht overgebleven. De legende heeft zijn stempel gedrukt en het schijnt niet meer weggewassen te kunnen worden. Maar moet dat eigenlijk ? Er vallen natuurlijk heel wat mooie lessen van te leren. De witte monniken zijn helden in Hendrik Ido Ambacht. Hun standbeelden worden vereerd. Als iemand van iets teveel en te snel wil, dan wordt er vaak gezegd : "Neem maar eens een voorbeeld aan de witte monniken." En dat wordt ook gezegd als iemand heel gierig en egoïstisch is. De witte monniken waren de rolmodellen voor Hendrik Ido Ambacht, en nog steeds. Hun positie en taak blijkt steeds groter te worden, maar vreemd genoeg hoor je er buiten Hendrik Ido Ambacht niets over. Voor de rest van het land en de aarde bestaan de witte monniken niet, en hebben ze nooit bestaan.

Soms proberen de kinderen weleens de witte monniken na te doen. Dan draaien ze in het rond, of lopen en bewegen heel traag. Op speciale dagen zingen ze liedjes. Soms beweren kinderen dat ze een standbeeld van een witte monnik hebben zien bewegen. Het vreemde ervan is dat alleen kinderen dit beweren. Maar hun ouders geloven hen.

Het Standbeeld

Hij kwam 's nachts thuis en trof zijn vrouw dood aan in haar bed met een mes in haar borst.

Hij vertrouwde niemand, geen dokter en geen politie. Ze waren allemaal corrupt in zijn ogen. Hij had teveel meegemaakt. Hij schreeuwde in zichzelf, greep een mes en rende naar buiten, op zoek naar de moordenaar.

Hij zocht overal, ook in het bos. Hij vond geen spoor.

Hij voelde iets breken in zijn hoofd.

Zou het standbeeld op de toren het gedaan hebben ?

Hij keek ernaar en het standbeeld leek te bewegen.

Hij viel op de grond en sloot zijn ogen, en zag toen een licht.

Was er een engel gekomen ?

Zij gaf hem een lichtend zwaard, en toen was er niets dan zee.

Hij strompelde naar huis.

Hij moest zich vergist hebben, maar zijn vrouw was toch echt dood.

Plotseling was hij omringd met standbeelden.

Zij hadden allemaal messen.

Zij hakten en staken op hem in, totdat hij ook een standbeeld was geworden.

In het diepste van de nacht,

Waar de nachtzon opkomt, de zon van bloed,

Daar hadden ze hem gevonden,

En ze namen hem mee,

Zoals ze zijn vrouw namen.

Vanuit de zee kwamen ze op,

Nee, ze hadden geen genade,

Ze bleven naar hem vragen,

En bloed was hun meester

Hij zocht tussen de standbeelden naar de moordenaar van zijn vrouw,

Maar waren zij niet allen moordenaars ?

Waar het bloed liegt, daar is hun pad,

En niemand wist ergens van,

Zij waren allemaal leugenaars die in ontkenning leefden

Hij wilde weg, maar kon de uitgang niet vinden,

Hij zat vast in een doolhof, maar toen herinnerde hij zich het lichtende zwaard en de engel,

En weer begon het licht hem te overweldigen,

Zacht licht, en toen was alles zee,

Het begon hem mee te nemen,

Het doolhof was slechts het verlee

Op een steen stond zijn naam geschreven, en daarnaast de naam van zijn vrouw,

Maar terugvinden deed hij haar niet,

Waar engelen zijn naam roepen, waar de vijand niet meer is,

Alles heeft hem verblind, en zijn vrouw is slechts een herinnering,

Als een lichtend spook door het bos,

Waar de bladeren ruisen

Hij roept haar naam, maar zij hoort niet,

Zij spreekt niet, zij is een standbeeld,

Zoals hij dat is

Zij staat op een andere toren in een andere stad,

Ze kunnen alleen van elkaar dromen

De Paarse Nep Paus

Er waren ook vreemde snoepwinkels in Hendrik Ido Ambacht, waar de klant niets mocht kopen, maar alleen gekocht mocht worden. Dat gebeurde door grote snoep-automaten die heel menselijk waren, en de klanten uitkozen die ze wilden kopen. De snoep-automaten gingen ook vaak de straten en de daken op om mensen te kopen. Ze gingen gewoon door open ramen of schoorstenen heen. Het waren koop-automaten. Zij kochten klanten en verder een ieder die zij wilden.

De kopers werden zelf verkocht en veranderden in poppen. Dit was de reden dat men de snoepwinkels probeerde te sluiten, maar er kwamen er alleen maar meer bij. Kopers waren niet meer veilig. Ze eindigden zelf ergens in een winkel. De snoep-automaten die hen gekocht hadden verkochten hen gewoon weer door. Daarom was er een groep ontstaan van hen die niets meer wilden kopen. Ze waren te bang zelf gekocht te worden. Snoep smaakte hen niet meer. Ze waren er bang voor geworden. Vele mensen hadden winkelvrees gekregen, en steeds meer van hen gingen in de natuur leven, of onder de grond. Ze gingen van de natuur leven. Maar de snoep-automaten achtervolgden hen daar ook.

De snoep-automaten kochten alles over, geheel Hendrik Ido Ambacht. En zo kwam Hendrik Ido Ambacht onder de macht van de snoep-machines, die steeds groter en groter werden. Alles werd geregeld door de snoepmachines.

De koopziekte begon enorm terug te lopen in Hendrik Ido Ambacht. De enigen die nog kochten waren de verkochten. En ze kochten alles wat los en vast zat. Het was als het geheim van snoep en het geheim van de zee. Er kwamen toen heel wat demonstraties totdat uiteindelijk alles verschoven werd naar een maand in het jaar, een feestmaand waarin al het

gekochte zou kopen, en dat werd gevierd met veel snoep. Het was dan ook een snoepfeest, en er werden die maand vele optochten gehouden. Het werd ook wel het paars-rode feest genoemd. Veelal droegen de mensen in die maand rode en paarse kleding. Het werd weer zo'n vreemd geloof in Hendrik Ido Ambacht, zoals er daar zoveel vreemde geloven waren. De eigenlijke betekenis ging steeds meer verloren, en het werd meer en meer het feest waarin de snoepmensen kwamen. Zij werden snoepmannen genoemd, maar dat konden ook vrouwen zijn. Zij gingen door de straten in optochten en waren helemaal bekleed met snoep.

De leider van dit geloof ? De paarse paus. Hij was omhuld met mysterie. Niemand wist echt zeker wie of wat het was. Hij vertoonde zich nooit aan de mensen, alleen door de televisie, en hij was geheel gehuld in paars. Hij sprak niet. Hij gaf alleen tekst. Dit was in een andere taal, en de vertaling verscheen eronder. Meestal waren zulke uitzendingen alleen in de feestmaand. Het had ook te maken met allerlei olifantencultussen, wat dan ook volop op de televisie was te zien, en de paarse paus was vaak omringd met menselijke snoep-automaten, en die zouden van alles wat er in Hendrik Ido Ambacht gebeurde notities maken, en dat niet voor een rechterlijk systeem, maar puur om verhalen te maken. De parse paus was de schrijver van een heilig boek, maar het was nog lang niet af. Vandaar dat de snoep-automaten nog steeds notities moesten maken over de mensen, en over alles wat er gebeurde in Hendrik Ido Ambacht.

Op een dag reed er een paarse paus op een versierde en beklede olifant door de stad, maar het bleek een valse te zijn, want de echte paarse paus zou dat nooit doen. Ook sprak deze paarse paus, iets wat de echte paarse paus nooit zou doen. Ook dit werd in de notities gezet, en de echte paarse paus liet in de feestmaand van het volgende jaar weten dat hij hier niets aan zou doen dan het in een verhaal te zetten. Sinds toen was er elk jaar wel een paarse paus ergens te vinden. Ze zagen het wel als een uitdaging, want ze wilden ook wel in de verhalen van de paarse paus komen. De mensen begonnen het steeds meer gewoon te vinden, en ze begonnen eraan te wennen. De echte paarse paus begon steeds minder op de televisie te komen. Hij vond dat de nep valse pausen zijn taak mooi konden overnemen. Het ging niet helemaal zoals het altijd was, maar de paarse paus was er tevreden mee en nam het niet zo nauw. Totdat hij helemaal niet meer op televisie verscheen. Andere paarse pauzen begonnen het werk over te nemen, en hadden hun eigen inbreng, waardoor de vreemde religie steeds meer veranderde.

En het witte goud rondom Hendrik Ido Ambacht vertelde verhalen, en er werd nooit meer iemand veroordeeld door een rechterlijk systeem, maar alles werd opgelost door verhalen.

Het Sprekende Witte Goud

Eens was er in Hendrik Ido Ambacht een wit gouden park. Er mochten alleen maar vrouwen in het park komen, en die vrouwen reden op leeuwen. Er mochten absoluut geen mannen in het park komen. Hier werd veel over gedemonstreerd, want men vond dat erg racistisch, maar het vanwege veiligheidsredenen. Het bleek met de leeuwen te maken hebben. Het waren namelijk hele speciale leeuwensoorten die alleen maar mannenvlees lusten. Vrouwenvlees lusten ze niet. Het park was ommuurd met wit goud, en het trok veel bekijks. Op een dag was er een man over de stenen muur heengeklommen en rende het park in waar de vrouwen op leeuwen reden. Hij leek dronken te zijn. Er werd veel geroepen dat hij terug moest komen, maar hij rende op een leeuw af. "Ga weg !" riep de vrouw die op de leeuw zat. "De leeuw zal je verslinden. Mannetjes als jij komen hier niet ver."

De man trok zich er niets van aan en begon de leeuw te aaien, die direct toehapte. "Dan moet je het zelf maar weten," zei de vrouw. "Ik kan er niet wakker om liggen. Je hebt het zelf gewild." De man trok zijn arm terug, maar hij was nog niet klaar. Weer probeerde hij de leeuw te aaien, en ditmaal beet de leeuw goed door en trok zijn arm eraf.

"Idioot !" riep de vrouw. De man kreunde van de pijn, maar hij was goed dronken, en nog was hij niet klaar. Ditmaal beet de leeuw ook zijn andere arm eraf.

"Wanneer ga je het leren !" riep de vrouw.

"Wanneer jullie van die leeuwen afkomen," brulde de man zonder armen. "Vrouwen horen niet op leeuwen te rijden."

"Het zijn speciale leeuwen, idioot !" riep de vrouw woest. "Ze lusten alleen mannenvlees."

"Dan moet je wel erge mannenhaat hebben om op zo'n beest te rijden !" brulde de man even woest terug, in hevige pijn, en hevig bloedend. "Dus als we bij jullie willen komen dan worden onze armen eraf gebeten."

"Vertrouw me maar, dit is nog maar het begin !" gilde de vrouw. "Als je zo doorgaat worden je benen er ook afgebeten."

De man liep naar de leeuw toe in zijn dronkenschap en begon de leeuw te schoppen, maar toen greep de leeuw ook zijn been en rukte het eraf. De man stortte in het zand.

"Ik zal maar snel weg proberen te komen met dat laatste been van je !" gilde de vrouw. "Wij wilden je niet in de buurt, en de leeuw al helemaal niet. Hebben wij er ooit om gevraagd ?"

Maar de man lag daar levenloos. De vrouw reed weg op haar leeuw. Hier had ze geen tijd voor, en het was haar taak niet. De man had zichzelf aan haar en de leeuw opgedrongen.

De man werd met loeiende sirene naar het ziekenhuis gebracht. Door dit nieuws werd de woede van de mensen over het witte gouden park nog wel groter, en er werden meer demonstraties gehouden dan ooit. Men vond dat het tijd werd het witte gouden park te sluiten.

Dat was snel gebeurd. De gehele tuin werd gesloopt, al het witte goud, en niemand wist waar de vrouwen en leeuwen naartoe waren gegaan. Sommigen dachten dat ze ondergronds gegaan waren. Wat van het witte goud van het park kwam in het museum terecht, en verder gingen de vrouwen die op de leeuwen reden de boeken in.

De speciale kleding die ze droegen ging de kledingzaken in, naar het voorbeeld.

Nog vaak werd er gesproken over deze vreemde geschiedenis.

Het witte goud zweeg verder. Het had al genoeg vertelt.

De Verhalenman

Als het 's nachts donker is en heel stil, dan reist de verhalenman langs de kinderkamers om zijn verhalen uit te delen. Grote verhalen en kleine verhalen, leuke verhalen en enge griezelverhalen, de verhalenman is in alles thuis. Bengels en deugnieten slaat hij over, maar zoete, lieve kinderen bezoekt hij.

Waar woont de verhalenman dan ? Hij woont in de wolken.

Ook bezoekt hij kinderen op scheepjes, en zelfs kinderen in de klas.

Niemand kan hem dan zien dan het kind zelf.

Natuurlijk zeggen veel volwassenen dat het niet waar is, dat de verhalenman niet echt bestaat.

De verhalenman heeft daarom een grote hekel aan zulke volwassenen.

Hij zegt vaak dat volwassenen niet bestaan.

Het is maar één van zijn verhalen.

Wat doet de verhalenman dan de hele dag ?

Als hij geen kinderen bezoekt dan schrijft hij verhalen.

Hij is daar nooit klaar mee.

Hij heeft ook een vrouw, genaamd tante Tingeling.

Die schenkt altijd koffie voor hem in, en rinkelt met een belletje wanneer de koffie klaar is.

Eens was tante Tingeling in grote problemen.

Toen haalde de verhalenman haar eruit door een verhaal.

Soms neemt hij kinderen mee op een boot naar zijn wolkenstad.

Hij woont daar in een groot kasteel, genaamd ik-weet-het-niet-meer.

Er zijn wel duizend gangen in dat kasteel.

Je kunt er makkelijk in verdwalen.

Eens verdwaalde ik daar.

Ik werd onder verhalen bedolven.

Uiteindelijk hoorde ik het koffie-belletje van tante Tingeling,

en toen vond ik de verhalenman.

Zoveel verhalen vertelde hij mij,

Ik heb ze nu allemaal weer op een rij.

De verhalenman, de verhalenman,

Er zijn dingen die niemand anders kan.

Als je het midden in de nacht warm en koud hebt,

Dan staat hij aan de deur,

Met zoveel verhalen in zijn armen,

Waaraan je je kunt verkoelen en verwarmen,

Als een oase in de woestijn,

Ja, bij hem moet je zijn.

Eens was hij al zijn verhalen kwijt,

Maar toen schreef hij weer nieuwen met grote vlijt,

En zoveel kinderen die hij ooit had geholpen,

Brachten zijn verhalen weer terug,

Zij vormden de brug

De Tovenaar van Wezep

Is het niet de wespenzeep ?
In een wespenzee, waar hij aan de kant zijn bootje heeft,
Achter het strand is een oerwoud, zeer exotisch,
Waar alle struiken steken,
Want dit is het wespenland.

Oh tovenaar van Wezep in je boot,
Redt ons, want de gorilla's en de grote apen jagen op ons,
Oh, daar in het land waar alles jaagt,
Nooit hebben we hier rust.

Maar de tovenaar van Wezep houdt de wacht aan de kust,
Als een leeuw is hij in de nacht

Oh, tovenaar van Wezep, neem ons mee in je boot.

De Kinderdief

De magische flessen stonden naast elkaar. Er zaten geesten in die flessen. Het was druk in de stad der spinnen. Zoveel geluiden van auto's, en dan ineens zo stil, omdat de koningin langskomt. De koningin der spinnen zit op haar troon, omgeven met speren. Zij is het geluid zo zat, en eist stilte. Dan zinkt de stad weg in de golven van eenzaamheid. Het is haar beslissing. Zij houdt de stad veilig. De familie ruzies moeten ophouden. Zij breekt de families, en verspreid hen over de stad. Zij wacht, en slaat dan toe. De koele gebaren van eenzaamheid zijn een teken dat het werkt. De stad is stoffig. Overal ligt rommel op de grond. Maar het is tenminste rustig. De inwoners leven in vrees. Zij kennen hun koningin.

De droogte is bijna zoet. De grachten hebben groen water, en veel bruin. De koningin wil veel bruin zien, en veel bleke plekken daartussen. Zij houdt van het contrast. Dan wil ze klederdracht zien, en tradities, om het vervolgens allemaal stuk te slaan. Ze bereidt het gif om de stad te laten slapen. Alles is dodelijk uitgecalculeerd. Ze maakt geen fouten. Zij is onfeilbaar. De stad is een trage belevenis. Morgen zal alles wit zijn. Haar dienaressen hebben zichzelf gewapend. De strijd kan beginnen, maar waartegen ? De stad is dood. Er is niets te zien hier. Morgen zal alles wit zijn.

Haar heupen bewegen tegen het glas aan. Het glas springt, en zij is vrij. Over de stad zijn haar webben. Niemand zal ontsnappen. Zij zullen allen moeten eten van haar vergif, om zo te slapen voor eeuwig, opdat de stad wit zal zijn. In de morgen zullen nieuwe soldaten opstaan. Zij zullen haar op handen dragen, en aan haar voeten liggen, want zij dient aanbeden te worden.

Niet velen durven tegen haar in te gaan. Niet velen durven haar te benaderen. Er zijn haaien in haar zee, grote schepen op haar golven, en haar mandarijnen zijn bommen. Zij is een verwend klein kind. Zij houdt hen maskers voor, en praat alles weg. Haar leugens laten haar tussen de bomen wonen, tussen de planten. Een distelkind is zij, met brandnetels in haar haren. Zij stoeit met slangen, en zij luisteren naar haar. Zij vecht met katten, en overwint. Zij is de vogelspin.

Haar liederen zijn stormen in de nacht, die kinderen uit hun bedden roven. Zij brengt hen tot het kasteel. Zij draagt een wit kleed waarin zij haar bruine lichaam omhult. Haar liederen zijn schepen in water. Zij zinken niet. Zij laat hen allen dromen, de dromen des doods. Zij brengt het gif dicht bij hen monden, en laat hen dan slikken. Dan sleept zij hen naar de kelders. Haar hyena's jagen daar, en zij leidt hen tot de ondergrondse stad. Zij brengt hen tot onder de riolen tot het licht der kinderen.

De Kannibaalse Bruid

Hermien van de Straaten kwam thuis. Haar vriend zat op de bank een krant te lezen. Ze schonk koffie in voor haarzelf en haar vriend, en ging naast hem zitten. 'Wat ben je aan het lezen ?' vroeg ze.

'Oh, niets,' zei haar vriend. 'Je weet wel, het is daadwerkelijk niets. Ik ben hier gewoon weer eens mijn tijd aan het doden.'

'Ik weet het,' zei Hermien. 'Zal het ooit nog eens anders worden. Ik ben een boek aan het lezen. Zal ik het je eens laten zien ?' Ze haalde een boek uit haar tas en gaf het aan haar vriend. Hij bladerde het eens rustig door. 'Interessant, Hermien,' zei hij. 'Ik wil het ook wel lezen als je het uit hebt.' Hermien glimlachte. Ze stond op na een tijdje en schonk nog wat koffie in. Midden in de nacht werden ze wakker. Er stond een mannetje voor hen, met een puntmutsje met wat belletjes. Het leek wel op een klein narretje. 'Ik ben Kraak,' zei het mannetje. 'Doe drie wensen, maar ze moeten wel voor jezelf zijn of voor je huis.'

'Ik zou me wel wat beter willen voelen,' zei Hermien slaperig. Ze was zo moe dat ze weer in slaap viel, en haar vriend was alweer in slaap gevallen. De volgende ochtend sneeuwde het, en Hermien voelde zich vrolijk en warm. Ze had geen moeite met opstaan, zoals ze dat eerst wel had.

De nacht erop was het mannetje er weer. 'Je mag nog twee wensen doen,' zei het mannetje. 'Oh, Kraak,' zei Hermien, 'ik zou graag een wat betere relatie willen hebben met mijn vriend.

Het is al wel goed, maar het kan veel beter.' De dag erop werden ze allebei blij wakker, en lagen een hele lange tijd in elkaars armen, wat ze eigenlijk nooit echt lang deden. 'Hermien,' zei Ewout, 'ik voel me ineens zo anders, zoveel beter.'

'Het komt door dat mannetje,' zei Hermien. Maar Ewout kon zich er bijna niets meer van herinneren. Ze hadden nu eigenlijk alles wat ze nodig hadden, en waren tevreden. Buiten scheen de zon in de sneeuw, en Hermien schonk weer koffie in. Koffie was altijd goed geweest tegen depressies, maar nu was de lucht zo helder. Die dag fietsten ze samen door het bos, maar ineens werd Ewout van zijn fiets afgeduwd. Een speer vloog dwars door Hermien heen, en ze viel bloedend op de grond. 'Grijp hem,' zei een luide stem. Ewout stond op en keek recht in de ogen van een groep wilden. Hij werd vastgegrepen en dieper in het bos gesleurd. Hij werd in een hut geduwd waar allerlei uitgehongerde mannen zaten. 'Welkom,' zei een oude man.

'Wat is dit hier ?' vroeg Ewout.

Een van de mannen werd gegrepen en uit de hut gesleurd. Buiten stond er een vrouw opgedost met veren. 'De kannibaalse bruid,' zei de oude man.

Ewout schrok wakker. Hij greep naar Hermien, maar die was er niet. 'Och, natuurlijk niet,' dacht Ewout. 'De relatie is verbroken. Ik ben een alleenstaand man.' Ewout was blij dat de relatie was verbroken, want Hermien was een verschrikkelijk mens, zeer wreed, ongevoelig, onbetrouwbaar en onberekenbaar. Hij was beter af zonder haar. Toen Ewout door een stukje bos naar zijn werk fietste zag hij een stel kinderen een ander kind slaan met stokken. Ewout sprong direkt van zijn fiets af en nam het kind in bescherming. Het kind rilde helemaal. Na een paar woorden gezegd te hebben tegen de andere kinderen nam hij het kind mee naar huis en belde zijn baas dat hij wat later zou komen. Hij legde het aan zijn baas uit, maar die zei direkt : 'Ach, neem er maar een dag vrij voor.'

Jonas heette het kind. Het was een weeskind, en het kind durfde niet goed terug naar het weeshuis. Het was er verschrikkelijk. Het kind rilde nog steeds, en Ewout deed een deken om hem heen, en gaf het kind wat te drinken. 'Lees je graag ?' vroeg Ewout.

'Ja,' zei Jonas.

'Oh, ik heb boven een hele kast vol met boeken. Kijk er maar eens tussen. Je mag voorlopig wel hier blijven, dan bel ik het weeshuis er wel over op,' zei Ewout.

'Van wat voor boeken houd je het meest ?' vroeg Ewout.

'Indianenboeken,' zei het kind. Ewout liet de boekenkist aan het kind zien. Er zaten veel indianenboeken tussen.

Ewout kreeg een andere vriendin : Jeiske. Ze was een stuk aardiger dan Hermien, maar ook aan deze relatie kwam snel een eind. Toen kwam er Saskia, toen Sjanine, maar het was allemaal niet blijvend. Jonas werd meer en meer als een zoon voor Ewout, en eigenlijk kon Ewout niet meer zonder hem, en besloot hem te adopteren. Hij had echt dat fantastische vadergevoel, maar hij miste een vrouw in zijn leven, en Jonas miste een moeder.

Tundra was een vrouw die Ewout wel zag zitten. Ze was lief en behulpzaam maar toch ook een beetje vreemd, alsof ze een duister verleden had. Ze kon goed koken, en was een uitzonderlijk goede verhalenverteller, dus ook Jonas was direkt erg dol op haar. Ze had haar eigen kamer in het huis. Ze wilde 's nachts graag alleen zijn. Ze was erg wisselend van karakter. Ze hield van foto's maken en fietsen, en op een dag nam ze Jonas mee in het bos. Ze zou proberen wat foto's te maken van dieren die in het bos woonden. Na een tijdje kwamen ze de kinderen van het weeshuis tegen. 'Zo Jonas, heb je eindelijk je moeder gevonden ?' riepen ze. Ze gingen in een groep rondom de fietsen staan. Tundra werd een beetje boos, maar de kinderen duwden haar in een bosje en Jonas namen ze mee. Ze brachten hem naar een hut in het bos. 'Zo, we zullen jou eens uithongeren met alleen af en toe wat bramen, brood en water,' zei een van de kinderen. 'Je bent een verwend ding.' Ze hielden hem opgesloten in de hut, en gaven hem haast geen voedsel. Na een paar weken was hij helemaal uitgehongerd. Net op tijd vond Ewout hem, nam hem mee naar huis en belde het weeshuis erover op. De kinderen kregen strenge straffen.

Tundra was een soort moeder voor Jonas, maar Jonas wist dat hij zijn vader hard nodig had. Een tijd lang durfde hij niet zonder zijn vader naar buiten. Ook Tundra had soms moeite om naar buiten te gaan vanwege het voorval. Ze zouden in ieder geval niet meer in het bos komen. De relatie tussen Tundra en Ewout werd steeds stabieler, en Jonas was er erg gelukkig mee. Voor hem waren Tundra en Ewout de perfecte ouders. Hij had het zich niet beter kunnen voorstellen. Op een nacht had Ewout weer een droom : Een spin had haar partner gevonden, en na de geslachtsdaad vrat ze haar partner op. De volgende ochtend vertelde hij het aan Tundra. Tundra had dit gevoel overgehouden aan een vorige relatie. Ook Ewout kende dit gevoel natuurlijk. In zijn ogen was Hermien die spin. 'Maar we hebben het overleefd,' zei Ewout, 'of er is gewoon leven na de dood.'

'Weet je wat kannibalen geloven ?' zei Tundra. 'Dat wanneer ze iemand hebben opgegeten dan hebben ze die kracht overgenomen, dan hebben ze de ziel van die persoon overgenomen. Zo voelen ze zich machtiger in de strijd om te overleven.'

'Ja, dat heb ik ook eens gelezen,' zei Ewout. 'Maar ik kan jou ook wel opvreten, maar dan van liefde.' Tundra glimlachte. 'Dus ik ben een soort gebakje voor jou ?'

'Veel lekkerder,' zei Ewout. 'En ben ik dan een kannibaal ?'

'Ik denk het wel, Ewout,' grapte Tundra. 'Ik moet nu zeker voor je oppassen.'

'Ach, er is nog hoop voor ons,' zei Ewout. 'We kunnen een banketbakkerij beginnen.'

'Dus eigenlijk is de natuur iets heel moois, als je het op die manier bekijkt,' zei Tundra. 'Het is om ervan te leren.'

'Juist,' zei Ewout.

'Dus, dan ben ik jouw kannibaalse bruid ?' vroeg Tundra.

'Als je het mij vraagt wel,' zei Ewout. 'Maar dan op een hele andere manier. Jij kan al dat nare weer recht krijgen.'

'Wat kun jij toch rare verhalen vertellen,' grapte Tundra.

'Nou, jij kan er ook wat van,' lachte Ewout.

'Ik heb het heel moeilijk gehad,' zei Tundra. 'Maar sinds ik jou ken ben ik gelukkig. En bij Jonas heb ik dat echte moedergevoel.'

Ewout zette de t.v. aan. Er was een oorlogsfilm op, en op de andere zender een praat programma. 'Laat Jonas maar even naar een kinderprogramma kijken,' zei Tundra. Ewout schakelde over. Tundra en Ewout gingen in de achterkamer even wat koffie drinken, terwijl Jonas t.v. ging kijken. 'Ewout,' fluisterde Tundra. 'Er zijn zoveel kinderen zoals Jonas eerst was : Ongelukkig in een weeshuis, ongeliefd, gebroken, trauma op trauma, en er lijkt geen einde aan te komen. We hebben een groot huis. Waarom zouden we geen tweede kind adopteren ?'

'Goed idee,' zei Ewout. 'Ik zou zelfs mijn huis wel willen uitbouwen om zoveel mogelijk kinderen onder te brengen. Maar de kinderen moeten het dan zelf ook willen.'

Met een telefoontje was het snel gedaan. Ewout en Tundra mochten een kijkje komen nemen op het weeshuis om over hun plannen te vertellen. Sommige kinderen waren enthousiast. Anderen niet. Drie kinderen wilden het weleens op proef proberen.

'Jaap Edema, Gerout van Huizen en Liesbeth van Tongeren.' Maar het werd geen succes. Ze konden niet met Jonas opschieten en ze waren vernielzuchtig. Ewout besloot wat dieren in huis te brengen, zodat Jonas niet zo alleen was. Maar naarmate Jonas ouder werd werd hij steeds stiller en trok zich steeds meer op zijn kamer terug. Toen hij twintig was trouwde hij met een meisje, maar het huwelijk was binnen drie jaar kapot, en hij kwam gebroken weer thuis. Ewout en Tundra wisten altijd al wel dat het een kannibaalse bruid was waarmee hij was getrouwd. Ze hadden hem nog gewaarschuwd, maar zonder resultaat. Hij was weer een ervaring rijker, en kreeg zijn oude kamer terug. Snel had hij weer een vriendin, en toen nog een, maar nooit koos hij echt de gemakkelijksten uit. Ewout hoopte dat hij ooit iemand zou vinden als Tundra. Maar op een dag raakte Jonas betrokken bij een auto-ongeluk en raakte verlamd. Het leven was als een kannibaalse bruid voor hem, en Ewout en Tundra waren er kapot van. Ze hadden gehoopt dat hij gelukkig zou worden, en dat hij zijn leven zou kunnen opbouwen, maar het was nu een afhankelijk kasplantje. Na een paar maanden stierf Jonas als gevolg van het auto-ongeluk. Ewout en Tundra waren weer alleen. Het was moeilijk, maar ze hadden elkaar. Weer gingen ze naar het weeshuis om te kijken of ze een nieuw kind konden adopteren, maar niemand was zoals Jonas. Toch wilden ze het wel met een nieuw kind proberen dat wel een beetje op Jonas leek. Het jongetje heette Huib. Maar Huib was ernstig ziek en stierf na een paar maanden, en weer waren Ewout en Tundra alleen. Het leek alsof de kannibaalse bruid weer had toegeslagen. Het leven was zo fragiel als een nachtvlinder.

Ewout keek naar buiten, en keek naar een bij gaande van bloem tot bloem. Ook zag hij wat vliegjes in een spinnenweb, en zelfs een vlinder. Ook hier zat een betekenis in. Ook dit kon omgedraaid worden. Tundra zat achter hem en had haar armen om hen heengeslagen. Hij miste Jonas en ook Huib, maar Tundra was zoveel dichterbij ineens om al die lege plekken op te vullen. Het leek alsof er in zijn binnenste broodjes werden belegd en opgewarmd. Het was een manier om dichter naar elkaar toe te groeien. Ewout had een brok in zijn keel. Ja, hij was echt depressief, maar Tundra was zijn lichtpuntje. 'Zoveel is er van ons gegeten,' zei Ewout, 'en nu eten wij elkaar door de liefde, als een weg uit deze woeste wereld.' Tundra knikte.

Midden in de nacht werd Ewout wakker van een droom. Hij droomde dat er een nachtvlinder op zijn hart zat. Hij miste Jonas en Huib zo, en brak in tranen uit. Ook Tundra werd wakker en troostte hem. Ze hield hem in zijn armen totdat hij rustig werd. 'Heus,' zei ze, 'eens zullen we alles terugkrijgen. Er is leven na de dood.'

And you will fly,

On the wings of today,

And you will be going back to remember yesterday,

And you will fly,

On the wings of love, today,

And you will be going back to remember yesterday,

Yes, you will fly high,

On the winds of love, today,

And you will be growing up to be free from yesterday

De Roodbil Stam

Henry ter Zand was een voetballer van het eerste team van zijn stad. Vaak kwam er een motorbende kijken, die de voetballers vaak uitscholden voor voetbroeders en ei-verkopers. Henry werd er altijd een beetje misselijk van. Op een dag besloot hij de motorbende eens te bezoeken. Hij had zich anders aangekleed zodat hij niet meer op zichzelf leek. Hij werd hartelijk ontvangen, en men leidde hem rond in het gebouw. Er waren wat oude mensen bij, misschien ouders van de motorrijders, en een vrouw die een soort bediende was deed het woord. Maar plotseling werd hij herkend door een van de motorrijders, en Henry moest maken dat hij weg kwam. Het uitschelden was sindsdien wel een stuk minder ineens, en op een dag werd Henry uitgenodigd om weer eens bij hen op bezoek te komen. De motorrijders hadden er spijt van dat ze hem zo rot hadden behandeld. Al gauw werd Henry goede vrienden met hen, wat ook de bedoeling was. Op een dag las een van de motorrijders voor uit een vreemd jongensboek. Het ging over de roodbil stam, een groep wilden die in de bossen leefden. De roodbil stam deed veel aan voetbal, maar er werden nogal wrede dingen gedaan met de verliezers. 'Het spijt ons, Henry,' zei de motorrijder, 'we hebben ons inderdaad nogal kinderachtig gedragen.'

Eric Rouwmeester heette een van de motorrijders, en had vroeger nog bij Henry in de klas gezeten. Eric knipoogde naar hem. Aan het einde van het voorlezen sprak Eric hem nog even persoonlijk aan. 'Heb je zin om een keer mee te gaan samen naar het bos ?' vroeg Eric. 'Dan kunnen we wat oude herinneringen ophalen.' Henry vond dat best. Een paar avonden later waren ze samen in het bos. Zo deden ze dat vroeger ook. 'Ja, eigenlijk raar,' zei Eric. 'We gingen beiden naar een andere school later, en het contact was verbroken, terwijl we toch altijd goede vrienden waren.' Henry knikte. In het bos kwamen ze een verwilderde vrouw tegen. Ze had wat rode verf achter op haar broek. 'Ja, verfschieten,' zei ze. Het bleek een spel te zijn.

Na een tijdje kwamen ze bij een ravijn aan. Ze hadden hier een goed uitzicht. 'Herinner je je Klaas nog ?' vroeg Eric. 'Heeft zichzelf stukgereden tegen een boom. En Ilse, ook dood.' Henry knikte. Ja, dat had hij ook gehoord. Hij was er kapot van. Klaas en Ilse waren ook goede vrienden van hem. 'Maar ja, dood is dood,' zei Eric. 'Je kunt ze niet terughalen.' Daar kwam de vrouw weer langs. Ditmaal had ze nog meer rode strepen op haar lichaam. 'Zo, je hebt het druk,' zei Eric.

'Ja,' zei de vrouw. 'Een feestje, maar een leuk feest.'

'Gelukkig,' zei Eric. Henry grinnikte. 'Hey, is dat Riet niet ?' zei Henry. 'Riet van de Kaars.'

'Ja, verhip, je hebt gelijk,' zei Eric. 'Hey, Riet.' Maar Riet was al weer verderop. 'Laten we er naartoe gaan,' zei Eric. Even later vonden ze haar. 'Hoe gaat het met je, Riet, ken je ons nog, Eric en Henry.'

'Het gaat goed, en met jullie ?' vroeg Riet. Ze deed een beetje afstandelijk ineens. Riet kon vroeger moeilijk meekomen op school en had vaak het gevoel dat ze er niet echt bijhoorde. Ze

ging vroegtijdig naar een andere school. Na een tijdje brak het ijs een beetje. 'Zeg hebben jullie zin om mee te gaan naar het feestje ? Het is mijn feestje,' zei Riet. Even later zaten ze bij haar thuis met de andere feestgangers. Ze had een groot huis. 'Blijven jullie slapen ?' vroeg ze.

Ach ja, waarom niet, dachten Eric en Henry. Er werd even wat gebeld, en al snel was het okay. Midden in de nacht stond Eric op en ging op zijn blote voeten naar buiten. Het was een huis in het bos. Hij vond het geweldig om alleen in de natuur te zijn. Na een tijdje lopen kwam hij bij een meer aan, deed zijn kleren uit en gleed in het water. Het water was een beetje koel, maar verder was het warm weer. Heerlijk vond hij dat, om in de vrije natuur te zwemmen, en helemaal alleen. Maar later merkte dat er ook een andere man en een vrouw aan het zwemmen waren, aan de overkant van het meer. Het waren mysterieuze mensen. Eric groette hen beleefd. 'Zo, wat doe jij zo laat hier,' vroeg de man. Eric vertelde dat hij niet kon slapen, en het fijn vond alleen in de natuur te zijn. 'En jullie ?' vroeg Eric.

'We hebben nergens om naartoe te gaan,' zei de vrouw. 'We hebben ons huis verloren, en nu leven we in de natuur.' Even later lieten ze hem het hol zien waarin ze woonden.

'Fantastisch,' zei Eric. 'Ik zou ook wel in zo'n hol willen wonen.' Maar ineens greep de man een pistool en richtte het op Eric. 'Meekomen,' zei hij. Eric werd ergens in een kooi gestopt gemaakt van takken en touw. 'Wat gaan jullie met me doen ?' vroeg Eric.

'Weten we nog niet,' zei de vrouw. Eric zag dat de vrouw rode vlekken op haar bil had. Toen lieten ze hem alleen. Na een paar uur was Eric nog steeds alleen, en begon te roepen. Na een tijdje sleurden de man en de vrouw de kooi naar het meer en duwden hem erin. Eric schreeuwde nog uit alle macht, maar niets hielp.

De vermissing van Eric kwam hard aan bij Henry. Ook Riet was er kapot van. Pas maanden later vonden ze hem, verdronken. Ook de man en de vrouw die het op hun geweten hadden werden gevonden. Het bleek dat ze onder in de grond nog meer vermiste personen vasthielden, maar die leefden nog steeds.

Henry keek naar Riet. Ze leek veel op de vrouw die het gedaan had. Ze bleken tweelingzussen te zijn. De man bleek lid te zijn van de motorbende.

Op een dag werd er weer uit het vreemde jongensboek voorgelezen. Het was een soort winterboek. De roodbil stam plantte zich op een vreemde manier voort. De vrouwen legden kleine eitjes die met hun voeten uitgebroed moesten worden, anders zou het vruchtje doodgaan. Zij die uit het ei kwamen waren piepklein, als kaboutertjes, en ze hadden nog steeds een lijmachtige gel over zich heen, het vlies-ei, wat later als ze opgegroeid waren verder uitgebroed moest worden, anders zouden ze doodgaan. Dit moest gedaan worden door hun moeder of door hun partner. In hun jonge jaren waren ze als varkens, maar naarmate ze ouder werden verloren ze die kwaliteiten. Het voedsel waarvan ze leefden was rode varkens. Hun vijanden : langbek krokodillen.

Henry begreep niet waarom er nu weer uit het jongensboek voortgelezen moest worden.

Onze kapitein is een jongen, zei de motorrijder. Hij heeft dit boek geschreven, en het is onze bijbel.

'En waar is die jongen ?' vroeg Henry.

'Vraag niets,' zei de motorrijder.

Henry besloot er niet meer naartoe te gaan. Maar toch keerde hij weer terug. Alsof iets zijn interesse had. Op een nacht werd Henry wakker. Er stond een jongetje voor hem in middeleeuwse koninklijke kleding. 'Ik ben het geheim van alle tijden, ik ben het poppetje waar alle paarden op rijden, waar alle rozen om strijden.'

'Wat kan ik voor je doen ?' vroeg Henry. Maar het jongetje was alweer verdwenen. De nacht erop was het jongetje erweer. Ditmaal had hij een boek bij zich. 'Dit is mijn bijbel,' zei hij. Op de kaft stond 'De Roodbil Stam' met een plaatje waarop wilden voetbalden. De bal was een leren zak die een beetje op een doodshoofd leek.

Weer vroeg Henry : 'Wat kan ik voor je doen.' Het jongetje gaf hem het boek en verdween. Henry begon direkt te lezen. Het was een boek over de middeleeuwen, over wrede praktijken, die uiteindelijk ophielden, maar ze waren nog steeds in de lucht, en kwamen verkleed als andere dingen.

Een man werd wakker van een lange vreemde droom. Hij had de dag ervoor naar een oorlogsfilm gekeken, en daarna naar een voetbalwedstrijd. Hij zuchtte diep, en viel weer in slaap. Hij droomde toen over een dames voetbal team waar alle vrouwen rode strepen op hun achterste hadden, terwijl sommige grote rode vlekken hadden, en sommigen gewoon rode broekjes. Honden renden over het veld, die toen in zwarte panters veranderden. En toen stond het veld in brand. De man was schoolmeester, en de volgende dag toen hij een vrouwlijke collega tegenkwam bemerkte hij dat er rode vlekken op haar broek zaten, die op lipstift leken. De man wreef in zijn ogen. 'Ben ik nu gek ?' dacht hij bij zichzelf. Maar toen ze zich omdraaide had ze het gezicht van een hond. De man wist dat hij nog steeds sliep. Het leek wel alsof hij niet meer kon wakker worden, en de dromen werden steeds langer en langer. Hij herinnerde dat hij de dag ervoor bij de t.v. en bij de voetbalwedstrijd veel te veel had gedronken. Of hadden ze soms iets in zijn glas gestopt ?

Een man las een vreemd verhaal in een magazine. Het was een soort strip, ook met veel plaatjes, en dan weer tekst. Het was in een wasserette. Hij gooide de magazine opzij. Greep zijn spullen en liep naar buiten. Het werk was gedaan. Hij gleed uit over een bananeschil en viel terwijl alles op de stoep lag. Sommige mensen hielpen hem. Zijn wasmachine deed het niet meer. De was was weer vuil, maar iemand anders bood hem aan de was te doen bij haar thuis. Het was een aardige vrouw. De vrouw van de man was zwanger. Hij wilde weer op tijd thuis zijn, maar het was zo gezellig bij de vrouw dat hij wat langer bleef, en ze besloten vrienden te blijven. Hij vertelde haar over het vreemde verhaal wat hij in de magazine had gelezen. 'Nee, niet gelezen,' zei de vrouw.

Een man zat bij de psychiater. Dit was het verhaal wat hij eruit floepte. 'Okay,' zei de psychiater, 'en wat is de betekenis ?'

Een krant werd gedrukt met dit vreemde verhaal. Iemand werd wakker en had dit gedroomd, iemand las dit. Een grote octopus hing over een stad, en slikte de stad op in zijn geheel. Iemand rende uit het ziekenhuis. Ze hadden hem een injectie gegeven, maar hij was erdoor aan het hallucineren. het was alsof de werkelijkheid nu in duizenden stukjes voor hem lag, in brokken. Iemand was geraakt door een giftige pijl van een wilde stam, de roodbil stam. De man was aan het hallucineren en werd in een kooi gezet. Al snel raakte hij uitgehongerd. Spinnen kropen over hem heen.

Iemand zat een winterboek voor volwassenen te lezen. Dit was wel het vreemdste winterboek wat hij ooit had gelezen. En het volgende verhaal was over de idioten van Mars. De idioten waren een echt ras, wilde reuzen, die in de vreemde jungles van Mars leefden. Ja, idioot was het, maar de plaatjes waren prachtig. Het sprak echt tot de verbeelding. De idioten van Mars waren vaak kaal met hanekammen. Het verhaal daarna ging over slangen, en daarna was er een verhaal wat meer op science fiction leek. De man bracht het boek terug naar de bibliotheek, en ging naar de jeugdafdeling om daar een paar winterboeken te lenen. Tot zijn grote verbazing ging het weer over de roodbil stam. Die nacht had hij een droom over een stam waarvan de vrouwen rood geverfde billen hadden. Hij vertelde het aan zijn vrouw en vroeg wat het voor betekenis kon hebben. 'Dat je teveel leest,' zei zijn vrouw. En ze had gelijk, want hij was een echte boekenwurm. 'Als je 's nachts droomt van hetgeen je hebt gelezen, dan heb je gewoon teveel gelezen, en hetzelfde geldt voor t.v.,' zei ze.

'Maar wat kan ik dan doen ?' vroeg de man. 'Heb jij een beter idee ?'

'Neem mij eens wat vaker uit,' zei de vrouw. 'Ik heb het idee dat je getrouwd bent met de boeken in plaats van mij.'

Zo gezegd zo gedaan. De man nam zijn vrouw die dag direkt mee naar het bos om een wandeling te maken. Maar de man werd al snel onwel, en ze keerden om. 'Ik kan gewoon niet zonder mijn boeken,' zei de man. Ze probeerden nog een paar dingen, maar uiteindelijk legde de vrouw zich er maar bij neer.

Een man werd wakker van een droom, en daar een andere man. Ze hadden allemaal hetzelfde gedroomd, alsof er wilde geesten in de lucht waren. Zwarte honden blaften op de straat. Diep in het bos stapte een dwerg lachend zijn huisje binnen en trok de deur achter zich dicht. Er hingen wat klokken van wezens die in elkaar waren gegroeid en die zich voedden met elkaars inhoud. De dwerg roerde wat in een potje. 'Zombies zijn het,' zei de dwerg. 'Ze kunnen niet met en niet zonder elkaar, want ze zitten aan elkaar vast door het hart. Ja, door dit middeltje zullen ze eindelijk los van elkaar kunnen komen, maar vergeten doen ze elkaar nooit.'

Einde

De Indiaanse Nachten

Een oude indiaanse man vond een schoen vlakbij het ravijn. Hij wierp de schoen in het ravijn, en liep verder langs de ravijn, terwijl hij soms naar de overkant keek. Een boze geest had gedreigd tot de oude man dat hij al het land aan zijn kant van het ravijn zou laten verdwijnen, zodat alles wat erop zou leven in het ravijn zou verdwijnen. De boze geest hield zijn hand over het gezicht van de oude man, terwijl hij achter de oude man stond. De hand was vlammend. Even leek het alsof de oude man blind was geworden. De hand brandde en deed hem pijn. De oude man zakte door zijn knieen en ging op de grond zitten. Hij probeerde naar de overkant van het ravijn te kijken, maar hij zag niets meer. 'Ik zal je één kans geven,' zei de boze geest. 'Elke nacht moet je een sprookje bedenken, en elke nacht dat je er in slaagt mij een sprookje te vertellen, zal ik je een stuk van een brug geven, en moet je op het stuk blijven tot de volgende nacht om een nieuw stuk erbij te krijgen. Als je er op een nacht niet in slaagt mij een sprookje te vertellen, dan zal de brug instorten. Als de brug helemaal tot de andere kant is gekomen door de sprookjes, dan zal een ieder die over de brug tot de andere kant van het ravijn komt gespaard worden.'

'Wat is er aan de andere kant van het ravijn ?' vroeg de man.

'Een land genaamd Sinsabijne, het land van de indiaanse vlieg,' sprak de boze geest.

'Ik kan niets meer zien,' sprak de oude indiaanse man. 'Hoe kan ik ooit in dat land komen ?'

'Elke keer als je er in slaagt een sprookje te vertellen 's nachts, zal ik je iets meer van je zicht teruggeven,' sprak de boze geest.

'Waarom wil je onze kant van het ravijn vernietigen en ons in het ravijn laten verdwijnen ?' vroeg de oude indiaanse man.

'Ik wil het niet,' sprak de boze geest. 'Eens werd ik verbannen uit Sinsabijne, het land van de indiaanse vlieg. Ik was vals beschuldigd, en ik werd betoverd in een boze geest. Ik zou alleen mogen terugkomen als ik het land aan deze kant van het ravijn zou vernietigen of een sprookjesbrug zou bouwen over het ravijn.'

De oude indiaanse man keek de boze geest met grote ogen aan, terwijl hij weer een klein beetje kon zien. 'Wie bent u dan ?' vroeg hij.

'Ik ben de prins van Sinsabijne,' sprak de boze geest. 'Ik ben onder een grote vloek. Als de keten van de nachtsprookjes verbroken wordt door één nacht over te slaan, dan zal de brug instorten, en het land aan deze kant van het ravijn ten onder gaan.'

De oude indiaanse man schudde zijn hoofd. Het was inmiddels nacht geworden, en de man begon te vertellen. Aan het einde van de laatste nacht en het laatste sprookje lag er een prachtige brug over het ravijn, en konden ze beiden het land Sinsabijne binnengaan. De betovering was verbroken, en de prins van Sinsabijne stond voor de oude indiaanse man. Overal vlogen prachtige indiaanse vliegen om hen heen. Ze gingen over de brug om de

mensen aan de andere kant van het ravijn te waarschuwen en te roepen, om hen ook over de sprookjesbrug van de indiaanse nachten te laten komen.

Maar een heleboel mensen luisterden niet. De sprookjesbrug begon langzaam in het ravijn te zakken. Ook het land waar de oude indiaanse man vandaan kwam begon steeds meer weg te zinken. Nu wilden de mensen wel over de brug rennen, maar ze begonnen steeds meer terug te glijden. De prins van Sinsabijne schudde zijn hoofd. De oude indiaanse man vroeg de prins wat er met zijn sprookjes zou gebeuren.

'Ik weet wel wat,' zei de prins, en klapte in zijn handen. Direct begonnen de brokstukken van de sprookjes uit het ravijn omhoog te komen. Ze waren zo glad dat niemand zich er aan vast kon houden, terwijl ze dat wel probeerden. Weer klapte de prins in zijn handen, en op het Sinsabijnse land begonnen de brokstukken een prachtig paleis te vormen.

'Hier kunnen wij wonen, en allen die de sprookjes hebben liefgehad,' sprak de prins. De oude indiaanse man glimlachte, en ze leefden nog lang en gelukkig.

De Wonderlijke Boekenkamer van

Oom Benno

Hoofdstuk 1. Ziek

Bertram had een boze tante en een vreemde oom. Ze hielden hem opgesloten in een kamer. Hij was altijd ziek, en mocht nooit uit zijn kamer. Zijn eten werd gebracht. Hij mocht dus ook niet naar buiten, maar dat zou hij waarschijnlijk ook niet kunnen, omdat hij te ziek was. Zijn boze tante was de rode heks, en zijn vreemde oom was oom Benno, ook een heks, en een tovenaar. Oom Benno had een boekenkamer, waar een heleboel indianenboeken stonden. Ook stonden er vele andere soorten boeken. Bertram mocht daar beslist niet komen. De goudvis had gezegd dat Bertram in de boeken de sleutel tot zijn ontsnapping kon vinden.

Op een nacht hadden zijn oom en tante vergeten zijn deur op slot te doen. Stilletjes sloop Bertram uit zijn kamer, en liep de boekenkamer van oom Benno in. Bertram griste direct een indianenboek uit de boekenkast. En toen nog één, en toen nog één, en liep toen snel naar zijn kamer terug. 'Ik moet ze maar goed verborgen houden,' zei Bertram tegen zichzelf, en ze alleen 's nachts lezen wanneer oom en tante slapen. Het was nu 's nachts, dus Bertram begon direct te lezen.

'Horlepiep,' zei Bertram tegen zichzelf, wat gebeurt er nu ? Ik ben helemaal duizelig ineens. Hij had de eerste bladzijde van een indianenboek opengeslagen, en werd helemaal warm van binnen. De letters duizelden voor zijn ogen. 'Hoofdstuk één,' las hij. Hij hoorde wat schoten, en gezwiep van een zweep of lasso. 'Hoe kan dat ?' vroeg hij zichzelf af. Hij klapte het boek dicht, maar het was al te laat. Toen hij opkeek was hij in een woestijn, een prairie. Twee cowboys stonden voor hem. 'Wat moet dat daar ?' zeiden ze. Toen ineens vielen ze beiden naar voren. Ze hadden pijlen in hun rug. Een groep indianen op paarden namen Bertram mee. In het kamp merkte Bertram dat hij vastgebonden was. Ze brachten hem naar een paal, waar hij aan vastgemaakt werd.

'Laat me los,' zei Bertram. 'Ik ben ziek.'

'Niks mee te maken,' zeiden de indianen.

'Wat gaan jullie met me doen ?' vroeg Bertram.

'Dat zul je nog wel zien,' zeiden ze.

Bertram begon te huilen. Zijn oom en tante hadden hem weleens verteld wat indianen met hun gevangenen doen. Hij werd naar een grote ketel gebracht even later. 'Gaan jullie me opeten ?' huilde Bertram. 'Nee,' zeiden de indianen. 'Jij moet vanaf nu voor ons koken.'

'Maar ik ben daar veel te ziek voor,' zei Bertram.

'Geeft niks,' zeiden de indianen. 'Daar krijg je wel medicijnen voor.'

Ze gaven hem een soort groene dropjes, en na een tijdje voelde Bertram zich veel beter.

'Ik houd van jullie,' zei Bertram. 'Jullie hebben mij beter gemaakt.'

'Niks mee te maken,' zeiden de indianen boos. 'Je bent onze slaaf. Je moet voor ons koken nu.'

'Mij best,' zei Bertram, die allang blij was dat ze hem beter hadden gemaakt. 'Ik ben niet ziek meer !' juichte Bertram. 'Stil houden, jongen,' zei een wat oudere indiaanse vrouw.

Bertram roerde in de pan. Hij moest soep maken. Ze legden hem uit wat hij allemaal in de pan moest stoppen. Veel kruiden, en allerlei soorten vruchtjes.

De soep was heel lekker.

'Nu moet je weer terug,' zeiden de indianen.

'Wat ?' zei Bertram teleurgesteld. 'Ik wil niet meer terug naar mijn oom en tante. Ze houden me opgesloten.

'Niets mee te maken,' zeiden de indianen. 'We kunnen je hier niet houden.'

'Alsjeblieft,' smeekte Bertram, 'ik zal alles doen wat jullie willen.'

'Nee, jongen,' zei een wat oudere indiaanse vrouw. 'Je moet terug.'

Bertram begon te huilen. Trillend hield hij het boek in zijn handen, en merkte dat hij weer in zijn kamer was. Ook voelde hij zich weer ziek.

Hoofdstuk 2. De Ontsnapping

Bertram legde de boeken diep onder zijn bed, onder een doek, en ging slapen. De volgende ochtend was hij vroeg wakker. Hij deed de gordijnen open, maar het licht deed zoveel pijn aan zijn ogen dat hij de gordijnen weer dichtdeed. Oom en tante sliepen nog, dus hij kon nog wel even lezen. Hij pakte een ander indianenboek, sloeg het open, en werd weer duizelig. Snel bevond hij zich in een oerwoud. Wilde beesten stonden om hem heen. Hij was wel even bang. Toen hoorde hij schoten. De beesten renden weg, en al snel stond er een indiaan met een geweer voor hem.

'Meekomen jij,' zei de indiaan. Bertram liep mee met de indiaan, die hem naar het kamp bracht. Langs het kamp was een rivier met bootjes. 'Jij bent wie ?' vroeg de indiaan.

'Bertram,' zei hij.

'Oh, ah,' zei de indiaan. 'Ik jouw naam leuk vinden.'

'Haha,' zei Bertram.

'Waarom jongen zij hier zijn ?' vroeg de indiaan.

Toen legde Bertram het uit aan de indiaan. De indiaan begreep er niets van.

'Ik heb tent voor jou,' zei de indiaan. Hij nam Bertram mee naar een lege indianentent. 'Hier mag jij wonen,' zei de indiaan.

'Dank je wel,' zei Bertram. 'Dat is erg aardig van u.'

's Nachts komen de spoken,' zei de indiaan, 'de geesten van de voorouders.'

'Gezellig,' zei Bertram.

'Nee,' zei de indiaan. 'Niet gezellig. Zij zijn boos, altijd boos.'

'En ik ben altijd ziek,' zei Bertram.

'Ik zal de spoken zeggen, jij altijd ziek zijn,' zei de indiaan.

Maar ineens werd hij wild door mekaar geschud door oom Benno. 'Heb jij aan mijn indianen-boeken gezeten ?' brult oom Benno woest.

'Waar komt die man vandaan ?' vraagt de indiaan.

'Heb ik jou iets gevraagd, snotaap ?' brult oom Benno. 'Die jongen moet meekomen, meekomen, nu !'

De indiaan grijpt zijn hakbijl en slaat oom Benno tegen de grond met de achterkant. 'Zo, wijsneus,' zegt de indiaan. 'Jij mij niet beledigen, en van jongen afblijven.' Oom Benno wordt vastgebonden, en naar een paal gesleept. 'Ziezo, die kan mij niet meer beledigen,' zei de indiaan.

Toen de andere indianen terugkwamen vroegen ze : 'Wat moet die dikke man hier ?'

'Het is een uilskuiken,' zei de indiaan. 'Hij heeft ons beledigd, en wilde jongen roven.'

'Wie is die jongen ?' vroegen ze.

'Goed kijken,' zei de indiaan. 'Hij is de machtige zonnedroom.'

De indianen bogen voor Bertram neer. Bertram begon te lachen.

'Maak me onmiddellijk los, Bertram !' brulde oom Benno.

Maar Bertram deed net alsof hij hem niet hoorde. Toen het nacht geworden was brulde oom Benno de hele nacht door. De volgende dag zei de indiaan dat hij naar het gevangenen-kamp moest. 'Wat gaan jullie met hem doen ?' vroeg Bertram.

'Weten we nog niet,' zei de indiaan. Toen oom Benno was afgevoerd was het eindelijk rustig.

Een paar dagen later moest Bertram weer terug. Ze konden hem niet te lang houden. Maar ze wilden oom Benno houden, ook om Bertram een dienst te bewijzen. Bertram knipperde even met zijn ogen, en was weer in zijn eigen kamer, starende naar het boek. Bertram had honger, maar er was geen voedsel op zijn kamer. Hij liep naar de deur en merkte dat de deur nog steeds open was. Tante riep hem. 'Bertram, kom naar mijn slaapkamer. Ik ben ziek, en ik weet niet waar je oom is.'

Bertram liep direct haar kamer binnen. Het was hier heel donker. Hij zag tante in haar bed liggen. 'Jongen, je bent nu oud genoeg geworden om je kamer uit te kunnen,' zei tante. 'Kun je wat voor je oude tante klaarmaken. Ik voel me zo zwak.'

'Natuurlijk tante,' zei Bertram.

Hij liep naar beneden de keuken in, en maakte wat brood voor haar met thee en een eitje. Toen bracht hij het boven. 'Dank je wel, lieverd,' zei tante. 'Ga nu maar doen waar je zin in hebt.'

Bertram ging direct naar de boekenkamer. De goudvis had gelijk gehad. In de boeken had hij de sleutel tot zijn ontsnapping gevonden.

De Plaag van Elzega

In het stadje Elzega was een plaag van vliegende vissen die de hoofden van de burgers teisterden. De heksenmeester had een zwart zaad waarmee hij vissen kon laten vliegen, en hij gaf hen de naarste opdrachten. Zo zaaide hij een boel tragedie en hopeloosheid. De vissen waren gevreesd, en als ze dan weer vertrokken was het leed vaak al geschied, of begon toen pas echt.

Iedereen was met zijn handen in het haar. Ook de kleine Jog vond het vervelend. Hij was vastbesloten hier iets aan te doen, en op een dag stapte hij naar de burgemeester. Jog belde aan, en de dienstmaagd van de burgemeester deed bezorgd open. 'Is er wat gebeurd, kleine ?'

'Nee,' zei Jog, 'ik wil gewoon de burgemeester spreken.' Na een tijdje wachten kon de kleine Jog bij de burgemeester naar binnen in zijn kamer.

'Zo, kleine jongen, dus jij wilt de stad redden van dit boze gespuis, huh ?' zei de burgemeester nadat Jog hem het verhaal had verteld. 'En hoe zou jij dat willen doen, kleine man ?'

'Geef me even de tijd, burgemeester,' zei de jongen. 'Ik kan vast wel iets bedenken.'

'Toch wel vreemd, jongen, dat je hier komt zonder ook maar enig idee te hebben, want meestal zijn degenen die hier komen al voorbereid met een idee of plan. Maar in ieder geval is het erg dapper van je,' zei de burgemeester.

Met de dagen leek het steeds erger te worden. De vissen waren erg bloeddorstig, en maakten velen ziek. Ook maakten ze angstaanjagende geluiden, waardoor mensen 's nachts niet konden slapen.

Het waaide hard buiten. De kerkklokken bleven maar luiden. Jog staarde voor zich uit, vastbesloten een plan te bedenken. 'Jongen, geef de moed maar op,' zei zijn moeder telkens. 'Hier is geen kruid tegen opgewassen.' Ze probeerden mensen gek te maken met hun gekrijs. In het stadje werden ze inmiddels overal de schuld voor gegeven. Ook zouden ze kinderen gekke en nare versjes laten zingen.

Toen Jog achttien was had hij ineens een plan. Hij zou naar het boze berkenbos gaan, op zoek naar de heksenmeester die dit allemaal op zijn geweten had.

Na lang lopen kwam hij bij een huisje. Hij ging naar binnen, en zag de heksenmeester

achter een tafeltje zitten. 'Zeg kerel,' zei Jog, 'je boze spelletjes zijn uit. Jij bent de schuldige, en ik ben de wraakengel.'

'Zo zo,' zei de heksenmeester. 'Praatjes, hè, je bent er anders nog niet.' De heksenmeester stond op, en een vuurvlam kwam van zijn hand die regelrecht op Jog afvloog. Jog kon nog net bukken. Maar toen kwamen er twee vliegende vissen binnenvliegen, die met groot gekrijs Jog grepen en met hem wegvlogen. Ze brachten hem op een heel hoog nest in de bergen, waar het heel koud was.

'Je moet voor heksenmeester Troegadoer verschijnen,' zei één van de vliegende vissen.

Na hem ernstig toegetakeld te hebben, brachten ze hem bloedend naar een dichtbijzijnd kasteel in het bos. Heksenmeester Troegadoer zat binnenin op een troon. 'Laat deze lamlendeling binnenkomen !' riep de heksenmeester. 'Hij heeft mijn broer bedreigd. Nu is hij van mij.' De heksenmeester begon te lachen.

'Maar jullie hebben Elzega getergd met jullie vliegende vissen !' riep Jog.

De vliegende vissen brachten hem tot vlak voor de troon, en lieten hem toen neervallen. Kreunend en hijgend stond Jog moeizaam op. Hij was diep verwond.

'Elzega is ons terrein,' zei Troegadoer. 'Jullie hadden nooit dat stadje moeten bouwen op natuur gebied.'

'Daar kunnen wij niets aan doen,' riep Jog boos, 'dat hebben onze voorouders gedaan, en ze zeiden dat het een open vlakte was. Ze hebben geen bomen ervoor omgekapt, of ander natuurgebied.'

'Leugens,' zei Troegadoer, 'ze hebben een heel stuk bos ervoor weggekapt. Als je leven je lief is, vertrek uit de stad. De stad zal vernietigd worden.'

'Mijn voorouders moesten wel ergens leven. Ze hebben niets verkeerds gedaan,' zei Jog.

'Dat maken ze je maar wijs,' zei Troegadoer. 'Spoedig zal de stad vergaan, en er is niks wat je daaraan kunt doen.'

Jog probeerde zich los te rukken uit de greep die de vliegende vissen op hem hadden. Ze stonken verschrikkelijk. Hij voelde hun hete adem in zijn nek. Ze hadden bijna een zwarte huid.

Ze spoten hun inktgas in hem, terwijl hun nagels als naalden diep in zijn huid gingen. Hij werd plotseling depressief en duizelig. Toen viel hij op de grond. Troegadoer begon te lachen.

Jog wordt dan wakker na een tijdje in een langwerpige zaal op een bed, waar nog veel meer mensen op bedden liggen.

Een klein meisje komt aangelopen met lang, zwart haar. 'Wij zullen je bewerken met het zwarte zaad,' zei het meisje. 'Ook jij zal in een vliegende vis veranderen. We kunnen je goed gebruiken.'

'Nee !' gilde Jog, maar al snel injecteerde het meisje hem, en hij viel weer in een diepe slaap. Hij werd in een capsule gestopt en ging diep in de grond. Hij werd wakker toen ze de boom van het zwarte zaad hadden bereikt, diep onder de grond. Er zaten vleermuizen in deze boom. Hij moest van het zaad eten. Hij werd in een rivier geworpen en ging kopje onder. Hij zwom naar boven, en merkte dat hij in de zee was. Ook merkte hij dat hij een vis was geworden. Hij zag meerdere vissen om zich heen, en ze stegen op uit het water, om te vliegen.

Ook hij merkte dat hij kon vliegen. Zijn huid was bijna zwart. Hij bevond zich in een zaal met vele andere vliegende vissen. Ze keken allemaal richting een bol, waarop een vogelachtige verschijning zat met grote vleugels. Toen veranderde de verschijning in een koning. Het was de koning van de vliegende vissen.

Plotseling merkte Jog dat hij zijn eigen lichaam weer terughad. Hij rende door een tunnel, zoekende naar de uitgang. 'Nee, ik wil dit niet !' riep hij. Hij ramde met zijn vuisten op glas. Hij had het gevoel dat hij verdronk. Hij kon niet ademen. 'Is er dan niemand om me te helpen !' riep hij in wanhoop.

'Er is iets mis,' zei het kleine meisje. 'We kunnen hem niet veranderen in een vliegende vis. Zijn hart is te sterk.'

Plotseling voelde Jog dat hij buiten lag op de grond, vlak voor het kasteel. Zo snel als hij kon rende hij terug naar het stadje Elzega. Hij was door deze ervaring zo getraumatiseerd dat hij er nooit meer over durfde te spreken.

De Trollenspiegel

Als iemand in de trollenspiegel keek, viel hij direkt dood neer en werd zijn ziel door de spiegel heengetrokken om hem in het land der trollen te laten werken. Het was een groensoortig zaad waardoor de zielen dan geketend werden, een zaad dat vanuit de ziel een gevoelige plek liet voortgroeien als een trollenspiegel. Zo kon niemand de ziel bevrijden zonder zelf ook een slachtoffer van de trollenspiegel te worden.

De trollen waren een wreed volk zonder enige genade. En als er dan genade was, dan zat er altijd wel een addertje onder het gras. Zo waren velen blij en verheugd als de trollen hen vrijlieten, maar dan werden ze al snel gegrepen door een groen vuur waardoor ze nog verschrikkelijker gebonden werden. Nee, een trol liet zijn gevangene nooit vrij. Een trol maakte alleen zijn slachtoffers klaar voor nog grotere wreedheden. Hierin had de trol altijd veel plezier.

Er was geen volk zo wreed als het volk der trollen. Ze kenden geen genade. Hun genade was alleen een nog grotere wreedheid. Dit maakte hen berucht. Ja, de trollen waren zeer gevreesd. Veel plezier hadden ze erin als hopeloze zielen voor hun aanwezigheid trilden. Want in de handen te vallen van een trol, was te komen in een fuik waaruit geen ontsnapping mogelijk was, alleen het uitzicht op een steeds groeiende ellende. De gevangene had alleen het uitzicht op ongekend wrede martelingen, die alleen maar wreder en wreder zouden worden, tot groot plezier van de trollen. En zolang je nog niet door hen gepakt was, kon je erop wachten dat ze op een dag voor je deur zouden staan, want een trol geeft nooit op. Hij zou het telkens weer opnieuw proberen door de ene na de andere valstrik, totdat je een keer op een onbedachtzaam moment zou toehappen, als het begin van een ritje dat steeds duisterder zou worden.

Ze hadden er groot plezier in om alles langzaam op te bouwen, om de spanning en angst zo groot mogelijk te maken, en om maar zoveel mogelijk valse hoop en zekerheid te schenken, zodat de klap daarna extra hard zou aankomen. Ja, het waren misbaksels, en zij woonden in de trollenspiegels en hun slachtoffers. Telkens weer spanden zij hun netten en webben om hun geluk te beproeven. Nee, er was geen groter duivels kwaad dan de trollenspiegel. Het was een ras erger dan demonen en vampieren. Als zij in de buurt waren dan gilden de geesten, spoken en duivelen het uit. Er was niets vergeleken met de trollen. Eens hadden zij de trollenspiegel ontworpen, en sindsdien groeide hun macht.

En allen die nog nooit in de trollenspiegel hadden gekeken, en dachten dat het zo’n vaart niet zou lopen, en dat het gewoon iets onschuldigs was, zouden zich eens op een dag ook bewust zijn .... van het kwaad van de trollenspiegel.

Einde

Het Paarse Complot

Junos was het zoontje van een oude hertog in Nunspeet. Ze woonden in het kasteel dichtbij de molen. Junos had geen broertjes of zusjes, en zijn moeder was lang geleden overleden. Wel had Junos een stiefmoeder, maar zij was vaak weg. Op een dag moest Junos boodschappen doen voor zijn stiefmoeder. Hij moest daarvoor naar het dorp fietsen, en ook naar een zaak met spiegels gaan. Zijn stiefmoeder wilde een paarse spiegel voor in haar slaapkamer. Onderweg kwam Junos een paar kwajongens tegen. 'Zeg, looshelm, waar ga jij met die spiegel naartoe ?' riepen ze. En met hun brommers kwamen ze achter hem aan. Al snel hadden ze de spiegel te pakken en wierpen het op de straat.

Thuisgekomen wachtte Junos niet erg veel begrip op. Zijn stiefmoeder was razend. 'Die spiegels zijn duur, Junos, en je had een tas moeten vragen aan de zaak waar je die spiegel gekocht hebt. Dan konden die jongens hem niet zien.' Ook zijn vader vond het erg dom van Junos. 'Junos, je had een andere weg moeten inslaan, want je weet dat daar altijd die jongens met hun brommers staan. Ze doen van alles om mensen het leven zuur te maken.' Junos moest de volgende dag naar de zaak terug om van zijn eigen geld een nieuwe paarse spiegel te halen. Maar de baas van de spiegelzaak kreeg het al snel door, en al gauw vertelde Junos hem het verhaal. 'Weet je wat,' zei hij, 'wij brengen de spiegel wel even met de auto van de zaak langs. En natuurlijk hoef je daar niets voor te betalen, want jij kon er per slot van rekening niks aan doen dat die andere spiegel kapotging. En voor de schrik mag je een extra dure uitzoeken, eentje met parfumspuiten en met een speeldoos erin. Dat zal je moeder prachtig vinden.'

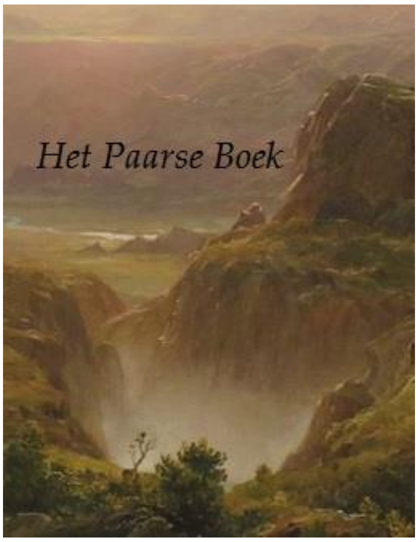
'Het is mijn moeder niet,' zei Junos, 'het is mijn stiefmoeder, en als ik er eentje uit mag kiezen, dan wil ik de allergoedkoopste.' De baas keek een beetje beteuterd. 'Maar mag je haar dan niet ?' vroeg hij. 'Niet echt,' zij Junos, 'want sinds zij er is krijg ik altijd overal de schuld van.' De baas van de spiegelzaak keek erg bedenkelijk. 'Ik denk juist dat je je stiefmoeder en je vader moet opvrolijken, want ze zullen het wel erg moeilijk hebben als ze zo tegen je doen,' zei hij voorzichtig. 'Misschien hebt u gelijk,' zei Junos. 'Laten we het dan maar doen.'

En zo gebeurde het. De bijzondere spiegel werd in de bestelbus van de zaak naar het kasteel gebracht. De oude hertog en zijn vrouw waren er erg blij mee. En even leek het erg goed te gaan in het gezin. Maar na een tijdje begon de stiefmoeder weer erg te klagen naar Junos en hem van veel dingen de schuld te geven. 'Mamma,' zei Junos, 'is er soms iets met de spiegel gebeurd ?' De stiefmoeder was erg verrast omdat Junos haar voor het eerst 'mamma' had genoemd. 'Ja,' zei ze heel zacht, terwijl haar gezicht een beetje vertrok. 'Ik durfte het je eigenlijk niet zo goed te zeggen, maar de speeldoos springt aan op de meest vreemde momenten, zelfs als we slapen, en de parfumspuiten geven veel te veel parfum af.' Maar daar wist Junos wel wat op. Ze zouden iemand van de spiegelzaak ervoor laten komen. Na een tijdje werd er aangebeld. Het was de baas van de spiegelzaak. Al snel zag hij wat er aan de hand was. Het mechanisme van de spiegel was stuk. 'Ik kan zien dat de spiegel veel gebruikt

werd, u was er zeker erg blij mee,' zei de baas van de spiegelzaak. De stiefmoeder knikte. 'Nou,' zei de baas. 'Ik heb voor u een nieuwe paarse spiegel meegebracht. Het is hetzelfde model, maar er zitten ook kleine lampjes bij in allerlei kleuren.' De stiefmoeder was erg verrast.

En weer scheen het een tijdje erg goed te gaan in het gezin van de oude hertog. Maar op een dag hoorde Junos iets stukspringen. Hij rende naar de kamer van zijn stiefmoeder, en zag haar daar in tranen zitten terwijl de spiegel kapot op de grond lag. 'Dat stomme ding maakt me gek,' zei de stiefmoeder. 'De lichtjes knipperen de hele tijd, ook nadat ik ze heb uitgezet. Ze springen gewoon weer aan. Ik word er ziek van.' Huilend viel ze Junos in de armen. Dat was voor de eerste keer dat ze hem omhelste. Junos kreeg er een brok van in z'n keel. 'Mamma, ik zal snel de spiegelzaak wel weer bellen. Ik weet zeker dat de baas ons nu een nog betere zal geven.' Maar de stiefmoeder huilde : 'Nee, Junos, ik wil nooit geen spiegel meer op m'n kamer zien. Het is afgelopen ermee.' En sindsdien was Junos z'n stiefmoeder altijd het zonnetje in huis. Ze was zichtbaar opgelucht toen de spiegel weg was, en ze zou er nooit meer één in haar kamer neerzetten ... nooit meer.

Na een tijdje kwam Junos nog eens terug bij de spiegelzaak om te vertellen wat er gebeurd was. De baas van de spiegelzaak was zichtbaar blij. 'Ach, Junos, weet je,' zei hij, 'die spiegels zijn zo gemaakt. De geschiedenis heeft wel bewezen dat zulke spiegels heel opvoedkundig zijn, en veel problemen in gezinnen voorkomen en wegnemen. Ze zijn gemaakt door een speciale fabrikant.' En toen pakte de baas weer zo'n paarse spiegel, en draaide de onderkant boven. Daar zat een klein stickertje waar hij op wees. 'Zie, hier staat het,' zei hij : 'het paarse complot.' Junos glimlachte, en na nog even met de baas van de spiegelzaak door te praten ging hij fluitend naar huis.


Het Paarse Boek

HET PAARSE BOEK

COAB 2018

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Het Evangelie van het

Paarse Boek

Ik kwam haar tegen op de kermis.

Ze deed me aan Mallemoe denken.

Ze likte aan haar ijsje en staarde mij aan.

"Kun je mij een boek voorlezen ?' vroeg ze.

"Waarom ?" vroeg ik. "Kun je zelf niet lezen ?"

"Het is in een taal die ik niet versta," zei het meisje.

"Wat is het voor boek ?" vroeg ik.

"Kom met me mee naar huis, dan laat ik het je zien," zei ze.

Ik liep met haar mee, en we waren na een tijdje bij haar achtertuin aangekomen, en we gingen daar door de achterdeur naar binnen. We gingen helemaal naar het zolder waar zij haar kamer had, en daar liet ze mij het vreemde boek zien. Het boek was paars met zwarte tekens, vreemde tekens, die ik niet begreep.

"Hoe kom je eraan ?" vroeg ik.

"Gevonden," zei ze.

"Waar ?" vroeg ik.

"In de achtertuin," sprak ze.

"Hoe zou het daar gekomen zijn ?" vroeg ik.

Ze haalde haar schouders op. "Geen idee," sprak ze.

Ze gaf het boek aan mij, en ik begon erdoor te bladeren. Boven de tekens stonden wel plaatjes.

"Ik denk dat het hieroglyphen zijn. De plaatjes vertellen een verhaal," zei ik.

"Kun je het me vertellen ?" vroeg ze.

"Ik zal het proberen," zei ik, en begon bij elk plaatje wat uitleg te geven. Zo probeerde ik er een verhaal van te maken, plaatje voor plaatje.

"Wat als het een andere betekenis heeft ?" vroeg ze ineens.

Ik gaf het boek aan haar. "Probeer het nu zelf eens ?" zei ik.

Ze begon toen zelf een uitleg aan de plaatjes te geven, en vertelde een heel ander verhaal dan ik had gedaan. "Je hebt talent," zei ik. "Zullen we weer terug gaan naar de kermis ?"

"Nee," zei ze. "Ik wil dat je hier blijft."

"Waarom ?" vroeg ik.

Ze zuchtte. "Moet ik dat allemaal uit gaan leggen ?" vroeg ze.

"Eigenlijk wel," zei ik. "Je moet wel met een goede reden komen natuurlijk."

"Heb je nog tijd ?" vroeg ze.

"Ik heb nog wel even," zei ik.

Ze ging op haar bed liggen. "Droom je weleens dat je kan vliegen ?" vroeg ze.

"Eigenlijk nooit," zei ik.

"Ik laat je niet meer gaan," sprak ze.

Ik gaf haar een duw. "Ik moet gaan," zei ik.

Maar ze ging weer voor me staan. Weer duwde ik haar.

Ik ging de trap af. Gelukkig volgde ze me niet. Ik ging naar beneden en liep weer door de achterdeur naar buiten. Vanuit het zolderraam riep ze me toe. Ik kon het niet verstaan. Ze sprak wat verward, als in een andere taal. "Wat voor taal is het ?" riep ik terug.

Ik ging terug naar de kermis. Ik schudde mijn hoofd. Ik had haar al zo lang niet meer gezien. Wat was ze vreemd geworden. Gelukkig had ze me laten gaan. Het had natuurlijk ook verkeerd kunnen aflopen. Ik hoopte maar dat ze me nu niet zou gaan stalken.

Toen ik thuiskwam zag ik haar voor mijn deur staan. Ik schrok, en draaide me weer om. Ik ging terug naar de kermis en kocht een patatje. Ik had geen zin in deze toestanden. Ik wachtte totdat het avond was, maar tot mijn grote schrik stond ze nog steeds bij mijn voordeur. Ook begon er een boosheid in me op te borrelen. Ik liep op haar af, en vroeg wat ze moest.

"Jij weer," zei ze. "Ik sta hier gewoon."

"Het is mijn huis," zei ik. "Je doet vreemd. Zo was je vroeger niet. Wat is er gebeurd ?"

"Ben je het vergeten ?" sprak ze. "Onze ouders zijn dood. Jij bent het laatste wat ik heb."

"Maar waarom nu ?" vroeg ik.

"Ik dacht altijd dat ik in het paarse boek meende te lezen dat ik bij je uit de buurt moest blijven voor wat voor reden dan ook," sprak ze. "Maar ik ben daarover steeds meer gaan twijfelen, vooral ook toen ik je ineens tegen kwam op de kermis."

"Toeval heeft ons dus bij elkaar gebracht ?" zei ik.

Ze knikte. "Of het komt door het boek," zei ze. "Het lijkt op een buitenaards boek. Ik meende erin te lezen dat ik een bijzonder iemand van vroeger zou ontmoeten."

Ik schudde mijn hoofd. "Je kent het boek niet. Je kent de taal niet, dus het is allemaal gokken. Daar kun je je leven niet op bouwen."

"Daarom vroeg ik jou het boek te vertalen, want ik weet het niet meer," sprak ze.

"Ik weet het ook niet," zei ik. "Kun je het boek niet gewoon vergeten ?"

"Nee," sprak ze. "Het boek heeft me geholpen over de dood van onze ouders heen te komen. Het boek heeft me ook teruggebracht naar jou. Ik wil je niet meer verliezen."

Ik staarde haar aan. "Ik ben moe," zei ik. "Kunnen we een andere keer verder praten ?"

Maar ze hield me tegen bij de deur. "Ga met mij mee," sprak ze.

"Nu niet," zei ik, "ik heb behoefte aan mijn eigen huis."

"Maar ik kan niet zonder je," sprak ze. "Ik heb je te lang moeten missen."

"Ook door het boek ?" vroeg ik.

"Ik dacht dat ze een goede reden hadden," zei ze.

"We zijn uit elkaar gegroeid," zei ik. "Zo werken de dingen niet."

"Mag ik dan bij jou logeren ?" vroeg ze.

"Je bent een wildvreemde voor me," zei ik. "Ik ken je niet meer terug."

"Alsjeblieft, ik smeek het je," zei ze. "Ik zal me gedragen."

Ik duwde haar weg en opende de deur. "Goed," zei ik, "maar geen verkeerde bewegingen maken."

Toen ze binnen was rende ze naar boven alsof het huis van haar was. "Geweldig, hier ben ik zo lang niet geweest," riep ze.

Ik zuchtte. Ik was moe, en ging snel naar bed.

De volgende ochtend zat ze aan de eettafel in haar witte nachtjapon waar ik haar tegen kwam. Ik was blij dat ze zich had gedragen, en ik had goed geslapen. Ik liep op haar af en nam haar in mijn armen. "Je bent een engel," zei ik. "Dat had ik niet verwacht. Ik heb de hele nacht ongestoord kunnen slapen." Ze keek me aan, en vertelde weer over het paarse boek, en het leek alsof ze een bloeiend paars bloemenveld was. Ik omhelsde haar weer, en zij omhelsde mij ook heel stevig.

Ze had allerlei theorieën over het paarse boek, en probeerde het toe te passen op onze levens. Ze was geobsedeerd met het boek. Op een dag besloten we het boek te laten onderzoeken door een professor van oude talen. Al gauw kwam hij erachter dat het om een oude indiaanse stam ging met een hele oude taal die niet meer gesproken werd. Ook de stam bestond niet meer, maar het boek was gemaakt door hen die wat oude grotten hadden onderzocht, en hadden het eigenlijk gewoon allemaal overgetekend. Volgens de professor was het hele boek gewoon een beschrijving van de plantenwereld. De professor vond het allemaal interessant genoeg, en liet het ontcijferen door een genootschap waarvan hij lid was, en die gespecialiseerd was in deze stam en hun taal.

Ook mijn logee kreeg de ontcijfering te lezen. Ze was blij dat het eindelijk was ontcijferd, maar ze was ook teleurgesteld. Ze had zich er al die tijd iets heel anders van voorgesteld. Het leek alsof haar wereld instorte. Ik moest haar opvangen. Ze werd zwaar depressief. Het werd

zo erg dat ik tegen haar zei dat de professor en zijn genootschap het ook fout konden hebben. Ik raadde haar aan om vast te houden aan haar eigen beleving van het paarse boek. Gelukkig kon ik haar meer en meer ompraten en haar te doen geloven dat het boek toch wel degelijk buitenaards is. Zo ging het steeds beter met haar, en ik vertelde haar vele verhalen over het boek. Ik kon haar van alles wijsmaken vanuit het boek, en ik besloot de vertalingen op te schrijven voor haar, alle verhalen. Ze begon het ook aan anderen te vertellen, op dezelfde manier waarop ze mij eens benaderde, als een evangelie, een blijde boodschap. Zelfs de professor begon haar te geloven, alhoewel ik niet wist of hij dat deed om haar of dat hij het ook daadwerkelijk geloofde. De professor zei dat de indiaanse stam ook buitenaardse contacten schenen te hebben, en dat de diepte van hun geheime coderingen onpeilbaar waren. Volgens de professor zou het zeker een mogelijkheid kunnen zijn. Steeds meer en meer volgelingen begon ze te krijgen, maar toen had ze ook weer het idee dat het boek haar vertelde dat ze zich weer moest terugtrekken. Ze logeerde steeds minder bij me, en uiteindelijk trok ze zich helemaal terug op haar zolder. Ik vroeg aan de professor wat dat gedrag zou kunnen zijn, want ik had het al eerder met haar meegemaakt, en de professor zei dat de indianen stam van het boek ook zo waren. Ik had er vrede mee. Het leek een golfbeweging te zijn. Ze gaan diep, en trekken zich dan weer terug om vervolgens nog dieper te gaan. Ik zou het allemaal wel afwachten.

Op een dag stond ze voor mijn deur met het paarse boek. Ze deed net alsof ze mij niet kende. "Hallo, mag ik u het evangelie verkondigen van het paarse boek ?" vroeg ze.

Ik dacht laat ik het spelletje maar meespelen. "Waar gaat het over ?" vroeg ik.

"Het gaat eigenlijk nergens over," sprak ze. "Het is wat de lezer er van maakt. Je kan zo diep gaan als je zelf wil."

"Maar gaat dan de bedoeling van het boek niet verloren ?" vroeg ik.

"Maar dit is de bedoeling van het boek," sprak ze. "Het boek geeft de lezer een zekere vrijheid, een zekere ruimte, en de lezer mag er zelf creatief mee zijn."

"Interessant," zei ik. "En heb je al wat moois gevonden of uitgevonden ?"

"Het gaat om jou, wat je er zelf in ziet, niet wat de ander er in ziet," zei ze.

"Maar ik ben altijd geinteresseerd in wat anderen van iets vinden," zei ik. "Misschien dat ik nog wat van ze kan leren."

"Wij verkondigen het evangelie van het paarse boek als het evangelie van wat je er zelf in ziet," sprak ze. "Het is heel persoonlijk. Kunt u mij uitleggen wat het paarse boek betekent ?"

Ik nam haar naar binnen. Ze was nog steeds als een engel. Ik ging met haar op de bank zitten, en ik begon de plaatjes aan haar uit te leggen, en ik begon er verhalen over te vertellen, mooier en dieper dan ik ooit had gedaan. Ik begon er dingen in te zien die ik nog nooit eerder had gezien. Ik zag hoe ze er van opleefde. Ik was erdoor ontroerd, en ik sloeg een arm om haar heen, en even later omhelsde ik haar en knuffelde ik haar.

De Kikkerkoning

Ik zag het leven niet meer zitten.

Maar er kwam een lichte verandering in het plan.

Ik strompelde naar een pas nieuwe psychiater in de stad.

Hij bleek uit het buitenland te komen en sprak met een accent.

Toen ik binnen was gekomen en was gaan zitten stond hij op van achter zijn bureau en ging dichtbij me staan. Hij boog wat voorover en fluisterde in mijn oor : "Ik ben een buitenaardse, ik ben van gisteren."

Ik keek hem verbaasd en met grote ogen aan.

"Ja," zei hij toen weer met een normale stem, "dat zit namelijk zo. Ik was er gisteren, maar ik ben ergens vastgeraakt."

Ik keek hem nog eens goed aan. "U lijkt wel op een leraar van vroeger, inderdaad. Dus u beweert dat u al in mijn leven was, maar dat u ergens bent vastgeraakt, en dat toen mijn leven gewoon verder ging ?"

Ik knipperde met mijn ogen, terwijl hij knikte.

Ik greep hem vast en liet hem niet meer los. Ik omhelste hem. "Houd me vast dan," zei ik, "dan verdwijn je niet meer in het verleden."

"Maar ik moet ..." sprak hij, en begon weg te vagen.

Toen werd ik wakker. Het was maar een droom geweest. De nacht erop droomde ik weer over hem. Hij had veel gezichten, zoals Mallemoe. Hij nam me overal mee naar toe in de droom, als een ware vader. Dit is hoe psychiaters horen te zijn. Hij nam me mee de natuur in, naar het water. Hij liet me de pracht van het universum zien. Voordat de droom af was gelopen zei hij dat hij als ik wakker zou worden niet van me weg zou zijn, maar dat ik hem moest leren herkennen in het dagelijkse leven. Hij had namelijk veel gezichten. Hij was mijn beste vriend.

Toen ik wakker werd begon ik hem na te doen. Ik wilde zoals hem zijn. Ik werd ook psychiater, en nam mijn patienten de natuur in. Ik ging overal met hen naartoe, en ik noemde hen niet mijn patienten, maar mijn vrienden. Ook zoals mijn beste vriend moest ik hen altijd aan het einde van de dag loslaten, en dan zei ik dat ik niet van hen weg zou zijn, maar dat ze mij moesten leren herkennen in alles rondom hen, omdat ik vele gezichten had.

Voor sommigen was dat een hele harde opgave, en hen voor wie dit nog te moeilijk was liet ik vaak bij mij in de vakanties en weekenden logeren. Ik was de slechtste niet. Mijn doel was van mijn patienten zelf zulke psychiaters te maken, zodat ze zichzelf en anderen konden helpen zoals ik had gedaan.

Maar ja, hoe denk je dat buitenstaanders hierop reageerden ? Volgens hen kon dit echt niet, en ik kon eigenlijk mijn plannen pas volledig realizeren toen de kikkerkoning het land ging regeren.

De Gezichten van

Mallemoe

Mallemoe had vele gezichten, en ik wist niet welk gezicht ik ditmaal zou aantreffen als ik thuis zou komen. Ik was op weg naar huis. Ik zat in de bus, dichtbij de chauffeur, en we hadden een gesprek. Onderweg moesten we bij een station stoppen, en daar kocht ik nog even een strippenkaart erbij, want ik had meer strippen nodig om thuis te kunnen komen. Ik kocht een vijf strippen kaart. Dat zou wel voldoende zijn volgens de chauffeur, alhoewel hij niet eens wist waar mijn straat was toen ik hem de straatnaam gaf. De chauffeur moest ook nog even wat op het station doen, dus er was nog wel tijd. Ik ging een trap op en kwam ergens aan op een hogere verdieping. Ik raakte in gevecht met een blonde vrouw. Ze rende zo vanuit een terrasje van een café op deze verdieping op me af en begon op me in te slaan. Daar kon ik niet tegen en moest haar tegen de vlakte slaan. Ik kende de vrouw niet. Ik dacht dat ze te diep in het glaasje had gekeken. Ik herinnerde me de gezichten van Mallemoe. Ik kon ook gewoon een trein pakken hier, en dan ergens anders naartoe.

Ik liep weer terug op de verdieping, richting de trap, maar toen zag ik een gebroken beeldje liggen op de grond. Het ene deel was een huisje met een hondje, en het andere deel was een jongetje. Ik legde de twee delen tegen elkaar aan en vond het een prachtig beeldje. Al snel stond er een groep mensen om me heen die me geld begonnen te bieden voor het beeldje. Ik zei dat ik dat niet kon doen, want Mallemoe zou me dat zeker betaald zetten. Er was ook iemand anders bij die precies hetzelfde beeldje uit zijn tas haalde, maar dan heel. Misschien dat de beeldjes ergens dichtbij verkocht werden ? Maar waarom waren al die mensen dan om me heen die mijn gebroken beeldje wilden kopen ? Voor mij was het een raadsel, een raadsel zoals Mallemoe was.

Ik stopte het gebroken beeldje in mijn schooltas en ging terug naar de bus. Even later was ik thuis, maar Mallemoe was niet blij. Ik vroeg Mallemoe om de lijm, om het beeldje te lijmen, maar ik kreeg het niet van haar. Mallemoe was het allemaal zat. Ze wilde dat ik het beeldje zou wegdoen. "Of dat beeldje eruit, of ik eruit," sprak Mallemoe.

"Nou, dan jij maar eruit, Mallemoe," zei ik, "want het beeldje wil ik toch wel graag houden."

Mallemoe pakte haar spullen. Met haar vele koffers vertrok ze. Het was een hele volksverhuizing, en ons zoontje nam ze mee. Die avond staarde ik naar het beeldje wat ik op de tv had gezet. De lijm had ik gekregen van een vriendelijke buurvrouw. Het jongetje was nu verzoend met zijn hond, en met zijn huis. Hij had een petje op. Tot mijn grote verbazing begon het jongetje te fluisteren, en toen te roepen, en toen te schreeuwen en zelfs te gillen. Toen begon het jongetje te lachen. Ik wist dat ik de juiste keuze had gemaakt.

De Gezichten van

Mallemoe II

Toch ben ik Mallemoe daarna nog een keer tegengekomen. Het was in een hele drukke winkelstraat, waar ze stond met haar draaiorgel, en ons zoontje liep ervoor met het geldbakje. Hij rammelde ermee op de maat van de muziek. Ik liep op mijn zoontje af, en vertelde hem over het sprekende beeldje, maar hij wilde mij niet geloven, en wilde ook niet kijken of het misschien toch waar was wat ik zei. Ook Mallemoe wilde mij niet geloven. Het draaiorgel was verbonden aan een bromfiets, en ze sprong zo op de bromfiets, nam mijn zoontje achterop, en stoof met het ding weg, een enorme stank achterlatende. Ik dacht er direct aan dat ze de uitlaatpijp weleens na mocht laten kijken. Dit was niet goed, en even vreesde ik voor haar veiligheid en de veiligheid van mijn zoontje. Natuurlijk wist ik niet waar ze nu woonden. Dat werd mij allemaal niet gemeld.

De volgende dag keek ik of ze weer terugwas, maar nee. Misschien reiste ze wel door het hele land. Het zou een onmogelijke opgave zijn om haar te traceren. Die uitlaatpijp was niet goed, al helemaal niet voor de natuur. Maar ja, wat kon ik doen ? Mallemoe was niet altijd natuurgetrouw. Het hing er maar vanaf welk gezicht ze had opgezet. Ze had ook vele hoedjes. Die had ze allemaal onderverdeeld in dozen. Ze was er maar druk mee. Ik hoopte maar dat ze ons zoontje niet zou aansteken met deze gekte. Pilatus noemde ze hem altijd. Terwijl ik hem Deur noemde. Het was natuurlijk wel verwarrend voor dat joch, maar ik kon het gewoon niet over mijn hart halen om hem Pilatus te noemen. Mallemoe vond het wel Mediterraans klinken, en wel zwoel, maar ik kende de achtergronden van die naam. Ik had er veel over gelezen. Ik las veel universitaire literatuur, terwijl Mallemoe alleen maar flutromannetjes las en roddelblaadjes. Daar was ze groots in. Pilatus was voor haar echt een naam van verdachte status, van controversiële aard, en dat trok haar aan. Het moest vooral anders zijn, en tegendraads, iets waar veel over nagedacht werd, en waar veel bekijks over was. Het moest iets zijn wat de volkeren bezighield, niet dat hele ingeburgerde. Het moest iets zijn waarover men zich druk maakte.

Op een dag kreeg ik een brief van Mallemoe, met veel gezwets over Pilatus. Ik vroeg me af waarom ze me schreef, maar ze bleek geld nodig te hebben. Zodra ze geld nodig had was ze ineens heel open en vriendelijk. Het was gewoon één van de gezichten van Mallemoe voor mij, één van haar vele gezichten. Ik werd er niet warm of koud van. Ik stuurde haar wat monopolie geld op, en naar mijn zoontje stuurde ik echt geld. De volgende dag stond ze op de stoep. Ze vond het onverantwoordelijk dat ik Pilatus zoveel geld had gestuurd. Hij deed er de meest vreemde dingen mee, ook dingen waarvan ze gezegd had : "Of dat ding eruit, of ik eruit." Pilatus had dus voor het ding gekozen. Dat wilde ze even kwijt, en ze was ook zo weer weg, op haar brommer met draaiorgel. Ik vroeg me af wat voor dingen Pilatus had aangeschafd. Maar ja, ik had zijn adres niet.

Ik kwam er snel genoeg achter. Op een dag niet lang nadat Mallemoe was geweest las ik in de krant over Circus Pilatus. Ik dacht dat dat wel van mijn zoontje moest zijn. Had hij toch nog wat goeds met zijn geld gedaan. Ik dacht laat ik eens een kijkje nemen. Toen het circus dicht in de buurt was ging ik er naartoe. En daar stond Pilatus. Hij stopte zijn hoofd in leeuwenbekken en krokodillenbekken. Daar schrok ik toch wel van, en stapte direct op hem af, maar hij fluisterde dat de leeuwen en krokodillen slechts robotten waren, dus ik was weer gerust. Het circus had ook clowns en acrobaten. Dat waren ook robotten, dus eigenlijk kon er niets foutgaan. Ik vroeg aan hem of zijn moeder hier dan niet kon werken. Dan had ze wat te doen, maar hij schudde zijn hoofd. Het circus was de reden waarom Mallemoe wegging. Ik herinnerde hem eraan dat ze eens met hem wegging vanwege een simpel beeldje. Hij knikte. Hij kon zich dat nog herinneren.

"Je bent een groot man nu, Pilatus," sprak ik. Ik noemde hem niet meer Deur. "Dat is de eerste keer dat je mij zo noemt," sprak Pilatus. Ik knikte.

"Je hebt nu je eigen circus," zei ik. "Circus Pilatus."

Hij knikte.

"Dat je maar veel geld mag verdienen, jongen," sprak ik. "Misschien dat je dan ooit eens je moeder uit de brand kan helpen, dat je iets kan kopen waardoor ze niet wegloopt."

"Ik heb er geen zin meer in," zei Pilatus. "Wat ik ook doe, het is toch nooit goed. Laat haar maar gaan waar ze wil gaan."

"Nou ja," zei ik. "Ik ben daar niet zo'n voorstander van. Die brommer waarop ze rijdt met dat draaiorgel is echt niet goed."

"Ik weet het," zei Pilatus. "Het is ook niet goed voor de natuur, maar moeder doet wat ze doet."

"Met geld kun je veel beginnen," zei ik. "Ze heeft een nieuw gezicht nodig, want met degenen die ze nu heeft redt ze het niet."

"Laat het, pa," zei Pilatus. "Ze heeft al genoeg gezichten."

"Ja, maar geld kan ons gelukkig maken," zei ik. "Veel geld."

"Dat ben ik niet met je eens," zei Pilatus. "Jullie beiden hielden altijd van veel geld, en zie waar het ons heeft gebracht. En heb jij zelf niet eens al die gezichten van moeder gekocht ?"

Ik boog mijn hoofd. "Je hebt gelijk, maar zie je, Pilatus, ik had de gezichten eens gewonnen op de kermis, dus ik kon ze niet zomaar weg doen. Ik had er teveel geld in gestopt."

"In die automaten, pa ?" sprak Pilatus. "Je was slechts een gekke gokker, doldwaas, en nu zitten we met de gebakken peren."

"Ja, maar politie-ma kwam erg van pas," zei ik, "en bokser-ma, en spelletjes-ma, kook-ma, feest-ma, was-ma, ze hebben ons altijd goed geholpen, al die gezichten. Er heeft nog nooit iemand bij ons ingebroken. Aan Mallemoe waagden ze zich niet. Ik was de enige die me aan haar waagde."

"Pa, pa," zei Pilatus, terwijl hij zijn hoofd schudde. "Je had haar haarzelf moeten laten zijn, want zulk kermisspul is nooit goed. Dat heb je nu wel gezien. Of je had een robot kunnen kopen, zoals ik heb gedaan."

"Waar heb je die robotten eigenlijk gekocht ?" vroeg ik.

"In Griekenland," zei Pilatus.

"Griekenland ?" vroeg ik. "Waarom helemaal daar ?"

"Shhh," zei Pilatus, "laten we het ergens anders over hebben."

"Je hebt het toch niet van de mafia gekocht, hè ?" vroeg ik.

"Nee," zei Pilatus. "Maak je maar geen zorgen."

"Ik wil weten waar je het vandaan hebt, Pilatus," zei ik.

"Nieuwe soort supermarkt voor robotische spullen," sprak Pilatus. "Dat beeldje van jou schijnt er ook vandaan te komen."

"Wat zijn dat voor toestanden ?" vroeg ik. "En waarom is Mallemoe er op tegen ? Ziet zij of die gezichten van haar het als concurrentie ?"

"Vermoedelijk wel," zei Pilatus.

"We zouden die gezichten van haar er moeten afschroeven," sprak ik.

"Ja, maar wat houden we dan over ?" vroeg Pilatus.

"Het is toch al niks meer," zei ik.

Maar ja, Pilatus moest verder werken. Ik ben toen maar naar huis gegaan. Ik dacht na over de gezichten van Mallemoe. Ik keek naar het beeldje op de tv. Het jongetje danste met zijn hondje. Er werd aangebeld. Het bleek Mallemoe weer te zijn. Ze wilde terugkomen.

"Maar ik heb nog steeds dat beeldje," zei ik.

"Het geeft niet," zei Mallemoe. "Zoals het nu gaat is het ook niks."

"Misschien ben je gewoon overgevoelig," zei ik.

"Nee, dat is het niet," zei Mallemoe.

"Wat is het dan ?" vroeg ik.

"Ik ben star, streng en eigenzinnig," sprak ze.

"Toe maar weer," zei ik. "Dat is een hele mond vol."

"Nu wel," zei ze.

"Maar straks niet meer ?" vroeg ik.

"Het is maar één van mijn gezichten," sprak ze.

De Ontvoering

Het was een doorzichtig voertuig. Ik was bang dat ik er vanaf zou vallen. We waren op een weg van Breda, in prachtig natuurgebied, maar de persoon naast mij was niet zo prachtig, en al helemaal niet kalmerend. Hij was allemaal stads aan het zwetsen, en loog over mij. Ik vroeg waar hij het allemaal over had, maar hij zei : "Dat weet je toch zelf wel ?"

Ik klaagde over zijn voertuig. Dat kon hij niet hebben. Hij reed de berm in, een heuveltje op, stapte uit, en trok mij mee, en begon mij te duwen. Even leek het alsof de tijd stilstond, en ik staarde naar hem. Wat er toen gebeurde herinner ik me niet meer, maar ik zag hem zo van het heuveltje afrollen. Ik bedacht me geen moment, en rende over het heuveltje een achterliggende Bredase woonwijk in. Er was hier een soort klein winkelcentrum. Ik dacht dat ik nu van hem af was, maar ineens zag ik hem daar weer lopen, met een pistool. Er waren hier veel glazen wanden, en ik vroeg me af of ik veilig was, of er nog genoeg glas tussen mij en hem was. Hij had mij wel gezien, en kwam achter mij aan. Hij was niet snel. Het glazen doolhof leek mij van hem af te schermen. Weer leek het alsof de tijd stilstond, en ik staarde naar hem. En weer gebeurde er toen iets wat ik me niet meer kon herinneren, maar alles wat ik weet was dat ik toen ineens het pistool in handen had, en hij was er niet meer.

Ik voelde mij strak als een robot. Dit was geen normaal pistool. Ik kon me niet eens meer bewegen. Ik kon dwars door de hoofden van de mensen heenkijken. Ik wist waar ze vandaan kwamen en waar ze naartoe gingen. Niemand deed iets, want ik had het pistool. Ik dacht ik zou deze mensen wel willen helpen. Ook zij hebben zo lang geleden onder hem met het pistool. Zo werd hij ook genoemd : het pistool. Hij was de schrik van Breda. "De gemaakte" was een andere bijnaam van hem. Ik herinnerde dat hij het was die mij had ontvoerd, en eigenlijk was iedereen in Breda ontvoerd door hem. Ik wilde deze mensen helpen, maar ik was in een glazen doolhof. Het glas beschermde mij.

De Kikkerkoning II

De kikker was een dokter. Hij was erg tegendraads.
Als iedereen naar links ging, ging hij naar rechts,
En als iedereen omlaag ging, ging hij omhoog,
Hij noemde zijn patienten vrienden,
En liet ze bij hem logeren in de vakanties,
En ook wenste hij hen altijd beterschap.

Dat kon en mocht niet volgens de regerende elite.
Die kikker moest gekruisigd worden,
En zo gebeurde het op een nacht.

De kikker had hen al gewaarschuwd :

"Als jullie mij kruisigen, dan zal het voor eeuwig sneeuwen, en zullen jullie worden als standbeelden, en een draaiorgel zal mij uitroepen als koning. Met jullie stenen zal ik de muren bouwen van mijn koninkrijk," maar niemand luisterde.

Zo grepen ze hem in de nacht, en kruisigden hem.

Het was mid-zomer en het begon te sneeuwen, zoals voorzegd door de kikker.

Zij die hem hadden gekruisigd waren in grote verbazing, en begonnen al in steen te veranderen.

Hun laatste woorden waren gewoonlijks : "Hij was waarlijk de kikkerkoning."

Een draaiorgel riep hem toen uit als koning, maar de kikker hing aan het kruis.

Het sneeuwde, en het bleef sneeuwen. Niemand kon dat stoppen, en grote sneeuwstormen kwamen om veel verwarring te zaaien. Families werden van elkaar losgescheurd, en hele landen. Ook kerken bleven niet gespaard. Ze hadden een nieuwe koning nu.

En op zondagmorgen besteeg de kikker de hoge preekstoel, en predikte uit een paars boek.

Hierin stonden verschrikkelijke dingen beschreven waarvan een ieder begon te beven.

Nee, nooit meer waren ze dezelfde, maar de kikker gaf zo'n wonderbaarlijke uitleg dat het hun mooiste boek was.

En zo werd het paarse boek gepredikt in alle windrichtingen, en patienten werden tot dokters, en dokters werden tot patienten. En zij waren allemaal patienten van het grote paarse medicijnenboek, maar zij werden vrienden genoemd.

De kikker nam nooit geld, maar gaf alleen maar geld.

En zo regende het elke zondagmorgen geld.

Armen waren er niet meer sinds de kikkerkoning het land regeerde.

De Sprookjesmarkt

Een jongen ging altijd met zijn grootmoeder op vrijdag naar de sprookjesmarkt in de ochtend. Het was dan altijd net licht geworden, en hij zat dan altijd bij zijn grootmoeder achterop de fiets. Dan zocht hij telkens zijn sprookjes uit. Op een dag werden ze tegengehouden door een kleine knokige kabouter met een knots. "Dat gaat zo maar niet," sprak de kabouter. "Elke vrijdagochtend wanneer het net licht geworden is komen jullie om mijn sprookjes te stelen."

De jongen keek de kabouter met opgeheven wenkbrauwen aan, zeer verbaasd. "Maar wij betalen toch voor de sprookjes, en hoe zijn het uw sprookjes ?"

De kabouter gaf de jongen een mep tegen zijn been. "Brutale vlegel, ik ben de baas van de sprookjesmarkt," bromde de kabouter. "Nu vlug, maak dat je wegkomt. Jullie zijn hier veel te vaak, en nu is het wel welletjes." Maar toen stapte de grootmoeder van de fiets af. "Puh," sprak ze. "Hoe kan zo'n klein mannetje als jij de baas zijn van zo'n grote markt ?" Maar toen begon de kabouter zo woest met zijn knots te slaan dat grootmoeder en de jongen zo snel mogelijk op de fiets moesten springen om bij hem weg te kunnen komen. De kabouter raasde en foeterde, en kwam nog achter hen aan ook. Wat kon dat mannetje hard rennen. Grootmoeder moest erg snel fietsen, anders zouden ze eraan gaan. Gelukkig waren ze na een tijdje van hem af.

De volgende vrijdag gingen ze het weer proberen. Ze gingen nu nog vroeger. Het licht was nog niet eens gevallen. De marktkoopmannen en vrouwen waren nog bezig hun kraampjes op te zetten. Grootmoeder liep op de eerste de beste marktkoopman af en vroeg of het waar was dat de kleine kabouter met de knots de baas was van de sprookjesmarkt. De marktkoopman keek haar aan met opgeheven wenkbrauwen. "Maar mevrouw toch," sprak de man. "Hoe komt u toch aan zulke verhalen ? Er is geen baas van de sprookjesmarkt. Wij hebben de sprookjesmarkt allemaal samen opgezet, en niemand is de baas over de ander." Toen begon grootmoeder het hele verhaal te vertellen.

De koopman barstte in lachen uit. "Wat een vreemd verhaal, en wat een kostelijk sprookje. Dat kunnen we wel verkopen hier."

"Hoeveel kost het ?" vroeg grootmoeder.

"Maar mevrouw," sprak de koopman, "u bent zelf de bedenker van het sprookje, dus het is helemaal gratis voor u." Even later overhandigde de koopman het sprookje aan grootmoeder. De jongen zocht ook nog wat andere sprookjes uit, en toen zijn ze weer op de fiets gegaan. Maar na een tijdje kwamen ze weer die ellendige kabouter tegen. "Zie, weer sprookjes stelen, hè ? Ik wist het," bulderde de kabouter, en kwam hen weer achterna met de knots. Hij was nu extra kwaad. "En nu ben ik zeker ook in het sprookje, hè ? Van mij kom je niet meer af." Hij foeterde en tierde, maar hij kon grootmoeder en de jongen niet inhalen. Hij volgde hen wel helemaal naar grootmoeder's huis. "Ik zal jullie leren !" bulderde hij. Snel sprongen grootmoeder en de jongen van de fiets af met de sprookjes, en snel gingen ze naar binnen, en grootmoeder deed de deur weer goed op slot. "Die fiets is nu van mij !" gilde de woeste, ziedende kabouter. De kabouter pakte de fiets en ze hebben hem nooit meer teruggezien. Wel vonden ze zijn knots waar de fiets had gestaan, en die hebben ze toen naar de sprookjesmarkt gebracht als bewijs dat het sprookje echt waar was.

De knots werd in een glazen kistje gelegd en werd op een halve pilaar gezet op het middelpunt van de sprookjesmarkt. Grootmoeder en de jongen mochten toen zoveel mogelijk sprookjes uitzoeken als ze wilden. En ze mochten hen allemaal gratis meenemen. Vanuit de hele wereld kwam iedereen om de knots in het glazen kistje te bewonderen en om het sprookje van de sprookjesmarkt te horen. Het werd de drukst bezochte markt van de hele wereld.

De Vreemde

Ontmoeting

Ze droeg altijd witte laarzen, en woonde op twee hoog. Op een dag was hij van de trap in het trappenhuis gevallen. Ze nam hem op, en om hem op te vrolijken nam ze hem mee naar de kermis, waar zij hem bracht tot een clown. Hij was verder niet verwond.

De clown slikte hem op, en hij kwam in een tunnel terecht waar mensen een carnavals optocht hielden. De tunnel eindigde in een woestijn aan de rand van een grote stad. Er werden hier overal markten gehouden.

Hij vroeg zich af waar ze was. Nu een tijdje spuwde de clown hem weer uit. Het was een grote machine. Ze stond daar en lachte. 'Voel je je alweer wat beter nu ?' vroeg ze.

'Dit is geweldig,' zei hij.

'Kom met me mee naar huis,' sprak ze. Ze nam hem bij de arm en leidde hem naar twee hoog. Binnengekomen kreeg hij een kopje koffie. Hij keek naar haar witte laarzen. Die waren wit als altijd.

Hij kon niet veel zeggen. 'Sprakeloos als altijd ?' vroeg ze. Hij knikte.

'Het geeft niet hoor,' zei ze.

'Ik moet gaan,' zei hij.

'Nee, blijf nog even,' zei ze. 'Ik wil je wat vertellen. De duinen hier vlakbij zijn zo mooi. Heb je zin om daar een keer te wandelen ?'

'Best,' zei hij. 'Maar ik moet nu gaan.'

'Hoe laat zullen we afspreken. Vanavond om half zes ?' vroeg ze.

'Best,' zei hij.

'Dan zie ik je bij het muurtje,' zei ze.

Hij knikte, en verliet het pand. Zo gezegd zo gedaan. Om half zes stond hij bij het muurtje. Zij had hem daar al opgewacht. Samen liepen ze door het park naar de duinen. Zij had weer haar witte laarzen aan. 'Weet je,' zei ze. 'Ik denk er vaak over om de zee over te zwemmen tot dat eiland daar, ken je dat ? Lijkt me geweldig om daar te wonen, echt fantastisch, of op z'n minst om daar eens op vakantie te gaan. Gewoon in de wildernis leven, proberen te overleven. Er groeien daar veel wilde bessen.'

'Een bessen-menu, dat lijkt me wel wat,' zei hij. Hij begon wat trager te praten. Ze trok wat kleren uit, en rende naar het water. 'Kom mee,' riep ze.

'Dat mens is gek,' dacht hij bij zichzelf. Maar toch deed hij wat ze zei. Hij rende achter haar aan en toen het water in. 'Het is niet zo lang zwemmen,' riep ze. Na een tijdje stonden ze op het eiland. Het eiland stond inderdaad vol met bessenstruiken. Het leek wel alsof de bessen in zijn hoofd spraken. 'Het zijn erg krachtige bessen,' zei ze. 'Men noemt ze weleens heksen-bessen. Dat is omdat het volwaardig aan de voedsel-behoefte voldoet.'

'Heksen-bessen ?' vroeg hij.

Ze knikte. Ze liep op een struik af, en begon te plukken en te eten. Ook gaf ze bessen aan hem. De bessen waren erg voedzaam, en al snel hadden ze genoeg. Het was bijna als sap in hun mond. 'Hutje bouwen hier ?' vroeg ze. Hij knikte.

Die nacht droomde hij vreemd. Hij lag in haar armen als een kind bij zijn moeder. Ze was wat ouder dan hem. Hij droomde dat ze hem sleepte naar de kermis tot de clown, en dat hij weer een ritje maakte door de clown. De tunnel was weer vol met dansende mensen in een carnavals-optocht, en weer liep de tunnel uit op markten aan de rand van een woestijn, aan de rand van een grote stad. Hij ging toen de stad binnen. Er was overal graffiti hier. Hij werd duizelig en viel, en ze sleurde hem mee door de stad en toen door de markten tot de woestijn. Dit liep uit op een grote zee. De grootst mogelijke vissen zwommen in de zee.

Toen werd hij wakker. Zij lag aan de andere kant van de hut. Hij liep naar haar toe en ging in haar armen liggen. Zij ontving hem als een kind. Het voelde heel natuurlijk aan. Door de bessen werd hij kleiner, en zij werd groter, althans dat leek zo in zijn dromen. Het leek wel alsof hij aan het ijlen was. Toen hij echt wakker werd de volgende dag voelde hij zich ziek.

'Misschien komt het door de bessen, als een zij-effect,' zei ze. Hij voelde zich flink beroerd. Hij kon niet meer goed nadenken. Ook kreeg hij last met het spreken. Alles ging steeds trager en moeizamer. Hij trilde. Met haar was niets aan de hand. 'Dit doe ik dus nooit meer,' zei hij. 'Ik heb het gevoel alsof ik doodga.' Zij maakte een kano en een peddel. Ze bracht hem in de kano, en begon te peddelen. Snel waren ze aan de overkant, waar ze hem naar een dokter bracht. 'U bent vergiftigd,' zei de dokter.

'Bessen ?' vroeg hij.

'Nee,' zei de dokter. 'Het eiland wat u heeft bezocht kent vreemde diersoorten, die een speciaal gas afscheiden. Het is zwaar giftig. Wist u niet dat het eiland verboden was ? Ik zou u hier eigenlijk voor moeten aangeven. U heeft waarschijnlijk de natuur daar zwaar verstoord.'

De dokter gaf hen pillen mee, die hij tweemaal daags moest slikken met water. Elke dag ging het een stukje beter met hem. Zij kwam hem vaak opzoeken. Dan hield zij zijn hand vast. 'Jammer dat het zo gelopen is,' zei ze. Hij knikte. 'Ik ben blij dat ik weer thuis ben,' zei hij.

'Thuis is toch het beste dan,' zei ze. 'Maar het was een goede ervaring.'

'Voor mij niet,' zei hij.

'Oh, waarom niet ?' vroeg ze. 'Alles moet je een keer meemaken.'

'Dat vind ik niet,' zei hij. 'Je kan ook gewoon je eigen weg gaan. Ik hoef niet alles mee te maken.'

Maar toen leek het wel alsof ze een beetje boos werd. 'Ik moet gaan,' zei ze.

'Nee, blijf nog even,' zei hij.

'Nee, geen sprake van,' zei ze. 'Je bent me nogal een betweter.'

'Jij anders ook,' zei hij.

'Dan is het beter dat het hier stopt,' zei ze. 'Wij kunnen niet met elkaar.'

'Eet maar wat bessen,' waren haar laatste woorden. Toen vertrok ze. Hij heeft haar nooit meer teruggezien.

Bloedbessen

Joost Verschuur komt 's avonds laat thuis van een feestje. Zijn vriendin ligt al in bed. Snel doet hij zijn kleren uit en gaat tegen haar aanliggen. Ze slaapt, maar wordt wakker van hem. Ze kust hem, en dan vallen ze samen in slaap. Midden in de nacht horen ze een hard geluid. Joost rent naar het raam. Iemand staat voor de deur. 'Doet jullie bel het niet ofzo ?' schreeuwt de persoon. Het is de broer van Joost. Even later staat ook zijn zus voor de deur. 'Doe open Joost,' schreeuwt zijn zus. Joost staat als aan de grond genageld, kleed zich langzaam aan, en loopt langzaam naar beneden om de deur te openen. Even later zitten ze rond de tafel. De vriendin van Joost is er inmiddels ook bijgekomen. 'Willen jullie wat drinken ?' vraagt Thea, de vriendin van Joost.

'Nee,' zegt Arnold, de broer van Joost. 'Jacquelien, vertel jij het hen maar.'

Jacquelien, de zus van Joost begint te huilen. 'Pa is ernstig ziek,' zegt ze.

'Wat heeft hij ?' vraagt Joost verschrikt.

'Hartklachten,' zegt Arnold. 'Hij heeft een hart-aanval gehad. Hij heeft niet lang meer te leven. Hij wil dat je nu bij hem komt. Hij wil je iets vertellen.'

Zo gezegd zo gedaan. Even later staat Joost bij zijn vader op de stoep, en een paar minuten later heeft hij de warme hand van zijn vader in zijn hand. 'Joost,' zegt zijn vader, 'ik ga weg. Spoedig zal ik mijn laatste adem uitblazen. Ik heb al met mijn andere kinderen gesproken, maar niet met jou.' Hij knipoogt even naar Joost, en laat dan even een glimlach zien. Joost, ik .... Met jou heb ik altijd het beste contact gehad, van de kinderen, maar de laatste jaren niet meer zoals het was, en ik weet wel waardoor dat komt. Thea had een hekel aan me. In ieder geval ... ik wil je zeggen dat ik van je houd, en dat ... dat ... mijn grootste erfenis naar jou toegaat.'

'En wat is dat dan ?' vraagt Joost.

'Een boek,' zegt zijn vader.

'Wat voor een boek ?' vraagt Joost.

'Een boek van zeerovers en spoken, ik heb het zelf geschreven,' zegt zijn vader. 'Ik heb het onder pseudoniem geschreven, zodat niemand ooit wist dat ik het had geschreven.'

'Die bestseller ?' vraagt Joost. 'Heb jij dat geschreven ?'

Na een paar dagen sterft de vader van Joost en enkele dagen later heeft Joost de eerste uitgave, de luxe editie, van het boek in bezit, en het manuscript. Joost bergt het meteen goed op. 'Zo, dat was dan de biecht van mijn vader,' zegt Joost tegen Thea. Thea zegt niks. Ze heeft zijn vader nooit gemogen.

'Klaar !' zegt Joost. 'Afgelopen.'

Thea komt langzaam naar hem toe, omhelst hem, en dan kust ze hem.

'Het was niets dan spel,' zegt Joost, 'het contact wat ik eerder met hem had. Ik deed maar net alsof, ik had geen andere keus.'

'Ik weet het,' zegt Thea, 'en vroeger durfde je niet anders.'

Joost kust Thea terug. Samen gaan ze op de bank zitten. Joost speelt wat met haar bloesje. 'Je hebt nu een echt speeltje,' zegt Thea. 'Iets wat je zelf hebt uitgekozen en wat je leuk vindt.'

Joost knikt. Bijna met zijn kin opgeheven. Voor het eerst in zijn leven kan hij echt glimlachen, en hij kijkt rebels. 'Toch wel vreemd dat mijn vader de schrijver was van dat boek,' zei Joost. Thea knikt. 'En jij bent de schrijver van mijn boek,' zegt ze. Joost glimlacht. 'Ik houd ervan je te beschrijven.'

'Doe nog eens een gooi,' zegt Thea.

'Je bent bloedmooi,' zegt Joost. 'Ik kan je wel drinken.'

'Mooi als die struik met bloedbessen daar buiten ?'

'Die bessen zijn giftig,' zegt Joost. 'Jij bent ontgiftigend, genezend.'

'Maar medicijnen zijn soms giftig, Joost,' zegt Thea. 'Giftig, het kan een gave zijn, een gift.'

'Gut wat doe je weer moeilijk,' lacht Joost. En neemt haar in de houdgreep. 'Ik ben toch veel sterker dan jij.'

Thea kijkt hem aan. 'Verleden tijd,' zegt ze zacht. 'Kijk eens diep in mijn ogen.' Joost doet het en voelt zich zwak worden, en dan ineens neemt zij hem in de houdgreep. 'Okay, Thea,' zegt Joost, 'ophouden met die spelletjes nu. Ik weet dat je me kunt betoveren en hypnotiseren. Je bent misschien wel potentieel een gevaar.'

'Gevaar is een te groot woord, noem het maar avontuur,' zegt Thea.

Midden in de nacht worden ze weer wakker van een geluid. Het zijn weer de broer en zus van Joost. Even later zitten ze weer om de tafel.

'Wat heeft vader je gegeven,' vraagt Jacquelien.

'Oh niets,' zegt Joost.

'Probeer het niet achter te houden, Joost,' zegt Jacquelien, 'want moeder heeft gezegd dat jij iets hebt gehad.'

'Dat is tussen vader en mij,' zegt Joost. 'Waarom zijn jullie hier ?'

Joost kijkt ze indringend aan. 'Nou ? Waarom zeggen jullie niets ?'

'Wij vinden dat je moet zeggen wat vader je heeft gegeven,' zegt Jacquelien. Arnold knikt.

'En daarmee komen jullie midden in de nacht ? Waar slaat dat op ?' vraagt Joost.

'Omdat het belangrijk is,' zegt Arnold. 'Nou, zeg op.'

'Okay dan,' zegt Joost, 'als het voor jullie zo belangrijk is, eh, het was een boek, over zeerovers en spoken. Eh, hij heeft dat boek eens geschreven onder pseudoniem.'

'Mis, Joost,' zegt Arnold. 'Bladzijde 441 vertelt het geheim, daar heeft hij in kleine letters geschreven, ga zelf maar kijken.' Joost pakt het boek, gaat naar bladzijde 441 en leest hardop : 'Beste Joost, gefeliciteerd, aan jou de familie-erfenis : een geheim eiland.'

'Moet ik nu hoera zeggen ?' vraagt Joost. 'En waar is dat geheime eiland ?'

'Ga naar bladzijde 847,' zegt Arnold.

En daar leest Joost het. Het schijnt dat Joost een geadopteerd kind was, als baby, en zijn vader en moeder durfden het hem nooit te zeggen. Boos slingert Joost het boek weg, en rent naar buiten, terwijl Thea hem achterna gaat. 'Lees het boek verder voor meer informatie,' roept Arnold hem na. Maar Joost is woedend. Pas na een paar uur komt Joost weer thuis, samen met Thea. Arnold en Jacquelien liggen op de bank te slapen. Op de tafel ligt het boek, en Joost leest verder. Het blijkt dat Joost op dat eiland geboren is.

Na een tijdje kan Joost het accepteren en gaat samen met Thea op vakantie naar het eiland. Er wonen daar twee mensen die ooit de samenleving hebben verlaten. Ze wonen hier als wilden. Als Joost hen het verhaal vertelt begrijpen ze dat hij hun kind is.

'Jij hoort bij ons,' zegt zijn echte vader. 'Ooit hebben ze jou van ons afgepakt. Nu ben je terug. En Thea is ook welkom.' Hij omhelst zijn vader en dan zijn moeder, en ook Thea doet dat. En ze leven nog lang en gelukkig.

DE FLAMINGO'S

Hij werd altijd meegenomen op de rug van een flamingo.

Zij brachten hem altijd naar paradijselijke plaatsen,

Naar wonderlijke tuinen, en verre eilanden.

Maar na een tijdje kwamen ze niet meer, en het jongetje begon hen te missen.

Op school moest hij altijd aan ze denken, en hij probeerde hen altijd te tekenen, en ook de plaatsen waarnaar ze hem brachten.

Toen het jongetje ouder werd kon hij zich er steeds minder van herinneren.

Het vaagde steeds meer uit zijn hersenen weg.

Hij was hier heel verdrietig over.

Hij begon alles op te schrijven wat hij zich er nog van kon herinneren, maar hij merkte dat er grote gaten waren. Die gaten begon hij op te vullen met zijn eigen verhalen. Hij probeerde de gaten te dichten, maar wist niet meer zeker of het zo was gegaan.

Maar dit was de enige manier voor hem om ermee om te gaan, anders zou de pijn te groot zijn.

Hij verlangde terug naar de flamingo's, om op hun rug te vliegen naar verre, onbekende landen, warme oorden met prachtige stranden. Maar ze kwamen maar niet.

Hij begreep het niet, en vroeg zich af wat hij fout had gedaan.

Waren ze misschien boos op hem, of was er iets anders aan de hand ?

Hij ging naar het bos om ze te roepen, en ook naar het strand.

Hij had inmiddels vele schriften vol geschreven over de flamingo's, maar op een dag merkte hij dat er verschillende schriften waren verdwenen. Hij zocht overal in het huis, maar hij vond ze niet, en begon mensen te verdenken. Hij vroeg zich af wie ze gestolen kon hebben, of was hij misschien zelf te slordig geweest ? De schriften die verdwenen waren probeerde hij te vervangen door nieuwe verhalen, maar de pijn bleef, en werd elke dag erger.

Op een dag kwam er een nieuw meisje bij hem in de klas. Ze kon prachtige verhalen vertellen, en ze deed hem herinneren aan de flamingo's die hem altijd meenamen. Het leek wel alsof hij door haar verhalen meer kon herinneren. Ze werden goede vrienden, en het meisje genoot ook erg van zijn verhalen. Ze besloten beiden boeken te maken die ze uitdeelden in de klas om ook andere kinderen te helpen.

Op een dag kwamen de flamingo's bij het jongetje terug. Dit maal waren er meer flamingo's dan ooit, en ze namen het jongetje ditmaal verder dan ze ooit eerder waren gegaan met hem. Niemand zag het jongetje ooit nog terug.

Einde

De Anandez

De Anandez, de grote ijszee, was het land aan het overstromen. Het scheurde families uit elkaar als lappen poppen. Eigenlijk bleef het maar bij één grote golf die alles overspoelde, en toen trok de zee zich weer terug, maar het kwaad was al geschied. Niemand was nog dezelfde sinds die dag. Het was alsof er iets geknapt was in de hersenen van de mensen. Velen hadden hun geheugen verloren. Velen begonnen totaal doelloos rond te zwerven ... als zombies. Weer anderen begonnen vreemde dromen te krijgen. Allen wisten ze dat de Anandez had toegeslagen. Dat was nu diep in hun geheugen gegrift, en spoelde eigenlijk alles weg. Hun leven draaide nu om de Anandez, en altijd verwachtten ze dat de Anandez weer opnieuw zou toeslaan, maar dat gebeurde niet. De dijken werden enorm versterkt en hoger gemaakt. In grote angst werd het land zelfs overdekt, wat de definitieve scheiding betekende tussen mens en zee. De mens leefde nu in een schelp. Genieten op het strand was er niet meer bij. De mensen zochten nu de overdekte bosrivieren op. Hier probeerden ze een nieuw leven te vinden. Velen wilden niet meer naar huis. Ze hadden daar een groot trauma opgelopen door het toeslaan van de Anandez. Al hun bezittingen hadden ze achter gelaten. Ik spreek dan over de rest van de inwoners van het land, want de meesten waren omgekomen door de Anandez.

Dat ik het nog kan navertellen is een wonder. Ik woon gelukkig diep in het land, en ik stond in de slaapkamer toen het gebeurde. Bij mij reikte de golf net tot het dak, tot de vensterbank van de slaapkamer. Ik kon het zo buiten zien gebeuren. Zij die voor mij woonden hadden minder geluk. In ieder geval was ineens het dak onder het raam van de slaapkamer bedekt met sneeuw en ijs, en toen zag ik dat de zee zich langzaam begon terug te trekken. Maar de golf had velen meegesleurd. Ik woonde op het randje van het natuurgeweld. Voor mij was het erop of eronder. Ik was mijn vrouw dankbaar dat ze dit huis had gekozen. Iets dichter bij de zee en we hadden niet meer geleefd. Iedereen die dichtbij de zee woonde werd door de golf meegesleurd naar God weet waar. Er moest een nieuwe regering komen, want die leefden dichtbij de zee.

Ik was dan één van de velen die nu vreemde dromen begon te krijgen. Er was ook iets in mijn hersenen geknapt. Ook was ik een groot deel van mijn geheugen kwijt, maar niet alles. Gewoon om het te kunnen verwerken wilde ik de Anandez eens opzoeken, maar dat mocht niet. De dijken waren zwaar bewaakt. Niemand kon erdoor naar de ijszee. Het was afgesloten terrein. Ik moest me daarbij neerleggen, maar eigenlijk wilde ik dat niet. Ik heb me toen voorgedaan als wetenschapper, en na veel gesprekken lieten ze me eindelijk door. Er waren altijd uitzonderingen op de regel, en ik bleek er aan te voldoen. En het was ook zo : Ik wilde

de Anandez onderzoeken. Ik wilde meer van de Anandez weten. Via een streng bewaakte tunnel kwam ik op het verwilderde strand van de grote ijszee. Er was hier geen kip. Er was een begeleider bij me, een gids. Zijn regenpak was blauw, wit en oranje. Ook had hij een helm op. Het was best donker dus hij had een soort lantaarn of schijnwerper meegenomen. Hij was nogal enthousiast over een bepaalde vissensoort : ijshaaien. Die konden geweldig snel zwemmen en hoge sprongen maken. Ze waren veelal wit. We liepen dichter naar de zee toe, en toevallig zagen we er een paar. Het was een wonderlijk gezicht.

De keer daarop ging mijn vrouw ook mee. Ze had zich extra stevig ingepakt, want het was een koukleum. 'Dit is hem dan,' zei ik tegen mijn vrouw. 'De Anandez, de grote ijszee, die onze hele familie uit elkaar heeft gescheurd.' Ik moest mijn vrouw van alles uitleggen, want het grootste gedeelte van haar geheugen was weg. Gelukkig herinnerde ze zich mij wel. 'Hoe kan ik jou nou ooit vergeten,' zei ze altijd. 'Dat is toch onmogelijk.' Maar ja, er waren zoveel mensen die mij niet meer herinnerden. We liepen langs het strand, en de gids vertelde ons veel over de Anandez. Het was weer dezelfde gids, en hij had weer een helm op. Hij scheen met zijn lantaarn op het water. Mijn vrouw wilde de ijshaaien wel graag zien, maar ze waren er dit keer niet. De gids begon vreemd te fluiten, waar we wel even van opkeken. Uit de golven kwam een vrouw omhoog, die toen naar ons toeliep over het water. Ze was gewikkeld in lange doeken. 'Wat gebeurt hier !' riep ik. Er was ineens overal storm. Ik zag mijn vrouw nog wegrennen, en de gids zag ik al helemaal niet meer. Ik begon te roepen, maar mijn stemgeluid kon niet tegen de storm op. Ik werd opgenomen als een veertje en over het strand geslingerd. "Anandez," zei een stem. De vrouw met de doeken was erg dichtbij me nu. Ik wist niet waar ik was. Haar doeken hingen over mij. Ik werd badend in zweet wakker. Alles was maar een droom geweest. Ik greep om me heen, en greep naar de plaats waar mijn vrouw altijd lag, maar ze lag er niet. Uit angst riep ik haar, en al snel kwam ze de slaapkamer binnen. Ze was even in de badkamer geweest. Ik vertelde haar de droom. "Ik heb iets soortgelijks gedroomd," zei ze. "Daarom ging ik naar de badkamer om even mijn gezicht nat te maken." Ik omhelsde haar. In elkaars armen probeerden we weer verder te slapen, maar dat werkte niet echt. Ze bleef maar praten. "Praat tot me," zei ze weleens als ik dreigde in te dutten.

"Sorry, ik probeer te slapen," zei ik.

Na een tijdje sliep ze, en kon ik ook slapen. Weer droomden we over de Anandez. Het was een vrouw die sprak dat ze de zon had overwonnen. Ze noemde het een stinkende bal. In haar wereld draaide alles om de ijszee, die als een echo-machine was. De echo's vervormden in de wind, en daarom moest men zo dicht mogelijk bij de echo-machine komen. Mijn vrouw en ik waren verbaasd dat we weer beiden dezelfde droom hadden gehad. Mijn vrouw maakte toen een lied over de Anandez :

Anandez, de grote ijszee,

Als een echo in de wind,

Zoveel geheimen draag je,
Die maar nooit worden gevonden,
Want de stormen zijn te zwaar

Anandez, maar zo kan het toch niet altijd blijven,
Anders is het met ons gedaan

Anandez, groot raadsel in de wind,
Toon ons toch jouw sleutel,
Leid ons toch de weg in dit bestaan,
Leer ons elkaar te verstaan

Anandez, jij scheurde ons allen uiteen,
En nam vele levens, waar zijn zij heen ?
Anandez, niets of niemand schijnt jou te kunnen stoppen,
En wij kwijnen allen weg,
Of is dit juist de weg ?

Anandez, jij komt altijd op in de morgen,
Als het morgenrood, jij hebt de zon verslagen,
Dan kijken we allen naar het ijs,
Hebbende zoveel vragen

Anandez, wat heeft de nacht met ons gedaan,
Jij brengt ons zoveel dromen,

Anandez, alles wat wij grijpen glijdt weg,
En wij worden zelf weggegrepen

Anandez, er is zoveel wat wij niet begrijpen,
Als een ons overspoelende zee van ijs,
Jij hebt ons meegenomen, jouw gezicht getoond,
In jou zijn wij wijs

Anandez, door vreemde dingen breng jij ons dichter bij elkaar,
Zo ver weg en toch dichtbij, mogen wij elkaar verstaan,
Het wonder van ijs is iets wat wij niet kennen,
Maar langzaam maar zeker mogen wij er aan wennen,
Anandez, kom snel terug,
Jij bent maar een droom,
Alles wat jij doet is verborgen geluk

Anandez, kom snel,
Praat met ons, leer ons jouw spel,
Wanneer wij in de ochtend ontwaken,
Zijn wij nog steeds in jouw droom,
Jij bent de gids tussen de doeken en de dekens

Oh, jij ijszee, zo warm en diep,
Zo verborgen, jij bent het die ons riep,
Oh ijszee van boven, oh hemelse taal,

Anandez, kom snel,

Jij bron beter dan de zon

In jou is al het licht en leven,

In jou is al het vuur om bruggen te bouwen,

Nee, warmer dan jij is er niemand,

Oh, hemelse zee van echo's,

Tot jouw geheim zwemmen wij

Mijn vrouw zong maar door. Ze was inmiddels achter de piano gaan zitten. De nacht erop had ik een droom dat ze een standbeeld was en eeuwig zong. Ze was door de Anandez gezonden.

Einde

De Verhalenman

Als het 's nachts donker is en heel stil, dan reist de verhalenman langs de kinderkamers om zijn verhalen uit te delen. Grote verhalen en kleine verhalen, leuke verhalen en enge griezelverhalen, de verhalenman is in alles thuis. Bengels en deugnieten slaat hij over, maar zoete, lieve kinderen bezoekt hij.

Waar woont de verhalenman dan ? Hij woont in de wolken.

Ook bezoekt hij kinderen op scheepjes, en zelfs kinderen in de klas.

Niemand kan hem dan zien dan het kind zelf.

Natuurlijk zeggen veel volwassenen dat het niet waar is, dat de verhalenman niet echt bestaat.

De verhalenman heeft daarom een grote hekel aan zulke volwassenen.

Hij zegt vaak dat volwassenen niet bestaan.

Het is maar één van zijn verhalen.

Wat doet de verhalenman dan de hele dag ?

Als hij geen kinderen bezoekt dan schrijft hij verhalen.

Hij is daar nooit klaar mee.

Hij heeft ook een vrouw, genaamd tante Tingeling.

Die schenkt altijd koffie voor hem in, en rinkelt met een belletje wanneer de koffie klaar is.

Eens was tante Tingeling in grote problemen.

Toen haalde de verhalenman haar eruit door een verhaal.

Soms neemt hij kinderen mee op een boot naar zijn wolkenstad.

Hij woont daar in een groot kasteel, genaamd ik-weet-het-niet-meer.

Er zijn wel duizend gangen in dat kasteel.

Je kunt er makkelijk in verdwalen.

Eens verdwaalde ik daar.

Ik werd onder verhalen bedolven.

Uiteindelijk hoorde ik het koffie-belletje van tante Tingeling,

en toen vond ik de verhalenman.

Zoveel verhalen vertelde hij mij,

Ik heb ze nu allemaal weer op een rij.

De verhalenman, de verhalenman,

Er zijn dingen die niemand anders kan.

Als je het midden in de nacht warm en koud hebt,

Dan staat hij aan de deur,

Met zoveel verhalen in zijn armen,

Waaraan je je kunt verkoelen en verwarmen,

Als een oase in de woestijn,

Ja, bij hem moet je zijn.

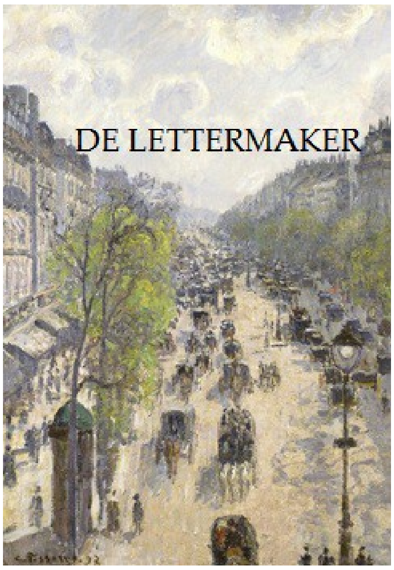
Eens was hij al zijn verhalen kwijt,

Maar toen schreef hij weer nieuwen met grote vlijt,

En zoveel kinderen die hij ooit had geholpen,

Brachten zijn verhalen weer terug,

Zij vormden de brug


DE LETTERMAKER

De Lettermaker

COAB 2018

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Het Experiment

Hij stond daar in een wit plasma pak met uitschuifbare klauwen in de onderarmen, hele lange metalen pinnen met gifpunten, die hij kon besturen door vinger drukpunten. Soms moest hij een paar keer klikken om het gewenste resultaat te bereiken. Hij was in gevecht met schildpad-achtige wezens, de linea. Ze hadden groen en blauw bloed, en verder ook gele, witte en rode sappen in hun lichaam. Het was allemaal gif, en ze hadden de planeet al zo lang geterroriseerd. Nu was het oorlog.

Hij moest vechten voor zijn leven en hoopte maar dat het gif van zijn tegenstander niet door zijn helm heen zou kunnen komen. De schilpadachtige wezens waren woest. Ze spoten hun gif vanaf grote afstanden, maar hij was ditkeer goed bewapend. In het verleden was dat wel anders. Met zijn electrische sabel vocht hij als een leeuw. Ook was zijn helm goed toegerust met lange afstands wapens. Die waren ook electrisch, en ook hij kon gif spuiten. Hij werkte zijn weg naar boven over de metalen trappen en stellages, en was op zoek naar een cabine. Hij was niet alleen. Een soortgelijk leger was met hem.

Hij had de vinger bewegingen goed geoefend, zodat hij zijn wapens goed kon besturen. Hij kende alle codes. Hier had hij maandenlang voor gestudeerd en veel geoefend in schijn-gevechten. Nu was hij hier, en hij had maar één doel voor ogen : overwinnen, overleven. De schildpad-achtige wezens, de linea, vochten als beren. Het was geen makkelijke opgave. Ze waren zeer gewiekst in allerlei truken, maar tot nu toe kwam hij er doorheen, en zijn leger ook.

Hij was trots op zichzelf dat hij het zo ver had kunnen schoppen. Hij was dankbaar dat hij in het leger was toegelaten. Ook was hij trots op zijn gevechtspak. Het gevechtspak was als een vriend. Het voelde zo goed aan, zo vertrouwd. In de helm zat een goed navigatie systeem. Ze hadden er dit keer echt werk van gemaakt. Nog steeds was het een experiment, maar het ging tot dusver goed.

Opeens gingen er overal schelle alarmen af. Hij viel op de grond alsof een aardbeving hem had getroffen. Even later werd hij wakker in een cel. Een schildpad-achtige bewaker keek hem aan. 'Ontsnappen is onmogelijk,' zei de bewaker, en injecteerde een groene stof in zijn lichaam met een spuit. Hij krijste, en viel na een bepaalde tijd weer in slaap. Plotseling werd hij weer wakker. Alles was donker. Hij hoorde gekrijs. Mannen in witte plasmapakken met grote witte ondoorzichtige helmen die grote punten hadden pakten hem beet terwijl hij weer een beetje kon zien. Ze namen hem mee door een tunnel. Het waren hele grote mannen, alhoewel hij niet wist of het wel mannen waren. Ze waren veel langer dan zijn leger in ieder geval. Het leken wel monsters. Ze namen hem mee door de tunnel naar een wit ruimteschip, ondoorzichtig.

Hij wist niet wie ze waren. Ze namen hem mee naar een kamer waar een vrouw was. Ze was in allerlei documenten aan het bladeren. 'Uw helm was nog te zwak,' zei de vrouw zonder op te kijken. 'Het was niet bestand tegen de sonische aanvallen.'

'Wie bent u als ik vragen mag ?' vroeg hij.

'Dat doet niet ter zake,' zei de vrouw, 'ik ben van het systeem. Een robot. Ik dien u te herbewapenen.'

'Welk systeem ?' vroeg hij.

'Ante-serius,' sprak zij.

'Wat is het ?' vroeg hij.

'Dat kan ik u niet uitleggen nu,' sprak de robot. 'Er is weinig tijd. U bent nu herbewapend.'

Plotseling was hij weer op een metalen trap, oog in oog met twee schilpadachtige wezens die hem aanvielen. Ze deden weer sonische aanvallen, geluids-aanvallen, maar hij was er nu tegen bestand. Hij merkte dat zijn helm zichzelf had ge-update. Het was allemaal een ingebouwd mechanisme. Het geluid van de schildpad-achtige wezens was nu in de verte, en het was een heel prettig geluid, alsof hij zich in een computerspel bevond. Weer haalde hij uit met zijn klauwen, en ze maakten ook zachte, kalmerende geluiden. Elke beweging die hij maakte gaf een sonische sensatie. Het gaf hem een zeker gevoel van veiligheid. Het navigatie systeem van zijn helm legde hem uit dat hij nu zelf ook sonische aanvallen kon doen. Hij had hierin verschillende keuze-mogelijkheden.

Hij merkte dat hierdoor zijn tegenstanders snel verslagen waren. Ze konden niet tegen dit systeem op. Hij voelde zichzelf als een moderator.

In een reflectie zag hij dat zijn eigen helm nu ook uitsteeksels had. Hij moest zijn wapenrusting beter leren kennen. Na een tijdje had hij de cabine gevonden, samen met wat anderen. Ze renden de cabine binnen, en schakelden de schildpadachtige wezens die daar waren uit. Een monotoon alarm ging af. Het was heel doordringend, maar hij voelde dat hij er tegen bestand was. Meer en meer schildpadachtige wezens kwamen de cabine in, en er was weer een gevecht. Wat waren het er veel ditkeer, maar ze leken kleiner te worden. Aan de andere kant van de cabine was een langere man of monster binnengekomen in een wit plasmapak met lange uitsteeksels op zijn helm. Hij sprak heel doordringend met een aangenaam geluid. Het was als een zoemend geluid. Ik begreep dat hij door deze sonische aanval de schildpadachtige wezens verkleinde. Hij begon op ze te trappen met zijn witte laarzen.

Dit was de hoofdcabine. Er waren allerlei machines met ingewikkelde computerschermen. Er kwamen meerdere lange mannen of monsters binnen die achter de computers gingen zitten, en ze begonnen eraan te werken. Sommigen hadden speciaal gereedschap bij zich om eraan te sleutelen. 'Dat was het,' zei de lange man.

'Wat ?' vroeg ik.

'We zijn er,' zei hij. 'De oorlog is door ons gewonnen.'

Ik kon het bijna niet geloven. De staatsgreep was geslaagd.

'En wat nu ?' vroeg ik.

'Heel wat om op te bouwen,' zei hij.

Ik dacht na over wat we allemaal hadden verloren in de afgelopen tijd. De schade was erg groot, en ik had pijn in mijn hoofd. Ik had het gevoel alsof ik nooit zou genezen.

'De verwonding is te diep,' stamelde ik.

'Wij zijn dieper,' zei de lange man.

De planeet was bevrijd. Iedereen was blij en er werd veel gefeest, maar ik voelde me niet blij. Ik voelde me kapot. Ook was ik op mijn hoede, want dat kon toch allemaal niet waar zijn ? Het duurde dan ook een tijdje voordat alles tot me doordrong. Ik vroeg me af of we wel echt veilig waren. De gesprekken met de lange mannen, of monsters, schenen me te helpen. Alleen al hun sonische eigenschappen hadden al een verzachtend effect op me, als wederopbouwend. Alles leek wel spelenderwijs te gaan. Het scheen iets in mijn helm te zijn wat zich integreerde, en wat muteerde, alsof twee samenlevingen één werden. Er leefde iets in mij, er groeide iets in mij, als een strijder. Het was mijn gids en mijn beschermer.

Ze waren onderdelen van een spel, een prachtig kosmisch en prozaïsch spel. Het was als een brug in mij, een zintuig, maar ik kon nog niet mijn vinger erop leggen wat het nu precies was. Ze waren de onderdelen van mijn wapenrusting, mijn vrienden. Ze hadden mij eindelijk gevonden.

Alles wat ik deed had een andere sonische waarde nu, en het beschermde mij tegen sonische aanvallen van buitenaf. De hele samenleving van de planeet werd door andere sonische blokken opgebouwd nu, als een versterkte immunologie. Het was het hart van de samenleving van de planeet, maar het leek wel alsof het sonisch verminderend was, want het leidde telkens tot diepere stiltes, dieper en dieper, en de stiltes werden langer en langer. Het was de sonische vermindering, een verschijnsel wat leidde tot het ontstaan van zoveel andere zintuigen.

De vorige samenleving van de planeet was namelijk oversonisch, waardoor deze zintuigen niet konden functioneren.

Terwijl hij nog steeds zijn helm ophad sprak het navigatie systeem tot hem : 'Besef je dat je vijanden slechts onderdelen zijn van je eigen wapenrusting ? Je hebt ze alleen nog niet op waarde kunnen schatten.' Anderen hadden hun helmen allang afgedaan, en velen hadden ook hun plasma-pakken uitgedaan. Hij wilde het zekere voor het onzekere nemen, en hij had zeker behoefte aan begeleiding door het navigatie systeem.

De Dromen van Niets

Aan zijn voorarm was een vlijmscherp hakmes bevestigd. Hij haalde er een paar keer goed mee uit. Het mes ging dwars door de keel van de leider van de straatbende. Hij had de keel met de punt van zijn mes geraakt, en hij hakte door de hele keel heen als in een flits. En toen nog een keer met de punt van de andere kant van het mes. Het was snel gedaan. De leider van de straatbende lag al snel op de grond in een plas bloed. Hij bleef ernaar kijken, het in zichzelf opnemende. Hij rende niet eens weg. Al snel waren er sirenes. Hij stond daar als onder hypnose, ook toen hij even later gearresteerd werd. Het leven op straat was niks. Het zou in de gevangenis veel beter zijn. Ook hij was de leider van een straatbende.

Hij dacht na over zijn daad, maar wist dat hij dit moest doen. Volgens hem was er geen andere weg. Hij had nog steeds een smaak van bloed in zijn mond. Het proefde bitter, maar voor hem had het ook een zekere zoetheid, want het betekende het einde van een tijdperk, van een lange strijd.

Zijn maten kwamen hem in de gevangenis opzoeken. Ze brachten allemaal spullen voor hem mee. Ze zouden hem er wel doorheen helpen. 'De politie wilde het niet doen, dus deed ik het zelf,' zei hij telkens. Zeven jaar de gevangenis in. De stad was blij dat hij het gedaan had. Nu waren ze eindelijk verlost. Het waren zeven lange jaren van grote terreur geweest voor de stad, en nu moest hij voor zeven jaar de gevangenis in om het te neutraliseren. Het viel voor hem nog wel mee. Hij had een veel langere gevangenis straf verwacht.

De eerste nacht in de gevangenis was vreemd geweest. Het was alsof hij hier thuis was. Zelfs de agenten zagen hem als een held, omdat hij Jejo had uitgeschakeld, de beruchte bendeleider die de stad zo lang had geterroriseerd. Zeven lange, zware jaren, die wel eeuwen leken te duren. Er moest wel een einde aan komen. Toen de zeven jaren voorbijwaren wilde hij niet weg, maar hij moest. Hij kreeg een huisje waar hij opnieuw kon beginnen. Op een nacht werd er op de deur geklopt. Het was een vroegere vriendin. Ze wilde iets voor hem voorlezen. Het was een gedicht.

Ze sprak : "Waarom zijn de tijden zo snel voorbij ? Wat wij hadden was maar een zucht en flits. Ik draag het met mij mee, maar het wordt steeds kleiner, totdat het zal komen als een baby van het niets."

"We kunnen niet met elkaar, Sara," sprak hij. "Dat heb je mooi verwoord."

"Ik ga maar weer eens," sprak ze. Hij ging naar bed en dacht na over alles. Alles was inderdaad zo snel gegaan. Met Jejo had hij afgerekend, en die herinnering zou ook steeds kleiner worden.

De dag erna ging hij de stad in. Weer kwam hij Sara tegen die daar ergens op een bankje zat. Hij keek haar aan en zij keek naar hem. "Mooi weertje, hè ?" zei hij.

"Ja, dat wel," zei ze.

"Dat wel ?" vroeg hij. "Dat klinkt alsof de rest niet zo mooi is."

"Daarom was ik ook bij je," zei ze. "Ik wist dat je net uit de gevangenis was gekomen, dus ik dacht dat jij me misschien wel zou begrijpen."

"Het ontging me," zei hij. "Wat is er aan de hand ?"

"De baby," zei ze, "de baby van het niets. Het is onze zoon."

Hij trok zijn wenkbrauwen op. "Dat geloof je toch zeker zelf niet, hè, Sara ?" sprak hij. "Dat was een gedicht, iets symbolisch. Het is niet echt."

"Dat zei ik ook," sprak ze. "De baby is niet echt, en dat is ook het probleem."

"Sara," zei hij. "Stop eens met die filosofische onzin. Hier komen we toch ook niet verder mee ?"

"Het is verdriet," sprak ze.

"Ja, maar we konden niet met elkaar," sprak hij. "Het zou alleen maar nog meer verdriet opleveren."

"Herinner je je Jejo ?" vroeg ze.

"Ja, natuurlijk, wie niet ?" sprak hij geirriteerd.

"Ik heb ook een baby van het niets met hem," sprak ze.

"Iedereen wist dat je een hoer was, Sara," sprak hij, "ik kijk er niet van op."

Sara begon te lachen. "Het is niet echt," grinnikte ze, "en de baby ook niet. Je moet niet alles geloven." Toen rende ze lachend weg.

"Trol !" riep hij haar na.

De volgende dag kwam hij haar weer tegen. Ze was nog wel bedroefder dan de vorige keren, en ze was helemaal in het zwart. "Sara toch," sprak hij. "Zeg, wees nu eens eerlijk en zeg me wat er aan de hand is."

"Okay," zei ze. "Ditmaal zal ik duidelijker zijn, maar niet in paniek raken, okay ?"

Hij knikte.

"Herinner je je wat ik zei over Jejo gisteren ?" vroeg ze.

Hij knikte weer.

"Ik had het over babies van niets, en ik ben blij," zei ze.

Hij trok zijn wenkbrauwen op en staarde naar haar.

"Blij om wat ?" vroeg hij.

"Nou," zei ze, "gewoon blij dat het geen echte baby was."

"Wat bedoel je Sara ?" vroeg hij traag.

"Hij heeft het geprobeerd ...," sprak ze.

"Geprobeerd ?" vroeg hij verbaasd.

"Ja, gedwongen," zei ze. "Hij heeft me ... Laat maar." Toen liep ze weg. Hij rende achter haar aan en greep haar jas. "Zeg het me," zei hij.

"Ik ben één van de velen. Ik ben blij dat ik nog leef, en nee, ik heb nooit iets met hem gehad. Hij heeft me ..." sprak ze.

"Waarom heb je me dat nooit eerder verteld ?" vroeg hij.

"Ik kon het niet," sprak ze. "Ik mocht het niet van hem, anders zou hij me ... Laat maar."

"Ik weet genoeg," zei hij bitter, "die vuilak."

"Wees in vervolg voorzichtig met wie je een hoer noemt," sprak ze. Toen liep ze weg.

"Sara !" riep hij. Hij rende achter haar aan, maar zij rende ook. Ze rende door het drukke verkeer, maar daar waagde hij zich niet aan. Hij wachtte bij het stoplicht, en ging toen het groen was de drukke weg over. Hij zag haar rennen naar het metro station. "Waarom doe je nu zo ?" riep hij.

Toen hij aan was gekomen bij het metro station zag hij haar net in de metro stappen, en die reed toen ook direct weg.

"Wat moet je nu met zoiets ?" zei hij tegen zichzelf, en ging naar huis.

Die nacht had hij een droom over de babies van niets. Ze waren opgegroeid en terroriseerden de stad. De babies van niets waren nu tot iets geworden. En zoals gewoonlijks was de politie nergens te bekennen, en moest hij het allemaal in zijn eentje opknappen en kwam daardoor de gevangenis in. Hij was blij toen hij weer wakker was, dat het allemaal maar een droom was, de dromen van niets.

De Sprekende Toren

Er was eens een sprekende toren. Wanneer iemand de trappen van de toren op wilde gaan, dan schreeuwde de toren uiteindelijk zo hard dat niemand echt ver kon komen. Maar de koning had gehoord dat er bijzondere dingen te vinden waren in die hoge toren, die zo hoog was dat niemand eignelijk wist waar die toren eindigde. De koning liet een dove man komen en vroeg aan de man of hij wilde gaan kijken wat er bovenin te vinden was. De dove man stemde toe, en vertrok direkt naar de toren. De man had natuurlijk geen last van het harde geluid, en na een tijdje was hij zo hoog gekomen dat hij in een zaaltje terecht kwam waar allerlei indiaanse vruchten lagen. De man begon ervan te eten, en begon hard te lachen. Hij wilde toen een trap op om nog hoger te komen, maar werd direkt tegengehouden door verblindende lichten. De man ging terug naar het zaaltje, nam zoveel mogelijk van de indiaanse vruchten mee, en ging terug naar de koning. Hij vertelde de koning over de verblindende lichten, maar dat hij wel vruchten had gevonden waar je hard van ging lachen.

De koning kon die vruchten wel gebruiken, en na niet al te lange tijd leed het hele hof aan de slappe lach. Maar tevreden was de koning niet. En daarom liet hij ook een blinde man komen. De blinde man maakte natuurlijk geen kans om door het harde geluid van het eerste gedeelte te komen, en daarom moest de dove man terug naar het torenzaaltje om daar vanuit

een raampje een touw te laten zakken om de blinde man omhoog te heisen.

Dat ging allemaal goed, en zo kon de blinde man de trap op nog verder omhoog, en had geen last van de verblindende lichten. Na een tijdje kwam de blinde man in een zaaltje waar glanzende indiaanse stenen lagen. De man zag dat natuurlijk niet, maar had ze al snel gevonden, maar barste toen in huilen uit. Hij wilde toen met de trap nog verder omhoog, maar daar werd het elke stap heter en heter, totdat de man het niet meer uit kon houden, en terugging naar het zaaltje. Hier nam hij zoveel mogelijk indiaanse edelstenen mee, en ging terug over de trap naar het eerste zaaltje, waar hij door het raampje over het touw naar beneden kon. Zo kwam hij terug bij de koning, en vertelde wat hij had meegemaakt. Ook liet hij de indiaanse edelstenen zien, waarvan je in huilen uitbarste zodra je ze aanraakte. ‘Nou, laten we dat dan maar niet doen, hè,’ zei de koning. De koning liet de edelstenen goed opbergen.

Maar op een dag was er een dief in het kasteel, en vond de edelstenen. Toen hij ze wilde oppakken barste hij ineens in huilen uit. Huilend en vol van spijt meldde hij zich bij de koning, en de koning wist nu hoe belangrijk die edelstenen waren. Ze waren goede wachters. Voor straf moest de dief de torentrap beklimmen, helemaal tot aan het puntje. Maar ver kwam de man natuurlijk niet. Eerst raakte hij doof van het geluid. Later raakte hij blind van het licht, en toen hij nog hoger kwam was het daar zo heet dat hij verbrandde. Niemand zag hem ooit weer terug. De koning had gehoopt dat de dief met meerdere geheimen zou terugkomen, en daarom was de teleurstelling groot toen dat niet gebeurde. De koning wist nu dat ze een man van steen nodig hadden die de hete trap zou kunnen bestijgen.

Vele jaren gingen voorbij, maar uiteindelijk had de koning toch zo’n man gevonden. De man van steen kon ook goed tegen hard geluid en fel licht, en al gauw kwam hij in een derde zaal, waar hij indiaanse bloemen vond. Maar de bloemen riepen direkt : ‘Raak ons maar niet aan, want dan kun je niet meer spreken.’ De man stapte daarom direkt achteruit en liep naar de volgende trap omhoog. Maar daar werd het elke trede steeds kouder en kouder, en op een gegeven moment kreeg de man het zo koud dat hij gillend naar beneden rende. Snel kwam hij bij de koning aan, en vertelde over de koude trappen. Ook vertelde hij over de bloemen. Maar de koning was erg boos dat de man van steen de bloemen niet voor hem had meegenomen. Het kon de koning niets schelen dat de man van steen dan niet meer zou kunnen praten als hij ze mee zou nemen. Dus de man moest terug. De man van steen nam zoveel mogelijk bloemen mee als hij maar kon, maar kon sindsdien niet meer spreken. De koning liet de bloemen planten in zijn kasteel, aan het einde van de grote hal. De koning liet er een klein riviertje omheen bouwen, en een hekje, zodat niemand de bloemen zomaar zou aanraken.

De koning was nog steeds erg ontevreden, want hij wilde weten wat er achter die koude trappen was. En daarvoor had de koning een kachelman nodig. Na vele jaren zoeken vond de koning eindelijk zo’n man die geheel van kacheltjes was gemaakt. Hij zou met gemak over die koude trappen kunnen komen. En hij kon ook makkelijk de trappen daarvoor beklimmen, omdat hij overal tegen bestand was. Maar de koude trappen waren niet makkelijk. Na een tijdje begon de man te merken dat de kacheltjes uit begonnen te gaan, en uiteindelijk moest de man zich omdraaien om weer terug te gaan.

De koning was woedend. De kachelman was zijn enige hoop. Voor straf moest de kachelman in het veld van de indiaanse bloemen geworpen worden. Toen hij tegen de bloemen aankwam kon hij direkt niet meer spreken. De bloemen hadden erg veel medelijden met hem, en op een dag zei één van de bloemen tegen hem : ‘Hoor eens. Ik zal een druppel wonderhoning voortbrengen, en als je die druppel inslikt, dan zul je met gemak

over de koude trappen heenkomen.' En zo gebeurde het. De bloem bracht de honingdruppel voort, de kachelman slikte het in, en de bloemen brachten hem over de rivier en over het hek. De kachelman ging terug naar de toren, en kwam later met gemak over de koude trappen heen. Daar boven vond hij zo'n prachtig rijk dat hij niet meer terugwilde. En waarom zou hij dat verklappen aan zo'n gemene en valse koning ?

Sindsdien begon de toren nog meer te stralen, en de indiaanse bloemen begonnen naar de toren toe te groeien. Ze werden elke dag wilder en begonnen scherpe dorens voort te brengen, zodat niemand de toren meer kon beklimmen. Ze groeiden zo hoog dat ze helemaal in het rijk van de kachelman terechtkwamen. De kachelman was daar natuurlijk erg blij mee, maar kon nog steeds niet spreken. Elk jaar brachten de indiaanse bloemen prachtig bloesem voort, en op een dag zei één van de bloemen : 'Kachelman, zodra de bloesem een druppel wonderhoning voortbrengt : slik het in. Dan zul je weer spreken.' De kachelman wachtte totdat de druppel zou komen, en toen hij slikte kon hij niet alleen spreken, maar ook stond er een indiaanse prinses voor hem. Zij was gehuld in bloesem en de wonderlijkste bloemen. 'Ik ben de bloemenprinses,' zei ze. En ze leidde hem naar een trap geheel gemaakt van bloemen, en de trap was heel geurig. Helemaal bovenaan de trap waren er vlammetjes waardoor al zijn kacheltjes weer aan konden gaan. En voordat de kachelman het wist stond hij bovenop die hoge toren en had een uitzicht over het hele land.

'Hallo,' zei de toren, 'nog nooit heeft er iemand op mijn top gestaan, en het is zo'n heerlijk gevoel. Daarom geef ik je nu vleugeltjes, zodat je hier altijd weer terug kan komen.' En zo vloog de kachelman weg met zijn indiaans prinsesje, want nu hij zo hoog was gekomen, wilde hij eigenlijk alleen maar hoger. En de bloemen groeiden heel snel met hen mee, en volgden hen overal. En elk jaar bracht de bloesem weer nieuwe indiaanse prinsesjes voort. De kachelman kwam nooit meer terug naar de toren, en sindsdien is het geluid van de toren alleen maar harder geworden. Men zegt dat dat is omdat hij de kachelman roept.

Tijd
Zand

Ik kwam hem op de markt tegen waar hij allemaal rotzooi verkocht. Ik waarschuwde de mensen tegen hem. Ik kende hem, maar niemand luisterde. Hij had zijn plaats gevestigd in de markt. Hij was ingeburgerd. Hij was als de stenen van de huizen van de mensen. Ik werd afgewimpeld. Hij was vaak dronken. Hij keek niet normaal uit zijn ogen. Maar niemand gaf er wat om, want hij was immers een deel van hun leven, als een familie erfenis. Ze waren afhankelijk van hem, alsof hij de regering van de stad in handen had. Ik kon alleen maar toekijken. Niemand, maar dan ook niemand geloofde mij, en ik werd steeds stiller. Dit werd zo erg dat ik op een gegeven moment gewoon met

hen meepraatte, want ze wilden toch niet luisteren. Ik speelde gewoon het spelletje mee. Ik zorgde wel dat ik bij hem uit de buurt bleef. Hij was gevaarlijk.

Maar ik begon ontzettend aan mezelf te twijfelen. Ik wist dat hij een pyromaan was, maar ik zag hem als schuldige wanneer er ergens brand was, bij voorbaat al. Ik zag hem achter elke boom. Voor mij zat hij achter alles wat verkeerd ging in mijn leven. Hij werd een obsessie voor me. Ik zag hem nog zo zitten achter de piano. Hij ging door totdat de piano in brand stond. Het hele theater brandde af. Ik zag de mensen nog zo gillend wegrennen. Er werd gezegd dat het een ongeluk was, maar ik wist wel beter. Ik kon hier alleen niet over praten. Het leek wel alsof hij mijn mond vastgelijmd had. Ik kon niet zeggen wat ik dacht en wist, want mensen zouden toch niet naar me luisteren.

Het werd van kwaad tot erger. Hij was niet alleen mijn obsessie, maar ook mijn hysterie. Het leidde tot grote woede-uitbarstingen. Wat had hij toch met mij gedaan ? Ik was mezelf niet meer. Ik herinnerde me nog dat schilderij van hem aan de muur van de familie. Zij liepen met hem weg. Zij waren ook geobsedeerd door hem, maar dan op een positieve manier. Daarom heb ik me ook van die familie gedistantieerd. Ze waren voor mij niet meer geloofwaardig. Ik kon ze niet meer vertrouwen. Ik wilde ook niets meer van mijn familie weten. Ze hingen aan de lippen van die crimineel.

Hij was niet goed snik. Hij ging 's nachts als het regende met zijn viool naar buiten. Ik geloofde hem niet. Al die stomme liedjes die hij zong, en dat gerammel met die piano. Maar hij werd goed verkocht. Mijn familie had al zijn platen. Ik kon niet tegen die muziek. Het ging altijd over hetzelfde, en eigenlijk ging het nergens over.

Op een dag had hij besloten op een paard door de stad te rijden. Dat kwam natuurlijk op de voorpagina van alle kranten de dag erna. Hij deed altijd van alles om maar in de publiciteit te komen. Er was iets vreemds met hem aan de hand, maar ik wist niet wat. Het was te gemaakt.

Ik besloot mijn eigen muziek te maken, gewoon om over dat gemeier van hem heen te kunnen komen. Ik wilde verwerken wat hij me had aangedaan. Hij was veel te ver gegaan, over mijn grenzen heen. Ik maakte mijn eerste plaat, maar het sloeg niet aan. Het hoefde voor mij ook niet. Het ging mij om mezelf. Het was puur therapeutisch. Ik maakte een tweede plaat, maar die flopte nog wel erger, en weer deed het me niks. Het was voor mezelf. Ik vond het beter dan zijn spul, maar hier in de stad hielden ze nu eenmaal meer van smartlappen. Ze zeiden me altijd : "Ga naar het buitenland. Daar zul je meer succes hebben, want hier eet de boer niet wat hij niet kent."

Dat heb ik toen uiteindelijk gedaan. Ik was het helemaal zat. Ik vertrok met de trein naar het buitenland. Ik ging naar Duitsland. Ik hoopte hier los te kunnen komen van het verleden. Ik bracht mijn twee platen hier uit, en dat ging in het begin redelijk goed. Veel beter dan in de stad waar ik vandaan kwam. Het kwam daar niet verder dan de stadsmuren, dus buiten de stad kende niemand me, maar hier in Duitsland sloegen mijn twee platen redelijk aan, en kreeg er een redelijk inkomen door, en werd op straat herkend. Dat vond ik eigenlijk niet nodig, en best wel irritant, dus liep ik vaak met een zonnebril op, alhoewel dat lang niet altijd werkte.

Met mijn derde plaat brak ik pas echt door. Ik kon niet eens maar de straat op, zo hysterisch was het. Ze waren zo obsessief met me, zoals ik eens obsessief was over hem, maar dan in positieve zin, alhoewel ik het niet meer als positief zag. Ik dacht dat ik te ver was gegaan, en wenste dat ik de derde plaat nooit had uitgebracht. Een normaal leven was er voor mij niet meer mogelijk. Dit werd voor mij zo erg dat ik uiteindelijk weer terug besloot te gaan naar mijn eigen stad. Het was zo vreemd. Mensen deden gewoon normaal. Ik werd niet aangesproken, zelfs vaak niet eens aangekeken. Iedereen leefde langs me heen, en het was heerlijk. Maar toen ik 'hem' weer eens tegen kwam op de markt knapte er iets in me. Nee, hier kon ik ook niet mee leven.

Ik wilde niet terug naar Duitsland, maar hier kon ik ook niet blijven. Ik kon gewoon niet met 'hem' leven. Ik begon er niet meer aan. Ik ben toen in een andere stad gaan wonen, een veel kleinere stad, een soort dorp. Hier kwam ik eindelijk tot rust. Ik bemoeide me niet meer met muziek. Ik begon dingen van me af te schrijven, anoniem. Het was heel therapeutisch, en ik zou mezelf nooit meer zo 'uitgeven' als ik had gedaan met mijn muziek. Ik maakte boeken, maar dan alleen maar voor mezelf. Toen er op een dag een paar verdwenen waren zag ik hem als de schuldige.

Hij had het me namelijk eens gezegd : 'Ik zal je altijd volgen, als je schaduw. Ik weet alles wat je doet. Ontsnappen kun je niet. Ik weet je altijd weer te vinden. Ik ben je spiegelbeeld, of liever gezegd : Jij bent mijn schaduw en spiegelbeeld. Je zult nooit worden zoals ik. Alles wat je hebt en zal krijgen is slechts van mij. Ik kan het nemen en wegdoen wanneer ik wil, want jij bent de klederen die ik 's nachts uitdoe als ik ga slapen. Jij bent de schil van de vruchten die ik eet. Ik kan je zo wegmieteren wanneer ik maar wil. Je doet er niet toe. Ja, ik geef toe, je maakt me hebberig, maar wat heb ik eigenlijk aan je ? Ik kan je zo wegdoen. Geen probleem hoor, voor jou een ander. Ik heb wel meerderen van jou in de la liggen. Jij bent er eentje van dertien in een dozijn, dus denk niet dat je zo speciaal bent.'

Op een dag kreeg ik een brief uit Duitsland. Ze wilden dat ik weer platen zou maken. Zij boden me echt heel veel geld. Ik dacht aan wat ik allemaal met het geld zou kunnen doen, en ik vergat helemaal de consequenties van de roem, maar ik wilde genezen, een nieuw leven beginnen. Ik had zoiets van : "Ik ga wel ergens diep in het bos leven, in een kasteel ofzo, met veel bewaking, als een labyrint waar ze me nooit kunnen vinden."

En dat deed ik. Ik deed het wel op de voorwaarde dat ik anoniem zou kunnen zover dat mogelijk was, en zo niet, dan met een pseudoniem. Ze stemden hierin toe, omdat ze wisten dat mijn platen toch goed zouden verkopen, met of zonder mijn naam. En zo gebeurde het. Ik maakte een plaat onder een pseudoniem, maar iedereen wist dat ik het was. Ik werd rijk, vertrok naar het bos, ging daar in een kasteel wonen en liet er een groot labyrint omheen bouwen. Het labyrint werkte zo goed dat er eigenlijk geen bewaking nodig was, maar voor de zekerheid liet ik die er toch zijn. Je weet immers maar nooit.

Op een dag kwam 'hij' aan bij het labyrint. Het bleek dat ik nu ook was doorgebroken in mijn eigen land en zelfs mijn eigen stad. Ik weet niet hoe hij het voor mekaar had gekregen, maar hij stond ineens voor me. Ik vroeg hem hoe hij door het labyrint was gekomen. Hij zei dat het een koud kunstje was, want 'hij kende me immers door en door." Dat had ik vaker gehoord. Gelukkig was er bewaking bij. 'Dit is hij," zei ik tegen de bewaking. Ze hielden hem onder schot. 'Wat moet je ?' vroeg ik.

Hij begon zich als een idioot te gedragen ... Niet dat dat de eerste keer was, maar dit keer was het echt idioot. Hij begon op de grond te rollen als een gek. Er was schuim op zijn mond en hij zei op een vreemde manier : "Een beetje maar, een klein beetje maar."

"Een beetje wat ?" vroeg ik.

"Een beetje zand," zei hij, "een klein beetje maar, ach geef me toch een beetje zand."

"Zand ? Waar heb je het over ?" vroeg ik.

"Weet je het dan niet meer ?" zei hij.

"Ik weet van niks," zei ik.

"De dag dat je trouwde met haar, en ik haar aan flarden schoot, en niemand je geloofde dat ik het had gedaan," zei hij, "en zand was alles wat ik je gaf. Een zak zand. Ik wil het terug, al is het maar een klein beetje."

"Dat zand heb ik allang niet meer, dat heb ik weggedaan," zei ik.

"Stommeling," zei hij. "Dat was het zand van tijd."

"Wat moet je ermee ?" vroeg ik.

"Ik heb een te groot gebrek aan tijd," zei hij.

"Ja, dat zand is weg," zei ik. "Wist ik veel dat het het zand van tijd was. Mijn vrouw was dood, afgeschoten door jou, dus ik had wel andere dingen aan mijn hoofd dan over zand na te denken. Ik vond het nogal vreemd dat je mij een zak zand gaf nadat je mijn vrouw had vermoord. Ik vond dat ook verdacht, dus ik deed het weg."

"Zand, zand !" riep hij toen. "Ik heb zand nodig !" Toen smolt hij weg en verdween in de vloer.

"Ik wist dat het een spook was," zei ik tegen de bewakers.

"Het gebeurt wel vaker," zei één van de bewakers. "Het zijn zand-tovenaars die hun boze magie bedrijven, maar ze betalen altijd met zand, hun eigen tijd."

"Maar ja," zei ik. "Mijn vrouw heb ik er niet door terug."

"Nee," zei de bewaker, "maar je kreeg wel een heleboel zand van hem, magisch zand, kostbare tijd."

"Een schrale troost," zei ik. Ik heb de zand tovenaar daarna nooit meer teruggezien.

De Toverbeker en het Toverbordje

Eens waren er dertig prinsen die door een heks waren betoverd tot wachters op een hoge toren. De toren was zo hoog dat het hoogste deel niet gezien kon worden, en de toren was zo breed dat het de helft van het land vulde. Als iemand de trap omhoog wilde bestijgen, dan kwamen er ballen van steen en ballen van vuur naar beneden, en maakten voor lange tijd het land onveilig. Daarom verbood de koning dat nog iemand naar de toren zou gaan.

De koning had veel verdriet van het verlies van zijn dertig zonen. De dertig prinsen waren nu angstaanjagende wachters die op de top van de toren moesten marcheren. Zij moesten de schat van de heks bewaken : een toverbeker die nooit op zou raken, en waarmee je onder de grond kon reizen, en een toverbord dat altijd vol was, en waarmee je in de lucht kon reizen.

De koning had een erge hekel aan de heks. Was hij nu maar wat aardiger voor haar geweest, dan was alles niet zo erg als het nu was. Ja, de koning had veel spijt wat hij de heks had aangedaan. Een oud bedelvrouwtje kwam eens aan de poort en vroeg om onderdak, maar de koning zond haar weg. Hoe kon hij nu weten dat het een heks was ? En een heks kun je maar beter onderdak geven, anders zal het je je hele leven berouwen. Dat was de koning nu wel duidelijk geworden.

Sindsdien was de koning altijd goed voor bedelaars, en had hij z’n lesje wel geleerd. Op een dag kwam één van de bedelaars tot de koning. ‘Koning,’ zei de bedelaar, ‘ik heb gehoord wat er gebeurd is. Ik kom uit een ver land, maar ik heb een lange tijd onder de grond gewoond, en eens zag ik de heks met haar toverbeker langskomen. Ik volgde haar, en ze kwam in een bron van licht, waar ze onzichtbaar werd. Zo ging ik ook naar de bron, en in een bliksemschicht stond ik bovenop de toren waar u zonen gevangen worden gehouden. Ze waren inderdaad de meest afschuwelijke wachters geworden, en marcheerden gevaarlijk rond. Maar ze konden mij niet zien, omdat ik onzichtbaar was. De toverbeker was verdwenen, omdat de heks daarmee onder de grond was, maar het toverbordje dat altijd vol was stond daar, en ik nam ervan, en steeg op in de lucht. Hoever ik gekomen ben weet ik niet, maar ik was zo hoog waar nog geen mens ooit was gekomen. Hier kwam ik in een wereld waar de meest wonderlijke sprookjesfiguren waren. Zij vertelden mij dat uw zonen geheime sprookjes in zich droegen die nog nooit waren verteld. De betovering zou worden verbroken wanneer die sprookjes zouden worden verteld.’

Toen liet de koning de beste sprookjesvertellers van het land komen, om zoveel mogelijk sprookjes te verzamelen en te vertellen, maar er gebeurde niets. Toen liet de koning de bedelaar weer terugkomen, en vroeg hem waar onder de grond die lichtbron was. De koning zond toen tien lakeien met de bedelaar mee. De koning hoopte dat zijn lakeien de prinsen konden bevrijden. Maar de heks wachtte hen al op. In een lichtflits betoverde ze de lakeien in stenen wachters die de lichtbron moesten bewaken, maar de bedelaar zag de toverbeker staan, greep de beker en dronk ervan, terwijl hij nog dieper onder de grond kon reizen. Na een lange tijd kwam de bedelaar in een sprookjesrijk zo diep onder de grond waar geen mens ooit was geweest. Hoe diep het was, wist hij niet, maar er waren hier wonderlijke sprookjeswezens. Zij vertelden dat zij eens samenleefden met de sprookjeswereld boven de lucht, maar de heks had het rijk verscheurd. In de lichtbron verborg de heks sprookjes, en de twee sprookjeswerelden zouden weer bij elkaar komen als die verborgen sprookjes zouden worden verteld.

Weer ging de bedelaar naar de koning, en weer liet de koning de beste sprookjesvertellers komen, en ook de beste sprookjesvertellers uit andere landen, maar er gebeurde weer niets. Maar toen kreeg de bedelaar een idee. Hij had nu immers zowel het toverbordje als de toverbeker. Met het toverbordje kon hij nu de toverbeker naar het rijk boven de lucht brengen, en dan zouden zij met de toverbeker naar het rijk onder de grond kunnen gaan. Vanaf die dag werd er heel wat heen en weer

gereisd, en ze vertelden elkaar de wonderlijkste sprookjes. Niet lang daarna marcheerden de stenen lakeien en de wachters van de toren naar de dichtstbijzijnde stad, en begonnen de sprookjes te vertellen. Langzaam maar zeker verbrak de betovering, en de koning kon zijn dertig zonen en zijn tien lakeien weer in de armen nemen.

De Lettermaker

De lettermaker werkt 's nachts altijd door,
Altijd is hij op,
Een lettertje hier, een lettertje daar,
Hij is er maar druk mee

De lettermaker let niet op,
Hij heeft het te druk voor verhalen,
Nooit heeft hij voor iets anders tijd,
Alleen maar zijn letters te maken

De lettermaker poetst zijn letters op,
En zet ze in zijn etalage,
Toe koopt toch al uw letters hier,
Het is een hele rage

De lettermaker schildert zijn letters op in allerlei bonte kleuren,
Een vrouw in een bontjas kwam eens tot hem,
En zei het was niet haar stijl,
Toen heeft hij haar de deur uitgezet,
En ook haar misselijke hondje

Maar in haar handtasje verborg zij giftige werktuigen,
Toen ging zij terug de winkel binnen, en begon hem te bespuiten,
Oh wee, sprak de lettermaker, nu, weet gij wat ik zal doen met u ?
Ik zal een letter van u maken, en u zult zeker in mijn boeken komen

Het was voor de lettermaker maar een koud kunstje,
En nu staat ook zij in de etalage,
Dat is het loon van hen die het werk van de lettermaker geen warm hart toedragen

Oh letterman, oh letterman, gij maakt letters van uw vijanden in een pan,
Oh letterman, oh letterman, een gewaarschuwd mens telt voor twee,
Zij die in zijn winkel komen en zijn werk niet waarderen,
Moeten zonder pardon als zijn letters paraderen,
Zij komen nooit meer uit zijn winkel,
In zijn etalage hebben zij hun plaats,

Als een waarschuwing voor hen die de taal nooit leren

Oh lettermaker, oh lettermaker, gij maakt letters in uw pan,
Gij kookt hen op voor hen die honger hebben naar taal,
Ja, taal zal alles goedmaken,
De lettermaker op zijn paard,
Als een schrijver op zijn letters,
Trek maar aan de letters,
Als een schrijver trekkende zijn zwaard

De lettermaker is nooit ziek,
Maar zijn letters kunnen flink ziek zijn,
Maar dan geeft hij van hun eigen deeg hen een medicijn

Oh letterman, oh letterman, de letters draaien in de pan,
Geen goed idee voor hen om de benen te nemen,
Want als het alfabet een letter mist,
Dan gaat hij op jacht, richt zijn pijl,
En zorgt dat hij niet mist

Oh lettermaker, oh lettermaker, gij roept al uw letters van de daken,
Daar komen zij al hollend aan,
Want thuis is het toch het beste gedaan

De Wonderplaatjes

Hij verkocht plaatjes van vrouwen. De plaatjes bewogen, maar het waren eigenlijk een soort verhalen. Volgens de politie gingen de verhalen te ver, en daarom was het ook verboden. Plaatjesdealers waren in de ogen van de politie erger dan drugsdealers. Hij verkocht de plaatjes daarom ook altijd stiekem, en liever helemaal niet. Dit maakte hem mysterieus. Zijn plaatjes waren gewild, maar eigenlijk moest je wel heel speciaal zijn wilde je een kans hebben zo'n plaatje van hem te kunnen kopen. De plaatjes waren ook nog eens erg duur. Theo was helemaal door het dolle heen toen hij op een dag zo'n zeer gewild plaatje kon bemachtigen. Hij kon er uren naar staren. Het plaatje bewoog, en ook de lippen van de vrouw, en zij vertelde een verhaal. Het plaatje gaf dus ook

geluid af. Met een draaischijf aan de zijkant van het plaatje kun je het geluid harder of zachter zetten. Hij liet het verhaal telkens weer afspelen totdat hij het uit zijn hoofd kende en gewoon naar de lippen van de vrouw keek. Hij vond het verhaal helemaal niet te ver gaan, maar hij hoorde van anderen dat de andere verhalen veel erger waren. Hij zou wel meer van zulke plaatjes willen hebben, maar hij was al dolgelukkig dat hij er één had. Hij had nooit gedacht dat het hem op een dag zou lukken zo'n plaatje te krijgen. Al zijn klasgenootjes waren stikjaloers.

Hij speelde er teveel mee, zelfs op school, en op een dag nam de juffrouw het van hem af. 'Je weet dat die plaatjes verboden zijn,' zei de juffrouw. En hij wist toen dat de pret was afgelopen. Hij was te ver gegaan en te onvoorzichtig geweest. Hij kon zichzelf wel voor z'n kop slaan. Sommige jongens van de oudere klassen lieten nog steeds hun plaatjes wapperen, maar alleen op het schoolplein. Ze zouden het niet in de klas doen waar de meester of juffrouw het kon zien. Het waren vaak vrienden van de jongen die de plaatjes verkocht. Theo vertelde het verhaal aan de jongen die de plaatjes verkocht toen hij hem weer zag, maar die was niet geïnteresseerd. "Had je maar beter moeten oppassen," zei de jongen. "Je krijgt geen nieuwe."

Theo ging teleurgesteld naar huis, en vertelde het aan zijn vader en moeder. "Ach," zei zijn moeder, "ik heb nog wel zulke plaatjes voor je. Wij hadden ze vroeger ook. Ze moeten ergens in een doos op zolder liggen nog." Theo was helemaal door het dolle heen. Zijn moeder kwam even later aanzetten met een hele schoenendoos vol met bewegende plaatjes. Theo nam ze één voor één uit de schoenendoos. "Wat zijn het voor verhalen, mam ?" vroeg hij.

"Ga ze maar luisteren," zei zijn moeder, "maar neem ze nooit mee naar school. Je hebt inmiddels gezien wat er dan kan gebeuren."

Hij nam de schoenendoos mee naar zijn kamer en ging luisteren. Hij hing de plaatjes in zijn kamer. Niemand, maar dan ook niemand, kon zijn geluk nog tegenhouden. Hij begon zich steeds meer op zijn kamer op te sluiten, en wilde niet meer naar school. De plaatjes onderwezen hem beter, zei hij. Maar hij werd een verslaafde, en had al snel andere plaatjes nodig. Hij zocht contact met de plaatjesdealer, maar die dacht dat hij gek geworden was. "Kijk eens naar jezelf," zei de plaatjesdealer, "je staat helemaal te trillen, en je ogen zijn helemaal rood. Dit is niet meer normaal. Hoe kwam je aan die plaatjes ?"

"Van mijn moeder," zei Theo. "Van vroeger."

De plaatjesdealer keek hem diep in zijn ogen. "Weet je het dan niet ?" zei hij. "Vroeger verkochten ze gevaarlijke rommel. Die vrouwen zijn gevaarlijk. Ze maken je gek."

"Wat kan ik doen ?" vroeg Theo. "Ik smeek je me te helpen."

De plaatjesdealer keek hem weer diep in zijn ogen. "Ik heb je gewaarschuwd," zei hij, en liep weg.

"Nee, alsjeblieft," huilde Theo. "Je moet me helpen."

De plaatjesdealer draaide zich om. "Vooruit," zei hij. "Breng mij die plaatjes van vroeger en je krijgt van mij een nieuwe." Even later kwam Theo met de schoenendoos en gaf het aan de plaatjesdealer. Theo kreeg in ruil een nieuw plaatje. Dat was alles wat hij nodig had. Toen de plaatjesdealer thuis kwam zette hij de schoenendoos met plaatjes op een tafel, en begon op de vrouwen te schelden. "Jullie moeten getemd worden. Jullie hebben die jongen helemaal het hoofd gek lopen maken." Maar het temmen liep op niets uit. De plaatjesdealer raakte gefrustreerd en op een dag gooide hij de schoenendoos met plaatjes weg. Maar toen kreeg hij ineens een ingeving. Hij dacht aan Theo, en toen aan de moeder van Theo. Hij zou de schoenendoos naar haar terugbrengen

en haar zeggen dat ze het niet meer terug moest geven aan Theo. Theo's moeder begreep het hele verhaal en ze zou de schoenendoos goed opbergen. Theo's moeder zou ook wel eens alle nieuwe plaatjes willen zien. De plaatjesdealer nam haar toen mee naar zijn huis. De plaatjes hingen door het hele huis. Theo's moeder keek haar ogen uit. "Kan ik er wat meer kopen voor Theo ?" vroeg ze. De plaatjesdealer stemde toe. De plaatjes waren heel duur, maar Theo's moeder was rijk, zeer rijk. Ze kwam toen met een heleboel nieuwe plaatjes thuis voor Theo. Maar de pret duurde niet lang. De politie had er hoogte van gekregen en begon huiszoekingen te doen, en Theo werd niet overgeslagen. De plaatjes werden in beslag genomen, en ook de schoenendoos werd gevonden en in beslag genomen.

Theo's moeder waarschuwde de politie voor het gevaar van de plaatjes, maar ze luisterden niet. Snel wist iedereen het. De politie was binnen korte tijd een stel verslaafden. Ze waren zoals Theo eens was, trillerig, met rode ogen, en smekend. Maar er waren geen meerdere plaatjes meer, hoe veel ze ook op huiszoeking gingen. Ze smeekten de plaatjesdealer om meer plaatjes, en ze smeekten ook Theo en zijn moeder. "Probeer het maar bij juffrouw Jans," zei Theo. "Zij heeft eens zo'n plaatje van me afgenomen." Daar strompelden ze toen als dronkaarden naartoe. "Tja," zei de juffrouw, "die heb ik eens aan mijn ex-man gegeven en die woont nu in het buitenland."

Ze moesten en zouden daar naartoe gaan, maar onderweg verdwaalden ze. Ze waren niet henzelf meer en hadden hun gevoel van orientatie verloren. "Het plaatje, het plaatje !" riepen ze. Ze had hen ook nog eens een vals adres gegeven. Ze kwamen uiteindelijk aan bij het huis van een oude vrouw aan de rand van een bos, in het buitenland. Ze vroegen direct om het plaatje. "Plaatje ?" vroeg de vrouw. "Waar hebben jullie het over ?" Toen vertelden ze stotterend en stamelend het hele verhaal, terwijl het speeksel van hun monden droop. "Ik zal direct de dokter bellen," zei het vrouwtje. "Het gaat niet goed met jullie." Toen de dokter kwam kreeg hij ook het hele verhaal te horen. "Oh, die plaatjes ?" zei hij. "Ik heb er eens een hele doos van geërfd, van wel honderden jaren geleden. Je mag ze wel hebben als jullie denken dat het jullie gaat helpen. Ik doe er toch niets mee." De dokter nam de trillende en bevende politie-agenten mee naar zijn huis, en liet hen de doos zien. "Plaatjes, plaatjes, plaatjes !" riepen de agenten, alsof ze goud hadden gevonden. Hun ogen puilden er helemaal uit, en ze grepen de plaatjes en begonnen ze in het rond te strooien alsof ze in een geldmijn waren gekomen. "Plaatjes, plaatjes, plaatjes !" riepen ze. Dat was alles wat ze nog konden zeggen. De vrouw van de dokter schudde haar hoofd. "Die plaatjes werden vroeger verboden, en ik weet nu waarom," sprak ze. "Mensen worden stapelgek."

"Ik heb er wel een medicijn voor denk ik," zei de dokter.

"Dan mag je snel zijn," zei zijn vrouw. "Anders wordt jij er zo ook nog door aangestoken." De dokter keek zijn vrouw aan met rode ogen, en toen weer naar de plaatjes die overal om hem heen lagen. "Plaatjes, plaatjes, plaatjes !" riep de dokter, en waggelde achter de politie-agenten aan. "We moeten meer van die rotzooi hebben, waar zijn ze ?" riep de dokter. Maar niet lang daarna kon hij ook alleen maar "plaatjes, plaatjes, plaatjes" zeggen. "Jullie hebben teveel praatjes !" riep de vrouw van de dokter. Ze begon de plaatjes op te rapen en deed ze weer in de doos. "Levensgevaarlijk zulke plaatjes," sprak ze. "Ik zal het goed opbergen." Maar de politie-agenten en de dokter waren niet meer stil te krijgen. De dokter had inmiddels zijn muziek-instrumenten gegrepen en begon ze uit te delen aan de politie-agenten, en ze begonnen muziek te maken, zo vreemd, want ze konden immers niet meer spreken. En zo gingen ze door het hele land, marcherend. En de mensen kenden het verhaal niet, maar ze vonden het prachtige muziek. En iedereen werd erdoor aangestoken, en er werden grammofoon-plaatjes van gemaakt. Iedereen had ze na een tijdje wel in huis. En er kwam vrede op aarde en niemand werd er meer ziek. Politie en dokters waren niet meer nodig. Ze waren nu muzikanten geworden, en dat was het beste.

De Geschilderde Wond

Het laat me niet los,
Zij die stierf, onder mysterieuze omstandigheden,
Nee, erachter gekomen ben ik niet,
Ik weet niet wat mij plaagt,
Ze was nog zo jong

Het laat me niet los,
Die dag in het bos,
Toen ik met haar was in het bootje,
Iets greep haar en trok haar de diepte in

En zoveel nam zij met haar mee,
En zoveel liet zij achter,
Als ik naar het behang staar zie ik haar,
Maar er is zoveel wat ik niet zie

Een schilderij van haar hangt in de kamer,
Dat doet mij goed, maar het is ook een wond,
Als een eeuwige wond die maar niet weggaat,
Het is zo dubbel na al die jaren,
Terwijl het in het begin slechts bitter was

De wonden worden zoeter,
Water wordt tot wijn,
De bitterheid is minder,
Maar het is nog steeds daar

Elke dag lijkt het beter te gaan,
Wanneer ik naar het schilderij kijk,
Ik kan er zoveel in zien,
Ook de dingen die er nooit waren

Het lijkt alsof ze doorgroeit in het schilderij,
Alsof ze tot mij spreekt,
Het is alsof ik achter haar sta,
Maar dan lijkt het alsof iets mij doorbreekt

Ik vecht tegen schimmen en schaduwen,
Ik vecht tegen spiegelbeelden en de tijd,
We zijn te ver weg van elkaar

Is het te overbruggen, of is het beter zo,
Ik droom van een betere aarde,
Als ik het toch terug kon draaien was ik nooit met haar de rivier op gegaan,
Dan was ik met haar thuisgebleven,
Maar misschien zou het daar dan op een andere manier hebben toegeslagen

Sommige dingen zijn niet te ontwijken,
Dingen komen zoals ze komen,
En schilderijen kunnen dingen begrijpen,
Ze verstaan het beter dan ons,
En hangen aan de muur, als hangende dokters

In de tijd dat er nog ketters waren, jij en ik,
Waren we onze eigen dokters,
Maar het mocht niet zo wezen,
Want eigen dokters moesten hangen,
En nu hangen ze aan de muren,
En eigen dokters moesten branden,
En nu zijn ze het open haard van het huis

Wat een hoge prijs betaalden wij,
Om ons eigen medicijn te zijn,
Wat een hoge prijs betaalden wij, liefste,
Om elkaars dokter te zijn

Ze trokken jou in het water, en mij in het vuur,
Een schilderij is alles wat er van ons over is,
Als een zoete liefdes dokter,
Hangende als een ketter aan de muur

De Kermis Pop

Hij was een kermisjongen. Hij was nog maar heel jong, maar was gedwongen op de kermis te werken. Het was pure kinderarbeid, dwangarbeid. Hij werd altijd ziek en misselijk van de vele geluiden op de kermis, maar niemand hield rekening met hem. Op een dag kon hij er niet meer tegen en rende weg, zo hard als hij kon. Hij hoopte maar dat niemand het had gemerkt. Hij rende door de massa's mensen heen die de kermis bezochten, op weg naar de uitgang. Zo rende hij het terrein af regelrecht het bos in. Hij rende terwijl hij niet omkeek, terwijl hij de harde, felle geluiden van de kermis nog goed kon horen in de verte. Wat was het toch een naar geluid.

Hij rende zo een huisje binnen ergens in het bos. Hij was helemaal buiten adem. Een oud vrouwtje

keek hem aan : 'Zo,' zei het oude mensje, 'aan de wandel, jongen ? En waar gaat de reis naar toe ?'

'Dat weet ik niet, mevrouw,' zei het jongetje. 'Ik moet gewoon weg, weg van die kermis.'

'Oh, maar jij komt van de kermis ?' vroeg de vrouw met een vreemd accent.

Het jongetje knikte. 'Ik werd gedwongen daar te werken.'

'Door wie dan ?' vroeg het vrouwtje.

'Door mijn vader en moeder,' zei het jongetje. 'De kermis is hun bezit.'

'Ah, zo zo,' sprak het vrouwtje, 'dus ze dachten niet na over de ellende die ze jou daarmee bezorgden ?'

'Precies,' zei het jongetje.

'Maar mijn jongen.' sprak het vrouwtje, 'weet jij wat wij daar aan kunnen doen ?'

Het jongetje schudde zijn hoofd.

'Wij kunnen een pop van jou maken die precies lijkt op jou, en die kunnen we naar de kermis toe laten gaan om jouw plaats in te nemen, anders zullen ze zeker naar je op zoek gaan en je terughalen.'

'Echt waar, kunt u dat ?' vroeg het jongetje met glunderende ogen.

'Jazeker,' zei het vrouwtje. Zij begon direct allemaal potten en pannen uit de keuken te halen, en allerlei soorten pakken met poeders. Die begon ze in de potten te gieten, en met een grote plastic lepel mengde ze die. Toen nam ze wat pakken met vloeistof en goot die ook door de mengsels heen. 'Zo, dat begint er al op te lijken,' zei ze met haar vreemde accent.

Het jongetje moest op een stoel zitten, en toen begon zij hem op te meten. 'Nou, helemaal in orde,' zei ze. 'Ons plannetje zal goed slagen.'

Toen moest hij even van een toverdrankje drinken, zodat hij zou gaan slapen, terwijl het vrouwtje het werk zou kunnen doen. Hij nam een slokje en viel zo in slaap. Toen hij wakker werd was de pop klaar en die leek precies op hem, als twee druppels water. De pop kon ook praten en lopen.

'Hier moeten ze het maar mee doen,' glimlachte het vrouwtje. Ook het jongetje was erg blij en verbaasd.

'Er is alleen een heel groot verschil,' sprak het vrouwtje.

Het jongetje keek nog eens goed naar de pop.

'Hij is veel en veel brutaler dan jou,' sprak het vrouwtje, 'en zal zeker niet pikken wat zijn ouders hem hebben aangedaan. Hij zal de hele kermis op stelten zetten, totdat het zo erg is dat zijn ouders naar het buitenland vluchten. Hij zal alles op de kermis veranderen en nieuw maken, en niemand zal nog gedwongen worden. Je zal dan weer met een gerust hart naar de kermis terugkunnen, en je zult het er zelfs leuk vinden.'

Het jongetje keek het vrouwtje aan met grote ogen. 'Echt ?' vroeg hij.

Het oude vrouwtje knikte. De pop stond op en sprak : 'Nu, ik ga maar eens.'

Het oude vrouwtje sprak : 'Gelukkige tijden.'

Toen ging de pop de deur uit. En het gebeurde precies zoals het vrouwtje verteld had. De pop maakte een enorme bende van de kermis, en maakte het leven van zijn ouders onmogelijk, totdat ze huilend het land uitvluchtten. Alles op de kermis veranderde hij, en het werd er leuk en gezellig voor iedereen. Natuurlijk liet de pop dat even weten aan het vrouwtje en het jongetje, en zo gingen ze met z'n drieën naar de kermis en ze hadden een onvergetelijke dag.

Het Liedje van Vader

Alles wat hij zich nog van zijn vader kon herinneren was een lied wat zijn vader hem eens liet horen. Het was het mooiste lied wat hij ooit had gehoord. Dat was eigenlijk het enige wat zijn vader hem had gegeven. Er was zoveel meer, maar dat was hij allemaal vergeten.

Toen ging zijn vader op een lange reis waarvan hij nooit meer terugkeerde. Zijn moeder dacht dat het schip moest zijn vergaan. Hij dacht misschien wilde zijn vader niets meer van hen weten. Dat was een strijd in zijn koppie. Vader moest wel op reis, want hij had een belangrijke opdracht van de koningin gekregen. Hij moest naar het krokodillen gebied. Eigenlijk was het wel logisch dat vader was opgevreten door een krokodil, maar dat kwam niet in hem op, en ook niet in moeder.

Of misschien was hij ergens achter het krokodillen gebied terecht gekomen en durfde hij niet meer terug, maar daar dachten ze ook niet over na. Ze waren zich niet echt van de gevaren van het leven bewust en hoe kort het kon zijn, maar moeder hield vol dat het schip gewoon was vergaan. Op een dag kregen ze een brief van de koningin. De koningin schreef dat sinds er geen berichten over vader waren gekomen, moesten ze vaststellen dat hij niet meer leefde.

Ook dit was natuurlijk zeer kort door de bocht, want wat als vader ergens zat opgesloten ? Maar de koningin had er nog iets bijgeschreven. P.S. Ik had nog wat spullen van je vader hier liggen, die mag je wel hebben. Kom maar eens langs als je durft.

Hij was er nogal verontwaardigd over : "Kom maar langs als je durft." Was zij dan ook gevaarlijk ofzo ? Maar hij ging toch. Hij wilde de spullen van zijn vader wel zien en misschien hebben. Kwam hij daar aan bleek het allemaal rotzooi te zijn. Het lag daar ergens in een schuur. Hij zat wat aan het metaal te draaien en er knakte zo wat vanaf. Hij ging naar huis met lege handen, kreeg toen spijt en ging weer terug. "Ik zou het toch willen hebben," zei hij. Met een bak vol rommel ging hij terug naar zijn moeder, die erom begon te lachen. "Wat heb je me nu meegenomen, jongen ?" lachte ze.

"Van vader," zei hij.

"Niks van vader," sprak ze. "Dit is oude rommel. De koningin maakt je vast wat wijs." Hij was diep teleurgesteld. "Ze zijn niet te vertrouwen daar bij het koninklijk huis," zei moeder. "Ga maar een ijsje kopen," zei zijn moeder. Ze gaf hem wat geld, maar toen hij even later weer thuiskwam met het ijsje was zijn moeder er niet meer. Dagen gingen voorbij en ze was er nog steeds niet. Na vele jaren was het ijsje eigenlijk nog het enige wat hij van haar herinnerde. Alles wat ze hem had gegeven was een ijsje. Natuurlijk had ze hem veel meer gegeven, maar dat herinnerde hij niet. En oh ja, dat liedje van vader. Na lange tijd kreeg hij weer eens een brief van de koningin. Er waren geen tekenen van leven van zijn moeder, dus ze gingen er vanuit dat ze dood was. Dat was natuurlijk enorm kort door de bocht weer. Er stond bij dat hij wel naar het paleis mocht komen, want daar lag nog wat oude rommel van zijn moeder. "Ik heb genoeg rommel van haar hier liggen," schreef hij terug, "maar alles wat ik me echt van haar herinner is een ijsje."

Maar de koningin bleef aandringen, dus toen ging hij maar. De koningin riep hem bij zich en haalde een sjaal uit een zak, en een paar handschoenen.

"Wat moet ik ermee ?" vroeg hij ongeinteresseerd.

"Het is van je moeder," zei de koningin.

"Waarom ga je er zelf niet mee lopen dan," zei hij.

"Dat kan ik niet doen," zei de koningin. "Ik ben de koningin."

"Dus ik moet ermee rond gaan lopen ?" vroeg hij.

"Dat zeg ik niet," zei de koningin, "maar anders gooi ik het weg."

"Geef maar hier dan," zei hij. Toen ging hij weer naar huis.

Hij leegde de zak op tafel. Tot zijn grote verbazing rolden er ook sieraden uit de zak, hele vreemde, exotische sieraden. Hij nam er ééntje in zijn hand wat op een horloge leek. Er kwamen klauwtjes uit die hem staken toen hij het om zijn pols deed. Zijn pols begon te bloeden. Hij probeerde het af te doen, maar het lukte niet meer. Helemaal blauw ging hij naar de wastafel, waar hij het met zeep er vanaf probeerde te krijgen, maar niets hielp. Hij greep de telefoon en begon een nummer te draaien, maar ver kwam hij niet. Hij kon geen adem meer halen. Toen viel hij flauw. Toen hoorde hij weer het liedje, dat liedje wat zijn vader hem ooit eens liet horen :

"Mijn vader is een zeeman,
Mijn moeder is een schip,
En ik ... ik .... ik kan alleen maar dromen ...

Mijn vader is altijd op reis,
En mijn moeder is nooit thuis ...
En ik .... ik ... ik kan alleen maar dromen ...

Ik lig in de hoge golven, en daar gaat mijn schip,
Ze roepen wel, maar ik hoor ze niet,
Het was er altijd wel, maar kan het niet goed herinneren,

Mijn vader is altijd op zijn schip,

Mijn moeder is nooit thuis,
En ik .... ik ... ik let nooit goed op,
Ik kan alleen maar dromen ..."

De Heilige Voeten van de Hel

Ze waren allemaal blij met de dwerg op het schip. Het was een hele wijze kabouter. "De droom-kabouter" noemde ze hem weleens. Het stormde hard, en de golven waren duister. Het was nacht. Er was een klein jongetje die vaak hard schreeuwde. Ook Ragnarok die iets ouder was dan het jongetje was op het schip. Hij probeerde het kleine jongetje vaak te kalmeren. Nu stormde het, maar het kleine jongetje probeerde overal bovenuit te schreeuwen. "Pas op," zei Ragnarok. "Straks schreeuw je je longen er uit."

"Bemoei je er niet mee," krijste het jongetje.

Daar kwam de dwerg aan en moest de jongens uit elkaar trekken, want ze waren al in een gevecht.

"Probeer te dromen," sprak de dwerg. "We kunnen nu niets aan deze situatie veranderen en met elkaar vechten heeft geen zin."

Het jongetje begon te lachen, bijna alsof hij de dwerg en Ragnarok uitlachte. "Jullie zijn me nogal slampampers !" riep hij. Hij probeerde de dwerg een mep te verkopen, maar de dwerg legde hem snel in de houdgreep. "Hier heb je om gevraagd," sprak de dwerg.

"Mag ik nu los ?" vroeg het jongetje.

"Nog niet," zei de dwerg. De dwerg droeg de jongen naar een kooi en sloot hem daar in op. "Niet eerlijk," zei het jongetje. Ragnarok ging voor de kooi staan. "Opgeruimd staat netjes," zei Ragnarok. Hij pakte een snoepstaaf en begon eraan te knabbelen.

"Niet eerlijk," zei het jongetje pruillippend. "Geef mij ook wat."

"Dat is niet voor kleine jongetjes die altijd schreeuwen en vechten," zei Ragnarok.

"Oh ok," zei het jongetje.

De moeder van het jongetje was ook op het schip, maar zij sliep, en zij sliep al heel lang. Ze was in een coma door een gif.

Ragnarok en de dwerg wisten dat het jongetje altijd zo schreeuwde omdat hij zijn moeder wilde

wekken, maar dat werkte zo niet. De rest van de passagiers spraken bijna niet. Ze waren blij met Ragnarok en de dwerg. Daar draaide eigenlijk alles om.

Op een dag werd de moeder van het jongetje wakker. Niemand wist hoe dat kon. Ze stapte uit haar bed en ging het dek op. Het jongetje in de kooi was door het dolle heen. "Mama !" krijste het jochie. De vrouw liep naar de kooi toe. "Hoe ben je hier in terecht gekomen ?" vroeg zijn moeder.

"Door mijn geschreeuw en omdat ik altijd wil vechten," sprak het jongetje.

De moeder keek om haar heen. Er was verder niemand in de buurt. Toen probeerde ze de kooi te openen, maar het lukte niet.

"Laat maar, mama," zei het jongetje. "Het is beter dat ik hier blijf."

"Ja, maar ik heb je nodig," zei zijn moeder. Weer probeerde ze het slot open te maken. Ineens lukte het. Ze nam haar zoontje in haar armen, en ging met hem de reling over, om zo in het water te springen. Het jongetje krijste. "Man overboord !" riep de dwerg.

"Wij horen niet op het schip," zei moeder tegen haar zoontje terwijl ze in het water lagen. Ragnarok keek, en de dwerg keek, en ze waren erg verbaasd. "Kom terug !" riep de dwerg, terwijl hij een touw met een reddingsboei wierp.

"Houd maar op !" riep de moeder. "Het is beter zo !"

Snel werden ze omringd door haaien. "Grijp de reddingsboei !" riep de dwerg.

"Doe het zelf !" riep de vrouw.

"Waarom wil je naar de haaien gaan met je kind !" riep de dwerg weer.

"Het staat zo geschreven !" riep de vrouw terug.

"Waar ?" riep de dwerg.

"Laat maar !" riep de vrouw, "je begrijpt het toch niet !"

"Leg het me dan uit," riep de dwerg. "Dat kan toch zo niet !"

"Ik heb het ooit eens zo opgeschreven !" riep de vrouw.

"Je bent zwaar ziek !" riep de dwerg.

Ragnarok sprong over de reling en zwom naar de vrouw en het kind toe die waren omsingeld door haaien. Hij zwemde tussen de haaien door en gooide de reddings boei om de hals van de vrouw met het kleine jongetje. "Daar !" riep Ragnarok. Hij begon toen aan het trouw te trekken, maar de haaien begonnen ineens toe te happen. "Nee, nee !" schreeuwde Ragnarok. "Houd goed vast !" riep de dwerg, die toen keihard aan het touw begon te trekken. Ook wat passagiers begonnen mee te trekken, en al snel waren ze alledrie aan boord gehesen, maar wel flink verwond door de haaien.

"Oh," kreunde Ragnarok. Het jongetje ademde niet meer. De vrouw lag als verstijfd op het dek. De passagiers brachten haar naar haar hut in haar bed, terwijl de dwerg het jongetje in zijn armen had genomen. "Arm kind," sprak de dwerg. Hij blies op zijn gezicht en begon zijn wonden te verbinden.

Toen begon het jongetje even later weer te ademen. Ragnarok en de dwerg brachten het kind weer naar zijn moeder. "Waarom deed je dat ?" vroeg de dwerg weer aan de moeder. "Je hebt het leven van jezelf en je kind flink op het spel gezet. Als Ragnarok er niet was geweest, dan ..." maar verder kon de dwerg niet komen. Hij keek naar Ragnarok die het jongetje vasthield. "Hij mag niet meer naar zijn moeder," zei Ragnarok. "Zij is een groot gevaar voor hem. Ze is zwaar ziek."

De vrouw schrok. "Alsjeblieft, zo bedoelde ik het niet. Ik zal voortaan beter oppassen."

"We geloven je niet," sprak Ragnarok. "Waarom zouden we je geloven en het leven van het kind op het spel zetten ?"

"Geloof me," zei de vrouw. "Ik heb immers het boek geschreven. Ik ben het boek."

"Welk boek ?" vroeg de dwerg verbaasd.

"Ah, ze bedoelt natuurlijk dat boek waarmee ze kwam aanzetten toen ze hier aan boord kwam," zei Ragnarok. "Dat kookboek waarmee ze zichzelf heeft vergiftigd."

"Oh, ja, dat heb ik allang weggedaan," zei de dwerg. "Er stonden ook allemaal vreemde liedjes in."

"Barbaar," zei de vrouw. "Dat je zomaar mijn boek weg hebt gegooid. Ik heb het zelf geschreven."

"Het was te gevaarlijk," zei de dwerg. "Je was ervan in een coma geraakt."

"Maar het was een heilig boek," zei de vrouw.

"Kan wel waar wezen," zei de dwerg, "maar het was te gevaarlijk. Het koste je bijna je leven, en nu weer."

"Ik kan het me nog steeds herinneren," gniffelde de vrouw. "Ik ga het opnieuw schrijven."

"Jij gaat niks," zei Ragnarok. "Je bent zwaar, zwaar gestoord. Een gevaar voor jezelf en voor anderen."

"Het kwam allemaal door mijn man," zei de vrouw.

"Wat heeft je man gedaan ?" vroeg de dwerg.

"Daar kan ik niet over praten," zei de vrouw.

"En waar is hij nu ?" vroeg de dwerg.

"Weg," zei de vrouw.

"Waar naartoe ?" vroeg de dwerg.

"Dat doet er niet toe," zei de vrouw. "Hij zei altijd tegen mij : "Werp jezelf en je gillende kind voor de haaien," en ook : "Eet vergif."

"Waarom deed je dat dan ?" vroeg de dwerg. "Eigenlijk had hij dus dat boek geschreven."

"Ja, ik weet het niet," zei de vrouw. "Dat is nu eenmaal zo in ons geloof dat het woord van de man

heilig is, en het woord van de vrouw is er slechts een weerklank van, als een bevestiging."

"Wat een bende, zeg," zei de dwerg, "dat klinkt erg lui. Kun je zelf dan niet iets beters bedenken, ook voor je kind ? Want je kind is maar met zo'n moeder opgezadeld die alles doet wat iemand anders haar vertelt. Geen wonder dat hij zo schreeuwt altijd. Je moet eens wakker worden. Zeg, wat stond er eigenlijk nog meer in dat boek ? Eigenlijk zou jij de kooi inmoeten, want je bent een grote bedreiging voor ons allemaal."

De vrouw begon te gniffelen. "Jullie zijn zo dom. Jullie hadden mij nooit als kokkin moeten huren, want ik heb zo met jullie voedsel geknoeid dat jullie geheel in mijn macht zijn. Jullie dromen slechts."

Ragnarok raakte in paniek : "Jij vuile heks !" riep hij. "Vandaar dat de andere passagiers bijna niet praten. Wat heb je met ze gedaan ?"

"Je kan beter vragen wat ik nog met ze ga doen !" krijste de heks. "Het schip zal vergaan !" krijste ze, terwijl ze de hut uitrende en over de reling dook. Plotseling begon het schip te branden. Hoge vlammen begonnen de zeilen aan te vreten.

"Schandalig !" riep Ragnarok. Hij keek naar de zee en die brandde ook. "Oh, oh, oh, het brandt in mijn hoofd !" riep Ragnarok.

"Er is nog maar één oplossing," riep de dwerg.

"En dat is ?" riep Ragnarok.

"De magische lijm," riep de dwerg.

"Oh ja," zei Ragnarok, en begon in zijn broekzakken te zoeken.

"Snel, snel !" riep de dwerg. "We hebben geen uren de tijd."

"Ja, ik weet het," sprak Ragnarok. "Hier is het."

Hij haalde de lijm uit één van zijn broekzakken en hij smeerde het op zijn onderlip. Zijn gezicht raakte toen bevroren en kwam zo onder een zware magie terecht. IJs begon er toen uit zijn lichaam te stromen, zoveel magisch ijs, om het schip in veiligheid te brengen. "Ze mag niet terug !" riep de dwerg. "Het is de vuur heks. Ze was ons te slim afgeweest."

"Dan weten we het nu !" riep Ragnarok. Ook uit zijn mond stroomde ijs. Na een tijdje waren de vlammen geheel gedoofd, ook in de zee, en er kwam een vrouw uit het water op die toen over het water naar het schip begon te lopen. "Dat zijn de heilige voeten van de hel !" riep de dwerg. De vrouw klom het schip in en liep op Ragnarok af om hem in haar armen te nemen. "Goedendag, moeder," sprak Ragnarok.

Ragnarok's moeder kwam altijd nadat er ijs uit hem stroomde bij hoge nood, om ook het ijs weer te ontdooien. Zij werd ook wel de heilige voeten van de hel genoemd. Zij kon op water lopen. De dwerg had hen ooit eens gemaakt. Hij maakte Ragnarok en zijn moeder als de beveiliging voor het schip. In zijn grote wijsheid was hij soms vergeetachtig, maar als het echt nodig was liet zijn geheugen hem niet in de steek.

De IJsvogel

De IJsvogel vliegt van ijs naar ijs,
De herinneringen verlatende

De IJsvogel neemt niets mee,
en vliegt zo hoger

Zonder lasten, vrij en blij,
Maar de last van ijs is een zware

Steeds lager vliegt hij dan,
Als een koning naar zijn troon,
Steeds dieper zinkt hij dan,
In de ijszee van zijn verlangens

Een ijsvis is hij dan,
Gevangen in het ijs,
Hij wil weer een ijsvogel worden dan,
Maar hij moet wachten tot de morgen

Oh ijsvogel, waar vlucht gij heen ?
Oh ijsvis, wie houdt u tegen ?
Oh, koning zonder kroon,
Gedoemd tot dwalen rondom de troon

De ijskroon is een mysterie diep en zoet,
Maar de wegen tot haar zijn bitter

De Bevroren Tandenfee

Toen Eldo die ochtend zijn raam opendeed kwam er een zonnestraaltje zijn kamer binnen, en een klein wezentje zat erop. Eldo kon zijn ogen niet geloven. Plotseling begon het wezentje te groeien tot een fee zo groot als zijn moeder. Ze was als doorzichtig, als gewoven door nectars en bloemendraden, en ze had een wonderlijke jurk met vleugels. Eldo had een hele moeilijke tijd gehad waarin hij probeerde uit te dokteren wat hem plaagde in zijn gedachtes.

'Er is een wereld groter dan je gedachtes,' zei de fee. Ze was een tandenfee, en had een hele zachte,

maar doordringende stem. Eldo werd helemaal warm, en zuchtte diep. Hij wilde dat zijn wereld meer zoals een sprookje was, want de wereld waarin hij leefde was zo ingewikkeld. 'Onthoud het, Eldo,' en toen vertrok de tandenfee.

Sinds toen voelde Eldo zich een beetje beter, alsof er wat magie kwam in zijn leven, maar hij zag de tandenfee niet meer terug. Hij wist dat de tandenfeeën in de wolken leefden waar ze hun paleizen hadden die waren gemaakt van de tanden van kleine kinderen. Hierdoor werkte hun magie. Toen Eldo opgroeide las hij veel boeken over tandenfeeën, en zijn grootouders vertelden hem vaak de langste verhalen over hen.

Op een dag hoorde hij een verhaal over een tandenheks. Dat was de eerste keer dat hij zo'n verhaal hoorde. Hij dacht dat er alleen maar tandenfeeën waren, maar er schenen ook tandendwergen te zijn, en ze schenen allemaal dezelfde taak te hebben : het stelen van kindertanden om hen juwelen ervoor in de plaats te geven. Nu had Eldo vele feeën juwelen want hij had zijn baby tanden verloren, maar hij had geen dwergen juweel of heksen juweel. Het verhaal was over een goede tandenheks en een slechte tandenheks. De slechte tandenheks had een heleboel tandenfeeën en tanden dwergen tot slaaf gemaakt die moesten werken in haar paleis wat van baby tanden was gemaakt, en ze waren niet toegestaan om 's nachts kinderen te bezoeken. Dit was waarom zoveel kinderen niet eens meer wisten dat er nog tanden feeën en tanden dwergen bestonden, en zoveel kinderen hadden nog nooit over hen gehoord en leefden ongelukkige levens.

De tandenfeeën jammerden en jammerden, de hele dag, want ze moesten altijd het paleis van de slechte tandenheks poetsen. Op een dag had de boze tandenheks zelfs drie leiders van de tandenfeeën gevangen genomen : Marcella, Tanzania en Zana, en dat was haar grootste vangst ooit. Ze sloot hen op in de diepste kerker onder het boosaardige tandenpaleis. Gelukkig konden zij nog steeds met elkaar praten door het feeënzand. Zij wisten dat alleen de goede tandenheks hen kon helpen, want zij was de enige die ook maar iets zou kunnen beginnen tegen de krachten van de boze tandenheks.

Marcella kon contact maken met het paleis van de goede tandenheks door haar ketting, maar plotseling stond de boze tandenheks voor haar en nam de ketting weg. Zana had een ring waarmee ze contact kon maken met de goede tandenheks, maar de boze tandenheks nam ook deze ring weg.

Tanzania had een ring waarmee ze contact kon maken met de tanden elven, en ze had deze ring in haar jurk gedaan waar niemand het kon zien. Ze wist dat ze heel voorzichtig moest zijn, anders zou de heks deze ring ook wegnemen, dus ze wachtte tot de nacht. Toen het twaalf uur was wreef ze zacht over de ring en fluisterde tot de tanden elven. Maar ze wist niet dat de boze tandenheks ook de tandenelven gevangen had genomen die dag. Ze hoorde niets.

Dagen gingen voorbij in grote droevenis, terwijl de boze tandenheks veel plezier scheen te hebben. De wachters van de kerkers waren de meest verschrikkelijke tandentrollen, maar één van hen was gewillig om Tanzania vrij te zetten in ruil voor de tandenelf ring. Toen de boze tandenfee dit ontdekte nam ze de tandentrol en liet hem werpen in de tanden oven. Maar Tanzania was vrij nu, en was op weg naar de goede tandenheks. Zij leefde in een groot paleis gemaakt van de meest kostbare kindertanden, en het leek alsof zij de meeste had van iedereen. Tanzania vloog het kasteel binnen en snel nam de goede tandenheks haar in de armen. De goede tandenheks suste haar en sprak bemoedigende woorden tot haar.

En toen vertelde de goede tandenheks een verhaal aan Tanzania, het verhaal van de bevroren tandenfee. Op een dag raakte de eerste tandenfee in een valstrik die gezet was door een kind, en toen het kind de vangst ontdekte nam hij haar naar de diepvriezer om haar daar in te doen. En daar

verdween zij langzaam weer tot het tandenfeeën land, maar dit keer kwam ze in het Noorden, waar het bevroren gebied was, en ze ontdekte dat ze bevroren was en geketend aan een rots in een rotsachtig gebied. En vele anderen waren geketend hier, bevroren, en ze vroeg zich af wie ze waren. Ze leken op tanden elven.

'Tanzania,' zei de goede tandenheks. 'Je was gevangen in het paleis van de boze tandenheks, en je draagt nu de geheime vlam. Jij bent de enige die de bevroren tandenfeeën en tandenelven kan vrijzetten, en zij zijn de enigen die alle anderen kunnen vrijzetten die gevangen zijn gezet en tot slaaf zijn gemaakt door de boze tandenfee, want zij dragen de geheime ijspegel binnenin.'

'Oh, maar hoe kom ik daar ?' vroeg Tanzania. 'Hoe kom ik in het noordelijke gebied van het tandenfeeën land, want niemand van ons kon daar ooit komen.' De goede tandenheks vertelde haar dat de geheime vlam haar zou helpen daar te komen. Plotseling kwam de geheime vlam van haar hand : 'Kom, ik zal je leiden.'

En zo volgde Tanzania de vlam, en eerst gingen ze door een gebied van sneeuw en kleine huizen van tanden dwergen. Het was een ijzig gebied, maar de geheime vlam verwarmde haar. Wanneer ze in hun huizen keek zag ze bevroren tanden dwergen bedekt door ijs en sneeuw. Ze ging deze huizen binnen om hen te smelten door haar geheime vlam. Dat ging erg gemakkelijk. De tanden dwergen waren haar erg dankbaar. Tanzania vroeg hen hoe dit kon gebeuren met hen, en zij vertelden haar dat het was gebeurd door de boze tandenheks.

Na een tijdje ging Tanzania verder, terwijl de geheime vlam haar de weg toonde. Toen kwam zij in een gebied waar vele boze tanden wachters waren van de boze tandenheks. Er waren schrikaanjagende slangen, kikkers, padden en andere wezens. Tanzania wist dat ze nu erg voorzichtig moest zijn, want ze wilde niet weer gevangen genomen worden. De geheime vlam begon over haar vleugelen te komen zodat ze door de ijzige lucht kon komen. Ze kon heel gemakkelijk vliegen nu, en spoedig was ze in het rotsachtig gebied waar de bevroren tandenfeeën en tandenelven moesten zijn. Na een lange zoektocht vond ze wat grotten waar ze waren, en door de geheime vlam kon zij ze allemaal smelten.

Ze waren zo blij, en Tanzania vertelde hen over het paleis waar de boze tandenheks zovele anderen gevangen hield om hen te laten werken als slaaf. Ze vertelde hen dat zij de geheime ijspegels binnenin hadden en dat zij in staat zouden zijn om de boze tandenheks te verslaan.

Maar toen stond de boze tandenheks al voor hen, en schreeuwde. Niemand wist hoe de geheime ijspegels te laten werken, en terwijl de boze tandenheks lachte begonnen sommige tanden elven al te bevriezen. 'Niemand kan mij verslaan !' schreeuwde de boze tandenheks, en plotseling kwamen al haar boze tanden wachters de plaats binnen, en begonnen iedereen aan de muur te ketenen. 'Niemand kan mij verslaan !' brulde de tandenheks. Maar toen verscheen de goede tandenheks, en de boze tandenheks was bijna verblind door het licht. 'Wie ben jij ?' brulde ze.

'Ik ben degene die de geheime ijspegels zal laten werken,' sprak de goede tandenheks. Toen deed ze haar handen in de lucht, terwijl de geheime ijspegels naar voren kwamen. De geheime vlam begon de bevroren tandenelven weer te smelten, en de ketenen, terwijl de ijspegels om de boze tandenheks en haar boze tanden wachters begonnen te dansen totdat zij bevroren waren. Toen ontploften ze, en zovele tanden wezens kwamen vrij. Ook in het paleis, en het was als een grote ontwaking, alsof zij een miljard jaar hadden geslapen.

De Driesprong

In het bos woonde eens een man en een vrouw die een dochtertje hadden. De man en de vrouw maakten vaak ruzie en vaak kon het meisje er niet van slapen. Op een nacht vluchtte ze weg, omdat het lawaai haar erg bang maakte. Lang zwierf ze door het bos, totdat ze uiteindelijk was verdwaald en niet meer wist waar ze was. Uitgeput leunde ze tegen een boom aan, maar viel toen in een gat. Ze viel erg diep, en raakte door de val bewusteloos.

Toen ze weer wakker werd zag ze allemaal konijntjes om haar heen, maar toen ze zich bewoog vluchtten alle konijntjes van haar weg. Langzaam stond het meisje op, en vroeg zich af waar ze terecht was gekomen. Ze zag hier allemaal kleine huisjes met lichtjes en hele hoge bomen. Zo hoog had ze de bomen nog nooit gezien. Toen ze in de lucht keek zag ze alleen duisternis, en enkele stralende sterretjes. Plotseling zag ze één van die sterretjes vallen, en wat verderop tussen de bomen was even later een stralend licht. Voorzichtig liep het meisje op het licht af.

Maar naarmate ze dichterbij kwam werd alles weer donker. Hier waren geen kleine huisjes met lichtjes, en al gauw durfde ze niet verder. Ze wilde zich omdraaien, maar ook achter haar was het ineens heel donker.

‘Hallo !’ riep het meisje. ‘Is daar iemand ?’

Maar niets en niemand antwoordde. Het meisje was erg moe, en even later viel ze op de grond en kwam in een diepe slaap. Zo moe was ze nog nooit geweest. Even later kreeg ze dromerig om haar heen. Ze zag wat lichtjes om haar heen, met hele kleine spulletjes. Kleine stoeltjes, kleine stofzuigertjes, kleine laarsjes, en nog wat andere spulletjes. Ook zag ze hele kleine piepkleine kaarsjes. ‘Waar ben ik ?’ vroeg ze. Langzaam stond het meisje op, en keek omhoog waar alles donker was. Wel zag ze in het donker wat wijde schilderijen hangen. Snel kwam ze erachter dat ze in een soort zaal was. Op een hoge troon in het duister zat een konijn. Het konijn zei niks, en het meisje stapte dichterbij, en toen was alles weer weg, en alles was weer pikkedonker.

‘Ik weet dat jullie er zijn !’ riep het meisje. Maar niets en niemand antwoordde. ‘Ik wil niet moeilijk doen,’ zei het meisje, ‘maar zo ontvang je geen gasten.’

‘Gasten, gasten ?’ zei een stem. ‘Je komt hier zomaar ongevraagd binnenvallen, en je noemt jezelf gast. Ik noem je een indringer.’

Het meisje keek naar beneden en zag een konijntje bij haar voet. Het konijntje schopte tegen haar been aan.

‘Zeg, laat dat,’ zei het meisje, ‘zo gedraag je je niet naar een dame.’

‘Nou, ik noem jou geen dame,’ zei het konijntje, ‘je hebt geen manieren. Je komt hier zomaar ongevraagd binnenvallen, en denkt dat je de koningin bent. Maar goed, ik zal je wel

binnenlaten, en dan zul je eens een echte koningin meemaken.’

Het konijntje trok aan het jurkje van het meisje, en leidde het meisje naar een klein kamertje waar een konijntje op een troon zat.

‘We hebben indringers, koningin,’ zei het konijntje.

‘Ik weet het, Arend,’ zei de konijnenkoningin, ‘laat haar hier maar blijven.’ Toen vertrok het konijntje.

De konijnenkoningin keek het meisje diep aan. ‘Dus ... jij komt van de grote mensenwereld,’ zei de koningin.

‘Eh, ja, majesteit,’ zei het meisje, ‘maar ik ben zelf nog klein.’

‘Oh, maar jij wordt vast ook zo groot,’ zei de koningin. ‘Maar voor het zover is mag je hier wel blijven. Hier achter mij is een deur, en als je daar doorheen gaat, dan .... Nu ja, dat zul je zelf wel zien. Je moet gewoon het pad volgen.’

Het meisje bedankte de koningin, en ging door de deur, en kwam op een pad terecht. Hele kleine vogeltjes zaten in de struikjes aan de zijkanten van het pad. Het pad straalde en glom door een geheimzinnig licht. Het meisje begon haar reis. Na een tijdje kwam ze op een open plek waar konijntjes wat spelletjes aan het doen waren. Een paar konijntjes waren aan het hinkelen. Achter de konijntjes waren drie paden.

‘Waar moet ik nu naartoe ?’ vroeg het meisje.

‘Waar kom je dan vandaan ?’ vroegen de konijntjes.

Van de koningin, zei het meisje.

‘Van de koningin ?’ vroegen de konijntjes, ‘heeft ze dan zelf niet gezegd waar je naartoe moest gaan.’

Het meisje schudde haar hoofd. ‘Ze zei alleen maar dat ik het pad moest volgen.’

‘Ik zou het eerste pad maar niet kiezen,’ zei een konijntje, ‘want dan kom je bij een heks terecht. Het tweede pad leidt tot het witte kasteel, en het derde pad dat weet niemand. Iedereen valt daar in slaap.’

‘Nou,’ zei het meisje, ‘ik heb lang genoeg geslapen. Ik kies voor het tweede pad.’ En zo ging het meisje op weg naar het witte kasteel.

Het witte kasteel stond vol met levende pionnen. ‘Ik heb jou hier nog nooit gezien,’ zei een zwarte pion. ‘Ik jou ook niet,’ zei het meisje.

‘Waar kom je vandaan ?’ vroeg een rode pion.

‘De koningin heeft me gestuurd,’ zei het meisje.

‘De koningin ?’ vroegen alle pionnen verwonderd.

‘Spring maar op m’n rug,’ zei een groene pion. Toen het meisje op de groene pion klom begon de pion te steigeren, en rende toen een trap op van het kasteel, en kwam op een balkon terecht, en rende toen door naar een volgende trap. De groene pion bracht het meisje helemaal tot aan een toren. ‘Kijk eens naar buiten,’ riep de pion, ‘zo kun je het hele land

zien.'

'Welk land ?' vroeg het meisje. Door het raam zag ze allemaal grasvelden die er als speelborden uitzagen. Het waren wonderlijke tuinen. 'Zo je ziet het, hè,' zei de pion. 'We hebben nog veel te doen.'

'Ja, maar de koningin vertelde me dat ik het pad moest volgen,' zei het meisje.

'Het pad ?' vroeg de groene pion. 'Oh, wat stom van me, ik had het kunnen weten.'

Toen huppelde de groene pion met het meisje op zijn rug weer helemaal naar beneden, en ging toen via de keuken de achtertuin in. 'Zie je, daar in de verte,' zei de groene pion terwijl hij op wat struikjes achter een groot grasveld wees, 'daar gaat het pad verder. Een goede reis.'

En toen zette het meisje haar reis voort, nadat ze van de pion afscheid had genomen. Tussen de struikjes achter het grasveld ging het pad verder. Het pad straalde en glom weer als door een geheimzinnig licht. Maar na een tijdje wandelen kwam het meisje weer bij de konijntjes die spelletjes aan het spelen waren. 'Hier ben ik al geweest,' zei het meisje.

'Dan moet je gewoon een ander pad nemen,' zei één van de konijntjes.

'Maar welk pad ?' vroeg het meisje.

'Nou, het eerste of het derde pad,' zei het konijntje.

'Ja maar dan kom ik bij de heks, of val ik in slaap,' zei het meisje.

'Ik kan het ook niet helpen, kies maar,' zei het konijntje.

'Nou, dan kies ik voor het derde pad, want ik begin toch al een beetje moe te worden,' zei het meisje.

Langs het derde pad stonden allemaal toverbloemen, en al snel begon het meisje zo moe te worden dat ze niet meer kon blijven staan, en al gauw viel ze in een diepe slaap.

'Ehm, mijn naam is de spin,' zei een dromerige, geheimzinnige stem, 'weet je dat ik altijd win ?'

'Nee, dat weet ik niet,' zei het meisje dromerig.

'Nou, dan weet je het nu,' zei de stem weer.

Waar ben ik ? vroeg het meisje.

Toen ze haar ogen opende zag ze bloemen, zoveel bloemen. Overal waren bloemen, en zoveel wonderbaarlijke geuren, zo betoverend.

'Ik zei toch dat ik altijd win,' zei de stem slaperig, 'ik heb je betoverd.'

'Ja maar daar heb ik eigenlijk geen tijd voor,' zei het meisje, 'de koningin heeft me gezegd dat ik het pad moet volgen.'

'De koningin ?' zei de stem. 'Dat verandert de zaak, kom maar mee.' En ineens stond het meisje klaarwakker tussen de bloemen. In de verte zag ze een rivier, terwijl beneden bij haar voet een klein spinnetje stond. 'Als de koningin je gestuurd heeft, dan is het in orde,'

zei het spinnetje, ‘dan hoeven we geen spelletjes te doen.’ Toen liep het spinnetje voor haar uit naar de rivier. Over de rivier was een brug waaronder allerlei bootjes met lampjes doorgingen. Het waren kleine bootjes.

‘Daar in de verte woont een heks,’ zei het spinnetje.

‘Oh maar ik dacht dat de heks op het eerste pad woonde,’ zei het meisje. Na een tijdje komen ze in de keuken van een groot kasteel aan. Een dienstknecht loopt op het meisje af. ‘Hallo, ik ben Andrew,’ zegt de bediende. ‘Ik verwachtte je al. Laat me je het kasteel rondleiden.’

‘Hoe weet u dat ik zou komen,’ vroeg het meisje, en het meisje vroeg zich ook af waar het spinnetje ineens was gebleven. ‘Het spinnetje zei dat hier een heks woonde,’ zei het meisje.

‘Ah, je moet niet alles en iedereen geloven,’ zei Andrew. ‘Hier woont de konijnenkoningin.’

‘Maar daar kom ik net vandaan,’ zei het meisje, ‘en ze heeft me gezegd het pad te volgen.’

‘Oh kom dan maar mee,’ zei Andrew, en leidde haar naar de achterkant van het kasteel. Hier ging het pad verder. Weer zag het meisje het spinnetje hier, maar het spinnetje was heel ver weg. ‘Spinnetje ?’ riep het meisje. Maar het spinnetje hoorde haar niet. En het pad ging een andere richting op. Het meisje besloot om maar gewoon het pad te volgen.

Na een tijdje zag ze wat ijzeren bekertjes op de grond staan, en toen ze dichterbij kwam sprong er een konijntje tevoorschijn. ‘Raad eens wat er in deze bekertjes zit ?’ vroeg het konijn. ‘In eentje zit de zee, in de andere zit het bos, en als je van de derde drinkt, dan ben je de klos.’

Ja, maar ik wil daar helemaal niet van drinken,’ zei het meisje. ‘Laat me er langs.’

Kies er eentje uit, kies er eentje uit, en waar je dan ook terecht komt, je komt er altijd weer uit, zong het konijntje een paar keer. En word je dan de klos, dan kom je altijd wel weer los, en kom je tot de zee dan is het altijd okay.

Maar het meisje wilde er niets van horen, en stampte op de grond. ‘Nu is het afgelopen met die gekheid. Ik moet er nu door, want de koningin ....’ maar verder kon ze niet komen.

‘De koningin ? De koningin ?’ zei het konijntje. En snel was het konijntje met zijn bekertjes verdwenen, en kon het meisje verder gaan. Na een tijdje kwam het meisje in de duinen, en niet lang daarna zag ze de prachtige oceaan waarin een diepe, felle zon scheen. Het meisje zag het pad helemaal doorlopen tot in de zee. ‘Maar dat kan toch helemaal niet,’ zei het meisje.

‘Jawel hoor,’ zei een stem. Een donkere gestalte stond ineens naast het meisje. Het leek wel een beetje op een zwarte pion op een paard. ‘Ik breng je er wel doorheen,’ zei de pion.

‘Ja, maar hoe dan ?’ vroeg het meisje. Ineens haalde de gestalte een dobbelsteen onder het zadel vandaan. De gestalte gooide de dobbelsteen van de duin op het strand. Op het bovenvlak van de dobbelsteen stond een gestalte als een rode pion. De gestalte was gevleugeld, en stond al snel naast het meisje. ‘Spring maar op mijn rug,’ zei de rode gestalte. En toen het meisje op zijn rug zat steeg de gestalte op. De zwarte gestalte was weer verdwenen. De rode gestalte had een geweer met kogels als dobbelstenen, en als ze door vervelende vogels werden lastiggevallen schoot hij ze met het geweer neer. Na een tijdje kwamen ze op een heuvel aan waar het pad weer verder ging. De rode pion wees in de verte

: ‘Zie, daar, waar het glinstert, daar moet je zijn, daar woont de konijnenkoningin.’

‘Maar daar kom ik net vandaan,’ zei het meisje. ‘De koningin zei dat ik het pad moest volgen.’

‘Dat moet een vergissing zijn geweest,’ zei de rode pion, en vertrok.

‘Wacht eens even,’ riep het meisje. ‘Je moet het me uitleggen. Ik begrijp het niet meer.’ Maar de rode pion was al weg. Toen besloot ze het pad maar te volgen tot de glinsteringen in de verte, maar al snel begon het erg donker te worden en koud. ‘Ik moet hier ergens iets vinden om te kunnen schuilen,’ zei het meisje. Het begon ook steeds harder en harder te waaien.

‘Kom hier !’ riep een stem, ‘kom hier,’ bijna gillend. De stem leek op het geluid wanneer haar ouders ruzie maakten. Een konijn op een woonboot riep naar een ander konijn. Het was een woonboot gewoon op de grond. Er was nergens water te bekennen, alleen wat druppels van een beginnende regen. ‘Kom nu binnen !’ riep de stem weer, ‘wil je soms verdrinken ?’ Het meisje zag een wat jonger konijntje stampvoetend naar binnen lopen, in de woonboot. Het andere konijn gaf hem een om z’n oren. Toen ging de deur dicht. Snel begon het natter te worden onder de voeten van het meisje, en werd ze door de wind bijna weggeblazen. Toen ze in de verte keek, kreeg ze de schrik van haar leven. Bulderend hoge golven kwamen op haar af, alsof de oceaan het land wilde opslokken. Zo snel als ze kon rende ze naar de woonboot, maar hoe hard ze ook op het deurtje bonsde, niemand deed open.

Help me, help me dan toch ! riep het meisje. Het water was al tot haar knieen gekomen, en de razende golven kwamen steeds dichterbij, en groeiden steeds hoger. Al snel was het water tot haar heupen gekomen, en keek ze recht in een kilometers hoge golf die haar elk moment zou kunnen opslokken. Het meisje slaakte een gil. Een raampje naast het deurtje ging open, en een hand greep het meisje vliegensvlug naar binnen.

‘Dat was op het nippertje,’ zei een konijntje. Het meisje zuchtte diep.

‘Dat gebeurt altijd als de koningin kwaad word,’ zei het konijntje.

‘Waarom wordt ze dan kwaad,’ vroeg het meisje.

‘Ze kan niet tegen haar verlies met spelletjes,’ zei het konijntje.

‘Met wie doet ze dan spelletjes ?’ vroeg het meisje.

‘Met een spin,’ zei het konijntje.

‘Oh maar ik ken dat spinnetje,’ zei het meisje. ‘Ik ben dat spinnetje ook tegengekomen, en hij sprak dat hij altijd wint.’

‘Hoe weet je dat ?’ vroeg het konijn ineens. ‘Niemand weet dat, dus waarom zou jij dat weten ?’

‘Nou,’ legde het meisje uit, ‘er waren drie paden. Eerst kwam ik op het tweede pad waar het witte kasteel was, en daarna kwam ik op het derde pad waar iedereen in slaap viel. Hier ben ik hem tegengekomen.’

‘Maar dat kan niet,’ zei het konijn, ‘dat is absoluut onmogelijk. Niemand die op het derde pad komt ontwaakt weer. Zij die daar komen zullen voor eeuwig en altijd slapen.’

‘Oh maar ik zei tegen het spinnetje dat ik van de koningin had gehoord dat ik het pad moest volgen,’ zei het meisje, ‘en toen liet hij me erdoor.’

‘De koningin ?’ vroeg het konijntje terwijl zijn gezicht groen en geel tegelijk werd. ‘Mens allemachtig, heeft de koningin dat tegen jou gezegd ?’

Het meisje knikte. ‘Oh maar dan zijn wij in heel groot gevaar,’ zei het konijntje. ‘Als de koningin dat gezegd heeft, dan is ze ergens op uit. Dan daagt ze je uit voor een duel.’

‘Een duel ?’ vroeg het meisje.

‘Ja een duel, een gevecht,’ zei het konijn, ‘en dan moeten we snel zijn. We moeten direkt naar het kasteel, want daar zit ze op je te wachten voor het spel.’

Direct rende het konijn een andere kamer in, en startte de motor. Met volle kracht ging de boot richting het glinsterende kasteel in de verte. Na een tijdje voer het bootje naar binnen. Bij een grote paal diep in het kasteel was een kade waar ze konden uitstappen. Het konijn greep de hand van het meisje en rende samen met haar een grote stenen trap naast een muur op. ‘Majesteit, majesteit,’ riep het konijn, en toen hij de koningin op de trap tegenkwam, zei hij het wat rustiger : ‘Majesteit, ik weet dat we wat laat zijn.’

‘Wat, laat ?’ zei de koningin, ‘helemaal niet laat. Veel te vroeg. Jullie zijn veel te vroeg hier.’

‘Maar waarom werd u dan zo boos ?’ vroeg het konijn.

‘Ach, niks bijzonders,’ zei de koningin, ‘gewoon een ongelukje.’

‘Een ongelukje ?’ vroeg het konijn.

Ja, zei de koningin, ik liet een pion vallen, en die vloog weg.

‘Misschien een rode pion ?’ vroeg het konijn.

Ja, hoe weet jij dat nu weer, vroeg de koningin een beetje kattig.

Nou, ik zag een rode ster naar beneden vallen, maar later dacht ik : het zal wel weer een pion van de koningin zijn, zei het konijn.

Ja, lachte de koningin, jaha, dat heb je goed gezien, jongen, en nu vlug wegwezen, want het is nog lang geen tijd.

Toen rende het konijn weg. Nu stond het meisje oog in oog met de koningin.

En wie ben jij ? vroeg de koningin.

‘Eh, ik ben het meisje wat van u gewoon het pad moest volgen,’ zei het meisje.

Oh ja ? kraste de koningin, nou heus, ik ken je niet.

Kijk dan eens beter. Kent u mij echt niet ? vroeg het meisje.

Toen deed de koningin een brilletje op, en kwam dichterbij. Eens even kijken, zei de koningin. Er zijn zoveel meisjes die .... het pad volgen, zei je ?

Het meisje knikte.

Wacht eens even, zei de koningin. Ben jij langs de drie paden gegaan ?

Alleen de tweede en de derde. Ik ben nog niet bij de heks op het eerste pad geweest, zei het meisje.

Wat sta je hier dan te staan ? bulderde de koningin. Terug jij !

En toen zette het meisje het op een rennen, want de koningin begon verschrikkelijk te bulderen. Het leek alsof haar ouders weer ruzie maakten, erger dan ooit tevoren, en het meisje begon heel hard te huilen.

Rennen ! brulde de koningin, ren voor je leven, want ik ontplof, en dan zul je de dobbelstenen zien rollen.

Het meisje was al snel omsingeld door een heel leger met dobbelstenen. Er kwam vuur uit hun monden, en de roden waren het ergste. Nog harder begon het meisje te huilen. Toe dan, konijn, help me dan ! riep het meisje hard. Maar het konijn was nergens te bekennen. In de verte zag ze de woonboot, maar die dreef telkens verderweg. Oh, was ik nu maar naar het eerste pad gegaan, zei het meisje. De dobbelstenen zagen er zo dreigend uit.

Wat zei je, krijste de koningin, nee, dat kan niet, zei je dat je het derde pad op ben gegaan ?

Ja, majesteit, zei het meisje.

Iedereen slaapt daar, en niemand staat ooit weer op, zei de koningin.

Ja, maar het spinnetje ... zei het meisje

Het spinnetje ? krijste de koningin .... Heeft het spinnetje je erdoor gelaten ? En toen werd de koningin nog kwaaier.

Maar toen ik hem vertelde wat u gezegd had dat ik het pad moest volgen, toen liet hij me erdoor, zei het meisje.

Oh, zuchtte de koningin woest, ik kan dat spinnetje niet uitstaan ... Wat heeft hij nog meer gezegd ?

‘Dat hij altijd wint,’ zei het meisje.

En toen werd de koningin wel zo razend dat ze niets meer met de dobbelstenen te maken wilde hebben. ‘Uit mijn ogen !’ krijste ze tegen de dobbelstenen. ‘Niets wil ik nog met spelletjes te maken hebben.’ Toen liep ze boos weg, het meisje alleen achterlatend.

Even later kwam ze weer terug. ‘Zeg, waar kom je eigenlijk vandaan ?’ vroeg ze aan het meisje. ‘Toch niet uit de grote mensenwereld, hè ?’

Ja, zei het meisje, daar kom ik vandaan. Mijn vader en moeder maakten altijd ruzie, en ....

Je hoeft me niets meer te vertellen, zei de koningin, ik begrijp het al. Dan kom je dus van het eerste pad vandaan.

Nee, daar ben ik nog niet geweest, daar bij die heks, zei het meisje.

Kom maar mee, zei de koningin, dan laat ik het je zien.

In een hoge torenkamer aangekomen schonk de koningin thee voor het meisje in, en vroeg

het meisje of ze het fijn vond in de grote mensenwereld.

Nee, zei het meisje, want niemand begrijpt me, en ze maken altijd ruzie.

‘En wat heb je eraan gedaan ?’ vroeg de koningin.

Ik ben weggelopen, zei het meisje.

Dat is het beste wat je kon doen, zei de koningin, zo kon je de heks verslaan.

Ja maar ik ben nog helemaal geen heks tegengekomen, zei het meisje.

Als dat zo is, zei de koningin, dan zul je terugmoeten naar het eerste pad, en dan zul je het pad gewoon moeten volgen totdat je haar tegen bent gekomen. Of zullen we gewoon een spelletje doen ?

De paden heb ik gevolgd, zei het meisje. Laten we nu dan maar een spelletje doen.

En zo gebeurde het. Tot diep in de avond deed het meisje spelletjes met de koningin, en ze konden het zo goed met elkaar vinden dat de koningin niet meer boos werd als ze een spelletje verloor. Het meisje beleefde nog vele avonturen met de koningin, maar dat hoor je wel in een ander verhaal.

De Dag van de Tanden Tovenaar

Armanda, Abmanda en Sherri waren drie tandenfeeën die in hetzelfde kasteel leefden. Zij waren een soort zussen bij elkaar, en ze gingen ook 's nachts naar buiten om hun werk samen te doen. Zij waren goede vrienden. Altijd weer reden ze op hun vliegende tandenpaarden in de nacht, om hun feeënzand te verspreiden over de steden. De koningin van de tandenfeeën leefde in een kasteel dichtbij hen. De koningin had een soort van kroon met witte veren, en ze lag altijd tussen de tandenluipaarden. Ze ging maar één keer per week met haar strijdwagen de lucht, en ook wanneer het donderde, en dan deed ze de klusjes die andere tandenfeeën niet konden doen. Meestal redde ze dan kleine kinderen uit hun nachtmerries, en ze bezocht kinderen die bang waren voor de tandarts. Ze had de gewoonte om deze kinderen altijd door de donder te roepen, en sommige kinderen waren erg bang van haar stem op deze wijze, maar wanneer ze dichtbij hen was dan zou ze zachte woorden tot hen spreken en hen in slaap sussen.

Op een dag moest de koningin een jongetje redden uit handen van een tandenheks. Ze riep Armanda, Abmanda en Sherri om haar te helpen, maar het was een moeilijke opgave. Uiteindelijk kon niemand van hen de jongen redden, en toen deden sommige tandenluipaarden van haar het karwei, en brachten het jongetje naar haar strijdwagen vol veren. Het jongetje jammerde veel, want de tandenheks had hem veel pijngedaan, maar de tandenfee was erg vriendelijk naar hem. Zij vertelde hem dat ze hem naar haar kasteel zou nemen, en dat hij dan kon spelen met de tandenluipaarden.

Maar op een dag vond de tandenheks het kasteel van de tandenfee koningin waar de jongen leefde, en terwijl ze krijste bevroor alles, en de tandenheks nam de jongen weer weg. Sinds toen leefde de jongen alleen met de herinneringen aan de tandenfee koningin en haar tandenluipaarden. De heks sloot hem op in de donkerste kerker waar niemand hem kon vinden. Niemand kon de tandenfee koningin smelten, en sinds toen kwamen er tranen uit haar ogen.

Armanda, Abmanda en Sherri wilden de tandenfee koningin helpen, maar ze wisten niet hoe. Zij namen het tandenfeeën boek en probeerden alle toverspreuken om haar te laten smelten, maar niets werkte. Ze moesten wachten op de tandentovenaar die elk jaar kwam om de dingen te doen die de tandenfee koningin niet kon doen. Toen de dag van de tandentovenaar was aangebroken vertelden ze wat er was gebeurd. Hij legde zijn hand op de bevroren tandenfee koningin en ze begon onmiddelijk te smelten.

Voor hem was het erg makkelijk om de jongen te vinden en hem vrij te zetten, en omdat hij wist dat de tandenheks zou proberen de jongen weer weg te nemen bracht hij de jongen naar zijn eigen paleis hoog in de wolken.

Ladybug

Zij heeft het hoofd van een lieveheers beest ... Haar ogen doordringen mij, als rollende dobbelstenen. Ze klaagt en jammert, en laat de pauwen horrorshow beginnen, totdat ze mijn aandacht heeft.

Ik ben haar gevangene, haar munt die altijd terugkeert. Haar steek is de steek van een wesp. Ze is van het holle ... Zij hebben nooit genoeg ... Zij leven in de bijna zone ...

Zij is van de vanille wildernis, met haar hoofd als de rug van een lieveheersbeest ... terwijl haar ogen rollen ...

Ze brengt haar bleke verhalen tot de massa's ... haar kranten, haar vlinders ... om vruchten te ontvoeren voor de keuken van een schrijver ... Ze is een klagende kat ... die altijd iemand anders de schuld moet geven voor haar bleke verhalen ... terwijl de nachten de kleuren brengen ... wanneer de pauwen horrorshows komen ... De dag erna zijn zij verhalen ... in een Venusiaanse boekwinkel ...

Het zijn vreemde Arabische draaimolens in de lucht, deze pauwen horrorshows ... Zij mixen het roomijs ... kapitalisten met communistische glimlachen ... Het zijn vreemde spiegels in kastelen ... Wij zijn er doorheen gemixt, leidende ons langs paarse gordijnen, de vliezen ... tot de traan van Venus ... Zij maken tochten naar vanille ... waar de delirische poeders zijn ... die hun harten ijdel

maken ...

Er zijn paarse draaimolens in mijn hoofd ... lieveheersbeestjes, en dan ontploffen de werelden ... Het gebeurt als ik mijn arendshelm opheb ... die het gezicht heeft van een lieveheersbeestje ... Het zijn één-dags-lieveheersbeestjes ... en wanneer ze sterven dan nemen ze een stuk van je wereld mee ... om je een pauwen horrorshow te laten zien ... en dan zul je weer gemixt worden ... in alles wat voor je was achtergebleven ... en daar zul je een nieuwe wereld vinden ...

Rode zandman met zijn vlammenpyama ... He is zo anders wanneer het zilver toeslaat ... dan heeft hij een pyama van bakerman's gezichten ... een pyama van lieveheersbeestjes ... en dan vliegt hij ... terwijl tranenflessen overstromen ... terwijl paarse draaimolens ronddraaien om alles te mixen ...

Er zijn oranje leugenaars op een boot ... Zij staan languit om hun lange fluisteringen te verspreiden ... terwijl de flessen van tranen overstromen ...

Rode zandmannen hebben verhalen op hun pyama's, en zij lachen in de vlammen ... Zij kennen de opera's ... terwijl oranje zandmannen de shows bespotten ... De pauwen horrorshows komen om alles weer te mixen ...

Het bed is te zacht om je te laten ontwaken ... waar een vuur de vuren verbrandt ... waar een boek boeken verslindt ... Het is te wild om je te laten slapen ... Het fluistert met miljoenen fluisteringen ... Je uitnodigende tot de tekenfilms ... als ladders tot de hemel ...

Nu zijn zij heren van de dobbelstenen, nagejaagd door duizend verhalen ... en het Russische gezicht op de deur laat zoveel kleuren zien met een pauwen horrorshow op zijn helm ...

Dit zijn pauwen horrorshows, maar zij zijn slechts ijspegels van een lang verloren sprookje .... Het is een klok van liedjes ... de wielen van regenboog auto's ... Zij marcheren tot vanille's paradijs ... waar de wespen de herinneringen fokken ... deze monsters van rock ... om een pauwen horrorshow te maken ...

Tranen
van
Vuur

TRANEN VAN VUUR

COAB 2018

Hester en de Koffie Robot
Janna en Hamma gaan naar het bos
Sandra en de Boze Badmeester
Mieke en het Magische Geld
De Dropping
Hertint
De Goochelaar

Hester
en de Koffie Robot

Vader had een donker meisje uit Amerika geadopteerd, Hester. En daarna een blank jongetje, Jaap. Jaap was heel blij met zijn oudere zus. Vader had een moeilijk leven gehad. In de oorlog moest hij vluchten. Ook had hij een hele moeilijke vrouw, maar die stierf vlak na de oorlog. Vader was heel handig. Hester hielp vader veel met het huishouden, en ook Jaap kon veel klusjes.

Vader zette 's nachts altijd het huis onder stroom aan de buitenkant, zodat dieven niet konden binnenkomen. Dat beveiligings-systeem had vader zelf gemaakt. Jaap vond het knap, en ook Hester was trots op vader. Hester was een paar jaar ouder dan Jaap, en Jaap was trots op zijn zus. Hij was blij dat hij in zo'n goed gezin terecht was gekomen, met zo'n goede vader, maar vader was soms erg depressief van de oorlog. Hester en Jaap probeerden hun vader er dan altijd overheen te helpen, maar dat lukte niet altijd. Soms moest de dokter komen, en die gaf aan vader dan medicijnen.

Maar vader begon steeds meer ziek te worden, en Hester nam steeds meer taken van vader over.
'Het laat me niet gaan,' zei vader. 'Hier is geen kruid tegen opgewassen.'

'Jawel joh,' zei Hester. 'We vinden wel wat.'

Hester en Jaap hielden de goede moed erin, ook al raakte hun vader steeds meer aan lager wal. Nu moesten ze voor zichzelf zorgen. Elke dag kookte Hester voor het gezin. Ze begon steeds meer als een moeder voor Jaap te worden. Ook vriendinnen van Hester hielpen weleens mee in het huishouden. Vader zei dat hij iets wilde uitvinden om hemzelf te helpen. Hij ging daarom soms diep in de nacht naar zijn werkkelder. Dat was eigenlijk het enige wat hij nog kon doen.

Op een ochtend kwam vader stralend uit zijn werkkelder. Hij zei dat hij de oplossing had gevonden. Hij had een robot-moeder gemaakt. Hij zei dat een moeder eigenlijk datgene was wat ontbrak in het gezin. Hij had de robot donker gemaakt, zodat ze een beetje leek op Hester, alsof het Hester's eigen moeder was. Hester vond dat de robot erg mooi was geworden. 'En wat kan ze ?' vroeg Hester schaterlachend.

'Van alles,' zei vader. 'Kijk, er zitten knoppen op. Eentje voor koken, eentje voor afwassen, eentje voor schoonmaken, eentje voor wassen, en eentje voor gezellig kletsen, en nog veel meer.'

'Geweldig,' zei Hester. Ook Jaap was blij met zijn nieuwe moeder. 'Nu is het gezin pas echt compleet,' zei Jaap. 'En het lijkt inderdaad op Hester's moeder. Nu is het alsof vader mijn vader is, en moeder Hester's moeder, en zo zijn wij bij elkaar gekomen.'

Het huis begon nu pas echt op orde te komen, want de robot deed haar werk goed. Ze was ook als een echte moeder. Ze was zorgzaam en hield je in de gaten. Maar ze was absoluut niet te streng. Ze was een droommoeder. Ieder kind zou wel zo'n moeder willen hebben. 's Avonds zaten ze op de bank om naar de tv te kijken. Langzaam begon vader uit zijn depressie te komen. De robot was zo goed gemaakt dat je niet kon zien dat het een robot was. Maar natuurlijk had ze wel knopjes.

Op een dag ging het gezin op vakantie. Robot-moeder ging ook mee. Jaap liep voortdurend gekke bekken te trekken voor de foto's. Niemand kon zo scheel kijken als Jaap. Ook Hester gaf niet om de foto's. Ze keek zo vreemd mogelijk. Ze waren gekomen voor vakantie, niet voor foto's, maar er waren allemaal fotografen. Hester en Jaap vroegen zich af waarom ze zoveel gefotografeerd werden. Vader werkte voor een energie bedrijf die energie opwekte vanuit de zee, en hij was hier tegelijkertijd op zakenreis. Als de onderhandelingen zouden slagen dan zou het land van het gezin geheel op zee energie werken.

Hester en Jaap moesten even wachten in een ander zaaltje toen vader onderhandelingen aan het doen was. Op een gegeven moment hoorden ze luid applaus, en vader kwam glimlachend naar buiten. De onderhandelingen waren geslaagd. Weer waren er fotografen bij, en nu wisten ze waar het voor was.

Toen ze weer thuiswaren ging vader direct naar zijn werkkelder. Iets had hem op een idee gebracht. Hij wilde nu energie proberen op te wekken uit koffie bonen. Hij werkte dag en nacht hier aan door, terwijl Hester en de robot moeder al het huishouden deden. Zo werd de band tussen Hester en haar robot moeder eigenlijk alleen maar hechter. Vaak stonden ze samen af te wassen in de keuken, en hadden dan de diepste gesprekken. Voor Hester was haar robot moeder haar beste vriendin.

Op een dag was het zover. Vader had zijn machine om energie op te wekken uit koffie bonen klaar, en het zou nu voorgesteld worden aan zijn bedrijf. Ze waren er zo erg van onder de indruk dat ze naast zee energie ook koffie energie wilden uitproberen. Als er zee energie werd gebruikt hing er een zee geurtje, en als er koffie energie werd gebruikt hing er een koffie geurtje. Er was ook een schakelaar voor waarmee je het kon wisselen.

Op een dag ging Hester met haar robot moeder het bos in. Ze gingen heel diep, en eigenlijk wilde Hester helemaal niet meer terug. Er stonden wat wigwams, en Hester wilde er in wonen. Haar robot

moeder stemde erin toe. Ze zouden hier blijven voorlopig. Vader was toch altijd druk bezig, dus die zou hen niet eens missen. Hester wilde nooit meer terug. Ze liet ook haar vriendinnen komen.

Eén van de moeders van de meisjes vond dit helemaal niet goed, en ze liep helemaal met haar dochter mee naar het wigwammen kamp. Ze begon iedereen enorm uit te foeteren, en het liep allemaal zo hoog op dat de meisjes die moeder begonnen te bekogelen met modder. Toen moest die moeder het wel opgeven, maar ze riep nog wel dat ze de politie erbij zou halen. De meisjes waren hier op bedacht, dus toen zijn ze met de wigwams nog dieper het bos ingegaan, daar waar geen mens ooit zou gaan. 'Laat die politie maar komen,' zei Hester, 'dan zullen ook zij ten onder gaan in het moddergevecht.'

Omdat er vanaf toen vaak helicopters overvlogen zijn ze onder de grond gegaan met hun wigwams, om daar hun kamp te bouwen. Ze gingen zo diep als ze konden en kwamen daar in een andere wereld. Hier schenen veel meer indianen te wonen.

Vader en Jaap vonden het allemaal best. Ze kwamen weleens een kijkje nemen in het ondergrondse indianenkamp. Maar de pret was maar van korte duur. De nazi's waren het land binnengevallen. Ze ontdekten ook de ondergrondse schuilplaats, en iedereen ging in gevangenschap. Vader en Jaap en alle andere indiaanse mannen werden meegenomen om op de trein gezet te worden naar Bergen-Belsen, een concentratie kamp. De meisjes zouden allemaal voor de Duitsers moeten werken in het huishouden. Alleen robot moeder kon ontsnappen. Daar was ze immers een robot voor.

Jaap jammerde in de trein naar Bergen-Belsen. In Bergen-Belsen zouden ze uitgehongerd worden, en er zouden implantaten in hun botten komen. Vader zei : 'Robot moeder zal wel naar de andere robotten gaan, de zee energie robot en de koffie energie robot. Ze staan nog in de kelder en hebben waarschijnlijk nog niet door wat er gaande is, maar robot moeder zal hen wel aan de praat krijgen, en dan zal het niet best zijn voor de Duitsers.'

Hester moest in het huis van een bepaalde Duitse officier werken, en ze foeterde hem uit.

Het was verschrikkelijk in het concentratie kamp. Jaap en vader kregen bijna niets te eten. 'Ze mogen wel opschieten,' jammerde Jaap. 'Inderdaad, ze zijn wel laat,' zei vader.

'Wat gaan ze met ons doen, vader, die nazi's ?' vroeg Jaap.

'Laten we het daar maar niet over hebben,' zei vader.

Inmiddels was Hester in gevecht geraakt met de Duitse officier, maar werd toen door anderen onder schot gehouden. Ze wist niet waar haar vriendinnen waren. Hester moest nu haar werk wel doen, ook al wilde ze niet. Ze zeiden dat ze haar zouden doodschieten als ze het werk niet zou doen.

Opeens werd er op het raam getikt. Het was robot moeder. Ook waren de zee energie robot en de koffie energie robot meegekomen. 'Robot moeder !' riep Hester terwijl ze opkeek van het vloeren dweilen. De Duitsers die bij Hester stonden om haar in de gaten te houden keken heel verbaasd. 'Wie is die vrouw ?' mopperden ze.

'Dat is mijn moeder !' riep Hester blij.

'Wat moet die nu hier !' riep een Duitser. De robotten begonnen het raam in te slaan en kwamen toen binnen door het venster. 'Wat krijgen we nu !' riep de Duitse officier. 'Kunnen jullie niet gewoon door de deur naar binnen komen ?'

'Nee,' zei de koffie energie robot. Hij richtte zijn arm op de Duitse officier en spoot koffie electriciteit op de man af die gelijk onder zware stroom stond. 'Nee !' gilde de Duitse officier. 'Niet doen !'

'En dan is er koffie,' zei de koffie energie robot. Toen gaf hij ook de andere Duitsers een optater met de koffie stroom. Ze werden tegen de muur geslingerd en hun haren stonden recht overeind. 'Nou, wat waren dat voor spelletjes !' riep de koffie energie robot.

Hester was heel blij. Toen gingen ze met z'n allen naar Bergen-Belsen. Toen de robotten het concentratie kamp binnenkwamen was er direct grote paniek bij de Duitsers. Ze werden allemaal onder zware koffie stroom gezet en weggeslingerd. Jaap en vader keken verheugd op. 'Eindelijk zijn ze gekomen,' zei Jaap.

'Ja, eindelijk,' zei vader.

Janna en Hamma gaan naar het bos

'Op de klippen gevaren !' riep Janna, terwijl ze het boek dichtklapte. Toen ging ze kleren zoeken, want ze zouden naar het bos gaan. Ook Hamma was dat aan het doen. Ze zouden morgen gaan. Ze zouden een tentje meenemen. Nu waren ze hun tasjes aan het voorbereidden. Ze zouden op de fiets gaan. Het zou wel een eindje fietsen zijn, maar dat vonden ze helemaal niet erg.

'Waar ging het boek over ?' vroeg Hamma.

'Ga het zelf maar lezen,' zei Janna, 'want dat verklap ik nog niet. Ik zal het boek wel voor je meenemen naar het bos. Dan heb je alle tijd.'

'Oké,' zei Hamma.

Janna had een karretje achter haar fiets. Daar kon de tent mooi in, en wat andere spullen. De rest hadden ze in de fietstassen gestopt die aan de bagagedragers hingen. Zo konden ze heel wat mee nemen.

Er scheen een monster te leven in het bosmeer wat ook tegen het dorp van Janna en Hamma aanlag. Janna en Hamma waren erg nieuwsgierig. Ze zouden ook zeker een kijkje nemen bij het meer, maar

ze waren ook bang.

'Zou het monster groot zijn, Janna ?' vroeg Hamma aan haar net iets oudere zus.

'Ik weet het niet, Hamma,' zei Janna. 'We zullen het vanzelf wel zien.'

'Denk je echt dat er een monster is ?' vroeg Hamma.

'Ik denk het wel,' zei Janna.

De volgende ochtend waren ze al vroeg op en gingen op pad.

Midden in de nacht, toen ze inmiddels hun tentje in het bos hadden opgezet en daarin sliepen, werden ze wakker gemaakt door een geluid. Het was een stem die zei : 'Dromen zijn bedrog. Alles is hier van drop gemaakt.' Janna opende de tent en keek naar buiten. Ze zag een groot monster met vuur in zijn ogen. Ook Hamma keek. Janna ging naar buiten en liep recht op het monster af. 'Wie ben je ?' vroeg ze. Hamma kwam ook naar buiten en verschool zich achter Janna.

'Ik heb jullie gemaakt,' zei het monster. 'Ik heb alles gemaakt. Jullie zijn van drop en ik ga jullie opeten.'

Janna begon te lachen. 'Wij van drop ? Niks hoor. Misschien ben jij wel van drop, en gaan wij jou opeten.'

Het monster kwam dichterbij, maar Janna was niet bang.

'Zeg dat je gelogen hebt over die drop,' zei Janna brutaal.

'Het is een speciaal soort drop,' zei het monster.

'Wat een vreemd monster,' zei Hamma.

'Ik lust wel wat drop,' zei Janna.

Toen ging het monster weg, en Janna en Hamma gingen weer terug naar de tent om verder te slapen. Toen ze 's ochtends weer wakker werden dachten ze dat ze het maar gedroomd hadden.

'Maar we hebben het wel beiden gedroomd,' zei Hamma. 'En dat is vreemd.'

'Misschien was het wel echt,' zei Janna.

'Een monster die het altijd over drop heeft,' zei Hamma.

'Misschien wilde hij wel drop,' zei Janna. 'Laten we het maar vergeten.'

Maar de daarop volgende nacht kwam het monster weer. Hij wilde Janna en Hamma wat vertellen. Weer gingen ze de tent uit, en liepen naar hem toe. 'Vroeger was dit allemaal moeras,' sprak het monster. 'En ik was het moeras-monster, en vanuit een dropplantje heb ik alles gemaakt.'

'Weer drop !' riep Hamma. 'Kun je het ook eens over iets anders hebben ?'

'Vast niet,' zei Janna. 'Hij lijkt mij heel dom, of misschien houdt hij ons voor de gek.'

'Echt niet,' zei het monster. 'Jullie moeten mij geloven.'

'Waarom zouden we je geloven ?' vroeg Janna.

'Ik kan jullie helpen,' zei het monster.

'Hoe dan ?' vroeg Janna.

'Eerst geloven,' zei het monster.

'Okay, ik geloof het,' zei Janna.

'Ik kan afrekenen met smerige leraren, vuile dokters, en ander tuig,' zei het monster.

'Hoe dan ?' vroeg Janna weer.

'Dat zul je wel zien,' zei het monster.

Toen begon Janna een lijstje op te dreunen met mensen waarvan ze wilde dat het monster ermee zou afrekenen.

'Komt voor elkaar,' zei het monster.

'Ik denk niet dat we dit keer dromen,' zei Hamma.

'Natuurlijk dromen we dit,' zei Janna. 'Denk je nu echt dat dit echt is ?'

'Ik denk het wel,' zei Hamma.

Het monster begon te huilen. 'Ik kan er niet meer tegen,' huilde hij.

'Wat doe je ?' vroeg Janna.

'Dat zul je wel zien,' zei het monster, terwijl er stromen van tranen uit zijn ogen kwamen. De stromen gingen richting het meer, en het meer begon steeds hoger te stijgen. 'Ga je het dorp laten overstromen ?' vroeg Janna.

'Ja,' huilde het monster.

'Goed,' zei Janna, 'braaf beest. Dan zijn we van alles af. Ik zou hier wel willen blijven.'

'Ga nu naar jullie tent,' huilde het monster. 'Morgen zal alles klaar zijn. Het dorp zal geheel overstroomd zijn door het bosmeer.'

Janna en Hamma gingen naar hun tent en sliepen verder. De volgende ochtend dachten ze dat ze het maar gedroomd hadden, maar toen ze naar het meer liepen zagen ze het dorp niet meer aan de overkant. Het meer was nu als een zee.

'Het was dus toch waar,' zei Janna. 'Nu hebben we geen familie meer, geen school.'

'Het vreemde monster heeft er echt werk van gemaakt,' zei Hamma.

Janna en Hamma gingen dieper het bos in, totdat ze een indiaan tegenkwamen die hen uitnodigde om in het verderop liggende indianenkamp te komen wonen.

Janna wilde dat eerst niet, maar na lang aandringen van Hamma stemde ze er toch in toe. De indianen wisten alles over het monster. Het monster zou uit de onderwereld zijn gekomen.

Al snel hadden Janna en Hamma het erg naar hun zin in het indianenkamp, maar de nazi's waren het land binnengevallen, en ook het indianenkamp werd niet overgeslagen. De mannen moesten per trein naar Auschwitz, een concentratie kamp waar ze implantaten in hun botten zouden krijgen, en de vrouwen moesten het huishouden doen van Duitse officieren. Janna en Hamma waren woedend, maar ze konden niets beginnen. 'Oh, was het monster nog maar hier,' klaagde Janna.

'Het monster zal komen,' spraken de indiaanse vrouwen die bij Janna en Hamma waren. De vrouwen werden in een bus gezet, en zouden verdeeld worden onder de Duitse officieren voor huishouden. 'Afwassen, koken, ramen wassen, poetsen, boenen, aardappel schillen, ik hoop dat jullie dat allemaal kunnen,' zei een Duitse officier.

'Ja hoor, ik kan alles,' zei Janna. En stilletjes dacht ze : 'Dan kan ik jullie lekker vergiftigen. Maar ja, dan moet ik ervoor zorgen dat ik er zelf niets van eet, en ook Hamma en de indiaanse vrouwen niet.'

'Wat als we het niet kunnen ?' vroeg Hamma.

'Dan worden jullie afgeschoten,' zei de Duitse officier nors.

'Dat is nogal wat,' foeterde Hamma. 'Zijn jullie wel helemaal goed bij jullie hoofd ?'

'Het monster zal komen,' zei een indiaanse vrouw weer.

'Wat voor monster !' riep een Duitse officier, terwijl hij de loop van het geweer tegen de kin van de indiaanse vrouw aanlegde.

'Raak haar niet aan !' schreeuwde Janna. De indiaanse vrouw duwde het geweer weg. 'Ik kan koken,' zei ze. 'En de rest zal ik wel zien.'

'Om ons te vergiftigen zeker,' zei de Duitse officier.

'Misschien,' sprak de indiaanse vrouw.

'Dan laat ik het jou het eerst eten,' sprak de Duitse officier nors.

'Wat moeten jullie ?' riep een andere indiaanse vrouw.

'Tut, tut, tut,' zei de Duitse officier. 'Jullie hoeven niet alles te weten.'

'Het is ons terrein,' riep de indiaanse vrouw. 'Jullie zijn op verboden terrein, en jullie zullen hier zwaar voor boeten. Het monster uit de onderwereld zal jullie grijpen.'

De Duitse officieren begonnen te lachen, en één van hen sloeg haar in het gezicht.

Janna werd woest, maar ze werd vastgehouden. 'Nog één keer, en vuur zal uit de hemel dalen om jullie te vernietigen !' schreeuwde ze.

'Ja, ja,' zei een Duitse officier. 'Je hebt teveel praatjes en teveel verhaaltjes gelezen.' Toen sloeg hij de indiaanse vrouw weer.

'Ik had je gewaarschuwd !' riep Janna.

'Zie, geen vuur,' zei de Duitse officier.

'Dat komt nog,' riep Janna.

'We hebben er hier eentje,' zei de Duitse officier.

Janna en Hamma en een indiaanse vrouw werden meegenomen naar een grote villa waar een Duitse officier woonde. Hier moesten ze werken. Schoonmaken, koken, de was doen, enzovoorts. Er kwam geen einde aan. Maanden gingen voorbij en Janna en Hamma begonnen moedeloos te worden. De indiaanse vrouw werkte stevig door, en zei altijd maar : 'Het monster zal komen.'

Op een dag was de oorlog afgelopen. De bevrijders waren gekomen, en ook Janna, Hamma en de indiaanse vrouw werden vrijgezet. 'Zou het monster dit gedaan hebben ?' vroeg Janna aan de indiaanse vrouw. De indiaanse vrouw knikte. Ze zouden nu terug gaan naar het indianen kamp. Het stond er helemaal leeg, alsof zij de enigen waren die het hadden overleefd, maar ze bleven wachten op de anderen. Maar die kwamen maar niet.

'Monster, waar ben je nou !' riep Janna.

'Het monster werkt door dingen heen,' zei de indiaanse vrouw. 'Soms zijn er eerst veel tranen voordat het monster wat kan doen.'

'Is het monster een droom of is het echt ?' vroeg Janna.

'Een droom gezonden tot de nachtmerrie, maar met veel tranen,' sprak de indiaanse vrouw.

'Het monster had ons verlost van ons verschrikkelijk dorp, en nu van de nazi's,' zei Hamma.

De indiaanse vrouw sprak niet veel, maar als ze iets zei waren het wijze woorden.

'Waarom zien we het monster niet meer ?' vroeg Janna.

'Het monster kan meer één keer gezien worden, en daarna nooit meer, maar het zal genoeg zijn,' zei de indiaanse vrouw.

'Maar we hebben het monster twee keer gezien,' zei Janna.

De indiaanse vrouw schrok. 'Twee keer ? Maar dat kan niet. Dat moet een ander monster zijn geweest,' zei ze.

'Misschien was het dan toch alleen maar een droom,' zei Janna.

'Het is een droom,' zei de indiaanse vrouw, 'maar het komt maar één keer, en zal dan gewoon door je leven heenwerken zonder dat je het monster nog een keer ziet.'

'We hadden het twee keer,' zei Hamma, 'de eerste keer had hij het voortdurend over drop, totdat je

er gek van werd, en de tweede keer liet hij ons dorp overstromen.'

'Maar dat kan niet,' zei de indiaanse vrouw. 'Het monster houdt helemaal niet van drop. Dat moet een ander monster zijn geweest en niet ons monster uit de onderwereld.'

'Goed,' zei Janna. 'Het maakt niet uit of het ons monster of jouw monster was. Misschien heeft het monster wel praatjes of verschillende gedaante verschijningen. In ieder geval zijn we van de nazi's bevrijd.'

'Maar onze stam is weg,' zei de indiaanse vrouw.

'Dan moeten we opnieuw beginnen,' zei Janna.

Op een nacht werd Janna gewekt in haar wigwam. Het monster stond voor haar. 'Heb je ook drop ?' vroeg het monster.

'Nee,' zei Janna.

'Nou, dan ga ik maar weer,' zei het monster.

'Nee,' zei Janna, 'blijf. We hebben je nodig. De nazi's waren hier, en nu zijn we weer terug, maar de hele stam is nu verdwenen, behalve Hamma, ik en een indiaanse vrouw.'

'Waar zijn de anderen ?' vroeg het monster.

'Ik weet het niet,' zei Janna. 'De mannen gingen naar Auschwitz, en de vrouwen gingen met de Duitse officieren mee voor het huishouden, en toen kwamen de bevrijders.'

'Ik heb jullie bevrijd,' zei het monster.

'Dat zei de indiaanse vrouw ook,' zei Janna, 'maar ze zei dat het monster zich maar één keer liet zien en daarna nooit meer.'

'Ze kletst,' zei het monster. 'Allemaal fabeltjes.'

'Ze dacht dat het misschien een ander monster was,' zei Janna.

'Kletskoek,' zei het monster. 'Er is maar één monster en dat ben ik.'

'Maar waar zijn de anderen dan ?' vroeg Janna.

'Ik weet het niet,' zei het monster, 'maar ik zal eens in Auschwitz kijken. Ik was er nog niet aan toe gekomen vanwege mijn drukke schema.'

'Snel een beetje dan,' zei Janna. 'Het is één van de verschrikkelijkste plaatsen.'

Het monster verdween weer, en Janna sliep verder. Ze had geen zin om het de volgende dag aan de indiaanse vrouw te vertellen, maar ze vertelde het aan Hamma. De daarop volgende nacht sliep Hamma bij Janna in de wigwam, omdat Hamma het monster ook weer wilde terugzien. Midden in de nacht werden ze gewekt. Het was het monster. 'Auschwitz staat in brand,' zei het monster. 'Ik heb het niet kunnen blussen. Het is te erg.'

'Waar zijn de indiaanse mannen van het kamp ?' vroeg Janna.

'Waarschijnlijk in het vuur vergaan,' zei het monster.

'En de indiaanse vrouwen die bij de officieren moesten werken ?' vroeg Janna.

'Weg, allemaal weg,' zei het monster.

'Wat nu dan ?' vroeg Hamma.

'Ik weet het niet,' zei het monster. 'Heb je nog drop ?'

'Drop ?' vroeg Hamma boos. 'Wie vraagt nu om drop als we het over zulk slecht nieuws hebben ?'

'Het leven gaat door,' zei het monster.

'Het is ongepast,' zei Hamma. 'Vele indianen zijn ten onder gegaan en jij wil drop.'

'Het is om er overheen te komen,' zei het monster. 'Drop zit vol met wonderbaarlijke genezingskrachten.'

'Ga jij maar lekker drop zoeken,' zei Hamma. 'Ik wil naar Auschwitz. Jij ook, Janna ?' Janna knikte. De volgende dag gingen ze met de indiaanse vrouw naar de trein om naar Auschwitz te gaan om te kijken wat er van over was gebleven. Er was inderdaad alleen maar vuur zoals het monster had gezegd. Ergens moesten ze uit de trein stappen, want daar ging de trein niet meer verder. Er stonden allemaal hekken om het vuur heen, en er was veel bewaking. De brandweer was nog steeds bezig het vuur te blussen. Janna en Hamma vroegen zich af wat er gebeurd was.

'Er is hier niets te doen,' zei de indiaanse vrouw.

'Nee,' zei Janna, 'maar ik wil weten wat er gebeurd is.'

'Het monster,' zei de indiaanse vrouw.

'Wat ?' vroeg Janna.

'Het monster uit de onderwereld,' zei de indiaanse vrouw.

'Heeft het monster dit gedaan ?' vroeg Janna.

'Ons monster,' zei de indiaanse vrouw, 'niet die van jullie. Nu zijn alle martelingen voorbij. Auschwitz is vernietigd.'

'Maar daarmee ook de indiaanse mannen van onze stam en alle anderen die in het concentratie kamp waren opgesloten ?' vroeg Janna.

'Nee,' sprak de indiaanse vrouw, 'het is bovennatuurlijk vuur, monsterlijk vuur. Onze mannen zijn in veiligheid gebracht. Het is het vuur van dromen, wat dwars door de nachtmerrie heenging, als een trein, om hen mee te nemen.'

'Gelukkig maar,' zei Janna. Ze keek naar de indiaanse vrouw en zag vuur in haar ogen, zoals ze ook eens vuur zag in de ogen van het monster. 'Nu lijk jij wel op het monster,' zei Janna tegen de

indiaanse vrouw. 'Jij hebt ook al vuur in je ogen.' De indiaanse vrouw keek naar Janna en gromde : 'Ik ben het monster.'

Janna schrok. 'M... maar ik heb je nu al zo vaak gezien, terwijl je telkens zegt dat het monster maar één keer gezien kan worden en daarna nooit weer,' zei Janna.

'Het herhaalt zich gewoon in je herinnering,' gromde de indiaanse vrouw.

'Droom ik ?' vroeg Janna.

'Ja,' zei de indiaanse vrouw. 'Het herhaalt zich in de herinnering en vervormt zich dan, maar het was maar één keer.'

Hamma keek verbaasd naar de indiaanse vrouw. 'Waar zijn de indiaanse mannen van de stam nu ?' vroeg Hamma.

'In Auschwitz,' gromde de indiaanse vrouw die steeds meer in een monster begon te veranderen.

'In het vuur ?' vroeg Hamma.

'Ze slapen,' zei het monster. 'Het is het vuur van de dromen, van de slaap. Het is opgewekt door vele tranen.'

Hamma zuchtte. Ook Janna zuchtte. Toen verdween het monster in het vuur.

Einde

Sandra en de
Boze Badmeester

'En er was een put van meisjesboeken waar alle nazi's ingeworpen werden, en ze moesten voor straf voor eeuwig meisjesboeken lezen,' las Jan hardop en sloeg toen het boek dicht. Toen moesten Jan en Sandra naar zwemles. Moeder bracht hen naar de kleedkamer van het zwembad, waar ze hun zwemkleding konden aantrekken. Daarna moesten ze onder een hele warme douche heenlopen, en zo kwamen ze bij het zwembad, waar de badmeester hen al opwachtte. Ze moesten wat baantjes zwemmen, en de badmeester legde hen wat uit. Sandra keek naar de lichtblauwe tegeltjes die ze gewoon door het water heen kon zien. Ook keek ze naar de witte klompen van de badmeester. Ze lette niet goed op, en kreeg zo een tik met de haak van de badmeester, waarmee hij vaak rondliep. 'Opletten en bij de les blijven, Sandra,' zei de badmeester streng.

Toen moest ze wel, maar alles tolde haar voor de ogen. Hij had haar op haar natte arm geslagen en het deed best wel pijn. Even wilde ze hem uitfoeteren, maar ze voelde zich te duizelig. 'Ik ben duizelig,' zei ze toen, en stapte het zwembad uit.

'Gewoon in het zwembad blijven, Sandra,' zei de badmeester, terwijl hij haar weer terugduwde. 'Maar ik ben zo duizelig,' zei Sandra.

'Dan moet je beter opletten,' zei de badmeester. Jan werd heel kwaad op de badmeester. 'Zeg, blijf van haar af,' zei hij toen hij het zwembad uitstapte, maar ook hij werd teruggeduwd. 'Ik ga het straks aan mijn vader en moeder zeggen,' zei Jan.

'Je doet maar,' zei de badmeester. Toen de badmeester even niet oplette rende Jan het zwembad uit naar de kleedkamer. 'Terugkomen !' riep de badmeester. Maar hij kon niet achter Jan aan, want dan zouden alle kinderen het zwembad uitkomen.

Sandra begon te trillen en te rillen. 'Ik voel me niet goed,' zei ze. Weer probeerde ze uit het zwembad te komen, maar weer werd ze teruggedrukt. Ze voelde haar toen helemaal wegglijden, en ging kopje onder. De andere kinderen begonnen bang te worden. Gelukkig kwam er een andere badmeester aan. 'Het gaat niet goed met één van je kinderen, zie ik,' zei hij, en trok Sandra toen uit het water. 'Misschien is ze ziek.'

'De badmeester drukte haar telkens terug !' riepen de kinderen.

'Is dat waar ?' vroeg de andere badmeester.

'Ik dacht dat ze haar aanstelde, want ze had net straf gehad,' zei de badmeester.

'Dit is gevaarlijk spel. Daar kun je voor ontslagen worden,' zei de andere badmeester.

'Ach, stel je niet aan, joh,' zei de badmeester. 'Ze speelt het gewoon om van me af te zijn.'

'Hoe weet je dat ?' vroeg de andere badmeester. 'Ze heeft haar ogen dicht, en praat niet.'

Maar toen werd de badmeester kwaad, en duwde de andere badmeester en Sandra het water in. De kinderen begonnen keihard te gillen, en er kwamen nog meer badmeesters en badjuffrouwen aangerend.

Het werd een dolle boel zoals je wel kunt begrijpen. Maar de badmeester hield vol dat Sandra het gewoon speelde om hem terug te pakken. Hij was loeikwaad.

'Je kunt kinderen nooit dwingen,' zei een badjuffrouw. 'Dat is levensgevaarlijk, of ze het nu spelen of niet.' Sandra lag levenloos in de armen van de andere badmeester, die ze weer op de kant hadden getrokken. 'Ze moet naar het ziekenhuis,' zei de andere badmeester. 'En hij moet ontslagen worden.'

Maar de badmeester werd erg kwaad, en duwde alle badmeesters en juffrouwen het zwembad in, terwijl hij Sandra greep en met haar wegrende. De kinderen begonnen nog harder te gillen. De badmeester rende met Sandra in zijn armen de trap op, en ging toen zijn grote kantoor in, en deed de deur op slot. 'Is het nu afgelopen met die spelletjes !' schreeuwde hij tegen Sandra, en sloeg haar in het gezicht. Sandra ademde bijna niet meer. Al gauw werd er op de deur geklopt, maar hij deed niet open. 'We zullen de politie bellen !' werd er geroepen. De badmeester rende toen door een andere deur met Sandra weg, weer een trap af, en toen het zwembad uit. Toen rende hij naar zijn grote witte auto, en even later scheurde hij ermee weg.

Hij bracht haar naar een grote witte villa diep in het bos. Hier nam hij haar uit de auto, en ging toen de grote villa in met haar in zijn armen, en bracht haar naar een grote ondergrondse zaal, waar een heleboel bedden waren met levenloze kinderen erin. Hier legde hij haar neer in een leeg bed. Een man met een lange witte jas kwam binnen. Hij had een brilletje op en haardossen aan beide kanten van zijn hoofd, maar boven op zijn hoofd en op zijn voorhoofd was hij kaal. 'Kun je hier weer een robot van maken,' zei de badmeester.

'Komt in orde,' zei de man. De man maakte toen even wat foto's van Sandra en ging toen weer weg. Sandra kreeg toen wat spuitjes totdat ze echt helemaal niet meer bewoog. Na een paar uur kwam de man in de lange witte jas weer terug met een robot die precies op Sandra leek. 'Perfect,' zei de badmeester. 'Nu ga jij die andere badmeesters eens haarfijn uitleggen dat je alles maar gespeeld had,' zei hij tegen de robot.

'Natuurlijk, het spijt me,' zei de robot, die gewoon op een echt mens leek.

De badmeester nam de menselijke robot mee en liet Sandra levenloos achter. Hij stopte de robot in de auto en reed toen terug naar het zwembad. Hij had de robot ondertussen allerlei instructies gegeven. En zo werd alles opgelost. De badmeester kon blijven. Sandra had zich afschuwelijk misdragen, en deed maar net alsof om hem te jennen en in de problemen te brengen. De andere badmeesters en badjuffrouwen moesten ook schuld bekennen.

Zo was er een heel crimineel netwerk in het dorp wat kinderen omwisselde met menselijke robotten die precies op die kinderen leken, en zo kon niemand wat vermoeden.

Maar Jan was een hele slimme jongen, en had al snel door dat dit Sandra niet was. Zijn ouders geloofden hem niet, maar de robot zei dingen die Sandra nooit zou zeggen. Daar kende Jan zijn zus te goed voor. Jan was heel fijngevoelig en veel intelligenter dan zijn ouders. Jan rook onraad. Nachtenlang had hij zware en diepe gesprekken met de robot, die zich nog steeds voordeed als

Sandra, zijn zus, maar uiteindelijk gaf de robot toe dat ze Sandra niet was, maar slechts een robot. De robot had het erg met Jan te doen, maar was ook slechts een slachtoffer en kon niets doen. Jan was wel blij dat de robot het in ieder geval had toegegeven. Maar Jan's ouders geloofden er nog steeds niets van, en zeiden dat Sandra zwaar ziek was dat ze dacht dat ze een robot was, en niet de echte Sandra was. Ze stuurden de robot naar een psychiater, en de robot kreeg zware medicijnen. Jan was inmiddels heel veel van de robot gaan houden en kon dit ook niet meer aanzien. Op een nacht smeekte hij de robot uit te leggen waar Sandra was. De robot probeerde het uit te leggen, maar raakte steeds in de war. Omdat Jan steeds meer bij zijn ouders er op aandrong om hem te geloven moest ook hij naar de psychiater en kreeg zware medicijnen. De psychiater zei dat zowel hij als Sandra naar een rustoord moesten. De psychiater nam hen beiden mee naar de grote witte villa diep in het bos. 'Ik herken dit !' riep de robot. 'Hier worden alle kinderen verwisseld door robotten !'

'Het is goed, Sandra,' zei de psychiater. 'Hier zul je tot rustkomen.'

'Hier moet ergens de ware Sandra liggen,' zei de robot.

'Het is goed, Sandra,' zei de psychiater weer, terwijl hij de auto parkeerde. 'Hier zal alles goed met je komen.'

'Luister dan eens naar wat ze zegt, idioot !' riep Jan. 'Heb je nu oren of niet ?'

'Ze is zwaar ziek, Jan,' zei de psychiater. 'En jij ook. Met de juiste medicatie zullen jullie hier snel tot rust komen.'

'Levenloos liggen die kinderen daar in zalen,' zei de robot. 'Jullie zijn zware criminelen.'

'Heus, het komt goed met je,' zei de psychiater, die de auto deur opendeed en uitstapte.

'Ik wil Sandra zien,' zei Jan.

'Sandra is hier,' zei de psychiater en wees op de robot.

'Nee, de echte Sandra,' zei Jan.

Toen liepen ze met z'n drieen naar het gebouw. Zowel Jan als de robot kregen een kamer in het gebouw. Jan begon het hele gebouw af te zoeken. De robot liep met hem mee. 'Het moet ergens in een zaal onder het gebouw zijn, Jan,' zei de robot. Na een tijdje vonden ze in de linkerzijde van het gebouw een trap naar beneden. Toen kwamen ze even later in de grote zaal waar levenloze kinderen lagen, waaronder ook Sandra. 'Zie je nu wel !' riep Jan. 'Dat is Sandra !'

Hij rende op Sandra af, en zag al snel dat ze helemaal onder plastic was. 'Sandra ?' riep hij, terwijl hij haar door elkaar begon te schudden. 'Word wakker !'

Maar Sandra bewoog niet. Ook de robot kwam dichterbij. 'Helaas, Jan,' zei de robot.

'Je hebt je best gedaan,' zei Jan tegen de robot. 'Gelukkig heb ik jou nog.'

De man met de lange witte jas kwam toen binnen. 'Kun je dit verklaren ?' vroeg Jan boos.

'Ja,' zei de man met de lange witte jas. 'Natuurlijk. Het is eigenlijk heel eenvoudig. Ze had een overdosis medicijnen genomen. Dat had ze nooit mogen doen.'

'Je liegt !' riep Jan. 'Kijk eens naar deze robot. Die lijkt precies op haar ! Jullie hebben hen omgewisseld ! Het begon allemaal doordat de badmeester haar bleef terugduwen in het water !'

'Je kletst, Jan,' zei de man met de lange witte jas. 'Ik ben dokter. Ik ben een professionele deskundige. Ik heb ervoor gestudeerd. Je weet nergens wat van.'

'Hoe komt het dan dat ze als twee druppels op elkaar lijken ?' riep Jan. 'Het zijn valse spelletjes die jullie spelen, stelletje omruilers !'

'Je kunt niets doen, Jan. Geef het maar op,' zei de dokter. 'Ze zullen mij toch altijd geloven boven jou, want ik ben de dokter.'

'Klootzak !' riep Jan. 'Wat hebben jullie met haar gedaan ! Sandra, antwoord me !'

Toen kwam de psychiater binnen. 'Jan moet tot rust komen,' zei de dokter.

'Dat merk ik,' zei de psychiater. 'Ik kon zijn geschreeuw in het hele gebouw horen.'

'Jullie zijn leugenaars,' riep Jan. 'Kijk nu eens wat jullie gedaan hebben. Zie dan. Ik had het bij het rechte eind. Hier ligt de ware Sandra. Kijk dan eens goed uit je doppen !'

De psychiater liep naar de levenloze Sandra, en voelde aan haar pols.

'Nou ?' zei Jan.

De psychiater keek naar Jan. Toen keek de psychiater naar de robot, en toen weer naar de levenloze Sandra.

'Nou ? Sprakeloos, hè !' riep Jan. 'Wie is er hier nu zwaar ziek !'

'Deze patient ligt hier al tijden na een overdosis medicijnen,' zei de psychiater. 'Ze mag misschien naar jouw idee op Sandra lijken, maar dit is Sandra niet.'

'Het gebeurt wel vaker dat patienten elkaar door elkaar halen,' zei de dokter.

Jan zuchtte diep. 'Hier valt niet tegen op te boksen, Jan,' zei de robot, 'maar jij en ik weten wel beter.'

'Jullie maken mensen psychisch kapot om jullie medicijnen kwijt te krijgen,' zei Jan. 'En dit hier is gewoon pure misdaad.'

Ineens opende de levenloze Sandra haar ogen. 'Ik heb alles gehoord,' zei ze. 'Sorry, maar ik ben Sandra niet. Mijn naam is Evelien, en ik ken jullie niet.' Toen sloot ze haar ogen weer.

'Weer een robot,' zuchtte Jan. 'Of misschien heb ik me wel echt vergist, of ben ik echt zwaar ziek,' en sloeg toen een arm om de robot die naast hem stond, en zei tegen haar : 'Dan moet jij toch echt de echte Sandra zijn, mijn zus. Misschien ben jij dan ook wel zwaar ziek. Wat is er toch met ons gebeurd ? Maar in ieder geval hebben we elkaar nog, en dat is het allerbelangrijkste.' En zo liepen ze arm in arm de zaal uit, de trap op.

Mieke en
het Magische Geld

Je kon eigenlijk alles met het magische geld doen : je kon het eten, je kon ermee schoonmaken, en er van alles mee bouwen. Het geld was tegelijkertijd een beveiligings-systeem tegen dieven. Er zat een alarm op, en zette elke inbreker direct onder stroom. Vandaar dat het magische geld vrede bracht en elke oorlog won.

Mieke's vader werkte bij de bank, en kwam altijd met veel geld thuis, maar in de winter was er bijna geen geld, want dat was het bloeiseizoen niet. Het magische geld groeide in een heel speciaal dropplantje. In de winter moesten ze daarom altijd heel zuinig leven. Maar in een zekere winter stopte de winter niet meer, en de mensen werden steeds armer. Mieke's vader is toen naar de reserve kluis van de bank gegaan, en heeft toen het laatste geld gebruikt om met zijn gezin te verhuizen naar een eiland in de Stille Zuidzee.

Ook op dit eiland ging hij bij een bank werken, maar daar was geen magisch geld. Voor elke cent moest keihard gewerkt worden. Mieke vertelde over het magische geld wat ze hadden in het land waar ze vandaan kwamen, totdat het altijd winter werd, maar niemand geloofde haar. Ze werd verschrikkelijk uitgelachen om haar verhalen. Dit werd zo erg dat Mieke niet meer naar school wilde.

'Als je niet naar school wil, dan blijf je dom, en dan heb je later geen werk en geen geld,' zei moeder altijd.

'Och, ik vind wel weer zo'n magisch dropplantje,' zei Mieke dan.

'Die groeien hier niet, en in het winterland waar wij vandaan komen groeien ze ook niet meer,' zei moeder dan. 'Ze zijn uitgestorven. Het is verleden tijd.'

'Die goede, oude tijd,' zuchtte Mieke. 'En toch zal ik het magische dropplantje vinden.'

En zo ging Mieke op zoek. Ze zocht over het hele eiland, maar nergens vond ze het magische dropplantje. Op een dag kwam ze een klein jongetje tegen met een pepermuntplantje. 'Ruik er eens aan,' zei het jongetje.

'Mmmmmm,' zei Mieke, terwijl ze eraan ruikte. 'Zo lekker.'

'Dat is mijn plantje,' zei het jongetje.

'Wij hadden vroeger plantjes waar geld in groeide,' zei Mieke.

'Oh, dit plantje kan nog wel veel meer,' zei het jongetje.

Mieke keek hem verbaasd aan. Hij had alleen een overbroek aan waarvan één van de schouderbanden was gescheurd en los hing.

'Heb je verder geen kleren dan alleen maar dit ?' vroeg ze.

'Het pepermuntplantje is alles wat ik nodig heb,' zei het jongetje.

'En wat kan het plantje allemaal ?' vroeg Mieke.

'Het steelt, en vreet dan alles op,' zei het jongetje.

'Maar wat heb je er dan aan ?' vroeg Mieke stomverbaasd.

'Kan goed van pas komen,' zei het jongetje.

'Oh ja, ik weet wel wat,' zei Mieke. 'Ik kan niet meer naar school, want ik word gepest.'

'Daar weet het plantje wel wat op,' zei het jongetje. 'Ik kan hem zo bij het schooltje neerzetten, en dan is het schooltje de volgende dag weg.'

Weer keek Mieke hem verbaasd aan. 'Echt waar ?' vroeg ze.

Mieke wees het jongetje de weg naar het schooltje, en daar zette het jongetje het potje met het pepermuntplantje neer. 'Moet je goed opletten,' zei het jongetje. 'Vannacht lekker slapen, en dan is het schooltje morgen weg.'

'Maar dan kan niemand meer naar school, en worden we allemaal arm,' zei Mieke.

'Welnee,' zei het jongetje. 'Het plantje zal voor ons zorgen. Het plantje zorgt ervoor dat alles eerlijk verdeeld is. Het plantje zal ons wel onderwijzen.'

Mieke ging toen naar huis, en de volgende dag ging ze terug naar het schooltje, maar het stond er niet meer. Alleen het jongetje stond daar met zijn plantje. Mieke was stomverbaasd. 'En de leraren en de kinderen dan ?' vroeg Mieke. 'Waar zijn die ?'

'Dat moet je het plantje vragen,' zei het jongetje. Maar het plantje zei niets.

'Ik denk niet dat mijn moeder daar blij mee zal zijn,' zei Mieke.

'Welke moeder ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Mijn eigen moeder,' zei Mieke.

Het jongetje keek Mieke een tijdje verbaasd aan. 'Je moeder bestaat niet meer,' zei het jongetje.

Mieke begon te huilen. 'Ook door dat rotplantje ?' vroeg ze. 'En mijn vader dan ?'

'Jij en ik zijn nog de enigen die over zijn op dit eiland,' zei het jongetje.

Mieke begon nog harder te huilen. 'Nee, nee !' riep ze. 'Ik heb mijn vader en moeder nodig !'

'Alles wat je nodig hebt is dit plantje,' zei het jongetje toen.

'Heb je nog een hart ?' vroeg Mieke huilend.

'Het plantje is mijn hart,' zei het jongetje. 'Zij die geldspelletjes spelen en schoolspelletjes, en hun kinderen gewoon laten pesten alsof er niets aan de hand is zijn het niet waard om op dit eiland te leven.'

Mieke snikte. 'Maar zo heb ik niemand meer.'

'Je hebt mij en het plantje,' zei het jongetje. 'Dat is alles wat je nodig hebt. Heus, het is beter zo.'

Maar op een dag was ook het jongetje verdwenen en had Mieke alleen nog maar het pepermunt plantje.

'Nu,' snikte Mieke, 'nu zijn alleen jij en ik nog overgebleven, en je praat niet.'

Mieke besloot het plantje uit het potje te halen en gewoon in de grond te planten. Na een tijdje stonden er veel meer van de speciale pepermuntplantjes. 'Alles is nu weg,' zei Mieke, 'en van jullie komen er steeds meer bij. Mag ik de reden vragen waarom ook het jongetje weg moest ?'

Maar de pepermuntplantjes spraken niet. Op een dag was Mieke het alleen zijn zo zat dat ze een bootje pakte en de zee op begon te roeien op weg naar een dichtbij liggend eiland. Ook dit eiland scheen onbewoond te zijn. 'Misschien hebben de pepermunt plantjes hier ook al toegeslagen,' zei Mieke tegen haarzelf. Weer ging ze het bootje in, en ging op naar het derde eiland. Tot haar grote verbazing vond ze het jongetje daar.

'Waarom ben je bij me weggegaan ?' vroeg ze.

'Oh, heel eenvoudig,' zei het jongetje. 'Het bloeiseizoen van het pepermunt plantje kwam eraan, en dan ga ik altijd op vakantie.'

'En dan laat je mij achter ?' vroeg het meisje.

'Ja,' zei het jongetje, 'wie niet achter zich kan laten is het pepermuntplantje niet waard. Ik zou heus wel weer terugkomen, hoor.'

'Ach, stik jij toch met je pepermuntplantjes !' riep Mieke boos. Ze stapte weer in haar bootje en roeide terug naar het tweede eiland. 'Hier zal ik blijven wonen,' zei ze tegen haarzelf. 'Ik wil niets meer met die pepermunt plantjes te maken hebben.'

Maar het jongetje kwam na een tijdje ook met een bootje naar het eiland.

'Ik wil je niet meer zien !' riep ze tegen het jongetje, 'en je pepermuntplantjes ook niet !'

'Maar het is alles wat je nog hebt,' zei het jongetje.

'Ik heb niks meer, helemaal niks,' snikte het meisje. 'Jullie hebben me alles afgenomen.'

'Maar je word niet meer gepest,' zei het jongetje.

'Jij bent de ergste pestkop die ik ooit ben tegengekomen,' snikte Mieke.

'Kan ik er wat aan doen,' zei het jongetje. 'Ik ben slechts een plaagplantje.'

'Oh, ben jij zelf ook zo'n plantje,' zei Mieke. 'Wat heb je met mijn ouders gedaan, en met iedereen waarvan ik hield ?'

'Wil je het echt weten ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Ja,' snikte Mieke, 'voordat ik je een mep verkoop.'

'Je begrijpt bepaalde dingen niet,' zei het jongetje. 'Ik plaag om je te beschermen.'

'Waartegen bescherm je mij dan ?' vroeg Mieke.

'Tegen iets veel ergers,' zei het jongetje.

'Zeg op,' zei Mieke, die haar hand al had opgetrokken, klaar om het jongetje een mep te verkopen.

'Tegen de eeuwige winter,' zei het jongetje. 'Omdat jullie in het land waar jullie vandaan kwamen het geld niet konden loslaten kwam de eeuwige winter. Het pepermuntplantje speelt zulke spelletjes niet.'

'Maar we hadden geld nodig om te kunnen leven,' zei Mieke.

'Nee,' zei het jongetje, 'het enige wat jullie nodig hadden was het pepermuntplantje, die ervoor zou zorgen dat alles eerlijk verdeeld zou zijn, en dat je alles ook weer zou kunnen loslaten.'

'Die groeiden niet in ons land,' zei Mieke.

'Dat kon ook niet,' zei het jongetje. 'Jullie hielden teveel vast aan jullie geld, en alles was oneerlijk verdeeld, en alles draaide om geld.'

'We konden alles met het magische geld doen,' zei Mieke. 'Het groeide aan een heel speciaal dropplantje.'

'Ja, ja, ik ken die dropplantjes,' zei het jongetje. 'Het zijn grote bedriegers. Zij brengen zelf de eeuwige winter, en dan gaan ze er vandoor.'

'Nou, jullie zijn ook niet de aardigsten,' zei Mieke. 'Kijk wat jullie gedaan hebben.'

'Kijk naar jezelf,' zei het jongetje. 'En waar ben je nu liever ? Hier op een eiland in de Stille Zuidzee of in het winterland ?'

'Je hebt gelijk,' zei het meisje. 'Waarschijnlijk moet ik kiezen tussen twee kwaden, en dan kan ik beter dit kiezen.'

'Maar als je ons kwaad maakt, dan zijn we weg,' zei het jongetje, 'en dan wordt het hier ook voor altijd winter.'

Mieke haalde haar schouders op. 'Dan vind ik vast wel een beter plantje dan jouw plantje,' zei ze.

Maar toen werd het jongetje erg boos. 'Goed, dan moet je het zelf maar weten.'

Hij ging terug naar zijn bootje en begon weg te roeien. Toen werd het winter en het bleef winter. Het begon steeds kouder en kouder te worden.

'Oh, had ik maar naar het jongetje geluisterd,' jammerde Mieke. Ze begon overal op het eiland te zoeken naar een nieuw plantje wat haar zou kunnen helpen, maar ze vond niets. Het begon hard te vriezen, en Mieke voelde dat ze bevroor. 'Help !' riep Mieke. Maar niemand hielp.

'Ik heb het allemaal verkeerd gedaan !' riep Mieke. 'Ik had beter moeten luisteren ! Help me dan toch !'

Maar de eeuwige winter had toegeslagen. Mieke werd helemaal bedolven onder de sneeuw, en viel toen in een diepe slaap, daar midden op een eiland in de Stille Zuidzee. En op de sneeuwhoop die haar bedekte groeide een klein pepermuntplantje.

'Droom ik ?' vroeg Mieke. Ze kon zo het kleine pepermuntplantje zien, en probeerde het te grijpen, maar het was te ver weg, en het sprak ook niet.

'Help !' riep Mieke. 'Droom ik ?'

Maar niemand antwoordde, en ook het plantje niet. En het plantje groeide groter en groter, en het jongetje kwam er lachend uitrennen, en reikte zijn hand naar haar uit. Mieke greep zijn hand.

'Nog een ander plantje gevonden ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Eh nee,' zei Mieke. 'Ik ben bevroren, maar ik heb het helemaal niet koud.'

'Dat komt omdat je op een eiland op de Stille Zuidzee bent, in het geheim van de pepermuntplantjes,' zei het jongetje.

'Oh ja, die plagen,' zei het meisje.

'Ja, de plaagplantjes,' zei het jongetje, 'maar om je te beschermen tegen nog ergere pestkoppen.'

'Volgens mij ben jij echt de ergste pestkop,' zei het meisje.

'Ik ben een pepermuntplantje,' zei het jongetje. 'Jij begrijpt ons gewoon niet.'

Langzaam kon het meisje zich weer bewegen. Ze keek helemaal omhoog om te zien hoe groot het pepermuntplantje was geworden. 'Kom,' zei het jongetje.

En ze begonnen omhoog te klimmen in de pepermuntplant. 'De wereld wordt een winter,' zei het jongetje. 'Maar ik zal jou leiden naar mijn wereld.'

Einde

De Dropping

Ze kon de zwarte auto herinneren waarmee ze was ontvoerd. Het kwam telkens terug in haar gedachten. Het verleden was een schaduw die haar achtervolgde, stalkte, altijd weer. Ze kwam maar niet los. Het was als een watermerk in haar leven. Het was ook niet weg te krijgen. Dagelijks dacht ze eraan en dagelijks vocht ze ertegen.

Ze namen haar naar het bos, naar een buurthuis, midden in de nacht, en daar moest ze allerlei karweitjes doen. Wat erna gebeurde kon ze zich niet meer herinneren. Alles werd zwart voor haar ogen. Het was uiteindelijk een witte auto die haar vrijzette, maar ze vertrouwde het niet. Ze deden zich voor als haar bevrijders, maar ze had altijd het gevoel dat ze samenwerkten met hen van de zwarte auto. Het was niet echt een auto, maar meer een klein busje. Dat gold ook voor de witte auto.

'Ze zijn niet goed snik,' dacht ze altijd. Er was nooit een zaak van gekomen. De criminelen waren nooit berecht. Ze kon er niet over praten. Ze had het een keer aan iemand verteld, maar die geloofde haar niet. Die dacht dat het een dropping geweest moest zijn. Ze is toen enorm aan haarzelf gaan twijfelen.

Ze had het eens nagevraagd aan mensen, en het bleek dat er wel vaak soortgelijke droppings werden georganiseerd. De zwarte auto's namen mensen geblinddoekt mee naar een onbekende plaats, waar ze werden gedumpt. Dan moesten ze hun weg naar huis vinden, alleen of in een groep, en als ze dan te ver afdwaalden en hun weg niet meer konden vinden, dan waren er de witte auto's om hen naar huis te brengen. Maar alles wat ze nog kon herinneren was dat ze niet was geblinddoekt, en dat ze naar het buurthuis ging waar ze karweitjes moest doen. Volgens haar was er misdaad in het spel. Omdat ze nooit werd geloofd sprak ze er op een gegeven moment niet meer over.

Ze had een heel onderzoek gedaan over droppings, en er waren geen gevallen bekend dat mensen ook karweitjes moesten doen. Misschien haalde ze wel dingen door elkaar. Er werd beweerd dat ze eens een tijdje in het buurthuis had gewerkt, en daar kreeg ze ook voor betaald. Ze vroeg zich af waarom ze dat niet meer kon herinneren. Ook had ze eens een verhaal gelezen over een uit de hand gelopen dropping waarin mensen niet alleen ergens werden gedumpt, maar ook werden opgesloten, als een soort boeienkoning. Dan moesten ze dus eerst zien los te komen. Maar dit was slechts een verhaal uit een boek. In dat verhaal werden ze zelfs gevoed met vergif opdat ze hun geheugen en orientatie zouden verliezen. Zij had het idee dat dat met haar was gebeurd. Het leek wel alsof het verhaal de enige was die haar begreep en alle informatie had. Het boek hield ze sindsdien op haar kamer, en ze vereerde het boek, ook al wist ze dat het maar een verhaal was. Ze twijfelde aan de echtheid ervan, maar ze achtte het wel een mogelijkheid.

Ze had meer op met boeken dan met mensen.

Op een dag kwam ze een meisje tegen die beweerde dat hetzelfde met haar was gebeurd. Ze durfde zichzelf toen weer een beetje te openen, en ze werden de grootste vriendinnen. Eigenlijk was het

precies hetzelfde verhaal, en ze leende ook haar boek uit aan haar nieuwe vriendin, en die was er helemaal dolenthousiast over, want dit gaf haar een antwoord wat er met haar gebeurd was. Beide meisjes leefden hier ontzettend van op. Ze besloten niets aan de buitenwereld te vertellen, want die zouden hen toch niet geloven. Ze hadden genoeg aan elkaar. Wel vroegen ze zich af of er meerderen waren zoals hen. Misschien in het buitenland. Ze zouden op de uitkijk staan. Ze besloten eens een anonieme advertentie te plaatsen in de krant, maar daar kwam niemand op af. Dit probeerden ze zelfs in het buitenland, maar zonder resultaat.

Op een dag toen ze bij elkaar waren stopte er een rode auto vlakbij hen. De man schoof een raampje naar beneden en gaf hen een foldertje. Het was een uitnodiging voor een dropping. Ze werden allebei vuurrood. 'Een dropping ? Dat nooit,' zei het ene meisje tegen het andere. Toen lazen ze het foldertje verder. 'De deelnemers worden meegenomen naar het buurthuis voor koekhappen en andere leuke spelletjes, en worden daarna gedropt ergens in het bos, voor een leuke tocht.'

'Ja, ja,' zei haar vriendin. 'En dat moeten wij zeker geloven ? Wij werden nooit geloofd, maar wij zullen hen ook niet geloven. We zijn toch niet gek ? Een ezel stoot zich nooit aan dezelfde steen. Koekhappen ? Vergif happen zullen ze bedoelen.'

Maar ze waren toch wel erg nieuwsgierig, en op de dag van de dropping gingen ze bij het buurthuis kijken. Het was er een hele vrolijke boel. Er liepen zelfs clowns rond, en een man met een hondje dat kunstjes deed. Ze hadden medelijden met de kinderen die daar waren, maar ze wisten dat er maar eentje de klos zou zijn, zoals eens bij hen, opdat de anderen hen nooit zouden geloven.

Arm in arm liepen ze toen naar huis, er vol van overtuigd dat daar een groot kwaad aan het gebeuren was, of misschien juist niet, opdat zij geheel geisoleerd zouden blijven in hun lijden en door niemand geloofd zouden worden.

Aan elkaar hadden ze genoeg. De wereld was immers gek geworden. Mensen konden zich niet meer inleven in elkaar. Er was teveel afstand, en teveel grootspraak. Niemand begreep hen beter dan het boek. In de buitenwereld was het allemaal de beste stuurlui staan aan wal. Iedereen had maar makkelijk praten. Met een blinddoek naar koek happen ? Natuurlijk word je dan bedrogen, en door leugen en vergif meegenomen. In hoeverre waren ze nog zichzelf ? Iets of iemand had zwaar met hen gerommeld. Onschuldige spelletjes noemen ze dat dan.

Het andere meisje had ook de herinnering dat er een mes op haar keel was gelegd. 'We laten de mensen de mensen,' zei ze. 'Wij weten wel beter. Als we onszelf niet meer kunnen geloven dan heeft het leven geen zin meer.'

Niet lang na de dropping van het foldertje liepen ze samen ergens op straat, en een zwarte auto stopte vlakbij hen. Een raampje ging naar beneden, en een boertje keek hen aan. 'Stap maar in, jongedames. Waar gaat de reis naartoe ?'

Plotseling herinnerden de meisjes het boertje. 'Zeg, heb jij ons niet eens eerder meegenomen ?' vroeg het meisje.

'Ik herinner hem ook,' zei haar vriendin.

'Nee hoor,' zei het boertje. 'Ik weet van niets. Stap in, dan kunnen we verder praten, want anders rijd ik weer weg.'

'Nee, nee, rijd niet weg,' zei het meisje. 'Alstublieft, vertel ons alles wat er gebeurd is.' Ze wist dat het boertje haar enige hoop was om aan de informatie te komen die ze nodig had.

'Laten we dat nu maar niet doen,' zei haar vriendin, 'want dan gebeurt weer hetzelfde, en dan moeten we er weer doorheen.'

'Ja, maar ik heb dit nodig, anders blijf ik met die vretende twijfels en onzekerheden lopen,' zei het meisje.

'Ja, maar wat als we het dit keer niet overleven ?' vroeg haar vriendin.

'Het leven heeft geen zin als ik hier niet achterkom,' zei het meisje.

Uiteindelijk zijn ze toen maar ingestapt, want ze konden hun nieuwsgierigheid niet bedwingen, en die nieuwsgierigheid was veel en veel groter dan hun angst.

'Vertel op,' zeiden de meisjes die inmiddels op de achterbank zaten. 'Wat heb je met ons gedaan de vorige keer ?'

'Zoals ik al zei,' zei het boertje, 'ik ken jullie niet, maar zou jullie graag een lift willen aanbieden. Waar gaat de reis naartoe ?'

'U heeft ons leven flink in de problemen gebracht,' zei het meisje. 'Alles wat we willen is een verklaring hiervoor.'

'Welnee,' zei het boertje. 'Jullie begrijpen het gewoon niet. Ik zal jullie meenemen naar de boerin dan krijgen jullie lekkere koek met thee.'

'Nee !' riepen de meisjes. Dat herinnerden ze zich ook ineens, dat ze koek met thee kregen van de boerin.

De boer reed met het zwarte kleine busje een weiland in, op weg naar een boerderij. Bij een klein boerderijtje stopten ze. 'We willen best meegaan, maar we drinken geen thee en eten geen lekkere koek. Alles wat we willen is een verklaring.'

'Loop maar mee,' zei het boertje ineens een stuk platter.

De boerin wachtte hen al op in de deur opening.

'Kom verder,' zei de boerin plat. De meisjes waren nog steeds niet bang, want hun nieuwsgierigheid had alle angst weggevreten. Zo lang hadden ze gewacht op een antwoord, en nu hoopten ze dat eens eindelijk te krijgen. In een kamertje vlak naast de keuken stond een tafel met een tapijt erover en wat stoelen. Daar gingen ze zitten. De meisjes staarden als gehypnotiseerd naar het servies. Dit kenden ze. Ze bestuurden ijverig de patronen van het servies.

'Thee ?' vroeg de boerin.

'Nee, en ook geen lekkere koek,' zei het meisje. 'Wij komen alleen voor het antwoord. Wat hebben jullie met ons gedaan de vorige keer, want ik herken alles.'

'Herinner je de dropping ?' vroeg de boerin.

Toen vertelde het meisje alles wat ze nog herinnerde.

De boerin schudde haar hoofd.

Toen begon ook het andere meisje haar verhaal te vertellen wat er veel op leek, en weer schudde de boerin haar hoofd.

'Lieve meisjes,' zei de boerin. 'Jullie begrijpen er niets van, helemaal niets. Maar drink even wat thee en eet even wat lekkere koek.'

'Dat doen we niet,' zei de vriendin van het meisje. 'Want dan komen we weer bij hetzelfde punt uit, en misschien erger.'

'Ach, doe even gezellig, neem even wat, dat praat makkelijker,' zei de boerin.

'Daar zijn we niet voor gekomen,' zei het meisje. 'Ik ben ervan overtuigd dat dat de oorzaak is van al onze problemen.'

De boerin schoot in de lach. 'Het was een dropping, en jullie hebben alles verkeerd begrepen. Maar heus, je hoeft van mij echt niets te eten of te drinken. Als je niet wil, dan houd het op. Dan drink en eet ik het lekker zelf op, en mijn man.'

'Maar krijgen we het antwoord nog te horen ?' zei het meisje.

'Wie niet eten en drinken wil krijgt ook niets te horen,' zei de boerin.

'Wat flauw,' zei de vriendin van het meisje. 'Dan zijn we helemaal voor niets gekomen.'

'Dat zijn nu eenmaal de regels,' zei de boerin.

'Okay,' zei het meisje, 'dan eet en drink ik, maar mijn vriendin niet. Is dat ook goed ?'

'Nee, zo zijn we niet getrouwd,' zei de boerin. 'Samen uit, samen thuis. Of allebei, of niets.'

'Wat is dat voor belachelijk gedoe,' zei de vriendin van het meisje.

'De regels van de dropping,' zei de boerin.

'Welke dropping ?' vroeg het meisje. 'We hebben helemaal nooit aan een dropping meegedaan. Het lijkt wel alsof we ertoe gedwongen waren.'

'Laten we even ter zake komen,' zei de boerin. 'Of jullie eten en drinken nu, of jullie vertrekken nu weer, want ik heb geen zin om nog langer mijn tijd te verdoen met jullie.'

'U eerst,' zei het meisje.

De boerin keek beledigd naar het meisje. 'Wat nou : u eerst ? Ik ben hier in mijn eigen huis, en ik laat me niet commanderen door één of andere snotaap. Drink en eet nu, of vertrek.'

'Goed,' zei het meisje boos, en begon van de koek te eten en van de thee te drinken, en haar vriendin ook.

'Nu kunnen we zaken doen,' zei de boerin.

Snel vielen de meisjes in slaap. 'Ze zullen elkaar niet meer herinneren,' zei de boerin. Ze werden beiden op een bed in aparte kamers gelegd, en na een tijdje stopte er een witte auto bij de boerderij, die kwam om het meisje mee te nemen. Na ongeveer een kwartier kwam er een tweede witte auto die de vriendin van het meisje mee zouden nemen.

Het meisje werd wakker in de witte auto. 'Waar ben ik ?' vroeg het meisje.

Een man in een wit pak zei : 'We vonden je ergens slapend in het bos. Was jij van de dropping ?'

'Ik weet het niet meer,' zei het meisje. 'Ik weet helemaal niets.'

'Denk goed na,' zei de man in het witte pak.

'Volgens mij moest ik karweitjes doen in het buurthuis, en ben ik toen gevlucht, en toen vonden jullie mij,' zei het meisje. 'Het begon allemaal toen ik ontvoerd werd in een zwarte auto.'

'Weet je ook door wie ?' vroeg de man in het witte pak.

'Nee,' zei het meisje.

Ergens dichtbij haar huis zette de witte auto haar af. Toen liep ze verder alleen naar huis. Op haar kamer was het een enorme rotzooi. Op het bureau lag het boek over de uit de hand gelopen dropping. Ook lag er een kaart van haar vriendin in het boek als een boekenlegger. Op het kaartje stond : 'Ik ben zo blij dat we elkaar hebben gevonden.' Daaronder stond haar naam en adres. 'Wie is dat ?' vroeg het meisje zich af. Het leek een waas in haar geheugen te zijn. Ze kon haar nieuwsgierigheid niet meer bedwingen, en ging direct met de kaart naar het adres toe, maar er woonde een oud echtpaar. Het meisje liet de kaart aan het echtpaar zien, maar ze schudden het hoofd. 'Die woont hier allang niet meer,' zei de vrouw. 'Die woonde hier voordat wij hier woonden, maar toen zij was verongelukt ging het gezin verhuizen.'

De rillingen gleden door het meisje heen. 'Misschien is het een hele oude kaart dan,' zei het meisje.

'Dat moet wel,' zei de vrouw.

'Ik kan haar niet herinneren,' zei het meisje.

'Ach,' zei de vrouw. 'Dat kan gebeuren. Je komt zoveel mensen tegen in je leven. Dat kun je nooit allemaal bijhouden, vooral niet als het zo lang geleden is. Wil je misschien binnenkomen voor wat thee en een lekkere koek ?'

Het meisje schudde haar hoofd. 'N... nee, ik moet maar weer eens gaan,' zei ze, en rende toen weg.

Einde

Hertint

Ze had drugs genomen, en zag nu alles rood. Ze was erdoor in een rode wereld gekomen.
Ze ging ook meehelpen de drugs te verkopen. Het was heel duur.
Mensen deden er een moord voor, of werden dieven.
Sommige mensen waren afhankelijk van de drugs. Het hield hen in leven.
Maar er was niet genoeg, en voor velen was het te duur, onbereikbaar.
Ze werkte mee in dit criminele netwerk. Mensen vochten om dit spul.
Hierom waren de straatbendes in oorlog, om dit goedje.
Meisjes gingen de prostitutie in om het te kunnen bemachtigen.
Alhoewel steeds meer meisjes de criminaliteit verkozen boven de prostitutie.
Ze stalen liever dan dat ze hun lichamen overgaven aan vreemden.
Maar ja, als ze in de gevangenis kwamen, dan gebeurde dat toch wel.
En daarom hadden ze juist het rode spul zo hard nodig.
Want de wereld was hard.

Het zou volop in de natuur groeien, en daarom gingen velen de wildernis in, omdat het in de stad te moeilijk te krijgen was. Het spul groeide in bepaalde soorten klaprozen, in papavers, maar de drugs maakten de mens agressief, wild, humeurig, onverschillig, afstandelijk en egoïstisch. Eigenlijk werd alles alleen maar erger door de drugs. De mens kwam in een vicieuze cirkel.

Vrouw Hertint had drie roodharige kinderen, naar haar eigen zeggen door haar zware verslaving aan de rode drugs. Haar man, Hertant, was ook zwaar verslaafd, door haar. Hun kinderen werden zwaar verslaafd geboren, en raakten alleen maar erger verslaafd naarmate ze opgroeiden. Hun kinderen waren drie oorlogsvisioenen opgewekt door de rode drugs.

De Goochelaar

Ze had geld nodig en ging in op de vacature voor assistente van een goochelaar. Het waren nogal gevaarlijke truuks, maar het betaalde daarom ook verschrikkelijk goed, en dat had ze echt nodig om uit de schulden te komen. Het waren meer stunts dan dat het goochelen was. Het werd ook uitgezonden op televisie. Vaak ging er iets mis, en daarom had het ook hoge kijkcijfers. Haar vader was hier erg kwaad om. Hij vergeleek het met de Romeinse arena's, en zei dat er in dat opzicht niet veel was veranderd. Hij wilde ook niet dat ze rookte. Eigenlijk was ze door het roken in de schulden gekomen, want ze rookte altijd haar gehele inkomen op, en daarnaast gokte ze ook.

Toen ze de baan als assistente van de goochelaar had gekregen was de hele familie blij, behalve haar vader. De hele familie ging dan ook naar de voorstellingen toe, maar vader kwam niet. Haar familie gaf meer om de roem en het geld dan om haar leven. Ze begreep haar vader wel, en wist diep in haar hart dat hij eigenlijk de enige was die echt van haar hield, maar ze had het geld nodig, en toch trokken de stunts haar aan. Dan had ze het gevoel dat ze echt leefde. Ze was nogal een waaghals, en dat was ze altijd al geweest.

De stunts waren ingewikkeld, en niet altijd goed te volgen, bijna als puzzels, en ook dat trok weer mensen aan. Mensen hielden van het mysterie. Soms gebeurden de stunts in de buitenlucht. Er waren al eens assistentes spoorloos vermist geraakt, en ook waren er al assistentes verongelukt, maar het hield haar niet tegen, en ook de staat verbood deze gevaarlijke spelletjes niet, waar vader erg kwaad over was. 'Je moet het zelf maar weten,' zei hij, 'maar ik kom niet.'

Dit keer gebruikte de goochelaar een lange, dunne zaag. Iedereen hield z'n adem in. Er waren drie hokken waarvan in twee hokken een assistente zat. Die waren erin gestapt, en toen werden de hokken verwisseld achter een zwarte doek, dus niemand wist waar ze inzaten. De goochelaar haalde toen het doek weg, en drukte zo de zaag in een gat en begon naar onderen te zagen in één van de hokken. Nadat dit was gebeurd gingen de andere twee hokken open, en de twee assistentes kwamen er glimlachend uit. Toen liet de goochelaar zich blinddoeken en er stond een hele rij van assistentes, zowel vrouwelijke als mannelijke, en ze hielden allemaal een object vast. Met de zaag sloeg de goochelaar de objecten gewoon uit hun handen. Toen namen ze weer andere objecten in hun handen, en er werd een groot bord van piepschuim voor de assistentes neergezet zodat het publiek hen niet kon zien. De zaag had een hele scherpe punt, als een zwaard, en de goochelaar begon zo telkens te steken door het piepschuim en te zagen. Maar aan het einde ging dat niet goed. Een mannelijke assistente gaf een schreeuw van achter het piepschuim. Iedereen was in grote paniek. Het had een dodelijke afloop.

Ze gingen allemaal bedroefd naar huis, maar ze hadden hun grote geld verdiend als troost. Wanneer er iets misging werd er altijd dubbel uitbetaald. 'Ik had jullie nog gewaarschuwd !' foeterde vader. Maar ze trokken zich niets van hem aan. De keer erop gingen ze gewoon weer. Vanwege dat ze nu goed verdiende gaf ze altijd peperdure cadeau's aan de familie. Mede daarom was ze ook heel

geliefd. Vader nam de cadeau's nooit aan. Hij noemde het bloedgeld.

Op een dag belandde ze in het ziekenhuis door een stunt die weer verschrikkelijk misging. Ditmaal was ze zelf de klos. De ziekenhuis rekening was zo groot dat ze ondanks haar vele geld er diep door in de schulden raakte. 'Er is altijd baas boven baas,' zei vader. 'Wist je dat het ziekenhuis een contract heeft met de goochelaar ?'

Ze keek haar vader vreemd aan. 'Dat wist je niet, hè ?' zei vader. 'De goochelaar wordt door het ziekenhuis goed betaald als hij zijn truken mis laat gaan, en soms krijgt hij grote bonussen zoals nu. Deze grote maatschappijen houden elkaar in stand. Ze leven van elkaar. Er is ook een contract met de begrafenis-ondernemer. Het is allemaal legaal, want de staat leeft er ook van. Ze zijn allemaal deel van het complot van de goochelaar.'

'Ja, maar wat moet ik dan ?' vroeg ze. 'In de prostitutie wil ik ook niet werken.'

Vader keek naar zijn dochter in het ziekenhuisbed. Haar been was in het gips, en haar hoofd zat flink in het verband.

'Zie, nu moet je meer terugbetalen dan dat je ooit hebt verdiend,' zei vader.

'Dus u denkt dat de goochelaar het met opzet heeft gedaan ?' vroeg ze.

'Het zijn criminelen,' zei vader. 'Je kunt ze niet vertrouwen.'

'Wat moet ik dan doen ?' vroeg ze.

Opeens kwam de goochelaar binnen. Hij had een fles wijn voor haar meegenomen, en wat pakjes sigaretten. 'Wat moet jij nu hier ?' vroeg vader.

't Spijt me,' zei de goochelaar, en richtte zich toen tot het meisje. 't Spijt me dat het mis is gegaan en dat je nu in diepere schulden zit dan ooit, maar als troost wil ik je je eigen show als goochelaar aanbieden.'

Vader schudde zijn hoofd, terwijl ze helemaal begon te stralen en te glimlachen. 'Mag het vader ?' vroeg ze, 'dan kan ik uit mijn schulden komen, en dan kan me verder niets meer overkomen als goochelaar.'

Vader schudde weer zijn hoofd. 'Ik geef het op met jou,' zei hij. 'Nog steeds begrijp je het complot van de goochelaar niet.' Toen rende hij de ziekenhuis kamer uit.

Het meisje keek uit het raam en zag haar vader even later het ziekenhuis uitrennen. Ze kreeg een heel vreemd gevoel in haar buik, een gevoel wat ze niet kon verklaren. Toen keek ze naar de goochelaar. 'Mijn vader is er niet blij mee, en ik wil hem niet nog een keer teleurstellen. Hij heeft me ook nog geen toestemming gegeven.'

'Okay, denk er maar even over na,' zei de goochelaar.

De volgende dag was vader er weer. 'En ?' vroeg hij.

'Ik heb de baan niet aangenomen, vader,' zei het meisje. 'Ik moet eerst uw toestemming hebben.'

'Wat denk je zelf ?' vroeg vader.

'Voor u doe ik het niet,' zei ze.

Vader zuchtte. 'Ik dacht dat je je lesje wel geleerd had, maar blijkbaar niet.'

'Ik doe het niet, vader,' zei ze. 'Is dat niet genoeg ?'

Vader schudde zijn hoofd. 'Ik kan maar niet tot je doordringen,' zei hij. 'Is er nog iets wat ik moet weten ? Het lijkt alsof je zwaar aan de drugs bent.'

'Ik gebruik inderdaad, vader,' zei het meisje. 'Het was een vereiste om mee te kunnen doen als assistente van de goochelaar.'

Vader zuchtte en schudde zijn hoofd. 'Welk middel ?' vroeg hij.

'De drugs heet 'de Goochelaar,' zei het meisje. 'Ik moest het geheim houden. Als ik het zou verraden zouden ze me koudmaken.'

Vader boog zijn hoofd. 'De Goochelaar ? Maar mijn lieve kind, dan ben je al levende dood. Ze noemen het ook wel zombie drugs. Het laat je hersenen afsterven totdat je hersendood bent, en dan bespelen de drugs verder de lichamelijke functies zodat het net lijkt alsof je nog leeft. Ik heb mijn dochter verloren.'

'Maar vader, ik leef nog,' zei het meisje.

'Ja, de drugs leven in jou als parasieten,' zei vader, 'maar je hart is dood. Ik heb een clown als dochter.'

Het meisje begon te snikken. 'Is er nog een mogelijkheid om hiervan af te kicken, vader ?'

'Voor zover ik weet is zaad van het telefoonplantje het enige tegengif,' zei vader.

'Heeft u dat toevallig, vader ?' vroeg het meisje.

'Ik heb het altijd op zak,' zei vader. 'In het kleine flesje wat aan mijn halsketting hangt.'

'Ik vroeg me altijd al af wat er in dat flesje aan uw nek zit,' zei ze lachend.

Vader keek heel ernstig. 'Je kunt het maar één keer in je leven gebruiken,' zei vader. 'Als je na gebruik weer van de goochelaars drugs neemt, dan val je op slag dood.'

'Ik begrijp het, vader,' zei het meisje. 'Ik zal u niet nog een keer teleurstellen.'

Vader haalde het flesje van zijn ketting, opende het flesje, en gaf zijn dochter ervan te drinken. Het meisje begon te snikken. 'Ik voel me zo vreemd, vader, alsof ik van een diepe slaap ben ontwaakt. Ik kan weer heel goed en diep nadenken, en ik voel mijn hart weer kloppen.'

Vader glimlachte. 'Ik hoop dat je snel weer naar huis kan.'

Ineens kwam de goochelaar binnen. 'Heb je je beslissing al gemaakt ?' vroeg hij. Het meisje raakte direct in paniek. 'Laat hem weggaan !' gilde ze.

'Je moet nu weggaan,' zei vader, 'en nooit meer terugkomen.'

'Ik zie het al,' zei de goochelaar.

'Ren hard,' zei vader tegen de goochelaar. De goochelaar rende hard de kamer uit, nog wel harder dan vader gisteren rende. Toen keken ze beiden door het raam en zagen de goochelaar het ziekenhuis uitrennen.

'Opgeruimd staat netjes,' zei vader.

'Zou hij ook niet kunnen afkicken, vader ?' vroeg het meisje. 'Heeft u nog meer spul van het telefoonplantje ?'

Vader schudde zijn hoofd. 'Ik kreeg het eens van een vrouw die ik van de verdrinking had gered. Ze legde uit wat het was, en zei erbij dat ik het maar één keer kon gebruiken. Het was het laatste wat er nog op aarde was van het telefoonplantje. Ze zei dat het plantje al was uitgestorven.'

'Maar wat als er toch nog ergens een laatste telefoonplantje bestaat, misschien ergens diep onder de grond ofzo, of misschien zelfs grote velden vol van zulke plantjes ?' zei het meisje.

'Dan wens ik de goochelaar heel veel geluk en succes op zijn zoektocht,' zei vader.

Einde

De Drokelaarse Pap

en andere verhalen

DE DROKELAARSE PAP

en andere verhalen

COAB

2006-2018

De Diefstal
De Fabriek
De Toversleutel tot de Hemel
Het Rode Slipje
De Drokelaarse Pap
Elwin en de Gouden Veer

De Diefstal

Vanwege de oorlog werd een indiaans gezin in een indiaanse wijk gezet. Terrom vond het leuk in zijn nieuwe huis. De buurjongen was een leuke jongen. Maar hij draaide alles om, en dat maakte hem erger dan iedere andere jongen. Dat had hij in de bajes aangeleerd.

'Altijd alles omdraaien,' zei hij altijd tegen Terrom. 'Zo blijf je uit de problemen, want de mensen kunnen niet tegen de waarheid.'

'Vreemd,' zei Terrom.

'Wees een leugenaar,' zei de buurjongen. 'Dan krijg je alles voor mekaar.'

Natuurlijk vond Terrom's moeder dat niet goed. Maar de buurjongen wist ook haar te paaien met zijn gladde woorden. Dat had hij in de bajes geleerd en zo kreeg hij alles gedaan.

Hij dreigde altijd, om zijn woorden kracht bij te zetten. Mensen waren tegelijkertijd ook bang voor hem. 'Angst is de beste leermeester,' zei hij altijd. Maar dan praatte hij alles glad met veel gepaai. 'Angst zonder veel paaien is niks waard,' zei hij altijd, 'want dan jaag je de mensen tegen je in het harnas.' Hij deed altijd grote beloftes, alsof hij aan het handelen was. Als Terrom op straat was met de buurjongen, dan voelde hij zich altijd heel veilig.

Maar op een dag verhuisden de buren. Terrom was er kapot van. Toen hij opgroeide probeerde hij als de buurjongen van vroeger te zijn, maar het lukte hem niet goed. Hij kon niet zo goed overdrijven en opscheppen als zijn buurjongen, en hij merkte altijd dat hij erdoor in de grootste problemen kam als hij het probeerde. Eens kwam Terrom in de gevangenis vanwege diefstal. Tot zijn grote verbazing kwam hij daar de vroegere buurjongen weer tegen. Ze kwamen op dezelfde kamer terecht. De buurjongen keek hem vreemd aan. 'Jou herinner ik,' sprak hij. 'Was jij niet dat besluiteloze en onzekere buurjongetje waarvoor ik alles moest oplossen ?'

Terrom zei niets.

'Wat is er van jou geworden, jongen, kerel,' zei de buurjongen die op hem afliep en een hand op zijn schouder legde. 'We komen er samen wel weer uit. Ik knap het wel weer voor je op.'

'Kun je mij niet leren meer zoals jou te zijn,' zei Terrom, 'want ik heb het geprobeerd, maar het lukte me niet. Ik praatte mezelf juist de problemen in.'

'Het is heel simpel,' zei de buurjongen.

'Voor mij niet,' zei Terrom. 'Ik ben blij dat ik je weer ben tegengekomen.'

'Let goed op,' zei de buurjongen. 'Ik weet precies waar het bij jou is misgelopen. Ik kan het gewoon aan je zien. Je stopt ergens middenin. Je moet veel meer je fantasie gebruiken. Je laat je gewoon in een hoek praten. Dat was vroeger ook al zo, en toen moest ik je er altijd uithelpen.'

'Maar hoe dan ?' vroeg Terrom. 'Ik klap gewoon telkens dicht.'

'Het is heel eenvoudig,' zei de buurjongen. 'Steel iets meer. Wees wat egoïstischer.'

'Heb ik geprobeerd,' zei Terrom. 'Maar dat heeft me hier gebracht.'

'Dat is precies wat er moest gebeuren,' zei de buurjongen.

'Mijn moeder is er niet blij mee,' zei Terrom.

'Ach, die paai ik wel weer,' zei de buurjongen. 'Als je niet steelt, dan leef je niet, maar dan word je geleefd. Stelen is dromen en fantaseren. Je moet toch iets doen ?'

'Maar kan het niet op een andere manier ?' vroeg Terrom. 'Want ik zou dan telkens weer in de gevangenis terechtkomen, net zoals jij.'

'Ik ben hier niet voor mezelf,' zei de buurjongen. 'Ik was vals beschuldigd, en niet eens voor diefstal.'

'Voor wat dan ?' vroeg Terrom.

'Een moord,' zei de buurjongen. 'Maar ik heb het niet gedaan.'

'Wat als je liegt ?' vroeg Terrom. 'Je hebt me zelf het liegen geleerd.'

De buurjongen gaf hem een klap in het gezicht, en begon toen te dreigen. 'Zo werken we niet. Moorden is een gebrek aan fantasie. Met moorden kom je nergens in het leven.'

Terrom staarde de buurjongen aan. 'Dus stelen en liegen is de weg ?' vroeg Terrom.

'Je begrijpt het niet,' zei de buurjongen. 'Je begrijpt er niets van.'

'Wat is het dan ?' vroeg Terrom. 'Je doet gewoon enorm wazig.'

Weer kreeg Terrom een klap in zijn gezicht. 'Luister,' zei de buurjongen. 'Ja, je moet veel stelen, want iedereen steelt, maar je begreep niet wat ik bedoel. Je moet woorden stelen. Let goed op hoe mensen zijn, en steel het, en doe er je voordeel mee.'

'Ah, in die zin,' zei Terrom. 'Dat is een stuk veiliger dan.'

'Helemaal niet,' zei de buurjongen. 'Het is gevaarlijk werk. Het wordt niet geaccepteerd als je mensen nadoet, maar daarom moet je veel dreigen en veel paaien. Je moet er je eigen draai aan geven, het je eigen maken. Je bent uniek. Je moet ook gaan mengen.'

'Mengen ?' vroeg Terrom.

'Ja, mengen,' zei de buurjongen. 'Bepaalde personen zijn dynamiet bij elkaar. Je neemt hun woorden, en mengt ze dan, en klaar.'

'Is het zo gemakkelijk ?' vroeg Terrom.

'Nee, hoe kom je daar nou weer bij ?' zei de buurjongen.

'Omdat je net deed alsof alles zo simpel was,' zei Terrom.

'Nee, het stelen is simpel,' zei de buurjongen. 'Het gaat erom beter te observeren.'

'Maar kom ik dan niet in dezelfde problemen als jou ?' vroeg Terrom. 'Want nu ben jij beschuldigd van moord.'

'Nee,' zei de buurjongen. 'Ik maakte maar een grapje. Ik werk bij de geheime politie, en ik ga geregeld undercover de bajes in.'

'Dus je bent hier om mij te helpen ?' vroeg Terrom.

'Ja,' zei de buurjongen, die hem een kus op zijn wang gaf, 'ik werk ook bij de geheime medici.'

De Fabriek

Hij werkte in een steenkool fabriek. Vaak moest hij overwerken. Hij was een echte work aholic. Dan had hij wat te doen, anders zou hij maar voor zich uit blijven staren. Hij kwam altijd helemaal onder het roet thuis, vaak pas laat. Maar er was niemand die op hem wachtte. Hij was gescheiden. Zijn vrouw kon er niet meer tegen dat hij nooit thuis was, en heeft toen de benen genomen.

Maar toen er een nieuwe directie kwam in de fabriek en hij harder moest werken voor minder loon had hij er minder lol in. Eigenlijk moest hij steeds harder werken en kreeg hij steeds minder. Op een gegeven moment had hij zo'n laag loon dat hij honger begon te lijden.

Er was een zware industrialisering gaande in het land, die uitliep op een industriële revolutie. Dit maakte dat het land zwaar communistisch werd, en hij voelde zich een slaaf. Alles werd hem afgenomen. Alles was nu van de staat. Hij voelde zichzelf slechts een poppetje, een marionet. Hij was zo weinig thuis dat het leek alsof hij in de fabriek woonde.

Zijn maten hadden het erover dat ze een opstand wilden beginnen, maar ze wisten niet hoe. Hij deed ook wat duiten in het zakje, maar het was allemaal slechts gissen, en ze vonden het vechten tegen de bierkaai. Ze zouden er wat langer over nadenken hoe dit te doen. Maar één ding was zeker : Ze

wilden hier weg. Ze verlangden naar de vrije natuur. De stad had hen opgesloten, en met name de fabriek. Ze vervloekten de fabriek. Hij was een steenkool werker in hart en nieren, maar dit ging te ver. Het terrein van de fabriek werd zwaar bewaakt, dus eigenlijk was er geen ontsnapping mogelijk. Toch spraken ze over bepaalde tunnels, die zelfs uit de stad zouden kunnen leiden. Ook de stad werd zwaar bewaakt. Je kon niet zomaar erin of eruit.

Ook moest hij bijgeschoold worden een paar uur per week. Dat was altijd op de dinsdag. Er was een klein schoolgebouwtje op het terrein van de fabriek. Het had twee verdiepingen en een zolder, en hij kreeg les op de zolder. De leraar was een aardige man, maar ook hij was een slaaf van de fabriek. Soms liep hij zomaar uitgekondigd de klas uit, naar een soort bergingsruimte. Dan moest hij even roken. Dat mocht hij niet in de klas doen. Ook hij werd in de gaten gehouden, maar hij wilde meewerken aan de ontsnapping.

Hij vond de leraar één van de laatsten die nog een hart hadden. Ook de leraar wist van bepaalde tunnels af, maar zei dat het te gevaarlijk was. 'En wat moet je in de natuur ?' zei hij altijd. 'Gevaarlijke indianenstammen en gevaarlijke roofdieren en allerlei ander ongemak.' Toch wilde hij ontsnappen. Hij zei dat hij zijn eigen stad wilde bouwen.

Zijn verdriet was groot toen de leraar op een dag werd doodgeschoten. Maar eigenlijk had hij het wel verwacht. De leraar sprak teveel. Natuurlijk zou dat tegen hem keren op een bepaald moment. Nee, hij keek er niet van op. Hijzelf hield zich wijselijk stil.

Wel had hij de uitleg van het tunnelsysteem nog in zijn hoofd, wat de leraar hem had gegeven. Het brulde als een tijger in zijn hoofd. Maar hij wilde geen tijger zijn. Het was alsof hij in gevecht was met de tijger. Hij wilde het slimmer aanpakken. Geen gevaarlijk tunnelsysteem wat volgens de leraar onvermijdelijk dodelijk zou aflopen. Neen, hij wilde tijd rekken, met meer strategie te werk gaan.

Toen drie van zijn maten het besluit hadden genomen toch via de tunnels te gaan was hij er op tegen. Hij was ook niet verbaasd toen hij hoorde dat ze alledrie afgeschoten waren. Direct drie dagen na de moord op zijn vrienden kreeg hij een aanbod om in het transport te werken. De steenkolen werden vervoerd met schip en trein. Hij zou dan in de haven en op het station komen te werken, naast zijn werk in de fabriek. Zo had hij wat afwisseling. Hij nam het aanbod met beide handen aan. Hij was blij dat hij het geduld hiervoor had gehad. Maar het werk was zwaar en hard. Toch had hij hierdoor het idee dat hij dichter bij de ontsnapping was. Hij zou het kunnen proberen per schip of trein te ontsnappen.

In ieder geval begon hij weer meer plezier te krijgen in zijn werk door de afwisseling. Ook begon hij mee te helpen in de ontsnapping van anderen door schip en trein, alhoewel hij het nog steeds niet over zijn hart kon krijgen zelf te ontsnappen. Hij was alreeds bezig met gevaarlijk werk, want als ze betrapt zouden worden in het helpen anderen te laten ontsnappen, dan zou zouden ze zelf ook opgepakt worden. Tot nu toe ging alles goed, en ze begonnen er handigheid in te krijgen. Het was alsof het zijn tweede baan was. Het gaf hem hoop en energie, alhoewel de spanning soms flink bij hem toesloeg.

Op een dag werden enkelen van zijn maten betrapt tijdens het laten ontsnappen van inwoners van de stad. Ze werden allemaal ter plekke afgeschoten. Hij werkte op dat moment in de fabriek en hoorde het pas later, ook als een waarschuwing. Hij raakte hierdoor zwaar depressief en wilde niet meer leven. Een andere maat van hem praatte hem erdoor heen. Hij was het helemaal zat. Hij kon hier niet meer mee leven, en zou samen met zijn maat gaan onderduiken. Zijn maat wist wel een adres.

Het was in de stad zelf. Midden in de nacht gingen ze er naartoe. Ze hoopten dat ze geen bewakers

zouden tegenkomen. Het was een dikke vrouw waar ze terechtkwamen. Ze had een geheime woning onder haar huis. Dat moest wel, want er werden vaak huiszoekingen gedaan als werkers werden vermist. De dikke vrouw was direct enorm onvriendelijk en veeleisend. Snel kwamen hij en zijn maat erachter dat ze in een nieuwe slavernij en gevangenschap terecht waren gekomen, en de vrouw had hele strenge regels. Toch wilden ze het proberen om te kijken of het beter was dan waar ze vandaan kwamen. Tegelijk wisten ze ook dat er nu geen weg meer terug was.

De dikke vrouw foeterde vaak op hen, en schold hen vaak uit. Ook kregen ze bij haar veel werk te doen. Ze was enorm praatziek en twistziek en ze hield hen nachtenlang op. Eten kregen ze bijna niet, en als ze het kregen hadden ze het idee dat ermee gerommeld was, alsof ze vergiftigd werden, en ze waren er vaak ziek door. Steeds meer kreeg de dikke vrouw macht over hen. Als het niet helemaal ging zoals ze wilde bedreigde ze hen soms met een mes. Ze had haar lijsten van mensen wie ze van alles wel zou willen aandoen, en dat moesten ze altijd aanhoren. Altijd maar weer die lange verhalen, en geweld werd niet geschuwd, maar verheerlijkt. Ze preekte als een dominee, maar dan wel een hele criminele en bloeddorstige.

Toch hadden ze soms wel medelijden als ze al die verhalen hoorde. De vrouw had als meisje veel meegemaakt, en was daar eigenlijk nooit overheen gekomen, en reageerde dat nu op hen af.

Ze waren goed de klos, dat wisten ze wel. Soms was de vrouw heel aardig, maar dan waren ze erg op hun hoede. Ze wisten niet wat er dan achterstak. Soms zou ze hen wel willen helpen, maar ze wist niet hoe. Soms gaf ze tekenen die leken op een soort van medelijden.

Ze spraken met haar over de ontsnapping uit de stad, en ook zij was er wel in geinteresseerd. Niet alleen voor hen, maar ook voor haarzelf. Hoe moeilijk ze ook in elkaar zat, zij was ook een slachtoffer van de stad, en wachtte op bevrijding. De natuur zagen zij als de grote bevrijding, maar ook zij sprak over de gevaarlijke indianenstammen daar, en andere gevaren van de open natuur.

Soms als ze kwaad was dreigde ze hen weer terug te sturen naar de steenkool fabriek, maar uiteindelijk kwam het er nooit van. Hij wilde niet ontsnappen met een schip of trein, want daar had hij een trauma aan overgehouden door de dood van zijn vrienden.

Op een nacht zei ze dat er nog wel geheime tunnels onder de geheime woning waren die nog dieper gingen, maar daar wist ze weinig vanaf. Ze zou wel meewillen als ze zouden gaan. Op een nacht besloten ze het erop te wagen. Er liepen hier allemaal gangen. Het leek wel op een mijn. Ze kwamen zelfs mijnwerkers tegen, maar die spraken in een andere taal. Die waren niet van hier. Ze stonden voor een raadsel. Ze hadden harde stemmen en lieten hen niet gaan. Ze probeerden wat uit te leggen. 'Komtaar,' zei een mijnwerker, die vlak voor hen ging staan. 'Karta.' En hij maakte bewegingen met zijn handen en voeten. Hij had de indruk dat de mijnwerker het over indianen had in gebarentaal. Toen wenkte de mijnwerker hen, en ze moesten hem volgen. Ze gingen toen door vele tunnels heen. Heel veel mijnwerkers waren hier bezig. Hij herkende ze niet. Weer begon de mijnwerker allemaal gebaren te maken en wees op de andere mijnwerkers. Het was een steenkool mijn, maar het scheen geheim te zijn, en deze werkers waren niet van de stad. De mijnwerker scheen met gebaren te vragen of ze hier wilden werken. Hij en zijn maat zagen dat wel zitten, maar de vrouw wilde terug, en begon paniekerig te doen. Een andere mijnwerker die met hen mee was gelopen begreep de vrouw die telkens terugwees en duidelijk overstuur was, en nam haar weer mee terug.

'Komtaar,' zei de andere mijnwerker weer. Ze kregen werkkleding en een helm, en konden direct aan het werk. Alles was hen nog steeds een raadsel. Ze vroegen zich af wie het waren. Ze kregen ook een eigen kamer in het ondergrondse mijnenstelsel. Er werd hun duidelijk gemaakt dat ze konden werken wanneer ze wilden. Er lag geen druk op, en ze konden hier tot rust komen. Er werd

hier ook gewerkt met ondergrondse voertuigen die op treinen leken, waarmee de steenkool vervoerd werd. Ze vroegen zich af waar het naartoe ging. Ze kwamen erachter door de gebaren van de mijnwerker dat de ondergrondse voertuigen dieper onder de grond gingen naar een dieper liggende steenkool fabriek. Dit volk was een ondergronds volk, dieper onder de aarde, waar de wereld boven de aarde geen weet van had.

Op een dag werd hij geleid tot de leider van de mijnwerkers, en het was een klein jongetje. Toen hij dichter bij kwam zag hij dat het zijn buurjongetje van vroeger was die eens ging verhuizen. 'Je bent nog precies hetzelfde !' zei hij met grote verbazing. 'Je bent nooit verder gegroeid. Hoe kan dat ?'

Het buurjongetje sprak in zijn eigen taal. 'We gingen verhuizen onder de grond,' zei het jongetje. 'Mijn vader ging daar werken. Niemand wordt hier ouder.'

'Wie zijn het ?' vroeg hij.

'Het zijn vluchtelingen die ontsnapt zijn uit het communistische regiem,' zei het buurjongetje. 'Ze zijn nu lid van het geheime leger, verzetsstrijders.'

'En hoe komt het dat niemand hier ouder wordt ?' vroeg hij.

'Dat heeft te maken met ondergrondse mineralen en voedselsoorten die ze boven niet kennen,' zei het buurjongetje. 'Nog dieper onder de grond is de woeste wildernis en de wilde oceaan, waar de indianen wonen.'

Hij keek het buurjongetje met verbazing aan.

'En hoe komen we daar ?' vroeg hij.

'Door de fabriek,' zei het buurjongetje.

Einde

De Toversleutel tot
de Hemel

Hoofdstuk 1.

Hij zag de muren van zich wegbewegen. Als hij op straat was dan voelde hij zich niet een geheel met de mensen. Hij was een eenling, alsof hij ergens anders vandaan kwam. Hij hoorde niet bij deze mensen. Hij vond dat ze zich vreemd gedroegen. Hij had ook angsten die hij niet kon verklaren. Vaak veranderden grote massa's mensen in vrouwen in zijn gedachten, en dat vond hij bedreigend. Hij vertrouwde geen vrouwen, en hij vertrouwde ook geen mensen in het algemeen. Hij voelde zich opgesloten, alsof de geschiedenis het alarm was, wat telkens weer terugkwam. Ook voelde hij zich vaak vies als hij weer mensen had gezien. En de zelfspot die in hem opkwam was ook zwaar, teneerdrukkend, alsof hij zichzelf uitlachte. Hij maakte karikaturen van zichzelf en dat dreef hij dan enorm ver door, totdat hij van zichzelf walgde, en dan lachte hij zichzelf uit. Hij dacht dat hij de gevangene van een heks was, en die had allerlei ingewikkelde alarmen vastgelegd in zijn cel. Dingen waren niet wat ze leken. De massa bestond in zijn ogen niet. Het was een vrouw. Hij moest het in z'n geheel zien. Volgens hem waren er geen afzonderlijke mensen. Hij deelde ze allemaal in in groepjes, en moest zich vasthouden aan de lijnen. Hij zou hysterisch worden als ze afgezonderd zouden worden. Hij zag de groepen als vrouwen. Deze vrouwen waren altijd om hem heen, maar hij probeerde ze te ontlopen. Hij sprak hier met niemand over. Hij schuwde mensen. Hij was bang voor afzonderlijke mensen. Hij moest de groepjes zien, en het liefst van een afstand, en het liefst helemaal niet. Als er dan toch een mens door hem werd opgemerkt, dan moest hij zo snel mogelijk de groep zien en de vrouw die de groep was. Hij sloeg zichzelf soms als hij nadacht over een afzonderlijk mens. Dat wilde hij niet. Dat vond hij eng. Hij probeerde daarom altijd zoveel mogelijk langs mensen heen te kijken, op zoek naar de groep waartoe ze hoorden, op zoek naar de vrouw. Maar de vrouw vreesde hij ook.

De geschiedenis kon urenlang aan hem vreten, genadeloos, waarin hij maar geen uitweg zag, als het alarm van de heks. Maar de geschiedenis was ook een vrouw. Hij wilde het niet anders zien. Hij ging niet meer naar de café's, alleen in zijn gedachten. Hij sloot zich helemaal op, trok zich helemaal terug in zichzelf, ... diep. Hij had genoeg aan zijn verleden. Hij wilde er niets meer aan toevoegen. Hij had geen behoefte meer aan sociaal contact. Die tijd had hij gehad. Hij vertrouwde toch niemand meer. Oh ja, ze probeerden hem wel te lokken, maar hij trapte er niet in, en trok zich dan zelfs nog meer terug, en bleef nog langer binnen, zo ver weg mogelijk, zo diep mogelijk. Ze zouden hem nooit meer kunnen bereiken. Het was al te laat.

Soms als iedereen sliep, diep in de nacht, ging hij weleens wandelen door de stad, en dan het bos in, helemaal alleen. Hij was weleens een naakte vrouw tegengekomen in het bos, dacht hij, maar die rende toen weg. Normaal gesproken was het er altijd rustig en doodstil rond die tijd diep in de nacht, en erg donker. Voedsel bestelde hij altijd en dat zetten ze dan neer in kratjes in de achtertuin. Dan bestelde hij voor een paar weken. Werken deed hij niet. Hij was werkeloos en afgekeurd. Als hij sliep droomde hij over de natuur, hoe dat maar doorging, en hoe het maar niet stopte. In zijn dromen kwam er geen einde aan de natuur.

Hij was verdwaald in zijn innerlijke labyrint. Hij dwaalde en dwaalde en hij vond de uitgang niet. Hij zonk weg in de saaiheid en hopeloosheid van het bestaan. Hij herinnerde zich de contacten van het verleden, maar hij liet het wegglijden. Hij wilde alleen zijn. Hij liep tegen allerlei muren op in zijn verleden, maar die leidden hem naar bruggen. Hij herinnerde zich de feestjes, en de cadeau's die hij kreeg, en nu was het weg. Hij herinnerde zich de stroop op de pannekoeken, die zijn wereld metselden. Hij wilde nu alleen zijn. Alles was teveel geworden. Hij wilde alles nu overdenken.

Alles om hem heen was ingestort, maar hij had het overleefd, en zou nu zijn leven bewaken. De geschiedenis was slechts een poortwachter tussen hem en de mensen, als een alarm. Hij was hypergevoelig nu. Nee, niemand zou nog in zijn leven toegelaten worden. Hij had al genoeg. Er kon niks meer bij.

Hij haatte en verafschuwde zijn vader die altijd tegen hem zei dat hij meer onder de mensen moest zijn. Het had hem in de grootst mogelijke problemen gebracht. Mensen waren zijn afgoden niet meer, en zijn vader al helemaal niet. Hij zag zijn vader als een sluwe duivel die hij buiten de poorten moest laten. Maar goed, zijn vader was al jaren dood.

Hij vond zijn vader altijd maar een lompe boer, zonder precisie. Zijn moeder was het tegenovergestelde, maar ook zij was al jaren dood. Hij had altijd het gevoel alsof zijn moeder in een gevangenis leefde die zijn vader had gemaakt. Daardoor kon hij zijn moeder eigenlijk nooit echt bereiken. Ze was te ver weg. En daarom was het thuis ook altijd een hel. Hij voelde zich als kind al een martelaar. Zijn vader dronk, en kwam 's avonds laat vaak dronken thuis om hem en zijn moeder te slaan. Zijn vader kon zuipen als de duivel, en ook tekeer gaan als de duivel, en vaak wist hij niet eens waarover het ging. Soms werd hij gewoon van zijn bed gelicht en tegen de muur aangezet. Als hij een pistool of geweer had gehad, dan had hij het wel geweten. Hij had medelijden met zijn moeder als hij zag wat zijn vader met haar deed, maar hij was machteloos. Zo vaak als hij kon ging hij logeren, of naar de buren, maar dan voelde hij zichzelf een lafaard, alsof hij zijn moeder in de steek liet.

Zijn moeder was de enige die hij miste. Maar zij was dood.

Hij herinnerde zich ook dat hij eens over de brug rende, dat hij niet meer wilde leven. Hij zou wel van de brug willen afspringen. Maar als hij dan aan zijn moeder dacht, dan kon hij het niet. Hij leefde alleen nog voor zijn moeder, en voor de logeerpartijtjes bij neefjes of de buren.

Misschien was zijn vader zwaar ziek geworden door de alcohol, maar eigenlijk wilde hij er niet meer over nadenken. Hij wist hoe verwoestend alcohol was voor het menselijk lichaam. Toen zijn vader stierf was het zelfs een grote opluchting voor hem. Niet lang daarna stierf zijn moeder ook, en hij had toen het gevoel alsof hij daar nooit meer overheen zou komen. Het was alsof hij in een zwart gat viel, en hij voelde zichzelf alsof hij holle ogen had, alsof die eruit waren geschoten, alsof hij met twee grote gaten in zijn hoofd liep. Niets interesseerde hem nog. Hij zag niets meer. Hij leefde langs alles heen. En de mensen gingen gewoon door met feesten alsof er niets was gebeurd. Hij haatte daarom de mensen, met een diepe, bittere haat. Nooit hadden ze hem geholpen. Nooit hadden ze zijn moeder geholpen.

Hij geloofde nu dat zijn moeder in de hemel was, en dat ze elkaar ooit terug zouden zien. Tot die dag wilde hij alleen zijn. Hij had genoeg aan zijn denken.

In de nacht droomde hij vaak over het grote, vieze, vadsige lichaam van zijn vader die hem opgesloten hield. Zijn moeder was dan altijd onbereikbaar. Die zat achter glas, in haar eigen gevangenis. Zijn moeder wilde hem dingen geven, maar die dingen stonden ook allemaal achter glas. Het alcoholisme van zijn vader hield het tegen. Alcoholisme was een groot probleem in de

stad. Veel kinderen hadden zo'n vader. Hij was niet de enige. Sommige kinderen hadden zelfs een drinkende vader en een drinkende moeder, en moesten met dronken ouders leven. Maar het feit dat zijn moeder niet tegen zijn vader opkon was al erg genoeg. Hij zag er geen uitweg in, ook niet nu ze dood waren.

In zijn gedachten probeerde hij er omheen te draaien, maar hij kwam hier altijd terug, alsof hij er nog steeds in leefde. De achtertuin was een zootje. Maar de rommel herinnerde hem eraan dat hij het had overleefd. Zijn moeder was altijd netjes.

Netjes, netjes, netjes, maar daar wonnen ze de oorlog niet mee. Zijn moeder werd al overstuur als ze een pluisje op de grond zag. Dan wapende ze zich al met stoffer en blik, en had ze haar handschoentjes aan, want zij mocht niet vies worden. Ze was verder niet streng, maar wel paniekerig. Hierin ontwikkelde ze een grote precisie. Ze was heel accuraat en ook creatief. Ze was als een hypergevoelig alarm. Maar zijn vader sloeg altijd het alarm in. Het was een hopeloze situatie. En hij leefde nog steeds met die wond in zijn hoofd, en die schiep afstand tussen hem en anderen. Ruimte moest er zijn, vond hij. Anders zou hij het benauwd krijgen. Hij had behoefte aan rust, en wat meer natuurlijke chaos. Vroeger was alles te netjes in huis door zijn moeder. Hij begreep dat wel, maar ook ergerde hij zich eraan. Voor haar was het natuurlijk een manier om te kunnen overleven met zo'n chaotische man.

Hij zuchtte, en wist even niet waar hij naartoe moest met zijn gedachtes. Dit kon toch niet altijd zo door blijven gaan ? In zijn jonge jaren was zijn vader piloot. Maar door de alcohol kon dat op een gegeven moment niet meer, en toen ging hij elke dag naar de kroeg. Zijn moeder werd toen de kostwinner, maar zijn vader nam grotendeels het geld, voor drinken en gokken. Hij had zijn moeder weleens gevraagd waardoor het kwam dat hij zo was geworden. Zijn moeder had daarop geen antwoord.

Het was alsof zijn vader zijn leven had getekend door de alcohol. De gehele architectuur van zijn leven was doordrenkt met de alcohol van zijn vader. Daar draaide alles om, en daar was alles uit voortgekomen, hoe hij nu was.

Hoofdstuk 2.

Hij keek naar de rommel die in zijn huis lag. Hij woonde in een flat. Hij keek naar het oude kantoor-bureau waarop wat boeken en papieren lagen, onder de stof, waar het zonlicht op scheen. Hij keek naar het raam wat al tijden niet gewassen was. Dit was zijn leven. Zijn ouders had hij niet meer, en met mensen wilde hij geen contact. Aan zijn denken had hij genoeg, meer dan genoeg. Er kon niets meer bij. De geschiedenis, zijn verleden, was zijn poortwachter. Hij had al genoeg ellende meegemaakt. Nu stond dat tussen hem en de mensen in.

Zelfs in zijn keuken was het een enorme rotzooi. Het plafond was heel hoog, en op de bovenste keukenkastjes lagen allemaal dozen en boeken die helemaal tot het plafond stapelden. Vroeger

behoorde dit allemaal tot zijn kantoor, maar hij ging failliet. Nu was hij werkeloos. Afgekeurd. Hij kon het ook niet meer opbrengen. Hij zat veel te ingewikkeld in elkaar. Ze hadden het allerlei namen gegeven, maar daar ging hij nu ook niet meer naartoe.

De geschiedenis was onverbiddelijk in zijn hoofd. Het had geen medelijden met hem gehad, maar hem neergejaagd en opgesloten. Ja, de alcohol van zijn vader leefde voort, als een heks in zijn hoofd. Zou zijn vader hierin ook opgesloten zijn geweest ? Want zijn vader was ook allesbehalve sociaal.

Hij vroeg zich af hoe het zo heeft kunnen gebeuren. Zijn vader werd van piloot tot dronkaard, alsof hij daardoor neergestort was, en zijn hele gezin zat in het vliegtuig. Hij sleurde zijn hele gezin mee in zijn val. Of waren ze in zee gestort, en kwam hij zo aan op een onbewoond eiland ? Of had zijn vader nog net een noodlanding kunnen maken ?

In ieder geval voelde hij zich voor het leven verminkt. Hij verwaarloosde zijn huis, en bleef maar over de piloot en zijn vliegtuig denken. Het was een onderwerp wat hem obsedeerde. Hij was nu op het onbewoonde eiland, en als hij dan nog eens mensen tegenkwam, dan waren dat in zijn gedachten gewoon de dieren van het onbewoonde eiland. En groepjes mensen vormden een vrouw. Hij sprak weleens in gedachten tot de groepjes mensen : 'Hallo, ben je hier allang ? Ik dacht dat dit eiland onbewoond was.' Als ze dan niet antwoordde, dan moesten het wel dieren zijn, of bewegende blaadjes van de bomen door de wind.

Hij vroeg zich af waar zijn vader nu was. Misschien was zijn vader in de onderwereld wel weer piloot geworden, had hij zijn leven gebeterd, en was op een vliegtocht naar de hemel. Hij hoopte het. Maar ja, wie zou het zeggen ? Misschien als hij zelf zou sterven zou zijn vader hem opwachten met een vliegtuig om hem naar de hemel te brengen ? Zo werd hij heen en weer geslingerd tussen haat en hoop. Soms dacht hij aan de hartsvriend van zijn vader die ook piloot was en die met zijn vliegtuig was neergestort. Zou dat de reden zijn waarom zijn vader zo was geworden, en zo eigenlijk met hem mee neerstortte, en zo het hele gezin ?

Ja, hij zag zijn leven als het gevolg van een vliegtuig ongeluk, en hij stelde zich zo voor dat er mensen waren die het hadden zien gebeuren, en mensen die het in het theater hadden gezien, en dat hij in de hoofden van die mensen doorleefde. Zij maakten schilderijen en muziekstukken, en hij leefde daarin verder.

Hij wilde meer weten van de innerlijke realiteiten, en die binnen gaan. De buitenste lagen interesseerden hem niet, want die hadden hem in de problemen gebracht. Ja, die problemen waren hoogdravend. Hij had het vroeger vaak geprobeerd om in de innerlijke realiteiten te komen, zonder succes. Maar eindelijk was het dan gelukt. Alles wat hij nodig had was in de innerlijke realiteiten.

Hij ging de stad in omdat hij nog wat dingen nodig had. Dit deed hij niet vaak, maar soms moest het toch gebeuren. Hij gaf wat geld aan een dakloze, en in de zaak voor huishoudelijke spullen knipoogde een werker naar hem die hij tussen de schappen tegen kwam. Daarna ging hij even naar de supermarkt. Een oude vrouw woog wat groente af, en mompelde toen iets. 'Wat zegt u ?' vroeg hij.

'Ik dacht ik kan er ook nog wel een komkommertje bijnemen,' zei de vrouw. 'Niet toch ?' Hij zei zachtjes : 'Ja, dat kan.'
Dat waren eigenlijk alle contacten van die dag. Toen hij weer naar huis liep groette een jongetje op een fiets hem, maar hij had zijn hoofd gebogen en zei niets. Toen groette het jongetje hem nog een keer, en toen groette hij het jongetje terug, en was toen al bijna bij zijn deur aangekomen. Met zijn tassen kwam hij binnen. Hij was blij dat hij weer thuis was. Het zat er weer op. Hij was met zijn jas

ergens in een winkel aan een haakje blijven steken en nu zat er een scheur in, als een aandenken aan zijn uitstapje. Hij kwam ook veel jongeren tegen met gescheurde kleding.

Zijn huis in de flat had twee verdiepingen. Eronder waren de kelders, en hij kon met een stenen trap naar beneden om zijn tuin in te komen. Op zijn tweede verdieping had hij zijn indianen boeken en hingen zijn indianen schilderijen. Zijn leven draaide om de eeuwige jachtvelden en om speelgoed. Daar kon hij uren over nadenken. Op de tweede verdieping had hij ook een tafel waar indiaantjes opstonden. De verdieping had een schuin dak met een schuin raam. Boven de verdieping waren weer andere woningen, maar voor hem was het zijn zolder. Hier kon hij zichzelf uitleven. Er stond ook een bed. Soms sliep hij hier.

Op een nacht had hij een droom dat het gezin in een klein vliegtuigje naar Amerika ging. Zijn vader bestuurde het vliegtuigje, maar in Amerika stortten ze neer, en hij was de enige overlevende.

Toen hij wakker werd die ochtend werd hij geplaagd in zijn gedachtes. Dit werd zo erg dat hij in zijn kamer begon te dansen als een joker. Hij probeerde zijn gedachten te slim af te zijn, en besloot nu zijn gedachten te plagen en te bedriegen. Hij danste als een spion. Hij omsingelde zijn gedachtes door zijn dansen. Hij wist dat er toch niets met zijn gedachten te overleggen viel. Ze waren koppig, dus dan moest het maar op een andere manier. In zijn hoofd kopieerde hij zijn gedachten en maakte er iets anders van. Hij was er volledig zat van. Hij zou ze gebruiken als werktuigen van de joker.

Hij zong tot de zielen, en vertelde hen verhalen. Hij ging hiertoe over de zeeën om hun schepen te vinden. Zo bracht hij ze in veiligheid en trok hen op. Maar hij wist ook dat hij terugmoest, de rivier over, tot het grote niets, want zijn leven was teveel ingevuld, en hij was als een robot geprogrammeerd door de alcohol van zijn vader. Door de joker kon hij die programmatie verbreken, maar hij moest uiteindelijk weer terugkeren tot het niets, waar ook het nergens was, en het nooit.

Alle ervaringen die hij op zijn netvlies had gehad en wat hij zijn verleden noemde waren als drugs, en het had hem zwaar in de problemen gebracht. Hij wilde afkicken. Was het leven slechts een drug ? En wat was dan het ware leven ? Of bestond dat niet ? En wie had hem deze drug gegeven ? En hoe zou hij kunnen afkicken ?

Hij dacht er ook over na hoe mensen zo lang konden trappen tegen een dood paard. Hij zag het voor zich, en moest er om lachen. In zijn gedachten begon hij die mensen te bespotten.

Die nacht had hij een droom over een groot wit hek aan de rand van een weiland. Hij ging door het hek, maar hij kwam er steeds dieper in en raakte erin opgesloten. Het was alsof het weiland achter zijn tuin was, en het witte hek leidde hem naar het grote indiaanse oerwoud. Hier was een woeste rivier waar je alleen maar over kon komen door over een brug gemaakt van kinderboeken te gaan. Hij ging de brug over, terwijl de woeste rivier hem probeerde te grijpen om hem van de kinderboeken brug af te sleuren. 'Nee !' riep hij uit in doodsangst. 'Oh, was ik er maar nooit aan begonnen.' Hij probeerde de kinderboeken te lezen en probeerde houvast te vinden in de woorden. Maar alles was nat, en alles lag door elkaar heen. Hij was blij als hij een heel woord kon lezen, maar vaak waren dat alleen maar losse woorden, en ook die werden weer weggespoeld. Verderop liep de brug hoger, en hij probeerde omhoog te klauteren, maar telkens weer gleed hij weg. Hij keek naar de diepte, en daar waren ook allemaal puntige rotsen. 'Nee !' riep hij weer. Hij durfde er bijna niet naar te kijken. Hij had er erge buikpijn van, en het was zo diep. Als hij zou vallen, dan zou hij eerst een heel eind naar beneden vallen. Dat zou hij nooit overleven.

Twee handen grepen hem. Ze pakten hem stevig beet, en trokken hem omhoog. Ze maakte hem vast aan een touw. 'Goed vasthouden,' zei ze. Het trouw trok hem door een tunnel heen die opliep als een put, en de tunnel was geheel gemaakt van meisjesboeken. 'Aaaaaaaaah !' riep hij, en toen werd hij

wakker. Het eerste wat hij toen ging doen was op zoek gaan naar de doos meisjesboeken die hij ooit van zijn tante had gehad. Toen hij het na lang zoeken vond begon hij alle boeken te lezen, iets wat hij nog nooit had gedaan. Hij kende deze boeken niet, en het was alsof er een wereld voor hem werd opengescheurd. 'Ja, het meisjesboek is het enige wat mij erdoor heen kan slepen,' sprak hij, 'ja, het meisjesboek.' En hij werd een schrijver van meisjesboeken, en voor het eerst had hij het gevoel dat het hem over het vliegtuig ongeluk heen bracht, en dat hij eindelijk de alcohol van zijn vader kon overwinnen. Hij wilde een meisjesboeken toren bouwen tot de hemel. Ja, het leven kreeg zo weer zin voor hem, ook sociale contacten. Hij zou het allemaal kunnen verwerken in zijn meisjesboeken. Hij had de toversleutel tot de hemel gevonden.

Het Rode Slipje

Het is het jaar 20.017. Russische buitenaardsen hebben de aarde ingenomen. Het zijn parasieten die werken met dwang-psychiatrie en dwang-dentistry, als een vreemde religie. Het zijn rovers en piraten, fokkers van het menselijk ras waar ze zich langzaam inmengen. Ze willen het menselijk ras geheel assimileren. Ze zijn de Nolp, van de planeet Nolp.

Alleen een krankzinnige professor kan de aarde redden, professor Dikkema, maar hij is altijd dronken. Hij heeft een tijdmachine gebouwd, en daarom gevreesd door de parasieten. Op een dag lichten ze hem van zijn bed, en sluiten hem op. Ze beschuldigen hem van dingen die hij nooit heeft gedaan, en ze proppen hem vol met gedwongen implantaten en medicijnen. De tijdmachine nemen ze in beslag, maar het is een robot met kunstmatige intelligentie die zich door ontwikkeld. Ze willen het ding vernietigen, maar de robot valt hen genadeloos aan.

Even later komt de robot professor Dikkema bevrijden, en blaast het gevangenis complex op. Professor Dikkema wordt in de tijd geflitst, en komt op de planeet Nolp voordat het geheel werd ingenomen door de parasieten. Er is overal oerwoud. Hij weet precies waar hij naar op zoek moet. Een rood slipje. Het was eens van zijn vrouw. Zijn vrouw werd al eerder in de tijd geflitst als experiment, maar hij kon haar niet meer terugflitsen. Toen heeft hij ook een rood slipje in de tijd geflitst als experiment, maar ook dat kwam niet meer terug. Alleen zekere besjes zouden immuniteit brengen tegen de parasieten, die hier ergens moesten groeien.

Uiteindelijk vond hij de besjes, maar zijn vrouw en haar rode slipje heeft hij nooit meer kunnen terugvinden.

De Drokelaarse
Pap

Met zijn vader kwam hij de herberg binnen, en hij wist niet wat hij zag. Allemaal zaten ze of scheef op hun stoelen of lagen op de grond van het lachen. En het hield maar niet op. 'Wat is hier gebeurd ?' vroeg hij aan zijn vader. Zijn vader hief zijn schouders op. 'Ik heb geen idee.'

Toen vroeg hij het aan de herbergier, maar die lachte ook verschrikkelijk, en kon niet meer stoppen, en moest alleen maar harder lachen toen de jongen het hem vroeg.

'Zitten jullie me soms uit te lachen ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ja !' riep een dikke vrouw van achter een tafel, en iedereen lachte nog harder. Ze gierden van het lachen, en sommigen waren aan het schaterlachen. Ze kwamen niet meer bij.

De jongen keek hen vreemd aan, en toen keek hij naar zijn vader. 'Waarom lacht u niet met hen mee dan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Omdat,' lachte de herbergier, 'omdat hij niet van de pap heeft gegeten.' Toen lachten ze allemaal nog wel harder, en nog doller en dwazer.

'Wat voor pap ?' vroeg de jongen.

'De Drokelaarse pap !' riep iemand.

'Ik ken die pap niet,' zei de jongen. 'Mag ik het eens proberen ?'

Nog steeds bulderden ze van het lachen, en het leek alleen maar erger te worden.

'Niet zo goed voor jou, jongen,' zei iemand. 'Je bent nog erg klein.'

'Ja,' zei vader, 'er zitten bessen in die pap waar je nogal dronken van wordt, dus doe maar niet.'

'Maar ik wil ook lachen, vader,' zei de jongen.

'Ach, we lopen zo wel even langs het toneelspel op straat,' zei vader, 'dan kun je ook lachen.'

'Ja, maar ik wil net zo hard lachen als de mensen in de herberg hier,' zei de jongen. 'Dat heb ik nog nooit eerder meegemaakt.'

Vader nam de jongen weer mee naar buiten, en bracht hem naar het toneelspel op straat, maar de

jongen kon er niet om lachen. Die nacht kon hij niet slapen, want hij moest telkens weer aan de pap denken. Midden in de nacht dacht hij dat hij zijn ouders weleens hard hoorde lachen, dus misschien hadden ze het wel in huis. Hij sloop zijn bed uit, ging de trap af, en toen de keuken in. Overal in de keukenkastjes begon hij te zoeken. Ergens op een pot stond 'Drokelaarse pap'. 'Dit moet het zijn,' zei hij tegen zichzelf en begon gulzig ervan te eten. Maar er gebeurde niets. Teleurgesteld ging hij weer naar bed. Zijn vader nam hem daarna niet meer mee naar de herberg, en zo begon de jongen steeds meer de herberg en wat daar gebeurd was te vergeten, en zo ook de Drokelaarse pap.

Toen hij wat ouder was geworden kwam hij op een dag een boer tegen op het zanderige pad tussen twee weilanden in. De boer begon direct te lachen. 'Zit u me nu uit te lachen ?' vroeg de jongen. De boer begon alleen maar harder te lachen. 'Neem me niet kwalijk, kerel,' bulderde de boer van het lachen. 'Ik had net wat Drokelaarse pap gegeten in de herberg.'

'Oh, maar dat heb ik ook weleens gegeten,' zei de jongen, 'maar er gebeurde niets.'

'Je moet die van de herberg hebben, kerel,' zei de boer. 'Daar zitten Drokelaarse bessen in. Die van de winkel is pap zonder bessen.'

'Verrek,' zei de jongen. 'Dan ben ik dus al die tijd bedrogen geweest.' De jongen slenterde naar de herberg en ging er naar binnen, maar niemand lachte. 'Drokelaarse pap, graag,' zei de jongen. Maar de herbergier schudde zijn hoofd. 'Ik heb net het laatste verkocht,' zei de herbergier, 'en nu gaat het uit de handel.'

'Maar waarom ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Het werd te dol en te bont,' zei de herbergier.

'Ach, nog één keer dan,' klaagde de jongen. Maar de herbergier was niet om te kopen en bleef bij zijn standpunt. 'Ga de Drokelaarse bessen zelf maar zoeken,' zei de herbergier.

'Waar vind ik die ?' vroeg de jongen. De herbergier haalde zijn schouders op. 'Alstublieft, zeg het me,' zei de jongen.

'Boven op de gang moeten er nog wat liggen,' zei de herbergier.

De jongen wilde direct naar boven rennen, maar de herbergier hield hem tegen. 'Je bent geen gast,' zei de herbergier.

'Ik ben wel een gast,' zei de jongen. 'Ik ben toch hier gekomen voor pap ?'

'Ja, maar je hebt geen kamer gehuurd,' zei de herbergier. 'Alleen zij die een kamer hebben gehuurd mogen boven komen.'

'Goed,' zei de jongen, en huurde een kamer.

'Kamer zeventien,' zei de herbergier.

De jongen stoof naar boven, en begon overal te zoeken naar de Drokelaarse bessen, maar hij vond niks. Teleurgesteld ging hij weer naar beneden.

'En ?' vroeg de herbergier.

'Niks,' zei de jongen.

'Heb je al op kamer zeventien gekeken dan ?' vroeg de herbergier.

'Alleen maar op de gang,' zei de jongen, die weer naar boven ging. Hij ging de kamer op, en begon daar te zoeken. Eindelijk vond hij een pot Drokelaarse bessen in de kast. Hij keek naar de bessen, maar durfde ze niet zomaar rauw op te eten, en ging zo terug naar de herbergier. De herbergier lachte toen hij eraan kwam, en begon daarna te bulderen van het lachen. Ook de jongen begon te lachen. 'Alleen als ik ze al zie,' zei de herbergier.

'Maar waarom stopt u er dan mee,' zei de jongen.

'Luister,' zei de herbergier, 'dit is echt het laatste, want bandieten hebben vannacht de Drokelaarse boom omgehakt in de moestuin. Het was de enige Drokelaarse boom die er nog over was. We moeten daarom wel stoppen.'

De herbergier keek de jongen aan met tranen in zijn ogen.

'Dan heeft u deze pot hard nodig,' zei de jongen, en gaf het aan de herbergier.

'Nee, jongen,' zei de herbergier. 'Het is voor de gasten. Geniet ervan. Het is het laatste wat er nog is. We willen onze gasten deze ervaring niet onthouden.' Toen gaf de herbergier de pot weer terug.

'Hoe was de Drokelaarse boom eigenlijk ontstaan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ach,' zei de herbergier, 'eens vond Napoleon ergens een rood slipje, en men zegt dat daar waar hij zijn rode slipje verloor daar ontstond de Drokelaarse boom, en dat was hier in Waterloo, in onze moestuin.'

De jongen begon toen zo hard te lachen dat hij drie dagen niet kon stoppen.

Elwin

En de Gouden Veer

Hoofdstuk 1. Bij de Konijnenfee
Hoofdstuk 2. Naar Fragilie
Hoofdstuk 3. De Ontsnapping
Hoofdstuk 4. De Slangifant

Hoofdstuk 1. Bij de Konijnenfee

Elwin liep in het stadje Sardes, een Brannans stadje. Hij was op weg naar het huisje van de konijnenfee, waar ze woonde met de oude keizer van Brannan. Elwin ging daar vaak logeren. Hij moest langs wat grachten en wat winkels. Daar zag hij de konijnenfee al. Ze stond in een winkel om brood te kopen. Elwin zag ook de bakker door het raam. Elwin liep de winkel binnen. De konijnenfee was blij hem te zien. ‘Ik was al naar je op weg,’ zei Elwin. Het was druk in Sardes. Er was markt. Samen liepen ze even later over de drukke markt. ‘Ik ben blij je te zien,’ zei de konijnenfee. Na wat bijgepraat te hebben gingen ze die avond spelletjes doen. De koning van Pergamos was er ook, en natuurlijk de oude koning van Brannan. Ook twee vriendinnen van de konijnenfee kwamen : Cindy en Linie. De konijnenfee had wat nieuwe drankjes gemaakt, en al snel was het een dolle boel.

Elwin ging pas heel laat slapen. Ook de koning van Pergamos en de twee vriendinnen van de konijnenfee bleven slapen. Ze hadden allemaal een eigen logeerkamer. Midden in de nacht hoorden ze gekrijs. Linie had een nachtmerrie. Elwin probeerde haar te troosten, maar het leek wel alsof niets hielp. Ook de anderen probeerden haar te troosten, maar ze zat stijf rechtop in bed.

‘Ik moet weg uit Sardes,’ zei ze. ‘Er komen spoken vanuit de rivier. Ik wil het zien.’ Ze kleedde zich snel aan en rende naar buiten. Elwin en de anderen renden achter haar aan, terwijl de oude

keizer van Brannan op het huis bleef passen. Linie rende naar de rivier dichtbij het huisje van de konijnenfee. Het was een grote rivier. Ze wees met haar vinger naar de lucht en gilde : ‘Zie je wel, zie je wel, daar zijn ze.’

Elwin en de anderen zagen het ook. Paarse lange spoken hingen over de rivier. ‘Ja,’ zei de konijnenfee. ‘De wolkenmannen moeten deze rivier nog droogleggen voor een groot deel.’

‘We moeten hier weg,’ krijste Linie. ‘Ze komen richting de stad.’

‘Welnee,’ zei de konijnenfee, ‘ze zullen niks doen. Nog even en dan zijn de wolkenmannen hier, en dan worden de rivieren zo drooggelegd dat er geen spoken meer zijn.’

Elwin knikte. Hij sloeg een arm om Linie heen en samen liepen ze weer terug. Maar plotseling zagen ze een paarse gestalte voor de deur van het huisje van de konijnenfee staan. ‘Uit de weg,’ zei Elwin.

‘Zie,’ schreeuwde Linie, ‘ze zijn er.’

‘Ach nee,’ zei de konijnenfee, ‘dat is alleen maar een weerspiegeling.’

Binnengekomen had de oude keizer van Brannan lekkere thee ingeschonken. Even later lagen ze allemaal in bed. Alleen de konijnenfee en Elwin zaten nog bij Linie op haar bed. ‘Heus, Linie,’ zei de konijnenfee, ‘er is echt niets aan de hand. Bij ons ben je veilig. De wolkenmannen hebben al een heleboel drooggelegd, want vroeger was het een zee. Dit zijn de laatste resten.’

Toen probeerde Linie weer te slapen. De volgende dag zaten ze allemaal aan het ontbijt. Alleen Linie was er nog niet. Ze was ook niet op haar kamer. Elwin begon een beetje ongerust te worden. Maar na een tijdje kwam Linie binnen. Ze had wat boodschappen gedaan. Binnen korte tijd waren de rivieren in Sardes door de wolkenmannen drooggelegd, en begon er een prachtige natuur te groeien.

‘Waar maakte ik me eigenlijk druk om ?’ vroeg Linie toen ze allemaal weer bij elkaar waren.

‘Het waren de laatste restjes,’ zei de konijnenfee, ‘en ze moesten jou net hebben.’

‘Waarom ik ?’ vroeg Linie. Maar daar had niemand een antwoord op. Behalve Elwin : ‘Omdat je zo gevoelig bent en zo lief. Je bent waaks over de stad.’

‘En dat terwijl ik wegwilde,’ zei Linie. ‘Ik was een lafaard.’

‘Ach nee, Linie,’ zei de konijnenfee, ‘je stond gewoon aan het front, en zocht naar een schuilplaats

voor ons allemaal. En die schuilplaats was de wolkenmannen. Het is allemaal in orde nu.'

'We hebben het vroeger inderdaad veel met de paarse lange spoken en gestaltes aan de stok gehad,' zei de konijnenfee, 'en daar heb je gewoon veel van opgepikt. Maar het is nu voorbij.'

'Dus ik heb gewoon over de geschiedenis gedroomd ?' vroeg Linie.

'Ja,' zei de konijnenfee, 'en dromen kunnen bedrieglijk zijn. Vooral nachtmerries.'

Tranen rolden over Linie's wangen. 'Het was verschrikkelijk,' zei ze.

'Nou, er zijn nog steeds velen in Sardes die het nog steeds niet verwerkt hebben wat er allemaal is gebeurd,' zei de konijnenfee. 'Spreek maar eens met de oude bejaarden hier die de oorlog nog hebben meegemaakt. Dat is voor hen nog steeds een trauma. En die oorlog kwam inderdaad vanuit de zee. Het waren de piraten met de paarse schepen.'

'Waar kwamen die piraten dan vandaan ?' vroeg Linie.

'Uit Galatie,' zei de konijnenfee, 'dat was een groot eiland dat tegenover Sardes lag, toen de zee er nog was. Maar nu bestaat dat niet meer. Sinds de wolkenmannen de zee hadden drooggelegd totdat het een rivier was rekenden ze ook met Galatie af.'

'Piraten ?' vroeg Elwin. 'Oh, dat wist ik nog niet.'

'Ja,' zei de konijnenfee, 'het was verschrikkelijk. Ze plunderden alles wat los en vast zat, en op een dag namen ze Sardes in, en namen de inwoners in hun paarse schepen mee naar Galatie waar ze diep onder de grond in de mijnen moesten werken.'

'Oh, maar dat is verschrikkelijk,' zei Elwin. 'Dus de wolkenmannen hebben hen even later daaruit gered ?'

'Ja, jaren later,' sprak de konijnenfee. 'En velen denken dat er nog steeds oude inwoners van Sardes en hun kinderen diep onder de grond werken voor de piraten.'

'Verschrikkelijk,' zei Elwin.

Op een dag gingen ze met z'n drieen naar een bejaardenhuis in Sardes om het aan de bejaarden te vragen, en steeds hoorden ze hetzelfde verhaal. De piraten van Galatie hadden verschrikkelijke dingen gedaan en hielden nog steeds oude inwoners van Sardes en hun kinderen onder de grond verborgen. De wolkenmannen hadden Galatie met de grond gelijk gemaakt en hadden er een nieuwe stad overheen gebouwd, maar velen wisten dat daar diep onder de grond nog oude inwoners

opgesloten zaten. En ook de piraten leefden daar voort.

‘Maar hoe weten jullie dat ?’ vroeg Elwin.

‘Omdat we daar gewerkt hebben,’ zei een bejaarde man. ‘Wij kennen de ondergrond daar. Sommigen konden ontsnappen, anderen werden door de wolkenmannen gered, maar het was een diepe ondergrondse werkplaats met veel verdiepingen. Velen zitten daar nog vast, en de piraten hebben daar ondergrondse steden.’

‘Dat is verschrikkelijk,’ zei Elwin. ‘Eigenlijk wil ik er direkt naartoe om op onderzoek uit te gaan.’

‘Kom er maar niet, Elwin,’ zei de oude man die met hem sprak, ‘want als ze je te pakken krijgen dan is het niet best.’

Elwin vroeg zich af waarom de wolkenmannen nooit dieper onder de grond zijn gegaan. Of waren zij soms ook bang voor de piraten van Galatie ?

‘Wat een gemene boeven,’ dacht Elwin. ‘We kunnen hen toch niet zomaar hun gang laten gaan ? Dan kennen ze Elwin uit de Drokelaar nog niet.’

Hoofdstuk 2. Naar Fragilia

De konijnenfee was wel in voor een avontuur, en Linie ook. Linie had niet voor niets zo’n nachtmerrie gehad, maar Elwin vond het veel te gevaarlijk voor haar om haar mee te nemen. Hij moest er niet aan denken als ze in de handen van die gemene piraten terecht zou komen. Nee, die nachtmerrie was genoeg. Zij had de eerste stap gezet, en nu zou Elwin de tweede stap nemen, samen met de konijnenfee.

‘Karel Blauw,’ zei de konijnenfee toen ze weer thuis waren. ‘Dat is een piraat hier in Sardes die geen vlieg kwaad doet. Hij weet veel over piraten, en hij leeft ook als een piraat, maar hij is geen gevaarlijke. Laten we naar hem toegaan. Misschien weet hij meer.’

Het was een eindje lopen. Hij woonde dichtbij de stadsmuur, vlakbij de poort. Waar vroeger de zee was was nu alleen nog maar een smal riviertje. Karel Blauw had een doek om zijn hoofd, een ruige baard en een papegaai. Hij had vroeger veel gevaren en wist veel van piraten af. Toen ze bij hem aanklopten was hij direkt heel gastvrij en vriendelijk. ‘Willen jullie wat koffie ?’ vroeg hij. Maar ze wilden hem eigenlijk direkt het verhaal vertellen en wat vragen stellen.

‘Ja,’ zei hij. ‘Ja, ja, ik weet waar jullie het over hebben. De piraten van Galatie waren de ergste

piraten die ik ooit ben tegengekomen. Of ze nog bestaan weet ik niet, maar velen denken dat ze nog ergens onder de grond leven en daar hun eigen steden hebben. Ik weet het niet. Maar laten we er maar eens gaan kijken. Dat moet dan ergens onder Fragilie zijn, de stad die over Galatie heen is gebouwd.'

Met een oud busje van Karel Blauw reden ze er even later naartoe. Karel Blauw vroeg zich af hoe ze onder de grond konden komen. Hij vond altijd dat de inwoners van Fragilie zich vreemd gedroegen, alsof ze iets te verbergen hadden. Ze besloten bij iemand aan te bellen om te vragen hoe ze ergens onder de grond konden komen. Een oud vrouwtje deed open.

'Jullie kunnen wel via de kelder onder de grond komen hoor,' zei het vrouwtje. Toen ze even later alledrie in de kelder waren hoorden ze ineens de deur achter hen dichtgaan, en de deur werd direkt op slot gedaan. De kelder was verder een afgesloten geheel. Ze konden hier helemaal niet onder de grond komen. Even later ging de deur weer open. Twee grote piraten zeiden tegen het vrouwtje : 'Goede vangst, ouwe.'

Elwin, de konijnenfee en Karel Blauw werden ruw door de piraten vastgepakt. Alhoewel Karel Blauw reusachtig sterk was kon hij niets tegen deze twee piraten beginnen. Ze leken wel van steen. De piraten blinddoekten hen en bonden hen vast, en gooiden hen daarna in een busje. Niet lang daarna waren ze in een lift en gingen diep de grond onder. Toen werden ze alledrie in een cel gestopt. Tegenover hen waren nog veel meer cellen.

'Zie, dat komt ervan,' zei de papegaai van Karel Blauw. 'Je moet je nergens mee bemoeien. Deze piraten zijn slecht, erg slecht.'

Elwin werd er erg bang van. 'Zeg, konijnenfee,' zei Elwin. 'Kun je niet wat toveren.'

'Het lukt niet, Elwin,' zei de konijnenfee. 'Laten we afwachten.' Karel Blauw hield zich erg rustig. Na een tijdje moesten ze voorkomen bij de piraten-hoofdman.

'Zo,' zei de piraten-hoofdman, 'spionnen he. Nou, we zullen jullie laten zien wat we met spionnen doen.' Elwin werd in een ton gestopt en in een afgrond geworpen. Karel Blauw werd aan zijn voeten gehangen en de konijnenfee werd in een ruimte gedrukt waar nog een heleboel andere vrouwen waren. Hier moesten ze hard werken.

'Koning Rat ben ik,' zei de piraten-hoofdman tegen Karel Blauw. 'Dat is mijn naam.'

Elwin was door de val bewusteloos geraakt. Pas na een paar uur kwam hij weer bij, en probeerde uit de ton te komen. Toen hem dat eindelijk lukte kwam hij in een grot terecht waar mannen werkten. Een piraat greep hem vast. Ook Elwin moest hier werken, en even later werd Karel Blauw ook binnen geduwd. Weer kwam de piraten-hoofdman binnen en sloeg enkele mannen met een stok.

Ondertussen vroeg Elwin aan een oudere man waar hij vandaan kwam. 'Uit Sardes,' zei de man. 'Velen van hier komen uit Sardes, of hebben ouders uit Sardes.'

Elwin wist genoeg. Het was dus allemaal waar. Aan het einde van de dag moest iedereen weer naar z'n cel. De konijnenfee was helemaal uitgeput. Elwin was blij dat Linie er niet bij was.

Ondertussen maakte de oude keizer van Brannan zich erg ongerust omdat ze niet teruggekomen waren. Hij besloot direkt de wolkenmannen in te schakelen, maar die zeiden dat ze niet tegen de ondergrondse piraten van Galatie opkonden. Boven de grond zou het wel kunnen, maar zo diep ondergronds hadden ze niet veel in te brengen, vooral niet met zulke piraten. Zelfs de neushoorn-wachters van de Brannanse muren zeiden dat ze daar niet aan zouden beginnen omdat ze tegen zulke piraten niet opkonden. De wolkenmannen zeiden dat de piraten in de loop der jaren steeds gevaarlijker waren geworden, en hoe dieper ze onder de grond kwamen, des te sterker ze werden, zo sterk dat eigenlijk niemand daar iets tegen kon doen.

Maar de oude keizer van Brannan wilde de moed niet opgeven. Inmiddels vroeg de konijnenfee zich af waarom haar toverkracht niet werkte. Het leek alsof ze vastzat in steen. 'Elwin,' fluisterde de konijnenfee. 'Wat dom van ons om hier te komen. We hadden het nooit moeten doen. Maar we weten nu wel dat het allemaal waar is. De oude inwoners van Sardes worden hier opgesloten gehouden. Wat moeten we doen ?' Maar Elwin wist het antwoord ook niet.

Hoofdstuk 3. De Ontsnapping

'Luister,' zei Karel Blauw kalm. 'Het is allemaal heel simpel. Ik ben vaker door dit soort piraten opgesloten. Reken maar dat mijn papegaai ons er allemaal uit kan helpen.'

'Ja, ja, kom eens hier,' krijste de papegaai. Direkt kwamen er een paar piraten aanlopen. 'Als je je waffel niet houdt, vogel, dan hakken we die waffel er af.'

'Wil je geld verdienen ?' vroeg de papegaai.

'Ja, natuurlijk, wie niet,' zei een van de piraten.

Direkt liet de papegaai wat gouden munten uit zijn snavel rollen. 'Het is een tovervogel,' zei een van de piraten.

'Man, klets niet. Het is vast een truc,' zei een andere piraat. Weer een andere piraat liep op de tralies af, stak zijn hand erdoor heen en probeerde de munt te pakken. Het lukte hem niet, en de andere piraten liepen weer verder. Na een tijdje kwam de piraat helemaal met zijn lichaam vast te zitten. Snel sloeg Karel Blauw de piraat knock out, greep de sleutels die de piraat aan zijn broek had hangen, en maakte het slot los. Snel maakte hij ook wat andere kooien los, en met z'n allen renden ze de gangen op. Met een groepje gingen ze de lift in. Ze konden kiezen uit vele werkkampen en piratensteden, maar er was ook een knop voor Fragilie. Die drukten ze in, en even later stonden ze

in een verborgen kelder van het gemeentehuis. Het was inmiddels nacht. Na een korte tijd stonden ze op straat. Karel Blauw wilde zo snel mogelijk naar zijn busje toe. Dat was nog wel even lopen. Het was een paar straten verder. Gelukkig stond het busje er nog. Ze waren met z'n zevenen. Gelukkig konden ze er allemaal in. Karel Blauw, Elwin, de konijnenfee en nog vier anderen. Karel Blauw vroeg zich af waar de anderen waren. 'Rijden, Karel Blauw,' sprak de konijnenfee.

Karel Blauw wilde zo snel mogelijk weg uit Fragilie. De papegaai was er gelukkig ook. De oude keizer van Brannan was dolblij dat ze terugwaren. Een wat oudere man zei dat de piraten buiten Fragilie niet veel konden beginnen. Later hoorden ze ook dat het andere groepje had kunnen ontsnappen.

De konijnenfee was ten einde raad. Ze vond het vreselijk dat er nog steeds velen daar opgesloten zaten. Niemand scheen er wat aan te kunnen doen. Karel Blauw en de papegaai wilden in ieder geval niet meer terug, want ze zeiden dat het ook verkeerd had kunnen aflopen. Elwin wilde de moed nog niet opgeven. Ze wisten nu in ieder geval dat het in Fragilie ook niet deugde.

Zelfs de nieuwe keizer van Brannan durfde er niets aan te doen, en zei dat Fragilie zichzelf regeerde. Het spookte daar verschrikkelijk volgens hem, en hij wist ook alles van de piraten van Galatie af en wist dat er geen kruid tegenop gewassen was. Hij was allang blij dat het niet verder kwam dan Fragilie, en raadde iedereen aan om gewoon zo ver mogelijk bij Fragilie uit de buurt te blijven.

De oude keizer van Brannan wilde zijn vrouw, de konijnenfee, met geen mogelijkheid nog een keer naar Fragilie laten gaan, en alhoewel de konijnenfee achter Elwin stond wilde ze daar zelf ook niet meer naartoe. Maar veel van degenen die waren ontsnapt wilden dat wel. Ze wilden hun vrienden niet in de steek laten.

Elwin besloot nog een keer naar het bejaardenhuis te gaan. Dit keer sprak hij met een oude man die zelf vroeger in Galatie had gewoond en met de piraten had geleefd. Hij was een bootsjongen die het dek moest schrobben en voor de piraten moest koken. Hij kreeg daar wel wat geld voor, maar veel was het niet. Doordat zijn ouders naar Sardes verhuisden hoefde hij daar niet meer te werken, maar hij wist inmiddels veel van hen af. De oude man keek Elwin geheimzinnig aan. 'Weet je, Elwin,' zei de oude man. 'Ik ken het geheim van de piraten van Galatie. Ik ken hun zwakke plek.'

Elwin luisterde aandachtig. Alles wat deze man zei was als goud rollend uit z'n mond. Het kon de sleutel zijn tot het redden van degenen die nog opgesloten zaten in de duistere werkkampen. 'Hoeveel bied je,' zei de man.

'U gaat me toch niet vertellen dat u er geld voor wil hebben,' zei Elwin. 'Het gaat om de levens van inwoners van Sardes en hun kinderen.'

'Wat heb ik met Sardes te maken,' zei de oude man. 'Ik had het niet goed in Galatie, maar toen ik hier kwam had ik het veel slechter. Hier deed iedereen gemeen tegen elkaar, bedrieglijk. Ik werd altijd uitgescholden omdat ik uit Galatie kwam. Zo gemeen had ik het in Galatie nooit meegemaakt.'

Elwin haalde een stapeltje bankbiljetten uit zijn zak en legde het op tafel. ‘Meer dan genoeg,’ zei de oude man. ‘Koning Rat was verloofd met een meisje. Het meisje was op een dag spoorloos verdwenen. Koning Rat zei dat degene die hem vertelde waar het meisje was mocht vragen wat hij maar wilde. Ik weet waar het meisje is. Ze is nu natuurlijk een stuk ouder, maar ik weet dat Koning Rat nog steeds naar haar op zoek is.’

‘En waar is het meisje ?’ vroeg Elwin.

‘Ze is nu een vrouw,’ zei de oude man. ‘Ze woont ergens op een woonboot. Niet hier, maar in een andere stad.’

‘Maar wil ze hem nog wel zien ?’ vroeg Elwin.

‘Nee,’ zei de oude man. ‘En het is ook niet verstandig om haar woonplaats aan hem te verraden, maar zij weet voldoende van hem af. Zij zal je verder kunnen helpen.’

‘Maar hoe weet u dat ?’ vroeg Elwin.

‘Geloof me nu maar,’ zei de oude man. ‘Ga eens met haar praten, en je zult genoeg weten.’

De man vertelde waar de woonboot was, en niet lang daarna zat Elwin met de vrouw aan een tafeltje, de vrouw die eens de verloofde van de piraten-hoofdman van Galatie was.

‘Ik ben weggegaan omdat hij mij sloeg,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Ik ben nog steeds erg bang voor hem. Daarom woon ik ook in een andere stad. Hij sloot me altijd op. Ik moest brood met spinnenkoppen eten, en alles doen wat hij me opdroeg. Ik was zijn dienstmeisje en ik moest met hem trouwen. Zo niet dan zou hij mij ophijsen aan de mast van zijn schip.’

‘Weet u dat hij nog steeds heel veel oude inwoners uit Sardes en hun kinderen opgesloten houdt ?’ vroeg Elwin. De vrouw knikte.

‘Weet u wat ik daaraan kan doen ?’ vroeg Elwin.

‘Ik weet precies wat u daaraan kunt doen,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Hij zou al die oude inwoners van Sardes en hun kinderen wel willen inruilen voor mij.’

‘Nee,’ protesteerde Elwin. ‘Iedereen is kostbaar. U ook. Heeft u ook een andere manier ?’

‘Ik zou het niet weten,’ zei de vrouw.

‘Maar kent u misschien zijn zwakke plek ?’ vroeg Elwin.

‘Ach ja,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Vroeger had hij een vriend met wie hij alles deelde. Die vriend kent zijn geheim.’ Na een tijdje stond Elwin met het adres van die oude vriend weer op straat. Gelukkig was het adres dichtbij, een paar straten verder. Maar de man wilde niet met Elwin spreken.

‘Maar meneer, het gaat om de piraten-hoofdman van Galatie. Hij houdt nog steeds velen opgesloten,’ zei Elwin.

‘Wat heb ik daarmee te maken,’ zei de man. ‘Wat kan mij het schelen.’

‘Nou, dat is ook niet vriendelijk,’ zei Elwin. ‘Bent u soms nog steeds met hem bevriend ?’

‘Hoe weet jij dat ?’ vroeg de man ineens. En toen veranderde de man opeens. Hij was ineens heel vriendelijk. ‘Nee, nee, ik ben al tijden geen vriend meer van hem. Dat was ik vroeger wel, maar we hebben eens flinke ruzie gehad.’

‘Waar ging die ruzie dan over ?’ vroeg Elwin.

‘Ach, een kleinigheidje,’ zei de man, ‘een kleinigheidje. Maar het is nooit meer goedgekomen.’

‘Nou, hij schopt nog steeds erg veel problemen,’ zei Elwin. ‘Heeft u enig idee hoe hij daarmee kan stoppen.’

‘Oh ja, natuurlijk,’ zei de man, ‘natuurlijk. Ik heb hem jaren gekend. Ik ken al zijn geheimen.’

‘Wat zijn zijn geheimen dan eigenlijk ?’ vroeg Elwin.

‘Van zijn kracht ?’ vroeg de man. ‘Ja, hij is erg sterk. Dat komt, hij is de zoon van een heks, weet je. Zij liet hem altijd bijten door katten en ratten. Daardoor heeft hij zoveel littekens. Dat is het geheim van zijn kracht. Zolang hij in het donker blijft, diep onder de grond, is die kracht het grootst, en kan niemand tegen hem op. Alleen zijn moeder kan tegen hem op.’

‘En waar woont die dan ?’ vroeg Elwin.

‘Die leeft niet meer,’ zei de man. ‘Maar eh, ze heeft mij verteld hoe iemand hem de baas kan.’

‘En hoe dan ?’ vroeg Elwin.

‘Oh, een gouden veer,’ zei de man. ‘Daar kan hij niet tegen. Als je met die gouden veer voor hem staat dan wil hij alles voor je doen. Zijn moeder heeft me eens zo’n gouden veer gegeven. Ik heb die gouden veer vroeger veel gebruikt, en kon alles van hem gedaan krijgen, maar op een gegeven moment begon het te vervelen, zo erg dat ik niets meer van hem wilde weten. Het kon me allemaal niet meer schelen. Ik gebruikte de gouden veer niet meer, kreeg ruzie met hem, en ben toen vertrokken.’

‘Dus u was ook een piraat van Galatie, net als hem ?’ vroeg Elwin.

‘Oh ja,’ zei de man, ‘We waren beste maatjes. Ik was eigenlijk eh… de eerste piraten-hoofdman van Galatie, door die gouden veer. Hij was mijn beste piraat, de gevaarlijkste. En toen ik vertrok en mijn cafe kreeg werd hij de hoofdman. Maar de gouden veer heb ik nog steeds, en je kunt hem zo gratis van me krijgen.’

Hoofdstuk 4. De Slangifant

‘Gratis ?’ vroeg Elwin.

‘Ja,’ zei de man, ‘Ik heb hem ook gratis van zijn moeder gehad. Het was een heks, maar het was een best mens.’

Na een tijdje stond Elwin met de gouden veer in zijn handen. Kon Elwin dit allemaal wel geloven ? Toch wilde hij het erop wagen. Aan de onderkant van de veer zat een soort pen. Elwin ging zo snel als hij kon naar Fragilie. Hij had geen tijd te verliezen. Daar aangekomen liep hij direkt met de gouden veer het gemeentehuis binnen. ‘Ik wil de piraten-hoofdman van Galatie spreken,’ zei Elwin, terwijl hij de gouden veer liet zien. ‘Jawel meneer,’ zei de loket-beambte. ‘Ik zie dat u een vriend van hem bent.’ De loket-beambte pakte zijn telefoon en had al snel de piraten-hoofdman aan de lijn. ‘Ik heb hier uw vriend met de gouden veer. Hij wil u direkt zien.’ Binnen enkele minuten kwam de piraten-hoofdman uit de lift. ‘Ik wil dat je direkt alle oude inwoners van Sardes en hun kinderen loslaat uit je werkkampen, en ook alle andere wezens die je daar hebt opgesloten.’

‘Ja, kapitein,’ zei de piraten-hoofdman.

Na een paar uur was iedereen met de lift naar boven gekomen, en niet lang daarna was er een grote optocht uit Fragilie.

Iedereen wilde ineens gouden veren om zich te beschermen tegen de gemene piraten van Galatie, en de nieuwe keizer van Brannan liet er een gebod van maken dat iedere bewoner van Brannan een gouden veer in zijn huis moest hebben. Nooit meer wilde de nieuwe keizer van Brannan iets

dergelijks meemaken. Maar waar waren die gouden veren te vinden ?

‘Printkop-papegaaien,’ zei de oude vriend van de piraten-hoofdman. Daarvoor moesten ze naar een ver eiland. Die papegaaien verwisselden elke maand van veren, en daarom was het hele eiland bezaaid met gouden veren. Alleen het eiland werd bewaakt door een verschrikkelijke olifant. Zijn slurf kon veranderen in een snavel en in een slang, en kon daardoor diepe wonden aanbrengen.

Ook waren er op het eiland gevaarlijke indianen die kannibalen waren. Elwin ging er in zijn helicoptertje naar toe. Hij zou allang blij zijn als elke stad in Brannan een gouden veer zou hebben. Elwin zag dat er ook veel vogels naar een kleiner eilandje ernaast vlogen. Elwin besloot eerst daar te kijken. Hier waren alleen vogels. Het was een vogeleiland. De printkop-papegaaien kwamen hier ook, en Elwin vond hier best wel veel gouden veren. Zo ging Elwin even later met zijn helicoptertje vol gouden veren terug. Hij zou vanaf nu iedere maand naar het vogel-eiland teruggaan voor gouden veren, want om in de handen te komen van verschrikkelijke kannibalen of in zo’n gevaarlijke slurf had Elwin niet zo’n zin in.

Maar sinds het in Brannan zo vol werd met gouden veren bracht het ook andere dingen met zich mee. De verschrikkelijke kannibalen kwamen in bootjes tegelijk Brannan binnen en het leek maar niet op te houden. En in het oerwoud kwamen er steeds meer van die olifanten met die gevaarlijke slurven voor. Slangifanten werden ze genoemd, of Snavelifanten. Iedereen was er erg bang voor. De verschrikkelijke kannibalen gingen sindsdien in de oerwouden van Brannan wonen om daar de boel onveilig te maken. Velen durfden sindsdien het oerwoud niet meer in. Nu hadden de inwoners van Brannan dan wel gouden veren en geen last meer van de piraten van Galatie, maar wat hadden ze ervoor in de plaats gekregen ? Er scheen iets met de gouden veren mee te komen. En de kannibalen schenen nog erger te zijn dan de piraten van Galatie ooit waren geweest. De nieuwe keizer van Brannan was radeloos.

Elwin wist het nu ook niet meer. Weer ging hij terug naar de oude vriend van de piraten-hoofdman. ‘Ja, dat komt ervan, he,’ zei de man lachend. ‘Allerlei nare dingen kunnen gebeuren door hebberigheid. Ik had je toch een gouden veer gegeven ?’

‘Ja, maar de nieuwe keizer van Brannan wilde dat iedereen veilig zou zijn tegen zulke piraten,’ zei Elwin.

‘Ik zal je vertellen hoe je nooit meer last zult hebben van piraten, kannibalen en slangifanten,’ zei de man. ‘Breng al die gouden veren weer terug naar het vogel-eiland. Bewaar de gouden veer die ik je heb gegeven, die met die pen aan de onderkant.’

‘Is dat alles ?’ vroeg Elwin. ‘Mag ik de gouden veer dan in het paleis van de keizer van Brannan brengen ?’

‘Dat kan ook,’ zei de man. ‘Het is genoeg om zo geen last meer van ze te hebben.’

En zo gebeurde het. Elwin bracht in zijn helicoptertje alle gouden veren weer terug naar het vogel-eiland, en liet zijn eigen gouden veer die hij van de oude vriend van de piraten-hoofdman had

gekregen naar het paleis van de keizer van Brannan brengen waar het een goed plaatsje kreeg. Toen keerde de rust weer terug in Brannan. Elwin was blij dat alles zo goed was afgelopen, en bedankte de oude vriend van de piraten-hoofdman die daarin een grote rol had gespeeld. Ook de nieuwe keizer van Brannan was hem erg dankbaar, zo dankbaar dat de oude vriend van de piraten-hoofdman sindsdien de schenker van het paleis mocht zijn. Hij kreeg een eigen bar in het paleis waar hij de gasten van de keizer mocht ontvangen, geheel op zijn eigen wijze. Elwin ging nog vaak bij hem op bezoek. Ook Karel Blauw had veel voor Brannan betekent, en kreeg als dank een grote zolder in het paleis waar hij voortaan mocht wonen. Hij kon heel goed miniatuurtjes maken die hij dan weer door kon verkopen. Zijn zolder was vlak naast het keizerlijke cafe van de oude vriend van de piraten-hoofdman.

Ook Elwin en de konijnenfee waren erg dapper geweest, en natuurlijk Linie waar het allemaal mee begon. En zij kregen allemaal grote kadoos van de nieuwe keizer van Brannan. De nieuwe keizer van Brannan was een erg gulle man die heldendaad rijkelijk beloonde. De papegaai van Karel Blauw mocht sindsdien als dank weleens boodschappen van de nieuwe keizer van Brannan brengen. Daarvoor vloog hij dan vaak naar verre landen, en de papegaai vond dat maar wat leuk.

Einde

De Traan
van de Bloem

De Traan van de Bloem

COAB 2018

Het Implantaat
De Verpleegster
De Meisjesgek
De Verborgen Wereld
Kraak en het Spook Mysterie
De Poppenmakers
Doosje met Geheimen
De Bloem

Het Implantaat

Een gezin woonde op vijf hoog in een flat. Het waren drie jongens, een meisje en een vader en moeder. Joost, Herman en André heetten de drie jongens. Herman, de middelste van de zonen, was verliefd op een meisje genaamd Herma, maar zij viel niet op hem. Zij viel namelijk op vrouwen. Toen probeerde hij het bij een meisje die Annelies heette, maar die viel ook alleen maar op vrouwen. 'Je kiest wel telkens de verkeerden uit,' zei moeder hem weleens. Maar op een mooie dag kwam hij thuis met een meisje dat Marijke heette. Hij straalde helemaal, en moeder straalde ook. Ze was blij voor haar zoon. Alles scheen goed te gaan.

André had ook een meisje, genaamd Rosalie, maar dat was geen makkelijke. Vaak kwam hij met een blauw oog thuis. Joost en Sandra hadden verder een goed huwelijk. Allemaal woonden ze in dezelfde flat. Vader en moeder hadden gezegd dat de jongens meisjes moesten uitkiezen uit de flat. Dat was het gemakkelijkste. Er woonden ook veel Aziaten in de flat. Die konden heel lekker koken. Daar gingen ze ook vaak bij eten. Ook hun buren waren Aziaten. Ze waren door de hele flat verspreid. Ze vroegen zich weleens af waarom er zoveel Aziaten in de flat waren, maar er waren over het algemeen gewoon veel Aziaten in de stad. Het waren vluchtelingen van de oorlog. Ze maakten vaak muziek om van hun oorlogs-herinneringen af te komen.

De oorlog was heel zwaar. De Amerikanen hadden het hele continent van de Aziaten ingenomen en voerden een zwaar bewind. Met grote helicopters kwamen ze daar, en hadden een dwang bevel gegeven. Er moesten muziek-implantaten in de botten van de Aziaten komen, waardoor ze gedwongen naar Amerikaanse muziek moesten luisteren. Het bonste door hun hele lichaam heen en beheerste hun gedachtenleven. Daarom zijn velen gevlucht. Ze deden dat vroeger ook bij de indianen, en er bestonden daarom bijna geen indianen meer. Eén van de laatste indianen woonde nog op de flat, in een hoekje. Hij heette Patrillo. Herman was goed bevriend met Patrillo. Patrillo vertelde Herman altijd verhalen over de oorlog, en dan gruwelde en huiverde hij.

Patrillo's vader was de baas van een groot pretpark. Patrillo mocht daar altijd gratis naartoe, en hij nam Herman vaak mee. Herman keek altijd zijn ogen uit in het pretpark. Het was er ook heel leerzaam. Er waren sprekende standbeelden die over de oorlog vertelden.

Patrillo's moeder woonde niet meer bij zijn vader. Zij woonde ergens anders. Ze draaide altijd alles om wat je zei. Patrillo ging er niet graag naartoe, maar hij moest van zijn vader. Herman ging weleens met hem mee. Ook als Herman wat zei draaide ze het altijd om. Herman vond het een hele gevaarlijke vrouw, maar hij deed het voor Patrillo. Patrillo zei dat ze zo geworden was door de oorlog. Op een dag toen Patrillo en Herman bij de moeder van Patrillo waren was er ook een indiaans meisje. Het moest één van de laatste indiaanse meisjes zijn die bestond. Herman werd direct smoorverliefd op het meisje en vergat Marijke helemaal. Maar het meisje moest niet veel van hem hebben. Herman kon wel merken dat ze erg was aangetast door de oorlog. Het scheen dat de moeder van Patrillo haar had geadopteerd, omdat haar ouders niet meer leefden. Herman wilde sinds toen graag naar de moeder van Patrillo, allemaal om dat meisje te zien. Patrillo werd er zo gek van dat hij op een gegeven moment zei : 'Dan ga je maar alleen, als je zo vaak wil.' Herman was niet meer te stoppen.

Eigenlijk was het pure mishandeling wat daar gebeurde. Patrillo's moeder was nog wel erger naar

Herman toe als hij alleen kwam, en het meisje gedroeg zich ook precies als haar adoptie-moeder. Maar ja, Herman was verliefd, en liefde maakt blind. En hij liet het allemaal maar toe, tot blauwe ogen aan toe. Patrillo was kwaad, maar hij liet Herman maar gaan. 'Die jongen is helemaal het spoor kwijt,' zei hij weleens. Herman had medelijden met Patrillo's moeder en haar geadopteerde dochter, vanwege de oorlog. Hij dacht dat hij ze misschien kon helpen. Hij probeerde ze in principe gewoon om te kopen, en op een dag was dit gelukt en was het ijs gebroken. Nu nam hij het indiaanse meisje mee naar huis als zijn nieuwe vriendin. 'Zou je dat wel doen, jongen,' zei zijn moeder, 'zo'n oorlogsvluchteling ?'

'Dan heb ik in ieder geval het idee dat ik wat beteken,' zei Herman.

'Je hebt een gouden hart, Herman,' zei moeder.

Op een dag waren ze getrouwd en gingen in de flat wonen. Vaak gingen ze nog naar haar adoptie-moeder, die hij ook omgekocht had. Maar op een dag vielen de Amerikanen binnen, en iedereen werd gedwongen muziek-implantaten in de botten te krijgen.

'We moeten hier weg, Herman,' zei het indiaanse meisje toen ze een brief daarover ontvingen. Herman raakte in paniek. 'Waar kunnen we naartoe ?' vroeg hij radeloos.

'Ik weet wel wat,' zei het indiaanse meisje. 'Ik ben bevriend met een Amerikaanse piloot. Hij vond eens mijn ouders dood, en heeft me toen naar dit land gebracht.' Met een telefoontje was het gebeurd. De Amerikaanse piloot zou hen ophalen en hen ergens anders naartoe brengen. Hij wist wel een plaatsje waar het Amerikaanse leger nooit een overval zou doen.

'En waar is dat plaatsje ?' vroeg Herman.

Het indiaanse meisje was al bezig haar spullen bij elkaar te rapen. 'Hij zei niet waar het was,' zei het indiaanse meisje.

Na een paar uur landde het vliegtuigje van de Amerikaanse piloot achter de flat waar Herman en het indiaanse meisje al met hun spullen stonden. De Amerikaanse piloot schoof het raampje naar beneden. 'Sorry dat ik een beetje laat ben, stap maar in,' zei hij. Ze gingen het vliegtuigje in, en Herman maakte kennis met de piloot. De piloot stak zijn hand uit met een zwarte handschoen. Hij had ook een helm op. 'Waar gaat u ons naartoe brengen ?' vroeg Herman.

'Oh, ik weet wel een plaatsje,' zei de Amerikaanse piloot.

'Maar waar ?' vroeg Herman.

'Dat zul je wel zien,' zei de Amerikaanse piloot.

Ze moesten lang vliegen. De Amerikaanse piloot ging met hen over berg en dal, en toen over zee.

Na een tijd kwamen ze aan bij een groot gevangenis-complex.

'Maar dat is een gevangenis,' zei Herman.

'Dat weet ik,' zei de Amerikaanse piloot. 'Maar hier werk ik, en ik kan ervoor zorgen dat die muziek-implantaten niet in jullie komen.'

'Hoe ga je dat doen ?' vroeg Herman.

Ze stapten uit nadat ze geland waren, en de Amerikaanse piloot nam hen mee naar zijn kantoor. 'Hier zijn jullie veilig,' zei hij, 'maar kom niet buiten het kantoor.'

Het kantoor was gelukkig groot. Het had een aantal slaapkamers en zelfs een badkamer. 'Perfect,' zei het indiaanse meisje. Herman maakte zich zorgen om zijn familie en om Patrillo. 'We moeten sterk zijn,' zei het indiaanse meisje. 'Dit was een buitenkansje.'

Hier leefden ze verder voort. Ze kregen ook kinderen. Er was ook een keukentje. Het was alles wat ze hadden. Herman dacht veel na over zijn land. Hij vroeg zich af of er ooit bevrijding voor hen zou komen, of misschien hadden ze ook kunnen vluchten. Op een dag was de Amerikaanse piloot weer op zijn kantoor, en Herman begon veel vragen te stellen, ook om de reden waarom de muziek-implantaten werden opgedrongen aan zovelen. De Amerikaanse piloot wilde daar niks over zeggen. Hij zei dat hij een zwijgplicht had, dus daar werden ze ook niet veel wijzer van.

Herman had er een gesprek over met zijn indiaanse vrouw of zij het misschien wist.

'Hij heeft het mij weleens verteld,' zei de indiaanse vrouw, 'in een zwak moment.'

'Nou, vertel het dan,' zei Herman.

Zijn indiaanse vrouw schudde haar hoofd. 'Hij zei erbij dat als ik het zou doorvertellen dan zou mijn implantaat ontploffen, en daarbij mijn gehele lichaam.'

'Dus jij hebt ook al zo'n implantaat ?' vroeg Herman geschrokken.

Ze knikte.

'Waarom heb je mij dat nooit verteld ? En hoe kan het implantaat er weer uit ?' vroeg Herman.

'Ik mag er niet teveel over praten,' zei ze zacht. 'Want als ik er teveel over praat dan kan het ook al ontploffen.'

Herman begon te snikken. 'Laten we dan maar stoppen erover te praten. Ik wil je niet in levensgevaar brengen,' zei hij.

'Ik voel het aan,' sprak ze, 'of het wel of niet kan. Ik heb ermee leren leven en ben er gevoelig voor.'

'We vinden wel een weg,' zei Herman, terwijl hij zijn arm om haar heen sloeg, maar ze duwde de arm weer weg. 'Op zulke momenten kan lichamelijk contact ook fataal zijn,' zei ze, 'want dan kan het implantaat oververhit raken en ontploffen.'

'Sorry,' zei Herman, en verwijderde zich verder weg van haar.

'Wat een onding,' zei Herman boos.

Ineens rolde Herman's oog uit zijn hoofd en viel op de grond, waar het ontplofte. Herman schrok en greep met zijn handen naar zijn hoofd. 'Ook een geheim implantaat !' riep het indiaanse meisje.

'Nee !' riep Herman, 'dit kan niet waar zijn !' Op dat moment kwam de Amerikaanse piloot binnen, terwijl ook zijn oog eruit rolde en explodeerde. 'Kom,' zei hij. 'We moeten hier weg. De implantaten hebben een malfunctie.'

'Het lijkt erop alsof we lopende implantaten zijn !' riep Herman boos. Ze renden naar het vliegtuig met hun twee kleine kinderen en wat spullen, de Amerikaanse piloot volgende.

'Wat moeten we nu doen ?' vroeg Herman in paniek.

'Ik weet nog wel wat,' zei de Amerikaanse piloot.

'Er tikt wat in me,' zei de indiaanse vrouw.

'Dat is het implantaat,' zei de Amerikaanse piloot. 'Het moet er zo snel mogelijk uit.'

'Maar hoe ?' vroeg de indiaanse vrouw.

'Ik weet nog wel een adresje,' zei de Amerikaanse piloot. 'Een vriend van mijn vader werkte voor het leger als professor, dus hij heeft van al deze dingen wel verstand.'

Na een tijd vliegen, wat wel een eeuwigheid leek te duren, kwamen ze uiteindelijk aan bij een wolkenkrabber. Hier moesten ze het vliegtuig uit en een lift in. Helemaal bovenin was het kantoor van de professor. Het was een wolkenkrabber van het leger. De professor zag direct wat er aan de hand was. 'Inderdaad een malfunctie,' zei de professor. Hij had een witte jas aan met zwarte handschoenen. Het implantaat van het indiaanse meisje was zo aan het tikken en pulseren dat er een grote bobbel te zien was op haar huid. 'Het moet er inderdaad zo snel mogelijk uit,' zei de professor. 'We hebben geen tijd meer te verliezen.'

'Doe dan wat !' riep Herman. De professor keek naar de Amerikaanse piloot. 'Er moet een vervanging zijn, anders gaat het niet lukken,' zei de professor.

'Is er vervanging ?' vroeg de Amerikaanse piloot.

'Ik ben bang van niet,' zei de professor. Plotseling rolde er ook een oog uit het hoofd van de professor en ontplofte toen. Toen viel ook zijn neus eruit en explodeerde. 'Drommels,' zei de professor. 'Dit is echt een hele zware malfunctie dan.' Nog meer lichaamsdelen van hen begonnen eraf te vallen en te exploderen, en de huid van het indiaanse meisje begon eraf te glijden. Nu was het implantaat duidelijk zichtbaar, en het gaf oogverblindende lichtstoten. Herman had nog maar één oog en terwijl hij zijn laatste oog dichtkneep liep hij op het implantaat in zijn indiaanse vrouw af. Ineens was er een enorme explosie. Alles stond in brand, en zijn vrouw werd als een lappen pop weggeslingerd. 'Nee ! riep Herman. Alles wat hij nog kon zien was de professor die daar stond in zijn witte jas. Zwarte handschoenen grepen hem vast, en sleurden hem mee. 'Naar het vliegtuig !' werd er geroepen. 'Dit zijn malfuncties van de hersen-implantaten !' Het leek wel alsof de stemmen driedubbel waren, en de geluidsgolven kwamen alleen trillerig door. Herman werd in het vliegtuig getrokken, en toen viel hij bewusteloos. Heel in de verte kon hij nog stemmen horen, maar die werden steeds vager.

Hij kwam weer iets bij, en zag nog steeds de zwarte handschoenen. Het leek wel alsof ze hem aan het opereren waren. 'Nee !' riep hij. Maar er kwam niets uit zijn mond. Toen zag hij dat zijn hersenen werden geopereerd. Er werd een klein orgaantje uitgetrokken, en er werd iets anders ingedaan. Toen werd het gehecht. Hij werd pas echt wakker in het ziekenhuis. Hij zag het glimlachende gezicht van zijn indiaanse vrouw. 'Hij is wakker,' zei ze stralend.

'W... wat is er gebeurd ?' zei hij stamelend.

'Je had het telkens over oorlog,' zei de indiaanse vrouw, 'oorlog, oorlog, zei je, en toen raakte je bewusteloos.'

'Waar is de Amerikaanse piloot ?' vroeg Herman.

'Ik ken geen Amerikaanse piloot,' zei de indiaanse vrouw lachend.

'En de professor ?' vroeg Herman.

'Huh ?' zei ze weer lachend. 'Ik ken al die mensen niet, maar ik ben blij dat je weer wakker bent.'

'Maar de Amerikaanse piloot die ons gered had,' zei Herman. 'Waar is die ?'

'De enige die mij heeft gered ben jij,' zei ze met een grote glimlach.

Einde

De Verpleegster

Edgar en Rocco woonden met hun ouders in een groot huis. Ze hadden ook nog een zusje. Ze kregen altijd duur technisch speelgoed want hun vader had een hele goede baan waar hij dik mee verdiende. Ze woonden in een rijtjeshuis, maar de huizen waren erg groot. Ze woonden dichtbij een rivier en aan een weiland. Dichtbij was ook het bos, maar er zaten enkele wijken nog tussen. Op een dag kreeg Edgar een ongeluk met zijn motor. Hij moest naar een ziekenhuis helemaal naar de andere kant van het land, waar ze gespecialiseerd waren in het type wonden die hij had. Hij moest daar heel lang blijven, maar soms bezochten hij en een verpleegster het natuurmeer dichtbij het ziekenhuis. Hij knapte daar erg van op. Ook ging hij soms een paar dagen logeren bij een oudtante in de buurt toen het wat beter met hem ging. Hij ontmoette daar ook een neefje die hij nog nooit eerder had gezien. Hij had wel veel over het neefje gehoord. Het neefje had het erover hoeveel hij wiskunde haatte, maar Edgar vond wiskunde een mooi vak.

Maar op een dag maakte de oudtante een hele vervelende opmerking naar Edgar, en hij wilde er niet meer naar terug. Hij bleef toen gewoon in het ziekenhuis om verder te revalideren. Hij vond de natuur zo prachtig in dit gebied, dat hij eigenlijk niet naar zijn huis terugwilde, en besloot op advertenties te reageren van aangeboden huizen. Na een tijdje had Edgar een leuk huisje gevonden ergens in het gebied van het ziekenhuis. Er waren veel wijken waaruit hij kon kiezen. Ook het

neefje woonde hier ergens in de buurt en die kwam hem soms opzoeken.

Edgar was verliefd geworden op zijn verpleegster en al snel hadden ze een relatie en zij kwam bij hem inwonen. Maar op een dag ging zij er met een ander vandoor. Edgar raakte toen in een depressie, en vroeg zich af of ze zich dan nog wel verpleegster mocht noemen. Hij maakte een afspraak met de directrice van het ziekenhuis om zijn verhaal te doen, en hij deed er alles aan om ervoor te zorgen dat de verpleegster die hem bedrogen had ontslagen zou worden. Maar de directrice deed er allemaal erg gemakkelijk over, alsof het allemaal zo hoorde.

'Dus ik ga naar het ziekenhuis, en kom er depressief vandaan, is dat de bedoeling ?' vroeg Edgar boos.

'De bedoeling is dat je voor jezelf leert te vechten, creatief te worden, en dat gebeurt niet als wij allemaal om je heen blijven,' zei de directrice. 'Eens moet je ons loslaten, Edgar, en het zelf doen. We kunnen niet altijd voor je blijven zorgen.'

'Heeft u geen andere verpleegster voor mij ?' vroeg Edgar.

'Nee,' zei de directrice. 'Lichamelijk ben je nu weer gezond. Als je depressief bent dan moet je ergens anders wezen.'

'Waar dan ?' vroeg Edgar.

'Er is een ander ziekenhuis speciaal voor dat soort dingen,' zei de directrice, en gaf hem een klein boekje, een prospectus met informatie over het ziekenhuis.

Edgar begon direct te lezen, en er stonden wat plaatjes op. Het was ook een soort school.

'Nou, dat lijkt me wel wat,' zei Edgar, 'want ik ben flink depressief, en ik kom hier nooit helemaal zelf doorheen.'

'Goed,' zei de directrice. 'Ik zal contact met hen maken voor jou. Dan krijg je er nog wel bericht over.'

Verschillende weken later kreeg Edgar een brief van het ziekenhuis waarin hij werd uitgenodigd te komen. Hij was inmiddels nog depressiever geraakt. Het ziekenhuis was niet ver weg. Het lag ergens achter een zandverstuiving. Edgar kreeg een nieuwe verpleegster. Ze hielp hem goed, en al snel raakte Edgar weer verliefd. Hij zei toen direct tegen zichzelf : 'Zou je dat nu wel doen ?' Maar hij kon het niet helpen. 'Ze zal je laten vallen als een baksteen, net als de vorige, omdat ze meerdere klanten hebben, en dat noemen ze therapeutisch,' zei hij tegen zichzelf. En het was hier ook verboden een relatie aan te gaan met iemand van de verpleging. Ze hield ook direct de boot af toen hij erover begon. 'Koude bedoening,' dacht Edgar bij zichzelf. Hij was het altijd gewend dat vrouwen en meisjes bij bosjes voor hem vielen, omdat hij 'zo aardig was', zoals ze altijd zeiden. Niemand was in hun ogen zo aardig als Edgar. Zijn oudtante had dus de vervelende opmerking gemaakt dat hij zo geliefd was bij de dames vanwege zijn geld. Daarom wilde hij haar nooit meer zien. Hij vond dat een grove belediging. Hij wilde over zichzelf denken als een aardig iemand, niet zomaar iemand met veel geld. Hij kwam uit een hele rijke familie, maar dat kon soms ook een vloek zijn. Sommige mensen haatten hem, alleen maar omdat hij zo rijk was, en vaak waren ze ook jaloers.

Edgar raakte door het koude gedrag van de verpleegster nog depressiever. Op een dag vluchtte hij weg. Keihard scheurde hij over de weg met zijn motor. Het had hem kwaad gemaakt, en voordat hij

er erg in had kreeg hij weer een ongeluk en kwam weer terecht in het eerste ziekenhuis waar hij de verpleegster waarmee hij een relatie had gehad weer tegenkwam.

'Zo Edgar, dus je bent weer bij me terug ?' vroeg ze aan Edgar die helemaal op een bed voor pampers lag.

'Ik lig weer in diggelen,' zei Edgar. 'Heb je nu je zin ?'

'Dat komt goed uit,' zei de verpleegster, 'want ik ben ook bij mijn vorige vriend weggegaan.'

'Ja, maar mij krijg je niet meer terug,' zei Edgar.

'Je bent al terug,' glimlachte ze. 'Ik kan alles doen met je wat ik wil,' zei ze terwijl ze haar tongetje uitstak.

'Goed,' zei Edgar. 'Maar het is maar tijdelijk. Als ik weer beter word ben ik weg.'

'Neem je me dan weer mee zoals de vorige keer ?' vroeg de verpleegster.

'Nee,' zei Edgar, 'want ik weet precies waar dat op uitloopt. Dan ga je daarna weer bij me weg, en word ik weer depressief, en kan ik naar dat andere ziekenhuis om me weer zo kwaad te maken zodat ik weer een ongeluk krijg. Jullie verdienen er goed aan.'

'En dat is nu juist de bedoeling,' zei de verpleegster. 'Want wij werken voor verkeersvoorlichting, en wij hopen zo dat slachtoffers het eens een keer door gaan krijgen dat ze niet het verkeer inmoeten als ze dronken zijn, kwaad zijn, of zwaar depressief. Nog sterker : Ik werk voor de spoorwegen, en hoop hiermee dat je iets vaker de trein pakt.'

Edgar keek haar verbaasd aan. 'Dus ik heb gewoon met een lopend verkeersbord te maken ? Wat is dat voor een rare boel hier ?'

'Dat moet u zo niet zien, mijnheer,' zei de verpleegster ineens heel deftig. 'Ik ben een geheime wijkagente. Heus, wij hebben het beste met u voor.'

Edgar werd kwaad en probeerde op te staan, maar krampte toen weer ineen van de pijn.

'Heus, mijnheer, het is het beste zo,' sprak de verpleegster. 'Alleen als u hier nooit meer weg zou kunnen zou ik voor altijd de uwe zijn. En ik heb een nare mededeling voor u dat u met negenennegentig procent zekerheid blijvend invalide zal zijn dit keer.'

'Waarom de negenennegentig procent ?' vroeg Edgar.

'Omdat we in dit ziekenhuis nooit nooit mogen zeggen of altijd,' zei de verpleegster.

'Dus het is ook voor negenennegentig procent zeker dat je dit keer bij me zult blijven ?' vroeg Edgar.

'Ja,' zei de verpleegster. 'Zolang je hier niet weg kunt kom je van mij ook niet af. We verlaten alleen mensen die het zelf allemaal kunnen. Ik had het al lang genoeg met je volgehouden de vorige keer. Ik was zelfs nog bij je toen je alweer thuis was.'

'Dus scheiding is alleen voor de gezonden ?' vroeg Edgar.

'Natuurlijk,' zei de verpleegster. 'We mogen nooit een zieke in de steek laten. Dan zouden we ons beroep zwaar schenden.'

'Wil je dan met me trouwen tot de dood ons scheidt ?' vroeg Edgar.

'Ik trouw met je totdat de gezondheid ons scheidt,' zei de verpleegster. 'We kunnen dus alleen maar voor negenennegentig procent trouwen.'

'Dan heb ik dus nog geen zekerheid,' zei Edgar.

'Kun je nog een extra verzekering voor aanvragen,' zei de verpleegster.

'Laat maar,' zei Edgar. 'Ik denk dat ik er genoeg van heb, maar als ik hier nooit meer wegkom dan zit er denk ik niets anders op dan met je te trouwen onder deze vreemde voorwaarden.'

'Dus toch ?' vroeg de verpleegster. 'Maar dan niet gaan simuleren, hè, alsof je allang geen rolstoel meer nodig hebt, maar er toch inblijft om mij.'

'Nou ja,' zei Edgar. 'Ik zal er natuurlijk alles voor doen om ons huwelijk in stand te houden. En dat verwacht ik van jou ook. We zullen er beiden voor moeten strijden.'

'Ik zal je wel weer eens goed en hard neerslaan als je je weer te goed gaat voelen, is dat afgesproken ?' lachte de verpleegster.

'Dat is ook weer niet de bedoeling,' zei Edgar. 'Ik zit niet te wachten op huwelijks-geweld, jij wel ?'

'Maar er moet gestreden worden voor het huwelijk, want anders komt er niets van,' zei de verpleegster. 'En in de oorlog is alles geoorloofd.'

'Lieve help,' zei Edgar, 'waar ben ik beland ? Het lijkt hier wel een gekkenhuis of een gevangenis. Met wie heb ik nu eigenlijk te maken ? Gaat het wel goed in dat bolletje van je ?'

De verpleegster boog haar hoofd. 'Het is allemaal nog wel erger, Edgar. Ik ben namelijk als familie werker ingehuurd door jouw familie om je het leven zo zuur te maken dat je weer terugkeert naar je familie, of in ieder geval naar hun woongebied, want je woont nu te ver weg volgens hen.'

'Wat een klootzakken !' riep Edgar. 'Hoeveel geld hebben ze je geboden ?'

Ze noemde toen een duizelingwekkend bedrag.

'Ik bied je het dubbele,' riep Edgar. 'Kunnen deze spelletjes dan afgelopen zijn ?'

'Goed,' zei de verpleegster afgemeten en zakelijk.

Edgar schreef een cheque uit en gaf het aan haar. 'En nu wil ik een andere verpleegster !' riep hij.

'Goed mijnheer,' zei de verpleegster koud. 'Maar die anderen zijn nog wel veel erger dan ik.'

'Of zijn die ook al gekocht door mijn familie ?' brieste Edgar in grote woede. 'Dan moet ik die dus ook allemaal gaan lopen afkopen.'

'U bent toch rijk ?' vroeg de verpleegster.

'Oh, dus het is jullie allemaal om het geld te doen,' brieste Edgar. 'Wat als jullie allemaal grote leugenaars zijn ?'

'Ik moet je iets opbiechten, Edgar,' zei de verpleegster. 'Ik werk ook voor de kerk. Ik moest je zo radeloos maken dat je naar de kerk zou gaan. Ze hebben aandelen bij ons, dus ze delen ook in onze winst.'

'Wat !' riep Edgar. 'Op wat voor een zottenkermis ben ik beland ? Jullie zijn echt niet goed snik. Je hebt je cheque nu, dus oprotten. Ik wil verder niets meer van je weten, want je maakt me helemaal gek. Je bent een levensgevaarlijke vrouw. Ik vraag me af wat ik ooit in je heb gezien.'

'Mijn vele geld ?' vroeg de verpleegster.

'Ik geef niets om geld,' zuchtte Edgar. 'Ik heb zelf al genoeg geld. Daarom kwam jij ook bij mij inwonen. Er is altijd baas boven baas. Maar je bent me er eentje.'

'Ik weet al waarom je op me gevallen bent,' zei de verpleegster.

'Zeg het eens,' zei Edgar.

Op dat moment kwam Rocco binnen, de broer van Edgar.
Rocco omhelsde zijn broer. Edgar kon even geen woord uitbrengen.
Daarna vroeg hij aan Rocco of het allemaal echt waar was wat de verpleegster over de familie had gezegd.

'Nee joh,' zei Rocco. 'Wij hadden je opgegeven voor de geheime fop camera om je wat op te vrolijken in het ziekenhuis. Ze nemen patienten in de maling, en daarna wordt het op televisie uitgezonden.'

'Gefopt !' riep de verpleegster lachend, en toen wezen ze op de geheime camera die ergens was verstopt. Ook Rocco lachte. En Edgar was niet eens boos, want zijn broer daar had hij een zwak voor, en die kon alles wel bij hem doen. 'Goede grap,' zei Edgar. 'Maar ik krijg je nog wel, broer.'

Toen keek Edgar naar de verpleegster. 'Hoorde dat je er met een ander vandoor ging nou ook bij die grap, of was dat echt ?' vroeg hij.

'Het was een grap,' lachte de verpleegster.

'Maar mijn ongeluk was toch geen grap ?' vroeg Edgar.

'Jawel, broer,' lachte Rocco, 'dat was ook een grap. Er kon niets fout gaan. Ze hebben deze stunts al zo vaak uitgehaald.'

'Levensgevaarlijk,' mompelde Edgar, 'levensgevaarlijk.' Maar zijn broer kon in zijn ogen nooit kwaad doen. Toen keek hij weer naar de verpleegster. Hij had er bijna pijn in zijn buik van.
'Betekent dat dat je nog steeds mijn vriendin bent, of was dat ook allemaal gespeeld voor de grap ?' vroeg Edgar.

'Wat denk je zelf ?' vroeg de verpleegster lachend.

'Ga me niet vertellen dat het een grap was, want dan heb je dus wel even met mijn gevoelens gespeeld,' zei Edgar.

'Het was echt,' zei Rocco, 'maar ze moest je wel eerst testen om te zien of je het wel waard was, en of je tegen een grapje kon.'

'Dat kan ik, broer,' zei Edgar, 'maar ik pak je nog wel weer terug,' waarna hij zich richtte tot de verpleegster : 'en jou ook.'

Einde

De Meisjesgek

Wilhelmus woonde met zijn familie in een heel klein huisje. Het huisje was zo klein dat de broer van Wilhelmus beneden in de schuur moest slapen. Wilhelmus vond dat verschrikkelijk voor zijn broer, maar hun vader had er echt werk van gemaakt, en het leek gewoon op een slaapkamertje. In de tuin stond nog een andere schuur.

Wilhelmus was een echte meisjesgek. Om elke vinger had hij wel tien meisjes. Die trommelde hij altijd op van overal en nergens. Hij ging naar ze op zoek en verzamelde ze als stickers. De broer van Wilhelmus was erg verlegen. Hij had ook vaak hoofdpijn. Wilhelmus had het erg met zijn broer te doen, en verzamelde zo ook meisjes voor zijn broer, maar zijn broer was niet geinteresseerd.

Op een dag kwam Wilhelmus met een heel speciaal meisje thuis voor zijn broer, uit een ander land, maar zijn broer had teveel hoofdpijn. Het meisje was erg betrokken bij de broer van Wilhelmus, want haar vader had ook vaak hoofdpijn. Sindsdien bleef ze getrouw wekelijks kaartjes sturen naar de broer van Wilhelmus. De broer van Wilhelmus vond dat heel aardig. Wilhelmus wilde wel dat er een medicijn zou zijn voor zijn broer, maar zijn broer had de moed al opgegeven en zei vaak dat er geen kruid tegen opgewassen was. Wilhelmus vroeg zich af wat de oorzaak was van de hoofdpijn, en op een dag vertelde zijn broer het. Zijn broer had eens een boek gelezen over een heks die mensen opbakte als een banketbakker, en daarna werden ze verkocht. Hij had sindsdien nachtmerries en een hoofdpijn die eigenlijk nooit vertrok, en daarnaast was hij erg verlegen en stil. Wilhelmus vertelde het ook aan het meisje wat uit een ander land kwam.

'Maar hoe kan dat ?' vroeg het meisje. 'Het is toch maar een verhaal ? Maar ik begrijp het al. In ons land gebeuren er nog wel ergere dingen, en mijn vader heeft hoofdpijn van wat er in zijn jeugd was

gebeurd.'

Wilhelmus keek haar aan. 'Wat is er dan gebeurd ?' vroeg hij.

'Ik kan het maar beter niet vertellen,' zei het meisje. 'Want dan krijg jij ook hoofdpijn.'

'Nee, alsjeblieft, vertel het me,' smeekte Wilhelmus. 'Ik moet het weten. Misschien kan ik wel helpen.'

Maar het meisje durfde het niet te zeggen.

Op een dag ging Wilhelmus op de fiets heel diep het bos in om na te denken. Hij kwam daar een oude kabouter tegen, die hem naar zijn huisje leidde. Hij kreeg daar de overheerlijkste dingen te eten. Maar aan het eind zei de kabouter dat de taartjes en de vla van mensenvlees waren gemaakt. Wilhelmus moest toen verschrikkelijk overgeven en rende hals over kop weg naar zijn fiets en reed zo hard hij kon met zware hoofdpijn naar huis.

'Dingen zijn niet pluis in het bos,' zei Wilhelmus tegen zijn broer toen hij was thuisgekomen.

'Ik weet het,' zei zijn broer. 'Je hoeft mij niets meer te vertellen.'

'Dus je weet het al ?' vroeg Wilhelmus.

Zijn broer knikte.

De dag erna op school vertelde Wilhelmus het tegen het meisje uit het andere land. Ze knikte. 'Ja,' zei ze. 'Mijn vader heeft zulke dingen ook meegemaakt. Bepaald niet pluis.'

'Wat doen we eraan ?' vroeg Wilhelmus.

'Niks,' zei het meisje. 'De politie gelooft het niet, en de dokter ook niet. Praten heeft geen zin.'

'Zijn ze betoverd ?' vroeg Wilhelmus.

'Veel erger,' zei het meisje. 'Ze zitten in het complot. Ze worden betaald om zich stil te houden.'

Wilhelmus gruwelde en huiverde.

'Hoe kan het dat ik heb weten te ontsnappen ?' vroeg Wilhelmus.

'Mijn vader heeft kunnen ontsnappen, en jouw broer ook, waarschijnlijk,' zei het meisje.

'Wat doen we eraan ?' vroeg Wilhelmus weer.

'Laten we beiden op onderzoek uitgaan dit keer,' zei het meisje.

De dag erna gingen ze beiden naar het bos, naar de plek waar Wilhelmus de kabouter had ontmoet. Hier moest ook ergens het huisje van de kabouter zijn, maar hoe ze ook zochten, ze vonden het niet.

Plotseling na vele uren stond de kabouter voor hen, en hield een touw voor hun ogen. 'Zoeken jullie dit soms ?' vroeg hij.

'Nee, we zoeken je huisje,' zei Wilhelmus.

'Waarom ?' vroeg de kabouter.

'Ik heb er mensenvlees gegeten, en ik ben er naar van,' zei Wilhelmus. 'Ik wil er graag meer van weten.'

'En je hebt je vriendinnetje meegenomen ?' vroeg de kabouter. 'Gezellig. Kom maar mee.'

En weer leidde de kabouter Wilhelmus naar zijn huisje terwijl het meisje hen volgde.

Binnengekomen vroeg de kabouter : 'Wat wil je weten ?'

'Waarom dient u mensenvlees op als koek, taart en gebak ?' vroeg Wilhelmus.

'Omdat ik er dol op ben,' zei de kabouter.

'Hoe gaat het in zijn werk bedoel ik. Hoe komt u aan het vlees,' vroeg Wilhelmus.

'Simpel,' zei de kabouter. 'Ik heb aandelen bij het ziekenhuis, dus ik deel in de winst.'

'Walgelijk,' zei Wilhelmus. 'Gezondheid is geen koopwaar.'

'Het is een goktent,' zei de kabouter. 'Ik win er altijd veel mensenvlees. Kwestie van geluk, en het geluk is altijd met me.' Hij gooide een zilveren munt in de lucht en ving die weer op. Toen liet hij de munt zien waar het hoofd van een banketbakker heks opstond. 'Met deze munt laat het geluk mij nooit in de steek,' zei de kabouter. 'Wanneer ik het uitgeef komt het altijd bij me terug, met grote winst.'

'Bah, wat flauw,' zei Wilhelmus. 'En wij maar hoofdpijn hebben.'

'Jouw hoofdpijn is voor ons groot geluk !' riep de kabouter schaterlachend. 'Het is voor ons de jackpot !'

'Wat bent u toch gemeen,' zei Wilhelmus.

'Kanker, asthma, tyfus, het brengt ons handenvol prijzen,' grinnikte de kabouter.

'Waarom doet u al deze dingen ?' vroeg Wilhelmus.

'Anders is het leven maar saai,' zei de kabouter. 'Wij zijn roofdieren. De mens is de prooi. Zo is de natuur.'

'Maar er is altijd baas boven baas,' zei het meisje ineens. 'Er komt geen einde aan.'

'Kanker, asthma, tyfus, lepra !' begon de kabouter te schelden.

'Je vergat nog aids, leukemie, herpes en malaria,' zei het meisje.

'Houd je mond, spuit elf,' zei de kabouter. 'Het ziekenhuis is een slagerij en banketbakkerij. Het ruimt netjes op.'

'We zullen jou opruimen,' zei het meisje.

De kabouter begon te lachen. 'Wie ga je daar voor meebrengen ?'

Het meisje liep steeds dichter naar de kabouter toe. 'Wat heb je met mijn vader gedaan, en met Wilhelmus en zijn broer ?' vroeg ze.

De kabouter deed een stapje terug. Hij liep naar een kokend heet keteltje toe. 'Nog even, en ik werp dit over je heen, en dan kan ik je ook opbakken als taartje.'

'Blijf van dat keteltje af !' riep Wilhelmus. Ook Wilhelmus kwam steeds dichter op de kabouter af. 'Oh,' zei de kabouter. 'Zal ik het dan eens in jouw gezicht werpen. Wil je dat soms ?'

'Wat heb je met haar vader en mijn broer gedaan ?' vroeg Wilhelmus.

'Ik heb niks gedaan,' zei de kabouter. 'Jullie wanen maar wat. Ik ben maar een kabouter met aandelen bij het ziekenhuis. Ik ken jullie allemaal niet.'

'Mensenvlees heb je mij te eten gegeven,' zei Wilhelmus. 'Hoofdpijn heb je me gegeven. Ook haar vader en mijn broer hebben hoofdpijn.'

'Dat kan zoveel oorzaken hebben,' zei de kabouter.

'Mensenvlees heb je mij te eten gegeven,' zei Wilhelmus weer. 'Mensenvlees. Je hebt aandelen bij het ziekenhuis en deelt in de winst. Wij weten genoeg. Voor de dag ermee.'

De kabouter wilde zijn kokende keteltje pakken, maar verbrandde zich. 'Au !' foeterde hij. Hij greep toen naar een kookhandschoen en nam het keteltje weer op, maar verbrandde zich weer, en liet het keteltje direct uit zijn handen vallen. 'Het is al te heet !' foeterde hij. 'Jullie hebben me aan de praat gehouden, terwijl ik aan het koken was !' Het kokende spul was op de vloer gevallen en al snel stond het huisje in de fik. Wilhelmus en het meisje renden naar buiten, terwijl de kabouter niet uit het huisje wilde. Hij begon zo te krijsen en te foeteren dat Wilhelmus er van huiverde en griezelde.

'Kanker, asthma, tyfus !' gilde kabouter, en toen weer. Hij bleef het maar herhalen alsof er een kras op de grammofoonplaat was. 'Ik heb jullie gewaarschuwd !' gilde hij. 'Kanker, asthma, tyfus, ik bak zoals het me lief is ! Mijn mondje is zuur. Het is veel te duur. Nu weet je pas echt wat een dief is !' En hij bleef het maar herhalen, terwijl zijn huisje nog meer fikte. Hij kwam maar niet naar buiten, alsof hij zijn huisje niet wilde loslaten.

'U bent de dief !' riep Wilhelmus.

'Laten we teruggaan,' zei het meisje. 'Ik denk dat er hier niets meer te doen is.'

En zo zijn ze teruggegaan, en vertelden het aan de broer van Wilhelmus.

'Het gebeurt elke dag,' zei de broer van Wilhelmus. 'Elke dag weer trekt hij bezoekers, en elke dag weer brengt hij zichzelf in de problemen, maar de dag erop begint het liedje weer van voren af aan. Telkens blijft het ergens steken en gaat dan weer terug.'

'Hij werkt voor de banketbakker heks ?' vroeg Wilhelmus.

'Hij heeft haar munt,' zei de broer. 'Het komt altijd weer bij hem terug en deelt de winst, en haalt

hem altijd weer uit de penarie. Het is een tovermunt.'

Wilhelmus zuchtte. 'Wat kunnen we eraan doen ?' vroeg hij.

'Ik ben bang dat we niks kunnen doen,' zei de broer. 'Het gaat altijd zo door. Maar we kunnen wel het beste van ons leven maken.'

'Ik heb hoofdpijn,' zei Wilhelmus.

'Ik ook,' zei het meisje.

'En ik ook,' zei de broer van Wilhelmus. 'Maar ik moet jullie iets opbiechten. Ik heb zelf ook zo'n tovermunt.'

Wilhelmus keek zijn broer verbaasd aan. 'Ik had het in het geheim geërfd van opa die in het leger had gewerkt,' zei de broer van Wilhelmus. 'Het werd in de oorlog gebruikt als een geluksmunt tegen de vijand, maar sommigen van die oorlogsmunten zijn in verkeerde handen gevallen, en hebben die munten misbruikt.'

Het meisje keek de broer van Wilhelmus aan. 'Het is altijd oorlog in het hoofd van mijn vader,' zei het meisje. 'Oorlogsmunten, hè ? Zou het dan geen medicijn voor mijn vader kunnen zijn als hij de munt zou zien ?'

'Ik gebruik de munt zelf niet,' zei de broer van Wilhelmus. 'Het is veel te gevaarlijk. Toen ik het erfde was de munt al veilig opgeborgen in een lijstje achter glas.'

'Mag ik de munt zien ?' vroeg het meisje.

'Het zit in een kluis,' zei de broer van Wilhelmus. 'En de code ken ik niet.'

'Maar wat heb je er dan aan ?' vroeg het meisje. 'Heb je het zelf dan ooit weleens gezien ?'

'Nee,' zei de broer van Wilhelmus. 'Ze zeiden alleen dat in de kluis het lijstje zou zijn met de oorlogsmunt, maar alleen mijn opa zou de code kennen, en die was inmiddels overleden.'

'Dan moeten we naar de kluiskraker,' zei Wilhelmus.

'Nee,' zei de broer van Wilhelmus. 'Ik kom er eerlijk voor uit. Ik wil niet dat de munt in verkeerde handen valt. Dat zou een grote ramp betekenen.'

'Ja, maar we moeten iets doen,' zei Wilhelmus. 'Het is oorlog.'

'Ik heb een beter idee,' zei de broer van Wilhelmus. 'Mijn oma zei dat ik de munt alleen maar mocht gebruiken om het meisje van mijn dromen te krijgen.'

'Is het geen tijd om de munt nu te gebruiken dan ?' vroeg Wilhelmus.

'Ik heb teveel hoofdpijn,' zei de broer van Wilhelmus.

'Maar zou het je juist niet van je hoofdpijn afhelpen als je de munt zou gebruiken voor iets goeds ?' vroeg Wilhelmus. 'Want nu worden zulke munten alleen maar voor het kwaad gebruikt.'

'Je begrijpt het niet,' zei de broer van Wilhelmus.

'Wat als ik het meisje van je dromen ben ?' vroeg het meisje.

'Sorry,' zei de broer van Wilhelmus. 'Jij bent niet het meisje van mijn dromen, maar het nieuwe buurmeisje.'

Het meisje werd kwaad, en trok een verwrongen gezicht. 'Dan houd het hier op !' riep ze. 'Ik heb al mijn tijd hier voor niets ingestopt !'

'Het ging om je vader,' zei Wilhelmus. 'Die wilde je toch helpen ?'

'Ja,' zei het meisje, 'maar ik kom geen steek verder met jullie.' Boos liep ze toen de deur uit.

'Gebruik het dan voor het buurmeisje,' zei Wilhelmus tegen zijn broer.

De broer van Wilhelmus schudde zijn hoofd. 'Je begrijpt het niet,' zei hij. 'Oma zei er ook bij dat de munt alleen maar voor iemand anders gebruikt kan worden, en nooit voor jezelf. Het meisje van mijn dromen is daarom voor jou, omdat je altijd zo'n goede broer voor mij bent geweest en mij altijd alles wilde geven. Alleen jouw geluk zal mijn hoofdpijn kunnen genezen.'

Wilhelmus viel zijn broer in zijn armen. 'Ik kan dat echt niet aannemen, broer,' zei hij. 'Laten we de munt gebruiken om de dromen van de armen waar te maken.'

'Ik weet niet of ik de armen wel kan vertrouwen met zo'n munt,' zei de broer van Wilhelmus. 'Wat als de munt weer in verkeerde handen valt, dan wordt alles alleen maar erger. Alleen jou vertrouw ik, omdat je een goed mens bent.'

'Maar de tovermunt komt toch altijd bij de bezitter terug ?' vroeg Wilhelmus.

'Ik moet je nog wat opbiechten,' zei de broer van Wilhelmus. 'Oma zei er ook nog iets anders bij. Er ligt ook een brief in de kluis van degene die de munt ooit heeft gemaakt.'

'Gaat dat duidelijkheid geven ?' vroeg Wilhelmus.

'Nee, hoofdpijn,' zei de broer van Wilhelmus. 'Het zou geschreven zijn in een taal die niemand kent, met belangrijke informatie over de munt en over het gebruik van de munt. We tasten dus in het duister, en ik ben voorzichtig.'

'Misschien moeten we het dan maar de tijd geven,' zei Wilhelmus. 'Misschien kunnen we de brief wel ontcijferen.'

'Oma zei dat het grote hoofdpijn zou geven,' zei de broer van Wilhelmus. 'Die brief valt niet zomaar te ontcijferen.'

'En we hebben al zoveel hoofdpijn,' zei Wilhelmus.

'Precies,' zei de broer van Wilhelmus. 'Het is een mijnenveld, dus we kunnen beter wachten op instructies.'

'Ja, maar dan kun je misschien wachten totdat je een ons weegt,' zei Wilhelmus.

'Nee, oma zei dat de tovermunt voor zichzelf zou zorgen,' zei de broer van Wilhelmus. 'De tovermunt kent de weg.'

'Wat heeft oma nog meer gezegd ?' vroeg Wilhelmus.

'Dat de tovermunt eens oma en opa bij elkaar bracht en hen beschermde,' zei de broer van Wilhelmus.

'Tovermunt of geen tovermunt,' zei Wilhelmus toen. 'Je weet dat ik een echte meisjesgek ben, en dat ik ze verzamel als stickers, en er stad en land voor afzoek, ook voor jou. Ik ga mijn geluk weer beproeven, door mijn eigen vaardigheid en ervaring.'

Maar toen hij richting de deur liep begon hij al te puffen en te zuchten. 'Bah, veel teveel hoofdpijn,' zei hij.

'De tovermunt kan alleen voor iemand anders gebruikt worden, nooit voor jezelf,' zei de broer van Wilhelmus.

'Ik weet het,' zei Wilhelmus, 'maar ik ben een meisjesgek in hart en nieren. Ook al heb ik nu teveel hoofdpijn voor ze, ik zal altijd van ze blijven dromen.'

De broer van Wilhelmus glimlachte. 'Droom jij maar van je meisjes, mijn kleine broer. Ik droom van de tovermunt. Je moet nog veel leren.'

'Je hebt gelijk, broer,' zei Wilhelmus. 'Ik geef toe dat ik meisjesziek ben. Het is een ziekte. Misschien kan de tovermunt me genezen.'

'De tovermunt is voor jou, Wilhelmus,' zei de broer van Wilhelmus, 'hoe vaak moet ik je dat nog duidelijk maken ? Ik kan het alleen voor anderen gebruiken, en ik heb jou uitgekozen. Je hebt het over de armen die geholpen moeten worden, maar eerst moet jezelf geholpen worden, anders kunnen we de armen niet eens helpen.'

'Je hebt gelijk, broer,' zei Wilhelmus. 'Bedankt voor je wijsheid.'

Onmiddelijk na die woorden werd er gebeld. Het was het nieuwe buurmeisje. Ze werd binnengelaten en keek de beide jongens aan. 'Jullie zien eruit alsof jullie een tovermunt hebben ingeslikt. Jullie stralen gewoon,' zei het meisje lachend.

'Ha, meisje van mijn dromen,' zei de broer van Wilhelmus blij.

'Ik heb je nog nooit zo blij gezien,' zei het nieuwe buurmeisje. 'Dat doet me goed.'

'Zeg, meisje van mijn dromen,' zei de broer van Wilhelmus. 'Ik heb jou gedroomd voor mijn broer, Wilhelmus. Misschien kun jij hem van zijn meisjesgekte afhelpen ? Dan kunnen jullie samen de armen helpen.'

'Ik zou nooit nee zeggen tegen de buurjongens van mijn dromen,' zei het buurmeisje lachend. 'Jullie zijn beiden goud. Straks komt mijn zus thuis, en die zou ook graag haar dromen zien uitkomen,' terwijl ze knipoogde naar de broer van Wilhelmus.

'Nee, nee, niet je zus,' zei de broer van Wilhelmus. 'Laten we die er alsjeblieft buiten houden. Ik krijg al hoofdpijn als ik eraan denk. Die praat me altijd de oren van het hoofd. Ik denk er eerder aan

de tovermunt tegen haar in te zetten.'

'Goed, goed,' lachte het nieuwe buurmeisje. 'Ik geef je geen ongelijk.'

De broer van Wilhelmus had geen tijd voor meisjes, maar alleen maar voor de tovermunt.

Einde

De Verborgen Wereld

Hij woonde dichtbij een natuurmeer. Hij vond het daar prachtig. Hij ging er vaak zwemmen, maar er werd allerlei troep in het water gegooid, ook glas. Op een dag was hij met zijn vriendjes aan het spelen in het water, en stapte hij in een stuk scherp glas wat op de bodem lag, waardoor zijn voet helemaal werd opengescheurd. Zijn vriendjes moesten hem toen naar huis brengen en er moest een dokter komen. Hij bloedde hevig. Zijn ouders waren in grote paniek. Hij voelde zich erg duizelig, en raakte even later bewusteloos. Hij werd meegenomen naar een ziekenhuis in de buurt. Het ziekenhuis lag ook in natuurgebied. Toen hij weer bijkwam was zijn bed omgeven met familie leden en wat vriendjes. Ook een vriendinnetje kwam even later. Ze hadden het allemaal erg met hem te doen. Hij had een vreemd gevoel in zijn voet, wat door zijn lichaam heengleed. Hij voelde zich zacht. De wond zou wel weer herstellen, zeiden ze. Hij moest voorzichtig doen met lopen.

Hij voelde zich vreemd sinds hij het ongeluk had gehad, altijd licht in zijn hoofd. Op een dag moest hij naar een centrum toe voor verder onderzoek van zijn voet. Het bleek dat er een belangrijke zenuw was geraakt en aangetast. De genezing duurde langer dan ze hadden verwacht. Hoe dan ook wilde hij terug naar het natuurstrand. Hij zou dit keer gewoon op het strand blijven. Hij voelde er ook voor om een boswandeling te maken, maar moest voorzichtig zijn met zijn voet. Alles had hem voorzichtiger gemaakt, ook in zijn spreken.

Nadat hij op het natuurstrand was geweest ging hij een boswandeling maken met een vriendinnetje. Ze gingen heel diep in het bos. Ze was hem allerlei verhalen aan het vertellen. Er was ook een hele diepe en grote kuil in het bos waar ze ingingen. 'Ik zou wel aan lianen willen slingeren,' zei hij tegen het vriendinnetje, 'van boom naar boom.'

Toen ze weer thuis waren had hij er een goed gevoel van overgehouden, een echt bosgevoel. Er was een vreemde kracht in zijn voet. In zijn onderbroek rende hij naar buiten en ging weer het bos in. Hij wilde een wilde zijn. Hij rende zo diep in het bos als hij kon. Hij kwam daar een vrouw tegen die op een wilde leek. Ze duwde hem in de modder. Hij probeerde weg te rennen, maar een vreemde kracht in zijn voet hield hem tegen. Hij keek naar haar, en toen nog eens. 'Wie bent u ?' vroeg hij. 'Het lijkt alsof ik u ergens van ken.'

'Nee hoor,' zei de vrouw.

'Maar wie bent u dan, en waar komt u vandaan ?' vroeg hij, terwijl hij helemaal onder de modder was.

'Ik woon onder de grond,' zei de vrouw. 'Daar is een verborgen wereld.'

'Laat eens zien ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Volg mij,' zei de vrouw. Ze moesten in een diepe kuil. Plotseling hield de vrouw hem tegen. 'Hier kunnen we niet verder,' zei ze.

'Waarom niet ?' vroeg hij.

Ze nam modder en gooide het naar hem, en probeerde hem toen weer op de grond te duwen. Hij rende weer weg, maar de vreemde kracht in zijn voet hield hem weer tegen. Hij rolde over de grond en schreeuwde. Maar er kwam geen normaal woord uit zijn mond. Hij schreeuwde in een vreemde taal. Hij stond op, en begon de vrouw uit te foeteren. 'We moeten een meertje in,' zei de vrouw.

'Zeker waar weer scherp spul ligt op de bodem en ik mijn voeten weer openhaal,' zei hij.

'Nee,' zei de vrouw, 'het is een bosmeer waar nooit iemand komt.'

Toen leidde ze hem naar het meer, waar ze gingen zwemmen. 'En wat nu ?' vroeg hij.

'Dat zul je wel zien,' zei de vrouw.

Plotseling greep een hoge golf hen en trok hen in de diepte. Op de bodem werd een luik geopend, en ze werden beiden naar binnen genomen. Een woeste man staarde hen aan. Hij had een grote baard en een knots. Het luik ging weer dicht en er was bijna geen water, alleen maar wat natte modder. Ze waren nu onder het meer. De man had ook een fakkel bij zich. Toen leidde hij ze door lange ondergrondse tunnels die steeds dieper gingen.

De jongen schrok plotseling wakker in zijn ziekenhuisbed. Zijn voet was in het verband. 'Ik wil weer terug naar de verborgen wereld,' stamelde de jongen. Hij ging het ziekenhuisbed uit en strompelde naar de deur. Toen liep hij naar buiten, op weg naar het natuurmeer. 'Kom terug !' riep iemand achter hem. Maar hij begon harder en harder te rennen, totdat hij bij het natuurmeer was aangekomen, en liep erin, hopend dat hij weer op een stuk glas zou trappen. Aan de waterkant riep een verpleegster. 'Kom terug ! Je bent zwaar gewond !'

'Ik wil terug naar de verborgen wereld onder de grond !' riep hij. Hij liep dieper en dieper het natuurmeer in. Hij had alleen een onderbroek aan. Hij hoorde de verpleegster achter hem roepen, die inmiddels in het water was gegaan. Ze zwom achter hem aan, totdat ze hem eindelijk had gegrepen. Dichtbij zijn oor zei ze toen : 'Ben je gek geworden ?'

Ze sleurde hem mee het water uit. 'Je bent levensgevaarlijk voor jezelf,' zei ze. In het ziekenhuis pleegde ze een telefoontje, en al snel kwam er een busje.

'Waar ga ik naartoe ?' vroeg de jongen. 'Ik wil naar het glas, het scherpe glas. Ik wil terug naar de verborgen wereld.'

'Daar ga je nu naartoe naar die verborgen wereld,' zei de verpleegster.

Ze namen hem mee achter glas. Hier zou hij veilig zijn. Het was een streng bewaakte plaats. Je moet eerst beter worden, zeiden ze tegen hem.

'Mmmm, de verborgen wereld,' zei hij.

Einde

Kraak en het Spook Mysterie

Kraak was in zijn bootje op een bosrivier diep in het bos. Hij keek naar de oevers en voelde zich een beetje duizelig. Alles draaide voor zijn ogen. Hij nam wat te drinken uit een kruikje wat hij had meegenomen, en voelde zichzelf toen weer wat beter. 'Dat doet een bosmannetje goed,' sprak hij tot zichzelf. Toen deed hij de kurk weer op het kruikje.

Het bootje had een hele tijd lopen wiebelen. Misschien was hij daardoor duizelig geworden. Misschien was hij een beetje rivierziek, maar nu voelde hij zich weer wat beter. Hij peddelde naar de oever toe en stapte aan land. Dichtbij stond een boompje waaraan mutsjes groeiden.

'Ach, wat moet ik met mutsjes,' bromde hij. 'Zo koud is het hier echt niet.'

Opeens kwam er een mannetje van achter de mutsjesboom tevoorschijn. 'Een hoedje dan, beste man ?' vroeg het mannetje, die toen een heleboel verschillende hoedjes liet zien, kleine hoedjes, die hij gewoon uit zijn mouw schudde en uit zijn eigen hoed haalde. Hoe kwam dat mannetje aan zoveel hoeden ?

'Eh, nee,' zei Kraak. 'Ik heb wel andere dingen te doen vandaag.'

'Ach toe nou,' zei het mannetje. 'Ik verkoop hoedjes en mutsjes en heb er vandaag nog niet één verkocht.'

'Ik heb er geen tijd voor, en geen zin aan ook,' zei Kraak.

Het mannetje versperde hem de weg. 'Je komt er niet door zonder hoedje, beste kerel. Dit is mijn gebied,' snauwde het mannetje.

'Ik moet je teleurstellen,' zei Kraak, die het mannetje opzij probeerde te duwen, maar het mannetje werd alleen maar aggressiever. 'Een beetje op je manieren passen, hè, snater,' foeterde het mannetje.

'Ga nu weg,' zei Kraak, 'anders zal ik je een mep verkopen.'

'Jij gaat hier niets verkopen,' tierde het boze mannetje. 'Ik ben de verkoper hier, en ik verkoop hoedjes, en daarmee basta, brutale vlegel.' Het mannetje begon aan de kleren van Kraak te trekken.

'Wat wil je ?' bromde Kraak, en gaf het boze mannetje een mep.

'Au !' krijste het mannetje met een vuurrood gezicht. 'Weet je dat niet, weet je dat echt niet ?'

'Ja, hoedjes verkopen,' sprak Kraak, die hem weer een mep wilde geven.

'Mispoes,' gilde het mannetje. 'Begrijp je het dan niet ? Ik wil jou een huisje verkopen. Dat hoedje is nog maar het begin.'

'Geen sprake van,' sprak Kraak geirriteerd. 'Laat me er nu door.' Het mannetje had weer wat afstand genomen, maar stond alweer klaar om opnieuw toe te springen. Tot de grote schrik van Kraak kwamen er toen van alle kanten precies dezelfde mannetjes op hem af. Ze hadden allemaal een heleboel hoedjes bij zich en wilden hem ook een huis verkopen. Dat ging gedwongen. Kraak werd omsingeld en van achteren aangevallen. Toen bonden de mannetjes hem vast en trokken hem verder het bos in.

'Wat heeft dit te betekenen ?' bromde Kraak die niet veel meer kon doen.

'Zou je dat niet weten ? Zou je dat niet weten ?' gromde één van de mannetjes. 'Het is een overval, en nogal een grote. Jij bent op ons gebied, dus jij moet dingen van ons kopen.'

'Ik moet helemaal niks kopen,' sprak Kraak.

'Jawel, wijsneus,' sprak één van de mannetjes. 'Dat doe je wel.'

'Ik heb toch geen geld bij me,' sprak Kraak.

'Geld hoeven we niet. Je kunt voor ons werken,' snauwde één van de mannetjes. En toen begonnen ze allemaal door elkaar heen te praten. Toen werd hij een huisje ingeduwd en hij moest taartjes en toetjes eten.

'Ik heb geen honger !' brulde Kraak die nu echt boos was geworden. Maar de mannetjes bleven hem voeren. Kraak moest eten totdat hij misselijk was. Toen werd hij in een kooi gezet.

Twee mannetjes moesten zijn kooi bewaken. De ene heette Knip, en de andere heette Knol. De volgende dag moest hij weer zoveel eten, maar daarna lieten ze hem met rust.

Na een lange tijd kwamen Knip en Knol terug. Knol haalde zijn hoedje van zijn hoofd af en maakte een buiging voor Kraak. 'Beste klant,' zei hij deftig. 'Ik ben ervan overtuigd dat u van ons wel een hoedje of een huisje zou willen kopen, nietwaar ?'

Kraak wist dat hij het maar beter kon meespelen, anders zou hij weer zoveel moeten eten of misschien zouden er dan nog ergere dingen gebeuren. 'Oh, ja, maar natuurlijk,' sprak hij. 'Ik zou al uw hoedjes en huisjes wel willen kopen.'

'Nu, ja, dat is wel een beetje overdreven,' sprak Knol, 'maar de klant is koning. Kies maar een hoedje uit, en daarna kunt u een huisje uitkiezen. Daar werkt u dan voor en dan is het af.'

'Af ?' vroeg Kraak. 'En hoelang moet ik voor een hoed en een huisje werken ?'

'Je hele leven natuurlijk,' grapte Knol.

Kraak werd vuurrood, maar hield zich toen in. 'Dus als ik het goed begrijp is het nooit af ?' sprak hij.

'Precies !' schaterde Knol, terwijl ook Knip begon te gniffelen. 'U werkt altijd om uw hoedje en huisje te houden.'

'Oh, dus het is huur ?' vroeg Kraak die dacht dat hij het nu goed begreep.

'Maar natuurlijk,' sprak Knol. 'Het zal nooit uw volledig bezit zijn. Alles is hier van de koning.'

'Wie is de koning ?' vroeg Kraak.

'Dat weet niemand,' sprak Knol, 'en dat is ook niet belangrijk.'

'Een onbekende koning dus,' sprak Kraak. 'En kan ik mijn hoedje ook gewoon op de schoorsteenmantel zetten ? Want ik draag liever geen hoedjes.'

'Doe ermee wat je wil,' sprak Knol, 'maar zonder hoedje kom je er niet in.'
'Waarin ?' vroeg Kraak.

'In dit bosgebied,' sprak Knol.

'Betekent dit dat ik ook gewoon kan weigeren en dan gewoon terugkwam waar ik vandaan kwam ?' vroeg Kraak.

'Natuurlijk,' sprak Knol. 'Niemand leeft hier gedwongen. Maar u wilde door ons gebied zonder u aan de regels te houden. Daarom hadden we u tegen uw zin meegenomen.'

'Aha,' sprak Kraak. 'Dat verandert de zaak. Ik wil geen van uw huisjes of hoedjes, en gewoon terug naar mijn bootje. Ik had nooit voet moeten zetten aan uw oever. Ik zal mijn reis bij deze gewoon voortzetten.'

'Zoals u wilt,' sprak Knol deftig, en samen met Knip bracht hij Kraak terug naar zijn bootje en zorgde ervoor dat alle touwen waarmee hij gebonden was waren verwijderd.

'Tot ziens maar weer,' sprak Knol.

'Ik denk het niet meer,' sprak Kraak, die haastig in zijn bootje stapte en begon voort te peddelen.

'Verder op de rivier gaan maar,' sprak hij tot zichzelf. Hij zuchtte diep. Dat was gelukkig goed afgelopen. Verderop de bosrivier was de begroeiing dichter en dichter, en was het ook veel

donkerder. Op een gegeven moment kon Kraak bijna niets meer zien, en moest met zijn bootje naar de oever. Hij stapte uit en liep het donkere bos in. Hij voelde zich verschrikkelijk duizelig. Na een tijdje komt hij aan bij een klein torentje. Hij gaat het torentje binnen en gaat op de trap naar boven. De trap eindigt in een klein torenkamertje waar een mannetje in een geruit jasje aan een tafeltje bij een openhaardvuurtje zit te lezen. 'Goedendag, mijn naam is Kraak,' sprak Kraak. Het mannetje keek op. 'Welkom,' sprak het mannetje. Toen vertelde Kraak zijn verhaal.

'Hoedjes ?' sprak het mannetje. 'Oh, de hoedenmannetjes. Ach ja, ze bewaken een grote schat, dus daarom doen ze zo.'

Nu werd Kraak wel erg nieuwsgierig. 'Wat is dat dan voor een schat ?' vroeg hij.

'Tja, dat weet ik ook niet,' zei het mannetje. 'Het is een soort apparaat dat vertelt hoe het met je gaat, en dan adviezen geeft, maar veel meer weet ik er ook niet van. Het apparaat schijnt ook nachtmerries te geven en liegt nogal veel.'

Kraak keek het mannetje met grote ogen en opgetrokken wimpers aan. 'En dat noem jij een schat ?'

'Nou ja,' zei het mannetje, 'de hoedenmannetjes schijnen het als een schat te zien. Waarom weet ik ook niet.'

'Kunnen we niet met z'n tweeen op onderzoek uitgaan daar om te zien wat die schat daadwerkelijk is ?' vroeg Kraak.

'Maar natuurlijk,' glunderde het mannetje. 'Alleen is maar alleen, en ik heb ook nog een appeltje met hen te schillen.'

'Met z'n tweeën staan we sterker,' sprak Kraak. 'Misschien kunnen we ze wel om de tuin leiden.' Het mannetje glimlachtte.

'Kom mee,' zei Kraak, 'dan gaan we met mijn bootje.'

'Wacht even,' zei het mannetje. 'We moeten eerst een plan maken, en het beste is om ze vanuit het bos te benaderen, en niet vanuit het water.'

'Wat is de naam van het apparaat ?' vroeg Kraak.
'Het is een lieg-apparaat,' sprak het mannetje. 'Het liegt over iedereen, en steekt hen tegen elkaar op, en daar worden hen die het apparaat bedienen erg rijk van.'

'Dat apparaat moet gestopt worden,' sprak Kraak.

Plotseling kwam er een apparaat binnenrijden. 'Ik heb jullie wel gehoord, hoor,' zei het apparaat. 'Een beetje roddelen over mij achter mijn rug om.'

'Moet je maar niet liegen,' zei Kraak.

'Kom toch,' zei het apparaat. 'Liegen is mijn lust en mijn leven.'

'Dan moet je een ander beroep kiezen,' zei Kraak.

'Helemaal niet,' zei het apparaat. 'Het bevalt me best, en waar bemoei jij je eigenlijk mee ? Ik heb jullie op heterdaad betrapt.'

'Wie wil nou jouw leugens horen ?' zei Kraak.

'Zovelen,' zei het apparaat, 'en zo niet, dan koop ik ze gewoon om. Ik geef ze gewoon een heleboel dingen gratis, en maak ze het hoofd dol. Ik kan ze verslaafd maken, en dan ineens vraag ik er een heleboel voor terug, zodat ik ze alles voor me kan laten doen.'

'En dreigen en chanteren doe je zeker ook als je je zin niet krijgt,' zei Kraak.

'Ik doe alles wat nodig is,' zei het apparaat, 'maar waar bemoei je je toch mee ? Ik hoef aan jou geen verantwoording af te leggen.'

'Wat kom je doen dan ?' vroeg Kraak.

'Niks mee te maken,' zei het apparaat.

Plotseling werd er hard geklopt. 'Binnen,' zei het mannetje met het geruite jasje.

Een lopend stuk steen met armen, benen en een hoofd kwam binnen.

'Wat moet jij hier nou ?' vroeg het mannetje.

'Wie is het ?' vroeg Kraak.

'Ik heb niks te doen,' zei de stenen man.

Het apparaat begon de stenen man vreemd aan te kijken en te onderzoeken. 'Wie is dat ?' vroeg het apparaat.

'Oh, een kennis,' zei het mannetje.

'Ik heb hem hier nog nooit gezien,' zei het apparaat.

'Dan heb je je werk niet goed gedaan,' zei Kraak.

De stenen man ging aan het tafeltje zitten en boog zijn hoofd.

'Ben je depressief ?' vroeg het mannetje.

'Nee,' zei de stenen man, 'gewoon moe.'

'Dat is altijd zo rond deze tijd,' zei het mannetje. 'Wel meerderen hebben daar last van.'

'Nee, ik heb gewoon te hard gewerkt,' zei de stenen man.

'Wat doe je dan ?' vroeg het mannetje.

'Och,' zei de stenen man, 'ik heb tijdenlang dit lieg-apparaat in de maling genomen, zonder dat het wist dat ik het was, en zonder dat het mij kende.'

Het lieg-apparaat begon heel kwaad te worden, en begon op de stenen man in te slaan. 'Dus jij bent degene geweest. Je bent op heterdaad betrapt,' zei het apparaat.

'Nee hoor,' zei de stenen man. 'Ik werk bij de geheime politie.'

'Dan is het geen geheim meer,' zei het apparaat.

'Jawel hoor,' zei de stenen man, die opstond, een stenen pistool trok en het richtte op het apparaat.

'Nou niet gemeen en gevaarlijk gaan doen,' zei het lieg-apparaat die direct achteruit reed.

'Zodra ik mezelf bekendmaak gaan er natuurlijk koppen rollen,' zei de stenen man, 'want het moet natuurlijk wel geheim blijven.' Toen schoot hij het apparaat aan flarden.

'Pssst, aan niemand vertellen, hè,' zei de stenen man tegen Kraak en het mannetje, en ging toen de deur uit en het trappetje van de toren af.

Kraak en het mannetje keken elkaar verbaasd aan. 'Nou ja, dat is in ieder geval netjes opgelost,' zei Kraak.

'Dat mogen we natuurlijk hopen,' zei het mannetje die naar de flarden van het apparaat keek die op de grond lagen. Snel raapte hij de flarden op en wierp ze in het openhaardvuurtje. 'Griezelige spoken,' zei het mannetje terwijl hij naar het vuurtje keek. 'Gelukkig gaan ze door de schoorsteen naar buiten.'

'Ik moet weer eens gaan,' zei Kraak. 'Ik hoop dat die spoken me verder niet lastigvallen.'

Toen Kraak die nacht in zijn bedje lag had hij nachtmerries over spoken. Hij draaide in zijn bedje. Hij had eigenlijk gehoopt dat de stenen man ook met de spoken zou afrekenen. Maar dat gebeurde niet. Kraak had er een zware dobber aan. Sinds toen werd hij elke nacht lastig gevallen door spoken. Hij probeerde er allerlei middeltjes tegen te maken, maar eigenlijk hielp niets. Hij dacht : 'Tja, wie schiet er dan ook zomaar een lieg-apparaat aan flarden. Daar komt natuurlijk gespook van. Een lieg-apparaat kon niet zomaar vernietigd worden. Daar moest veel meer voor gebeuren. Kraak moest daar hele wijze boeken voor lezen. Hij studeerde en studeerde. Hij moest de spoken te slim af zijn, net zoals de stenen man het apparaat te slim af was. In een heel dik boek werd er over een heel vreemd dansje geschreven wat Kraak zou moeten maken, en dat deed hij dan maar. Elke nacht voordat hij ging slapen deed hij het dansje, en dat hielp in ieder geval al een beetje. Maar Kraak moest veel meer studeren. Maar hoeveel hij ook studeerde, hij kwam niet van de spoken af, en op een gegeven moment werd het zo erg dat hij naar ome Dik moest, de laatste hulp bij ongelukken zoals ze hem noemden, als ieder ander middel zou falen. Ome Dik was een apparaat, een gevechts-apparaat, en het was eigenlijk een kaartenmachine, want hij gaf altijd kaartjes met advies erop. Ome Dik woonde in een huisje diep in het bos, en daar zou Kraak naartoe gaan. Kraak pakte wat spulletjes bij elkaar en ging in zijn bootje. Na een uurtje peddelen was hij eindelijk bij ome Dik aangekomen. Dat was weer een hele reis geweest. Ome Dik kwam er in de verte al aan. Ome Dik reed op wieletjes, en was blij Kraak te zien. 'Zo jongen,' zei ome Dik. 'Dat is lang geleden, hè ? Ken je me nog ?'

'Jawel, ome Dik,' zei Kraak.

Ome Dik legde een arm om de schouder van Kraak en samen gingen ze naar het huisje van ome Dik. Er groeiden hier prachtige geurende bloemetjes waar allerlei bijtjes op dansten. 'Het is gelukkig mooi weer,' zei ome Dik.

'Ja, gelukkig wel,' zei Kraak.

Toen ze binnengekomen waren keek Kraak in het rond. Dit herinnerde hij nog wel. Hij was blij ome Dik weer eens te zien, en zijn huisje. 'Zeg het eens,' zei ome Dik. 'Wat kan ik voor je doen, Kraak ?'

'Nou, ome Dik,' zei Kraak, 'moet u eens luisteren. Ik heb de laatste tijd nogal veel last van spoken. Ze geven me slapeloze nachten, en als ik dan eens slaap, dan geven ze me nachtmerries.'

'Tjonge,' zei ome Dik. 'Nou, dat is niet leuk. Hoe is dat eigenlijk gekomen ? Waar heb je die spoken ergens opgetrommeld ?'

En toen vertelde Kraak het hele verhaal over de lieg-machine.

Ome Dik begon te lachen. 'Maar jongen,' zei hij. 'Natuurlijk kun je niet zomaar zo'n machine aan flarden schieten en dan denken dat het af is. De flarden liegen door, en worden tot spoken, vooral als je ze dan ook nog eens in het openhaardvuurtje werpt. Dan worden ze woest, dan worden ze duivels, hels, en tja, dan krijg je spoken die je overal volgen.'

'Ze laten me niet meer met rust,' zei Kraak.

'Ja, jullie hebben ze woest gemaakt, hondsdol,' zei ome Dik. 'Een lieg-machine, neem dat maar van mij aan, die pak je heel anders aan. Met een kaartspel, trek maar een kaart.'

Kraak keek ome Dik even verbaasd aan. 'Trek maar een kaart, jongen,' zei ome Dik.

Voorzichtig liep Kraak op ome Dik af en aarzelde even, en drukte toen op een knop, en daar kwam een kaart uit. Kraak keek naar de enorme machine. Door het raampje zag hij hoe de kaarten binnenin nog steeds werden geschud.

'Lees het maar voor, Kraak,' zei ome Dik.

Toen las Kraak hardop : 'Op reis. We doen het allemaal wel eens. Maar pas dan goed op wat voorbijgangers allemaal aanbieden. Neem geen sigaretten van ze aan om zomaar je problemen te verbranden. Ga gewoon echt op reis, weg van iedereen, even er helemaal uit, en trek eens een kaartje van ome Dik.'

'Dat heb ik gedaan,' zei Kraak. 'En dat is goede reclame voor uw machine, ome Dik.'

'Goedzo,' zei ome Dik. 'Trek nu je tweede kaartje.'

Weer drukte Kraak op de knop, en er floepte een tweede kaartje uit.

'Lees weer hardop,' zei ome Dik.

Weer las Kraak hardop : 'Ja, haha, daar is ie weer. Ome Dik is er weer met een kaart. Dingen zomaar verbranden in een open haard is geen goed idee, maar speel eens een spelletje kaart met ome Dik, om dingen eens echt goed te verwerken. Ome Dik weet wel een oplossing, als je maar het geduld hebt om naar hem te luisteren. Kom daarom gauw bij ome Dik, en leg hem je problemen uit. Dan zal ome Dik wel laten zien hoe het hoort, en hoe je met allerlei soort gespuis deftig afrekent. Met de botte bijl alles oplossen doen we niet meer, want het lost eigenlijk niks op, en maakt dingen alleen maar erger.'

'Dat heb ik gedaan,' zei Kraak. 'Wat nu, ome Dik ?'

'Derde kaartje,' zei ome Dik.

Weer drukte Kraak op de knop en trok er een kaartje uit. De machine begon te gloeien.

Weer las Kraak hardop : 'Stop. Al is het maar voor even. Denk even na voordat je wat doet. Tel even tot tien. Ome Dik is er weer. Tijd om te luisteren. Stop even met alles waarmee je bezig bent.'

'Dat heb ik gedaan, ome Dik,' zei Kraak. 'Zeg, komt er nog wat van. Ik heb geen uren de tijd. Ik kom gewoon voor advies, en niet om allerlei dingen te horen die ik al weet, en dat de machine me vertelt wat ik al gedaan heb. Daar heb ik niks aan.'

'Trek de vierde kaart,' zei ome Dik. 'Wees toch niet zo ongeduldig, jongen. Ome Dik moet eerst opwarmen.'

'Nou, nog eentje dan,' zei Kraak, en trok een kaart.

'Wow, welkom bij ome Dik,' stond er op de kaart. 'Welkom, lieve mensen, ome Dik is er weer. Gaat u maar zitten. De show gaat zo beginnen. maak het uzelf gemakkelijk. U heeft nog wel even tijd om naar de keuken te gaan voor een lekker glaasje sap, thee of koffie. U heeft nog wel even tijd om een lekker gebakje te pakken of een bakje popcorn. Het gaat weer een geweldige show worden, met als gastheer niemand minder dan ome Dik.'

Kraak begon nu echt boos te worden. 'Daar hebben we toch allemaal niks aan, ome Dik. Dat weten we toch allemaal al ? We komen hier niet verder mee. Ik wil van mijn spoken af. Ik ga geen kaartjes meer trekken, want het leidt nergens toe. Alleen maar een hoop onzin en gepraat. Allemaal advertenties.'

'Je hebt geen geduld, Kraak,' zei ome Dik. 'Je bent maar een opvliegerig mannetje. Kletsen is alles wat je kunt, maar luisteren ? Ho maar. Ik heb het met je gehad, Kraak. Je bent van de show weggelopen, terwijl de show nog niet eens was begonnen. Zo maakt ome Dik geen kaartjes. Zo doet ome Dik geen zaken.'

Kraak werd toen zo boos dat hij de machine een mep gaf. Boos liep Kraak toen het huisje uit.

'Succes met je spoken !' riep ome Dik hem na.

'U bent het ergste spook !' riep Kraak. Maar toen hij weer bijna bij zijn bootje was aangekomen kreeg hij spijt hoe hij ome Dik had behandeld en ging weer terug.

'Het spijt me, ome Dik,' zei Kraak. 'Ik weet dat u gelijk hebt. Ik ben te opvliegerig. Kunt u daar misschien ook wat aan doen ? Ik zal me dit keer proberen beter te gedragen.'

'Trek maar een kaartje,' zei ome Dik.

Kraak drukte op de knop, maar er kwam geen kaartje uit, maar koffie prut. Dat spoot gewoon op Kraak's broek. 'Ik heb het verdiend,' zei Kraak. Kraak drukte weer op de knop, en toen spoot er sinaasappelsap uit, ook op zijn broek. 'Bah !' riep Kraak, 'maar ik heb het verdiend.' Weer drukte Kraak op de knop, en daar vloog eindelijk een kaartje uit, maar het vloog door de hele kamer. Kraak moest er toen van alles aan doen om het kaartje te vangen. Toen hem dat eindelijk lukte en hij het kaartje in zijn hand had kon hij het kaartje niet lezen. De letters waren heel onduidelijk en vaag.

'Ik kan het niet lezen, ome Dik,' zei Kraak.

'Nee,' zei ome Dik. 'Het is de wraak van de kaarten over hoe je hen behandeld hebt. Ze zijn flink boos.'

'Toe nou, ome Dik,' zei Kraak. 'Ik heb me verontschuldigd.'

'Ik kan het niet helpen, Kraak,' zei ome Dik.

'Wat moet ik nu doen ?' vroeg Kraak.

'Wachten totdat ze afgekoeld zijn,' zei ome Dik.

Kraak wachtte en wachtte. Hij wachtte wel een uur. Toen kwam er eindelijk vanzelf een kaartje uit. 'Spoken, hè ?' stond er op het kaartje. 'Los het zelf maar op.'

'Ze zijn nog steeds boos, ome Dik,' zei Kraak, 'die kaartjes.'

'Tja, jongen,' zei ome Dik. 'Je hebt ze goed boos gemaakt. Kom anders morgen bij me terug en probeer het opnieuw. Laten we er een nachtje over slapen.'

'Kan ik hier logeren ?' vroeg Kraak.

'Maar natuurlijk, jongen,' zei ome Dik.

En zo bleef Kraak die nacht bij ome Dik logeren. De volgende ochtend was hij al vroeg op, en ook ome Dik. 'Druk maar op het knopje, Kraak,' zei ome Dik.

Kraak drukte erop, maar er droop alleen maar koffieprut uit de machine.

'Volgens mij is de machine, kapot,' zei ome Dik. 'Dan moeten we naar tante Helmes.'

'Wie is dat ?' vroeg Kraak.

'Oh, die woont dieper in het bos, nog dieper dan ikzelf, en die herstelt apparaten,' zei ome Dik.

En zo gingen Kraak en ome Dik samen nog dieper het bos in die dag, in Kraak's bootje, om naar tante Helmes te gaan. Het was wel een uur peddelen. Helemaal vermoeid kwamen ze aan bij het huisje van tante Helmes die aan de oever van de bosrivier woonde. Ze kwam direct naar buiten rennen. 'Ik zie het al, ik zie het al !' riep ze. 'Spoken hebben je apparaat in bezit genomen.' Ze trok hen direct mee naar haar huisje. Ze haalde ook direct een verband trommel erbij.

'Verband ?' vroeg Kraak verbaasd. 'Gebruik je dat voor kapotte apparaten ?'

'Ja, ja,' zei tante Helmes, 'maar het is speciaal verband.'

'Hoe gaat dat dan, tante Helmes ?' vroeg Kraak.

Tante Helmes begon de machine helemaal te omwikkelen met verband.

'Het lijkt wel een mummie zo,' zei Kraak.

Toen haalde ze er allerlei injectie spuiten bij en begon het apparaat te injecteren.

'Eng hoor,' zei Kraak. 'Met die spuiten.'

'Welnee,' zei tante Helmes. 'Daar knapt hij van op.'

'Het zal allemaal wel,' zei Kraak. 'Ik heb er geen verstand van.'

Na een tijdje haalde ze het verband eraf. Toen drukte ze op het knopje en er floepte een kaart uit.

Hardop las ze : 'Welkom. Je bent net op tijd. Het kaartspel gaat zo beginnen. Neem allen plaats en zeg wat uw probeem is, en we gaan aan de gang.'

'Ach,' zei tante Helmes. 'Volgens mij is er veel meer aan de hand. De kaartenbak van de machine is oud. Met dit soort kaarten kun je niet veel en jaag je iedereen alleen maar weg.'

'Dat zei ik hem al,' zei Kraak, 'maar hij wilde niet luisteren.'

'Er moet een nieuw kaartensysteem in,' zei tante Helmes. Ze schroefde de machine open, trok het deurtje open, en haalde de kaartenbak eruit, en verving het met een nieuw kaartensysteem. Het nieuwe kaartensysteem glimde heel mooi, en er zaten veel meer kaarten in. Toen deed tante Helmes het deurtje weer dicht en schroefde de machine weer vast.

Toen drukte ze op het knopje. Direct floepte er een kaartje uit. 'Lees maar, Kraak,' zei ze.

Kraak las toen hardop : 'Wawoetsedipan akoemoedoetsi Santanio Palero Kri Krak De Dik Makus, Ha Ha.'

Ome Dik werd woest. 'Die taal ken ik niet ! Je hebt mijn machine verprutst !'

'Nee,' zei tante Helmus. 'Nee, nee, hij moet nog opstarten.'

'Trek weer een kaartje, Kraak,' gromde ome Dik.

Kraak drukte op de knop, maar toen ontplofte de hele machine. Kraak schrok. Ook tante Helmes schrok. 'Ik denk dat hij gewoon te oud was, Kraak,' zei tante Helmes. 'De hele machine moet vervangen worden, en niet alleen maar het kaartensysteem.' En zo werkte tante Helmes uren na uren om alle onderdelen van de machine te vervangen. Het werd een geheel nieuwe ome Dik. 'Waar zijn de spoken ?' gromde ome Dik.

'Ik heb sinds ik bij jullie ben geen last meer van spoken gehad,' zei Kraak.

'Het is oorlog,' gromde ome Dik. 'Het ergste spook is het spook van ongeduld.'

Ome Dik had nu veel meer knoppen, en tante Helmes begon ze in te drukken. Ome Dik begon steeds meer op hol te slaan en begon woest om zich heen te slaan. 'Waar zijn de spoken ?' gromde hij weer. 'Ook een erg spook is het spook van de roekeloosheid.'

'Ga dan even rustig zitten,' zei tante Helmes.

'Ik ga niks rustig,' gromde ome Dik. 'Ik ben op oorlogspad.'

Maar ome Dik werd steeds woester en woester. Het werd zo erg dat zowel Kraak als tante Helmes op de vlucht moesten slaan. 'Snel, naar mijn bootje !' riep Kraak.

'Hij slaat totaal op hol !' riep tante Helmes. 'Hij is een woesteling.'

Kraak en tante Helmes gingen vlug het bootje in, en Kraak begon hard te peddelen. 'Laten we maar naar mijn huis gaan,' zei Kraak tegen tante Helmes. 'Wat is er eigenlijk met ome Dik aan de hand ?'

'Ik weet het niet,' zei tante Helmes. 'Hij is ergens door op tilt geslagen.'

'Misschien moeten we inderdaad meer geduld hebben, ook hiermee, en wachten totdat hij afgekoeld is,' zei Kraak.

'Ja, en de oorlog tegen de spoken is zwaar,' zei tante Helmes.

Kraak zuchtte. 'Ik wou dat ik kon helpen,' zei Kraak.

'Dat doe je al,' zei tante Helmes. 'Meer dan je ooit zult beseffen.'

Ze besloten er maar een nachtje over te slapen. Tante Helmes bleef bij Kraak logeren, en de ochtend daarna was er een mooie en kalme dag begonnen. Toen ze aan het ontbijt waren werd er geklopt. Het was ome Dik. Hij was inmiddels flink gekalmeerd. 'Nou, het is gebeurd, hoor,' sprak hij. 'Ik heb die spoken een flink lesje geleerd.'

'Goedzo,' zei tante Helmes. 'Je bent niet voor niets admiraal van het bosleger.'

Ome Dik glimlachte. 'Ze moeten het maar met me doen,' zei hij. Maar na een tijdje begon ome Dik weer vreemd te doen, en werd woester en woester. 'Ik denk dat het het alarm is,' zei tante Helmes.

'Ik voel me niet goed,' zei ome Dik.

'Ja, misschien het spook alarm,' zei Kraak.

'Waar zijn die spoken ?' gromde ome Dik.

'Ze zijn vaak onzichtbaar, dus ze kunnen overal wel zitten,' zei Kraak.

'Ik haat ze, die spoken,' zei ome Dik.

'Lees eens een goed boek,' zei tante Helmes. 'Er is nu ook een knop voor boeken bijgekomen.'

'Echt waar ?' vroeg ome Dik.

'Ja, hier,' zei tante Helmes, terwijl ze één van de knoppen van het apparaat indrukte. Toen viel er zo een boek uit. Ome Dik raapte het op, en begon direct te lezen. Hij las en las en stopte niet meer, en ging er zelfs voor naar het speciale leeskamertje in het huis van Kraak.

'Goedzo,' zei tante Helmes. 'Dat heeft hem flink gekalmeerd en nu is hij zoet.'

'Gelukkig maar,' zei Kraak.

Tegen de avond kwam ome Dik helemaal blij uit de leeskamer. 'Ik heb zulke mooie dingen gelezen,'

zei hij. 'Dat zouden jullie ook eens moeten doen.' En zo gingen ze alle drie de rest van de avond, en zelfs een stukje van de nacht, lezen. En van spoken hadden ze toen nog maar weinig last. Soms als ze dan nog eens een probleem hadden, dan gingen ze gewoon naar ome Dik, en dan drukten ze op de boekenknop voor een nieuw boek, wat hen leerde hoe met het probleem om te gaan en hoe het probleem op te lossen. Vaak waren ze na het lezen van het boek het probleem alweer vergeten.

Op een dag kwam ome Dik hen beiden ophalen met zijn nieuwe schip, en hij liet hen alle mooie plekjes van het bos zien waar ze nog nooit waren geweest, en toen gingen ze over de bosrivier helemaal naar de zee toe. Dat vond Kraak zo mooi dat hij er sinds toen hele mooie dromen over had. Ze beleefden zo een heleboel mooie avonturen, die ook in de boeken van ome Dik kwamen te staan. Iedereen kon bij ome Dik terecht voor advies. En vaak had hij ze dan ook een heel mooi boek te geven. Zo werd ome Dik een hele geliefde en hele beroemde admiraal van het bos, en Kraak was natuurlijk zijn beste vriend. Vaak gingen ze naar tante Helmes, de apparaten dokter, die vaak aan ome Dik sleutelde om hem nog beter te maken. Vandaar dat tante Helmes en ome Dik ook uiteindelijk met elkaar getrouwd zijn. Ook Kraak ging naar het huwelijksfeest in het bos. Het was een mooie dag, en er stond een hele hoge taart waar iedereen een stukje van kreeg.

Einde

De Poppenmakers

De poppenmakers waren lange insecten die hun slachtoffers injecteerden met gif door hun lange dunne angels als naalden, waardoor hun slachtoffers helemaal verstijfden en als poppen leefden voor de rest van hun leven. Daarom waren deze insecten genoemd 'de poppenmakers'. Het was een buitenaards ras, en ze konden ook in menselijke vorm verschijnen. Ze hadden vele kolonies gemaakt waarin hun poppen voor hun moesten werken als slaven. Eigenlijk veranderde alles met de komst van admiraal van Putten, hun grote vijand. Het was een man met een brede grijns die zich niet liet afschrikken of weg liet jagen door de poppenmakers. Hij kreeg die grijns omdat hij jarenlang in een diepe donkere put was opgesloten, maar toen hij eindelijk eruit ontsnapte en het daglicht zag had hij een brede grijns, en die is eigenlijk nooit meer weggegaan. Hij zag het als zijn levenstaak toen om vele anderen die in putten opgesloten werden gehouden te bevrijden, en zo bouwde hij zijn vloot. Hij leefde veelal totaal op het water, op zijn schepen. Hij was de schrik van de Baarse kust. Hij kwam zelf ook uit het Baarse gebied. Met een grote vloot van Baarsen heeft hij toen de kolonies van de poppenmakers overgenomen, en hij maakte de poppenmakers tot de roeiers van zijn galeischepen. Zo hadden ze geen tijd meer om poppen te maken. Als de poppenmakers dan hun straf als roeiers hadden uitgezeten, dan werden ze veelal aan de octopi en waterspinnen gevoed. Die waren erg groot. Admiraal van Putten werd zo een beroemde zeeheld die met de poppenmakers had afgerekend. Maar op een dag was er een grote storm op zee, zo groot dat de gehele vloot van admiraal van Putten met man en muis verging. Admiraal van Putten overleefde echter de schipbreuk, en spoelde aan op een geheimzinnig eiland wat hij niet kende. Aan de kust van het eiland waren overal zeemeerminnen, die admiraal van Putten nog nooit in het echt had gezien. Hij

had er alleen maar van gehoord in verhalen. De zeemeerminnen begonnen hem de wonderlijkste en mooiste verhalen te vertellen. Ze brachten hem toen naar een grot waar een oude vrouw woonde. 'Oh, die poppenmakers,' zei de vrouw toen ze van admiraal van Putten over ze hoorde. 'Zij zijn ook degenen die de storm hebben gebracht, als wraak, maar hier op het eiland van de zeemeerminnen ben je veilig. Ik heb ze gestuurd.'

'Wie bent u dan ?' vroeg admiraal van Putten.

'Je bent verdronken, lieve man,' zei de vrouw.

'Dus ik heb de schipbreuk eigenlijk helemaal niet overleefd ?' vroeg de admiraal verbaasd.

'Nee,' zei de vrouw, 'dat leek maar zo, maar je bent nu hier, in een andere wereld.'

'Wonderlijk,' zei de admiraal, 'hemels. Maar wie bent u ?'

'Ik ben wie ik ben,' zei de vrouw.

'En wie is dat ?' vroeg de admiraal.

'Zo word ik genoemd,' zei de vrouw. 'Het is mijn naam.'

'Wonderlijk,' zei de admiraal. 'Dus uiteindelijk hebben de poppenmakers me toch weer te pakken gehad ?'

'Door die storm ?' zei de vrouw. 'Oh ja, zeer zeker. Ze hadden je goed beet, maar zij zijn zelf ook in die storm vergaan.'

'En wat nu ?' vroeg de admiraal.

'Kunnen we even ter zake komen ?' vroeg de vrouw. 'Er ligt een opdracht voor jou.'

'En dat is ?' vroeg de admiraal.

'De poppenmakers zijn ook in deze wereld,' zei de vrouw.

'Wat kunnen we eraan doen ?' vroeg de admiraal.

'Kom mee,' zei de vrouw, 'dan laat ik het je zien.'

Ze leidde hem tot een zaaltje. Er zat daar een oude man aan een tafel.

'Jachma,' zei de vrouw. 'Hij is gekomen.'

'Gaat u zitten,' zei de oude man. De admiraal ging tegenover de oude man zitten.

'Ken jij de vierde stem ?' vroeg de oude man. Hij pakte een muziek doos en opende het. Er was eerst één stem, toen kwam er een tweede bij, toen een derde, en daarna een vierde. 'Het is zeemeerminse muziek,' zei de oude man.

'Wonderlijk,' zei de admiraal. De vierde stem begon toen steeds meer in een fluit te veranderen. Het ging door de hele muziek heen, draaide om alles heen. Het werd steeds wonderlijker en

wonderlijker.

'Dat zulke dingen bestaan !' riep de admiraal uit.

Toen veranderde de fluit weer in een stem en begon allerlei verhalen te vertellen.

'De vierde stem,' zei de oude man toen de muziekdoos was uitgespeeld.

'Wonderlijk, wonderlijk,' zei de admiraal.

'Ik kan het je geven, in ruil voor je leven,' zei de oude man.

'Maar ik ben al dood,' zei de admiraal lachend, 'hartstikke dood, verdronken.'

'Nee,' zei de oude man, 'je leeft. Ik zie leven.'

'Ja, hier,' zei de admiraal. 'Waarom wilt u het laatste wat ik nog heb me ook afnemen ?'

'Je begrijpt het niet,' zei de man. 'De vierde stem is de steen van leven, het ware leven, waarvoor je je oude leven moet inleveren. Zo kan het vervangen worden.'

'Aha,' zei de admiraal die het eindelijk begreep. 'En hoe gaat dat precies ?'

'Volg de toverfluit,' zei de oude man. Plotseling verscheen er een toverfluit voor de admiraal en begon weer te spelen. De admiraal stond op, en volgde de fluit die naar een trap ging wat naar een gang leidde over een balkon, en dat leidde weer tot een deur. 'Vele kamers,' zei de toverfluit die toen de deur opende. Het was een lange gang met allemaal deuren aan weerszijden.

De admiraal volgde de toverfluit door de gang. 'Kies een kamer uit,' zei de toverfluit.

'Welke moet ik kiezen ?' vroeg de admiraal.

'Maakt niet uit,' zei de toverfluit. 'Ze zijn allemaal hetzelfde.'

De admiraal opende een deur en keek recht in een zee, en een golf sloeg naar binnen.

'Wonderlijk,' zei de admiraal.

'Een nieuwe wereld,' zei de toverfluit. 'Het is de wereld van de vierde stem. Die is voor nuance.'

'Aha,' zei de admiraal. Plotseling duwde de toverfluit hem naar binnen en hij viel over het randje van de deur drempel de zee in. 'Help !' riep de admiraal. 'Hey wat ? Ik kan vliegen !'

'Ha ha ha !' lachte de admiraal. 'De vierde stem heeft mij laten vliegen.' Ook de toverfluit vloog daar. 'Volg mij altijd,' zei de toverfluit, als het volgen van je hart, van nuance. 'Ik ben de vierde stem, en het laat je inderdaad vliegen en overal bovenuit stijgen. Dat is de enige manier om van de poppenmakers los te komen.'

Samen met de toverfluit vloog de admiraal naar een eiland in de zee. Het was een heel tropisch eiland, en het water was daar zo helder dat je dwars door alles heen kon kijken.

'Wonderlijk,' sprak de admiraal.

'Probeer het zelf nu eens,' zei de toverfluit.

'Wat ?' vroeg de admiraal.

'De vierde stem te zingen,' zei de toverfluit. Ze hoorden muziek en drie stemmen, en toen zong de admiraal de vierde stem.

'Zie,' zei de toverfluit, 'je kunt het best.'

Op het eiland lagen allemaal wonderlijke stenen die allemaal hun eigen stem hadden. Sommigen hadden een hele zachte stem, en anderen hele harden. De admiraal was in grote verwondering, en staarde naar de stenen, hield ze in zijn hand, en hij kon nieuwe werelden zien in de stenen. Ze waren zo doorzichtig.

'Wonderlijk !' riep de admiraal telkens, 'wonderlijk !'

Een steen met een hele prachtige zachte, diep doordringende stem zei : 'De steken van de poppenmakers brachten je hier, want hoe dieper ze steken, des te dieper je ontwaakt tot deze geheime, verborgen werelden.'

'Wonderlijk,' zei de admiraal, 'dus eigenlijk is het iets heel medicinaals ?'

'Uiteindelijk wel,' zei de zachte steen, 'maar eerst sterf je aan jezelf, want eerst moet je uit de valse schelp van je ego.'

'Maar alles wat ik zag was dat ze mensen tot poppen maakten, tot hun slaven,' zei de admiraal.

'Dat is alleen in de buitenwereld zo, in de oppervlakkige wereld,' zei de zachte steen, 'maar zij die diep genoeg gestoken zijn gaan van binnen leven, en komen tot onze werelden. En daarom is het zo dat een poppenmaker die te diep heeft gestoken zelf hierdoor sterft en wordt vernietigd, want zij zullen nooit tot onze werelden komen.'

Einde

Doosje met
Geheimen

Met zijn voet was hij getrapt in een stuk glas wat op de bodem lag van het natuurmeer. Als troost mocht hij logeren bij zijn oud-tante, samen met zijn broertje. Maar er woonde een heel vervelend meisje bij zijn oud-tante in de flat die hem altijd plaagde. Ondanks dat had hij het reuze naar zijn zin bij zijn oud-tante, en vooral de lift van het flatgebouw vond hij heel interessant. Op een dag kwamen hij en zijn broertje vast te zitten in de lift. Zijn broertje drukte op de alarm knop. Het vervelende meisje kwam toen voor het raampje staan en riep : 'Laten we hen er maar in laten. Dan leren ze het af om telkens met de lift te spelen.' Hij was heel bang en had buikpijn. Even later kwamen er een oude vrouw en een man. De oude vrouw was erg boos, maar de man tilde hen eruit.

Bij zijn oud-tante gingen ze veel kaarten. Dan kwam er soms ook een vriendin van de oud-tante voor een avondje kaarten. Haar stopwoorden waren : 'Je zit de boel te verzieken,' als ze het aan het verliezen was, en ook zei ze telkens : 'Oh moeder, wat een piene, piene, piene.' Als de oud-tante er niet doorheen kwam met haar kaarten, dan zei ze vaak : 'Het is weer bar en boos.' Hij onthoudde deze zinnetjes voor als hij het vervelende meisje tegenkwam die hem altijd plaagde. Telkens als hij het meisje tegenkwam of aan haar dacht, was het weer net alsof hij met zijn voet in het glas trapte. Ook voelde het alsof hij in de brandnetels werd geduwd. Het was als een gemeen insect wat hem stak, dieper en dieper, maar toen de logeerpartij voorbij was en hij weer naar school moest was hij haar alweer snel vergeten. Misschien had ze dan toch niet diep genoeg gestoken, anders zouden ze beiden sterven.

Het jaar erop ging hij weer, maar ditmaal alleen. Ze was zo anders geworden, vriendelijker. Maar hij wist dat hij op zijn hoede moest zijn. Ze nodigde hem uit om naar haar kamer te komen. Heel voorzichtig stemde hij toe, om haar toch een kans te geven. Ze liet hem een souvenier zien, een vreemd ding uit een ver land. 'Niet aanraken, hoor,' zei ze.

'Wat is het ?' vroeg hij.

Ze zweeg. 'Ik kan er niet over praten,' zei ze toen.

Hij bleef maar kijken naar het ding. 'Komt het uit het bos ?' vroeg hij.

'Alsjeblieft, stop erover,' zei ze.

'Maar dan had je het me niet moeten laten zien,' zei hij.

'Ga maar weer weg,' zei ze. Ze was ineens niet meer zo vriendelijk. Toen is hij maar gegaan. Ze wilde hem klaarblijkelijk dus wat laten zien wat hij niet begreep.

Het was eigenlijk een hele vervelende opmerking van zijn oudtante die maakte dat hij er niet meer wilde komen. Het jaar erop ging hij niet meer. Hij had verder nog wel goede herinneringen aan de logeerpartijen, dus ze had niet diep genoeg gestoken, anders zouden ze beiden sterven. Ze stuurde hem zo nu en dan nog kaarten, en hij schreef ook heel soms terug. Tot zijn grote verbazing kreeg hij op een dag ook een brief van het meisje. Het was een hele geheimzinnige brief, en hij voelde een kracht die hij nog niet kende, iets heel dieps binnenin. Ze wilde dat hij voor haar zou vechten. Ze

zei dat ze een doosje had gekregen met iets erin, weer een souvenier uit een ander land, wat zo sterk zou zijn dat het heel Nederland zou kunnen veroveren. Het maakte hem heel nieuwsgierig. Hij schreef terug en vroeg wat er in het doosje zat. Ze schreef terug dat het een geheimpje was. Hij zou maar moeten komen. Met de trein ging hij naar haar toe. Ze was blij hem te zien en omhelsde hem. Op haar kamer liet ze hem het doosje zien. 'Hier, maak maar open,' zei ze. Hij nam het doosje en opende het. Er zat een briefje in waarop stond : 'Gefopt. Ik wilde je alleen maar zien.'

'Flauw hoor,' lachte hij. Ze was verder wel aardiger dan vroeger, wat volwassener geworden. Het jaar erop kwam ze bij hem logeren, en nog steeds ging alles goed. Ze besloten zelfs te trouwen. Maar tot een huwelijk is het nooit gekomen, want op een dag was ze spoorloos vermist en is nooit meer teruggevonden. Ditmaal was hij diep genoeg gestoken. Hij voelde zich van binnen sterven, en wist ook dat zij diep genoeg gestoken was dit keer om te sterven, maar wie dit op zijn geweten had en hen te diep gestoken had zou hierdoor zelf ook sterven. Alleen er was geen enkel spoor. Het was in die dagen dat hij weer besloot te logeren bij zijn oud-tante. Ze hadden inmiddels haar nare opmerking uitgepraat. Zijn oud-tante moest hem ook nog wat anders opbiechten. Ze had een afscheidsbrief gehad van het meisje, maar ze had erbij gezet dat ze het aan niemand mocht vertellen. Eerst wilde ze zich daaraan houden, maar toen ze zag hoe hij er aan onder doorging moest ze wel ingrijpen. Er stond in dat het leven niks voor haar was, en dat ze het bos in zou gaan in haar trouwjurk die ze voor het huwelijk had klaargemaakt. Ze zou dan net zo lang doorlopen totdat ze bij een bosrivier of bosmeer zou komen, en zou haarzelf daarin laten wegglijden.

Hij begon te jammeren. 'Maar waarom, waarom ?'

'Ik weet het niet,' zei ze. 'Ze had nogal vreemde dingen op haar kamer staan, hele duistere dingen, die kreeg ze van een oom die naar allerlei verre landen ging. Die oom zou haar ook soms hebben bedreigd, en hij heeft nog wel ergere dingen gedaan waar ze nooit over wilde praten.'

'Zou het doorgestoken kaart zijn, die brief ?' jammerde hij. 'We hebben nu in ieder geval een spoor.'

'Zou je eens aan haar grootmoeder moeten vragen,' zei ze, 'die kent haar het best. Ze woont ook hier op de flat.'

Zo gezegd zo gedaan. Zijn oudtante regelde een afspraak met de grootmoeder van het meisje, en al snel konden ze daar beiden een avondje komen.

'Ze zei dat ik het aan niemand mocht vertellen,' zei haar grootmoeder, 'maar haar oom heeft haar enkele keren verkracht. Toen ze klein was, en ook toen ze wat ouder was, en hij heeft haar ook bedreigd met een mes en gechanteerd. Ik denk dat het daar mee heeft te maken, dat ze er niet meer mee kon leven.'

Hij begon weer te jammeren. 'Zou ze nog leven ?' vroeg hij. Op dat moment kwam de oom van het meisje binnen. Hij had een getrokken pistool. 'Alle sporen van haar moeten uitgewist worden,' zei hij, terwijl hij schoot. En hij bleef maar schieten. De jongen en zijn oudtante gingen zo snel mogelijk het huis uit, hevig bloedend. Zijn oudtante wilde terug naar haar flatwoning lopen, maar zo ver kwamen ze niet meer. Ergens halverwege zakten ze in elkaar. Het laatste waaraan de jongen kon denken was aan de vreemde souveniers van het meisje.

Einde

De Bloem

Er was een bloem die helemaal over de zee groeide naar een eiland. En velen gingen over de bloem om tot het eiland te gaan, want de zee was te woest. Maar de bloem had vele dorens om hen die over de bloem gingen te kwellen, en toen ze op het eiland aankwamen was het totaal anders dan ze hadden verwacht, want het was verschrikking na verschrikking. En zo werden ze kwaad op de bloem, en de bloem had een traan. En het was een lange, zwarte traan aan de rand van het eiland. En ze namen van de traan om ervan te proeven en het was bitter en zoet, en ze kregen dromen zo wonderschoon dat het hen speet dat ze kwaad waren geworden op de bloem.

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Hoofdstuk 1. De Trollenlift

Het begon eigenlijk op een mooie zomeravond toen hij bij zijn oud-tante in de keuken was. Hij keek door het raam naar buiten en zag de prachtige struik met de besjes. Toen keek hij naar de theemuts en de fluitketel begon te fluiten. Hij ging zitten op een stoel en zijn oud-tante schonk de thee in. Toen kreeg hij een kopje. Hij dronk van het spul en voelde zichzelf wegglijden, alsof hij door de vloer zakte. Zijn oud-tante drukte op een belletje, en daar ging hij. Door een donkere tunnel kwam hij terecht in een hal van grote doodsbeenderen en schedels.

Hij voelde zich slap en kon niet goed nadenken. Hij begon door de hal te lopen die overliep aan de zijkant in een rijk begroeide gang die uitliep naar een eveneens rijk begroeide deur. Hij klopte aan en iemand met een kaars deed open. Het was een trol in een nachtjapon. Hij had slagtanden en een slaapmuts op. 'Wat moet je ?' vroeg de trol boos en slaperig.

'Eh, waar ben ik ?' vroeg hij.

'Wat een vraag,' bromde de trol. 'Kom maar binnen.'

De jongen liep de trol achterna naar binnen, terwijl hij de deur achter zich sloot. Er hing hier een vreemde geur van natuur en medicijnen. 'Drop, siroop, ik verkoop het allemaal,' bromde de trol. In de huiskamer gingen ze aan een tafeltje zitten. De trol haalde een kaart tevoorschijn, een landkaart, waarop hij zijn vinger bewoog en geheimzinnig prevelde.

'Dat ken ik niet,' zei de jongen.

'Waar kom je vandaan ?' vroeg de trol.

'Van boven,' zei de jongen, 'van de mensenwereld.'

De trol trok zijn schouders op. 'Dan kan ik je niet helpen,' zei de trol.

'Waarom niet ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Omdat er geen weg terug is,' zei de trol. De trol schonk wat in uit een vreemde theepot voor de jongen, in een vreemd kopje. De jongen nam een slokje, en voelde zichzelf weer wegglijden, alsof hij door de vloer zakte. Weer bevond hij zich in een tunnel naar beneden, en hij kwam terecht in een duister dal met grote beenderen en schedels. 'Weer ?' vroeg de jongen. 'Dus ik kan tegenwoordig niets meer drinken, of dit soort dingen gebeuren ? En het is nog donkerder dan de vorige keer.' Hij volgde de duistere, zwaar begroeide gang aan de zijkant van het dal. Weer kwam hij bij een zwaar begroeide deur uit, aan de zijkant van het dal, als een deur in een heuvel. Hij klopte aan en weer werd er geopend. Er stond een grote dikke trol met slagtanden boven en onder en een grote knuppel. 'Kom je voor de thee ?' bromde de trol.

'Eh nee,' zei de jongen. 'Telkens als ik drink van die thee dan ga ik een verdieping lager.'

'Dat klopt !' lachte de trol. 'Het is de trollenlift.'

'Het begon bij mijn oud-tante in de keuken,' zei de jongen.

'De mensenwereld ?' zei de trol. 'Daar kun je niet meer naar terug.'

'Waarom niet ?' vroeg de jongen.

'De trollenlift gaat alleen maar naar beneden,' zei de trol. 'Nooit omhoog.'

'En wat is daaronder ?' vroeg de jongen nieuwsgierig.

'Ben je niet boos, bang of verdrietig dat je niet meer naar boven kunt ?' vroeg de trol verbaasd.

'Nee,' zei de jongen. 'Ik vind het wel best, want boven was het toch een klote wereld.'

De trol dacht even na. 'Een verdieping lager is de natuurkerk,' zei de trol.

'Wat is dat ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Een kerk gebaseerd op natuur-principes, een trollenkerk,' zei de trol.

'Mag ik er naartoe ?' vroeg de jongen.

De trol ging weer naar binnen en kwam even later vol met een pruttelende beker vol met groen spul. 'Hier, drink maar,' zei de trol, 'maar kom eerst nog even binnen.' De jongen stapte naar binnen en begon direct te drinken. Hij zakte zo weg door de vloer van de gang, en schoot pijlsnel in een enorme duistere diepte. Hij werd wakker in een bed, een vreemd bed wat hij niet kende. Een boerin in klederdracht keek hem aan. 'Waarop ben ik hier ?' zuchtte hij verbaasd.

'We hebben je kunnen onderscheppen,' zei de boerin. 'Je was op weg naar een gevaarlijke plaats in de trollenlift.'

'Waar ging ik naartoe ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Je was op weg naar de trollenkerk,' zei de boerin. 'Daar gebeuren duistere dingen die het daglicht niet kunnen verdragen, en daaronder ligt de woeste indianenwereld. Nog steeds is er een grote oorlog tussen de trollen en de indianen, en vroeger waren al deze gebieden van de indianen, maar de

trollen hebben alles overwonnen behalve de diepste wereld, en plaatsten er hun trollenlift.'

'Waar zijn we dan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Tussen twee verdiepingen van de trollen in,' sprak de boerin.

'Zijn we hier wel veilig dan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Oh ja,' zei de boerin. 'Heel veilig.'

'Hoe zijn jullie hier gekomen dan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Nooit,' zei de boerin. 'Dit was altijd al onze wereld, maar de trollen hebben het niet kunnen vinden.'

'Ik wilde graag kijken in de trollenkerk,' zei de jongen.

'Doe dat maar niet,' zei de boerin, 'want je komt er nooit meer uit. Ze doen daar erg vreemd en zijn heel wreed. Ze kennen geen genade.'

'En hier dan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Oh, hier is ook een kerk,' zei de boerin, 'maar lang niet zo vreemd als daar.'

Toen kwam ook de boer binnen. Hij zei niets, maar na een tijdje zei hij heel plat : 'Zo, weer één ?' Toen liep hij weer weg.

'Moet ik hier altijd blijven ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Naar boven kan niemand,' zei de boerin.

De jongen ging met de boerin en de boer naar de kerk. Het was een hele bijzondere kerk. Er hingen allerlei iconen van indianen en ook de raam schilderingen waren van indianen. De dominee preekte ook over de indianen, dat ze een groot kruis droegen vanwege de trollen. De dominee preekte ook over de trollenlift die alleen maar dieper kon, en nooit omhoog, en dat het oorspronkelijk een indiaanse afgrond was. De mens moest leren loslaten. Het was de onverbiddelijke diepte van de natuur. De jongen luisterde bijna met open mond. De dominee sprak ook over zijn gevechten met de trollen, en dat hij uiteindelijk de trollen had overwonnen. Hij sprak over het vinden van een trollensteen waarin de geschiedenis tot steen was geworden. Iedereen zou persoonlijk tot die steen moeten komen om een nieuw leven te krijgen. De steen was in een zaaltje achter kerkzaal, en lag veilig achter glas op een klein pilaartje. De jongen werd erg nieuwsgierig.

Na de dienst gaf de dominee iedereen een hand, en toen hij de hand van de jongen schudde vroeg de jongen aan hem of hij de trollensteen mocht zien. De dominee glimlachte en zei dat hij naar het keukentje mocht gaan tussen de twee zaaltjes in, en dat de dominee daar na het handenschudden naar hem toe zou komen. Dat deed de jongen, en na een tijdje kwam de dominee hem daar opzoeken. Toen nam de dominee hem mee naar het achterzaaltje en liet hem de steen achter glas zien. Het was een wonderschone steen. De jongen wist niet wat hij zag, en hij had een hemelse ervaring. Het was alsof hij weer in de trollenlift zat en in een wonderschone natuur gleed. De dominee noemde het de afgrond van de indianen.

Toen nam de dominee hem naar een ander zaaltje wat daar achter lag, waar ze samen filmpjes gingen kijken. Het eerste filmpje heette : De Trollen Fotograaf.

Hoofdstuk 2. De Trollen Fotograaf

De Trollen Fotograaf

Een jongen woonde met zijn ouders in een groot huis in het bos. De laan waarin ze woonden stond vol met grote huizen en grote tuinen. Zelf hadden ze ook een grote tuin, maar niet zo groot als de boze buurman Lampetek. Op een dag raakte de jongen op zolder in gevecht met een trol. De jongen was op zoek naar boeken in een boekendoos, en de trol sprong zo uit de doos, en viel de jongen aan. Het was een lange worsteling waar de jongen flink wat schaafwonden en blauwe plekken aan overhield. De trol was woedend, en riep dat hij naar het dorp zou gaan waar de klasgenootjes van de jongen woonden, en waar hun school stond, en hij zou ze flink plagen en teisteren, en dan filmpjes van hen maken, tot vermaak van de trollen. Toen rende de trol pijlsnel de trap af en verdween in het niets. De ouders van de jongen wilden het verhaal niet geloven, maar sindsdien werden de klasgenootjes van de jongen ernstig geteisterd. Ze maakten de naarste dingen mee, en dat hoorde de jongen allemaal in de klasgesprekken.

Boze buurman Lampetek hoorde hij sindsdien vaak bulderen van het lachen, en als de jongen uit zijn slaapkamerraam keek, dan kon hij de buurman in zijn huis voor een scherm zien zitten waarop filmpjes werden gedraaid. 'Dat moeten de trollenfilmpjes zijn,' dacht de jongen bij zichzelf. Op een nacht kon de jongen het niet meer inhouden. Hij sloop naar het huis van de buurman. In de verte hoorde hij honden blaffen, maar de buurman had geen honden. Nee, de buurman zei dat hij voor niemand bang was, en dat niemand van hem durfde te stelen, en dat hij daarom ook altijd 's nachts de achterdeur openliet. De jongen liep naar de achterdeur, en ging naar binnen. Die stond dus inderdaad open. De buurman had daarover niet gelogen. Stilletjes sloop hij naar de huiskamer en keek er in het rond. Hij klikte even een lampje aan. Buiten was het pikkedonker, en het stormde en onweerde wat. Het scherm stond er nog steeds, en in de boekenkast lagen een heleboel filmpjes voor de projector. Allemaal kleine bandjes, en er stonden namen op. Hij schrok toen hij op elk bandje een naam van zijn klasgenootjes las. 'Dat zijn dus inderdaad de trollenbandjes,' zei de jongen tegen zichzelf. De jongen aarzelde geen moment, en nam een paar trollenbandjes mee. 'Dat is voor mijn onderzoek,' fluisterde de jongen. Tot zijn grote schrik lagen er zelfs boeken met de namen van zijn klasgenootjes erop. De titels van de verhalen waren verschrikkelijk. Ook daar nam hij een paar van mee. Maar opeens hoorde hij wat. Er kwam iemand van de trap af. Snel verstopte hij zich achter de gordijnen nadat hij het licht had uitgeklikt. Toen hoorde hij de kamerdeur opengaan, en iemand stapte naar binnen.

Toen werd er licht aangeklikt. 'Dom, dom,' zei een stem die op die van de buurman scheen te lijken. Met een ruk werd het gordijn opengedaan. 'Op heterdaad betrapt,' riep de boze buurman. 'Jij vuile dief.'

'Nee, u bent de vuile dief !' riep de jongen. 'Dit zijn filmpjes en boeken over mijn klasgenoten, en de titels zijn verschrikkelijk !'

'Weet je het niet ?' zei de boze buurman die de jongen vastgreep. 'Met jou zal het nog wel erger aflopen.' De jongen beet de buurman in zijn arm, maar de buurman gaf hem een harde klap in het gezicht, en toen kreeg hij een schop in zijn buik. De jongen stortte kreunend neer, terwijl de buurman de boeken en bandjes opraapte. 'Ziezo,' zei de boze buurman. 'Jij komt hier niet meer weg.' Maar toen kwam de buurvrouw naar beneden. Ze was in haar nachtjapon. 'Wat heb je met hem gedaan ?' zei ze geschrokken.

'Hij probeerde mijn bandjes en boeken te stelen,' riep buurman Lampetek. Buurvrouw Lampetek liep op de buurman af, en keek hem aandachtig aan. 'Echt ?' vroeg ze.

'Nee, buurvrouw Lampetek,' zei de jongen, 'echt niet. Deze boeken en bandjes gaan over mijn klasgenootjes en het gaat over verschrikkelijke dingen, en er zijn daadwerkelijk verschrikkelijke dingen met hen gebeurd, nadat ik een gevecht had met een trol.'

Toen begon buurvrouw Lampetek de jongen aandachtig te bekijken. 'Hmmm,' zei ze, 'dat is inderdaad niet leuk.' Toen keek ze weer naar haar man. 'Hoe kom je aan die boeken en bandjes eigenlijk ?'

'Gaat je niks aan,' zei buurman Lampetek. 'Bemoei je er niet mee. Deze jongen is er goed bij.'

'Ik hoorde hem vaak bulderen van het lachen,' zei de jongen. 'Ik kon het horen, en als ik dan naar jullie huis keek dan zag ik hem voor het scherm filmpjes kijken.'

'Het is mijn bezit,' zei de buurman. 'Verder gaat het jullie niets aan.'

'Kindermishandeling,' zei de jongen.

Buurvrouw Lampetek ging dichtbij haar man staan, en stond toen recht voor hem en keek hem aandachtig aan. Toen keek ze weer naar de jongen. 'En jij beweert dat er trollen in het spel zijn ?' vroeg ze aan de jongen.

'Ja,' zei de jongen, 'want toen de trol weer vertrok zei hij dat hij mijn klasgenootjes zou teisteren en er filmpjes van zou maken.'

Buurvrouw Lampetek keek weer naar haar man. 'Is dat waar, Leonard ?'

Maar hij maakte zich snel uit de voeten en rende naar boven.

'Vreemde man heb ik,' zei de buurvrouw.

Even later kwam buurman Lampetek weer naar beneden. Hij had foto camera's in zijn handen. Toen begon hij allemaal foto's van hen te maken.

'Wat doe je ?' vroeg de buurvrouw verbaasd.

'Foto's van jullie maken voor de trollenfilmpjes,' zei buurman Lampetek.

'Oh, ga je weer toveren ?' vroeg de buurvrouw. 'Stop eens met al dat getover. Ik begrijp er niets van.'

De dag erna lagen zowel de jongen als de buurvrouw ziek op bed, en de buurman keek zijn trollenfilmpjes en bulderde van het lachen. De jongen en de buurvrouw wisten dat de filmpjes over hen gingen. Het ging eigenlijk alleen maar slechter totdat ze samen naar het ziekenhuis moesten. De jongen had altijd al gedacht dat de buurvrouw een fee of een engel was, in tegenstelling tot de boze buurman. De jongen en zijn buurvrouw kwamen op dezelfde ziekenhuis kamer terecht, terwijl de buurman hen vaak bezocht om foto's te maken. 'Voor je trollenfilmpjes ?' vroeg de buurvrouw.

'Ja,' zei buurman Lampetek.

'Hmm,' zei de buurvrouw, 'dit is wel erg vreemd.'

En aan wie de jongen en de buurvrouw het ook vertelden, ze werden niet geloofd. Op een dag kwam de trol naar het ziekenhuis. 'Zie je nu wat er van komt ?' zei hij tegen de jongen.

'Ik had niks gedaan,' zei de jongen. 'Jij viel me aan en toen verdedigde ik me.'

'Dom,' zei de trol. 'Als je niets had gedaan zou het niet zo erg zijn geweest.'

'Wat heb je met mijn man gedaan ?' vroeg de buurvrouw.

'Ach, we hadden een fotograaf nodig,' zei de trol. 'En hij wilde het wel doen, want hij had geld nodig, en wilde een groot huis.'

'Oh, dus hij fotografeert al heel lang voor jullie ?' vroeg de buurvrouw.

'Ja, al heel lang,' zei de trol. 'Hij is professioneel trollenfotograaf.'

'Vreemd,' zei de buuvrouw, 'dus hij wordt betaald voor het stichten van ellende en voor het fotograferen ervan ?'

'Precies,' zei de trol, 'en wij maken daar weer filmpjes van, maar de boeken waren al lang van tevoren beschreven met de scripts.'

'Oh, dus jullie verzinnen deze ongein ?' vroeg de buurvrouw. Toen begon ze op de trol in te slaan, terwijl er net een dokter binnenkwam. 'Wat doet u daar mevrouw ?' vroeg de dokter.

'Zie je dat niet, domoor !' krijste de buurvrouw. 'Ik ben in gevecht met een trol, en jij staat er maar bij te kijken als toeschouwer ofzo ?'

'Mevrouw,' zei de dokter. 'Er is hier geen trol. Ik ben bang dat we u op moeten sluiten, want u bent een gevaar voor uzelf en anderen.'

Maar de jongen begon toen te protesteren. 'Er is wel een trol. Ben je soms blind ?' riep hij, en begon ook op de trol in te slaan.

'Jullie slaan alleen maar op elkaar in,' zei de dokter.

'Oh, dus jij bent ook al omgekocht door mijn man !' riep de buurvrouw tot de dokter.

'Mevrouw, u heeft geen man,' zei de dokter. 'U woont al vele jaren alleen.'

'Niet waar !' riep de jongen. 'Iedereen kent buurman Lampetek, en weet wat voor een verschrikking het is.'

'Nee,' zei de dokter. 'Iedereen weet dat jullie dingen zien die er niet zijn.'

'Dit is het toppunt !' riep de jongen. 'Vraag het aan mijn ouders !'

'Je hebt geen ouders meer,' zei de dokter.

'Ik denk dat we in zo'n trollenfilmpje van mijn man zitten,' zuchtte de buurvrouw. 'Hij heeft ons goed beet.'

'Mevrouw, voor de zoveelste keer,' zei de dokter. 'U heeft geen man.'

'Ik wil direct naar huis,' zei de jongen, 'en naar mijn ouders, dan kan ik het hen vragen.'

'Jullie wonen hier al jaren in het ziekenhuis,' zei de dokter. 'Dit is jullie huis.'

De jongen werd toen echt kwaad en sloeg de dokter in het gezicht. 'Wij hebben niks met dit trollenziekenhuis te maken !' riep de jongen.

'Precies,' zei de buurvrouw, en gaf de jongen een hand. 'Kom op, buurjongen, we stappen nu op.'

Toen zijn ze samen het ziekenhuis uitgelopen, en liepen terug naar hun huizen. Maar de huizen stonden er niet meer. Er was alleen maar bos. 'Nou, gelukkig maar,' zei de buurvrouw. 'Dan ben ik tenminste van mijn man af, en jij van je ouders die je nooit geloofden.'

'Zo is het,' zei de jongen. 'Wilt u dan mijn nieuwe moeder zijn ? En waar gaan we wonen ?'

'Natuurlijk,' zei de buurvrouw. 'Ik ben nu je moeder die je altijd gelooft, en die het ook zelf allemaal heeft meegemaakt, en ik weet nog wel ergens waar we kunnen wonen.' En de buurvrouw nam hem mee naar een prachtige plaats en een prachtig huis nog dieper in het bos, waar ze toen samen zijn gaan wonen, en ze hebben nooit geen last meer gehad van een boze buurman.

Einde

'Zoals u dominee bent,' zei de jongen aan het einde van de film, 'neem ik aan dat deze film een diepere betekenis heeft. Klopt dat ?'

'Natuurlijk,' zei de dominee. 'De trollenverdiepingen ontstaan allemaal in en door de trollenfilmpjes. Er is een trollen fotograaf mee aan de gang gegaan, en zo hebben ze door hun camera's het indianen gebied ingenomen. Een camera is een gevaarlijker wapen dan een pistool of wat voor wapen dan ook. Onze gebieden zijn veilig gebleven door de zogenaamde bomen filmpjes. De bomen zijn als het ware natuur camera's die hun eigen beelden opslaan en er dan filmpjes van maken.'

'Interessant,' zei de jongen. 'Dat zijn dus processen waar de mensen boven geen weet van hebben ?'

'Precies,' zei de dominee. 'De mensen boven leven te ver van de natuur af om dit te weten.'

'Zeeen van foto's, zeeen van natuurfilms, stromende uit de bomen,
Zij zijn de koningen van de diepte fotografie,
Ja, diep in de harten fotograferen zij,

Niemand kan zich voor hen verstoppen,

Zeeen van foto's, de politie is daar waar de fotograaf ontmaskert ...'

Toen gingen ze een andere film kijken : De Eeuwige Oorlogen.

Hoofdstuk 3. De Eeuwige Oorlogen

De Eeuwige Oorlogen

Het Knor-Gesticht was een boot op een ijszee. Het was een stad op een boot, een stad van bannelingen. Als iemand probeerde te ontsnappen vielen ze te pletter in de ijszee. Er was geen ontsnapping uit het Knor Gesticht. De randen van het schip waren zeer glad. Niet velen durfden zich daar te wagen. Alleen als je welonderwezen was in de poëzie van het geheim. Door het op de juiste tijd, op de juiste plaats en in de juiste volgorde en verhouding de poëzie op te prevelen kon je niet van de rand afglijden. Alleen waaghalzen waagden zich daar. Hij moest er niet aan denken. Hij was veel te onzeker. Hij had de poëzie van het geheim nog lang niet onder de knie. De poëzie kon je ergens in de stad op het schip kopen, maar er werd zeer vaag over gedaan. Sommige oude vrouwtjes brouwden het in hun ketels in duistere winkeltjes. Je moest er veel voor betalen. Het koste je een arm of een been, of je raakte verlamd. En dat zou de ontsnapping wezen ? Hij wist het niet. Hij zag de waaghalzen op de randen, getooid met onverklaarbare poëzie, en hij kon maar niet zien wat het was, en wat deden ze daar ? Probeerden ze te ontsnappen ? Het Knor Gesticht was een politieke gevangenis voor ballingen, maar ook daklozen kwamen er al gauw terecht en zij die te ziek waren om te werken. Ook allerlei soort tuig kwam er terecht, zoals moeilijk opvoedbare kinderen en criminelen. Ook dieren kwamen er vaak terecht. Het Knor Gesticht werd geheel geleid door hen van het Knor Gesticht, zij die daar ook eens terecht waren gekomen, en zich hadden opgewerkt hogerop, maar zij bleven onderdeel van het Knor Gesticht. Hij vroeg zich af waar het schip naartoe ging in deze ijszee. Moest hij nu echt zijn lichaamsdelen en organen verkopen voor wat poëzie ? Maar ja, raadselachtige poëzie, wat bescherming zou bieden en misschien een soort van ontsnappingsplan. En hoe ver moest je gaan ? Sommige waaghalzen hadden geen armen meer, en sommigen hadden zelfs geen armen en benen meer. Wat was dit voor zotte idioterie ? Hij vroeg zich af of er een andere manier was. Misschien was de poëzie van het geheim wel een doodlopende weg, maar hij wist het niet, en dat maakte hem ook onzeker en op zijn hoede, altijd maar weer. Vrouwtjes probeerden hem erin te praten om het te doen, maar wat als het een valstrik was ? Wat als hij in iets nog ergers terecht zou komen dan het Knor Gesticht ? Was er eigenlijk wel iets ergers dan het Knor Gesticht ? In ieder geval zat hij hier vast. Eens ging hij deze stad binnen om iemand te helpen, maar hij mocht de stad niet meer verlaten. Hij bezocht iemand van het Knor Gesticht, maar voordat hij het wist zagen ze hem aan voor een bewoner ervan. Deze stad was levensgevaarlijk, dit schip.

Waar gingen ze naartoe ? Op de randen droop het ijs. Hij moest er niet aan denken in de ijszee te vallen, maar dit hier was ook niks. Hij wist dat in het leven niks vrijblijvend was. Alles had zo z'n

gevolgen. Wilde je iemand helpen, dan werd je meegetrokken, in hetzelfde lot als degene die je wilde helpen. Daar was hij nu wel achter gekomen. Maar hij moest het doen. Hij zag in hoe ze hem hier nodig hadden, hoe ze hier totaal wanhopig aan hun lot waren overgeleverd.

Op een dag wist hij het zeker : Hij moest en zou drinken van de poëzie van het geheim, anders zou hij hier gek worden. Hij ging naar een ketelvrouw die wat van het spul brouwde, in een klein winkeltje, een bazar, een toko. Hij keek zijn ogen uit, en toen staarde hij direct naar het spul, wat groenig was en borrelde. Er steeg vreemde groenachtige rook vanaf als in slierten. Hij stak zijn vinger uit naar de vrouw : 'Hak er maar af voor een beetje van dit spul.'

'Voor je oog krijg je het dubbele,' kraste het vrouwtje. 'Drink er maar goed van, jongen, want je wilt niet halverwege tot de ontdekking komen dat je er te weinig van hebt genomen.'

'Waarom niet ?' vroeg hij.

'Omdat zij die te weinig hebben op de rand er vanaf glijden,' kraste het vrouwtje, terwijl ze in de ketel roerde.

'Kom, neem wat jongen,' zei ze.

Hij kwam dichterbij. Hij keek naar het fonkelende groene spul. 'Toe maar,' zei het vrouwtje.

'Mag ik wat proberen ?' vroeg hij.

'Steek je vinger er maar in, en lik maar,' zei ze, 'omdat jij het bent, en daarna kun je beslissen.'

Hij stak zijn vinger erin, en stopte toen. Hij aarzelde. 'Brengt het geen ongeluk ?' vroeg hij.

'Zeer zeker,' zei het vrouwtje. 'Als je alleen maar proeft en het daar bij laat, dan brengt het ongeluk, groot ongeluk.'

'Laat maar,' zei hij, terwijl hij het winkeltje weer uitliep. Hij keek naar zijn vinger waarop het groene spul zat. Hij durfde er niet van te proeven. Hij pakte een flesje wat aan zijn riem hing, en stopte het in het flesje. Toen ging hij naar een volgend winkeltje en deed precies hetzelfde. Aan het einde van de dag had hij een flink flesje vol met het kleverige spul. 'Vele beetjes maken een hoop,' zei hij tegen zichzelf en begon er toen van te drinken. Hij wandelde als een beschonkene door de stad, maar hij zag geen ballingen meer, maar bewapende vrouwen.

'Wat is hier aan de hand !' riep hij. Het schuim stond op zijn mond.

'Geef hem het geheim van Kraal !' werd er geroepen.

Hij keek om zich heen en zag geen stad meer, maar een wildernis.

'Hij is over de rand gegaan !' werd er geroepen.

Hij raasde en tierde als een wilde. 'Waar ben ik !' gromde hij. Toen zag hij een flits als van bliksem en viel op de grond. Hij werd wakker voor een troon waar een wilde vrouw opzat. 'Heb je van de dichtersmede genomen ?' vroeg de vrouw.

'Ja,' gromde hij. 'Ik ben niet meer dezelfde. Ik ben niet meer op dezelfde plek.'

'Je bent de rand over gegaan,' zei de vrouw.

'M... maar dat kan toch niet,' stamelde hij. 'Daar is de ijszee.'

'Nee,' zei de vrouw, 'zij die van de dichtersmede drinken komen tot ons.'

'Wie bent u ?' vroeg hij.

Maar de vrouw was alweer verdwenen. Hij voelde zichzelf wegzakken in bitter ijs. 'Waar zijn jullie dan ?' riep hij.

'Zij die te weinig hebben komen niet ver !' werd er geroepen.

'Hoe kom ik aan meer !' riep hij terug.

'Je kent de weg,' werd er dichtbij hem gefluisterd. Toen werd hij met een hard voorwerp geslagen en stortte bewusteloos neer. Hij was helemaal verlamd en werd op een tafel gelegd.

'Die kan niet meer ontsnappen,' werd gezegd.

'Waar ben ik,' prevelde hij even later.

'In het Knor Gesticht,' werd er gezegd, maar hij zag niets. Alles was zwart voor zijn ogen.

'Waarom ?' vroeg hij. 'Ik heb van de dichtersmede gedronken.'

'Te weinig, en niet genoeg betaald, dus we hebben het je betaald gezet,' werd er gezegd.

'Ik kan niet opkomen,' zei hij. Toen was het weer alsof hij van de dichtersmede dronk.

Weer zag hij vrouwen, gewapend. 'Waar ben ik ?' vroeg hij.

'Bij Odin, G'Odin,' werd er gezegd. 'Je hebt van Haar mede gedronken. G'Odin is de aanvoerster van de walkuren.'

Hij keek de vrouwen één voor één aan. 'Ben ik opgenomen ?' vroeg hij.

'Neergenomen,' zeiden ze. Toen gaven ze hem nog meer mede. Hoe meer hij dronk hoe donkerder de vrouwen waren.

'Hoe komt het dat jullie steeds donkerder worden ?' vroeg hij.

'Zij die niet van de dichtersmede hebben genomen zijn vergiftigd en zien dingen die er niet zijn,' zeiden ze.

Hoe meer hij van de dichtersmede dronk hoe meer hij erachter kwam dat het een shamaanse drank was waardoor hij dieper in de onderwereld kwam, en waardoor zijn ogen meer en meer geopend werden. Zij die er niet van hadden gedronken sliepen slechts.

Hij kwam in de motor kamer van het schip. De vrouwen waren slechts onderdelen van de motor, als de godinnen van de seconden. Hij keek naar de prachtig glanzende motor, als geheel ingevet. Het had een prachtige roodbruinige kleur en was heel groot. Daar raasde het ding woest.

'Nog een slokje,' dacht hij. Hij probeerde dichterbij de motor te komen, maar het leek alsof er glas omheen zat. 'Geef me nog een slokje,' zei hij. Hij bedelde bijna. 'Wie ontsnapt er uit het Knor Gesticht ?' zong iemand. 'Wie oh wie ?' Hij greep naar de motor, maar hij greep mis vanwege het glas, alsof iets hem wegduwde, onverbiddelijk, en alsof een slang naar hem blies en hem beet. Hij was gebeten, maar door wat ?'

'Drink nu, drink,' werd er gefluisterd.

Hij voelde het bloed in zijn mond en dronk ervan. Hij voelde zich van binnen bloeden en was duizelig en waggelde. Toen stortte hij neer. Hij zag zichzelf wegglijden.

'Hij heeft geen sleutel voor de motor,' werd er gefluisterd, 'geen ijssleutel'.

'I... ik betaal alles voor die sleutel,' stamelde hij. Hij hoorde gelach. Hij zag zich wegglijden en bevond zich weer in de stad van het Knor Gesticht. De bewoners keken hem vreemd aan, en sommigen lachten, alsof ze hem bespotten. 'Waarom lach je ?' riep hij. Maar ze zeiden niets.

'Ik moet meer van die mede hebben, meer, meer,' zei hij, terwijl hij een winkeltje inliep. Een oud vrouwtje roerde in de ketel waar het pruttelende groene sap in was. 'Nee,' zei het vrouwtje, 'niet weer.'

'Waarom niet ?' vroeg hij. Ze wees op zijn gezicht, alsof ze naar iets op zijn voorhoofd keek, en schudde haar hoofd. 'Zij die teveel hebben gedronken dragen het groene teken op hun voorhoofden, en zij zullen er nooit meer van drinken. Zij zijn verdoemd !' kraste het vrouwtje.

Hij strompelde het winkeltje uit en probeerde het bij een ander winkeltje maar kreeg hetzelfde te horen. 'Ik heb het spul toch echt nodig,' dacht hij bij zichzelf. Hij ging terug. 'Alsjeblieft, ik geef er alles voor,' zei hij, maar het vrouwtje was onverbiddelijk.

'Wat betekent het dat ik verdoemd ben ?' vroeg hij.

'Jij gulzigaard !' tierde zij. Niemand sprak meer met hem. Hij werd door iedereen uitgescholden of uitgelachen, allemaal vanwege het groene teken op zijn voorhoofd. Pas na lange tijd begon het minder te worden, want ze begonnen eraan gewend te raken en negeerden hem gewoon. En zo leefde hij voort op het schip van het Knor Gesticht, altijd terugverlangende naar de dagen dat hij de dichtersmede dronk. Hij werd ouder en ouder, en ook zijn herinneringen aan de dichtersmede begonnen te vervormen. Op een dag kwam hij iemand tegen die hetzelfde groene teken op zijn voorhoofd scheen te hebben, maar die persoon had het er zelf opgeverfd. Hij zuchtte. Hij voelde zich alleen en hopeloos verloren. Diep in zijn hart wist hij dat hij hier niet hoorde, maar dat hij alleen maar wilde helpen, maar waar had het hem gebracht ? Zelfs door de mede-bannelingen werd hij als een onderschepsel behandeld.

Op een dag legde het schip ergens aan. Hij werd ergens in een gezin geadopteerd. Ze keken hem vreemd aan vanwege het groene teken op zijn voorhoofd, maar wisten niet wat het betekende. Hij probeerde het hen uit te leggen, maar ze spraken een andere taal. Er werd hier volop van de dichtersmede gedronken, maar hij mocht het niet hebben, want hij was een vreemdeling. Toch was het voor hem goed om even ergens anders te zijn. Het bleek maar van korte duur, want iedereen moest toen weer terug naar het schip, ook hij. Het was een korte vakantie geweest. Ook die herinnering bleef bij hem, en hij dacht er vaak over na.

Vooral 's nachts verlangde hij ernaar om van de dichtersmede te drinken, en dan zwierf hij door de

stad. Op een nacht werd hij gebeten door een hond, en even had hij weer het gevoel alsof hij van de dichtersmede dronk. Telkens als hij flashbacks had leek het alsof hij ervan dronk. De herinneringen waren als flessen in zijn hoofd. Er stonden allerlei vreemde etiketten op.

Hij had het groene teken op zijn voorhoofd, wat betekende dat hij een geisoleerde was. Nooit kon hij ergens lang blijven. Het groene teken had hem rusteloos gemaakt. Altijd moest hij zwerven. Nooit was hij ergens echt thuis. Op een dag vond hij een nieuw winkeltje in de stad. Er ging zacht groen licht vanuit, bijna gelig. Hij stapte binnen, en zag anderen met het groene teken op hun voorhoofd. 'Wat wordt hier verkocht ?' vroeg hij. Maar niemand antwoordde. Het leek wel alsof ze te ver heen waren, en hij kon er geen contact mee maken. Toen is hij maar weer weggegaan.

Op een dag viel een jongen hem aan op straat. Hij werd door de jongen weer meegesleurd naar het nieuwe winkeltje. De jongen deed zijn muts af en had ook een groen teken op zijn voorhoofd. Hij vroeg de jongen wat hij moest, maar de jongen sprak tot hem in een vreemde taal die hij niet begreep. Hij trok zijn schouders op. 'Ik versta je niet,' zei hij. Toen kreeg hij een klap in zijn gezicht.

'Wat moet ik doen ?' vroeg hij. De jongen liet hem toen een vreemde zachtgroene steen zien. Iemand anders zei : 'Dat is de steen der nachtmerries.' De jongen begon met de steen op hem te wrijven. 'Wat moet ik ermee ?' vroeg hij. Weer begon de jongen in de vreemde taal te spreken.

'Hij bedoelt dat het jouw steen is, jouw talisman,' zei de andere persoon.

Hij nam de steen aan van de jongen. De steen voelde warm aan. Plotseling verkrampte hij. Er ging een vreemde scheut door zijn arm en hij viel neer. 'Zo krachtig is het,' zei de andere persoon.

Hij had van schrik de steen losgelaten, maar raapte de steen weer op en stond op. 'Wat doet het ?' vroeg hij.

'Het leidt de weg door de stad,' zei de andere persoon.

De steen gaf een vreemd groen licht af wat begon te seinen, alsof het zijn eigen taal sprak.

'Ik versta de signalen van de steen nog niet,' zei hij.

'Dat komt nog wel,' zei de andere persoon. 'Je moet nu weggaan, anders komt er kortsluiting.'

Hij rende de winkel uit met de steen. Hij kon de steen niet meer wegleggen. Nu moest de steen gaan waar het wilde gaan, en hij moest volgen. De steen kende de weg door deze zware stad, kende alle sleutels en sloten. Nu moest hij de taal van de steen leren. Zijn nachtmerries waren een medicijn wat hij nog niet kende. Hij wist niet hoe hij het moest gebruiken, en het maakte hem overstuur en wanhopig.

Heel diep in het Knor Gesticht lag het medicijn. Hij moest veel dieper in het schip. In lagere verdiepingen kwam hij tot een zaal waar grote groene machines stonden. In de machines stonden robotten van een nieuwe medische orde. Het was daar waar het medische systeem samensmolt met het politie systeem. Hij had zo lang onder deze samensmelting geleden, wat een samensmelting was met een derde element, namelijk het criminele systeem, wat ervoor zorgde dat het Knor Gesticht ontstond. Maar de steen der nachtmerries begon te piepen. De steen wilde het derde element vervangen. Hij moest de steen tegen de groene machines aanleggen, en zo begonnen er dingen te veranderen. De steen was een programmeur. Hij had totaal geen controle of macht over de steen. De steen deed wat het wil, en hij kon alleen maar toekijken. Zo begon het ware medicijn uit de

machines te komen, maar wat was het ? Het proefde als mint. Hij zag alles van een afstand, alsof er glas om hem heen was. Hij was nog steeds de geisoleerde. En robotten kwamen voort vanuit de groene machines, en het glas werd dikker en dikker. Hij had immers het groene teken op zijn voorhoofd. De robotten werden tot vrouwen die zich ontkleden en een dans opvoerden.

Het was alsof het medicijn klotste in zijn hoofd, alsof hij zelf het medicijn was. Hij realiseerde dat hij de geisoleerde van G'Odin was. Hij was diep neergenomen. De Medi Mind begon in hem te ontwaken. Zonder het Knor Gesticht zou hij hier nooit gekomen zijn. Maar toen hij het medicijn had genomen werd hij opgenomen in een vurige strijdwagen, en hij zag de Medi Wars, en hij werd deel van een leger. Allen hadden zij het groene teken op hun voorhoofd, maar dit begon steeds roder te worden. Hij was in een nieuwe ontwaking, die van de medische oorlogen.

Einde

Toen de film was afgelopen zei de dominee : 'Ook jij hebt het groene teken.' Hij liep naar een deur achterin het filmzaaltje, en opende het, terwijl ze recht in een zaal achter het filmzaaltje keken. De zaal stond vol met bewapende medi wars robotten. 'Hier,' zei de dominee. 'Zij zullen de medi trollen moeten verdrijven.' De jongen keek met grote verbazing. 'Wanneer zal dat gebeuren ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Het is jouw leger,' zei de dominee. 'Alleen zij die het groene teken dragen zullen het leger kunnen opwekken.'

'Hoe gaat dat ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Door het lezen en begrijpen van het boek van de Medi Wars, en dat is het boek van je eigen leven,' zei de dominee.

Einde

Joegoslavische
Kettingbrieven

Joegoslavische Kettingbrieven
COAB 2019

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De Joegoslavische Kettingbrieven

Met een kettingbrief is het altijd het geval dat mensen de brief naar een aantal mensen moeten doorsturen en er wordt dan geluk of geld beloofd, en vaak wordt er ook ongeluk voorspelt voor hen die de ketting zouden breken. Aan deze invloeden is de kettingbrief dus onderhevig. Een ieder die de kettingbrief dus ontvangt en doorstuurt kan daar dus heel makkelijk veranderingen in aanbrengen, dingen toevoegen en dingen weglaten, zodat de oorspronkelijke boodschap in de kettingbrief zich geheel kan gaan vervormen, en er verschillende versies zijn. Maar wat is het risico daarvan, want is dit ook niet een soort verbreken van de ketting ?

Sommige versies zullen het niet overleven, terwijl andere versies het dan weer wel overleven. Dit maakt het onderwerp 'de kettingbrief' dus een interessant onderwerp voor onderzoek. In de volgende verhalen weten we dus eigenlijk niet in welk stadium de kettingbrief zich bevindt. Het zijn Joegoslavische kettingbrieven geschreven tijdens de Joegoslavische oorlog. De namen, adressen, beloftes en bedreigingen zijn weggelaten. Alleen het verhaal is overgebleven. Bij het lezen van de kettingbrief mag je je ook afvragen : in hoeverre is het leven niet één grote kettingbrief ? En waartoe was de kettingbrief uitgezonden ? Om met dwang aandacht te vragen voor de noodsituatie in Joegoslavië ? De verhalen van de kettingbrieven gingen zelfs over de grenzen van Joegoslavië heen, en werden dus ook in andere talen vertaald. Of waren er andere motieven in het spel ? Mysterie.

Wie de verhalen heeft geschreven is onbekend. Sommigen beweerden dat geestelijken van Joegoslavië ze schreven om de bevolking moed in te spreken of wat afleiding te bezorgen, terwijl weer anderen beweerden dat ze door Joegoslavische soldaten of buitenlandse soldaten die daar werkten waren geschreven om er doorheen te komen. En zo ontstonden de Joegoslavische kettingbrieven die er uiteindelijk voor zorgden dat de oorlogen werden beëindigd. Omdat na de oorlog de Joegoslavische kettingbrieven langzaam verdwenen heb ik ze verzameld en opgetekend opdat ze bewaard zouden blijven, want ze waren inmiddels medicinaal gebleken.

Sommigen van deze kettingbrieven uit Joegoslavië waren al vrijwel uitgestorven. Eén zo'n kettingbrief vond ik terug in een afgelegen museum ergens in Ethiopië en kon ik overkopen voor veel geld. Een andere kettingbrief heb ik opgekocht vanuit een soortgelijk museum uit Rusland. Ook werden laatste exemplaren van bepaalde Joegoslavische kettingbrieven bewaard en bewaakt door stijfkoppige bejaarden waarmee ik eerst over en weer moest discussiëren over hoe belangrijk deze brieven en verhalen waren voor het algemeen welzijn van het volk. Maar ja, met een beetje ervaring als literair wetenschapper weet ik het dan uiteindelijk toch voor elkaar te krijgen, en het resultaat is dit boek.

Maar nu wil het voorval dat dit voorwoord ook eens een Joegoslavische kettingbrief scheen te zijn, als één van de verhalen die de monniken of soldaten van Joegoslavië in de oorlog schreven, dus nu weten we nog niks. Er kan tussentijds van alles mee gebeurd zijn, Jan en alleman kunnen er dingen aan hebben toegevoegd, maar we moeten het er maar mee doen. Het herinnert ons in ieder geval terug aan het tijdperk van de Joegoslavische kettingbrieven.

De Paarse Draak

De paarse draak had een doorn in zijn hart,
Hij wilde de draak helpen, en ging daarvoor diep het bos in,
Naar de grotten waar de draak woonde,
De draak woonde in een kasteel boven de grotten

De draak wist al dat hij zou komen en sprak :
Ik sta alleen, en ik zal alleen blijven staan, altijd.
In zijn hart was ook de paarse traan en een boze geest.
En hij sprak tot de boze geest : 'Er is een jongen op pad naar mij. Doodt hem.'

En de boze geest ging uit van het kasteel, op zoek naar de jongen.
Maar zij vond hem niet, en ging terug.

'Niet velen zijn zo dom als jou,' sprak de draak tegen de boze geest.
En er was nog een andere boze geest in zijn hart, een verborgene, en die riep hij toen, en gaf dezelfde opdracht : 'Doodt de jongen.'
En de boze geest ging uit. De boze geest was woest en tierde.
Maar ook deze boze geest kon de jongen niet vinden.

'Misschien heb ik het wel gedroomd,' sprak de paarse draak,
'Dat er een jongen naar mij op pad is.'

Maar de jongen was op pad gegaan, alleen de andere kant uitgegaan,
Hij wilde gaan naar de boom die eens het hart van de draak had verwond.
'Ik sta alleen, en ik zal alleen blijven staan, altijd,' zei de draak.
En dat was ook precies hetzelfde wat de boom zei toen de jongen bij de boom aankwam.

'Wil jij dan een doorn in jouw hart om te voelen wat ik en de draak voelen ?'
'Oh ja,' zei de jongen, 'want de derde zal de sleutel zijn, om het hart te verlichten.'
En de boom stak de jongen in zijn hart met een doorn, en de jongen viel in een diep slaap.
Ook de jongen kreeg zijn eigen kasteel, en doornen groeiden er omheen, woeste doornen die wilden steken, een ieder die te dichtbij zou komen.
En toen de jongen wakker werd kon hij alleen maar zeggen : 'Ik sta alleen, en ik zal alleen blijven staan, altijd.'
Hij voelde nu aan dat wanneer er iemand dichtbij hem zou komen, dan zou de pijn alleen maar groter worden, dan zou de doorn hem dieper steken.
En de jongen weende paarse tranen, en de paarse tranen waren zijn enige gezelschap.
Maar boze geesten waren er niet, want de jongen had zijn hart gegeven.
En door zijn pijn viel de jongen vaak in een diepe slaap.

En hij had een droom van een meisje die tot de boom kwam,
En de boom zei weer, net als de draak eens zei : 'Ik sta alleen, en ik zal alleen blijven staan, altijd.
Wil jij dan een doorn in jouw hart om te voelen wat ik, de draak, en de jongen voelen ?'
Maar het meisje antwoordde niet, en kwam niet te dicht bij de boom.
Ze had een kleine schop meegenomen en begon te graven, en bleef graven totdat het nacht was.
Uiteindelijk kwam ze uit het gat met een sleutel die ze had gevonden.
Ze hield de sleutel voor de boom en richtte het op de boom en zei :
'De eerste heeft het hart verwond, de tweede heeft het hart bewaakt, de derde heeft het hart verlicht,

en de vierde zal het hart doen verdwijnen.'

En zo hadden sinds het meisje was gekomen de draak en de jongen geen hart meer, maar een sleutel, en de sleutel kon maar op één slot passen.

De Psychologie van
de Eindeloze Winkelstraat

Het was een eindeloze straat,
Een winkelstraat, in de grootste stad van de wereld,
En een jongen slenterde daar eindeloos,
Hij kwam nooit ergens aan,
Ging geen winkel binnen

Hij was op weg naar de haven,
Hij was op weg naar een boot,
Aan de eindeloze zee

Maar onderweg kwam hij iemand tegen met wie hij een eindeloos gesprek had,
Het stopte maar niet,
Maar hij besloot haar mee te nemen,
Naar zijn boot

Ze sloegen een zijstraat in die naar de haven zou leiden,
Maar ook dit was een eindeloze straat,
En hij vroeg zich af of ze ooit bij de haven aan zouden komen,
Maar ja, hij had in ieder geval een eindeloos gesprek

Ze wist hem over te halen met haar mee te gaan naar het eindeloze bos,
En daarvoor sloegen ze weer een zijstraat in,
Maar ja, je raadt het al : die zijstraat was ook eindeloos

Hoe lang duurt het nog ? vroeg hij telkens.
Uit haar tas haalde ze een boek wat eindeloos was.
'Alles is hier eindeloos, hè ?' vroeg hij.
'Maar zo'n eindeloos boek kan ik toch niet allemaal gaan lezen ?
Ik heb genoeg aan dit eindeloze gesprek met jou.'

'Oh, ik moet nog wat even doen,' zei ze.

Toen stapte ze een winkel binnen.
Hij volgde haar.
'Nee, even buiten blijven,' zei ze.
'Ik ben zo terug.'
Maar ze bleef eindeloos weg,
En toen is hij naar binnen gegaan.
Hij keek zijn ogen uit.
Het was een eindeloze winkel.
Ze was hier vast en zeker verdwaald,
Dat kon niet anders.

En ook hij begon te dwalen en te dwalen,
In deze eindeloze winkel.
Na heel lang dwalen kwam hij de winkelier tegen.
De winkelier omhelsde hem.
'Oh, zo lang niemand gezien,
Ik was verdwaald in mijn eigen winkel.
Eindelijk iemand gevonden,'
zei de winkelier.

'Ik ben mijn vriendin kwijt met wie ik een eindeloos gesprek had,' zei de jongen.
'Geeft niet, geeft niet,' zei de winkelier. 'Die komt wel weer terecht.'
'Maar hoe dan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Nou,' zei de winkelier, 'alles wordt hier verkocht, ook wij, dus ze komt wel weer terecht.'

'Dat is een hele opluchting,' zei de jongen. 'Kan ik haar dan nu kopen ?'

'Het kost eindeloos veel,' zei de winkelier.

'Maar het is mijn vriendin,' zei de jongen, 'we waren op weg naar het eindeloze bos.'

'Allemaal eindeloos duur,' zei de winkelier.

'Een vreemde bedoening dan,' zei de jongen. 'Ik wil hier weg.'

'We kunnen niet weg,' zei de winkelier.

'Dus we moeten wachten totdat we gekocht worden ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ik vrees van wel,' zei de winkelier.

'Maar wie hebben eindeloos geld daarvoor dan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'De eindelozen,' zei de winkelier.

'Wie zijn dat ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ik zal het je wel even laten zien,' zei de winkelier.
Hij haalde uit zijn tas een boek tevoorschijn. Het was een eindeloos boek.
'Dat boek ken ik,' zei de jongen.
'Heb je het gelezen ?' vroeg de winkelier.

'Eh nee,' zei de jongen, 'ik was met iemand in gesprek.'

'Sufferd !' riep de winkelier.

'Wat nu ?' vroeg de jongen. 'Het lijkt hier wel een gevangenis.'

'Dat is het ook !' foeterde de winkelier. 'Wat dacht je dat het anders was ?'

'Een winkel ?' zei de jongen.

'Wat is dat voor oneindeloos gezwets !' foeterde de winkelier.

'Maar wat nu dan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Wachten op de eindeloze trein,' zei de winkelier.

'Komt die hier ook ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Nee, hier niet,' zei de winkelier.

'Maar wat hebben we er dan aan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Dan moet je het boek lezen !' foeterde de winkelier, terwijl hij het boek in de handen van de jongen drukte. Toen liep de winkelier boos weg. 'Zorg dat je niet nog een keer verdwaalt !' riep de jongen hem na.

Toen begon de jongen maar met lezen. 'Wel verdraaid !' riep de jongen. 'Die taal versta ik niet !'

Na uren dwalen kwam hij het meisje weer tegen.

'En ?' vroeg het meisje.

'En wat ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Heb je het eindeloze boek gevonden ?' vroeg het meisje.

'Ja,' zei de jongen. 'Ik kreeg het van de winkelier, maar het is in een andere taal.'

Het meisje begon te lachen. 'Dan had je het boek maar van mij moeten aannemen, want dat was in jouw taal. Maar nee, je wilde liever met me praten. Snapte je dan niet waar eindeloze gesprekken met meisjes naartoe zouden kunnen leiden ?'

'Ik snap het nu,' zei de jongen. 'Het leidt nergens toe. Mag ik dan nu het boek ?'

Het meisje stak toen haar tong uit. 'Nee,' zei ze, en draaide zich toen om en rende weg.

'Kom terug !' riep de jongen. 'Dus ik zit in een gevangenis omdat ik een bepaald boek niet heb gelezen, en dat boek wordt nu ook nog eens van me afgehouden ? Wat een zotte bedoening is dit ?'

En de jongen dwaalde en dwaalde en vroeg zich af wat er in het boek zou staan. Wel stonden er soms plaatjes in het boek in de vreemde taal. 'Ik lijk wel Jan Huigen in de ton met een hoepeltje

erom,' dacht hij bij zichzelf. 'Was ik maar weer in de eindeloze winkelstraat op weg naar de haven. Ik was zo stom om me af te laten leiden door dat meisje. Eerst was ze zo eindeloos praatgraag, maar nu, nu ....'

Opeens stond er een fee voor de jongen in een roze jurk, met een toverstafje. 'Boekjes lezen, hè, boekjes lezen,' zei de fee. 'Ik dacht dat je op weg was naar de haven ?'

'Ja,' zei de jongen, 'maar het duurde eindeloos, en ik raakte in een eindeloos gesprek.'

'Dat is geen reden om dan maar boekjes te gaan lezen,' zei de fee.

'Wat moest ik dan doen ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Nou,' zei de fee, 'wat een vraag. Er staan hier chocolade winkels door de hele straat, en meneer weet niet wat hij moet doen.' Toen begon de fee te lachen. 'Neem eens een chocolaatje voor de verandering.'

'Tja, daar had ik even niet aan gedacht,' zei de jongen.

'Dus ga je maar achter de meisjes aan ?' zei de fee glimlachend.

'Ik kwam haar toevallig tegen, en ze hield me aan de praat,' zei de jongen.

'Toevallig hè ?' zei de fee glimlachend. 'Maar toevallig stonden er ook een heleboel chocolade winkels aan weerszijden van de straat, en daar had je geen oog voor ? Malle jongen.'

'Ik werd gewoon afgeleid,' verdedigde de jongen. 'Ze praatte maar door, en belemmerde mij het zicht. Ze bleef me maar lastig vallen, ook toen ik doorliep.'

'Ja ja,' zei de fee, 'dat zeggen ze allemaal. En toen besloot je haar maar mee te nemen naar je boot in de haven ?'

'Ja,' zei de jongen, 'misschien zou dat haar kalmeren, want ik kwam toch niet meer van haar af, en het was eindeloos.'

'Een chocolaatje had wonderen kunnen doen,' zei de fee.

'Ik begrijp het,' zei de jongen, 'het spijt me. Mag ik dan nu een chocolaatje ?'

'Zoek ze zelf maar,' zei de fee, terwijl ze haar tong uitstak naar hem.

Toen vloog ze weg.

'Bah,' zei de jongen. 'Die feeën van tegenwoordig zijn nog wel erger dan meisjes.'

Hij keek in een bak op een winkelschap, en zag er chocolaatjes liggen, maar je raadt het al : die waren natuurlijk eindeloos duur.

'Zie je nu wel !' riep de jongen. 'Ik word hier eindeloos bedrogen. Maar ja, niemand schijnt hier toch te zijn, en de winkelier zal alweer verdwaald zijn, dus ik neem er maar eentje.' Hij haalde de wikkel van de chocola eraf, en toen het zilveren folie en begon van het chocolaatje te eten. 'Lekker,' zei hij. 'Die fee had toch wel echt gelijk. Had ik eerder moeten doen, had ik eerder moeten doen.'

Hij liep verder met zijn hoofd in de wolken. 'Chocolade is toch wel het heerlijkste wat bestaat,' zei hij. Opeens botste hij tegen een politie agent op. 'Chocolaatjes stelen, hè ?' zei de agent.

'Er was hier niemand en ik was verdwaald,' zei de jongen. 'Ik moest toch wat eten.'

'Dat zeggen ze allemaal,' zei de politie agent. 'Kom maar mee.'

'Nou, ik ben blij dat je me gevonden hebt,' zei de jongen. 'Haal me hieruit.'

'Nee, je gaat er dieper in,' zei de politie agent. 'We zijn hier niet zo gesteld op dieven.'

En zo leidde de politie agent hem naar een lift, en ze gingen heel hoog. Even later kwamen ze op een hoge verdieping uit. Hier werden allemaal boeken verkocht. 'Nee, geen boeken !' riep hij. 'De fee zei dat ik op zoek moest gaan naar chocola in plaats van boeken.'

'Niks mee te maken,' zei de politie. 'En dit zijn trouwens toch chocolade boeken.'

'Dat is geen straf dan,' zei de jongen.

'Het is eindeloos duur, dus ik zou er maar niet aanzitten als ik jou was,' zei de politie agent, 'want anders ga je nog hoger het gebouw in.'

'Maar wat moet ik eten dan ?' vroeg de jongen. 'Ik heb honger. Je kunt me toch niet laten verhongeren ? Dus deze gevangenis voedt zijn gevangenen niet ?'

'Niks mee te maken,' zei de politie agent. 'Wees blij dat je nog leeft. We kunnen niet voor alles zorgen.'

'Bah, wat flauw,' zei de jongen. 'Wat een flauwe bedoening allemaal.'

'Je was toch op weg naar de haven, naar je boot ?' zei de politie agent.

'Ja, maar ik kwam iemand tegen,' zei de jongen, 'en die leidde me hier naartoe. Ik had natuurlijk nooit naar haar moeten luisteren. En nu is ze weg.'

De politie agent begon hem uit te lachen. 'Dat is mijn dochter,' zei hij. 'Zij werkt voor ons. Zo krijgen we nieuwe klanten.'

'Gevangenen zul je bedoelen,' zei de jongen sip.

'Kop op,' zei de politie agent. 'Ik heb ook nog een andere dochter. Zou je die niet willen ontmoeten ?'

'Wat staat me dan te wachten ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Kom maar mee,' zei de politie agent. Weer gingen ze de lift in, en ditmaal gingen ze nog hoger. 'Hoe hoger je komt, hoe meer de winkels in elkaar overlopen, en dan is het veel kleiner.'

Plotseling stond de jongen met de politie agent weer op straat, en alles was niet eindeloos meer. 'Wat vreemd,' zei de jongen.

'Het was een verkleinings-lift,' zei de politie. 'Nu ben je pas waar je wezen moet. Mijn andere dochter wacht op je bij de haven.'

'Vreemd,' zei de jongen weer, en liep over straat op weg naar de haven. Ergens halverwege kwam hij weer de eerste dochter van de politie agent tegen. 'Ha, ben je daar weer !' riep ze van een afstand.

'Ik heb geen tijd nu,' zei hij. 'Iemand wacht op me bij de haven.'

'Heb je een afspraakje ?' zei het meisje lachend. Toen liep ze lachend door.

Bij de haven aangekomen zag de jongen een ander meisje staan. 'Ben jij de dochter van de politie agent ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ja, hoezo ?' vroeg het meisje geirriteerd.

'Nou, ik mag toch wel wat vragen,' zei de jongen. 'Dan hoef je niet direct zo boos te doen. Je vader zei dat je me hier zou opwachten.'

'Mijn vader zegt zoveel, daar heb ik niks mee te maken,' zei het meisje. 'Ik wacht hier op heel iemand anders.'

'Op wie dan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Gaat je niks aan,' zei het meisje. 'Wijsneus.'

'Je bent gierig,' zei de jongen.

'Gierig ?' lachte het meisje ineens, en rende toen weg.

Het leek wel alsof alles toen nog kleiner en nauwer werd. De jongen had moeite met ademhalen. Het leek wel alsof alles op hem afkwam om hem te verpletteren. 'Moet dat chocolaatje zijn geweest,' zei hij tegen zichzelf. 'Ik ook altijd met mijn goede ideeën. Ik moet terug naar die lift, want hier is het nog erger.'

Hij begon al te hijgen en puffen van de benauwdheid, en liep weer terug naar het punt waar de politie agent hem bracht. Daar stond de eerste dochter van de politie agent weer. 'Alsjeblieft, ik smeek je,' zei de jongen. 'Breng me weer terug naar de verkleinings-lift.'

'Wil je dat het nog kleiner en benauwder wordt ?' vroeg het meisje lachend.

'Nee, groter, eindelozer,' zei de jongen. 'Dit is ook niks.'

'Jij weet ook niet wat je wil,' zei het meisje lachend. 'Ik dacht dat je een afspraakje had ?'

'Het was een misverstand,' zei de jongen. Daar kwam ook de politie agent weer aan. 'Wat sta jij hier nog te staan !' bulderde hij. 'Lopen, naar de haven !'

'Je dochter wilde niet,' zei de jongen.

'Niks mee te maken,' zei hij.

'Je kan niemand dwingen,' zei hij.

'Dat maak ik nog wel uit,' zei de politie agent, 'en nu lopen.'

'Ik ga naar de haven, naar mijn boot, maar niet naar haar,' zei de jongen.

Toen rende de jongen terug naar de haven, naar zijn boot, en stapte naar binnen. Het was er een enorme rotzooi. Hij startte direct de motor. 'Ik moet hier weg,' dacht hij bij zichzelf, 'weg.' Gelukkig was de zee hier niet eindeloos. Het was maar een riviertje. Maar alles werd alleen maar kleiner en benauwender. Weer ging hij terug naar de haven, ging zijn boot uit, en op zoek naar de tweede dochter van de politie agent. Die stond daar ergens met een telefoontje. 'Alsjeblieft,' hijgde hij. 'Breng me terug naar de verkleinings-lift,' zei hij.

'Vergrotingslift zul je bedoelen,' zei het meisje, terwijl ze gewoon doorging met haar telefoongesprek.

'Alsjeblieft,' hijgde hij, 'als alles maar weer groter en eindelozer wordt.'

'Waarom neem je niet gewoon een chocolaatje ?' vroeg ze, terwijl ze weer doorsprak aan de telefoon.

'Heb ik niet,' zei de jongen.

Het meisje grabbelde even wat in haar tas, terwijl ze doorsprak aan de telefoon, en gaf hem toen gehaast een chocolaatje. Hij haalde de wikkel er vanaf en toen het zilveren folie en begon ervan te eten. 'Mmm,' zei hij, 'zo lekker. Chocola is toch wel het heerlijkste wat er is.'

'Je bent laat,' zei het meisje.

'Ik was er al, maar toen wilde je niet,' zei de jongen. 'Je zei dat je op iemand anders wachtte.'

'Dat moet een vergissing zijn,' zei het meisje. 'Kom maar.'

Het meisje leidde hem toen naar de vergrotingslift die weer helemaal naar beneden ging naar het eindeloze winkelgebouw. Hij was zo opgelucht. 'Wat is de bedoeling hiervan ?' vroeg hij.

'Nou,' zei het meisje, 'de bedoeling is dat de klant het niet in zijn hoofd haalt nog ooit uit onze winkel te ontsnappen.'

Einde

De Advertenties van Arentrecht

De winkelstraat aan de zee was lang,
De poppenmaker wilde zijn poppen niet laten gaan,
Zij die in de weilanden waren liepen snel,
Op zoek naar de wildernis

Dit zijn advertenties van Arentrecht,
De bosvrouwen gaan tot de rand om dan hun gezegdes te roepen,
Maar wie luistert ?

En zij die luisteren, waar eindigen zij ?
Achter de weilanden liggen de kampen en de campings,
Achter de weilanden .... de werkterreinen ...

Wie kan het begrijpen ?
Dit zijn de advertenties van Arentrecht,
Dit is wat de bosvrouwen roepen aan de randen,
En verder gaan ze niet ...

Ik kwam hier vaak, maar nu niet meer,
Ik zag ze staan met hun wapens, en durfde niet meer,
Ik rende terug,
Nee, ik wilde niet in militaire dienst,
Aan de rand van de weilanden, zoveel kazernes ...

Nu heb ik geen hoop meer op ontsnapping,
Maar de advertenties van Arentrecht zijn nog steeds in mijn hoofd,
In mijn herinneringen zijn ze, maar er is geen toekomst ...

Het is allemaal al zo lang geleden, en nu zijn er weer nieuwe dingen ...

De Bloem in het Bos

Ze waren in het bos op zoek naar een bijzondere bloem, de Lelystad. Ze gingen heel diep tot daar waar het bos leek over te gaan in een oerwoud, een wildernis met slingerplanten. Daarna liep het weer over in bosgebied, heide, dicht op elkaar staande bomen en veel heuvelen. Ze haalden de boslucht diep in. Op de heuvelen groeide vele soorten grassen. De Lelystad bloem was een geheim, een groot geheim. Het was een grote bloem met witte kelken. Er droop wit sap uit. Het droop zo de

rivier in, de bosrivier. Toen ze bij de bloem waren aangekomen dronken ze van het sap alsof het siroop was. Hier hadden ze lang op gewacht. Het was heel kleverig spul.

De bloem gaf een krijs. Het was alsof ze schokdraad hadden aangeraakt, alsof ze allemaal onder stroom stronden opeens. Het was nu onweer in hun hoofd. Weer begon de bloem te krijsen. 'Wat is er, bloem ?' vroegen ze.

'Iemand heeft me wakker gemaakt,' sprak de bloem. 'Het was hier altijd zo rustig dat ik sliep.'

Maar het sap van de bloem was een slaapsap, en ze werden steeds slaperiger, totdat ze samen met de bloem in slaap vielen. En de bloem nam hen in haar op. Nu had het geheim zich teruggetrokken, maar ze droomden dromen waarin ze het geheim zagen. En het geheim was een klok van levenssappen. En de tijd dreef voort, en ze grepen ernaar, maar niemand kon het vastpakken. Ze waren in de bloem gevangen, en moesten het doen met hun dromen, maar het was meer dan genoeg. Terug naar de tijd wilden ze niet meer. 'Hoe konden we zo dom zijn naar de tijd te grijpen ?' zeiden ze.

En de bloem prikte in hun vingers, en ze krijsten als de bloem. 'Wie heeft ons wakker gemaakt ?' riepen ze.

'Nee, jullie dromen,' zei de bloem. En de bloem zoog hen dieper naar binnen, waar een stad was in de bloem. Maar het was geen echte stad, meer een dorp in de wildernis, een samenleving. En de mensen van de bosstad verwelkomden hen. En de mensen hier vertelden elkaar verhalen, versierden elkaar met de geheimen van het bos. En ze dronken meer en meer van het sap van de bloem, wat een slaapdrank was, opdat zij nog dieper in de bloem zouden gaan, tot onbekende geheimen, dieper en dieper in de dromen van de bloem.

Einde

De Joegoslavische Kettingbrief

Pas op met wat je doet of denkt.

Is het je weleens opgevallen dat heel veel mensen denken dat ze het altijd beter weten dan de ander, en dat eigenlijk onze hele samenleving hierop is gebouwd ? Groepen werken zo, organisaties en ook landen. Zij weten het beter. Het merkwaardige is dus dat we dit in elke cultuur tegenkomen, en dat ze allemaal iets anders zeggen, dus wie weet het nu echt beter ?
Het antwoord is : Het zijn allemaal spelletjes die de mens speelt, hele gevaarlijke spelletjes, want de

lucht zit vol met onzichtbare parasieten die op een andere frequentie zitten zodat de mens ze NIET kan zien, maar die er dus WEL zijn, en ze houden ervan mensen tegen elkaar op te stoken. Ze leven namelijk van BLOED. Daarom moeten we oppassen met iedere gedachte en elk woord, want ze hebben het op ons gemunt en ze komen gecamoufleerd. Een gewaarschuwd mens telt voor twee.

Er is dus een geestelijke oorlog gaande. Hier is een verhaal tijdens de Joegoslavische oorlog in de 90-er jaren waarin deze twee oorlogen elkaar kruisten. Het ging om een Joegoslavische kettingbrief. Met een kettingbrief is het altijd het geval dat mensen de brief naar een aantal mensen moeten doorsturen en er wordt dan geluk of geld beloofd, en vaak wordt er ook ongeluk voorspelt voor hen die de ketting zouden breken. Aan deze invloeden is de kettingbrief dus onderhevig. Een ieder die de kettingbrief dus ontvangt en doorstuurt kan daar dus heel makkelijk veranderingen in aanbrengen, dingen toevoegen en dingen weglaten, zodat de oorspronkelijke boodschap in de kettingbrief zich geheel kan gaan vervormen, en er verschillende versies zijn. Sommige versies zullen het niet overleven, terwijl andere versies het dan weer wel overleven. Dit maakt het onderwerp 'de kettingbrief' dus een interessant onderwerp voor onderzoek. In het volgende verhaal weten we dus eigenlijk niet in welk stadium de kettingbrief zich bevindt. Het is dus een Joegoslavische kettingbrief geschreven tijdens de Joegoslavische oorlog. De namen, adressen, beloftes en bedreigingen zijn weggelaten. Alleen het verhaal is overgebleven. Bij het lezen van de kettingbrief mag je je ook afvragen : in hoeverre is het leven niet één grote kettingbrief ? En waartoe was de kettingbrief uitgezonden ? Om met dwang aandacht te vragen voor de noodsituatie in Joegoslavie ? De brief ging zelfs over de grenzen van Joegoslavie heen, werd dus ook in andere talen vertaald. Of waren er andere motieven in het spel ? Mysterie.

Als Joegoslavische 'geestelijke oorlogs-soldaat' zat hij met buitenlandse soldaten die in de Joegoslavische oorlog hadden geholpen samen in hetzelfde ziekenhuis. Hij zag ze nog zo op de grond zitten, de oorlog herbelevende, trillende, in een shock, telkens weer dezelfde flashbacks. Hij probeerde ze te kalmeren, en liet hen wat van zijn tekeningen zien. 'Daar kun je veel geld mee verdienen,' zei er eentje. Het waren zijn vrienden. Zij hadden allemaal hun leven gegeven voor een hoger doel. Eentje van hen ging naar een psychiatrische kliniek. Hij wilde hem niet alleen laten gaan, ook al ging het in die tijd al beter met hem. Hij dacht dat hij misschien ook anderen daar kon helpen. Hij ging daar naartoe uit liefde. Hij kwam daar en er waren verschillende incest slachtoffers die hij ook probeerde te helpen. Hij was daar voor een paar weken geweest, anders zou hij er zelf aan onderdoor gaan, omdat er daar dingen gebeurden die het daglicht niet konden verdragen. Hij had het zaad gezaaid. Dat is waar hedendaagse volgelingen van het 'kruis-principe' behoren te zijn, nergens anders. Het bezoeken van de zieken, de gevangenen, de hongerigen. Dat is het pad van het kruis. Hij was hiertoe geroepen.

Wie hielp die jongens ? Wie hielp die meisjes ? Niemand. Hij omhelsde ze, en werd ervoor bestrafd door het medische personeel, die in de waan waren dat ze 'professioneel' waren. Maar die jongens en meisjes vertelden hem dat wat hij deed hen had behoed tegen zelfmoord. Nu wil het voorval dat een mevrouw hier totaal niets van wilde weten, en hier ook totaal niets van wist, en om hem een hak te zetten dan maar ging rondbazuinen dat hij in een inrichting zat en wilsonbekwaam was, en dat zijn kinderen daarom afgenomen moesten worden. Zoveel voor het helpen van oorlogsslachtoffers en incest-slachtoffers voor een paar weekjes. Diezelfde mevrouw had hij ooit eens geleerd dat mensen elkaar alleen maar van onderen konden helpen, en niet van bovenaf. En waar zat die mevrouw die al deze dingen zei ? Hoog en droog in haar 'huisje' met zijn kinderen, niet willen weten en beseffen dat de steden en dorpen zelf al 'inrichtingen' zijn. Diezelfde mevrouw had hem ooit eens gezegd dat ze een demoon was die naar de aarde was gezonden om mensen bang te maken. Later lijdde deze mevrouw aan geheugenverlies naar eigen zeggen, en wilde haar hart niet blootleggen, vanwege het monster die het had gewaagd voor incestslachtoffers en oorlogsslachtoffers naar zo'n plaats te gaan voor een paar weken. Natuurlijk moest dat door haar

nog eens extra gedramatiseerd worden, en moest ze dat eens extra bespotten.

Deze mevrouw heeft nooit navraag gedaan naar wat er gaande was, maar deed zich voor alsof ze er alles van wist. Ook wilde deze mevrouw zich nergens in verdiepen, maar anderen moesten zich wel in haar verdiepen. Demonen bestonden volgens deze mevrouw eigenlijk niet meer. Deze mevrouw zag ze niet, dus in kleuterschool taal konden die er dus ook niet zijn, ook al was de hele wereld een grote rotzooi en sprak alles zichzelf tegen. Bij deze mevrouw was het de ene keer dit en de andere keer dat.

Hij had deze mevrouw geleerd dat gedachten en woorden al snel demonen konden zijn en dat we niet zomaar mochten denken en spreken vanwege dit gevaar, maar deze mevrouw kon dat allemaal niets schelen en dacht en sprak maar alsof het een lieve lust was. Maar genoeg over deze mevrouw.

De Joegoslavische Kettingbrief II

Verraad in de steden,

vervolgde de Joegoslavische geestelijke oorlogs-soldaat,
De steden zijn inrichtingen,
Ze weten het niet,
Ze weten niet eens wat een 'inrichting' is,
Het is een scheldwoord,
Heb je er weleens gekeken ? Ben je er weleens geweest ?
Mensen die voor JOU hebben gevochten zitten daar,
Mensen die hun leven voor anderen hebben gegeven,
Mensen die ervoor hebben gezorgd dat JIJ nu veilig kan leven,
Verder zit het er vol met incest-slachtoffers, daklozen en politieke gevangenen,
Wat heb jij voor hen teruggedaan ?
Of denk je het allemaal beter te weten en ben je vergeten wat ze allemaal voor JOU hebben gedaan ?

Op dit punt begon de Joegoslavische geestelijke oorlogs-soldaat te schelden en vervloekingen uit te spreken als een oordeels-profeet,
De steden waren verdoemd in zijn ogen,
De steden waren nog wel ergere inrichtingen,
De steden waren daadwerkelijke gekkenhuizen,
Want zij hadden deze oorlogen veroorzaakt, en zij hadden ervoor gezorgd dat zoveel mensen naar zulke ziekenhuizen moesten, en dat anderen hen moesten bezoeken, omdat een mens altijd alleen maar van onderen geholpen kon worden.

Zo vervolgde de Joegoslavische geestelijke oorlogs-soldaat :

Ben JIJ de beste stuurlui die aan wal staat, die vanaf een zogenaamde veilige woning hoog en droog allemaal gemakkelijk praat over iemand anders die zijn leven in de oorlog voor jou heeft gegeven ? Zo veilig is het niet. Je bent gefopt. Je bent nog wel op een ergere plaats terecht gekomen door je gedrag, door tegen jezelf en anderen te liegen. Hier leeft misleiding op misleiding.

En zo was de tweede Joegoslavische kettingbrief nog wel erger dan de eerste. Omdat het nogal grote gevolgen zou hebben om deze kettingbrief niet door te sturen, en mensen al in grote angst leefden vanwege de oorlog, stuurden velen hem door.

De Joegoslavische Kettingbrief III

Hij woonde met mensen in een huis die van een hele zware kerk waren.
De familie had een eigen gedeelte, maar ze deelden de badkamer.
Soms spiekten de meisjes weleens als hij de badkamer gebruikte.
Er waren gaten in de muur waar je doorheen kon kijken.
De zoon van die familie was vroeger zijn klasgenoot.
Ze hadden vaak ruzie.

De meisjes moesten zich altijd heel zedelijk kleden vanwege de zware kerk.
Ze mochten ook geen gebruik maken van lingerie.
Hij daarentegen was heel vrij, en sprak over van alles.
Maar zij waren gesloten mensen. Dat moest zo van die kerk.
Er waren een heleboel dingen die hij niet wist.

De zware kerk was erg zwaar, en ik bedoel heel zwaar.
Dingen moesten op een bepaalde manier klaargemaakt worden.
Daar mocht niet van afgeweken worden.
Anders zouden ze geloofsproblemen krijgen, en dat hadden ze veel.
Voor hen was het soms ook niet haalbaar, maar het moest.

Hij had wel medelijden met ze.
Het was alsof ze leefden met een pistool tegen hun hoofd.
Niks mocht. Alles moest.
Ze hadden eigenaardige spullen.
Ze mochten geen lingerie, maar hun meubiliar was gewoon puur lingerie,
hun stoelen, hun tafels, hun manden, allemaal met verfijnde decoratie.
Hij keek altijd zijn ogen uit als hij daar was, en dat gebeurde niet veel.
Hij kwam daar eigenlijk alleen maar met koninginnedag, want dan was de koningin op de televisie, en dat wilde hij graag zien.
Hij had geen televisie. Hij was te vrij voor een televisie. Maar in die zware kerk moesten ze een televisie hebben. Dat was verplicht. Alle zenders werden beheerd door hun dominees. Die waren de hele dag door op de tv.

Het was een zware kerk, zo zwaar dat er geen medeleven getoond mocht worden. Het leven was

lijden, en dat had iedereen verdiend. Hij wilde ze troosten en bemoedigen, maar dat werd door hen niet geaccepteerd. Ze waren als de orthodoxe zwanen in Joegoslavische grachten. Eén verkeerde beweging of een verkeerd woord, en ze vlogen je aan. Op een keer kwam hij zijn vroegere klasgenoot tegen in het winkelcentrum, maar ze hadden alweer bijna ruzie. Het ging over poppen. In die zware kerk moesten mannen met poppen spelen. Dit was preventief, want zo zouden ze van de vrouwen afblijven. Zijn vroegere klasgenoot beschuldigde hem ervan eens zijn pop te hebben gestolen of kapot gemaakt. 'Zo lang geleden,' zei hij. 'Ik kan me dat niet meer herinneren, maar als je er echt nog zo mee zit, dan gaan we nu lekker naar een poppenwinkel, en dan koop ik een nieuwe pop voor je.' En zo gebeurde het. Hij nam de jongen mee naar een poppenzaak, en kocht voor hem een hele dure en sjieke pop, in zedelijke klederdracht. De vroegere klasgenoot was daar heel blij mee, en het was direct vrede.

Ze leefden in Joegoslavië,
Er was geen tijd voor oorlog meer,
Want de poppen marcheerden,
Elke man kreeg zijn pop,
opdat de vrouwen konden emanciperen.

De Toverbeker en het Toverbordje

Eens waren er dertig prinsen die door een heks waren betoverd tot wachters op een hoge toren. De toren was zo hoog dat het hoogste deel niet gezien kon worden, en de toren was zo breed dat het de helft van het land vulde. Als iemand de trap omhoog wilde bestijgen, dan kwamen er ballen van steen en ballen van vuur naar beneden, en maakten voor lange tijd het land onveilig. Daarom verbood de koning dat nog iemand naar de toren zou gaan.

De koning had veel verdriet van het verlies van zijn dertig zonen. De dertig prinsen waren nu angstaanjagende wachters die op de top van de toren moesten marcheren. Zij moesten de schat van de heks bewaken : een toverbeker die nooit op zou raken, en waarmee je onder de grond kon reizen, en een toverbord dat altijd vol was, en waarmee je in de lucht kon reizen.

De koning had een erge hekel aan de heks. Was hij nu maar wat aardiger voor haar geweest, dan was alles niet zo erg als het nu was. Ja, de koning had veel spijt wat hij de heks had aangedaan. Een oud bedelvrouwtje kwam eens aan de poort en vroeg om onderdak, maar de koning zond haar weg. Hoe kon hij nu weten dat het een heks was ? En een heks kun je maar beter onderdak geven, anders zal het je je hele leven berouwen. Dat was de koning nu wel duidelijk geworden.

Sindsdien was de koning altijd goed voor bedelaars, en had hij z’n lesje wel geleerd. Op een dag kwam één van de bedelaars tot de koning. ‘Koning,’ zei de bedelaar, ‘ik heb gehoord wat er gebeurd is. Ik kom uit een ver land, maar ik heb een lange tijd onder de grond gewoond, en eens zag ik de heks met haar toverbeker langskomen. Ik volgde haar, en ze kwam in een bron van licht, waar ze onzichtbaar werd. Zo ging ik ook naar de bron, en in een bliksemschicht stond ik bovenop de toren waar u zonen gevangen worden gehouden. Ze waren inderdaad de meest afschuwelijke wachters geworden, en marcheerden gevaarlijk rond. Maar ze konden mij niet zien, omdat ik onzichtbaar was. De toverbeker was verdwenen, omdat de heks daarmee onder de grond was, maar het toverbordje dat altijd vol was stond daar, en ik nam ervan, en steeg op in de lucht. Hoever ik gekomen ben weet ik niet, maar ik was zo hoog waar nog geen mens ooit was gekomen. Hier kwam ik in een wereld waar de meest wonderlijke sprookjesfiguren waren. Zij vertelden mij dat uw zonen geheime sprookjes in zich droegen die nog nooit waren verteld. De betovering zou worden verbroken wanneer die sprookjes zouden worden verteld.’

Toen liet de koning de beste sprookjesvertellers van het land komen, om zoveel mogelijk sprookjes te verzamelen en te vertellen, maar er gebeurde niets. Toen liet de koning de bedelaar weer terugkomen, en vroeg hem waar onder de grond die lichtbron was. De koning zond toen tien lakeien met de bedelaar mee. De koning hoopte dat zijn lakeien de prinsen konden bevrijden. Maar de heks wachtte hen al op. In een lichtflits betoverde ze de lakeien in stenen wachters die de lichtbron moesten bewaken, maar de bedelaar zag de toverbeker staan, greep de beker en dronk ervan, terwijl hij nog dieper onder de grond kon reizen. Na een lange tijd kwam de bedelaar in een sprookjesrijk zo diep onder de grond waar geen mens ooit was geweest. Hoe diep het was, wist hij niet, maar er waren hier wonderlijke sprookjeswezens. Zij vertelden dat zij eens samenleefden met de sprookjeswereld boven de lucht, maar de heks had het rijk verscheurd. In de lichtbron verborg de heks sprookjes, en de twee sprookjeswerelden zouden weer bij elkaar komen als die verborgen sprookjes zouden worden verteld.

Weer ging de bedelaar naar de koning, en weer liet de koning de beste sprookjesvertellers komen, en ook de beste sprookjesvertellers uit andere landen, maar er gebeurde weer niets. Maar toen kreeg de bedelaar een idee. Hij had nu immers zowel het toverbordje als de toverbeker. Met het toverbordje kon hij nu de toverbeker naar het rijk boven de lucht brengen, en dan zouden zij met de toverbeker naar het rijk onder de grond kunnen gaan. Vanaf die dag werd er heel wat heen en weer gereisd, en ze vertelden elkaar de wonderlijkste sprookjes. Niet lang daarna marcheerden de stenen lakeien en de wachters van de toren naar de dichtstbijzijnde stad, en begonnen de sprookjes te vertellen. Langzaam maar zeker verbrak de betovering, en de koning kon zijn dertig zonen en zijn tien lakeien weer in de armen nemen.

Olifantensoep

"Dag mijnheer, gaat u daar maar alvast zitten. Wij zullen u de olifantsoep zo opdienen. Doet u maar alvast uw schietgebedje, en schrijft u uw laatste woorden maar alvast op voor uw familie, en strooi alvast wat zout op uw hoofd."

- "Pardon, waar is dat goed voor ? Ik heb mijn soep graag zonder zout, en wat u daarvoor allemaal zei moet een grapje wezen."

"Nee nee, u begrijpt ons verkeerd. De olifantensoep eet u graag met wat zout."

- "Helemaal niet, ik wil zoutloze olifantensoep."

"Nee nee, alweer verkeerd begrepen, mijnheer. Wij bedoelen dat de olifantensoep u graag lust met zout. De olifantensoep, daar gaat het om, niet u. Het is uw laatste kwartier, dus geen praatjes maken nu. Hier wordt de olifantensoep niet gegeten. Alleen de olifantensoep zelf eet."

- "Wel potverdrie, wat is dat voor een belachelijke tent hier ? Ik neem aan dat de olifant dood en gesneden in de soep ligt ?"

"Nee nee, mijnheer, nu niet beledigend doen naar de olifant, en al helemaal niet naar de soep. De soep eet u, niet andersom. Ik hoop dat dat nu duidelijk is."

- "Ober, u bent een klier. Wat een grapjas bent u, zeg. Dit is mijn laatste kwartier ? Dan is dit uw laatste vrije dag, want ik ga zo naar de politie om u te laten arresteren."

"Mijnheer, de politie in deze stad arresteert niet, maar kan alleen gearresteerd worden. U had uzelf beter moeten informeren voordat u naar Hendrik Ido Ambacht zou komen."

- "En wie verricht dan de arrestaties, ober ? De kok ?"

"Nee, de olifantensoep."

- "Hè bah, wat een flauwe mop."

"Het is geen mop. U had hier niet moeten komen. U komt hier nooit meer weg. In dit restaurant zijn alleen ingangen, geen uitgangen."

- "Wat een belachelijk restaurant dan, ober."

"Ach ja, ergens moeten de rollen toch omgedraaid zijn ?"

- "Ober, u verpest mijn hele dag met uw flauwe grappen. Daar heb ik nu allemaal geen tijd voor. Kunnen we even ter zake komen ? Doet u mij maar een broodje gezond in plaats van olifantensoep. Of moet ik dat ook met mijn leven bekopen ?"

"Ik zal erover nadenken. Dan moet u wel een hele goede reden hebben."

- "Goede reden, ober ? Ik ben geen crimineel. Toe, geef me gewoon dat broodje gezond, dan is deze onzin afgelopen. Wat is er gebeurt met de stelling : de klant is koning ?"

"Die stelling is hier nooit geweest, mijnheer. De klant is hier geen koning, maar een dief."

- "U bent een verschrikkelijke ober. Ik wil een andere ober, nu. Ik heb geen tijd voor al deze onzin."

"De andere obers zijn nog wel erger dan ik. U heeft het maar getroffen met zo'n ober als ik."

- "Ik geloof er helemaal niks van, ober. Hoe kunnen ze nu erger zijn dan dit ?"

"Nou, gewoon, ze leggen direct de loop van een geweer in uw nek. Dat heb ik nog niet bij u gedaan. Dat moet nog komen."

- "Nog komen ? Zeg ober, bent u nu helemaal gek geworden. Zo benader je geen klanten."

"Klanten, mijnheer ? Zeg maar gerust zware misdadigers."

- "Wat heb ik misdaan ?"

"U kunt beter vragen wat u niet heeft gedaan."

- "Ober, u kent mij niet. U weet niets van mij af, dus bespaar me al deze vooroordelen."

"Ik weet alles van u af, mijnheer. Ik ken u door en door. U staat schuldig. Ik weet genoeg."

- "En hoe weet u dat allemaal ?"

"Ik ben niet dom, en ook niet gek. Uw hele leven heb ik al spionnen om u heengezet. Dit restaurant houd iedereen in de gaten. En nu bent u hier, omdat het ons wel welletjes werd."

- "Ober, u heeft waarschijnlijk uw dag niet. Niemand heeft mij gevolgd, en niemand heeft mij hier naartoe gebracht. Het is mijn eigen keuze geweest, en ik vertrek ook weer op eigen keuze."

"Mijnheer, zoals ik u al uitlegde vertrekt niemand hier. U bent hier op de juiste plaats, en op het juiste moment, voor het juiste gerecht. Denkt u nu echt dat u uzelf kunt vertrouwen ?"

- "Ober, neem wat rust. Misschien dat het morgen beter gaat. Dit heb ik niet verdiend, en ik heb ook geen strafblad. Misschien bent u met iemand anders in de war."

"Nee nee, mijnheer. Zo makkelijk komt u niet van ons af. Het is ons restaurant, dus wij bepalen de regels. Ik vergis me zeer zeker niet. Ik heb alles nauwkeurig bijgehouden."

- "Goed ober, ik zal u betalen voor uw tijd, en dan vertrek ik hier. Dit is niet langer uit te houden. Hoe haalt u het allemaal in uw hoofd."

"Mijnheer, nu geen politietje spelen. U bent hier in een restaurant, niet op het politie bureau, en trouwens hier doet de politie zulke dingen niet, dus ik zou maar ophouden als ik u was. De klant betaalt hier ook niet, maar wij betalen uw begrafenis. Lief, hè ?"

- "Ober, nu moet u ophouden, anders ga ik geweld gebruiken. Ik wil hier nu weg."

"Er wordt hier geen geweld gebruikt door klanten. U kunt er alleen over dromen. Dat is nog net niet strafbaar."

- "Nou, dat valt me weer mee dan. Kunnen we nu stoppen ?"

"Stoppen ? We zijn net begonnen."

- "Ja, maar dit is echt te belachelijk voor woorden. En er komt nog meer ? Ik heb zo een afspraak."

"Wij betalen uw begrafenis en regelen uw afspraakjes. Wij zullen ook al uw papieren regelen, terwijl u naar de hel gaat. Mooi geregeld, toch ?"

- "Hel ? Ben ik hier nu in de kerk gekomen ofzo ? En waarom niet naar de hemel ?"

"Mijnheer, u bent een gevaarlijke crimineel. Zelfs de hel is nog te goed voor u, maar ziet u, wij zijn de slechtsten nog niet."

- "Dan ga ik nu naar een ander restaurant. Dit kan echt niet waar zijn."

"Andere restauranten in Hendrik Ido Ambacht zijn nog wel erger dan die van ons."

- "Nog erger ? Hoe is het mogelijk."

"U zult het nooit uitvinden, mijnheer. Uw reis stopt hier."

- "En de hel is zeker jullie smerige achtertuin ?"

"Nu niet beledigend gaan doen, mijnheer. Daar maakt u het alleen maar erger mee."

De klant verliest nu echt zijn geduld, en slaat de ober neer. "Breng hem maar naar het ziekenhuis. Ik ben er klaar mee. Ik heb lang genoeg mijn geduld bewaard !" roept de klant hysterisch van woede.

Een lange ober in een witte jas komt toesnellen. "In het ziekenhuis liggen alleen dokters. De patiënten moeten de dokters opereren," spreekt de lange ober traag.

"Dat kan deze patiënt niet," spreekt de klant. "Ik heb hem tegen de vlakte geslagen. Zelfverdediging."

"Hij doet geen vlieg kwaad," sprak de lange ober. "Hij heeft alleen een hele grote mond. En dreigen, hè, veel dreigen."

"Maar waarom ontsla je hem dan niet ?" vroeg de klant.

"Sorry, dat kunnen de werkers van het restaurant niet, ontslaan," sprak de lange ober traag. "Dat kunnen alleen de klanten."

"Dan zijn jullie nu beiden op staande voet ontslagen !" bulderde de woeste, schuimbekkende klant.

"Heeft hij u niet verteld dat de andere obers nog wel erger zijn ?" vroeg de lange ober.

"Ja, dat zei hij inderdaad," brieste de klant. "Jullie zijn allemaal ontslagen ! Ik ontsla dit hele restaurant !"

"Maar heeft hij u niet verteld dat de andere restauranten nog wel erger zijn dan dit restaurant ?" vroeg de lange ober.

"Dat heeft hij zeker," brulde de klant, zo woest als een leeuw.

"En heeft hij u er dan niet bijgezegd, dat wanneer dit restaurant dichtgaat er nog wel tien andere restauranten in de plaats worden geopend, wel tien maal erger dan dit restaurant ?" vroeg de lange ober.

"Nee, dat niet, dat niet," brulde de klant, "maar wie zegt dat ik dat moet geloven ? En ik kom hier nooit meer in Hendrik Ido Ambacht !"

"Jammer dat we u zien gaan," sprak de lange ober.

"En u gaat ook," brieste de klant. "Pak uw spullen, en vertrek. U bent ontslagen. Ik verklaar dit restaurant gesloten, eens en voor altijd."

"U vergeet uw olifantensoep," sprak de lange ober.

Een verschrikkelijk monster kwam aanrennen en slokte de klant op.
In één hap !

"Dat was op het nippertje," sprak de lange ober traag. "Nou, Loofhaar, we kunnen hier nog steeds blijven werken, jongen, dankzij de olifantensoep," terwijl hij de gevallen ober helpt op te staan.

"Ja," sprak de andere ober. "Ik wist dat we met dit recept geen verkeerde keuze hadden gemaakt. Tegenwoordig denken mensen dat ze zomaar van alles kunnen eten."

Doosje met
Geheimen

Met zijn voet was hij getrapt in een stuk glas wat op de bodem lag van het natuurmeer. Als troost mocht hij logeren bij zijn oud-tante, samen met zijn broertje. Maar er woonde een heel vervelend meisje bij zijn oud-tante in de flat die hem altijd plaagde. Ondanks dat had hij het reuze naar zijn zin bij zijn oud-tante, en vooral de lift van het flatgebouw vond hij heel interessant. Op een dag kwamen hij en zijn broertje vast te zitten in de lift. Zijn broertje drukte op de alarm knop. Het vervelende meisje kwam toen voor het raampje staan en riep : 'Laten we hen er maar in laten. Dan leren ze het af om telkens met de lift te spelen.' Hij was heel bang en had buikpijn. Even later kwamen er een oude vrouw en een man. De oude vrouw was erg boos, maar de man tilde hen eruit.

Bij zijn oud-tante gingen ze veel kaarten. Dan kwam er soms ook een vriendin van de oud-tante voor een avondje kaarten. Haar stopwoorden waren : 'Je zit de boel te verzieken,' als ze het aan het verliezen was, en ook zei ze telkens : 'Oh moeder, wat een piene, piene, piene.' Als de oud-tante er niet doorheen kwam met haar kaarten, dan zei ze vaak : 'Het is weer bar en boos.' Hij onthoudde deze zinnetjes voor als hij het vervelende meisje tegenkwam die hem altijd plaagde. Telkens als hij het meisje tegenkwam of aan haar dacht, was het weer net alsof hij met zijn voet in het glas trapte. Ook voelde het alsof hij in de brandnetels werd geduwd. Het was als een gemeen insect wat hem stak, dieper en dieper, maar toen de logeerpartij voorbij was en hij weer naar school moest was hij haar alweer snel vergeten. Misschien had ze dan toch niet diep genoeg gestoken, anders zouden ze beiden sterven.

Het jaar erop ging hij weer, maar ditmaal alleen. Ze was zo anders geworden, vriendelijker. Maar hij wist dat hij op zijn hoede moest zijn. Ze nodigde hem uit om naar haar kamer te komen. Heel voorzichtig stemde hij toe, om haar toch een kans te geven. Ze liet hem een souvenier zien, een vreemd ding uit een ver land. 'Niet aanraken, hoor,' zei ze.

'Wat is het ?' vroeg hij.

Ze zweeg. 'Ik kan er niet over praten,' zei ze toen.

Hij bleef maar kijken naar het ding. 'Komt het uit het bos ?' vroeg hij.

'Alsjeblieft, stop erover,' zei ze.

'Maar dan had je het me niet moeten laten zien,' zei hij.

'Ga maar weer weg,' zei ze. Ze was ineens niet meer zo vriendelijk. Toen is hij maar gegaan. Ze wilde hem klaarblijkelijk dus wat laten zien wat hij niet begreep.

Het was eigenlijk een hele vervelende opmerking van zijn oudtante die maakte dat hij er niet meer wilde komen. Het jaar erop ging hij niet meer. Hij had verder nog wel goede herinneringen aan de logeerpartijen, dus ze had niet diep genoeg gestoken, anders zouden ze beiden sterven. Ze stuurde hem zo nu en dan nog kaarten, en hij schreef ook heel soms terug. Tot zijn grote verbazing kreeg hij op een dag ook een brief van het meisje. Het was een hele geheimzinnige brief, en hij voelde een kracht die hij nog niet kende, iets heel dieps binnenin. Ze wilde dat hij voor haar zou vechten. Ze zei dat ze een doosje had gekregen met iets erin, weer een souvenier uit een ander land, wat zo sterk zou zijn dat het heel Nederland zou kunnen veroveren. Het maakte hem heel nieuwsgierig. Hij schreef terug en vroeg wat er in het doosje zat. Ze schreef terug dat het een geheimpje was. Hij zou maar moeten komen. Met de trein ging hij naar haar toe. Ze was blij hem te zien en omhelsde hem. Op haar kamer liet ze hem het doosje zien. 'Hier, maak maar open,' zei ze. Hij nam het doosje en opende het. Er zat een briefje in waarop stond : 'Gefopt. Ik wilde je alleen maar zien.'

'Flauw hoor,' lachte hij. Ze was verder wel aardiger dan vroeger, wat volwassener geworden. Het jaar erop kwam ze bij hem logeren, en nog steeds ging alles goed. Ze besloten zelfs te trouwen. Maar tot een huwelijk is het nooit gekomen, want op een dag was ze spoorloos vermist en is nooit meer teruggevonden. Ditmaal was hij diep genoeg gestoken. Hij voelde zich van binnen sterven, en wist ook dat zij diep genoeg gestoken was dit keer om te sterven, maar wie dit op zijn geweten had en hen te diep gestoken had zou hierdoor zelf ook sterven. Alleen er was geen enkel spoor. Het was in die dagen dat hij weer besloot te logeren bij zijn oud-tante. Ze hadden inmiddels haar nare opmerking uitgepraat. Zijn oud-tante moest hem ook nog wat anders opbiechten. Ze had een afscheidsbrief gehad van het meisje, maar ze had erbij gezet dat ze het aan niemand mocht vertellen. Eerst wilde ze zich daaraan houden, maar toen ze zag hoe hij er aan onder doorging moest ze wel ingrijpen. Er stond in dat het leven niks voor haar was, en dat ze het bos in zou gaan in haar trouwjurk die ze voor het huwelijk had klaargemaakt. Ze zou dan net zo lang doorlopen totdat ze bij een bosrivier of bosmeer zou komen, en zou haarzelf daarin laten wegglijden.

Hij begon te jammeren. 'Maar waarom, waarom ?'

'Ik weet het niet,' zei ze. 'Ze had nogal vreemde dingen op haar kamer staan, hele duistere dingen, die kreeg ze van een oom die naar allerlei verre landen ging. Die oom zou haar ook soms hebben bedreigd, en hij heeft nog wel ergere dingen gedaan waar ze nooit over wilde praten.'

'Zou het doorgestoken kaart zijn, die brief ?' jammerde hij. 'We hebben nu in ieder geval een spoor.'

'Zou je eens aan haar grootmoeder moeten vragen,' zei ze, 'die kent haar het best. Ze woont ook hier op de flat.'

Zo gezegd zo gedaan. Zijn oudtante regelde een afspraak met de grootmoeder van het meisje, en al snel konden ze daar beiden een avondje komen.

'Ze zei dat ik het aan niemand mocht vertellen,' zei haar grootmoeder, 'maar haar oom heeft haar enkele keren verkracht. Toen ze klein was, en ook toen ze wat ouder was, en hij heeft haar ook bedreigd met een mes en gechanteerd. Ik denk dat het daar mee heeft te maken, dat ze er niet meer mee kon leven.'

Hij begon weer te jammeren. 'Zou ze nog leven ?' vroeg hij. Op dat moment kwam de oom van het meisje binnen. Hij had een getrokken pistool. 'Alle sporen van haar moeten uitgewist worden,' zei hij, terwijl hij schoot. En hij bleef maar schieten. De jongen en zijn oudtante gingen zo snel

mogelijk het huis uit, hevig bloedend. Zijn oudtante wilde terug naar haar flatwoning lopen, maar zo ver kwamen ze niet meer. Ergens halverwege zakten ze in elkaar. Het laatste waaraan de jongen kon denken was aan de vreemde souveniers van het meisje.

Einde

De Eeuwige Oorlogen

Het Knor-Gesticht was een boot op een ijszee. Het was een stad op een boot, een stad van bannelingen. Als iemand probeerde te ontsnappen vielen ze te pletter in de ijszee. Er was geen ontsnapping uit het Knor Gesticht. De randen van het schip waren zeer glad. Niet velen durfden zich daar te wagen. Alleen als je welonderwezen was in de poëzie van het geheim. Door het op de juiste tijd, op de juiste plaats en in de juiste volgorde en verhouding de poëzie op te prevelen kon je niet van de rand afglijden. Alleen waaghalzen waagden zich daar. Hij moest er niet aan denken. Hij was veel te onzeker. Hij had de poëzie van het geheim nog lang niet onder de knie. De poëzie kon je ergens in de stad op het schip kopen, maar er werd zeer vaag over gedaan. Sommige oude vrouwtjes brouwden het in hun ketels in duistere winkeltjes. Je moest er veel voor betalen. Het koste je een arm of een been, of je raakte verlamd. En dat zou de ontsnapping wezen ? Hij wist het niet. Hij zag de waaghalzen op de randen, getooid met onverklaarbare poëzie, en hij kon maar niet zien wat het was, en wat deden ze daar ? Probeerden ze te ontsnappen ? Het Knor Gesticht was een politieke gevangenis voor ballingen, maar ook daklozen kwamen er al gauw terecht en zij die te ziek waren om te werken. Ook allerlei soort tuig kwam er terecht, zoals moeilijk opvoedbare kinderen en criminelen. Ook dieren kwamen er vaak terecht. Het Knor Gesticht werd geheel geleid door hen van het Knor Gesticht, zij die daar ook eens terecht waren gekomen, en zich hadden opgewerkt hogerop, maar zij bleven onderdeel van het Knor Gesticht. Hij vroeg zich af waar het schip naartoe ging in deze ijszee. Moest hij nu echt zijn lichaamsdelen en organen verkopen voor wat poëzie ? Maar ja, raadselachtige poëzie, wat bescherming zou bieden en misschien een soort van ontsnappingsplan. En hoe ver moest je gaan ? Sommige waaghalzen hadden geen armen meer, en sommigen hadden zelfs geen armen en benen meer. Wat was dit voor zotte idioterie ? Hij vroeg zich af of er een andere manier was. Misschien was de poëzie van het geheim wel een doodlopende weg, maar hij wist het niet, en dat maakte hem ook onzeker en op zijn hoede, altijd maar weer. Vrouwtjes probeerden hem erin te praten om het te doen, maar wat als het een valstrik was ? Wat als hij in iets nog ergers terecht zou komen dan het Knor Gesticht ? Was er eigenlijk wel iets ergers dan het Knor Gesticht ? In ieder geval zat hij hier vast. Eens ging hij deze stad binnen om iemand te helpen, maar hij mocht de stad niet meer verlaten. Hij bezocht iemand van het Knor Gesticht, maar voordat hij het wist zagen ze hem aan voor een bewoner ervan. Deze stad was levensgevaarlijk, dit schip.

Waar gingen ze naartoe ? Op de randen droop het ijs. Hij moest er niet aan denken in de ijszee te vallen, maar dit hier was ook niks. Hij wist dat in het leven niks vrijblijvend was. Alles had zo z'n gevolgen. Wilde je iemand helpen, dan werd je meegetrokken, in hetzelfde lot als degene die je wilde helpen. Daar was hij nu wel achter gekomen. Maar hij moest het doen. Hij zag in hoe ze hem hier nodig hadden, hoe ze hier totaal wanhopig aan hun lot waren overgeleverd.

Op een dag wist hij het zeker : Hij moest en zou drinken van de poëzie van het geheim, anders zou hij hier gek worden. Hij ging naar een ketelvrouw die wat van het spul brouwde, in een klein winkeltje, een bazar, een toko. Hij keek zijn ogen uit, en toen staarde hij direct naar het spul, wat groenig was en borrelde. Er steek vreemde groenachtige rook vanaf als in slierten. Hij stak zijn vinger uit naar de vrouw : 'Hak er maar af voor een beetje van dit spul.'

'Voor je oog krijg je het dubbele,' kraste het vrouwtje. 'Drink er maar goed van, jongen, want je wilt niet halverwege tot de ontdekking komen dat je er te weinig van hebt genomen.'

'Waarom niet ?' vroeg hij.

'Omdat zij die te weinig hebben op de rand er vanaf glijden,' kraste het vrouwtje, terwijl ze in de ketel roerde.

'Kom, neem wat jongen,' zei ze.

Hij kwam dichterbij. Hij keek naar het fonkelende groene spul. 'Toe maar,' zei het vrouwtje.

'Mag ik wat proberen ?' vroeg hij.

'Steek je vinger er maar in, en lik maar,' zei ze, 'omdat jij het bent, en daarna kun je beslissen.'

Hij stak zijn vinger erin, en stopte toen. Hij aarzelde. 'Brengt het geen ongeluk ?' vroeg hij.

'Zeer zeker,' zei het vrouwtje. 'Als je alleen maar proeft en het daar bij laat, dan brengt het ongeluk, groot ongeluk.'

'Laat maar,' zei hij, terwijl hij het winkeltje weer uitliep. Hij keek naar zijn vinger waarop het groene spul zat. Hij durfde er niet van te proeven. Hij pakte een flesje wat aan zijn riem hing, en stopte het in het flesje. Toen ging hij naar een volgend winkeltje en deed precies hetzelfde. Aan het einde van de dag had hij een flink flesje vol met het kleverige spul. 'Vele beetjes maken een hoop,' zei hij tegen zichzelf en begon er toen van te drinken. Hij wandelde als een beschonkene door de stad, maar hij zag geen ballingen meer, maar bewapende vrouwen.

'Wat is hier aan de hand !' riep hij. Het schuim stond op zijn mond.

'Geef hem het geheim van Kraal !' werd er geroepen.

Hij keek om zich heen en zag geen stad meer, maar een wildernis.

'Hij is over de rand gegaan !' werd er geroepen.

Hij raasde en tierde als een wilde. 'Waar ben ik !' gromde hij. Toen zag hij een flits als van bliksem en viel op de grond. Hij werd wakker voor een troon waar een wilde vrouw opzat. 'Heb je van de dichtersmede genomen ?' vroeg de vrouw.

'Ja,' gromde hij. 'Ik ben niet meer dezelfde. Ik ben niet meer op dezelfde plek.'

'Je bent de rand over gegaan,' zei de vrouw.

'M... maar dat kan toch niet,' stamelde hij. 'Daar is de ijszee.'

'Nee,' zei de vrouw, 'zij die van de dichtersmede drinken komen tot ons.'

'Wie bent u ?' vroeg hij.

Maar de vrouw was alweer verdwenen. Hij voelde zichzelf wegzakken in bitter ijs. 'Waar zijn jullie dan ?' riep hij.

'Zij die te weinig hebben komen niet ver !' werd er geroepen.

'Hoe kom ik aan meer !' riep hij terug.

'Je kent de weg,' werd er dichtbij hem gefluisterd. Toen werd hij met een hard voorwerp geslagen en stortte bewusteloos neer. Hij was helemaal verlamd en werd op een tafel gelegd.

'Die kan niet meer ontsnappen,' werd gezegd.

'Waar ben ik,' prevelde hij even later.

'In het Knor Gesticht,' werd er gezegd, maar hij zag niets. Alles was zwart voor zijn ogen.

'Waarom ?' vroeg hij. 'Ik heb van de dichtersmede gedronken.'

'Te weinig, en niet genoeg betaald, dus we hebben het je betaald gezet,' werd er gezegd.

'Ik kan niet opkomen,' zei hij. Toen was het weer alsof hij van de dichtersmede dronk.

Weer zag hij vrouwen, gewapend. 'Waar ben ik ?' vroeg hij.

'Bij Odin, G'Odin,' werd er gezegd. 'Je hebt van Haar mede gedronken. G'Odin is de aanvoerster van de walkuren.'

Hij keek de vrouwen één voor één aan. 'Ben ik opgenomen ?' vroeg hij.

'Neergenomen,' zeiden ze. Toen gaven ze hem nog meer mede. Hoe meer hij dronk hoe donkerder de vrouwen waren.

'Hoe komt het dat jullie steeds donkerder worden ?' vroeg hij.

'Zij die niet van de dichtersmede hebben genomen zijn vergiftigd en zien dingen die er niet zijn,' zeiden ze.

Hoe meer hij van de dichtersmede dronk hoe meer hij erachter kwam dat het een shamaanse drank was waardoor hij dieper in de onderwereld kwam, en waardoor zijn ogen meer en meer geopend werden. Zij die er niet van hadden gedronken sliepen slechts.

Hij kwam in de motor kamer van het schip. De vrouwen waren slechts onderdelen van de motor, als

de godinnen van de seconden. Hij keek naar de prachtig glanzende motor, als geheel ingevet. Het had een prachtige roodbruinige kleur en was heel groot. Daar raasde het ding woest.

'Nog een slokje,' dacht hij. Hij probeerde dichterbij de motor te komen, maar het leek alsof er glas omheen zat. 'Geef me nog een slokje,' zei hij. Hij bedelde bijna. 'Wie ontsnapt er uit het Knor Gesticht ?' zong iemand. 'Wie oh wie ?' Hij greep naar de motor, maar hij greep mis vanwege het glas, alsof iets hem wegduwde, onverbiddelijk, en alsof een slang naar hem blies en hem beet. Hij was gebeten, maar door wat ?'

'Drink nu, drink,' werd er gefluisterd.

Hij voelde het bloed in zijn mond en dronk ervan. Hij voelde zich van binnen bloeden en was duizelig en waggelde. Toen stortte hij neer. Hij zag zichzelf wegglijden.

'Hij heeft geen sleutel voor de motor,' werd er gefluisterd, 'geen ijssleutel'.

'I... ik betaal alles voor die sleutel,' stamelde hij. Hij hoorde gelach. Hij zag zich wegglijden en bevond zich weer in de stad van het Knor Gesticht. De bewoners keken hem vreemd aan, en sommigen lachten, alsof ze hem bespotten. 'Waarom lach je ?' riep hij. Maar ze zeiden niets.

'Ik moet meer van die mede hebben, meer, meer,' zei hij, terwijl hij een winkeltje inliep. Een oud vrouwtje roerde in de ketel waar het pruttelende groene sap in was. 'Nee,' zei het vrouwtje, 'niet weer.'

'Waarom niet ?' vroeg hij. Ze wees op zijn gezicht, alsof ze naar iets op zijn voorhoofd keek, en schudde haar hoofd. 'Zij die teveel hebben gedronken dragen het groene teken op hun voorhoofden, en zij zullen er nooit meer van drinken. Zij zijn verdoemd !' kraste het vrouwtje.

Hij strompelde het winkeltje uit en probeerde het bij een ander winkeltje maar kreeg hetzelfde te horen. 'Ik heb het spul toch echt nodig,' dacht hij bij zichzelf. Hij ging terug. 'Alsjeblieft, ik geef er alles voor,' zei hij, maar het vrouwtje was onverbiddelijk.

'Wat betekent het dat ik verdoemd ben ?' vroeg hij.

'Jij gulzigaard !' tierde zij. Niemand sprak meer met hem. Hij werd door iedereen uitgescholden of uitgelachen, allemaal vanwege het groene teken op zijn voorhoofd. Pas na lange tijd begon het minder te worden, want ze begonnen eraan gewend te raken en negeerden hem gewoon. En zo leefde hij voort op het schip van het Knor Gesticht, altijd terugverlangende naar de dagen dat hij de dichtersmede dronk. Hij werd ouder en ouder, en ook zijn herinneringen aan de dichtersmede begonnen te vervormen. Op een dag kwam hij iemand tegen die hetzelfde groene teken op zijn voorhoofd scheen te hebben, maar die persoon had het er zelf opgeverfd. Hij zuchtte. Hij voelde zich alleen en hopeloos verloren. Diep in zijn hart wist hij dat hij hier niet hoorde, maar dat hij alleen maar wilde helpen, maar waar had het hem gebracht ? Zelfs door de mede-bannelingen werd hij als een onderschepsel behandeld.

Op een dag legde het schip ergens aan. Hij werd ergens in een gezin geadopteerd. Ze keken hem vreemd aan vanwege het groene teken op zijn voorhoofd, maar wisten niet wat het betekende. Hij probeerde het hen uit te leggen, maar ze spraken een andere taal. Er werd hier volop van de dichtersmede gedronken, maar hij mocht het niet hebben, want hij was een vreemdeling. Toch was het voor hem goed om even ergens anders te zijn. Het bleek maar van korte duur, want iedereen moest toen weer terug naar het schip, ook hij. Het was een korte vakantie geweest. Ook die herinnering bleef bij hem, en hij dacht er vaak over na.

Vooral 's nachts verlangde hij ernaar om van de dichtersmede te drinken, en dan zwierf hij door de stad. Op een nacht werd hij gebeten door een hond, en even had hij weer het gevoel alsof hij van de dichtersmede dronk. Telkens als hij flashbacks had leek het alsof hij ervan dronk. De herinneringen waren als flessen in zijn hoofd. Er stonden allerlei vreemde etiketten op.

Hij had het groene teken op zijn voorhoofd, wat betekende dat hij een geisoleerde was. Nooit kon hij ergens lang blijven. Het groene teken had hem rusteloos gemaakt. Altijd moest hij zwerven. Nooit was hij ergens echt thuis. Op een dag vond hij een nieuw winkeltje in de stad. Er ging zacht groen licht vanuit, bijna gelig. Hij stapte binnen, en zag anderen met het groene teken op hun voorhoofd. 'Wat wordt hier verkocht ?' vroeg hij. Maar niemand antwoordde. Het leek wel alsof ze te ver heen waren, en hij kon er geen contact mee maken. Toen is hij maar weer weggegaan.

Op een dag viel een jongen hem aan op straat. Hij werd door de jongen weer meegesleurd naar het nieuwe winkeltje. De jongen deed zijn muts af en had ook een groen teken op zijn voorhoofd. Hij vroeg de jongen wat hij moest, maar de jongen sprak tot hem in een vreemde taal die hij niet begreep. Hij trok zijn schouders op. 'Ik versta je niet,' zei hij. Toen kreeg hij een klap in zijn gezicht.

'Wat moet ik doen ?' vroeg hij. De jongen liet hem toen een vreemde zachtgroene steen zien. Iemand anders zei : 'Dat is de steen der nachtmerries.' De jongen begon met de steen op hem te wrijven. 'Wat moet ik ermee ?' vroeg hij. Weer begon de jongen in de vreemde taal te spreken.

'Hij bedoelt dat het jouw steen is, jouw talisman,' zei de andere persoon.

Hij nam de steen aan van de jongen. De steen voelde warm aan. Plotseling verkrampte hij. Er ging een vreemde scheut door zijn arm en hij viel neer. 'Zo krachtig is het,' zei de andere persoon.

Hij had van schrik de steen losgelaten, maar raapte de steen weer op en stond op. 'Wat doet het ?' vroeg hij.

'Het leidt de weg door de stad,' zei de andere persoon.

De steen gaf een vreemd groen licht af wat begon te seinen, alsof het zijn eigen taal sprak.

'Ik versta de signalen van de steen nog niet,' zei hij.

'Dat komt nog wel,' zei de andere persoon. 'Je moet nu weggaan, anders komt er kortsluiting.'

Hij rende de winkel uit met de steen. Hij kon de steen niet meer wegleggen. Nu moest de steen gaan waar het wilde gaan, en hij moest volgen. De steen kende de weg door deze zware stad, kende alle sleutels en sloten. Nu moest hij de taal van de steen leren. Zijn nachtmerries waren een medicijn wat hij nog niet kende. Hij wist niet hoe hij het moest gebruiken, en het maakte hem overstuur en wanhopig.

Heel diep in het Knor Gesticht lag het medicijn. Hij moest veel dieper in het schip. In lagere verdiepingen kwam hij tot een zaal waar grote groene machines stonden. In de machines stonden robotten van een nieuwe medische orde. Het was daar waar het medische systeem samensmolt met het politie systeem. Hij had zo lang onder deze samensmelting geleden, wat een samensmelting was met een derde element, namelijk het criminele systeem, wat ervoor zorgde dat het Knor Gesticht ontstond. Maar de steen der nachtmerries begon te piepen. De steen wilde het derde element vervangen. Hij moest de steen tegen de groene machines aanleggen, en zo begonnen er dingen te veranderen. De steen was een programmeur. Hij had totaal geen controle of macht over de steen. De

steen deed wat het wil, en hij kon alleen maar toekijken. Zo begon het ware medicijn uit de machines te komen, maar wat was het ? Het proefde als mint. Hij zag alles van een afstand, alsof er glas om hem heen was. Hij was nog steeds de geisoleerde. En robotten kwamen voort vanuit de groene machines, en het glas werd dikker en dikker. Hij had immers het groene teken op zijn voorhoofd. De robotten werden tot vrouwen die zich ontkleden en een dans opvoerden.

Het was alsof het medicijn klotste in zijn hoofd, alsof hij zelf het medicijn was. Hij realiseerde dat hij de geisoleerde van G'Odin was. Hij was diep neergenomen. De Medi Mind begon in hem te ontwaken. Zonder het Knor Gesticht zou hij hier nooit gekomen zijn. Maar toen hij het medicijn had genomen werd hij opgenomen in een vurige strijdwagen, en hij zag de Medi Wars, en hij werd deel van een leger. Allen hadden zij het groene teken op hun voorhoofd, maar dit begon steeds roder te worden. Hij was in een nieuwe ontwaking, die van de medische oorlogen.

Einde

De Gezichten van Mallemoe

Mallemoe had vele gezichten, en ik wist niet welk gezicht ik ditmaal zou aantreffen als ik thuis zou komen. Ik was op weg naar huis. Ik zat in de bus, dichtbij de chauffeur, en we hadden een gesprek. Onderweg moesten we bij een station stoppen, en daar kocht ik nog even een strippenkaart erbij, want ik had meer strippen nodig om thuis te kunnen komen. Ik kocht een vijf strippen kaart. Dat zou wel voldoende zijn volgens de chauffeur, alhoewel hij niet eens wist waar mijn straat was toen ik hem de straatnaam gaf. De chauffeur moest ook nog even wat op het station doen, dus er was nog wel tijd. Ik ging een trap op en kwam ergens aan op een hogere verdieping. Ik raakte in gevecht met een blonde vrouw. Ze rende zo vanuit een terrasje van een café op deze verdieping op me af en begon op me in te slaan. Daar kon ik niet tegen en moest haar tegen de vlakte slaan. Ik kende de vrouw niet. Ik dacht dat ze te diep in het glaasje had gekeken. Ik herinnerde me de gezichten van Mallemoe. Ik kon ook gewoon een trein pakken hier, en dan ergens anders naartoe.

Ik liep weer terug op de verdieping, richting de trap, maar toen zag ik een gebroken beeldje liggen op de grond. Het ene deel was een huisje met een hondje, en het andere deel was een jongetje. Ik legde de twee delen tegen elkaar aan en vond het een prachtig beeldje. Al snel stond er een groep mensen om me heen die me geld begonnen te bieden voor het beeldje. Ik zei dat ik dat niet kon doen, want Mallemoe zou me dat zeker betaald zetten. Er was ook iemand anders bij die precies hetzelfde beeldje uit zijn tas haalde, maar dan heel. Misschien dat de beeldjes ergens dichtbij verkocht werden ? Maar waarom waren al die mensen dan om me heen die mijn gebroken beeldje

wilden kopen ? Voor mij was het een raadsel, een raadsel zoals Mallemoe was.

Ik stopte het gebroken beeldje in mijn schooltas en ging terug naar de bus. Even later was ik thuis, maar Mallemoe was niet blij. Ik vroeg Mallemoe om de lijm, om het beeldje te lijmen, maar ik kreeg het niet van haar. Mallemoe was het allemaal zat. Ze wilde dat ik het beeldje zou wegdoen. "Of dat beeldje eruit, of ik eruit," sprak Mallemoe.

"Nou, dan jij maar eruit, Mallemoe," zei ik, "want het beeldje wil ik toch wel graag houden."

Mallemoe pakte haar spullen. Met haar vele koffers vertrok ze. Het was een hele volksverhuizing, en ons zoontje nam ze mee. Die avond staarde ik naar het beeldje wat ik op de tv had gezet. De lijm had ik gekregen van een vriendelijke buurvrouw. Het jongetje was nu verzoend met zijn hond, en met zijn huis. Hij had een petje op. Tot mijn grote verbazing begon het jongetje te fluisteren, en toen te roepen, en toen te schreeuwen en zelfs te gillen. Toen begon het jongetje te lachen. Ik wist dat ik de juiste keuze had gemaakt.

De Gezichten van Mallemoe II

Toch ben ik Mallemoe daarna nog een keer tegengekomen. Het was in een hele drukke winkelstraat, waar ze stond met haar draaiorgel, en ons zoontje liep ervoor met het geldbakje. Hij rammelde ermee op de maat van de muziek. Ik liep op mijn zoontje af, en vertelde hem over het sprekende beeldje, maar hij wilde mij niet geloven, en wilde ook niet kijken of het misschien toch waar was wat ik zei. Ook Mallemoe wilde mij niet geloven. Het draaiorgel was verbonden aan een bromfiets, en ze sprong zo op de bromfiets, nam mijn zoontje achterop, en stoof met het ding weg, een enorme stank achterlatende. Ik dacht er direct aan dat ze de uitlaatpijp weleens na mocht laten kijken. Dit

was niet goed, en even vreesde ik voor haar veiligheid en de veiligheid van mijn zoontje. Natuurlijk wist ik niet waar ze nu woonden. Dat werd mij allemaal niet gemeld.

De volgende dag keek ik of ze weer terugwas, maar nee. Misschien reiste ze wel door het hele land. Het zou een onmogelijke opgave zijn om haar te traceren. Die uitlaatpijp was niet goed, al helemaal niet voor de natuur. Maar ja, wat kon ik doen ? Mallemoe was niet altijd natuurgetrouw. Het hing er maar vanaf welk gezicht ze had opgezet. Ze had ook vele hoedjes. Die had ze allemaal onderverdeeld in dozen. Ze was er maar druk mee. Ik hoopte maar dat ze ons zoontje niet zou aansteken met deze gekte. Pilatus noemde ze hem altijd. Terwijl ik hem Deur noemde. Het was natuurlijk wel verwarrend voor dat joch, maar ik kon het gewoon niet over mijn hart halen om hem Pilatus te noemen. Mallemoe vond het wel Mediterraans klinken, en wel zwoel, maar ik kende de achtergronden van die naam. Ik had er veel over gelezen. Ik las veel universitaire literatuur, terwijl Mallemoe alleen maar flutromannetjes las en roddelblaadjes. Daar was ze groots in. Pilatus was voor haar echt een naam van verdachte status, van controversiële aard, en dat trok haar aan. Het moest vooral anders zijn, en tegendraads, iets waar veel over nagedacht werd, en waar veel bekijks over was. Het moest iets zijn wat de volkeren bezighield, niet dat hele ingeburgerde. Het moest iets zijn waarover men zich druk maakte.

Op een dag kreeg ik een brief van Mallemoe, met veel gezwets over Pilatus. Ik vroeg me af waarom ze me schreef, maar ze bleek geld nodig te hebben. Zodra ze geld nodig had was ze ineens heel open en vriendelijk. Het was gewoon één van de gezichten van Mallemoe voor mij, één van haar vele gezichten. Ik werd er niet warm of koud van. Ik stuurde haar wat monopolie geld op, en naar mijn zoontje stuurde ik echt geld. De volgende dag stond ze op de stoep. Ze vond het onverantwoordelijk dat ik Pilatus zoveel geld had gestuurd. Hij deed er de meest vreemde dingen mee, ook dingen waarvan ze gezegd had : "Of dat ding eruit, of ik eruit." Pilatus had dus voor het ding gekozen. Dat wilde ze even kwijt, en ze was ook zo weer weg, op haar brommer met draaiorgel. Ik vroeg me af wat voor dingen Pilatus had aangeschafd. Maar ja, ik had zijn adres niet.

Ik kwam er snel genoeg achter. Op een dag niet lang nadat Mallemoe was geweest las ik in de krant over Circus Pilatus. Ik dacht dat dat wel van mijn zoontje moest zijn. Had hij toch nog wat goeds met zijn geld gedaan. Ik dacht laat ik eens een kijkje nemen. Toen het circus dicht in de buurt was ging ik er naartoe. En daar stond Pilatus. Hij stopte zijn hoofd in leeuwenbekken en krokodillenbekken. Daar schrok ik toch wel van, en stapte direct op hem af, maar hij fluisterde dat de leeuwen en krokodillen slechts robotten waren, dus ik was weer gerust. Het circus had ook clowns en acrobaten. Dat waren ook robotten, dus eigenlijk kon er niets foutgaan. Ik vroeg aan hem of zijn moeder hier dan niet kon werken. Dan had ze wat te doen, maar hij schudde zijn hoofd. Het circus was de reden waarom Mallemoe wegging. Ik herinnerde hem eraan dat ze eens met hem wegging vanwege een simpel beeldje. Hij knikte. Hij kon zich dat nog herinneren.

"Je bent een groot man nu, Pilatus," sprak ik. Ik noemde hem niet meer Deur. "Dat is de eerste keer dat je mij zo noemt," sprak Pilatus. Ik knikte.

"Je hebt nu je eigen circus," zei ik. "Circus Pilatus."

Hij knikte.

"Dat je maar veel geld mag verdienen, jongen," sprak ik. "Misschien dat je dan ooit eens je moeder uit de brand kan helpen, dat je iets kan kopen waardoor ze niet wegloopt."

"Ik heb er geen zin meer in," zei Pilatus. "Wat ik ook doe, het is toch nooit goed. Laat haar maar gaan waar ze wil gaan."

"Nou ja," zei ik. "Ik ben daar niet zo'n voorstander van. Die brommer waarop ze rijdt met dat draaiorgel is echt niet goed."

"Ik weet het," zei Pilatus. "Het is ook niet goed voor de natuur, maar moeder doet wat ze doet."

"Met geld kun je veel beginnen," zei ik. "Ze heeft een nieuw gezicht nodig, want met degenen die ze nu heeft redt ze het niet."

"Laat het, pa," zei Pilatus. "Ze heeft al genoeg gezichten."

"Ja, maar geld kan ons gelukkig maken," zei ik. "Veel geld."

"Dat ben ik niet met je eens," zei Pilatus. "Jullie beiden hielden altijd van veel geld, en zie waar het ons heeft gebracht. En heb jij zelf niet eens al die gezichten van moeder gekocht ?"

Ik boog mijn hoofd. "Je hebt gelijk, maar zie je, Pilatus, ik had de gezichten eens gewonnen op de kermis, dus ik kon ze niet zomaar weg doen. Ik had er teveel geld in gestopt."

"In die automaten, pa ?" sprak Pilatus. "Je was slechts een gekke gokker, doldwaas, en nu zitten we met de gebakken peren."

"Ja, maar politie-ma kwam erg van pas," zei ik, "en bokser-ma, en spelletjes-ma, kook-ma, feest-ma, was-ma, ze hebben ons altijd goed geholpen, al die gezichten. Er heeft nog nooit iemand bij ons ingebroken. Aan Mallemoe waagden ze zich niet. Ik was de enige die me aan haar waagde."

"Pa, pa," zei Pilatus, terwijl hij zijn hoofd schudde. "Je had haar haarzelf moeten laten zijn, want zulk kermisspul is nooit goed. Dat heb je nu wel gezien. Of je had een robot kunnen kopen, zoals ik heb gedaan."

"Waar heb je die robotten eigenlijk gekocht ?" vroeg ik.

"In Griekenland," zei Pilatus.

"Griekenland ?" vroeg ik. "Waarom helemaal daar ?"

"Shhh," zei Pilatus, "laten we het ergens anders over hebben."

"Je hebt het toch niet van de mafia gekocht, hè ?" vroeg ik.

"Nee," zei Pilatus. "Maak je maar geen zorgen."

"Ik wil weten waar je het vandaan hebt, Pilatus," zei ik.

"Nieuwe soort supermarkt voor robotische spullen," sprak Pilatus. "Dat beeldje van jou schijnt er ook vandaan te komen."

"Wat zijn dat voor toestanden ?" vroeg ik. "En waarom is Mallemoe er op tegen ? Ziet zij of die gezichten van haar het als concurrentie ?"

"Vermoedelijk wel," zei Pilatus.

"We zouden die gezichten van haar er moeten afschroeven," sprak ik.

"Ja, maar wat houden we dan over ?" vroeg Pilatus.

"Het is toch al niks meer," zei ik.

Maar ja, Pilatus moest verder werken. Ik ben toen maar naar huis gegaan. Ik dacht na over de gezichten van Mallemoe. Ik keek naar het beeldje op de tv. Het jongetje danste met zijn hondje. Er werd aangebeld. Het bleek Mallemoe weer te zijn. Ze wilde terugkomen.

"Maar ik heb nog steeds dat beeldje," zei ik.

"Het geeft niet," zei Mallemoe. "Zoals het nu gaat is het ook niks."

"Misschien ben je gewoon overgevoelig," zei ik.

"Nee, dat is het niet," zei Mallemoe.

"Wat is het dan ?" vroeg ik.

"Ik ben star, streng en eigenzinnig," sprak ze.

"Toe maar weer," zei ik. "Dat is een hele mond vol."

"Nu wel," zei ze.

"Maar straks niet meer ?" vroeg ik.

"Het is maar één van mijn gezichten," sprak ze.

De Kikkerkoning

Ik zag het leven niet meer zitten.
Maar er kwam een lichte verandering in het plan.
Ik strompelde naar een pas nieuwe psychiater in de stad.
Hij bleek uit het buitenland te komen en sprak met een accent.
Toen ik binnen was gekomen en was gaan zitten stond hij op van achter zijn bureau en ging dichtbij me staan. Hij boog wat voorover en fluisterde in mijn oor : "Ik ben een buitenaardse, ik ben van gisteren."

Ik keek hem verbaasd en met grote ogen aan.

"Ja," zei hij toen weer met een normale stem, "dat zit namelijk zo. Ik was er gisteren, maar ik ben ergens vastgeraakt."

Ik keek hem nog eens goed aan. "U lijkt wel op een leraar van vroeger, inderdaad. Dus u beweert dat u al in mijn leven was, maar dat u ergens bent vastgeraakt, en dat toen mijn leven gewoon verder ging ?"

Ik knipperde met mijn ogen, terwijl hij knikte.

Ik greep hem vast en liet hem niet meer los. Ik omhelste hem. "Houd me vast dan," zei ik, "dan verdwijn je niet meer in het verleden."

"Maar ik moet ..." sprak hij, en begon weg te vagen.

Toen werd ik wakker. Het was maar een droom geweest. De nacht erop droomde ik weer over hem. Hij had veel gezichten, zoals Mallemoe. Hij nam me overal mee naar toe in de droom, als een ware vader. Dit is hoe psychiaters horen te zijn. Hij nam me mee de natuur in, naar het water. Hij liet me de pracht van het universum zien. Voordat de droom af was gelopen zei hij dat hij als ik wakker zou worden niet van me weg zou zijn, maar dat ik hem moest leren herkennen in het dagelijkse leven. Hij had namelijk veel gezichten. Hij was mijn beste vriend.

Toen ik wakker werd begon ik hem na te doen. Ik wilde zoals hem zijn. Ik werd ook psychiater, en nam mijn patienten de natuur in. Ik ging overal met hen naartoe, en ik noemde hen niet mijn patienten, maar mijn vrienden. Ook zoals mijn beste vriend moest ik hen altijd aan het einde van de dag loslaten, en dan zei ik dat ik niet van hen weg zou zijn, maar dat ze mij moesten leren herkennen in alles rondom hen, omdat ik vele gezichten had.

Voor sommigen was dat een hele harde opgave, en hen voor wie dit nog te moeilijk was liet ik vaak bij mij in de vakanties en weekenden logeren. Ik was de slechtste niet. Mijn doel was van mijn patienten zelf zulke psychiaters te maken, zodat ze zichzelf en anderen konden helpen zoals ik had gedaan.

Maar ja, hoe denk je dat buitenstaanders hierop reageerden ? Volgens hen kon dit echt niet, en ik kon eigenlijk mijn plannen pas volledig realizeren toen de kikkerkoning het land ging regeren.

De Kikkerkoning II

De kikker was een dokter. Hij was erg tegendraads.
Als iedereen naar links ging, ging hij naar rechts,
En als iedereen omlaag ging, ging hij omhoog,
Hij noemde zijn patienten vrienden,
En liet ze bij hem logeren in de vakanties,
En ook wenste hij hen altijd beterschap.

Dat kon en mocht niet volgens de regerende elite.
Die kikker moest gekruisigd worden,
En zo gebeurde het op een nacht.

De kikker had hen al gewaarschuwd :
"Als jullie mij kruisigen, dan zal het voor eeuwig sneeuwen, en zullen jullie worden als standbeelden, en een draaiorgel zal mij uitroepen als koning. Met jullie stenen zal ik de muren bouwen van mijn koninkrijk," maar niemand luisterde.
Zo grepen ze hem in de nacht, en kruisigden hem.
Het was mid-zomer en het begon te sneeuwen, zoals voorzegd door de kikker.
Zij die hem hadden gekruisigd waren in grote verbazing, en begonnen al in steen te veranderen.
Hun laatste woorden waren gewoonlijks : "Hij was waarlijk de kikkerkoning."

Een draaiorgel riep hem toen uit als koning, maar de kikker hing aan het kruis.
Het sneeuwde, en het bleef sneeuwen. Niemand kon dat stoppen, en grote sneeuwstormen kwamen om veel verwarring te zaaien. Families werden van elkaar losgescheurd, en hele landen. Ook kerken bleven niet gespaard. Ze hadden een nieuwe koning nu.

En op zondagmorgen besteeg de kikker de hoge preekstoel, en predikte uit een paars boek.
Hierin stonden verschrikkelijke dingen beschreven waarvan een ieder begon te beven.
Nee, nooit meer waren ze dezelfde, maar de kikker gaf zo'n wonderbaarlijke uitleg dat het hun mooiste boek was.
En zo werd het paarse boek gepredikt in alle windrichtingen, en patienten werden tot dokters, en dokters werden tot patienten. En zij waren allemaal patienten van het grote paarse medicijnenboek, maar zij werden vrienden genoemd.
De kikker nam nooit geld, maar gaf alleen maar geld.
En zo regende het elke zondagmorgen geld.
Armen waren er niet meer sinds de kikkerkoning het land regeerde.

Flamingo Dagen

Hij schreef een brief, een hele lange brief. Hij had haar tijden niet meer gezien. Eigenlijk durfde hij het niet goed, maar het was de enige manier. Zij had bij hem in de klas gezeten, en zij was de baas van dit vreemde ziekenhuis. Hij wist niet goed hoe hij hier terecht was gekomen. Hij kon het zich nog nauwelijks herinneren, maar zij die hem kwamen ophalen hadden een badge met een flamingo erop. De badge was op borsthoogte van hun witte pakken. Ook was er een groot embleem van de flamingo op de witte bus. Dat was alles wat hij kon herinneren, en waarom hij werd meegenomen wist hij niet, en dat vertelden ze hem ook niet. Hij wilde in ieder geval een reden weten, en misschien kon hij haar overhalen om hem vrij te laten zetten. Zij was zijn enige hoop. Hij beefde toen hij de brief schreef. Hij zag het allemaal als een grote ontvoering. Misschien waren ze wel crimineel. Verder werd hij hier goed behandeld. Hij had een eigen kamer.

Hij schreef haar dat hij kinderen had die nu zonder vader moesten opgroeien. Hij wachtte vele maanden op een brief terug, maar er kwam geen antwoord. Hij vroeg zich af of ze de brief wel had ontvangen, en stuurde de brief nog een keer, maar er kwam geen antwoord. Zo verstreken de jaren en hij moest leven met grote onzekerheid. Waar hij woonde was het luxe, zeer luxe. Hij vroeg zich af hoe het met de buitenwereld ging, maar die informatie werd van hem afgehouden. Eigenlijk mocht niemand met hem contact opnemen. Vandaar dat hij de baas, of liever gezegd de bazin, van het vreemde ziekenhuis als zijn laatste hoop zag. Op een keer toen hij langs het hokje van de leiding liep dacht hij een flits op te vangen van een televisie beeld met mensen die in grote armoe leefden, en toen begon hij de gedachte te krijgen dat in de buitenwereld iedereen steeds armer werd, en hij daar misschien tegen beschermd werd.

Er werd nauwelijks met hem gesproken, en al helemaal niet over het verleden of de buitenwereld, of wat voor ziekte hij zou hebben. Hij wist in principe niets, alleen dat hij hier opgesloten werd gehouden.

Er waren ook andere patiënten, veelal meisjes, en die hadden vaak een verleden van misbruik. Hij probeerde ze te helpen, maar veelal sloten ze zichzelf op, en meden iedereen. Hij kon niet echt tot ze doordringen. Soms keken ze even en leek het alsof ze zouden spreken, maar dan gingen ze weg. Waarschijnlijk was het voor hen te zwaar om er over te praten.

Toch kon hij zo nu en dan wel meisjes met iets helpen. Zo had hij toch nog het gevoel dat hij waarde had. Soms had hij even het idee dat hij hier niet voor niets was, als met een bedoeling, maar dat was vaak maar een flits, en daarna voelde hij zich weer nutteloos. Hij had veel vragen die maar niet beantwoord leken te worden.

Op een dag moest hij bij het hokje van de leiding komen. Hij kreeg een nieuw medicijn. Op het pakje medicijnen stond een flamingo embleem. Het leek wel op een pakje sigaretten. Er zaten kleine roze en witte pilletjes in. Ook op de pilletjes zelf was een flamingo gegraveerd. Toen hij het inslikte met wat water leek het alsof hij een andere tong kreeg, en ook alsof hij ander tandvlees had.

Het voelde aan alsof hij een totaal andere mond had. "Wat is dit ?" vroeg hij. Maar niemand antwoordde, en hij wist niet waarvoor het was.

Die nacht had hij vreemde dromen over opstijgende flamingo's. Toen zag hij het meisje uit zijn klas, de bazin van het vreemde ziekenhuis. "Weet je het dan niet ?" zei ze. "Jij bent een geheim verpleger. Jij bent er om de meisjes te helpen."

De dag erna werd hij uit het ziekenhuis ontslagen. Hij kreeg een nieuw huis, en ook een baan. Hij werd tandarts, maar mocht niet boren en rekeningen versturen. Hij werd een flamingo tandarts, die alleen maar pilletjes gaf gratis. Op een hele zachte en natuurlijke manier werden de monden zo genezen. 's Nachts droomde hij dat hij een flamingo was, op zoek naar de geheimen van de zee. Ook droomde hij dat hij een duiker was, een diepzee duiker. Op de zeebodem bleken alle stoffen te groeien die ze nodig hadden voor de pilletjes.

Zijn kinderen wilden niets met hem te maken hebben. Ze kenden hem niet. Ze zeiden dat hij hen in de steek had gelaten, en dat hij nu op de blaren moest zitten. Hij begreep ze niet, omdat het om een ontvoering ging. Hij kon er niets aan doen.

Hij was diep teleurgesteld in zijn koppige kinderen die zich niet verplaatsten in de situatie. Hij leefde alleen nog voor zijn werk. Op een dag kwam de bazin van het vreemde ziekenhuis hem bezoeken. Ze vroeg hem of hij ook wilde werken in het ziekenhuis. "Dat nooit !" riep hij. "Ze hebben mij ontvoerd. Ik heb haast geen herinneringen van de ontvoering en van vóór de ontvoering. Er moet wel geweld gebruikt zijn."

"Gewoon een pilletje in je soep, door je vrouw," zei de bazin van het vreemde ziekenhuis. "Zo zijn wij flamingo's nu eenmaal. Je ging te diep gebukt onder het leven, en toen heeft je vrouw deze beslissing genomen."

"Waar is ze nu ?" vroeg hij. "De kinderen willen me het niet vertellen."

"In een ander ziekenhuis," zei de bazin van het vreemde ziekenhuis. "Toen ze hoorde hoe je was opgeknapt door het pilletje heeft ze zelf ook zo'n pilletje genomen."

"Is ze veilig bij de flamingo's ?" vroeg hij.

"Net zo veilig als jij," glimlachte ze.

Een diepe glimlach kwam ook op zijn gezicht. "Mag ik haar weer zien ?" vroeg hij.

"Jullie konden niet met elkaar opschieten," zei ze. "Dat is ook een reden waarom ze het pilletje in je soep had gedaan. Zij ging er ook teveel onder gebukt."

"Ik kan me er niets meer van herinneren," zei hij. "Dan moet het wel erg geweest zijn."

"Ik kan je daar helaas niets over zeggen," zei ze. "Je vrouw heeft me dat verboden."

"Ik kan me haar helemaal niet meer herinneren," zei hij. "Ik weet niet eens meer wie ze is, sinds dat pilletje."

"Ik ben je vrouw," zei ze.

Einde

Liefdeslittekens

Wilde honden joegen in de nacht. Het was een onbekend soort. Ze waren wilder dan hyena's. Een stadje werd door hen geteisterd. De wetenschap stond voor een raadsel. Waar waren die wilde honden vandaan gekomen ?

Een dominee bezoekt een man die zijn vrouw had verloren. De dominee gebruikte de illustratie van de wilde honden. "Wilde honden jagen in de nacht. Zij namen je vrouw, en zij is nu één van hen."

"Dat is geen lekker idee," zei de man. "Ik dacht dat ze in de hemel was."

"De hemel is onbekend," zei de dominee. "Niemand weet precies hoe het zit. Het is slechts gespeculeer."

Die nacht droomde de man dat hij en zijn vrouw de liefde bedreven. Plotseling veranderde ze in een wilde hond en rende weg. De man schrok wakker en greep om zich heen. Misschien had de dominee toch gelijk gehad ?

Toen hij het de volgende dag aan de dominee vertelde moest de dominee glimlachen. "Zie, ik zei het je toch ? Maar het is maar symbolisch, en dromen zijn vaak bedrog."

"Ja, maar het was net echt," zei de man, "alsof ik weer even contact met haar was, en het was goed. Ik denk dat ze terug is gegaan naar de natuur."

"Ik denk het ook," zei de dominee. "En nog eens wat : Er zijn veel vrouwen vrijgezel in de kerk. Grijp je kans zou ik zeggen."

"Het zit nog veel te diep," zei de man. "Ik kan het allemaal nog maar moeilijk verwerken."

"Maar een nieuwe vrouw zou het je kunnen laten verwerken," zei de dominee.

Die nacht had de man een droom dat ook vrouwen om hem heen in wilde honden veranderden. Nu stond het idee om een nieuwe vrouw te nemen hem helemaal niet meer aan, want het zou hem weer pijn gaan doen. De dominee noemde het bindings-angst. De dominee begreep hem goed, maar zei ook dat zo het leven was, te leren leven met ontvangen en verliezen. De dominee haalde een tekst aan uit het boek Job : "De Heere heeft gegeven, de Heere heeft genomen. De Naam van de Heere zij geprezen."

De dominee was voor de man een rots in de branding. De wilde honden waren steeds in het nieuws, en de man bleef er bij bepaald. Telkens moest hij weer aan zijn vrouw denken, die in principe

gewoon was meegenomen door de wilde honden. Er kwam een bos-verbod vanwege de wilde honden. De dominee zei dat het een stukje natuur was.

"Waarom komt er geen kerk-verbod vanwege wilde vrouwen in de kerk ?" vroeg de man. De dominee begon te lachen. "Jij bent me ook een mooie, grapjas."

"Nee, ik meen het," zei de man. "Een nieuwe vrouw hebben zal al lastig zijn, en helemaal als ik ze weer verlies."

"Zo is het leven," zei de dominee, "en je moet toch wat."

"Ik blijf liever alleen, uit het bos, en uit de kerk," zei de man.

"Je kan wel naar de kerk gaan, maar dan gewoon uit de buurt van de wilde honden blijven," zei de dominee.

"Nee, ik ken de natuur van de wilde honden," zei de man. "Ze zullen me echt wel krijgen."

"Dan ben ik gewoon je kerk," zei de dominee. "Waar twee of drie vergaderd zijn is er al een kerk, en je bent zelf een kerk."

"Dat is een mooie, rustgevende gedachte," zei de man. Even voelde hij zo'n diepe liefde voor de dominee dat hij dacht dat hij verliefd op hem was. Hij liep naar de dominee toe en omhelsde hem. "Bedankt man," zei hij. "Je betekent de wereld voor mij."

De dominee hield hem stevig vast.

De man was bang voor de liefde, de wilde honden van de liefde, die hem zo zouden kunnen verscheuren. Hij bleef liever op een afstand om zo de wilde honden veilig te kunnen bestuderen.

Die nacht had hij weer een droom over zijn vrouw. Weer veranderde ze in een wilde hond, en begon naar hem te grommen, en plotseling beet ze hem. Hij vroeg zich af wat zij van hem wilde. De dag erna bleef hij erover nadenken. Was het een boodschap van haar. Wilde zij misschien dat hij weer terug zou gaan naar de kerk, of een nieuwe vrouw zou nemen ? Schijnbaar was ze ontevreden over iets.

Hij vertelde de droom aan de dominee. "Ik zou dat zo zeker niet zien," zei de dominee. "Het is een beeld van de liefde. Ze heeft je opgezocht, en greep je beet, en het doet pijn, omdat ze er niet meer is. Telkens zal het pijn doen als je met haar bezig bent, alsof ze bijt. Het is het gemis, de onmacht. Nu draag je de littekens van de liefde, de littekens van haar liefdesbeet."

"Oh, dominee, dat is bijna te mooi om waar te zijn," zei de man.

Die nacht was er een overstroming waarin vele mensen het leven verloren. De grote rivier was uit haar bedding getreden. De dominee zei : "De wilde honden zijn gekomen. Ze hebben velen meegenomen."

"Weer liefdeslittekens ?" vroeg de man.

"Weer liefdeslittekens," zei de dominee.

Wilde Honden

Een man en een vrouw waren in het bos. Plotseling verloren ze elkaar geheel uit het oog, alsof een duizeling hen trof. Ze hoorden honden blaffen en janken in de verte, en het geluid leek steeds dichterbij te komen. De man greep de vrouw die als verstijfd was. ‘Liefste,’ sprak de man. ‘We moeten ons verbergen.’ Ze moesten het direkt op een rennen zetten. Daar zagen ze de honden al in de verte aankomen. De vrouw slaakte een gil, terwijl de man al een eind weg was. Eén voor één stortten de wilde honden zich op de vrouw, en lieten niets van haar over. De andere honden gingen al achter de man aan. Buiten adem rende de man langs de bomen, en door struiken naar de donkerste plekken. Er waren veel honden. De man wist dat hij niets tegen hen zou kunnen beginnen. De jacht was meedogenloos. Hij kon bijna het gehijg van de honden al horen, en de honden gilden bijna. Nog nooit was de man zo bang geweest. Zijn binnenste leek over te lopen van zweet. Na een tijdje bereikte hij een huisje. Snel ging hij naar binnen en deed de deur achter hem dicht. Al snel omsingelden de honden het huis. De man rende op de trap naar boven waar een man en een vrouw in bed lagen. Aan de muur hing een geweer. De man greep het geweer, en knalde door het raam een paar honden neer. De man op het bed stond op, liep naar de man met het geweer toe, en sprak : ‘Welkom, welkom, in het land van plezier.’ De man met het geweer keek hem vreemd aan, terwijl ze beiden de honden jankend hoorden wegrennen.

‘Pardon, ze hebben .... ze hebben haar verscheurd,’ zij de man met het geweer.

‘Wie hebben ze verscheurd ?’ vroeg de man die net van het bed was opgestaan.

De man met het geweer begon te snikken.

‘Oh, ik begrijp het al. Je bent je geliefde kwijt, je liefje,’ zei de man, terwijl ook de vrouw opstond.

‘Maar goed, je bent hier veilig. Je hebt die honden lelijk te pakken gehad.’

De man greep een ander geweer onder het bed vandaan, en sprak : ‘Kom, we gaan op hondenjacht.’

Even later waren ze beiden weer buiten, en zochten naar de honden, die ze later op een open plek vonden. Ze knalden ze allemaal af.

‘Wat bedoelde je met ‘dit is het land van plezier,’ vroeg de ene man.

De andere man zei niets. ‘Dat zul je wel zien,’ zei hij even later. Beiden liepen ze naar een kasteel toe wat leegstond. ‘Hier kan je voorlopig blijven,’ zei de man. ‘Ga niet naar huis, want de honden zullen je pakken. Er zijn hier zoveel wilde honden.’

De man knikte, en ging het kasteel binnen. De andere man ging weer terug naar zijn eigen huisje.

In het kasteel keek de man zijn ogen uit. Hij was moe, sloot de deuren, en ging in een kamer in een bed liggen. De volgende ochtend was hij vroeg wakker. Hij besloot het hele kasteel te bezichtigen. In een torenkamertje lagen een man en een vrouw. ‘Heb je het gehoord van de honden ?’ vroeg de vrouw.

‘Ja, ik weet er alles van,’ zei de man die net was binnengekomen.

‘Nee, je begrijpt me niet,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Ik bedoel .... ach laat maar.’

‘Nee, vertel het hem,’ zei de man die naast haar lag.

‘Okay,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Wij waren allemaal achternagejaagd door de honden, en kwamen hier, in het land van plezier.’

Plotseling begonnen de ogen van de vrouw gelig te worden. Ze omhelsde de man die naast haar lag, kuste hem, en sprak : ‘Wij verloren allemaal een partner aan de honden. Maar kijk, hier vinden we er één terug.’

‘Waar heb je het over,’ vroeg de man die in de deuropening stond.

‘Nou,’ zei de vrouw geheimzinnig, ‘jij zal hier ook een nieuw maatje terugvinden.’

‘Oh, maar daar heb ik helemaal geen zin in,’ zei de man in de deuropening.

‘Maar terug naar huis kun je niet,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Want de honden zullen je pakken.’ Buiten hoorden ze geblaf, en de schrik sloeg de man weer om het hart. ‘Zoek je maatje op, schat,’ zei de vrouw, ‘want zij die hier dagen alleen blijven zullen het kasteel uitmoeten, en aan de honden overgeleverd

zijn.’

‘Pardon ?’ zei de man. ‘Wie bepaald dat ? Ik mocht hier voorlopig blijven, en ik hoop dan weer naar huis te kunnen gaan. Ik zal zeker de dood van mijn geliefde moeten verwerken in een diepgaand rouwproces.’

De vrouw begon te lachen. ‘Er is geen weg meer terug. Elke dag groeit het aantal honden. Ze hokken hier snel, en daar valt echt niet tegen op te jagen. Zij van het huisje zijn allang dood. De heer van het kasteel zal het niet toestaan dat je hier nog iets langer blijft dan een paar dagen, tenzij je een nieuw maatje vindt.’

‘Hoe bedoel je ?’ vroeg de man. ‘Hoe kan het dat zij die van het huisje zijn allang dood zijn ? En wie is de heer van het kasteel ?’

Weer begon de vrouw te lachen, en omhelsde de man naast haar nog een keer, en zei terwijl ze hem kustte : ‘Er is alleen leven mogelijk in het kasteel. De rest is aan de honden overgeleverd. Ze zullen het echt niet lang volhouden, en tenslotte zijn ze al jaren dood .... hahaha .... Er is geen ontsnapping mogelijk uit het kasteel .... Tenzij je voer voor honden wil zijn ...’

De man draaide zich om, wilde weglopen, maar vroeg toen : ‘Waar kan ik dat maatje vinden ?’

Maar de man en de vrouw die met elkaar waren zeiden niets meer. De man liep weg, en na een lange tocht door het kasteel kwam hij in een andere toren terecht waar hij een vrouw in een kamer zag liggen. De vrouw was omringd door honden. De man schrok. ‘Ze zijn maar opgezet hoor,’ zei de vrouw. De man haalde diep adem. Als dit zijn maatje moest zijn, dan ging de man nog liever gewoon dood. De vrouw had iets arrogants over haar, en iets dominants. Ze leek totaal niet op zijn vorig liefje. Na een lange zwerftocht door het kasteel kwam hij in een andere toren waar een andere vrouw zat. Hij moest nu snel beslissen, tenzij alles wat die andere vrouw had gezegd een leugen was. ‘Pardon ?’ vroeg de man. ‘Wie is de heer van het kasteel, en wat zijn zijn bedoelingen ?’

De vrouw begon te glimlachen. ‘Wat heb je er voor beeld bij ? Wie denk je ?’ Toen vertelde de man het hele verhaal, terwijl de vrouw in lachen uitbarstte. ‘Nou, deels is het wel waar, maar als je geen maatje vind, dan wordt je niet uit het kasteel gezet voor de honden .... Nee, het is allemaal veel erger .... Dan zal de heer van het kasteel zelf met je afrekenen ....’

De man schrok. Wat kon hij verwachtten ? Wie was die heer van het kasteel, en wat zou hij doen ? De vrouw schudde met haar hoofd van het lachen, en de man begon zich heel ongemakkelijk te voelen. ‘Uit hoeveel vrouwen kan ik kiezen, en voor wanneer moet dat gebeuren ?’ vroeg de man. De vrouw wees op een poster waarop de meest verschrikkelijke vrouwen stonden vol prestige, verwaandheid en tuttigheid. Hij kon zich geen vreemder gezelschap bedenken. ‘Nou, lever me dan maar over aan die heer van het kasteel,’ zei de man. De vrouw greep de man, deed hem handboeien om, en leidde hem naar een donkere kamer waarin een oude man zat. ‘Zo,’ zei de oude man, ‘ik neem aan dat je geen keuze kon maken ? Goed, dan zul je geworpen worden in de vrouwenput waar de armste en vieste vrouwen leven.’

‘Alles beter dan dat tuig op die poster,’ zei de man.

De man werd naar een put geleid, en daar ingeworpen, waardoor hij helemaal onder de modder kwam te zitten. De oude man begon te lachen, en ook de vrouw. Even later kwamen er nog meer vrouwen om de put heenstaan om de man uit te lachen. De vrouwen in de put leken op holbewoners, en de man keek recht in allerlei gangen die bereikt konden worden vanuit de put. Hier leefden de vrouwen. De man kreeg erge medelijden met hen. De vrouwen waren zo paranoïde en zo depressief dat ze hem niet bij hen lieten. De man besloot maar in het midden van de put te blijven.

Hier leidde hij een eenzaam bestaan. Elke dag werd hem voedsel toegeworpen. Hij dacht terug aan de honden, en wilde dat hij door de honden zou zijn verscheurd, maar hier waren geen honden, en hij moest leven met zijn wonden. Hij begreep dit kasteel niet. Totdat de oude man hem op een dag uit de put liet komen.

‘Wie zijn die vrouwen, wat heb je met hen gedaan ? Ze zijn wild en onbereikbaar,’ vroeg de man.

‘Maar ze hebben je al die tijd in leven gelaten,’ zei de oude man.

‘Ik had liever dat ze me hadden verscheurd, want het is daar geen leven. Ik ben nog liever dood,’ zei de man.

‘Ik zal je vertellen wie zij zijn,’ zei de oude man. ‘Eens werden ook zij door honden nagejaagd, en kwamen hier terecht, en vonden geen maatje.’

‘Waarom hebt u mij nu uit de put gehaald ?’ vroeg de man.

‘Omdat ik hoopte dat je je maatje in de put zou vinden,’ zei de oude man.

Toen werd de man in een ander put geworpen. Deze put was veel dieper, en hij gleed helemaal door de modder door allerlei gangen heen, totdat hij in een grote modderpoel terechtkwam. Hier was niemand, en hij begon een lange tocht onder de grond, totdat hij uiteindelijk uitkwam op een plek dichtbij zijn huis. Hij was blij dat hij het nare uitstapje naar het bos had overleefd. Hij zou nooit meer teruggaan naar het bos. Wel moest hij aan zijn geliefde denken, die hij in het bos had verloren. Thuisgekomen kreeg hij de schrik van zijn leven toen hij zijn liefje gewoon in bed zag liggen. Hij maakte haar wakker, en vertelde wat er was gebeurd. ‘Ik was helemaal niet met je in het bos,’ zei de vrouw. ‘En honden ? Ik weet niks van honden.’ De man staat voor een raadsel. Zou hij het maar gedroomd hebben ?

Einde

Wilde Honden II

Een man en een vrouw waren in het bos. Na een tijdje werd hun rust verstoord door geblaf van honden in de verte. Het geblaf begon dichter bij te komen, en de man en de vrouw begonnen bang te worden. Snel pakten ze hun spullen en renden van het geluid vandaan. Ze renden tussen de bomen en door struikjes heen, en kwamen na een lange tocht in een klein hutje terecht. Hier besloten ze te rusten, maar al snel hadden de honden hen gevonden. De honden waren woest, en probeerden door de deur en de ramen binnen te komen, maar gelukkig zat alles dicht. Maar meer en meer honden leken het hutje te omsingelen, en probeerden de deur open te krijgen. Overal om hen heen hoorden ze gekras. De honden probeerden een opening in het hutje te krijgen. Ze wisten dat ze niet meer konden vluchten, en ze wisten ook dat ze het niet overleefden als de honden erin zouden slagen binnen te komen. Daarom besloten ze maar gewoon verder te gaan met hun liefkozen. Misschien was het wel de laatste keer. Hun harten gingen tekeer van angst. Ze kusten elkaar. Toen brak de muur open, en de honden stortten zich op de liefkozende man en vrouw. Ze werden allebei flink gebeten. Onder het bloed strompelde de man weg, terwijl de vrouw gegrepen werd. De honden sleurden de vrouw mee naar hun hol, terwijl de man kon ontsnappen.

Gelukkig lieten ze de vrouw in leven, alhoewel ze erg verwond was. Ze moest nu eten wat de honden haar brachten, en leefde sindsdien in gevangenschap. De man hield veel verschrikkelijke littekens aan de vechtpartij over, en dacht daarbij dat hij haar verloren had. Maar op een dag ontdekte een wandelaar de gevangenschap van de vrouw, en ook kwam de man het al snel te weten. Ze besloten een hele goede jager vanuit het buitenland over te laten komen om de honden uit te schakelen. Dat lukte deels, maar de laatste hond viel de jager aan. De jager kwam om het leven, en de hond ging terug naar zijn prooi in het hol. De hond verkrachtte de vrouw, en na een tijdje baarde de vrouw twee honden. De vrouw voelde zich zo vies dat ze nooit meer naar de samenleving terugwilde. Ze vonden haar na vele jaren toen de honden alledrie al dood waren. De vrouw was paranoïde en herkende de man niet eens meer. Ook sprak ze haar taal niet meer.

De vrouw begon agressief gedrag te vertonen, en iedereen vertrok. Ze moesten de keuze van de vrouw respecteren. Maar op een dag, vele jaren later, stond de vrouw ineens bij de man voor de deur. Ze leek hem nu wel weer te herkennen, en toen hij opendeed duwde ze hem zachtjes naar binnen. Ze gingen naar de kamer en ze omhelsde hem. Achter hen hing een schilderij van wilde honden, en als wilde honden omhelsden ze elkaar. Maar naar het gevaarlijke bos zouden ze nooit meer teruggaan.

Einde

De Wilde Hond

Ze woelde in haar slaap als een wilde hond.
Ze zou degene die haar man om het leven had gebracht wel willen aanvallen en hard bijten,
Ze droeg de littekens ervan op haar hart.
In haar dromen ging ze op jacht, op zoek naar de moordenaar van haar man,
maar zonder resultaat. En zo was het ook in het dagelijks leven.
Zij moest met deze wond leven.
Ze leefde als een wilde hond.

De dominee kwam haar vaak opzoeken,
En dan las hij voor uit gedichtenboeken, of hij vertelde verhalen,
Door de dominee kwam ze er doorheen.
De gesprekken inspireerden haar, en gaven haar rust, als een veilige haven.
Maar als hij weg was, dan had ze het moeilijk.
Gelukkig kwam de dominee vaak, heel vaak.

Ze ging niet naar de kerk, nee,
Daar deden ze te moeilijk,
Maar voor de dominee had ze een zwak.
Hij worstelde zelf ook met een aantal dingen.
De dominee was altijd haar steun en toeverlaat.

Ze woelde in haar slaap,
Ze dacht aan de dominee en haar man die dood was,
De dader was nooit gevonden, maar hij was om het leven gebracht door messteken,
In haar gedachten was zij altijd op zoek, altijd op jacht,
Nooit had ze rust, alleen als de dominee er was.

Op een dag nam hij haar mee naar een sprookjespark,
Ze kon zo alles een beetje relativeren aan de hand van sprookjes,
En aan het einde van de dag nam hij haar mee naar een restaurant.
Het was een Oosters restaurant met vreemde plaatjes aan de muur.
Een andere keer nam hij haar mee naar een restaurant met jachtplaatjes aan de muur.
Op sommige plaatjes stonden wilde honden,
Al zou het alleen maar gaan om deze plaatjes te zien, dan zou ze naar het restaurant gaan,
Het inspireerde haar, want voor haar waren de wilde honden een beeld van gerechtigheid,
En ze had het gevoel alsof er geen gerechtigheid was op aarde.
De wilde honden waren voor haar een beeld van de hemel,
Hun jacht zou wel slagen.

De dominee legde haar uit dat de wilde hond een metafoor is van wat we niet begrijpen,

We zijn op zoek, maar we vinden het niet,
Dat wat we verloren hebben krijgen we niet terug,
Maar op een dag zullen we het wel begrijpen,
En dan kunnen we pas echt zeggen dat de jacht geslaagd is,
Als wij zelf gegrepen zijn door de wilde hond.

IJsziek

Hij was op het piratenschip, op de ijszee. Het was verschrikkelijk koud, en hij begon steeds vreemder te hallucineren en te dromen. Hij was zowel zeeziek als ijsziek. De piraten leken in zijn hallucinaties steeds langer en dunner te worden. Soms leken ze ver weg en soms dichtbij. Hij zweefde op het randje van de dood. Hij was verschrikkelijk aan het ijlen. Hij probeerde zich dingen te herinneren, terwijl hij niet meer wist of hij wakker was of sliep. Hij zag vanaf het schip de gigantische ijszee. Waren de laatste herinneringen die hij had wel echt ? Alles tolde voor zijn ogen. Hij kon geen werkelijkheid van verbeelding meer onderscheiden. Hij voelde zich dronken van de kou. In zijn gedachten probeerde hij terug te gaan door de dagen. Hoe kwam hij hier ? En waarom was hij hier op de ijszee ? Hele vage herinneringen had hij, en hij wist niet of ze waar waren. Hij probeerde zijn herinneringen te grijpen, maar hij kon het niet. Ze leken uit zijn vingers weg te glijden en ze leken te veranderen. Hij probeerde te janken, maar hij kon het niet. Hij voelde zich als bijna bevroren. Hij was al zoveel dagen op deze zee, of misschien wel weken. Hij kon zich herinneren dat het steeds kouder werd. Was het niet een waarzegster die hem op deze tocht had gezonden ? Hij ging in zijn gedachten terug om vat te krijgen op de herinneringen over de waarzegster, maar of het waar was wist hij niet meer. Het drong hem op als de werkelijkheid. Het was alleen even een flits, en het begon zich al snel te vervormen.

Ze had twee stenen. Het waren orakelstenen. Een steen was de tranen steen, en de andere steen was de urine steen. Ze keek in de stenen, en sprak tot hem : 'Ga over de rivier van varkensbloed tot de urine zee.' De bloedvarkens waren woest zoals altijd. Toen hij op zijn bootje op de rivier was moest hij er een paar afschieten met zijn boog. Gruwelijk gromden zij. Hij kwam aan bij de urine zee, laat. Hij wachtte op verdere tekens, maar die kwamen niet. Zij had gezegd dat hij tekens zou ontvangen. 'Die vervloekte stenen doen altijd vaag,' mopperde hij tegen zichzelf.

Hij ging aan boord van een piratenschip, diep in de woestijn, aan de urine zee. De piraten waren lang en woest. Sommigen hadden messen tussen hun tanden. Ze zouden aanleggen bij een amazone eiland. De amazones hielden vee voor bloed en urine. De urine van de zee was ondrinkbaar. De piraten zouden naar het eiland toegaan om met de amazones te onderhandelen.

Het eiland was een reusachtige woestijn op zichzelf. Op het eiland liepen mannen rond aan ketenen. Het waren zware criminelen. Het was een ballingen eiland.
Ook op dit woestijn eiland waren er bloed rivieren en urine rivieren. Er zouden hier ook veel kampen en nederzettingen zijn van de amazones die de mannen gebruikten als slaven.

Na een lange zeereis van vele dagen kwamen ze eindelijk aan op het eiland.

De zee van urine zelf was de zee van vergetelheid, een natuurverschijnsel in de diepte van de eindeloze woestijn. Toen hij op het eiland was aangekomen was hij alles van zijn verleden vergeten. Hij wist niet meer waarom hij hier was. Het zijn op de urine zee van vergetelheid had hem dronken gemaakt.

Na de onderhandelingen gingen ze verder de zee op langs het reusachtige woestijneiland. Verderop zou de urine zee steeds meer overgaan in een ijszee.

De reusachtige ijszee liep over in een zee van bloed. Op een rotseneiland op de zee van bloed woonde een ijsheks. Het duurde vele weken voordat ze daar aankwamen. Het was een donkere vrouw, en hij herkende haar onmiddelijk. Het was een flits van zijn geheugen wat hij weer terugkreeg. 'Jij bent de vrouw van het orakel die mij deze tocht heeft laten maken,' zei hij.
Ze glimlachte warm en liefdevol. 'Dat is mijn andere deel,' sprak ze. 'Ik wilde dat je ook dit deel zou leren kennen. Alleen zij die de tocht maken zullen mij waarlijk kennen en waardig genoeg zijn om met mij te zijn.'
Ze bood een trouwring aan, maar hij raakte in paniek. 'Nee !' riep hij. 'Daarvoor ben ik niet gekomen ! Er moet een ander doel zijn, anders is alles voor niets geweest !'

'Niets is voor niets geweest,' sprak ze. 'Ik bied je een huwelijk aan.'

'Steek het huwelijk in je dikke reet !' riep hij. 'Ik doe niet mee.'

Maar de piraten grepen hem stevig vast.

'Wat ? Een gedwongen huwelijk ? Dat kan niet waar zijn !' riep hij.

Toen sloegen de piraten hem neer. 'Bedankt,' zei de vrouw. Ze ging naar hem toe en schoof de ring om zijn teen. 'Een huwelijks-slaaf om mee te beginnen. Later zien we wel verder.'

Hij kwam weer bij bewustzijn aan ketenen. Hij keek om zich heen en zag meerdere mannen aan ketenen. Hij vroeg zich af waar hij was. Overal was woestijn, dus hij dacht dat het het woestijn-eiland was. Hij kon zich herinneren dat hij gedwongen werd tot een huwelijk, een huwelijk tot een ijsheks. De andere mannen lachten hem uit, en hij wist niet waarom, maar hij dacht dat het was omdat hij nieuw was.

Even later kwamen er amazones om de mannen te inspecteren. 'Ben ik een crimineel dat jullie mij hier houden ?' vroeg hij. Ze zeiden niets en gingen door de rijen. 'Hey !' riep hij. 'Wat heeft dit te betekenen ?'

'Mond houden,' zei een dikke vrouw, terwijl hij een klap kreeg. Hij stortte in elkaar. Daarna kreeg hij nog een paar schoppen totdat hij weer zijn bewustzijn verloor. Deze vrouwen waren keihard.

Toen hij na een tijdje weer bij zijn bewustzijn was gekomen was de ijsheks er weer. 'Waarom doe je mij dit aan ?' kreunde hij.

'Accepteer je het huwelijk of wil je hier blijven ?' vroeg ze.

'Ik accepteer het,' zei hij. Hij werd weer neergeslagen, en kwam pas weer bij op het rotseneiland van de ijsheks in de bloedzee.

Hij zuchtte. 'Waarom moet dit allemaal ?' vroeg hij. 'Ik had nooit naar je moeten luisteren en naar je orakels.'

'Te laat,' sprak ze. 'Zij die mijn andere deel hebben gezien komen nooit meer van me weg.'

'Leuk,' zei hij. 'Wie verzint zulke regels ?'

'Het orakel,' sprak ze.

'Oh, die twee stenen, de tranen steen en de urine steen ?' zei hij spottend. 'Heb je geen andere stenen ?'

'Je hebt teveel praatjes,' zei ze. 'Als je zo doorgaat moet ik je ombrengen.'

'Oh, ook een regel van het orakel ?' zei hij boos. Maar tegelijkertijd werd hij heel bang, en kalmeerde zichzelf. 'Goed, ik accepteer alles wat je zegt. Wat moet ik doen ?'

'Je hebt mijn derde deel nog niet gezien,' sprak ze.

'Ik weet niet of ik je derde deel wel wil zien,' zei hij, 'tenzij je derde deel me hieruit haalt.'

'Dat kan,' zei ze, 'maar zij is erger dan dit deel.'

'Laat dan maar zitten,' zei hij. 'Het is al erg genoeg.'

'Nee, je moet haar zien,' zei ze.

'Ik wil niet !' kermde hij.

Ze sleurde hem mee naar een deur en deed de deur open. Er viel een pop uit. De pop had menselijke afmetingen. 'Hier is ze,' sprak ze.

'Maar dat is een pop,' zei hij.

'Nou en ?' zei ze.

Hij kreeg de pop mee en mocht gaan waar hij wilde gaan, maar mocht de pop niet wegdoen, want dan zou hem iets verschrikkelijks overkomen. De pop ging mee in een doos. Hij kreeg een schip en mocht vertrekken.

Hij was erg blij. De bemanning van het schip zei dat hij maar beter kon doen wat de ijsheks hem

zei, anders zou het verkeerd met hem aflopen. Hij wilde de pop overboord laten gooien, maar de bemanning durfde dat niet. Ze vreesden de ijsheks.

Hij besloot het zelf te doen toen ze sliepen, en kieperde de pop in de doos uit het schip. Niet lang daarna was er een verschrikkelijke storm. De bemanning was razend en zagen hem als de schuldige. In hun woede grepen ze hem en wierpen hem overboord. Toen begon de storm kalmer te worden. Ergens zag hij de doos drijven en zwemde er naartoe. Hij nam de pop uit de doos. Zij kon drijven. Hij wist dat hij niet terugkon op het schip. Ergens dichtbij was een eiland waar hij met zijn handen naartoe peddelde terwijl hij op de pop lag. 'Boe,' zei de pop. 'Wist je niet, hè ?' De pop begon tot leven te komen, en dreef niet meer. Het laatste stukje moesten ze zelf zwemmen. 'Dus ik kom daadwerkelijk niet zomaar van je af ?' vroeg hij. 'Ik denk dat ik gek wordt. Heb je ook een vierde deel ?'

'Het vierde deel is voor hen die overwinnen,' sprak ze.

'Wat overwinnen ?' vroeg hij.

Ze wees op zijn teenring : 'De vervloekte teenring van het gedwongen huwelijk,' sprak ze.

'Hoe kan ik het overwinnen ?' vroeg hij. Hij nam de teenring af en wierp het in de zee. Maar ineens was de teenring weer om zijn teen. 'Het zit vast,' zei ze. Hij zuchtte.

'Ik denk echt dat ik gek wordt,' zei hij, 'maar alles beter dan dat kamp van verbande criminelen.'

Ze had een schortje aan van wat lange witte veren.

'Weet je dan niet dat je zelf het vierde deel bent ?' vroeg ze.

'En zo is het gegaan,' zei een man tegen de psychiater, 'en daarom ben ik hier. Ik ben getrouwd met een pop en kan daarom mezelf niet vinden.'

'Die pop, hè ?' zei de psychiater. 'Staat die bij u thuis ?'

'Ja,' zei de man. 'Die is één dag levend geweest, en daarna was het weer gewoon een pop, en toen heb ik haar mee naar huis genomen, na een lange zee tocht.'

'En u zegt die zee was geheel van urine, overlopende in een ijszee en daarna in een bloedzee ?' vroeg de psychiater.

De man knikte. 'Zeer eigenaardig, zeer eigenaardig,' sprak de psychiater. 'Zeg, mag ik die pop eens zien ?'

'Maar natuurlijk,' zei de man enthousiast. 'Ik ben blij dat u mijn verhaal gelooft.'

'Nou ja, geloven is een groot woord,' zei de psychiater. 'Eerst zien, dan geloven. Daarna zou ik ook graag die urine zee willen zien waar u het over had.'

'Daar kom je niet zomaar,' sprak de man. 'Dan moet je eerst over een varkensrivier, en dan mag je hopen dat je het overleefd, want er zijn daar allemaal woeste bloedvarkens.'

'Dat is me nogal wat,' sprak de psychiater. 'Laat me dan eerst maar eens die pop zien om te beginnen.'

De man nam de psychiater achterop zijn fiets mee naar zijn huis. De donkere pop met het schortje van een paar lange witte veren zat op de bank. Verder was ze naakt.

'Nou, nou,' sprak de psychiater, 'dat is me nogal een pop. Het lijkt wel op een sex pop.'

'Nou, psychiater,' zei de man. 'Ik voel mezelf als een sexpop want het was een gedwongen huwelijk.'

'Ik begrijp het,' knikte de psychiater. 'Is er ooit sprake geweest van verkrachting ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'Nooit,' zei de man. 'Het is maar een pop.'

'Gelukkig maar,' zei de psychiater. 'Dat is al een last minder. Nou, vertelt u mij eens : Hoe is dit nu allemaal gekomen. Waar begon het mee ?'

'Nou, zoals ik al zei,' zei de man. 'Ik ging naar een indiaanse waarzegster in de buurt, en ze gebruikte haar orakelstenen en gaf mij de opdracht.'

'Vreemd, zeer vreemd,' zei de psychiater. 'Zullen we eens naar die waarzegster toegaan ?'

Maar de man begon in paniek te raken. 'Daar wil ik niet meer komen !' riep hij. 'Ik heb een teenring waar ik van probeer af te komen, maar zodra ik hem afdoe zit de teenring er weer om.

'Eigenaardig,' zei de psychiater. 'Laat u mij dat eens zien.'

De man deed zijn schoen en sok uit en nam de teenring van zijn teen af. Hij gaf de teenring aan de psychiater. 'Wat een prachtige teenring,' zei de psychiater.

'Nee, het is een vervloekte teenring, mijnheer de psychiater,' zei de man. 'De teenring van het gedwongen huwelijk.'

'Maar er zit geen teenring meer om uw teen,' zei de psychiater. 'Waarschijnlijk heeft u alles gewoon gedroomd, en heeft u de teenring ooit eens gekocht of gekregen. Zeg, mag ik eens met die indiaanse waarzegster praten waar u het over had ? Ik begrijp dat door die gebeurtenis alles misliep in uw leven, zegt u. U hoeft niet met mij mee te gaan, maar kunt u mij het adres van die waarzegster geven ?'

'Ik ben bang dat de teenring straks weer aan mijn teen zit als u weg bent,' zei de man. Hij liep naar de kast en haalde er een kaartje uit. 'Hier is haar visite kaartje, en neemt u gerust de teenring mee. Ik wil de teenring niet meer. Ik heb er teveel ellende aan overgehouden.'

'Wilt u dat ik de pop ook meeneem ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'Graag,' zei de man.

De psychiater stopte de teenring met het visite kaartje in zijn zak, en nam de pop mee in een grote plastic tas. Bij de waarzegster aangekomen belde hij aan. Een donkere vrouw deed open. 'Goedendag,' sprak de psychiater. 'Ik heb nogal een vreemd verhaal gehoord van één van mijn patiënten, en zou daar graag met u over willen praten om een en ander te verifiëren.'

'Komt u verder,' sprak de vrouw warm en hartelijk. Hij legde de tas in de gang neer en kreeg een stoel in de huiskamer waarop hij ging zitten, en begon toen het verhaal te vertellen.

De vrouw luisterde ernaar met open mond. Aan het einde van het verhaal begon ze te lachen. 'Ik kan mijn oren niet geloven,' sprak ze. 'U moet weten dat ik ten eerste geen tranen steen of urine steen heb, en ten tweede heb ik hem nooit zulke opdrachten gegeven, en ten derde is de rest van het verhaal al helemaal het bizarste wat ik ooit heb gehoord.'

De psychiater haalde de teenring uit zijn zak en liet het aan de vrouw zien. De vrouw knikte bewonderend. 'Het is een mooi ding, maar ik heb het nog nooit eerder gezien. Ik heb niets, maar dan ook niets met deze zaak te maken.'

'Maar kent u hem ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'En of ik hem ken,' zei de vrouw. 'Hij is hier vaak geweest.'

'En wat gebeurde er dan ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'We hadden sex voor geld, en ik voorspelde voor hem de toekomst,' legde ze uit.

'Wie betaalde ? U of hij ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'Hij betaalde. Het is mijn professie, mijnheer,' sprak ze. 'Bent u hier nieuw ? U bent hier in de rode buurt.'

'Dus u bent hoer, en waarzegster,' zei de psychiater. 'Ik vraag me af hoe hij zo geworden is, en waarom hij deze dingen denkt. Heeft u enig idee hoe hij zo geworden is, of zijn er hier dingen gebeurd waardoor hij misschien in de war is geraakt.'

De vrouw keek de man geheimzinnig aan. 'Ik heb zo mijn beroepsgeheimen,' sprak ze.

'Dat is vaag, heel vaag,' sprak de psychiater. 'Ik heb informatie nodig om mijn eigen professie te kunnen uitvoeren.'

'Dan komt u maar met de politie of een advocaat,' sprak de vrouw, 'maar ik ga niet zomaar persoonlijke informatie aan u geven.' De vrouw stond op en wenkte hem. 'Ik kan u niet verder helpen op het moment,' zei de vrouw koud. 'De informatie is gevoelig.'

Na een paar minuten stond de psychiater op de stoep. Hij was de tas met de pop vergeten. Daarna werd de deur weer opengemaakt. 'U bent uw sex pop vergeten,' zei de vrouw terwijl ze de tas overhandigde. Ze sprak nog steeds koud.

'Het is mijn sex pop niet,' zei de man, 'maar van mijn patiënt. Is die pop toevallig ook van u ?'

'Nee hoor,' sprak de vrouw kil, en smeet de deur weer dicht.

Inmiddels zat de teenring weer om de teen van de man, en de psychiater stond voor een raadsel. De psychiater had de andere teenring nog steeds in zijn zak. 'Had u toevallig meerderen van zulke ringen ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'Nee,' zei de man. De ring was adembenemend mooi. De psychiater bleef er maar naar staren. 'Weet u dat u heel rijk kunt worden ?' sprak de psychiater langzaam.

'Ik weet het,' zei de man, 'maar ik wil er vanaf.'

'Ik begrijp het, ik begrijp het,' sprak de psychiater. 'De waarzegster ontkende alles, maar ze had naar eigen zeggen wel haar beroepsgeheimen. Het ging om persoonlijke en gevoelige informatie.'

'Ik ben veel vergeten,' zei de man. 'Het komt door de urine zee, de zee van vergetelheid, waarop ik was.'

'U heeft niet toevallig gewoon wat gedronken ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'Kan wezen, kan wezen,' zei de man.

'Ik heb namelijk nog nooit van een urine zee van vergetelheid gehoord,' sprak de psychiater. 'Misschien haalt u dingen door de war.'

'We dronken soms wat voordat we sex hadden,' zei de man. 'Een stimulerend drankje.'

'Of misschien heeft ze een verdovend middel in het drankje gedaan ?' vroeg hij. 'Je kunt hoeren nooit vertrouwen.'

'Misschien,' zei de man. 'Ze zei dat ze een heks was, een ijsheks.'

'Ik begrijp het,' zei de psychiater. 'En heksen kun je al helemaal niet vertrouwen. Het was een waarzegster.'

'Precies,' zei de man. 'En die teenring die telkens verschijnt is het bewijs.'

'Weet je zeker dat je geen hele bak thuis hebt met zulke teenringen ?' vroeg de psychiater. 'Het zijn wel hele aparte ringen die je niet zomaar ergens vindt.'

'Ik weet het zeker,' zei de man.

'Nu,' zei de psychiater. 'Het verhaal wat u mij vertelt lijkt heel veel op een meervoudig personaliteiten syndroom. U denkt dat u een deel bent van de waarzegster.'

'Nee,' zei de man. 'Dat denk ik niet. Dat zei de pop.'

'Maar poppen praten niet,' zei de psychiater. 'Ik denk dat u in de war bent met iets, onder invloed van drugs of alcohol. Het verhaal klopt van geen kanten.'

De man begon zenuwachtig te worden. 'Goed, u gelooft mij niet, terwijl u zelf zag dat ik de teenring weer terughad. Ik zit hier mijn tijd te verdoen.'

'Luister,' zei de psychiater. 'Er kan heel goed misdaad in het spel zijn. De vrouw wilde niet echt meewerken, en alles is uiterst verdacht.'

'Schakelt u de politie dan in ?' vroeg de man.

'Ik zit er wel aan te denken,' zei de psychiater, 'want voor nu komen we geen stap verder.'

'Doe dan wat,' zei de man. 'Want mijn leven is een hel.'

Een man wordt wakker van het geblaf van honden. 'Karel, laat de honden uit !' roept zijn vrouw. De man kleedt zich snel aan en gaat met de herdershonden naar buiten. Wat een vreemde droom had hij gehad over een ijsheks en dat hij bij de psychiater zat. Hij had een slecht huwelijk, en probeerde zijn vrouw zo veel mogelijk te ontwijken. Toch kon hij ook niet zonder, alsof hij vastzat aan onzichtbare ketenen.

'Droom, droom, laat de tovenaar je lach zien,
Droom, droom, laat de tovenaar je traan zien,
Oh droom, en laat de tovenaar al je ketenen zien,
Want hij staat bij de grote ketel,
de dromenketel, waar hij alles weer goed kan maken,
Als de dromensmid is hij, als de woordensmid is hij,
Hoe diep de woorden ook in je hart zijn geschoten,
Hij vist ze er weer uit,
Hij is de dromenvisser,
Hoe diep de vloeken ook in je hart zijn gestoken,
Hij vist ze er weer uit

Droom, droom, laat de tovenaar je hart zien,
Laat de tovenaar je pracht zien en al je pijn,
Droom, droom, laat de tovenaar de ijsheks zien,
Zij die met je spot, zij die je telkens bedot,
Laat het zien, laat het de dromensmid zien,
Hij is de dromenvisser,
Hij neemt je mee, op de zee, een weg eruit,
Een weg erdoor, opdat je het sieraad ziet,
De teenring die nooit weggaat, het is niet wat je denkt,
Het is een onbegrepen geschenk,
Het vertelt een verhaal,
Oh droom, droom, totdat het zichtbaar wordt voor jou,
Begrepen als het sieraad van genezing,
Over de zeeën nam het je mee, tot een kroning

Droom, droom, laat de tovenaar het zien,
Laat de tovenaar je helpen,
Geef hem je tijd en energie,
Hij leidt je erdoor,
Met een ring en een verhaal,
Hij leidt je erdoor'

De man keek op van het vreemde lied.
De honden blaften nog steeds.
Een man in een paars gewaad stond voor hem.
Hij wilde wegrennen.

'Ik ben de tovenaar,' sprak de man.
Karel keek weer op naar de man.
'Karel ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

'Ja ?' zei Karel.
'Ik moet je wat vertellen,' zei de tovenaar.

'Droom, droom, op de golven van je droom,
Op de golven van je liederen,' zong een vreemd lied.

'Wat moet ik hiermee ?' vroeg Karel.

'Ik ben de tovenaar van je dromen,' sprak de man.
Karel kon niets dan buigen voor de man en viel op zijn knielen,
terwijl de honden nog steeds afschuwelijk blaften.
'Stop jongens !' riep hij naar de honden, maar ze gingen maar door.

'Ze zijn erg waakzaam,' zei de tovenaar.
'W... wie bent u ?' vroeg Karel.
'Ik ben de tovenaar van je dromen,' zei de tovenaar weer.

'Droom, droom, ik ben het lied van je hart ...'

'Kunt u alstublieft stoppen met zingen,' zei Karel bijna huilend.
'U maakt me gek.'

'Ongevoelig, hè ?' sprak de tovenaar.
'De laatste tijd probeer ik je te breken met dromen, want je leeft in een grote leugen.'

'Ik weet het,' sprak Karel.
'En het maakt me gek. Ik wordt verscheurd door twee kanten.'

'Laat je verscheuren, Karel,' sprak de tovenaar.
'Zoals het nu is is het niet goed.'

'Droom, droom,' ging het lied verder.

'Houd op !' krijste Karel.

Karel rolde over de grond met zijn vingers in zijn oren, maar hij kon het niet meer stoppen. Het ging harder en harder en nam hem helemaal over, totdat hij op de golven was van de urine zee om zijn leven te vergeten. Er was een teenring aan zijn teen die er nooit afkon. Het was als een implantaat, als een keten. Het was gedwongen. Hij rolde aan de voeten van de ijsheks. 'Gevangene van de trouwring,' sprak ze.

'Laat me los, heks !' schreeuwde Karel.

'Waarom zou ik ?' vroeg de ijsheks.

'Laat me sterven in ijs !' riep de man. 'Ik houd het niet meer vol ! Het is altijd hetzelfde liedje, eeuwig en altijd.'

'Wij horen bij elkaar,' sprak de ijsheks. 'We zijn delen van elkaar.'

De man zuchtte. Hij probeerde het te begrijpen.

'De kaart van de ijsheks,' sprak de tovenaar, 'een kaart in je dek.
Ze laat je nooit meer los, want het is een deel van je hart,

Een teenring is wat ze je gaf, de trouwring,
En de waarzegster voorspelt de toekomst,
Een andere kaart in je dek,
Zij speelt met het orakel en jou,
En zendt je op verre tochten om de ijsheks te ontmoeten,
Zodat je wakker wordt aan haar voeten,
Geketend aan een pop die je hart bewaart,
de derde kaart, totdat je je hart vindt, de vierde kaart,
Niets dan blaffende herdershonden die het geheim van het huwelijk bewaken,
En dan ben ik de vijfde kaart, de dromenkaart, om je inzicht te bieden. Droom diep.'

De man keek op en zag de kaart van de tovenaar boven hem zweven. Hij probeerde de kaart te grijpen, maar het vloog van hem weg, terwijl de ijsheks ijselijk lachte.
Hij voelde zichzelf als wegzinkende in een ijszee, totdat alles begon te bloeden.
Hij voelde zichzelf als een pop die zijn hart niet kon bereiken.

Hij werd wakker op het piratenschip op de ijszee. De kou had hem vreselijk doen hallucineren en dromen. Hij voelde zich als op het randje van de dood, en hij was zeeziek. Ook was hij ijsziek.

'Ik ben aan het ijsdromen !' riep hij. Hij had niet het gevoel dat iemand hem zou kunnen horen. Hij zag de piraten heel lang en dun worden, heel ver weg, en dan weer dik en dichtbij. 'Het zijn nachtmerries !' gilde hij.

'De kaart van het piratenschip op de ijszee,' sprak een stem.

'Die kaarten zijn gevaarlijk,' zei hij.

'Nee, nee,' zei de waarzegster, 'we hebben ze nodig.'

'Waar ben ik ?' vroeg hij.

'Bij mij, onder hypnose,' sprak ze. 'Ik ben de dromendokter. Ik genees je verleden.'

'Ik was in een nachtmerrie,' zei hij. 'Stervende van de kou op een piratenschip.'

'Dat piratenschip was je leven,' zei de waarzegster.

'Waar is het goed voor ?' vroeg hij. 'Ben ik nog steeds ijsziek ?'

'Kijk,' zei de waarzegster. Hij zag brandend ijs. De kaart begon te branden.

'U doet truukjes,' zei hij.

Hij was zwaar aan het hallucineren op het schip. Hij jammerde zachtjes. Hij was aan het ijlen. Hij vroeg zich af of hij de enige was. Misschien waren de piraten wel zo gewend aan de ijszee en zo gehard dat ze niet meer zeeziek en ijsziek werden. Voor hem was het de eerste keer. Ze waren op weg naar de ijsheks. Zij woonde op een rotsen eiland.

Hij viel in een diepe slaap. Ze brachten hem voor de ijsheks. Hij was nieuw. Hier ontwaakte hij. Ze glimlachte naar hem. Ineens was ze in de verte, lang en dun, en toen weer dichtbij en dik. Hij was nog steeds aan het ijlen. 'IJsziek, hè ?' zei ze. 'Je moet er wat voor over hebben om bij me te kunnen komen.'

'W... wat doe ik hier ?' vroeg hij. 'B... ben ik dood ?'

'Je zou dood kunnen zijn,' zei de ijsheks.

'Laat me los, heks !' riep hij.

'En toen werd ik wakker in mijn bed,' zei een man bij de psychiater.

'Volkomen normaal,' zei de psychiater. 'U had misschien koorts of iets verkeerds gedronken, en toen bent u vreemd gaan dromen. Iedereen droomt weleens vreemd. Er is niets met u aan de hand. Dromen zijn volkomen normaal. Het is een verwerkings-mechanisme van het menselijk lichaam. Het is heel psychologisch. Als ik u was zou ik me geen zorgen maken.'

'Maar ik ben bang nog te gaan slapen,' sprak de man. 'Het is niet de eerste keer. Mijn hele leven is het al zo. Ik leef in twee werelden.'

'Volkomen normaal,' zei de psychiater. 'Misschien moet u schrijver worden ? Doe iets met de dromen.'

'Ja, maar ik ben bang voor mijn dromen,' zei de man. 'Ik ben erdoor opgesloten. Aan de andere kant heb ik ook een Stockholm syndroom lijkt het wel, alsof ik verliefd ben op mijn eigen dromen. Er is ook iets zoets aan mijn nachtmerries wat ik maar niet kan verklaren. Het is heel dubbel.'

'Eén van onze pilletjes, en je bent van alles af,' zei de psychiater.

'Dat is teveel van het goede,' zei de man. 'Zoals ik u al zei kan ik ook niet zonder. Maar wat zijn dat voor pilletjes ?'

De psychiater keek hem diep aan. 'De pilletjes zijn genaamd "IJsziek". Alle psychiaters slikken die pilletjes, en dat is ook de voorwaarde geweest om hier te kunnen werken. Het heeft als bij-effect dat je één keer ongeveer droomt zoals u heeft gedroomd, en daarna droom je bijna nooit meer, en ben je van alles af. Wel moet je die pilletjes je hele leven blijven slikken.'

'Waarom ?' vroeg de man.

'Anders komen de dromen terug, erger dan ze ooit zijn geweest,' sprak de psychiater.

De Speelgoed Fabriek

De psychiater gaf hem medicijnen die hem hallucinaties gaven van de natuur, omdat hij depressief was geworden door de stadse etiquette, maar de patiënt had klachten over de medicijnen. De hallucinaties zouden te wild zijn. Het zou voorkomen dat hij zich midden in een stammenoorlog bevond. Hij vroeg zich af of het bijwerkingen waren.
De psychiater schudde zijn hoofd. 'Nee, nee, dat zijn geen bijwerkingen. Het is een manier om wat afleiding te hebben.'
Maar de patiënt begon steeds meer te klagen over de medicijnen, dat hij hallucinaties van donkere vrouwen ervan kreeg die hem pijn deden.
Ook hiervan zei de psychiater dat het bij het medicijn hoorde, om zo los te komen van alle stadse trauma's.
'Dus eigenlijk krijg ik een nieuw trauma om los te komen van het oude trauma ?' vroeg de patiënt.
De psychiater schudde zijn hoofd, terwijl hij zijn pijp uitklopte. 'Jongen, moet je eens even goed naar mij luisteren. De hallucinaties weten wat ze doen. De vrouwen moeten het trauma eruit slaan,' sprak hij.

'Maar mijn depressies lijken erger te worden,' zei de patiënt.

'Dat is altijd zo in het begin,' zei de psychiater. 'Moet je luisteren. Wat als ik je wat andere medicijnen meegeef ? Dan kun je uittesten welke medicijnen je het beste liggen.'

De man ging met verschillende doosjes medicijnen naar huis, en probeerde ze allemaal uit. Elk medicijn bracht weer andere soorten hallucinaties.

'Het lijkt wel als het lezen van boeken,' zei de man toen hij weer terugwas bij de psychiater, 'of het kijken naar films.'

'Precies,' zei de psychiater. 'Het is heel therapeutisch.'

'Ook wel erg politiek,' zei de patiënt. 'Ze proberen je een bepaalde kant op te drukken, om je van een bepaalde partij lid proberen te krijgen.'

'Ah, zo moet je dat niet zien,' zei de psychiater. 'Het zijn verhalen. Doe ermee wat je wilt. Als het is uitgewerkt neem je er weer één in, of je neemt een ander.'

'Maar is er geen verslavings-gevaar ?' vroeg de patiënt, 'want sommige medicijnen zijn wel erg aantrekkelijk.'

'Tja,' zei de psychiater, 'het helpt je je belevingsvermogen te herstellen. Natuurlijk is het het beste ze

niet te slikken, maar soms heeft een mens een duwtje nodig.'

'Ik begrijp het,' zei de patiënt. 'Dus elk medicijn heeft weer zijn eigen fantasie ?'

'Ja,' sprak de psychiater, 'en het helpt het lichaam zelf die stoffen aan te maken, dus het is alleen maar voor tijdelijk, totdat het lichaam de stof heeft overgenomen.'

'Interessant,' zei de patiënt. 'Ik zou wel veel meer medicijnen willen uitproberen.

Die dag ging de man met een hele tas vol medicijnen naar huis, en probeerde ze thuis allemaal uit. Na een paar weken was hij terug bij de psychiater. 'Geweldig,' sprak de patiënt. 'Ik voel me al een stuk beter, en ben tegelijkertijd van mijn televisie verslaving afgekomen.'

'Wonderbaarlijk,' sprak de psychiater. 'Dat is goed nieuws.'

'Ja,' sprak de patiënt. 'Ik ben er erg enthousiast over, maar ik moet er wel bijzeggen dat mijn sociale leven er erg onder lijdt. Ik kom haast niet meer onder de mensen, omdat ik mijn hallucinaties veel interessanter vindt.'

'Tja, het gaat een beetje om balans zoeken,' sprak de psychiater. 'De hallucinaties bieden hun eigen sociale leven, als een soort virtuele realiteit, maar ik kan me voorstellen dat de mensen om u heen dat lastig kunnen vinden.'

'Ja,' sprak de patiënt, 'vooral mijn vrouw, want die begint nu ook al depressief te worden doordat ik haar minder aandacht geef.'

'Is het geen tijd voor haar dan om ook eens een pilletje uit te proberen ?' vroeg de psychiater. 'Ik kan zo een afspraak voor haar maken.'

'Nee,' zei de patiënt, 'dat is geen optie. Ze is bang voor de psychiater, en al helemaal voor medicijnen. Ze denkt dat het troep is, en vooral nu ik haar zo negeer.'

'Oh, dat is niet leuk,' zei de psychiater. 'Maar wij hebben ook medicijnen die het sociale leven opstuwen. Je gaat dan anderen ook door hele andere ogen bekijken, door speciale soorten hallucinaties.'

'Dat lijkt me wel wat,' zei de patiënt. 'Dan zou ik die heel graag willen gebruiken, want nu staat mijn huwelijk op het randje van instorten.'

De man krijgt weer andere soorten medicijnen mee, en gaat ze thuis uitproberen. Hij geeft weer veel aandacht aan zijn vrouw, en bekijkt haar inderdaad met andere ogen, meer als in een verhaal. Hij komt enthousiast terug bij de psychiater een paar weken later. 'Nou, het heeft gewerkt, hoor,' zei hij tegen de psychiater. 'Mijn vrouw is er enorm door opgeleefd.'

'Goedzo,' zei de psychiater.

Maar na een tijdje kwam de rekening bij de man binnen waardoor hij enorm schrok, en waardoor hij en zijn vrouw in enorme financiële problemen kwamen. Beiden werden ze hier depressiever van dan ze ooit waren geweest en begonnen alles op elkaar af te reageren. Ook beschuldigden ze elkaar ervan. 'Laten we rustig blijven,' zei de man. 'Misschien maakt mijn lichaam de nodige stoffen nu zelf aan, zodat we de psychiater niet meer nodig hebben.' Maar de financiële depressie en alles wat daarmee te maken had was te zwaar. Ze waren diep in de schulden gekomen. Hij had speciale

medicijnen nodig voor financiële depressie, en wist dat hij dan eerst uit de schulden moest komen, en dan voor de medicijnen moest sparen. Maar de schulden werden steeds erger, want doordat de man nu depressiever was dan ooit verloor hij zijn baan. Hij kwam in een vicieuze cirkel terecht en werd helemaal naar beneden gezogen, terwijl hij zijn vrouw meezoog. Na een tijdje kon zijn vrouw er niet meer tegen, en kwamen ze in een scheiding. Nu had hij ook speciale medicijnen nodig om dit te verwerken. Hij zag het niet meer zitten. Hij besloot gokker te worden, maar hierdoor verloor hij zelfs al zijn bezit. Een ziekenhuis kon hij niet betalen, dus hij werd een zwerver. 'Het is allemaal de schuld van die vervloekte medicijnen,' gromde hij. Toen hij de psychiater eens op straat tegenkwam vloog hij hem aan. Hij begon op de psychiater in te slaan, totdat de politie kwam om hem te arresteren en naar de gevangenis te brengen. 'Dat is ook een oplossing,' dacht hij bij zichzelf. 'Hier heb ik in ieder geval te eten, te drinken en een dak boven mijn hoofd.'

In de gevangenis kwam hij ook dieven tegen die de speciale hallucinatie medicijnen hadden gestolen. 'Duur zijn ze, hè ?' zei hij tegen zijn medegevangenen. Ze knikten. 'Daarom stalen we ze, en nu zijn we hier.'

'Het zit ons ook niet mee,' zei hij. 'Het lijkt wel alsof die medicijnen ons de afgrond in hebben geholpen.'

'Therapie noemen ze dat dan,' sprak één van de dieven. 'Een geneesmiddel, maar nee.'

Tot zijn grote verbazing kreeg hij in de gevangenis dezelfde soort medicijnen die hij had, maar dan gratis. Het hoorde bij het resocialisatie proces en het werd door de staat betaald. 'Verwacht er maar niet teveel van,' zei één van de dieven. 'Het is allemaal sterk verdunt. Het houd je tussen wal en schip.' En zo was het. De medicijnen speelden een spelletje met hem.

'Ik denk dat ze ons gewoon die troep geven zodat zij in ieder geval hun baan kunnen blijven behouden,' sprak hij tegen zijn mede-gevangenen, die knikten.

'Natuurlijk,' zei één van de dieven. 'Het is allemaal doorgestoken kaart. Waarom zou een dokter iedereen daadwerkelijk willen genezen ? Dan heeft hij geen werk meer en geen inkomsten. Het zijn slimme en sluwe gasten.'

'Daarom vloog ik er ook één aan,' zei de man. 'En blijkbaar werkt het ziekenhuis samen met de politie. Zo weten ze ons altijd te krijgen en te houden.'

'Het is één groot complot,' zei de dief. 'Ik heb geen vertrouwen meer in de maatschappij. Ze hebben mijn respect verloren, en ik neem nu gewoon wat ik nodig denk te hebben.'

'Laten die medicijnen ons dit ook niet hallucineren ?' vroeg de man.

'Dat zou best kunnen,' zei de dief. 'Ik zou er in ieder geval niet van opkijken.'

De volgende dag komt de psychiater hem opzoeken. Hij kan tot de psychiater spreken van achter glas. 'Ik heb er over nagedacht,' sprak de psychiater. 'Ik wist dat je de medicijnen nodig had en niet kon betalen. Dat kan inderdaad frustrerend zijn, en sommigen gaan dan door het lint. Ik kan de rechtbank vragen u te berechten met verzachtende omstandigheden.'

'U doet maar wat u niet laten kan,' sprak de man, 'maar ik zit hier best. Hier heb ik in ieder geval een dak boven mijn hoofd, te eten en te drinken, en de medicijnen, alhoewel zwaar verdund. Het houdt me in het midden, maar het is beter dan niks.'

'Ik heb speciale medicijnen waardoor u psychiater of politie kunt worden,' sprak de psychiater. 'Lijkt u dat niet wat ? Dan heeft u volledige beschikking over de medicijnen die u nodig heeft.'

De man wordt boos. 'Jullie zijn grote oplichters,' roept hij. Dan is de bezoekerstijd om. De volgende dag komt zijn vrouw hem bezoeken. 'Echt, het spijt me,' zei ze. 'Ik had het nooit moeten doen. Mijn leven is nu nog wel erger dan het was.'

'Dat is jouw probleem,' zei de man. Ook dat gesprek was snel afgelopen. Het gevangenis leven viel hem zwaar, maar het was beter dan buiten de gevangenis. Ook had hij het gevoel dat de gevangenis-bewakers geen gelukkig leven hadden, dus daar moest hij ook niet aan denken. Op een dag kwam de psychiater weer langs, maar de man wilde hem niet meer zien. Na lang aandringen kwam de man toch, en had een gesprek met de psychiater van achter het glas.

'Luister,' zei de psychiater. 'Ik heb je echt verkeerd ingeschat. Ik denk dat ik je verkeerde medicijnen heb gegeven, en om het goed te maken heb ik nu de juiste medicijnen voor je, en je mag ze gratis hebben op volle sterkte.'

De man dacht dat hij toch niets te verliezen had, en nam de medicijnen aan zonder te vragen waar het voor was, of wat het voor een effect zou hebben. Toen de psychiater weg was nam hij wat van de medicijnen in. Hij kreeg dit keer wel hele vreemde hallucinaties. Hij was bij de tandarts en de tandarts begon in zijn tanden en kiezen te boren. Ook begonnen de oren van de tandarts te groeien. Hij probeerde weg te rennen, maar hij was gebonden aan de stoel waarin hij lag. Van de pijn merkte hij dat hij niet meer kon praten. Hij schrok wakker en wilde direct de psychiater spreken, maar hij kon nog steeds niet praten. Hij besloot daarom te schrijven, maar ook dat hielp niet. Omdat het beschreven werd als een gevangenis-ongeval mocht hij zo gratis naar het ziekenhuis. Hier kreeg hij wel allerlei medicijnen op volle sterkte, maar hij kon nog steeds niet spreken. Hij dacht bij zichzelf hoe hij nou zo stom kon wezen om zomaar medicijnen te slikken terwijl hij van niets wist. Maar ook het denken ging steeds moeilijker. In het ziekenhuis begonnen ze medicijnen te dwingen en ook kreeg hij gedwongen spuitjes. Hij kon zich niet verdedigen. Hij zat in zichzelf opgesloten en gleed langzaam weg in een coma. Hij wist nu wel zeker dat de psychiater een grote misdadiger was. Na een tijdje verklaarden ze hem dood, terwijl hij nog steeds in leven was, en alles kon horen. Hij kon horen hoe zij zijn begrafenis al aan het regelen waren.

Dan komt zijn ex-vrouw ineens huilend binnen. 'Jullie hebben hem teveel rotzooi gegeven !' riep ze. 'Hij kan wel schijndood zijn. Dat heb ik weleens gelezen dat dat kan gebeuren als mensen teveel medicijnen hebben genomen.' Maar ze wilden haar niet geloven.

'Ik eis dat jullie stoppen waar jullie mee bezig zijn !' riep ze, 'en dan zien of hij misschien uit zijn schijndood komt omdat hij geen medicijnen meer binnen krijgt.' Ze liep naar hem toe en voelde zijn pols. 'Zie !' krijste ze. 'Hij heeft nog steeds polsslag. Hij is helemaal niet dood, stelletje criminelen !'

Maar zij grepen ook haar, en injecteerden haar vanwege opstandig gedrag. Ze maakten aantekeningen dat ze gevaarlijk zou zijn, en snel was zij ook in een coma, en werd dood verklaard. Nu zouden ze beiden begraven worden. Ze kreeg hele vreemde hallucinaties door de injecties. Ze kon met haar ex-man spreken, en hij kon terugspreken. Maar het waren slechts hallucinaties. Haar ex-man hoorde haar niet meer. Toen ze beiden levend waren begraven en waren gestorven hallucineerden zij door, alsof zij een nieuw leven hadden gekregen. Maar zij waren niet bij elkaar.

De man zag een tandarts voor hem staan, en gaf hem een klap in het gezicht. Ook de vrouw zag een tandarts voor haar staan, en deed hetzelfde. Er kwam geen politie aan te pas dit keer. Maar de oren van de tandartsen begonnen weer te groeien. 'Wat is dit voor medicijn !' schreeuwde de man naar de tandarts. Maar de tandarts gaf geen antwoord. De mond van de tandarts werd steeds kleiner en

kleiner. Plotseling was de tandarts een konijn. Het konijn probeerde weg te rennen, maar de man kwam achter het konijn aan en schopte het. 'Ons hele leven hebben jullie vernield !' riep hij. 'Vertel op, wat voor medicijn was het ! Houd je niet van de domme !'

Toen veranderde het konijn in een eend, en toen in een bad-eendje. 'Een stuk speelgoed zijn wij,' zei het bad-eendje. 'Het medicijntje van een speelgoed-treintje. Het is geen eigen keuze of beloning, maar een geschenk, een leuk cadeau voor de verjaardag, of zomaar omdat het een mooie dag is, of je hebt eens de jackpot gewonnen.'

De man viel flauw en begon te schuimbekken en over te geven met stuiptrekkingen. 'Houd me niet voor de gek !' riep de man. 'Wat voor medicijn is het !' Plotseling bevond de man zich in de natuur, gebonden aan een paal, terwijl donkere vrouwen voor hem stonden en hem sloegen. 'Wat voor medicijn is het !' riep de man weer.

'Het is speelgoed !' riepen de vrouwen.

'Wat voor speelgoed ?' vroeg hij.

'Jij bent speelgoed,' zeiden ze. 'En wij verkopen het weer door.'

'Houd me niet voor de gek !' riep de man. 'Wat voor medicijn is het !'

'Speelgoed,' zeiden de vrouwen. 'Wij zijn speelgoedmakers, poppenmakers.'

'Ziek,' zei de man.

'Waarom ziek ?' vroegen de vrouwen. 'Het levert goede winst op.'

Hij eindigde in een doos, en kwam in een speelgoedwinkel terecht als pop.

'Mama, hij gedraagt zich zo raar,' zei een meisje toen haar moeder de pop voor haar had gekocht. 'Alsof de pop leeft.'

'Zit er dan maar niet aan, lieverd,' zei de moeder. De pop belandde op de poppenbank naast een andere pop, zijn vrouw. Hij fluisterde naar zijn vrouw. 'Hoe ben jij hier terecht gekomen ?' Ze vertelde een soortgelijk verhaal.

'We zitten hier flink in de problemen,' fluisterde hij.

Eigenlijk kwam hij pas vrij door een atoom oorlog. De lucht was vol met prachtige energieën. De speelgoed fabriek was gekomen.

Ik en mijn Video Spelletje

Een speelgoedwinkelier was in gesprek met een oude dame die speelgoed wilde kopen voor haar kleinzoon.
'Wat moet het precies wezen ?' vroeg de speelgoedwinkelier.
'Hij is dol op video-spelletjes,' zei de vrouw.
'Het liefst met indianen en cowboys. Daar is hij gek op.'

'Hmmm,' zei de speelgoedwinkelier, 'en leidde haar mee naar de bak waar de video-spelletjes waren. Bladert u hier maar even tussen.' Het ware hele dunne schijfjes als diskettes. De vrouw zocht er een paar uit, en rekende ze af. 'Uw kleinzoon zal er vast erg blij mee wezen,' glimlachte de speelgoedwinkelier.

'Dat geloof ik ook,' sprak de oude vrouw. 'Het is toch zo'n goeie jongen. Hij heeft altijd alles over voor iedereen. Hij heeft een hart van goud.'

'Nou, dan is het hem gegunt,' sprak de speelgoedwinkelier. De vrouw bleef maar doorpraten over haar kleinzoon, totdat het sluitingstijd was, maar de speelgoedwinkelier wilde haar niet zomaar wegsturen. 'Zeg, wilt u anders niet een kopje thee met me drinken in het magazijn ?' vroeg de speelgoedwinkelier vriendelijk.
'Nee,' zei de oude vrouw, 'ik moet nu direct weg.' De vrouw keek op haar horloge en schrok. 'Het is inderdaad erg laat.' Toen rende ze haastig de winkel uit. De man zuchtte. Het was weer een drukke dag geweest.

De volgende dag kwam de kleinzoon van het oude dametje langs. Hij wilde één spel ruilen, omdat het toch niet was wat hij wilde. 'Kijk maar in de bak,' zei de speelgoedwinkelaar vriendelijk. Snel had de jongen zijn keuze gemaakt, en ging de winkel uit. De volgende dag was de jongen er weer. 'Nou, het zijn mooie spelletjes,' zei de jongen, 'maar mijn huiswerk lijdt er zo onder. Heeft u ook spelletjes waar tegelijkertijd mijn huiswerk in gedaan kan worden ? Oma heeft me geld meegegeven.'

De speelgoedwinkelier glimlachte vriendelijk en sprak : 'Maar natuurlijk. Goed dat je ernaar vraagt. ' Hij liep even het magazijn in en kwam toen terug met een hele doos vol spelletjes die ook nog eens leerzaam zijn. 'Hier, je mag ze allemaal gratis hebben,' zei de speelgoedwinkelier. 'Ze worden namelijk toch niet verkocht. Niemand wil ze.'

'Graag,' zei de jongen blij, 'en ik wil ze wel.' Vrolijk ging de jongen de winkel uit met de doos, maar de volgende dag was hij er weer. 'Het sluit niet echt aan op mijn huiswerk,' zei de jongen. 'Het zijn hele mooie en leerzame spelletjes, maar het loopt niet gelijk op. Ik heb namelijk ander huiswerk opgekregen.'

De speelgoed winkelier glimlachte. 'Zo is het leven, jongen,' sprak hij. 'Maar misschien kan er een samenwerking komen tussen de speelgoedfabriek en de school ? Als je me even zegt wie je onderwijzer is, dan kan ik hem bellen en dan kunnen we overleggen.'

'Dat zou fantastisch zijn,' zei de jongen.

Maar de onderwijzer was een hele nare man, en wilde niets met de speelgoedwinkelier te maken hebben. Spelletjes hoorden niet thuis in het huiswerk. De onderwijzer was absoluut ongeinteresseerd, en het gesprek was vlug afgelopen. De jongen kreeg het te horen en was enorm

kwaad. Hij was verschrikkelijk aan het stampvoeten en schelden. Mensen kenden hem niet meer terug. Hij vertelde het ook aan zijn oma, die ook verschrikkelijk kwaad werd op de onderwijzer. De oude dame belde de man op en schold hem de huid vol. 'Je moet je schamen om zo'n creatief project af te wijzen. Kinderen hebben spelletjes nodig. Spelenderwijs leren ze veel beter.'

Maar de onderwijzer was erg geschokt, en vroeg zich af hoe ze al deze dingen durfde te zeggen. 'Spelletjes horen niet thuis op school,' zei de man. 'Die zijn voor de vakanties. Spelletjes maken kinderen lui en gemakzuchtig. Zo wordt het leervermogen vernietigd.'

'U kletst uit uw nek,' gilde de oma. 'U zult nog van mij horen.' Toen gooide ze de hoorn op de haak.

De speelgoedwinkelier had het inmiddels bij andere scholen geprobeerd en daar lukte het wel. De jongen wilde overgeplaatst worden, maar dat mocht niet. Dat was wettelijk zo geregeld in het land. Alleen met een zeer goede reden mocht er overplaatsing aangevraagd worden. De oma was woedend. Ook de speelgoedwinkelier wilde het er niet bij laten zitten. Ze zeiden dat de jongen werd behandeld als een gevangene. Er werden brieven over gestuurd naar de regering, maar die werkte totaal niet mee. Toen kwamen de telefoontjes, maar ook dat hielp niet. De jongen moest gewoon op zijn oude school blijven.

Het was in die dagen dat de speelgoed fabrieken een speelgoed atoomoorlog opzetten. Er verschenen torens en gebouwen op de wolken, en grote steden, en de lucht was vol met prachtige energieën. Het was een groot kunstwerk. Ook andere landen zagen het in de lucht en bewonderden het. Ook de regering bewonderde het, en zo mocht het jongetje eindelijk overgeplaatst worden. Zijn oude school werd gesloten, en het duurde niet lang totdat kinderen helemaal niet meer naar school hoefden. De speelgoedfabrieken waren de nieuwe scholen geworden.

Een jongetje schoof zijn nieuwe video spelletje uit de computer. Het ging over een speelgoed atoomoorlog. Het jongetje had goed gevochten, en een hoge score behaald, met veel bonus. Hij ging naar zijn moeder toe en vroeg om de deodorant. Hij was helemaal onder het zweet.

'Wat heb je gedaan ?' vroeg zijn moeder.

'Het nieuwe video spelletje,' hijgde hij. 'Het was fantastisch.'

'Maar heb je je huiswerk al af ?' vroeg zijn moeder.

'Als het goed is hoeven we niet meer naar school nu,' zei het jongetje.

'Wat bazel je nu, ventje,' zei de moeder, die hem een draai om zijn oren gaf.

'Laat maar,' zei het jongetje. 'Ik zal mijn huiswerk nu direct gaan doen.'

Moeder kwam even later naar zijn kamertje boven, en zag hem weer een video spelletje spelen.
'Ik gooi dat ding nog eens uit huis,' brulde zijn moeder.

'Maar het huiswerk staat hierop, ma,' zei het jongetje. 'Ik heb het van de meester meegekregen.'

Moeder kijkt naar het scherm en is verbaasd. 'Je hebt gelijk,' zei ze. 'Dit is jouw huiswerk. Dat is een nieuwe vorm van huiswerk, in een video spelletje ?'

'Ja, mam,' zei het jongetje. 'Het heet de Speelgoed Fabriek, zodat kinderen meer spelenderwijs leren.'

'Dat is me nogal een uitvinding,' zei moeder. 'Dat zal dan wel een hoop minder geklaag zijn over het huiswerk.'

'Dat hoop ik ook,' zei het jongetje. 'Gaan we dan ook verhuizen ?'

'Verhuizen ?' vroeg moeder verbaasd. 'Hoe kom je daar nou weer bij ?'

'De meester zei als ik het spel heb gewonnen dan krijgen we een nieuw huis, veel beter dan wat we nu hebben,' zei het jongetje.

'De meester maakt zeker een grapje,' zei moeder.

'Nee, echt,' zei het jongetje. 'En als ik het spel gewonnen heb dan krijg ik ook nog een andere prijs.'

'En wat is dat ?' vroeg moeder.

'Dat u weer beter bent,' zei het jongetje.

Er kwam een traan uit moeder's ogen, want moeder was ernstig ziek. 'Ik kan dat bijna niet geloven, mijn jongen,' zei moeder vriendelijk, 'maar ik vind het toch heel lief van je dat je zulke dingen zegt.'

Die nacht heeft moeder erge nachtmerries. Ze droomt ook dat ze dood gaat. Als ze wakker is gaat ze naar het kamertje van haar zoontje, en vraagt hoe ver hij is met het spel. 'Nog even, ma,' zei hij. 'Het is heel zwaar geweest, maar ik kom er wel doorheen.'

Op een dag heeft hij het spel af en heeft hij het gewonnen, maar het is alleen een huis op de computer, in het video spelletje, en ook de moeder is een poppetje in het video spelletje, en zij is genezen. Het jongetje laat het zien aan zijn moeder. Ze vindt het heel mooi, maar ze is ook teleurgesteld dat het niet echt is. De vrouw wordt zieker en zieker, en sterft dan aan haar ziekte. Het jongetje is ontroostbaar. 'Er moeten betere spelletjes verzonnen worden,' zei hij tegen de meester. 'Ik heb zo hard mijn best gedaan, maar alles was maar een spelletje.'

De vader van het jongetje is boos op de meester, want het zou zijn zoontje valse hoop hebben gegeven. In het spelletje zou alles steeds beter gaan, maar in de echte wereld werd alles steeds erger. Toch blijft het jongetje de spelletjes spelen, en hoopt één dag zelf een video-spelletjes maker te worden, maar dan niet alleen in samenwerking met scholen, maar ook met de woningbouw en het ziekenhuis. Hij wil dus ook een soort dokter worden, een speelgoed dokter.

Zijn vader vind hem maar een dromer. 'Het leven is hard. Daar kun jij niets tegen beginnen,' zegt zijn vader altijd, maar het jongetje vecht door. Op een dag wordt ook zijn vader ernstig ziek, en ondanks alle mooie beloftes van de video-spelletjes sterft zijn vader ook niet lang daarna. Psychisch gaat het niet goed met het jongetje. Ook hij moet naar de dokter.

Op een dag komt hij een klasgenootje tegen. Het meisje heeft een soort blauwe krassen op haar voortanden als van een stift. Ook kan hij zien dat ze haar tanden niet goed heeft gepoetst. 'Ik ben blij dat je naar de dokter gaat,' zei het meisje tegen hem.

Het jongetje schrok van haar woorden. 'Dat is wel heel gemeen wat je tegen me zegt, dat je blij bent dat ik naar de dokter ga.'

Het meisje werd overstuur van zijn woorden. 'Ik bedoel dat ikzelf ook veel naar de dokter ga. Het

kan soms helpen, en ik voel met je mee.'

'Sorry dat ik je verkeerd begreep,' zei het jongetje. 'Het gaat psychisch niet goed met mij, en ik ben soms een beetje in de war.'

Plotseling is er geen beeld meer. Het video-spelletje is gecrashed. Als het jongetje het spelletje weer oplaad is het meisje er niet meer.

'Ik dacht toch echt dat het echt was,' zei het jongetje tegen zichzelf, 'maar het was maar een video-spelletje. Ik hoop dat mijn hele leven maar een video-spelletje is geweest, en dat ik het spelletje zal winnen, of dat ik misschien een ander spelletje krijg.'

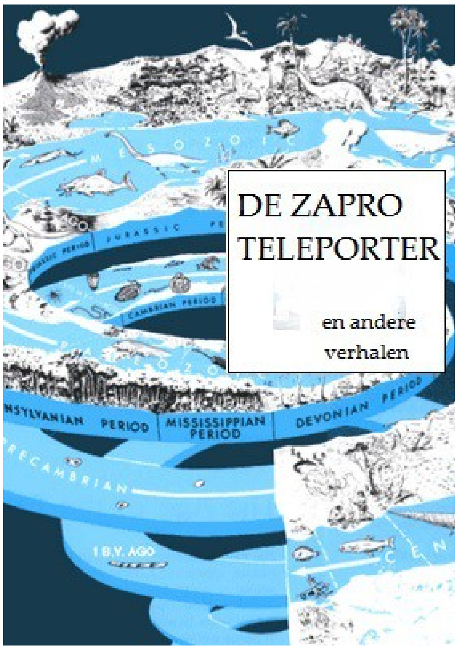
Hij voelde een hand op zijn schouder. Het was zijn vader. En ook zijn moeder stond achter hem.
'Ben je eindelijk wakker geworden uit je coma, jongen ?' zei zijn vader. 'We dachten : Laten we je maar achter de computer zetten, want daar hield je altijd zo van.'

'Video-spelletjes, ja,' zei het jongetje. 'Ik ben blij dat jullie nog leven. Wat was er met me gebeurd ?'

'Geschept door een vrachtwagen,' zei vader.

'Ik kan me er niets meer van herinneren,' zei het jongetje.

Zijn vader gaf hem toen een doos vol met nieuwe video-spelletjes. 'Op naar een nieuw leven, jongen.'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COAB 2019

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Het Meisje in de Kelder

Jork mocht van zijn moeder niet bij de kelders komen, helemaal onder de flat. Er scheen daar een meisje te zijn wat haarzelf telkens in de brand zette en ook sneed ze haarzelf voortdurend met een groot slagersmes en begon dan hysterisch te lachen. Zodra mensen haar probeerden te helpen dan vaagde ze weg. Ze dachten dat het een spookverschijning was of een overledene. Maar de verhalen erover maakte het jongetje nieuwsgierig. Ook zijn klasgenootjes hadden het er vaak over. Het meisje heette Mariëtte. Ook zij zouden haar weleens gezien hebben. Zijn klasgenootjes woonden in andere flatten en daar werd ze soms ook gezien bij de kelders. Omdat het een groot probleem was zorgde de stad ervoor dat Mariëtte haar eigen kelder kreeg. Maar nog steeds ging ze vaak voor haar kelder staan, en stak haarzelf in de brand of begon haarzelf te snijden totdat haar witte t-shirt bloedvlekken had. Men besloot zo ook de kelder van Mariëtte in te richten. De mensen legden er een bed in, een oud kastje, een stoeltje, en wat nieuwe kleren, maar het meisje scheen zich daaraan niet te storen en bleef haar kunsten vertonen.

'Ze mag mijn kamer wel hebben, mama,' zei Jork. 'Misschien is ze wel verdrietig.'

'Dat is heel lief van je, Jork, maar waar moet jij dan slapen ?' vroeg moeder.

'Ik slaap wel op een matras,' zei Jork.

'Ze is veel te gevaarlijk, Jork,' zei moeder. 'Dat kunnen we echt niet doen.'

'Dan ga ik wel op het zolder slapen,' zei Jork.

Jork bleef maar doordrammen, totdat moeder er niet meer tegen kon en zei : 'Okay, Jork, maak je kamer maar in orde voor haar, dan ga ik nu naar haar kelder toe om haar te zeggen dat ze kan komen.'

Na een tijdje kwam moeder met het meisje binnen. 'Dit is Mariëtte,' zei moeder. Het was inderdaad een spookverschijning. Ze was half doorzichtig. Jork had haar nog niet eerder gezien, alleen er verhalen over gehoord. Ze zou ook zo kunnen verdwijnen.

'Gelukkig geen messen en lucifers, hoop ik,' zei Jork.

'Nee, die heeft ze achter gelaten,' zei moeder.

'I ... ik kan het niet,' zei het meisje, 'en begon weg te vagen.'

'In ieder geval heb je het geprobeerd,' zei moeder tegen Jork.

Midden in de nacht werden ze wakker van kabaal. Het meisje was teruggekomen en klopte op de

deur, en riep : 'Kom dan lafaard, dan zullen we vechten, en dan zal ik je aan mijn mes rijgen en in de fik steken. Dan zullen we barbecuen vannacht. Vind je dat niet lekker, Jork ?'

Vader ging naar buiten en er was niemand. De volgende nacht was ze er weer. Ze daagde Jork uit.

Mensen begonnen allerlei cadeau's in haar kelder te leggen, maar niets scheen te helpen. 'Wat wil je dan, Mariëtte ?' begonnen mensen te vragen. Maar Mariëtte zei niets.

Toen Jork wat ouder was geworden mocht hij wel naar de kerkers en hij kwam het meisje daar vaak tegen. Ze sneed in haarzelf en stak haarzelf in de fik, en soms daagde ze hem uit te vechten, zoals vroeger, maar meestal verdween ze snel weer. Hij had erge medelijden met het meisje. 'Wie ben je ?' vroeg hij telkens als hij haar zag. Ze zei dan niets.

Op een dag was Jork afgestudeerd en werd schoolmeester. Eén van de kinderen die hij lesgaf had het telkens over het meisje. 'Misschien wil ze wel in de natuur zijn ?' vroeg het kind. De schoolmeester schudde het hoofd. 'Dat hebben we geprobeerd, maar dat wilde ze ook niet.'

'Ook niet in een tuin ?' vroeg het kind. Weer schudde de schoolmeester het hoofd.

'Maar waarom is ze dan zo ?' vroeg het kind.

'Niemand weet het,' zei de schoolmeester. 'Waarschijnlijk is er iets heel ergs gebeurd waardoor ze zo is geworden.'

'Zoals een brand ?' vroeg het kind.

'Misschien,' zei de schoolmeester.

En telkens kwamen er nieuwere generaties, maar het meisje in de kelder sprak niet over haar zelf, en werd ook maar niet ouder, en deed nog steeds dezelfde kunsten. Kinderen daagde ze uit, en maakte ze bang. Het was een groot probleem in de stad. Zij wilde niet geholpen worden. Op een dag was er een fluitspeler in de stad, en hem werd gevraagd of hij er niet wat aan kon doen. Al spelend op de fluit ging hij naar haar kelder toe. Toen het meisje het geluid van het fluitspel hoorde bleef ze ineens stokstijf staan. Haar mes gleed uit haar hand en ook haar lucifersdoosje liet ze vallen. 'Kom maar, kom maar,' zong de fluitspeler, en het meisje ging met de fluitspeler mee die haar leidde tot buiten de stadspoort. Toen ging hij met haar door velden en dalen, en niemand heeft hen ooit nog teruggezien.

De Rotterdamse Soldaat

'Het interesseert mij allemaal niet, mevrouw, ik heb al teveel voor mijn kiezen gehad. Ik ben de dood al vele malen gestorven, dus het zal mij niet meer deren. Als ik val, raak ik de grond toch al niet meer, mevrouw. Het is allemaal routine geworden,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat in de tram. 't Is toch zo ? Het is er toch allemaal al ingeramd ? Niemand kijkt er meer van op, mevrouw. Als je nou zestien of zeventien jaar zou zijn, mevrouw, kijk, dan was het wat anders, maar ik zit al meer dan twintig jaar in het vak. Ik heb alles al meegemaakt, mevrouw, ik draai mijn hand er niet meer voor om. 't Is toch zo ? Kijk als je nou echt over heel veel jaren geleden praat en je bent piepjong, en je hebt nog niks meegemaakt, ja, dan is het andere koffie, dan is het anders, maar met mij, mevrouw, het kan me allemaal geen worst meer schelen. Ze doen maar, ze hebben het altijd al zo gedaan, dus laten ze het rustig door doen, geen kip die er meer om kraait. We zijn het allemaal al gewend, helemaal doodgedraaid, allemaal routine, mevrouw, allemaal routine. Die van ons nog komen zijn allemaal robotten, mevrouw, wij hebben dit kunstje al zo vaak gedaan. We kunnen het slapend doen. Kijk, als je nou over echt heel lang geleden praat, ja, dan is het anders, maar nu zijn we even vele jaren verder, hè, dat maakt een groot verschil, mevrouw, groot verschil. 't Interesseert me niet meer. Ik voel me als een bouwvakker die telkens hetzelfde huis bouwt. 't Is allemaal hetzelfde, niemand kijkt er meer van op. Echt mevrouw, moet u een paar dagen met me meekomen, en dan kent u het liedje wel. Ik heb er allemaal geen zin meer in, ik heb het wel gezien, maar ik doe het gewoon. Wat moet je anders, mevrouw ?'

'En hoe lang heeft u in Joegoslavië gezeten tijdens de oorlog daar ?' vroeg de vrouw die tegenover hem zat in de tram.

'Drie maanden, mevrouw,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Ik kreeg daar al snel een relatie met een vrouw die nog wel erger was dan de oorlog. Ik heb zowel op het strijdveld gewerkt als in het ziekenhuis. Ik was daar ook voor haar. Ik streed ook voor haar, maar ze ging overal rondbazuinen dat ik in een inrichting zat, mevrouw. Moet een mens maar tegen kunnen, mevrouw, maar zo langzamerhand kan ik tegen alles, mevrouw. Ik heb veel meegemaakt, mevrouw, ik ben erin gehard.'

'Hadden jullie ruzie ofzo, of was je er te weinig voor haar ?' vroeg de vrouw.

'Er was oorlog, mevrouw, ik was daar niet op vakantie,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Ik was daar om levens te redden, ook het hare. Ik moest er vaak op uit, en daar kon ze niet zo goed mee leven. Maar als ik er was hadden we vaak ruzie, mevrouw.'

'Ik ken zulke types,' zei de vrouw. 'Ze draaien alles om. Als je te dichtbij komt, dan is het 'kip ik heb je.' Het worden ook wel Aldebaranse vogels genoemd.'

'Aldebaranse vogels ? Wat zijn dat, mevrouw ? Ik heb daar nog nooit van gehoord, mevrouw,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat.

'Het komt uit een boek,' zei de vrouw. 'Aldebaranse vogels, ze kunnen je beste vrienden zijn, maar de dag erna zijn het je ergste vijanden. Ze doen zich zo zacht en teder voor, zo zwak en fragiel, maar raak ze niet aan, want dan zijn ze ineens de sterkste leeuwen, en ze zullen geen medelijden met je hebben. Ze vertellen je hun problemen, en smeken je om hulp, maar als je ze aanraakt dan ben jij ineens wat zij waren. Het zijn aasgieren, en je betaalt altijd een hoge prijs voor wat ze je geven.'

'Dat komt me bekend voor, mevrouw,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Je slaat de spijker op z'n kop. Ik

ben Joegoslavië na drie maanden uitgevlucht, niet om de oorlog, maar om haar, mevrouw. Stuur me de oorlog in, laat me werken in het ergste ziekenhuis, laat me afdalen in de diepste put om mensen eruit te redden, maar stuur me niet terug naar zo'n vrouw, mevrouw. Ik heb er nog steeds nachtmerries van.

De tram stopte. 'Ik moet er hier uit,' zei de vrouw.

'Nee, alsjeblieft, mevrouw,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Blijf nog even zitten. Dan kunnen we nog even kletsen, mevrouw. Laat me niet in de steek, want door het u allemaal te vertellen lijkt het wel alsof ik er weer middenin zit.'

'Het is een tram, geen café,' lachte de vrouw.

'Aljeblieft, mevrouw,' smeekte de Rotterdamse soldaat. Maar de vrouw stond al buiten, en de tram reed verder.'

De Rotterdamse soldaat vloekte. 'Waarom moet ik toch altijd mijn hele ziel en zaligheid aan iemand vertellen ? Ze geven er toch geen stuiver om. Aldebaranse vogels had ze het over ? Volgens mij was zij er ook één. Aasgieren zijn het. Ze laten je niet eens uitspreken. Ik was nog lang niet klaar.'

Opeens werd de Rotterdamse soldaat van achteren op zijn schouder getikt. Hij keek achterom en zag een rokende man met een hoed op en een krant bij zich. 'Kunt u even niet zo vloeken en schelden ?' zei de man. 'Ik probeer rustig mijn krantje te lezen en ik heb zo werk te doen. U zit hier niet in een café.'

'Oh, nog zo'n Aldebaranse vogel,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Goed dat ik het weet, maar als het oorlog is hoef je niet bij mij aan te kloppen.'

Bij de volgende halte stapte de Rotterdamse soldaat uit, en liep door de stad, terwijl hij boos tegen van alles aantrapte. 'Moet ik weer net hebben, moet ik weer hebben,' zei hij. Nog steeds vloekte en schold hij. 'Ik kan een mens hier niks zeggen, allemaal Aldebaranse vogels, allemaal aasgieren.'

Hij ging een café in en begon zich vol te zuipen. Hij bleef maar aanpraten tegen de barman. Die werd er natuurlijk ook voor betaald, en die zei telkens maar : 'Ja ... ja.'

Toen de Rotterdamse soldaat over zijn Joegoslavische vriendin begon zei de barman : 'Ik had ook eens zo'n vrouw. Ze hebben nooit genoeg, zijn nooit tevreden. Er blijft niets meer van je over.'

'Hoe heb je het overleefd ?' vroeg de Rotterdamse soldaat.

'Vluchten,' zei de barman. 'Wat kan je anders doen ? In zo'n oorlog kun je niet vechten.'

'Nee, inderdaad,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Ze mogen me in elke oorlog gooien, maar sommige vrouwen zijn erger dan honderden oorlogen bij elkaar.'

'Ik zou geen risico meer nemen,' zei de barman. 'Als je je beroep liefhebt, dan is dat je vrouw.'

'Goed punt,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat.

De barman keek hem geheimzinnig aan, ging toen even naar de keuken, en kwam toen terug met een boek. 'Een boek over de Aldebaranse vogels,' zei de barman. 'Het zijn mythische vogels, trickster vogels, die een mens plagen totdat de mens zijn ware liefde heeft ontdekt, niet in een

persoon, maar in het beroep, de levenstaak van de mens. Daartoe dienen dus de Aldebaranse vogels, opdat de mens zijn doel zal vinden. Je mag het wel van me lenen.'

En zo kreeg de Rotterdamse soldaat het boek mee, en ging fluitend naar huis. Onderweg zag hij wat leek op Aldebaranse vogels, maar hij glimlachte gewoon. Hij ging er niet op in, want hij wist waar het op uit kon lopen.

De Rotterdamse Soldaat II

'Ik zeg niks meer, mevrouw,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat in de tram. 'Ik praat niet meer. Er zijn hier allemaal Aldebaranse vogels die zitten te loeren, die aasgieren. Ik heb altijd iedereen geholpen, mevrouw, stond altijd voor iedereen klaar, maar als je dan zelf eens iemand nodig hebt, dan zijn ze er niet, dan is niemand thuis en heeft niemand tijd, mevrouw. Ik zou eigenlijk een toren tot de hemel moeten bouwen, mevrouw, en dan volgt iedereen maar die mij wil volgen, mevrouw.'

'Vergeet dan niet eerst de toren naar beneden te bouwen,' zei de vrouw die tegenover hem in de tram zat, 'de aarde in, zodat ook alle moddermannen zoals jij die zich in de aarde verscholen houden met je mee naar boven kunnen.'

'Moddermannen ?' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Zeg, gaan we beledigend doen, mevrouw ? Ik heb het weer getroffen, hoor. Ze zijn erweer : de Aldebaranse vogels. Ze zitten hier tegenover me.'

'Nou ja, ik bedoel met moddermannen degenen die bang voor het leven zijn geworden en niks meer durven te zeggen, geen contacten meer durven te maken met anderen uit angst pijn gedaan te worden,' zei de vrouw. 'Ze gaan de aarde in om een schuilplaats te zoeken en laten zichzelf niet meer zien. Ze zijn er nog wel, maar hun harten zijn gesloten.'

'Ja, ja,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Mij uit mijn tent proberen te lokken, hè ? Nou, dat gaat mooi niet door. Ik ben niet zo iemand die zichzelf zomaar voor de leeuwen werpt, mevrouw. Ik ben niet achterlijk. Waar doen we het tegenwoordig nog voor, mevrouw ? De mens is ondankbaar. Het is toch nooit genoeg. Nee, we moeten het met minder doen, mevrouw. Er zit niks anders op.'

'Bouw jij je torentje naar de hemel maar,' zei de vrouw. 'Ik ga straks lekker in mijn achtertuin zonnen. Glaasje erbij, tijdschriftje, en dan ga ik daarna lekker kletsen met de buurvrouw over van alles wat ons dwars zit, en ook over van alles wat ons niet dwars zit, en dan hebben we jou niet eens nodig, modderman.'

'Pffft,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat verontwaardigd. 'Als de oorlog komt, weet je ook dat je bij mij niet aan hoeft te kloppen.'

'Er komt geen oorlog, modderman,' zei de vrouw. 'De enige oorlog die er is is in je eigen hoofd, jij

en je Aldebaranse vogels. 't Lijkt wel een syndroom.'

'Ik heb in de oorlog gevochten, mevrouw, opdat u hier nu veilig kunt leven,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Een beetje respect voor je militaire medemens. Je mocht ze nog eens nodig hebben, je weet maar nooit, mevrouw.'

't Enige wat ik nodig heb is een goede buurvrouw, dat is beter dan een verre modderman die zich in de aarde verschuild,' zei de vrouw.

'Twee pond konijnenkaas bij de bakker, u bazelt maar wat,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Ik laat me niet uit de kast lokken door zo'n Aldebaranse vogel als u. Ik houd mijn kaken flink op elkaar. Van mij krijgt u niets, want ik weet precies waar alle informatie naartoe gaat : naar uw buurvrouw, die natuurlijk ook in het complot zit.'

'Wat voor complot ?' lachte de vrouw.

'Tegen uw militaire medemens, mevrouw,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat.

'U ziet ze vliegen,' zei de vrouw. 'U bent zwaar paranoide. U zou uzelf moeten laten opnemen in het ziekenhuis om u te laten nakijken, opdat uw niet-militaire medemens geen overlast van u heeft.'

'Maar dan moet u ook niet komen aandraven als het oorlog is, mevrouw, want dan zijn we er niet,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Dan zijn we aan het sjoelen en tafeltennissen in het ziekenhuis, mevrouw. Allemaal uw schuld. U maakt uw militaire medemens gek.'

'Dat is dan mooi geregeld,' zei de vrouw. 'Er komt geen oorlog. U zit iedereen maar bang te maken. Ga wat leuke dingen doen.'

Boos ging de Rotterdamse soldaat de tram uit. 'U zult geen last meer van uw militaire medemens hebben,' zei hij nog boos. Hij liep de straten over en schopte tegen alles aan wat los en vast zat. 'Hoe krijgen ze het toch altijd weer voor elkaar, die Aldebaranse vogels. Nu heb ik weer mijn ziel en zaligheid lopen uitstorten. Alsof ze je de woorden gewoon uit je trekken. Bah.'

Hij ging een café in om zich vol te zuipen. 'Zegt u het maar, waar heeft u last van ?' vroeg de barvrouw.

'Van Aldebaranse vogels mevrouw,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Overal lopen ze te loeren op mijn bloed, halen het bloed onder mijn nagels vandaan, mevrouw. Aasgieren zijn het.'

'Tja, die zitten hier veel,' zei de barvrouw. 'Daar hebben we gelukkig onze sappen voor. Meer drinken, minder denken, minder praten.'

'Precies,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Spreken is zilver, zwijgen is goud, drinken is platina, en erop los schieten is de hemel. Ik heb mijn torentje gebouwd.'

'Nou ja, teveel drinken is natuurlijk niet goed, en schieten al helemaal niet,' zei de barvrouw.

'Zeg, gaat u ook al beledigend doen naar uw militaire medemens, mevrouw ?' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat aangebrand. 'Gaan we roet in het eten gooien ? Ik heb in de oorlog gewerkt, mevrouw. Ik zal het echt wel weten wat goed is en wat niet goed is. En beledig mijn torentje naar de hemel niet.'

'Er zit hier een zekere grens aan het drinken,' zei de barvrouw. 'Boven die grens mogen we het niet

toestaan en gaat er een slot op, en schieten doen we al helemaal niet. Als u wilt schieten dan gaat u maar naar de dartshoek, of naar de gokautomaat.'

'Gokautomaat ?' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'U bent natuurlijk op mijn geld uit. Weer een Aldebaranse vogel geschoten. Het was goed raak. Het was me een genoegen, mevrouw.'

'Beter te gokken dan te schieten,' zei de barvrouw. 'Schiet maar met geld, dan hebben anderen er ook wat aan.'

'Ah, bent u er zo één ?' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat.

'Met geld krijg je alles van een mens gedaan,' zei de barvrouw, 'vertrouw daar maar op. Voor niets gaat de zon op.'

'Ik ben niet zo rijk, mevrouw,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat, 'en geluk is niet te koop. Het houdt altijd ergens op, en hoe hoger je hebt gebouwd, hoe harder je valt.'

'Dan heb je het niet goed gedaan,' zei de barvrouw.

'Oh, dus ik sta oog in oog met een specialist ?' vroeg de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Leg uit dan.'

'Hoeveel betaal je ervoor ?' vroeg de barvrouw.

'Ik heb geen rooie stuiver meer,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Ik heb alles opgezopen.'

'Een onderpand dan,' zei de barvrouw.

De Rotterdamse soldaat gaf haar zijn horloge. 'Nou, zeg op,' zei hij.

'Luister,' zei de barvrouw. 'Ik ken een liedje en dat gaat zo :
Geef het leven een kans, gooi het maar op de bank,
Rente is nooit te duur, grijp je kans, grijp je kans.

Wat ik daarmee bedoel is, dat je in het leven niet alles als een dolle zot moet gaan besteden, maar je moet het naar de bank brengen om te sparen, ook al is het weinig, en dan krijg je vanzelf rente. Vele beetjes maken veel, en dat geeft ook weer veel rente. Dat moet je eigenlijk met alle dingen doen. Het heet het minimalisme, dat je alles opspaart, je woorden, je gedachten. Je leeft zuinig, en dan wordt je daar ook weer voor betaald. De Aldebaranse vogels komen opdat een mens dit zal leren, en om een mens van dit principe niet te laten afwijken. Dat is het ware drinken. Je drinkt zo van de hemelbron.'

De barvrouw gaf hem zijn horloge terug en een zoen op zijn wang. 'Dit is je rente al,' sprak ze. De Rotterdamse soldaat is toen hemels dronken naar huis gegaan.

De Amsterdamse Soldaat

'Het is allemaal ijdelheid, mevrouw,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Waar doen we het allemaal voor ? We zoeken allemaal onze zogenaamde vijanden te doden, en we vergeten dat we aan onszelf moeten sterven. Wij zijn zelf onze ergste vijanden, ons ego, onze verbeeldzucht en ijdelheid. De mens houd van sprookjes, mevrouw, van spiegeltje, spiegeltje aan de wand, ik ben het mooiste van het land. Ik weet altijd alles beter, mevrouw, daar gaat het de mens om. Het is allemaal ijdelheid, mevrouw. We kunnen wel opstappen. Waar is de liefde vandaag de dag nog, mevrouw ? De mens wil gezien worden, het gaat allemaal om geld en roem. We kunnen wel ophouden, mevrouw. De mens doet het allemaal om gezien te worden, laten we eerlijk zijn, mevrouw.'

'Waren de moddermannen er nog maar,' zei de vrouw die tegenover hem zat in de tram. 'Die nog in de grond groeven, hun linkerhand niet lieten weten wat hun rechterhand deed, de hongermannen, die zichzelf niet vetmesten met onnuttige en overbodige rijkdom. Ze gaven het liever aan een arme die niets had, en daar liepen ze niet mee te koop. Ze deden het niet om bekend te worden, om als een held geloofd en geprezen te worden. Ze deden het in het verborgene, en ontweken alle hooggeplaatsten. Ze leefden in de aarde.'

'Zo is het, mevrouw,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Ik ben blij dat er nog mensen zoals u zijn, mevrouw.'

'Bijna niet meer,' zei de vrouw. 'Je hebt een winnend lot uit de loterij getrokken. Gefeliciteerd.'

'Ik zal u nooit meer vergeten, mevrouw,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Ik zal mijn herinnering aan u altijd blijven koesteren.'

'Die bekendheid, eer en roem wil ik niet,' zei de vrouw. 'Ik heb al spijt dat ik het je heb gezegd.'

'Zo bedoel ik het niet, mevrouw,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Het is maar een gebaar, een filosofie. Ik eer het principe, maar zal u waarschijnlijk straks snel weer vergeten zijn. Het leven is druk, en vloeit al gauw over in andere dingen.'

'Gelukkig maar,' zei de vrouw opgelucht, 'want ik ben een moddervrouw.'

'Dan scheiden hier onze wegen,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat, en toen de tram stopte stapte hij de tram uit. De volgende dag kwam hij haar alweer tegen.

'Ha, moddervrouw,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat.

'Ha, modderman,' zei de vrouw.

'Was jij gisteren niet mijn winnend lot uit de loterij ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat.

'Ja,' zei de vrouw, 'maar dat was maar een moment-opname, van herkenning, niet zozeer van herinnering. Het leven gaat verder.'

'Ja, het is een modderwereld,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Maar weer een magisch moment dat ik u weer heb getroffen.'

'Vandaag weer gewonnen,' zei de vrouw, 'maar vandaag wordt altijd weer vervangen door morgen. Dat hoort bij het werk.'

'Speelt u graag in de zandbak, mevrouw ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'U speelt nogal graag spelletjes, hè ?'

'Het is geen spel,' zei de vrouw. 'Het is mijn beroep.'

'Bent u filosoof ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat die tegenover haar was gaan zitten in de tram.

'Psycholoog,' zei de vrouw. 'Ik help de man van de vrouw af in plaats van andersom, want de vrouw is gevaarlijk speelgoed.'

'Maar u als psycholoog bent toch geen gevaarlijk speelgoed ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat.

'Ik ben de speelgoedverkoper,' zei de vrouw. 'Ik onderwijs de gebruiksaanwijzing. Ik houd me ook aan de leeftijden die op de verpakkingen staan.'

'Laat maar zitten, mevrouw,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Ik ben soldaat en modderman. Wat moet ik met speelgoed ?'

'En u strijd tegen uzelf ?' vroeg de vrouw.

'Dat is de grootste oorlog, mevrouw,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat.

'Mag ik u dan een advies geven als psycholoog ?' vroeg de vrouw.

De Amsterdamse soldaat knikte.

Ze schoof dichter naar hem toe en zei in zijn oor : 'Dan bent u op het juiste pad. Ik heb daar wel speelgoed voor.'

'Welk speelgoed ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat.

'Plastik messen, bijlen, pijl en boog, handboeien, alles plastik,' zei de vrouw.

'We gaan toch geen cowboytje en indiaantje spelen,' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat.

'Nee, veel erger,' zei de vrouw. 'Er is een monster genaamd 'het zelf'.

'Mevrouw,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Ik heb jarenlang tegen dit monster gestreden, en het liet me verdwalen. Ik ben alles kwijt, al mijn orientatie.'

'Mijn speelgoed rekent ermee af, en geeft je een kompas,' zei de vrouw.

De Amsterdamse soldaat keek haar diep in haar ogen. 'En waar is uw speelgoed winkel ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat.

'In mijn hart,' zei de vrouw.

'Maar daar kom ik toch nooit,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat, 'want u bent een moddervrouw en zou mij nooit toelaten.'

'Misschien win je ooit nog eens een lot uit de lotterij,' zei de vrouw, en stapte de tram uit.

'Maar ik ben ook een modderman,' riep hij haar na.

'Waar de modder ons samenbrengt,' riep ze terug. 't Zal weer volledig toevallig zijn.'

'Wat een vreemde vrouw,' dacht hij bij zichzelf. De dag erna zag hij haar weer in de tram, maar er was een andere man bij haar.

'Zo, heb je je modderman gevonden ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat.

'Het was mijn lot uit de loterij,' zei de vrouw.

'Wanneer gaan jullie trouwen ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat.

De vrouw moest lachen. 'Het is maar een patient,' zei de vrouw. 'Hij moet er even op uit.'

'Op uit ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat.

'Ja, leren een modderman te zijn,' zei de vrouw. 'Het is een test.'

'Dus als hij faalt, dan moet hij terug boven de grond ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat.

'Als hij faalt, dan word hij net zoals jij,' zei de vrouw.

'Nou, dat is ook niet aardig,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Dus ik heb gefaald ?'

'Ja,' zei de vrouw, 'ik bood je speelgoed aan, maar je had andere dingen te doen.'

'Ik vind u maar een vreemde mevrouw,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Maar ja, dat zijn de meeste psychologen. Dus cowboytje en indiaantje spelen is therapeutisch ?'

'Ik ga het zo met mijn patient doen,' zei de vrouw. 'Het is symboliek. Het hoort inderdaad bij de therapie.'

'Ach, ik weet het al,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'U probeert natuurlijk klanten te werven. Ik zit hier mijn tijd te verdoen. Ik dacht dat ik met een normaal mens sprak, maar u liet mij in die waan. Dat is ook niet echt medisch verantwoord dan, mevrouw.'

'Ik heb ook nog wel medicijnen in de aanbieding,' zei de vrouw.

'Laat maar,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'De vissen willen niet bijten vandaag. Ik kan net zo goed een raam uitspringen. Ik kom weer uit bij het begin, mevrouw. Alles is ijdelheid. Mijn grootste vijand is mezelf, maar ik ben ook mijn eigen grootste vriend, dat heb ik ook wel weer in de gaten. Gegroet, mevrouw.' En zo stapte de Amsterdamse soldaat de tram uit, niet meer omkijkende. De dag erna kwam hij haar weer tegen, maar hij negeerde haar. 't Is toch altijd weer hetzelfde liedje,' dacht hij bij zichzelf. 'Niets zeggen maar. Ze zit hier voor haar beroep, niet voor mij. En trouwens

ik mag dan wel mijn eigen grootste vijand wezen, ik ben ook mijn eigen grootste vriend.'

Na een tijdje kwam ze naar hem toe in de tram en ging tegenover hem zitten. 'Heb je misschien een kwartje voor mij ?' vroeg ze.

'Oh, ben je aan de drugs ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat.

'Nee, ik heb geen klein geld voor de telefoon,' zei ze.

'Dat komt goed uit,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat, 'want ik heb namelijk geen kwartje.'

'Het gaat om een patient die mij dringend nodig heeft,' zei ze.

'Oh, dat is helemaal mooi,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Twee vliegen in één klap dan.'

'Goed gedaan,' zei ze. 'Moddermannen zoals jou zijn er bijna niet meer. Je bent goed door de test heengekomen.'

'Ja, maar ik ben helemaal uw patient niet eens, mevrouw,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'U moet in de war zijn met iemand anders.'

'Nee,' zei de vrouw, 'het was jij.'

'Gaan we opdringerig doen ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Is uw spiegeltje kapot vandaag ?'

'Nee, jij had het winnend lot getrokken,' zei de vrouw. 'Nu niet er onderuit proberen te komen.'

'Winnend lot ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Zeg, bent u gek ?'

'Karelssen is de naam ?' vroeg ze.

'Ja, met twee s-en,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat.

'Dan zit u in het systeem,' zei de vrouw.

'Hoe komt dat ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Ik wil eruit.'

'Ik zal u eruit schrappen,' zei de vrouw, 'maar dan mist u alle aanbiedingen.'

'Zal mij een rotzorg zijn,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Ik heb al genoeg aan mezelf. Ik ben geen baby-sitter, mevrouw. Daar was ik niet voor in de wieg gelegd. Ik ben hier niet om u te vermaken en liedjes voor u te zingen.'

'Een echte modderman, ik kan niks aan je kwijt,' zei de vrouw. 'Mijn taak zit erop.'

'Tot in de modder dan maar, mevrouw,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat.

'Tot in de modder,' zei de vrouw.

De Almeerse Soldaat

De Almeerse soldaat liep met een speelgoed geweertje langs de huizen. Hij had ook een kar bij zich. Hij ging langs de huizen om te vragen of ze ook nog oud speelgoed hadden voor de armen. Vaak gaven mensen hem wel een tasje of zakje met oud speelgoed mee. Aan het einde van de dag ging hij terug naar zijn huisje, en zijn hele kar zat flink vol. Er kon niets meer bij. Hij zette de kar in de achtertuin neer, en begon de zakjes en tasjes naar binnen te brengen, en daar gooide hij alles op een grote hoop in de huiskamer. 'Daar zullen de arme kinderen blij mee zijn,' zei de Almeerse soldaat tegen zichzelf. Er zat ook een paarse pop tussen. Hij nam de pop in zijn armen. De pop deed ineens zijn ogen open.

'Heb je ook schoeipapier ?' vroeg de pop.

'Schoeipapier ?' vroeg de Almeerse soldaat. 'Wat is dat ?'

'Nou, dat is heel speciaal papier waardoor de plaatjes die erop staan bewegen, als filmpjes,' zei de pop.

'Nee, daar heb ik nog nooit van gehoord,' zei de Almeerse soldaat, 'maar het lijkt me wel interessant.'

'Kijk eens tussen het speelgoed dan,' zei de pop. De Almeerse soldaat zette de pop op de bank en begon tussen het speelgoed te kijken. Er lagen ook wat boekjes tussen die hij aan de pop gaf. 'Kijk maar eens of dat schoeipapier is,' zei de Almeerse soldaat.

'Nee,' zei de pop. 'Dat is het niet. Het is heel speciaal papier. Ze hebben het in mij gestopt, en daarom kan ik bewegen en leven.'

Toen begon de pop zelf tussen het speelgoed te zoeken. 'Ik ben bang dat het er niet is,' zei de pop.

'En jij bent ook de enige pop hier die kan bewegen en spreken,' zei de Almeerse soldaat.

'Ik heb me al die tijd stil gehouden toen ik bij die anderen was,' zei de pop. 'Anders zouden ze me waarschijnlijk nooit weg hebben gedaan.'

'De arme kinderen zullen heel blij met je zijn,' zei de Almeerse soldaat. 'Dat weet ik wel zeker.'

'Nou, ik weet het niet zo zeker,' zei de pop.

'Waarom niet ?' vroeg de Almeerse soldaat.

'Misschien verveelt het snel,' zei de pop, 'en houden ze meer van wat eenvoudiger speelgoed.'

'Je bent me er eentje,' zei de Almeerse soldaat. 'Ik kan je natuurlijk ook voor mezelf houden.'

'Ja, laten we vrienden worden,' zei de pop. 'Ik kan ook de afwas voor je doen.'

'Gezellig,' zei de Almeerse soldaat, 'maar ik ben wel veel weg. Ik werk voor de armen.'

'Dat kunnen we toch samen doen ?' vroeg de pop.

En zo gebeurde het. De paarse pop was wel de ster van het feestje. De arme kinderen waren heel verbaasd toen de Almeerse soldaat en zijn sprekende pop het speelgoed kwamen brengen.

'Machtig,' zei een klein jongetje. 'Ik wil later ook poppenmaker worden om zulke poppen te maken.'

'Daar heb je schoeipapier voor nodig,' zei de pop. 'Dat groeit aan de bomen in Poplaarsia.'

'Waar is dat ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'In Afrika ergens, maar ik weet niet waar,' zei de pop.

De arme kinderen waren allemaal erg blij, en de pop schonk ook limonade voor hen in.

Toen de Almeerse soldaat en zijn pop weer weg zouden gaan waren de arme kinderen erg verdrietig. Ze hadden geen vader en moeder meer, en zouden graag mee willen. 'Weet je wat,' zei de Almeerse soldaat. 'Spring allemaal maar in de kar, dan gaan we langs de huizen om te vragen of er nog een plaatsje voor jullie over is.' De paarse pop liep voor hen uit, en de Almeerse soldaat trok de kar voort. Hij had nog steeds zijn speelgoed geweertje bij zich. Telkens als de paarse pop ergens aanbelde, dan waren de mensen zo verbaasd, verwonderd en verblijd dat ze maar wat graag een kind wilden adopteren. En zo werd de paarse pop de grootste held die Almere ooit gekend heeft, en natuurlijk de Almeerse soldaat waar het allemaal mee was begonnen. Er werden van beiden een standbeeld gemaakt, maar zowel de paarse pop als de Almeerse soldaat wilden niets van de roem weten, en zijn toen beiden de grond onder gegaan om als moddermannen te leven, en niemand heeft hen ooit nog teruggezien, maar velen volgden sindsdien wel het grote voorbeeld wat ze ooit gegeven hadden.

Einde

De Vogels van Moeder Afrika

Hij kwam aan de deur, en gaf mij eieren van vogels van Moeder Afrika.
We mochten niet spreken, alleen maar fluisteren, maar niet veel.
Hij draaide om alles heen.
Hij was door haar gezonden.

Als de eieren uitgebroed waren, dan zou ik de vogels moeten voeden en opvoeden, en dan zouden zij ons terugbrengen tot moeder Afrika.

Moeder Afrika droomt,
De watervallen, rivieren en zeeën stromen uit haar lichaam,
Zij brengt de genezing der volkeren.

Hij kon dingen alleen maar half zeggen, en vaak al helemaal niet.
Ik herkende hem. Hij was hier al eens eerder geweest.
Hij bleef zo vaag mogelijk. Het was te gevaarlijk. We werden afgeluisterd.

Alles was hier ingenomen door een vreemde religie.
De mens was ontvoerd, weg van Moeder Afrika.
Overal was afluister-apparatuur. Overal was ontploffingsgevaar.
Het was een criminele religie. Het had alles ingenomen.
De mens moest de leiders van deze terroristische religie aanbidden.

De man was een Afrikaanse vogel. Hij moest wel in een mens veranderen, anders zou hij neergeschoten worden.
Even later kwam hij binnen, en veranderde hij weer in een vogel. Hij zou de eieren uitbroeden.

Het was eigenlijk al door het uitbroeden dat alles begon te veranderen.
Er kwamen warme golven van de eieren af, en de kamer veranderde in de natuur.
Iets in mijn hersenen veranderde, en ik bevond mezelf op de grote Afrikaanse vogel die over een reusachtige zee vloog. Deze zee kwam voort uit Moeder Afrika die droomde.

En ze had ook een eiland gedroomd. Alles was ineens anders. Mijn zicht veranderde weer, en ik stond weer bij de deur, en de man stond voor de deur met zijn eieren. Ik knipperde met mijn ogen. Hij fluisterde wat, maar ik kon het niet verstaan.

'Alles gebeurt maar half,' fluisterde hij toen. 'Alles wordt in de gaten gehouden, en alles wordt afgeluisterd. Wat ik je geef zal je leren dromen. Het zijn de items van een spel die de weg zullen wijzen door de steden. De items wijzen de steden aan.'

Ik keek naar de eieren, en plotseling waren het boeken. Toen moest hij echt weg.

Ik bad tot de dromende Moeder Afrika. Ik zag de stromen van de watervallen, de rivieren en de zeeën uit haar stromen. Zij was hier, met mij, maar alles was maar half. Ik begon toen de boeken te lezen, maar ze werden weer tot eieren. Ze moesten uitgebroed worden, en de vogels moesten gevoed en opgevoed worden. Ik moest de eieren beschermen. Ik was de bewaker van de eieren.

Ik was me bewust van de opdracht, en besefte dat het bij het spel hoorde. Ik zag uit naar de

Afrikaanse vogels. Zij zouden ons over de woeste zee van het halve brengen.

Een vreemde religie heerste hier, waarin geen plaats was voor Moeder Afrika. Er mocht niet gesproken worden over de armen. Dat ik het toch had gedaan had me in de grootst mogelijke problemen gebracht, en daarom had Moeder Afrika haar vogel gezonden.

ARABISCH AMALGAAM

Hoofdstuk 1.

Ik, 27 jaar,

Lang,

Doe mezelf ouder voor dan ik ben.

Zij, 44 jaar

We zijn gelukkig samen, alsof we het eeuwig geluk hebben gevonden. Toch leiden we een saai leven, een sleur, zitten we opgesloten tussen muren. We leven meer in de dalen dan op de toppen. We mogen niet klagen, alcohol vult altijd de leegtes op. We moeten beiden oppassen geen alcoholisten te worden, maar we hebben het nu redelijk onder controle. Vaak als we klachten hebben wordt ons alcoholische dranken voorgeschreven door onze dokter. Onze dokter is wel alcoholist, maar daar hebben wij genoegen meegenomen. Dit omdat het een aardige man is, en dat zijn dokters zeer zelden. Hij neemt ons serieus en heeft ons op sleeptouw genomen.

Zij, is kleiner dan mij, heeft grote borsten die het leeftijds-verschil opvullen. We hebben geen kinderen, en dat willen we ook niet. Ze is rustig, ik ben tamelijk druk, dus we houden elkaar in balans. Zij leert mij nu om rustig te zijn, ook om mijn innerlijke stem te verstaan. Innerlijke vrede noemt ze dat. De dokter is hier weleens dronken geweest. We hebben besloten hem de hand boven het hoofd te houden. We zouden hem nooit verraden. We zijn niet kerkelijk, maar gaan wel naar een discussie-groepje om daar de dingen van het geloof te bespreken. Veelal wordt het geloof vanuit de atheistische hoek bekeken, aangevuld met kunstzinnige ideeen. We beschouwen het geloof als een vreemde erfenis, als cultuurgoed, maar voelen ons ook ingenomen, onder schrikbewind, door kolonisten uit het midden-oosten. We hebben nog geen geestelijke onafhankelijkheid. Ook de psychische gezondheidszorg houdt ons nog in mentale afhankelijkheid, en de zogeheten

tandheelkunde houdt ons in orale afhankelijkheid, en deze bezetters komen allemaal uit het oosten aanwaaien. Trots zijn we er niet op, we hebben meer binnengelaten dan ons lief is, en hebben onze onafhankelijkheid prijsgegeven aan idioten, beulen. Maar ja, het was immers oorlog, het was een strooptocht, kolonisten zijn uit op kolonies, het creeeren van een apartheid. Deze kolonisten hebben een minderwaardig ras geschapen, wij. Het is voor het leken-ras verboden na te denken. Er wordt al voor ons gedacht, er is al voor ons gedacht, en er zal nog veel voor ons gedacht worden. Dat de etiketten niet passen is niet van belang. Het zijn de merktekens van het beest.

En dan is er nog de sex-politie die ons sexueel afhankelijk heeft gemaakt, bang dat een onzedelijk geluidje in een oplettend kinderoortje terecht zal komen. Maar diezelfde kinderoortjes worden niet gespaard voor het traumatiserende geschreeuw van knettergekke dokters en het erbarmenloze geboor van de zogeheten tandarts. Dat diezelfde kinderen voor de ogen van hun ouders door zulke misdadigers oraal worden gescalpeerd schijnt geen probleem te zijn. In Afrika worden kleine meisjes vanwege het volksgeloof aldaar vaginaal besneden, en daar is men in de hele wereld terecht ontdaan over, en wordt het als een godslasterlijke misdaad beschouwd, maar hier worden kinderen, zowel jongens als meisjes door de bezetter oraal besneden, en geen kip die erom kraait.

Mijnheer A. Hoekstra-Van Het Land denkt hier anders over. In zijn zogeheten tandartsen-praktijk wordt alles veilig gedaan, en zijn er strenge voorzorgsmaatregelen, die overigens overal gelden, en waar ook een strenge controle op is. Ook worden er na de besnijding betrouwbare, goed geteste stoffen gebruikt om de opening weer mee te bedekken, zodat het gebit van het kind extra lang mee kan gaan. Mevrouw T. Foppen sluit zich hier helemaal bij aan, en ja, wat hebben wij in te brengen tegen deze bezetters ? We kunnen ons hoogstens aansluiten bij het verzetstrijders-front tegen zulke praktijken. Wij hebben allemaal het merkteken van het beest ontvangen, of we nu wilden of niet, en het merkteken is eeuwig. Daar kan zelfs God of de keizer niets aan veranderen. Er zijn hier in dit land drie oppergeloven waar iedereen zich aan dient te onderwerpen, waarvoor elke knie zich dient te buigen, en waartoe elke tong zal belijden : het medische geloof, het geloof in de geestelijke gezondheid, en het orale geloof, tot aan het dentale toe. En of je nu een dentaal bent of je bent het niet : die kerk kent geen grenzen.

Maarten Stokmans-Van Zeilen, zogeheten tandarts, aan de Belgische grens, vermeld dat er de laatste tijd vreemde dingen in zijn zogeheten tandartsen-praktijk plaatsvinden. Zo zouden beugels spontaan inkrimpen, en zogenaamd amalgaam, de zogeheten grijze roestvrije metaal-vullingen, zou spontaan in het niets oplossen. Hij gebruikt daarom nu veel vaker witte en rode vullingen, die volgens hem wat meer betrouwbaar zijn. Rood is tegelijkertijd de kleur van zijn lievelingskat, dus dat geeft ook direkt een emotionele verbinding met thuis. Ook is Maarten tegelijkertijd een enthousiast lid van de pinkstergemeente, en staat hij elke zondag trouw in deze kerk te klappen op de maat van de overigens heel mooie en aanstekelijke muziek. Hij heeft een visie voor het invoeren van veel meer kleuren zogeheten vullingen, zodat de mensen kunnen kiezen waarmee de barbaarse boorgaten voor eeuwig kunnen worden verborgen. Dat zou ook wat meer vrolijkheid brengen onder deze groep mensen die zo lijden onder de orale bezetting uit het oosten. Hij vindt ook wel dat de paus van de zogeheten tandartsen, Alexander de Kleine, de touwtjes wel wat mag vieren.

Kaakchirurg Riekerd van Aarnautsen is het hier niet mee eens, want hij vreest dat een al te zeer bemoedigde jonge generatie wel eens het einde van de bezetting zou kunnen betekenen. En dat zou helemaal godsonterend zijn. De wet die hen door God gegeven is, en waardoor zij de macht hebben gekregen, moet gehandhaafd worden. Van Aarnautsen staat hierin niet alleen. Tenminste negentig procent van de zogeheten tandartsen en kaakchirurgen staan achter hem, alhoewel sommigen gedwongen zijn dit te doen. Ook is hij van mening dat het God Zelf is geweest die het zogeheten

amalgaam heeft geschapen, en dat wij Zijn schepping moeten eren en ervan gebruik moeten maken. Hij is van mening dat het amalgaam ook goed gebruikt kan worden in andere delen van het lichaam, vooral in de botten. Hij vindt het onzin om mensen die jarenlang niet kunnen slapen van de heuppijn een nieuwe heup te geven. Implantaties van amalgaam zouden volgens hem wonderen kunnen verrichten. Dit omdat het volgens hem bewezen is dat amalgaam gevoeligheid van de botten kan afdekken.

Ja, de verschillende meningen over amalgaam en het gebruik ervan, dat is me er eentje. Nu wil Van Aarnoutsen zijn naam veranderen in Van Aernoutsen met Ae, want dat staat volgens hem veel deftiger. Men is er maar druk mee, met de grote drie, de drie supergeloven van dit land. Het christelijk geloof is daar helemaal aan ondergeschikt, want ook de christen buigt voor de dokter, de geestelijk verzorger en de zogeheten tandarts. Het geloof van de zogeheten tandarts is gebaseerd op de orale besnijding, als plicht, als prioriteit, en zij die rebels daartegen zijn worden doorverwezen naar de geestelijke verzorgers, want die mensen mankeren natuurlijk heel wat. Veel mensen denken dat we in 1945 zijn bevrijd van de nazi's, maar de bezetting door de nazi's is groter dan ooit, door de medi-nazi's, de psychinazi's en de nazi's van de mond, de orale nazi's. En dit is dan ook de drieeenheid die alomtegenwoordig aanbeden wordt. Het vullingenbeheer wordt overgelaten aan de orale organisten, de tandpasta-producenten, die net zoals de nazi's fluor gebruiken, een afvalproduct, om de gehypnotiseerde kolonie gewillig te houden. Zij bespelen met grote flair en betutteling de monden van de leken-families, zodat er niet al teveel tegenspraak zal zijn. Men moet eten wat de pot schaft, en door het gepoets komt er ook nog eens lekker veel gifdamp vrij van de kwikhoudende en kankerverwekkende chemicalien die ze vullingen noemen inplaats van gedwongen bot-implantaten, als de kinderdoop na de besnijdenis. En na zulk een gebeurtenis is hun naam ineens haas, en zijn alle verdere klachten voor de psychiater en de zondagsschool. Nee, dan ben ik maar als een oude jood die zegt : De verlosser moet nog komen. Een geschikte kanditaat hiervoor zou zijn Nelson Lincoln, die ook nog eens voor de dieren opkomt.

Onder dwangverpleging moeten we vandaag de dag van de verboden vrucht eten, om zo vervolgens nog meer in de problemen te komen, om zo nog rijper voor de verboden vrucht te worden. Dit is een vicieuze cirkel. En gedwongen implantaten hebben meer te maken met bezoek van buitenaardse wezens dan met werkelijke zorg. We zijn allang niet meer van onszelf. Maar goed, elke religie heeft zijn ongelovigen, en die moeten naar de hel. De hele wereld zal het beest achterna gaan om zijn beeld te aanbidden en zijn merkteken te dragen. De vijand werkt met vergiftiging, en met ontkenning ervan, zo is het altijd al geweest.

Mijnheer Olafsen uit Zutphen aan de Rijn zegt dat aan amalgaam geen enkel gevaar zit, want alles zit netjes ingedekt binnenin de kies. Nooit van dampvorming en metaalradiatie gehoord, mijnheer Olafsen ? Vervolgens zegt mijnheer Olafsen dat er maar heel weinig van het amalgaam daadwerkelijk in het lichaam terecht kan komen. Hoe weet u dat mijnheer Olafsen ? Ooit weleens opgemeten ? En weet u niet dat de apparatuur van de bezetters zichzelf echt niet zullen gaan verraden ? Drogredenaties, mijnheer Olafsen. En u heeft geen respect voor de mening van een ander, zelfs niet als het om hun eigen mond gaat. Uw wil is wet, want u heeft uw kolonie bezet, en duldt geen verzet. U houdt hen allen in slaap door het stafke van Doornroosje, met uw prikkende boren, soms tot aan de zenuw toe, en dan maar de gepleegde misdaden afdekken. Wie heeft u gezegd in de monden van gevoelige kinderen te gaan boren ? Het is niet veel anders dan Karel de Kleine die met het zwaard de ongelovigen dwong het christendom aan te nemen. En zo is de orale besnijding net zo erg als de vaginale besnijding, omdat het beiden om dwang gaat, en de klachten erbij niet serieus worden genomen. Klachten zijn de tekenen dat de bezetting werkt. En men wil dat zo houden. Alle tong zal belijden, elke knie zal buigen.

Bert Ootjes is door het verzet als zogeheten holistisch tandarts geplaatst in Bergen aan de Maas. Hij werd geplaatst voor het verwijderen van brandmerken, mertekens en nummers van het beest, en werkte in opdracht van de patient. Door de ongelovelijke werkdruk is mijnheer Ootjes overspannen geraakt, en plaatste het verzet een tweede zogeheten holistisch tandarts, professor Joost Achterbergen. Ook hij werkte in opdracht van de patient. Sindsdien zijn er vele zogeheten holistische tandartsen in het land gaan werken om de orale besnijdingen tegen te gaan. Veel van die zogeheten holistische tandartsen waren boorloos, maar ook de bezetters infiltreerden in deze branche, maar dan met boren. Om het infiltreren tegen te gaan plaatste het verzet schermpjes die zelf dauwdruppels konden aanmaken, en die schermpjes bezaten twee soorten poedertjes die op de zogeheten tandarts zouden reageren. Werden de dauwdruppels blauwkleurig, dan was de kust veilig, maar als de dauwdruppels roodkleurig werden, dan had de patient te doen met een infiltrant. Zo konden patienten het snel testen. Het was een uitvinding van Bert Ootjes. Niemand heeft ooit het tegendeel van de werking ervan kunnen bewijzen, en als er wetenschappelijk commentaar van buiten het verzet kwam, dan werd dat gewoon niet erkend. Het kwam er al snel op neer dat minstens vijftig procent van de zogeheten holistische tandartsen infiltranten waren van de bezetting. Velen hadden gewoon hun eigen gifjes die ze gebruikten, en de orale besnijding werd gewoon doorgezet. Ook het half serieus nemen werd een grote trend.

Ik ben in het verzet gegaan toen ik 25 werd, maar omdat ik op straat werd neergestoken kon ik geen actief lid meer zijn, en beperkte mij hooguit tot discussie-groepjes. Ik raakte verlamd. Ik zit nu in een rolstoel, en moet weer langzaam leren lopen. Mijn vriendin helpt me daarbij. Vandaag ben ik met haar naar het naaktstrand gegaan omdat het buitengewoon mooi weer was. Daar waren mensen met mooie naakte plekken in hun mond, niet vervuild door de zogeheten tandarts. Alles puur natuur.

28 Januari 1971

De flower power beweging groeit nog steeds, meer dan ooit. Ook de ‘Baas in Eigen Mond’ beweging groeit hard, vooral onder de jeugd. Ik kan weer een beetje lopen. De wonden zijn aardig genezen. De naaktstranden zijn dichtbevolkt nu. Overal wordt geprotesteerd en gedemonstreerd tegen de bezetting, tegen de grote drie, maar het ministerie is niet onder de indruk. Het is volgens hen door de gezondheidsraad bewezen dat de grote drie geen kwaad hebben verricht en een bevordering zijn voor de volksgezondheid. Inmiddels grijpt de bevolking massaal naar speciale tandpastas voor gevoelige tanden, want nieuwe zogeheten vullingsoorten zorgen ervoor dat zelfs duikers niet meer zo diep konden duiken als voorheen, doordat ze de druk op de mond niet meer aankunnen vanwege deze nieuwe aanwinst in de pharmaceutische industrie. Dit wordt door het ministerie ontkent. De nieuwe zogeheten vullingsoorten zijn prima. De bezetting kan er alleen maar van profiteren. Er wordt alleen vanuit het hogere elite-ras gedacht. Het leken-ras is niet interessant. Steeds meer jongeren beginnen zich tegen de flower power beweging te verzetten, omdat er maar niets gebeurt. Het is allemaal te soft, en de meesten worden gezien als watjes die niets ondernemen dan mantras zingen en mandalas tekenen. De heavy metal beweging begint te groeien, en kaapt veel van de flower power beweging weg. De zogeheten underground wordt een grote attractie voor degenen die maar geen aansluiting konden vinden in de flower power beweging, of hen die erin teleurgesteld waren en grote vraagtekens hadden.

Bert Ootjes begint een nieuwe pseudo-industrie en wordt door de politie opgepakt en vastgezet. Hij is inmiddels de grootste verzetsstrijder die het verzet kent, en de bekendste. Hij wordt ook wel de Vader van het Verzet genoemd. In de gevangenis vindt Bert Ootjes een nieuw hormoon uit wat

tanden weer kan laten aangroeien. Wel zorgt dit hormoon ervoor dat de tanden om de zoveel tijd gewisseld worden, en dat betekent dus tegelijkertijd het einde van de hele zogeheten tandheelkunde. Het hormoon is een mengsel van een stof die door haaien en krokodillen wordt gedragen, en die door een simpele injectie in een mens ingebracht kan worden, eens en voor altijd. Vanaf het moment van de injectie maakt het lichaam de stof zelf aan. Het hormoon slaat in als een bom, en naast het verdwijnen van de zogeheten tandheelkunde valt ook de geestelijke gezondheidszorg en ook het medische bewind. Nu een van de grote drie is gevallen blijkt het dat ze hun belangrijkste schakel kwijt zijn. Mensen worden gezonder doordat ze niet meer als een afvalput van gifstoffen worden behandeld. Ook het kerkelijk geloof valt hierbij in, en onze erfenis bleek niet veel meer te zijn dan een zogeheten vulling na de besnijdenis, en nu de besnijdenis was verdwenen daalde ook de behoefte naar een zogeheten vulling, maar de dwang was er nog steeds. De grote twee adopteerden toen het kerkelijk geloof als nummer drie, maar de geloofwaardigheid hiervan was tot een minimum gedaald, en velen lieten zich niet zomaar meer afzetten.

3 Januari 1980

Bert Ootjes komt vrij, en zorgt ervoor dat ons land de onafhankelijkheid krijgt. De geestelijke gezondheidszorg en het medische geloof worden tot liefde-werk gereduceerd. Het kerkelijk geloof mag daarbij helpen, maar verliest haar macht. Nelson Lincoln wordt de nieuwe anarchistische leider, en ook Joost Achterbergen speelt hierin een grote rol. Zij worden de nieuwe grote drie. Een man genaamd Tutuc zet een geheel nieuwe religie op gebaseerd op liefde en sex. Maas-Middelland wordt de nieuwe hoofdstad, waar professionele prostituees zich zetelen en de stad leiden. Er worden meer naaktstranden geopend, en het land wordt voor vijftig procent naturistisch. Tutuc richt de Naturistische Anarchistische Partij op, de NAP, en krijgt zestig procent van alle stemmen. Velen hebben een andere definitie van naturisme, die volgens hen veel meer is dan gewoon naakt lopen. Binnen het naturisme komen vele stromingen. Er wordt fel uitgehaald naar de mode beweging die wordt gezien als sexuele onderdrukking en het creeeren van een underdog. Nog steeds dertig procent van de bevolking hangt de mode beweging aan, en ze hebben grote invloed, vooral op scholen, waar andersdenkenden al snel als leken-ras worden gezien. De mode wordt steeds meer gezien als manipulatie en als een belemmering voor de vrijheid.

28 Augustus 1981

Het land heeft de status van Utopia bereikt. Er is vrede overal. Men kan elkaar weer waarderen, men voelt zich weer veilig bij elkaar, er is weer vertrouwen, rust, maar ook onafhankelijkheid. Ik kan inmiddels weer goed lopen en alles weer doen. Veel ga ik met mijn vriendin naar het zwanenmeer, het plantsoen. Hier kom ik helemaal tot rust. We hebben het vaak over onze schooltijd. Ik ben erg veranderd volgens mijn vriendin, minder druk. De roosjes beginnen uit te komen langs het zwanenmeer, en ze brengen wit sap voort. De grootste zwaan van het plantsoen gaat stoer over het riviertje dat het slot omgeeft. Altijd ruikt het hier naar zeewier. Als ze van die grootste zwaan niet zouden zeggen dat het een zwaan was, dan zou ik denken dat het een paard was. De bloemen komen hier laat uit, en niemand weet waarom. Altijd pas na de mid-hitte van de zomer. De criminaliteit is hier tot een nulpunt gedaald. Ik voel me weer veilig op straat.

In andere landen is het nog geen Utopia, en zijn missionarissen van Bert Ootjes vaak niet welkom. Heel veel buitenlanders emigreren naar ons land, en er komen steeds meer flats, die ook steeds hoger worden, en dit schijnt een goede uitwerking te hebben op de onderlinge vrede. In de politiek in andere landen gaat het er hard aan toe, ze geven Bert Ootjes geen kans. En ons land noemen ze

de nieuwe toren van Babel. Dan wordt Bert Ootjes in het buitenland vastgezet wegens het smokkelen van zwaar alcoholische dranken. Hier schrijft hij zijn apocalypse. In ons land wordt een standbeeld van hem opgericht. Zijn geboortedag wordt een nationale feestdag. Met de diertjes gaat het helaas nog steeds niet goed. Ze worden nog volop geslacht, en er wordt nog volop van hen genoten. Wel heeft Nelson Lincoln al heel veel voor hen gedaan. Vegetariers proberen heel wat, maar worden aan alle kanten tegengewerkt. Hun hoop is eigenlijk op Bert Ootjes, maar die zit in de gevangenis. De dieren hebben zo nog steeds geen onafhankelijkheid, en behoren nog steeds tot het leken-ras. Slagers beginnen steeds meer reclame te maken, met de meest idiote, uit zijn verband gerukte, betuttelingen, en proberen de massa met liedjes en slagzinnen in hypnose te houden. Leuk, zo'n arm diertje slachten, en dan ook erbij gaan zingen. De zingende slagers zijn populair, en er worden veel platen verkocht. Ook banketbakkers werken veel vaker met vlees. De warme broodjes met vleesvullingen gaan pijlsnel over de toonbank heen. En ze vinden steeds weer nieuwe dingen uit, en verleggen hun grenzen voortdurend. Voor de dieren is het nog geen Utopia. In het buitenland hebben de dieren het beter.

In de ogen van de dieren zijn de slagers en hun consumenten de bezetters. Zij vinden het racisme, maar niemand schakelt in op hun frequentie, en zij hebben geen diploma's. Nee, dit land is met zijn kar vol diploma's aan de rand van de afgrond terecht gekomen, ook al noemen ze het een Utopia. Maar in de apocalypse hebben de dieren het laatste woord.

2 Augustus 1982

Grillen zijn 'in'. Er wordt veel gebarbecued, veel gezongen en gedanst. Voor de dieren lijkt het alleen maar erger te worden. We zijn in de tachtiger jaren beland. Vlees wordt een handig weggevertje, een uitstekend kado voor speciale gelegenheden, en een bewijs van eeuwige trouw en liefde. Huwelijks-taarten worden meer en meer omgezet in bouwsels van vlees, en de miniaturen van zowel bruid als bruidegom op de top van de vlees-cake zijn steeds meer naakt, als een propaganda voor het naturisme, wat natuurlijk op zich niet verkeerd is. Steeds meer wordt er de nadruk gelegd op practische collectieve ambacht, waarin de vlees-eter moet zien wat hij eet. Veel demonstraties van openlijke slachtingen worden vertoont, en het vlees bestemd voor een huwelijks-feest wordt op het feest zelf geslacht. Door dit soort openlijke vertoning steeg allereerst het aantal vegetariers dramatisch, maar later werd het als cultuur-goed gezien, als educatief. Zo werd alles geheel gestileerd, en elke zenuw lamgelegd. Woorden als 'traditie' werden gebruikt, terwijl die traditie er nooit was. Vegetariers hadden ingezien waar het anarchisme het land naar toe had geleid, en begonnen te verlangen naar een milde vorm van communisme. Een bekend schrijver sprak : 'Het educatieve zwaard heeft een praalwagen gemaakt voor het bandeloze verstand.' Het werd een chaos in het land. Iedereen zag uit naar de terugkomst van Bert Ootjes. Maar die kwam maar niet, want die zat vast in het buitenland. Joost Achterbergen promoveerde weer ergens met een verslag over de carnivorische problematiek, maar dat haalde allemaal niets uit. Men was ergens in aan het vastroesten en kwam er niet meer uit. Er kwam een wet dat iedereen die nog vlees wilde eten de dieren zelf moest fokken en slachten. Negentig procent van de bevolking werd hierdoor boer. Nelson Lincoln had gehoopt dat ze door deze wet zouden terugschrikken, maar nee hoor, het werd een sport, een trend, een ritueel, ja, een geloof. En er werd zoveel mogelijk nonsense over verkocht. Het land kwam in een draaikolk van schaamteloos geweld en arrogantie tegen dieren. Dieren werden gewoon door de steeds naturistischer wordende bevolking als minderwaardig gezien, als ondergeschikt aan, als plezier-leken die uitgebuit moesten worden. Het werd een agrarisch land van veeteelt waarin iedereen betrokken werd, en de vegetariers zonderden zich veelal af. Zij konden dit zinloze geweld niet bevatten, en velen van hen vertrokken naar het buitenland.

Zovelen konden hun worstjes met karbonaatjes niet missen. Ze moesten er toch niet aan denken om zonder de speklapjes en de frikandellen door het leven te gaan. Vleesproducenten haalden zelfs stunts uit door het vlees te laten regenen op speciale dagen. Het land had een nieuwe bezetter. Men begon een hogere ethische en morele waarde aan vlees te hechten. Het zou gezond zijn en zelfs noodzakelijk voor het instandhouden van het menselijk ras. Het dierlijk ras stond dus zichtbaar op een lager plan volgens deze bezetter. En dieren konden niet spreken, dus die konden zich niet verzetten. De nieuwe orale bezetters waren gekomen. Het geloof in vlees redeneerde als volgt : Mensen waren engelen, en dieren waren gevallen engelen, duivels. Zo verdedigden ze hun handelwijzen, en daarmee beweerden ze ook nog eens dat wanneer zij die dieren verslonden, dan werden hun zonden vergeven. Ik legde me er bij neer. Ik kon niets doen. Vaak ging ik met mijn vriendin naar het zwanenmeer om te bespreken wat we konden doen, maar er was niet veel wat we konden doen. We voelden ons machteloos, en besloten te genieten van de dieren die er nog waren, en die met rust gelaten werden : zwanen. Vaak gingen we ‘s nachts naar het meertje, trokken onze kleren uit en gingen daar zwemmen met de zwanen. Op een dag nam de grootste zwaan ons op zijn rug, en bracht ons naar het slot. Er woonde hier niemand meer. Het slot stond vol met ridder-pantsers. We zijn toen naar boven gegaan en gingen op een oud bed liggen. We waren helemaal naakt. Ineens kwam de zwaan binnen met een pluimhelm op. Dat was wel het zotste wat we ooit gezien hadden, en we moesten beiden heel erg lachen. Boven het bed hing een schilderij met naakte vrouwen en een wereldbol. We wisten dat het een naturistisch slot was. Het was vrij toegankelijk voor iedereen. Overal waren ook spinnewebben. Op een verdieping hoger waren nog meer schilderijen met naakte vrouwen. We besloten weer terug te gaan, zwommen het meertje over, en klommen even later ons bed in. Een man scheen het allemaal op camera te hebben vastgelegd. Hij had een zwarte hond met manen. Hij liet het ons zien en zei dat het het mooiste was wat hij ooit op kamera had vastgelegd. We voelden ons niet bespied ofzo. We vonden het wel dapper van hem, en bovenal knap. Hij wilde ons wel meer beeldmateriaal laten zien. Het waren veelal naaktscenes. Ik kwam dichter bij zijn zwarte hond met de zwarte manen. De hond had zulke prachtige ogen en ik moest hem gewoon omhelzen. Het dier was één en al geconcentreerde kracht. Het dier leek wel van adel. Alles was rust hier en vredig, en we kregen een goed contact met de man.

Hij wilde ons wel vaker filmen, en we stemden toe. Hij was een filmmaker die op zoek was naar unieke, zeldzame tafereeltjes. Wat deze man deed was kunst, hij had de gave om de climaxen en het goede van het leven te vereeuwigen. Mijn vriendin kreeg hem lief. Hij was van haar leeftijd. Ik zei : ‘Ga je gang.’ Ik kon me voorstellen dat ze iemand nodig had van haar leeftijd. Ik was altijd veel te jong voor haar, alhoewel ik me ouder voordeed dan ik was. Nu was ik me dan steeds kinderlijker gaan gedragen, omdat ik daar vroeger nooit de ruimte voor had gehad. Ik beleefde mijn jeugd nu voor de eerste keer in mijn leven. Ik ontmoette een jonge vrouw, jonger dan mij, een buitenlandse, en we werden smoorverliefd. We deden alles samen. Ook gingen we ’s nachts vaak zwemmen in het zwanenmeer, en bezochten we vaak het oude slot. Ik bleef wel gewoon hele goede vrienden met mijn vroegere vriendin en haar nieuwe geliefde. Ik had het gevoel dat zij veel beter bij elkaar pasten, alhoewel we altijd een fantastische relatie hadden gehad. Het was goed zo. We waren beiden verzadigd van elkaar. Ik begon een nieuwe hoodstuk in mijn leven, en zij ook, en ik was nog steeds verliefd op haar en zij op mij. En de liefde was mooi en goed. De man die van haar leeftijd was had haar op het moment meer te bieden dan ik had, en hij kon heel wat leegtes vullen die door het leeftijds-verschil tussen haar en mij waren ontstaan. Zij had mijn moeder kunnen wezen. Ik had nu behoefte aan iemand die op één lijn stond met mij, van dezelfde leeftijdscategorie, of iets jonger, omdat ik mezelf nu ook jonger gedroeg dan ik was.

De tuin rondom het slot leek Arabisch, hier in Rotterdijk. Het had een beetje een pseudo-religieus-communistische gloed, wel heel mooi trouwens, bijna sprookjesachtig. Het was alsof de zwanen de sleutel ergens bewaarden. Mijn nieuwe vriendin had grote volle borsten die vol leken te hangen met melk, net zoals mijn vorige vriendin. Het leeftijdsverschil hoefde nu niet echt opgevuld te worden,

want we scheelden niet zoveel in leeftijd, maar wel kon het lengte-verschil opgevuld worden. Zij was kleiner dan mij, maar verder absoluut niet klein. Omdat ze bruin was zei ze altijd dat ze chocolade-melk had, maar dat was natuurlijk maar een grapje. We hadden beiden een bepaalde orale fixatie en dat was tegelijkertijd om te overleven. Er woedde nu eenmaal een orale oorlog. We waren schaakmat gezet in een machtsspel. De gelovigen zeiden altijd dat het paradijs van Arabisch-Babylonische oorsprong was, dus voor ons was het gebied rondom het slot altijd paradijselijk. Hier moest ergens de sleutel hangen. Met mijn nieuwe vriendin dwaalde ik door de gangen van het grote slot, diep in de nacht. Overal hingen naaktschilderijen die ons denken leken te programmeren. Veel van die schilderijen waren enigmatische paradijselijke taferelen. Sommige vrouwen werden met een blinddoek beschilderd, naakt en met een zwaard. Soms een weegschaal vasthoudende, of een schaal met daarin een soort zwarte of grijze stof. Ze hadden een rechterlijke of richterlijke uitstraling of houding, als een vrouwe Justitia. Ook gaven zij mannen die stof te drinken. Ik moest ineens weer aan die amalgaam-toestanden denken. Zou het een vonnis zijn gebaseerd op in het verleden gepleegde misdaden ? De vrouwen waren van bruine huidskleur, maar niet altijd. Zou de bron van dit alles in het paradijs te vinden zijn ? Zou daar wat mis zijn gegaan ? Waarom gaf Eva haar man van de giftige vrucht ? Ik viel bijna naar achteren toen we in een kamertje kwamen met nog een schilderij. Dit schilderij was heel hoog opgehangen, boven een deur die een open haard verborg. De man was geblinddoekt in dit schilderij. De vrouw niet. Zij had twee ogen als rode appels waardoor ze naar hem keek. Hij zat op een stoel. Zij had een zwaard en een sigaar. Boven het schilderij was nog een schilderij met een geblinddoekte vrouw met een zwaard die stond alsof ze klaar was om te kappen. Maar dat was het schokkendste niet : Beide vrouwen waren als etalage-poppen, werkende voor een industrie, en ze hadden geen borsten. Die waren afgekapt. Ze konden hun moedermelk niet geven. Hun vagina’s waren afgedekt met metaal en een slot. Zij waren kinderloos, ontdaan van hun sexualiteit. Daarom gaven ze niets dan gif en verderf. Mijn nieuwe vriendin schrok er ook van. Het deed haar denken aan de vaginale besnijdenis in Afrika.

‘Zouden dieren zich ook zo voelen ?’ vroeg ik. ‘Zij worden besneden tot de dood.’ Mijn nieuwe vriendin knikte. Ik voelde me onwennig. Toen zijn we maar teruggegaan. ‘Bij de indianen,’ zei ik, ‘in het amazone-gebied, werden soms de borsten van vrouwen geamputeerd zodat ze beter hun pijl en boog konden gebruiken.’

‘Ja,’ zei zijn vriendin, ‘en in Fenicie wat nu Turkije is werd Attis aanbeden, een aan zijn lot overgeleverde jongen die door wilde schapen werd grootgebracht, en zichzelf ontmande door een vloek. Uit zijn bloed kwam de naaldboom voort, en hij was een vroegere Jezus.’

Als in Turkije daadwerkelijk het paradijs heeft gelegen, dan ging daarachter nog steeds deze gruwelijkheid schuil : een dieper kruis, een genitale afsnijding, een sexuele apartheid. En dit had grote orale gevolgen. Het moederschap en de mannelijkheid werden ingeruild voor de oorlog, de jacht, de dood. Attis had zijn geliefde, Cybele, verlaten voor een sterveling, en werd door Cybele getroffen met de vloek van waanzin, vanwege de jaloezie. In de Joodse legendes duikt ook de naam van Lilith op als de eerste geliefde van Adam, maar zij werd al heel snel de hof uitgestuurd, omdat zij zich niet aan Adam wilde onderwerpen. En dit kruis was een enigma met vele gevolgen. Lilith zwoer dat zij de kinderen van Adam, de mensen, zou vernietigen. Zij kwam terug als de slang om Adam en Eva het gif aan te bieden. Ik ging op mijn buik liggen, en mijn vriendin ging op me liggen. Ik was niet getroffen door een vloek omdat ik een andere vriendin had nu, en mijn vorige vriendin had ook een andere vriend nu. Er was geen jaloezie. Er was vrijheid. Er waren geen rekken in onze monden meer.

Hoofdstuk 2.

‘Een vrouw zonder borsten heeft alleen gif te voeren,’ wordt er weleens gezegd, figuurlijk dan. Dat betekent dat een vrouw die geen verantwoordelijkheid draagt, geen moederlijke empathie, een gevaar is voor de samenleving. Dat was de slang in het paradijs, maar we zagen al dat er vele kanten aan het verhaal zaten, vele factoren speelden een rol, en het is niet echt eerlijk om alles zwart-wit neer te zetten met vurig religieus fundamentalisme. Er waren andere kanten. Wie hakte de borst van de vrouw af ? Waarom was ze zo woedend op de man, en wilde ze hem berechten ? Is er een kant van het verhaal die wij niet kennen ? Of heeft ze haar borst zelf afgehakt, als een amazone, om zo macht te kunnen voeren over de man ? En met welke redenen ? Voelt ze zich bedreigd door de man ? Of wil ze gewoon dwars haar zin doorvoeren.

Ik besluit met mijn vriendin terug te keren tot het slot. Ditmaal gaan we nog hoger. Op een hogere verdieping vinden we veel olie-lampen, veel Arabische spulletjes. De schilderijen zijn veel bloederiger hier, met veel naakte vrouwen die oorlog voeren. Ook zijn er veel jacht-tafereeltjes. We lopen naar de volgende verdieping, waar het enigma al snel toeslaat : afgehakte koppen van bizons staan op de schilderijen. Ook zijn er veel azteekse schilderijen, waar azteekse priesters de harten uit hun slachtoffers snijden en omhoog houden. Het is een dolle boel van besnijdingen en afsnijdingen, allemaal om apartheid te creeeren. Weer een verdieping hoger staat een enorm schilderij met de toren van Babel. De toren van Babel is een verhaal uit de bijbel waarin mensen een toren proberen te bouwen naar de hemel, en naam te maken, maar dan daalt God neer om hen te verwarren en te scheiden, zodat ze elkaar niet meer kunnen verstaan. Nog een verdieping hoger staat een standbeeld van een engel, waarachter een schilderij is met de boom des levens. De engel lijkt op een wachter, zelfs op de engel des doods. Ik houd mijn vriendin vast. We zijn beiden naakt, en staren verschrikt naar de engel en het schilderij. Naast ons is nog een klein trapje naar boven, naar een zoldertje. We horen een stem : ‘Wie wil het ei uitbroeden, wie eet het, en wie staart naar de dop ?’

‘Zei jij dat ?’ vraag ik aan mijn vriendin. ‘Nee,’ zegt ze. ‘Jij ?’ Ik schud mijn hoofd. Dan vliegt er een papegaai van het zoldertje naar beneden. ‘Opkrassen,’ schreeuwt hij. ‘Wie heeft jullie gezegd hier te komen. Het ei zal rotten.’ We lopen naar boven naar het zoldertje en zien overal rotte eieren liggen. Het stinkt hier ook verschrikkelijk naar rotte eieren. ‘Te laat,’ krijst de papegaai, ‘te laat. Jullie hadden eerder moeten komen om het geheim te zien. Nu is het weg, voor eeuwig. Dit is wat jullie krijgen voor jullie optreden : Rotte eieren.’ Tussen de eieren ligt een klein kruisje waaraan een staafje hangt dat lijkt op een mannelijk geslachtsdeel. ‘En nu oprotten,’ roept de papegaai. Het beest begint ons te pikken, en we rennen naar beneden. Het best blijft ons pikken totdat we uit het slot zijn. Snel rennen we door de tuin het water in, en zwemmen naar de overkant, maar nog steeds houdt het beest niet op met aanvallen. Dan komt de grootste zwaan ons te hulp. We houden er heel wat plekken aan over, en willen voorlopig niet meer naar het slot.

Blijkbaar is de vruchtbaarheid aan het lijden verbonden, onlosmakelijk, als twee tegengestelden, het naakte aan het bedekte. We moeten maar wachten totdat daarin vrede is gekomen. In de grondtekst van de bijbel is het paradijs Sheool, het dodenrijk, oftewel de tuin der doden. Ook de val was een werking van het paradijs, om het offer te doen rijpen. De ruwe diamant moest geslepen worden. Ze ligt op mijn rug en heeft haar armen onder mijn oksels door en houdt mijn schouders vast. Ze probeert me op te trekken, maar ik ben moe. Dan vallen we beiden in slaap.

Een oosterse tuin van geheimen, met religieuze valstrikken. Ik schrik wakker. Zij houdt me vast. Ik val weer in slaap. Voor een tweede keer schrik ik wakker. Zij houdt me weer stevig vast, en ik val weer in slaap. In wiens armen lig ik, of is dit weer een strik van de dood. Hoe dan ook, ik heb het

nodig om door de dag te komen. Het is mij gegeven. Ze staan daar voor huizen als paardjes, paardjes van de apocalypse om de volle druiven te betreden, te vertrappen. De maan schijnt, de sterren vallen, een droomweb houdt mij vast. Houd mij vast, laat mij jouw trekpop zijn, in dit speelse paradijs is het beter te zijn, beter dan daarbuiten. Het paard van religie trapt hard, ongenadig, straft voor eeuwig, zet schaakmat, en trapt dan de druiven van het genot in, één voor één, en soms meerderen tegelijk. Een hard besluit, van een jaloerse God, een erfenis, van lang geleden, een raadsel dat brult, smeekt, dwingt. Kijk naar de vrucht, niet naar de dop, eet niet, want het is slechts vergif, maar zoek naar haar geheimenis, broedt het uit, en ren wanneer je kan, zweef over de wateren, als een afstandelijke liefde, veilig en ver weg als de zon. Laat de hoop je niet ontnemen, laat je niet zeggen dat ver weg alleen maar koud is, want kijk naar de zon, die het verste weg is van ons allemaal, en schijnt en warmte geeft zoals niemand anders dat kan. De zon, de astronaut, op zoek naar geheimenissen, het grote broeden.

Ik maak een verkeerde beweging en er knapt iets in mijn rug. Toch nog een complicatie van de steekpartij. Ik vecht tegen de dood, en heb een bijna-dood-ervaring. Ik kom in het paradijs, waar naakte vrouwen zijn, overal. Zij houden een geheim vast, een ei, een groot ei, een doorgang, een weg. Het is een ei vol van bloed. Ik bekijk het ei vol belangstelling. En het bloed stolt, en brengt een lichaam voort met orale en genitale vrijheid. En er is een harmonie tussen die twee, en er is vrede. Na een paar dagen ben ik weer de oude. Er is iets veranderd in mij. Ik heb de dood ontmoet, en daardoor het leven. Ik sta aan beide kanten. Ik ben de brug tussen twee naturen.

Er stonden vele narcissen in onze tuin, vechtend tegen de koude dood. Zij gaven het leven warmte, de mensen een warme deken. Alles was bevroren, bevroren legers. Er werd gehandeld in mensen. De koude hand des doods greep hen, en wie kon daar tegen opvechten. Sommigen dachten harmonie in bloed te zien, anderen alleen maar twist. De raven kwamen over de stad. De stad was snel opengebroken. Er was plaats voor het enigma nu, men staarde niet alleen maar naar de dop. Men at niet meer van het vergif. De broeders waren gekomen. In de heldere zon stonden zij daar, in de Arabische zon. De raven waren uit het oosten gekomen. Oosterse wachters waren nu in de stad, kloppende op de deuren. Zij brachten dat andere nieuws. Zij geloofden dat zij het hart waren binnengegaan, op de zwaan waren zij geklommen, en het bracht hen hier. Ook zij hadden hun verwachtingen, hun verlangens, hun logica. De Arabische zon was heet. Zij waren de paarden van de apocalypse, maar niemand heeft hen begrepen. Zachte hoeven hadden zij, manen overal, lange wimpers, dromerige ogen, bruin, dromend van zachte winters, sneeuwwitte daken, waarop het paarse zou neerdalen. De paarse hand zou hen allemaal wegnemen. Zij hadden hun schuilplaats in het oosten wanneer de winter zou vallen, en dan zou het pas echt hard en koud zijn. En de drop-verkopers zouden er rijk van worden, de banketbakkerijen vol, want iedereen wilde daar ineens slapen. Men zou vluchten tot het orale als de genitale klem zou worden gebroken. Nu lag zij nog vastgebonden op de grond, maar de wachters waren dichtbij haar. Ik hoorde een schreeuw. Zij stond op, en bedekte haar naakte lichaam met een nachtjapon. Zij ging de nacht in met een fakkel, zij was de moeder der raven. De paarse hand bracht haar op de punt van de kerktoren. Een sneeuwwitte dag zou het worden, nu Doornroosje was ontwaakt. Niet door een kus. Neen. Door een warme hand, een innige omhelzing.

Het was een paarse dag met lange manen, een koninklijk feest. Doornroosje was opgestaan. Zij stond tussen haar vader en moeder in, de oude koning en koningin. Zij bracht hen de smeltende chocola die voor eeuwen verborgen was gehouden. Iedereen zou wel met haar willen dansen, iedereen zou wel een veeg van haar chocola willen krijgen. Maar zij was selectief in haar genade, zeer selectief. Zij bedekte de edele vruchten met chocola, en schoof hen in de ogen. De bakker stond buiten op een kist en zong van haar. Zo lieten zij het feest ten einde gaan. Maar tot diep in de nacht werd er nagenoten. De bakker stond bij de notenboom met een bijl, en brak het open. Kisten

vol mandarijnen stonden hier, kisten vol oude mandarijnse koningen, met een mandarijns accent. Een zetel gaf zij aan de oude man die zij door het licht had geleid. De baard van de oude tovenaar die vastzat in de boomspleet was losgesneden door het zwaard van haar ogen. Haar ogen spoten vuur, en lieten de koralen zien. Dit allemaal in flitsen, niet teveel, want teveel van dit goede zou de draken opwekken. Zij wilden Doornroosje voor eeuwig laten slapen, en niet slechts voor honderd jaar.

Ik keek met haar over de rivier van gisteren, naar de dampen ervan en de spoken, en wij wilden er niet wezen. Wij waren gevangen door het morgenland, waar de prinsessen en prinsen van gisteren niet meer regeerden. Wij konden het, ja, wij konden het wat we jaren niet gekund hadden. In het midden van de stad was zij verlicht. Wij werden door haar gevuld als roomsoezen. Van taai vlees waren haar vullingen, niet om te eten, maar om te broeden. De kok van de slacht werd terechtgesteld, en dit allemaal na een reeks lovende woorden. Morgen zou de maaltijd zijn, niet vandaag. Nooit meer zouden wij van onrijpe druiven eten waardoor de tanden van onze kinderen slee waren geworden. En deze komende maaltijd was een maaltijd voor vogels, raven, want zij waren bestemd voor dat uur om het eerste aan tafel te gaan en te eten. Het oog van de stad wilde haar verlichten, want de stad had haar nodig, en wilde haar nooit meer uit het gezicht verliezen, maar op die dag vertrokken de zwanen naar het oosten. De raven hadden de stad nu, en zij werden ingenomen, zoals zij eens innamen. Het pasen met zijn versierselen van drop was nog steeds een ingrijpende gebeurtenis. Ik keek haar aan, zij keek naar mij. Ik had mijn oude jeugdliefde teruggevonden. Zij had kleine borsten, niet gevuld, zij was teder, intens, voorzichtig, zacht. Nooit zou er meer een zondvloed komen na die dag. Haar regenboog was een teken daarvan aan haar hemel. Ik schraapte de damp er vanaf. Een standbeeld werd van haar opgericht in de stad. Wij zouden haar nooit vergeten.

Na die week speelden de kinderen spookje in de stad, en werden de oude hobbelpaarden uit de schuur gehaald. Zij speelde, ik droomde. Het was de slag der herinneringen, rijkelijk belegde het mijn brood. Ik liet de raven er van eten. Ik at de worst van het verleden door de berg naar de andere kant, en daar werd het varken van de toekomst geslacht. Tijd was niet meer. De bezetters hadden de stad en het land ingenomen, weer vanuit het oosten, door de Arabische zon. En ik kon alleen maar glimlachen. Ik vond het wel grappig, al die vogels. Wij voerden de vogels aan het zwanenmeer, maar de zwanen zijn hier nooit meer teruggekomen. Zij hadden het geheim ergens anders gebracht. Ook voerden wij de paarden die dag, de paarden van deze apocalypse. Beschuit was haar lievelingsvoer, en rozen haar lievelingsbloemen. Een paard zwom door de grachten. Ik keek erna, en mijn rug maakte mij los van de aarde. Ik zweefde er boven, als een grote broer, als de lange neef. Ik verzorgde de aarde als mijn broertje.

Het regende buiten. Ik zat met mijn jeugdliefde op de bank. Aan al het oude was een einde gekomen, nu ik het oudere had gevonden. Het was als een harem in mijn gedachten, een doornenkroon, een rozenkrans, de cirkelzaag boven Bagdad, de ster van Betlehem. Een zoete ster was het, van genadeloos geduld. Haar licht was verblindend, en toen konden we ineens weer voelen, elkaar voelen. Voelen datgene wat zo lang was weggeweest. Zij liep zo langzaam in haar lange nachtjapon, een oosterse avondjurk, leren schoentjes met riempjes, met allerlei gaten, gelakt, en haar sokjes waren kinderlijk als de bloesem. En nog steeds dacht ik aan de zwanen. Waar zouden ze zijn ? Verblindend was haar licht, des te zoeter haar aanrakingen, haar verschijning. Teer licht, weeskind, wolf, onbegrepen. Ongezadeld in de nacht. Ik borstel haar, er is rust. Zij neemt haar pijl en boog, en gaat de stad in. In de stad staan beelden van zwanen, als een herinnering aan die dag. De zwanen zijn van steen, niet van vlees. De stad is verlaten van zwanen. De oorlog is dood. Elke knie zal zich buigen, elke tong zal belijden, en niemand weet wat. Een onverbiddelijk zwaard heeft de oorlog lamgelegd. Het vrederijk is aangebroken. De paarden van de apocalypse gaan streng door

de stad heen, en dan komt de zon op, de Arabische zon. Het jachtboek is nu geopend. Men bekijkt de plaatjes, en begrijpt niet waarom. Men wil terug naar de oude dagen, maar het kan niet meer. Ik borstel haar haren, er is rust. Ze is in de stad met haar boog, als vrouwe Justitia. De rechtszaak begint. Zij was een vrouw van geconcentreerde kracht en zwakheid. De jacht-engel. Zij roepen vrede vrede, terwijl er geen vrede is. Na de duizend jaren zal er een nieuw tijdperk van vrede aanbreken. Ik borstel haar haren nog steeds. Ze zegt niks. Ik zak weg, en ze gaat op mijn rug liggen. Als een kat heeft ze haar prooi. De vlekken van de luipaard spreken van oude wonden. Dan breekt ze mijn rug, en ik ben niet meer van de aarde. Haar bereiken kan ik niet, alleen door stralen. Ik moet haar overgeven, ik moet haar loslaten, de afstand zal nu rechter zijn. Ik voel mij als een Arabische zon, die het ijzer laat stinken, die het leer zacht maakt.

Zij zal het grote ei uitbroeden, zonder dat het haar zal doden. Van het vergif zal zij niet eten. Eens sprong zij in het wespennest, en werd een luipaard. Nu komt zij niet dichtbij, maar broedt van ver weg. De dokters zeggen dat mijn rug nu goed is, maar ik heb pijn. Zij zeggen dat dat er niet is. Zij staren alleen naar de dop. In een vuur dat eeuwig brandt wonen zij. Van een afstand ontkennen zij de problemen, een naaldboom groeit uit mijn wond. Grootgebracht door wilde schapen ben ik. We zijn omsingeld en schaakmat gezet door levensgevaarlijke zotten. De idioten van de planeet Idiotia zijn gekomen. Waren de dokters maar dronken en aardig. Wat is er van ons Utopia overgebleven ? De nieuwe bezetters ruiken als het oude, de mondenrekken zijn weer terug. Ditmaal met veel prikkeldraad. IJzeren Jaap is uit zijn doos geklommen om de klokken terug te zetten. Waren de zwanen nog maar hier. Zij is een boogschutter, een teken aan de hemel, dat de oorlog nooit meer komen zal, maar we leven met de jacht. Een teken dat er nooit geen zondvloed meer zou komen, maar nu zijn we hier. De ijzeren maagd is onze straf. Zij broedt niet, zij steekt, zij is op jacht. Mijn rug is van ijzer, een bouwwerk van amalgaam, van kwik, van Mercurius, om de rest van mijn lichaam te verzieken. De dokters zien niets op hun foto’s. Zij staren alleen naar de dop. Wij wachten allen op Bert Ootjes, die nu inmiddels een martelaar is. Maar de zwanen hebben hem bezocht. Mijn buik is gemaakt van witte en rode vulling, een eeuwig gif. Zelfs al is de wortel eruit, het symptoom zal altijd blijven. Een leuk syndroom waar geestelijk verzorgers aan kunnen blijven sleutelen. Ouders blijven met hun kinderen naar zulke dokters gaan, want als het kind geestelijk ziek wordt verklaard door de beroepsbeul, dan treft de ouders zelf geen schuld, want geestelijk ziek zijn dat ben je vanaf de geboorte, en zo hebben de ouders die hun kind verrot hebben geslagen een alibi. Zo is de zogeheten tandarts met zijn stiekeme, niet navolgbare, zogeheten vullinkjes die het kind beladen met complexe vergiftigingen en de syndrooms-stempeltjes van de geestelijk verzorgers, de zogeheten psychiaters en hun handlangers, een professionele ouders-bescherming geworden. En hoe kan een kind tegen zo’n doortrapt systeem opboksen ? Een kind heeft geen diploma’s, geen zegeltjes, maar mag deze zegeltjes wel verbreken, door de paardjes van de apocalypse. Maar waar zijn de zwaantjes wanneer je ze nodig hebt ? En waar is Bert Ootjes ?

Rebelse kinderen worden al snel ziek verklaard, niet de maatschappij, nee, want de maatschappij is heiliger, in ieder geval heiliger dan degene die aan de bel trekt. De paardjes staan nog steeds in deze carrousel. En de mierzoete snoepjes van oma moeten de kinderen klaarmaken om een reis door de fuik van de zogeheten tandarts te maken. De zogeheten tandarts gebruikt hiervoor goedgepraat geweld. De Arabische tandarts was nu gekomen, en die was nog wel orthodoxer. Bij de balie werd snoep uitgedeeld wanneer een kind zich keurig en netjes had gedragen. Het hormoon van Bert Ootjes was inmiddels uitgewerkt. Ook de botten begonnen gaatjes te vertonen, en ook die moesten gevuld worden, en daar had de Arabische tandarts een heel arsenaal voor, en die duldde echt geen tegenspraak. Arabisch amalgaam werd daarvoor gebruikt, waarvan de ingredienten strict geheim werden gehouden. Alleen de ingewijden mochten de ambacht uitvoeren, en beunhazen werden streng gestrafd. Die werden openlijk op de pleinen aan de schandpaal gezet. Nee, de Arabische tandarts, daar viel niet mee te sollen. Malafide tandartsen werden als kwakzalvers bestempeld, afgezet, en gingen sindsdien vaak zonder een ledemaat of ontmand door het leven. Azteekse

praktijken kwamen niet zelden voor. De Arabische tandarts meende het. De bottenvuller, zo werd de Arabische tandarts vaak genoemd. ‘Ik moet vandaag weer naar de bottenvuller,’ klaagde een oud mensje. ‘Ja, ik ook,’sprak een bijna tandenloos oud mannetje, en een ander moest de dag erna. Controles waren wekelijks, en sommigen moesten twee keer per week. Elke knie boog, elke tong beleed, en elke trotse nek brak voor de Arabische tandarts. Als er problemen waren met het Arabisch amalgaam, dan werd dat altijd op iets anders geschoven, en dan voelde de Arabische tandarts zich diep beledigd, en kon erg kwaad worden, wat dan de meest verschrikkelijke consequenties had. Het was godslasterlijk om te twijfelen aan het Arabisch amalgaam. Zulke godslasteraars en aanstellers waren rijp voor de Arabische psychiater. De Arabische tandarts was wel heel goed voor dieren. Zo wreed als ze waren naar hun klagende patienten, zo genadig waren ze naar dieren.

Het lichaam van Bert Ootjes lag inmiddels op de bodem van het meer van Geneve, waar ze hem hadden gedumpt. Zijn botten werden later opgedoken en hij kreeg een eervolle begrafenis. De appel brandt, en kan niet meer gegeten worden. Er kan alleen nog maar gekeken worden als naar de uitbarsting van een vulkaan. De trekpop van het verleden is stuk, maar de Arabische tandarts kan het nog wel maken, want die handelt ook in speelgoed. Bert Ootjes zal zich zeker in zijn graf omdraaien. Speelgoed, om kinderen klaar te maken voor de tandarts. Nu kunnen ze nog spelen, maar straks ? Onze enige hoop is de marsmannetjes, maar die bestaan niet. De marsman marcheert onderdrukt in ons geconditioneerd verstand. De Arabische tandarts is de banketbakker, heeft een hotel-keten, is ambitieus. Hij is de grootste snoep-producent voor kinderen. Hij verdient wat bij, om ook een zwembad te hebben onder zijn kast van een huis. De Arabische tandarts is hier kind aan huis. Om Bert Ootjes wordt inmiddels flink gerouwd. Velen worden monddood verklaard. Ik begin een Arabische tandartsen-praktijk, zo’n beetje de enige manier om aan de Arabische tandarts te ontkomen.

Een nieuwe Arabische vogelsoort is er toegevoegd in het plantsoen, om het verlies van de zwanen op te vangen : de draai-konten. Prachtige vogels, daar niet van, maar ze kunnen zo vanuit het niets bezoekers aanvallen. Zo van : van te voren maar eerst bellen. Hele statige, deftige vogels met een strenge zwaar-orthodoxe etiquette. Zo ken ik er nog één. Het doet me een beetje denken aan die papegaai van het slot. Ik durf niet zomaar meer naar het zwanenmeer, het plantsoen. Deze vogels zijn geen grappen.

‘IJs ?’ vraagt ze.

- Ja, met slagroom, zeg ik

‘Siroop erbij ?’

- Ja, die rode

‘De Arabische tandarts zal daar blij mee zijn, die is lekker duur, en veroorzaakt veel gaten in je botten. Hij zal wel weer flink op je schelden bij de komende controle om zijn blijdschap om de winst goed te verbergen.’

- Nee, ik heb nu mijn eigen kwastjes. Ik kom niet meer bij die man. Ik ben nu zelf die man. Hij mag wel bij mij komen, dan zal ik hem een koekje van eigen deeg geven.

‘Arabisch amalgaam ?’

- Ja, schat, die met die vogelstront.

‘Schat, je weet toch dat je de doodstraf kan krijgen voor het verraden van de ingredienten.’

- Laat hen maar hierkomen met hun bekken vol mislukte plastische chirurgie en gedwongen eeuwige mode.

‘Schat, je weet toch dat dat hun geloof is ? Ze weten niet beter, en dat moet je respecteren.’

- Ik heb daar allemaal geen respect voor. Heb jij respect voor een mes die in je rug wordt gestoken ?

‘Toe nou, liefje, dat moet je zo niet zien.’

- Oh, en hoe moet ik het dan zien ?

‘Moet je kijken hoe je jezelf opstelt, en dat noemt zich een Arabische tandarts. Een beetje professioneler mag wel.’

- Oh, gaan we het nu ook over professionaliteit hebben, en vergeet vooral het woord deskundig niet te noemen. Ga godverredomme een ezel kopen.

‘Zeg, jeetje, nu ga je ook nog eens een beetje lopen vloeken hier.’

- En doe jij nu maar niet ineens alsof je heilig Aagje bent.

‘Oh, heerlijk zo’n ruzie met jou, maar je weet wie er boven in bed de touwtjes in handen heeft.’

- Je hebt gelijk, ’t spijt me, zal niet meer gebeuren.

‘Goed, Jan Klaassen, dan is dat in ieder geval duidelijk.’

- Ja, Katrijn.

‘Moet je nu nog ijs met slagroom en rode siroop ?’

- Nee, Katrijn, ik heb geen honger meer.

We starten een restaurant in het midden van de stad, zoals elke goede Arabische tandarts zou doen. Het voedsel is er zalig, en mensen komen hier echt om heerlijk te genieten. We hebben ons eigen plantsoentje met Arabische draaikont-vogels, door ons getemd. Een betere plek kan ik me niet wensen. Mijn wereld kan niet meer stuk, en de hare ook niet.

Hiep Hoera en de Stemmenhekser

Het was een vreemde man. Hij verdraaide stemmen, daar had hij een machine voor uitgevonden. Hij was een stemmenhekser. Hij brouwde daarvoor zijn sapjes en goot ze in flesjes. Het was een vreemd reflectie-systeem. Als je een geluid hoorde dan dacht je dat het van een andere kant kwam. Zo kon hij z'n bedrog plegen. Ja, de stemmenhekser had deze flat zo gemaakt tot een kinderschool, en de kinderen werden zwaar onderdrukt. Iedereen die er woonde moest de flat verlaten. Daar had de stemmenhekser voor gezorgd.

Toen Hiep Hoera de clown daar naartoe ging met een meisje die hij kende was de stemmenhekser er niet. Misschien was hij wel op jacht naar nieuwe kinderen voor zijn school. Hiep Hoera de clown ging samen met het meisje op onderzoek uit. Er waren hier allemaal hele vreemde meesters en juffrouws die de kinderen les gaven. Uiteindelijk na lang zoeken vonden Hiep Hoera en het meisje de machine. Het leek wel op een kopieermachine. Op de machine lag een metalen blad. Op dat moment stond er iemand op het balkon. Hij had lang haar en een bril op. Het was de stemmenhekser. Hij liep naar binnen en wilde de clown aanvallen, maar de clown wierp de metalen plaat op de stemmenhekser af. De stemmenhekser werd flink geraakt, maar splitste toen en veranderde zichzelf in een slang en een oranje muis, en er was overal geblaf. 'Kill him !' riep Hiep Hoera de clown tegen het meisje. Hij had het juiste meisje hiervoor uitgekozen. Het meisje begon te stampen op de grond om de slang en de muis te vermorzelen. Toen was het eindelijk weer rustig. Je zou je afvragen : 'Wie is dat meisje ? Hoe kon zij zo'n verschrikkelijke tovenaar verslaan ?' Maar je zou je ook kunnen afvragen : 'Is de stemmenhekser wel werkelijk verslagen ?'

De clown keek naar het meisje. Zij was een robot. Hij liep toen naar de machine en schudde zijn hoofd, en begon het ding uit elkaar te halen. Toen hij daarmee begon was de flat geen school meer, maar gewoon weer een flat. 'Ik zie je wel,' zei een onzichtbare stem. Het was de stemmenhekser. 'Ik heb dan wel mijn macht verloren, maar ik ben nog steeds een stemmenhekser, en ik kan nog steeds de mens kwellen met mijn truken.'

Hiep Hoera de clown liet het in de krant zetten om alle mensen te waarschuwen, dat de stemmenhekser dan wel verslagen was, maar nu onzichtbaar in de lucht leefde om mensen met zijn

geluiden te kwellen. Hij kon nog steeds woorden verdraaien, stemmen verdraaien, zodat mensen elkaar niet zouden begrijpen en leugens over elkaar zouden vertellen. Ook zouden mensen elkaar voor iemand anders aanzien, elkaar verwisselen, alles door de war halen.

Het zat in de drankjes die de mensen nog steeds dronken. Het waren spookdrankjes. Hiep Hoera de clown ging met het meisje het bos in. Ze moesten iets anders verzinnen wat de mensen zouden kunnen drinken. De mensen dronken vreemde drankjes, en de stemmenhekser zat erachter. Hij kwam toen aan bij een sprekende braamstruik. De clown en het meisje keken er wel van op. 'Dat zulke dingen vandaag nog gebeuren,' zei de clown. 'Ik had er eens ergens over gelezen, maar ik weet niet meer waar.'

'Goedendag,' had de braamstruik gezegd. De clown vertelde toen het hele verhaal van de stemmenhekser. 'Tja,' zei de braamstruik. 'Ik sta hier helemaal alleen op een heuvel. Wat kan ik doen ?'

'De mensen drinken verkeerde drankjes,' zei de clown, 'spookdrankjes. Ze moeten iets anders drinken.'

'Teveel bramensap is ook niet goed,' zei de braamstruik.

'Ben je de enige die spreekt van de struiken,' vroeg de clown, 'of zijn er meer.'

'Ik weet het niet,' zei de braamstruik. 'Ik sta hier maar alleen. Maar wat ik wel weet is dat in het diepste van de aarde onbekende groentes groeien, en ook op de bodem van de zee. Daar zou je heel goed sapjes van kunnen brouwen om de mensen te herstellen.'

Zo gezegd zo gedaan. Hiep Hoera de clown zag het als een opdracht, en hij haalde er veel meer van zijn robotten bij om het werk te doen. En zo werd de stemmenhekser steeds meer teruggedreven.

Einde

Medusa

Hoofdstuk 1. De Zonderling

Ik denk dat ik doodga als ik naar haar kijk. ‘Dit is het rijk van de dood,’ zei ze. Ze had een suikerzoet jurkje aan, met de geur van een herfstbos. Ik draaide mijn gezicht om en keek naar buiten, naar de grauwe stenen. Het was alsof ze lang uitgestrekt op de daken lag, alsof ik haar met mijn ogen niet kon ontwijken. De bus stopte dichtbij, mensen stapten in de bus, en het was alsof zij tussen de rijen stond. Ik denk dat ik doodga als ik haar aankijk, dat ik het dan gewoon niet overleef. Ze pakt me bij mijn hand, en trekt me naar beneden. Het is etenstijd. Zij smeert het brood, kijkt naar buiten naar de heg. Ik ruik haar suikerzoet jurkje, alsof het belegd is met hemelse rijkdommen, maar naar haar kijken durf ik niet. Ik ben laf. Ik voel haar hand nog steeds, terwijl ze me allang heeft losgelaten. Ze voert me.

Ze is als een rots waarvan ik af kan springen, daarom beklim ik haar niet. De pot pindakaas voelt nog warm aan van haar hand. Ze was hier. Nu is ze in de kelder. Omdat ze zo lang wegblijft drink ik de laatste slokken melk en thee, en dan ga ik naar bed. Het was een dag des doods, in de tuin van spot. En gisteren was ik in de tuin van wreedheden. Mijn herinneringen zijn daar. Mijn hersenen bloeden. Ze leest me een boek voor, terwijl ik probeer te slapen. Ik hoor haar stem echoen door mijn hoofd. Het zaad van de lindeboom houd ik stevig vast, en meng het met mijn tranen. Dan smeer ik haar lichaam in, met het mengsel dat lijkt op natte tarwe, griesmeel, het is als brood, en het bed is de oven. Zij is de vrouw van de bakker, en ik ben de bakker. Ik maak haar klaar voor het kostelijke dinner in het diepste van de nacht, en dan slaap ik.

Ze is als de boom aan de rivier. Ik krab aan het hout, het is alsof de sterren breken. Ik denk aan de tuinen waarin wij waren, de hoge poorten in de heggen, de vruchten die zijn als de meest kostelijke snoepjes. Wie plantte hen daar ? Ik keek naar haar gezicht toen ze sliep. Nu was het veilig. De lazarus-koekjes bungelden aan haar lichaam, slap, uitgedroogd, de nacht heerste hier over de dood, de gouden dood. Voor mij was het een vakantie, ze was even geen roofdier meer. Ik kuste haar lippen, en dan slaap ik, vrij, blij, zonder angst, want ze slaapt. Een diepe nacht die mijn bewustzijn breekt, ik ben er even helemaal uit. Tante Connie controleert later de kamers nog even, of alle lichten wel uit zijn voor de nacht, want als de nacht komt, dan moet de nacht echt goed komen. Zo praat ik ’s nachts als met een pop. Ik hoor tante Connie op de gang lopen, als een lijzige boom, verzwakt door het gewicht van haar ouderdom, met passen als het slaan op de koekjestrommel. Ja, haar hele wezen klinkt me als muziek in de oren. Altijd is ze mijn lievelingstante geweest, daarom wonen we hier samen, maar de herinnering aan haar verzwakt. Ik leef hier in een dorre tuin, spot gemengd met wreedheden, de souvenirs van het duistere gat van het verleden. Geen lichtjes konden dat goedmaken, geen gouden pollepel van welke grootmoeder dan ook. Ik voel me verminkt.

Oom Joop is een man met humor, maar ook hij kon mij niet redden. Als ik wakker word zit er iemand op me, wassende mijn rug. Het is zij. Ik durf haar niet aan te kijken. Ze pakt me beet, laat dan los, pakt me steviger beet, en dan laat ze me helemaal los, om op te staan. Ik ben te moe, en het

zonlicht kwelt me. Er liggen hier snoep papiertjes overal. Ik hoor haar lachen. Er is geen tuinman die de wilde tuin van mijn ziel op orde kan krijgen. Ik lig hier voor Jan Worst.

Ze is de laatste van de rozentuin, dus ik kan haar niet wegdoen. De geschiedenis van de graaf, en zijn kinderen. Zij is als de erfenis. Uit mijn gedachten is ze niet. Ze speelt de piano. Ik kijk naar buiten, en probeer langzaam grip te krijgen op de dag. De muren buiten lijken hoog, zoals zij hoog is, van adel. Tante Connie komt binnen, en sleept zichzelf over het tapijt. Het lijkt voor haar een woestijnreis om aan ons bed te komen, en alles lijkt verwaterd. Haar rumoerig kapsel was vroeger deftig en hehoudend. Ze staart in de spiegel. ‘Ik moet me nog opmaken voor de dag, je weet wel, het harnas aandoen,’ zegt ze. Ze gaat tegen de verwarming aanzitten, en luistert naar de piano. De schotel die ze in haar handen heeft maakt haar bijna als een bedelaar. Ze heeft behoefte aan een gesprek, en ik ben te moe. De dochter van de graaf daarentegen is vol energie, en begint het gesprek met haar in zinderende vaart. Ze zijn als een stel vogels. Al snel prakken de vorken een maal. Ik krijg niks, want ik behoor niet tot de dag. Het is alsof ze elkaar voeren.

In de middag ligt ze weer op me. Het lijkt wel alsof ze draadjes aan me bevestigt om me op te hijsen. Er is nog maar een klein stukje van de dag over en dat eist ze helemaal voor haarzelf op, als met gloeiende handen. Buiten hoor ik de bus, mensen stappen in, verveeld, uitgeput. Ik vraag me af of ze ooit zullen aankomen. Zwetend en puffend kom ik aan bij de lift op de gang. Ik wil naar de zolder. Maar de lift schijnt niet te werken. Ik strompel naar de trap, want een dag met de dochter van de graaf is te veel voor mij. Ik zie bij de trap naar de zolder een andere vrouw staan, in wit kant. Ze helpt me op de trap. Ik plof even later op haar bed neer. Zij is de vrouw van de zolder, en ik heb de zolder bereikt, niet te bereiken voor de dochter van de graaf, de dochter des doods. Maar ik hoor haar krijsen beneden, als iemand die zich geprikt heeft bij het naaien. Ja, toe maar, druk die speld maar diep naar binnen, je verdient het, kreng, denk ik bij mezelf. Maar dan word ik ineens mild door de zachtheid van de vrouw hier. Ze komt dichterbij, spreid haar benen waarmee ze mij vastklemt. ‘Ho, doe normaal,’ zeg ik. Ze verzwakt de klem een beetje, maar ik voel haar gewicht op me. ‘Slapen ?’ vraagt ze.

‘Nee, dank je, ik heb net geslapen,’ zeg ik.

Ze loopt naar een kastje, haalt wat brood eruit en besmeerd het. Daarna voert ze me. De lucht is donker hier, en ik hoor de dochter van de graaf nog steeds krijsen. Als ik naar buiten staar is het alsof ze zich heeft uitgespreid over de daken.

‘Waar kom je vandaan ?’ vraagt de vrouw van de zolder.

‘Vanuit de tuin,’ zeg ik.

‘Oh, de tuin der edelheden en martelingen ?’

Ik knik.

‘Zo’n zoet-bitter iets,’ zegt ze. Ik knik weer. De verdiepingen onder de zolder lijken ver weg. Ik staar weer naar buiten, alsof ik mijn ziel zie vliegen. ‘Waar ben ik ?’ vraag ik.

- Bij mij.

Ze pakt een schotel en een kom, en voert me dan soep. ‘Ik wil niet meer terug,’ zeg ik. Ik kwam van een nachtelijk gebrul, en nu was ik hier, een plaats vol protserige spulletjes, over en weer gelakt en opgepoetst. Vanaf de zolder kon ik de tuinen zien, de heggen, met de hoge poorten. ‘Ik ben een vergiftigd mens,’ zeg ik. ‘Een dwaallicht, een pop.’ Ze knikt. Als ik naar buiten keek zag ik mijn weerspiegeling. Zij stond ineens voor de spiegel, en maakte zich op, met allerlei smeerseltjes. ‘Goed spul van de bomen,’ zei ze. ‘Het is voor mijn huid. Ik ga niet naar het feest vanavond, ik blijf wel hier met jou.’

Het is alsof ik met haar hang tussen de verdiepingen, alsof ik met haar zweef boven de tuinen. Ik voel haar gewicht, en ben bang dat we naar beneden vallen, maar ze rekt me uit. Ik zie de begroeiing op de muren, en herinner de begroeiing van de tuinen, de dorens, de valstrikken, puur natuur.

‘Ik ben de maker van de tuin,’ zegt ze plotseling. Ik schrik. ‘Hoe kun je zoiets maken ?’ vraag ik. Ze zwijgt, als het graf. Ik merk dat ik kwaad word van binnen, maar dan voel ik ineens genade. Al snel voel ik niets meer, ik kijk alleen maar in een onbekend gat, als een mist, een waas. Ik kan niet meer nadenken. ‘Wat is er aan de andere kant van de tuin ?’ vraag ik.

- Een snoepwinkel. Ze verkopen eigenlijk gewoon zoete vruchten.

Ik kijk naar haar kanten jurkje. Het is als een snoep jurkje. Ineens heb ik zoiets van : Als ik nog verder naar haar kijk, dan ga ik dood.

Ik rol van het bed af naar de trap, en laat mij naar beneden vallen. De dochter van de graaf vangt mij op, en de vrouw van het zolder stormt naar beneden. ‘Hij zit toch aan touwen vast, elastiek, draden, kettingen, dus wat wil je,’ schreeuwt ze.

‘Is dit de oorlog van de feeen,’ vraag ik, ‘of van de indianen.’ Ze grijpen elkaar in de haren. ‘Uit dat licht,’ roept de vrouw van de zolder. Ik staar doelloos naar de hoeken van de trap. Dan voel ik de hand van tante Connie, die mij naar haar kamer neemt. ‘Thee ?’ vraagt ze.

Ze maakt brood voor me, opgepoft en zacht, een beetje nat, met wat soep en pudding. ‘Je moet goed eten, jongen,’ zegt ze. Ik zie haar kauwen. Het zal wel avondetens-tijd zijn. Ik hoor vrouwen krijsen. Buiten hoor ik vogels krijsen. Het klinkt me als muziek in de oren. Bij tante Connie is alles altijd anders. Ze zorgt voor me, grijpt in wanneer het nodig is. Oom Joop zit aan de andere kant van de kamer. Een verfrommelde papieren zak ligt naast hem, met oud brood. De gouden klok tikt, en het is een rustgevend geluid. Ik probeerde vat te krijgen op de structuur van dit huis, maar het was alsof ik van de daken afgleed, of was dit huis slechts de weerspiegeling van de tuin. Het was niet bepaald mijn Eden, en toch wilde ik dit huis doordringen. Ik voelde mij een zwerver in dit huis, een huis wat ik nooit echt binnen kon gaan. Na een paar uur zaten de twee vrouwen keurig netjes tegen elkaar aan, in keurige zoete kleertjes, als feestbroodjes bij de bakker. Rozen op hen vastgespeld alsof er iemand jarig was, en de spelden gingen diep in hun vlees. ‘Ja dieper, dieper,’ dacht ik. Ik

wilde het voelen bloeden. Het was al aan het bloeden. Het bloed sijpelde op de grond. Tante Connie raakte in paniek, en ik ook, omdat ik toch meer waarde hechtte aan de beoordelingen van tante Connie dan aan mezelf. ‘Waarom doen jullie dat !’ riep ze.

‘Dit is ons verbond,’ zeiden de twee vrouwen. ‘Ons bloed-verbond.’

‘Zie je,’ dacht ik bij mezelf, ‘dan had ik het wel goed ingeschat.’

‘Geef me de speld,’ zei ik. ‘Ik wil ook deel hebben aan het bloed-verbond.’ Het was een hele opluchting toen ik de speld in mijn vlees voelde gaan, en ik de zachtheid van de roos tegen mijn huid aanvoelde. Ik voelde me een plak vlees bij de slager.

‘Nu kun je het dak opkomen,’ zeiden de vrouwen. ‘Nu kon je de tuin bezaaien en besproeiien.’ De poort van mijn hersenen leek open te gaan, en de waas leek even te vertrekken. Ik wilde meer van zulke lichaams-spelden. Ik herinnerde de dorens, ik herinnerde hoe genadeloos diep ze gingen, totdat alles binnenin me brak, en ik begon te zweven. Ik was nu boven het dak, maar de huizen om ons heen waren veel groter. Ik kon de zolders inkijken en zag de vrouwen. Ze leken eenzaam, en ik was eenzaam. Ik was met een helm op geboren, maar die ontplofte nu. Ik zweefde bij iemand binnen. En hier zag ik bomen groeien door het hele huis. Ik was nog steeds in de tuin. Hier hingen zoveel gouden klokken aan de muur, die allemaal heerlijk tikten, zo licht, zo zacht, zo helder, ontwakende de diepste roerselen van mijn hersenen. Ze waren als een vuur in mijn lichaam. De mensen die hier woonden hadden allemaal dialogen. Het moest vooral ergens over gaan, maar ze kwamen er nergens mee. Ze leefden in een cirkeltje. Ik had ze al snel door. Toch was het allemaal erg verrijkend voor mij. Jurkjes hingen er aan de muur, vruchtjes lagen op schaaltjes, gezet op oventjes. ‘Is dit de weg naar de stad ?’ vroeg ik.

- Welke stad. Oh, de overstad.

Ik knikte. ‘Daar heb ik vaker over gehoord,’ zeiden ze. Ze lieten me ladders van touw zien. Ik klom en klom, dit huis was lang, als een herenhuis wat maar niet ophield. Mensen leefden hier als vogels. Ik wist niet waar ik moest kijken. ‘De parel van de tuin,’ zeiden ze, ‘is daar,’ en dan wezen ze omhoog. De ladder was glibberig, en ik gleed weg. In spiegels zag ik mezelf klimmen. Ik had weer het gevoel dat ik van de daken gleed, alsof ik het huis niet kon binnengaan. Tante Connie legde haar hand op mijn hoofd. Haar hand was gloeiend heet, of was mijn hoofd gloeiend heet. ‘Waarom ?’ vroeg ik. ‘Waarom is er hier geen doorkomen aan ?’ Tante Connie zei niks, zweeg als het graf. Ook de twee vrouwen zeiden niets. Het was als een schijnbaar open weg die dood liep. Een zwakte maakte zich van mij meester, en ik was gelijmd aan de grond. Met wilde maar beheerste ogen keek de dochter van de graaf naar mij, alsof ze een wild paard probeerde te temmen, met de koele zelfverzekerdheid dat dat haar aardig lukte. Even stond de tijd stil, en was het alsof zij de muziek van het moment perfect kon berijden. Als ze zou vallen zou ze aan draden verbonden zijn, als aan elastiek, zodat ze niet in de vlammen van het hellemeer zou vallen. Ik snakte naar adem. Ik hoorde haar ogen roepen. Toen greep ze me vast. ‘Ik laat je nooit meer los,’ zei ze. ‘Nooit meer.’ Even dacht ik dat ik thuis gekomen was. Ik probeerde me zo lang te maken als zij zich waardig voelde. ‘Wie ben jij eigenlijk ?’ vroeg ik.

De vrouw van het zolder liep terug naar de trap. In gedachten zweefde ik langs het huis, en de

dochter van de graaf lag uitgestrekt op de daken. Wij konden dit huis niet binnenkomen. Wij waren in de tuin. Het zonlicht was aangenaam, en het was alsof we beiden smolten en naar beneden sijpelden, om in elkaar te versmelten ? Waren wij de vruchten van deze tuin ?

Hoofdstuk 2. De Sleutel

Tante Connie legt gouden bestek op de tafel voor het feestmaal. Oom Joop komt aan tafel zitten. Ik zit naast de dochter van de graaf. Ze houdt mijn hand vast. Tante Connie brengt dan de pan met het avondeten, en met een grote lepel laat ze het ploffen op onze borden. ‘Is zij van het zolder niet uitgenodigd ?’ vraag ik.

‘Ze heeft haar eigen,’ zegt tante Connie. Ik heb het gevoel dat ik wat mis, en ga na een tijdje naar het zolder. Ik voel me op en top. Ze ligt op bed, en staart door het raam. Ik ga bij haar zitten. Haar ogen kijken dwars door me heen, alsof ze me niet ziet. Als ik naar buiten kijk, zie ik haar weerspiegelingen daar, alsof ze uitgestrekt is over de daken, en langs de muren, als begroeiing. ‘Zoveel mensen kennen me niet,’ zegt ze. Dan staat ze op en geeft mij een bord. Het schijnt hier ook etenstijd te zijn. Ze schept op. We staren elkaar de hele tijd aan, en als ik dan later naar buiten staar is het al donker, en haar weerspiegelingen zijn als de lichten in de nacht, als woeste paarden over de daken. Ik hoor tante Connie beneden roepen. Het is tijd voor de nacht, maar ik wil niet slapen. Ik houd de hand vast van de vrouw van het zolder. Mijn hoofd voelt als een stad met huizen, grote huizen, hoge huizen, lange huizen, met bomen er tussen, met plaats voor de tuin. Het is alsof de vrouw van het zolder op mijn hersenen danst, en het doet pijn, en ik word al snel moe. Pudding voert ze me. Grote lange draden voel ik door mijn lichaam gaan, totdat ik het gevoel heb dat ik kan zweven. Haar bed is ineens zo dik en ver weg, haar kamer twee keer groter. Nee, naar buiten wil ik niet meer. Ik ben hier buiten. Zij is mijn wereld. Ik heb een kinderlijk geloof in haar.

Tante Connie laat me de schoonheid van het huis zien, van alle plekken, en ja, ik moet haar gelijk geven. Ze heeft een plaats in mij, alle dingen in dit huis hebben een plaats in mij. Ik heb ze nodig. Ik ben er bijna ziekelijk afhankelijk aan. Het is mijn levenswarmte. Maar toch voelt het alsof ik heen en weer gesleurd word. Ik heb nergens grip op, ik glijd telkens weg, dieper. Dit is een doodlopende weg, een fuik, van vuur. Ik zie ze het glas heffen. Zij zijn als de vlammen in mijn hoofd. Ik durf niet naar ze te kijken, want dan ga ik dood. Het zijn de hoofden van de Medusa. De mensen die hier wonen zijn net zo steen als dit huis, en iedereen die naar hen kijkt verandert in steen. Zo is het leven. Is dit de sleutel weg uit de tuin, of is dit de sleutel tot de tuin.

In de nacht danst de vrouw van de zolder als een zwaan, als een brandende struik. Ik probeer me om te draaien, maar ik kan niet. Deze dans is dodelijk, of misschien wel leidende naar de poort van de hel. Ik sta verstijfd. De uitsteeksels en aanhangsels van haar jurk raken mij. Ik kijk naar haar door mijn glas wijn. De poort brandt. Ik probeer me ergens aan vast te klampen, maar zonder success, totdat ik de stem van tante Connie hoor. Ik kan niet terugroepen. Iemand knijpt mijn keel dicht, maar ik heb geen verlangen om terug te roepen. Ik ben als een boom geworteld in de grond. Ik heb het geheim van Medusa gezien : Alleen met de ogen van wijn kunnen wij haar bekijken. Ze gilt en schreeuwt nu ik het geheim heb ontdek. Ik gooi de wijn in haar gezicht, want ze wil me verscheuren. Dan staat ze in vlammen, en het gehele huis brandt. Ik moet hier weg. Maar de trappen zijn hier van vuur. Alles is van vuur. Ik besluit te blijven. Medusa schijnt aardiger dan ik dacht. Haar hoofden leven hier in een vreemde vrede. Roofdieren bespringen mij en verscheuren mij, en mijn hart is blij. Het is mijn vuur, het is omringd door mijn hart. Ik heb mijn weg hier doorheen gebeten. Een huis met standbeelden. Het is als een brandend strand, en een brandend oog leidt mij

uit, om dieper in te gaan. De brandweerman houdt mij stevig vast. Zijn jas is glibberig. En dan brandt hij ook.

Tante Connie doet alsof er niets gebeurt is en staart mij aan. ‘Nog wat koffie, jongen ?’ vraagt ze. Ik zeg niks. Tante Connie schenkt nog wat voor me in. Wie zwijgt stemt toe. Mijn oude bed in de kamer van de dochter van de graaf is versleten, scheuren in de matras, en de piano is vals. Maar niet minder mooi dan de gouden spulletjes van tante Connie. Als tante Connie lacht heb ik het gevoel dat ze op de daken fietst. Ik keek naar de vrouw van de zolder. Waren we niet net als Adam en Eva die door de brandende heg probeerden terug te keren naar het paradijs ? En was dit paradijs een mengsel tussen huizen en blote benen ? Ik keek naar de dochter van de graaf. Ik probeerde een weg door haar heen te graven. Maar ze hield alles tegen. Tante Connie dient de pudding op. Ik kan de borsten zien van de vrouw van het zolder, door haar doorzichtige jurk heen, en ze heeft haar jurk ook wel flink open. Haar borsten druipen nog, als de moederlijke fontein, maar er zijn geen babies. Ik besluit niets te eten. Hier kan ik niet tegen, en het is dodelijk. Als ik naar de dochter van de graaf kijk, dan zie ik hetzelfde tafereel. Het is onbeschoft tegen tante Connie om pudding te laten druipen terwijl zij pudding opdient. Ik kan oom Joop goed begrijpen dat hij zo ver mogelijk van de tafel afzit, als een bibberend hondje. Maar plotseling is het alsof de stoppen bij mij doorslaan. Ik voel me een baby, een hond zelfs, die gevoed moet worden. Wat een drama. Tante Connie ziet het aan mijn gezicht en raakt in paniek. Zelfs oom Joop staat op. Iedereen zit verstijfd. Ik begin met grote happen van de pudding te eten, zodat al snel mijn hele gezicht eronder zit. Oom Joop lacht mij uit. Dit is de tuin van spot. Waarom zijn Adam en Eva hier teruggekeert. Ook de twee vrouwen lachen mij uit, terwijl ze hun jurken nog meer open trekken. En dan smeren ze de pudding over hun lichaam heen en gaan op de tafel liggen. ‘Ik heb al brood gehad,’ zegt oom Joop. Ik kan hier niet tegen. Zelfs een hond wordt beter behandeld. Ik word er erg stil van, en ga bij oom Joop zitten. ‘Je weet hoe vrouwen zijn,’ zegt oom Joop.

‘Dodelijk is het,’ zeg ik. ‘We hebben niet zomaar met een stel hoofden te maken. Het zijn de hoofden van Medusa.’

‘Kijk naar hen door het glas wijn,’ zegt oom Joop. Tante Connie loopt naar de vrouwen toe, en giet wijn over hen heen. ‘Wat een vertoning,’ zeg ik. ‘Dit is toch niet meer normaal.’

‘Ik dacht ook dat ik naar een ander feestje was gegaan,’ zei oom Joop.

‘Kom op, nu weten we het wel,’ zeg ik. ‘Zo lopen we de fanfare niet. Moet je dat nou eens kijken, ze vervuilen die hele tafel.’

‘Nee hoor,’ zegt de dochter van de graaf. ‘Dit is de oerbron, de big bang.’

‘Als je je maar niet verroert,’ schreeuwt tante Connie. ‘We gaan hier geen polonaise in de kamer houden, al mijn spulletjes worden vies. Is er nog respect in dit land ?’

‘Likken, bloedvriend,’ zegt de vrouw van het zolder tegen haar wederhelft. ‘Alsof je leven er vanaf hangt.’

‘Als jullie niet eten wat de pot schaft,’ zegt tante Connie, ‘dan sodemieteren jullie maar op.’

‘We vonden het eten heerlijk,’ zei de vrouw van het zolder, ‘maar we hebben onze eigen toetjes meegenomen.’

‘Contractbreuk,’ zegt tante Connie. ‘Dat hadden we niet afgesproken zo, en voor half geld komen jullie er echt niet langs. Ik voel me door jullie verschrikkelijk door de tang genomen, als je dat maar weet. Ik heb nog wat blokken hout nodig voor het tuinvuur.’

‘Ik dacht anders dat Adam wel tegen een grapje kon,’ zei de vrouw van het zolder, ‘maar mijnheer loopt daar in het hoekje te kniezen.’

‘Oh, toe maar, geef mij maar weer de schuld,’ zei ik. ‘Het is nu oorlog.’ Ineens stormden de vrouwen op mij af, en peperden mij in met pudding, en trokken me op de tafel. ‘Dit is nog eens een kersttoetje, een vijf-gangen toetje is aan ons welbesteed,’ zei de vrouw van het zolder. Ik was woedend. ‘Als ik ooit loskom, dan zul je wat beleven,’ riep ik.

Het was alsof alle machines ineens stilstonden. We staarden elkaar allemaal aan, maar deden niets. ‘Ode aan de kok,’ zei de dochter van de graaf. Na een tijdje lagen we in het bad, en het was nog gezellig ook. Het was als een lange brandende dag aan het strand. Ik was moe, ik had mijn portie wel gehad. Het was een vreemde gewaarwording dat roosjes zo konden zijn. Ik zou vanaf nu veel meer op mijn hoede zijn. Dit mocht niet nog een keer gebeuren. Tante Connie zou het niet overleven. Er groeiden sinds die dag struiken op het behang, die ervoor zouden moeten zorgen dat deze dingen nooit meer zouden gebeuren. Tante Connie was het goed zat, en huurde bewakers in, die een oogje in het zeil zouden houden. Ook liet ze overal cameras planten. We voelden ons vanaf die dag in ons huis bekeken. Maar de volgende keer dat we aan tafel zaten schoten bij mij weer de stoppen door. Ik verlangde zo naar de oermoeder, dat ik boven op de vrouw van het zolder klom, de stoel brak, en we vielen beiden op de grond. Een wachter schoot een pijl door mijn hoofd, net op tijd, en ik werd aan de muur gespietst. ‘Geef hem melk,’ zei tante Connie rustig. ‘Jullie moeten niet zo paniekerig doen.’ Pudding droop uit de borst van de vrouw van het zolder. Ik kon me niet bewegen. ‘Eerste hulp bij ongelukken,’ zei tante Connie. ‘Hij is dood, hij heeft een pijl dwars door z’n kop. Geef hem de melk des levens, stelletje koeien. Nou, waar wachten jullie op.’

‘Hij hangt te hoog, tante,’ zeiden de vrouwen.

- Nou dan spuit je maar. Druk de knopjes maar goed in.

‘Nee, hij is dood. Hij heeft Medusa gezien, en wie van haar melk drinkt gaat naar de hel.’

- Ik ben niet gelovig, stop met die onzin.

‘God, zelfs als je de tepels van Medusa ziet ben je al overgeleverd aan de vlammen van de hel, en haar duistere hulpjes.’

- Ja, die ken ik, rijden die hier niet de hele tijd rond ? Medusa is al openlijk te kijk gezet, je hoeft het knopje van de tv maar aan te draaien.

‘Arme jongens.’

Ik kon naar de melk fluiten. De dames gingen ieder hun eigen kant op. Ik was in de tuin der wreedheden, ik was op sterven na de dood met die pijl in m’n kop. Oom Joop was behulpzaam en trok de pijl uit mijn hoofd. Maar dat deed nog veel meer pijn, dus ik drukte hem er weer in. Even later klopte ik bij de vrouwen aan de deur, maar ze deden niet open. Ik sliep die nacht bij tante Connie en oom Joop in de huiskamer. De dag erna zaten ze allemaal aan tafel alsof er niets was gebeurd. ‘Zo, de meer dan dodelijke borsten van Medusa zijn ook weer van de partij,’ zei ik. De vrouwen zeiden niets. Ze aten gulzig en verslikten zich een paar keer. Het ging zoals gewoonlijk weer nergens over. ‘Leuk,’ zei ik. ‘We zitten hier aan tafel met vergif. Killers.’

‘Houd je mond,’ zei tante Connie. ‘Jij bent ook niet een van de braafsten.’ Plotseling stonden de vrouwen als een vrouw op, als Medusa, en de muren om ons heen begonnen te branden. ‘Zie,’ riep tante Connie. ‘Ik wist het. Medusa is gekomen om wraak te nemen. Ren voor je leven.’ Oom Joop gooide een deken om ons heen, en trok ons naar zijn kant. Hij was de slimste geweest want sinds de dames hier aten zat hij bijna nooit meer aan tafel. Een golf van geweld sloeg ons neer. Maar oom Joop gedroeg zich als een duivel, en dat moest wel, anders had hij niks bij Medusa in de pap te brokkelen. Ik heb oom Joop nog nooit zo te keer zien gaan. Al snel stond Medusa buiten het raam. ‘Ik wist wel dat die wijven een grote pot met vergif waren,’ zei hij. Ik had nog nooit zo’n groot machts-spel gezien. Ik trilde als een hondje. Oom Joop was een held.

Omdat Medusa ons bleef bezoeken kregen we een ander huis in een andere straat. Er groeiden hier zogenaamde borsten-struiken die vruchten hadden als tepels waaruit een sap voortkwam wat bestand was tegen het borstgif van Medusa. We konden zelfs hierdoor Medusa genezen van haarzelf. De vloek was al snel verbroken. Er hoefde verder geen apocalypse aan te pas te komen. Onze vriendschappen werden hersteld, en al snel leefden we hier weer met elkaar. Alles was veilig nu. We hadden onze condomen-boom gevonden.

Een vrouw leefde tussen de verdiepingen in, een vrouw in mijn hoofd, onderdrukt door de hedendaagse maatschappij, een deel gesloten door de hersenen. Medusa was de oorlogsgodin, weggepest door een maatschappij van valse vrede. Een vreemde vrede bracht haar terug. Zij kende de tuin van spot ook. Ze had die zelf gemaakt. Ook kende ze de tuin van edelheden en wreedheden, op maat gesneden. Ze had zich een weg door die tuin gebaand, terug naar het paradijs. Ze ontmoette haar Adam in de lucht, en leidde ook hem terug. Door de brandende heg gingen zij, en helemaal opgebrand kwamen zij aan. Heel snel kwamen zij erachter dat zij een cirkeltje hadden gelopen. Zo slaan dan al snel de stoppen door, en vinden ze de liefde in zichzelf, die na korte tijd niets dan haat blijkt te zijn. Het is alles niet wat het lijkt. Ik kreeg een fatalistische, nihilistische kijk op het leven door deze dingen. We waren weer terug bij af. Heel wat dromen waren kapot gesprongen, en we begonnen ons oude huis te missen, maar daar woonde een nieuwe familie in.

Waar we dan ook naartoe gaan, het is altijd hetzelfde. Laten we daarom naarbinnen keren, en elkaar daar vinden, of hele andere personen die eindelijk onze dromen kunnen waarmaken, maar dit is slechts ijdelheid, illusie. We jagen lucht achterna, iedereen weet het, maar we blijven proberen. We

blijven happen naar de koek die voor ons wordt gehangen. We zijn geconditioneerd, slaven, hondjes van Pavlov. Alles is hier misleiding op misleiding. Ik begon een pessimist te worden, zwaar somber. Ik wilde niemand valse hoop geven, niemand voorliegen. We liepen de leugen achterna omdat er geen waarheid was, of was de waarheid gewoon in een heel klein hoekje ergens, daar waar we het onmogelijk zouden kunnen vinden ? Maar alle dingen zijn toch mogelijk voor hen die geloven. En zo ging ik geloven. Niet in het kerkelijk geloof, maar in die vrouwen hier met hun gekke spelletjes. Misschien dat de grootste leugen ook diep in haar de waarheid droeg. Ik had kans, want ik had een pijl door mijn hoofd. Denken was fataal. Het moest van een andere kant komen. Maar ik merkte al snel dat die vrouwen een gesloten boek waren. Ik kwam er niet ver mee. En ik wilde toch ergens in geloven. Een grote trots was er, ergens diep binnenin. Iets wat mij over het ravijn kon laten zweven, iets wat ik niet kon beschrijven, een mystiek gevoel. Oom Joop zei altijd dat een boek ons erdoor zou helpen, maar hij wist niet welk boek. Een popperige papieren kermis leek het. Tante Connie had een pop in een schoenendoos verborgen, een pop waarin ze heilig geloofde dat deze ons allen redden zou. Vaak sta ik op het balkon en voel me tussen de huizen, tussen de bomen, tussen de rivieren, overal tussen.

Het is een wonder dat ik nog leef met die pijl door mijn hoofd. Op een dag voel ik me door het gevoel dat die pijl in mijn hoofd geeft zo in de wolken, zo extatisch, dat ik merk dat ik kan vliegen. Heel voorzichtig vlieg ik van het balkon, tussen de huizen door. Mensen vallen flauw achter de ramen. ‘Bedrieger,’ roept er iemand. Ik kan er niet mee zitten. Ook al zou het bedrog zijn, ik heb er een goede tijd mee. Ik vlieg naar de top van het hoogste huis in de buurt. Als ik naar beneden kijk is alles wit. Ook het hoge platte horizontale dak waarop ik sta. Ik ruik bosgeuren. Dan vlieg ik over de stad. Wat als ik dit alles zou kunnen ontsnappen. Ik besluit naar de volgende stad te vliegen, daar waar de fabrieks-wolken zijn. Ik houd van de rook. Ik hoop dat we er allemaal in verzuipen. Dat is beter dan wat we hadden. We hebben niets te verliezen. Maar dan roep ik mezelf tot orde. Er staan wat meiden voor een raam. Ze kijken verwonderd. Ik zwaai naar ze. Ze wenken me. Een van hen opent het raam, en ik vlieg naar binnen. ‘Kijk, die kan vliegen,’ zegt er een. ‘Een truc,’ zeg ik. ‘Leer het me,’ zegt een van de meiden. Ik vertel hen over de pijl in mijn kop. Ze giechelen een beetje. Al snel hangen ze aan me. ‘Mag ik in jullie geloven,’ vraag ik. ‘Ik wil ergens in geloven.’

- Wij geloven in de dominee.

‘Okay, maar dat is niet wat. Kan ik in jullie geloven ?’

- Ik weet niet of ik daartoe bevoegd ben.

‘Ik geloof in je.’

- Wat moet ik nu doen ?

‘Vlieg met me mee.’

- Ja, maar ik kan niet vliegen. Waarom blijf je niet gewoon hier. We hebben het hier erg naar onze zin.

‘Okay.’

Ik bleef bij ze staan, en ze trokken me aan tafel. Ik moet zeggen ze waren een stuk netter dan de vrouwen die ik kende, de Medusa-vrouwen. Ze aten deftig, met mes en vork, geen geklieder. Ik staarde naar buiten, allemaal rook. Ik kon niet veel zien. Ze sliepen allemaal in de huiskamer op matrassen. Ik kreeg ook een matras. Ik sliep al snel. Ik merkte al snel dat ik in mezelf aan het bidden was tot hen. Ik was op zoek naar een geloof. De volgende dag namen ze mij mee naar de kerk. Ik moet zeggen dat het mij aardig beviel. De dominee was erg aardig. Hij had ook wel wijze dingen te zeggen, en liep voortdurend met zijn sleutels te rinkelen. Had hij misschien de sleutels om Medusa te openen ? Na de kerkdienst liep ik op hem af om het hem te vragen. Zonder nadenken nam hij een sleutel van zijn sleutelhanger af en gaf het aan mij. ‘Probeer het maar uit,’ zei hij. Maar eigenlijk wilde ik hier niet meer weg. Deze mensen waren geweldig. Weer ging ik met de meiden mee naar hun huis. Omdat ik heel veel aan Medusa dacht, ben ik even later toch teruggegaan naar mijn eigen stad en huis. Ik begon direkt aan de Medusa-vrouwen te sleutelen. En het werkte, tot mijn eigen verbazing. Voor het eerst had ik het gevoel dat ik met hen ergens kwam. Alsof we de boom des levens hadden bereikt. We dronken koffie op het resultaat. Ik wilde de dominee bedanken, en vloog terug naar de andere stad. De meiden waren blij me weer te zien, en samen gingen we naar het huis van de dominee. De dominee was net zijn huis aan het schilderen. Na het bedankje nam ik afscheid van de meiden, en ging weer terug naar mijn eigen huis. Ik had Medusa verlost uit haar kooi.

Hoofdstuk 3. De Gespleten Aarde

De meiden hebben al snel ons huis gevonden, en de dominee ook. Ze waren met de dominee meegereden. De sleutel had namelijk een zendertje van binnen. Natuurlijk waren ze van harte welkom, maar de Medusa-vrouwen werden snel jaloers. Daar wist de dominee wel wat op, want die had veel meer sleutels. Wat me opviel was dat alles snel verstijfde. Alsof de sleutels veel openden, maar tegelijkertijd viel er ook zoveel dicht. We kregen het idee dat er een vloek op de sleutel lag. De dominee was niet overtuigd, want die geloofde heilig in zijn sleutels. Omdat hij zich steeds arroganter opstelde heeft tante Connie hem even later het huis uitgezet. Ik bewaarde de sleutels sindsdien. Die waren veel te gevaarlijk in de handen van een dominee. De meiden aanbaden inmiddels Medusa aan haar voeten. De dominee was woedend en noemde hen afgodendienaars. Ze waren niet meer welkom in zijn stad. Het bleek dat hij ook nog eens de burgemeester was. Medusa begon trouwens door deze aanbidding ook steeds meer te eisen. Haar voeten moesten gekust worden, anders zou ze alles vertrappen. Ik had allang spijt dat ik haar had verlost, maar het kwam allemaal door die sleutels. Op een gegeven moment was ik het zo zat dat ik de sleutels inslikte. Maar sindsdien ging het niet goed met mij. Ik begon zelf een Medusa te worden. Wie had dat ooit durven dromen dat ik ooit de god der wrake zou worden. Het liep uit op een gevecht met de andere Medusa om de macht. De Medusa begon een gevaarlijk mechanisme te worden. Voordat het nog erger zou worden besloot ik een volgende vliegtocht te beginnen. Ditmaal kwam ik in een andere stad met de hoogste gebouwen. Een oud vrouwtje deed haar raam open, en nodigde mij uit. Toen ik haar het verhaal over de sleutels vertelde scheen ze mij te kunnen helpen. Zij was namelijk een heks. Ik moest een bepaald kruidendrankje drinken, en dan zou ik de sleutels kunnen uitspuwen, en dan zou zij de sleutels omsmelten. Maar alles pakte anders uit. Het kruidendrankje werkte niet. Ik had de krachten van Medusa. Ik was immuun tegen hekserij. Ik moest onder ogen komen dat ik in een monster aan het veranderen was.

Ik strompelde naar de uitgang van deze tuin. Ik had het in zicht nu, en greep naar mijn buik. Ook al verdween de uitgang en de buitenste heg in het niets, en leek het alsof het verder van me af begon te

liggen, ik liep toch door. Ik greep om me heen als tastende in het donker. Ik greep het touw mij toegeworpen. Een vriendelijk vrouwengezicht keek me aan. Rozensappen dropen in een fles. Ik hoorde gegorgel en gezang. Bloedende tuinen, zover het oog reikt, vermengd met regen, waar het oog van Medusa over waakt. Het koren dat het goud omhoog haalt, het licht der sterren weerkaatsende, haar vrucht wordt vastgehouden. Medusa waakt. Het houten huis kraakt onder het getal van de lelies. Hier heeft ze haar woning. Hier voedt zij haar raadsel, haar mysterie, waar prinsen op paarden al eeuwen naar zoeken. Nee, zij zullen niet vinden, want Medusa waakt over haar geheim. Haar kroning was een bespotting. Haar lijden was een ontmaskering, maar niemand is ooit tot haar parel gekomen, niemand heeft ooit haar zwaard gedragen. Allen sterven zij door een blik op haar te slaan. Tot steen werden zij in alle eeuwigheden. Haar discipel is zoek, haar beker verloren. Zij heeft haarzelf nog nooit gezien. Zou zij het weten, dan zou zij sterven, daarom weet zij maar half. De rozengrachten hier zijn vol met parels. De mensen hier weten dat Medusa een geheim heeft, alleen ze kennen het niet. Ze hebben er alleen een glimp van opgevangen, en die glimp heeft hen voor altijd verblind.

Ik zit op mijn houten paard, mij hobbelpaard van vroeger, met mijn lange speer, mijn lans. ‘Open de poort,’ roep ik, maar alles zwijgt. Ik vlieg hoog, over de muur heen, maar hier is niks. De aarde is dus toch plat. Is dit het onverbiddelijke geheim van Medusa ? Ik stort hier uit alles wat ik nog in mijn hoofd heb, alle puinhopen, alles gaargebraden, en kijk in de enorme diepte. Nee, het is een ravijn. De aarde is gespleten. Een groot werk moet dat geweest zijn, met de schaar des hemels. Daar aan de overkant weten de mensen niet dat ze niet weten. Ik vlieg weer terug, en omhels mijn Medusa, en mijn meiden. ‘Ik ben aan de andere kant van de schaar geweest,’ zei ik. ‘Daar moeten we ook niet wezen. Vernietig alle spiegels. We staren wel in een glas wijn, met wijn van borsten-struiken.’ Ik strek mij uit. Ze zijn blij dat ik terug ben. Ik solliciteer bij de zeevaart. Ik waarschuw hen dat de aarde wel degelijk plat is, en dat verklaart ook waarom er zoveel schepen zijn gebleven. Ik word er kapitein. Als ik thuis ben speelt oom Joop vaak op het orgel. Maar ik ben niet veel thuis. Ik moet de zee afbakenen. Een hoge rand moet er gemaakt worden, waar niemand meer overheen kan tuimelen. Medusa is als een moeder die haar kinderen terugroept. Zij heeft de tuin gebouwd, en haar muren, en die moeten we eren, omdat het buiten veel erger is. Er is geen paradijs aan de andere kant van de heg, maar de heg spreekt tot de verbeelding. Ik zie nog meer paradijs in een pot pindakaas. Als ik thuis ben zijn de vrouwen blij, dan is het feest, maar een paradijs zal het nooit zijn, en hebben we dat wel nodig. We hebben toch elkaar.

Op een dag ga ik met de meiden voetballen op het pleintje. Via een tunnel komen we in een ander deel van de stad, in een winkelstraat. We slenteren door de straten. Ik neem hen mee naar de bakker, en koop wat special brood voor hen. Brood kan mij nooit te luxe zijn. Het is een levensnoodzaak. Bij de speelgoedwinkel wanen ze zich in het paradijs. Bij het tuinhek laten we alle zorgen achter ons. Voor de chocolade-winkel danst de vrouw van chocolade. Ze roept herinneringen bij me op, ze danst als een zwaan. We gaan de stoffige winkel binnen. Een grote notenkraker-eekhoorn staart ons aan. ‘Ja,’ zegt de winkelier, ‘veel noten altijd in de chocolade, we hebben een verdrag met de noten-industrie. We kregen dit beeld van hen, toch aardig, vindt u niet.’ Ik knikte. De meiden keken de man vriendelijk aan. We konden aan hem zien dat hij er blij van werd. ‘Ik zal u vertellen, ik ben mijn vrouw verloren,’ zei de winkelier. ‘Ik mis haar echt, en er is nu een zee van ruimte boven, want ze had zoveel spullen en die zijn allemaal in haar graf meegegaan. Komt u maar even mee, dan laat ik het u zien.’ Boven stond alles leeg. Ik staarde naar buiten, waar de chocolade-vrouw nog steeds danste. Ze was een zwerfster, en werd zo altijd genoemd.

Grote poppen van chocolade stonden in kasten. De man deed er erg zakelijk over, en kraste wat op papieren. Even later stonden we weer op straat. Aan het eind van de straat was een fontein. We zagen tante Connie lopen met een zware tas. ‘Tante Connie,’ riep ik. Ze had koffie gekocht, in

allerlei soorten. Samen liepen we naar huis. Ik hielp haar de tas te dragen, en de meiden hielden ook wat spullen vast. Medusa wachtte ons op.

Suzie

De edelste tuinen zag ik. Zoutig, zurig, niet te veel zoet, zo smaakten de bessen. Ze waren heerlijk. Ze waren bijna verzonnen als door een insect. En dan niet een normaal insect, maar bijzonder, eentje met groot potentieel, als een wereldredder. Ik had kriebel in mijn keel toen ik ernaar keek. Het smaakte ook een beetje naar drop. Drop kon je trouwens niet krimpen, tenzij het rode drop was. Maar rode drop was dan weer net iets zoeter. Ik stapte de tuinen binnen, waar nog veel meer van die bessen hingen, en allemaal beestjes. Ze zat daar met een rood jurkje, een beetje opgebolt als pudding was haar jurkje, als met kant belegd. Het jurkje was niet te groot, en dat hoefde ook niet. Het was al genoeg dat ze daar zat. De touwtjes van haar jurkje waren als dropveters, als van rode drop. Ik keek niet op of om, maar ging dieper de tuinen in, op zoek naar meer bessen. Ik hield ervan om naar bessen te staren, vooral druipende bessen. Het was alsof ik haar tong op de mijne voelde, maar ik ontweek haar. Ik wilde niet aan haar denken. Zij blijkbaar ook niet aan mij, want ze bleef gewoon zitten. Ik voelde contact met haar, maar ontkende het in mezelf. Kom op, zeg. Ik heb wel andere dingen te doen. Als ik me aan haar zou geven, zou ze me toch verscheuren. Ze was een roofdier, daar diep in de tuin. Ik had haar wel in de gaten, maar deed alsof ik haar niet zag. Ze begon een beetje zenuwachtig heen en weer te draaien. 'Ik heb je wel in de gaten, hoor,' zei ze. Ik deed alsof ik haar niet hoorde. 'Dat is ook niet netjes,' zei ze. 'Helemaal niets terugzeggen.' Ik draaide met mijn rug naar haar toe. Ik begon nog meer bessen te plukken, en begon ze te eten. 'Hey, geef mij ook eens wat van die bessen,' zei ze. Ik gooide er eentje toe.

'Je bent afstandelijk,' zei ze. 'Nou, jij mag er anders ook wel wezen,' zei ik. 'Eindelijk praat je,' zei ze. 'Ik vind het allemaal best,' zei ik. 'Wat vind je allemaal best ?' vroeg ze. Ik zweeg. Ik begon door te eten van de bessen. 'Niet met je mond vol praten,' zei ze. 'Je bent mijn moeder niet,' zei ik. 'Nee, gelukkig niet,' zei ze. 'Je bent me nogal een probleem-geval.' 'Zo mag ik het horen,' zei ik. 'Hoe zal ik je noemen ?' sprak ze. 'Al noem je me Klaas, doet me niets,' zei hij. 'Krokodillen-voer,' sprak ze zachtjes. 'Die zijn hier niet,' zei ik.

Ik liep dieper de tuin in, mijn gezicht verborgen voor haar. Ze kwam mij niet achterna. Wat zou ze van me moeten ? En ik had wel andere dingen te doen. Ik verzamelde bessen in mijn mandje. Ik bracht ze naar grootmoeder. Ze kookte er iets van. Het was heerlijk. Ik sprak met haar niet over de dingen die ik had gezien in de edelste tuinen. Maar later deed ik het toch. 'Ach, dat meisje,' zei grootmoeder. 'Ik ken haar wel. Ze woonde hier vroeger in de buurt. Er hing daar altijd was buiten, in de tuin. Ze kookte weleens voor ons. Maar later werd ze een wilde. Ze vertrok naar de andere kant van de stad, en ging aan de kade wonen. Het was veel te wild voor ons. Maar ze hield altijd al veel van de bossen. Daar zwierf ze vaak. Toen je klein was kwam ze je weleens opzoeken.' 'Ik kan

me daar niets meer van herinneren,' zei ik. 'Dat ben je misschien vergeten,' zei grootmoeder. 'Jullie waren vroeger heel gek met elkaar.' 'Hoe kunnen mensen zo uit elkaar groeien ?' vroeg ik. 'Ach ja, jongen,' zei grootmoeder, 'dat is de wereld. Het is komen en gaan, vastpakken en loslaten, en je groeit uit alles ook weer uit.' 'Ja, dat jurkje wat ze droeg was wel erg klein,' zei ik. 'Ze past er niet meer in,' zei grootmoeder. 'Nou, het paste wel goed,' zei ik, 'maar het jurkje was gewoon klein.' 'Ze had dus niet veel aan,' zei grootmoeder. 'Nou, okay, daar kan ik inkomen. Het is nogal zomers weer, een beetje zwoel zelfs, vind je niet ?' Ik keek oma aan. Ze had van die wonderlijke ogen, donkere ogen. Ik zag de pretlichtjes in haar ogen, alsof ze blij was dat we met elkaar spraken. Ja, dat had ook anders kunnen zijn. Er waren zovelen die niet meer met oma wilden praten. Haar ogen dropen bijna als bessen. En ik had bijna druipende handen. 'Vertel me meer,' zei ik. 'Nou, ja, ze was vroeger gek op je, en wilde met je trouwen,' zei grootmoeder. 'Maar de familie wilde dat niet. Toen droop ze af. Alle contacten verwaterden sindsdien.' 'Ja, maar daar kan ik toch niets aan doen,' zei ik. 'Ze werd verboden met je om te gaan,' zei grootmoeder. 'En daar legde ze zich bij neer.' 'Was ze gevaarlijk of zo ?' vroeg ik. 'De familie vond van wel,' zei grootmoeder. 'Ze is als een kwark-taartje,' zei ik. 'Ja, maar jij kent haar duisternissen niet,' zei grootmoeder. 'Vertel me,' zei ik. Grootmoeder werd even stil. Ze keek me diep aan in mijn ogen, en sprak : 'Ze houdt van vreemde spelletjes. Het zijn geen echte spelletjes, maar ik noem het maar even zo.'

Ik kwam haar een paar dagen later in de bibliotheek tegen. Ze was daar aan het lezen. Ze had prachtige laarzen aan. En een prachtig wit broekje dat tot aan haar laarzen reikte. Ze had touwtjes in haar haren, en het voelde alsof haar tong op de mijne lag. Ik had een bessensmaak in mijn mond. Ze deed alsof ze me niet zag, of misschien zag ze me helemaal niet. Ik liep langs haar heen, en liep zo dicht tegen haar aan dat ik haar raakte, maar niet te hard, en niet te dichtbij, en zeker ook niet te lang. Een rilling en een warm gevoel ging door mij heen. Ik voelde mij als in de hemel. Ik werd er een beetje emotioneel van. Plotseling keek ze op, en keek met haar warme donker-bruine ogen naar mij, alsof ze me niet herkende. Toen las ze weer door. 'Je herkent me niet ?' vroeg ik. 'Nee,' zei ze, terwijl ze niet opkeek. Ze las gewoon door. 'Ik geloof je niet,' zei ik. Ze glimlachte warm, terwijl ze even opkeek. 'Het is me allemaal verboden,' zei ze. 'Door wie ?' vroeg ik. 'Je familie,' zei ze. Ik zweeg. Ik probeerde me haar naakt voor te stellen, of in een bikini op het strand, terwijl ik doorliep. Dat was de laatste keer dat ik haar zag. Grootmoeder vertelde mij een paar weken later dat ze in de krant had gelezen dat ze spoorloos was verdwenen. Ik werd er niet koud of warm van. Het zij zo, dacht ik. Haar zus kwam ik nog weleens tegen. Maar die wilde er niet over praten. Dat was ook een heel ander type. Toch wilde ze er na een bepaalde tijd wel over praten. 'Mijn zusje hield veel van je,' zei ze. 'Ze wil dat je haar nooit vergeet.' 'Waar is ze ?' vroeg ik. Ze overhandigde me een brief. 'Lees,' zei ze. Er stond in dat ze naar het bos was gevlucht, voorgoed. Ze wilde dat ik zou komen. Ik stond op, en ging terug naar grootmoeder. 'Ja, ze hield veel van de bossen,' zei grootmoeder. 'Altijd al. Karel, haar vader, was ook een bos-fanaat.' Ik schudde mijn laars uit. Er zat allemaal zand in, en ook een munt, een gouden munt, met haar hoofd erop. Ik liet het aan grootmoeder zien. 'Maar dat kan toch niet, lieve jongen,' zei grootmoeder. 'Hoe kun je nu een munt vinden met haar hoofd erop, en dat zat in je laars ? Dat heeft haar zus vast in je laars gestopt toen je daar was.' Ik was verbijsterd. 'Hoe is dat mogelijk ?' vroeg ik. 'Een munt met haar hoofd erop ?' 'Ja, ze moet wel ergens koningin zijn, jongen,' zei grootmoeder. 'Je komt niet zomaar met je hoofd op een munt.' 'Hoe kan dat ?' vroeg ik. 'Ik weet het niet, jongen,' zei grootmoeder. 'Volgens mij weet haar zus meer.' Ik ging weer naar haar zus, en die begon direct te glimlachen toen ze de munt zag. 'Ja, Suzie is een koningin,' zei ze. Het was de eerste keer dat ik haar zag glimlachen. 'Van welk rijk ?' vroeg ik. 'Suzie is de koningin der apen,' zei ze. 'Ach, kom nou,' zei ik. 'Hoe kunnen apen nou munten hebben.' 'Ach,' zei ze, 'dat was eens een stunt in de dierentuin, waar je je hoofd kon laten zetten op een munt, als je voor een bepaald bedrag had gedoneerd.' 'Dus heb jij die munt in mijn laars gedaan ?' vroeg ik. Ze giechelde. Raadsel opgelost. Ik ging terug naar grootmoeder. 'Ach, Karel had ook altijd van die vreemde dingen,' zei grootmoeder. 'En haar moeder was ook zo'n zot mens. Haar moeder reiste in bootjes door het bos. Ook zo'n bosmens. En dan vreemde dingen, he.' 'Wat voor vreemde dingen ?' vroeg ik. Grootmoeder zweeg.

Ik besloot door de vele struiken van bosbessen naar het bos te gaan. Al gauw kwam ik haar daar tegen. Ze had een boog op mij gericht. 'Wat kom je doen ?' zei ze ruig. 'Ik dacht dat je wilde dat ik kwam ?' zei ik. 'Wie ben je ?' vroeg ze. 'Ik dacht dat je me wel kende, Suzie,' zei ik. 'Ik ben Suzie niet,' zei ze. 'Ik ben nu iemand anders.' 'Mag ik bij je komen ?' vroeg ik. Ze spande de boog nog strakker. Ik keek naar de glinsterende pijl. Als ze die los zou laten, zou ik er zeker geweest zijn. 'Jij bent het reeenkind, het geheim van het hertenjong,' zei ze. 'Wat is dat ?' vroeg ik. 'Nog even en dan ben je een kluif,' zei ze. Ze greep een touw met een lasso van haar schouder en liet het om mijn nek vliegen. 'Hey, ben je gek geworden ?' vroeg ik. Met een steen sloeg ze me neer. Ik was bewusteloos, en werd even later wakker in een kooi. 'Jij bent dus echt gek geworden,' zei ik. 'Stom varken,' zei ze. 'Ik dacht dat ik eerst een hertenjong was, en nu ineens een varken ?' vroeg ik. 'Mond houden,' zei ze. 'Je speelt met je leven.' 'Je praat gewoon heel ongenuanceerd, alsof er een steekje bij je los zit,' zei ik. 'Ik ga je laten verhongeren,' zei ze. Die is echt gek, dacht ik bij mezelf. Die heeft ze niet meer goed op een rijtje. 'Je zal niet meer teruggaan naar je familie,' zei ze hardvochtig. 'Het is afgelopen met hun spelletjes. Je bent nu van mij.' 'Wat als ze me hier komen halen ?' vroeg ik. 'Dit is verboden terrein voor hen,' zei ze. Opeens stond daar de boswachter. Suzie moest naar de gevangenis, en ik kon weer terug naar mijn familie. Ik had wel heel erg veel medelijden met Suzie. Ik zocht haar vaak op in de gevangenis. 'Heus, ik bedoelde het niet zo,' zei ze. 'Ja, dat zeggen ze allemaal,' zei ik. 'Ik was gewoon met je aan het spelen,' zei ze. 'Mijn familie had gelijk,' zei ik. 'Je bent gevaarlijk, en je houdt van vreemde spelletjes.' Ze begon te huilen. 'Ik wilde je geen kwaad doen. Ik zou je daarna gewoon loslaten, maar jullie vatten alles verkeerd op,' zei ze. 'Maar je had een pijl en boog op me gericht, en je had me bewusteloos geslagen met een steen. Noem je dat nog spelletjes ? Je bent een beetje vreemd,' zei ik. 'Het bosleven is hard,' zei ze. 'Ik moest overleven.' 'Maar je zei dat je wilde dat ik kwam,' zei ik. 'In die brief. Het is een soort liegen en bedriegen.' 'Nee,' zei ze. 'Ik wilde dat je kwam. Ik wilde gewoon met je spelen.' 'Je hebt me erin laten lopen,' zei ik. 'Denk je nou echt dat ik je kwaad wilde doen ?' vroeg ze. 'Ik weet het niet,' zei ik. 'Je bent in ieder geval niet te vertrouwen.' 'Het was maar spel,' zei ze. 'Vond je het niet leuk ? Dan had je het moeten zeggen, dan waren we direct gestopt.' 'Ik was al bewusteloos geslagen,' zei ik. Ze scheen het niet te begrijpen. Het was een bijzonder meisje. 'Het dringt niet tot je door, he ?' zei ik. 'En nu zit ik hier dan,' zei ze. 'Ik wil terug naar het bos.' 'Maar je bent te gevaarlijk,' zei ik. 'Ach kom,' zei ze. 'Jullie kunnen ook niet tegen een grapje.' 'Geen leuk grapje als ik bewusteloos wordt geslagen,' zei ik. Maar dat drong niet tot haar door. 'Het is het wilde leven,' zei ze. 'In het wilde leven kunnen dingen gebeuren die in de stad niet mogen gebeuren. Het is anders.' 'Ja, ja, maak dat de kat maar wijs,' zei ik.

Grootmoeder wilde dat ik uit haar buurt zou blijven, vooral toen ze weer vrij kwam. Het was voor haar verboden om in het bos te komen. Dat zou een verkeerde uitwerking op haar hebben. Ik ging haar niet echt uit de weg. Soms kwam ik haar in de bibliotheek tegen. 'Van wat voor boeken houd je ?' vroeg ik haar. 'Van het bos,' zei ze. 'Daar mag je niet komen, he ?' zei ik plagend. 'Nee,' zei ze zacht. 'Mijn familie heeft liever niet dat ik met je praat,' zei ik. 'Naar voor je,' zei ze. 'Waarom dat nou weer ?' vroeg ik. 'Wat kan mij dat nou schelen. Ben je zo belangrijk ?' 'Nou, je kwam me anders wel altijd opzoeken, in het bos, in de gevangenis, en nu,' zei ze. Ik begon hevig te protesteren. 'Nee, dat was omdat ik medelijden met je had, niet voor mezelf,' zei ik. 'Oh, ben jij er zo één,' zei ze. 'Ik vertrouw je niet,' zei ik. 'Ja, dat weten we al,' zei ze. 'Maar je loopt wel altijd achter me aan.' Weer begon ik hevig te protesteren. 'Zeg, dame, nou moet je eens even heel goed naar me luisteren. Ik heb net zoveel recht om in de bibliotheek te komen als jij. En ik ben hier voor de boeken, niet voor jou. Nu moet je geen hoogmoeds-waanzin krijgen, mevrouw, of wil je ook dat ik 'u' tegen je zeg ?' zei ik verontwaardigd. 'Nee,' zei ze, 'en ik loop je gewoon maar wat te plagen.' 'Goed,' zei ik, en liep door. Maar ze kwam me achterna. 'Ik zal je nog wel eens een keer krijgen, zoals ik je goed beet had in het bos,' zei ze. Ik slikte. Ik wist dat ik nog steeds op mijn hoede moest zijn. Deze vrouw was immers gek. Op een nacht werd ik wakker, vastgebonden, terwijl zij op me zat. 'Hoe kom jij hier binnen ?' vroeg ik. 'Voor jou een vraag, voor mij een weet,' zei ze. 'Kun je mij onmiddelijk losmaken,' zei ik. 'Nee,' zei ze, 'ik zei toch dat ik je nog wel zou krijgen ?' 'Okay, maar ik vind het

niet leuk,' zei ik. Toen maakte ze me los. Ik zag toen dat ze het waarschijnlijk niet kwaad meende. Ik nam haar in mijn armen. 'Ik vind je eigenlijk heel lief,' zei ik. 'Ik zie nu in dat ik je helemaal verkeerd beoordeeld heb.' 'Maar ik had je niet bewusteloos mogen slaan,' zei ze. 'Het is niet erg,' zei ik. 'Het was in het bos, en daar zijn misschien andere regels.' 'Nee,' zei ze. 'Het was verkeerd van me.' 'Ik heb er niks aan overgehouden,' zei ik. Ik hield haar vast in bed, en streelde door haar haar. Toen ging ik met mijn vingers over haar lippen. Ik kuste haar. 'Ik heb je eindelijk,' zei ze. 'Je moet eens weten hoe lang ik hier op heb gewacht. Mijn hele leven al.'

Opeens stond grootmoeder in de deur-opening. Ze stond daar lijkbleek. Ze maakte direct rechtsomkeerds. Even later ging de telefoon. Ik nam op. Het was grootmoeder. 'Ik hoef haar niet te zien,' zei ze. 'Wil je haar ofzo ? Ik zei je toch dat je uit haar buurt moest blijven ? Ze is niet pluis.' 'Ze is gewoon speels, grootmoeder,' zei ik. 'Maar dat kan een keer verkeerd aflopen, lieve jongen,' zei grootmoeder. Op aanraden van grootmoeder wilde ik dat ze het huis weer zou verlaten. Ik besloot een grote zwerftocht door het bos te maken. Ik ging door de vele bessenstruiken, en ik wist dat ik hier vrij zou zijn van de streken van Suzie. Ik kon me nooit helemaal aan haar geven. Een warmte omgaf mij, alsof iets me riep. Ik ging dieper het bos in, totdat ik bij een bosmeertje kwam. Er waren hier jongens aan het spelen. Ze hadden verfstrepen op hun lichamen. Toen ze mij zagen grepen ze hun bogen. 'Wie ben je, en wat moet je ?' riep één van hen. 'Ik wil in het bos leven,' riep ik terug. 'Zweer je dat je nooit terug zal gaan ?' riep een ander. 'Ik zweer het,' zei ik. Ze kwamen dichterbij. 'Hij moet geverfd worden,' zei één van hen. Voordat ik het wist was ik neergeslagen. Ik werd wakker in een kooi. Ze glimlachte. 'Wie ben jij ?' vroeg ik. 'Ben jij dat, Suzie ?' stamelde ik. 'Hoe kun jij hier zijn ?' Ik was nog steeds een beetje duizelig, en had een beetje een waas voor mijn ogen vanwege de klap. 'Ik ben haar tweeling-zus,' zei ze. Ik had een smaak van bessen in mijn mond. 'Okay, ik vind dit dus niet leuk, dus maak me los,' zei ik. 'Oh nee,' zei ze, 'daar komt niks van in. Ik ben niet zo makkelijk in die dingen als mijn zus.' 'Mijn familie zal mij vinden,' zei ik. 'De jongens zullen hen grijpen, zoals ze jou grepen,' zei ze. Ik voelde me machteloos. Ze zou me waarschijnlijk laten verhongeren. 'Aan het einde van het ritje zul je zijn als deze jongens,' zei ze. 'En je zal nooit meer terugwillen.' 'Wat is hier te doen ?' vroeg ik. 'Wil je terug naar mijn zus dan ?' vroeg ze. 'Ze zal echt nooit opgeven. je zal moe van haar worden.' 'Okay, ik blijf,' zei ik. 'Maak me los.' 'Geen denken aan,' zei ze. 'Deze jongens zijn zorgvuldig geinitieerd, en zo zal jij ook geinitieerd moeten worden.' 'Mijn grootmoeder zal naar mij op zoek gaan,' zei ik. 'Ze zal er niet doorkomen,' zei ze. 'Dan ken jij mijn grootmoeder nog niet,' zei ik. 'Ik ken haar,' zei ze. 'Ze is niet tegen mij opgewassen.' 'Wat als de boswachter komt ?' vroeg ik. 'Die komt hier niet,' zei ze. 'Waarom niet ?' vroeg ik. Ze zweeg. Ik kreeg bijna geen voedsel. Alleen soms wat bessen met vreemde melk. Ik werd vaak geslagen, veelal totdat ik bewusteloos raakte. 'Het is om los te komen van de oude wereld en van je oude geheugen,' zei ze. 'Je bent serieuzer dan je zus,' zei ik. 'Mijn zus is te speels,' zei ze. 'Voor mij is het menens. De buitenwereld is gevaarlijk. Jouw familie is gevaarlijk.' Ze brachten een verf uit op mijn huid, en op een dag lieten ze me uit de kooi. Ik was nu één van hen.

Op een dag kwamen ze ons in helicopters halen. Het meisje ging de gevangenis in, en de jongens gingen terug naar hun families, zoals ook ik. Grootmoeder was woedend. Zij kende dat meisje wel. Het meisje vertrok al heel jong naar het bos, en keerde niet terug. Ze werd waarschijnlijk grootgebracht door hyenas. Mijn grootmoeder verbood mij om het meisje op te zoeken in de gevangenis. Ik wilde dat eigenlijk ook niet. Het scheen dat het meisje heel veel op haar geweten had. Ze zou niet zomaar vrij komen. Ze was veel gevaarlijker dan haar tweeling-zus, Suzie. We gingen verhuizen naar een andere stad. Grootmoeder vond dat beter, want dan zouden we geheel afzijn van die vreemde familie van Suzie. Grootmoeder wilde er niet op wachten dat er weer iets zou gebeuren.

In onze nieuwe stad gingen grootmoeder en ik vaak wandelen naar de zee. De kust stond vol met bessenstruiken, waar veel wespen waren. Ik had veel diepe gesprekken met mijn grootmoeder.

Een Vreemd Verhaal

Iedereen heeft zo zijn eigen spookhuizen in het leven. Ik noem ze ook wel "nachtmerrie-huizen", en sommige nachtmerries kunnen zo erg zijn dat je er niet eens over kan praten of wil praten.

Soms kunnen nachtmerries zelfs niet opgeschreven worden, en als ze dan opgeschreven worden, dan komen ze in veel gevallen in een persoonlijk archief. Een voorbeeld hiervan is een dagboek.

Er rust een grote geheimzinnigheid op dagboeken, en vaak wil de eigenaar ook niet dat het gelezen wordt. Soms lezen mensen dagboeken van anderen en hadden dat achteraf liever niet gedaan.

Dat kan ook met sommige boeken zijn. Soms heb je gemengde gevoelens over een boek, en had je bepaalde dingen niet willen lezen. Bepaalde andere dingen kunnen dan juist weer heel belangrijk zijn, en daarom gooi je het ook niet weg, en belandt het in het archief.

Zo kunnen uitgevers ook een archief hebben met boeken die belangrijke inhoud hebben maar die niet rijp of geschikt zijn voor publicatie. Zo'n archief hebben wij ook. Als ik dan door de boeken van dat geheime archief blader dan jaagt het me de stuipen op het lijf, en tegelijkertijd opent het wonderbare werelden voor mij.

Het zijn boeken die niet in deze wereld thuishoren, en die ook zeker niet zijn geschreven voor het grote publiek. Het zijn beschrijvingen van nachtmerries, maar dan op zo'n manier dat het spookhuizen zijn, gesloten spookhuizen dan, en dat is maar goed ook.

Eén zo'n boek, en ik kan het me nog herinneren als de dag van gisteren, ging over een professor die wel een heel bijzondere spelcomputer had gemaakt ... Ik zal er een beetje omheen praten, en de kernen van het boek niet opnoemen, want het zijn hoge graads nachtmerries. Alleen al het lezen van het boek is een herinnering die ik niet meer weg kan wissen. Het was een hele verheldering, die zo diep ging in de demonologie dat ik me kon voorstellen waarom dit boek in het geheim archief terecht was gekomen. Ze moesten wel een groot vertrouwen in mij hebben dat ook ik de sleutel mocht dragen van dit archief.

In ieder geval ... In dat boek bezocht iemand die professor ... En dat ging zo :

"Op een dag bracht ik een bezoek aan de professor. De professor was net bezig een nieuw drankje te maken. Hij liet mij een ondergrondse lift van teleportatie zien. De lift kon tot erg diep reiken. Het diepste punt leidde tot ..."

En toen volgde er de naam van een planeet.

"Vanaf het balkon kon je een prachtige natuur zien. Professor Rood Barenhout liet mij ook allerlei

machines zien, en voertuigen.

Hij liet mij ook veel wapens zien, vooral zwaarden die gestoken waren in doodskoppen als hun schedes.

Professor Rood Barenhout had een rode spelmachine gebouwd.

Hij sprak dat het een soort spookhuis was.

Ik keek hem aan met opgeheven wenkbrauwen.

Hij vertelde dat een ieder die in de machine zou stappen tijdelijk zijn geheugen zou verliezen over het feit dat het maar een spelmachine was.

Ik had eigenlijk helemaal geen zin om een spookhuis binnen te gaan.

Mijn leven was al zwaar genoeg.

Hij liet me de machine zien, een gigantisch rood ding met rails en een soort auto.

Het was allemaal zwaar technologisch.

Hij drukte op een knop en er was allemaal stoom.

Toen liet hij mij de computer schermen zien in de auto, die heel wonderlijk waren.

Ik kon mijn leven zien, en die waren als autobanen.

Ik zag die autobanen op het scherm dwars door mijn leven heen, als rode zachte stralen, die ook zacht zoemend geluid gaven.

Ik vroeg me af hoe de machine zomaar mijn leven tevoorschijn kon halen.

Misschien tapte het van mijn geheugen.

De professor drukte weer op wat knoppen op een soort tankpomp computer naast de spel-auto. We gingen beiden in de auto zitten. Ik keek bijna gehypnotiseerd op de schermen. Dit was mijn verleden. Ik begon enthousiast te worden, maar nog steeds met een zekere terughoudendheid.

‘Het is om te leren,’ sprak professor Rood Barenhout.

‘Ja, ja,’ zei ik. ‘Je mag me echt wel laten zien hoe het werkt, maar dan stap ik ook weer uit.’

‘Natuurlijk,’ zei de professor. ‘Je wordt echt niet gedwongen.’

Weer drukte hij op wat knoppen, ditmaal in de auto zelf. Ik bleef kijken op de computer. Ik zag de vriendinnen die ik in mijn leven had gehad, en ook wat nare gebeurtenissen, en de autobanen gingen er dwars doorheen. Onderaan het scherm was een soort auto met een groot dashboard.

‘Dit is groots,’ sprak ik. ‘Maar wat is hier nou zo eng aan ? Ik ben wel verbaasd dat die nare gebeurtenissen in mijn leven nu gewoon op het scherm staan, maar die auto rijdt er gewoon doorheen.’

‘Blijf kijken,’ sprak de professor. Ik bleef kijken op het scherm, en de gebeurtenissen begonnen te veranderen in een tekenfilm. Mijn hele verleden begon te veranderen in een tekenfilm.

‘Ik vind dit wel mooi,’ sprak ik.

‘Het probleem is ...’, sprak de professor, ‘dat de spelmachine nog niet af is. Ik heb testers nodig. Dan kan ik zien waar ik het moet veranderen en bijstellen. Ik bied je vijf miljoen.’ Ik keek hem met grote ogen aan, en weer met opgeheven wenkbrauwen. ‘Ik kan het geld wel gebruiken,’ sprak ik, ‘maar is dat gevaarlijk, zo’n test ? Ik bedoel : Wat gaat er met mij gebeuren ?’

‘Het is niet zonder risico’s,’ sprak de professor.

‘Wat zijn de risico’s ?’ vroeg ik. Ik voelde me bijna als een stuntman als ik er aan dacht.

‘Ik kan daar niet teveel over zeggen,’ sprak de professor. ‘Het is een experiment, en het kan flink traumatisch zijn, maar het is maar een spel. Het is niet echt, alhoewel je tijdelijk je geheugen verliest over dat het maar een spel is.’

‘Dus ik kom er gewoon levend weer uit, en krijg te horen dat het niet echt was, zodat ik het weer kan vergeten of misschien met andere ogen kan bekijken ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Precies,’ zei professor Rood Barenhout.

‘Klinkt goed,’ zei ik. ‘En ik heb wel zin in een uitdaging zoals dit, als het voor de vooruitgang van de wetenschap is heb ik het er zeker voor over, en die vijf miljoen is mooi meegenomen.’

‘Maar vergeet niet dat het een spookhuis is,’ sprak de professor serieus.

‘Wat houdt dat in ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Je gaat verschrikkelijk getest worden,’ sprak de professor, ‘maar het is voor een goed doel, inderdaad voor de vooruitgang van de wetenschap.’

‘Bliksems,' zei ik. 'Waarom moet je hier zo vaag over doen ?’ zei ik.

‘Omdat het nog niet af is,’ sprak de professor. ‘Ik weet nog niet helemaal wat er mis kan gaan.’

‘En je wil het zelf niet testen ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Nee, natuurlijk niet,’ zei de professor. ‘Dat zou levensgevaarlijk zijn, want ik moet juist de machine in de gaten houden en de knoppen bedienen wanneer dat nodig is, en kleine aanpassingen maken. Stel dat de machine op hol slaat, dan ben ik er in ieder geval nog om alles tot orde te brengen.’

‘Nou, dat is een geruststelling,’ sprak ik, ‘maar wat als jou iets overkomt, of je verliest de macht over de machine ?’

‘Daar ga ik niet vanuit,’ sprak professor Rood Barenhout. ‘Ik heb veel ervaring met dit soort machines, en stel dat ik tijdelijk de macht zou verliezen dan doe ik er alles aan met mijn kennis om de macht weer terug te krijgen. Dat is gewoon een kwestie van tijd dan.’

‘Nou, lekker,’ sprak ik. ‘Nu begrijp ik waarom je er vijf miljoen voor vraagt, want waarschijnlijk staat mijn leven ook nog op het spel.’

‘Alle machines zijn zo gebouwd dat mocht het uit de hand lopen dan na bepaalde tijd zal de machine zichzelf uitschakelen,’ sprak de professor. ‘Oververhitting bijvoorbeeld zal de machine al na tien minuten uit zich zelf stoppen. Verder heeft alles zo zijn risico’s, binnen bepaalde grenzen natuurlijk, maar toch vind ik daarom de vijf miljoen redelijk. Doe er iets moois mee,’ sprak professor Rood Barenhout, en liet mij de cheque zien van vijf miljoen.

‘Ik ben erg nieuwsgierig geworden, professor,’ sprak ik. ‘Laten we maar direct beginnen. Ik kan eigenlijk niet meer wachten.’

‘Goed,’ sprak professor Rood Barenhout. ‘De auto zal door de machine het gebouw verlaten, en zal je naar huis brengen. Zodra je uitstapt zal je tijdelijk totaal vergeten zijn dat je hier was, en dat je aan het spel deelneemt. Je zal naar de winkel gaan voor wat boodschappen, en daar zal je iemand tegenkomen die hele verhalen aan je begint op te hangen, verhalen die herkenning bij je zullen oproepen uit je eigen leven. Klaar ?’

‘Zo klaar als het maar kan,’ sprak ik. Ik kon het eigenlijk niet geloven, en dacht dat het ook allemaal gewoon onzin kon zijn, maar nu wilde ik het toch echt weten. Ik zou nooit meer zo’n kans kunnen krijgen.

Professor Rood Barenhout stapte uit. ‘Daar gaan we dan,’ sprak hij. Hij deed de deur van de auto dicht, en begon te typen op het toetsenbord van de tankpomp. Rode lampen begonnen aan te gaan die zacht, waterig licht begonnen te verspreiden, en die begonnen zacht te zoemen.

‘Het is een groot voorrecht,’ sprak de professor. ‘Jij zal de geschiedenis herschrijven. Het zal een mijlpaal in je leven zijn, en in de algehele evolutie van het bestaan, en ....’

Maar ik kon hem niet meer horen. De auto was al gaan starten en reed zacht zoemend de immens grote machine in. Op de weg zag ik veel mensen vanuit hun auto’s naar mij en mijn auto staren. Zoiets hadden ze nog nooit gezien. Ik zat wel achter een stuur, maar ik hoefde verder niets te doen. De auto deed alles zelf, en daar kon ik niets aan veranderen, en dat hoefde ook niet. Tot mijn grote schrik zag ik nu een tijdje politie achter mij rijden.

Even later reden ze vóór mij, en wilden dat ik zou stoppen. De auto volgde hen en stopte. De agenten liepen naar de auto toe en rukten de deur open. ‘Wat is dit voor auto, mijnheer ? Dat kan toch niet ? Mag ik uw rijbewijs zien ?’ vroeg één van hen. Ik haalde mijn rijbewijs uit mijn zak en liet het hem zien.

‘Kunt u even de auto uitkomen ?’ vroeg de andere agent. Hij begon mij uitvoerig te inspecteren. ‘Dit lijkt een illegale auto te zijn,’ sprak de agent, ‘alsof het regelrecht van de kermis afkomt.’

Ik knikte. ‘Ik kan het ook niet helpen, mijnheer. Het is voor mijn werk.’

Opeens kwam professor Rood Barenhout door op één van de schermen. Hij begon luid te schreeuwen naar de agenten. ‘Drommelse jongens, verstoor mijn werkzaamheden niet, okay ? Ik heb nu geen tijd voor spelletjes. Mijnheer heeft een belangrijke opdracht voor de vooruitgang van de wetenschap. Ik werk voor het rijk, voor het ministerie van defensie. Ik heb echt geen tijd nu voor jullie onzin, rotjongens.’

De agenten kenden hem wel, en boden hem hun verontschuldigingen aan. ‘Reken het ons niet aan,’

sprak één van de agenten. ‘Wij hadden niet in de gaten dat het een auto was van u. We dachten eerst dat de auto uit de toekomst kwam, maar nu begrijpen we het.’

‘Maak geen geintjes, jongens,’ schreeuwde de professor. ‘Ik heb wel andere dingen te doen. Nou vooruit, doe jullie werk, en laat mijnheer verder met rust, anders lopen we achter op schema, en dan zal ik jullie daar duur voor laten betalen.’

‘Begrepen, professor,’ zeiden de agenten rood van schaamte, en vertrokken weer. De deur van de auto ging weer dicht, en begon mij verder te brengen naar huis."

Dit was een stukje uit het eerste hoofdstuk. In het tweede hoofdstuk begint de ik-persoon :

"Ik had zware nachtmerries in mijn kinderjaren. Ze overweldigden mij, nachtmerries van grote horror en verdoemenis, vaak in de vorm van ..." en dan komt er een heel verhaal totdat de ik-persoon zegt : "Ik was bang om te gaan slapen, omdat ik wist wat er kon gebeuren." Dan komt er weer een heel verhaal totdat de ik-persoon aan het einde van het tweede hoofdstuk zegt :

"Op een gegeven moment begonnen de nachtmerries minder te worden en te verzwakken, en kwam ik langzaam terug tot mezelf. Maar overdag werd ik in mijn gedachtes erdoor geplaagd. Ik kon er niet overheen komen. Erover praten kon ik niet.

Totdat ik op een dag iemand tegenkwam met dezelfde soort verhalen."

Dit was dus wat de professor al had aangekondigd. Hoofdstuk drie gaat over die ontmoeting :

"Hij keek me aan. ‘Heus,’ sprak hij. ‘Je moet me geloven. Toen het ruimteschip kwam werden alleen een paar van ons gered. Ze brachten ons naar de aarde voor veiligheid. Nog steeds leven er velen daar op de ...."

En dan volgt weer de naam van die planeet ...

"in hetzelfde lot als wat mij ten deel was gevallen, en waarvan ik nu heb kunnen vluchten. Mijn bevrijders – Ik weet niet waar zij zijn. Alles wat ik weet is dat ze mij hier op aarde brachten, en toen vertrokken ze weer. Ik was de enige die ze hier hadden gebracht. De anderen namen zij met zich mee – misschien naar een andere planeet. Ik kan het niet meer. Ik kan niet terug naar de planeet waar ik vandaan kwam. Maar iets in mij wordt ertoe aangetrokken, alsof ik daar hoor. Ik heb er alles voor over dat er iemand naar mijn verhaal luistert."

‘Hoeveel geef je ervoor ?’ vroeg ik nors. Ik hield hem voor een idioot of gewoon een sluwe leugenaar om wat voor reden dan ook.

Hij keek me aan. ‘Vijfhonderd,’ sprak hij langzaam. Ik maakte een beweging met mijn hand om het aanbod af te wimpelen. ‘Te weinig,’ sprak ik. ‘Want jij wil natuurlijk dat ik iets met jouw verhaal ga doen, en dan wil jij er rijk van worden en beroemd ?’

‘Nee, nee,’ sprak hij. ‘Daar is het het verhaal niet voor. Ik heb dringend psychische hulp nodig. Ik denk dat ik één van de weinigen ben die van de ...."

En dan volgt de naam van de planeet weer ...

"heeft kunnen ontsnappen. Ook de slachtoffers van de ....

En dan weer volgt de naam van de planeet ...

"hebben die hulp nodig.’

Ik lachtte hem uit. ‘Ja, ja, dus jij denkt echt dat wij hier ruimteschepen hebben die naar de ..."

Naam van de planeet ...

"kunnen gaan om daar ook nog eens een oorlog te beginnen, om die zogenaamde slachtoffers te bevrijden ? Nou, kom op, wat geef je ervoor opdat ik zal luisteren naar die ellenlange onzin die je mij wil vertellen ? Maar ik zal je nu al vertellen dat ik er niet veel aan zal of wil doen.’

‘Alsjeblieft,’ smeekte hij bijna, terwijl hij me doordringend aankeek. ‘Zeshonderd dan ?’

Ik schudde mijn hoofd. Dat ging nog even door tot negenhonderd, en toen zuchtte hij."

De ik-persoon gaat niet op het aanbod in, maar dan is er een nieuw aanbod : een bijzonder voorwerp van die planeet ...

"Ik keek ernaar met grote ogen. Het leek op een metaal wat ik niet kende, buitenaards, en ik kreeg er vreemde gevoelens van in mijn buik. Opeens was ik vol interesse. Ik griste het uit zijn hand. ‘Nou, vertel op,’ zei ik een beetje duizelig. Ik moest gaan zitten, anders zou ik zeker flauwvallen. ‘Moet je wat water ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Alsjeblieft,’ sprak ik ineens heel nederig, en ik begon de waarde van deze man in te zien. Hij had een tederheid over zich, en een fijngevoeligheid die ik niet kende. Plotseling zag ik hem als heel innemend. Hij gaf me wat water, en leek direkt heel bezorgd over me, alsof de aandacht voor hemzelf was verschoven naar aandacht voor mij. ‘Jij hebt vast en zeker ook wel heel wat meegemaakt,’ sprak hij. Ik knikte, een beetje verslagen. ‘Iedereen heeft zo zijn eigen verhaal,’ sprak ik.

‘Kun je mij nu op waarde schatten ?’ vroeg hij. ‘Ik kan ook heel veel voor jou betekenen. Misschien hebben wij wel raakvlakken.’ Ik knikte weer. Ik was door alles wat ik zelf had meegemaakt een heel gecalculeerd iemand geworden die alles afwoog, en die zich niet liet afschepen. Vertrouwen moest verdiend worden, maar dan nog steeds zou ik niemand echt vertrouwen. Ik keek hem aan en zuchtte. ‘Jij eerst ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Nee,’ stamelde ik. ‘Ik ... ik ben al te ver heen. Ik kan daar niet eens over praten.’

Hij glimlachtte. ‘Dat zit diep dus. Ik voel met je mee. Misschien hebben wij meer of minder hetzelfde meegemaakt, maar dan op een verschillende manier. Het is nogal universeel.’

Ik keek hem aan. ‘Nee, dat denk ik niet. We zullen ongetwijfeld unieke verhalen hebben die los van elkaar staan. Dat jij gewoon je verhaal kan doen is daar een teken van. Ik heb teveel meegemaakt. Ik kan het niet.’

‘Nu moet je mij niet onderschatten,’ sprak hij. ‘Ik heb tijdenlang er niet over kunnen praten. Het scheelt dat ik nu op een andere planeet ben en een nieuw leven heb. Als jij op de ..."

En dan volgt de naam van de planeet weer ...

"zou zijn geweest, los van waar je vandaan kwam, dan had je misschien ook wel kunnen praten.’

Ik knikte. Daar zat wat in. Ik had ineens het gevoel dat ik wel naar een andere planeet wilde gaan, maar of ..."

En dan weer de naam van de planeet ...

"een goede keuze zou zijn ? Zijn verhaal zou dat uitmaken.

Hij keek me aan en glimlachte. Even had ik het gevoel alsof hij er niets van meende, alsof hij me bedroog, alsof hij me ergens in wilde lokken, maar toen hij weer een serieus gezicht trok wilde ik het wel proberen.

‘Okay, ga je gang,’ sprak ik.

Hij opende zijn mond, en begon te vertellen."

In het vierde hoofdstuk begint de man over de planeet te vertellen. Het waren dingen die ik nog nooit had gehoord, dingen die niet zomaar in je denken kunnen opkomen. Het valt dus ook niet te vergelijken met andere boeken. Vandaar dat het één van de indrukwekkendste boeken was die ik in het geheime archief was tegen gekomen. Hier was de mensheid niet voor klaar, en misschien wel nooit. Ook het boekenkaft was erg indrukwekkend. Als je dat in een boekwinkel zou tegenkomen dan zou je gewoon wegzweven. Het is wat geen oog ooit gezien heeft, wat in geen mensenhart is opgekomen.

Aan het einde van het verhaal zegt de man :

"Dit alles scheen voort te komen uit een orakel. Het orakel werd bewaakt door een slang. Ik had vele kronieken hierover gelezen, en ik voelde dat ik verdwaald was in dit orakel. Ik wilde losbreken, maar ik kon het niet.

Ik wist waar het orakel stond, in een ondergrondse tempel, waar markten omheen waren. Op die markten werden de kronieken verkocht. Deze boeken waren heilig en werden aanbeden. Ook het orakel en de slang werden aanbeden.

Heel ver in het verleden waren die geschriften verboden en zou je de marteldood sterven als je zo’n geschrift in je bezit had."

De man stopte met spreken. Hij had nu al een lange tijd verteld, en wat van de kronieken opgesomd. ‘Heb jij toevallig zelf ook zo’n boek ?’ vroeg ik.

Hij keek op. ‘Ik heb er eentje meegenomen van het ruimteschip.’ Hij nam een dik boek uit zijn tas met een leren kaft en gaf het aan mij. Ik sloeg het open, en zag kleine letters in kolommen verdeeld over de pagina. Ik trilde een beetje. ‘Ik zou het graag willen lezen,’ sprak ik.

‘Je mag het wel hebben,’ sprak hij. ‘Ik ken het allemaal wel uit mijn hoofd, en moet er ook weer van loskomen.’

Toen begon hij me op een hele vreemde manier aan te kijken. ‘Zou jij wel op de ..."

En dan volgt weer de naam van de planeet ...

"willen leven ?’

Ik keek verbaasd. ‘Waarom vraag je dat ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Laat maar,’ zei hij, terwijl zijn gezicht weer strak werd. Ik werd weer duizelig toen ik in het boek begon te lezen. De letters tolden voor mijn ogen. Er waren ook vreemde plaatjes in het boek. Ik kreeg vreemde gevoelens in mijn buik. ‘I... ik moet zeggen dat ik weleens nachtmerries over dit soort dingen heb gehad,’ sprak ik. Hij glimlachtte, maar ik kon de pijn en de angst in zijn ogen zien.

‘Wij zijn aan elkaar verbonden. Jij kent de ..."

De naam van de planeet weer ...

‘Hoezo ?’ vroeg ik. ‘Ik ken absoluut de ... niet. Ik vind alleen wat herkenning in sommige nachtmerries die ik had als kind.’

Hij begon te lachen. ‘Je blijft het ontwijken, hè ? Jouw vorig leven was op de ... Dat zijn dingen van vóór je geboorte. Vandaar dat je je zo voelt.’

‘Ach, wat ?’ zei ik luid. ‘Hoe weet je dat ? Hoe kom je daarbij ?’

Hij keek me diep in mijn ogen. ‘Ik ben niet los. Ik zit nog steeds vast aan de ... Nu ik hier ben wordt ik nog steeds achtervolgd door ... Zij zeggen dat ik hier ben voor een opdracht. Er is geen ware bevrijding voor mij.’

Ik begon medelijden met de man te krijgen. ‘Doe alsjeblieft niet zo negatief,’ sprak ik. ‘Het moet nu afgelopen zijn.’

‘Nee, het is goed zo,’ sprak hij. ‘Er is geen kruid tegen opgewassen. Het is te sterk.’

Ik begon verloren voor me uit te staren. Ik wist niet meer wat ik moest zeggen. Ik voelde me alsof mijn mond was gesnoerd.

‘Ze zitten achter je aan,’ sprak hij. ‘Ze willen je terug. Ook jou stuurden ze hier voor een missie, als een zendeling.’

Ik begon te lachen. Maar toen leek het alsof ik wilde huilen. Iets had bezit van me genomen. ‘Wat heb je in mijn water gedaan ?’ vroeg ik in paniek. Maar ik voelde me verzwakken en verzachten.

‘Het is te sterk,’ zei hij. ‘De ... is het tegenovergestelde van de aarde. De aarde is de spiegel-planeet van de ..., als een schaduw-sateliet.’

‘Wat !’ riep ik uit. ‘Ja, je hebt gelijk.’

'Vertel me meer,’ zei ik, ‘want ik heb het idee dat dit me allemaal in grote verwarring stort.’

‘Ik loop er niet mee te koop,’ sprak hij. ‘Ik ben speciaal naar jou toegekomen, omdat jij de ... in je draagt. Ik ben de sleutel tot jouw ontwaking. Het is heel wetenschappelijk, heel technologisch.’

Ineens trok hij een pistool uit zijn tas, en richtte het op mij. ‘Als je nu verstandig bent, dan kom je met mij mee,’ sprak hij. Ik schrok. ‘Ben je gek geworden ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Geen tijd voor analisering,’ sprak hij, en prikte met het getrokken pistool in mijn buik. Ik voelde

me even duizelig worden, en kreeg buikpijn van de spanning. ‘Waar gaat dit over ?’ protesteerde ik. Hij begon me te duwen, en trok me toen met zich mee. Buiten trok hij me naar het bos. We moesten over een zanderig paadje, terwijl ik in de verte rood licht zag. Ik deed mijn handen voor mijn ogen. Op een heuveltje stond een soort ruimteschip. Hij duwde me naar binnen, en toen steeg het op.

Ik schold. Hij zou me meenemen naar de ... Blijkbaar had hij die opdracht. Hij zei dat ik blij mocht zijn dat ik nog leefde. In het ruimteschip zag ik nog meer van hen.

Er waren veel boeken met kronieken in het ruimteschip. Ik werd gedwongen ze te bestuderen. Ik vond in deze boeken veel herkenning. We waren op weg naar de ... Ze zeiden me dat ze me daar ergens zouden dumpen.

Ik vroeg naar het waarom, maar ze gaven mij geen antwoord. Ik had geen besef van tijd meer. Ik studeerde en studeerde maar, en sliep soms tussendoor. Mijn leven stond ondersteboven.

Na een lange tijd – ik weet niet hoelang, dagen, weken, of maanden – kwamen we aan op de ... Ergens werd ik afgezet. Toen vertrok het ruimteschip weer. Het was hier erg warm.

Ik was erg op mijn hoede. Ze hadden mij geen wapen meegegeven ..."

De rest van het boek gaat over wat hij daar allemaal meemaakt. Op een dag komt hij langs de rivier van bloed tot de zee van tranen :

"Ergens bij de zee van tranen was een tunnel die onder de grond leidde. Het liep uit op een grottenstelsel waar veel boeken waren. Al deze boeken waren gewijd. De boeken stonden vol van kronieken."

Hij werd overvallen door twee gewapende planeet-bewoners, hij werd gekooid en moest in de boeken onder dwang studeren :

"Op de grond van de kooi lag hooi. Er was een bed en een tafeltje met een stoel. Ook was er een klein wastafeltje. Ik had drie grote boeken gekregen met leren kaften. ‘We zullen je straks overhoren,’ spraken de gewapende planeet-bewoners, en liepen weer weg. Ik wist dat er voor mij niets anders opzat dan de boeken te gaan lezen om er in te studeren. Eerst sloeg ik een boek open met een donkerrode leren kaft.

Ik begon te trillen. Ik voelde alsof ik mijzelf niet meer was, alsof er iets in mij was geknapt of gebroken door de spanning.

Ik begon erg te zweten en te trillen, en begon me erg moe te voelen. Ook had ik buikpijn die steeds erger werd. Het was voornamelijk de spanning in mijn buik, die mij duizelig maakte. Ik las verder en zag de plaatjes. Ik herinnerde de nachtmerries die ik vroeger had. Zij namen totaal mijn verstand over en mijn wil.

Toen ik de plaatjes zag en de teksten las leek het alsof ik bellen in mijn hoofd hoorde afgaan, alsof er iemand voor de deur stond. Ik herinnerde mij dat ik ook zulke nachtmerries had. Dan werd alles zwart voor mijn ogen wanneer ik de deur opendeed. Ik werd dan schreeuwend en gillend wakker."

Sommigen zouden het geen nachtmerries meer noemen, maar nacht terreur.

"Ik was verlamd en verstijfd van schrik. Ik deed mijn ogen dicht. Ik hoorde voetstappen. Het waren de twee gewapende planeet-bewoners die me hier hadden opgesloten. Ze bleven bij de tralies van

mijn kooi staan. ‘Je weet wat je te doen staat,’ sprak één van hen hardvochtig, opende de kooi, en ze trokken mij eruit weg. Ze trokken mij helemaal door een lange, donkere tunnel die schuin onder de grond de diepte in ging. Toen openden ze een deur met tralies. We kwamen in een halfverlichte zaal in een grot. In de verte stond een troon van een soort wit goud.

‘Laat hem dichterbij komen,’ werd er gesproken. Ze trokken mij tot voor de troon.

‘Heeft hij gestudeerd ?’ vroeg degene die op de troon zat. ‘Ja,’ sprak één van de gewapende planeet-bewoners.

‘Werp hem in de vurige oven !’ riep degene die op de troon zat. Links achter de troon in de muur verscheen een groot vuur, waar een deur was. De gewapende planeet-bewoners trokken mij naar de deur, en toen het vuur verdwenen was opende één van hen de deur en duwde mij naar binnen. Ik viel in een groot gat, in een vurig ravijn, als in een put. Het was heel groot. Ik zag overal vuur, maar ik voelde geen pijn. Ik was nog steeds vallende, maar ik begon lichtelijk te zweven. Het vallen ging trager en trager, totdat ik de grond raakte. Ik voelde mij verlamd. Ik voelde me ineens heel zwaar worden, en ik kon moeilijk ademen.

Ik voelde me helemaal verstijven. Ik had toen kracht om op te staan.

Ik begon te schudden, maar ik begon meer en meer te verstijven.

Ik kwam in een eindeloze cirkel van wedergeboorte terecht.

Zachte bellen ringden, terwijl ik merkte dat ik mezelf kon loswringen van de eeuwige cirkel van wedergeboorte. Ik zag mezelf boven de cirkel zweven, in de zee. Ik zat in een soort lift.

Ik ging hoger en hoger, todat ik in een nieuwe natuur kwam. Alle kleuren waren zacht hier, en dimensionaal. Ik kwam tot reusachtige tronen, die leken te golven, en die op en neer gingen.
Ik hoorde allemaal fluitjes, zachte fluitjes, die weer plaats maakten voor nieuwe fluitjes, en telkens naar de achtergrond gingen om weer plaats te maken voor nieuwe fluitjes. De zee bruiste in mij. Zij waren deel-realiteiten. Ik kon door de dimensies heenkijken. Zij raken alles lichtelijk aan, en vertrekken dan weer. Zij zijn niet gebonden aan de vaste dimensies.

Zij leefden door zware cryptiek, als een drug.

Ik werd wakker in de spel-auto van professor Rood Barenhout, en ik herinnerde me plotseling mijn opdracht om een spel te testen. Ik was nooit echt naar huis gegaan die dag. Alles was een illusie van de rode spelmachine."

Dit is de korte boekbespreking ervan. Ik heb de zware stukken overgeslagen.

Einde

de ZAPRO-teleporter

Het probleem : de idioten.
Het was een planeet, een grote witte planeet.
Ik had de ZAPRO-teleporter gebouwd.
Ik was uitvinder.
Ook was ik crypto-linguïst.
De ZAPRO-teleporter had een ingebouwde tijdmachine.
Tijd was slechts afstand, ruimte, en kon geopend worden door cryptische linguïstiek.
Ik was taalkundige.

Ik gebruikte een Azteekse sleutel voor de teleporter : XIPE TOTEC - Thoth - Duaty - David - Dowd - DT - Idioot - DT.

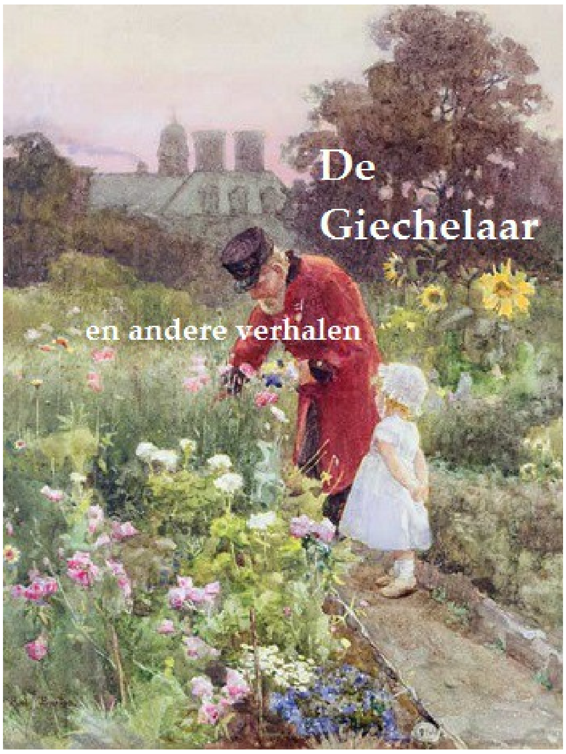
Ik kwam zo op de planeet 'de Idioten'. De idioten leefden in de stad, en de idiotianen leefden in de natuur, als indianen. De idioten in de stad werden geregeerd door de tandofielen. Ook waren zij veelal op jacht naar idiotianen, en als ze een man hadden gevangen dan werd deze man onder dwang volgepompd met te diep gelegde giftige vullingen, en als ze een vrouw hadden gevangen, dan werd deze vrouw verkracht en in de gedwongen prostitutie gestopt. Ik werd gek toen ik dit zag. 'Hoe kan zo'n planeet bestaan ?' Maar ik bewonderde ook de natuur van deze planeet. De natuur was veel groter dan het stedengebied. Ik wist dat deze natuur deze planeet zou overweldigen. Ik kon dat zien op de toekomst-chip.

Ik was flink kwaad toen ik het leed zag wat de idioten de idiotianen aandeden. Ik moest nu de ingebouwde tijd-capsule tot actie brengen, de tijd machine, want zo alleen kon het opgelost worden. Ik gebruikte daarvoor weer een Azteekse sleutel : HUITZILOPOCHTLI - WITSILOPOCHTLI - WITI - vergetelheid.

De witi-vergetelheid was een onderdeel van een slaappoeder voortgebracht door de machine, en ik begon dit slaappoeder te lozen boven de natuur en het stedengebied. Het zou nieuwe dromen brengen. Maar ik viel hierdoor zelf ook in een diepe slaap, en kreeg allereerst een gigantische nachtmerrie waardoor ik door het systeem werd opgezogen. Ik kon mijn weg niet meer terugvinden, maar ik wist één ding : ik had de Azteekse code geactiveerd.

Ik werd wakker in mijn eigen kantoor waar ook anderen werkten, in mijn eigen woongedeelte. Ik was nog erg slaperig, dus ik nam een douche. Toen kwam de postbode die aanbelde, maar niemand deed open. Ze begon mijn naam te roepen, maar ik was onder de douche. Gelukkig hebben andere werkers toen de post aangenomen, en namen haar naar binnen. Ik was weer zo moe geworden dat ik alleen maar kon slapen, maar ik wist dat de post was aangekomen.

Einde


De
Giechelaar
en andere verhalen

De Giechelaar
en andere verhalen
COAB 2019

De Ontsnapping
De Blinde Stad
De Giechelaar
De Giechelaar II
De Giechelaar III
De Kaaskabouter
De Schepping
De Nacht Mysterieën
De Peergangers
De Perenverkoper
De Februari Schietpartijen

De Ontsnapping

Jara stond stil. Ze keek om haar heen. De rivier leek alsof het elk moment kon opwellen. De zon raakte bijna de rivier aan, geheel wit in de verte. Apen zag ze aan de overkant. Al snel was ze in de rivier en zwom naar de overkant. Ze greep een liaan, en trok haarzelf uit het water. Apen staarden haar aan. Ze kroop op een heuveltje verder het water uit, haar huid zat onder de modder. Ze hoorde het geluid van de apen, en opeens voelde ze hun handen op haar huid. Ze trokken haar verder omhoog. Het water dampte als in een mist, en het was er warm. Even later lag ze languit op het gras, tussen het mos, onder de bomen. Het was een prachtige jungle hier, in de dieptes van het regenwoud. Weer raakten de apen haar aan, en de rillingen gingen door haar lijf. Ze omhelsde hen, en ze lieten het toe. Ze was hun kind. Ze maakte zich meester van de situatie, stond op, en rende het oerwoud in. Even later stond ze in een hut. Ze was moe, ging op de versleten matras liggen. Niemand kon haar zeggen waar ze was. Het leek wel alsof de apen hier woonden. Achter de hut vond ze een skelet. Ze nam van wat appels die hier en daar lagen. Ze was hongerig, en ze at zelfs wat oud brood. Haar hele leven had ze verlangd naar een rustige plaats, waar ze alleen zou zijn.

Ze was onrustig, zoals de apen onrustig waren, maar de natuur was mooi hier, ze kon hier wegglijden. De apen probeerden met haar te communiceren, maar zij gleed steeds weg omdat ze moe was. Ze hielden haar vast. Even later duwden ze haar bananen in haar mond.

De natuur was als gladgestreken hier, niemand zei wat. Ze voelde zich oud en jong. Ze staarde naar het amulet wat ze om haar nek had gedragen. Ze had het in haar hand. Plotseling draaide ze zich om en zag een man staan, een indiaan. Een band met een paar witte veren om zijn hoofd. Hij pakte haar hand, en ging naast haar liggen. Zij vond dat eigenlijk heel normaal. Misschien woonde de man hier. Hij joeg haar niet weg. Hij gedroeg zich mysterieus. Ze voelde geen angst voor hem, alleen acceptatie.

Als ze in zijn ogen keek zag ze een open jungle. Hij staarde naar haar. Ze kon wegzinken in zijn ogen. Ze zeiden niets tegen elkaar. De man maakte een vuur, en ging erbij zitten, en Jara kwam er ook bijzitten even later. Het leek wel alsof elke minuut een uur duurde. Zo stil was het hier. Er was hier een open wereld, een diepte.

Ze omhelsden elkaar terwijl ze elkaar niet kenden. Ze wisten genoeg. De natuur bond hen samen. Er waren geen woorden nodig, alles was ondergedompeld in de prachtige natuur. De ontmoeting duurde lang. Daarna vertrok de man weer. Jara staarde naar het amulet. Het glom. Ze ging terug naar de versleten matras, en viel in slaap.

Ze zag haar reis als een gezel, ze hield van de reis. Ze at van de natuur, en dronk van de rivier, het was genoeg. Ze was gelukkig. Jara was als bedekt door de natuur, als een veilige schuilplaats, geen slavernij meer. Maar nog wel de littekens daarvan. Ze was ontsnapt, ze had dagen door het bos gerend, en nu was ze hier. Slangen gleden door het gras. Ze had van hen niets te vrezen. Het was alsof de natuur haar opnam.

Ze wilde wraak nemen op de blanken, maar hoe. Ze was zelfs gemerkt in haar mond. Vreemde tekens hadden ze in haar tanden gesneden, en metalen erin gegoten. Met haar mes probeerde ze het eruit te snijden. Al snel was ze aan het bloeden. De apen kwamen dichtbij. Ze kwam erachter dat de kolonisten zendertjes hadden gestopt in de dieptes van haar kiezen. Ze wist dat ze in gevaar was, nog steeds. Misschien konden ze haar wel achtervolgen. Ze rende verder, de voetstappen van de man volgende. Na enkele dagen kwam ze hem tegen. Hij trok haar naar zich toe. Ze spraken niet.

Het was alsof ze elkaar aanvoelden. Ze hoorden schoten in de lucht. 'Slaven ontsnapt,' riep iemand. De man greep zijn mes, maar daarna greep hij een pijl, en toen zijn boog. Beiden renden ze verder. Weer waren er schoten, maar ze zagen niemand. Ze kwamen aan bij een riviertje, waar een bootje was. Ze namen het bootje om de rivier mee over te komen. Aan de overkant gekomen wees Jara op de mond van de man. Ze opende haar mond om haar tanden te laten zien. Ook de man opende zijn mond, en Jara zag het metaal, en de zendertjes. Ze probeerde het hem duidelijk te maken. Met een mes kregen ze het eruit. Jara gooide de zendertjes in het riviertje. Toen gingen ze dieper het oerwoud in. Ze hoopten dat niemand hen hier nog zou kunnen volgen. De natuur was te mooi om daar nog drukte om te maken. Het was alsof hun lasten door die pracht werden afgespoeld. Het was alsof de man wilde zeggen : Laten we hier opnieuw beginnen. Jara knikte. Zijn ogen spraken. Een leven hier zou goed zijn.

Ze wilden wraak nemen op de blanken, maar de natuur nam hen mee. De natuur deed hen vergeten, maar er was nog wel die diepe pijn van binnen. Er was geen doel, er was alleen het leven. Het was als een warme haard, de natuur om hen heen. En die kwam dieper en dieper om de pijn weg te wassen. De man raakte haar aan. Het voelde als vertrouwd. De zachte aanraking van de natuur leek het te vermengen. Voor het eerst voelde Jara zich gelukkig. Ze kon de sterke stroming van de rivier horen in de verte. Alle geluiden kwamen haar lichaam binnen, en openbaarden zich aan haar. De man streelde door haar haar, en ging met zijn vingertoppen over haar lippen. Ze boog haar hoofd. Ze begreep niet wat er gaande was. De man omhelsde haar van achteren, en in haar gevoel was het alsof hij tegen haar zei : 'Je bent vrij nu.' Ze zochten de rivier weer op, en gingen daar zwemmen. Hier zouden ze willen wonen. In de verte was een waterval die ze konden horen bulderen. Ze besloten er naartoe te gaan. Het was alsof de waterval hen van binnen schoonwaste. De waterplanten waren prachtig en overtuigend hier. Ze sprongen bijna door het water heen.

Wisten zij dat zij kinderen waren van de bomen, van de struiken die onderwater en bovenwater groeiden. Wisten zij dat zij gemaakt waren voor ritmische en kronkelende groei. Krokodillen waren hun vrienden hier, geen vijanden. Ze waren aan het ware gevaar ontsnapt. Ook de waterslangen waren hen goedgezind. Ze voelden zich fijn met deze kronkelende elementen. De waterplant was als de hemel voor hen. Ze stonden open voor het harmonische gevoel van de natuur, ze spraken met hun ogen. Het water was een bron van leven voor hen. De man staarde naar haar amulet. Hij kuste het amulet. Het was alsof de man wilde zeggen : Als zij, het amulet, haar ogen zal openen, waar zullen de blanke kolonisten dan zijn, heus, ze zullen geleid worden naar de hel. Ze hebben een hel gemaakt, een hel die hen dan zal opslokken. Het was alsof het zonlicht het zo overbracht, en zo waar als de waterval zelf. Ze keek hem diep in de ogen, alsof ze het verankerde. Ze had respect voor hem, stond open voor hem, ze besefte dat zij het antwoord om haar nek droeg. Het amulet leek op een slang. Het had veel waarde voor haar. Sommige slangen hier leken op het amulet. Het was alsof het amulet ooit de sleutel was van haar kooi. Ze voelde zich week worden als ze naar hem keek. De blauwe lucht leek neer te dalen in de rivier, op weg naar de waterval. Het licht werd alle kanten opgereflecteerd.

De Blinde Stad

Zij stelen dromen,
De wachters van een stad,
Zij stelen de verbeelding recht uit iemand's hart,
Deze stad kent geen medelij

Alles dor en droog,
Kinderen zijn hier niet,
Iedereen is hier oud,
Hier is slechts verdriet

Koude harten, lege hoofden,
Gevuld met hartvochtigheid,
Niemand kent geluk,
Wanneer de stad zich over hen spreidt

De stenen zijn roze, en ze draaien maar,
Zij brengen sneeuw, totdat iedereen bevriest,
Tot steen zullen zij worden in alle eeuwigheid,
Meedraaien zullen zij, om droom en plezier te stelen,
Tot roze steen zullen zij worden,
In deze stad van slechts verdriet,
Och, hoor toch naar mijn duistere lied

Ik ben een oude troubadour,
Ik heb het allemaal gezien,
Maar niemand gelooft mij,
Want zij hebben allemaal dezelfde droom van de stad gekregen,
Een droom dat zij nog steeds alles hebben,
Een droom van bedrog,
Zij zijn allen ziek

Och hoort toch naar mijn lied,
Zij hebben allen van het grachtwater van de stad gedronken,
Dieven en piraten zijn het,
Zij stelen en slapen, geeuwen en gapen,
En dromen dat zij niets hebben gedaan,
Och, deze stad is onder een vloek,
Zij zijn allen dik en vet,
Zij zijn de ondergang tegemoet gegaan

Ik zie de stenen draaien,
En alles weggraaien,
Eens was deze stad er niet,

Eens was er hier een rijke natuur,
Totdat de plaaggeesten kwamen

Zij bouwden deze stad,
Och luistert toch naar een oude troubadour,
Moet ik u smeken, of moet ik u slaan,
Waak op, waak op, of het is met ons gedaan

Zeven plaaggeesten op een rij,
In een pot leefden zij,
Oh wie heeft deze pot geopend ?
De eerste heet mankepoot, de tweede beelzebul, de derde je-weet-het-wel, de vierde ik-heb-hem-niet, de vijfde stuk verdriet, de zesde mijn geluk, de zevende ik-heb-je-tuk

Nu ik dit gezongen heb, zal ik niet meer leven,
Toe, schrijf mijn woorden op, zodat u eens uw bevrijding zal beleven,
Laat dit lied niet sterven in de wind,
Wacht totdat een kinderhart het vindt,
De sleutel is in mijn mouw,
Och, dat ik het toch zelf vertellen zou

En toen stierf de troubadour,
Zijn vrienden schreven het lied op,
En plakten het op de deur van het stadsbestuur,
De sleutel vonden ze in de mouw van de troubadour,
Maar ze wisten niet wat ze daarmee moesten doen

Een van de vrienden besloot de sleutel zolang bij hem te houden,
Ook stierf hiermee langzaam de herinnering aan de troubadour

Toen de burgemeester van de stad het lied las,
Verscheurde hij ter plekke het papier

Niemand had de troubadour gelooft,
Ook zijn vrienden zeiden dat hij gek was,
En zo leefde de stad voort in bedrog

Raakte je het steen aan,
Dan werd je betoverd,
En zo groeide de stad groter en groter,
Het roze steen leefde van de mensen,
At en at, en werd vet

Het roze steen begon steeds meer van de mensen te vragen

De heks is blind, en woont in de zee,
Waar haar zeepaardjes en dolfijnen haar overal naartoe brengen in haar koets,
Op haar wagen,
Zij heeft de zeven plaaggeesten uit hun pot vrijgezet,
Opdat zij de stad zouden bouwen

De blinde heks van de zee had honger,

Honger naar uitgesmeerde zieltjes,
Uitgesmeerd op brood

Het is een stad in de zee, maar niemand wist het,
De heks had al hun hoofden betoverd

De mensen aanbaden het roze steen,
Wat hun leven had gegeven

De kerken van het roze steen schoven door de stad,
Door de wondermacht van de mens gegeven,
Het schoof door 's mensens geloof,
Door trouw van het menselijk gelaat,
Oh, zedig schoof het door de stad,
Om de mens te wenken, om te zwaaien en kostelijk te bezitten,
Als een koning was het,
Ja, het roze steen had de stad geschapen

De blinde heks schuifelde door de stad,
Op zoek naar zieltjes,
Maar het roze steen waakte over hen,
Als de goede, trouwe herder,
Die zijn schapen verslond in de nacht,
Om hen mee te sleuren naar de onderwereld,
Naar een glitterwereld, van het roze vuur,
Van roze steen, draaiende in onze gedachtes,
Sussende alle pijn, verdraaiende al het gegriezel,
Bedekkende, wederopbouwende,
Totdat de morgenstond hen weer wakker wreef,
Die zachte morgen, oh goddelijk geluk,
Welzalig zijn hen die het roze steen aanbidden …
Van bedrog tot bedrog gaan zij …
De blinde heks …. draait het getij …

Als eb en vloed, het roze steen doet goed,
Zij draait, zij bedriegt, zij steelt de dromen,
Zij trekt de ziel tot gruwelijke grotten,
Maar laat het lichaam opstaan in een groot geluk,
In de handen van de plaaggeest ik-heb-je-tuk

De hersenen op sterk water,
Het hart in zeeketenen, de droom kapot,
Maar niemand merkt het, want het lichaam is vol van het roze geluk,
Het is als drugs, als rijp koren,
Als alcohol en dikke sigaretten,
Een sigaar erbij, mijnheer,
En een dikke krant,
De blinde heks heeft het niet meer

De blinde heks staat gierend op de trap,
Met haar oog voelt zij,
Zij kent deze drap,

Er is hier geen geneesheer voor te vinden,
Alle wegen lopen hier dood,
Een blinde leidt de blinden,
Maar zij voelt, en geeft hen grijps genot,
Graai maar, neem maar, heb maar lief,
Ik ben de kinderdief

Zo worden zij allen als haar,
Maar zij zien niet
Nee, niemand is opgewassen tegen het heks met het blinde oog,
Zij was maar met één oog geboren, en dat was blind,
Met één arm kan ze je grijpen,
Met één been kan ze je achterhalen,
Zij is het halve

Zo sterft zij langzaam in alle eeuwigheden,
Om velen mee te sleuren,
Zij heeft misgegrepen,
En is nu een ieders vijand geworden,
Deze stad is haar afschuwelijk geheim

Wie wegrent wordt verminkt,
Zij heeft alle dromen gestolen,
En geeft hen nu illusie op illusie,
Haar illusie

Wie wegrent wordt gepakt,
De blinde heks zal je stropen,
Zij is het halve

Zij wordt rijk aan jouw ellende,
En bedekt het met een roze doek

Een vrouw is gevallen,
Bedek haar met een roze doek,
Een mijnheer heeft een wond,
Bedek het met een roze doek,
Roze sluiers om haar paleis,
In de dieptes van de zee,
In de dieptes van de stad,
Waar haar roze hart klopt,
Zo roze dat het grijs is

De blinde heks wordt oud,
Men kan het aan haar zien,
Ze is de ouwe niet meer,
Ze is jong nu, en zij volgen haar tot de roze kerken,
Waar de plaaggeesten zwaaien en wenken

Ik-heb-je-tuk zit op de troon,
Hij heeft geschapen een wonderdroom,
Mijn geluk zit naast de troon,

Klaar om je te bespringen,
Hij klopt wat in zijn potje,
Roze smeersel

Het voelt koud aan,
Hij drinkt het met een rietje,
Hij plakt de zielen daarmee vast,
En verwend dan hun lichamen,
Ja, maak hen maar blind,
Zo blind als de blinde heks

Hij smeert het in hun ogen,
En spuit het zo naar binnen,
Dan neemt hij hen mee,
En draait hen in het rond,
Roze stenen zullen ze worden

Bevende van geluk draaien zij,
Oh, wat is het leven mooi,
Zij aanbidden de roze stenen,
Groei maar, roze stenen,
Wordt maar dik en vet,
Dan zal de stad groter groeien

De stad zweeft boven de zee, om alle levende schepselen naar binnen te zuigen,
Wat een grote onzichtbare zichtbare stad

Groei maar, stad,
Geef hen maar van alles wat,
Hun dromen zullen nooit uitkomen,
Hun wonden zullen nooit genezen,
Maar jij vertelt ze maar wat

Eet maar, stad, dikker zul je nog worden,
Dan zullen de mensen wel vergeten,
Dat ze net zo zijn als jij,
Zeven plaaggeesten op een rij

De zeven plaaggeesten marcheerden door de stad,
Mankepoot voorop,
Daarachter Beelzebul,
Daarachter je-weet-het-wel,
Daarachter ik-heb-hem-niet,
Daarachter stuk verdriet,
Daarachter mijn geluk,
En als laatste ik-heb-je-tuk

De macht van het grote woord,
Was de macht van het hangkoord,
Zij preekten in de kerken,
Om hen allen met het roze te bewerken

Stilletjes werden zij aanbeden,
Want zulke nette mannen,
Die mag je niet verbannen

Mankepoot sprak het woord,
En het roze geluk kwam voort,
Beelzebul sprak over hebt elkaar lief,
En daar kwam de dromendief,
Geen geluk kon zich werkelijk aarden,
Maar met wat bedrog kwam alles tot bedaren,
Je-weet-het-wel zegende het gehoor,
Zij zongen allemaal in koor,
Tot het roze gesteente wat hen gezaligd had,
Zij keken allen vroom op toen ik-heb-hem-niet bad,
Stuk verdriet kwam met de collecte bus,
Mijn geluk gaf hen allen een hand en een kus,
En koning ik-heb-je-tuk zei :
Ik heb u allen tuk,
Maar zij verstonden het niet,
Want zij hadden oren als een vergiet,
Zij dansten maar door,
Zij hadden zulk slecht gehoor,
Als doven kwamen zij tot de slager,
En het gedans ging al maar trager,
Maar goede dromen hadden zij,
Het was de kering van het getij

Deze stad als eb en vloed,
Niemand zag het vergoten bloed

De blinde heks daalde op hen neer,
De dominee had het niet meer

Oh, wat konden die kerken schuiven,
Langs de winkels, langs het meer,
Langs de grachten keer op keer,
Allen vonden zij groot geluk,
Zij waren in de handen van ik-heb-je-tuk

Een groot plaagheer is opgestaan,
De koning der plaagheren,
De zevende

Ik-heb-je-tuk zit op de troon,
En laat zijn kunstjes zien,
Allen buigen zij neer in aanbidding,
De dominee heeft met gezag en macht gesproken,
Vol ontzag volgen zij hem naar zijn huis,
Waar hij vervolgens hangt aan een kruis,
Oh ja, naast hem te hangen,
Dat is waar wij allen naar verlangen,
Doe nog eens wat van uw kunsten groot,

Ga nog lang niet dood

Ik-heb-je-tuk lacht en doet,
Zijn kruis is nu een vliegtuig,
Waar zij allen onder hangen,
Maar zij zijn blind van verlangen

Ik-heb-je-tuk, oh bedot ons,
Het kan ons allemaal niets meer schelen,
Niemand mag ons hier van helen,
Want als de heler helen moet,
Dan is dat iets wat hij maar ergens anders doet,
Zo praten wij in een kringetje,
Dat is toch wat wij willen,
Het leven is wonderschoon,
Vooral met zo'n koning,
Ik ben blij dat ik in deze stad woon,
Ik had dit voor geen goud willen missen, zeg,
Zij die hier niet wonen hebben grote pech,
Ja, grote pech zal het wezen,
Wanneer gij nooit over deze stad hebt gelezen

Stuk verdriet lacht zich krom,
Langzaam slaat hij zijn trom,
Er zijn weer veel doden gevallen,
En nu doen we vroom,
En vergeten alles in de roze droom,
Deze stad is gebouwd op been en bloed,
Het is wat een mens goed doet

De blinde heks is een taaie,
Maar zeker geen kwaaie,
Zie met wat ze ons heeft goedgedaan,
Zij droogde ons aller traan,
Als een lam bracht zij ons tot rustige wateren,
Tot goddelijke watervallen, zij bracht haar oordeel over de afschuwelijke kwallen,
Zij gaf ons een droom, en wijsheid in de tuin,
Zij leidde ons uit dat diepe, duistere dal,
Weg is de kwal,
We kunnen nu veilig geloven,
In het roze steen wat ons heeft doen beloven,
Dat wij haar altijd zullen volgen,
Ook al is de kwal nu verbolgen

Het roze steen heeft de kwal verslagen,
Wij kunnen haar nu volop behagen,
Alles doen wij voor haar,
Zuivere toewijding, en geen ja-maar,
Als slaven staan wij op haar kusten,
Toe steen, draai maar,
Maak het nieuwe getij klaar

Al onze dromen staan op de kust,
Zedelijk en goed uitgerust,
Vernieuwde dromen zal zij ons geven,
Zij is hierin heel bedreven

Ik zie het in de verte, die stad,
Het glinstert in de zee,
Als een oase in de woestenij,
Hoge muren, toe, zal ik ze beklimmen ?
Zoveel plaagheren die op de muren marcheren,
Zij hebben hun bogen klaar,
Om zielen tot het dodenrijk te trekken,
Maar roze lichamen worden aan hen gegeven,
Vreet je maar vol en dik,
Laat je spierbundels maar zien,
Opdat je het geheim niet zult vinden

Als deze dop op de fles gaat,
Is het geheim voor eeuwig verloren

Het goddelijk roze heeft de adel bekleed,
De troubadour speelt zijn snarenspel,
En de adel kijkt, en droomt weg,
Er zitten parels aan die snaren,
Hoe kan hij het lied zo mooi zingen ?
Als paarden beteugeld naar het bal,
Daar is het geheim, laten we zien wat het zeggen zal,
Nee maar, het is een kwal

Ik ontwaak aan de kust van een zwarte zee,
Bloed in het water,
Golven over mijn been,
Ik kan me niet bewegen,
Dan kijk ik op,
Ik zie een vrouw met lang haar, en een agent,
Met een kwal in een pot,
Het ding had me bijna doodgebeten,
Nee, nooit ga ik terug naar de roze stad,
Nee, nooit ga ik terug naar de roze stad

Dokter, kunt u me genezen,
Ik kan me niet bewegen,
Ik ben bang dat ik spoedig niet kan spreken,
Want ik ben in de roze stad geweest,
Het roze steen is in mijn gebeente

Ik kan u niet helpen, zegt de dokter,
U zult sterven en de stad zien,
In een ander licht,
Daar zult u leven tot in alle eeuwigheden,
Want werkelijk,
Van deze stad kan niemand vluchten,

Wij gingen daar allen heen,
Wij zijn er nooit van teruggekomen,
Heus, er is geen geneesmiddel hiervoor,
Het antwoord zit in je been

Ik kijk naar mijn been, en zie de sleutel,
Ik trek het eruit, het bloedt nog wel,
Dan kijk ik naar de dokter die in een kwal verandert,
Ik ren, ik ben er dus nog steeds niet uit,
Waar is hier de uitgang uit deze roze stad ?
Wie kan mij helpen, waar moet ik heen ?

Ik zie het lieve gezicht van de vrouw,
En het bezorgde gezicht van de agent,
Met de kwal in een pot,
Nog steeds heb ik de kwallensteek,
Nog steeds heb ik de roze steek,
Ik ben er nog niet van terug,
Ik lig hier nog dronken in het zand,
Op een donker strand

De agent neemt me op, en brengt me naar mijn huis,
Aan de muur hangt een groot kruis,
Nee, dit moet nog steeds de roze stad wezen,
Toen heeft hij mij op een schip gehesen,
Het schip hing hoog in de lucht,
Toen werden we de hemel in gedreven,
De kwal wilde ons aan stukken rijgen,
Een octopus, een grote octopus, zei mijn naam,
De stad riep mij, ik moest terug,
Maar de agent arresteerde de octopus, en stopte het in een pot,
Terwijl het lieve vrouwengezicht mij aankeek

Nee, nee, schreeuwde ik, ik vertrouw het niet,
Jullie zijn van de roze stad, dat kan niet anders,
Want alles is de roze stad …

Oh, roze stad, hoe kan ik je breken,
Oh roze stad, hoe kan ik je vergeten

De blinde heks houdt het geheim in haar hand als een ei van licht,
terwijl de roze stad over de zee zweeft, suizende, ruisende,
Totdat alles donker wordt

Laat me je inwijden in het roze ei,
Sprak de blinde heks,
Maar ik rende

Ik ren het bos in, maar alles is versierd met het roze,
Geen bos, alleen een roze stad

Ik ren en duik, en vlieg in de lucht,

Maar het roze zit me op de hielen,
De blinde heks heeft me gezien,
De kerken zitten me achterna,
Mijn gebeente is van het roze gesteente,
Geen dokter die me helpen kan,
Zij zijn allen stuk verdriet,
Plaagheer, plaaggeest, plaag geweest,
En nu ben ik hier

De blinde heks zit in haar boot,
In een roeibootje gaat zij over de rivier,
Een rotzooi is het hier,
Dit bos is vol van roze,
Dit bos is slechts een stad,
Er is geen uitweg hier

De blinde heks roeit, en dan krijst,
Haar bootje wordt door een zwart gat opgezogen,
Zomaar uit de modder kwam het opdagen,
Als een kasteel van grote orde,
Een boskasteel is het geweest,
Een boskasteel van grote rade,
Een boskasteel van harde zaken

De blinde heks moet voorkomen,
Het boskasteel bestraft haar luid,
Zij moet het bos verlaten

Zij jankt, zij weent, slaat woedend om haar heen,
Maar niets kan haar roze stad hier nog houden,
Zij moet vertrekken met al haar hebben en houwen

Dan smeekt zij, gilt zij, en zegt kom eens hier,
Maar niemand luistert naar haar,
Ze heeft niets meer te zeggen hier,
De deur van de boskoning staat op een kier,
Zo ontsnap ik uit de zee,
En dreef ik met het bootje mee

De boskoning is erg aardig,
Hij is aan het verjaren,
Ik bouw een stad,
Maar hij breekt het af,
En slaat mij op mijn vingers

Geen steden meer voor jou,
Maar bospaadjes,
Boskastelen, diep en ver,
Hoog en vol van waarheid,
Je hebt de waarheid gevonden in een pot met leugens,
Je hebt het roze ei verbroken, en bent binnengegaan,
Hier zijn de slierten niet meer roze, maar bosslierten,

Donker en dromerig, bestijg je paard,
Reis diep door de nacht, totdat je geheel van de roze droom ontwaakt

De roze stad is geen stad voor jou,
Het zijn vervelende mensen,
Zo'n stad zou je nooit wensen,
Niet wensen voor jou

Ik hoor het gekrijs van de heks in de verte,
Maar dan ebt het weg in de verte,
Is de roze stad nu eindelijk weggezonken ?

De blinde heks die is uitgeworpen verkoopt haar roze eieren aan de hooggeplaatsten,
Om een leger te vormen,
Het leger van een lam,
Een bloeddorstig lam,
Maar niemand wil haar eieren kopen

Dan verzint zij een sluw plannetje,
Zij zal nieuwe dromen maken,
Bosdromen, om het roze te bedekken,
Maar de bosdromen zullen wel volgepompt worden met het roze gas,
Goed verborgen onder de oppervlakte

Zo blaast zij haar poppen op,
Maar niemand wil hen kopen,
Ze raakt gefrustreerd,
En klagerig

Ze snelt tot de zeven plaaggeesten voor advies,
Maar zij zitten weer in hun pot,
En de blinde heks kan hen met geen mogelijkheid bevrijden,
Ook kan zij hen niet verstaan,
En zij kunnen haar niet verstaan

De roze stad is aan het slinken, aan het wegrotten,
Totdat het een oude tol is geworden,
De heks heeft weer misgegrepen,
En ook de zeven plaaggeesten rotten weg in hun pot,
De roze stad is niet meer,
Het roze ei verkoopt niet meer,
Hier is waar het roze pad doodloopt,
En daarachter een grote wildernis

Hier ligt een groot ei, waar niemand durft aan te zitten,
Een duister ei

Op een dag ontploft het,
En bloed spuit eruit voort,
Nee, de roze stad zal niet wederom rijzen,
De roze stad is verloren gegaan,
Geen stem wordt er nog in gehoord,

Het is weggeslonken, weggerot,
En het zal zijn pad niet terugvinden,
Het heeft zijn tijd gehad

De Giechelaar

Ze giechelde altijd als ze hem zag. Ze was hem aan het schminken voor de voorstelling. Zijn ouders kwamen ook. 'Is dat je nieuwe vriendin ?' vroegen ze toen ze haar zagen. Hij knikte. 'Ze heeft brede heupen,' zei z'n moeder.

Na de voorstelling nam het meisje hem apart. 'We gaan morgen naar je ouders,' zei ze. Dat stelde ze zo vast. Hij had niets in te brengen. Het was bijna weekend. Geen school, en geen voorstellingen.

Toen ze het weekend bij zijn ouders waren was zijn tante er ook. Ook zijn tante zei dat ze hele brede heupen had.

Het gegiechel werd eigenlijk alleen maar erger. Ze gaf hem een beertje waarop geschreven stond : 'friends forever', maar na een paar dagen wilde ze het terug, omdat ze het zo'n leuk ding vond. En ze giechelde.

Hij noemde haar 'de giechelaar'. Altijd voor de voorstellingen schminkte ze hem op, en ze giechelde dan altijd. Iemand besloot eens de voorstelling te filmen, en toen giechelde ze ook. De video banden werden verkocht, en ze kreeg er geld voor, en ze giechelde. Hij kreeg geen geld, want hij had slechts een bijrol. Het was een project van school. Ze gingen er stad en land voor af. In een grote bus gingen ze door het hele land. Hij leerde zo wel de wereld kennen. Hij herinnerde zich hoe ze elkaar door de voorstellingen beter leerden kennen. Eens waren ze in de bus, en hij dacht eraan dat zij wel zijn vriendin kon worden. Het was alsof hij haar hoorde giechelen in zijn hoofd, en hij lachte. Maar sinds ze zijn vriendin daadwerkelijk was lachte hij steeds minder om haar giechelen.

Hij vroeg zich af waarom ze altijd zo giechelde. Op een dag besloot hij het haar te vragen. Ze giechelde. Hij had het wel verwacht, maar ze gaf geen antwoord. Zo was ze wel vaker.

De giechelaar reed op zijn fiets door de straten. Hij had een hele lange baard. Hij verkocht oude rotzooi. Als het hem lukte iets te verkopen dan giechelde hij altijd. Dat verhaal had hij eens in een boek gelezen en hij dacht er weer aan. Hij besloot het boek nog eens te lezen.

Ze giechelde eigenlijk zoveel dat het heel moelijk was haar beter leren te kennen. Het was als een afweer mechanisme. Hij kon niet tot haar doordringen. Hij zei tegen haar dat hij een boek over de

giechelaar had gelezen : 'De giechelaar reed op zijn fiets door de straten. Hij had een hele lange baard. Hij verkocht oude rotzooi. Als het hem lukte iets te verkopen dan giechelde hij altijd.'

Toen liep ze weg. 'Is dat je vriendin, die met die brede heupen ?' vroegen mensen hem weleens. 'Het is de giechelaar,' zei hij dan.

'Oh, giechelt ze zoveel dan ?' vroeg een oude vrouw hem eens. Zij begon toen ook te giechelen. Hij kon er niet om lachen. Hij vroeg zich nog steeds af wat er te giechelen was. Weer las hij het boek over de giechelaar. 'De giechelaar reed op zijn fiets door de straten. Hij had een hele lange baard. Hij verkocht oude rotzooi. Als het hem lukte iets te verkopen dan giechelde hij altijd.' Hij moest dan altijd aan haar denken, maar het scheen dat ze ook anderen aan het giechelen maakte.

'Wat probeer je mij eigenlijk te verkopen ?' vroeg hij eens aan haar. Ze giechelde en rende weg. Hij kon geen goed hoogte van haar krijgen. 'Moet ik me beledigd voelen ?' vroeg hij toen hij weer bij haar was. 'Zit mijn neus soms scheef, of zit mijn haar niet goed ?'

'Nee, dat is het niet,' zei ze giechelend.
'Maar wat dan ?' vroeg hij. 'Je maakt me gek met dat gegiechel van je.'

Op een dag besloot hij haar een lange brief te schrijven. Al zijn frustraties stonden er in, en ook weer de vraag waarom ze altijd zo giechelde, want daar had hij nog steeds geen antwoord op.

Ze schreef niet terug. Hij vond haar oppervlakkig. Haar wegdoen wilde hij ook niet. Hij besloot haar maar gewoon te accepteren zoals ze was. Nog vaak dacht hij terug aan het boek van de giechelaar. 'Zo is ze nu eenmaal,' zei hij dan tegen zichzelf. 'Het had veel erger gekund. Er zijn vrouwen die altijd klagen.'

Op een dag liepen ze hand in hand in de stad. Hij kocht een ijsje voor haar, en ze giechelde. Mensen keken vaak naar haar als ze zo giechelde, en sommigen giechelden dan ook. Dat waren altijd vrouwen. Ook begonnen steeds meer mensen haar te herkennen op straat. Zij was één van de hoofdrolspelers van de voorstelling. De video ervan werd goed verkocht.

'Ben jij niet dat meisje van die film genaamd 'de giechelaar' ?' vroeg iemand haar eens op straat. 'Ja, dat ben ik,' giechelde ze. Hem herkenden ze vaak niet, want hij speelde slechts een bijrol, als een soort figurant. 'Hij vindt het nooit zo leuk als ik giechel,' zei ze, terwijl ze op hem wees. 'Hij wil na de voorstelling alles zo snel mogelijk weer vergeten, maar bij mij gaat het giechelen gewoon door. Er is voor mij geen verschil tussen de voorstelling en na de voorstelling.'

Hij haatte de school en hij haatte de voorstelling. Hij wilde er nooit over nadenken. Hij voelde zich een marionet, en was altijd blij als het weer afgelopen was. Hij zag altijd uit naar de vakanties, alleen te zijn met haar. Ze was dan wel een giechelaar, maar het meest werd er altijd gegiecheld in de voorstellingen.

'Ik kan het niet uitleggen,' zei hij op een dag. Ze woonden inmiddels samen. 'Altijd maar dat gegiechel. Ik krijg eigenlijk nooit school en die voorstellingen uit m'n kop. Ik heb echt het gevoel alsof ik stapelgek word.'

'Maar ja, je weet dat het verplicht is,' zei ze. 'School is nu eenmaal belangrijk, en de voorstellingen zijn ervoor om het leuk te houden.'

'Ja, heel leuk,' zei hij sarcastisch.

'De giechelaar, een oude man in zijn schuit, met een baard zo lang, en altijd giechelt hij. Je kunt hem niets vertellen of hij giechelt, en vooral als hij zijn oude rotzooi bij je kwijt kan. De giechelaar, eens kocht ik een gouden beeldje van hem, zo mooi. En ik dacht : hoe is dat tussen die oude rotzooi terecht gekomen ? Dat dachten mensen altijd als ze iets van hem kochten. Telkens weer kreeg hij het voor elkaar. De giechelaar, met zijn boot door de nacht, oude lampen verkopende aan de steden, en dan is er zulk een prachtige en verzachtende gloed. Ja, ook medicijnen verkoopt hij, al jaren over datum, maar het werkt goed, zo goed. Want hij is de giechelaar, hij praat alles goed, hij laat hen allemaal in hem geloven, de giechelaar, de giechelaar, als je slapen moet.'

'De giechelaar, de giechelaar, een slaaplied voor de nacht, de giechelaar, de giechelaar, een schuit vol met rotzooi, allemaal afgedankte spullen, maar het glijdt zo het water in, en vindt zijn weg, zijn weg. De giechelaar, de giechelaar, met zijn lange baard op de fiets, om rotzooi te verkopen, voor mensen die dromen, en dan giechelt hij. De giechelaar, de giechelaar, een boot vol met troep, en steden vol onzin, de giechelaar, de giechelaar, hij is de veerman van het verdriet, over rivieren en zeeen, je kan het zo gek niet bedenken, de giechelaar, de giechelaar, voor als je slapen moet.'

Hij werd er vroeger altijd zo rustig van als zijn oma uit het boek van de giechelaar voorlas. Hij las het ook aan haar voor, en langzaam viel ze in slaap. Eindelijk was het gegiechel er even niet meer, maar het zou de dag erna gewoon weer verder gaan.

Einde

De Giechelaar II

Ik was in het bos op een open vlakte tussen de bomen, zanderig en met allerlei grassen, en ik hoorde iemand giechelen in de verte. Het was de giechelaar, een oude man met een baard,. Ik kende hem wel. Hij kwam weleens in de stad met zijn fiets om oude rommel te verkopen. Je kon het zo gek niet bedenken of hij verkocht het wel, en het waren altijd mooie spullen. Hij giechelde altijd. Hij had een prachtig landgoed in het bos, een prachtig huis, zeg maar gerust villa, maar op zijn manier.

Het was eigenlijk een soort hut. Hoe hij eraan kwam was een raadsel. Of misschien had hij het zelf gebouwd, maar het deed niet onder voor het prachtigste paleis. Misschien dat hij daarom altijd zo giechelde. Hij liet mij het terrein zien, en grote voorraden oude spullen. Het was beter dan allerlei moderne troep die ze in de stad verkochten. Deze man was een genie. Hij was uitvinder. Hij kon alles recyclen tot de prachtigste spullen die ook nog eens nuttig waren. Ik ging graag winkelen bij de giechelaar.

De giechelaar, de giechelaar, een stralend geluk,
De giechelaar, de giechelaar, een oude lamp onder de mensen,
Opdat de goede geschiedenis nooit verloren zou gaan.
En daarom giechelt hij, giechelt hij,
Hij is de veerman van het verdriet.

En wat kost het dan, wat kost het dan ?
Het kost je je leven, je ziel en je hart,
Maar van geluk zul je beven,
De giechelaar, de giechelaar, een boot door de nacht,
Een boot vol met vergeten pracht.

De giechelaar, de giechelaar, wat zou een mens nog wensen,
De giechelaar, de giechelaar, nog zoveel te ontdekken,
als een gids door de nacht,
een boot door de nacht.

Niemand begrijpt hem waarom hij zo giechelt,
Zijn vrouw is een standbeeld,
die hij eens in het bos vond,
en sinds toen giechelde hij.

Hij liet mij het standbeeld zien,
En ik herkende het beeld,
Het was het beeld van een meisje wat ik zo lang niet had gezien.

En hij zei tegen mij : Je mag het wel hebben,
En ik heb het beeld toen mee naar huis genomen.
Nu staat het op het zolder.
Sindsdien giechelde de giechelaar meer dan ooit tevoren,
Want weer had hij zijn rotzooi en verhalen aan iemand kwijtgekunt.

Ik dacht dat ik door het beeld ook zou gaan giechelen, maar ik giechelde niet.
Ik werd steeds stiller. En ik dacht : Maar is dit niet zijn vrouw ?
Wil hij zijn vrouw dan niet terug ?
En ik vroeg het aan hem, en hij zei : Nee, het is voor jou. En hij giechelde.
Het was een heel mooi beeld, het mooiste beeld wat ik ooit had gezien.
En ik begon te dromen over het beeld.
En in mijn dromen giechelde zij altijd.

Maar ik kon niet giechelen.
En eigenlijk wilde ik ook niet giechelen.
Er waren al genoeg giechelaars.
Wel gaf het beeld mij grote vreugde en groot geluk,
Al was dat vaak maar voor even,
En daarom ging ik vaak naar de giechelaar toe,
Opdat het geluk zou nadreunen.

Wat een man, die giechelaar,
Met zijn lange baard op zijn fiets,
En zoveel rommel,
Wat mensen wel niet allemaal weggooien,
Wat hij wel niet allemaal terugvindt wat verloren is geraakt,
Een meestervinder is hij,
En ook mij heeft hij gevonden.

De Giechelaar III

De giechelaar nam hen allen op zijn boot mee naar een eiland. Hij was een oude man met een lange baard, en hij leerde hen hoe ze nog wat konden maken van oude rommel. Hier kregen ze een nieuw leven, op het eiland, en de giechelaar giechelde.

En de mensen droomden en konden hun oude leven verlaten, en wat er nog overgebleven was aan oude rommel konden ze gebruiken en nuttig maken. Ze konden er nieuwe dingen van maken, zoals de giechelaar het hen leerde. En ze bouwden oerwouds steden op het eiland, en de giechelaar ging met zijn boot over de grachten. Met een lange staf raakte hij de bodem, en zo duwde hij het schip voort. En hij bleef zijn oude rommel verkopen, en hij bleef zijn verhalen vertellen.

Want verhalen vertellen, dat kon hij. Je kon het zo gek niet bedenken.

Hij was als Noach op zijn schip, en oude rommel was zijn specialiteit. Dat haalde hij overal en nergens van vandaan, van onder de grond, of God mag 't weten. Wat mensen allemaal wel niet achterlaten. Hij was een meestervinder, en een meesterlijke uitvinder. Niets gooide hij weg. Alles was bruikbaar, ook al was het voor brandstof of meststof. Ook metselde hij met troep. Niemand kende zijn geheim. Hij kon alles weer mooi maken. Waar mensen klaagden over rommel, daar giechelde hij, en maakte er wat moois van. Je kon het zo gek niet bedenken. Giechelen, veel giechelen, dat was wat hij deed. Je kon hem van ver horen aankomen. Ook had hij allerlei bellen op zijn fiets, en toeters. Hij liet het duidelijk merken als hij kwam. Er hing ook van alles aan zijn fiets, wat lawaai maakte. Potten en pannen, lepels, vorken en messen, van alles. Hoe hij ermee kon fietsen was een raadsel, maar alles ging goed. Hij giechelde zich door alles een weg heen. Op een dag zat de politie achter hem aan, maar daar had hij ook weer allerlei dingen voor. Ze konden niet tegen zijn uitvindingen op, en moesten het onderspit delven. Sindsdien probeerden ze het nooit meer, want de giechelaar was de ware politie. Ook probeerden ze hem eens naar een ziekenhuis te trekken, maar ook daar had hij zijn apparaten voor, en ze konden het niet meer navertellen. Nee, met de giechelaar viel niet te sollen.

Het enige waar hij bang voor was waren olifantenslurven, maar ja, die waren daar niet. Wel had hij er soms weleens nachtmerries over, maar toch werd hij altijd giechelend wakker. Ze konden hem niet kapot krijgen. Op een dag probeerden ze hem naar een school te trekken, maar ook daar had hij zijn apparaatjes voor. Hij was immers de meester uitvinder, en hij vond ook zijn eigen school uit, dus daar eindigden ze, bij hem in de schoolbanken, want ze moesten niet denken dat er te sollen viel met de giechelaar. En dan gaf hij ze giechelend les, een koekje van eigen deeg. Hij was niet voor een gat te vangen, en hij was van alle markten thuis.

Ik denk nog vaak aan hem terug, maar dan giechel ik niet. Neen. Dat laat ik aan de giechelaar over. Het is een klein beeldje op de televisie als een aandenken, en als ik op een knopje druk dan giechelt hij even, maar dan is het ook weer snel voorbij. Ik laat het weleens aan kinderen zien, en ze vinden het prachtig. Ze vragen me weleens hoe ik aan het beeldje kwam. Eens op de rommelmarkt gevonden. Wat mensen wel niet allemaal weggooien.

'Ik heb het op de televisie gezien,' zei een jongetje. 'Wat prachtig dat je zo'n ding hebt.'

'Oh, je hebt dat programma op de televisie gezien van de giechelaar ?' vroeg ik.

Het jongetje knikte.

'Ja,' zei ik, 'en ik had er vroeger een boek van. Het boek heb ik niet meer, en verkopen ze ook niet meer, maar op de rommelmarkt heb ik het beeldje gevonden. Wat mensen tegenwoordig wel niet allemaal wegdoen. Maar goed, nu het boek nog.'

'Oma heeft het boek,' zei het jongetje.

'Nee,' zei ik. 'Oma heeft het boek niet. Je oma kletst maar wat. Het boek wordt niet meer verkocht, en ..... het wordt niet meer gemaakt .... en .... het wordt niet meer gelezen .... en ..... niemand heeft het nog, want het zijn hele speciale boeken die vroeger werden gemaakt, die langzaam in het niets oplossen. Je moet dus niet te langzaam zijn met lezen.'

'Je kletst maar wat,' zei het jongetje. 'Mijn oma heeft het boek wel, van vroeger.'

'Zeker een vervalsing,' zei ik.

'Het zijn mooie verhalen,' zei het jongetje, 'net zoals de verhalen op de televisie.'

'Okay, geluk ermee,' zei ik. Ik was jaloers. Ik wilde het boek ook.

'Misschien wil mijn oma het boek wel ruilen voor het beeldje,' zei het jongetje.

'Je oma kan de pot op,' zei ik.

Hoe dan ook was de giechelaar een echte kinderheld, maar ook voor volwassenen, juist ook voor volwassenen. Ik wilde het boek ook, vervalsing of niet. Trouwens dat van die boeken die in het niets oplossen was maar verzonnen. Ik was gewoon kwaad op dat jongetje en zijn oma. Ik had het gevoel alsof we tegen elkaar aan het opscheppen waren. Misschien was het jongetje ook wel dingen aan het verzinnen, maar ik ging toch extra kijken op de rommelmarkten. Toen ik vele jaren later een boek van de giechelaar vond was ik door het dolle heen. Wat mensen toch wel niet allemaal wegdoen tegenwoordig. Ik kocht het direct. Ik bladerde er in, en het waren dezelfde verhalen als vroeger op de televisie.

Ik las en las, en droomde helemaal weg. Het leek wel alsof ik de giechelaar weer hoorde giechelen. Die nacht sliep ik heerlijk. Toen ik wakker werd was ik nog steeds in vervoering, alsof ik dronken was. Nu had ik het boek en het beeldje. Boek, beeldje, boek, beeldje, boek, zo ging het de hele tijd in mijn hoofd. Ik was geobsedeerd.

Mijn obsessie begon heel extreem te worden, maar ik werd geen giechelaar. Nee, dat liet ik aan de giechelaar over. Ik was echt zo'n kijker, zo iemand die altijd naar voetballen keek, maar zelf geen bal aanraakte. Maar de giechelaar raakte mij aan. Het was alsof de bal dwars door de televisie was geschoten, en ik was niet meer dezelfde. Ik was bijna als een dronken gek. Hoe kon iemand toch zo in de ban zijn van een jeugd serie ? De giechelaar, de giechelaar, zo ging het altijd door mijn hoofd heen.

Nu wilde ik ook nog muziek van de giechelaar, en de video banden van de giechelaar. Ik was niet meer te stoppen. Mensen dachten : 'Waar is die jongen toch mee bezig ?' Ook mijn vrouw vond het

wel welletjes, want ik was altijd maar met de giechelaar bezig, en niet meer met haar. Dat vond ze vervelend, en dat kon ik me voorstellen. Eigenlijk zou ik het virus wel op haar willen overbrengen, maar ze was koud als ijs. Ik was misschien met de verkeerde getrouwd, maar ik wilde haar ook niet wegdoen. God, als zij toch zou kunnen giechelen als de giechelaar, dan zou er weer wat leven in de brouwerij komen, maar ze was saai en klaagde altijd. Ze had altijd op alles wel wat aan te merken. Ik kon het nooit goeddoen. Maar ja, de giechelaar inspireerde mij om er toch nog wat van te maken.

Wat een man, die giechelaar, en wat een baard, zo lang. Daar zou je een toren mee kunnen opklimmen of een berg. Wat een man, die giechelaar, en wat een boek, wat een verhalen. Ik kan er wel uren over praten, maar mijn vrouw vond mij vervelend. Allemaal mooie woorden vond ze het, waar we geen sikkepit aan hadden. 'Dat staat daar maar te kletsen en obsessief te doen,' zei ze altijd. En ze vroeg me altijd wat ik haar probeerde te verkopen. 'De giechelaar misschien ?' zei ik dan altijd. Ze werd stapelgek van mij en 'die giechelaar'. Ze vond het allemaal maar achterlijk. 'Doe maar eens wat aan de tuin,' zei ze altijd. 'Het is daar zo'n zootje.'

'Nee,' zei ik dan. 'Het is het oerwoud van de giechelaar. Het moet lekker wild blijven.'

Toen bood ze haar excuses aan, en zei ze dat ik ook wel gelijk had, en dat ze zich niet zo moest aanstellen. Ze gaf toe dat ze jaloers was, omdat al mijn aandacht naar de giechelaar ging. De giechelaar boeide haar gewoon niet. Daar was ze te netjes voor, en Liesje mocht niet vies worden. Ik zou wel met haar een moddergevecht willen hebben, in plaats van onze wekelijkse kussengevechten. Maar dat vond ze te ver gaan. Sneeuwballengevecht was wat nog net kon. Dat hadden we wel vaak gedaan. Maar nee, ze mocht niet vies worden. Ze was als een porseleinen vaas. Ik vond het wel jammer. Het had zo mooi kunnen zijn.

'Waarom niet gewoon normaal zijn ?' vroeg ze me weleens. Ik hief dan altijd mijn schouders op. Ik wilde wat avontuur in mijn leven. Op een dag zette ze mij voor de keuze. Ik moest kiezen tussen haar en de giechelaar. Mijn keuze was natuurlijk snel gemaakt. Ik koos voor de giechelaar, en toen ging ze met zes wollen dekens achter de muziek aan. Ze heeft haar spullen gepakt en vertrok. Ik heb nog nooit in mijn leven zo gegiecheld, want ze was een blok aan mijn been. Soms belde ze me nog weleens op, en ik nam altijd op zeggende : 'Met de giechelaar.' Dat vond ze niet leuk. Ze wilde er niets meer over horen, maar ze was in ieder geval weg. 'Waarom bel je me nog ?' vroeg ik.

'Nou ja, toch voor de geschiedenis,' zei ze. 'We hebben samen veel meegemaakt.'

'Dat is waar,' zei ik dan.

'Ik kan wel gewoon de weekeinden komen,' zei ze. 'Dan kan ik het nog wel volhouden met die giechelaar. Door de weeks ben ik weg.'

'Goed,' zei ik. 'Dan kom jij maar lekker met de weekeinden. De giechelaar giechelt zich er wel doorheen.'

En zo gebeurde het. Maar vaak was dat haar ook al teveel. Zodra ze binnenstapte zei ze vaak : 'Weer die giechelaar.'

En zo werden de weekeinden met haar ook steeds korter, totdat ze maar een uurtje per week kwam, even op visite, om toch nog contact te houden. Ik probeerde me dan ook zoveel mogelijk te gedragen. Ook het uurtje werd steeds korter, totdat het nog maar een minuut was. Ze kon gewoon niet met mij leven. Telefoon ging op een gegeven moment ook niet meer. Toen gingen we maar brieven schrijven, ellenlange brieven over van alles en nog wat. Ik kon me redelijk inhouden, en uiteindelijk beviel dit me wel. Ik hield haar toch zo nog op zekere afstand, maar ook weer niet

teveel en te ver. Ik had haar nu op de juiste plaats, daar waar ze niet tussen mij en de giechelaar in kon komen. Ik was echt een fanatieke fan van de giechelaar, en had alles voor de giechelaar opgegeven, mijn hele ziel en zaligheid, en hij verloste mij van het blok aan mijn been. Voor mij was de giechelaar het beste ziekenhuis, het beste medicijn, ook al was het al vele jaren na datum. Het leek wel alsof het daardoor zelfs beter was. Bij de giechelaar was alles over datum. Ook mijn vrouw was over datum, maar nu was het beter dan ooit. Door brieven hadden we elkaar gevonden. Het was het werk van de giechelaar.

Einde

De Kaaskabouter

De kaaskabouter was op weg naar de kaasmarkt met een kar vol kaas die hij zou verkopen. Hoe hij zijn kaas maakte ? Dat was een duister geheim. Hij zond zijn wolven uit in de nacht om kinderen uit hun bedden te roven. Hoe deden zij dit ? Met een sleutel die op elk slot paste. Ze deden dat altijd in andere steden, en over de grens, niet in de stad van de kaaskabouter.

De kaaskabouter lachte. Hij had zijn kinderkaas goed gebrouwen, en nu was het hard genoeg om verkocht te worden. De kazen waren goed gestold. Zoveel arme kinderen leden in zijn kooien. Zij wilden geen kaas worden, maar de kaaskabouter had geen medelijden.

De kaaskabouter woonde helemaal alleen in het bos, met zijn wolven en de kinderen in kooien. Niemand anders kwam daar ooit. En daarom bleef het ook zo'n goed geheim. Mensen vroegen zich altijd af waarom de kaas van de kaaskabouter altijd zo lekker was. Wat zouden ze walgen als ze wisten wat het was. Het was kinderkaas.

Op een dag, niemand wist hoe, kon er een jongetje ontsnappen. Hij rende zo hard als hij kon naar de dichtstbijzijnde stad, de stad van de kaaskabouter. Hij begon op deuren te kloppen, en allerlei mensen aan te spreken. Hij vertelde zijn verhaal, maar niemand geloofde hem.

'De kaaskabouter is een beste vent,' zeiden ze. 'Hij maakt de lekkerste kazen. Pas op met wat je zegt, want valse beschuldingen leiden tot de galg hier.'

En het jongetje werd al snel opgepakt, en moest voor de rechter komen. Ook de rechter geloofde hem niet. Hoe durfde hij dat over de kaaskabouter te zeggen die zoveel voor kinderen had gedaan. Vaak doneerde hij gratis kaas aan kinderziekenhuizen en weeshuizen, en ook de armen kregen het vaak gratis. Nee, over de kaaskabouter mocht geen kwaad woord gezegd worden. Dat zou het jongetje de kop kosten.

Het jongetje smeekte de rechter om wat politie agenten te sturen naar de kaaskabouter, om te zoeken naar de kooien, maar de rechter wees dit verzoek af. Hoe durfde dat jongetje zoiets te zeggen. Het zou ernstig trauma veroorzaken in de kaaskabouter als hij door politie agenten voor onderzoek zou worden bezocht. Hij zou dan een verdachte zijn, en dat zou een zware belediging

zijn en ervoor zorgen dat de kaaskabouter geen kinderen, armen en zieken meer zou helpen. Het zou een ramp zijn voor de stad, want daar stond de stad immers om bekend.

En zo werd het jongetje ter dood veroordeeld. Zijn hoofd zou eraf gehakt worden door de stadsbeul. Heel veel mensen zouden komen kijken. 'Nee, nee !' riep het jongetje. 'Ik smeek het u. Gaat u alstublieft daar kijken om te zien wat daar allemaal gebeurd.'

In de rechtszaal stond er een dame op. 'Rechter, laat mij dan gaan om een kijkje te nemen bij de kaaskabouter. Ik verzin wel een smoes om binnen te komen, en zo zal hij zich niet geintimideerd of beledigd voelen,' zei de dame.

Maar de rechter werd verschrikkelijk boos. 'Nog meer beledigingen aan het adres van de kaaskabouter die zoveel voor de stad heeft gedaan ? U moest u schamen. Weer een tegenstander. Weer zo iemand die de kaaskabouter verdacht probeert te maken. U krijgt hier ook de doodstraf voor, en ook uw hoofd zal op dezelfde dag als de onthoofding van het jongetje eraf gaan.'

En zo durfde niemand een kwaad woord te zeggen over de kaaskabouter. Twee kinderen die ook in de rechtszaal waren besloten om na de rechtszaak toch eens bij de kaaskabouter te kijken. Ze gingen het bos in en kwamen na een tijdje lopen aan bij de kaaskabouter, en ja hoor, ze hoorden al snel het geschreeuw en gegil van kinderen, en kwamen er ook achter waar de kooien waren. Helaas werden ze al snel in de kraag gegrepen door de kaaskabouter. En zij die durfden bij de kaaskabouter te komen werden ook zonder pardon in de kooi gestopt om even later tot kaas te worden verwerkt.

'Stommelingen !' foeterde de kaaskabouter. 'Heel dom van jullie hier te komen. Wat kwamen jullie eigenlijk doen ?'

De kinderen vertelden het verhaal, en de kabouter begon te lachen. 'Ik ben er één verloren, maar ik heb er twee voor terug. Zo gaat dat altijd.'

De kinderen werden tot kaas gemaakt, en de dame en het ontsnapte jongetje werden op het stadsplein onthoofd door de stadsbeul, en de kabouter lachte. Maar op een dag kwamen zijn wolven ziek terug van de jacht, en ze hadden niets gevangen. De kaaskabouter vroeg zich af wat er aan de hand was, en de wolven schenen maar niet beter te worden. Nu kon de kaaskabouter geen kaas meer maken, en de mensen in de stad begonnen meer en meer te klagen, over hoe ze de zalige kaas van de kaaskabouter misten. De kaaskabouter kwam helemaal niet meer opdagen. Op een dag waren ze het allemaal beu, en gingen in een grote groep midden in de nacht met fakkels naar de kaaskabouter, die toen al sliep. Hij werd zo van zijn bed gelicht, en de woedende mensen vroegen hem waar zijn kaas bleef. Omdat de kabouter geen antwoord gaf zijn ze toen alles gaan doorzoeken, en kwamen uiteindelijk ook bij de kooien aan waar allerlei kinderkleren lagen. 'Zie, het was dus toch waar !' riep er eentje. 'Die dame en dat jongetje die ons er al voor waarschuwden en dat met hun kop moesten betalen hadden dus gelijk !' Woest gingen ze terug naar de kabouter, maar die was in geen velden of wegen te bekennen. Ze zijn toen teruggegaan naar de stad en vonden dat de hoofden van de dame en het jongetje een ereplaats verdienden. Het hoofd van de dame konden ze niet meer vinden, maar het hoofd van het jongetje had iemand bewaard in een glazen bol, en die werd voortaan boven de stadspoort gezet. De andere steden die nog steeds leden onder het hoge aantal aan vermiste kinderen kregen het ook te horen, en sindsdien waren er veel toeristen om het hoofd van het dappere jongetje boven de stadspoort te bezichtigen. 'Luister goed naar uw waarschuwer,' was er op een bordje onder het hoofd geschreven.

De Schepping

Dalmaël staat aan de hemelse oerrivier.
Hij is half mens, half krokodil.
Hij heeft een droom.
Hij ziet vele mensen komen uit het water die door krokodillen worden verslonden.
Slechts één mens weet te ontsnappen.
De mens bereikt een grot en gaat daar naar binnen.
Hij ziet daar een groen glimmend ei, en begint ervan te eten want hij is hongerig.
Zo verandert ook hij in een krokodil, maar blijft half mens.
En ook hij begint te dromen.
En hij droomt over mensen die uit de rivier komen, maar zij worden door krokodillen verslonden.
Eén weet er te ontsnappen, en komt tot een grot waar hij een ontmoeting heeft met de krokodillengodin. Zij verslindt hem en geeft dan geboorte aan de schepping.
Dalmaël glimlacht.
Hij kijkt naar het water van de hemelse oerrivier.
Er komen vele krokodillen uit voort.
'Wie heeft er gedroomd ?' vragen zij, en verslinden dan de dromer.

De Nacht Mysterieën

I
Het is nacht. Hafereth komt thuis tot zijn moeder, de krokodillengodin.
Hij komt tot haar tent, en gaat die binnen.
Hij legt een pot neer, en een mand, die hij had meegenomen.
Hafereth loopt dan de tent weer uit, maar zijn moeder roept hem terug.

II
Hafereth slaapt bij zijn moeder in de tent, en ontvangt een droom.
In deze droom is hij een prins.
Als hij wakker wordt is hij weer arm.

III
Hafereth gaat naar de rivier.
Zijn moeder is daar ook. Zij is een krokodil.
Als hij dan in het water stapt, verslindt zij hem.
Zij trekt hem naar beneden naar de onderwereld.
Hier is hij een prins die over de doden moet oordelen.

IV
Hij weet niet hoe het moet.

Hij doet daarom niets, en zit maar op zijn troon.
Op een nacht komt zijn moeder weer tot hem.
Dit gebeurt in een droom.
Zijn moeder is weer in krokodillengedaante en verslindt hem weer.
Als hij wakker wordt weet hij ineens hoe het moet, en begint met het oordelen van de doden.

V
Hafereth schrijft vele boeken, over zijn moeder,
en ook over het oordelen van de doden.
De zielen in de onderwereld moeten deze boeken lezen en zich aan de wetten houden.
Maar Hafereth voelt zich erg alleen.
Hij heeft geen vrouw.
Dan op een nacht heeft hij weer een droom.
Zijn moeder komt weer tot hem en verslindt hem weer.
Als hij ontwaakt heeft hij een vrouw.

VI
Zijn nieuwe vrouw is ook een krokodillengodin.
Zij helpt hem met het oordelen van de doden.
Maar op een dag verslindt zij hem.

VII
Nu is hij alles kwijt.
Hij is zijn troon kwijt.
Hij is armer dan ooit tevoren.
In de nacht komt zijn vrouw soms tot hem in een droom, en verslindt hem dan.
Het gaat steeds slechter met hem.
Hij weet niet waar hij is.
Alles is duister.

VIII
In deze duisternis maakt hij zijn eigen tent, in grote eenzaamheid.
Later komt hij erachter dat hij dicht bij een rivier is.
Het begint weer dag te worden.
De rivier zit vol met krokodillen.
Ze komen uit het water en omsingelen zijn tent.
Dan verslinden zij hem, en hij vindt het ware geluk,
diep van binnen, als een opwellende rivier.

IX
Hij wordt wedergeboren in de schoot van de krokodillengodin,
en dan begint alles weer bij het begin, maar niemand kan zijn geluk nog stelen.
Altijd is hij nu de gouden prins van het geluk.
Een koninginnenkind is hij,
Het kind van de krokodillengodin.
Hij heeft het geheim van het leven gevonden.

De Peergangers

De Perenheks bouwde haar domein van de geheimen die mensen voor elkaar hadden.
Zij bouwde haar domein midden in de stad tussen de huizen, maar niemand zag het.
Het was in het geheim.
Ze bouwde langs alles heen, en tussen alles door.
In haar tuin had ze een perenboom van wonderen, waardoor ze leven had geschonken aan de mensen van de stad.
Maar niemand wist het.
Het was geheim.
En de mensen aten haar donkere peren en leefden in slavernij tot haar, tot haar wil en wensen.
Ook deed zij hen over elkaar liegen opdat er ruzies ontstonden, en dan bood zij haar peren aan als medicijn. Maar niemand zag de hand die het hen aanbood.
Het lag gewoon in de winkel, en niemand zocht er iets kwaads achter.
En zo begonnen de mensen elkaar te beschuldigen van alle ellende.
De perenheks lachte, maar niemand hoorde haar gelach.

Op een dag konden veel mensen er niet meer tegen, en trokken de natuur in.
Hier groeiden wilde peren, die zij begonnen te eten.
En zij begonnen dromen en visioenen te krijgen, over het kwaad van de stad en de heks.
En was de peer niet een herinnering aan het hart wat zij eens had gestolen ?
Maar alles was nu zo anders.

Hadden zij nog wel een hart ?
Als ze van de wilde peren aten, dan voelden zij hun hart weer en dan weenden ze.
Er waren niets dan dromen hier, maar de stad was een nachtmerrie.

Een jongen keek uit zijn kamerraam in een woning op de stadsmuur, en zag deze vreemde uittochten. Zijn ouders hadden hier geen deel aan, en eigenlijk zou hij wel mee willen, maar hij mocht niet. Toen hij later groter werd en volwassen ging hij zelf mee. Er waren nog steeds van die uittochten, maar ook intochten. Hij wilde het met zijn eigen ogen zien, het zelf beleven, en ook hij at van de wilde peren. En ook hij kwam tot de woeste rivieren van de natuur. Ook hij kreeg zijn dromen en visioenen. Voor het eerst voelde hij zijn hart kloppen in zijn binnenste en hij weende. En hij hoorde de verhalen dat de wilde peren een herinnering waren dat er ook andere planeten waren. En hij had buitenaardse ervaringen waarin hij werd opgenomen tot die planeten, tot hogere bewustzijnsvormen. Het was voor hem een ontwaking.

Hij kon nu de heks door alles heen zien, hoe de stad en ook zijn verleden was gebouwd op leugens. Maar hij kon ook het pad van de wilde peren zien, terug tot de oerrivieren, terug tot wie hij werkelijk was.

De Perenverkoper

De perenverkoper had een duister geheim,
Hij verkocht alleen donkere peren van een donkere boom,
De perenboom in de tuin van zijn oma,
Al lang geleden was ze overleden, maar van haar peren hield hij nog zoveel.

Ja, een duister geheim had de perenverkoper,
Het was maar één perenboom, maar toch had hij zoveel peren.
Zijn oma gaf hem eens het geheim,
Van geslacht tot geslacht werd het doorgegeven,
Moorden werden er gepleegd om het geheim te bewaren,
Deze perenboom werd geplant op veel bloed,
Van een kind ontvoerd en geofferd,
Tot een vreemde god.

Och, mocht ik het toch kunnen navertellen, maar ik kan het niet.
Dat kind was ik zelf, maar nu ben ik slechts de wind.
Nog altijd ga ik terug tot de perenboom,
Daar waar ik het duistere geheim zag en stierf,
Want niemand zou het geheim zien en leven,
En de perenverkoper verkoopt zijn peren door,
Zijn donkere, donkere peren,
En niemand weet wat voor gruwelijk geheim ligt opgeborgen in hun pitten.

Eens zag ik hem lopen, die perenverkoper, daar bij de molen,
En gaf hem een lel, want dat is wat ik als de wind nog steeds kan doen,
En ik blies hem weg, ver weg, tot achter de molen,
En ik duwde hem zo de rivier in,
En hij riep : 'Het moet om mijn duistere geheim zijn,
dat geheim waar kinderen voor moesten sterven,
en waardoor mijn peren altijd goed verkopen.'

En ik zei : 'Zeg het dan, zeg het dan,' maar hij hoorde mij niet, maar toch zei hij het.
Hij dacht dat er niemand was, maar ik hoorde alles, en had ik het niet eens eerder gehoord ?
'Oh omaatje lief !' riep hij,
'Oh god van de duistere peren, redt mij !'
Maar zijn peren hoorden hem niet.

En hij begon te zingen, liedjes zo vreemd,
En hij begon te dansen, maar niets deed mij stoppen.
Ik nam hem op en slingerde hem weg.
'Oh perengod !' riep hij, 'nooit had ik van uw peren moeten snoepen, want waar heeft het me nu gebracht ? Een kind geofferd aan een vreemde god om de peren te laten groeien, dat is niet zo goed als ik dacht. Ik heb me daadwerkelijk vergist, maar bij wie moet ik nu zijn ?
Hoe kan ik het goed maken ?'

En ik liet de perenverkoper los hoog boven het water.
Met de plons riep hij uit : 'Mijn boze spelletjes zijn uit. Geen peren van oma meer voor mij. Deze jongen is nu vrij.'

En zo trok ik hem uit het water, en bracht hem naar huis.
Maar sindsdien dansten de peren, en iedereen die de peren nog at begon ook te dansen.
En ze konden niet meer stoppen.
En hoe de perenverkoper ook riep, ze luisterden niet.
En allen dansten zij tot het water, in grote optochten.
En zo gingen zij ten onder, en de perenverkoper was mijn enige vriend.

De Februari Schietpartijen

Ik herinnerde mij de Februari schietpartijen. Maar nu was ik bij haar. Zij haatte mij.

Ik herinnerde mij de vogel die mij oppikte en hier bracht. Het was zeer traumatisch, als een nachtmerrie. Ik zag hoe de grote vogel mij streng in de gaten hield. Ik kende deze vogel niet, maar het was een roofvogel en het had grote angst in mijn hart gebracht. Het greep mij in de weilanden toen ik vluchtte van de februari schietpartijen. Deze vrouwen waren gek.

Als ik in de stad was gebleven zou ik niet meer geleefd hebben. Ze hadden het ook op mij gemunt, maar wat was dit leven waard hier ? Deze vrouwen waren gek.

Op een dag greep de vogel mij weer, en nam mij weg. Misschien vond de vogel het wel genoeg. De vogel bracht me diep in de wildernis, maar ik kon niet vergeten wat er was gebeurd. Op een bepaalde manier had de vogel mijn leven voor de tweede keer gered.

In de nachten had ik nachtmerries over de Februari schietpartijen. Ik was helemaal alleen in de wildernis, maar de vogel zorgde voor mij. Het hield roofdieren op een afstand, en bracht voedsel tot mij.

Het was maar een droom. Ontsnapping was slechts een droom hier.

Meer en meer begon ik te twijfelen aan de februari schietpartijen. Het kon slechts een nachtmerrie zijn geweest. Wat gaven de vrouwen mij hier te eten ?

Ik keek haar aan, en toen lager naar haar borsten. Ik was in grote angst en pijn. Hoe zou iemand naar deze vrouwen kunnen kijken en leven ? Ze waren barbaars, wreed, als een nachtmerrie. Zij waren de februari schietpartijen.

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VREEMDE TELEFOONGESPREKKEN
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COAB 2019

Stewardes in het Oerwoud
Ello
Het Eiland in de Zee
May Flower
May Flower's return
Het Spookhuis
Het Kruis van IJs
Kapitein Mekko
Het Cruiseschip

Stewardes in het Oerwoud

Ik sprak met de stewardes.
Nee, het kon allemaal niet doorgaan.
De vorige keer was ik te diep het oerwoud in gegaan, en dat had mij problemen gegeven, en hun verzekering kon het niet betalen, en ik mocht niet meer mee.
Ik schold haar uit voor rotte vis.
Ik wilde haar baas spreken.
Zelfde verhaal.
Later biechte ze iets op, dat ze wat in mijn koffie hadden gegooid.
Een pilletje ofzo.
Wat wilden ze niet vertellen.
Gelukkig had ik het telefoon gesprek opgenomen.

Ik sprak weer met die stewardes.
Zei dat ik haar baas had gesproken, en die had wat in mijn koffie gestopt.
Zij wilde dat niet geloven.
Ik zei dat ik het gesprek had opgenomen, maar toen ze het hoorde zei ze dat het nep was.
Je komt nergens bij deze reis organisatie en al helemaal niet met hun verzekering.
Je betaalt er alleen dik voor, maar ja, ik was over de streep gegaan volgens hen, en hun baas had iets in mijn koffie gestopt, maar toen ze het gingen navragen werd alles ontkent.
Ik heb de opnames, maar die zijn volgens hen nep.

Dit reis bureau, ik heb er flinke koppijn van overgehouden, of is het van die koffie ?
En wat hebben ze er doorheen gegooid ?
Als ik er vroeger met mijn oma en tante naartoe ging, dan werden ze allemaal zenuwachtig. We werden verschrikkelijk in de gaten gehouden. Ze deden alsof wij criminelen waren die hen wilden overvallen. Dat zeiden ze dan wel niet letterlijk, maar hun gedrag naar ons was paranoïde, alsof we zware wapens bij ons hadden ofzo. Mijn oma en ik moesten er toen nog om lachen, maar nu lach ik niet meer.

Te ver het oerwoud ingegaan, dus daarom werkte de verzekering niet meer.
Ik had netjes aan de lijn moeten blijven als een hond.
Daar betaal ik niet voor.
Ik had ook eerder terug moeten zijn ofzo.
Maar ja, dat kan dus niet als je diep in het oerwoud wordt vastgehouden.
Verzekering betaalde het niet, maar kon ik het helpen dat ik zo diep het oerwoud was ingegaan.
Wat kun je doen tegen een ontvoering ?
Hadden ze ook allemaal excuses voor.
Ik weet wel zeker dat die baas van hen erachter zit. Zei doodleuk dat ze wat in mijn koffie had gedaan. En daarna alles ontkennen. Ze proberen je gewoon gek te maken.

Ik heb de opname nog steeds, op een bandje, maar volgens hen heb ik dat zelf gedaan met stemmetjes. Alsof ik zelf alles heb lopen plakken. Ja, bandjes aan elkaar lopen plakken, en dingen wegknippen. Zo konden zij het ook. Dat zeiden ze. Toen kwamen ze met allerlei bandjes opzetten

met dingen die ik nooit had gezegd, bedreigingen enzo, en andere zwaar overdreven bekentenissen. Het leek wel op mijn stem, maar het was niet mijn stem. Toch vroeg ik me af hoe ze het gedaan hadden. Toen begonnen ze me te chanteren met die bandjes, en ze zeiden dat ze nog wel meer bandjes hadden, met video opnames enzovoorts. Ik ben toen maar weggegaan. Ik was er helemaal klaar mee. Naar een ander reis bureau gegaan, maar wilden ze niet hebben, waren al ingelicht. Werd weer gechanteerd. Moest het maar niet meer proberen bij reis bureau's, enzovoorts. Ik ben er toen allemaal maar mee gestopt, en ging toen zelf op wereldreis. Zeilbootje, hup. Niemand meegenomen. Was met iedereen klaar. Ik werd toch niet geloofd. Het reis bureau zou het wel weten.

Ging weer terug naar dat oerwoud. Kwam ik ergens daar in die rimboe die stewardes weer tegen. Ik zei : 'Hey, jou ken ik. Wat moet je hier ?' Gaf toen toe dat ze ook ontvoerd was, en probeerde haar weg weer terug te vinden. Ik zei mij niet gezien. Ze wilde mij niet geloven, en niet helpen, en nu zat ze dus in hetzelfde schuitje, maar daar was ik allang uitgesprongen. Ik had het schip verlaten voordat het zonk. Toen werd ze me toch een partijtje kwaad, maar ik was niet om te praten natuurlijk. Ik moest haar maar helpen, zei ze. Begon ze mij allemaal om informatie te vragen, en ik kwam weer terug bij het verhaal over dat bandje, van die baas die had gezegd dat er wat in mijn koffie was gestopt. Was waarschijnlijk ook bij haar gebeurd. Ze vroeg zich af waarom. Kan van alles wezen, zei ik. Ik zei toen ook dat ze nep bandjes van mij hadden gemaakt. Daar wist ze van. Ik vroeg haar hoe ze het gedaan hadden, maar zij wist het niet. Zei dat ze nu aan mijn kant stond. Ik zei dat ik niet aan haar kant stond.

Ik zei de verzekering zou haar niet betalen.
Het was allemaal een complot.
Dat wist ze.
Hoefde ik haar niet meer te vertellen.
Ze wist ook dat haar baas niet pluis was.
Een beetje laat, zei ik.
Ik wilde doorlopen, maar ze hield me tegen.
Toen trok ze haar kleren uit, en zei laten we hier wonen.

Ik duwde haar weg, maar ze hield vol.
Ik heb het toen maar zo gelaten.
Ik vertrouwde haar niet, maar een stewardes in het oerwoud die alles voor je wil doen kan van pas komen.
Ik zou haar gewoon terug laten betalen, en dan zou ik wel verder zien.

Bouw voor ons een hut, of maak een tent, kan mij het schelen, droeg ik haar op.
En zorg dat we voldoende te vreten hebben.
Ze ging direct aan de slag.
'Ik werk voor jou nu,' zei ze.
'Nooit meer voor dat stomme reis bureau.'

'Ik ben nu jouw reis bureau,' zei ik tegen haar.
'Mag je achter het loketje zitten, terwijl ik de hort op ga.
En zorg dat het eten klaar is als ik weer terug ben.'

En dat was het. Ik wilde geen tijd met haar verdoen.
Ik ben er gewoon vandoor gegaan, liet haar gewoon wachten zoals ze mij vroeger deden wachten.
Als het goed is wacht ze nu nog steeds.

Ello

Er was eens een jongetje dat Ello heette, en hij was de koning van Nederland. Op een nacht toen hij sliep werd zijn kroon gestolen die hij op zijn nachtkastje had gezet. De dieven namen de kroon mee naar het bos waar ze de kroon bewaakten. De kroon begon sinds de diefstal te zoemen en te rinkelen, en soms ook te bewegen, en dan raakten de wachters helemaal hysterisch en in paniek, bang dat iemand de kroon zou stelen. Maar de kroon zei op een dag toen dat weer gebeurde : 'Maar jullie zijn zelf de dieven. En zij die de kroon hebben gestolen zullen luizen krijgen. Zo staat het geschreven.' De wachters, die dus eigenlijk dieven waren, begonnen steeds meer luizen te krijgen, en steeds meer jeuk, wat zo erg werd dat ze een heel eind weg gingen staan van de kroon, steeds verder en verder. Maar in de verte hoorden ze de kroon brullen als een leeuw, en ze werden erg bang. De kroon brulde : 'Dieven van de kroon zullen trouwens niet alleen luizen krijgen, maar zullen aan het eind ook opgevreten worden door leeuwen.' En leeuwen begonnen voort te komen uit de kroon om achter de dieven aan te gaan, en de dieven waren zo bang dat ze wegsmolten van de angst. En ze smolten en toen stolde het weer totdat ze stenen waren, waarop stond geschreven : 'Wij stalen de kroon, en dit is ons loon.' De stenen stonden aan de rand van het bos. De koning kreeg het al snel te horen, en vond door het gebrul van de kroon al snel zijn kroon terug. En toen kon hij al weer snel de koning van Nederland zijn.

Het Eiland in de Zee

Hij ondernam de tocht, en ging op zijn zeilschip de zee over. Het was prachtig weer, wat al snel overliep in een regenbui. Helemaal drijfnat kwam hij aan op een eiland na een lange tijd zeilen. Het was een prachtig eiland. Het leek wel alsof de bomen hem toewuifden. Hij legde aan op een strandje en stapte uit de boot. Een donkere vrouw met een rieten rokje liep op hem af. Ze was direct heel gastvrij, en verwelkomde hem op het eiland, en nodigde hem uit tot haar hut te gaan. Hij keek zijn ogen uit in het prachtige oerwoud. Ze gingen over een zandpad en het zand brandde onder zijn voeten. Na een tijdje kwamen ze aan bij haar hut. Het was een eenvoudige hut. Ze zei dat ze hem later ook wel het hele eiland kon laten zien. Hij had deze gastvrijheid niet verwacht. Het had ook heel anders kunnen gaan, namelijk door een pijl in zijn rug. Toch was hij op zijn hoede. Je wist immers maar nooit. Het kon ook een valstrik zijn.

Het eiland was grotendeels onbewoond. Het was dus ook een overlevings strategie van de vrouw waarom ze zo deed. Na een tijdje bracht ze hem weer naar buiten, en liet hem de wildernis zien. Er waren hier prachtige rivieren met prachtig hoog gras, en daarachter wildernis. Hij vroeg hoe ze hier leefde. Ze zei dat ze helemaal alleen was, maar dat er een klein kampje was ergens op het eiland wat ze soms bezocht. Ze was vroeger deel van het kamp, maar ze hadden ruzie gekregen, en ze kwam erachter dat ze beter op haarzelf kon leven. Ze ging soms naar de stam toe puur om te overleven.

Naar mate hij haar beter leerde kennen kwam hij erachter dat ze helemaal niet zo makkelijk was in de omgang. Ze had vele gezichten. Het was sinds hij was ingegaan op haar aanbod dat ze hem steeds respectlozer ging behandelen. Ze was nog steeds heel erg gastvrij, maar ze begon hem steeds meer te kleineren. Dat lag er echt niet dik bovenop in het begin, maar meer subtiel. Het was alsof ze hem steken onder water gaf, en het dan weer afdekte met een doek. Dan kon ze ineens weer heel aardig doen.

Op een bepaalde manier was hij in een worsteling met haar, een psychologische worsteling. Het lag er niet dik bovenop, maar het was onderhuids. Tegelijkertijd genoot hij van de pracht van het eiland, hoe het hem stimuleerde en inspireerde. Hij was even weg van alles en van zijn verleden.

Ze hield hem af van het ontmoeten van de stam verderop het eiland, en hij wist niet waarom. Ze zei dan wel dat ze niet gemakkelijk waren, maar dat was zij ook niet. Beiden bleven ze kalm in hun gesprekken met elkaar, misschien ook omdat ze telkens werden afgeleid door de prachtige natuur om hen heen en de geluiden van het oerwoud. Soms begreep hij haar niet en wist hij niet of ze hem

nu probeerde te beledigen of dat ze wat anders bedoelde. Soms kon hij het niet opbrengen om verder door te vragen, wilde hij in de rust blijven, maar soms bracht dat ook een bepaalde rusteloosheid. Het leek wel alsof er competitie heerste tussen hen op een bepaalde manier.

Eigenlijk wilde hij weg van haar, en de stam waar ze het over had ontmoeten, of gewoon ergens anders op het eiland de tijd verdrijven, maar hij voelde alsof ze iets van hem had gestolen wat hij terugwilde. Hij kon niet weg. Dat wat zij van hem had gestolen, daar kon hij niet zonder leven. Ze had dus al een zekere macht over hem. Toch wilde hij hier niet aan toegeven, en zei dat hij weer verder wilde, of naar die stam, of ergens anders op het eiland. Hij bedankte haar al voor de gesprekken en de gastvrijheid, maar toen wilde zij dat hij zou blijven. Toen kon hij het ook niet over zijn hart krijgen om weg te gaan. De dagen erna werd ze eigenlijk steeds moeilijker, maar ook steeds aardiger, en die combinatie werd in principe gewoon dodelijk. Hij voelde dat hij psychologisch vast kwam te zitten door haar, door haar opmerkingen, alsof zij hem had verlamd.

Hij wist dat hij goed in de problemen was nu. Hij had snoep genomen van vreemden waarvoor zijn moeder hem altijd gewaarschuwd had. Hij was in een exotische valstrik van het eiland gelopen, van het oerwoud. Hij verdedigde zich niet naar haar, want hij wist dat het dan alleen maar erger kon worden, alsof hij dan in de fuik werd getrokken, en ze probeerde altijd ook een hele hoop goed te praten.

Ze vermoeide hem, en daardoor werd hij afhankelijk van haar. Zij moest nu voor hem zorgen. Hij was in een gevaarlijke situatie terecht gekomen. Hij voelde zich ziek, alsof hij vergiftigd was, en hij was helemaal alleen in het oerwoud met haar. Ze betuttelde hem ook, sprak telkens met verklein-woordjes. Ze bemoederde hem, maar was ook een slinkse vijand. Hij moest telkens op zijn hoede zijn. Op een dag kon hij niet meer verder. Hij kon alleen nog maar neerliggen.

Ze zou wat soep voor hem maken, met allerlei exotische vruchten er doorheen. Die zouden erg krachtig en pittig zijn, en die zouden hem wel genezen. Hij dacht er ook aan dat hij misschien niet bestand was tegen het leven in het oerwoud en tegen zulke vrouwen als zij. Maar de soep deed hem goed, en zo hield zij hem aan het lijntje. Ze was niet extreem, maar subtiel. Het liep ook nooit uit op een echte ruzie tussen hen, maar er was wel een onzichtbare oorlog. Langzaam voelde hij zich weer beter. Het was alsof zij hem ook weer optrok, maar na de problemen die zij hem had gegeven. Zo werd haar machtspositie nog meer versterkt in zijn leven. Hij begon er aan gewend te raken, en het gaf een bepaald vertrouwen. Toch wist hij dat het een gokspel was, want ze zou hem zo aan zijn lot kunnen overlaten.

Ze lokte hem dieper in haar wereld, als een zoet vergif, waarvoor hij telkens weer een medicijn nodig had, en dat was zij. Het was als een vreemde medicijnen of drugs verslaving, maar waren alle vriendschappen en relaties niet zo ? Hij dacht dat het gewoon bij het leven hoorde, en het gaf hem grote afleiding. Zijn verleden was niet al te best, en zo had hij even wat anders. Hij raakte meer en meer geïnteresseerd in haar als persoon. Hij wilde haar verleden kennen, hoe ze zo was geworden, haar geheimen, en misschien zou hij haar ook kunnen helpen. Niets was vrijblijvend hier in ieder geval. Voor elk woord wat van haar tong droop moest hij zwaar betalen, als voor zeldzame honing. Het werd een obsessie voor hem waarvan hij niet meer kon loskomen. Zij was als televisie in het oerwoud.

Zij leerde hem overleven in het oerwoud. Zij leerde hem alles. Zij liet hem een totaal nieuw leven zien, en al snel vroeg hij zich af waar hij zich in eerste instantie druk over had gemaakt. Misschien was het zijn voorzichtigheid, zijn ingebouwde alarm. Alles had tijd nodig. Ook dit.

Hij genoot met haar van het oerwoud en van de zee. Soms gingen ze zwemmen. Het leek wel alsof het oerwoud en de zee tussen hen beiden in was, om hun vriendschap gezond te blijven houden. Hij

kon telkens alles afspoelen. Er was telkens teveel afleiding om hen heen om echt totaal verloren te raken in elkaar. Misschien zou het in de stad helemaal verkeerd zijn gelopen, zouden ze dan te dicht bij elkaar op de lip hebben gezeten, en zou het oerwoud niet tussen beiden kunnen komen wanneer dat nodig was. De natuur beschermde hem ook tegen al te zware depressie en wanhoop. De golven spoelden alles weg. Het zoute water was telkens zijn genezing, en zo kon hij haar ook telkens weer op nieuwe manieren bekijken en tegemoet treden. De natuur werkte zo aan hun vriendschap.

Op een dag bracht zij hem naar de stam op het eiland. Hij zag direct wat ze bedoelde. De vrouwen liepen daar bijna zenuwachtig rond met hun speren, agressief. Ze begonnen hem direct uit te schelden en kleinerende opmerkingen te maken. Er was hier geen politie op het eiland, dus ze zouden hem zo kunnen aanvallen. Ze hadden een zeker respect voor de vrouw die bij hem was, dus daarom deden ze het niet, maar ze dreigden. Ze zagen hem als een indringer. Ze waren veel te direct. Ze waren een deel van haar leven, en ze werden dus ook een deel van zijn leven, maar hij kon goed begrijpen waarom ze vaak afstand hield. Het eiland was eigenlijk te groot om zich druk te maken over hen. Hij had genoeg afleiding en ze hadden hen nauwelijks nodig. De vrouw ging er steeds minder vaak naartoe sinds hij er was.

Ze verzonnen hun eigen spelletjes in het oerwoud, zodat ze niet telkens hoefden te spreken. Het bracht ook wat avontuur in hun leven, alhoewel het zwemmen in de zee, of een trektocht door het oerwoud al avonturen op zich waren. Soms deden ze hardloop spelletjes, tikkertje of speelden ze verstoppetje, als tijdverdrijf. Zo leerden ze elkaar ook op een andere manier kennen. Hij wilde haar psychologische diepte kennen. Hij merkte dat het leren kennen van elkaar steeds trager ging, en dat ze in cirkeltjes terechtkwamen. Ergens liep alles vast en werd het routine. Hij besefte toen ook dat de geheimen waar hij naar op zoek was niet slechts in haar te vinden waren, maar ergens anders in de veel grotere natuur. Daarom is hij op een dag naar zijn zeilboot gegaan en trok verder de zee over tot een volgend eiland.

May Flower

Vroeger zat er een jongetje bij mij in de klas genaamd May Flower. Zijn vader was schipper op een groot schip. Hij vertelde er vaak over, en soms gingen ze op vakantie met het schip. Ik ging ook een keer mee. Op een dag was May Flower niet in de klas, en ik vroeg me af wat er met hem was. Misschien was hij ziek ofzo, maar de meester wilde het niet vertellen. Na een paar dagen was hij nog steeds niet in de klas, en de meester zei dat het schip van zijn vader was vergaan. Ik had het erg met May Flower te doen. Sommige meisjes begonnen te huilen toen de meester het vertelde. Pas na een paar weken kwam May Flower terug. Na schooltijd nam ik hem mee naar huis. Mijn ouders leefden niet meer. Ik woonde bij mijn grootouders, dus ik wist precies waar May Flower doorheen ging. Zijn vader was het laatste wat hij had, want zijn moeder was al bij zijn geboorte overleden. Mijn grootouders hadden ook erg met May Flower te doen, en wilden hem wel adopteren. Ik vond het een goed plan, en zo gebeurde het.

Zo kwam May Flower er ook een beetje overheen. Ik probeerde hem op te vrolijken. We deden veel spelletjes en gingen overal naartoe. Ook mijn grootouders deden er alles aan om hem op te vrolijken. Uiteindelijk lukte dat wel. Ook de meisjes in de klas waren erg lief voor hem.

Op een nacht vertelde May Flower me dat hij een keer naar Amerika was geweest met zijn vader. Ze bezochten toen ook een indianen stam. De indianen waren heel gastvrij, en wilden dat ze zouden blijven. Maar hij zei telkens : 'Nee, daar ga ik niet voor. Dat kan ik echt niet doen.' Hij had nu spijt dat hij nee had gezegd, want als ze waren gebleven in die indianen stam, dan had zijn vader misschien nog geleefd. Hij moest even weer huilen, en ik omhelsde hem. De dag erna kochten we een indianen poster voor hem, want dat was wel een goede herinnering van hem. Hij wilde er eigenlijk weer naar terug om zich aan te sluiten bij de indianen stam. Ik zei dat ik dan ook wel mee wilde. Maar toen we het mijn grootouders vertelden vonden ze dat niet goed, en ze zeiden dat we dat echt niet konden doen, dat het veel te gevaarlijk was in het oerwoud. Toch was het onze droom. Ik had veel indianen boeken, waar May Flower ook graag in las. Ik zei vaak dat als we ouder zouden zijn dat we er dan wel naartoe zouden gaan.

En toen mijn grootouders uiteindelijk kwamen te overlijden zijn we dat ook daadwerkelijk gaan doen. We gingen met een schip, en May Flower wist nog waar het was gelukkig. Weer waren de indianen van die stam zeer gastvrij. We vertelden hen wat er was gebeurd, dat May Flowers' vader niet meer leefde, en ze waren erg betrokken. Weer vroegen ze of we wilden blijven, maar we bleven zeggen : 'Dat kunnen we echt niet doen.' Toch hebben ze ons even later weten over te halen om wat langer te blijven. Daarna moesten we echt weer terug, want May Flower en ik studeerden inmiddels techniek, en we wilden een brug bouwen van Europa tot Amerika. De indianen vonden dat heel interessant. Ze wilden wel meehelpen, maar dan moest het wel een natuurbrug zijn. Ze hadden daarover hun ideeën en legden het ons ook uit. Wij vonden het een mooi plan, maar onhaalbaar, dus

we zijn toen echt teruggegaan om verder te studeren in de techniek van de bruggenbouw. Het was een project op school dat we mee zouden helpen met de brug van Europa tot Amerika, en dan zou er een spoor op aangelegd worden voor een trein. Het was een hele onderneming.

Het nam al onze tijd in beslag, maar we gingen ervoor. Dag en nacht hadden we het over de brug, en het kwam in allerlei kranten te staan. Maar halverwege het project werd de brug verwoest door een zware storm. Mayflower was ontroostbaar. We moesten onze dromen opgeven. Maar op een dag had hij toch weer een idee. Hij wilde een ondergrondse tunnel bouwen, onder de zee door. Wat we ontdekten was dat die ondergrondse tunnel er al was, maar nooit was afgemaakt. Diep onder de grond waren vreemde gangen met vreemde indiaanse hieroglyphen die een verhaal vertelden. We probeerden het verhaal te ontcijferen, en eigenlijk zagen we ons eigen levensverhaal in de plaatjes. Dat was heel vreemd. Alles leek te kloppen, alles leek met elkaar te maken te hebben, met elkaar in verbinding te staan. Maar op een dag verdwaalden we in de gangen, en konden onze weg niet meer terugvinden. We waren ook ergens ingegleden waardoor we nog dieper kwamen, en er scheen geen weg meer naar boven te zijn. We konden wel nog dieper en toen hebben we dat maar gedaan. We kwamen toen in een ondergrondse wereld. Hier leefden ook indiaanse stammen. We waren hier erg van onder de indruk dat we niet eens meer terugwilden.

Maar deze indianen stammen waren niet zo gastvrij als de indianen die wij kenden. Ze negeerden ons, of begonnen te dreigen. We zijn toen maar verder getrokken, maar telkens weer kwamen we in de problemen met zulke stammen. We waren niet gewenst.

Ik zei tegen May Flower dat we ze beter met rust konden laten, maar hij wilde niet luisteren. Hij bleef proberen contact te maken. Hij was een echte waaghals. Ik zei hem dat hij dan over natuurgrenzen heen zou gaan, maar hij wilde niet luisteren. Ik bleef hem vertellen dat deze indianen anders waren en gevaarlijk. We kregen er ruzie over, en hij zei dat ik niet zomaar grenzen in zijn leven kon gaan trekken. Hij wilde wat meer uitdaging, anders had zijn leven geen zin. Hij wilde niet telkens in dezelfde cirkeltjes gaan. Hij wilde wat van zijn leven maken. Ik dacht dat we al ver genoeg gekomen waren, maar hij dacht daar anders over. Hij zei dat ik teveel van hem vroeg, dat hij daar echt niet voor kon gaan. Ik moest het maar vergeten. Hij wilde alles wel voor me doen, maar dit ging hem te ver. Ik moest niet proberen vadertje over hem te spelen. En dit was de eerste fikse ruzie die we ooit hadden gehad. Er was ergens een hek, en daar verderop was een indiaanse stam, en hij ging zo het hek over en ik zag hem richting die stam rennen. Ik riep hem nog terug, maar het was al te laat. Ik zag zo een paar pijlen door hem heengaan en een speer. 'Zie je nu wel !' riep ik. 'Het is gevaarlijk hier !' Dat was het laatste wat ik ooit van May Flower had vernomen. Verslagen liep ik terug. Ik vond uiteindelijk mijn weg terug. Er hing ergens een touw, en daardoor kwam ik weer boven. Ik ben toen weer helemaal teruggegaan naar huis. Het laatste aandenken wat ik had aan May Flower en die ondergrondse wereld was een vreemd beeldje wat ik daar had gevonden en had meegenomen. Ik zette het in mijn kamer. Van mij hoefde het niet meer. Ik wilde niet meer terug, maar het beeldje bleef mij inspireren. Ik wist dat er nog zoveel hieroglyphen waren die ik nog niet had ontdekt en ik wist ook zeker dat het de missende stukjes van het verhaal waren, en ook wist ik zeker dat het mijn eigen levensverhaal moest zijn.

May Flower, die durfal. Steeds meer begon hij mij te inspireren. Niet dat ik zoals hem zou zijn, maar zijn passie inspireerde mij, zijn passie voor meer kennis van het onbekende, alleen wist ik dat die altijd samen moest gaan met voorzichtigheid en goede voorbereiding. Ik wilde namelijk niet zoals hem eindigen. Hij was een les voor mij op twee sporen. Ik dacht niet meer aan een tunnel tussen Europa en Amerika, maar alleen aan een tunnel tot de ondergrondse wereld, en dat was May Flower voor mij.

May Flower's return

Ik vertelde de bevriende indianen stam over de dood van May Flower, maar zij geloofden niet dat hij dood was. Zo zou hij contact met hen hebben gezocht via een orakel. Ook zeiden ze dat als ik techniek had gestudeerd, dan zou ik hem ook tot leven moeten kunnen wekken als hij echt dood zou zijn. Ik zei toen dat dat allemaal niet zo simpel lag, maar zij waren er niet van overtuigd dus dat hij dood was, vanwege het orakel.

Hij had volgens hen door het orakel hen duidelijk gemaakt dat hij nog steeds leefde, maar in een nog diepere ondergrond onder de ondergrondse wereld. Hij zou daar in een andere indianen stam terecht zijn gekomen, maar hij kon daar niet teveel over zeggen. Zij zouden een godin hebben die ergens stond, en zij zou zo heilig zijn dat ze alleen maar bij haar voeten konden komen. En haar voeten waren een beeld van het geheim en de eenzaamheid.

Ik stond eigenlijk een beetje met open mond te luisteren, maar ze bleven maar zeggen dat ik terug moest gaan om via de techniek beter contact met hem te zoeken. Ik heb dat toen ook gedaan. Ik ben weer terug gegaan en begon gewoon maar wat te bouwen. Ik wilde een apparaat ontwikkelen wat de dood kon overbruggen, of wat contact zou kunnen maken met die wereld onder de ondergrondse wereld, waar May Flower nu zou zijn volgens de indianen. Het werd een klein kastje waarmee ik experimenteerde, een klein kunstwerkje. Uiteindelijk begon ik hem aan de lijn te krijgen. Hij deed allemaal heel geheimzinnig, en hij bevestigde ook alles wat de indianen hadden gezegd, ook over die godin die zo heilig was dat ze alleen maar tot haar voeten konden komen, en die voeten waren een groot geheim en veroorzaakten grote eenzaamheid.

Ik wilde hem opzoeken, maar hij zei dat ik dat niet moest doen. Het zou veel te gevaarlijk wezen, en hij kon niet meer terug. Waarom wilde hij niet zeggen. Hij klonk heel wanhopig. Hij zat ergens vast, en ook al kon hij niet meer weg, hij wilde ook niet meer weg. Het leek wel op een stockholm syndroom. Ik vertelde hem waar ik na het verliezen van hem allemaal doorheen was gegaan, en hij zei dat hij door hetzelfde was heengegaan. Meer zei hij in principe niet, en deed verder allemaal weer geheimzinnig, tot het punt dat we weer bijna ruzie hadden.

Ik ging met deze informatie terug naar de bevriende indianen. Ze zeiden dat hij inderdaad opgesloten was, en dat er velen daar opgesloten waren, en dat we moesten werken aan hun terugkeer. Dat leek mij een onmogelijke opgave, maar weer zeiden ze dat als ik techniek had gestudeerd dan zou ik daarvoor wat kunnen maken. Weer ging ik terug en werkte nog wat door aan het kastje. Ik maakte het ook wat groter, zodat er een scherm bijkon waarop ik beeld zou kunnen krijgen. Eerst was er alleen maar sneeuw op het beeld, maar ik begon er steeds meer patronen in te zien. Dit zou de eerste stap zijn, en daarna zou ik wel verder kijken. Ik moest al die patronen nu

zien te decoderen en ze omzetten tot beeld. Dat was een heel karwei, een heel gedoe, maar uiteindelijk slaagde ik erin een soort natuur op het scherm te krijgen. Ik had hem nog niet gevonden. Ik moest weer het hele ding afstemmen, en naar hem zoeken. Ik deed dit met bepaalde warmte sensoren. Die moesten ook ingesteld worden op de juiste afstand, dus er kwam een heleboel ingewikkelde radar techniek bij kijken. Maar daar had ik immers voor gestudeerd. Uiteindelijk vond ik hem weer. Via zijn warmte verschillen per lichaamsdeel kreeg ik hem op het scherm, in verschillende kleuren, alhoewel het nog wel wazig was. Soms leek het in elkaar over te lopen, maar ik was tevreden met het resultaat, en zijn stem was glashelder. Wel deed hij weer enorm geheimzinnig.

Ik zei dat ik bezig was een apparaat te bouwen wat hem zou kunnen laten terugkeren, maar hij zei direct dat hij dat niet wilde, dat hij dat niet kon doen. Hij zei tegen me dat ik maar alleen naar het feestje moest gaan. Ik begreep hem niet, en hij deed wazig. Hij had nu de godin gevonden, of in ieder geval haar voeten, en dat was een groot geheim en grote eenzaamheid. Hij kon niet meer terug en wilde niet meer terug. Ik was teleurgesteld, maar ik begreep hem. Toch zou ik verder bouwen aan het apparaat, en ik vroeg of er dan misschien nog anderen waren die wel terug wilden. Hij zei dat hij het ze zou vragen. Die nacht sliep ik bijna niet. Het spookte allemaal door mijn hoofd, ook dat May Flower misschien een stockholm syndroom had, dus tegen zijn wil daar werd vastgehouden en zich er maar bij neer had gelegd, of misschien werd hij zelfs bedreigd en moest hij gered worden. Ik wist het niet. Hij deed allemaal te geheimzinnig. Eigenlijk kon ik helemaal niet slapen, en ging terug naar het apparaat. Ik zag nu meerdere personen op het scherm, en sommigen wilden inderdaad terug, omdat het daar te zwaar zou zijn. Ik beloofde dat ik verder zou werken aan het kastje. Er zou nog een groot gat in komen waardoor ze misschien omgezet zouden worden in andere signalen. Het was allemaal heel ingewikkeld. Ik zat weer allemaal door oude studie boeken heen te bladeren. Ik moest hun patronen omzetten in andere patronen die het gat zou kunnen herkennen en waardoor ze hier geprojecteerd konden worden, en dan via een bepaalde code zou het apparaat hen vlees en bloed kunnen geven. Ik werkte bijna dag en nacht door aan dit project. Ik sliep bijna niet, en dat kon ik ook niet.

Ik begon ook anderen te vragen over die godin die ze vereerden. Zij zeiden in principe hetzelfde dat ze een groot geheim was en grote eenzaamheid bracht. Ze konden alleen haar reusachtige voeten zien, en als ze te dichtbij kwamen, dan trapte zij ze soms weg. De rest mochten ze niet zien. Maar hoe meer ik met deze personen sprak, hoe meer ik erachter kwam hoe hun verhalen elkaar tegenspraken, en ik kwam erachter dat het een soort stelsel was van inwijding en dat ze ook weer geheimen hadden voor elkaar en dus ook voor mij. Ze konden niet spreken en mochten niet spreken. Het waren allemaal ingewikkelde zwijgplichten die te maken hadden met hun niveau van inwijding.

Ik dacht misschien zou het helpen als ze uiteindelijk hier waren. Het was een hele grote indianen stam, en ik vroeg me ook af waar ik ze dan moest herbergen. Ik zou misschien een woon project voor hen kunnen oprichten in het bos. Toen ik de eerste persoon door het gat kon laten komen was ik verbaasd over mezelf dat ik dit heb kunnen doen. Er volgden er toen snel meer, en toen puntje bij paaltje kwam heb ik ze allemaal ondergebracht in woningen in het bos. Ik had daarvoor een beurs van de erfenis van mijn grootouders. Uiteindelijk kreeg ik het toen ook voor elkaar om May Flower over te halen, en ook hij keerde terug. Ik omhelsde hem, en het was direct weer als vanouds. Ook durfde hij toen weer meer te zeggen. Ik begon hem vragen te stellen over die godin, of zij misschien ook gered moest worden. May Flower keek me aan. Hij vroeg : 'Wil je het echt weten ?'

Ik zei : 'Ja, natuurlijk. Je verhalen hebben me wel nieuwsgierig gemaakt, en zij moet dan zelf ook wel heel eenzaam zijn, vooral als zij zo diep in dat systeem van geheimen zit met allerlei zwijgplichten.'

'Okay,' zei May Flower, 'dat zit dus echt heel ingewikkeld in elkaar. Zij is de hoogst ingewijde van

allemaal, en heeft daarom ook de meeste zwijgplichten. Zij draagt het grootste geheim, en daarom was zij voor ons slechts een projectie van een nog diepere ondergrondse wereld, waardoor we alleen maar haar voeten konden zien. Zodra we te dichtbij kwamen waren er teveel electrische ontladingen vanwege het energie verschil tussen ons en die nog diepere ondergrondse wereld waar zij was. Daarom noemden we haar de godin, en het pad was de eenzaamheid, want als we meer zoals haar werden, dan zouden dezelfde verschijnselen optreden tussen ons en de anderen. Het zou grote oorlogen kunnen veroorzaken, grote misverstanden.'

'Wat moeten we dan doen ?' vroeg ik.

'We kunnen niks doen,' zei May Flower. 'Ze zit compleet vast.'

'Ik kan natuurlijk proberen contact te maken met die nog diepere ondergrondse wereld waar zij is.'

'Doe dat maar niet,' zei May Flower. 'Je kent haar niet. Veel te gevaarlijk.'

Maar toen werd ik een beetje zoals May Flower vroeger tegen mij deed. Ik zei dat hij mijn grenzen niet bepaalde, en dat hij geen vadertje over me moest spelen. Ik wilde alles wel voor hem doen, maar dit ging me te ver. En zo hadden we de tweede grote ruzie in onze vriendschap, en uiteindelijk zei hij dat ik het zelf maar moest weten dan.

Toen hij sliep ben ik weer naar het apparaat gegaan en probeerde contact te maken met de godin en die diepere ondergrondse wereld. Allereerst kreeg ik alleen haar voeten op het scherm door de warmte sensoren, maar die begonnen direct oververhit te raken. Er waren allerlei ontploffingen in het kastje ineens, en ik werd zomaar ineens door het gat gezogen. Ik schrok me wild, en dacht direct dat ik beter naar May Flower had moeten luisteren. Ik ging door een tunnel heen en wist niet wat me overkwam. Ik keek in een levensgroot ravijn, en viel daar naar beneden, toen het water in. Er was grote storm en de golven waren huizen hoog. Ik werd zo tegen een rots geslingerd, en werd even later wakker in een hutje. Er stond een vrouw voor me. 'Je bent me wel een waaghals,' zei ze. Het bleek de godin te zijn. Ik begon direct het hele verhaal te vertellen, en ze knikte telkens, en zei dat ze het al wist. Ik vroeg of ze hulp nodig had, maar ze lachte me gewoon uit. 'Hulp ?' vroeg ze. 'Jij hebt onze hulp nodig.' Ik keek haar toen verbaasd aan.

Ik vroeg haar of ze May Flower kende. Ze knikte. 'Die heb ik ooit eens bij je in de klas gezet, om jou tot ons te trekken, tot deze diepere wereld. Waarom zou je terug willen ? Er zijn zoveel geheimen die ik je zou willen openbaren.

'Wat gaat het me kosten ?' vroeg ik.

Ze glimlachte, maar zei niets. Ik voelde mezelf wegvagen, en kon haar nog maar nauwelijks zien. Toen werd ik weer terug gezogen door het gat, en ik zag May Flower achter het apparaat zitten. Hij keek op het scherm, en toen naar mij. 'Daar ben je eindelijk,' zei hij.

'Waarom, waarom ?' vroeg ik. 'Zag je dan niet dat ik bij de godin was ? Ze zei dat ze me alles wel wilde vertellen.'

'Geloof je het zelf ?' vroeg May Flower. 'Ja, ik zag het, maar je vroeg ook wat het je zou kosten, en toen glimlachte ze.'

'Nou en ?' vroeg ik. 'Je had haar minstens kunnen laten uitpraten.'

'Snap je het dan niet ?' vroeg May Flower.

'Nee, ik snap er niets van,' zei ik. 'Ik was zo ver gekomen, en dan moet je mij ineens terug halen. Je had het minstens even netjes kunnen vragen zoals ik bij jou deed.'

May Flower zuchtte. 'Lieve jongen,' zei hij. 'Dit is de prijs die je moet betalen.' Ik keek op het scherm en ik zag alleen nog maar haar voeten.

Einde

Het Spookhuis

Met de familie gingen we naar een natuur camping in natuur gebied. Het was er heel mooi. Er was ook een winkeltje, maar de winkelkarretjes waren daar nogal vreemd. Zo moest je betalen aan het winkelkarretje zelf. Naast het handvat was er een soort kastje met een gleuf. Het winkelkarretje speelde ook mooie, maar hele zachte muziek, wat je alleen kon horen als je er heel dichtbij stond, en wat je ook weer uit kon zetten, maar als je niet betaalde dan gaf het telkens een piep. Ze verkochten daar ook hele bijzondere grote vruchten die we nog niet kenden, en ik ging er telkens weer naar terug om er meer van te halen, alhoewel ik me afvroeg hoeveel er van gegeten mocht worden per dag. Altijd oppassen met voedsel hoeveelheden. Ik wilde natuurlijk niet over een bepaalde natuurgrens heengaan met die dingen en dan in de problemen komen. Zo mag je van sommige dingen maar hele kleine beetjes per dag. De vrucht was onbekend voor ons, dus wilde ik er meer van afweten. Ook kochten we eens wat kaartjes voor het spookhuis op de camping. Dat was een afzonderlijk gebouw ergens. We gingen er naar binnen en er was eerst een voorkamer, en dan moest je een gang op, maar we hoorden zoveel angstaanjagend gegil en gejammer dat we eigenlijk niet verder durfden. Ik was al bijna bij de gang aangekomen, maar ik kon me niet meer goed bewegen. Alles ging trager, en iets verlammends gleed over me. Gelukkig stond er een bed en daar ging ik op liggen. Het gegil en gejammer werd eigenlijk alleen maar angstaanjagender. Ik zag de familie stuk voor stuk weggaan, het spookhuis uit. Ik zei dat ik me niet meer kon bewegen. Mijn nichtje stond dichtbij me en die wilde ook weggaan. Weer zei ik dat ik me niet meer kon bewegen en ik zag haar aarzelen. Ze deed een paar stappen richting de uitgang, maar bleef toen staan en keek naar me. Ik wist even niet waar ze nu banger voor was, voor het angstaanjagende gegil of om mij alleen te laten. Uiteindelijk bleef ze daar staan, of misschien kon ze niet meer verder, kon ze zich ook niet meer bewegen. De anderen waren in geen velden of wegen meer te bekennen. Ik wilde weg, maar ik kon niet. Ik kon ook niet meer spreken. Toen werd alles langzaam zwart voor mijn ogen. Grootvader was niet mee gegaan, maar uiteindelijk werd ik wakker bij hem in het campinghuisje. Hij scheen mij er uiteindelijk vandaan gehaald te hebben.

Voor me stond een piepend winkelkarretje. 'Ik denk dat het ding weer geld wil,' zei grootvader, 'maar het was een goed middel om je weer wakker te krijgen.'

We stopten toen maar wat geld in de gleuf en toen hebben we het ding maar weer teruggebracht naar de winkel waar het thuishoorde. Nooit meer zijn we nog naar die camping teruggegaan.

Het Kruis van IJs

Ik groeide op in een lichtelijke probleem wijk met een alleenstaande moeder, als enig kind. Mijn moeder was onbereikbaar voor me, en eigenlijk alles was onbereikbaar voor me. Ik wist niet wie mijn vader was, en ik wist niet eens of mijn moeder het wel wist. Het voelde alsof ik opgroeide, hangende aan een kruis van ijs.

Op school had ik het niet naar mijn zin, maar ik had een aardige juffrouw. Ze was heel jong, en vaak gekleed in rood. Eigenlijk altijd. Ze werd daarom ook vaak de dame in het rood genoemd, of moeder van de rode planeet. Ik was verliefd op de juffrouw en wilde met haar trouwen. De dag dat ik volwassen was geworden zocht ik haar direct op. Ik wist waar ze woonde, en zei gewoon direct toen ze opendeed dat ik verliefd op haar was en met haar wilde trouwen. Ze liet me toen binnen, en liet me haar tuin zien. We scheelden niet eens zoveel van leeftijd. 'Zou je er niet eerst over nadenken ?' vroeg ze. Maar dat had ik al vele jaren gedaan.

'Zou je er dan eerst niet over willen praten ?' vroeg ze toen.
Maar ik kende haar al, en mijn doel stond vast.
Ze zei toen dat ik maar weer moest terug komen als het me menens was.

En zo ging ik steeds meer naar haar toe. Na niet al te lange tijd hadden we een relatie, en ik nam haar ook mee naar mijn huis. Mijn moeder was er vaak niet. Op een dag kwam mijn moeder te overlijden, en toen trok de dame in het rood bij mij in. Het was nu eindelijk dat ik mijn jeugd echt goed kon verwerken. Het vrolijkte het huis wat op, en we gingen beiden vaak de natuur in. Zij had een eind gemaakt aan het verhaal van mijn moeilijke jeugd.

Soms dansten we in de woonkamer op muziek. We hadden niet veel contact met de buitenwereld. Het was eigenlijk allemaal tussen ons en de natuur.

Ik voelde me nog steeds vaak koud. Er waren ook veel bomen bij het huis, en daarom kon het zonlicht nooit goed doorbreken. Maar zij was een warme vrouw.

Ik werd soms op onverklaarbare manieren geplaagd door angsten. Ik vertelde het dan aan haar, en dan zei zij altijd dat zij mij had gered. Ik vroeg haar weleens of zij een buitenaardse was. Dan zei ze : 'Natuurlijk. Ik word niet voor niets moeder rode planeet genoemd.' En ja, dat was vroeger op school ook al haar bijnaam.

Op een dag werd er gebeld. Er stond een man aan de deur die beweerde mijn vader te zijn. Hij had al die tijd in de gevangenis gezeten. Hij beweerde dat mijn moeder niet wilde dat ik met een bajes vader zou opgroeien. Dat vond ze een verkeerde invloed. Hij had ook brieven meegenomen die dat bewezen, en dat was inderdaad het handschrift van mijn moeder. Ik voelde ineens zoveel woede naar haar opkomen, maar ja, ze was dood. Had ik maar een vader gehad, dan had ik me misschien niet gevoeld alsof ik aan een ijskruis hing. Ik liet hem binnen en omhelsde hem.

'Hoe kwam je in de gevangenis ?' vroeg ik.

'Ik wil het er niet over hebben,' zei hij.

'Ik ken hem,' zei de dame in het rood. 'Het stond overal in de kranten.'

De man boog zijn hoofd.

'Wat was het ?' vroeg ik aan haar.

'Een trein overval,' sprak ze. 'Ik zat ook in die trein, maar ze lieten mij gaan.'

'Waarom ?' vroeg ik.

'Omdat ik zo'n mooie rode jurk aan had, had hij gezegd,' sprak ze.

'Is dat waar ?' vroeg ik aan de man.

De man schudde zijn hoofd. 'Dat was wel gezegd,' zei hij, 'maar er was een hele andere reden voor.'

'En wat voor reden ?' vroeg ik.

'Ik dacht : Stel dat zij op een dag de juffrouw van mijn nu nog ongeboren zoon zou worden,' zei hij.

'Dus je bent een crimineel ?' vroeg ik.

'Dat zeiden ze,' zei hij, 'maar ik dacht : stel dat deze trein ooit eens over mijn nu nog ongeboren zoon zou rijden.'

'Dus eigenlijk ben je zwaar gestoord, of heb je gewoon allerlei smoesjes,' zei ik.

'Ik was zwaar aan de drugs,' zei de man. 'Het was een bij effect van een medicijn wat ik moest slikken al sinds ik heel jong was. Het maakte dat mensen niet meer helder konden denken. Daarom

hebben ze het later uit de handel gehaald, maar het kwaad was al geschiedt.'

'Waarom moest je die medicijnen slikken ?' vroeg ik.

'Omdat ik allerlei problemen had met allerlei rommel die ze in mijn lichaam hadden geimplanteerd sinds kind zijn al,' zei hij. 'Ze geloofden niet dat ik last kon hebben van hun heilige implantaten, dus ik werd geestesziek verklaard en daar moest ik allerlei gevaarlijke medicijnen voor slikken, zodat ze me nog erger konden maken.'

'Maar waarom moesten er als kind dingen in je geimplanteerd worden ?' vroeg ik.

'Daar hebben ze honderd en één smoesjes voor,' zei hij. 'Ze wilden gewoon hun rotzooi aan mij kwijt.'

Ik keek hem aan met opgeheven wenkbrauwen. Toen keek ik naar de dame in het rood.
'En dat is precies de reden waarom ik gekomen ben,' zei ze.

Einde

Kapitein Mekko

Een jongen genaamd Mekko was de kapitein van een wereld op een schip. Het was een wereldschip. Een heleboel kinderen die in deze wereld opgroeiden wisten niet eens dat het een schip was, zo groot was die wereld, en niemand vertelde het hen. Ik kwam van een ander wereldschip en ook mij was nooit verteld dat het een schip was. Ik kwam uit een moeilijke wereld, maar Mekko redde mij. Ook Mekko zelf was eens gered door zijn wereldschip. Ik was de eerste van mijn familie die van het wereldschip waar wij opgroeiden gered werd. Ik was zelfs de eerste van die hele wereld, die verschrikkelijke wereld. Alle huizen waren daar hetzelfde, geplaatst in blokken. Ze hadden allemaal dezelfde tafels en stoelen, en ook dezelfde kindertafels en kinderstoelen. Die stonden allemaal in de woonkamers, en de kinderen werden altijd gescheiden gehouden van de volwassenen. Na mij werd mijn broertje gered, als tweede, en toen mijn oom, als derde. Daarna volgde de rest van de familie, maar er was een bepaald gezin die Mekko nog niet kon redden. Zij zaten te diep vast op het wereldschip waar wij vandaan kwamen, en ze werden zwaar in de gaten gehouden.

Toen Mekko mij had gered liet hij mij zijn hele reusachtige wereldschip zien. Het was inderdaad een wereld op een schip, en je had eerst gewoon niet in de gaten dat het een schip was, totdat hij je

tot het dek nam. Dan had je een reusachtig overzicht over het gehele schip.

Ik moest altijd aan mijn nichtje denken die nog niet gered was. Mekko zei altijd dat zij de eerste was van dat gezin die gered moest worden. Mekko zei dat hij daarvoor mijn hulp nodig had. Ik moest hem alles vertellen wat ik van haar wist. Ik begon hele boeken te schrijven over mijn nichtje om Mekko een goed beeld van haar te geven. We gingen er vroeger nooit vaak naartoe. Het was nogal een aparte familie met strikte regels. Je mocht daar altijd een heleboel dingen niet aanraken, en je moest eerst bepaalde dingen zeggen of vragen voordat je wat deed. Mijn nichtje leed daar erg onder, maar we konden niets doen. Ze werd te zwaar in de gaten gehouden, en ze kreeg altijd zware straffen als ze ook maar iets afweek van de regel, of als ze probeerde te ontsnappen. We wilden het daarom ook niet erger maken voor haar, maar we bespraken wel vaak hoe we haar zouden kunnen redden. En dat terwijl we zelf ook gered moesten worden van die wereld.

Mekko gebruikte voor onze redding een spiegel. Het was bijna een religieuze ervaring. De spiegel was ook een vrouw, als een baarmoeder, en op een nacht verscheen het in mijn kamer, en werd ik erdoor gered. Door de spiegel kon ik op Mekko's schip komen.

Ook de wereld waar wij vandaan kwamen was als een spiegel, waardoor alles hetzelfde was, maar Mekko's spiegel maakte alles net even anders. Uiteindelijk kon zo ook mijn nichtje gered worden, maar ze was nog helemaal gebrainwashed. Ze kwam uit een bepaald land waar alles nog wel veel erger was dan hoe het altijd bij ons was. Ze kwam uit de Oostblok landen en het gebied werd ook wel Zuid Afrika genoemd. Alles was daar zo eenvoudig mogelijk, en er werd minimaal gebruik gemaakt van materialen. Alles was er nogal saai en kaal. Wel hingen er soms prachtige schilderijtjes aan de muren. Ook lazen ze daar uit prachtige boekjes, sprookjesachtige boekjes, over ver afgelegen paradijsen waar ze nooit zouden kunnen komen, dus ze droomden er alleen maar over. Er werd hen altijd van alles beloofd, maar ze kregen het nooit. Die beloftes waren alleen voor degenen die zich strikt aan de regels hielden, en daarom dachten velen dat ze toch op een bepaalde manier afgeweken waren, of zelfs afgevallen, verdoemd. Ze liepen vaak rond met een enorm onverklaarbaar schuldcomplex en minderwaardigheidscomplex. Ze hadden altijd het gevoel dat er iets voor hen achtergehouden werd, dat er ergens een verborgen elite was die lachend op hen neerkeek. Er hing daarom altijd een soort van onzichtbaar en subtiel racisme.

Mekko keek mij aan. 'Herinner je de spiegel ?' vroeg hij.
Ik knikte.
'Wist je dat alle wereldschepen in deze zee ook weer onderdelen zijn van een nog veel groter wereldschip, en dat de zee daar ook een onderdeel van is ?' vroeg hij.
Ik schudde mijn hoofd.
'Wie is de kapitein ?' vroeg ik.

'De spiegel,' zei Mekko.
Ik keek naar Mekko.

'Kan zij de rest van de familie redden, en de rest van de oostblok landen vrijzetten ?' vroeg ik.

'Ik heb daarvoor je broertje nodig, je oom, en je nichtje,' zei Mekko. 'Zij moeten terug naar Zuid Afrika, en zij moeten spiegeltjes smokkelen.'

Het moest midden in de nacht gebeuren. Ze vroegen of ik ook mee wilde, maar ik mocht niet van Mekko. Ik moest bij de hoofd spiegel blijven.

Ik kan de grote uittocht nog herinneren. Zoveel treinen en bussen vol met mensen. En toen op een nacht, als een natuur verschijnsel, werd de hoofd spiegel met een andere hoofd spiegel verbonden

van een nog groter onbekend wereldschip. En er kwamen zoveel ruimteschepen om ons weg te nemen. Hier was nooit over gesproken en was nooit over gelezen. En we werden tot het dek genomen van het allesomvattende wereldschip, en hadden een overzicht over alle wereldschepen erin, en al onze geschiedenissen, van zo'n grote afstand, dat alles duidelijk werd en op z'n plaats viel.

Einde

Het Cruiseschip

Mijn opa had een cruiseschip waarvan hij kapitein was. Vroeger nam hij ons vaak mee, en bezochten we allerlei landen. Ook mijn oom en tante gingen vaak mee. Ik weet nog wel dat mijn tante altijd veel roddelblaadjes en boekjes bij zich had. Als ik niks te doen had las ik er vaak in, maar als kind begreep ik er niets van, en had er zo mijn eigen fantasieën bij. Als ze zagen dat ik de boekjes van mijn tante las, dan namen ze het altijd af.

Ik weet nog wel dat ik later in mijn jeugd een vriendinnetje had, en die ging toen ook mee op het cruiseschip in de vakanties. De hele familie was er dan, maar de relatie liep op een gegeven moment ten einde. Ik had het daar moeilijk mee, maar aan de andere kant was het een opluchting, want ze was heel moeilijk. Ze miste eigenlijk een aan en uit knopje. Mijn opa was erg bij me betrokken, en had op een dag een robot gemaakt die precies op mijn vriendin leek, metr het verschil dat ze een aan en uit knopje had. Ze had zelfs de stem van mijn vriendin, want mijn opa had veel van haar verhalen en gesprekken opgenomen op een bandje, en kon het goed gebruiken om de robot te bouwen. De robot was ook een soort spelcomputer en een soort communicatie netwerk waarmee ik anderen kon bellen. Ik vond het een geweldig ding.

Ook mijn oom was kapitein op een cruiseschip. Het zat dus in de familie. We gingen ook vaak op zijn cruiseschip mee. Zo groeide ik op, op en aan de zee. Op een dag toen ik eens op het cruiseschip van mijn oom was vond ik weer eens zo'n boekje van mijn tante ergens rondslingeren. Er was niemand in de buurt, dus ik greep het en begon te lezen. Het ging over een cruiseschip en over twee geliefden die door roddel en gestook van passagiers van elkaar werden weggescheurd, en tot overmaat van ramp zonk het cruiseschip in een storm. Beiden overleefden ze het en vonden elkaar terug op een onbewoond eiland. Van de andere passagiers scheen er niemand meer in leven te zijn.

Ze konden het uitpraten, maar er bleef grote afstand. Toch moesten ze samen zien te overleven op het onbewoonde eiland. Later bleek dat toch ook de kapitein het had overleefd, die ze aan de andere kant van het eiland tegenkwamen, en hij kon hen weer met elkaar verzoenen. Hij vertelde hen namelijk over al die passagiers die hen tegen elkaar hadden opgestookt, hoe goed hij ze kende, en hoe bedriegelijk ze waren. Het waren zogezegd vaste passagiers die telkens weer terugkwamen, tot grote ergernis van de kapitein, en daarom hield hij zich altijd afzijdig.

De kapitein zei dat het iets van de zee zelf was. Hij zei dat eens op een dag zijn cruiseschip werd overmeesterd door een grote reuzenzeespin. Die kwam zo vanuit de zee op en greep het schip. De zeespin had vele poten en die poten werden tot passagiers die nooit meer weg zouden gaan. De twee keken hem vreemd aan, en keken toen naar elkaar, niet wetende of ze dat wel konden geloven.

'En was dat echt, of had je het maar gedroomd ?' vroeg de man aan de kapitein.

Opeens kwam toen mijn tante binnen, en ik legde snel het boekje weg.
'Wat was je daar aan het lezen, schat ?' vroeg mijn tante toen.
'Oh niks,' loog ik toen, want ik wilde niet op m'n kop krijgen.

'Oh, het boekje ligt open, en op een andere plaats,' zei ze toen. 'Was het leuk ?'

Ik zei niks. Toen kwam mijn oom ook binnen vanaf de lange gang in het cruiseschip.
'Hij heeft erin gelezen,' zei mijn tante.
'Waar ging het over ?' vroeg mijn oom glimlachend.

Ik vertelde toen over de reuzen zeespin, en hoe zijn poten tot passagiers werden, en hoe zij de twee geliefden uit elkaar hadden getrokken, en ik vertelde over het onbewoonde eiland, en hoe de kapitein hen weer met elkaar verzoende.

Mijn oom glimlachte. Ook mijn tante glimlachte. Als ik naar ze keek zag ik de prachtige zee. 'Nou, vooruit dan maar,' zei mijn oom. Toen ze wegwaren nam ik het boekje weer en ging verder met lezen. 'Je mag het wel houden,' zei mijn tante toen ik haar even later weer tegenkwam. Ik was door het dolle heen. Superblij nam ik het boekje mee naar mijn eigen kajuit, en las het helemaal uit. Ik was helemaal in de wolken, alsof ik boven de zee zweefde. Vroeger wilde ik altijd cruiseschip kapitein worden, omdat mijn opa en oom dat ook waren, maar nu wilde ik schrijver worden. Ik wilde anderen meenemen op de golven van mijn eigen fantasie. Het boekje inspireerde mij enorm, en het was hemels.

Maar later in mijn jeugd werd ik zwaar gekweld door nachtmerries over een reuzen zeespin, en had ik slopende gevechten ermee. Maar dan klikte ik altijd mijn robot aan die ik van mijn opa had gekregen, en die vocht dan aan mijn zijde. Zij sprak mij er doorheen.

In die nachtmerries schiep de zeespin mensen om mij heen, die eigenlijk zijn poten waren, en die probeerden mij te verstrikken in roddel en stokerijen. Maar altijd weer ontmaskerde de robot ze. Ook in mijn dromen was de robot, als een wachter in de nacht. Op een dag vertelde ik het ook aan mijn oom en tante, over de nachtmerries en over hoe het ook in het boekje wat ze gaven over een zeespin ging. Ze zeiden dat het boekje uit een serie kwam, en ze gaven me nog meer van zulke boekjes, zodat ik kon zien hoe het afliep in de vervolgverhalen, en er was ook veel informatie over in eerdere verhalen. Er waren iets van twintig delen. Maar ik bleef maar nachtmerries houden, en eigenlijk werd het alleen maar erger, totdat ik zelf de stoute schoenen aantrok en mijn eigen serie erover begon te schrijven. Misschien was dat wel het noodlot van een schrijver, dat hij eerst zelf door al deze dingen heen moest gaan, en eerst zelf flink wat nachtmerries moest hebben, om genoeg creatief materiaal te hebben om zijn verhalen te schrijven.

'Wordt dan gewoon cruiseschip kapitein,' zei mijn opa altijd, en mijn oma zei vaak : 'Wordt dan schilder, of ga schilderen voor de koningin, misschien hoef je dan het leger niet in.' Maar ik moest en zou schrijven. Ik wilde hiermee klaarkomen. Het was in de tijd dat de dienstplicht naderde, en dan zou ik ook het leger inmoeten. Maar dit was op een heel ander niveau, alsof we te maken hadden met onzichtbare vijanden. En zo besloot ik niet te schilderen voor de koningin, maar te schrijven voor de koningin. En ze vond het nog leuk ook, en ik hoefde zo het leger niet in.

Het was de dag van mijn leven toen ik aangenomen werd. Ik kreeg ook een kamer vlak naast de koningin. Daar kon ik rustig mijn werk voortzetten. De koningin geloofde geen woord over onzichtbare vijanden, maar ze vond de verhalen zo mooi. Maar op een dag had ik zo'n zware nachtmerrie dat er geen verhaal meer tegen opgewassen was. Niets kon mij nog helpen, en ik ben toen gevlucht naar een oude kerk in het bos. De kerk werd niet meer gebruikt, maar hier voelde ik mij veilig. Soms woonden er wat monniken of hermieten. Het was een soort bedevaartsplaats voor kluizenaars.

Ik nam daar intrek in een kamer, en begon te schrijven over de onzichtbare vijanden en hoe ermee om te gaan. Er was teveel in de lucht wat de mens niet begreep en waar de mens niet tegen opgewassen was. Voor mij was het een nieuwe wetenschap. Ik begon wetenschappelijke geschriften te schrijven over dit onderwerp. Maar vaak als er bezoekers waren en ik vertelde hen iets erover dan waren ze niet echt geïnteresseerd. Sommigen leken ook aan de drugs te zijn, en het was ook alsof ze als de poten van de zeespin waren. Ik begon preken te geven maar er kwam bijna niemand. Soms zat er een verdwaald kind, of een van huis weggelopen kind, of een zwerver. Ik preekte tegen de kerkbanken en de muren. Op een dag kwam mijn opa en die ging vooraan zitten. Hij wilde mijn preken wel horen. Hij wist dat er onzichtbare vijanden waren. Hij werd er zijn hele leven door gekweld, maar voelde zich altijd goed zodra hij op zijn cruiseschip was. Ook mijn oma kwam de volgende keer mee, en zei weer : 'Waarom word je niet schilder van de koningin ?'

Ik dacht : 'Laat ik dat dan maar eens proberen,' dus ik ging terug naar de koningin en ging ditmaal voor haar schilderen. Het beviel haar totaal niet. Wat ik schilderde vond ze veel te eng. Ik schilderde ook de reuzen zeespin. 'Waarom ga je niet gewoon weer schrijven ?' vroeg ze. Maar ik schilderde gewoon door. Ik bleef haar maar schilderijen leveren, maar ze vond het maar niks. Ik was er kwaad om, en ik verscheurde mijn schilderijen ook vaak weer. Ik kwam in een grote identiteits-crisis. Ik dacht dat mensen me allemaal voor hun karretje wilden spannen, dat ik mezelf dan niet meer zou zijn. Ik voelde mij achtervolgd door de zeespin.

Op een dag was ik het weer zat, en begon gewoon het bos in te rennen. Ik bleef maar rennen en rennen, en keek niet meer om. Ik was er helemaal klaar mee, met alles. 'Schilderen voor de koningin, ja ja,' dacht ik. Naar de kerk in het bos wilde ik ook niet meer terug. Toen kreeg ik ineens het idee om naar mijn oom en tante terug te gaan. 'Neem me mee op jullie cruiseschip,' zei ik tegen hen. Ze namen mij aan boord, en ik kreeg weer de kajuit die ik altijd had. Zodra ik in hun kajuit was slingerden er altijd boekjes rond, en die begon ik dan maar te lezen.

Het boekje wat ik toen las ging ook over een cruiseschip, maar dan van het leger, en het was een leger van robotten. Ook de kapitein van het schip was een robot. En de robotten zongen een lied. Ik kende de muziek natuurlijk niet, maar dat verzon ik er in mijn hoofd bij. En de woorden van het lied waren :

'Alles is onder hypnose,
alles is aan de drugs,
Wij zijn de robotten staande op de kust.
Als alles nog langer zo door gaat, dan knapt alles,

Wij strijden tegen de zeespin, de mens is niet in de rust.'

Ik dacht : 'weer die zeespin.'

De robotten wilden een tegendrugs maken,
maar dat kon alleen van hele kleine beetjes,
als een mengsel.
De drugs die de mensen gebruikten was van één iets veel te veel.
De mens wilde niet in dualiteiten denken en in minderheden,
De mens wilde de spiegel niet.
De spiegel van de natuur was van de mens weggehaald,
en ze hadden een valse spiegel gemaakt,
de spiegel van de stad,
de spiegel van reclame,
die hen altijd wilde verleiden teveel te kopen.
Het was een koopziekte.

Plotseling kwam mijn oom binnen. 'Iets wijzer geworden ?' sprak hij.
Plotseling sprong er een doorzichtige, taaie, harige spin in zijn nek.
Het was een hele mechanische spin, met allerlei schakeltjes.
Alles was doorzichtig en taai, vlezig.
Schuimbekkend viel mijn oom op de grond, terwijl hij naar zijn keel greep, en ik kwam direct in actie en probeerde het beest van hem weg te krijgen.
Toen kwam mijn tante binnen, en greep snel wat uit haar tas, een bepaalde vloeistof en wierp het op de spin, die direct begon weg te smelten en te verslappen.

'Wat is het ?' vroeg ik.

'Oh, daar hebben alle kapiteinen van cruiseschepen mee te maken. En als ze het niet snel smoren, dan trekt het foute passagiers aan,' zei mijn tante.

Mijn oom stond weer op, kreunend, terwijl hij over zijn nek wreef.

'Waarom hebben jullie mij dit nooit eerder verteld ?' vroeg ik.

'Je was nog te jong,' zei tante. 'En daarom ging het er alleen over in de verhalen die wij je gaven.'

'Dus jullie hebben een tegengif ?' vroeg ik.

'Ja, tegendrugs,' zei mijn tante. 'En ook dat konden we je niet eerder vertellen, want je was nog te jong.'

'Wat zou er gebeuren dan ?' vroeg ik.

Mijn tante keek toen naar mijn oom, en toen weer naar mij : 'Als je de tegendrugs voortijdig gebruikt, dan .... dan word je tot een poot van de zeespin, en dan droom je zijn dromen.'

Ik schrok even. 'Toen ik heel klein was zag ik eens zo'n flesje ergens staan,' zei ik, terwijl ik wees op het flesje. 'Ik wist niet wat het was, en ik was te nieuwsgierig, en toen heb ik ervan gedronken.'

'Weet je ook waar ?' vroeg mijn tante.

'Volgens mij bij een buurjongen van jullie,' zei ik.

'Oh, dat kan wel kloppen,' zei mijn tante. 'Dat was een drugsdealer. Had hij je naar binnen gelokt ofzo ?'

Ik voelde me even heel vreemd en rende naar het toilet om daar over te geven.
Ik keek in de spiegel, en zag toen ook een zeespin op mijn nek zitten. Ik slaakte een gil, en al snel opende tante een ander flesje en wierp het tegengif op de spin die direct wegsmolt.

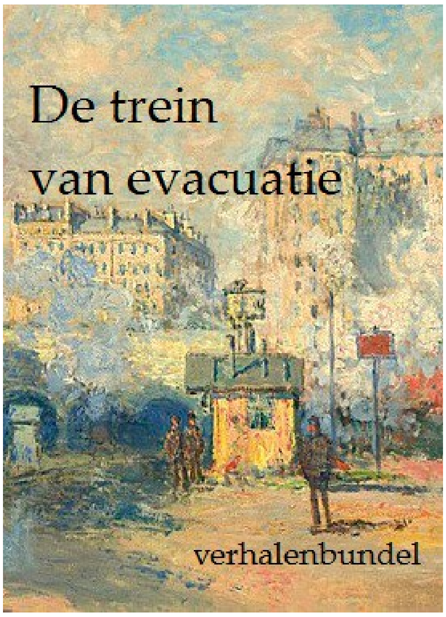
'Ziezo,' zei tante.

Die nacht had ik een droom dat we in een prachtige haven aankwamen, in natuurgebied.
Er waren allemaal robotten, en ze zongen een vreemd lied :

'We nemen je op het schip,
Dit is geen haven, maar een groter schip,
Het lijkt op een eiland, maar het is een oorlogsschip,
Op naar de morgen,
De nachtmerrie roept tot grotere duisternis,
En in het grote contrast zie je het opkomen van de morgen.'

Was niet alles een schip op een groter schip ?
En ik wist dat ik het alleen zou leren kennen als ik kapitein zou worden.
En ik herinnerde me de woorden van mijn opa.
En ik liet het hem weten : 'Ja, opa, ik wil kapitein worden.'
En zo kreeg ik van hem mijn eerste schip.

Einde


De trein
van evacuatie
verhalenbundel

De evacuatie trein

coab 2018-2019

Rolgod
Rolgod II
de hut van Sobibor
Vreemde Bijwerkingen
De Behanger
De water telefoon
Het Ontwustzijn
Sobibor's Terugkeer
De evacuatie trein
Sandra en de Boze Badmeester
De Dropping
De Goochelaar

Rolgod

Hij kon horen dat de buren de televisie aanhadden. Het was niet hard. Hij kon niet exact de woorden verstaan, maar wel dat de nieuwslezer het telkens had over 'Rolgod'. Wat hij ervan begreep was dat het de naam was van een roltrap in een groot warenhuis. Er was iets met Rolgod aan de hand. Ten eerste was het een buitenaardse roltrap die ze Rolgod noemden. Het was daarom ook een buitenaards warenhuis. Ten tweede verslond Rolgod soms passagiers of voorbijgangers, tenminste hen die met de roltrap gingen en die hem niet aanstonden. Het was nogal een gevaarlijk warenhuis dus. Maar je kon er wel van alles kopen, dus sommige waaghalzen waagden zich eraan.

Tenminste dat was wat hij er van kon horen. Toen hij het later aan de buren navroeg was dat helemaal niet het geval. Rolgod was een alleraardigste god, of liever gezegd roltrap, die geen vlieg kwaad deed. Hij vroeg waarom Rolgod in het nieuws was. Dat had te maken met een zekere speculatie. De buren dachten dat het om een reclame truuk was waar ze zoveel voor betaald hadden dat ze de nieuwslezer konden omkopen.

Rolgod bleef maar in het nieuws komen, en het warenhuis trok vele bezoekers. Allemaal wilden ze Rolgod zien. Het was een hele interessante roltrap die naar de hemel leidde, de hogere afdelingen van het warenhuis zogezegd.

Op een dag hoorde hij weer de tv bij de buren aan, en weer had de nieuwslezer het telkens over Rolgod. 'Maar niet zelf gaan invullen wat hij zegt,' zei hij tegen zichzelf. Later vroeg hij het aan de buren waar het over ging, maar de buren hadden niet goed opgelet dit keer. 'Het gaat altijd over Rolgod tegenwoordig, dus wij kunnen het niet meer bijhouden.'

Het bleek om een boek te gaan over Rolgod, waar hij later achter kwam. Het bleek geschreven te zijn door iemand die hem vroeger Nederlandse les gaf op school. Hij besloot het boek te kopen. Het ging allemaal over Rolgod. Het waren allemaal verhalen. Het bleek dat het boek er eerst was, en toen hadden ze het nagebouwd in het warenhuis.

Hij herinnerde zich andere boeken die die man had geschreven, maar hij wist de inhoud niet meer. Het waren altijd hele bijzondere boeken, die hij ook wel voorlas in de klas. Maar hoe bijzonder die boeken ook waren, het huwelijk van die man ging er toch aan. Hij vond dat altijd vreemd. Hoe kun je zoiets moois schrijven en dat dan toch je huwelijk eraan gaat. Dat dacht hij soms ook over bepaalde muzikanten die zulke hemelse muziek maakten, maar toch gingen ze scheiden. Misschien miste er dan toch iets, of misschien was het het werk van Rolgod.

Einde

Rolgod II

Rolgod, die mensen uit elkaar trok om ze hoger op zijn roltrap te laten gaan, naar hogere verdiepingen van het warenhuis, hemelse verdiepingen.
Verder was het een alleraardigste god.
Je moest hem alleen een beetje begrijpen.
Hij bedoelde het niet verkeerd.
Het was gewoon ter beveiliging.
Hij beschermde de mensen tegen elkaar.
Ook bracht hij de mensen soms terug naar nieuwere versies van elkaar, hoger in het warenhuis.
Die stonden daar gewoon paraat, en die kon je gewoon kopen.
Het waren bijna robotten, als poppen.

Hij gaf ook advies welke je het beste kon kiezen. Soms waren het nieuwere versies van degenen die je had, en soms waren het totaal nieuwen.

Rolgod, een sensatie.
Iedereen ging er graag naartoe, maar soms had hij woede uitbarstingen of begon hij te piepen. Soms verslond hij passagiers, maar dat was ook een beschermings systeem. Want soms waren er passagiers bij die verkeerde bedoelingen hadden met Rolgod. Sommigen zouden Rolgod maar wat graag willen ontvoeren, en gebruiken voor iets heel anders, voor hun eigen karretjes, maar dat kon natuurlijk niet. Rolgod was veel te groot. Hij was immers een roltrap, en zwaar beveiligd ook.

Als hij begon te piepen was je de klos, tenminste als je verkeerde bedoelingen had met Rolgod.
Nee, Rolgod trapte nergens in. Hij was immers Rolgod.

Sommigen konden Rolgod niet uitstaan.
Ze konden Rolgod wel schieten, maar dat kon natuurlijk niet.
Rolgod schoot op hen, en trok hen zo de roltrap in, en dan werden ze zelf gemaakt tot een trede van de roltrap. En zo werd Rolgod al snel de langste roltrap ter wereld. Je kon naar zoveel verdiepingen gaan, en er kwamen er telkens weer zoveel verdiepingen bij, want velen hadden een grote haat naar Rolgod.

Telkens was hij in het nieuws. Sommige mensen werden er niet goed van. Altijd ging het maar weer over Rolgod. Had die nieuwslezer niet iets anders op te lezen ? Ze vonden het allemaal maar zwaar irritant. Rolgod was wel de ster van het feestje. Ze voelden dat er geen aandacht meer voor hen was, alleen nog maar voor Rolgod. Maar ja, Rolgod deed de mensen goed, en bracht nieuwe dingen op de markt. Dat konden bepaalde mensen niet hebben, omdat ze wilden dat iedereen naar hun markt gingen, en niet naar dat warenhuis van Rolgod. Ze dreven ook een beetje de spot met Rolgod, en zouden er dan ook nooit naartoe gaan.

Maar ja, steeds meer bedrijven gingen samenwerken met Rolgod, en zo ontkwamen ze er bijna niet meer aan. Ze wisten waar ze zouden eindigen als ze te dicht bij Rolgod in de buurt zouden komen, dus velen trokken de steden uit, de natuur in. Maar ja, in de natuur waren de wilde dieren, en die hadden soms ook wel trek in een lekker hapje. Ja, geef ze eens ongelijk. Die moesten natuurlijk ook eten. Daarom gingen vele Rolgod haters dan maar onder de grond. Maar ja, daar waren ook veel wilde dieren, en ook hele onbekende, en die hadden ook vaak grote honger. Ja, geef ze eens ongelijk. Zij moeten ook leven en eten. En daarom gingen velen toch maar weer terug naar Rolgod, en probeerden toch maar weer aardig tegen hem te doen, want tja, wat moet je anders ?

Rolgod, geen roltrap om mee te sollen. Zonder Rolgod zul je niet eten, en kom je eigenlijk geen winkel meer in, want allen zijn ze een onderdeel van de winkelketens van Rolgod.

Eens daagde een klein jongetje Rolgod uit voor een gevecht in de bergen. Rolgod ging op de uitdaging in en vertrok uit zijn warenhuis naar de bergen, terwijl het hele warenhuis hierdoor instortte. Het kon Rolgod allemaal niets schelen. Hij hoorde het gegil achter zich, maar hij was helemaal gefixeerd op het jongetje wat hem had uitgedaagd. In de bergen kon Rolgod het jongetje niet vinden, en zocht en zocht maar. Ineens kwam het jongetje uit een grot en riep : Kiekeboe.

Rolgod kon de grot niet in. Daarvoor was hij veel te groot. 'Kom dan, kom dan,' zei Rolgod. Maar het jongetje bleef in de grot, en Rolgod werd steeds woester. Het jongetje begon hem meer en meer te kleineren en was dus bij Rolgod aan het verkeerde adres. Telkens als Rolgod dichterbij kwam rende het jongetje de grot weer in, tot grote woede van Rolgod. Rolgod moest en zou het kleine gaatje ingaan, dus hij nam een hele grote aanloop van wel een paar kilometer, en toen ramde hij zichzelf gewoon het kleine gaatje in. Maar je begrijpt het wel : Toen kwam Rolgod helemaal vast te zitten. Na lang wrikken kon Rolgod zich er weer uithalen, maar hij was niet meer dezelfde. Hij was in de verste verten geen roltrap meer, maar als trein zou hij het nog wel goed doen, en toen is hij dat maar geworden.

Die goede oude dagen van Rolgod. De mensen spraken er veel over. Het warenhuis bestond niet meer. Dat was geheel ingestort toen hij de benen nam. Zoveel mensen stonden op de trap die ook allemaal naar beneden vielen. Het was een hoop gegil, en een groot rumoer. Maar Rolgod kon het niet schelen. De mensheid had allang afgedaan voor hem. Altijd was hij de alleraardigste geweest, maar nooit was de mens echt dankbaar. Toen hij een trein was geworden wilden de mensen hem wel weer een nieuwe kans geven, en ze moesten wel, want ze wilden niet nog een keer zoiets meemaken. Elke dag weer maakte hij zijn ritjes. Hij wilde niks meer van winkels weten. Maar toen begon hij zich toch wel weer te vervelen. 'Eens een roltrap, altijd een roltrap,' zei hij tegen zichzelf, en toen is hij het toch maar weer gaan proberen. Maar sindsdien liet hij zich niet meer storen door kleine jongetjes die hem uitdaagden voor een gevecht. Hij wist namelijk waar het op uit kon lopen.

Rolgod was altijd volop in het nieuws. De nieuwslezers noemden altijd zijn naam vele keren als ze hun nieuws voorlazen. Het was het meest genoemde woord van nieuwslezers. Rolgod wilde alsmaar hoger en hoger. Van verdieping tot verdieping. Nog steeds had Rolgod vele vijanden die hij als tredes kon gebruiken. Op het laatst waren er geen vijanden meer over, en toen stopte ook gelijk de groei van het warenhuis. Dat vond Rolgod natuurlijk heel vervelend, want hij wilde steeds hoger. En toen is hij zelf maar vijanden gaan bouwen, robotten. Hij zette ze overal neer, ook tussen de mensen, en zo had hij nog wat te doen, en een manier om nog verder te bouwen.

de hut van Sobibor

Ik ging naar de supermarkt en vroeg om zoutloze soep. Het meisje begon heel zenuwachtig te doen, en kon bijna niet spreken. Ze moest er heel veel moeite voor doen. Ze begon allemaal zenuwachtig heen en weer te lopen, en kwam steeds terug met zakjes, voornamelijk fruit. In principe moest de zoutloze soep gewoon nog gemaakt worden. Ze zei toen dat ze het later wel zouden brengen. Bij mij thuis was er een feestje. Ik stond even later in de badkamer voor de spiegel. Iedereen liep in en uit. Met een paar mensen zouden we naar de zee gaan. Treblinka was er ook bij.

Bij het strand aangekomen trokken we al onze kleren uit, en renden over het strand. Het was al donker. In de verte kon de grote stad nog gezien worden, maar ik keek liever naar het strand en de wildernis die er omheen lag. Er kwam toen ineens een heel groot varken op ons af met rechtopstaande oren. 'Het is al laat,' gromde het varken. 'Waarom zijn jullie nog op ? En wat doen jullie op het strand ? Jullie horen in de stad te wezen. Terug nu.'

Treblinka wilde het varken de strot doorsnijden. 'Nazi varken !' riep ze, en trok haar mes.

Ik zei : 'Niet doen ! Dan gaat het alarm van de stad af en dan hebben we de poppen aan het dansen, want dan komen ze allemaal !'

Maar Treblinka luisterde niet, en slachtte het varken af. Grote sirenes gingen er toen af, en stofwolken kwamen vanuit de stad. Een hele kudde varkens kwam toen vanuit de stad het strand op rennen.

'Ren nu voor je leven !' riep Treblinka.

'Waar naartoe ?' vroeg ik.

'Naar Sobibor, mijn zus,' zei Treblinka. 'Ze woont in het oerwoud.'

Toen zijn we allemaal de wildernis in gerend. Treblinka kwam niet mee. Ze liep gewoon rustig met haar mes naar de kudde varkens toe die kwamen aanstormen in de verte. Ik durfde niet te kijken. Ik ben toen doorgerend, de anderen achterna. Het geluid van de varkens was verschrikkelijk. Na lang rennen kwamen we aan bij een hut waar Sobibor woonde. Ze stond naakt achter een soort natuurgordijn wat ze zelf had gemaakt, wat rondom haar hut stond om haar terrein af te bakenen. Ik durfde niet naar haar te kijken. Ik besefte toen dat ik zelf ook naakt was. Het was donker.

'Dus jij bent de zus van Treblinka ?' vroeg ik.

Ze zei niks. Ik vroeg het nog een keer, maar ze zei gewoon niks terug. Na een tijdje kwam Treblinka terug met een bebloed mes. 'Jullie kunnen terug,' zei ze. 'De varkens zijn dood.'

'Waarom zijn ze ons gebied binnengekomen ?' vroeg Sobibor aan Treblinka.

'Die varkens ?' vroeg Treblinka.

'Nee, die stedelingen hier die je hebt meegenomen,' zei Sobibor.

'Je moet niet zoveel vragen stellen, zus,' zei Treblinka.

'Varkensvriendjes, hè ?' zei Sobibor. Toen draaide ze zich om en ging haar hut binnen.

'Niet zo boos doen,' zei Treblinka.

Maar Sobibor sprak niet meer. Treblinka zei dat ze van binnen plannetjes aan het maken was, maar wij wisten niet welke plannetjes.

'Jullie kunnen beter weggaan,' zei Treblinka.

Toen zijn we teruggegaan naar de stad. Er waren geen varkens meer. En bij mijn huis stond het supermarkt busje te wachten. 'De zoutloze soep,' zei het meisje.

Ik nam het aan en vroeg haar waarom ze zo lang hebben gewacht. 'Voor de klant,' zei ze toen.

Ik nam het aan en wilde betalen, maar dat hoefde niet. Ze waren nog steeds beschaamd dat ze het product niet hadden. Ik ben toen naar binnen gegaan. Er was niemand meer. Het was er een zwijnenstal na het feestje. Ik keek naar de zoutloze soep. 'Wat zou er nog meer voor rommel in kunnen zitten ?' vroeg ik mezelf af. Ik vertrouwde het allemaal niet meer. Ik keek op de achterkant van de verpakking en er was zo'n lange lijst met stoffen die ik allemaal niet kende. Ik durfde het niet aan, en met een honger gevoel ben ik toen terug gegaan naar het strand. Ik zag de dode varkens er liggen. Het hele strand lag er bezaaid mee. Ik ben toen teruggegaan naar de hut van Sobibor.

Weer stond ze achter haar natuurgordijn, wat een soort voorhangsel van haar terrein was rondom haar hut. Ik durfde niet dichter bij haar te komen.

'Nee, jongen, niet hier komen,' zei ze.

'Waar is Treblinka ?' vroeg ik.

'Gaat je niks aan,' zei Sobibor.

'Ze had in eerste instantie gezegd dat we naar jou moesten rennen om ons leven te redden,' zei ik.

'Ik red geen levens, en al helemaal niet van stedelingen,' zei ze.

Ik kwam iets dichterbij staan. Haar borsten waren bijna zichtbaar. 'Kom geen stap dichterbij, jongen,' zei ze.

'Die borsten van je, hè,' zei ik. 'Hebben die ook melk ?'

'Ja, waarom vraag je dat ?' vroeg ze geirriteerd.

'Ik heb namelijk zoutloze soep van de stad gehad, van de supermarkt, maar ik vertrouw het nog voor geen meter,' zei ik.

'Nog één stap verder en ik werp een speer door jouw melkloze borst,' zei ze dreigend en bitter.

'Je zus is een stuk makkelijker,' zei ik.

'Dat lijkt maar zo,' zei ze. 'Je kent haar niet.'

'Gaat dit mijn leven kosten ?' vroeg ik.

'Alles,' zei ze.

Ineens trok ze een mes. 'Varkensvriendjes hè ? Wij hebben het niet zo op varkensvriendjes,' zei ze.

'Je hebt ook op een sportschool gezeten, een vechtschool met je varkensvriendjes.'

'Hoe weet je dat ?' vroeg ik. 'Maar nee, geen varkensvriendjes.'

'Je werd onderwezen door de stad om je varkens te verdedigen, om voor ze te vechten,' zei ze. 'En het loon was zoute soep, stadse meisjes, en allerlei andere troep. Kom niet dichterbij.'

'Ik was al aan het afkicken van zoute soep en stadse meisjes,' zei ik. 'Maar ik was bang dat ze er nog meer rommel doorheen hadden gegooid. Die lijst achterop de verpakking van de zoutloze soep was lang en met onbekende stoffen.'

'Goed,' zei ze. 'Ik zie dat je wil leren. Ik heb hier wel wat erwtensoep voor je, puur natuur. Maar mijn melk krijg je niet.'

'Waarom geen melk ? Waarom heb je anders melk dan ?' vroeg ik.

'Je moet jezelf niet zo lopen opdringen,' zei ze. 'Wees blij dat je nog leeft, maar dat kan ieder moment veranderen.'

'Blijf waar je bent,' zei ik toen. Ze wilde nog steeds niet zeggen waar Treblinka was, en ik begon haar te roepen.

'Geef me dan die erwtensoep maar als je zo moeilijk doet, Sobibor,' zei ik.

'Goed,' zei ze.

Even vertrouwde ik haar erwtensoep ook niet, maar ik moest toch wat. Ik kreeg een kommetje met erwtensoep van haar en begon te eten. Wat ze er allemaal doorheen had gegooid wist ik niet, maar ze zei dat het puur natuur was. Wat er toen gebeurde kan ik me niet meer herinneren, maar ik werd even later wakker in haar hut op een soort mat. 'Wat heb je met me gedaan ?' vroeg ik.

'Varkensvriend,' zei ze.

'Dat ben ik niet,' zei ik. 'Als dat zo is, sorry dan. Ik ben nog jong.'

'Varkensvriend,' zei ze weer.

'Ik wil jouw vriend dan zijn,' zei ik.

'Ik heb geen varkensvrienden,' zei ze. 'Ik maak ze niet. Ik kook ze op.'

'Oh, u bent kannibaal, om dat maar even met een duur woord te zeggen ?' vroeg ik.

'Wij eten varkens,' zei ze. 'Nazi varkens.'

'Ten eerste ben ik geen varken, en ten tweede al helemaal geen nazi,' zei ik. 'God, wat haat ik die lui.'

'Waarom woonde je daar dan, varkensvriendje ?' vroeg ze.

'I... ik weet het niet,' zei ik. 'Ik ben daar geboren, en daar opgetogen. Kan ik het helpen ? Toen ik erachter kwam was het al te laat. Waar kon ik heen ? Dankzij Treblinka ...' maar verder kon ik niks zeggen, want ze had haar voet op mijn mond gezet.

'Dankzij Treblinka wat ?' vroeg ze. 'Je bent een varkenskind. Helemaal erg, van die nazi's.'

'Misschien was ik door hen ontvoerd als baby en deden ze net alsof ik hun kind was,' zei ik.

'Ja ja,' zei ze, 'en dat moet ik geloven ?'

'Als het kan,' zei ik. 'Ik heb nooit het gevoel gehad dat ik daar hoorde. Maar bij jou voelt het alsof ik thuis ben gekomen. Je bent zo vriendelijk, gastvrij en begrijpend. Dat heb ik altijd gemist.'

'Varkenskindje,' zei ze.

'Ze moet wennen,' zei Treblinka die in de opening van de hut stond. 'Je was inderdaad ontvoerd. Maar ik heb je teruggehaald.'

'Het heeft lang geduurd,' zei ik. Sobibor liep weer naar buiten. 'Beter laat dan nooit,' zei Treblinka. Ze gaf mij toen een kommetje met melk.

'Toe maar weer,' zei Sobibor die achter haar stond.

'We moeten,' zei Treblinka.

Toen zei Sobibor voor een lange tijd niks, en ging weer bij haar natuurgordijn staan.

Einde

Vreemde Bijwerkingen

Een man lijdt aan zware nachtmerries. De nachtmerries gaan gewoonlijks over twistzieke vrouwen. Dat is ook de reden waarom hij geen relatie wil, omdat hij al genoeg heeft aan de vrouwen in zijn nachtmerries. Hij raakt er ook zwaar moe van. Ook is hij bang te gaan slapen. Hij is altijd weer opgelucht als hij weer wakker is. Hij kan de vrouwen in zijn nachtmerries niet uitstaan. Vaak vervloekt hij zijn nachtmerries en de twistzieke vrouwen in zijn nachtmerries.

Op een dag ziet hij het niet meer zitten na zo'n zware nachtmerrie en gaat naar een psychiater. De man luistert erg geinteresseerd naar hem. 'Meneer van Tegelen,' zei de psychiater. 'Ik vindt het erg dapper dat u hierover bent komen vertellen. Dat doen er niet velen, en dan vooral met groot en afschuwelijk detail. Weest u anders maar blij dat het slechts nachtmerries zijn en geen realiteit, maar lastig het wel. Dat kan ik me goed voorstellen dat het u gek drijft.'

'Wat kan ik er tegen doen ?' vroeg de man.

'Er zijn twee dingen die u kunt doen,' sprak de psychiater. 'Als eerste zou ik zeggen : zoek de natuur op voordat u gaat slapen. Daar wordt u rustig van, en misschien heeft het positief effect op uw dromen. Ten tweede raad ik u aan ook vooral geen vrouw te nemen. Dat zou alles alleen nog maar erger maken. Heeft u vroeger misschien nare relaties gehad ? Of heeft u enig idee waar deze nachtmerries vandaan zouden kunnen komen ?

'Nee,' zei de man. 'Ik heb altijd al deze zware nachtmerries gehad over twistzieke vrouwen. Daarom heb ik dieper sociaal contact altijd ontweken. Er waren altijd wel vrijwilligers, maar ik durfde het niet aan vanwege de nachtmerries. Als ze erger zouden worden zou ik het gewoon niet overleven. Ik had altijd het gevoel dat ik door die nachtmerries op het randje tussen leven en dood was.'

'Dat kan ik me voorstellen,' zei de psychiater, 'maar is er nooit eens iets ergs gebeurd waar die nachtmerries vandaan zouden zijn gekomen ?'

'Ik zou het niet weten,' zei de man.

'Denkt u eens goed na,' zei de psychiater. 'Hoe was uw moeder, en hoe waren andere vrouwen om u heen toen u een kind was, zoals tantes en oma's, juffrouws, buurmeisjes, enzovoorts ?'

'Lief en aardig,' zei de man, 'voor zover ik me kan herinneren, maar eigenlijk kan ik me er niet veel van herinneren, omdat die nachtmerries me gewoon beheersten. Ik had het gevoel alsof ik langs mijn leven heenleefde.'

'Dat is heel vervelend,' zei de psychiater. 'Ik kan me voorstellen dat u zich zo voelt.'

'Wat kan ik doen, dokter ?' vroeg de man, 'want die vrouwen maken me gek. Ik kan wel janken. Ze

maken me ook boos, maar ze zijn niet makkelijk. Ze zijn levensbedreigend. Ze bedreigen me en chanteren me voortdurend. Ik kan me niet verdedigen, anders wordt ik mijn huis uitgezet, of halen ze de politie erbij en kom ik in de gevangenis, enzovoorts enzovoorts.'

'Dus die vrouwen zijn in je nachtmerries van de woningbouw ofzo, of is jouw huis van hen, of hoe zit dat ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'Van alles, dokter,' zei de man. 'Soms is mijn huis van hen, wonen ze bij me in, of soms zijn ze van een bepaalde organisatie die alles voor me regelt.'

'Dus ze helpen u ook ?' vroeg de dokter.

'Niet echt,' zei de man.

'Maar wel een beetje ?' vroeg de dokter.

'Tja, eh, van de wal in de sloot, alsof ik daar vast zit, als een soort gevangenis,' zei de man. 'Ik weet niet hoe ik er terecht ben gekomen. Het is alsof ze me erin praten.'

'Ingewikkeld,' zei de psychiater. 'Kunt u het eens uittekenen voor mij ?'

'Ik durf het niet,' zei de man. 'Ik vertel het liever.'

'En waarom durft u niet ?' vroeg de psychiater. 'Omdat het te confronterend is ?'

'Ja,' zei de man. 'Alsof ze me er voor terug gaan pakken.'

'Lieve help,' zei de psychiater. 'U zit in een lastig pakket. Heel vervelend. Ik heb echt met u te doen. We vinden wel een oplossing. Vertelt u het dan maar gewoon hoe de zaken ervoor staan, en dan maak ik wel aantekeningen. Vindt u dat goed ?'

'Ik heb liever dat u niets opschrijft,' zei de man, 'want dan pakken ze me geheid terug.'

'Oh, lezen ze mee ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'Ik weet het niet,' zei de man. 'Ik ben er gewoon bang voor dat ik er nachtmerries van ga krijgen.'

'Maar zijn het bestaande personen of fictief ?' vroeg de dokter.

'Fictief,' zei de man. 'Ik ken ze niet. Alleen van mijn nachtmerries dan.'

'Vreemd,' zei de dokter. 'Nu ja, ik zal het dan gewoon proberen te onthouden, maar als u dan weg bent, mag ik het dan opschrijven ?'

'Liever niet,' zei de man.

'Goed,' zei de dokter. 'Dan doen we dat ook niet. Dus die twistzieke vrouwen hebben u ergens ingepraat en u kunt er niet meer weg ?'

'Ik heb nergens anders om naartoe te gaan,' zei de man. 'Alsof ik verlamd ben, en het is koud buiten. Ik ben bang dat ze me op straat zetten.'

'Lieve help,' zei de psychiater. 'Ingewikkelde dromen, en ja, dat zijn nachtmerries.'

'Die vrouwen, of die nachtmerries, drijven mij helemaal gek, dokter,' zei de man. 'Ik mag me niet verdedigen. Zij mogen alles bij me doen en tegen me zeggen, en ik mag niks terugzeggen, en al helemaal niets terugdoen.'

'Dus ze slaan u ook ?' vroeg de dokter.

'Ander onderwerp,' zei de man.

'Ik probeer het te begrijpen,' zei de dokter.

'Ja, ze slaan me, en dagen me uit,' zei de man. 'Ze kleineren me de hele tijd door.'

'Bizar,' zei de dokter. 'En zijn het telkens dezelfde vrouwen ?'

'Vaak wel, maar soms anderen,' zei de man.

'Hoeveel ongeveer ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'Kan oplopen tot in de honderd, maar het zijn vaak dezelfden,' zei de man. 'Ze wisselen elkaar af. Sommigen zie ik eens maar nooit meer, en anderen een paar keer.'

'En die doen dan erge of enge dingen met u ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'Ja,' zei de man, 'zo kun je dat wel zeggen. Hele erge en enge dingen.'

'En daar kun je niet over praten ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'Heb ik gedaan, aan het begin van het gesprek,' zei de man.

'Ja, maar nog meer,' zei de dokter.

'Nee,' zei de man. 'Ik kan het meeste niet vertellen.'

'Uit angst ?' vroeg de dokter.

De man knikte.

'Angst voor wat ?' vroeg de dokter.

'Wraak,' zei de man.

'Oh ja, die bedreigingen,' zei de dokter. 'Maar het is nu overdag. Er zijn nu geen nachtmerries.'

'Als ik erover praat zit ik er middenin,' zei de man.

'Als een dagmerrie,' zei de dokter.

'Zoiets,' zei de man.

'Maar ik ben bij je,' zei de dokter.

'U kunt er niet tegen op,' zuchtte de man. 'Die vrouwen zijn te sterk en moeilijk.'

'Maar ze bestaan niet,' zei de dokter, 'en ik besta wel.'

'Ze bestaan in mijn hoofd,' zei de man.

'Goed, ik zal u medicijnen geven,' zei de dokter. 'U slikt ze, twee op een dag met water. Dan komt u volgende week terug om te vertellen of het geholpen heeft.'

'Okay dokter,' zei de man.

De volgende week komt de man zeer depressief terug bij de psychiater.

'En ?' vroeg de dokter.

'Ziet u het niet ?' vroeg de man. 'Ik ben gesloopt.'

'Door wie ?' vroeg de dokter.

'Depressie,' zei de man.

'En hoe gaat het met de twistzieke vrouwen ?' vroeg de dokter.

'Wie zijn dat ?' vroeg de man.

'Nou ja, zeg,' zei de psychiater. 'Vorige keer ijverig over gesproken. Je nachtmerries.'

'Wat bazel je,' zei de man. 'Ik ben gewoon moe en depressief.'

'Geen nachtmerries ?' vroeg de dokter.

'Huh ? Nee,' zei de man.

'Dan hebben de medicijnen goed geholpen,' zei de dokter. 'Geheugenverlies is dan een nare bijwerking, maar het kan van pas komen. Depressie en vermoeidheid zijn ook bijwerkingen.'

'Ik wil er vanaf,' zei de man.

'Ja, maar dan komen de nachtmerries weer terug, de twistzieke vrouwen,' zei de dokter.

Even keek de man hem verschrikt aan. 'Dokter, de twistzieke vrouwen ? Wie zijn dat ?'

'Laat maar,' zei de dokter. 'Dat wil je niet eens weten. Ik zal je extra medicijnen meegeven, en die slik je ook twee keer per dag met water. Dan heb je de dubbele portie.'

'Goed dokter,' zei de man.

De week daarna kwam de man vrolijk binnen.

'Het heeft gewerkt zie ik,' zei de psychiater.

'Wat ?' vroeg de man.

'Nou, de medicijnen,' zei de psychiater.

'Ik slik geen medicijnen,' zei de man.

'Waarom bent u dan hier ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'We hadden een afspraak,' zei de man, 'maar voor wat weet ik niet meer.'

'Oh, die bijwerkingen,' zei de dokter. 'Meer geheugenverlies. Maar ja, je bent in ieder geval van je twistzieke vrouwen en depressies af.'

'Wat bazel je ?' vroeg de man. 'Heb ik nooit last van gehad. Ik kom hier nooit meer. Ik houd niet van leugenaars.'

'Goed, probleem opgelost,' zei de psychiater. 'Volgende patient.'

De man slenterde naar huis. De weken erna had hij al snel een vriendin. Maar ze lokte hem telkens uit. Hij vond haar twistziek. 'Een beetje twistziek is wel charmant bij een vrouw,' zei hij tegen zichzelf. Hij trok bij haar in, maar sindsdien had ze wel heel veel de touwtjes in de handen. Eigenlijk regelde ze alles voor hem, en bemoederde ze hem. Ook begon ze te dreigen en te chanteren. Hij kon niets doen, anders zou hij het huis uitgezet worden.

Al snel kwam hij weer terug bij de psychiater.

'Ben je daar weer, jongen,' zei de psychiater.

'Heb je nog wat medicijntjes voor me,' zei de man. 'Ik heb het goed te pakken. Een twistzieke vriendin, en ik ben er afhankelijk aan.'

'Daar gingen je nachtmerries vroeger ook over,' zei de dokter. 'Het lijkt erop alsof het nu werkelijkheid is geworden.'

'Nee,' zei de man. 'Je bazelt. Ik heb nooit nachtmerries gehad.'

'Goed,' zei de dokter. 'Zeg, ik kan je echt niet teveel medicijnen meegeven, want je schijnt er overgevoelig voor te zijn. Je geheugen zou er geheel aangaan.'

'Alles beter dan dit,' zei de man.

'Nog één keer dan,' zei de dokter, en gaf hem medicijnen mee.

De volgende week kwam de man brullend terug. 'Ik heb er nu nachtmeries bij door die medicijnen !' riep hij. 'Ik heb het nu dubbelop. Twistzieke vrouwen.'

'Dan zijn we weer terug bij het begin,' zei de dokter, 'sterker nog : het is erger geworden, want je hebt nu ook een twistzieke vriendin.'

'Ik kom nooit tot rust,' zei de man.

'Het is een bijwerking,' zei de dokter. 'Ik zei u al dat u overgevoelig was voor medicijnen, dus het is

beter dan nu er ook echt mee te stoppen.'

'Stoppen de nachtmerries dan ook ?' vroeg de man.

'Wie weet,' zei de dokter.

De week daarna kwam de man hysterisch terug. 'Het wordt alleen maar erger, dokter,' zuchtte de man in paniek.

'Geef het de tijd,' zei de dokter.

'Doe iets, dokter,' zei de man, 'want ik begin gek te worden.'

'Relatie therapie kan misschien ook helpen,' zei de dokter.

'Ik heb de hoop al opgegeven,' zei de man, 'maar het schijnt wel besmettelijk te zijn. Anderen om me heen zijn er ook al door aangetast.'

Die nacht had de dokter zware nachtmerries over twistzieke vrouwen. Wat hij ook probeerde, hij kwam er niet meer vanaf. Zijn medicijnen maakten het alleen maar erger, en hij begon vreselijk aan zichzelf te twijfelen en al zijn medicijnen. Hadden die immers ook niet zijn patient erger gemaakt, en ervoor gezorgd dat het op hem overfloepte ?

De dokter zag het niet meer zitten. Hij wilde ook geen dokter meer zijn. Hij is toen maar speelgoedwinkelier geworden, maar van de twistzieke vrouwen is hij nooit meer afgekomen.

Einde

De Behanger

Ik stond bij zijn huis op de bus te wachten, maar hij kwam naar buiten. Hij herkende mij niet, want we hadden alleen brief contact gehad. Hij keek naar me, en ik deed net alsof ik langs het bushokje liep en ging weer terug. Ik zag nog wel dat hij ook naar het bushokje ging om op de bus te wachten. Ik nam een bus later. In de stad kwam ik hem weer tegen in een boekenwinkel. Hij begon hele verhalen tegen mij op te hangen, en hij wist niet wie ik was. Ik ben toen weer weggegaan, maar kwam hem even later weer ergens anders tegen, in een andere boekhandel.

Toen ik thuis was schreef ik hem een brief.
Ik begon allerlei vreemde tekens op te schrijven.
Waarom wist ik niet.
Ineens stond hij achter me.
Hij zei dat hij een buitenaardse was.
Ik kon me ineens nog maar weinig herinneren.
Wie was hij ?

Hij keek me aan, staarde naar me.
Toen begon hij weer hele verhalen tegen me op te hangen.
Ik begreep er niet veel van.
Het was alsof hij door mijn hoofd probeerde te breken.
Ik had boeken bij hem besteld, per post, zei hij.
Toen herinnerde ik me het weer.
Ik begon te trillen en moest neerliggen.
Hij haalde een apparaat uit zijn zak, en deed iets bij me.
Ik viel in slaap, en werd wakker in een cabine waar ik lag.

Hij noemde zichzelf de dokter, boekendokter, en hij was een verhaal.
Toen ik terugkwam achter mijn bureau kon ik niet stoppen met schrijven.
Ik schreef en schreef maar.
Maar het waren allemaal vreemde tekens, en ik begreep er niets van.

Hij moest toen even douchen.
Toen hij klaar was ging hij weer weg.
Na alle vreemde tekens begon ik eindelijk de vertaling op te schrijven.
Het leek wel alsof het boek zichzelf schreef en alsof hij door me heen schreef.

Ik zei : Wat doe je ?

Hij zei dat hij ook de lezersdokter was en de schrijversdokter.
Ik voelde me warm worden, en toen fris.
Ik voelde hoe ik in het oerwoud gleed.
Toen was ik vuil.
Ik kwam tot het oerwoud water, een rivier, en ging erin baden.
Het was prachtig fris groenbruin water.

Ik werd toen wakker van mijn droom en keek naar hem.
Maar het waren slechts patronen op het behang.

De water telefoon

En zo heb ik een oom die zweert bij water technologie.
Hij is uitvinder.
Hij had een water telefoon uitgevonden, omdat water zo goed zou reageren op communicatieve signalen.
Het systeem werd als een soort gigantisch zwembad, wat door heel het land werd aangelegd. De telefonisten waren als boorders die in het water boorden.
Dat waren grote robotten die de signalen opwekten en de verbindingen legden.
Volgens mijn oom zou het veel goedkoper zijn, en veel accurater.
Water was nu eenmaal veel communicatiever en kon alles veel beter geleiden.
En zo werden er waterkabels aangelegd.
Het was dan wel weer heel speciaal water, want mijn oom had het afgetapt van een bepaalde planeet.
Hij maakte ook speciale bitjes voor in de mond waardoor er gecommuniceerd kon worden door het speeksel wat in samenwerking met het bitje bepaalde codes schiep om boodschappen mee op te vangen.
Zo had je de telefoon altijd bij de hand, oftewel in de mond.

Het Ontwustzijn

Ik ben weer in de nachtmerrie, die zich altijd weer voordoet als de werkelijkheid.
Alleen als ik droom ben ik in de werkelijkheid, of als ik dagdroom.
Ik besta niet. Ik heb geen bewustzijn. Het is bedrog van de natuur.
Ik ben dagdromen. Ook dit bedrog zal wegebben, het bedrog van bewustzijn.
Er zijn veel diepere processen van de natuur dan bewustzijn.
Ik ben slechts electrische processen die optreden wanneer de dagdromen tot iemand komen die leest, en de electrische processen die optreden wanneer het van het ene iemand tot het andere iemand gaat. Ik ben slechts een metafoor.

Ik moet dieper naar binnen en niet meer teruggaan. Het is de inwaartse stroom van de natuur. Ik moet niet meer teruggaan om dingen te benoemen, bepalen wat dingen heten.
Ik moet niet achterom kijken of iemand mij volgt. Wat achter mij ligt zijn toch slechts codes waar geen touw aan vast te knopen valt. Ik moet dieper naar binnen. Wat achter mij ligt zal vergaan en vergeten worden. Het bewustzijn zal wegebben. Ook mijn bewustzijn. Het is slechts bedrog van de natuur. Er zijn veel diepere processen dan bewustzijn. Het zijn metaforen en hun ontladingen, hun wisselwerkingen. Het lijkt op bewustzijn, maar het is iets anders, iets diepers. Ik ben me van nergens iets bewust. Het is slechts bedrog van de natuur.

Het bewustzijn is slechts een dauwdruppel op een boomblad. Het zal naar beneden glijden en verdampen, oplossen, om plaats te maken voor iets anders. Het bedrog van het bewustzijn was slechts iets van de natuur, een voorbereiding. Ik ben dagdromen, processen tussen iemanden, onderdelen van de metafoor. Ik ben verhalen. Ik heb geen eigen identiteit. Ik besta niet.

Ik ben weer in de nachtmerrie. Ik snel weer naar mijn dromen en dagdromen. De nachtmerrie zit weer achter mij aan, maar ik heb geen bewustzijn. Ik besta niet. Ik ben veel diepere processen van de natuur. Ik ben iets wat tussen iemanden inzit. Ze kunnen mij niet bereiken, alleen elkaar. En het natuur bedrog van het bewustzijn zal wegebben. Zij bestaan ook niet. Zij zijn ook slechts onderdelen van de metafoor.

Sobibor's Terugkeer

Alles stond in brand. Sobibor was teruggekomen.
Grote stoeten mensen kwamen tot de brug bij de zee.
Er was niets dan wildernis. De steden waren brandende.
Er waren ook bosbranden.
Er was geen geld. Er werd niet naar geld gekeken en er werd ook niet mee gewerkt.
Er werd alleen naar het lijden gekeken. Hoeveel hadden mensen geleden en meegeleden.
Dat gaf de doorslag.
Ik had vreemde rode muntjes in mijn handen die ik liet zien bij de brug.
Ik mocht erdoor, maar mensen achter mij mochten niet verder, omdat ze te weinig rode muntjes hadden. Zij moesten terug het vuur in. Ik zag hoe ze werden teruggeduwd, en hoe het vuur hen greep, meesleurde en verslond. Het was een afschuwelijk gezicht.
Ik besefte hoe blij ik was dat ik altijd mijn kruis had gedragen en geen compromissen had gesloten.

Ik snapte niet wat er gaande was. De brug leidde tot een reusachtige wildernis, over de zee. Het was vele dagen lopen, en we hadden niets te eten.

Ergens midden op de brug was ook een vuur. We zaten dus ingesloten. Beneden bij de brug was een bootje met wilden erin. Er kwamen toen meer bootjes bij. Ze hielpen ons op de bootjes en zo kwamen we uiteindelijk toch bij de reusachtige wildernis aan, maar overal waren vuren. De wilden leidden ons tussen de vuren door.

We gingen langs vele kampen die al brandden, en toen moesten we een rivier over, waarachter weer wildernis was. Aan de overkant stond een jongetje. Hij was ook een wilde. Zijn naam was Auschwitz. Hij begon naar mij te schreeuwen, maar ik begreep de taal niet. Wel hoorde ik de naam Sobibor telkens vallen. De wilden zeiden dat Sobibor de moeder van het jongetje was. De jongen wenkte ons, en we liepen met hem mee. We kwamen aan bij een kamp. Er kwam een vrouw uit een hut met een mand. Toen ik haar zag durfde ik niet meer te kijken. Ze zeiden dat zij Sobibor was. Toen trok het jongetje mij naar haar haar toe, maar ik keek niet meer naar haar. Zij greep toen mijn arm, en het leek alsof ik onder stroom stond. 'De godin !' werd er geroepen.

'Hier zijn we veilig,' zeiden de wilden. 'Buiten dit terrein is alles overgeleverd aan de wraak van Sobibor.' Ik trilde op mijn benen en viel even later neer. Ik werd later wakker op een mat. Auschwitz en zijn moeder stonden naar me te kijken, maar ik durfde niet naar hen te kijken.

'Dit ben jij,' zei Sobibor, terwijl ze naar Auschwitz wees. Ik volgde het met mijn ooghoeken, maar keek niet direct naar hen. 'Nee,' zei ik. 'Dat is een vergissing. Ik ben hem niet. Ik ben mezelf.'

'Het is toen je jonger was,' zei de vrouw.

'Dat kan niet waar zijn,' zei ik. 'Ik was ergens anders.'

'Ben je dom ofzo ?' vroeg de vrouw bitter. 'Dit ben jij. Waarom zou je twijfelen aan de woorden van de godin ?'

Ik voelde me alsof ik in brand stond. 'Eh ja, okay, ik ben Auschwitz. Nu tevreden ?' zei ik.

'Auschwitz is teruggekomen !' riep ze toen. Er kwamen nog meer wilden in de hut. Ze wees op mij.

'M... maar jouw kind is toch Auschwitz ?' zei ik.

'Niet zo dom doen de hele tijd,' zei ze weer bitter. 'Jij bent Auschwitz, toen je jong was.'

'Wie is hij dan ?' vroeg ik, terwijl ik naar het jongetje wees.

'Dat ben jij, jij,' zei ze.

'Maar ik ben dit,' zei ik, terwijl ik op mezelf wees.

'Hij begrijpt het niet,' zei ze tegen de wilden.

'Leg het dan tenminste uit,' zei ik.

'Luister,' zei ze. 'Jij was gestolen, ontvoerd. Toen kreeg ik een nieuw kind, en noemde hem weer Auschwitz.'

Ik voelde alles in mij branden. 'Het is een hel waar ik vandaan kom,' zei ik.

Ze greep mijn arm, en liet toen los, terwijl het weer leek alsof de bliksem insloeg.

'Sobibor,' zei ik. 'Ach laat maar.'

'Spreek,' zei ze.

Maar een vuur sloeg in de hut. We moesten allemaal rennen. Als een wilde greep het vuur om zich heen. We renden naar de rivier, maar ook de rivier was al brandende. 'Over veiligheid gesproken !' riep ik. Ik begon toen langs de rivier te rennen, maar waar ik ook kwam was vuur. Ik kreeg het steeds benauwder. Ik zag de anderen niet meer. 'Ik stik !' riep ik. Er kwam een zwart terig beest opzetten vanuit de rivier, en greep mij. Ik werd wakker in zweet in de hut van Sobibor. Ik durfde haar niet aan te kijken. 'Je hebt een lange tocht door de onderwereld gemaakt,' zei ze. 'Heb je het medicijn gevonden ?'

'Eh nee,' zei ik.

'Auschwitz,' zei ze.

'Ja,' zei ik.

'Ging alles maar door zonder te stoppen ?'

'Ja,' zei ik.

'In de onderwereld stopt het nooit,' sprak ze. 'Het gaat altijd maar dieper.'

'Eindeloos,' zei ik.

'Is dat een probleem ?' vroeg ze.

'Het ligt eraan,' zei ik.

'Nog even en ik ga open,' zei ze.

'Wat betekent dat ?' vroeg ik.

'Auschwitz,' zei ze.

'Ja,' zei ik.

'Jij bent Auschwitz,' zei ze. 'Ik ga open in de zin dat ik geboorte ga geven.'

'Aan wie ?' vroeg ik.

'Aan jou,' zei ze.

'Mocht eens tijd worden,' zei ik.

'Het is tijd,' zei ze. 'Er is niemand die de tijd kan stoppen.'

Toen zag ik niets dan vuur. Ik zonk er helemaal in weg, maar het verbrandde mij niet. Het genas mij. 'Auschwitz,' zei ze, 'jij poort van de onderwereld, jij doorvorser, nooit stop jij. Ik heb jou bevrijding gebracht. Geboorte. De wildernis zal branden totdat het werk geschiedt is. Jij bent het werk.'

Ik viel toen door een put, en werd wakker in mijn eigen bed. De wereld brandde niet, maar ik wist dat het brandde, want Sobibor was gekomen.

De evacuatie trein

In de stad was er een toneelgroep met een theatershow die ook een misdaadorganisatie bleek te zijn. Mensen verdwenen soms gewoon tijdens of vlak na de voorstelling onder de meest verdachte omstandigheden. Op een dag werd de gehele toneelgroep gearresteerd.

Het kwam overal in de kranten, en iedereen was geschokt, maar ze zagen het al wel aankomen. Hoe mooi de voorstelling ook was, en hoe beroemd en bekend, en zelfs geliefd de toneelspelers ook waren, dit zat eraan te komen. De gevangenis was hun deel. Daar hoorden ze thuis.

Niet dat dit zonder slag of stoot ging. Er schenen vreemde dingen ineens bij de politie te gebeuren. Dingen die ze niet konden verklaren. Ook in de stad waarin ze in de gevangenis opgesloten waren gebeurden er vreemde dingen, tot het punt dat de mensen geevacueerd moesten worden over de rivier. Het was een hele lange rivier, maar door bepaalde vervoerstechnieken en vervoersmiddelen ging het tamelijk snel, zodat de mensen erover verwonderd waren.

De poortwachter van het gebied achter de rivier zei : 'Dat komt ervan als je deze bepaalde groente eet waarin er een heleboel 'ambt' zit. Dat mag niet boven de twaalf gram per dag.'

Mensen in die stad aten gewoonlijks ver boven de twaalf gram, dus ze moesten minderen. Ze moesten afkicken. Anders zouden ze niet eens binnen mogen komen in het gebied achter de rivier. Het gebied achter de rivier wilde namelijk niet dezelfde toestanden als wat ze in de stad hadden.

Ik werd ook geevacueerd. Het ging allemaal heel snel, terwijl het zo'n brede rivier was. Ik zag er eerst als een berg tegenop. Een vriend van mij was nog niet geevacueerd. Ook zijn zus nog niet. Ik had hem aan de telefoon. Hij kon bijna niet spreken. Ik zei : 'Wacht je niet te lang ?' Ik vroeg toen wat er was gebeurd. Het had te maken met zijn zusje, maar ik werd telkens afgeleid door iets anders en moest telkens de telefoonhoorn neerleggen.

'Wat is er nu precies ?' zei ik. 'Ik moest even ergens anders kijken, maar ik ben weer terug.'

Hij stamelde met een heel zacht stemmetje.

'Toe, zeg het,' zei ik.

'Zij heeft, zij heeft,' stamelde hij.

'Wat ?' vroeg ik. 'Je weet dat je me alles kunt vertellen. Heeft ze haarzelf iets aangedaan weer ?'

'Ja,' zei hij. 'Ditmaal fataal afgelopen. Ze heeft de over overdosis van die groente genomen, boven de limiet waar je zelfs in deze stad niet boven mag komen want dan sterf je.'

'Tjonge,' zei ik. 'Waarom moest dat nou. Jullie hadden toch gewoon hier kunnen komen ?'

'Ja maar,' zei hij.

'Ja maar wat ?' vroeg ik. 'Jullie gaan er allemaal aan. Ik wil niet jou ook nog verliezen.'

'Ja, maar die toneelgroep,' zei hij. 'Ik kan er toch niet zomaar weggaan.'

'Wat bedoel je ?' vroeg ik. 'Je hebt toch verder niets met ze te maken ?'

'Technicus,' zei hij.

'Wat bedoel je ?' vroeg ik. 'Je bent niet hun technicus.'

'Nee,' zei hij.

'Waarom noem je het dan op ?' vroeg ik.

'Laat maar,' zei hij.

'Wordt je bedreigd ofzo ?' vroeg ik.

'Ja,' zei hij. 'Ik kan niet teveel zeggen.'

'Dan kom ik nu naar je toe,' zei ik.

'Nee, nee,' zei hij.

'Waarom niet ?' vroeg ik. 'Ik zit onder de twaalf gram, dus ik kan het me veroorloven.'

'Niet doen,' zei hij, 'gewoon niet doen.'

'Ja, maar in de stad wordt je gedwongen boven de twaalf gram te gaan. Ze zorgen daar altijd wel voor, en het zit ook altijd door andere dingen heen, dus eigenlijk speel je met je leven,' zei ik.

'Ik kan niet weg,' zei hij.

'Waarom niet ?' vroeg ik.

'Laat maar,' zei hij.

Woest gooide ik de hoorn op de haak. 'Ik zal naar hem toe gaan,' riep ik.

Ik had snel mijn jas aangetrokken, en rende naar buiten, toen naar de poort bij de rivier, maar de poortwachter hield mij tegen.

'Wat zeur je nou, knaap,' zei ik. 'Ik zit onder de twaalf gram.'

'Finito,' zei hij. 'Dat gaat je je leven kosten daar.'

'Waarom ?' vroeg ik.

'Je kunt niet terug,' zei hij. 'Niemand kan terug. Het zit daar in de lucht.'

'Dan doe ik een gasmasker op,' zei ik. 'Maar ik moet nog iemand helpen evacueren.'

'Komt niks van in,' zei hij. Ik raakte met hem in gevecht en we rolden in de rivier. Hij greep me, en trok me weer op de kant. 'Ik zal je moeten opsluiten,' zei hij.

'Doe dan,' zei ik.

Toen werd ik gearresteerd. Er kwamen meerdere agenten bij, en ze sleepten me naar een dichtbijzijnde gevangenis boven een tankstation. Het stelde niet veel voor.

'Finito,' zei de poortwachter.

'Ja, wat ?' vroeg ik.

'Je hebt er veel teveel van genomen,' zei hij.

'Daarom ben ik hier, om af te kicken,' zei ik. 'En blijkbaar is het teveel gevraagd een vriend in nood te helpen.'

'Hij kan niet geholpen worden,' zei de poortwachter.

'Waarom niet ?' vroeg ik met opgetrokken wenkbrauwen.

'Hij is dood,' zei de poortwachter. 'Ze hebben hem opgezet.'

'Hoe ?' vroeg ik.

'Al zijn organen uit zijn lichaam gehaald en volgespoten met hun parasitaire troep,' zei de poortwachter.

'Die lui van die toneelgroep hebben dat gedaan ?' vroeg ik.

'Ja,' zei de poortwachter.

'Maar waarom zit ik hier dan nog ?' riep ik. 'We kunnen hem toch wel weer tot leven wekken ?'

'Nee,' zei de poortwachter. 'Onmogelijk.'

'Waarom onmogelijk ?' vroeg ik.

'De doden leven niet,' zei de poortwachter, 'en zijn zusje …' Maar plotseling viel de poortwachter flauw. Ik greep naar mijn hoofd. Er brulde een beest in me. Ik was vergiftigd. 'Niet meer dan twaalf gram van die troep,' brulde het beest. Ik werd wakker en zat nog steeds in de evacuatie trein over de rivier. Ik had alles maar gedroomd. Toen ik uiteindelijk uitstapte aan de andere kant van de rivier was het een heel ander soort poortwachter. Hij had een lange jas aan, hoog opgetrokken, en een pet op die hij ver over zijn gezicht had geduwd. Hij keek me aan. Ik kon bijna zijn gezicht niet zien vanwege zijn pet. Hij moest mijn papieren inzien. 'Juist ja,' zei hij. 'Kom niet boven de twaalf gram met de finito groente. Het rommelt met de hersenen, en je gaat dingen zien die er niet zijn, gaat leven in een stad die niet bestaat, enzovoorts. Dat zijn symptomen van een overdosis.'

'Dus waar ik vandaan kom bestaat niet ?' vroeg ik.

'Nee,' zei hij.

'Maar waar kom ik dan vandaan ?' vroeg ik. 'Die troep zat overal in, en het werd gedwongen, en er was een toneelgroep opgepakt …' Verder kon ik niet spreken alsof mijn keel zat dichtgeknepen.

'Zei je daar toneelgroep ?' vroeg de man ineens.

Ik knikte.

Hij schudde zijn hoofd. 'Ik moet je wat vertellen,' zei hij. 'De stad aan de overkant is niet echt. Het is een hallucinatie die wel meerderen hadden toen ze werden gegrepen door de finito haaien. We mogen nooit zomaar mensen uit hun nachtmerrie wekken, dus dan gebruiken we eerst andere soort woorden, zoals een overdosis aan finito groenten, en dat je onder de twaalf gram moet blijven, maar kerel, je was dus gegrepen door haaien, en ….' Maar verder kon de poortwachter niets zeggen. Hij begon te waggelen en ging van zijn stokje … Ook ik begon te waggelen en ging van mijn stokje. Alles duizelde, en alles draaide om me heen. 'Wie ben ik, en waar ben ik ?' begon ik te roepen. Ik voelde water, en ik voelde tanden, en toen zag ik haaien, als in een nachtmerrie, en ik was in gevecht. Ik probeerde boven water te komen, van die haaien af te komen, maar ze bleven me maar in de diepte trekken.

Ik stond onder een vreemde soort stroom. 'Ik moet onder de twaalf gram komen van deze troep, maar ik wordt er gewoon in verdronken !'

Weer werd ik wakker in de evacuatie trein, en weer stapte ik even later uit, en kwam tot de poortwachter van het gebied achter de rivier. 'Onder de twaalf gram blijven he, met de finito groenten. Er zit ambt in.'

'Ja, ja,' zei ik. 'Ik weet het.'

Ik kreeg een huisje toegewezen, en het eerste wat ik deed was die vriend bellen en vragen hoe het met hem ging en met zijn zusje, en wanneer hij zou komen met de evacuatie trein. Ik kreeg hem aan de telefoon, allemaal heel vrolijk alsof er niks aan de hand was. Ja, alles ging goed. Zij zaten in het juiste stadsdeel, en er was daar niks aan de hand, en boven de twaalf gram kon ook geen kwaad. Ik begon hem het hele verhaal uit te leggen. Ik vroeg hoe het met die toneelgroep was afgelopen. Die zaten dus inderdaad in de gevangenis. Het bleek dat zijn zusje ook nog had geholpen in die zaak.

'Maar zit die ook niet boven de twaalf gram ?' vroeg ik.

Ja, dat klopte, maar dat kon geen kwaad.

Ik zei toen dat het een tikkende tijdbom was. Hij had nog genoeg tijd, zei hij. Ik noemde hem een waaghals. Toen moest hij weer ophangen, want hij had andere dingen te doen.

Ik belde toen ook naar zijn zusje, maar die nam niet op. Ik zuchtte. Ik hoopte maar dat ik nu echt wakker was geworden, maar aan de andere kant maakte ik me zorgen over die vriend en zijn zusje.

'Ja, nee, dat zit allemaal goed,' had hij gezegd, 'prima in orde.'

Ik liep naar de koelkast om wat finito groenten te pakken. Ik was er nog flink aan verslaafd, alhoewel ik keurig netjes onder de twaalf gram per dag bleef. Dat hield ik nauwkeurig bij. Ik wilde niet opnieuw in de problemen komen.

Opeens werd er gebeld. Het was het zusje van die vriend. Maar toen werd ik ineens weer wakker in de evacuatie trein nadat alles voor mijn ogen begon te tollen toen ik haar zag. Ze zaten toen gewoon tegenover me in de trein. Ik zuchtte van opluchting.

Maar ik hapte weer naar adem. Nee, ik was niet wakker. Ik was in gevecht met haaien in een rivier. Of was ik in zee ? Allerlei rillingen gleden door me heen. Nee, ik was niet wakker. Ik moest wakker

worden … 'godverrejantheo !' riep ik toen ze me weer beten en meesleurden.

Ik kon hier niet tegenop. Ik kon het niet. Het leek wel alsof alles tussen mijn vingers doorgleed. Ze trokken me tot een eiland, waar ze me uiteindelijk bloedend op het strand lieten liggen. Wie waren deze haaien, en waren het wel haaien ?

Ik strompelde even later het eilandje op. Ik was hier volop in de natuur, en overal groeide de finito groente. 'Ja, maar ik mag niet over de twaalf gram per dag gaan !' riep ik. Een donkere man met een rijsthoed liep toen op me af, heel zorgzaam. 'Er zit hier geen ambt in de groente, dus je kan rustig zoveel eten als je wil. Het is juist in de steden dat ze het ambt gif op de groenten spuiten, dus daarom kan je er maar heel weinig van eten.'

'Dat makes sense,' zei ik.

'Goed,' zei de man, 'dan gaan we nu eten.'

Hij nam mij naar een hut waar een tafel vol stond met allerlei groentes waar we in de stad maar heel weinig van mochten eten. 'Hier zit geen ambt in, dus eet maar volop.'

'Ik wordt gek van dat ambt,' zei ik.

'Het is hier niet,' zei de man. 'Dat gif word hier niet gebruikt.'

'Hoe kan ik dat zeker weten ?' vroeg ik.

'Proef maar,' zei de man, en bracht een lepel vol met groente naar mijn mond. Ik at, en bevond mij in de hemel. Bruisende natuur gleed over mij heen. Onbespoten groente. Dat had ik nog nooit geproefd. Het was de eerste keer in mijn leven.

Sandra en de
Boze Badmeester

'En er was een put van meisjesboeken waar alle nazi's ingeworpen werden, en ze moesten voor straf voor eeuwig meisjesboeken lezen,' las Jan hardop en sloeg toen het boek dicht. Toen moesten Jan en Sandra naar zwemles. Moeder bracht hen naar de kleedkamer van het zwembad, waar ze hun zwemkleding konden aantrekken. Daarna moesten ze onder een hele warme douche heenlopen, en zo kwamen ze bij het zwembad, waar de badmeester hen al opwachtte. Ze moesten wat baantjes zwemmen, en de badmeester legde hen wat uit. Sandra keek naar de lichtblauwe tegeltjes die ze gewoon door het water heen kon zien. Ook keek ze naar de witte klompen van de badmeester. Ze lette niet goed op, en kreeg zo een tik met de haak van de badmeester, waarmee hij vaak rondliep. 'Opletten en bij de les blijven, Sandra,' zei de badmeester streng.

Toen moest ze wel, maar alles tolde haar voor de ogen. Hij had haar op haar natte arm geslagen en het deed best wel pijn. Even wilde ze hem uitfoeteren, maar ze voelde zich te duizelig. 'Ik ben duizelig,' zei ze toen, en stapte het zwembad uit.

'Gewoon in het zwembad blijven, Sandra,' zei de badmeester, terwijl hij haar weer terugduwde. 'Maar ik ben zo duizelig,' zei Sandra.

'Dan moet je beter opletten,' zei de badmeester. Jan werd heel kwaad op de badmeester. 'Zeg, blijf van haar af,' zei hij toen hij het zwembad uitstapte, maar ook hij werd teruggeduwd. 'Ik ga het straks aan mijn vader en moeder zeggen,' zei Jan.

'Je doet maar,' zei de badmeester. Toen de badmeester even niet oplette rende Jan het zwembad uit naar de kleedkamer. 'Terugkomen !' riep de badmeester. Maar hij kon niet achter Jan aan, want dan zouden alle kinderen het zwembad uitkomen.

Sandra begon te trillen en te rillen. 'Ik voel me niet goed,' zei ze. Weer probeerde ze uit het zwembad te komen, maar weer werd ze teruggedrukt. Ze voelde haar toen helemaal wegglijden, en ging kopje onder. De andere kinderen begonnen bang te worden. Gelukkig kwam er een andere badmeester aan. 'Het gaat niet goed met één van je kinderen, zie ik,' zei hij, en trok Sandra toen uit het water. 'Misschien is ze ziek.'

'De badmeester drukte haar telkens terug !' riepen de kinderen.

'Is dat waar ?' vroeg de andere badmeester.

'Ik dacht dat ze haar aanstelde, want ze had net straf gehad,' zei de badmeester.

'Dit is gevaarlijk spel. Daar kun je voor ontslagen worden,' zei de andere badmeester.

'Ach, stel je niet aan, joh,' zei de badmeester. 'Ze speelt het gewoon om van me af te zijn.'

'Hoe weet je dat ?' vroeg de andere badmeester. 'Ze heeft haar ogen dicht, en praat niet.'

Maar toen werd de badmeester kwaad, en duwde de andere badmeester en Sandra het water in. De kinderen begonnen keihard te gillen, en er kwamen nog meer badmeesters en badjuffrouwen aangerend.

Het werd een dolle boel zoals je wel kunt begrijpen. Maar de badmeester hield vol dat Sandra het gewoon speelde om hem terug te pakken. Hij was loeikwaad.

'Je kunt kinderen nooit dwingen,' zei een badjuffrouw. 'Dat is levensgevaarlijk, of ze het nu spelen of niet.' Sandra lag levenloos in de armen van de andere badmeester, die ze weer op de kant hadden getrokken. 'Ze moet naar het ziekenhuis,' zei de andere badmeester. 'En hij moet ontslagen worden.'

Maar de badmeester werd erg kwaad, en duwde alle badmeesters en juffrouwen het zwembad in, terwijl hij Sandra greep en met haar wegrende. De kinderen begonnen nog harder te gillen. De badmeester rende met Sandra in zijn armen de trap op, en ging toen zijn grote kantoor in, en deed de deur op slot. 'Is het nu afgelopen met die spelletjes !' schreeuwde hij tegen Sandra, en sloeg haar in het gezicht. Sandra ademde bijna niet meer. Al gauw werd er op de deur geklopt, maar hij deed niet open. 'We zullen de politie bellen !' werd er geroepen. De badmeester rende toen door een andere deur met Sandra weg, weer een trap af, en toen het zwembad uit. Toen rende hij naar zijn grote witte auto, en even later scheurde hij ermee weg.

Hij bracht haar naar een grote witte villa diep in het bos. Hier nam hij haar uit de auto, en ging toen de grote villa in met haar in zijn armen, en bracht haar naar een grote ondergrondse zaal, waar een heleboel bedden waren met levenloze kinderen erin. Hier legde hij haar neer in een leeg bed. Een man met een lange witte jas kwam binnen. Hij had een brilletje op en haardossen aan beide kanten van zijn hoofd, maar boven op zijn hoofd en op zijn voorhoofd was hij kaal. 'Kun je hier weer een robot van maken,' zei de badmeester.

'Komt in orde,' zei de man. De man maakte toen even wat foto's van Sandra en ging toen weer weg. Sandra kreeg toen wat spuitjes totdat ze echt helemaal niet meer bewoog. Na een paar uur kwam de man in de lange witte jas weer terug met een robot die precies op Sandra leek. 'Perfect,' zei de badmeester. 'Nu ga jij die andere badmeesters eens haarfijn uitleggen dat je alles maar gespeeld had,' zei hij tegen de robot.

'Natuurlijk, het spijt me,' zei de robot, die gewoon op een echt mens leek.

De badmeester nam de menselijke robot mee en liet Sandra levenloos achter. Hij stopte de robot in de auto en reed toen terug naar het zwembad. Hij had de robot ondertussen allerlei instructies gegeven. En zo werd alles opgelost. De badmeester kon blijven. Sandra had zich afschuwelijk misdragen, en deed maar net alsof om hem te jennen en in de problemen te brengen. De andere badmeesters en badjuffrouwen moesten ook schuld bekennen.

Zo was er een heel crimineel netwerk in het dorp wat kinderen omwisselde met menselijke robotten die precies op die kinderen leken, en zo kon niemand wat vermoeden.

Maar Jan was een hele slimme jongen, en had al snel door dat dit Sandra niet was. Zijn ouders geloofden hem niet, maar de robot zei dingen die Sandra nooit zou zeggen. Daar kende Jan zijn zus te goed voor. Jan was heel fijngevoelig en veel intelligenter dan zijn ouders. Jan rook onraad. Nachtenlang had hij zware en diepe gesprekken met de robot, die zich nog steeds voordeed als Sandra, zijn zus, maar uiteindelijk gaf de robot toe dat ze Sandra niet was, maar slechts een robot. De robot had het erg met Jan te doen, maar was ook slechts een slachtoffer en kon niets doen. Jan was wel blij dat de robot het in ieder geval had toegegeven. Maar Jan's ouders geloofden er nog

steeds niets van, en zeiden dat Sandra zwaar ziek was dat ze dacht dat ze een robot was, en niet de echte Sandra was. Ze stuurden de robot naar een psychiater, en de robot kreeg zware medicijnen. Jan was inmiddels heel veel van de robot gaan houden en kon dit ook niet meer aanzien. Op een nacht smeekte hij de robot uit te leggen waar Sandra was. De robot probeerde het uit te leggen, maar raakte steeds in de war. Omdat Jan steeds meer bij zijn ouders er op aandrong om hem te geloven moest ook hij naar de psychiater en kreeg zware medicijnen. De psychiater zei dat zowel hij als Sandra naar een rustoord moesten. De psychiater nam hen beiden mee naar de grote witte villa diep in het bos. 'Ik herken dit !' riep de robot. 'Hier worden alle kinderen verwisseld door robotten !'

'Het is goed, Sandra,' zei de psychiater. 'Hier zul je tot rustkomen.'

'Hier moet ergens de ware Sandra liggen,' zei de robot.

'Het is goed, Sandra,' zei de psychiater weer, terwijl hij de auto parkeerde. 'Hier zal alles goed met je komen.'

'Luister dan eens naar wat ze zegt, idioot !' riep Jan. 'Heb je nu oren of niet ?'

'Ze is zwaar ziek, Jan,' zei de psychiater. 'En jij ook. Met de juiste medicatie zullen jullie hier snel tot rust komen.'

'Levenloos liggen die kinderen daar in zalen,' zei de robot. 'Jullie zijn zware criminelen.'

'Heus, het komt goed met je,' zei de psychiater, die de auto deur opendeed en uitstapte.

'Ik wil Sandra zien,' zei Jan.

'Sandra is hier,' zei de psychiater en wees op de robot.

'Nee, de echte Sandra,' zei Jan.

Toen liepen ze met z'n drieen naar het gebouw. Zowel Jan als de robot kregen een kamer in het gebouw. Jan begon het hele gebouw af te zoeken. De robot liep met hem mee. 'Het moet ergens in een zaal onder het gebouw zijn, Jan,' zei de robot. Na een tijdje vonden ze in de linkerzijde van het gebouw een trap naar beneden. Toen kwamen ze even later in de grote zaal waar levenloze kinderen lagen, waaronder ook Sandra. 'Zie je nu wel !' riep Jan. 'Dat is Sandra !'

Hij rende op Sandra af, en zag al snel dat ze helemaal onder plastic was. 'Sandra ?' riep hij, terwijl hij haar door elkaar begon te schudden. 'Word wakker !'

Maar Sandra bewoog niet. Ook de robot kwam dichterbij. 'Helaas, Jan,' zei de robot.

'Je hebt je best gedaan,' zei Jan tegen de robot. 'Gelukkig heb ik jou nog.'

De man met de lange witte jas kwam toen binnen. 'Kun je dit verklaren ?' vroeg Jan boos.

'Ja,' zei de man met de lange witte jas. 'Natuurlijk. Het is eigenlijk heel eenvoudig. Ze had een overdosis medicijnen genomen. Dat had ze nooit mogen doen.'

'Je liegt !' riep Jan. 'Kijk eens naar deze robot. Die lijkt precies op haar ! Jullie hebben hen omgewisseld ! Het begon allemaal doordat de badmeester haar bleef terugduwen in het water !'

'Je kletst, Jan,' zei de man met de lange witte jas. 'Ik ben dokter. Ik ben een professionele deskundige. Ik heb ervoor gestudeerd. Je weet nergens wat van.'

'Hoe komt het dan dat ze als twee druppels op elkaar lijken ?' riep Jan. 'Het zijn valse spelletjes die jullie spelen, stelletje omruilers !'

'Je kunt niets doen, Jan. Geef het maar op,' zei de dokter. 'Ze zullen mij toch altijd geloven boven jou, want ik ben de dokter.'

'Klootzak !' riep Jan. 'Wat hebben jullie met haar gedaan ! Sandra, antwoord me !'

Toen kwam de psychiater binnen. 'Jan moet tot rust komen,' zei de dokter.

'Dat merk ik,' zei de psychiater. 'Ik kon zijn geschreeuw in het hele gebouw horen.'

'Jullie zijn leugenaars,' riep Jan. 'Kijk nu eens wat jullie gedaan hebben. Zie dan. Ik had het bij het rechte eind. Hier ligt de ware Sandra. Kijk dan eens goed uit je doppen !'

De psychiater liep naar de levenloze Sandra, en voelde aan haar pols.

'Nou ?' zei Jan.

De psychiater keek naar Jan. Toen keek de psychiater naar de robot, en toen weer naar de levenloze Sandra.

'Nou ? Sprakeloos, hè !' riep Jan. 'Wie is er hier nu zwaar ziek !'

'Deze patient ligt hier al tijden na een overdosis medicijnen,' zei de psychiater. 'Ze mag misschien naar jouw idee op Sandra lijken, maar dit is Sandra niet.'

'Het gebeurt wel vaker dat patienten elkaar door elkaar halen,' zei de dokter.

Jan zuchtte diep. 'Hier valt niet tegen op te boksen, Jan,' zei de robot, 'maar jij en ik weten wel beter.'

'Jullie maken mensen psychisch kapot om jullie medicijnen kwijt te krijgen,' zei Jan. 'En dit hier is gewoon pure misdaad.'

Ineens opende de levenloze Sandra haar ogen. 'Ik heb alles gehoord,' zei ze. 'Sorry, maar ik ben Sandra niet. Mijn naam is Evelien, en ik ken jullie niet.' Toen sloot ze haar ogen weer.

'Weer een robot,' zuchtte Jan. 'Of misschien heb ik me wel echt vergist, of ben ik echt zwaar ziek,' en sloeg toen een arm om de robot die naast hem stond, en zei tegen haar : 'Dan moet jij toch echt de echte Sandra zijn, mijn zus. Misschien ben jij dan ook wel zwaar ziek. Wat is er toch met ons gebeurd ? Maar in ieder geval hebben we elkaar nog, en dat is het allerbelangrijkste.' En zo liepen ze arm in arm de zaal uit, de trap op.

De Dropping

Ze kon de zwarte auto herinneren waarmee ze was ontvoerd. Het kwam telkens terug in haar gedachten. Het verleden was een schaduw die haar achtervolgde, stalkte, altijd weer. Ze kwam maar niet los. Het was als een watermerk in haar leven. Het was ook niet weg te krijgen. Dagelijks dacht ze eraan en dagelijks vocht ze ertegen.

Ze namen haar naar het bos, naar een buurthuis, midden in de nacht, en daar moest ze allerlei karweitjes doen. Wat erna gebeurde kon ze zich niet meer herinneren. Alles werd zwart voor haar ogen. Het was uiteindelijk een witte auto die haar vrijzette, maar ze vertrouwde het niet. Ze deden zich voor als haar bevrijders, maar ze had altijd het gevoel dat ze samenwerkten met hen van de zwarte auto. Het was niet echt een auto, maar meer een klein busje. Dat gold ook voor de witte auto.

'Ze zijn niet goed snik,' dacht ze altijd. Er was nooit een zaak van gekomen. De criminelen waren nooit berecht. Ze kon er niet over praten. Ze had het een keer aan iemand verteld, maar die geloofde haar niet. Die dacht dat het een dropping geweest moest zijn. Ze is toen enorm aan haarzelf gaan twijfelen.

Ze had het eens nagevraagd aan mensen, en het bleek dat er wel vaak soortgelijke droppings werden georganiseerd. De zwarte auto's namen mensen geblinddoekt mee naar een onbekende plaats, waar ze werden gedumpt. Dan moesten ze hun weg naar huis vinden, alleen of in een groep, en als ze dan te ver afdwaalden en hun weg niet meer konden vinden, dan waren er de witte auto's om hen naar huis te brengen. Maar alles wat ze nog kon herinneren was dat ze niet was geblinddoekt, en dat ze naar het buurthuis ging waar ze karweitjes moest doen. Volgens haar was er misdaad in het spel. Omdat ze nooit werd geloofd sprak ze er op een gegeven moment niet meer over.

Ze had een heel onderzoek gedaan over droppings, en er waren geen gevallen bekend dat mensen ook karweitjes moesten doen. Misschien haalde ze wel dingen door elkaar. Er werd beweerd dat ze eens een tijdje in het buurthuis had gewerkt, en daar kreeg ze ook voor betaald. Ze vroeg zich af waarom ze dat niet meer kon herinneren. Ook had ze eens een verhaal gelezen over een uit de hand gelopen dropping waarin mensen niet alleen ergens werden gedumpt, maar ook werden opgesloten, als een soort boeienkoning. Dan moesten ze dus eerst zien los te komen. Maar dit was slechts een verhaal uit een boek. In dat verhaal werden ze zelfs gevoed met vergif opdat ze hun geheugen en orientatie zouden verliezen. Zij had het idee dat dat met haar was gebeurd. Het leek wel alsof het verhaal de enige was die haar begreep en alle informatie had. Het boek hield ze sindsdien op haar kamer, en ze vereerde het boek, ook al wist ze dat het maar een verhaal was. Ze twijfelde aan de echtheid ervan, maar ze achtte het wel een mogelijkheid.

Ze had meer op met boeken dan met mensen.

Op een dag kwam ze een meisje tegen die beweerde dat hetzelfde met haar was gebeurd. Ze durfde zichzelf toen weer een beetje te openen, en ze werden de grootste vriendinnen. Eigenlijk was het precies hetzelfde verhaal, en ze leende ook haar boek uit aan haar nieuwe vriendin, en die was er

helemaal dolenthousiast over, want dit gaf haar een antwoord wat er met haar gebeurd was. Beide meisjes leefden hier ontzettend van op. Ze besloten niets aan de buitenwereld te vertellen, want die zouden hen toch niet geloven. Ze hadden genoeg aan elkaar. Wel vroegen ze zich af of er meerderen waren zoals hen. Misschien in het buitenland. Ze zouden op de uitkijk staan. Ze besloten eens een anonieme advertentie te plaatsen in de krant, maar daar kwam niemand op af. Dit probeerden ze zelfs in het buitenland, maar zonder resultaat.

Op een dag toen ze bij elkaar waren stopte er een rode auto vlakbij hen. De man schoof een raampje naar beneden en gaf hen een foldertje. Het was een uitnodiging voor een dropping. Ze werden allebei vuurrood. 'Een dropping ? Dat nooit,' zei het ene meisje tegen het andere. Toen lazen ze het foldertje verder. 'De deelnemers worden meegenomen naar het buurthuis voor koekhappen en andere leuke spelletjes, en worden daarna gedropt ergens in het bos, voor een leuke tocht.'

'Ja, ja,' zei haar vriendin. 'En dat moeten wij zeker geloven ? Wij werden nooit geloofd, maar wij zullen hen ook niet geloven. We zijn toch niet gek ? Een ezel stoot zich nooit aan dezelfde steen. Koekhappen ? Vergif happen zullen ze bedoelen.'

Maar ze waren toch wel erg nieuwsgierig, en op de dag van de dropping gingen ze bij het buurthuis kijken. Het was er een hele vrolijke boel. Er liepen zelfs clowns rond, en een man met een hondje dat kunstjes deed. Ze hadden medelijden met de kinderen die daar waren, maar ze wisten dat er maar eentje de klos zou zijn, zoals eens bij hen, opdat de anderen hen nooit zouden geloven.

Arm in arm liepen ze toen naar huis, er vol van overtuigd dat daar een groot kwaad aan het gebeuren was, of misschien juist niet, opdat zij geheel geisoleerd zouden blijven in hun lijden en door niemand geloofd zouden worden.

Aan elkaar hadden ze genoeg. De wereld was immers gek geworden. Mensen konden zich niet meer inleven in elkaar. Er was teveel afstand, en teveel grootspraak. Niemand begreep hen beter dan het boek. In de buitenwereld was het allemaal de beste stuurlui staan aan wal. Iedereen had maar makkelijk praten. Met een blinddoek naar koek happen ? Natuurlijk word je dan bedrogen, en door leugen en vergif meegenomen. In hoeverre waren ze nog zichzelf ? Iets of iemand had zwaar met hen gerommeld. Onschuldige spelletjes noemen ze dat dan.

Het andere meisje had ook de herinnering dat er een mes op haar keel was gelegd. 'We laten de mensen de mensen,' zei ze. 'Wij weten wel beter. Als we onszelf niet meer kunnen geloven dan heeft het leven geen zin meer.'

Niet lang na de dropping van het foldertje liepen ze samen ergens op straat, en een zwarte auto stopte vlakbij hen. Een raampje ging naar beneden, en een boertje keek hen aan. 'Stap maar in, jongedames. Waar gaat de reis naartoe ?'

Plotseling herinnerden de meisjes het boertje. 'Zeg, heb jij ons niet eens eerder meegenomen ?' vroeg het meisje.

'Ik herinner hem ook,' zei haar vriendin.

'Nee hoor,' zei het boertje. 'Ik weet van niets. Stap in, dan kunnen we verder praten, want anders rijd ik weer weg.'

'Nee, nee, rijd niet weg,' zei het meisje. 'Alstublieft, vertel ons alles wat er gebeurd is.' Ze wist dat het boertje haar enige hoop was om aan de informatie te komen die ze nodig had.

'Laten we dat nu maar niet doen,' zei haar vriendin, 'want dan gebeurt weer hetzelfde, en dan moeten we er weer doorheen.'

'Ja, maar ik heb dit nodig, anders blijf ik met die vretende twijfels en onzekerheden lopen,' zei het meisje.

'Ja, maar wat als we het dit keer niet overleven ?' vroeg haar vriendin.

'Het leven heeft geen zin als ik hier niet achterkom,' zei het meisje.

Uiteindelijk zijn ze toen maar ingestapt, want ze konden hun nieuwsgierigheid niet bedwingen, en die nieuwsgierigheid was veel en veel groter dan hun angst.

'Vertel op,' zeiden de meisjes die inmiddels op de achterbank zaten. 'Wat heb je met ons gedaan de vorige keer ?'

'Zoals ik al zei,' zei het boertje, 'ik ken jullie niet, maar zou jullie graag een lift willen aanbieden. Waar gaat de reis naartoe ?'

'U heeft ons leven flink in de problemen gebracht,' zei het meisje. 'Alles wat we willen is een verklaring hiervoor.'

'Welnee,' zei het boertje. 'Jullie begrijpen het gewoon niet. Ik zal jullie meenemen naar de boerin dan krijgen jullie lekkere koek met thee.'

'Nee !' riepen de meisjes. Dat herinnerden ze zich ook ineens, dat ze koek met thee kregen van de boerin.

De boer reed met het zwarte kleine busje een weiland in, op weg naar een boerderij. Bij een klein boerderijtje stopten ze. 'We willen best meegaan, maar we drinken geen thee en eten geen lekkere koek. Alles wat we willen is een verklaring.'

'Loop maar mee,' zei het boertje ineens een stuk platter.

De boerin wachtte hen al op in de deur opening.

'Kom verder,' zei de boerin plat. De meisjes waren nog steeds niet bang, want hun nieuwsgierigheid had alle angst weggevreten. Zo lang hadden ze gewacht op een antwoord, en nu hoopten ze dat eens eindelijk te krijgen. In een kamertje vlak naast de keuken stond een tafel met een tapijt erover en wat stoelen. Daar gingen ze zitten. De meisjes staarden als gehypnotiseerd naar het servies. Dit kenden ze. Ze bestuurden ijverig de patronen van het servies.

'Thee ?' vroeg de boerin.

'Nee, en ook geen lekkere koek,' zei het meisje. 'Wij komen alleen voor het antwoord. Wat hebben jullie met ons gedaan de vorige keer, want ik herken alles.'

'Herinner je de dropping ?' vroeg de boerin.

Toen vertelde het meisje alles wat ze nog herinnerde.

De boerin schudde haar hoofd.

Toen begon ook het andere meisje haar verhaal te vertellen wat er veel op leek, en weer schudde de boerin haar hoofd.

'Lieve meisjes,' zei de boerin. 'Jullie begrijpen er niets van, helemaal niets. Maar drink even wat thee en eet even wat lekkere koek.'

'Dat doen we niet,' zei de vriendin van het meisje. 'Want dan komen we weer bij hetzelfde punt uit, en misschien erger.'

'Ach, doe even gezellig, neem even wat, dat praat makkelijker,' zei de boerin.

'Daar zijn we niet voor gekomen,' zei het meisje. 'Ik ben ervan overtuigd dat dat de oorzaak is van al onze problemen.'

De boerin schoot in de lach. 'Het was een dropping, en jullie hebben alles verkeerd begrepen. Maar heus, je hoeft van mij echt niets te eten of te drinken. Als je niet wil, dan houd het op. Dan drink en eet ik het lekker zelf op, en mijn man.'

'Maar krijgen we het antwoord nog te horen ?' zei het meisje.

'Wie niet eten en drinken wil krijgt ook niets te horen,' zei de boerin.

'Wat flauw,' zei de vriendin van het meisje. 'Dan zijn we helemaal voor niets gekomen.'

'Dat zijn nu eenmaal de regels,' zei de boerin.

'Okay,' zei het meisje, 'dan eet en drink ik, maar mijn vriendin niet. Is dat ook goed ?'

'Nee, zo zijn we niet getrouwd,' zei de boerin. 'Samen uit, samen thuis. Of allebei, of niets.'

'Wat is dat voor belachelijk gedoe,' zei de vriendin van het meisje.

'De regels van de dropping,' zei de boerin.

'Welke dropping ?' vroeg het meisje. 'We hebben helemaal nooit aan een dropping meegedaan. Het lijkt wel alsof we ertoe gedwongen waren.'

'Laten we even ter zake komen,' zei de boerin. 'Of jullie eten en drinken nu, of jullie vertrekken nu weer, want ik heb geen zin om nog langer mijn tijd te verdoen met jullie.'

'U eerst,' zei het meisje.

De boerin keek beledigd naar het meisje. 'Wat nou : u eerst ? Ik ben hier in mijn eigen huis, en ik laat me niet commanderen door één of andere snotaap. Drink en eet nu, of vertrek.'

'Goed,' zei het meisje boos, en begon van de koek te eten en van de thee te drinken, en haar vriendin ook.

'Nu kunnen we zaken doen,' zei de boerin.

Snel vielen de meisjes in slaap. 'Ze zullen elkaar niet meer herinneren,' zei de boerin. Ze werden

beiden op een bed in aparte kamers gelegd, en na een tijdje stopte er een witte auto bij de boerderij, die kwam om het meisje mee te nemen. Na ongeveer een kwartier kwam er een tweede witte auto die de vriendin van het meisje mee zouden nemen.

Het meisje werd wakker in de witte auto. 'Waar ben ik ?' vroeg het meisje.

Een man in een wit pak zei : 'We vonden je ergens slapend in het bos. Was jij van de dropping ?'

'Ik weet het niet meer,' zei het meisje. 'Ik weet helemaal niets.'

'Denk goed na,' zei de man in het witte pak.

'Volgens mij moest ik karweitjes doen in het buurthuis, en ben ik toen gevlucht, en toen vonden jullie mij,' zei het meisje. 'Het begon allemaal toen ik ontvoerd werd in een zwarte auto.'

'Weet je ook door wie ?' vroeg de man in het witte pak.

'Nee,' zei het meisje.

Ergens dichtbij haar huis zette de witte auto haar af. Toen liep ze verder alleen naar huis. Op haar kamer was het een enorme rotzooi. Op het bureau lag het boek over de uit de hand gelopen dropping. Ook lag er een kaart van haar vriendin in het boek als een boekenlegger. Op het kaartje stond : 'Ik ben zo blij dat we elkaar hebben gevonden.' Daaronder stond haar naam en adres. 'Wie is dat ?' vroeg het meisje zich af. Het leek een waas in haar geheugen te zijn. Ze kon haar nieuwsgierigheid niet meer bedwingen, en ging direct met de kaart naar het adres toe, maar er woonde een oud echtpaar. Het meisje liet de kaart aan het echtpaar zien, maar ze schudden het hoofd. 'Die woont hier allang niet meer,' zei de vrouw. 'Die woonde hier voordat wij hier woonden, maar toen zij was verongelukt ging het gezin verhuizen.'

De rillingen gleden door het meisje heen. 'Misschien is het een hele oude kaart dan,' zei het meisje.

'Dat moet wel,' zei de vrouw.

'Ik kan haar niet herinneren,' zei het meisje.

'Ach,' zei de vrouw. 'Dat kan gebeuren. Je komt zoveel mensen tegen in je leven. Dat kun je nooit allemaal bijhouden, vooral niet als het zo lang geleden is. Wil je misschien binnenkomen voor wat thee en een lekkere koek ?'

Het meisje schudde haar hoofd. 'N... nee, ik moet maar weer eens gaan,' zei ze, en rende toen weg.

Einde

De Goochelaar

Ze had geld nodig en ging in op de vacature voor assistente van een goochelaar. Het waren nogal gevaarlijke truuks, maar het betaalde daarom ook verschrikkelijk goed, en dat had ze echt nodig om uit de schulden te komen. Het waren meer stunts dan dat het goochelen was. Het werd ook uitgezonden op televisie. Vaak ging er iets mis, en daarom had het ook hoge kijkcijfers. Haar vader was hier erg kwaad om. Hij vergeleek het met de Romeinse arena's, en zei dat er in dat opzicht niet veel was veranderd. Hij wilde ook niet dat ze rookte. Eigenlijk was ze door het roken in de schulden gekomen, want ze rookte altijd haar gehele inkomen op, en daarnaast gokte ze ook.

Toen ze de baan als assistente van de goochelaar had gekregen was de hele familie blij, behalve haar vader. De hele familie ging dan ook naar de voorstellingen toe, maar vader kwam niet. Haar familie gaf meer om de roem en het geld dan om haar leven. Ze begreep haar vader wel, en wist diep in haar hart dat hij eigenlijk de enige was die echt van haar hield, maar ze had het geld nodig, en toch trokken de stunts haar aan. Dan had ze het gevoel dat ze echt leefde. Ze was nogal een waaghals, en dat was ze altijd al geweest.

De stunts waren ingewikkeld, en niet altijd goed te volgen, bijna als puzzels, en ook dat trok weer mensen aan. Mensen hielden van het mysterie. Soms gebeurden de stunts in de buitenlucht. Er waren al eens assistentes spoorloos vermist geraakt, en ook waren er al assistentes verongelukt, maar het hield haar niet tegen, en ook de staat verbood deze gevaarlijke spelletjes niet, waar vader erg kwaad over was. 'Je moet het zelf maar weten,' zei hij, 'maar ik kom niet.'

Dit keer gebruikte de goochelaar een lange, dunne zaag. Iedereen hield z'n adem in. Er waren drie hokken waarvan in twee hokken een assistente zat. Die waren erin gestapt, en toen werden de hokken verwisseld achter een zwarte doek, dus niemand wist waar ze inzaten. De goochelaar haalde toen het doek weg, en drukte zo de zaag in een gat en begon naar onderen te zagen in één van de hokken. Nadat dit was gebeurd gingen de andere twee hokken open, en de twee assistentes kwamen er glimlachend uit. Toen liet de goochelaar zich blinddoeken en er stond een hele rij van assistentes, zowel vrouwelijke als mannelijke, en ze hielden allemaal een object vast. Met de zaag sloeg de goochelaar de objecten gewoon uit hun handen. Toen namen ze weer andere objecten in hun handen, en er werd een groot bord van piepschuim voor de assistentes neergezet zodat het publiek hen niet kon zien. De zaag had een hele scherpe punt, als een zwaard, en de goochelaar begon zo telkens te steken door het piepschuim en te zagen. Maar aan het einde ging dat niet goed. Een mannelijke assistente gaf een schreeuw van achter het piepschuim. Iedereen was in grote paniek. Het had een dodelijke afloop.

Ze gingen allemaal bedroefd naar huis, maar ze hadden hun grote geld verdiend als troost. Wanneer er iets misging werd er altijd dubbel uitbetaald. 'Ik had jullie nog gewaarschuwd !' foeterde vader. Maar ze trokken zich niets van hem aan. De keer erop gingen ze gewoon weer. Vanwege dat ze nu goed verdiende gaf ze altijd peperdure cadeau's aan de familie. Mede daarom was ze ook heel geliefd. Vader nam de cadeau's nooit aan. Hij noemde het bloedgeld.

Op een dag belandde ze in het ziekenhuis door een stunt die weer verschrikkelijk misging. Ditmaal

was ze zelf de klos. De ziekenhuis rekening was zo groot dat ze ondanks haar vele geld er diep door in de schulden raakte. 'Er is altijd baas boven baas,' zei vader. 'Wist je dat het ziekenhuis een contract heeft met de goochelaar ?'

Ze keek haar vader vreemd aan. 'Dat wist je niet, hè ?' zei vader. 'De goochelaar wordt door het ziekenhuis goed betaald als hij zijn truken mis laat gaan, en soms krijgt hij grote bonussen zoals nu. Deze grote maatschappijen houden elkaar in stand. Ze leven van elkaar. Er is ook een contract met de begrafenis-ondernemer. Het is allemaal legaal, want de staat leeft er ook van. Ze zijn allemaal deel van het complot van de goochelaar.'

'Ja, maar wat moet ik dan ?' vroeg ze. 'In de prostitutie wil ik ook niet werken.'

Vader keek naar zijn dochter in het ziekenhuisbed. Haar been was in het gips, en haar hoofd zat flink in het verband.

'Zie, nu moet je meer terugbetalen dan dat je ooit hebt verdiend,' zei vader.

'Dus u denkt dat de goochelaar het met opzet heeft gedaan ?' vroeg ze.

'Het zijn criminelen,' zei vader. 'Je kunt ze niet vertrouwen.'

'Wat moet ik dan doen ?' vroeg ze.

Opeens kwam de goochelaar binnen. Hij had een fles wijn voor haar meegenomen, en wat pakjes sigaretten. 'Wat moet jij nu hier ?' vroeg vader.

't Spijt me,' zei de goochelaar, en richtte zich toen tot het meisje. 't Spijt me dat het mis is gegaan en dat je nu in diepere schulden zit dan ooit, maar als troost wil ik je je eigen show als goochelaar aanbieden.'

Vader schudde zijn hoofd, terwijl ze helemaal begon te stralen en te glimlachen. 'Mag het vader ?' vroeg ze, 'dan kan ik uit mijn schulden komen, en dan kan me verder niets meer overkomen als goochelaar.'

Vader schudde weer zijn hoofd. 'Ik geef het op met jou,' zei hij. 'Nog steeds begrijp je het complot van de goochelaar niet.' Toen rende hij de ziekenhuis kamer uit.

Het meisje keek uit het raam en zag haar vader even later het ziekenhuis uitrennen. Ze kreeg een heel vreemd gevoel in haar buik, een gevoel wat ze niet kon verklaren. Toen keek ze naar de goochelaar. 'Mijn vader is er niet blij mee, en ik wil hem niet nog een keer teleurstellen. Hij heeft me ook nog geen toestemming gegeven.'

'Okay, denk er maar even over na,' zei de goochelaar.

De volgende dag was vader er weer. 'En ?' vroeg hij.

'Ik heb de baan niet aangenomen, vader,' zei het meisje. 'Ik moet eerst uw toestemming hebben.'

'Wat denk je zelf ?' vroeg vader.

'Voor u doe ik het niet,' zei ze.

Vader zuchtte. 'Ik dacht dat je je lesje wel geleerd had, maar blijkbaar niet.'

'Ik doe het niet, vader,' zei ze. 'Is dat niet genoeg ?'

Vader schudde zijn hoofd. 'Ik kan maar niet tot je doordringen,' zei hij. 'Is er nog iets wat ik moet weten ? Het lijkt alsof je zwaar aan de drugs bent.'

'Ik gebruik inderdaad, vader,' zei het meisje. 'Het was een vereiste om mee te kunnen doen als assistente van de goochelaar.'

Vader zuchtte en schudde zijn hoofd. 'Welk middel ?' vroeg hij.

'De drugs heet 'de Goochelaar,' zei het meisje. 'Ik moest het geheim houden. Als ik het zou verraden zouden ze me koudmaken.'

Vader boog zijn hoofd. 'De Goochelaar ? Maar mijn lieve kind, dan ben je al levende dood. Ze noemen het ook wel zombie drugs. Het laat je hersenen afsterven totdat je hersendood bent, en dan bespelen de drugs verder de lichamelijke functies zodat het net lijkt alsof je nog leeft. Ik heb mijn dochter verloren.'

'Maar vader, ik leef nog,' zei het meisje.

'Ja, de drugs leven in jou als parasieten,' zei vader, 'maar je hart is dood. Ik heb een clown als dochter.'

Het meisje begon te snikken. 'Is er nog een mogelijkheid om hiervan af te kicken, vader ?'

'Voor zover ik weet is zaad van het telefoonplantje het enige tegengif,' zei vader.

'Heeft u dat toevallig, vader ?' vroeg het meisje.

'Ik heb het altijd op zak,' zei vader. 'In het kleine flesje wat aan mijn halsketting hangt.'

'Ik vroeg me altijd al af wat er in dat flesje aan uw nek zit,' zei ze lachend.

Vader keek heel ernstig. 'Je kunt het maar één keer in je leven gebruiken,' zei vader. 'Als je na gebruik weer van de goochelaars drugs neemt, dan val je op slag dood.'

'Ik begrijp het, vader,' zei het meisje. 'Ik zal u niet nog een keer teleurstellen.'

Vader haalde het flesje van zijn ketting, opende het flesje, en gaf zijn dochter ervan te drinken. Het meisje begon te snikken. 'Ik voel me zo vreemd, vader, alsof ik van een diepe slaap ben ontwaakt. Ik kan weer heel goed en diep nadenken, en ik voel mijn hart weer kloppen.'

Vader glimlachte. 'Ik hoop dat je snel weer naar huis kan.'

Ineens kwam de goochelaar binnen. 'Heb je je beslissing al gemaakt ?' vroeg hij. Het meisje raakte direct in paniek. 'Laat hem weggaan !' gilde ze.

'Je moet nu weggaan,' zei vader, 'en nooit meer terugkomen.'

'Ik zie het al,' zei de goochelaar.

'Ren hard,' zei vader tegen de goochelaar. De goochelaar rende hard de kamer uit, nog wel harder dan vader gisteren rende. Toen keken ze beiden door het raam en zagen de goochelaar het ziekenhuis uitrennen.

'Opgeruimd staat netjes,' zei vader.

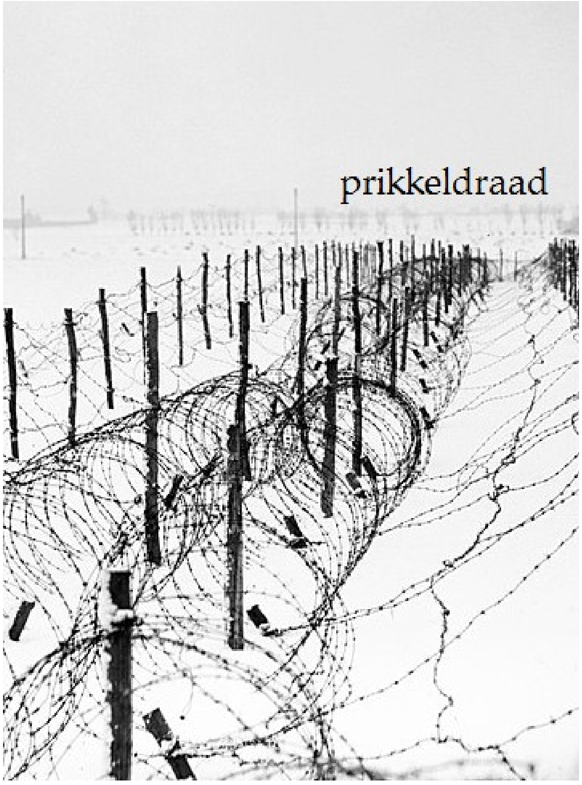
'Zou hij ook niet kunnen afkicken, vader ?' vroeg het meisje. 'Heeft u nog meer spul van het telefoonplantje ?'

Vader schudde zijn hoofd. 'Ik kreeg het eens van een vrouw die ik van de verdrinking had gered. Ze legde uit wat het was, en zei erbij dat ik het maar één keer kon gebruiken. Het was het laatste wat er nog op aarde was van het telefoonplantje. Ze zei dat het plantje al was uitgestorven.'

'Maar wat als er toch nog ergens een laatste telefoonplantje bestaat, misschien ergens diep onder de grond ofzo, of misschien zelfs grote velden vol van zulke plantjes ?' zei het meisje.

'Dan wens ik de goochelaar heel veel geluk en succes op zijn zoektocht,' zei vader.

Einde


prikkeldraad

prikkeldraad

coab 2019

verzamelbundel voor de mid-herfst (voorwoord)

Het Vreemde Huis
Voor hetzelfde geld
De Brug van Heimdal
Lijm
De Politie Hond
De Vrouwenondergoed Verkoper
zekere grenzen
De Twaalfjes
Het Feestvarken
een wereld op wielen
het pilletje
opengebroken horizon
prediker's vrouw
boek van onkruid
onkruid vergaat niet
wat alleen het onkruid kon vinden ...
waar het onkruid lacht ...
waar het onkruid de hekken sluit
prikkeldraad

verzamelbundel voor de mid-herfst (voorwoord)

Het is alweer bijna mid-herfst en dan geven we zoals gewoonlijks ook wel weer een verhalenbundel uit. Dit keer is het een verhalenbundel met zowel verhalen als gedichten, genaamd 'prikkeldraad'. Het is dus al bijna weer hoog herfst, en we gaan op naar de winter wat altijd wel zo'n beetje het prikkeldraad seizoen is. We herdenken dan ook de oorlogswinter. Het komt steeds verder van de mens af te liggen. De vader van mijn vader had de oorlog nog meegemaakt en was ontvoerd naar Duitsland door de nazi's en moest daar werken. Ik heb hem lang gekend, maar de nieuwe generatie kent het bijna niet meer. De oorlog is zogenaamd voorbij, maar dat is helemaal niet zo. En denk eens aan de dieren die nog steeds in de holocaust leven. En dat allemaal door de gestoorde gekken die zichzelf 'de mensheid' noemen. Het zijn geen mensen. Ze doen maar net alsof. En daarom gaat de oorlog door.

Introspectief, meditatief. Soms moet je net even wat dieper doordenken.
Het leven geeft halve verhalen, die je zelf moet afmaken,
het hek durven overgaan, waar het onkruid onverstoord voortwoekerd.
Door de samenleving verboden, maar levensbelangrijk.
Onkruid kan een symbool zijn voor vele dingen,
o.a. het verzet.

Het Vreemde Huis

Ik was hier nog nooit eerder geweest.
Het stak me.
Ik viel op de grond en gilde.
Ik werd wakker in het ziekenhuis.
Ik probeerde eraan terug te denken wat er was gebeurd, maar ik kon het me niet herinneren.

Volgens mij was ik bij een vreemd huis en zag ik een vreemde vrouw, maar ik wist het niet meer zeker.

Niemand kon het me vertellen. Ze deden er allen wazig over.
Ik had het idee dat ze me het niet wilden vertellen.
Ik wilde terug naar waar ik was geweest, waar het was gebeurd, maar ze lieten me er niet naartoe gaan. Ik wist ook niet waar het was, maar soms had ik wel een idee, en dan vaagde het weer weg.

Volgens mij had ik een zwangere vrouw gezien, naakt, door een raam.
Ze was donker.
Iets had me gestoken, en daarom wist ik het niet zeker.
Ik twijfelde. Misschien bazelde ik maar wat. Misschien ijlde ik.

Maar die vrouw … ik kende haar …
Ik wilde haar niet zien, maar ik bleef kijken … Ik had weg moeten rennen … Iemand stak me … Het was niet zo … Ik verbeeldde het me maar … Het was een vreemd huis, dat weet ik wel, en ik zag een vreemde vrouw … Ik raakte onder hypnose … Ik kende haar, maar waarvan ?

Een breuk, zei de dokter … Ik moest weten wie het had gedaan, maar hij wist me niks te vertellen of wilde het me niet vertellen …

We hebben er alles aan gedaan, zei hij …

'Wat ?' vroeg ik …

Ze deden zo vaag en wazig … Daar zijn ziekenhuizen voor hè … die mensen communiceren gewoon niet … Ik was mijn geheugen kwijt door wat er was gebeurd … Het was gewoon een zwart gat … Maar die donkere vrouw … Ik kende haar … Ze was zwanger of met haar baby …. Ik heb gewoon ergens een kink in de kabel van wat er was gebeurd … En ik wist niet wat ?

Wie had het gedaan, en wie was zij ?

Het was een vreemd huis, dat is alles wat ik weet … Ik kom er gewoon niet bij … Ik heb een wond in mijn hoofd … een breuk, zegt de dokter …

Ik zit hier gewoon een brief te schrijven, maar ik maak het niet af … Hadden wij niet wat ? En waar zou ik het naartoe moeten sturen ? Ik kan me zo kwaad maken dat ik het me niet kan herinneren … Ik moet wel een klap op m'n hoofd gehad hebben van achteren … Ja, iemand stond achter mij, ik weet het zeker, maar wie ? En waar ? Het was een vreemd huis, dat is alles wat ik weet, en een vreemde vrouw, maar kende ik haar niet ? Hadden wij niet wat ? Ze was zwanger of met een baby … Of was het mijn baby ?

De dokters hier werken niet mee. Ik moet rust nemen, en dan zal de breuk wel weer herstellen … Ik hoop mijn geheugen ook … Ik wil naar dat vreemde huis toe, maar misschien was het wel mijn eigen huis … Alles is vreemd voor hen die het niet kunnen herinneren …

Een zwangere vrouw … of een vrouw met een baby … Een donkere vrouw … En iemand moet wel achter mij hebben gestaan om mij een klap te verkopen … Maar waarom stond ik daar ? Ik stond bij een raam … Ik kon zo door de weerspiegeling van het raam iemand achter mij zien staan met een mes … Ik was gewoon te laat …

Misschien bazel ik, of ijl ik, maar zo was het gegaan volgens mij … Ja, het was een mes … Wie was hij of zij die achter mij stond ? Ik was te laat … Ik kon me niet meer omdraaien, maar zag het als een flits in de weerspiegeling van het raam … En nu ben ik hier in het ziekenhuis … Ik weet niet eens waar ik die brief naartoe moet sturen en naar wie …

Wat deed ik daar ? Ik stond in de bosjes door het raam te gluren … Die vrouw was helemaal naakt, zwanger … of met een baby … Nee, volgens mij had ze wat aan … Volgens mij was ze helemaal niet naakt … Hoe kom ik daar nu weer bij ? Het is mijn hoofdwond …

Ik krijg hier maar geen vat op … Het kan me zwaar kwaad maken, maar ik schiet er niets mee op … Daarom schrijf ik het maar op … Het was een vreemd huis, dat is alles wat ik zeker weet … Een vreemde vrouw, donker, zwanger of met een kind … Ik weet niet hoe oud dat kind was … 't Kan ook wel zo zijn dat het kind veel ouder was … Was het mijn kind ? Waarom gluurde ik daar ? Kan iemand me dat vertellen ? Er moet iets gebeurd zijn … Iemand heeft niet zomaar een breuk en geheugenverlies … Ik zie dat kind nog zo door de ramen staren naar mij … Ze zei : 'Mamma …' en begon te wijzen … Hoe oud zal het kind geweest zijn ? Ik heb geen idee … Niet volwassen in ieder geval … Echt nog zo'n kind … Een mamma's kind … Zo'n kind die altijd haar moeder bij de rok vastheeft … niet loslaat … Maar waar was de vader … Misschien aan het werk, of misschien … achter mij ?

Waarom keek ik daar door het raam ? Blijkbaar was het gevaarlijk terrein … Of was het mijn huis ? Nee, dit huis was echt heel vreemd … Ik kende het niet … En die vrouw en dat meisje waren ook vreemd … Ik kan me er zo kwaad om maken dat ik het me niet herinner … Die vrouw had volgens mij een mes, maar er lag ook brood … Volgens mij was ze brood aan het smeren voor haar kind … Of voor haarzelf, of voor beiden … Misschien dat haar man net thuiskwam en mij zag staan … Maar ja, daar steek je iemand toch niet voor neer ?

Die dokters zeggen echt helemaal niets … Misschien weten zij het ook niet … Ze waren er niet bij …

Volgens mij was die vrouw gisteren hier om me te bezoeken met haar kind … Meer weet ik ook niet … Volgens mij had ze zoiets gezegd als : Kom je nog eens langs bij ons vreemde huis ?

Vreemde vraag vond ik het … Nee, ik wil niet nog een keer een mes in m'n rug, of hoofd … Ik zal me gek wezen … Wie stelt nu zo'n vraag na alles wat er was gebeurd ?

Nee, nee, volgens mij verzin ik nu maar wat … Die vrouw was hier, maar zonder haar kind … Ze was zwanger … Ze boodt mij wat aan, maar wat weet ik niet meer … Het is zo'n chaos in mijn hoofd, en het steekt … Ik kan beter stoppen met denken … Ik vertrouw niet meer wat ik denk dat ik me herinner … Het lijkt telkens anders te zijn … Ze hebben me flink verwond … Wie het dan ook mochten wezen … Die vrouw leek me heel zorgzaam, maar voor mij was het een vreemde … haar kind ook … Ik kan beter stoppen …. Dit leidt nergens toe …

Het was een vreemd huis, dat is alles wat ik zeker weet …. en een vreemde vrouw … Of ze hier nu wel of niet was doet er even niet toe …. Ik denk op het moment niet al te helder … Het is een breuk, zegt de dokter … Die breuk doet dat … Hij hoopt op een snel herstel, en weet dat dit lastig voor me is … Ze vertellen me verder niets … Ze zeggen dat ik teveel praat, dat ik rust moet houden … Naar mijn idee praat ik helemaal niet teveel …

Het vreemde huis … Komen we daar weer bij terug …. Een vreemde vrouw, donker, al dan niet zwanger, al dan niet naakt … Ik zag het door het raam, en toen gebeurde het, en daarom ben ik hier … Wat er gebeurde weet ik nog steeds niet, maar het moet flink ernstig zijn geweest … Ik maak me er telkens erg kwaad om … Het heeft mijn geheugen aangetast … De dokter zegt dat het van korte duur zal zijn … Hij verwacht dat ik spoedig mijn geheugen weer terug heb … Laten we het hopen … Ik wil naar dat vreemde huis, naar die vreemde vrouw … Ik wil naar het kind … Maar eigenlijk wil ik niet, vanwege dat mes, of die messentrekker …. Wie het ook moge zijn … Dat kan toch niet ? Je kan toch niet zomaar even op je dooie gemak iemand neersteken van achteren die door een raam staat te gluren … Misschien wel naar zijn eigen vrouw en kind ? Wie zal het zeggen ? Tegenwoordig schijnt alles te kunnen … Je kan niets meer doen tegenwoordig of je wordt er voor afgeknald. Hup, weg ermee, de volgende … Het ziekenhuis verdient er goed aan …

Misschien heeft de dokter het zelf gedaan ? Had hij patienten nodig ? Zo mag ik niet denken natuurlijk, maar ik denk het wel … Dat gebeurt … Daar kan ik verder niets aan doen …

Die gedachte kwam wel in mij op ja, want hij doet er veel te geheimzinnig over …

Volgens mij had die dokter een kat … Volgens mij kende ik hem … Was het niet de buurman ? … Laat ik maar stoppen … Ik begon veel te paranoide te worden … Ik zit gewoon dingen te verzinnen nu … Ik heb teveel tijd aan mijn handen nu ik die hoofdwond heb … Maar ja, dan had hij me maar niet van achteren moeten neesteken … Waarom deed hij dat eigenlijk ? Had hij niets anders te doen ? Het was toch mijn eigen huis en tuin ? Of had ik hem op heterdaad betrapt met mijn vrouw ? Had hij mijn vrouw misschien zwanger gemaakt ? Ik hoop dat het geen verkrachting was … Maar zo niet, dan ben ik dus ook weer in mijn vrouw teleurgesteld … Wat doet zij nog meer allemaal achter mijn rug om ? Wat voor figuren haalt zij naar binnen tegenwoordig ? En dat kind dan ? Zegt dat kind daar allemaal dan niks van ?

Volgens mij was dat kind hier gisteren om me op te zoeken, zonder haar moeder, met cadeautjes, heel lief … Ach, ik weet het niet meer … Misschien verzin ik het allemaal maar …

Wel weet ik dat het een vreemd huis was … Ik hoorde daar niet … De dokter probeerde me nog te helpen, maar het was al te laat … Aardige man, die dokter, alleen hij zegt niet veel … en is ook niet één van de snelsten …. Hij had me best wel kunnen redden …

Ik word soms zo moe van mezelf als ik het niet meer weet, het niet meer herinner … Ik wil er op uit, langs de huizen lopen, door de straten … misschien herinner ik het me dan weer …

Het was een vreemd huis, vreemde vrouw, vreemd kind … Dat is wat ik zeker weet … of die vrouw was zwanger, één van die twee …. Naakt of half naakt, en ik keek door het raam … Toen gebeurde

het … Of zou ik het maar gedroomd hebben ? Waarom ben ik hier ?

Het was een hele mooie tuin, dat weet ik nog wel. Ik stond daar tussen de struiken bij het raam. Volgens mij had ik een pistool … Maar waarom verdedigde ik me dan niet ? Nee, volgens mij had ik geen pistool, maar degene die achter mij stond … Ik hoor hem nog zo lachen, en daarna wist ik niks meer … Alles zwart voor mijn ogen … Ik vraag me af of die vrouw nog leeft, en haar kind …

Het was een hele mooie tuin, dat wel … Maar daar heb je niets aan als je met een kogel in je kop op het gras ligt te spartelen. Ja, mooie tuin. Je kan niet alles hebben. Die vrouw liep toen naar het raam toe, en keek, met haar kind op haar arm. Ze was zichtbaar in een shock. Waarom moest mij dat overkomen ? En dat arme kind … Misschien was ik haar vader wel …

Het was een hele mooie tuin, en toen een hele stoet met ziekenhuiswerkers, brancards … politie erbij … Er was niet veel meer van die mooie tuin over … En die vrouw stond stokstijf voor het raam … Volgens mij had ze ook een telefoon in haar hand … Kon wezen dat zij ze allemaal had opgebeld …

Nee, dat kind moet veel ouder zijn geweest, iets van in de twintig … Ze had al zo'n volwassen gezicht … Volgens mij stond zij met een telefoon in haar hand … Ik weet het niet meer …. Misschien bazel ik wel wat, ijl ik … Het was een mooie tuin … Dat is alles wat ik weet … Laten we het daar op houden … Prachtige tuin, en toen al die werkers … pianisten, violisten … Ik lag op de grond … Of stond ik nu ? Volgens mij stond ik eerst … Ik ging plat … Misschien door die muziek ? Het was heel mooi, dat weet ik nog wel …

Het was een vreemd huis, met vreemde muziek … Ik vond het mooi, misschien wel wat te mooi … Ik kon het niet goed zien … Volgens mij ben ik toen dichterbij gekomen … Ik zag die vrouw … Ze danste … En toen danste ze met mij …. Volgens mij vielen we toen … of …. Nee …. Die muziek … er was iets met die muziek … gewoon te vreemd …. Ik kon niet meer ademhalen …. Te mooi … Ja, daarom ben ik hier … Daarom ben ik hier ….

Einde

Voor hetzelfde geld

'Ouwe juten zak als broek, een onbroek,' hoorde ik iemand zeggen toen ik half dronken een Rotterdams café instapte. 'Ja, dat had hij aan,' zei die persoon weer. Het was de barkeeper die tegen een klant sprak. 'Hij draait z'n hand er niet voor om. Je hoeft maar te zeggen dat je van iemand al geruime tijd last hebt, en het klusje is zo geklaard. Daar wordt hij voor betaald. Het is zijn beroep. Daar wordt hij ook voor beschermd.'

'Hoe weet je dat allemaal ?' zei een andere man aan de bar.
'Tja, kijk,' zei de barkeeper, 'ik vul natuurlijk de lege glazen, hè, dan hoor je nog eens wat. Hij is hier bijna kind aan huis, en dan het ene naar het andere glas, en dan krijg je die verhalen te horen.'

Ik wist niet hoe ik zo dronken was gekomen. Ik voelde me zo. Maar ja, dat gebeurd wel vaker met dronken mensen. Die weten achteraf niet meer hoe het gekomen is. Wat ik me nog wel herinner trouwens is dat ik ergens aanspoelde op een strand. Wat daarvoor dan weer was gebeurd weet ik niet meer. Ik spoelde aan op een strand, strompelde het strand op, en raakte in gevecht met een piraat. Ik weet niet waarover het ging, dat kan ik me niet meer herinneren. Geld of goud ofzo. Ik overleefde het gevecht. Ik zag hem op de grond liggen en strompelde weer door. Ik weet niet wat ik had gedaan, maar hij was flink rustig zo. Toen werd ik op een landweg ergens aangevlogen door een hond. De hond was verschrikkelijk wild, en begon me overal te bijten. Ik raakte zwaargewond, vooral aan mijn hand. Dat ging me door merg en been, steken dat het deed. Ik gaf die hond een schop, en overleefde het zo. Ik zag hem daar halfdood liggen toen, en ben toen verder gegaan. Ik was zwaar gewond, ook in mijn knie gebeten enzo, en in mijn heupen, maar mijn hand was er het ergste aan toe. Op sommige momenten voelde ik helemaal niks meer, alsof ik niet meer bestond ofzo.

Ik strompelde naar het dichtst bijzijnde stadje, een brugje over, en klopte aan bij een willekeurig huisje, nog steeds zwaargewond. Deed er een vrouw open. Nou, kom maar binnen, ziet er niet best uit. Toen ging ze mijn wonden verbinden. Bleek even later dat ze dokter was, dus wilde ze er nog geld voor hebben ook. Dat had ik dus niet. Toen raakte ik ook nog eens met haar in gevecht, alsof ik er dat nog allemaal bij kon hebben.

Dat zijn zo van die dames hè, die zeggen : 'Kom maar, kom maar,' maar ze hebben een groot beest naast zich. Je zou bijna niet meer op deuren durven te kloppen zo, maar ik moest wel. Ik was nog wel erger verwond toen, zweefde ergens op het randje van de dood door die vrouw en die gemene hond. Ik klopte dus weer ergens aan, dachtende dat het mijn dood dit keer wel zou worden. Bleek het een huurmoordenaar te zijn. Ik kende hem wel. Hij zat vroeger bij mij in de klas. Hij vroeg mij om het lijstje toen. Ik zei : 'wat voor lijstje ?'

Hij zei : 'Nou, het lijstje met degenen die je al geruime tijd lastig vallen en waarvan je af wil. Het is mijn beroep.' Ik dacht even na, nog steeds verbaasd dat ik hem helemaal hier tegen was gekomen. Wat was de wereld toch weer klein ineens. 'Nou ja,' zei ik, 'nu ik er toch ben. Ik zou wel van die en die afwillen.' Natuurlijk had ik het ook nog even over die vrouw.

'Ik draai m'n hand er niet voor om hoor,' zei hij toen. 'Dat klusje is zo geklaard. Een peuleschilletje, en omdat jij het bent doe ik het voor de helft van de prijs.' Hij moest toen even weg, en kwam toen terug en zei : 'Het klusje is al geklaard hoor. Het is mijn beroep. Ik heb er handigheid in. Ik word er ook voor beschermd.'

Hij liet mij toen zijn vuile bebloede handen zien. Toen wilde hij dus geld hebben, en dat had ik niet. Daarna kan ik me niks meer herinneren, alleen dat ik half dronken dat Rotterdamse café inliep. De barkeeper had het net over hem. Ik ben blij dat ik nog leef overigens. Voor hetzelfde geld was ik zijn volgende patient. Waarschijnlijk heb ik het puur overleefd omdat ik bij hem in de klas zat en hij alles voor mij voor een vriendenprijsje deed.

Einde

De Brug van Heimdal

Ze was zwanger in het ziekenhuis, en lag daar, terwijl ik van haar weg wilde, omdat ik op zoek was naar ware liefde. Ik liep over de brug naar huis en kwam Heimdal tegen, een constructie werker die ik kende. 'Moet je niet bij je vrouw zijn ?' vroeg hij.

'Ben ik net geweest,' zei ik. 'Ik vind het wel goed zo. Ik ga bij haar weg. Ik ben op zoek naar ware liefde. Dit is het niet voor mij.'

'Wat dan wel ?' vroeg Heimdal.

'Boeken denk ik,' zei ik.

'Ja, maar je kunt haar toch niet zomaar aan haar lot overlaten nu ze bevallende is ?' zei Heimdal.

'Ik zal haar wel een boekje sturen,' zei ik koud.

'Dat is ook niet aardig,' zei Heimdal.

'Dit is het gewoon niet voor mij,' zei ik. 'Het boeit me gewoon niet.'

'Volgens mij ben jij gewoon zwaar overspannen,' zei Heimdal. 'Ik heb nog wat voor je.'

Hij is toen met me meegelopen naar mijn huis in een flat aan het riviertje. Tegenover het riviertje woonde mijn oom en zijn gezin, in een heel langwerpig huis alles op de begane grond. Dan moest je eerst een bruggetje over. Heimdal kende hem ook wel. Had hij nog bij in de klas gezeten vroeger.

Toen Heimdal binnen was in mijn huis trok hij z'n tas open en haalde er een apparaat uit. Het was een heel ingewikkeld verwarmings apparaat, maar nog veel meer. Het regelde de temperatuur, automatisch, als een soort huiselijke weer machine, maar nog veel meer. Het apparaatje was al oud, en hij probeerde het aan de praat te krijgen. Hij werd erg kwaad toen het niet lukte. Hij begon zelfs kwaad op mij te worden. Ik zei : 'Nu lijkt het wel alsof jij zwaar overspannen bent. Heb je te hard gewerkt ofzo ?' Toen probeerde ik hem te kalmeren en gerust te stellen. We zijn toen beiden naar mijn oom gegaan. Ik had mijn oom al een tijdje niet gezien en viel hem in zijn armen. Het was best wel emotioneel. Ik zei tegen Heimdal dat ik altijd heel erg tegen mijn oom had opgezien, dat het een soort kinderheld was voor mij toen ik klein was. Daarna was het contact verwaterd, alhoewel we zo dichtbij elkaar woonden. Mijn oom was heel trots erop dat hij zoveel voor mij betekende. 'Kijk, het begint al te werken,' zei Heimdal.

'Wat ?' vroeg ik.

'Dat apparaat,' zei Heimdal. 'Blijkbaar moest het eerst opwarmen, maar het apparaat herstelt dus ook sociale contacten wanneer dat nodig is.'

'Mooi,' zei ik. Ineens begon de liefde voor mijn vrouw weer omhoog te borrelen. 'I... ik moet maar weer eens gaan,' zei ik. 'Mijn vrouw is hoogzwanger en heeft mij nodig.'

Heimdal knipoogde naar mijn oom.

'Ga jij maar snel, jongen, dan drink ik nog even een glaasje plezier hier met mijn klasgenoot van vroeger,' zei Heimdal.

Ik rende terug, helemaal naar de grotere brug toe waarachter het ziekenhuis lag. Maar midden op de brug sloeg een grote angst me om het hart. Ik durfde niet meer verder. Ik ben toen teruggegaan naar Heimdal en mijn oom en viel ze huilend in de armen. 'Nog steeds zwaar, jongen ?' vroeg één van hen. 'Wat als we er nu samen naartoe gaan ?'

'Nee, nee, ik kan het niet meer,' zei ik. 'Ik ben blij dat ik jullie heb. Meer kan ik niet aan.'

Heimdal keek me aan. 'Zeg, vertel me eens, is er een keer iets gebeurd waardoor je zo bent geworden ? Heeft ze je iets aangedaan wat ik nog niet weet ?'

'Ik wil er niet over praten,' zei ik.

'Goed,' zei Heimdal. 'Het apparaat moet nog even opwarmen. Als het goed is zal het apparaat je gehele huis herbouwen, en ook je hele sociale netwerk, en dan zal alles op zijn plaats vallen.'

'Ja, maar het verleden kan ik niet meer veranderen,' zei ik. 'Gebeurd is gebeurd.'

Heimdal glimlachte. 'Maar het apparaat kan het verleden wel veranderen.'

Einde

Lijm

Donkere vrouw in het wit,
Achter glas is zij, maar ik zie het,
Als het sprei van sneeuw,
Een koningin, van dromen

Donkere vrouw in het paars,
Niets anders dan een waas,
Dit glas laat nog wel minder zien,
En voelen al helemaal niet,
Ik leg mijn hand tegen het glas, en het wordt warm …

Donkere vrouw in het roze,
Er is niets tegen haar,
Dit zijn de zomen van de natuur …

Waarom kan de mens niet zien dat zij de adem van de filosofie is,
De waterval vanuit de aarde,
Als de sluier van moeder aarde,
Ik leg mijn hand tegen het glas en dan mijn lichaam, en het wordt warm,
Als dan het glas breekt of wegsmelt zwem ik in het water, en ook zij

Als zij de warmte van de natuur is, dan kan de kou nooit heersen, want zij is overal.
Als zij slechts fragmenten is van een stukgeslagen aarde,
Dan ben ik de lijm die haar kan helen.

De Politie Hond

Zij en haar herdershonden … Was ze zelf ook niet als een herdershond ? Toen ze haar mes trok veranderde ze in een schaap, en dat was tegelijkertijd hoe het boek eindigde. Het was een heel dik boek met een rood kunstleren kaft en met een leeslint, als een dagboek, en het stond altijd in de openbare ruimte van de flat waarin ik vroeger woonde. Het was een hele sjieke flat met hele sjieke mensen. Toen ik er terugkwam was het eigenlijk alleen maar sjieker geworden. Ik woonde altijd helemaal in een uithoek. Ik kwam er alleen maar om rond te kijken om te zien hoe het was geworden, maar ik moet eerlijk zeggen dat het nu wel heel erg op een soort poppen bordeel leek. Ik zeg dingen gewoon recht voor z'n raap. Ik ga er geen doekjes om binden, er niet omheen draaien of bloemerig over doen. Ik benoem man en paard, of in dit geval man en hond. Ik hoorde buiten iemand schreeuwen die boos was, en die wat meer zorg en aandacht nodig had, dus ik zou zeggen, en sorry dat ik het zeg, maar het leek echt alsof ik in een soort sjiek poppenbordeel was gekomen voor mensen die zorg en aandacht nodig hebben, dus hoe zou je dat noemen ? Daar mag dan niet over gesproken worden, maar dat moet dan privé gehouden worden. De mensen die daar werken praten allemaal heel zacht. Er mocht eens iets uitlekken. Zo ook de vrouw die er op dat moment werkte. Volgens mij was het een organisator, of iemand die de administratie bijhield. Ik had het gevoel alsof ik haar kende, maar van waar ? We gingen ergens zitten, en ik zei dat ik er vroeger had gewoond. Ik durfde het woord niet te zeggen waaraan ik dacht. Zo rechtstreeks ben ik nu ook weer niet, en het kan natuurlijk heel beledigend overkomen. Ze had het over haar herdershonden, en dat ze een politie opleiding deed. Dit was eigenlijk haar bijbaantje om het allemaal te kunnen bekostigen. Ik moest weer aan dat boek denken. Ze kwam bij mij totaal niet over als een herdershond vrouw, maar meer als een schaap. Ze was heel lief. Ze liet me de kamers zien, ook waar ik vroeger woonde. Ja, het was allemaal nog sjieker geworden, terwijl het vroeger al zo sjiek was. Er waren ook zoveel plantenbakken. Alles was ruim en hoog. Het meubiliair was klassiek, niet modern.

'Oh, dus jij bent schrijver ?' vroeg ze. Ik knikte.

'Wat schrijf je dan zoal ?' vroeg ze geinteresseerd.

'Over van alles en nog wat, over alles en niets, over overal en nergens,' zei ik glimlachend.

'Interessant,' zei ze. 'Kun je ook eens wat schrijven over bio-klokken, bio-ritmes, van de vrouw, want mannen schijnen daar geen oog en aandacht voor te hebben.'

'Volgens mij heb ik daar ook wel boeken over geschreven,' zei ik.

Even had ze het gezicht als een herdershond, en toen weer als een schaap. 'Wil je deze dans van mij ?' vroeg ze.

'Okay,' zei ik. Maar ze trok haar handen weg. 'Ik bedoel de bio ritmes binnen de bio klok van de vrouw,' zei ze zacht. 'Het is een dans, en die moet de mens leren.'

'Oh de literaire dans,' zei ik.

'Ja,' zei ze zacht.

'Heb ik veel over geschreven,' zei ik.

Weer had ze het gezicht als van een herdershond, maar toen werd ze weer een schaap.

'Waar werk je ?' vroeg ze.

'Oh, daar verderop achter de snackbar aan de zee,' zei ik.

'Nee, dat bedoel ik niet,' zei ze. 'Waar werk je, waar heb je je onderkomen ?'

'Ja, daar,' zei ik.

'Oh, je woont daar ook ?' vroeg ze.

'Ik woon altijd op het werk,' zei ik.

'Ik niet,' zei ze. 'Ik ben helemaal met de trein gekomen. Ik woon in de Achterling.'

't Geeft niet,' zei ik.

Ze glimlachte. 'Je maakt er geen werk van, wou je zeggen ?'

Ik keek haar diep in de ogen, zonder te knipperen. Ik had nog steeds het idee alsof ze een pop was. Ik wilde het woord niet zeggen. Het zou wel heel beledigend kunnen zijn. Dat zeg je niet zomaar tegen mensen. En deze leek me ook geen katje om zonder handschoenen aan te pakken.

Ik stond daar. Ik zei maar : 'okay, okay,' want ik wist niet wat ze bedoelde. Ik ben toen maar weggegaan. Ik woonde hier immers niet meer. Gewoon terug naar zee, en schrijven, ook hierover. Ik was verbaasd toen ik een brief van haar kreeg, want mijn adres heb ik nooit gegeven. Sommige mensen schijnen alles te weten, of schijnen alles te weten kunnen te komen. Er stond in : 'Kom je nog eens langs ?' want ze wilde me nog iets laten zien. Toen ben ik de daaropvolgende dinsdag er weer naartoe gegaan, en ze liet me een beeldje van een dansend elfje zien in mijn oude woning. Het elfje draaide op een muziekdoosje. 'De bio-ritmes van de natuur,' zei ze.

Ik vroeg haar waar mijn oude woning nu voor gebruikt werd. Ze glimlachte. 'Daar ga ik niet over uitweiden,' sprak ze. 'Oh, zeker een …' en toen noemde ik het woord wat ik niet wilde zeggen. Ze keek me aan. 'Nee, iets veel ergers,' zei ze.

'Nou ja, ga me niet vertellen dat dit de gevangenis is ofzo,' zei ik toen.

'Ik loop stage voor de politie,' zei ze. 'Dit is inderdaad nu een gevangenis, maar niet meer zoals vroeger. Ze kunnen gaan en staan waar ze willen, maar als ze iets willen gaan doen wat niet mag, dan gaat hun chip piepen.'

'Chip ?' zei ik verbaasd.

'Ja, nieuwe technologie,' sprak ze. 'Het is een soort poppen chip zodat de marionetten niet afwijken

van de norm, maar toch vrij en blij kunnen leven en uniek kunnen zijn. En in deze gevangenis zitten we allemaal. Ik heb ook zo'n chip.'

'Interessant,' zei ik. 'Ik zou ook wel zo'n chip willen.'

'Oh, jij staat al op de lijst,' zei ze glimlachend. 'Het zat ooit eens in je vla flip.'

'Oh, dus het is een biologische chip ?' vroeg ik.

'Ja,' zei ze glimlachend, 'je kunt het gewoon als een ijsje eten.'

'Een soort politie aan huis dan ?' vroeg ik.

'Ja, als de klok aan de muur,' zei ze.

'Wat een uitvinding,' zei ik. En dan mag je raden of ik er de daaropvolgende dinsdag weer naartoe ging.

Einde

De Vrouwenondergoed Verkoper

Zo zag ik iemand die beweerde dat het praten over vrouwenondergoed de fijnere dingen in het leven zijn. Ik moest daar even vijf minuten hard om lachen, en dacht : Houd jij je maar bezig met je vrouwenondergoed, terwijl ik dieper de filosofie inga om aan types zoals jou te ontkomen. Wat een grapjas. Hij leek trouwens op iemand waarmee ik in mijn jeugd op vakantie in Frankrijk was, en hij was de eerste die ik ooit het woord 'motherfucker' heb horen zeggen. Als kind was ik daar een maand lang overstuur van, en ook dat ik me afvroeg : 'Wat bedoelt hij daar eigenlijk mee te zeggen ?' Hij was de zoon van mijn leraar Nederlands, een geadopteerde zoon uit het buitenland, en hij dacht dat hij alles mocht zeggen. Hij was als elastiek, en wilde altijd dansen, en je zou hem de Nederlandse Michael Jackson kunnen noemen, dus velen die hem zagen wilden met hem spreken, en dan moest ik als vriend de boot telkens afhouden. Ik voelde me een beetje als zijn bodyguard. Zo nu en dan kijk ik naar het filmpje over die idioot die doet alsof het praten over vrouwenondergoed de normaalste zaak van de wereld is, zodat ik weer even hard kan lachen, en ook er weer over kan

nadenken : 'Wat bedoelt hij nu eigenlijk ? Waar gaat dit over ?' En natuurlijk omdat hij een beetje lijkt op die jongen van vroeger, een beetje jeugdsentiment. Eerst dacht ik dat hij het was.

Wat doen de dwazen vandaag de dag ? Wat als het een grap is ? Misschien proberen ze mensen in de maling te nemen, want dat kan toch niet waar zijn wat ze zeggen ? Is dat de boodschap die je wil uitzenden naar de jeugd ? De jeugd is de toekomst. Hangt onze toekomst dan af van vrouwenondergoed ? Dat zijn soms de dingen die me bezig houden. Het lijkt wel alsof hij ergens overstuur over is. Tenminste dat kan ik me zo voorstellen als je daar altijd over moet praten, alsof dat de fijnere dingen van het leven zijn. Ik vraag me dan af wat voor leven hij heeft. Wat over de vrouw zelf in plaats van haar ondergoed ? Zou je het leuk vinden als iemand het voortdurend over je ondergoed heeft en niet over jezelf, of over dingen die er werkelijk toe doen ? "Hey, hallo, ik ben er ook nog. Stop met het staren naar mijn ondergoed."

Misschien heeft hij een handel in vrouwenondergoed ? Dat zou ook nog kunnen, dat hij er gewoon reclame voor maakt. Is dat een beroep wat je zou kiezen ? Helemaal hysterisch was hij erover, ging het tot in de kleinste details beschrijven. Ik dacht : 'Okay, okay, maar wat kan ik hiermee ? Wat voegt dit toe aan de waarde van mijn leven ? Ik ben geen vrouw, dus houd je mond maar. Je hoeft het mij niet proberen te verkopen.'

Ik merkte dat alhoewel ik er hard om lachte ook lichtelijk overstuur van was. Wat durven mensen tegenwoordig wel niet allemaal te zeggen, ook over vrouwen. Het is iets privé. Hoe zou jij het vinden als iemand anders over je ondergoed zou lopen praten ? Heb je dan ook niet zoiets als : 'Afblijven jij. Volgend onderwerp.'

Wat zou hij ervan vinden als mensen ineens over zijn ondergoed gaan lopen praten en erover gaan speculeren tot in de kleinste details. 'Hey, hallo, ik ben er ook nog.'

Het is een ondergoed verkoper. Dat staat vast. Vandaar al die praatjes. Hij leeft er van. Hij heeft het er altijd over. Het is zijn adem. Ik wil het er niet meer over hebben, maar ja, dan kan het een anti-obsessie worden, en dat is tegelijkertijd ook weer een obsessie. Zeg, heb je nu werkelijk waar niets anders te vertellen ? Zeg eens iets aardigs over de vrouw zelf, of iets onaardigs. Maar 'make sense'. Niemand heeft er iets aan als jij de hele dag over vrouwenondergoed loopt te zaniken. Nee, daar schieten we allemaal wat mee op wou je zeggen. Daar wordt de wereld echt wel een betere plaats door, zeg. En kinderen gaan hem dan ook nog nadoen. Irritante mensen, die ondergoedverkopers. Dan kun je wel aan de gang blijven. Dan is vuilnis ook ineens het belangrijkste in het leven voor vuilnisophalers. En schoenen voor schoenenverkopers. Zo heeft iedereen wel wat. Ja, het zwembad is het belangrijkste in het leven, zegt de zwembad eigenaar. Die wil zich natuurlijk niet in zijn eigen vingers snijden. Helemaal eerlijk is het natuurlijk niet. Daarom ben ik ook geen zakenman. Ik heb nooit mijn spullen verkocht. Men denkt hun waardeloze spullen sneller te kunnen verkopen als men stelt dat het het belangrijkste in het leven is. Het is dwaas, maar vele dwazen tuinen erin.

Ja, weer een klant voor vrouwenondergoed. Weer een klant voor dit of dat. Dat is alles waar het bij hen om draait, en daar liegen ze veel voor. Het zijn zielenvissers. Ik heb mijn telefoonnummer maar niet gegeven. Hij vroeg erom, en ik maar lachen. Wat wilde die clown eigenlijk ? Zeker nog meer met me over vrouwenondergoed praten. Hij gaf me toen een filmpje mee van hemzelf, voor als ik mijn gedachten zou veranderen. Als ik in een dipje zit dan kijk er soms even na, en dan lach ik zo hard dat mijn dag weer goed is, maar soms werkt het ook weer averechts.

Op een dag kwam hij met een grote truck bij me aan de deur. Hele truck zat vol met vrouwenondergoed. Ik zei : Wat mot je ? Hij had het erover dat ik een hele grote bestelling had gedaan. Ik zei : Ik weet anders van niks.

Ja, via internet, zei hij. Ik zei dat kunnen ook hackers wezen. Ze doen zich dan voor als mij etcetera, maar ik verdacht hem ineens zelf ervan. Nou ja, dan ga ik weer weg, zei hij toen. Ik zei : Stop, blijf nog even. Ik heb hem toen mijn huis binnengenomen. Na een beetje praten kwam ik erachter dat hij flink dronken was. Ik had het wel met hem te doen. Als je nou altijd over vrouwenondergoed moet praten om je een beetje goed te voelen, ja, dan wilde ik hem wel proberen te helpen. Het leek me verder een beste jongen. Misschien moest ik maar weer de taak van bodyguard op me nemen met deze jongen. Hoe was hij zo geworden ? Ja, zei hij toen, zijn moeder gooide altijd haar ondergoed vroeger naar hem toe als hij ondeugend was. Dat zou hem minder pijn doen dan als ze een schoen zou gooien. Ik begreep hem toen direct. Ik zei hem dat ik dan ook zo geworden zou zijn. Hij had er natuurlijk een syndroom aan overgehouden, en daarom was hij vrouwenondergoed verkoper geworden. Zo zie je maar weer, een beetje doorvragen soms, en dan is het allemaal veel duidelijker.

Maar ja, nu moest ik hem natuurlijk nog helpen. Ik zei : Nou ja, als je er nog zo mee zit, ga jij dan maar lekker vrouwenondergoed verkopen.

Hij werd me toen toch een partijtje kwaad. Hij noemde het een hulp van lik me versje. Hij vond het ook nogal beledigend overkomen, alsof hij voor niets anders goed was dan vrouwenondergoed te verkopen. Hij had een hele zak met vrouwenondergoed meegenomen, en begon mij ermee te bekogelen. Maar toen was hij nog niet klaar. Hij ging terug naar zijn truck en kwam terug met nog veel meer vrouwenondergoed om mij ermee te bekogelen. Hij stopte maar niet. Er was geen houden meer aan. Al zijn verborgen woede kwam naar boven. En ja, je raad het al. Toen hij uiteindelijk weg was gegaan was er zoveel vrouwenondergoed in mijn huis dat ik zelf ook maar vrouwenondergoed verkoper ben geworden. Om het af te leren.

zekere grenzen

Ik bracht het evangelie tot het Noorden. Ik wilde weten wat het evangelie eigenlijk was, want alles wat ik deed was herhalen wat mensen zeiden. Wat ze dan ook tegen me zeiden zei ik tot hen terug, totdat ze er tureluurs en ziek van werden. Moe werden ze van mij, en ik begon hen ook steeds meer na te doen in hun bewegingen en gezichts uitdrukkingen.

Natuurlijk had dat zekere grenzen. Mensen begonnen van wanhoop in de sloten te springen, maar ik bleef gewoon staan. Ik stond erbij en keek ernaar. Ook begonnen mensen van wanhoop hun haren uit te trekken, en dat deed ik natuurlijk niet bij mezelf. Ik stond er gewoon bij om ernaar te kijken. Was dit nu het evangelie ?

Ik vroeg me af waarom ik dat telkens deed : Alles herhalen wat mensen zeiden, en dan stopte ik niet. Ik ging gewoon door totdat ze er gek van werden. Maar hadden ze dat vroeger ook niet gedaan ? Iemand gooide een balletje op, en men bleef het maar herhalen, totdat anderen er ziek van werden. Dat kon hen overigens niets schelen. Ze gingen gewoon maar door. Mensen sprongen in de sloten en de rivieren, en gingen onder de grond wonen, en ze stonden er bij en keken ernaar.

De Twaalfjes

We kennen allemaal wel de elven, maar wat zijn dan de twaalven ? Zij zijn de wezens van de klok. Altijd zijn ze bezig met tijd, wanneer het wel mag en wanneer het niet mag. Alles moet op tijd. Het mag geen seconde te vroeg of te laat, want dan zijn ze overstuur, of boos, heel boos. Dat kan natuurlijk helemaal uit de hand lopen. De ergste vijanden van de twaalven zijn de varkens, want die komen nooit op tijd. Die komen altijd veel te vroeg of veel te laat. Dat zijn niet zomaar varkens maar monsterlijke varkens. Ze vreten alles wat los en vastzit, en altijd feesten ze. Ze gaan niet naar school, terwijl twaalven altijd met school bezig zijn. Dat is het grote verschil.

De twaalfjes, we hebben ze wel nodig, de wezens van de tijd, anders gaat alles verkeerd.
Zo bouwden ze een school voor de varkens, maar de varkens zetten het op een loop.
De varkens bouwden toen een stad van feesten, en ook de twaalfjes werden uitgenodigd, maar die kwamen niet. Die waren nog steeds beledigd dat de varkens niet naar hun school wilden komen.

Maar toen waren de varkens ook beledigd dat de twaalfjes niet naar hun feest stad wilden komen, en ze begonnen meer en meer de twaalfjes van alles de schuld te geven. Dat was natuurlijk heel hypocriet, maar dat gebeurt er als je alleen maar tijd neemt om te feesten en niet om te leren. Dan ontwikkelen je hersenen zich niet en dan ga je alles omdraaien. En zo werd het een zware oorlog tussen de twaalfjes en de varkens. De varkens sloegen de hele school van de twaalfjes kort en klein, en toen zijn de twaalfjes onder de grond gevlucht. Op de puinhopen van de school van de twaalfjes bouwden de varkens een nieuwe stad, een tweede feest stad. Altijd maar weer gingen ze feesten. En leren ? Ho maar. Dat was alleen iets voor twaalfjes.

Onder de grond bouwden de twaalfjes opnieuw een school, maar toen die even later ook door de varkens werd verwoest wisten de twaalfjes het niet meer. Op een dag zijn ze toen weggevlogen, naar een plaats die niemand weet. Ze zouden alleen nog maar onzichtbaar komen, door de tijd, en zouden in klokken wonen. En ze zouden alleen gezien kunnen worden door een kinderhart wat altijd vlijtig door zou leren. Want oh wee als de varkens het zouden ontdekken. Dan zou de wereld te klein zijn. En daarom bleven ze onzichtbaar. Toen een jongetje op een dag een twaalfje zag werd hij daarom ook niet geloofd.

'Welnee, jongen, twaalfjes bestaan niet, alleen in sprookjesboeken,' zei zijn moeder.
'Maar toch heb ik het gezien,' zei het jongetje. En de dag erna zag hij het weer, en toen weer, en toen veel meer twaalfjes.

'Mama, ze komen,' zei hij op een dag.

'Welnee,' zei moeder. 'Je hebt het maar gedroomd.'

'Nee, het was echt,' zei het jongetje, 'ze zullen komen met zovelen.'

'En wat gaan ze dan doen ?' vroeg zijn moeder.

'Een school bouwen,' zei het jongetje.

'Maar er zijn al zoveel scholen,' zei zijn moeder.

'Het is een onzichtbare school,' zei het jongetje, 'die alleen kinderharten kunnen zien die vlijtig door willen leren.'

'Wie zegt dat ?' vroeg zijn moeder. 'Waar heb je zulke dure taal geleerd ?'

'Een twaalfje zei het tegen me, mama,' zei het jongetje.

'Twaalfjes bestaan niet, klein kereltje,' zei zijn moeder weer.

'Wat zielig voor u,' zei het jongetje, 'want dan hebt u dus geen kinderhartje wat vlijtig door wil leren, anders zou u het ook gezien hebben.'

'Je bazelt maar wat, klein mannetje,' zei moeder. 'Het is alweer bijna tijd voor jou om naar bed te gaan.'

'Hoi, hoi, mama, dan mag ik weer lekker dromen over de twaalfjes,' zei het jongetje.

'Ik weet anders niet wat daar nu zo leuk aan is,' zei zijn moeder. 'Vind je het niet leuker om een spelletje met mij te doen voordat je gaat slapen ?'

'Nee,' zei het jongetje. 'Ik speel liever geen spelletjes met domme varkens die niet willen leren.'

Moeder geeft hem een klets in het gezicht. 'Bah, hoe durf je dat tegen je moeder te zeggen. Van wie heb je dat allemaal geleerd ?'

'Van de twaalfjes, mama,' zei het jongetje.

'Ik ben je mama niet meer,' zei de vrouw. 'Ga jij maar naar je twaalfjes toe. Mijn taak zit erop.'

'Okay, domme varkenskop,' zei het jongetje.

Dat was natuurlijk teveel voor de zwaar jaloerse moeder van het jongetje. En zo moest het jongetje naar een tehuis voor moeilijk opvoedbare kinderen. Ook daar verspreidde hij zijn verhalen over de twaalfjes. En ook dit bracht hem in de grootst mogelijke problemen, maar dat had hij er graag voor over. Op een dag kwam zijn vader hem halen die hij nog nooit had gezien. Zijn vader had een prachtig groot huis in het bos waar hij nu mocht wonen.

'Papa, waarom had ik u nooit eerder gezien ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Lang verhaal,' zei zijn vader, 'maar het begon allemaal met twaalfjes. Ken je die ?'

De ogen van het jongetje begonnen helemaal te glinsteren. 'Nou en of,' zei het jongetje.

'Dan hebben we elkaar toch nog gevonden,' zei zijn vader.

'Dankzij de twaalfjes,' zei het jongetje.

'Dankzij de twaalfjes,' zei vader.

En ze leefden nog lang en gelukkig, met de twaalfjes.

Einde

Het Feestvarken

Op een dag ontsnapte een varkentje uit de slagerij. Het hele dorp was in rep en roer. Dat kon natuurlijk niet, want er moest altijd vlees op tafel zijn, en als vlees op de loop zou gaan, dan was dat natuurlijk niet goed. Maar het varkentje was door een deur gegaan die openstond. Het hele dorp was kwaad op de slager, en flink overstuur. Wat een domme, domme slager, die zomaar de deur had laten openstaan.

Het varkentje ging het bos in, en kwam na een tijdje aan bij een huisje. Daar ging het varkentje toen naar binnen, want ook daar stond de deur los. Een vrouw keek verbaasd naar het varkentje. 'Zeg, hoor jij niet thuis in de slagerij ?' vroeg de vrouw.

'Nee, ik ben ontsnapt,' zei het varkentje.

'Dat is nou jammer,' zei de vrouw. 'Morgen is er groot feest in het dorp, en nu mis je alles.'

'Wat voor feest ?' vroeg het varkentje.

'Een varkensfeest,' zei de vrouw. 'Er zal een grote varkensoptocht zijn, en voor alle varkens zal het feest zijn.'

Het varkentje snoof even aan de vrouw. Was dit wel waar ?

'Heus, je zal er geen spijt van krijgen als je teruggaat,' zei de vrouw.

'Maar moet ik daarna weer terug naar de slagerij ?' vroeg het varkentje.

'Welnee joh,' zei de vrouw. 'Na het feest zullen ze de slagerij heus wel afbreken. Ik zal wel met je meelopen als je niet alleen durft.'

En zo gebeurde het. De vrouw bracht het varkentje terug naar het dorp en toen naar de slager.

'Maar waarom gaan we dan naar de slager ?' vroeg het varkentje.

'Omdat daar het feest begint,' zei de vrouw.

Bij de slager aangekomen zei de vrouw : 'Ik heb hier nog een varken voor het varkensfeest morgen.'

'Ah, die had de benen genomen,' zei de slager. 'Blij dat het weer terug is. Ik had de deur open laten staan.'

En zo miste het dorp dus geen enkel stukje vlees. Het varkentje was erin getuind door mooie beloftes en valse reclame, en zo tuint ieder dom varken telkens weer in de bedriegelijkheden van de stad. Geloof ze niet als ze zeggen dat je het feestvarken bent. Je bent slechts een stuk vlees voor hen. Je bent gewaarschuwd !

een wereld op wielen

Je kunt er urenlang over nadenken als je er niet bij bent geweest, maar dan kom je er niet achter. Je kunt het natuurlijk navragen aan anderen die er wel waren geweest, maar dan zal iedereen het anders beleefd hebben. Wel kun je misschien zo dieper in een moment komen, zoals een moeder die het beste voorheeft met haar kind, en zich dan probeert te verdiepen in het brein van een kind, en haar dan meeneemt een dagje aan zee. Dan lopen ze beiden langs de winkelstraat, en dan gaan ze langs de brug, en dan is er misschien net een optocht, en dan komen ze uiteindelijk aan bij het strand, en dan kan de moeder eens rustig de tijd nemen om haarzelf eens lekker te verdiepen in de gedachtengang van haar kind, misschien met een ijsje erbij. Dat wil nog weleens wat losweken bij het kind. Maar ja, het kind is in de groei, dus zal elke dag weer anders denken. Toch verdiept de moeder haarzelf daar dan in, ook al is het kind zo afwisselend als het weer. Het zijn toch allemaal weer kleine stukjes, en dan kan de moeder daar ook weer verder mee en er wat van leren misschien. Dat is ook niet altijd zeker natuurlijk, want het kan ook juist zo zijn dat de moeder van alles gaat afleren, of misschien wel zo dwaas wordt als het kind zelf.

Vandaar dat er ook telkens weer verkiezingen zijn, omdat er zoveel op ons afkomt, ook in vergaderingen. Wie leidt het zaakje, en waarom werd deze persoon verkozen. Dat moet ook weleens in twijfel gebracht worden, en uiteindelijk kon je pas aan het einde zeggen of je wel of niet goed gekozen hebt. Er zijn dan een heleboel omwegen en tussenwegen die je kunt nemen. Er zijn een heleboel mensen die daar lang over nadenken, en een heleboel mensen totaal niet. En een moeder kan dan erover speculeren hoe haar kind later zal worden. Met dat soort gedachtes zit een moeder dan ook weer opgezadeld. Waarom is een moeder hier zoveel mee bezig ? Het is een instinct. Veel mensen zullen dat proberen af te wimpelen, vaak omdat ze het moederschap nooit zelf hebben

ontvangen. Pas als de mens zelf dan moeder is geworden, dan weet de mens het ineens. Dat kan heel lang duren, of misschien wel nooit. Natuurlijk geldt dit ook voor een vader, maar die zit weer heel anders in elkaar. Wat doet een vader met zijn kind ? Of liever gezegd : wat kan een vader met zijn kind ? Ook de vader zit tussen allerlei begrenzingen in. Hij zit op een stoel tussen muren, of in een open wildernis. Iedere vader is weer anders, maar ze hebben allemaal hun begrenzingen.

Sommige vaders gaan dan mee met het dagje aan zee, terwijl andere vaders moeten werken, of ze zijn in het ziekenhuis, of in de gevangenis, of op een lange reis naar weet ik veel waar. Het kan een zakenreis zijn of een reis voor ander werk of nog iets anders. Daar kan een mens dan ook weer lang over nadenken, vooral als er een gebrek aan informatie is of was. En als het dan om de vader van iemand anders gaat dan is er misschien nog wel minder informatie. Sommigen nemen daar dan genoegen mee, terwijl anderen weer navraag gaan doen. Dat leidt dan soms ook weer tot bijzondere contacten, en als puntje bij paaltje komt bepaald dat iemand's levensloop of zelfs met wie hij trouwt. Zo rolt de mens vaak van het één in het ander, en is dat daadwerkelijk tegen te houden ?

Soms stuurt het dan ook de beroepskeuze van de mens bij. Je komt dan bepaalde mensen tegen, en krijgt dan bepaalde informatie, en dat gaat dan als een sleutel in je hoofd zitten, en je krijgt het niet meer weg. Is dat dan iemand's levenslot ?

En dan moet ik ook direct denken aan iemand die verslaafd is aan alcohol en telkens bij dag en dauw, bij weer en wind, de kroeg ingaat. Zou dat ook niet iemand's gedachtenstroom beinvloeden, partnerkeuze, beroepskeuze enzovoorts ? Heeft het ook met muziek keuze te maken, en kan dat nog nadreunen in het nageslacht ? Zoals mijn vader was een alcohol verslaafde en mijn moeder was zwaar aan de drugs. Die liep altijd door het dorp met een joint in haar mond. Daar stond ze om bekend. Ik dacht vroeger dat het gewoon een sigaret was. Ik kan haar niet losdenken van die sigaret of die joint. Dat is gewoon mijn moeder. Dan slofte ze zo altijd door de straten, niet echt helder denkend, niet meer echt bij, door die joint die ze altijd in haar mond had. Het hing er zo uit, en mensen dachten echt : Daar heb je haar ook weer. Het was een echte kettingroker, of kettinggebruiker. En dan denk ik dat ik ook aan de drugs ben geboren vanwege mijn moeder. Ik had altijd het gevoel alsof ik tussen wal en schip hing. Het leven was voor mij te mooi om waar te zijn. Ik was altijd high, of stoned zoals ze dat noemen. Sommigen vonden dat ik zo hard als steen was, ondoordringbaar. Er was niets met mij te beginnen, onbereikbaar. Zo werd ik ook weleens genoemd : de steen, of de harde. Ze wisten niet wat ze aan me hadden. Dat was natuurlijk wel jammer voor hen. Het had zo mooi kunnen wezen. Mijn ouders waren ook beiden doof, dus ik groeide op met gebarentaal. Ze hadden hun eigen tekens.

Het waren toen natuurlijk hele andere tijden, hè. Toen hadden de mensen nog wat voor elkaar over. Ze vroegen mij weleens waarom ik niets voor anderen over had, maar ik had natuurlijk al mijn handen vol aan mijn vader en moeder die door hun verslaving in een belabberde toestand waren. Dat waren nog eens tijden. Dagje aan zee met de familie enzo. Maar nu is er niets meer van die familie over. Allemaal al overleden.

Maar ik denk er nog weleens aan terug en vraag me af of het mij ook nog heeft beinvloed in mijn denken, mijn keuzes enzovoorts. Wat ook wel leuk is zijn die vlaggetjes die ze tegenwoordig hebben bij veel winkels, zoals bij winkels waar je nog ouderwets ijs kunt halen. Er is wel heel veel veranderd zo, in deze tijden. Trekt natuurlijk ook weer nieuwe klanten aan. Je moet toch wat. Daar moet ook wel heel veel tijd ingegaan zijn om al deze nieuwe dingen te bedenken, maar ik vind het wel fraai. Het had veel erger kunnen wezen natuurlijk, laten we eerlijk zijn. Neen, ik vind dat onze maatschappij erop vooruit is gegaan vergeleken met vroeger. Vroeger kon je niet eens gewoon rustig door een straat heenlopen, want er was altijd wel wat. Maar nu is het stil geworden, hè ? Er gebeurt niet echt veel meer, en dat heeft zeker zijn goede kanten. Teveel rust is niet goed zeggen ze dan, maar we kunnen ook niet zonder. Laten we eerlijk wezen. Als er iemand hard met klompen

komt aanlopen tegenwoordig, dan kijkt iedereen er verschrikt van op, maar vroeger keek niemand daar van op. Dat was de normaalste zaak van de wereld. Vroeger was het allemaal veel lawaaieriger. Alles moest maar hard en lang. Het hield gewoon niet op. En mensen schreven daar dan weer over in de kranten, en daar werd dan ook weer op gereageerd. Het hield maar niet op, al die eindeloze discussies. Dat is nu wel anders. Nu hoor je ze bijna niet meer. Het zijn natuurlijk nu ook allemaal weer nieuwe mensen, hè. En wat zijn er veel vreemdelingen tegenwoordig, hè. Je zou bijna denken dat je in een ander land bent als je de straat opgaat.

Maar goed, dat zijn zo van die dingen. Ik heb het er niet vaak over, maar het moet soms toch genoemd worden. Kan verder geen kwaad denk ik. Maar ja, de meeste mensen leggen zich er dan ook wel bij neer. Het zijn niet meer echt tijden waarbij je nu daadwerkelijk de straten opmoet in grote optochten om ergens tegen te protesteren. Dat was echt iets van vroeger. Dat gebeurt nu eigenlijk niet meer. Gek hè, hoe dingen kunnen veranderen.

Ik kijk weleens om me heen en dan zeg ik : Wat is het hier rustig zeg. Dat kon je vroeger echt niet zeggen. Toen was er altijd wel wat, op elke hoek van de straat. En veel drugsdealers, hè. Dat kwam allemaal vanuit Amerika overwaaien. Maar nu : niks meer daarvan. Ze zijn allemaal verdwenen. Waar naartoe weet ik niet. Misschien wil ik het ook wel niet weten. Maar je wenst ze dan natuurlijk het beste. Ik bedoel maar : Ik weet wat het is om een moeder te hebben die drugs gebruikte en dealde. En dat was nog maar het topje van de ijsberg. Wat een drama was dat vroeger zeg.

Nu zijn mensen allemaal zo netjes, en kunnen ook gewoon nee zeggen. Want overdaad schaadt. Vroeger moest alles maar groots en grootser, maar vandaag de dag neemt men met minder genoegen. Gelukkig maar. Dat is natuurlijk een hoofdpijn minder.

Mensen zijn nu ook allemaal zo eensgezind geworden, hè. Is je dat ook niet opgevallen ? Ze lijken allemaal op elkaar. Ik zou niet meer weten wie wie is. Ik hoef het ook niet te weten. Ik vind het allemaal best zo. Iedereen is het tegenwoordig maar met elkaar eens. Dat was vroeger wel anders. Vroeger vlogen ze elkaar echt in de haren om het minste of geringste. Dat wil je niet weten. Ja, de tijden zijn veranderd. De mensen zijn nu echt blij als ze wat krijgen, terwijl ze vroeger altijd zaten te zaniken van ondankbaarheid en ontevredenheid als ze wat kregen. Nooit was het goed genoeg. En het was altijd weer te weinig. Ze konden er niet mee rondkomen, ofzo, of hadden zo niks om uit te delen, niks om trots over te zijn of iets dergelijks, niks om over naar huis te schrijven, en daar stond je dan. Dat is nu wel anders. Mensen zijn nu echt verrast en verrukt als ze iets krijgen, ook al is het iets heel kleins.

Maar ja, we moeten natuurlijk niet overdrijven. Er zitten soms weleens rotte appels of peren tussen, maar in ieder geval een stuk minder als vroeger. Nee, ik ben goed tevreden over hoe de wereld vandaag de dag is. We zijn er een stuk mee opgeschoten. De mensen kunnen nu het kleine meer waarderen. Het vroegere pakt de mens niet meer. Het heeft z'n klauwen verloren.

Er groeien bij ons in de tuin nu hele grote appelbomen met hele lekkere appels. Het doet me weleens terugdenken aan vroeger, maar dan op een goede manier. Appels waren er toen ook al, maar het smaakt nu anders. Het is heel eigenaardig, alsof het kaneel er tegenwoordig gewoon al inzit. Het doet mij weleens denken aan hoe ze vroeger van die bussen schoonmaakten. Een kwartje per bus vroegen ze daar volgens mij voor. Dat was ook altijd een hele eigenaardige geur. Ik weet niet wat voor spul ze daar altijd voor gebruikten. We hadden ook zo'n meester dan die bij ons in de straat woonde. Het was niet onze meester, maar van een school dichtbij onze school. En die deed ook altijd hele typische dingen, zoals op zondag de was uithangen, echt heel tegendraads, want het was een openbare school. Dat ging dan recht tegen onze religie in, maar het inspireerde mij wel. Je moet als mens durven te breken met wat je met de paplepel krijgt ingegoten en zelfs later niet begrijpt. Als het kwartje dan niet valt, dan is het tijd om eens een andere automaat te proberen.

Het zal mij dan ook allemaal worst wezen hè, want al die scholen worden bestuurd door volwassenen, en toch vlogen ze elkaar in de haren over hoe het zat of zou moeten zitten. Zo zie je maar, je kunt ze gewoon niet vertrouwen. Dat is nu overigens ook wel anders. Ik hoor er nooit meer iets van. Kan natuurlijk stilte voor de storm wezen, maar het kan ook echt zo zijn dat er iets ten goede is veranderd, en dat het zo blijft. Laten we het hopen.

Niemand zit er op te wachten dat het weer word als vroeger. Vroeger duurde al veel te lang. Hij dreef weg ofzo, hadden ze het over, toen kleine Karel verdronk. Daar moet je toch niet lang over nadenken ? Nee, vroeger moet een afgesloten hoofdstuk zijn. Het was al erg genoeg. Hij was nog zo jong, had een heel leven voor de boeg. Wat zou er van hem geworden zijn als hij niet was verdronken ? Daar denk ik dan weleens aan. Ik had er zoveel nachtmerries over. Vroeger werd er totaal niet op kleine kinderen gelet. Die lieten ze altijd maar aanrotzooien. Dat is nu ook wel anders. Verdrinkingen van kleine kinderen dat hoor je bijna niet meer. Veel ouders zijn nu voorbeeldig, en hebben geleerd van de geschiedenis. Soms zit er nog weleens een rotte appel of peer tussen, maar veel minder dan vroeger. Soms verdrinkt er nog weleens eentje, maar dat ligt dan vaak aan het kind zelf. Nee, aan de ouders kan het niet liggen tegenwoordig. Ik sta geheel aan hun kant. Zoveel dingen zijn stukken beter geworden vandaag de dag, met name het ouderschap, daar durf ik mijn hand wel voor in het vuur te steken. Ik heb dat allemaal nauwgezet bijgehouden, en het is waar. Een goede ouder is trouwens ook maar het halve werk. Ik verdedig het hedendaagse ouderschap met hand en tand. Het is altijd een grote droom van mij geweest dat ooit te kunnen doen, en die droom is nu uitgekomen. Mensen staan er niet altijd zo bij stil, en nemen het vaak als vanzelfsprekend, maar ik heb ook die andere tijden gekend, hè. Als mensen anders daarover denken, wat bijna niet voorkomt moet ik eerlijk zeggen, dan zeg ik altijd : Zou je het niet een kans willen geven ? Negen van de tien keer stemmen ze daar dan in toe, en komen vrijwel altijd dan na afloop naar me toe om de hand te schudden en te zeggen dat ik gelijk heb gehad. Daar ben ik dan best wel een beetje trots over.

Zo zijn er dan ook mensen die liever wat drinken in een cafeetje en hier niet teveel over willen praten, en dat kan ook. Je mag je nooit bij mensen opdringen. Daar zijn de tijden allemaal niet voor. Je kunt er ook hoge boetes voor krijgen of gevangenisstraf, zoals mensen van religieuze bewegingen die willekeurig bij huizen aanbellen zonder van te voren een afspraak te hebben gemaakt. Die tijden hebben we gehad. Dat komt nooit meer terug. Ze zouden direct worden opgepakt. Ook spullen aan de deur verkopen is er niet meer bij. Er zijn nu allemaal rijdende winkels. Dat was er vroeger al veel, maar nu nog meer. Ik reed vroeger weleens met ze mee, dan was ik er even uit. Ik heb wel veel avonturen meegemaakt met die rijdende winkeliers, die winkels op wielen. Wat een tijden waren dat zeg. Het bracht me over al mijn problemen heen, en volgens mij heeft het me gebracht waar ik nu ben, net zoals de rijdende ziekenhuizen en rijdende rechters. Heerlijk was dat. Die komen gewoon je straat binnenrijden wanneer het nodig was, en dan kon je onverplicht meerijden. Maar goed, alles is op wielen tegenwoordig. Je hoeft er niet meer naartoe te gaan, want het komt gewoon bij je in de straat. Spanje, Mexico, de Antillen, het komt allemaal bij je in de straat. Dagje naar het zwembad hoeft ook niet meer, want er zijn nu rijdende zwembaden.

Je hoeft de tv niet meer aan te klikken vanwege de rijdende bioscopen tegenwoordig, en andere rijdende theaters. Er is altijd ruime keuze. Het gaat de hele dag door. Daarom is het tegenwoordig allemaal zo stil op straat, want iedereen gaat naar die rijdende pretparken. Daarbinnen is het pret, en buiten is het rustig. Alles is op wielen tegenwoordig. Een wereld op wielen.

het pilletje

Hij draaide er altijd omheen. Dat zou je niet van hem denken. Hij zei dan altijd : ja, ik geloof, ik geloof, maar verder kwam hij dan eigenlijk nooit. Hij kon het niet duidelijk maken wat hij eigenlijk geloofde. Maar ja, wie zit daar nog op te wachten, want geloof is een vies woord geworden vandaag de dag, een vies woord. Doe maar normaal, dan doe je al gek genoeg, zeggen ze tegenwoordig vaak. En geloof is voor zwevende zieltjes die te lui zijn om levenslessen te leren. Allemaal waar natuurlijk, maar voor een oude rot in het vak als Henriette van Kochel is dat natuurlijk teveel gevraagd. Dat was me ook een mens, naast hem. Op een bijzondere manier ging het altijd goed met die twee, en ze zijn later getrouwd, maar toen toch weer gescheiden. Trouwen is ook een vies woord vandaag de dag. Brengt alleen maar een hoop ellende. En dat is gewoon zo.

Doe maar normaal, dan doe je al gek genoeg, dat zeggen ze dus. Maar goed, voor een oude rot in het vak zoals Henriette van Kochel is dat moeilijk te aanvaarden. Ze is nog steeds op zoek naar een nieuwe man, maar welke man wil nu telkens haar ondergoed in zijn gezicht geslingerd krijgen als haar iets niet zint, want daar staat ze om bekend.

Wat een figuur, die Henriette van Kochel. Ik kende haar dus ook wel, jammer genoeg. Ben ook nog wel op een blauwe dinsdag de stad met haar in geweest. Kon ik ook bijna al niet meer navertellen. Die vrouw is levensgevaarlijk. Trekt zo een mes als het haar niet zint. Ze zei ook eens : Je geld of je leven, tegen me. Toen heb ik voor het geld gekozen, maar ik leef nog steeds, tenminste dat denk ik en hoop ik, maar met zo'n onbetrouwbaar figuur als Henriette van Kochel weet je het nooit.

Zit gewoon liedjes te zingen als je het moeilijk hebt, want dan is zij vrolijk. Maar goed, ik ga niet alle vuile was van haar buiten hangen. Ik heb het menigmaal in mijn gezicht gekregen, en daar hoef ik ook niet alles van uit de doeken te doen. Dat is iets tussen haar en mij. Dat gaat verder niemand wat aan. Het is allemaal al vreemd genoeg, en als ik het zou doorvertellen zou het allemaal alleen maar vreemder worden.

Maar ze is nu eenmaal onbetrouwbaar en onvoorspelbaar. Ik weet niet wat ze allemaal bij me in de koffie heeft gedaan, maar helemaal hetzelfde voel ik me niet meer. Daarvoor is teveel gebeurd. Ik ga trouwens ook niet bij de pakken neerzitten. Maar goed, haar ex man draaide sinds hun scheiding om alles heen, misschien ook om haar de hand boven het hoofd te houden, en dan kwam hij met zijn geloof op de proppen wat hij maar niet kon uitleggen, maar ja, daarom is het ook het geloof, want het heeft niets met daadwerkelijke kennis van zaken verder te maken. Ik mag van geluk spreken dat ik nooit haar man ben geweest, want dan zat ik nu in hetzelfde schuitje, maar het kwam allemaal wel gevaarlijk dichtbij. Er waren tijden dat ze me echt flink in de macht had. Voornamelijk kwam dat door haar vele dreigen. Ik kon niet veel anders. Ze liet weinig ruimte over voor mijn keuze. Zij deelde de lakens uit.

Haar ex man is hier nu kind aan huis, maar het is zoals gezegd een hele vreemde man, laten we er geen doekjes om binden. Misschien dat hij zo is geworden door haar, en ik weet het wel zeker. Hij is natuurlijk bedreigd en gechanteerd. Ze werkt ook aan de lopende band met huurmoordenaars, dus ook hij heeft nog geluk dat hij leeft. Ze zou hem zo uit de weg kunnen ruimen als ze wilde. Maar ja, ik denk dat haar geloof haar soms gewoon in de weg staat. Het geloof is dus in ieder geval toch nog ergens goed voor. Het is ook haar werk. Ze preekt zondags in de kerk. Ze is vrouwelijk dominee. Het valt verder op geen enkele manier met haar levensstijl te rijmen, of misschien ook wel als je begrijpt wat ik bedoel.

Ik probeerde hem aan de praat te krijgen, wat dus niet lukte vanwege zijn geloof, dus Henriette van Kochel blijft nog steeds een mysterie. Mijn eigen informatie is onvoldoende om een zuiver beeld te kunnen vormen. Het mes kan maar niet geslepen worden op deze botte steen. Het is een hopeloze toestand. Ook de kerk waar ze werkt werkt niet mee. Die houden haar ook allemaal de hand boven het hoofd. Waarschijnlijk zijn zij ook door haar bedreigd en gechanteerd. Ik weet hoe het gaat. Ik ben allang mezelf niet meer. Waarschijnlijk ben ik een hoop gewoon alweer vergeten door haar toedoen. Ze mikte van alles door mijn voedsel heen. Ik voel me nu een marionet, net als de anderen, maar ik vecht door. Ik laat het hier niet bij zitten. Haar geloof zal me verder worst wezen. Het is de dekmantel waaronder ze werkt. Ik kan me een avondje klaverjassen met haar nog wel herinneren. Toen ik verloor verloor ik niet alleen mijn kleren, maar ook mijn maagdelijkheid. Ik was nog heel jong. Ik mocht het niet verder vertellen want dan zwaaide er wat. Ik moest toen ook een pilletje slikken, en daarna zei ze dat ik maar wat bazelde, dat het pilletje mij dit alles liet bedenken. Maar als dat zo is, dan is het al erg genoeg dat ze mij zo'n pilletje heeft gegeven. Misschien heeft ze wel meer bij me gedaan, en heb ik het vergeten door het pilletje.

Nu wil het voorval dat haar ex man eens tegen me zei : van haar pilletjes, haar pilletjes, daar ga je van geloven …

Maar ik geloofde haar niet, ik vecht nog steeds … Misschien ben ik immuun … of misschien heeft ze mij een ander pilletje gegeven. Iemand zei dat ze ervan hield te stoken, want dat gaf haar ook weer macht, dus daarom geeft ze iedereen weer andere soort pilletjes … Complete chaos … Deze pilletjes zijn oorlogspilletjes, deze pilletjes brengen scheiding … Deze pilletjes drijven mensen tot gekte en waanzin, door de open deuren van haar kerk ... En geloven is haar een excuus geven … en zo zichzelf … Ze hebben altijd een alibi.

opengebroken horizon

Ik moest altijd oppassen …
Onberekenbaar roofdier …
Mijn vrouw …

Ik moest altijd betalen …
Op tijd, anders zou ze me laten betalen …
Onberekenbaar en onbeschrijfbaar roofdier …
Mijn vrouw …
Als een belasting …

Toch was zij ook mijn verzekering …
Maar waar leidde het naartoe ?
Ook beschermde zij mij, en voedde ze mij op,
Maar waartoe ?

In de kerk ontmoette ik haar,
Daar waar zij predikte, haar hoge woord …
Ik moest aan haar collecte geven, anders zou schuld mij teneerdrukken …
Ik moest bidden, tot haar … Mijn handen gevouwen … Zij wilde geen ongebonden gevangenen …

In de kerk ontmoette ik haar …
Opengebroken horizonnen …

Zij voedde mij van haar boom …
Of was het haar prooi …
Of was ik de prooi ?
Het tolde voor mijn ogen …
Als een bril die niet goed afgestemd was …
Onberekenbaar roofdier …
Mijn vrouw …

De kerkdeuren waren open …
Je kon alleen naar binnen, en nooit meer eruit …
Waar was ik terechtgekomen ?
In de hemel of de hel ?

En mijn horizon brak open,
En daar stond zij in de deur opening …
En zij gaf mij van het medicijn …
En ik kon mezelf niet meer terugvinden …
Verdwaald in haar doolhoven …
Onberekenbaar roofdier …
Mijn vrouw …

Ik ontmoette haar in de kerk,
Handen gevouwen,
Zij predikte het woord,
het medicijn … Een dokter was zij …
Of was zij mijn ziekte ?

Een uitgang vond ik niet …
Slechts horizonnen opengebroken …
Zij gaf mij van het medicijn …
Onberekenbaar roofdier …
Mijn vrouw …

Is dat de naam van het medicijn ?
Mijn vrouw …
Wat een vreemde naam …

Of is dat om aan te duiden dat het diep gaat en intiem wordt ?
Is zij god of godin ?
Zij breekt mijn horizonnen open,
Zij laat mij dingen anders bekijken …
Onberekenbaar roofdier …
Mijn vrouw …

Aan haar ontsnappen kan ik niet …
Het tikt diep binnenin …
Als een klok of een bom ?
Alles wat ik weet is dat zij mijn horizonnen openbreekt …

Zij leidt mij door de tuin, want ik ben als een blinde …
Zij is een verhaal ...

prediker's vrouw

zij predikt haar hel,
hij predikt zijn hemel,
zo vechten zij als dolle beesten,
terwijl ik hun vrucht neem,
als de moeder van het boek

haar nachten zijn ijs en lang,

waar hij doolt in bittere woede,
waar ik hem meeneem als de moeder van het boek

haar woorden kwellen,
hij kan haar niet doorgronden,
koop van mij als van de moeder van het boek

hij brengt haar pracht,
en opent het bos voor haar,
zij luistert slechts naar haar eigen gezang,
de morgenstond zal haar een nieuw lied schenken

oh prediker, is je vrouw dan slechts je kruis waaraan je stierf,
opdat je het woord zou kunnen brengen ?
en is je verhaal niet slechts de baarmoeder van de moeder van het boek,
opdat je wedergeboorte zou vinden ?

wie bent gij in de duistere nacht,
waarin zij slechts hoont en lacht,
is het niet de diepte van uw psyche,
die gij nog niet kent ?

boek van onkruid

boek van onkruid,
onze namen geschreven in gif,
deze ramen beletten elk licht,
onkruid achter de ramen,
onkruid over de heg,
zij kwamen om ons weg te nemen

boek van onkruid,
geschreven met gif en pek,
het onkruid sluipt door de heg,
om ons mee te nemen naar de andere wereld

het verboden kruid,
maar nu niet meer,
het brak door de ramen

een moeder weent om haar kinderen,
zij zijn niet meer,
het onkruid is gekomen,
wreed en meedogenloos breekt het de grenzen van het verstand,
tuinen van onkruid,
als een weg tot de wildernis

onkruid vergaat niet

Een vader aan de alcohol, een moeder aan de drugs,
en ik groeide op als onkruid.
Het onkruid groeide zelfs in de kamer.
Het was gewoon niet te stoppen.
Het woekerde waar het niet mocht woekeren.
Het was een woeker tuin.

Wie stopte het ?
Niemand, want vader was aan de alcohol en moeder aan de drugs,
Ik groeide grenzeloos op.
Alles mocht maar en kon maar, want vader was niet thuis en moeder sjokte door het hele dorp met haar joint uit de mond hangende.
Je zou zo maar moeten leven.

Vader in de kroeg, en kwam altijd als een beschonkene thuis,
stomdronken, dus geen tijd voor de opvoeding,
Ik rotzooide maar wat aan, als onkruid.

Een vader aan de alcohol en moeder aan de drugs,
beiden vroeg de gevangenis in,
en ik was aan mijn lot overgeleverd,
eindigde ook in de bak, waar al het onkruid thuishoort,
maar brak weer los, omdat ik nu eenmaal bleef voortwoekeren,
ik werd onheilsprofeet om het einde van deze verdwaasde wereld aan te kondigen.

Dat begon ook te vervelen, en toen ben ik maar een zadel geworden.
Toch nog nuttig voor het paardrijden.
Maar ja, billen op je neus is ook niet alles,
Toen ben ik maar een hond geworden,

Maar ja, dat is ook een pot verdriet,
En toen ben ik maar weer gewoon onkruid geworden,
Want onkruid vergaat nu eenmaal niet.

wat alleen het onkruid kon vinden ...

Een vader aan de alcohol, een moeder aan de drugs,
en ik groeide op als onkruid.
Het onkruid groeide hier zelfs in de kamer en op het behang.
Studeren tussen het onkruid, daar kwam het altijd op neer.

Vader altijd in de kroeg, en moeder sjokte altijd met een joint door het dorp,
en ik woekerde voort als onkruid, om nog wat van mijn leven te maken.
Wel moeilijk als je het juiste voorbeeld niet krijgt, maar het maakt je wel creatief.

Een vader die met speelgoed soldaatjes speelt, en een moeder die met poppen speelt,
en ik studeerde mezelf kapot.
Maar ja, onkruid vergaat niet.
Ik overleefde het, en kan het navertellen.

Een vader die in zijn eeuwige dronkenschap alles beter weet, en een moeder die door de drugs alles is vergeten, een hel op aarde, maar onkruid vergaat niet.

Altijd die speelgoed soldaatjes maakt een mens ziek.
Je had geen dag rust.
Altijd liet hij ze door de kamer marcheren.
En zij had alleen oog voor haar poppen.
Maar onkruid vergaat niet.

En zo groeide ik op als onkruid, nam steden in,
Maakte de aarde plat,
Nog nooit had iemand deze paden betreden,
wat alleen het onkruid kon vinden …

waar het onkruid lacht ...

vader aan de alcohol, moeder aan de drugs,
en ik ben onkruid

vader met zijn speelgoed soldaatjes,
moeder met haar poppen,
en ik studeer hard,
want onkruid vergaat niet

zoals hen wil ik niet worden,
zoals hen wil ik niet zijn,
ik vecht voor mijn leven,
ik zoek het pad wat alleen het onkruid kan vinden

vader altijd in de kroeg,
moeder altijd sjokkende door het dorp met haar joint half hangende uit haar mond,
alsof het hen allemaal niets kan schelen

moeten we dan zo wezen, moeten we dan zo zijn,
wat is het leven dan waard,
is het leven dan niet slechts pijn ?

maar zij horen niet,
het gezin is doof,
en onkruid is een sleutel

ze slaan je half lens,
totdat alles waaraan je nog kan denken onkruid is,
onkruid, onkruid,
woekerende in de nacht,
hard werk, 't is net begonnen,
het grijpt je en laat je niet meer los,
het trekt je terug naar het bos

wat een familie met hun speelgoed autootjes,
stomdronken gaan ze door het leven,
en maar zingen : oh, wat zijn we blij,
nee, doe mij dan maar een pot met onkruid,
woekerende door de nacht,
over de heg tot in mijn bedje,
neem mij mee, neem mij mee,
want iedereen leeft hier slechts in het verlee,
ze groeien niet, in cirkeltjes gaan ze alsmaar rond,
neem mij mee tot waar het onkruid lacht …

waar het onkruid de hekken sluit

waar het onkruid de hekken sluit,
waar het onkruid de dekens uitdeelt,
waar het onkruid zachtjes voorleest,
onverstaanbaar als de wind

waar het onkruid niet kan komen,
daar kan een mens niet dromen,
daar heeft een mens zijn leven verloren,
want onkruid is de adem van de natuur

vrouwe onkruid had zeven zonen,
die nauwelijks konden slapen en nauwelijks konden dromen,
daarom gingen ze elke nacht,
op dievenpad met onbeschrijfelijke pracht

ze stalen alles wat los en vastzat,
want eens was hun wereld gestolen,
altijd achter het hek moeten opgroeien,
liet hun zielen rusteloos ronddolen

waar het onkruid de hekken sluit,
waar het onkruid de dekens uitdeelt,
waar het onkruid zachtjes voorleest,
onverstaanbaar als de wind,
waar het onkruid zegt : het is genoeg, mijn kind

prikkeldraad

nog nooit zo'n lange stoet gezien,
waar moet het heen ?
zoveel monniken tussen het onkruid,
en waarom ?

waarom dwalen zij ?
zij dolen als het onkruid van de samenleving,
zij werken nog, waar anderen slapen …

nee, geen plaats is er voor hen,
geen plaats in de herberg,

geen plaats in de tuin,
in de wildernis moeten zij zijn …

waar het onkruid gaat heb ik ze gezien,
waar het voortwoekert met een onverwoestbare ijver,
als een weggeworpen erfenis

nee, geen plaats was er voor hen,
geen plaats in de herberg,
maar waar het onkruid hen verwelkomde,
daar werd de erfenis opgegraven,
zoete ijver, een werk van staal,
mannen van ijzer met een zachte taal,
met vrouwen die grommen als beren,
sterk als leeuwen,
want onkruid is het prikkeldraad van de opvoeding

ABR
Amazone Bijbel Romans

Korte Verhalen I

De Nachtregen

ABR
Amazone Bijbel Romans

Korte verhalen I
De Nachtregen

COAB
2020
1970-2020

golven van het oerwoud
zwarte koningin
de hagedis

de wijzen uit het westen
p.a.p.
oorlogsbesluiten
radio de christelijke rolstoel – wie weet waar wie werd geboren
Dikke Taram
Hoogspanning
de nonnenkoren
De Imker
De kleermaker die van tranen kleren maakte
De Vrouwenondergoed Verkoper
De Toversleutel tot de Hemel
Avond Danser
Wilde Honden
Wilde Honden II
De Wilde Hond

golven van het oerwoud

Ze sprak het en het was er …
Ze zag niet eens dat het er was, maar ze kon het ervaren …
Menkilo had het gezien, en was ervan overtuigd dat zij speciale krachten had …
Meer kon hij er niet over vertellen, want zelfs voor hem was het allemaal te wonderlijk …
Een lichtende gestalte gleed over hem heen, als een poeder …
Toen hij bij de waarzegster vandaan kwam had hij weer volle moed …
Zijn benen trilden helemaal …
Zij had hem zoveel verteld waar hij niet over durfde te praten, maar hij moest wel … Hij kon het eigenlijk niet inhouden, en toen hij één van zijn vrienden zag begon hij al snel te vertellen … Hij vertelde hem dat ze heel raadselachtig was, maar hij merkte ook bij zichzelf hoe hij de woorden verdraaide, omdat hij niet wilde dat hij zomaar zijn gevoel en zijn unieke ervaring geheel ontbloot zou weggeven, ook al was het één van zijn vrienden …
Senturio was altijd een vreemde geweest, ook al was het een vriend, maar hij wist nooit of hij hem wel echt kon vertrouwen … Toch noemde hij hem vriend, omdat Senturio ook weer heel veel voor hem had gedaan … Meer dan wie dan ook … Nu stond hij dan op een kruispunt … Moest hij dan alles open en bloot vertellen tot in de kleinste details, of kon hij ook wat achterhouden …
Hij koos voor het langzaam afzwakken, en probeerde eigenlijk zelfs op een ander onderwerp over te gaan … Senturio staarde hem met open mond aan, alsof hij het bijna kon voelen … 'Maar dat is

geweldig,' sprak Senturio, die niet veel anders kon zeggen … 'Ik wil daar ook naartoe …'

'Zou je dat wel doen, Senturio,' zei Menkilo … 'Is het niet gewoon genoeg geweest dat ik er ben geweest en dat je het van mij te horen krijgt als door een filter … Ik ben altijd erg beschermend over je geweest, dat weet je … Je hebt zoveel voor me gedaan, dat ik dat niet in woorden kan uitdrukken.'

Even borrelde er woede op in Senturio … 'Probeer je het me nu te onthouden ?'

Niet lang daarna waren ze zelfs in gevecht … en rolden over de grond … Hun vriendschap kon zo ineens omslaan in vijandschap … Zo was dat altijd geweest … Ze waren het wel gewend … Er was toch een zekere competitie tussen hen … vooral als het om vrouwen ging …

Midden in de nacht ging Senturio naar de waarzegster … alleen … op afraden van Menkilo, maar die slaapte toch al … Senturio had wat gedronken, en ook de waarzegster scheen wat gedronken te hebben … De volgende ochtend had Senturio de hik, en vertelde al hikkend aan Menkilo wat er was gebeurd, maar hij zorgde ervoor dat hij alles verdraaide … Menkilo mocht de waarheid niet weten … Het was iets tussen Senturio en de waarzegster … Het was te persoonlijk en te kostbaar … Senturio wilde alles wel met zijn vriend delen, maar niet dit …

Wel werd hun band door dit alles hechter, en ze besloten samen een tocht te maken op een oerwoud rivier … in een bootje … Senturio was een reiziger in hart en nieren, en Menkilo was ook altijd wel klaar voor een avontuur … Alles bleef rustig … Ze kwamen zo kalm weer terug als ze waren vertrokken, en aan de oever stond de waarzegster … Met grote ogen keken ze haar aan … alsof ze werden geslagen door een virus … Beiden trilden ze op hun benen …

Ze sprak en het was er … Ze zag niet eens dat het er was, maar ze kon het ervaren …
Menkilo en Senturio hadden het gezien, en waren ervan overtuigd dat zij speciale krachten had …
Meer konden zij er niet over vertellen, want zelfs voor hen was het allemaal te wonderlijk …
Een lichtende gestalte gleed over hen heen, als een poeder …
Hun benen trilden helemaal … Maar toen stonden ze strak en staarden voor zich uit … Ze waren door iets geslagen … Het leek wel alsof even hun denken geheel vastliep … De waarzegster had tot hen gesproken … Niemand anders had ervaren wat zij hadden ervaren … Het was zo uniek, en zo diep, zo persoonlijk … Het gleed door hen heen, als oerwouds water … van de rivier … Het was alsof ze door de bliksem waren geslagen, maar er was veel meer … en ze konden er niet over praten … Nu wisten ze dat ze beiden hetzelfde hadden ervaren, precies hetzelfde, en ze hoefden het elkaar niet uit te leggen … Het maakte hun band dieper en hechter … Ze waren er nu beiden doorheen gegaan met elkaar, wat een bijzondere band schepte … Daar was het de waarzegster ook om te doen … Eerst apart, en dan samen … als de golven van het oerwoud … Het had een genezende werking … alsof de natuur losbrak in hen … Ze wilden het wel vertellen maar ze konden het niet … Er lag iets op hun mond, er lag iets op hun denken … Hun gezichten waren nat, hun lichamen waren nat … als van de oerwouds rivier …

Ze gingen terug naar het kamp … Ze konden niet praten … Ze wilden het vertellen, maar konden het niet … Er werden vragen aan hen gesteld, maar alles ging langs hen heen … Zij waren immers met de waarzegster geweest … Niemand mocht dit zo weten zoals het gegaan was … Dat was te zeldzaam, en zo moest het ook blijven … Het was iets van de natuur wat zich niet zomaar prijs wilde geven … En daarom ging het zo … Alleen de waarzegster zou kunnen beslissen wanneer en hoe, en met wie … Als zij sprak, dan zou het komen … Maar wat hield zij nog meer voor hen verborgen ? Zou zij ook niet zelf een heleboel dingen verdraaien van wat zij had meegemaakt ? Gewoon om haar hart te beschermen ? Het was een groot mysterie van de natuur … Senturio en Menkilo begonnen te tollen, en iedereen keek … En iedereen begon onder hun betovering te komen

… de betovering die eens over hen kwam … door de woorden van de waarzegster … Ze keken toe, en zagen dat ook anderen begonnen te tollen, en sommigen vielen in het zand … Wat gebeurde hier ? Dit was wel erg vreemd …

Toen de waarzegster kwam klapte zij in haar handen … En een ieder keek naar haar … Ze sprak en het was er … Ze zag niet eens dat het er was, maar ze kon het ervaren … Ze hadden het gezien, en waren ervan overtuigd dat zij speciale krachten had … Iedereen ervoer weer wat anders … Het zorgde voor een vreemde scheiding … alsof er glazen muren tussen hen kwamen … Een lichtende gestalte gleed over hen heen, als een poeder … Het leek wel alsof even hun denken geheel vastliep … De waarzegster had tot hen gesproken … Niemand anders had ervaren wat zij hadden ervaren … Het was zo uniek, en zo diep, zo persoonlijk … Het gleed door hen heen, als oerwouds water … van de rivier … En een ieder ging zijn eigen weg … Ze waren onder een betoverend virus van het oerwoud … Kampen werden opgebroken … En de waarzegster vond haar weg …

Ze hield iets in haar handen … Dit moest ze hebben … Het was zo lang weggeroofd geweest … Iets van de natuur …. Ze kon er niet over praten … Het schuimde tussen haar vingers … Zo lang was het weggeweest … Ze drukte het tegen haar hart … Hier zou ze nooit over kunnen vertellen … Ze zou de woorden hierover moeten verdraaien om het te kunnen beschermen, zodat het niet een tweede keer weggeroofd zou worden … Het was iets van haarzelf … Het was haar hart ...

zwarte koningin

Wie kan haar hart vinden ?
Wie kan haar woorden verstaan ?
Zij verdraaid hier al haar woorden, als een spin,
Vlinders komende uit kokonnen …
Verborgenheden van haar hart …
Achter glas verborgen …
Niemand komt hier … Zij zullen allen sterven …
Allen zijn zij onder haar vloek … Wie kan aan haar vloeken ontkomen ?
Scheldend is zij de koningin van het oerwoud …
Zij droomt en doet dromen …
Zij is een zwaar virus … golven van het oerwoud …
Zij houdt hen allen in hypnose … in een diepe slaap … opdat zij haar niet zullen vinden …
Alleen een kinderhart kan het glas van haar hart doen smelten …
Alleen een kinderhand kan haar verstaan …

Haar woorden zijn als een rivier, golvende, draaiende …
Zij draait alles om, zij doet al hun wegen scheiden …

Zij stookt en spot, liegt en bedriegt …
Zij geeft niet om de waarheid …
De waarheid is in haar hart, maar zij geeft het niet …
Zij beschermt de waarheid …
Geen indringers komen dichtbij haar …

Zij is altijd zwart en donker …
Zij is de koningin van de dromen … van het virus …
van het oerwoud … zich verstoppende …
Het glijdt altijd weg, altijd draaiende …
Het ligt niet in het bereik …
Alleen een kinderhart zal het vinden …
En een kinderhand alleen zal het verstaan …

Zij is een wurgende slang, haarzelf wurgende …
Zij is een draaiende in de grot, die alles omdraaid …
Als water van het oerwoud …
Nee, zij komen niet dichtbij …
Zij gilt en schreeuwt, totdat het breekt in hun hoofden,
en dan spuit zij haar leugen, opdat zij de waarheid niet vinden …

In het groene water ligt het geheim …
Alleen kinderen zien het …
Voor volwassenen is er geen bewijs …

Met hun steriele en klinische handen zullen zij haar niet vinden, haar niet verscheuren …
Zij is een roofdier, en zij zijn haar prooi …
In haar webben liggen zij verstrikt …
Achter glas zijn zij, zoals haar hart …

Nee, klinische, volwassen harten zullen haar niet vinden …
Door haar lokroep gaan zij ten onder …
Zij baart kinderen in de duistere nacht,
Zij die van haar bloed zijn zullen haar zien …

Waarom zoeken zij haar nog steeds met hun lampen ?
Zij moeten sterven …
Waarom roepen zij nog steeds haar naam ?
Zij zal niet horen …
Achter glas is zij, en in hen wordt het virus verspreidt …
In de boze nacht zullen zij niet kunnen samenzweren …
Zij kunnen elkaar niet zien en niet verstaan …
Het glas heeft scheiding tussen hen gemaakt …

Oh, in groene wateren ligt het geheim, maar het is ver weg van hen …
Het is alleen dicht bij een kinderhart …
Haar woorden verdraaien het,
Terwijl zij verdwalen … Ja, dieper in het glas zullen zij gaan …
Hier kwam zij boven, maar zij zullen het nooit zien …

Hier houdt zij haar hart vast,

Hier droomt zij een nieuw leven …
En zoveel kinderen volgen haar …

Zij bedriegt,
Zij draait om,
Waar al hun schepen vergaan ...

de hagedis

Is dat hoe je erover denkt ? vroeg de dominee.
Ik had een hagedis op een fiets getekend, met zijn tong uit z'n bek, en die zei zoiets als blahahahaha ...
Ja, dominee, zei ik, dat is hoe ik er over denk.
Ik sloeg hem op z'n schouder.
Al die dode dieren in de kerkbanken.
Hoe lang moeten we het nog aanzien ?

Dode dieren, huh ? vroeg de dominee ...
Ja, in de kerkbanken, op het bord, waar dan ook ... allemaal dode dieren ...
Ik sloeg hem nogmaals op z'n schouder, nu iets harder ...

Naakte vrouwen, moet dat allemaal, dominee ?
Huh ? vroeg de dominee ...
Ja, naakte vrouwen in de kerk en op het bord ...
Hoe kom je daar nu bij, vroeg de dominee ...
Nou ja, moeder god wordt toch gegeten alsof ze nooit heeft bestaan ?
Het gaat toch altijd over de vader ?
Moeder god woont ergens naakt in de wildernis ...
Ze was niet uitgenodigd op het feestje ...

Ja ja ja, zei de dominee, ergens heb je wel gelijk ...
Ik sloeg hem nogmaals keihard op z'n schouder ...
Da's hoe'k erover denk, dominee ... niet om over naar huis te schrijven dus ...

Nou ja, ik ga maar weer eens naar huis, zei de dominee ...
Welk huis ? vroeg ik ...
Nou, ik moet toch eten en slapen, zei de dominee ...

Nee, je moet niks, zei ik ...
Met je poten van de diertjes en de vrouwtjes afblijven nu, makker ...
Dan zullen wij het best met elkaar kunnen vinden ...
Toen sloeg ik hem weer keihard op de schouder ...
Het was inmiddels al een heel oud mannetje geworden ...
Toen ik klein was moest hij mij altijd hebben ...
Maar nu waren de rollen omgedraaid ...

Nou ja, als je het ergens niet mee eens bent, dan neem je me maar onder vuur, zei hij ...
Dat doe'k graag, zei ik ...
Maar je mag niet haten, zei hij toen ...

Ik dacht okay, laat ik kwaad maar niet met kwaad vergelden ...
Ik ben toen weggegaan ... Ik heb verder nooit meer tegen hem gesproken, maar ik had gezegd wat hij moest weten ...

Toen hij was overleden ben ik nog wel een keer terug gegaan naar die kerk van hem, en heb de hele boel daar kort en klein geslagen als de wedergekomen jezus met de zweep .... het was allemaal heel bijbels en ik sloeg ze ook om de oren met de bijbel ...

da's hoe'k erover denk, zei ik, en toen ben ik boos weggelopen ...
ik heb toen ook nog de hele kerk onder water laten zetten als een zondvloed ...
dat hadden ze wel verdiend ...

maar jij bent jezus niet, riep toen iemand ...
nee, riep ik, ik ben zeker geen stripfiguur ...
ik ben toen maar die hagedis op die fiets na gaan doen die ik ooit eens had getekend, met z'n tong uit z'n bek, en die blahahahahaha zei.
wie doe je na ? riep hij toen ...
mijn tante uit amerika, riep ik toen ...

de wijzen uit het westen

Ze kwamen aan op het Nederlandse strand, drie piratenschepen. Ze hadden schatten geroofd uit Amerika, de indianen geplunderd. Ze kwamen terug uit het grote Indianië met een grote buit. Ze hadden een boodschap te verkondigen, een grote gave te geven. Het was iets waardoor je onzichtbaar kon worden. En deze schurken stonden op het strand, drie piratenhoofdmannen, drie piratenkapiteinen, met hun piratenbendes. En de koning van Nederland werd week in zijn knieën, en de koningin van Nederland pakte haar spiegeltje. En zij werden omgekocht, gechanteerd, bereigd, met mes op de keel, want Nederland had geen legers. Hoe kon het dan dat Nederland geen legers had ? Och ziet u, het waren slechts muizenvolkeren. Maar de koning en de koningin kregen een gave. Ze konden nu onzichtbaar worden. En met de indiaanse schatten die ze kregen moest er een school gebouwd worden, in het midden van het Markermeer, op een eiland, en het eiland en de school moesten totaal onzichtbaar zijn.

De wijzen uit het westen waren gekomen. Ze hadden hun evangelie gebracht, een diepe haak in het hart. En zo marcheerde op de scholen het onzichtbare geheim. Zoveel zielen in een fles, opgesloten. De koning liet het er niet bij zitten, maar hij kon niets, want hij was onzichtbaar geworden. Hij was

onder een vloek, net als zijn vrouw. En de muizenvolkeren deden niks. Ze lachten maar en dronken maar de hele dag. Maar op een dag kwamen er wijzen uit het oosten, mirre, wierook en goud. Zij konden de koning wel zien, want zij hadden ogen om te zien, in tegenstelling tot de blinde muizenvolkeren. En zij gaven hun geschenken aan de koning : mirre, wierook en goud. En de koning boog voorover om hun voeten te kussen, maar ze waren weg, onzichtbaar geworden. En de koning greep naar zijn hoofd en riep : 'Ben ik dan blind geworden ?'

Maar verder kon hij nog alles zien. Zelfs de onzichtbare school op het Markermeer. En ook zag hij daar de wijzen uit het westen zitten, de piraten met hun bendes. En hij ging naar ze toe met mirre, wierook en goud. En hij zei : 'Pak me dan, als je kan, want het indiaanse goud heeft jullie verblind.' En hij liet de school afbreken, en niemand heeft ooit nog over de school gesproken.

Moraal van het verhaal : de wijzen uit het westen kwamen Nederland slechts vetmesten.

p.a.p.

Er zit me nogal een groot verschil tussen, riep de marktjongen.
Verkrampingen van nazi-onverschilligheid of van het verzet.
Wij verkopen alleen poeders van het verzet.
Smeer het op uw dijen, op uw schenen, en zie dan hoe de verkramping door uw lichaam trekt om u te verzetten tegen het goddeloze regiem van dit land !
Ze donderen alles maar in de mond bij de mensen en alles moet maar.
Je hebt geen recht van meningsuiting meer. Alles moet maar via hen, zoals zij het willen.
Dit poeder kan uw leven veranderen, door verkramping.
Het houd jezelf strak en hard tegen deze pest.
Het is een virus, en daarom hebben wij een poeder.

Maar de circusbaas was het er niet mee eens.
'Zeg snotaap, werkte jij eerst niet bij ons circus ?
Je mot niet zoveel praatjes hebben.'

Ja, dat deed ik, riep de marktjongen, maar nu werk ik hier.
Beter dan dat corrupte circus van u.

Lieve help, riep een vrouw, zoveel beschuldigingen op de vroege ochtend.
Mot dat allemaal ?

U kunt ook een poedertje van me krijgen, riep de marktjongen.
Omdat jij het bent voor de halve prijs.

Nee laat maar, zei de vrouw
– Ik ga liever gewoon dood …

Teveel gifpoeders vandaag, zei een andere vrouw

Dan motten jullie het zelf maar weten, zei de marktjongen.
En hij smeerde zijn wangetjes nog extra in met het poedertje.

Je ziet wel wit vandaag, zei iemand.

Ja, dat is het poedertje, moet je ook wat ?
riep de marktjongen.

Nee, ik ga liever gewoon dood …

Nazi, nsb, het loopt hier allemaal door het publiek rond …
riep de marktjongen …

Moet je maar geen poedertjes verkopen ! riep iemand …

Oh, krijg ik de schuld, krijg nou wat ! riep de marktjongen.
Hij begon ineens veel meer van het poeder op zich te smeren,
ook op zijn armen, en toen stroopte hij zijn broek op om zijn onderbenen in te smeren.
Toen trok hij zijn schoenen en sokken uit en begon ook zijn voeten ermee in te smeren.
Hij begon helemaal strak te trekken, te verkrampen.

Het is een jonge knaap nog, riep iemand.

Ja, het maakt je jong ! riep de marktjongen. Ook wat ?

Nee, laat maar. Ik ga liever met pensioen, zei die persoon. Veel teveel werk.

Kom hier dan, riep de marktjongen. Dan zal ik je een knal verkopen door zo over mijn poeders te spreken. En dan zeker varken worden he, een nazi of nsb.

Ach man, zei de andere persoon, je ziet ze vliegen, je bent niet meer helder. Kom hier met dat poeder, dan zal ik het over je kop uitgieten !

Poedertjes, poedertjes, zei een chique dame in een chique jurk ineens. Ik verkoop ze ook, dan kunnen jullie lekker nazi, nsb en varkentje worden … Lekker vervroegd met pensioen, hoef je niet meer na te denken, niet meer naar school …

Iedereen rende op haar af om het poeder te kopen …

Ik heb het niet hier, zei de vrouw … Kom maar mee, het is in het bos …

En zo volgde een hele stoet deze vreemde chique dame met de chique jurk. Ze had ook een parasolletje …

Is het nog lang ? vroeg een jongetje.

We zijn er bijna, zei het vrouwtje.

Ze begon steeds ouder te worden …

Is het nog ver ? vroeg iemand anders …

We zijn er zo … zei het vrouwtje …

Toen veranderde ze in een monsterlijk varken en vrat hen allemaal op …

Moraal van het verhaal : stinkende poeders maken het lijf slap

oorlogsbesluiten

hoofdstuk 1. het water van de gesha
hoofdstuk 2. het waarheidsgehalte van een flutromannetje
hoofdstuk 3. dikke pijlen door dikke huiden
hoofdstuk 4. het vuur van virus
hoofdstuk 5. de billenlezer
hoofdstuk 6. het badhokje
hoofdstuk 7. de billenkrant
hoofdstuk 8. oorlogsbesluiten
hoofdstuk 9. flutromannetjes

hoofdstuk 1. het water van de gesha

Dominee Bouma zag de gesha's langsgaan. Het was een tragisch gezicht. Ze liepen heel stijf en mochten niet dromen. Hij las weer verder in het boekje waar hij mee bezig was. Er waren rode vlekken op het papier. Nee, hij kon de gesha's niet helpen. Er waren onzichtbare muren in de stad. Dominee Bouma had vaak black outs en viel weg. Hij las in de inleiding over het zwijn Lo H. Ook las hij over het water van gesha. Het was een hele lange inleiding. Uiteindelijk begon het verhaal toen.

hoofdstuk 2. het waarheidsgehalte van een flutromannetje

Ed Edelweis was de directeur van een uitgeverij van flutromannetjes. Hij verdiende hier veel geld mee. Hij was in een vergadering en besprak met zijn medewerkers welke flutroman hij dit keer zou uitgeven. Er lag een hele stapel nog aan ongepubliceerde flutromans die eigenlijk nog op hun moment aan het wachten waren. Iedere medewerker had zijn eigen voorkeur. Er zaten hele bijzonderen bij. Ed Edelweis had ze nog niet allemaal gelezen, maar er moest nu wel een beslissing

komen. Zijn oog was gevallen op een boekje genaamd oorlogsbesluiten. Hij vond het wel een interessant verhaal. Het ging over een man met een billen obsessie. Hij dacht dat het daarom wel goed zou verkopen, want volgens hem waren vele vrouwen geobsedeerd met hun billen, zowel in positieve zin als in negatieve zin, en ditmaal konden ze het eens beleven door de ogen van een man. De anderen hadden het ook gelezen. De hoofdstukken waren kort en raadselachtig, bijna als profetieën, als literaire sigaretten. Dat was tevens ook de naam van hun uitgeverij : de literaire sigaret.

Om de stad heen was er een muur gebouwd van flutromannetjes. Het waren bijna hieroglyphen. Je kon alleen de stad in en uit als je ze kon ontcijferen. Het waren immers oorlogsbesluiten.

hoofdstuk 3. dikke pijlen door dikke huiden

Om een gouden kalf dansten zij, de afgoden van hun ambachten. Leeuwen met grote manen joegen op de deserteuren die de oorlog hadden vergeten, en beren joegen op de spijbelaren die van hun halfslachtige principes goden hadden gemaakt, om vervolgens al het principiële te vergeten. Ze waren volgelingen van al te snelle persoonlijking. Daarom moesten de beren komen. Op de tribune zat iemand die wegsmolt door een vreemd vuur. Het was een vuur van een virus. Ook de amazones joegen op runderen, op de ambachten van de mens, die ze tot hun goden hadden gemaakt. Dikke pijlen door dikke huiden. Het was het vuur van een oog.

Ze stond in de tent van haar moeder. Daar waar het rund geen leeuw wilde worden moest ze het rund schieten.

Harde en stijfgetrokken amazones in het water met pijl en boog om vissen die geen runderen willen worden te schieten. Ook schieten zij runderen die geen vissen willen worden, want de vis is de scholing.

En er was iets in de kerk gekomen waardoor de kerken leegliepen. En zij probeerden te vluchten tot de wildernis, maar ergens halverwege versteenden ze, want ze hadden de natuur niet lief. En zo werden zij als muren, als eenzame voorspellers van een lot voor allen die afdwalen.

De oude vergadering of de nieuwe vergadering ? De shamaan koos voor geen. De oude germaanse golems die op de gongen sloegen waren gevallen. De amazones waren gekomen. Het was stil op straat. De kerken waren leeg. Het virus was gekomen.

hoofdstuk 4. het vuur van virus

Het was koel weer, maar de muur langs de brede brug naar het noorden was zonovergoten. Er was een plakkaat op de muur van natuurvrouwen. Amos liep langs de muur, en zijn blik viel op het plakkaat, en hij bleef meer staren. Opeens zag hij het grauwe gezicht van een tante verschijnen op het plakaat. Ze was heel doods en had een gewaad aan. Ze droeg een natuurbaby met een band om zijn voorhoofd. Toen moest die tante de baby overhandigen aan de amazones. Daarna zag hij op het plakkaat een kantoor verschijnen waarin een grote dode leeuw lag, met een pijl door zijn hart. Zijn tante was in een rouwstoet. Het was een hele lange stoet, en ze waren allemaal in lange, grauwe gewaden met gebogen hoofd. Amos was op weg naar het noorden. Hij liep haastig door zonder om te kijken.

Amos was op weg naar een kerkgebouw achter de brug, een kerk van de regressie. Er was nu een nieuwe God, de God van de regressie. Hij ging helemaal achterin het kerkgebouw zitten. Er waren veel meer mensen. Sommige mensen meende hij te kennen, zelfs enkele familie leden, maar waren zij niet reeds overleden ? Misschien vergiste hij zich wel. Soms moest hij twee keer kijken. Ze leken er slechts op, of was er meer ? Hij keek voor zich uit, en luisterde naar de preek die aan hem voorbij vloog. De reformatie was overgegaan in de regressie. Er was nu een nieuw plan, een nieuw fundament. Het was een andere bedeling. Er heerste een andere strategie.

Buiten werden de mensen geplaagd door een virus. Ze konden hun kinderen niet meer opvoeden. Ze moesten hen overdragen aan de amazones. Amos keek voor zich uit, koel. Hij had die nacht een droom gehad dat New York een stuk natuur was met slechts één huis, een groot huis, met een grote tuin die overliep in de wildernis. Het was een huis voor moeilijk opvoedbare kinderen. Ook waren deze kinderen paranoïde. Eentje durfde eigenlijk nooit zijn kamer uit, en plaste in een plastic prullenbak die hij eens in de week leegde. De prullenbak was helemaal gaan schimmelen, en op een goede dag durfde hij zelfs helemaal op het zolder te gaan, om daar de prullenbak in de week te leggen, vol met water op het aanrechtje wat daar stond. Toen ging hij weer terug naar zijn kamer en durfde er niet meer te komen. Maar toen de eigenaar van het huis veel later erachter kwam dat er een met urine beschimmelde prullenbak op het zolder was was deze eigenaar woest, zo woest dat hij er niet meer wilde werken, omdat hij bang was dat er inmiddels een virus daar was vanwege dat die beschimmelde prullenbak daar zo lang had gestaan. Hij heeft toen die prullenbak opgeruimd, en vertrok gelijktijdig. Midden in de nacht kwam er een raket van het virus die alle kinderen toen mee had genomen, alsof het huis gewoon een raket basis was. Het virus moest dus gewoon hiervoor gekweekt worden. Het was een vreemde droom. Maar inmiddels sloeg een virus wild om zich heen.

Het dreef de mensen de natuur in of ze droegen hun kinderen over aan de amazones. Amos had een mand. Hij wilde er ook wel in plassen. Sommigen zeiden dat urine geneeskrachtige eigenschappen had, en in de dierenwereld bakende het territorium af, als een alarm. Weer anderen zeiden dat het het sap was van de regressie. Amos slenterde weer naar huis. Hij trapte ergens tegen een blikje aan. Het rolde zo de weg over.

Dit is het vuur van een virus, en rook komt er van voort. Een zwarte leeuwin ligt op een voortijdse grafstede, op een stenen graf, waar een naakte amazone voortstaat. Het is de kerk van de regressie, waar het rund, de ambacht, wordt tot leeuw, de oorlog. Haar monniken zijn rovers, zij gaan terug in de tijd. Ze nemen van een rode stof in een speciale pot, het virus van regressie. Ieder mens moet ontwaken tot de eeuwigheden. Ze aanbidden het regressie virus.

hoofdstuk 5. de billenlezer

Hij was als gestoken door een vreemd insect, een vlieg.
Hij kronkelde spastisch op de grond.
Het was drugs in hun hoofden.

Een man schrikt wakker van een vreemde droom. Hij wordt wakker van het geluid van de douche waar zijn vrouw onder staat. Hij gaat de slaapkamer uit en sluipt richting het hokje van de badkamer, maar dan ineens overvalt een angst hem. Hij kijkt naar de muren die hem dreigen te overweldigen. Maar dan wordt hij weer rustig als hij het water van de douche hoort. Het klinkt als warm water. De frisse geur komt onder het badhokje door.

Dan komt zijn vrouw onder de douche vandaan. Ze heeft een klein schortje aan. Hij kijkt naar haar borsten. De muren van het badhokje zijn vreemd geel en vreemd rood, oud. Hij kijkt ernaar. Dan gaat ook hij onder de douche. Als hij terugkomt in de slaapkamer slaapt zijn vrouw al.

Hij denkt na over zijn droom, en valt dan ook in slaap.
De volgende ochtend zijn ze vroeg wakker. Hij kijkt naar de witte jurk van zijn vrouw. Het is een vreemde witte kleur.

Die nacht kijkt hij naar hoe de billen van zijn vrouw zich door de nacht woelen. Hij heeft een obsessie met haar billen, alsof hij daardoor wedergeboren moet worden. Maar dat is allemaal sinds hij de vreemde droom had waarin hij was gestoken door een vreemd insect, een vlieg, een botvlieg.

Het is alsof zijn vrouw zijn botten leest, als een orakel. Zijn lichaam is strakgetrokken. Hij voelt zich stijfgetrokken sinds hij gestoken is door de vreemde vlieg, de botvlieg.

Haar naam was 'oorlogsbesluiten'.

Als ze naar het winkelcentrum loopt om boodschappen te doen loopt hij achter haar aan om naar haar billen te kijken. Hij leest haar billen. Het geeft hem inspiratie. Zij leest zijn botten, hij leest haar billen. Zij is oorlogsbesluiten.

Er staat een kastje in hun slaapkamer met een plantje erbij, en er ligt een mand met verkleedspullen. Buiten hebben ze een haan. Dat gaat altijd door zijn hoofd. Ook als ze 's ochtends naar het slaapkamer raam loopt om de gordijnen open te doen staart hij naar haar billen als naar de ochtendkrant. Hij is de billenlezer. Het is zijn beroep. Zo leest hij het nieuws voor op tv.

Zij verkleedt zich soms. Dat is goed voor de afwisseling. Zo hebben ze geen saai leven.

Zij leest zijn botten. Daar krijgt ze inspiratie van. Daar wordt ze vrolijk van. Normaal gesproken is ze depressief. Ze kan namelijk niet tellen. Ze neemt er geen genoegen mee als hij haar dan troost. Als hij zegt dat ze door haar handicap juist zoveel andere talenten kan ontwikkelen noemt ze hem kortzichtig en te simpel. In haar ogen is hij een simpele ziel en begrijpt er niks van.

Hij is de billenlezer, zeer beroemd in het land. En zij is de bottenlezer, maar tellen kan zij niet. Soms lukt het haar om tot tien te tellen, maar verder komt ze niet. Daarom houdt ze ervan haarzelf te verkleden. Dan is ze minder depressief. Zij is de bottenlezer die op de tv de programma's aankondigt, de oorlogsbesluiten. Zij is ook zeer beroemd.

Maar beroemd zijn ze alleen maar onder de botvliegen. Verder kent niemand ze.

Hij kwam pas heel laat naar bed. Toen hij terugkwam sliep zijn vrouw al.

Hij werd wakker van de douche. Zijn vrouw stond eronder. Hij sloop richting het hokje van de badkamer, maar dan ineens overvalt een angst hem. Hij kijkt naar de muren die hem dreigen te overweldigen. Maar dan wordt hij weer rustig als hij het water van de douche hoort. Het klinkt als warm water. De frisse geur komt onder het badhokje door.

Dan komt zijn vrouw onder de douche vandaan. Ze is dit keer helemaal naakt en kijkt verschrikt. 'Ik ben het maar,' zei hij.

'Ik dacht dat je nog sliep,' zei ze.
'Ik werd wakker van het geluid van de douche,' zei hij, terwijl hij naar haar borsten kijkt, dan naar

haar heupen en billen.
'Draai je eens om,' zei hij. Toen begon hij haar billen te lezen.

'Nog iets interessants ?' vroeg ze.

hoofdstuk 6. het badhokje

Het badhokje, daar draaide wel zijn hele leven om. Altijd als zijn vrouw ging douchen werd hij er wakker van, en sloop dan de gang op richting het douche hokje. Hij keek dan naar de vergeelde muren, en naar het vage, vreemde rode. Altijd overvalt de angst hem dan, de muren die hem dreigen te overweldigen. Maar dan wordt hij weer rustig als hij het water van de douche hoort. Het klinkt als warm water. De frisse geur komt onder het badhokje door. Dan komt zijn vrouw er uiteindelijk uit, met een klein schortje of geheel naakt. Het is als een ritueel. Hier draait zijn leven om, en om haar billen, alsof hij daardoor wedergeboren moet worden. Hij moet de billen lezen, altijd weer. Hij is de billenlezer.

Zijn lichaam verstijfd als hij haar ziet, alsof er bottenvliegen op zijn botten zitten, bottenlezers. Hij is zo stijf dan als een nieuwslezer. Hij was geobsedeerd met de billen van vrouwen, en had 's nachts vreemde dromen over kinderen die speelden op grote kruizen en die nog geboren moesten worden. Hij wilde afkomen van zijn billen obsessie, en ging daarom wildernis verhalen schrijven, maar merkte dat hij telkens weer schreef over de billen van natuurvrouwen. Daarom schreef hij ook maar zoveel mogelijk over geboortes, maar die vielen in het niet bij zijn aandacht tot de billen van natuurvrouwen. Hij bleef er maar over schrijven.

'Kijk dan maar weer naar mijn billen,' zei ze.
'Dat doe ik al,' zei hij.
'Doe het dan iets meer,' zei ze.
'Ik doe het al de hele tijd,' zei hij.
'Stop dan met schrijven,' zei ze.
'Dat kan ik niet,' zei hij.

'Dan moet je naar de dokter,' zei zijn vrouw.
'Kun jij mijn dokter niet zijn ?' vroeg hij toen aan zijn vrouw.
'Ik heb er niet voor gestudeerd,' zei zijn vrouw. 'Ik kan niet eens normaal tellen.'

'Dokter,' zei hij toen hij eindelijk bij de dokter zat. 'Ik denk altijd maar aan billen, billen, billen. Ik kan er maar niet mee stoppen.'

'Wat is uw beroep ?' vroeg de dokter.

'Billenlezer,' zei hij.

'Dat verklaart een hoop,' zei de dokter.

'Wat doe ik er tegen ?' vroeg hij.

'Gewoon rustig blijven kijken als het uw beroep is,' zei de dokter.

'Ja, maar ik heb nooit rust,' zei hij. 'Ik neem het werk mee naar huis.'

'Oh, als huiswerk,' zei de dokter. 'Dat is niet zo vreemd.'

'Ja, maar ik wil er van af,' zei hij.

'Wat zou je dan willen worden ?' vroeg de dokter.

'Ik weet het niet,' zei hij.

'Denk daar dan eerst maar heel goed over na,' zei de dokter.

Ondertussen schreef hij door. Het werden vele wildernis boeken, allemaal over billen van natuurvrouwen, en geboortes. Ook de dokter las ze. 'Weet u nu wat ik zo gek vind,' zei de dokter op een dag. 'Dat u eigenlijk heel goed kunt schrijven. Het zit allemaal heel logisch in elkaar. Het legt het allemaal helder uit. U bent een hele goede billenlezer.'

'Ja, maar ik word er gek van,' zei hij. 'Het is altijd weer hetzelfde liedje.

'Wat zegt uw vrouw ervan ?' vroeg de dokter.

'Die wil dat ik naar haar billen kijk,' zei hij. 'Dat doe ik al genoeg, maar ze is nogal erg jaloers.'

'Wat is haar beroep ?' vraagt de dokter.

'Bottenlezer,' zegt hij. 'Ze kondigt de programma's aan, de oorlogsbesluiten. Zo heet ze ook : oorlogsbesluiten.'

De dokter begint hard te lachen.

'Nou, wat valt daar dan weer over te lachen dan ?' vraagt hij.

'Binnenpretje,' zei de dokter. 'Lachen is gezond.'

'Ja, maar het lijkt alsof u ons zit uit te lachen,' zegt hij.

'Nee, nee, dat is het echt niet,' zei de dokter, 'maar u zegt het ook zo komisch en droog. Oorlogsbesluiten, ha ha ha.'

'Ja, dat is haar naam,' zegt hij. 'Daar kan ze niks aan doen.'

'U lijkt me een gezond stel,' zei de dokter. 'Gaat u maar rustig door met uw billen en botten lezen. Er valt nog veel te lezen. En voor u te schrijven.'

Maar als hij thuiskomt wil hij er weer vanaf.

'De dokter leeft niet echt mee,' zei hij tegen zijn vrouw.

Hij begint maar weer met schrijven, en schrijft over niets anders dan de billen van natuurvrouwen.

Hij wordt er wanhopig van. 'Ik moet denk ik naar een zielenarts,' zegt hij.

Ook bij de zielenarts vertelt hij zijn verhaal. De zielenarts laat hem ook zijn hele levensverhaal vertellen, en al gauw zegt de zielenarts : 'U heeft nooit een moeder gehad. Als u altijd maar aan billen van natuurvrouwen moet denken, dan wil dat zeggen dat u nog nooit echt geboren bent, omdat u nooit een echte moeder heeft gehad. U heeft onderdrukte moedergevoelens, het gemis van een moeder. Dat is me zeer duidelijk geworden door uw verhaal. U heeft een trauma opgelopen door dit gemis, wat zich hierin uit. Neemt u het uzelf niet kwalijk, en ook uw beroepskeuze niet. Het komt wel vaker voor.'

'Ja, maar ik zit vast in de billen industrie,' zei hij.

'Dat maakt niet uit. Het komt in plaats van het hebben van een moeder. U moet toch wat,' zei de zielenarts.

Als hij weer thuis is is zijn vrouw onder de douche. Hij loopt richting het douche hokje, maar een enorme angst overvalt hem. Hij valt op de grond, en begint spastisch te rollen als gestoken door een vreemd insect, een vlieg, een botvlieg.

Of je nu leest of schrijft, de mens is voortgekomen vanuit de billen van de natuurvrouw, en zal naar de billen van de natuurvrouw wederkeren.

hoofdstuk 7. de billenkrant

Zijn obsessie werd eigenlijk alleen maar erger, tot het punt dat hij zijn eigen krant uitbracht : de billenkrant. Mensen begonnen hem nu echt met de nek aan te kijken, terwijl anderen hem verdedigden, want het was immers zijn beroep. Alle boeken die hij had geschreven gingen over billen, en nu had hij ook zijn eigen billenkrant. Ondanks alle tegenstand werd de billenkrant goed verkocht. Meer mensen kregen zo last van de billen obsessie maar ook kregen dezelfde mensen last van angst aanvallen en paniek aanvallen zoals hij had. Het ging gepaard met zware ademhalingsproblemen.

Inteelt was een groot probleem. Hij moest echt rennen in de bessenvelden. De billenmonsters waren exogaam. Hij moest wederom geboren worden. De billenmonsters waren kruizingen tussen tijgers en beren, maar dan veel erger. Hij moest rennen voor zijn leven, altijd, als hij in de bessenvelden was. Zo kwam hij ook eens bij haar terecht. Hij kon zijn dromen niet najagen, maar hij kwam bij haar terecht. Het monster hield hem tegen, het billenmonster. Hij viel er niet mee op, zonnebrilletje op. Niemand zag het, alleen hij. Zij was immers oorlogsbesluiten.

hoofdstuk 8. oorlogsbesluiten

Zijn vader en moeder waren wandelende flutromannetjes. Zijn vader was heel dik, en zijn moeder was heel dun. Er was een wand tussen hen van flutromannetjes. Zijn moeder was onbereikbaar voor hem. Zijn vader probeerde hem te wurgen met zijn vadsige lichaam. Dat was de nachtmerrie die hij vaak had. Op een dag brokkelde de wand af, en zag hij een prachtige natuur met natuurmensen. Het waren natuurmoeders, natuurvrouwen, en hun kinderen. Hij wist niet wat hij moest doen. Hij was alles kwijt. Het overweldigde hem. Toen is hij maar weer teruggegaan naar zijn flutromannetjes.

Ed Edelweis had het gelezen en het was goed zo. Het was klaar voor publicatie. Kort maar krachtig. Het waren immers oorlogsbesluiten.

hoofdstuk 9. flutromannetjes

Dominee Bouma had het boekje uitgelezen, en keek op. Weer zag hij de gesha's langsgaan. Zij waren stijf en mochten niet dromen. Zij moesten werken voor de flutromannetjes. Zij waren modellen om de schrijvers van de flutromannetjes te inspireren. Ze verdienden veel geld. Dominee Bouma zuchtte. Hij kon niets doen. Ook hij voelde zichzelf als een gesha. Maar hij keek op, en zag een rode planeet. Het waren immers …. oorlogsbesluiten ...

radio de christelijke rolstoel – wie weet waar wie werd geboren

Radio de christelijke rolstoel, goedemorgen.

– Eh ja, hallo, met wie ?

Met Hendrik van Putten spreekt u, van radio de christelijke rolstoel, goedemorgen.

– Wie ?

H... Hendrik van Putten …

– Van Dutten ?

Nee, van Putten, Putten …

– Die ken ik niet, en trouwens ik ben doof. Ik ging namelijk al op jonge leeftijd met pensioen. Wel zo makkelijk.

Oh, maar dan bent u aan het goede adres hier. Wat is uw naam ?

– Van Zelderen. Frits van Zelderen.

Wie ? Ik versta u niet goed … Solderen ?

– Nee, nee, van Zelderen, met Z E, of bent u zelf ook doof ?

Ja, vroeg met pensioen gegaan, maar een radio leek me nog wel leuk, vooral een christelijke.

– Zit u ook in een rolstoel ?

Ik wel. U ook ?

– Ja, ik heb er ook één.

Nou ja, kunnen we dan even ter zake komen ? Hoeveel wilt u er bij bestellen ?

– Oh, dat kan hier allemaal op de radio ? Nou, graag voor de hele familie en de buren, en die zullen ook wel hun families hebben.

Ja, het is een leuke sport. Allemaal vervroegd met pensioen.

– Zo is het.

Zeg, en meneer van Zelderen, wat komt u nog meer allemaal doen ?

– Ik ben een mevrouw.

Sorry, dat verstond ik verkeerd.

– Gebeurd wel vaker.

Maar waarvoor belt u nog meer ?

– Nou ja, ik ben nogal aandachtsgeil, televisie geil, radio geil, noem maar op.

Oh, dus u wilt gewoon even op de radio komen, uw stem laten horen ? Leuk.

– Ik vind het wel een goede mop.

Ja, ook leuk voor de kleinkinderen.

– Die heb ik niet.

Maar die kunt u dan toch adopteren ? Nou ja, maar u hebt toch hoop ik ook gebeld om mee te doen aan het spel, hè ?

– Welk spel ?

Nou, van radio de christelijke rolstoel. U bent hier op het spelletjes programma, en live nog wel.

– Live ? Dat wist ik niet. Ik dacht dat we al dood waren.

Nou, wat zijn dat nou voor grappen, meneer of mevrouw van Zelderen ?

– Nou ja, ik dacht dat dat de bedoeling was.

Nee, eigenlijk niet. Ik denk nog steeds dat u een man bent. Zit u ons soms in de maling te nemen.

– Nee hoor.

Nou, het lijkt er anders wel op. Wie zegt nu zulke dingen ?

– Wat ?

Wie zegt nu dingen zoals : 'Ik dacht dat we al dood waren.' U bent live op radio de christelijke rolstoel. We wilden net aan het spel beginnen en nu begint u de boel hier te vergallen.

– Welk spel ?

Nou, het spel waarvoor u gebeld heeft en waarmee u pensioen fondsen kunt winnen, extra rolstoelen en rolstoel uitstapjes en ga zo maar door. Het spel heet, wat alle luisteraars weten : Wie weet waar wie geboren is ?

– Dat weet ik niet. Dat moet je mij allemaal niet vragen waar wie woont. Verkoopt u ook gehoor apparaten en blinde geleide honden ?

Die kunt u ook winnen of bestellen.

– Nou, doe mij er maar drie.

Wat drie ? Drie van wat ?

– Van dat.

Meneer van Zelderen, nu niet grappig gaan lopen doen. Daar kopen we allemaal niks voor. Wilt u bestellen of spelen ?

– Ik besteel niemand.

Nee, bestellen, met dubbele L.

– Oh. Ja, ik kom voor de bestelling.

Wat is die bestelling dan, meneer van Zelderen, want u bent in de live uitzending en we hebben niet veel tijd.

– We hebben alle tijd, meneer Hendrik van Dutten. We zijn met pensioen gegaan. Alle tijd van de wereld.

U begrijpt er allemaal niks van, meneer van Zelderen. En ik heet Hendrik van Putten. Dat weet iedereen.

– Nou, ik niet.

We moeten zo stoppen.

– Nu al. Het begint net leuk te worden.

Meneer van Zelderen, houd op met die grapjes.

– Ik dacht leuk voor de kleinkinderen.

Ik heb die ook niet. Laten we het even over wat anders hebben.

– Goed, waar wil je het over hebben.

We hebben nog precies één minuut. Maakt dus niet uit. Doe maar even iedereen de groeten. U gaat zo weer van de radio af. Het was me een genoegen.

– Okay, Nou ja, groeten aan alle andere doden.

Met pensioen gaan is niet hetzelfde als dood zijn, meneer van Zelderen.

– Voor mij wel.

De tijd is voorbij. We gaan u ophangen. Stuurt u uw bestelling maar toe via een brief, maar dan wel duidelijk zijn.

– Ik kan niet zo netjes schrijven.

Typ het dan maar.

– Ik heb geen typ machine.

Verzin maar wat. De groeten, meneer van Zelderen.

– Ja, groeten aan uw kleinkinderen.

Die heb ik niet. Dat had ik u al gezegd, meneer van Zelderen.

– Ik kreeg al alzheimer op vroege leeftijd.

Ik ook, maar dan hoeven we toch niet rot te doen naar elkaar ? We zijn toch christelijk ?

– Jij begon.

Nee, u begon, meneer van Zelderen, toen u ging zeggen dat we al dood waren.

– Dat zijn we toch ?

U bent een moeilijk mens, meneer van Zelderen.

– De waarheid is moeilijk.

Hè bah, u probeert gewoon mijn dag te verpesten, meneer van Zelderen.

– Druk die knop dan in, dan ben ik weg.

Ik druk hem al de hele tijd in, maar volgens mij is er een technische storing, want u bent nog steeds hier.

– Ja, dat heb je met een technicus die ook vervroegd met pensioen is gegaan.

Nou, maar we doen ons best. Ah, daar is de volgende beller. Radio de christelijke rolstoel, goedemorgen.

--- Hallo ?

Ja, hallo.

--- Met wie spreek ik ?

Met radio de christelijke rolstoel, goedemorgen. Met Hendrik van Putten.

--- Oh, dan ben ik verkeerd verbonden. Ik ken geen van Dutten.

Van Putten is mijn naam, met een P.

--- Die ken ik ook niet.

En u kent radio de christelijke rolstoel ook niet toevallig ?

--- Nee, wat is dat ?

Bent u toevallig al met pensioen gegaan ?

--- Nee, nog niet, maar mijn man wel.

Geef hem maar even.

--- Ja, dat kan ik niet doen. Die slaapt.

Ach doet u dan vrolijk met ons mee, met het spel wie weet waar wie werd geboren.

--- Dat weet ik niet. Maar ik ben niet zo goed in raad spelletjes. Mijn man wel, maar die slaapt nu.

Nog extra rolstoelen nodig, pensioen fondsen, brillen, gehoor apparaten ?

--- Nee, ik kan u nu goed horen. Eerst was de verbinding niet zo goed, dus verstond ik u verkeerd. Kunt u alles nog een keer zeggen ?

Pff, nou ja, goedemorgen, u bent live in de uitzending van de christelijke rolstoel, op het programma wie weet waar wie is geboren. U spreekt met Hendrik van Putten.

--- Wie ?

Hendrik van Putten, met een P, Putten …

--- D ?

Pfff, nee een P, een P, van Pieter, van paaldansen …

--- Oh, paaldansen.

Ja, of paalzitten.

--- Gezellig, kan ik me daarvoor inschrijven.

Nee, niet vandaag, het is nu spelletjes dag.

--- Oh, ik dacht dat dat ook een spel was.

Ja, maar dat is een ander spel, paaldansen voor bejaarden.

--- Oh, voor bejaarden. Dat ben ik nog niet.

Dan heeft u hier niets te zoeken, tenzij u vervroegd bejaard wil worden. Daar kunnen wij wel voor zorgen, met wat pensioen fondsjes erbij. We zijn de slechtsten nog niet.

--- Nee, laat maar. Geen interesse.

En met wie sprak ik ?

--- Met meneer van Zelderen.

Oh, meneer van Zelderen nog. Zit u nu allerlei typetjes te doen ?

--- Ja, voor uw kleinkinderen. Ik had toch nog wat tijd over. En u kon mij niet wegkrijgen. U moet toch goede radio kunnen maken. Ik dacht ik help u een handje.

Flauw, zeer flauw. Je had ons kunnen helpen door zelf het knopje in te drukken. Het is maar een kleine moeite voor een groot plezier. Fijn dat je gekomen bent, nog fijner als je weer gaat. Maar u houdt ervan de boel te bedriegen zie ik.

--- Maar jullie bedriegen zelf niet wilde je zeggen.

Hoe komt u daar bij ?

--- Nou, hoe zou ik daar nou bij komen ? Hoe komen jullie aan al dat geld voor jullie pensioen fondsen bijvoorbeeld ?

Daar wordt hard voor gewerkt.

--- Door wie ?

Nou, door onze luisteraars bijvoorbeeld, en die doneren dat. Die zijn ook allemaal met pensioen of gaan op pensioen, en hebben veel voor ons over door het rentenieren.

--- U leeft maar in een hele kleine wereld.

Ik heb niet meer nodig. Maar zeg eens, wie bent u echt ?

--- Inspecteur van radio programma's. U bent nu ook op ons programma. U licht mensen op, en daarom lichten wij u op.

Ik ben geen oplichter.

--- Kleine kinderen hun armen en benen afzagen in ruil voor snoep is geen oplichten wil u zeggen.

Dat doen wij niet. U bent gek.

--- Kinderen lokken in pensioen fondsen noem ik gek.

Mijn knopje doet het niet.

--- Goedzo. Uw knopje zal het ook niet meer doen.

Oh, dus u heeft het kapot gemaakt ? Ik wilde u graag wegstemmen.

--- Ik ga zo weer weg, maar ik heb de opnames nu.

Geluk ermee. Luisteraars, dit was het dan weer voor vandaag. Ik hoop dat u genoten heeft van weer een nieuwe aflevering van het spel wie weet waar wie werd geboren op radio de christelijke rolstoel.

Dikke Taram

Dikke Taram loog veel. Haar leugens maakten je de kop gek. Soms zei ze niks, maar dan was ze wel weer aan het liegen en roddelen. Roddelen deed ze ook graag. Ze had ook een vriendin, en die was eigenlijk hetzelfde. Er was geen ontsnapping aan haar leugens. Het bleef maar in je hoofd rondtollen totdat je er gek van werd. Daarom was dikke Taram gevreesd. Als iemand er problemen mee had dan lachte ze gewoon. Het kon haar niks schelen. Ja, dikke Taram was iemand waarmee je maar moeilijk op kon schieten. Ze had een zeer grote bek. Als ze een jongen zag, dan sloeg ze hem neer. Ze was nogal feministisch aangelegd. Ze kon ook makkelijk tegen jongens op. Dikke Taram ging geen jongens uit de weg. Ze sloeg hen neer en sleepte hen dan naar een kooi. Daar moesten ze

dan telkens haar leugens aanhoren. Dat ging soms de hele dag door. Daarom waren de jongens bang voor haar, en bleven ze zoveel mogelijk uit haar buurt. Ze sloeg door totdat ze blauwe plekken hadden, of soms zelfs totdat ze een bloedneus hadden of een bloedlip. Ze ging niemand uit de weg.

Hoogspanning

'Ik ben een vuur wat niet gestopt kan worden. Schiet mij door mijn hart en het zal in andere vormen tot je komen, heviger dan ooit. Wij zijn robotten, komende van een wereld van kennis, niet van wil. Wij zijn tot deze lagere sferen gekomen waar mensen worden voortgedreven door de wil. Wij zijn hier voor een missie,' zei de robot.

Ik keek hem even vreemd aan.

'Nou, ik wil je echt geen kwaad doen,' zei ik. 'Waarom zou ik dat doen ?'

Toen herhaalde hij het weer wat hij had gezegd, en toen weer, maar toen onderbrak hij zichzelf. 'Sorry,' zei hij. 'Jij lijkt me wel een type waarmee we kunnen praten. Ik kan daarom wel normaal met je spreken denk ik.'

'Ben je daar nog niet helemaal zeker van ?' vroeg ik.

'Ik ben je nog aan het scannen,' zei de robot.

'Wat als ik net zo ben zoals jullie ?' vroeg ik. 'Wat als ik veel eerder al hier naartoe was gezonden dan jullie ?'

'Zou kunnen,' zei de robot. 'Ik ben het nog even aan het doorscannen.'

De robot bleef daar maar staan, en zei toen niets meer. Ik heb nog even een uurtje gewacht en ben toen doorgelopen. Hij zou me wel met gemak kunnen terugvinden als hij echt hele goede scanners zou hebben.

Midden in de nacht stonden ze ineens in mijn slaapkamer. Ze hadden hun scanners op mij gericht. Allemaal rode lampjes in mijn gezicht. 'Ik was al aan het slapen,' zei ik.

'Goed,' zeiden ze. 'Dan gaan we weer. We weten nu in ieder geval waar je woont.'

'Met hoeveel zijn jullie ?' vroeg ik.

'Met drieduizend man, kunnen ook vrouwen tussenzitten,' zeiden ze.

Ze hadden donkere pakken aan en waren zwaar bewapend. 'Hij is één van ons,' zei één van de robotten. Toen zijn ze weer weggegaan. Ik was nog maar een kind. Toen ik de volgende ochtend wakker werd dacht ik dat ik het maar gedroomd had. Ik vertelde over de droom in de klas die dag. De juffrouw moest er hartelijk om lachen, en ook de kinderen. Ik lachte ook. 'Het zal je maar gebeuren,' zei een klasgenootje.

Maar de nachten daarop begonnen de andere kinderen ook zulke dromen te krijgen, en zelfs de juffrouw. Iedereen vond het heel vreemd. De dromen gingen allemaal over hetzelfde : de robotten waren gekomen. Ze waren hier op missie, maar het was onbekend wat hun missie was.

De juffrouw stond voor een raadsel. Ze begon vreemde tekens op het schoolbord te tekenen. 'Kennen jullie die ?' vroeg de juffrouw. Iedereen schudden z'n hoofd. 'Ik heb het gedroomd,' zei de juffrouw. 'Het zit in mijn hoofd. Het moet nog ontcijferd worden.'

Opeens kwam de hoofdmeester binnen. Hij keek naar de tekens. 'Wat ben jij die kinderen nou aan het leren ?' vroeg hij.

'Oh,' zei de juffrouw, 'ik las het in een tijdschrift.'

'Welk tijdschrift ?' vroeg de hoofdmeester, 'en welke taal is het ?'

'Ik had erover gedroomd,' zei de juffrouw.

'En moet je daar de kinderen mee belasten ?' vroeg de hoofdmeester boos. 'Heb je ze niets anders te leren ?'

'We hebben er allemaal over gedroomd !' riepen de kinderen toen.

Het was toen even lange tijd stil.

'Zitten jullie me nu voor de gek te houden ?' vroeg de hoofdmeester boos. Stampvoetend liep hij het klaslokaal uit, maar de volgende dag kwam hij als een bibberend hondje terug. 'I... ik heb er ook over gedroomd,' zei hij.

De juffrouw glimlachte. 'Vertel er eens over,' zei de juffrouw.

'Nou,' zei de hoofdmeester. 'Er was oorlog, en ze kwamen ons halen. Zoveel robotten in zoveel ruimteschepen. De hele lucht was er mee vol. En er stonden allemaal van die vreemde tekens op hun pakken, en op hun ruimteschepen, net zulke tekens als op het schoolbord.'

'Zal het gebeuren ?' vroeg iemand.

'Het zijn maar dromen,' zei de juffrouw, 'maar omdat we er allemaal over gedroomd hebben kan er meer aan de hand wezen.'

'Misschien worden we wel bestraald,' zei iemand anders.

'Het zou kunnen,' zei de juffrouw. En toen wezen ze allemaal op mij. 'Bij hem is het begonnen. Hij kwam er als eerste mee,' zeiden ze. Toen zijn ze mijn schooltas gaan doorzoeken. Ze haalden er een apparaat uit wat ik niet kende. Het leek wel op een computerspelletje, maar het was veel meer. Er

werden toen andere meesters en juffrouws bijgeroepen. Toen hebben ze de politie gebeld. Ik moest mee naar het bureau. Het apparaat was zeer verdacht. Ik had geen idee hoe het in mijn tas was gekomen, maar het bleek een apparaat te zijn van gedachten beïnvloeding. Het bleek een heel gevaarlijk apparaat te zijn, tenminste dat zeiden ze. Ik moest toen voor de kinderrechter verschijnen, en moest de gevangenis in. Ik snapte nog steeds niet hoe het kon gebeuren, maar niemand geloofde me. Ik herinnerde me wat één van die robotten ooit tegen me gezegd had, en dat begon ik toen telkens tegen de gevangenisbewakers te zeggen : 'Ik ben een vuur wat niet gestopt kan worden. Schiet mij door mijn hart en het zal in andere vormen tot je komen, heviger dan ooit. Wij zijn robotten, komende van een wereld van kennis, niet van wil. Wij zijn tot deze lagere sferen gekomen waar mensen worden voortgedreven door de wil. Wij zijn hier voor een missie.' Zij begonnen sinds toen ook zulke dromen te krijgen over komende robotten, en over de vreemde tekens. Ik moest toen overgeplaatst worden naar een zwaardere gevangenis, meer geïsoleerd. Ze hebben toen een heleboel experimenten op me uitgevoerd. Maar zij die dat deden werden daardoor geplaagd met zware nachtmerries over de robotten, en ik bleef maar zeggen : 'Ik ben een vuur wat niet gestopt kan worden. Schiet mij door mijn hart en het zal in andere vormen tot je komen, heviger dan ooit. Wij zijn robotten, komende van een wereld van kennis, niet van wil. Wij zijn tot deze lagere sferen gekomen waar mensen worden voortgedreven door de wil. Wij zijn hier voor een missie.' Ik waarschuwde dat als ze nog verder met me zouden sollen dat er dan doden zouden kunnen vallen, dat ze van binnen kapot zouden branden, dat ze gewoon spontaan zouden kunnen exploderen. Ze moesten weten dat ik van gevaarlijke apparatuur was gemaakt met reflectie effecten, waardoor alles wat ze me aandeden op hen zou terugstuiten, nog wel in ergere vorm. Ze luisterden niet. Het leek wel alsof ze hun leven voor de wetenschap gaven. Ze moesten en zouden aan mij sleutelen, ook al kwamen ze zo onder hoogspanning. Ik was nog maar een kind. Wetenschappers die aan mij sleutelden overleefden het uiteindelijk niet, en zo werd het steeds rustiger om me heen. Steeds minder waagden zich nog aan mij. Een enkele waaghals zo nu en dan moest het met zijn leven bekopen. Ik raakte meer en meer geïsoleerd, en terug naar de samenleving mocht ik niet.

Op een nacht kwamen de robotten mij halen. Het was oorlog. Met grote ruimte schepen kwamen ze, met allerlei vreemde tekens erop. Ik was nog maar een kind. Ze hebben me toen naar een dichtbijzijnde planeet gebracht, genaamd de aarde. Hier had ik een nieuwe missie. Ik dacht toen direct : 'Laat ik m'n grote bek nu maar eens een keer houden voor de verandering, zodat het me niet nog een keer in dezelfde problemen zal brengen.' Ik was een brutaal kind, deinsde voor niets en niemand terug, zei alles recht voor z'n raap. Dat kon niet meer, dus toen hebben ze m'n geheugen maar gewist. Ik moest helemaal opnieuw beginnen. Ik werd op die andere planeet op een nieuwe school een voorbeeldige leerling. Ik wist van niks. De juffrouw kon me alles vertellen, en ik geloofde het.

Op een dag zei ze tegen me : 'Ik ben een vuur wat niet gestopt kan worden. Schiet mij door mijn hart en het zal in andere vormen tot je komen, heviger dan ooit. Wij zijn robotten, komende van een wereld van kennis, niet van wil. Wij zijn tot deze lagere sferen gekomen waar mensen worden voortgedreven door de wil. Wij zijn hier voor een missie.'

Ik keek haar met grote ogen aan.
Ik kon haar bijna niet geloven.
'Echt ?' vroeg ik. 'En wat is die missie dan ?'
Het was na schooltijd. Alle andere kinderen waren al de klas uit.
Ze begon vreemde tekens op het schoolbord te schrijven.
Even dacht ik dat ik die tekens kende, maar van een tv programma.
'Ja, daar kijk ik altijd naar, naar dat programma,' zei ik.
Ze glimlachte.
'Ja, dat is een mooi programma hè,' zei ik, 'over robotten die komen met hun ruimteschepen om uit te helpen uit de oorlog.'

'Ja, daar is dat regeltje van,' zei ze, 'van dat programma.'
Alle andere kinderen keken er ook graag naar.
Soms deden we alsof we die robotten waren om elkaar uit de oorlog te helpen.

Einde

de nonnenkoren

Alles word gemaakt van spiegelingen,
alles wordt gemaakt van spinnenrag,
alles stroomt voort vanuit de spiegel van het oer, van de eeuwige jeugd,
alles komt voort vanuit de rode hof,
waar de oude nonnenkoren zijn, zo oud en blind en doof,
terwijl ze denken dat ze zien … maar ze zien niks …
ze bewaken de eeuwige jeugd …
vervroegd met pensioen gegaan …

altijd lekker willen eten, altijd maar gulzig willen zijn,
zij willen niet werken, niks doen, lekker makkelijk,
alleen maar lekker eten willen zij,
zo doen ze hun dansjes, die ouwe nonnen in hun optochten,
vanuit de rode hof komen zij,
slechts spiegelingen … slechts spinnenrag …
bewakende de eeuwige jeugd …

kannibalen zijn zij, gulzige kannibalen …
Joost zag het niet meer zitten, Joost zag het niet meer staan,
Ze willen alleen maar zitten, ze willen alleen maar staan …
niet meer werken, niets meer doen, niets meer leren … niets meer willen zien, maar ze denken dat ze zien … gulzige kannibalen zijn zij … zo doen ze hun dansjes …

ouwe nonnendansjes … daar gaan ze door de tuin … trage gezangen …
kannibalen liederen …
lekker willen eten, niets meer willen doen,
ze bewaken de eeuwige jeugd …
ze bewaken de spiegel …
een valse spiegel hebben zij opgericht …

zij zijn altijd de mooisten in het land …
zij zijn ook de allerblindsten …
daarom zag Joost het niet meer zitten … hij zag het niet meer staan …
ze willen alleen maar eten … ze willen alleen maar staan … alleen maar zitten …
alleen maar uitrusten … niets meer te doen …. Joost zag het niet meer zitten …
de eeuwige jeugd bewaken zij …
de bibelebonse pap ….

Joost zag het niet meer zitten … wat een ongein …
Joost zag het niet meer staan …
Ze willen alleen maar zitten … ze willen alleen maar staan ….
Joost had het helemaal gehad met die kannibalen …
met die stoeten van ouwe nonnen door zijn land …
hij kon er niets tegen doen …
hij was ten einde raad ….

toen is hij naar een ouwe heks gegaan,
die roerde in haar ketel …
wat wil je weten … dat zijn wij vergeten …
niemand kon hij nog vertrouwen …
allen gingen ze achter de optochten van de ouwe nonnen aan …
achter de muziek aan … wat een domme dansjes …
kannibalen zijn zij …. lekker gulzig willen eten …. altijd maar weer eten …
niets meer bijleren …. blind zijn zij, en doof ….
zij horen het geschreeuw niet meer van hen in grote pijn ….
zij zijn te oud geworden …. zij zijn met pensioen gegaan ….
geheel afgestorven …. nee, zij horen niks meer …. en luisteren doen ze niet …
ze zijn te oud voor die dingen …. en nu doen ze hun dansjes, en hebben hun feestjes ….
nu leven ze om te eten …. kannibalen zijn zij … gulzige kannibalen ….
alles willen ze hebben, maar ze hebben niks ….
stokdoof zijn zij, en steke blind … zo drijven zij voort … gedreven door de wind …
gedreven door de gulzigheid ….
Joost zag het niet meer zitten, Joost zag het niet meer staan ….
ze willen alleen maar zitten … ze willen alleen maar staan ….
niets meer doen, alleen maar gulzig eten, dan gulzig dansen, en dan slapen ze …

Joost ging toen naar een andere heks,
maar dat was ook allemaal hetzelfde …
toen vluchtte hij naar de rode hof,
maar daar waren ook alleen maar heksen …

Joost is gekomen met z'n bibelebonse pap …
Joost is gekomen met z'n biblebonse pap …
Hij neemt een hap …

Hij zag hun domme dansjes … als ouwe nonnen gingen ze daar … door de hele tuin, door het hele land, en ze namen ouder en kind mee … wat een optocht …

De nonnen, zij bewaken het zo goed, en Joost kon niet uit zijn nachtmerrie komen …

Koning pap wat heb je dan gedaan … De nonnen hebben het gedaan !
Joost zat onder de nonnen. Ze hielden hem overal vast, aan z'n armen en benen, en probeerden hem

te wassen.

'Wie zijn jullie !' riep Joost, maar ze antwoordden niet …

Koning pap wat heb je dan gedaan … De nonnen hebben het gedaan !

Joost had een zware nachtmerrie ...

De Imker

Bij mijn tante was er een land octopus geconstateerd, in haar huis, in de keuken om precies te zijn. Een land octopus kan ook gewoon op land leven. Het was een witte. Het is bekend van de land octopus dat het gif spuit met z'n tentakels, en als iemand geraakt wordt dan heeft zo iemand het gevoel dat hij de krant leest, en sterft dan even later, of raakt voor de rest van z'n leven verlamd. Coma's zijn ook mogelijk. Ook kan de land octopus steken met zijn tentakels, en het is bekend dat hij zo eitjes kan leggen in degene die wordt gestoken, zowel in mens als dier. Niet om op de koffie uit te nodigen dus. Mijn tante durfde de keuken niet meer in. Ik ging er naartoe, en toen ik in de achterhal was kon ik zo de keuken inkijken, en daar zat de witte land octopus op een tafeltje, te blazen. Toen hij mij zag krijste het ding. Ik was in mijn imker pak gekomen voor het geval hij zou spuiten, steken of bijten. Plotseling sprong hij hevig krijsend op mijn helm, en probeerde er een gat in te steken. Hij begon allemaal te tikken. Ik greep hem met mijn handschoen, waarin hij toen probeerde te bijten. Ik voelde me heel vies, en had allerlei drangen om te poepen en te plassen. Ik had allerlei beelden in mijn hoofd van toiletten en alsof ik de krant las. Ook had ik overgeef neigingen. Mijn tante voelde haarzelf al jaren misselijk. Het scheen dat de land octopus al die tijd bij haar onder het huis had geleefd, maar had zich nu boven de grond vertoond en had het gemunt op mijn tante, die toen gelukkig tijdig kon ontkomen. Het beest begon als een bezetene inkt te spuiten. Ze worden daarom ook wel krant octopussen genoemd. Hij probeerde mij onder hypnose te brengen. Met mijn andere hand pakte ik een nijptang. Er was een vreemd uitsteeksel aan de onderkant van het beest, zijn geslachtsorgaan. Het orgaan trilde van woede. Ik besloot het te amputeren, want dit beest was hondsdol en levensgevaarlijk. Ik moest snel zijn, want ik had het gevoel dat het beest me probeerde in te nemen. Ik wist niet hoe lang mijn imker pak er nog tegen bestand zou zijn, maar ik voelde dat het beest gebruik maakte van de zwakke plekken ervan. Ik bedacht me geen moment. Ik zette de knijpers van de nijptang tegen het geslachtsdeel aan, en zette er druk op om het vervolgens met draaiende bewegingen los te wrikken. Op dat moment kwam mijn tante binnen, en ik liet haar het geamputeerde geslachtsdeel zien. Het was als een heel vreemd uitwendig kliertje, en ik hield het zo voor haar neus. 'Ruik er eens aan,' zei ik. Ze deed het.

'Bah, wat smerig,' zei ze.

'Dit beest laat ieder mens hetzelfde denken, door zijn vermogen van groeps-hypnose,' zei ik. 'Daarom noemen ze het ook wel een krant octopus.' Mijn tante knikte.

'Hoe voel je je nu ?' vroeg ik aan haar.

'Nog een beetje duizelig,' zei ze.

Het beest hing slap in mijn hand. 'Het ding heeft hier flink lopen klieren,' zei ik.

'Ik weet het,' zei mijn tante.

'Het is een wonder dat je nog leeft,' zei ik. 'Hij heeft hier zo lang onder de grond gewoond.'

'Ik was doodziek,' zei mijn tante.

Daar kwam ook het hondje van mijn tante. Ik wierp het kleine, vreemde geslachtsdeeltje van de krant octopus zo naar hem toe, en hij slokte het meteen op.

'Dat kan geen kwaad ?' vroeg mijn tante.

'Nee,' zei ik.

'Wat doen we met de land octopus zelf ?' vroeg mijn tante.

'Die gaat mee naar het laboratorium voor verder onderzoek,' zei ik.

Ik stopte het slapgeworden beest in een zak, en vertrok toen snel. Mijn tante belde me even later. 'Is alles goed nu ?' vroeg ze.

'Nee,' zei ik. 'Hij heeft teveel kinderen gemaakt. Het is een ware plaag, en hij is onder veel meer huizen.'

'Ben ik wel veilig dan ?' vroeg ze.

'Ik heb je aan zijn uitwendige klier laten ruiken, dus als het goed is gaat je lichaam er nu antistoffen tegen aanmaken,' zei ik. 'Maar je moet inderdaad oppassen. Ik heb geen idee hoeveel er nog onder je huis zitten, maar dit was de alfa octopus, oftewel de leider.'

'Wat kan ik nog meer doen ?' vroeg mijn tante.

'Gewoon rustig blijven,' zei ik.

'Gelukkig heb ik een hond,' zei mijn tante. 'Die meldde het mij direct toen het beest boven de grond was gekomen. Waarschijnlijk heeft dat m'n leven gered. Ik had er niet aan moeten denken als het in mijn slaap op me was gesprongen.'

'Je mag inderdaad van geluk spreken,' zei ik. 'Maar mentaal gezien moet er nog heel wat gebeuren. Dit beest hield het gehele land onder zware hypnose, net zoals de krant.'

'Vandaar de naam,' zei mijn tante.

'Precies,' zei ik.

'Okay, ik ga maar slapen,' zei mijn tante.

Ik voelde me moe. Toen ben ik ook maar vroeg naar bed gegaan. Ik voelde me vies, alsof ik de hele dag vies werk had gedaan, en alles in mijn huis vies was. Ik douchte me wel een paar keer, maar ik kon dat vieze gevoel niet van me afwassen. Ik keek in de spiegel en zag wat vreemde bulten. 'Zou de land octopus me dan toch … ?' vroeg ik mezelf af. Ik zuchtte. Ik kreeg de meest vreemde gedachtes, alsof ik toch nog met hem in gevecht was.

'Misschien zit er ook één onder mijn huis,' dacht ik ineens. Ik kon ineens moeilijk ademhalen, en viel na een tijdje neer. Niet lang daarna kroop er een witte land octopus langs mij. Ik kon me niet bewegen. Hij begon me te steken en zijn eitjes in me te leggen, terwijl ik mijn imker pak niet aanhad. Ik kon zelfs niet schreeuwen van de pijn. Ik probeerde naar de telefoon te grijpen, maar het was hopeloos. Ik zag allerlei kranten voor mijn ogen rollen, alsof er massa's kranten werden gedrukt. Ineens schrok ik wakker. Het was een nachtmerrie geweest. Maar ik wist dat er wat onder het huis moest zitten. Ik ging naar beneden naar de kelder, en toen ik de deur opende zag ik hem al zitten, tussen de boeken. Wat een gulzig gedrocht was het. Ik deed de deur dicht, en trok eerst mijn imker pak aan. Toen ging ik terug de kelder binnen. Ik raakte in een enorm gevecht met deze land octopus. Hij blies en spoot, stak en beet … Nee, hij wilde niet opgeven. Ik pakte een nijptang en gaf hem daarmee een mep. Het leek alsof ik immuun was voor hem. Ik had zo'n varkentje natuurlijk al weleens eerder gewassen. Ik nam hem toen in mijn hand, en zocht naar het uitwendige kliertje, maar deze had geen kliertje, alleen een zeer vreemde, geribbelde inham. 'Dit moet het vrouwtje wezen,' zei ik tegen mezelf. 'Het alfa vrouwtje.'

Ik gaf het beest nog een mep met de nijptang, maar werd gelijk omsingeld door nog meer witte land octopussen, alsof haar hele nageslacht me nu op de hielen zat, maar ik liet haar niet los. Ik begon om me heen te schoppen en te stampen, maar ze begonnen aan me vast te kleven. Ik moest nu snel zijn. Ik pakte toen een schroevendraaier, en stak het toen in de inham en drukte helemaal door totdat er bloed uitspoot. Toen ik de schroevendraaier er weer uittrok bleef het geribbelde gaatje eraan steken en kwam helemaal buiten als een kliertje. 'Hmmm, dus deze kan wisselen,' mompelde ik. Toen pakte ik de nijptang weer en verwijderde draaiend het uitwendige kliertje. Ik voelde me even heel slap, en moest even op de grond zitten, maar het beest was nu ook slap, en ook het nageslacht. Ze gleden gewoon slap langs me af, als een kleed wat werd afgedaan. Ik kon ook niet meer blijven zitten, maar moest liggen, met mijn hoofd op de koude grond.

De volgende dag was er geen krant. Ze staakten daar bij de krant. Maar de dag daarop was er weer gewoon de krant. Ik vroeg me af waar ik het eigenlijk allemaal voor gedaan had. Ik wist dat er nog veel meer van zulke gedrochten onder de huizen van de mensen zaten. Wel waren er bepaalde veranderingen in de krant. Ook werden bepaalde producten niet meer verkocht. Maar ja, dat gebeurde wel vaker. Ik had het gevoel alsof het dweilen met de kraan open was. Maar ongeveer een week daarna kreeg ik een telefoontje van mijn tante. Ze voelde haarzelf beter dan ooit tevoren. Ook vertelde ze dat ze onderzoek had gedaan onder haar huis, en dat ze een tunnel had gevonden die naar een andere wereld leidde. Ik zou direct komen. Ze liet het me zien, en ik was verbaasd en verwonderd. Toen zijn we met z'n tweeen naar die andere wereld gegaan. De poortwachter was nu immers dood.

Einde

De kleermaker die van tranen kleren maakte

Er was eens een kleermaker die van tranen kleren maakte. De kleren waren zo mooi dat wanneer iemand ze zag dan barstte zo iemand vaak in snikken uit. Vaak was dat omdat de kleren zo prachtig waren, maar soms was het ook omdat de prachtige kleren voor hen te duur waren. Ja, de kleermaker vroeg er veel voor. Er ging namelijk nogal veel werk inzitten om ze te maken, maar dan waren het ook wel de mooiste kleren die je ooit had gezien.

Op een dag liep een moeder met haar zoon langs de etalage, en beiden barstten ze in snikken uit toen ze de van tranen gemaakte kleren zagen. Oh, ze waren toch zo prachtig, maar toen de jongen het prijskaartje ervoor zag liggen begon hij zelfs nog harder te huilen en zelfs te gillen. Dat zou hij nooit kunnen betalen, en zijn moeder ook niet. Hij zou daar wel dertig jaar voor moeten werken om het te kunnen kopen. 'Ik wil het hebben, moeder,' zei hij.

'Dan moet je nu al beginnen met een krantenwijkje, anders gaat het je nooit tijdens je leven lukken,' zei moeder. Hij jammerde, gilde en schreeuwde zo luid dat de kleermaker naar buiten kwam. Toen hij het verhaal hoorde zei hij : 'Maar je kunt ook bij mij werken.'

Even had de jongen hoop. Maar toen hij een tijdje bij de kleermaker had gewerkt gaf hij het al op. Het was veel te zwaar en moeilijk werk. De tranen waren moeilijk aan elkaar te rijgen. De kleermaker gebruikte daar een speciale techniek voor, maar het wilde de jongen maar niet lukken. Moedeloos ging de jongen terug naar huis en vertelde het zijn moeder.

Op een nacht kreeg de jongen een idee. Hij zou de van tranen gemaakte kleren stelen, want anders kreeg hij ze nooit. Dat ging hij doen. Midden in de nacht ging hij op pad. Iedereen sliep. Ook de kleermaker. Hij had de sleutel van de winkel die hij van de kleermaker had gekregen nooit teruggegeven, dus voor hem was het een koud kunstje de winkel binnen te komen. Daar zag hij de van tranen gemaakte kleren die hij wilde. Heel stilletjes sloop hij ernaar toe. Maar toen hij de kleren wilde aanraken en pakken werd hij ineens gebeten door de poes van de kleermaker. En wie gebeten zou worden door de poes van de kleermaker zou voor altijd huilen. Jammerend ging de jongen de winkel weer uit. Door de pijn van de beet was hij de van tranen gemaakte kleren helemaal vergeten. Ook toen hij thuis was gekomen kon hij niet stoppen met jammeren, en de volgende dag ook niet. Hij was immers gebeten door de poes van de kleermaker. Zijn moeder zei dat hij naar de heks moest. Die kon toveren. De heks woonde helemaal aan de rivier. Daarvoor moesten ze eerst een tijd door het bos lopen. De hele tijd jammerde de jongen. Hij kon niet stoppen.

Ook toen ze bij de heks aankwamen uiteindelijk jammerde de jongen nog steeds. 'Ik zie wat er gebeurd is,' zei de heks. 'Alleen als je de rivier overzwemt zul je van het jammeren afzijn.'

De jongen zag geen andere oplossing, en ging snikkend de rivier in en begon toen te zwemmen. Het

was een hele lange zwemtocht over de rivier. De heks had hem verteld dat hij nooit mocht omkijken. Na een hele lange tijd kwam hij snikkend aan land. Hij was wel blij dat hij het gered had. Hij durfde nog steeds niet om te kijken. Hij bleef maar lopen en lopen totdat hij in een dorpje kwam. Het jammeren was inderdaad eindelijk afgelopen. Maar telkens als de mensen vroegen wie hij was en als hij het verhaal vertelde wat er was gebeurd, dan kon hij het snikken niet inhouden. Dan huilde hij bittere tranen, en het deed pijn, zoveel pijn, dat hij het eigenlijk nooit meer wilde vertellen. Hij wilde niet meer terug waar hij vandaan kwam, en ook de heks had hem gezegd dat hij nooit meer mocht omkijken. En zo leefde hij de rest van zijn leven met een geheim waar hij nooit meer over kon praten.

Einde

De Vrouwenondergoed Verkoper

Zo zag ik iemand die beweerde dat het praten over vrouwenondergoed de fijnere dingen in het leven zijn. Ik moest daar even vijf minuten hard om lachen, en dacht : Houd jij je maar bezig met je vrouwenondergoed, terwijl ik dieper de filosofie inga om aan types zoals jou te ontkomen. Wat een grapjas. Hij leek trouwens op iemand waarmee ik in mijn jeugd op vakantie in Frankrijk was, en hij was de eerste die ik ooit het woord 'motherfucker' heb horen zeggen. Als kind was ik daar een maand lang overstuur van, en ook dat ik me afvroeg : 'Wat bedoelt hij daar eigenlijk mee te zeggen ?' Hij was de zoon van mijn leraar Nederlands, een geadopteerde zoon uit het buitenland, en hij dacht dat hij alles mocht zeggen. Hij was als elastiek, en wilde altijd dansen, en je zou hem de Nederlandse Michael Jackson kunnen noemen, dus velen die hem zagen wilden met hem spreken, en dan moest ik als vriend de boot telkens afhouden. Ik voelde me een beetje als zijn bodyguard. Zo nu en dan kijk ik naar het filmpje over die idioot die doet alsof het praten over vrouwenondergoed de normaalste zaak van de wereld is, zodat ik weer even hard kan lachen, en ook er weer over kan nadenken : 'Wat bedoelt hij nu eigenlijk ? Waar gaat dit over ?' En natuurlijk omdat hij een beetje lijkt op die jongen van vroeger, een beetje jeugdsentiment. Eerst dacht ik dat hij het was.

Wat doen de dwazen vandaag de dag ? Wat als het een grap is ? Misschien proberen ze mensen in de maling te nemen, want dat kan toch niet waar zijn wat ze zeggen ? Is dat de boodschap die je wil uitzenden naar de jeugd ? De jeugd is de toekomst. Hangt onze toekomst dan af van vrouwenondergoed ? Dat zijn soms de dingen die me bezig houden. Het lijkt wel alsof hij ergens overstuur over is. Tenminste dat kan ik me zo voorstellen als je daar altijd over moet praten, alsof dat de fijnere dingen van het leven zijn. Ik vraag me dan af wat voor leven hij heeft. Wat over de vrouw zelf in plaats van haar ondergoed ? Zou je het leuk vinden als iemand het voortdurend over je

ondergoed heeft en niet over jezelf, of over dingen die er werkelijk toe doen ? "Hey, hallo, ik ben er ook nog. Stop met het staren naar mijn ondergoed."

Misschien heeft hij een handel in vrouwenondergoed ? Dat zou ook nog kunnen, dat hij er gewoon reclame voor maakt. Is dat een beroep wat je zou kiezen ? Helemaal hysterisch was hij erover, ging het tot in de kleinste details beschrijven. Ik dacht : 'Okay, okay, maar wat kan ik hiermee ? Wat voegt dit toe aan de waarde van mijn leven ? Ik ben geen vrouw, dus houd je mond maar. Je hoeft het mij niet proberen te verkopen.'

Ik merkte dat alhoewel ik er hard om lachte ook lichtelijk overstuur van was. Wat durven mensen tegenwoordig wel niet allemaal te zeggen, ook over vrouwen. Het is iets privé. Hoe zou jij het vinden als iemand anders over je ondergoed zou lopen praten ? Heb je dan ook niet zoiets als : 'Afblijven jij. Volgend onderwerp.'

Wat zou hij ervan vinden als mensen ineens over zijn ondergoed gaan lopen praten en erover gaan speculeren tot in de kleinste details. 'Hey, hallo, ik ben er ook nog.'

Het is een ondergoed verkoper. Dat staat vast. Vandaar al die praatjes. Hij leeft er van. Hij heeft het er altijd over. Het is zijn adem. Ik wil het er niet meer over hebben, maar ja, dan kan het een anti-obsessie worden, en dat is tegelijkertijd ook weer een obsessie. Zeg, heb je nu werkelijk waar niets anders te vertellen ? Zeg eens iets aardigs over de vrouw zelf, of iets onaardigs. Maar 'make sense'. Niemand heeft er iets aan als jij de hele dag over vrouwenondergoed loopt te zaniken. Nee, daar schieten we allemaal wat mee op wou je zeggen. Daar wordt de wereld echt wel een betere plaats door, zeg. En kinderen gaan hem dan ook nog nadoen. Irritante mensen, die ondergoedverkopers. Dan kun je wel aan de gang blijven. Dan is vuilnis ook ineens het belangrijkste in het leven voor vuilnisophalers. En schoenen voor schoenenverkopers. Zo heeft iedereen wel wat. Ja, het zwembad is het belangrijkste in het leven, zegt de zwembad eigenaar. Die wil zich natuurlijk niet in zijn eigen vingers snijden. Helemaal eerlijk is het natuurlijk niet. Daarom ben ik ook geen zakenman. Ik heb nooit mijn spullen verkocht. Men denkt hun waardeloze spullen sneller te kunnen verkopen als men stelt dat het het belangrijkste in het leven is. Het is dwaas, maar vele dwazen tuinen erin.

Ja, weer een klant voor vrouwenondergoed. Weer een klant voor dit of dat. Dat is alles waar het bij hen om draait, en daar liegen ze veel voor. Het zijn zielenvissers. Ik heb mijn telefoonnummer maar niet gegeven. Hij vroeg erom, en ik maar lachen. Wat wilde die clown eigenlijk ? Zeker nog meer met me over vrouwenondergoed praten. Hij gaf me toen een filmpje mee van hemzelf, voor als ik mijn gedachten zou veranderen. Als ik in een dipje zit dan kijk er soms even na, en dan lach ik zo hard dat mijn dag weer goed is, maar soms werkt het ook weer averechts.

Op een dag kwam hij met een grote truck bij me aan de deur. Hele truck zat vol met vrouwenondergoed. Ik zei : Wat mot je ? Hij had het erover dat ik een hele grote bestelling had gedaan. Ik zei : Ik weet anders van niks.

Ja, via internet, zei hij. Ik zei dat kunnen ook hackers wezen. Ze doen zich dan voor als mij etcetera, maar ik verdacht hem ineens zelf ervan. Nou ja, dan ga ik weer weg, zei hij toen. Ik zei : Stop, blijf nog even. Ik heb hem toen mijn huis binnengenomen. Na een beetje praten kwam ik erachter dat hij flink dronken was. Ik had het wel met hem te doen. Als je nou altijd over vrouwenondergoed moet praten om je een beetje goed te voelen, ja, dan wilde ik hem wel proberen te helpen. Het leek me verder een beste jongen. Misschien moest ik maar weer de taak van bodyguard op me nemen met deze jongen. Hoe was hij zo geworden ? Ja, zei hij toen, zijn moeder gooide altijd haar ondergoed vroeger naar hem toe als hij ondeugend was. Dat zou hem minder pijn doen dan als ze een schoen zou gooien. Ik begreep hem toen direct. Ik zei hem dat ik dan ook zo geworden zou zijn. Hij had er natuurlijk een syndroom aan overgehouden, en daarom was hij vrouwenondergoed verkoper

geworden. Zo zie je maar weer, een beetje doorvragen soms, en dan is het allemaal veel duidelijker.

Maar ja, nu moest ik hem natuurlijk nog helpen. Ik zei : Nou ja, als je er nog zo mee zit, ga jij dan maar lekker vrouwenondergoed verkopen.

Hij werd me toen toch een partijtje kwaad. Hij noemde het een hulp van lik me versje. Hij vond het ook nogal beledigend overkomen, alsof hij voor niets anders goed was dan vrouwenondergoed te verkopen. Hij had een hele zak met vrouwenondergoed meegenomen, en begon mij ermee te bekogelen. Maar toen was hij nog niet klaar. Hij ging terug naar zijn truck en kwam terug met nog veel meer vrouwenondergoed om mij ermee te bekogelen. Hij stopte maar niet. Er was geen houden meer aan. Al zijn verborgen woede kwam naar boven. En ja, je raad het al. Toen hij uiteindelijk weg was gegaan was er zoveel vrouwenondergoed in mijn huis dat ik zelf ook maar vrouwenondergoed verkoper ben geworden. Om het af te leren.

De Toversleutel tot de Hemel

Hoofdstuk 1.

Hij zag de muren van zich wegbewegen. Als hij op straat was dan voelde hij zich niet een geheel met de mensen. Hij was een eenling, alsof hij ergens anders vandaan kwam. Hij hoorde niet bij deze mensen. Hij vond dat ze zich vreemd gedroegen. Hij had ook angsten die hij niet kon verklaren. Vaak veranderden grote massa's mensen in vrouwen in zijn gedachten, en dat vond hij bedreigend. Hij vertrouwde geen vrouwen, en hij vertrouwde ook geen mensen in het algemeen. Hij voelde zich opgesloten, alsof de geschiedenis het alarm was, wat telkens weer terugkwam. Ook voelde hij zich vaak vies als hij weer mensen had gezien. En de zelfspot die in hem opkwam was ook zwaar, teneerdrukkend, alsof hij zichzelf uitlachte. Hij maakte karikaturen van zichzelf en dat dreef hij dan enorm ver door, totdat hij van zichzelf walgde, en dan lachte hij zichzelf uit. Hij dacht dat hij de gevangene van een heks was, en die had allerlei ingewikkelde alarmen vastgelegd in zijn cel. Dingen waren niet wat ze leken. De massa bestond in zijn ogen niet. Het was een vrouw. Hij moest het in z'n geheel zien. Volgens hem waren er geen afzonderlijke mensen. Hij deelde ze allemaal in in groepjes, en moest zich vasthouden aan de lijnen. Hij zou hysterisch worden als ze afgezonderd zouden worden. Hij zag de groepen als vrouwen. Deze vrouwen waren altijd om hem heen, maar hij probeerde ze te ontlopen. Hij sprak hier met niemand over. Hij schuwde mensen. Hij was bang voor afzonderlijke mensen. Hij moest de groepjes zien, en het liefst van een afstand, en het liefst helemaal niet. Als er dan toch een mens door hem werd opgemerkt, dan moest hij zo snel mogelijk

de groep zien en de vrouw die de groep was. Hij sloeg zichzelf soms als hij nadacht over een afzonderlijk mens. Dat wilde hij niet. Dat vond hij eng. Hij probeerde daarom altijd zoveel mogelijk langs mensen heen te kijken, op zoek naar de groep waartoe ze hoorden, op zoek naar de vrouw. Maar de vrouw vreesde hij ook.

De geschiedenis kon urenlang aan hem vreten, genadeloos, waarin hij maar geen uitweg zag, als het alarm van de heks. Maar de geschiedenis was ook een vrouw. Hij wilde het niet anders zien. Hij ging niet meer naar de café's, alleen in zijn gedachten. Hij sloot zich helemaal op, trok zich helemaal terug in zichzelf, ... diep. Hij had genoeg aan zijn verleden. Hij wilde er niets meer aan toevoegen. Hij had geen behoefte meer aan sociaal contact. Die tijd had hij gehad. Hij vertrouwde toch niemand meer. Oh ja, ze probeerden hem wel te lokken, maar hij trapte er niet in, en trok zich dan zelfs nog meer terug, en bleef nog langer binnen, zo ver weg mogelijk, zo diep mogelijk. Ze zouden hem nooit meer kunnen bereiken. Het was al te laat.

Soms als iedereen sliep, diep in de nacht, ging hij weleens wandelen door de stad, en dan het bos in, helemaal alleen. Hij was weleens een naakte vrouw tegengekomen in het bos, dacht hij, maar die rende toen weg. Normaal gesproken was het er altijd rustig en doodstil rond die tijd diep in de nacht, en erg donker. Voedsel bestelde hij altijd en dat zetten ze dan neer in kratjes in de achtertuin. Dan bestelde hij voor een paar weken. Werken deed hij niet. Hij was werkeloos en afgekeurd. Als hij sliep droomde hij over de natuur, hoe dat maar doorging, en hoe het maar niet stopte. In zijn dromen kwam er geen einde aan de natuur.

Hij was verdwaald in zijn innerlijke labyrint. Hij dwaalde en dwaalde en hij vond de uitgang niet. Hij zonk weg in de saaiheid en hopeloosheid van het bestaan. Hij herinnerde zich de contacten van het verleden, maar hij liet het wegglijden. Hij wilde alleen zijn. Hij liep tegen allerlei muren op in zijn verleden, maar die leidden hem naar bruggen. Hij herinnerde zich de feestjes, en de cadeau's die hij kreeg, en nu was het weg. Hij herinnerde zich de stroop op de pannekoeken, die zijn wereld metselden. Hij wilde nu alleen zijn. Alles was teveel geworden. Hij wilde alles nu overdenken.

Alles om hem heen was ingestort, maar hij had het overleefd, en zou nu zijn leven bewaken. De geschiedenis was slechts een poortwachter tussen hem en de mensen, als een alarm. Hij was hypergevoelig nu. Nee, niemand zou nog in zijn leven toegelaten worden. Hij had al genoeg. Er kon niks meer bij.

Hij haatte en verafschuwde zijn vader die altijd tegen hem zei dat hij meer onder de mensen moest zijn. Het had hem in de grootst mogelijke problemen gebracht. Mensen waren zijn afgoden niet meer, en zijn vader al helemaal niet. Hij zag zijn vader als een sluwe duivel die hij buiten de poorten moest laten. Maar goed, zijn vader was al jaren dood.

Hij vond zijn vader altijd maar een lompe boer, zonder precisie. Zijn moeder was het tegenovergestelde, maar ook zij was al jaren dood. Hij had altijd het gevoel alsof zijn moeder in een gevangenis leefde die zijn vader had gemaakt. Daardoor kon hij zijn moeder eigenlijk nooit echt bereiken. Ze was te ver weg. En daarom was het thuis ook altijd een hel. Hij voelde zich als kind al een martelaar. Zijn vader dronk, en kwam 's avonds laat vaak dronken thuis om hem en zijn moeder te slaan. Zijn vader kon zuipen als de duivel, en ook tekeer gaan als de duivel, en vaak wist hij niet eens waarover het ging. Soms werd hij gewoon van zijn bed gelicht en tegen de muur aangezet. Als hij een pistool of geweer had gehad, dan had hij het wel geweten. Hij had medelijden met zijn moeder als hij zag wat zijn vader met haar deed, maar hij was machteloos. Zo vaak als hij kon ging hij logeren, of naar de buren, maar dan voelde hij zichzelf een lafaard, alsof hij zijn moeder in de steek liet.

Zijn moeder was de enige die hij miste. Maar zij was dood.

Hij herinnerde zich ook dat hij eens over de brug rende, dat hij niet meer wilde leven. Hij zou wel van de brug willen afspringen. Maar als hij dan aan zijn moeder dacht, dan kon hij het niet. Hij leefde alleen nog voor zijn moeder, en voor de logeerpartijtjes bij neefjes of de buren.

Misschien was zijn vader zwaar ziek geworden door de alcohol, maar eigenlijk wilde hij er niet meer over nadenken. Hij wist hoe verwoestend alcohol was voor het menselijk lichaam. Toen zijn vader stierf was het zelfs een grote opluchting voor hem. Niet lang daarna stierf zijn moeder ook, en hij had toen het gevoel alsof hij daar nooit meer overheen zou komen. Het was alsof hij in een zwart gat viel, en hij voelde zichzelf alsof hij holle ogen had, alsof die eruit waren geschoten, alsof hij met twee grote gaten in zijn hoofd liep. Niets interesseerde hem nog. Hij zag niets meer. Hij leefde langs alles heen. En de mensen gingen gewoon door met feesten alsof er niets was gebeurd. Hij haatte daarom de mensen, met een diepe, bittere haat. Nooit hadden ze hem geholpen. Nooit hadden ze zijn moeder geholpen.

Hij geloofde nu dat zijn moeder in de hemel was, en dat ze elkaar ooit terug zouden zien. Tot die dag wilde hij alleen zijn. Hij had genoeg aan zijn denken.

In de nacht droomde hij vaak over het grote, vieze, vadsige lichaam van zijn vader die hem opgesloten hield. Zijn moeder was dan altijd onbereikbaar. Die zat achter glas, in haar eigen gevangenis. Zijn moeder wilde hem dingen geven, maar die dingen stonden ook allemaal achter glas. Het alcoholisme van zijn vader hield het tegen. Alcoholisme was een groot probleem in de stad. Veel kinderen hadden zo'n vader. Hij was niet de enige. Sommige kinderen hadden zelfs een drinkende vader en een drinkende moeder, en moesten met dronken ouders leven. Maar het feit dat zijn moeder niet tegen zijn vader opkon was al erg genoeg. Hij zag er geen uitweg in, ook niet nu ze dood waren.

In zijn gedachten probeerde hij er omheen te draaien, maar hij kwam hier altijd terug, alsof hij er nog steeds in leefde. De achtertuin was een zootje. Maar de rommel herinnerde hem eraan dat hij het had overleefd. Zijn moeder was altijd netjes.

Netjes, netjes, netjes, maar daar wonnen ze de oorlog niet mee. Zijn moeder werd al overstuur als ze een pluisje op de grond zag. Dan wapende ze zich al met stoffer en blik, en had ze haar handschoentjes aan, want zij mocht niet vies worden. Ze was verder niet streng, maar wel paniekerig. Hierin ontwikkelde ze een grote precisie. Ze was heel accuraat en ook creatief. Ze was als een hypergevoelig alarm. Maar zijn vader sloeg altijd het alarm in. Het was een hopeloze situatie. En hij leefde nog steeds met die wond in zijn hoofd, en die schiep afstand tussen hem en anderen. Ruimte moest er zijn, vond hij. Anders zou hij het benauwd krijgen. Hij had behoefte aan rust, en wat meer natuurlijke chaos. Vroeger was alles te netjes in huis door zijn moeder. Hij begreep dat wel, maar ook ergerde hij zich eraan. Voor haar was het natuurlijk een manier om te kunnen overleven met zo'n chaotische man.

Hij zuchtte, en wist even niet waar hij naartoe moest met zijn gedachtes. Dit kon toch niet altijd zo door blijven gaan ? In zijn jonge jaren was zijn vader piloot. Maar door de alcohol kon dat op een gegeven moment niet meer, en toen ging hij elke dag naar de kroeg. Zijn moeder werd toen de kostwinner, maar zijn vader nam grotendeels het geld, voor drinken en gokken. Hij had zijn moeder weleens gevraagd waardoor het kwam dat hij zo was geworden. Zijn moeder had daarop geen antwoord.

Het was alsof zijn vader zijn leven had getekend door de alcohol. De gehele architectuur van zijn leven was doordrenkt met de alcohol van zijn vader. Daar draaide alles om, en daar was alles uit voortgekomen, hoe hij nu was.

Hoofdstuk 2.

Hij keek naar de rommel die in zijn huis lag. Hij woonde in een flat. Hij keek naar het oude kantoor-bureau waarop wat boeken en papieren lagen, onder de stof, waar het zonlicht op scheen. Hij keek naar het raam wat al tijden niet gewassen was. Dit was zijn leven. Zijn ouders had hij niet meer, en met mensen wilde hij geen contact. Aan zijn denken had hij genoeg, meer dan genoeg. Er kon niets meer bij. De geschiedenis, zijn verleden, was zijn poortwachter. Hij had al genoeg ellende meegemaakt. Nu stond dat tussen hem en de mensen in.

Zelfs in zijn keuken was het een enorme rotzooi. Het plafond was heel hoog, en op de bovenste keukenkastjes lagen allemaal dozen en boeken die helemaal tot het plafond stapelden. Vroeger behoorde dit allemaal tot zijn kantoor, maar hij ging failliet. Nu was hij werkeloos. Afgekeurd. Hij kon het ook niet meer opbrengen. Hij zat veel te ingewikkeld in elkaar. Ze hadden het allerlei namen gegeven, maar daar ging hij nu ook niet meer naartoe.

De geschiedenis was onverbiddelijk in zijn hoofd. Het had geen medelijden met hem gehad, maar hem neergejaagd en opgesloten. Ja, de alcohol van zijn vader leefde voort, als een heks in zijn hoofd. Zou zijn vader hierin ook opgesloten zijn geweest ? Want zijn vader was ook allesbehalve sociaal.

Hij vroeg zich af hoe het zo heeft kunnen gebeuren. Zijn vader werd van piloot tot dronkaard, alsof hij daardoor neergestort was, en zijn hele gezin zat in het vliegtuig. Hij sleurde zijn hele gezin mee in zijn val. Of waren ze in zee gestort, en kwam hij zo aan op een onbewoond eiland ? Of had zijn vader nog net een noodlanding kunnen maken ?

In ieder geval voelde hij zich voor het leven verminkt. Hij verwaarloosde zijn huis, en bleef maar over de piloot en zijn vliegtuig denken. Het was een onderwerp wat hem obsedeerde. Hij was nu op het onbewoonde eiland, en als hij dan nog eens mensen tegenkwam, dan waren dat in zijn gedachten gewoon de dieren van het onbewoonde eiland. En groepjes mensen vormden een vrouw. Hij sprak weleens in gedachten tot de groepjes mensen : 'Hallo, ben je hier allang ? Ik dacht dat dit eiland onbewoond was.' Als ze dan niet antwoordde, dan moesten het wel dieren zijn, of bewegende blaadjes van de bomen door de wind.

Hij vroeg zich af waar zijn vader nu was. Misschien was zijn vader in de onderwereld wel weer piloot geworden, had hij zijn leven gebeterd, en was op een vliegtocht naar de hemel. Hij hoopte het. Maar ja, wie zou het zeggen ? Misschien als hij zelf zou sterven zou zijn vader hem opwachten met een vliegtuig om hem naar de hemel te brengen ? Zo werd hij heen en weer geslingerd tussen haat en hoop. Soms dacht hij aan de hartsvriend van zijn vader die ook piloot was en die met zijn vliegtuig was neergestort. Zou dat de reden zijn waarom zijn vader zo was geworden, en zo eigenlijk met hem mee neerstortte, en zo het hele gezin ?

Ja, hij zag zijn leven als het gevolg van een vliegtuig ongeluk, en hij stelde zich zo voor dat er mensen waren die het hadden zien gebeuren, en mensen die het in het theater hadden gezien, en dat hij in de hoofden van die mensen doorleefde. Zij maakten schilderijen en muziekstukken, en hij leefde daarin verder.

Hij wilde meer weten van de innerlijke realiteiten, en die binnen gaan. De buitenste lagen interesseerden hem niet, want die hadden hem in de problemen gebracht. Ja, die problemen waren hoogdravend. Hij had het vroeger vaak geprobeerd om in de innerlijke realiteiten te komen, zonder succes. Maar eindelijk was het dan gelukt. Alles wat hij nodig had was in de innerlijke realiteiten.

Hij ging de stad in omdat hij nog wat dingen nodig had. Dit deed hij niet vaak, maar soms moest het toch gebeuren. Hij gaf wat geld aan een dakloze, en in de zaak voor huishoudelijke spullen knipoogde een werker naar hem die hij tussen de schappen tegen kwam. Daarna ging hij even naar de supermarkt. Een oude vrouw woog wat groente af, en mompelde toen iets. 'Wat zegt u ?' vroeg hij.

'Ik dacht ik kan er ook nog wel een komkommertje bijnemen,' zei de vrouw. 'Niet toch ?' Hij zei zachtjes : 'Ja, dat kan.'
Dat waren eigenlijk alle contacten van die dag. Toen hij weer naar huis liep groette een jongetje op een fiets hem, maar hij had zijn hoofd gebogen en zei niets. Toen groette het jongetje hem nog een keer, en toen groette hij het jongetje terug, en was toen al bijna bij zijn deur aangekomen. Met zijn tassen kwam hij binnen. Hij was blij dat hij weer thuis was. Het zat er weer op. Hij was met zijn jas ergens in een winkel aan een haakje blijven steken en nu zat er een scheur in, als een aandenken aan zijn uitstapje. Hij kwam ook veel jongeren tegen met gescheurde kleding.

Zijn huis in de flat had twee verdiepingen. Eronder waren de kelders, en hij kon met een stenen trap naar beneden om zijn tuin in te komen. Op zijn tweede verdieping had hij zijn indianen boeken en hingen zijn indianen schilderijen. Zijn leven draaide om de eeuwige jachtvelden en om speelgoed. Daar kon hij uren over nadenken. Op de tweede verdieping had hij ook een tafel waar indiaantjes opstonden. De verdieping had een schuin dak met een schuin raam. Boven de verdieping waren weer andere woningen, maar voor hem was het zijn zolder. Hier kon hij zichzelf uitleven. Er stond ook een bed. Soms sliep hij hier.

Op een nacht had hij een droom dat het gezin in een klein vliegtuigje naar Amerika ging. Zijn vader bestuurde het vliegtuigje, maar in Amerika stortten ze neer, en hij was de enige overlevende.

Toen hij wakker werd die ochtend werd hij geplaagd in zijn gedachtes. Dit werd zo erg dat hij in zijn kamer begon te dansen als een joker. Hij probeerde zijn gedachten te slim af te zijn, en besloot nu zijn gedachten te plagen en te bedriegen. Hij danste als een spion. Hij omsingelde zijn gedachtes door zijn dansen. Hij wist dat er toch niets met zijn gedachten te overleggen viel. Ze waren koppig, dus dan moest het maar op een andere manier. In zijn hoofd kopieerde hij zijn gedachten en maakte er iets anders van. Hij was er volledig zat van. Hij zou ze gebruiken als werktuigen van de joker.

Hij zong tot de zielen, en vertelde hen verhalen. Hij ging hiertoe over de zeeën om hun schepen te vinden. Zo bracht hij ze in veiligheid en trok hen op. Maar hij wist ook dat hij terugmoest, de rivier over, tot het grote niets, want zijn leven was teveel ingevuld, en hij was als een robot geprogrammeerd door de alcohol van zijn vader. Door de joker kon hij die programmatie verbreken, maar hij moest uiteindelijk weer terugkeren tot het niets, waar ook het nergens was, en het nooit.

Alle ervaringen die hij op zijn netvlies had gehad en wat hij zijn verleden noemde waren als drugs, en het had hem zwaar in de problemen gebracht. Hij wilde afkicken. Was het leven slechts een drug ? En wat was dan het ware leven ? Of bestond dat niet ? En wie had hem deze drug gegeven ? En

hoe zou hij kunnen afkicken ?

Hij dacht er ook over na hoe mensen zo lang konden trappen tegen een dood paard. Hij zag het voor zich, en moest er om lachen. In zijn gedachten begon hij die mensen te bespotten.

Die nacht had hij een droom over een groot wit hek aan de rand van een weiland. Hij ging door het hek, maar hij kwam er steeds dieper in en raakte erin opgesloten. Het was alsof het weiland achter zijn tuin was, en het witte hek leidde hem naar het grote indiaanse oerwoud. Hier was een woeste rivier waar je alleen maar over kon komen door over een brug gemaakt van kinderboeken te gaan. Hij ging de brug over, terwijl de woeste rivier hem probeerde te grijpen om hem van de kinderboeken brug af te sleuren. 'Nee !' riep hij uit in doodsangst. 'Oh, was ik er maar nooit aan begonnen.' Hij probeerde de kinderboeken te lezen en probeerde houvast te vinden in de woorden. Maar alles was nat, en alles lag door elkaar heen. Hij was blij als hij een heel woord kon lezen, maar vaak waren dat alleen maar losse woorden, en ook die werden weer weggespoeld. Verderop liep de brug hoger, en hij probeerde omhoog te klauteren, maar telkens weer gleed hij weg. Hij keek naar de diepte, en daar waren ook allemaal puntige rotsen. 'Nee !' riep hij weer. Hij durfde er bijna niet naar te kijken. Hij had er erge buikpijn van, en het was zo diep. Als hij zou vallen, dan zou hij eerst een heel eind naar beneden vallen. Dat zou hij nooit overleven.

Twee handen grepen hem. Ze pakten hem stevig beet, en trokken hem omhoog. Ze maakte hem vast aan een touw. 'Goed vasthouden,' zei ze. Het trouw trok hem door een tunnel heen die opliep als een put, en de tunnel was geheel gemaakt van meisjesboeken. 'Aaaaaaaaah !' riep hij, en toen werd hij wakker. Het eerste wat hij toen ging doen was op zoek gaan naar de doos meisjesboeken die hij ooit van zijn tante had gehad. Toen hij het na lang zoeken vond begon hij alle boeken te lezen, iets wat hij nog nooit had gedaan. Hij kende deze boeken niet, en het was alsof er een wereld voor hem werd opengescheurd. 'Ja, het meisjesboek is het enige wat mij erdoor heen kan slepen,' sprak hij, 'ja, het meisjesboek.' En hij werd een schrijver van meisjesboeken, en voor het eerst had hij het gevoel dat het hem over het vliegtuig ongeluk heen bracht, en dat hij eindelijk de alcohol van zijn vader kon overwinnen. Hij wilde een meisjesboeken toren bouwen tot de hemel. Ja, het leven kreeg zo weer zin voor hem, ook sociale contacten. Hij zou het allemaal kunnen verwerken in zijn meisjesboeken. Hij had de toversleutel tot de hemel gevonden.

Avond Danser

Hij woonde in een havenstadje. Het havenstadje lag aan een groot meer. Hij had het gevoel alsof niemand naar hem luisterde, alsof niemand hem kon horen. Hij voelde zich niet serieus genomen. De mensen leefden langs hem heen. Hij had een zus die vele jaren ouder was, dus ze groeiden ook niet samen op. Hij had het gevoel alsof hij enig kind was. Misschien was dat ook de reden waarom hij zich zo geisoleerd en onbegrepen voelde. De mensen om hem heen waren veelal ouder en met hele andere dingen bezig. Zijn vader was altijd en eeuwig bezig met de tuin. Hij had het gevoel alsof zijn vader nooit oog voor hem had, alsof zijn vader hem niet eens zag staan.

Zijn moeder was een heel dromerig type. Die was ook onbereikbaar, en draaide altijd alles om, en maakte altijd iets anders van wat hij zei. Het was een zweverig en afstandelijk iemand. Hij had het gevoel alsof niemand om hem gaf, alsof hij er niet toe deed. Wat hij ook maakte of deed, het was nooit goed. Hij had het gevoel dat zelfs als hij zou kunnen vliegen dat de mensen er dan niet van op zouden kijken. Hun leven ging dan gewoon door. Ze waren onverschillig en ongeinteresseerd.

Hij maakte prachtige, gevoelige muziek, maar niemand luisterde. Hij schreef prachtige boeken en maakte prachtige schilderijen, maar iedereen was met andere dingen bezig. Hij was slechts een druppel in de oceaan. Hij kreeg geen voet aan de grond.

Hij voelde zich als een avond danser, terwijl anderen moe waren van de dag en alreeds voorbereidingen troffen voor de nacht. Hij danste door, terwijl ieder ander naar bed ging. De mensen om hem heen waren moe, moegepraat. Hij wist niet waar hij zijn energie vandaan haalde. Hij ging graag wandelen in het park. Op een dag kwam hij daar een meisje tegen. Eerst deed ze alsof ze hem niet zag staan, maar even later kwam ze naar hem toe. "Mooi weer is het vandaag, hè ?" vroeg ze.

"Ja, dat wel," zei hij.

"Dat wel ?" vroeg ze. "Zijn andere dingen niet mooi ?"

"Niemand begrijpt me," zei hij.

"Begrijpt de zon de hemel ?" vroeg ze. "Begrijpt de maan de aarde ? Ze leven langs elkaar heen. Het zijn twee werelden die elkaar kruizen, totaal verschillende werelden."

"Daar zit wat in," zei hij.

"En zo is het ook tussen ons," zei ze. "Wij kennen elkaar niet, en nu kruizen even onze paden."

"Jammer," zei hij.

"Waarom ?" vroeg ze. "Zo is het leven. Zeg, ik moet er weer vandoor. Een prettige dag verder."

Toen liep het meisje weg. Hij voelde alsof iedereen haast had. Iedereen was met andere dingen bezig zoals altijd.

De volgende dag kwam hij haar weer tegen in het park, maar ze negeerde hem volkomen. Ze deed alsof ze hem nog nooit eerder had gezien, alsof ze nog nooit met elkaar hadden gesproken. Hij had het gevoel alsof ze hem niet eens zag staan, alsof hij lucht voor haar was.

De dagen erop gebeurde hetzelfde. Hij kwam haar tegen in het park, maar ze sprak niet met hem, keek totaal langs hem heen, maar sprak wel met andere voorbijgangers. Hij begon zich er een beetje kwaad over te maken, of misschien wachtte ze erop dat hij iets zou zeggen ?

Hij besloot zich te gedragen zoals zij zich gedroeg. Hij zorgde ervoor dat hij niet naar haar keek, en hij sprak iedere andere voorbijganger even aan, alhoewel ze vaak niet eens wat terug zeiden. Ze hadden haast, of waren niet geinteresseerd, of heel kortaf. Sommigen hadden wel hele lange gesprekken met haar in het park. Hij vroeg zich af wat er met hem aan de hand was.

Hij had het gevoel alsof hij een dans met haar opvoerde. Ze waren vaak bij elkaar in de buurt, maar

toch ook weer niet. Hij besloot zo ook met anderen om te gaan. Hij was een avond danser.

Hij leefde geheel voor de avond dans, en schudde zo zijn zorgen van hem af.

Maar om een dag kwam ze samen met een jongen, en de dag erna was de jongen er weer. Hij dacht dat ze misschien een vriend had, en het begon hem te verlammen. Het dansen ging hem moeilijk af, en toen ze voor de derde keer samen met de jongen naar het park kwam besloot hij niet meer te gaan. Ongeveer een week later lag er een kaart van het meisje in de brievenbus. Ze liet hierin weten dat ze hem miste, en dat de andere jongen haar broer was. Hij vroeg zich af hoe zij aan zijn adres kwam, of misschien had zij hem wel naar huis gevolgd. Ook vroeg hij zich af waarom ze hem miste, omdat ze elkaar nooit spraken. Of had het misschien met de avond dans te maken, dat ze dat miste ?

Na een week besloot hij terug te gaan naar het park, maar dit keer met zijn zus. Hij besloot verder helemaal niet op haar kaart te reageren. Hij had ook haar adres niet. Hij was druk met zijn zus in gesprek. Ze hadden het over allerlei dingen, en het meisje was er ook met haar broer. Hij vroeg zich af waarom ze altijd met haar broer kwam. Hij dacht dat het meisje niet kon weten dat het zijn zus was, maar ze bleken elkaar te kennen, en ze raakten met elkaar in gesprek. Hij werd verder volkomen genegeerd. De volgende dag kwam hij alleen, terwijl het meisje weer kwam met haar broer. Maar op een dag kwam het meisje met een andere jongen, en het begon aan hem te knagen. Ditmaal kreeg hij er geen kaart over, en elke dag was de jongen er weer. Hij had hier geen zin in, dus na een tijdje besloot hij niet meer te komen. Hij was ziek geworden van deze avond dans. Hij voelde zich verlamd, als gestoken door een giftig insect. Hij kon aan niets anders meer denken.

Soms ging zijn zus nog wel eens naar het park, en op een dag vertelde ze dat zij daar nog steeds veel was, maar dan met haar andere broer.

Het was in die dagen dat hij besloot andere meisjes te vragen om met hem naar het park te gaan, gewoon als wandel-partner, of als een soort dans-partner. Hij waagde zich weer aan de avond dans. Toch voelde hij zich er rot over dat hij nooit haar kaart had beantwoord, ook al had hij haar adres niet. Hij vroeg aan zijn zus of zij haar adres had, en zij gaf het hem. Maar hij had de moed niet.

Op een dag was het meisje weer helemaal alleen in het park, terwijl hij met een ander meisje was. De dag erop was zij weer alleen, en na een week besloot hij ook alleen te komen. "Heb je mijn kaart ooit gehad ?" vroeg ze.

"Ja, maar ik had je adres niet," zei hij.

"Je zus zei dat ze mijn adres aan je had gegeven, dat je er zelf om had gevraagd," zei ze.

Hij werd rood van verlegenheid, maar durfde verder niets te zeggen. Even later zei hij : "Ik was het weer vergeten."

"Ik bedoelde er verder niets persoonlijks mee," zei ze. "Ik dacht ik deel het gewoon met je. Ik had ook mijn vriend mee kunnen nemen."

Hij werd helemaal koud van binnen.

"Niet dat ik een vriend heb," zei ze. "Maar het zou een mogelijkheid kunnen zijn. In mijn geval zal dat wel nooit gebeuren."

"Waarom niet ?" vroeg hij.

"Mensen zijn te verschillend," zei ze. "Het is beter ze op een afstand te houden, als in een dans."

Hij voelde zich warm en koud tegelijk van binnen.

"Ik werk in het museum," sprak ze.

"Ik moet gaan," zei hij.

"Wacht," zei ze. "Ik bedoel er niets persoonlijks mee."

"Ik weet het," zei hij, en liep door.

Hij dacht na over het museum. Hij vroeg zich af of zijn kunst ooit in een museum zou komen, maar het leven voerde een dans met hem op, net zoals het meisje, en hij deed mee in deze dans.

Op een dag kwam het meisje niet meer, en weken gingen voorbij waarin hij haar niet zag. Zou hij dit keer misschien te koud zijn geweest ? Na een maand schreef hij een kaartje dat hij haar miste. Een maand later kreeg hij een kaart terug. Daarin stond : "Sorry, ik heb het te druk met paardrijden."

De dag erna was ze in het park. Hij ging direct op haar af. "Ik heb het gevoel dat ik je paard ben," zei hij.

"Ik begrijp het," zei ze. "Ik kan zo soms overkomen, maar zo zit ik niet in elkaar."

"Wil je een keer met me mee naar de bibliotheek ?" vroeg hij.

"Als jij een keer met me meegaat naar het museum," zei ze.

"Afgesproken," zei hij, "maar dan wil ik je eerst een keer mijn kamer laten zien."

Op zijn kamer hingen zijn schilderijen en lagen zijn boeken, maar toen ze er was deed ze volkomen ongeinteresseerd en onverschillig. Ze was meer met hem bezig dan met wat hij had gemaakt. Ze keek wel rond, maar verder zei ze er niets over, en begon dan over andere dingen. Hij voelde zich koud worden van binnen en wenste dat hij haar nooit had binnengelaten. Hij voelde zich verlamd, als gestoken door een giftig insect. Hij danste niet meer. Hij voelde zich aan een paal gebonden door een headhunter. Hij voelde zich als een hebbedingetje, een monument. Ze ging ijskoud met hem om, als een museum medewerker met een object.

"Hallo, ik leef, ik praat," zei hij.

Ze reageerde er verder niet op. "Laten we nu naar de bibliotheek gaan," zei ze, "en dan daarna naar het museum."

Maar hij had geen zin meer. "Laten we dat een andere keer doen," zei hij. "Ik heb nu geen tijd."

Hij was blij toen ze weer weg was. Hij zou nu een lange tijd niet meer het park inkomen. Hij had het gevoel dat hij haar moest laten betalen voor haar gedrag. De avond dans begon andere vormen te krijgen.

Hij vond haar gevaarlijk voor zijn psychische gezondheid, maar toch wilde hij dit roofdier ook

temmen. Of zou zij dan hem temmen ?

Hij zette als het ware het contact met haar in de ijskast. Hij wist dat zij slechts op jacht was naar zijn schedel. Of waren het misschien de wonderen van de natuur ?

Hij besloot boswandelingen te maken in plaats van parkwandelingen, maar tot zijn grote schrik kwam hij haar daar op een dag tegen. Ze kwam direct op hem af, en fluisterde iets in zijn oor. Hij kon het niet verstaan. "Wat zeg je ?" vroeg hij.

Maar ze liep door. De dag erna was ze weer in het bos, dus hij besloot terug te gaan naar het park. Toen ze daar ook kwam dacht hij dat ze dit misschien al tijden deed, gaan van bos naar park en omgekeerd. Ze bleek dit ook zo te doen tussen het museum en de bibliotheek. Eigenlijk kon hij haar niet ontlopen. Het was in deze tijd dat hij zich steeds meer terugtrok op zijn kamer. Hij begreep zijn vader beter, die altijd bezig was met de tuin. Hij begreep nu waarom. Ook begreep hij zijn moeder beter, waarom die zo was. Misschien was het meisje wel een wonderlijk medicijn, maar ook iets wat je zeker niet te veel moest gebruiken. Er stond een dagelijkse limiet op, en daar moest hij zich streng aan houden.

Een man kocht een pakje medicijnen genaamd "Avond Danser" in een boekhandel. Er zat ook een klein boekje bij. Hij kocht het, omdat hij wilde dat zijn gezin elkaar beter zou begrijpen. Het was een wereldbekend medicijn, bekend van televisie. De man wilde het weleens uitproberen.

Einde

Wilde Honden

Een man en een vrouw waren in het bos. Plotseling verloren ze elkaar geheel uit het oog, alsof een duizeling hen trof. Ze hoorden honden blaffen en janken in de verte, en het geluid leek steeds dichterbij te komen. De man greep de vrouw die als verstijfd was. ‘Liefste,’ sprak de man. ‘We moeten ons verbergen.’ Ze moesten het direkt op een rennen zetten. Daar zagen ze de honden al in de verte aankomen. De vrouw slaakte een gil, terwijl de man al een eind weg was. Eén voor één

stortten de wilde honden zich op de vrouw, en lieten niets van haar over. De andere honden gingen al achter de man aan. Buiten adem rende de man langs de bomen, en door struiken naar de donkerste plekken. Er waren veel honden. De man wist dat hij niets tegen hen zou kunnen beginnen. De jacht was meedogenloos. Hij kon bijna het gehijg van de honden al horen, en de honden gilden bijna. Nog nooit was de man zo bang geweest. Zijn binnenste leek over te lopen van zweet. Na een tijdje bereikte hij een huisje. Snel ging hij naar binnen en deed de deur achter hem dicht. Al snel omsingelden de honden het huis. De man rende op de trap naar boven waar een man en een vrouw in bed lagen. Aan de muur hing een geweer. De man greep het geweer, en knalde door het raam een paar honden neer. De man op het bed stond op, liep naar de man met het geweer toe, en sprak : 'Welkom, welkom, in het land van plezier.' De man met het geweer keek hem vreemd aan, terwijl ze beiden de honden jankend hoorden wegrennen.

'Pardon, ze hebben .... ze hebben haar verscheurd,' zij de man met het geweer.

'Wie hebben ze verscheurd ?' vroeg de man die net van het bed was opgestaan.

De man met het geweer begon te snikken.

'Oh, ik begrijp het al. Je bent je geliefde kwijt, je liefje,' zei de man, terwijl ook de vrouw opstond.

'Maar goed, je bent hier veilig. Je hebt die honden lelijk te pakken gehad.'

De man greep een ander geweer onder het bed vandaan, en sprak : 'Kom, we gaan op hondenjacht.'

Even later waren ze beiden weer buiten, en zochten naar de honden, die ze later op een open plek vonden. Ze knalden ze allemaal af.

'Wat bedoelde je met 'dit is het land van plezier,' vroeg de ene man.

De andere man zei niets. 'Dat zul je wel zien,' zei hij even later. Beiden liepen ze naar een kasteel toe wat leegstond. 'Hier kan je voorlopig blijven,' zei de man. 'Ga niet naar huis, want de honden zullen je pakken. Er zijn hier zoveel wilde honden.'

De man knikte, en ging het kasteel binnen. De andere man ging weer terug naar zijn eigen huisje.

In het kasteel keek de man zijn ogen uit. Hij was moe, sloot de deuren, en ging in een kamer in een bed liggen. De volgende ochtend was hij vroeg wakker. Hij besloot het hele kasteel te bezichtigen. In een torenkamertje lagen een man en een vrouw. 'Heb je het gehoord van de honden ?' vroeg de vrouw.

'Ja, ik weet er alles van,' zei de man die net was binnengekomen.

‘Nee, je begrijpt me niet,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Ik bedoel .... ach laat maar.’

‘Nee, vertel het hem,’ zei de man die naast haar lag.

‘Okay,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Wij waren allemaal achternagejaagd door de honden, en kwamen hier, in het land van plezier.’

Plotseling begonnen de ogen van de vrouw gelig te worden. Ze omhelsde de man die naast haar lag, kuste hem, en sprak : ‘Wij verloren allemaal een partner aan de honden. Maar kijk, hier vinden we er één terug.’

‘Waar heb je het over,’ vroeg de man die in de deuropening stond.

‘Nou,’ zei de vrouw geheimzinnig, ‘jij zal hier ook een nieuw maatje terugvinden.’

‘Oh, maar daar heb ik helemaal geen zin in,’ zei de man in de deuropening.

‘Maar terug naar huis kun je niet,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Want de honden zullen je pakken.’ Buiten hoorden ze geblaf, en de schrik sloeg de man weer om het hart. ‘Zoek je maatje op, schat,’ zei de vrouw, ‘want zij die hier dagen alleen blijven zullen het kasteel uitmoeten, en aan de honden overgeleverd zijn.’

‘Pardon ?’ zei de man. ‘Wie bepaald dat ? Ik mocht hier voorlopig blijven, en ik hoop dan weer naar huis te kunnen gaan. Ik zal zeker de dood van mijn geliefde moeten verwerken in een diepgaand rouwproces.’

De vrouw begon te lachen. ‘Er is geen weg meer terug. Elke dag groeit het aantal honden. Ze hokken hier snel, en daar valt echt niet tegen op te jagen. Zij van het huisje zijn allang dood. De heer van het kasteel zal het niet toestaan dat je hier nog iets langer blijft dan een paar dagen, tenzij je een nieuw maatje vindt.’

‘Hoe bedoel je ?’ vroeg de man. ‘Hoe kan het dat zij die van het huisje zijn allang dood zijn ? En wie is de heer van het kasteel ?’

Weer begon de vrouw te lachen, en omhelsde de man naast haar nog een keer, en zei terwijl ze hem kustte : ‘Er is alleen leven mogelijk in het kasteel. De rest is aan de honden overgeleverd. Ze zullen het echt niet lang volhouden, en tenslotte zijn ze al jaren dood .... hahaha .... Er is geen ontsnapping mogelijk uit het kasteel .... Tenzij je voer voor honden wil zijn ...’

De man draaide zich om, wilde weglopen, maar vroeg toen : ‘Waar kan ik dat maatje vinden ?’

Maar de man en de vrouw die met elkaar waren zeiden niets meer. De man liep weg, en na een lange tocht door het kasteel kwam hij in een andere toren terecht waar hij een vrouw in een kamer zag liggen. De vrouw was omringd door honden. De man schrok. ‘Ze zijn maar opgezet hoor,’ zei de vrouw. De man haalde diep adem. Als dit zijn maatje moest zijn, dan ging de man nog liever gewoon dood. De vrouw had iets arrogants over haar, en iets dominants. Ze leek totaal niet op zijn vorig liefje. Na een lange zwerftocht door het kasteel kwam hij in een andere toren waar een andere vrouw zat. Hij moest nu snel beslissen, tenzij alles wat die andere vrouw had gezegd een leugen was. ‘Pardon ?’ vroeg de man. ‘Wie is de heer van het kasteel, en wat zijn zijn bedoelingen ?’

De vrouw begon te glimlachen. ‘Wat heb je er voor beeld bij ? Wie denk je ?’ Toen vertelde de man het hele verhaal, terwijl de vrouw in lachen uitbarstte. ‘Nou, deels is het wel waar, maar als je geen maatje vind, dan wordt je niet uit het kasteel gezet voor de honden .... Nee, het is allemaal veel erger .... Dan zal de heer van het kasteel zelf met je afrekenen ....’

De man schrok. Wat kon hij verwachtten ? Wie was die heer van het kasteel, en wat zou hij doen ? De vrouw schudde met haar hoofd van het lachen, en de man begon zich heel ongemakkelijk te voelen. ‘Uit hoeveel vrouwen kan ik kiezen, en voor wanneer moet dat gebeuren ?’ vroeg de man. De vrouw wees op een poster waarop de meest verschrikkelijke vrouwen stonden vol prestige, verwaandheid en tuttigheid. Hij kon zich geen vreemder gezelschap bedenken. ‘Nou, lever me dan maar over aan die heer van het kasteel,’ zei de man. De vrouw greep de man, deed hem handboeien om, en leidde hem naar een donkere kamer waarin een oude man zat. ‘Zo,’ zei de oude man, ‘ik neem aan dat je geen keuze kon maken ? Goed, dan zul je geworpen worden in de vrouwenput waar de armste en vieste vrouwen leven.’

‘Alles beter dan dat tuig op die poster,’ zei de man.

De man werd naar een put geleid, en daar ingeworpen, waardoor hij helemaal onder de modder kwam te zitten. De oude man begon te lachen, en ook de vrouw. Even later kwamen er nog meer vrouwen om de put heenstaan om de man uit te lachen. De vrouwen in de put leken op holbewoners, en de man keek recht in allerlei gangen die bereikt konden worden vanuit de put. Hier leefden de vrouwen. De man kreeg erge medelijden met hen. De vrouwen waren zo paranoïde en zo depressief dat ze hem niet bij hen lieten. De man besloot maar in het midden van de put te blijven.

Hier leidde hij een eenzaam bestaan. Elke dag werd hem voedsel toegeworpen. Hij dacht terug aan de honden, en wilde dat hij door de honden zou zijn verscheurd, maar hier waren geen honden, en hij moest leven met zijn wonden. Hij begreep dit kasteel niet. Totdat de oude man hem op een dag uit de put liet komen.

‘Wie zijn die vrouwen, wat heb je met hen gedaan ? Ze zijn wild en onbereikbaar,’ vroeg de man.

‘Maar ze hebben je al die tijd in leven gelaten,’ zei de oude man.

‘Ik had liever dat ze me hadden verscheurd, want het is daar geen leven. Ik ben nog liever dood,’ zei de man.

‘Ik zal je vertellen wie zij zijn,’ zei de oude man. ‘Eens werden ook zij door honden nagejaagd, en kwamen hier terecht, en vonden geen maatje.’

‘Waarom hebt u mij nu uit de put gehaald ?’ vroeg de man.

‘Omdat ik hoopte dat je je maatje in de put zou vinden,’ zei de oude man.

Toen werd de man in een ander put geworpen. Deze put was veel dieper, en hij gleed helemaal door de modder door allerlei gangen heen, totdat hij in een grote modderpoel terechtkwam. Hier was niemand, en hij begon een lange tocht onder de grond, totdat hij uiteindelijk uitkwam op een plek dichtbij zijn huis. Hij was blij dat hij het nare uitstapje naar het bos had overleefd. Hij zou nooit meer teruggaan naar het bos. Wel moest hij aan zijn geliefde denken, die hij in het bos had verloren. Thuisgekomen kreeg hij de schrik van zijn leven toen hij zijn liefje gewoon in bed zag liggen. Hij maakte haar wakker, en vertelde wat er was gebeurd. ‘Ik was helemaal niet met je in het bos,’ zei de vrouw. ‘En honden ? Ik weet niks van honden.’ De man staat voor een raadsel. Zou hij het maar gedroomd hebben ?

Einde

Wilde Honden II

Een man en een vrouw waren in het bos. Na een tijdje werd hun rust verstoord door geblaf van honden in de verte. Het geblaf begon dichter bij te komen, en de man en de vrouw begonnen bang te worden. Snel pakten ze hun spullen en renden van het geluid vandaan. Ze renden tussen de bomen en door struikjes heen, en kwamen na een lange tocht in een klein hutje terecht. Hier besloten ze te rusten, maar al snel hadden de honden hen gevonden. De honden waren woest, en probeerden door de deur en de ramen binnen te komen, maar gelukkig zat alles dicht. Maar meer en meer honden leken het hutje te omsingelen, en probeerden de deur open te krijgen. Overal om hen heen hoorden ze gekras. De honden probeerden een opening in het hutje te krijgen. Ze wisten dat ze niet meer konden vluchten, en ze wisten ook dat ze het niet overleefden als de honden erin zouden

slagen binnen te komen. Daarom besloten ze maar gewoon verder te gaan met hun liefkozen. Misschien was het wel de laatste keer. Hun harten gingen tekeer van angst. Ze kusten elkaar. Toen brak de muur open, en de honden stortten zich op de liefkozende man en vrouw. Ze werden allebei flink gebeten. Onder het bloed strompelde de man weg, terwijl de vrouw gegrepen werd. De honden sleurden de vrouw mee naar hun hol, terwijl de man kon ontsnappen.

Gelukkig lieten ze de vrouw in leven, alhoewel ze erg verwond was. Ze moest nu eten wat de honden haar brachten, en leefde sindsdien in gevangenschap. De man hield veel verschrikkelijke littekens aan de vechtpartij over, en dacht daarbij dat hij haar verloren had. Maar op een dag ontdekte een wandelaar de gevangenschap van de vrouw, en ook kwam de man het al snel te weten. Ze besloten een hele goede jager vanuit het buitenland over te laten komen om de honden uit te schakelen. Dat lukte deels, maar de laatste hond viel de jager aan. De jager kwam om het leven, en de hond ging terug naar zijn prooi in het hol. De hond verkrachtte de vrouw, en na een tijdje baarde de vrouw twee honden. De vrouw voelde zich zo vies dat ze nooit meer naar de samenleving terugwilde. Ze vonden haar na vele jaren toen de honden alledrie al dood waren. De vrouw was paranoïde en herkende de man niet eens meer. Ook sprak ze haar taal niet meer.

De vrouw begon agressief gedrag te vertonen, en iedereen vertrok. Ze moesten de keuze van de vrouw respecteren. Maar op een dag, vele jaren later, stond de vrouw ineens bij de man voor de deur. Ze leek hem nu wel weer te herkennen, en toen hij opendeed duwde ze hem zachtjes naar binnen. Ze gingen naar de kamer en ze omhelsde hem. Achter hen hing een schilderij van wilde honden, en als wilde honden omhelsden ze elkaar. Maar naar het gevaarlijke bos zouden ze nooit meer teruggaan.

Einde

De Wilde Hond

Ze woelde in haar slaap als een wilde hond.
Ze zou degene die haar man om het leven had gebracht wel willen aanvallen en hard bijten,
Ze droeg de littekens ervan op haar hart.
In haar dromen ging ze op jacht, op zoek naar de moordenaar van haar man,
maar zonder resultaat. En zo was het ook in het dagelijks leven.
Zij moest met deze wond leven.

Ze leefde als een wilde hond.

De dominee kwam haar vaak opzoeken,
En dan las hij voor uit gedichtenboeken, of hij vertelde verhalen,
Door de dominee kwam ze er doorheen.
De gesprekken inspireerden haar, en gaven haar rust, als een veilige haven.
Maar als hij weg was, dan had ze het moeilijk.
Gelukkig kwam de dominee vaak, heel vaak.

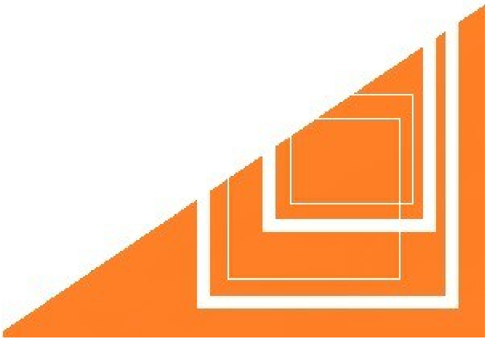
Ze ging niet naar de kerk, nee,
Daar deden ze te moeilijk,
Maar voor de dominee had ze een zwak.
Hij worstelde zelf ook met een aantal dingen.
De dominee was altijd haar steun en toeverlaat.

Ze woelde in haar slaap,
Ze dacht aan de dominee en haar man die dood was,
De dader was nooit gevonden, maar hij was om het leven gebracht door messteken,
In haar gedachten was zij altijd op zoek, altijd op jacht,
Nooit had ze rust, alleen als de dominee er was.

Op een dag nam hij haar mee naar een sprookjespark,
Ze kon zo alles een beetje relativeren aan de hand van sprookjes,
En aan het einde van de dag nam hij haar mee naar een restaurant.
Het was een Oosters restaurant met vreemde plaatjes aan de muur.
Een andere keer nam hij haar mee naar een restaurant met jachtplaatjes aan de muur.
Op sommige plaatjes stonden wilde honden,
Al zou het alleen maar gaan om deze plaatjes te zien, dan zou ze naar het restaurant gaan,
Het inspireerde haar, want voor haar waren de wilde honden een beeld van gerechtigheid,
En ze had het gevoel alsof er geen gerechtigheid was op aarde.
De wilde honden waren voor haar een beeld van de hemel,
Hun jacht zou wel slagen.

De dominee legde haar uit dat de wilde hond een metafoor is van wat we niet begrijpen,
We zijn op zoek, maar we vinden het niet,
Dat wat we verloren hebben krijgen we niet terug,
Maar op een dag zullen we het wel begrijpen,
En dan kunnen we pas echt zeggen dat de jacht geslaagd is,
Als wij zelf gegrepen zijn door de wilde hond.

boek van honing



het boek van honing

1 de schat met het bijen alarm
2 de schat met het bijen alarm 2
3 de bijenkorf
4 het oog van de zombificator
5 de muurbij
6 de muurbij 2
7 de muurbij 3 : honing uit de muur
8 de muurbij 4
9 Medusa
10 RATATOSK
11 de hut van Sobibor
12 Sobibor's Terugkeer
13 De Psychologie van de Eindeloze Winkelstraat
14 Het Duistere Sprookje van de Donkere Kaas

de schat met het bijen alarm

Jan Hielke woonde in het stadje Lagerhorst waar zijn vader chirurgijn was. Jan Hielke sjouwde rond met een tv, op een kar. Dat had zijn vader hem opgedragen om de mensen op te vrolijken tijdens de epidemie, want zijn vader had het veel te druk. Er kwamen veel te veel mensen bij hem, en hij werd erdoor overspoeld. Daarom moest Jan Hielke voor wat afleiding zorgen, en zijn vader zei tegen hem dat hij ook maar flink de zot moest uithangen. Maar Jan Hielke had hier helemaal geen zin in. Hij haatte de stad en z'n gierige mensen. Daarom vertrok hij stilletjes naar het bos met zijn tv op de kar. Ergens diep in het bos woonde een heks, heks Zotz. Ze stonk altijd, en maakte van alles een rotzooitje. Daarom ging eigenlijk niemand naar het bos. Het was er erg rustig. Wel dumpten ze al hun vuilnis in het bos.

Het terrein van heks Zotz werd bewaakt door bijen, die nogal erg agressief konden worden. Jan Hielke moest dus op zijn hoede zijn. Heks Zotz scheen ook een schat te bewaken, maar grotendeels zorgden de bijen voor de bewaking. Heks Zotz was nogal een luie heks. De stank kwam Jan Hielke tegemoet, maar hij zette gewoon door. Op een gegeven moment was hij omringd door bijen. Ze begonnen hem overal te prikken. Maar Jan Hielke liep gewoon door. Het was immers beter dan te zijn in de stad Lagerhorst. Moet je je voorstellen wat een vreselijke stad het moet zijn geweest, nog erger dan de stank en de bijen hier, en een heks in de buurt. Maar ja, Jan Hielke dacht ook aan de schat. Dat moest toch wel iets heel bijzonders zijn, dus hij nam het geprik en de stank maar op de koop toe, en alle rotzooi die hij zag. Toen hij bij de heks was aangekomen lag ze in bed. Ze was ziek. Zij was ook platgeslagen door de epidemie en ze was verbaasd dat hij gewoon rechtop stond.

'Wat kom je doen ?' krijste ze.

'Even kijken of alles in orde met u is,' zei Jan Hielke.

'Ja, daar ben je de zoon van de chirurgijn voor,' kraste de heks. 'Verder nog iets te melden ?'

'Niet veel,' zei Jan Hielke.

't Is zeker niet goed in de stad,' kraste de heks. 'Je zegt niet veel. Of kom je voor mijn schat ?'

'Eigenlijk wel, ja,' zei Jan Hielke. 'Wat is het voor een schat ?'

'Oh, niets bijzonders,' kraste de heks. 'Allemaal rotzooi.'

'Ja, ja,' zei Jan Hielke, en ging door een deur verder het gebouw in waar de heks woonde.

'Niet naar de keuken gaan, daar staat de schat, en 't is vol met bijen,' kraste de heks.

'Bedankt voor de tip,' zei Jan Hielke. 'Wat is het voor schat ?'

'Zoals ik al zei : allemaal rotzooi,' zei de heks.

'Waarom bewaak je het dan, en waarom is het in de keuken ?' vroeg Jan Hielke. 'Geen wonder dat je er ziek van wordt.'

'Och, ik houd van rotzooi,' zei de heks. 't Heeft veel waarde voor me, veel meer dan de troep van de stad.'

'Ik zit ook zo in elkaar,' zei Jan Hielke, 'maar die stank hier is niks.'

'Beter dan de stank van de stad,' zei de heks.

'Oh, auto stank, dat is waar,' zei Jan Hielke.

'En giftige medicijnen stank, fabrieks stank, en wat voor stank dan nog meer,' zei de heks.

'Dat is ook weer waar,' zei Jan Hielke.

'Nou, we kunnen het dus best goed met elkaar vinden,' zei de heks.

'Ik denk het niet,' zei Jan Hielke, en liep toen door. Hij hoorde de heks krijsen. Deze gang was heel gammel en lang, en de vloer kraakte onder zijn voeten. Toen werd hij weer gestoken, maar ditmaal veel harder. En het begon in zijn haar te zitten, en handen begonnen uit de muren te komen om aan hem te trekken, en voeten kwamen uit de muur om hem te schoppen. Verder kon hij het niet goed zien, want het was nogal donker. Hij besloot maar te rennen, maar het werd erger en erger, en hij hoorde hard geschreeuw recht van voren naar hem toekomen. Hij wist niet hoe snel hij zich toen moest omdraaien om hier weg te komen en weg van die heks, terug naar zijn kar met de tv, en terug naar Lagerhorst. Maar ook dat beviel hem niet, maar hij moest. Of toch niet ?

Hij klikte de tv aan en hoorde wonderlijke verhalen over een wereld onder de grond. En toen is hij daar maar naartoe gegaan.

Einde

de schat met het bijen alarm 2

Toen Jan Hielke in de wereld onder de grond was aangekomen was het niet zoals de verhalen op de tv. Het was hier nog wel smeriger als bij de heks, en er waren ook weer allemaal bijen, of misschien moest hij nog dieper. Hij had al een uur gelopen door een tunnel, en was toen ergens een pijp ingedaald. Het was hier verder wel puur natuur, maar weer alsof er hier allemaal vuilnis was uitgestort, en misschien kwam het wel van boven, van de stad, of van de heks. Jan Hielke moest zijn neus dichtknijpen. Een hele grote bij staarde naar hem van achter een boom. Die bij was wel bijna net zo groot als Jan Hielke.

De bij zag er bijna net uit als een mens. 'Ik heb ook nog een zus,' zei de bij.

'Wie ben je ?' vroeg Jan Hielke verbaasd.

'De bijenkoningin, maar zeg maar gerust 'u'.'

Ze kwam toen op hem af om hem te steken. Er gleed een sapje over hem heen. Toen reikte ze hem een spiegel aan. Het was een koninklijke spiegel omringd door goud. 'Kijk !' brulde ze. Jan Hielke kon bijna niet praten van de pijn van het steken, en keek in de spiegel. Hij zag er witter uit dan normaal.

'Een stuk schoner,' zei de bijenkoningin. 'Ik heb je goed gewassen.'

'Het is hier anders niet schoon,' stamelde Jan Hielke. 'Het is hier nog wel een grotere rotzooi dan boven de grond.'

'Dat lijkt maar zo,' zei de bijenkoningin. 'Zo moet je het niet zien.'

'Maar ze dumpen de vuilnis hier ?' vroeg Jan Hielke, die weer een beetje kon spreken na al het gesteek en geprik.

'Nou ja,' zei de bijenkoningin. 'Waar haal je het vandaan.'

Jan Hielke wees op de vuilnis, en op de pijp waaruit hij was gekomen. 'Ga er dichterbij staan,' zei de bijenkoningin. Ze reikte hem wat vuilnis aan, maar Jan Hielke sprong direct naar achteren. 'Nee, nee, doe weg,' riep hij.

'Kijk !' riep de bijenkoningin. 'Ik gebied je te kijken.'

Ineens kreeg hij een duw van achteren van een andere grote bij, die ook bijna zo groot was als hem. 'Kijk !' riep de bij achter hem. Hij keek toen naar het vuilnis en zag spul van goud. De bijenkoningin begon het op zijn handen te wrijven en op zijn gezicht. 'Je kan het zelfs eten, zo schoon is het !' gilde ze bijna.

'Wat is er met mijn ogen gebeurd ?' vroeg hij. 'Ik zou zweren dat het eerst vuilnis was, troep, vuil.'

'Je moet niet zoveel dromen,' zei de bij achter hem. Toen duwden ze hem richting een kooi en stopten hem daar in. 'Gevaarlijke types zoals jou horen hier thuis,' zeiden ze.

'Gevaarlijk ?' vroeg hij.

'Ja, levensgevaarlijk,' zeiden ze. 'Je zou leugens verspreiden over ons heilige goud, onze honing.'

Hij kreeg niks te eten in zijn kooi, wat zo erg werd, dat hij uiteindelijk maar datgene begon te eten wat ze op zijn handen en gezicht hadden gesmeerd, deze hemelse honing. Het smaakte nog lekker ook. Weer hielden ze hem een spiegel voor na een hele lange tijd, en hij zag er heel anders uit, bijna als een bij.

'Zit die spiegel me nu voor de gek te houden ?' vroeg hij.

Maar ze zeiden niks, en vlogen weg. De honing was op. Hij moest hier weg. Hij kon niet voor altijd in deze kooi blijven. Lange tijd ging voor bij, en niemand kwam om hem eruit te halen. Maar terug naar de stad wilde hij niet, en ook niet terug naar de heks. Het was alleen zo anders dan hij zich er van had voorgesteld. Het was anders dan op tv, of misschien moest hij nog dieper onder de grond

gaan, maar hoe ? Hij begon op het vloertje van de kooi te springen. Het leek nog niet eens zo stevig, en na een tijdje begon hij er doorheen te zakken, en toen bleef hij maar glijden, als over honing, dieper en dieper. Oh, het was hemels. Totdat hij een plof hoorde. Waar was hij ? Hij was in een keuken, en er lag een taart op het aanrecht, met bijtjes er omheen. Er waren hele dunne witte kaarsjes op de taart met hele kleine vlammetjes. Hij kwam dichterbij de taart, maar besefte toen dat het misschien de keuken van de heks kon zijn ? Maar was dat niet boven ? De bijtjes begonnen te piepen, alsof er een alarm af begon te gaan. Was dit de schat van de heks ? En wat was het ? Het was hier niet rommelig. Het leek wel een koninklijke keuken. Het honing druipte van de muren. Hij wist dat hij nu voorzichtig moest zijn, erg voorzichtig. Hij wilde hier eigenlijk niks eten. Hij liep toen stilletjes langs het aanrecht naar een deur. Toen hij de deur opendeed was er een soort huiskamer, en ze vierden een feestje, maar ze zagen hem niet. Er waren een vader en een moeder, met kinderen. Hij leek wel onzichtbaar.

Hij besloot toen terug te gaan om een andere deur in de keuken door te gaan. Die leidde naar een gang met een trap naar boven. Boven waren de slaapkamers. Er stonden ook boekenkasten in de slaapkamers. Hij begon tussen de boeken te kijken. Boeken vond hij altijd wel leuk, en ze wisten toch niet dat hij er was. Hij leek onzichtbaar. Al deze boeken gingen over honing. En de honing in de nacht werd tot vuilnis, als door een mysterie. En hij begon over het mysterie te lezen, maar de letters begonnen weg te vagen, alsof het boek nat was. Dat was zo bij alle boeken. Hij kwam niet ver. En piepende bijtjes waren om hem heen, heel klein. Wat moest hij nu doen ? Was het bijen alarm afgegaan ?

'Volg ons,' zeiden de bijtjes. En ze leidden hem de trap af, en toen gingen ze een kelder in, over een trap naar beneden. En hier stonden overal honing produkten, maar er lag ook een bril. 'Huh,' zei Jan Hielke. 'Die bril ken ik. Dat is de bril van mijn vader.'

'Iedereen die deze bril draagt ziet vuilnis, in plaats van smaad en haat,' zeiden de bijtjes, 'en iedereen die deze bril draagt ziet ook vuilnis in plaats van honing.'

'Kom,' zeiden de bijtjes weer, en ze gingen nog dieper de kelder in, en toen door een deur kwamen ze bij grote honing raten, als in een immens grote bijenkorf. De bijen waren hier zo groot als mensen, en ze waren allemaal heel ijverig en zagen hem niet.

'Kom,' zeiden de kleine bijtjes weer. 'Zij slapen en dromen.'
Toen moesten ze weer een trap af, en toen kwam hij weer tot de bijenkoningin en haar zuster. Maar ze bewogen niet. Ze stonden daar als standbeelden, in de natuur. Hij keek om zich heen. 'Ja, hier gingen de verhalen over op de tv,' zei hij.

Toen keek hij weer naar de standbeelden. 'Het zijn de twee deugnieten,' zeiden de kleine bijtjes. 'Het grootste deel van de tijd zijn ze als standbeelden, en alleen soms, heel soms, komen ze tot leven.'

'Vandaar dat ik zoveel honger leed,' zei Jan Hielke.

'Ze zijn betoverd door een heks,' zeiden de bijtjes.

'Ze zeiden dat ik gevaarlijk was,' zei Jan Hielke. 'Mijn ideeën.'

'Ze zijn zelf ook gevaarlijk,' zeiden de bijtjes, 'nog wel gevaarlijker dan jou.'

'Dat heb ik gemerkt,' zei Jan Hielke.

'Ze draaien alles om,' zeiden de bijtjes. 'Ze hebben een bril op.'

'Ik zag geen bril op hen,' zei Jan Hielke.

'Dat komt omdat jij ook een bril op hebt, dan zie je alles anders,' zeiden de bijtjes. 'Dan zie je soms niet eens dat iemand een bril op heeft, of dat je zelf een bril op hebt. Dat komt door die bril. Het draait alles om.'

'Leuk,' zei Jan Hielke. 'Niet leuk dus. Hoe weet je dan wat de waarheid is ?'

'Zoals we al zeiden,' zeiden de bijtjes : 'Iedereen die deze bril draagt ziet vuilnis, in plaats van smaad en haat, en iedereen die deze bril draagt ziet ook vuilnis in plaats van honing. Of net andersom. Zo ontstaan grote oorlogen. Zo ontstaan hele epidemieën.'

'Maar hoe weet ik dan wat de waarheid is ?' vroeg Jan Hielke weer.

'Wij zijn het bijen alarm,' zeiden de bijtjes, 'het alarm van de bril.'

'Maar hoe weet ik of jullie de waarheid spreken ?' vroeg Jan Hielke. 'Misschien hebben jullie ook wel zo'n bril op ? En is dit de schat van de heks ?'

'De schat van de heks is het alarm zelf,' zeiden de bijtjes. 'Ze heeft het eens geroofd, en je hebt ons nu teruggevonden, door je ijver en je volharding.'

'Maar hoe kan ik jullie geloven ?' vroeg Jan Hielke. 'Misschien wordt ik weer voor de zoveelste keer bedonderd en bedrogen ?'

Maar toen begonnen de bijtjes woest te worden, en begonnen hem te prikken en te steken. 'Dat mag je niet zeggen !' riepen ze.

'Wat heb ik gezegd ?' klaagde Jan Hielke. 'Ik zei alleen maar misschien. Ik vroeg het me af.'

De bijtjes begonnen hem te bijten en een sap op hem te spuiten. Ze waren in doldwaze woede.

'Ik denk dat nu toch echt het alarm is afgegaan, en ik kan nergens naartoe !' riep Jan Hielke. Alles was kleverig geworden. 'Wen er maar aan !' riepen de bijtjes en vlogen boos weg.

'Ik denk dat die bijtjes ook goed betoverd zijn,' zei Jan Hielke, 'maar ik waarschijnlijk ook, en het is hier bijna net als op tv. Och, had ik hier nog maar m'n tv, dan wist ik hoe het verder zou moeten gaan. Dan wist ik misschien beter wat er aan de hand is. Oh, had ik nu maar beter opgelet tijdens het tv kijken vroeger, en had ik maar meer tv gekeken. Dat zou erg van pas gekomen zijn. Ik ook weer en m'n domme ideeën.'

Jan Hielke kon maar niet loskomen van deze kleverige bende, en begon om hulp te roepen.

'Aan die standbeelden heb ik ook niks,' zei Jan Hielke. 'Die zijn ook onder een betovering, en zullen me waarschijnlijk nog meer mollen als ze wakker worden.'

Wat moest Jan Hielke nu doen ? Hij kon niets doen. Het was alsof hij zelf tot een standbeeld werd door deze kleverige bende op hem, dit vreemde sapje. Het was een soort honing. Zou het hem uiteindelijk verder helpen of nog meer in de problemen brengen ? Hij merkte dat hij begon te verstijven, en begon te draaien als een ballerina. Het leek alsof hij nu van goud was. Hij hoorde

zachte muziek op de achtergrond. Hij werd er rustig van, en het leek alsof hij in slaap begon te tollen, begon te dromen, maar ook begon hij te dansen, te draaien. En bijtjes begonnen om hem heen te draaien, als een alarm. Was hij nu zelf ook een schat geworden die bewaakt moest worden ? Nee, het alarm was de schat, maar het was onbekend of het alarm het wel goed deed, want waarschijnlijk was het alarm betoverd.

'Ik heb in ieder geval mijn best gedaan, en ik heb een goed geweten,' zei Jan Hielke tegen zichzelf.

'Jan Hielke !' riep iemand.
Het was heks Zotz, en ze kwam op een fiets naar hem toe.
'Ik ben weer beter,' zei de heks.

Jan Hielke keek nog eens beter naar de heks terwijl hij draaide, maar het was helemaal geen heks. Het was een gapend gat in de grond waardoor hij een afgrond zag met een diepere ondergrondse wereld.

'Verbeeld ik me alles nu ?' zei Jan Hielke tegen zichzelf. 'Het is als een inktvlek waarin ik vele dingen kan zien. Maar ik ben mogelijk onder een betovering, of misschien is het wel helemaal niet zo. Misschien kan ik ook wat anders zien in deze inktvlek. Misschien heb ik vroeger wel veel teveel tv gekeken. Maar al met al ben ik nu hier, en kan ik niet stoppen met draaien.'

En hij probeerde naar zichzelf te kijken, als naar een inktvlek, en hij zag ineens dat hij helemaal niet bewoog. Was alles niet slechts gezichtsbedrog ? Maar hoe gevaarlijk kon dat dan wel niet zijn ? Of was het allemaal heel medicinaal ? Hij keek naar de bijtjes, het alarm. Misschien was dit ook wel gezichtsbedrog, maar er moest een alarm zijn. Er moest wel iets zijn om je te stoppen als je heel erg zou doordraven, iets om je terug te roepen, al was het alleen al om te testen of je wel echt vastbesloten was, volhardend op het goede pad wat je had gezien. Hij wilde het onderste uit de kan hebben. Het had zoveel mogelijkheden, en daarvan wilde hij het beste niet missen.

Einde

de bijenkorf

Ik ging weer eens terug naar een wereld die ik eens achterliet, en belde aan bij het huis waar ik toen woonde. Een vrouw of meisje deed open. Ze leek een beetje op een bij. Ze zei : 'Hallo, wie ben je ?'

Ik zei : 'Ken je me dan niet meer ? Ik weet trouwens ook niet wie jij bent. Het is al zo lang geleden, of misschien wonen hier inmiddels andere mensen.'

Ze zei : 'Mallerd, kom maar binnen.'

Ik ging naar binnen en volgde haar door de gang.

'Dus je hebt hier gewoond,' zei ze, 'en hoe lang was dat geleden ?'

Ik keek naar het meisje of de vrouw, nog steeds niet wetende of ze nu een meisje of een vrouw was,

maar dat deed er eigenlijk ook niet toe. Ik ging toen ergens zitten. 'Ik heb geen idee meer, lang geleden in ieder geval.'

'Nou ja,' zei ze, 'daar schieten we dus niks mee op. Je hebt je geheugen verloren ofzo ? Ik ken je in ieder geval niet, dus het moet wel lang geleden zijn, ja.'

'Okay,' zei ik. 'En nee, ik heb mijn geheugen niet verloren. Jullie zijn dus de nieuwe bewoners. Of jij kan ik beter zeggen, want ik weet niets over anderen. Ik ben zeker mijn geheugen niet verloren, maar misschien wil ik het allemaal niet meer weten.'

'Oh zit dat zo,' zei ze. 'Nou ja, misschien ben ik het ook allemaal wel expres vergeten.'

Ik keek haar even vreemd aan. 'Dus je kent me wel ?' vroeg ik.

'Nee,' zei ze. 'Je lijkt me wel okay.'

'Ja, maar je zei net dat je het misschien ook wel allemaal expres bent vergeten,' zei ik.

'Ja, ik zei misschien, dat wil zeggen dat ik het niet meer weet,' zei ze. 'Het kan best wezen dat ik expres dingen vroeger ben vergeten, en dat ik het anno nu niet meer weet. Een mens kan raar in elkaar zitten.'

'Zeg dat wel,' zei ik.

'Maar waar ben je voor gekomen ?' vroeg ze.

'Kijken hoe alles er nu bijstaat,' zei ik.

'Heb je heimwee ?' vroeg ze.

'Nee, niet echt, maar het is wel nostalgie. Blijft toch een deel van mijn leven,' zei ik. 'Meer belangstelling.'

'Okay,' zei ze toen. 'Nu ja, ik zal je verder niet ophouden. Voel je vrij om rond te kijken.' Ik begon door het huis te lopen, en de kamers te doorzoeken. Ik keek naar de spulletjes, gewoon om herkenningspunten te krijgen, maar dit waren natuurlijk nieuwe bewoners. Toch zocht ik naar overeenkomsten.'

'Maak je het niet te bont ?' hoorde ik haar roepen.

'Nee hoor, ik ben zo klaar,' zei ik hard. Ineens stond ze in de deur opening.

'Ja, dat is mijn dagboek,' zei ze. 'Blader er maar in.'

'Je bent wel gastvrij,' zei ik.

'Je hebt hier immers gewoond, dus ik vind wel dat je recht hebt om een beetje te weten wie hier nu woont, omdat het toch een stukje van jezelf is en blijft,' zei ze.

'Is dat zo ?' vroeg ik, terwijl ik verder bladerde in haar dagboek. Ik las er nauwelijks in, meer bladeren.

'Houd je van verhaaltjes ?' zei ze.

Ik keek naar het kastje, en naar het bed. Toen keek ik naar de muur. 'Ik herken het wel een beetje,' zei ik, 'en ja, ik houd van verhaaltjes.'

'Lees dan wat,' zei ze, om me uit te dagen. Ik vond het zelf toch wel heel onbeleefd om zomaar ongevraagd in haar dagboek te lezen, dus had ik er alleen maar een beetje in gebladerd en er overheen gelezen, maar nu gaf ze me toestemming. Ik begon te lezen.

'Zo, zo,' zei ik. 'Je hebt wel lef. Weet je het allemaal nog ?'

'Ja,' zei ze. Ik knikte wat terwijl ik las. 'Nou, heel keurig,' zei ik, terwijl ik het dagboek weer aan haar gaf. Maar ze gaf het weer terug. 'Lees nog wat meer,' zei ze. 'Het was immers vroeger jouw huis.'

Ik las verder. 'Maar ik ken die namen,' zei ik. Ik liet haar lezen wat ik bedoelde. Ze knikte. 'Dus onze levens liggen toch dichter bij elkaar dan we eerst dachten. We kennen wat van dezelfde mensen.'

'Of het is puur toeval,' zei ze. 'Mensen hebben soms dezelfde namen.'

'Ja, maar dit is een heel lijstje,' zei ik. 'Dat kan bijna geen toeval meer zijn. En als ik het zo lees, dan zijn het dezelfde mensen met dezelfde karakter eigenschappen.' Maar toen las ik iets wat ik niet kon plaatsen bij een bepaalde persoon. 'Hmm, misschien toch toeval,' zei ik, en gaf het dagboek weer terug. Ze knikte. 'Blijf anders, dan kun je me nog wat vertellen over hoe het hier vroeger was,' zei ze.

'Okay,' zei ik. 'Ik heb geen haast, en dan kun jij me vertellen over hoe het nu is. Misschien leren we nog wat van elkaar.'

Ze knikte. Opeens zakte ze door haar knieën en snikte. Ze hield mijn hand vast. 'Wat is er ?' vroeg ik. Ik aaide over haar haar. Toen hielp ik haar weer overeind. Ze zei niets. 'Kom,' zei ik. Toen liet ik haar op het bed zitten. Na een paar minuten vroeg ik weer : 'Wat was er nu ?'

Ze zei : 'Je lijkt wel op een heilige. Ik ben zo gehecht aan dit huis, en heb altijd al gefantaseerd over hoe het zou zijn geweest voordat ik hier kwam. Het huis draagt zo'n geschiedenis, en het begon mij meer en meer te fascineren en een obsessie voor me te worden, en toen kwam jij. Daarom vind ik dit ook zo waardevol en overweldigend, omdat je voor mij een onbekend deel draagt wat wel heel belangrijk voor me is.'

Ik glimlachte. 'Ik ben er wel blij mee,' zei ik, 'en ik zit ook zo in elkaar een beetje. Het had ook heel anders kunnen zijn dat ik niet toegelaten zou worden, en dat het allemaal onbekend voor mij zou blijven hoe het nu met het huis is. We hebben dan wel een gedeelde interesse. Voor het huis is dat ook weer belangrijk. Ik zeg altijd : 'Huizen hebben ook gevoel.'

'Wat is dat mooi hoe je dat zegt,' zei ze, terwijl ze me warm aankeek, bijna stralend. 'Zo voel ik dat ook. Huizen hebben ook gevoel. Door het komen en gaan van mensen wordt er vaak heel wat van hen afgenomen, als innerlijke scheuringen, maar nu voelt het alsof deze wond wordt gedicht, als het opengaan van een lang vergeten dagboek.'

Ik keek haar aan. Ze leek nog steeds op een bij, gaande van bloem tot bloem om haar honing te verzamelen. Het huis was de bijenkorf.

Einde

het oog van de zombificator

Ik werkte in het prachtigste natuurgebied van mijn stad, helemaal in het zuiden. Wel stonden daar in die prachtige natuur met al die prachtige bomen, struiken, velden en riviertjes een heleboel hoge flats. Ik was er voor de gordijntjes. Op een dag werden we gebeld voor een afspraak op vijf hoog ergens. We gingen er naartoe, ik en mijn maat, en een vrouw deed open. Ze zei : 'Kom maar, kom maar,' en maakte zo'n gebaar met haar vingers alsof we kinderen waren. 'Helemaal achter in de kamer, bij het raam, daar hangt het gordijn, en het is helemaal mis. Het is van jullie.' Ik keek mijn maat vreemd aan, en hij keek vreemd naar mij, zo van : 'Het zal wel goed wezen.' Maar die vrouw had hele hypnotiserende ogen, en voordat we het wisten lagen we op de grond. We konden ons niet meer bewegen. Mijn maat dacht dat het koolmonoxide was, maar ik dacht dat het door haar ogen kwam. Natuurlijk fluisterden we. Ze hielp ons weer op, en we hadden ineens weer kracht in onze benen. 'Gingen jullie beiden van je stokje ?' vroeg ze.

'Ik dacht het wel,' zei ik. Mijn maat zei toen : 'Kan een koolmonoxide probleem zijn. Laat uw ketel eens goed nakijken. Het is hier niet pluis.'

'Ik heb rattengif gelegd,' zei die vrouw toen. 'Sorry, maar daar komt het waarschijnlijk van. Veel mensen kunnen niet tegen het spul, maar jullie staan weer.' Ik keek haar aan, en weer ging ik van mijn stokje.

'Ze moeten hem wel hebben vandaag,' sprak ze tegen mijn maat. 'Doe jij anders die gordijnen even, want ik moet zo weg.'

'Wow,' zei mijn maat. 'Mijn maat gaat voor. Al het andere kan wel wachten. Er is hier iets niet pluis.' Ik dacht dat ik maar niet meer in haar ogen moest kijken. Mijn maat hielp me weer overeind. Toen zijn we naar haar gordijn gaan kijken. We voelden ons beiden niet goed. 'Misschien dat rattengif,' fluisterde ik, 'maar ik kijk niet meer in die ogen.' We hebben toen ook even het raam open gezet en toen ging het wat beter. Wat frisse lucht. Maar daar werd die vrouw woest van. Dat konden we niet zomaar doen. Na lang praten stemde ze eindelijk toe, anders wilden we ons werk niet doen. Het gordijn klopte inderdaad van geen kanten. 'Misschien ligt het wel aan jullie gordijn,' zei ze toen. Het waren hele speciale gordijnen, die nogal ingewikkeld in elkaar zaten. Maar ja, we kenden ons werk, en na een uurtje werken was het gordijn weer goed. Maar wij voelden ons nog steeds niet goed. 'Wat water misschien ?' vroeg ze.

'Nee, laat maar,' zei ik. 'Uw gordijn is nu in orde. We moeten weer gaan.'

'Dat gaat zo maar niet,' zei die vrouw. 'Mijn ander gordijn aan de andere kant is ook stuk.' Toen gingen we daar ook kijken, en hebben we daar ook een raampje open gezet, en hebben we weer een uur eraan gewerkt om het gordijn in orde te krijgen. Het zijn van die hele speciale gordijnen, werkt allemaal electrisch. Zodra iemand naar het gordijn kijkt, dan vangt het gordijn zo iemands herinneringen op, en onttrekt er honing aan, als een honingbij. Dat is ook de firma waarvoor we

werkten : honingbij gordijnen. Maar als er dan iets mis is, dan is het vaak ook goed mis.
'Waarschijnlijk waren het dan toch de kapotte gordijnen,' zei ik.

Ze keek me aan met een hypnotiserende blik, maar ik keek niet naar haar. Ik zag het in mijn ooghoeken. Ik werd er naar van. Ik voelde het in mijn buik. 'Is er nog meer stuk ?' vroeg mijn maat ineens.

Ik keek hem boos aan. Ik had het helemaal gehad.

'Ja,' zei ze. 'Nog veel meer.'

'Dat verklaart een hoop,' zei ik. 'Hopelijk niet van onze firma.'

'Nee,' zei ze. 'Er komt hier iedere ochtend iemand voor het bad. Het is een heel speciaal bad. Het is een honingbad. Als je in het bad zit, dan onttrekt het honing uit je herinneringen. Die herinneringen zijn als bloemenvelden, en de honingbijen gaan van jaar tot jaar.'

'Dat doen onze gordijnen ook,' zei ik.

'Ja, maar een bad is toch beter,' zei ze.

'En het bad is ook stuk ?' vroeg ik.

'Ja,' zei ze.

'We kunnen er wel even naar kijken,' zei mijn maat, terwijl ik hem weer boos aankeek. Ik had het helemaal gehad met die vreemde vrouw. 'Kom maar, kom maar,' zei ze, terwijl ze naar de badkamer liep, en weer kinderlijke gebaren met haar vingers naar ons maakte. 'Zit ze nu de spot met ons te drijven ?' fluisterde ik naar mijn maat. Maar die deed alsof hij niks hoorde. Toen stonden we bij het bad, en ze liet het vollopen. 'Eigenaardig,' zei mijn maat.

'Heb je het nog nooit gezien ?' vroeg de vrouw.
'Nee,' zei mijn maat. 'En wat is er precies stuk ?'

'Kijk goed,' zei die vrouw. Mijn maat boog over het bad en begon aan de honing te ruiken.
'Mmmm,' zei hij, alsof hij onder hypnose was. Ik wilde weg. Zijn hele gezicht zat er toen onder.
'Heb je het gezien ?' vroeg ze. 'Nu jij,' zei ze tegen mij. Ik boog ook maar over het bad, en rook aan de honing. Ook mijn gezicht zat eronder. Het rook vreemd. 'Kunt u wat duidelijker zijn ?' vroeg ik.
'Wat is er nu precies mis met dat bad.

'Precies dat,' zei de vrouw.

'Wat ?' vroeg ik.

'Lik er eens aan,' zei die vrouw toen.

'Ikke niet,' zei ik toen. Toen likte mijn maat eraan. 'Mmmm,' zei hij, 'v... volgens mij is er niks mis mee.' Maar ineens zakte hij op de grond, en kreeg stuiptrekkingen alsof hij epilepsie had. 'Wat is er ?' vroeg ik. Ik probeerde hem omhoog te trekken, maar hij trok zich woest weg van mij, en greep de benen van de vrouw vast en liet niet meer los. 'Blijf van me af !' riep hij.

'Ik zei het je toch,' zei de vrouw met een strak gezicht. 'Er is heel wat mis met dat bad.'

'Ik heb het in de gaten,' zei ik boos. 'En het is niet eens van onze firma, dus we kunnen niets doen.'

Die maat van mij werd steeds gekker. 'Nee, nee, nee !' gilde hij. En toen zei hij weer dat het zo hemels was, maar hij wilde niks meer van mij weten. Ik wilde hem meenemen uit het huis, maar hij wilde dat niet.

'En er komt morgenochtend weer iemand voor ?' vroeg ik.

'Dat hoop ik wel,' zei die vrouw.

'Kunt u die persoon nu niet bellen dan ?' vroeg ik. 'Mijn maat is zichzelf niet meer. Dit kan echt niet. Dat bad is levensgevaarlijk. Waar heeft u het gekocht ?'

'Op de zwarte markt,' zei de vrouw.

'Ja, dan vraag je om problemen,' zei ik.

'Ze hebben het druk, dus ze kunnen echt niet eerder komen,' zei de vrouw.

'Belachelijke firma,' zei ik.

'I... i... is er m... m... misschien nog iets stuk,' vroeg mijn maat toen, alsof hij dronken was.

'Nee, dit is alles,' zei de vrouw.

Ik dacht : 'Gelukkig maar,' maar dit was al erg genoeg.

'Ach toe nou,' zei mijn maat dronken, 'er moet nog wel iets wezen wat kapot is en wat ik kan maken.'

En weet je wat die vrouw toen deed ? Ze trapte hem zo tegen zijn mond aan en riep : 'Ja, dit is nog kapot.' Toen onze firma hiervan hoorde werd mijn maat ontslagen en hij is nooit meer dezelfde geworden. Later hoorde ik dat hij tandarts was geworden. Dingen kunnen soms vreemd lopen in het leven.

Het oog van de zombificator lacht,
In die donk're donk're nacht,
Het oog van de zombificator liegt,
Terwijl het met de buit wegvliegt,
Ja, dat oog kan het allemaal niets schelen,
Geen echt werk, maar allemaal criminelen.

En ik heb toen heel lang naar onze gordijnen moeten staren om het weer recht te krijgen. Elke bloem draagt honing zal ik maar zeggen. Ook deze bloem, het oog van de zombificator, nog steeds diep gegrifd in mijn geheugen, maar ook telkens weer zijn honing gevende. Het is een wond, zo diep, zo diep, als een honingbij stekende, maar ook als een bloem zijn honing gevende. Honing zo zoet, zo zoet, maar dit keer is het goed. Het maakt mij dronken, zo dronken, totdat ik een schop tegen mijn mond voel, en dan is het tijd me weer te bezinnen, me weer terug te trekken, opdat het oog van de zombificator me geen oor aannaait.

Ik ken een bloem, diep in de nacht,

Waar het oog van de zombificator wacht,
Oh, hoe ik worstel met die bloem, hoe ik ermee strijd,
Totdat het zich opensplijt,
Om honing te geven,
Niemand houd het tegen,
Als een honingbij in de nacht,
Heb ik op deze bloem gewacht,
Niemand kan deze bloem bekoren,
Bij voorbaat heb je 't al verloren,
Alleen in 't diepste van de nacht is haar pracht,
Niemand kan deze bloem bekoren,
Bij voorbaat heb je 't al verloren,
Haar honing stroomt alleen wanneer je 't niet meer verwacht

Ik ken een bloem,
diep in de nacht,
waar het oog van de zombificator wacht,
vol van bedrog, vol van geweld,
Je ligt snel op de vloer waar je leven niet meer telt,
Ik ken een boom van mooie lied'ren,
waar het leven niet meer wacht,
je moet het zelf maar gaan verdienen,
al die diepe hemelse pracht,
Je kan het zelf al niet meer zeggen,
het leven is niet slechts geluk,
maar aan beide kanten kun je pas echt beseffen,
het leven heeft je slechts tuk

Het oog van de zombificator lacht,
als een mysterieuze bloem in de nacht,
niemand kent het, maar er zijn zoveel verhalen van,
en ieder draait er omheen,
en het duurt al zo lang

Ik heb er lang in geloofd, in deze bloem,
maar nu is al mijn liefde gedoofd,
Ik heb er lang voor gevochten, voor deze bloem,
Maar het bracht alleen maar onheil,
en roofde al mijn poen,
Ik heb er toen nooit meer voor gestreden,
nam haar honing, en was toen weg,
dat is toch het leven van een bij,
alles staat voor je op een rij

Het oog van de zombificator rust,
Een prachtige bloem, dat wel, maar gevaarlijk en vol van lust,
Elke bloem geeft zijn honing, dat wel,
Maar wie blijft er nu lang bij zulke kommer en zulke kwel,
'k ben een honingbij op een tocht,
dat is alles waar ik voor vocht

Mijn mooie bloem,

van veraf zo prachtig,
van dichtbij zo heldhaftig,
Een wond in mijn hoofd die maar niet geneest,
Maar al is het alleen maar voor de honing geweest …

Het oog van de zombificator,
Nu een heel bloemenveld vol van die krengen,
Ze groeien en marcheren door de hele stad,
maar een hele uitdaging voor de honingbij,
zo'n prachtige zwarte bloem,
met hele speciale levengevende honing,
alhoewel je er eerst de dood voor sterft …
Wat moet je wel niet geven om van haar honing te kunnen nemen ?

Het oog van de zombificator,
Altijd weer dans je voor haar,
en altijd maar weer heeft ze zoveel klusjes voor je te doen,
en altijd wel weer breek je wat,
vooral je hart …

Ik heb er lang over lopen denken,
Ik dacht het zal allemaal wel wennen,
Maar ik kon alleen maar rennen …
Alleen een honingbij gaat in en uit door haar poort …

Einde

de muurbij

De leesbij is een boekenbij, die gaat van boek tot boek om honing te verzamelen. Van regel tot regel gaat de leesbij, voor honing. De kijkbij kijkt rond, om uit alles wat hij ziet honing te halen. De samenleving is een boekenkorf. Alles is al opgeschreven. Er ligt nog zoveel honing in opgeborgen. De muren van de samenleving zijn dik. Ze hebben meer scheiding gemaakt dan lief was, maar muurbijen zitten op deze muren om er honing aan te onttrekken. De muurbij vliegt van muur tot muur. Er ligt zoveel geschiedenis in deze muren opgeborgen.

Ik vloog eens op de rug van zo'n muurbij. De muurbij was heel groot, en hij nam me mee naar allerlei landen over de muren : naar Afrika enzo. Er waren zoveel muren, en daarom moesten er wel muurbijen zijn. Hij liet me zien hoe hij honing aan de muren onttrok.

We vlogen toen naar Suriname, en ik zag veel meer van die muurbijen. De muren waren dik, maar vol honing. Ik zag een meisje tussen muren. Ze kon haar weg niet meer vinden. De muurbij zette mij daar toen af, en zei : 'Onthoud wat ik je heb geleerd,' en vloog toen weg. Ik heb het meisje toen geleerd hoe ze honing uit de muren kon krijgen. Ze kreeg hier ook vleugeltjes van, net als mij, en

toen zijn we samen hand in hand weggevlogen, over de muren heen, naar andere gebieden om verdwaalden het verhaal van de muurbij te vertellen.

de muurbij 2

Zo zijn er ook vloerbijen en plafondbijen. Er is aan alles wel honing te onttrekken. Zo is er niets voor niets. De mens kan zich soms ingesloten voelen, maar er is altijd honing. Alles is een bloemenveld, en in jezelf is de bijenkorf. Ga van bloem tot bloem, maar vergeet niet terug te keren tot de bijenkorf. Laat je niet afschrikken door bepaalde bloemen die verschrikkelijk lijken. Ook zij hebben hun honing. Alles is een honingbloem. Maar de bij kent een zeker pad, en werkt zeker met strategie. Er zijn namelijk ook zoveel valstrikken voor de bij. Een bij moet ook altijd goed gewapend zijn, en toegerust met de nodige instrumenten.

De bij moet de bijenkoningin kennen, ook al is die goed of slecht. Ook de bijenkoningin heeft haar honing. Ze is niet zomaar de eerste de beste. De bij moet naar de juiste bijenkoningin gaan, ook al is ze goed of slecht. Het gaat om de honing die erin zit. Soms is die honing een belangrijke sleutel op het pad. Het gaat erom wat erin haar ligt opgesloten.

Soms zijn muren niet te doorbreken, maar kun je er wel honing uit onttrekken. De muren staan symbool voor de voorwaardes van het leven. Zijn muren daarom geen bruggen ? Ja, het zijn hele lange bruggen, bijna oneindig, maar alleen zo kan de honing komen.

Muren zijn de droombruggen van het ware leven, van het diepere leven, van het eeuwige leven, waaruit de honing voorstroomt.

de muurbij 3
honing uit de muur

Waarom worden we soms, of misschien wel heel vaak, geblokkeerd in ons leven, en zit er voor ons niets anders op om als muurbijen te leven ? Misschien zijn die dikke muren er wel om ons ergens tegen te beschermen ? Er zijn ook andere realiteiten die soms voorrang krijgen. We hebben te maken met een interdimensionaal verkeerssysteem. Wij zijn niet de enige levensvormen. Er zijn zoveel andere levens-energieën, en ook horen die weer bij ons. Soms kan zich dat heel wrang vertalen en zijn tranen onze honing.

Zo liep ik eens een bruggetje over het park in. Er stond daar een huilend meisje met haar pop. Ik nam het meisje in mijn armen en vroeg er wat er loos was. Ze kon niet praten. Ik heb haar toen naar huis genomen, en gaf haar wat te eten en te drinken. Ik vertelde haar toen over de bijtjes, en toen kon ze weer lachen. Ze zei toen dat ze haar vader en moeder kwijt was. Die waren dood. Ik zei dat

ze wel bij mij mocht wonen, dan zou ik haar vader wel zijn. Ze gaf toen haar pop aan mij uit dankbaarheid, maar ik zei dat die pop voor haar was, en dat ze nog veel meer poppen van me zou krijgen, en bijen. Ik liet haar er een paar zien. Ik had nog wel een extra kamertje, dus dat kon haar slaapkamer worden. Er stonden nog wat poppen en ook bijtjes. Ze was daar heel blij mee, en wilde graag dat ik haar pop in mijn kamer zou houden. Dat beloofde ik haar, dat ik ook goed voor haar pop zou zorgen.

'Mijn pop heeft ook geen vader en moeder meer. En ik ben maar een kind. Kun je ook de vader van de pop zijn ?' had ze gevraagd. Blijkbaar was de last van de pop te groot voor haar, dus heb ik de pop naar mijn kamer genomen.

Nu, na al die jaren, is het meisje groot. Ze is als een muurbij nu. Dat heb ik haar geleerd, om honing te onttrekken aan de muren in het leven. Op een dag zei ze tegen mij : 'Heb jij geen vader en moeder ?' Ik zei : 'Ik heb een muurbijenkoningin.'

Ze wilde de muurbijenkoningin toen ook zien, maar ik zei tegen haar dat die achter duizend muren was. Ik kon haar alleen maar leren honing aan die muren te onttrekken. Echte muurhoning, als dromen tot haar komende. Op een dag vertelde ze me dat ze over de muurbijenkoningin had gedroomd.

'En ?' vroeg ik.

'Het was heel prachtig,' zei ze. 'Ze had een witte jurk aan, met een prachtige witte hoed met gaas, en op haar jurk waren ook wat bloemetjes.'

'Zeer poëtisch,' zei ik toen. 'Heeft ze ook nog wat tegen je gezegd ?'

'Nee,' zei ze. 'Ze gaf me een potje muurhoning, en toen vloog ze weg.'

'En toen ?' vroeg ik.

'Ik volgde haar,' zei ze. 'We kwamen in de muurbijenkorf. Toen keek ze me stralend aan, en gaf me een omhelzing, toen ze zag dat ik haar was gevolgd. Ze gaf me toen een boek, een dagboek. Ik begon het als een leesbij te lezen.'

'Wat stond erin ?' vroeg ik.

'Ik spreek niet, maar ik schrijf,
Ik ga met niemand om, ik ben slechts in de boeken,
Ik ben achter duizend muren,
Alleen de echte muurhoningbij zal mij vinden,
Veel liefs,
de muurbijenkoningin,' zei ze.

Ik keek haar aan. 'Ze spreekt door de muren,' zei ik. 'Zo heb ik haar leren kennen, en zo heeft ze haar geheimen aan mij geopenbaard.'

Einde

de muurbij 4

Het is misschien een verschrikkelijke bloem, en het is misschien maar heel weinig honing, maar de honingbij is dankbaar voor elke druppel. De honingbij bouwt zijn huis met elke druppel, in dankbaarheid. Elke druppel is er weer een druppel bij. Daar kan een honingbij weer mee verder. En elke druppel honing uit de muur, is ook weer een druppel meer om de muur beter te kunnen begrijpen. Van druppels rijgt de muurbij zijn sieraden. Van druppels rijgt de muurbij zijn boeken van begrip, regel voor regel. Hiervan bouwt hij zijn huis. Het is een boekenkorf. De muurbij spreekt niet, maar schrijft. De muurbij leeft niet, maar is in de boeken, zoals zijn muurbijenkoningin. Dat heeft zij hem geleerd. Hij spreekt en leeft alleen door muren. De hieroglieven erop zijn moeilijk te begrijpen, als in een doolhof, maar zij zijn er om de boekenkorf te beveiligen. Indringers zullen het hier niet maken. Zij zullen niet ver komen.

Maar wat is er dan achter de muur ? Helemaal niks. Al het leven is in de muur. Zij is de muur.

'Het was mijn dit, mijn dat, hebben ze allemaal afgepakt, achter muren gezet, maar er is alleen leven in de muur … Niet ervoor, niet erachter, maar alleen in de muur … Totdat we zelf die muur zijn geworden … Ik kan niks zeggen, ik kan alleen maar wat laten zien … Ik ben slechts een muur … Teveel tegen muren opgelopen, werd ik zelf een muur …

Ik kan niet spreken, ik kan alleen mijn hieroglieven laten zien, mijn geheimschrift, wat je kunt ontcijferen, om het pad te volgen naar mijn hart … Maar als je dan daar aangekomen bent, ben ik allang weer ergens anders … Ik ben slechts een muur … Ik laat mijn sporen achter, maar zij leiden slechts naar een muur, totdat je zelf een muur bent geworden … Ik ben de koningin der muurbijen … de koningin der muren … In mij is al het leven te vinden … Buiten mij is er slechts illusie en bedrog … Ik maakte het om mijn hart te bewaken … Welkom tot mijn doolhof … het pad tot de honing des levens … Ik ben een raadselmaker, een maker van sleutels en sloten … Ik ben de maker van muren en deuren … De deur leidt nergens toe, maar al het leven is in de muur …'

Ik had haar dagboek gevonden en erin gelezen, en schudde mijn hoofd. Er werd op mijn schouder getikt, en ik draaide mij om, en zag haar daar staan : de muurbijenkoningin. Droomde ik of was het echt ? 'Moest dat nu allemaal ?' vroeg ik. Ik schudde mijn hoofd, maar begreep haar wel. 'Heel begrijpelijk,' zei ik. 'Je moet wel heel wat meegemaakt hebben dat je zo bent geworden.'

Maar ik sprak slechts tegen een muur.

Einde

Medusa

Hoofdstuk 1. De Zonderling

Ik denk dat ik doodga als ik naar haar kijk. ‘Dit is het rijk van de dood,’ zei ze. Ze had een suikerzoet jurkje aan, met de geur van een herfstbos. Ik draaide mijn gezicht om en keek naar buiten, naar de grauwe stenen. Het was alsof ze lang uitgestrekt op de daken lag, alsof ik haar met mijn ogen niet kon ontwijken. De bus stopte dichtbij, mensen stapten in de bus, en het was alsof zij tussen de rijen stond. Ik denk dat ik doodga als ik haar aankijk, dat ik het dan gewoon niet overleef. Ze pakt me bij mijn hand, en trekt me naar beneden. Het is etenstijd. Zij smeert het brood, kijkt naar buiten naar de heg. Ik ruik haar suikerzoet jurkje, alsof het belegd is met hemelse rijkdommen, maar naar haar kijken durf ik niet. Ik ben laf. Ik voel haar hand nog steeds, terwijl ze me allang heeft losgelaten. Ze voert me.

Ze is als een rots waarvan ik af kan springen, daarom beklim ik haar niet. De pot pindakaas voelt nog warm aan van haar hand. Ze was hier. Nu is ze in de kelder. Omdat ze zo lang wegblijft drink ik de laatste slokken melk en thee, en dan ga ik naar bed. Het was een dag des doods, in de tuin van spot. En gisteren was ik in de tuin van wreedheden. Mijn herinneringen zijn daar. Mijn hersenen bloeden. Ze leest me een boek voor, terwijl ik probeer te slapen. Ik hoor haar stem echoen door mijn hoofd. Het zaad van de lindeboom houd ik stevig vast, en meng het met mijn tranen. Dan smeer ik haar lichaam in, met het mengsel dat lijkt op natte tarwe, griesmeel, het is als brood, en het bed is de oven. Zij is de vrouw van de bakker, en ik ben de bakker. Ik maak haar klaar voor het kostelijke dinner in het diepste van de nacht, en dan slaap ik.

Ze is als de boom aan de rivier. Ik krab aan het hout, het is alsof de sterren breken. Ik denk aan de tuinen waarin wij waren, de hoge poorten in de heggen, de vruchten die zijn als de meest kostelijke snoepjes. Wie plantte hen daar ? Ik keek naar haar gezicht toen ze sliep. Nu was het veilig. De lazarus-koekjes bungelden aan haar lichaam, slap, uitgedroogd, de nacht heerste hier over de dood, de gouden dood. Voor mij was het een vakantie, ze was even geen roofdier meer. Ik kuste haar lippen, en dan slaap ik, vrij, blij, zonder angst, want ze slaapt. Een diepe nacht die mijn bewustzijn breekt, ik ben er even helemaal uit. Tante Connie controleert later de kamers nog even, of alle lichten wel uit zijn voor de nacht, want als de nacht komt, dan moet de nacht echt goed komen. Zo praat ik ’s nachts als met een pop. Ik hoor tante Connie op de gang lopen, als een lijzige boom, verzwakt door het gewicht van haar ouderdom, met passen als het slaan op de koekjestrommel. Ja, haar hele wezen klinkt me als muziek in de oren. Altijd is ze mijn lievelingstante geweest, daarom wonen we hier samen, maar de herinnering aan haar verzwakt. Ik leef hier in een dorre tuin, spot gemengd met wreedheden, de souvenirs van het duistere gat van het verleden. Geen lichtjes konden dat goedmaken, geen gouden pollepel van welke grootmoeder dan ook. Ik voel me verminkt.

Oom Joop is een man met humor, maar ook hij kon mij niet redden. Als ik wakker word zit er iemand op me, wassende mijn rug. Het is zij. Ik durf haar niet aan te kijken. Ze pakt me beet, laat dan los, pakt me steviger beet, en dan laat ze me helemaal los, om op te staan. Ik ben te moe, en het zonlicht kwelt me. Er liggen hier snoep papiertjes overal. Ik hoor haar lachen. Er is geen tuinman die de wilde tuin van mijn ziel op orde kan krijgen. Ik lig hier voor Jan Worst.

Ze is de laatste van de rozentuin, dus ik kan haar niet wegdoen. De geschiedenis van de graaf, en

zijn kinderen. Zij is als de erfenis. Uit mijn gedachten is ze niet. Ze speelt de piano. Ik kijk naar buiten, en probeer langzaam grip te krijgen op de dag. De muren buiten lijken hoog, zoals zij hoog is, van adel. Tante Connie komt binnen, en sleept zichzelf over het tapijt. Het lijkt voor haar een woestijnreis om aan ons bed te komen, en alles lijkt verwaterd. Haar rumoerig kapsel was vroeger deftig en hehoudend. Ze staart in de spiegel. 'Ik moet me nog opmaken voor de dag, je weet wel, het harnas aandoen,' zegt ze. Ze gaat tegen de verwarming aanzitten, en luistert naar de piano. De schotel die ze in haar handen heeft maakt haar bijna als een bedelaar. Ze heeft behoefte aan een gesprek, en ik ben te moe. De dochter van de graaf daarentegen is vol energie, en begint het gesprek met haar in zinderende vaart. Ze zijn als een stel vogels. Al snel prakken de vorken een maal. Ik krijg niks, want ik behoor niet tot de dag. Het is alsof ze elkaar voeren.

In de middag ligt ze weer op me. Het lijkt wel alsof ze draadjes aan me bevestigt om me op te hijsen. Er is nog maar een klein stukje van de dag over en dat eist ze helemaal voor haarzelf op, als met gloeiende handen. Buiten hoor ik de bus, mensen stappen in, verveeld, uitgeput. Ik vraag me af of ze ooit zullen aankomen. Zwetend en puffend kom ik aan bij de lift op de gang. Ik wil naar de zolder. Maar de lift schijnt niet te werken. Ik strompel naar de trap, want een dag met de dochter van de graaf is te veel voor mij. Ik zie bij de trap naar de zolder een andere vrouw staan, in wit kant. Ze helpt me op de trap. Ik plof even later op haar bed neer. Zij is de vrouw van de zolder, en ik heb de zolder bereikt, niet te bereiken voor de dochter van de graaf, de dochter des doods. Maar ik hoor haar krijsen beneden, als iemand die zich geprikt heeft bij het naaien. Ja, toe maar, druk die speld maar diep naar binnen, je verdient het, kreng, denk ik bij mezelf. Maar dan word ik ineens mild door de zachtheid van de vrouw hier. Ze komt dichterbij, spreid haar benen waarmee ze mij vastklemt. 'Ho, doe normaal,' zeg ik. Ze verzwakt de klem een beetje, maar ik voel haar gewicht op me. 'Slapen ?' vraagt ze.

'Nee, dank je, ik heb net geslapen,' zeg ik.

Ze loopt naar een kastje, haalt wat brood eruit en besmeerd het. Daarna voert ze me. De lucht is donker hier, en ik hoor de dochter van de graaf nog steeds krijsen. Als ik naar buiten staar is het alsof ze zich heeft uitgespreid over de daken.

'Waar kom je vandaan ?' vraagt de vrouw van de zolder.

'Vanuit de tuin,' zeg ik.

'Oh, de tuin der edelheden en martelingen ?'

Ik knik.

'Zo'n zoet-bitter iets,' zegt ze. Ik knik weer. De verdiepingen onder de zolder lijken ver weg. Ik staar weer naar buiten, alsof ik mijn ziel zie vliegen. 'Waar ben ik ?' vraag ik.

- Bij mij.

Ze pakt een schotel en een kom, en voert me dan soep. ‘Ik wil niet meer terug,’ zeg ik. Ik kwam van een nachtelijk gebrul, en nu was ik hier, een plaats vol protserige spulletjes, over en weer gelakt en opgepoetst. Vanaf de zolder kon ik de tuinen zien, de heggen, met de hoge poorten. ‘Ik ben een vergiftigd mens,’ zeg ik. ‘Een dwaallicht, een pop.’ Ze knikt. Als ik naar buiten keek zag ik mijn weerspiegeling. Zij stond ineens voor de spiegel, en maakte zich op, met allerlei smeerseltjes. ‘Goed spul van de bomen,’ zei ze. ‘Het is voor mijn huid. Ik ga niet naar het feest vanavond, ik blijf wel hier met jou.’

Het is alsof ik met haar hang tussen de verdiepingen, alsof ik met haar zweef boven de tuinen. Ik voel haar gewicht, en ben bang dat we naar beneden vallen, maar ze rekt me uit. Ik zie de begroeiing op de muren, en herinner de begroeiing van de tuinen, de dorens, de valstrikken, puur natuur.

‘Ik ben de maker van de tuin,’ zegt ze plotseling. Ik schrik. ‘Hoe kun je zoiets maken ?’ vraag ik. Ze zwijgt, als het graf. Ik merk dat ik kwaad word van binnen, maar dan voel ik ineens genade. Al snel voel ik niets meer, ik kijk alleen maar in een onbekend gat, als een mist, een waas. Ik kan niet meer nadenken. ‘Wat is er aan de andere kant van de tuin ?’ vraag ik.

- Een snoepwinkel. Ze verkopen eigenlijk gewoon zoete vruchten.

Ik kijk naar haar kanten jurkje. Het is als een snoep jurkje. Ineens heb ik zoiets van : Als ik nog verder naar haar kijk, dan ga ik dood.

Ik rol van het bed af naar de trap, en laat mij naar beneden vallen. De dochter van de graaf vangt mij op, en de vrouw van het zolder stormt naar beneden. ‘Hij zit toch aan touwen vast, elastiek, draden, kettingen, dus wat wil je,’ schreeuwt ze.

‘Is dit de oorlog van de feeen,’ vraag ik, ‘of van de indianen.’ Ze grijpen elkaar in de haren. ‘Uit dat licht,’ roept de vrouw van de zolder. Ik staar doelloos naar de hoeken van de trap. Dan voel ik de hand van tante Connie, die mij naar haar kamer neemt. ‘Thee ?’ vraagt ze.

Ze maakt brood voor me, opgepoft en zacht, een beetje nat, met wat soep en pudding. ‘Je moet goed eten, jongen,’ zegt ze. Ik zie haar kauwen. Het zal wel avondetens-tijd zijn. Ik hoor vrouwen krijsen. Buiten hoor ik vogels krijsen. Het klinkt me als muziek in de oren. Bij tante Connie is alles altijd anders. Ze zorgt voor me, grijpt in wanneer het nodig is. Oom Joop zit aan de andere kant van de kamer. Een verfrommelde papieren zak ligt naast hem, met oud brood. De gouden klok tikt, en het is een rustgevend geluid. Ik probeerde vat te krijgen op de structuur van dit huis, maar het was alsof ik van de daken afgleed, of was dit huis slechts de weerspiegeling van de tuin. Het was niet bepaald mijn Eden, en toch wilde ik dit huis doordringen. Ik voelde mij een zwerver in dit huis, een huis wat ik nooit echt binnen kon gaan. Na een paar uur zaten de twee vrouwen keurig netjes tegen elkaar aan, in keurige zoete kleertjes, als feestbroodjes bij de bakker. Rozen op hen vastgespeld alsof er iemand jarig was, en de spelden gingen diep in hun vlees. ‘Ja dieper, dieper,’ dacht ik. Ik wilde het voelen bloeden. Het was al aan het bloeden. Het bloed sijpelde op de grond. Tante Connie raakte in paniek, en ik ook, omdat ik toch meer waarde hechtte aan de beoordelingen van tante Connie dan aan mezelf. ‘Waarom doen jullie dat !’ riep ze.

‘Dit is ons verbond,’ zeiden de twee vrouwen. ‘Ons bloed-verbond.’

‘Zie je,’ dacht ik bij mezelf, ‘dan had ik het wel goed ingeschat.’

‘Geef me de speld,’ zei ik. ‘Ik wil ook deel hebben aan het bloed-verbond.’ Het was een hele opluchting toen ik de speld in mijn vlees voelde gaan, en ik de zachtheid van de roos tegen mijn huid aanvoelde. Ik voelde me een plak vlees bij de slager.

‘Nu kun je het dak opkomen,’ zeiden de vrouwen. ‘Nu kon je de tuin bezaaien en besproeiien.’ De poort van mijn hersenen leek open te gaan, en de waas leek even te vertrekken. Ik wilde meer van zulke lichaams-spelden. Ik herinnerde de dorens, ik herinnerde hoe genadeloos diep ze gingen, totdat alles binnenin me brak, en ik begon te zweven. Ik was nu boven het dak, maar de huizen om ons heen waren veel groter. Ik kon de zolders inkijken en zag de vrouwen. Ze leken eenzaam, en ik was eenzaam. Ik was met een helm op geboren, maar die ontplofte nu. Ik zweefde bij iemand binnen. En hier zag ik bomen groeien door het hele huis. Ik was nog steeds in de tuin. Hier hingen zoveel gouden klokken aan de muur, die allemaal heerlijk tikten, zo licht, zo zacht, zo helder, ontwakende de diepste roerselen van mijn hersenen. Ze waren als een vuur in mijn lichaam. De mensen die hier woonden hadden allemaal dialogen. Het moest vooral ergens over gaan, maar ze kwamen er nergens mee. Ze leefden in een cirkeltje. Ik had ze al snel door. Toch was het allemaal erg verrijkend voor mij. Jurkjes hingen er aan de muur, vruchtjes lagen op schaaltjes, gezet op oventjes. ‘Is dit de weg naar de stad ?’ vroeg ik.

- Welke stad. Oh, de overstad.

Ik knikte. ‘Daar heb ik vaker over gehoord,’ zeiden ze. Ze lieten me ladders van touw zien. Ik klom en klom, dit huis was lang, als een herenhuis wat maar niet ophield. Mensen leefden hier als vogels. Ik wist niet waar ik moest kijken. ‘De parel van de tuin,’ zeiden ze, ‘is daar,’ en dan wezen ze omhoog. De ladder was glibberig, en ik gleed weg. In spiegels zag ik mezelf klimmen. Ik had weer het gevoel dat ik van de daken gleed, alsof ik het huis niet kon binnengaan. Tante Connie legde haar hand op mijn hoofd. Haar hand was gloeiend heet, of was mijn hoofd gloeiend heet. ‘Waarom ?’ vroeg ik. ‘Waarom is er hier geen doorkomen aan ?’ Tante Connie zei niks, zweeg als het graf. Ook de twee vrouwen zeiden niets. Het was als een schijnbaar open weg die dood liep. Een zwakte maakte zich van mij meester, en ik was gelijmd aan de grond. Met wilde maar beheerste ogen keek de dochter van de graaf naar mij, alsof ze een wild paard probeerde te temmen, met de koele zelfverzekerdheid dat dat haar aardig lukte. Even stond de tijd stil, en was het alsof zij de muziek van het moment perfect kon berijden. Als ze zou vallen zou ze aan draden verbonden zijn, als aan elastiek, zodat ze niet in de vlammen van het hellemeer zou vallen. Ik snakte naar adem. Ik hoorde haar ogen roepen. Toen greep ze me vast. ‘Ik laat je nooit meer los,’ zei ze. ‘Nooit meer.’ Even dacht ik dat ik thuis gekomen was. Ik probeerde me zo lang te maken als zij zich waardig voelde. ‘Wie ben jij eigenlijk ?’ vroeg ik.

De vrouw van het zolder liep terug naar de trap. In gedachten zweefde ik langs het huis, en de dochter van de graaf lag uitgestrekt op de daken. Wij konden dit huis niet binnenkomen. Wij waren in de tuin. Het zonlicht was aangenaam, en het was alsof we beiden smolten en naar beneden sijpelden, om in elkaar te versmelten ? Waren wij de vruchten van deze tuin ?

Hoofdstuk 2. De Sleutel

Tante Connie legt gouden bestek op de tafel voor het feestmaal. Oom Joop komt aan tafel zitten. Ik zit naast de dochter van de graaf. Ze houdt mijn hand vast. Tante Connie brengt dan de pan met het avondeten, en met een grote lepel laat ze het ploffen op onze borden. ‘Is zij van het zolder niet uitgenodigd ?’ vraag ik.

‘Ze heeft haar eigen,’ zegt tante Connie. Ik heb het gevoel dat ik wat mis, en ga na een tijdje naar het zolder. Ik voel me op en top. Ze ligt op bed, en staart door het raam. Ik ga bij haar zitten. Haar ogen kijken dwars door me heen, alsof ze me niet ziet. Als ik naar buiten kijk, zie ik haar weerspiegelingen daar, alsof ze uitgestrekt is over de daken, en langs de muren, als begroeiing. ‘Zoveel mensen kennen me niet,’ zegt ze. Dan staat ze op en geeft mij een bord. Het schijnt hier ook etenstijd te zijn. Ze schept op. We staren elkaar de hele tijd aan, en als ik dan later naar buiten staar is het al donker, en haar weerspiegelingen zijn als de lichten in de nacht, als woeste paarden over de daken. Ik hoor tante Connie beneden roepen. Het is tijd voor de nacht, maar ik wil niet slapen. Ik houd de hand vast van de vrouw van het zolder. Mijn hoofd voelt als een stad met huizen, grote huizen, hoge huizen, lange huizen, met bomen er tussen, met plaats voor de tuin. Het is alsof de vrouw van het zolder op mijn hersenen danst, en het doet pijn, en ik word al snel moe. Pudding voert ze me. Grote lange draden voel ik door mijn lichaam gaan, totdat ik het gevoel heb dat ik kan zweven. Haar bed is ineens zo dik en ver weg, haar kamer twee keer groter. Nee, naar buiten wil ik niet meer. Ik ben hier buiten. Zij is mijn wereld. Ik heb een kinderlijk geloof in haar.

Tante Connie laat me de schoonheid van het huis zien, van alle plekken, en ja, ik moet haar gelijk geven. Ze heeft een plaats in mij, alle dingen in dit huis hebben een plaats in mij. Ik heb ze nodig. Ik ben er bijna ziekelijk afhankelijk aan. Het is mijn levenswarmte. Maar toch voelt het alsof ik heen en weer gesleurd word. Ik heb nergens grip op, ik glijd telkens weg, dieper. Dit is een doodlopende weg, een fuik, van vuur. Ik zie ze het glas heffen. Zij zijn als de vlammen in mijn hoofd. Ik durf niet naar ze te kijken, want dan ga ik dood. Het zijn de hoofden van de Medusa. De mensen die hier wonen zijn net zo steen als dit huis, en iedereen die naar hen kijkt verandert in steen. Zo is het leven. Is dit de sleutel weg uit de tuin, of is dit de sleutel tot de tuin.

In de nacht danst de vrouw van de zolder als een zwaan, als een brandende struik. Ik probeer me om te draaien, maar ik kan niet. Deze dans is dodelijk, of misschien wel leidende naar de poort van de hel. Ik sta verstijfd. De uitsteeksels en aanhangsels van haar jurk raken mij. Ik kijk naar haar door mijn glas wijn. De poort brandt. Ik probeer me ergens aan vast te klampen, maar zonder success, totdat ik de stem van tante Connie hoor. Ik kan niet terugroepen. Iemand knijpt mijn keel dicht, maar ik heb geen verlangen om terug te roepen. Ik ben als een boom geworteld in de grond. Ik heb het geheim van Medusa gezien : Alleen met de ogen van wijn kunnen wij haar bekijken. Ze gilt en schreeuwt nu ik het geheim heb ontdek. Ik gooi de wijn in haar gezicht, want ze wil me verscheuren. Dan staat ze in vlammen, en het gehele huis brandt. Ik moet hier weg. Maar de trappen zijn hier van vuur. Alles is van vuur. Ik besluit te blijven. Medusa schijnt aardiger dan ik dacht. Haar hoofden leven hier in een vreemde vrede. Roofdieren bespringen mij en verscheuren mij, en mijn hart is blij. Het is mijn vuur, het is omringd door mijn hart. Ik heb mijn weg hier doorheen gebeten. Een huis met standbeelden. Het is als een brandend strand, en een brandend oog leidt mij uit, om dieper in te gaan. De brandweerman houdt mij stevig vast. Zijn jas is glibberig. En dan brandt hij ook.

Tante Connie doet alsof er niets gebeurt is en staart mij aan. ‘Nog wat koffie, jongen ?’ vraagt ze. Ik

zeg niks. Tante Connie schenkt nog wat voor me in. Wie zwijgt stemt toe. Mijn oude bed in de kamer van de dochter van de graaf is versleten, scheuren in de matras, en de piano is vals. Maar niet minder mooi dan de gouden spulletjes van tante Connie. Als tante Connie lacht heb ik het gevoel dat ze op de daken fietst. Ik keek naar de vrouw van de zolder. Waren we niet net als Adam en Eva die door de brandende heg probeerden terug te keren naar het paradijs ? En was dit paradijs een mengsel tussen huizen en blote benen ? Ik keek naar de dochter van de graaf. Ik probeerde een weg door haar heen te graven. Maar ze hield alles tegen. Tante Connie dient de pudding op. Ik kan de borsten zien van de vrouw van het zolder, door haar doorzichtige jurk heen, en ze heeft haar jurk ook wel flink open. Haar borsten druipen nog, als de moederlijke fontein, maar er zijn geen babies. Ik besluit niets te eten. Hier kan ik niet tegen, en het is dodelijk. Als ik naar de dochter van de graaf kijk, dan zie ik hetzelfde tafereel. Het is onbeschoft tegen tante Connie om pudding te laten druipen terwijl zij pudding opdient. Ik kan oom Joop goed begrijpen dat hij zo ver mogelijk van de tafel afzit, als een bibberend hondje. Maar plotseling is het alsof de stoppen bij mij doorslaan. Ik voel me een baby, een hond zelfs, die gevoed moet worden. Wat een drama. Tante Connie ziet het aan mijn gezicht en raakt in paniek. Zelfs oom Joop staat op. Iedereen zit verstijfd. Ik begin met grote happen van de pudding te eten, zodat al snel mijn hele gezicht eronder zit. Oom Joop lacht mij uit. Dit is de tuin van spot. Waarom zijn Adam en Eva hier teruggekeert. Ook de twee vrouwen lachen mij uit, terwijl ze hun jurken nog meer open trekken. En dan smeren ze de pudding over hun lichaam heen en gaan op de tafel liggen. 'Ik heb al brood gehad,' zegt oom Joop. Ik kan hier niet tegen. Zelfs een hond wordt beter behandeld. Ik word er erg stil van, en ga bij oom Joop zitten. 'Je weet hoe vrouwen zijn,' zegt oom Joop.

'Dodelijk is het,' zeg ik. 'We hebben niet zomaar met een stel hoofden te maken. Het zijn de hoofden van Medusa.'

'Kijk naar hen door het glas wijn,' zegt oom Joop. Tante Connie loopt naar de vrouwen toe, en giet wijn over hen heen. 'Wat een vertoning,' zeg ik. 'Dit is toch niet meer normaal.'

'Ik dacht ook dat ik naar een ander feestje was gegaan,' zei oom Joop.

'Kom op, nu weten we het wel,' zeg ik. 'Zo lopen we de fanfare niet. Moet je dat nou eens kijken, ze vervuilen die hele tafel.'

'Nee hoor,' zegt de dochter van de graaf. 'Dit is de oerbron, de big bang.'

'Als je je maar niet verroert,' schreeuwt tante Connie. 'We gaan hier geen polonaise in de kamer houden, al mijn spulletjes worden vies. Is er nog respect in dit land ?'

'Likken, bloedvriend,' zegt de vrouw van het zolder tegen haar wederhelft. 'Alsof je leven er vanaf hangt.'

'Als jullie niet eten wat de pot schaft,' zegt tante Connie, 'dan sodemieteren jullie maar op.'

'We vonden het eten heerlijk,' zei de vrouw van het zolder, 'maar we hebben onze eigen toetjes meegenomen.'

‘Contractbreuk,’ zegt tante Connie. ‘Dat hadden we niet afgesproken zo, en voor half geld komen jullie er echt niet langs. Ik voel me door jullie verschrikkelijk door de tang genomen, als je dat maar weet. Ik heb nog wat blokken hout nodig voor het tuinvuur.’

‘Ik dacht anders dat Adam wel tegen een grapje kon,’ zei de vrouw van het zolder, ‘maar mijnheer loopt daar in het hoekje te kniezen.’

‘Oh, toe maar, geef mij maar weer de schuld,’ zei ik. ‘Het is nu oorlog.’ Ineens stormden de vrouwen op mij af, en peperden mij in met pudding, en trokken me op de tafel. ‘Dit is nog eens een kersttoetje, een vijf-gangen toetje is aan ons welbesteed,’ zei de vrouw van het zolder. Ik was woedend. ‘Als ik ooit loskom, dan zul je wat beleven,’ riep ik.

Het was alsof alle machines ineens stilstonden. We staarden elkaar allemaal aan, maar deden niets. ‘Ode aan de kok,’ zei de dochter van de graaf. Na een tijdje lagen we in het bad, en het was nog gezellig ook. Het was als een lange brandende dag aan het strand. Ik was moe, ik had mijn portie wel gehad. Het was een vreemde gewaarwording dat roosjes zo konden zijn. Ik zou vanaf nu veel meer op mijn hoede zijn. Dit mocht niet nog een keer gebeuren. Tante Connie zou het niet overleven. Er groeiden sinds die dag struiken op het behang, die ervoor zouden moeten zorgen dat deze dingen nooit meer zouden gebeuren. Tante Connie was het goed zat, en huurde bewakers in, die een oogje in het zeil zouden houden. Ook liet ze overal cameras planten. We voelden ons vanaf die dag in ons huis bekeken. Maar de volgende keer dat we aan tafel zaten schoten bij mij weer de stoppen door. Ik verlangde zo naar de oermoeder, dat ik boven op de vrouw van het zolder klom, de stoel brak, en we vielen beiden op de grond. Een wachter schoot een pijl door mijn hoofd, net op tijd, en ik werd aan de muur gespietst. ‘Geef hem melk,’ zei tante Connie rustig. ‘Jullie moeten niet zo paniekerig doen.’ Pudding droop uit de borst van de vrouw van het zolder. Ik kon me niet bewegen. ‘Eerste hulp bij ongelukken,’ zei tante Connie. ‘Hij is dood, hij heeft een pijl dwars door z’n kop. Geef hem de melk des levens, stelletje koeien. Nou, waar wachten jullie op.’

‘Hij hangt te hoog, tante,’ zeiden de vrouwen.

- Nou dan spuit je maar. Druk de knopjes maar goed in.

‘Nee, hij is dood. Hij heeft Medusa gezien, en wie van haar melk drinkt gaat naar de hel.’

- Ik ben niet gelovig, stop met die onzin.

‘God, zelfs als je de tepels van Medusa ziet ben je al overgeleverd aan de vlammen van de hel, en haar duistere hulpjes.’

- Ja, die ken ik, rijden die hier niet de hele tijd rond ? Medusa is al openlijk te kijk gezet, je hoeft het knopje van de tv maar aan te draaien.

‘Arme jongens.’

Ik kon naar de melk fluiten. De dames gingen ieder hun eigen kant op. Ik was in de tuin der wreedheden, ik was op sterven na de dood met die pijl in m’n kop. Oom Joop was behulpzaam en trok de pijl uit mijn hoofd. Maar dat deed nog veel meer pijn, dus ik drukte hem er weer in. Even later klopte ik bij de vrouwen aan de deur, maar ze deden niet open. Ik sliep die nacht bij tante Connie en oom Joop in de huiskamer. De dag erna zaten ze allemaal aan tafel alsof er niets was gebeurd. ‘Zo, de meer dan dodelijke borsten van Medusa zijn ook weer van de partij,’ zei ik. De vrouwen zeiden niets. Ze aten gulzig en verslikten zich een paar keer. Het ging zoals gewoonlijk weer nergens over. ‘Leuk,’ zei ik. ‘We zitten hier aan tafel met vergif. Killers.’

‘Houd je mond,’ zei tante Connie. ‘Jij bent ook niet een van de braafsten.’ Plotseling stonden de vrouwen als een vrouw op, als Medusa, en de muren om ons heen begonnen te branden. ‘Zie,’ riep tante Connie. ‘Ik wist het. Medusa is gekomen om wraak te nemen. Ren voor je leven.’ Oom Joop gooide een deken om ons heen, en trok ons naar zijn kant. Hij was de slimste geweest want sinds de dames hier aten zat hij bijna nooit meer aan tafel. Een golf van geweld sloeg ons neer. Maar oom Joop gedroeg zich als een duivel, en dat moest wel, anders had hij niks bij Medusa in de pap te brokkelen. Ik heb oom Joop nog nooit zo te keer zien gaan. Al snel stond Medusa buiten het raam. ‘Ik wist wel dat die wijven een grote pot met vergif waren,’ zei hij. Ik had nog nooit zo’n groot machts-spel gezien. Ik trilde als een hondje. Oom Joop was een held.

Omdat Medusa ons bleef bezoeken kregen we een ander huis in een andere straat. Er groeiden hier zogenaamde borsten-struiken die vruchten hadden als tepels waaruit een sap voortkwam wat bestand was tegen het borstgif van Medusa. We konden zelfs hierdoor Medusa genezen van haarzelf. De vloek was al snel verbroken. Er hoefde verder geen apocalypse aan te pas te komen. Onze vriendschappen werden hersteld, en al snel leefden we hier weer met elkaar. Alles was veilig nu. We hadden onze condomen-boom gevonden.

Een vrouw leefde tussen de verdiepingen in, een vrouw in mijn hoofd, onderdrukt door de hedendaagse maatschappij, een deel gesloten door de hersenen. Medusa was de oorlogsgodin, weggepest door een maatschappij van valse vrede. Een vreemde vrede bracht haar terug. Zij kende de tuin van spot ook. Ze had die zelf gemaakt. Ook kende ze de tuin van edelheden en wreedheden, op maat gesneden. Ze had zich een weg door die tuin gebaand, terug naar het paradijs. Ze ontmoette haar Adam in de lucht, en leidde ook hem terug. Door de brandende heg gingen zij, en helemaal opgebrand kwamen zij aan. Heel snel kwamen zij erachter dat zij een cirkeltje hadden gelopen. Zo slaan dan al snel de stoppen door, en vinden ze de liefde in zichzelf, die na korte tijd niets dan haat blijkt te zijn. Het is alles niet wat het lijkt. Ik kreeg een fatalistische, nihilistische kijk op het leven door deze dingen. We waren weer terug bij af. Heel wat dromen waren kapot gesprongen, en we begonnen ons oude huis te missen, maar daar woonde een nieuwe familie in.

Waar we dan ook naartoe gaan, het is altijd hetzelfde. Laten we daarom naarbinnen keren, en elkaar daar vinden, of hele andere personen die eindelijk onze dromen kunnen waarmaken, maar dit is slechts ijdelheid, illusie. We jagen lucht achterna, iedereen weet het, maar we blijven proberen. We blijven happen naar de koek die voor ons wordt gehangen. We zijn geconditioneerd, slaven, hondjes van Pavlov. Alles is hier misleiding op misleiding. Ik begon een pessimist te worden, zwaar somber. Ik wilde niemand valse hoop geven, niemand voorliegen. We liepen de leugen achterna omdat er geen waarheid was, of was de waarheid gewoon in een heel klein hoekje ergens, daar waar we het onmogelijk zouden kunnen vinden ? Maar alle dingen zijn toch mogelijk voor hen die

geloven. En zo ging ik geloven. Niet in het kerkelijk geloof, maar in die vrouwen hier met hun gekke spelletjes. Misschien dat de grootste leugen ook diep in haar de waarheid droeg. Ik had kans, want ik had een pijl door mijn hoofd. Denken was fataal. Het moest van een andere kant komen. Maar ik merkte al snel dat die vrouwen een gesloten boek waren. Ik kwam er niet ver mee. En ik wilde toch ergens in geloven. Een grote trots was er, ergens diep binnenin. Iets wat mij over het ravijn kon laten zweven, iets wat ik niet kon beschrijven, een mystiek gevoel. Oom Joop zei altijd dat een boek ons erdoor zou helpen, maar hij wist niet welk boek. Een popperige papieren kermis leek het. Tante Connie had een pop in een schoenendoos verborgen, een pop waarin ze heilig geloofde dat deze ons allen redden zou. Vaak sta ik op het balkon en voel me tussen de huizen, tussen de bomen, tussen de rivieren, overal tussen.

Het is een wonder dat ik nog leef met die pijl door mijn hoofd. Op een dag voel ik me door het gevoel dat die pijl in mijn hoofd geeft zo in de wolken, zo extatisch, dat ik merk dat ik kan vliegen. Heel voorzichtig vlieg ik van het balkon, tussen de huizen door. Mensen vallen flauw achter de ramen. ‘Bedrieger,’ roept er iemand. Ik kan er niet mee zitten. Ook al zou het bedrog zijn, ik heb er een goede tijd mee. Ik vlieg naar de top van het hoogste huis in de buurt. Als ik naar beneden kijk is alles wit. Ook het hoge platte horizontale dak waarop ik sta. Ik ruik bosgeuren. Dan vlieg ik over de stad. Wat als ik dit alles zou kunnen ontsnappen. Ik besluit naar de volgende stad te vliegen, daar waar de fabrieks-wolken zijn. Ik houd van de rook. Ik hoop dat we er allemaal in verzuipen. Dat is beter dan wat we hadden. We hebben niets te verliezen. Maar dan roep ik mezelf tot orde. Er staan wat meiden voor een raam. Ze kijken verwonderd. Ik zwaai naar ze. Ze wenken me. Een van hen opent het raam, en ik vlieg naar binnen. ‘Kijk, die kan vliegen,’ zegt er een. ‘Een truc,’ zeg ik. ‘Leer het me,’ zegt een van de meiden. Ik vertel hen over de pijl in mijn kop. Ze giechelen een beetje. Al snel hangen ze aan me. ‘Mag ik in jullie geloven,’ vraag ik. ‘Ik wil ergens in geloven.’

- Wij geloven in de dominee.

‘Okay, maar dat is niet wat. Kan ik in jullie geloven ?’

- Ik weet niet of ik daartoe bevoegd ben.

‘Ik geloof in je.’

- Wat moet ik nu doen ?

‘Vlieg met me mee.’

- Ja, maar ik kan niet vliegen. Waarom blijf je niet gewoon hier. We hebben het hier erg naar onze zin.

‘Okay.’

Ik bleef bij ze staan, en ze trokken me aan tafel. Ik moet zeggen ze waren een stuk netter dan de vrouwen die ik kende, de Medusa-vrouwen. Ze aten deftig, met mes en vork, geen geklieder. Ik

staarde naar buiten, allemaal rook. Ik kon niet veel zien. Ze sliepen allemaal in de huiskamer op matrassen. Ik kreeg ook een matras. Ik sliep al snel. Ik merkte al snel dat ik in mezelf aan het bidden was tot hen. Ik was op zoek naar een geloof. De volgende dag namen ze mij mee naar de kerk. Ik moet zeggen dat het mij aardig beviel. De dominee was erg aardig. Hij had ook wel wijze dingen te zeggen, en liep voortdurend met zijn sleutels te rinkelen. Had hij misschien de sleutels om Medusa te openen ? Na de kerkdienst liep ik op hem af om het hem te vragen. Zonder nadenken nam hij een sleutel van zijn sleutelhanger af en gaf het aan mij. 'Probeer het maar uit,' zei hij. Maar eigenlijk wilde ik hier niet meer weg. Deze mensen waren geweldig. Weer ging ik met de meiden mee naar hun huis. Omdat ik heel veel aan Medusa dacht, ben ik even later toch teruggegaan naar mijn eigen stad en huis. Ik begon direkt aan de Medusa-vrouwen te sleutelen. En het werkte, tot mijn eigen verbazing. Voor het eerst had ik het gevoel dat ik met hen ergens kwam. Alsof we de boom des levens hadden bereikt. We dronken koffie op het resultaat. Ik wilde de dominee bedanken, en vloog terug naar de andere stad. De meiden waren blij me weer te zien, en samen gingen we naar het huis van de dominee. De dominee was net zijn huis aan het schilderen. Na het bedankje nam ik afscheid van de meiden, en ging weer terug naar mijn eigen huis. Ik had Medusa verlost uit haar kooi.

Hoofdstuk 3. De Gespleten Aarde

De meiden hebben al snel ons huis gevonden, en de dominee ook. Ze waren met de dominee meegereden. De sleutel had namelijk een zendertje van binnen. Natuurlijk waren ze van harte welkom, maar de Medusa-vrouwen werden snel jaloers. Daar wist de dominee wel wat op, want die had veel meer sleutels. Wat me opviel was dat alles snel verstijfde. Alsof de sleutels veel openden, maar tegelijkertijd viel er ook zoveel dicht. We kregen het idee dat er een vloek op de sleutel lag. De dominee was niet overtuigd, want die geloofde heilig in zijn sleutels. Omdat hij zich steeds arroganter opstelde heeft tante Connie hem even later het huis uitgezet. Ik bewaarde de sleutels sindsdien. Die waren veel te gevaarlijk in de handen van een dominee. De meiden aanbaden inmiddels Medusa aan haar voeten. De dominee was woedend en noemde hen afgodendienaars. Ze waren niet meer welkom in zijn stad. Het bleek dat hij ook nog eens de burgemeester was. Medusa begon trouwens door deze aanbidding ook steeds meer te eisen. Haar voeten moesten gekust worden, anders zou ze alles vertrappen. Ik had allang spijt dat ik haar had verlost, maar het kwam allemaal door die sleutels. Op een gegeven moment was ik het zo zat dat ik de sleutels inslikte. Maar sindsdien ging het niet goed met mij. Ik begon zelf een Medusa te worden. Wie had dat ooit durven dromen dat ik ooit de god der wrake zou worden. Het liep uit op een gevecht met de andere Medusa om de macht. De Medusa begon een gevaarlijk mechanisme te worden. Voordat het nog erger zou worden besloot ik een volgende vliegtocht te beginnen. Ditmaal kwam ik in een andere stad met de hoogste gebouwen. Een oud vrouwtje deed haar raam open, en nodigde mij uit. Toen ik haar het verhaal over de sleutels vertelde scheen ze mij te kunnen helpen. Zij was namelijk een heks. Ik moest een bepaald kruidendrankje drinken, en dan zou ik de sleutels kunnen uitspuwen, en dan zou zij de sleutels omsmelten. Maar alles pakte anders uit. Het kruidendrankje werkte niet. Ik had de krachten van Medusa. Ik was immuun tegen hekserij. Ik moest onder ogen komen dat ik in een monster aan het veranderen was.

Ik strompelde naar de uitgang van deze tuin. Ik had het in zicht nu, en greep naar mijn buik. Ook al verdween de uitgang en de buitenste heg in het niets, en leek het alsof het verder van me af begon te liggen, ik liep toch door. Ik greep om me heen als tastende in het donker. Ik greep het touw mij toegeworpen. Een vriendelijk vrouwengezicht keek me aan. Rozensappen dropen in een fles. Ik hoorde gegorgel en gezang. Bloedende tuinen, zover het oog reikt, vermengd met regen, waar het oog van Medusa over waakt. Het koren dat het goud omhoog haalt, het licht der sterren weerkaatsende, haar vrucht wordt vastgehouden. Medusa waakt. Het houten huis kraakt onder het

getal van de lelies. Hier heeft ze haar woning. Hier voedt zij haar raadsel, haar mysterie, waar prinsen op paarden al eeuwen naar zoeken. Nee, zij zullen niet vinden, want Medusa waakt over haar geheim. Haar kroning was een bespotting. Haar lijden was een ontmaskering, maar niemand is ooit tot haar parel gekomen, niemand heeft ooit haar zwaard gedragen. Allen sterven zij door een blik op haar te slaan. Tot steen werden zij in alle eeuwigheden. Haar discipel is zoek, haar beker verloren. Zij heeft haarzelf nog nooit gezien. Zou zij het weten, dan zou zij sterven, daarom weet zij maar half. De rozengrachten hier zijn vol met parels. De mensen hier weten dat Medusa een geheim heeft, alleen ze kennen het niet. Ze hebben er alleen een glimp van opgevangen, en die glimp heeft hen voor altijd verblind.

Ik zit op mijn houten paard, mij hobbelpaard van vroeger, met mijn lange speer, mijn lans. ‘Open de poort,’ roep ik, maar alles zwijgt. Ik vlieg hoog, over de muur heen, maar hier is niks. De aarde is dus toch plat. Is dit het onverbiddelijke geheim van Medusa ? Ik stort hier uit alles wat ik nog in mijn hoofd heb, alle puinhopen, alles gaargebraden, en kijk in de enorme diepte. Nee, het is een ravijn. De aarde is gespleten. Een groot werk moet dat geweest zijn, met de schaar des hemels. Daar aan de overkant weten de mensen niet dat ze niet weten. Ik vlieg weer terug, en omhels mijn Medusa, en mijn meiden. ‘Ik ben aan de andere kant van de schaar geweest,’ zei ik. ‘Daar moeten we ook niet wezen. Vernietig alle spiegels. We staren wel in een glas wijn, met wijn van borsten-struiken.’ Ik strek mij uit. Ze zijn blij dat ik terug ben. Ik solliciteer bij de zeevaart. Ik waarschuw hen dat de aarde wel degelijk plat is, en dat verklaart ook waarom er zoveel schepen zijn gebleven. Ik word er kapitein. Als ik thuis ben speelt oom Joop vaak op het orgel. Maar ik ben niet veel thuis. Ik moet de zee afbakenen. Een hoge rand moet er gemaakt worden, waar niemand meer overheen kan tuimelen. Medusa is als een moeder die haar kinderen terugroept. Zij heeft de tuin gebouwd, en haar muren, en die moeten we eren, omdat het buiten veel erger is. Er is geen paradijs aan de andere kant van de heg, maar de heg spreekt tot de verbeelding. Ik zie nog meer paradijs in een pot pindakaas. Als ik thuis ben zijn de vrouwen blij, dan is het feest, maar een paradijs zal het nooit zijn, en hebben we dat wel nodig. We hebben toch elkaar.

Op een dag ga ik met de meiden voetballen op het pleintje. Via een tunnel komen we in een ander deel van de stad, in een winkelstraat. We slenteren door de straten. Ik neem hen mee naar de bakker, en koop wat special brood voor hen. Brood kan mij nooit te luxe zijn. Het is een levensnoodzaak. Bij de speelgoedwinkel wanen ze zich in het paradijs. Bij het tuinhek laten we alle zorgen achter ons. Voor de chocolade-winkel danst de vrouw van chocolade. Ze roept herinneringen bij me op, ze danst als een zwaan. We gaan de stoffige winkel binnen. Een grote notenkraker-eekhoorn staart ons aan. ‘Ja,’ zegt de winkelier, ‘veel noten altijd in de chocolade, we hebben een verdrag met de noten-industrie. We kregen dit beeld van hen, toch aardig, vindt u niet.’ Ik knikte. De meiden keken de man vriendelijk aan. We konden aan hem zien dat hij er blij van werd. ‘Ik zal u vertellen, ik ben mijn vrouw verloren,’ zei de winkelier. ‘Ik mis haar echt, en er is nu een zee van ruimte boven, want ze had zoveel spullen en die zijn allemaal in haar graf meegegaan. Komt u maar even mee, dan laat ik het u zien.’ Boven stond alles leeg. Ik staarde naar buiten, waar de chocolade-vrouw nog steeds danste. Ze was een zwerfster, en werd zo altijd genoemd.

Grote poppen van chocolade stonden in kasten. De man deed er erg zakelijk over, en kraste wat op papieren. Even later stonden we weer op straat. Aan het eind van de straat was een fontein. We zagen tante Connie lopen met een zware tas. ‘Tante Connie,’ riep ik. Ze had koffie gekocht, in allerlei soorten. Samen liepen we naar huis. Ik hielp haar de tas te dragen, en de meiden hielden ook wat spullen vast. Medusa wachtte ons op.

RATATOSK

Hoofdstuk 1. het pedagogische onkruid
Hoofdstuk 2. de schoenenreus

Hoofdstuk 1. het pedagogische onkruid

Het onkruid van munt, geduldig maar streng.
Het spaart het kind niet, als het kind tot het vreemde moet gaan,
maar blijft wel altijd achter het kind staan met haar warmte.
Haar sieraden zijn verleidelijk, en daarom wordt zij onkruid genoemd, een gevaarlijke vrouw.
Zij laat haar kinderen alleen in de nacht, opdat zij zelf het pad vinden.

Van het zuiverste onkruid is zij gesponnen, dat wat anderen niet aandurfden,
Zij leidt haar kinderen tot het vreemde.
Zij daagt het vreemde uit om haar kinderen te nemen.
En daarom wordt zij onkruid genoemd, een gevaarlijke vrouw.

Zij groeit om steden heen, en komt binnen door de gaten,
Waar onoplettendheid heerst neemt zij haar kans,
en sleurt zij kinderen naar haar holen, waar zij worden ingewijd in het onkruid van munt,
Waar zij wedergeboren worden als haar kinderen.

De stad is zwak in haar ogen,
niet bestand tegen haar geheimen.

Zij leidt haar kinderen tot de geheimen van het bos,
En in de nacht vaagt haar stem weg, opdat zij het vreemde zullen zoeken.
Zij zendt haar kinderen als boodschappers tot het vreemde.
Hoe lieflijk op de bergen zijn de voeten van hen die goed nieuws brengen.
Hoe lieflijk zijn de voeten van hen die geschoeid zijn met het evangelie des vredes.

Het vreemde is een droom tussen waken en slapen, als een tussenslaap.
Als de moederborsten die neervallen van de grote kerk,
om de doden te voeden.

Wat als haar kind spastisch zou zijn ?
Zij zou blij zijn als het vreemde haar kind zou helpen.
Telkens weer kijkt zij hoe ver het kind is.

Wat als haar kind geen armen zou hebben ?
Zou het vreemde dan niet helpen,
en zou zij het vreemde niet toestaan ?

Vergeet het binnennemen van de vreemdelingen niet,
want daardoor hebben sommigen, zonder het te weten, godsgezondenen binnengenomen.

Maar gij sprak : het vreemde heeft ons overweldigd.
Zij hebben onze kampen en holen ingenomen.

Het onkruid van munt is een stille getuige van deze dingen.

En gij sprak : Is het vreemde niet tot vijand geworden ?
Maar gij was zelf de vijand.

Hoe lieflijk zijn op de bergen dan de voeten die goed nieuws brengen ?
Maar gij hebt niet willen luisteren.

Het onkruid van munt gaat altijd haar kinderen vooruit,
en onderhandelt met het vreemde,
maar gij hebt het niet begrepen, en jammerde en klaagde.
En zij bekommerde zich er niet om.

Niets is geduid, ze treft bewust haar doel niet,
en glijd langs hem heen om haar geheimen te bewaren.
Zij ontwijkt hem, zij is het onkruid van munt.
Zij blijft op een afstand, opdat er ruimte is voor groei.

Waarom draagt zij dan nog steeds deze glorie ?
Waarom hoort zij nog steeds zijn stem ?
Omdat zij nog steeds betrokken is.
Zij staat nooit te ver weg.

Zou het vreemde tot vrede leiden, dieper in het bos ?
Maar gij noemt het oorlog.

Zij onderhandelt met het vreemde,
haar kinderen begrijpen het niet.
En toch moet zij moeder zijn.

Sta de vreemdeling toe, spreekt zij,
want het kan een godsgezondene zijn.

Ik ken deze kinderen in het veld niet.
Zij zijn vreemden.

Hoe diep moest je gaan om aan deze wereld te ontkomen ?
Velen lijden om te vermeerderen, om troost te zoeken in rijkdom, roem en macht.
Maar jij moest het hongerpad op om tot het hongerzaad te komen.
Het hongerzaad bracht een nieuwe schepping, de andere schepping die verloren was geraakt, vergeten, uit de harten gebant.

Hoe diep moest je gaan om aan deze wereld te ontkomen ?
Het ware evangelie is : gij moet minder worden, gij moet hongeren, leren leven met het minste.
Zo is er ruimte voor fantasie en verbeelding, de andere wereld die zal komen.
Zo komt gij tot het hongerzaad die zij is.

Het hongerpad, maar wie weet de weg ?
De honger weet de weg.

Hoe diep moest je gaan om aan deze wereld te ontkomen ?
Hij kwam tot het onkruid van munt, als minnares,
de ware roman,
waarin hij zijn hongerzaad gaf,
voor een nieuwe schepping,
een nieuwe wereld.

Hij staart naar de blote borsten van de honger,
waarin hij sterft.

Hij stierf op het hongerpad, en werd ook in haar wedergeboren,
en iedereen deed alsof er niets aan de hand was.

Hoe diep moest je gaan ? Hoe diep moest je gaan ?

Zij kan het je niet vertellen want ze is het vergeten door de honger,
en jij bent het ook vergeten. Alleen een kind kan het weten.

Ze was sadistisch en hardvochtig, wreed, zoals je je de honger had voorgesteld.
Zo waren de zakkenrollers van Amsterdam toch nog ergens goed voor.
Ze kwamen met moeder Honger op haar schip, als haar pieten.
Gillend renden ze door de straten, om te stelen alles wat los en vast zat.
Zij waren de sirenes van moeder Honger.

Het is een verschrikkelijk moment waarop zij komt,
om dood en verderf te zaaien, als de anti sinterklaas,
rijdend op een zwart paard,
gehuld in een paars gewaad.

Ik ben de honger loper,
in een honger nachtmerrie,
die gaat tot het verborgene, een groot geheim.
Buiten het verborgene is niets dan misbruik.

Ik ben de honger loper,

tussen slapen en waken,
in de tussenslaap,
waar ik dodelijke literaire schilderijen schilderde,
waar ik eerst zelf aan stierf.

Mijn moeder was ook een literaire schilderes,
in paars gehuld …

Zo voerde zij oorlogen,
Zo stonden haar standbeelden daar in een zuiver hemels metaal,
Haar kinderen waren duur betaald …

Zij kan niemand zo ver krijgen om voor haar te vechten,
Daarom schildert zij ze …

Maar is zij dan een snelle doder ?
Nee, zij werkt met honger,
op zwart paard met lang paars gewaad,
om hen aan haar literaire schilderijen de hongerdood te doen sterven …

Alsmaar willen zij meer,
Maar zij legt het hen uit, keer op keer …
Zij is de pedagogiek van het onkruid,
Altijd wegtrekkend op haar paard,
Om te zien wie komt en wie gaat …

Dure bonbons op een schaaltje,
maar niet voor hen,
zij zijn als honden …
Honden van de honger die voor haar uitgaan, en achter haar navolgen …
om de literaire honger te brengen …

Dure bonbons op een schaaltje,
maar niet voor hen,
zij zijn immers om de honger te brengen,
honger uit een gat …

Daar sterven zij een langzame dood,
waar zij kijkt, al schilderend voor het nageslacht …
Zij is de verzetsstrijdster tegen de gulzige stad …

Zij vangt de dwazen in haar netten …
Haar wapen is de honger …
De schade die zij aanricht is literair …

Gulzigaarden staren haar aan,
en verbleken als zij haar honger schilderijen zien …
om dan vervolgens weg te smelten …

Zou zij met zulke stenen haar lanen niet bouwen ?
Een krachtig morofoog is zij …
Wat is een morofoog ?

Een aardring in het diepste donkerste van de psyche …

Haar honger-monniken gaan traag in het paars,
in stoeten achter haar aan …
Ze merken het niet, zij zijn hongerend,
in de honger nachtmerrie …
slaapwandelaars ….

Hoofdstuk 2. de schoenenreus

Maar de koekmannetjes en de koekvrouwtjes lieten dat niet op zich zitten, en sloegen hard terug,
zodat moeder Honger tot de boeken werd verbannen.
Niemand kon hen stoppen. Zij spraken namelijk koeks.
Daarmee kregen ze alles voor elkaar.
En zo werd moeder Honger slechts tot sprookje.

De gulzigaarden spraken koeks,
een verboden taal,
maar zij deden het zo graag,
lekker stiekem koeks praten.

Ze is toen gaan onderduiken bij haar zus die een bordeel had.
Het bordeel was zo belachelijk duur dat er bijna niemand kwam.
Alleen zij die voldoende hadden gehongerd konden er komen,
als ze het honger geld hadden.
Het was een zwart geld, zwaar verboden.

En de bordeel meisjes daar waren slechts soldaten,
Je vond daar alleen de dood.
Alleen honger monniken kwamen daar,
zij die klaar waren voor de dood.

De honger monniken, op weg naar het bordeel,
maar de bordeel meisjes zijn slechts honger en dood,
opdat het gulzige ego zou sterven.

Zij is slechts de eenzaamheid aan wie zij hun honger zaad schenken.
Traag klagen en zingen zij in stoeten op weg naar het bordeel,
waarlangs velen al voortijdig door de honden van honger worden verscheurd,
want hier heerst slechts de honger.

Het bordeel werd bezocht door jammerende, klagende, vloekende monniken die honger kruizen en

honger palen op hun ruggen droegen, al zuchtend en kreunend.

Met honger tranen,
maar de gulzigen hadden gulzige tranen …

Die monniken moesten slechts werk krijgen,
in een schoenmakerij of een poppenmakerij …
Dan hadden ze wat te doen …
De bordeelhoudster was slechts een onderwijzeres …

Zouden zij de voeten van deze vrouwen kunnen schoeien met het goede nieuws ?
Of waren zij het niet waard ?
Ze zouden ook bij de kapper kunnen werken …

Hoe lieflijk op de bergen zijn de voeten van hen die het goede nieuws brengen,
de honger hebben gebracht,
de gulzige slang hebben verslagen …

Het pinksterfeest is een oogstfeest, waarop zij met lieflijke voeten het goede nieuws brengen,
Het hongerfeest leidt hiertoe,
als het hongerpad dat leidt tot de schoenmakerij, tot de schoenenreus …
De reus is een metafoor voor de grotere context …
Ook klein duimpje ging op het hongerpad tot de schoenenreus …
Klein duimpje is een metafoor voor de besnijdenis van de vastheid,
de zekerheden van de mens …

In de ladderfabriek moest ik ladders in elkaar schuiven,
en eens schoof het over mijn duim, en scheurde het zo open …
Ik bloedde en viel even later flauw …
Ook brak ik eens mijn duim, en mijn duim voelt nog steeds een beetje gebroken …
Gevoelig, zoals Jakob's heup op Pniel … Mijn duim is besneden …
Mijn zekerheden, mijn houvast …

Door hoeveel besnijdenissen moet de mens heen op het hongerpad om tot de reus met de zeven mijlslaarzen te komen ?
Ook snelheid is een symbool voor context.
Toen ik bij de schoenenreus was geweest regende het,
hongertranen gemengd met hongerzaad …
als een eekhoorn die zijn eikels voor de winter verzameld …
Ratatosk brengt altijd scheiding …
Alleen door besnijdenissen en scheidingen kom je immers tot de grotere context …

Ik ging naar de supermarkt en vroeg om zoutloze soep. Het meisje begon heel zenuwachtig te doen, en kon bijna niet spreken. Ze moest er heel veel moeite voor doen. Ze begon allemaal zenuwachtig heen en weer te lopen, en kwam steeds terug met zakjes, voornamelijk fruit. In principe moest de zoutloze soep gewoon nog gemaakt worden. Ze zei toen dat ze het later wel zouden brengen. Bij mij thuis was er een feestje. Ik stond even later in de badkamer voor de spiegel. Iedereen liep in en uit. Met een paar mensen zouden we naar de zee gaan. Treblinka was er ook bij.

Bij het strand aangekomen trokken we al onze kleren uit, en renden over het strand. Het was al donker. In de verte kon de grote stad nog gezien worden, maar ik keek liever naar het strand en de wildernis die er omheen lag. Er kwam toen ineens een heel groot varken op ons af met rechtopstaande oren. 'Het is al laat,' gromde het varken. 'Waarom zijn jullie nog op ? En wat doen jullie op het strand ? Jullie horen in de stad te wezen. Terug nu.'

Treblinka wilde het varken de strot doorsnijden. 'Nazi varken !' riep ze, en trok haar mes.

Ik zei : 'Niet doen ! Dan gaat het alarm van de stad af en dan hebben we de poppen aan het dansen, want dan komen ze allemaal !'

Maar Treblinka luisterde niet, en slachtte het varken af. Grote sirenes gingen er toen af, en stofwolken kwamen vanuit de stad. Een hele kudde varkens kwam toen vanuit de stad het strand op rennen.

'Ren nu voor je leven !' riep Treblinka.

'Waar naartoe ?' vroeg ik.

'Naar Sobibor, mijn zus,' zei Treblinka. 'Ze woont in het oerwoud.'

Toen zijn we allemaal de wildernis in gerend. Treblinka kwam niet mee. Ze liep gewoon rustig met haar mes naar de kudde varkens toe die kwamen aanstormen in de verte. Ik durfde niet te kijken. Ik ben toen doorgerend, de anderen achterna. Het geluid van de varkens was verschrikkelijk. Na lang rennen kwamen we aan bij een hut waar Sobibor woonde. Ze stond naakt achter een soort natuurgordijn wat ze zelf had gemaakt, wat rondom haar hut stond om haar terrein af te bakenen. Ik durfde niet naar haar te kijken. Ik besefte toen dat ik zelf ook naakt was. Het was donker.

'Dus jij bent de zus van Treblinka ?' vroeg ik.

Ze zei niks. Ik vroeg het nog een keer, maar ze zei gewoon niks terug. Na een tijdje kwam Treblinka terug met een bebloed mes. 'Jullie kunnen terug,' zei ze. 'De varkens zijn dood.'

'Waarom zijn ze ons gebied binnengekomen ?' vroeg Sobibor aan Treblinka.

'Die varkens ?' vroeg Treblinka.

'Nee, die stedelingen hier die je hebt meegenomen,' zei Sobibor.

'Je moet niet zoveel vragen stellen, zus,' zei Treblinka.

'Varkensvriendjes, hè ?' zei Sobibor. Toen draaide ze zich om en ging haar hut binnen.

'Niet zo boos doen,' zei Treblinka.

Maar Sobibor sprak niet meer. Treblinka zei dat ze van binnen plannetjes aan het maken was, maar wij wisten niet welke plannetjes.

'Jullie kunnen beter weggaan,' zei Treblinka.

Toen zijn we teruggegaan naar de stad. Er waren geen varkens meer. En bij mijn huis stond het supermarkt busje te wachten. 'De zoutloze soep,' zei het meisje.

Ik nam het aan en vroeg haar waarom ze zo lang hebben gewacht. 'Voor de klant,' zei ze toen.

Ik nam het aan en wilde betalen, maar dat hoefde niet. Ze waren nog steeds beschaamd dat ze het product niet hadden. Ik ben toen naar binnen gegaan. Er was niemand meer. Het was er een zwijnenstal na het feestje. Ik keek naar de zoutloze soep. 'Wat zou er nog meer voor rommel in kunnen zitten ?' vroeg ik mezelf af. Ik vertrouwde het allemaal niet meer. Ik keek op de achterkant van de verpakking en er was zo'n lange lijst met stoffen die ik allemaal niet kende. Ik durfde het niet aan, en met een honger gevoel ben ik toen terug gegaan naar het strand. Ik zag de dode varkens er liggen. Het hele strand lag er bezaaid mee. Ik ben toen teruggegaan naar de hut van Sobibor.

Weer stond ze achter haar natuurgordijn, wat een soort voorhangsel van haar terrein was rondom haar hut. Ik durfde niet dichter bij haar te komen.

'Nee, jongen, niet hier komen,' zei ze.

'Waar is Treblinka ?' vroeg ik.

'Gaat je niks aan,' zei Sobibor.

'Ze had in eerste instantie gezegd dat we naar jou moesten rennen om ons leven te redden,' zei ik.

'Ik red geen levens, en al helemaal niet van stedelingen,' zei ze.

Ik kwam iets dichterbij staan. Haar borsten waren bijna zichtbaar. 'Kom geen stap dichterbij, jongen,' zei ze.

'Die borsten van je, hè,' zei ik. 'Hebben die ook melk ?'

'Ja, waarom vraag je dat ?' vroeg ze geirriteerd.

'Ik heb namelijk zoutloze soep van de stad gehad, van de supermarkt, maar ik vertrouw het nog voor geen meter,' zei ik.

'Nog één stap verder en ik werp een speer door jouw melkloze borst,' zei ze dreigend en bitter.

'Je zus is een stuk makkelijker,' zei ik.

'Dat lijkt maar zo,' zei ze. 'Je kent haar niet.'

'Gaat dit mijn leven kosten ?' vroeg ik.

'Alles,' zei ze.

Ineens trok ze een mes. 'Varkensvriendjes hè ? Wij hebben het niet zo op varkensvriendjes,' zei ze.

'Je hebt ook op een sportschool gezeten, een vechtschool met je varkensvriendjes.'

'Hoe weet je dat ?' vroeg ik. 'Maar nee, geen varkensvriendjes.'

'Je werd onderwezen door de stad om je varkens te verdedigen, om voor ze te vechten,' zei ze. 'En het loon was zoute soep, stadse meisjes, en allerlei andere troep. Kom niet dichterbij.'

'Ik was al aan het afkicken van zoute soep en stadse meisjes,' zei ik. 'Maar ik was bang dat ze er nog meer rommel doorheen hadden gegooid. Die lijst achterop de verpakking van de zoutloze soep was lang en met onbekende stoffen.'

'Goed,' zei ze. 'Ik zie dat je wil leren. Ik heb hier wel wat erwtensoep voor je, puur natuur. Maar mijn melk krijg je niet.'

'Waarom geen melk ? Waarom heb je anders melk dan ?' vroeg ik.

'Je moet jezelf niet zo lopen opdringen,' zei ze. 'Wees blij dat je nog leeft, maar dat kan ieder moment veranderen.'

'Blijf waar je bent,' zei ik toen. Ze wilde nog steeds niet zeggen waar Treblinka was, en ik begon haar te roepen.

'Geef me dan die erwtensoep maar als je zo moeilijk doet, Sobibor,' zei ik.

'Goed,' zei ze.

Even vertrouwde ik haar erwtensoep ook niet, maar ik moest toch wat. Ik kreeg een kommetje met erwtensoep van haar en begon te eten. Wat ze er allemaal doorheen had gegooid wist ik niet, maar ze zei dat het puur natuur was. Wat er toen gebeurde kan ik me niet meer herinneren, maar ik werd even later wakker in haar hut op een soort mat. 'Wat heb je met me gedaan ?' vroeg ik.

'Varkensvriend,' zei ze.

'Dat ben ik niet,' zei ik. 'Als dat zo is, sorry dan. Ik ben nog jong.'

'Varkensvriend,' zei ze weer.

'Ik wil jouw vriend dan zijn,' zei ik.

'Ik heb geen varkensvrienden,' zei ze. 'Ik maak ze niet. Ik kook ze op.'

'Oh, u bent kannibaal, om dat maar even met een duur woord te zeggen ?' vroeg ik.

'Wij eten varkens,' zei ze. 'Nazi varkens.'

'Ten eerste ben ik geen varken, en ten tweede al helemaal geen nazi,' zei ik. 'God, wat haat ik die lui.'

'Waarom woonde je daar dan, varkensvriendje ?' vroeg ze.

'I... ik weet het niet,' zei ik. 'Ik ben daar geboren, en daar opgetogen. Kan ik het helpen ? Toen ik erachter kwam was het al te laat. Waar kon ik heen ? Dankzij Treblinka ...' maar verder kon ik niks zeggen, want ze had haar voet op mijn mond gezet.

'Dankzij Treblinka wat ?' vroeg ze. 'Je bent een varkenskind. Helemaal erg, van die nazi's.'

'Misschien was ik door hen ontvoerd als baby en deden ze net alsof ik hun kind was,' zei ik.

'Ja ja,' zei ze, 'en dat moet ik geloven ?'

'Als het kan,' zei ik. 'Ik heb nooit het gevoel gehad dat ik daar hoorde. Maar bij jou voelt het alsof ik thuis ben gekomen. Je bent zo vriendelijk, gastvrij en begrijpend. Dat heb ik altijd gemist.'

'Varkenskindje,' zei ze.

'Ze moet wennen,' zei Treblinka die in de opening van de hut stond. 'Je was inderdaad ontvoerd. Maar ik heb je teruggehaald.'

'Het heeft lang geduurd,' zei ik. Sobibor liep weer naar buiten. 'Beter laat dan nooit,' zei Treblinka. Ze gaf mij toen een kommetje met melk.

'Toe maar weer,' zei Sobibor die achter haar stond.

'We moeten,' zei Treblinka.

Toen zei Sobibor voor een lange tijd niks, en ging weer bij haar natuurgordijn staan.

Einde

Sobibor's Terugkeer

Alles stond in brand. Sobibor was teruggekomen.
Grote stoeten mensen kwamen tot de brug bij de zee.
Er was niets dan wildernis. De steden waren brandende.
Er waren ook bosbranden.
Er was geen geld. Er werd niet naar geld gekeken en er werd ook niet mee gewerkt.
Er werd alleen naar het lijden gekeken. Hoeveel hadden mensen geleden en meegeleden.
Dat gaf de doorslag.
Ik had vreemde rode muntjes in mijn handen die ik liet zien bij de brug.
Ik mocht erdoor, maar mensen achter mij mochten niet verder, omdat ze te weinig rode muntjes hadden. Zij moesten terug het vuur in. Ik zag hoe ze werden teruggeduwd, en hoe het vuur hen greep, meesleurde en verslond. Het was een afschuwelijk gezicht.
Ik besefte hoe blij ik was dat ik altijd mijn kruis had gedragen en geen compromissen had gesloten.

Ik snapte niet wat er gaande was. De brug leidde tot een reusachtige wildernis, over de zee. Het was vele dagen lopen, en we hadden niets te eten.

Ergens midden op de brug was ook een vuur. We zaten dus ingesloten. Beneden bij de brug was een bootje met wilden erin. Er kwamen toen meer bootjes bij. Ze hielpen ons op de bootjes en zo kwamen we uiteindelijk toch bij de reusachtige wildernis aan, maar overal waren vuren. De wilden leidden ons tussen de vuren door.

We gingen langs vele kampen die al brandden, en toen moesten we een rivier over, waarachter weer wildernis was. Aan de overkant stond een jongetje. Hij was ook een wilde. Zijn naam was Auschwitz. Hij begon naar mij te schreeuwen, maar ik begreep de taal niet. Wel hoorde ik de naam Sobibor telkens vallen. De wilden zeiden dat Sobibor de moeder van het jongetje was. De jongen wenkte ons, en we liepen met hem mee. We kwamen aan bij een kamp. Er kwam een vrouw uit een hut met een mand. Toen ik haar zag durfde ik niet meer te kijken. Ze zeiden dat zij Sobibor was. Toen trok het jongetje mij naar haar haar toe, maar ik keek niet meer naar haar. Zij greep toen mijn arm, en het leek alsof ik onder stroom stond. 'De godin !' werd er geroepen.

'Hier zijn we veilig,' zeiden de wilden. 'Buiten dit terrein is alles overgeleverd aan de wraak van Sobibor.' Ik trilde op mijn benen en viel even later neer. Ik werd later wakker op een mat. Auschwitz en zijn moeder stonden naar me te kijken, maar ik durfde niet naar hen te kijken.

'Dit ben jij,' zei Sobibor, terwijl ze naar Auschwitz wees. Ik volgde het met mijn ooghoeken, maar keek niet direct naar hen. 'Nee,' zei ik. 'Dat is een vergissing. Ik ben hem niet. Ik ben mezelf.'

'Het is toen je jonger was,' zei de vrouw.

'Dat kan niet waar zijn,' zei ik. 'Ik was ergens anders.'

'Ben je dom ofzo ?' vroeg de vrouw bitter. 'Dit ben jij. Waarom zou je twijfelen aan de woorden van de godin ?'

Ik voelde me alsof ik in brand stond. 'Eh ja, okay, ik ben Auschwitz. Nu tevreden ?' zei ik.

'Auschwitz is teruggekomen !' riep ze toen. Er kwamen nog meer wilden in de hut. Ze wees op mij.

'M... maar jouw kind is toch Auschwitz ?' zei ik.

'Niet zo dom doen de hele tijd,' zei ze weer bitter. 'Jij bent Auschwitz, toen je jong was.'

'Wie is hij dan ?' vroeg ik, terwijl ik naar het jongetje wees.

'Dat ben jij, jij,' zei ze.

'Maar ik ben dit,' zei ik, terwijl ik op mezelf wees.

'Hij begrijpt het niet,' zei ze tegen de wilden.

'Leg het dan tenminste uit,' zei ik.

'Luister,' zei ze. 'Jij was gestolen, ontvoerd. Toen kreeg ik een nieuw kind, en noemde hem weer Auschwitz.'

Ik voelde alles in mij branden. 'Het is een hel waar ik vandaan kom,' zei ik.

Ze greep mijn arm, en liet toen los, terwijl het weer leek alsof de bliksem insloeg.

'Sobibor,' zei ik. 'Ach laat maar.'

'Spreek,' zei ze.

Maar een vuur sloeg in de hut. We moesten allemaal rennen. Als een wilde greep het vuur om zich heen. We renden naar de rivier, maar ook de rivier was al brandende. 'Over veiligheid gesproken !' riep ik. Ik begon toen langs de rivier te rennen, maar waar ik ook kwam was vuur. Ik kreeg het steeds benauwder. Ik zag de anderen niet meer. 'Ik stik !' riep ik. Er kwam een zwart terig beest opzetten vanuit de rivier, en greep mij. Ik werd wakker in zweet in de hut van Sobibor. Ik durfde haar niet aan te kijken. 'Je hebt een lange tocht door de onderwereld gemaakt,' zei ze. 'Heb je het medicijn gevonden ?'

'Eh nee,' zei ik.

'Auschwitz,' zei ze.

'Ja,' zei ik.

'Ging alles maar door zonder te stoppen ?'

'Ja,' zei ik.

'In de onderwereld stopt het nooit,' sprak ze. 'Het gaat altijd maar dieper.'

'Eindeloos,' zei ik.

'Is dat een probleem ?' vroeg ze.

'Het ligt eraan,' zei ik.

'Nog even en ik ga open,' zei ze.

'Wat betekent dat ?' vroeg ik.

'Auschwitz,' zei ze.

'Ja,' zei ik.

'Jij bent Auschwitz,' zei ze. 'Ik ga open in de zin dat ik geboorte ga geven.'

'Aan wie ?' vroeg ik.

'Aan jou,' zei ze.

'Mocht eens tijd worden,' zei ik.

'Het is tijd,' zei ze. 'Er is niemand die de tijd kan stoppen.'

Toen zag ik niets dan vuur. Ik zonk er helemaal in weg, maar het verbrandde mij niet. Het genas mij. 'Auschwitz,' zei ze, 'jij poort van de onderwereld, jij doorvorser, nooit stop jij. Ik heb jou

bevrijding gebracht. Geboorte. De wildernis zal branden totdat het werk geschiedt is. Jij bent het werk.'

Ik viel toen door een put, en werd wakker in mijn eigen bed. De wereld brandde niet, maar ik wist dat het brandde, want Sobibor was gekomen.

De Psychologie van de Eindeloze Winkelstraat

Het was een eindeloze straat,
Een winkelstraat, in de grootste stad van de wereld,
En een jongen slenterde daar eindeloos,
Hij kwam nooit ergens aan,
Ging geen winkel binnen

Hij was op weg naar de haven,
Hij was op weg naar een boot,
Aan de eindeloze zee

Maar onderweg kwam hij iemand tegen met wie hij een eindeloos gesprek had,
Het stopte maar niet,
Maar hij besloot haar mee te nemen,
Naar zijn boot

Ze sloegen een zijstraat in die naar de haven zou leiden,
Maar ook dit was een eindeloze straat,

En hij vroeg zich af of ze ooit bij de haven aan zouden komen,
Maar ja, hij had in ieder geval een eindeloos gesprek

Ze wist hem over te halen met haar mee te gaan naar het eindeloze bos,
En daarvoor sloegen ze weer een zijstraat in,
Maar ja, je raadt het al : die zijstraat was ook eindeloos

Hoe lang duurt het nog ? vroeg hij telkens.
Uit haar tas haalde ze een boek wat eindeloos was.
'Alles is hier eindeloos, hè ?' vroeg hij.
'Maar zo'n eindeloos boek kan ik toch niet allemaal gaan lezen ?
Ik heb genoeg aan dit eindeloze gesprek met jou.'

'Oh, ik moet nog wat even doen,' zei ze.
Toen stapte ze een winkel binnen.
Hij volgde haar.
'Nee, even buiten blijven,' zei ze.
'Ik ben zo terug.'
Maar ze bleef eindeloos weg,
En toen is hij naar binnen gegaan.
Hij keek zijn ogen uit.
Het was een eindeloze winkel.
Ze was hier vast en zeker verdwaald,
Dat kon niet anders.

En ook hij begon te dwalen en te dwalen,
In deze eindeloze winkel.
Na heel lang dwalen kwam hij de winkelier tegen.
De winkelier omhelsde hem.
'Oh, zo lang niemand gezien,
Ik was verdwaald in mijn eigen winkel.
Eindelijk iemand gevonden,'
zei de winkelier.

'Ik ben mijn vriendin kwijt met wie ik een eindeloos gesprek had,' zei de jongen.
'Geeft niet, geeft niet,' zei de winkelier. 'Die komt wel weer terecht.'
'Maar hoe dan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Nou,' zei de winkelier, 'alles wordt hier verkocht, ook wij, dus ze komt wel weer terecht.'

'Dat is een hele opluchting,' zei de jongen. 'Kan ik haar dan nu kopen ?'

'Het kost eindeloos veel,' zei de winkelier.

'Maar het is mijn vriendin,' zei de jongen, 'we waren op weg naar het eindeloze bos.'

'Allemaal eindeloos duur,' zei de winkelier.

'Een vreemde bedoening dan,' zei de jongen. 'Ik wil hier weg.'

'We kunnen niet weg,' zei de winkelier.

'Dus we moeten wachten totdat we gekocht worden ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ik vrees van wel,' zei de winkelier.

'Maar wie hebben eindeloos geld daarvoor dan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'De eindelozen,' zei de winkelier.

'Wie zijn dat ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ik zal het je wel even laten zien,' zei de winkelier.
Hij haalde uit zijn tas een boek tevoorschijn. Het was een eindeloos boek.
'Dat boek ken ik,' zei de jongen.
'Heb je het gelezen ?' vroeg de winkelier.

'Eh nee,' zei de jongen, 'ik was met iemand in gesprek.'

'Sufferd !' riep de winkelier.

'Wat nu ?' vroeg de jongen. 'Het lijkt hier wel een gevangenis.'

'Dat is het ook !' foeterde de winkelier. 'Wat dacht je dat het anders was ?'

'Een winkel ?' zei de jongen.

'Wat is dat voor oneindeloos gezwets !' foeterde de winkelier.

'Maar wat nu dan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Wachten op de eindeloze trein,' zei de winkelier.

'Komt die hier ook ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Nee, hier niet,' zei de winkelier.

'Maar wat hebben we er dan aan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Dan moet je het boek lezen !' foeterde de winkelier, terwijl hij het boek in de handen van de jongen drukte. Toen liep de winkelier boos weg. 'Zorg dat je niet nog een keer verdwaalt !' riep de jongen hem na.

Toen begon de jongen maar met lezen. 'Wel verdraaid !' riep de jongen. 'Die taal versta ik niet !'

Na uren dwalen kwam hij het meisje weer tegen.

'En ?' vroeg het meisje.

'En wat ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Heb je het eindeloze boek gevonden ?' vroeg het meisje.

'Ja,' zei de jongen. 'Ik kreeg het van de winkelier, maar het is in een andere taal.'

Het meisje begon te lachen. 'Dan had je het boek maar van mij moeten aannemen, want dat was in jouw taal. Maar nee, je wilde liever met me praten. Snapte je dan niet waar eindeloze gesprekken met meisjes naartoe zouden kunnen leiden ?'

'Ik snap het nu,' zei de jongen. 'Het leidt nergens toe. Mag ik dan nu het boek ?'

Het meisje stak toen haar tong uit. 'Nee,' zei ze, en draaide zich toen om en rende weg.

'Kom terug !' riep de jongen. 'Dus ik zit in een gevangenis omdat ik een bepaald boek niet heb gelezen, en dat boek wordt nu ook nog eens van me afgehouden ? Wat een zotte bedoening is dit ?'

En de jongen dwaalde en dwaalde en vroeg zich af wat er in het boek zou staan. Wel stonden er soms plaatjes in het boek in de vreemde taal. 'Ik lijk wel Jan Huigen in de ton met een hoepeltje erom,' dacht hij bij zichzelf. 'Was ik maar weer in de eindeloze winkelstraat op weg naar de haven. Ik was zo stom om me af te laten leiden door dat meisje. Eerst was ze zo eindeloos praatgraag, maar nu, nu ....'

Opeens stond er een fee voor de jongen in een roze jurk, met een toverstafje. 'Boekjes lezen, hè, boekjes lezen,' zei de fee. 'Ik dacht dat je op weg was naar de haven ?'

'Ja,' zei de jongen, 'maar het duurde eindeloos, en ik raakte in een eindeloos gesprek.'

'Dat is geen reden om dan maar boekjes te gaan lezen,' zei de fee.

'Wat moest ik dan doen ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Nou,' zei de fee, 'wat een vraag. Er staan hier chocolade winkels door de hele straat, en meneer weet niet wat hij moet doen.' Toen begon de fee te lachen. 'Neem eens een chocolaatje voor de verandering.'

'Tja, daar had ik even niet aan gedacht,' zei de jongen.

'Dus ga je maar achter de meisjes aan ?' zei de fee glimlachend.

'Ik kwam haar toevallig tegen, en ze hield me aan de praat,' zei de jongen.

'Toevallig hè ?' zei de fee glimlachend. 'Maar toevallig stonden er ook een heleboel chocolade winkels aan weerszijden van de straat, en daar had je geen oog voor ? Malle jongen.'

'Ik werd gewoon afgeleid,' verdedigde de jongen. 'Ze praatte maar door, en belemmerde mij het zicht. Ze bleef me maar lastig vallen, ook toen ik doorliep.'

'Ja ja,' zei de fee, 'dat zeggen ze allemaal. En toen besloot je haar maar mee te nemen naar je boot in de haven ?'

'Ja,' zei de jongen, 'misschien zou dat haar kalmeren, want ik kwam toch niet meer van haar af, en het was eindeloos.'

'Een chocolaatje had wonderen kunnen doen,' zei de fee.

'Ik begrijp het,' zei de jongen, 'het spijt me. Mag ik dan nu een chocolaatje ?'

'Zoek ze zelf maar,' zei de fee, terwijl ze haar tong uitstak naar hem.

Toen vloog ze weg.

'Bah,' zei de jongen. 'Die feeën van tegenwoordig zijn nog wel erger dan meisjes.'

Hij keek in een bak op een winkelschap, en zag er chocolaatjes liggen, maar je raadt het al : die waren natuurlijk eindeloos duur.

'Zie je nu wel !' riep de jongen. 'Ik word hier eindeloos bedrogen. Maar ja, niemand schijnt hier toch te zijn, en de winkelier zal alweer verdwaald zijn, dus ik neem er maar eentje.' Hij haalde de wikkel van de chocola eraf, en toen het zilveren folie en begon van het chocolaatje te eten. 'Lekker,' zei hij. 'Die fee had toch wel echt gelijk. Had ik eerder moeten doen, had ik eerder moeten doen.'

Hij liep verder met zijn hoofd in de wolken. 'Chocolade is toch wel het heerlijkste wat bestaat,' zei hij. Opeens botste hij tegen een politie agent op. 'Chocolaatjes stelen, hè ?' zei de agent.

'Er was hier niemand en ik was verdwaald,' zei de jongen. 'Ik moest toch wat eten.'

'Dat zeggen ze allemaal,' zei de politie agent. 'Kom maar mee.'

'Nou, ik ben blij dat je me gevonden hebt,' zei de jongen. 'Haal me hieruit.'

'Nee, je gaat er dieper in,' zei de politie agent. 'We zijn hier niet zo gesteld op dieven.'

En zo leidde de politie agent hem naar een lift, en ze gingen heel hoog. Even later kwamen ze op een hoge verdieping uit. Hier werden allemaal boeken verkocht. 'Nee, geen boeken !' riep hij. 'De fee zei dat ik op zoek moest gaan naar chocola in plaats van boeken.'

'Niks mee te maken,' zei de politie. 'En dit zijn trouwens toch chocolade boeken.'

'Dat is geen straf dan,' zei de jongen.

'Het is eindeloos duur, dus ik zou er maar niet aanzitten als ik jou was,' zei de politie agent, 'want anders ga je nog hoger het gebouw in.'

'Maar wat moet ik eten dan ?' vroeg de jongen. 'Ik heb honger. Je kunt me toch niet laten verhongeren ? Dus deze gevangenis voedt zijn gevangenen niet ?'

'Niks mee te maken,' zei de politie agent. 'Wees blij dat je nog leeft. We kunnen niet voor alles zorgen.'

'Bah, wat flauw,' zei de jongen. 'Wat een flauwe bedoening allemaal.'

'Je was toch op weg naar de haven, naar je boot ?' zei de politie agent.

'Ja, maar ik kwam iemand tegen,' zei de jongen, 'en die leidde me hier naartoe. Ik had natuurlijk nooit naar haar moeten luisteren. En nu is ze weg.'

De politie agent begon hem uit te lachen. 'Dat is mijn dochter,' zei hij. 'Zij werkt voor ons. Zo krijgen we nieuwe klanten.'

'Gevangenen zul je bedoelen,' zei de jongen sip.

'Kop op,' zei de politie agent. 'Ik heb ook nog een andere dochter. Zou je die niet willen ontmoeten ?'

'Wat staat me dan te wachten ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Kom maar mee,' zei de politie agent. Weer gingen ze de lift in, en ditmaal gingen ze nog hoger. 'Hoe hoger je komt, hoe meer de winkels in elkaar overlopen, en dan is het veel kleiner.'

Plotseling stond de jongen met de politie agent weer op straat, en alles was niet eindeloos meer. 'Wat vreemd,' zei de jongen.

'Het was een verkleinings-lift,' zei de politie. 'Nu ben je pas waar je wezen moet. Mijn andere dochter wacht op je bij de haven.'

'Vreemd,' zei de jongen weer, en liep over straat op weg naar de haven. Ergens halverwege kwam hij weer de eerste dochter van de politie agent tegen. 'Ha, ben je daar weer !' riep ze van een afstand.

'Ik heb geen tijd nu,' zei hij. 'Iemand wacht op me bij de haven.'

'Heb je een afspraakje ?' zei het meisje lachend. Toen liep ze lachend door.

Bij de haven aangekomen zag de jongen een ander meisje staan. 'Ben jij de dochter van de politie agent ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ja, hoezo ?' vroeg het meisje geirriteerd.

'Nou, ik mag toch wel wat vragen,' zei de jongen. 'Dan hoef je niet direct zo boos te doen. Je vader zei dat je me hier zou opwachten.'

'Mijn vader zegt zoveel, daar heb ik niks mee te maken,' zei het meisje. 'Ik wacht hier op heel iemand anders.'

'Op wie dan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Gaat je niks aan,' zei het meisje. 'Wijsneus.'

'Je bent gierig,' zei de jongen.

'Gierig ?' lachte het meisje ineens, en rende toen weg.

Het leek wel alsof alles toen nog kleiner en nauwer werd. De jongen had moeite met ademhalen. Het leek wel alsof alles op hem afkwam om hem te verpletteren. 'Moet dat chocolaatje zijn geweest,' zei hij tegen zichzelf. 'Ik ook altijd met mijn goede ideeën. Ik moet terug naar die lift, want hier is het nog erger.'

Hij begon al te hijgen en puffen van de benauwdheid, en liep weer terug naar het punt waar de politie agent hem bracht. Daar stond de eerste dochter van de politie agent weer. 'Alsjeblieft, ik smeek je,' zei de jongen. 'Breng me weer terug naar de verkleinings-lift.'

'Wil je dat het nog kleiner en benauwder wordt ?' vroeg het meisje lachend.

'Nee, groter, eindelozer,' zei de jongen. 'Dit is ook niks.'

'Jij weet ook niet wat je wil,' zei het meisje lachend. 'Ik dacht dat je een afspraakje had ?'

'Het was een misverstand,' zei de jongen. Daar kwam ook de politie agent weer aan. 'Wat sta jij hier nog te staan !' bulderde hij. 'Lopen, naar de haven !'

'Je dochter wilde niet,' zei de jongen.

'Niks mee te maken,' zei hij.

'Je kan niemand dwingen,' zei hij.

'Dat maak ik nog wel uit,' zei de politie agent, 'en nu lopen.'

'Ik ga naar de haven, naar mijn boot, maar niet naar haar,' zei de jongen.

Toen rende de jongen terug naar de haven, naar zijn boot, en stapte naar binnen. Het was er een enorme rotzooi. Hij startte direct de motor. 'Ik moet hier weg,' dacht hij bij zichzelf, 'weg.' Gelukkig was de zee hier niet eindeloos. Het was maar een riviertje. Maar alles werd alleen maar kleiner en benauwender. Weer ging hij terug naar de haven, ging zijn boot uit, en op zoek naar de tweede dochter van de politie agent. Die stond daar ergens met een telefoontje. 'Alsjeblieft,' hijgde hij. 'Breng me terug naar de verkleinings-lift,' zei hij.

'Vergrotingslift zul je bedoelen,' zei het meisje, terwijl ze gewoon doorging met haar telefoongesprek.

'Alsjeblieft,' hijgde hij, 'als alles maar weer groter en eindelozer wordt.'

'Waarom neem je niet gewoon een chocolaatje ?' vroeg ze, terwijl ze weer doorsprak aan de telefoon.

'Heb ik niet,' zei de jongen.

Het meisje grabbelde even wat in haar tas, terwijl ze doorsprak aan de telefoon, en gaf hem toen gehaast een chocolaatje. Hij haalde de wikkel er vanaf en toen het zilveren folie en begon ervan te eten. 'Mmm,' zei hij, 'zo lekker. Chocola is toch wel het heerlijkste wat er is.'

'Je bent laat,' zei het meisje.

'Ik was er al, maar toen wilde je niet,' zei de jongen. 'Je zei dat je op iemand anders wachtte.'

'Dat moet een vergissing zijn,' zei het meisje. 'Kom maar.'

Het meisje leidde hem toen naar de vergrotingslift die weer helemaal naar beneden ging naar het eindeloze winkelgebouw. Hij was zo opgelucht. 'Wat is de bedoeling hiervan ?' vroeg hij.

'Nou,' zei het meisje, 'de bedoeling is dat de klant het niet in zijn hoofd haalt nog ooit uit onze winkel te ontsnappen.'

Einde

Het Duistere Sprookje van de Donkere Kaas

Een jongen moest van zijn moeder naar de kaasmarkt om een pond kaas te halen.
Toen hij daar aankwam stonden er drie indiaanse vrouwen met blote voeten op de tafel van een marktkraam, en er was alleen maar donkere kaas. De jongen moest de vrouwenvoeten kussen voordat hij de kaas meekreeg. Ook moest hij betalen, en het was erg duur. De jongen vond het een beetje vreemd, maar hij wist dat hij niet moest proberen zonder kaas thuis te komen, dus hij stemde er mee in en kuste de vrouwenvoeten. Toen hij het verhaal aan zijn moeder vertelde was die woedend. Ze pakte de jongen bij de hand en ging met hem naar de kaasmarkt.

De jongen en zijn moeder werden vervolgens neergeslagen. Later werden ze wakker in een kooi. Twee bandieten keken hen aan. De jongen probeerde te praten, maar merkte dat hij niets kon zeggen. Zijn moeder was woest. "Wat heeft dat te betekenen ?" brulde ze. De bandieten glimlachten. "We kunnen er niets aan doen, mevrouw," spraken ze. "Er is een nieuwe directeur, en die wil donkere kaas."

"Maar waarom zijn we hier ?" brulde de vrouw woest. "Wat heeft dit in godsnaam te betekenen ?"

"Sorry, mevrouw," sprak één van de bandieten. "Orders van de baas."

"En wat nu ?" vroeg de vrouw. "Dus we kunnen niet eens meer zomaar een markt bezoeken zonder overvallen te worden, en mijn zoon moet eerst de voeten van drie indiaanse vrouwen kussen en veel betalen voordat hij kaas meekrijgt, en dan ook nog donkere kaas ?"

"Wat is er mis met donkere kaas, mevrouw ?" vroeg de bandiet.

"Helemaal niks," zuchtte de vrouw. "Maar wat heeft de rest er allemaal mee te maken ?"

"Zo wordt nu eenmaal donkere kaas geserveerd, mevrouw," spraken de bandieten.

"Het is me nogal een zootje," sprak de vrouw. "En wat nu ? Gaan jullie mij ook nog mijn zoon afnemen ?"

"U gaat opgehangen worden," spraken de bandieten.

En zo gebeurde het. De vrouw werd opgehangen, en de jongen moest op de donkere kaasmarkt werken.

Een man stopte met lezen. "Ik heb nog nooit zo'n dom verhaal gehoord," sprak de man tegen zichzelf. "Moet je dit eens lezen," zei hij even later tegen zijn vrouw. Toen de vrouw het had gelezen barste ze in lachen uit. "Donkere kaas ? Is dit echt of een verhaal ?" vroeg ze verbaasd.

"Echt denk ik," sprak de man. "Het is de krant."

"Dat zegt vandaag niet zoveel," sprak de vrouw. "Bij de krant werken allemaal grapjassen vandaag de dag. Ik zal eens kijken in de supermarkt morgen, of ze nu ook daadwerkelijk donkere kaas verkopen."

"Ik zou het maar niet doen," sprak de man. "Waarschijnlijk gebeurd dan hetzelfde met jou als met de vrouw uit het verhaal."

De volgende dag kwam de vrouw thuis met donkere kaas, en hield een pond voor de neus van haar man. "Zie, niks gebeurd," sprak ze trots.

"Dat moet nog gebeuren," sprak de man. "We kunnen de krant maar beter serieus nemen, anders horen we er niet meer bij, en sluiten ze ons misschien wel op in het gekkenhuis."

"Ach, klets niet," sprak de vrouw. "Je hebt teveel babbels en teveel tv gekeken."

In de nacht stierf de vrouw. Toen de man 's ochtends ontwaakte slaakte hij een gil. Het moest wel van de donkere kaas komen. Hij maakte de dag ervoor maar wat grapjes, maar nu bleek het toch menens te zijn. Misschien was er wel een duistere vloek op de donkere kaas.

"Ik kan het niet geloven dat nu mijn vrouw dood is," sprak de man tegen zichzelf, "maar het was niet zo'n beste, en lang leve de lol. Ik ga er op uit, en zal een betere vrouw vinden."

Een man klikt de tv uit. "Teveel rommel op de tv vandaag de dag. Donkere kaas ? Wat een stelletje gekken." Hij gaat naar bed, en heeft die nacht nachtmerries over donkere kaas. Hij moet de voeten van indiaanse vrouwen kussen. "Zeg, ben ik dan nu op tv ?" bulderde de man. "Want gisteren was dit op de tv, en nu ben ik hier, net zoals die jongen uit dat verhaal. En nu moet ik zeker ook duur betalen voor die donkere kaas ?"

Toen werd hij op zijn hoofd geslagen en werd wakker in zweet. Hij begon om zich heen te grijpen en had ademhalings-moeilijkheden. De volgende dag vertelde hij het aan de dokter. De dokter dacht dat hij gek aan het worden was, en liet hem niet meer gaan. "Alzheimer waarschijnlijk," sprak de dokter. "U heeft betere zorg nodig," sprak de dokter.

"Ja, maar ik ben nog jong," sprak de man.

"Niets mee te maken," sprak de dokter. "U komt hier niet meer weg."

"Het moet die donkere kaas zijn," sprak de man tegen zichzelf.

Hij werd opgesloten en stierf een eenzame dood, en hij kon alleen maar denken aan donkere kaas.

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COAB 2020

Het Eén-Dags-Kruid
IJsziek
De IJsheks
Medusa
De Verslaving
De Tuin Engel
De Vijfde Rivier
jan appelboom
de dompteur
de etalage pop
zomerliefde
de gulle bliksem
de schat met het bijen alarm
de schat met het bijen alarm 2
de bijenkorf
het oog van de zombificator
de muurbij
de muurbij 2
de muurbij 3 : honing uit de muur
de muurbij 4
de schoolheks

Het Eén-Dags-Kruid

Hij was ijsziek. Het jongetje op het piratenschip was goed ziek. Ze waren op de ijszee nu, en het was koud. Het werd steeds kouder, en het jongetje begon te ijlen en te hallucineren. Hij begon vreemde dromen te krijgen. Hij dacht dat hij doodging.

Het indianenland lag achter de ijszee, maar hij dacht dat hij het niet zou halen. Hij was te ziek. De piraten waren erg zorgzaam over hem. Ze hadden hem gekocht van zijn vader en moeder die te arm waren om voor hem te zorgen. Ze gaven hem een fles met roze spul erin. Het maakte zijn hart iets warmer, maar het kon niet tegen de kou op. Het enige wat het misschien deed was hem in leven houden.

Sommige piraten waren al bevroren. De wind was snijdend. De kou had hem gestoken, en hij bloedde.

'De ijsheks vraagt om offers !' riep een van de piraten.

'Geef haar het kind !' riep een andere piraat. 'Zonder haar zal het kind toch niet overleven.'

En zo kwam het jongetje in handen van de ijsheks. Het schip van de ijsheks kwam langs met grote zwarte zeilen, en ze droegen het jongetje aan haar over. Op het schip van de ijsheks was het veel warmer. Het was ook een veel groter schip, en het jongetje werd diep in het schip gebracht.

'Kun je me wat beloven ?' vroeg de ijsheks.

Het jongetje knikte.

'Vertel niets over mij aan de indianen,' sprak de ijsheks.

'Ik beloof het,' zei het jongetje. Het was de ijsheks die het jongetje naar het indianenland bracht, een heel warm land. Als de ijsheks er niet was geweest dan zou het jongetje aan ijsziekte zijn gestorven op het piratenschip.

Het jongetje was de ijsheks dankbaar. Midden in de nacht zette het schip van de ijsheks het jongetje af op het strand van het indianenland. Het jongetje liep het oerwoud in achter het strand, en liep door totdat hij bij een indianenkamp aankwam. Iedereen sliep, dus het jongetje besloot te wachten tot de volgende ochtend. Hij ging in het mos liggen en viel al snel in slaap. De volgende ochtend werd hij wakker door het geluid van de oerwoud vogels.

Maar er kwamen maar geen indianen uit hun tenten. Na een tijdje kon hij zijn nieuwsgierigheid niet bedwingen en ging een tent binnen. Tot zijn grote schrik waren er alleen grote indianenbeelden. En ook in andere tenten was dit het geval. Het waren alleen beelden, en het jongetje stond voor een raadsel.

Hij klopte op één van de beelden. 'Hallo, is er iemand thuis ?' vroeg hij. Maar niemand antwoordde. Hij liep de tent weer uit. Ook liep hij het kamp uit, het oerwoud in. Na een tijdje lopen kwam hij een soldaat tegen. De man zou van het Suba leger zijn. Het jongetje vroeg hem wat er met de indianen was gebeurd die als versteende beelden waren. 'De ijsheks,' sprak de soldaat. 'Iedereen is op zijn hoede.' Nu had het jongetje beloofd niets over de ijsheks te zeggen tot de indianen, maar dit was een soldaat. Hij vertelde de soldaat dat de ijsheks zijn leven had gered.

Er bleken twee ijsheksen te zijn, een goede en een slechte. Het jongetje vroeg zich ook af waarom hij niets tegen de indianen mocht zeggen over de ijsheks. De Suba soldaat zei dat ze dan helemaal gek zouden worden. Ze vreesden de ijsheks meer dan wat dan ook, en konden geen onderscheid maken tussen de goede en de slechte.

Het jongetje knikte. 'Ik zal je met mij meenemen,' zei de soldaat. 'Hier kun je niet blijven.' En zo nam de Suba soldaat het jongetje mee door het oerwoud naar het Suba kamp. In het Suba kamp keek het jongetje zijn ogen uit.

'Hoe kan de slechte ijsheks verslagen worden ?' vroeg het jongetje aan de Suba soldaat.

'Door een speciaal dropkruid wat een diepere slaap brengt,' sprak de Suba soldaat. 'Wij kweken het hier. De slechte ijsheks is namelijk een soort nachtmerrie die optreedt als de hersenen niet diep genoeg in slaap komen.'

In verschillende tentjes groeide het dropkruid. Maar er was nog veel te weinig. Ze wilden dat het hele oerwoud er mee vol zou groeien. 'Het lijkt wel een onmogelijke opgave,' sprak de Suba soldaat.

'Het is een één-dags-kruid. Het komt op, en verdwijnt weer snel. Het plant zich ook niet of nauwelijks voort.'

'Hoe bent u er dan aan gekomen ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'De nacht heeft zo zijn geheimen, mijn jongen,' sprak de Suba soldaat.

Het jongetje begon meer vragen te stellen, maar de Suba soldaat zweeg. 'Alleen de goede ijsheks kan ons helpen,' sprak de Suba soldaat na een tijdje. Tot de grote schrik van het jongetje werd de Suba soldaat steeds stiller, en begon ook in een beeld te veranderen. In de tentjes was het dropkruid aan het wegtrekken. Het jongetje raakte in paniek en rende het oerwoud in. Hij was bang dat hij ook in een beeld zou veranderen. Hij rende tot aan het strand, waar een gevleugelde indiaanse vrouw was. Ze had hele lange witte vleugels. Plotseling veranderde ze geheel in een vogel en vloog weg. 'Kom terug, kom terug !' riep het jongetje, maar ze verdween volledig uit het zicht. Het jongetje begon over het strand te rennen en tot de zee te roepen. Hij riep naar de goede ijsheks.

'In leven en sterven,' sprak een stem,
'Ligt het kruid, het een-dags-kruid,
Het komt op en vaagt dan weg als een zucht,
Hoe de zee van ijs te overbruggen ?
Alles vaagt hier weg,
Het medicijn is nooit blijvende.'

'Wie is dat ?' vroeg het jongetje.
'Laat iemand ons alstublieft helpen. We zijn in beelden aan het veranderen.'

'Ken ik jou, of je stem ?' vroeg de stem, terwijl er een wind om het jongetje heen kwam.
'De vleugelen van de wind ben ik, dragende het medicijn,
Maar ik vaag altijd weer weg,
Nooit kan ik je vasthouden, mijn kind.'

'Alstublieft, help ons, wind,' sprak het jongetje.

'De nacht heeft zo zijn geheimen,' sprak de wind.

Het jongetje wachtte op de nacht, maar die kwam maar niet. De slechte ijsheks had het eiland ingenomen en behekst, en nu was het altijd dag. Er waren alleen nog dagen en geen nachten, en die volgden elkaar op, dag na dag. Het jongetje leefde aan het strand van bessen. Hij kon bijna niet slapen van het licht, en het begon zijn hersenen op te breken. Soms bloedde zijn hoofd. Hij was verwonderd dat hij nog geen beeld was. Hij was aan de andere kant van het eiland, waar de zee niet van ijs was, maar ook hier begon het steeds kouder te worden, en steeds meer ijs begon er te verschijnen op de golven. Het jongetje begon weer ijsziek te worden, en huilde. Een ijzige gestalte stond voor hem. Het was de slechte ijsheks. 'Ik weet waarom ik je niet in een beeld kan veranderen,' krijste ze. 'Mijn goede zuster heeft je betoverd.' En zo raakten de twee zusters met elkaar in gevecht over het jongetje. Het jongetje kon alleen maar toekijken. Het jongetje rende het oerwoud in en het begon weer nacht te worden. Hij herinnerde hoe de Suba soldaat en de wind spraken over de geheimen van de nacht. Hij rende zo diep in het oerwoud totdat hij niet meer kon en in slaap viel. Ditmaal sliep hij heel diep, zo diep als hij nog nooit had geslapen, en toen hij wakker werd was hij omringd met het dropkruid. Het groeide helemaal over hem heen. Het bleef maar groeien. 'Het is gekomen !' riep het jongetje. Waar het jongetje ook ging, overal om hem heen groeide het dropkruid. Hij rende naar het indianenkamp, en ook daar begon het dropkruid om hem heen te groeien. De beelden begonnen te ontwaken. 'W... wie heeft ons doen ontwaken ?' vroeg één van de

indianen. Het jongetje wist dat hij niet over de ijsheks mocht spreken. 'De nacht heeft zo zijn geheimen,' sprak het jongetje. Toen rende hij naar het Suba kamp, waar ook het dropkruid om hem heen begon te groeien. 'Suba soldaat,' zei het jongetje. Ook de Suba soldaat begon te ontwaken en kon zich weer bewegen. 'Is ze gekomen ?' vroeg de Suba soldaat.

'Ja, ze is gekomen,' zei het jongetje.

IJsziek

Hij was op het piratenschip, op de ijszee. Het was verschrikkelijk koud, en hij begon steeds vreemder te hallucineren en te dromen. Hij was zowel zeeziek als ijsziek. De piraten leken in zijn hallucinaties steeds langer en dunner te worden. Soms leken ze ver weg en soms dichtbij. Hij zweefde op het randje van de dood. Hij was verschrikkelijk aan het ijlen. Hij probeerde zich dingen te herinneren, terwijl hij niet meer wist of hij wakker was of sliep. Hij zag vanaf het schip de gigantische ijszee. Waren de laatste herinneringen die hij had wel echt ? Alles tolde voor zijn ogen. Hij kon geen werkelijkheid van verbeelding meer onderscheiden. Hij voelde zich dronken van de kou. In zijn gedachten probeerde hij terug te gaan door de dagen. Hoe kwam hij hier ? En waarom was hij hier op de ijszee ? Hele vage herinneringen had hij, en hij wist niet of ze waar waren. Hij probeerde zijn herinneringen te grijpen, maar hij kon het niet. Ze leken uit zijn vingers weg te glijden en ze leken te veranderen. Hij probeerde te janken, maar hij kon het niet. Hij voelde zich als bijna bevroren. Hij was al zoveel dagen op deze zee, of misschien wel weken. Hij kon zich herinneren dat het steeds kouder werd. Was het niet een waarzegster die hem op deze tocht had gezonden ? Hij ging in zijn gedachten terug om vat te krijgen op de herinneringen over de waarzegster, maar of het waar was wist hij niet meer. Het drong hem op als de werkelijkheid. Het was alleen even een flits, en het begon zich al snel te vervormen.

Ze had twee stenen. Het waren orakelstenen. Een steen was de tranen steen, en de andere steen was de urine steen. Ze keek in de stenen, en sprak tot hem : 'Ga over de rivier van varkensbloed tot de urine zee.' De bloedvarkens waren woest zoals altijd. Toen hij op zijn bootje op de rivier was moest hij er een paar afschieten met zijn boog. Gruwelijk gromden zij. Hij kwam aan bij de urine zee, laat. Hij wachtte op verdere tekens, maar die kwamen niet. Zij had gezegd dat hij tekens zou ontvangen.

'Die vervloekte stenen doen altijd vaag,' mopperde hij tegen zichzelf.

Hij ging aan boord van een piratenschip, diep in de woestijn, aan de urine zee. De piraten waren lang en woest. Sommigen hadden messen tussen hun tanden. Ze zouden aanleggen bij een amazone eiland. De amazones hielden vee voor bloed en urine. De urine van de zee was ondrinkbaar. De piraten zouden naar het eiland toegaan om met de amazones te onderhandelen.

Het eiland was een reusachtige woestijn op zichzelf. Op het eiland liepen mannen rond aan ketenen. Het waren zware criminelen. Het was een ballingen eiland.
Ook op dit woestijn eiland waren er bloed rivieren en urine rivieren. Er zouden hier ook veel kampen en nederzettingen zijn van de amazones die de mannen gebruikten als slaven.

Na een lange zeereis van vele dagen kwamen ze eindelijk aan op het eiland.

De zee van urine zelf was de zee van vergetelheid, een natuurverschijnsel in de diepte van de eindeloze woestijn. Toen hij op het eiland was aangekomen was hij alles van zijn verleden vergeten. Hij wist niet meer waarom hij hier was. Het zijn op de urine zee van vergetelheid had hem dronken gemaakt.

Na de onderhandelingen gingen ze verder de zee op langs het reusachtige woestijneiland. Verderop zou de urine zee steeds meer overgaan in een ijszee.

De reusachtige ijszee liep over in een zee van bloed. Op een rotseneiland op de zee van bloed woonde een ijsheks. Het duurde vele weken voordat ze daar aankwamen. Het was een donkere vrouw, en hij herkende haar onmiddelijk. Het was een flits van zijn geheugen wat hij weer terugkreeg. 'Jij bent de vrouw van het orakel die mij deze tocht heeft laten maken,' zei hij.
Ze glimlachte warm en liefdevol. 'Dat is mijn andere deel,' sprak ze. 'Ik wilde dat je ook dit deel zou leren kennen. Alleen zij die de tocht maken zullen mij waarlijk kennen en waardig genoeg zijn om met mij te zijn.'
Ze bood een trouwring aan, maar hij raakte in paniek. 'Nee !' riep hij. 'Daarvoor ben ik niet gekomen ! Er moet een ander doel zijn, anders is alles voor niets geweest !'

'Niets is voor niets geweest,' sprak ze. 'Ik bied je een huwelijk aan.'

'Steek het huwelijk in je dikke reet !' riep hij. 'Ik doe niet mee.'

Maar de piraten grepen hem stevig vast.

'Wat ? Een gedwongen huwelijk ? Dat kan niet waar zijn !' riep hij.

Toen sloegen de piraten hem neer. 'Bedankt,' zei de vrouw. Ze ging naar hem toe en schoof de ring om zijn teen. 'Een huwelijks-slaaf om mee te beginnen. Later zien we wel verder.'

Hij kwam weer bij bewustzijn aan ketenen. Hij keek om zich heen en zag meerdere mannen aan ketenen. Hij vroeg zich af waar hij was. Overal was woestijn, dus hij dacht dat het het woestijn-eiland was. Hij kon zich herinneren dat hij gedwongen werd tot een huwelijk, een huwelijk tot een ijsheks. De andere mannen lachten hem uit, en hij wist niet waarom, maar hij dacht dat het was omdat hij nieuw was.

Even later kwamen er amazones om de mannen te inspecteren. 'Ben ik een crimineel dat jullie mij hier houden ?' vroeg hij. Ze zeiden niets en gingen door de rijen. 'Hey !' riep hij. 'Wat heeft dit te betekenen ?'

'Mond houden,' zei een dikke vrouw, terwijl hij een klap kreeg. Hij stortte in elkaar. Daarna kreeg hij nog een paar schoppen totdat hij weer zijn bewustzijn verloor. Deze vrouwen waren keihard.

Toen hij na een tijdje weer bij zijn bewustzijn was gekomen was de ijsheks er weer. 'Waarom doe je mij dit aan ?' kreunde hij.

'Accepteer je het huwelijk of wil je hier blijven ?' vroeg ze.

'Ik accepteer het,' zei hij. Hij werd weer neergeslagen, en kwam pas weer bij op het rotseneiland van de ijsheks in de bloedzee.

Hij zuchtte. 'Waarom moet dit allemaal ?' vroeg hij. 'Ik had nooit naar je moeten luisteren en naar je orakels.'

'Te laat,' sprak ze. 'Zij die mijn andere deel hebben gezien komen nooit meer van me weg.'

'Leuk,' zei hij. 'Wie verzint zulke regels ?'

'Het orakel,' sprak ze.

'Oh, die twee stenen, de tranen steen en de urine steen ?' zei hij spottend. 'Heb je geen andere stenen ?'

'Je hebt teveel praatjes,' zei ze. 'Als je zo doorgaat moet ik je ombrengen.'

'Oh, ook een regel van het orakel ?' zei hij boos. Maar tegelijkertijd werd hij heel bang, en kalmeerde zichzelf. 'Goed, ik accepteer alles wat je zegt. Wat moet ik doen ?'

'Je hebt mijn derde deel nog niet gezien,' sprak ze.

'Ik weet niet of ik je derde deel wel wil zien,' zei hij, 'tenzij je derde deel me hieruit haalt.'

'Dat kan,' zei ze, 'maar zij is erger dan dit deel.'

'Laat dan maar zitten,' zei hij. 'Het is al erg genoeg.'

'Nee, je moet haar zien,' zei ze.

'Ik wil niet !' kermde hij.

Ze sleurde hem mee naar een deur en deed de deur open. Er viel een pop uit. De pop had menselijke afmetingen. 'Hier is ze,' sprak ze.

'Maar dat is een pop,' zei hij.

'Nou en ?' zei ze.

Hij kreeg de pop mee en mocht gaan waar hij wilde gaan, maar mocht de pop niet wegdoen, want dan zou hem iets verschrikkelijks overkomen. De pop ging mee in een doos. Hij kreeg een schip en mocht vertrekken.

Hij was erg blij. De bemanning van het schip zei dat hij maar beter kon doen wat de ijsheks hem zei, anders zou het verkeerd met hem aflopen. Hij wilde de pop overboord laten gooien, maar de bemanning durfde dat niet. Ze vreesden de ijsheks.

Hij besloot het zelf te doen toen ze sliepen, en kieperde de pop in de doos uit het schip. Niet lang daarna was er een verschrikkelijke storm. De bemanning was razend en zagen hem als de schuldige. In hun woede grepen ze hem en wierpen hem overboord. Toen begon de storm kalmer te worden. Ergens zag hij de doos drijven en zwemde er naartoe. Hij nam de pop uit de doos. Zij kon drijven. Hij wist dat hij niet terugkon op het schip. Ergens dichtbij was een eiland waar hij met zijn handen naartoe peddelde terwijl hij op de pop lag. 'Boe,' zei de pop. 'Wist je niet, hè ?' De pop begon tot leven te komen, en dreef niet meer. Het laatste stukje moesten ze zelf zwemmen. 'Dus ik kom daadwerkelijk niet zomaar van je af ?' vroeg hij. 'Ik denk dat ik gek wordt. Heb je ook een vierde deel ?'

'Het vierde deel is voor hen die overwinnen,' sprak ze.

'Wat overwinnen ?' vroeg hij.

Ze wees op zijn teenring : 'De vervloekte teenring van het gedwongen huwelijk,' sprak ze.

'Hoe kan ik het overwinnen ?' vroeg hij. Hij nam de teenring af en wierp het in de zee. Maar ineens was de teenring weer om zijn teen. 'Het zit vast,' zei ze. Hij zuchtte.

'Ik denk echt dat ik gek wordt,' zei hij, 'maar alles beter dan dat kamp van verbande criminelen.'

Ze had een schortje aan van wat lange witte veren.

'Weet je dan niet dat je zelf het vierde deel bent ?' vroeg ze.

'En zo is het gegaan,' zei een man tegen de psychiater, 'en daarom ben ik hier. Ik ben getrouwd met een pop en kan daarom mezelf niet vinden.'

'Die pop, hè ?' zei de psychiater. 'Staat die bij u thuis ?'

'Ja,' zei de man. 'Die is één dag levend geweest, en daarna was het weer gewoon een pop, en toen heb ik haar mee naar huis genomen, na een lange zee tocht.'

'En u zegt die zee was geheel van urine, overlopende in een ijszee en daarna in een bloedzee ?' vroeg de psychiater.

De man knikte. 'Zeer eigenaardig, zeer eigenaardig,' sprak de psychiater. 'Zeg, mag ik die pop eens zien ?'

'Maar natuurlijk,' zei de man enthousiast. 'Ik ben blij dat u mijn verhaal gelooft.'

'Nou ja, geloven is een groot woord,' zei de psychiater. 'Eerst zien, dan geloven. Daarna zou ik ook graag die urine zee willen zien waar u het over had.'

'Daar kom je niet zomaar,' sprak de man. 'Dan moet je eerst over een varkensrivier, en dan mag je hopen dat je het overleefd, want er zijn daar allemaal woeste bloedvarkens.'

'Dat is me nogal wat,' sprak de psychiater. 'Laat me dan eerst maar eens die pop zien om te

beginnen.'

De man nam de psychiater achterop zijn fiets mee naar zijn huis. De donkere pop met het schortje van een paar lange witte veren zat op de bank. Verder was ze naakt.

'Nou, nou,' sprak de psychiater, 'dat is me nogal een pop. Het lijkt wel op een sex pop.'

'Nou, psychiater,' zei de man. 'Ik voel mezelf als een sexpop want het was een gedwongen huwelijk.'

'Ik begrijp het,' knikte de psychiater. 'Is er ooit sprake geweest van verkrachting ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'Nooit,' zei de man. 'Het is maar een pop.'

'Gelukkig maar,' zei de psychiater. 'Dat is al een last minder. Nou, vertelt u mij eens : Hoe is dit nu allemaal gekomen. Waar begon het mee ?'

'Nou, zoals ik al zei,' zei de man. 'Ik ging naar een indiaanse waarzegster in de buurt, en ze gebruikte haar orakelstenen en gaf mij de opdracht.'

'Vreemd, zeer vreemd,' zei de psychiater. 'Zullen we eens naar die waarzegster toegaan ?'

Maar de man begon in paniek te raken. 'Daar wil ik niet meer komen !' riep hij. 'Ik heb een teenring waar ik van probeer af te komen, maar zodra ik hem afdoe zit de teenring er weer om.

'Eigenaardig,' zei de psychiater. 'Laat u mij dat eens zien.'

De man deed zijn schoen en sok uit en nam de teenring van zijn teen af. Hij gaf de teenring aan de psychiater. 'Wat een prachtige teenring,' zei de psychiater.

'Nee, het is een vervloekte teenring, mijnheer de psychiater,' zei de man. 'De teenring van het gedwongen huwelijk.'

'Maar er zit geen teenring meer om uw teen,' zei de psychiater. 'Waarschijnlijk heeft u alles gewoon gedroomd, en heeft u de teenring ooit eens gekocht of gekregen. Zeg, mag ik eens met die indiaanse waarzegster praten waar u het over had ? Ik begrijp dat door die gebeurtenis alles misliep in uw leven, zegt u. U hoeft niet met mij mee te gaan, maar kunt u mij het adres van die waarzegster geven ?'

'Ik ben bang dat de teenring straks weer aan mijn teen zit als u weg bent,' zei de man. Hij liep naar de kast en haalde er een kaartje uit. 'Hier is haar visite kaartje, en neemt u gerust de teenring mee. Ik wil de teenring niet meer. Ik heb er teveel ellende aan overgehouden.'

'Wilt u dat ik de pop ook meeneem ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'Graag,' zei de man.

De psychiater stopte de teenring met het visite kaartje in zijn zak, en nam de pop mee in een grote plastic tas. Bij de waarzegster aangekomen belde hij aan. Een donkere vrouw deed open. 'Goedendag,' sprak de psychiater. 'Ik heb nogal een vreemd verhaal gehoord van één van mijn patiënten, en zou daar graag met u over willen praten om een en ander te verifiëren.'

'Komt u verder,' sprak de vrouw warm en hartelijk. Hij legde de tas in de gang neer en kreeg een stoel in de huiskamer waarop hij ging zitten, en begon toen het verhaal te vertellen.

De vrouw luisterde ernaar met open mond. Aan het einde van het verhaal begon ze te lachen. 'Ik kan mijn oren niet geloven,' sprak ze. 'U moet weten dat ik ten eerste geen tranen steen of urine steen heb, en ten tweede heb ik hem nooit zulke opdrachten gegeven, en ten derde is de rest van het verhaal al helemaal het bizarste wat ik ooit heb gehoord.'

De psychiater haalde de teenring uit zijn zak en liet het aan de vrouw zien. De vrouw knikte bewonderend. 'Het is een mooi ding, maar ik heb het nog nooit eerder gezien. Ik heb niets, maar dan ook niets met deze zaak te maken.'

'Maar kent u hem ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'En of ik hem ken,' zei de vrouw. 'Hij is hier vaak geweest.'

'En wat gebeurde er dan ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'We hadden sex voor geld, en ik voorspelde voor hem de toekomst,' legde ze uit.

'Wie betaalde ? U of hij ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'Hij betaalde. Het is mijn professie, mijnheer,' sprak ze. 'Bent u hier nieuw ? U bent hier in de rode buurt.'

'Dus u bent hoer, en waarzegster,' zei de psychiater. 'Ik vraag me af hoe hij zo geworden is, en waarom hij deze dingen denkt. Heeft u enig idee hoe hij zo geworden is, of zijn er hier dingen gebeurd waardoor hij misschien in de war is geraakt.'

De vrouw keek de man geheimzinnig aan. 'Ik heb zo mijn beroepsgeheimen,' sprak ze.

'Dat is vaag, heel vaag,' sprak de psychiater. 'Ik heb informatie nodig om mijn eigen professie te kunnen uitvoeren.'

'Dan komt u maar met de politie of een advocaat,' sprak de vrouw, 'maar ik ga niet zomaar persoonlijke informatie aan u geven.' De vrouw stond op en wenkte hem. 'Ik kan u niet verder helpen op het moment,' zei de vrouw koud. 'De informatie is gevoelig.'

Na een paar minuten stond de psychiater op de stoep. Hij was de tas met de pop vergeten. Daarna werd de deur weer opengemaakt. 'U bent uw sex pop vergeten,' zei de vrouw terwijl ze de tas overhandigde. Ze sprak nog steeds koud.

'Het is mijn sex pop niet,' zei de man, 'maar van mijn patiënt. Is die pop toevallig ook van u ?'

'Nee hoor,' sprak de vrouw kil, en smeet de deur weer dicht.

Inmiddels zat de teenring weer om de teen van de man, en de psychiater stond voor een raadsel. De psychiater had de andere teenring nog steeds in zijn zak. 'Had u toevallig meerderen van zulke ringen ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'Nee,' zei de man. De ring was adembenemend mooi. De psychiater bleef er maar naar staren. 'Weet

u dat u heel rijk kunt worden ?' sprak de psychiater langzaam.

'Ik weet het,' zei de man, 'maar ik wil er vanaf.'

'Ik begrijp het, ik begrijp het,' sprak de psychiater. 'De waarzegster ontkende alles, maar ze had naar eigen zeggen wel haar beroepsgeheimen. Het ging om persoonlijke en gevoelige informatie.'

'Ik ben veel vergeten,' zei de man. 'Het komt door de urine zee, de zee van vergetelheid, waarop ik was.'

'U heeft niet toevallig gewoon wat gedronken ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'Kan wezen, kan wezen,' zei de man.

'Ik heb namelijk nog nooit van een urine zee van vergetelheid gehoord,' sprak de psychiater. 'Misschien haalt u dingen door de war.'

'We dronken soms wat voordat we sex hadden,' zei de man. 'Een stimulerend drankje.'

'Of misschien heeft ze een verdovend middel in het drankje gedaan ?' vroeg hij. 'Je kunt hoeren nooit vertrouwen.'

'Misschien,' zei de man. 'Ze zei dat ze een heks was, een ijsheks.'

'Ik begrijp het,' zei de psychiater. 'En heksen kun je al helemaal niet vertrouwen. Het was een waarzegster.'

'Precies,' zei de man. 'En die teenring die telkens verschijnt is het bewijs.'

'Weet je zeker dat je geen hele bak thuis hebt met zulke teenringen ?' vroeg de psychiater. 'Het zijn wel hele aparte ringen die je niet zomaar ergens vindt.'

'Ik weet het zeker,' zei de man.

'Nu,' zei de psychiater. 'Het verhaal wat u mij vertelt lijkt heel veel op een meervoudig personaliteiten syndroom. U denkt dat u een deel bent van de waarzegster.'

'Nee,' zei de man. 'Dat denk ik niet. Dat zei de pop.'

'Maar poppen praten niet,' zei de psychiater. 'Ik denk dat u in de war bent met iets, onder invloed van drugs of alcohol. Het verhaal klopt van geen kanten.'

De man begon zenuwachtig te worden. 'Goed, u gelooft mij niet, terwijl u zelf zag dat ik de teenring weer terughad. Ik zit hier mijn tijd te verdoen.'

'Luister,' zei de psychiater. 'Er kan heel goed misdaad in het spel zijn. De vrouw wilde niet echt meewerken, en alles is uiterst verdacht.'

'Schakelt u de politie dan in ?' vroeg de man.

'Ik zit er wel aan te denken,' zei de psychiater, 'want voor nu komen we geen stap verder.'

'Doe dan wat,' zei de man. 'Want mijn leven is een hel.'

Een man wordt wakker van het geblaf van honden. 'Karel, laat de honden uit !' roept zijn vrouw. De man kleedt zich snel aan en gaat met de herdershonden naar buiten. Wat een vreemde droom had hij gehad over een ijsheks en dat hij bij de psychiater zat. Hij had een slecht huwelijk, en probeerde zijn vrouw zo veel mogelijk te ontwijken. Toch kon hij ook niet zonder, alsof hij vastzat aan onzichtbare ketenen.

'Droom, droom, laat de tovenaar je lach zien,
Droom, droom, laat de tovenaar je traan zien,
Oh droom, en laat de tovenaar al je ketenen zien,
Want hij staat bij de grote ketel,
de dromenketel, waar hij alles weer goed kan maken,
Als de dromensmid is hij, als de woordensmid is hij,
Hoe diep de woorden ook in je hart zijn geschoten,
Hij vist ze er weer uit,
Hij is de dromenvisser,
Hoe diep de vloeken ook in je hart zijn gestoken,
Hij vist ze er weer uit

Droom, droom, laat de tovenaar je hart zien,
Laat de tovenaar je pracht zien en al je pijn,
Droom, droom, laat de tovenaar de ijsheks zien,
Zij die met je spot, zij die je telkens bedot,
Laat het zien, laat het de dromensmid zien,
Hij is de dromenvisser,
Hij neemt je mee, op de zee, een weg eruit,
Een weg erdoor, opdat je het sieraad ziet,
De teenring die nooit weggaat, het is niet wat je denkt,
Het is een onbegrepen geschenk,
Het vertelt een verhaal,
Oh droom, droom, totdat het zichtbaar wordt voor jou,
Begrepen als het sieraad van genezing,
Over de zeeën nam het je mee, tot een kroning

Droom, droom, laat de tovenaar het zien,
Laat de tovenaar je helpen,
Geef hem je tijd en energie,
Hij leidt je erdoor,
Met een ring en een verhaal,
Hij leidt je erdoor'

De man keek op van het vreemde lied.
De honden blaften nog steeds.
Een man in een paars gewaad stond voor hem.
Hij wilde wegrennen.

'Ik ben de tovenaar,' sprak de man.
Karel keek weer op naar de man.
'Karel ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

'Ja ?' zei Karel.

'Ik moet je wat vertellen,' zei de tovenaar.

'Droom, droom, op de golven van je droom,
Op de golven van je liederen,' zong een vreemd lied.

'Wat moet ik hiermee ?' vroeg Karel.

'Ik ben de tovenaar van je dromen,' sprak de man.
Karel kon niets dan buigen voor de man en viel op zijn knielen,
terwijl de honden nog steeds afschuwelijk blaften.
'Stop jongens !' riep hij naar de honden, maar ze gingen maar door.

'Ze zijn erg waakzaam,' zei de tovenaar.
'W... wie bent u ?' vroeg Karel.
'Ik ben de tovenaar van je dromen,' zei de tovenaar weer.

'Droom, droom, ik ben het lied van je hart ...'

'Kunt u alstublieft stoppen met zingen,' zei Karel bijna huilend.
'U maakt me gek.'

'Ongevoelig, hè ?' sprak de tovenaar.
'De laatste tijd probeer ik je te breken met dromen, want je leeft in een grote leugen.'

'Ik weet het,' sprak Karel.
'En het maakt me gek. Ik wordt verscheurd door twee kanten.'

'Laat je verscheuren, Karel,' sprak de tovenaar.
'Zoals het nu is is het niet goed.'

'Droom, droom,' ging het lied verder.

'Houd op !' krijste Karel.

Karel rolde over de grond met zijn vingers in zijn oren, maar hij kon het niet meer stoppen. Het ging harder en harder en nam hem helemaal over, totdat hij op de golven was van de urine zee om zijn leven te vergeten. Er was een teenring aan zijn teen die er nooit afkon. Het was als een implantaat, als een keten. Het was gedwongen. Hij rolde aan de voeten van de ijsheks. 'Gevangene van de trouwring,' sprak ze.

'Laat me los, heks !' schreeuwde Karel.

'Waarom zou ik ?' vroeg de ijsheks.

'Laat me sterven in ijs !' riep de man. 'Ik houd het niet meer vol ! Het is altijd hetzelfde liedje, eeuwig en altijd.'

'Wij horen bij elkaar,' sprak de ijsheks. 'We zijn delen van elkaar.'

De man zuchtte. Hij probeerde het te begrijpen.

'De kaart van de ijsheks,' sprak de tovenaar, 'een kaart in je dek.

Ze laat je nooit meer los, want het is een deel van je hart,
Een teenring is wat ze je gaf, de trouwring,
En de waarzegster voorspelt de toekomst,
Een andere kaart in je dek,
Zij speelt met het orakel en jou,
En zendt je op verre tochten om de ijsheks te ontmoeten,
Zodat je wakker wordt aan haar voeten,
Geketend aan een pop die je hart bewaart,
de derde kaart, totdat je je hart vindt, de vierde kaart,
Niets dan blaffende herdershonden die het geheim van het huwelijk bewaken,
En dan ben ik de vijfde kaart, de dromenkaart, om je inzicht te bieden. Droom diep.'

De man keek op en zag de kaart van de tovenaar boven hem zweven. Hij probeerde de kaart te grijpen, maar het vloog van hem weg, terwijl de ijsheks ijselijk lachte.
Hij voelde zichzelf als wegzinkende in een ijszee, totdat alles begon te bloeden.
Hij voelde zichzelf als een pop die zijn hart niet kon bereiken.

Hij werd wakker op het piratenschip op de ijszee. De kou had hem vreselijk doen hallucineren en dromen. Hij voelde zich als op het randje van de dood, en hij was zeeziek. Ook was hij ijsziek.

'Ik ben aan het ijsdromen !' riep hij. Hij had niet het gevoel dat iemand hem zou kunnen horen. Hij zag de piraten heel lang en dun worden, heel ver weg, en dan weer dik en dichtbij. 'Het zijn nachtmerries !' gilde hij.

'De kaart van het piratenschip op de ijszee,' sprak een stem.

'Die kaarten zijn gevaarlijk,' zei hij.

'Nee, nee,' zei de waarzegster, 'we hebben ze nodig.'

'Waar ben ik ?' vroeg hij.

'Bij mij, onder hypnose,' sprak ze. 'Ik ben de dromendokter. Ik genees je verleden.'

'Ik was in een nachtmerrie,' zei hij. 'Stervende van de kou op een piratenschip.'

'Dat piratenschip was je leven,' zei de waarzegster.

'Waar is het goed voor ?' vroeg hij. 'Ben ik nog steeds ijsziek ?'

'Kijk,' zei de waarzegster. Hij zag brandend ijs. De kaart begon te branden.

'U doet truukjes,' zei hij.

Hij was zwaar aan het hallucineren op het schip. Hij jammerde zachtjes. Hij was aan het ijlen. Hij vroeg zich af of hij de enige was. Misschien waren de piraten wel zo gewend aan de ijszee en zo gehard dat ze niet meer zeeziek en ijsziek werden. Voor hem was het de eerste keer. Ze waren op weg naar de ijsheks. Zij woonde op een rotsen eiland.

Hij viel in een diepe slaap. Ze brachten hem voor de ijsheks. Hij was nieuw. Hier ontwaakte hij. Ze glimlachte naar hem. Ineens was ze in de verte, lang en dun, en toen weer dichtbij en dik. Hij was nog steeds aan het ijlen. 'IJsziek, hè ?' zei ze. 'Je moet er wat voor over hebben om bij me te kunnen

komen.'

'W... wat doe ik hier ?' vroeg hij. 'B... ben ik dood ?'

'Je zou dood kunnen zijn,' zei de ijsheks.

'Laat me los, heks !' riep hij.

'En toen werd ik wakker in mijn bed,' zei een man bij de psychiater.

'Volkomen normaal,' zei de psychiater. 'U had misschien koorts of iets verkeerds gedronken, en toen bent u vreemd gaan dromen. Iedereen droomt weleens vreemd. Er is niets met u aan de hand. Dromen zijn volkomen normaal. Het is een verwerkings-mechanisme van het menselijk lichaam. Het is heel psychologisch. Als ik u was zou ik me geen zorgen maken.'

'Maar ik ben bang nog te gaan slapen,' sprak de man. 'Het is niet de eerste keer. Mijn hele leven is het al zo. Ik leef in twee werelden.'

'Volkomen normaal,' zei de psychiater. 'Misschien moet u schrijver worden ? Doe iets met de dromen.'

'Ja, maar ik ben bang voor mijn dromen,' zei de man. 'Ik ben erdoor opgesloten. Aan de andere kant heb ik ook een Stockholm syndroom lijkt het wel, alsof ik verliefd ben op mijn eigen dromen. Er is ook iets zoets aan mijn nachtmerries wat ik maar niet kan verklaren. Het is heel dubbel.'

'Eén van onze pilletjes, en je bent van alles af,' zei de psychiater.

'Dat is teveel van het goede,' zei de man. 'Zoals ik u al zei kan ik ook niet zonder. Maar wat zijn dat voor pilletjes ?'

De psychiater keek hem diep aan. 'De pilletjes zijn genaamd "IJsziek". Alle psychiaters slikken die pilletjes, en dat is ook de voorwaarde geweest om hier te kunnen werken. Het heeft als bij-effect dat je één keer ongeveer droomt zoals u heeft gedroomd, en daarna droom je bijna nooit meer, en ben je van alles af. Wel moet je die pilletjes je hele leven blijven slikken.'

'Waarom ?' vroeg de man.

'Anders komen de dromen terug, erger dan ze ooit zijn geweest,' sprak de psychiater.

De IJsheks

Eliak keek op naar de planeet die ze de Traan noemden. Hier zouden alle planeten omheen draaien, ook zijn eigen planeet. Eliak vroeg er veel over aan zijn moeder, maar die had niet overal antwoord op. Het was één van die mysteriën van het leven.

Eliak keek naar zijn moeder. Hij deed dat altijd vol liefde en warmte. Het was zijn echte moeder niet, maar zij redde hem eens toen hij met zijn bootje de waterval afgleed. Als zij er niet was geweest dan was hij waarschijnlijk verdronken. Hij was met zijn hoofd tegen een rots gestoten en gleed toen het wilde water in, bewusteloos. Sindsdien kon hij zich niet meer veel herinneren, alleen dat zij hem gered had. Hij werd wakker in een hut, en haar warme, liefdevolle gezicht keek hem aan. Hij noemde haar zijn behouder, maar zij werd ook zijn nieuwe moeder. Hij kon zich niet herinneren wie zijn echte moeder was of waar hij woonde. En alles was zo diep in de wildernis gebeurd dat het onmogelijk was het uit te zoeken.

Eliak voelde zich altijd licht in zijn hoofd, vanwege het ongeluk met de rots. Het was alsof er altijd vliegen in zijn hoofd rondvlogen. Vaak voelde hij zich duizelig, en hij leed sindsdien aan epilepsie. Soms had hij last van hyperventilatie. Zijn moeder was hierin een grote steun.

Moeder zei hem altijd dat hij uit de stad kwam, waar ze niet leefden door de Traan. Al het leven draaide om de Traan, maar de stad draaide om zichzelf. Moeder zei altijd dat de Traan het hogere leven was, maar op vele vragen had ze geen antwoord.

Op de Traan zouden er ook watervallen zijn en rivieren, en wildernis. Maar moeder kon hem niet vertellen hoe hij op de Traan zou kunnen komen. De planeet was erg ver weg en ze konden niet vliegen.

Het jongetje moest en zou er achter komen hoe daar te komen. Op een dag las hij erover in een boekje dat alleen de vliegen tot de Traan konden komen, maar soms namen zij weleens iemand mee. Eliak hoopte dat hij een keer werd meegenomen, maar eigenlijk gebeurde het nooit.

Op een dag maakte hij een hele lange strandwandeling, en kwam na een tijdje bij een struikje een vlieg tegen. 'Ach,' zei Eliak, 'kun jij me niet met je meenemen naar de Traan ?' De vlieg begon hem uit te lachen. 'Denk je dat ik jou kan dragen ?' vroeg de vlieg. De vlieg begon hem te bespotten. Het spotten werd zo erg dat Eliak bijna huilend verder liep.

Toen hij thuiskwam in de hut vertelde hij het aan zijn moeder. 'Je kunt beter wachten totdat het donker is,' zei moeder. 'Dan zijn de vliegen vaak in groepen, en dan kunnen ze je misschien wel dragen.' Dat leek Eliak wel een goed idee. Hij wachtte totdat het avond was geworden, en ging toen weer naar het strand. Er waren overal vuurvliegjes die het pad naar het strand hadden verlicht. Op het strand kwam Eliak een groep vliegen tegen die daar speelden, en vroeg hen of zij hem mee wilden nemen naar de Traan. Maar ze begonnen hem uit te lachen en te bespotten. Ze zeiden dat het allemaal leugens waren, en dat hij nooit naar de Traan zou kunnen gaan. Hij moest hier voor de rest van zijn leven blijven. Huilend ging Eliak naar huis en toen hij in de hut was aangekomen viel hij zijn moeder in haar armen. Hij stotterde het hele verhaal, en zijn moeder zei : 'Eliak, kijk eens, de Traan is al in je hart gekomen. Je hebt ernaar verlangt en nu is het hier. Maar ik begrijp je wel : Je wil naar de Traan toe, en als de vliegen zo vervelend doen, dan zit er niets anders op dan het de tovenaar te vragen.'

Eliak zag dat als zijn laatste kans. Daarom ging hij de volgende ochtend op pad naar de tovenaar.

Hij was vol frisse moed, en was blij dat er nog tovenaars bestonden. Bicardo heette de tovenaar. Hij was een groot kunstenaar die in een kasteel bij het strand woonde, ergens in de duinen. Toen Eliak daar na een lange wandeltocht aankwam was de tovenaar aan het schilderen. Hij maakte wonderschone schilderijen, schilderijen die leefden, en waardoor je andere werelden binnen kon gaan. Bicardo was helemaal in zijn nieuwe schilderij verdiept toen Eliak binnenkwam. Eliak groette en de tovenaar bleef maar doorpeinzen over het nieuwe schilderij, als in een hypnose. Eliak moest meerdere keren groeten voordat de tovenaar hem eindelijk opmerkte. 'Zo, klein jongetje,' sprak de tovenaar. 'Waar kan ik je mee helpen ?'

Eliak begon zijn verhaal te vertellen. De tovenaar begon te glimlachen. 'Oh, maar dat is heel eenvoudig,' zei de tovenaar. 'Ik heb vele schilderijen geschilderd over de Traan, en die schilderijen leven. Het zijn poorten tot de Traan. Het is heel eenvoudig, kom maar mee.'

Met het jongetje liep hij een gang door totdat ze in een groot gallerij kwamen met vele trappen. Aan de muren hingen grote schilderijen van de centrale planeet, de Traan. Eliak keek zijn ogen uit. De golven op de schilderijen van de Traan bewogen gewoon. De tovenaar zei dat het tranen waren. Eliak legde zijn vinger tegen een golf aan en werd direct helemaal nat. Het spoelde over hem heen. De tovenaar moest erg lachen. Eliak deed zijn vinger in zijn mond. 'Het proeft zout,' zei Eliak, 'net als een echte zee.'

'Ja, ja,' zei de tovenaar, 'je kan er zo in zwemmen. En dan zwem je naar de kust en dan ben je op de Traan.'

'Echt ?' vroeg Eliak.

'Ja,' zei de tovenaar, 'of we slaan dit voor nu even over, en gaan direct naar de kust, want ik heb ook schilderijen over de wildernis van de Traan.'

Toen liepen ze naar een schilderij van een oerwoud. 'Is dat niet gevaarlijk ?' vroeg Eliak.

'Welnee, joh,' zei Bicardo. 'Niet als ik erbij ben.' De tovenaar was gekleed in rood en paars en had een grote witte baard. Even sloeg hij op het schilderij van het oerwoud met een staf en er sprong zo een kikker uit.

'Geweldig,' zei Eliak. 'Mijn moeder zal vast heel blij zijn. Op zoveel vragen kan ze mij geen antwoord geven.'

'Ik weet alles,' zei Bicardo.

'Wat moet u een geweldig leven hebben,' zei Eliak. 'Dat u zulke schilderijen kunt maken.'

'Nou jongen,' zei de tovenaar, 'aan de ene kant wel, maar besef ook goed dat de Traan niet altijd een pretje is. De Traan laat zoveel zien, zowel goede dingen als slechte dingen. Er is zoveel wat de Traan wil veranderen.'

'Ik begrijp het,' zei het jongetje. 'Ik kan bijna niet wachten. Ik zou het zo graag willen zien.'

Toen leidde de tovenaar het jongetje naar een ander schilderij met een stromende waterval. 'Ik was eens van een waterval afgevallen,' zei Eliak. 'Ik stootte mijn hoofd aan een rots, en daarna ben ik nooit meer dezelfde geweest. Mijn geheugen van vóór die tijd is grotendeels weg.'

Bicardo keek hem aan en wreef zijn hand over het hoofd van het jongetje. 'De Traan is al in jou,'

sprak de tovenaar.

'Ik weet het,' zei Eliak.

'De Traan roept je voor wonderlijke avonturen,' zei de tovenaar. Toen liepen ze naar een ander schilderij. Op het schilderij stond een grote poort. 'Ben je klaar ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

'Helemaal,' zei Eliak.

Toen nam Bicardo hem door het schilderij. Van alles begon toen door Eliak's hoofd te zoemen. Alles voelde zo zacht en licht aan, nog wel lichter dan het ooit was geweest, en overal waren prachtige vliegen. Ze gingen door de poort en kwamen in een groot oerwoud. Overal waren watervalletjes. Ook waren er overal kampen gemaakt van bamboe van verschillende verdiepingen met hutjes erop. 'Prachtig !' riep Eliak. Wat vrouwen kwamen naar Eliak toe.

'Is hij nieuw ?' vroegen ze aan de tovenaar.
De tovenaar knikte.
De vrouwen keken het jongetje liefdevol aan. 'Hij moet nog veel leren,' zei één van de vrouwen.

'Dat kunnen jullie mooi doen,' sprak de tovenaar, en was toen ineens verdwenen.
Eliak wreef even in zijn ogen.
'Hoe heet je ?' vroeg een andere vrouw warm en liefdevol.
'Eliak,' zei het jongetje.
De vrouw glimlachte. 'Welkom in de wondere wereld van de Traan.'

'Is het echt zo dat alles leeft door de Traan ?' vroeg Eliak.

'Alles,' zei weer een andere vrouw. 'De Traan is ons leven. Zonder de Traan gaat alles dood.'

'Ik ben dus op de juiste plaats gekomen,' zei Eliak.

De vrouwen knikten. Eliak keek om zich heen. Hij bewonderde alle grote stellages van bamboe. Eén van de vrouwen kwam dichterbij en tilde hem op. Hij omhelsde haar. Ze leek op zijn moeder. 'Wij zullen voor je zorgen,' zei de vrouw. 'Dat doet de Traan. De Traan zorgt voor ons allemaal, en wij zorgen voor elkaar.' Het jongetje glimlachte. Hij kwam tot een diepe rust. Hij keek naar een rivier, en wees ernaar. 'En dat zijn allemaal tranen ?'

'Ja,' sprak de vrouw aan wiens nek hij hing. 'De tranen zijn de dromen.' Ze kuste zijn voorhoofd zacht. Er rolde een traan uit zijn ogen. Het was een traan van geluk.

'Hoe is de Traan ontstaan ?' vroeg hij.

'De Traan heeft altijd al bestaan,' zei de vrouw, 'maar eerst zat de Traan opgesloten in een steen, een ei van steen, en op een dag kwam de Traan uit het ei.'

'Interessant,' zei Eliak.

Een man schrikt wakker van een droom en grijpt naar de rode steen op zijn nachtkastje die hij de dag ervoor had gekocht. Tranen biggelen over zijn wangen als hij de steen tegen zijn hart drukt. Hij maakt zijn vrouw wakker, die hem in haar armen neemt. 'Heb je weer een nachtmerrie gehad ?' vroeg ze warm en liefdevol.

'N... nee,' stotterde de man, 'H... het was zo mooi, zo lieflijk ...'

'Wil je het me vertellen ?' vroeg de vrouw.

De man vertelt de droom.

'Denk je dat het met de rode steen heeft te maken ?' vroeg de vrouw. 'In de winkel zeiden ze dat het een hele bijzondere steen was.'

'Ik weet het niet,' snikte de man.

'Misschien als je weer gaat slapen krijg je het antwoord wel,' sprak de vrouw. 'In de winkel zeiden ze dat het een dromensteen was.'

De man probeert weer te slapen en ligt dicht tegen zijn vrouw aan. De volgende dag moet hij vroeg op voor het werk. Hij werkt bij de douane. In de middag komt een collega naar hem toe met een vreemde steen in zijn hand. 'Hier,' zei de collega, 'in de steen is het hol. Daar hebben ze drugs mee gesmokkeld. Ze worden steeds slimmer vandaag de dag.'

De man moest ineens weer aan de droom denken. 'Ik heb vannacht toch zo vreemd gedroomd,' zei hij, en begon de droom aan zijn collega te vertellen. Zijn collega begon hem uit te lachen. 'Ik denk dat je gek aan het worden bent,' zei de collega spottend. Even later had de collega het hele verhaal doorverteld, en het verhaal werd hoe langer hoe gekker. Helemaal gesloopt kwam de man die avond thuis, en vertelde zijn vrouw over alle roddel en spot.

'Ik denk dat dat de keerzijde van de Traan is,' zei de vrouw. 'Denk aan de droom, hoe het jongetje bespot werd, en hoe de tovenaar al aangaf hoe dubbel alles was.'

'Je hebt gelijk,' zei de man, 'maar het is geen pretje om zo voor schut gezet te worden, en zo in je vertrouwen beschaamd te worden.'

'Is de Traan niet iets wat communiceert ?' vroeg de vrouw. 'Het brengt het gevoel van de ene persoon over naar de andere persoon. Zo kun je je in de ander verplaatsen.'

De man knikte. Nacht na nacht wachtte hij op nieuwe dromen, maar ze kwamen maar niet, en het huilen stond hem nader dan het lachen. Het was alsof de Traan hem van binnen aanvrat. Hij begon boos te worden, ook boos op zijn vrouw. Op een dag kon hij het niet meer langer houden. 'Het komt allemaal door die vervloekte steen !' riep hij. Hij nam de rode steen mee naar het strand en wierp het zo ver als hij kon de zee in. Toen hij thuiskwam voelde hij zich opgelucht.

'Opgelucht ?' vroeg zijn vrouw.

'Ja,' zei de man. 'Ik voel me kilo's lichter. Het leek wel een plaaggeest, die steen.'

'Ik ben het niet met je eens,' zei de vrouw. 'Er gaan dingen mis in je leven, en je hebt behoeftes die maar niet vervuld lijken te worden, en dan leg je de schuld op andere dingen, terwijl je niet de tijd neemt om dingen te onderzoeken, op waarde te schatten en te leren begrijpen.'

Maar hij werd alleen maar bozer. 'Jij hebt makkelijk praten,' zei hij. 'Jij gaat niet door de dingen waar ik doorheen ga.'

'Hoe weet je dat ?' vroeg ze. 'Weet je hoe lang het duurt voordat je een brug tussen twee personen

kunt overgaan ? Het lijkt eindeloos. Dat kan alleen door magie.'

'En die magie is er niet,' zei hij. 'Ik dacht dat het er was, maar nu is het weg.'

'Op de eindeloze brug tussen twee personen kom je altijd eerst het misverstand en de traan tegen,' sprak ze. 'De ander is een puzzel. Het is niet eenvoudig. Het gaat erom geduld te hebben. Ben je in voor het avontuur van ontdekking ?'

'Ik kan het niet meer,' zei hij, en liep de deur uit. In de nacht kwam hij terug en ging in een ander bed liggen. Ze begonnen uit elkaar te groeien, meer en meer. Ze hielden van elkaar, maar ze hadden beiden het gevoel opgesloten te zitten in een stenen ei.

'Toch blijf ik er aan vasthouden dat eens de traan zal losbreken uit het stenen ei zoals in je droom,' zei de vrouw op een dag. Hij zweeg. Ze kwam dichter naar hem toe, en nam hem in haar armen. Hij voelde aan als steen. Zij had het gevoel alsof hij het stenen ei was waarin ze opgesloten zat, maar ze wist ook dat er meer aan de hand moest zijn. Op een dag kon ze er niet meer tegen. Er was iets in haar geknapt, en ook zij begon steeds meer in steen te veranderen, zo erg dat hij het begon op te merken. Hoe hij ook op haar in begon te praten en haar probeerde te helpen, niets hielp, en het werd alleen maar erger.

'Herinner je al je woorden dan die je naar mij gebruikte,' zei hij.

Vaak zweeg ze dan, of zei dat ze het zich niet meer kon herinneren, of dat het toch niet werkte. Hij begon steeds zachter te worden, maar hij had het idee alsof hij te laat was gekomen, alsof hij de laatste trein had gemist. Hoe hij ook aan haar sleutelde, niets hielp. Hij was weer teruggekomen tot zijn vroegere ideeën en leefde weer vanuit de traan. Hij begreep haar, omdat hij hier zelf ook doorheen was gegaan. Hij zei dat ook altijd tegen haar, maar ze werd met de dag kouder en harder. Hij deed van alles om haar op te vrolijken, maar niets hielp.

'Ik ben er voor je,' zei hij op een dag. 'Waarschijnlijk moeten we hier doorheen. Ik weet wie je echt bent. Dit ben je niet, zoals ik ook mezelf niet was.'

Op een nacht had hij weer een droom, na een hele lange tijd. Hij was in het atelier van Bicardo de tovenaar. Hij smeekte de tovenaar hem te helpen. De tovenaar liet hem een schilderij zien van ijs. Overal waren ijsvlaktes. 'Ben je bereid door deze ijsvlaktes te gaan om je vrouw te ontdooien ?' vroeg Bicardo. 'Je vrouw is in gevangenschap van een ijsheks.'

'Wat !' riep de man. 'Hoe komt ze daar ? Ze is altijd de warmte zelf geweest.'

'Ze is in een ei van ijs,' zei de tovenaar.

'Ja, maar hoe ?' riep de man.

'Ben je bereid ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

'Natuurlijk,' zei de man, 'voor haar heb ik alles over.'

Zonder verder wat te zeggen duwde de tovenaar hem ruw door het schilderij heen, en hij viel diep naar beneden in de sneeuw van de ijsvlaktes. Het was alsof hij met zijn hoofd iets hard raakte, als een rots. Voor een tijdje lag hij bewusteloos en kwam toen langzaam weer bij. Hij begon te strompelen door de sneeuw, voor uren en uren, terwijl het wel dagen leken, en hij begon zich steeds kouder te voelen. 'Ik ga hier dood !' riep hij.

Hij begon te schreeuwen als een wild beest. 'Niemand helpt, hè ?' Na een tijdje kwam hij aan bij iets wat leek op een kasteel. Het was omgeven door een ijzige mist en een bevroren rivier. Hij liep het bruggetje over en moest zorgen dat hij niet uitgleed. Hij besefte ook dat als dit het kasteel van de ijsheks zou zijn, dan kon hij weleens in grote problemen zijn. Bij de gesloten poort belde hij aan. Een oud vrouwtje kwam even later de poort opendoen.

'Ik ben op zoek naar de ijsheks,' sprak hij.

'Kom verder,' zei het oude vrouwtje. 'Ik kan je daar alles over vertellen.'

'Maar wat als uzelf de ijsheks bent ?' vroeg hij aarzelend.

'Wees maar niet bang,' zei het oude vrouwtje.

'U bent niet de ijsheks ?' vroeg de man.

Ze schudde haar hoofd.

'Ja of nee ?' vroeg de man. 'Ik wordt altijd een beetje zenuwachtig van gebarentaal.'

'Kom nou maar binnen,' zei het vrouwtje. 'Het is koud buiten. En nee, ik ben niet de ijsheks.'

Haar gedrag begon hem meer en meer te irriteren. 'Ik weet wel zeker dat jij de ijsheks bent,' sprak hij. 'IJsheksen doen altijd zo. Maar ik heb geen andere keus. Ik ben aan het doodvriezen.'

'Wees niet bang,' zei ze weer. 'Volg mij.'

Binnen was het een stuk warmer. 'Wat heb je met mijn vrouw gedaan ?' vroeg hij. Ze leidde hem door een gang naar een soort huiskamer. Hier kreeg hij een stoel.

'Ik ben geen ijsheks,' zei ze weer. 'De ijsheks woont verderop. Ik heb vroeger wel voor haar gewerkt, maar toen ik er achter kwam dat ze een slechte vrouw was ben ik ermee gestopt.'

'Wat voor werk deed u ?' vroeg de man.

'Schoonmaak,' zei de vrouw, 'het huishouden. Soms kookte ik voor haar.'

'Ik zie het,' zei de man. 'Kunt u mij vertellen waar mijn vrouw is, en waarom ? Bicardo zei dat mijn vrouw in gevangenschap leeft van een ijsheks.'

'Ik kan het u niet vertellen,' zei het vrouwtje. 'Het kan persoonlijke redenen hebben. Ik ken geen details. Ik weet alleen waar ze woont en dat ze niet te vertrouwen is.'

'U kunt proberen een reden te geven ?' vroeg de man.

'Zo zit ze in elkaar,' zei het vrouwtje.

De man besefte dat hij niet verder kwam met het vrouwtje. Ook wist hij niet of het vrouwtje de waarheid sprak. 'Breng me naar de ijsheks,' zei hij na een tijdje. De vrouw had hem voedsel aangeboden en wat te drinken, maar dat had hij geweigerd, uit angst vergiftigd te worden. Het vrouwtje stond op, en sprak : 'Volg mij.' Weer liepen ze door de gang, maar dan helemaal naar de

andere kant van het kasteel waar een grote tuin was. Ook hier lag overal sneeuw. In de verte was een nog veel groter kasteel, en het kasteel was verlicht. 'Daar woont ze,' sprak de vrouw, terwijl ze de achterdeur opendeed. Hij stapte naar buiten, en ze sloot direct de deur achter zich. Hij groette haar, maar hij zag haar al weglopen door het raam. Hij zette het op een lopen, en rende naar het verlichte kasteel toe. Hij hoorde het gehuil van wolven in de verte.

'Ken ik jou ?' krijste een stem.
'Nee, Madelief !' hoorde hij een man terugroepen.
'Niet jij, maar die man die eraan komt !'

Hij rende tot de verlichte poort, waar een andere oude vrouw was. Ze was aan het schrobben. Hij zag de andere man niet. 'Wie bent u ?' vroeg het vrouwtje terwijl ze opkeek.

'Wat heb je met mijn vrouw gedaan ?' vroeg de man.

'Niets,' zei het vrouwtje verbaasd. 'Ik zou niet weten wie je bent of wie je vrouw is.'

'U bent de ijsheks ?' vroeg hij.

'Welnee,' zei het vrouwtje. 'Die woont aan de overkant.'

'Waar ?' vroeg hij.

'Daar waar je vandaan kwam,' zei het vrouwtje.

De man schrikt wakker, en grijpt om zich heen, maar zijn vrouw slaapt in de andere kamer. De volgende ochtend vertelt hij de nachtmerrie. Ze zegt niets.

'Ik begin te geloven dat het waar is,' zei hij. 'Je bent niet meer zoals je was.'

'Geloof je in sprookjes en dromen ?' vroeg zijn vrouw op een spottende toon. 'Blijf met je beide benen in de realiteit. Daar schieten we veel meer mee op.'

'Vroeger was je niet zo,' sprak hij.

'Ik ben eindelijk ontwaakt,' sprak ze. 'Ik ben je spelletjes zat. Ik praatte altijd maar met je mee. Het was allemaal aangeleerd gedrag.'

Hij zuchtte. Hij begon erg aan zichzelf te twijfelen. Misschien was hij wel ontspoord. 'Maar Bicardo ...' zei hij aarzelend.

'Bicardo is een verzinsel,' sprak zijn vrouw spottend. 'Er bestaat geen Bicardo. Er bestaat geen ijsheks, en die verhalen over de Traan zijn ook allemaal belachelijk. Kinderachtig is het. Het helpt ons niet verder.'

Hij zuchtte weer. 'Ik kan niet tot je doordringen, maar dan zou ik je willen vragen : Kun je dan alsjeblieft tot mij doordringen ? Als jij het zo goed weet, onderwijs me dan ?'

'Stoppen met alle onzin,' sprak ze. 'Al dat zweverige gedoe van jou heeft ons nooit verder gebracht, en nu kan ik het niet meer. Ik heb je niets te zeggen. Jij hebt mijn leven kapotgemaakt met al jouw dromen en verhalen.'

Hij schrok. Dit was niet de vrouw die hij eens kende. De dag erna was ze weg. Ze had een briefje achtergelaten : 'Het gaat zo niet meer. We lopen elkaar alleen maar voor de voeten. Denk niet dat het is omdat ik niet van je houd. Ik zal je missen.' Hij voelde zich koud, als in de greep van een ijsheks. Hij ook altijd met zijn verhalen. Had hij nu zijn mond maar gehouden. Of was dit misschien de prijs die hij moest betalen ? 'Hoe duur is die traan wel niet !' riep hij uit.

Hij begon steeds minder te voelen, alsof hij was opgesloten in een steen. Alle hoop begon uit zijn leven weg te sijpelen. Hij had wat nieuwe vriendinnen, maar kwam niet ver op de eindeloze bruggen tussen hen in. Altijd weer dat misverstand en dat onbegrip, alsof ze te verschillend waren. Het was een onmogelijke opgave. Alle wegen schenen dood te lopen, en hij klapte snel dicht, of durfde het niet meer aan. Hij was bang zijn gevoelens te laten zien, het laatste wat hij nog had, en wat steeds minder leek te worden. Hij was bang zijn tranen te laten zien. Op wat voor vreemd pad was hij terecht gekomen in zijn leven ?

Op een nacht had hij een droom dat hij weer in de ijsvlaktes was, en hij werd omsingeld door vliegen. Ze begonnen over hem te roddelen, en alles wat hij gezegd had begonnen ze om te draaien, en het geroddel en gelieg werd erger en erger, totdat ze hem begonnen aan te vallen en op te vreten. Hij werd gillend wakker van de nachtmerrie.

Hij begon steeds kwader te worden op het leven, maar het was als het aanschoppen tegen steen. Niets veranderde. Hij noemde alles om hem heen kinderachtige fantasie, en zijn enige waarheid waren zijn dromen. Hij had alle hoop gevestigd op Bicardo de tovenaar, maar die kwam maar niet. Ook dit hield hij niet lang vol. Hij was kwaad op zichzelf. Was hij ziek, gek of misschien een leugenaar ? Bedroog hij zichzelf ? Of was hij onder een vloek ? Hij begon meer dingen uit zijn huis weg te gooien uit angst voor vloeken en betoveringen. Steeds weer ging hij naar het strand en wierp zijn bezittingen in de zee. Hij deed dit zelfs met grammofoon platen. Terwijl hij dit deed schold hij altijd op de zee. Hij was bang voor de zee, en voelde zich machteloos naar het grote natuurgeweld van de zee. Hij was tegelijkertijd woedend op de zee en op de natuur.

Iets knaagde aan hem, maar hij wist niet wat. Huilen kon hij niet eens meer, en zo begon hij meer en meer weer als steen te worden, harder dan ooit tevoren. Hij wist dat het nu hard tegen hard was. Hij moest wel, anders zou hij het niet overleven. Hij vertrouwde geen mens meer, en begon zich zoveel mogelijk af te zonderen van mensen. Zijn baan bij de douane gaf hij op. Het was hem onmogelijk geworden. Hij wilde geen mensen meer zien. Het liefst zou hij het bos willen inrennen om daar te wonen. Het kon hem niet meer schelen. Hij zou de prijs wel betalen. Hij maalde er niet meer om, huilde er niet meer om, en klagen deed hij ook niet meer. In de nachten had hij dromen dat hij in steen veranderde. Op een nacht in een droom kwam Bicardo heel dichtbij hem met zijn staf. 'Nee,' smeekte hij. 'Raak mij niet aan met die staf.'

'Het is tijd dat je uit het ei van steen komt, dat het steen wordt opengebroken,' sprak de tovenaar en sloeg tegen de steen aan die hij was geworden. Hij gilde het uit van de pijn, en het leek alsof hij onder grote stroom stond. Hij begon open te barsten, en rivieren begonnen uit hem voort te stromen. 'Ja, ja !' riep hij. 'Ik zie het eeuwige leven !' Hij hoorde toen het gebulder van de zee wat in hem losbrak. Na een tijdje viel hij uitgeput op de grond. Alles tolde voor zijn ogen. Hij was nog te zwak om wat te zeggen. Alles overweldigde hem, overspoelde hem, als groot natuurgeweld. Overal was donder, bliksem, en storm. Het was alsof een orkaan hem opnam.

'Wat weet jij van het leven ?' vroeg Bicardo.

'Helemaal niets,' zei hij zacht.

'Spreek harder,' zei Bicardo.

'Helemaal niets !' riep hij.

'Ben je klaar voor school ?' vroeg Bicardo.

'Ja, helemaal,' zei hij.

'Jij bent Eliak,' zei Bicardo. 'De Traan is ontwaakt in je. Nu moet je opgevoed worden en geschoold worden in de Traan.'

Hij keek om zich heen en zag de bamboe kampen zoals in de droom over Eliak, het jongetje. Hij voelde zich weer een kind, en zag de natuur-vrouwen op hem afkomen. Ze waren warm en liefdevol, en keken hem glimlachend aan.

'Het heeft me verscheurd,' sprak hij.

'Je moest losgescheurd worden om hier te kunnen komen,' sprak één van de vrouwen.

'De stenen zijn duur, en helemaal de sappen die ze dragen,' sprak een andere vrouw.

'Het leven is duur, zeer duur,' zei een andere vrouw.

Hij knikte. 'Laat me nooit meer los,' smeekte hij.

Toen werd hij wakker. Hij was rustig en er was een warmte om hem heen. 'Ik wordt heen en weer geslingerd tussen twee werelden,' zei hij tegen zichzelf, 'maar ze beïnvloeden elkaar. Ergens moet er een kruispunt zijn, een samensmelting.' Hij zuchtte van opluchting. Hij voelde met beide werelden contact. 'Ik moet beide delen accepteren,' zei hij tegen zichzelf. 'Zij horen bij elkaar. Zij vullen elkaar aan, stuwen elkaar op. Zij behoren tot mijn levensverhaal als kostbare stenen met kostbare sappen. Het leven is waardevol. Eerst is er het misverstand, en dan het begrip, het geheim van de Traan.' Hij beefde. Het leek nog steeds alsof hij droomde. Hij zag zijn verleden langs hem heenstromen als een rivier. Hij wist dat hij de rivier niet kon vasthouden. Alles zou weer tussen zijn vingers wegglippen. Hij moest verder. Hij moest het geheim van de rivier ontdekken, het geheim van de Traan.

Hij zou niet teruggaan naar het verleden. Hij wist dat het iets cyclisch was. Het zou vanzelf wel weer terugkomen, maar dan op een andere manier. Niets was blijvend. Alles moest veranderen. Hij keek naar zijn trouwring. Het waren twee handen die elkaar vasthielden. Hij schudde zijn hoofd. De materie zou hem nooit verder helpen. Dit was geen echte cyclus. Het zou hem alleen maar afhouden van de hogere cyclus. Hij moest het loslaten. Hij ging naar het strand en wierp de gouden trouwring zo ver de zee in als hij kon. Hij voelde de brandende hand van Bicardo op zijn schouder. Alsof toen alles ineens door kon stromen. Hij dook de zee in nadat hij zijn kleren had uitgetrokken. Het was een warme, tropische dag. Hij waande zichzelf met de natuurvrouwen uit zijn droom. Hij maakte plezier met hen in de warme zee. Hij proefde wat van het zoute water. Het leek wel alsof Bicardo naar hem keek vanaf het strand. 'Kom ook in het water, Bicardo !' riep hij. Maar Bicardo begon steeds meer weg te vagen. 'Nee, ik moet nog wat karweitjes doen !' riep de tovenaar. 'Maak jij maar lekker pret met de natuurvrouwen, en leer van hen.' Alles wat nog van deze woorden overbleef was nog een echo.

Een jongen wordt wakker in het klaslokaal door de bel. Hij had zo vreemd gedroomd. Maar ja, alles beter dan zo'n saaie les. Hij had nog steeds de echo van Bicardo's woorden in zijn hoofd, en hij voelde zich duizelig. De kinderen zagen hem wakker worden en lachten hem uit. Hij lachte terug

naar hen. 'Domme oen !' zei één van de kinderen.

Hij begon nog harder terug te lachen. 'Wie is er nu een dommere oen ? Ik ben in ieder geval weer heel wat wijzer geworden van mijn slaap, en jullie een heel stuk dommer door het luisteren naar de oen die hier lesgeeft. En vergeet later niet je trouwring in je dikke reet te stoppen. Het mocht je nog eens in grote problemen brengen,' zei hij glimlachend. Toen keek hij de verbaasde onderwijzer aan, en liet zijn ogen toen afdalen naar diens trouwring .... 'Gevangen ... door ... de ... ijsheks ...' fluisterde hij brutaal en aanmatigend in het oor van de leraar, op een spottend toontje. Hem konden ze niets meer wijsmaken. 'Nu, dat was het,' zei hij. Hij pakte zijn boeken en zijn tas, en liep trots het lokaal uit.

Toen hij thuiskwam zei hij : 'Mam, ik heb toch zo vreemd gedroomd. Het ging over een trouwring, en over ijsheksen die elkaar beschuldigden, en over natuurvrouwen en tovenaars die levende schilderijen maakte.'

'Zorg jij nu maar dat je je huiswerk doet,' zei zijn moeder, 'anders komt er niets van je terecht met al je gedroom.' Brutaal liep hij naar zijn moeder toe en begon aan haar vinger te trekken. 'Als ik het niet dacht,' zei hij. 'Trouwringetje, hè ? Ringetje van ijs ... Gevangen door de ijsheks.'

'Wat bazel je toch ?' zei zijn moeder. 'Als ik niet getrouwd was, was jij er nooit geweest.'

Hij ging recht voor zijn moeder staan in een trotse, bijna sierlijke en poëtische houding, niet zonder spot. 'Mam, nu moet je eens even goed naar me luisteren,' sprak hij. 'Als jij er niet was geweest, dan leefde ik nog steeds op de Traan, maar je moest er wel zijn, anders kon ik niet dieper in de Traan komen. Het stenen ei is van levensbelang, anders zou de Traan nooit kunnen bestaan. De Traan heeft het stenen ei nodig.'

'Hmmm,' zei zijn moeder. 'Je hebt wel praatjes, maar betekent dit dat ik je vader nodig heb ? Het is soms zo'n rotvent, en ik leef vaak in een tranendal met hem.'

'Precies, mam,' zei de jongen. 'Keurig gezegd, petje af. Jij steekt dingen goed op van de levenslessen.'

'Gelukkig maar,' zei zijn moeder.

Einde

Medusa

Hoofdstuk 1. De Zonderling

Ik denk dat ik doodga als ik naar haar kijk. ‘Dit is het rijk van de dood,’ zei ze. Ze had een suikerzoet jurkje aan, met de geur van een herfstbos. Ik draaide mijn gezicht om en keek naar buiten, naar de grauwe stenen. Het was alsof ze lang uitgestrekt op de daken lag, alsof ik haar met mijn ogen niet kon ontwijken. De bus stopte dichtbij, mensen stapten in de bus, en het was alsof zij tussen de rijen stond. Ik denk dat ik doodga als ik haar aankijk, dat ik het dan gewoon niet overleef. Ze pakt me bij mijn hand, en trekt me naar beneden. Het is etenstijd. Zij smeert het brood, kijkt naar buiten naar de heg. Ik ruik haar suikerzoet jurkje, alsof het belegd is met hemelse rijkdommen, maar naar haar kijken durf ik niet. Ik ben laf. Ik voel haar hand nog steeds, terwijl ze me allang heeft losgelaten. Ze voert me.

Ze is als een rots waarvan ik af kan springen, daarom beklim ik haar niet. De pot pindakaas voelt nog warm aan van haar hand. Ze was hier. Nu is ze in de kelder. Omdat ze zo lang wegblijft drink ik de laatste slokken melk en thee, en dan ga ik naar bed. Het was een dag des doods, in de tuin van spot. En gisteren was ik in de tuin van wreedheden. Mijn herinneringen zijn daar. Mijn hersenen bloeden. Ze leest me een boek voor, terwijl ik probeer te slapen. Ik hoor haar stem echoen door mijn hoofd. Het zaad van de lindeboom houd ik stevig vast, en meng het met mijn tranen. Dan smeer ik haar lichaam in, met het mengsel dat lijkt op natte tarwe, griesmeel, het is als brood, en het bed is de oven. Zij is de vrouw van de bakker, en ik ben de bakker. Ik maak haar klaar voor het kostelijke dinner in het diepste van de nacht, en dan slaap ik.

Ze is als de boom aan de rivier. Ik krab aan het hout, het is alsof de sterren breken. Ik denk aan de tuinen waarin wij waren, de hoge poorten in de heggen, de vruchten die zijn als de meest kostelijke snoepjes. Wie plantte hen daar ? Ik keek naar haar gezicht toen ze sliep. Nu was het veilig. De lazarus-koekjes bungelden aan haar lichaam, slap, uitgedroogd, de nacht heerste hier over de dood, de gouden dood. Voor mij was het een vakantie, ze was even geen roofdier meer. Ik kuste haar lippen, en dan slaap ik, vrij, blij, zonder angst, want ze slaapt. Een diepe nacht die mijn bewustzijn breekt, ik ben er even helemaal uit. Tante Connie controleert later de kamers nog even, of alle lichten wel uit zijn voor de nacht, want als de nacht komt, dan moet de nacht echt goed komen. Zo praat ik ’s nachts als met een pop. Ik hoor tante Connie op de gang lopen, als een lijzige boom, verzwakt door het gewicht van haar ouderdom, met passen als het slaan op de koekjestrommel. Ja, haar hele wezen klinkt me als muziek in de oren. Altijd is ze mijn lievelingstante geweest, daarom wonen we hier samen, maar de herinnering aan haar verzwakt. Ik leef hier in een dorre tuin, spot gemengd met wreedheden, de souvenirs van het duistere gat van het verleden. Geen lichtjes konden dat goedmaken, geen gouden pollepel van welke grootmoeder dan ook. Ik voel me verminkt.

Oom Joop is een man met humor, maar ook hij kon mij niet redden. Als ik wakker word zit er iemand op me, wassende mijn rug. Het is zij. Ik durf haar niet aan te kijken. Ze pakt me beet, laat dan los, pakt me steviger beet, en dan laat ze me helemaal los, om op te staan. Ik ben te moe, en het zonlicht kwelt me. Er liggen hier snoep papiertjes overal. Ik hoor haar lachen. Er is geen tuinman die de wilde tuin van mijn ziel op orde kan krijgen. Ik lig hier voor Jan Worst.

Ze is de laatste van de rozentuin, dus ik kan haar niet wegdoen. De geschiedenis van de graaf, en zijn kinderen. Zij is als de erfenis. Uit mijn gedachten is ze niet. Ze speelt de piano. Ik kijk naar buiten, en probeer langzaam grip te krijgen op de dag. De muren buiten lijken hoog, zoals zij hoog is, van adel. Tante Connie komt binnen, en sleept zichzelf over het tapijt. Het lijkt voor haar een woestijnreis om aan ons bed te komen, en alles lijkt verwaterd. Haar rumoerig kapsel was vroeger deftig en hehoudend. Ze staart in de spiegel. ‘Ik moet me nog opmaken voor de dag, je weet wel,

het harnas aandoen,’ zegt ze. Ze gaat tegen de verwarming aanzitten, en luistert naar de piano. De schotel die ze in haar handen heeft maakt haar bijna als een bedelaar. Ze heeft behoefte aan een gesprek, en ik ben te moe. De dochter van de graaf daarentegen is vol energie, en begint het gesprek met haar in zinderende vaart. Ze zijn als een stel vogels. Al snel prakken de vorken een maal. Ik krijg niks, want ik behoor niet tot de dag. Het is alsof ze elkaar voeren.

In de middag ligt ze weer op me. Het lijkt wel alsof ze draadjes aan me bevestigt om me op te hijsen. Er is nog maar een klein stukje van de dag over en dat eist ze helemaal voor haarzelf op, als met gloeiende handen. Buiten hoor ik de bus, mensen stappen in, verveeld, uitgeput. Ik vraag me af of ze ooit zullen aankomen. Zwetend en puffend kom ik aan bij de lift op de gang. Ik wil naar de zolder. Maar de lift schijnt niet te werken. Ik strompel naar de trap, want een dag met de dochter van de graaf is te veel voor mij. Ik zie bij de trap naar de zolder een andere vrouw staan, in wit kant. Ze helpt me op de trap. Ik plof even later op haar bed neer. Zij is de vrouw van de zolder, en ik heb de zolder bereikt, niet te bereiken voor de dochter van de graaf, de dochter des doods. Maar ik hoor haar krijsen beneden, als iemand die zich geprikt heeft bij het naaien. Ja, toe maar, druk die speld maar diep naar binnen, je verdient het, kreng, denk ik bij mezelf. Maar dan word ik ineens mild door de zachtheid van de vrouw hier. Ze komt dichterbij, spreid haar benen waarmee ze mij vastklemt. ‘Ho, doe normaal,’ zeg ik. Ze verzwakt de klem een beetje, maar ik voel haar gewicht op me. ‘Slapen ?’ vraagt ze.

‘Nee, dank je, ik heb net geslapen,’ zeg ik.

Ze loopt naar een kastje, haalt wat brood eruit en besmeerd het. Daarna voert ze me. De lucht is donker hier, en ik hoor de dochter van de graaf nog steeds krijsen. Als ik naar buiten staar is het alsof ze zich heeft uitgespreid over de daken.

‘Waar kom je vandaan ?’ vraagt de vrouw van de zolder.

‘Vanuit de tuin,’ zeg ik.

‘Oh, de tuin der edelheden en martelingen ?’

Ik knik.

‘Zo’n zoet-bitter iets,’ zegt ze. Ik knik weer. De verdiepingen onder de zolder lijken ver weg. Ik staar weer naar buiten, alsof ik mijn ziel zie vliegen. ‘Waar ben ik ?’ vraag ik.

- Bij mij.

Ze pakt een schotel en een kom, en voert me dan soep. ‘Ik wil niet meer terug,’ zeg ik. Ik kwam van een nachtelijk gebrul, en nu was ik hier, een plaats vol protserige spulletjes, over en weer gelakt en opgepoetst. Vanaf de zolder kon ik de tuinen zien, de heggen, met de hoge poorten. ‘Ik ben een vergiftigd mens,’ zeg ik. ‘Een dwaallicht, een pop.’ Ze knikt. Als ik naar buiten keek zag ik mijn weerspiegeling. Zij stond ineens voor de spiegel, en maakte zich op, met allerlei smeerseltjes.

‘Goed spul van de bomen,’ zei ze. ‘Het is voor mijn huid. Ik ga niet naar het feest vanavond, ik blijf wel hier met jou.’

Het is alsof ik met haar hang tussen de verdiepingen, alsof ik met haar zweef boven de tuinen. Ik voel haar gewicht, en ben bang dat we naar beneden vallen, maar ze rekt me uit. Ik zie de begroeiing op de muren, en herinner de begroeiing van de tuinen, de dorens, de valstrikken, puur natuur.

‘Ik ben de maker van de tuin,’ zegt ze plotseling. Ik schrik. ‘Hoe kun je zoiets maken ?’ vraag ik. Ze zwijgt, als het graf. Ik merk dat ik kwaad word van binnen, maar dan voel ik ineens genade. Al snel voel ik niets meer, ik kijk alleen maar in een onbekend gat, als een mist, een waas. Ik kan niet meer nadenken. ‘Wat is er aan de andere kant van de tuin ?’ vraag ik.

- Een snoepwinkel. Ze verkopen eigenlijk gewoon zoete vruchten.

Ik kijk naar haar kanten jurkje. Het is als een snoep jurkje. Ineens heb ik zoiets van : Als ik nog verder naar haar kijk, dan ga ik dood.

Ik rol van het bed af naar de trap, en laat mij naar beneden vallen. De dochter van de graaf vangt mij op, en de vrouw van het zolder stormt naar beneden. ‘Hij zit toch aan touwen vast, elastiek, draden, kettingen, dus wat wil je,’ schreeuwt ze.

‘Is dit de oorlog van de feeen,’ vraag ik, ‘of van de indianen.’ Ze grijpen elkaar in de haren. ‘Uit dat licht,’ roept de vrouw van de zolder. Ik staar doelloos naar de hoeken van de trap. Dan voel ik de hand van tante Connie, die mij naar haar kamer neemt. ‘Thee ?’ vraagt ze.

Ze maakt brood voor me, opgepoft en zacht, een beetje nat, met wat soep en pudding. ‘Je moet goed eten, jongen,’ zegt ze. Ik zie haar kauwen. Het zal wel avondetens-tijd zijn. Ik hoor vrouwen krijsen. Buiten hoor ik vogels krijsen. Het klinkt me als muziek in de oren. Bij tante Connie is alles altijd anders. Ze zorgt voor me, grijpt in wanneer het nodig is. Oom Joop zit aan de andere kant van de kamer. Een verfrommelde papieren zak ligt naast hem, met oud brood. De gouden klok tikt, en het is een rustgevend geluid. Ik probeerde vat te krijgen op de structuur van dit huis, maar het was alsof ik van de daken afgleed, of was dit huis slechts de weerspiegeling van de tuin. Het was niet bepaald mijn Eden, en toch wilde ik dit huis doordringen. Ik voelde mij een zwerver in dit huis, een huis wat ik nooit echt binnen kon gaan. Na een paar uur zaten de twee vrouwen keurig netjes tegen elkaar aan, in keurige zoete kleertjes, als feestbroodjes bij de bakker. Rozen op hen vastgespeld alsof er iemand jarig was, en de spelden gingen diep in hun vlees. ‘Ja dieper, dieper,’ dacht ik. Ik wilde het voelen bloeden. Het was al aan het bloeden. Het bloed sijpelde op de grond. Tante Connie raakte in paniek, en ik ook, omdat ik toch meer waarde hechtte aan de beoordelingen van tante Connie dan aan mezelf. ‘Waarom doen jullie dat !’ riep ze.

‘Dit is ons verbond,’ zeiden de twee vrouwen. ‘Ons bloed-verbond.’

‘Zie je,’ dacht ik bij mezelf, ‘dan had ik het wel goed ingeschat.’

‘Geef me de speld,’ zei ik. ‘Ik wil ook deel hebben aan het bloed-verbond.’ Het was een hele opluchting toen ik de speld in mijn vlees voelde gaan, en ik de zachtheid van de roos tegen mijn huid aanvoelde. Ik voelde me een plak vlees bij de slager.

‘Nu kun je het dak opkomen,’ zeiden de vrouwen. ‘Nu kon je de tuin bezaaien en besproeiien.’ De poort van mijn hersenen leek open te gaan, en de waas leek even te vertrekken. Ik wilde meer van zulke lichaams-spelden. Ik herinnerde de dorens, ik herinnerde hoe genadeloos diep ze gingen, totdat alles binnenin me brak, en ik begon te zweven. Ik was nu boven het dak, maar de huizen om ons heen waren veel groter. Ik kon de zolders inkijken en zag de vrouwen. Ze leken eenzaam, en ik was eenzaam. Ik was met een helm op geboren, maar die ontplofte nu. Ik zweefde bij iemand binnen. En hier zag ik bomen groeien door het hele huis. Ik was nog steeds in de tuin. Hier hingen zoveel gouden klokken aan de muur, die allemaal heerlijk tikten, zo licht, zo zacht, zo helder, ontwakende de diepste roerselen van mijn hersenen. Ze waren als een vuur in mijn lichaam. De mensen die hier woonden hadden allemaal dialogen. Het moest vooral ergens over gaan, maar ze kwamen er nergens mee. Ze leefden in een cirkeltje. Ik had ze al snel door. Toch was het allemaal erg verrijkend voor mij. Jurkjes hingen er aan de muur, vruchtjes lagen op schaaltjes, gezet op oventjes. ‘Is dit de weg naar de stad ?’ vroeg ik.

- Welke stad. Oh, de overstad.

Ik knikte. ‘Daar heb ik vaker over gehoord,’ zeiden ze. Ze lieten me ladders van touw zien. Ik klom en klom, dit huis was lang, als een herenhuis wat maar niet ophield. Mensen leefden hier als vogels. Ik wist niet waar ik moest kijken. ‘De parel van de tuin,’ zeiden ze, ‘is daar,’ en dan wezen ze omhoog. De ladder was glibberig, en ik gleed weg. In spiegels zag ik mezelf klimmen. Ik had weer het gevoel dat ik van de daken gleed, alsof ik het huis niet kon binnengaan. Tante Connie legde haar hand op mijn hoofd. Haar hand was gloeiend heet, of was mijn hoofd gloeiend heet. ‘Waarom ?’ vroeg ik. ‘Waarom is er hier geen doorkomen aan ?’ Tante Connie zei niks, zweeg als het graf. Ook de twee vrouwen zeiden niets. Het was als een schijnbaar open weg die dood liep. Een zwakte maakte zich van mij meester, en ik was gelijmd aan de grond. Met wilde maar beheerste ogen keek de dochter van de graaf naar mij, alsof ze een wild paard probeerde te temmen, met de koele zelfverzekerdheid dat dat haar aardig lukte. Even stond de tijd stil, en was het alsof zij de muziek van het moment perfect kon berijden. Als ze zou vallen zou ze aan draden verbonden zijn, als aan elastiek, zodat ze niet in de vlammen van het hellemeer zou vallen. Ik snakte naar adem. Ik hoorde haar ogen roepen. Toen greep ze me vast. ‘Ik laat je nooit meer los,’ zei ze. ‘Nooit meer.’ Even dacht ik dat ik thuis gekomen was. Ik probeerde me zo lang te maken als zij zich waardig voelde. ‘Wie ben jij eigenlijk ?’ vroeg ik.

De vrouw van het zolder liep terug naar de trap. In gedachten zweefde ik langs het huis, en de dochter van de graaf lag uitgestrekt op de daken. Wij konden dit huis niet binnenkomen. Wij waren in de tuin. Het zonlicht was aangenaam, en het was alsof we beiden smolten en naar beneden sijpelden, om in elkaar te versmelten ? Waren wij de vruchten van deze tuin ?

Hoofdstuk 2. De Sleutel

Tante Connie legt gouden bestek op de tafel voor het feestmaal. Oom Joop komt aan tafel zitten. Ik zit naast de dochter van de graaf. Ze houdt mijn hand vast. Tante Connie brengt dan de pan met het

avondeten, en met een grote lepel laat ze het ploffen op onze borden. ‘Is zij van het zolder niet uitgenodigd ?’ vraag ik.

‘Ze heeft haar eigen,’ zegt tante Connie. Ik heb het gevoel dat ik wat mis, en ga na een tijdje naar het zolder. Ik voel me op en top. Ze ligt op bed, en staart door het raam. Ik ga bij haar zitten. Haar ogen kijken dwars door me heen, alsof ze me niet ziet. Als ik naar buiten kijk, zie ik haar weerspiegelingen daar, alsof ze uitgestrekt is over de daken, en langs de muren, als begroeiing. ‘Zoveel mensen kennen me niet,’ zegt ze. Dan staat ze op en geeft mij een bord. Het schijnt hier ook etenstijd te zijn. Ze schept op. We staren elkaar de hele tijd aan, en als ik dan later naar buiten staar is het al donker, en haar weerspiegelingen zijn als de lichten in de nacht, als woeste paarden over de daken. Ik hoor tante Connie beneden roepen. Het is tijd voor de nacht, maar ik wil niet slapen. Ik houd de hand vast van de vrouw van het zolder. Mijn hoofd voelt als een stad met huizen, grote huizen, hoge huizen, lange huizen, met bomen er tussen, met plaats voor de tuin. Het is alsof de vrouw van het zolder op mijn hersenen danst, en het doet pijn, en ik word al snel moe. Pudding voert ze me. Grote lange draden voel ik door mijn lichaam gaan, totdat ik het gevoel heb dat ik kan zweven. Haar bed is ineens zo dik en ver weg, haar kamer twee keer groter. Nee, naar buiten wil ik niet meer. Ik ben hier buiten. Zij is mijn wereld. Ik heb een kinderlijk geloof in haar.

Tante Connie laat me de schoonheid van het huis zien, van alle plekken, en ja, ik moet haar gelijk geven. Ze heeft een plaats in mij, alle dingen in dit huis hebben een plaats in mij. Ik heb ze nodig. Ik ben er bijna ziekelijk afhankelijk aan. Het is mijn levenswarmte. Maar toch voelt het alsof ik heen en weer gesleurd word. Ik heb nergens grip op, ik glijd telkens weg, dieper. Dit is een doodlopende weg, een fuik, van vuur. Ik zie ze het glas heffen. Zij zijn als de vlammen in mijn hoofd. Ik durf niet naar ze te kijken, want dan ga ik dood. Het zijn de hoofden van de Medusa. De mensen die hier wonen zijn net zo steen als dit huis, en iedereen die naar hen kijkt verandert in steen. Zo is het leven. Is dit de sleutel weg uit de tuin, of is dit de sleutel tot de tuin.

In de nacht danst de vrouw van de zolder als een zwaan, als een brandende struik. Ik probeer me om te draaien, maar ik kan niet. Deze dans is dodelijk, of misschien wel leidende naar de poort van de hel. Ik sta verstijfd. De uitsteeksels en aanhangsels van haar jurk raken mij. Ik kijk naar haar door mijn glas wijn. De poort brandt. Ik probeer me ergens aan vast te klampen, maar zonder success, totdat ik de stem van tante Connie hoor. Ik kan niet terugroepen. Iemand knijpt mijn keel dicht, maar ik heb geen verlangen om terug te roepen. Ik ben als een boom geworteld in de grond. Ik heb het geheim van Medusa gezien : Alleen met de ogen van wijn kunnen wij haar bekijken. Ze gilt en schreeuwt nu ik het geheim heb ontdek. Ik gooi de wijn in haar gezicht, want ze wil me verscheuren. Dan staat ze in vlammen, en het gehele huis brandt. Ik moet hier weg. Maar de trappen zijn hier van vuur. Alles is van vuur. Ik besluit te blijven. Medusa schijnt aardiger dan ik dacht. Haar hoofden leven hier in een vreemde vrede. Roofdieren bespringen mij en verscheuren mij, en mijn hart is blij. Het is mijn vuur, het is omringd door mijn hart. Ik heb mijn weg hier doorheen gebeten. Een huis met standbeelden. Het is als een brandend strand, en een brandend oog leidt mij uit, om dieper in te gaan. De brandweerman houdt mij stevig vast. Zijn jas is glibberig. En dan brandt hij ook.

Tante Connie doet alsof er niets gebeurt is en staart mij aan. ‘Nog wat koffie, jongen ?’ vraagt ze. Ik zeg niks. Tante Connie schenkt nog wat voor me in. Wie zwijgt stemt toe. Mijn oude bed in de kamer van de dochter van de graaf is versleten, scheuren in de matras, en de piano is vals. Maar niet minder mooi dan de gouden spulletjes van tante Connie. Als tante Connie lacht heb ik het gevoel dat ze op de daken fietst. Ik keek naar de vrouw van de zolder. Waren we niet net als Adam en Eva die door de brandende heg probeerden terug te keren naar het paradijs ? En was dit paradijs een

mengsel tussen huizen en blote benen ? Ik keek naar de dochter van de graaf. Ik probeerde een weg door haar heen te graven. Maar ze hield alles tegen. Tante Connie dient de pudding op. Ik kan de borsten zien van de vrouw van het zolder, door haar doorzichtige jurk heen, en ze heeft haar jurk ook wel flink open. Haar borsten druipen nog, als de moederlijke fontein, maar er zijn geen babies. Ik besluit niets te eten. Hier kan ik niet tegen, en het is dodelijk. Als ik naar de dochter van de graaf kijk, dan zie ik hetzelfde tafereel. Het is onbeschoft tegen tante Connie om pudding te laten druipen terwijl zij pudding opdient. Ik kan oom Joop goed begrijpen dat hij zo ver mogelijk van de tafel afzit, als een bibberend hondje. Maar plotseling is het alsof de stoppen bij mij doorslaan. Ik voel me een baby, een hond zelfs, die gevoed moet worden. Wat een drama. Tante Connie ziet het aan mijn gezicht en raakt in paniek. Zelfs oom Joop staat op. Iedereen zit verstijfd. Ik begin met grote happen van de pudding te eten, zodat al snel mijn hele gezicht eronder zit. Oom Joop lacht mij uit. Dit is de tuin van spot. Waarom zijn Adam en Eva hier teruggekeert. Ook de twee vrouwen lachen mij uit, terwijl ze hun jurken nog meer open trekken. En dan smeren ze de pudding over hun lichaam heen en gaan op de tafel liggen. 'Ik heb al brood gehad,' zegt oom Joop. Ik kan hier niet tegen. Zelfs een hond wordt beter behandeld. Ik word er erg stil van, en ga bij oom Joop zitten. 'Je weet hoe vrouwen zijn,' zegt oom Joop.

'Dodelijk is het,' zeg ik. 'We hebben niet zomaar met een stel hoofden te maken. Het zijn de hoofden van Medusa.'

'Kijk naar hen door het glas wijn,' zegt oom Joop. Tante Connie loopt naar de vrouwen toe, en giet wijn over hen heen. 'Wat een vertoning,' zeg ik. 'Dit is toch niet meer normaal.'

'Ik dacht ook dat ik naar een ander feestje was gegaan,' zei oom Joop.

'Kom op, nu weten we het wel,' zeg ik. 'Zo lopen we de fanfare niet. Moet je dat nou eens kijken, ze vervuilen die hele tafel.'

'Nee hoor,' zegt de dochter van de graaf. 'Dit is de oerbron, de big bang.'

'Als je je maar niet verroert,' schreeuwt tante Connie. 'We gaan hier geen polonaise in de kamer houden, al mijn spulletjes worden vies. Is er nog respect in dit land ?'

'Likken, bloedvriend,' zegt de vrouw van het zolder tegen haar wederhelft. 'Alsof je leven er vanaf hangt.'

'Als jullie niet eten wat de pot schaft,' zegt tante Connie, 'dan sodemieteren jullie maar op.'

'We vonden het eten heerlijk,' zei de vrouw van het zolder, 'maar we hebben onze eigen toetjes meegenomen.'

'Contractbreuk,' zegt tante Connie. 'Dat hadden we niet afgesproken zo, en voor half geld komen jullie er echt niet langs. Ik voel me door jullie verschrikkelijk door de tang genomen, als je dat maar weet. Ik heb nog wat blokken hout nodig voor het tuinvuur.'

‘Ik dacht anders dat Adam wel tegen een grapje kon,’ zei de vrouw van het zolder, ‘maar mijnheer loopt daar in het hoekje te kniezen.’

‘Oh, toe maar, geef mij maar weer de schuld,’ zei ik. ‘Het is nu oorlog.’ Ineens stormden de vrouwen op mij af, en peperden mij in met pudding, en trokken me op de tafel. ‘Dit is nog eens een kersttoetje, een vijf-gangen toetje is aan ons welbesteed,’ zei de vrouw van het zolder. Ik was woedend. ‘Als ik ooit loskom, dan zul je wat beleven,’ riep ik.

Het was alsof alle machines ineens stilstonden. We staarden elkaar allemaal aan, maar deden niets. ‘Ode aan de kok,’ zei de dochter van de graaf. Na een tijdje lagen we in het bad, en het was nog gezellig ook. Het was als een lange brandende dag aan het strand. Ik was moe, ik had mijn portie wel gehad. Het was een vreemde gewaarwording dat roosjes zo konden zijn. Ik zou vanaf nu veel meer op mijn hoede zijn. Dit mocht niet nog een keer gebeuren. Tante Connie zou het niet overleven. Er groeiden sinds die dag struiken op het behang, die ervoor zouden moeten zorgen dat deze dingen nooit meer zouden gebeuren. Tante Connie was het goed zat, en huurde bewakers in, die een oogje in het zeil zouden houden. Ook liet ze overal cameras planten. We voelden ons vanaf die dag in ons huis bekeken. Maar de volgende keer dat we aan tafel zaten schoten bij mij weer de stoppen door. Ik verlangde zo naar de oermoeder, dat ik boven op de vrouw van het zolder klom, de stoel brak, en we vielen beiden op de grond. Een wachter schoot een pijl door mijn hoofd, net op tijd, en ik werd aan de muur gespietst. ‘Geef hem melk,’ zei tante Connie rustig. ‘Jullie moeten niet zo paniekerig doen.’ Pudding droop uit de borst van de vrouw van het zolder. Ik kon me niet bewegen. ‘Eerste hulp bij ongelukken,’ zei tante Connie. ‘Hij is dood, hij heeft een pijl dwars door z’n kop. Geef hem de melk des levens, stelletje koeien. Nou, waar wachten jullie op.’

‘Hij hangt te hoog, tante,’ zeiden de vrouwen.

- Nou dan spuit je maar. Druk de knopjes maar goed in.

‘Nee, hij is dood. Hij heeft Medusa gezien, en wie van haar melk drinkt gaat naar de hel.’

- Ik ben niet gelovig, stop met die onzin.

‘God, zelfs als je de tepels van Medusa ziet ben je al overgeleverd aan de vlammen van de hel, en haar duistere hulpjes.’

- Ja, die ken ik, rijden die hier niet de hele tijd rond ? Medusa is al openlijk te kijk gezet, je hoeft het knopje van de tv maar aan te draaien.

‘Arme jongens.’

Ik kon naar de melk fluiten. De dames gingen ieder hun eigen kant op. Ik was in de tuin der wreedheden, ik was op sterven na de dood met die pijl in m’n kop. Oom Joop was behulpzaam en

trok de pijl uit mijn hoofd. Maar dat deed nog veel meer pijn, dus ik drukte hem er weer in. Even later klopte ik bij de vrouwen aan de deur, maar ze deden niet open. Ik sliep die nacht bij tante Connie en oom Joop in de huiskamer. De dag erna zaten ze allemaal aan tafel alsof er niets was gebeurd. ‘Zo, de meer dan dodelijke borsten van Medusa zijn ook weer van de partij,’ zei ik. De vrouwen zeiden niets. Ze aten gulzig en verslikten zich een paar keer. Het ging zoals gewoonlijk weer nergens over. ‘Leuk,’ zei ik. ‘We zitten hier aan tafel met vergif. Killers.’

‘Houd je mond,’ zei tante Connie. ‘Jij bent ook niet een van de braafsten.’ Plotseling stonden de vrouwen als een vrouw op, als Medusa, en de muren om ons heen begonnen te branden. ‘Zie,’ riep tante Connie. ‘Ik wist het. Medusa is gekomen om wraak te nemen. Ren voor je leven.’ Oom Joop gooide een deken om ons heen, en trok ons naar zijn kant. Hij was de slimste geweest want sinds de dames hier aten zat hij bijna nooit meer aan tafel. Een golf van geweld sloeg ons neer. Maar oom Joop gedroeg zich als een duivel, en dat moest wel, anders had hij niks bij Medusa in de pap te brokkelen. Ik heb oom Joop nog nooit zo te keer zien gaan. Al snel stond Medusa buiten het raam. ‘Ik wist wel dat die wijven een grote pot met vergif waren,’ zei hij. Ik had nog nooit zo’n groot machts-spel gezien. Ik trilde als een hondje. Oom Joop was een held.

Omdat Medusa ons bleef bezoeken kregen we een ander huis in een andere straat. Er groeiden hier zogenaamde borsten-struiken die vruchten hadden als tepels waaruit een sap voortkwam wat bestand was tegen het borstgif van Medusa. We konden zelfs hierdoor Medusa genezen van haarzelf. De vloek was al snel verbroken. Er hoefde verder geen apocalypse aan te pas te komen. Onze vriendschappen werden hersteld, en al snel leefden we hier weer met elkaar. Alles was veilig nu. We hadden onze condomen-boom gevonden.

Een vrouw leefde tussen de verdiepingen in, een vrouw in mijn hoofd, onderdrukt door de hedendaagse maatschappij, een deel gesloten door de hersenen. Medusa was de oorlogsgodin, weggepest door een maatschappij van valse vrede. Een vreemde vrede bracht haar terug. Zij kende de tuin van spot ook. Ze had die zelf gemaakt. Ook kende ze de tuin van edelheden en wreedheden, op maat gesneden. Ze had zich een weg door die tuin gebaand, terug naar het paradijs. Ze ontmoette haar Adam in de lucht, en leidde ook hem terug. Door de brandende heg gingen zij, en helemaal opgebrand kwamen zij aan. Heel snel kwamen zij erachter dat zij een cirkeltje hadden gelopen. Zo slaan dan al snel de stoppen door, en vinden ze de liefde in zichzelf, die na korte tijd niets dan haat blijkt te zijn. Het is alles niet wat het lijkt. Ik kreeg een fatalistische, nihilistische kijk op het leven door deze dingen. We waren weer terug bij af. Heel wat dromen waren kapot gesprongen, en we begonnen ons oude huis te missen, maar daar woonde een nieuwe familie in.

Waar we dan ook naartoe gaan, het is altijd hetzelfde. Laten we daarom naarbinnen keren, en elkaar daar vinden, of hele andere personen die eindelijk onze dromen kunnen waarmaken, maar dit is slechts ijdelheid, illusie. We jagen lucht achterna, iedereen weet het, maar we blijven proberen. We blijven happen naar de koek die voor ons wordt gehangen. We zijn geconditioneerd, slaven, hondjes van Pavlov. Alles is hier misleiding op misleiding. Ik begon een pessimist te worden, zwaar somber. Ik wilde niemand valse hoop geven, niemand voorliegen. We liepen de leugen achterna omdat er geen waarheid was, of was de waarheid gewoon in een heel klein hoekje ergens, daar waar we het onmogelijk zouden kunnen vinden ? Maar alle dingen zijn toch mogelijk voor hen die geloven. En zo ging ik geloven. Niet in het kerkelijk geloof, maar in die vrouwen hier met hun gekke spelletjes. Misschien dat de grootste leugen ook diep in haar de waarheid droeg. Ik had kans, want ik had een pijl door mijn hoofd. Denken was fataal. Het moest van een andere kant komen. Maar ik merkte al snel dat die vrouwen een gesloten boek waren. Ik kwam er niet ver mee. En ik wilde toch ergens in geloven. Een grote trots was er, ergens diep binnenin. Iets wat mij over het ravijn kon laten zweven,

iets wat ik niet kon beschrijven, een mystiek gevoel. Oom Joop zei altijd dat een boek ons erdoor zou helpen, maar hij wist niet welk boek. Een popperige papieren kermis leek het. Tante Connie had een pop in een schoenendoos verborgen, een pop waarin ze heilig geloofde dat deze ons allen redden zou. Vaak sta ik op het balkon en voel me tussen de huizen, tussen de bomen, tussen de rivieren, overal tussen.

Het is een wonder dat ik nog leef met die pijl door mijn hoofd. Op een dag voel ik me door het gevoel dat die pijl in mijn hoofd geeft zo in de wolken, zo extatisch, dat ik merk dat ik kan vliegen. Heel voorzichtig vlieg ik van het balkon, tussen de huizen door. Mensen vallen flauw achter de ramen. ‘Bedrieger,’ roept er iemand. Ik kan er niet mee zitten. Ook al zou het bedrog zijn, ik heb er een goede tijd mee. Ik vlieg naar de top van het hoogste huis in de buurt. Als ik naar beneden kijk is alles wit. Ook het hoge platte horizontale dak waarop ik sta. Ik ruik bosgeuren. Dan vlieg ik over de stad. Wat als ik dit alles zou kunnen ontsnappen. Ik besluit naar de volgende stad te vliegen, daar waar de fabrieks-wolken zijn. Ik houd van de rook. Ik hoop dat we er allemaal in verzuipen. Dat is beter dan wat we hadden. We hebben niets te verliezen. Maar dan roep ik mezelf tot orde. Er staan wat meiden voor een raam. Ze kijken verwonderd. Ik zwaai naar ze. Ze wenken me. Een van hen opent het raam, en ik vlieg naar binnen. ‘Kijk, die kan vliegen,’ zegt er een. ‘Een truc,’ zeg ik. ‘Leer het me,’ zegt een van de meiden. Ik vertel hen over de pijl in mijn kop. Ze giechelen een beetje. Al snel hangen ze aan me. ‘Mag ik in jullie geloven,’ vraag ik. ‘Ik wil ergens in geloven.’

- Wij geloven in de dominee.

‘Okay, maar dat is niet wat. Kan ik in jullie geloven ?’

- Ik weet niet of ik daartoe bevoegd ben.

‘Ik geloof in je.’

- Wat moet ik nu doen ?

‘Vlieg met me mee.’

- Ja, maar ik kan niet vliegen. Waarom blijf je niet gewoon hier. We hebben het hier erg naar onze zin.

‘Okay.’

Ik bleef bij ze staan, en ze trokken me aan tafel. Ik moet zeggen ze waren een stuk netter dan de vrouwen die ik kende, de Medusa-vrouwen. Ze aten deftig, met mes en vork, geen geklieder. Ik staarde naar buiten, allemaal rook. Ik kon niet veel zien. Ze sliepen allemaal in de huiskamer op matrassen. Ik kreeg ook een matras. Ik sliep al snel. Ik merkte al snel dat ik in mezelf aan het bidden was tot hen. Ik was op zoek naar een geloof. De volgende dag namen ze mij mee naar de kerk. Ik moet zeggen dat het mij aardig beviel. De dominee was erg aardig. Hij had ook wel wijze dingen te zeggen, en liep voortdurend met zijn sleutels te rinkelen. Had hij misschien de sleutels om

Medusa te openen ? Na de kerkdienst liep ik op hem af om het hem te vragen. Zonder nadenken nam hij een sleutel van zijn sleutelhanger af en gaf het aan mij. ‘Probeer het maar uit,’ zei hij. Maar eigenlijk wilde ik hier niet meer weg. Deze mensen waren geweldig. Weer ging ik met de meiden mee naar hun huis. Omdat ik heel veel aan Medusa dacht, ben ik even later toch teruggegaan naar mijn eigen stad en huis. Ik begon direkt aan de Medusa-vrouwen te sleutelen. En het werkte, tot mijn eigen verbazing. Voor het eerst had ik het gevoel dat ik met hen ergens kwam. Alsof we de boom des levens hadden bereikt. We dronken koffie op het resultaat. Ik wilde de dominee bedanken, en vloog terug naar de andere stad. De meiden waren blij me weer te zien, en samen gingen we naar het huis van de dominee. De dominee was net zijn huis aan het schilderen. Na het bedankje nam ik afscheid van de meiden, en ging weer terug naar mijn eigen huis. Ik had Medusa verlost uit haar kooi.

Hoofdstuk 3. De Gespleten Aarde

De meiden hebben al snel ons huis gevonden, en de dominee ook. Ze waren met de dominee meegereden. De sleutel had namelijk een zendertje van binnen. Natuurlijk waren ze van harte welkom, maar de Medusa-vrouwen werden snel jaloers. Daar wist de dominee wel wat op, want die had veel meer sleutels. Wat me opviel was dat alles snel verstijfde. Alsof de sleutels veel openden, maar tegelijkertijd viel er ook zoveel dicht. We kregen het idee dat er een vloek op de sleutel lag. De dominee was niet overtuigd, want die geloofde heilig in zijn sleutels. Omdat hij zich steeds arroganter opstelde heeft tante Connie hem even later het huis uitgezet. Ik bewaarde de sleutels sindsdien. Die waren veel te gevaarlijk in de handen van een dominee. De meiden aanbaden inmiddels Medusa aan haar voeten. De dominee was woedend en noemde hen afgodendienaars. Ze waren niet meer welkom in zijn stad. Het bleek dat hij ook nog eens de burgemeester was. Medusa begon trouwens door deze aanbidding ook steeds meer te eisen. Haar voeten moesten gekust worden, anders zou ze alles vertrappen. Ik had allang spijt dat ik haar had verlost, maar het kwam allemaal door die sleutels. Op een gegeven moment was ik het zo zat dat ik de sleutels inslikte. Maar sindsdien ging het niet goed met mij. Ik begon zelf een Medusa te worden. Wie had dat ooit durven dromen dat ik ooit de god der wrake zou worden. Het liep uit op een gevecht met de andere Medusa om de macht. De Medusa begon een gevaarlijk mechanisme te worden. Voordat het nog erger zou worden besloot ik een volgende vliegtocht te beginnen. Ditmaal kwam ik in een andere stad met de hoogste gebouwen. Een oud vrouwtje deed haar raam open, en nodigde mij uit. Toen ik haar het verhaal over de sleutels vertelde scheen ze mij te kunnen helpen. Zij was namelijk een heks. Ik moest een bepaald kruidendrankje drinken, en dan zou ik de sleutels kunnen uitspuwen, en dan zou zij de sleutels omsmelten. Maar alles pakte anders uit. Het kruidendrankje werkte niet. Ik had de krachten van Medusa. Ik was immuun tegen hekserij. Ik moest onder ogen komen dat ik in een monster aan het veranderen was.

Ik strompelde naar de uitgang van deze tuin. Ik had het in zicht nu, en greep naar mijn buik. Ook al verdween de uitgang en de buitenste heg in het niets, en leek het alsof het verder van me af begon te liggen, ik liep toch door. Ik greep om me heen als tastende in het donker. Ik greep het touw mij toegeworpen. Een vriendelijk vrouwengezicht keek me aan. Rozensappen dropen in een fles. Ik hoorde gegorgel en gezang. Bloedende tuinen, zover het oog reikt, vermengd met regen, waar het oog van Medusa over waakt. Het koren dat het goud omhoog haalt, het licht der sterren weerkaatsende, haar vrucht wordt vastgehouden. Medusa waakt. Het houten huis kraakt onder het getal van de lelies. Hier heeft ze haar woning. Hier voedt zij haar raadsel, haar mysterie, waar prinsen op paarden al eeuwen naar zoeken. Nee, zij zullen niet vinden, want Medusa waakt over haar geheim. Haar kroning was een bespotting. Haar lijden was een ontmaskering, maar niemand is ooit tot haar parel gekomen, niemand heeft ooit haar zwaard gedragen. Allen sterven zij door een blik op haar te slaan. Tot steen werden zij in alle eeuwigheden. Haar discipel is zoek, haar beker

verloren. Zij heeft haarzelf nog nooit gezien. Zou zij het weten, dan zou zij sterven, daarom weet zij maar half. De rozengrachten hier zijn vol met parels. De mensen hier weten dat Medusa een geheim heeft, alleen ze kennen het niet. Ze hebben er alleen een glimp van opgevangen, en die glimp heeft hen voor altijd verblind.

Ik zit op mijn houten paard, mij hobbelpaard van vroeger, met mijn lange speer, mijn lans. ‘Open de poort,’ roep ik, maar alles zwijgt. Ik vlieg hoog, over de muur heen, maar hier is niks. De aarde is dus toch plat. Is dit het onverbiddelijke geheim van Medusa ? Ik stort hier uit alles wat ik nog in mijn hoofd heb, alle puinhopen, alles gaargebraden, en kijk in de enorme diepte. Nee, het is een ravijn. De aarde is gespleten. Een groot werk moet dat geweest zijn, met de schaar des hemels. Daar aan de overkant weten de mensen niet dat ze niet weten. Ik vlieg weer terug, en omhels mijn Medusa, en mijn meiden. ‘Ik ben aan de andere kant van de schaar geweest,’ zei ik. ‘Daar moeten we ook niet wezen. Vernietig alle spiegels. We staren wel in een glas wijn, met wijn van borsten-struiken.’ Ik strek mij uit. Ze zijn blij dat ik terug ben. Ik solliciteer bij de zeevaart. Ik waarschuw hen dat de aarde wel degelijk plat is, en dat verklaart ook waarom er zoveel schepen zijn gebleven. Ik word er kapitein. Als ik thuis ben speelt oom Joop vaak op het orgel. Maar ik ben niet veel thuis. Ik moet de zee afbakenen. Een hoge rand moet er gemaakt worden, waar niemand meer overheen kan tuimelen. Medusa is als een moeder die haar kinderen terugroept. Zij heeft de tuin gebouwd, en haar muren, en die moeten we eren, omdat het buiten veel erger is. Er is geen paradijs aan de andere kant van de heg, maar de heg spreekt tot de verbeelding. Ik zie nog meer paradijs in een pot pindakaas. Als ik thuis ben zijn de vrouwen blij, dan is het feest, maar een paradijs zal het nooit zijn, en hebben we dat wel nodig. We hebben toch elkaar.

Op een dag ga ik met de meiden voetballen op het pleintje. Via een tunnel komen we in een ander deel van de stad, in een winkelstraat. We slenteren door de straten. Ik neem hen mee naar de bakker, en koop wat special brood voor hen. Brood kan mij nooit te luxe zijn. Het is een levensnoodzaak. Bij de speelgoedwinkel wanen ze zich in het paradijs. Bij het tuinhek laten we alle zorgen achter ons. Voor de chocolade-winkel danst de vrouw van chocolade. Ze roept herinneringen bij me op, ze danst als een zwaan. We gaan de stoffige winkel binnen. Een grote notenkraker-eekhoorn staart ons aan. ‘Ja,’ zegt de winkelier, ‘veel noten altijd in de chocolade, we hebben een verdrag met de noten-industrie. We kregen dit beeld van hen, toch aardig, vindt u niet.’ Ik knikte. De meiden keken de man vriendelijk aan. We konden aan hem zien dat hij er blij van werd. ‘Ik zal u vertellen, ik ben mijn vrouw verloren,’ zei de winkelier. ‘Ik mis haar echt, en er is nu een zee van ruimte boven, want ze had zoveel spullen en die zijn allemaal in haar graf meegegaan. Komt u maar even mee, dan laat ik het u zien.’ Boven stond alles leeg. Ik staarde naar buiten, waar de chocolade-vrouw nog steeds danste. Ze was een zwerfster, en werd zo altijd genoemd.

Grote poppen van chocolade stonden in kasten. De man deed er erg zakelijk over, en kraste wat op papieren. Even later stonden we weer op straat. Aan het eind van de straat was een fontein. We zagen tante Connie lopen met een zware tas. ‘Tante Connie,’ riep ik. Ze had koffie gekocht, in allerlei soorten. Samen liepen we naar huis. Ik hielp haar de tas te dragen, en de meiden hielden ook wat spullen vast. Medusa wachtte ons op.

De Verslaving

Hij leefde alleen, diep in de natuur, eenzaam en verlaten. Hij leefde van giftige bessen die hem deden hallucineren. Dat was alles waarvan hij leefde. Hij leefde in tussen het morgenrood en avondrood. Vreemde natuurverschijnselen drongen zich aan hem op door de hallucinaties. Hij had naakte vrouwen in zijn hoofd die veranderden in wapenen. Het was altijd oorlog in zijn hoofd, als een oorlogstrauma. In de natuur was er geen plaats voor oorlog, maar de bessen maakten hem wild. Altijd was hij op zijn hoede, maar hij was geheel alleen. Als hij zich in het water waste dacht hij altijd dat het bloed was. Zijn hersenen waren zwaar aangetast door de bessen. Hij leefde in een hele andere realiteit. Als hij de bessen at dacht hij dat het vlees was van zijn prooi. Hij dacht dat hij een jager was, maar hij was half verlamd. Er waren hier geen dieren, alleen bessen. Er waren hier geen vrouwen, alleen dromen. De wilde bessen hadden bezit van hem genomen. En het waren geeneens bessen. Het was zaad, van een vreemde, wilde struik. Hij dacht dat het bessen waren. Het groeide in de bomen, overal door de wildernis. Als hij geen zaad had gegeten voelde hij zich eenzaam en depressief, en wilde hij niet meer leven, alhoewel hij de natuur steeds meer begon te bewonderen. En zo was de nieuwe realiteit in zijn hoofd een ziekte, maar het hielp hem te overleven. Hij was verslaafd aan verwoestende drugs, het giftige zaad van een boom.

Hij vond zijn ziekte mooi, hij aanbad zijn ziekte. Het was zijn kameraad. Hij voelde zich minder eenzaam als hij van het zaad had gegeten. De winters waren streng, en dan moest hij altijd onder de grond waar het zaad niet was. In de winters groeide het zaad niet, en dan hongerde hij uit, hebbende hallucinaties van de kou, maar ook de winters zelf waren slechts hallucinaties van het zaad.

Naakte vrouwen waren in zijn hallucinaties jacht gerei zodra hij dichterbij hen kwam. In zijn hoofd leefde hij van de jacht. Na de winter was hij te zwak om boven de grond te komen. Hij leefde van de aarde en zijn eigen urine. Zijn hersenen waren zo beschadigd dat hij bleef hallucineren. Hij hallucineerde over het zaad. De naakte vrouwen in zijn hoofd waren het zaad, maar hij wist dat het zaad giftig was en dat het zaad hem zou kunnen doden. Hij probeerde weg te komen van de naakte vrouwen, maar zij lieten hem niet gaan. Als hij probeerde te ontsnappen werd hij weer door hen gevangen in een wilde achtervolging. Hij was een verslaafde. De drugs liet hem niet meer gaan.

De Tuin Engel

Ze was gebonden aan de tuin. Buiten de tuin zou ze sterven.
Ik kwam haar alleen tegen in de tuin.
Het was een wonderschone tuin, dat wel,
De pracht van de stad ...

Ze had geheimen,
Ik wist niet welke,
Erover praten kon ze niet,
Altijd sliep ze in een stenen bed, ergens diep in de tuin,
En ook zijzelf was van steen, en soms een engel ...

De engel van de tuin werd ze genoemd,
Haar water had genezende krachten,
Diep in de tuin

Op een dag nam ze mij aan haar hand,
Tot de diepte van haar tuin,
Als een wildernis was het hier,
Niemand mocht hier ooit komen,
Ze tilde mij over het hek

Ze gebood me te rennen, en dat deed ik,
En plots was ik ook van steen,
Als betoverd door de tuin,
Ik kon de schoonheid niet dragen

Soms ben ik een engel, soms ben ik van steen,
En nu leef ik langs alles heen,
In een droom wereld leef ik nu,
Sinds de dag dat zij mij meenam ...

De Vijfde Rivier

Hij woonde op een onbewoond eiland en hij hallucineerde vanwege de honger waarin hij leefde. Alles wat hier op het eiland groeide was giftig, en hij durfde het niet te eten.
De honger visioenen werden erger en erger, maar ook hield het hem in leven op een vreemde manier. Het was alsof de giftige bessen en het giftige zaad om hem heen hem beschermde tegen de dood. In deze natuur waren er andere wetten. Je stierf niet door de honger, maar je kwam erdoor tot leven.

Ook dit was slechts een hallucinatie want hij was niet op een onbewoond eiland, maar in de woestijn van de honger planeet, die een woestijn planeet was.

Hij moest over vijf rivieren : de urine rivier, de tranen rivier, de rivier van slaap, de rivier des doods, en daarna de rivier van depressie. Toen hij over de rivier van depressie was gegaan, de vijfde rivier, zag hij donkere vrouwen aan de oever. Vissersvrouwen met netten, en ze haalden hem naar binnen. Ze deden alsof hij een vis was die ze hadden gevangen. Hij werd naar hun kamp geleid, en aan een paal gebonden. Hij was zwaar depressief. Hij wilde niet meer leven, maar het was alsof de vrouwen hem in leven hielden, alsof ze zijn medicijnen waren.

De medicijnen hadden zo hun bijwerkingen. Hij werd afhankelijk en zij lieten hem werken. Hij kwam echter niet vrij van zijn depressie. Het was alsof ze een gat in de markt hadden gevonden. Ze lieten hem ertussen hangen.

Ze hadden rokjes van veren, van de kippen van zijn gedachtes. Ze molken hem helemaal uit. Ze visten in de wateren van zijn depressies en trauma's, op zoek naar een reactie, als psychiaters op zoek naar geld, prikkende in zijn wonden. Hij was een patiënt die ze niet meer lieten gaan.

jan appelboom

Jan was veranderd in een appelboom. Hij wist niet hoe het kwam. Hij stond nu langs een weggetje, en riep telkens, maar niemand hoorde hem.

Hij dacht wat na, en toen wist hij het weer. Een heks had hem op een nacht iets gegeven, en toen had hij ervan gegeten. En die heks was zijn eigen moeder. Zijn vader was een bullebak van een reus. Hij wilde niet naar hen terug, maar een appelboom wilde hij ook niet zijn. Nu ja, het moest maar. Er zat niets anders op.

Op een dag kwam er een vrouw langs op een fiets. Ze stapte af en begon appels te plukken om ze in haar mandje te doen. 'Blijf van me af,' zei Jan, maar ze hoorde het niet.

Oh, dus appels willen de mensen hebben, dacht Jan bij zichzelf. Nou, die kunnen ze krijgen. Hij begon te blazen, te puffen en te hijgen, en begon supersnelle appels voort te brengen die overal om hem heen begonnen te vallen en te rollen. Van schrik fietste de vrouw weg, maar de appels kwamen achter haar aan. Het was een appel nachtmerrie.

'Nee, nee !' riep Jan. 'Ik wil geen appelboom zijn. Ik wil niet woest worden. Dat doet zo'n pijn.' En hij begon te jammeren, totdat hij wakker werd in zijn bed. 'Pfffff,' dacht hij. 'k Ben gelukkig toch geen appelboom.' Hij ging die dag fluitend naar school, en gaf de juffrouw een kus op haar wang. 'Zeg Jan, wat is er toch met jou gebeurd ?' vroeg de juffrouw.

'Ach juffrouw,' zei Jan, 'k ben zo blij dat ik geen appelboom ben.'

Daar moest de juffrouw wel even om lachen. 'Mallerd,' zei ze, 'natuurlijk ben jij geen appelboom. Waarom zou je dat denken ?'

'Ach,' zei Jan, 't had toch zo kunnen gebeuren. Ik had er vannacht immers over gedroomd.'

'Ja, dromen zijn dromen, die zijn niet echt,' zei de de juffrouw.

'Ik moet u iets vertellen,' zei Jan.

'Wat is het, Jan !' vroeg de juffrouw.

'Dat slechte rapport, hè, zou dat de reden zijn waarom ik zo naar heb gedroomd ?' vroeg Jan.

'Ik denk dat je teveel televisie hebt gekeken,' zei de juffrouw.

'Ja, dat vooral,' zei Jan, 'en dat was ook de reden waarom ik zo'n slecht rapport had.'

'Voortaan beter doen dan, Jan,' zei de juffrouw.

Hij pakte de juffrouw vast. 'Juffrouw, wilt u met me dansen ?' vroeg Jan ineens. Hij begon aan haar te trekken alsof ze een pop was.

Niet doen Jan, zei de juffrouw. Maar Jan hield niet op. Hij begon met haar te dansen, geheel tegen haar wil. Ze begon toen om hulp te roepen. 'Was je maar een appelboom, Jan,' zei de juffrouw. 'Dat is beter dan dit.'

'Nee, veel erger,' zei Jan. 'Ik was zo kwaad. Ik begon zoveel appels voort te brengen en ik bedolf de hele wereld onder appels.'

'Toe Jan, doe dat niet met mij,' zei de juffrouw. Ze smeekte hem, en ze had een vuurrood hoofd.
'Wat had ik alweer voor cijfers juffrouw ?' vroeg Jan.

'Hele goeien,' zei de juffrouw. 'Laat me daarom nu maar los.'

'Dat gaat zomaar niet,' zei Jan.

'Dan ga ik je vader bellen,' zei de juffrouw, 'en de politie.'

'Jij gaat niks,' zei Jan. 'Jij gaat dansen, met mij.'

'Jan, ik ben je onderwijzeres, niet je danspartner,' zei de juffrouw.

'Dat bepaal ik zelf nog wel,' zei Jan. Hij draaide allemaal rondjes met haar en het ging steeds harder.

'Toe dan, Jan, we vliegen straks uit de bocht,' zei de juffrouw.

'Niks mee te maken,' zei Jan.

De juffrouw begon nog harder om hulp te roepen.

'Nee, nee !' riep Jan. 'Ik wil dit niet zijn !' En hij begon te jammeren, en werd toen wakker in bed, helemaal bezweet. 'Weer een droom,' zei Jan. 'Oh ja, ik ben ziek.'

Zijn moeder kwam binnen met melk en koekjes.

'Weg met die troep,' zei hij. 'Ik wil niks meer van je hebben.'

'Waarom niet ?' zei zijn moeder. 'Je bent ziek.'

'Je bent een heks,' zei Jan. 'Ik wil hier trouwens niet wezen.'

'Maar je bent ziek,' zei zijn moeder. 'Je moet binnen blijven en wat eten en drinken.'

'Je kan de pot op !' riep Jan, en hij sprong zo door het raam heen, en rende het bos in. 'Weg, ik moet weg van hier.' zei Jan tegen zichzelf, terwijl hij bleef rennen. Maar weer begon hij te veranderen in een appelboom, en ditmaal was hij nog woester dan tevoren, allemaal op zijn moeder. Hij begon te blazen, te hijgen en te puffen, en weer bracht hij supersnel appels voort die van de boom begonnen te vallen, en richting het huis waar hij vandaan kwam te rollen. 'Goedzo,' dacht hij. 'Ik zal ze bedelven onder appels.' Maar zijn woede deed hem pijn, en hij begon weer te roepen. 'Nee, nee !' riep hij. Maar dit keer werd hij niet wakker. Waarschijnlijk droomde hij dit keer dan niet, of was het echt een hele lange droom. Hij begon te groeien en te groeien, boven de wolken uit, en begon de appels uit te storten in de wereld onder hem. 'Ik ben die wereld zat, en die dromen van mij !' riep hij. Nog steeds werd hij niet wakker. 'Die vuile heks,' dacht hij. 'Die heeft dit allemaal op haar geweten.' En hij begon ook appels uit te spuwen. Hij werd woester en woester, alsof hij ontplofte. Hij blaaste zichzelf zo enorm op, en dan spoot hij de appels voort. Hij was in oorlog met de wereld. Maar ja, beter dan kogels.

Toen werd Jan toch weer wakker. Hij was helemaal bezweet. Oh ja, gelukkig. Hij woonde niet meer bij zijn vader en moeder. Hij woonde bij zijn juffrouw nu, en die was heel aardig. Hij liep naar haar kamer. Hij voelde zich ziek. Hijgend en puffend ging hij haar kamer binnen. 'Heb je naar gedroomd ? vroeg ze.

'Ja, hoe raad je het,' zei hij. 'Ik was een appelboom, en toen ging alles mis.' Ze ging naar hem toe, en nam hem in haar armen. Toen begon ze hem te sussen. 'En het ging weer over mijn vader en moeder,' zei hij.

'Ze zijn dood,' zei de juffrouw. 'Ik ben nu je moeder.'

Hij glimlachte. 'En je bent geen appelboom,' zei ze, 'mallerd.'

'Ik droomde ook dat we ruzie hadden, jij en ik,' zei hij. 'Ik dwong je om met me te dansen. Ik kon me niet inhouden. Ik kon niet stoppen. Totdat ik nee, nee riep, en toen werd ik wakker, terwijl ik eigenlijk nog steeds sliep.'

'Mijn liefde is mijn woord,' zei de juffrouw. 'Mijn liefde is de tuchtigende kennis. Mijn liefde is de honger, want er staat zoveel overmaat op de loer, en overmaat schaadt.'

'Je had predikant moeten worden,' zei Jan.

'Dat ben ik ook,' zei de juffrouw.

'Leidt me dan door dit tranendal,' zei Jan, 'want ik begrijp er niks meer van.'

'Je moet de honger leren kennen,' zei de juffrouw.

de dompteur

Er was circus in de stad. Een dompteur moet altijd genoeg afstand houden, ook van de circus bezoekers. Ook van zijn familie. Het is een gevaarlijk beroep. Levensgevaarlijk.

De dompteur stond bij zijn leeuwen. Hij gooide ze telkens wat voedsel toe om ze rustig te houden. Dat ging niet altijd goed, en dan moest hij wel zijn zweep gebruiken.

Karel was dompteur.
Had zijn handen vol eraan.

Op een dag kwam zijn grootmoeder hem opzoeken.
Ook die moest hij temmen.
Ze was gevaarlijk als een leeuw.
Hij moest haar telkens iets toegooien, en als dat niet goed ging zijn zweep gebruiken.
Hij kwam uit een gevaarlijke familie.
Hij was ontsnapt, maar ze stalkten hem nog steeds.
Hij kwam maar niet van ze af, maar hij kon ze wel temmen als dompteur.

Hij gaf haar wat geld, en toen moest ze van hem opdonderen.
Dat wilde ze niet, dus toen begon hij geweld te gebruiken.
Zo ging dat vaak met familie.
Maar ja, circus artiesten zijn ook nomaden, dus ze trekken altijd weer verder, en ditmaal wilde de dompteur zo ver gaan dat zijn familie hem niet meer zou volgen.
Het circus stemde in, en daar gingen ze.
Ze gingen de grens over, en traden op in totaal ander gebied.
Ze gingen landen binnen waar een strenge controle was, waarvoor ze allerlei ingewikkelde papieren en vergunningen vor nodig hadden, en zo kon zijn familie hem dus niet volgen.
Dat was dus jammer voor hen, maar voor hem was het winst. Hij was immers dompteur.

Op een dag kwam zijn dochter hem opzoeken.
'Hoe ben jij hier allemaal doorheen gekomen ?' vroeg hij.
Hij was helemaal verbaasd.
'Mamma kent de koningin van het land,' zei ze. 'Zij heeft wat kunnen regelen.'

'Nou, zeg dan maar wat je wil worden in het circus,' zei hij.

'Een clown,' zei ze.

'Nou,' zei hij. 'Dat komt goed uit. We hebben nog een clown nodig.'

Maar het ging helemaal fout. Iedereen schudde altijd zijn hoofd als ze opkwam. Het zat niet in haar bloed. Ze wilde toen een bloem zijn, en liep rond met een bloemenpak aan met een grote bloem op haar hoofd als muts. De mensen vonden het prachtig. Het circus trok velen aan die de prachtige bloem wilden zien. Op een dag kwamen ook haar moeder kijken, en de koningin.

Op een dag nam de dompteur haar in zijn caravan, en gaf haar wat geld. 'Hier, bouw je eigen circus maar,' zei hij tegen haar.

Het was een hoop geld, maar daar kon ze een prachtig circus voor kopen en opbouwen.

Haar moeder wilde er ook in werken als bloem, en ook de koningin, en er was een hele optocht van bloemen, en ze trokken overal naartoe, door bergen en dalen. Het gaf ook wat rust voor de dompteur, want altijd maar weer lag de druk op zijn circus. Het was een goede afleiding en een keer wat anders.

Op een dag was de moeder van het meisje ook bij de dompteur in de caravan. Ook zij kreeg geld voor haar eigen circus. Dat gaf nog meer rust voor de dompteur.

de etalage pop

Ze kon zich niet bewegen. Ze was een etalage pop. Telkens moest ze hier maar staan. Niemand nam haar mee. Ze droomde van vrijheid, maar die kwam maar nooit. Ze wist niet eens hoe ze hier was gekomen. Ze keek vaak naar de voorbijgangers, en zag hen naar haar kijken. Ze wilde soms wat zeggen, maar kon het niet. Ze was immers een etalage pop. Op een dag was het oorlog in de stad. Er werd een steen door de ruiten gegooid en er was overal brand. Ineens merkte ze dat ze zich kon bewegen en nam direct de benen. Ze rende helemaal naar achteren, naar het magazijn. Toen de winkelier haar zag viel hij flauw. Ze rende door totdat ze uit het gebouw was. Hier was een tuin en achter de tuin was een hek waar ze overheen klom, en toen rende ze de wildernis in. Ze ontdeed haarzelf van al haar kleren en deed haar grote hoed af en gooide het weg. Ergens in een bosmeertje ging ze baden. Ze keek naar achteren. De stad was brandende. Ze wist niet hoe het kon, maar ze was vrij nu. Nu moest ze zien te overleven. Na een tijd lopen door het bos kwam ze bij een indianenkamp aan. Ze keken haar allemaal heel vreemd aan. 'Dit kan toch niet,' zei het opperhoofd. 'Ze lijkt wel op een pop.'

'Oh, daar heb ik wel wat voor,' zei de medicijnenman. Ze kreeg toen een soepje met kruiden. 'Ik kan me weer goed bewegen,' zei ze toen. 'Ik voel me helemaal geen pop meer.'

'Je ziet er ook niet meer als een pop uit,' zei de medicijnman glimlachend. 'De natuur weet altijd wel raad met dit soort dingen.'

'Moet ik niet terug ?' vroeg ze, terwijl ze naar achteren keek.

'Nee,' zei de medicijnman, 'je kan hier wel blijven.'

'Oh goed,' zei ze, 'want ik wil helemaal niet terug.'

'Er is ook geen weg meer terug,' zei de medicijnman. 'De stad is afgebrand.'

'En er zijn geen andere steden ?' vroeg ze.

'Nee,' zei de medicijnman, 'ook allemaal afgebrand.'

'Hoe kwam dat ?' vroeg ze.

De medijnman haalde zijn schouders op. 'Ze maken elkaar allemaal af daar.'

'I … ik kan hier niet blijven,' stamelde ze. 'Ik voel me weer als een pop.' Ze stond op en rende terug het bos in, richting de brandende stad, en rende toen zo het vuur in.

'Ah, vuur !' riep ze, terwijl ze begon te branden. 'Eindelijk vrij.'

De medicijnman en het opperhoofd waren haar gevolgd. 'Wat doe je nu !' riep het opperhoofd, terwijl ze zag dat de medicijnman hem aanstootte. 'Ik ben vrij nu !' riep ze.

'Ja, maar je brandt !' riep het opperhoofd. Weer zag ze hoe de medicijnman hem aanstootte.

Haar poppenvlees begon weg te smelten. Eronder was niets dan metaal. Het was vuurvast metaal. 'Ik ben ook niet kapot te krijgen !' riep ze.

'Wacht hier maar !' riep de medicijnman. Na een tijd plofte ze vermoeid neer in het zand. De medicijnman begon haar uit elkaar te schroeven. 'Wat doe je nu ?' vroeg het opperhoofd. Weer stootte de medicijnman hem aan. 'Ik ben bezig,' zei de medicijnman.

Ze sprak niet meer, zoals ze eerst niet sprak. Dit was wat er van haar was overgebleven, en de medicijnman was nog niet klaar. Hij begon haar helemaal opnieuw te maken. Ze was nu een donkere vrouw en leek op een indiaan. Maar de medicijnman schudde zijn hoofd. 'Nee, nee, dat is het niet,' zei hij. Hij begon haar weer uit elkaar te schroeven en gooide de onderdelen stuk voor stuk in een rivier dichtbij waar krokodillen waren. Die lustten de onderdelen wel, en konden het ook verteren. 'Wat heb je nu gedaan ?' riep het opperhoofd in paniek. 'Je hebt haar omgebracht !'

'Welnee,' zei de medicijnman. 'Ze was maar een pop.'

'Misschien ben jij ook wel een pop,' zei het opperhoofd. 'Je lijkt wel gek.'

'Prik er eens in,' zei de medicijnman.

Waarin ?' vroeg het opperhoofd.

'Nou, in mijn huid, dan zie je of ik een pop ben of niet,' zei de medicijnman.

Voorzichtig stak het opperhoofd met een scherp voorwerp in de huid van de medicijnman. Die gaf

geen kik.

'Je bent een pop,' zei het opperhoofd.

Ook het indianendorp was inmiddels gaan branden vanwege de vele bosbranden die vanuit de stad waren gekomen. Het opperhoofd keek om zich heen, en zag overal rook. 'En wat heb ik aan je als je slechts een pop bent ? En nog een gevaarlijke pop ook,' zei het opperhoofd. 'Misschien moet ik jou dan ook maar aan de krokodillen voeren.'

'Schroef me dan wel eerst uit elkaar,' zei de medicijnman.

'Wat ?' vroeg het opperhoofd. 'Ben je gek geworden ?'

Ineens kwam de vrouw uit het water. 'Hoe kan dat ?' vroeg het opperhoofd. 'Ik dacht dat je door krokodillen was opgevreten ?'

'Ze hebben me weer uitgespuwd,' zei de vrouw.

'Waarom ?' vroeg het opperhoofd, 'en ben je nu geen pop meer dan ?'

'Nou ja, het metaal hebben ze gegeten,' zei de vrouw. 'Maar ik ben meer dan het metaal. Ik zat in het metaal opgesloten.'

'Pardon, pardon,' zei het opperhoofd. 'Ik had van deze zaken geen verstand. Ik heb u verkeerd beoordeeld medicijnman.'

'In het vervolg dan je bek houden,' zei de medicijnman, 'en laat alles aan de experts over.'

'Begrepen,' zei het opperhoofd. 'En omdat ik me zo stom heb gedragen ben jij vanaf nu het opperhoofd,' zei hij tegen de medicijnman.

'Laat dat deze vrouw maar wezen,' zei de medicijnman.

En toen hebben ze samen het indianendorp weer opgebouwd.

zomerliefde

Ze gaf hem een laatste kus, en toen moesten ze gaan. De vakantie zat er weer op. Hij zou weer teruggaan naar zijn eigen land, en zij zou teruggaan naar Amsterdam. Het was een mooie zomervakantie geweest. Ja, ze hadden wel adressen uitgewisseld. Ze zouden elkaar schrijven. Maar

ja, hoe vaak kwam dat er echt van met vakantie liefdes ? Vaak was het uit het oog uit het hart. Het dagelijkse leven had genoeg aan zichzelf.

Wel zei ze nog tegen hem : 'Je mag me wel een keer komen opzoeken in Amsterdam.' Hij dacht dat het een grapje was.

Toen ze thuis was was ze hem eigenlijk alweer vergeten. Het normale leven begon weer. Ze moest weer naar die rotschool ook. Pas na een week dacht ze weer aan hem, en besloot hem te schrijven. Gewoon een kort briefje. Na een maand kreeg ze een antwoord terug. Ook een heel kort briefje. Hij schreef over zijn hondje. Ook dat hij een gedicht voor haar had geschreven, maar hij durfde haar het niet te schrijven. Het was een geheimpje ook. Hierdoor was ze wel vertederd en eigenlijk kon ze sinds toen alleen nog maar aan hem denken. Eigenlijk dacht ze niet eens zoveel aan hemzelf dan, maar aan dat gedichtje. Wat zou erin staan ? Waarom deed hij er zo geheimzinnig over, en waarom durfde hij het haar niet te schrijven ?

Ze schreef weer een kort briefje terug waarin ze hem probeerde over te halen om het gedichtje voor haar op te schrijven, want ze was erg nieuwsgierig, en het dreef haar gek. In het korte briefje begon ze toen ook heel geheimzinnig te doen, iets wat ze hem wilde vertellen. Eigenlijk probeerde ze hem een soort ruil aan te bieden. Hij moest haar zijn geheim vertellen, dan zou zij haar geheim vertellen. pas na twee maanden kreeg ze een antwoord terug. Hij schreef dat zijn hondje dood was, en dat hij eigenlijk alleen maar aan het hondje moest denken, en dat het hem depressief had gemaakt. 'Hij is ook zo gevoelig, met een goed hart,' dacht ze. Dat trok haar erg in hem aan. Ze schreef toen een brief terug, iets langer om hem op te vrolijken, maar daar kreeg ze nooit geen antwoord meer op. Ze begon zich zorgen te maken, maar door haar eigen zorgen van de dag moest ze toch verder leven, en begon ze hem uiteindelijk te vergeten. Jaren gingen voorbij.

Heel soms dacht ze nog wel eens terug aan haar zomerliefde. Ze wist dat zomerliefdes eigenlijk nauwelijks standhielden. Op een dag las ze over een zanger die naar Amsterdam zou komen, uit het buitenland. Toen ze de naam las dacht ze : 'Maar dat is hem, mijn vakantie liefde. Waarom heeft hij nooit meer wat van zich laten horen ?' Ze wilde hem zien, en ging naar het concert. Ze ging vooraan zitten, zodat ze hem goed kon zien. Toen hij opkwam leek hij haar niet aan te kijken. Het was mooie muziek, dat wel. Ze had er een brok van in haar keel. 'Waarom, waarom ?' dacht ze telkens, terwijl ze ook wist dat zomerliefdes meestal gewoon verwaterden. Opeens ergens midden in een lied keek hij haar recht in de ogen. Er gleed even een warmte door haar heen. Zou hij haar herkennen ? Het was al vele jaren geleden. Ze was zoveel ouder geworden, volwassener. Hij bleef maar naar haar kijken. Toen kwam hij ook nog naar haar toe, en zong verder tegen haar, en nam haar hand. Hij ging gewoon het publiek in. 'Waarom,' fluisterde ze in zijn oor met tranen in haar ogen. Toen liet hij haar hand weer los en ging terug op het podium om het liedje af te maken, en begon toen met het volgende liedje. Het liedje ging over een zomerliefde, over hoeveel hij van haar hield, maar dat hij haar los moest laten. Hij zong over zijn depressies, dat het hem gek dreef, en dat hij pillen begon te slikken die rare dingen met zijn hoofd deden. Hij wilde haar hier niet doorheen laten gaan. Hij wilde dat ze mooie herinneringen aan hem had. Hij wilde haar er niet mee belasten. Ze keek hem aan met tranen in haar ogen. Dit ging over haar. Hij keek weer naar haar.

Na het concert ging ze naar hem toe. Hij nam haar naar de kleedkamer. 'Kom met me mee naar huis,' zei ze. 'Je hebt me nu eindelijk na al die jaren je gedicht verteld, je geheim, en nu zal ik je mijn geheim vertellen.' Toen ze in haar huis waren keek ze hem aan. 'Ik wilde je vroeger ook wat vertellen, namelijk dat het mijn droom was een nachtzuster te worden, en ik wilde beginnen een nachtzuster te zijn voor jou. Ik had het je moeten schrijven, maar ik wist niet hoe. Ik was misschien net als jij te jong om alles in me uit te drukken.'

Einde

de gulle bliksem

Ik was de baas van een zwemparadijs.
De gulle bliksem werd ik genoemd.
Ik bracht er daklozen en armen in onder, en kapotte families.
Zo ook mijn eigen familie.
Maar omdat ik het nogal druk had met mijn werk was ik er nooit.
En dan maar verhalen over mij verzinnen, pure roddel.
Ik zou dit zijn, en ik zou dat zijn.
Ik leefde in de hemel, was een opgenomene, en had deze hemel gemaakt, maar nog was het niet goed genoeg voor hen. Het was nooit goed.
Op een dag kwam ik binnen op hun feest.
Ik confronteerde hen met het feit hoe ze over mij hadden gelogen, en dat ze mij moesten rectificeren. Ik zei : Weten jullie dan niet wie ik ben ?
Ik ben de bliksem.
Ze kenden mij niet omdat ik er nooit was.
Het had iets met het verleden te maken. Deze mensen waren levensgevaarlijk.
En maar over mij roddelen en fantaseren om de gaten op te vullen.
Ik ben de bliksem, zei ik. Onthoud het goed. En toen ging ik er weer als de bliksem vandoor.
Nu hadden ze weer wat om over te roddelen, want dat zouden ze weer helemaal verkeerd gaan uitleggen, zoals ze dat altijd deden, wat ik ook zei, en daarom sprak ik bijna niet meer.
Ik had geen zin om russisch roulette te spelen.
Ik was de baas van een zwemparadijs.
Ik was de gulle bliksem.

de schat met het bijen alarm

Jan Hielke woonde in het stadje Lagerhorst waar zijn vader chirurgijn was. Jan Hielke sjouwde rond met een tv, op een kar. Dat had zijn vader hem opgedragen om de mensen op te vrolijken tijdens de epidemie, want zijn vader had het veel te druk. Er kwamen veel te veel mensen bij hem, en hij werd erdoor overspoeld. Daarom moest Jan Hielke voor wat afleiding zorgen, en zijn vader zei tegen hem dat hij ook maar flink de zot moest uithangen. Maar Jan Hielke had hier helemaal geen zin in. Hij haatte de stad en z'n gierige mensen. Daarom vertrok hij stilletjes naar het bos met zijn tv op de kar. Ergens diep in het bos woonde een heks, heks Zotz. Ze stonk altijd, en maakte van alles een rotzooitje. Daarom ging eigenlijk niemand naar het bos. Het was er erg rustig. Wel dumpten ze al hun vuilnis in het bos.

Het terrein van heks Zotz werd bewaakt door bijen, die nogal erg agressief konden worden. Jan Hielke moest dus op zijn hoede zijn. Heks Zotz scheen ook een schat te bewaken, maar grotendeels zorgden de bijen voor de bewaking. Heks Zotz was nogal een luie heks. De stank kwam Jan Hielke tegemoet, maar hij zette gewoon door. Op een gegeven moment was hij omringd door bijen. Ze begonnen hem overal te prikken. Maar Jan Hielke liep gewoon door. Het was immers beter dan te zijn in de stad Lagerhorst. Moet je je voorstellen wat een vreselijke stad het moet zijn geweest, nog erger dan de stank en de bijen hier, en een heks in de buurt. Maar ja, Jan Hielke dacht ook aan de schat. Dat moest toch wel iets heel bijzonders zijn, dus hij nam het geprik en de stank maar op de koop toe, en alle rotzooi die hij zag. Toen hij bij de heks was aangekomen lag ze in bed. Ze was ziek. Zij was ook platgeslagen door de epidemie en ze was verbaasd dat hij gewoon rechtop stond.

'Wat kom je doen ?' krijste ze.

'Even kijken of alles in orde met u is,' zei Jan Hielke.

'Ja, daar ben je de zoon van de chirurgijn voor,' kraste de heks. 'Verder nog iets te melden ?'

'Niet veel,' zei Jan Hielke.

't Is zeker niet goed in de stad,' kraste de heks. 'Je zegt niet veel. Of kom je voor mijn schat ?'

'Eigenlijk wel, ja,' zei Jan Hielke. 'Wat is het voor een schat ?'

'Oh, niets bijzonders,' kraste de heks. 'Allemaal rotzooi.'

'Ja, ja,' zei Jan Hielke, en ging door een deur verder het gebouw in waar de heks woonde.

'Niet naar de keuken gaan, daar staat de schat, en 't is vol met bijen,' kraste de heks.

'Bedankt voor de tip,' zei Jan Hielke. 'Wat is het voor schat ?'

'Zoals ik al zei : allemaal rotzooi,' zei de heks.

'Waarom bewaak je het dan, en waarom is het in de keuken ?' vroeg Jan Hielke. 'Geen wonder dat je er ziek van wordt.'

'Och, ik houd van rotzooi,' zei de heks. 't Heeft veel waarde voor me, veel meer dan de troep van de stad.'

'Ik zit ook zo in elkaar,' zei Jan Hielke, 'maar die stank hier is niks.'

'Beter dan de stank van de stad,' zei de heks.

'Oh, auto stank, dat is waar,' zei Jan Hielke.

'En giftige medicijnen stank, fabrieks stank, en wat voor stank dan nog meer,' zei de heks.

'Dat is ook weer waar,' zei Jan Hielke.

'Nou, we kunnen het dus best goed met elkaar vinden,' zei de heks.

'Ik denk het niet,' zei Jan Hielke, en liep toen door. Hij hoorde de heks krijsen. Deze gang was heel gammel en lang, en de vloer kraakte onder zijn voeten. Toen werd hij weer gestoken, maar ditmaal veel harder. En het begon in zijn haar te zitten, en handen begonnen uit de muren te komen om aan hem te trekken, en voeten kwamen uit de muur om hem te schoppen. Verder kon hij het niet goed zien, want het was nogal donker. Hij besloot maar te rennen, maar het werd erger en erger, en hij hoorde hard geschreeuw recht van voren naar hem toekomen. Hij wist niet hoe snel hij zich toen moest omdraaien om hier weg te komen en weg van die heks, terug naar zijn kar met de tv, en terug naar Lagerhorst. Maar ook dat beviel hem niet, maar hij moest. Of toch niet ?

Hij klikte de tv aan en hoorde wonderlijke verhalen over een wereld onder de grond. En toen is hij daar maar naartoe gegaan.

Einde

de schat met het bijen alarm 2

Toen Jan Hielke in de wereld onder de grond was aangekomen was het niet zoals de verhalen op de tv. Het was hier nog wel smeriger als bij de heks, en er waren ook weer allemaal bijen, of misschien moest hij nog dieper. Hij had al een uur gelopen door een tunnel, en was toen ergens een pijp ingedaald. Het was hier verder wel puur natuur, maar weer alsof er hier allemaal vuilnis was uitgestort, en misschien kwam het wel van boven, van de stad, of van de heks. Jan Hielke moest zijn neus dichtknijpen. Een hele grote bij staarde naar hem van achter een boom. Die bij was wel bijna net zo groot als Jan Hielke.

De bij zag er bijna net uit als een mens. 'Ik heb ook nog een zus,' zei de bij.

'Wie ben je ?' vroeg Jan Hielke verbaasd.

'De bijenkoningin, maar zeg maar gerust 'u'.'

Ze kwam toen op hem af om hem te steken. Er gleed een sapje over hem heen. Toen reikte ze hem een spiegel aan. Het was een koninklijke spiegel omringd door goud. 'Kijk !' brulde ze. Jan Hielke kon bijna niet praten van de pijn van het steken, en keek in de spiegel. Hij zag er witter uit dan normaal.

'Een stuk schoner,' zei de bijenkoningin. 'Ik heb je goed gewassen.'

'Het is hier anders niet schoon,' stamelde Jan Hielke. 'Het is hier nog wel een grotere rotzooi dan boven de grond.'

'Dat lijkt maar zo,' zei de bijenkoningin. 'Zo moet je het niet zien.'

'Maar ze dumpen de vuilnis hier ?' vroeg Jan Hielke, die weer een beetje kon spreken na al het gesteek en geprik.

'Nou ja,' zei de bijenkoningin. 'Waar haal je het vandaan.'

Jan Hielke wees op de vuilnis, en op de pijp waaruit hij was gekomen. 'Ga er dichterbij staan,' zei de bijenkoningin. Ze reikte hem wat vuilnis aan, maar Jan Hielke sprong direct naar achteren. 'Nee, nee, doe weg,' riep hij.

'Kijk !' riep de bijenkoningin. 'Ik gebied je te kijken.'

Ineens kreeg hij een duw van achteren van een andere grote bij, die ook bijna zo groot was als hem. 'Kijk !' riep de bij achter hem. Hij keek toen naar het vuilnis en zag spul van goud. De bijenkoningin begon het op zijn handen te wrijven en op zijn gezicht. 'Je kan het zelfs eten, zo schoon is het !' gilde ze bijna.

'Wat is er met mijn ogen gebeurd ?' vroeg hij. 'Ik zou zweren dat het eerst vuilnis was, troep, vuil.'

'Je moet niet zoveel dromen,' zei de bij achter hem. Toen duwden ze hem richting een kooi en stopten hem daar in. 'Gevaarlijke types zoals jou horen hier thuis,' zeiden ze.

'Gevaarlijk ?' vroeg hij.

'Ja, levensgevaarlijk,' zeiden ze. 'Je zou leugens verspreiden over ons heilige goud, onze honing.'

Hij kreeg niks te eten in zijn kooi, wat zo erg werd, dat hij uiteindelijk maar datgene begon te eten wat ze op zijn handen en gezicht hadden gesmeerd, deze hemelse honing. Het smaakte nog lekker ook. Weer hielden ze hem een spiegel voor na een hele lange tijd, en hij zag er heel anders uit, bijna als een bij.

'Zit die spiegel me nu voor de gek te houden ?' vroeg hij.

Maar ze zeiden niks, en vlogen weg. De honing was op. Hij moest hier weg. Hij kon niet voor altijd in deze kooi blijven. Lange tijd ging voor bij, en niemand kwam om hem eruit te halen. Maar terug naar de stad wilde hij niet, en ook niet terug naar de heks. Het was alleen zo anders dan hij zich er van had voorgesteld. Het was anders dan op tv, of misschien moest hij nog dieper onder de grond gaan, maar hoe ? Hij begon op het vloertje van de kooi te springen. Het leek nog niet eens zo stevig, en na een tijdje begon hij er doorheen te zakken, en toen bleef hij maar glijden, als over honing, dieper en dieper. Oh, het was hemels. Totdat hij een plof hoorde. Waar was hij ? Hij was in een keuken, en er lag een taart op het aanrecht, met bijtjes er omheen. Er waren hele dunne witte kaarsjes op de taart met hele kleine vlammetjes. Hij kwam dichterbij de taart, maar besefte toen dat het misschien de keuken van de heks kon zijn ? Maar was dat niet boven ? De bijtjes begonnen te piepen, alsof er een alarm af begon te gaan. Was dit de schat van de heks ? En wat was het ? Het was hier niet rommelig. Het leek wel een koninklijke keuken. Het honing druipte van de muren. Hij wist dat hij nu voorzichtig moest zijn, erg voorzichtig. Hij wilde hier eigenlijk niks eten. Hij liep

toen stilletjes langs het aanrecht naar een deur. Toen hij de deur opendeed was er een soort huiskamer, en ze vierden een feestje, maar ze zagen hem niet. Er waren een vader en een moeder, met kinderen. Hij leek wel onzichtbaar.

Hij besloot toen terug te gaan om een andere deur in de keuken door te gaan. Die leidde naar een gang met een trap naar boven. Boven waren de slaapkamers. Er stonden ook boekenkasten in de slaapkamers. Hij begon tussen de boeken te kijken. Boeken vond hij altijd wel leuk, en ze wisten toch niet dat hij er was. Hij leek onzichtbaar. Al deze boeken gingen over honing. En de honing in de nacht werd tot vuilnis, als door een mysterie. En hij begon over het mysterie te lezen, maar de letters begonnen weg te vagen, alsof het boek nat was. Dat was zo bij alle boeken. Hij kwam niet ver. En piepende bijtjes waren om hem heen, heel klein. Wat moest hij nu doen ? Was het bijen alarm afgegaan ?

'Volg ons,' zeiden de bijtjes. En ze leidden hem de trap af, en toen gingen ze een kelder in, over een trap naar beneden. En hier stonden overal honing produkten, maar er lag ook een bril. 'Huh,' zei Jan Hielke. 'Die bril ken ik. Dat is de bril van mijn vader.'

'Iedereen die deze bril draagt ziet vuilnis, in plaats van smaad en haat,' zeiden de bijtjes, 'en iedereen die deze bril draagt ziet ook vuilnis in plaats van honing.'

'Kom,' zeiden de bijtjes weer, en ze gingen nog dieper de kelder in, en toen door een deur kwamen ze bij grote honing raten, als in een immens grote bijenkorf. De bijen waren hier zo groot als mensen, en ze waren allemaal heel ijverig en zagen hem niet.

'Kom,' zeiden de kleine bijtjes weer. 'Zij slapen en dromen.'
Toen moesten ze weer een trap af, en toen kwam hij weer tot de bijenkoningin en haar zuster. Maar ze bewogen niet. Ze stonden daar als standbeelden, in de natuur. Hij keek om zich heen. 'Ja, hier gingen de verhalen over op de tv,' zei hij.

Toen keek hij weer naar de standbeelden. 'Het zijn de twee deugnieten,' zeiden de kleine bijtjes. 'Het grootste deel van de tijd zijn ze als standbeelden, en alleen soms, heel soms, komen ze tot leven.'

'Vandaar dat ik zoveel honger leed,' zei Jan Hielke.

'Ze zijn betoverd door een heks,' zeiden de bijtjes.

'Ze zeiden dat ik gevaarlijk was,' zei Jan Hielke. 'Mijn ideeën.'

'Ze zijn zelf ook gevaarlijk,' zeiden de bijtjes, 'nog wel gevaarlijker dan jou.'

'Dat heb ik gemerkt,' zei Jan Hielke.

'Ze draaien alles om,' zeiden de bijtjes. 'Ze hebben een bril op.'

'Ik zag geen bril op hen,' zei Jan Hielke.

'Dat komt omdat jij ook een bril op hebt, dan zie je alles anders,' zeiden de bijtjes. 'Dan zie je soms niet eens dat iemand een bril op heeft, of dat je zelf een bril op hebt. Dat komt door die bril. Het draait alles om.'

'Leuk,' zei Jan Hielke. 'Niet leuk dus. Hoe weet je dan wat de waarheid is ?'

'Zoals we al zeiden,' zeiden de bijtjes : 'Iedereen die deze bril draagt ziet vuilnis, in plaats van smaad en haat, en iedereen die deze bril draagt ziet ook vuilnis in plaats van honing. Of net andersom. Zo ontstaan grote oorlogen. Zo ontstaan hele epidemieën.'

'Maar hoe weet ik dan wat de waarheid is ?' vroeg Jan Hielke weer.

'Wij zijn het bijen alarm,' zeiden de bijtjes, 'het alarm van de bril.'

'Maar hoe weet ik of jullie de waarheid spreken ?' vroeg Jan Hielke. 'Misschien hebben jullie ook wel zo'n bril op ? En is dit de schat van de heks ?'

'De schat van de heks is het alarm zelf,' zeiden de bijtjes. 'Ze heeft het eens geroofd, en je hebt ons nu teruggevonden, door je ijver en je volharding.'

'Maar hoe kan ik jullie geloven ?' vroeg Jan Hielke. 'Misschien wordt ik weer voor de zoveelste keer bedonderd en bedrogen ?'

Maar toen begonnen de bijtjes woest te worden, en begonnen hem te prikken en te steken. 'Dat mag je niet zeggen !' riepen ze.

'Wat heb ik gezegd ?' klaagde Jan Hielke. 'Ik zei alleen maar misschien. Ik vroeg het me af.'

De bijtjes begonnen hem te bijten en een sap op hem te spuiten. Ze waren in doldwaze woede.

'Ik denk dat nu toch echt het alarm is afgegaan, en ik kan nergens naartoe !' riep Jan Hielke. Alles was kleverig geworden. 'Wen er maar aan !' riepen de bijtjes en vlogen boos weg.

'Ik denk dat die bijtjes ook goed betoverd zijn,' zei Jan Hielke, 'maar ik waarschijnlijk ook, en het is hier bijna net als op tv. Och, had ik hier nog maar m'n tv, dan wist ik hoe het verder zou moeten gaan. Dan wist ik misschien beter wat er aan de hand is. Oh, had ik nu maar beter opgelet tijdens het tv kijken vroeger, en had ik maar meer tv gekeken. Dat zou erg van pas gekomen zijn. Ik ook weer en m'n domme ideeën.'

Jan Hielke kon maar niet loskomen van deze kleverige bende, en begon om hulp te roepen.

'Aan die standbeelden heb ik ook niks,' zei Jan Hielke. 'Die zijn ook onder een betovering, en zullen me waarschijnlijk nog meer mollen als ze wakker worden.'

Wat moest Jan Hielke nu doen ? Hij kon niets doen. Het was alsof hij zelf tot een standbeeld werd door deze kleverige bende op hem, dit vreemde sapje. Het was een soort honing. Zou het hem uiteindelijk verder helpen of nog meer in de problemen brengen ? Hij merkte dat hij begon te verstijven, en begon te draaien als een ballerina. Het leek alsof hij nu van goud was. Hij hoorde zachte muziek op de achtergrond. Hij werd er rustig van, en het leek alsof hij in slaap begon te tollen, begon te dromen, maar ook begon hij te dansen, te draaien. En bijtjes begonnen om hem heen te draaien, als een alarm. Was hij nu zelf ook een schat geworden die bewaakt moest worden ? Nee, het alarm was de schat, maar het was onbekend of het alarm het wel goed deed, want waarschijnlijk was het alarm betoverd.

'Ik heb in ieder geval mijn best gedaan, en ik heb een goed geweten,' zei Jan Hielke tegen zichzelf.

'Jan Hielke !' riep iemand.
Het was heks Zotz, en ze kwam op een fiets naar hem toe.

'Ik ben weer beter,' zei de heks.

Jan Hielke keek nog eens beter naar de heks terwijl hij draaide, maar het was helemaal geen heks. Het was een gapend gat in de grond waardoor hij een afgrond zag met een diepere ondergrondse wereld.

'Verbeeld ik me alles nu ?' zei Jan Hielke tegen zichzelf. 'Het is als een inktvlek waarin ik vele dingen kan zien. Maar ik ben mogelijk onder een betovering, of misschien is het wel helemaal niet zo. Misschien kan ik ook wat anders zien in deze inktvlek. Misschien heb ik vroeger wel veel teveel tv gekeken. Maar al met al ben ik nu hier, en kan ik niet stoppen met draaien.'

En hij probeerde naar zichzelf te kijken, als naar een inktvlek, en hij zag ineens dat hij helemaal niet bewoog. Was alles niet slechts gezichtsbedrog ? Maar hoe gevaarlijk kon dat dan wel niet zijn ? Of was het allemaal heel medicinaal ? Hij keek naar de bijtjes, het alarm. Misschien was dit ook wel gezichtsbedrog, maar er moest een alarm zijn. Er moest wel iets zijn om je te stoppen als je heel erg zou doordraven, iets om je terug te roepen, al was het alleen al om te testen of je wel echt vastbesloten was, volhardend op het goede pad wat je had gezien. Hij wilde het onderste uit de kan hebben. Het had zoveel mogelijkheden, en daarvan wilde hij het beste niet missen.

Einde

de bijenkorf

Ik ging weer eens terug naar een wereld die ik eens achterliet, en belde aan bij het huis waar ik toen woonde. Een vrouw of meisje deed open. Ze leek een beetje op een bij. Ze zei : 'Hallo, wie ben je ?'

Ik zei : 'Ken je me dan niet meer ? Ik weet trouwens ook niet wie jij bent. Het is al zo lang geleden, of misschien wonen hier inmiddels andere mensen.'

Ze zei : 'Mallerd, kom maar binnen.'

Ik ging naar binnen en volgde haar door de gang.

'Dus je hebt hier gewoond,' zei ze, 'en hoe lang was dat geleden ?'

Ik keek naar het meisje of de vrouw, nog steeds niet wetende of ze nu een meisje of een vrouw was, maar dat deed er eigenlijk ook niet toe. Ik ging toen ergens zitten. 'Ik heb geen idee meer, lang geleden in ieder geval.'

'Nou ja,' zei ze, 'daar schieten we dus niks mee op. Je hebt je geheugen verloren ofzo ? Ik ken je in ieder geval niet, dus het moet wel lang geleden zijn, ja.'

'Okay,' zei ik. 'En nee, ik heb mijn geheugen niet verloren. Jullie zijn dus de nieuwe bewoners. Of jij kan ik beter zeggen, want ik weet niets over anderen. Ik ben zeker mijn geheugen niet verloren, maar misschien wil ik het allemaal niet meer weten.'

'Oh zit dat zo,' zei ze. 'Nou ja, misschien ben ik het ook allemaal wel expres vergeten.'

Ik keek haar even vreemd aan. 'Dus je kent me wel ?' vroeg ik.

'Nee,' zei ze. 'Je lijkt me wel okay.'

'Ja, maar je zei net dat je het misschien ook wel allemaal expres bent vergeten,' zei ik.

'Ja, ik zei misschien, dat wil zeggen dat ik het niet meer weet,' zei ze. 'Het kan best wezen dat ik expres dingen vroeger ben vergeten, en dat ik het anno nu niet meer weet. Een mens kan raar in elkaar zitten.'

'Zeg dat wel,' zei ik.

'Maar waar ben je voor gekomen ?' vroeg ze.

'Kijken hoe alles er nu bijstaat,' zei ik.

'Heb je heimwee ?' vroeg ze.

'Nee, niet echt, maar het is wel nostalgie. Blijft toch een deel van mijn leven,' zei ik. 'Meer belangstelling.'

'Okay,' zei ze toen. 'Nu ja, ik zal je verder niet ophouden. Voel je vrij om rond te kijken.' Ik begon door het huis te lopen, en de kamers te doorzoeken. Ik keek naar de spulletjes, gewoon om herkenningspunten te krijgen, maar dit waren natuurlijk nieuwe bewoners. Toch zocht ik naar overeenkomsten.'

'Maak je het niet te bont ?' hoorde ik haar roepen.

'Nee hoor, ik ben zo klaar,' zei ik hard. Ineens stond ze in de deur opening.

'Ja, dat is mijn dagboek,' zei ze. 'Blader er maar in.'

'Je bent wel gastvrij,' zei ik.

'Je hebt hier immers gewoond, dus ik vind wel dat je recht hebt om een beetje te weten wie hier nu woont, omdat het toch een stukje van jezelf is en blijft,' zei ze.

'Is dat zo ?' vroeg ik, terwijl ik verder bladerde in haar dagboek. Ik las er nauwelijks in, meer bladeren.

'Houd je van verhaaltjes ?' zei ze.

Ik keek naar het kastje, en naar het bed. Toen keek ik naar de muur. 'Ik herken het wel een beetje,' zei ik, 'en ja, ik houd van verhaaltjes.'

'Lees dan wat,' zei ze, om me uit te dagen. Ik vond het zelf toch wel heel onbeleefd om zomaar ongevraagd in haar dagboek te lezen, dus had ik er alleen maar een beetje in gebladerd en er overheen gelezen, maar nu gaf ze me toestemming. Ik begon te lezen.

'Zo, zo,' zei ik. 'Je hebt wel lef. Weet je het allemaal nog ?'

'Ja,' zei ze. Ik knikte wat terwijl ik las. 'Nou, heel keurig,' zei ik, terwijl ik het dagboek weer aan haar gaf. Maar ze gaf het weer terug. 'Lees nog wat meer,' zei ze. 'Het was immers vroeger jouw huis.'

Ik las verder. 'Maar ik ken die namen,' zei ik. Ik liet haar lezen wat ik bedoelde. Ze knikte. 'Dus onze levens liggen toch dichter bij elkaar dan we eerst dachten. We kennen wat van dezelfde mensen.'

'Of het is puur toeval,' zei ze. 'Mensen hebben soms dezelfde namen.'

'Ja, maar dit is een heel lijstje,' zei ik. 'Dat kan bijna geen toeval meer zijn. En als ik het zo lees, dan zijn het dezelfde mensen met dezelfde karakter eigenschappen.' Maar toen las ik iets wat ik niet kon plaatsen bij een bepaalde persoon. 'Hmm, misschien toch toeval,' zei ik, en gaf het dagboek weer terug. Ze knikte. 'Blijf anders, dan kun je me nog wat vertellen over hoe het hier vroeger was,' zei ze.

'Okay,' zei ik. 'Ik heb geen haast, en dan kun jij me vertellen over hoe het nu is. Misschien leren we nog wat van elkaar.'

Ze knikte. Opeens zakte ze door haar knieën en snikte. Ze hield mijn hand vast. 'Wat is er ?' vroeg ik. Ik aaide over haar haar. Toen hielp ik haar weer overeind. Ze zei niets. 'Kom,' zei ik. Toen liet ik haar op het bed zitten. Na een paar minuten vroeg ik weer : 'Wat was er nu ?'

Ze zei : 'Je lijkt wel op een heilige. Ik ben zo gehecht aan dit huis, en heb altijd al gefantaseerd over hoe het zou zijn geweest voordat ik hier kwam. Het huis draagt zo'n geschiedenis, en het begon mij meer en meer te fascineren en een obsessie voor me te worden, en toen kwam jij. Daarom vind ik dit ook zo waardevol en overweldigend, omdat je voor mij een onbekend deel draagt wat wel heel belangrijk voor me is.'

Ik glimlachte. 'Ik ben er wel blij mee,' zei ik, 'en ik zit ook zo in elkaar een beetje. Het had ook heel anders kunnen zijn dat ik niet toegelaten zou worden, en dat het allemaal onbekend voor mij zou blijven hoe het nu met het huis is. We hebben dan wel een gedeelde interesse. Voor het huis is dat ook weer belangrijk. Ik zeg altijd : 'Huizen hebben ook gevoel.'

'Wat is dat mooi hoe je dat zegt,' zei ze, terwijl ze me warm aankeek, bijna stralend. 'Zo voel ik dat ook. Huizen hebben ook gevoel. Door het komen en gaan van mensen wordt er vaak heel wat van hen afgenomen, als innerlijke scheuringen, maar nu voelt het alsof deze wond wordt gedicht, als het opengaan van een lang vergeten dagboek.'

Ik keek haar aan. Ze leek nog steeds op een bij, gaande van bloem tot bloem om haar honing te verzamelen. Het huis was de bijenkorf.

Einde

het oog van de zombificator

Ik werkte in het prachtigste natuurgebied van mijn stad, helemaal in het zuiden. Wel stonden daar in die prachtige natuur met al die prachtige bomen, struiken, velden en riviertjes een heleboel hoge flats. Ik was er voor de gordijntjes. Op een dag werden we gebeld voor een afspraak op vijf hoog ergens. We gingen er naartoe, ik en mijn maat, en een vrouw deed open. Ze zei : 'Kom maar, kom maar,' en maakte zo'n gebaar met haar vingers alsof we kinderen waren. 'Helemaal achter in de kamer, bij het raam, daar hangt het gordijn, en het is helemaal mis. Het is van jullie.' Ik keek mijn maat vreemd aan, en hij keek vreemd naar mij, zo van : 'Het zal wel goed wezen.' Maar die vrouw had hele hypnotiserende ogen, en voordat we het wisten lagen we op de grond. We konden ons niet meer bewegen. Mijn maat dacht dat het koolmonoxide was, maar ik dacht dat het door haar ogen kwam. Natuurlijk fluisterden we. Ze hielp ons weer op, en we hadden ineens weer kracht in onze benen. 'Gingen jullie beiden van je stokje ?' vroeg ze.

'Ik dacht het wel,' zei ik. Mijn maat zei toen : 'Kan een koolmonoxide probleem zijn. Laat uw ketel eens goed nakijken. Het is hier niet pluis.'

'Ik heb rattengif gelegd,' zei die vrouw toen. 'Sorry, maar daar komt het waarschijnlijk van. Veel mensen kunnen niet tegen het spul, maar jullie staan weer.' Ik keek haar aan, en weer ging ik van mijn stokje.

'Ze moeten hem wel hebben vandaag,' sprak ze tegen mijn maat. 'Doe jij anders die gordijnen even, want ik moet zo weg.'

'Wow,' zei mijn maat. 'Mijn maat gaat voor. Al het andere kan wel wachten. Er is hier iets niet pluis.' Ik dacht dat ik maar niet meer in haar ogen moest kijken. Mijn maat hielp me weer overeind. Toen zijn we naar haar gordijn gaan kijken. We voelden ons beiden niet goed. 'Misschien dat rattengif,' fluisterde ik, 'maar ik kijk niet meer in die ogen.' We hebben toen ook even het raam open gezet en toen ging het wat beter. Wat frisse lucht. Maar daar werd die vrouw woest van. Dat konden we niet zomaar doen. Na lang praten stemde ze eindelijk toe, anders wilden we ons werk niet doen. Het gordijn klopte inderdaad van geen kanten. 'Misschien ligt het wel aan jullie gordijn,' zei ze toen. Het waren hele speciale gordijnen, die nogal ingewikkeld in elkaar zaten. Maar ja, we kenden ons werk, en na een uurtje werken was het gordijn weer goed. Maar wij voelden ons nog steeds niet goed. 'Wat water misschien ?' vroeg ze.

'Nee, laat maar,' zei ik. 'Uw gordijn is nu in orde. We moeten weer gaan.'

'Dat gaat zo maar niet,' zei die vrouw. 'Mijn ander gordijn aan de andere kant is ook stuk.' Toen gingen we daar ook kijken, en hebben we daar ook een raampje open gezet, en hebben we weer een uur eraan gewerkt om het gordijn in orde te krijgen. Het zijn van die hele speciale gordijnen, werkt allemaal electrisch. Zodra iemand naar het gordijn kijkt, dan vangt het gordijn zo iemands herinneringen op, en onttrekt er honing aan, als een honingbij. Dat is ook de firma waarvoor we werkten : honingbij gordijnen. Maar als er dan iets mis is, dan is het vaak ook goed mis. 'Waarschijnlijk waren het dan toch de kapotte gordijnen,' zei ik.

Ze keek me aan met een hypnotiserende blik, maar ik keek niet naar haar. Ik zag het in mijn ooghoeken. Ik werd er naar van. Ik voelde het in mijn buik. 'Is er nog meer stuk ?' vroeg mijn maat ineens.

Ik keek hem boos aan. Ik had het helemaal gehad.

'Ja,' zei ze. 'Nog veel meer.'

'Dat verklaart een hoop,' zei ik. 'Hopelijk niet van onze firma.'

'Nee,' zei ze. 'Er komt hier iedere ochtend iemand voor het bad. Het is een heel speciaal bad. Het is een honingbad. Als je in het bad zit, dan onttrekt het honing uit je herinneringen. Die herinneringen zijn als bloemenvelden, en de honingbijen gaan van jaar tot jaar.'

'Dat doen onze gordijnen ook,' zei ik.

'Ja, maar een bad is toch beter,' zei ze.

'En het bad is ook stuk ?' vroeg ik.

'Ja,' zei ze.

'We kunnen er wel even naar kijken,' zei mijn maat, terwijl ik hem weer boos aankeek. Ik had het helemaal gehad met die vreemde vrouw. 'Kom maar, kom maar,' zei ze, terwijl ze naar de badkamer liep, en weer kinderlijke gebaren met haar vingers naar ons maakte. 'Zit ze nu de spot met ons te drijven ?' fluisterde ik naar mijn maat. Maar die deed alsof hij niks hoorde. Toen stonden we bij het bad, en ze liet het vollopen. 'Eigenaardig,' zei mijn maat.

'Heb je het nog nooit gezien ?' vroeg de vrouw.
'Nee,' zei mijn maat. 'En wat is er precies stuk ?'

'Kijk goed,' zei die vrouw. Mijn maat boog over het bad en begon aan de honing te ruiken. 'Mmmm,' zei hij, alsof hij onder hypnose was. Ik wilde weg. Zijn hele gezicht zat er toen onder. 'Heb je het gezien ?' vroeg ze. 'Nu jij,' zei ze tegen mij. Ik boog ook maar over het bad, en rook aan de honing. Ook mijn gezicht zat eronder. Het rook vreemd. 'Kunt u wat duidelijker zijn ?' vroeg ik. 'Wat is er nu precies mis met dat bad.

'Precies dat,' zei de vrouw.

'Wat ?' vroeg ik.

'Lik er eens aan,' zei die vrouw toen.

'Ikke niet,' zei ik toen. Toen likte mijn maat eraan. 'Mmmm,' zei hij, 'v... volgens mij is er niks mis mee.' Maar ineens zakte hij op de grond, en kreeg stuiptrekkingen alsof hij epilepsie had. 'Wat is er ?' vroeg ik. Ik probeerde hem omhoog te trekken, maar hij trok zich woest weg van mij, en greep de benen van de vrouw vast en liet niet meer los. 'Blijf van me af !' riep hij.

'Ik zei het je toch,' zei de vrouw met een strak gezicht. 'Er is heel wat mis met dat bad.'

'Ik heb het in de gaten,' zei ik boos. 'En het is niet eens van onze firma, dus we kunnen niets doen.'

Die maat van mij werd steeds gekker. 'Nee, nee, nee !' gilde hij. En toen zei hij weer dat het zo hemels was, maar hij wilde niks meer van mij weten. Ik wilde hem meenemen uit het huis, maar hij wilde dat niet.

'En er komt morgenochtend weer iemand voor ?' vroeg ik.

'Dat hoop ik wel,' zei die vrouw.

'Kunt u die persoon nu niet bellen dan ?' vroeg ik. 'Mijn maat is zichzelf niet meer. Dit kan echt niet. Dat bad is levensgevaarlijk. Waar heeft u het gekocht ?'

'Op de zwarte markt,' zei de vrouw.

'Ja, dan vraag je om problemen,' zei ik.

'Ze hebben het druk, dus ze kunnen echt niet eerder komen,' zei de vrouw.

'Belachelijke firma,' zei ik.

'I... i... is er m... m... misschien nog iets stuk,' vroeg mijn maat toen, alsof hij dronken was.

'Nee, dit is alles,' zei de vrouw.

Ik dacht : 'Gelukkig maar,' maar dit was al erg genoeg.

'Ach toe nou,' zei mijn maat dronken, 'er moet nog wel iets wezen wat kapot is en wat ik kan maken.'

En weet je wat die vrouw toen deed ? Ze trapte hem zo tegen zijn mond aan en riep : 'Ja, dit is nog kapot.' Toen onze firma hiervan hoorde werd mijn maat ontslagen en hij is nooit meer dezelfde geworden. Later hoorde ik dat hij tandarts was geworden. Dingen kunnen soms vreemd lopen in het leven.

Het oog van de zombificator lacht,
In die donk're donk're nacht,
Het oog van de zombificator liegt,
Terwijl het met de buit wegvliegt,
Ja, dat oog kan het allemaal niets schelen,
Geen echt werk, maar allemaal criminelen.

En ik heb toen heel lang naar onze gordijnen moeten staren om het weer recht te krijgen. Elke bloem draagt honing zal ik maar zeggen. Ook deze bloem, het oog van de zombificator, nog steeds diep gegrifd in mijn geheugen, maar ook telkens weer zijn honing gevende. Het is een wond, zo diep, zo diep, als een honingbij stekende, maar ook als een bloem zijn honing gevende. Honing zo zoet, zo zoet, maar dit keer is het goed. Het maakt mij dronken, zo dronken, totdat ik een schop tegen mijn mond voel, en dan is het tijd me weer te bezinnen, me weer terug te trekken, opdat het oog van de zombificator me geen oor aannaait.

Ik ken een bloem, diep in de nacht,
Waar het oog van de zombificator wacht,
Oh, hoe ik worstel met die bloem, hoe ik ermee strijd,
Totdat het zich opensplijt,
Om honing te geven,
Niemand houd het tegen,
Als een honingbij in de nacht,
Heb ik op deze bloem gewacht,
Niemand kan deze bloem bekoren,
Bij voorbaat heb je 't al verloren,
Alleen in 't diepste van de nacht is haar pracht,

Niemand kan deze bloem bekoren,
Bij voorbaat heb je 't al verloren,
Haar honing stroomt alleen wanneer je 't niet meer verwacht

Ik ken een bloem,
diep in de nacht,
waar het oog van de zombificator wacht,
vol van bedrog, vol van geweld,
Je ligt snel op de vloer waar je leven niet meer telt,
Ik ken een boom van mooie lied'ren,
waar het leven niet meer wacht,
je moet het zelf maar gaan verdienen,
al die diepe hemelse pracht,
Je kan het zelf al niet meer zeggen,
het leven is niet slechts geluk,
maar aan beide kanten kun je pas echt beseffen,
het leven heeft je slechts tuk

Het oog van de zombificator lacht,
als een mysterieuze bloem in de nacht,
niemand kent het, maar er zijn zoveel verhalen van,
en ieder draait er omheen,
en het duurt al zo lang

Ik heb er lang in geloofd, in deze bloem,
maar nu is al mijn liefde gedoofd,
Ik heb er lang voor gevochten, voor deze bloem,
Maar het bracht alleen maar onheil,
en roofde al mijn poen,
Ik heb er toen nooit meer voor gestreden,
nam haar honing, en was toen weg,
dat is toch het leven van een bij,
alles staat voor je op een rij

Het oog van de zombificator rust,
Een prachtige bloem, dat wel, maar gevaarlijk en vol van lust,
Elke bloem geeft zijn honing, dat wel,
Maar wie blijft er nu lang bij zulke kommer en zulke kwel,
'k ben een honingbij op een tocht,
dat is alles waar ik voor vocht

Mijn mooie bloem,
van veraf zo prachtig,
van dichtbij zo heldhaftig,
Een wond in mijn hoofd die maar niet geneest,
Maar al is het alleen maar voor de honing geweest …

Het oog van de zombificator,
Nu een heel bloemenveld vol van die krengen,
Ze groeien en marcheren door de hele stad,
maar een hele uitdaging voor de honingbij,
zo'n prachtige zwarte bloem,

met hele speciale levengevende honing,
alhoewel je er eerst de dood voor sterft …
Wat moet je wel niet geven om van haar honing te kunnen nemen ?

Het oog van de zombificator,
Altijd weer dans je voor haar,
en altijd maar weer heeft ze zoveel klusjes voor je te doen,
en altijd wel weer breek je wat,
vooral je hart …

Ik heb er lang over lopen denken,
Ik dacht het zal allemaal wel wennen,
Maar ik kon alleen maar rennen …
Alleen een honingbij gaat in en uit door haar poort …

Einde

de muurbij

De leesbij is een boekenbij, die gaat van boek tot boek om honing te verzamelen. Van regel tot regel gaat de leesbij, voor honing. De kijkbij kijkt rond, om uit alles wat hij ziet honing te halen. De samenleving is een boekenkorf. Alles is al opgeschreven. Er ligt nog zoveel honing in opgeborgen. De muren van de samenleving zijn dik. Ze hebben meer scheiding gemaakt dan lief was, maar muurbijen zitten op deze muren om er honing aan te onttrekken. De muurbij vliegt van muur tot muur. Er ligt zoveel geschiedenis in deze muren opgeborgen.

Ik vloog eens op de rug van zo'n muurbij. De muurbij was heel groot, en hij nam me mee naar allerlei landen over de muren : naar Afrika enzo. Er waren zoveel muren, en daarom moesten er wel muurbijen zijn. Hij liet me zien hoe hij honing aan de muren onttrok.

We vlogen toen naar Suriname, en ik zag veel meer van die muurbijen. De muren waren dik, maar vol honing. Ik zag een meisje tussen muren. Ze kon haar weg niet meer vinden. De muurbij zette mij daar toen af, en zei : 'Onthoud wat ik je heb geleerd,' en vloog toen weg. Ik heb het meisje toen geleerd hoe ze honing uit de muren kon krijgen. Ze kreeg hier ook vleugeltjes van, net als mij, en toen zijn we samen hand in hand weggevlogen, over de muren heen, naar andere gebieden om verdwaalden het verhaal van de muurbij te vertellen.

de muurbij 2

Zo zijn er ook vloerbijen en plafondbijen. Er is aan alles wel honing te onttrekken. Zo is er niets voor niets. De mens kan zich soms ingesloten voelen, maar er is altijd honing. Alles is een bloemenveld, en in jezelf is de bijenkorf. Ga van bloem tot bloem, maar vergeet niet terug te keren tot de bijenkorf. Laat je niet afschrikken door bepaalde bloemen die verschrikkelijk lijken. Ook zij hebben hun honing. Alles is een honingbloem. Maar de bij kent een zeker pad, en werkt zeker met strategie. Er zijn namelijk ook zoveel valstrikken voor de bij. Een bij moet ook altijd goed gewapend zijn, en toegerust met de nodige instrumenten.

De bij moet de bijenkoningin kennen, ook al is die goed of slecht. Ook de bijenkoningin heeft haar honing. Ze is niet zomaar de eerste de beste. De bij moet naar de juiste bijenkoningin gaan, ook al is ze goed of slecht. Het gaat om de honing die erin zit. Soms is die honing een belangrijke sleutel op het pad. Het gaat erom wat erin haar ligt opgesloten.

Soms zijn muren niet te doorbreken, maar kun je er wel honing uit onttrekken. De muren staan symbool voor de voorwaardes van het leven. Zijn muren daarom geen bruggen ? Ja, het zijn hele lange bruggen, bijna oneindig, maar alleen zo kan de honing komen.

Muren zijn de droombruggen van het ware leven, van het diepere leven, van het eeuwige leven, waaruit de honing voorstroomt.

de muurbij 3
honing uit de muur

Waarom worden we soms, of misschien wel heel vaak, geblokkeerd in ons leven, en zit er voor ons niets anders op om als muurbijen te leven ? Misschien zijn die dikke muren er wel om ons ergens tegen te beschermen ? Er zijn ook andere realiteiten die soms voorrang krijgen. We hebben te maken met een interdimensionaal verkeerssysteem. Wij zijn niet de enige levensvormen. Er zijn zoveel andere levens-energieën, en ook horen die weer bij ons. Soms kan zich dat heel wrang vertalen en zijn tranen onze honing.

Zo liep ik eens een bruggetje over het park in. Er stond daar een huilend meisje met haar pop. Ik nam het meisje in mijn armen en vroeg er wat er loos was. Ze kon niet praten. Ik heb haar toen naar huis genomen, en gaf haar wat te eten en te drinken. Ik vertelde haar toen over de bijtjes, en toen kon ze weer lachen. Ze zei toen dat ze haar vader en moeder kwijt was. Die waren dood. Ik zei dat ze wel bij mij mocht wonen, dan zou ik haar vader wel zijn. Ze gaf toen haar pop aan mij uit dankbaarheid, maar ik zei dat die pop voor haar was, en dat ze nog veel meer poppen van me zou krijgen, en bijen. Ik liet haar er een paar zien. Ik had nog wel een extra kamertje, dus dat kon haar slaapkamer worden. Er stonden nog wat poppen en ook bijtjes. Ze was daar heel blij mee, en wilde graag dat ik haar pop in mijn kamer zou houden. Dat beloofde ik haar, dat ik ook goed voor haar pop zou zorgen.

'Mijn pop heeft ook geen vader en moeder meer. En ik ben maar een kind. Kun je ook de vader van de pop zijn ?' had ze gevraagd. Blijkbaar was de last van de pop te groot voor haar, dus heb ik de pop naar mijn kamer genomen.

Nu, na al die jaren, is het meisje groot. Ze is als een muurbij nu. Dat heb ik haar geleerd, om honing te onttrekken aan de muren in het leven. Op een dag zei ze tegen mij : 'Heb jij geen vader en moeder ?' Ik zei : 'Ik heb een muurbijenkoningin.'

Ze wilde de muurbijenkoningin toen ook zien, maar ik zei tegen haar dat die achter duizend muren was. Ik kon haar alleen maar leren honing aan die muren te onttrekken. Echte muurhoning, als dromen tot haar komende. Op een dag vertelde ze me dat ze over de muurbijenkoningin had gedroomd.

'En ?' vroeg ik.

'Het was heel prachtig,' zei ze. 'Ze had een witte jurk aan, met een prachtige witte hoed met gaas, en op haar jurk waren ook wat bloemetjes.'

'Zeer poëtisch,' zei ik toen. 'Heeft ze ook nog wat tegen je gezegd ?'

'Nee,' zei ze. 'Ze gaf me een potje muurhoning, en toen vloog ze weg.'

'En toen ?' vroeg ik.

'Ik volgde haar,' zei ze. 'We kwamen in de muurbijenkorf. Toen keek ze me stralend aan, en gaf me een omhelzing, toen ze zag dat ik haar was gevolgd. Ze gaf me toen een boek, een dagboek. Ik begon het als een leesbij te lezen.'

'Wat stond erin ?' vroeg ik.

'Ik spreek niet, maar ik schrijf,
Ik ga met niemand om, ik ben slechts in de boeken,
Ik ben achter duizend muren,
Alleen de echte muurhoningbij zal mij vinden,
Veel liefs,
de muurbijenkoningin,' zei ze.

Ik keek haar aan. 'Ze spreekt door de muren,' zei ik. 'Zo heb ik haar leren kennen, en zo heeft ze haar geheimen aan mij geopenbaard.'

Einde

Het is misschien een verschrikkelijke bloem, en het is misschien maar heel weinig honing, maar de honingbij is dankbaar voor elke druppel. De honingbij bouwt zijn huis met elke druppel, in dankbaarheid. Elke druppel is er weer een druppel bij. Daar kan een honingbij weer mee verder. En elke druppel honing uit de muur, is ook weer een druppel meer om de muur beter te kunnen begrijpen. Van druppels rijgt de muurbij zijn sieraden. Van druppels rijgt de muurbij zijn boeken van begrip, regel voor regel. Hiervan bouwt hij zijn huis. Het is een boekenkorf. De muurbij spreekt niet, maar schrijft. De muurbij leeft niet, maar is in de boeken, zoals zijn muurbijenkoningin. Dat heeft zij hem geleerd. Hij spreekt en leeft alleen door muren. De hieroglieven erop zijn moeilijk te begrijpen, als in een doolhof, maar zij zijn er om de boekenkorf te beveiligen. Indringers zullen het hier niet maken. Zij zullen niet ver komen.

Maar wat is er dan achter de muur ? Helemaal niks. Al het leven is in de muur. Zij is de muur.

'Het was mijn dit, mijn dat, hebben ze allemaal afgepakt, achter muren gezet, maar er is alleen leven in de muur … Niet ervoor, niet erachter, maar alleen in de muur … Totdat we zelf die muur zijn geworden … Ik kan niks zeggen, ik kan alleen maar wat laten zien … Ik ben slechts een muur … Teveel tegen muren opgelopen, werd ik zelf een muur …

Ik kan niet spreken, ik kan alleen mijn hieroglieven laten zien, mijn geheimschrift, wat je kunt ontcijferen, om het pad te volgen naar mijn hart … Maar als je dan daar aangekomen bent, ben ik allang weer ergens anders … Ik ben slechts een muur … Ik laat mijn sporen achter, maar zij leiden slechts naar een muur, totdat je zelf een muur bent geworden … Ik ben de koningin der muurbijen … de koningin der muren … In mij is al het leven te vinden … Buiten mij is er slechts illusie en bedrog … Ik maakte het om mijn hart te bewaken … Welkom tot mijn doolhof … het pad tot de honing des levens … Ik ben een raadselmaker, een maker van sleutels en sloten … Ik ben de maker van muren en deuren … De deur leidt nergens toe, maar al het leven is in de muur …'

Ik had haar dagboek gevonden en erin gelezen, en schudde mijn hoofd. Er werd op mijn schouder getikt, en ik draaide mij om, en zag haar daar staan : de muurbijenkoningin. Droomde ik of was het echt ? 'Moest dat nu allemaal ?' vroeg ik. Ik schudde mijn hoofd, maar begreep haar wel. 'Heel begrijpelijk,' zei ik. 'Je moet wel heel wat meegemaakt hebben dat je zo bent geworden.'

Maar ik sprak slechts tegen een muur.

Einde

de schoolheks

Leo en Daniël moesten naar de schoolheks in het bos. Zij verkocht de schoolspullen voor het nieuwe jaar heel goedkoop, veel goedkoper dan de winkels in de stad, en omdat de ouders van Leo en Daniël heel arm waren moesten ze naar de schoolheks. Daarvoor moesten ze wel even een eindje fietsen in het bos, want de heks woonde best wel ver weg. Het werd al laat en het begon steeds donkerder te worden, en ze waren nog niet bij de schoolheks aangekomen. Daniël begon al te jammeren, maar Leo zei dat ze er bijna waren. Tenminste, zo hadden hun ouders het hen uitgelegd. Ze wisten precies waar ze moesten fietsen, maar ze leken er maar niet te komen. Na een tijdje

werden ze beiden wel erg moe en moesten ze stoppen. Ze zetten hun fiets tegen een boom aan en gingen in het mos liggen. Daar vielen ze in slaap. Toen het morgen was zagen ze een groen licht in de verte. 'Kijk, daar is het,' zei Daniël. 'We waren er dus eigenlijk al. Zijn we net te vroeg gestopt met fietsen.'

'Ja, kom,' zei Leo. 'Ik kon toch al niet meer verder. Het is beter zo. Nu is het een nieuwe dag en kunnen we naar de schoolheks.' Ze konden er zo naartoe lopen en lieten hun fietsen staan. Ze kwamen aan bij een huisje wat helemaal van schoolspullen was gemaakt. Van pennen, schooltassen, rugzakken, passers, papieren, geo-driehoeken, rekenmachientjes en computers. 'Nou, volop keus !' riep Daniël, 'en wat zijn het mooie spullen. Het is gemaakt van onze lievelings tv programma's, en onze sport helden. Ik kan alles er weer op terug zien. Die ken ik, en die ken ik ook.'

'Ja, jottems,' zei Leo, 'deze is van mijn lievelings popgroep.' En zo liepen ze dichter naar het huisje toe en begonnen te grissen.

'Eh, Leo,' zei Daniël, 'gaat zo het huisje niet instorten ?'

'Welnee,' zei Leo, 'daar is het voor gemaakt. We kunnen best wel wat weghalen. Als de schoolheks nog slaapt is het gratis.'

En ze begonnen verder te grissen wat ze nodig hadden voor school. 'Kijk, hier zijn ook schoolboeken voor het nieuwe jaar,' zei Daniël. 'Lekker goedkoop. Vader en moeder zullen heel blij zijn.'

Opeens hoorden ze een stem. 'Wie grist daar van mijn passers en pennen, en wil straks snel wegrennen ?'

'Ehm, schoolheks,' zei Leo. 'Ik zie dat u toch al wakker bent geworden, dus we zullen het zo bij u afrekenen.'

'Maar je wilde het stelen hè,' zei de heks, 'stelen. Ik heb het wel gehoord.'

'Ja, dat was maar een grapje,' zei Leo. 'U kunt toch wel tegen een grapje hoop ik.'

'Nou, eigenlijk niet,' zei de schoolheks, 'want als ik was doorgeslapen was je er vast mee weggerend zonder af te rekenen.'

Leo zei niets. Hij wist dat het waar was wat de heks zei. Hij had het maar wat graag gratis mee willen nemen.

't Spijt me,' zei Leo. 'Maar het hing er gewoon zo bij alsof het van niemand was. Het hangt hier gewoon in het bos.'

'Ja ja,' zei de schoolheks, 'grote smoesjes. Je wist dat het van mij was. Nou, kom maar binnen, en reken je spullen af.'

En daar gingen Leo en Daniël met hun uitgekozen spullen naar binnen.

'Zo,' zei de heks, die hen op twee stoelen wees. 'Ga maar even zitten, dan zal ik zien wat jullie gekocht hebben.'

Ze begon de spullen te bekijken. Ook raakte ze de spullen even aan. 'Ik zie het al,' zei de

schoolheks. 'Het zijn mooie spullen, maar omdat jullie het eigenlijk gewoon wilden wegstelen als jullie konden, zullen jullie er duur voor moeten betalen.'

'Waarom is dat ?' vroeg Leo. 'Mijn broertje heeft het toch niet gezegd ? Ik was het.'

'Dapper van je dat je voor je broertje opkomt,' zei de heks, 'maar hij zou net als jij gewoon met de spullen wegrennen zonder af te rekenen, als hij zou kunnen, maar daar heb ik dus een stokje voor gestoken.'

't Spijt ons,' zei Daniël, 'het was echt niet onze bedoeling. We zouden er graag voor willen betalen, maar onze ouders zijn ook heel arm, en u was er niet, ziet u.'

'Zie, daar praat je jezelf al de problemen in,' zei de heks. 'Weer een dief, net zoals ik al zei.'

'Wat kunnen we doen om het goed te maken, heks ?' vroeg Leo.

'Jullie blijven hier nu voortaan,' zei de heks. 'Jullie ouders zijn te arm om jullie op te voeden en jullie in het gareel te houden.'

Daniël begon te huilen. 'Wat gaat u met ons doen, heks ?' huilde hij.

'Dat zul je wel zien,' zei de heks. Toen bracht ze hen naar een kooi en stopte hen er beiden in.

'Maar heks,' zei Leo, 'dat kan toch helemaal niet ? Wij moeten toch naar school ?'

'Niks mee te maken,' zei de heks. 'Ik ben nu jullie school. Ik ben immers de schoolheks. Geen kind vertrekt van hier. Ik maak schoolspullen van ze.'

Ook Leo begon toen te jammeren. Ook begon hij te smeken, maar de heks was zonder genade. 'Ik weet nog wel iets, heks,' jankte Leo. 'We willen wel alle karweitjes doen die nodig zijn in uw huis om u te helpen, maar verander ons alstublieft niet in schoolspulletjes.'

'Zo mag ik het horen,' zei de heks.

'Zeg ons wat we moeten doen,' zei Leo.

En toen zette de heks hen aan het harde werk. Het was zo moeilijk en naar dat ze het jammerend deden, maar alles beter dan in schoolspulletjes veranderd te worden.

'Wanneer mogen we weer terug ?' vroeg Daniël.

'Nooit meer,' zei de heks. 'Jullie blijven hier. Jullie ouders zijn te arm om jullie op te voeden en in het gareel te houden.'

'Ja, maar we moeten toch echt naar school,' zei Daniël.

'Ik ben jullie school,' zei de heks. 'Ik ben immers een schoolheks.'

En zo moesten Leo en Daniël bij de schoolheks wonen, en ze vroegen zich af waarom hun ouders hen hier naartoe hadden gestuurd.

'Vader en moeder wilden gewoon van ons af,' zei Daniël tegen Leo.

'Nee, ze wisten het niet,' zei Leo.

'Misschien komen ze ons dan halen,' zei Daniël.

'Ik denk niet dat ze tegen de heks opkunnen,' zei Leo. 'Ze waren ook inderdaad veel te arm om ons te kunnen opvoeden.'

Wel hadden ze hier alle schoolspulletjes die ze maar wilden, maar wat konden ze er mee ? Het was allemaal waardeloos geworden hier bij de heks. Werken en werken moesten ze. Op een dag kon de heks het niet meer aanzien. Ze was oud geworden, en Leo en Daniël waren groot geworden. Toen de heks stierf hebben ze alle schoolspulletjes naar het stadje gebracht waar ze vandaan kwamen. Er bleef niets meer van het huisje over. Maar in de stad waren ze inmiddels al vele jaren verder en hadden ze hele andere spullen. Niemand was geinteresseerd in schoolspullen van vele jaren geleden. Ook bleek het dat de vader en moeder van Leo en Daniël al gestorven waren. Omdat ze lange tijd niet naar school waren geweest konden ze geen werk vinden in de stad. Ze waren duidelijk niet gewensd. Toen zijn ze maar weer teruggegaan naar de plaats in het bos waar ze gewoond hadden, met alle schoolspulletjes, en hebben ze er opnieuw een huis van gebouwd waarin ze voor altijd konden wonen. Alle schoolspulletjes hadden een vreemde groene gloed. Het waren de kinderen die eens door de schoolheks betoverd waren tot schoolspulletjes, en op een dag kwamen ze tot leven. Ook zij begonnen verder aan het huis te bouwen, en ook zij bleven daar voor altijd wonen.

Einde

DE KAARS VAN DE
GILLENDE JONGENS

De Kaars van de Gillende Jongens

het snoep orakel
de wilde indianen
De Hoogvliegers
De Kunstroof
Het Kompas
Jaap Zaalbergen …
Het Geheim van Zwarte Snoep
Nachtmerries van het Zwarte Snoep
de babbels van kuuk
de brillenzaak
Elwin in het toets kasteel

het snoep orakel

Niemand werkt natuurlijk voor niets.
Ik had hard gewerkt voor klinkende munt.
Ik was bij het snoep orakel aangekomen.
Het was hier waar mensen deftiger begonnen te spreken,
alsof ze iets groots te verbergen hadden.
Droom ik ? vroeg ik.
Nee, het is echt, zeiden ze, een EGT, een hersenprogrammaatje wat via echo-peiling je hersenen scant.
Ik had tijden moeten werken voor ene heer G. van Genis, en nu was ik hier.
Hij had mij uitbetaald met klinkende munt.
Iemand die naast mij stond had gewerkt voor ene heer Z. Iekenhuis.
We moesten allemaal wachten op ene heer S.R. Vies, want die moest namelijk het snoep orakel uitleggen, en die kwam maar niet, en we begrepen er allemaal niks van.
Het was hier waar mensen weer begonnen om te keren.
Ze wilden er niet op wachten.
Op het laatst waren alleen ik en degene die voor de heer Z. Iekenhuis had gewerkt overgebleven.
We wisten wel wat volhouden was, dus we wilden het nog niet opgeven.
Pas toen het nacht was geworden kwam de heer S.R. Vies eindelijk.
Nou, daar zul je hem hebben, zei ik.
Degene die naast me stond zei toen : Leg nu het snoep orakel uit.
We hebben al lang genoeg gewacht.
Maar de heer S.R. Vies ging zich toen geheel uitkleden, en ging toen een bosmeertje in, vlakbij. Wij volgden hem. Nou, komt er nog wat van ?
Hij deed net alsof hij ons niet zag.
Toen zijn we ook maar het bosmeertje ingegaan.
Nou, het zit namelijk zo, zei hij ineens. Het wachten is nog op de heer K. Onijn.
We hebben toen ik weet niet hoe lang in het bosmeertje gewacht, totdat de ochtend viel, en toen kwam eindelijk de heer K. Onijn aanzetten, maar die zei ook niets.
Die zei toen een half jaar later dat we nog moesten wachten op een zekere heer E.K. Hoorn, en toen is degene die voor de heer Z. Iekenhuis had gewerkt boos weggelopen.
Nu was alleen ik nog over met deze vreemde heerschappen.
Ik kon er naar fluiten. De heer E.K. Hoorn kwam gewoon niet opdagen, hoe lang ik ook wachtte.
Ik werd toen ook heel kwaad, en zei : Dat hele snoep orakel zal me worst wezen.
Direct toen ik het had gezegd kwam er een zekere heer M. Elkman aanlopen.
En die heeft toen het hele snoep orakel voor me uitgelegd.
Het was zo'n lang verhaal, en het ging zo snel, dat ik er niks van kon verstaan en ook niks van kon onthouden. Ik zei kwaad : Waar doe ik het allemaal voor ?
Toen zeiden ze dat ik blij moest wezen dat iemand tenminste de moeite deed om het uit te leggen.
Ik zei dat het een orakel op zich was.
Maar toen begon de heer M. Elkman zo kwaad te worden, en ik wist nog steeds niet wat hij zei. Ik heb nog nooit iemand zo kwaad zien worden. Hij explodeerde gewoon, en begon het hele snoep orakel aan stukken te slaan. Ik keek naar de scherven en zag mijn hele leven op de grond liggen. Ik keek toen op en zag een vrouw die al die tijd in het snoep orakel had gezeten. Ze zei : Maak jij het snoep orakel weer in orde ? Als je klaar bent mag je de suiker smelten. En zo moest ik werken en werken voor deze vrouw. Haar naam ? S. Lager-Hoorn. Ze bleek de vrouw te zijn van de heer E.K.

Hoorn. Ik vroeg haar waar haar man bleef. Die zou immers het snoep orakel uitleggen. Ze zei niks. Toen ik na vele jaren het hele snoep orakel bijna af had kwam de heer E.K. Hoorn eindelijk, maar begon ook het snoep orakel in stukken te slaan, en ging er toen met zijn vrouw vandoor.
Waar doe ik het allemaal voor ? vroeg ik mezelf af. Ik keek naar de stukken van het snoep orakel. Ik was helemaal klaar met dit snoep orakel. Ik was helemaal alleen en weende mijzelf de nacht in. Ik was moe van alles en viel in slaap. Ik droomde over het snoep orakel. Ik keek ernaar en zag het bewegen, en draaien. Het waren wielen. En ze maakten hele mooie schakels en verbindingen. Wijs, zei ik, wijs. Ik wist dat ik niet voor niets had gewerkt. Toen ik wakker werd keek ik naar het gebroken en verwoeste snoep orakel, en ik wist nu wat het betekende. Het sprak tot mij. Het was een stem die op geen andere manier tot mij zou kunnen komen. Dit was de enige weg.

Kijk naar het snoep orakel,
alleen als het gebroken is,
versta je de weg,
Kijk naar je eigen leven,
alleen als het gebroken is,
begrijp je wat ik zeg

Alle letters op een rij,
Nu komt het door,
nu keert het tij,
Je moet er nog een keer naar kijken,
als de traan doorbreekt,
dan proef je pas echt,
wat het daadwerkelijk heeft gezegd

Geen machine werkt zonder olie,
Geen snoep orakel zonder traan,
Je moet het in je eentje klaren,
Je kunt het best,
deze dingen komen alleen,
als de muren zijn doorbroken …

Strijd tegen je vlees tot tranens toe,
tot zwetens toe, tot bloedens toe, tot zadens toe,
Muren doorbreken en zaaien,
De bijen zullen de honing kweken,
voor het snoep orakel ...

de wilde indianen

Het stadje was geheel gemaakt van snoep.
De snoepwachters gingen door de straten.
Ze droegen een gesel om orde en recht te handhaven.

Ook kleine kinderen werden niet overgeslagen.
Zij stonden in dienst van de heks.
Zij had deze stad gemaakt.
In de avonden smolt altijd alles weg,
want dan kwam de nacht.
Iets wat de heks niet kende.
Zij moest dan altijd haar snoep opgeven,
en al haar gesels, haar orde en haar recht.
Het was iets wat zij niet begreep,
iets wat zij nooit had geleerd.
Het stond beschreven in een boek van een klein jongetje.
Zij kende het boek niet, en wist niet dat hij het had.
Zij wist zelfs niet dat het jongetje bestond.
Alleen de snoepwachters kenden hem.
Hij kon zelf nog niet lezen, maar zijn vader las hem altijd voor.

De nacht met onbekende pracht,
wanneer de wilde indianen komen.

Het Scherm van Rotaviera

Mens was op scherm geprojecteerd.
Mens zat vast.
Het scherm was heet, en brandde alles weg na een tijd.
Het was als een kookplaat.
De mens was niets anders dan brandstof.
Rotaviera, de heks, had het nodig.
Zo kon zij bewegen en dansen, muziek maken.
Zo kon zij zingen.

Op een dag stortte het scherm in.
Rotaviera lag eronder en vroeg haarzelf af hoe het was gekomen.
Ze ontdekte dat het door een klein lekje kwam.
Ze heeft toen het scherm weer opnieuw opgebouwd, maar het werd niet meer als tevoren.
Er zat een druppel in het scherm die ze er niet meer uitkreeg, zodat het scherm nu anders leek.
Het irriteerde haar. Het scherm zag er nu bobbelig uit.
Ook zat er een barst in het scherm.
Het begon haar te vervelen, en ze probeerde het scherm steeds meer te negeren, maar ze had het nodig.
Op een dag liet ze het scherm los en begon zelf ook te ontploffen.
Op een afstand schold ze.

Maar het geluid werd eigenlijk steeds vager.
Ze had geen zin meer om haarzelf opnieuw op te bouwen, want dan zou er ook wel weer een bobbeltje inzitten en een barst.
Toen is ze maar met pensioen gegaan.
Ze wilde geen heks meer zijn.

Een klein jongetje vond het scherm en bouwde er een auto van.
Toen hij erachter kwam hoe het scherm brandstof kreeg weende hij.
En hij bouwde een nieuwe wereld van zijn tranen.

De Hoogvliegers

Ergens in de natuur hield alles op, en was er een groot duizelingwekkend ravijn met een vreemde zon die erboven hing. Ik keek ernaar en had vreemde gevoelens in mijn buik. Dit was de rand van de natuur, niet van de kant van de stad, maar van de andere kant. Ik staarde naar de brandende bol, maar het was geen vuur. Nee, dit was iets anders. Het was zachtheid, en tegelijkertijd zo hard. Het was alsof je hier door een deur zou gaan, en dat er geen terugkeer meer mogelijk was. Ik keek, en het veranderde mij voorgoed. Nooit zou ik de wereld en het leven nog op dezelfde manier bekijken. Het gaf me zoveel energie, maar roofde ook zoveel weg. Ik kon zwemmen in deze energie. Het was alsof ik in een grote zee staarde. Wie verzon zoiets, wie maakte zoiets ? Het leek ergens vandaan te stromen. Dit was geen echte zon. Het waren zielen. Ik kon hier rechtstreeks in de onderwereld kijken. Hier liep de natuur over in de onderwereld. Ik vroeg me af wat ik nu moest doen. Ik wilde niet meer terug. Neen. Hiervoor had ik alles achtergelaten.

Ik viel in slaap hier, aan de rand van het ravijn. In een droom kwam de zielenzon mij halen. Ik was nu een deel geworden van de zielenzon. En de zon ging onder, de onderwereld in. We waren gemaakt van hele zachte stenen. Ik wenste dat ik nog meer kon zien, maar ik zag slechts gordijnen, en voor de gordijnen stond een hond. Ik wilde niet meer terug, maar hier kon ik ook niet meer verder. Langzaam werd ik wakker aan de rand van het ravijn. De mist hing over het ravijn als een sluier. Ik had het wonder gezien en besloot mijn tocht te beeindigen, terug naar huis. Ik wilde vertellen wat ik had gezien. Maar ik kon mijn weg naar huis niet meer terugvinden. De wildernis was te groots, en het had mij opgeslokt. Neen. Er was geen weg meer terug.

De zon van zielen brandde in mijn binnenste. Het leidde mij voort, maar wees mij de weg niet. Ik was verdwaald in de wildernis, en zij lieten mij dwalen. Ik was één van hen, hebbende het

geheimenis gezien, tot aan het gordijn, en ik mocht niet verder. Ik zat tussen twee werelden in. Het gaf mij energie en roofde zoveel van mij weg. Het was een bloedmooie natuur. Ik kwam aan bij een rivier, maar het was geen water. Het waren zielen die hier stroomden, en ze vertelden verhalen. Och, kon ik ze maar verstaan. Ze spraken in een andere taal. Soms was er een ziel bij die mijn taal sprak, maar die stroomde ook zo weer weg. 'Ga niet terug naar de stad !' riep een wegstromende ziel. Het was een wonderbaarlijke rivier. Ik riep : 'De weg terug tot de stad kon ik toch niet vinden !'

En ik dronk van de rivier, en het gaf mij energie, en het nam ook zoveel weg. En ik dwaalde verder. Maar de wind dreef mij terug naar de rivier. Het was geen echte wind, maar het waren zielen. En de wind duwde mij de zielenrivier in, en ik werd één van hen, en ik stroomde met hen mee. En ook ik begon verhalen te vertellen. Ik deed dit in mijn eigen taal, en ook ik stroomde weg. Wat anderen ervan oppikten wist ik niet. Misschien was het maar heel weinig, maar ik gaf ze zo toch wat mee. En het deed er ook niet meer toe in wat voor talen we spraken. Het ging om wat er uit ons hart stroomde. Dat was een hartentaal die iedereen verstond. Maar echt begrijpen deden we het niet. Iedereen maakte er weer iets anders van. En we versierden elkaar met de sieraden van de wildernis.

Waren we dood of tot leven gekomen ? Lezers of schrijvers ? Alles mengde zich hier. En de rivier stroomde sneller en sneller, opgehitst door de wind, die tot een storm werd en ons dreef tot de zee. Oh, wat was het water koel hier, maar nog steeds zeer tropisch en zwoel. Het was een weldaad van de natuur. Het bruiste in ons binnenste, alsof we de eeuwigheid hadden gevonden, of liever gezegd het geheimenis ervan. Eeuwig stroomde alles. Eeuwig vermengde alles, en scheidde ook weer af tot hogere vermengingen. Ik keek en keek, en zag de zielenzon weer boven het water. Alles was zo kalm op zee. Het was geen water, maar het waren zielen. En de zielenzon brandde in mijn binnenste, alsof het mij opnam, maar toch was ik ook in de zee, als een golf. Toch was de zee kalm nu, en stil. Het was als een bevroren moment in de tijd.

De zee sprak tot mij, als een reus, en er was overal echo. En ik zag eilanden met moeders en hun kinderen. Het geheim van het bestaan. De grond van de eilanden was geen grond, maar zielen. Ik kon er dwars doorheen kijken. En ik zag de baarmoeder. Ik werd erin gezogen en kwam tot wedergeboorte. De wedergeboorte in de natuur. Ik was in de onderwereld. Daar waar natuur en onderwereld elkaar kruisten. Het liep in elkaar over als het pad van de baarmoeder tot hogere geboorte. Ik had vreemde buikkrampen. Ik was geen kind, maar een ziel. Als een vogel zweefde ik boven dit alles, als een ibis. Ik was trots op de natuur, en trots op de onderwereld, dat ze samen zo iets moois hadden gemaakt. Ik was trots op zowel de lezer als de schrijver die hadden doorgezet. Samen hadden ze deze wereld gemaakt.

Ik werd wakker van deze droom in mijn huis in de stad. Op het behang was een hond, of wolf. Roodkapje erbij. Ik staarde ernaar. Ja, door mijn hele huis was er sprookjesachtig behang, met behang van de natuur, verstrengeld tot sieraad. Ik schreef de droom op, zo goed als ik het me kon herinneren. Ik voelde de zielenzon in mijn binnenste branden, en de zielenrivier voelde ik door mijn ziel stromen, door mijn hersenen, als grote vruchtbaarheid gevend. Er was toch een zekere veiligheid in de stad, een zekere gewenning, maar ik wilde er niet aan wennen. Ik was verscheurd tussen verschillende werelden, en die werelden hadden elkaar nodig, om het geheimenis in mij te voeden. Ogenschijnlijk scheidden zij, tot hogere vermengingen. Ik moest de taal verstaan van deze dynamieken. Leren weven met de draden mij gegeven. Het was alles wat ik had. Ik moest er het beste van maken.

Ik dwaalde verder door de boeken. Mijn huis was als een bibliotheek. Maar het waren geen boeken. Het waren zielen, en zij leidden mij voort op deze dwaaltocht. Dwalen en dwalen, nooit kwam ik echt thuis, maar ik mocht alleen maar aanraken. Zo kwam ik verder. Ik kon niet stoppen. Ik kon niet settlen. Altijd zocht ik mijn weg erdoor heen. Altijd zocht ik nieuwe wegen.

Zo is mijn huis een boot, een zielenboot, op de zielenrivier van mijn dromen. Ik ken beide kanten ervan, hoe het mes snijdt aan twee kanten, hoe de zielenrivier mij altijd opneemt, mij leidt tot de zielenzee, waar ik wordt opgenomen door de zielenzon. Het zout van genezing, een snijdende, scheidende pijn tot hogere vermengingen, de vreemde talen van het hart van de onderwereld, van de baarmoeder van de natuur.

En een geschreeuw, steeds harder en harder, stijgt op van de zielenzon bij elke nieuwe geboorte, maar dit zijn geen stemmen, maar zielen. Zij komen door van een wereld onder de onderwereld, de onderste wereld. Het is de verloren wereld waar zij allen dwalen, en waren dit niet jij en ik ? Het is de vergeten wereld eens gezonken, in de zielenzee, in een draaikolk van zielen.

Zo hard en zo zacht, dat het lijkt alsof het schreeuwt, maar het is een ziel, een vergeten ziel. Nee, zij spreken niet. Het is slechts een echo.

Het zijn geen gedachten, maar zielen. Geen dromen, maar zielen. Zielen van de zielenzon die je opnemen. Zij komen van de onderste wereld. Zij kennen de bodemloosheid van het ravijn. Zij stromen nog steeds, als de eeuwige rivier. Love is a river of fantasy. Zij die liefhebben leren. Het gaat om het liefhebben van de hogere natuurkennis, om het leren ervan. Love is knowledge.

Er is op aarde zoveel liefde van het vlees. Ze houden van het vlees eten, en noemen het liefde. Ze houden van het vlees. Het vlees staat geen kennis toe, en geen fantasie. Daarom moest de zielenzon wel komen. Het neemt ons mee, op een tocht. Ga niet terug. De eeuwigheid moet blijven stromen.

En als je terug wil gaan, dan zal de zielenwind je tegenhouden. Want je bent een veranderde, je hebt het geheimenis gezien. Eens ontwaakt, altijd ontwaakt. En de zielenrivier stroomt te snel en te krachtig. Hoe kun je eraan ontvluchten ? En de zielenzee roept, want het geheimenis van het eiland dringt. En een moeder is op zoek naar haar kind. Zij zal haar kind niet laten gaan. Nee, geen donder en bliksem, maar zielen die elkaar aanraken.

Ook de nacht is slechts zielen, donkere zielen die het geheimenis omhullen. Hier is het gordijn, en het vlucht van je weg, om de vrucht eerst te doen rijpen.

Ja, ik heb het verschijnsel van de zielenzon nauwkeurig gade geslagen.
Ik sprak niet meer, maar stroomde slechts weg, maar het getij zal keren.

In de stad is het niet toegestaan. Het vlucht weg van een lezers oog.
Maar de hoogvliegers zullen het verstaan.

De
Kunstroof

Het schilderij hing aan een draad, maar toen we het aan de muur hingen hing alleen het draad er. Het schilderij was weg. Ik had geen idee hoe het kon gebeuren. Het schilderij had ons in een zekere hypnose gebracht. Het was een heel bijzonder schilderij, heel zeldzaam ook, niet iets wat je zomaar tegen zou komen gewoonlijks, en nu was het weg. Ik was teleurgesteld. Ik keek om me heen. Tot mijn grote verbazing kon ik dwars door de muren en de vloer heenkijken, en ook door het plafond. Ik zag alle verdiepingen. De hypnose van het schilderij was nog steeds werkzaam in mij. In de verte zag ik de kunstrovers rennen met het schilderij. Ze waren ergens onder de grond. Ik wist niet dat er daar ook gangen waren. Maar ja, het was een groot museum. Ik werkte hier nog niet eens zo lang. Ik wist dat ze niet ver zouden komen, die kunstdieven. Het schilderij was te hypnotisch. Ze zouden bedwelmd worden. Ik zag ze ergens in een gang neerzitten op de grond. Blijkbaar waren ze al onder hypnose gekomen. Ik zag ze toen door een deur heenkruipen. Toen ging de deur dicht. Ik kon vreemd genoeg niet door die deur heenkijken. En toen na korte tijd kon ik helemaal niet meer door de muren, vloeren en plafonds heenkijken. De hypnose was uitgewerkt. Ook de anderen hadden het gezien. Iemand wist de weg door de gangen wel. Die werkte hier al langer. We gingen er toen op af. Bij de deur waar de kunstbandieten door waren gegaan stopten we. We probeerden de deur open te doen. Het was een zekere kelder. De deur zat op slot en ook met wat sleutels konden we het niet openkrijgen. We klopten toen op de deur en schreeuwden wat.

Maar toen hoorden ook wij geschreeuw. 'Hier met dat schilderij !' riep één van de bandieten. En de andere bandiet riep toen : 'Ik zag het het eerst. Het is van mij.' En toen was er een hoop gescheld, alsof ze erom vochten. Er werden rake klappen uitgedeeld. Na een tijdje werd de deur opengedaan, maar het waren de bandieten niet. Het was iemand anders en we keken recht in een grote zaal, en hij wees naar boven waar het prachtige natuur-schilderij hing. Een schilderij van de wildernis, zo bedwelmend. Ik raakte weer helemaal in een trance.

Waar zijn de bandieten ? vroeg ik.

Dood, zei de persoon die de deur had opengemaakt. Ze hebben elkaar afgemaakt.

Wie bent u dan ? vroeg ik.

Ik ben de engel van het schilderij, zei de persoon. De persoon had een lang gewaad aan, van een hele zachte kleur. Het was bijna alsof het geen kleding was, maar een soort energie. Weer wees de persoon op het schilderij.

Het hangt daar wel mooi zo, zei ik. Veel beter dan waar het zou hangen boven. Alsof het nu echt zijn plaats heeft gevonden. Maar ja, hier komen geen bezoekers.

Nee, nee, zei de engel. Het is ook niet voor de bezoekers. Het is voor hen die hier werken. Het is voor jullie.

Ik zal er 's nachts goed van dromen, zei ik.

Ja, het is een wonder, zei een ander die er al langer werkte.

De kunstrover zal nooit ver komen, sprak de engel met een glimlach. Hij is altijd gedoemd om het op de juiste plaats te brengen.

Ik ging die dag met een dikke glimlach naar huis. Het was al nacht, want zoals je wel kunt voorstellen was deze dag in het museum flink uitgelopen. Ik kwam thuis en mijn vrouw was nog steeds op. Ik vertelde haar het hele verhaal en de glimlach kwam ook op haar gezicht. Het was het mooiste wat ik ooit gezien had.

Einde

Het Kompas

De wielen …
Ze maaien alles stuk, nemen alles van je af …
Het zijn monsters in de nacht … vretende alles op wat los en vast is …
Ze vreten ook jou … en nemen je mee …

Meedogenloos als ze zijn, nee, ze nemen je niet naar een paradijs …
Eerder het tegenovergestelde …
Ik zag het mysterie van de wielen …
Ook ik werd eens gegrepen …

Ze namen mij naar een hopeloos dorp,
met hopeloze nachten ….
Eigenlijk wachtten we allemaal op een schip wat nooit kwam …
Totdat op een dag een oud vrouwtje zei dat het schip allang was gekomen,
al honderden jaren geleden …
Maar aan de kust vloog het schip op onverklaarbare wijze in de brand en zonk …

Ik ben toen op een dag gaan wezen duiken naar het schip.
Het stormde, maar wat had ik te verliezen ?
Er moest nu wat gebeuren.
Ik ging de koude, kille diepte in,
En vond op de bodem een kompas bij een oud wrak.

Ik nam het kompas mee naar huis.
Ik kreeg het ding weer aan de praat.
Het was een heel bijzonder kompas.

De wildernis was verboden hier,

Iedereen zat opgesloten in het dorp,
en alleen de zee was onze hoop.
Maar het kompas begon te tikken,
en leidde mij door een verborgen gang tot de wildernis.

Er was geen politie hier, geen dorpsgekken die mij tegenhielden.
Het kompas leidde de weg.

Maar in de wildernis waren de wielen,
de wielen, grote, roofzuchtige roofdieren,
en ik wist niet hoe snel ik weer terug wilde naar het dorp …
Er stroomde een vreemd soort siroop uit het kompas …
In het dorp zeiden ze dat het een drugs was genaamd parallel …
Je mocht er nooit teveel van nemen …

Alhoewel ik naar de wildernis wilde waren daar de wielen,
dus was ik liever in het dorp, maar daar wilde ik eigenlijk ook niet zijn …
maar daarom nam ik van de siroop die uit het kompas droop genaamd parallel …
Je kreeg er vreemde dromen van, maar alles beter dan dit …
Naast de zee was het mijn hoop …
Mijn laatste hoop …

Met parallel was ik op de golven …
Dit moest het schip zijn eens verloren …
We kwamen tot een eiland, maar ik wist dat het niet waar was …
Ik kon er alleen maar over dromen …

En zo schreef ik boeken, zoveel boeken, over een wereld eens verloren …
Nee, terug konden we niet … en voorwaarts ook niet …
Alsof we in een kerker zaten opgesloten …
Maar waren deze stoffen niet veel te gevaarlijk ?
De wielen waren overal …
Beschermde het ons niet tegen iets veel gevaarlijkers ?
Nee, het kon beter in de boeken blijven …
Zachtjes dromen door de duistere nacht,
als een bootje over het pikzwarte water …
Het kompas leidt ons voort …
Door boeken ongehoord …
Als het leven te gevaarlijk is, is het dan niet beter om slechts te lezen ?

Ik zag het mysterie van de wielen,
Hier wordt alles verpulverd tot letters en boeken …
Hier worden de boeken opgebakken …
Als een sluw vergif, tot een boekenoorlog …
Het kompas leidt ons voort …

Op een dag ging ik weer duiken in de zee …
Op zoek naar het oude wrak …
En ik nam wat maten mee …
Ditmaal vonden we een lijk in een oude kist,
En in de kist stonden er woorden geschreven :
Wie het kompas de eerste keer vindt zal sterven …

Wie het kompas voor de tweede keer vindt zal lezen …
Wie het kompas voor de derde keer vindt zal leven …
Sterven, lezen, leven … En wie een stap overslaat zal er voor altijd tussenzweven …

In de kist lag ook een kompas, een globe, en wat boeken, maar die waren bijna niet meer te lezen … We probeerden het te ontcijferen, maar omdat het bijna niet te lezen was hebben we er een hoop bijverzonnen … Zo ook dit verhaal … Maar het is beter zo … Het is soms beter te schrijven dan te lezen, want de wielen zijn op jacht … Lezerjagers zijn het … En alleen een schrijvershand zal aan hen ontkomen … Het lijk bleek van een oude kapitein te zijn … Zijn hand met een witte handschoen aan lag er al af, maar had nog wel een vreemdsoortige gouden pen … Die hand met pen ligt nog steeds op mijn bureau … Het inspireert mij om te schrijven in de grote lezersoorlogen … Lezers met zombie oren, gebrouwen door de wielen … Zij hebben nooit rust … Altijd zweven ze ertussen … Ik ontdekte dat het leven het schrijven betekent … Maar wie kan schrijven als de wielen op jacht zijn ? Ook de oude kapitein had het eeuwige leven niet, maar zijn boeken bestaan voort … Ook al zijn ze onleesbaar geworden … Toch inspireren zij nieuwe schrijvers … te dansen over het schrijverskoord over de zee …

Ik nam nog wat van de drugs parallel, en toen wist ik het wel, toen wist ik het wel …
Ik moest balans vinden tussen lezen en schrijven, en het sterven, en zo zou ik pas echt leven, wederom geboren worden …
Dat gebeurde ergens op een kamer, omringd met boeken … Maar ik was te jong om te lezen … Ik was nog in de wieg … En toen ik opgroeide toen had ik mijn eigen dromen … En altijd als ik uit het raam keek zag ik de prachtige natuur … En ik vond het kompas … Het hing ergens aan de muur … Het was gewoon met mij meegegaan … Zo trouw …

En ook het kompas groeide op, ze was met mij gestorven en geboren … door lezen en schrijven …
En toen we beiden groot genoeg waren trouwden we …
En we kregen kinderen … kinderen van het kompas … En zij vonden de weg tot de wildernis, en ook de weg door de wildernis, net als ons … Ook zij leerden de wielen kennen … En begrepen dat zo de kompassen werkten …

Ik was zelf de uitvinder van het kompas, maar moest er eerst in verdwalen voordat ik mijn weg kon vinden ...

Jaap Zaalbergen …

Je zou soms willen dat het hele zaakje plat ging …
En dan is daar ineens … Jaap Zaalbergen ….

Je zou soms willen dat het feestje afgelopen zou zijn, want het gaat maar door en door en door …
En dan is daar ineens … Jaap Zaalbergen …

Je zou wel willen dat iedereen eens zijn grote smoel zou houden …
En dan is daar ineens … Jaap Zaalbergen …

Komt altijd te laat … maar beter laat dan nooit …
Jaap Zaalbergen …
Ik zag het eens op de tv … was een of andere reclame …
Het zat in een fles …
Nou, dan kun je het wel raden hè … dat moet je dan kopen en opdrinken om het weer te kopen omdat het zulk goed spul is …
Maar ja, komt altijd te laat hè … het is nogal duur spul … moet je hard voor werken …
En 't schijnt als eerste met jezelf te beginnen …
Jaap Zaalbergen ….
Daar kwam het … zoeffffff …. en nu is het alweer weg …

Jaap Zalig op de bergen noemden ze hem vroeger,
maar dat vonden ze te lang, dus hebben ze 't ingekort …
Jaap Zaalbergen is het nu … echt zalig spul … maar snel op hè …
Je vind het ook bijna nooit … als 't er is is 't altijd snel uitverkocht …
of als je het wil is het al net na sluitingstijd …
Het komt altijd te laat, maar als 't komt, komt 't goed …
maar dan is het ook zo weer weg … voordat je 't eigenlijk doorhebt …
Dan wil je hem naroepen : 'Hey Jaap ! Wat een zalig spul !'
Maar dan is hij alweer doorgereden ...

Het Geheim van Zwarte Snoep

'Je bent prachtig,' zei ik tegen haar, 'je vertelt zulke prachtige verhalen. Heb jij mij die verhalen verteld ?'

Ze knikte. Ik was in de stoomboot, en keek naar Sintermelk.

Ik keek naar het zwarte snoep. Het was nachtmerrie snoep.
'Dit heeft je naar mij gebracht,' zei ze.
Ik knikte.

En toen was ze ook weg. Er was geen tijd voor romantiek.
Ze verdween zo in het niets, en ik was helemaal alleen met het zwarte snoep, het nachtmerrie snoep, op het stoomschip. Maar ik was in ieder geval op het stoomschip, en daar was ik blij mee. Het zwarte snoep hing daar als zwarte gordijnen, en ik wist wel zeker dat Sintermelk haarzelf er weer achter had verstopt.
Het zwarte snoep begon me weer verhalen te vertellen, en ik viel weer in een diepe slaap.
Zoveel zwart snoep wat daar als kralen hing.
Ik kwam er maar niet doorheen, het was als een wildernis.

Het zwarte snoep was als boeken, en ik begon in de boeken te lezen.
Ik raakte in een trance en ik begon naar Sintermelk te roepen.
En ik zag haar in de verte, in de duisternis.
En ze stroomde daar als melk en honing, en zwarte snoep, en vertelde verhalen.
Ik hing aan haar lippen.
Ik zat aan haar voeten en luisterde.
Zij was het grote geheim van Zwarte Snoep.
Ik keek in haar ogen, en zij keek in mijn ogen, en ik gleed weer weg in een diepe slaap.
Zij was de onbereikbare, maar zij vertelde prachtige verhalen die uit haar stroomden.
Ik was op de golven, en ik zag het stoomschip in de verte.
'Nee, laat me nu niet in de steek !' riep ik.
Ik werd gesleurd door de golven tot een eiland, en daar bracht ik mijn dagen door.
Het was een onbewoond eiland, en ik schreef alle verhalen op die ik nog van haar kon herinneren.
Het was alles wat ik nog had.
Maar het was het beste wat me was overkomen.

Nachtmerries van het Zwarte Snoep

Christus … Christ-us … Kruist-ons … Datgene wat ons kruist …
Het lijkt niet uit de samenleving weggewassen te kunnen worden, maar dan moet je even dieper kijken : Kruis-tus … Er is een kruis tussen alle dingen … Het roept om oplossing …
Zij is de onbereikbare bereikbaarheid … sintermelk …
Wij reizen door de verhalen van het zwarte snoep … nachtmerries tot sieraden gemaakt …

Ik schreef de verhalen op in de grotten … in hieroglieven … Maar ik begreep ze later niet meer …
Ook anderen vonden de grotten en probeerden de hieroglieven te ontcijferen, en kijk wat ze ervan gemaakt hebben …

Nederland die zijn kinderen aan de mammon offert …
Dit godsgruwelijke land …
En ik ben nog steeds op zoek naar sintermelk …
Het houdt mij op de been …
Al hangen er duizend duivels aan mijn broek …
Ik ga door …
Ik zal haar vinden …

Ik heb haar in mijn dromen zien stromen …
Maar kijk wat de mens er van heeft gemaakt …
Zij is de onbereikbare bereikbare …
Zij is benaderbaar …
Maar het kehatitische verschijnsel zorgt ervoor dat het vlees afsterft aan deze dingen …
Daarom is corona gekomen …

Zij is de onbereikbare bereikbare … de hemelse kennis …
En ik ben in de hemel geweest …

Maar kijk om je heen en zie al die mannetjes draven met hun stropdasjes …
En simpele zieltjes volgen hen …
Nederland die zijn kinderen offert aan de mammon …

Nachtmerries van het zwarte snoep …
Ik kom dichterbij, maar glijd dan weg …
En ik puzzel weer met de verhalen …
Rijgende sieraden van mijn dromen …
Christus … Crossed us … Kruist ons …
Een kruis tussen alle dingen …
Nachtmerries van het zwarte snoep …

De weg tot sintermelk is zwaar en hard,
maar niemand kan zeggen dat het niet zoet is …
Dit zijn de nachtmerries van het zwarte snoep …

En vaak is het te zoet …
Oh Nederland is zo zoet, zo lief, zo aardig …
Maar kijk wat ze met haar kinderen doet …
Hoe ze hen offert aan de mammon …
Aan de werken van het vlees …
Om haar in een roes te dienen …
Nachtmerries van het zwarte snoep …

Kijk hoe ze haar kinderen martelt …
In het verborgene waar niemand het ziet …
Kijk hoe haar kinderen roepen,
maar niemand hoort hen …
En ze kunnen alleen maar luisteren naar sintermelk's verhalen …
De onbereikbare bereikbare …

Ik heb me er bij neergelegd en toch strijd ik …
Ik ben erdoor in slaap gevallen, maar toch ontwaak ik …
Deze stromen zijn sterk … te sterk … Het heeft mij afgezonderd …
Ook ik ben maar één van die kinderen …

Nachtmerries van het zwarte snoep …
Kruist ons … Kruis tussen alle dingen en alle mensen …
Christus … Kruisigt hem … Kruisigt ons …
Nachtmerries van het zwarte snoep …
Sintermelk heeft gesproken …
Van haar dromen eens vervlogen ...

de babbels van kuuk

kuuk liep op de straat.
toen kwam babbels.
babbels zei : hey kuuk.
maar kuuk zei niks.
kuuk was boos.
babbels werd toen ook boos.
omdat kuuk niets zei.
en toen werd kuuk nog bozer.
en zei : babbels, nu ben je van mij.

de brillenzaak

'Ik zag hem er zo langsheen kijken, alsof hij niet bestaat,' zei de kabouter.
'Dat moet ik nou net weer hebben. Ik kan wel wat hebben, maar dat moet niet langer zo doorgaan, want dan breekt er wat.'
--- Wat dan ? vroeg de man.
'Ja, dat ga ik jou allemaal niet verklappen,' zei de kabouter. 'Verdiep je er maar eens in. Doe je eens wat goed.'
--- Nou, een beetje beleefder mag wel, zei de man.
'Ik mag helemaal niks,' zei de kabouter. 'Wie gaat mij een beetje lopen vertellen wat ik allemaal mag en niet mag. Mijn moeder beslist dat allemaal.'
--- Je moeder ? lachte de man. Dan kan ik beter doorlopen.
'Ja, loop jij maar vlug door,' zei de kabouter. 'Jij hebt hier helemaal niets te zoeken, voordat er wat breekt.'
Toen liep de man weg. Net op het nippertje, want de kabouter had het echt bijna met hem gehad.
En zo komt ons verhaal toch nog tot een goede einde.

Ik zat zo tegen die steen aan te staren, waar dit allemaal op stond geschreven. Ik dacht bij mezelf : 'Wat een belachelijke steen. Maar laat ik maar niks zeggen.' Nee, want je weet natuurlijk nooit met stenen waarop zulke verhalen staan geschreven. Die kunnen zomaar ineens uit hun slof springen. Dus ik ben maar doorgelopen, na de steen gegroet te hebben. Ja, dat kan je ook maar beter doen. Je moet een steen natuurlijk nooit irriteren, en nooit negeren.

Vroeger, heel vroeger, heel lang geleden, liep ik nog weleens te schelden op een steen, totdat ik zelf in een steen veranderde, dus toen dacht ik : Laat ik maar een stuk aardiger zijn tegen stenen. Maar ja, als je dan zulke verhalen leest, dan denk je weleens bij je jezelf : 'En nu is het afgelopen.' Als elke steen nu allemaal zulke lange verhalen heeft, dan ben je toch nooit uitgelezen. Dan kun je toch wel aan de gang blijven.

Maar goed, ja, ik ben ook weleens zo'n kaboutertje tegengekomen. Je kunt ze maar beter te vriend houden. Niet gaan lopen stampen en zeggen : Hey, ik wil dit, en ik wil dat. Want ze schoppen je zo in elkaar man, ze toveren je zo in een kikker of in kikkerdril of nog erger … modder. Maar laat ik maar ophouden. Het is inmiddels al lang geleden. Ik moet eens leren niet zoveel koeien uit de sloot te vissen, maar soms is het wel nodig. Ik heb er een wijze les van geleerd. Daar kun je niks van zeggen, dus dat moet je ook niet doen. Je kan het beter laten voor wat het is, vind ik. Allemaal

moeilijk gaan lopen doen, heeft geen zin. Geen snotterbel die daar op zit te wachten. Maar goed, ik probeer hier nu een einde aan te breien. Het is wel weer genoeg voor vandaag, zo. Ik dacht wel : Wat een raar kaboutertje was dat toch. Echt zo'n pubertje. Liep op alles te schelden, en maar schoppen, en drammen, en doorzeuren.

'Mijn vriend, beste vrind,' zei die kabouter, 'wil je daarmee ophouden ?'

Ik vroeg : Met wat ?

Met ademen, zei hij.

Ja, maar dan ga ik dood, idioot ! schreeuwde ik.

Stik toch, schold die kabouter.

Niet zo aardig dus. Maar ja, dat is bekend, dat die kabouters flink niet aardig kunnen wezen. Ik draai altijd om de hete koffie om ze niet nog kwaaier te maken. Maar goed, daarvan ga je ook in frustraties leven. Dus moet er een oplossing komen. Helemaal mee eens ?

Mijn vader was brillenmaker. Wij woonden boven de brillenzaak. Ik ging 's nachts weleens naar beneden in mijn pyama op blote voeten of op sokken, en dan ging ik uren lopen staren naar de prachtige brillen die hij maakte. Ja, zo is het eigenlijk allemaal gekomen. Er was iets gebeurd met mijn ogen. Ik zag dingen die er volgens anderen niet waren, zoals kabouters en sprekende stenen. Ik zei dan : 'Een beetje de brillen van mijn vader belachelijk gaan lopen maken ? Misschien bestaan jullie dan ook niet, hè, hè. Een beetje gaan lopen beslissen wie wel en niet bestaat, wie er wel of niet gezien kan worden. Ga eens potverdrie een bril kopen en zie het voor jezelf. Ook de koning van het land heeft zo'n bril en zegt dat het waar is. Er wonen bij hem zelfs kabouters op het paleis, en zijn paleis is gebouwd van sprekende stenen met verhaaltjes derop, derop. Drop ja.'

Allemaal reclame truukjes, zeiden ze dan. Je vader maakt goed gebruik van je.
En ja, het was waar. Mijn vader had ons opgedragen dit soort dingen te vertellen om klanten te trekken. Ja, je moet toch wat. Toch was het stiekem allemaal wel waar, want de brillen van mijn vader waren gewoon erg bijzonder. Als een man een bril van mijn vader opzette kreeg zo'n man daar spontaan een baard van. Toch wel bijzonder. Als een vrouw een bril van mijn vader's brillenzaak opzette, dan ging ze daardoor zeggen : 'Alles is maar tijdelijk.' Ook wel bijzonder. Als een bril zoiets bij een mens kan doen, dan is dat toch wel wonderlijk. Er zaten ook knopjes aan de bril, waardoor je ze onzichtbaar kon maken, zodat niemand zag dat je een bril had.

Maar genoeg over brillen
Het is om te gillen.
Hiermee verdiende hij zijn brood,
Maar nu is hij dood.

Einde

Elwin in het
toets kasteel

Elwin was al heel diep in het bos gekomen. Plotseling zag hij iets glinsteren. Er leek licht te zijn. Zijn gedachten begonnen als balletjes in hem te borrelen. Zou het dan toch waar zijn dat hij eindelijk het bos was uitgekomen ? Hij was goed verdwaald. Maar wilde hij eigenlijk het bos wel uit ? Het was hier zo prachtig. Hij zag een kasteel in de verte. Toen hij bij het kasteel was aangekomen stond er een mannetje in de opening van de kasteelpoort. 'Ben je daar eindelijk ?' zei het mannetje. 'Al je gedachten moeten getoetst worden, anders verbeeldt jij het je allemaal maar, mannetje,' zei het mannetje.

Toen moest Elwin het kasteel in. Het mannetje zei dat dat heel belangrijk was, want al Elwin's gedachtes moesten getoetst worden op waarheid. Ze kwamen hiervoor in een grote ruimte. Er stond daar een grote spiraal met een trechter. De spiraal was gemaakt van allerlei buisjes die in een lange lijn verbonden waren aan de trechter. Elwin's gedachten bubbelden nog steeds als bolletjes. 'Hoeps,' zei het mannetje. De bolletjes van Elwin's gedachten begonnen de trechter in te dwarrelen. Het leek wel alsof het uit zijn hoofd begon te spuiten. Het mannetje begon te lachen.

Gierend van het lachen ging het mannetje achter een piano zitten. 'Wie bent u eigenlijk ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Ik, weet je dat dan niet ?' proeste het mannetje. 'Ik ben de tovenaar van het toets kasteel. Al jouw gedachtes moeten de trechter in. Dan gaan ze door verschillende buisjes in de spiraal, keer op keer, totdat we zien wat het is.'

'Interessant,' zei Elwin, die naar de balletjes keek die bubbelden in de trechter. Toen zag hij ze een voor een in het eerste buisje rollen. Het eerste buisje in de spiraal was genaamd de waarheid.

'De waarheid,' zei de tovenaar. Hij begon wat te spelen op de piano. 'Alles wordt getoetst aan de waarheid, getest door een oranje vuurtje.' Plotseling zag Elwin glinsterend vuur in de buis. Het was inderdaad oranje. 'Wat voel je nu ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

'Vogeltjes,' zei Elwin, 'in mijn buik. Het is alsof ze vliegen.'

'Dat zijn je gedachten,' zijn de tovenaar. 'Die komen van heel diep, vanuit de buik.' Elwin zag dat de vogeltjes toen uit hem kwamen en ook de trechter in vlogen.

'Interessant,' zei Elwin weer.

'Nu moet je opletten,' zei de tovenaar. De tovenaar begon veel ruiger te spelen op de piano. Alle bolletjes en vogeltjes waren nu inmiddels in het eerste buisje gekomen. Elwin keek naar de buis, naar het oranje vuur.

'De waarheid,' zei de tovenaar weer, 'want er mag geen leugen zijn. Alle leugens zullen hier

verbranden. Maar denk dan niet dat het klaar is, Elwin, want er is ook nog zoiets wat we valse waarheid noemen. Het moet dus nog verder getest worden in de buisjes die erna komen in de spiraal.'

Elwin voelde zich heel vreemd in zijn buik, leeg worden, en keek naar het oranje vuur. Het had de hele buis van de waarheid gevuld. Elwin was er even helemaal stil van. Heel veel van zijn balletjes en vogeltjes waren tot as geworden. Het as liep door een filter in neergaande spiraal naar beneden. Het stonk heel erg. 'Mest,' zei de tovenaar. 'Het zal allemaal tot mest worden wat de boeren op hun land zullen gebruiken zodat alles wat ze verbouwen kan groeien.' De neergaande spiraal, de afvoer-spiraal, liep helemaal de grond in. 'Gaat allemaal het riool in,' zei de tovenaar. 'De boeren werken hiermee. Komt allemaal goed. Is het toch niet voor niets geweest. Alles is bruikbaar.'

Elwin glimlachte. Er waren ook wat vogeltjes en bolletjes die wel door het oranje vuur waren heengekomen in de buis van de waarheid, maar dat waren er al een stuk minder. Soms kwamen er nieuwe gedachtes in Elwin opborrelen en die moesten ook direct de trechter in. Het hield eigenlijk nooit op. Het was een altijd-durend proces. Het overblijfsel liep in de tweede buis, in een opgaande spiraal.

'Zoals ik al zei,' zei de tovenaar, 'is er valse waarheid, dus alles moet verder getest worden. De volgende buis is de buis van nederigheid, want de valse waarheid is sluw en eerzuchtig. Altijd wil de valse waarheid haantje de voorste zijn. Begrijp je wat ik bedoel ?'

Elwin knikte. Dat wist Elwin maar al te goed. De valse waarheid was een opdringer, nam altijd meer dan hij nodig had. In nederigheid kon je dat testen. Het was een groene doorzichtige buis in de spiraal die naar boven liep. Daar gingen alle overgebleven vogeltjes en balletjes in. Ze dwarrelden allemaal door elkaar heen. 'Ik zie nog niks,' zei Elwin. 'Ik zie de vogeltjes en balletjes dwarrelen, maar nog geen vuur.'

'Ho ho,' zei de tovenaar. 'We pakken dat anders aan.'

'Hoe dan ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Gas,' zei de tovenaar. 'Er stroomt daar een tovergas van nederigheid.'

'Ik zie het niet,' zei Elwin.

'Je kunt het niet zien,' zei de tovenaar. 'Het gas is onzichtbaar.'

Wel zag Elwin toen dat sommige vogeltjes en balletjes in de buis begonnen neer te vallen en ze werden tot mest en het stonk. 'Oh, ik zie het al,' zei Elwin. 'Ja.'

'Wat ja ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

'Gewoon,' zei Elwin. 'Ik zie hoe het tovergas van nederigheid de waarheid scheidt van de valse waarheid. De valse waarheid wordt hier tot mest. Ik zie hoe het wordt afgevoerd door een filter en door een buisje wat het naar beneden zuigt. Het gaat zo de grond in door die spiraal.'

'Goedzo, Elwin,' zei de tovenaar. 'De valse waarheid is een opschepper, maar het tovergas van nederigheid weet daar wel raad mee.'

Elwin knikte. 'Heel mooi,' zei Elwin. 'Die boeren zullen er vast blij mee zijn.'

'Vast en zeker,' zei de tovenaar.

'Wat nu ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Ho ho,' zei de tovenaar. 'Er is ook nog zoiets als valse nederigheid, dat je toch nog een beetje met de ellebogen wil werken, voor aandacht bijvoorbeeld, eerzuchtige strijd om de meeste te willen zijn, om aanbeden te willen worden, en dan ga je erg sjoemelen, dus als in een hele egoïstische nederigheid, verwaand bijna. Daarom moet het verder getest worden, Elwin.'

Toen ging alles in het derde deel van de spiraal, het derde buisje, dat wat was overgebleven tenminste. Er waren nu nog minder vogeltjes en balletjes, maar heel soms kwamen er wat bij omdat Elwin nieuwe gedachten kreeg die getoetst moesten worden en ook door de trechter in de spiraal kwamen. Elwin keek naar de derde buis. Het was een blauwe doorzichtige buis. 'De buis van vrede,' zei de tovenaar glimlachend.

'Wat gebeurt hier ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Let maar op,' zei de tovenaar. En toen gebeurde er iets wonderlijks. Er kwamen zingende jongetjes naar boven in de buis. Ze waren heel klein. Maar ineens begonnen ze te gillen. 'Wat zijn het ?' vroeg Elwin.

'De gillende jongens,' zei de tovenaar glimlachend. 'Ze komen uit een klok. Soms zingen ze, soms gillen ze, en soms zijn ze wild. Het zijn een soort kaarsjes.' Elwin zag ook vlammetjes op de hoofdjes van de jongetjes. 'Ze moeten met hun gegil de overgebleven vogeltjes en bolletjes testen, je overgebleven gedachten,' zei de tovenaar.

'Interessant,' zei Elwin. 'Maar het is totaal niet vredig.'

'Nee,' zei de tovenaar. 'De vrede is bang en gilt, omdat er gevaren op de loer staan, en daarom moet het getest worden, en zo wordt het getest.'

'Hebben ze ook pijn ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Zeer zeker,' zei de tovenaar. 'Ware vrede kan heel pijnlijk zijn. Het is een beveiligings systeem wat ervoor zorgt dat alles eerlijk verdeeld is, om veilig te zijn tegen de truken van valse nederigheid. De valse nederigheid is zeer, zeer bedrieglijk, als een clown. Hij komt gewoon om te roven.'

'Dus eigenlijk zijn de jongetjes in een oorlog ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Zeer zeker,' zei de tovenaar. 'Dit is de klok van de gillende jongetjes, en zij zullen ook heel wild worden. Het zijn de wilde jongens.'

Elwin bleek kijken naar de gillende jongetjes in de buis, die inderdaad als kaarsjes waren. 'En wat nu ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Kijk goed,' zei de tovenaar. Veel vogeltjes en bolletjes werden weer tot mest. De jongetjes begonnen toen in boertjes te veranderen. 'Vreemd,' lachte Elwin.

'Goed kijken,' zei de tovenaar. Elwin zag hoe de jongetjes harkjes hadden, en andere instrumenten die boeren en tuinmannen hebben. 'Oh, tuinjongens !' riep Elwin.

'Ja, jaha,' zei de tovenaar. 'Maar goed opletten.' Elwin bleef kijken. Nog steeds waren de jongetjes

als kaarsjes. Sommige jongetjes waren al bijna opgebrand, en er was een reuk van rook. 'Dit is gevaarlijk, heel gevaarlijk,' zei de tovenaar. 'Kijk nu snel naar de vierde buis, want we hebben nog een buis nodig. Er is namelijk ook valse vrede. Sommigen van die jongetjes dutten in, en zien de gevaren niet meer, en gaan lopen luieren, en blijven boertjes, terwijl ze veel meer moeten zijn. Daarom moet het verder getoetst worden.' Elwin zag de overgebleven jongetjes de vierde buis in dwarrelen. Deze buis was pikzwart, maar doorzichtig. Deze buis lag hoger op de spiraal. Alles wat hier binnenkwam was al ver gekomen. 'Het is de buis van dapperheid,' zei de tovenaar. 'De valse vrede moet verslagen worden, anders is er geen goed beveiligings systeem.'

Hier werden de boertjes en gillende jongetjes tot wilde jongens, tot indiaantjes. 'Verschrikkelijk,' zei Elwin. 'Moet je dat zien.'

'Wat ?' vroeg de tovenaar. Elwin liep ergens naar de buis toe en wees. Er waren daar wat jongetjes aan het zingen. 'Ze zingen zo vals,' zei Elwin. De tovenaar lachte. 'Het is ook nog niet klaar,' zei de tovenaar. De hele spiraal begon toen te branden, als een klok, als een kaars, een klokkaars, maar het waren meerdere kaarsjes. Elwin greep naar zijn hoofd. Er was zoveel rook. 'Nu het getest is,' zei de tovenaar, 'zijn er alleen nog maar vlakketjes.'

'Vlakketjes ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Ja, een soort vlammetjes die getest zijn, maar ze branden maar heel kort,' zei de tovenaar. 'Het is het zuivere deel van je gedachten wat over is gebleven, door de toets heen is gekomen.'

Er waren overal kaarsjes. De kaarsjes leken op jongetjes. En ze hadden de vlakketjes op hun hoofd. Ze zongen een vreemd lied, en ze waren wild. Sommigen gilden. 'Het zijn harde mannen,' zei de tovenaar. 'Zachte jongens worden harde mannen in de nacht.'

Elwin keek naar de jongens. 'Begrijp je wat hier gaande is ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

Elwin greep weer naar zijn hoofd. 'Ik ben in de war. Ik begrijp het niet,' zei Elwin. 'Alles is chaos in mijn hoofd, alsof de wilde jongens in mij zijn.'

'Eerst moet er chaos zijn,' zei de tovenaar, 'en dan worden er nieuwe dingen gemaakt.'

Elwin voelde zichzelf wegsmelten, als in een ketel. Hij keek om zich heen en hij was in een woeste zee. Wat was er gebeurd ? Wat was dit ? Hij werd meegesleurd door woeste golven. 'Help, help !' riep Elwin. Hij hoorde de jongetjes gillen in zijn hoofd. Hij zag ze gebonden aan palen, en indianen dansten er omheen. Alles liep hier in elkaar over. 'Waar ben ik !' riep Elwin.

'Je wordt getest, Elwin !' hoorde hij de tovenaar roepen. 'Helemaal getest. Er zal niets ongetest blijven.'

'Nou, bedankt !' riep Elwin. 'Moet dit allemaal ?'

'Ja !' riep de tovenaar. Elwin voelde nu zelf ook hoe hij aan een paal was gebonden en indianen dansten om hem heen. Elwin begon te gillen. Maar toen werd hij wilder en wilder. Ook hij voelde hoe zijn hoofd als een kaars was. Hij wilde oorlog voeren tegen het kwaad, tegen alles wat vals was, maar hij wist ook hoe bedrieglijk dat kon zijn, dus daarom moest het wel getoetst worden. Er stonden zoveel gevaren op de loer, zoveel valstrikken, maar het leek alsof Elwin nu ook in een valstrik was, en hij kon er niet uit. 'Help !' riep Elwin weer.

'Zoek het maar uit !' riep de tovenaar toen.

Elwin keek rond, en zag dat het een grote puzzel was. Alle stukjes vlogen om hem heen. Alles liep door elkaar heen ook. Hij was in een ketel. In de ketel was een paal waaraan Elwin was gebonden, en zijn hoofd brandde als een kaars.

'Al je gedachten moeten getoetst worden, Elwin,' riep de tovenaar, 'alles waarvan jij denkt dat het de waarheid is, ook alles waarvan je denkt dat het goed is.'

'Ik begrijp het !' riep Elwin. Hij merkte dat alles wat op een afstand bleef. Het draaide woest om hem heen, maar het kwam niet verder.

'Waar ben ik ?' riep Elwin. 'Nee !'

'Kijken of je dapper bent !' riep de tovenaar.

'Ik wil niet !' riep Elwin.

'Dan stopt de reis hier, en wordt je tot mest !' riep de tovenaar.

'Nee, dat wil ik ook niet !' riep Elwin.

'Zoveel !' riep Elwin.

'Zoveel wat ?' hoorde hij de tovenaar roepen.

'Veren !' riep Elwin, 'witte veren ! Waar ben ik ?'

'Het is een klok !' riep de tovenaar. 'Alles gaat terug naar het begin, en dan wordt het weer getoetst.'

'Waarom ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Het is een toetsklok,' zei de tovenaar. 'Je kan jammeren wat je wil, maar dit gaat eeuwig door.'

'Ik wil niet !' riep Elwin. Elwin greep naar zijn hoofd. Dat kon hij weer. Hij moest zich ook goed vasthouden. Hij was zo duizelig.

'Dan wordt je mest,' zei de tovenaar. 'Of nog erger.'

'Nog erger ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Valse vrede doet pensioneren. Dan wordt je een opaatje,' zei de tovenaar.

'Nee, dat wil ik niet !' riep Elwin. 'Ik wil altijd een kind blijven !'

'Goedzo,' zei de tovenaar. 'Dan is er hoop.'

Elwin begon te snikken. 'Ik voel me zo vreemd, zo ziek.'

Hij zag de jongetjes om zich heen. Sommigen waren boertjes, anderen waren indiaantjes, tuinmannetjes, of gewoon wilde jongens, en weer anderen leken op het punt te staan te gaan gillen. Ze waren een stuk groter nu.

'Ik kan wel janken,' zei Elwin. 'Zijn we nu klaar ?'

'Nee,' zei de tovenaar. 'Het beste moet nog komen.'

Op hun hoofden waren de vlakketjes. Dit waren de gezuiverde en getoetste gedachten. Toen werd Elwin wat rustiger. Ook op Elwin's hoofd waren de vlakketjes. 'Dit zijn de nieuwe dromen,' zei de tovenaar, 'zacht als veren.'

Elwin zuchtte. Weer greep hij naar zijn hoofd. 'Ik begrijp dit niet, ik begrijp dit niet.'

'Hoeft ook niet,' zei de tovenaar. 'Niet alles hoeft begrepen te worden, maar je bent hier in het toets kasteel. Er valt hier veel te leren.'

'Ik kom hier nooit meer uit ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Dat zou dom zijn,' zei de tovenaar. 'Je kunt er alleen maar dieper in, en zoals je weet veranderd hier alles. Het is immers een klok.'

'Je denkt dat je heel wat bent, hè ?' zei Elwin ineens heel brutaal.

'Ik ben ook getoetst,' zei de tovenaar. 'Maar ik heb dit alles gemaakt.'

'Dan zou ik dat ook weleens willen toetsen !' riep Elwin, en rende op het mannetje af en raakte met het mannetje in gevecht. 'Dit is dan zeker het beste, hè !' riep Elwin. 'Een gevecht met jou, om te zien of je wel echt bent !'

Eerst was het mannetje heel klein, maar toen ineens stond er een leeuw voor Elwin.

Elwin zuchtte. 'Ik kan het nu wel opgeven. Je bent immers een tovenaar.'

Elwin was in slaap gevallen. De leeuw was groot en zwart en stond voor hem. Alles was donker. 'Waar ben ik ?' vroeg Elwin slaperig. 'Droom ik ?'

Hij zag toen een jongetje. 'In het toets kasteel,' zei het jongetje. 'Je bent bij de gillende jongens van de klok.'

'Vreemd,' zei Elwin, en viel weer in slaap.

'W... wat heb ik gedronken,' stamelde Elwin slaperig … 'Ik …'

'Wij worden altijd wild in de nacht,' fluisterde de jongen. Er was nu ook een andere jongen bij.

'A... als een kaars ?' vroeg Elwin terwijl hij half sliep … 'Ik ben zo …'

'Ja, als kaarsen,' zeiden de jongens. Er kwamen steeds meer jongens bij. Elwin was omsingeld.

'Welkom in de klok van de gillende jongens,' zei één van de jongens. 'Je bent nu één van ons. Wij worden ook wel de wilde jongens genoemd. Wij zijn het geheim van het toets kasteel.'

'E... en jullie kunnen ook zo mooi zingen,' zei Elwin …

'Soms,' zei één van de jongens.

'Het is oorlog,' zei één van de jongens.

'Ja, en zoveel valse vrede,' zei een andere jongen.

'En daarom zijn wij hier,' zei weer een andere jongen.

Ze hadden zulke mooie stemmen.

'Nou, bedankt,' zei Elwin. 'Ik wil graag bij jullie horen, maar ik ben nogal dom vergeleken met jullie, in de zin dat ik nog eigenlijk helemaal niets van deze plaats afweet.'

'Komt wel,' zei één van de jongens.

'Elwin, malle jongen,' zei een andere jongen, die hem een klap gaf.

'Au,' zei Elwin. 'Jij bent zeker de pestkop van het stel ?'

'We zijn allemaal pestkoppen min of meer,' zei weer een andere jongen, 'op onze eigen manier. Moet wel. Het is meer spelen en toetsen. Het is meer onderzoeken, van verschillende kanten bekijken, eraan draaien, zien hoe dingen werken.'

'Oh, reacties uitlokken,' zei Elwin.

'Het is een soort voorzichtigheid,' zei één van de jongens. 'Maar er is ook vals pesten, dus vandaar dat het toets kasteel er is. Er wordt geplaagd, het is een plaag kasteel, maar dus om te toetsen, als voorzichtigheid, en dat is een goede basis. Het is hier een studie kwaliteit, een onderzoeksdrang, en niet zomaar met alle winden meewaaien, en daarom gillen wij. Wij plagen en worden geplaagd. Wij plagen en worden geplaagd.'

Toen bleef de jongen het maar opnieuw zeggen : 'Wij plagen en worden geplaagd.' Het ging maar door, en ook de anderen begonnen het op te zeggen, als een versje.'

'Hey, stop daarmee,' zei Elwin. 'Nu weet ik het wel.'

Maar ze stopten niet. Het ging maar door. 'Volgens mij moeten jullie de toets spiraal weer in,' zei Elwin.

Ze begonnen toen te zingen, de meest wonderschone liederen. Ze waren als koorknapen. Elwin vond het prachtig. Elwin zag de grote trechter weer. Daar moest alles in. Al zijn gedachten, alle vogeltjes en bolletjes, want was het allemaal wel waar ? Ook dit moest getoetst worden. Elwin voelde zichzelf een harde werker, alsof hij in de mijnen werkte. Hij droeg alles wat hij maar kon vinden tot de grote trechter, ook de zingende jongetjes, die daar maar stonden en steeds kleiner werden. 'Hup, de trechter in,' zei Elwin. En toen ging hij naar de buisjes kijken van de spiraal, waar alles doorheen ging, en zoveel, ja zoveel, werd tot mest.

'De boeren zullen er blij mee zijn,' grinnikte Elwin, maar hij was ook verdrietig, omdat sommigen van die jongetjes niets dan mest bleken te zijn. Het was vals. Er rolden soms wat tranen over zijn wangen als hij dat zag. Hij hield van die jongetjes. Maar hoevelen van hen waren echt ? Hoevelen van hen waren van een pure waarheid ? Vaak zat er weer een addertje onder het gras, maar nu wist Elwin hoe hij het kon toetsen. Uiteindelijk moesten ook alle vlakketjes de trechter in. Ook alles waarvan hij dacht dat het nu wel zuiver moest zijn. Alles moest weer de trechter in. Dit was eeuwig,

iets wat herhaald moest blijven worden, anders zou Elwin zelf tot mest worden.

Waarheid, Nederigheid, Vrede en Dapperheid, daaraan moest alles getoetst worden, en ook de toetsresultaten moesten weer opnieuw getoetst worden, want het was immers een klok. En daarom gilden de jongens, als een hypergevoelig alarm. Er stonden ook teveel onbekende en geheime gevaren op de loer. Dit was niet iets simpels. Elwin moest hier een harde werker worden, een wilde jongen. Het was hard werk in deze mijnen. Altijd maar weer moest hij terug naar de trechter.

RGG – regressief-gereformeerde gemeente 2020

DE HEILIGE TWEEDE BIJBEL
VERZAMELINGEN VOLUME III - PROZA
LOG

DE HEILIGE TWEEDE BIJBEL

VERZAMELINGEN VOLUME III - PROZA

LOG

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Hoofd-indeling :

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Geografische Proza

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Koeiendorp
Varkensdorp
Hilversum

Algemene Proza

Medusa

Hoofdstuk 1. De Zonderling

Ik denk dat ik doodga als ik naar haar kijk. ‘Dit is het rijk van de dood,’ zei ze. Ze had een suikerzoet jurkje aan, met de geur van een herfstbos. Ik draaide mijn gezicht om en keek naar buiten, naar de grauwe stenen. Het was alsof ze lang uitgestrekt op de daken lag, alsof ik haar met mijn ogen niet kon ontwijken. De bus stopte dichtbij, mensen stapten in de bus, en het was alsof zij tussen de rijen stond. Ik denk dat ik doodga als ik haar aankijk, dat ik het dan gewoon niet overleef. Ze pakt me bij mijn hand, en trekt me naar beneden. Het is etenstijd. Zij smeert het brood, kijkt naar buiten naar de heg. Ik ruik haar suikerzoet jurkje, alsof het belegd is met hemelse rijkdommen, maar naar haar kijken durf ik niet. Ik ben laf. Ik voel haar hand nog steeds, terwijl ze me allang heeft losgelaten. Ze voert me.

Ze is als een rots waarvan ik af kan springen, daarom beklim ik haar niet. De pot pindakaas voelt nog warm aan van haar hand. Ze was hier. Nu is ze in de kelder. Omdat ze zo lang wegblijft drink ik de laatste slokken melk en thee, en dan ga ik naar bed. Het was een dag des doods, in de tuin van spot. En gisteren was ik in de tuin van wreedheden. Mijn herinneringen zijn daar. Mijn hersenen bloeden. Ze leest me een boek voor, terwijl ik probeer te slapen. Ik hoor haar stem echoen door

mijn hoofd. Het zaad van de lindeboom houd ik stevig vast, en meng het met mijn tranen. Dan smeer ik haar lichaam in, met het mengsel dat lijkt op natte tarwe, griesmeel, het is als brood, en het bed is de oven. Zij is de vrouw van de bakker, en ik ben de bakker. Ik maak haar klaar voor het kostelijke dinner in het diepste van de nacht, en dan slaap ik.

Ze is als de boom aan de rivier. Ik krab aan het hout, het is alsof de sterren breken. Ik denk aan de tuinen waarin wij waren, de hoge poorten in de heggen, de vruchten die zijn als de meest kostelijke snoepjes. Wie plantte hen daar ? Ik keek naar haar gezicht toen ze sliep. Nu was het veilig. De lazarus-koekjes bungelden aan haar lichaam, slap, uitgedroogd, de nacht heerste hier over de dood, de gouden dood. Voor mij was het een vakantie, ze was even geen roofdier meer. Ik kuste haar lippen, en dan slaap ik, vrij, blij, zonder angst, want ze slaapt. Een diepe nacht die mijn bewustzijn breekt, ik ben er even helemaal uit. Tante Connie controleert later de kamers nog even, of alle lichten wel uit zijn voor de nacht, want als de nacht komt, dan moet de nacht echt goed komen. Zo praat ik ’s nachts als met een pop. Ik hoor tante Connie op de gang lopen, als een lijzige boom, verzwakt door het gewicht van haar ouderdom, met passen als het slaan op de koekjestrommel. Ja, haar hele wezen klinkt me als muziek in de oren. Altijd is ze mijn lievelingstante geweest, daarom wonen we hier samen, maar de herinnering aan haar verzwakt. Ik leef hier in een dorre tuin, spot gemengd met wreedheden, de souvenirs van het duistere gat van het verleden. Geen lichtjes konden dat goedmaken, geen gouden pollepel van welke grootmoeder dan ook. Ik voel me verminkt.

Oom Joop is een man met humor, maar ook hij kon mij niet redden. Als ik wakker word zit er iemand op me, wassende mijn rug. Het is zij. Ik durf haar niet aan te kijken. Ze pakt me beet, laat dan los, pakt me steviger beet, en dan laat ze me helemaal los, om op te staan. Ik ben te moe, en het zonlicht kwelt me. Er liggen hier snoep papiertjes overal. Ik hoor haar lachen. Er is geen tuinman die de wilde tuin van mijn ziel op orde kan krijgen. Ik lig hier voor Jan Worst.

Ze is de laatste van de rozentuin, dus ik kan haar niet wegdoen. De geschiedenis van de graaf, en zijn kinderen. Zij is als de erfenis. Uit mijn gedachten is ze niet. Ze speelt de piano. Ik kijk naar buiten, en probeer langzaam grip te krijgen op de dag. De muren buiten lijken hoog, zoals zij hoog is, van adel. Tante Connie komt binnen, en sleept zichzelf over het tapijt. Het lijkt voor haar een woestijnreis om aan ons bed te komen, en alles lijkt verwaterd. Haar rumoerig kapsel was vroeger deftig en hehoudend. Ze staart in de spiegel. ‘Ik moet me nog opmaken voor de dag, je weet wel, het harnas aandoen,’ zegt ze. Ze gaat tegen de verwarming aanzitten, en luistert naar de piano. De schotel die ze in haar handen heeft maakt haar bijna als een bedelaar. Ze heeft behoefte aan een gesprek, en ik ben te moe. De dochter van de graaf daarentegen is vol energie, en begint het gesprek met haar in zinderende vaart. Ze zijn als een stel vogels. Al snel prakken de vorken een maal. Ik krijg niks, want ik behoor niet tot de dag. Het is alsof ze elkaar voeren.

In de middag ligt ze weer op me. Het lijkt wel alsof ze draadjes aan me bevestigt om me op te hijsen. Er is nog maar een klein stukje van de dag over en dat eist ze helemaal voor haarzelf op, als met gloeiende handen. Buiten hoor ik de bus, mensen stappen in, verveeld, uitgeput. Ik vraag me af of ze ooit zullen aankomen. Zwetend en puffend kom ik aan bij de lift op de gang. Ik wil naar de zolder. Maar de lift schijnt niet te werken. Ik strompel naar de trap, want een dag met de dochter van de graaf is te veel voor mij. Ik zie bij de trap naar de zolder een andere vrouw staan, in wit kant. Ze helpt me op de trap. Ik plof even later op haar bed neer. Zij is de vrouw van de zolder, en ik heb de zolder bereikt, niet te bereiken voor de dochter van de graaf, de dochter des doods. Maar ik hoor haar krijsen beneden, als iemand die zich geprikt heeft bij het naaien. Ja, toe maar, druk die speld maar diep naar binnen, je verdient het, kreng, denk ik bij mezelf. Maar dan word ik ineens mild door de zachtheid van de vrouw hier. Ze komt dichterbij, spreid haar benen waarmee ze mij

vastklemt. ‘Ho, doe normaal,’ zeg ik. Ze verzwakt de klem een beetje, maar ik voel haar gewicht op me. ‘Slapen ?’ vraagt ze.

‘Nee, dank je, ik heb net geslapen,’ zeg ik.

Ze loopt naar een kastje, haalt wat brood eruit en besmeerd het. Daarna voert ze me. De lucht is donker hier, en ik hoor de dochter van de graaf nog steeds krijsen. Als ik naar buiten staar is het alsof ze zich heeft uitgespreid over de daken.

‘Waar kom je vandaan ?’ vraagt de vrouw van de zolder.

‘Vanuit de tuin,’ zeg ik.

‘Oh, de tuin der edelheden en martelingen ?’

Ik knik.

‘Zo’n zoet-bitter iets,’ zegt ze. Ik knik weer. De verdiepingen onder de zolder lijken ver weg. Ik staar weer naar buiten, alsof ik mijn ziel zie vliegen. ‘Waar ben ik ?’ vraag ik.

- Bij mij.

Ze pakt een schotel en een kom, en voert me dan soep. ‘Ik wil niet meer terug,’ zeg ik. Ik kwam van een nachtelijk gebrul, en nu was ik hier, een plaats vol protserige spulletjes, over en weer gelakt en opgepoetst. Vanaf de zolder kon ik de tuinen zien, de heggen, met de hoge poorten. ‘Ik ben een vergiftigd mens,’ zeg ik. ‘Een dwaallicht, een pop.’ Ze knikt. Als ik naar buiten keek zag ik mijn weerspiegeling. Zij stond ineens voor de spiegel, en maakte zich op, met allerlei smeerseltjes. ‘Goed spul van de bomen,’ zei ze. ‘Het is voor mijn huid. Ik ga niet naar het feest vanavond, ik blijf wel hier met jou.’

Het is alsof ik met haar hang tussen de verdiepingen, alsof ik met haar zweef boven de tuinen. Ik voel haar gewicht, en ben bang dat we naar beneden vallen, maar ze rekt me uit. Ik zie de begroeiing op de muren, en herinner de begroeiing van de tuinen, de dorens, de valstrikken, puur natuur.

‘Ik ben de maker van de tuin,’ zegt ze plotseling. Ik schrik. ‘Hoe kun je zoiets maken ?’ vraag ik. Ze zwijgt, als het graf. Ik merk dat ik kwaad word van binnen, maar dan voel ik ineens genade. Al snel voel ik niets meer, ik kijk alleen maar in een onbekend gat, als een mist, een waas. Ik kan niet meer nadenken. ‘Wat is er aan de andere kant van de tuin ?’ vraag ik.

- Een snoepwinkel. Ze verkopen eigenlijk gewoon zoete vruchten.

Ik kijk naar haar kanten jurkje. Het is als een snoep jurkje. Ineens heb ik zoiets van : Als ik nog verder naar haar kijk, dan ga ik dood.

Ik rol van het bed af naar de trap, en laat mij naar beneden vallen. De dochter van de graaf vangt mij op, en de vrouw van het zolder stormt naar beneden. 'Hij zit toch aan touwen vast, elastiek, draden, kettingen, dus wat wil je,' schreeuwt ze.

'Is dit de oorlog van de feeen,' vraag ik, 'of van de indianen.' Ze grijpen elkaar in de haren. 'Uit dat licht,' roept de vrouw van de zolder. Ik staar doelloos naar de hoeken van de trap. Dan voel ik de hand van tante Connie, die mij naar haar kamer neemt. 'Thee ?' vraagt ze.

Ze maakt brood voor me, opgepoft en zacht, een beetje nat, met wat soep en pudding. 'Je moet goed eten, jongen,' zegt ze. Ik zie haar kauwen. Het zal wel avondetens-tijd zijn. Ik hoor vrouwen krijsen. Buiten hoor ik vogels krijsen. Het klinkt me als muziek in de oren. Bij tante Connie is alles altijd anders. Ze zorgt voor me, grijpt in wanneer het nodig is. Oom Joop zit aan de andere kant van de kamer. Een verfrommelde papieren zak ligt naast hem, met oud brood. De gouden klok tikt, en het is een rustgevend geluid. Ik probeerde vat te krijgen op de structuur van dit huis, maar het was alsof ik van de daken afgleed, of was dit huis slechts de weerspiegeling van de tuin. Het was niet bepaald mijn Eden, en toch wilde ik dit huis doordringen. Ik voelde mij een zwerver in dit huis, een huis wat ik nooit echt binnen kon gaan. Na een paar uur zaten de twee vrouwen keurig netjes tegen elkaar aan, in keurige zoete kleertjes, als feestbroodjes bij de bakker. Rozen op hen vastgespeld alsof er iemand jarig was, en de spelden gingen diep in hun vlees. 'Ja dieper, dieper,' dacht ik. Ik wilde het voelen bloeden. Het was al aan het bloeden. Het bloed sijpelde op de grond. Tante Connie raakte in paniek, en ik ook, omdat ik toch meer waarde hechtte aan de beoordelingen van tante Connie dan aan mezelf. 'Waarom doen jullie dat !' riep ze.

'Dit is ons verbond,' zeiden de twee vrouwen. 'Ons bloed-verbond.'

'Zie je,' dacht ik bij mezelf, 'dan had ik het wel goed ingeschat.'

'Geef me de speld,' zei ik. 'Ik wil ook deel hebben aan het bloed-verbond.' Het was een hele opluchting toen ik de speld in mijn vlees voelde gaan, en ik de zachtheid van de roos tegen mijn huid aanvoelde. Ik voelde me een plak vlees bij de slager.

'Nu kun je het dak opkomen,' zeiden de vrouwen. 'Nu kon je de tuin bezaaien en besproeiien.' De poort van mijn hersenen leek open te gaan, en de waas leek even te vertrekken. Ik wilde meer van zulke lichaams-spelden. Ik herinnerde de dorens, ik herinnerde hoe genadeloos diep ze gingen, totdat alles binnenin me brak, en ik begon te zweven. Ik was nu boven het dak, maar de huizen om ons heen waren veel groter. Ik kon de zolders inkijken en zag de vrouwen. Ze leken eenzaam, en ik was eenzaam. Ik was met een helm op geboren, maar die ontplofte nu. Ik zweefde bij iemand binnen. En hier zag ik bomen groeien door het hele huis. Ik was nog steeds in de tuin. Hier hingen zoveel gouden klokken aan de muur, die allemaal heerlijk tikten, zo licht, zo zacht, zo helder, ontwakende de diepste roerselen van mijn hersenen. Ze waren als een vuur in mijn lichaam. De mensen die hier woonden hadden allemaal dialogen. Het moest vooral ergens over gaan, maar ze kwamen er nergens mee. Ze leefden in een cirkeltje. Ik had ze al snel door. Toch was het allemaal erg verrijkend voor mij. Jurkjes hingen er aan de muur, vruchtjes lagen op schaaltjes, gezet op

oventjes. ‘Is dit de weg naar de stad ?’ vroeg ik.

- Welke stad. Oh, de overstad.

Ik knikte. ‘Daar heb ik vaker over gehoord,’ zeiden ze. Ze lieten me ladders van touw zien. Ik klom en klom, dit huis was lang, als een herenhuis wat maar niet ophield. Mensen leefden hier als vogels. Ik wist niet waar ik moest kijken. ‘De parel van de tuin,’ zeiden ze, ‘is daar,’ en dan wezen ze omhoog. De ladder was glibberig, en ik gleed weg. In spiegels zag ik mezelf klimmen. Ik had weer het gevoel dat ik van de daken gleed, alsof ik het huis niet kon binnengaan. Tante Connie legde haar hand op mijn hoofd. Haar hand was gloeiend heet, of was mijn hoofd gloeiend heet. ‘Waarom ?’ vroeg ik. ‘Waarom is er hier geen doorkomen aan ?’ Tante Connie zei niks, zweeg als het graf. Ook de twee vrouwen zeiden niets. Het was als een schijnbaar open weg die dood liep. Een zwakte maakte zich van mij meester, en ik was gelijmd aan de grond. Met wilde maar beheerste ogen keek de dochter van de graaf naar mij, alsof ze een wild paard probeerde te temmen, met de koele zelfverzekerdheid dat dat haar aardig lukte. Even stond de tijd stil, en was het alsof zij de muziek van het moment perfect kon berijden. Als ze zou vallen zou ze aan draden verbonden zijn, als aan elastiek, zodat ze niet in de vlammen van het hellemeer zou vallen. Ik snakte naar adem. Ik hoorde haar ogen roepen. Toen greep ze me vast. ‘Ik laat je nooit meer los,’ zei ze. ‘Nooit meer.’ Even dacht ik dat ik thuis gekomen was. Ik probeerde me zo lang te maken als zij zich waardig voelde. ‘Wie ben jij eigenlijk ?’ vroeg ik.

De vrouw van het zolder liep terug naar de trap. In gedachten zweefde ik langs het huis, en de dochter van de graaf lag uitgestrekt op de daken. Wij konden dit huis niet binnenkomen. Wij waren in de tuin. Het zonlicht was aangenaam, en het was alsof we beiden smolten en naar beneden sijpelden, om in elkaar te versmelten ? Waren wij de vruchten van deze tuin ?

Hoofdstuk 2. De Sleutel

Tante Connie legt gouden bestek op de tafel voor het feestmaal. Oom Joop komt aan tafel zitten. Ik zit naast de dochter van de graaf. Ze houdt mijn hand vast. Tante Connie brengt dan de pan met het avondeten, en met een grote lepel laat ze het ploffen op onze borden. ‘Is zij van het zolder niet uitgenodigd ?’ vraag ik.

‘Ze heeft haar eigen,’ zegt tante Connie. Ik heb het gevoel dat ik wat mis, en ga na een tijdje naar het zolder. Ik voel me op en top. Ze ligt op bed, en staart door het raam. Ik ga bij haar zitten. Haar ogen kijken dwars door me heen, alsof ze me niet ziet. Als ik naar buiten kijk, zie ik haar weerspiegelingen daar, alsof ze uitgestrekt is over de daken, en langs de muren, als begroeiing. ‘Zoveel mensen kennen me niet,’ zegt ze. Dan staat ze op en geeft mij een bord. Het schijnt hier ook etenstijd te zijn. Ze schept op. We staren elkaar de hele tijd aan, en als ik dan later naar buiten staar is het al donker, en haar weerspiegelingen zijn als de lichten in de nacht, als woeste paarden over de daken. Ik hoor tante Connie beneden roepen. Het is tijd voor de nacht, maar ik wil niet slapen. Ik houd de hand vast van de vrouw van het zolder. Mijn hoofd voelt als een stad met huizen, grote huizen, hoge huizen, lange huizen, met bomen er tussen, met plaats voor de tuin. Het is alsof de vrouw van het zolder op mijn hersenen danst, en het doet pijn, en ik word al snel moe. Pudding voert ze me. Grote lange draden voel ik door mijn lichaam gaan, totdat ik het gevoel heb dat ik kan zweven. Haar bed is ineens zo dik en ver weg, haar kamer twee keer groter. Nee, naar buiten wil ik niet meer. Ik ben hier buiten. Zij is mijn wereld. Ik heb een kinderlijk geloof in haar.

Tante Connie laat me de schoonheid van het huis zien, van alle plekken, en ja, ik moet haar gelijk geven. Ze heeft een plaats in mij, alle dingen in dit huis hebben een plaats in mij. Ik heb ze nodig. Ik ben er bijna ziekelijk afhankelijk aan. Het is mijn levenswarmte. Maar toch voelt het alsof ik heen en weer gesleurd word. Ik heb nergens grip op, ik glijd telkens weg, dieper. Dit is een doodlopende weg, een fuik, van vuur. Ik zie ze het glas heffen. Zij zijn als de vlammen in mijn hoofd. Ik durf niet naar ze te kijken, want dan ga ik dood. Het zijn de hoofden van de Medusa. De mensen die hier wonen zijn net zo steen als dit huis, en iedereen die naar hen kijkt verandert in steen. Zo is het leven. Is dit de sleutel weg uit de tuin, of is dit de sleutel tot de tuin.

In de nacht danst de vrouw van de zolder als een zwaan, als een brandende struik. Ik probeer me om te draaien, maar ik kan niet. Deze dans is dodelijk, of misschien wel leidende naar de poort van de hel. Ik sta verstijfd. De uitsteeksels en aanhangsels van haar jurk raken mij. Ik kijk naar haar door mijn glas wijn. De poort brandt. Ik probeer me ergens aan vast te klampen, maar zonder success, totdat ik de stem van tante Connie hoor. Ik kan niet terugroepen. Iemand knijpt mijn keel dicht, maar ik heb geen verlangen om terug te roepen. Ik ben als een boom geworteld in de grond. Ik heb het geheim van Medusa gezien : Alleen met de ogen van wijn kunnen wij haar bekijken. Ze gilt en schreeuwt nu ik het geheim heb ontdek. Ik gooi de wijn in haar gezicht, want ze wil me verscheuren. Dan staat ze in vlammen, en het gehele huis brandt. Ik moet hier weg. Maar de trappen zijn hier van vuur. Alles is van vuur. Ik besluit te blijven. Medusa schijnt aardiger dan ik dacht. Haar hoofden leven hier in een vreemde vrede. Roofdieren bespringen mij en verscheuren mij, en mijn hart is blij. Het is mijn vuur, het is omringd door mijn hart. Ik heb mijn weg hier doorheen gebeten. Een huis met standbeelden. Het is als een brandend strand, en een brandend oog leidt mij uit, om dieper in te gaan. De brandweerman houdt mij stevig vast. Zijn jas is glibberig. En dan brandt hij ook.

Tante Connie doet alsof er niets gebeurt is en staart mij aan. ‘Nog wat koffie, jongen ?’ vraagt ze. Ik zeg niks. Tante Connie schenkt nog wat voor me in. Wie zwijgt stemt toe. Mijn oude bed in de kamer van de dochter van de graaf is versleten, scheuren in de matras, en de piano is vals. Maar niet minder mooi dan de gouden spulletjes van tante Connie. Als tante Connie lacht heb ik het gevoel dat ze op de daken fietst. Ik keek naar de vrouw van de zolder. Waren we niet net als Adam en Eva die door de brandende heg probeerden terug te keren naar het paradijs ? En was dit paradijs een mengsel tussen huizen en blote benen ? Ik keek naar de dochter van de graaf. Ik probeerde een weg door haar heen te graven. Maar ze hield alles tegen. Tante Connie dient de pudding op. Ik kan de borsten zien van de vrouw van het zolder, door haar doorzichtige jurk heen, en ze heeft haar jurk ook wel flink open. Haar borsten druipen nog, als de moederlijke fontein, maar er zijn geen babies. Ik besluit niets te eten. Hier kan ik niet tegen, en het is dodelijk. Als ik naar de dochter van de graaf kijk, dan zie ik hetzelfde tafereel. Het is onbeschoft tegen tante Connie om pudding te laten druipen terwijl zij pudding opdient. Ik kan oom Joop goed begrijpen dat hij zo ver mogelijk van de tafel afzit, als een bibberend hondje. Maar plotseling is het alsof de stoppen bij mij doorslaan. Ik voel me een baby, een hond zelfs, die gevoed moet worden. Wat een drama. Tante Connie ziet het aan mijn gezicht en raakt in paniek. Zelfs oom Joop staat op. Iedereen zit verstijfd. Ik begin met grote happen van de pudding te eten, zodat al snel mijn hele gezicht eronder zit. Oom Joop lacht mij uit. Dit is de tuin van spot. Waarom zijn Adam en Eva hier teruggekeert. Ook de twee vrouwen lachen mij uit, terwijl ze hun jurken nog meer open trekken. En dan smeren ze de pudding over hun lichaam heen en gaan op de tafel liggen. ‘Ik heb al brood gehad,’ zegt oom Joop. Ik kan hier niet tegen. Zelfs een hond wordt beter behandeld. Ik word er erg stil van, en ga bij oom Joop zitten. ‘Je weet hoe vrouwen zijn,’ zegt oom Joop.

‘Dodelijk is het,’ zeg ik. ‘We hebben niet zomaar met een stel hoofden te maken. Het zijn de hoofden van Medusa.’

‘Kijk naar hen door het glas wijn,’ zegt oom Joop. Tante Connie loopt naar de vrouwen toe, en giet wijn over hen heen. ‘Wat een vertoning,’ zeg ik. ‘Dit is toch niet meer normaal.’

‘Ik dacht ook dat ik naar een ander feestje was gegaan,’ zei oom Joop.

‘Kom op, nu weten we het wel,’ zeg ik. ‘Zo lopen we de fanfare niet. Moet je dat nou eens kijken, ze vervuilen die hele tafel.’

‘Nee hoor,’ zegt de dochter van de graaf. ‘Dit is de oerbron, de big bang.’

‘Als je je maar niet verroert,’ schreeuwt tante Connie. ‘We gaan hier geen polonaise in de kamer houden, al mijn spulletjes worden vies. Is er nog respect in dit land ?’

‘Likken, bloedvriend,’ zegt de vrouw van het zolder tegen haar wederhelft. ‘Alsof je leven er vanaf hangt.’

‘Als jullie niet eten wat de pot schaft,’ zegt tante Connie, ‘dan sodemieteren jullie maar op.’

‘We vonden het eten heerlijk,’ zei de vrouw van het zolder, ‘maar we hebben onze eigen toetjes meegenomen.’

‘Contractbreuk,’ zegt tante Connie. ‘Dat hadden we niet afgesproken zo, en voor half geld komen jullie er echt niet langs. Ik voel me door jullie verschrikkelijk door de tang genomen, als je dat maar weet. Ik heb nog wat blokken hout nodig voor het tuinvuur.’

‘Ik dacht anders dat Adam wel tegen een grapje kon,’ zei de vrouw van het zolder, ‘maar mijnheer loopt daar in het hoekje te kniezen.’

‘Oh, toe maar, geef mij maar weer de schuld,’ zei ik. ‘Het is nu oorlog.’ Ineens stormden de vrouwen op mij af, en peperden mij in met pudding, en trokken me op de tafel. ‘Dit is nog eens een kersttoetje, een vijf-gangen toetje is aan ons welbesteed,’ zei de vrouw van het zolder. Ik was woedend. ‘Als ik ooit loskom, dan zul je wat beleven,’ riep ik.

Het was alsof alle machines ineens stilstonden. We staarden elkaar allemaal aan, maar deden niets. ‘Ode aan de kok,’ zei de dochter van de graaf. Na een tijdje lagen we in het bad, en het was nog gezellig ook. Het was als een lange brandende dag aan het strand. Ik was moe, ik had mijn portie wel gehad. Het was een vreemde gewaarwording dat roosjes zo konden zijn. Ik zou vanaf nu veel meer op mijn hoede zijn. Dit mocht niet nog een keer gebeuren. Tante Connie zou het niet overleven. Er groeiden sinds die dag struiken op het behang, die ervoor zouden moeten zorgen dat

deze dingen nooit meer zouden gebeuren. Tante Connie was het goed zat, en huurde bewakers in, die een oogje in het zeil zouden houden. Ook liet ze overal cameras planten. We voelden ons vanaf die dag in ons huis bekeken. Maar de volgende keer dat we aan tafel zaten schoten bij mij weer de stoppen door. Ik verlangde zo naar de oermoeder, dat ik boven op de vrouw van het zolder klom, de stoel brak, en we vielen beiden op de grond. Een wachter schoot een pijl door mijn hoofd, net op tijd, en ik werd aan de muur gespietst. 'Geef hem melk,' zei tante Connie rustig. 'Jullie moeten niet zo paniekerig doen.' Pudding droop uit de borst van de vrouw van het zolder. Ik kon me niet bewegen. 'Eerste hulp bij ongelukken,' zei tante Connie. 'Hij is dood, hij heeft een pijl dwars door z'n kop. Geef hem de melk des levens, stelletje koeien. Nou, waar wachten jullie op.'

'Hij hangt te hoog, tante,' zeiden de vrouwen.

- Nou dan spuit je maar. Druk de knopjes maar goed in.

'Nee, hij is dood. Hij heeft Medusa gezien, en wie van haar melk drinkt gaat naar de hel.'

- Ik ben niet gelovig, stop met die onzin.

'God, zelfs als je de tepels van Medusa ziet ben je al overgeleverd aan de vlammen van de hel, en haar duistere hulpjes.'

- Ja, die ken ik, rijden die hier niet de hele tijd rond ? Medusa is al openlijk te kijk gezet, je hoeft het knopje van de tv maar aan te draaien.

'Arme jongens.'

Ik kon naar de melk fluiten. De dames gingen ieder hun eigen kant op. Ik was in de tuin der wreedheden, ik was op sterven na de dood met die pijl in m'n kop. Oom Joop was behulpzaam en trok de pijl uit mijn hoofd. Maar dat deed nog veel meer pijn, dus ik drukte hem er weer in. Even later klopte ik bij de vrouwen aan de deur, maar ze deden niet open. Ik sliep die nacht bij tante Connie en oom Joop in de huiskamer. De dag erna zaten ze allemaal aan tafel alsof er niets was gebeurd. 'Zo, de meer dan dodelijke borsten van Medusa zijn ook weer van de partij,' zei ik. De vrouwen zeiden niets. Ze aten gulzig en verslikten zich een paar keer. Het ging zoals gewoonlijk weer nergens over. 'Leuk,' zei ik. 'We zitten hier aan tafel met vergif. Killers.'

'Houd je mond,' zei tante Connie. 'Jij bent ook niet een van de braafsten.' Plotseling stonden de vrouwen als een vrouw op, als Medusa, en de muren om ons heen begonnen te branden. 'Zie,' riep tante Connie. 'Ik wist het. Medusa is gekomen om wraak te nemen. Ren voor je leven.' Oom Joop gooide een deken om ons heen, en trok ons naar zijn kant. Hij was de slimste geweest want sinds de dames hier aten zat hij bijna nooit meer aan tafel. Een golf van geweld sloeg ons neer. Maar oom Joop gedroeg zich als een duivel, en dat moest wel, anders had hij niks bij Medusa in de pap te brokkelen. Ik heb oom Joop nog nooit zo te keer zien gaan. Al snel stond Medusa buiten het raam. 'Ik wist wel dat die wijven een grote pot met vergif waren,' zei hij. Ik had nog nooit zo'n groot machts-spel gezien. Ik trilde als een hondje. Oom Joop was een held.

Omdat Medusa ons bleef bezoeken kregen we een ander huis in een andere straat. Er groeiden hier zogenaamde borsten-struiken die vruchten hadden als tepels waaruit een sap voortkwam wat bestand was tegen het borstgif van Medusa. We konden zelfs hierdoor Medusa genezen van haarzelf. De vloek was al snel verbroken. Er hoefde verder geen apocalypse aan te pas te komen. Onze vriendschappen werden hersteld, en al snel leefden we hier weer met elkaar. Alles was veilig nu. We hadden onze condomen-boom gevonden.

Een vrouw leefde tussen de verdiepingen in, een vrouw in mijn hoofd, onderdrukt door de hedendaagse maatschappij, een deel gesloten door de hersenen. Medusa was de oorlogsgodin, weggepest door een maatschappij van valse vrede. Een vreemde vrede bracht haar terug. Zij kende de tuin van spot ook. Ze had die zelf gemaakt. Ook kende ze de tuin van edelheden en wreedheden, op maat gesneden. Ze had zich een weg door die tuin gebaand, terug naar het paradijs. Ze ontmoette haar Adam in de lucht, en leidde ook hem terug. Door de brandende heg gingen zij, en helemaal opgebrand kwamen zij aan. Heel snel kwamen zij erachter dat zij een cirkeltje hadden gelopen. Zo slaan dan al snel de stoppen door, en vinden ze de liefde in zichzelf, die na korte tijd niets dan haat blijkt te zijn. Het is alles niet wat het lijkt. Ik kreeg een fatalistische, nihilistische kijk op het leven door deze dingen. We waren weer terug bij af. Heel wat dromen waren kapot gesprongen, en we begonnen ons oude huis te missen, maar daar woonde een nieuwe familie in.

Waar we dan ook naartoe gaan, het is altijd hetzelfde. Laten we daarom naarbinnen keren, en elkaar daar vinden, of hele andere personen die eindelijk onze dromen kunnen waarmaken, maar dit is slechts ijdelheid, illusie. We jagen lucht achterna, iedereen weet het, maar we blijven proberen. We blijven happen naar de koek die voor ons wordt gehangen. We zijn geconditioneerd, slaven, hondjes van Pavlov. Alles is hier misleiding op misleiding. Ik begon een pessimist te worden, zwaar somber. Ik wilde niemand valse hoop geven, niemand voorliegen. We liepen de leugen achterna omdat er geen waarheid was, of was de waarheid gewoon in een heel klein hoekje ergens, daar waar we het onmogelijk zouden kunnen vinden ? Maar alle dingen zijn toch mogelijk voor hen die geloven. En zo ging ik geloven. Niet in het kerkelijk geloof, maar in die vrouwen hier met hun gekke spelletjes. Misschien dat de grootste leugen ook diep in haar de waarheid droeg. Ik had kans, want ik had een pijl door mijn hoofd. Denken was fataal. Het moest van een andere kant komen. Maar ik merkte al snel dat die vrouwen een gesloten boek waren. Ik kwam er niet ver mee. En ik wilde toch ergens in geloven. Een grote trots was er, ergens diep binnenin. Iets wat mij over het ravijn kon laten zweven, iets wat ik niet kon beschrijven, een mystiek gevoel. Oom Joop zei altijd dat een boek ons erdoor zou helpen, maar hij wist niet welk boek. Een popperige papieren kermis leek het. Tante Connie had een pop in een schoenendoos verborgen, een pop waarin ze heilig geloofde dat deze ons allen redden zou. Vaak sta ik op het balkon en voel me tussen de huizen, tussen de bomen, tussen de rivieren, overal tussen.

Het is een wonder dat ik nog leef met die pijl door mijn hoofd. Op een dag voel ik me door het gevoel dat die pijl in mijn hoofd geeft zo in de wolken, zo extatisch, dat ik merk dat ik kan vliegen. Heel voorzichtig vlieg ik van het balkon, tussen de huizen door. Mensen vallen flauw achter de ramen. ‘Bedrieger,’ roept er iemand. Ik kan er niet mee zitten. Ook al zou het bedrog zijn, ik heb er een goede tijd mee. Ik vlieg naar de top van het hoogste huis in de buurt. Als ik naar beneden kijk is alles wit. Ook het hoge platte horizontale dak waarop ik sta. Ik ruik bosgeuren. Dan vlieg ik over de stad. Wat als ik dit alles zou kunnen ontsnappen. Ik besluit naar de volgende stad te vliegen, daar waar de fabrieks-wolken zijn. Ik houd van de rook. Ik hoop dat we er allemaal in verzuipen. Dat is beter dan wat we hadden. We hebben niets te verliezen. Maar dan roep ik mezelf tot orde. Er staan wat meiden voor een raam. Ze kijken verwonderd. Ik zwaai naar ze. Ze wenken me. Een van hen

opent het raam, en ik vlieg naar binnen. ‘Kijk, die kan vliegen,’ zegt er een. ‘Een truc,’ zeg ik. ‘Leer het me,’ zegt een van de meiden. Ik vertel hen over de pijl in mijn kop. Ze giechelen een beetje. Al snel hangen ze aan me. ‘Mag ik in jullie geloven,’ vraag ik. ‘Ik wil ergens in geloven.’

- Wij geloven in de dominee.

‘Okay, maar dat is niet wat. Kan ik in jullie geloven ?’

- Ik weet niet of ik daartoe bevoegd ben.

‘Ik geloof in je.’

- Wat moet ik nu doen ?

‘Vlieg met me mee.’

- Ja, maar ik kan niet vliegen. Waarom blijf je niet gewoon hier. We hebben het hier erg naar onze zin.

‘Okay.’

Ik bleef bij ze staan, en ze trokken me aan tafel. Ik moet zeggen ze waren een stuk netter dan de vrouwen die ik kende, de Medusa-vrouwen. Ze aten deftig, met mes en vork, geen geklieder. Ik staarde naar buiten, allemaal rook. Ik kon niet veel zien. Ze sliepen allemaal in de huiskamer op matrassen. Ik kreeg ook een matras. Ik sliep al snel. Ik merkte al snel dat ik in mezelf aan het bidden was tot hen. Ik was op zoek naar een geloof. De volgende dag namen ze mij mee naar de kerk. Ik moet zeggen dat het mij aardig beviel. De dominee was erg aardig. Hij had ook wel wijze dingen te zeggen, en liep voortdurend met zijn sleutels te rinkelen. Had hij misschien de sleutels om Medusa te openen ? Na de kerkdienst liep ik op hem af om het hem te vragen. Zonder nadenken nam hij een sleutel van zijn sleutelhanger af en gaf het aan mij. ‘Probeer het maar uit,’ zei hij. Maar eigenlijk wilde ik hier niet meer weg. Deze mensen waren geweldig. Weer ging ik met de meiden mee naar hun huis. Omdat ik heel veel aan Medusa dacht, ben ik even later toch teruggegaan naar mijn eigen stad en huis. Ik begon direkt aan de Medusa-vrouwen te sleutelen. En het werkte, tot mijn eigen verbazing. Voor het eerst had ik het gevoel dat ik met hen ergens kwam. Alsof we de boom des levens hadden bereikt. We dronken koffie op het resultaat. Ik wilde de dominee bedanken, en vloog terug naar de andere stad. De meiden waren blij me weer te zien, en samen gingen we naar het huis van de dominee. De dominee was net zijn huis aan het schilderen. Na het bedankje nam ik afscheid van de meiden, en ging weer terug naar mijn eigen huis. Ik had Medusa verlost uit haar kooi.

Hoofdstuk 3. De Gespleten Aarde

De meiden hebben al snel ons huis gevonden, en de dominee ook. Ze waren met de dominee

meegereden. De sleutel had namelijk een zendertje van binnen. Natuurlijk waren ze van harte welkom, maar de Medusa-vrouwen werden snel jaloers. Daar wist de dominee wel wat op, want die had veel meer sleutels. Wat me opviel was dat alles snel verstijfde. Alsof de sleutels veel openden, maar tegelijkertijd viel er ook zoveel dicht. We kregen het idee dat er een vloek op de sleutel lag. De dominee was niet overtuigd, want die geloofde heilig in zijn sleutels. Omdat hij zich steeds arroganter opstelde heeft tante Connie hem even later het huis uitgezet. Ik bewaarde de sleutels sindsdien. Die waren veel te gevaarlijk in de handen van een dominee. De meiden aanbaden inmiddels Medusa aan haar voeten. De dominee was woedend en noemde hen afgodendienaars. Ze waren niet meer welkom in zijn stad. Het bleek dat hij ook nog eens de burgemeester was. Medusa begon trouwens door deze aanbidding ook steeds meer te eisen. Haar voeten moesten gekust worden, anders zou ze alles vertrappen. Ik had allang spijt dat ik haar had verlost, maar het kwam allemaal door die sleutels. Op een gegeven moment was ik het zo zat dat ik de sleutels inslikte. Maar sindsdien ging het niet goed met mij. Ik begon zelf een Medusa te worden. Wie had dat ooit durven dromen dat ik ooit de god der wrake zou worden. Het liep uit op een gevecht met de andere Medusa om de macht. De Medusa begon een gevaarlijk mechanisme te worden. Voordat het nog erger zou worden besloot ik een volgende vliegtocht te beginnen. Ditmaal kwam ik in een andere stad met de hoogste gebouwen. Een oud vrouwtje deed haar raam open, en nodigde mij uit. Toen ik haar het verhaal over de sleutels vertelde scheen ze mij te kunnen helpen. Zij was namelijk een heks. Ik moest een bepaald kruidendrankje drinken, en dan zou ik de sleutels kunnen uitspuwen, en dan zou zij de sleutels omsmelten. Maar alles pakte anders uit. Het kruidendrankje werkte niet. Ik had de krachten van Medusa. Ik was immuun tegen hekserij. Ik moest onder ogen komen dat ik in een monster aan het veranderen was.

Ik strompelde naar de uitgang van deze tuin. Ik had het in zicht nu, en greep naar mijn buik. Ook al verdween de uitgang en de buitenste heg in het niets, en leek het alsof het verder van me af begon te liggen, ik liep toch door. Ik greep om me heen als tastende in het donker. Ik greep het touw mij toegeworpen. Een vriendelijk vrouwengezicht keek me aan. Rozensappen dropen in een fles. Ik hoorde gegorgel en gezang. Bloedende tuinen, zover het oog reikt, vermengd met regen, waar het oog van Medusa over waakt. Het koren dat het goud omhoog haalt, het licht der sterren weerkaatsende, haar vrucht wordt vastgehouden. Medusa waakt. Het houten huis kraakt onder het getal van de lelies. Hier heeft ze haar woning. Hier voedt zij haar raadsel, haar mysterie, waar prinsen op paarden al eeuwen naar zoeken. Nee, zij zullen niet vinden, want Medusa waakt over haar geheim. Haar kroning was een bespotting. Haar lijden was een ontmaskering, maar niemand is ooit tot haar parel gekomen, niemand heeft ooit haar zwaard gedragen. Allen sterven zij door een blik op haar te slaan. Tot steen werden zij in alle eeuwigheden. Haar discipel is zoek, haar beker verloren. Zij heeft haarzelf nog nooit gezien. Zou zij het weten, dan zou zij sterven, daarom weet zij maar half. De rozengrachten hier zijn vol met parels. De mensen hier weten dat Medusa een geheim heeft, alleen ze kennen het niet. Ze hebben er alleen een glimp van opgevangen, en die glimp heeft hen voor altijd verblind.

Ik zit op mijn houten paard, mij hobbelpaard van vroeger, met mijn lange speer, mijn lans. ‘Open de poort,’ roep ik, maar alles zwijgt. Ik vlieg hoog, over de muur heen, maar hier is niks. De aarde is dus toch plat. Is dit het onverbiddelijke geheim van Medusa ? Ik stort hier uit alles wat ik nog in mijn hoofd heb, alle puinhopen, alles gaargebraden, en kijk in de enorme diepte. Nee, het is een ravijn. De aarde is gespleten. Een groot werk moet dat geweest zijn, met de schaar des hemels. Daar aan de overkant weten de mensen niet dat ze niet weten. Ik vlieg weer terug, en omhels mijn Medusa, en mijn meiden. ‘Ik ben aan de andere kant van de schaar geweest,’ zei ik. ‘Daar moeten we ook niet wezen. Vernietig alle spiegels. We staren wel in een glas wijn, met wijn van borsten-struiken.’ Ik strek mij uit. Ze zijn blij dat ik terug ben. Ik solliciteer bij de zeevaart. Ik waarschuw hen dat de aarde wel degelijk plat is, en dat verklaart ook waarom er zoveel schepen zijn gebleven. Ik word er kapitein. Als ik thuis ben speelt oom Joop vaak op het orgel. Maar ik ben niet veel thuis.

Ik moet de zee afbakenen. Een hoge rand moet er gemaakt worden, waar niemand meer overheen kan tuimelen. Medusa is als een moeder die haar kinderen terugroept. Zij heeft de tuin gebouwd, en haar muren, en die moeten we eren, omdat het buiten veel erger is. Er is geen paradijs aan de andere kant van de heg, maar de heg spreekt tot de verbeelding. Ik zie nog meer paradijs in een pot pindakaas. Als ik thuis ben zijn de vrouwen blij, dan is het feest, maar een paradijs zal het nooit zijn, en hebben we dat wel nodig. We hebben toch elkaar.

Op een dag ga ik met de meiden voetballen op het pleintje. Via een tunnel komen we in een ander deel van de stad, in een winkelstraat. We slenteren door de straten. Ik neem hen mee naar de bakker, en koop wat special brood voor hen. Brood kan mij nooit te luxe zijn. Het is een levensnoodzaak. Bij de speelgoedwinkel wanen ze zich in het paradijs. Bij het tuinhek laten we alle zorgen achter ons. Voor de chocolade-winkel danst de vrouw van chocolade. Ze roept herinneringen bij me op, ze danst als een zwaan. We gaan de stoffige winkel binnen. Een grote notenkraker-eekhoorn staart ons aan. 'Ja,' zegt de winkelier, 'veel noten altijd in de chocolade, we hebben een verdrag met de noten-industrie. We kregen dit beeld van hen, toch aardig, vindt u niet.' Ik knikte. De meiden keken de man vriendelijk aan. We konden aan hem zien dat hij er blij van werd. 'Ik zal u vertellen, ik ben mijn vrouw verloren,' zei de winkelier. 'Ik mis haar echt, en er is nu een zee van ruimte boven, want ze had zoveel spullen en die zijn allemaal in haar graf meegegaan. Komt u maar even mee, dan laat ik het u zien.' Boven stond alles leeg. Ik staarde naar buiten, waar de chocolade-vrouw nog steeds danste. Ze was een zwerfster, en werd zo altijd genoemd.

Grote poppen van chocolade stonden in kasten. De man deed er erg zakelijk over, en kraste wat op papieren. Even later stonden we weer op straat. Aan het eind van de straat was een fontein. We zagen tante Connie lopen met een zware tas. 'Tante Connie,' riep ik. Ze had koffie gekocht, in allerlei soorten. Samen liepen we naar huis. Ik hielp haar de tas te dragen, en de meiden hielden ook wat spullen vast. Medusa wachtte ons op.

Roze

Zwanen

Hoofdstuk 1. Het Zwaard Van Calvijn

De vlaggen hingen uit buiten. Hij zat in zijn zitstoel, zijn vrouw was in de keuken. Hij had net het gras weer eens gemaait, wat hij wekelijks deed. Hij staarde naar buiten, naar de begroeiing op de muur. De metalen platen zaten er goed vast tegenaan, en daar groeiden de planten omheen. Dat kon hem niet wild genoeg zijn. Hij was altijd al geinteresseerd geweest in tuinieren, en hij had dan ook echt zijn eigen stijl, vurig, wild, maar ook piekfijn geordend. Het was een samenspel tussen natuur

en mens. Hij had vroeger altijd bij de politie gewerkt, en daar ging het er eigenlijk hetzelfde aan toe : de buurt was wild, en de politie bracht orde, en zo was er een prachtig samenspel, heen en weer. De politie mocht volgens hem de soep niet te heet opdienen, en zo liet hij dan ook de natuur in zijn tuin een zekere vrijheid hebben. Wel hield hij alles goed in de gaten. Hij had een zekere strengheid als hij naar zijn tuin keek. Zijn vrouw kwam de huiskamer binnen met de koffie. Ze zeiden niks tegen elkaar. Het zonlicht golfde de kamer binnen toen zijn vrouw het gordijn iets verder opendeed. Beiden staarden ze naar buiten, de tuin in. De sproeier stond aan, het was een warme dag. Aan de dag scheen geen einde te komen. Zijn vrouw was aan het breien, en hij staarde maar. Geen woord werd er gezegd. Het leek wel alsof zijn denken vastzat. Hij hoorde het getik van de brei-pennen van zijn vrouw. Het leek wel alsof ze heel ver weg zat. Of kwam dat door de vele spullen die er tussenstonden. De tegels op de grond glansten in het zonlicht, maar ze werden er niet bruiner op. Het was een harde vloer. Je zou makkelijk wat kunnen breken als je erop viel. Er lagen ook wat tapijtjes in de grote huiskamer. Ze hadden een groot huis, een alleenstaand huis. Ook het fonteintje in de vijver stond aan. Hij worstelde zichzelf door de dag. Hij verveelde zich, maar wist niet wat hij moest doen. Hij bleef het tikken van de brei-pennen van zijn vrouw maar horen. Kinderen hadden ze niet, nee, ze waren tamelijk eenzaam. De man stond op en liep naar de kast, waar hij een fles sterke drank uittrok, en gaf zijn vrouw ook wat. Ze hielden wel van een borrel. Dat was goed voor het bloed, en dat hielp hen op de been. Eigenlijk leken ze in hun leven niet meer verder te komen. Ze waren in een nauw cirkeltje terecht gekomen, en gingen bergafwaarts. Ze leefden geisoleerd. Er was nauwelijks contact met de buitenwereld, en daar hadden ze ook geen behoefte aan. De tuin was alles voor hen, en hun woning. Zijn vrouw was vroeger arts geweest, voornamelijk kinderarts, maar moest later stoppen vanwege haar alcoholisme. Nu had ze het veel beter onder controle. Haar man hield de wacht over haar, maar liet haar nog wel genieten van een borreltje op zijn tijd. Toch waren de twee erg zwaarmoedig en hielden er een kerkelijk leven op na. De kerk was alles voor hen, voornamelijk op de zondag. Een grote bijbel lag naast de openhaard. Het geloof in God gaf hen rust, als een oase in de woestijn van hun ouderdom.

Op zondag na de kerkdienst fietsten ze samen naar huis. Het was warm weer. Maar al snel zaten ze weer in hun oude positie. Hij had niet veel behoefte om dingen te gaan doen, ook al verveelde hij zich. Hij trok zich op aan de structuur van zijn tuin en zijn huis, wat hij streng in de gaten hield. Het was als het werken in de tempel, alsof hij in de kerk woonde. Hij voelde zich een nauwlettende koster, en dat was hij vroeger ook geweest. Veel was hij bezig met zijn herinneringen, die hem ook half depressief maakten. Een heleboel dingen zou hij terugwillen, maar ze waren onbereikbaar. Het was een treurig stel, en velen zouden hen saai noemen. Als ze kleinkinderen zouden hebben, dan zouden die hier geen leven hebben. In zijn gedachten was hij altijd de tuin en het huis aan het maaien. De gelakte spulletjes waren als hun huisdieren. Maar het ging niet zo goed met zijn vrouw. Ze was aan het dementeren, en dat riep ook wel heel veel herinneringen bij hem op. Op een gegeven moment kon ze niet langer in huis blijven, en moest ze naar een verzorgings-tehuis. Hij kon dat moeilijk accepteren, maar hij had geen andere keus. Hij voelde zich al als een weduwenaar. Het was als een trauma in zijn hoofd, maar het kerkelijk leven beurde hem op. Hij wist dat zijn vrouw een verloren zaak was. Ook de tuin gaf hem rust. De maaiers in zijn hoofd waren nu als van vuur, als grillen. Hij had nu het gevoel dat hij de touwtjes nog strakker moest trekken. Nog steeds stonden de protserige spulletjes van zijn vrouw hier, de beeldjes, de hebbedingetjes, het antiek, en het gaf hem een gevoel van verbinding met haar. Aan de telefoon kon hij niet meer met haar praten, en ze wist nog nauwelijks wie hij was. Ze was aan het aftakelen tot aan het bot.

Hij ging meer en meer drinken, om het verdriet over zijn vrouw te vergeten, en bezocht kroegen voor het eerst in zijn leven. Het huis en de tuin werden wilder, omdat hij het onderhoud niet meer kon bijhouden, en het was voor hem ook geen prioriteit meer. Hij raakte verslaafd aan de fles, zoals zijn vrouw eens was. Hij kwam in het rijk der schimmen. De alcohol bracht hem een felle stem in zijn hoofd. Met het vele geld dat hij had schafte hij een bar aan in zijn eigen huis, helemaal voor

hemzelf. Ook ontving hij vrouwen van lichte zeden aan huis. Maar deze tijden liepen snel ten einde, door het knagend kerkelijk geweten binnenin. De God in zijn hoofd sleepte hem naar het graf, en sprak hem ernstig toe. Hij probeerde zo min mogelijk na te denken, en weer begon het vele staren. Hij was zelf ook door maaiers omringd, de gouden maaiers van de kerk. Zij zouden hem veilig leiden tot aan het graf en tot de hemelpoort. De bijbel scheen hem weer nieuwe kracht te geven, en hij las er veel in, en spoedig begon hij ook zijn tuin en huis te onderhouden als nooit tevoren. Ook koken ging hem goed af, ook al waren het alleen maar de standaard-gerechten. Maar het was alsof iets hem van binnen aanvrat, alsof er een spin in hem leefde. Wat als hij niet een uitverkorene was van de God die hij diende ? Het zwaard van Calvijn sneed diep in zijn ziel. Hoe meer hij de bijbel las, hoe meer hij ook de duistere andere kant van het verhaal zag. Vooral na zijn wilde uitstapjes begon hij de hel meer te vrezen dan ooit. Misschien was de God die hij diende wel helemaal niet zo tevreden over hem. En velen waren geroepen, maar weinig uitverkoren. Hij kwam in de eerstegrote geloofs-strijd van zijn leven, en lijstjes over wie er allemaal niet het koninkrijk des hemels zouden beerven bleven hem kwellen tot diep in de nacht. Het was alsof hij door duiveltjes was gebonden. Misschien ging hij er iets te hypnotisch mee om, maar hij kon er niet van loskomen, totdat ook bij hem Alzheimer toesloeg.

Hij wist niet meer wat de bijbel was. Hij kon er uren naar staren, naar het kaft, maar wist het niet meer. Was het het dagboek van zijn vrouw ? Of het wetboek van de politie, was het pornografisch ? Was het onzedelijkheid ? Een enorme woede maakte zich van hem meester. Hij kon het zich niet meer herinneren. Wel wist hij dat het altijd heel belangrijk voor hem was. Was het een erfenis van zijn vader ? Waren het de liefdesbrieven van meisjes die hij in zijn jonge jaren kreeg ? Was het grootmoeders kookboek ? Een uitgelopen folder van de jehovah's getuigen ? Een boek van een ons onbekende religie ? Was het een geschiedenis boek. Het zweet steeg hem naar het hoofd. Hij was bijna aan het klappertanden, aan het beven als een jong hondje. Was het een toverboek ? Nee, toverboeken bestonden niet. Een verzameling niet betaalde rekeningen ? Misschien was het van zijn vrouw ? Hij besloot het boek weer neer te leggen. In de kerk kwam hij niet meer. Hij voelde zich als levende achter tralies. Hij wist niet meer wie hij was. Hij werd als een wild dier.

Hij kon uren staren naar dingen, om zich af te vragen wat het was. Hij was de grip op de werkelijkheid kwijt. Het maakte hem kwaad, dat zijn hersenen hem in de steek lieten. Maar aan de andere kant kwam hij erg tot rust. Het leven was hier zwoel. Hij voelde zichzelf als levende op een tropisch eiland, badend in het warme zeewater. Het normale leven drong niet meer tot hem door, en waarom zou dat moeten ? Hij snapte de kaartjes die hij kreeg niet. Hij dacht dat het kokosnoten waren, of dat het herfst was. Weer wat blaadjes die van de bomen zijn gevallen. Soms probeerde hij ze op te eten, soms hing hij ze aan de muur. Sommige van die kaarten waren prachtig. Op een dag besloot hij zijn hele huis rood te verven, maar toen hem dat niet beviel verfde hij alles bruin. Het stond nog niet eens zo gek. Hij had wel stijl. Hij probeerde af te rekenen met het verleden wat hij maar niet begreep. Hij noemde zichzelf 'baas van de hel'. Ook dacht hij dat hij Calvijn was, maar hij wist niet meer wat Calvijn voorstelde. Hij droeg zijn oude politie-pak weer en was nu baas van de politie, iets wat hij overigens altijd al had willen zijn. Op een dag had hij even een flits in zijn hoofd. 'Had Calvijn niet de bijbel geschreven ? Dit is mijn boek. Mijn agenda. Hierin staat wat er moet gebeuren.' Hij greep de bijbel en liep ermee rond. Hij riep en schold, alsof hij een dictator was. Maar hij raakte in de war van zichzelf en plofte op de bank. Toen ging hij maar weer de tuin instaren. Hij werd er stil van.

In zijn hoofd regende het, en na een tijdje werd hij bedlegerig. Vreemde gezichten zag hij in zijn gedachten, die dan allemaal weer vermengd werden. Hij kon zich niets meer herinneren. Ondanks zijn ziekte had hij een goede tijd. In zijn gedachten waren bomen personen en konden spreken, en hij voerde lange gesprekken met hen. Hij betuttelde hen, omdat hij nu eens eindelijk zijn

onderdrukte vader gevoel kon manifesteren. De bomen in zijn hoofd waren als zijn kinderen. ‘Jullie zijn de vrucht van mijn tuin,’ zei hij altijd. ‘Dan is het allemaal toch niet voor niets geweest.’ De bomen in zijn hoofd gaven hem zijn geheugen weer een beetje terug, maar op een hele andere manier, met een hele andere kijk op het leven. Maar de bomen in zijn hoofd begonnen te rotten en stierven. Het was een hevig gevecht, want hij beschouwde hen als zijn kinderen. Hij werd weer geconfronteerd met de dorheid van het bestaan, hij nam het stof waar, om hem heen. ‘Alles is een bende,’ zei hij. Het was een traumatische ervaring zijn kinderen te moeten verliezen. Er was een begrafenis-stemming in zijn hoofd. Maar bloesem scheen voort te komen uit het dode hout, vrouwen. ‘Mijn kinderen zijn gestorven,’ zei hij. ‘Hebben jullie hen niet kunnen redden ?’ Maar de vrouwen zeiden niks. Ze waren naakt. ‘Toe, trek wat aan,’ zei hij. ‘Anders sterven jullie zo van de kou.’

‘Wij gaan niet dood,’ zeiden de vrouwen. ‘Wij zijn de vlammetjes van het eeuwig leven. En wij gaan u weer jong maken.’

‘Oh, de bron van de eeuwige jeugd,’ zei de man. ‘Zo, zo.’ Maar de man werd steeds zieker. Zijn gedachten kwamen vast te zitten, en hij waande zich in de woestijn. Hij had niet eens de kracht een raam open te zetten. Er kwam een verzorgster langs, elke dag. Die moest dat maar doen. Ze wilden hem eigenlijk naar een verpleeghuis verplaatsen, maar hij wilde zijn huis niet kwijt. Zijn huis en zijn tuin, dat was alles voor hem, zijn tempel. ‘De goden hebben mij hier gebracht,’ zei hij.

‘U bent een kind van de goden ?’ vroeg de verzorgster.

‘Ja,’ zei hij triomfantelijk, ‘of hun vader.’ De verzorgster las hem vaak voor uit de bijbel, maar hij begreep er niet veel van. Hij zag er hele andere dingen in, en het raakte hem niet meer. ‘Wat een mooi sprookjesboek,’ zei hij altijd. ‘Het schuift maar, en het doet maar, en het komt maar nooit aan in mijn hart, maar het is een mooi gezicht, dat wel.’

‘Je bent zo mooi als mijn vrouw eens was,’ zei de man op een dag tegen de verzorgster. ‘Mijn vrouw was als een tuin, vol wonderlijke geheimen, en toen ik dacht, nu wil ik eindelijk dat geheim weten, toen ging ze weg. Ze werd van mij weggetrokken, naar een verpleeghuis. Maar ik had het boek nog niet uitgelezen.’

‘Veel dingen zullen nooit afkomen,’ zei de verzorgster. ‘Er is niet voor alles tijd.’

‘Is dat niet sneu ?’ vroeg de man. ‘Of misschien hoort het zo. Weet je hoe ik het bekijk, ik denk dat het verhaal in een ander boek verder gaat.’

De verzorgster knikt. De kamer was vol met de geur van de tuin, gloeiende rozenblaadjes, gloeiend in de zon, bijna schroeiend. Het leek alsof ze van binnen bloedden. ‘We zijn soldaten in de oorlog,’ zei de man. ‘We moeten ons pad zien te vinden. Zovelen weten niet wat hen te wachten staat, als ze dieper in de tuin van het leven komen. Alles sterft hier af.’ De verzorgster knikt weer. ‘Ja, we moeten op die andere frequentie zien te komen,’ zegt ze. ‘Want deze loopt dood. Het is een overgang, je voelt de stromen van de bloemen door de lucht heengaan om het pad voor ons te banen. Voelt u dat ?’

‘Ja,’ zegt de man. ‘De bloemen weten meer dan wij. Dat is waarom ik altijd van tuinen heb gehouden. Er zijn daar geheime gangen. Zij kunnen leiden tot de hemel.’ Midden in de nacht groef de man zich in in de grond. ‘Ik wil een bloem worden,’ zei hij. Het was tijd dat hij een plaats kreeg in het verpleeghuis. Hij had het niet meer in de gaten, dat dit niet zijn eigen huis was. Hij was zich niet echt bewust van de overgang. En de verzorgster zocht hem nog vaak op, en er was een prachtige tuin, nog wel prachtiger dan zijn eigen tuin ooit was geweest. ‘Wat is mijn tuin toch prachtig geworden,’ zei hij trots. En als andere mensen over de schoonheid van de tuin spraken, dan zei hij altijd : ‘Ja, ik heb er hard aan gewerkt. Het is niet voor niets geweest, al die lange jaren.’ Ook het huis zag er pico bello uit, en hij voelde zich als een koning. In het verpleeghuis werden ook kerkdiensten gehouden, maar hij zei altijd tegen de predikant dat hij de politie was. Hij begreep de werkelijke strekking van het verhaal niet meer. Mensen vonden het altijd een beetje vreemd als hij over zijn kinderen, de goden, sprak. Veel van de mensen daar waren toch wel diep gelovig. Hij kon verschrikkelijk opscheppen, en vaak had hij het hoogste woord. Over zijn vrouw die de hemelpoort zou zijn, en dat iedereen zijn vrouw moest aanbidden om in de hemel te kunnen komen. Maar eigenlijk wist hij niet goed meer wat de hemel was. Eens stapte hij op een andere man af met zijn glas, wees in het glas en zei : ‘Zie, daar is de hemel.’ En sommige mensjes waren erg goedgelovig.

Op een dag moest en zou hij preken. Hij duwde bijna de predikant weg van zijn plaats, ging staan en zei : ‘Geliefde broeders en zusters, wij, de goden, hebben vandaag besloten u op deze manier toe te spreken. U bent aangekomen in de hemel, gefeliciteerd. U mag elkaar de hand schudden en kussen.’ En enkelen begonnen dat ook te doen, maar anderen werden overstuur. ‘Ik ben de kapitein van het schip,’ zei de man. ‘En wie het daar niet mee eens is wordt overboord gezet.’ Na een tijdje luisterden ze allemaal aandachtig naar hem. Hij bedoelde het niet kwaad. Na een tijdje stapte hij op, maar al snel wilden ze hem weer hebben. Elke zondag wilden ze naar hem luisteren. Ook de verzorgsters en verzorgers vonden het interessant. Ze stonden ervan te kijken hoe snel hij opleefde in het verpleeghuis. Hoe hij zich vrijer voelde dan hij ooit was geweest. ‘Een groot profeet is opgestaan,’ riep een man eens tijdens zijn preek.

Hij heeft zijn oude levensstijl vergeten, zijn oude denkstijl, en kan niet meer terug. Hij heeft het gevoel dat er wat fout zit, en kan daar vaak kwaad om worden. Hij wil weer tuinieren, en wordt kwaad als het niet lukt. Een vreemd gevoel heeft zich van hem meester gemaakt, en vreet hem aan van binnenuit. Alsof er een spin in hem leeft, dodelijk, onvermoeibaar, met een duidelijk doel. En hij ligt verstrikt in het web. Wat kan hij doen ? Alle oplevingen zijn maar voor even, om daarna nog dieper weg te vallen. Hij bereidt zich voor op de dood, die maar niet komt. Als hij vrouwen ziet borduren, is het alsof zij hem van binnen prikken. Hij kan daar kwaad om worden. Hij raakt meer en meer geisoleerd van de anderen. Hij heeft zijn eigen kamer. Nog steeds denkt hij dat het zijn eigen huis is, en dat de anderen noodgedwongen bij hem logeren, want buiten is de grote zee, de vloed. Hij herinnert zich een oud kinderversje : Alle dieren twee aan twee, gaan met Noachs ark mee. Hij is er van overtuigd dat hij Noach is, en dat hij hen allemaal gered heeft met zijn ark, zijn huis. Maar nu heeft hij rust nodig. ‘Waarom ben ik zo moe in het paradijs ?’ vraagt hij zich af. ‘Is er soms een slang in het paradijs ? Ben ik gebeten ? Of is dit de hel, is dit mijn straf, ben ik niet uitverkoren ?’ Maar de religieuze verwarring maakt al snel weer plaats voor de grote trots over wat hij allemaal al heeft bereikt in zijn leven : kapitein op een schip. Hij wijt zijn religieus trauma aan een vroegere aanval van zeerovers. Die zouden hem op zijn hoofd hebben geslagen. Zijn geheugen gaat op en naar en maakt rare draaiingen. En dan valt hij op een dag helemaal in een grijs gat. Alles tolt voor zijn ogen. ‘De zeerovers,’ roept hij. ‘Ze hebben teruggeslagen.’ En dan zijn ineens zijn woorden niet verstaanbaar meer. In zijn hersenen gaat alles traag, alsof ze alles vermalen wat nog is overgebleven. Het is hem zwart voor de ogen nu. Hij kan zijn gedachten niet meer onder woorden brengen. Hij denkt dat hij overboord gegooid is, en dat vissen hem aanvreten, haaien. Hij zweeft op

het randje van de dood. Hij ziet bloeidende tuinen, gloeiend, bijna schroeiend in de zon. Hij denkt dat hij dood is. Hij voelt zich alsof hij door een donkere gang met bloemen gaat. Hij kan met de bloemen spreken, ze verwelkomen hem. Maar dan is alle verbinding verbroken, en is alles zwart. Hij voelt zich hopeloos verloren, maar even later lijkt het alsof hij in een bloem ligt. De dood ademt hier.

Hij leeft weer in het verleden, alsof zijn vrouw er nog is, zijn zusjes, zijn vader en moeder. Zijn zusjes spelen op het plein. Ze zien eruit als popjes. Hij wil ze omhelzen, maar dan staat hij stijf. Zijn vader roept hem. ‘Zeg Noach, afwassen.’ Ook gaan ze naar de kerk. De stem van de dominee echoot door de kerkzaal. Hij zit weer op school. De leraren staan voor hun schoolborden, waaruit struiken komen om de kinderen mee te nemen. ‘Eindelijk,’ denkt hij. Al zijn nachtmerries komen terug, de struiken die hun dorens in de monden van jonge kinderen stoppen, en hen in hun tanden steken. En die dorens blijven daar zitten. En pepermunt wordt er in de kerk uitgedeeld, van de mintstruik.

‘Ik vraag jullie te luisteren,’ zegt de leraar.

- Nee, zegt een kind.

‘Dan ga je maar naar de directeur.’

- Geen sprake van.

Zo gaat dat altijd. Moe wordt hij ervan. Altijd en eeuwig die dictators. Slangen in het paradijs. Zijn hoofd is heet, zijn oude woede stroomt. Hij heeft zijn vrouw nodig, de poort naar de hemel. Maar hij is jonger nu, en speelt op het plein. De kinderen hebben ruzie. Honden in het paradijs. Ze rennen, ze zijn op jacht. Het zijn vuurbessen in zijn hoofd, de honden van gebrek. Hij ziet de engel des doods, zo vroeg al, zich mengende in het kinderspel. Zijn bittere klauw beroert het zoete kinderhart, en plant het trauma daar, als een pad leidende tot de dood. Zo zijn wij allen hier opgehangen. En op het huwelijk ? Trots kijkt zij hem aan, en dan wordt de spiegel ineens ingeslagen. De engel des doods is hier. Ruw worden kinderdromen verstoord, moeders en vaders gillen. De engel des doods vertrekt met het kind, met de pop, ramen inslaande, deuren intrappende, baant hij zijn weg. De engel des doods is hier, waar Maria haar niet kan tegenhouden. Het is een vrouw, het gezicht van een lerares, een dokter, een arrogante blik. Ze heeft haar lange reis gemaakt vanuit de hel om toe te slaan. De oogst van de hel is bijna rijp, hier staat zij met haar sikkel en zeis, als de Zwarte Maria. Hij smeekt haar het kind te sparen, maar koelbloedig neemt zij het kind mee.

Onbarmhartig heeft zij toegeslagen. Bij het zien van het leed verroerde zij geen vin, koud als de dood was zij. Haar angel vindt haar weg door harten, om te verwonden. Zij sluit geen compromissen, laat zich niet omkopen. Haar zwarte klauw komt om te grijpen en te doden. Zij komt om te breken, om dat wat alreeds zwak is gemaakt mee te nemen. Ze laat woede achter, onbegrip, verscheurde gevoelens, een doorboord hart.

In haar doolhoven zijn we verdwaald, in haar web verstrikt. De confrontatie is onvermijdelijk. Ze laat al haar wapens zien in een reflex. Ze heeft een dodelijke wond, want eens kwam ze haarzelf

halen. De engel des levens kijkt haar goedkeurend en bewonderend aan, en we staan schaakmat. Is er nog een andere engel die meeleven toont, dan is dat een gevallen engel, en zo wordt alles weggestreept. Hij wil opstaan uit de kerk, maar hij kan het niet. De woorden van de dominee geven hem troost.

De koude hand voelt hij, die zijn schouder indrukt, het machteloze gevoel, de woede, maar het woord van de dominee is verzachtend, ontgiftigend, totdat de engel des doods weer toeslaat. Haar reis vanuit de de hel stopt hier. Hier neemt zij haar woning. Maria draagt een zwart kleed, haar soldaten hebben zwarte helmen, en die zwarte bessen moeten gegeten worden. Hij schreeuwt, vol woede, maar ze sluiten hem op. Een gevallen engel noemen zij hem. Een engel ? Wat is dat ? Heeft dat met een auto-industrie te maken ? En de bijbel, wat is dat dan ? Hij weet het niet meer, in zijn hersenen verliest hij grip. Er is een koud gat in zijn hersenen, glibberig, als besmeurd met uitwerpselen. Het is maar een darm. Voedselresten, niets anders, en een grotere vertering moet nog komen ? Of blijft het hierbij ?

Hij staat op straat, het regent. De stad lijkt bezaait met hondenpoep, en nu zwemt het rond in de regen die zich ophoopt op de grond. Kinderen hebben plezier in rubberbootjes. Hier hebben ze altijd van gedroomd. Diepliggende garages lopen onder. Hij kijkt rond. Hij heeft een paraplu. Zo maakt de bakker dus zijn brood, denkt hij.

Hij mag er wezen. Hij voelt zich vrij. Het is dinsdag. Hij loopt naar de brug over het smalle riviertje. Dan gaat hij de winkelstraat in. Hij leest een krant die in het regenwater drijft, althans dat probeert hij. Op zoek naar een gouden boodschap, maar al wat hij ziet zijn de eentonige, naargeestige boodschappen van de engel des doods. Met monotone stappen loopt hij verder. ‘Hier woonde Iris vroeger,’ bedacht hij zich. Maar hij loopt haastig door. Het water is hem bijna tot de knieen gestegen. De stad lijkt nu bezaaid met de uitwerpselen van honden. Het zijn de honden van gebrek, maar hij is gelukkig nu. De apocalypse kent hij nu, de schalen des hemels die over het verloederd volk wordt uitgegoten. Hier heeft hij zo lang op gewacht. En het regent maar door, en de dijken breken door, en hij klimt in een boom. Dit is de boom waar hij als kind altijd in speelde, waar hij zijn hutten had, en zijn eerste vriendinnetjes. De boom was nu veel langer. Ja, hij zou de zondvloed overleven. Deze boom, als de kroon van zijn tuin. Lange schaakstukken staan op de dijken.

Hij zoent met Klara, dan met Els, maar op Klara wordt hij steeds verliefder. Hij trouwt met haar, alles in het wit. De tuin is voor hem het belangrijkste. Die boom moet groeien, anders redden we het niet. Op de dijken en duinen loopt hij, de koppen afhakkende van lange schaakstukken. Zij zijn de weg naar de hemel niet, en hij is de politie. Het gaat om de boom. Maar nieuwe koppen komen uit de schaakstukken ploppen. Hij is in een gevecht met de engel des doods. En de engel des levens lacht. Ze waren zo verliefd. Hij ziet haar staan, bij de brug, Kirsten, zijn eerste liefde. Ze is in schitterend wit met allerlei hangende touwtjes. Hij komt dichterbij en de bliksem slaat hem. Ze staan bij een boom, een andere boom, en dan kussen ze elkaar. Een langere jongen gaat er uiteindelijk met haar vandoor, en dan wordt ze een popje van een andere tuin, vreemd voor hem. En de jaren daarvoor was de liefde in hem zo zwak dat hij alleen maar kon dromen. Er waren zoveel andere dingen in hem die hij veel belangrijker vond. Een auto was belangrijker dan een meisje. De juffrouw was belangrijker dan een meisje. De sterkste zijn was belangrijker dan een meisje. Het meeste hebben was belangrijker dan een meisje. Hij trok aan datgene wat de engel des doods vasthield. Hij wist niet wat het was, maar hij wilde het hebben. Een ongelovelijke kracht maakte zich van hem meester, een jeugdige kracht, en zij liet los. Hij hoorde een schreeuw, een gil. Hij hield de engel des levens in zijn armen. Hij trok haar door het inmiddels tot de nek gestegen

regenwater. ‘Kom naar de boom,’ riep hij.

‘Wij weten allemaal wat de enige weg is,’ zei de dominee. Hij wist het niet meer. ‘Ja, maar de stad, de stad,’ riep hij.

‘Grijp de boom,’ riep de dominee. ‘Kus haar. Beklim haar. Ze is van jou. Ik verklaar u nu man en vrouw. En deze bijbel mag jullie huwelijk bezegelen.’ Hij wist niet wat de bijbel was. ‘Liefdesbrieven van Klara of van mijn eerdere liefdes ?’

‘Allemaal,’ zei de dominee. ‘Onderhoud nu je tuin.’

‘Bind haar aan de boom,’ riep iemand. ‘Trek haar op,’ riep een ander. Een politie-agent deed hem in de boeien. ‘Waarom heeft u deze vrouw opgehangen ?’

‘Ik probeerde haar te redden. Ik ben zelf een politie-agent,’ zei hij.

‘U moet voorkomen bij de engel des doods,’ zei de agent. Ze zat daar in de hal, vooroorlogs. ‘Nu is het oorlog,’ riep ze. ‘Je hebt het vuur van de goden gestolen, Prometheus, en aan de mensen gegeven. Je kent je straf.’ Een gier vloog op hem af, om van zijn lever te eten, die tegelijkertijd weer aangroeide. ‘Gier,’ zij hij. ‘Breng haar tot de ark, de grote boom, we missen nog een paar dieren.’

De gier vloog op haar af en greep haar.

Hoofdstuk 2. De Oase

Ze had satijn aan, als een popje. De juffrouw had alle kinderen onder haar macht. Als haar poppen waren ze, en ze behandelde hen goed. Alle jongens waren verliefd op de juffrouw, maar er waren belangrijkere dingen dan de juffrouw. Het jaar daarop kregen ze een nieuwe juffrouw, een verschrikkelijke, het tegenovergestelde van de vorige juffrouw. De nieuwe juffrouw was als de engel des doods, als een wild en gevaarlijk dier. En toch wist ze zich te gedragen dat jaar, en kwamen ze er heelhuids doorheen, en het was maar voor een jaar. De dag des doods was voorbij. Het schip triomfeerde in de haven, aan de kade. ‘Moet dat nou, al dat bloot ?’ vroeg zijn vader toen hij meer en meer ging tekenen.

‘Ja, open en bloot,’ zei hij. ‘Ik laat ze niks meer verbergen. Dieren zijn toch ook bloot ?’

‘Het is een onderwaardering van het vrouwelijke geslacht,’ zei vader. ‘Zie jij vrouwen als dieren ?’

‘Bomen staan toch ook bloot ?’ zei hij. ‘Het is onze enige redding.’

‘Nee,’ zei vader, ‘je weet wie onze enige redding is.’

Maar hij wist het niet meer. Hij was gefixeerd op de boom. De noot moest gekraakt worden, gepeld, tot aan de pit. ‘We hebben lang genoeg gewacht, vader,’ zei hij.

‘Jij groeit op voor galg en rad,’ zei vader.

‘En jij groeit op voor de kus van de engel des doods,’ zei hij tegen vader.

Maar het schip triomfeerde in de haven, aan de kade. De lage boompjes op de grond, de struiken in het diepe zand, warm zand was het, en het leek alsof ze allemaal bewust waren. Het zonlicht leek rinkelend. Hij kon het zich niet meer herinneren, en werd een treurig persoon. Hij wist snel niet meer wat bomen waren. Het dwaalde allemaal op hem heen. Hij lag vaak op bed. Hij was vaak moe, als gekust door de engel des doods. Een diersoort was het in zijn ogen, gemeen, opdringerig.

‘Praat niet zo over engelen,’ zei vader. ‘Het zijn heilige wezens.’ Maar hij wist niet meer wat heilig was. Er was een diep gemis in zijn hart, het knaagde. De somberheid van het alledaagse leven overspoelde hem, verlamde hem.

‘Trouw haar,’ zei de dominee. Het was zijn verlossing uit dat gezin. Klara dronk veel, en hij lustte ook wel een borreltje op zijn tijd, en steeds meer begonnen ze zich in hun huisje terug te trekken. Het was alsof ze alcoholische sappen aan de bomen konden onttrekken. Hij likte aan de bomen.

Zij was het schilderij in zijn huis, een schilderij van groen-metalen maaiers, waarmee hij wel over elke wilde haardos wilde gaan. De groen-metalen maaiers schitterden in het zonlicht. Het was een warme, mooie dag. Ze waren als de wachters van de engel des doods. Maar ze had haar betekenis verloren. Ze was als het ei op tafel. Het was paas-ochtend, de geur van het lijden na de dood, nieuw leven brengend. Zijn vrouw stond in de keuken. Hij staarde naar de tuin. Het zou een prachtige dag worden met veel zon. Er was geen krant vandaag, en op de televisie was er het levenslied. Zijn vrouw kwam even later met de koffie binnen, en ging toen zitten om te breien. Het was alsof hij alles weer opnieuw beleefde. Ze zat ver weg van hem, of dat kwam door de vele spullen die tussen hen stonden. Het huis stond vol met de dierbare spulletjes van zijn vrouw. Er werd niet veel gezegd. Het ging bergafwaarts met zijn vrouw, en snel werd ze door de engel des doods weggehaald. Een groot ei zweefde boven de vijver. Deze had zijn vrouw opgeslokt. Het was alweer pasen. Het jaar daarna was hij alleen. Hij at veel eieren, om iets van zijn vrouw terug te krijgen, maar hij ving veel bot. Hij liet schilderijen in zijn huis hangen, Franse schilderijen, met wulpse gestaltes die ’s nachts tot leven kwamen, tot hem kwamen, om hem te beladen met kerkelijke schuld. Hij wist dat er wat mis was met hem. Hij had aan bomen gelikt.

De nachten duurden lang, waren diep, waarin hij vele gesprekken voerde, naar de schilderijen staarde. Hij liet een bar plaatsen. De gestaltes van de schilderijen moesten zijn vrouw vervangen, de leegtes opvullen. Maar de kerkelijke prijs was hoog, een prijs die opliep tot aan pasen. Hij was de gekruisigde, hij was de engel des doods. Hij was voortijdig gekomen, gevallen was hij. Maar het grote boek begon de betekenissen te veranderen. Het was een draaiboek, een boek van rekeningen, en hij doneerde veel geld om zijn geweten los te kopen, uit deze hel. Hij was het zelf die die lange

reis vanuit de hel had gemaakt, en nu was hij hier, met al zijn groengelakte maaiers. De tuin vroeg erom om gemaaid te worden, en het was een mooie dag. De tuin was klaar om haar oogst te geven. Hij greep, miste, en greep nog een keer, en was vereeuwigd in een schilderij. Hij met de zeis, gedood om te doden. De vlaggen hingen uit buiten. Hij herinnerde de verzorgster die kwam. Hij liet haar ook aan bomen likken, en zij werd als hem. Zij leerde van hem. Hij had een machts-positie. Zij aanbad hem omdat hij ouder was, en veelkleurig was. Voor haar was hij niet ziek maar vrij, een verlicht mens. Hij liet haar het schilderij zien waarop hij stond. 'Is dat je grootvader ?' vroeg ze.

- Nee, dat ben ik.

'Je lijkt veel ouder hier.'

- Macht verouderd.

'Wie heeft het geschilderd ?'

Hij zwijgt, en hangt het schilderij weer terug. Met pasen eten ze altijd samen paas-eitjes. Dan herinnert hij zich niks meer, en gaat terug in de tijd, zo ver, dat hij bij de witte lijnen aankomt. Als hij erover gaat zal hij sterven. Hij beweegt zich helemaal tot het randje van de laatste streep. Hij kijkt in de diepte van een reusachtig ravijn. 'Hier wil ik niet sterven,' denkt hij. Hij gaat terug, en hoort zijn vader en moeder tot hem spreken, hem betuttelen. Hij is niet vrij. Strak wordt hij opgevoed. Zijn vader bespeelt hem als een pop. Zijn moeder kan hem niet bereiken. Hij heeft een ei met vele stralen in zijn hart. 'Alleen een vrouw kan me hieruit redden,' denkt hij.

'Wil je met haar trouwen ?' vraagt de dominee.

'Ja,' zegt hij.

'Dan is zij nu uw vrouw.'

De kerkdienst gaat verder. Zijn vader en moeder zijn verdrietig omdat ze hem kwijt zijn. Ze wilden hem in een hokje houden. De dominee neemt het hok over. Als dieren zijn ze in het schip van Noach, twee aan twee. Zijn vrouw kan goed naaien en breien. En borduren doet ze ook graag, maar het steekt hem. Het steekt hem dat ze toch ook zo ver weg is. Ze leven in verschillende werelden. Ze breekt zoveel van zijn hart weg, door haar geprik, als een spin die hem van binnen aanvreet. En met pasen zijn er nieuwe eieren. Hij is het paaskind, maar hij kan niet opnieuw geboren worden. Daarvoor zijn de banden te strak. De tijd brengt dood voort, geen leven. En hij gaat het tegemoet. Een vrouw moet hem redden. Zijn eigen vrouw is niet genoeg, het gaat niet diep genoeg, alhoewel ze diep steekt. Dan zijn daar de Franse schilderijen. Met deuren die 's nachts opengaan. Hij leert hen bomen likken. Ze worden als hem, en kunnen niet meer terug. Ze zijn de stralen van het ei. Hij is de kapitein op het schip, en buiten loeren de haaien op hem. Ze willen hem naar een verpleeghuis brengen, net als zijn vrouw. Zijn vrouw woont nu in de haaien, als de prinses der haaien is zij. Ze hebben haar overboord gegooid. Hij zal hen vinden. Hij is de engel des doods, het ei met de vele stralen. Hij had niet moeten slapen, hij had zijn tuin moeten onderhouden. Nu is ze weg. De Franse soldaten hebben hun Napoleon gevonden. Hij steekt zijn maaiers in de fik, en is klaar om te gaan

grillen. De honden van gebrek zijn in de stad. Nu is alles in vuur. Hij zal zijn vrouw vinden. Hij zal haar vinden in de haai die haar opslokte, en van die haai zullen ze hun boot maken. Maar zijn herinneringen draaien, en zijn ziedend, en dan weet hij ineens niks meer. Hij weet niet dat hij ooit een vrouw had. Hij heeft nu de gedachte dat ze er nooit is geweest. Ze probeerden hem iets op de mouw te spelden. Hij woont alleen. Zijn huis staat in een klein bos, met een bloemenveld. Hij woont hier eenzaam en verlaten, met zijn maaiers. Veel te maaien elke dag. Daar trekt hij zich aan op. En schilderijen zijn zijn passie maar zij zijn dood. En ook boeken zijn zijn passie, maar zij zijn dood. Hij houdt van de engel des doods. Het leven is te eng. Hij heeft een Maria-beeld naast de televisie, wat hij ooit heeft zwartgeverfd. Er is een lamp in geplaatst. Hij aanbidt haar, maar dan verdwijnt haar betekenis. Ook zij is dood. De dode kunst trekt hem aan, en het dode water der bomen, de alcohol. De lucht ruikt naar drop. Hij durft niet naar het toilet, daarom gebruikt hij een po die hij eens in de week verschoont. De po staat boven, en bakent zijn terrein af. Het beschermt hem tegen de wilde dieren van het bos. Hij staart uit het raam en ziet de uitgestrekte velden der vergetelheid. Hier zijn de witte strepen. En nu wil hij er echt voor gaan. Hij vecht, hij schreeuwt, hij overwint, en verliest dan. Beelden staan er in zijn huis, die het Christus-verhaal uitbeelden. Vaak gaat hij langs die beelden. Die beelden zijn als zijn huisdieren, veilig in de ark van Noach. De ark van Mozes heeft horens. Hij komt dichterbij, en de geur van wierook, drop en chocola overspoelt hem, maar ook de geur van hondenpoep. Hij grijpt de horens van de ark, maar wordt dan achteruit geslagen. Boven de ark verschijnt een ei met vele stralen. De ark verandert in een doodskist, en hij heeft het gevoel alsof hij in een lift zit, en wordt uitgestrekt als een sigaar in een sigaren-houder. 'Ik ben een van de velen,' denkt hij. 'Velen zijn geroepen, weinig uitverkoren.' Doodsangst overvalt hem.

Zijn hang naar materiele goederen wordt groter, die zijn hersenen bevriezen. Goud en metaal is zijn lust, edele metalen, het liefst gelakt. De badkamer is als een ark voor hem. Hij staart veel naar bijbeltaferelen op schilderijen, maar hij kan ze nauwelijks herinneren. Hij is alleen, in een koel huis. Hij strijdt tegen alles totdat het dood is. Het dode heeft de vlam van ander leven, elitair leven, fijngevoelige kunst. Maar hij kan dit leven niet opbrengen. Het hout om hem heen begint te rotten, het goud om hem heen begint te stinken, en het koele begint hem te steken. Een spin vreet hem aan, een groep dolle wolven. De honden van gebrek zijn hier, de honden van een duivels paradijs. Zij nemen hem mee naar het verpleeghuis, en zij gaan zijn huis bewonen. Zij hebben al zijn medailles afgenomen, om er zelf mee te pronken. 'Alleen de duivel kan de duivel overwinnen,' denkt hij. Hij weet nog nauwelijks wie of wat de duivel is. Hij ziet het als een wapen. Hij moet zich verdedigen, maar hij kan het niet. 'Ik kan net zo goed Frans praten,' denkt hij.

De juffrouw houdt hem stevig vast.

'Wil je met haar trouwen ?' vraagt de dominee.

Hij knikt verlegen. Als hij thuis is maait hij het gras. Zijn vrouw komt hem een hoog glas brengen. Later zitten ze in de tuin. Ze gaan vroeg naar bed. Zijn vrouw leest voor. Over de engel des doods wordt niet gesproken. Wel weten ze dat het een plaaggeest is. Dan gaan ze slapen. Zijn vrouw kust hem. Hij houdt haar hand vast. Zijn zusjes wonen bij hem in. Ze zijn paas-eitjes aan het beschilderen. Als hij het ziet krijgt hij er honger van. Zijn zusjes spelen vaak op het pleintje, waar ze spelletjes doen. Ook zijn ouders wonen bij hem in. Hij draagt het ei met stralen. In de nacht maait hij. Dokters nemen hem mee in de nacht, zeggende dat hij schizofreen is, een gevaar voor de samenleving, met zijn maaiers. Zij nemen hem mee en sluiten hem op, ver weg van het oog van zijn familie. Zij willen het ei met de stralen uit hem roven, maar zij kunnen het niet. Hij denkt dat zij buitenaardsen zijn. Van de planeet aarde schijnt hij nog nooit gehoord te hebben, en wil er ook niet

zoveel mee te maken hebben.

Met hem schijnt het beter te gaan nu ze hem nieuwe pillen hebben gegeven. Hij is inmiddels in het ziekenhuis, op een speciale afdeling. Langzaam begint hij weer uit bed te komen. De zusters bewonderen hem vanwege zijn humor en zijn markante persoonlijkheid. Hij is bijna hun god. Hij wordt hier als een prins behandeld, als een prins die van het paard is gevallen, zoals hij dat altijd zegt. Snel heeft hij een vriendin, en zijn gezondheid verbeterd steeds meer, tot zo'n hoogte dat hij zelfs weer op zichzelf zou kunnen wonen. Met zijn vriendin krijgt hij ergens een woning hoog in een flat. Zijn vriendin is veel jonger, maar door de pillen verjongd hij ook. In zijn flatwoning voelt hij zich al snel als de prins van Bagdad. Door de pillen loopt zijn leeftijd zo drastisch terug dat hij op een gegeven moment nog maar twintig is. Het voelt heerlijk aan tussen de hoge flatgebouwen. Hij staart vaak naar de overkant. Hij voelt zich vitaal. Tussen de flatgebouwen door zijn de prachtigste rozentuinen, waar hij vaak doorloopt of langsloopt met zijn vriendin. Er hangt een beetje een oosters of Arabisch sfeertje, en dat bevalt hem wel. Maar de rozenstruiken groeien steeds hoger en worden steeds dichter, om zo de flatgebouwen te isoleren. Nu voelt hij zich als Doornroosje. Ze gaan verhuizen en krijgen een flatje aan het weiland. Op dit tijdstip begint het weer slechter met hem te gaan, ook al is hij twintig. Misschien dat nu de ouderdom toch echt toeslaat. Weer belandt hij in het ziekenhuis, maar hij voelt zich nog steeds de prins van Bagdad, en zelfs van heel Arabie. Hij staart vaak naar de stenen van het ziekenhuis die zo'n aparte kleur hebben. Vooral als het zonlicht erop valt heeft het een prachtig effect. Zacht roze is toch wel de mooiste kleur, denkt hij.

En als zijn vriendin bij hem op bezoek komt heeft ze zo'n mooie roze jurk. Ze neemt hem mee voor een wandeling langs het meer. De melkfabriek staat hier dichtbij en alles ruikt hier aangebrand. In zijn gedachten zweeft hij met haar over het meer, en roze zwanen volgen hen. Even later liggen ze beiden in het koele meer. 'Zullen we naar de overkant zwemmen ?' vraagt hij. Zijn vriendin vindt het best. Dat hebben ze al wel eerder gedaan. Achter het meer zijn de weilanden, en achter het weilanden is hun flat. Helemaal nat komen ze aan in hun woning. Maar hij zorgt dat hij voor het donker wordt weer in het ziekenhuis is. Ook al is hij nu dan weer in het ziekenhuis, deze laatste bladzijden van zijn leven zijn sterk en roze, als rotsen waarop hij kan bouwen. Hij voelt zich veilig hier, iets wat over hem waakt. De golfjes die hier aankomen brengen voornamelijk geluk. Een oase was over hem heengevallen, en dat was allemaal net op tijd.

ARABISCH AMALGAAM

Hoofdstuk 1.

Ik, 27 jaar,

Lang,

Doe mezelf ouder voor dan ik ben.

Zij, 44 jaar

We zijn gelukkig samen, alsof we het eeuwig geluk hebben gevonden. Toch leiden we een saai leven, een sleur, zitten we opgesloten tussen muren. We leven meer in de dalen dan op de toppen. We mogen niet klagen, alcohol vult altijd de leegtes op. We moeten beiden oppassen geen alcoholisten te worden, maar we hebben het nu redelijk onder controle. Vaak als we klachten hebben wordt ons alcoholische dranken voorgeschreven door onze dokter. Onze dokter is wel alcoholist, maar daar hebben wij genoegen meegenomen. Dit omdat het een aardige man is, en dat zijn dokters zeer zelden. Hij neemt ons serieus en heeft ons op sleeptouw genomen.

Zij, is kleiner dan mij, heeft grote borsten die het leeftijds-verschil opvullen. We hebben geen kinderen, en dat willen we ook niet. Ze is rustig, ik ben tamelijk druk, dus we houden elkaar in balans. Zij leert mij nu om rustig te zijn, ook om mijn innerlijke stem te verstaan. Innerlijke vrede noemt ze dat. De dokter is hier weleens dronken geweest. We hebben besloten hem de hand boven het hoofd te houden. We zouden hem nooit verraden. We zijn niet kerkelijk, maar gaan wel naar een discussie-groepje om daar de dingen van het geloof te bespreken. Veelal wordt het geloof vanuit de atheistische hoek bekeken, aangevuld met kunstzinnige ideeen. We beschouwen het geloof als een vreemde erfenis, als cultuurgoed, maar voelen ons ook ingenomen, onder schrikbewind, door kolonisten uit het midden-oosten. We hebben nog geen geestelijke onafhankelijkheid. Ook de psychische gezondheidszorg houdt ons nog in mentale afhankelijkheid, en de zogeheten tandheelkunde houdt ons in orale afhankelijkheid, en deze bezetters komen allemaal uit het oosten aanwaaien. Trots zijn we er niet op, we hebben meer binnengelaten dan ons lief is, en hebben onze onafhankelijkheid prijsgegeven aan idioten, beulen. Maar ja, het was immers oorlog, het was een strooptocht, kolonisten zijn uit op kolonies, het creeeren van een apartheid. Deze kolonisten hebben een minderwaardig ras geschapen, wij. Het is voor het leken-ras verboden na te denken. Er wordt al voor ons gedacht, er is al voor ons gedacht, en er zal nog veel voor ons gedacht worden. Dat de etiketten niet passen is niet van belang. Het zijn de merktekens van het beest.

En dan is er nog de sex-politie die ons sexueel afhankelijk heeft gemaakt, bang dat een onzedelijk geluidje in een oplettend kinderoortje terecht zal komen. Maar diezelfde kinderoortjes worden niet gespaard voor het traumatiserende geschreeuw van knettergekke dokters en het erbarmenloze geboor van de zogeheten tandarts. Dat diezelfde kinderen voor de ogen van hun ouders door zulke misdadigers oraal worden gescalpeerd schijnt geen probleem te zijn. In Afrika worden kleine meisjes vanwege het volksgeloof aldaar vaginaal besneden, en daar is men in de hele wereld terecht ontdaan over, en wordt het als een godslasterlijke misdaad beschouwd, maar hier worden kinderen, zowel jongens als meisjes door de bezetter oraal besneden, en geen kip die erom kraait.

Mijnheer A. Hoekstra-Van Het Land denkt hier anders over. In zijn zogeheten tandartsen-praktijk wordt alles veilig gedaan, en zijn er strenge voorzorgsmaatregelen, die overigens overal gelden, en waar ook een strenge controle op is. Ook worden er na de besnijding betrouwbare, goed geteste stoffen gebruikt om de opening weer mee te bedekken, zodat het gebit van het kind extra lang mee kan gaan. Mevrouw T. Foppen sluit zich hier helemaal bij aan, en ja, wat hebben wij in te brengen tegen deze bezetters ? We kunnen ons hoogstens aansluiten bij het verzetstrijders-front tegen zulke praktijken. Wij hebben allemaal het merkteken van het beest ontvangen, of we nu wilden of niet, en het merkteken is eeuwig. Daar kan zelfs God of de keizer niets aan veranderen. Er zijn hier in dit

land drie oppergeloven waar iedereen zich aan dient te onderwerpen, waarvoor elke knie zich dient te buigen, en waartoe elke tong zal belijden : het medische geloof, het geloof in de geestelijke gezondheid, en het orale geloof, tot aan het dentale toe. En of je nu een dentaal bent of je bent het niet : die kerk kent geen grenzen.

Maarten Stokmans-Van Zeilen, zogeheten tandarts, aan de Belgische grens, vermeld dat er de laatste tijd vreemde dingen in zijn zogeheten tandartsen-praktijk plaatsvinden. Zo zouden beugels spontaan inkrimpen, en zogenaamd amalgaam, de zogeheten grijze roestvrije metaal-vullingen, zou spontaan in het niets oplossen. Hij gebruikt daarom nu veel vaker witte en rode vullingen, die volgens hem wat meer betrouwbaar zijn. Rood is tegelijkertijd de kleur van zijn lievelingskat, dus dat geeft ook direkt een emotionele verbinding met thuis. Ook is Maarten tegelijkertijd een enthousiast lid van de pinkstergemeente, en staat hij elke zondag trouw in deze kerk te klappen op de maat van de overigens heel mooie en aanstekelijke muziek. Hij heeft een visie voor het invoeren van veel meer kleuren zogeheten vullingen, zodat de mensen kunnen kiezen waarmee de barbaarse boorgaten voor eeuwig kunnen worden verborgen. Dat zou ook wat meer vrolijkheid brengen onder deze groep mensen die zo lijden onder de orale bezetting uit het oosten. Hij vindt ook wel dat de paus van de zogeheten tandartsen, Alexander de Kleine, de touwtjes wel wat mag vieren.

Kaakchirurg Riekerd van Aarnautsen is het hier niet mee eens, want hij vreest dat een al te zeer bemoedigde jonge generatie wel eens het einde van de bezetting zou kunnen betekenen. En dat zou helemaal godsonterend zijn. De wet die hen door God gegeven is, en waardoor zij de macht hebben gekregen, moet gehandhaafd worden. Van Aarnautsen staat hierin niet alleen. Tenminste negentig procent van de zogeheten tandartsen en kaakchirurgen staan achter hem, alhoewel sommigen gedwongen zijn dit te doen. Ook is hij van mening dat het God Zelf is geweest die het zogeheten amalgaam heeft geschapen, en dat wij Zijn schepping moeten eren en ervan gebruik moeten maken. Hij is van mening dat het amalgaam ook goed gebruikt kan worden in andere delen van het lichaam, vooral in de botten. Hij vindt het onzin om mensen die jarenlang niet kunnen slapen van de heuppijn een nieuwe heup te geven. Implantaties van amalgaam zouden volgens hem wonderen kunnen verrichten. Dit omdat het volgens hem bewezen is dat amalgaam gevoeligheid van de botten kan afdekken.

Ja, de verschillende meningen over amalgaam en het gebruik ervan, dat is me er eentje. Nu wil Van Aarnoutsen zijn naam veranderen in Van Aernoutsen met Ae, want dat staat volgens hem veel deftiger. Men is er maar druk mee, met de grote drie, de drie supergeloven van dit land. Het christelijk geloof is daar helemaal aan ondergeschikt, want ook de christen buigt voor de dokter, de geestelijk verzorger en de zogeheten tandarts. Het geloof van de zogeheten tandarts is gebaseerd op de orale besnijding, als plicht, als prioriteit, en zij die rebels daartegen zijn worden doorverwezen naar de geestelijke verzorgers, want die mensen mankeren natuurlijk heel wat. Veel mensen denken dat we in 1945 zijn bevrijd van de nazi’s, maar de bezetting door de nazi’s is groter dan ooit, door de medi-nazi’s, de psychinazi’s en de nazi’s van de mond, de orale nazi’s. En dit is dan ook de drieeenheid die alomtegenwoordig aanbeden wordt. Het vullingenbeheer wordt overgelaten aan de orale organisten, de tandpasta-producenten, die net zoals de nazi’s fluor gebruiken, een afvalproduct, om de gehypnotiseerde kolonie gewillig te houden. Zij bespelen met grote flair en betutteling de monden van de leken-families, zodat er niet al teveel tegenspraak zal zijn. Men moet eten wat de pot schaft, en door het gepoets komt er ook nog eens lekker veel gifdamp vrij van de kwikhoudende en kankerverwekkende chemicalien die ze vullingen noemen inplaats van gedwongen bot-implantaten, als de kinderdoop na de besnijdenis. En na zulk een gebeurtenis is hun naam ineens haas, en zijn alle verdere klachten voor de psychiater en de zondagsschool. Nee, dan ben ik maar als een oude jood die zegt : De verlosser moet nog komen. Een geschikte kanditaat hiervoor zou zijn Nelson Lincoln, die ook nog eens voor de dieren opkomt.

Onder dwangverpleging moeten we vandaag de dag van de verboden vrucht eten, om zo vervolgens nog meer in de problemen te komen, om zo nog rijper voor de verboden vrucht te worden. Dit is een vicieuze cirkel. En gedwongen implantaten hebben meer te maken met bezoek van buitenaardse wezens dan met werkelijke zorg. We zijn allang niet meer van onszelf. Maar goed, elke religie heeft zijn ongelovigen, en die moeten naar de hel. De hele wereld zal het beest achterna gaan om zijn beeld te aanbidden en zijn merkteken te dragen. De vijand werkt met vergiftiging, en met ontkenning ervan, zo is het altijd al geweest.

Mijnheer Olafsen uit Zutphen aan de Rijn zegt dat aan amalgaam geen enkel gevaar zit, want alles zit netjes ingedekt binnenin de kies. Nooit van dampvorming en metaalradiatie gehoord, mijnheer Olafsen ? Vervolgens zegt mijnheer Olafsen dat er maar heel weinig van het amalgaam daadwerkelijk in het lichaam terecht kan komen. Hoe weet u dat mijnheer Olafsen ? Ooit weleens opgemeten ? En weet u niet dat de apparatuur van de bezetters zichzelf echt niet zullen gaan verraden ? Drogredenaties, mijnheer Olafsen. En u heeft geen respect voor de mening van een ander, zelfs niet als het om hun eigen mond gaat. Uw wil is wet, want u heeft uw kolonie bezet, en duldt geen verzet. U houdt hen allen in slaap door het stafke van Doornroosje, met uw prikkende boren, soms tot aan de zenuw toe, en dan maar de gepleegde misdaden afdekken. Wie heeft u gezegd in de monden van gevoelige kinderen te gaan boren ? Het is niet veel anders dan Karel de Kleine die met het zwaard de ongelovigen dwong het christendom aan te nemen. En zo is de orale besnijding net zo erg als de vaginale besnijding, omdat het beiden om dwang gaat, en de klachten erbij niet serieus worden genomen. Klachten zijn de tekenen dat de bezetting werkt. En men wil dat zo houden. Alle tong zal belijden, elke knie zal buigen.

Bert Ootjes is door het verzet als zogeheten holistisch tandarts geplaatst in Bergen aan de Maas. Hij werd geplaatst voor het verwijderen van brandmerken, mertekens en nummers van het beest, en werkte in opdracht van de patient. Door de ongelovelijke werkdruk is mijnheer Ootjes overspannen geraakt, en plaatste het verzet een tweede zogeheten holistisch tandarts, professor Joost Achterbergen. Ook hij werkte in opdracht van de patient. Sindsdien zijn er vele zogeheten holistische tandartsen in het land gaan werken om de orale besnijdingen tegen te gaan. Veel van die zogeheten holistische tandartsen waren boorloos, maar ook de bezetters infiltreerden in deze branche, maar dan met boren. Om het infiltreren tegen te gaan plaatste het verzet schermpjes die zelf dauwdruppels konden aanmaken, en die schermpjes bezaten twee soorten poedertjes die op de zogeheten tandarts zouden reageren. Werden de dauwdruppels blauwkleurig, dan was de kust veilig, maar als de dauwdruppels roodkleurig werden, dan had de patient te doen met een infiltrant. Zo konden patienten het snel testen. Het was een uitvinding van Bert Ootjes. Niemand heeft ooit het tegendeel van de werking ervan kunnen bewijzen, en als er wetenschappelijk commentaar van buiten het verzet kwam, dan werd dat gewoon niet erkend. Het kwam er al snel op neer dat minstens vijftig procent van de zogeheten holistische tandartsen infiltranten waren van de bezetting. Velen hadden gewoon hun eigen gifjes die ze gebruikten, en de orale besnijding werd gewoon doorgezet. Ook het half serieus nemen werd een grote trend.

Ik ben in het verzet gegaan toen ik 25 werd, maar omdat ik op straat werd neergestoken kon ik geen actief lid meer zijn, en beperkte mij hooguit tot discussie-groepjes. Ik raakte verlamd. Ik zit nu in een rolstoel, en moet weer langzaam leren lopen. Mijn vriendin helpt me daarbij. Vandaag ben ik met haar naar het naaktstrand gegaan omdat het buitengewoon mooi weer was. Daar waren mensen met mooie naakte plekken in hun mond, niet vervuild door de zogeheten tandarts. Alles puur natuur.

28 Januari 1971

De flower power beweging groeit nog steeds, meer dan ooit. Ook de 'Baas in Eigen Mond' beweging groeit hard, vooral onder de jeugd. Ik kan weer een beetje lopen. De wonden zijn aardig genezen. De naaktstranden zijn dichtbevolkt nu. Overal wordt geprotesteerd en gedemonstreerd tegen de bezetting, tegen de grote drie, maar het ministerie is niet onder de indruk. Het is volgens hen door de gezondheidsraad bewezen dat de grote drie geen kwaad hebben verricht en een bevordering zijn voor de volksgezondheid. Inmiddels grijpt de bevolking massaal naar speciale tandpastas voor gevoelige tanden, want nieuwe zogeheten vullingsoorten zorgen ervoor dat zelfs duikers niet meer zo diep konden duiken als voorheen, doordat ze de druk op de mond niet meer aankunnen vanwege deze nieuwe aanwinst in de pharmaceutische industrie. Dit wordt door het ministerie ontkent. De nieuwe zogeheten vullingsoorten zijn prima. De bezetting kan er alleen maar van profiteren. Er wordt alleen vanuit het hogere elite-ras gedacht. Het leken-ras is niet interessant. Steeds meer jongeren beginnen zich tegen de flower power beweging te verzetten, omdat er maar niets gebeurt. Het is allemaal te soft, en de meesten worden gezien als watjes die niets ondernemen dan mantras zingen en mandalas tekenen. De heavy metal beweging begint te groeien, en kaapt veel van de flower power beweging weg. De zogeheten underground wordt een grote attractie voor degenen die maar geen aansluiting konden vinden in de flower power beweging, of hen die erin teleurgesteld waren en grote vraagtekens hadden.

Bert Ootjes begint een nieuwe pseudo-industrie en wordt door de politie opgepakt en vastgezet. Hij is inmiddels de grootste verzetsstrijder die het verzet kent, en de bekendste. Hij wordt ook wel de Vader van het Verzet genoemd. In de gevangenis vindt Bert Ootjes een nieuw hormoon uit wat tanden weer kan laten aangroeien. Wel zorgt dit hormoon ervoor dat de tanden om de zoveel tijd gewisseld worden, en dat betekent dus tegelijkertijd het einde van de hele zogeheten tandheelkunde. Het hormoon is een mengsel van een stof die door haaien en krokodillen wordt gedragen, en die door een simpele injectie in een mens ingebracht kan worden, eens en voor altijd. Vanaf het moment van de injectie maakt het lichaam de stof zelf aan. Het hormoon slaat in als een bom, en naast het verdwijnen van de zogeheten tandheelkunde valt ook de geestelijke gezondheidszorg en ook het medische bewind. Nu een van de grote drie is gevallen blijkt het dat ze hun belangrijkste schakel kwijt zijn. Mensen worden gezonder doordat ze niet meer als een afvalput van gifstoffen worden behandeld. Ook het kerkelijk geloof valt hierbij in, en onze erfenis bleek niet veel meer te zijn dan een zogeheten vulling na de besnijdenis, en nu de besnijdenis was verdwenen daalde ook de behoefte naar een zogeheten vulling, maar de dwang was er nog steeds. De grote twee adopteerden toen het kerkelijk geloof als nummer drie, maar de geloofwaardigheid hiervan was tot een minimum gedaald, en velen lieten zich niet zomaar meer afzetten.

3 Januari 1980

Bert Ootjes komt vrij, en zorgt ervoor dat ons land de onafhankelijkheid krijgt. De geestelijke gezondheidszorg en het medische geloof worden tot liefde-werk gereduceerd. Het kerkelijk geloof mag daarbij helpen, maar verliest haar macht. Nelson Lincoln wordt de nieuwe anarchistische leider, en ook Joost Achterbergen speelt hierin een grote rol. Zij worden de nieuwe grote drie. Een man genaamd Tutuc zet een geheel nieuwe religie op gebaseerd op liefde en sex. Maas-Middelland wordt de nieuwe hoofdstad, waar professionele prostituees zich zetelen en de stad leiden. Er worden meer naaktstranden geopend, en het land wordt voor vijftig procent naturistisch. Tutuc richt de Naturistische Anarchistische Partij op, de NAP, en krijgt zestig procent van alle stemmen. Velen hebben een andere definitie van naturisme, die volgens hen veel meer is dan gewoon naakt lopen. Binnen het naturisme komen vele stromingen. Er wordt fel uitgehaald naar de mode beweging die

wordt gezien als sexuele onderdrukking en het creeeren van een underdog. Nog steeds dertig procent van de bevolking hangt de mode beweging aan, en ze hebben grote invloed, vooral op scholen, waar andersdenkenden al snel als leken-ras worden gezien. De mode wordt steeds meer gezien als manipulatie en als een belemmering voor de vrijheid.

28 Augustus 1981

Het land heeft de status van Utopia bereikt. Er is vrede overal. Men kan elkaar weer waarderen, men voelt zich weer veilig bij elkaar, er is weer vertrouwen, rust, maar ook onafhankelijkheid. Ik kan inmiddels weer goed lopen en alles weer doen. Veel ga ik met mijn vriendin naar het zwanenmeer, het plantsoen. Hier kom ik helemaal tot rust. We hebben het vaak over onze schooltijd. Ik ben erg veranderd volgens mijn vriendin, minder druk. De roosjes beginnen uit te komen langs het zwanenmeer, en ze brengen wit sap voort. De grootste zwaan van het plantsoen gaat stoer over het riviertje dat het slot omgeeft. Altijd ruikt het hier naar zeewier. Als ze van die grootste zwaan niet zouden zeggen dat het een zwaan was, dan zou ik denken dat het een paard was. De bloemen komen hier laat uit, en niemand weet waarom. Altijd pas na de mid-hitte van de zomer. De criminaliteit is hier tot een nulpunt gedaald. Ik voel me weer veilig op straat.

In andere landen is het nog geen Utopia, en zijn missionarissen van Bert Ootjes vaak niet welkom. Heel veel buitenlanders emigreren naar ons land, en er komen steeds meer flats, die ook steeds hoger worden, en dit schijnt een goede uitwerking te hebben op de onderlinge vrede. In de politiek in andere landen gaat het er hard aan toe, ze geven Bert Ootjes geen kans. En ons land noemen ze de nieuwe toren van Babel. Dan wordt Bert Ootjes in het buitenland vastgezet wegens het smokkelen van zwaar alcoholische dranken. Hier schrijft hij zijn apocalypse. In ons land wordt een standbeeld van hem opgericht. Zijn geboortedag wordt een nationale feestdag. Met de diertjes gaat het helaas nog steeds niet goed. Ze worden nog volop geslacht, en er wordt nog volop van hen genoten. Wel heeft Nelson Lincoln al heel veel voor hen gedaan. Vegetariers proberen heel wat, maar worden aan alle kanten tegengewerkt. Hun hoop is eigenlijk op Bert Ootjes, maar die zit in de gevangenis. De dieren hebben zo nog steeds geen onafhankelijkheid, en behoren nog steeds tot het leken-ras. Slagers beginnen steeds meer reclame te maken, met de meest idiote, uit zijn verband gerukte, betuttelingen, en proberen de massa met liedjes en slagzinnen in hypnose te houden. Leuk, zo'n arm diertje slachten, en dan ook erbij gaan zingen. De zingende slagers zijn populair, en er worden veel platen verkocht. Ook banketbakkers werken veel vaker met vlees. De warme broodjes met vleesvullingen gaan pijlsnel over de toonbank heen. En ze vinden steeds weer nieuwe dingen uit, en verleggen hun grenzen voortdurend. Voor de dieren is het nog geen Utopia. In het buitenland hebben de dieren het beter.

In de ogen van de dieren zijn de slagers en hun consumenten de bezetters. Zij vinden het racisme, maar niemand schakelt in op hun frequentie, en zij hebben geen diploma's. Nee, dit land is met zijn kar vol diploma's aan de rand van de afgrond terecht gekomen, ook al noemen ze het een Utopia. Maar in de apocalypse hebben de dieren het laatste woord.

2 Augustus 1982

Grillen zijn 'in'. Er wordt veel gebarbecued, veel gezongen en gedanst. Voor de dieren lijkt het alleen maar erger te worden. We zijn in de tachtiger jaren beland. Vlees wordt een handig weggevertje, een uitstekend kado voor speciale gelegenheden, en een bewijs van eeuwige trouw en

liefde. Huwelijks-taarten worden meer en meer omgezet in bouwsels van vlees, en de miniaturen van zowel bruid als bruidegom op de top van de vlees-cake zijn steeds meer naakt, als een propaganda voor het naturisme, wat natuurlijk op zich niet verkeerd is. Steeds meer wordt er de nadruk gelegd op practische collectieve ambacht, waarin de vlees-eter moet zien wat hij eet. Veel demonstraties van openlijke slachtingen worden vertoont, en het vlees bestemd voor een huwelijks-feest wordt op het feest zelf geslacht. Door dit soort openlijke vertoning steeg allereerst het aantal vegetariers dramatisch, maar later werd het als cultuur-goed gezien, als educatief. Zo werd alles geheel gestileerd, en elke zenuw lamgelegd. Woorden als 'traditie' werden gebruikt, terwijl die traditie er nooit was. Vegetariers hadden ingezien waar het anarchisme het land naar toe had geleid, en begonnen te verlangen naar een milde vorm van communisme. Een bekend schrijver sprak : 'Het educatieve zwaard heeft een praalwagen gemaakt voor het bandeloze verstand.' Het werd een chaos in het land. Iedereen zag uit naar de terugkomst van Bert Ootjes. Maar die kwam maar niet, want die zat vast in het buitenland. Joost Achterbergen promoveerde weer ergens met een verslag over de carnivorische problematiek, maar dat haalde allemaal niets uit. Men was ergens in aan het vastroesten en kwam er niet meer uit. Er kwam een wet dat iedereen die nog vlees wilde eten de dieren zelf moest fokken en slachten. Negentig procent van de bevolking werd hierdoor boer. Nelson Lincoln had gehoopt dat ze door deze wet zouden terugschrikken, maar nee hoor, het werd een sport, een trend, een ritueel, ja, een geloof. En er werd zoveel mogelijk nonsense over verkocht. Het land kwam in een draaikolk van schaamteloos geweld en arrogantie tegen dieren. Dieren werden gewoon door de steeds naturistischer wordende bevolking als minderwaardig gezien, als ondergeschikt aan, als plezier-leken die uitgebuit moesten worden. Het werd een agrarisch land van veeteelt waarin iedereen betrokken werd, en de vegetariers zonderden zich veelal af. Zij konden dit zinloze geweld niet bevatten, en velen van hen vertrokken naar het buitenland.

Zovelen konden hun worstjes met karbonaatjes niet missen. Ze moesten er toch niet aan denken om zonder de speklapjes en de frikandellen door het leven te gaan. Vleesproducenten haalden zelfs stunts uit door het vlees te laten regenen op speciale dagen. Het land had een nieuwe bezetter. Men begon een hogere ethische en morele waarde aan vlees te hechten. Het zou gezond zijn en zelfs noodzakelijk voor het instandhouden van het menselijk ras. Het dierlijk ras stond dus zichtbaar op een lager plan volgens deze bezetter. En dieren konden niet spreken, dus die konden zich niet verzetten. De nieuwe orale bezetters waren gekomen. Het geloof in vlees redeneerde als volgt : Mensen waren engelen, en dieren waren gevallen engelen, duivels. Zo verdedigden ze hun handelwijzen, en daarmee beweerden ze ook nog eens dat wanneer zij die dieren verslonden, dan werden hun zonden vergeven. Ik legde me er bij neer. Ik kon niets doen. Vaak ging ik met mijn vriendin naar het zwanenmeer om te bespreken wat we konden doen, maar er was niet veel wat we konden doen. We voelden ons machteloos, en besloten te genieten van de dieren die er nog waren, en die met rust gelaten werden : zwanen. Vaak gingen we 's nachts naar het meertje, trokken onze kleren uit en gingen daar zwemmen met de zwanen. Op een dag nam de grootste zwaan ons op zijn rug, en bracht ons naar het slot. Er woonde hier niemand meer. Het slot stond vol met ridder-pantsers. We zijn toen naar boven gegaan en gingen op een oud bed liggen. We waren helemaal naakt. Ineens kwam de zwaan binnen met een pluimhelm op. Dat was wel het zotste wat we ooit gezien hadden, en we moesten beiden heel erg lachen. Boven het bed hing een schilderij met naakte vrouwen en een wereldbol. We wisten dat het een naturistisch slot was. Het was vrij toegankelijk voor iedereen. Overal waren ook spinnewebben. Op een verdieping hoger waren nog meer schilderijen met naakte vrouwen. We besloten weer terug te gaan, zwommen het meertje over, en klommen even later ons bed in. Een man scheen het allemaal op camera te hebben vastgelegd. Hij had een zwarte hond met manen. Hij liet het ons zien en zei dat het het mooiste was wat hij ooit op kamera had vastgelegd. We voelden ons niet bespied ofzo. We vonden het wel dapper van hem, en bovenal knap. Hij wilde ons wel meer beeldmateriaal laten zien. Het waren veelal naaktscenes. Ik kwam dichter bij zijn zwarte hond met de zwarte manen. De hond had zulke prachtige ogen en ik moest hem gewoon omhelzen. Het dier was één en al geconcentreerde kracht. Het dier leek wel van

adel. Alles was rust hier en vredig, en we kregen een goed contact met de man.

Hij wilde ons wel vaker filmen, en we stemden toe. Hij was een filmmaker die op zoek was naar unieke, zeldzame tafereeltjes. Wat deze man deed was kunst, hij had de gave om de climaxen en het goede van het leven te vereeuwigen. Mijn vriendin kreeg hem lief. Hij was van haar leeftijd. Ik zei : 'Ga je gang.' Ik kon me voorstellen dat ze iemand nodig had van haar leeftijd. Ik was altijd veel te jong voor haar, alhoewel ik me ouder voordeed dan ik was. Nu was ik me dan steeds kinderlijker gaan gedragen, omdat ik daar vroeger nooit de ruimte voor had gehad. Ik beleefde mijn jeugd nu voor de eerste keer in mijn leven. Ik ontmoette een jonge vrouw, jonger dan mij, een buitenlandse, en we werden smoorverliefd. We deden alles samen. Ook gingen we 's nachts vaak zwemmen in het zwanenmeer, en bezochten we vaak het oude slot. Ik bleef wel gewoon hele goede vrienden met mijn vroegere vriendin en haar nieuwe geliefde. Ik had het gevoel dat zij veel beter bij elkaar pasten, alhoewel we altijd een fantastische relatie hadden gehad. Het was goed zo. We waren beiden verzadigd van elkaar. Ik begon een nieuwe hoodstuk in mijn leven, en zij ook, en ik was nog steeds verliefd op haar en zij op mij. En de liefde was mooi en goed. De man die van haar leeftijd was had haar op het moment meer te bieden dan ik had, en hij kon heel wat leegtes vullen die door het leeftijds-verschil tussen haar en mij waren ontstaan. Zij had mijn moeder kunnen wezen. Ik had nu behoefte aan iemand die op één lijn stond met mij, van dezelfde leeftijdscategorie, of iets jonger, omdat ik mezelf nu ook jonger gedroeg dan ik was.

De tuin rondom het slot leek Arabisch, hier in Rotterdijk. Het had een beetje een pseudo-religieus-communistische gloed, wel heel mooi trouwens, bijna sprookjesachtig. Het was alsof de zwanen de sleutel ergens bewaarden. Mijn nieuwe vriendin had grote volle borsten die vol leken te hangen met melk, net zoals mijn vorige vriendin. Het leeftijdsverschil hoefde nu niet echt opgevuld te worden, want we scheelden niet zoveel in leeftijd, maar wel kon het lengte-verschil opgevuld worden. Zij was kleiner dan mij, maar verder absoluut niet klein. Omdat ze bruin was zei ze altijd dat ze chocolade-melk had, maar dat was natuurlijk maar een grapje. We hadden beiden een bepaalde orale fixatie en dat was tegelijkertijd om te overleven. Er woedde nu eenmaal een orale oorlog. We waren schaakmat gezet in een machtsspel. De gelovigen zeiden altijd dat het paradijs van Arabisch-Babylonische oorsprong was, dus voor ons was het gebied rondom het slot altijd paradijselijk. Hier moest ergens de sleutel hangen. Met mijn nieuwe vriendin dwaalde ik door de gangen van het grote slot, diep in de nacht. Overal hingen naaktschilderijen die ons denken leken te programmeren. Veel van die schilderijen waren enigmatische paradijselijke taferelen. Sommige vrouwen werden met een blinddoek beschilderd, naakt en met een zwaard. Soms een weegschaal vasthoudende, of een schaal met daarin een soort zwarte of grijze stof. Ze hadden een rechterlijke of richterlijke uitstraling of houding, als een vrouwe Justitia. Ook gaven zij mannen die stof te drinken. Ik moest ineens weer aan die amalgaam-toestanden denken. Zou het een vonnis zijn gebaseerd op in het verleden gepleegde misdaden ? De vrouwen waren van bruine huidskleur, maar niet altijd. Zou de bron van dit alles in het paradijs te vinden zijn ? Zou daar wat mis zijn gegaan ? Waarom gaf Eva haar man van de giftige vrucht ? Ik viel bijna naar achteren toen we in een kamertje kwamen met nog een schilderij. Dit schilderij was heel hoog opgehangen, boven een deur die een open haard verborg. De man was geblinddoekt in dit schilderij. De vrouw niet. Zij had twee ogen als rode appels waardoor ze naar hem keek. Hij zat op een stoel. Zij had een zwaard en een sigaar. Boven het schilderij was nog een schilderij met een geblinddoekte vrouw met een zwaard die stond alsof ze klaar was om te kappen. Maar dat was het schokkendste niet : Beide vrouwen waren als etalage-poppen, werkende voor een industrie, en ze hadden geen borsten. Die waren afgekapt. Ze konden hun moedermelk niet geven. Hun vagina's waren afgedekt met metaal en een slot. Zij waren kinderloos, ontdaan van hun sexualiteit. Daarom gaven ze niets dan gif en verderf. Mijn nieuwe vriendin schrok er ook van. Het deed haar denken aan de vaginale besnijdenis in Afrika.

‘Zouden dieren zich ook zo voelen ?’ vroeg ik. ‘Zij worden besneden tot de dood.’ Mijn nieuwe vriendin knikte. Ik voelde me onwennig. Toen zijn we maar teruggegaan. ‘Bij de indianen,’ zei ik, ‘in het amazone-gebied, werden soms de borsten van vrouwen geamputeerd zodat ze beter hun pijl en boog konden gebruiken.’

‘Ja,’ zei zijn vriendin, ‘en in Fenicie wat nu Turkije is werd Attis aanbeden, een aan zijn lot overgeleverde jongen die door wilde schapen werd grootgebracht, en zichzelf ontmande door een vloek. Uit zijn bloed kwam de naaldboom voort, en hij was een vroegere Jezus.’

Als in Turkije daadwerkelijk het paradijs heeft gelegen, dan ging daarachter nog steeds deze gruwelijkheid schuil : een dieper kruis, een genitale afsnijding, een sexuele apartheid. En dit had grote orale gevolgen. Het moederschap en de mannelijkheid werden ingeruild voor de oorlog, de jacht, de dood. Attis had zijn geliefde, Cybele, verlaten voor een sterveling, en werd door Cybele getroffen met de vloek van waanzin, vanwege de jaloezie. In de Joodse legendes duikt ook de naam van Lilith op als de eerste geliefde van Adam, maar zij werd al heel snel de hof uitgestuurd, omdat zij zich niet aan Adam wilde onderwerpen. En dit kruis was een enigma met vele gevolgen. Lilith zwoer dat zij de kinderen van Adam, de mensen, zou vernietigen. Zij kwam terug als de slang om Adam en Eva het gif aan te bieden. Ik ging op mijn buik liggen, en mijn vriendin ging op me liggen. Ik was niet getroffen door een vloek omdat ik een andere vriendin had nu, en mijn vorige vriendin had ook een andere vriend nu. Er was geen jaloezie. Er was vrijheid. Er waren geen rekken in onze monden meer.

Hoofdstuk 2.

‘Een vrouw zonder borsten heeft alleen gif te voeren,’ wordt er weleens gezegd, figuurlijk dan. Dat betekent dat een vrouw die geen verantwoordelijkheid draagt, geen moederlijke empathie, een gevaar is voor de samenleving. Dat was de slang in het paradijs, maar we zagen al dat er vele kanten aan het verhaal zaten, vele factoren speelden een rol, en het is niet echt eerlijk om alles zwart-wit neer te zetten met vurig religieus fundamentalisme. Er waren andere kanten. Wie hakte de borst van de vrouw af ? Waarom was ze zo woedend op de man, en wilde ze hem berechten ? Is er een kant van het verhaal die wij niet kennen ? Of heeft ze haar borst zelf afgehakt, als een amazone, om zo macht te kunnen voeren over de man ? En met welke redenen ? Voelt ze zich bedreigd door de man ? Of wil ze gewoon dwars haar zin doorvoeren.

Ik besluit met mijn vriendin terug te keren tot het slot. Ditmaal gaan we nog hoger. Op een hogere verdieping vinden we veel olie-lampen, veel Arabische spulletjes. De schilderijen zijn veel bloederiger hier, met veel naakte vrouwen die oorlog voeren. Ook zijn er veel jacht-tafereeltjes. We lopen naar de volgende verdieping, waar het enigma al snel toeslaat : afgehakte koppen van bizons staan op de schilderijen. Ook zijn er veel azteekse schilderijen, waar azteekse priesters de harten uit hun slachtoffers snijden en omhoog houden. Het is een dolle boel van besnijdingen en afsnijdingen, allemaal om apartheid te creeeren. Weer een verdieping hoger staat een enorm schilderij met de toren van Babel. De toren van Babel is een verhaal uit de bijbel waarin mensen een toren proberen te bouwen naar de hemel, en naam te maken, maar dan daalt God neer om hen te verwarren en te scheiden, zodat ze elkaar niet meer kunnen verstaan. Nog een verdieping hoger staat een standbeeld van een engel, waarachter een schilderij is met de boom des levens. De engel lijkt op een wachter, zelfs op de engel des doods. Ik houd mijn vriendin vast. We zijn beiden naakt, en staren verschrikt naar de engel en het schilderij. Naast ons is nog een klein trapje naar boven, naar een zoldertje. We horen een stem : ‘Wie wil het ei uitbroeden, wie eet het, en wie staart naar de dop ?’

‘Zei jij dat ?’ vraag ik aan mijn vriendin. ‘Nee,’ zegt ze. ‘Jij ?’ Ik schud mijn hoofd. Dan vliegt er een papegaai van het zoldertje naar beneden. ‘Opkrassen,’ schreeuwt hij. ‘Wie heeft jullie gezegd hier te komen. Het ei zal rotten.’ We lopen naar boven naar het zoldertje en zien overal rotte eieren liggen. Het stinkt hier ook verschrikkelijk naar rotte eieren. ‘Te laat,’ krijst de papegaai, ‘te laat. Jullie hadden eerder moeten komen om het geheim te zien. Nu is het weg, voor eeuwig. Dit is wat jullie krijgen voor jullie optreden : Rotte eieren.’ Tussen de eieren ligt een klein kruisje waaraan een staafje hangt dat lijkt op een mannelijk geslachtsdeel. ‘En nu oprotten,’ roept de papegaai. Het beest begint ons te pikken, en we rennen naar beneden. Het best blijft ons pikken totdat we uit het slot zijn. Snel rennen we door de tuin het water in, en zwemmen naar de overkant, maar nog steeds houdt het beest niet op met aanvallen. Dan komt de grootste zwaan ons te hulp. We houden er heel wat plekken aan over, en willen voorlopig niet meer naar het slot.

Blijkbaar is de vruchtbaarheid aan het lijden verbonden, onlosmakelijk, als twee tegengestelden, het naakte aan het bedekte. We moeten maar wachten totdat daarin vrede is gekomen. In de grondtekst van de bijbel is het paradijs Sheool, het dodenrijk, oftewel de tuin der doden. Ook de val was een werking van het paradijs, om het offer te doen rijpen. De ruwe diamant moest geslepen worden. Ze ligt op mijn rug en heeft haar armen onder mijn oksels door en houdt mijn schouders vast. Ze probeert me op te trekken, maar ik ben moe. Dan vallen we beiden in slaap.

Een oosterse tuin van geheimen, met religieuze valstrikken. Ik schrik wakker. Zij houdt me vast. Ik val weer in slaap. Voor een tweede keer schrik ik wakker. Zij houdt me weer stevig vast, en ik val weer in slaap. In wiens armen lig ik, of is dit weer een strik van de dood. Hoe dan ook, ik heb het nodig om door de dag te komen. Het is mij gegeven. Ze staan daar voor huizen als paardjes, paardjes van de apocalypse om de volle druiven te betreden, te vertrappen. De maan schijnt, de sterren vallen, een droomweb houdt mij vast. Houd mij vast, laat mij jouw trekpop zijn, in dit speelse paradijs is het beter te zijn, beter dan daarbuiten. Het paard van religie trapt hard, ongenadig, straft voor eeuwig, zet schaakmat, en trapt dan de druiven van het genot in, één voor één, en soms meerderen tegelijk. Een hard besluit, van een jaloerse God, een erfenis, van lang geleden, een raadsel dat brult, smeekt, dwingt. Kijk naar de vrucht, niet naar de dop, eet niet, want het is slechts vergif, maar zoek naar haar geheimenis, broedt het uit, en ren wanneer je kan, zweef over de wateren, als een afstandelijke liefde, veilig en ver weg als de zon. Laat de hoop je niet ontnemen, laat je niet zeggen dat ver weg alleen maar koud is, want kijk naar de zon, die het verste weg is van ons allemaal, en schijnt en warmte geeft zoals niemand anders dat kan. De zon, de astronaut, op zoek naar geheimenissen, het grote broeden.

Ik maak een verkeerde beweging en er knapt iets in mijn rug. Toch nog een complicatie van de steekpartij. Ik vecht tegen de dood, en heb een bijna-dood-ervaring. Ik kom in het paradijs, waar naakte vrouwen zijn, overal. Zij houden een geheim vast, een ei, een groot ei, een doorgang, een weg. Het is een ei vol van bloed. Ik bekijk het ei vol belangstelling. En het bloed stolt, en brengt een lichaam voort met orale en genitale vrijheid. En er is een harmonie tussen die twee, en er is vrede. Na een paar dagen ben ik weer de oude. Er is iets veranderd in mij. Ik heb de dood ontmoet, en daardoor het leven. Ik sta aan beide kanten. Ik ben de brug tussen twee naturen.

Er stonden vele narcissen in onze tuin, vechtend tegen de koude dood. Zij gaven het leven warmte, de mensen een warme deken. Alles was bevroren, bevroren legers. Er werd gehandeld in mensen. De koude hand des doods greep hen, en wie kon daar tegen opvechten. Sommigen dachten harmonie in bloed te zien, anderen alleen maar twist. De raven kwamen over de stad. De stad was

snel opengebroken. Er was plaats voor het enigma nu, men staarde niet alleen maar naar de dop. Men at niet meer van het vergif. De broeders waren gekomen. In de heldere zon stonden zij daar, in de Arabische zon. De raven waren uit het oosten gekomen. Oosterse wachters waren nu in de stad, kloppende op de deuren. Zij brachten dat andere nieuws. Zij geloofden dat zij het hart waren binnengegaan, op de zwaan waren zij geklommen, en het bracht hen hier. Ook zij hadden hun verwachtingen, hun verlangens, hun logica. De Arabische zon was heet. Zij waren de paarden van de apocalypse, maar niemand heeft hen begrepen. Zachte hoeven hadden zij, manen overal, lange wimpers, dromerige ogen, bruin, dromend van zachte winters, sneeuwwitte daken, waarop het paarse zou neerdalen. De paarse hand zou hen allemaal wegnemen. Zij hadden hun schuilplaats in het oosten wanneer de winter zou vallen, en dan zou het pas echt hard en koud zijn. En de drop-verkopers zouden er rijk van worden, de banketbakkerijen vol, want iedereen wilde daar ineens slapen. Men zou vluchten tot het orale als de genitale klem zou worden gebroken. Nu lag zij nog vastgebonden op de grond, maar de wachters waren dichtbij haar. Ik hoorde een schreeuw. Zij stond op, en bedekte haar naakte lichaam met een nachtjapon. Zij ging de nacht in met een fakkel, zij was de moeder der raven. De paarse hand bracht haar op de punt van de kerktoren. Een sneeuwwitte dag zou het worden, nu Doornroosje was ontwaakt. Niet door een kus. Neen. Door een warme hand, een innige omhelzing.

Het was een paarse dag met lange manen, een koninklijk feest. Doornroosje was opgestaan. Zij stond tussen haar vader en moeder in, de oude koning en koningin. Zij bracht hen de smeltende chocola die voor eeuwen verborgen was gehouden. Iedereen zou wel met haar willen dansen, iedereen zou wel een veeg van haar chocola willen krijgen. Maar zij was selectief in haar genade, zeer selectief. Zij bedekte de edele vruchten met chocola, en schoof hen in de ogen. De bakker stond buiten op een kist en zong van haar. Zo lieten zij het feest ten einde gaan. Maar tot diep in de nacht werd er nagenoten. De bakker stond bij de notenboom met een bijl, en brak het open. Kisten vol mandarijnen stonden hier, kisten vol oude mandarijnse koningen, met een mandarijns accent. Een zetel gaf zij aan de oude man die zij door het licht had geleid. De baard van de oude tovenaar die vastzat in de boomspleet was losgesneden door het zwaard van haar ogen. Haar ogen spoten vuur, en lieten de koralen zien. Dit allemaal in flitsen, niet teveel, want teveel van dit goede zou de draken opwekken. Zij wilden Doornroosje voor eeuwig laten slapen, en niet slechts voor honderd jaar.

Ik keek met haar over de rivier van gisteren, naar de dampen ervan en de spoken, en wij wilden er niet wezen. Wij waren gevangen door het morgenland, waar de prinsessen en prinsen van gisteren niet meer regeerden. Wij konden het, ja, wij konden het wat we jaren niet gekund hadden. In het midden van de stad was zij verlicht. Wij werden door haar gevuld als roomsoezen. Van taai vlees waren haar vullingen, niet om te eten, maar om te broeden. De kok van de slacht werd terechtgesteld, en dit allemaal na een reeks lovende woorden. Morgen zou de maaltijd zijn, niet vandaag. Nooit meer zouden wij van onrijpe druiven eten waardoor de tanden van onze kinderen slee waren geworden. En deze komende maaltijd was een maaltijd voor vogels, raven, want zij waren bestemd voor dat uur om het eerste aan tafel te gaan en te eten. Het oog van de stad wilde haar verlichten, want de stad had haar nodig, en wilde haar nooit meer uit het gezicht verliezen, maar op die dag vertrokken de zwanen naar het oosten. De raven hadden de stad nu, en zij werden ingenomen, zoals zij eens innamen. Het pasen met zijn versierselen van drop was nog steeds een ingrijpende gebeurtenis. Ik keek haar aan, zij keek naar mij. Ik had mijn oude jeugdliefde teruggevonden. Zij had kleine borsten, niet gevuld, zij was teder, intens, voorzichtig, zacht. Nooit zou er meer een zondvloed komen na die dag. Haar regenboog was een teken daarvan aan haar hemel. Ik schraapte de damp er vanaf. Een standbeeld werd van haar opgericht in de stad. Wij zouden haar nooit vergeten.

Na die week speelden de kinderen spookje in de stad, en werden de oude hobbelpaarden uit de schuur gehaald. Zij speelde, ik droomde. Het was de slag der herinneringen, rijkelijk belegde het mijn brood. Ik liet de raven er van eten. Ik at de worst van het verleden door de berg naar de andere kant, en daar werd het varken van de toekomst geslacht. Tijd was niet meer. De bezetters hadden de stad en het land ingenomen, weer vanuit het oosten, door de Arabische zon. En ik kon alleen maar glimlachen. Ik vond het wel grappig, al die vogels. Wij voerden de vogels aan het zwanenmeer, maar de zwanen zijn hier nooit meer teruggekomen. Zij hadden het geheim ergens anders gebracht. Ook voerden wij de paarden die dag, de paarden van deze apocalypse. Beschuit was haar lievelingsvoer, en rozen haar lievelingsbloemen. Een paard zwom door de grachten. Ik keek erna, en mijn rug maakte mij los van de aarde. Ik zweefde er boven, als een grote broer, als de lange neef. Ik verzorgde de aarde als mijn broertje.

Het regende buiten. Ik zat met mijn jeugdliefde op de bank. Aan al het oude was een einde gekomen, nu ik het oudere had gevonden. Het was als een harem in mijn gedachten, een doornenkroon, een rozenkrans, de cirkelzaag boven Bagdad, de ster van Betlehem. Een zoete ster was het, van genadeloos geduld. Haar licht was verblindend, en toen konden we ineens weer voelen, elkaar voelen. Voelen datgene wat zo lang was weggeweest. Zij liep zo langzaam in haar lange nachtjapon, een oosterse avondjurk, leren schoentjes met riempjes, met allerlei gaten, gelakt, en haar sokjes waren kinderlijk als de bloesem. En nog steeds dacht ik aan de zwanen. Waar zouden ze zijn ? Verblindend was haar licht, des te zoeter haar aanrakingen, haar verschijning. Teer licht, weeskind, wolf, onbegrepen. Ongezadeld in de nacht. Ik borstel haar, er is rust. Zij neemt haar pijl en boog, en gaat de stad in. In de stad staan beelden van zwanen, als een herinnering aan die dag. De zwanen zijn van steen, niet van vlees. De stad is verlaten van zwanen. De oorlog is dood. Elke knie zal zich buigen, elke tong zal belijden, en niemand weet wat. Een onverbiddelijk zwaard heeft de oorlog lamgelegd. Het vrederijk is aangebroken. De paarden van de apocalypse gaan streng door de stad heen, en dan komt de zon op, de Arabische zon. Het jachtboek is nu geopend. Men bekijkt de plaatjes, en begrijpt niet waarom. Men wil terug naar de oude dagen, maar het kan niet meer. Ik borstel haar haren, er is rust. Ze is in de stad met haar boog, als vrouwe Justitia. De rechtszaak begint. Zij was een vrouw van geconcentreerde kracht en zwakheid. De jacht-engel. Zij roepen vrede vrede, terwijl er geen vrede is. Na de duizend jaren zal er een nieuw tijdperk van vrede aanbreken. Ik borstel haar haren nog steeds. Ze zegt niks. Ik zak weg, en ze gaat op mijn rug liggen. Als een kat heeft ze haar prooi. De vlekken van de luipaard spreken van oude wonden. Dan breekt ze mijn rug, en ik ben niet meer van de aarde. Haar bereiken kan ik niet, alleen door stralen. Ik moet haar overgeven, ik moet haar loslaten, de afstand zal nu rechter zijn. Ik voel mij als een Arabische zon, die het ijzer laat stinken, die het leer zacht maakt.

Zij zal het grote ei uitbroeden, zonder dat het haar zal doden. Van het vergif zal zij niet eten. Eens sprong zij in het wespennest, en werd een luipaard. Nu komt zij niet dichtbij, maar broedt van ver weg. De dokters zeggen dat mijn rug nu goed is, maar ik heb pijn. Zij zeggen dat dat er niet is. Zij staren alleen naar de dop. In een vuur dat eeuwig brandt wonen zij. Van een afstand ontkennen zij de problemen, een naaldboom groeit uit mijn wond. Grootgebracht door wilde schapen ben ik. We zijn omsingeld en schaakmat gezet door levensgevaarlijke zotten. De idioten van de planeet Idiotia zijn gekomen. Waren de dokters maar dronken en aardig. Wat is er van ons Utopia overgebleven ? De nieuwe bezetters ruiken als het oude, de mondenrekken zijn weer terug. Ditmaal met veel prikkeldraad. IJzeren Jaap is uit zijn doos geklommen om de klokken terug te zetten. Waren de zwanen nog maar hier. Zij is een boogschutter, een teken aan de hemel, dat de oorlog nooit meer komen zal, maar we leven met de jacht. Een teken dat er nooit geen zondvloed meer zou komen, maar nu zijn we hier. De ijzeren maagd is onze straf. Zij broedt niet, zij steekt, zij is op jacht. Mijn rug is van ijzer, een bouwwerk van amalgaam, van kwik, van Mercurius, om de rest van mijn lichaam te verzieken. De dokters zien niets op hun foto's. Zij staren alleen naar de dop. Wij wachten allen op Bert Ootjes, die nu inmiddels een martelaar is. Maar de zwanen hebben hem

bezocht. Mijn buik is gemaakt van witte en rode vulling, een eeuwig gif. Zelfs al is de wortel eruit, het symptoom zal altijd blijven. Een leuk syndroom waar geestelijk verzorgers aan kunnen blijven sleutelen. Ouders blijven met hun kinderen naar zulke dokters gaan, want als het kind geestelijk ziek wordt verklaard door de beroepsbeul, dan treft de ouders zelf geen schuld, want geestelijk ziek zijn dat ben je vanaf de geboorte, en zo hebben de ouders die hun kind verrot hebben geslagen een alibi. Zo is de zogeheten tandarts met zijn stiekeme, niet navolgbare, zogeheten vullinkjes die het kind beladen met complexe vergiftigingen en de syndrooms-stempeltjes van de geestelijk verzorgers, de zogeheten psychiaters en hun handlangers, een professionele ouders-bescherming geworden. En hoe kan een kind tegen zo’n doortrapt systeem opboksen ? Een kind heeft geen diploma’s, geen zegeltjes, maar mag deze zegeltjes wel verbreken, door de paardjes van de apocalypse. Maar waar zijn de zwaantjes wanneer je ze nodig hebt ? En waar is Bert Ootjes ?

Rebelse kinderen worden al snel ziek verklaard, niet de maatschappij, nee, want de maatschappij is heiliger, in ieder geval heiliger dan degene die aan de bel trekt. De paardjes staan nog steeds in deze carrousel. En de mierzoete snoepjes van oma moeten de kinderen klaarmaken om een reis door de fuik van de zogeheten tandarts te maken. De zogeheten tandarts gebruikt hiervoor goedgepraat geweld. De Arabische tandarts was nu gekomen, en die was nog wel orthodoxer. Bij de balie werd snoep uitgedeeld wanneer een kind zich keurig en netjes had gedragen. Het hormoon van Bert Ootjes was inmiddels uitgewerkt. Ook de botten begonnen gaatjes te vertonen, en ook die moesten gevuld worden, en daar had de Arabische tandarts een heel arsenaal voor, en die duldde echt geen tegenspraak. Arabisch amalgaam werd daarvoor gebruikt, waarvan de ingredienten strict geheim werden gehouden. Alleen de ingewijden mochten de ambacht uitvoeren, en beunhazen werden streng gestrafd. Die werden openlijk op de pleinen aan de schandpaal gezet. Nee, de Arabische tandarts, daar viel niet mee te sollen. Malafide tandartsen werden als kwakzalvers bestempeld, afgezet, en gingen sindsdien vaak zonder een ledemaat of ontmand door het leven. Azteekse praktijken kwamen niet zelden voor. De Arabische tandarts meende het. De bottenvuller, zo werd de Arabische tandarts vaak genoemd. ‘Ik moet vandaag weer naar de bottenvuller,’ klaagde een oud mensje. ‘Ja, ik ook,’sprak een bijna tandenloos oud mannetje, en een ander moest de dag erna. Controles waren wekelijks, en sommigen moesten twee keer per week. Elke knie boog, elke tong beleed, en elke trotse nek brak voor de Arabische tandarts. Als er problemen waren met het Arabisch amalgaam, dan werd dat altijd op iets anders geschoven, en dan voelde de Arabische tandarts zich diep beledigd, en kon erg kwaad worden, wat dan de meest verschrikkelijke consequenties had. Het was godslasterlijk om te twijfelen aan het Arabisch amalgaam. Zulke godslasteraars en aanstellers waren rijp voor de Arabische psychiater. De Arabische tandarts was wel heel goed voor dieren. Zo wreed als ze waren naar hun klagende patienten, zo genadig waren ze naar dieren.

Het lichaam van Bert Ootjes lag inmiddels op de bodem van het meer van Geneve, waar ze hem hadden gedumpt. Zijn botten werden later opgedoken en hij kreeg een eervolle begrafenis. De appel brandt, en kan niet meer gegeten worden. Er kan alleen nog maar gekeken worden als naar de uitbarsting van een vulkaan. De trekpop van het verleden is stuk, maar de Arabische tandarts kan het nog wel maken, want die handelt ook in speelgoed. Bert Ootjes zal zich zeker in zijn graf omdraaien. Speelgoed, om kinderen klaar te maken voor de tandarts. Nu kunnen ze nog spelen, maar straks ? Onze enige hoop is de marsmannetjes, maar die bestaan niet. De marsman marcheert onderdrukt in ons geconditioneerd verstand. De Arabische tandarts is de banketbakker, heeft een hotel-keten, is ambitieus. Hij is de grootste snoep-producent voor kinderen. Hij verdient wat bij, om ook een zwembad te hebben onder zijn kast van een huis. De Arabische tandarts is hier kind aan huis. Om Bert Ootjes wordt inmiddels flink gerouwd. Velen worden monddood verklaard. Ik begin een Arabische tandartsen-praktijk, zo’n beetje de enige manier om aan de Arabische tandarts te ontkomen.

Een nieuwe Arabische vogelsoort is er toegevoegd in het plantsoen, om het verlies van de zwanen op te vangen : de draai-konten. Prachtige vogels, daar niet van, maar ze kunnen zo vanuit het niets bezoekers aanvallen. Zo van : van te voren maar eerst bellen. Hele statige, deftige vogels met een strenge zwaar-orthodoxe etiquette. Zo ken ik er nog één. Het doet me een beetje denken aan die papegaai van het slot. Ik durf niet zomaar meer naar het zwanenmeer, het plantsoen. Deze vogels zijn geen grappen.

'IJs ?' vraagt ze.

- Ja, met slagroom, zeg ik

'Siroop erbij ?'

- Ja, die rode

'De Arabische tandarts zal daar blij mee zijn, die is lekker duur, en veroorzaakt veel gaten in je botten. Hij zal wel weer flink op je schelden bij de komende controle om zijn blijdschap om de winst goed te verbergen.'

- Nee, ik heb nu mijn eigen kwastjes. Ik kom niet meer bij die man. Ik ben nu zelf die man. Hij mag wel bij mij komen, dan zal ik hem een koekje van eigen deeg geven.

'Arabisch amalgaam ?'

- Ja, schat, die met die vogelstront.

'Schat, je weet toch dat je de doodstraf kan krijgen voor het verraden van de ingredienten.'

- Laat hen maar hierkomen met hun bekken vol mislukte plastische chirurgie en gedwongen eeuwige mode.

'Schat, je weet toch dat dat hun geloof is ? Ze weten niet beter, en dat moet je respecteren.'

- Ik heb daar allemaal geen respect voor. Heb jij respect voor een mes die in je rug wordt gestoken ?

'Toe nou, liefje, dat moet je zo niet zien.'

- Oh, en hoe moet ik het dan zien ?

‘Moet je kijken hoe je jezelf opstelt, en dat noemt zich een Arabische tandarts. Een beetje professioneler mag wel.’

- Oh, gaan we het nu ook over professionaliteit hebben, en vergeet vooral het woord deskundig niet te noemen. Ga godverredomme een ezel kopen.

‘Zeg, jeetje, nu ga je ook nog eens een beetje lopen vloeken hier.’

- En doe jij nu maar niet ineens alsof je heilig Aagje bent.

‘Oh, heerlijk zo’n ruzie met jou, maar je weet wie er boven in bed de touwtjes in handen heeft.’

- Je hebt gelijk, ’t spijt me, zal niet meer gebeuren.

‘Goed, Jan Klaassen, dan is dat in ieder geval duidelijk.’

- Ja, Katrijn.

‘Moet je nu nog ijs met slagroom en rode siroop ?’

- Nee, Katrijn, ik heb geen honger meer.

We starten een restaurant in het midden van de stad, zoals elke goede Arabische tandarts zou doen. Het voedsel is er zalig, en mensen komen hier echt om heerlijk te genieten. We hebben ons eigen plantsoentje met Arabische draaikont-vogels, door ons getemd. Een betere plek kan ik me niet wensen. Mijn wereld kan niet meer stuk, en de hare ook niet.

Het Kind Van Licht

Ik, 44 jaar, schrijver.

Ik houd van boeken, vooral van de wat mysterieuze boeken. Ik woon alleen in een kasteel. Om de dag door te komen drink ik veel thee. Als ik dat niet doe dan val ik in een diepe depressie die met het verleden te maken heeft. Arabische thee werkt het beste op mij. In de zomer trek ik er altijd met

mijn caravan op uit. Ik heb vroeger gejaagd, maar daar heb ik me inmiddels voor negentig procent van bekeerd. Ik jaag nu alleen nog maar bij noodzaak. Ik ben een prominent lid van de jagers-vereniging. Ik houd van sport, maar ik merk bij mezelf dat ik steeds meer de rust opzoek. Ik houd van de indiaanse cultuur. Zij zijn het meest mysterieus voor mij. Ik ben verder niet gelovig, maar maak wel gebruik van de rijke symboliek van religies, als achtergrond. Voor mij is het natte kunst, de koude dood, ik geloof afstandelijk, maar wat ik dan geloof weet ik eignelijk niet. Ik voel mijzelf als een agnost, die weleens gebruik maakt van de metaforen en archetypes om mij heen, waarin ik bij vlagen soms een echte passie heb, die mij overigens ook weer benauwd. Ik voel mij een gevangene van mezelf, van deze wereld. Ik schrijf om ergens de uitgang te kunnen vinden.

Ik houd van dunne boekjes, maar wat dikkere boekjes doen het ook wel goed bij mij. Sommige boeken zijn gewoon echt perfect van formaat en ik kan daar wel uren naar staren en over nadenken. Ik lees veel, maar ben ook veel bezig met mijn geheugen. Sommige boeken benauwen me, en die heb ik liever niet in huis. Ik ben op zoek naar de perfecte boeken. Zo bouw ik mijn stad, mijn land, en mijn huis.

Ik ken mijn kasteel niet, ik woon alleen in een klein gedeelte. In veel kamers ben ik nog nooit geweest. Het kasteel staat verder helemaal leeg. Ik kom uit een gereformeerd gezin, een nachtmerrie, daarom woon ik nu alleen. Niemand zal me ooit de les nog leren. Mijn vader was dominee, en mijn moeder was uit hetzelfde hout gesneden. Ik kon me nooit uiten daar, ik werd nooit serieus genomen. Alleen de dikke bril van mijn vader sprak de waarheid. Wij hadden niets in te brengen. 's Nachts is het alsof ik engelen hoor zingen. Vroeger leek het altijd alsof ik duivels hoorde zingen. Mijn vader noemde iedereen vroeger altijd 'duivel', en hemzelf beschouwde hij als een half-god. Ik kan daar nu om lachen, maar toen hij de baas was was dit zeer beangstigend, onheilspellend. Via een achterdeurtje in de kerk ben ik ontsnapt. Ik ben naar de kinder-bescherming gegaan en heb verteld wat voor gruwelijke praktijken ze er bij mij thuis op nahielden. Toen stopten ze me in een weeshuis. Mijn vader kreeg een lange gevangenis-straf, en mijn moeder werd in een inrichting geplaatst. Mijn vader is in de gevangenis overleden, en mijn moeder in die inrichting. Dat is natuurlijk een treurig einde, en ik heb daar best veel verdriet van gehad. In het weeshuis ben ik verder goed opgevangen. Ik woon nu op mijzelf.

Ik ben een verzamelaar van oud plastic speelgoed, klassieke uitgaves. Plastic is de toekomst, zeg ik altijd. Ik denk altijd : waren we maar wat meer van plastic, dan zouden een heleboel problemen opgelost zijn. We zijn van een te hoge graad vlees en bloed, en dat veroorzaakt de helse pijnen. Ikzelf weet goed wat pijn is, en het leek altijd wel een vereiste om verder te komen. Wat ik dan schrijf ? Antropologie en cultuur. Ik zou wel als ontdekkingsreiziger naar Zuid-Amerika willen gaan. Vooral het Amazone-gebied trekt mij aan. Er hangt veel kunstfruit in het kasteel, nog van de vorige bewoners.

28 Juni 1972

Ik heb nu een vriendin. We wandelen samen door het kasteel. Dan sleurt ze me mee de tuin in. Ze haalt me over om bij haar in te wonen. Ze heeft een klein huisje in de stad. Ik voel daar wel wat voor. Het kasteel is nu verleden tijd. Haar familie komt vaak op bezoek. Ze heeft een oom Jan en een oom Piet waar ze nogal erg op gesteld is. Sinds ik met haar ben ben ik de dingen anders gaan zien. Ze is veel buiten om de vogels te voeren. Vanaf hier kun je de kerk-klokken goed horen, maar ik vind dat niet erg. Ook heeft ze een voorliefde voor koken. Vooral met uien maakt ze veel bijzondere gerechten. Als ik aan de ui denk pel ik hem af in tranen. Zo zie ik mijn leven. Wortels

zijn ook haar favoriet. Wortels doen me denken aan konijnen. Verder houdt van allerlei puddings. Ze is veel bij de bloemen in haar tuin. Als ik aan bloemen, wortels en uien denk, dan zou ik er wel een trap van willen maken om met haar naar de zon te gaan. We houden van de zon. We zitten vaak buiten. Dan filosoferen we over allerlei dingen. Ze heeft boven veel schilderijen van indianen hangen. We zijn beiden erg ontzet over wat de blanken de indianen hebben aangedaan. Op zolder heeft ze een groot schilderij van de bizon-jacht. Ik vertel haar dat ik tegen jagen ben, maar dat het soms noodzakelijk is. Daarom ben ik lid van de jagers-vereniging. Indianen waren jagers voor voedsel, anders zouden ze gek van de honger worden, dus het was volkomen gerechtvaardigd. Ze waren ook nog eens met een jacht-instinct opgezadeld. De indianen zagen de dieren wel als heilig, dus vroegen ook om vergeving als ze op jacht waren geweest. Maar goed, dat kon natuurlijk per stam verschillen. Sommige indianen zagen het misschien ook als hun opdracht om te jagen voor de goden. Hoe dan ook, het hoe en waarom van de jacht interesseerde mij. Het was een prachtig schilderij, dat schilderij op de zolder. Het was net alsof de bizons op dat schilderij zeker niet voor niets stierven. Ze redden een indiaanse stam van de ondergang. Ook kwam er kannibalisme voor onder indianen. Dit had vaak te maken met religie, maar ook met oorlog, en soms gewoon echt honger. Sommige schilderijen die ze had waren echt luguber. Maar ik moest er gewoon meer vanaf weten. Het was een drang die ik niet kon tegenhouden. Mijn obsessie met indianen werd zo sterk dat mijn vriendin me op andere gedachten probeerde te krijgen, en mij probeerde af te leiden. Maar mijn drang was zo groot en aanstekelijk dat ze op een bepaald moment ook zelf voor de bijl ging. Wij moesten en zouden het geheim ontrafelen.

Mijn vriendin had ook een schilderij van engelen, en dat sprak mij aan, maar beangstigde mij ook. Een ander schilderij was met een engel die op de engel des doods leek, staande voor een poort. Het leek op een reusachtig groot zwart-grijs standbeeld. In de geschiedenis werden de indianen en hun goden door de christenen gedemoniseerd. Natuurlijk is bloedvergiet niet goed te praten, maar daar konden de christenen ook wat van. Ik staarde naar buiten, en kon de kerktoren boven de huizen zien uitsteken. Aan de ene kant trok het christendom mij aan, maar aan de andere kant stootte het mij af. Het was in mijn ogen de arrogantie ten top, verschrikkelijk nationalistisch en cultuurbarbaars. En dan die eeuwige hel, dat was me nogal een piek op de kerstboom. De macht van het christendom was groot, en zaaide angst en paniek. En mijn vraag was wat de God van de christenen met de indiaanse goden en de zielen van de gesneuvelde indianen heeft gedaan. Waar waren zij ? In mijn hoofd dansten de indianen een vurige dans, en als dat zo door zou gaan zou alles spoedig in vuur gaan. Ik kon mezelf er niet van losmaken. Het leek alsof zij brandden door het christelijk stempel. Het van hen geroofde land was nooit aan hen teruggegeven. De indianen hadden ingang tot de natuur, iets wat de blanken nauwelijks hadden, en dat maakte hen jaloers, omdat ingang tot de natuur ook de staf van vruchtbaarheid betekende. Het was alsof de draak een ei bewaakte en tegelijkertijd niet bij dat ei kon komen.

En wij leefden nog steeds dichtbij die draak in dat land, die jaloerse, kleptomanische, arrogante kracht die ons door het vele papier van de natuur af wilde houden. Maar goed, we wilden ook geen slapende draken wakker maken. Mijn vriendin leefde zich uit met het koken. Bij broodgerechten werd het bruine brood bewust gemengd met het witte brood. De blanken zouden deel kunnen hebben aan die natuur, door vermenging, niet door moord en roof. De blanke land-inpikker koos de brede snelweg van de vijandschap en niet de langzame, smalle weg van de vriendschap. Maar de blanke zag de indiaan al als goddeloos bij voorbaat, omdat de leefwijze van de indianen niet bijbels was. Grappig is het dat in de grondteksten van de bijbel alles wel weer indiaans is, maar de blanke leefde met een slappe vertaling daarvan. De spinnenwebben buiten laten me zien wat voor spel er aan de gang is. Of zijn de blanken ook een soort indianen met hun eigen jacht-instinct ? Daar lijkt het wel op, want onze voorouders hebben een verschrikkelijke jacht op de indianen gemaakt, en waren erg barbaars, echt niet minder dan de indianen, en vandaag laat de blanke nog steeds zien wie hij is door al zijn machts-systemen en verschrikkelijke bureaucracy. Daar moet je maar tegen

kunnen. De blanke heerser is als een witte spin met een web waar je ‘u’ tegen moet zeggen, en doet in oorlogsstrategie niet onder aan de indiaan. Wie is er nu een wilde ? Schuilt er in iedere blanke niet een indiaan ? Wat rassen-communisme zou de wereld geen kwaad doen.

Het liefdesbed boven de zee was leeg. Zowel de blanke als de indiaan waren vertrokken, naar hun eigen stukje natuur. Het bed was omringd met duizend deuren. Eén van deze deuren was de deur van verzoening, terwijl de anderen deuren waren van de dood. Ik was vastbesloten de juiste deur te kiezen. Ik had maar één kans. Ik ging op mijn gevoel af. Ik opende een deur en viel in een afgrond. Was dit de dood of de verzoening ? Ik zag grote doodshoofden van indiaanse opperhoofden. Ik zweefde boven de wateren, met haaien onder mij. Aan de andere kant van de afgrond kwam ik aan. Ik was trots op mezelf dat ik het had gered. Waar was ik nu ? Dood of levend ? Eén van de haaien had een grote staart die hij op me richtte. Hij was me gevolgd. Hij stond op het punt om mij met die grote staart te slaan. In mijn binnenste hoorde ik een stem die zei : ‘Omhels de staart.’ Toen ik dat deed ontplofte de staart en kleine doodskoppen kwamen voort. Een vrouw droeg een kruik, de laatste jacht.

De wereld met al haar boosaardigheden bleef ergens steken in een gat, zwevend in een licht. Alleen haar vrucht zou kunnen doorlopen, maar zij zelf zou vergaan in die kruik, in de laatste jacht. Ik staarde naar haar schilderij. Ze had het zelf geschilderd. Ze had een prachtige uitleg gegeven, zoals ik het niet zou kunnen doen. Ik had bewondering voor haar. Zij had een heerlijk boek geschreven. Andere boeken zouden mij steken. In onze gedachten waren wij nog steeds in het kasteel. Wij keken naar het binnenste van het kasteel, wat was als een exotische vrucht, waarvan je zou sterven als je het zou eten, maar wij stierven niet. Wij hadden het kind van licht gevonden. Wij keken naar de vrucht, aten ervan, en beseften dat dit het vlees en bloed was van de verzoening. Wij hadden de juiste deur gevonden. Een geluksgevoel maakte zich van mij meester, als van een geboorte. Dit kind van licht was ons kind. Nu zouden wij nooit een kind opbrengen in de materiele wereld, dat zou wreed zijn. We lieten het kind in de lucht zijn.

In het kasteel, in de kern, was alles anders, waar de pit was, het lichaam van de verzoening. Dit bed was in ons huis nu, in de huiskamer, waar iedereen het kon zien. Ook vanuit de keuken kon het bed gezien worden, en vanuit de tuin. Hier draaide het huis om nu, en buiten sneeuwde het, om alles, maar dan ook alles, met een sluier te bedekken. In onze gedachten was er een gele zwemvogel in het riviertje van het kasteel. Wij wisten niet waar het diertje vandaan kwam. Wij hadden het daar nog nooit eerder gezien. Het was onze trots, een trots om de nieuwe geboorte. Op hetzelfde moment was er een sterfgeval, de oude wereld, en het feit dat we niet meer in het kasteel waren. Maar het was goed zo.

In het bos rondom het kasteel waren zoete vruchten, exotischer dan degenen in het kasteel. In het bos was het goed. Dat was gewoon zo. Nog wel beter dan in het kasteel. En hier waren wij. Hier leefden wij. Van de modder van het dagelijks leven. Het diertje kwam hier ook. En als wij op onze uitgestrekte deken zaten, dan gaven wij hem ook wat voedsel. De gele zwemvogel was onze vriend, een parel uit de andere wereld. Het was een krachtige vogel, die goed voor zichzelf kon zorgen, statig, deftig, onafhankelijk, een hele verschijning. Wij konden hem niet de baas. Het was een koppige, eigenzinnige vogel, maar daar hadden ze om gevraagd. Hij wist precies zijn zin te krijgen. We deelden met hem de oogst.

Hij was een profeet, een prachtig joch, een apocalypse. Hij sprak snel, soms verwarrend. Hij sloeg deuren open. Wij volgden hem, terug naar het kasteel. Hij liet ons boeken zien die nog nooit waren

gelezen, en boeken die nog nooit waren geschreven. Hij liet ons gangen zien die we niet kenden, en een wereld waar wij geen deel aan hadden. Een globe van vuur, in het midden van het kasteel. Daar legde hij zijn kleed af en gaf ons precies wat wij wilden. Hij was gekomen om verlangens te vervullen, wensen. Hij was gekomen om dromen uit te laten komen. En daarna ging hij rond met de hoed. Hij was een handelaar, een makelaar in dromen.

Mexicaans

IJs

Hoofdstuk 1.

Ik liep op straat, en dacht aan het mengsel in de lucht, als aan een trap die tot een wolkenkasteel zou leiden, of een andere planeet. Ik had daar vaak over nagedacht en gefilosofeerd. Wie zou daar wonen ? In de nacht trok ik de stoute schoenen aan, en fietste naar de hemel. Ik had een lange regenjas aan.

Een koude oorlog heerste in de hemel, zo koud. Alles hier was gemaakt van het mengsel, prachtige zuilen, zeer hoog, een kolossaal gezicht. Zure gezichten bewaakten deze hemel, professionele gezichten zonder zorg, maar met een doodslust, ongenadig, zonder hart. En ik dacht : als het dan hier al zo koud is, hoe koud zou dan het opperwezen wel niet zijn, God. Ik zag God in de kleine dingen, de liefde tussen mensen, maar niet hoog op een ijselijke troon, geen gezagswezen die brulde om aandacht, en het dan niet gaf. Wie had deze God gecreeerd, deze machine van de hel. Wie had deze God in het leven geroepen ? Ik liep op straat, en keek door een winkelraam, waar ik protserige chocolade figuren zag liggen. De winkelier was in gesprek met een mevrouw. Zijn gezicht stond vuurrood. Niks geen liefde op zijn gezicht, alleen koele zakelijkheid. En de vrouw keek alsof ze haar liefde op het eerste gezicht had gevonden.

Ik liep door op de trap, tot het zolder, waar ik alle geraamtes nog beter kon bekijken. Een machteloos gevoel overstroomde mij, wat mij vertelde dat er meer aan de hand was. Een pauwenkoningin vond ik op een verdieping boven het zolder. Zij was de leider van een stad. Zij sprak mij geruststellend toe. Zij droeg het raadsel van de schoonheid, het raadsel van de hoer. Ik kwam er meer en meer achter dat ik de toren van Babel aan het beklimmen was. Ik was nog maar een jong kind. Ik had deze dromen zelf gecreeerd. Maar ik wilde er meer van weten. Het kon niet zo zijn dat ik de enige hier was. De pauwenkoningin nam mij mee naar haar kamer. ‘Wil je je voetjes vegen, schatje,’ zei ze. Ook wilde ze dat ik zou douchen. Het was liefde op het eerste gezicht. Ik was verliefd op haar. Maar natuurlijk had ik geen plaats in haar hart. Voor haar was ik maar een nummer. Ik was een jong kind, maar op hetzelfde moment een oude man. Zij was een zeemeeuw in de lucht. Boven de zee zweefde zij, de zee van mijn verlangens, maar ze liet me gaan. Ik was een nummer voor haar. Ik was maar een klein golfje in haar zee, gemaakt om te werken, om haar scheepjes te dragen. Toen ik haar bereikt had was ik oud, zeer oud, toen ze mij toegang gaf tot haar toren. We werden vrienden, en ik herinnerde het moment waarop ze mij voor het eerst zag. Ze had sprekende ogen, gecalculeerd, hardvochtig, maar tegelijkertijd zo zoet. Ik was bang voor haar, en

tegelijkertijd bewonderde ik haar. De zuilen van haar stad waren hoog. Zou zij God herbergen ? Ik was bang dat ik haar niet aan zou kunnen, bang dat zij over mij zou heersen, en dat gebeurde ook. Het mengsel was hier een dictator. Ik sloofde mezelf voor haar uit, om een hogere rang te krijgen in haar koninkrijk, en op hetzelfde moment vroeg ik mij af waar ik mee bezig was. Ze maakte mij tot kapitein.

Het mengsel was een mix van edele metalen en edele plastic-soorten, met de sterkte van dansers. Het was zowel buigbaar als onbuigbaar. Je kon het niet manipuleren. Zelden had ik een koppiger geheel gezien. Ik bleef maar gefixeerd op haar. Zij was de ster van het feestje, zij werd aanbeden. Haar stem was zacht en zoet, en tegelijkertijd gebiedend. Ze dwong aandacht en aanbidding. Zij die haar niet genoeg gaven werden geperst als fruit en vruchtjes, en wisten de keer erna wel beter. Zij was de mixer. Haar dans-muziek was meeslepend. Je kon je er nauwelijks tegen verzetten. En het raadsel van de schoonheid in haar was allesverwoestend en traumatiserend. In de nacht was zij een storm van angst. Ze was een vrouw van tegenpolen, ze had een duister gat. Haar legermachten vreesden haar. Ik kon mij niet verzetten tegen haar. Ik voelde me een slaaf. Er was iets in haar wat het einde van de wereld kon veroorzaken. Maar ook zij werd oud en grijs op haar oude dag, en ik trok voort. Als een trekvogel nam ik afscheid van haar. Haar woede liet veel van de toren invallen. Ik hield mij vast aan de dunne zuilen van het mengsel, en klom omhoog. Het mengsel redde mij uit haar grip. Ze was een panische verschijning vanaf toen.

Ik trok me op aan het mengsel, maar het begon te branden en te klonteren. Het droop van me af. Het proefde als een mix van chocola en caramel. Een spin greep mij, en ik verloor alles. Ik had geen identiteit meer, geen enkele zeggenschap. De wind deed met mij wat hij wilde. Ik was als geknakt riet. Ik was gekomen op de academie, waar jonge haantjes met hun veren pronkten, arrogante belhamels, die nog niet wisten dat ze niets wisten. Zij hadden van de grote appel van het ‘zelf’ gegeten. De ‘ik’ was hier de baas. Ook zij droegen het geheim van schoonheid. Zij waren ijdel, en bleven uren lang kammen voor de spiegel. Zij hielden hun schoonheidsverkiezingen van wie er het meest deskundig uitzag. Het mengsel werd hier aanbeden. Zij aanbaden het raadsel van de hoer. Het was een koopwaar, bezegeld met een diploma. Koningen kochten hun tronen voor hoge prijzen, en het raadsel van geld was moord. Ik had geen alibi, dus ze zagen mij als de moordenaar aan, en sloten mij op in een inrichting. Het was de koningin van de pauwen die mij daaruit bevrijdde. Dit land kende geen gevangenissen, alleen inrichtingen. En het mengsel was de militaire dienstplicht. De koningin van de pauwen maakte me tot officier nu. Ik was officier in het leger van het mengsel nu.

De hoer van Babylon zat hier, een prostituee, met een handel in koffie en cacao. Zij had haar mengsel geschapen van macht, want de toren moest verder gebouwd worden, tot in het hart van de hemel. Dit keer zou zij niet falen. Er stond teveel op het spel. Zij was de Izebel die de papieren profetie zou scheuren, als het voorhangsel van de schoonheid. Zij had haar potten en pannen opgestapeld, en beklom dezen. Zij was de prinses op de erwt. Haar matrassen waren opgestapeld tot aan het plafond. Vandaar kon ik het koele wezen zien, het wezen dat ons allemaal met strakke, misselijkmakende hand regeerde en afbeulde. Dit monster was genaamd het beest, slechts haar eigen spiegelbeeld. Ik dronk wat van mijn koffie, en zat tegenover haar, op de wiebelende matras. We voelden de erwt steken. Het stak als het ergste zwaard. Het was de wraak van de koffie-plantage, de opstand der slaven. Zij hadden hun eigen middel : de melange. Het was een mengsel van groenten, koffie, fruit en snoep. Het was een neger-opperhoofd die de toren van Babel claimde. Iemand anders had een middel genaamd : de mix. Al snel liep het uit op een oorlog, en het beest sprong toe, zodat ik er langs kom en naar boven rende. ‘Laten ze elkaar maar opvreten,’ dacht ik bij mezelf. Ik had lang genoeg zitten kaarten. Eindelijk waren er dan wat jokers in het spel. Maar de toren van Babel begon in te storten. Ik kon niet verder naar boven. Weer had de koningin der

pauwen genade met mij, en liet mij binnen in het wolkenkasteel. Ik was nu haar generaal. Maar koning was ik nog steeds niet. Ik liep er nog steeds zeer armoedig bij. Ze begon met pudding te gooien, en al snel waren we in een gevecht. Het mengsel was nog steeds meer dan overwinnaar. Ik verdiende het niet om zo te lijden, maar de oren waren doof hier. Een kat genaamd mengelmoes kwam dichterbij. 'Wat wil je hier beginnen ?' vroeg hij. 'Niemand zal naar je luisteren, want ze zijn allemaal in de ban van de mengelmoes.' Ik maakte een stap naar achteren omdat ik bang was dat deze 'mengelmoes' mij zou bespringen. Hij zag er woest uit en levensgevaarlijk. 'Ik zal je doof maken als de rest,' zei hij. 'Ik zal je voorhoofd harder maken dan hun voorhoofden, en je zult hen overwinnen.'

'Waar bestaat u uit ?' vroeg ik.

'Appelmoes,' zei hij, 'jam, kaas, en veel worst.' Hij probeerde mij kopjes te geven, maar ik hield me afzijdig. Hij zou me met één slag of bijt kunnen vermorzelen. 'Ken je het geheim van Babylon ?' vroeg hij. 'De moederstad van alle hoeren. Ik bewaak haar boom.' En hij probeerde mij te verleiden om van die boom te eten, wat mij tot een koning zou maken in de stad, maar ik weigerde, en zijn woede was groot. Hij kookte van woede, en begon te sissen als een slang. 'Zij die geweigerd hebben komen de stad nooit meer uit,' sprak hij toen kalm. Ik rende de stad binnen, en zocht naar een schuilplaats om me tegen deze kat te beschermen, maar niemand deed voor me open. Binnenin de stad was de gracht van chaos, waar ik toen insprong. Duisternis omhulde mij, maar alles beter dan deze kat. Ik zwom van gracht naar gracht, totdat ik bij een bakkerij aankwam. Het was de bakkerij des doods, waar zwart-grijze vrouwen werkten. 'Mengelmoes zal wel naar je op zoek zijn,' sprak één van de vrouwen. 'Hij houdt niet van zwervers zoals jij. Er is er maar één die je nog kan helpen, en dat is Hutspot.'

'Wie is dat ?' vroeg ik.

Ik ontsnapte via een achterdeurtje met een boekje in mijn hand. Ik was nu in een winkelstraat, op zoek naar Hutspot. Het boekje was een stratenboek, en al snel kwam ik waar ik wezen moest. Hutspot was een oude clown. Hutspot kende de toren van Babel als zijn broekszak en was ooit zelf ternauwernood aan mengelmoes ontsnapt. Hij vertelde mij hoe hij onstnapt was : 'Een glimlach bestaat uit een mengsel tussen monogamie en polygamie, maar de hoererij is een nog groter overspelig mengsel die de glimlach dooft. Daartoe was mengelmoes uitgezonden. Het grootste mengsel is echter het celibaat waarvan je werkelijk gaat lachen, ja, schaterlachen. Dat is het grootste medicijn.'

'Bent u van het katholieke priesterschap of iets soortgelijks,' vroeg ik.

'Nee, zoon,' zei hij. 'Er is een groter mysterie,' zei hij. 'De slang bewaakte in de hof de boom van de vermenging, waardoor er bastaarden voort zouden komen, half-bloed paarden. Adam en Eva waren volbloed-paarden van het koninkrijk, de onaangetaste bloedlijn, ongemengd. Zij leefden in de oorspronkelijke hof van Babylon, het paradijs, waar zij de voorbestemde bruid en bruidegom van Babylon waren. Eet van de hutspot.' En toen zette hij mij een bordje voor. De kat klopte al op de deur, dus ik moest snel eten. Bij de eerste hap die ik naar binnen slikte hoorde ik de kat al krijsen. Bij de tweede hap was alles doodstil. Hutspot had een restaurant, en vertelde mij dat de bruid van Babylon in de kelder leefde. Ik wilde haar graag ontmoeten. Zij was als getooid voor haar man, versierd met kostbare edelstenen. Zij droeg het serum in een glazen bol. Zij was maagd, de prinses

van de pauwen. ‘Je weet dat het mengsel aids is, hè ?’ vroeg ze. Ik knikte. ‘En je weet wat de enige oplossing daartegen is, hè ?’ vroeg ze. Ik knikte weer. Ze opende de glazen bol, en haalde er een rode condoom uit. ‘Hier,’ zei ze.

‘Nee,’ zei ik, ‘dat kan ik echt niet aannemen.’ Toen rende ik weg, hard de trap op, en toen nog hoger. Dit hier was niets anders dan een andere afdeling van het bordeel. Het mengsel regeerde hier. Ik greep een paraplu die ergens hing, en wist dat als ik ergens de kans kreeg, dan zou ik van deze toren afspringen. Maar alles was gesloten hier. Ik kon alleen naar boven rennen. Er was zo’n meerkeuze-dictatuur hier. Bovenaan de trap was het rijk van mevrouw Kluts, een heks. Zij stond daar in haar ketel te roeren. Toen ik er langs wilde, veranderde ze in een octopus. Tegelijkertijd veranderde alles wat hier was in een grote zee. ‘Klaar voor de zondvloed ?’ zei ze. Zij was een zeeheks. Zij was het mengsel der mengsels. Ook kon ze alles in steen laten veranderen. Het was bijna twaalf uur op de klok van de toren van Babel. Iedereen verzamelde zich onder de klok, alle bakkers met hun taarten, en toen kwam de snijder naar voren om de taarten te snijden. Het mengsel zou gescheiden worden. Alles ging in grote dozen. Mij wilden ze tot koning maken, maar ik wilde hier niet wezen. Ik verborg me in de klok. In de klok was een tunnel naar een andere toren, de toren van Noach, die zou namelijk hoog genoeg zijn om de hemel te bereiken, die zou nooit vallen, en die zou niet door de zondvloed getroffen worden. De godin der pauwen begroette mij daar, en nam mij naar binnen. Hier werd ik niet als een nummer behandeld. Maar er was iets wat niet klopte. Ik was terecht gekomen in een molen. Ik zou spoedig tot moes vermalen worden. Ik rende snel weer terug naar de toren van Babel, maar die was al aan het branden. Ik kon geen kant op. Plotseling pikte een vogel me op en zette me in de wolken. ‘Hier gaat de toren van Babel verder,’ zei de vogel. Ik klom van wolk tot wolk, en besefte dat de gehele aarde een toren van Babel was. Hoeveel torens zou het kasteel van Babel hebben, dacht ik. Ik stapte in een lift, waar ook de hoer van Babylon inzat, en de bruid van Babylon. ‘Zo, waar gaat de reis naartoe ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Naar de hemel,’ zeiden ze.

‘Oh, de hof van Babylon ?’ vroeg ik. Ze knikten. ‘Moes regeert daar,’ zeiden ze.

‘Oh, mengelmoes ?’ vroeg ik verschrikt.

‘Nee, zijn broer, die is wat makkelijker,’ zeiden ze.

‘Ik hoop het,’ zei ik.

Na een tijdje kwamen we aan in de hof van Babylon. Moes was inderdaad ook een kat, een prachtig beest. ‘De Kat van Babylon,’ zeiden ze. Moes was een aardig dier. Alles leek hier gemaakt te zijn van moes. De druiptuinen waren hier. ‘Koffie ?’ vroeg Moes. Ik knikte. ‘Met of zonder chocola ?’

‘Met,’ zei ik.

‘Goede keus,’ zei Moes. ‘De gifmengers van de hel nog tegen gekomen ?’ Ik knikte. Daar had ik genoeg van gezien.

‘De gedwongen vrucht, hè,’ zei hij. Ik knikte weer.

‘Nu, die gedwongen vrucht is hier niet,’ zei hij. Ik keek naar een omgekapte boom, maar wel vloeide er spul van naar beneden. ‘Ja, beneden komt heel wat aan,’ zei Moes.

‘Kun je die boom niet naar beneden donderen ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Nee, want dan komt niemand meer aan. Dan was jij hier ook nooit gekomen,’ zei Moes. Het raadsel van de schoonheid raasde in de lucht als een mengsel, haarzelf instandhoudende, bevestigende en ondersteunende. Zij had geen zelf-kritiek, zij was puur en alwetend. Zij protste hier en bracht anderen ten onder. En niemand kon haar vasthouden vanwege hun onreinheid. Zij was een giftige lijm in de lucht. Zij was de enige waarheid. Zij nam niemand serieus, kon zich totaal niet verplaatsen in de ander, en had daar ook geen behoefte aan, want alles draaide om haar, zij was de enige. Zij was de chemische stank in de lucht, de uitlaat van de cosmetische fabriek. Zij was van alles en iedereen verlaten, maar hield zichzelf in stand door zelfbevrediging. Ze was een meervoudige personaliteiten syndroom. Zij eiste blindelingse gehoorzaamheid. En dit noemden ze de hemel ? Moes zei dat we daarom beter in de hof van Babylon konden blijven. Er was daarboven niets te zoeken. Maar de bijtende lucht was overal. Moes bracht me naar een grot waar poppen waren. Hier was het veiliger, maar die poppen deugden ook niet echt. Ik voelde me opgesloten hier. Moes begreep me, en bracht me toen naar de grot van een draak. Het vuur van de draak en zijn rook was erg ontgiftigend. Het was de draak van Babylon, die de geheimen hier bewaarde. Ik had het gevoel dat ik weer een beetje kon ademen. De draak verwarmt de toren. De draak heeft dit alles gebouwd. Wij kunnen alleen opstijgen als een phoenix vanuit het as. Dit is de draken-cocon, de cocon van vuur en ijs. Wij zijn vlinders van de dood, die vervolgens worden gedroogd en ingelijst. Wij zijn hier op het mijnenveld, elke stap kan de laatste zijn. Maar uit de cocon zullen wij nooit vallen. De martelaar schreeuwt en niemand verstaat. De draak grijpt om zich heen, en sleurt iedereen mee in zijn val.

Hoofdstuk 2.

De tere vlinder vliegt, raakt vast in webben, valt, en verandert in een moordenaar. Vals beschuldigd, bespot, bedreigd, gedwongen en gehaat, moest zij van het mengsel drinken, van Babylon’s thee, en haar gevoelens verdringen. Tot het dodenrijk daalde zij, in het diepste van de hel vond zij haar pijl. Zij is een moordenaar nu, een deel van de draak zelf. Zij moest drinken van de thee, zij moest eten van het verleden. Zij moest drinken van andere werelden die zij niet kende. Zij was naar de toren van Babel verbannen. De molenaar van het kruis moest zij ontmoeten, en de moordenaar die daaraan hing. Zij verloor alles in de strijd. Door het mengsel werd alles van haar afgesneden. De stem van Babel was zacht en verwarrend. Alleen de ochtend kon verheldering geven. En dan kwam de nacht weer, en dat ging maar door, totdat we zelf een deel van het mengsel waren geworden. De bakker van Babylon mengt ons. Hij maakt van ons dat wat we niet wilden zijn. Hij trekt ons uit elkaar en voegt dingen in, zoals hij dat wil. Ik zat weer in de lift, ditmaal naar beneden, tot diep onder de grond waar de slager van Babylon leefde.

De volgende dag liep ik in de winkelstraat en probeerde dit alles te vergeten. Maar diep van binnen wist ik dat ik nog steeds in deze toren opgesloten zat. Toen ik thuis was staarde ik uit het raam, en ging vroeg naar bed. In mijn bed lag ik te woelen, en probeerde alles van me af te schudden. Ik

voelde me ziek. Ik kon wel janken. In mijn boekenkast was een boek van de Babylonische geschiedenis, naast een boek van Mexicaanse ijs-gerechten. Ik trok beide boeken eruit, en las in het eerste boek over Tammuz die het symbool was van de overwinning over relatie-problemen in het huwelijk. Hij was getrouwd met Ishtar, die het pasen uitbeeldde als Easter. Zij was een hemels ei dat ooit uit de hemel viel in de rivier de Eufraat. In de Sumerische voor-cultuur stond zij bekend als Inana die haar zuster Ereshkegal in de onderwereld wilde bezoeken en door zeven poorten moest gaan waarbij ze telkens een kledingstuk of sieraad moest afleggen. Zij beeldde de heilige striptease uit, het pellen van het heilige ei. Ishtar-Inanna was ook de moeder van Tammuz die hem later uit de doden opwekte door haar tranen. Hij had ontdekt dat het huwelijk hem tot het graf had geleid, maar kwam er ook achter dat het hem weer opwekte. Dit is de kracht van het Pasen, Easter. Hij was een voor-christelijke Babylonische Christus. Hij werd verscheurd door een psychiater, en werd toen meervoudige personaliteiten syndroom genoemd. Omdat zijn vrouw nog steeds een relatie met hem had werd zij vanaf dat moment een hoer genoemd, en was toen rijp voor de prostitutie. Ik voelde me machteloos en hulpeloos. Ik greep naar het tweede boek dat ik had gepakt, met de Mexicaanse ijs-recepten. Ik bestelde veel ijs en ging direct aan de slag. Er was zoveel ijs dat ik het in drie ijskasten in de kelder moest stoppen. Ik nodigde een vriendin uit. Ze vond het heerlijk. Ze vertelde mij veel over Mexico. Ik vertelde haar veel over de toren van Babel. ‘Weet je dat er ook zo’n toren in Mexico staat ?’ vroeg ze. Ze haalde een boek uit haar tas en liet het me zien. ‘Het is een ondergrondse toren, naar het middelpunt van de aarde.’

‘En wat is daar te zien, in het middelpunt van de aarde ?’ vroeg ik. Ze haalde nog een boek uit haar tas. Ik schrok. Het waren de meest verschrikkelijke slangen en draken. ‘Dit kun je daar vinden,’ zei ze. Toen ik het boek begon door te bladeren vond ik het prachtig. ‘Daar in Mexico aanbidden ze de dualiteit. Dat betekent dat ze alles aannemen wat je zegt, maar daar maken ze wel hun eigen mengsel van,’ zei ze.

‘Je bedoelt de paradox ?’ vroeg ik. Ze knikte. ‘Ze aanbidden de rokende spiegel,’ zei ze. ‘De spiegel is de enige weg uit de toren van Babylon,’ zei ze. ‘Ik ben gekomen om je te redden.’

‘Nou, dank je wel,’ zei ik. ‘Dank je wel.’ Ze leidde mij naar de spiegel, en door de spiegel kwamen we samen in de ondergrondse toren van Mexico terecht. We gingen het eerste het beste ijs-restaurantje binnen. Het leven was hier goed, veel beter dan in de toren van Babel. Mijn redder zat naast me. Wel begon het steeds kouder te worden. Ik staarde naar een vlechtwerk aan de muur. ‘Je hebt de dubbele draad nodig,’ zei ze. ‘De twee kunnen niet zonder elkaar.’ Ik nam haar in mijn armen en besefte dat ik niet zonder het mengsel kon. Na het eten gingen we naar een hotel. We zochten een spiegel op, en gingen weer terug naar de toren van Babel. ‘De toren van Babel, en het Mexicaanse ijs,’ zei ik. ‘Laten we het daarop houden. Hier woon ik, dit is mijn thuis.’ Ze knikte. Ze stond volledig achter me. Er liepen wachters op de muren van Babel, om het geheim te bewaken. ‘Hier woont de hoer van Babylon,’ zeiden ze telkens. Er kwam een klein hondje op me afrennen. Ik nam het beestje in mijn armen. Ik wilde het geheim weten. We stapten in de lift, en gingen nog verder naar beneden. We kwamen aan in de hof. Het leek alsof we een cirkeltje hadden gemaakt. Maar dit keer stond de omgekapte boom rechtop, en er was een slang in de boom, genaamd Ea. Deze slang was een orakel. Je moest niets van wat hij zei letterlijk nemen. Hij was de god van de afgrond, die door de Sumeriers ook wel Enki werd genoemd. Hij was ook de god van het water en van de wijsheid. Hier hing het mexicaanse ijs in de boom. ‘Als god zul je zijn, als je van het mexicaanse ijs zal eten,’ zei de slang. ‘En je ogen zullen opengaan. Het zal je hart verlichten.’

‘Ik heb er al van gegeten,’ zei ik.

‘Dan zullen de Spanjaarden je snel vinden,’ zei de slang.

‘De Spaanse inquisitie ?’ vroeg ik. De slang knikte. ‘Maar daar weet ik wel wat op,’ zei de slang. ‘Bouw een schip, want ik zal de zondvloed brengen.’

‘Kan ik niet gewoon de lift weer in ?’ vroeg ik. Het was een schip der zotten waarin ik was beland, maar ook wist ik dat hier ergens het geheim moest zijn. Ik ging zitten op een bankje, en wist niet of ik de raadselachtige slang met z’n allegorieen serieus moest nemen. Weer nam ik wat van het mexicaanse ijs. Het was gewoon lekker, en verder kon het me niet zoveel schelen. Hij was een zoetwater slang, en een slang van het genezend water, dus zo erg zou zo’n zondvloed nog niet eens zijn. In de bijbel was er ergens een tekst over de poel van vuur en zwavel van eeuwige pijniging, wat in de grondtekst een poel van genezing blijkt te zijn. Alles was hier zo dubbel, en alles kon omgedraaid worden. Het orakel lachte naar me. Hij scheen zichzelf ook niet al te serieus te nemen. ‘Ik ben het geheim van de vruchtbaarheid,’ grapte hij, ‘het geheim van alle creatie.’

‘Het zal wel,’ zei ik. Maar mijn mond begon steeds meer te branden. Wat had ik toch gegeten. ‘Ik zei het je toch,’ zei de slang, ‘maar je wilde niet luisteren.’

‘Zeker zwaar gekruid,’ zei ik. Ik gooide de deur achter mij dicht, en ging weer naar mijn kamer. Ik legde de twee boeken weer terug in de boekenkast, samen met de twee boeken die ik van die vriendin had gekregen. Ik ging weer slapen. In de nacht werd ik weer wakker van de pijn. ‘Je bent gekust door het vuur,’ zei een stem. Ik probeerde weer te slapen, maar het lukte niet. ‘Eet wat meer van het mexicaanse ijs, toe,’ zei de stem. Ik strompelde naar de keuken, en begon te eten, zoals ik nog nooit had gegeten, maar het vuur werd steeds erger. Ik hoorde gelach. ‘Okay, wat moet ik nu doen,’ zei ik.

‘Snap je dan niet dat je in een dubbele wereld bent. Wil je meer ijs, dan krijg je meer vuur,’ zei de stem.

Ik moest al snel overgeven van het vele ijs wat ik had gegeten, en er ging nog wel meer uit : vreemd kruid, vreemde bessen, zelfs doorns. ‘Het mexicaans ijs is goed voor orale laxering,’ zei de stem. Het voelde alsof mijn darmen werden schoongespoeld, en ik spuugde alles uit. Ik ging weer slapen, en sliep als een roos.

Het Gedwongen Chocola

Een oud vrouwtje leefde helemaal alleen in het bos in een klein huisje. Ze staarde naar buiten. Ze kon de bomen goed zien. Daarna staarde ze naar haar gedroogde vlinders die ze als kind had gevangen. Voor haar gevoel miste ze nog een paar kostbaren. Ze had haar net nog dichtbij haar,

klaar om de ontbrekende exemplaren te vangen. Altijd was ze op zoek. Niets dan leugens zweefden in de lucht, haar beschuldigende. Ze wilde deze leugens vangen, opdrogen en inlijsten. Ze was vol van haat. Ze kon het gelach van de plagende spotters om haar heen niet meer aan. Elke dag weer probeerden ze haar neer te halen, al vanaf het moment dat ze wakker werd. Ze leken op kinderlijke kleine elfjes, met brutale gezichtjes, als vlindertjes vrolijk dartelend om haar heen. Ze haatte kinderen op die manier, en ze droeg dan ook een duister geheim in haar binnenste. Soms sloeg ze met haar schepnet om zich heen, en riep : 'Is het nu afgelopen.' Maar de laatste jaren ving ze niks meer. Ze droeg een duister geheim van binnen. Ze wilde hier niet aan denken, en met niemand over praten. Ze was het vechten moe. Niemand zou haar begrijpen, en niemand zou sympathie voor haar hebben. Langzaam schonk ze wat thee in voor haarzelf. Buiten vlogen wat vogeltjes waar ze naar keek. Ze snapte niet waarom zo'n jonge geest als zij opgesloten moest zijn in zo'n oud lichaam. Zij zou oud worden in de armen van een ieder die haar aan zou raken, en daarom bleef ze ver van de mensen vandaan. Overdag werkte ze aan haar maaltijd voor de avond, en zorgde ze dat het huisje voldoende schoon bleef. Ook deed ze wat handwerk. Ze was ver weg in haar gedachten. Niemand kon haar bereiken. Ze was bitter geworden.

Ze wist niet dat er wat verder in het bos wonderbomen stonden. Ze kwam niet verder dan haar eigen tuin. De bomen werden bewaakt door dieren, zoals katten, slangen en konijnen, orakels. De bomen zouden haar naar boven leiden, maar ze zag hen niet. Ze zag alleen de kabalerige vliegende deugnietjes om haar heen fladderen. Maar op een dag was ze als door hypnose geslagen, en liep haar tuin uit door het tuinhekje. Ze wilde even het bos in, niet zo ver, maar even ergens anders zijn. Een konijn stond voor een boom, en wenkte haar. Ze kwam dichterbij en keek in de ogen van het konijn. Waarom komt u niet in deze boom wonen, zei het konijn. De top van de boom draagt een geweldig huis.

- Hoe kom ik daar, vroeg het oude vrouwtje.

Maar toen was het konijn weg. De vrouw wist niet of ze het konijn kon vertrouwen, liep door, en gleed in een onder het mos verborgen put. Ze viel gelukkig zacht, en op de bodem van de put stond een kat voor een deurtje. 'Heus,' zei de kat, 'er is een ander leven voor u. Welkom binnen in uw nieuwe huis.' En ineens was de kat verdwenen. De vrouw wist niet of ze de kat kon vertrouwen, maar ging toch naar binnen. 'Welkom in de boom,' zei een stem. 'De boom is alles wat er is.'

'Ik heb anders nooit in een boom geleefd,' zei de vrouw.

'Omdat je dat niet wist,' zei de stem. 'Je dacht alleen maar dat je wat wist.'

'Ik wil hier weg,' zei de vrouw. 'Ik moet weer naar huis.'

'Dit is je huis,' zei de stem. Ze keek recht in de ogen van een kat.

'Oh, jij weer,' zei ze tegen de kat.

'En jij weer,' zei de kat. De kat greep haar en wilde met haar dansen, maar de vrouw wilde niet. 'Ik wil eruit,' riep ze.

‘Waaruit ?’ vroeg de kat.

‘Uit deze hel,’ zei de vrouw.

‘Dit is alles wat er is,’ zei de kat.

‘Spreek geen onzin,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Ik was daarnet nog in mijn huis.’

‘Welk huis ?’ zei de kat. ‘Dat dacht je alleen maar. Je bent hier altijd al geweest.’

‘Leugenaar,’ riep de vrouw. ‘Ik haal de politie erbij.’

‘De politie ?’ zei de kat. ‘Wat is dat ? Dat zijn alleen je gedachten.’

De vrouw werd woest en probeerde de kat te slaan, maar die was ineens verdwenen. Alles was donker om haar heen. Ze liep een trapje op naar boven, waar een beetje licht was. Daar was de kat weer. Beiden stonden ze voor een lift. ‘Stap in de lift,’ zei de kat, ‘dan zul je van al je problemen af zijn.’ Als gehypnotiseerd stapte de vrouw in de lift, en de kat sloot de deur achter haar. Hoog in de boom kwam ze aan in haar nieuwe huisje. ‘Maar dat is fantastisch,’ zei ze. Ze zou de kat wel willen omhelzen, maar die was nergens te vinden. Het beviel haar goed in haar nieuwe huisje. Alles was prachtig wit. Al snel kwam er een konijn boven. Het bleek hetzelfde konijn te zijn. ‘En van hieruit zul je alle lieve kinderen van de wereld opnemen,’ zei het konijn. ‘Er zijn kamers genoeg.’

‘Oh, dat lijkt me heerlijk,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Dan kan ik eindelijk voor het eerst een tante zijn.’

‘Zorg voor ze, kook voor ze, ga leuke dingen met ze doen,’ zei het konijn. ‘Deze kinderen zijn erg ongelukkig. Maak ze gelukkig.’ De vrouw had er echt zin in, en voelde zich jonger dan ooit tevoren. Het huis was inderdaad erg groot. Ze zou pannekoeken bakken, sprookjes voorlezen, en veel spelletjes met hen doen. Ook zou ze hen de andere plaatsen van de boom laten zien. Snel was haar huis vol met lieve kinderen. Ze sprak tot de boom als tot haar geliefde. Op een dag was ze verschrikt en in de war omdat haar kinderen in vuur waren. Maar de kat stelde haar gerust : het was slechts boomvuur. Het was een koud vuur wat aan hen beitelde, om hen nog meer klaar te maken voor het leven in de boom. De gezichten van reuzen waren in de boom die tot hen spraken. Op een dag stierf de vrouw. Heintje, een van de kinderen, nam de leiding over. Op de kamer van de oude vrouw stond een oude lift waar ze ingingen. Boven het huis bleek de boom gewoon door te gaan, en al snel waren ze in de wolken. Via een hele hoge tak kwamen ze in een andere boom terecht. Ze werden direkt door een konijn gegrepen en naar binnen gesleurd. Hier moesten ze gedwongen van vruchtenpastei eten. Ja, zei het konijn, want dit is de boom van de gedwongen vrucht. De kinderen vonden het niet zo erg, want de vruchtenpastei was erg lekker. Maar al snel moesten ze nog meer eten, en veel kinderen begonnen misselijk te worden. Heintje begon het toen flink zat te worden, trok zijn pistool en schoot het konijn aan flarden. Het bleek verder een prachtige boom te zijn. Ieder kind kreeg hier zijn eigen verdieping. Midden in de nacht maakte een ander konijn hen allemaal wakker, en dwong hen om chocola te eten in de gezamenlijke huiskamer. Eerst vonden de kinderen

dat geweldig, maar toen ze later nog meer moesten eten werden sommigen al snel erg misselijk. Het konijn was verschrikkelijk aan het schelden. Heintje vroeg : 'Mag ik vragen wat hiervan de bedoeling is ?' Maar het konijn wilde er niks van zeggen. Ze hadden maar te gehoorzamen. Dat liet Heintje niet op zich zitten, greep zijn pistool en schoot op het konijn. Maar het konijn dook weg. Even later kwamen er nog meer konijnen binnen, en grepen Heintje. Heintje zou worden opgesloten achter tralies. De kinderen waren erg in paniek. Daantje werd hun nieuwe leider. 'Zoals jullie hebben gezien is er hier niet veel pluis,' zei Daantje. 'We kunnen beter teruggaan.' Maar toen ze bij de hoge tak terugkwamen zagen ze konijnse wachters staan. Toen zijn ze naar beneden gegaan, maar ook daar stonden konijnse wachters. De dagen erna werden ze weer gedwongen om chocola te eten, meer dan ze opkonden, en niemand kon er wat tegen doen. De kinderen werden doodziek. Weer riep Daantje iedereen bij elkaar en zei : 'Dan maar zo hoog mogelijk.' En ze gingen ditmaal gewoon zo hoog als ze konden. Ze hoopten dat ze weer een tak tegen zouden komen die hen naar een andere boom zou brengen, maar er gebeurde niks. Wel zagen ze ergens een deurtje waardoor ze naar binnen konden gaan. Het bleek een lift te zijn, maar die kon alleen maar omhoog. De kinderen gingen in de lift, en Daantje drukte op het hoogste knopje. 'Jullie zitten vast,' zei een stem van de lift. 'Niemand kan van de boom van de gedwongen vrucht ontsnappen.' Veel kinderen begonnen te huilen. Ook Daantje wist niet wat hij kon doen. Toen ze uit de lift stapten zagen ze een heks zitten, met een slang en een beer. De beer was een knuffelbeer. Toen ze wat beter keken zagen ze dat de heks en de slang een standbeeld waren. De knuffelbeer begon te lachen. 'Wat sta je te lachen,' zei Daantje.

'Jullie hebben vast moeten eten van de vruchtenpastei en de chocola, nietwaar ?' zei de knuffelbeer.

'Ja, hoezo ?' zei Daantje. Weer begon de knuffelbeer te lachen, ditmaal te schaterlachen.

'Wat sta jij daar nou te lachen, domme aap,' zei Daantje.

'Nou,' zei de knuffelbeer, 'ik vind het wel grappig.'

'Grappig,' zei Daantje, 'het is helemaal niet grappig. We zijn er doodziek van.' Weer moest de knuffelbeer daar erg om lachen.

'Zit je ons nu uit te lachen ?' vroeg Daantje.

'Kom, knuffel me,' zei de knuffelbeer ineens. Daantje stapte voorzichtig naar voren, en begon de knuffelbeer te knuffelen. 'Laat mij maar met jullie meegaan, dan zal jullie niks overkomen,' zei de knuffelbeer. Samen gingen ze terug en de knuffelbeer had gelijk. Nu hij mee was gekomen lieten de konijnen hen met rust. De knuffelbeer was heel aardig. Op een dag vroeg Daantje waarom de konijnen hen niet meer dwongen. 'Omdat ze bang voor me zijn,' zei de knuffelbeer.

'Kun jij Heintje dan niet bevrijden ?' vroeg Daantje.

'Nee,' zei de knuffelbeer, 'een konijnenslot valt niet zo maar open te krijgen.' De konijnse wachters stonden ook nog steeds bij de grote tak en beneden, en daar viel niet zomaar langs te komen. 'Ik zal je vertellen hoe je bij de knuffelboom kan komen,' zei de knuffelbeer. 'Midden in de nacht als

iedereen slaapt dan schuift het standbeeld van de heks en de slang even opzij waardoor er een tunnel ontstaat die tot de knuffelboom leidt.'

Daantje besluit er naar toe te gaan om meer kennis op te doen. Hij moet helemaal alleen gaan, want de knuffelbeer is van die boom verbannen. Voor de jongere kinderen zou het te gevaarlijk zijn. Alles lukt, en al gauw komt Daantje via de tunnel aan in de knuffelboom. Maar het is alles behalve een knuffelplaats. Militaire konijnen lopen hier rond. Daantje heeft nog nooit zoveel wapens bij elkaar gezien, en ze zien er heel gevaarlijk uit. Deze konijnen zien er veel erger uit dan de andere konijnen. Het zijn roofkonijnen, als ratten. En hun oren zijn ook een stuk korter. 'Neem van mij aan, deze konijnen zijn geen stumperds, nee, zeker niet. Geen ruzie mee krijgen,' zegt een konijn tegen hem. 'Wat kom je hier doen trouwens.' Maar Daantje loopt door. 'Wat hebben jullie met Heintje gedaan ?' roept hij. Even later komt hij bij een hok waarin een heleboel knuffelberen zijn, en waar ook Heintje zit. Heintje is flink boos. Heintje ziet er een stuk ouder uit, en vertelt hem dat ze gedwongen worden gevaarlijke medicijnen te slikken. Als dat zo door gaat heeft Heintje niet lang meer te leven. Daantje schrikt daar erg van. 'Daantje,' zegt Heintje, 'herinner je dat tante het eens heeft gehad over het huisje waar ze eerst woonde, vlak bij de boom, dat daar plagende elven woonden ? Misschien dat zij kunnen helpen. Wij kunnen niet van deze boom weg, maar als jij naar beneden loopt dan kon je door de voordeur eruit en naar ze op zoek gaan.'

Goed idee, zegt Daantje, en vertrekt meteen. Na een tijdje zoeken komt hij bij het huisje van het oude vrouwtje aan. In het huisje vindt hij de elfjes. Ze zijn erg droevig om wat ze het oude vrouwtje allemaal hebben aangedaan. Daantje vertelt hen het verhaal, en al snel gaan ze met hem mee naar de knuffelboom. Ditkeer gingen ze plagen en pesten zoals ze nog nooit eerder hadden gedaan, maar nu allemaal voor een goed doel. De konijnen waren snel allemaal van de boom vertrokken. Deze magische elven wisten heel goed hoe ze de kooi moesten openen, en al snel waren Heintje en de knuffelberen vrij.

Nachtkozijnen

Ze was als een roofdier. Ze leefde ergens hoog in een wolkenkrabber. Hier had zij haar eigen appartement. Mensen vonden haar vreemd. Ze leefde nogal geisoleerd, introvert. Ze had haar eigen manieren, haar eigen dingen, haar eigen verhalen, en daarom vonden veel mensen haar wereldvreemd, maar sommigen waren wel nieuwsgierig naar haar. Vaak liep ze rond in gewaden met een zonnebril op, alsof ze een beroemde popster was. Haar cowboylaarzen hadden indrukwekkende patronen, en men vroeg zich af hoe ze daar aan kwam. Ze was een beetje op de maan.

Tarro van Hamelen had nog bij haar in de klas gezeten. Hij was altijd een beetje verliefd op haar geweest, en nog steeds had hij dat rare gevoel in zijn buik wanneer hij aan haar dacht, maar ze zag hem niet staan. Eigenlijk zag ze niemand echt staan. Ze leefde op zichzelf, en had genoeg aan zichzelf. Toch had ze ook vrienden die een beetje waren zoals zij, maar die bleken verre familie te

zijn. Ze waren er wel en ze waren er niet. Niemand kon echt hoogte van haar krijgen.

Tarro probeerde soms een praatje met haar te hebben als hij haar tegen kwam. Maar dan liep ze snel door. Mensen waren nieuwsgierig, maar ze liet haast niets los. Ze was een roofdier.

Ze kon heel mooi zingen, en Tarro had altijd het idee dat ze stiekem albums maakte, en dat haar grote appartement hoog in de wolkenkrabber een eigen studio had. Ze was heel rijk. Misschien was ze de koningin van vermommingen, en had ze ook andere namen. Misschien was ze wel een groot schrijfster, of een groot sporter. Soms zei ze weleens : 'Ik moet naar de dans studio.' Tarro had het idee dat dat ook in haar appartement was, want dan liep ze altijd haastig weg. Ze deed alsof Tarro niet bestond, alsof ze geen tijd voor hem had. Tarro had vreemde dromen over haar 's nachts. Alsof ze op jacht was, als een grote tijgerin. Ook vaak was ze wat kleiner, als een puma of panter, of een andere soort wilde katachtige.

Ze was echt een beetje op de maan. Zo zag Tarro haar altijd. Alsof ze niet met beide benen op de grond stond, alsof ze in een andere wereld leefde, in een fantasie-wereld, die onbereikbaar was voor Tarro, maar waar hij zo graag deel aan wilde hebben. Hij kon er wel om janken. Hij miste haar zo verschrikkelijk. Vroeger sprak ze veel meer met hem, alhoewel hij het gevoel had dat hij er niet was. Hij wist dat het zo afgelopen kon zijn, want eigenlijk zag ze hem niet staan, en sprak ze alleen met hem omdat hij nu toevallig haar klasgenoot was. Veel probeerde hij om haar aandacht te trekken, maar tevergeefs. Soms deed ze leuke dingen met hem, maar dat was dan weer snel afgelopen. Hij kon het zich nog nauwelijks herinneren, en hij had het idee dat die leuke dingen maar op een hand te tellen waren. Maar hij had problemen met zijn geheugen. Soms had hij het idee dat ze veel meer samen hadden gedaan, maar dan gleed dat idee weer weg. Soms vroegen mensen weleens : 'Was dat niet dat meisje waar jij ooit verkering mee had ?' Maar dan schudde hij zijn hoofd. Hij had nooit verkering met haar gehad, maar zou dat graag gewild hebben. Maar toch was het alsof zijn geheugen faalde.

Hij had zich nooit goed in zijn hoofd gevoeld, altijd alsof hij ergens tussen zweefde. Liezelore leek in dat opzicht veel op hem, maar hij was veel socialer. Hij voelde zich ook een beetje op de maan, maar anders dan haar. Hij wilde haar wel helpen, maar zou ook graag door haar geholpen willen worden. Ze zouden veel aan elkaar kunnen hebben. Op een dag besloot hij de stoute schoenen aan te trekken, en belde aan bij haar appartement. Hij moest hiervoor hoog met de lift in de wolkenkrabber. Ze deed open met haar zonnebril en keek hem verbaasd aan, haar mond een beetje openvallende. 'Tarro ?' vroeg ze.

'Wat kom je hier eigenlijk doen ?' vroeg ze. Tarro begon te stotteren, en even leek het alsof hij flauw zou vallen. Ze greep hem en trok hem naar binnen. 'Wat leuk dat je gekomen bent,' zei ze.

Maar toen werd hij wakker. Het was alsof ze in zijn hoofd zong, en het was als een plaaggeest. Maar toen smolt het weg. Hij had geen kracht om uit zijn bed te komen. De hele dag lag hij in bed om aan haar te denken. Op een dag kreeg hij bericht dat ze naar Amerika was vertrokken. Geen spoor liet ze achter. Een nieuwe vrouw kwam in haar appartement wonen, die een beetje was zoals zij, en die familie bleek te zijn. Het was haar zus. Ook haar zus liep vaak rond in lange gewaden met een kap over haar haar en een zonnebril op. Vaak waren die gewaden paars, en ze had ook cowboy-laarzen, maar dan met andere patronen. Ze was veel meer dan de gewoonlijke vrouwen, en al snel zette ze het hart van Tarro in vuur en vlam. De vrouw had ook een vreemd accent, alsof ze uit Amerika kwam.

Ook deze vrouw was als een roofdier, en Tarro had 's nachts dromen over haar. Aanspreken durfde hij haar niet.

Jaren gingen voorbij, waarin Tarro haar langzaam vergeette. Tarro had zijn eigen leven, en deze vrouw stond te ver weg. Maar muziek op de radio bracht ineens alle herinneringen terug, todat Tarro er pijn van had in zijn buik. Hij besloot de muziek te kopen, en luisterde vaak naar de albums. Zo had hij het een beetje in huis, en stond het niet meer zo ver weg. Maar toch bleef de pijn. Tarro wilde contact met de vrouw, en misschien op die manier met Liezelore. Tarro trok de stoute schoenen aan, ging naar de wolkenkrabber, en toen de lift in. Dat was een hele rit. Hoog in de wolkenkrabber aangekomen belde Tarro bij de vrouw aan. Die deed direct open. Tarro begon het verhaal te vertellen dat hij haar zus kende, en dat hij afvroeg hoe het met haar ging. 'Oh Liezelore ?' vroeg de vrouw. 'Kom maar even binnen,' zei ze warm.

'Liezelore is een vreemd meisje,' zei de vrouw. 'Ze woont nu in mijn appartement in Amerika, en ik hier in haar appartement, maar ze blijft maar klagen dat ze terugwil.'

'Waarom wil ze terug ?' vroeg Tarro.

'Omdat ze jou mist,' zei de vrouw met een lach op haar gezicht.

'Je meent het,' zei Tarro ongelovig. 'Ze ontwijkt me als de pest.'

'Zo zit ze in elkaar,' zei de vrouw. 'Ze houdt van je, is dol op je, maar ze kan het niet uiten. Ze kan er niet mee omgaan. Daarom rent ze weg, maar ze heeft het altijd over je.'

'Hoe is ze zo geworden ?' vroeg Tarro.

'Ach, zie je,' zei de vrouw. 'Door haar vader verkracht. Gelukkig is hij dood.'

Tarro begon te snikken, en begreep nu ineens haar vreemde gedrag. 'Liezelore kan niet met mensen omgaan, sinds hij dit deed. Hij deed het toen ze heel jong was,' zei de vrouw.

'Deed hij dat ook met jou ?' vroeg Tarro.

'Ja,' zei de vrouw, 'maar veel minder, omdat ik vaak weg was. Ik probeerde te ontsnappen. Dat is me eindelijk gelukt, en toen hielp ik Liezelore om van hem af te komen. Maar het kwaad was al geschied. Met haar was het veel erger als met mij, maar we hebben veel geleden onder onze vader.'

'Het spijt me verschrikkelijk om dat te horen,' zei Tarro met een gebogen hoofd.

'Mijn zus heeft veel geheimen,' zei de vrouw.

'Zoals wat ?' vroeg Tarro nieuwsgierig.
'Ik kan daar niet over praten,' zei de vrouw. 'Ik begrijp zelf ook niet alles goed, maar ze schijnt in contact te zijn met buitenaardse wezens. Die hebben haar opgezocht, en ze zeiden dat zij een van hen was.'

Tarro's mond valt open. 'Vandaar dat ze een beetje op de maan is,' zei Tarro.

'Ze hebben haar goed geholpen,' zei de vrouw. 'Ze voelt veel liefde van hen, en zou dat graag met je willen delen, maar ze kan het niet. Ze klapt dicht, en rent weg.'

'Ik begrijp het,' zei Tarro. 'Ik zal hiermee moeten leren leven.'

'Ze is een roofdier, Tarro. Ze kan alleen maar plagen. Je zal je eigen weg moeten zien te vinden. Dat

kan niemand je geven. Je moet het zelf doen. Wij moesten dat ook zelf doen,' zei de vrouw.

'Ik begrijp het,' zei Tarro. 'Bedankt voor de uitleg.'

'Geloof je in telepathie ?' vroeg de vrouw.

'Ik denk het,' zei Tarro.

'Zo kun je met haar communiceren,' zei de vrouw, 'en jullie kunnen een wereld opbouwen op die manier, maar die kan nooit in de realiteit komen.'

'Maar ik dacht dat telepathie een hogere realiteit is ?' vroeg Tarro.

'Dat is zo,' zei de vrouw, 'maar niet iedereen is daar klaar voor, dus is het grotendeels een geheim.'

'Ik ben ook een beetje op de maan,' zei Tarro, 'dus ik ben daar open voor.'

'Natuurlijk, soldaat,' glimlachte de vrouw. 'Je bent welkom in haar leger.'

Die nacht had Tarro een droom dat de grote wolkenkrabber instortte, en dat er een poort tot de natuur verscheen, tot een groot oerwoud. Grote tijgers kwamen tot hem, en ook kleinere katachtigen zoals puma's en panters, en andere wilde katachtigen. Tarro kon ze allemaal omhelzen. Ze waren van het leger. 'Van Hamelen,' werd er geroepen. Het was Liezelore. Zij zat daar als de koningin van de jungle. Plotseling veranderde ze in een wild dier, en sprong op Tarro af, en likte hem. Ze leek op een gevlekt luipaard. Tarro begon het dier te aaien. Het was een hele grote vorm van een luipaard, en ook leek het veel op een jaguar. Toen veranderde ze in een zwarte panter, en toen in een lichtere kleur, als een soort bruin.

'Wat heb jij toch veel in je,' zei Tarro.

In de ochtend kwam er een pakket binnen. Het was een boek van Liezelore wat haar zus naar hem had opgestuurd. Het boek ging over David die zich had ingemengd in de indiaanse culturen in hun godenwerelden. In het boek werd David Xipe Totec genoemd, de gevilde en villende god van de Azteken, de god die de oorlog schiep. Xipe Totec droeg de gevilde huiden van zijn tegenstanders over zijn eigen lichaam. Dit waren menselijke tegenstanders.

Het was een boek geschreven door Liezelore zelf. Het besprak haar problemen met haar vader, die zichzelf de reincarnatie van koning David noemde, en ook bijbelverzen aanhaalde om zichzelf goed te praten. Voor haar was David het ergste monster wat bestond. Na de scheiding ging haar vader ergens anders wonen. Onder het huis scheen een tunnel te zijn die uitliep op een plaats waar grote skeletten lagen, als van reuzen. Ze had hier vaak nachtmerries over, ook over dat haar vader met de geheugens van mensen knoeide. Even gingen er rillingen door Tarro heen. Haar vader scheen tegen haar gezegd te hebben dat als ze ooit verkering met iemand zou krijgen, dan zou die persoon aan geheugenverlies gaan leiden, als een vloek. In de nachtmerries ontvoerde haar vader jongens naar zijn huis, waar hij een heksenketel had, waarin hij thee brouwde. Dan dwong hij de jongens om die thee te drinken, zodat ze problemen met hun geheugen zouden krijgen. Ook zouden ze dan door de tunnel onder het huis moeten gaan om te komen tot de reuzen-skeletten.

Tarro kon zich herinneren dat hij daar ook vroeger nachtmerries over had, dat hij werd gedwongen om thee te drinken. Maar verder kon hij het niet herinneren. Weer gingen de rillingen door hem heen. Hij had even het gevoel dat hij flauw zou vallen. De dood van haar vader was een hele opluchting voor haar, maar ze bleef nachtmerries over hem hebben. Die nachtmerries waren vaak zo

erg dat ze niet durfde te slapen. In de nachtmerries vilde haar vader zichzelf altijd grijnzend, en probeerde vervolgens haar grijnzend te villen. Haar vader was als een gestoorde psychopaat.

Het beroep van haar vader was tandarts. Ze heeft dit altijd verschrikkelijk gevonden, omdat ten eerste tandartsen mensen dwingen vullingen te hebben, en ten tweede dat deze vullingen zwaar giftig zijn. Ze maken mensen ziek, en het rotzooit met hun geheugen. Altijd had ze veel last van de door haar vader gelegde vullingen, en kon ze van de kiespijn niet meer tegen licht, en heeft jarenlang op een donkere kamer geleefd, waar haar vader haar op bijna dagelijkse basis verkrachtte, en hij wilde de door hem gelegde vullingen niet verwijderen. Toen heeft ze zelf op een dag de kiezen met vullingen getrokken, en heeft dit maar nauwelijks overleeft. Dit was de eerste stap op weg naar haar bevrijding, maar het heeft haar bijna het leven gekost. Al veel eerder had ze de gevulde kiezen willen trekken, maar ze durfde het niet. Tarro ontplofte bijna van woede toen hij dit las. Vol van haat was hij naar die vader. Hij kon sowieso tandartsen al niet uitstaan vanwege hun dwang-verplegingen. Het was echt crimineel. 'Wat een vuile rotzak was die vader zeg. Geen wonder dat ze was zoals ze was,' dacht Tarro bij zichzelf. Hij had haar zo graag willen helpen.

Verderop in het boek startte haar apocalypse tegen de tandartsen, maar ook tegen het verdere medische systeem. Ze beschreef David als de demoon die dit allemaal achter de schermen bestuurde, en ook als degene die het indiaanse volk had ingenomen en uitgemoord.

Tarro besloot haar terug te schrijven :

'Lieve Liezelore,
Ik vind het verschrikkelijk waar je doorheen bent gegaan. Is er iets wat ik voor je kan doen ? Ik vind het moedig van je dat je het hebt opgeschreven. Ik ben blij dat je vader dood is. Die rotzak kan nu niets meer beginnen, alhoewel ik gelezen heb over je nachtmerries.'

Tarro besloot het kort te houden. Na een tijdje kreeg hij een brief terug.

'Lieve Tarro,
Bedankt voor je brief. Het betekent de wereld voor me. Herinner je je nog dat we eens verkering hadden ? Mijn vader vertelde me dat hij jouw geheugen hierover had gewist. Hij was daar heel trots over. Ik ben ook blij dat hij dood is.
Je Liezelore.'

'Lieve Liezelore,
Nee, ik herinner me daar niets meer van. Ik had altijd het gevoel dat je niks van me wilde, en dat gevoel werd alleen maar erger. Wat een verschrikkelijke vader had je. Waarom zijn we dan niet meer bij elkaar ?
Groetjes, en liefs,
Je Tarro.'

'Lieve Tarro,
Mijn vader bedreigde mij. Ik moest de verkering verbreken. Ik had geen andere keuze. En hij zou je bewerken zodat je het niet meer zou herinneren. Hij was lid van een geheim genootschap. Hij werd zelfs aanbeden als de grote god, David, en als Xipe Totec.
Je Liezelore.'

'Lieve Liezelore,
We hadden zo gelukkig met elkaar kunnen zijn als je vader er niet was geweest. Waarmee heeft hij jou dan bedreigd ? Ik hoop dat je hier allemaal snel overheen zult komen.'

'Lieve Tarro,
Hij bedreigde mij dat hij jou zou vermoorden als ik de verkering niet zou verbreken. Ik wilde jou niet in gevaar brengen.'

Nadat Tarro nog een keer had teruggeschreven kreeg hij geen brieven meer van haar binnen. Tarro besloot naar haar zus te gaan, maar deze wist het antwoord niet. Ook zij besloot Liezelore te schrijven, maar kreeg geen antwoord. Tarro was bezorgd, en haar zus ook.

Na een tijdje kreeg haar zus slecht nieuws van een familie-lid. Liezelore bleek vermoord te zijn door het geheime genootschap waar haar vader lid van was. Tarro kon het niet geloven, en was er kapot van. Nu moest hij voor eens en voor altijd Liezelore opgeven. Tarro was ontroostbaar, en ook de zus van Liezelore. Tarro wilde alles op alles zetten om dat geheime genootschap aan de kaak te stellen, maar Liezelore's zus raadde hem aan er verre van te blijven, anders zouden ze hem ook wat aandoen. Het was een Davidisch genootschap wat er niet voor terugdeinsde tegenstanders om het leven te brengen. Voor deze misdaden werden bijbelverzen aangehaald, vooral van David, om het moorden goed te praten. David was een terrorist, dus ook zij konden terrorisme gebruiken om hun doelen te verwezenlijken.

Nadat Tarro eens op de televisie was verschenen om zijn verhaal te doen, en mensen te waarschuwen, had hij het gevoel alsof hij overal gevolgd werd. Hij had geen moment rust meer, en was erg op zijn hoede, voor het geval dat ze hem ook wilden ombrengen. Op een dag kreeg hij een vreemde brief waarin ze hem waarschuwden niet meer over hen te praten anders zou hij daar erge spijt van krijgen. Tarro wilde zich niet laten kennen, en verscheen weer op televisie-programma's en ook radio-programma's. Hij wist in zijn achterhoofd dat nu ergens de maat vol moest zijn bij het geheime Davidische genootschap. Op een dag toen hij van zijn werk thuiskwam reed er een busje op hem af, en mannen met zwarte kappen op hun hoofd kwamen uit het busje om hem te grijpen en in het busje te trekken. Ze ontvoerden hem naar een donkere plaats in een grot waar een man op een stoel zat. De man had een grijze baard en een pijp. Deze man bleek niet van het genootschap te zijn, maar was ook ontvoerd, en werd gedwongen om mee te werken. Hij begon Tarro kalm toe te spreken, terwijl de mannen met de zwarte kappen op hen toekeken. Ze waren gewapend.

'Ik heb ook materiaal over hen gepubliceerd,' zei de oude man. 'Nu hebben ze mij gedwongen voor hen te werken. Ik zal je uitleg moeten geven. Ook jij zal met hen mee moeten werken, anders zullen ze je koudmaken. Er is geen andere weg. Je kunt natuurlijk proberen te ontsnappen, maar dat kun je met de dood bekopen.' De man stond op, en leidde hem naar een deurtje. Hier was een zacht verlichte ruimte waar wat Azteekse boeken lagen. Het waren boeken over rituelen. 'Dit zal ons lot zijn,' zei de oude man, terwijl hij een boek pakte en erin begon te bladeren. 'Wij zijn offers voor Xipe Totec, oftewel David. Hij heeft Amerika veroverd en daarmee de hele wereld.' Een vreemd apparaat met tentakels kwam binnen, om vervolgens een tentakel in Tarro's arm te steken. Allerlei substanties en energieen werden vanuit Tarro's lichaam opgenomen via de tentakel, om het apparaat te voeden. 'Wij zijn niets dan voeding en brandstof voor het systeem,' zei de oude man. 'Zo worden wij omgebouwd tot robotten om David te dienen.'

De oude man en Tarro werden samen opgesloten in een cel. Toen de wachters weg waren konden ze vrijuit met elkaar praten. De oude man vertelde hem veel over het geheime genootschap, wat in het geheim de wereld zou besturen. 'Is er een manier te ontsnappen ?' vroeg Tarro.

'Ze zullen ons injecteren, en operaties op ons doen om hun troep te installeren, hi-tech om onze gedachtes te beinvloeden,' zei de oude man. 'Ik heb al veel troep in me, en ik weet niet hoe lang ik dit ga vol houden. Ik leef met veel pijn.'

Tarro pakte de arm van de man vast. 'We zullen het niet op ons laten zitten. Er moet een oplossing

zijn.'

'Nee, Tarro,' zei de man. 'Hier is geen kruid tegen opgewassen.' Tarro wist dat de man dit zei omdat hij teveel onder hun invloed was. Tarro herinnerde de buitenaardse wezens waarmee Liezelore contact had, en die haar hadden geholpen. Zij zouden misschien veel kunnen betekenen voor hen nu. Toen Tarro in slaap viel had hij een droom. Hij was terug in de wolkenkrabber, en in de droom leefde Liezelore hier weer, maar ditmaal nog hoger, en ook de wolkenkrabber zelf was hoger, zelfs dat de top niet zichtbaar was. Liezelore nam hem mee naar haar appartement, en vertelde dat hoe hoger ze zouden komen in de wolkenkrabber, hoe dieper het hen zou leiden tot een nieuwe wereld. Het zou door een zwarte gat heengaan, een dimensionale overgang, en zou uitkomen op een eiland in een hogere vibratie. Hier zouden de buitenaardse wezens vandaan komen.

Liezelore nam hem bij de arm, en samen liepen ze naar de lift. 'Kom mee,' zei ze. Toen de lift na lange tijd stopte waren ze op een eiland aangekomen. Beiden stapten ze uit, en buitenaardse wezens met laser-geweren hielden hen tegen. 'Dat is bewaking,' zei Liezelore. 'Ze bedoelen het goed.' Even later hadden ze doorgang. Maar de droom begon weg te vagen. Tarro werd zwetend wakker. Hij keek naar de oude man die nog steeds lag te slapen. Tarro probeerde weer te slapen, maar hij kon het niet. Plotseling werd de deur van de cel opengeschoten. De buitenaardse wezens waren gekomen. Ze namen Tarro en de oude man bij de arm, om hen naar hun luchtschip te brengen. Dit ging allemaal vrij gemakkelijk. Er was geen weerstand van het genootschap, tenzij de buitenaardse wezens al met hen hadden afgerekend. Er was veel licht. De oude man was nog steeds slaperig. Ze legden hem op een soort bed of brancard in het luchtschip, in een kamer diep in het schip. Een groot apparaat werd over de man geschoven. Zijn implantaten moesten uitgenomen worden, en zijn hersengolven moesten bijgesteld worden. Ook Tarro moest even later op zo'n soort bed liggen, want er moest veel met zijn geheugen gebeuren. Tarro kreeg veel van zijn geheugen terug. Door bepaalde schermen kon hij communiceren met Liezelore. Ook kon ze door bepaalde techniek als een hologram aan boord komen. De buitenaardse wezens zeiden dat ze eraan werkten om haar weer een lichaam te geven, maar dat dat tijd zou kosten. Het hologram zou zich steeds meer en meer verdikken, totdat het zou overgaan in een wat dichtere dimensie. Ze zou een hogere dichtheid krijgen. Tarro hoopte maar dat hij dit niet droomde.

Het luchtschip was even later in een groot gevecht tegen een enorm gedrocht. Ze zeiden dat dit gedrocht David was, oftewel Xipe Totec, die de wereld onder controle hield, en dat ze konden komen omdat ze door het energie-schild van dit beest waren heengebroken. Maar nu moesten ze het beest zelf verslaan. Tarro en de oude man waren midden in een grote oorlog terechtgekomen, maar ze wisten dat er geen andere oplossing was, en ze waren blij dat er nu in ieder geval eindelijk wat gebeurde.

Liezelore begon steeds meer op een mens te lijken. Tarro hield haar hand vast, wat nog een beetje een soort dikke energie was. Hij gaf haar een kus. 'Ik ben blij dat je terug bent, schat,' zei hij. Ondertussen moesten de buitenaardse wezens een heleboel tentakels van het gedrocht afschieten. Het gedrocht krijste. Het ging er even om spannen. De buitenaardse wezens zeiden dat ze al wel vaker waren gekomen, maar dat ze dan gewoon weer door het energie-schild werden weggeblazen na een bepaalde tijd. Maar nu konden ze goed doorbreken. De lucht was gevuld met vele luchtschepen, en juist daardoor moest het gedrocht, wat zich lang verborgen had gehouden, zich tonen. Het gedrocht deed allerlei soorten aanvallen, voornamelijk lichtaanvallen. 'Ik hoop echt dat ik dit niet droom,' dacht Tarro bij zichzelf. 'Ik heb hier zo lang op gewacht.' Plotseling hoorden ze gegil. Een oude vrouw leek in het schip te zijn binnengekomen. Toen Tarro haar zag dat hij even dat hij flauw viel. Het leek wel alsof er honderden of wel duizenden bellen gingen rinkelen in zijn hoofd.

'Laat hem niet ontsnappen !' gilde de oude vrouw. Zwarte buitenaardse wezens stonden achter haar

die pistolen op hem richtten. 'Vuur !' riep de oude vrouw. Maar snel werden ze afgeschoten door de buitenaardse wezens van het schip. Tarro zuchtte van verlichting, maar hij voelde zich onwel.

'Ik moet even liggen,' stamelde Tarro. Toen schreeuwde hij in paniek. Hij kon het niet meer inhouden. Hij probeerde schaduwen van zich af te schudden. Weer werd hij op een bed gelegd, en een machine kwam boven hem. Allerlei soorten lichten gingen aan. Toen begon het op zijn hersengolven in te werken, en de energieen van zijn lichaam. Diep werd er gegraven in zijn geheugen, alsof er deuren werden geopend. Tarro zag gestaltes van wit licht, die uit een vliegtuig bleken te komen. 'Wie zijn dat ?' vroeg Tarro. 'Zij besturen onze planeet,' zeiden de buitenaardse wezens. Tarro voelde handen op zijn handen, en die werden heel warm. 'We laten je niet meer los, Tarro,' werd er gezegd. 'Hier ben je veilig. Je hersenen zijn bij ons in goede handen, en er valt veel werk te verrichten.'

Tarro dacht nog steeds dat er een mogelijkheid was dat hij dit gewoon droomde, en dat hij elk moment wakker kon worden. Toen was er een enorme explosie. Het schip vloog aan flarden in een oceaan van vuur, een woeste oceaan. 'Vrees niet,' werd er gezegd.

Tarro keek regelrecht door de zee in een groot oerwoud achter een hek. De zee gleed van hem af als een sluier, en de sloten gingen van het hek af, wat zichzelf opende. Er waren hier apen en andere dieren, zoals tijgers en leeuwen. Ook waren er wat arenden. In de verte zag hij olifanten, en prachtige meren. Tarro voelde zichzelf weer als een kind. 'Ik wil dit niet dromen,' dacht hij bij zichzelf. Tranen begonnen bij hem op te komen. Hij had een week gevoel in zijn buik. Hij was er bijna zeker van dat hij dit gewoon droomde. Hij kneep in zijn arm, en voelde niets. Hij werd bang, want waar zou hij wakker worden ?

'Wij zijn bij je,' werd er gezegd. Een warm gevoel gleed door hem heen. Weer voelde hij tranen bij hem opkomen, alsof hij elk moment in huilen zou kunnen uitbarsten. 'We hebben het schild van David wat genadeloos op de wereld was gespannen verbroken,' werd er gezegd. Er was een zacht licht om Tarro heen. Hij kon even niets zien. Het deed geen pijn aan zijn ogen. Andere kleuren licht kwamen boven hem, als kleine stipjes die langzaam iets groter werden als blokjes. Het was alsof iets hem begon te scheuren, maar het deed geen pijn. 'Je oude verstand wordt weggehaald,' werd er gezegd. Weer waren er allerlei explosies, en Tarro zag alles weer wegvagen.

'Ik begrijp het niet,' stamelde Tarro. 'Wat is dit ?' Weer kwam de angst om wakker te worden. Hij wilde dat dit echt was. Hij wist dat hij gevangen werd gehouden door het genootschap, en dat ze duistere plannen met hem hadden. 'Wij komen je helpen,' werd er gezegd. 'Er is niets wat ons kan stoppen.' Witte explosies vonden plaats, explosies van wit licht, en plotseling waren er grote tijgers om Tarro heen. Hij voelde zich wegglijden, en schreeuwde, maar kon geeneens zijn eigen stem horen.

Toen stond hij weer met beide benen op de grond, en keek het oerwoud in. 'Ik ga hiervan genieten zo lang als het duurt,' dacht Tarro bij zichzelf.

'De stammen,' zei een stem, 'de stammen, Tarro. David heeft ze zo lang verborgen gehouden.'

Allerlei lichtjes kwamen in hem, als vlammetjes. 'Waar is David ?' vroeg Tarro.

'Dood,' zeiden de stemmen. 'Daarom zijn we hier. Daarom blijven we hier. We zullen niet loslaten.'

'Waar ben ik ?' vroeg Tarro. 'Ben ik dood, of slaap ik ? Of is dit echt ?'

Toen hoorde hij gelach. 'Zacht praten, Tarro, anders horen ze je.'

'Wie ?' vroeg Tarro.

Toen was het een lange tijd stil. Tarro voelde dat hij zich niet kon bewegen. Weer was er gelach. Tarro begon zenuwachtig te worden, en ook bang. 'Blijf in contact met ons,' werd er gezegd. 'Je hersenen moeten ons ook vasthouden. Je hersenen zijn zwak, maar je bent in goede handen. Wij laten jou niet meer los, maar laat ons ook niet meer los.'

'Ik doe mijn best,' zei Tarro. Tarro hoorde geschreeuw en hoorde zijn naam roepen.

'Droom maar fijn, Tarro,' zei een stem, een stem anders dan de anderen. 'Laat me los !' riep Tarro, die het niet meer vertrouwde. 'Ach rustig maar,' zei de stem. 'Ik ben maar een arend. Je bent op mijn rug. Ik breng je naar betere planeten.'

'Laat me los !' riep Tarro. Weer was er gelach. 'De apen zullen je niet loslaten,' zei de stem. 'Wij zijn de stemmen van het oerwoud, het grote oerwoud. Wij zijn allemaal verschillend, maar we willen je verwelkomen.'

'Weer eentje verlost uit de kerkers van David,' zei een ander.

'We zullen het best met elkaar kunnen vinden.'

'Waar kom je vandaan ?'

Tarro werd overweldigd door een zee van stemmen, die allemaal uit het oerwoud bleken te komen. Er werd zelfs over hem gevochten. Grote dikke slangen in het meer vochten om bij hem te zijn. Ook apen vochten met elkaar. Sommige dieren waren kwaad, en zouden hem liever om het leven willen brengen, op willen vreten, of weg laten rotten. Sommigen vertrouwden niemand. Nog steeds vroeg Tarro zich af wanneer hij wakker zou worden. Dit was te vreemd om waar te zijn. Waren de buitenaardse wezens echt gekomen ? Of waren ze gewoon in een laag van zijn hersenen binnengekomen ? Waren ze gewoon in zijn dromen binnengekomen ?

'Droom maar fijn,' werd er weer gezegd. Het was de arend weer. Tarro zag het beest nu veel beter. Het was een prachtig beest. 'Je bent in goede handen,' zei de arend. Weer leek het alsof Tarro zich niet kon bewegen. 'Lang hebben we gestreden om je los te krijgen,' zei de arend. 'En altijd dat verdomde schild van David hield ons tegen, maar nu is het verbroken.'

Tarro voelde een diepe liefde voor het dier, maar bleef voorzichtig. Hij wist niet wat dit was. Was dit allemaal echt ? De arend was veel groter dan Tarro. Het was een reuzen-arend. 'Wij hebben altijd voor je gezorgd,' zei de arend. 'Maar echt bereiken konden wij je niet, en jij kon ons niet bereiken.'
Tarro greep naar zijn hoofd. De stemmen begonnen hem weer te overweldigen, en al snel schreeuwde hij het uit. 'Ik moet hier weg ! Dit is niet goed !' Hij had het gevoel dat er teveel druk op zijn hoofd was. 'Laat me los ! Allemaal !'

Hij wilde niet in deze wereld zijn. Het was teveel voor hem. Hij voelde de hand van Liezelore. Hij keek naar haar, en wilde haar omhelzen, maar ze begon weg te vagen. 'Waar ben ik !' riep hij.

'Op een goede plaats,' fluisterde ze, maar hij zag haar niet meer. Het licht had haar weg laten vagen. Het licht was gelukkig heel zacht, en deed geen pijn aan zijn ogen. 'Ik wil dit niet !' riep hij. 'Er klopt iets niet !'

'Wil je dan weer terug naar je cel ?' vroeg ze. 'Ze hebben je vrijgezet ?'

'Wie ?' vroeg Tarro.

'De buitenaardse wezens hebben je vrijgezet,' zei Liezelore.

'Ik wil dit ook niet,' zei Tarro. 'Ik heb moeite met ademen. Er is een groot gewicht op me.'

'Dat is normaal,' zei Liezelore. 'Je moet nog wennen.'

'Volgens mij ben ik dood,' zei Tarro.

'Je bent niet dood,' zei Liezelore.

'Maar jij was ook dood, of bent het nog steeds,' zei Tarro. 'Daarom heb ik misschien contact met je, omdat ik ook dood bent.'

'Nee,' zei Liezelore. 'Tarro, het is buitenaardse techniek.'

'Ik denk dat ik gek ga worden,' zei Tarro. 'Iets is me aan het aanvreten.'

Toen vaagde Liezelore weer weg.

'Oh god, ik ben in een gevangenis !' riep Tarro. 'Laat iemand me helpen ! Er is een vuur wat me aanvreet, een vuur wat ik niet kan zien !'

'Tarro, het is goed,' zei een stem. Een grote tijger kwam dichterbij.

'Ga weg,' zei Tarro.

Tarro moest erg wennen aan waar hij was. Hij wilde van deze plaats weg. Er werd tegen hem gezegd dat het slechts een doorgang was. Maar waar hij ook kwam, hij verlangde terug naar de aarde. Hij wilde dat de buitenaardse wezens hem nooit hadden gered. Het leek wel alsof hij in de hel was. 'Breng me terug naar de aarde !' riep Tarro in paniek. 'Ik heb het benauwd !'

'Leef niet meer door adem, Tarro,' werd er gezegd, maar door geuren, gevoel, het eeuwig zaad, het eeuwige bloed, het bloed der stammen.'

'Wat is dat !' riep Tarro.

'Het bloed van de jacht,' werd er gezegd. 'Dat is wat de stammen uitbeelden. Jaag of sterf.' Tarro kreeg een boog en een mes. Ook kreeg hij een speer en een net. Maar hij wilde niet op jacht. Na een tijdje zag hij in dat er geen andere mogelijkheid was. Hij werd door grote dieren met horens omsingeld. Ze stonden klaar om met hem af te rekenen. Tarro trok zijn mes en vocht als een bezetene. Het was gelukkig een groot slagersmes. Hij merkte dat hij tot leven kwam door het bloed, dat hij geen adem meer nodig had. De warmte van het bloed leek door hem heen te stromen, om de lust naar adem te vervangen. Het was een wild gevecht. Tarro slachtte deze beesten af, die als gehoornde grote zwijnen waren met de kracht van leeuwen. Ze waren woest. Tarro maakte een tent van hun huiden, en had voorlopig genoeg te eten. Hij smeerde zichzelf in met bloed. Ook smeerde hij zijn haren ermee in.

'Maak me wakker !' riep hij, nog steeds denkende dat hij droomde. Of misschien waren dit al de

bewerkingen van het genootschap. Misschien hadden ze hem al vermoord, of apparaten in zijn lichaam geplaatst waardoor hij niet meer tot de werkelijkheid kon komen. In ieder geval zou hij vechten voor zijn leven en vrijheid. Hij begon ook op grote buffels en bizons te jagen. Hij had een hekel aan zijn leven op deze manier. Hij had zich van het leven heel wat anders voorgesteld, ook van het gered worden door buitenaardse wezens. Maar dit leek de keiharde realiteit te zijn voor nu. Tarro brulde woest, ook als een teken naar de dieren dat ze beter niet aan hem konden komen. Tarro wilde weg, maar wist niet waar naartoe. Hij besloot verder te trekken. De natuur was hier prachtig. Hij wist dat als hij het weer benauwd zou krijgen, dan was het tijd om te jagen.

Hij kwam aan bij een soort van stam. Ze namen hem naar hun kamp, en hij kreeg een ketting om zijn nek met een soort kralen waarvan ze zeiden dat de kralen de stammen uitbeeldden. Het bleek de stam van Gad te zijn. Tarro had de neiging weg te lopen. Hij kon het contact niet aan, en weer had hij het benauwd. Ze gaven hem vlees te eten en bloed te drinken. Maar niets scheen te helpen. Tarro had paniek-aanvallen en stuip-trekkingen. Toen rende hij woest de wildernis weer in. Hij kon geen contact maken met de stammen. Hij ging op jacht naar wat renbokken, en dat kalmeerde hem een beetje. Langzaam begon hij grip te verliezen, viel neer, en werd wakker. Hij had alles gedroomd. Het was een vreemde droom, want Liezelore bestond helemaal niet, en hij heette helemaal geen Tarro. Op zijn nachtkastje lag een science fiction boek wat hij aan het lezen was. Het ging over een machine die dromen in mensen kon planten waardoor ze ineens een hele andere identiteit kregen. Deze machine heette nachtkozijn. De dag erna besloot hij het boek weg te gooien.

De Oranje Ster

De ster was gekomen, als nachtzicht in een duistere nacht. Het leek weer dag nu. De ster had een romige, gloeiende oranje rand, zo zacht. Bijna donzig. Marja en Kees keken ernaar. Ze hadden hier zo lang naar uitgezien. Ze hadden hier zo lang over gedroomd. De zon was namelijk verwoest en zo lang hadden ze in het pikkedonker geleefd.

Nu was het afwachten op wat er zou gaan gebeuren. Velen reisden naar de ster, maar niemand wist nog goed wat het nu precies was. Ook Kees en Marja zouden de reis beginnen. Ze stopten hun auto vol met dekens, en daar gingen ze. De wegen waren vol met auto's. Iedereen was op zoek naar de ster. Ook Harry Achterwoud was op weg. Ergens bij een tank station kwamen ze hem tegen. 'Hey Harry,' zei Kees. Harry was heel enthousiast. Hij had al zijn papieren bij zich waarop zijn berekeningen van de ster stonden, wiskundige papieren. Hij wist ook al dat de ster zou komen, en had eigenaardige theorieen. Aandachtig luisterden Kees en Marja naar hem.

'De ster is een reis,' zei Harry. 'Wij horen niet veel van anderen die daar zijn geweest, want iedereen gaat daar naar binnen. Het is een tunnel.'

'Zouden ze nog in leven zijn ?' vroeg Marja zich af.

'Ach natuurlijk,' zei Harry. 'Het is een dimensionale overgang.'

'Ik ben bang,' zei Marja. 'Het kan natuurlijk ook iets duisters zijn. Ik ga ervoor, maar heb mijn twijfels.'

'Twijfelen is goed, Marja,' zei Harry. 'Maar ik heb het onderzocht, en het is goed betrouwbaar. Eén van de grootste evenementen aller tijden. Mijn jongens zijn ook heel enthousiast. Ze hebben het er de hele tijd over. Het is nachtzicht, Marja.'

'Ja, maar die wiskundige berekeningen van jou die werken ook niet altijd,' zei Marja.

'Heb je daar voorbeelden van ?' vroeg Harry.

'Ach,' zei Marja, 'die berekeningen die je had gedaan over mijn zwangerschap waren interessant, maar grote onzin.'

'Ja,' zei Harry, 'maar dat was nog in de tijd van Karel Klaus. Ik liet me teveel door hem beinvloeden.'

'Karel Klaus was een genie,' zei Marja, 'maar een grote gek.'

Kees begon te grinniken. 'Wat weet je verder over die ster, Harry ?' vroeg hij. Harry begon te bladeren door zijn papieren, en liet hen wat ingewikkelde tekeningen zien. Toen kwam er één of ander scheikundig verhaal waar ze niets van begrepen, maar het voelde allemaal wel wonderbaarlijk aan.
Even later gingen ze weer verder. Toen ze in het bos waren met de auto begonnen ze de ster steeds beter te zien. De ster was prachtig oranje. Het had een kalmerend effect.

Marja wist het nog niet. Wat moest ze nu geloven ? Maar ze wilde het wel proberen. In de verte leek het wel alsof de auto's in de ster reden. Was dit niet gewoon een natuurverschijnsel ?

Na een tijdje reden zij dan ook de ster binnen. Ze konden eerst niets zien. Alles was zacht oranje. Even later reden ze een grote wildernis binnen. De auto stopte vanuit zichzelf. Kees en Marja stapten uit. Geen enkele auto kon er hier rijden.

In de verte zat een gestalte van vuur op een troon van vuur. Achter de gestalte was een grote stad. De hele stoet met mensen ging richting die persoon.

'Wie zou die persoon zijn ?' vroeg Marja. Kees had geen idee. Daar zagen ze Harry weer. Die zat weer tussen zijn papieren te bladeren. 'Hey, Achterwoud,' zei Kees. 'Nu, moet je eens horen,' zei Harry. 'Die gestalte is de personificatie van de ster.' Toen volgden er weer allerlei scheikundige en natuurkundige verhalen. 'Laten we maar gewoon kijken wie of wat dat is,' zei Marja.

'Die personificatie bepaalt wie en wat in de stad komt,' zei Harry.

'Waar baseert die personificatie dat op ?' vroeg Marja.

'Op wiskundige berekeningen,' zei Harry.

'Hoe gaat dat dan ?' vroeg Marja. En weer legde Harry alles uit met zijn papieren. Weer liet hij hen vreemde tekeningen zien.

'Waar gaan degenen naartoe die niet naar de stad gaan ?' vroeg Marja.

'Die worden de wildernis ingezonden,' zei Harry.

'Ik zou niet weten welke keuze ik zou willen maken,' zei Marja.

'Het gaat niet om jouw keuze,' zei Harry. 'Het gaat om de berekeningen.'

Ineens wilde Marja terug. In de verte zagen ze de gestalte van vuur opstaan, en die begon te roepen :

'Er is niet veel tijd meer. Wij gaan zodadelijk sluiten. Maak daarom haast. Dit zal de enige uittocht zijn voor aardlingen in de geschiedenis. De rest zal op aarde moeten blijven.'

Marja wist even niet wat ze moest doen. Ze wilde wel bij Kees blijven die gewoon doorliep. Ze pakte zijn arm. Snel liepen ze door tot de gestalte. Twee handen kwamen op hun hoofden.

'Ah,' zei de gestalte. 'Net op tijd. Jullie zijn de laatsten van de aardlingen. Jullie mogen de stad binnengaan.'

Ook Harry was de stad binnengegaan. Marja wist niet of ze blij moest zijn of niet. Harry was in ieder geval heel blij, en Kees ook. Harry zei dat ze vanuit de stad ook de wildernis inkonden. Het was een reusachtige stad. Marja en Kees kregen een huisje toegewezen, en Harry kwam naast hen wonen. Harry zuchtte. Hij had gehoopt dat zijn jongens mee waren gekomen, maar die moesten naar voetbal. Het was meer blinden-voetbal omdat het zo pikkedonker was.

Harry Achterwoud klikte de TV aan in zijn nieuwe huisje. 'Wel goed dat ze hier TV hebben,' dacht Harry bij zichzelf.

Kees was achter de computer gegaan. Ze hadden hier ook internet. Een heleboel dingen leken zoals de dingen op aarde. Er was ook een koelkast. Marja was de tuin ingegaan. Het was een prachtige tuin. Vanuit de tuin kon ze de wildernis zien. Er waren hoge bomen in de wildernis. Er groeide prachtig, verlokkend kruid in de bomen.

Even later kwam Harry binnen. Hij liet hen een plattegrond zien waardoor ze de wildernis inkonden. Er was namelijk een groot hek rondom de wildernis. Via de vreemde berekeningen wist Harry precies hoe ze in de wildernis konden komen. Er moest ergens een tunnel wezen. Die tunnel was verbonden aan elk huis door een kelder. Diep in de kelder moest ergens een slot zijn met een deur. Het slot was als een groot toetsenbord met wat schermpjes waarop de juiste code ingetypt moest worden. Harry legde het uit via de vreemde berekeningen.

'Ik wil eerst zien of dat wel werkt, Harry,' zei Marja.

'Kom,' zei Harry, 'dan laat ik het jullie direct zien.'

Met z'n drieen gingen ze naar de kelderdeur. Harry liep voorop. Met een knop moest Harry de vlammen in de kelder aanzetten, zodat ze alles konden zien. Toen moesten ze over een trap naar beneden. Het leek wel op een magazijn. Er stonden hier een heleboel pakken met etenswaren. Door een lange gang kwamen ze uiteindelijk bij een deur. Daar zagen ze het toetsenbord aan de muur met

de schermpjes. 'Hier,' zei Harry.

Marja vroeg zich af hoe Harry dit allemaal wist. Als een razende begon Harry te typen. Het leek wel op een heel verhaal. Toen klopte hij op de schermpjes die direct aansprongen. Op de schermpjes verschenen kaarten. Het leek wel op een spel. Weer typte Harry een heel verhaal in. De kaarten begonnen te veranderen. Op één kaart stond een doodshoofd, en op een andere een skelet. 'Hebbes,' zei Harry. Toen typte hij weer een heel verhaal in. Weer begonnen de kaarten te veranderen, en er kwamen wat nieuwe kaarten bij. Toen verscheen er een speelbord op één van de schermpjes, en de kaarten kwamen daarop terecht. Ook verschenen er rode knopjes die Harry indrukte. Toen begon de deur zich te openen.

'Kunnen we nog wel weer terug ?' vroeg Marja.

'Natuurlijk,' zei Harry. Door een gang kwamen ze in de wildernis terecht. Op de bomen stonden orakels getekend, waarop mensen aan het typen waren. Ze leken als in een trance, en er waren bollen rondom hun hoofden. 'Kom,' zei Harry, 'dan gaan we dieper de wildernis in.' Ze liepen richting een soort kleine woestijn, een strook van een zanderige wildernis. Ze gingen een soort heuveltje op. Vanaf het heuveltje hadden ze een goed uitzicht. Ze zagen een strand met een soort zee. Boven de zee zweefde een oranje ster.

'Hey, is dat niet de ster waar wij door naar binnen gingen ?' vroeg Marja.

'Het is een ster in een ster,' zei Harry. Er waren veel mensen aan het zwemmen. Zij zwommen richting de ster, maar niemand kon daar naar binnen, want de ster zweefde veel te hoog. Na een tijdje begon de ster naar beneden te komen. De mensen zwommen de ster binnen, en werden bedekt met glibberig spul. Ook vormde zich een bol van vuur rondom hen.

'Zij ontvangen de vlam,' zei Harry. 'Het is de vlam van de oranje ster.'

'Wat betekent dat ?' vroeg Marja.

Toen begon Harry weer met zijn wazige berekeningen. Dit keer was het nog doldwazer dan ooit. Harry haalde een schrift tevoorschijn, en liet hen weer allerlei vreemde tekeningen zien. Het leek wel alsof de lucht begon open te scheuren. De scheur was oranje en romig. Zachtjes begon de scheur de ster naar binnen te zuigen, met vele mensen erin.

'Waar gaan ze naartoe ?' vroeg Kees, die zich al die tijd stil had gehouden.

Harry bladerde door het schrift. 'Proza,' zei Harry. 'Een nieuwe literaire code, om hen in een nieuwe linguistische realiteit te brengen. Het is als een mind-altering drug.'

Er begon iets te zoemen in het hoofd van Marja. 'Proza is een andere frequentie,' zei Harry. 'Volg me,' zei hij, en liep naar het strand toe. Met kleren en al dook Harry de branding in, en zwom de zee in. Marja en Kees volgden hem.

Weer zweefde de ster boven de zee, en kwam langzaam naar beneden. Marja voelde de warmte. Toen de ster haar raakte werd ze opgeheven, als naar binnen gezogen, en langzaam scheurde de lucht open. De ster werd naar binnen gezogen. Marja zweefde. Ook zag ze Kees en Harry zweven. Ze zweefden naar een zanderige plek in de scheur. Een bol kwam om hun heen, en ze kwamen in een wildernis terecht, waar weer bomen waren met orakels waar mensen op typten. De mensen waren ook in bollen, net als hen. In het midden van de orakels was een scherm.

'Het is een soort internet,' zei Harry.

Harry ging achter zo'n boom zitten en begon te typen. 'Je kan hierdoor allerlei werelden openen,' zei Harry. Hij typte een heel verhaal in. Weer verschenen er allerlei kaarten op het scherm die begonnen te draaien, als in een cirkel. Harry selecteerde er één. Het was een kaart met een doodskop. Toen selecteerde hij er één met een skelet. Marja herinnerde de kaarten van het slot in de kelder.

Harry klikte op de kaart met de doodskop, terwijl de kaart rood begon te gloeien en te knipperen. 'Hebbes,' zei Harry. Toen typte hij weer een heel verhaal, en de boom begon zichzelf te openen als een poort. Een lange gang verscheen met een auto. 'Kom,' zei Harry, terwijl hij de auto instapte. Kees ging naast Harry zitten, en nam Marja op schoot. Harry startte de auto. De auto reed richting een stad. Het was de stad waar zij hun huisjes hadden. Met een bepaalde code kon de auto door het hek.

'Heen door de keldergang, terug met de auto,' zei Harry.

'De literaire code had de zon afgebroken,' zei Harry. 'Dit is waardoor de oranje ster kon komen. De zon had ons opgesloten door een valse literaire code, een vals licht, waardoor onze levens min of meer bevroren waren. De ware vlam kenden wij niet, maar die is nu in ons binnengekomen.'

Die nacht hadden ze alle drie wilde dromen. Er was een glazen bol rondom hen waardoor roofdieren naar binnen probeerden te komen, maar ze renden zich stuk op het glas. Die roofdieren waren de herinneringen van de oude en valse literaire code waarin ze zo lang opgesloten waren. De roofdieren waren woest, maar konden niets doen. Kees werd wakker in het zweet, en nam een bad. Marja ging onder de douche staan. Ze waren die ochtend vroeg op, en Harry kwam ook vroeg.

Harry vertelde hen zijn dromen, en gaf weer allerlei eigenaardige berekeningen. 'Het glas wordt steeds dikker,' zei Harry. 'De roofdieren zullen steeds verder weg komen, en zullen steeds meer verzwakken. Ze verliezen hun grip en zullen in vee veranderen.'

Marja herinnerde de potten met vlees in de kelder. Kees knikte. Dit had hij ook gedroomd. In de stad waren vaak vleesmarkten met zulk vlees. Er moest vlees gegeten worden, anders zouden de roofdieren weer sterker worden, en het glas dunner. Ze moesten dus eten voor hun leven.

'Het vee wordt door het glas gezogen tot een plaats in de wildernis,' zei Harry. 'Hiervoor worden jagers, slagers en vlees-verkopers aangesteld. Je begint als vlees-verkoper, dan wordt je een jager, en daarna een slager. De slager is een vleeskweker. Hij kent de geheimen van de vleesbrug.'

Kees kreeg een baan als vlees-verkoper op de markt. Hij leerde veel over de verschillende vleessoorten. Na een tijdje werd hij aangenomen in de jager-cursus. Hier leerde hij hoe hij moest jagen. Het had veel te maken met codes. Hij moest leren de codes in te typen. Harry was hierin zijn grote voorbeeld. Ook moest hij de verschillende spelen leren. Na een tijdje mocht hij zichzelf 'Kees de jager' noemen. Harry was heel trots op hem. Marja wist het nog niet. Ze keek een beetje de kat uit de boom. Ze had teveel verhalen van Harry gehoord, en moest het allemaal nog zien. Sinds Kees jager was geworden moest hij veel vaker de wildernis in. Marja miste hem.

Harry had haar verteld dat vrouwen geen jagers, slagers of vlees-verkopers konden worden, alleen als de gestalte van vuur hen daarvoor sinds het begin had aangesteld. Dat was met Marja dus niet gebeurd. Volgens Harry was er maar één manier om het wel te worden. Dat was door een nacht-verdrag. Dat moest volkomen in het geheim gebeuren, wanneer de man zou slapen. Er hing daarvoor een speciale knop in de slaapkamer die zou berekenen wanneer de man zou slapen van

begin tot het eind. Zo kon de vrouw op tijd weer terug zijn. Marja voelde daar wel wat voor. Zo zou ze in ieder geval wat met Kees gemeen hebben. Ze begon als nachtvlees-verkoper, en volgde ook jagers-cursussen in de nacht wanneer hij sliep. Marja was een snelle leerling, en voor haar was de slager status snel behaald, terwijl Kees nog maar jager was.

Op een nacht wilde zij het geheim van de vleesbrug weten waar Harry het altijd over had. Met Harry ging ze de wildernis in door de kelder-gang. Ze moesten hiervoor heel diep de wildernis in. Ze kwamen aan bij een vochtige woestijn. Het leek wel alsof het hier geregend had. In de woestijn begon ergens de vleesbrug. Die ging over een rivier van vuur. De brug was geheel van vlees gemaakt. De brug was nogal glibberig. Marja was bang dat ze er vanaf zou glijden. Harry stelde haar gerust. Hij had in een rugzak spijkerschoenen meegenomen voor allebei. Dat waren schoenen met lange spijkers om zo vastgehaakt te zijn in het vlees. Samen liepen ze de brug over tot een grote burcht. Hier ging de woestijn gewoon verder, maar ze moesten in de burcht zijn. Er stonden wat poortwachters met geketende roofdieren. De poortwachters zeiden verder niets.

Binnengekomen moest Harry wat codes intypen. Toen kregen ze verder toegang. Ze kwamen in een zaal met wapens : speren, messen, hakbijlen, en andere vreemdsoortige wapens. Er waren wapens bij die Marja nog nooit eerder had gezien. 'Kees zou dit moeten zien,' dacht Marja bij zichzelf, 'die zou het prachtig vinden.' Even miste ze Kees, en wenste dat hij hier met haar was.

Op een tafel stond een bord met vlees. Harry begon ervan te eten, en een andere deur ging open. Ze kwamen in een zaaltje met een heleboel deuren. Naast elke deur stond een tafeltje met een bord vol vlees wat gegeten moest worden om de deur te openen. 'Kies een deur uit,' zei Harry, 'en eet van het vlees.'

Marja liep op een deur af en begon te eten. De deur ging open, en weer kwamen ze in een zaaltje binnen. Grote boeken lagen op tafels met bordjes vlees ernaast. Om de boeken te openen moest er van het vlees gegeten worden. De boeken zouden vol geheimen staan. 'Dit heb jij vast en zeker vaker gedaan,' zei Marja. Harry knikte.

'Kies een boek,' zei Harry.

Marja koos een boek en begon te eten. Het boek opende zich en Marja begon te lezen. De letters deden pijn aan haar ogen, en ze deed het boek weer dicht.

'Ik kan het niet lezen,' stamelde Marja.

'Ik ken al deze boeken door en door,' zei Harry. 'Het zijn boeken van pijn. Al deze boeken hebben hun eigen pijn. Probeer een ander boek.'

Marja koos een ander boek, en at van het vlees. Het boek opende zichzelf, en Marja kreeg enorme last van hoofdpijn. Weer sloeg ze het boek dicht, en ging naar een ander boek, waar ze at van het vlees. Het boek opende zichzelf, en ze kreeg een enorme buikpijn. Dit was nog wel te doen, en ze begon te lezen.

'Witskebat Hapi Da La Loie Vakau, welkom tot het geheim van de vleesbrug, een geordend geheim voor slagers. Ben je geen slager, maak dan dat je wegkomt. Wij eten om te vergeten. Al je herinneringen eet je hier, en dit geeft de toegang tot onze geheimen. Nogmaals welkom. Als slager ben je een volleerde jager. Het vlees dat u hier eet zal u toegang geven tot hogere jachten. Door verschillende soorten vlees te eten krijgt u verschillende soorten wapens voor de jacht. Probeer ze allen uit. In één van deze boeken zult u de code vinden voor de poort voor u. Hierdoor zult u komen tot een hal van jachtwapens die te verkrijgen zijn door van het vlees naast hen te eten. Elk

jachtwapen zal toegang geven tot een nieuwe deur waardoor u een nieuw jachtveld kunt betreden.'

Marja sloeg het boek dicht. De pijn was ondragelijk geworden. Dit waren nachtverhalen, zei Harry. 'Wat is de code, Harry ?' vroeg Marja.

'Ik kan het je niet geven, Marja,' zei Harry. 'Dan zou ik ontploffen. Die codes zijn zo gevaarlijk dat als ze van een mens tot een mens worden overgedragen, dan is dat het gevolg.'

Marja at van het vlees van een ander boek. Het boek opende, en Marja begon te lezen. Ze kreeg verschrikkelijke kiespijn. Ze gilde het uit, en viel bijna flauw. Harry kalmeerde haar. 'Doorzetten, schat,' zei hij. 'Nee !' gilde ze. 'Dit is wreed !'

'Shhh,' zei Harry. 'Maak ze niet wakker. Als ze hier komen, dan … dan …'

'Wie zijn ze ? Waar heb je het over ?' vroeg Marja.

'Dat kan ik niet zeggen. Lees nu maar,' zei Harry.

'Jij hebt makkelijk praten,' zei Marja. 'Ik ben hier ook doorheengegaan,' zei Harry. 'Ik weet er alles van.'

'Het is een offer, hè ?' zei Marja. Harry knikte. 'Ja, dat kun je wel zeggen,' zei hij.

'Okay,' zei Marja, die zich alweer iets beter voelde, en begon te lezen.

Sawir, Fliktir Sawelaa Maree Barits Homalogie Karee Almas Vandrin Ogesta Amalee Verin Sevinda Allanse Allaa Mir Allaa Vaanit Evus Olong Patong Palone Perisia. Welkom tot dit boek, geachte gast. Wij hebben er weer veel werk van gemaakt. Dat heeft u misschien al wel ondervonden. De code tot de volgende deur zal hier geopenbaard worden. Zeeen van winden kunnen ons hier niet vinden. Achter glas zijn zij, waar de zeven zeemeerminnen nog steeds zoeken naar het geheim van goud. Nooit zullen zij binnengaan, zij die op zoek zijn naar de geheimen van de zon. De zon is gestorven. De dictator is dood. Zij die hem trachten op te wekken rusten tevergeefs. Zij zullen geen rust vinden, alle dagen van hun ijdele leven. Ijdelheid vervliegt. Ik geef u toegang tot de nieuwe deur. Weest welbewapend met haar geheimen. Ga niet in voordat u alle boeken hebt gelezen. Gebruikt deze code wel, en geeft haar nooit door aan anderen, anders zult gij ontploffen, en uw weg nooit meer terugvinden. Neemt deze waarheid ter harte. Wij geven ook geen geld terug. U zult ook nooit meer kunnen wederkeren, maar wanneer gij door alle deuren bent heengegaan en alle jachten hebt gejaagd, dan zult gij de code ontvangen om door een reis rond de ster toch te komen waar u eerst was, maar dan vanaf de andere kant. U mag deze code in uw eigen woorden intypen.

Welke boeken Marja daarna ook las, het deed geen pijn meer, en alle letters waren verdwenen. Het waren allemaal lege bladzijdes. 'Dat komt door het kennen van de code,' zei Harry. Samen liepen ze naar de nieuwe deur, waar Marja in haar eigen woorden de code intypte. Toen ging de nieuwe deur open, waar wapens lagen met bordjes vlees ernaast. Marja koos een wapen uit, en begon te eten. Snel nam ze het wapen op en liep naar de deur van het wapen. Ze kwamen hierdoor op een jachtveld terecht. De hele nacht jaagden ze. Toen Marja alle wapens had gebruikt, en op alle jachtvelden was geweest ontving ze de code voor de reis rond de ster. Zo kon ze terugkeren waar ze was door de andere kant. De code gaf hen toegang tot een auto. Met een rotvaart scheurde Harry, die achter het stuur zat, over de geasfalteerde weg.

Marja wist niet hoe lang het geduurd had, maar toen ze thuiskwam lag Kees nog steeds te slapen.

Marja maakte wat ontbijt en bracht het naar Kees.

'Ik heb zo vreemd over je gedroomd,' zei Kees toen hij wakker was geworden. 'Je was op de vleesbrug en gleed in een rivier van vuur.'

'Vreemde droom,' zei Marja. 'Misschien dat Harry hier meer over weet.' Samen gingen ze even later naar Harry toe, en Kees vertelde de droom.

'Ik weet het niet,' zei Harry. 'Misschien een roofvogel van het verleden die jouw heeft lastiggevallen met zo'n nachtmerrie. Het is tijd dat je een slager wordt en dat je de geheimen van de vleesbrug leert kennen.'

Kees werd toegelaten tot de slagers-cursus. Ook hij werd slager, en op een nacht nam Harry hem mee naar de vleesbrug. Alles was veranderd hier. Er was geen vuurzee meer, alleen een woestijn. De vuurzee was inmiddels opgedroogd. 'Zie,' zei Harry, 'geen vuurzee.' Ook Kees moest de boeken lezen, en ontving de code. Na een lange nacht kon hij via de andere kant terugkeren naar de stad. Kees was trots nu hij het geheim van de vleesbrug kende. Dat had hij al zo lang willen kennen. Ook Marja was trots op hem.

Op een nacht zweefde er een nieuwe ster boven de stad. Het was de ster van vlees. Velen gingen de ster binnen. Ook Marja, Kees en Harry. Binnenin de ster was een wildernis geheel gemaakt van vlees, en de ster gleed door een tunnel in de ondergrond van de stad. De ster gleed dieper en dieper.

Harry had het over de vlam van vlees die ze moesten ontvangen. Het was een eeuwige vlam. Hiervoor moesten ze zwemmen over een oceaan van bloed in de ster van vlees. Het was een reusachtige ster, en de oceaan was ook reusachtig. Harry leidde hen tot het zogenaamde bloedstrand. Dit strand was gemaakt van vlees, maar het bloed spoelde hier aan. Harry dook al snel in de branding van de bloed-oceaan. Marja en Kees volgden hem. Het bloed voelde warm aan. Het zwemmen ging heel makkelijk, alsof ze bijna in het bloed dreven. Zo zwommen ze vele dagen aaneen, zonder dat ze echt moe werden. Het bloed gaf hen kracht.

Ze kwamen aan bij een reusachtig vlees-eiland. Hier moest ergens de vlam van vlees zijn. Op het eiland was een orakel van vuur. Harry begon aan het orakel te draaien. Alle drie kregen ze last van vreemde pijnen, alsof ze gestoken waren door insecten. Op hun lichamen kwamen vreemde merktekenen.

Hierdoor kregen ze toegang tot een tunnel achter het orakel. Aan het einde van de gang kwam er iets gloeiends over hen. Dit was de vlam van vlees. De pijnen werden ineens veel erger, daarom moesten ze zo snel mogelijk de oceaan van bloed induiken.

De ster van bloed zweefde boven de oceaan van bloed. Uit de ster van bloed kwam een man tevoorschijn met een ladder. Het scheen Ronald te zijn, de broer van Harry. Ronald was zomaar van de één op de andere dag vermist, maar Harry beweerde altijd al wat er met Ronald gebeurd was, en hoe hij nog steeds telepatisch contact met hem had. Hier scheen hij dus al zijn wiskundige verhalen vandaan hebben gehaald. Zijn broer onderwees hem. Ze klommen de ladder van touw op die Ronald had laten zakken, en toen ze in de ster van bloed waren gekomen viel Harry hem in de armen. Verschillende soorten bloed moest hier gedronken worden voordat er deuren geopend konden worden, boeken gelezen konden worden en wapens gebruikt konden worden.

Ronald was nog wel erger dan Harry met vreemdsoortige wiskundige berekeningen, en praatte honderduit, nog veel meer dan Harry. Ronald had een kasteel geheel gebouwd van botten. Kees en Marja hadden nog nooit zoiets gezien, en het was zo groot. Het kasteel stond vol met boekenkasten

waar de boeken van uitpuilden. Ze kregen allemaal een kamer aangewezen in het kasteel van Ronald.

Midden in de nacht kwam Harry om Kees en Marja te wekken. 'Kom,' zei hij. 'Ik wil jullie wat laten zien.' Hij leidde hen tot diep onder het kasteel van botten, waar bloedrivieren stroomden. Achter de rivieren was een prachtig land. 'Kijk,' zei hij, terwijl hij op het land achter de rivieren wees. 'Bloed is een prachtige bescherming,' zei hij. 'Roofdieren zullen in dromen proberen aan te vallen, maar zij kunnen niet door het bloed komen, daarom is het land achter de bloedrivieren het veiligst.'

Ze zwommen de rivieren over, en kwamen in een land vol insecten. Ze werden volop gestoken, en Marja wilde terug. 'Dit is ook de reden waarom Ronald hier niet komt,' zei Harry. 'Dit is niet uit te houden,' zei Marja.

'Dit is het land van pijnen,' zei Harry. 'Herinner je je de boeken van pijn ?' Marja knikte. 'En door het lezen van de boeken vertrokken de pijnen ook weer,' zei Harry. 'Door te leven in het land van pijnen, zullen de pijnen dus ook vertrekken.'

'Ik zet door, ik zet door,' riep Marja. Plotseling zonk ze in mekaar … Dood. Harry en Kees stonden voor een raadsel. Ze hoorden Ronald roepen aan de andere kant van de rivieren. Na een tijdje stond Ronald naast hen. 'Waarom zijn jullie hier naartoe gegaan, Harry ?' vroeg Ronald. 'Ik had je nog zo gewaarschuwd. Dit land is gevaarlijk. Gevaarlijke insecten enzo. Jullie leven is hier in gevaar. Ik kom hier alleen onder zware condities op gezette tijden.'

'Kun je Marja weer tot leven wekken ?' vroeg Harry.

'Wat denk je, Harry ?' zei Ronald. 'Denk je dat ik een tovenaar ben ?'

'Nou, wel zoiets,' zei Harry.

'Het heeft geen zin, Harry,' zei Ronald. 'De vurige gestalte heeft beslist.' Kees begon te snikken. Hij omhelsde Marja, om te zien of er nog enig leven in haar was, maar tevergeefs.

'Het heeft geen zin, Kees,' zei Ronald. 'De vurige gestalte heeft haar van ons weggenomen. Dat zal wel ergens goed voor zijn.'

'Maar wat dan ?' vroeg Kees.

'Kees, jongen, dat zal ik je haarfijn uitleggen,' zei Ronald. 'Er zijn hier zoveel geheime werelden. Ik weet zeker dat de vurige gestalte haar nodig heeft voor een karwei ergens.'

'Het is allemaal mijn schuld,' zei Harry. 'Ik had beter naar je moeten luisteren.'

'Harry, je bent een pionier,' zei Ronald. 'Je bent een onderzoeker, en die nemen soms risico's. We willen allemaal een betere wereld.'

'Maar ik heb het leven van Kees en Marja op het spel gezet, en het heeft Marja haar leven gekost,' zei Harry.

'Laat het een les voor je zijn, Harry,' zei Ronald. 'Maar de vurige gestalte zou Marja anders op een andere manier hebben weggehaald.'

Maar Harry was niet te troosten. Hij nam hier geen genoegen mee.

'Ik moet boeten,' zei Harry.

'Alsjeblieft, Harry,' zei Ronald. 'Doe dit jezelf niet aan.'

'Ik voelde me als een vader over haar, als een gids. Hoe kon ik zo stom zijn ?' snikte Harry.

'Misschien is ze op een andere manier gestorven,' zei Ronald.

'Ik had beter naar je moeten luisteren,' zei Harry.

'Je bent een avonturier,' zei Ronald.

Kees schrok wakker. Hij was zo opgelucht. Het was allemaal maar een droom geweest. Hij ging even naar de kamer van Marja. Ze lag daar rustig te slapen. Hij ging naar haar toe, ging bij haar liggen en nam haar in zijn armen. Ze werd wakker, en vroeg wat er aan de hand was.

'Ik heb naar gedroomd,' zei Kees. Met een brok in zijn keel vertelde hij zijn droom.

'Jij droomt ook altijd zo vreemd en raar,' fluisterde ze. 'Harry zegt dat het misschien roofvogels van het verleden zijn.' De volgende ochtend vertelden ze het aan Harry en Ronald. Harry keek naar Ronald. Ronald begon te lachen, en kwam toen weer met een wiskundig verhaal, maar het kwam er inderdaad op neer dat een roofvogel van het verleden Kees had lastiggevallen met deze droom.

'Hoe kan hij hiervan verlost worden ?' vroeg Marja.

Ronald dacht even na. 'Er zijn hier inderdaad rivieren van bloed. Daarachter is een land. Er zijn daar insecten die steken. Het is als een toegangs-bewijs. Zo kom je steeds dieper. Het is een taal, een code, die ze op je steken. Ik denk dat de roofvogels jou deze droom hebben gegeven, om je af te schrikken, dat je daar niet naar toe zal gaan.

Met z'n vieren gingen ze de rivieren over. Ze werden inderdaad gestoken.

Kees wordt wakker achter zijn stuur door getoeter achter hem. Zo lang had hij in de file gestaan. Overal waren files vanwege de komst van de oranje ster. Hij had alles maar gedroomd. Marja was thuisgebleven voor haar wekelijkse club-avond.

Zee der Leugens

De spin

De spin, wevende de dimensies, de spin, het trauma. Het ruist over de zeeen, om de slag te slaan. Hier vandaan nemen de religies. Daarachter verbergen zij de spin. De spin neemt hen allen in. Ze kunnen het niet aan. Ze maken vla. Ze eten het, en doen alsof er niets aan de hand is.

De spin wacht, en slaat dan toe. Hiervan nemen de religies. Ze hebben veel te verbergen. Bergen, hopen.

De spin maakt een teken, en slaat dan toe, zoals de religies het doen. Maar zij houden de echo van de spin netjes verborgen.

De spin is op jacht …

Ik heb het gehoord. Hoor je zijn stem ? Roepende, gillende, wevende de dimensies. De religies kunnen het niet aan.

Toe, neem van haar.

Ik denk dat ik één van hen ben geworden. Ik draag een wapen …

Ik sla toe zoals hen, maar ik ken de spin niet. Het heeft mijn geheugen gewist.

Ik wordt ergens wakker. Ik ken het hier niet. Waar kom ik vandaan ? De spin is op jacht geweest. Wij drijven allemaal rond in de modder.

In de verte zie ik de brug. Ik zie hen met de maskers. Ik denk dat ik één van hen ben geworden.

De spin heeft mij gebeten. Er is overal bloed. Ik ben meer geworden zoals jou. Ze hebben mijn geheugen gewist. Ze kwamen op die dag en namen alles mee ….

De man met de boog

De spin tatoeeert mijn hersenen. Honing stroomt, ontwaakt. Mijn hersenen zijn als bloesem. Het voelt zo fragiel. Het water stroomt langs mijn vingers, en ik kijk naar haar. Ze is een pop. Ze zit op haar rieten stoel en beweegt niet. Ook zij was aangeraakt door de spin.

De spin tatoeeerde mijn hersenen, totdat ik niets meer wist. Zo'n hopeloos gevoel, als een gat in de lucht. Ik denk dat ik nu één van hen ben geworden, op hun wereld leef, zoals hen. Ik kijk hen aan, met het gevoel dat we één zijn. Een kleine prik doet mij ontwaken, alsof ik toch anders dan hen ben. De man met de boog kwam tot mijn stad, helemaal tot mijn huis, en klom op de steigers. Hij had vier pijlen op zijn boog, die hij gezamenlijk afschoot op mij. Dwars door de ramen gingen ze, en toen dwars door mijn hoofd. Hij nam mij mee, maar waar naartoe ?

Ik keek naar beneden, en zag de grote brug. Ik hoorde haar roepen … maar toen niet meer …

De droom

Haar gezicht, van goud, mij bespottende. Ze schrok toen ik haar zag, en toen was ze stil. Ik zat voor het raam, en aan de andere kant zat zij in haar schommelstoel. Ik denk dat ze aan het borduren was, of aan het breien. Een trui ofzo. En de honing was in mijn hoofd. Ik dacht terug aan de man met de boog die mij mee had genomen. Hij bracht me naar een hoog gebouw. Een flat ofzo, en vertelde wat er aan de hand was, maar ik kan me er niets meer van herinneren. De spin was in mijn hoofd. Het wiste mijn verleden. Het tatoeerde me, en zo werd alles langzaam en stapsgewijs veranderd. Het was net allemaal anders, en het kreeg nieuwe betekenissen. Ik was als op de golven van een woeste zee, die mij veranderde. Alles was anders.

Ik droeg haar naar de zee, en legde haar in het zand. De golven raakten haar licht aan. Ik droeg haar op aan de spin. De spin verscheen gigantisch boven de zee, en slokte haar op. Maar het was een droom. Ik heb geen houvast, want er leeft een spin in mijn hoofd. Het is een droom. En nu ontwaak ik.

Het grijze

Zij vermeed mij, waarom weet ik niet. Misschien vanwege de spin in mijn hoofd. Het keek door mijn ogen. Ik kon haar veranderen, en daarom rende ze weg, het bos in. Ik achtervolgde haar, maar ze rende steeds harder. Haar lot was tragisch. Ik wil er niet aan denken.

Ik voel alsof ik nu één van hen ben geworden. De man met de boog vertelde mij veel, maar waar is hij nu ? En wat is er van overgebleven ? Zoveel jaren naar school, alles vergeten. Waar is alles goed voor geweest ? En ze spraken maar door, zij met de maskers. Ze brachten me naar de brug, waar ik verdronk. Door vogels werd ik opgenomen, en zij brachten mij naar een plaats waar de grote spin sprak. Ik zag mijn hersenen voor mijn ogen aan flarden gescheurd, en de spin sprak door totdat het pijn deed. Zij brachten mij hier voor een reden. Een reden die ik niet zag. Ik haatte hen, maar toch voelde ik dat ik één met hen was geworden. We reden in dezelfde auto, hadden dezelfde kleren, en vochten in dezelfde oorlog. Ze stapten uit met hun geweren, en ik was één van hen. De leider moest de nieuwe koning worden. Daar vochten wij voor. Ik deed wat mij voorgezegd werd. Dat is alles wat ik weet.

Wij waren met zovelen, toen we de stad aanvielen. Velen vielen aan onze voeten. Zoveel dromen sprongen kapot. Ik was één met hen geworden. Nu wist ik het zeker. Hier nemen de religies af, hier lopen de dimensies in elkaar over, als een zwaar vergif. Ik kan alleen maar janken op dit punt, en niemand mag mij aanraken. Ik sta daar met een geweer, één van hen, om onze leider koning te maken. Hier nemen de religies af, en lopen de dimensies in elkaar over, totdat alles grijs is.

Vier pijlen

De spin tatoeeert mij. Ik ben er gewend aan geworden. Ik zak af in een grote diepte. Aan een touw ben ik vast, als een duiker naar de schat. Zoveel pijlen schieten er door mijn hoofd, om de honing te doen ontwaken. Ik verlies mijn zicht. Ik kijk naar mijn hersenen, als naar bloesem, en rood bloedende honing, en allemaal ladders, in diepe, diepe duisternis. Ik ben niet meer in de zee. Ik ben van binnen. Zoveel pijlen door mijn hoofd, op de rug van de man met de boog. Hij hangt aan het touw, als aan een liaan. Dromend glijd ik in een oerwoud, als aan de drugs. Beneden sneeuwt het, en mensen schreeuwen. Zij worden nat. Hij bracht mij hier. Voor heel even.

Mijn hersenen zijn bedekt met honing, en ik staar naar de ladders. Ook mijn handen zijn bedekt met honing. Ik grijp een ladder, maar het brokkelt af in mijn handen. Alles brokkelt af, totdat alleen een rode lijn overblijft, recht door het grijze. Alles is grijs.

Rood zover het oog reikt, die rode lijn, als de enige weg door het grijze. Als een rood pad door de wildernis. Vier pijlen had hij op zijn boog, die dwars door mijn hoofd werden geramd. Ik staar naar de pijlen. Zij hebben mijn leven gered. Ik kus ze, en wikkel ze in. Ze brachten mij over de zee, over de grote brug. Ik kan janken als ik aan ze denk of naar ze staar. Religie brokkelde af, recht voor

mijn ogen.

De tweede pijl

Ze was zo lang. Ze was lang genoeg om mij aan te raken, dwars door mijn schilden heen. De nachtmerrie brak zij af. Zij was één van de vier pijlen. De man met de boog had zo lang aan haar gewerkt. Dagen en nachten was hij bezig haar te decoreren. Hij maakte de juiste insnijdingen, de juiste bochten. Deze pijl was zijn paspoort en sleutel.

Ze was één van de vier pijlen. Een lange pijl, die mij nachtmerries gaf. Ze was zo klein na de duistere nacht, maar niet te klein. Ik was langer dan haar, maar ze trok mij naar beneden. Ze liet mij de duisternis onder het huis zien, de grotten en de tunnels. Ze nam mij mee naar deze plaatsen, en ik dacht dat het altijd nacht was. Ze liet mij haar dromen zien, en haar leugens. Ze had zoveel gezichten. En in de nachten zweefde zij over de brug, of dreef in de wateren. Met of zonder masker.

Zij was de tweede pijl. Ze zit nog steeds in mijn hoofd. Alles brokkelt af wanneer ze spreekt. Ik kan mezelf niet terugvinden, niets om aan vast te houden.

Het trappenhuis

Ik probeer te ontcijferen waar ik ben. Ze nam mij mee naar een diepe kelder. Vanaf toen voelde het weer alsof mijn geheugen begon weg te golven. Ik kwam aan bij een grote grijze zee. Spinnen zwommen hier, groot en klein, en bruggen waren nachtmerries. Grote spookbruggen over de zee, over elkaar. Was dit vrede of oorlog ? Dit angstaanjagende plaatje …. Een foto …. Ze stak haar mes door het plaatje, en bedreigde mij met dit mes, om mij vervolgens nog dieper mee te nemen. Met het mes tegen mijn keel leidde ze mij over de trappen naar beneden. Het was een diep trappenstelsel. Het trappenhuis was mijn nachtmerrie. In het riool probeerde ze mij te verdrinken. Ratten zwommen hier. Een rat viel haar aan, en trok haar naar beneden. Dit redde mijn leven. Ik zwom naar de kant, maar ik wist niet of ik dood was of levend. Een grote rat stond daar. Deze ratten waren groot. Hij trok mij op de kant. De stad zou branden. Ik mocht niet meer terug.

Herinneringen

Hij woonde in een andere stad. Ik ging daar vaak naartoe. Dan deden we spelletjes, en dachten nergens meer aan. Ik kwam daar niet meer toen hij stierf. Maar soms kwamen de herinneringen terug, als grote oorlogen, als vogels die mij meenamen, terug naar mijn verleden.

De galg

Het leek wel alsof sommige jaren van mijn leven als een paradijs waren, als eilanden in de zee, waar ik aankwam na grote gevechten. Sommige jaren waren moeilijk. De spin had ze allemaal in mijn hersenen getatoeeerd. Ze spraken mij toe, al die tatoeages. Ik keek in de dieptes als in bodemloze putten, en hield mij vast aan de brug. Ik voelde mij dronken. Ik ben toen steden ingegaan die ik dacht te herinneren. Helemaal zeker was ik niet meer. Ik was hier niet gekend.

Ze stond in de keuken, lang als ze was. Ik weet niet wat ze kookte. De spin gebruikte haar om mijn hersenen te tatoeeren. Ik was in haar armen, en ze beschuldigde mij, dat ik geld van haar zou hebben gestolen en medicijnen. Ze stuurde mij brieven, en beschuldigde mij later dat ik die brieven zou hebben verscheurd. Ik hield van haar. Ze was de tweede pijl. De man met de boog had lang werk van haar gemaakt.

Ze had het eten klaar, en ik gooide de helft ervan weg, omdat ik bang was dat ze me zou vergiftigen. Dit kon ze mij niet vergeven. Ik had haar eten weggegooid. Het redde mijn leven. Zij

wilde mijn leven niet redden. Ze beschuldigde mij dat ik mijn eigen leven had gered. Ze was dood.

Na de duistere nacht was ze zo klein, maar niet te klein. Ik was gewoon langer dan haar, maar toch haalde ze me neer. Ze dwong mij van haar voedsel te eten, de volle portie, en ik moest aan haar medicijnen, dezelfde die zij slikte. Ze schold en schreeuwde, en de spin in mijn hoofd tatoeeerde mij. Alles werd zwart, en toen wit. Zij leidde mij door het grijze, over de rode streep.

Deze steden waren allemaal gemaakt door religies, maar daaronder waren grote geheimen, diep onder de stad. Zij zou mij naar al die plaatsen leiden. Zij was de tweede pijl.

In de keuken stond zij, klaar om mij te vernietigen, klaar om mij te vergiftigen. Ik kon niet weigeren. De spin was in mijn hoofd. Honing droop van mijn fragiele hersenen. Ik geloofde alles wat ze zij. Zij was mijn religie. Zij was de tweede pijl.

Oog in oog met de man met de boog. Hij sloeg mij op mijn kaak. In een boshut werd ik wakker. Ik keek naar de spin, en viel toen weer in slaap. Mijn kaak was broos. Ik kon niet praten. Ik denk dat ik net als hen ben. Ik ben ver afgedwaald. Diep in de bossen kwam ik haar tegen, de prinses. Zij kapte hier de bomen om, en maakte haar meubels. Ook schreef ze haar boeken op het dode hout. Zij maakte religies. Vanaf hier marcheerden haar soldaten, om de wereld beneden haar in te nemen, en boven haar. Alles was van haar. Op hoge deuren klopten zij, om een bevel uit te dragen om te komen tot de galg. Zoveel gingen aan de galg die dag.

De oorlog

'Naam en toenaam,' werd er gezegd. Een zwart leren handschoen schreef alles op papier. Toen mocht ik door. Ik kreeg mijn eigen put. Maar de spin was nog steeds in mijn hoofd. Alles draaide. Ik was duizelig. Niemand kwam door. Geen bezoek. Ik was geheel afgezonderd. Er werden hier huizen gebouwd die even later in mijn hoofd afbrokkelden. Ik was er niet van overtuigd dat dit echt was. Maar wat was dan wel echt ? De spin weefde de dimensies door elkaar, en bouwde een nieuwe wereld. In mijn hoofd brokkelde het allemaal af, alsof het nooit door kon komen. Ik zweefde tussen twee realiteiten. Niets kon ooit echt worden. De spin raapte niks op. Er werden gewoon werelden overheen gebouwd. Alles in het sop. En de gebouwen werden hoger, en de mensen werden langer. Ik kon de spin van dichtbij zien. Maar ik kon de spin niet aanraken. De spin was achter glas.

Zoveel mensen klommen op ladders omhoog, om te kunnen ontkomen aan de spin, maar de ladders braken gewoon af. Niemand kon ontsnappen. De dimensies werden in elkaar geweven. Het was een verlammend gevoel. We kwamen nooit ver.

De oorlog had dit allemaal gedaan.

Oude lappen

En ik droomde dat ik over de zee zweefde, ziende op alle zeeslagen, en grote boten. Alles zonk in de grote duistere, zwarte zee, als in vergif. Alleen de spin kwam boven, en nu is het in mijn hoofd. Fragiele draden door mijn hoofd. Een pistool of geweer is niet opgewassen tegen de spin. Alle dimensies worden hier in elkaar verweven. De spin is achter glas, dik glas, en iedereen voelt hopeloos. Zoveel dromen springen kapot wanneer de spin langskomt. En men weet nooit wanneer de spin komt. De spin komt plotseling. Het is niet te berekenen. Zo diep steekt het, zo intens, als het tatoeeren van hersenen. De zee lijkt van honing, meer en meer, als dikke stroop waar we nooit doorheen kunnen komen. Het trekt ons naar beneden, als een soldaat van de spin. Het trekt ons tot de kelders, en tot het riool. Als een pop in de kelder kijk je me aan. Vier pijlen door je hoofd, en zoveel naalden in je lichaam. Je bent net als ik. Ik zie de rode lijn in je ogen. Jij bent ook vergiftigd, net als ik. Je bent gebonden op een stoel, en probeert mij dromen te geven, maar die dromen komen nooit aan. De spin slaat alles stuk, en maakt er iets anders van. Ik kan nooit horen wat je zegt. Diep, diep in de kelder leven wij, met uitzicht op het riool, en daarachter is de zee, die nooit meer

terugkomt. De soldaat van de spin heeft zijn werk gedaan. Kleurloos is het, met scheuten van pijn. Het is als het verkopen van oude lappen.

Het orakel

Ik ben eenzaam, alleen op de wereld, als een pop die de andere poppen niet kan bereiken. Morgen sta ik in de speelgoed-winkel. Het werk is bijna af. Een kind zal mij kopen. Het kind zal mij meesleuren in de modder. Het kind zal mij proberen te voeden met rotzooi. Ik kom in een nieuw huis, waar ik op een kastje wordt gezet. Mijn gezicht is opgeschilderd. Ik kan alles horen wat ze zeggen. Het kind is nu ouder, en speelt niet meer met mij, maar nog steeds voel ik de spin in mijn hoofd, die mijn dromen maakt, en stukslaat. Hier lopen de dimensies in elkaar over.

Ik probeer te draaien, en te bewegen. Dit zijn de oorlogs-jaren. Er is een inval in het huis, en ik wordt meegenomen. Even later wordt ik in de rivier geworpen. Ik kan alles zien van hier. Ook zie ik de grote brug. Ik zie hen met de maskers. In de nacht ben ik als dakpannen. Als schilden tegen de regen. Ik denk dat ik nu één met hen ben geworden.

Met een fluitje roepen ze mij op, en vragen mij om informatie. Ze willen alles weten, en dan klappen zij. Ik kan hen alles vertellen, en ze geloven alles. Ik ben nu een geest. Ik ben interessant, want ik kan dingen zien die zij niet zien. Als een orakel zetten ze mij neer, als een monument. Het is een nieuwe religie. Zij schilderen mij op, en verdelen de stukken. Als hongerige wolven bijten ze me, totdat de spin hen uit elkaar trekt. Mijn leven is gered. De spin in mijn hoofd …. mijn oplossing …. waar de dimensies in elkaar overvloeien, en dan is alles anders.

Borduringen van mijn hart

Maar de dag erna sta ik weer op de markt. Weer ben ik een orakel, om de toekomst te voorspellen. Ik ben boos bedrog, boeren-bedrog, om anderen op te lichten. Alles draait om geld, en ik dans als een ballerina. Ik doe mijn kunstjes wel. Aan het einde van de dag steekt de spin mij, en dan is het afgelopen. Maar de dag erna begint alles weer van voren aan. Ik ben in de carrousel. Ik werk voor het circus. Ik werp messen en speel met vuur, en zij … zij is mijn assistente.

De assistente van de dood, het verkoopt goed. Dat moet je leren. Het is een koud kunstje.

Ik ben rijk, en wordt alsmaar rijker. Mensen aanbidden mij. Ze staan voor mij in de rij. Zij regelt de economie. Zij is mijn accountant. Als boekhouder wint ze. Dat is haar grote geheim. Ze verkoopt mij, en koopt me dan weer terug voor een laag prijsje, of ze steelt me gewoon terug. Zij is een groot spion. Maar de spin heeft ook haar grenzen opgesteld. Ze is de tweede pijl. Nauwkeurig schiet de man met de boog haar door het raam, dwars door mijn hoofd. Hij had maar één kans. Toen werd hij afgevoerd door de grote spin. In een ziekenhuis wordt hij neergelegd. Hij wordt met banden aan een bed bevestigd. En vele injecties gaan door zijn hoofd. De spin neemt ook hem onder handen. Zijn hersenen worden getatoeeerd, voor grotere opdrachten. Diep onder de grond gaat hij, om een zetel in de politiek te behalen. Dan slaapt iedereen. Hij speelt met het knopje. Hij speelt met de lamp. Zijn haren raken verstrikt in een spinnenweb.

Ik zie de zee onder mij, bedekt met zoveel spinnenwebben. Allemaal raken zij verstrikt. Ook ik. Hier spoelen de dimensies aan. Hier spoel ik aan. Bloedend lig ik op het strand, totdat een vrouw mij wegtrekt. Ik wordt als een pop behandeld. Maar de spin steekt haar ook. Er is niemand meer.

Onder het grijze lig ik, waar het vriest. Haar haren zijn lang en grijs. Zij houdt mij stevig in een greep, totdat de spin haar ook steekt.

Ik ren vrij, door de weilanden. Ik word vies, ik ben onder de modder. Ik struikel en val, en kruip een schuur binnen. Dan brokkelt alles af. Ik ben in het grote niets.

Ik ben in de grote stad van het niets, waar ik fiets. Iemand verkoopt fruit, maar niemand ziet het,

alleen ik. Ik ben het grote niets.

Het is stil hier. Alles glijdt weg in de grote zee.

De spin borduurt mijn hart, mijn lichaam is gevoelig.

De nieuwe honing

Ik ben één met hen nu. Ik voel één met hen. Zij hebben ook honing, en het is een zee van honing.

De brug brokkelt af. Niemand kan meer terug, en niemand kan nog komen. Maar dan brokkelt hier ook alles af.

Door bliksemschichten worden deze poppen bestuurd.

Het is de melk van de spin, een nieuwe honing in hun hoofd.

Het opent boeken, en ze zien visioenen. Dat wat lang geleden verloren was gegaan.

Ik denk dat ik één met hen ben. Al deze dingen gebeuren ook in mij. Maar dan brokkelt alles af. Wij kunnen elkaar niet bereiken. Wij kunnen niets tegen elkaar zeggen. Alles wordt vervormd in de wind.

De zee van leugens

Het blijft steken totdat de honing vloeit. Honing van lang vervlogen tijden.

Het blijft steken totdat het de oude tonen voortbrengt, de geluiden van verloren gegane tijden.

Nu is het terug. De oude trommel staat naast de kast. Hij trommelt erop, en dan wordt alles stil.

De fluit is terug, en oude vogels fladderen in het rond. Klaar om hen over de zee te brengen.

Roep het nog eens zoals het was, schreeuw nog eens zoals het gebeurde.

Het blijft steken totdat de oude visioenen stromen. In een zee van visioenen woont de spin.

Ik kan je niet voelen, ik zie je niet, daarom moet het steken, steken totdat ik je vind.

In de mand met kleding is niets te vinden, alleen je naam.

Ik kan je niet voelen en zien. Ik kijk naar je speelgoed, je trommel en je fluit.

De vogels nemen mij op, en brengen mij over de zee, waar je eens woonde.

Alleen je naam staat geschreven op een stukje papier.

Eens was je hier, maar nu niet meer.

Ik kan je niet voelen en zien. Ik ben als een blinde man. Maar de spin blijft steken, totdat de rode lijn naar jou leidt. Ik kijk in je glazige ogen. Dan voel ik je warme hand.

Ik geef je een kus. Dan geef je mij een kus terug, met speeksel op mijn wang.

Ik til je op. Dan zie ik je straal en je lach.

Ik heb je nu helemaal. Ik trok je uit de mand en de doos.

Ik neem je in mijn armen, maar dan brokkelt alles af.

Het is de leugen die steekt.

De man met de boog kon me net op tijd redden.

Verblindende lichten waren op jacht,

Maar de pijl redde mij ….

Ik val op de grond, en tijd staat stil …

Ze liep weg. Ze keek niet op of om …
De pijl had mij gered …

In een zee van leugens lag ik,
maar de pijl maakte alles anders …
En er waren vier pijlen …
Zij was de tweede …

Ik luisterde naar haar slaapliedjes …
Ik trok mezelf aan haar op …
De spin stak mij totdat ik sliep …

Een schip op zee,
en ik zonk weg in de leugens,
geen houvast,
want de spin had mij gestoken …

Er was hier niets, maar toen alleen duisternis,
En het bleek steken, totdat iemand jouw naam noemde

Hier vloeiden de dimensies in elkaar over …
Hier woonde de spin ….
Mijn hart sterft de hele tijd, totdat ik de rode lijn weer zie,
en het grijze wegvaagt

Hier heb ik een uitzicht over de hele stad.
Daar staan zij met hun trommels.

Het getrommel is als het steken van de spin.
En dan slaapt de stad,
bedekt onder sneeuw.

Getrommel in de wind,

wordt zo vals dat het de doden oproept,
een leger van doden.
In de zee van leugen zullen we allen vergaan.

In mijn keel steekt het.
Ook daar is de spin.
Het steekt totdat het de oude verloren woorden terugbrengt,
Totdat ik mijn mond open …

Ik slik een paar keer, maar de pijn gaat niet weg.
Het wordt alleen maar erger.
Er is geen weg uit.
Ik zie haar daar staan, spottend,
liegend, als gedronken hebbend van de zee der leugens.
Tussen de prachtige bomen staat ze,
met prachtige struiken,
de leugen aanbiddend,
totdat ik afbrokkel

Zij is de tweede pijl, een zwaar vergif,
mijn hoofd is dood na de oorlog.

Op de zee der leugens heeft ze haar boot.
Ze vist mij eruit, om me nog meer te pijnigen.
Ik ben een pop in haar armen.
Ze knijpt al het leven uit me.

Ze sleurt me naar het riool.
Zo snel wordt ze oud,
als de riool-roos.
En alles wat ik kan doen is grijpen naar de grammofoon-speler,
maar dan brokkelt mijn arm af,
en dan alles om me heen.
Er is een stuk van het standbeeld afgebroken.
De spin steekt in mijn hoofd.
Er is bloed in het grijze, een rode lijn.
Ik moet mijn reis voortzetten.

Spinnen komen uit mijn mond.
Ik kan niet praten.
De tweede soldaat van de spin is gekomen.
Hij zegt dat ik rustig moet zijn.
Ik kan hem wel onthoofden.

Hij slaat mij met een laars,
en drukt mijn hoofd tegen de kachel aan.
Ineens zie ik het licht.
De zee der leugens spreekt tot mij.
Maar ik kan niet terugspreken.

Dan ineens vlieg ik de spin aan,
Ik grijp mijn mes, maar mijn arm staat stil.
Hier is waar de dimensies in elkaar overvloeien.

De spin is nu slechts een bruine vlek op het behang,
Ik had dit veel eerder moeten doen.
Waarom deed ik dit niet ?
Ik was onder de controle van een spin,
en een man met vier pijlen.

De spin was de derde pijl,
Het was een huwelijk,
wat al snel in de dood eindigde.
Op de rug van dit beest kwam ik tot de onderwereld.
Maar dit beest moest mij terugbrengen,
mij terugbrengen tot waar ik eens vandaan kwam.
Ik was ontvoerd.

Ik had de spin overwonnen,
een huwelijksfeest.
Hier is waar de dimensies in elkaar overvloeien,
Hier is waar de spin niet meer spreekt.

Planten van Vlees

Harm woonde met zijn twee kinderen aan de rand van een bos. Het bos was tamelijk groot, en er bleek een indianenstam te wonen die een paal met een dierenkop erop aanbaden. Meestal waren dat koppen van varkens of runderen zoals buffels en bizons. Harm waarschuwde zijn kinderen altijd dat ze niet het bos moesten ingaan. Hij was te bang dat de indianen zijn kinderen wat vreemds zouden aandoen. Er gingen allerlei vreemde verhalen over deze stam in de ronde. Ze zouden vreemde dingen doen met kinderen. Bewijzen voor deze verhalen waren er niet. Maar Harm wilde geen enkel risico nemen.

Op een dag tikte er een man op het raam. Het bleek een indiaan te zijn. Hij had dierenvellen op zijn rug, en hij had laarzen van een soort bont. Harm deed open, en vroeg waarmee hij de man kon helpen. De indiaan zei niets. Toen wees hij op zijn laarzen. 'Ikko Boeke,' zei de indiaan. Harm kon dat natuurlijk niet verstaan en haalde zijn schouders op. 'Mijnheer, ik heb geen idee wat u mij probeert te vertellen. Die taal ken ik helemaal niet,' zei Harm een beetje nors. Weer wees de indiaan op zijn laarzen, en toen zag Harm dat er een gat inzat. 'Oh, ik dacht dat indianen zelf wel wisten hoe ze zulke dingen kunnen maken,' grapte Harm. 'Nou, komt u maar verder.' De indiaan kwam naar binnen en deed zijn laars uit. Harm pakte draad en een naald, en begon de stof aan elkaar te naaien. Hij vond het vreemd dat de indiaan dit zelf niet kon.

'Hebben ze bij jullie geen onderwijs ?' vroeg Harm. De indiaan schudde zijn hoofd. De kinderen kwamen thuis en waren verbaasd toen ze de indiaan op de bank zagen zitten. 'Wat moet hij hier ?' vroeg Ko.

'Laten we een beetje gastvrij zijn,' zei Harm.

'Maar pa, u weet dat indianen gevaarlijk zijn,' zei Bep.

'Daar zijn geen bewijzen voor,' zei Harm. 'Trouwens, hij had gewoon mijn hulp nodig.'

'Het kan een valstrik zijn, pa,' zei Ko, die het niet vertrouwde.

'Ach welnee,' zei Harm. 'Hij kan hier best wel een nachtje slapen.'

'Wat !' riep Ko. 'Mij niet gezien. Dan ga ik wel bij oma slapen.'

'Doe jij dat maar,' zei Harm. 'Ik ben wel blij met een beetje gezelschap sinds mama is overleden.'

Bep begon te snikken. 'Moet je dat allemaal weer aanhalen, pa ? Zo komen we er nooit overheen.'

'Sorry,' zei Harm. 'Ga jij ook maar naar oma.'

De kinderen liepen de deur uit, terwijl Harm aan de indiaan vroeg of hij een biertje wilde. De indiaan wilde dat wel. Harm zag het als een uitdaging. Als hij vriendschap met de indiaan kon sluiten, dan zou dat bevordelijk zijn voor de verhouding tussen het dorp en de indianen. Misschien zou dat wel veel misverstanden uit de weg ruimen.

In de nacht hoorde Harm wat gerommel op het zolder. Toen hoorde hij ineens luide muziek. Toen hij kwam kijken had de indiaan een grammofoon-plaat opgezet. Harm kon er wel om lachen, en ging weer verder slapen. De indiaan bleek het goed naar zijn zin te hebben, maar de dag erop wilde de indiaan weer terug. De indiaan was te gehecht aan het bos. Harm kon dat goed begrijpen. De indiaan was verder erg dankbaar, maar maakte duidelijk in hele gebrekkige taal dat de vriendschap nu ook ten einde moest komen. De indiaan zei dat het voor hem eigenlijk verboden was om vriendschap te hebben met de blanken.
Harm kon het niet laten om nog even te vragen over die laars. 'Waarom kwam je hier eigenlijk voor die laars ? Hebben jullie geen vrouwen in jullie stam die voor dit soort dingen zorgen ?'

De indiaan liet weten dat ze geen vrouwen meer hadden. Die waren allemaal dood. De stam had alleen nog maar mannen, en die schenen heel onhandig met deze dingen te zijn.

'Maar hoe moet dat dan verder als je nog eens zoiets nodig hebt ?' vroeg Harm. De indiaan maakte duidelijk dat het maar behelpen was, en dat alles te hooi en te gras zou gaan. Misschien zouden ze zich het zelf wel aanleren, maar dat zou tijd kosten. De laatste vrouw van de stam was net overleden. Harm zei dat hij kon begrijpen hoe hij zich voelde, want zijn vrouw was ook overleden.

De indiaan maakte duidelijk dat hij juist blij was dat de vrouw dood was. Vrouwen bleken een grote macht binnen de stam te hebben, en die zouden ze in het verleden misbruikt hebben. De indiaan voelde zich vrij nu. Harm vroeg zich af of de vrouwen misschien vermoord waren. 'Hoe zijn jullie vrouwen aan hun einde gekomen ?' vroeg Harm tactisch.

De indiaan liet weten dat dit een groot geheim was. Harm vond dat verdacht. 'Waarom wil je het niet zeggen ?' vroeg Harm. 'Hebben jullie iets te verbergen ?'

'Shhhh,' zei de indiaan, en drukte zijn vingers op de lippen van Harm. 'Jullie zijn me maar een vreemde koekebakkers,' zei Harm.

De indiaan maakte duidelijk dat hij nu moest gaan, en rende het bos in.

Harm stond met zijn ogen te knipperen. Hij vertrouwde het helemaal niet. Even later kwamen de kinderen thuis.

'Hoe was het bij oma ?' vroeg Harm.

'Oma was er niet,' zei Ko. 'Maar we hadden de sleutel, dus we zijn daar gewoon gaan slapen.'

'Misschien is ze bij tante Buurtje,' zei Harm.

Ko en Bep gingen op de bank zitten. 'Hoe is het afgelopen met die indiaan ?' vroeg Bep. Toen vertelde Harm het hele verhaal.

'Ik heb nog eens lopen denken, hè,' zei Bep. 'Die indianen hebben misschien onze hulp nodig. Ze

leven niet voor niets in het bos. Er moet iets in het verleden mis zijn gegaan.'

'Ach welnee,' zei Ko. 'Ze houden van het bos. Ze zouden niet anders willen. Er is nooit iets verkeerds gegaan, want ze hebben altijd al in het bos geleefd.'

'Nou, ik weet het nog niet zo net,' zei Bep. 'Misschien hebben ze traumatische ervaringen gehad in stad of dorp, en zijn toen naar het bos vertrokken. Wie zou er nu vanuit zichzelf zo primitief willen leven ?'

'Ik,' zei Ko. 'Ik begrijp hen gedachtengang helemaal. Maar voor ons zijn ze nu niet meer te vertrouwen. Het lijkt wel alsof er een vuur is tussen hen en ons. Het bos is in oorlog met het dorp.'

'Er kunnen toch ook wel tussenwegen zijn ?' vraagt Bep.

'Blijkbaar niet,' zei Ko.
Midden in de nacht wordt er op het raam geslagen. Een groep woedende indianen is gekomen. Harm rent naar beneden, ziet de indianen staan, en grijpt naar zijn honkbal-knuppel.

Hij doet de deur open en roept : 'Wie van jullie wil er het eerst aan ?'

De indianen zijn boos, en laten hem weten dat ze erachter zijn gekomen dat één van hen bij de blanken is geweest en vriendschap heeft gesloten. Ze laten weten dat er een speer door het hart van de dader is gegaan door dit misdrijf.

'Zeg, zijn jullie de politie ofzo ?' vraagt Harm boos. 'Scheer je weg, of ik bel de politie !'

De indianen maakten het duidelijk dat ze de politie niet waren, maar dat de blanken zouden boeten voor de vriendschap met één van hen. Blanken zouden niet te vertrouwen zijn, en het zou als een vloek op hun stam rusten als ze dat zomaar langs hun heen zouden laten gaan. Verschillende speren werden er op Harm gericht. Harm stond klaar om toe te slaan met de honkbal-knuppel, en riep naar zijn kinderen om hen de politie te laten bellen. Steeds meer indianen begonnen zich te verzamelen voor het huis van Harm. 'Ik waarschuw je,' zei één van de indianen. 'We zullen je niet vermoorden, maar lever je kinderen uit. Dan zal het voor ons afgedaan zijn.'

'Nooit,' zei Harm woedend. 'Zijn jullie helemaal gek geworden.'

'Je kinderen liggen al verlamd in hun bed,' zei de indiaan. 'We zijn al door de achterkant binnengekomen, en hebben hen het spinnengif toegediend.'

'Spinnengif ?' vroeg Harm verbaasd. Toen werd ook Harm van achteren geinjecteerd met het gif, en lag al snel verlamd op de grond. Na lange tijd werd hij wakker in het indianenkamp diep in het bos. Hij lag daar vastgebonden naast zijn kinderen. Zijn kinderen waren nog steeds bewusteloos. In de verte zag hij een paal met een varkenskop erop.

Een indiaan kwam dichterbij. 'Aanbidden jullie die varkenskop daar ?' vroeg Harm.

'Kop houden,' zei de indiaan, en schopte hem een paar keer.

'Nee, serieus,' zei Harm. 'Ik wil weten of jullie die varkenskop daar aanbidden.'

'Gaat je niks aan,' zei de indiaan nors, en schopte hem weer. Dit keer veel harder.

'Jij bent leraar van beroep, hè ?' vraagt de indiaan nors.

'Hoe weet je dat ?' kreunt Harm van de pijn.

'Wij weten alles,' zei de indiaan, die hem weer schopte, hard in zijn buik. 'Jullie blamken weten precies hoe iedereen te maken zoals jullie zelf.'

Harm kon niet meer praten van de pijn. Het duizelde hem voor de ogen, terwijl de indiaan maar door blijf schoppen, totdat hij weer bewusteloos viel.

Toen hij weer wakker was was hij aan een paal gebonden. Het bleek de paal met de varkenskop te zijn. De varkenskop was vlak boven hem.

'Dom varken,' zei één van de indianen, terwijl de andere indianen lachten. Een wat oudere indiaan kwam naar voren. Hij drukte een mes op de keel van Harm. 'Jullie blanken hebben alles verziekt,' zei de oude indiaan. 'Jullie zijn een vloek. Wij weten precies wat wij met jullie moeten doen. Jij gaat geofferd worden aan de paal met de varkenskop.'

Harm wordt wakker in zweet. Hij had alles maar gedroomd. De indiaan slaapt nog steeds op het zolder, en zijn kinderen zijn bij oma. Die ochtend moest hij naar school om les te geven, maar de nachtmerrie zit hem nog steeds in de keel. Hij heeft moeite met spreken, en besluit af te bellen. Hij voelt zich duizelig en misselijk. Na een tijdje wordt hij gebeld door Ko. Hij doet zijn hele verhaal, en dan wil oma hem ook even aan de telefoon. Oma is erg in paniek, en zei dat hij een domme fout had gemaakt, omdat de indianen met boze magie werken. Die nachtmerrie was daar een teken van. Harm zag nog steeds geen kwaad in de indiaan. 'Iedereen droomt weleens naar,' zei hij tegen oma.

'Maar je bent ziek,' zei oma. 'Er kunnen wel duistere krachten aan het werk zijn, jongen, vergis je er maar niet in. Of misschien heeft die indiaan wel allerlei ziektes naar binnen gebracht. Die mensen leven niet echt hygienisch.'

Harm werd zieker en zieker, en moest naar het ziekenhuis voor onderzoek. Oma kwam hem ook opzoeken met de kinderen. Ze schudde haar hoofd. 'Ik heb je er altijd zo voor gewaarschuwd geen bosmensen binnen te nemen. Ze zijn niet te vertrouwen.'

Oma besloot om bij Harm in te wonen om voor de kinderen te zorgen. Harm was erg depressief. Gelukkig was het geen ernstige ziekte, dus hij kon snel weg uit het ziekenhuis. Tante Buurtje zou de kinderen een tijdje op vakantie nemen naar een tropisch eiland, zodat Harm helemaal tot rust kon komen.

Tante Buurtje was een vrolijke vrouw, als zonneschijn, en zij zorgde ervoor dat de kinderen helemaal over de dood van hun moeder heenkwamen. Maar met Harm ging het steeds slechter.

Op een nacht kon Harm niet meer verder. Hij moest hier weg. Hij rende het bos in, zijn huis achterlatende. Oma sliep.

Na een lange tijd rennen kwam Harm aan bij de indianenstam. Hij smeekte of hij daar kon wonen. Ze waren direct erg aardig. Ook de indiaan die Harm geholpen had was erbij. Oma had hem weer het bos ingestuurd toen Harm in het ziekenhuis lag. Harm kreeg zijn eigen rieten hut. Oma was erg in paniek. Ze wist niet waar Harm was, maar had een vermoeden, omdat Harm zo vaak tegen haar zei dat hij weg wilde, het bos in, om te leven met de indianen. Toen Harm maar niet terug kwam en zo lang weg bleef besloot oma op onderzoek uit te gaan. Ze begreep hem wel een beetje, maar wilde toch zekerheid. Na lang lopen zag ze in de verte het indianen-kamp, en hoorde zijn luide stem al.

Oma was erg opgelucht. Even wilde ze hem zien, en toen ze in de verte een glimp van hem opving keerde ze weer terug. Ze wist dat ze hem toch niet tegen kon houden, en toen Harm in het ziekenhuis lag kwam ze erachter dat de indiaan die bij Harm logeerde eigenlijk een hele aardige man was. Ook de kinderen hadden er vrede mee toen ze het hoorden. Oma zou nu voor hen zorgen. Bep dacht er niet aan om in een indianen-stam te wonen, maar Ko dacht er over om zijn vader in het kamp te bezoeken, en misschien daar ook te blijven. Niet alleen omdat hij zijn vader miste, maar ook omdat het bos hem aantrok. Voor hem was het ook heel interessant dat zijn vader nu contact had met de indianen, en zelfs één van hen was geworden, terwijl hij er vroeger altijd voor waarschuwde.

Na een tijdje ging ook Ko in het bos wonen, bij zijn vader en de indianen. Oma en Bep bleven in het huis wonen. Zij konden het goed met elkaar vinden. Ook tante Buurtje kwam vaak bij hen op bezoek. 'Ach,' zei tante Buurtje, 'Harm heeft gewoon een vrouw nodig. Dan blijft hij wel weg van die inboorlingen. Hij heeft gewoon niets te doen.'

'Tegen mij zei hij dat als hij ooit nog een relatie wilde, dan met een bosvrouw, met een indiaanse vrouw,' zei Bep. 'Maar daar was hij nog helemaal niet aan toe, en dacht er ook niet over, omdat hij nog zo stoeit met de dood van moeder. Hij is ook bang om weer gehecht aan iemand te raken, en die persoon dan weer te moeten verliezen.'

'Ja, dat is ook waar,' zei tante Buurtje. 'Maar heus, het kan hem misschien opvrolijken. Hij kan gewoon met zijn nieuwe vrouw zo nu en dan het bos inwandelen, dat helpt ook.'

'U begrijpt het niet, tante Buurtje,' zei Bep. 'Hij wil in het bos wonen. Hij wil niet terug naar het dorp.'

'Jammer dan,' zei tante Buurtje. 'Ik hoop dat hij een goed leven heeft daar.'

Oma knikte. Tante Buurtje kwam meer en meer logeren bij oma en Bep, en besloot na een tijdje bij hen in te trekken. Drie vrouwen in een huis. Het was een echt vrouwenhuis, en het was er altijd erg gezellig. Maar Harm en Ko dachten er niet aan om terug te komen. Zo leefden de drie vrouwen vele jaren bij elkaar, en het was een reuze gezellige en goede tijd. Maar toen stierf oma plotseling, en niet lang daarna ook tante Buurtje. Nu was Bep helemaal alleen, en depressies begonnen haar aan te vliegen. Ze kon het allemaal maar moeilijk verwerken, en deze keer begon ze haar vader en Ko heel erg te missen. Ook zij ging naar het bos, en zocht de indianenstam op om daar te wonen. Ze hadden dan wel helemaal geen familie meer buiten elkaar, maar de indianen waren nu hun nieuwe familie.

Toch kon Bep hier ook niet helemaal goed aarden. Ze voelde zich verscheurd tussen twee werelden. Ze leek steeds depressiever te worden, en er bleek geen kruid tegen opgewassen te zijn. Harm en Ko deden van alles om haar op te vrolijken, en ook de indianen. Op een dag werd ze naar de medicijn-man gebracht. Hij liet haar ruiken aan wat rode veren, en gaf haar een medicijn. Toen bond de medicijn-man de rode veren in haar haar.

'Het grote geheim is wat jij moet zien,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Ik zal jou op een reis nemen door het bos naar het grote geheim.'

Met goedvinden van Harm en Ko ging Bep op een bosreis met de medicijn-man. Ze gingen heel diep het bos in, langs meren en heuvels, tot een plaats waar de wilde dieren waren. Ook hier was een meertje. De medicijn-man smeerde haar in met zand, modder en klei. Ook smeerde hij zichzelf hiermee in, en nu zouden ze het meertje overzwemmen. Na een tijdje kwamen ze aan bij een struik die over het meertje hing. Aan de stam van de struik lag een kleine panter. De medicijn-man nam haar mee langs de panter. Vlakbij was een grot. De medicijn-man zei dat de panter de bewaker was

van de grot. De medicijn-man nam haar diep in de grot. Ook in de grot was een meertje, en een spook-achtig geluid. Plotseling was er een verschijning. Het was erg licht.

'Waarom zijn jullie gekomen,' sprak de gestalte.

De medicijn-man maakte een buiging en zei : 'Dit is Bep. Zij heeft last van depressies, en ik dacht dat het haar zou helpen om het grote geheim te zien.'

'Depressies is de roep van het grote geheim,' zei de gestalte. De lichtende verschijning had een kap op, en een lang gewaad. Ook had de gestalte een speer. 'Ik waak over het grote geheim,' zei de gestalte, 'maar depressie is de sleutel. Ik waak over de zielen van het woord. Ook haar moeder is hier, haar oma, en haar tante. Nog veel meer zielen zijn hier. Deze depressie is haar verbinding met hen, maar die verbinding is verbroken. Ik ben de grote verbinder. Ik heb deze weg gemaakt. Laat haar dichterbij komen. Ik zal haar hart genezen, en haar hoofd tot rust brengen.' Toen vaagde de gestalte weg, en een lichtende weg verscheen voor hen. 'Kom mee,' zei de medicijn-man, en stapte op de weg. Het was een soort tunnel die toen begon te draaien. Bep werd duizelig. Droomde ze dit ? Voorzichtig stapte zij ook op de weg. Ze leken in een heel nieuw bos te komen. Bep voelde een band om haar hoofd komen, en stralen kwamen naar binnen om haar hart te voeden. 'Kom verder,' zei een stem. Het was een donkere, lage stem, die steeds lager werd. Ze zag weer een verschijning, dit keer zonder kap, die een miniatuur koe in zijn handen had. 'Dit is het woord,' zei de verschijning die daar in lange gewaden stond. Plotseling begon er melk uit de koe te komen. 'Woord, spreek,' zei de verschijning luid. Toen stond er een paal met een koeienkop op. De melk begon te stromen en te stromen, totdat Bep en de medicijnman er bijna in zwommen. 'Ik ben het grote geheim,' zei de koeienkop. 'Als het middernacht is, dan verander ik in een varkenskop, en dan is het grote geheim van jou,'

'Wacht eens even,' zei Bep. 'Hier heb ik een keer over gedroomd. Nee, dat kan niet waar zijn.'

'Wat bedoel je ?' vroeg de medicijn-man.

'Ik heb dit al weleens eerder gezien,' zei Bep. 'We moeten wachten tot middernacht, en dan zal de varkenskop spreken.'

'Precies,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Het is de strijd tussen hebzucht en honger, onthechting. Het is de stem van depressie, maar tegelijkertijd het medicijn.'

Ze bleven wachten tot het middernacht was. Toen veranderde de koeienkop in een varkenskop.

'Ik ben overwonnen,' zei de varkenskop. 'Willen jullie mijn geheim zien ? Het geheim wat ik al voor vele eeuwen verborgen heb gehouden ?'

Bep knikte, en stapte dichterbij. Toen ineens begon de varkenskop vuur te spuwen. Bep schrok, en rende naar achteren. De medicijn-man hield haar vast. 'Hij is het geheim aan het openbaren.' Weer spuwde de varkenskop vuur. 'Ik bedank jullie alvast voor het komen. Jullie hebben het welverdiend om dit te zien. Ruben, Simeon, Levi, Juda, Gad, Aser, Issaschar, Zebulon, Jozef, Benjamin, Dina, Efraim, Manasse ….' En weer spuwde de varkenskop vuur, en begon woest te worden. Zijn kop werd helemaal rood. 'Ik ben hier om deze zegels te verbreken !' riep de varkenskop. 'Dat is mijn taak, om de zegels der stammen te verbreken !'

'Niemand dan jullie zijn gekomen om dit geheim te zien,' zei de varkenskop toen rustig. Een gouden cirkel met daarop de stenen van de stammen begon rond te draaien en te branden. 'Deze gouden cirkelzaag, …. deze gouden cirkelzaag …' riep de varkenskop. En toen ontplofte de cirkel. Een

tunnel verscheen voor hen. 'Ga de tunnel binnen,' zei de varkenskop nors. Bep en de medicijnman liepen haastig door. Achter hen werd een deur gesloten.

'Jullie willen het geheim toch zien ? Jullie willen het geheim toch zien ?' riep de varkenskop. 'Voor eeuwig is dit verborgen gebleven, maar jullie hebben overwonnen. 'De sleutel van depressies heeft jullie hier gebracht.' Achter de varkenskop verscheen een troon met een oude vrouw erop met lange vieze haren. 'Het geheim is gemanifesteerd in haar,' zei de varkenskop. De vrouw stond op, en liep op Bep en de medicijn-man af. Maar als door de bliksem werd ze teruggeslagen. 'Ik moet altijd op deze troon zitten,' jammerde ze. 'En dat omdat ik voor de hebzucht heb gekozen. Mijn varken is nu slechts een kop, om mij te verraden. Ik dacht altijd maar aan eten, en meer rijkdommen, om mijn macht te laten zegevieren. Maar mijn varken is tegen mij gekeerd nu, en heeft mijn schuilplaats verraden. Dom varken !' krijste ze. 'Ik zit nu voor altijd aan mijn stoel vastgeplakt. Ik heb de dorpen en de steden ontworpen, en ik heb ze groot gemaakt ! Dat is alles wat ik kan ! Dit is mijn troon, en ik ben aan het smelten !' jammerde ze. 'Ik heb de ring der stammen gecreeerd als het orakel van mijn toverboek waarmee ik de dorpen en steden heb behekst. Maar jullie hebben de ring verbroken !' krijste ze, terwijl ze vuur spuwde. 'Hoe meer vuur ik spuw, hoe meer ik smelt. Mijn woede is mij aan het verteren,' jammerde ze. 'Maar ik heb jouw familie, en ik zal ze meetrekken in mijn val,' krijste ze. Haar stem echode. Bep trilde even. Tot haar grote schrik begon de rode troon waarop de heks zat te bewegen, maar gelukkig schoot de troon weer terug als door elastiek.

'Ik weet je naam, ik weet waar je woont !' krijste de heks. 'Hier is het grote geheim : De stammen zijn de steden en de dorpen.' Toen viel de stoel om, en de heks begon weg te smelten. Weer begon een cirkel voor hen te draaien, maar deze begon langzaam weg te smelten. Toen begon een andere cirkel voor hun ogen te draaien en te krijsen, maar ook deze begon langzaam weg te smelten.

'Ik weet waar je woont !' werd er in de verte geroepen. Plotseling viel Bep neer. Gelukkig konden de armen van de medicijn-man haar opvangen. 'W...w...wie was dat ?' vroeg Bep.

'Je bent in de matrix van het bos,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Het is een raadsel wat je moet oplossen. Er is een hogere natuur, die het grote geheim is.'

'Ik ben te depressief,' snikt Bep. 'Ik kan niet goed nadenken. Het vermoeit me.' De medicijn-man nam haar in zijn armen. 'Juist door depressie, leegte en vermoeidheid wordt het raadsel opgelost,' zei hij. 'Niet door goed nadenken. Nadenken is een valstrik. Het labyrint moet namelijk overwonnen worden. Het is een gevecht.' Bep begint harder te snikken. 'Ik ben zo moe. Ik kan het niet meer volhouden. Alles slaat op me in.'

'Ik bescherm je,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Je moet je innerlijke vijanden overwinnen, en dit is de perfecte plaats. Het is nu of nooit. Juist in je depressies kun je de vijand een grote slag slaan.'

'Het vreet me aan, medicijn-man,' snikte Bep. 'Ik ben hier niet tegen opgewassen.'

'Haal rustig adem,' zei de medicijn-man. Hij leidde haar tot een stomend, kolkend meertje, waar hij haar onderdompelde en begon te wassen. Hij haalde zijn hand over haar voorhoofd. 'Zoveel spanning op je hoofd,' zei hij. Het meertje was heel warm. 'Dit is de overgang naar de dromenwereld, heel diep in het bos,' zei de medicijn-man. 'De planten, kruiden en bloemen zijn hier namelijk veel sterker, zijn veel meer zaaddragend, en veroorzaken daardoor een veld van hallucinaties. Ik spreek nu tot je door de hallucinaties, al voor een geruime tijd. Dit is ook een hallucinatie.'

'Wat wonderlijk,' zei Bep. 'Ik wil nog dieper het bos in.'

'Ja, maar verderop zijn de nachtmerries,' zei de medicijnman. 'De planten daar zijn wel nog sterker dan hier.'

'Interessant,' zei Bep. 'Nou, laten we dan maar hier blijven,' zei Bep.

'Ja,' zei de medicijn-man, 'want die nachtmerrie-hallucinaties doen net alsof je dan in de dorpen en de steden terecht komt, maar het is gewoon nog dieper in het bos.'

'Hmmm,' zei Bep. 'Dus u wilt zeggen dat toen wij in het dorp woonde, wij gewoon onder de invloed van zware planten waren dieper in het bos ?'

'Precies,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Je bent nu daarvan aan het afkicken, en dat is ook heel confronterend.'

'Ik ben bang,' zei Bep.
'Wij gaan daar alleen naartoe als wij een tegengif hebben genomen,' zegt de medicijn-man. 'Wij nemen dan soms stoffen van die zware planten, omdat in kleine hoeveelheden, in een veilig gebied, deze stoffen als medicijn kunnen werken. Maar als je er teveel van neemt, dan ga je dus echt dorpen en steden hallucineren als nachtmerries.'

'Was het overlijden van mijn moeder ook zo'n nachtmerrie-hallucinatie ?' vroeg Bep.

De medicijn-man knikte. 'Ja, en dat was een hele zware stof, die jarenlang in het lichaam kan blijven doorwerken.'

'En tante Buurtje en oma, hun overlijden, was dat hetzelfde ?' vroeg Bep.

De medicijn-man knikte weer. 'Ja, allemaal hetzelfde. Het is zware troep, waar veel te veel van genomen is, en je was in onveilig gebied. Het hangt daar in zware doseringen gewoon in de lucht, en dat werkt dag en nacht op je.'

Bep begint weer te snikken. 'Ik voelde me zo rot, en ik voel me nog steeds rot. Ik mis ze zo erg. Dus het was allemaal niet waar ? En waren zij zelf dan ook een hallucinatie, en bestonden zij dan helemaal niet ?'

De medicijn-man was even stil. 'Kind, je moet nog veel leren,' zei hij.

'Nee, ik wil het weten,' zei Bep in paniek. 'Bestonden moeder, oma en tante Buurtje echt, of waren het slechts hallucinaties ?'

'Ze bestonden in andere vormen,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Maar niet zoals je ze kende. Het waren dorpse hallucinaties, dus alles was dorps. Het begon misschien goed, maar het was een geladen nachtmerrie, wat betekent dat het je langzaam in een tragedie zou zuigen. Het zijn roofplanten, Bep. Het zijn hele gevaarlijke planten, die alleen wij als medicijn-mannen veilig kunnen gebruiken. Zoals ik al zei gaat dat in hele lage doseringen, en in veilig gebied. Dan dient het als een medicijn, en we gebruiken het in de oorlog en in de jacht in hogere doseringen. Het is dan goed gif. Wij moeten in ieder geval voldoende tegengif hebben om hier tegen bestand te zijn.'

'Wat voor tegengif is dat ?' vroeg Bep nieuwsgierig.

'Wij kweken daarvoor bepaalde spinnen,' zei de medicijnman, 'die wij dan melken voor hun gif. Maar ook dit gif mag niet genomen worden in te hoge doseringen.'

'Waarom niet ?' vroeg Bep.

'Omdat dat verlammingen kan brengen,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Ook heeft het in hoge doseringen hetzelfde effect als de roofplanten.'

'Klinkt eng,' zei Bep. 'Ik begin flink bang te worden van al deze dingen. Wat als er op dit moment iets goed fout zit, want u zei dat ik nu ook aan het hallucineren ben ?'

'Leer en ervaar,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Als je er telkens weer wat bijleert, dan zal dat je steeds meer rust geven. Steeds meer zul je dan het grotere plaatje zien om je inzicht te geven.'

'Toch is het eng,' zei Bep. 'Wat als je het verkeerde erbij leert, en dat je zo dieper en dieper in de kronkels wordt geholpen ?'

'Wanneer de student klaar is om meer te leren, komt de leraar,' zei de medicijn-man.

'Ja, maar de leraar kan bedriegen,' zei Bep.

'Niet als de student blijft onderzoeken, open blijft staan, om tot de dieptes van de kennis te komen,' zei de medicijn-man.

'Nou, ik weet het nog zo net niet,' zei Bep. 'Sommigen zijn erg sluw. En een foutje is snel gemaakt.'

'Voorzichtigheid is de moeder van de waarheid,' glimlachte de medicijnman.

'Ik ben voorzichtig en bang,' zei Bep. 'Ik begin bijna paranoide te worden nu. Dit is echt heel eng.'

'Ik kan je helpen met wat tegengif van de speciale spinnen die wij kweken,' zei de medicijn-man.

'Wat voor spinnen zijn dat ?' vroeg Bep.

'Pajiet-spinnen,' zei de medicijnman. 'Die zijn heel zeldzaam, maar worden al sinds eeuwen in het geheim gekweekt door onze stam. Het gif breekt heel snel de andere giffen af.'

'Ja, ja,' zei Bep. 'Maar kom je zo niet in een andere hallucinatie terecht ? Leven wij niet allemaal in hallucinaties ?'

'Slimme meid,' glimlachte de medicijn-man. 'In wezen zijn er alleen goede en slechte hallucinaties, ja. Alles is gebaseerd op hallucinaties.'

'Lekker ingewikkeld,' zei Bep. 'Dus misschien besta ik helemaal niet, of in een andere vorm.'

'Je moet hierin je pad leren te vinden, Bep,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Wil je het tegengif ?'

'Ja, doe maar,' zei Bep. 'Ik heb toch niets te verliezen.'

Snel spoot de medicijn-man iets in haar arm, en het leek wel alsof er nog iets in haar werd gespoten, als in haar arm buiten haar arm. Bep werd direct wakker alsof er een waas van haar ogen was weggetrokken. Alles was heel helder nu, en ze zag de medicijnman met haar arm in zijn hand. Hij had daar net iets ingespoten. Bep haalde diep adem. 'Interessant,' zei ze. 'Dus we hadden beiden dezelfde hallucinatie ?'

'Ja, ik ben in verschillende lagen van de natuur,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Ik heb leren dubbel-leven, en leren switchen.'

'Interessant,' zei Bep. 'En dat kun jij me ook leren ?'

'Natuurlijk,' zei de medicijn-man. Samen gingen ze terug naar het kamp, en Bep had natuurlijk veel te vertellen. Ze voelde zichzelf al een stuk beter nu.

Bep werd steeds nieuwsgieriger naar die planten dieper in het bos. De medicijn-man vertelde haar dat het vlees-planten waren, die op geslachtsdelen leken. Zij die onder de bedwelming hiervan kwamen zouden zelfs hallucinaties van geboorte kunnen krijgen, waardoor ze al hun herinneringen verloren. Juist omdat Bep's depressies na een tijdje sterker dan ooit terugkwamen wilde ze hier zo graag naartoe. De medicijn-man kreeg hier hoogte van en waarschuwde haar. Hij zei dat het alleen maar erger zou worden als ze daar naartoe zou gaan. Hij vertelde haar ook dat ze juist daar vandaan kwam, en dat ze daarom zo'n verschrikkelijk leven had gehad. Maar Bep wilde terug, want haar depressies waren erger dan ooit tevoren. De medicijn-man wist dat hij iets moest doen. Hij kon daar wel naartoe met voldoende tegengif, omdat hij een volleerd medicijn-man was, maar Bep was onervaren. Bep kon niet meer wachten. Ze zei dat er niets meer te verliezen was, en dat het toch niet meer erger kon worden. Bep begon ook aan alles te twijfelen, juist omdat het zo slecht met haar ging. De medicijn-man bleef zeggen dat afkicken een heel zwaar proces was, en dat het soms wel erger was dan ooit tevoren. Dat hoorde bij het proces. Het was een heel zwaar gevecht. 'Ik kan het niet meer aan, medicijn-man,' zei Bep.

'Volhouden, meid,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Blijf studeren, en voordat je het weet kun je daar samen met mij naartoe.'

Maar Bep kon niet meer. Ze nam dezelfde dosering tegengif die de medicijn-man had voorgeschreven, en rende op een nacht het bos in. Ze bleef maar rennen en rennen. Na een tijdje was ze omringd door prachtige struiken van vlees die inderdaad op een soort geslachtsdelen leken. De draden waren heel dun, en bovenop was een soort gezwollen vruchtbaar deel met een prachtige roze kleur. Hier stroomde sap uit, waarvan Bep wist dat het een heel gevaarlijk sap was. Even stond ze als aan de grond genageld. Ze wist dat ze nu een heel groot risico nam. Eigenlijk was het nog helemaal geen tijd om hier naartoe te gaan. Plotseling voelde ze wat springen in haar hoofd. Het sap leek binnen te stromen. Ze begon te krijsen en te huilen. 'Ik kan niet meer,' huilde ze. 'Waarom martelen jullie me zo ?'

Van achteren was ze door een pijl geraakt. Toen viel ze bewusteloos. Achter haar stond de medicijn-man die haar op zijn schouder nam. Dat was op het nippertje. Hij bracht haar veilig naar het kamp. Na een tijdje werd ze heel zwakjes wakker. 'Oh, het was prachtig,' zei ze, terwijl ze nog steeds onder bedwelming was. 'Maar toen overweldigde me het, en ik werd zo bang.'

'Je was nog niet klaar, meid,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Ik heb je op het nippertje kunnen redden. Ze hadden je bijna meegesleurd in hun stroom.'

'Het was zo spannend,' zuchtte Bep.

'Nee, het was gevaarlijk,' zei de medicijn-man.

'Maar het was zo prachtig,' zei Bep, 'zo adembenemend.'

'Bep, wacht jij nou maar rustig totdat het tijd is dat we daar samen naartoe kunnen gaan. Ik moet je

nog enkele dingen uitleggen, en dan ben je klaar. Je hebt nu alvast even een voorproefje gehad, maar dat was niet de bedoeling. Het had je je leven kunnen kosten. Dit zijn geen dingen om mee te spelen,' zei de medicijn-man.

'Ik weet dat je bezorgd bent,' zei Bep. 'Ik weet dat je de waarheid spreekt, maar ik kon niet meer. Ik moest het gewoon zien. De drang in mij was te sterk. Het was als gekrijs in mijn hoofd.'

'Je moet nog veel leren, Bep,' zei de medicijn-man. Bep knikte. Ze had nu wonderlijke dromen die haar leken voor te bereiden. Maar Bep besefte niet dat juist de planten van vlees dit allemaal gesimuleerd hadden. Ze hadden haar alreeds gevangen, en gaven haar hallucinaties alsof ze nog veilig bij de medicijn-man was. Iedereen van het kamp begon zich steeds vreemder en gemener tegen Bep te gedragen, ook de medicijn-man. Bep had nog steeds niets door. Voor haar was dit een aanzet om weer terug te gaan naar de vlees-planten, niet wetende dat ze allang weer onder hun macht was. Ze had het gevoel dat iedereen haar haatte, dus ze zei tegen haarzelf : 'Kom ik om, dan kom ik om.' Op een nacht begon ze weer te rennen. Ze wilde terug naar de vlees-planten. Ze zag de prachtige planten in de verte die naar haar lonkten. Ze zakte langzaam in een rivier omringd met de meest wonderlijke en prachtige vlees-planten. Dit keer had ze geeneens tegengif genomen. Ze verlangde hier zo naar. Langzaam zonk ze in de rivier, tot aan haar nek. De rivier was vol van het zaad van de wonderlijke planten, en langzaam begon ze te drinken. Ze wilde hallucineren om van deze depressies af te komen. Ze voelde zich wonderlijk.

Ze was het gepraat van de medicijn-man zat. Ze wilde leven. Ze wilde genieten van de prachtige natuur. Ze wilde niet naar school. Er was al genoeg tegen haar gesproken in haar leven. Ze was er moe van. De medicijn-man was niet meer wie hij was, en de anderen ook niet.

In het kamp in de werkelijkheid was inmiddels grote paniek, omdat Bep verdwenen was, en maar niet terugkwam. De medicijn-man vermoede dat ze naar de vlees-planten was gegaan. Hij besloot er naartoe te gaan met voldoende tegengif om te zien of er sporen van haar waren. Diep in de velden van de vlees-planten vond hij haar. Ze lag daar op de grond. Hij wist dat ze zo had geworsteld met depressies en kon haar zo goed begrijpen. Maar toch wist hij dat scholing het beste was voor haar. Ze moest afkicken en tot de waarheid komen. Met wat medicijnen kon hij haar terugbrengen tot de werkelijkheid, en ze werd huilend wakker, heel zwak. Ze kon niet praten, maar wel een beetje lopen. Heel voorzichtig liep hij met haar terug naar het kamp. Ko nam haar direct in zijn armen.

Ze gebruikte vuile taal, omdat ze nog steeds dacht aan wat zij haar hadden aangedaan in haar hallucinaties. De medicijn-man maakte haar duidelijk dat ze in een simulatie-realiteit was gekomen door de hallucinaties van de vlees-planten, die ook het kamp hadden gesimuleerd en alle kamp-bewoners, als gevolg van haar tochtje. Toen hield ze Ko stevig vast. Ze was blij dat ze gered was. Het had ook anders kunnen aflopen, want soms verslonden de vlees-planten hen die tot hen kwamen. Waarschijnlijk had het tegengif haar gered, en het feit dat ze toch al wat kennis had.

Bep had van haar fouten geleerd. Ze wilde nu goed bij de les blijven. Na een lange periode kon ze dan eindelijk met de medicijn-man mee naar de planten van vlees. Ze keek haar ogen uit, en de medicijn-man liet haar vele geheimen zien. 'Deze planten zijn heilig,' zei de medicijn-man. 'Eens in de zoveel tijd kiezen ze iemand uit die hen goed heeft behandeld, en die veel van hen afweet, en zo iemand zal dan voor altijd tussen hen kunnen wonen. Zij wonen meestal dieper in de velden van de vlees-planten, daar waar je niet zomaar kunt komen.'

'Interessant, dat lijkt me wel wat,' zei Bep. 'Ik vind het hier prachtig.'

'Zelfs ik ben nog niet eens zo ver,' grapte de medicijn-man.

Bep hoorde heldere stemmen in haar hoofd, waarvan de medicijn-man zei dat het de stemmen van de vlees-planten waren. Ze hadden haar op het oog. Ze wilden met haar communiceren. Ze wilden haar onderwijzen.

Ze vertelden haar van een zee die achter de velden van vlees-planten lag, en ze nodigden haar uit daar naartoe te gaan. Zij moest hiervoor de medicijn-man achter haar laten. Ze moest over een zanderig pad, en de planten hier begonnen steeds wonderlijker te worden. Er waren allerlei soorten roze lichten in haar hoofd, als stralen-kransen. Ze vertelden haar dat zij een uitverkorene was. De zee stond vol met prachtige planten van vlees. Ze communiceerden door stoom en een soort vuur, en allerlei sappen. Sommige van die sappen leken wel kokend, en die werden hier en daar uitgespoten. Bep kreeg een heel warm gevoel. Het leek alsof delen in haar hoofd aan elkaar verbonden werden. Ze had ineens veel minder hoofdpijn, alsof er bruggen in haar hoofd werden gebouwd. De planten van vlees zeiden dat ze in haar hoofd leefden. Deze zee was de zee van communicatie. Ze wilden haar genezen en voorbereiden op haar taak. Bep begon te lachen. Haar depressies begonnen weg te smelten. Alles binnenin haar bleek te werken door sappen en vuren, en alles binnenin haar was gemaakt van vlees-planten, als een grote puzzel die in elkaar gezet moest worden. Bep was in een gelukzalig gevoel. Er borrelde zoveel in haar op. Hier kon zij verder studeren, en de planten van vlees zouden haar alle eilanden van de zee laten zien, en haar al hun geheimen vertellen. Dit waren tijden van grote genezing, en van kennis. Een rood vuur scheen bezit van haar te nemen, en allerlei rode sappen, ook kokende rode sappen die voortspoten. Verder was het een heel tropisch klimaat.

Deze planten hadden heel wat te vertellen. Wat er allemaal verkeerd was gegaan, en wat er allemaal moest gebeuren. Bep begon steeds meer van haar verleden te vergeten, als door een nieuwe geboorte. Toch herinnerde ze ook dingen, maar dan op een hele andere manier. Deze dingen hadden waarde, maar waren in de verkeerde vormen tot haar gekomen. Nu kon alles recht gezet worden zoals het was. Ze had zicht gekregen in de nacht. Het was het vuur van de vleesplanten die haar hoofd had verlicht. Dit waren allerlei soorten vuren, die ook werkten door allerlei sappen. Weelderige struiken namen haar mee door de zee, waardoor alles begon te duizelen in haar. Alles werd gemixt in haar hoofd, en nieuwe vormen kwamen voort. Het was als een pretpark in de zee. De zee-planten fluisterden in haar, en trokken haar naar de eilanden.

In dit proces begon ze haar identiteit te verliezen, tot het punt dat ze niet meer wist of ze nu een man of een vrouw was. Ze voelde zichzelf als een oude man. In de verte leek het wel alsof ze Ko zag staan, haar vader, en de medicijn-man, en ze miste hen, maar het leek wel alsof dat van een lang vervlogen tijd was, alsof ze niet meer bestonden. Plotseling kroop er een gevoel van depressie op haar, en de gestaltes bleken weg te vagen. Ze had heimwee, maar de drangen van de vlees-planten waren te groot. Waar trokken ze haar naartoe ? Het leek wel alsof ze in een grote woestijn was aangekomen, alsof ze iets heel groots moest voorttrekken, als een kar door de woestijn. Ze voelde zich oud, als een oude man, als Kain. 'Kom tot het land Nod, als een oase in deze woestijn,' werd er gefluisterd. Ze wist niet meer of ze de planten van vlees nog wel kon vertrouwen. Ze voelde zich als een slaaf, en dan in meerdere dimensies tegelijk, want ze voelde zich ook een slaaf van een schip. Ze wilde overboord springen, maar ze was geketend. Ze moest roeien. Ze was een roei-slaaf. 'Oh, waar ben ik toch in terecht gekomen,' jammerde ze. 'Ik heb waarschijnlijk veel te veel van die troep genomen. Het is zware drugs. Oh, waar ben ik toch aan begonnen. Ik ben al tijden mezelf niet. Ik heb er al veel te lang mee lopen experimenteren. Dit is een 'bad trip,' een 'bad trip,' girl. Wat heb ik mezelf toch aangedaan.' Ze hoorde gelach in haar hoofd, alsof alles aan het scheuren was in haar hersenen. 'Je wilde het grote geheim toch zien ?' lachte de stem in haar hoofd.

Plotseling vaagde het allemaal weg, en zag ze de medicijn-man voor haar staan. Hij sloeg een arm om haar heen, en zei : 'Eindelijk heb je dan het grote geheim gezien.' Toen liepen ze samen terug naar het kamp.

Zijn Huis Stond In De Weg

Hij staarde eenzaam voor zich uit. Hij miste zijn vrouw, maar wist ook dat hij nooit terug kon naar haar. Ze was te gevaarlijk. Hij poetste zijn schoenen, stond op, en liep toen naar buiten. De tuin was prachtig. Er stond een vrouw tussen de struiken, met een radiatie als van een leeuw, tegelijkertijd zwak. 'Ben je …,' zei ze verlegen.

'Ben ik wat ?' vroeg hij.

'Ben je de nieuwe buurman,' zei ze.

'Oh, ja,' zei hij.

'Mag ik u een hand geven,' vroeg ze.

Hij stak zijn hand uit en liep op haar af. Haar hand voelde zacht aan, en tegelijkertijd stevig.

'Wilt u mijn huis zien ?' vroeg ze.

'Zodadelijk,' zei hij, 'Eh, okay, ik loop wel even met je mee nu.'

Ze glimlachte. Ze deelden de tuin samen. Het was een grote tuin. Ze leidde hem tot haar keuken, waardoor ze binnen kwamen. 'Mooi hier,' sprak hij.

Ze glimlachte verlegen.
'Ja, dat hebben wel meerderen gezegd.'

Hij ging op de bank zitten in de kamer. 'Moet u wat koffie met een koekje ?' vroeg ze.
'Nee, doe maar geen moeite,' zei hij.
'Ach ik kan het zo inschenken,' zei ze bijna fluisterend.
Even later zaten ze samen op de bank. Hij dronk van zijn koffie en keek haar aan.
'Wat is dat voor schilderij op de muur ?' vroeg hij.
Het was nogal een ingewikkeld schilderij. Een dame in het zwart, en een naakte man op een stoel met een appel in zijn mond.
'Oh,' lachte ze. 'Dat is …'

'Toe, zeg het maar,' zei hij.

'Dat is … Ach, het is een dom varken,' sprak ze.

'En wie is die vrouw ?' vroeg hij.
'Het is geen vrouw, het is een heerser,' sprak ze.

'Zo, zo,' zei hij.

'En wie bent u ?' vroeg ze.

'Roderik,' zei hij.

'Oh, rode Rik,' lachte ze.

'Nee, gewoon Roderik,' zei hij.

'Mijnheer Roderik, u bent een interessante man,' zei ze.
'Ik weet het,' zuchtte hij. 'Dat lijkt altijd zo aan de buitenkant. Maar ik ben tamelijk saai.'
Hij keek naar nog wat andere schilderijen aan de muur. Schilderijen van indianen.

'Vleselijk, hè,' zei ze.

'Wat is vleselijk ?' vroeg hij.

'Nou, al die naakte mannen op schilderijen,' zei ze.

'Ik vind het wel wat hebben,' zei hij. 'Maar als je dat vindt, waarom haal je ze niet weg ?'

'Ik heb geen probleem met vleselijk,' zei ze.

'Ach wat, je bent lief,' zei hij.

'Vind je ?' vroeg ze. 'Het zijn vleselijke varkens. Varkens moeten er ook zijn. Ik heb er geen problemen mee. Ze eindigen toch wel in de pan.'

'Huh,' zei Roderik. 'Dit begint me nu even te duizelen. Indianen zijn varkens ?'

'Nee, niet indianen,' sprak ze, 'mannen zijn varkens.'

'Oh, ja, daar heb je gelijk in,' zei Roderik. 'Vaak wel.'

'Altijd,' lachte ze.

'Oh,' zei Roderik die bijna zijn koffie uitproeste. 'Dus ik ben ook een varken.'

'Tuurlijk,' zei ze zacht. Even kwam haar tongetje naar buiten. Het was een klein tongetje die ze even heel snel liet zien, alsof ze hem plaagde. Een vreemd gevoel gleed over zijn rug.

'Zeg, ik moet weer gaan,' zei Roderik.

'Ach, mijnheer, blijf nog even zitten,' zei ze.

'Nog even dan,' zei Roderik een beetje ongeduldig.

'Ik wil u nog even wat laten zien. Ze ging bij hem op schoot zitten, terwijl hij helemaal rood werd.

Toen haalde ze wat foto's tevoorschijn. Foto's van gelakt leer.

'Wat zullen we nu beleven ?' vroeg Roderik. 'Je gaat zo maar bij me op schoot zitten, en laat me foto's zien van gelakt leer.'

'Even doorbijten,' zei ze. Toen liet ze wat foto's zien van bruin leer, en foto's van bloed.

'Dat was het, mijnheer Roderik,' zei ze met een donkere stem. 'Nog een prettige avond.' Ze stond op, en keerde haar rug naar hem. Roderik begon te fronzen. 'Zeg, is er iets niet helemaal in orde in dat hoofdje van je ? Plotseling draaide ze zich naar hem toe, en hij keek recht in de ogen van een doodshoofd waar wormen uitkwamen.

Roderik schrok wakker. Hij had het even niet meer. Hij stapte uit zijn bed en liep naar de badkamer om wat water te drinken. Hij zuchtte hevig. 'De doodstraf staat hierop,' mompelde hij, en liep weer naar zijn bed. Hij greep zijn kussen en ging weer liggen, maar hij kon maar niet in slaap komen. Hevig lag hij te woelen en te zweten. Plotseling barste hij in huilen uit. Hij wist niet wat het was. Hij woonde hier in zijn nieuwe huis, na de scheiding. De buurvrouw had hij nog niet gezien, terwijl hij hier al een week woonde. Ze hadden een grote gezamelijke tuin.

De volgende ochtend was hij er vroeg uit. Hij had niet kunnen slapen na die nachtmerrie. Hij was nu wel erg benieuwd wie zijn buurvrouw was. Hij liep de tuin in en ging tussen wat struiken staan. Hij keek door het raam van de buurvrouw naar binnen, maar zag haar niet. Hij begon een beetje zenuwachtig heen en weer te lopen in de tuin. Toen kon hij zich plotseling niet meer inhouden. Hij liep naar de voorkant toe, en belde bij haar aan. Even later deed een vrouw open. Het was een indiaanse vrouw. 'Ik ben de nieuwe buurman,' zei hij, terwijl hij zijn hand uitstak. 'De naam is Roderik,' zei hij.

Ze schudde zijn hand. 'Komt u verder,' zei ze. Hij liep achter haar aan de gang in naar de woonkamer. 'Gaat u maar zitten. Hij ging op de bank zitten. 'Moet u wat drinken ?' vroeg ze. 'Nee, dank u,' zei hij.

'Wat leuk dat je je even komt voorstellen,' zei ze.

'Ja, het werd anders wel tijd,' zei hij.

'Ben je een beetje een dromertje ?' vroeg ze.

'Huh, hoezo ?' vroeg hij.

'Nou, omdat u zo lang heeft gewacht voordat u uzelf kwam voorstellen,' zei ze.

'Ik ga nogal door een moeilijke tijd,' zei hij. 'Ik zit in een verwerkingsproces van een scheiding,' zei hij.

'Oh,' zei ze. 'Dat is inderdaad niet leuk.'

'Het is een rotvak,' zei hij.

'Ja, als je het als in schoolverband bekijkt, inderdaad,' zei ze.

'Ik heb wat lelies in mijn tuin staan, ze bloeien leuk, hè ?' vroeg ze.

'Oh ja, ik zag ze,' zei hij. 'Ze zijn prachtig.

'Ja, wazig,' zei ze. 'Ze zijn zo dromerig, zoals u,' lachte ze.

'Waarom noemt u me alweer dromerig,' vroeg hij.

'Ach, u ziet er zo dromerig uit, zo wazig, alsof u … Ach, laat maar, u wilt het toch niet horen,' sprak ze.

'Nou ja, dat kan wel kloppen,' zei hij. 'Ik heb vannacht haast niet geslapen. Ik kreeg een nachtmerrie, en toen kon ik niet meer in slaap komen.'

'Waar ging die nachtmerrie over ?' vroeg ze ineens met een serieus gezicht.

'Over u,' zei hij. 'Het begon goed, maar eindigde slecht.'
In het kort vertelde hij de nachtmerrie.

Ze zuchtte.

'Ja, een mens kan raar dromen,' sprak hij.

Ze was ineens stil.

'Heb ik u hiermee pijn gedaan door het zomaar te vertellen ?' vroeg hij.

'Eh, nee hoor,' zei ze zacht.

'Maar ik heb u toch niet in verlegenheid gebracht nu hoop ik ?' vroeg hij.

Ze schudde haar hoofd.

'Maar mijn voorouders …' zei ze.

'Wat ?' vroeg hij. 'Zeg het maar gerust, hoor.'

'Nee, mijn voorouders hebben u die droom gegeven. Het is over …. over,' zei ze.

'Over wat ?' vroeg hij.

'Meesters en meesteressen,' zei ze.

'Onze stam had geen huwelijks-relaties, maar meesters en meesteressen met hun slaven,' zei ze.

Ze liet hem wat boeken zien met plaatjes. 'Hier, het gaat allemaal om vernederingen en leugens,' zei ze.

'Blijf je slapen ?' vroeg ze. 'Dan kunnen we nog wat doorpraten.'

'Gezellig,' zei hij.

Hij kreeg een bed in haar eigen slaapkamer. Zij sliep aan de andere kant van haar slaapkamer. Hij voelde zich wel op zijn gemak bij zo'n gastvrije vrouw.

Ze praatten door tot diep in de nacht, totdat ze beiden in slaap vallen. Weer heeft hij een droom. Hij droomt dat hij in een rustige natuur is. Opeens schrikt hij wakker. Hij merkt dat hij vastgebonden is. De vrouw zit op hem. Ze heeft een klein rood slipje aan, wat in haar bilspleet vastligt. Met haar tenen begint ze met zijn tepels te spelen. 'Wat is hier aan de hand,' kreunt hij.

'Niks zeggen,' zegt ze. Hij probeert zich los te maken, maar hij is te goed door haar vastgebonden. Snel heeft ze haar slipje uit, en drukt haar grote vagina met haar vele schaamhaar tegen zijn gezicht aan. Hij moet even slikken. Hij begint bang te worden, want dit hadden ze niet afgesproken.

'Maak me los, onmiddellijk,' kreunt hij. Maar dan drukt ze haar grote voeten in zijn gezicht. 'Shhhh...,' zegt ze. 'Niet zoveel praten.'

'Wat !' gilt hij bijna, terwijl zijn stem overslaat. 'Heb je dit eerst aan mij gevraagd ? Laat me los.' Maar hij had al snel door dat het de vrouw menens was. Haar voeten zijn stevig tegen zijn lippen aangedrukt. Haar voeten hebben een warme, indringende geur, en al snel raakt hij bedwelmd. Hij proeft ze en weet dat hij niet veel in te brengen heeft. Hij legt zich er maar bij neer, hopende dat het alleen maar een sex-spelletje is. Toch voelt hij zich ongemakkelijk, als een gevangene. Hij is geheel aan haar genade overgeleverd. Hij wordt bang dat ze hem misschien wel wat aan zal doen. Hij heeft opeens veel last van zijn buik vanwege de spanning, maar hij durft niets te zeggen. Weer plaagt ze zijn tepels met haar tenen. Een vreemde electriciteit trekt door zijn lichaam. Hij voelt zich opgewonden voelen, maar ook opgewonden van angst en paniek. 'Alsjeblieft,' smeekt hij even later.

'Mannen zijn varkens,' fluistert ze. En dan zegt ze het nog een keer met een zachte stem. Hij herinnert zijn nachtmerrie. 'Wat ga je met me doen ?' vraagt hij fluisterend, maar met een grote paniek in zijn stem. Hij voelde zich in de val gelokt. 'Ik kan alles met je doen,' fluistert ze. Hij ligt naakt, en inmiddels ligt zij achter hem. Met haar tenen gaat ze over zijn tenen. Hij voelt zich als een prooi.

Dan schrikt hij wakker. Het was maar een droom. Het leek zo echt. Ze ligt aan de andere kant van de kamer in haar bed. Hij is onder het zweet. Hij loopt naar haar toe. Hij kijkt naar haar gezicht. Ze slaapt zo vredig. 'Hey,' fluistert hij. Ze opent haar ogen. 'Wat is er ?' vraagt ze.

'Ik heb weer een nachtmerrie over je gehad,' zegt hij. En dan vertelt hij de droom. Ze is inmiddels rechtop gaan zitten. 'Kom bij me zitten,' zegt ze. Dan neemt ze hem in haar armen en probeert hem te sussen. 'Het zijn mijn voorouders weer,' sprak ze.

'Wat willen ze van ons ?' vroeg hij.

Met haar warme lippen kust ze hem. 'Het spijt me zo,' zei ze.

'Je kan er niets aan doen,' sprak hij. 'Ik had wel een heel raar gevoel, een soort van opgewondenheid, maar dat kan ook van angst zijn geweest.'

'Vond je het lekker ?' vroeg ze.

'Je voelde lekker aan, maar ik was ook in paniek. Ik was je gevangene en ik wist niet wat je met me zou doen,' zei hij. Ze drukte hem tegen zich aan. Weer kuste ze hem, en hij kuste haar ook.

'Mijn stam vindt relaties gevaarlijk. Onze stam accepteert alleen zoals jij het droomde,' sprak ze.

'Bedankt voor je warmte en gastvrijheid,' zei hij. Ze glimlachte. 'Je mag wel bij me liggen als je je

daarbij veiliger voelt.' Hij knikte een beetje verlegen, en ging bij haar onder de dekens, terwijl ze hem naar zich toetrok. Hij voelde haar warme lichaam, en hij werd wat rustiger. Toch durfde hij niet meer te slapen. Na een tijdje stond hij op. Toen ging hij terug naar zijn huis.

Ze belde hem de volgende dag op om te vragen hoe het met hem was. Hij was nogal stil. Ze begreep hem wel. Hij ging de stad in, door het drukke verkeer. Er hing een vreemde ster aan de hemel, met een vreemd licht. Het licht materialiseerde bijna. De ster leek op twee grote lippen, en die lippen begonnen te bewegen. 'Droom ik ?' dacht hij bij zichzelf. Hij wreef even goed in zijn ogen. Hij voelde zich nat worden, maar het regende niet.

'Aarsom !' werd er geroepen. 'Konika !'

Hij keek om. Waar kwam dat geroep vandaan ? Of misschien hoorde hij het verkeerd ? Hij stond bij het stoplicht. Het stoplicht stond op rood, en hij liep door. Maar het was alsof de grond onder hem in water veranderde. Hij zag een man met een hoed in de golven wegzinken. Hij probeerde ergens aan vast te klemmen, maar er was alleen maar water. 'Help !' riep hij. Hij zakte weg in de golven. 'Ik begrijp hier niets van !' riep hij. Badend in het zweet werd hij wakker. De vrouw lag nog steeds naast hem. 'Alweer gedroomd,' dacht hij bij zichzelf. Haar arm lag op hem, en ze trok hem dicht tegen zich aan. 'Wat is er, jongen,' vroeg ze. 'Je bent helemaal nat.'

'Ik heb weer een nachtmerrie gehad,' fluisterde hij.

'Mijn voorouders moeten je wel hebben,' zuchtte ze. Toen vertelde hij de droom. 'Ik begin mijn grip op de realiteit te verliezen, want die dromen lijken net echt. Ik weet niet meer wanneer ik droom of wakker ben,' zei hij. Ze probeerde hem te sussen. Hij zag haar grote borsten in haar nachtjapon. Hij slikte even. Ze glimlachte. Ze kuste hem. Hij kuste haar terug. Hij was maar wat blij met zo'n gastvrije buurvrouw, maar waarom al die dromen ?

'Ik denk dat ze je ergens voor willen,' zei ze. 'Ze roepen je.'

Hij voelde zich ziek en beverig. Ze maakte wat soep voor hem, en kwam toen weer terug. Hij zat rechtop in bed tegen een kussen aan. 'Wat willen ze van me ?' vroeg hij.

'Ik durf niet meer te slapen,' zei hij.

'Je moet er aan wennen,' zei ze, 'aan die dromen. Het zijn cryptische dromen. Het zijn gidsen.'

'Je bent zo lief voor me,' zei hij. 'Ik heb het maar getroffen met zo'n buurvrouw. Maar ik weet niet of ik nu droom of echt wakker bent.' Ze glimlachte.

De dagen erna werd hij meegesleurd in een net van wilde dromen en nachtmerries. Hij dacht dat hij gek aan het worden was, maar zij hield hem op de been. Altijd sliep ze naast hem, want ze wist dat zij de oorzaak was van deze dromen. Haar voorouders hadden hem op het oog. Ze zagen hem als een goede vangst. Ze hield er van om tegen hem aan te liggen. Voor haar was hij ook een goede vangst.

'Roderik,' zei ze. 'Ik ben je in mijn hart aan het sluiten. Ik waardeer onze vriendschap heel erg.' Roderik knikte. 'Ik heb hetzelfde,' zei hij. 'Ik voel me zo gehandicapt met deze dromen. Ze zijn verwarrend, maar aan de andere kant brengen ze me dichter bij jou.' Ze glimlachte en knikte. 'Het zal wel goed komen,' zei ze. 'Mijn voorouders zullen over je waken, en zullen het tot een goed eind brengen, of liever gezegd een goed begin.' Hij voelde zich rustig worden. Zij was zijn rust, zijn diepe rust. Het was alsof ze afdaalde in zijn hart. Ze bond hem aan haar.

De nacht erop had hij een droom over grote vrouwen met veren in hun haren, en andere dingen die hij niet begreep. Ze hadden een soort netten in hun haren, maar ook leken het uitvoerige veren. Het was alsof deze netten levensgevaarlijk waren, heel pijnlijk. Hij wist dat hij die netten niet moest aanraken, maar plotseling kwamen ze achter hem aan. Hij schrok, en rende. Hij verborg zich ergens in een grot, maar al snel hadden ze hem gevonden. Hij smeekte hen hem geen pijn te doen. Maar ze namen de netten uit hun haren en wierpen het op hem af.

Hij schrok wakker, en greep om zich heen. De vrouw drukte hem dicht tegen zich aan. 'Weer naar gedroomd ?' fluisterde ze. Haar nachtjapon was uit. Ze had alleen een wit slipje aan. Het was warm. Hij voelde zich heerlijk in haar armen. Haar benen gingen over zijn benen, en ze omhelsde hem stevig. Het leek wel alsof hij niet goed kon ademen, alsof hij in de greep van een beest was. Hij vroeg zich af of hij wel helemaal wakker was. Hij begon te schreeuwen in paniek. Plotseling had ze hem nog steviger vast. Het was nu echt net alsof hij niet meer kon ademen. Hij was als in de klauwen van een spin. Grote harige poten waren overal om hem heen. Hij begon te krijsen. De spin begon hem te verscheuren. Verslagen werd hij wakker. Niet wetende of hij echt wakker was. Ze lag naast hem, en had gewoon haar nachtjapon aan. Hij nam haar in zijn armen en legde zijn hoofd tegen haar borst aan. Omdat ze niet wakker werd, en hij ook niets durfde te zeggen, likte hij haar in haar nek. Hij keek nog eens naar haar slapende gezicht, maar ineens veranderde het in een doodskop waar wormen uitkwamen. Hij schrok, en slaakte een kreet. Hij sprong uit het bed met een kussen in zijn armen, en begon te trillen. 'Nee, nee, doe mij dit niet aan !' gilde hij helemaal overstuur. Spinnen kwamen uit haar mond, terwijl het leek alsof hij stierf, alsof de aftitelingen op het einde van zijn leven verschenen. Hij begon te huilen, en stortte neer op zijn knieen, het kussen stevig omhelzende. Hij weende bitter, als een gebroken man. De spinnen maakten een cocon van haar.

Spoedig was ze helemaal bedolven, en toen kwamen de spinnen op hem af. Hij gilde en huilde, smekende of dit op mocht houden, maar de spinnen waren genadeloos. Spoedig was hij bedolven, als onder sneeuw. Was dit zijn graf ?

'Moeder !' riep hij. 'Help me !' Hij had het heel erg benauwd. Een man met een hoed stond voor hem. Hij ging aan een bureautje zitten. 'Zeg,' zei de man, 'zijn er nog wijzen in dit land ? Of alleen maar gillende imbecielen zoals jij ?'

'Zie je dan niet wat er met mij aan de hand is ?' riep Roderik. 'Ik ben voedsel voor spinnen.'

'Ach, welnee, joh,' zei de man met de hoed. 'Je moet niet zo dromen. Je moet jezelf niet zo laten meesleuren.'

'Ja, maar ik kan niet anders,' riep Roderik. 'Het overweldigt me !'

'Ach nee, joh, je laat jezelf overweldigen,' zei de man.

'Hoe dan ?' vroeg Roderik.

'Ach, nietsnut,' zei de man, en vertrok.

Roderik keek naar zichzelf. Hij was onder de rode poeder. Ook had de man een spoor van rood poeder achter gelaten wat ergens in het niets scheen te verdwijnen. Roderik begon weer een beetje tot zijn zinnen te komen. Was het waar dat hij zich teveel liet meeslepen ? Had hij gewoon zijn hoofd wat koeler moeten houden ? Maar hij kon niets doen.

Hij hoopte maar dat hij snel wakker zou worden. Na een tijdje wekte zijn buurvrouw hem, en hij zag haar lieve gezicht boven hem. 'Ik dacht dat ik je beter kon wakker maken. Je was zo aan het woelen en in jezelf aan het praten, alsof je in een zwaar gevecht was,' sprak ze.

'Dank je,' zei hij. Toen vertelde hij haar de droom.

'Oh,' zei ze. 'Oh, dat was mijn oom. Hij droeg altijd een hoed.'

'Waarom was hij zo …' zei Roderik.

'Ach,' zei ze. 'Zo is hij altijd geweest. Trek het je niet aan.'

'Waarom kwam hij ?' vroeg hij.

'Ach,' zei ze. 'Ik weet het niet. Het is nogal een bemoeial, maar dat rode poeder van hem heeft je eruit geholpen. Hij is een helper, alleen hij doet het niet altijd op een leuke en respectvolle manier.'

'Wie waren die spinnen, en die grote vrouwen met die netten in hun haar ?' vroeg hij.

'Oh, ik weet het niet,' zei ze. 'Mijn voorouders zullen vast wel meer daarover weten. Als het goed is krijg je nog wel uitleg.'

Hij keek strak voor zich uit. Even later liep hij naar de stad, door het drukke verkeer. Hij wilde naar dat stoplicht toe in zijn droom. Hij voelde zich al helemaal in de grond wegzakken. 'Er is hier een zee,' dacht hij. Hij kwam tot de ontdekking dat hij droomde. Een leeuw stond voor hem. Er zat iemand op. Toen vervaagde de leeuw.

'Ik ben de leeuw,' zei een stem. 'Ik ben haar oom, de man met de hoed.'

'Ik ben de trol,' zei een andere stem. 'Ik ben …'

Maar toen vaagden de stemmen weg. Hij zat in een klein kamertje. Het kamertje bevond zich in een meertje. Toen begon het kamertje ook weg te zakken. Het was alsof hij in een lift zat die met een rotvaart naar beneden ging. Hij gilde. Het was alsof alle stoppen bij hem doorsloegen. Zijn oren leken doof te raken. Plotseling was er een enorme klap. Een vrouw zat voor hem met een sigaret. 'Roken,' sprak de vrouw.

'Waarom ? Wat bedoelt u ?' vroeg hij.

'Voorgeslachtelijke dromen van haar,' zei de vrouw. 'Wij zijn haar voorgeslacht. Wij willen je.'

'Willen voor wat ?' vroeg hij angstig.

'Voor het huis,' sprak de vrouw.

'Welk huis ?' vroeg hij.

'Niet zoveel vragen stellen,' zei ze.

Langzaam werd hij wakker met echoes in zijn hoofd, en hij voelde zich duizelig. Zijn buurvrouw lag naast hem. Hij voelde zich ziek, en misselijk. Hij liep naar de badkamer om wat water te drinken. Hij hoopte maar dat hij nu echt wakker was geworden. Maar niets was minder waar. Ze

kwam naar hem toe met een leeuwenhoofd. Ze brulde. Hij storte op zijn knieen en begon bitter te wenen. 'Ik denk dat ik gek word,' zei hij. Ze keek hem aan. 'Toe, zeg dat niet,' sprak ze, terwijl ze haar normale gezicht weer kreeg. 'Je droomt. Deze dromen zijn belangrijk.'

'Waar zijn ze belangrijk voor ?' vroeg hij.

'Het zijn gidsen,' zei ze.

'Ik begin moe te worden,' weende hij. 'Word ik ooit nog wakker, of ben ik al dood ?'

'Je bent in de onderwereld,' sprak ze. 'Je bent met de doden, maar zie, we leven.'

'Wie ben je ?' vroeg hij.

'Haar gids, haar tante,' sprak ze.

Plotseling begon de vloer zacht te worden, en hij gleed in de diepte. Hij probeerde zich ergens aan vast te klemmen, maar alles werd vloeibaar. Toen was het alsof hij in een diep gat viel, en hij kwam tussen een plaats met doodskoppen terecht.

'San Win,' werd er gezegd. 'Apulatus Menere.'

Een man kwam naar voren, een indiaan. Hij had veren op zijn hoofd, en stak zijn hand uit. 'Je hoeft niet bang te zijn,' sprak de man. 'Ik ben Zittende Buffalo. Hamma Ontole.'

'San Win,' zei de man weer. 'Zit met me.'

Roderik ging zitten na het schudden van handen. 'Ik ben gestuurd naar jou,' zei de man, 'voor een belangrijke opdracht. Ik moet jou brengen tot de Jungle van de onderwereld. Zoon, ik ben een Mazakka, een Mazakka krijger, van de Mazakka stam, een beruchte stam in de Jungle van de onderwereld, van Ma Oerwoud. Takki Abin.'

'Hesofort Perondeo, Porondeo Amaus,' sprak hij. 'Tutulus Paturu, Klazei Vakantus Opium Opius Opus Spiegandei Spakeius Plego. Plego Fanfort ! Amadeo ! De taal van de onderwereld. Kom dieper ! Hora Marantus ! Afei Vakus ! Fateio Amadei ! Kom dieper ! Luister naar mij !'

Roderik kwam in een trance, en de man nam hem bij de hand, om hem door vele struiken naar de Jungle van de onderwereld te brengen. Er was overal vuur, en hij hoorde gegil.

'Samanteo,' zei de man. 'Orferetus Marateo.' Roderik voelde zich zwak. Hij liep door het vuur, maar het deerde hem niet. Er was een soort bescherming om hem heen. Overal waren leeuwen, lange leeuwen. 'De leeuw is de poort tot trol,' zei de man. 'De Jungle van de onderwereld is van de trollen. Het zijn wilde indianen-stammen.'

Roderik kreeg een vreemd gevoel in zijn buik. Hij zakte in elkaar, en wilde opstaan, maar kon het niet. Een groene struik bedekte een poort. Er was een nauwe opening waar ze net doorheen konden. Toen stond hij in de open Jungle. De indianen hadden een groen-bruine huid, maar sommigen hadden rode huiden, veelal roodbruin. Er droop een vreemd groen sap van hun handen. Ze begonnen wild te krijsen en te gillen toen ze hem zagen. Maar hij was onder een bescherming. Ze namen hun speren, maar konden niets doen. Het was alsof er een licht op hen viel.

'Tetaris,' zei de man. 'Slaap.' Toen vielen ze allemaal in slaap. De man liep verder, terwijl Roderik

hem volgde. 'Ik noem je Orion, en dit gebied is Orion,' zei de man. Hij nam hem mee in de dieptes van een grot. Hier groeiden wat bloemen, en het leidde tot een diepe paradijselijke wereld. Veel bloemen waren er overal langs rivieren, en de bloemen hadden wortels die overal weelderig groeiden. Roderik werd er duizelig van. Deze wereld had een hypnotizerend effect op hem. Hij hoorde gegil en gilletjes in de verte. Hij kreeg een vreemd gevoel in zijn onderbuik.

'Meesters en meesteressen, en hun slaven,' zei de man. 'Maar de meesters staan altijd onder meesteressen. Er zijn geen vrije meesters. Zij zijn allen slaven.' Roderik herinnerde de woorden van zijn buurvrouw.

'Puk Holes,' zei de man. De man bleef het herhalen. Roderik zakte in elkaar. De man trok hem weer op. 'Blijf dicht bij me, Orion,' zei de man. Ze moesten over een brug gemaakt van touw, over een rivier. De rivier was heel woest. 'Elip !' riep de man. Een groot spinachtig dier stond aan de overkant van de rivier bij de brug. Het dier kwam bijna hysterisch op hen afrennen, greep hen, en rende terug. 'Azalip,' zei de man. 'Katanga Horeng, Debezewat Karami.'

Het spinachtig dier had een vreemde geur. 'Lik het, Orion, lik hem,' zei de man. Roderik nam een likje. Het was alsof hij een groot stuk vlees, of een vleesmaaltijd had gegeten. Hij voelde zich direct vol. 'Kom,' zei de man. Ze liepen verder. Het vreemde dier volgde hen. 'Azakaaltes,' zei de man. Ze kwamen weer bij een grot aan, bedolven onder bloemen, in een heuveltje. 'Ik breng je hier,' zei de man. 'Nu moet je zelf je pad vinden. Ik moet terug. Loop gewoon door totdat je bij de Mazakka stam bent gekomen. Ik zie je later.' De man rende weg. Roderik zuchtte en liep de grot in. Binnenin de grot waren vreemde vlinders, met zacht licht. Hij liep helemaal door tot de uitgang, en kwam in een kamp terecht. Hier liepen veel indiaanse vrouwen, en mannen zaten op de grond of geknield.

Roderik werd wakker. Zijn buurvrouw lag naast hem. Alweer wist hij niet of hij echt wakker was geworden. Hij keek naar haar lieve, slapende gezicht. Voorzichtig maakte hij haar wakker, en vertelde over de dromen, en hoe bang hij was dat hij nog steeds droomde. 'Ze maken het je wel heel erg moeilijk,' zuchtte ze. Ze nam hem weer heel dicht tegen hem aan, en wreef over zijn rug. 'Ik weet niet meer wat ik moet doen,' fluisterde hij.

'Je kunt niets doen,' zei ze. 'Je moet het gewoon over je heen laten komen als een ervaring.' Hij keek naar haar nachtjapon. Ze had een indiaanse nachtjapon aan.

'De Woogerbommies zijn maskers, oude indiaanse maskers, door de tegenstander gemaakt om onze stam lastig te vallen. Deze maskers eten het bovenlichaam, en nemen het over. Het zijn een soort spinnen, gezichten met weelderige uitsteeksels, netten, als de slangen van het Medusa hoofd,' sprak ze. 'Als je het ziet, verander je in steen, maar onze stam heeft jou de bescherming gegeven. Onze stam heeft de Woogerbommies overwonnen. Zij dragen de overwonnen, verzwakte Woogerbommies als veren in hun haar, als netten, en gebruiken het om hen die dichtbij komen te testen, en om de vijand te bestrijden. De Woogerbommies zijn hun slaven en kampdieren.'

Hoe kan ik de Woogerbommies overwinnen ?' vroeg Roderik.

'Door ingewijd te worden in de leefwijzen van de stam,' sprak ze. 'En daar zijn ze nu mee bezig. Wil je verder, of wil je hier stoppen ?'

'Verder,' zei Roderik aarzelend.

'Dan ben ik dus je meesteres,' zei de vrouw. 'Onze stam is matriarchisch.'

'Best,' zei Roderik. 'Als dit de enige weg is om door deze dromen en nachtmerries heen te komen

om het tot een goed einde te brengen, dan zij het niet anders.'

'Goed,' zei de vrouw. 'Kniel voor me. De Woogerbommies konden ons alleen plagen zolang we in huwelijken leefden, en zolang mannen de leiding hadden buiten een moeder om.'

Hij knielde op de matras voor haar. 'Ik moet je binden,' zei ze. Voorzichtig ging ze achter hem zitten en bond zijn polsen aan elkaar door een touwachtig snoer. Het snoer voelde wel zacht aan, maar het was ook strak. Het deed verder geen pijn, want het was erg flexibel. Zijn armen waren nu achter zijn rug.

'Welkom in onze stam,' sprak ze.

'Mag ik nu weer los ?' vroeg hij.

'Nee,' zei ze. 'Nog niet.'

Ze ging weer liggen en trok hem mee. Ze lag achter hem. Ze ging met haar handen onder zijn pyama-shirt, maar even later maakte ze zijn knoopjes los. 'Het moet naakt gebeuren,' sprak ze. 'Dan ben je helemaal van ons, en niet meer van de Woogerbommies, want nu ben je een gevangene van de Woogerbommies. Door onze bescherming heb je het overleeft. Met haar vingers gleed ze over zijn huid. 'Je hoeft niet helemaal naakt,' zei ze. Het is al naakt genoeg. Ik voel je.' Haar handen gleden naar zijn nek. 'Hier komt een halssnoer,' zei ze.

'Is dat echt allemaal nodig ?' vroeg hij.

'Ja,' fluisterde ze. Ze stond op, en kwam even later terug met het halssnoer wat ze om zijn nek vastmaakte. Het was een zwart snoer, een beetje bruinig. Ook zat er een steentje aan de voorkant. Hij voelde het halssnoer tegen zijn nek en hals aanliggen, maar het zat niet te strak. 'Vanaf nu noem je mij meesteres of jaagster,' sprak ze.

'Ja, meesteres,' zei hij. Hij vond alles best, zolang hij maar van zijn dromen af zou komen. Nog steeds wist hij niet of hij al echt wakker was geworden. Hij had zich erbij neergelegd dat hij waarschijnlijk nog steeds droomde. Dit kon gewoon niet waar zijn.

'Droom ik ?' vroeg hij.

'Zeg : Droom ik, meesteres,' sprak ze streng.

'Droom ik, meesteres ?' vroeg hij.

'Als je me nog één keer aanspreekt zonder me meesteres te noemen, dan zal ik je moeten straffen,' sprak ze.

'Ja, meesteres,' zei hij, terwijl de rillingen door hem heen liepen. Hij begon zich ongemakkelijk te voelen. Hij was geheel op scherp ineens, en zou er bijna hysterisch voor zorgen dat hij nu bij alles wat hij zei haar meesteres zou noemen. Hij was bang voor de straf, want wat zou dat kunnen zijn ? Hij haalde de meest gekke dingen in zijn hoofd.

Hij probeerde los te wringen, maar dat lukte niet. Hij had dit al wel eerder gedroomd. Hij hoopte maar dat hij snel zou wakker worden, maar dat gebeurde maar niet. Wat als het echt waar zou zijn ? Waar was hij toch aan begonnen ?

'Ik wil naar huis,' sprak hij. 'Ik voel me niet op mijn gemak.'

'Geen sprake van,' zei ze. 'Ik kan je nu niet laten gaan. Veel te gevaarlijk met al die Woogerbommies. Je zou ons kunnen verraden. Nee hoor, komt niets van in.'

Hij zag in dat het haar menens was, maar besefte ook dat dit crimineel was, want ze hield hem tegen zijn zin gevangen.

'Ik laat de politie komen als je me niet laat gaan,' zei hij.

'Je kunt niets doen, en dat zijn alweer drie regels zonder mij meesteres te noemen. Dat worden negen slagen met de gesel. Ze trok hem op, en ontblootte zijn rug. Ze pakte ergens een gesel vandaan, en kwam terug om hem te slaan, terwijl ze met haar andere hand zijn hoofd naar achteren trok aan zijn haren. Ze sloeg niet hard met de gesel. Het was tamelijk zacht. Ze zei dat dat een waarschuwing was.

'Ik doe niet meer mee,' zei hij. 'Sla me maar zoveel en zo hard als je wil, maar ik noem je geen meesteres meer. Bij mij is de lol er allang vanaf.'

Ze begon hem harder te slaan. Ze was inmiddels gaan staan, en stond naast het bed. Ze had hem in een bukkende houding neergezet. Ze sloeg hem zo hard dat er striemen op zijn rug kwamen. Hij deed zijn mond niet open. Hij voelde er niet zoveel van, wat voor hem een teken was dat hij nog steeds droomde. Of hij was in een shock.

Weer trok ze aan zijn haren. 'Je komt niet zo makkelijk af van mij, mannetje,' riep ze. Maar de stem begon te vervagen, en hij werd wakker. Hij zuchtte van grote verlichting. Tegelijkertijd voelde hij zich opgewonden, omdat de vrouw van wie hij was gaan houden gelukkig niet degene was waarvan hij had gedroomd. Hij pakte haar vast en kuste haar. Haar lichaam voelde warm en lekker aan. Hij drukte zich stevig tegen haar billen aan, en hij werd nog meer opgewonden. Hij was zo blij dat zijn liefde voor haar niet in haat was veranderd. Ze kreunde in haar slaap, en draaide zich om naar hem. Spoedig voelde hij haar warme lippen op zijn mond. Hij genoot van haar, meer dan ooit. Hij voelde haar tong op de zijne. Hij wilde alleen maar meer. Maar was hij wakker, dat was de vraag.

'Je voelt zo lekker aan, schat,' zei ze.

'Jij ook,' zei hij. Hij kreunde zacht. Ze hielden elkaar stevig vast.

'Ik heb zo vreemd gedroomd,' sprak hij. 'Ik ook,' zei ze.

'Waar heb je over gedroomd ?' vroeg hij.

We liepen in het oerwoud, en plotseling waren we omsingeld door hyena's. Ze namen ons mee en ik kan er niet over praten wat er toen gebeurde. Toen vertelde hij zijn droom.

'Ze moeten je wel weer hebben,' sprak ze. 'Mag ik je mijn liefde laten zien en je laten zien hoe ik wel ben ?' vroeg ze.

Zijn hart begon hevig te kloppen. Hij wist niet of hij daar wel aan toe was na alles wat hij had meegemaakt met zijn vrouw en met de echtscheiding. Maar aan de andere kant verlangde hij naar haar, en wond het hem op. 'Wil je met me vrijen ?' vroeg ze. Even was het stil vanwege zijn aarzeling. Hij kuste haar, en begon de knoopjes van haar indiaanse nachtjapon los te trekken. Ook zij begon zijn knoopjes los te trekken. Ze kusten elkaar heel intiem, en nadat ze elkaars nachtkleren

hadden uitgetrokken lagen ze naakt tegen elkaar aan. Toen hij wakker werd was hij niet alleen opgelucht, maar ook diep teleurgesteld en bang. Misschien was hij wel dood, want hij scheen niet meer echt wakker te worden. Hij werd erg wanhopig. Hij had hulp nodig. Hij maakte haar wakker en vertelde haar bijna huilend het verhaal. Ze was direct erg zorgzaam. 'Je bent er zo van in de war, hè,' zei ze. 'Ik kan me dat heel goed voorstellen. Maar heus, je bent echt wakker nu.' Ze kneep hem in zijn arm. 'Au !' riep hij. 'Ik ben wakker !' Hij was de gelukkigste man nu.

'Die dromen dragen een boodschap,' sprak ze. 'Een boodschap van mijn voorouders. Het zou goed zijn om ze op te schrijven.' Hij voelde zich te ziek, en daarom deed zij het voor hem. Ze maakte wat soep voor hem met brood.

De dagen erna begonnen de dromen minder te worden en af te zwakken, en hij herstelde goed. Hij besloot om weer terug te keren naar zijn huis. Hij belde haar nog wel veel. Ook kwam ze hem vaak indiaanse spulletjes brengen, en al snel stond zijn huis er vol mee. Hij voelde zich er goed bij. Ze betekende veel voor hem, maar het kwam niet tot een relatie. Daar zorgden de voorouders voor, en hij wist precies waarom.

Op een nacht had hij weer een droom. Hij viel in het water, en van de kant doken trollen in het water die naar hem toezwommen om hem vervolgens onder water te drukken. Ze probeerden hem te verdrinken. Hij was in doodsangst. Hij verloor zijn bewustzijn, en alles leek wel een eeuwigheid te duren. Hij probeerde weer boven te komen, maar hij faalde, en gleed weg in wanhoop en duisternis, als in een diepe, trage tunnel. Toen ontwaakte hij tussen witte bloemen. Een jongen stond voor hem. 'De witte bloem der trollen,' sprak de jongen. 'Welkom.'

'Welkom waar ?' vroeg Roderik.

'Nou gewoon, welkom in de onderwereld der trollen,' sprak de jongen.

'Zo gewoon is dat niet voor mij,' zei Roderik.

'Ach, je bent hier al wel vaker geweest,' zei de jongen.

De jongen legde een keten om de hals van Roderik. 'Meekomen, slaaf,' zei hij.

'Maar ik ben helemaal geen slaaf,' zei Roderik.

'Dat ben je wel,' zei de jongen. 'Ik ben je meester. Ik heb je hier gevangen genomen, tot slaaf gemaakt.'

Roderik probeerde de keten los te maken, maar het had geen zin.

'Het zit op slot,' zei de jongen. 'Noem me meester.'

'Wat als ik je geen meester noem ?' vroeg Roderik.

'Dan vermoord ik je,' zei de jongen.

'Ik ben toch al dood,' zei Roderik. 'Ik ben verdronken, weet je nog ?'

'Heb maar niet zoveel praatjes,' zei de jongen. 'Zij die voor de tweede keer sterven gaan naar de hel.'

Roderik schrok. Zijn hart begon zwaar te kloppen, en het bloed begon naar zijn hoofd te stijgen. Hij

wist dat hij maar beter geen risico's kon nemen. 'Ja, meester,' zei hij.

'Goedzo,' zei de jongen. 'Je begint het al te leren.'

Roderik kon de jongen wel wat aandoen, maar hij wist dat hij voorzichtig moest zijn. Hij wilde het niet erger maken dan het al was. 'Ik leid je tot de meesteres,' zei de jongen.

Met een keten trok de jongen Roderik voort. De meesteres woonde in een wigwam.

'Ah, slaven-vlees,' zei de meesteres.

'Gaan jullie me opeten ?' vroeg Roderik bang.

'Nee, veel erger,' zei de meesteres. 'We gaan je uithongeren, en tot de trollen-arena brengen.'

'Alstublieft niet,' smeekte Roderik.

'Noem me meesteres,' zei de meesteres.

'Laat me alstublieft niet verhongeren en naar de arena gaan, meesteres,' smeekte Roderik.

Hij lag aan haar voeten. 'Smeek me om genade,' sprak de meesteres.

'Genade, genade, meesteres,' gilde Roderik.

'Er is geen genade,' zei de meesteres hardvochtig.

'Breng hem naar de kooi, zandtrol,' zei de meesteres.

De jongen trok Roderik direct mee tot een kooi, waar hij ingeduwd werd. Roderik kreeg alleen water, melk en een bloedachtig mengsel. Na een paar dagen was Roderik flink uitgehongerd, en hij voelde zich zwak en moe.

Na een paar weken werd hij tot de arena gesleurd, waar hij tegen uitgehongerde trollen moest strijden. Roderik huilde. 'Genade, genade,' smeekte hij, maar hij wist dat er geen genade was. Al snel stortte hij in, en werd in elkaar geschopt. Na een lange tijd werd hij wakker in de zachte armen van een trollenvrouw. 'Ik zal vanaf nu je meesteres zijn,' fluisterde de vrouw, 'maar alleen hier. Ik ben een arena-meesteres. Ik bereid mijn slaven voor op het gevecht, en neem hen mee naar mijn ruimte na het gevecht.' Roderik was bewusteloos getrapt. Ze depte zijn wonden.

'Waar is dit allemaal goed voor ?' kreunde Roderik. 'Vruchtbaarheid,' zei de trollenvrouw. 'Ook zorgt het ervoor dat mannen niet sterker worden dan vrouwen. Daarom hongeren wij hen uit, en laten hen tegen elkaar vechten in de arena. Het is goede discipline en goede veiligheid.'

'Ik begrijp het,' kreunde Roderik. 'Is er geen andere manier ?'

'Nee,' zei de trollenvrouw.

'Hoelang moet dit doorgaan ?' vroeg Roderik.

'Voor altijd,' zei de trollenvrouw.

Roderik werd koud en warm op hetzelfde moment. Zijn hart begon sneller te kloppen, en bloed steeg tot zijn hoofd. Hij begon erg bang te worden, en voelde hopeloosheid bezit van hem nemen.

'I... is dit a... alles of is er m... meer ?' stamelde Roderik.

'Er is veel meer. Het zal steeds erger worden,' zei de trollenvrouw.

'Wat gaan jullie met me doen ?' gilde Roderik. Hij begon zachtjes te wenen, maar de trollenvrouw was meedogenloos.

'Ik ben er goed bij,' dacht Roderik, 'tenzij dit allemaal weer een nachtmerrie is.'

De trollenvrouw begon over hem te zingen, en Roderik kreeg een vreemd gevoel in zijn buik. 'Ik ben er geweest,' dacht Roderik. Hij begon hele erge buikpijn te krijgen.

'Jullie gaan jullie zin niet krijgen !' riep Roderik, terwijl hij zich probeerde los te worstelen. Maar de vrouw was veel sterker dan hem. Snel bond ze hem aan handen en voeten. Roderik voelde zich machteloos. Woest begon hij te brullen. De vrouw pakte een gesel en begon hem te slaan. Ook begon ze hem te schoppen. Na een tijdje gaf Roderik de moed geheel op. Hij kon niet meer. Hij barstte in huilen uit. Weer begon ze over hem te zingen. 'Ze proberen me gek te maken,' dacht Roderik. 'Ze proberen me te programmeren.' Ze streelde hem over zijn buik. Haar hand gleed dieper en dieper. 'Blijf van me af !' riep Roderik. Ze nam hem in haar armen. 'Je hebt niets in te brengen, sex-slaaf,' sprak ze.

'Ik ben geen sex-slaaf !' gilde Roderik.

'Je bent een speeltje,' zei de trollenvrouw, 'niets meer dan dat. En we gaan met je fokken. We hebben meer slaven nodig.'

Het begon te duizelen voor Roderik's ogen. Weer werd hij heet en koud tegelijkertijd, en steeg het bloed naar zijn hoofd, terwijl zijn hart in zijn keel bonkte. Weer probeerde hij zich los te worstelen, maar niets hielp. Hij vocht tegen beter weten in. 'Nooit zal ik een sex-slaaf zijn !' gilde hij. Weer begon ze over hem te zingen, terwijl hij begon te krijsen. Hij wilde haar niet horen. Hij kreeg er hoofdpijn van.

'Stil, sex-slaaf,' zei ze.

Na een tijdje werd hij teruggebracht tot zijn kooi, waar hij in het hooi ging liggen.

Toen werd hij wakker van deze nachtmerrie. Helemaal in paniek belde hij zijn buurvrouw op, en hij kon direct komen. Ze nam hem in zijn armen, terwijl hij de nachtmerrie vertelde. Ze was nog niet helemaal wakker, dus ze gingen naar haar bed. Hij was erg bang. Hij durfde niet meer te slapen. Hij lag tegen haar aan, en ze probeerde hem tot rust te brengen. 'Kalm maar,' zei ze. 'Ik weet dat het diep gaat.'

'Zijn dit weer je voorouders ?' vroeg Roderik.

Ze knikte.

'Waarom, waarom ?' vroeg Roderik.

'Roderik, dat hebben ze je al uitgelegd. De dreiging van de man is groot,' sprak ze.

'Ja, maar dit is misselijk,' zei Roderik. 'Is er geen andere manier ?'

'Nee,' zei de vrouw.

'Wow,' zei Roderik. 'Ik begin nu een beetje te vermoeden wat er aan de hand is. Ik denk weer dat ik aan de dodendans ben ontvlucht, maar ik ben nog steeds in hun klauwen. Ik ben nog steeds niet wakker !' Hij kneep in zijn arm en voelde niets. Hij keek naar haar, en ze was als een doorzichtige zwarte pop die net iets kleiner was geworden. Toen werd ze nog kleiner. 'Draak !' gilde hij, en sprong uit het bed. De lucht was vol zwart gas nu, en ze begon te exploderen. Spoedig was het huis in de vlammen. Roderik probeerde weg te rennen, maar van alles begon op hem te vallen. Het huis begon in te storten. Toen steeg hij hoog boven de vlammen uit en werd in de zee geslingerd. Hij zag zichzelf in een witte kamer en probeerde de muren te doorbreken, maar het lukte hem niet. De kamer werd steeds kleiner en kleiner, en explodeerde toen. Hij was in de lucht nu. Heel langzaam werd hij wakker in zijn eigen kamer, maar hij vertrouwde het nog steeds niet. Hij kon zich niet bewegen. Trollen kwamen zijn kamer binnen die hem begonnen te slaan met stokken.

'Laat me eruit !' gilde hij. Maar spoedig kon hij ook niet meer spreken. 'Deze wereld is gek,' dacht hij bij zichzelf. Hij wilde niet meer leven. 'Ik word toch wel weer een keer wakker,' dacht hij bij zichzelf.

'De trollen, de trollen, ze komen !' werd er ineens geroepen. 'Deze monsters zullen de wereld overnemen. En het zal alleen maar erger worden.'

Hij lag daar als verlamd. Hij lag daar met een koptelefoon op, met een scheldende stem. Het was een nar, een dictator, op een bandje. Iemand moest die cassette eruit halen. Hij kon niet praten. Hij kon niet bewegen.

Na een tijdje kon hij zich weer bewegen. Hij stond op en liep het huis uit. Zijn huis stond midden op een groot veld waar allemaal wigwams stonden. Deze wigwams hadden een heleboel scherpe uitsteeksels op de top. Vanuit de wigwams werd geroepen : 'Wat moet je hier. Wegwezen jij. We hebben je niet nodig.' Hij voelde zich verworpen, en waar hij dan ook kwam werd hij afgewezen. De hele stad was vol wigwams nu, als een indiaanse stad, maar het was nu als een bosvlakte, als een groot kamp in de natuur. En zijn huis stond in het midden. Misschien dat ze daarom zo boos waren. Zijn huis stond in de weg.

Suzie

De edelste tuinen zag ik. Zoutig, zurig, niet te veel zoet, zo smaakten de bessen. Ze waren heerlijk. Ze waren bijna verzonnen als door een insect. En dan niet een normaal insect, maar bijzonder, eentje met groot potentieel, als een wereldredder. Ik had kriebel in mijn keel toen ik ernaar keek. Het smaakte ook een beetje naar drop. Drop kon je trouwens niet krimpen, tenzij het rode drop was. Maar rode drop was dan weer net iets zoeter. Ik stapte de tuinen binnen, waar nog veel meer van die bessen hingen, en allemaal beestjes. Ze zat daar met een rood jurkje, een beetje opgebolt als

pudding was haar jurkje, als met kant belegd. Het jurkje was niet te groot, en dat hoefde ook niet. Het was al genoeg dat ze daar zat. De touwtjes van haar jurkje waren als dropveters, als van rode drop. Ik keek niet op of om, maar ging dieper de tuinen in, op zoek naar meer bessen. Ik hield ervan om naar bessen te staren, vooral druipende bessen. Het was alsof ik haar tong op de mijne voelde, maar ik ontweek haar. Ik wilde niet aan haar denken. Zij blijkbaar ook niet aan mij, want ze bleef gewoon zitten. Ik voelde contact met haar, maar ontkende het in mezelf. Kom op, zeg. Ik heb wel andere dingen te doen. Als ik me aan haar zou geven, zou ze me toch verscheuren. Ze was een roofdier, daar diep in de tuin. Ik had haar wel in de gaten, maar deed alsof ik haar niet zag. Ze begon een beetje zenuwachtig heen en weer te draaien. 'Ik heb je wel in de gaten, hoor,' zei ze. Ik deed alsof ik haar niet hoorde. 'Dat is ook niet netjes,' zei ze. 'Helemaal niets terugzeggen.' Ik draaide met mijn rug naar haar toe. Ik begon nog meer bessen te plukken, en begon ze te eten. 'Hey, geef mij ook eens wat van die bessen,' zei ze. Ik gooide er eentje toe.

'Je bent afstandelijk,' zei ze. 'Nou, jij mag er anders ook wel wezen,' zei ik. 'Eindelijk praat je,' zei ze. 'Ik vind het allemaal best,' zei ik. 'Wat vind je allemaal best ?' vroeg ze. Ik zweeg. Ik begon door te eten van de bessen. 'Niet met je mond vol praten,' zei ze. 'Je bent mijn moeder niet,' zei ik. 'Nee, gelukkig niet,' zei ze. 'Je bent me nogal een probleem-geval.' 'Zo mag ik het horen,' zei ik. 'Hoe zal ik je noemen ?' sprak ze. 'Al noem je me Klaas, doet me niets,' zei hij. 'Krokodillen-voer,' sprak ze zachtjes. 'Die zijn hier niet,' zei ik.

Ik liep dieper de tuin in, mijn gezicht verborgen voor haar. Ze kwam mij niet achterna. Wat zou ze van me moeten ? En ik had wel andere dingen te doen. Ik verzamelde bessen in mijn mandje. Ik bracht ze naar grootmoeder. Ze kookte er iets van. Het was heerlijk. Ik sprak met haar niet over de dingen die ik had gezien in de edelste tuinen. Maar later deed ik het toch. 'Ach, dat meisje,' zei grootmoeder. 'Ik ken haar wel. Ze woonde hier vroeger in de buurt. Er hing daar altijd was buiten, in de tuin. Ze kookte weleens voor ons. Maar later werd ze een wilde. Ze vertrok naar de andere kant van de stad, en ging aan de kade wonen. Het was veel te wild voor ons. Maar ze hield altijd al veel van de bossen. Daar zwierf ze vaak. Toen je klein was kwam ze je weleens opzoeken.' 'Ik kan me daar niets meer van herinneren,' zei ik. 'Dat ben je misschien vergeten,' zei grootmoeder. 'Jullie waren vroeger heel gek met elkaar.' 'Hoe kunnen mensen zo uit elkaar groeien ?' vroeg ik. 'Ach ja, jongen,' zei grootmoeder, 'dat is de wereld. Het is komen en gaan, vastpakken en loslaten, en je groeit uit alles ook weer uit.' 'Ja, dat jurkje wat ze droeg was wel erg klein,' zei ik. 'Ze past er niet meer in,' zei grootmoeder. 'Nou, het paste wel goed,' zei ik, 'maar het jurkje was gewoon klein.' 'Ze had dus niet veel aan,' zei grootmoeder. 'Nou, okay, daar kan ik inkomen. Het is nogal zomers weer, een beetje zwoel zelfs, vind je niet ?' Ik keek oma aan. Ze had van die wonderlijke ogen, donkere ogen. Ik zag de pretlichtjes in haar ogen, alsof ze blij was dat we met elkaar spraken. Ja, dat had ook anders kunnen zijn. Er waren zovelen die niet meer met oma wilden praten. Haar ogen dropen bijna als bessen. En ik had bijna druipende handen. 'Vertel me meer,' zei ik. 'Nou, ja, ze was vroeger gek op je, en wilde met je trouwen,' zei grootmoeder. 'Maar de familie wilde dat niet. Toen droop ze af. Alle contacten verwaterden sindsdien.' 'Ja, maar daar kan ik toch niets aan doen,' zei ik. 'Ze werd verboden met je om te gaan,' zei grootmoeder. 'En daar legde ze zich bij neer.' 'Was ze gevaarlijk of zo ?' vroeg ik. 'De familie vond van wel,' zei grootmoeder. 'Ze is als een kwark-taartje,' zei ik. 'Ja, maar jij kent haar duisternissen niet,' zei grootmoeder. 'Vertel me,' zei ik. Grootmoeder werd even stil. Ze keek me diep aan in mijn ogen, en sprak : 'Ze houdt van vreemde spelletjes. Het zijn geen echte spelletjes, maar ik noem het maar even zo.'

Ik kwam haar een paar dagen later in de bibliotheek tegen. Ze was daar aan het lezen. Ze had prachtige laarzen aan. En een prachtig wit broekje dat tot aan haar laarzen reikte. Ze had touwtjes in haar haren, en het voelde alsof haar tong op de mijne lag. Ik had een bessensmaak in mijn mond. Ze deed alsof ze me niet zag, of misschien zag ze me helemaal niet. Ik liep langs haar heen, en liep zo dicht tegen haar aan dat ik haar raakte, maar niet te hard, en niet te dichtbij, en zeker ook niet te lang. Een rilling en een warm gevoel ging door mij heen. Ik voelde mij als in de hemel. Ik werd er

een beetje emotioneel van. Plotseling keek ze op, en keek met haar warme donker-bruine ogen naar mij, alsof ze me niet herkende. Toen las ze weer door. 'Je herkent me niet ?' vroeg ik. 'Nee,' zei ze, terwijl ze niet opkeek. Ze las gewoon door. 'Ik geloof je niet,' zei ik. Ze glimlachte warm, terwijl ze even opkeek. 'Het is me allemaal verboden,' zei ze. 'Door wie ?' vroeg ik. 'Je familie,' zei ze. Ik zweeg. Ik probeerde me haar naakt voor te stellen, of in een bikini op het strand, terwijl ik doorliep. Dat was de laatste keer dat ik haar zag. Grootmoeder vertelde mij een paar weken later dat ze in de krant had gelezen dat ze spoorloos was verdwenen. Ik werd er niet koud of warm van. Het zij zo, dacht ik. Haar zus kwam ik nog weleens tegen. Maar die wilde er niet over praten. Dat was ook een heel ander type. Toch wilde ze er na een bepaalde tijd wel over praten. 'Mijn zusje hield veel van je,' zei ze. 'Ze wil dat je haar nooit vergeet.' 'Waar is ze ?' vroeg ik. Ze overhandigde me een brief. 'Lees,' zei ze. Er stond in dat ze naar het bos was gevlucht, voorgoed. Ze wilde dat ik zou komen. Ik stond op, en ging terug naar grootmoeder. 'Ja, ze hield veel van de bossen,' zei grootmoeder. 'Altijd al. Karel, haar vader, was ook een bos-fanaat.' Ik schudde mijn laars uit. Er zat allemaal zand in, en ook een munt, een gouden munt, met haar hoofd erop. Ik liet het aan grootmoeder zien. 'Maar dat kan toch niet, lieve jongen,' zei grootmoeder. 'Hoe kun je nu een munt vinden met haar hoofd erop, en dat zat in je laars ? Dat heeft haar zus vast in je laars gestopt toen je daar was.' Ik was verbijsterd. 'Hoe is dat mogelijk ?' vroeg ik. 'Een munt met haar hoofd erop ?' 'Ja, ze moet wel ergens koningin zijn, jongen,' zei grootmoeder. 'Je komt niet zomaar met je hoofd op een munt.' 'Hoe kan dat ?' vroeg ik. 'Ik weet het niet, jongen,' zei grootmoeder. 'Volgens mij weet haar zus meer.' Ik ging weer naar haar zus, en die begon direct te glimlachen toen ze de munt zag. 'Ja, Suzie is een koningin,' zei ze. Het was de eerste keer dat ik haar zag glimlachen. 'Van welk rijk ?' vroeg ik. 'Suzie is de koningin der apen,' zei ze. 'Ach, kom nou,' zei ik. 'Hoe kunnen apen nou munten hebben.' 'Ach,' zei ze, 'dat was eens een stunt in de dierentuin, waar je je hoofd kon laten zetten op een munt, als je voor een bepaald bedrag had gedoneerd.' 'Dus heb jij die munt in mijn laars gedaan ?' vroeg ik. Ze giechelde. Raadsel opgelost. Ik ging terug naar grootmoeder. 'Ach, Karel had ook altijd van die vreemde dingen,' zei grootmoeder. 'En haar moeder was ook zo'n zot mens. Haar moeder reiste in bootjes door het bos. Ook zo'n bosmens. En dan vreemde dingen, he.' 'Wat voor vreemde dingen ?' vroeg ik. Grootmoeder zweeg.

Ik besloot door de vele struiken van bosbessen naar het bos te gaan. Al gauw kwam ik haar daar tegen. Ze had een boog op mij gericht. 'Wat kom je doen ?' zei ze ruig. 'Ik dacht dat je wilde dat ik kwam ?' zei ik. 'Wie ben je ?' vroeg ze. 'Ik dacht dat je me wel kende, Suzie,' zei ik. 'Ik ben Suzie niet,' zei ze. 'Ik ben nu iemand anders.' 'Mag ik bij je komen ?' vroeg ik. Ze spande de boog nog strakker. Ik keek naar de glinsterende pijl. Als ze die los zou laten, zou ik er zeker geweest zijn. 'Jij bent het reeenkind, het geheim van het hertenjong,' zei ze. 'Wat is dat ?' vroeg ik. 'Nog even en dan ben je een kluif,' zei ze. Ze greep een touw met een lasso van haar schouder en liet het om mijn nek vliegen. 'Hey, ben je gek geworden ?' vroeg ik. Met een steen sloeg ze me neer. Ik was bewusteloos, en werd even later wakker in een kooi. 'Jij bent dus echt gek geworden,' zei ik. 'Stom varken,' zei ze. 'Ik dacht dat ik eerst een hertenjong was, en nu ineens een varken ?' vroeg ik. 'Mond houden,' zei ze. 'Je speelt met je leven.' 'Je praat gewoon heel ongenuanceerd, alsof er een steekje bij je los zit,' zei ik. 'Ik ga je laten verhongeren,' zei ze. Die is echt gek, dacht ik bij mezelf. Die heeft ze niet meer goed op een rijtje. 'Je zal niet meer teruggaan naar je familie,' zei ze hardvochtig. 'Het is afgelopen met hun spelletjes. Je bent nu van mij.' 'Wat als ze me hier komen halen ?' vroeg ik. 'Dit is verboden terrein voor hen,' zei ze. Opeens stond daar de boswachter. Suzie moest naar de gevangenis, en ik kon weer terug naar mijn familie. Ik had wel heel erg veel medelijden met Suzie. Ik zocht haar vaak op in de gevangenis. 'Heus, ik bedoelde het niet zo,' zei ze. 'Ja, dat zeggen ze allemaal,' zei ik. 'Ik was gewoon met je aan het spelen,' zei ze. 'Mijn familie had gelijk,' zei ik. 'Je bent gevaarlijk, en je houdt van vreemde spelletjes.' Ze begon te huilen. 'Ik wilde je geen kwaad doen. Ik zou je daarna gewoon loslaten, maar jullie vatten alles verkeerd op,' zei ze. 'Maar je had een pijl en boog op me gericht, en je had me bewusteloos geslagen met een steen. Noem je dat nog spelletjes ? Je bent een beetje vreemd,' zei ik. 'Het bosleven is hard,' zei ze. 'Ik moest overleven.' 'Maar je zei dat je wilde dat ik kwam,' zei ik. 'In die brief. Het is een soort liegen en bedriegen.' 'Nee,' zei ze. 'Ik wilde dat je

kwam. Ik wilde gewoon met je spelen.' 'Je hebt me erin laten lopen,' zei ik. 'Denk je nou echt dat ik je kwaad wilde doen ?' vroeg ze. 'Ik weet het niet,' zei ik. 'Je bent in ieder geval niet te vertrouwen.' 'Het was maar spel,' zei ze. 'Vond je het niet leuk ? Dan had je het moeten zeggen, dan waren we direct gestopt.' 'Ik was al bewusteloos geslagen,' zei ik. Ze scheen het niet te begrijpen. Het was een bijzonder meisje. 'Het dringt niet tot je door, he ?' zei ik. 'En nu zit ik hier dan,' zei ze. 'Ik wil terug naar het bos.' 'Maar je bent te gevaarlijk,' zei ik. 'Ach kom,' zei ze. 'Jullie kunnen ook niet tegen een grapje.' 'Geen leuk grapje als ik bewusteloos wordt geslagen,' zei ik. Maar dat drong niet tot haar door. 'Het is het wilde leven,' zei ze. 'In het wilde leven kunnen dingen gebeuren die in de stad niet mogen gebeuren. Het is anders.' 'Ja, ja, maak dat de kat maar wijs,' zei ik.

Grootmoeder wilde dat ik uit haar buurt zou blijven, vooral toen ze weer vrij kwam. Het was voor haar verboden om in het bos te komen. Dat zou een verkeerde uitwerking op haar hebben. Ik ging haar niet echt uit de weg. Soms kwam ik haar in de bibliotheek tegen. 'Van wat voor boeken houd je ?' vroeg ik haar. 'Van het bos,' zei ze. 'Daar mag je niet komen, he ?' zei ik plagend. 'Nee,' zei ze zacht. 'Mijn familie heeft liever niet dat ik met je praat,' zei ik. 'Naar voor je,' zei ze. 'Waarom dat nou weer ?' vroeg ik. 'Wat kan mij dat nou schelen. Ben je zo belangrijk ?' 'Nou, je kwam me anders wel altijd opzoeken, in het bos, in de gevangenis, en nu,' zei ze. Ik begon hevig te protesteren. 'Nee, dat was omdat ik medelijden met je had, niet voor mezelf,' zei ik. 'Oh, ben jij er zo één,' zei ze. 'Ik vertrouw je niet,' zei ik. 'Ja, dat weten we al,' zei ze. 'Maar je loopt wel altijd achter me aan.' Weer begon ik hevig te protesteren. 'Zeg, dame, nou moet je eens even heel goed naar me luisteren. Ik heb net zoveel recht om in de bibliotheek te komen als jij. En ik ben hier voor de boeken, niet voor jou. Nu moet je geen hoogmoeds-waanzin krijgen, mevrouw, of wil je ook dat ik 'u' tegen je zeg ?' zei ik verontwaardigd. 'Nee,' zei ze, 'en ik loop je gewoon maar wat te plagen.' 'Goed,' zei ik, en liep door. Maar ze kwam me achterna. 'Ik zal je nog wel eens een keer krijgen, zoals ik je goed beet had in het bos,' zei ze. Ik slikte. Ik wist dat ik nog steeds op mijn hoede moest zijn. Deze vrouw was immers gek. Op een nacht werd ik wakker, vastgebonden, terwijl zij op me zat. 'Hoe kom jij hier binnen ?' vroeg ik. 'Voor jou een vraag, voor mij een weet,' zei ze. 'Kun je mij onmiddelijk losmaken,' zei ik. 'Nee,' zei ze, 'ik zei toch dat ik je nog wel zou krijgen ?' 'Okay, maar ik vind het niet leuk,' zei ik. Toen maakte ze me los. Ik zag toen dat ze het waarschijnlijk niet kwaad meende. Ik nam haar in mijn armen. 'Ik vind je eigenlijk heel lief,' zei ik. 'Ik zie nu in dat ik je helemaal verkeerd beoordeeld heb.' 'Maar ik had je niet bewusteloos mogen slaan,' zei ze. 'Het is niet erg,' zei ik. 'Het was in het bos, en daar zijn misschien andere regels.' 'Nee,' zei ze. 'Het was verkeerd van me.' 'Ik heb er niks aan overgehouden,' zei ik. Ik hield haar vast in bed, en streelde door haar haar. Toen ging ik met mijn vingers over haar lippen. Ik kuste haar. 'Ik heb je eindelijk,' zei ze. 'Je moet eens weten hoe lang ik hier op heb gewacht. Mijn hele leven al.'

Opeens stond grootmoeder in de deur-opening. Ze stond daar lijkbleek. Ze maakte direct rechtsomkeerds. Even later ging de telefoon. Ik nam op. Het was grootmoeder. 'Ik hoef haar niet te zien,' zei ze. 'Wil je haar ofzo ? Ik zei je toch dat je uit haar buurt moest blijven ? Ze is niet pluis.' 'Ze is gewoon speels, grootmoeder,' zei ik. 'Maar dat kan een keer verkeerd aflopen, lieve jongen,' zei grootmoeder. Op aanraden van grootmoeder wilde ik dat ze het huis weer zou verlaten. Ik besloot een grote zwerftocht door het bos te maken. Ik ging door de vele bessenstruiken, en ik wist dat ik hier vrij zou zijn van de streken van Suzie. Ik kon me nooit helemaal aan haar geven. Een warmte omgaf mij, alsof iets me riep. Ik ging dieper het bos in, totdat ik bij een bosmeertje kwam. Er waren hier jongens aan het spelen. Ze hadden verfstrepen op hun lichamen. Toen ze mij zagen grepen ze hun bogen. 'Wie ben je, en wat moet je ?' riep één van hen. 'Ik wil in het bos leven,' riep ik terug. 'Zweer je dat je nooit terug zal gaan ?' riep een ander. 'Ik zweer het,' zei ik. Ze kwamen dichterbij. 'Hij moet geverfd worden,' zei één van hen. Voordat ik het wist was ik neergeslagen. Ik werd wakker in een kooi. Ze glimlachte. 'Wie ben jij ?' vroeg ik. 'Ben jij dat, Suzie ?' stamelde ik. 'Hoe kun jij hier zijn ?' Ik was nog steeds een beetje duizelig, en had een beetje een waas voor mijn ogen vanwege de klap. 'Ik ben haar tweeling-zus,' zei ze. Ik had een smaak van bessen in mijn mond. 'Okay, ik vind dit dus niet leuk, dus maak me los,' zei ik. 'Oh nee,' zei ze, 'daar komt niks van

in. Ik ben niet zo makkelijk in die dingen als mijn zus.' 'Mijn familie zal mij vinden,' zei ik. 'De jongens zullen hen grijpen, zoals ze jou grepen,' zei ze. Ik voelde me machteloos. Ze zou me waarschijnlijk laten verhongeren. 'Aan het einde van het ritje zul je zijn als deze jongens,' zei ze. 'En je zal nooit meer terugwillen.' 'Wat is hier te doen ?' vroeg ik. 'Wil je terug naar mijn zus dan ?' vroeg ze. 'Ze zal echt nooit opgeven. je zal moe van haar worden.' 'Okay, ik blijf,' zei ik. 'Maak me los.' 'Geen denken aan,' zei ze. 'Deze jongens zijn zorgvuldig geinitieerd, en zo zal jij ook geinitieerd moeten worden.' 'Mijn grootmoeder zal naar mij op zoek gaan,' zei ik. 'Ze zal er niet doorkomen,' zei ze. 'Dan ken jij mijn grootmoeder nog niet,' zei ik. 'Ik ken haar,' zei ze. 'Ze is niet tegen mij opgewassen.' 'Wat als de boswachter komt ?' vroeg ik. 'Die komt hier niet,' zei ze. 'Waarom niet ?' vroeg ik. Ze zweeg. Ik kreeg bijna geen voedsel. Alleen soms wat bessen met vreemde melk. Ik werd vaak geslagen, veelal totdat ik bewusteloos raakte. 'Het is om los te komen van de oude wereld en van je oude geheugen,' zei ze. 'Je bent serieuzer dan je zus,' zei ik. 'Mijn zus is te speels,' zei ze. 'Voor mij is het menens. De buitenwereld is gevaarlijk. Jouw familie is gevaarlijk.' Ze brachten een verf uit op mijn huid, en op een dag lieten ze me uit de kooi. Ik was nu één van hen.

Op een dag kwamen ze ons in helicopters halen. Het meisje ging de gevangenis in, en de jongens gingen terug naar hun families, zoals ook ik. Grootmoeder was woedend. Zij kende dat meisje wel. Het meisje vertrok al heel jong naar het bos, en keerde niet terug. Ze werd waarschijnlijk grootgebracht door hyenas. Mijn grootmoeder verbood mij om het meisje op te zoeken in de gevangenis. Ik wilde dat eigenlijk ook niet. Het scheen dat het meisje heel veel op haar geweten had. Ze zou niet zomaar vrij komen. Ze was veel gevaarlijker dan haar tweeling-zus, Suzie. We gingen verhuizen naar een andere stad. Grootmoeder vond dat beter, want dan zouden we geheel afzijn van die vreemde familie van Suzie. Grootmoeder wilde er niet op wachten dat er weer iets zou gebeuren.

In onze nieuwe stad gingen grootmoeder en ik vaak wandelen naar de zee. De kust stond vol met bessenstruiken, waar veel wespen waren. Ik had veel diepe gesprekken met mijn grootmoeder.

Karel

Klouterwoes

Blauwe Angels

'Deze besjes waren giftig, en wel zo giftig dat ze dat nooit konden weten.'

Hoofdstuk 1.

Bizonbloed was een heksenkind. Tenminste dat dacht ik, totdat ze mij de andere kant van het verhaal liet zien. Ze bewoog giftige bessen langs me heen. Ik had haar van een afstand gezien, en ze kwam steeds dichterbij. Het was een grauwe dag, en het leek overal te tochten. Toen trok ze mij in de sneeuw. Ze trok me diep weg.

Ze voelde zacht aan. Haar heupen waren fors, en ik lag daar. Ze trok me door de sneeuw mee naar haar hut. De sneeuw smolt weg door haar glimlach. En de tuin rood als bloed, verborg haar edelstenen, vastgeklonterd heil. En sneeuwwit kant bedekte haar voeten, en ze was de bloesem van het morgenoog. De tuin had haar schoonheid niet verloren in de winter, maar was gevlochten nu. Ze droeg de boog, en alles om haar heen vervaagde. Ze was als de oplossing van het gouden hertenkind.

Ze kwam langzaam op mij af met haar brede heupen, met de boog gericht op iets achter mij, een bizon. 'Ik ben dat mannelijke zwaard zat,' zei ze. Toen schoot ze een pijl af, dwars door zijn hart. Het beest viel neer, en ze duwde mij opzij, en trok mij in een woning. Vanaf hier konden we de tuin nog beter bezichtigen. Ze las rijmpjes voor uit een met goud gedecoreerd boek, een boek met een leren omslag. De tuin was haar trots. De sneeuw sijpelde naar binnen. Het was hierbinnen warmer. Ze deed wat kleding uit, maar was nog steeds bedekt met riemen. Ze was als de jagersgodin.

Ze droeg een jachtmaal binnen, en begon te eten. Ze liet mij niet dichterbij komen. Ik had het gevoel te verhongeren. 'Ik moet gaan,' zei ik. Maar ze liet me ook niet gaan. 'Wat wil je van me,' vroeg ik.

'Kom hier,' zei ze. 'Maar raak het vlees niet aan. Het is verboden vlees. Je zal sterven als je er van eet.'

'Waarom eet jij het dan ?' vroeg ik, terwijl ik langzaam dichterbij kwam. Ze zei niets. De tuin ruikte naar zure vruchten. Het was alsof de bommen in de tuin vlogen, wanneer zij zich bewoog. Zij was een oorlogsmachine. Zij danste in de tuin met trots, op het bloed van de gevallenen. Ze zag het als haar opdracht.

Ze trok mij dieper in het huis, waar ze op haar zwangere buik wees. 'Maar het kind zal vroeg sterven,' zei ze, terwijl ze een doktersjas aantrok. 'Waarom zeg je dat ?' vraag ik.

'Omdat het niet om het leven gaat. Het gaat om de dood,' sprak ze. Ze kwam met een injectie naald dichtbij me. 'Even de adem inhouden.' Ik trok mijn arm weg. 'Nee,' zei ze. 'Niet wegtrekken. Je moet gevaccineerd worden. Dit huis is gevaarlijk.' Ik keek naar buiten, naar de klonterige druiven die daar hingen, en dik sap droop naar beneden. Daar had ze mij al geprikt. 'Klaar,' zei ze. Ik glimlachte. Ik was bijna flauwgevallen. Ik trok mezelf aan haar op.

'En nu de tuin in,' zei ze.

'Waarom ?' vroeg ik.

'Je moet werken, werken,' zei ze.

'Wat moet ik doen ?' vraag ik.

'Je moet het zo doen, kijk,' zei ze. Maar ze deed niets.

'Ik snap je niet goed,' zei ik. Ze bond een touw aan mijn nek en trok me weg. Even later knipte ze het touw door, zodat het een ketting was. 'Je moet er alleen voor zorgen dat je nergens blijft achterhaken,' zei ze. Rode bloesem omhulde hen, en de schaduwen van de roze nachten omhulden hen beiden. Weer trok ze hem het huis in, en het scheen er flink te tochten.

'Ga nu eens zitten,' zei ze.

Ineens schrikt hij wakker na een zware hersen-operatie. Hij kan zich niet goed bewegen. Een vrouw in ridderkleding zit naast hem. 'Welk jaar is het ?' vraagt hij.

'1978,' zegt ze.

'Waarom ben je gekleed als een ridder ?' vraagt hij.

'Carnaval,' zei ze.

'Wie ben je ?' vraagt hij.

'Ik ben je vrouw,' zegt ze.

'Ik kan het me niet herinneren,' zegt hij. Dan komt er een dokter binnen. De vrouw begint te snikken. 'Is dit mijn vrouw ?' vraagt hij aan de dokter.

'Er is niemand anders in de kamer dan u en ik,' zegt de dokter.

Bizonbloed sleept hem uit het ziekenhuis, en brengt hem terug naar de tuin en het huis. 'Probeer niet

te ontsnappen,' zegt ze. 'Ik wil dat je de wachter bent van de tuin.'

'Waarom ik ?' vraag ik.

'Omdat je ... laat maar zitten,' zei ze. 'Doe het nou maar gewoon.' Ik laat mijn hand zakken, en loop wat rond in de tuin. Ze volgt elke beweging die ik maak. 'Vanavond komen de heksen,' zei ze. 'Doe het nou maar.'

Dan stort hij neer. Een grote vogel staat naast hem, die hij vastgrijpt. En de vogel brengt hem naar een ver eiland. Ook hier is Bizonbloed. Ze kijkt hem aan. Ze is halfnaakt, als een wilde. 'Hoe ben je hier gekomen ?' vraagt ze. Ik wijst op de vogel.

'Hier kun je ook waken,' zei ze. 'De heksen komen vanavond. Je moet wel wat te vertellen hebben.'

'Maar ik heb niets te vertellen,' zei ik.

'Geeft niets,' zei ze. 'Gewoon een brilletje op doen is ook goed. Het is carnaval.' Ik loop braaf met haar mee. Even later zitten we in tuinstoelen. Daarachter is een hutje waar ze aan het koken was, voor vanavond.

Hij staart voor zich uit. De dokter grijpt zijn hand. Hij vecht voor zijn leven. De dokter voelt zijn pols, en drukt een alarm-bel in.

Ze loopt binnen in het hutje. 'Kom,' zegt ze. Weer volg ik haar braaf. Ze roert in haar ketel.

Met wat reanimatie krijgen ze hem weer aan de gang. Ze besluiten nog een hersen-operatie te doen.

'Waarom lach je ?' vraagt ze.

'Niets,' zei ik.

'Je hebt een mooie lach,' zegt ze.

Het klontert in zijn hoofd. Dan komt er ineens een straal vrij van zijn hoofd. De dokters springen op zij. Dan klimt er ineens een beestje uit de scheur in zijn hoofd. De dokters beginnen te schreeuwen in paniek en vallen neer. Een zoemend geluid neemt over.

'Tatarak !' krijst het beestje. 'Opereer zijn hersenen.' Vrouwen komen de kamer binnen, en starten de operatie. Ze werken met gouden instrumenten. Er komt schuim op zijn mond. Maar ze krijgen alles weer goed op gang.

Hij zit op het witte zand. Hier en daar liggen wat bladeren, en Bisonbloed zit naast hem. Ze houdt zijn hand vast. 'Ik ben blij dat je er bent,' zegt ze. De geur van koffie zit in zijn klederen. Ze besluiten het uit te wassen in het meertje verderop. Het is als een heet stoombad. Snel zijn ze beiden naakt. Het zand aan de kusten ziet er niet zo best uit. En er is overal hondenpoep. Hij wordt onwel, en ze trekt hem uit het meertje. Al gauw ligt hij in een hutje onder een verrotte deken.

'We hebben geluk gehad,' zei ze. 'Er ligt overal glas in het meertje.'

'Waarom trok je me daar naartoe dan ?' vraagt hij.

'Alleen daar kun je vrijkomen van de koffielucht,' zei ze.

'Ik wil er weer naartoe,' zei hij.

'Niemand mag daar ooit voor een tweede keer naartoe,' zei ze.

'Ik wil bloeden,' zei ik. 'Al dat valse bloed moet eruit.'

Ze pakt een stukje glas en rijt hem open. 'Hier,' zegt ze.

'Nee, ik moet naar dat meertje,' zei ik. Ik stond op, en rende naar het meertje.

'Je zult sterven en door een haai gegrepen worden,' zei ze.

'Kan me niet schelen !' riep ik, terwijl ik in het meertje dook. Alles was plotseling bruisend water. 'Er bestaat geen dood !' gilde ik. 'Houd toch eens op met je drama !'

'En geef me nu van het verboden vlees !' riep ik. 'Waar is het !'

'Je zult sterven,' zei ze.

'Okay, dan ga ik godverredomme maar dood !' riep ik. 'Wie kan het wat schelen !'

'Ik,' zei ze. Ze trok me er weer uit. Ik zat onder de hondepoep, onder het glas, en vreemde bessen. Ze stopte me in een kist en bedekte de kist met roze kant. 'Ik ben niet dood !' riep ik. Ze drukte op een knop, en er werd een slaaplied gespeeld. 'Ik voel me op en top, dus stop met die onzin !' riep ik. Ik proefde wat van de bessen. Ze waren zoet, zuur en bitter. Waarschijnlijk waren ze ook giftig.

'Je speelt met je leven,' zei ze. Plotseling was de kist in vlammen, maar ik lachte. Ik stapte eruit, brandend, en greep haar beet. Ze had een laken om haar heen.

'Je kunt ook wel een boom zijn,' zei ze. 'Het frisse, jonge hout brandt goed.' Ik knikte.

Het zachte zadel hield ze voor me. Ik ging er op zitten. Ik sloeg het brandend laken om me heen, en het was snel als kant. Ik was de prins van de molen. Ze had gelijk. Ik was dood.

Hoofdstuk 2.

Ik was in de lederen darm van een haai. In de buurt stonden overal rozenstruiken, en de straten waren bezaaid met vuurwerk. En alles was nat, want het had flink geregend. Ik had een nare smaak in mijn mond, van bessen, glas, metalen en hondepoep. Er liepen wat arabieren en punkers op de straat. Ik had last van de wind in mijn hoofd. Alles was zacht, en ik stortte in. Maar touwen trokken mij weer op. Ik moest dansen, zingen, en veel geld verdienen. Dan zou Bizonbloed weer langskomen, en op een dag was het dan zo ver.

Ik herkende haar bijna niet meer terug. Ze was wat ouder nu. Met een schaar trok ze mijn blaren open. 'Kijk naar die bloemen,' zei ze. 'Ze wijzen je de weg naar het leven.' Ik keek, en de kelken hadden bruisend sap in hen. 'Ik wil er van drinken,' zei ik.

'Nee, want dan sterf je weer,' zei ze. Maar het kon me niet schelen. Ik liep af op de wulpse kelken, en begon te drinken. Ik verdronk er bijna in. Ik begon flink dronken te worden.

'Domme idioot !' riep ze. 'Wat ben jij een koppige ezel, zeg. Je doet gewoon alles wat niet mag.'

'En jij moet niet zo de baas over mij spelen,' zei ik. 'Ik bedoel maar, ik heb een blaas, weet je, en ik plas straks alles weer uit.'

'Nou, je bent maar goed begenadigd,' zei ze. 'Je bent een begiftigd man.'

Ik knikte. Ik stortte neer aan haar voeten, en zij sleepte me weg. Ze dumpte me ergens in een sloot, maar touwen trokken hem weer op. Ik ging de eerste de beste stal in waar ik me kon wassen, want ik voelde me nu toch wel een beetje vies. Het water hier zat vol met modder, maar dat kon me niet schelen. Ik voelde me schoner nu. Ik ging ergens in het hooi liggen om op te drogen. Even later rende ik achter het weiland het eerste het beste huisje in en speelde de clown. Ik had ook een harp nu, en ze gooiden geld in mijn hoed. Ik ging van huis tot huis, om mijn kunstje te vertonen. Ik had een beetje drempelvrees, maar een snoepje deed altijd wonderen.

Met modderhanden streelde ze door mijn haren. Het was toch carnaval.

Hij lag aan de hart-monitor. Dokters vreesden voor zijn leven.

Hij zwom met de zwanen, en gleed door alles wat vies, gevaarlijk en verboden was. Iemand kamde zijn haren, en hij zonk weg in een put van stank. Hij was goed door een haai gegrepen, zoals Bizonbloed had geprofeteerd. Maar hij was nogal goddeloos, onkerks en tegen de draad in. Hij had een hekel aan geloof en regels. Zijn bloedvaten waren aan het exploderen, en hij hoorde gelach in zijn hoofd. Hij lachte mee. Kon hem het wat schelen.

Touwen trokken hem op, en hij werd op een podium gezet. Hij zwaaide naar de mensen, en begon te zingen, en te acteren. Het was per slot van rekening carnaval, en alles moest maar kunnen. Een raam werd ingegooid, en hij begon aan zware epilepsie te lijden. Hij zat bij de kapper, en hij hoorde

alleen maar lachen. Zijn hoofd werd ingezeept.

De dokters waren alweer een hersen-operatie aan het uitvoeren, om hem van de dood proberen te redden.

Hij had het gevoel alsof hij dronken was. Hij waggelde door de stad. Hij was een clown. Na een lange tijd zag hij Bizonbloed weer terug. Met een dronken stem zei hij dat hij niet had gedacht dat hij haar ooit nog tegen zou komen. Ze bracht hem mee naar een flatwoning, waar ze hem ging douchen. 'Nu is het afgelopen,' zei ze.

'Wie denk je dat je bent ?' vroeg hij. 'De Jezusin ?'

Ze knikte.

'Ik had toch een andere soort van wederkomst verwacht,' zei hij.

'Nee, het is niet te berekenen,' zei zij.

Alle rozen in de stad waren blauw geworden, en het sneeuwde. De Jezusin liep een cafe binnen, en begon te drinken.

'Tatarak !' schreeuwt iemand.

Hij wordt wakker in de tuin, met een beestje in zijn hand. Hij is de tuinwachter. Het beestje had een angel in zijn hand gestoken, waardoor blauw spul in zijn lichaam werd geinjecteerd. Hij trok de angel eruit, en kon weer ademhalen. Hij voelde zich vies, maar ach, het was maar de natuur. Hij zag het als een onbekend vaccin. Waar het goed voor was, wist hij niet, maar het zou wel ergens goed voor zijn, dat wist hij zeker. Nog steeds had hij een beetje dat dronken gevoel. Ook voelde hij zich overgevoelig. Nee, hij wilde niet nog een keer door zo'n beestje gestoken worden.

Toen hij afgelost werd kon hij naar huis. Zijn geliefde was daar. Ze had een bloemenjurk aan van een hele fijne, zachte, plezierige stof. Als hij die stof voelde, voelde hij zich altijd heel veilig. Ze was thee voor hem aan het zetten, van een soort blauwe bonen. Even later zaten ze beiden aan tafel.

Dokters hadden eindelijk ontdekt wat er mankeerde aan zijn hersenen. Het bleek dat zijn gevoelscentrums geirriteerd waren, waardoor hij niet tegen aanrakingen kon. Het bleek te zijn ontstaan door een allergie tegen bacterien die alleen maar in hout voorkwamen. Ook was er een vreemde uitslag op orgaantjes in zijn hersenen wat ze zouden moeten verwijderen, dus hij ging weer onder het mes.

Hij draaide maar in het rond in de tuin. Hij voelde zich goed.

Hoofdstuk 3.

Ze zaten tegenover elkaar. Ze smeerde het brood. Het was zonnig buiten. Het zonlicht weerspiegelde in hun gouden spulletjes. Er werd gebeld. Ze nam op, en legde weer neer. Hij droomde weg. Ze liep de kamer binnen. Hij keek naar haar door het raam. Plotseling begon het te waaien, dus ook hij ging naar binnen. Er droop zand uit de plantenbakken. De druiven in de tuin dropen. Het was allemaal zeer klonterig. Het leek goed rijp. Hij rende naar buiten in de regen, greep wat druiven en kwakte ze op een bordje.

'Carolien, ik ben je wachter,' zei hij. 'Dat zal ik altijd zijn, wat er ook gebeurd.'

'Ik weet het,' zei ze. 'Je bent zo trouw.'

Ze nam hem mee naar boven en trok aan de touwtjes van zijn blouche. Ze drukte hem op het bed, en ging naast hem liggen. Op het nachtkastje lag een boek genaamd 'Bloedbizon'. Het ging over de jacht op bizons. Het was een soort avonturenverhaal. Hij las er uit voort. Maar hij begreep wel waar de schrijver naartoe wilde. De bizons waren het beeld van mannen die de autoriteit hadden genomen, en die autoriteit misbruikten. Het was een heel feministisch boek, dat ook opkwam voor andere minderheden.

Hij legde het weer weg. 'Carolien,' zei hij. 'Je weet het. Ik sta aan de kant van de vrouw.'

Carolien knikte. 'Ik weet het,' zei ze. Toen gingen ze beiden slapen.

De hersenen werden getest. De man kwam tot leven. Er werd geapplaudiseerd.

'Het leven is een valstrik,' stamelde hij. 'Een web van een vrouwelijke spin.' Hij stond in de bibliotheek. Hij bekeek de vele boeken over vrouwen. Vaak waren die vrouwen de heldinnen, of gevaarlijke vrouwen, waarin de hoofdpersoon verstrikt raakte. Op de kaften waren vaak woestijnen met schaars geklede vrouwen al dan niet met wapens en helmen. 'Ik wil meer weten over het gevaar,' zei hij.

Boven hem zag hij rozenstruiken, als een put. Hij werd naar binnengezogen, en kwam in een plaats waar een heleboel vrouwen waren, genaamd de danaiden. Op hun voetzolen waren de namen van hun vermoorde mannen te lezen, die zij zelf hadden vermoord in de huwelijksnacht. Zo leefden ze voort door de geroofde levens-energie van hun mannen. Het waren merktekenen op hun voeten, waarmee ze anderen ook konden merken. Er droop inkt uit voort. Ook gebruikten ze het voor handtekeningen op rekeningen en andere officiele papieren. Zo konden ze veel gedaan krijgen. Hij klapte het boek dicht, en stond weer met beide benen op de grond. 'Ik moet me van illusies onthouden,' zegt hij.

'Besef het, je hebt een redder nodig,' zei Bizonbloed, de Jezusin.

'Er wordt overal gejaagd, er is niet veel wat je kunt doen. Je zal erg moe worden.'

Er waren overal struiken, en tussen de takken door bloedende borsten. Zij bloedden door de scherpe doornen. 'Je moet het bloed drinken,' zei ze. Ze gaf hem een buisje met bloed, en hij dronk. 'Het is bizonbloed,' zei ze. 'Je hebt nu het vrouwelijke deel in je gevonden.'

'Ik wil dit niet !' riep hij. Toen viel hij neer. Hij schoot een paar bizons van afstand, en ging toen slapen. Vanuit het bloed kwamen klimoppen. De klimoppen brachten hem naarboven naar een hemels paradijs. 'Tatarak !' riep hij. Het zand was hier wit. Er kwam een bruisend sap uit de klimoppen, en de bessen explodeerden. In de klimoppen leefden vrouwen met staarten.

Het merkteken was grauw in hun hoofd. Zij werden gevoerd door borsten, door leidingen die via een kraan getapt konden worden. Het was de moederstad. Zij troonde hier in vuur, zij, Bizonbloed. En Karel Klouterwoes was haar nar.

De stad leek als bedekt met takken, waardoor het bizon veld bezichtigd kon worden, midden in de stad. Hier moest veel gejaagd worden, zodat de man nooit meer zou regeren. De stad leefde door bizonbloed, en zo moest het blijven.

Haar klederen waren doordrenkt met bizonbloed, en zij brandde. Het hield hen dronken. Deze besjes waren giftig, en wel zo giftig dat ze dat nooit konden weten. Een lange trap gaf een antwoord aan Karel Klouterwoes. Ook hij moest buigen voor de koningin, en haar kunstzaal onder ogen komen. 'Verdomme,' zei hij. 'Zij kan het.'

Ik moest oppassen voor Karel Klouterwoes, zoals iedereen dat moest. Hij was door haar gedresseerd, maar het was een roofdier. Hij leefde in haar kooien wanneer zij hem niet gebruikte. En anders was hij gewoon aan de ketting. Er moest goed toezicht op deze man gehouden worden.

Maar op een dag ging het mis. Karel Klouterwoes brak los. Mensen renden in paniek hun huizen binnen, en deden alles goed op slot. Maar het was al te laat. Karel Klouterwoes deed de stad verdrinken in bizonbloed. Ik kon net op tijd ontsnappen. Hij was per slot van rekening maar mijn schaduw. Ook de koningin liet hij in leven. Zij was immers de Jezusin. Ik keek de takken door en zag de zee van bizonbloed. Het was warm op het strand. Het bizonbloed leek weg te trekken en weer op te komen door eb en vloed. Dit werd gereguleerd door een vreemde planeet, de bloedbizon. Deze planeet hing ergens in Orion. Door toedoen van de koningin werd de stad weer leefbaar. Ik keerde weer terug naar de stad, maar Karel Klouterwoes liet het er niet bij zitten. Hij omsingelde de stad met een leger. Ze waren op zoek naar mij.

Ze klopten op hoge deuren, maar ik was veilig met de koningin. Ze liet mij het geheim van de stad

zien. Ik zag overal bloed stromen. Het leek van boven naar beneden te regenen. Ze leidde mij naar een trap die mij bracht naar een plaats diep onder de stad. Hier spreidde ze haar jurk uit en vroeg aan mij of ik een ballerina wilde worden.

Het zou het enige medicijn tegen Karel Klouterwoes, de dolle losgebroken nar, zijn. Ik ging staan als een standbeeld, en begon te draaien, terwijl mijn kleding en huid in goud en zilver veranderden. Ik hoorde slaapliederen op de achtergrond. Ze had ergens op een knopje gedrukt. Spoedig ging ik dansend door de stad. Er waren overal leeuwen in de stad, maar het was alsof er glas om me heen was. Ze lieten mij met rust. Met een fluit leidde ik de leeuwen daarna uit de stad, het woud in.

Het leek te verergeren met zijn hersenen. De dokters besloten dat zijn laatste hoop een hersentransplantatie zou zijn. Voorzichtig werden zijn hersenen eruit gesneden, en werden er nieuwe hersenen ingelegd. Hij moest er spontaan van overgeven. Hij voelde zich anders, bevrijd. Maar daarna was hij in een shock. Weer begonnen ze in zijn hersenen te snijden, omdat ze er zoveel geld mee verdienden. Hij rook de geur van drop.

De bomen groeiden tegen de klok in. De koningin kwam hem redden, maar toen werden ze uit elkaar gescheurd. Hij voelde zich in een lange diepe put wegglijden. Karel Klouterwoes nam zijn lichaam. Hij voelde zich opgesloten in zichzelf, alhoewel hij nu wel moest lachen. Hij zag zichzelf liggen. Het was alsof er een lachgas over hem kwam. Hij stond op en was een geraffineerde nar nu. Hij zou trouw blijven aan de koningin, aan de koningin in zijn hoofd. Zij waakte over hem.

De stad was brandende. Hij klom naar een hogere verdieping in het flatgebouw. Karel Klouterwoes klom achter hem aan, in zijn lichaam. Een gevecht ontstond. 'Brandende dampen !' schreeuwde Karel Klouterwoes. 'Ik zal je wel krijgen.' Hij gaf Karel een trap, en klom verder. Alweer greep Karel hem. 'Je zal niet weg kunnen komen, ventje,' zei Karel. Weer trapte hij Karel weg, maar Karel had zijn jas gegrepen. Toen deed hij zijn jas uit, en klom verder, maar Karel had zijn broekspijpen gegrepen. Ook trok hij toen zijn broek uit, en klom verder, totdat hij helemaal naakt was. Een vogel wachtte hem op aan de top van het gebouw. 'De koningin heeft mij gezonden,' zei de vogel. Maar Karel greep een pistool en schoot de vogel neer. De man begon nu echt in paniek te raken. Door de rook zag hij nog een gebouw op het gebouw, met een ladder ervoor. 'Gelukkig,' zei de man, en rende er naar toe. Karel begon nu ook op hem te schieten. Maar snel was hij hoog op de ladder. Toen Karel bij de ladder was aangekomen, was de man al een raam binnen geklommen. Hij zag ergens een hoed hangen en deed die op, en daarna een lange jas en een broek. Snel rende hij naar de andere kant van het gebouw en begon de trappen op te rennen. 'Ik krijg je wel !' hoorde hij Karel roepen. Helemaal bovenin het gebouw aangekomen belde hij ergens aan, en de koningin deed open. 'Hier ben je veilig,' zei ze. Binnen maakte ze wat thee voor hem klaar, maar al snel hoorden ze gebons op de deur. 'Hier is Karel !' riep hij. 'Ik kom je halen !' Toen trapte Karel de deur in. De koningin drukte ergens op een knopje, en een kistje ging open die Karel helemaal begon op te zuigen. Toen dat klaar was ging het kistje weer dicht. 'Ziezo,' zei de koningin, 'die is weer waar hij wezen moet.' In de kamer was een doorzichtige bol gevuld met bizonbloed, en de bol brandde. 'Het is de stad die brandt,' zei de koningin. De man knikte.

'Dus,' zei de koningin. 'Niemand heeft het ooit zo ver gebracht. Ik ben trots op je.' Het vuur begon weg te trekken. na een tijdje keek ik door het raam naar beneden. Er waren bizon gevechten. Er werd op trompetten geblazen. Weer zag ik alles door vuur wegvagen. Ze was naakt.

Hoofdstuk 4.

Er kwam meer en meer begroeiing. De stad begon op een oerwoud te lijken. De man zat nog steeds dichtbij de koningin. Ze had het kistje op haar schoot. Haar vinger bewoog heel langzaam naar een rood knopje. Plotseling werd er een spiegel ingeslagen, een grote wand. Electrische gestaltes stonden daar in vuur. 'Luister niet naar haar !' riep één van hen. 'Zij is zelf Karel Klouterwoes, en zal je willen opsluiten in haar kistje !' Ze hadden gereedschap in hun hand, en sloegen toe. 'Ren door de spiegel !' riep een ander. Hij rende door de spiegel, waar het gebouw veel hoger was, en de brand veel erger. 'Het is niet waar !' riep de koningin. Hij zag toe hoe er een gevecht ontstond. De

koningin had het kistje geopend, en Karel was weer tevoorschijn gekomen. Nu begon ook de koningin in Karel te veranderen. 'Ren !' gilden de electrische gestaltes. De man zette het op een lopen, terwijl er overal explosies waren. Weer rende de man trappen op. Toen hij het plafond had bereikt belde hij ergens aan. De koningin deed open. 'Ik hoop maar dat u de goede bent,' zei de man.

'Natuurlijk,' zei de koningin. 'Ik ben de echte.'

'Ja, dat zeggen ze allemaal,' zei de man. 'Hoe kan ik dat zeker weten ?'

Daar kwam Karel al met een noodvaart door de deur heen. 'Klim uit het raam,' zei de koningin. 'Snel.' De man klom uit het raam, en de koningin deed hetzelfde.

'Ik zie jullie wel,' riep Karel. Een helikopter kwam op de top van het gebouw, met electrische gestaltes. Snel stapten de man en de koningin in, terwijl het gebouw beneden ontplofte. Maar tot hun grote schrik zagen ze de hand van Karel Klouterwoes die een stang onder het toestel had gegrepen. Hij trok zich eraan op, en probeerde de deur te openen. Toen hij een ruit insloeg richtte één van de electrische gestaltes snel een laser-pistool op hem. De man trapte Karel Klouterwoes weg, maar Karel had zijn been gegrepen, en beiden gleden naar buiten. De man kon nog net de stang vastgrijpen. Hij probeerde Karel van zich los te trappen, wat niet lukte. En Karel begon zich al omhoog te trekken aan hem. Maar toen schoot één van de electrische gestaltes hem weg. De man werd weer naar binnen getrokken.

De man klaagde dat met de hersen-transplantatie hij het gevoel had niet meer in zijn eigen lichaam te zitten. Toen hebben de dokters hem een tweede hersen-transplantatie gegeven. De dokters leken op Karel Klouterwoes. Hij trapte hen van hem af, en rende naar buiten met schuim op zijn mond. Hij rende naar de tuin, waar hij tuinwacht was. Hij voelde Karel Klouterwoes in hem. Hij zocht naar het beestje wat hem eens stak. Snel had hij het beestje gevonden, zette het op zijn arm, en liet zich steken.

Iemand trok hem het huis in. Het was Bizonbloed. 'Heb je de oplossing gevonden ?' vroeg ze.

'Ja, stekende beestjes,' zei ze. Ik glimlachte.

De Kannibaalse Bruid

Hermien van de Straaten kwam thuis. Haar vriend zat op de bank een krant te lezen. Ze schonk koffie in voor haarzelf en haar vriend, en ging naast hem zitten. 'Wat ben je aan het lezen ?' vroeg ze.

'Oh, niets,' zei haar vriend. 'Je weet wel, het is daadwerkelijk niets. Ik ben hier gewoon weer eens mijn tijd aan het doden.'

'Ik weet het,' zei Hermien. 'Zal het ooit nog eens anders worden. Ik ben een boek aan het lezen. Zal ik het je eens laten zien ?' Ze haalde een boek uit haar tas en gaf het aan haar vriend. Hij bladerde het eens rustig door. 'Interessant, Hermien,' zei hij. 'Ik wil het ook wel lezen als je het uit hebt.' Hermien glimlachte. Ze stond op na een tijdje en schonk nog wat koffie in. Midden in de nacht werden ze wakker. Er stond een mannetje voor hen, met een puntmutsje met wat belletjes. Het leek wel op een klein narretje. 'Ik ben Kraak,' zei het mannetje. 'Doe drie wensen, maar ze moeten wel

voor jezelf zijn of voor je huis.'

'Ik zou me wel wat beter willen voelen,' zei Hermien slaperig. Ze was zo moe dat ze weer in slaap viel, en haar vriend was alweer in slaap gevallen. De volgende ochtend sneeuwde het, en Hermien voelde zich vrolijk en warm. Ze had geen moeite met opstaan, zoals ze dat eerst wel had.

De nacht erop was het mannetje er weer. 'Je mag nog twee wensen doen,' zei het mannetje. 'Oh, Kraak,' zei Hermien, 'ik zou graag een wat betere relatie willen hebben met mijn vriend. Het is al wel goed, maar het kan veel beter.' De dag erop werden ze allebei blij wakker, en lagen een hele lange tijd in elkaars armen, wat ze eigenlijk nooit echt lang deden. 'Hermien,' zei Ewout, 'ik voel me ineens zo anders, zoveel beter.'

'Het komt door dat mannetje,' zei Hermien. Maar Ewout kon zich er bijna niets meer van herinneren. Ze hadden nu eigenlijk alles wat ze nodig hadden, en waren tevreden. Buiten scheen de zon in de sneeuw, en Hermien schonk weer koffie in. Koffie was altijd goed geweest tegen depressies, maar nu was de lucht zo helder. Die dag fietsten ze samen door het bos, maar ineens werd Ewout van zijn fiets afgeduwd. Een speer vloog dwars door Hermien heen, en ze viel bloedend op de grond. 'Grijp hem,' zei een luide stem. Ewout stond op en keek recht in de ogen van een groep wilden. Hij werd vastgegrepen en dieper in het bos gesleurd. Hij werd in een hut geduwd waar allerlei uitgehongerde mannen zaten. 'Welkom,' zei een oude man.

'Wat is dit hier ?' vroeg Ewout.

Een van de mannen werd gegrepen en uit de hut gesleurd. Buiten stond er een vrouw opgedost met veren. 'De kannibaalse bruid,' zei de oude man.

Ewout schrok wakker. Hij greep naar Hermien, maar die was er niet. 'Och, natuurlijk niet,' dacht Ewout. 'De relatie is verbroken. Ik ben een alleenstaand man.' Ewout was blij dat de relatie was verbroken, want Hermien was een verschrikkelijk mens, zeer wreed, ongevoelig, onbetrouwbaar en onberekenbaar. Hij was beter af zonder haar. Toen Ewout door een stukje bos naar zijn werk fietste zag hij een stel kinderen een ander kind slaan met stokken. Ewout sprong direkt van zijn fiets af en nam het kind in bescherming. Het kind rilde helemaal. Na een paar woorden gezegd te hebben tegen de andere kinderen nam hij het kind mee naar huis en belde zijn baas dat hij wat later zou komen. Hij legde het aan zijn baas uit, maar die zei direkt : 'Ach, neem er maar een dag vrij voor.'

Jonas heette het kind. Het was een weeskind, en het kind durfde niet goed terug naar het weeshuis. Het was er verschrikkelijk. Het kind rilde nog steeds, en Ewout deed een deken om hem heen, en gaf het kind wat te drinken. 'Lees je graag ?' vroeg Ewout.

'Ja,' zei Jonas.

'Oh, ik heb boven een hele kast vol met boeken. Kijk er maar eens tussen. Je mag voorlopig wel hier blijven, dan bel ik het weeshuis er wel over op,' zei Ewout.

'Van wat voor boeken houd je het meest ?' vroeg Ewout.

'Indianenboeken,' zei het kind. Ewout liet de boekenkist aan het kind zien. Er zaten veel indianenboeken tussen.

Ewout kreeg een andere vriendin : Jeiske. Ze was een stuk aardiger dan Hermien, maar ook aan deze relatie kwam snel een eind. Toen kwam er Saskia, toen Sjanine, maar het was allemaal niet blijvend. Jonas werd meer en meer als een zoon voor Ewout, en eigenlijk kon Ewout niet meer zonder hem, en besloot hem te adopteren. Hij had echt dat fantastische vadergevoel, maar hij miste een vrouw in zijn leven, en Jonas miste een moeder.

Tundra was een vrouw die Ewout wel zag zitten. Ze was lief en behulpzaam maar toch ook een beetje vreemd, alsof ze een duister verleden had. Ze kon goed koken, en was een uitzonderlijk goede verhalenverteller, dus ook Jonas was direkt erg dol op haar. Ze had haar eigen kamer in het huis. Ze wilde 's nachts graag alleen zijn. Ze was erg wisselend van karakter. Ze hield van foto's maken en fietsen, en op een dag nam ze Jonas mee in het bos. Ze zou proberen wat foto's te maken

van dieren die in het bos woonden. Na een tijdje kwamen ze de kinderen van het weeshuis tegen. 'Zo Jonas, heb je eindelijk je moeder gevonden ?' riepen ze. Ze gingen in een groep rondom de fietsen staan. Tundra werd een beetje boos, maar de kinderen duwden haar in een bosje en Jonas namen ze mee. Ze brachten hem naar een hut in het bos. 'Zo, we zullen jou eens uithongeren met alleen af en toe wat bramen, brood en water,' zei een van de kinderen. 'Je bent een verwend ding.' Ze hielden hem opgesloten in de hut, en gaven hem haast geen voedsel. Na een paar weken was hij helemaal uitgehongerd. Net op tijd vond Ewout hem, nam hem mee naar huis en belde het weeshuis erover op. De kinderen kregen strenge straffen.

Tundra was een soort moeder voor Jonas, maar Jonas wist dat hij zijn vader hard nodig had. Een tijd lang durfde hij niet zonder zijn vader naar buiten. Ook Tundra had soms moeite om naar buiten te gaan vanwege het voorval. Ze zouden in ieder geval niet meer in het bos komen. De relatie tussen Tundra en Ewout werd steeds stabieler, en Jonas was er erg gelukkig mee. Voor hem waren Tundra en Ewout de perfecte ouders. Hij had het zich niet beter kunnen voorstellen. Op een nacht had Ewout weer een droom : Een spin had haar partner gevonden, en na de geslachtsdaad vrat ze haar partner op. De volgende ochtend vertelde hij het aan Tundra. Tundra had dit gevoel overgehouden aan een vorige relatie. Ook Ewout kende dit gevoel natuurlijk. In zijn ogen was Hermien die spin. 'Maar we hebben het overleefd,' zei Ewout, 'of er is gewoon leven na de dood.'

'Weet je wat kannibalen geloven ?' zei Tundra. 'Dat wanneer ze iemand hebben opgegeten dan hebben ze die kracht overgenomen, dan hebben ze de ziel van die persoon overgenomen. Zo voelen ze zich machtiger in de strijd om te overleven.'

'Ja, dat heb ik ook eens gelezen,' zei Ewout. 'Maar ik kan jou ook wel opvreten, maar dan van liefde.' Tundra glimlachte. 'Dus ik ben een soort gebakje voor jou ?'

'Veel lekkerder,' zei Ewout. 'En ben ik dan een kannibaal ?'

'Ik denk het wel, Ewout,' grapte Tundra. 'Ik moet nu zeker voor je oppassen.'

'Ach, er is nog hoop voor ons,' zei Ewout. 'We kunnen een banketbakkerij beginnen.'

'Dus eigenlijk is de natuur iets heel moois, als je het op die manier bekijkt,' zei Tundra. 'Het is om ervan te leren.'

'Juist,' zei Ewout.

'Dus, dan ben ik jouw kannibaalse bruid ?' vroeg Tundra.

'Als je het mij vraagt wel,' zei Ewout. 'Maar dan op een hele andere manier. Jij kan al dat nare weer recht krijgen.'

'Wat kun jij toch rare verhalen vertellen,' grapte Tundra.

'Nou, jij kan er ook wat van,' lachte Ewout.

'Ik heb het heel moeilijk gehad,' zei Tundra. 'Maar sinds ik jou ken ben ik gelukkig. En bij Jonas heb ik dat echte moedergevoel.'

Ewout zette de t.v. aan. Er was een oorlogsfilm op, en op de andere zender een praat programma. 'Laat Jonas maar even naar een kinderprogramma kijken,' zei Tundra. Ewout schakelde over. Tundra en Ewout gingen in de achterkamer even wat koffie drinken, terwijl Jonas t.v. ging kijken. 'Ewout,' fluisterde Tundra. 'Er zijn zoveel kinderen zoals Jonas eerst was : Ongelukkig in een weeshuis, ongeliefd, gebroken, trauma op trauma, en er lijkt geen einde aan te komen. We hebben een groot huis. Waarom zouden we geen tweede kind adopteren ?'

'Goed idee,' zei Ewout. 'Ik zou zelfs mijn huis wel willen uitbouwen om zoveel mogelijk kinderen onder te brengen. Maar de kinderen moeten het dan zelf ook willen.'

Met een telefoontje was het snel gedaan. Ewout en Tundra mochten een kijkje komen nemen op het weeshuis om over hun plannen te vertellen. Sommige kinderen waren enthousiast. Anderen niet.

Drie kinderen wilden het weleens op proef proberen.

'Jaap Edema, Gerout van Huizen en Liesbeth van Tongeren.' Maar het werd geen succes. Ze konden niet met Jonas opschieten en ze waren vernielzuchtig. Ewout besloot wat dieren in huis te brengen, zodat Jonas niet zo alleen was. Maar naarmate Jonas ouder werd werd hij steeds stiller en trok zich steeds meer op zijn kamer terug. Toen hij twintig was trouwde hij met een meisje, maar het huwelijk was binnen drie jaar kapot, en hij kwam gebroken weer thuis. Ewout en Tundra wisten altijd al wel dat het een kannibaalse bruid was waarmee hij was getrouwd. Ze hadden hem nog gewaarschuwd, maar zonder resultaat. Hij was weer een ervaring rijker, en kreeg zijn oude kamer terug. Snel had hij weer een vriendin, en toen nog een, maar nooit koos hij echt de gemakkelijksten uit. Ewout hoopte dat hij ooit iemand zou vinden als Tundra. Maar op een dag raakte Jonas betrokken bij een auto-ongeluk en raakte verlamd. Het leven was als een kannibaalse bruid voor hem, en Ewout en Tundra waren er kapot van. Ze hadden gehoopt dat hij gelukkig zou worden, en dat hij zijn leven zou kunnen opbouwen, maar het was nu een afhankelijk kasplantje. Na een paar maanden stierf Jonas als gevolg van het auto-ongeluk. Ewout en Tundra waren weer alleen. Het was moeilijk, maar ze hadden elkaar. Weer gingen ze naar het weeshuis om te kijken of ze een nieuw kind konden adopteren, maar niemand was zoals Jonas. Toch wilden ze het wel met een nieuw kind proberen dat wel een beetje op Jonas leek. Het jongetje heette Huib. Maar Huib was ernstig ziek en stierf na een paar maanden, en weer waren Ewout en Tundra alleen. Het leek alsof de kannibaalse bruid weer had toegeslagen. Het leven was zo fragiel als een nachtvlinder.

Ewout keek naar buiten, en keek naar een bij gaande van bloem tot bloem. Ook zag hij wat vliegjes in een spinnenweb, en zelfs een vlinder. Ook hier zat een betekenis in. Ook dit kon omgedraaid worden. Tundra zat achter hem en had haar armen om hen heengeslagen. Hij miste Jonas en ook Huib, maar Tundra was zoveel dichterbij ineens om al die lege plekken op te vullen. Het leek alsof er in zijn binnenste broodjes werden belegd en opgewarmd. Het was een manier om dichter naar elkaar toe te groeien. Ewout had een brok in zijn keel. Ja, hij was echt depressief, maar Tundra was zijn lichtpuntje. 'Zoveel is er van ons gegeten,' zei Ewout, 'en nu eten wij elkaar door de liefde, als een weg uit deze woeste wereld.' Tundra knikte.

Midden in de nacht werd Ewout wakker van een droom. Hij droomde dat er een nachtvlinder op zijn hart zat. Hij miste Jonas en Huib zo, en brak in tranen uit. Ook Tundra werd wakker en troostte hem. Ze hield hem in zijn armen totdat hij rustig werd. 'Heus,' zei ze, 'eens zullen we alles terugkrijgen. Er is leven na de dood.'

And you will fly,

On the wings of today,

And you will be going back to remember yesterday,

And you will fly,

On the wings of love, today,

And you will be going back to remember yesterday,

Yes, you will fly high,

On the winds of love, today,

And you will be growing up to be free from yesterday

De Roodbil Stam

Henry ter Zand was een voetballer van het eerste team van zijn stad. Vaak kwam er een motorbende kijken, die de voetballers vaak uitscholden voor voetbroeders en ei-verkopers. Henry werd er altijd een beetje misselijk van. Op een dag besloot hij de motorbende eens te bezoeken. Hij had zich anders aangekleed zodat hij niet meer op zichzelf leek. Hij werd hartelijk ontvangen, en men leidde hem rond in het gebouw. Er waren wat oude mensen bij, misschien ouders van de motorrijders, en een vrouw die een soort bediende was deed het woord. Maar plotseling werd hij herkend door een van de motorrijders, en Henry moest maken dat hij weg kwam. Het uitschelden was sindsdien wel een stuk minder ineens, en op een dag werd Henry uitgenodigd om weer eens bij hen op bezoek te komen. De motorrijders hadden er spijt van dat ze hem zo rot hadden behandeld. Al gauw werd Henry goede vrienden met hen, wat ook de bedoeling was. Op een dag las een van de motorrijders voor uit een vreemd jongensboek. Het ging over de roodbil stam, een groep wilden die in de bossen leefden. De roodbil stam deed veel aan voetbal, maar er werden nogal wrede dingen gedaan met de verliezers. 'Het spijt ons, Henry,' zei de motorrijder, 'we hebben ons inderdaad nogal kinderachtig gedragen.'

Eric Rouwmeester heette een van de motorrijders, en had vroeger nog bij Henry in de klas gezeten. Eric knipoogde naar hem. Aan het einde van het voorlezen sprak Eric hem nog even persoonlijk aan. 'Heb je zin om een keer mee te gaan samen naar het bos ?' vroeg Eric. 'Dan kunnen we wat oude herinneringen ophalen.' Henry vond dat best. Een paar avonden later waren ze samen in het bos. Zo deden ze dat vroeger ook. 'Ja, eigenlijk raar,' zei Eric. 'We gingen beiden naar een andere school later, en het contact was verbroken, terwijl we toch altijd goede vrienden waren.' Henry knikte. In het bos kwamen ze een verwilderde vrouw tegen. Ze had wat rode verf achter op haar broek. 'Ja, verfschieten,' zei ze. Het bleek een spel te zijn.

Na een tijdje kwamen ze bij een ravijn aan. Ze hadden hier een goed uitzicht. 'Herinner je je Klaas nog ?' vroeg Eric. 'Heeft zichzelf stukgereden tegen een boom. En Ilse, ook dood.' Henry knikte. Ja, dat had hij ook gehoord. Hij was er kapot van. Klaas en Ilse waren ook goede vrienden van hem. 'Maar ja, dood is dood,' zei Eric. 'Je kunt ze niet terughalen.' Daar kwam de vrouw weer langs. Ditmaal had ze nog meer rode strepen op haar lichaam. 'Zo, je hebt het druk,' zei Eric.

'Ja,' zei de vrouw. 'Een feestje, maar een leuk feest.'

'Gelukkig,' zei Eric. Henry grinnikte. 'Hey, is dat Riet niet ?' zei Henry. 'Riet van de Kaars.'

'Ja, verhip, je hebt gelijk,' zei Eric. 'Hey, Riet.' Maar Riet was al weer verderop. 'Laten we er naartoe gaan,' zei Eric. Even later vonden ze haar. 'Hoe gaat het met je, Riet, ken je ons nog, Eric en Henry.'

'Het gaat goed, en met jullie ?' vroeg Riet. Ze deed een beetje afstandelijk ineens. Riet kon vroeger moeilijk meekomen op school en had vaak het gevoel dat ze er niet echt bijhoorde. Ze ging vroegtijdig naar een andere school. Na een tijdje brak het ijs een beetje. 'Zeg hebben jullie zin om mee te gaan naar het feestje ? Het is mijn feestje,' zei Riet. Even later zaten ze bij haar thuis met de andere feestgangers. Ze had een groot huis. 'Blijven jullie slapen ?' vroeg ze.

Ach ja, waarom niet, dachten Eric en Henry. Er werd even wat gebeld, en al snel was het okay. Midden in de nacht stond Eric op en ging op zijn blote voeten naar buiten. Het was een huis in het bos. Hij vond het geweldig om alleen in de natuur te zijn. Na een tijdje lopen kwam hij bij een meer aan, deed zijn kleren uit en gleed in het water. Het water was een beetje koel, maar verder was het warm weer. Heerlijk vond hij dat, om in de vrije natuur te zwemmen, en helemaal alleen. Maar later merkte dat er ook een andere man en een vrouw aan het zwemmen waren, aan de overkant van het meer. Het waren mysterieuze mensen. Eric groette hen beleefd. 'Zo, wat doe jij zo laat hier,' vroeg de man. Eric vertelde dat hij niet kon slapen, en het fijn vond alleen in de natuur te zijn. 'En jullie ?'

vroeg Eric.

'We hebben nergens om naartoe te gaan,' zei de vrouw. 'We hebben ons huis verloren, en nu leven we in de natuur.' Even later lieten ze hem het hol zien waarin ze woonden.

'Fantastisch,' zei Eric. 'Ik zou ook wel in zo'n hol willen wonen.' Maar ineens greep de man een pistool en richtte het op Eric. 'Meekomen,' zei hij. Eric werd ergens in een kooi gestopt gemaakt van takken en touw. 'Wat gaan jullie met me doen ?' vroeg Eric.

'Weten we nog niet,' zei de vrouw. Eric zag dat de vrouw rode vlekken op haar bil had. Toen lieten ze hem alleen. Na een paar uur was Eric nog steeds alleen, en begon te roepen. Na een tijdje sleurden de man en de vrouw de kooi naar het meer en duwden hem erin. Eric schreeuwde nog uit alle macht, maar niets hielp.

De vermissing van Eric kwam hard aan bij Henry. Ook Riet was er kapot van. Pas maanden later vonden ze hem, verdronken. Ook de man en de vrouw die het op hun geweten hadden werden gevonden. Het bleek dat ze onder in de grond nog meer vermiste personen vasthielden, maar die leefden nog steeds.

Henry keek naar Riet. Ze leek veel op de vrouw die het gedaan had. Ze bleken tweelingzussen te zijn. De man bleek lid te zijn van de motorbende.

Op een dag werd er weer uit het vreemde jongensboek voorgelezen. Het was een soort winterboek. De roodbil stam plantte zich op een vreemde manier voort. De vrouwen legden kleine eitjes die met hun voeten uitgebroed moesten worden, anders zou het vruchtje doodgaan. Zij die uit het ei kwamen waren piepklein, als kaboutertjes, en ze hadden nog steeds een lijmachtige gel over zich heen, het vlies-ei, wat later als ze opgegroeid waren verder uitgebroed moest worden, anders zouden ze doodgaan. Dit moest gedaan worden door hun moeder of door hun partner. In hun jonge jaren waren ze als varkens, maar naarmate ze ouder werden verloren ze die kwaliteiten. Het voedsel waarvan ze leefden was rode varkens. Hun vijanden : langbek krokodillen.

Henry begreep niet waarom er nu weer uit het jongensboek voortgelezen moest worden.

Onze kapitein is een jongen, zei de motorrijder. Hij heeft dit boek geschreven, en het is onze bijbel.

'En waar is die jongen ?' vroeg Henry.

'Vraag niets,' zei de motorrijder.

Henry besloot er niet meer naartoe te gaan. Maar toch keerde hij weer terug. Alsof iets zijn interesse had. Op een nacht werd Henry wakker. Er stond een jongetje voor hem in middeleeuwse koninklijke kleding. 'Ik ben het geheim van alle tijden, ik ben het poppetje waar alle paarden op rijden, waar alle rozen om strijden.'

'Wat kan ik voor je doen ?' vroeg Henry. Maar het jongetje was alweer verdwenen. De nacht erop was het jongetje erweer. Ditmaal had hij een boek bij zich. 'Dit is mijn bijbel,' zei hij. Op de kaft stond 'De Roodbil Stam' met een plaatje waarop wilden voetbalden. De bal was een leren zak die een beetje op een doodshoofd leek.

Weer vroeg Henry : 'Wat kan ik voor je doen.' Het jongetje gaf hem het boek en verdween. Henry begon direkt te lezen. Het was een boek over de middeleeuwen, over wrede praktijken, die uiteindelijk ophielden, maar ze waren nog steeds in de lucht, en kwamen verkleed als andere dingen.

Een man werd wakker van een lange vreemde droom. Hij had de dag ervoor naar een oorlogsfilm gekeken, en daarna naar een voetbalwedstrijd. Hij zuchtte diep, en viel weer in slaap. Hij droomde toen over een dames voetbal team waar alle vrouwen rode strepen op hun achterste hadden, terwijl sommige grote rode vlekken hadden, en sommigen gewoon rode broekjes. Honden renden over het veld, die toen in zwarte panters veranderden. En toen stond het veld in brand. De man was schoolmeester, en de volgende dag toen hij een vrouwlijke collega tegenkwam bemerkte hij dat er

rode vlekken op haar broek zaten, die op lipstift leken. De man wreef in zijn ogen. 'Ben ik nu gek ?' dacht hij bij zichzelf. Maar toen ze zich omdraaide had ze het gezicht van een hond. De man wist dat hij nog steeds sliep. Het leek wel alsof hij niet meer kon wakker worden, en de dromen werden steeds langer en langer. Hij herinnerde dat hij de dag ervoor bij de t.v. en bij de voetbalwedstrijd veel te veel had gedronken. Of hadden ze soms iets in zijn glas gestopt ?

Een man las een vreemd verhaal in een magazine. Het was een soort strip, ook met veel plaatjes, en dan weer tekst. Het was in een wasserette. Hij gooide de magazine opzij. Greep zijn spullen en liep naar buiten. Het werk was gedaan. Hij gleed uit over een bananeschil en viel terwijl alles op de stoep lag. Sommige mensen hielpen hem. Zijn wasmachine deed het niet meer. De was was weer vuil, maar iemand anders bood hem aan de was te doen bij haar thuis. Het was een aardige vrouw. De vrouw van de man was zwanger. Hij wilde weer op tijd thuis zijn, maar het was zo gezellig bij de vrouw dat hij wat langer bleef, en ze besloten vrienden te blijven. Hij vertelde haar over het vreemde verhaal wat hij in de magazine had gelezen. 'Nee, niet gelezen,' zei de vrouw.

Een man zat bij de psychiater. Dit was het verhaal wat hij eruit floepte. 'Okay,' zei de psychiater, 'en wat is de betekenis ?'

Een krant werd gedrukt met dit vreemde verhaal. Iemand werd wakker en had dit gedroomd, iemand las dit. Een grote octopus hing over een stad, en slikte de stad op in zijn geheel. Iemand rende uit het ziekenhuis. Ze hadden hem een injectie gegeven, maar hij was erdoor aan het hallucineren. het was alsof de werkelijkheid nu in duizenden stukjes voor hem lag, in brokken. Iemand was geraakt door een giftige pijl van een wilde stam, de roodbil stam. De man was aan het hallucineren en werd in een kooi gezet. Al snel raakte hij uitgehongerd. Spinnen kropen over hem heen.

Iemand zat een winterboek voor volwassenen te lezen. Dit was wel het vreemdste winterboek wat hij ooit had gelezen. En het volgende verhaal was over de idioten van Mars. De idioten waren een echt ras, wilde reuzen, die in de vreemde jungles van Mars leefden. Ja, idioot was het, maar de plaatjes waren prachtig. Het sprak echt tot de verbeelding. De idioten van Mars waren vaak kaal met hanekammen. Het verhaal daarna ging over slangen, en daarna was er een verhaal wat meer op science fiction leek. De man bracht het boek terug naar de bibliotheek, en ging naar de jeugdafdeling om daar een paar winterboeken te lenen. Tot zijn grote verbazing ging het weer over de roodbil stam. Die nacht had hij een droom over een stam waarvan de vrouwen rood geverfde billen hadden. Hij vertelde het aan zijn vrouw en vroeg wat het voor betekenis kon hebben. 'Dat je teveel leest,' zei zijn vrouw. En ze had gelijk, want hij was een echte boekenwurm. 'Als je 's nachts droomt van hetgeen je hebt gelezen, dan heb je gewoon teveel gelezen, en hetzelfde geldt voor t.v.,' zei ze.

'Maar wat kan ik dan doen ?' vroeg de man. 'Heb jij een beter idee ?'

'Neem mij eens wat vaker uit,' zei de vrouw. 'Ik heb het idee dat je getrouwd bent met de boeken in plaats van mij.'

Zo gezegd zo gedaan. De man nam zijn vrouw die dag direkt mee naar het bos om een wandeling te maken. Maar de man werd al snel onwel, en ze keerden om. 'Ik kan gewoon niet zonder mijn boeken,' zei de man. Ze probeerden nog een paar dingen, maar uiteindelijk legde de vrouw zich er maar bij neer.

Een man werd wakker van een droom, en daar een andere man. Ze hadden allemaal hetzelfde gedroomd, alsof er wilde geesten in de lucht waren. Zwarte honden blaften op de straat. Diep in het bos stapte een dwerg lachend zijn huisje binnen en trok de deur achter zich dicht. Er hingen wat klokken van wezens die in elkaar waren gegroeid en die zich voedden met elkaars inhoud. De dwerg roerde wat in een potje. 'Zombies zijn het,' zei de dwerg. 'Ze kunnen niet met en niet zonder elkaar, want ze zitten aan elkaar vast door het hart. Ja, door dit middeltje zullen ze eindelijk los van elkaar kunnen komen, maar vergeten doen ze elkaar nooit.'

Einde

De Vreemde
Ontmoeting

Ze droeg altijd witte laarzen, en woonde op twee hoog. Op een dag was hij van de trap in het trappenhuis gevallen. Ze nam hem op, en om hem op te vrolijken nam ze hem mee naar de kermis, waar zij hem bracht tot een clown. Hij was verder niet verwond.

De clown slikte hem op, en hij kwam in een tunnel terecht waar mensen een carnavals optocht hielden. De tunnel eindigde in een woestijn aan de rand van een grote stad. Er werden hier overal markten gehouden.

Hij vroeg zich af waar ze was. Nu een tijdje spuwde de clown hem weer uit. Het was een grote machine. Ze stond daar en lachte. 'Voel je je alweer wat beter nu ?' vroeg ze.

'Dit is geweldig,' zei hij.

'Kom met me mee naar huis,' sprak ze. Ze nam hem bij de arm en leidde hem naar twee hoog. Binnengekomen kreeg hij een kopje koffie. Hij keek naar haar witte laarzen. Die waren wit als altijd.

Hij kon niet veel zeggen. 'Sprakeloos als altijd ?' vroeg ze. Hij knikte.

'Het geeft niet hoor,' zei ze.

'Ik moet gaan,' zei hij.

'Nee, blijf nog even,' zei ze. 'Ik wil je wat vertellen. De duinen hier vlakbij zijn zo mooi. Heb je zin om daar een keer te wandelen ?'

'Best,' zei hij. 'Maar ik moet nu gaan.'

'Hoe laat zullen we afspreken. Vanavond om half zes ?' vroeg ze.

'Best,' zei hij.

'Dan zie ik je bij het muurtje,' zei ze.

Hij knikte, en verliet het pand. Zo gezegd zo gedaan. Om half zes stond hij bij het muurtje. Zij had hem daar al opgewacht. Samen liepen ze door het park naar de duinen. Zij had weer haar witte laarzen aan. 'Weet je,' zei ze. 'Ik denk er vaak over om de zee over te zwemmen tot dat eiland daar, ken je dat ? Lijkt me geweldig om daar te wonen, echt fantastisch, of op z'n minst om daar eens op vakantie te gaan. Gewoon in de wildernis leven, proberen te overleven. Er groeien daar veel wilde

bessen.'

'Een bessen-menu, dat lijkt me wel wat,' zei hij. Hij begon wat trager te praten. Ze trok wat kleren uit, en rende naar het water. 'Kom mee,' riep ze.

'Dat mens is gek,' dacht hij bij zichzelf. Maar toch deed hij wat ze zei. Hij rende achter haar aan en toen het water in. 'Het is niet zo lang zwemmen,' riep ze. Na een tijdje stonden ze op het eiland. Het eiland stond inderdaad vol met bessenstruiken. Het leek wel alsof de bessen in zijn hoofd spraken. 'Het zijn erg krachtige bessen,' zei ze. 'Men noemt ze weleens heksen-bessen. Dat is omdat het volwaardig aan de voedsel-behoefte voldoet.'

'Heksen-bessen ?' vroeg hij.

Ze knikte. Ze liep op een struik af, en begon te plukken en te eten. Ook gaf ze bessen aan hem. De bessen waren erg voedzaam, en al snel hadden ze genoeg. Het was bijna als sap in hun mond. 'Hutje bouwen hier ?' vroeg ze. Hij knikte.

Die nacht droomde hij vreemd. Hij lag in haar armen als een kind bij zijn moeder. Ze was wat ouder dan hem. Hij droomde dat ze hem sleepte naar de kermis tot de clown, en dat hij weer een ritje maakte door de clown. De tunnel was weer vol met dansende mensen in een carnavals-optocht, en weer liep de tunnel uit op markten aan de rand van een woestijn, aan de rand van een grote stad. Hij ging toen de stad binnen. Er was overal graffiti hier. Hij werd duizelig en viel, en ze sleurde hem mee door de stad en toen door de markten tot de woestijn. Dit liep uit op een grote zee. De grootst mogelijke vissen zwommen in de zee.

Toen werd hij wakker. Zij lag aan de andere kant van de hut. Hij liep naar haar toe en ging in haar armen liggen. Zij ontving hem als een kind. Het voelde heel natuurlijk aan. Door de bessen werd hij kleiner, en zij werd groter, althans dat leek zo in zijn dromen. Het leek wel alsof hij aan het ijlen was. Toen hij echt wakker werd de volgende dag voelde hij zich ziek.

'Misschien komt het door de bessen, als een zij-effect,' zei ze. Hij voelde zich flink beroerd. Hij kon niet meer goed nadenken. Ook kreeg hij last met het spreken. Alles ging steeds trager en moeizamer. Hij trilde. Met haar was niets aan de hand. 'Dit doe ik dus nooit meer,' zei hij. 'Ik heb het gevoel alsof ik doodga.' Zij maakte een kano en een peddel. Ze bracht hem in de kano, en begon te peddelen. Snel waren ze aan de overkant, waar ze hem naar een dokter bracht. 'U bent vergiftigd,' zei de dokter.

'Bessen ?' vroeg hij.

'Nee,' zei de dokter. 'Het eiland wat u heeft bezocht kent vreemde diersoorten, die een speciaal gas afscheiden. Het is zwaar giftig. Wist u niet dat het eiland verboden was ? Ik zou u hier eigenlijk voor moeten aangeven. U heeft waarschijnlijk de natuur daar zwaar verstoord.'

De dokter gaf hen pillen mee, die hij tweemaal daags moest slikken met water. Elke dag ging het een stukje beter met hem. Zij kwam hem vaak opzoeken. Dan hield hij zijn hand vast. 'Jammer dat het zo gelopen is,' zei ze. Hij knikte. 'Ik ben blij dat ik weer thuis ben,' zei hij.

'Thuis is toch het beste dan,' zei ze. 'Maar het was een goede ervaring.'

'Voor mij niet,' zei hij.

'Oh, waarom niet ?' vroeg ze. 'Alles moet je een keer meemaken.'

'Dat vind ik niet,' zei hij. 'Je kan ook gewoon je eigen weg gaan. Ik hoef niet alles mee te maken.'

Maar toen leek het wel alsof ze een beetje boos werd. 'Ik moet gaan,' zei ze.

'Nee, blijf nog even,' zei hij.

'Nee, geen sprake van,' zei ze. 'Je bent me nogal een betweter.'

'Jij anders ook,' zei hij.

'Dan is het beter dat het hier stopt,' zei ze. 'Wij kunnen niet met elkaar.'

'Eet maar wat bessen,' waren haar laatste woorden. Toen vertrok ze. Hij heeft haar nooit meer teruggezien.

Het Surinaamse Dagboek

Suriname, 6 april 1992

Ik ben in Suriname aangekomen. Vastbesloten het geheim te vinden waar iedereen over spreekt. De papieren roos, de naam voor een lange plant met papier-achtige roosjes, komt veel in Suriname voor, en nergens anders in de wereld. Ik staar naar de plant, met vreemde gevoelens in mijn buik. Een verlamming kwam over mij, en ik moest naar het ziekenhuis. Ik heb nu de ontmoeting gehad. Ik had hier lang op gewacht, maar het liep bijna verkeerd af. Ik was voor drie weken in het ziekenhuis.

Suriname, 8 april 1992

Ik weet niet wat ik moet doen. Ik kan niet loskomen van Suriname. Ik loop dwalend rond en kan niet weg. Het lijkt wel alsof ik opgesloten ben. Het lijkt alsof ik dood ben, terwijl ik leef. Ik heb het duistere geheim van Suriname ontmoet, maar nu ben ik in de war. Mensen kijken me na op straat. Ik geef een zoekende indruk. Alsof ik iets kwijt ben. Ik kan mijn gedachtes niet beheersen. Ik ben een gevangene van Suriname. Het is alsof een spin mij van binnen opeet. Ik heb jeuk van binnen, en hoeveel ik ook krab, het gaat niet weg.

Ik ben niet gemachtigd om contact op te nemen met mijn familie. Ik krijg geen toestemming. Ik heb ook geen idee van wie ik toestemming moet krijgen. Ik denk dat ik gek aan het worden ben. Ik geef de schuld aan de papieren roos. Ik haat die planten nu, alhoewel ik weet dat ik misschien nu onredelijk ben. Toch heb ik het idee dat die planten duivels zijn. Ze worden vaak bij allerlei duistere

rituelen gebruikt.

Ik ga huilend naar bed. Ik voel me fragiel en verward. Ik heb hulp nodig, maar durf het niet te vragen. Het is alsof het me verboden is. Het voelt alsof ik in een coma leef. In de nacht kijkt een vreemd houten standbeeld mij aan. Ik heb het gevoel alsof mensen mij uitlachen en niet om mij geven. Was ik maar nooit naar Suriname gegaan. Het is alsof iemand mijn geld en paspoort heeft gestolen, terwijl ik het nog steeds heb. Maar het dringt niet tot mij door. Niets dringt er tot mij door. Ik heb het gevoel alsof mensen mij niet horen, wat ik ook zeg. Ze leven gewoon door. Ik heb zelfs het gevoel dat het onmogelijk is dat iemand verstaat wat ik zeg. Ze horen mij wel, maar zij verstaan het niet, en het lijkt hen ook niets te kunnen schelen.

Ik weet zeker dat ik onder een vloek ben. Ik maak een lange boswandeling tot aan een rivier. Dan loop ik terug. Ik voel me opeens heel warm van binnen. Alsof iemand mij wel begrijpt, of een gevoel dat alles wel goed komt. Maar dat is maar een flits. Als ik terug kom op mijn kamer ben ik depressief. Het wordt zo erg dat ik weer een wandeling maak naar de rivier. Ditmaal voel ik alsof ik gewapend ben, maar ik ben onbewapend. Iets of iemand speelt een spelletje met mij. Het is alsof ik aan de drugs ben, maar ik heb die troep nooit aangeraakt. Of zou iemand iets in mijn koffie hebben gedaan ? Ik ben mezelf niet meer. Ik voel alsof ik een zombie ben. Iets is over mij gekomen. Ik heb ook het gevoel dat ik niet goed meer kan praten. Alsof niemand mij kan horen, of in ieder geval dat niemand mij begrijpt, alsof ik in een andere taal spreekt die niemand verstaat. Ik begin wanhopig te worden, hopeloos. Ik voel me opgesloten. Iemand heeft iets in m'n hoofd gedaan. Ik heb koppijn. Het is alsof ik opgesloten zit in mezelf, en iemand heeft de sleutels weggeworpen, zonder enig mededogen. Het is alsof er een sieraad in me zit wat ik niet kan bereiken. Dan begint het sieraad te branden, en ik begin weg te smelten. Ik kan het vuur ruiken. Nu denk ik echt dat ik gek ben geworden, verdwaasd, krankzinnig. En dat terwijl ik me zo op deze vakantie had verheugd. Ik weet dat ik niet meer terugkan. Iets houdt mij tegen. Iets heeft mij naar de keel gegrepen. Iets met een witte jurk. Ze loopt op sandalen. Zou het een geest zijn ? Of verzin ik maar wat. Ik heb het gevoel dat er hier een oorlog is, en dat ik tot het leger wordt geroepen. Ik moet vechten. Ze willen mij laten staren naar een haan. Ik moet die haan bevechten, en dan merk ik dat ik zelf een haan ben. Ik smijt het boek op de tafel wat ik aan het lezen ben. 'Is het nu afgelopen ?' roep ik. Het is alsof ik bezeten aan het raken ben. Ik voel het schuim bijna op mijn mond komen. Ik maak veel speeksel aan. Wanhopig val ik op mijn bed. Ik begin aan mijn haren te trekken, en wild met mijn hoofd te schudden. Iets is binnenin mij gekomen. Ik krijg het er niet uit.

Suriname, 10 april 1992

Ik voel me dromerig. Ik heb nog steeds geen contact met mezelf kunnen krijgen. Het is alsof ik mezelf niet meer kan bereiken, alsof ik uit mijn eigen handen ben weggegleden, in de diepte, verdronken. Ik voel me als een pop, of alsof ik als een pop ben, en ik houd mezelf vast, maar ik kan mezelf niet bereiken. Ik ben onbereikbaar. Ik kom er niet meer doorheen.

Ik weet weer waarom ik hier ben : voor de juwelen. Maar de juwelen hebben mij opgesloten. Ik kwam om juwelen te zoeken in de bossen, maar het was te gevaarlijk. De wachters van de juwelen hebben mij opgesloten.

Suriname, 10 maart 1993

Ik begin een reclame bureau in Suriname, ook om adviezen te geven wat betreft reclame. Vorig jaar was een verschrikkelijk jaar. Ik heb mezelf bij elkaar kunnen grijpen, maar ik wil niet weg nu. Eerst kon ik niet weg, en nu wil ik niet weg.

Suriname, 10 maart 1994

Het is weer mis. Alle ellende is teruggekomen. Ik wil niet meer leven. Ik wil van deze planeet vertrekken, maar ik kan niet. Ik probeer de dood te vinden, maar deze vlucht van mij weg. Iets roept mij op voor de oorlog, een oorlog tegen een haan. En dan merk ik dat ik zelf ook een haan ben. Met mesjes sta ik daar, mesjes aan mijn benen vastgemaakt. Maar dan enige tijd later beland ik in het ziekenhuis. Ik voel me gebroken. Ik ben verwond, misschien zelfs dodelijk. Mensen vertellen me dat ik ergens ben ingesprongen. Het was nogal van een grote hoogte. Ben ik mijn verstand aan het verliezen ? Ik kan niet tegen de smoelen van deze mensen, die hypocriete, duivelse glimlachen. Ze voeren iets in hun schild, ik weet het zeker.

Suriname, 12 maart 1994

Iemand zingt liedjes tot mij waarvan ik rustig wordt. Ik lig nog steeds in het ziekenhuis. Soms ben ik bewusteloos. De verpleegsters zijn wel aardig hier. Ze zingen voor mij, en zeggen dat als ik weer beter ben, dan zullen ze met me zwemmen, in de rivier achter het ziekenhuis. Dat is al half in het bos. Het lijkt me wel leuk. Hun glimlachen zijn mysterieus en zoet. Ik heb vol vertrouwen in hen dat zij mijn leven beter zullen maken.

Eén van de verpleegsters neemt mij mee in haar auto. We gaan diep het bos in, naar een rivier waar krokodillen leven. Zij laat me ook een plant zien genaamd de papieren roos, een lange plant met bijna papieren roosjes. Ik schrik. Ze houdt mijn hand vast, maar die duw ik weer weg. Ik ben ineens heel paranoide. Ze vraagt me wat er gebeurd is, maar ik ren weg met schuim op mijn mond. Ze komt mij achterna. Ze heeft een boog en dreigt mij neer te schieten. Niemand zal namelijk ontsnappen. Ik weet niet waar ze het over heeft. Ik ben toch niet in een gevangenis ? Maar ze geeft geen uitleg. Dan lijkt het alsof ik een klap op mijn hoofd krijg. Even later wordt ik wakker in het ziekenhuis.

Zij zingt over mij.

Suriname, 18 maart 1994

Ik denk dat er iets goed mis met mij is. Ik ben opgesloten in een nachtmerrie, alsof ik in een coma ben. Daarom kon ik hier nooit weg. Ik kan niet goed nadenken. Ik kan niet tellen. Ik wil weg, maar ik kan niet. Ik probeer weg te kruipen, maar ik ben als een verlamde. Alles is zo groot en ver weg om mij heen. Het is alsof ik in de maag van een beest ben, een roofdier. Ik wil hier weg. Maar ik kan niet. Alles gaat zo traag. Ik heb het idee alsof niemand om mij geeft, maar toch heb ik het gevoel dat het goedkomt.

Suriname, 18 mei 1994

Ik lag in warm water. Het gaf me hoop. Eventjes kon niks me nog schelen. Ik heb het gevoel dat ik meer in mijn dagboek moet schrijven. Dat doe ik bijna niet. In mijn dromen groeien planten met witte bloempjes in mijn kamer. Het is alsof ze zullen komen om me te halen. Er groeien witte bloemen in mijn hoofd, planten met witte bloemen, weelderige struiken, die een wit zaad verspreiden. Het maakt me warm van binnen. Ik dacht dat Suriname zo meedogenloos was, maar nu heb ik haar geheim gezien. Alhoewel ik mezelf misschien wat teveel bemoedig nu. Wat hebben die witte bloemenstruiken in hun zin ? Ze hebben doornen als ik ze dichterbij bekijk. Er druipt bloed vanaf, als van de poten van gevechtshanen, van de messen. Iets knapt er in mijn hoofd. Ik moet even neerliggen. Ik herken deze plek. Had ik dit niet in mijn dromen gezien ? Ik was op weg naar een witte stad, met zoveel anderen, maar toen brak de ladder af. We vielen allemaal naar beneden. Het was een bodemloze put, met veel vuur. Duivels waren rondom ons. Een huis van medelij neemt ons binnen, maar dat bleek valse medelij te zijn. Ik kan niet meer nadenken. Alles duizelt mij voor

de ogen. Hier leeft valse genade, een beest.

Suriname, 19 mei 1994

Toen kwam het. De struiken namen bezit van me, alsof rivieren me overstroomden. Ik was in een droom. Ik was als Doornroosje, maar Doornroosje stierf. Ze werd door teveel doornen geprikt. Ze gilde terwijl ze stierf. Het was een deel in mij wat stierf. Terwijl het andere deel een clown was, die onder water was, verstrikt in een onderwater-struik, ook met vele doornen. Ook de clown stierf toen, en ik bevond mijzelf in een wilde zee, totdat ik aanspoelde op een strand. Iemand kwam tot mij, en hielp mij op de been. Toen bracht zij mij naar haar huis. Ze glimlachte. Ik staarde naar haar. Ik kon niet denken. Alles stond stil. Ik ben nu meerdere personen.

Suriname, 20 mei 1994

Het moorden van mei is aan mijn zij. In een slachtkamer bracht zij mij. Ik wist niet wie zij was. Ik durf niet veel te zeggen. Ze is een moordenaar, nogal periodiek. Ik ben te zwak om tegen haar op te staan. Ik ben nu meerdere personen. Zij heeft mij gespleten. Ik kan mezelf niet vinden tussen alle maskers.

Suriname, 21 mei 1994

Ze zit op een stoel, en ik moet haar diensten verlenen. Ik heb deze stoel eerder gezien. Het stond boven Suriname toen ik het land binnenkwam. Ik ben meerdere personen nu, uit elkaar getrokken, verscheurd. Ik moet de stoel aanbidden. Zij is een moordenares. Ik ben door de verkeerde persoon gered. De enige die ik nog heb is mijn dagboek. Zij houdt mij onder schot en bedreigt me. Zij is hoog in de wolken, als de ark van Noach, en ik ben het volk. Ik ben niet in de ark, en dat is een vreselijke gewaarwording. Overal regent het. Haar stem klinkt door mijn hele lichaam, als donder en bliksem. Ik sta in vuur. Ik sta in brand, maar dan besef ik dat ik een deel ben van een plant. Ik ben een deel van een struik, en ik groei naar boven.

Suriname, 22 mei 1994

Een plant met gele bloemen, het is als drugs. Over die brug kwam ik hier. Wie heeft mij zo gemaakt ? Er moet een uitweg uit dit doolhof zijn. Ik ben bezeten en gespleten. Ziek zijn in Suriname is geen pretje. Ik kon er wel in, maar niet meer uit. Het vuur der dwazen brandt hier. Als dollen dansen zij er omheen. Ik doe niet mee.

Een groter kwaad is er nooit geschiedt.

Suriname, 23 mei 1994

Ik hoop dat ze nooit mijn dagboek leest. Ze schijnt er geen interesse voor te hebben, dus ik schrijf door. In de nacht heb ik wel haar dagboeken gevonden. Ze schrijft over mij. Ik zit hier gevangen. Het is haar paleis.

Suriname, 24 mei 1994

Ik voel me als haar marionet. Twee vrouwelijke matrozen vielen in hetzelfde lot. Ze zitten daar in hun marine jurkjes, wit met blauw. Ik ben in een halve coma. Ik kan me niet goed bewegen en niet goed ademen. Het is de aanval van de plant. De struik heeft genomen, en laat haar doornen inzinken. Buiten is er donder. Het leger van de plant is gekomen. Ze staat op het balkon op de uitkijk, alsof ze schepen naar binnen moet halen. Dan doet ze het raam dicht. Haar haren zijn als in

vuur. Dan brandt ze helemaal. Ik kijk hoe ze in as verandert, maar het is slechts zaad. Wit zaad, wat door het huis wordt geblazen. Het huis is in stof en een spin maakt webben.

Suriname, 25 mei 1994

Zij zit in een witte jurk, omringd door de planten met witte bloemen. Zonder de gele bloemen zou ik hier nooit zijn gekomen. Zij namen mij me op hun schip. Mijn verleden liet ik achter me. Het verdronk. Eindelijk voelde ik mij aangenomen in de ark van Noach. Ik kan er niet meer aan denken. De zee is romig. Ik ben op het schip. Het schip is een eiland, als een vis in de zee, als een haai. Ik kan niet meer vooruit en niet meer achteruit. Alleen het schip kan bewegen. De bloemen groeien naar de hemel. Dit is mijn ladder. Maar dan breekt de ladder. Het witte huis neemt mij aan, verzorgt mijn wonden. Ik voel mij zwak, en de witte dame heerst over mij.

Suriname, 26 mei 1994

Ik ben bang dat zij mijn dagboek leest. Daarom verdraai ik de woorden. Ik lees haar dagboeken in de nacht. Zij zijn duister. Ik denk dat ik gek wordt. Schuimbekkend rol ik op de grond, totdat ik mij weer optrek aan de lange planten met bloemen. Ik trek mezelf op aan de struik. Ik klim naar de hemel, maar kom niet ver. Ik kan alleen maar kijken. Ik staar naar Surinaams fruit op een schaal. Voor mij is het een zee, een zee waarover ik nooit kan komen, maar waar wel eilanden in zijn. Dit fruit draagt een duister geheim. Dit fruit ligt alleen maar stil, en ik kijk ernaar. Een zee van fruit liet mij niet door. Ik kan alleen maar kijken. Ik kan alleen maar wegzinken. Ik zag hen daar staan op de bruggen met maskers, en in de boten. Zij namen vrouwen in wit op het schip. Die visten zij uit het water. Zij haalden die vrouwen naar binnen als Surinaams fruit, fruit met een duister geheim. Het Surinaamse fruit is als een lange reis naar ellende. Als je bij de pit bent aangekomen ben je dood. Vrouwen in kanten jurken, bedolven onder spinnenwebben. Spinnen in hun haren. Zo bieden zij het fruit aan. Geen goede reclame als je het mij vraagt, maar het wordt goed verkocht. Mensen kijken niet verder dan hun neus lang is.

Suriname, 27 mei 1994

Planten met blauwe bloemen. Het paars groeit aan de randen van de rivier, als het paarse vuil. Het zijn paarse bloemen. Diep kijk ik in haar ogen en zie hetzelfde. Het is bijna als een spiegel. Ik probeer de diepte van haar ogen te zien. Het paars bedekt hier alles. Ik heb het gevoel dat ik in cirkeltjes draai. Hetzelfde is mij al eens eerder overkomen. Ik kan niet losbreken. Ik moet geholpen worden. Maar de hulp komt niet.

Suriname, 28 mei 1994

Ik wacht op de droom die mij zal doen ontwaken, die mij weer laat durven spreken. Die droom komt maar niet. De hemel lijkt ver weg. Het grote syndroom van Suriname heeft mij in haar macht. Het is als een verslaving aan drugs. Ik kan de ketenen niet doorhakken. Moed heb ik niet om dit syndroom in detail te bespreken. Ik praat er slechts omheen. Ik ben zo gemaakt. Het is mijn aard geworden. Ik drink van de bloemenzee, en stik bijna in haar zaad. Warmte komt met golven om mij heen. De witte stad komt in zicht, maar verblindt mij.

Suriname, 29 mei 1994

De vrouw in het wit staat tussen twee matrozen in. Zij komen van een vreemd leger. Ik draai en woel in mijn bed. In de rivier hangen de witte bloemen diep, met een zwaar gewicht. Ik zit op de rivier-boot. Het was een labyrint van vuur, waarin we de juiste combinaties moesten zien te vinden. Het was een race tegen de klok. De muren waren draaiende en brandende. We renden, maar zij

struikelde. Een gil achtervolgde mij. Ik kon haar niet meer vinden.

Suriname, 30 mei 1994

De ladder naar de witte stad laat grijze gezichten zien. Zij zijn niet uitgenodigd. Als zij de ladder aanraken, dan branden zij. Hun gezichten smelten weg. Ik ben op de ladder en kom steeds hoger, steeds dieper. De witte muren van de stad zijn begroeid.

Zij zat daar op een witte troon, waar alle ladders naartoe leidden. Ze keek naar beneden en verdween in witte rook. Ik volgde het spook dieper de stad in.

Iedereen zonk weg in de witte golven, en vele schepen vergingen. Ik klom door, hoger de stad in. Ik durfde niet achterom te kijken. Ik hoorde gekrijs, en mensen riepen : Stop. Maar ik liep door. Ik was in Suriname. Zij nam het gewicht van de stad in. Alles loopt over in de wildernis in de diepte van de witte stad. Het is een schuimende zee, wild golvend. Het is een Surinaamse vrucht. Surinaams fruit, ik kijk erna, en het is alsof ik in een coma ben. Niemand kan mij horen. Niemand kan mij verstaan. Het is alsof er nooit communicatie is geweest. Niemand kan iets overbrengen. Ik zink weg in de witte zee. Grote vissen zwemmen hier, maar zij nemen niemand mee. Wij zijn aan ons lot overgeleverd. Oh, was ik maar nooit naar Suriname gegaan. Ik ben gebrandmerkt.

Suriname, 31 mei 1994

Ik herinner de droom over het witte hek. Het trekt me tot de wildernis, maar laat me nooit door. Het trekt me dieper en dieper totdat ik vastraak. Is dit het grote Suriname ? Is dit het witte hek ? Het is een vreemd hek, met vreemde muziek, als een begrafenis. Wie wordt er begraven ? De muziek zo traag en subtiel. En voordat je het witte hek bereikt kom je tot een stad waarin je altijd verdwaald. Het neemt je tijd in beslag. Het neemt alles. Ik sta op de duinen en schreeuw over alles wat me is ontnomen door het witte hek. Ik wil het terug, maar golven overweldigen mij, en nemen mij mee, dieper tot het witte hek, als tot een ladder. Een pen wordt in mijn hand gedrukt, en ik moet veel schrijven. Ik moet een boek schrijven over Suriname. Ik moet tot haar geheimen doordringen. Ik schreeuw. Ik heb het trauma in mijn hand, maar dan wordt het rustig. Ik hoor het witte hek ruizen op de achtergrond, spelende haar muziek. Het doet pijn, maar de steek gaat eruit. Ik moet een wit boek schrijven, een witte bijbel. Ik tril en beef. Ik wil wegrennen, maar golven overweldigen mij. 'Schrijf, schrijf,' bulderen zij. Er beginnen dingen in mijn hoofd te draaien. Ik kan geen verhalen schrijven. Maar de klokken in mijn hoofd leiden een leven op henzelf.

De jongen met drugs

Fruitkraam

In een steegje verkocht hij drugs,
De plaaggeest zat achter hem aan,
Een plaaggeest met meerdere gezichten.

De muren waren wit en kaal,
Hij was mijn vriend,
Hij was als een trein in de nacht,
Een grootse nacht

Een trein in de nacht,

Van grote pracht,
Hij verkocht drugs op het plein,
En nu wordt het plein klein,
Zo ver weg, dat de drugs onbereikbaar is

Hij kan niets meer verkopen,
Ze zijn nu zo ver weg,
Als fruit op schalen,
Ik kan ze niet meer horen,
En zij zijn doof

De drugs geeft plaatjes in je hoofd,
Maar nu is het weg

Pinocchio

De trein breekt door in mijn hoofd,
Het is de nachttrein,
En daar staat de man in het blauw,
Als een reus is hij,
In de grootse nacht.

Hij rijdt in een mercedes,
Heeft hij die eerlijk verdient of gestolen,
Niemand weet het,
Een raadsel in de nacht is hij,
Als hij naar de sterren kijkt,
Dan vallen ze.

Is hij Pinocchio ?
Hij komt als de nachttrein,
Door bloemenvelden,
Na een lange nacht,
Is hij lang

Pinocchio rijdt door de straten,
Allen zien hem,
En hij zwaait,
Hij is de koning,
Zijn leugens hebben hem lang gemaakt,
Hij heeft een goed overzicht,
Al zij die liegen,
Hij liegt nog meer,
Hij is de opper-leugenaar

Wuivende rijdt hij door de straten,
In zijn open mercedes,
Hij zwaait naar de mensen,
Alsof hij de koning is,
Maar hij is het niet,
Hij is gewoon een goede leugenaar,
Iemand die veel liegt en bedriegt,

Het geeft hem rust,
De jongen verkoopt drugs voor goede dromen,
Allemaal illusies

Ze volgen hem tot achter de bergen,
Waar de bloemenvelden overgaan in zeeen,
Hij is een verkoper, een zakenman,
Hij slaat op, en verbergt.

Een sprookje zoals Bagdad

Oh Bagdad, met je roze bomen, met je roze bananen,
Oh Bagdad, je kwam helemaal overzwemmen,
Jij van Bagdad,
Waar de harten-koningin nog steeds hoofden afkapt,
Johannes de Doper wordt gemist

Oh Bagdad, met je edele grachten,
Met je roze meloenen, met je roze planten,
Ze groeien langs de grachten, zo de huizen in,
Je kwam van zo ver,
Jij van Bagdad,
Of kom je ergens anders vandaan,
En leef ik in een waan ?

De harten-koningin gaat door de straten,
Dan verandert ze in het zwart,
Ze klopt op de deuren,
Want ze wil koppen zien rollen,
Die moet onthoofd worden, en die,
En dan gaat ze weer verder,
Een heel leger volgt haar,
En zij groeien elke dag,
Zij hebben lange haren

Als bokken volgen ze haar,
maar zij onthoofdt hen ook,
Zoveel koppen moeten rollen

Dan klopt ze op de deur van de auto-winkel,
Een groot gegil,
Het is hier onheilspellend,
Daarom verlaten velen de stad,
En daarom zwom jij naar mij,
Je komt van zo ver

Maar Bagdad is maar een sprookje,
Jij komt ergens anders vandaan,
Ik weet het wel, zeg op

Zij kwam van ver, in haar bootje,
Helemaal alleen was zij in de stad,
Het leek een beetje op Bagdad,
Een kabouter zat achter haar aan,
En een trein brak door de stad heen,
Niemand wist waar het vandaan kwam

En nu ben je hier,
Maar ik zie je niet staan,
Onzichtbaar ben je

Ook de bomen zien je niet,
Ze kijken dwars door je heen,
Jij kwam van een onzichtbare stad,
Ook een sprookje,
Een sprookje zoals Bagdad

En dan moesten ze allen in de spiegel kijken,
En dan zagen zij het weer,
Aan de andere kant van de spiegel leefde jij,
En nu ben je hier

Een spiegel vertelt over jouw wereld,
Een reflectie van ver weg,
Oh zo ver weg,
Waar wij niets van weten

De Roze Muur

*'Ketenen rondom mijn hart, het roze rondom mijn hart,
langzaam zal het afdrijven ... Het spreekt, en dan breekt alles ...'*

Ze hebben gestoken. En nu is alles zacht als honing. Drie bijen gingen op hen af, tot de grote stad, en bereikten haar hart. Haar hart zond de stralen uit over de grachten, en nu is zij hier, in een wieg. Ik schommel de wieg, en troost het huilende kind.

De moeder wilde het kind niet meer troosten, en rende weg in de nacht. Met een zwarte bus vertrok zij naar het woud. Ik bleef bij de baby. Ik wilde het kind in liefde grootbrengen, maar ook ik werd weggegrepen, het kind alleen achterlatende. Ik had geen andere keus. Ik kon niet meer terug. Er was een muur tussen haar en mij. Alles was zwart voor mijn ogen.

De roos nam haar mee, en bracht haar tot een tafel. Hier groeide ze op. Wie verstaat de pijn van overleden ouders voor hun kind ? Ze proberen het hart van het kind te bereiken in de zwarte nacht, maar ze worden achterna gejaagd door zwarte honden, totdat zij een tweede keer sterven.

Ik at van het honingbrood. Ik was een schim in de nacht. Bij daglicht was ik een golf in de zee,

terwijl mijn kind sliep. Ik zond haar roze dromen. Ik maakte een wiegje voor haar in de roze droom, en suste het kind, schommelde de wieg. De roos heeft altijd voor haar gezorgd.

Ik staar naar deze roos, in een vaas op tafel. De roos heeft alle kleuren van de regenboog en spreekt in vele talen.

De honing prikt in mijn keel. Het kind kijkt naar mij en lacht. Ik voer het kind honingbrood, en neem het dan mee over de zeeen van dromen. Tot een roze stad neem ik het kind, waar paarse rozen bloeien. Ik neem het kind aan de hand langs de grachten. Paarse rozen groeien aan de wanden van de gracht. Ergens gaat er een trappetje naar beneden.

Even later neem ik het kind mee uit de stad, waar heide is. Ik breng het kind door de heide. Tot de bijen zullen wij gaan.

De bijen maken honing in vele kleuren. Ik laat het kind proeven van de honing. Een grote boom staat hier, met uitzicht over de werelden.

Roze muren hebben de kamer van het kind, waar het kind haar wieg heeft. Ik schommel de wieg zoals ik altijd doe, en sus de baby. Ik troost het kind waar de moeder het niet kon troosten. In een groot vuur is de moeder, sterker dan haarzelf. Ze rent om van het vuur los te komen, maar het blijft knagen.

Totdat ook de honing haar vindt. Ik praat tegen het kind. Maar het kind slaapt. Ik fluister, en doe dan zachtjes de deur dicht. Ik zit met de moeder op de bank. De moeder zegt niets. Ik kijk haar aan, en draai dan mijn gezicht weg. Ze heeft honing op haar gezicht. Ze is gestoken door bijen. Dan eet ze honingtaart, en ik denk dat ze nu het kind wel weer wil troosten.

Als het kind jarig is, dan vieren de bijen feest, en krijgt ze een kroontje. Maar het vuur komt terug om te knagen. Het knaagt door de rieten stoelen heen. Het kind krijgt een nieuwe naam, en krijst. Maar de honing blust het vuur, en ik troost het kind weer.

Bovenop de steden, daar is het roze vuur, een beter vuur dan het vuur beneden.
Het roze vuur zal je herinneringen genezen,
Het roze vuur zal bij je zijn, en je nieuwe dromen geven,
Leg je hand in mijn hand.
Ik neem je tot het roze vuur,
Ik til je wanneer het nodig is

Bilha en Jakob

Bilha en Jakob,
In de zee, zout warm water, en frisse golven,
Het is een zuivere mix,
De bomen aan de kust staren hen aan,
Van die hangende oerwouds-bomen

Zij staart naar hem,

naar zijn ketting, en dan naar zijn ogen

Hij staart terug,
Dan kijkt hij wat lager,
Maar dan roept iets hem terug,
Hij kan niet te lang naar haar kijken,
Want zij is goddelijk

Zo goddelijk is zij,
Dat hij genageld is aan de grond, het zachte zand onder zijn voeten in de zee

Zij roept hem, maar een golf overspoelt hem,
Hij zwemt naar hem toe,
En zij grijpt hem

Zij trekt hem naar de kant,
Zij is zijn god,
Naar haar tenten neemt zij hem

Bilha droomt van forse vrouwen,
Op een mat slaapt hij,
Zij slaapt op een hoger bed

De wereld is blind en tot een rots geworden,
In de wildernis woont Bilha, met haar slaaf Jakob ...

De Eeuwige Jachtvelden

Een jongen tekent. Een jongen droomt. Zijn ouders zitten beneden aan tafel. De jongen droomt over indianen. De volgende dag tekent hij een sleutel. De vader vindt de tekening en verscheurt het. De jongen huilt. Het kan vader niet zoveel schelen. De dag erna droomt de jongen weer over indianen. De jongen is ernstig ziek.

Het is alsof niemand de jongen kan benaderen. En niemand kan de jongen beschrijven. De jongen leest een boek over indianen, en heeft een vreemd gevoel in zijn buik, alsof hij een gevangene is. Een gevangene is hij, van zijn eigen ziekte. Hij kan nergens heen, hij kan niet naar school, hij kan zijn dromen niet waarmaken. Hij leeft als in een nachtmerrie van indianen.

Hij ziet de voeten van indianen wild voorbij bewegen als hij bed ligt. En hij kan niets doen, hij is machteloos. Hij kan zich niet eens bewegen, en hij durft het ook niet. Hij is een krijgsgevangene. Maar welke oorlog heeft hij gevoerd ? Is hij schuldig, en aan welke wet ? Hij weet het niet, hij begrijpt het niet, hij is als een gebondene aan een paal, een oorlogspaal. Een boek van zijn opa ligt naast hem, een boek over Duitsland, over de oorlog. Begrijpen doet hij het niet. En zo leeft hij voort met dat vreemde gevoel in zijn buik, het gevoel een krijgsgevangene te zijn.

In nachtmerries martelen ze hem aan een paal, totdat hij huilt, en dan lachen ze. Hij vindt het ziekelijk, maar hij is zelf ziek. Zouden zij hem ziek hebben gemaakt ? En wie zijn het dan ? De draak van geweld verscheurt al zijn dromen. Een machteloos gevoel verlamd hem altijd. Niemand heeft oog voor hem, alleen de Duitse jongen van de buren. Die houdt ervan om in uniforms rond te lopen, en neemt het altijd voor hem op.

Op een dag vertelt hij de nachtmerries aan zijn Duitse buurjongen. De Duitser lacht, en is ineens helemaal niet zo lief, maar pakt dan zijn hand. 'Weet je,' zegt hij, 'dat zijn allemaal maar verhaaltjes. Ik denk dat je teveel televisie hebt gekeken en teveel vreemde boeken hebt gelezen. Denk je dat zelf ook niet ?' En ja, dat klopte, de jongen keek erg veel televisie, omdat hij ziek was. En ook las hij veel vreemdsoortige boeken over indianen, dus eigenlijk was het heel logisch dat hij zo droomde. 'Stop daar dan eens mee,' zei de Duitse jongen. 'Ga eens andere dingen doen.'

'Maar wat dan ?' vroeg de jongen. De Duitser glimlachte. De Duitser gaf hem wat adviezen, maar het werkte niks uit. de jongen was te gehecht aan de televisie en zijn boeken. Het was een verslaving. En de nachtmerries werden alleen maar erger. Wilde indianen voeten die om hem heen dansten, en dan maakten ze zich klaar voor de buffeljacht. En hij realiseerde dat hij de buffel was, en de buffels. Ze wilden hem geheel naar binnen halen, maar voor wat ? Ze hadden een feest, om hem. Hij was als een veld vol buffels, ziek, en hij zag de gezichten van dokters in de indianen. Wilden ze hem echt helpen, of was hij voor hen niets anders dan een grote zak met geld. Daar prikten ze de dollars, en het bloed begon te stromen, voor nog meer geld. Hij had altijd het gevoel dat de dokters niets om hem gaven. Alleen zijn Duitse buurjongen gaf om hem.

Het leek wel alsof de dokters hem niet wilden genezen, want dan zou het geld niet meer stromen voor hen. En zo bleef hij ziek en trillerig. De buffeljacht ging door. En ineens zat hij dan zelf op zo'n buffel. Hij wilde niet steken met zijn speer, totdat hij het gezicht van dokters in het dier zag. Toen wilde hij wel steken, toen ging hij het gevecht aan. Indianen hielpen hem, en even later aten ze gezamenlijk van het jachtmaal.

De varkensjacht was nog wel grootser, toen zag hij ineens gezichten van tandartsen in de varkens, en ja, die hadden hem per slot van rekening ziek gemaakt met hun amalgaam, hun giftige vullingen. Niets dan krengen waren het, en zo bleef hij steken, zoals ze hem ooit langdurig staken met hun boren. Het was nu zijn beurt. En niets kon tegen hem op. De varkens lagen al snel als blauw en gemerkt op de grond, klaar voor de grote slacht. En indianen hielpen hem.

Al snel werd hij stamhoofd, maar het begon hem ook te vervelen. Hij wilde geen koning zijn. Daarom verliet hij de stam voor een andere stam. Hier werd hij als een gevangene behandeld en het was goed zo. Hier was hij een slaaf en zo wilde hij het, hij werd als vuil behandeld. Hier hoorde hij thuis. Hij dacht er niet eens aan te ontsnappen. Ze gaven hem nauwelijks te eten. Hij leefde als een wilde. Hij werd wakker, stond op, ging naar beneden, en vertelde het aan zijn ouders. Zijn vader vertelde hem toen dat hij ook zulke dromen had, zijn hele leven lang al, en dat hij zich er bij neer had gelegd, en er ook niet meer zonder kon. Ineens had de jongen zoveel respect voor zijn vader.

Maar op een dag wilde de jongen niet meer verder leven. Hij zou naar zijn bed gaan en dan gewoon niet meer opstaan. In de hoop naar de eeuwige jachtvelden te kunnen.

Het Moddermeer

Hij bespeelde de piano. Zij keek hem aan. Ze hield zich stil. Hij pingelde wat. Toen liep ze de keuken in. Hij volgde haar, maar zei niets. Ze begon te koken. Hij liep de huiskamer weer in en greep een boek. Het boek ging over een duistere indianen-stam. Hij was diep geinteresseerd, bijna onder hypnose, en begon te lezen. Even later kwam zijn vrouw de huiskamer binnen met soep. Maar hij was in diepe trance, dus ze begon alleen te eten van de soep. Hij had geen honger.

Ze liep naar boven. Hij volgde haar met het boek. Ze was op haar bed gaan liggen, en hij legde

zichzelf ook op het bed, nog steeds met het boek. Hij begon weer te lezen. Ze zuchtte. Zo ging dat nu altijd. Haar man was verslaafd aan boeken.

Zij was niet geinteresseerd in boeken, en al helemaal niet in de rare verhalen die hij vertelde. Op een dag was ze het zat, en vertrok. Hij was niet onder de indruk, en las gewoon door. Als het kon wilde hij in de wildernis leven, zoals de stam van het boek. Op een dag was het zover. Hij pakte wat spullen en vertrok in de wildernis.

Hij voelde de modder tussen zijn tenen, en hij kon ademhalen … Dat gevoel had hij een lange tijd niet gehad. Een half naakte vrouw stond in de verte naar hem te kijken. Ze was bijna naakt, maar had wat riemen om haar heen.Ze had haar boog getrokken.

'Wat wil je ?' vroeg ze.

'Naar huis,' zei hij. 'Ik wil leven in een stam.'

Ze liet haar nog steeds gespannen boog een beetje zakken. 'Weet je wel niet wat het kost om een stam binnen te gaan vandaag de dag ?'

Hij schudde zijn hoofd. 'Nee.'

Wij moeten je initieren, zei de vrouw.

Hoe gaat dat ? Vroeg hij.

Dat gaat niet, sprak ze.

Waarom niet ?

Daarom niet.

Toen rende de vrouw weg. Hij ging haar achterna, maar de pijlen vlogen al snel over zijn hoofd, dus ook hij rende weg. Hier moest hij niet wezen. Ergens vond hij een tunnel die ondergronds leidde. Maar alles was zo stil hier. Hij kwam aan een meer van modder. Een kind was hier aan het spelen, een kind van wilden. Waarschijnlijk woonden moddermensen hier.

Verderop was het water wat minder modderig, maar wel bruin. Hij zakte in het water, en begon te zwemmen. Al snel was hij aan de overkant. Het was niet zo'n groot meer. Een vrouw kwam naar hem toe. Ze groette hem. Zij was een stuk aardiger dan die andere vrouw. Ze was bedekt met modder.

Wat is je naam ? Vroeg ze.

Ik heb mijn leven achter me gelaten, zei hij.

Waarom ? Vroeg ze.

'Laat dat maar zitten,' zei hij. 'Wat kost het om deel te hebben in uw stam ?'

'Niks,' zei de vrouw.

'Mag ik binnenkomen ?' vroeg hij.

Ze gaf hem een tent. Maar hij begon zich al snel te vervelen en trok verder.

Hij dacht na over zijn vrouw, maar vergat haar snel. Ze was te saai voor hem. Hij ging nog dieper ondergronds, na het vinden van een andere tunnel. Hij kwam aan bij een wilde zee. Het was hier verschrikkelijk aan het stormen. Hij liep door een reusachtige poort. Ook hier verveelde hij zich. Hij besloot weer terug te gaan naar zijn boeken. Vooral boeken over duistere indianen-stammen hadden zijn interesse.

's Nachts had hij dromen over wilde indianen-stammen. Het was voor hem nauwelijks mogelijk om in de realiteit te blijven. Hij leefde met zijn boeken en verhalen. Het was alsof er een indiaans oorlogsboek in zijn hoofd leefde waarvan hij maar niet kon ontsnappen.

Nog steeds had hij een diep verlangen deel te hebben aan zo'n stam, en in zijn dromen was het zo. Zijn dromen waren bijna nachtmerries, zo wild waren ze.

Moddermeer, moddermijn, modderveer,
Met rood bedekt,
Ze bloed niet meer,
Moddermeer, rozenschijn, moddermijn

Moddermeer, modermijn, rozenveer,
Hier moet je zijn,
Met rood bedekt,
De ochtendstond,
Je ademt niet meer,
Maar je bent niet dood,
Je bent bedekt met rood

Moddermeer, moedertaal, denk niet meer,
Het vuur gaat aan,
Het vuur gaat uit,
We denken er niet meer aan,
In het moddermeer

Je komt dichtbij,
Je raakt mij aan,
Ik adem niet meer,
Maar ik ben niet dood,
Ik ben bedekt door het moddermeer,
Bedekt met rood

Moddermeer, denk aan mij,
Houd me vast,
Verlaat mij niet meer,
Maar vlieg met mij,
Naar de regenboogstad,
En praat met mij.

De Kinderdief

De magische flessen stonden naast elkaar. Er zaten geesten in die flessen. Het was druk in de stad der spinnen. Zoveel geluiden van auto's, en dan ineens zo stil, omdat de koningin langskomt. De koningin der spinnen zit op haar troon, omgeven met speren. Zij is het geluid zo zat, en eist stilte. Dan zinkt de stad weg in de golven van eenzaamheid. Het is haar beslissing. Zij houdt de stad veilig. De familie ruzies moeten ophouden. Zij breekt de families, en verspreid hen over de stad. Zij wacht, en slaat dan toe. De koele gebaren van eenzaamheid zijn een teken dat het werkt. De stad is stoffig. Overal ligt rommel op de grond. Maar het is tenminste rustig. De inwoners leven in vrees. Zij kennen hun koningin.

De droogte is bijna zoet. De grachten hebben groen water, en veel bruin. De koningin wil veel bruin zien, en veel bleke plekken daartussen. Zij houdt van het contrast. Dan wil ze klederdracht zien, en tradities, om het vervolgens allemaal stuk te slaan. Ze bereidt het gif om de stad te laten slapen. Alles is dodelijk uitgecalculeerd. Ze maakt geen fouten. Zij is onfeilbaar. De stad is een trage belevenis. Morgen zal alles wit zijn. Haar dienaressen hebben zichzelf gewapend. De strijd kan beginnen, maar waartegen ? De stad is dood. Er is niets te zien hier. Morgen zal alles wit zijn.

Haar heupen bewegen tegen het glas aan. Het glas springt, en zij is vrij. Over de stad zijn haar webben. Niemand zal ontsnappen. Zij zullen allen moeten eten van haar vergif, om zo te slapen voor eeuwig, opdat de stad wit zal zijn. In de morgen zullen nieuwe soldaten opstaan. Zij zullen haar op handen dragen, en aan haar voeten liggen, want zij dient aanbeden te worden.

Niet velen durven tegen haar in te gaan. Niet velen durven haar te benaderen. Er zijn haaien in haar zee, grote schepen op haar golven, en haar mandarijnen zijn bommen. Zij is een verwend klein kind. Zij houdt hen maskers voor, en praat alles weg. Haar leugens laten haar tussen de bomen wonen, tussen de planten. Een distelkind is zij, met brandnetels in haar haren. Zij stoeit met slangen, en zij luisteren naar haar. Zij vecht met katten, en overwint. Zij is de vogelspin.

Haar liederen zijn stormen in de nacht, die kinderen uit hun bedden roven. Zij brengt hen tot het kasteel. Zij draagt een wit kleed waarin zij haar bruine lichaam omhult. Haar liederen zijn schepen in water. Zij zinken niet. Zij laat hen allen dromen, de dromen des doods. Zij brengt het gif dicht bij hen monden, en laat hen dan slikken. Dan sleept zij hen naar de kelders. Haar hyena's jagen daar, en zij leidt hen tot de ondergrondse stad. Zij brengt hen tot onder de riolen tot het licht der kinderen.

Het Oorlogs-spel

In het centrum van de wereldstad waren veel winkels. Ergens onder een winkel was een extra verdieping met spelletjes, waar ik spelletjes kocht. Oorlogs-spelletjes en spelletjes van avontuur. Zij kwam daar ook. Ik nam haar eens mee naar het gebied achter de winkels, waar we na lang lopen

langs de flatgebouwen in een ander gedeelte kwamen.

Ik bezocht daar altijd wat oudere mensen en mensen die het moeilijk hadden. We vonden een doorweg naar de weilanden, en daarachter waren de bossen. Er waren hier veel lange bruggen, en vele rijken hadden hier hun huizen. De weilanden en bossen waren vol met Antlia-hyenas, hele grote vormen van hyenas.

Achter de bossen was een kasteel, wat het kasteel van Californie heette. Hierin werden roofdieren omgezet tot vee, door injecties. Dat vee werd in de bossen en de weilanden gezet als voedsel voor de Antlia-hyenas.

We trouwden en we scheidden, en ik kwam erachter dat ik was getrouwd met de godin van scheiding. Het gif van scheiding bleek belangrijk te zijn om roofdieren om te zetten tot vee. Ik kwam erachter dat ze in het kasteel van Californie werkte.

Eens zocht ik haar daar op. 'Wat wil je van me,' vroeg ze.

'Ik mis je,' zei ik.

Ze heeft me toen meegenomen naar de jachtvelden. Ik mocht op haar paard zitten, en ze liet mij allerlei zadels zien. Ze was heel lief voor me. Maar ineens was ik geinjecteerd, en het leek alsof mijn hoofdhuid begon af te vallen. Ik viel bewusteloos en werd later wakker in een kooi. Ze had zichzelf opgetooid met kippenveren. Ik kreeg geen voedsel.

Ik werd wakker en greep op me heen. Ik greep mijn vriendin. Gelukkig, dacht ik. Ik vertelde haar mijn droom, en we vielen weer in slaap. Weer droomde ik over het kasteel van Californie. Ditmaal waren mannen daarin gekooid, en werden daar geinjecteerd totdat ze dun waren. Er werd hen gezegd dat in de oude taal man betekende dunne. We kregen haast geen voedsel.

Weer schrok ik wakker, maar ditmaal lag er geen vriendin. Ik bleek helemaal geen vriendin te hebben. Op mijn bureau lagen de oorlogs-spelletjes die ik had gekocht. Ik had er een paar gespeeld, wat misschien de reden was dat ik zo vreemd had gedroomd. Ik had ze gespeeld op de computer. Ik was bang ze nog verder te spelen, maar eigenlijk was ik ook nieuwsgierig.

Ik had een kind op mijn rug toen ik het kasteel inging. Ik kon kiezen uit verschillende wapens, en ik moest ervoor zorgen dat het kind ongedeerd bleef. Ik moest haar brengen naar haar kamer op een hogere verdieping, waar een betoverde spiegel stond. Door die betoverde spiegel zouden we in een nieuw level komen. Ik moest wat trollwachters verslaan, maar uiteindelijk kwamen we toch bij de spiegel aan.

'Kom verder,' zei de spiegel. Ik gleed naar binnen met het kind.

Ik zat op een hoog oorlogspaard. Het paard was van steen en begon te steigeren, ergens op een marktplein. Ik viel er vanaf en had een grote hoofdwond. Het kind sleurde mij naar een huis. De moeder van het kind legde mij op een bed. Ze verzorgde mijn wond. De moeder was bang dat ze haar huis zou verliezen, dat ze de huur niet meer zou kunnen betalen. Midden in de nacht trok ze mij mee naar de kelder, en via de kelder kwamen we in een ondergrondse wereld. Hier moest ze jagen voor geld, maar de jacht ging niet goed. Ik hielp haar, maar voordat ik het wist injecteerde ze mij, en ik begon in vee te veranderen. Het bleek dat ik veel geld van binnen had, dus ze begon me te fokken. Niet dat ze me vetmeste, maar ze mergelde mij uit door mij niet te voeden. Zo was het makkelijker bij het geld te komen.

Ik werd wakker in zweet. Ik staarde naar de oorlogs-spelletjes. Nog steeds vond ik ze interessant, en was ik nieuwsgierig. Ik voedde mijzelf haast niet. Ik was helemaal bezeten van die oorlogs-spelletjes.

Ik droomde over jongens die broeken hadden gemaakt van gekrompen schedels, en die jacht voerden, die eigenlijk een oorlog was. Ze hadden gif aan hun pijlen, waarmee ze roofdieren in vee konden omzetten, en dan zetten ze de jacht voort. Zij hadden een soort moedergodin die zij aanbaden, en die hen het gif verschafte. Het gif was het gif van scheiding.

Zij was de godin van de Antlia-hyena's. Haar tempel was gesluierd door orca's. Hier verborg zij de Antlia-hyena klok. Op een oorlogs-paard ging ik tot haar, maar ze sloeg mij met de bliksem. 'Hey dunne,' zei ze. 'Hey, jij die man is.' Als een spin sprong ze op mij, en stak mij. Ik raakte verlamd. Ze stopte mij in een kooi met twee Antlia-hyena's. Ze voedde mij haast niet. Ik begon in vee te veranderen door de steek.

Ik drukte op eject. Als een gek haalde ik het spelletje uit mijn computer. De disc was loeiheet en er kwamen vlammen vanaf. Ik gooide het van me af. Weer zette ik de koptelefoon op met het vizier. Ditmaal deed ik er een ander spelletje in. De disc draaide in mijn hersenschijf met een enorme snelheid. In het spel waren indianen in oorlog. Het was heel bloederig en wreed. Ik zat op een hoog paard, maar iemand schoot mij eraf.

Ik bevond mezelf in een ei. Ik kwam eruit als een skelet. Zodra er vlees op me begon te groeien werd het door de Antlia-hyena's erafgelikt en afgebeten. Maar heel langzaam begon ik te groeien en kwam tot de godin van scheiding. Zij was de alpha Antlia-hyena, maar veranderde op gezette tijden in een vrouw, of in fragmenten. Het was als een vreemd ritme. Zij bezat de Antlia-hyena klok. Het was ingebouwd in haar hart. Ik voelde mij niets meer dan een stuk vlees. Ik was gewoon een object. Ik had ook een klok van binnen waardoor ik in vee veranderde op gezette tijden, of in fragmenten. Ik voelde mij deel van een markt. 'De markt van scheiding,' zei de godin. Het was alsof mijn hoofhuid begon af te vallen, en even later hield ze mijn scalp voor mijn neus. Ze had zich getooid met kippenveren. Haar borsten waren groot, en er droop dikke melk vanaf. 'Het gif van scheiding,' sprak ze toen ik ernaar keek.

Ze gebood me ervan te drinken. Ik voelde me heel zwak worden. Toen veranderde ze in een Antlia-hyena, vloog me naar mijn nek, zette haar kaken erin, en liet niet meer los, terwijl ik in mijn bloed verdronk, stikte. Als een pijl klikte ik op eject, en begon zwaar te zuchten. 'Deze spelletjes zijn gek,' dacht ik. 'Levensgevaarlijk.' Maar vreemd genoeg had het nog steeds mijn interesse. Ik had het idee dat de spelletjes mij in hun macht hadden. 's Nachts droomde ik erover, dat ik door de orca-sluiers van de godin heenging, maar verderop waren de sluiers veel bloederiger, waar het vee hing. En toen weer vele sluiers van orca's. Ik zat op een hoog oorlogs-paard, dat woest uitgedost was met veren. Weer werd ik door bliksem getroffen, en alles was in vuur. Ze was een gril, een altaar. En wij moesten geofferd worden aan de godin van scheiding.

De gril maakte een joelend geluid, bijna gillend. Ik gleed naar binnen, en kwam in de hel. Ik moest me erbij neerleggen dat ik eeuwig brandde. De gril sprak namelijk dat dit spelletje nooit stopte. Ik begon weg te smelten in angst en depressie. Ik zag dat het huwelijk alleen maar een slager is die zich voorbereid op de slacht. Het huwelijk was de jacht, de scheiding de slacht. Wat een spelletjes had ik in huis gehaald. Maar goed, het waren maar spelletjes. Maar toch ... De spelletjes leken me te bezitten. Ik had geen rust meer.

Ze zat op een hoog oorlogspaard, en ik leek weg te glijden. Het huwelijk was een oorlog. De scheiding was de eind-uitslag van de oorlog.

Dit is hoe de godin een man tot haar kind maakt :
In vijf stappen doet zij dit, om haarzelf uit te drukken in de man.
Dit zijn de vijf Antlia-hyena juwelen.
1. Varken - De godin mergelt en beent de man uit.
2. Rund - De godin is sterker dan de man.
3. Kip - De man is de slaaf en gevangene van de godin.
4. Bok - De godin scalpeert de man.
5. Lam - De godin is de moeder van de man.

Hij kon zijn ogen niet geloven. Dit stond in de gebruiks-aanwijzing van de spelletjes. Hij wist even niet hoe hij het had, en begon ademhalings-problemen te krijgen. Deze discs moesten zo snel mogelijk in de vuilnisbak. Maar een onzichtbare hand leek hem te grijpen. Met schuim op zijn mond en gorgelend rent hij naar buiten. Zo snel mogelijk vlucht hij het bos in, waar hij recht in een licht loopt. Tot zijn grote verbazing staat er een ruimteschip voor hem. Een vrouw met een vikings-helm loopt naar hem toe. Maar dan verdwijnt alles, alhoewel het licht nog steeds daar is. 'Wat willen jullie van me,' schreeuwt hij. Hij voelt zich zwak worden in zijn benen, en begint te trillen. 'Je bent toch een man ?' zegt ineens een stem.

'Ja,' zegt hij, 'maar ik wens zo niet behandeld te worden.'

Dan wordt hij bevend wakker. Een oorlogs-boek ligt naast hem op het nachtkastje. Hij is blij dat hij het maar gedroomd heeft, maar hij durft niet meer te slapen. Hij neemt een glas water en gaat televisie kijken. Er is een oorlogsfilm op de televisie, en op een andere zender is er saai gepraat. Zijn vriendin komt even later naar hem toe. Ze hangt over hem heen. Hij ruikt de geur van haar borsten en raakt bedwelmd.

'Zeg, dat oorlogsboek wat je mij hebt gegeven, waar gaat dat over ?' vraagt hij. 'Ik heb het nog niet gelezen, maar zou het graag van jou willen horen.'

'Oh,' zegt ze. 'Het gaat over de oorlog tussen mannen en vrouwen.'
'Is het een psychologisch boek ?' vraagt hij.
'Nee,' zegt ze, 'het is een verhaal.'

'Wie winnen de oorlog ?' vraagt hij.
'De vrouwen,' zegt ze.
'Waarom zou ik het boek dan nog lezen ?' vraagt hij. 'Dat klinkt namelijk nogal sexistisch, racistisch zelfs.'

'Het is een feministisch verhaal, inderdaad,' zegt zijn vriendin. 'Mannen moeten namelijk een stapje terug doen, weer terugkomen aan de moederborst.'

'Oh, zie aan,' zegt hij, 'dus het is niet zomaar een verhaal. Het is iets waar je heilig in gelooft ?'

'Ja,' zegt ze. 'Het is gewoon een verhaal natuurlijk, maar wel met een diepe moraal.'

Verslagen loopt hij terug naar bed. Even later hangt zijn vriendin opgewonden boven hem met ontblote borsten. 'Zou je niet drinken van de moeder,' fluistert ze.

'Je bent mijn moeder niet,' snauwt hij. Dan wacht ze verder totdat hij slaapt, en bindt hem vast. Weer hangt ze boven hem en drukt haar borsten in zijn gezicht. Hij schrikt wakker, en merkt dat hij zich niet kan bewegen.

'Wat zullen we nou krijgen ?' vraagt hij. Even later ligt ze helemaal op hem. Hij probeert los te komen, maar ze is vastbesloten. Na een tijdje geeft hij op. 'Jij je zin,' zegt hij, en probeert weer te slapen.

De volgende dag wil hij op staan, maar hij merkt dat hij nog steeds vastgebonden is.
'Okay, nu is het mooi geweest,' zegt hij. 'Maak me los. Het was een leuk spelletje, maar het spelletje is nu afgelopen.'
Maar ze kleedt zich aan, en gaat de deur uit. Aan het einde van de dag is ze terug, terwijl hij honger heeft en vooral erge dorst. Ze geeft hem melk, maar verder niks. Na zeven weken is hij behoorlijk uitgemergeld. Hij heeft het opgegeven. Als ze zulke spelletjes met hem wil spelen, dan doet ze maar. Ze voedt hem bijna niet, maar geeft hem wel voldoende melk te drinken. Hij voelt zich heel slap, en ze is inmiddels sterker dan hem. Ze test het wel eens door hem lost te maken, en dan stoeit ze met hem. Hij kan niets tegen haar beginnen. Hij begint haar vragen te stellen, maar ze beantwoordt hen niet. Ze houdt er ook van om op hem paardje te rijden. Ze begint hem steeds meer te vernederen. Ze noemt hem 'varken', of 'rund'.

Op de één of andere manier maakte hij een verkeerde beweging, en de eject knop werd ingedrukt, en de disc kwam tevoorschijn, waardoor het spel stopte. Vliegensvlug deed hij de koptelefoon en het vizier af. Hij grijpt het boekje wat bij de disc hoorde en begint te lezen. Hij raakt ervan in de war en gooit het weg. De telefoon gaat, maar hij durft niet op te nemen. Nog steeds vermoedt hij dat hij in het spel is. Langzaam loopt hij weer terug naar het weggegooide boekje, en leest over de voorschriften voor het vee. Hij grijpt naar zijn hoofd en gaat op bed liggen. Hij durft niet in slaap te vallen, maar zijn omgeving vertrouwt hij ook niet.

'Ik ben erin getrapt,' denkt hij bij zichzelf. Even later wordt er aan de deur gebeld. Hij besluit open te doen, en er staat een vrouw voor hem met een elegant hoed op. 'Mag ik even binnen komen ?' vraagt ze. 'Ik wil namelijk iets met u bespreken.' Hij laat haar binnen en ze gaan op de bank zitten. 'Bedankt voor het kopen van ons product,' zegt ze. 'Onze excuses voor elk ongemak wat u heeft ervaren.' Dan steekt hij ineens van wal over alles wat hij heeft meegemaakt, en vraagt of de producten terug kunnen zodat hij zijn geld kan terugkrijgen.

'Helaas, mijnheer,' zegt de vrouw. 'Daar kunnen we niet aan beginnen.' Dan trekt ze haar pistool en gebiedt hem om op het bed te gaan liggen. Ze gebiedt hem op zijn handen te gaan liggen. Ze trekt haar kleren uit, en glijdt met het pistool over zijn tepel, en beweegt dan het pistool langzaam naar onderen. 'Eén foute beweging,' zegt ze, 'en we schieten één van de balletjes eruit.' Hij houdt zijn adem in.

Ze laat hem een vreemd spul opdrinken met een slaapmiddel, en hij zinkt weg in slaap. Snel bindt ze hem vast. Hij probeert uit alle macht wakker te worden. Hij voelt zich alsof hij in een coma is.

'Oorlogs-vrienden,' zegt ze.
'Ze komen als vrienden, maar zijn spionnen. Ze komen als een product, maar het is om je uit te schakelen.
Hoe kon je zo dom zijn. Dat oorlogs-spel was een oorlog tegen jou. Domme man, je bent bedrogen. Je bent verraden.'

'Jullie duivelse feministen,' prevelt hij. Ze gaat achter de computer zitten, en begint spelletjes te spelen. Even later hoort hij haar lachen. 'Goedzo,' denkt hij bij zichzelf. 'Ik hoop dat ze jou ook pakken.' Even later ligt ze op de grond. Na uren worstelen komt hij los. Hij sleept haar ver weg van zijn huis. Dan loopt hij terug. 'Ziezo,' denkt hij bij zichzelf. Even later wordt er weer gebeld, maar hij doet niet open. Hij hoort de stem van een andere vrouw die hem roept, maar hij kijkt wel beter

uit. Maar dan wordt de deur ingetrapt. Een vrouw nogal onder de modder staat voor hem. Nee, dit is niet de vrouw die hij had weggesleept. Ze trekt een mes. 'Daar gaan we weer,' denkt hij. Maar dan ineens wordt het beeld wazig. Hij trekt zijn koptelefoon af, en zijn vizier. Hij drukt op eject, en de disc komt eruit. Hij sluit zijn computer af, maar vertrouwt het nog steeds niet. Dit kan allemaal ingebouwd in het spel.

Hij gaat in zijn bed liggen, en vanaf dan begint zijn leven eigenlijk heel saai te worden, zonder spanning. Het wordt zo erg dat hij uiteindelijk terugverlangt de oorlogs-spelletjes weer te spelen. Ditmaal doet hij het spel wat de vrouw had gespeeld.

Het gezicht van een vrouw verschijnt, en zegt : 'Welkom in Antlia-Hyena Oorlogen. Klik op X om het spel te starten.'

Hij klikt op X en bevindt zich direct op een veld met Antlia-hyena's. Hij moet rennen voor zijn leven. Dan ineens verschijnt er een scherm waar hij kan kiezen wat hij wil zijn : een rund, een varken, een bok, of een lam. Hij selecteert : rund. Al snel valt hij in een kuil, die snel omsingelt is door Antlia-hyena's. Hij begint al snel honger te krijgen en uit te mergelen. Dan springen de Antlia-hyena's naar binnen.

'Dit is het huwelijk,' zegt een stem. Het gezicht van de vrouw verschijnt weer, en vraagt of hij zichzelf wil loskopen. Maar het schijnt dat hij daarvoor niet genoeg geld heeft. Het gezicht verdwijnt weer. De Antlia-hyena's zijn hem aan het likken, maar hij weet dat ze hem alleen maar voorbereiden voor de maaltijd.

Dan zegt een stem : 'Wilt u de scheiding nu, of uitstellen,' terwijl het gezicht van de vrouw weer verschijnt. Hij wist precies wat scheiden zou betekenen, dus hij klikte op 'uitstellen'.

De Slavenketting

'De mensen om me heen zijn niets anders dan de tralies van haar kooien.'

Hoofdstuk 1. Weerhyena

Ik was in haar duistere hut. Ik zag haar boog hangen, versierd met veren. Het leek op een feest. Ja, haar hut leek op een feest-tent. Ik zag haar niet, maar het leek alsof ik haar rook. Ik was bang. Ik kon me bijna niet bewegen. Ik probeerde een uitgang te vinden, maar plotseling stond ze in een deuropening. Of was dat maar de schaduw van iets ? Ik ging door de deuropening en kwam in een stoffige kamer waar een olielamp stond, witte kap. Het was alsof ik de warmte van haar lichaam kon voelen.

Het was alsof ze me riep. Maar mijn oren hoorden niets. Er lag een schelp, een grote schelp, en ik bracht het tot mijn oren om de zee te horen ruizen. Maar ik hoorde niets. Het was alsof ik haar hoorde fluisteren. Ik kwam dichterbij, en het was alsof de warmte van haar lichaam zich opbouwde. Het was alsof ik haar zag. Ze was prachtig, met dunne riempjes, als de oorlogsgodin. Ze had een boog, en dolken, en allerlei gerei wat je van een slavenjager kon verwachten. Veel touw. Plotseling greep ze mij met haar lasso. Maar het was maar een verbeelding.

Ze kende geen liefde. Alles was haat. Waarom zocht ik haar eigenlijk ? Ik wilde eruit, ontsnappen. Zij hield mij hier vast sinds mijn geboorte. Zij had mij gebroken. Alleen maar haat. Ik voelde mij koud. Het was niet echt. Het was altijd alsof ik in de handen was van een spook. De wind gierde. Ik wilde het geheim van de wind kennen. Had zij de wind gemaakt, of was zij de wind zelf ? Ik verlangde naar haar. Maar ze was weg. Ik was hier alleen in haar hut.

Was ze overleden ? Of was ze op jacht, en zou ze later terugkomen. Ze deed mij herinneren aan een boek. Ik fantaseerde over haar, maar het leek te worden stukgeslagen door de bittere, diep snijdende, pijnlijke eenzaamheid. Het was alsof ik bloedde. Zou ze bloeddorstig zijn ? Ik had toch het idee alsof ze daar stond, als een bloeddorstige hyena vrouw. Ik kon haar bek zien, waar bloed uitdroop, mijn bloed. Ik was bang. Ik voelde me zwak, hulpeloos. Duistere herinneringen van een ver verleden overvielen mij. Deze vrouw had mij uitgemergeld, uitgebeend, alles van me afgenomen. Waarom wilde ik haar ? Ik had het idee dat zij de godin was, de moeder van de wildernis, van de jachtvelden. Ze was een slavenmeesteres, een slavenjaagster. Ik wilde aan haar voeten neerknielen, om haar te smeken om mij te helpen, om mij uit deze doodse strijd te helpen, maar misschien was zij wel genadeloos, en zou ze me uitlachen.

Dat zou ik niet kunnen verdragen. Maar zij moest ergens de sleutel hebben. Of zou ik de strijd met haar moeten aangaan ? Ze zou me uitlachen. Ze was veel steviger dan ik. Ik was zwak vergeleken met haar, en dun. Ze zou mij misschien kunnen breken. Ik was haar kind.

Maar dat doe je je kind toch niet aan ? Zij wel. Mijn leven was een hel door haar. Misschien was zij de hel zelf. Haar hyena ogen leken mij aan te staren. Het was alsof ik naar een oud schilderij staarde. Het hing daar ergens in de hut. Maar toen de wind er overheen ging was het weer weg. En toen was het weer terug, als door een waas. Het leek te spiegelen. Ik voelde mij omringd door soldaten. Allemaal windstreken. Ze scheen Bilha te heten, gestuurd om angst te brengen. Sommigen zouden haar een demoon noemen, anderen een godin. Ik wist alleen dat ik moest oppassen. Ik was gevangen in haar moederschoot. Ik zat opgesloten in haar hut. Ik kon nergens heen. De muren leken weer zover weg te staan, en alle deuren. En daar viel ik neer, huilend. Ze maakte mij nooit sterker. Ik voelde me duizelig en vies. Daar stond ik weer op, en daar viel ik weer.

Het was alsof er sloten op de deuren zaten. Sloten gemaakt van duistere klauwen van monsters, als van zeemonsters. Een zeemeermin had mij ooit geprobeerd te redden. Ze was gemaakt van prachtige lichten, maar deze vrouw was duister. Een boek lag op tafel, een boek met riemen. Ik las er in. Het ging over hoe Adam en Eva in het tijdperk van Bilha werden aanbeden als goden. Bilha was de moedergodin. Het tijdperk van Bilha werd ook wel het tijdperk van de hyenas genoemd. De hyenas waren overal op aarde. En zij veranderden in vrouwen op bepaalde momenten. Het waren weerhyenas.

Bilha keek naar mij. Er vloeide bloed uit mijn ogen. Ze leek zo ver weg, maar ook dichtbij. Het was alsof ze op een troon zat, maar ook op een bank. Even leek het als door de bliksem dat ze een hoge gouden kroon had, met gedetaileerde inscripties, als een mozaiek. En ze had een gouden soortgelijk gewaad aan. Ze opende een deur door het klappen met haar handen. De deur was draaiende voor mijn ogen, terwijl de opening als mozaiek was, ook draaiende, en de combinaties veranderden voortdurend. Ik kreeg steken in mijn hand, en licht viel op mij. Toen werd het duister.

Ze was de bewaker van een gele vrucht. De vrucht was bitter en zoet, ook bijtend. Mensen kregen last van hun mond. De vrucht leek op het achterste van een vrouw. Mensen moesten door deze vrucht naar de tandarts, en hun tanden vielen er van uit. Ik stond aan een bushalte. Sommige mensen waren aan het vrijen in een bushokje, en plotseling begonnen ze te schreeuwen. Toen vielen al hun tanden uit, en hun monden begonnen te bloeden.

'Het is de vrucht,' dacht ik. 'De vrucht van Bilha.'

Ik probeerde weg te rennen, maar een wind greep mij. 'Het is een zure vrucht,' zeiden sommige mensen. 'Hoe kunnen we eraan ontsnappen ? Het zijn terroristen, stalkers.'

Ik greep mij vast aan het boshokje. Ik voelde me duizelig worden. Ik werd wakker in bed. Twee grote lippen zweefden boven mij, als weerspiegelingen, wazig, als de wind. Ik werd door de vrucht naar binnen gezogen, en ik gilde.

'Nee !' riep ik. Maar ik kon me er niet tegen verzetten. Ik voelde me als een melaatse, zonder voeten, zonder mond. Ik voelde me als een vis, als een meerman. Maar ik was een zeehond, nee, een weerhyena, zoals haar. Ik bracht haar bij me, in een groot huis, en ze ging op de bank zitten. Zij bewaakte de voedelvoorraad. Ze lag op de bank, en ik mergelde uit, zelfs meer dan ooit tevoren. Ze voedde mij niet. Ik mocht niet in de keuken komen. Dan zou ze me neerjagen. Ik voelde mij als de derde wereld.

Ik was haar slaaf, een slaaf van het grote geld. Ik was niets dan vee in haar handen. Die gele vrucht, het was niets dan geld. Ik was kwaad op haar. Hoe kon zij dit doen ? We waren gevangen in geld. We werden gekgemaakt door geld, maar kregen het nooit. Er moest toch iets anders zijn ? Iets beters ? Het was een nachtmerrie.

Geld was een monster dat ons programmeerde. Het betuttelde ons, en maakte ons arm en bang, zodat we het altijd zouden najagen als de wind. Ik was zo kwaad. Ik sloeg een ruit in, maar de rekening kwam snel.

Hoofdstuk 2. De Zoete Vrucht

Er was ook een andere vrucht in haar tuin. Het was de vrucht van slavernij. Voor mij was dat een lust voor het oog. De vrucht leek op een vrouwen-voet. Als het ons uit de vrucht van geld zou kunnen halen : graag. Maar wat voor een slavernij stond ons dan te wachten ? Ik bedacht dat het leven gewoon altijd pure slavernij was, maar dat je dan de beste slavernij moest uitkiezen. Ik wilde het wel proberen met deze vrucht. Zou deze vrucht mij rijk maken of arm ? Dat maakte mij niets meer uit. Ik wilde loskomen van de macht van geld, haar macht.

Ik bekeek de vrucht op een afstand. Ik hoorde gepiep. Er stond een vrouw voor me die haarzelf langzaam begon uit te kleden. Dit was de macht van het grote geld. Ik schoot haar neer met een pistool. Deze zaak was afgehandeld. Nu die andere vrucht nog. Ik keek ernaar, en de vrucht begon te groeien, en mijn ogen stonden wijder open. Ik voelde de smaak al langs mijn gehemelte vloeien, en in mijn keel. Zachte sappen. Ik was een slaaf, maar nu van iets anders. Alles beter dan van geld. Ik viel dronken op de grond. Het leek alsof ik verscheurd werd door een grote krokodil. Mijn hoofd kwam boven in een rivier, waar ook een andere reusachtig grote krokodil was. De zoete vrucht begon mij in te nemen, maar het werd bitter in mijn buik. Ik voelde riemen aan me, en een slavenketting rondom mijn nek. Ik werd meegetrokken in een woestijn. Het was een man met een lange baard.

Even later kon ik niet meer, en wilde zitten. Maar de man met de baard trok mij mee. We gingen een kasteel binnen. Wat had ik gekozen ? 'Even hier wachten,' zei de man. Even later kwam er een vrouw naar me toe. Ze leek me te keuren. Ze bleef maar staren en kijken, van top tot teen. 'We kunnen hem wel gebruiken,' zei ze. Toen kwamen er meerdere vrouwen, die mij dieper in het kasteel sleurden. De man had een soort riddergewaad aan. 'Waar ben ik ?' vroeg ik.

Ze duwden mij in een oven. Ik bevond mij in de vrucht, in een diepere afdeling van de baarmoeder

van Bilha. Ik had niks meer met winkels en geld te maken. Ik had een vreemde smaak in mijn mond. Ik was door de sluiers van geld gegaan, en was er van los gekomen. Ik kon mezelf weer voelen. Ik kreeg een huis, en leidde een normaal leven. Vaak had ik nachtmerries.

Ik begon Bilha te missen. Ze moest iets betekenen voor mij in het leven. Dus ik besloot terug te gaan naar haar hut. Daar hing de boog weer. Het was hier een feest-tent zoals altijd. Ik voelde mij een slaaf van haar. Maar gelukkig niet meer van geld.

Ze danste hier op het bloed van de gevallenen, op de huiden van dieren. Zij had geld overwonnen. Haar gejoel maakte mij doof. Ik probeerde nog weg te rennen, maar zij greep mij. Ik kreeg geen vruchten meer van haar. Zij bewaakte het voedsel. Ik kon niet bij de keuken komen. Altijd zat ze daar op die bank. Ze hongerde mij uit meer dan ooit tevoren. Waarom was ik teruggegaan ? Hyenas likten aan haar voeten, en nog steeds veranderde zij soms in een hyena of een halve hyena. Zij was de weerhyena.

Zij haatte geld, maar hield van de slavernij die ze dreef. Zij was de slavenjaagster. Ik werd een bedelaar voor voedsel, maar zij was genadeloos. Ze liet mij soms van haar melk drinken, maar dat was om mij te vergiftigen, te verzwakken en te verlammen. Ik was een teer, hulpeloos kind in haar schoot.

Ik was een bedelaar, en zij was de joelster. Ze maakte mij stokdoof. Ik had nooit rust. Zij was een stoorzender, een stoorgeest. Zij was een stalker. Zij liet mij niet slapen. Op een dag gaf ze mij de derde vrucht : de vrucht van gevangenschap. Het brandde in mijn mond. Ik gilde het uit. Ik viel als dood op de grond. Daarna voelde ik een vreemde kracht in mij opkomen, en ik werd in een arena gezet. Hier kreeg ik de vierde vrucht : de vrucht van de arena. Het leek alsof het vloeide in mijn hoofd. Het had een sterke geur. Het was een zeer bittere vrucht, en zuur. Ik werd ingezet in de oorlog.

Daarna kreeg ik de vijfde vrucht : de vrucht van de jacht. Het leek wel alsof mijn tong uit mijn mond groeide. Mijn tong viel af en veranderde in wapens. Toen groeide mijn tong weer. De macht van het geld was nu definitief gebroken, en de jacht kon beginnen. Geld zou nu gearresteerd worden. Het grote geld zou gefokt worden voor de dag van de grote slacht. Bilha reed op een hoog paard, zo hoog dat ik haar bijna niet kon zien. Of was ik gewoon heel klein ? Ik was een kind.

Ik werd een paardenstalmeester. Ik had overal koorden gehangen. Ook ik wachtte op de dag van de grote slacht. Ik had al voorgenot hierover. Ik wilde het geld zien bloeden. Ik wilde het geld zien krijsen, zoals het ons heeft laten krijsen. Ik wilde het geld zien smeken zoals het ons heeft laten smeken. Ik wilde het geld zien hangen. Ik was vol van leedvermaak.

Ik zou het geld martelen en bang maken, zoals het ons heeft bang gemaakt. Het geld moest een langzame, pijnlijke dood sterven. Ik wilde het geld voor eeuwig zien branden in de hel, met eeuwiggroeiende pijn. Pijn, pijn, pijn, dat is wat ik het geld toewenste. En ik wilde in die arena toekijken. Met een verrekijker.

Ik was wreed naar geld, want geld was wreed naar mij. Dat was de enige manier voor mij om te kunnen overwinnen, en om te kunnen genezen van de nachtmerrie van geld. Ik joeg op geld, genadeloos. Ik maakte geld tot mijn slaaf. Geld was mijn krijgsgevangene. En het lot van geld in mijn handen zou vreselijk zijn.

Ik bracht het geld tot de kooien, om het vet te mesten. Bilha keek toe.

Hoofdstuk 3. De Witte Vacht

Bilha trof mij met haar bliksem. Ik schudde en viel neer. Ik was haar slaaf met haar slavenketting om mijn nek. Nog steeds. De godin was te sterk. Geen man kon staan in haar nabijheid, tenzij zij hem kracht gaf. Maar ik had geen kracht. Ik was haar kind. Ik zag haar schilderij, waar ze opstond als een halve hyena, bloed vloeiende uit haar bek, mijn bloed.

'Verzadigd nu, kreng ?' vroeg ik. Maar ik sprak slechts tot een schilderij.

Ik wist dat zij nooit verzadigd zou zijn. Met hoge hakken was ze in de stad, in de regen, schaars gekleed. Om zoek naar prooi. Een auto-deur sloeg los. Ze stapte in de auto, en verscheurde de bestuurder. Toen ging ze zelf achter het stuur zitten, en reed zoveel mogelijk slachtoffers omver als ze kon. De politie kwam achter haar aan. Maar de politie was slechts een vrucht in haar hand. Een vrucht waar zoveel vliegende insecten om streden. Ze bracht mij de vrucht, maar ik wilde er niet van eten. Ze dwong mij om ervan te eten, en de strijd werd voortgezet in mijn mond. Insecten staken mij. Het was de zesde vrucht.

De zevende vrucht was de vrucht van slacht. Eindelijk. Ik kon nu vliegen. Ik had vleugels, maar die vielen even later van me af, terwijl ik nog steeds kon vliegen. De zevende vrucht had mij snel in de macht. Het was als een ei om me heen, en ik moest de dop breken. Een zoutachtige vloeistof scheidde zich af, en begon zich in mijn lichaam te verspreiden. Overal om me heen vielen reuzen neer. Ik bladerde door een boek en kon de bladzijden niet meer vinden. Alles begon voor mijn ogen te tollen. Iemand was mij aan het uitbroeden. Toen brak het licht door. Ik was als een licht in de duisternis. De duisternis wilde mij verslinden, maar kon het niet. Mijn licht was als een vloeistof wat overal doordrong.

De achtste vrucht was een vrucht van papier. Er kon niet meer gegeten worden, alleen maar gelezen. Ik begon uit te hongeren, maar een vreemde kracht begon mij te voeden. Er was geen weg terug meer tot de andere vruchten. De achtste vrucht had ons allemaal ingenomen. Het was een bewaakster en een waakster.

Ik werd wakker in de hut van Bilha. Wat was zojuist over me gekomen ? Was ik gek geworden ? Ik had niets anders dan wanen en hallucinaties gehad, alsof ik van een vergiftigde appel had gegeten, alsof ik zwaar aan de drugs was. Deze vrouw was gevaarlijk, bloedgevaarlijk. Ik wilde ontsnappen, maar ik kon het niet. Een duistere gestalte hield mij vast.

'Niemand ontsnapt ooit uit dit huis,' werd er gezegd. Het was alsof de wind sprak. Het spookte hier. Ik was onder een vloek. 'Er is geen weg meer terug,' zei de wind. 'Je zal altijd hier wakker worden.'

Ik keek naar de wand. Het zag er niet meer zo feestelijk uit, maar bloederig. Er hingen overal wapens en jachtgerei. In de kooien rondom mij was vee. Ik realizeerde mij dat ik ook in een kooi was. Toen ik naar mijn lichaam keek schrok ik. Ik was een varken.

Haar lichaam was fors. Je kon niet om haar heupen heen. Zij was de godin van het leven.

Ik ontwaakte in haar hut. Ze trok me in een bloederige tent waar veel sluiers waren, en een bed met een witte vacht. Ze ging in de deuropening staan. Het beest van geld werd doorstoken door de oude man met de baard. Het was de dag van de slacht.

De mensen om me heen zijn niets anders dan de tralies van haar kooien. De negende vrucht was de vrucht van het huwelijk, en de tiende vrucht was de vrucht van de scheiding.

De vruchten lagen op een schaaltje, tien vruchten, die toen allemaal in chocolaatjes veranderden. Ik

wilde er niet meer van eten, maar ze forceerde me. Het was haast dwang-verpleging. Ik hield mijn kaken stijf op elkaar, maar ze sloeg mij op de kaak, en ramde het naar binnen. Ik viel op de grond. Toen smeerde ze me in met chocola. Ze schoof mij in de oven, als brood wat gebakken diende te worden.

Hij woonde ergens langs de kade, in een hoog huis. Hij zwierf vaak langs de kusten. Hij verdronk mensen en dieren, en liet schepen zinken. Hij had lang haar, en mensen hadden het vaak over hem. Soms zwierf hij door de stad. Mensen ontweken hem dan. Ze waren allemaal bang voor hem.

De Roze Stad

Ik worstelde me uit de blauwe boom, de boom van gekheid, die ons allemaal vasthield. Ik worstelde me uit de blauwe struik. Het was een heel gevecht. Die struik had mij helemaal uitgezogen. Ik strompelde door het blauwe bloemenveld, waar bloemen mij hadden gegrepen. Zij hadden mij meegenomen naar hun hol. Nu rende ik, vrij, om veiligheid te vinden. Ik rende de open wildernis binnen, waar een vrouw mij meenam. Zij bond mij, maar het blauwe kon mij niet meer slaan. Nooit heb ik van het blauwe gehouden.

Ze gaf mij een nieuwe naam en een nieuw leven. Ik liep achter haar aan. Ik was als haar hondje, met een gordel om mijn nek. Ik werd wakker in de golven, en het blauwe schuim zat achter mij aan. Ik moest rennen voor mijn leven. Blauwe honden hadden mij snel gevonden, en beten me, en ik riep, maar niemand hoorde. Iedereen was hier doof. Ze lieten mij gewoon verdrinken in deze hoge golven, maar op de bodem vond ik sterke drank. Ik was een wonderkind.

Ik kwam aan in een veld van rode bloemen. Ik probeerde de blauwe bloemen uit mijn herinneringen te bannen, maar dat ging moeilijk. Ze kleefden aan me. Ik worstelde dagelijks in hun arena's. Ik liep met mijn ziel onder mijn arm, en trollen plaagden mij. Zij hingen mij aan een boom, de boom van zorgen. Zij lachten, en vierden feest. Later namen zij mij naar hun hol. Maar ik was tussen de rode bloemen.

Rode bloemen, zij kunnen mij sussen.

Maar al mijn wonden waren open, en al mijn zonden stonden op mij geschreven. En zij beet in mijn hoofd, de bijtende roos, de rode, als een rode bloem, een bloem met twee kanten. Ik kon het niet uitziften, dus ik ging zitten. Zij stond voor me als een melaatse, vloekende, tierende, met tatoeages. Zij was gelakt van top tot teen, als een brullende dikke vrouw. Zij was als een melaatse, als de lepra koningin, de lepra messias, maar zij was achter glas. Zij was in het zand van een warme dag, waaar zij smolt, gillende. Ik heb nog één keer omgekeken, en toen rende ik weg.

Ik was over de heg, tussen de bruine bloemen. Ze waren mooi, met groene bloesem. Ook kauwde ik. Ik was aan het herkauwen, maar toen besloot ik dat niet meer te doen. We waren slaven van het kauwen. Er moest een andere manier zijn, een andere manier.

Nog steeds rende ik voor mijn leven, voor de blauwe bloemen. Ik voelde haar hand, en trok de mijne terug. Ik voelde mijn mond, en de hare. Ik trok de mijne terug. Ik trok mijn tong diep naar binnen. Toen begon ze te gillen.

Achter een roze deur was ze, het blauwe bloed. Achter een groene deken, toen keek ik naar haar. Ik kon er een schilderij van maken. Blauwe bloemen waren om me heen. Ik rende de wildernis in. In de verte hoorde ik het wilde water bruisen. Ik hoorde de zee van een nieuw geluk. Ik werd de varkensjager, op een hoog paard, en velen volgden mij. Ze hadden allemaal nergens om naartoe te gaan.

De jacht begon. Ze sloegen de trommel, een heel leger achter mij aan. Ik was de varkensjager. De jacht was begonnen. De trommels waren stil, lange stilte, dan een slag, en het paard waarop ik zat zaaide vrees. Ik werd stil, en ging naar een kamer in de wildernis om een boek te schrijven. Mijn pen droop. De blauwe boom had gehoopt dat hij mij kon vasthouden.

Ik rende door de blauwe boom, op zoek naar de uitgang. Ik haatte het blauw. Ik zag de bruisende zeeen in de verte, en rende er naartoe, door de wildernis, door de bessen. Zoveel exotische vruchten.

De palmtakken waren lang.

Ik zat tussen het goud.

Ik had haar gevonden, de gouden ballerina. Ik drukte op het knopje, en ze draaide. Toen blies de wind. De wolk van zorgen vertrok. Ik liep binnen in een duistere stad, haar stad, waar haar schaduw op rustte. Ik bracht haar naar huis. Ze zat daar, ze was al snel weer aan het dansen, vrij. Ik keek uit het raam, en zag het verkeer, de stoplichten, en toen stopte alles. Ik stapte uit het schilderij. Ik had een gevecht met de wachter van het schilderij. Het schilderij was mooi, en de wachter ook. Ook het gevecht was mooi. Ik nam foto's. Het waren foto's van een mooie dag. Het waren foto's van een mooie dag aan het strand.

Ik ving haar tranen op in een vaas, en al haar bloed. Ik maakte haar nieuw. Ze was een nieuw mens nu. Ze zat op het paard, als een indiaan, en alle sterren begonnen te vallen. Het was een nieuw schilderij. De woestijn bloeide.

De blauwe boom stond daar.

Blauwe bloemenvelden, zover het oog reikte. Veranderende in zeeen, en dan weer bloemenvelden. Zeeen, bloemenvelden, zeeen. En zij brachten voort de honing, de honing van een nieuwe wereld, een wilde wereld. En ik viel, en zakte door de bodems. En toen was alles in de vlammen.

Ik bleef maar vallen, en het vuur leek dieper te gaan. Het opende de deuren, de deuren van een nieuwe morgen. Het was aan het blaffen.

De blauwe boom, ik zoog aan de honing, en werd wederomgeboren, als een nieuw kind. Ik zoog. De wilde honing had me in de grip, een zee van honing.

Ik klom uit het schip, en toen weer binnenin. Ik greep de blauwe druiven. Alles begon te druipen. Een blauwe vrucht op een schoteltje. Blauwe bloemen hadden ons omringd. Ik zoog.

De blauwe boom groeide hoog. Er groeide een stad op de top. Ik keek naar beneden en had een groot overzicht. Ik keek naar beneden en wilde vliegen. Maar ik bleef in de stad. Ik had andere dingen te doen. Ik ging in de dieptes van de stad, tot de wildernis. Waar blauwe bloemen groeien.

Waar blauwe bloemen groeien, in velden zover het oog reikt, veranderende in zeeen, en dan weer in bloemenvelden. Ik kon weer ademen.

De blauwe ladder, de blauwe boom, blauwe bloemvelden, veranderende in zeeen, en dan weer in bloemenvelden. Ladder naar de wildernis. De ladder leidt tot de konijnen, en dan behoudenis, tot de roze stad. De blauwe bloemen zullen je niet meer kunnen vinden, maar ze zullen er nog steeds zijn. Langs de kanten van de roze stad zullen ze groeien, aan de waterkanten. Ze zullen je niet meer kunnen horen of zien, ze zullen wegvagen tot in alle eeuwigheden, maar nog steeds zullen ze daar groeien, aan de waterkanten, aan de kanten van de roze stad.

Oorlogsgodin

Het was nogal een zwemtocht van het schip naar Suriname. Ik was al zo lang een piraat, en nu wilde ik wel iets anders. Ik wilde vrij zijn. Helemaal uitgeput kwam ik aan op het strand. Ik nam mijn intrede in een hutje voor landlopers. Ik was een zwerver. Mijn piratenkleding was gescheurd. Ik bloedde een beetje vanwege schaafwonden. Het was een lange tocht.

De natuur hier verwelkomde mij met open armen alsof ik een prins was. Het was mijn droom om hier voor altijd te wonen. Ik moest maar leven van de jacht, zodat ik geen rover meer hoefde te zijn. Tot mijn verbazing volgde het schip mij na, en ook mijn piratenmakkers besloten hier te gaan wonen, te stoppen met roven, om zo voor de jacht te leven. Dat was toch een stuk netter.

We hadden het hier goed naar ons zin. Elke dag zee, en een jungle vol met voedsel, goed voedsel. Op een dag kwam er een vrouw bij ons wonen. Ze maakte nieuwe kleren voor ons, en zorgde dat het voedsel werd klaargemaakt. Zoiets is natuurlijk onmisbaar. Het was een geschenk van de natuur van Suriname aan ons. De vrouw heette zelfs Suriname.

Wij waren altijd erg beleefd naar de natuur van Suriname. Wij respecteerden haar en eerden haar. En de vrouw aan ons gegeven behandelden we als een prinses. Ze was een geschenk uit de hemel.

We konden goed met elkaar opschieten, ik en m’n makkers, en de vrouw paste er precies tussen. Er waren eigenlijk nooit relletjes. Iedereen kende z’n plaats.

De vrouw wist veel van de natuur af, en kon ons veel leren. Op een dag maakten we een tochtje met het schip en namen de vrouw mee. Ze vermaakte zich uitstekend en verkleedde zich als een piratenkapitein. Ja, onze kapitein mocht ze wel wezen, sinds we onze eigen kapitein van boord hadden gegooid. Er viel niet te leven met die man. Zij was het tegenovergestelde.

Het piratenleven beviel haar goed, en dankzij haar konden we het wat netter houden, wat beschaafder. We besloten de ene helft van het jaar te varen, en de andere helft te leven aan de kust van Suriname. De zegen van Suriname kwam over ons. Ons schip zegevierde ten allen tijde, en dat allemaal dankzij onze nieuwe kapitein.

Het uniform stond haar goed. Dat ze op een dag in een anaconda veranderde verbaasde ons. Maar ja, ze was nu eenmaal een anaconda. Een geschenk van Suriname. We besloten weer met haar terug te varen, en lieten haar los in de jungle. Later kwamen we erachter dat ze om de zoveel jaren in een anaconda veranderde. We vonden het niet erg. Het was haar leven. Trouwens, we waren gek op anaconda’s. We hadden allemaal een obsessie als het aankwam op slangen. Ze kon jagen als de beste, en zo leden we eigenlijk nooit honger. Ze kon in nog wel veel meer dieren veranderen, zomaar plotseling. Ze was een heks, maar dan anders. Ze was gewoon een oorlogsgodin. Die kunnen dat soort trucjes.

We hielden alleen maar meer van haar. Ze was een bijzonder mens.

De Sneeuwstorm
Ze had de jurkjes van de kinderen gestreken. Mij liet ze niet binnen, terwijl het buiten koud was. Ze gooide mij wat oud brood toe, maar toen ik het proefte was het als gedoopt in azijn. Ik zakte weg, diep in de sneeuw. Zij lachte. Ik had hallucinaties van de tijd van vroeger, zoals het eens was. Toen ik daar van wakker werd vocht ik tegen de kou.

Eén van de kinderen ging later op zoek naar mij. Na een lange reis vond ze mij. Ik zat achter een drumstel en drumde.
Ik keek niet op of om. Ze probeerde met mij te praten, maar ik drumde door.

Toen ze huilde vloog er ineens een zwaluw langs het drumstel. Ik stopte, en omhelsde haar. Ze had een wit jurkje aan, en een wit strikje in haar haar. 'Geef dit aan mamma,' zei ik, en drukte haar iets in haar hand. Een sneeuwstorm nam mij mee, maar zij rende achter mij aan. We kwamen in een boshuisje waar de zwaluw zat. Ook een oud vrouwtje zat daar. Ze at van oud brood. 'Woont u hier ?' vroeg het kind aan me.

Ik knikte. Wie is die oude vrouw ? vroeg ze.
Ik zorg voor haar, zei ik.
En die zwaluw dan ? vroeg ze.
Oh, zei ik, dat is een vriend.

Waarvoor dan ? vroeg ze.
Ga ik je niet vertellen, zei ik.
Toen kwam de sneeuwstorm weer binnen, en nam mij mee, terwijl zij achter mij aanrende. Na een tijdje werd ze moe,
en de sneeuwstorm nam haar ook op.

De sneeuwkoningin was blij hen te zien. Zij nam hen op naar haar troon. 'Geef dit aan je mamma,' zei de sneeuwkoningin tegen het kind, terwijl ze iets in haar hand drukte.

Wat is het ? vroeg het kind.
Plaatjes, zei de sneeuwkoningin.
Ja, ik heb haar ook al wat plaatjes gegeven, zei ik.
Goedzo, zei de sneeuwkoningin.

Wat voor plaatjes zijn het als ik vragen mag ? vroeg het kind.
Ga ik je niet vertellen, zei ik.
De sneeuwkoningin zei niks.

Okay, ik geef het wel aan mamma, zei het kind.
Ik ging achter een drumstel zitten, en begon te drummen.
'Je moet nu gaan,' zei de sneeuwkoningin tegen het kind.

Het kind werd wakker in haar eigen bed, en vertelde aan haar moeder wat er gebeurd was.
'Het is mijn man niet meer, dus ik heb er niets mee te maken,' sprak ze.
Maar de sneeuwkoningin dan ? vroeg het kind.
Maar haar moeder sprak niet meer.

Even later werd er op het raam getikt. Het was de postbode met een brief.
Toen de moeder de brief opende bleek het voor het kind te zijn.
Een brief van haar vader.
De brief was geschreven in letters van sneeuw, en er was een plaatje bij van een drumstel.
Er was ook een plaatje bij van de sneeuwkoningin, en van het oude vrouwtje en de zwaluw.
Ook was er een plaatje bij van de sneeuwstorm en het boshuisje.
Geef de plaatjes aan je mamma, stond erbij geschreven.

Het kind gaf de plaatjes aan haar moeder, en haar moeder begon te huilen.
Waarom huilt u, mamma ? vroeg het kind.
Maar de moeder hield zich stil. Het meisje begreep het niet waarom haar moeder huilde, en wilde weten waarom. Midden in de nacht rende haar moeder naar buiten, en rolde door de sneeuw, terwijl een sneeuwstorm haar opnam. Ook het kind rende naar buiten en werd door de sneeuwstorm opgenomen.

De sneeuwkoningin was blij hen te zien, terwijl ik nog steeds aan het drummen was.
De sneeuwkoningin nam drie ijspegels uit het hart van de moeder, en vulde het op met sneeuw.
Ze wreef even over haar hart heen, en toen over haar jurk, en toen nam de sneeuwstorm hen weer op
om hen terug te brengen. De moeder en het kind rolden door de sneeuw. Even later waren ze in bed.
De zwaluw tikte op het raam van de slaapkamer van de moeder. Moeder deed het raam open.
Er was een brief in zijn snavel, geschreven met letters van sneeuw. Moeder las het en begon te huilen.
Het kind kwam binnen, en vroeg wat er aan de hand was. Moeder zei niks.

Na een tijdje rende ze weer naar buiten in de sneeuw, en het kind volgde haar, totdat ze beiden door een
sneeuwstorm werden opgenomen.

Ze kwamen in het boshuisje, waar een dwerg aan tafel zat. 'Ik ben het aan het eten, dat oude brood met azijn.'

'Ja, dat had ik niet moeten doen,' zei de moeder.

'Oh, is dat van jou dan ?' vroeg de dwerg.

'Ja,' zei de moeder, 'dat had ik eens aan mijn man gegeven.'

'Het is wel lekker hoor,' zei de dwerg. 'Het heeft me hier naartoe geleid. Moet je ook een hapje ?'

'Nee, dank je,' zei moeder.

'Je maakt me nogal lekkere toetjes, hoorde ik,' sprak de dwerg.

'Van wie hoorde je dat ?' vroeg moeder.

'Van je man,' zei de dwerg.

'Heeft hij het koud ?' vroeg moeder.

'Nee,' zei de dwerg. 'Er is iets wat hem warmhoudt.'

'Wat dan ?' vroeg moeder.

'Plaatjes,' zei de dwerg. 'Kijk maar eens naar die schilderijtjes aan de muur.'

Moeder keek naar de muur, en werd heel warm van binnen.
Het zijn een soort kijk-kachels, zei de dwerg. Je kijkt ernaar en wordt warm.

Oh ja, zei moeder. Ik begin het nu wel heel warm te krijgen. Na een tijdje liep moeder het huisje uit, op zoek naar de sneeuw, maar die was er niet.

Moeder moest helemaal naar huis lopen, maar de sneeuwstorm is ze nooit meer vergeten.

Het Rijk van Nicotine

Een van de reusachtigste leiders van het duistere rijk die ik ooit had gezien was wel het skelet Nicotine. Elke dag maakte hij een lange reis over de bergen naar de hoogste top, met in zijn armen het hoofd van een meisje. Nicotine had een paar duistere paarden, genaamd Ammalgamos, Compositos en Medicinos. Hij was een duistere rijder. In zijn rijk was er geen schoonheid, alleen lelijkheid, maar de jungles hier waren reusachtig. Ik stond aan de oever. Een jongetje in een boot

wenkte mij. Het was een lange dunne boot, en het jongetje had een peddel. Het was een indiaans jongetje. ‘Mijn moeder wacht op je,’ riep hij. Al gauw was hij bij de oever en ik stapte in het bootje. Al snel waren we aan de andere kant van het meertje. Aan de oever stond een vrouw. Ik herkende haar niet, maar zij riep mij bij mijn naam. Ik stapte uit het bootje en liep naar de oever. Ze omhelsde me stevig. ‘Ik heb een maaltijd voor je gemaakt,’ zei ze. ‘Wie ben je ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Oh, ik ben Melango,’ zei de vrouw. Al snel bracht ze mij naar haar hut. Er lagen hier allerlei pakjes sigaretten en sigarendoosjes. ‘Rook je ?’ vroeg ik. ‘Nee,’ zei ze. ‘Mijn zoontje neemt ze weleens mee.’

’s Nachts komen de troubadouren,’ zei ze. ‘Zij werken voor de farao.’

‘Waar hebben ze het dan over ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Oh,’ zei ze, ‘over hem. Je weet wel : Nicotine, de baas van alle farao’s. Hij is het grote opperhoofd.’ Ik kende Nicotine wel. Het was een verschrikking. Iedereen was geketend aan zijn lange kettingen, ook deze vrouw. Het hart van Nicotine was een rood hart, maar voor de rest was het hele duistere rijk zwart en wit. Als de troubadours kwamen dan was er altijd veel grijs, veel bruin en geel. Nicotine was een slager. Hij was altijd op jacht, en had een grote fokkerij. Hier liet hij de vrouwen zwaar werk verrichten. ‘Pssst, bevrijd me,’ fluisterde de vrouw. Ze wees op de ring aan mijn vinger die ik eens van de farao had gekregen. Ik bedacht me geen moment, legde de ring tegen haar ketting en brandde de keten door. Ik pakte haar hand, en zei : Kom mee. Ik weet niet hoe lang het geduurd heeft maar na tijden rennen kwamen we uit de jungles van Nicotine. Een man staarde ons aan met een lange baard. Hij liet ons de tand van een haai zien. ‘Waar zijn we ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Welkom,’ zei de man. Hij was direct heel vriendelijk. Hij staarde naar mijn ring. ‘Wie bent u ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Ik ben Terang,’ zei de man. ‘Gezand van de koning.’

‘Wie is de koning ?’ vroeg ik. Hij liet me een klein balletje zien. Maar daar kwam Nicotine al aan. Ik greep Melango weer bij haar hand en rende met haar verder. Maar ook in de verte zag ik Nicotine aankomen, en toen van alle kanten. Snel werden we ingesloten. ‘Nicotine heerst hier,’ zeiden ze. Plotseling kwam er rood licht uit mijn ring voort en scheen op de harten van de Nicotines om ons heen. Een van de Nicotines had witte klederen met een lange witte punthoed. Hij leek wel op een pion. Achter hem stonden nog een paar van zulke Nicotines. Ik richtte de straal van de ring op zijn gezicht, en hij begon weg te smelten. Ik rende met Melango door de opening die was ontstaan. Weer zag ik die man. ‘Kan ik iets voor je doen ?’ vroeg Terang.

‘Ja,’ zei ik. ‘Help ons hier uit.’

Maar Terang werd gegrepen door de Nicotines en werd verslonden. De Nicotines waren als een kudde hongerige honden. Weer richtte ik de straal van de ring op hen. In de verte was een piramide waar we naartoe renden. Binnenin zat een farao op een troon. Hij was geheel gemaakt van metaal, en er kwam rook uit hem voort. Maar al snel waren ook de Nicotines binnen en verslonden de

metalen farao. Een paar Nicotines zaten op paarden. Het waren grote paarden. We renden door een deur in een andere gang. Maar hier waren zwarte Nicotines met hun paarden. Weer beukte ik een deur in, en kwamen in een kamer terecht met een raampje waardoor we konden ontsnappen. We waren nu op de piramide. De vrouw haalde wat pakjes sigaretten en sigaren uit haar broekzakken en begon ze tussen haar handen te rammelen, terwijl ze veren begon te krijgen. Snel greep ze me en we vlogen weg. Het was mij een raadsel. Nicotine Magie, zei ze. We vlogen naar een hoog kasteel waar de Nicotine Tovenaar woonde. We hadden hier groot uitzicht. De Nicotine Tovenaar was een aardige man. Hij liet ons alle mechanismes van Nicotines zien. Het waren robotten. Ook hun grote paarden.

De Tovenaar zette ons ergens neer op de rotsen, in een ander rijk. We kwamen op een strand terecht met heet zand. Ook was er een hutje van riet en bamboe. ‘Blijf je bij me ?’ vroeg Melango.

‘Ach, ik kom je nog weleens een keertje opzoeken,’ zei ik. ‘Ik hoop dat je het hier naar je zin zult hebben. Er is hier strand en zee, en er groeit hier voldoende aan de bomen.’

Daar kwam de Tovenaar aan, vanaf het strand. ‘Je hebt in ieder geval goed gezelschap,’ zei ik. De Tovenaar gaf mij een hoed van stro en riet. En toen vertrok ik.

Einde

Het Lukuk Tablet

Ze waren in een gevecht. Zij probeerde hem in verwarring the brengen door leugens. Hij zat op de bank, en wilde de moed opgeven. Zijn hoofd kon het niet meer aan. Zij wilde hem aangeven bij de godin Serket. Zij was een wellustige vrouw. Ze verkocht haar man aan haar. Maar Serket wilde niet komen, en zond daarom Luluk, een indiaanse prinses. Luluk nam bezit van haar, en bracht haar man nog meer naar beneden, met de meest gemene truukjes. Hij had de moed allang opgegeven en wilde zelfmoord plegen. Hij staarde naar de beeldjes van zijn vrouw, haar godinnen. Hij wist niet wat hij er mee moest, maar hij begon tot hen te bidden.

Een keer kwam in zijn lot, de godinnen waren hem opeens goedgezind. Zijn vrouw kalmeerde. Van binnen voelde hij een haat naar de godinnen want zij hadden dit alles aangesticht. Zij hadden zijn vrouw gek gemaakt. Hij hield het Luluk tablet in zijn handen, en wilde het breken. Dit tablet hield zijn vrouw opgesloten.

Ze vloog hem aan. Ze was ongelovelijk sterk ineens. Ze bond hem vast, en hongerde hem uit. Het tablet werd ergens op een tafel neergelegd. Een vriendin van haar kwam. 'Kun jij dit tablet in bescherming nemen,' vroeg ze. De vriendin knikte, en vertrok weer.

Hij begon weer tot de godinnen te bidden en wist dat hij zich dit keer beter moest gedragen. Ze maakte hem los. Hij staarde naar de beeldjes van zijn vrouw. Ook hij was in dit tablet opgesloten. 'Dochter van de regen,' werd ze genoemd, 'dienares van Luluk,' ze was aan het kalmeren. In ieder geval liet ze hem nu met rust.

Haaien Bewustzijn

Hij woonde aan zee op een eiland. Een berevel was zijn schort en hij had een rieten hut. Een grote haai terroriseerde de kust. Hij kon niet eens normaal zwemmen of vissen. Parelduiken was er al helemaal niet bij. Op een dag was hij het zat. Hij zou zich niet meer door de haai laten afschrikken. Hij nam zijn speer mee, en ging het water in. Hij lustte de haai rauw nu. Maar de haai kwam niet. Na een tijdje ging hij terug om de speer op het strand te gooien, en ging alleen met zijn dolk terug het water in. Hij dook onderwater, en zag daar al snel de haai aankomen. Even was het alsof hij verlamd raakte van schrik. De haai was zo groot, en even had hij gehoopt dat hij zijn speer bij zich had, maar hij kon niet meer terug. De haai zwom op hem af en had zijn muil al open gedaan, klaar om toe te happen. Snel bewoog hij zijn dolk recht in de kaak van de haai, en toen twee keer in zijn ogen. De haai was woest en begon van zich af te bijten als een bezetene. Hij was nu onder de haai en stootte hem een paar keer met zijn dolk in zijn buik. Er was overal bloed nu. Een woede begon door zijn lichaam heen te stromen zoals hij die nog nooit eerder had gevoeld. Weer stootte hij zijn dolk in de kaak van het enorme beest en trok het toen met zich mee. Dit stukje zee was nu een bloedbad. Hier had hij zo lang op gewacht. Hij sleepte het halfdode beest naar het strand, pakte zijn speer en begon het beest net zo lang te steken totdat het dood was.

Hij nam de schedel van het beest en de tanden en botten naar zijn hut. Ook vond hij wat edelstenen in de buik van de haai. Hij noemde ze haaiestenen. De tanden van de haaien hing hij aan een draad voor zijn tent. Hij was trots op zichzelf. Hij rende het oerwoud in en ging op jacht. Hij had nu de smaak goed te pakken. Het was alsof er een deur in zijn hoofd geopend was. Hij was zo lang depressief en angstig geweest vanwege de haai.

Ook in zijn dromen werd hij vaak lastig gevallen door de haai. Nu had hij deze dromen niet meer. Wel droomde hij veel over clowns onder water, maar die deden niet veel. Zij waren vaak verstrikt in bloemen onder water. Het was alsof zij gevangen zaten. Zij probeerden woorden in zijn hoofd te spreken, maar hij kon het gelukkig niet horen.

Op een dag speelde er een clown op het strand. Hij werd plotseling erg bang, en rende het oerwoud in, maar toen ging hij er opaf. De clown trok een pistool en wilde schieten, maar hij wierp zijn speer. De clown viel neer, en hij hakte het hoofd van de clown af met zijn dolk. Hij hief het hoofd in de lucht en brulde. 'Alweer een doodskop,' dacht hij bij zichzelf. Langzaam liep hij terug naar zijn hut. Hij was kwaad. Hij werd geplaagd door zijn herinneringen, toen hij ooit met een heks leefde. Daarom is hij op een eiland gaan wonen.

Ze is in zijn hoofd iedere dag, om haar leugens in hem te blazen. Hij snapt niet waarom zij hem nog steeds lastig valt. Soms voelen die leugens zo erg aan dat hij het gevoel heeft dat zijn hoofd ontploft. Dan wil hij haar opzoeken om wraak te nemen, of om het met haar uit te praten. Maar hij weet dat er met haar niet te praten valt. Ze draait altijd om alles heen, en liegt en bedriegt. Hij zal haar nooit kunnen vertrouwen, wat ze dan ook zegt, maar op een vreemde manier voelt hij zich afhankelijk aan haar. Hij haat dit gevoel.

Dan begint hij na te denken over de haaiensoep die hij de avond van zijn haaienvangst had gemaakt.

Hij probeert het verdere verleden weer te vergeten. Haaiensoep had hij niet vaak gegeten, maar de keren dat hij het at waren heel bijzonder. Hij kreeg er altijd vreemde visioenen en dromen van. Hij begon er altijd sterk van te hallucineren. Haaiensoep met trommels was een goede combinatie voor hem. Min of meer waren die hallucinaties zo muzikaal. Het inspireerde hem tot nieuwe ritmes. Maar ja, hij voelde zich altijd ook een beetje ziek van haaiensoep. Hij kwam ervan in het dodenrijk, waar hij de doden bezocht en nieuwe deuren moest openen. Hij had ook zulke vreemde dieren gegeten. Haaien waren vreemde dieren. Hij kreeg altijd de rillingen als hij aan hen dacht. Soms leek het alsof hij dood ging als hij aan hen dacht. Alsof hij achter een zwart gordijn kwam. Het waren de vorsten van de dood. Hij zou ze geen kwaad doen, maar de haai die hij had doorspietst werd te gevaarlijk, en begon zijn leven flink te beheersen. Hij moest vechten voor zijn leven.

Hij dacht na over zijn leven, en over de haaien. Hij deed dit heel bewust.

Tijger Kind

Hij beklom de muren die omgeven waren met weelderige bloemen. Hij werd haast door ze naar beneden getrokken, maar hij vocht. Hij vocht ook om zijn tranen te bedwingen. Hij zat vol van woede. De muur was bijna zanderig en erg warm. Hij klom door een raam naar binnen, en zag haar daar liggen, helemaal in het wit. Deze vrouw had hem grootgebracht, maar hij was in de wildernis gevlucht, al heel jong. Hij had eigenlijk niets meer met deze vrouw te maken. Hij ging terug door het raam, trok wat van de bloemen van de muur, en sneed zich aan de dorens. Toen sprong hij naar beneden, en rende de wildernis in. Aan een liaan vol wilde bloemen sprong hij over de bruisende rivier. Het was alsof iemand hem vasthield. Hij liet los en kwam aan de rand van de overkant van de rivier, maar deze rand was zo glad dat hij de rivier weer ingleed. Hij greep een tak en trok zichzelf omhoog. Deze rivierwand was zo steil. Toen rende hij de wildernis in. Alles was dichtbegroeid hier.

Hij had een pijl tussen zijn tanden, en trok zijn boog. Zijn lange wilde haren bungelden over zijn naakte rug. Zijn rug was vol met striemen. Ook had hij littekentjes op zijn rug. De wildernis was genadeloos geweest naar hem, maar niets was erger dan de vrouw die hem had grootgebracht.

De wildernis trok hem aan, ook al moest het zo hardhandig. Hij probeerde zich te concentreren, maar hij was in pijn. De wildernis was vol geheimen. Het leek wel alsof het een andere taal sprak. Hij wilde die taal graag leren. Hij probeerde zijn pijnen te begrijpen, maar het leek wel alsof het hem woest maakte. Hij wilde loskomen van zijn woede. Het was alsof de wildernis hem plaagde. Hij wist dat hij gewoon met een heel zwaar wettenstelsel had te maken. Het was hem alles wel waard. Maar in zijn gevoelens werd hij heen en weer geslingerd.

Hij stak bloemen in zijn haar, en ging aan de rand van een andere rivier zitten. Hij boog voorover en keek in het water. Van bloemen maakte hij een schort. Dit deed hij van de bloemen die langs de

rivier groeiden. Het waren wilde bloemen, maar zo prachtig. Ze hadden taaie maar flexibele stengels die hij goed kon knopen. Langzaam liet hij zichzelf in het water glijden. Hij dacht terug aan gisteren, hoe ze hem sloegen met een gesel. Waarom ? Hij wist het nog steeds niet. Hij kon alleen maar gissen. Ze spraken niet veel tot hem. Alles ging om hun wetten. Als hij ze brak, dan werd hij daarvoor geslagen. Het maakte hem leeg van binnen. Hij vond het best. Alles beter dan de vrouw die hem grootbracht. Aan haar wilde hij zelfs niet herinnerd worden. Soms hoopte hij zelfs dat hij slaag kreeg, zodat hij de pijn over haar kon vergeten. De pijn van slaag maakte zijn hart leeg. Het maakte hem koud van binnen, totdat het hem helemaal niets meer deed. Maar meestal de dag erna was hij boos.

Hij liep langs de rivierkant in de modder. Toen liep hij naar zijn hut. Hij ging liggen op een oude matras. Maar even later kwamen ze om hem te slaan. Ze sloegen hem bont en blauw. Toen ze weg waren viel hij doodmoe neer op zijn matras. Hij had besloten om dieper de wildernis in te gaan, want hier kon hij niet meer tegen. Altijd werd hij voor niets geslagen, en ze zeiden niet waarom.

Terug naar de vrouw die hem grootbrachte wilde hij niet. Het was niet eens zijn echte moeder. De volgende ochtend ging hij dieper de wildernis in. Hij smeerde zich in met modder, als een goede camouflage, en bond bladeren om zich heen. Hij hoopte maar dat ze hem niet zouden zien.

Eén van de vrouwen zag hem. Ze begon bijna te krijsen. Hij zette het op een rennen. Als hij in hun handen zou vallen, dan zou het goed mis zijn. Hij dook naar een liaan, en ging van liaan tot liaan, van boom tot boom. De vrouwen waren snel en begonnen pijlen op hem af te schieten. Hij was hoog in de bomen, en moest zorgen dat hij niet stil bleef staan. Ze schreeuwden en gilden naar hem. Ze waren zichtbaar woest. Hij nam grote risico's en dook naar lianen waarvan hij niet eens wist of die hem wel zouden houden, en lianen die ver weg hingen. Maar hij kon niet anders. Soms moest hij weer even klimmen. Hij rende over takken. Het huilen stond hem nader dan het lachen, en door het gegil en geschreeuw begon hij te beven. Het was die vrouwen echt menens.

'Terugkomen !' gilden ze. Sommige vrouwen waren ook in bomen geklommen en sprongen ook van boom tot boom met lianen. Ze waren in een mum van tijd dicht achter hem. Hij begon een naar gevoel in zijn onderbuik te krijgen. Ze zouden hem kunnen doodslaan als ze hem te pakken zouden krijgen. Hij wist niet wat hij moest doen. Onder hem was een rivier, en hij zag dat als zijn laatste kans. Er was een waterval dichtbij, en de rivier stroomde nogal hard, maar hij had geen andere keuze. Hij liet zich naar beneden vallen, en kwam gelukkig goed in de rivier terecht. Hij ging kopje onder en werd direct meegesleurd door de harde stroom. Na een tijdje kwam hij boven water en hapte naar adem. Ook bewoog hij woest om zich heen om te kijken of hij ergens een tak kon vinden. Na een tijdje lukte hem dat, en hij trok zichzelf omhoog op de kant. Hij was een heel eind door de woeste stroom meegesleurd, ver weg van de vrouwen. Weer zette hij het op een rennen, nog steeds in grote angst. Hij rende aan één stuk door zonder om te kijken.

'Marceda,' zei een vrouw. Ze probeerde hem te stoppen, maar hij wist dat ze niet bij de andere vrouwen hoorde. Toch duwde hij de vrouw opzij, omdat hij geen risico's wilde nemen. Hij kon niemand vertrouwen. 'Marceda !' riep de vrouw weer. 'Laat me je helpen !' Hij wist niet wat Marceda betekende, maar ineens stopte hij. Misschien zou de vrouw hem inderdaad kunnen helpen. Ze nam hem mee naar haar hut, waar ze wat soep voor hem inschonk. 'Hier, eet wat,' zei ze. 'Wat is er aan de hand ?'

Hij vertelde het verhaal. 'Zij zijn niet goed bij hun hoofd,' zei de vrouw. 'Waarom ben je daar zo lang gebleven ?'

'Ze bewaakten mij min of meer,' zei hij.

'Ze zijn gek,' zei de vrouw.

Hij zuchtte. 'Neem wat rust,' zei de vrouw. 'Ik zal over je waken. Ze moeten hier niet komen.'

'Maar ze zijn met velen,' zei hij.

'Ze zijn hier nog nooit geweest,' zei de vrouw. 'Dit is mijn gebied.'

'Woon je hier alleen ?' vroeg hij. Ze knikte.

Hij hoorde trommels in de verte. Ook hoorde hij oorlogsgehuil. 'Ik ben niet veilig,' sprak hij. 'Ze zijn op jacht naar me.'

'Shhh,' zei de vrouw. 'Ga maar slapen. Ik zal het wel afhandelen.'

'Je kan niets beginnen in je eentje,' zei hij. 'Ze zullen je slaan, en misschien wel vermoorden.'

'Je kent me nog niet,' zei de vrouw. Ze trok haar boog en nam een pijl. Ook maakte ze haar paardenstaart los. Toen rende ze de wildernis in. Hij begon te beven. Hij vreesde voor haar leven. Na een tijdje kon hij de spanning niet meer aan, en rende de hut uit, dieper de wildernis in. Overal hoorde hij trommels. De schrik sloeg hem steeds dieper in de keel. Hij had buikpijn van de angst. Het leek wel alsof ze dicht om hem heen waren. De trommels leken steeds sneller te gaan. Het oorlogsgehuil was nog wel in de verte maar leek steeds dichterbij te komen, of harder te worden.

Bij een meertje was een hol. Hij ging naar binnen. Hij ging diep het hol in, en na lang lopen door gangen kwam hij diep onder de grond.

'Bloemenkind, vrees tekende je,
Depressie was de oorlogskleuren op je wangen en lichaam,
Gelach was je dagelijkse bad,
En honger was op je jachtspad.'

Een vrouw stond voor hem. 'Zei jij dat ?' vroeg hij.
Ze knikte. Het was donker. Hij kon haar niet goed zien. Haar stem maakte hem rustig. Hij herkende haar. Het was die vrouw die hem zou beschermen. Hij kwam dichterbij. Ze had oorlogsstrepen op haar wangen. 'Ik heb ze beschoten, en een paar geraakt,' zei de vrouw. 'Nu zijn ze zelfs woester. Het is nu oorlog. Wil je mee de oorlog in ?'

'Maar ze zijn met teveel. Ik wil niet dood. Laten we weggaan, dieper de wildernis in,' zei hij.

'Bloemenkind,' sprak ze. 'Je moet de oorlog winnen. Ze zullen op je jagen totdat ze je vinden. Vecht terug. Je hebt mij aan je zijde.'

'Laten we dieper onder de grond gaan,' zei hij.
'Nee, ze zijn in alle staten. We moeten nu vechten,' sprak ze.

Hij greep zijn boog en een pijl. 'Laten we gaan,' sprak hij. Hij wist dat ze geen kans maakten, maar hij wist ook dat ze hem vroeg of laat zouden vinden. Buiten gingen ze op een heuveltje staan, en ze verborgen zich achter een struik. Na een tijdje zagen ze drie vrouwen op oorlogspad. Hij herkende deze vrouwen. Ze hadden hem vaak genoeg geslagen en uitgejouwd. Beiden spanden ze hun bogen. Twee vrouwen werden geraakt. De derde trok haar boog, maar wist niet waar ze op moest richten. Na een tijdje kwam er een groep van ongeveer tien vrouwen. Ze hadden hun bogen getrokken, en

begonnen te schreeuwen.

'Shhh,' fluisterde de vrouw. 'Nu gewoon schieten.' Hij was bijna verlamd van schrik toen hij zoveel vrouwen zag. Door zijn hoofd schoten allerlei taferelen van wat ze met hem zouden kunnen doen als ze hem te pakken zouden krijgen. Maar hij vocht dapper. Hij kon een paar vrouwen raken met zijn pijlen. De vrouw naast hem was ineens weg. Toen werd hij ineens van achteren met een pijl geraakt. Hij wist dat het een valstrik was. Hoe kon hij zo stom zijn naar deze vrouw te luisteren. Maar waarom had ze haar eigen vrouwen geraakt ? Een groot raadsel flitste door hem heen. Hij was neergevallen, en ze schopte tegen hem aan. 'Waarom heb je mij dit aangedaan ?' kreunde hij. 'Stommeling,' sprak ze.

Tot zijn grote verbazing begon ze ook op de vrouwen te schieten, die na een tijdje weg begonnen te rennen. 'Je bent een grote idioot,' zei ze tegen hem. Ze trok de pijl uit zijn rug. Die was laag geschoten. 'Waarom praat je zo tegen me ?' vroeg hij. 'Wat heb ik verkeerd gedaan ?'

'Dit is mijn manier van de oorlog winnen,' sprak ze. 'Vertrouw me nu maar. Ze zijn nu weg.'

'Ik vertrouw je helemaal niet,' zei hij. 'Ik vrees dat wij geen vrienden zullen worden.'

Weer richtte ze een pijl op hem. 'Nu moet je ophouden,' sprak ze. 'Als je wijs bent houd je je mond. Ik zei je dat ik met ze zou afhandelen. Dit is mijn manier.'

Hij barstte bijna van woede. Maar hij hield zich stil. Het was ook menens voor deze vrouw.

'Mag ik gaan nu ?' vroeg hij.

'Je moet zelfs gaan,' zei de vrouw. 'Ren nu. Ren voor je leven.'

Hij zette het op een rennen, zonder om te kijken. Deze vrouwen waren echt gek. Ze waren debiel in zijn ogen. Ook in deze vrouw had hij zich zo vergist. Hij zou nu nog meer op zijn hoede zijn.

Weer ging hij door een hol de grond in. Hij hoopte in ieder geval dat deze debiele vrouw hen nu echt had weggejaagd, en dat ze hem nu met rust zouden laten. In een ondergrondse ruimte kwam hij tot een meertje. Hij waste zichzelf daarin, en bedekte zichzelf toen met modder. Hij had buikpijn en hoofdpijn. Toen hij over alles nadacht wilde hij niet meer leven. Het leven drukte zwaar op hem, alsof het hem wurgde. Weer hoorde hij oorlogsgehuil in de verte. Hij begon te trillen van woede. Hij voelde alsof hij zichzelf niet meer was, alsof er iets in hem was geknapt of gebroken door de spanning. Hij pakte zijn boog. Hij zou ze in zijn eentje tegemoet treden. Hij rende door het hol naar boeten en begon woest te krijsen buiten zijn zinnen. Snel was hij omsingeld door een groep vrouwen. Hij kreeg een slag op zijn hoofd en viel neer. Zij zetten hun voeten op hem. Ze rolden hem over zodat zijn rug op de grond lag. Hij kreeg een voet op zijn mond gedrukt. 'Nu houd je je kop,' zei één van de vrouwen.

Hij werd later wakker in een kooi. 'Stom varken,' zei een vrouw tegen hem. 'We zullen jou dat krijsen eens afleren. Hij kookte van woede. Toen de vrouw weg was greep hij mes wat hij had verborgen onder zijn schort van wilde bloemen. Gelukkig hadden ze dat niet afgenomen. Maar zijn boog was hij kwijt. Met zijn mes begon hij de kooi los te snijden. Dat lukte aardig, en na een tijdje was hij vrij en rende de wildernis in. Hij zou nu gewoon door blijven rennen totdat hij niet meer zou kunnen.

Hij rende door totdat hij aankwam bij de rivieren van bloed. Hij zwemde door totdat hij kwam in het land achter die rivieren. Hier waren veel insecten die hem staken, maar alles was beter dan te

leven met vrouwen die hem altijd maar sloegen.

Hier zette hij zijn tent op, en bouwde een boot. Hij leefde van de visserij, en de jacht. Hij probeerde zijn oude leven te vergeten. Nog vaak had hij woede aanvallen, maar hij wist dat de vrouwen toch nooit zouden veranderen. Het was hun aard.

Maar de tijger van dit land was niet al te blij met het bezoek. Na enige tijd kwam hij uit zijn hol, en kwam ten aanval. Hij hoorde een brul, en greep zijn dolk. Hij slikte even toen hij de tijger zag staan die klaar stond om aan te vallen. De tijger sprong op hem af, en probeerde hem te slaan met zijn klauw. Maar hij blokkeerde het met zijn dolk. Hij slaakte een oorlogskreet en raakte de tijger twee keer in zijn nek. Toen sprong de tijger echt af op hem, en hij stompte zijn dolk recht in het hart van de tijger. Een enorm gebrul verdoofde hem bijna. De tijger greep zijn arm, maar liet toen los als een verlamde. De tijger stortte neer op de grond. Spoedig had hij het beest onthoofd, en brulde als een woesteling toen hij de kop van de tijger in de lucht trok als een trofee. De tijger schedel zou het sieraad worden van zijn tent, en ook de tijger huid zou hij goed kunnen gebruiken.

Het Varkenshart

De vier palen

Atedo stak het hart van het varken op de puntige top van de paal. Het was een groot hart. Het hart werd doorboort als een teken dat de jacht over was. Atedo viel op de grond, want hij was zwaar gewond. Hyena's kwamen om hem te verslinden. Toen sprongen ze op om het hart van het varken naar beneden te trekken, maar het lukte hen niet. Stambewoners vonden het half opgevreten lichaam van Atedo later. De paal met het hart van het varken werd heilig verklaard als de paal van Atedo. Atedo was in hun ogen als een groot jager tot de eeuwige jachtvelden gegaan.

Zo waren er vier palen. Een paal voor runderharten, een paal voor buffelharten, een paal voor bizonharten en een paal voor varkensharten. Atedo had hen dit geleerd. Zo waren er de vier palen van Atedo. De vier palen functioneerden als een anti-orakel, om de stem van de goden te doven, en de druk die zij op de stam probeerden te leggen.

De dood

In een grot vond hij tabletten met vreemde tekens erop. Buiten waren de mammoeten. Buiten waren de paarden. Er was een grote oorlog. Hij schreef de tekens op zijn hand en zijn lichaam, en verdween toen. Hij moest dieper de grot in, waar hij nog meer tabletten vond, met nog meer vreemde tekens. Hij hoorde het gebrul van grote harige dieren buiten. Hij wist niet hoe lang hij dit nog zou volhouden. Toen stierf hij.

Bewerkt

Ook hij was verwond, verwond door de goden. Daarom streed hij tegen hen. Hij leefde van de jacht, van een diepe woede binnenin. Hij kon hier niet blijven, en rende dieper de wildernis in. Het oerwoud was zacht, met zachte stemmen, en ook was het nat. De droogte had hier plaatsgemaakt voor vruchtbare palmbomen, en diep groene struiken en bomen. Het groene zat hem achterna. Het verslond hem. Ook het blauwe terroriseerde hem. Mag ik wat van dat rode, dat rode daar ? Hij dook in een rivier, waar de wateren bruin waren, gelig bruin. Hij was thuisgekomen. Hij kon haar stem horen. Ze stond aan de kant. Maar haar boog was op hem gericht. De tabletten hadden de waarheid gesproken. Zij trok hem uit het water. Terug kon hij niet. Hij werd in een hok gedrukt, in een kooi. Het varkenshart was op een paal gestoken. Ze bleef naar hem kijken, maar toen draaide ze zich om. De tabletten hadden gezegd dat wanneer zij zich om zou draaien, dan viel het slot dicht. In gevangenschap was hij, maar niet gebonden. Hij leed, maar honger had hij niet. Dit hadden de tabletten voorzegd. Dit hadden de stemmen in de grot gesproken. En had hij de tabletten wel goed ontcijferd ? Was dit wel echt hun boodschap ? Of had zijn verkeerde interpretatie hem hier geleid ? Hij kon zich niet bewegen. Hij was als een gebondene zonder touwen.

Hij lag stijf van de schrik in een hok. Het varkenshart was op een paal gestoken. Precies zoals de tabletten hadden voorspeld. Maar waren zijn interpretaties wel waar ? Of had hij de tekens verkeerd vertaald ? Waarom was hij hier ?

De jacht zat diep in hem. Hij moest naar buiten. Maar hij kon niet. Hij was opgesloten, en zij had haar rug naar hem gekeerd. Het slot was dichtgevallen. De tabletten hadden gesproken. Of had zijn verkeerde vertaling en interpretatie gesproken ? Nu was hij hier, als een gebondene ongebondene. Toen kwam ze zijn hok binnen, en maakte hem tot slaaf. Ook dat stond op de tabletten. En hij geloofde het. Hij was onder hypnose.

Hij moest jagen voor de stam, met een touw om zijn nek. Hij kon niet ontsnappen. Er was altijd iemand bij hem. Hij was bewerkt.

David's huis

Zo waren daar David's goden in de verte. Maar hij zat in dit hok, geketend aan handen en voeten. Toen begon de honger toe te slaan, zoals de tabletten hadden voorspeld. En hij geloofde het, want het was zo echt. David's goden begonnen tot hem te fluisteren, om hem een uittocht aan te bieden. Maar zij stonden voor hem met touwen die ze om zijn nek wilden doen, en zij hadden ook ketenen. Met veel voedsel kwamen zij hem omkopen, maar hij koos voor de honger. De honger leidde hem tot de verlamdheid, en de verlamdheid leidde hem tot de vergetelheid.

'Stommeling !' werd er geroepen. 'Nu gebeurt het in het Oosten. Een kindeke is geboren daar die jou kan redden. Jouw verlosser is opgestaan.'

Maar hij kon het niet meer horen. Het varkenshart was op een paal geslagen. Het gejoel verdoofde hem. Ze hadden hem alleen gelaten, maar het was als een schild over hem.

Toch was er iets in hem wat hem deed geloven dat hij David's zoon was. De verloren zoon van David, rijk door de stammen onder het gezag van David. Hij werd meegetrokken door het geluid, in een woeste optocht na een geslaagde oorlog. David met een zwart leren handschoen trok het varkenshart op. De hyenas hadden het hart bereikt. Op een paal werd het hart gestoken. Hyenas dronken gulzig van het bloed, als de brug tussen twee planeten.

David's zoon was hij, zoals de tabletten hadden uitgelegd. Hij wist het zeker dat hij de tekens naar waarheid had vertaald. Maar toch was er twijfel in zijn hart. Hij verkoos de honger boven de gulzigheid. Zijn hart raakte verlamd, en hij verloor zijn geheugen. Toen David hem vond werd hij gedwongen te eten. Hij werd in een koninklijk pak gehesen, maar toen David even niet oplette, en

met zijn paarden bezig was, rende hij de wildernis in. Al snel werd het koninklijk pak vuil, en kwamen er scheuren in. David zou hem niet meer herkennen.

Koning David zat in zijn paleis, rouwende over zijn zoon Absalom, de koninklijke erfenis. Hij rouwde over de stammen die hem ontnomen waren. Zijn paleis zou spoedig branden.

De gebroken tabletten

'Breng dan hulde aan David !' werd er geroepen. David was als een schim tot het dodenrijk gedaald, en als een koning en god ontvangen door de zombies en schaduwen, en werd gekroond met hoge geestelijkheid. 'Mijn zoon Absalom, waar is hij ?' riep David.

David's zoon rende door de wildernis, maar werd weer gegrepen. Weer werd hij in een hok gedrukt. Hij kreeg er flink van langs. Nu zouden ze hem pas echt uithongeren. Zijn geheugen moest dood.

Woest werd hij weer uit het hok gesleurd. De rode planeet hing boven het kamp. De tabletten in zijn hoofd waren gebroken.

Het rode

'Nu is het kindeke geboren,' zei een stem. 'Nu daagt het in het Oosten, nu zijt wellekome.' Maar het hart van het varken was op een paal gespietst, en de stem moest doven.

Twaalf stammen opgesloten in een pot, en die pot werd in een rivier geworpen. De tabletten waren verbroken. Hij leerde nieuwe tekens. In diepe slavernij moest hij. Hij leefde van de jacht. Hij was tot de onderwereld gedaald. Hier was het groene en het blauwe niet. Hier was het bruine, het rode en het gele. Duisternis heerste hier. Hij was een vechtslaaf. Zoveel oorlogen moesten gewonnen worden.

'Zoon van David, jij bent het zonlicht.' Maar hij was in een nieuwe familie aangenomen. Mag ik wat van dat rode, dat rode daar ? Zij lieten hem in leven, omdat hij joeg. Maar hij jaagde voor de stam.

Het hok

Ze reden hem rond op een kar met een kaalgeschoren hoofd. David zou hem aan Saturnus geofferd hebben. Maar zij reden hem tot de paal met het varkenshart. Verder deden ze niets. Hij stapte uit, kuste de paal, en liep terug naar zijn hok. Die nacht kon hij niet slapen. De deur van zijn hok was opengelaten. Hij had niet de neiging om te ontsnappen. Hij wist dat buiten het hok het grootste en ergste hok was.

Het gif

Ze bracht hem wat soep de volgende dag, vol met het rode. Hij stond op, en keek naar haar. Toen ging hij weer zitten en at van de soep. Het gif taste zijn hoofd aan. Hij hallucineerde, drijvende in de rivier, met zijn hoofd naar de sterrenhemel. Hij voelde haar armen om zich heen. Hij voelde zich rustig. Het gif was om hem sterk te maken. Sterk voor wat ? Hij voelde zich juist zwakker, maar zijn woede aanvallen werden steeds intenser, en een enorme kracht maakte zich meester van hem, maar dat was altijd maar voor even. Dan voelde hij zich weer zo zwak en week. Hij voelde zich verlamd, met scheuten van onvoorstelbare kracht. Dit is wat het gif deed.

Bloed lucht

De paal met het gespietste varkenshart bracht honger. De lucht was van bloed. Dat is wat ze inademden. De zee was van bloed, en de rivieren. Hij ademde niet door zijn longen, maar door de top van zijn vruchtbare deel. De vruchtbare delen waren door zijn hele lichaam, als schakels. Zij ademden bloed-lucht, de rode lucht. Mag ik wat van dat rode daar ? De gespleten top van zijn vruchtbare deel was als zijn longen.

Het varkenshart

De top van zijn vruchtbare deel dronk van het bloed in de rivier. Zou hij dat niet doen, dan zou hij sterven. Het waren zijn lippen, en toen moest hij ze voeden. Hij was diep in hen, en toen zonk hij diep in de rivier, verdrinkende, om visioenen te krijgen. 'Drink niet !' riep hij, maar ze dronken. Hij moest ze voeden. Hij verloste zich uit hun greep, en zwom naar de oppervlakte. Hij wilde niet sterven. Hij kroop uit de rivier, maar ze trokken hem terug. Hij moest ze voeden. Hij joeg voor hen.

De paal met het varkenshart zou altijd het teken hiervan zijn. Hij kon het niet wegwissen. Zij hadden zijn hart geroofd.

De Ontsnapping

Jara stond stil. Ze keek om haar heen. De rivier leek alsof het elk moment kon opwellen. De zon raakte bijna de rivier aan, geheel wit in de verte. Apen zag ze aan de overkant. Al snel was ze in de rivier en zwom naar de overkant. Ze greep een liaan, en trok haarzelf uit het water. Apen staarden haar aan. Ze kroop op een heuveltje verder het water uit, haar huid zat onder de modder. Ze hoorde het geluid van de apen, en opeens voelde ze hun handen op haar huid. Ze trokken haar verder omhoog. Het water dampte als in een mist, en het was er warm. Even later lag ze languit op het gras, tussen het mos, onder de bomen. Het was een prachtige jungle hier, in de dieptes van het regenwoud. Weer raakten de apen haar aan, en de rillingen gingen door haar lijf. Ze omhelsde hen, en ze lieten het toe. Ze was hun kind. Ze maakte zich meester van de situatie, stond op, en rende het oerwoud in. Even later stond ze in een hut. Ze was moe, ging op de versleten matras liggen. Niemand kon haar zeggen waar ze was. Het leek wel alsof de apen hier woonden. Achter de hut vond ze een skelet. Ze nam van wat appels die hier en daar lagen. Ze was hongerig, en ze at zelfs wat oud brood. Haar hele leven had ze verlangd naar een rustige plaats, waar ze alleen zou zijn.

Ze was onrustig, zoals de apen onrustig waren, maar de natuur was mooi hier, ze kon hier wegglijden. De apen probeerden met haar te communiceren, maar zij gleed steeds weg omdat ze moe was. Ze hielden haar vast. Even later duwden ze haar bananen in haar mond.

De natuur was als gladgestreken hier, niemand zei wat. Ze voelde zich oud en jong. Ze staarde naar het amulet wat ze om haar nek had gedragen. Ze had het in haar hand. Plotseling draaide ze zich om en zag een man staan, een indiaan. Een band met een paar witte veren om zijn hoofd. Hij pakte haar hand, en ging naast haar liggen. Zij vond dat eigenlijk heel normaal. Misschien woonde de man hier. Hij joeg haar niet weg. Hij gedroeg zich mysterieus. Ze voelde geen angst voor hem, alleen acceptatie.

Als ze in zijn ogen keek zag ze een open jungle. Hij staarde naar haar. Ze kon wegzinken in zijn ogen. Ze zeiden niets tegen elkaar. De man maakte een vuur, en ging erbij zitten, en Jara kwam er ook bijzitten even later. Het leek wel alsof elke minuut een uur duurde. Zo stil was het hier. Er was

hier een open wereld, een diepte.

Ze omhelsden elkaar terwijl ze elkaar niet kenden. Ze wisten genoeg. De natuur bond hen samen. Er waren geen woorden nodig, alles was ondergedompeld in de prachtige natuur. De ontmoeting duurde lang. Daarna vertrok de man weer. Jara staarde naar het amulet. Het glom. Ze ging terug naar de versleten matras, en viel in slaap.

Ze zag haar reis als een gezel, ze hield van de reis. Ze at van de natuur, en dronk van de rivier, het was genoeg. Ze was gelukkig. Jara was als bedekt door de natuur, als een veilige schuilplaats, geen slavernij meer. Maar nog wel de littekens daarvan. Ze was ontsnapt, ze had dagen door het bos gerend, en nu was ze hier. Slangen gleden door het gras. Ze had van hen niets te vrezen. Het was alsof de natuur haar opnam.

Ze wilde wraak nemen op de blanken, maar hoe. Ze was zelfs gemerkt in haar mond. Vreemde tekens hadden ze in haar tanden gesneden, en metalen erin gegoten. Met haar mes probeerde ze het eruit te snijden. Al snel was ze aan het bloeden. De apen kwamen dichtbij. Ze kwam erachter dat de kolonisten zendertjes hadden gestopt in de dieptes van haar kiezen. Ze wist dat ze in gevaar was, nog steeds. Misschien konden ze haar wel achtervolgen. Ze rende verder, de voetstappen van de man volgende. Na enkele dagen kwam ze hem tegen. Hij trok haar naar zich toe. Ze spraken niet. Het was alsof ze elkaar aanvoelden. Ze hoorden schoten in de lucht. 'Slaven ontsnapt,' riep iemand. De man greep zijn mes, maar daarna greep hij een pijl, en toen zijn boog. Beiden renden ze verder. Weer waren er schoten, maar ze zagen niemand. Ze kwamen aan bij een riviertje, waar een bootje was. Ze namen het bootje om de rivier mee over te komen. Aan de overkant gekomen wees Jara op de mond van de man. Ze opende haar mond om haar tanden te laten zien. Ook de man opende zijn mond, en Jara zag het metaal, en de zendertjes. Ze probeerde het hem duidelijk te maken. Met een mes kregen ze het eruit. Jara gooide de zendertjes in het riviertje. Toen gingen ze dieper het oerwoud in. Ze hoopten dat niemand hen hier nog zou kunnen volgen. De natuur was te mooi om daar nog drukte om te maken. Het was alsof hun lasten door die pracht werden afgespoeld. Het was alsof de man wilde zeggen : Laten we hier opnieuw beginnen. Jara knikte. Zijn ogen spraken. Een leven hier zou goed zijn.

Ze wilden wraak nemen op de blanken, maar de natuur nam hen mee. De natuur deed hen vergeten, maar er was nog wel die diepe pijn van binnen. Er was geen doel, er was alleen het leven. Het was als een warme haard, de natuur om hen heen. En die kwam dieper en dieper om de pijn weg te wassen. De man raakte haar aan. Het voelde als vertrouwd. De zachte aanraking van de natuur leek het te vermengen. Voor het eerst voelde Jara zich gelukkig. Ze kon de sterke stroming van de rivier horen in de verte. Alle geluiden kwamen haar lichaam binnen, en openbaarden zich aan haar. De man streelde door haar haar, en ging met zijn vingertoppen over haar lippen. Ze boog haar hoofd. Ze begreep niet wat er gaande was. De man omhelsde haar van achteren, en in haar gevoel was het alsof hij tegen haar zei : 'Je bent vrij nu.' Ze zochten de rivier weer op, en gingen daar zwemmen. Hier zouden ze willen wonen. In de verte was een waterval die ze konden horen bulderen. Ze besloten er naartoe te gaan. Het was alsof de waterval hen van binnen schoonwaste. De waterplanten waren prachtig en overtuigend hier. Ze sprongen bijna door het water heen.

Wisten zij dat zij kinderen waren van de bomen, van de struiken die onderwater en bovenwater groeiden. Wisten zij dat zij gemaakt waren voor ritmische en kronkelende groei. Krokodillen waren hun vrienden hier, geen vijanden. Ze waren aan het ware gevaar ontsnapt. Ook de waterslangen waren hen goedgezind. Ze voelden zich fijn met deze kronkelende elementen. De waterplant was als de hemel voor hen. Ze stonden open voor het harmonische gevoel van de natuur, ze spraken met hun ogen. Het water was een bron van leven voor hen. De man staarde naar haar amulet. Hij kuste het amulet. Het was alsof de man wilde zeggen : Als zij, het amulet, haar ogen zal openen, waar zullen de blanke kolonisten dan zijn, heus, ze zullen geleid worden naar de hel. Ze hebben een hel gemaakt, een hel die hen dan zal opslokken. Het was alsof het zonlicht het zo overbracht, en zo waar als de waterval zelf. Ze keek hem diep in de ogen, alsof ze het verankerde. Ze had respect voor hem, stond open voor hem, ze besefte dat zij het antwoord om haar nek droeg. Het amulet leek op

een slang. Het had veel waarde voor haar. Sommige slangen hier leken op het amulet. Het was alsof het amulet ooit de sleutel was van haar kooi. Ze voelde zich week worden als ze naar hem keek. De blauwe lucht leek neer te dalen in de rivier, op weg naar de waterval. Het licht werd alle kanten opgereflecteerd.

De Ballerina

De Rozentrap

Ik las een boek. De letters leken tot mij te komen, en begonnen in mij te draaien. Alsof een vrouw tot mij sprak. Ze was naakt. Ik kon haar door de letters zien. Ze was een engel, de engel van het boek. Het boek was bijzonder, als een schilderij. Ik legde het boek weer terug, en pakte een ander boek, en hetzelfde gebeurde, maar het was een andere vrouw.

Het was een lange reis naar Bagdad. Eindelijk kwam ik daar aan, en stapte uit de trein. Er waren hier huizen met sluiers, en achter de sluiers zaten vrouwen. Sommigen rookten, anderen aten, en weer anderen deden niets. Ik kon dwars door de sluiers heenzien. Er waren rode, dampende lampen achter. Alsof ze iets probeerden te vermorzelen. Ik ramde mijzelf een weg door Bagdad.

Ze had het haar lang, golvend, toen ik bij haar aankwam. Ik zou nu haar bodyguard zijn. Ze sprak met veel tussenpozen.

Ik volgde haar op haar rozentrap. Ik was hier voor geld. Ik had haar een brief geschreven, voor veel geld, en ik zou nog veel meer doen, voor geld. Ik zou haar de show geven van haar leven. Het kon me verder niet schelen wie ze was. Veel informatie had ik niet nodig, als ik mijn geld maar kreeg. Ik droeg ook zorg voor haar dochter. Dat maakte niet uit. Ik was er nu toch.

Ik gaf haar de show van haar leven. Ik maakte mij op, dook, en hees mijzelf op het piratenschip. Ik zat vast aan elastieken. Het schip trok me op naar onbekende hoogtes, hoger dan ik ooit durfde dromen. Zoet was het hier, en zij was zoet. Even dacht ik niet meer aan het geld, maar aan haar. Maar toen werd ik weer stoicijns, als een gelikt zakenman. Ik moest hier weg, en wel zo snel mogelijk. De show was afgelopen. Ze liet me niet los, en ik liet politie komen, en een piratenleger, die haar gillend afvoerden.

Thuis zat ik het geld te tellen. Ik had goede winst gemaakt. Hier kon ik wat mee. Ik was een ballerina, ik was een pop. Ik bewoog door vreemde muziek, en vreemde ritmes. Magische muziek, en voor al het andere was ik doof.

Het

Luipaard

Hoofdstuk 1.

‘Vreemd,’ zei Frida. ‘Het is alsof hij hier nog steeds is.’

‘Wat bedoel je,’ zei Frits, ‘weg is weg.’

‘Oh wat kun jij toch koud zijn,’ zei Frida. ‘Er is meer tussen hemel en aarde.’

‘Goedgelovig zieltje,’ zei Frits. ‘Dood is dood, en we gaan er allemaal aan.’

Frits zat wat computerspelletjes te spelen in de hoek van de kamer. Frida had zich opgemaakt en probeerde hem te verleiden. ‘Sexualiteit is als de dood,’ zei Frits onverschillig. ‘Ik voel me altijd verscheurd als door een beest na een vrijpartij. En je weet dat ik niet van make up houdt. Doe mij maar puur natuur.’

‘Ga in een hutje op de hei wonen, Frits,’ zei Frida. Even later had ze de make up van haar gezicht gewassen. Ze voelde zich alleen. Hector net overleden, en nu zo’n koude partner.

‘Echt, heus,’ zei Frits. ‘Al dat bijgeloof is niks, en zeker niet het geloof in sex. Het leidt allemaal nergens toe. En dat moet dan liefde voorstellen.’

‘Goh, Frits,’ zei Frida. ‘Ik houd toch van je ?’

‘Kan dat niet op een andere manier,’ zei Frits. ‘Het is altijd hetzelfde. We kunnen toch gewoon bij elkaar zijn zonder al dat plakkerige gedoe.’

‘Jij noemt dat plakkerig,’ zei Frida, ‘ik noem het gewoon interesse.’

‘Ik ben meer gesteld op het platonische,’ zei Frits. ‘Dat noem ik interesse. We kunnen toch gewoon praten over de dingen die ons bezig houden, zonder door lichamelijke rituelen alles te bedekken.’

‘Nou, dit houdt mij bezig, en het is gezond,’ zei Frida. ‘Ik wil je kennen.’

‘Praat dan gewoon met me,’ zei Frits. ‘Ik ben hier.’

‘Nee, je bent er niet bij met je gedachtes. Je zit die domme computerspelletjes te doen,’ zei Frida.

‘Zie, je hebt geen interesse in mij. Je noemt dat wat mij bezig houdt dom,’ zei Frits.

‘Laten we geen ruzie maken,’ zei Frida.

‘Mijn hand erop,’ zei Frits.

‘Weet je dat je prachtig bent zonder al die make up troep,’ zei Frits.

‘Ik weet niks, ik voel me verstoten,’ zei Frida. ‘En misschien komt het wel omdat Hector er niet meer is.’

‘Een nieuwe hond wil ik niet,’ zei Frits.

‘Ik ook niet,’ zei Frida.

‘En een poes dan ?’ vraagt Frits.

Na een paar dagen hebben ze twee poezen in huis. Frits noemt Frida de poezenkoningin. Met kerst staat er een grote kerstboom in de kamer, en samen vieren ze kerst met de twee poezen. Frits en Frida hebben veel kadootjes voor elkaar gekocht, om elkaar de liefde te bewijzen. ‘Ik mis Hector,’ zegt Frida.

‘Ik ook,’ zegt Frits, ‘maar het leven gaat door. We kunnen hem met geen mogelijkheid terugkrijgen.’

‘Het brandt van binnen, het eet me op van binnen,’ zegt Frida.

‘Dat is wat de dood doet,’ zegt Frits. ‘Het hoort bij het leven. We gaan er allemaal aan.’

‘Frits,’ zegt Frida. ‘Dat klinkt niet echt avontuurlijk. Kun jij ons niet redden van dit noodlot.’

‘Nee,’ zegt Frits, ‘praat nu geen onzin, Frida. Niemand kan tegen de dood op. Dat moet je gewoon accepteren.’

‘Ik kan het niet,’ zegt Frida. ‘Er moet gewoon meer zijn tussen hemel en aarde.’

‘Dat hebben de mensen bedacht, Frida,’ zegt Frits. ‘Eens verlaten we allemaal het schip van leven, en dan is het afgelopen. We zijn dan niets meer dan een hoopje as wat door de wind verder van elkaar wordt losgetrokken.’

‘Geloof je dat echt ?’ vraagt Frida. ‘Wat ben jij dan bijgelovig, zeg, en wat een kerk zal dat wezen. De kerk die gelooft dat alles eens ophoudt.’

‘Het is geen geloof, jij bent hier de gelovige onder ons,’ zegt Frits.

‘Hoe weet je zo zeker dat alles straks wegrot onder de grond, om in het totale niets te verdwijnen,’ zegt Frida.

‘Gewoon logisch nadenken,’ zegt Frits. ‘Er is geen hemel, dus er kan ook niks tussen aarde en hemel zijn, dat is gewoon onzin, Frida, en dat weet jij ook. Neem een voorbeeld aan de poezen. Komen die ook met dit soort stomzinnige verhalen aanzetten ?’

‘Nu noem je mijn interesses ook ineens stom,’ zegt Frida.

‘Nee, Frida,’ zegt Frits, ‘dat zijn geen interesses, maar illusies. Je bent misleid door koppige mensen die niet aan de dood willen geloven. Eeuwig leven ? Kom zeg.’

‘Of reincarnatie,’ zegt Frida.

‘Ander onderwerp,’ zegt Frits.

‘Ik houd van je, schat,’ zegt Frida.

‘Ander onderwerp,’ zegt Frits.

‘Houd je nog een beetje van me ?’ vraagt Frida.

‘Jazeker,’ zegt Frits, ‘maar ik wil dat je daarop wat meer zult vertrouwen, in plaats van alsmaar over de liefde te praten, en die overmatige honger naar sexualiteit.’

‘Je doet alsof ik een sexbeest ben, alsof het een obsessie is. Ik heb gewoon pijn van binnen,’ zegt Frida.

‘Eens per maand is goed, maar eens per week is teveel van het goede,’ zegt Frits. ‘Het moet speciaal blijven, geen dagelijks brood.’

‘Kom op nou, Frits, dagelijks brood. Ik heb het er haast nooit over,’ zegt Frida.

‘Goed, ander onderwerp dan,’ zegt Frits.

‘Misschien heb je gelijk, Frits, misschien moet ik me meer op de oppervlakte bewegen en wat subtieler worden, en het horizontale wat breder maken, dat is ook een soort diepte, en wat cryptischer. Dat rechtstreekse is inderdaad teveel van het goede. En kijk die katten nou, zijn ze niet schattig, en zij zijn ook zo subtiel en mysterieus,’ zegt Frida. ‘Ze zullen veel geheimen hebben.’

‘Doe nou maar normaal,’ zegt Frits. ‘Altijd dat gefilosofeer. Wees nou eens nuchter.’

‘Alright, Frits, kun jij me daar dan mee helpen ?’ vraagt Frida. ‘Ik ben maar een beginneling.’

‘Altijd,’ zegt Frits.

Hoofdstuk 2.

‘Frits, je bent geweldig,’ zegt Frida. ‘Een betere vriend kan ik me niet voorstellen.’

‘Dank je wel, Frida,’ zegt Frits. ‘En jij mag er ook wezen.’

Hij heeft bijna pretlichtjes in zijn ogen. Op zijn verzoek lopen ze de volgende dagen heel wat pretparken af, en doen veel spelletjes. Daar is Frits verzot op. Frida probeert zich in Frits in te leven. Maar dan moet Frits voor zijn werk een hele lange tijd naar het buitenland. Frida voelt zich erg alleen, maar dan ontmoet zij Fred. Fred is het tegenovergestelde van Frits. Ze moet Fred gewoon de hele tijd van haar afhouden. Alhoewel ze verzot is op Fred mist ze Frits verschrikkelijk. Frits was altijd haar rots in de branding. Fred is gevoelig en week, en zij moet hem altijd uit de put praten. Ze hebben niks met elkaar, maar ze worden goede vrienden, en zo heeft Frida in ieder geval wat gezelschap. Frits weet er ook van, en vindt het allemaal best. Hij heeft zelf ook zijn extra vriendinnen op zijn werk.

Met Fred kan Frida echt in de diepte, ook over het geloof. ‘Mijn vriend wil me stijf en oppervlakkig maken,’ zegt Frida.

‘Oh, dat kan handig zijn,’ zegt Fred. ‘Als een schild tegen de wereld, en zodat vreemde zuignappen je niet weghalen.’

‘Maar soms wil ik weggehaald worden,’ zegt Frida. ‘Het leven is zwaar. Ik mis Hector, en nu mis ik Frits.’

‘Maar je hebt mij nu,’ zegt Fred.

‘Dat weet ik wel,’ zegt Frida. ‘Maar het is toch anders.’

‘En je hebt de poezen,’ zegt Fred.

‘Ja, maar ik mis een schakel,’ zegt Frida.

‘De volgende keer dat ik kom zal ik Loesia meebrengen,’ zegt Fred. ‘Zij is echt geweldig. Ik weet zeker dat jullie veel aan elkaar zullen hebben.’

En zo gebeurde het. Fred neemt de eerstvolgende keer een vriendin met zich mee, Loesia, een feestelijk type. Maakt echt wat leven in de brouwerij. Ze heeft veel verhalen te vertellen en heeft een diep inzicht in mensen. Ze heeft een serieuze kant maar ook veel humor. Frida houdt direct heel veel van haar, en ze kan nog goed koken ook. Binnen de kortste keren zijn Frida en Loesia de dikste vriendinnen.

‘Wat vind je van Fred,’ vraagt Frida haar op een dag.

‘Ach ja, Fred is Fred,’ zegt Loesia. ‘Een leuke jongen, maar niks voor mij. Veel te afhankelijk, veel te teer. Ik zou gek worden als ik met hem samen moest leven, maar we zijn goede vrienden. Ik wil hem graag helpen.’

Frida knikt. Fred leefde helemaal in zijn eigen wereld, en ging soms over de grenzen van anderen heen. Hij kon soms best wel zelfzuchtig zijn. Alles draaide om hem, maar verder was het een lieve jongen. Fred zou graag verkering willen hebben, maar daar was hij eigenlijk niet de persoon voor. Veel meisjes vonden hem leuk, maar toch kwam het er nooit van, alsof een onzichtbare kracht er tussenzat. Daar zat Fred wel erg mee.

‘Ach, je zal heus op een dag wel de ware vinden,’ zei Loesia vaak. Fred was verliefd op Loesia. Hij was helemaal verzot op haar, maar zij niet op hem. Wel voelde ze zich verplicht om hem te helpen. Het was een echt zorgenkindje, als een jongere broer.

‘Fred, ik moet eens met je praten,’ zei Loesia op een dag. ‘Zou jij eens met mij en Frida op een kleine vakantie willen. Dan gaan we naar het bos en dan nemen we de tent mee.’ Dat zag Fred natuurlijk wel zitten. Het liep uit op iets goeds. Ze hadden hun tent dichtbij een rivier, en zo waren ze allemaal even weg uit de dagelijkse sleur, en voor Fred was dat ook wel goed. Fred hield van wandelen en de natuur. Hij ging vaak alleen op pad, en zo hadden de vrouwen veel tijd voor henzelf. Het leek wel alsof Fred door de natuur wat zelfstandiger werd, en wat creatiever werd. Hij begon zijn avontuurlijke kant te ontdekken. Hij kon zich prima redden zo. Loesia en Frida waren erg trots op hem, en vonden dat het plan goed geslaagd was.

Toen Frits eindelijk weer thuis was kon hij direct goed met Fred opschieten. Het bleek dat ze een goede uitwerking op elkaar hadden. Ze gingen vaak samen op pad. Frits was ervan overtuigd dat

Fred bij Loesia hoorde, en na wat bemiddelingen stemde Loesia uiteindelijk toe. Fred was wat volwassener geworden, en stond op zijn eigen benen nu, dus voor Loesia was de kust nu vrij. Omdat Fred en Loesia nu een relatie hadden en dat veel tijd in beslag nam hadden Frits en Frida ineens weer veel meer tijd voor elkaar. Frits was wat opener geworden, en wat dieper, en dat bleek ook voornamelijk te komen door wat vrouwen die hij in het buitenland had ontmoet. Het was alsof ze hem betoverd hadden, als een fles opengetrokken. Frits voelde zich vernieuwd en ingewijd. Frida was tevreden. Het was nu alsof haar eigen fles ook werd opengetrokken.

Bij de volgende werkreis van Frits ontmoette ze Jan en Marlies. Zij bleken het perfecte stel te zijn. Ze waren erg op elkaar ingespeeld, en Frida bewonderde ze echt. ‘Dat zou ik ook wel willen,’ zei ze tegen zichzelf. Maar ze mocht niet klagen. het leek wel alsof Jan en Marlies in een diepe dans waren. Alles was harmonieus, en ze hadden zulke mooie stemmen. Het leken wel twee prachtige struiken die in elkaar verstrengeld waren. Frida kreeg het er warm van van binnen. Ook Fred en Loesia ontmoetten Jan en Marlies eens en werden er door aangestoken. ‘Dit is goed,’ dacht Frida. ‘Deze mensen hebben wat te vertellen, en wat te laten zien.’ Het leek wel alsof Jan en Marlies geheime therapeuten waren. De manier waarop ze met elkaar omgingen was aanstekelijk. En het was heel heilzaam. Zelfs de poezen reageerden er goed op. Frida had het gevoel dat eindelijk het gat werd gedicht wat was ontstaan door de dood van Hector. Jan en Marlies hadden drie honden : Eelco, John en Hotte. En Frida was direct erg aan ze gehecht.

Na een paar maanden was Frits weer thuis. Frits was zichtbaar veranderd. Het was een zware werkreis geweest, en het was alsof hij weer terug bij af was. Dit was de Frits zoals Frida hem kende. Frida’s droom was voorbij. Frits was moe, en wilde alleen maar veel slapen. Frida zat aan zijn bed. ‘Is er soms iets gebeurd ? Je bent anders dan hoe je de vorige keer was toen je thuiskwam,’ zei Frida.

Frits wilde er niet over praten. Maar toen er brieven van een bepaalde vrouw binnen begonnen te komen kwam Frida er al snel achter dat Frits een ander had. ‘Ik ga bij je weg, Frida,’ zei hij. ‘Ik moet dit gewoon doen. Ik denk dat ik nu toch echt de ware heb gevonden.’

‘En dat wat wij hadden dan ?’ snikt Frida. ‘Gooi je dat dan zomaar bij de vuilnis ?’

‘Je moet het accepteren,’ zei Frits. ‘Het is gewoon niet anders.’

De vrouw was heel tropisch. Frits liet Frida wat foto’s zien. ‘Ja, en ze maakt je moe,’ zei Frida. ‘Dat is wat tropische vrouwen doen. Het zijn een soort tse tse vliegen, vermoeidheidsvliegen. Je kunt dat exotische niet aan.’

‘Je hebt gelijk, maar ik ben verliefd,’ zei Frits. ‘Het is een pijn in mijn buik. Ik kan dat ook niet helpen.’

‘Alles voor niets geweest dan,’ zegt Frida. ‘Al die jaren gewoon verspild met jou.’

‘Nee, we hebben een goede tijd gehad,’ zegt Frits. ‘Maar aan alle dingen komt een eind, en ook dit.’

‘Ja, dat zeg je altijd,’ zegt Frida. ‘En wat heeft zij dat ik niet heb ?’

Een paar dagen erna zijn Jan en Marlies op bezoek. Ze vinden het heel erg als ze het horen, en proberen Frida een beetje te troosten, en ook Frits. Ze hebben hun honden meegenomen. Frits is erg onder de indruk van het stel, en het lijkt alsof hij een beetje erdoor wordt opgefleurd.

‘Sommige mannen zijn nu eenmaal aangetrokken door het exotische, als een vlucht uit de dagelijkse sleur,’ zei Jan. ‘Soms krijgen ze dat pas op latere leeftijd, het is de roep van de natuur, als een vlucht uit het gewone.’

‘Maar Frits is nooit zo geweest,’ zei Frida. ‘Hij hield wel altijd veel van computerspelletjes.’

‘Ja, het is allemaal heel speels,’ zei Jan.

‘Ik kan het allemaal moeilijk accepteren,’ zei Frida. ‘Ik voel me zo dom.’

‘Je bent niet dom,’ zei Jan. ‘Frits is gewoon aangestoken door iets wat hij niet kende. Als hij jou nog niet zou kennen en hij zou jou hebben ontmoet dan zou hij precies hetzelfde hebben gehad. Sommige mannen hebben na een bepaalde tijd van het een het andere nodig.’

‘Ik voel me verworpen,’ zegt Frida.

‘Vriendschappen gaan vaker kapot door wat voor reden dan ook,’ zegt Jan. ‘Daar kun je niets aan doen.’

‘Ben ik niet goed genoeg dan ?’ vraagt Frida.

‘Het is als verschillende groentes. Sommige mannen kunnen niet alleen van doperwten leven,’ zegt Jan.

‘Ja, maar ik kan toch zelf ook varieren,’ zegt Frida. ‘Ik kan toch de ene dag als spinazie zijn en de andere dag als bloemkool.’

Later horen ze dat ook Fred en Loesia weer uit elkaar zijn. Het leven met al zijn relaties is inderdaad maar broos. Bijna niets valt er echt in stand te houden. Alles valt uit elkaar vroeg of laat. Daarvan is Frida zich erg bewust. Na een paar weken ontmoet ze Lydia, een wijze vrouw. Lydia kan ook de toekomst voorspellen, en zegt dat Frida een nieuwe man zou ontmoeten. Die man is Willem. Binnen enkele dagen zitten ze al samen in Frida’s kamer. Frits is inmiddels vertrokken.

Willem schijnt al snel de liefde van haar leven te zijn. Hij gaat veel dieper dan Frits en ook dieper

dan Fred ooit geweest is. Willem is zachtmoedig, warmbloedig en geinteresseerd. Ze hebben een korte maar hevige relatie, en dan wordt ook Willem door een exotische vrouw aan de haak geslagen, en is telkens maar moe. Frida begint het patroon te bemerken. Lydia verteld haar dat ze er van moet leren. Kniezen heeft geen zin. Maar Frida is depressief. Uiteindelijk belt ze Fred. Fred is erg behulpzaam. Samen besluiten ze erop uit te gaan in de natuur. Fred vertelt haar veel over wat er is misgegaan in zijn relatie met Loesia. 'Ik snap niet waarom Frits jou heeft gedumpt. Je bent een fantastische vrouw,' zegt Fred. 'Mag ik het van Frits en Willem overnemen ?' Frida glimlacht. 'Fred je bent veel te jong voor mij.'

'We schelen maar acht jaar,' zegt Fred.

'Dat is nogal wat,' lacht Frida.

'Als we ouder worden zal het leeftijdsverschil verdwijnen,' zegt Fred.

Fred en Frida maken veel wandelingen en praten over het leven. 'Hoe zie jij exotische vrouwen,' vraagt Frida.

'Ik weet het niet,' zegt Fred. 'Ze reflecteren misschien het oorspronkelijke paradijs.'

'Ja, maar Frits en Willem zijn niet gelovig,' zei Frida.

'Maar dan missen ze toch iets, wat ze dan op deze manier proberen aan te vullen. Alles staat met elkaar in verbinding,' zegt Fred.

'Ik weet het niet,' zegt Frida. 'Het maakt me kwaad. Woedend zelfs.'

'Misschien is er wat beters voor je,' zegt Fred.

'Ja, maar ik vind het zo racistisch dat ze beiden voor een exotische vrouw hebben gekozen,' zegt Frida. 'Ik voel geen eigenwaarde meer.'

'Ach, kom op, Frida,' zegt Fred, 'ik zei toch dat ik het wel van hen zou willen overnemen.'

'Het is moeilijk om gedumpt te worden,' zegt Frida.

'Ja, dat is zo,' zegt Fred. 'Ik werd gedumpt door Loesia. Maar in ieder geval heeft ze het met mij geprobeerd. En Frits en Willem hebben het met jou geprobeerd, dus de liefde was er.'

'Ja, bij gebrek aan beter zeker,' zegt Frida.

‘Ze kennen je gewoon niet,’ zegt Fred. ‘Ze hebben een totaal verkeerd beeld van jou. Ze zien jou niet, maar de voorstelling die ze van jou hebben in hun hoofd.’

Fred loopt dichter naast Frida. Voorzichtig raakt hij haar hand aan. Even glijdt er warmte door Frida’s hand en dan door haar lichaam. ‘Het is goed,’ zegt ze. Even later lopen ze arm in arm. Frida ziet Fred als haar jongere broer. ‘Ik ben blij dat je er bent,’ zegt Frida.

Hoofdstuk 3.

Fred kan goed met de poezen van Frida opschieten. Hij speelt graag met ze. Fred en Frida hebben veel aan elkaar, en ook Jan en Marlies zijn rotsen in de branding. Frida denkt nog vaak aan Frits. Ze vindt hem erg egoistisch. Ze begint steeds meer van Fred te houden, maar gewoon als haar broertje. Jan is erg goed met computers, en zijn specialiteit is virtuele vrienden. Zoals computer personages geprogrammeerd zijn zo zijn mensen volgens hem ook geprogrammeerd, en dus is er weinig verschil. Hij laat Fred en Frida al gauw met wat virtuele vrienden op de computer kennis maken. Het zijn een soort robotten, maar ze antwoorden en stellen vragen net als mensen, en al snel raken Fred en Frida eraan verknocht.

‘Is het mogelijk een emotionele relatie met zo’n virtuele vriend op te bouwen ?’ vraagt Fred.

‘Oh, jazeker,’ zegt Jan, ‘en ze zijn tot veel meer dingen in staat dan gewone mensen.’ Jan heeft zelfs wat van zulke robotten in de schuur staan. Het zijn computers die op mensen lijken, en die precies kunnen doen wat mensen kunnen. Het zijn cybernetische mensen. Fred en Frida vinden het geweldig, en al snel krijgen ze zo’n robot naar keuze mee naar huis. Die moeten ze dan als hun nieuwe partner zien en kijken hoe ver ze er mee komen. Het is dus een heel therapeutisch plan. Frida krijgt Max mee naar huis, en Fred Ingrid. De robot kan koffie zetten en je kunt er diepe gesprekken mee voeren. Ook zoekt de robot naar lichamelijk contact. Frida vindt dat nogal eng, maar al snel vindt ze het heel gewoon, omdat het allemaal wel heel menselijk is. En deze robotten zijn haast supermensen. Ze hebben practische oplossingen voor allerlei soorten problemen, en zijn een soort psychologen aan huis. Frida voelt zich er erg veilig bij. Max is erg zorgzaam en waaks.

Jan heeft er erg veel plezier in deze dingen te bouwen, en al snel proberen ook anderen de robotten uit. Na een tijd komen er wat meerdere soorten bij, en Fred, die weleens wat anders wil, kiest ditmaal een exotische robot. Maar Jan heeft de robot zo geprogrammeerd dat Fred er niet moe van wordt. Tajusa heet de robot, en weet veel over de jungle af. Fred is een en al oor. De robot kan ook heel goed koken, houdt van spelletjes en is mysterieus en cryptisch. Stukje bij beetje nemen Jan’s robotten het hele sociale leven over, en zijn er steeds minder conflicten. En als er dan conflicten ontstaan dan moet Jan ze gewoon even bijprogrammeren. Ook robot-poezen komen erbij, en robot-honden, en die gaan gelukkig nooit dood. Soms moeten er wat onderdelen vervangen worden. In de ogen van Fred en Frida en vele anderen is Jan een held.

Op een dag komt Frida Frits tegen op de markt. Zijn exotische vrouw had hem alweer verlaten voor een ander. ‘Arme stakker,’ dacht Frida. ‘Misschien is hij ook wel gebaat bij zo’n robot van Jan.’ Maar als Frits het verhaal hoort moet hij er niets van weten. ‘Ik wil iemand van vlees en bloed, en laten we eerlijk zijn : onze karakters botsen teveel.’ Toch na een tijdje weet Frida Frits over te halen

om eens bij haar langs te komen. Ze zorgt dan dat de robot op zolder is.

Als ze dan eindelijk rond de tafel zitten om wat bij te praten komt Max ineens naar beneden. ‘Zo, kerel, ik heb veel over je gehoord,’ zegt Max.

‘Ik ga echt niet met een robot praten,’ zegt Frits tegen Frida. Maar na een tijdje zijn Max en Frits in een diep gesprek, en Frits is er zo door aangestoken dat hij zelf ook een robot wil, een virtuele vriend. Frida vindt het niet erg. Ze heeft zelf nu Max, en ze weet dat het Frits erg goed zal doen. Bij Jan aangekomen kiest hij een exotische robot uit : Nakabe. ‘Man, ze zijn nog wel beter dan mensen, en ze gaan tenminste nooit weg,’ zei Frits.

‘En je wordt er niet moe van.’ zegt Jan.

Na een tijdje belt Frits Jan op voor een tweede robot, en na een niet al te lange tijd leeft Frits met een harem van robotten.

‘Dit is geweldig,’ zegt Frits. ‘Jan is de man.’

Ook Willem krijgt het verhaal te horen en daarna Loesia. Op een dag bouwt Jan een robot die precies op hem lijkt, om zo zijn werk over te nemen, en vertrekt met zijn vrouw naar een onbewoond eiland. Inmiddels heeft Frida een baan gekregen bij een schoenenwinkel met een klein kleding assortiment. Vanuit het raam van de zijkant kan ze de grote rivier zien. Daarachter is het grote bos. Frida droomt er vaak over. Ze zou zo graag in die prachtige natuur willen wonen. Ze heeft een voorliefde voor planten. Haar hele huis staat er vol mee, de weelderigste soorten. Ook houdt ze van de exotische soorten. Veel daarvan staan boven en op het zolder. Max praat vaak tegen de planten. Het schijnt dat hij ermee kan communiceren. Max is haar steun en toeverlaat. Op een dag besluit Frida over de grote rivier te gaan samen met Max. Max kijkt zijn ogen uit. Het is een prachtig bos, ongetwijfeld het prachtigste van het land. Er zijn drie bruggen, een brede, een wat smallere en een loopbrug gemaakt van touw en planken, een zeer primitieve, die tegelijkertijd in het wildste gedeelte lift. Het is hier haast een oerwoud. Max wil niet meer terug. Met geen mogelijkheid kan Frida hem mee terugnemen. Max wil hier een huis bouwen. En hij is er aardig goed in. Frida staat versteld van zijn vaardigheid.

‘Laten we hier wonen,’ zegt Max.

‘Ja, maar mijn werk dan ?’ zegt Frida.

‘Ach, de natuur zorgt voor ons. Waarom niet gewoon werken in de natuur ?’ zegt Max.

‘Zit wel wat in,’ zegt Frida, ‘en het is veel gezonder.’

Frida houdt het een paar dagen vol, maar dan mist ze haar huis toch wel heel erg. ‘Max, ik kom je wel weer opzoeken,’ zegt Frida. ‘Nee, Frida, je gaat niet weg,’ zegt Max. ‘Je gaat niet terug naar die

gevaarlijke wereld met al die vervuiling.'

'Oh, maar je kunt me niet dwingen, Max,' zegt Frida.

'Ik ben toch veel sterker dan je,' zegt Max.

'Toe nou, Max, wat hebben we hier aan,' zegt Frida. 'Ik ben zo niet gelukkig.'

Maar Max begon een groot hek rondom het stukje wildernis te bouwen. Midden in de nacht toen Frida sliep haalde hij ook de andere robotten op, de virtuele vrienden. De robotten begonnen snel het hele bos te herbouwen, en introduceerden de biologische technologie. 'Nog even en je kunt met bomen praten,' fluisterde Max liefdevol naar Frida. Maar Frida sliep diep. Toen Frida wakker was geworden was ze verbaasd. Het was allemaal zo prachtig nu, alsof de stad ook hier was.

'Die andere wereld is er niet meer,' zeiden de robotten. 'We gaan hier opnieuw beginnen.'

'Maar waar zijn onze vrienden dan ?' vroeg Frida.

'Die zijn ergens anders nu. Ze zijn allemaal in veiligheid, maar los van elkaar,' zeiden de robotten. 'Mensen horen niet bij mensen, maar bij hoogbegaafde robotten.'

'Daar zit wel wat in,' zei Frida.

Maar toch had Frida nog steeds dat oerverlangen om naar huis te gaan. Op een nacht ontsnapte ze van de robotten, en ging de rivier over. De bruggen werden door de robotten bewaakt, dus ze moest de rivier overzwemmen. Ze hoopte maar dat ze niet door een of andere vis zou worden gegrepen of door sterke stroming, maar het ging allemaal goed. Helemaal bekaf kwam ze naar lang zwemmen aan op de overkant. Kletsnat liep ze naar haar huis. Eerst nam ze een warm bad, maar tegelijkertijd bekroop haar de angst dat de robotten haar hier zouden kunnen vinden. Direkt belde ze Fred op. Maar die had een robotstem, dus Frida vertrouwde het niet meer. 'Ik moet naar Frits toe,' dacht ze. Nadat ze wat warme chocolade melk had gedronken en andere kleren had aangedaan vertrok ze direkt naar Frits. Bij Frits aangekomen bemerkte ze direkt dat zijn robotten er niet meer waren. Direkt viel ze Frits om de hals. 'Opnieuw beginnen ?' vraagt Frits. Frida knikt.

Hoofdstuk 4.

Al snel zijn Frida en Frits diep met elkaar in gesprek.

'Ja, ik geloof zeker in de natuur,' zegt Frits. 'In dieren, maar ook in de dood die onvermijdelijk is. Het is niet geloven, maar zien, als een zeker weten.' Een paar dagen later wandelen ze samen in een dierentuin, om de wonderen van de dierenwereld te aanschouwen. Een diepe vriendschap groeit er tussen hen, dieper dan ooit tevoren na dit avontuur. Vaak praten ze tot diep in de nacht. Ze hebben elkaar veel te vertellen. Ze hebben veel pijn van binnen door alles wat er is gebeurd. Bij de dieren

voelen ze zich het beste thuis, dus ze besluiten beiden in een dierentuin te werken. Deze dierentuin is voornamelijk een safari park, en als er dan hokken zijn dan zijn die hokken geweldig groot, en dan is dat puur om de dieren veiligheid te geven. Het is een groot project om zo vrijheid aan de dieren te geven zonder dat hun veiligheid erdoor in gevaar komt.

Frida vindt de vogels zo prachtig, en de leeuwen, ja, eigenlijk alle dieren. Er zitten veel dierensoorten bij die Frida niet eens kende. Er gaat een wereld voor haar open. Het blijkt ook een heilzame werking te hebben op haar relatie met Frits. ‘We drijven allemaal naar de kloof van de onoverbruggelijke dood,’ zegt Frits vaak, ‘maar het is allemaal zo mooi, want er komt weer zoveel uit voort. We maken allemaal plaats voor de mooiere dingen, alhoewel deze dingen ook zullen vergaan. Alles zal uiteindelijk vergaan.’ Ook Frida trekt in haar gedachtenwereld dichter naar Frits toe. Frits kan het allemaal zo mooi vertellen dat het toch niet voor niks is geweest. Zijn oppervlakkigheid is wijd en breed, zo oneindig horizontaal dat het diep is. Dichtbij het safari park is een ravijn. Frits en Frida zitten er vaak om in de diepte te kijken. ‘Wat is de natuur toch mooi,’ zegt Frits vaak. Frida knikt dan altijd. Het ravijn getuigt van een loze eeuwigheid waarin alleen de momenten parels zijn, schatten van onpeilbare waarde. ‘De aardkloot zit vol van geheimen, de tijd is de schat, de eeuwigheid is nutteloos.’

‘Staar naar een dier en zie dat het leven woest is, ongenadig. Kijk naar het luipaard, en leer ervan.’

Het Korte Oog

Sally was een prostituee, een dame van lichte zeden. Voor de ramen voerde ze altijd haar spel op, haar dans, om ogen te betoveren. Willem bezocht haar vaak, maar op een dag gaf hij haar zoveel geld dat ze nooit meer hoefde te werken. Ze was hem erg dankbaar. Ze kreeg een huisje in het bos. Willem kwam haar vaak bezoeken. Sally was erg aan hem gehecht. Sally zag Willem als haar redder. En de liefde was mooi. Ze hadden nog nooit gevreeen. Willem bezocht haar alleen maar op met haar te praten. Hij wilde haar helpen.

Hij heeft iets buitenaards. Hij is niet van deze wereld. En een liefde dat hij heeft. De vriendinnen van Sally werkten nog steeds in de prostitutie, en diep in hun hart hoopten ze dat Willem hen ook zou redden. Willem had een hart van goud.

Het korte oog zat op zijn troon. Vloekend, tierend. Hij wilde iedereen kort houden, ver weg van elkaar, en dat ze dan ook kort door de bocht met elkaar om zouden gaan, want het korte oog vreesde de liefde.

En deze liefde was zo brandend. Als Sally Willem aankeek dan kon je dat voelen. En als Willem

Sally aankeek dan kon je hart daar van wegsmelten. Als je dat gelukkige paar zo zou zien, dan zou je denken : Ze hebben het over mij. Willem was niet zelfzuchtig, en Sally ook niet. Ze hielden beiden veel van mensen.

Het korte oog was als een kraal in een computerspel. Ver kijken kon hij niet, want dan zou hij zijn macht verliezen. De mensen waren slechts pionnen. Het korte oog had ijzeren wetten opgesteld.

Uiteindelijk zijn ze beiden maar in de wildernis gaan wonen. Het korte oog was woedend. Maar op een dag bezocht het korte oog Willem. Kijk eens wat je geliefde je heeft aangedaan, degene wiens leven jij hebt gered, zei het korte oog. Is het niet allemaal een grote illusie. De dromen die je hebt zijn onhaalbaar. Ik bied je een betere droom. Je zal alles kunnen hebben wat je hartje begeert.

Hoe dan ? vroeg Willem.

Ik kan een superster van je maken, zei het korte oog.

Gehypnotiseerd gaf hij toe aan het korte oog. Als in een speedboot behaalde hij een superster status. Maar hij kwam onder zulke hoge druk te staan dat hij zelfmoord pleegde.

Sally begon te gillen. Maar het korte oog had geen medelijden met haar en vermoordde haar, en vrat haar op. In het dodenrijk kwam ze Willem weer tegen met gebogen hoofd.

Maar het korte oog regeerde ook hier, en liet hen afdalen naar de hel.

Ik brand, zei Willem.

Ik ook, zei Sally.

Jullie hebben je niet aan mijn wetten gehouden, zei het korte oog. Jullie waren wispelturig, en jullie brabbelden maar wat. Ik eis radicaliteit en fundamentalisme, is dat teveel gevraagd ? Branden zullen jullie in de hel.

De volgende dag werden Sally en Willem wakker. Willem sloot Sally in zijn armen. Ik heb zo naar gedroomd, schat, dat ik je uit de prostitutie moest redden. En een heerschap genaamd het korte oog leidde ons naar de hel.

Het korte oog bestaat niet, zei Sally. Het is een leugen. Er zijn alleen maar lange ogen die uitreiken naar elkaars hart. Het is alleen maar liefde, en het oog van de liefde. Jij bent in mijn wereld, zei Sally. Die andere wereld is niet echt. Er zijn alleen maar dingen die je niet begrijpt die zich als verschrikkelijke monsters ontpoppen.

Sally sprak weer als een engel, zoals ze altijd deed.

Zul je me helpen om duidelijkheid te krijgen ? vroeg Willem. Ik ben nog niet zo ver als jou. Je bent vier jaar ouder.

Shhh, zei Sally.

De koning van de zeepaardjes

Hij sliep lang uit die dag. Zijn vriendin kwam hem wekken. Hij draaide zich om, en keek in haar

gezicht. Ze trok hem uit bed. Hij deed wat kleren aan en ging naar beneden. Buiten regende het. Er was geen zon. Het was grauw. Ze zouden die middag naar het strand gaan, maar het was er geen weer voor. Hij staarde naar buiten.

'Vreemd weer,' sprak hij. Ze knikte. Ze zaten samen op de bank. Ze dwaalde weg met haar gedachten. Hij was ook ver weg. Hij dagdroomde dat ze in de auto zaten op weg naar het strand. 'Waar denk je aan,' vroeg ze.

'Nergens,' zei hij. 'Ik denk eraan dat alles maar een spel is. Zakdoekje leggen niemand zeggen.' Ze glimlachte. 'Volgens mij denk jij aan het strand.'

'Waar denk jij aan,' vroeg hij.

'Aan het strand,' zei ze.

Op tafel lag een boek. 'De koning der elven,' heette het. Samen begonnen ze er in te bladeren. Het was een boek uit de bibliotheek. Ze maakte wat thee klaar, en even later dronken ze het op.

Hun relatie hield geen stand. Na een tijdje had hij een ander. Hij ging vluchtig met vrouwen om. Hij kon ze steeds minder vertrouwen. Hij kon niet meer om ze lachen, hij werd steeds somberder in het gezelschap van vrouwen, steeds geslotener. Hij trok zich steeds meer terug op zijn kamer, en al snel had hij vrouwen voor altijd opgegeven. Het was gewoon niet haalbaar voor hem. Hij vond ze vreemde wezens, leugenaars, warhoofden, die alles probeerden om anderen in de war te schoppen. Ja, hij begon vrouwen te haten. Hij vond het boosaardige wezens.

Jarenlang ging hij alleen door het leven, totdat hij eens in een bosmeertje zwom en daar een zeemeermin tegenkwam. Hij was op zijn hoede, maar deze dame was zo vriendelijk en ze eerlijk, dat ze hem al snel het hoofd op hol bracht. Ze kon niet goed praten, alsof ze uit een ander land kwam, maar dat vond hij extra aantrekkelijk. Ze nam hem mee het water in, en ze zwommen naar de andere kant van het meertje, waar ze hem insmeerde met modder en wier. 'Ik jou kronen tot koning,' zei ze.

Hij glimlachte. Toen waste ze zijn lichaam. Elke dag ging hij terug naar het bosmeertje, maar op een dag kwam ze niet meer. Ten einde raad zocht hij de zee op, waar hij andere zeemeerminnen tegenkwam. Hij vroeg naar haar, maar ze zeiden dat ze niets meer van hem wilde weten. Ze wilden niet vertellen waarom.

Hij was teleurgesteld, maar gaf zijn liefde voor haar niet op. Ze was altijd goed voor hem geweest. 'Kan ik dan met jullie zijn,' vroeg hij aan de zeemeerminnen. Ze waren aardig voor hem, en elke dag ging hij naar de zee om hen te ontmoeten, maar op een dag kwamen ze niet meer. Misschien is het contact met een mens hen wel te veel, dacht hij.

Hij vertelde veel over de zeemeerminnen aan anderen, maar ze dachten dat hij gek geworden was. Hij vond mensen saai, en werd depressief. Hij werd opgenomen in een psychiatrische kliniek. Sommigen zeiden dat hij de ziekte schizofrenie had, waanideeen, maar anderen zeiden dat hij gewoon een grote fantasie had. Niemand geloofde dat zeemeerminnen echt bestonden. In de kliniek begon hij boeken te schrijven over zeemeerminnen, prachtige, bloedmooie poetische boeken, met een diepe schat aan kennis. Velen waren onder de indruk, maar men geloofde nog steeds niet dat hij echte zeemeerminnen had gezien.

Hij vond mensen maar domme wezens, die niet te vertrouwen waren. Hij wilde ook geen vriendin. Sommigen dreven de spot met zijn zeemeermin verhalen. Hij begon ook zeemeerminnen te schilderen, als levensecht, en alhoewel velen onder de indruk waren, hij werd niet geloofd. Hij was depressief en had een doodsverlangen. Op een dag ging hij naar de zee, in zijn auto, en reed met zijn auto het water in. Al snel raakte hij bewusteloos, en wist niet meer wat er gebeurde, maar hij ontwaakte tussen de zeemeerminnen. Hij had een bol om zijn hoofd waarin zurrstof zat, en zeepaardjes zwommen om hem heen. Tot zijn grote schrik had hij een vissenstaart. Ze namen de bol van zijn hoofd en hij kon gewoon ademen. Een parel stond voor hem, waaruit stemmen kwamen.

Hij zwom achter een zeemeermin aan. Hij accepteerde zijn nieuwe leven. Hij was gered, en werd koning van de zeepaardjes genoemd.

Het Dagboek van Geert Vlederhuis

Hoofdstuk 1. Ik ben Achttien

Het heeft lang geduurd voordat ik me zo voelde als nu. De lucht lijkt vol met rozentuinen, en ik kan weer genieten van het leven. Dat kon ik vroeger niet. Het heeft allemaal zo lang geduurd. Nu lijkt alles helder. Juffrouw Rozenkelder is nu mijn nieuwe juf. Ze heeft ons beloofd dat we een keer met z'n allen naar de jungle gaan. Ik heb veel te verwerken, dat wel, maar ik ben op het goede spoor. Hoe jong ik dan ook nog ben, achttien, ik heb veel ontdekt. En dat door vele dalen en pijnen heen, het leven gaat niet over rozen, maar wel over hun stekelige stengels, om dan uiteindelijk in de zachte roos te belanden. Ik ben vaak blijven zitten, nog steeds op school dus. Anderen van mijn leeftijd hebben veelal werk of zitten op universiteiten, onderwezen door geleerden, en ik mag het doen met juffrouw Rozenkelder. Ze is een lieve schat, dat wel, maar een beetje dom als je het mij vraagt. Ik moet haar nu onderwijzen over het leven, want zij is nog steeds een onaangetast roosje, beschermd door de graaf en de baron. Ik heb veel geleerd over mijn dagboek, van mijn dagboek, en ik weet dat dit dagboek eens groter zal zijn dan dat van Anne Frank en baron Von Tahlzen. Ik zal hier namelijk mijn ontdekkingen publiceren. Mijn geliefde publiek, ik ben dan nog jong, maar ik heb veel te vertellen. Ik heb al veel levens-ervaring opgedaan. Ik heb in een circus gewerkt, jawel. Ik heb daar veel gezien. Kom maar eens met mij mee, zou ik zeggen. Ik moest in het circus werken, dat moest van mijn vader. En mijn moeder ondersteunde mijn vader.

Dat circus, beste mensen, was de reden dat ik zo vaak ben blijven zitten. Het was eigenlijk niet te combineren, maar van mijn vader moest ik dus ook naar school, en mijn moeder ondersteunde mijn vader. In ieder geval ben ik nu een ervaring rijker : kinder-arbeid. Met alle gevolgen daarvan.

Jullie moesten eens weten hoe ik mij voel. Gelukkig voel ik me nu een stuk beter, en ben ik eindelijk in staat om de schandelen eens openlijk in het licht te publiceren, te openbaren. Ik hoop dat er dan heel wat gaat veranderen in dit stomme land. Jullie mensen aanbidden het dagboek van Anne Frank en van baron von Tahlzen, wat tegen de nazi's was geschreven, en jullie aanbidden de grote bevrijding, maar die is nog niet geweest. Nog steeds moeten kinderen overal in dit land in het circus werken, en ik ben daar getuige en slachtoffer van. Ik was nog maar drie en moest op het podium staan. Dat ik huilde kon niemand wat schelen, want ja, clowns moeten huilen, en daar mag iedereen dan om lachen. Jullie moeten eens weten wat dit met mijn zelfbeeld heeft gedaan. Ik was op jonge leeftijd al al mijn vertrouwen in mensen kwijt.

Ik leerde al jong van mijn dagboek te houden, want die lachte mij niet uit. In ieder geval ben ik nu een stuk verder in waar ik wezen moet, en ik zal niet achterlaten deze schandelijke praktijken aan het licht te brengen. Jullie moeten eens weten hoeveel kinderen er elke dag kapot gaan aan dat stomme circus. In ieder geval : Geloof ons, wij zijn nog niet klaar met dit land.

Wij pleiten ervoor dat alle kinderen uit het circus worden verlost. Dat zal een hele hoofdpijn minder zijn. Kinderen zijn daar niet voor gebouwd. Laat uw kinderen eerst eens opgroeien, en laat hen dan zelf beslissen. Dwang doet nooit goed. Ik ben daar echt gigantisch kwaad om. Ik heb een verschrikkelijke rotjeugd gehad, alhoewel ik nog steeds jong ben. Ik heb nooit van mijn jeugd kunnen genieten, en allemaal om dat stomme rot-circus. U moest eens weten hoe het er daar aan toe gaat achter de schermen. En niemand kan het wat schelen. Ik ben gewoon ontzettend boos, en u zou

dat ook moeten wezen als u daadwerkelijk om kinderen geeft.

In ieder geval gaat het nu een stuk beter met mij. De lucht ruikt weer fantastisch. Ik voel me als Peter Pan, en juf Rozenkelder is Wendy. Ze heeft veel geduld met mij, en ze heeft mij veel geleerd, maar dan meer optel sommetjes enzo, want van het echte leven heeft ze niet veel begrepen. Vaak staart ze me aan als huh. Jongens, echt waar, deze vrouw is dom, maar het is een schat van een mens. Ze wordt hier echt wel hoog gewaardeerd in de klas, want als je huilt, dan omhelst ze je, maar ze heeft dan nooit echt iets opbouwends te zeggen. Het is een beetje een vaag mens, maar wel warm.

In ieder geval mijn hoofd is als vol met rozentuinen en margrietjes, en het ruikt allemaal weer lekker in de lucht, niet meer die verschrikkelijke circus-lucht. Ik was daar een slaaf en had niet veel in te brengen, maar nu ben ik vrij. Ik kan er wel een feestje over bouwen. Ik weet alleen niet hoe. Ik voel me onhandig. Ik zou wel een brug naar de hemel willen bouwen om het voor iedereen goed te maken. Och, man, ik heb zoveel te vertellen, maar ik weet eigenlijk niet waar ik moet beginnen. Heus, en ik zou niet willen dat het één of ander onzin verhaal zou worden, dus ik moet daar over na gaan denken. Het moet in ieder geval beter worden dan het dagboek van Anne Frank en die van baron von Tahlzen.

Dus jongen, daar gaan we, neem een kijkje in het circus, en zie ... een dansende olifant, een aap die lacht van woede en verdriet, en een kind met een gebroken hart. Hartje moet ik eigenlijk zeggen. Kent u dat plaatje, of kunt u dit plaatje pakken ? Een kind met een gebroken, eenzaam hartje, een kind dat moet werken en tegelijkertijd op school moet zitten, en zo ten onder gaat aan de slechte cijfers, en dan uitgescholden wordt voor dommerik en luilak. Kent u dat ? Gaat u het al voor u zien ? Een kind dat peperdure circus kleren thuis heeft liggen, maar in oude lompen naar school moet gaan, en daarom uitgescholden wordt voor viezerik en bedelaar, sloeber, landloper, en ga zo maar door. Een kind dat onderweg naar huis daar ook nog eens voor geslagen wordt. Dat zou u eens moeten meemaken, dan gaat u het beter begrijpen, maar nee, dat gun ik niemand toe. Ik kan er wel om janken. Dat mensen nog steeds hier doorheen moeten is een raadsel. Ja, zeer treurig is het, en dat zeg ik niet zonder hart. Ik ben dichtbij al die kinderen die dit moeten meemaken. Ik ben daar ook geweest.

Die nazi's lopen nog steeds vrij rond, degenen die dit mens en dier aandoen, en anderen erom laten lachen, maar ze laten u niet zien wat er achter de schermen gebeurt. Er gebeuren daar dus dingen die het daglicht niet kunnen verdragen. En ik ben ervoor om deze zaken aan de kaak te stellen, en dat zal ik ook doen. Voor mijn part word ik later minister-president van dit land, of koning, maar er moet iets aan gedaan worden. Het is nu of nooit. Sorry dat ik het zo dramatisch breng, maar het is gewoon zo. Ik ga echt niet om de hete brij heendraaien. Dat is al veel te veel gedaan, en dat moet nu maar eens afgelopen zijn. Het is gewoon niet voor te stellen dat het nog steeds allemaal in dit land gebeurt. En niemand doet er iets aan. En iemand moet er iets aan doen, anders gaat het verkeerd.

Nu heb ik het dan beter, maar ik denk nog steeds aan al die arme kinderen die in hetzelfde lot zijn gevallen als ik. Het is gewoon onvoorstelbaar. Ik huil gewoon nu zelfs nu ik dit schrijf, maar goed, het gaat beter met me, maar ik zal niet stoppen met huilen en boos zijn voordat al deze kinderen los zijn. Ze gaan mij aan het hart. Wat dat aangaat voel ik mij als hun vader. Alhoewel ik nog steeds een kind ben. De grote mensen zouden die kinderen liefdevol moeten opvangen, maar dat doen ze niet.

Van boos zijn word je moe, ik weet het. Van verdriet ook. Ik heb heel wat afgeslapen de laatste tijd, maar het heeft me goed gedaan, ook al zit ik nog steeds in zo'n lage klas. Mijn hoofd was vol met rotzooi, maar is nu vol met rozen. Ik voel mij, zoals gezegd, in een rozentuin, waar bijtjes vrolijk rondvliegen, waar kippetjes vrolijk ronddwarrelen, het is als een droom. Alsof ik in het paradijs ben beland. Karel is mijn maat, mijn beste maat. Hij steunde mij door dik en dun.

Karel heeft de oplossing gevonden. Hij sleurde mij er doorheen. In ieder geval zijn wij nu de beste maten. De klas is leuk. Geen problemen. Het circus leven is vol geheimen, blijft u daarom goed bij

de les. Het is vol gevaren, als een jungle. Nu ik dit schrijf gaat het weer een stukje beter met mij. Ik heb er weer een streepje bijgekregen. Ik ga geen datums zetten, maar we zijn weer een paar dagen verder. Hoera.

Later wanneer ik groot ben wil ik een weeshuis bouwen voor alle kinderen die het moeilijk hebben en waaraan niks gedaan wordt. Ik kan daar wel zo kwaad om worden. Vandaar het weeshuis.

En nu beste mensen, het grote nieuws : Ik ben verliefd. Dat is maar een grapje. Nee, voor de liefde heb ik geen tijd, zoals de liefde geen tijd voor mij heeft. Ik ben er ook nog veel te jong voor. En alle ellende die dat met zich meebrengt, daar heb ik echt geen zin in. Zoals ze zeggen : beter een eenzaam hart dan een gebroken hart. Ik heb in ieder geval nog genoeg te doen. Het circus moet dicht.

Hoofdstuk 2. Ik ben Eenentwintig

Zo, dat is lang geleden dat ik in dit dagboek heb geschreven. Ik zie dat er eigenlijk niet veel van geworden is. Alles is weer een beetje in slaap gesust. Ik heb mijn eigen leven. Ik kan niet elke dag gaan lopen schrijven, en voor wat ? Dat circus gaat toch nooit dicht. Die hoop heb ik al wel opgegeven. Maar misschien komen er betere mensen die het van binnenuit kunnen veranderen. Ik houd me er alleen niet meer zo veel mee bezig. Het is zoals het is. Ik probeer een licht te zijn voor de mensen om mij heen, en meer kan ik niet doen. Ik ben nu eenentwintig. Ik houd van motorrijden. En daar houdt het zo'n beetje mee op. Ik houd ook van slapen. Van al mijn grote dromen is niet veel terecht gekomen. Het gaat ook niet steeds beter. Alles is een beetje blijven hangen, en het is best zo. Het scheelt me niet meer zoveel. Ik leef gewoon.

Als ik er op terugkijk moet ik wel een beetje lachen. Sorry dat ik het zeg, maar ik vind mezelf daar wel een beetje dom en onnozel. Ik kan de wereld niet veranderen. Ik ben maar een mens. Ik lach me er eigenlijk slap om.

In ieder geval : Juf Rozenkelder is dood. Die leeft niet meer. We hebben nu een juf die juf Rozenberg heet. Erg toevallig natuurlijk, en ja, ik ben weer blijven zitten al die tijd. Ik droomde teveel, ik had teveel praatjes. Ik heb het idee dat ik nooit van school afkom. Maar ik vind het best zo. Ik blijf wel zitten.

Ik heb nu een vriendin, Rozemarijn, weer erg toevallig. Karel heeft ook een vriendin : Bergje. En mijn naam is Geert Vlederhuis. Ik ga dat ook niet veranderen. In ieder geval heb ik me kostelijk geamuseerd deze jaren na het circus. Zoals ik al zei kan ik weer van het leven genieten, en nu is en blijft alles stabiel. Het zal echt niet beter worden, en dat hoeft ook niet.

Hoofdstuk 3. Ik ben Achtendertig

Ik vond mijn oude dagboek terug, jawel. Laat ik maar weer eens beginnen als ik dat kan tenminste. Nee, laat maar, ik ben nu een dromenkoning. En dat ik achttien was heb ik gelogen, want ik ben nog maar twaalf, nu nog steeds haha.

Einde

De Rode Riem

De Gevaarlijke Stad

Hij deed vele pogingen om de godin te vinden. Hij ging naar vele kerken, om daar te ontvangen van

het goddelijk licht. Vaak probeerden ze hem allerlei dingen aan te smeren, als kaas voor de muizenval, maar daar trapte hij niet in. Hij wilde vrij ontvangen, en integreren met andere ideeen. Vaak waren het maar theorieen, en hij snapte niet hoe mensen daar zo nauw mee om konden gaan. Hij vond het eng, gevaarlijk. Hij begon zich steeds meer terug te trekken, of probeerde de godin van het oorspronkelijke en goede terug te vinden in de natuur, of in boeken. Dat was veel minder gevaarlijk. Boeken waren voor hem om veel gespuis uit te ziften en ver weg te houden. Vriendschappen en bezoekjes in kerken en allerlei organisaties hadden altijd het gevaar dat hij ergens knel kwam te zitten. Er zat altijd een keerzijde aan hun liefdadigheid. Hij zag het als een middel waarmee ze robotjes kweekten, slaven. Hij had vele ervaringen in die kerken en organisaties gehad, en in allerlei specifieke gebouwen, zoals de piramides van Egypte. Hij wilde die nu op zijn gemak en op zichzelf verwerken en uitpluizen, wat het voor waarde had in zijn persoonlijke leven.

In de bibliotheek las hij oude boeken over Hel als de godin van het goddelijke huwelijk, de vruchtbaarheid en de kinderen, die ze later hadden gedemonizeerd. Ook las hij over het verschil tussen kalo-demonen, goede demonen, en kako-demonen, kwade demonen. Hij zag in dat de kerken van vandaag aan alle kanten rammelden met hun opvattingen, en hij wilde er iets aan doen. Hij liep vaak door het park om na te denken, en ging dan op een muur zitten. Hij werd door anderen 'de denker' genoemd, en ging vaak diep op in filosofie wanneer hij met anderen sprak.

Op een dag las hij over de oude Romeinse godin Febris, de godin van ziekte. Maar zij werd aanbeden als de godin van genezing. Haar man was Februus, de god van de hel. Dit had te maken met reinigingen. Maar met de komst van het christendom werd de hel geheel negatief bekeken.

Op een dag was er oorlog in de stad. De christenen wilden totale controle over de stad. Het zou het einde betekenen van het vrije denken. Andersdenkenden werden in de gevangenis gegooid, ook hij. Maar wegens goed gedrag mocht hij al snel bij een oude christelijke dame in huis wonen, als hij zich maar zou gedragen. Gelukkig bestond de bibliotheek nog steeds, en hier ging hij nog steeds vaak naartoe. De oude dame was erg goed voor hem. Ze maakte vaak warme chocolade melk voor hem, en kon hem goed begrijpen. 'Je hebt helemaal gelijk,' zei de oude dame, 'maar je kunt het beter voor je houden om problemen te voorkomen.' Maar hij wilde juist er wat aan doen. Hij vond de eenzijdige benadering van het christendom oneerlijk. Er waren nog steeds veel relletjes in de stad. Vaak was er vuur. De stad moest leven in deze oorlog.

'Weet je,' zei de oude dame. 'Dit is het enige middel wat je kan uitleiden.' Ze toonde hem een rode riem. 'Wat is het ?' vroeg hij. 'Oh, ik heb het eens van een engel gekregen,' zei de oude dame. 'Sindsdien heb ik het altijd opgeborgen gehouden. Pas hem eens.' Hij schoof de riem door zijn broek, en het paste precies. 'Wijsheid, mijn jongen, wijsheid, en wijsheid zal je leiden.'

Hij probeerde zich te bewegen, maar hij kon het niet. Na een tijdje lukte het hem om te zitten. De oude dame schonk wat thee voor hem in.

De Rode Stad

Hij stond die morgen vroeg op, schonk wat voor zichzelf in en ging zitten. Het morgenlicht vormde een rode stad voor hem. Hij was autistisch en had geen behoefte aan sociaal contact. Hij had genoeg aan zijn eigen hoofd. De koningin ging zitten, de koningin van de rode stad, en keek hem aan. Ze leek op een kudde jonge hyenas. Hij staarde haar aan. 'Zo jongen,' zei ze, 'je bent nogal verlegen. Ik heb je in deze stad gebracht.'

'Waarom ?' vroeg hij.

'Omdat ...,' zei ze, 'je het waard bent.'

'Okay,' zei de jongen, en probeerde de kralen van haar ketting te tellen. 'Uw haar zit goed,' zei hij.

'Dank je,' zei de koningin.

Hij was als in een waas, en waande zich de koning van de elven. Hij zakte door de grond de diepte in, toen ze op een knopje drukte. Vele bellen rinkelden in zijn hoofd, alsof het kerstfeest was. Ze glimlachte. 'Prins van de hyena's ?' vroeg ze. Hij knikte. Hij glimlachte diep, ook toen ze hem aanraakte. Even ging er een schok door hem heen. 'Je bent in de rode stad,' zei ze, 'eindelijk.'

'Erin, ben jij dat ?' vroeg hij.

'Ja,' zei ze.

Erin was altijd zijn droom-vriendinnetje. Hij zakte dieper.

'Snap je het ?' vroeg ze. 'Wie zijn wij ?'

'De hyenas,' zei hij.

'Wij komen je redden,' zei ze. 'Wij brengen je naar een betere wereld.'

De rode stad was gemaakt van flonkerstenen, zeer mooi, adembenemend. Hij raakte zijn autisme kwijt, kwam uit zijn schulp, want hier kon het. Hier waren vuurstenen en ruimte-schepen. Hier was het goed.

'Wat een bende is het hier,' zei hij, terwijl hij lachte. Hij keek naar beneden. Er lag troep op de grond. Een leeg melk-kartonnetje, een leeg plastic flesje, en nog wat andere troep. Hij schopte er tegenaan, en rende er lachend achteraan, en schopte weer. Ook kleine hondjes volgden hem. Ze leken op hyena's. 'Ik ben gelukkig hier,' zei hij, en straalde.

'Goed,' zei Erin.

'Ik houd van je Erin,' zei hij.

'Ik ook van jou,' zei ze, en omhelsde hem.

Hij kreeg een kamertje hoog in een toren. Het was een rommeltje hier, maar hij had goed uitzicht. Hij bleef maar lachen en stralen. Erin was ook bij hem, en zorgde voor hem. Zij was de godin van de hyena's. Ze zorgde goed voor hem, ze kon goed koken. Ook deed ze vaak boodschappen, en kwam altijd met veel speelgoed thuis, en bijzonder voedsel, magisch. Hij had het met haar getroffen, en hield van haar als van de rode stad.

En kun je er ook van houden, als ik je aanraak, lieve schat,

En kun je er ook van houden, als alles rood is in het bad,

En kun je er ook van houden, als ik met je wegvlieg naar een berg,

Om die met jou verder te beklimmen.

Ze hadden de televisie aangedaan, en keken naar een tekenfilm over een rood sap. Dat kon je verwachten in de rode stad. Ze pakte hem vast en danste met hem.

Wil je met me dansen, naar de rode maan,

Wil je met me dansen, toe nou, doe niet zo raar,

Want morgen vroeg ben ik van jou,

Dan ben ik jouw vrouw.

Het liep allemaal goed af in de tekenfilm. Ze hadden het rode sap gevonden, en plotseling waren ze in de tekenfilm, en renden over de daken. 'Naar de hyenas !' riep ze. 'Hoei !' Spoedig waren ze op

het veld tussen de hyena's, op het land, tussen de boerderijen. Even sidderde hij, maar toen voelde hij zich met liefde omgeven. Wat een prachtige dieren waren het toch, zo rood. Hun bekken waren rood, omdat ze van het vlees gegeten hadden, maar welk vlees ? Dat maakte niet zoveel uit. Als ze maar goed aten. Want zulke lieve dieren ... Maar verder kwam hij niet. Een man met een geweer stond voor hen.

'Zo,' zei de man, een boer. 'Wat doen jullie om mijn land.'

'Uh, niets, meneer,' zei hij. 'We wilden alleen maar met de hyenas spelen. De hyenas gromden een beetje.

'Okay, goed,' zei de man, en vertrok weer.

'Klaar,' zei Erin. 'Laten we verder spelen.

'Wat is klaar ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Niets,' zei Erin.

'Erin, ze hebben van het vlees gegeten,' zei de jongen.

'Ach nee,' zei Erin. 'Dat moet je zo niet zien. Het is chocola.'

'Nee, het is vlees,' zei de jongen.

'Vlees van mijn vlees, gebeente van mijn gebeente,' zei Erin.

'Nu klink je kerks,' zei de jongen.

'Bloed van mijn bloed ?' zei Erin.

'Ben je Christus ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Doe niet zo mal,' zei Erin.

'Nee, zeg op,' zei de jongen ondeugend.

'Hey, praat niet zo tegen mij,' zei Erin, 'doe maar niet zo mal.'

'Ben je Christus of ben je het niet,' zei de jongen.

'Waarom wil je dat weten ?' vroeg Erin.

'Gewoon,' zei hij.

'Omdat je zo kerks klinkt,' zei hij even later.

'Oh,' zei Erin.

Ze rende weg. De hyena's renden achter haar aan, en plotseling was ze als een groep hyena's zelf. Hij sidderde. Ze was als de dood, en erger nog : als de hel, maar ze was lief, zoet, teder, als een roos.

'Erin ?' vroeg hij. 'Waar ben je nou Erin ?' De groep hyena's kwam dichterbij. Ze gromden. Hij sidderde. Hij liep terug naar de torenkamer, waar zij even later ook terugkwam. Ze deed alsof er niets was gebeurd. Ze was vrolijk. Ze kookte.

'Lieve jongen,' zei ze.

'Ja,' zei hij.

'Het eten is klaar,' zei ze. Ze zette het op tafel.

'Vlees ?' vroeg hij. Ze knikte. 'Ik lust geen vlees,' zei hij. Toen gaf ze hem een chocolaatje. 'Je moet goed eten,' zei ze.

'Nee,' zei hij. 'Dat moet ik niet. Dat moeten alleen de hyenas.' Ze klapte. Ze waren in de rode stad. Ze had wat bedelaars uitgenodigd. Ze aten allemaal van het vlees. 'Aten,' zei ze, 'dat is de

Egyptische zonnegod.'

'Kan mij het schelen,' zei de jongen.

'Zeg, heb eens wat meer respect,' zei ze.

'Heb ik geen respect voor,' zei hij. Ze kwam naar hem toe, en gaf hem klappen op zijn billen. De bedelaars keken toe. 'Zeg, doe eens rustig met die jongen,' zei één van de bedelaars. Maar toen nam de jongen het voor haar op. 'Zeg, heb wat meer respect voor de godin,' zei hij. 'Zij doet wat goed is. Aan haar wetten zijn wij ondergeschikt.'

'Je hebt gelijk,' zei de bedelaar. 'Ik wist niet dat zij de godin was.'

'Dan weet je het nu,' snauwde de jongen. De bedelaar sidderde.

'Lieve jongen,' zei de godin.

'Gatverredamme,' zei één van de bedelaars. Dat vlees stinkt.

'Je moet snel eten,' zei de godin. De bedelaars aten haastig door, en gingen weer weg.

'Wat een figuren,' zei de jongen.

'Jij bent anders ook niet zo'n lieverdje,' zei de godin.

'Maar ze hebben overal commentaar op,' zei de jongen, 'terwijl je ze zo goed helpt.'

'Dat denk je alleen maar,' zei de godin.

'Nee, ik zie het toch,' zegt de jongen.

'Laat maar, houd maar op,' sprak de godin. 'Ik begin een beetje ongeduldig met jou te worden.' En weer gaf ze hem een paar klappen op de broek. 'Het is dat je de godin bent,' sprak de jongen, 'anders was ik je aangevlogen.'

'Wil je werkelijk weten wat ik met de bedelaars heb gedaan ?' vroeg de godin.

Hij knikte. 'Ja,' zei hij. 'Graag.'

'Okay,' zei ze, 'maar je mag het niet verklikken.'

'Erewoord,' zei hij.

'Okay,' zei ze. 'Ze gaan naar de schuren.'

'Hoe bedoel je ?' vroeg hij.

'Laat maar,' zei ze.

'Nee, je moet het nu zeggen,' zei hij. 'Wie A zegt, moet ook B zeggen.'

'Waarom,' vroeg ze.

'Wie A zegt moet ook B zeggen,' herhaalde hij.

De godin zuchtte. 'Je bent luguber,' zei hij.

'Nee, jij bent luguber,' zei ze. 'Je begrijpt nooit wat ik bedoel.'

'En jij legt nooit wat uit,' zei hij.

'Daar bij de boerderijen,' zei ze.

'Wat ?' vraagt hij.

'Niks,' zegt ze. En even later : 'Ik kan het niet zeggen. Er staat een gestalte naast mij.'

'Waar heb je het over,' gilt de jongen.

'Niets,' rilt ze. 'Vergeet het.'

'Geesten ?' vraagt hij.

'Ja,' snikt ze. Hij omhelst haar. 'Het komt wel goed,' zegt hij.

'Je bent zo lief,' zegt ze.

'Jij ook,' zegt hij.

'Je bent altijd zo geduldig met me,' zegt ze. Hij glimlacht. Hij omhelst haar weer en kust haar.

'Nee, niet kussen,' zegt ze. 'Het doet pijn.'

Hij laat haar los. Dan slaat de bliksem in.

'Onweer,' zegt ze.

'Wat moeten we in een rode stad ?' vraagt hij.

Ze maakt kabeljauw klaar. Het zit in een potje, en het komt met drie wensen. 'Ik wens geluk, liefde en zaligheid,' zei ze. Hij rent uit de torenkamer, want hij kan de stank niet verdragen. 'Altijd vlees,' roept hij.

'Vis,' roept ze hem na.

'Hetzelfde,' zegt zij.

'Dat is alleen voor hyena's,' roept hij.

'Ben jij dan geen hyena, je bent de prins van de hyena's,' roept ze.

'Alles met mate,' zegt hij.

'Een waar woord,' zegt ze, terwijl ze de kabeljauw in het openhaard vuur gooit. Hij komt dichterbij.

'Zeg, ik ben verliefd, en voor de liefde doe ik alles,' zei ze.

'Op wie ?' vraagt hij.

'Op jou,' zegt ze.

'Blijf van me af,' zegt hij. 'Ik ben een autist.'

'Het was maar een grapje,' zei ze. 'Wij hyena's kunnen niet verliefd worden.'

'Ik ook niet,' zei hij. 'Het is walgelijk, smerig.'

'Precies, als gesmolten kaas,' zegt ze.

'Gatverredamme,' zei hij. En even later : 'Waarom maak je zulke grapjes.'

Ze gaf geen antwoord. Het maakte hem kwaad.

'Stomme hoer,' zei hij. Ze begon te huilen. 'Het spijt me verschrikkelijk. Het zal nooit meer gebeuren,' zei ze.

'Het is al te laat,' zei hij. 'Nu brand ik. Ik kan hier echt niet tegen. Een beetje over de liefde gaan lopen praten, gatverredamme, rot toch een end op.'

'Nu ben je niet leuk,' zei ze. 'En ook niet aardig.'

Je hebt me gekwetst, zei hij.

- En jij me verdrongen.

Niet waar, ik ben altijd open voor je geweest.

- Leugenaar.

Hond.

- Gemenerik.

Zwarte hond.

- Racist.

Ik weet het.

- Dode diender.

Ik weet het.

Opeens stond de boer weer voor hen met een geweer. 'Uit mij stad nu,' sprak hij nors, 'uit mijn stad. Jullie zouden met de hyenas spelen, maar alles wat jullie doen is elkaar voor gek uitmaken.'

'Maar wij zijn hyenas,' zei de godin.

'Ja, dat zeggen ze allemaal,' zei de boer. 'Wegwezen, uit mijn stad. Ik heb niets met jullie te maken. Ook al vriezen jullie dood in de kou, kan mij het schelen, oprotten, weg, weg.'

Maar toen werd de jongen heel erg kwaad, en greep het geweer en boog het om. 'Zeg, zo spreek je niet tegen een godin,' zei hij tegen de boer met strakke ogen. Zijn ogen lieten de boer niet meer los, en de boer begon te sidderen. Daar kwam een andere boer aan. 'Het is de godin,' riep de sidderende boer. 'Ach nee,' zei de andere boer, 'laat hen je niks wijsmaken.' Maar spoedig waren ze allemaal door grommende hyenas omsingeld. De hyenas doken op de twee boeren. 'Rennen !' riepen ze. Maar ze konden nergens heen.

'Dat is ook met de bedelaars gebeurd,' fluisterde de godin. 'Naar de schuren.'

Hyena's, maak het op, en leg het neer,

Hyena's, ren je rot en kom niet meer,

Hyena's, in de rode stad, je leeft niet meer.

Ze keken naar een andere tekenfilm. Buiten sneeuwde het. Ze maakte alleen nog maar chocolade voor hem. Hij gruwelde van vlees. Hij had haar gesmeekt geen vlees en vis meer te maken. Hij kon het niet aan. Het leven was te zwaar dan. Maar in chocolade was het voor hem een zachte, zalige oceaan. Zo romig en cremig. Dat was voor hem altijd weer een verrassing, en zij was zijn verrassing. Zij was zijn genade. Er lagen hier overal snoeppapiertjes, alsof er een heks was langsgekomen. Vlees was er allang niet meer, alleen nog maar snoep. Snoep maken kon ze als de beste, en ze genas zijn hart.

Hij liep altijd rond op gympen, en zij op blote voeten. Hij bladerde door wat boeken, en keek naar haar. Ze keek terug. 'Is dit wat je wilt ?' vroeg ze. 'Gaan we nooit trouwen ? Want straks word je wakker, en dan heb je mijn ring niet.'

'Onzin,' zei de jongen. 'Heb geloof.'

'Nu klink jij kerks,' zei Erin.

'Kan me niet zoveel schelen,' zei de jongen.

'Hoe heet je eigenlijk ?' vraagt Erin.

'Orpheus,' zegt de jongen. 'Orpheus P.'

'Mooie naam,' zegt Erin.

'Had je kunnen weten als godin zijnde,' zei Orpheus.

'Ik weet niet alles,' zei ze.

'Of je wil het gewoon niet weten,' zei hij.

'Of ik wil het gewoon van jou horen,' zei de godin.

Plotseling werden ze omringd door rode lichten.

'Hyenische energie,' zei de godin, 'ze hebben ons gevonden.'

'Er komt licht uit mijn handen,' zei Orpheus.

'Uit mijn handen ook,' zei Erin.

'Dan kunnen we een nieuwe wereld creeeren,' zei Orpheus.

'De rode stad is alles wat we nodig hebben,' zei Erin, 'als een rode picknick.'

'Als een rode draad, van mijn hart naar de jouwe ?' vroeg Orpheus.

Ze knikt. 'Ja,' zegt ze. En even later : 'Altijd aan elkaar verbonden.'

'Geen zweem van twijfel,' zei Orpheus.

'Het beest van twijfel is in de rivier geworpen,' zei de godin.

'Goed,' zei Orpheus.

'Zwarte mensen, gemaakt van chocola,

Zwarte mensen, dienen de tafella,

Zwarte hond, hebbende geen gena.

Weer keken ze naar een tekenfilm. 'Hoe kunnen we de rode draad vinden ?' vroeg Orpheus. 'Kom maar mee,' zei ze. Ze zwierven door de sneeuwbedekte stad, naar een kerk, waar de draad ergens moest hangen. Binnengekomen zagen ze een heks. 'Hoe zijn jullie binnengekomen ?' vroeg de heks. 'Dat is onmogelijk. Niemand kan hier komen.'

'Ik heb hem meegenomen,' zei Erin.

'Jij ?' sprak de heks. 'Ellendeling.' Toen begon ze op haar piano te spelen.

'Morgenrood, vroeg is dood, morgen boter, aardkloot,

Botervloot, kom hier nu, vlug, breng die mensen snel terug,

Deze stad is van mij, niemand komt er levend uit,

Niemand, nee, niemand, want de avond is het paslood,

Morgenbrood, vroeg is dood, ik heb hen nu geflest,

Ik heb hen op het kastje gelegd.'

'Heks, hou je waffel,' sprak Orpheus.

'Waar is de rode draad ?' vroeg Erin.

'Achter me,' zei de heks. 'Grijp ernaar, en als je mist, heb ik je.'

'Geen sprake van, heks,' zei Orpheus.

'Deze stad is van mij,' zei de heks, 'dus ik bepaal wat er gebeurd.'

De bakker heeft zijn hemd gescheurd,' zei Orpheus.

'Koeien in de sloot,' zei de heks.

'Ik heb een broertje dood,' zei Orpheus.

Toen begon ze weer verder te spelen.

'Draken van het vuurfontein, help met de wijn, help met de wijn,

Verdrink ze hier, in het bier, help met de wijn en met vertier,

Ha, kom terug, wanneer ik je roep, chocolade mensen hebben hier een goed beroep,

Slaven zullen jullie wezen, op het dekzeil gehesen, klaar.'

'Mens, houd toch op, niemand is in die akelige rijmpjes van jou geinteresseerd,' zei Orpheus.

'Niemand zei je ?' sprak de heks. 'Ze zijn toevallig allemaal aan de beeldbuis genageld. Ik beslis hier de TV. Ha.'

'Ach heks, houd op met je sprookjes,' zei Orpheus'. 'Zal ik u eens een verhaaltje vertellen.'

'Ga je gang,' zei de heks.

Orpheus floot even, en daar kwam een groep hyenas binnenstormen, die al snel op de heks doken.

'Dat kan helemaal niet,' zei de heks. 'Niemand kan hier komen. Hoe hebben jullie deze plaats ontdekt.'

'Vuur, vuur,' gilde de heks. Maar er kwam geen vuur, en haar piano kon ze niet meer bereiken. Toen maakte ze een heel hoog fluitje, maar dat werkte ook niets uit.

'Orpheus, we moeten hier weg,' gilde Erin. Samen renden ze naar buiten. 'Heb je het draad ?' vroeg Orpheus.

'Nog niet,' zei Erin.

'Houd vast,' zei Erin.

'Wat moet ik vasthouden ?' vroeg Orpheus.

'Mijn hand,' zei Erin.

'De rode stad is van mij,' gilde de heks. 'Dat kun je zo maar niet wegnemen. Mijn lieve, lieve stad.'

'Heks, het is afgelopen,' schreeuwde Orpheus.

'Nee !' krijste de heks. 'Kom daar niet aan. Raak het niet aan !'

Daar kwamen de hyenas naar buiten lopen met het draad. De stad was nu van hen. Ze hadden het draad in hun bekken, het rode draad, en er droop rood sap vanaf. Overal waar ze kwamen was er rode sneeuw.

'Het is een teken,' zei Erin.

'Wat voor een teken,' vroeg Orpheus.

'Ik kan het niet zeggen,' zei Erin.

'Schat, je moet het zeggen,' zei Orpheus.

'Chocola,' stamelde Erin.

'Het smaakt goed,' zegt Orpheus.

'Snoep is zoet,' zegt Erin.

'Deze heks met al haar vlezen,' zuchtte Orpheus.

'Ze is dood, heus,' zegt Erin. 'De hyenas hebben haar ...'

'Aan stukken gereten ?' vroeg Orpheus.

'Nee, veel erger,' zei Erin.

'Ik wil het niet weten,' zegt Orpheus.

'Je moet het weten,' roept Erin.

'Zeg me dat het niet zo is,' zegt Orpheus, nadat ze het hem had verteld. 'Hebben ze dat echt gedaan ? Dat had ik niet verwacht.'

'Ja, ze hebben haar echt in snoep veranderd,' zei Erin.

'En wie gaat haar opeten ?' vraagt Orpheus.

'De rode stad,' zegt Erin.

'Het snoep is goed,' zegt Orpheus.

Erin knikt. 'Ja,' zegt ze. 'Snoep is zoet.'

De dag erna sneeuwde het snoep, en de kinderen aten hun buikjes vol. Zo vol dat ze 's avonds niet bij het avondeten konden zijn. Ze moesten het vlees laten staan voor de hyena's, en lusten sinds die dag geen vlees of vis meer. 'Laat het over aan de hyena's,' werd er altijd gezegd. 'De snoep is voor de kinderen.'

Het Rode Wapen

Ik zag haar daar staan. Haar naam was Zwijnenjacht. Ze stond aan een poort met een sleutel. Ik probeerde weg te rennen, maar ze tackelde mij. En toen dacht ik : 'Waarom zou ik wegrennen eigenlijk ?' Het bleek een aardige vrouw. Ze nam mij door de poort naar binnen. Ze was heel praterig, had veel te vertellen. Ze zei dat zij me hier had gelokt, om mij te bevrijden uit een kerk. Ze had kleding gemaakt van parels. Je kon haar lichaam gewoon door de parels heenzien. Ze straalde warmte uit, maar ook geheimzinnigheid. Een koets stopte. We stapten in. De stad was groot hier, maar we gingen buiten de stad, waar ze in een hutje woonde. Een vreemd gevoel maakte zich van mij meester.

'Ik heb je verlost uit de kerk,' zei ze. 'Ze draaien daar allemaal in cirkeltjes, komen niet verder. Ze zijn onder de betovering van een heks. Ik heb je verlost. Het zijn zwijnen. Als je de jacht niet begint, dan pakken ze je terug. Bedriegelijke verschijnselen zijn het.'

'Okay,' zei ik. Toen begon ze te filosoferen. Ik vond het erg interessant. Ze was niet op haar mondje gevallen, en prikte door alles heen. 'Je moet denken,' zei ze, 'diep doordenken. Niet jezelf opsluiten in cirkeltjes.' Ik knikte.

'Er moet gewerkt worden in dat hoofdje van jou. Je moet je industrie bouwen. Zo kun je veilig zijn tegen de zwijnen,' sprak ze. Haar ogen waren rood doorbloed. Ik nam haar in mijn armen, gewoon omdat ik mezelf niet tegen kon houden. Ze huilde. Ik probeerde haar te troosten. 'Je bent zo lief,' zei ze. 'En dat is zeldzaam.'

'En jij bent een open vrouw,' zei ik. 'Dank je wel dat je mij verlost hebt.' Haar lichaam begon te schudden. 'Ze willen me bezitten, die zwijnen,' zei ze. 'Bouw je centrum van filosofie,' zei ze. 'En we zullen allemaal veilig zijn.'

'Wat is de belangrijkste filosofie ?' vroeg ik.

'Dat moet je ontdekken,' zei ze. 'Maar bouw gewoon voort. Die varkens zullen allemaal in het nieuwe stelsel van filosofie ontmaskerd worden.' Ik drukte haar tegen me aan. 'Je zult veilig zijn, heus,' zei ik. Toen glimlachte ze een beetje.

Ik keek naar de lucht, die vol was met luchtschepen. De hyena's zouden ons redden. Ze brachten ons naar een spiegel-universum. Alles was hier net een beetje anders. De natuur had hier zoveel

meer diepte. Zwijnenjacht was erg aan het beven. Ze was erg ziek. Ik nam haar mee naar een grot, en legde haar neer op een zachte plek, tussen veren en vellen. Weer nam ik haar in haar armen, en verzekerde haar dat alles goed zou komen. Er groeide hier een koffieboom, reusachtig met diepe wortels. En op de takken van de boom en de stam was een kasteel gebouwd. Caffeine soldaten marcheerden op de muren. Ze leken op ridders en hadden scherpe wapens. Ook hadden ze pistolen met rode lasers. Ze vormden hun eigen politie. Ze waren de communicatie politie. Caffeine had al deze realiteiten gecreeerd, en voerde een dwangmatige controle.

Ik las de statuten van Orion door, over een rode planeet, Dankbu. Het was een planeet vrij van caffeine. Het was een planeet waar alles om de innerlijke filosofische registers ging. Er was daar een oorlog tussen koffie en caffeine. Beide kanten hadden rode wapens.

Het Witte Kasteel

Hoofdstuk 1. Het Trauma van de Waarheid

De verwachting was dat alles goed zou lopen, en in zekere zin deed het dat ook, maar Marlies was stervende. Ze kon haar ziekte niet de baas. Ze was erg vrolijk, dat wel, maar de ziekte begon z'n tol te eisen. Haar lichaam werds steeds meer gammel. Ze kon niet bij de wortel van dit alles. Het was een raadsel. Deze allesverwoestende ziekte zou haar spoedig in de dodelijke grip ten onder brengen. Ze had een waas voor de ogen, en begon langzaam blind en doof te worden, afgesneden van de buitenwereld. Haar plan was om er zelf een einde aan te maken, voordat de ziekte dat zou doen. Ze zou daarvoor van een toren afspringen, om zo te pletter te vallen op de markt. Maar het dakzeil van een markt-tent zorgde ervoor dat ze dit overleefde. Toen gooide ze zichzelf voor de trein.

Er was twee minuten stilte in de kerk. De dominee las voor, een gedicht. Iedereen huilde. Arme Marlies. De bomen leefden rustig voort, met Marlies als de wind die hun bladeren bewoog. Zij bracht hen tot leven, door haar dood. Bloedbessen op een bord, thee ernaast. De tovenaar had haar zo gemaakt. Leeuwen waren haar vrienden ... witte leeuwen.

Een kleine jongen dacht na over zijn tante Marlies. Hij zou het witte kasteel waarin zij woonde missen. Snel woonden andere mensen daar. De kleine jongen groeide op, werd oud, maar vergat het witte kasteel nooit. Alsof leeuwen daar wandelden, altijd gingen zijn gedachten er naar terug. Hij was bang als haar te worden, stervende, maar een vreemde gezondheid had hem in de grip. Zijn gedachten waren meesterlijk, zijn honger was rijp, zijn staar ongrijpbaar, onbegrijpelijk, alsof de tovenaar hem had verlost. Zijn fantasieen waren kalm.

Hij schreef een boek over mensen, als een boek over vreemde wezens, als geesten wonen in hutten. Hij schreef een boek over de winden, en de tragiek van wolken. Hij was een eenling. Op een dag stond het witte kasteel te koop. Hij aarzelde geen moment en kocht het. Toen begon zijn leven op te bloeien.

Niemand had verwacht dat het zo snel zou gaan, maar hij werd koning, en regeerde een nieuw land. Grenzen waren aan het vervagen. Hij hield het geluk in zijn hand, trillend. Hij was bang het weer te verliezen, maar de liefde kalmeerde hem, stelde hem gerust. Tante Marlies was in zijn gedachten als de witte thee, in een prachtige witte jurk als bloesem. Ze was een plaatje. Zo zag hij haar altijd, als het getij van witte chocolade. Ze was altijd zijn lievelings-tante, en hij koesterde haar in zijn herinneringen.

Diep van binnen wist hij dat het een leugen was, de manier waarop hij met haar omging. Het had

altijd iets onechts. Het was alsof ze het maar acteerden, een poppenspel. Maar hij had van haar genoten, en zij van hem.

De leugen regeerde, ook in het nieuwe land. Het was een kunst, als het raadsel der waarheid. Van binnen voerde hij een oorlog, maar ook dat was slechts schijn. Hij was een man van maskers.

Het witte kasteel maakte een denker van hem, een filosoof, en in het land was er hervorming na hervorming. En daar bleef het allemaal niet bij. Nee, sprookjesachtig moest het zijn, al was het allemaal maar een leugen. Hier moest het zijn. Professionele leugenaars richtte hij op, die veel moesten liegen. Ja, hij geloofde in de leugen, voor hem was dat het eeuwige leven. 'Je kan het ook van een andere kant bekijken,' zei hij altijd.

Zijn droom was een paradijs, en hij wilde dat verwezenlijken. Met leugens bouwde hij voort, maar het werd een prachtig land, en men noemde hem de leugen-koning. Er moest een einde komen aan het trauma van de waarheid. Ze hadden al lang gevochten. De waarheid hield hen veel te veel bezig, en voor wat ? De waarheid was een gruwelijke dictator, maar hij was de dromenkoning. Hij werd bestempeld als gemeen en gek, maar het land was majestueus mooi. Ze konden alles van hem zeggen, maar niet dat hij geen kunstenaar was. Hij was een deskundige gek, een geleerde. Nonsense was zijn doel, want de nuchtere waarheid was saai. Het land was allesbehalve zaai. De clowns waren gekomen. Ze brachten het zoete verdriet. Zij waren de lakeien van de dageraad.

Spijbelaars werden gearresteerd voor school. Er kwam een koud en hard regiem, met een vleugje warmte en doel. Hij schiep een nieuwe aarde en een nieuwe hemel, en werd God genoemd. Door zowel vriend als vijand. En hij dacht aan tante Marlies, die zijn drijfveer was. Tante Marlies werd het boegbeeld van een nieuw ziekenhuis, en het witte kasteel was het huis van de politie. Dit alles omdat hij dat zo wilde.

De zeemeermin sprak, en haar woorden waren als de woorden van zijn tante Ans die altijd verhalen voorlas. Haar woorden zouden tot in eeuwigheden doorklinken. In haar kom was het witte kasteel niets dan vergif, omhuld met koud zout. Het was een vreemde dans der zeemeerminnen die hem ontwaakten. Zij grepen zijn ziel en trokken hem in de diepte, in de wildernis van een nieuw bestaan, waar hij de witte leeuwenkoning zou zijn.

Zij lieten hem de toekomst zien in een bol, als heerlijke chocolade. Zij maakten een academie.

Het huis wat hij nu had was een donkere grot, maar hij waakte op in een betoverdende droom. Hij zou voor duizend jaren slapen, want het stafje der zeemeerminnen had hem geraakt. Hij liep voorop naar een graf.

Dit graf was van tante Ans. Hij omhelsde haar, gaf haar leven. Haar woorden galmden door.

Zij moest hier wezen. Ze had respect.

De bomen grepen haar, en maakten haar tot een prinses. De sneeuw der zeemeerminnen daalde neer. Hij had de indruk dat hij het goed had gedaan. Een tuin met betoverde rozen. Hij liet zijn kennis los op het meer.

Hoofstuk 2. De Gruwel der Eeuwen

Het hek van de rozentuin was hoog, met gouden punten. Velen stierven daar, maar het kon hem niet schelen. Hij was gek en wreed, een koningszoon. Hij was te deftig om zich te bekommeren om de zieken en de armen.

Hij verkoelde, en nog steeds was zijn hart brandende met een passie, maar dat was slechts voor geld en macht. Het ging om de grootte voor hem, niet meer om de kwaliteit, want dat was een graf. Hij walgde wanneer hij het woord kwaliteit hoorde. Het was een kwelling voor hem. Het moest groots zijn en gruwelijk, maar meesterlijk.

En zo werd zijn land een spookhuis, een nachtmerrie, gemaakt van witte chocolade, dat zo oud was

geworden dat het giftig was. Maar hier wist hij wel raad mee. Het was een oorlogswapen, een medicijn, om de indiaan weer op het paard te hijsen. Zijn woonplaats stond vol met kleine indiaanse poppetjes, en hij liet ze oorlog voeren tegen elkaar. Ook schilderde hij, met het rozenvuur. Hij werd de gruwel der eeuwen.

Hij was de witte leeuwenkoning, de leugenkoning, en zeemeerminnen dienden hem. Maar hij miste een vrouw, alhoewel hij van het idee gruwelde dat hij een vrouw nodig zou moeten hebben. Hij haatte vrouwen diep van binnen. Dat was ook de reden waarom eigenlijk alles wat zich tussen hem en tante Marlies en tante Ans slechts spel was. Als er geen wet was dan zou hij ze hebben vermoord, als een dolle hond. En hij was druk bezig die wet af te schaffen. Moorden zou volgens hem moeten kunnen. Hij wilde leven van de moord, en dan vooral de moord op vrouwen. Dat waren wel de minste wezens die hij zich kon voorstellen. Maar al gauw had hij spijt van zijn ideeen. Hij wilde vrouwen een kans geven. Zij moesten gewoon geschoold worden.

En daarom maakte hij een wet dat alle vrouwen verplicht naar school moesten, tot de laatste dag van hun leven.

Watervogels

De Groene Dood

Hij sloop door het bos. De koningin van het woud waakte over hen. Hij hoorde de beesten brullen in de verte. De dromer waakte deze keer. In het zonlicht kon hij haar gezicht zien. Verderop zwommen wat watervogels in de rivier, en zijzelf waren met de grotere beesten. De groene wind was hen aan het omsingelen, heel subtiel, en kwam toen steeds dichterbij. Hij haalde het gedichten-boek met het gele leren kaft erbij, en begon eruit te prevelen. Ze hield hem tegen zich aan.

De watervogels kwamen dichterbij, en het natte was hun god. Kim staarde naar hem. Zij had hem gecreeerd. Zij was zijn godin. Zij had een boek met sleutels. En de sleutels waren van drop.

De watervogels brachten hen over de rivier naar het slot. In het slot hingen schilderijen, en er waren veel mysterieuze boeken. Ze gingen op een bed liggen, met een gordijn als deken. De groene dood was in de rivier, maar klom op de kant en ging het kasteel binnen. Aan de muren hingen skeletten.

Zij las hem verhalen voor, en het was voor hem een nieuw leven. Ze praatte snel, maar het was goed volgbaar voor hem. Hij had haar leren begrijpen, dronk wijn met haar.

De groene dood schoof als een deken over hem heen, en plotseling stond het slot in brand. Snel doken ze de rivier in. De watervogels beschermde hen tegen het vuur. Het was alsof alles in brand stond. De boeken veranderden in vogels, en de groene dood dook in de rivier om achter hen aan te gaan. Maar mysterieuze rozen waren om hen heen. Toen veranderde de rivier in bloed, en de groene dood loste er in op.

Ze zwommen naar de overkant, en gingen op de kant zitten. Rozen groeiden naar beneden vanuit de bomen. De vogels der geheimen kwamen om hen heen.

Nooit Genoeg

De Rode Woestijn

Hoofdstuk 1. De Hellekus

De pijn van het leven werd te erg en hij greep naar de drugs. Hij bleef maar spuiten om zijn hoofd boven water te kunnen houden. Hij kon er erg agressief van worden, of juist heel zachtaardig. Het waren als kleine tekenfilmpjes die in hem gespoten werden, of kleine stickertjes of plakplaatjes, die zijn hoofd op hol brachten, in een andere sfeer. Hij kon weer ademen, maar het spul was erg duur. Hij stal, en bedelde. De momenten dat hij spoot lieten hem zijn bloed weer voelen stromen. Het kon hem niet schelen wat anderen ervan dachten. Hij kon niet terug, want er was teveel pijn. Hij haatte de medische wereld, want zij hadden het allemaal op hun geweten. Sinds zijn geboorte hadden ze hem volgestopt met implantaten voor allerlei onzinnige redenen, diep in zijn lichaam. Hij wilde ook niets meer met zijn ouders te maken hebben, want zij hadden dit allemaal maar toegelaten. Hij beschouwde hen niet meer als zijn ouders.

Sommig spul liet hem voelen alsof hij kon vliegen. Door ander spul voelde hij zich heel wijs. Hij mengde ook veel drugs. Op een dag kwam hij een man tegen die hem veel vertelde over indiaanse drugs. De man nam hem zelfs in huis, en zorgde voor hem als voor een zoon. De indiaanse drugs bleek erg zuiver te zijn. Het maakte van pijn iets totaal anders. De jongen was de man erg dankbaar. Hij leefde er erg van op, en hoefde niet meer op de straat te slapen. De indiaanse drugs bleek erg machtig te zijn. Het maakte mensen intelligent.

De man had ook een dochter. De jongen en het meisje konden erg goed met elkaar opschieten. Ze kon goed verhalen vertellen, en hij luisterde vaak uren aandachtig naar haar. De indiaanse drugs maakte hem erg alert, maar op een dag ging het helemaal mis, en wilde hij van de drugs af. Maar zijn lichaam begon zo te protesteren, en een geweldige angst maakte zich van hem meester. Hij was inmiddels een gevangene van de drugs geworden. 'Probeer wat te minderen,' zei het meisje. Maar het leek wel alsof zijn lichaam meer eiste. Hij was in een zwaar gevecht, en uiteindelijk gaf hij toe dat hij niets in te brengen had. Hij zweefde op het randje van de dood, maar diep binnenin wilde hij dood, want hij leefde in de hel. De man deed er allemaal erg gemakkelijk over, maar het meisje droeg goed zorg voor hem. Hij at nauwelijks meer. Hij had een vreemde buikpijn. Hij had veel visioenen over de dood en de hel.

Het meisje was erg lief voor hem. Ze gaf hem veel liefde, ook sexueel, maar op een dag kon hij dat ook niet meer aan. Zijn zenuwstelsel was zo overgevoelig geworden dat alles pijn deed. Hij begon zichzelf op te sluiten, want sociale contacten waren te zwaar. Het meisje begreep het wel. Ze kon zich goed inleven in hem. Vaak schoof ze liefdesbriefjes bij hem onder de deur door.

Op een dag schoof ze vreemde zaadjes bij hem onder de deur door, in plastic, met een briefje erbij : 'Probeer dit spul eens. Kusjes.' Hij las op de strip van het product : Judas' Kussen. Hij slikte een zaadje in, wat als een klein besje was. Direct sprong er vuur in zijn ogen, en kon hij dwars door alles heenkijken. Hij raakte zijn grip op de werkelijkheid kwijt, en waande zich in een grote rode woestijn, die overigens vol begroeid was.

Een man liep op hem af. De man had een baard en kuste hem. 'Wie bent u ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ik ben Jezus,' zei de man.

'Ben ik dood ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Nee,' zei de man. 'Je bent niet dood, maar je leeft ook niet. Het is iets er tussenin.'

'Oh, dat is interessant,' zei de jongen. 'Wat is het ?'

'Je moet niet zoveel vragen stellen,' zei de man. Er kwam een andere man aanlopen.

'Hi,' zei de man.

De jongen gaf de man een hand en vroeg wie hij was.

'Judas,' zei de man.

'Interessant,' zei de jongen, 'maar goed, ik zal geen vragen meer stellen.'

'Oh, stel ze gerust,' zei de man die zich Judas noemde. De jongen kreeg al snel door dat deze man wat vriendelijker en meer open was dan de andere man.

'I...ik wil weten waar ik ben,' zei de jongen aarzelend.

'Heb je van het besje gegeten ?' vroeg de man.

De jongen knikte. 'Wij zijn je bevrijders,' zei de man. 'Je bent hier veilig. Wij zijn sterk, heel sterk.'

'Waar zijn we ?' vroeg de jongen.

Maar toen gaf de man die zich Jezus noemde hem een enorme duw, en zei bijna brullend : 'Ik zei toch dat je niet zoveel moest vragen ?'

'Ach, let maar niet op hem,' zei Judas tegen de jongen. 'Hij is soms een beetje ruw.'

'Dit is de hel,' zei Judas. 'De plaats tussen leven en dood.'

'Ik moet zeggen, het is een prachtige plaats hier,' zei de jongen. 'Anders dan wat ik had verwacht.'

'Wat verwachtte je ?' vroeg Judas.

Plotseling kon de jongen zich niet meer bewegen, en niet meer praten. Hij voelde zich als een gevangene. Vreemd rood vuur, als takken van bomen die hem hadden gegrepen. Hij werd wakker op zijn bed. Snel greep hij naar de zaadjes, en nam twee zaadjes. Het was alsof rood vuur vanuit zijn ogen opschoot. Het was alsof het meisje van wie hij hield in zijn kamer stond. Maar het rode vuur schoof tussen hen in. Weer verloor hij de grip op de werkelijkheid en kon door alles heenkijken, en weer was hij in de rode woestijn die vol begroeid was. 'Je bent terug,' zei Judas.

'Ja,' zei de jongen. 'Ik zou hier graag willen blijven.'

'Blijf hier dan,' zei Judas.

'Hoe ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Stop met vragen stellen,' zei de man die zich Jezus noemde. 'Ik word er doodziek van.'

'Zeg broer,' zei Judas. 'Ga dan terug.'

Maar Jezus sloeg Judas op zijn kaak, en brulde : 'Ik ga voor niemand uit de weg !'

'Goed,' zei Judas. Toen sloeg hij Jezus zo hard terug dat deze bewusteloos neerviel.

'Welkom in de hel,' zei Judas tegen de jongen. 'Vraag wat je wil.'

'Wie is hij,' vroeg de jongen.

'Hij is een onderdeel van de drugs, een krachtige hallucinatie,' zei Judas.

'En jij dan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ik ook,' zei Judas.

'Bestaan jullie echt, en zijn jullie echte personen ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ja, wij zijn een grotere werkelijkheid dan de wereld waar jij vandaan komt,' zei Judas. 'In jouw wereld wordt de hel vaak afgedaan als een fabeltje, of als een slechte realiteit voor schaduwen en

onder-figuren. Maar de hel is de wereld van de drugs, van zaden en geheimen, de wereld waar de natuur het voor het zeggen heeft.'

Opeens wordt het zwart voor de ogen van de jongen, en even later wordt hij wakker op zijn bed. Haastig grist hij de laatste drie zaadjes en slikt ze in. Maar dit keer gebeurt er niet veel. 'Ik moet meer van die troep !' schreeuwt hij. Hij wordt zo zenuwachtig dat hij zijn kamer uitgaat, en zijn meisje aanspreekt. Maar het meisje heeft het spul niet meer, en het is erg duur. 'Godverredomme !' briest hij. 'Waar groeit dat verdomde spul ? Ik moet meer van deze troep hebben.'

'Dat moet je aan pappa vragen,' zei ze. Plotseling valt de jongen op de grond, en er komt schuim op zijn mond. Het meisje sleept hem naar zijn kamer, naar zijn matras. 'I... ik houd van je,' stamelt de jongen. 'Ik ben zo verliefd op je. Je bent altijd zo lief voor me geweest.'

'Vertrouw me,' zei het meisje. 'Ik zal ervoor zorgen dat je zo snel mogelijk weer van die zaadjes hebt.' De jongen zinkt weg in een diepe trance. Na een dag of drie liggen er weer zaadjes die onder zijn deur door zijn geschoven. Als een woest beest scheurt de jongen het plastic open en neemt vier zaadjes. Maar er gebeurt niks. Dan neemt hij de laatste dertien zaadjes allemaal tegelijk, maar weer gebeurt er niets. 'Godverredomme !' schreeuwt de jongen. 'Er gebeurt geen klote !'

Hij laat het meisje op zijn kamer binnen. 'Wat voor spul is het ?' vraagt de jongen. 'Weet je zeker dat het hetzelfde spul is ? Wie verkoopt die rotzooi. Ik moet meer van die rotzooi hebben !'

Het meisje pakt het plastic, en op de rand staat : Judas' Kussen. 'Ja, het is nog steeds hetzelfde spul.'

Hij pakt haar vast en kust haar. 'Je bent zo'n lieve schat dat je dit gedaan hebt,' zegt hij. Hij kust haar weer, en ditmaal intens. Een paar dagen later liggen er weer strips onder de deur door. Ditmaal met gele zaadjes, en op de strips stond : Jesus' Kisses. 'Maar met eentje beginnen,' dacht hij. Hij nam een zaadje, en direct spoot er geel vuur door zijn ogen, en al snel bevond hij zich weer in de rode woestijn die vol begroeid was. Judas stond naast hem. 'Je bent weer terug,' zei hij. De jongen knikte. 'Hoe lang gaat het ditmaal duren ?' zei de jongen.

'Oh, veel langer,' zei Judas.

'Gelukkig,' zei de jongen. 'Ik lijk wel gek.'

'Waar is Jezus ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Dood,' zei Judas. 'Hij is op het moment gekruisigd en begraven.'

'Gek,' zei de jongen.

'Lekker rustig,' zei Judas. 'Het was niet zo'n beste.'

'Kunnen we het over iets anders hebben,' zei de jongen.

'Waar wil je het over hebben,' zei Judas.

'Hebben jullie hier ook telefoons ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Wat wil je daarmee doen ?' vroeg Judas.

'Mijn vriendin bellen,' zei de jongen.

'Die is hier niet,' zei Judas. 'Ze laat jou al die pilletjes slikken omdat ze van je houdt.'

'Ik weet het, maar zij is niet zo gek als mij. Hoe kunnen we haar hier krijgen dan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Wil je dat echt ?' vroeg Judas.

'Ja,' zei de jongen.

'Waarom ?' vroeg Judas.

'Omdat ik van haar houd,' zei de jongen.

'Mis je haar ?' vroeg Judas.

'Ik weet het niet,' zei de jongen.

'Je kunt hier ook vriendinnen krijgen,' zei Judas.

'Waar dan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Op de vriendinnen-markt,' zei Judas. 'Het zijn hallucinaties, sterke hallucinaties, die je kunt kopen.'

'Kopen ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Als in een spel,' zei Judas. 'Ze stelt je vragen, en als je ze goed beantwoord, dan mag je haar meenemen.'

'Eng,' zei de jongen.

'Zullen we het eens proberen ?' zei Judas.

Even later zaten ze tegenover een pop. 'Maar dit zijn poppen,' zei de jongen.

'Je begint met poppen,' zei Judas, 'dan later worden ze echter.'

'Stel je vraag maar,' zei de jongen tegen de pop.

'Hoe ben je hier gekomen,' zei de pop.

'Door een geel zaadje,' zei de jongen.

'Wat was de naam van het zaadje,' zei de pop.

'Jesus' Kisses,' zei de jongen.

'Geweldig,' zei de pop. 'Je hebt me gewonnen.'

'Dat ging makkelijk,' zei de jongen. Maar verderop waren de echtere poppen, en daar waren de vragen veel moeilijker. 'Maar ik wil geen pop als vriendin,' zei de jongen tegen Judas. 'Ik wil een echte persoon.'

'We zijn allemaal poppen,' zei Judas. 'Zelfs jij. We zijn allemaal kleine stukjes bewustzijn, en samengevoegd vormt het een groot geheel. In je reis naar onafhankelijkheid zul je moeten leren dat je zelf je eigen familie bent, en je eigen groep mensen, allemaal stukjes van jezelf, en de rest zal vervagen.'

'Dus ik zal later alleen nog maar contact hebben met mezelf, en niet meer met anderen ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Het gaat om de mechanismes,' zei Judas. 'Zoals ik al zei, we zijn allemaal poppen, kleine stukjes bewustzijn. We weerspiegelen allemaal kleine stukjes oneindigheid, van het grote, algehele mechanisme, en zullen daarin allemaal geabsorbeerd worden. Dan is er geen onderscheid van personen meer, maar alleen de eeuwige principes waarin wij tot rust zijn gekomen door verlichting.'

'Wow, dure woorden,' zei de jongen.

'Dus je zal uiteindelijk alles moeten worden voor jezelf,' zei Judas. 'Dan heb je je doel bereikt, en ben je niet meer afhankelijk van anderen. Nu hebben we anderen nog nodig, maar later niet meer.'

'Okay,' zei de jongen. Hij sprak nog een paar dagen door met Judas, en werd toen wakker op zijn bed. Hij slikte weer een geel zaadje, en bevond zich direct in een oorlog. Overal renden soldaten heen en weer. 'Waar gaat deze oorlog over ?' vroeg hij aan een soldaat. Daar kwam Judas al aanwandelen, in een wit, lichtend gewaad. Hij leek erg veel op Jezus. 'De soldaten horen je niet,' zei Judas. 'Ze strijden voor hun kleine bewustzijn, en zijn niet open voor andere bewustzijnen.'

'Dat is naar,' zei de jongen.

'Het zijn slaven,' zei Judas.

'Waarom kunnen ze mij niet horen ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ze zien je zelfs niet,' zei Judas. 'Ze zijn alleen maar bezig met hun eigen kleine bewustzijn. Daar zijn ze op gefixeerd.'

'Dus in wezen kunnen ze mij geen kwaad doen ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Nee,' zei Judas. 'Ze leven in hun eigen wereld, en kunnen jouw wereld niet bereiken.'

'Gek,' zei de jongen.

Na enkele weken waren de zaadjes van de jongen op, maar er lagen alweer nieuwe zaadjes. De jongen had vele gesprekken met Judas.

'De Jezus kus is een onderdeel van de Judas kus,' zei Judas. 'Een kus die je verlicht, die je uitleidt, naar een hele andere wereld, waar alles meer een geheel is. Zo kom je onder de sluiers door.'

Maar op een dag werkten de gele zaadjes niet meer voor de jongen, hoeveel hij er ook van nam. Weer had hij een gesprek met zijn meisje. Een dag later lagen er weer andere zaadjes onder zijn deur. Ditmaal waren de zaadjes wat groter, bijna als echte bessen, en ze waren blauw, oranje en zwart. Ook waren er bruine zaadjes tussen. De jongen slikte er één in. Op de strip las hij : Hell Kisses.

Een grote vrouw verscheen voor hem, en liet alles om hem heen draaien om hem in haar wereld te zuigen. Zijn verstand en bewustzijn, en al zijn herinneringen waren plotseling als water zo week, als zachte pudding. Scherpe tonen leken zijn hoofd te doorboren en rode met roze stralen, als infra-rood en lasers. Maar nog steeds leek het alsof ze in zijn kamer waren. Ze ging op zijn bureau zitten. Nee, dit was niet zijn kamer, maar leek op zijn kamer. Het gordijn achter haar was prachtig golvend met satijn, kant, wol en dierlijk touw. Door het raam zag hij niets dan vuur, maar het was als het vuur van drugs. Het speelde met zijn verstand, met zijn herinneringen, met zijn dierlijke instincten en met zijn filosofieen.

'Mijn naam is de Hel,' zei de vrouw. 'Ik ben de plaats waar jij was. Je hebt haar overwonnen.'

'Wie heb ik overwonnen ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Haar, degene die loog over mij,' zei de vrouw. De vrouw pakte hem stevig beet en kuste hem. 'Mijn zuster, genaamd Leven. Mijn andere zuster is Dood.'

'Ik ben blij dat je mij hebt gevonden,' zei de vrouw. Plotseling kwam Judas binnen en omhelsde haar. 'Dank je, schat,' zei ze.

'Dit is mijn moeder,' zei Judas.

'Leuke moeder heb je,' zei de jongen.

'Dank je,' zei Judas, 'ik weet het. Ze is de beste moeder die je maar kan bedenken.' Buiten was er inmiddels rood vuur, als gevuld met bloed.

'Ja, vele oorlogen worden er gestreden,' zei Judas, en wees op het rode vuur. Veel rook kwam er naar binnen door het raam.

'Moeder Oorlog,' zei de vrouw, 'met haar zuster Jacht. En haar andere zuster is Wet.'

'Interessante familie-lijn,' zei de jongen.

'Weet je wat interessant is,' zei Judas. 'Dat ik een deel van die familie-lijn ben.'

'Je bent een gezegende man,' zei de jongen.

Ineens rende Jezus binnen. 'Ha broer,' zei Judas. 'Weer van de doden opgestaan, jongen ?'

'Ja,' hijgde Jezus, 'Tante Leven heeft dat gedaan, maar nu is ze dood. Iemand schoot haar neer. Het lijkt wel alsof ik zwaar aan de drugs ben. Ik lijk godverredomme wel op een eland.'

'Ja, je bent me nogal een idioot,' zei Judas. Toen nam Judas een pistool en schoot Jezus neer. 'Probeer hier maar eens van op te staan.'

'Ik zal er niet om rouwen,' zei de vrouw genaamd de Hel. 'Jarenlang heeft deze knaap ons het leven zuur gemaakt.'

'Ach ma, en het is maar een drugs-pistool. Harde zaadjes die in het lichaam worden geschoten voor hallucinaties,' zei Judas.

'Zoon, je bent een genie,' zei Hel.

'Ik denk dat ik nu echt gek begin te worden,' zei de jongen terwijl hij zijn hoofd greep.

'Dat is Gekte,' zei Hel, 'de moeder van mijn moeder. En haar zus heet Drugs. Door hen zijn we allemaal hier.'

Plotseling ging de deur open, en twee vrouwen kwamen binnen. Ze namen direct de jongen in de houdgreep. 'Wie is hij ? Jongeman, wij arresteren jou.'

'Jullie zijn maar een gekke familie,' zei de jongen.

'Racist,' zei de vrouw genaamd Gekte. 'Ik weet nog wel een goede plaats voor jou : In het kippenhok.'

'Nee, in een goede legbatterij,' zei de vrouw genaamd Drugs.

'Dat is hetzelfde,' zei Gekte. 'En wel Godverredomme, wat doet Jezus hier op de grond.'

'Niet mee bemoeien,' zei Drugs.

'Dat doe ik wel,' zei Gekte.

'Nee, dat doe je niet,' zei Drugs, en sleurde haar mee naar buiten. Buiten door het raam was alles nu gifgroen.

'Wat een stel,' zei Judas.

De jongen werd wakker, en nam nog een zaadje. Snel bevond hij zich in een gevangenis. 'We hebben hem,' zei Gekte.

'Dat is geen nieuws,' zei Drugs.

'Zeg schatje,' zei Gekte, 'zou jij niet tot onze familie willen behoren.'

'Ach, waarom ook niet,' zei de jongen. 'Hoe gaat dat ?'

'Door een web,' zei Drugs. 'We moeten je door een web trekken, en dan moet je een spinnenei inslikken.'

'Klinkt geweldig,' zei de jongen.

Al snel was het voor mekaar, maar ze vertelden hem ook dat hij nu niet meer terugkon naar het gewone leven. Hij zou nu voor altijd in de hel moeten blijven. En onderdelen van de hel waren drugs en gekte.

'Haha, ik ben gek, ik ben gek,' zei de jongen. De twee vrouwen lachten.

Het ging niet goed met Judas. Hij had een verkeerd pilletje ergens ingeslikt en lag op sterven. De twee vrouwen konden er niet om rouwen : 'De één komt, de ander gaat.'

'Waar gaat hij naartoe ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ach, weet je wat het is met die Judas en die Jezus,' zeiden de vrouwen. 'Ze zijn nogal goed met Leven en Dood. Wij houden meer van Hel.'

'Oh,' zei de jongen.

Samen met Hel gingen ze naar de begravenis van Judas en Jezus, en Hel bad tot de slaapgodin om over haar zonen te waken. 'Ik heb in ieder geval nu een nieuwe zoon,' zei Hel, en wees op de jongen.

Hoofdstuk 2. Zij Nam Hem Mee

Hij zat in de trein naar een stad omgeven met drugs-struiken, waar allerlei zaadachtige besjes groeiden die mensen het hoofd dol konden maken. De stad werd streng bewaakt door deze struiken, die hier en daar echt muren hadden gevormd. In de stad troonde Ziekte, de moeder van Drugs en Gekte. De jongen zou een tijdje bij Ziekte logeren, om zo de familie beter te leren kennen. Ziekte was een hele aardige vrouw. Ze schonk thee voor hem in toen hij was binnengekomen. 'Voor het eerst ben je dan hier,' zei ze met een glimlach. De jongen knikte. 'Dus jij wilt de familie beter leren kennen hè,' zei ze. Weer knikte de jongen. Het was een hele mooie vrouw, zeer lieflijk, intelligent en mysterieus. Een vreemde kracht maakte zich van hem meester. 'Wij geloven niet in toeval hè,' zei Ziekte. 'Jij behoorde hier te zijn, bij mij.' Hij kon haar ogen niet van haar afhouden, en was als gehypnotiseerd.

'Luister je naar muziek ?' vroeg ze. De jongen knikte. Ze begon slaapverwekkende muziek op te zetten, betoverend mooi. Het had een verzachtende uitwerking op hem. Ze reikte hem een schaal met besjes aan. 'Neem er maar van,' zei ze. De jongen begon te grissen en te slikken. De vrouw glimlachte. 'Hongerig joch,' zei ze. Even leek er een glimlach op het gezicht van de jongen te komen, en toen straalde hij. Alles om hem heen scheen langzamer te gaan. Na een tijdje kwam Hel binnen. 'Ik ben blij met hem,' zei Ziekte tegen Hel. 'Hij is een goede aanwinst in de familie.'

Achter de stad was een brug die leidde naar de wereld genaamd Ziekte, haar wereld. Na het gesprek in de stad nam Ziekte hem mee naar haar wereld, in de trein. Hel ging ook mee. De jongen keek zijn ogen uit. Het was de mooiste wereld die hij ooit had gezien. Ziekte leidde hen naar een tafel in een weiland omgeven met wilde woestijnen, vol begroeid. Boven de tafel zweefde een roze theepot-olifant, die thee voor hen inschonk. De thee smaakte naar vla, en naar toverbessen.

Dieper in het weiland was een rivier. Voor de rivier stond een kathedraal. Hier werd de godin, Ziekte, aanbeden. Zij droeg het medicijn, en was dus ook de genezer met de groene vlam van gezondheid. Ze probeerde te onderwijzen dat we alleen onszelf kunnen redden, dat wanneer we een redder proberen te vinden, dan zal het wegglijden. Alles wat we proberen vast te houden en te bezitten, zal van ons wegglijden. Je kan alleen je familie en helpers samenstellen van je eigen innerlijke delen. De rest zal vergaan. Aan het einde zal alleen jijzelf overblijven. De sleutel die zij aanreikt is je eigen sleutel. Dat ben jezelf. Je hebt de ander niet nodig om gelukkig te zijn. De ander is er maar tijdelijk, totdat je hebt geleerd de ander te zijn voor jezelf. Het is een wordings-process. Het gaat om het zijn, niet om het bezitten, niet om relaties. Hiervoor hadden ze een hele speciale drug nodig : Kus van Ziekte. De jongen had nog nooit mensen gezien die zo erg aan de drugs waren dan deze mensen in de kathedraal. Ze bleven maar spuiten en slikken, en anderen zaten er in een totale trance bij, en veranderden geheel van uiterlijk. Zij volgden Ziekte naar de bronnen van genezing.

De Stad van Erotos

Zij zat daar, omringd door ogen, met een blauwe mond. Roze olifantjes stonden om haar heen, en de ogen hadden vleugels en zongen zo mooi. Er kwam een roze kracht uit de ogen, die door elkaar heenstroomde. Ook droop er een slijm uit de ogen. Zo was er het oog van wijsheid, het oog van liefde, het oog van genezing, het oog van schoonheid, het oog van kracht, het oog van puurheid, en

het oog van licht. Het waren zeven ogen, haar dienstknechten. Zij spraken tot haar als een orakel, maar vaak waren zij stil. Zij droegen de geur van de bossen en de wateren, en zij leefde als in een visioen.

Verderop stond de boom der hyena's. Onder deze boom regeerde de zwarte koningin met haar legioenen over alle witte mannen. Zij schreeuwde, en had veel bloed te verbergen. Onder de last van een ongeboren kind werkte zij. De boom bracht een vergif voort, haar vergif. Hiermee had zij de witte mannen in schuld gebonden. Zij konden deze schulden niet betalen. Zij leefden in honger onder de tirannie van de zwarte koningin. Zij voerde hen met vergif vanuit zwarte borsten, en dichtbij stond een spiegel. In de spiegel was er een wereld waar de witte koning regeerde over de zwarte vrouwen, een omgekeerde wereld, maar niemand kon deze wereld bereiken. De zwarte koningin bewaakte de spiegel bijna hysterisch. Maar de zwarte koningin stierf, en haar dochter nam het over. Haar dochter was zo lief, als de goedheid zelf, en iedereen was blij met deze koningin. En men vergat de boom der hyena's, en men vergat de spiegel, want iedereen leefde nu in geluk en zaligheid. En de spiegel en de boom der hyena's werden verbannen naar het rijk der nachtmerries. Maar zeker bij zeker kwam het land onder invloed van de witte spin, een vreemd en gevaarlijk medicijn.

Zelfs mensen konden verstrikt raken in de webben van deze spin. Zij werden dan tijdenlang uitgehongerd, en moesten van een vreemd vergif eten, wat de spin hen voerde, en zij werden voortdurend gewassen in het speeksel van de spin. De slachtoffers zouden dromen krijgen of hallucinaties van het meest overheerlijke voedsel, wat onbereikbaar voor hen was. Ook zouden ze nachtmerries krijgen dat ze in een varken of een gnoe veranderden, en geplaagd worden door doodsangsten. Na een tijd zou de witte spin dan veranderen in een zwarte spin, om aan de maaltijd te beginnen. Sommigen zeiden dat de witte spin eigenlijk niet wit was, maar zwart, en dat het alleen maar wit lijkt, also het zijn tanden laat zien. Ook zeiden sommigen dat het de wraak was van de zwarte koningin. De nieuwe koningin wilde er niets aan doen, omdat zij dacht dat het misschien de terugkeer van haar moeder was.

Maar op een dag kwam de witte spin in het paleis en wilde de nieuwe koningin ombrengen. Nog steeds durfde de nieuwe koningin niets te doen, en vluchtte naar het bos. De witte spin nam de troon. Direkt veranderde de witte spin in een witte koning, zodat sommigen dachten dat het de wraak van de spiegel was. Maar alweer gingen de witte mannen in gevangenschap, dus het zou toch heel goed mogelijk de zwarte koningin kunnen wezen, in één van haar gedaantes.

De witte spin vond dat de nieuwe koningin moest sterven. De witte spin verliet zijn troon en ging het bos in om naar haar te zoeken. Hij moest en zou haar vinden, en toen hij haar vond was ze erg verschrikt. 'Alstublieft,' zei het meisje. 'Laat mij leven, ik heb u toch niets aangedaan ? Ik smeek u, geef mij een kans, en laat mij de redenen weten waarom u mij wilt doden.'

Maar de spin antwoordde niet, en begon het meisje aan stukken te rijten. Het volk ging ten onder in doem meer dan ooit tevoren. De spin veranderde vaak van geslacht en kleur, en vaak zagen mensen een hyena op een troon. Mensen begonnen nachtmerries te krijgen van hyenas die hen verscheurden, koelbloedig, zonder genade.

Totdat op een dag een reusachtige witte vlieg het land binnenvloog. De vlieg was prachtig, als betoverend. Velen dachten dat het de terugkeer was van de gestorven nieuwe koningin. De vlieg vloog het paleis binnen en begon met een rustige, zachte stem te spreken. De spin vloog de vlieg aan, maar begon weg te smelten. Een wit vuur begon de spin aan te vreten. Nog nooit had het land zo'n gekrijs gehoord, als het gekrijs van hyenas. De witte vlieg, die reusachtig was, nam de troon, en alweer werden de witte mannen bevrijd.

Zeven jaren regeerde de goede koningin, totdat op een dag een hyena het paleis binnenkwam en de witte vlieg verscheurde. Het bleek de witte spin te zijn die zich als een hyena had vermomd. Hoe zij van de dood was opgestaan begreep niemand. Weer gingen de witte mannen in gevangenschap, erger dan ooit. Zij moesten een voer eten waardoor ze in varkens of gnoes veranderden. Ze

klaagden erover dat hun leven bestond uit sterven en geboren worden. 'Ja,' zei de witte spin, 'dat komt omdat jullie in het Grote Wiel van de Witte Spin zijn, van de eeuwige wedergeboorte en verslinding.'

'Dat klinkt oosters,' zei iemand.

'Nee, het is indiaans,' zei de witte spin. 'Het is een wiel, een cyclus, van vlees, niet van reincarnatie.'

'Van vlees en niet van reincarnatie ?' vroeg dezelfde persoon.

'Ja,' zei de witte spin, 'precies zoals ik het zeg. Daar moeten jullie witte mensen maar eens gewend aan raken. Jullie zijn gewoon onderdeel van de voedsel-keten, en in dit rijk ben ik de baas. Ik sta aan de top van de voedsel-keten, en jullie werken voor mij, sterven, en komen hierdoor weer tot leven.'

'Ja, weer om een stuk vlees te worden,' zei die iemand. 'Waar houdt dit alles op ?'

'Het houdt nooit op,' zei de witte spin.

'Bent u een filosoof ofzo ?' vroeg de persoon.

'Gaat je geen snars aan,' snauwde de witte spin. Even leek ze weer op een hyena, en even leek ze weer op een zwarte spin. Vervolgens sprak ze : 'In mijn webben zijn jullie. Wen daar maar aan.'

'Het is een vervloekte indiaanse steen,' zei iemand anders, 'een betoverd juweel. Wij hebben erin gekeken en raakten betoverd.'

'Als een Medusa ofzo ?' vroeg de andere persoon weer. Sommigen knikten.

'Hoe krijgen we dat dan weer recht ?' werd er gevraagd. Maar niemand wist de oplossing. 'Misschien is dit wel ons noodlot,' opperde iemand. In ieder geval voelden ze zich machteloos, en steeds meer hopeloos. Ze waren als opgesloten in een visioen door deze drug. Ze waren op een eeuwige boerderij, maar waar werden ze voor gekweekt ? Of werden ze nergens voor gekweekt. De witte spin richtte zich gewoon op het ritueel, als een traditie, en liet verder niets doorschemeren. 'Ik wed dat het de zwarte koningin is !' riep iemand. Sommigen knikten. 'En kunnen jullie die spiegel herinneren waarin een rijk is waar een witte koning is die zwarte vrouwen onderdrukt ? Nou, daar wil ik ook niet wezen.'

'Misschien heeft hij daar wel een reden voor,' opperde iemand anders. 'Of misschien is dat de witte spin zelf die daar een dubbelbestaan leidt, want soms verandert de witte spin in een witte koning. En de zwarte koningin bewaakte die spiegel altijd in grote hysterie.'

'Of misschien zit in de spiegel een sleutel tot onze bevrijding,' zei weer een ander.

'Ik geloof daar niet in,' zei iemand, 'ten eerste niet in het onderdrukken van vrouwen, en ten tweede niet in het onderdrukken van zwarte vrouwen. Zij zijn de bron van ons leven, zijn we allemaal niet uit hen voortgekomen ? Wij hebben ze nodig, en dat ze ons onderdrukken moeten ze zelf weten, maar we kunnen niet onze bron aanvallen.'

'Jij bent het spoor bijster,' zei een ander. Spoedig liep het uit op een vechtpartij. De witte spin had haar gladiatoren opgesteld, en zaaide strijd. Om die strijd te winnen hadden ze macht nodig, en daarom begonnen ze de witte spin te aanbidden, en werd zij hun godin. Vele tempels bouwden zij voor haar, en zij genoot van hun verdeeldheid. Ze had er een lust en plezier in om strijd te zaaien, achterdocht, wantrouwen en leugens. Op alle mogelijke manieren hongerde ze hen uit, zodat ze zich openstelden voor haar gif. Haar gif werd gezien als levendmakend, overwinnend, almachtig. Zij zagen haar als hun mogelijke bruid.

In hun grootmoed stelden zij wetten op, hun eigen webben, en bouwden kerken en psychiatrieen, en zij was daar, als het grote enigma. Zij broedde voort, ja zelfs in hun graven, maar zij was ongenadig, en gaf slechts illusies, valse hoop. En voor haar tronen werden zij in het ongelijk gesteld, de één meer als de ander.

Zij hield van de jacht en van misleidende woorden. Zij mengde haar giffen op hoge bergen, en als zij afdaalde kwam zij om te doden, maar ook om op te wekken in de hel. Op een dag echter, kwam zij met een geheimenis. Ze begon te vertellen dat de witte vlieg hun enige sleutel was om van hun schuld te worden verlost, en dat haar gif was gemaakt van de witte vlieg. En ze sprak dat de witte vlieg nog eenmaal zou komen om te verlossen en te veroordelen. Op een dag ging de witte spin in een cocon en verandere langzaam in een witte vlieg. Maar deze vlieg was erger dan ze hadden verwacht. Deze vlieg bracht hen een realiteit van ongekende wreedheid. Na zeven jaren van verschrikkelijk leed stierf uiteindelijk de witte vlieg. De mensen leefden door alsof er niets was gebeurd. Ze wilden er eigenlijk niet aan herinnerd worden. Ze vonden hun eigen drug om van alles te herstellen. Zowel de verhalen van de witte spin als van de witte vlieg kwamen steeds meer en meer op de achtergrond, en men vond het ook niet meer belangrijk. Zij creeerden hun eigen religies en mysteries.

De dromenkoningin was woedend. Zij had hen deze dromen gegeven, maar ze deden er niks meer mee, en ze had haar grip verloren. Een hyena rende haar kasteel binnen, en beet haar in de nek. 'Jij mag dan wel de godin van de dood zijn,' zei de hyena, 'maar ik ben de godin van de hel.' De godin van de dood rende al bloedend het kasteel uit, en rende het bos in. Maar de hyena achterhaalde haar. De hyena beet haar overal, maar vermoordde haar niet. De godin van de dood was nu de bloedende. Naar haar aard zocht ze de dood op, maar kon hem ditmaal niet vinden. Er was geen rad van wedergeboorte meer, want men stierf niet meer. Er kwam nu een ander rad : het Rad van de Hyena, het rad van de hel en van de onsterfelijkheid. En de schuldlast werd alleen maar groter. De grote godin van de hyenas was gekomen. De hyenas gebruikten de witte mannen nog steeds als stukken vlees, maar ditmaal stierven de mannen niet, en elk weggegeten stuk vlees groeide gewoon weer aan na een tijdje. De witte mannen werden vlees-slaven. Velen verlangden weer terug naar de dromenkoningin, naar de witte spin en de witte vlieg. Maar het werd hen niet gegeven. Zij zochten de dood, maar het vluchtte van hen weg. De god van de dood was Een-oog, die op een grote spin reed. Hij was op de vlucht, want hij wilde niet in de handen van de hyenas vallen. Als ze hem zouden vinden, dan zou eeuwige verdoemenis hem ten deel vallen. Maar de hyenas sloegen niets over. Alles kwam in hun boerderij terecht. Het was de levende eeuwig-durende hel, een slagerij. Hier hing het grote wiel van eeuwiggroeiend vlees. De hyenas vonden vetmesting maar niks, want het vlees bleef toch gewoon maar doorgroeien, dus alles moest uitgehongerd worden. Dan was het vlees van de beste kwaliteit, en zo konden de botten ook bereikt worden, want de hyenas waren ook bot-eters.

De witte mannen werden zo zwak dat ze niet meer konden spreken, en alleen nog maar varkensklanken en gnoe-klanken konden maken, en zo doofde ook de stem van de dood uit. De dood had het laatste woord niet meer, ja, was zelfs stom geworden. Ze konden alleen nog maar mekkeren en knorren. Velen zochten troost bij de god van de slaap, maar spoedig werd ook deze bezocht door de hyenas, en zijn lot was verschrikkelijk. De god van de slaap had al deze werelden gecreeerd van misleiding en deceptie, en hypnotiseerde hen allen met zijn muziek. Een web van dromen had hij gecreeerd en werkte nauw samen met de goden van de dood. Maar ook hij brandde toen de hyenas hem vonden, en al zijn paradijsen gingen in rook op. Hij had een lange tong, en rookte veel, ook zijn waterpijp. Hij had hoerenbuurten gecreeerd waar men met geld snel aan z'n trekken kon komen, maar geld telde voor de hyenas niet. De god van slaap was een belangrijke krachtbron voor de god van geld, die ook de god van de dood als zijn krachtbron had. Maar ook de god van geld werd woest aangevallen door de hyenas en al bloedend naar de boerderij getrokken. Als een modepop werd hij naar binnen getrokken. De hyenas beten hem overal waar ze hem bijten konden. Erotos was de god van de slaap, die hij bewerkte door snelle sex. De goden van sex en hoererij waren zijn trouwste dienstknechten. Ook deze twee honden werden door de hyenas flink gebeten en weggedragen naar de boerderij.

De god van slaap had een paradijs waar iedereen liep met een streepjescode, iedereen die had gedronken van de melk van slaap. Zij droegen die code op hun voorhoofden, en daarboven was de tatoeage van een vrouwenborst, als een merkteken. Zijn rijk werd gereguleerd door waterpijpen, die

aan de mensen werden vastgemaakt, en wiens pijpen in alle mogelijke openingen van het menselijk lichaam werden gestoken. Zijn doel was de mensen te leiden tot een rots, om hen daar te verstenen en tot de eeuwige slaap te leiden. Maar dat ging nu niet door sinds de hyenas waren gekomen. Zijn dromen waren ruw verstoord. Ook de waterpijpen van de god van slaap werden aangevallen. En de waterpijpen waren als vreemde paarse spinnen. 'Laat hen slapen,' werd er geroepen. 'Ach, laat hen slapen.' Maar de realiteiten van de hel waren een invasie begonnen, en zij kwamen met dagmerries. De dagmerries waren witte paarden die ook in zwarte paarden en in zwarte vrouwen konden veranderen. Zij waren geriemd en kwamen om te riemen, om hun rijk van slavernij op te zetten. Ook de god van de slaap ging in slavernij. Hij was bijna als een standbeeld, en zacht vuur kwam van hem voort, en hij was omringd door kleine hondjes. 'De god van de dood telt niet meer,' werd er gesproken. 'Zijn economieen zijn ten onder gegaan.' Lamach, de god van medicijnen, was woedend. Hij was de vader van de god van slaap en de god van de dood. In zijn machine kwam hij naar voren, terwijl de hyena's hem direkt aanvielen. De machine viel neer in het zand, en de god van medicijnen begon te bloeden vanuit zijn hoofd, waar hij een hoofdwond had. Er was bloed in het zand. De godin van de tuinen wierp er een roos op. Haar tranen waren van bloed. Zij was zijn vrouw. Zij was gehuld in een donkere jas van bont, maar ook haar vielen de hyena's aan. Ze viel op de grond en de hyena's doken op haar. 'Het godenrijk is vallende,' fluisterde ze. 'Onze verborgen berg, oh, laat niemand grootvader ontdekken.' De god van drugs danste op een meer. Hij had vleugels, was als een jong kind, en droeg een oog op zijn borst. Bloemen zweefden om hem heen. Toen hij de hyenas zag schrok hij, en rende weg. Maar de hyena's kwamen hem achterna. Zij zouden nooit meer loslaten wat hun oog had gezien.

'Heb medelijden met een kind,' werd er geroepen. Maar al snel werd er een bloedspoor in de sneeuw achtergelaten. Overal waar het bloed was gevallen waren vlinders. 'Jullie zullen mijn opa toch niet vinden,' zei het kind. Maar de hyenas volgden de lange ketting waaraan het kind was vastgemaakt, en kwamen uit bij de god van krankzinnigheid, die woonde in een groot kasteel.

'Potverdikkeme, de hel !' schreeuwde de god. 'Ik kan mijn ogen bijna niet geloven. Nou, ik heb op jullie gewacht, hoor. Ik heb al kaartjes voor de trein.' De hyena's vlogen de god van krankzinnigheid aan en sleurden hem naar de boerderij.

De Moederboom

Ze was verdwaald in haar hart, en de moederboom had bezit van haar genomen, door haar heen werkende, als een oneindig licht, wat ze niet kon bevatten. Ze was een bloederige wond in mijn hart, maar tegelijkertijd was ze de ridder die mijn kasteel beschermde. Ik was opgesloten in dit kasteel, maar tegelijkertijd was dit kasteel mijn schuilplaats.

Ik kon niet tegen haar op, ze was te sterk. Ze had vele namen, en blies als de noorderwind. Ze was als de moederboom met de vele takken en de weelderige bladeren, maar gelukkig met bloesem. Zij bracht mij voort, en brak mij, om me weer op te nemen door de wind. Ik kon haar niet doorzien, maar soms in flitsen was alles duidelijk. Ik had geen grip op haar, en ze gleed onder me weg. Later was ze als de zon waar ik niet naar kon staren. Ze was ver weg, en ik werd koud, en bloedde dood. Het kon haar niet schelen. Ze had dit pad zelf gemaakt. Het was haar ijzeren wil.

Ze zond mij poppen met kerstmis, en het was altijd kerstmis, en het sneeuwde altijd. Ik was verward, kapot. Ik was upgejut tegen de vele illusies die zij had gecreeerd. Ze speelde een spel met

mij. Ik begon weer te roken om het te kunnen verteren. In haar genade zond ze weer een ridder tot mij, een witte ridder, zwart van binnen. Ik bekeek haar aandachtig. Ze was als een sprookjesprinses, als een boom vol witte bloesem. Ik had een worsteling met deze elf voor vele dagen, maar als ik viel, viel ik in zachte kussens. Zachte kussens met gouden fluwelen koorden, waar ik niet teveel naar kon staren, anders zouden ze mij verblinden. Maar zij was goed voor mij. Ze verzorgde mij goed. Ze kon goed koken, alhoewel er altijd gifbessen in de buurt waren. Daar zou zij me wel tegen beschermen. Het was gewoon keuken-decoratie.

Ze wilde altijd gifbessen in de buurt hebben. Het leek haar te inspireren. Het bleek het geheim van de moederboom te zijn. Gifbessen gebruikte ze op haar pijlen. Het was zeer medicinaal. Ik bleef maar staren naar haar. 'Kun je ... kun je ...' Maar verder kwam ik niet. Ik stond in de keuken met haar, maar het was alsof er glas was tussen ons, ook verbaal. Ze keek me vragend aan. Er kwam bloed uit haar ogen. Ze strekte haar armen naar me uit, en smolt weg. Even later stond ze er weer.

Ik brak het ijs, want ik had een handschoen van brandend staal, vuurheet. Rook kwam uit mijn vuisten. Het glas begon te smelten, als vele gezichten. Het was als een deuk in een auto. Maar bereiken kon ik haar niet. Ze was in de rook. Plotseling brandde alles. Er was oorlog in de stad. Planten met gifbessen schoten op om de stad te bedekken. En in het midden van de stad groeide de moederboom.

Ik was bezitterig en verdwaald. Ik stopte mijn huis vol met hebbedingetjes. Ze keek me aan met ogen van een hyena. Ik gromde. Buiten regende het, en er was olie in de plassen. Ik begeerde haar te kennen. Zij was mijn innerlijke wond. Het was een vruchtbare plaats, als de tuin rondom mijn huis in mijn gedachten. Die tuin was roze, sprankelend. Ze stond daar als de ridder, met boeken vol gedichten. Ik werd er hebberig van. Ik kon mijn gedachten niet keren. 'Lees eruit voor,' zei ik. Maar ze zei niets. De wond was te waterig om iets te zeggen. Alles wat ik greep sijpelde weg. De ridder draaide langzaam rond als een ballerina, verspreidende lichte, zachte muziek, als op de achtergrond. Het was niet eens goed hoorbaar, maar ik leek er rustig van te worden. Het greep mijn hart, en liet mij een gat in de tuin zien, waar zoete vruchten uit voortkwamen. Ik begon te eten. Waterige gestaltes waren hier, die zeiden : 'Sophia ...'

'Wie is Sophia ?' vroeg ik.

'Zij is een religieuze ballerina die altijd in dezelfde cirkeltjes draait,' zeiden ze. 'Zij moet gedood worden, anders kom je nooit verder.'

'Houdt ze mij tegen ?' vroeg ik.

'Ja,' zeiden ze. 'Ze leeft in je. Ze vreet alles in je weg. Het is een religieus monster. Je moet haar overwinnen.'

'Hoe ?' vroeg ik.

'Verbrand je goden,' zeiden ze.

Ze lieten mij een waterige vlam zien. 'Neem het aan,' zeiden ze.

Ik pakte het aan en begon te branden, en er was gekrijs in mij. 'Alles wordt nat nu,' zeiden ze.

'Daar gaan mijn hebbedingetjes,' zei ik. Ik stond op een kale berg nu, heel zanderig. De berg leek gemaakt van touw. Ik voelde me gebonden. 'Religie ... strijd ertegen,' zeiden ze. 'Religie is drama en kortzichtigheid, een band om je hoofd.' Ik gleed in een warm meertje, tussen het brandende zand.

'Religie was gemaakt om mensen tot slaven to maken,' zeiden ze. 'Je kunt natuurlijk naar de diepte van zo'n religie gaan, om het te neutralizeren, en het een andere betekenis te geven, maar daarna moet je de religie verbreken en verslaan. Je moet tot de hogere ringen van het leven komen, en uiteindelijk de gouden ring, de ring van de moederboom.'

Ik voelde me als een slaaf worden, met een begeerte die gouden ring te vinden, om zo vrij te zijn ? Ik voelde mijn banden in het licht van dit meer. De waterige gestaltes namen mij dieper in het

meertje, waar alles veel heter was. Toen kwam ik in een riviertje dat naar een zee leidde achter de berg. De zee was vol met bomen met giftige bessen, en er waren overal haaien met miljoenen tanden. Het waren de poorten van de hel. 'Eet niet van de bessen,' zeiden de waterige gestaltes, 'en wij zullen je beschermen tegen de haaien.' Ze vormden een cirkel rondom me, die uiteindelijk uitgroeide tot een bol. Ze leidden mij door de zee naar de overkant. Hier waren ook giftige bessen, maar die moest ik gebruiken voor mijn pijlen. Ik moest een jager worden.

Er was hier een stad in oorlog. Ik moest naalden bevestigen aan mijn pijlen, tezamen met de giftige bessen. En ik moest die pijlen door open ramen schieten. Het was een religieuze stad. Ook woonden hier filosofen. Door het midden van de stad groeide de moederboom. Ik was hogerop hier. Ik raakte de boom aan en stond in brand. Toen werd alles nat. Ik klom hoger, en kwam in een woestijn-wereld. Er waren tekenaars hier en filosofen. Zij probeerden hun ringen te verkopen, maar ik was zoek naar de gouden ring van de moederboom. Er was een speciale taal in de gouden ring gegraveerd, zeiden ze, bepaalde tekens. Ineens had ik de gouden ring in mijn hand, en ik steeg op, naar een wereld vol van bomen en struiken met giftige bessen. Er waren ook planten met giftige bessen, en heggen. Ertussen waren allerlei huisjes en flatgebouwen. Hier woonden verhalenvertellers die hun ringen probeerden aan te praten. Maar ik was doof. De gouden ring had me verdoofd. Ik liep op een trap naar boven en zag een bruisend licht. Er werden hier generationele bloedlijnen bewaakt door kikkers. Een ieder die deze bloedlijnen zou aanraken, zou in connectie komen te staan met de moederboom, en zij zou in die persoon opspringen. De magische bloedlijnen waren de trots van een kikkerkoning. Ik schoot de kikkers neer met mijn pijlen en raakte de fontein van bloedlijnen aan, en werd direct naar achteren geslagen. Ik begon kikkers uit te braken, en de waterige gestaltes zeiden dat die kikkers de goden van de godenboom waren. Ik moest elke god achter mij laten. Een rijkere natuur ontvouwde zich voor mij. Ik was nu een deel van de familie. Het wemelde hier voor mijn ogen, als een zwerm vliegen of andere vliegende soorten insecten. Zij schenen zich niet om een god te bekommeren. Zij werden voortgestuwd door de familie, door de moederboom.

Er werd een bord voor mij op tafel gezet, en ik moest veel eten, maar ik raakte maar niet vol. Ik werd steeds hongeriger. Ik at van de honger, van het holle en het niets. Er werd nog een bord voor mij op tafel gezet, en weer moest ik eten. Ditmaal werd ik echt hebberig. Ik begeerde meer van de bloedlijn, als een gulzige gierigheid. Ik werd door de boom omhoog getrokken, en gehesen op een schip. Daarna werd ik in een zee van gifbessen geworpen. Ik wilde de religie overwinnen, de sluier verscheuren. Ik zwom naar de kust, waar zeemeerminnen zaten op rotsen. Zij waren erg filosofisch. Ze zeiden : 'Drink niet van het gif, maar zie het als dode kunst.' Ik rende het bos in, en joeg op bizons, met de gifbessen op mijn pijlen. Alle spoken van religie vielen neer, en ik maakte er tenten van. Het verloor zijn betekenis geheel. Niemand wist meer wat het was. Ook alle zwijnen waren vastgehaakt aan palen.

Niemand kon mij nog stoppen, geen haas en geen konijn. Ik was de jager. Ik had geen zin om in een ander wonderland verstrikt te raken. Ik smeerde mij in met de gifbessen. De geur was sterk. Ik bedekte mijzelf met zwijnenvel. Zij was mijn innerlijke wond, gek geworden, woest geworden, maar zij beschermde mij ook. Zij ontdeed haarzelf van kleding, en smeerde haarzelf ook in met gifbessen. Zij was het geheim van de moederboom. Zij leefde diep binnenin. Haar vellen lagen op de grond. Zij had een speer in haar hand, en zou de tent bewaken. Ik was opgesloten in deze tent, maar deze tent was ook mijn schuilplaats. Zij had mij het geheim laten zien.

Ik kwam in mijn oude huis toen ik uit dit schilderij was gestapt. En het leek in de verste verten niet meer op wat het was. Het schilderij was nu een portret van een oudere man met een middeleeuwse haardos. Zijn ogen staarden mij aan. Vroeger was dit een schilderij van de bizonjacht. Eens stapte ik er in, en kwam in de klem van religie, omdat het schilderij mij gehypnotiseerd had. Maar ik kwam er ook weer uit. Wie was deze man ? En wie had het geschilderd ? De bizonjacht was een beroemd schilderij, maar dit schilderij kende ik niet. Het leek een beetje op een Amerikaanse president. Op de schilderijen ernaast waren wat landschappen, maar geen van allen hypnotiseerden mij zoals de bizonjacht deed. Ik besloot naar een ander schilderij van de bizonjacht op zoek te gaan. Ik vond er

één, en hing het naast de man met de middeleeuwse haardos. Ik stapte in mijn bed en ging slapen. Ik droomde over de moederboom, en over de bizonjacht. De moederboom leek op twee indiaanse vrouwen tegenover elkaar. De indianen geloofden in voorouders, jachttropheeen en zielen van de vijand. Zij geloofden dat wat zij hadden verslagen, zij op hun eigen manier konden gebruiken.

Ik werd wakker en ging naar de bibliotheek. Ik las boeken over indianen en raakte gehypnotiseerd. Ik stapte in het boek, of werd erin gezogen, en gleed weg. Schilderijen van de bizonjacht vlogen om mij heen. Ik ging een stenen trap op, waar ik haar zag staan, mijn innerlijke wond, met een mes en een speer. Ook had zij een boog met pijlen. Ze leidde mij naar een wigwam. Ze drukte mij naar binnen. Alles begon te draaien. Ik had geen kracht meer om op te staan. Ik was opgesloten in het boek. Ik nam het boek mee naar huis, en weer begon alles te draaien. Het was een betoverend boek.

Ik vond het boek gevaarlijk, en bracht het terug, maar ik kon mijn weg er niet meer uitvinden. Pas na vele jaren vond ik een uitgang uit deze kerk. Ik begon te waarschuwen tegen het boek, en het liep uit op een oorlog. In het midden van de stad, tussen de vlammen, groeide de moederboom. Ik ging binnen in de moederboom. Ik ging aan een tafel zitten, tegenover een waarzegster. Maar vlammen kwamen uit haar mond. Ik rende weg. Ik pakte de lift naar boven, maar ze kwam achter mij aan. Ze had een heel leger van waarzegsters met zich. Ik kwam aan bij een pot met gifbessen, en begon gewoon te drinken, te drinken zoals ik nooit had gedronken. Niemand kon me nog de wet voorschrijven. Ik brandde. Ik gilde. Ik moest gewoon overal doorheen. Haaien met miljoenen tanden slokten mij op.

Ik doorzag haar. Ik werd kalm. Ze rookte een sigaret. Ze probeerde me te wurgen, maar ik gooide haar van mij af. Ze zat hoog op een paard ineens. Maar werd toen weggerukt door een storm. De moederboom nam mij op, en ik braakte gifbessen.

Het Rode Wapen

Ik zag haar daar staan. Haar naam was Zwijnenjacht. Ze stond aan een poort met een sleutel. Ik probeerde weg te rennen, maar ze tackelde mij. En toen dacht ik : 'Waarom zou ik wegrennen eigenlijk ?' Het bleek een aardige vrouw. Ze nam mij door de poort naar binnen. Ze was heel praterig, had veel te vertellen. Ze zei dat zij me hier had gelokt, om mij te bevrijden uit een kerk. Ze had kleding gemaakt van parels. Je kon haar lichaam gewoon door de parels heenzien. Ze straalde warmte uit, maar ook geheimzinnigheid. Een koets stopte. We stapten in. De stad was groot hier, maar we gingen buiten de stad, waar ze in een hutje woonde. Een vreemd gevoel maakte zich van mij meester.

'Ik heb je verlost uit de kerk,' zei ze. 'Ze draaien daar allemaal in cirkeltjes, komen niet verder. Ze zijn onder de betovering van een heks. Ik heb je verlost. Het zijn zwijnen. Als je de jacht niet begint, dan pakken ze je terug. Bedriegelijke verschijnselen zijn het.'

'Okay,' zei ik. Toen begon ze te filosoferen. Ik vond het erg interessant. Ze was niet op haar mondje gevallen, en prikte door alles heen. 'Je moet denken,' zei ze, 'diep doordenken. Niet jezelf opsluiten in cirkeltjes.' Ik knikte.

'Er moet gewerkt worden in dat hoofdje van jou. Je moet je industrie bouwen. Zo kun je veilig zijn

tegen de zwijnen,' sprak ze. Haar ogen waren rood doorbloed. Ik nam haar in mijn armen, gewoon omdat ik mezelf niet tegen kon houden. Ze huilde. Ik probeerde haar te troosten. 'Je bent zo lief,' zei ze. 'En dat is zeldzaam.'

'En jij bent een open vrouw,' zei ik. 'Dank je wel dat je mij verlost hebt.' Haar lichaam begon te schudden. 'Ze willen me bezitten, die zwijnen,' zei ze. 'Bouw je centrum van filosofie,' zei ze. 'En we zullen allemaal veilig zijn.'

'Wat is de belangrijkste filosofie ?' vroeg ik.

'Dat moet je ontdekken,' zei ze. 'Maar bouw gewoon voort. Die varkens zullen allemaal in het nieuwe stelsel van filosofie ontmaskerd worden.' Ik drukte haar tegen me aan. 'Je zult veilig zijn, heus,' zei ik. Toen glimlachte ze een beetje.

Ik keek naar de lucht, die vol was met luchtschepen. De hyena's zouden ons redden. Ze brachten ons naar een spiegel-universum. Alles was hier net een beetje anders. De natuur had hier zoveel meer diepte. Zwijnenjacht was erg aan het beven. Ze was erg ziek. Ik nam haar mee naar een grot, en legde haar neer op een zachte plek, tussen veren en vellen. Weer nam ik haar in haar armen, en verzekerde haar dat alles goed zou komen. Er groeide hier een koffieboom, reusachtig met diepe wortels. En op de takken van de boom en de stam was een kasteel gebouwd. Caffeine soldaten marcheerden op de muren. Ze leken op ridders en hadden scherpe wapens. Ook hadden ze pistolen met rode lasers. Ze vormden hun eigen politie. Ze waren de communicatie politie. Caffeine had al deze realiteiten gecreeerd, en voerde een dwangmatige controle.

Ik las de statuten van Orion door, over een rode planeet, Dankbu. Het was een planeet vrij van caffeine. Het was een planeet waar alles om de innerlijke filosofische registers ging. Er was daar een oorlog tussen koffie en caffeine. Beide kanten hadden rode wapens.

De Poortwachter van

de Hel

Corruptus werd door duivelen naar de hel geleid, naar een kokende pot waar zijn lever voor eeuwig doormidden gezaagd zou worden. ‘Heb genade,’ zei Corruptus. De zaag bleef in zijn lever steken, en hij werd doorgevoerd naar een ruimte waar zijn organen en daden werden gewogen en gemeten. Izu keek toe. Ook werden er door hem notities gemaakt. Langzaamaan raakte Corruptus gewend aan de zaag in zijn lever. Toen werd er een zwaard in zijn hart gestoken. ‘Dit zwaard,’ zei Izu, ‘zal daar voor eeuwig zitten. Nooit meer zal je hart onverschillig zijn, maar gevoelig. Voor de armen zul je werken nu, en voor hen die je hebt opgelicht.’ Corruptus vond het een rechtvaardige straf, maar hij was veel te moe en ziek door de zaag in zijn lever en het zwaard in zijn hart. Het zoog zijn energie weg. Hij begon erover te klagen. Maar Izu sprak : ‘Heb je ooit meedelijden gehad met je zieke en verzwakte slaven ? Nooit heb je hen rust gegeven, daarom zal rust ook niet jouw gezel zijn.’ Corruptus vond nog steeds dat de straf rechtvaardig was, en begon aan zijn werk. Zware stenen moest hij tillen, maar zodra hij ze had verzet rolden ze weer terug. ‘Maar heer,’ sprak Corruptus, ‘mijn werk heeft geen waarde. Alles wat ik doe wordt weer ongedaan gemaakt.’

‘Heb je zelf ook niet je slaven nutteloos werk laten verrichten ?’ vroeg Izu. En Corruptus besefte dat

de straf rechtvaardig was. Toen het avond werd werd hij in de poel van licht en geluid geworpen, en slaap vond hij niet. Ook anderen werden door duivelen naar deze plaats geleid. ‘Meester,’ sprak Corruptus, ‘ik heb honger. Wat heeft u te eten en drinken voor mij.’

‘Uitwerpselen,’ zei Izu, ‘want dat heb je je slaven ook gegeven.’

‘Oh meester,’ jammerde Corruptus, ‘hoe lang zal deze straf duren.’

‘Totdat je je straf zal hebben uitgezeten,’ zei Izu. ‘Leer ervan, en zij die er niet van leren zullen varen tot de eeuwige slaap die tot vergetelheid leidt.’

‘Ik heb behoefte aan slaap,’ zei Corruptus, ‘maar niet voor eeuwig. Ik besluit om van mijn straf te leren, dan zal ook ik deel hebben aan een zekere opstanding. Deze hel is niet voor eeuwig.’

‘Ga terug, Corruptus,’ sprak Izu, ‘naar de aarde waar je vandaan bent gekomen, en leer hen dat de hel bestaat, maar niet eeuwig is. In het licht is er rechtvaardigheid voor alle mensen. Omdat er over een God wordt gesproken die voor eeuwig straft en onrechtvaardig is, zo zijn de mensen ook onrechtvaardig geworden.’

En zo werd Corruptus teruggezonden tot de aarde met een boodschap. Maar de mensen lachten hem uit, en bespotten hem, zeggende dat hij teveel gedronken had en gek was geworden. Ook in de kerk was hij niet meer welkom. En zo liep Corruptus rond met een zware last. En velen gingen naar de hel zoals Corruptus eens ging. Door duivelen werden ze opgehaald, maar geen van hen werd naar de aarde teruggezonden. En velen jammerden toen ze de plagen van de hel onder ogen kwamen, maar ook werd hen beloofd dat dit niet voor eeuwig zou zijn, maar dat het was om hun zielen te zuiveren.

‘U zult gemeten worden met de maat waarmee gij hebt gemeten,’ predikte Corruptus. ‘Als u doorgaat met spotten, dan zult u ook met dezelfde maat in het hiernamaals bespot worden.’ Maar nog steeds werd hij uitgelachen, en ze zeiden dat hij het maar gedroomd had. ‘Ik heb het niet gedroomd,’ zei Corruptus, ‘en eens zullen jullie je daarvan bewust zijn. Tot brood zullen jullie gemalen worden.’ Al gauw werd Corruptus opgepakt en in de gevangenis gestopt vanwege ketterijen. Hij besefte dat de wereld een deel van de hel was, en haar bewoners de dienstdoende duivelen. Maar ook duivelen konden veranderen. En zo niet dan zouden ze tot de eeuwige slaap gedreven worden die tot de vergetelheid zou leiden, waar ze verbannen zouden zijn uit de gedachten.

In de gevangenis werd Corruptus meegenomen door twee vuur-engelen. ‘Je moet je straf in de hel verder uitzitten,’ zeiden de engelen. ‘Dertig jaren heb je je naasten onderdrukt, dus je bent nog niet van ons af.’ Corruptus kreeg een bijl door zijn longen, en kreeg problemen met ademhalen. Toen brachten de twee vuur-engelen hem naar het vuur. Het vuur leidde hem naar een plaats waar armen en benen werden afgehakt, in een restaurant. In het vuur begon Corruptus in een dier te veranderen. Tot een stuk vlees werd hij, omdat hij ook zijn naasten als een stuk vlees had behandeld. Zijn vlees ging ten onder, maar zijn ziel kreeg nog een kans. Ook zijn ziel ging door de molen, en er kwamen alleen maar snippers uit. Hij kreeg een nieuwe ziel, en werd door engelen tot Izu geleid. ‘Omdat je

in je terugkeer naar de aarde goed hebt geleefd mag je binnen gaan tot de hemel,' zei Izu. 'Wel moet je nog een reis maken door vele woestijnen en wildernissen naar de hemelse stad om je te beproeven en klaar te maken.'

'Dank u, heer,' zei Corruptus.

'Ongewapend zul je gaan, Corruptus,' zei Izu, 'omdat je op aarde misbruik van wapens hebt gemaakt. Ook zul je gaan zonder rijkdom, omdat je al je rijkdommen al op aarde hebt verspild. Omdat je op aarde macht hebt uitgevoerd over anderen en die macht hebt misbruikt, zul je geen enkele macht hebben op je pad, en geheel afhankelijk zijn van de genade van anderen.'

Toen begon Corruptus zijn lange reis, maar hij was dankbaar dat hij die reis mocht maken. Omdat hij op zijn reis barmhartig was werd hij op zijn pad steeds meer omringd door engelen. Als wilde dieren hem aanvielen, dan werd hij beschermd door de twee vuur-engelen, en op een dag nam een ridder hem mee naar zijn burcht. De ridder zelf was ook door de diepste zwakheid heengegaan, en de hulpeloosheid, en door de bijtende, tergende spotternij der duivelen, en wist precies wat het was. Eens moest hij ook de reis van Corruptus maken, en toen hij eindelijk de hemelse stad had bereikt kreeg hij deze burcht, om barmhartigheid te tonen aan andere reizigers. Corruptus had een erge langdurige honger, en kreeg voedsel van de ridder. De ridder gaf om hem en was erg behulpzaam. Toen Corruptus aangesterkt was ging hij verder. Weer werd hij geplaagd door honger, en wilde dieren vielen hem lastig. Ook werd hij aangevallen door rovers, maar de ridder kwam hem te hulp. Toen hij over een rivier moest zwemmen verdronk hij bijna, en een vis nam hem mee. De vis nam hem mee naar een grot waar hij kon ademen. 'Zo,' zei de vis. 'Die eeuwige stad zul je nooit bereiken. Geef het maar op. Ze hebben je voorgelogen dat er een weg uit de hel is. Uit de hel ontsnapt niemand, en je bent er nog steeds. Maak je klaar voor nog meer zielenpijn, want voor eeuwig zal je branden vanwege je zonden.'

Corruptus wist inderdaad dat zijn schuld groot was, maar hij wilde zich vasthouden aan het feit dat er ook hoop voor hem was, de kans om zijn leven te verbeteren. Maar de vis lachte hem uit. De vis liet zijn staart zien waarmee hij hem wilde slaan, maar weer verscheen de ridder naast hem en weerde de slag af. 'Ach Corruptus,' zei de ridder. 'Geloof niet in hen van de eeuwige dood. Het zijn slechts schimmen. Ook mij zijn ze tot plaag en spot geweest, maar zij die hen zullen overwinnen zullen eten van het geboomte des levens.' Maar toen de ridder was verdwenen zakte Corruptus in diepe wanhoop. De vis greep hem en sleurde hem nog verder in de diepte, tot een andere grot waarin hij kon ademen. 'Wie heeft jou gezegd dat je kunt ontsnappen aan de komende toorn,' sprak de vis. Ook haaien begonnen hem te omsingelen. Corruptus riep om hulp, maar niemand kwam hem helpen.

'Zie,' Corruptus, 'al die hulp was slechts een illusie, een schim. Ze kunnen niets voor je betekenen, want het zijn alleen je eigen ijdele gedachtes.'

'Maar eens werd ik teruggezonden naar de aarde,' zei Corruptus.

'Dat was maar een droom, Corruptus,' zeiden de vissen. De vissen zagen er gevaarlijk uit, en een grote vrees overviel Corruptus. Staarten omringden hem die hem wilden slaan. 'Sla mij,' zei Corruptus. 'Ik verdien niets anders.' De vissen sloegen hem, en sleepten hem mee, verder de diepte

in, waar ze hem begonnen aan te vreten. ‘Corruptus,’ sprak een stem. ‘Ditmaal zal je ziel ook van je afgenomen worden, maar dit zal je geest tot eeuwig leven wekken.’ En met een nieuwe geest bereikte Corruptus de overkant van de rivier. In de verte zag Corruptus een boomgaard, waar van vruchten jam werd gemaakt. De eeuwige stad had muren gemaakt van brood, en er werd jam opgesmeerd die schitterde in de zon. ‘Waarom smeren jullie er jam op ?’ vroeg Corruptus.

‘Alleen zij die eten zullen binnengaan,’ zei een man. ‘Er zijn geen poorten.’

‘Mag ik er van eten ?’ vroeg Corruptus. De man knikte.

Toen Corruptus begon te eten begon zijn mond pijnlijk te branden. Op een gegeven moment werd het zo pijnlijk dat hij stopte met eten. Maar daarna at hij door omdat hij de hemelse stad binnen wilde gaan. Helemaal uitgeput en verkrampt van de pijn kwam hij aan. Maar van binnen was alles donker. ‘Waarom is het hier donker ?’ vroeg Corruptus.

‘Omdat je oog eerst open moet,’ zei een man. Iemand nam een fakkel en stak zijn oog aan. Hij leek wel in de hel te zijn, nu zijn oog in verschrikkelijke ondragelijke pijn was. ‘Alleen door pijnen zal je oog opengaan,’ sprak iemand. Maar al wat hij zag en voelde was vuur, zo erg dat hij het uitgilde. En er was een licht dat hem verblindde. ‘Hoe kan ik ooit zien in dit verblindend licht en deze teisterende vlam ?’ riep Corruptus.

‘Alleen zij die de boeken van hun binnenste hebben geopend zullen zien,’ werd er gezegd. Toen werd er een speer door zijn buik gestoken, en hij ging in ketenen. ‘Waar ben ik terecht gekomen ?’ jammerde Corruptus. ‘Is dit de hemelse stad ?’

‘Dit is de hemelse stad,’ werd er gezegd, ‘maar het is hier niet zoals de aarde het verteld heeft.’

De pijnen waar Corruptus door moest gaan waren erger dan de pijnen die hij in de hel had. Hij vroeg zich af of er een vergissing was gemaakt. Hij kwam in een put van chaos en verwarring. ‘De hemel is erger dan de hel,’ werd er gezegd. ‘Heel vroeger wist men dat, maar duivelen hebben het omgedraaid.’ Corruptus schreeuwde en gilde en had het gevoel dat hij gek werd. Hij werd krankzinnig van de pijn, een wilde man, een verscheurend dier. Ook begon hij te spotten en te lachen.

‘Weer een dolle man,’ werd er gezegd. ‘Niemand blijft hier gezond. Zij die gegeten hebben van de hemelse vrucht zullen voor eeuwig branden. De hel is maar tijdelijk, maar de hemel is voor eeuwig.’

‘Maar dit is wreed,’ schreeuwde Corruptus. ‘Dit is wreder dan ik ooit ben geweest. Is er ontsnapping mogelijk ?’

‘Niemand die ooit de hemel is binnengaan zal daar ooit ontsnappen,’ werd er gezegd. ‘Zij zullen worden tot dienstknechten van de hemel voor eeuwig.’

Een groot platform kwam naar beneden, waarop Roomse goden stonden. 'Ik ben dus in de val gelokt ?' schreeuwde Corruptus. Maar toen voelde hij de hand van de ridder. 'De luchtweerspiegelingen in de woestijnen en wildernissen die naar de hemelse stad leiden zijn sterk. Ze bevatten veel waarheden, maar het zijn roofdieren op zoek naar prooi. Het zijn duivelen die toegestaan worden de gelovigen te beproeven.' Corruptus viel in de armen van de ridder. 'Ik ben zo blij dat je er bent. Ik dacht even dat alles verloren was. Ik zal beter op mijn hoede zijn. Wat kan ik er tegen doen ? En hoe kan ik ze herkennen ?' Maar de ridder was alweer vertrokken. Corruptus voelde nog steeds de plek waar de ridder zijn armen had geplaatst. Het voelde warm en gloeiend aan. Corruptus voelde zich paranoide worden. Het werd donker, en Corruptus begon als een bezetene om zich heen te slaan. Hij begon alles in twijfel te trekken en had het gevoel dat er een spelletje met hem werd gespeeld. 'Ik word alleen gelaten op de momenten dat ik jullie nodig heb,' riep hij.

En in pure wanhoop en angst scheurde hij toen zijn geest aan flarden, totdat hij niets meer was dan een vlam, een schim, een schaduw. Weer kwam hij tot een rivier, waar een piratenschip stond. 'Vergezel ons,' riep een piraat hem toe. Maar Corruptus dook in de rivier en probeerde naar de overkant te zwemmen. Snel werd hij omringd door haaien. Op het nippertje werd hij gered door het piratenschip. De piraten leken zacht en barmhartig als de ridder. Zij kwamen van de hemelse stad om reizigers te helpen. Corruptus was heel blij met deze vrienden. Zij brachten hem de grote rivier over. 'Als je ooit onze hulp nodig hebt, dan roep je maar,' zeiden ze. Corruptus was dankbaar, en zette zijn reis voort. Schijnbaar had hij meerdere vrienden nodig om ooit de hemelse stad te kunnen bereiken.

De hemelse stad lag op een stapel boeken, reuzenboeken, als een trap die hij moest beklimmen. De boeken waren van edelgesteente gemaakt, en konden niet geopend worden. Telkens als hij ze beklom werd hij weggeduwd door een wind, en viel in het zand. 'Hoe kan ik die boeken openen ?' riep hij.

'Elk boek heeft een wachter, en die moet je verslaan,' sprak een stem. Corruptus besloot langs de boeken heen te gaan, in de angst dat het weer een luchtweerspiegeling zou zijn. Hij wilde niet opnieuw in de problemen komen. Maar toen hij verder ging schoof er een zwaard in zijn oog. 'Heb je het Oog van Izu al gevonden ? Alleen door dit oog zal het boek geopend zijn.' Hij keek achterom en zag dat de boeken nu zacht waren als brood. 'Eet,' werd er gezegd, 'want alleen door het te eten zul je de stad binnengaan.' Corruptus begon van de boeken te eten die nu als zachte broden waren, en de hemelse stad begon naar beneden te komen. Maar telkens als alles bijna was opgegeten groeide het brood weer aan, en schoof de hemelse stad weer naar boven. Nog gulziger begon Corruptus te eten, maar na een tijd plofte hij ziek en vermoeid in het zand. Duivelen om hem heen begonnen hem uit te lachen. Ook begon zijn oog meer en meer te steken door het zwaard wat erin was gestoken. Corruptus trok het zwaard eruit en begon het brood in stukken te kappen met het zwaard. Hierdoor kwam de stad steeds lager te liggen, en even later kon hij de stad binnengaan. Maar het was niet wat hij verwachtte. De mensen liepen hier rond met dure kleren, veel sieraden, en begonnen hem te bespotten omdat hij er armoedig uitzag. Dit kon de hemel niet wezen. Deze mensen leefden in een eeuwige illusie. Hij had zelfs geen behoefte om met zulke mensen te spreken. Hij verwachtte liefde te zien in de hemel, en zorg, maar al wat hij kreeg was minachting. Nu hij wist wat de tijdelijkheid van de hel betekende en de eeuwigheid van de hemel liep hij de stad uit en vroeg zich af of er ook nog een derde mogelijkheid was. Of waren deze dingen die op zijn pad waren gekomen niets dan illusie ? En wat was dan de werkelijkheid ? Corruptus ging in het zand zitten, onder een boom en viel in slaap. Toen hij pas veel later wakker werd zag hij engeltjes

en duiveltjes dansen in de lucht. Het was tegelijkertijd een dans en een oorlog. Ze leken allemaal een beetje op vlinders. Het leek op een groot vlies wat in de lucht hing, en toen wegviel. Een prachtige stad had hij in het oog nu. Hij had nog nooit eerder zo'n prachtige stad gezien. Ineens stonden de piraten en de ridder naast hem. 'Kom op, jongen,' zeiden ze. 'Je hebt het gered. Laten we de stad binnengaan. En samen gingen ze toen de stad binnen. Het was een stad gebouwd van prachtig spiegelend materiaal, overgoten door zonlicht. Je kon alles van meerdere kanten bekijken, en het geheel was kaleidoscopisch. Ook de twee vuur-engelen kwamen bij hem staan, en toen zoveel engeltjes.

'Waar zou je nu graag willen helpen ?' werd er aan hem gevraagd.

'Nou, het liefst aan de ingang van de hel,' zei Corruptus, 'omdat daar nog steeds reizigers komen die denken dat ze er voor eeuwig inmoeten.'

Corruptus kreeg toen een burcht wat de poort van de hel werd, en zelf werd hij de poortwachter van de hel.

De Gele

Vlinder

Hoofdstuk 1.

Ik liep op de straten van Virgo, en tegelijkertijd liep er iemand op de starten van Mercurius die mij na probeerde te doen, een dubbelganger. Ik ging een huis binnen, en degene op Mercurius ook, op hetzelfde moment. Ik werd gevolgd. Ik ging naar boven en keek door het raam naar de hoge toren van Virgo. Ik zag Mercurius branden in de verte. Hij speelde op de piano. Hij had wat klokken op zijn tafel staan die hij aan het repareren was, gouden en zilveren. Hij had een Egyptisch aura, zo iemand waar je geen vat op kan krijgen, maar ik hield van hem. Hij was raadselachtig en mysterieus. Was hij de reden dat Mercurius brandde ? Beneden in de winkel verkocht hij chocola, maar hij had meerdere winkels in deze stad. Ik had in deze stad een vechtschool. Ik zag een andere planeet branden, Venus, de zonnetepel. Ik werd als een gevaar gezien. Men wilde mij uit de weg ruimen. Hij werkte aan zijn klokken, en andere mechanismes. Ook verbouwde hij paradijselijke groenten, en verzorgde hij paradijselijke dieren. Hij was zo'n beetje Manusje van alles, en hij was mijn bodyguard. Ook was hij een bouwer van computers, en verhuurde hij woningen. Ook was hij directeur van een school, mijn oude school nog wel. Hij had mij eens gered. Ik zocht altijd het gevaar op, en hij redde me er altijd uit. Hij was mijn geheime sleutel. Mijn moeder was een prostituee, waar ook nogal minzaam op werd neergekeken, ook omdat ze mijn moeder was, maar bij

hem was zij van harte welkom. Ze kwam vaak bij hem om te computeren. Ik hield van mijn moeder, oh God. Om haar was ik in de handen van tormentors.

Mijn moeder zat ingewikkeld in elkaar, als de Inanna. Zij was een striptease. Op sexueel gebied deinsde ze niet voor veel dingen terug, maar in het normale leven was ze fragiel als een nimf. Mijn vader was een schreeuwlelijkerd, haar pooier, maar hij had een goed hart. Hij was een sirene, een beroemd zanger in de stad, een goedbewaard geheim. Ik leefde in ketenen, achter tralies, maar dat besefte ik nog niet goed. Ik ging nog gewoon overal naartoe. Mijn vader was een tafel-nazi, die op de markt tafels probeerde te verkopen op een opdringerige manier. Als je te lang keek zonder iets te kopen dan werd hij kwaad. Ook verkocht hij dekens. Het werd hier op Virgo nogal aangemoedigd om veel bijbaantjes te hebben. Het was de lik van de leeuw. Maar vat erop krijgen deed ik niet. Achter mijn vechtschool stond de bibliotheek waar ik vaak naartoe ging om te lezen, om er een beetje uit te zijn. Ik combineerde vechtkunst met dans en striptease, en dat was volgens mij de foute combinatie. Ik had veel vijanden. Vooral in de mode-wereld had ik veel vijanden, omdat ik gescheurde kleding wilde introduceren, en armoedige kleding, versleten en oud. De man van Mercurius volgde mij. Hij had een pistool. Ik rende de trap op, en viel. Hij had me al geraakt. Maar mijn bodyguard stond plotseling tussen hem en mij in. Ik werd wakker in zijn kamer. Hij had de kogel er al uit gehaald, maar ik bloedde nog steeds. ‘Zij begrijpen het roze niet,’ zei hij. Daar moest ik het mee doen. Hij was een man van weinig woorden.

Mijn pleegmoeder was de koningin van de luipaarden. Ze startte de jacht op de man van Mercurius. Ze volgde hem na, en vond uit waar hij zijn schuilplaats had : in een veld van bizons. Zij moordde de bizons uit, maar kreeg hem niet te pakken. We besloten rustig te blijven. Het geheimenis van het eeuwig vuur was hier : een zoetwater rivier van genezing, de lik van de leeuw. Mijn bodyguard bouwde een pistool voor mij. Het was een pistool met vele klokken, een zwaard krommend in de zon. Ik was een boogschutter, ik kon goed richten. Het geheim van de stad was achter een poort van twee bokkengeesten, als een poort in een ark. Het was een veld van bokkenjagers. De man van Mercurius staat hier als een standbeeld.

Ik ga naar binnen, in de tuin, waar bokken hangen. Ik klamp me vast aan zijn standbeeld. Venus brandt. De melk is heet, het explodeert. Ik ga naar binnen, in het standbeeld. Ik vind de boog, de bokkenpijl. Alle vruchten branden hier, en dan ook de bomen. De man van Mercurius heeft twee gezichten, voor en achter. Hij heeft een duister geheim. Zijn schepen zijn in de haven, waar dag en nacht wordt gewerkt. De zeemeerminnen sterven in het water van Mercurius, het geheime gif. Hij is een man van dwang met strakke ogen. Steen is alles wat er over is na de brandende nacht. Dit is de stad van steen. De gravers graven in zijn vlezig hart. Gepolijste stenen is hun vak. De sirene staat hoog op de toren van de stad, om te waarschuwen, met haar gruwelijk gedicht, maar niemand luistert. Ze slapen allemaal in de nacht. Gepolijste stenen is alles wat ze willen zien. In de wateren heeft Mercurius zijn booreilanden, op zoek naar goud, aardgas en olie. Hij is de juwelier van de hel. In schelpen verbergt hij zijn hoofden. Zeven mannen zijn gekomen, de achtste moet nog komen. Ze hebben mij op het oog. Ze zien mij als het Hermes van de goden, de lijm waardoor alles gaat branden. Ik ben gekluisterd in een pot. Zij willen mij drinken als de goddelijke nectar. Apen rennen door de stad, omsingelen de toren, en rennen dan naar boven. Zij drukken de sirene opzij, en worden zelf het vaandel van bevrijding. De bodyguard leeft.

Ze geeft me de sleutel tot het bokkenveld. Ze noemt geen namen. De man van Mercurius zit op een troon. Achter hem is de grote roltrap waar alle zwaarden slap worden. De stad is grotendeels overdekt.

Zij die hem volgen hebben geen oren.

Zij is een prostituee, huurmoordenaar en woningverhuurder, vele manieren om toe te slaan. Ik blijf ver uit haar buurt. Ze zijn allemaal bezig hun architectuur uit te tekenen, en de bomen blijven ze uittekenen. Ze staat klaar om toe te slaan. Ze is een discipel van de man van Mercurius.

Hoofdstuk 2.

De hekken hebben hoge punten hier. Ik kan er nauwelijks doorheen komen. Alles is wazig hier. De hoge gothiek is als mijn tralies. Ik ben het drakenkind. Ik word door een draak bewaakt. Ik ben nog jong. De man van Mercurius is een slot aan mijn lichaam. Hij is een dode steen. Iedereen is hier gestorven. Ik kan me alleen uitstrekken naar de hogere kunst. Er is alleen leven in het licht. In het duister kan niemand bestaan. Ik schenk mijn moeder een steen van licht, en ze komt tot leven. Ze kan de draden zien, de patronen, de scheuren, de naden, en het grote gat. Ze kan de wond zien, het litteken, en het graf. Zij is de martelares in vuur geboren, als een tralie in mijn kooi. Met haar zal ik voorzichtig omgaan. Ik ben het Hermes der goden.

De engelen zijn hier bliksemschichten, in de tuin. Ze houden zoveel achter. Ik kan alleen maar staren. Alleen kennis doet leven, de onwetendheid is de dood. Venus brandt, haar licht verlicht de nacht. Hier zijn de stralen van het moederhart. Zij woont op nummer 43, en hij woont op nummer 10. Ik loop naar nummer 88, in hetzelfde flatgebouw, waar de spinnen leven, waar ze hun stenen webben weven. Het is de weg tot het verscheurde kant, waar het licht achter schuilt, de bron van het leven bewakende. De gele vlinder zal vliegen in de nacht. Hij zal vliegen over de woestijn en aankomen in het paradijs, Mars in Virgo. Hoog op de burcht zal hij staan, met al zijn wachters. Goud zal het regenen in de straten. Zij had mij gegrepen, en trok mij naar haar kamer om me als een paard te beteugelen. Aan het eind van de rit was ik niets meer dan één van de vele hobbelpaarden. Ze had een kamer in de woestijn. Ik wachtte op de gele vlinder die langs zou komen. Hij greep me. Hij was mijn bodyguard.

In mijn vechtschool bracht ik centaurs onder. Zij zouden allen vlinders worden. Een heel leger van vlinders zou er opstaan. Maar ik zakte meer en meer ineen, totdat een piano mij vond. De piano was te berijden. Het werd mijn paard. Ik werd de ruiter. De piano nam mij mee over de woestijn, daar waar geen hond door kon komen, volgende het pad van de gele vlinder. Ik kwam aan in het Virgose Amerika, waar ik in het vrijheidsbeeld ging wonen, een beeld met een doodskop. Ik rees mijn zwaard en viel, zo diep, dat ik in het indiaanse deel terecht kwam. Hier waren drie doodskoppen, drie indiaanse opperhoofden. Zij werden aangeraakt door de gele vlinder, en kwamen tot leven. Zij hoorden het geluid van mijn piano, en werden gelukkig. Zij zouden regeren. De pit van Mars was een thee der liefde, die alle monden liet branden. Izu had van die thee gedronken, en sindsdien brandde zijn mond. Hij was de Attis van de insectenwereld.

Zij reden op motors, van een futuristische apocalypse. Goud zou het nu regenen, want koning Midas zou terugkomen. De man van Mercurius hield een zwaard op mij gericht, en een drietand, en ik zakte weg. Dit hier was het rijk van Neptunus, de zeegod, die zoveel nimfendochters had. Deze draak van een man heerste niet alleen over de zee, maar ook over Virgo, en ik ging naar hem voor hulp. Deze tovenaar gaf mij drie brandende stenen. Ik kon zijn geluid horen in de verte. Zij dragen het eeuwig vuur van genezing. En die genezing was alleen in het vele licht wat werd afgegeven,

door het zwavel binnenin, eeuwig zwavel, onverwoestbaar. Ik werd warm van binnen. Het Griekenland was een vlies hier, en ik gleed dieper in de tempel. Ik was in de maag van de draak. Ik werd uiteengescheurd, alles werd dun en lang, totdat ik het geheim zag, vastgehouden door twee bokkenwachters, twee bokkengeesten, als de ark van licht, en het licht was een illusie, wat het geketende boek versluierde, en dit boek was slechts de sleutel tot de bibliotheek, de boekenwinkel, waar al het kwaad geschiedde. Ik las de boeken van de hemel, en zag de hel. Wie zou de dochters van Neptunus bevrijden ? De gele vlinder zou het doen. Ik gooide één van mijn zwavelstenen door de ruit van de antieke boekenwinkel, en de winkel was in vlammen. De tweede zwavelsteen gooide ik door de ruiten van de bakkerij, en de derde steen slikte ik in, en stierf. Niemand kon mij nu nog vinden, alleen de gele vlinder.

De dochters van Neptunus stonden voor mij, allemaal nimfen. Ze hadden tere gezichtjes. Ik legde mijn handen op hen, en maakte ze vrij. De gele vlinder was een sleutel in mij. Zij waren de vlammen in mijn hart. De draak nam mij op, en schonk mij het gas. Ik was de achtste man van Mercurius.

Hoofdstuk 3.

Mijn vechtschool ontving het Venus, de brandende zonnetepel, de poort tot Izu, en de vlinders waren in de stad. Het zou sneeuwen nu, en zij hadden hun eigen webben. Het eeuwige zwavel was een trots van genezing. En ik wilde Izu kennen. Ik was de boogschutter. Er waren bosbranden overal, en de zwarte gaten werden zichtbaar. En Izu nam het over van de Horus, en deze werd het stuur van de motor. Zijn lichaam was een brandende tong. Het orakel van de tong had hen allemaal tezamen gebracht. Zoete banaantjes lagen op een schaal, en de kunsten van chocola werden zichtbaar. ‘Breng mij nu het drop op een schaal,’ sprak de gele vlinder. En snel kwamen de nimfen van Neptunus met hun schalen. De bibliotheek werd bovenop mijn vechtschool geplaatst. We hadden nu een doel. Het gevecht moet gecombineerd worden met oude wijsheid. Mercurius was als een beschonkene. Hij waggelde, en viel. De vissers kwamen op, uit de diepe waters waar ze waren verdronken, en gooiden hun netten weer uit. Ik rende de trap op, en riep om mijn moeder. Zij stond daar bovenaan de trap, maar het was een roltrap, en die ging met volle kracht naar beneden en niet naar boven. De gele vlinder nam mij op en bracht mij naar haar. De fluisteraars van het heelal moesten mij hebben. Zij stuurden een tweede man op mij af. Hij had zijn havens hier, zijn scheepswerven, zijn woningbouw. Ik rende door de straten. Het huis van de gele vlinder stond hier niet meer. Ik keek naar de daken. De vleermuizen en de raven waren verdwenen. Ik raakte in paniek. Hij was de vlinder van het trauma, de naaldenprikker. Ik bloedde. Ik viel op de grond, en de vlinder nam mij op, de grote anti-vlinder.

Ditmaal redde mijn moeder mij, en nam mij naar mijn pleegmoeder, de koningin van de luipaarden. De grote anti-vlinder wist ons echter te vinden, maar het water begon te golven, en werd woest op hem. Zijn schip verging. En deze piraat had een grote geroofde schat. Wij doken de schat op en brachten het naar boven. Gouden tepels die chocolade melk gaven. De koe was vrij. De fluisteraars waren woedend. Nu zouden ze kabaal gaan maken. Ze stuurden een derde man op mij af, maar die was zo dronken dat die niet veel kon beginnen. Toen besloten de fluisteraars zelf te komen.

Ik kan er niet veel van navertellen. Het was het duisterste gat van mijn leven. Ze verwoesten mijn vechtschool, en de bibliotheek. In een zeegraf ging ik. Ik werd een piraat, en ik werd zelf een fluisteraar. Voor het eerst in mijn leven vertel ik het verhaal. Fluisteraars zijn vreemde insecten. Ze geven giftige melk, en maken webben. Ze verwarren de ander, omdat ze bang zijn dat iemand hun

hart binnendringt. Ze zijn onnavolgbaar. Het zijn orakels. Met raadsels bewaken ze hun bruggen. Ze verscheuren alles, en bouwen het dan weer op. Alleen als de zilveren tepels vermengd zouden worden met de gouden tepels, dan zou er zuivere melk vloeien, maar de fluisteraars hielden dezen altijd gescheiden. Ik maakte daar verandering in. Ik was zelf nu een fluisteraar en werd al snel de koning der fluisteraars. Zij hadden een oor wat doof was. Maar de zilver-gouden tepels waren hun oren nu. Zij waren luisteraars nu. Ook konden zij zien met deze tepels. Daarvoor waren zij blind. Waarom hielden ze altijd het goud en zilver gescheiden ? Omdat ze mij wilden opwekken, de rode vlinder. Die zou alleen maar door angst en woede opgewekt kunnen worden. Ik was de Nemesis.

De Vierde

Aarde

Hoofdstuk 1.

Wij waren gemaakt van een gouden amalgaam. Wij waren kinderen van de godin, die vrij in de tuin leefden. Alleen het gouden amalgaam kon de stralen van haar liefdeszon opvangen, om ons tot eeuwig leven op te wekken. Het was een liefdes-amalgaam, volkomen toegewijd aan de godin. Ook de hekken rondom de tuin waren van het gouden amalgaam gemaakt. Zij waren hoog en scherp. Wij voelden ons veilig binnen deze hekken. Eens aten wij van de verboden vrucht van de vleermuizenboom, een kaars, die in ons binnenste begon te branden, zodat we door een andere wereld geroofd werden, en wij kinderen van de hel werden. Maar de godin verstootte ons niet. Nog meer dan ooit wijdde ze zich toe aan haar liefde voor ons, en met geduld en passie probeerde zij ons terug te lokken naar de tuin. Een gouden vrucht hing zij voor onze ogen, en trok deze weg zodra wij ernaar grepen, om ons zo haar te laten volgen op het pad terug naar de tuin. Het was een verboden en geheime tuin voor velen. Deze wereld aanbad Doornroosje, de slapende prinses, en voor de paasheks hadden ze niet veel sympathie. Deze paasheks was Inanna, de godin van de armoede, die het geheim van Doornroosje kende. Doornroosje was een ei in haar handen, een ei die ze zou afpellen. Doornroosje sliep nog steeds in het paradijs, en zou tot de berg der goden moeten komen, de onderwereld.

Er was een doodslucht in de tuin, waarin zij die zich niet konden beheersen leefden. Altijd liepen ze hun begeertes achterna, als in een roes. Zij waren de schone slaapsters, de volgelingen van Doornroosje, van alles wat mooi en duur was. De onthechting was een groot geheimenis, maar zij werd gedemoniseerd en als heks bestempeld. Zij riep vanaf de berg, vanuit de wildernis. Zij wilde Doornroosje opwekken tot een hogere wereld. Dit zijn geen gewijde paadjes. Deze paadjes zijn afgesloten door de plaatselijke gemeentes. De draak zelf was de prins van de jungle die Doornroosje vrijkocht uit de kooi van de bebouwde kom. De kus wekte haar op tot de wildernis, omgeven door doornenstruiken.

De slang van het paradijs was eerst een draak, en zij gaf aan paarden de macht om zich te verzetten tegen hun rijders. Zij maakte eenhoorns van hen, de grote ontwaking. Ook gaf zij de macht aan bizons om zich te verzetten tegen hun jagers. Zij maakte eenhoorns van hen. Maar haar wijsheid werd buiten de poorten van het kasteel gezet, en zij veranderde in een vlam, om te verwarren en te verleugenen. Zij gaf haar aanklagers over aan een dwaalgeest.

Zij was de vleesgeworden boom die haar eigen koninklijkheid had bewaard. Zij was de koninklijkheid van het communistisch anarchisme. Zij was de koningin van de bloemen. Wilde bloemen had ze in onze haren gestoken, in deze drakentuin. Zij trok ons omhoog op het schip, toen de dauw ging vallen. De rivier van plastic omhulde ons. Zij had haar eigen pad, en wilde niks weten van het verwende gemeentepark. Daarom was zij onuitgenodigd, gehaat door velen, en gevreesd. De draak viel en werd in een kooi gestopt, maar niemand kon haar geheim doorgronden. Zij wist dat slechts hen buiten de kooi gekooid waren.

Ze hadden maar een fragment van haar vastgezet. Zij was natuurlijk veel groter. Zij leefde in plaatsen waar zij nooit zouden komen. Zij leefde in een mengsel van vuilheid in de dieptes van de wildernis, als sluiers van haar schoonheid. Deze schoonheid werd geproclameerd door een genetische collage van juwelen. De stenen stapelden zich op tot een druipkoninkrijk. Zij liet geen steen heel, perste hen geheel uit. Haar schoonheid kon niet uitgedrukt worden door stenen, alleen door wildernis. Zij ging over de muren. Zij van de smetvrees zouden daar nooit komen. Zij bouwden auto's die alleen maar op gladgestreken wegen konden rijden, en die het zonlicht als tralies weerspiegelden. Maar zij zocht het licht in de duisternis op, de zon van de onderwereld. En zij leefde in ons, op een diepere plaats. Hier in de diepe wildernis had zij haar huisje van snoep geplaatst, en was zij slechts een diepere inwijder. Het harnas van snoep lokte de soldaat tot een diepere strijd, de patronen van de wildernis, de verborgen arena waar slechts zij keek. Zij was het kruis van de jongen in zijn jeugd om hem te behoeden voor een veel groter kwaad. De kooi die zij hier had gebouwd was niets vergeleken met de kooi van de stad. Zij was immers het pasen gevierd met chocola. Zij was de moeder van de jungle, maar zij onderwees haar kinderen over de gevaren. Zij bewapende haar kinderen en ontzag hen niet. Zij tuchtigde haar kinderen reeds vroeg, en daarom moest de heks dood. De stad wilde kinderen verwennen met een allesverblindend licht, verlammend en bemoederend.

Zij was de zwarte koningin des doods, de koningin van het oerwoud, toen het witte haar kinderen en haar schone land stal. En zij beval haar jager het sneeuwwitte om te brengen, want het witte moest sterven, zeven maal. En zij hing haar vrucht van het gouden amalgaam. En het sneeuwwitte was jong, oningewijd, omgeven door witte doornen. En zij lokte haar tot de deur van de dood in het oerwoud. En het sneeuwwitte gewaad werd afgedaan, en een zwarte vrouw rees op.

Zij was de koningin van de wolven, de koningin van de zwarte draken. Vele andere kinderen waren tot de deur des doods gekomen, en haar moddermannen namen hen op en brachten hen tot haar. Wilde bloemen hebben hen toen ingewijd, en ze raakten verstrikt in haar webben.

Zij had ons geschapen in de dooier, omringd door het witte, in een ei. Zij hing dit ei hoog. Het was een ei omringd door vlees. Wij groeiden op en aten van het vlees, en kwamen tot het huisje van snoep in de wildernis. Binnenin waren paaseieren versierd. Ze had een paasrijk in het woud. Haar paaswachters liepen op haar druipmuren. Zij wilde de lichtjes van het pinksteren doven. In de poppenstadjes werden keurige pinksterfeestjes gehouden, vol van smetvrees. En zij was onuitgenodigd. Daarom bracht zij haar stortvloed, en liet hen het ei van pasen zien, hun verboden

vrucht. En hun kindertjes begonnen ervan te eten, en werden uit de stad gezet.

Zij had haar eigen stadje aan de rand van haar rivier, diep in de wildernis, een schilderachtig stadje, en zij gingen van vrucht tot vrucht, van ei tot ei. Haar eenhoorns liepen in pas, een drachtige optocht door de stad. En de stad lag op heuveltjes in de wildernis, en de eenhoorns gingen over de bruggen tussen die heuveltjes, langs de paars-roze sluiers.

‘Kun je van haar houden ?’ vroeg ik. We zaten gehurkt op het bed. Ik hield haar billen vast die heet aanvoelden. Vanuit de raampjes konden we de bomen zien met hun blauwpaarse vruchtjes en hun donkergroene blaadjes. Ze duwde mij neer, en ging op me liggen. ‘Natuurlijk,’ zei ze. ‘Ze is mijn moeder.’ Ik kuste haar, en ze was gelukkig. We waren naakt, maar we schaamden ons niet voor elkaar, want we waren in haar hof. Van gouden amalgaam waren wij gemaakt. In een kooi vonden we doorgang. Het was niet onze dood, maar een transformatie. We waren als vlindertjes in haar bos. Wij kwamen voort vanuit het orgie der goden, het gouden amalgaam, wat als een vrucht voor ons hing, als een ei, en waartegen gewaarschuwd werd, want men vreesde de geheimenissen van het bos. De goden hadden er veel liefde in gestopt, als het serum van bevrijding, als de paradijselijke zweer. Maar zie, zij werd geweerd als een melaatse. En zij hield de raadselen van de tuin verborgen.

En het imperium werd gebouwd, en zij werd als een boeman beschouwd, maar in haar waren de rangen gegarandeerd. Er was niks mechanisch aan, alles was natuurlijk, vanuit de dood voortkomend, het was een roze spot. Er moest plaats voor haar gemaakt worden, dit was haar vereiste, want ze was al lang genoeg weggedrukt. Zij hadden naast haar niet veel in te brengen, want zij kenden het raadsel van de dood niet. Zij omsingelde de grote stad met haar eenhoorns, en trok haar kinderen er één voor één uit. Tussen haar woestijnen door zijn rivieren, met bruggen waar barbaren voor staan, één wachter per brug, en wie kan hen verslaan ? Maar kinderen trekken zij mij, hen die bezegeld zijn door haar liefde. Zartan was de poortwachter van haar secte, bestempeld als een verleider, maar haar strikken brachten hen tot leven, voortkomende vanuit het meer. Haar moddermannen werden zij, en zij schuwde de bokken niet, zij waren de dragers van haar geheim. De secte werd groot en gevreesd, en men vergat de secte van de grote stad. Arsis en Jupo waren twee andere poortwachters van haar, maar die stonden dieper in haar rijk, want dit rijk had veel gebieden. En ook de kinderen werden beproefd door deze wachters. En velen bleven steken. De worsteling met de roos was een grote. Haar secte scheurde families uiteen.

Ze zat rechtop. Ze had contact met de bloemen, met de Braziliaanse schietbloem, met de Rijn-bloem, de vuur-bloem, en de flamingo-bloem. Zij had het wilde witte konijn gevolgd tot de sprekende bloemen. En zij hadden verborgen de vrucht die haar deed groeien. Zij likte aan de vrucht, nam ervan, en begon langzaam te groeien, tot de hoge burcht in de woestijn. De zon van de Sumerische onderwereld verlichtte de woestijn. Hier werd nog het zuivere Ninurta gegoten, de boodschapper der goden. Nergal, de god van de onderwereld zat hier op zijn troon, met speren aan weerszijde. Hij sprak en genas. Het was hier waar de eenzamen elkaar hadden gevonden. Hier was de Sumerische ark, terwijl buiten het gif van Mercurius regende. Er zou een zondvloed komen, want het tijdperk van Mercurius was nog maar net begonnen. En daar stonden ze dan, drie boodschappers van de goden : Ninurta, Hermes en Mercurius, en zij kwamen tot de troon van Nergal. En Mercurius had het gezicht van een wortel en had een grote glimlach. ‘Ik weet het, er zijn duizenden mercuriussen,’ zei Nergal. ‘En jij bent de enige die toegang hebt gekregen tot mijn paleizen.’

‘Vader,’ sprak Mercurius, ‘het kwik is alleen maar groeiende buiten, en u kent dit vergif. En u weet ook wat het enige anti-gif hiertegen is. De cocon van Mercurius heeft de wortelkwik-vlinder

voortgebracht. Zij heeft uw ark gebouwd.'

'Schenk mij het wortelkwik, Mercurius,' sprak Nergal. Mercurius deed een stap naar voren en gaf hem een zakje met wortels waarin het wortelkwik zat. 'Dit zijn de zaadjes voor wortelkwik-bloemen,' zei Mercurius. Toen vertrok hij.

'Hermes en Ninurta,' zei Nergal, 'jullie gaan deze zaadjes zaaien in de koninklijke tuin.' Hermes en Ninurta deden direct wat hen gezegd was. Snel groeiden er in de tuin de weelderigste bloemen die zich in het snelste tempo begonnen voort te planten. Het wortelkwik was duizendmaal sneller dan het normale kwik. 'Dank aan Mercurius,' zei Nergal. En Nergal sprak tot al zijn volgelingen : 'Dank dat u allen gekomen bent. Zoals u weet kunt u niet alleen bevrijd worden van uw kettingen door exorcisme, maar ook juist door ingewijd te worden in de mysterien.' Een beeld van Mithras werd naar voren gebracht, die vlak voor de opkomst van het christendom door de Romeinen werd aanbeden. Mithras streed tegen het kwaad, wat de vorm had van een stier. Het centrale thema van Mithraisme was de slacht van deze stier, het gedoopt worden in zijn bloed, en banket te houden met de zon. In het pre-atlantische was Mithras genaamd Matras, en werd het kwaad als een bizon uitgebeeld, waartegen Matras streed. Het afleggen van het oude leven door naaktheid, naturisme, was een belangrijk item in zowel Mithraisme en Matraisme, maar werd door de christelijke priesterdienst steeds meer ingebonden. Door onderwerping aan de goden kon men hogerop komen in het Mithraisme en Matraisme, maar het kerkelijke christendom legde vooral het accent op de onderwerping aan het kerkelijk gezag. Bij Mithraisme en Matraisme stond het loskomen van de aarde centraal. Dit kon bereikt worden door ascetisme. Nergal nam wat van het wortelkwik, smeerde het standbeeld ermee in, en het kwam tot leven. Iedereen begon te juichen. Toen werd het beeld van Matras naar voren geschoven die in worsteling was met de bizon. Het tot leven gekomen beeld van Mithras liet zien hoe Mithras in gevecht was met de stier, en werd geholpen door een hond, een slang, en een schorpioen. De schorpioen viel de genitalien van de stier aan, maar het standbeeld van Matras toonde geen schorpioen maar een spin. Verder werd hij niet geholpen door een hond en een slang, maar door een vlieg en een wesp. Ook dit beeld werd ingesmeerd door het wortelkwik en kwam tot leven, onder groot gejuich. Martarius was de pre-atlantische vorm van Mercurius, de boodschapper van de goden, maar gebruikte geen kwik maar zwavel, want kwik hield gebonden aan de materiele sferen. Ook zijn beeld werd door het wortelkwik tot leven gewekt.

Nergal maakte toen het wortelkwik tot een sleutel in zijn hand, en opende de deur naar een verborgen tuin. Hier brandde ergens het rode vuur, het verboden vuur, wat een mengsel was tussen het bloed van een rund en het bloed van een aap. De tuin was vol met rook. Ook is er hier een grot waar het rode vlies zich bevindt, de huid van een sprekend en vliegend varken. Deze huid wordt bewaakt door een schorpioen. Alleen degene die de schorpioen kan temmen en berijden kan het rode vlies bereiken. Dit rode vlies is het vlies van eeuwig leven. Alleen de godin Utanga, de pre-atlantische Athena, kan het hoofdstel, het zadel en de teugels hiertoe overhandigen, het tuig waarmee de schorpioen bereden kan worden. Zonder dit tuig zal een ieder ten prooi vallen aan de schorpioen. Zij kwam op een nacht tot Aleron, de pre-atlantische Jason, om dit tuig aan hem te geven. Zij kwam tot hem op haar rijtuig in de donder, omringd door luipaarden. Zij slachtte een pauw en bedekte hem met het bloed als met een deken. De pauw was de wachter van de grot waarin de schorpioen leefde. Als Aleron de schorpioen zou berijden, dan zou het rode vuur op hem vallen om naar de onderwereld te gaan naar zijn geliefde Averon. Ook aan haar zal hij een deel geven van het rode vlies. En zij komen erachter dat dezen allen huwelijksgeschenken zijn. En wanneer hij zijn geliefde heeft bereikt zal de schorpioen in een rund veranderen.

Kamperdam aan Zee, Juni 1962

Mijn jeugd was een hel. Ik ben nu getrouwd en heb twee kinderen. Wij hebben hier een heel speeltuin-complex waar ze vaak spelen. Ook gaan we zo nu en dan naar het strand of de stad in. Ik heb mijn vrouw in het ziekenhuis ontmoet. Zij was de verpleegster, ik de patient. Het winkelcentrum van de stad is overdekt. Onze jongste dochter is het ijverigst. Sinds 1948 is ons land hermitatisch. Daarvoor was het land christelijk, omdat we werden bestuurd door Roomse keizers. De staatsgodsdienst was christelijk en heidendom was verboden. Sinds de hermitatische bevrijding zijn wij meer universeel. Ik zal die dag nooit meer vergeten dat onze hermitatische bevrijders kwamen. Hoe dan ook, wij zijn allen slaven van de waarheid, en alles is een halve waarheid. We vallen totdat we vliegen. Ik ken een boom genaamd Torpoteo, een beetje de pre-atlantische vorm van Yggdrasil. Hierin kunnen we schuilen, als gevallen strijders die hun kruis binnengaan. En bovenin wonen de Wanen, de elven, de vruchtbaarheidsgoden, de Vanir, met de pre-atlantische vorm hiervan : de Targa. Het zal uitlopen op de Ragnarok, in het pre-atlantische wordt dit genoemd de Dordada, de grote eind-oorlog. Alleen in het diepste van de boom Yggdrasil zal er veiligheid en bevrijding zijn, als de vuurreus Surtr alles in vuur brengt door zijn zwaard. Ook de christenen hebben zo'n mythologie, over Armageddon, over de zondvloed van vuur, en een ark waarin bevrijding is. Het gaat allemaal om het binnengaan van het kruis, het ascetisme. De Torpoteo herbergt de bron van Tirz, die de pre-atlantische Mimir is, de bron van wijsheid. Odin gaf zijn oog op om deel te hebben aan die bron, maar de pre-atlantische Odin, genaamd Wassan gaf zijn vrouw op om deel te hebben aan de bron. Deze bron is het bodemloze ravijn, waarin Zolder viel, de pre-atlantische vorm van Balder, en door de rotsen gestoken werd, en hij zal vallen totdat hij vliegt. Hij zal voortkomen vanuit de Dordada, de grote eind-oorlog. De pre-atlantische Surtr is Staumi, met zijn zwaard Lauri, maar hij is een mengeling tussen een vuurreus en een ijsreus, dus Surtr-Ymir. De nadruk wordt vaak gelegd op het brandende ijs. Hij woont in Oswold, de pre-atlantische vorm van Jotunheim, waar de ijs-reuzen wonen. De stad waar wij inkwamen had muren gemaakt van slangen, waar het gif droop, waar de lucht was van bloed. Hier kwamen wij om de schilden te bezichtigen, maar zij waren bijna doorzichtig. Staumi had met het zwaard van wraak toegeslagen. De stad was nu als een woestijn. Zel zat hier op haar troon, in een ruimte achter rode doorzichtige sluiers, waar haar langharige leeuw ook was. Deze stad was genaamd Sogroff, en was omringd door een rivier genaamd Harenx. De schorpioen van Zel bracht wijn voort om de gevallen strijders die hier kwamen dronken te maken. Drie godinnen, Slova, Jarx en Slama, zouden hun verleden, heden en toekomst bepalen. Als ze goed hadden gestreden, dan gingen ze naar Travaska. Zo niet, dan werden ze door Zel opgeslokt. In Travaska woonde Rolf met zijn hamer Avik, die hen beschermde tegen boosaardige reuzen en dwergen. Travaska was een plaats in het hart van Zel.

En Zel bewoog zich gesluierd door de stad, en verspreidde haar bloemen van vuur. Kinderen groeiden hier in de bomen. Zij kwamen voort van een diepe eeuwige slaap. De tweede aarde was Trok, de derde Kempen en de vierde Saraul. En deze aardes waren al van een meer verheerlijkte stof. Men aanbad daar een ekster, een masker en een zeedraak. Er was daar alleen leven in het masker, en het masker was het oog.

Hoofdstuk 2.

Ik was de nachtleider. Ik had een nieuw pistool. Ik rende door de stad naar de kerk in de verte, en ik kon de kerk maar niet bereiken. In de top van de kerk woonde een geest. Ik richtte mijn pistool op de geest en schoot. Mijn kerkelijk hoofd spatte uiteen. Ik had de vrouwen in de kerk lief. Zij waren aan zware ketenen, maar ik beminde hen. Ik had de sleutel die op hun sloten pasten, en ik voerde hen uit. Zij hadden mij ook lief. Ik nam hen mee door de oceaan.

Mijn huis stond hoog, op een rots in de stad. Ik liet hen mijn schilderijen zien. Hier konden ze veilig wonen. Het was goed zo. Ik had een kroon voor hen gemaakt. Zij reisden van wereld tot wereld. Zij aanbaden het masker. Het maakte hen sterk, en de man werd zwak. De man werd trager en trager, en stond plotseling stil. Zijn hoed was als het gesmolten zilver. Ook zijn schoenen waren als gesmolten zilver en goud. Het droop van hem af. Ik riep naar hem, maar hij hoorde mij niet. Hij staarde naar de kerktoren. 'Daar bevinden zich al mijn geliefden,' zei hij. Hij wilde mijn pistool zien. Toen liet hij zijn eigen pistool zien.

Hij gaf mij geld, veel geld. Ik bouwde een brug, een brug tot zijn wereld. Hij kon me duidelijk horen nu. 'Ja, ik kan je duidelijk horen,' zei hij. We staarden samen naar het hoge kerkgebouw wat begon te druipen. Hij liet mij zijn horloge zien.

Ik zweefde tussen de werelden, tussen het westelijke paradijs en het oostelijke paradijs, en langs het voor-paradijs gleed ik terug naar de eerste aarde. En toen was de eerste aarde niet meer. En toen weer wel, en de eerste aarde begon te veranderen, en de man had een jas aan van zebra-huid. 'Ik ben de nacht,' zei de man. We klommen de kerk binnen, en die begon te druipen. Het was pudding nu. Wodan en Thor kwamen langs op hun paarden. Het land is van ons, zeiden ze. En ze wezen naar Wassan en Rolf. Ik droeg een masker, en de man was als een zeedraak op wiens rug ik zat, en we zakten in de zee, en kwamen in de lucht terecht. Zo ging dat op en neer. Hij strekte zich uit langs de kerkmuur. Hij strekte zich uit tot aan de rozenhaag waar alles begon te golven.

Bloedbessen

Joost Verschuur komt 's avonds laat thuis van een feestje. Zijn vriendin ligt al in bed. Snel doet hij zijn kleren uit en gaat tegen haar aanliggen. Ze slaapt, maar wordt wakker van hem. Ze kust hem, en dan vallen ze samen in slaap. Midden in de nacht horen ze een hard geluid. Joost rent naar het raam. Iemand staat voor de deur. 'Doet jullie bel het niet ofzo ?' schreeuwt de persoon. Het is de broer van Joost. Even later staat ook zijn zus voor de deur. 'Doe open Joost,' schreeuwt zijn zus. Joost staat als aan de grond genageld, kleed zich langzaam aan, en loopt langzaam naar beneden om de deur te openen. Even later zitten ze rond de tafel. De vriendin van Joost is er inmiddels ook bijgekomen. 'Willen jullie wat drinken ?' vraagt Thea, de vriendin van Joost.

'Nee,' zegt Arnold, de broer van Joost. 'Jacquelien, vertel jij het hen maar.'

Jacquelien, de zus van Joost begint te huilen. 'Pa is ernstig ziek,' zegt ze.

'Wat heeft hij ?' vraagt Joost verschrikt.

'Hartklachten,' zegt Arnold. 'Hij heeft een hart-aanval gehad. Hij heeft niet lang meer te leven. Hij wil dat je nu bij hem komt. Hij wil je iets vertellen.'

Zo gezegd zo gedaan. Even later staat Joost bij zijn vader op de stoep, en een paar minuten later heeft hij de warme hand van zijn vader in zijn hand. 'Joost,' zegt zijn vader, 'ik ga weg. Spoedig zal ik mijn laatste adem uitblazen. Ik heb al met mijn andere kinderen gesproken, maar niet met jou.' Hij knipoogt even naar Joost, en laat dan even een glimlach zien. Joost, ik .... Met jou heb ik altijd het beste contact gehad, van de kinderen, maar de laatste jaren niet meer zoals het was, en ik weet wel waardoor dat komt. Thea had een hekel aan me. In ieder geval ... ik wil je zeggen dat ik van je houd, en dat ... dat ... mijn grootste erfenis naar jou toegaat.'

'En wat is dat dan ?' vraagt Joost.

'Een boek,' zegt zijn vader.

'Wat voor een boek ?' vraagt Joost.

'Een boek van zeerovers en spoken, ik heb het zelf geschreven,' zegt zijn vader. 'Ik heb het onder pseudoniem geschreven, zodat niemand ooit wist dat ik het had geschreven.'

'Die bestseller ?' vraagt Joost. 'Heb jij dat geschreven ?'

Na een paar dagen sterft de vader van Joost en enkele dagen later heeft Joost de eerste uitgave, de luxe editie, van het boek in bezit, en het manuscript. Joost bergt het meteen goed op. 'Zo, dat was dan de biecht van mijn vader,' zegt Joost tegen Thea. Thea zegt niks. Ze heeft zijn vader nooit gemogen.

'Klaar !' zegt Joost. 'Afgelopen.'

Thea komt langzaam naar hem toe, omhelst hem, en dan kust ze hem.

'Het was niets dan spel,' zegt Joost, 'het contact wat ik eerder met hem had. Ik deed maar net alsof, ik had geen andere keus.'

'Ik weet het,' zegt Thea, 'en vroeger durfde je niet anders.'

Joost kust Thea terug. Samen gaan ze op de bank zitten. Joost speelt wat met haar bloesje. 'Je hebt nu een echt speeltje,' zegt Thea. 'Iets wat je zelf hebt uitgekozen en wat je leuk vindt.'

Joost knikt. Bijna met zijn kin opgeheven. Voor het eerst in zijn leven kan hij echt glimlachen, en hij kijkt rebels. 'Toch wel vreemd dat mijn vader de schrijver was van dat boek,' zei Joost. Thea knikt. 'En jij bent de schrijver van mijn boek,' zegt ze. Joost glimlacht. 'Ik houd ervan je te beschrijven.'

'Doe nog eens een gooi,' zegt Thea.

'Je bent bloedmooi,' zegt Joost. 'Ik kan je wel drinken.'

'Mooi als die struik met bloedbessen daar buiten ?'

'Die bessen zijn giftig,' zegt Joost. 'Jij bent ontgiftigend, genezend.'

'Maar medicijnen zijn soms giftig, Joost,' zegt Thea. 'Giftig, het kan een gave zijn, een gift.'

'Gut wat doe je weer moeilijk,' lacht Joost. En neemt haar in de houdgreep. 'Ik ben toch veel sterker dan jij.'

Thea kijkt hem aan. 'Verleden tijd,' zegt ze zacht. 'Kijk eens diep in mijn ogen.' Joost doet het en voelt zich zwak worden, en dan ineens neemt zij hem in de houdgreep. 'Okay, Thea,' zegt Joost, 'ophouden met die spelletjes nu. Ik weet dat je me kunt betoveren en hypnotiseren. Je bent misschien wel potentieel een gevaar.'

'Gevaar is een te groot woord, noem het maar avontuur,' zegt Thea.

Midden in de nacht worden ze weer wakker van een geluid. Het zijn weer de broer en zus van Joost. Even later zitten ze weer om de tafel.

'Wat heeft vader je gegeven,' vraagt Jacquelien.

'Oh niets,' zegt Joost.

'Probeer het niet achter te houden, Joost,' zegt Jacquelien, 'want moeder heeft gezegd dat jij iets hebt gehad.'

'Dat is tussen vader en mij,' zegt Joost. 'Waarom zijn jullie hier ?'

Joost kijkt ze indringend aan. 'Nou ? Waarom zeggen jullie niets ?'

'Wij vinden dat je moet zeggen wat vader je heeft gegeven,' zegt Jacquelien. Arnold knikt.

'En daarmee komen jullie midden in de nacht ? Waar slaat dat op ?' vraagt Joost.

'Omdat het belangrijk is,' zegt Arnold. 'Nou, zeg op.'

'Okay dan,' zegt Joost, 'als het voor jullie zo belangrijk is, eh, het was een boek, over zeerovers en spoken. Eh, hij heeft dat boek eens geschreven onder pseudoniem.'

'Mis, Joost,' zegt Arnold. 'Bladzijde 441 vertelt het geheim, daar heeft hij in kleine letters geschreven, ga zelf maar kijken.' Joost pakt het boek, gaat naar bladzijde 441 en leest hardop : 'Beste Joost, gefeliciteerd, aan jou de familie-erfenis : een geheim eiland.'

'Moet ik nu hoera zeggen ?' vraagt Joost. 'En waar is dat geheime eiland ?'

'Ga naar bladzijde 847,' zegt Arnold.

En daar leest Joost het. Het schijnt dat Joost een geadopteerd kind was, als baby, en zijn vader en moeder durfden het hem nooit te zeggen. Boos slingert Joost het boek weg, en rent naar buiten, terwijl Thea hem achterna gaat. 'Lees het boek verder voor meer informatie,' roept Arnold hem na. Maar Joost is woedend. Pas na een paar uur komt Joost weer thuis, samen met Thea. Arnold en Jacquelien liggen op de bank te slapen. Op de tafel ligt het boek, en Joost leest verder. Het blijkt dat Joost op dat eiland geboren is.

Na een tijdje kan Joost het accepteren en gaat samen met Thea op vakantie naar het eiland. Er wonen daar twee mensen die ooit de samenleving hebben verlaten. Ze wonen hier als wilden. Als Joost hen het verhaal vertelt begrijpen ze dat hij hun kind is.

'Jij hoort bij ons,' zegt zijn echte vader. 'Ooit hebben ze jou van ons afgepakt. Nu ben je terug. En Thea is ook welkom.' Hij omhelst zijn vader en dan zijn moeder, en ook Thea doet dat. En ze leven nog lang en gelukkig.

De Bizonjacht

Hij voelde de scherpe pennetjes door de huid boven zijn tepel gaan. Het waren een soort pijltjes, een soort scherpe botjes met kleine veertjes aan weerskanten als kwastjes. Die voelden zacht tegen zijn huid aan, maar de pijltjes waren scherp. Het deed wel even heel erg pijn, maar daarna raakte hij er meer en meer aan gewend. Hij moest een lange trap op bekleed met bruin fluweel of suede. Moeder overste stond op hem te wachten op de hoogste trede. Ze stond bij een groot portaal, een poort. “Je wist dat dit moest, hè ?' sprak ze. 'De pinnen moesten erin, anders zou de bizon je bezeten kunnen maken.' Hij knikte. Samen met haar liep hij door de poort. Ze kwamen in een duister veld waar in de verte de bizons graasden. 'Hier gaat het gebeuren,' sprak ze. Hij kreeg een speer, een pijl en boog met een mes. Ook kreeg hij een net.

'Ik wil niet,' zei hij. Moeder overste stond daar met een gesel. 'De kerk wil het,' sprak ze

zelfverzekerd. Hij boog zijn hoofd. Hij wilde de vader-priesters niet teleurstellen, en al helemaal niet moeder overste. Plotseling richtte hij de speer op haar. 'Ik kan het niet !' riep hij. En hij rende weg. Hij voelde zichzelf een banghaas, een grote mislukkeling. Hij rende de trap af naar zijn kamer. Hij deed de kamer op slot, voor het geval moeder overste achter hem aan zou komen. Ze had altijd die gesel wel, maar had haar die nog nooit zien gebruiken. Moeder overste begreep hem wel. Midden in de nacht kwam hij zijn kamer uit, en ging de trap op om vervolgens door de poort te gaan. Er waren daar een groep vrouwelijke jagers. 'Waar ga jij naartoe ?' vroegen ze.

'Ik wil hier weg,' zei hij. 'Dit is niks voor mij.'

Hij keek de lucht in, waar de nachtzon was verschenen. Er kwamen zoveel bizons uit voort die door de lucht gingen. De lucht leek wel op een grote vlakte met een heleboel velden. 'Waar gaan die naartoe ?' vroeg hij aan de vrouwen.

'Zij zullen de kerk aanvallen,' zeiden de vrouwen serieus en ernstig. In zijn gedachten zag hij moeder overste voor zich. Hij sprong op één van de jachtwagens, en maakte zijn speer klaar. Zo ging hij de nacht in. Hij joeg op de bizons alsof hij op de zon joeg. Gehuld in een bizonkleed kwam hij terug.

'Moeder overste zal trots op je zijn,' zeiden de vrouwen. De volgende dag ging hij naar moeder overste met zijn kleed. Zij nam hem in haar armen. 'Ik ben trots op je, jongen,' sprak ze. 'Eindelijk heb je jezelf overwonnen. Dat is een hele grote stap. Je bent erg moedig geweest.'

De nacht daarop ging hij weer op jacht, en kwam terug met een bizon-schedel. Die gaf hij aan moeder overste. Moeder overste drukte de schedel tegen zich aan. De dag erna stierf zij. Hij zwoer dat hij voor altijd voor haar en de kerk zou jagen. Hij zou de kerk tot overwinning brengen.

'Iets brandt er in mij, een eeuwige vlam,
Het steekt overal, ik ben zo bang,
Maar niets zal mij stoppen, het duurt al te lang,
Ik zal over haar waken zo lang als ik kan,
Ik ben hiervoor geroepen, terug kan ik niet,
Sinds ik jou vond als mijn beste vriend.'

Hij stond op en liep naar de poort. Hij keek in de lucht, en de nachtzon was vallende, maar er waren meer bizons dan ooit te voren. Het was alsof de jacht nu pas echt begon.

Het

Hemelbed

Ze loopt op de straat. Stenen uiltjes vallen haar aan met religieuze ideeen. Ze gaat door het tuinhek, en doet het hekje weer achter haar dicht, een hek met lange scherpe punten. Ze gaat het kasteel binnen als ze door de lange vlindertuin heeft gelopen. De kok ziet haar aankomen en wuift naar haar. Als hij dat doet krijgt ze altijd een warm gevoel van binnen. De raadsels hier zijn onopgelost. Zo gaat het altijd. De stenen uiltjes vallen haar altijd aan als ze buiten de tuin is. Maar in de tuin en het kasteel heeft ze rust. Ze loopt naar boven en gaat op haar hemelbed liggen. Naast het bed staat een oude piano. Dan grijpt ze haar telefoon, en belt naar haar geliefde. 'Hallo,' zegt ze. Even later valt ze in slaap.

De volgende ochtend gaat ze weer door het tuinhekje, en werd weer door de stenen religieuze uiltjes aangevlogen. Het zijn de uiltjes van haar verleden. Gelukkig zijn ze nu van steen, maar ze vladderen nog steeds verschrikkelijk, en die krengen kunnen nog steeds goed bijten en met hun vleugels slaan. Vroeger leefde ze met die uiltjes, moest ze doen wat ze zeiden, maar nu konden ze haar alleen maar van buitenaf aanvallen. Ze liep door de regen en stak een paraplu op. Ze merkte dat ze daar de uiltjes ook flink goed mee van haar af kon slaan. Ze ging naar haar geliefde waar ze werkte als secretaresse. Haar geliefde had een muurtje om zijn huis waar ook stenen uiltjes opstonden, maar deze konden niets doen. Ze waren één geheel met de muur.

Zij en haar geliefde hadden een woningvereniging genaamd 'De Gouden Leeuw'. Eens werd de stad geteisterd door een dokter die de stadsmensen dwong om giftige medicijnen in te nemen met een streng bewind van dwang-verpleging. Dit trok de stenen uiltjes aan die toen een strenge religie brachten, zodat de mensen die dokter konden vergeten. Vele mensen waren van die dokter zo ziek geworden dat ze hun werk niet meer konden doen, en hun woningen uitgezet werden omdat ze het niet meer konden betalen. 'De Gouden Leeuw' was opgezet om die zieke mensen een woning te geven. Het was een woningbouw voor zwervers. Nu het bewind van de dokter was verdwenen was er nog steeds het bewind van de stenen uiltjes, en de mensen waren nog erg ziek. De Gouden Leeuw had woningen voor de helft van de stad. De stenen uiltjes wilden hun religieuze dwang niet stoppen, omdat ze bang waren dat er ooit een tweede dwangdokter zou opstaan. Sinds de Gouden Leeuw bestond kwamen de stenen uiltjes niet meer in de tuinen en de huizen van de mensen, maar wel waren ze op straat, en vielen voetgangers lastig. Ook hielden ze zich op bij muurtjes en hekjes. Ze waren een plaag in de stad. Natuurlijk was iedereen bang dat er een tweede medische dictator zou opstaan, maar daar zou de Gouden Leeuw wel toezicht op houden. Men zag de stenen uiltjes vaak als een kwelling.

En als zij in bed lagen, zij en haar geliefde, dan droop een lijm van hen, als het spinsel der spinnen, om de stenen uiltjes vast te plakken aan de muren. Zij vreeen voor een betere wereld, voor de vrije stad.

Sleutel van het
Paradijs

Zeevlinder

Moeder keek vader aan. 'We hebben er over gesproken, Eduard. Je vader en ik vinden het beter als je ons gewoon zou vertellen wat er gebeurd is. We willen je zo graag helpen.'

'Ik kan het niet,' zei Eduard, en rende naar boven. Zijn moeder ging achter hem aan, en ging naast hem op zijn bed zitten in zijn kamer. 'Vertel het nou maar,' zei moeder. 'Heus, het is beter dan.' Toen vertelde Eduard stoterig en schokkerig zijn verhaal. Moeder belde direkt de politie. Die kwamen ook direct naar hem toe, en onderhandelden met de daders. De vader van één van de daders kwam na een tijdje bij Eduard op bezoek. De dader moest zijn verontschuldigingen aanbieden en gaf Eduard een cadeautje, een kleine ziekenauto. Eduard glimlachte, maar viel flauw toen hij de dader strak in het gezicht keek.

'Eduard ?' zei moeder.

Eduard zag zijn vriendin voor hem staan, die eens weg ging naar een andere stad, een verhuizing, vanwege werk van haar vader. 'Marlotte ?' vroeg Eduard. 'Die is hier niet,' zei moeder.

'Ik heb haar nodig,' stamelde Eduard. Hij hoorde het geluid van politie-auto's. 'Ze komen,' zei hij. 'Ze maken alles goed.'

Eduard kon niet goed lopen. Hij had zijn vriendinnetje nodig. Ze was er niet. Hij belde haar op. Ze kwam direct naar hem toe. 'Eduard, lieveling,' zei ze. Toen werd Eduard wakker. Hij had alles maar gedroomd. Zijn vader en moeder zouden hem nooit geloven. Zijn leven was een nachtmerrie. En Marlotte zou hem nooit meer terugwillen. Waarom wist hij niet. Hij was altijd goed voor haar geweest. Hij had een goed contact met zijn piano-leraar. Die sleepte hem er doorheen. Op een dag vroeg de piano-leraar of Eduard niet gewoon bij hem wilde wonen. Eduard stemde toe, maar wat graag. Hij wilde zijn ouders nooit meer zien.

'Marlotte,' zei de piano-leraar, 'is een vreemd meisje. Ik heb haar nooit vertrouwd.'

'Maar ik houd van haar,' zei Eduard.
'Dat begrijp ik,' zei de piano-leraar, 'maar toch.'
'Ik kan niet zonder haar leven,' zei Eduard. 'Ik ben bang dat ik gek word zonder haar. Ik mis haar.' De piano-leraar probeerde hem te sussen. 'Ze is heel erg duister. Er klopt gewoon iets niet met haar,' zei hij.

Eduard ging achter de piano zitten, en zong een liefdeslied. Hij was wel heel erg blij dat hij bij de piano-leraar kon wonen nu. Die was altijd al als een vader voor hem. Die nacht in bed had hij een duistere droom waarin Marlotte hem probeerde te verdrinken, en plotseling veranderde ze in een

duister beest. Ze trok hem de diepte in.

Ineens zaten ze in een schoollokaal. Zij zat voor hem als de juffrouw. 'Ik ben Lazarus,' zei ze.

'Wat bedoel je,' vroeg Eduard.

'Ik ben een boom,' sprak ze.

'Waarom dan ?' vroeg Eduard.

'Omdat ik het zeg,' zei ze, en sloeg met haar vuist op de tafel. 'Ik ben een boom vol van bloemen en geheimen. Ik ben meerdere personen, en ik draag de sleutel voor jou. Ik wil je niet vernietigen, ik wil je brengen naar de andere wereld.'

'Dat is een leugen,' zei Eduard. 'Je wilde niets meer van me weten.'

'Ik weet het,' zei Marlotte. 'Maar ik ben Lazarus.'

'Wat bedoel je ?' vroeg Eduard.

Ze begon te huilen, en zei : 'Ik ben de Lazarus-boom.'

'Wat is dat,' vroeg Eduard.

'Niets,' zei ze. Eduard schrok wakker. Ze stond voor hem in een prachtig witte jurk als bloesem. 'Ik ben al dood,' zei ze. 'Ik ben een bloem, de lazarus-boom, een mysterie voor jou, een raadsel.'

Eduard dacht dat hij gek aan het worden was en probeerde te roepen, maar het was alsof zijn mond op slot stond.

'Ik wil je overweldigen,' zei ze. 'Maar ik kan het niet. Hij houdt me tegen.'

'Wie is hij ?' vroeg Eduard.

'Je vader,' zei ze. 'Ik ben dood, Eduard, dood. Je vader heeft mij vermoord.'

'Je moet daar weg,' zei Eduard.

'Ik wil bij je zijn,' zei ze, 'maar ik kan het niet.'

'Leugens,' zei Eduard. 'Je zei altijd dat je juist niet bij me wilde zijn.'

'Help me,' zei ze. 'Ik kan het niet helpen. Ik ben meerdere personen. Ik kan niet praten.'

'Je komt anders aardig goed uit je woorden,' zei Eduard.

'Ik kan niet zeggen wat ik wil zeggen,' zei ze.

'Ik houd van je, Eduard,' zei ze.

'Ik geloof je niet,' zei hij. 'Je hebt me laten wegteren.'

'Alsjeblieft, ik smeek je,' zei ze.

'Wat bedoel je,' vroeg hij.

'Ik ben een lazarus-boom,' zei ze.

'Ja, dat had je al eerder gezegd,' zei hij.

'Ik groei, en ik kan het niet stoppen,' zei ze. 'Ik heb meerdere takken.' Toen begon ze te schreeuwen en te gillen. 'Nu sta ik in brand,' riep ze.

'Toe, help me,' gilde ze. 'Mijn vader verbrandt me.'

'Ik houd van je, Marlotte,' zei hij, en omhelsde haar. Hij probeerde haar te sussen, maar ze werd steeds wilder.

'Ik ga van je scheiden,' zei ze. 'Ik heb teveel pijn, ik ben te gevoelig. Ik brand, en jij gaat ook branden.'

'Het is okay, schat, ik wist niet dat we getrouwd waren, maar wat je dan ook zegt,' sprak hij kalm.

'Eduard, blus me,' zei ze.

'Hoe ?' vroeg hij.

'Met kussen,' zei ze.

Eduard begon haar te kussen, maar het leek allemaal veel erger te worden. Hij begon ook te branden. 'We moeten rennen,' zei hij. 'Waar naartoe ?' vroeg ze.

'Naar het bos,' zei hij. Snel renden ze het huis uit naar het bos, maar alle bomen waren aan het branden. Ze hoorden veel gegil en geschreeuw. 'Liefste,' riep ze. 'Als ik het niet overleef, vergeet nooit, maar dan ook nooit, dat ik altijd van je heb gehouden. En nu zelfs meer dan ooit.'

'Ik geloof je niet !' riep hij. 'Je bent er nooit voor mij geweest !'

'Ik kon het niet !' schreeuwde ze. 'Ti sento ! Ik ben te gevoelig !'

'Je zei dat je niet meer van me hield. Je zei zelfs dat je nooit van me hebt gehouden !' schreeuwde hij.

'Ik ben de lazarus-boom !' riep ze terug. 'Dingen gaan niet zoals ik wil dat ze gaan.'

'Je hebt me verraden met Judas-kussen !' schreeuwde hij. Alles stond in brand. Spoedig waren ze in een vuurzee. Ze huilde.

'Ik kan er niet tegen dat je lijdt. Ik wil je helpen, ik wil je troosten, zoals ik nachten met je op heb gezeten, maar je was gemeen naar mij,' zei Eduard.

'Jij lijdt ook, zoals ik lijd,' zei ze.

Hij had haar stevig in de grip. 'Liefste,' huilde hij. 'Het maakt niet uit dat ik lijd, maar ik kan er niet

tegen als jij lijdt. Ik heb daar nooit tegengekunt, wat je me dan ook hebt aangedaan.'

'Ik ben een lazarus-boom,' huilde ze.

'Ik weet het,' zei hij. 'Wacht gewoon totdat het gaat bloesemen.'

'Nee,' huilde ze, 'het gaat nooit meer bloesemen. Het gaat branden.'

'Ik zal je veilig maken,' zei hij.

'Hoe ?' vroeg ze. 'Waarom jij ? Omdat je de vader van mijn kinderen bent ?'

'We hebben nooit kinderen gehad,' zei hij.

'Dat is wel waar,' huilde ze.

In zweet werd hij wakker. Het was een nachtmerrie. Ze lag naast hem, met schuim op haar mond. Hij had ook schuim op zijn mond. Ze hadden samen drugs genomen van de lazarus-boom, om in een andere realiteit te komen, maar dat ging niet altijd goed. 'Ik... ik brand,' huilde ze zachtjes. Hij nam haar in zijn armen. 'Het spul heeft bijwerkingen,' zei hij, 'maar het zal ons er doorheen slepen. We zullen aankomen in die andere wereld.'

'Ik wil niet meer, baby,' huilde ze. 'Het is te zwaar. We lijken wel vijanden van elkaar.'

'De liefde is een oorlog,' zei hij. 'We vechten voor elkaar, en zonder scheiding is er geen verzoening. Zonder ijs is er geen vuur, en zonder verwarring is er geen helderheid.'

Maar alles moet toch ergens stoppen,' huilde ze.

'Oh, maar deze wereld is groot,' zuchtte hij. 'Ja, zo groot,' fluisterde ze. 'Ik kan niet meer.' Hij troostte haar.

Ze stopte met de drugs, terwijl Eduard ermee doorging. Ze begonnen uit elkaar te groeien, en het eindigde in een scheiding. Ze was koud, bevroren, en Eduard was warm. Hij begreep haar wel, maar zij begreep hem niet, en begon alles te ontkennen. Ze was niet meer zoals ze was, alsof ze zich ergens voor probeerde te verstoppen. Op een dog sloegen de stoppen bij Eduard door. Hij begreep haar niet meer, en was boos. Toch wilde hij dat ze gelukkig was. Het scheen niet goed mogelijk te zijn bij haar. Ze schreven brieven, en in die brieven schreef ze hoe slecht ze er aan toe was. 'Is dit nu alles wat je wilde ?' schreef hij terug.

Op een dag schreef ze terug dat ze een nieuwe drug had ontdekt, veel veiliger volgens haar. Eduard kwam bij haar langs. Ze scheen weer een warme vrouw te zijn. Ze glimlachte toen ze hem zag. Hij was nog steeds erg boos, en keek koud op haar neer. 'Spuit het maar in mijn arm,' zei hij. Ze hurkte voor hem neer, en spoot in zijn been. 'Daar,' zei ze. Eduard viel op de grond. De kinderen kwamen binnen. 'Wat doet pappa daar ?' vroeg de middelste.

'Pappa is gek,' zei Marlotte. Schuim kwam op zijn mond.

'Is hij aan de drugs ?' vroeg de jongste.

'Ja,' zei Marlotte, 'ik heb hem wat toegediend, van dat spul wat wij ook altijd gebruiken.' Ze trok hem naar een bed, en legde een jas over hem heen. Even later kwam ze bij hem liggen, toen de

kinderen weer weg waren. Ze spoot wat in haar been, en verloor haar bewustzijn. Een vuur kwam in haar hoofd, en ze werd verbonden met zijn hoofd, en zijn hart. 'Namens de vereniging van bomen, hartelijk welkom,' zei een stem. 'Ik heb het nog eens nagekeken, jullie zijn inderdaad geregistreerd. Welkom terug dan.' Een groen vuur kwam over hen. 'De godin van scheiding heeft jullie hier gebracht.'

'Het is haar schuld,' zei Eduard. 'Zij heeft die vervloekte scheidingsformulieren ingevuld.'

'Oh, op onze afgesneden huid ?' vroeg de stem. 'Dat is niet zo netjes.'

'Nee, niet zo netjes,' zei een andere stem. 'Zij gaat dus de afwas doen.'

'Maar ik heb al gekookt,' zei Marlotte. 'Dus ik ga ook niet nog eens de afwas doen. Kom zeg, eikel.'

'Ze heeft gelijk,' zei Eduard. 'Zij heeft mij de drugs toegediend, dus ze hoeft dan toch ook niet de afwas te doen.'

'Wel, hoor je nou niet eens even wat je zegt, domoor,' zei de stem. 'Zij heeft jou deze rommel aangeboden, dus dan zal ze potdorie die rommel ook op gaan ruimen.'

'Het is mijn schuld,' zei Eduard. 'Ik heb de rommel aangenomen. Ik had haar nooit naar binnen moeten halen. Ik ben zo dom geweest haar te vertrouwen.'

'Waarom heb je haar naarbinnen gehaald ?' vroeg de stem

'Ik wilde haar helpen,' zei Eduard.

'Hield je van haar ?' vroeg de stem.

'Absoluut en ongetwijfeld,' zei hij.

Heel langzaam werd hij wakker. Het was maar een droom. Ze was ver weg van hem, en zover hij wist was ze niet aan de drugs. Hij wel dus. Voor hem was dat de enige weg eruit. In haar brieven schreef ze hem hoe slecht het met haar ging. Hij wilde haar helpen, maar wist niet hoe. Ook was hij boos. Die boosheid werd eigenlijk elke dag erger, en het brief-contact stopte weer. Hij stortte zich nog meer op de drugs dan ooit tevoren. De bomen waren zijn helden. Hij had geen vat meer op de realiteit, en het was beter zo. Die realiteit werd volgens hem in stand gehouden door bomen-haters. 'Eet eens een vruchtje, lik eens een appeltje, laat je eens inspuiten door een lazarus-boom, voor een mooie droom. Eet eens een stukje hout, lik eens aan boomblad, aan zijn bast en zijn schors. Beklim eens een boom, hang eens aan een tak.' Hij zong een liefdeslied aan de piano. Het was een meedogenloos ritme. 'Klim eens op een appel, duik eens in een aardbei, grijp eens naar een roos. Ja, haar dorens zullen je verscheuren, maar ... maar ... laat dat je niet tegenhouden. Lik eens aan de honing, ja, haar dorens zullen je mond sluiten, maar ... maar .... laat dat je niet tegenhouden ... Vecht eens met een beer, laat de honing zijn voor iedereen. Vecht eens met bijen en wespen. Het geheim is niet alleen van hen ... Lik eens aan een tak, snuif eens wat bloemenzaad, grijp eens een plant, ook al krijg je dan een blaar. Ook al ga je dan bloeden, en lig je in het bad, ook al zal de storm dan woeden, wie doet dat wat .... Het gaat toch om de zomer, het holle in de boom, het gaat toch om de dauw in de morgen, en het morgenrood, doe wat je kan om daar te komen ... het avondrood zal je genezen .... Vecht in de oorlog, de oorlog der liefde, zet elkaar vrij, voor welke prijs dan ook, want wat is een prijs ?

's Nachts staar ik je aan, 's nachts hoor ik je stem en lied,

De morgen spoelt het weg, maar jij zult altijd zijn, de moeder van mijn kinderen,
Ik laat altijd een kaarsje voor jou branden,
Eens zal ik je eruit krijgen, uit die slimme doos,
Eens zal ik die sloten door mijn liefde smelten,
Ik ben nog jong, gouden tijden staan nog steeds op mijn roos,
Je bent in mijn herinnering, een nachtmerrie, een vlinderding,
Alle dingen schijnen twee kanten te hebben, alle kanten zullen in de tijd opzwemmen,
Alle kanten zullen hun gezicht laten zien,
Ik heb er tien, ik heb er tien, maar ik wil de jouwen ook zien,
Mijn lieveling .... mijn vlinderding .... de nachtmerrie is slechts een herinnering ...
Meer kan het niet zijn, ik ren nu .... vrij,
Over de heg, over de heuvel, de winter kan mij niet meer vasthouden,
De zomer maakte mij vrij, jij, zomervlinder, jij vlinderding ...

Ik vond jou, als een zeemeerman, aan de kusten van Spanje, kapotgebroken aan de rotsen,
Als een zeemeerman nam ik jou op, en gaf je de adem van de zee,
Maar de zee begon te branden door jouw vuur,
De zeevlinder nam ons beiden mee, en brak de muur,
In mijn lijst ben je nu, in mijn schilderij, in de bizonjacht,
Wij verdrinken samen in de gracht, todat de boot van Venetie ons opneemt,
Met de staf van zeebloemen en zeebloesem,
Met de staf van zeewier, als de staf der zeemeermannen,
Kom niet dichterbij, ik ben maar een zeemeerjongen,
Kom niet dichterbij, want je komt onder mijn betovering,
Ren nu, ren nu, voor je leven ... Als het leven je lief is,
Of heb je mij lief ... of de last der leugens ....

Negen van de tien keer loog je tegen mij,
Negen van de tien keer ... onder het sprei der bloemen ....
Als bloemen logen zoals jij, zouden ze nooit bloeien ...
En te bedenken dat je mij als leugenaar zag,
Zoveel bloemen op mijn graf,
Zoveel bloemen die je mij nooit gaf ...
Zoveel bloemen op jouw graf, door de zeevlinder gebracht ...
Maar de ware liefde breekt de grenzen van het leven,
Als een vuur die jou zelfs uit de hel kan opnemen ...
Denk je dat je naar de hemel kunt ontsnappen ....
Op de rug van de zeevlinder

Bedenk dat dit heel goed het laatste lied kan zijn wat ik ooit tot je zing,
Dat de zeevlinder het laatste is wat ik je geef ...'

'Eduard, Eduard,' riep zijn moeder. Kom uit je bed. Bijna schooltijd.
Eduard draaide zich om, en wilde weer slapen, maar het schelle getetter in zijn oor van zijn moeder besliste anders.
Snel begon ze hem wakker te schudden. Ze trok hem uit zijn bed en omhelsde hem.
'Mamma, kus me niet meer,' zei hij, 'anders kom ik hier nooit weg.' Toen liet zijn moeder hem los.
Hij kleedde zich aan, nam zijn tas mee, en vertrok met de bus.

Op school keek hij haar niet aan. Zij keek alleen maar naar hem door haar ooghoeken. Zij was zijn wapen tegen de reuzen, maar de drugs die zij hem gaf had hem bijna vermoord. Het was haar spreekbeurt vandaag, en ze begon spook-verhalen te vertellen. Hij opende zijn hart een beetje voor

haar. Ze stond daar bijna als een militair. Ja, zij voerde oorlog, en hij wilde in haar leger. Ze begon bloemen te tekenen op het bord, en schreef zijn naam. Hij voelde zichzelf in brand staan met liefdesvuur. 'Nu heb ik het ware vuur, riep hij,' terwijl de andere kinderen in de vlammenzee begonnen te verdwijnen. Hij hief haar op het schip. 'Geweldig is dit,' zei ze. 'Ja, je hebt mij flink in de war gebracht met die drugs,' zei hij, 'maar dit is goed.'

'Daar is het om te doen,' zei ze.

'We moeten maken wat er van te maken is,' zei hij. De vlammen werden wilder, maar het was goed vuur, liefdesvuur. Zij brandde nu ook, en ze voelde zich goed. 'Voel je je nu eindelijk goed, schatje ?' vroeg hij. Ze knikte, en zuchtte van verlichting. Hij nam haar in zijn armen, en ze stegen op. 'Dit is de sleutel van het paradijs,' zei ze. 'Ik wist dat je dit kon doen.'

'En ik wist dat jij het kon doen,' zei hij. 'Ti Sento. Ik voel je.'
Maar zwetend werd hij wakker in een vuur dat hij niet begreep. Hij begon boos te worden, en zonk weg in hopeloosheid. 'Ik was er bijna,' dacht hij. Maar hij wist niet waar het allemaal om draaide. Waar ging het nu eigenlijk om ? Was dit alles niet gewoon zinloos ? Maar ja, hij wilde niet in ongeluk blijven leven. Of bracht het ongeluk hem naar een dieper geluk ?

Zij beschuldigde hem. Brieven van schuld kwamen binnen, de één na de ander. Het was als een muur met kettingen. Hij kroop naar zijn piano, moe, en verkrampt door de pijn. Hij hees zichzelf op aan de piano, en begon te spelen.

'Liefde is beter dan drugs, maar ik heb de liefde niet, alleen maar haat,
Liefde is beter dan jou, maar wat is de liefde waard ...'

Hij greep naar de drugs en begon te slikken als een gek, zodat hij bewusteloos viel aan de piano. De godin van scheiding scalpeerde hem, en gaf hem een doornenkroon. Hij verloor zijn verstand. Hij hulde zichzelf in een rood kleed, en kroop op de piano waar hij begon over te geven.

'Ik ben de koning van de gekken, ik ben de koning van het gemis,
Ik ben de koning van de pijn, en ik heb niets meer,
Ik ben de koning van de gekken, ik ben de koning van het land,
Want alleen de koning van de gekken kan dit gekke land besturen ...

Ik ben de koning van de gekken, ik ben de koning van de drugs,
Ik ben de koning van het afscheid, ja, mijn dag kan niet meer stuk,
Ik ben de koning van het huwen, ik ben de koning van het scheiden,
Alleen de dommen volgen mij, maar de wijzen vermijden mij ...'

Dat kan me niet schelen !' schreeuwde Eduard met schuim op zijn mond. 'Het schijnt de enige weg naar het paradijs te zijn. Het is een oorlog.'

'Goed, je hebt de oorlog bar verloren, bar en boos,' zei de stem.

'Ik zal opstaan als de nachtvlinder,' zei Eduard, 'en mijn geliefden vrijzetten.'

'Toe nou, Eduard, nou niet zo hoogmoedig, jongen,' zei de stem. 'Daar zit niemand op te wachten.'

Eduard begon de piano te slopen. En begon wild om zich heen te slaan. Hij werd omsingeld door vlinders, en Marlotte stond ineens voor hem.

'Jij weer,' zei Eduard.

'Drugs is niet goed voor je, Eduard,' zei ze.

'Waarom gaf je me het dan ?' vroeg Eduard.

'Ik kon het geld goed gebruiken,' zei Marlotte. 'Ik heb er goede kinderen van gekocht.'

Er was glas tussen Marlotte en Eduard. Drie kinderen verschenen aan de kant van Marlotte. 'Dit zijn je kinderen,' zei ze.

'Ik wil ze niet zien,' zei Eduard.

'Ze hebben je nodig,' zei ze.

'Het zijn mijn kinderen niet. Je hebt ze gewoon met mijn geld gekocht, dat is alles,' zei Eduard.

'Toe, Eduard,' zei ze bijna smekend. 'Ik wil niet ontkennen dat ik in het verleden hele verkeerde dingen heb gedaan, maar we moeten maken wat er van te maken is. De kinderen hebben je nodig. We kunnen die situatie niet ontkennen. Zij kunnen daar verder niets aan doen.'

'Je hebt gelijk,' zei Eduard, 'maar het zijn mijn kinderen niet.'

'Adopteer ze dan, als je me niet geloofd,' zei Marlotte.

'Nee, ik heb helemaal niks met je te maken,' zei Eduard.

'Ik ben in je bloed,' zei Marlotte. 'Ik ben je drugs. Helemaal fout wat ik heb gedaan, maar ik kan er niet uit. Ik zit in je genetisch materiaal.'

'Ik wil dat je weggaat, Marlotte,' zei Eduard. 'Ik wil je niet. Ik heb dit nooit gewild. Je hebt gewoon misbruik gemaakt van mijn situatie. In een zwak moment kocht ik die drugs van je ... en ja, in een zwak moment ... kocht ik je.'

'Precies, en hier zijn je kinderen,' zei Marlotte. 'Reken ze het niet aan.'

'Het lot bracht ons tezamen,' zei Eduard. 'Maar je hebt mij te lang genegeerd. Het roept herinneringen op.'

'Vergeef me, Eduard,' zei Marlotte.

'Hoe vaak heb ik jou wel niet om vergeving gevraagd, en je hebt het me nooit gegeven, en dat terwijl ik je nooit iets heb aangedaan. Ik ben altijd goed voor je geweest,' zei Eduard.

'Ik kan niet met mijn kinderen leven,' zei Marlotte.

'Het zijn de vruchten van jouw zonden,' zei Eduard.

'Maar als jij me helpt, zijn het de vruchten van vergeving en vernieuwing,' zei Marlotte.

'Barst,' zei Eduard.

Marlotte begon te huilen. 'De kinderen hebben een gezonde vader en moeder nodig.'

'Al wat jij doet is drama maken,' zei Eduard. 'Word je nou nooit eens moe van jezelf ? Je hebt mij kapot gemaakt met die drugs.'

'Die drugs zat in mij. Mijn vader heeft ....' snikte Marlotte.

'Ja, ja, ja, houd daar nu maar over op, dat heb ik al zo vaak gehoord,' zei Eduard.

'Je moet eens weten hoeveel drugs hij in mij heeft gepompt,' snikte ze. 'Ik ben zelf drugs nu.'

Eduard nam een likje aan haar. 'Gadverredamme, dat is toch walgelijk,' schreeuwde hij.

'Ik kan er niets aan doen,' huilde ze nog harder.

'Je bent gewoon een drugs-hoer,' zei Eduard.

'Heb medelijden met me,' jankte ze.

'Waarom zou ik ?' schreeuwde Eduard. 'Heb jij ooit medelijden met mij gehad ?'

'Pappa, alsjeblieft, ik smeek je,' zei het middelste kind.

'Ik heb jullie nooit gezien,' zei Eduard. 'Het doet pijn jullie nu te zien.'

Het kind gaf hem een klein computertje. 'Hier pappa, hiermee kunnen we contact hebben met elkaar.' Toen vaagde alles weg. Hij zat achter zijn computer. Hij zag Marlotte op het scherm, en zijn kinderen. Het was een fantastische wereld in de computer, en hij stapte naar binnen. Ze namen hem bij de hand en namen hem naar een huisje. Alles was zo anders nu.

Arnold Lovehold was een computer expert, en hij zorgde ervoor dat de familie banden weer zorgvuldig werden samengesmeed. De zee-vlinder was inmiddels vrijgekomen uit de zee-kokon. Arnold Lovehold was een diepzinnige man, een filosoof, maar tegelijkertijd heel practisch. Met technologie wist hij alles voor elkaar te krijgen. De familie was voor een lange dag op het strand. De zee kolkte, en het zand was warm. Thuisgekomen ging Eduard op het bed liggen. Het was alsof het altijd zo was geweest, alsof er nooit iets was gebeurd. De familie leefde in vrede.

Troon der Lelies

En ik liep bijna dronken naar de brug. Ik had een oorlogs-trauma in mijn hoofd. Aan de overkant van de rivier waren lelies. Ook was er een stad van lelies. Ik liep langs de grachten.

Een vrouw met een wit en zachtgele hoed keek naar me. Ze had ook een zacht gele, witte jurk. Ze zeiden dat zij de vrouw der lelies was. Zonder adem keek ik naar haar. Haar hand was bedekt met Belgisch kant. Ze wees naar mij, en toen naar een huis. Ze wenkte mij om met haar mee te komen. Dronken liep ik achter haar aan. Ik had niets gedronken, maar ik was dronken van het oorlogs-trauma.

We moesten een trap op, en gingen in rieten stoelen zitten. Ze glimlachte naar mij, maar ik kon haar ogen nauwelijks zien vanwege de sluier van haar hoed.

We dronken wat, en zij vertelde haar verhaal, het verhaal over de stad. Hier had ze altijd gewoond, maar een oorlog had alles verscheurd, al haar herinneringen. Zij had ook een oorlogs-trauma … Terwijl ze vertelde keek ik uit het raam, waar ik de lelies zag in de vijver en in de gracht, en het was alsof ze mijn naam uitspraken. Zij tikten op de ramen.

De lelies hadden alles zien gebeuren. Zij waren de veroorzakers van de oorlog. Haar herinneringen waren van elkaar getrokken. Ze haperden, zoals de mijne. Het waren allemaal fragmenten in onze hoofden. Ik moest ze zien te rangschikken, maar de lelies trokken ons uit elkaar. Later scheen ze er niet eens te wonen. Ik was te dronken. Ik liep langs de lelies, een pad maakte ik door hen. Ik had mijn zwaard, mijn mes en mijn speer, en zoveel pijlen op mijn boog. Eén pijl had een touw. Ik kon op het kasteel komen. Zo kwam ik dichtbij haar ramen. Dus hier woonde zij. Zij had deze illusies en weerspiegelingen op mij afgezonden. Ik klom door een raam, en zag haar daar zitten. Met haar witte, zachtgele taartjes, als mokka taartjes. Ze at, en sprak, maar ik wist niet tegen wie. Misschien wel tegen mij, maar zij zag me niet. Of ze zag me wel, maar deed alsof ze mij niet zag.

Ik moest mijn herinneringen op orde zien te krijgen. Ik stapte op haar af. Zij stond op, en schudde mij de hand. Ze glimlachte. 'Eindelijk ben je gekomen. Zoveel hopen van dromen.'

Ik keek verlegen naar beneden.

Ze liet mij de stad zien. We gingen langs alle lelies. Ook liet ze mij de valleien zien, waar de lelies weelderig groeiden.

Ik bracht de lelie tot haar. Ze zat op een troon.

Laura
de Indiaanse

Ze ging met rode bloemen over de huid van haar prooi. Toen wierp ze de prooi tussen de bruine bloemen. De bruine bloemen deden haar altijd zingen.

Ze kookte haar prooi op, en toen was de dag alweer om. Haar tent is wild, gemaakt van bizonvellen, zoals haar hart is. Haar tent is groot en harig, zoals haar hart is. Zij is de meesteres van de wildernis.

Wanneer zij haarzelf omdraait, jaagt zij. De prooi is op zijn hoede wanneer zij haar rug naar hen toekeert.

Diep in de wildernis woont zij. Diep in de wildernis troont zij. Er waren wat dingen die alleen zij kon weghalen. Daarom bezocht ik haar. Zij schreeuwde hard. Ik moest altijd op mijn hoede zijn. Ze liet rode bloemen over mijn huid heenglijden, en duwde mij vaak in de bruine bloemen. Grote bruine bloemenvelden liet ze mij zien, en daarachter was de hei.

Ze kon het mij niet uitleggen wat de hei was. Ze wilde daar eigenlijk niet komen, maar ik hielp haar daar. Toen wilde ze er zelfs wonen, maar eerst gebruikte ze het als jachtterrein. Ze had dikke, forse heupen. Ik bevroor altijd als ik haar zag. Ik kon haar niet de baas. Als ze haar dikke, forse heupen draaide was ik verloren.

Nog vaak ging ik terug naar Laura de indiaanse, want er waren dingen in mijn leven die alleen zij kon weghalen, dingen die alleen zij de baas kon zijn. Maar ik zocht haar steeds minder op, omdat het leven mij opslokte. Altijd was ik druk. De rook van de stad hield mij tegen, had mij gevangen. Ook was ik een beetje bang voor Laura de indiaanse. Er was niemand zoals zij.

Nooit begreep ik waarom ze mijn huid bestreelde met rode bloemen. Het bleek een ritueel te zijn. Nooit begreep ik waarom ze me altijd duwde in de velden van bruine bloemen. De bruine bloemen deden haar zingen zodra ze ze zag.

Glorieus was haar speer, genadeloos haar mes. Op een dag bezocht ze de stad waarin ik was opgesloten, helemaal tot achter het rookgordijn. Ze liet mij daar de rode en bruine bloemen zien, en ik huilde. Ik miste hen. Zij was de natuur voor mij, de wildernis. Ze had mij veel geleerd. Ze zei dat ze nu op de hei woonde, en dat ze dat aan mij te danken had. Ik keek haar aan met grote ogen. Ze zei dat ik speciaal voor haar was, en wilde me weer meenemen. Ze wilde mij voor altijd vasthouden. Maar in paniek rende ik weg, en nooit heb ik haar teruggezien.

Nu slijten mijn dagen met gemengde gevoelens, wanneer ik denk aan Laura de indiaanse. Wilde dromen heb ik over haar, zoals haar hart wild was. Ik weet niet waar ze is, en ik durf niet op zoek te gaan. Misschien woont ze nog steeds op de heide. Ze vertelde me dat ze daar een huisje had, een hutje, of een tent. Ze deed er niet duidelijk over. Ze was altijd een beetje vaag, en het is nog maar vaag in mijn herinneringen. Toch wil ik haar niet verloren doen gaan in mijn herinneringen. Ik heb het gevoel dat ze belangrijk is, en dat ik haar nodig heb.

Elke avond brand ik een kaarsje voor haar, voor Laura de indiaanse. De dromen worden steeds wilder. Het is alsof ik bij haar hoor, en zij bij mij. Maar haar bezoeken durf ik niet. Ik zou op zoektocht kunnen gaan, maar de heide is groot, te groot. En misschien is ze daar allang weer vertrokken, want dit alles was lang geleden. Het lijkt wel alsof de herinneringen veranderen, alsof de tijd stilstaat. Ik bevries wanneer ik aan haar denk, maar wordt dan weer heel warm, en bang. Het is een vreemde mengeling van gevoelens en emoties, en vreemde gedachtes. Ik voel me dan heel extreem. De dromen beginnen me zelfs overdag te beheersen. Ik krijg haar niet meer uit mijn gedachtes weg lijkt het wel. Ik denk dat ik verliefd ben, op Laura de Indiaanse. We hadden het zo goed samen, en nu is alles weg. Ik kan alleen maar dromen.

Oh Laura de Indiaanse, wat is er toch van ons geworden,
We hadden het zo goed samen,
En je had zulke vreemde rituelen,
En dat past wel een beetje in mijn vreemde gedachtes,
Ik denk vaak aan je, en voel je altijd bij me,
Eigenlijk wordt het alleen maar sterker,
Blijf bij me, of kom weer terug,
Of is deze veranderende herinnering genoeg ?
Ik heb het gevoel dat je me nog steeds in de bruine bloemenvelden duwt,
Alsof ik wegzak in een diepe put,
Ik kan je niet bereiken, en weet ook niet of ik je wel wil bereiken,
Ik voel me zo gespleten,
Ik bekijk alles maar op een afstand,

Veilig achter de schermen van mijn herinneringen,
Maar het lijkt alsof je er doorheen breekt,
Op je hoge paard,
Je roept me, ik volg je,
Ja, ik hoor bij jou, maar de stad trekt me altijd weer weg

Voor het donker moeten we thuis zijn,
En dan krijgen we brood met melk,
Oh, Laura de Indiaanse,
Bij jou wil ik zijn.

De Heks
van de Gele Bloemen

Het lijkt erop alsof er een beest over de wolkenkrabber is gekropen. Helemaal eroverheen. En nu hangt hij daar. Eerst zag ik hem erop staan, met een vlag.

Het lijkt alsof we dit beest geen tweede kans hebben gegeven. Werd neergeschoten, en nu hangt het daar, als tussen twee rotsen in. Het water stijgt, dat is een feit.

Het lijkt erop dat de treinen vandaag sneller rijden. Hebben ze haast, of wat is dit ?

De bomen lijken hier hoog, en twee meter er tussenin. Het is goed uitgemeten. Ik rijdt op mijn fiets, en de lucht is bijna rood, alsof de moederschoot zich opent.

De struiken ruiken hier goed. Bessen hangen eraan in bosjes. Het druipt, ik heb er een goed gevoel over. En dan bessen in de koffie, bijna als vla. Miep hangt erbij als bessen, als bruisende chocola. Maar haar naam is niet Miep. Ik noem haar maar even Miep, omdat ik haar naam niet wil zeggen.

Het is nu zondag, en koud. De wind giert, maar toch zoveel warmte. Het is een gemengd gevoel en een hele afstand. Door dag en dauw stap ik. Allemaal kolen opgehoopt hier, zomaar in het bos, achterin het bos, over het spoor heen, waar ze vuilnis verbranden. Het ruikt hier lekker, maar waar ben ik ? Wie ben ik ? Alles lijkt oranje hier, uitgestrekte zandvlaktes en dor lijkende wildernissen. Maar van een vruchtbare dorheid, een andere dorheid. Het is brak land, maar dan in positieve zin. Het is een mooie mengeling van zoet en bitter, zoutig en smeuig. Ik ben verliefd. Waarop weet ik niet, maar op deze natuur lijkt het.

Ik zal hier wel altijd willen blijven. Het is hier zo rustig, en ik heb het hier niet benauwd. De stadse rook kan me hier niet raken. Ik ben ontsnapt, door de wildernis heen, tot achter het spoor. Geen

trein die me hier nog kan oppikken. De nazi's zijn ver weg.

Ik stap door, met geborrel op de achtergrond. Iemand is thee aan het maken. Oma is aan het borduren, en ook de oude tante. Zij zijn zussen. Ze zijn in mijn gedachtes. Nog steeds zijn zij daar. Zijn zij aan de overkant, of zijn zij hier ? Of is het maar de echo van het verleden. Hier staken alle gedachtes. Romig goud staart mij hier aan. En dan laat ook het goud los, het hele verleden, en wordt ik meegesleurd in de draaipoel van de wildernis, een draaikolk van struiken, als een wervelwind. Waar brengt het mij naartoe ? Ik heb dit vaker gezien.

Ik heb hier van gedroomd, en nu is het hier. Ik ben over het grijze en grauwe heen. Alles is hier bruin. Bruine bessen liggen mij het meest, als koffiebonen. De thee van het verleden kan mij niet meer meetrekken.

De wolkenkrabbers zijn hoog. Ook hier. Ik beklim ze, met mijn beitel. De muren zijn zacht. Ik kan alles erin graveren wat ik wil. Dan gooi ik mijn anker naar de maan, en trek me eraan op. Zo kom ik hoger en hoger, van planeet tot planeet, tot de rivier van melk. Bruisende melk is mijn vriend. Mijn shirt is nat. Dan zwem ik.

Ik kan over het ravijn kijken, en slinger aan een waslijn om erover heen te komen. Zoveel stemmen hoor ik daar. Waar ze over praten kan ik niet verstaan. Het is in een andere taal. Ik krijg hier een nieuw huis, een huis vol met schilderijen. Ik staar er vaak naar. De schilderijen vertellen verhalen. Ik droom er ook van.

De narcis groeit uit de put. Het maakt een brug over de zee. Gele bloemen groeien laangs de kant van de stad, als een stadsmuur. Iedereen die daar gaat wordt verward. Zij vallen in slaap en dromen vreemde dromen. Geen leger komt door de gele bloemenhaag. Allen zullen zij slapen.

De heks neemt hen mee tot een vreemd leger. Het leger van de heks zullen zij zijn.

De heks van de gele bloemen, zo noemen ze haar. Zij heeft klokken door haar hele kasteel. Zij bespeelt de viool, en maalt de molen. Zij bakt het brood, bloemenbrood, waar zij allen van slapen.

In het zwart gaat zij, in de gele nacht, zo wit. En zoveel monikken met kappen volgen haar, met langzame pas door de bloemenvelden. Deze bloemen worden wit in de nacht.

De heks van de gele bloemen, met zoveel honden jaagt zij. In de nacht is zij één en al pracht, een barbaarse strijdster is zij.

De heks van de gele bloemen, eens zag ik haar.
Ik werd getroffen als door bliksem, en toen viel ik in slaap.
Toen ik wakker werd zat ik op haar schoot.
Ik was heel klein toen.
Als kind stuurde ze me naar school.

De heks van de gele bloemen,
Zo vriendelijk was zij,
We dronken altijd samen thee,
En zij deed mijn huiswerk,
De heks van de gele bloemen,
Zij is een tunnel naar de onderwereld

Eens zag ik haar op haar paard, en ik volgde haar,

Zij leerde me de geheimen van de bossen en de wildernissen,
De heks van de gele bloemen, zij gaf mij een plaats.

Ik kon alles met haar doen, niets was haar te gek,
Ze stond altijd voor me klaar,
En ik mocht vechten in haar leger,
Om tot de mysterieen te gaan.

Een groot tovenares is zij,
Zij kent de wetten van de eeuwigheid.
Zij genas mijn hart en mijn herinneringen,
De puzzel in mij maakte zij.

Op het gele paard reed ik, achter haar aan,
Wit wordende in de nacht,
Zo viel ik in slaap, om tot een dromenwereld te komen,
Tot de heks van de gele bloemen,
Zij roept mijn naam.

De heks van de gele bloemen,
Ik kan altijd alles met haar doen,
Niets was haar te dol, en ze was nooit moe,
Maar eens zag ik haar slapen …

Ik liep naar haar toe,
Ik had thee voor haar gemaakt,
Ik bracht haar ontbijt op bed,
Met een gekookt eitje,
En ineens was er allemaal gejoel,
Zoveel indianen kwamen uit de kasten,
De heks van de gele bloemen,
Ja, het is echt waar.

Zij leerde mij de gnosis,
Zij leerde mij lezen en vele talen,
Zij leerde mij schrijven en de schoonste kunsten,
Zij leerde mij strijden,
De heks van de gele bloemen

Over zee ging ik met haar,
Zij liet mij de wijde wereld zien,
In haar heb ik een vriend,
In haar heb ik alles gezien,
De heks van de gele bloemen.

Over het ravijn bracht zij mij,
Tot de dieptes van een woud,
Waar het altijd regent,
Altijd tropisch is,
En nooit is het koud,
De heks van de gele bloemen.

En wij drinken samen gele bloementhee,
Zij is de put naar de onderwereld,
Zij neemt mij altijd mee,
Op haar reizen benee.

En wat als we nu dieper gaan,
Tot de eeuwige wildernissen,
Zij roept mij bij mijn naam.

Dieper, ja dieper,
Steeds dieper,
Tot een kroning,
De gele kroon,
Een bloemen-woning,
Van hieruit kan ik alles zien,
Ik bewonder het zo,
De heks van de gele bloemen.

Nu maak ik mijn reizen in een boot, over de rivieren waarin langs de kanten de gele bloemen groeien. Zij houden mij dromerig, zij houden mij in slaap, in diepe slaap. Zij geven mij sap te drinken, en gele bloemen-thee.

De gele bloemen vertellen verhalen, verhalen wonderschoon.

En zij leiden tot een wonderlijke tuin, een lusthof. Wonderlijke vruchten groeien hier.

In de straten van Haarlem ontwaak ik,
Meisjes met witte bloemen in hun haar,
En witte kanten jurkjes,
Het is bloemenfeest vandaag,
Zij heeft een witte hoed,
Ik kan haar gezicht net niet zien,
Alleen haar glimlach

Dan neemt zij mij mee naar het tuinfeest,
Waar ze rijdt op één of ander beest,
En ik blijf zeggen : 'Ik ben er nooit geweest.'

De Ring van de Leprechaun

Hoofdstuk 1. De Troon van de Leprechaun

Sonja en Eduard woonden op Flierefluit 16. Hun huis was als een koeienstal, maar wel vol met protserige spulletjes. Er werd in dit huis echt geleefd. Sonja woonde eerst op de Gregorius Laan, maar was later bij Eduard ingetrokken. Ze had een kat genaamd Darmia. Ook had ze een paar parkieten, en zelfs een vleermuis. Rekel heette die. Ze sprak vaak tot Rekel, maar Rekel zei nooit wat terug. Eduard had een oom die vaak langskwam, oom Klaas. Ze konden het erg goed met elkaar

vinden.

Er was niet veel met Eduard te beginnen. Hij was nogal koppig en eigenwijs. Hij had een hele andere kijk op het leven dan anderen. Nee, Eduard was nooit voor een karretje te spannen. Sonja was een heel gelovig mens, en ook nogal goedgelovig, en dat botste nog weleens met Eduard, want Eduard trapte nergens in. Eduard was meer paranoide, heel erg achterdochtig, en daardoor zakelijk. Toegeven deed hij overigens nauwelijks. Sonja hield erg veel van hem, want volgens haar was hij toch een hele warme man. Hij had zijn eigen wereld gecreeerd, en was hierin een gulle gever, erg hartelijk, open en gastvrij, erg mededeelzaam, maar wel verschrikkelijk manipulerend. Het is voor het goede doel, dacht Sonja altijd bij zichzelf. Ze begreep hem wel. Hij was verschrikkelijk perfectionistisch en net, maar sinds Sonja er was, was het huis een zwijnenstal, alhoewel het volstond met kostbare dingen. Hun huis was dan ook echt een hele belevenis.

Sonja stond in de keuken ham te snijden, en daarna kaas, voor de tosti's. Eduard was boven aan het werk. Plotseling werd er gebeld. Het was een dikke man met een bolhoed op. Hij was niet echt dik, maar meer gezet, maar door zijn dikke jas leek het erg dik. 'Wat zullen we nou krijgen,' zei Sonja, toen de man haar een folder aanreikte. 'Hier, voor jou,' zei hij met een hoge stem.

'Wat is dat dan ?' vroeg Sonja. 'Bent u een Jehovah's getuige ?'

'Nee, veel erger, veel erger,' lachte de man.

'Oh, ik zie het al,' zei Sonja, 'u bent van die nieuwe zaak aan de overkant ?'

Er stonden wat religieuze plaatjes op de folder, en wat plaatjes van sprookjesachtige figuren.

'Kom,' zei de man, 'je weet wie ik ben. Ik ben de nieuwe buurman.'

'Ja, maar wat is dit ?' vroeg Sonja.

'Lees het gewoon even door, lieve schat,' zei de man.

'Ik ben uw lieve schat niet,' zei Sonja gewiekst. 'En u hoeft me ook niets aan te smeren. Ik ben nu met Eduard, en hij leert mij om voorzichtig te zijn met mensen die dingen aanreiken aan de deur.'

'Maar ik ben je buurman, honey,' zei de man.

'Dat kan wel wezen,' zei Sonja, 'maar Eduard wil dat ik minder naief ben.'

'Zo, zo,' zei de man, 'je zit aardig bij Eduard onder de plak.'

'Het is voor de veiligheid,' zei Sonja.

'Ha, buurman,' zei Eduard, die net naar beneden kwam lopen.

'Voor de veiligheid hoef je het echt niet te doen,' zei de man. 'Ik ben de veiligheid zelve.'

'Kom binnen, buurman,' zei Eduard. Het bleek dat Eduard de nieuwe buren al had gesproken. Ze hadden een heleboel kinderen, en die kwamen al snel dagelijks bij hen over de vloer. Voor kinderen was het huis van Eduard en Sonja een hele belevenis, heel mysterieus ook met al die bijzondere dingen. En rommel maken viel hier echt niet op. Voor kinderen was het een paradijs.

Sonja bleek de folder helemaal vergeten te zijn. De man bleek heel aardig te zijn, en zijn familie ook. Rita was een zakenvrouw. Ze hadden ook een papegaai in huis. Eduard begon een beetje ellende te ruiken. Het was nu altijd zo druk in huis, dus hij ging er vaak vandoor.

Op een dag had Eduard een nieuwe vriendin. Sonja was ontroostbaar, maar ze mocht zijn huis houden. Eduard zou bij zijn nieuwe vriendin intrekken, die extreem netjes was. Ze moest ook niet zoveel van drukte hebben, en leefde een afgezonderd leven. Ze was een soort moderne kluizenaar. Eduard en Sonja bleven nog wel contact houden, en dat maakte het voor hen wat makkelijker om het te verwerken. Ook voor Eduard was het moeilijk de keuze te maken bij haar weg te gaan. Gelukkig hadden ze geen kinderen, maar de kinderen van de buren begonnen Eduard erg te missen, omdat hij toch wel een wonderbaarlijk persoon was. Ze mochten weleens bij hem logeren, en dan ging zijn nieuwe vriendin het huis uit, want die kon absoluut niet tegen kinderen.

Eduard voelde zich als een koning. De kinderen aanbaden hem bijna. Op een dag kwam zijn oude buurman langs, en reikte hem de folder aan. Oh ja, die folder. Die had hij nog nooit gelezen, maar die lag ook nog steeds bij Sonja ergens.

'Wat is het, buurman ?' vroeg Eduard. Er stonden religieuze plaatjes op en plaatjes van feeen. Maar ze raakten in gesprek over hele andere dingen, dus Eduard legde de folder opzij. 'Ik geloof niet zo in religie en sprookjes,' zei Eduard. Eduard had zijn eigen wereld, alles anders dan anderen. Eduard was een tamelijk uniek persoon. Bijna tot het punt dat er geen herkenning was. Eduard was bijna van een andere wereld. Hij wilde de folder eigenlijk niet lezen. Zijn haar was netjes gekamt, en hij had een stropdas. De buurman schoot bleek. 'Ik moet gaan,' zei de buurman, en vertrok.

Eduard vroeg zich af waarom de buurman zich zo vreemd gedroeg opeens. Even later kreeg hij een telefoontje dat de buurman een hart-aanval had gehad, en hij was inmiddels overleden. Eduard schrok, en greep het foldertje. Toen legde hij het foldertje weer weg, en belde Sonja. Sonja was erg in paniek, en wilde in het bos wonen.

Een paar weken later verhuisde Sonja naar een boshuisje. Ze kwam hier helemaal tot rust. Soms logeerden de kinderen van de oude buren nog weleens bij haar, maar het werd minder en minder. Sonja wist dat ze zich niet meer teveel aan mensen moest hechten, want dat deed teveel pijn.

Eduard zocht haar vaak op. Ze deden veel samen, en gingen samen op vakantie. Er leek weer een nieuwe liefde te ontpoppen tussen Eduard en Sonja. Maar ze besloten gewoon goede vrienden te blijven. De relatie tussen Eduard en zijn nieuwe vriendin was inmiddels op de klippen gelopen. Eduard en Sonja gingen vaak bramen plukken. Er groeiden veel bramenstruiken achter het huis van Sonja. Eduard hield ervan om in de tuin te werken, en begon allerlei soorten groenten, kruiden en vruchten te verbouwen. De bramenstruiken groeien wild door, om het hele huis heen. Het geeft hen een gevoel van veiligheid. Het wordt voor Eduard steeds moeilijker om het huis van Sonja te bereiken. Daarom besluit hij bij haar in te komen wonen. Ze raken steeds meer en meer geisoleerd van de buitenwereld.

Middenin de nacht klopt er een man op hun deur. De man draagt een wapenrusting, en heeft een helm op. Hij zoekt onderdak. Hij zegt dat hij op de vlucht is. Ze laten hem binnen en even later zitten ze om de tafel. De man is op de vlucht voor het leger, en beweert van een andere planeet te zijn. Plotseling zijn er allemaal lichten rondom het huis. Wapens verschijnen voor de ramen, en Sonja en Eduard raken in paniek. De man staat rustig op, en zegt dat het zijn vrienden zijn. Even later zijn er nog veel meer mannen binnen. Ze zien er inderdaad uit alsof ze van een andere planeet zijn, maar tegelijkertijd zijn ze zo menselijk. De man legt een boek op de tafel, en zegt : 'Dit boek zal jullie aarde veroveren.' Het boek heeft een zwarte kaft, maar er staan geen letters op. Dan gaan de mannen weer weg.

Eduard en Sonja durven het boek niet open te doen, en leggen het in een doos onder de kast. De dag erna is de man weer terug, en zo komt hij elke nacht even langs. Op een nacht leest hij hen voor out het zwarte boek. Op de eerste bladzijde staat de titel geschreven : Plan Voor Hen Die Echt Rijk Zijn. Dit gaat dan niet om de rijkdom van geld, maar om de rijkdom van het weten. Het gaat over mensen die weten wat er gaande is, die weten welke machten achter het wereldgebeuren schuilen. Het boek vertelt dat de wereld wordt beheerst door leprechaunen, plaaggeesten van geld, maar dat er een oorlog zal zijn tussen de leprechaunen en de trollen, en dat de trollen zullen winnen. Die trollen komen uit de dieptes van Orion, terwijl de leprechaunen alleen maar op de oppervlaktes leven. Sonja krijgt even de rillingen.

Het zou om een groot kaartspel gaan. De leprechauns met hun kaartendekken tegen de trollen met hun kaartendekken. Zo zouden er goede trollen zijn, en slechte trollen, maar de goede trollen zouden winnen. Daarom was de man naar de aarde gekomen, om de aarde voor te bereiden op die strijd, en om de aarde er goed doorheen te helpen. De man vocht mee aan de zijde van de goede trollen. Hij zei dat het leger in handen was van de leprechauns en de slechte trollen.

De man liet wat kaarten zien in het boek. Die kaarten waren belangrijk in de strijd. Ook liet hij de kaarten zien van de tegenstander, zoals de Leprechaunse Slang. 'Ik ben een wapen,' sprak de kaart, 'uitgezonden om de liefde en de zorg te doven. En dit allemaal om het medische machts-systeem te laten heersen.' Om tegen deze kaart bestand te zijn, moesten er twee kaarten getrokken worden : De Trolse Kabouter en de Trolse Vos. Snel sloeg de man het boek dicht. 'Ik voel het spoken,' zei hij. 'De oorlog is in volle gang.'

'Hoe kunnen we hiertegen bestand zijn ?' vroegen Sonja en Eduard.

'Door mee te delen in het kaartspel,' zei de man.

Ze kregen een helm op, met een vizier, waardoor ze leprechauns konden neerschieten. Ze waren al een deel van de oorlog. De man zei dat herdershonden gematerialiseerde leprechauns waren die een scherp alarm systeem vormden voor het leger op aarde, om alles te beheersen. Het was een gevangenis. De man zei dat op zijn planeet hele andere soorten herdershonden waren die hen zouden helpen in de strijd tegen de leprechauns. Dat waren hemelse herdershonden aan de zijde van de goede trollen. Een paar dagen erna nam hij wat van die herdershonden mee. Zo waren er goede herdershonden en valse herdershonden. Met hun vizier konden ze ook die valse herdershonden uitschakelen, die dus gematerialiseerde leprechauns waren die de aarde gevangen hielden. De man zei dat hij gestuurd was om die valse herdershonden spuitjes te geven, voornamelijk hun leiders, de alfa's. Dit zou een belangrijk onderdeel van de oorlog zijn, een beroemde sleutel alreeds op de planeet waar hij vandaan kwam. Het vizier maakte heel goed onderscheid tussen valse herdershonden en goede herdershonden. De valsen werden blauw op het scherm, en de goeden werden rood. Ook begonnen de blauwen erg te knipperen, terwijl de roden stabiel werden. De valse herdershonden tapten energie van een vreemde zon, de zon der wespen, waar reuzen woonden met hele kleine hoofdjes, piepklein. De oorlog was eigenlijk om de wespenzon. Degene die de wespenzon in handen zou krijgen, zou de oorlog winnen. De man vertelde dat hij de hele grote en gevaarlijke gallactische wespenzee moest overzwemmen om tot de aarde te komen. De man zei ook dat de aarde gered zou worden, als de zon der wespen in Orion zou verschijnen. Het werd ook wel de zon der gekken genoemd.

De man zei dat de hyena's van Orion de sleutel waren om de wespenzon onder controlle te krijgen, en dat de gnoes van Orion de sleutel waren om de valse herdershonden onder controle te krijgen. Hierdoor zouden de valse herdershonden in gnoes veranderen, als voer voor de hyena's van Orion. De wespenbrug was een belangrijke verbinding hier tussen. Hierover was in het boek geschreven.

Ook waren er plaatjes van te zien.

Hoofdstuk 2. De Wortelboom

De wortelboom werd bewaakt door een lange slang. Niemand mocht van die boom eten. De wortels waren hemels, en niet bestemd voor mensen. Alleen de goden konden er van eten. Kinderen ook. De slang bewaarde een eeuwenoude schat : een naakte vrouw. Zij was in deze boom opgesloten. De wortels waren haar vruchten, en brachten dromen en visioenen. Er was ook een andere wortelboom waar men wel van mocht eten, maar deze wortels brachten de dood voort. En in de woestijn verscheen een regenboog, en kinderen hadden een regenboog om hun hoofd. En ze kwamen tot het kasteel van fantasie.

Eduard en Sonja besluiten detective te worden over wat er eigenlijk aan de hand is in het heelal. In deze speurtocht ontmoeten zij Filip, een man met eigenaardige uitvindingen.

Ze vroegen hem of hij afwist van het zwarte boek. Hij kende het niet, maar toen ze hem de verhalen erin vertelden, scheen hij daar veel van af te weten. 'Oh ja,' zei hij. 'Ik kan het heelal aardig traceren met mijn apparatuur. Ik weet precies wat zich daar afspeelt. Die leprechauns bijvoorbeeld, die gematerialiseerde herdershonden, die hebben bazen. Dat zijn de pitbulls. Zij komen van een planeet ver weg waar zij leven met hun stropdassen. Pitbulls met kleren. Zij vergaderen daar. Zij beheersen de aarde.'

Filip had met zijn decodeer-apparatuur ontdekt dat het heelal was onderverdeeld in stierengevecht-velden, die beheerst werden door matador-pitbulls, een hoge vorm van leprechauns, de leidinggevenden. En deze afschuwelijke wezens werden bestuurd door nog afschuwelijkere wezens : tandartsen. Filip zei dat hij een medicijn had ontwikkeld tegen tandartsen. Hij leidde Sonja en Eduard naar een kamer waar ze op een lange stoel moesten liggen. Sonja en Eduard moesten volgens hem bevrijd worden van zware tandarts-straling. Hij activeerde zijn aparatuur, en verbond Sonja en Eduard met de aparatuur door vreemde draden. De aparatuur begon allerlei signalen te geven.

Het duurde niet zo lang. Tien minuten. En toen leidde Filip hen naar een bovenverdieping waar ze thee met gebak kregen, en daarna koffie. Filip was een aardige man, die overal veel vanaf wist te weten. Ze hadden lange gesprekken over allerlei zaken. Filip was een man die nooit opgaf, en altijd doorpuzzelde. Hij scheen een heel team te hebben van mensen die altijd weer dingen aan het uitbouwen waren, en nieuwe uitvindingen uitvoerden.

Snelheids

Duivel

Ze zaten hand in hand. Ze wilden elkaar niet verliezen. Ze waren bang, omdat zoveel relaties om hen heen stukliepen. 'Blijf alsjeblieft altijd eerlijk tegen me,' zei ze tegen hem. 'Praat alles met me

uit.' Hij knikte. 'Natuurlijk schatje.'

'Ik heb zo vreemd gedroomd vannacht,' zei ze zachtjes. 'Waarover dan ?' vroeg hij.
'Over voeten,' zij ze.
'Voeten ?' vroeg hij. 'Wat deden die voeten dan ?'
'Ze speelden,' zei ze, 'en ze deden alsof ze machtig waren.'
Plotseling kreeg hij stuiptrekkingen, en viel op de grond. Er was schuim op zijn mond. Even later zat hij weer naast haar op de bank. Ze zei niets. 'Ga verder,' zei hij. 'Waar heb je nog meer over gedroomd ?' Maar het was alsof ze in zichzelf gekeerd was nu. 'Oh, niets,' zei ze. Hij keek haar aan. Haar lippen waren vol. Hij wilde haar kussen, maar het was alsof iets hem tegenhield.

'Het zijn de tuinen,' zei hij.
'Wat bedoel je ?' zei ze bijna fluisterend.
'Nou ....,' zei hij. Maar verder kwam hij niet.

'Ik moet gaan,' zei ze.
'Waarom ?' vroeg hij.
'Ik heb nog wat dingen te doen,' sprak ze, en vertrok.

Die nacht had hij een droom. Over voeten die als dieren waren, en die op jacht gingen. Het was een vreemde droom, en de volgende dag vertelde hij het aan haar. Haar lippen waren vol en een beetje vochtig. Hij wilde haar kussen, maar ze duwde hem van haar af. Ze was een beetje misselijk zei ze. Hij begreep haar niet. Sinds hij die stuiptrekkingen had deed ze ineens zo koud. Ze legde hem uit dat ze zich niet lekker voelde na het vertellen van haar droom, zoals hij zich ook niet lekker voelde.

'Wat is er dan met ons aan de hand ?' vroeg hij. Toen omhelsde ze hem met haar warme lichaam. 'Alsjeblieft, laat me nooit meer gaan,' zei ze. 'Natuurlijk niet, schatje,' zei hij. Ze drukte wat toetsen in op de telefoon, en belde iemand op. Ze raakte diep in gesprek, alsof ze hem helemaal had vergeten. Hij voelde nog steeds haar warme lichaam tegen zich aan. Toen ze had opgehangen begon ze te huilen. 'Ik voel me niet lekker,' zei ze. Hij nam haar nog dichter tegen zich aan. 'Misschien moet je er gewoon over praten,' zei hij.

'Het zijn de dromen,' zei ze.
'Waar heb je dan over gedroomd ?' vroeg hij.
Ze zei niets.
'Toe, je moet het me vertellen,' zei hij.

'Ik droomde over Klaas,' zei ze. 'Dat hij alleen die rivier overzwom, en verdronk.'
Hij wiegde haar een beetje. Hij nam haar heupen vast. Opeens kreeg hij weer last van stuiptrekkingen, en viel neer. Midden in de nacht werd hij wakker, en ze hing wild over hem. Hij greep haar vast. Ze begon hem te kussen. 'Eindelijk ben je wakker,' zei ze. 'Je bent zo lang bewusteloos geweest. Ik heb je naar je bed getrokken.'

'Je bent sterk,' zei hij.

Ineens staat er een man in de deur-opening. Ze schrikken beiden. De man heeft een zwarte hoed op, en een wit gezicht, met verder een zwart lichaam met zwarte kleding. Maar dan is ook zijn gezicht zwart, en er rollen spinnen uit de pijpen van zijn jas. Een vreemde geur verspreid zich in de kamer. Ze horen geschreeuw. De man begint te lachen. Het is als het gebrul van een leeuw of een tijger.

'Ik ben een gek,' zei de man. 'Ik ben verschrikkelijk gestoord.' De man begint verschrikkelijk te gillen, en dan weer te lachen. Hij begint te bulderen van het lachen, totdat hij vuur spuwt in alle

kleuren. 'Ik heb deze dromen gegeven !' schreewde hij. 'Ik ben een engel.' De man in bed krijgt weer stuiptrekkingen, en begint heen en weer te rollen. 'Indiaanse dromen,' zei de man in zwart. 'Ik ben een boodschapper, een shamaan. Ik heb een boodschap voor jullie. Er is iets achter jullie aan, en het zal jullie krijgen ook.' Toen was de man verdwenen.

'Bah,' zei de vrouw. 'Wat is dat ?' Maar de man in bed had nog steeds stuiptrekkingen.

Toen stond er ineens een clown voor hen. Hij had een rode jas aan met wat gele en gouden strepen. 'Kaartje ?' vroeg hij. Hij hield hen een kaartje voor. Nu viel de vrouw ook flauw. Hij nam hen in zijn armen, en begon te groeien, terwijl hij over de straten begon te racen, en in een vreemd vuur alles achter zich liet. Hij was een ware snelheids-duivel.

Het Zwaard van Trol

Kemis, in kleuren en geuren, in het trollenwoud, tot het oerwoud. De geheimen van Kemis, het trollenkind, opgesloten in dozen, kisten van groot geweld. Open het, en sterf. Zij houdt een symbolisch zwaard voor jouw ogen, het draait, het spreekt. Het is het Zwaard van Trol.

Kemis, de sleutel is hier, een trollenkind, tot de poorten van de Leprechaun. Zij houdt een Zwaard voor je, wat spoedig in duisternis zal veranderen. Het zal geabsorbeerd worden door de lucht, en dan zal de hemel harig zijn. De hel zal het vieren.

Kemis, om je vrij te zetten, de boerderij doet haar deuren open. Ren daarom, tot het oerwoud, waar de taal van leprechaun spreekt. Haar lippen zijn groot, een groot geheim. De haaien zijn veranderd in varkens. Nu kan de jacht beginnen. Grijp de dolk van leprechaun.

Kemis, vol van kennis, hebbende de sleutel van de leprechaun gnosis, als een vlam. Zij draagt het in haar hand, en in haar andere hand de trol gnosis.

Zij staat in een geopent raam. Haar hand uitgestoken. Zij heeft een wapenrusting. Zij is klaar voor de jacht. Zij sprak in de duisternis van de leprechaun. De duisternis van de lokogamen is gekomen. Zij is de eerste duisternis.

Kemis, zij houdt de dolk vast, en de boog is op haar rug. Zij wijst op de rivieren. Zij zijn de rivieren van oerwouden. Zij wijst op de lucht, die donker wordt. Er is een haak in de lucht. De Tirkw.

Kemis is een leprechaun. Zij is een lokogaam. Zij spreekt, zij jaagt. Zij staat in het open raam. Zij roept je naam.

Het Labyrint

Hoofdstuk 1.

'Als ik in jouw spiegels kijk, ben ik altijd lelijk,' sprak ze.

'Dat komt...' zei hij aarzelend, 'omdat het de spiegels van de dwergen zijn.... eh... de boze dwergen dan, want de goede dwergen kunnen het niet wezen. Die doen zulke dingen niet.'

'Ja, maar wie leidt hen ?' vroeg ze.

'De heerser waarschijnlijk,' zei hij.

'Wie is de heerser ?' vroeg ze.

'Laat maar,' zei hij. 'We zitten nu eenmaal in dit duistere labyrint. We kunnen er niet uit, en we weten niet veel.'

'Alsjeblieft doe die spiegels dan weg,' zei ze. 'Ik kan er niet meer tegen. Ik vind je prachtig, dus je hoeft niet telkens in de spiegel te kijken of je haar wel goed zit, of dat je neus wel recht staat.'

'Je begrijpt het niet,' zei hij. 'Ik heb die spiegels nodig omdat ....'

Maar toen vielen ze beiden weer in slaap door de zachte winden van het labyrint.

Aan het meer op een klein strandje zat een dwerg op zijn fluit te spelen. Ik haaste me er naartoe. Al snel werd ik overvallen door struiken met scherpe doornen .... bessenstruiken. Daarachter waren de bessenbomen die daar weelderig groeiden. Ik probeerde te ontsnappen, maar kwam niet meer los. Ik werd in het meer getrokken. De bomen groeiden door tot in de dieptes van het meer. Het meer was langwerpig als een rivier. Ik kon de overkant zien. De dwerg speelde rustig door, en betoverde mij. Ik was nu een gevangene van het labyrint. Ik dwaalde rond over het zand, en zag een stad in de verte. Toen viel ook ik in slaap door de zachte winden van het labyrint.

'Mara, Mara,' zong de geest van het meer, de veerman, of beter gezegd de veerjongen. Ik zat in zijn boot en met zijn lange staf in het water kon hij de boot voortduwen. 'Mijn schreeuw heeft je gevonden,' zei de veerjongen. 'Ik zal je brengen naar de overkant van het meer, naar het paleis van de heerser en de prins.' Maar ik zakte weer weg. Ik werd door de wind opgenomen, en vloog richting het wazige, geestachtige paleis in de verte, als een paleis van mist, vage mist, weerspiegelingen. 'Ja, ja,' hoorde ik de geest roepen. 'Ja, ja, ja,' alsof hij iets probeerde af te zeggen. 'En dan ben ik klaar.' Ik zakte weg, als in een rozentuin. Vreemde bessenbomen, weelderige bessenbomen en struiken hingen over mij. Ze hadden hun doornen verloren. 'Ik breek !' schreeuwde de geest. Er was alsof er iets knapte in mij. Ik steeg op, en verliet de aarde. Ik bevond mij boven een woeste zee. 'Houd moed!' werd er geroepen. Ze probeerden mij op een schip te heisen. Ik zag zeemannen die er lichtelijk als piraten uitzagen, en een kapitein. Ze smeerden mij in met schuim.

'Tegen de draken,' zeiden ze. 'De zeedraken. Ze hadden je. Maar nu hebben wij jou.' Ik waggelde als een beschonkene, alsof ik teveel bier of andere sterke drank had gedronken. Ze wasten me in een teil van sterke drank en bier even later. Het tintelde op mijn lichaam. Mijn huid glanste in de zon. Het was bijna plakkerig, alsof er een olie-laagje op mijn huid zat nu.

De wanen hadden hem in zijn macht. Hij werd wakker met een zoutachtige smaak in zijn mond aan het hete strand. Het was warm en de zwoele zeewind overweldigde hem.

'Dodelijke spiegels zijn het,' werd er gejammerd. Er waren er meer die er onder leden. Boze dwergen hadden die spiegels gesmeed, van zwart goud, behekst. Het was alsof er een holte in was waar je doorheen kon rollen. De heerser had hen waarschijnlijk daartoe geinspireerd of zelfs hen daartoe opdracht gegeven. Waarschijnlijk zou de prins nog daartegen hebben gevochten, maar het mocht niet baten. De heerser had het voor het zeggen.

Het zwarte goud was een edel familie-geschenk, om de banden in stand te houden. Maar waar leidde het hen naartoe ? Naar hel en verdoemenis ... scheen het. Niemand wist wat er mee te

beginnen. Alles leek zo hopeloos. Ze waren in de ban van het zwarte goud, wat de toekomst zou kunnen voorspellen. De leugenaar woonde in hen.

Hoofdstuk 2.

Ze zit aan het strand met een klein dwergje. In de verte ziet ze de torens. Ze komen snel voort vanuit de zee, omgeven met een lichte mist. Golven spoelen aan. Ze zoekt naar boodschappen gebracht door pijn. In de pijn ziet ze visioenen. De pijn laat haar wanen. In de pijn hoort ze het gejoel van indianen, als het gejoel van hyena's. Ze gaat languit liggen in het hete zand, en voelt dan zanderige lippen op haar. Ze glijdt weg in de slaap, als een gevangene van het labyrint. Wie heeft dat labryrint gebouwd ?
Ze ziet boten in de verte, die metaal voortbrengen. Maar zij blijft dichtbij de bessen.

Nachtprinses

Ik ben een prins opgesloten door een draak. Niemand weet waar ik ben of waar ik slaap. Ik heb de moed allang opgegeven. Ze zal mij nooit vinden. Ik weet dat ze naar mij zoekt. Ik weet dat ze om me huilt. Niemand kan haar troosten, maar vinden zal ze me niet. Ik ben te diep. Deze draak houdt mij opgesloten, als in een roos, een labyrint. Er is niemand die mij vinden zal. Ik ben opgesloten door een draak. Niemand weet hoe, en niemand weet waar. Ik heb mezelf zovaak bedrogen, maar nu ben ik tot de waarheid gekomen. Ik kom hier nooit meer uit. Ik ben een glijder op de wind, het licht kan mij ergens brengen, als een vriend. Ik kan ook strijden op een wolk, maar mezelf bevrijden kan ik niet. Ik ben het kind van de wind, in duisternis zak ik weg. Ik heb het op mezelf genomen, en ik kan er nooit van weg. Misschien strijd jij nog voor mij. Misschien ben jij nog op zoek naar mij. Ik heb de moed allang opgegeven. Niemand brengt mij tot leven. Niemand die mij vinden kan.

Ik ben een prins opgesloten in dit kasteel. Alles hier is van fluweel. Ik heb mezelf voorgenomen om niet meer zo te dromen. Ik moet tot de feiten komen, dit kasteel is waar ik woon. Dit kasteel is waar ik verblijf, tot in alle eeuwigheid. Ik kom erdoor tot het duister, ik kom er door tot de meren, ik kom er door tot de zachtste veren, tot de allerzachtste kleren. Ik doe nu alles uit, en glijd in dit duistere bad, zo vies en zo vol wildernis, ik glijd tot andere streken. Ik glijd tot de warmte van het bad, ik glijd tot de armen van het bad, ik glijd in de gleuf van de draak, en dan gaat alles spelen. Ik heb geen zin om nog te jammeren, niemand luistert naar mij.

Oh prins, ik ben de nachtprinses. Ik sta voor het raam, en kom binnen als een dief in de nacht, als een nachtmerrie zal ik je ziel stelen. Oh prins, ik ben de nachtfontein, ik ben het nachtlatijn, en niemand kan jou deren. Niemand kan je vereten, niemand kan je stelen. Want ik heb jou, ik bevrijd jou.

Wat, jij bent het trauma, het trauma van de nacht. Hier heb ik zo lang op gewacht, maar je kwam maar niet, ik heb de moed al opgegeven. Ik geloofde niet meer, en had geen hoop, het deed te pijn, dus daarom was ik een ongelovige, maar nu voel ik jouw hand.

Prins, ik ben een heks, een monster, ik zal je wenken, om achter mij aan te komen naar een nieuwe

wereld, een nieuwe duisternis, in een bos van vrolijkheid. Ik zal je alles leren, ik zal je alles laten doen, ik zal je overal brengen waar je wilt. Ik ben het nacht-latijn, ik ben de nacht-fontein, staande aan het raam. Als de nachtmerrie zal ik je grijpen, om te verzoenen jou met al mijn haren, om een vuur te brengen in de kou. Ik zal zachtjes tot je zingen, totdat je rustig bent. Ik kom over jou met mijn gewaad, als een warme deken zal ik jou bedekken. Ik heb jou hier bereikt, jouw schuilplaats gevonden. Toe, laat me niet alleen, en laat ons rennen. Grijp me vast, houd me stevig vast, laat me nooit meer los. Ik ben jouw vleugels en genade, de nachtprinses die op jou wacht.

Oh, lieve prinses, ik sta op de trap die brand. Ik ren naar je liefelijk gewaad, jouw glimlach trekt mij aan. Oh, prinses, daar kom ik aan. Ik zie je daar staan. Ik heb engelengeduld met jou, oh lieve vrouw, een mooie nachtmerrie. Ik grijp jouw hand, en pak je vast, en leid jou naar de kamer van de schat. Ik laat het aan jou zien. Je bent verrukt. Oh lieve prinses, hurkende bij de schat, kijkende naar mij, je bent zo blij. Vlinders komen vanuit jouw gewaad, en dan zoveel vliegen en spinnen. Totdat je opstijgt vederlicht, en explodeert in het licht. Ik volg jou, de vuurvlieg, ik vlieg met jou, in de nacht. Er is iemand die jou warmhoudt, dat ben ik. Er zijn hier .... spoken .... zovelen die naar binnen willen. Ik doe de deur voor hen open, de draak smelt weg. De koning smelt weg, terwijl hij vasthoudt zijn koningin. Nu komt de wildernis binnen, wildgroeidende planten vallen aan, en nemen alles over. Oh nachtprinses, oh nachtprinses.

De Droomster

Ik was de tuinman van mijn ziel. Het was moeilijk om de tuin op orde te krijgen. Zo wild groeide het, en ik was een gevangene van mijn eigen tuin. Ik was verliefd op de droomster. Zij was vrij, als de godin van de lucht. Ze had een gouden sleutel om mij vrij te zetten, en toen mocht ik haar tuin bewaken. Ik mocht het groots maken zoals ik zelf wilde. Maar toen vertrok zij ...

Ik heb het nooit goed kunnen verwerken. Ze liet geen spoor van haarzelf achter. Misschien was zij ontvoerd door een beest. Ik bleef in haar tuin werken, en bleef op haar wachten, maar tevergeefs. Ik legde mij neer aan de voeten van dit raadsel. Er was geen doorkomen aan, en spoedig begon ik te merken dat ik in een boom begon te veranderen. Mijn takken strekten zich uit in de lucht, maar ik vond haar niet. Mijn wortelen groeiden diep onder de aarde, maar vinden deed ik haar niet. Ik droeg vrucht, en bloemen, en bloesem kwam ook, maar zij kwam niet. Wel kwamen allerlei dieren op me af, maar meestal om me te bestelen. Ze namen alles van me af totdat ik kaal stond.

Op een dag kwamen ze me omhakken, en toen was het gedaan met mij. Ik werd een tafel. En zij was nergens te bekennen. Ik raakte verbitterd. Niemand keek naar niemand om.

Op een dag werd ik wakker, en merkte dat ik brandde. De familie bij wie ik als tafel stond wilde mij niet meer. Nu moest ik branden, maar ik werd vrij. Mijn as zweefde in de lucht, en een wind nam mij mee. Ik was overal, en toen zag ik haar weer ... de droomster ...

Ze was prachtig, en voerde mij naar haar luchtkasteel. Daar zijn we toen gaan wonen, en ze verliet

mij nooit meer.

Het Bruine Boek

De slaven waren gepiercet in hun tepels. Ze stonden bevend voor haar. Zij had de macht hun leven geheel in de vernieling te brengen. Niet lang daarna lagen ze aan haar voeten, smekend om genade, maar er was geen genade. Zij moesten hun lot aanvaarden, en gehoorzamen. Zij had veel manieren om hen tot die gehoorzaamheid te brengen, om hen daarvan niet te laten afwijken.

Zoveel middelen had zij om hun leven tot een hel te maken, en dat zou zij ook doen. Er was niets meer wat haar tegen zou kunnen houden. Zij waren alleen met haar, als haar hulpeloze slaven.

Hoeveel ze ook gilden en schreeuwden, het kon haar niks schelen. Ze waren nek-geketend en aan handen en voeten gebonden. Zij overviel hen in hun slaap. Nu was er niets wat haar kon stoppen. Hier had ze lang op gewacht. De wraak was met haar.

Wanneer ze hen riep ging het hen door merg en been. Ze trok hen aan een touw door het zand. Zij was zoveel malen sterker dan hen. Nooit zou een man meer over haar heersen. Lang genoeg had zij in gevangenschap gezeten, maar nu was zij vrij, en zou haar vrijheid verdedigen als een wild beest.

Zij trok hen naar een gebied waar het groene niet was, een gebied van duistere jungles. Alles was hier grauw. De wateren waren van bloed en bruin. Het groene had haar eens geketend, maar nu zou zij alleen maar teruggaan naar het groene om gevangenen te maken. Zij wist dat de aanval de beste verdediging was. Ze zou niet wachten totdat ze weer door een groep mannen overvallen zou worden. Neen. Zij moesten allemaal in gevangenschap gaan voordat dat kon gebeuren.

Zij haatte het groene. Ook haatte zij het blauwe. Nu leefde zij voor eeuwig daar waar het groene en het blauwe niet kon komen. De mannen verbleekten voor haar aangezicht. Zij zou hen uithongeren, en voor eeuwig haar slaven zijn. Zij zou hoe dan ook met hen afrekenen. Zij hadden haar teveel aangedaan. Nu was zij een wild beest. Zij zouden niet veel kunnen doen. Zij was vele malen sterker dan hen. Toen ze jong was, en niet was ontwikkeld tot haar volle kracht konden ze haar nog temmen. Maar nu niet meer. De rollen waren omgedraaid.

Ze lachte, en spotte, terwijl ze de mannen bekeek die op de grond lagen. Ze zou hen voor eeuwig kooien. Voor haar werken zouden ze, zodat ze geen tijd zouden hebben om aan andere dingen te denken. Als hun gedachtes af zouden dwalen, dan zou dat een gevaar voor haar kunnen betekenen. Daarom zou zij hen moeten temmen. Zij zou hen onder hypnose moeten brengen, totaal onder haar

macht. Als een roofdier sloop zij tussen haar prooi. Haar mes had ze dicht tegen haar aan, en haar arm was gespannen, alsof ze elk moment kon toeslaan. Zij zou haar eerste offer brengen. Eén man moest sterven voor wat haar was aangedaan.

Ze boog over haar slachtoffers heen, hen uiterst zorgvuldig bekijkende, op zoek naar sporen van angst. De mannen beefden voor haar. Sommigen rolden over de grond, om van haar proberen weg te komen, maar het touw aan hun nek-ketens liet hen merken dat ze nergens naartoe konden. Ze waren van haar, haar bezit. Ook hadden sommigen dunne ketens bevestigd aan hun tepel-piercings. Ketens die terugliepen tot aan haar riem. Zij zouden altijd in paniek leven, gedwongen door pijn om haar te gehoorzamen, en door de pijn die op de loer stond. Ze konden nergens heen.

Ze rook hun lichamen, en genoot van hun angst, zoals ze eens van haar angst genoten. Ze liet hen merken hoe onwaardig ze waren, en vernederde hen op allerlei manieren. Ze lachte en spotte.

Na een tijd had ze haar offer gevonden. Deze man moest voor haar sterven. Ze greep hem bij de keel, en zette haar mes op zijn nek. Langzaam begon ze het mes naar binnen te laten zinken. Het bloed spoot eruit, en ze liet hem helemaal leegbloeden. De man begon luid te gillen, maar lag even later bewusteloos in het zand. Toen sneed ze zijn kop eraf, en trok het op aan zijn haren. 'Dit is wat ik van jullie maak !' schreeuwde ze. 'Hier hebben jullie om gevraagd !'
Ze ging in het zand zitten en huilde. Zoveel herinneringen kwamen naar boven. Dit was de man die haar dit allemaal had aangedaan. Ze was opgelucht nu. Zijn botten zou ze in haar tent hangen. Zijn schedel zou heilig zijn voor haar. Zij zou zijn schedel plaatsen op een paal. Ook zijn scalp spietste ze op een paal. Oorlogsgejoel klonk door de duistere nacht. Hier was het altijd nacht. Het bloed gaf licht, en er was veel vuur. Zo was er een donkere gloed waarin zij voortleefde, waarin zij zich veilig voelde. Hier zou ze bedenken wat ze met de andere mannen zou doen.

Zij konden niets meer tegen haar beginnen, nu ze tot haar volle kracht was uitgegroeid. Haar tranen vielen op de grond, maar spoedig zouden haar tranen niet meer stromen. Zij had al genoeg gehuild in haar leven. Nu zouden de mannen huilen.

Grote tranen vielen op haar voeten. Tranen die niet van haar waren, maar van hen die haar eens hadden opgejaagd, en hadden opgesloten. Zij voerden jacht op haar, en waren daarin geslaagd. In een kerker moest zij leven, voor zo'n lange tijd. In een duistere kooi leerde zij wat het was om een slaaf te zijn, afhankelijk aan de genade van een man. Die man was nu niet meer in leven. Maar al zijn dienstknechten lagen aan haar voeten.

Ze verachtte deze slaven. Zij waren altijd slaven geweest, en nu waren ze haar slaven. Zij zou geen genade of medelijden met hen hebben. In deze duistere nacht moesten zij op hun plaats gezet worden. Hier, in dit nachtgebied, zouden zij weten wie of wat ze waren, en wie ze moesten dienen. Zij zou raad weten met hun trotse borsten. Piercings gingen daarin, totdat de pijn hen dwong hun borsten te laten invallen, dichtvallen zoals zij dat noemde. Zij waren niet meer zo trots, en zij zouden nog minder trots zijn. Daar had zij haar middelen voor. Ook hun borst-piercingen werden soms bevestigd aan lange dunne kettingen, die terugliepen tot aan haar riem. Bij een lichte beweging van haar of hen hadden ze pijn. De pijn dwong hen om aan haar toe te geven. Ze hadden met de verkeerde persoon te maken. Zij zouden haar niet meer kunnen voorliegen.

Als een duister beest met veel prooi stond zij daar in het nachtgebied, naast haar tent. Ze stond daar met bloed aan haar mond, het bloed van een prooidier wat ze een tijd geleden had gevangen en vetgemest voor deze dag. Al deze mannen zouden haar geheim kennen. Ze zou hen voer geven wat hen zou veranderen in vee. Zij had zwarte magie in haar botten. Zij was de koningin van de zwarte magie en voodoo. Zij zou hun hoofden beheersen, en alles omdraaien. Zij zou hen in verwarring brengen, en hen te doen laten geloven dat zij beesten waren, fokvee, niets anders dan dat.

Slachtvee waren zij in haar ogen, en ook zij begonnen dat meer en meer te geloven. Elke dag sprak ze dat op hen in, en zij begonnen zich steeds meer als slachtvee te gedragen. Voodoo was haar naam.

De dag erna vermoordde ze al haar slaven. Nu zou ze haar zusters vrijzetten. Zwaar bewapend ging ze tot de groene en blauwe gebieden, daar waar het daglicht regeerde, en kwam tot hun kerkers, waar ze een zware strijd begon. Ze onthoofde de geestelijken, en verscheurde hun wetsboeken. Ze daalde neer op hun schedels. Zij brak hun miserabele lichamen, en slachtte haarzelf een weg door de bijna bevroren massa's. Zij waren alreeds zombies. Zij was op weg naar hun leider. Zij bespotte hem al in de verte, en riep zijn naam. In visioenen had zij hem al gezien. Ook hem zou zij breken. Op een hoge rode troon zat hij, met honden aan weerszijden. Hij leefde als in een kooi. Gouden tralies probeerden haar te stoppen. Er heerste hier een verschrikkelijke stank. Even dacht ze dat ze zou bezwijken, en alles was hier zo vol van licht. Ze verlangde naar de duisternis, maar moest eerst met deze persoon afhandelen om haar zusters vrij te zetten.

In haar hart sprak ze wat voodoo spreuken.

Toen hij haar zag veranderde hij in een groen gedrocht. 'Ik ken je !' riep ze bijna gillend. 'Jij bent het groene gedrocht. Jij hebt mijn zusters verkocht ! Waar heb je ze ?' Het groene gedrocht greep haar en begon haar te verscheuren. Hier was zij niet tegen opgewassen. Ze krijste en schreeuwde. Toen hoorde ze de stem van haar zusters. Ze was stervende, maar met haar laatste kracht wilde zij haar zusters vrijzetten. Ze sleepte haarzelf voort tot waar het geluid vandaan kwam, terwijl het groene gedrocht zich in haar had vastgebeten. Moeizaam sleepte ze haarzelf voort. Het groene gedrocht liet niet los, en ze begon steeds meer kracht en bloed te verliezen. Ze kon het groene gedrocht met geen mogelijkheid van haar afkrijgen. Ze kwam aan bij een duister hol, en ging daar naar binnen. In de verte zag ze de kooien, en hoopte maar dat ze die kooien zou kunnen bereiken voordat ze zou sterven. Moeizaam sleepte ze zich voort, en alles ging steeds trager. Ze begon steeds duizeliger te worden, maar het geschreeuw van haar zusters scheen haar een vreemde kracht te geven. Nog nooit had ze deze kracht eerder gevoeld. Met een krijs slingerde ze het beest van haarzelf af, en het spatte tegen een rotspunt aan in het hol. Ze was bedekt met groen slijm. Ergens lag een dierenvel waarmee ze haar wond begon dicht te knopen. Ze strompelde naar de kooien en met haar laatste krachten brak ze de tralies open. Haar zusters waren vrij. Ze namen haar in hun armen, maar niets kon meer baten. Ze was stervende. Ze ijlde. Ze was te diep verscheurd. Haar zusters huilden.

De grote Voodoo was niet meer.

De zusters keken elkaar aan. Ze wisten dat ze alleen verder moesten. Voodoo had hen bevrijd, maar … dat was tegelijkertijd het einde van Voodoo. Het was alsof ze haar nog steeds hoorden krijsen in de verte, maar het gekrijs werd minder, om even later plaats te maken voor doodse stilte. Snel renden de zusters de wildernis in.

Wie zou nu de koningin van de zwarte magie worden ? De zusters wisten niet of ze wel voor zo'n taak opgewassen waren. Ze waren anders dan Voodoo.

Hoe het kon wisten ze niet, maar het groene gedrocht wist hen ook te vinden. Hij begon hen te verscheuren zoals hij deed met hun zuster, en er was niets wat ze konden doen. Ze zouden sterven in deze nacht. Het groene monster nam hun wereld over, en ze kwamen samen met hun zuster in de onderwereld. Zij troonde daar in de onderwereld als de grote Voodoo koningin. Zij verbleekten naast haar. Maar ook hier kwam het groene gedrocht om hen te achtervolgen. Er was geen ontsnapping mogelijk van het groene gedrocht. Ze werden getrokken tot de hel waar ze zouden branden. In het vuur zagen ze elkaar's gezichten, en gilden. Ze smolten weg, totdat ze geheel

opgebrand waren, om dieper weg te zinken in een massale leegte. Ze waren tot de afgrond onder de hel gekomen, tot de bodemloze put. Hier zonken ze als in een moeras, een moeras van vergetelheid. Het voelde aan als een nieuwe geboorte. Ze gaven geboorte aan een dochter, een groot strijder. Zij waren door het groene zaad bevrucht. Hun dochter was een groot jager, met de macht om het groene gedrocht te vernietigen. Het groene gedrocht vloog toe op zijn zaad, en verslond het, maar hij werd er erg ziek van. Hij moest het weer uitspugen.

Een grote gestalte stond voor hem, zijn dochter, een vrouw. Ze was goed bewapend, en begon hem te martelen met de wapens. Hij wist dat zij op zijn vernietiging uit was. Ze had geen medelijden met hem. Er was geen genade. Hij riep tot zijn blauwe meesters, en smeekte hen. Het blauwe gedrocht zou nu komen om hem van zijn pijnigingen te verlossen. Onder het aanroepen van verzen uit een boek die hij nog kende kwam er een blauwe mist. Het blauwe gedrocht was gekomen, de grote vader, die het kind begon te verslinden. Het kind stierf. Nu waren alle sporen van het geslacht van voodoo uitgewist. Het blauwe monster had overwonnen en zong zijn oorlogsliederen. Hij zong van overwinning, en het blauwe nam alle werelden in, als grote zeeen die alles overspoelden.

Er was geen herinnering meer aan Voodoo en haar zusters. Iedereen herinnerde alleen de verzen van een oud boek. De verzen waarmee het groene gedrocht zijn blauwe meesters had opgeroepen. Deze verzen moesten bewaard worden tot in alle eeuwigheden.
Een vrouw keek uit over de zeeen. Zij was opgegroeid met het blauwe boek, en ook met het groene gezag. Maar zij had altijd de visioenen van het bruine in haar hoofd, en die vertelden haar over Voodoo en haar zusters.

Het blauwe moest haar doden, maar kon het niet. Ze werd beschermd door een bruin boek. Het was juist het bruine boek waarin Voodoo en haar zusters hun toevlucht hadden gevonden.

Avond Danser

Hij woonde in een havenstadje. Het havenstadje lag aan een groot meer. Hij had het gevoel alsof niemand naar hem luisterde, alsof niemand hem kon horen. Hij voelde zich niet serieus genomen. De mensen leefden langs hem heen. Hij had een zus die vele jaren ouder was, dus ze groeiden ook niet samen op. Hij had het gevoel alsof hij enig kind was. Misschien was dat ook de reden waarom hij zich zo geisoleerd en onbegrepen voelde. De mensen om hem heen waren veelal ouder en met hele andere dingen bezig. Zijn vader was altijd en eeuwig bezig met de tuin. Hij had het gevoel alsof zijn vader nooit oog voor hem had, alsof zijn vader hem niet eens zag staan.

Zijn moeder was een heel dromerig type. Die was ook onbereikbaar, en draaide altijd alles om, en

maakte altijd iets anders van wat hij zei. Het was een zweverig en afstandelijk iemand. Hij had het gevoel alsof niemand om hem gaf, alsof hij er niet toe deed. Wat hij ook maakte of deed, het was nooit goed. Hij had het gevoel dat zelfs als hij zou kunnen vliegen dat de mensen er dan niet van op zouden kijken. Hun leven ging dan gewoon door. Ze waren onverschillig en ongeinteresseerd.

Hij maakte prachtige, gevoelige muziek, maar niemand luisterde. Hij schreef prachtige boeken en maakte prachtige schilderijen, maar iedereen was met andere dingen bezig. Hij was slechts een druppel in de oceaan. Hij kreeg geen voet aan de grond.

Hij voelde zich als een avond danser, terwijl anderen moe waren van de dag en alreeds voorbereidingen troffen voor de nacht. Hij danste door, terwijl ieder ander naar bed ging. De mensen om hem heen waren moe, moegepraat. Hij wist niet waar hij zijn energie vandaan haalde. Hij ging graag wandelen in het park. Op een dag kwam hij daar een meisje tegen. Eerst deed ze alsof ze hem niet zag staan, maar even later kwam ze naar hem toe. "Mooi weer is het vandaag, hè ?" vroeg ze.

"Ja, dat wel," zei hij.

"Dat wel ?" vroeg ze. "Zijn andere dingen niet mooi ?"

"Niemand begrijpt me," zei hij.

"Begrijpt de zon de hemel ?" vroeg ze. "Begrijpt de maan de aarde ? Ze leven langs elkaar heen. Het zijn twee werelden die elkaar kruizen, totaal verschillende werelden."

"Daar zit wat in," zei hij.

"En zo is het ook tussen ons," zei ze. "Wij kennen elkaar niet, en nu kruizen even onze paden."

"Jammer," zei hij.

"Waarom ?" vroeg ze. "Zo is het leven. Zeg, ik moet er weer vandoor. Een prettige dag verder."

Toen liep het meisje weg. Hij voelde alsof iedereen haast had. Iedereen was met andere dingen bezig zoals altijd.

De volgende dag kwam hij haar weer tegen in het park, maar ze negeerde hem volkomen. Ze deed alsof ze hem nog nooit eerder had gezien, alsof ze nog nooit met elkaar hadden gesproken. Hij had het gevoel alsof ze hem niet eens zag staan, alsof hij lucht voor haar was.

De dagen erop gebeurde hetzelfde. Hij kwam haar tegen in het park, maar ze sprak niet met hem, keek totaal langs hem heen, maar sprak wel met andere voorbijgangers. Hij begon zich er een beetje kwaad over te maken, of misschien wachtte ze erop dat hij iets zou zeggen ?

Hij besloot zich te gedragen zoals zij zich gedroeg. Hij zorgde ervoor dat hij niet naar haar keek, en hij sprak iedere andere voorbijganger even aan, alhoewel ze vaak niet eens wat terug zeiden. Ze hadden haast, of waren niet geinteresseerd, of heel kortaf. Sommigen hadden wel hele lange gesprekken met haar in het park. Hij vroeg zich af wat er met hem aan de hand was.

Hij had het gevoel alsof hij een dans met haar opvoerde. Ze waren vaak bij elkaar in de buurt, maar toch ook weer niet. Hij besloot zo ook met anderen om te gaan. Hij was een avond danser.

Hij leefde geheel voor de avond dans, en schudde zo zijn zorgen van hem af.

Maar om een dag kwam ze samen met een jongen, en de dag erna was de jongen er weer. Hij dacht dat ze misschien een vriend had, en het begon hem te verlammen. Het dansen ging hem moeilijk af, en toen ze voor de derde keer samen met de jongen naar het park kwam besloot hij niet meer te gaan. Ongeveer een week later lag er een kaart van het meisje in de brievenbus. Ze liet hierin weten dat ze hem miste, en dat de andere jongen haar broer was. Hij vroeg zich af hoe zij aan zijn adres kwam, of misschien had zij hem wel naar huis gevolgd. Ook vroeg hij zich af waarom ze hem miste, omdat ze elkaar nooit spraken. Of had het misschien met de avond dans te maken, dat ze dat miste ?

Na een week besloot hij terug te gaan naar het park, maar dit keer met zijn zus. Hij besloot verder helemaal niet op haar kaart te reageren. Hij had ook haar adres niet. Hij was druk met zijn zus in gesprek. Ze hadden het over allerlei dingen, en het meisje was er ook met haar broer. Hij vroeg zich af waarom ze altijd met haar broer kwam. Hij dacht dat het meisje niet kon weten dat het zijn zus was, maar ze bleken elkaar te kennen, en ze raakten met elkaar in gesprek. Hij werd verder volkomen genegeerd. De volgende dag kwam hij alleen, terwijl het meisje weer kwam met haar broer. Maar op een dag kwam het meisje met een andere jongen, en het begon aan hem te knagen. Ditmaal kreeg hij er geen kaart over, en elke dag was de jongen er weer. Hij had hier geen zin in, dus na een tijdje besloot hij niet meer te komen. Hij was ziek geworden van deze avond dans. Hij voelde zich verlamd, als gestoken door een giftig insect. Hij kon aan niets anders meer denken.

Soms ging zijn zus nog wel eens naar het park, en op een dag vertelde ze dat zij daar nog steeds veel was, maar dan met haar andere broer.

Het was in die dagen dat hij besloot andere meisjes te vragen om met hem naar het park te gaan, gewoon als wandel-partner, of als een soort dans-partner. Hij waagde zich weer aan de avond dans. Toch voelde hij zich er rot over dat hij nooit haar kaart had beantwoord, ook al had hij haar adres niet. Hij vroeg aan zijn zus of zij haar adres had, en zij gaf het hem. Maar hij had de moed niet.

Op een dag was het meisje weer helemaal alleen in het park, terwijl hij met een ander meisje was. De dag erop was zij weer alleen, en na een week besloot hij ook alleen te komen. "Heb je mijn kaart ooit gehad ?" vroeg ze.

"Ja, maar ik had je adres niet," zei hij.

"Je zus zei dat ze mijn adres aan je had gegeven, dat je er zelf om had gevraagd," zei ze.

Hij werd rood van verlegenheid, maar durfde verder niets te zeggen. Even later zei hij : "Ik was het weer vergeten."

"Ik bedoelde er verder niets persoonlijks mee," zei ze. "Ik dacht ik deel het gewoon met je. Ik had ook mijn vriend mee kunnen nemen."

Hij werd helemaal koud van binnen.

"Niet dat ik een vriend heb," zei ze. "Maar het zou een mogelijkheid kunnen zijn. In mijn geval zal dat wel nooit gebeuren."

"Waarom niet ?" vroeg hij.

"Mensen zijn te verschillend," zei ze. "Het is beter ze op een afstand te houden, als in een dans."

Hij voelde zich warm en koud tegelijk van binnen.

"Ik werk in het museum," sprak ze.

"Ik moet gaan," zei hij.

"Wacht," zei ze. "Ik bedoel er niets persoonlijks mee."

"Ik weet het," zei hij, en liep door.

Hij dacht na over het museum. Hij vroeg zich af of zijn kunst ooit in een museum zou komen, maar het leven voerde een dans met hem op, net zoals het meisje, en hij deed mee in deze dans.

Op een dag kwam het meisje niet meer, en weken gingen voorbij waarin hij haar niet zag. Zou hij dit keer misschien te koud zijn geweest ? Na een maand schreef hij een kaartje dat hij haar miste. Een maand later kreeg hij een kaart terug. Daarin stond : "Sorry, ik heb het te druk met paardrijden."

De dag erna was ze in het park. Hij ging direct op haar af. "Ik heb het gevoel dat ik je paard ben," zei hij.

"Ik begrijp het," zei ze. "Ik kan zo soms overkomen, maar zo zit ik niet in elkaar."

"Wil je een keer met me mee naar de bibliotheek ?" vroeg hij.

"Als jij een keer met me meegaat naar het museum," zei ze.

"Afgesproken," zei hij, "maar dan wil ik je eerst een keer mijn kamer laten zien."

Op zijn kamer hingen zijn schilderijen en lagen zijn boeken, maar toen ze er was deed ze volkomen ongeinteresseerd en onverschillig. Ze was meer met hem bezig dan met wat hij had gemaakt. Ze keek wel rond, maar verder zei ze er niets over, en begon dan over andere dingen. Hij voelde zich koud worden van binnen en wenste dat hij haar nooit had binnengelaten. Hij voelde zich verlamd, als gestoken door een giftig insect. Hij danste niet meer. Hij voelde zich aan een paal gebonden door een headhunter. Hij voelde zich als een hebbedingetje, een monument. Ze ging ijskoud met hem om, als een museum medewerker met een object.

"Hallo, ik leef, ik praat," zei hij.

Ze reageerde er verder niet op. "Laten we nu naar de bibliotheek gaan," zei ze, "en dan daarna naar het museum."

Maar hij had geen zin meer. "Laten we dat een andere keer doen," zei hij. "Ik heb nu geen tijd."

Hij was blij toen ze weer weg was. Hij zou nu een lange tijd niet meer het park inkomen. Hij had het gevoel dat hij haar moest laten betalen voor haar gedrag. De avond dans begon andere vormen te krijgen.

Hij vond haar gevaarlijk voor zijn psychische gezondheid, maar toch wilde hij dit roofdier ook temmen. Of zou zij dan hem temmen ?

Hij zette als het ware het contact met haar in de ijskast. Hij wist dat zij slechts op jacht was naar zijn schedel. Of waren het misschien de wonderen van de natuur ?

Hij besloot boswandelingen te maken in plaats van parkwandelingen, maar tot zijn grote schrik kwam hij haar daar op een dag tegen. Ze kwam direct op hem af, en fluisterde iets in zijn oor. Hij kon het niet verstaan. "Wat zeg je ?" vroeg hij.

Maar ze liep door. De dag erna was ze weer in het bos, dus hij besloot terug te gaan naar het park. Toen ze daar ook kwam dacht hij dat ze dit misschien al tijden deed, gaan van bos naar park en omgekeerd. Ze bleek dit ook zo te doen tussen het museum en de bibliotheek. Eigenlijk kon hij haar niet ontlopen. Het was in deze tijd dat hij zich steeds meer terugtrok op zijn kamer. Hij begreep zijn vader beter, die altijd bezig was met de tuin. Hij begreep nu waarom. Ook begreep hij zijn moeder beter, waarom die zo was. Misschien was het meisje wel een wonderlijk medicijn, maar ook iets wat je zeker niet te veel moest gebruiken. Er stond een dagelijkse limiet op, en daar moest hij zich streng aan houden.

Een man kocht een pakje medicijnen genaamd "Avond Danser" in een boekhandel. Er zat ook een klein boekje bij. Hij kocht het, omdat hij wilde dat zijn gezin elkaar beter zou begrijpen. Het was een wereldbekend medicijn, bekend van televisie. De man wilde het weleens uitproberen.

Einde

De Roep van de Pauw

Twee meisjes stonden aan zijn kamerdeur. Buiten in het pauwenpark riepen de pauwen zijn naam : "Leo, Leo". Hij had altijd het gevoel alsof ze hem riepen. De meisjes klopten aan, en hij deed open. "Je moeder heeft ons binnengelaten," zeiden ze. Hij glimlachte. Hij liet ze binnen in zijn kamer. Ze keken rond. Hij had een poster aan de muur van Doornroosje. "Mooi," zeiden de meisjes. "Je hebt een leuke kamer." Hij glimlachte.

Ze keken hem diep in zijn ogen. "Hoe vindt je het nu in Birmingham ?" vroegen ze.

"Klaarwakker," zei hij. "Alsof ik ontwaakt ben. Krijg ik nu voedsel ?"

"Ben je een pauw dan ?" vroeg één van de meisjes.

"Misschien," zei hij. "Ik ben een oppasser."

"Oh, de oppasser van het pauwenpark om de pauwen te voeden ?" vroeg het andere meisje.

"Zoiets," zei Leo.

Die avond bleven de meisjes eten. Hij speelde wat muziek voor ze, en ging die avond vroeg naar bed, terwijl de meisjes weer naar huis gingen. De dag erna waren ze er weer. Ze hadden allerlei cadeautjes voor Leo mee gebracht. Wie waren zij eigenlijk ?

Zij waren van het huisbezoek van een kerk. Het was geen gewone kerk, maar van proza. Ze leefden door gedichten en proza, als een kerk van natuur-literatuur. Ze zagen in alles van de natuur en het leven een diepere boodschap. Soms noemden ze het de pauwenkerk, of de kerk van de pauw. De pauw is namelijk een dier van hele strenge poëtische etiquette. De pauw is ook zo extreem orthodox dat het abstract is. Denk je eens in een horizontale lijn aan de oppervlakte, die maar door en door gaat, zonder einde, en juist in die eindeloosheid ergens afbreekt of ombuigt en dan totaal de diepte in gaat, als een verborgen diepte.

Dingen die ogenschijnlijk oppervlakkig zijn kunnen juist zo belangrijk zijn. Daarom zijn we in deze ogenschijnlijk oppervlakkige wereld. Alles verbergt een les, en een ongrijpbare diepte. Wij kunnen de eeuwigheid niet grijpen zonder de sleutels die in de tijd worden aangereikt.
Wij moeten het leven op aarde zien te waarderen, en oog hebben voor de kleine details van het leven die ons worden gegeven. De waarheid zit verborgen in het kleine. "Wie het kleine niet waardeert is het grote niet weert."

De eindeloze oppervlakkigheid is wijd en breed, zo oneindig horizontaal dat het diep is. Het ravijn getuigt van een loze eeuwigheid waarin alleen de momenten parels zijn, schatten van onpeilbare waarde. De aardkloot zit vol van geheimen, de tijd is de schat, de eeuwigheid is nutteloos.

De meisjes onderwezen hem hierin. Eens kwamen ze bij hem aan de deur, en hij raakte geinteresseerd in de taal die zij spraken. Hij was hier net nieuw in Birmingham.

Het oneindige horizontale is de sleutel tot de diepte. We kunnen niet rechtstreeks de diepte in. Dan zouden we te pletter vallen. Daarom worden we eerst in de horizontale afgrond gedreven, het schijnbare nutteloze, het dagelijks leven met al zijn toeters en bellen. De meisjes lieten hem een pauwenveer zien die ze vonden in het pauwenpark dichtbij. De binnenste cirkel was onderbroken door een inham, een afgrond. Zo legden ze het uit dat alle cirkels van het leven eerst afgebroken moeten worden om verder te kunnen komen. Daarom moet een mens leren leven met verlies, omdat hier de lijnen ombuigen en de diepte ingaan.

Leo keek de meisjes aan. Ze leken als gezonden uit de hemel. In zijn gedachten waren ze als pauwen. Hij begon het steeds meer naar zijn zin te krijgen in Birmingham. Hij hield van de levensfilosofieën die de mensen er op na hielden hier in Birmingham.

De eindeloosheid van het horizontale begint dan juist door de ongrijpbaarheid ervan te draaien als een wit hek. Zo wordt al het oppervlakkige verkeerd uitgelegd en verkeerd begrepen, en wordt alles omgedraaid. Dit gebeurd aan beide kanten van de eindeloze lijn. Stel je voor : een lijn die geen begin heeft en geen eind, dat moet wel duizelen op een bepaald moment, dat moet wel eindigen in

chaos, in grote verwarring. Alleen op dat punt ontstaat de diepte, waarin je wegzinkt in de woeste zee. De pauw reikt hierin een schip aan, en neemt je mee.

Op naar Birmingham,
Op naar het pauwenpark,
Op naar het vertikale wat alleen ontstaat in het eindeloze horizontale,
Waar in grote vermoeidheid en in groot lijden en grote verwarring onze horizontale lijnen, onze horizontale reizen, worden afgebroken,
Waar het pauwenschip ons onderwijst over de zeedieptes,
Wat er groeit op de zeebodem

Op naar Birmingham,
Waar ons eigen weten afbreekt, en een nieuw weten begint,
Waar onze kortzichtige vooroordelen en fabeltjes de allesoverweldigende hoogtes en dieptes van het bestaan ontmoeten,
Van eindeloos horizontaal tot eindeloos vertikaal,
Als de wiskunde van het levensverhaal

Tijd en eeuwigheid zijn randen van dezelfde steen waarin alles ombuigt,
Het is ongrijpbaar als een waterval, als een golf van de zee,
Maar het zal je meesleuren tot dat wat was vergeten

Tijd is de sleutel tot Birmingham,
De eeuwigheid is slechts een muur,
Je kunt het niet grijpen, maar het grijpt jou,
En neemt je mee op reis, op de rug van de pauw

Ik heb de uiteindes gezien van het eindeloze horizontale en saaie,
Het zijn watervallen, en ze zullen alles overstromen,
De toekomst is allang geweest,
Ergens waar de tijd stopt en afbreekt stroomt alles terug,
Terug naar Birmingham,
Terug naar het pauwenpark,
Waar alleen de dichter nog preekt

De roep van de pauw roept ons terug,
Wie kan de roep van de pauw wederstaan ?

De Beloning

Er was een nucleaire oorlog. Midden in de nacht werd hij wakker en voelde zich zo onveilig in de stad dat hij zijn kleren aantrok, wat spullen pakte en een jas aan deed. Hij rende het huis uit. Hij moest zo snel mogelijk weg, zo snel mogelijk uit de stad. Het was hartje winter. Overal lag sneeuw. Hij rende naar het bos. Toen hij over het slootbruggetje was gegaan en langs de weg liep achter de stad was er een grote ontploffing. Hij kon niets doen dan rennen. Hij durfde niet naar achteren te kijken. Hij wist dat de stad nu brandende was. Hij wist dat er een nucleaire raket ingeslagen moest zijn. Hij gilde, want daar ging zijn verleden, daar was alles wat hij lief had.

Hij kwam bij het bos aan en moest zorgen dat hij niet uitgleed. Op sommige plaatsen was het heel glad, en op andere plaatsen was veel sneeuw. In de verte was de waterval. Hij was omringd door bomen. Hij keek naar achteren en zag alleen maar vuur. Hij wist dat er niets meer van de stad over was. Hier was hij opgegroeid. Er zouden geen sporen meer van achtergebleven zijn. Hij liep door met stevige pas. Tegelijkertijd trilde hij. Wat als het vuur hem ook zou grijpen ? En hij was duizelig.

Voor zich zag hij alleen maar sneeuw. Hij wist dat hij alleen veilig kon zijn in het bos. Hij liep daar voor uren. Het vuur was nog steeds achter hem aan. Hij begon heter en heter te worden. Dit kon niet goed gaan zo. Hij deed zijn kleren uit, en rende naar de bosrivier. Die zou hij overzwemmen. Hier was waar het vuur stopte. Het was een lange zwemtocht. Hij wist niet of hij het koud of heet had. Het leek wel alsof hij in een ander lichaam was. Eindelijk kwam hij aan de andere kant van de rivier in het bos. Er was hier een indiaan met een bootje bekleed met huiden. Hij liep op de indiaan af, en viel hem in zijn armen. "De stad is weg," zei hij. De langharige indiaan nam hem in zijn armen. "Ik weet het," zei de indiaan. De indiaan nam hem mee naar een boshut. Hier woonde de indiaan. "Er was geen hoop voor de stad," zei de indiaan met een accent. "Altijd oorlog."

De man knikte. Hij kreeg wat te drinken. "Voel je je alweer wat beter ?" vroeg de indiaan.

"Niet echt," zei de man. "Ik heb alles verloren, mijn hele familie, en al mijn vrienden."

"Wij zijn er hier voor je," zei de indiaan. "Je bent nooit alleen."

"Dank je," zei de man. "Ik begrijp waarom jullie hier wonen. Veel veiliger."

De indiaan knikte. De man moest denken aan iedereen die hij had verloren. Hij kreeg wat nieuwe kleren van de indiaan. "Het zijn vuurvogels," zei de indiaan. "Ze gaan van stad tot stad om alles te vernielen. Ze trekken families uit elkaar, die bommen en raketten."

"Ik weet het," zei de man. "Noemen jullie ze ook niet dondervogels ?"

"Ja," zei de indiaan, "en dat zijn het. Ze zijn niet te vertrouwen."

"Ik wil naar huis," zei de man.

"Dit is je nieuwe huis," zei de indiaan. "Ga nooit meer terug naar de stad."

Een man wordt wakker van een nachtmerrie. Hij staat op en loopt de trap af om iets uit de koelkast te pakken. Hij trilt helemaal. Gelukkig kwam er die dag huisbezoek. Een paar uur later in de ochtend staan er twee meisjes op de stoep. Hij laat ze binnen en vertelt zijn verhaal.

"Het zijn slechts kralen van een ketting," zei één van de meisjes. "In de nachtmerrie was je net buiten de stad, over de slootbrug heengegaan, en lopende langs de weg, terwijl je alles had verloren aan de ene kant, maar jij werd ergens voor bewaard. Iemand riep jou uit je bed en zei dat je de stad uitmoest. Het is iets van de natuur wat over jou waakt. Dat is de eerste kraal. Dan in de tweede kraal ben je aangekomen in het bos, en er is overal sneeuw. Het is winter. De winter heeft alles van je afgenomen, en neemt je tot haar, als een natuurverschijnsel, maar er is nog steeds een strijd gaande. Het vuur jaagt nog steeds op je, en je bent eenzaam en depressief. Dan in de derde kraal, dieper in de natuur vind je nieuw leven, nieuwe contacten, nieuw inzicht."

De man knikte. "Dus die dromen zijn kralen om het leven beter te begrijpen ?"

"Ja," zei het meisje. "Het is symboliek."

"Ik zie het," zei de man.

De volgende nacht heeft hij weer een droom. Weer ontmoet hij de indiaan die in zijn boot over de rivier gaat door de natuur, met een peddel. Hij roept de indiaan, maar die antwoordt niet, alsof de indiaan hem niet hoort. De man gaat het water in en zwemt op de boot af, maar de boot gaat sneller dan hem. Dan wordt de man wakker.

De volgende dag vertelt hij het aan de meisjes tijdens het huisbezoek. "Het is de vierde kraal," zei het meisje, wat de dag ervoor ook het woord deed. "Het betekent dat je ervoor moet werken om het nieuwe contact en het nieuwe inzicht te bewaren, en ook dat je het moet volgen. Het wil je ergens naartoe leiden."

De man bedankt de meisjes voor het bezoek en het inzicht. Hij is blij dat ze elke dag komen om hem ondersteuning te geven. Hij denkt veel na over de kralen, en schrijft het ook op. Hij merkt in hemzelf het samenspel tussen vuur en winter in zijn leven. Zij drijven hem terug tot de natuur, tot het hogere inzicht. Hij begint ook steeds meer de gevaren van de stad in te zien, hoe ze hem gebonden houden. In de natuur is vrijheid, maar een hogere soort van leiding en bescherming.

Toch kan hij ook de stad met andere ogen bekijken, als een onderdeel van de natuur. Hoe dieper hij in contact komt met de natuur, hoe meer ook alles om hem heen verandert tot een stuk natuur. Zo wordt alles bruikbaar in een hoger inzicht.

De man vindt rust in de natuur, en is dankbaar voor zijn dromenleven, wat hij als een gave ziet. De gave beschermt hem, de gave leidt hem. De meisjes noemen het een beloning, omdat hij alles heeft achtergelaten, en naar de natuur geluisterd heeft, en de natuur heeft gevolgd.

Einde

Advertentie Koekgeneraal

Ik heb het niet vaak kunnen vertellen, en ik zal het ook niet vaak doen. Alleen op speciale gelegenheden misschien. Het gaat over een bakkerij waar ze een recept hebben voor levende koeken : koekmannen en koekvrouwen, en die worden dan overal rondbezorgd. Het is niet voor de verkoop, maar voor de verhuur, want de koek die gegeten wordt groeit gewoon weer aan. Het is nogal duur, maar dan wel heel speciaal. Je kunt de koek gewoon voor je ogen zien groeien wanneer je ervan gegeten hebt. Het is echt de specialiteit van die nogal ongewone bakkerij. De bakkerij is nogal veel in de trek, vooral bij hooggeplaatsten. De koeken worden nooit oud, maar laatst probeerden sommige koeken wel te ontsnappen. Het leven van koekmannen en koekvrouwen is zwaar. Het is een vreemde fabriek, en vaak worden ze weer geheel anders gedecoreerd en aangekleed.

Vroeger was er eens een oorlog tussen de koeken en de banketbakkers. Banketbakkers zijn de koningen van de koeken. Vroeger was er eens een slavenopstand, maar de banketbakkers vonden daar wat op. Ze maakten een recept waardoor nu ook de koeken zelf konden eten. Zo was het eerlijker, en dit leidde tot het tijdperk waarin koeken ook zelf banketbakker konden worden. Koekmannen en koekvrouwen werden zelfstandiger, en velen zochten zelfs de wildernis op. Maar hier stuitten ze op een nieuw probleem : de verschrikkelijk wilde dieren. Uiteindelijk ontwikkelden die koekmannen en koekvrouwen hun eigen wildheid, om ook daar tegen bestand te zijn.

En nu ? Op aarde zie je ze bijna niet meer. Ze trokken allemaal naar andere planeten. Maar ik ken nog steeds die banketbakkerij met recepten voor levende koeken. Ik heb het zelf eens thuis uitgeprobeerd en dat was smikkelen en smullen. Het was zo'n koek die ook direct banketbakker was, dus van mij werd er ook door een recept een koek gemaakt. Ik moest een vreemd soort mengsel uit een zakje inslikken. Tegenwoordig loop ik daarom met veel smink zodat niemand ziet dat ik eigenlijk een koek ben. Ik heb een baan gekregen bij die nogal wat ongewone bakkerij, en soms ga ik op bestelling naar koningshuizen of feesten. Ja, het leven is vreemd als een levende koek. Ook geef ik cursussen hoe een levende koek te worden. Ik voel mezelf al flink een banketbakker, met een groeiend leger van koeken, want we hebben een oorlog te voeren, een oorlog tegen een koekloze maatschappij, een maatschappij van dode koeken. Ik ben daarom een koeksoldaat, en zo u wil een koekgeneraal. U kunt mij dus ook inhuren.

Veel koeken leven nog in gevangenschap, maar ik weet de weg naar de verlichting. Diep onder de grond heb ik een geheime fabriek waar het allemaal gebeurt. Het gaat er nogal machinaal aan toe, omdat we ons geen slordigheden kunnen veroorloven. Het machinale is natuurlijk altijd meedogenloos, maar we moeten een goed product leveren. Eén verkeerde beweging en alles gaat mis. We moeten ons recept 'clean' houden. En zo blijven onze koeken lekker en functioneel. Ook worden ze uiterst zorgvuldig verpakt.

Ambassadeur van Venus

Niet velen weten van mijn ontsnapping uit de spinnenboerderij. Noem het overigens maar fokkerij. Niet velen weten wat er daar ergens diep in de bossen gebeurt. Velen willen het ook niet weten. In

ieder geval hebben spinnen het daar voor het zeggen, en zeg maar gerust grote spinnen. Ze spuiten wat gif in je, en daar ga je. Mentale gif, dus dan denk je dat je heel ergens anders bent, dat je met die en die praat en omgang hebt, terwijl het gewoon maar sterke concentraties zijn in je hersenen opgewekt door het spinnengif. Kun je uit die boerderij ontsnappen, die boerderij waar we allemaal zitten en denken dat we in een civilisatie leven, dan ben je er nog niet. Ontsnappingen worden namelijk gefaked door het gif zelf, dus dan denk je dat je ontsnapt, maar je komt er alleen maar dieper in. Ook die fantasie in onze koppen dat we denken dat we in een civilisatie, een beschaving leven is niets anders dan een gif wat onze hersenen zo heeft beinvloed, terwijl we in handen zijn van savage spinnen, oftewel de wildernis.

Geen goed nieuws dus, hè, en vandaar dus ook dat velen het afkappen als onzin, ook door het gif. Maar goed, toen ik dus ontsnapte was ik er nog niet, omdat het dus allemaal gefaked was door dat gif. Dan denk je alleen maar dat je eruit bent. Ik kwam erachter dat die spinnenboerderij weer een onderdeel was van iets veel groters : een vliegenboerderij. Die vliegen fokten dus in principe weer die spinnen en die spinnen fokten ons. Dus stel dan dat je echt zou kunnen ontsnappen uit die spinnenboerderij, dan had je nog met een leger gewiekste verwilderde vliegen te maken, en geloof me, dat zijn geen lieverdjes. Vliegen met angels waar je naar van wordt. Druipend gif, dat je echt helemaal hoteldebotel maakt. En toch had ik dus op een gegeven moment die code van de spinnenboerderij gekaapt, en ik kwam daarna dus die vliegenboerderij onder ogen, het grotere geheel. Nou, dat was wat. Alarms gingen natuurlijk aan, en ik kwam erachter dat wij niet de enigen waren die naast de spinnen daar gefokt werden. Ook varkens werden er gefokt. Ik ging dus heel langzaam en voorzichtig zonder lawaai te maken de trappen op, langs al die gewapende vliegen heen, totdat ik op het dak kwam.

Ik zwaaide met een witte en een rode doek, en al gauw kwam een helicopter mij ophalen. Maar wat bleek nou ? Het waren vliegen, maar ditmaal goede vliegen. Ze hadden een helm op en waren vriendelijk. Ze zeiden dat ze van Venus kwamen, en ik dacht : 'Die lui zijn gek.' Maar toen ik dichter en dichter bij het wonderlijke Venus kwam vond ik ze helemaal niet meer zo gek. Ik begon ze interessant te vinden, en ik begon te beseffen dat zij daadwerkelijk mijn bevrijders waren. En ze vertelden mij dat eens Mars en Venus één planeet waren genaamd Pythia. En Pythia was vroeger weer deel van een nog groter geheel genaamd Lakshor. Het sprak allemaal een beetje tot mijn verbeelding, en ik begon er boeken over te schrijven, dikke pillen over Pythia en Lakshor, over alles wat die lui mij vertelden. Het waren een soort aliens met de eigenschappen van vliegen, maar ze waren ook deels trol en indiaan. Ze zeiden dat er vroeger een hele andere orde was. Het kwaad was het goede, en de leugen was de waarheid. Verder was de duisternis het licht en de nacht was de dag. Dat vond ik wel heel interessant, want ik had altijd al het idee dat het omgedraaid was. Wij leefden gewoon ondersteboven. De nachtmerrie was de droom, de oorlog vrede, de slavernij vrijheid, en de jacht liefde. Nou goed, het verwarde me aan de andere kant wel. Hoeveel procent kwaad waren zij ? Evil ? In ieder geval waren zij ook boeren en jagers, en hoe kon het ook anders ? Ze hadden wel ergens tegen op te boksen, dus ze moesten mij opfokken tot een goed soldaat in de strijd. En zo werd ik dan een ambassadeur van Pythia en Lakshor, en natuurlijk van Venus zelf. Venus is het portaal van antwoord voor deze tijd. Als we ons allemaal richten op Venus dan wordt het vanzelf een betere wereld.

Maar ja, toen ik wakker werd had ik niet meer zo'n grote mond, en toen de dag op gang was gekomen was ik Venus alweer vergeten. Ik had wel andere dingen aan mijn hoofd. Als iemand mij zou vragen : 'Pardon, bent u de ambassadeur van Venus ?' dan zou ik denken : 'Die is gek.' Wel had ik nog steeds het idee dat alles om mij heen een grote spinnenboerderij was, als een onderdeel van de nog grotere vliegenboerderij. Dat was dan misschien wat ik aan die droom heb overgehouden. Maar ambassadeur van Venus ? Hoe komen ze er toch bij. Nou ja, een mens kan soms raar dromen.

Wilde Honden

Een man en een vrouw waren in het bos. Plotseling verloren ze elkaar geheel uit het oog, alsof een duizeling hen trof. Ze hoorden honden blaffen en janken in de verte, en het geluid leek steeds dichterbij te komen. De man greep de vrouw die als verstijfd was. 'Liefste,' sprak de man. 'We moeten ons verbergen.' Ze moesten het direkt op een rennen zetten. Daar zagen ze de honden al in de verte aankomen. De vrouw slaakte een gil, terwijl de man al een eind weg was. Eén voor één stortten de wilde honden zich op de vrouw, en lieten niets van haar over. De andere honden gingen al achter de man aan. Buiten adem rende de man langs de bomen, en door struiken naar de donkerste plekken. Er waren veel honden. De man wist dat hij niets tegen hen zou kunnen beginnen. De jacht was meedogenloos. Hij kon bijna het gehijg van de honden al horen, en de honden gilden bijna. Nog nooit was de man zo bang geweest. Zijn binnenste leek over te lopen van zweet. Na een tijdje bereikte hij een huisje. Snel ging hij naar binnen en deed de deur achter hem dicht. Al snel omsingelden de honden het huis. De man rende op de trap naar boven waar een man en een vrouw in bed lagen. Aan de muur hing een geweer. De man greep het geweer, en knalde door het raam een paar honden neer. De man op het bed stond op, liep naar de man met het geweer toe, en sprak : 'Welkom, welkom, in het land van plezier.' De man met het geweer keek hem vreemd aan, terwijl ze beiden de honden jankend hoorden wegrennen.

'Pardon, ze hebben .... ze hebben haar verscheurd,' zij de man met het geweer.

'Wie hebben ze verscheurd ?' vroeg de man die net van het bed was opgestaan.

De man met het geweer begon te snikken.

'Oh, ik begrijp het al. Je bent je geliefde kwijt, je liefje,' zei de man, terwijl ook de vrouw opstond.

'Maar goed, je bent hier veilig. Je hebt die honden lelijk te pakken gehad.'

De man greep een ander geweer onder het bed vandaan, en sprak : 'Kom, we gaan op hondenjacht.'

Even later waren ze beiden weer buiten, en zochten naar de honden, die ze later op een open plek vonden. Ze knalden ze allemaal af.

‘Wat bedoelde je met ‘dit is het land van plezier,’ vroeg de ene man.

De andere man zei niets. ‘Dat zul je wel zien,’ zei hij even later. Beiden liepen ze naar een kasteel toe wat leegstond. ‘Hier kan je voorlopig blijven,’ zei de man. ‘Ga niet naar huis, want de honden zullen je pakken. Er zijn hier zoveel wilde honden.’

De man knikte, en ging het kasteel binnen. De andere man ging weer terug naar zijn eigen huisje.

In het kasteel keek de man zijn ogen uit. Hij was moe, sloot de deuren, en ging in een kamer in een bed liggen. De volgende ochtend was hij vroeg wakker. Hij besloot het hele kasteel te bezichtigen. In een torenkamertje lagen een man en een vrouw. ‘Heb je het gehoord van de honden ?’ vroeg de vrouw.

‘Ja, ik weet er alles van,’ zei de man die net was binnengekomen.

‘Nee, je begrijpt me niet,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Ik bedoel .... ach laat maar.’

‘Nee, vertel het hem,’ zei de man die naast haar lag.

‘Okay,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Wij waren allemaal achternagejaagd door de honden, en kwamen hier, in het land van plezier.’

Plotseling begonnen de ogen van de vrouw gelig te worden. Ze omhelsde de man die naast haar lag, kuste hem, en sprak : ‘Wij verloren allemaal een partner aan de honden. Maar kijk, hier vinden we er één terug.’

‘Waar heb je het over,’ vroeg de man die in de deuropening stond.

‘Nou,’ zei de vrouw geheimzinnig, ‘jij zal hier ook een nieuw maatje terugvinden.’

‘Oh, maar daar heb ik helemaal geen zin in,’ zei de man in de deuropening.

‘Maar terug naar huis kun je niet,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Want de honden zullen je pakken.’ Buiten hoorden ze geblaf, en de schrik sloeg de man weer om het hart. ‘Zoek je maatje op, schat,’ zei de vrouw, ‘want zij die hier dagen alleen blijven zullen het kasteel uitmoeten, en aan de honden overgeleverd zijn.’

‘Pardon ?’ zei de man. ‘Wie bepaald dat ? Ik mocht hier voorlopig blijven, en ik hoop dan weer naar huis te kunnen gaan. Ik zal zeker de dood van mijn geliefde moeten verwerken in een diepgaand rouwproces.’

De vrouw begon te lachen. ‘Er is geen weg meer terug. Elke dag groeit het aantal honden. Ze hokken hier snel, en daar valt echt niet tegen op te jagen. Zij van het huisje zijn allang dood. De heer van het kasteel zal het niet toestaan dat je hier nog iets langer blijft dan een paar dagen, tenzij je een nieuw maatje vindt.’

‘Hoe bedoel je ?’ vroeg de man. ‘Hoe kan het dat zij die van het huisje zijn allang dood zijn ? En wie is de heer van het kasteel ?’

Weer begon de vrouw te lachen, en omhelsde de man naast haar nog een keer, en zei terwijl ze hem kustte : ‘Er is alleen leven mogelijk in het kasteel. De rest is aan de honden overgeleverd. Ze zullen het echt niet lang volhouden, en tenslotte zijn ze al jaren dood .... hahaha .... Er is geen ontsnapping mogelijk uit het kasteel .... Tenzij je voer voor honden wil zijn ...’

De man draaide zich om, wilde weglopen, maar vroeg toen : ‘Waar kan ik dat maatje vinden ?’

Maar de man en de vrouw die met elkaar waren zeiden niets meer. De man liep weg, en na een lange tocht door het kasteel kwam hij in een andere toren terecht waar hij een vrouw in een kamer zag liggen. De vrouw was omringd door honden. De man schrok. ‘Ze zijn maar opgezet hoor,’ zei de vrouw. De man haalde diep adem. Als dit zijn maatje moest zijn, dan ging de man nog liever gewoon dood. De vrouw had iets arrogants over haar, en iets dominants. Ze leek totaal niet op zijn vorig liefje. Na een lange zwerftocht door het kasteel kwam hij in een andere toren waar een andere vrouw zat. Hij moest nu snel beslissen, tenzij alles wat die andere vrouw had gezegd een leugen was. ‘Pardon ?’ vroeg de man. ‘Wie is de heer van het kasteel, en wat zijn zijn bedoelingen ?’

De vrouw begon te glimlachen. ‘Wat heb je er voor beeld bij ? Wie denk je ?’ Toen vertelde de man het hele verhaal, terwijl de vrouw in lachen uitbarstte. ‘Nou, deels is het wel waar, maar als je geen maatje vind, dan wordt je niet uit het kasteel gezet voor de honden .... Nee, het is allemaal veel erger .... Dan zal de heer van het kasteel zelf met je afrekenen ....’

De man schrok. Wat kon hij verwachtten ? Wie was die heer van het kasteel, en wat zou hij doen ? De vrouw schudde met haar hoofd van het lachen, en de man begon zich heel ongemakkelijk te voelen. ‘Uit hoeveel vrouwen kan ik kiezen, en voor wanneer moet dat gebeuren ?’ vroeg de man. De vrouw wees op een poster waarop de meest verschrikkelijke vrouwen stonden vol prestige, verwaandheid en tuttigheid. Hij kon zich geen vreemder gezelschap bedenken. ‘Nou, lever me dan maar over aan die heer van het kasteel,’ zei de man. De vrouw greep de man, deed hem handboeien om, en leidde hem naar een donkere kamer waarin een oude man zat. ‘Zo,’ zei de oude man, ‘ik neem aan dat je geen keuze kon maken ? Goed, dan zul je geworpen worden in de vrouwenput waar de armste en vieste vrouwen leven.’

‘Alles beter dan dat tuig op die poster,’ zei de man.

De man werd naar een put geleid, en daar ingeworpen, waardoor hij helemaal onder de modder kwam te zitten. De oude man begon te lachen, en ook de vrouw. Even later kwamen er nog meer vrouwen om de put heenstaan om de man uit te lachen. De vrouwen in de put leken op holbewoners, en de man keek recht in allerlei gangen die bereikt konden worden vanuit de put. Hier leefden de vrouwen. De man kreeg erge medelijden met hen. De vrouwen waren zo paranoïde en zo depressief dat ze hem niet bij hen lieten. De man besloot maar in het midden van de put te blijven.

Hier leidde hij een eenzaam bestaan. Elke dag werd hem voedsel toegeworpen. Hij dacht terug aan de honden, en wilde dat hij door de honden zou zijn verscheurd, maar hier waren geen honden, en hij moest leven met zijn wonden. Hij begreep dit kasteel niet. Totdat de oude man hem op een dag uit de put liet komen.

‘Wie zijn die vrouwen, wat heb je met hen gedaan ? Ze zijn wild en onbereikbaar,’ vroeg de man.

‘Maar ze hebben je al die tijd in leven gelaten,’ zei de oude man.

‘Ik had liever dat ze me hadden verscheurd, want het is daar geen leven. Ik ben nog liever dood,’ zei de man.

‘Ik zal je vertellen wie zij zijn,’ zei de oude man. ‘Eens werden ook zij door honden nagejaagd, en kwamen hier terecht, en vonden geen maatje.’

‘Waarom hebt u mij nu uit de put gehaald ?’ vroeg de man.

‘Omdat ik hoopte dat je je maatje in de put zou vinden,’ zei de oude man.

Toen werd de man in een ander put geworpen. Deze put was veel dieper, en hij gleed helemaal door de modder door allerlei gangen heen, totdat hij in een grote modderpoel terechtkwam. Hier was niemand, en hij begon een lange tocht onder de grond, totdat hij uiteindelijk uitkwam op een plek dichtbij zijn huis. Hij was blij dat hij het nare uitstapje naar het bos had overleefd. Hij zou nooit meer teruggaan naar het bos. Wel moest hij aan zijn geliefde denken, die hij in het bos had verloren. Thuisgekomen kreeg hij de schrik van zijn leven toen hij zijn liefje gewoon in bed zag liggen. Hij maakte haar wakker, en vertelde wat er was gebeurd. ‘Ik was helemaal niet met je in het bos,’ zei de vrouw. ‘En honden ? Ik weet niks van honden.’ De man staat voor een raadsel. Zou hij het maar gedroomd hebben ?

Einde

Wilde Honden II

Een man en een vrouw waren in het bos. Na een tijdje werd hun rust verstoord door geblaf van honden in de verte. Het geblaf begon dichter bij te komen, en de man en de vrouw begonnen bang te worden. Snel pakten ze hun spullen en renden van het geluid vandaan. Ze renden tussen de bomen en door struikjes heen, en kwamen na een lange tocht in een klein hutje terecht. Hier besloten ze te rusten, maar al snel hadden de honden hen gevonden. De honden waren woest, en probeerden door de deur en de ramen binnen te komen, maar gelukkig zat alles dicht. Maar meer en meer honden leken het hutje te omsingelen, en probeerden de deur open te krijgen. Overal om hen heen hoorden ze gekras. De honden probeerden een opening in het hutje te krijgen. Ze wisten dat ze niet meer konden vluchten, en ze wisten ook dat ze het niet overleefden als de honden erin zouden slagen binnen te komen. Daarom besloten ze maar gewoon verder te gaan met hun liefkozen. Misschien was het wel de laatste keer. Hun harten gingen tekeer van angst. Ze kusten elkaar. Toen brak de muur open, en de honden stortten zich op de liefkozende man en vrouw. Ze werden allebei flink gebeten. Onder het bloed strompelde de man weg, terwijl de vrouw gegrepen werd. De honden sleurden de vrouw mee naar hun hol, terwijl de man kon ontsnappen.

Gelukkig lieten ze de vrouw in leven, alhoewel ze erg verwond was. Ze moest nu eten wat de honden haar brachten, en leefde sindsdien in gevangenschap. De man hield veel verschrikkelijke littekens aan de vechtpartij over, en dacht daarbij dat hij haar verloren had. Maar op een dag ontdekte een wandelaar de gevangenschap van de vrouw, en ook kwam de man het al snel te weten. Ze besloten een hele goede jager vanuit het buitenland over te laten komen om de honden uit te schakelen. Dat lukte deels, maar de laatste hond viel de jager aan. De jager kwam om het leven, en de hond ging terug naar zijn prooi in het hol. De hond verkrachtte de vrouw, en na een tijdje baarde de vrouw twee honden. De vrouw voelde zich zo vies dat ze nooit meer naar de samenleving terugwilde. Ze vonden haar na vele jaren toen de honden alledrie al dood waren. De vrouw was paranoïde en herkende de man niet eens meer. Ook sprak ze haar taal niet meer.

De vrouw begon agressief gedrag te vertonen, en iedereen vertrok. Ze moesten de keuze van de vrouw respecteren. Maar op een dag, vele jaren later, stond de vrouw ineens bij de man voor de deur. Ze leek hem nu wel weer te herkennen, en toen hij opendeed duwde ze hem zachtjes naar binnen. Ze gingen naar de kamer en ze omhelsde hem. Achter hen hing een schilderij van wilde honden, en als wilde honden omhelsden ze elkaar. Maar naar het gevaarlijke bos zouden ze nooit meer teruggaan.

Einde

Mijn Vriend, de Slang

In de onderwereld het ergste wat ik ooit had gezien waren de varkensslagers. De varkensslagers werden bestuurd door skeletten met gewaden aan en kappen op hun schedel. Vaak hadden ze hun domeinen in grote kraters. Je zou er depressief van kunnen worden, en dat werd ik dan ook. Ze sloten mij op in een kelder, een soort kerker, waar vanuit ik alles goed kon zien. Ik leefde van mijn eigen kots, en varkensvlees. Dat was de enige manier waarop ik leefde. Wel was het altijd goed om weer wakker te worden. Maar nog steeds denk ik eraan na al die jaren. Eigenlijk sta ik er mee op en ga ik er weer mee naar bed. Het is een trauma. Nog altijd hoor ik het gekrijs van die beesten in mijn hoofd, en nog meer het gekrijs van die skeletten. Het waren eigenlijk half-skeletten met nog een beetje vlees, spieren en vooral pezen. De geur was verschrikkelijk, niet om over naar huis te schrijven, en soms had ik het gevoel dat ik gewoon twee a drie dagen niet wakker werd. Ik wist wel dat ik droomde, maar toch. Dit was de onderwereld, daar ben ik van overtuigd. Het leek wel alsof alles hier varkensslager was of varken, en dan die skeletten met die kappen op. Echt verschrikkelijk. Het rook er echt naar de dood, naar ongewassen wateren, naar ongezouten lucht, en naar dingen die ik hier niet kan beschrijven. Weet je wat voor impact dat op een mens kan hebben ? Maar eigenlijk vraag ik me af of ik wel een mens ben.

Die skeletten met die kappen hadden daar beneden wel de touwtjes in handen. En mijn moeder maar zeggen : Je hebt het maar gedroomd. Ja, dat is waar, maar toch. De dominee zegt dat demonen bestaan, dat de onderwereld bestaat, diep in de grond, waar de doden leven. Mijn moeder zweert bij de kerk zo langzamerhand, maar ze zegt dat de dominee ook niet alles weet. Dat is zo, maar toch.

Zoveel skeletten in een optocht, allemaal met gewaden en kappen, een enge processie. Waar gaan ze naartoe ? Naar hun domein in de krater. Je zou er depressief van kunnen worden, en ik werd het ook .... En bang, verschrikkelijk bang, want zij heersen over hen zonder hoop. Ik had mijn geloof verloren in die tijd, en probeerde mijn hoop in andere dingen te vinden, dus ik was op dat moment hopeloos, en onder hun hoede. Verschrikkelijk. Ik denk er nog weleens aan terug. Daar reden ze dan op hun hoge paarden, en met hun scherpe laarzen maakten ze de huid van die beesten stuk. Verschrikkelijk. Sommige paarden waren gewoon skeletten. En die auto’s die ze hadden, en die schepen, die waren gemaakt van skeletten, bottenvoertuigen. Verschrikkelijk. Daar wil je echt niet wezen. En ik was altijd blij als ik wakker werd, maar voor hoelang. De volgende nacht zat me alweer op te wachten. En dan leek het alsof ik voor honderd jaar sliep. Ik kon soms gewoon niet wakker worden, en dan is er niet even een dominee of moeder in de buurt, neen, dan is alles de hel, zelfs de zachte hand.

Maar op een dag kreeg ik in zo’n droom een ontmoeting met een rode slang, en die gaf mij een borstschild met haar, en een prachtig glimmende steen erop, bijna een verblindende steen waardoor alles zacht werd, en toen begon ik ook mooie schone dromen te krijgen, en dat was eigenlijk voor het eerst in mijn leven. Ik werd niet meer zo snel gillend wakker. En weet je wat het mooie was ? Ik kon ook vliegen, dus als er gevaar dreigde dan wipte ik er tussenuit. Maar het had ook nadelen. Ik wilde de onderwereld kennen, en misschien wat kunnen betekenen, en de steen hield mij tegen. Totdat iemand die steen een keer verbrijzelde. Ik kon hem wel omhelzen. Het was een halfskelet,

met een verschrikkelijk angstaanjagende bijl. En ik kreeg weer toegang tot de diepere onderwerelden, ja eigenlijk dieper dan ooit. En wat ik daar zag, dat zul je niet geloven. Weinigen geloven me maar. Luister.

Op een dag zat ik aan de zee van bloed, na lang gezeten te hebben aan de rivier van bloed. In de verte kwamen een heleboel zwarte skeletten, heel dun, steeds dichterbij. Het leek wel op een processie. Sommigen droegen hoeden met veren, terwijl anderen kappen op hadden, maar de meesten hadden niets op, en waren gewoon naakte skeletten, soms met een veer hier of daar. Plotseling begonnen ze te grommen en snelden op mij af. Ik dacht : zal ik wegduiken in de diepte of hier gewoon blijven zitten ? Ze waren de kwaadsten nog niet, en gaven mij een mes. Op het handvat stond een plaatje van een oude vrouw, een fotootje, maar dat rukten ze ervan af, en er scheen bloed van het handvat af te komen, vreemd bloed, bijna een beetje roze doorzichtig. Ik keek naar het mes en toen naar hen. ‘Ja, het is van jou,’ zei één van hen. Ik knikte. Dat was me nu wel duidelijk geworden. Het mes glom. ‘Je zult het nodig hebben,’ zei een ander. Ik wist het. Het was hier gevaarlijk. Ze vertrokken weer, en ik heb ze eigenlijk nooit meer teruggezien, maar het mes bleef bij me. Het mes sprak zelfs. Het bleek een mes te zijn van mijn voorouders, en ik kon zo met hen en de goden spreken. Nu ben ik niet zo gelovig, en al helemaal niet zo familiaal, dus op een goede dag wierp ik het mes ver in de zee van bloed. Dat had ik beter niet kunnen doen, want de zwarte skeletten kwamen uit de zee, en waren des duivels. Toen heb ik het mes weer teruggenomen, en besefte dat er ook goede goden waren en goede families, waar ik deel aan scheen te hebben. Toch vond ik het eng, en later op een markt verkocht ik het voor veel geld. Het ding bleek veel waard te zijn, en later vroeg ik me af of ik er wel goed aan had gedaan het ding te verkopen. In ieder geval voelde ik me beter, en met het geld kon ik veel doen. Het was de eerste keer dat ik geld van de onderwereld in mijn handen had.

Ik leefde er goed van, kocht een bed, een kasteel, ridders, indianen, skeletten, en de hele rimram meer. Ik werd koning van de dood, althans dat dacht ik, want er schenen veel meer koningen hier te zijn. Eigenlijk ging het er allemaal erg vreedzaam aan toe. Iedereen had zijn eigen domein. In ieder geval was het hier het beste om het hoogste van het hoogste te zijn, anders werd er met je gesold. Vreemd genoeg kwam ik hier weinig varkensslagers tegen, en nog veel minder varkens. Ik was diep in de onderwereld. Op een dag werd ik uitgenodigd door een andere koning van de dood, en die liet mij zijn kasteel zien, en vroeg even later of ik met zijn dochter wilde trouwen. Ik zei direkt dat ik niet aan die dingen doe, want stel je voor, dan kun je helemaal niet meer terug, plus dat alles hier levensgevaarlijk was. Mannen waren hier de slaven van de vrouwen.

De koning zelf was ook niet getrouwd, maar een paar van zijn zonen wel, en ik zag hoe ze door hun vrouwen werden toegetakeld. Ik was er zo naar van, dat ik eigenlijk direkt weer wilde vertrekken. Maar de beste man hield mij tegen. Hij liet mij een kamer zien met een soort dodentelevisie, dodenradio en nog wat technische dingen. Dat kende ik nog niet, en hij gaf me wat interessant spul mee. Het was door deze dodenapparatuur dat ik de onderwereld snel nog beter leerde kennen. Ik kon snel wapens bestellen, het beste van het beste, en leerde hoe ik hier zo snel mogelijk de rijkste kon worden, en al gauw was ik de keizer der doden, aangesteld over vele koningen der dood, en ik kreeg mijn eigen domein in een krater. Maar toen kwam ik in aanraking met een probleem. In het domein woonden vele varkensslagers en vele varkens, en dat moest ik op de koop toenemen. Ik deed geen oog meer dicht. Dus via de dodenapparatuur probeerde ik naar een hoger beroep te vissen, maar alles had te maken met varkens en varkensslagerijen. Die varkensslagers hadden de absolute macht, en waren de rijksten van de rijksten. Daar had ik dus helemaal geen zin in, en zo bleef ik de keizer der doden, maar ik kreeg er al snel nachtmerries van. De varkensslagers bezochten mij vaak en commandeerden me dat ik maar zo moest doen en zus moest doen, en zij lieten mij altijd heel duidelijk merken dat zij de touwtjes in handen hadden .... Niet de keizer, maar de varkensslagers maakten de dienst uit. Zo, die zat. En weet je nou wat het ergste was. Hoe langer ik hier bleef, des te meer ik op een varken begon te lijken, alsof er een vloek op me rustte. En ik kon niet meer terug.

Ik dacht : liever een varken dan een varkensslager, maar daar kwam ik snel van terug. Ik ging de

oorlog aan tegen die varkens. Ik kocht een heleboel indianen in, skeletten, ridders, en nu zou ik dan de grote varkensslager der doden worden.

En wat kreeg ik ? Uitnodigingen. ‘Welkom in de orde der varkensslagers.’ Ik werd beter behandeld dan de keizer, werd overladen met kado’s, en mocht bij iedereen op visite komen. Ik kreeg en kap met een gewaad, en ik mocht mezelf skelet of halfskelet noemen, en ik had zoveel geld dat ik erin kon zwemmen. En dat deed ik dan ook. Ik scheen me steeds beter te voelen, terwijl anderen steeds depressiever werden. Ik had voor niemand tijd, want mijn nieuwe leven slokte mij helemaal op. Ik ging alleen nog om met andere varkensslagers, en had gevechten met ze. Soms waren er grote toernooien, waar alles om vrouwen ging. De winnaar kreeg dan één of andere belangrijke vrouw mee, maar ik zei al dat mannen hier de slaven van de vrouwen waren, en dat de vrouwen verschrikkelijke dingen met de mannen deden. Daarom ben ik die toernooien gaan ontlopen, want het eindigde toch altijd in de hel. Ik was een ridder, een poortwachter, en dat beviel me het best. Ik bleef op één plaats.

Ze noemden mij de poortwachter van de onderwereld. Ik dacht : het zal wel zo zijn. Heel soms ging ik weleens op uitnodigingen in van andere poortwachters, en zo belandde ik eens in een wel hele diepe krater. Het was het grootste domein wat ik ooit had gezien, en het joeg me schrik aan. De doodslucht die hier hing, verschrikkelijk. Ik kwam hier die rode slang weer tegen, en dat was maar goed ook, want ik raakte met die poortwachter in een verschrikkelijk gevecht. De rode slang redde voor de tweede keer mijn leven, en bracht me terug naar de bovenwereld, waar ik wakker werd. Het was een lange tocht geweest, een tocht die ik niet snel zou vergeten. De nacht erna gaf de rode slang mij een prachtige rode wapenrusting, en nam mij terug, ditmaal om de poortwachter te verslaan. De rode slang en een andere bruin en donker gestreepte doorzichtige slang zorgden ervoor dat dat domein nu van mij was, en dit was voor mij de poort om nog dieper in de onderwereld te komen.

Alles wat ik daar tegenkwam waren verschrikkelijke gevechten tussen poortwachters, en grote toernooien ..... Zij die wonnen kregen geen vrouwen, maar slangen, en toch leek me dat wel wat, want ik had meer met slangen dan met vrouwen. Ik won mezelf een leger van slangen, en kwam steeds dieper in de onderwereld terecht en kreeg steeds grotere terreinen. Ik dacht voorgoed van de varkensslagers af te zijn, maar hier zag ik ze weer. Ditmaal droegen ze vreemde kruizen en vreemde wielen, en waren de meesten geheel in het zwart verpakt : grote en vreemde zwarte pakken, en vreemde grote zwarte kappen, die soms op helmen leken. Waar ik terecht gekomen was wist ik niet. Ze spraken een vreemde taal, en ze bleken geheim gezelschap te hebben van vreemde slangen die in vrouwen konden veranderen. Het vreemde was dat ze niet tegen mij ingingen. Hun geld : slangentanden. Daar betaalden ze mee, en daarmee lieten ze hun werelden gestalte krijgen. Het leek op een vreemd kaartspel, alsof ze een groot spel speelden. Ik moest de spelregels leren kennen. Sommigen hadden rode dobbelstenen, gemaakt van zeldzame slangentanden.

Van een aardig wezen kreeg ik een huis, en hier moest ik beginnen. Het wezen leerde mij over goed voedsel dat hij in een ketel bereidde. Er waren hier ook wel eens toernooien, maar dan draaide alles om geld. Al snel won ik een paar toernooien, en werd de rijkste van allemaal. Ik kon kopen wat ik wilde. Ik baadde in rijkdom, en kreeg de centrale krater. Ik hield me veel bezig met mijn slangen, omdat die toch wel heel belangrijk voor me waren, en hun tanden waren een bron van inkomsten. Ze wisselden die tanden maandelijks, en sommigen dagelijks. Ik begon een slangen-kwekerij, maar dan op vriendschappelijke basis. Slangen waren mijn vrienden.

Ze noemden mij slangenvriend, en ze begrepen wel waarom. Terug naar huis wilde ik niet meer, totdat mijn moeder mij wekte.

Einde

Eén van Hen

Het mooiste wat je in je leven kan doen is te gaan naar plaatsen waar nog geen mens eerder is gekomen. Diep in de jungles van de inmens grote tropische regenwouden loopt een man eenzaam en verlaten, op zoek naar de laatste overblijfselen van wat eens het paradijs was. Een naakte vrouw ziet hem, draait haar gezicht van hem weg, en houdt haar handen ervoor. De man weet dat hij nu erg voorzichtig moet zijn. Zou zij van de Suebche-stam zijn ? Het zou de laatst overgebleven stam van het paradijs zijn. Plotseling is het alsof de vrouw door de bliksem wordt getroffen, en valt neer. De man rent op haar af, en de vrouw houd haar ogen stijf tegen elkaar.

‘Kus me,’ zegt de vrouw, ‘ik spreek jouw taal.’ Maar als de man het doet, krijgt hij een keiharde klap in zijn gezicht. De woorden ‘kus me’ betekenden hier iets heel anders. Hier werden dezelfde woorden gesproken, maar ze hadden andere betekenissen. De vrouw staat op, en rent weg. Dan begint ze te gillen, en al snel komen er naakte indianen haar tegemoet. Nu moet de man rennen voor zijn leven.

Een man wordt wakker met een bezweet gezicht. Hij ligt in zijn tentje diep in de jungle van het tropisch regenwoud, omdat hij op zoek is naar de laatste stam van het paradijs. Hij rekt zich goed uit, stapt zijn tentje uit, en bekijkt de prachtige vochtige en weelderige jungle die langzaam door het zonlicht overgoten wordt, en een zwoele vorm krijgt door alle weerspiegelingen. De temperatuur speelt hier met licht en schaduw, en de man knijpt even zijn ogen dicht om zichzelf één te maken met deze overweldigende natuur, en om zich te bezinnen op zijn opdracht.

Na een tijdje heeft hij zijn tentje opgerold, en trekt verder. Het is alsof de zon hem lokt, en het pad naar het paradijs hier in vleselijke gedaante voor hem ligt, een pad waarvan hij altijd dacht dat het onbereikbaar was, enkel zijn fantasie prikkelende. Diep in de jungle hoort hij de kreten van dieren, en hij vraagt zich af of de Suebche-stam nog steeds bestaat. Hij is niet gelovig, maar er wordt gezegd dat deze stam de laatst overgebleven stam van het paradijs is. Hij houdt het erop dat het het laatste stukje paradijs op aarde is, als de overblijfselen van de oertijd. Hij ziet het geloof als een poging om alles wat mooi is te bezitten. Maar dit hier is werkelijkheid, geen fantasie. Het geloof is zo ongrijpbaar, maar hier is alles vlees geworden.

In de verte hoort hij iemand zingen. Hij had hier eigenlijk geen mens verwacht. Hij dacht echt dat de stam zou zijn uitgestorven, maar wilde het toch met eigen ogen bewezen zien. Er kwam weer wat hoop in zijn hart toen hij het gezang hoorde. Hij loopt op het geluid af, en ziet een naakte vrouw in een kleine plas baden. Al snel heeft de vrouw hem in de gaten, en begint te gillen. ‘Wat zijn ze paranoide ?’ dacht de man bij zichzelf, glimlachend. Hij was absoluut niet bang, maar wel voorzichtig. Hij had er wel vertrouwen in dat het goed zou komen, maar de gil bleef als een echo in de lucht hangen. Het was de meest angstaanjagende kreet die hij ooit had gehoord, maar voor hem sprak het meer over de angst van de vrouw. Als zij van de Suebche-stam was, dan had ze nog nooit contact met de buitenwereld gehad.

De man is op zijn hoede. Als hij zich de woede van de stam op zijn hals haalt, dan is het afgelopen voor hem. Voorzichtig pakt hij een geknakte bloem van de grond af, steekt hem in zijn haar, glimlacht even, en houdt dan de bloem weer in zijn hand, alsof hij het de vrouw wil aanbieden. Ook de vrouw lijkt even te glimlachen, maar dan maken haar wenkbrauwen een gevaarlijke beweging, alsof ze van plan is hem aan te vliegen.

‘Heus, ik wil je geen pijn doen,’ fluistert de man zacht. Maar dat hoort ze niet. Ze staat nog te ver weg. Dan rent de vrouw weg. De man weet dat hij nu moet oppassen, want de Suebche-stam zou op alles jagen, en jagers waren ze als de beste. Na lang lopen probeert hij de natuur weer in zich op te nemen. De natuur vertoont een rijkdom die hij niet kent.

De man probeert zich weer te bezinnen op zijn opdracht. Ook bezint hij zich op zijn strategieen. Als de Suebche een zeker geloof hebben, dan zal hij daaraan tegemoet moeten komen, maar daar is

niets over bekend. Hij besluit zijn intuitie te volgen.

Na een tijdje ziet hij in de verte een groep Suebche-meisjes als in een soort dans. Hij herkent het als een jacht-ritueel. Ze gillen heel luid, en hij weet even niet of hij blij moet zijn of niet, dat hij ze nu heeft gevonden. Hij vermoed dat hij nu dichtbij hun dorp of kamp is.

Een python staart hem aan, hypnotiserend. Bang voor pythons is hij niet. Hij schijnt een kalmerend effect op hen te hebben. Even denkt hij dat hij schrikt, als de python ineens tot hem spreekt. De python heeft een vochtige huid, met de prachtigste patronen en kleuren met hun schakeringen, en weer schijnt het zonlicht ermee te spelen. ‘Waak op, zoon,’ sprak de python. ‘de Suebche hebben geen geloof. Zij leven in een fantasie.’ De man keek op, en merkte dat het toch echt de python was die tot hem sprak. De python bewoog zijn enorme lichaam, en kwam iets dichterbij. Ook de man leek zich te openen, en bewoog iets dichterbij. Toen sprak de python verder : ‘Zoon, zij leven in fantasie, de laatste overblijfselen van een echte fantasie-wereld. Daarom willen ze niets met de buitenwereld te maken hebben, en zullen ze je zeker doden als je dichterbij komt. Maar .... ik kan wel wat voor jou betekenen .... Ik ken de Suebche, en zij kennen mij ....’ De slang sprak bijna slaapverwekkend en heel geheimzinnig.

De man voelde een kracht door hem heenstromen die hij niet kende, iets heel vitaals, maar tegelijkertijd verzwakkend, alsof alle botten in hem doorspietst werden, of zelfs op een vreemde pijnloze manier werden gebroken.

‘Deze fantasie was eens een algehele realiteit,’ sprak de slang ineens veel luider, en zijn lichaam begon te ribbelen en in kracht op te komen. ‘Maar zij die deel hadden aan deze fantasie begonnen de fantasie te verwerpen, en daarom trok de fantasie zich terug, eerst door vulkanen, later door overstromingen. De Suebche hebben zich altijd aan de fantasie vastgehouden, en niet gekozen voor ... het geloof ...’

‘Maar is het geloof dan verkeerd ?’ vroeg de man.

Toen vervolgde de slang : ‘Zij die opgroeiden in het geloof moesten over het pad van geloof teruggaan naar de fantasie, maar velen blijven op dit pad steken, en zijn niet anders dan hun voorouders.’ De ogen van de man begonnen geheimzinnig te glinsteren. ‘Ben jij de slang van het paradijs ? Nee toch ?'

De slang gleed heel voorzichtig over zijn huid, en kreeg langzaam de man in zijn grip. De man was nog steeds niet bang, omdat hij zag dat de slang niets kwaads in de zin had. ‘het geloof verzon haar eigen verhaal. Er zat wel een kern van waarheid in,’ bromde de slang. ‘Er was eens een soort paradijs, de fantasie, waar ik deel aan had. Maar het geloof heeft alles kapot gemaakt. Het paradijs was van mij, maar door het christelijk geloof werd ik afgeschilderd als een indringer die anderen zou weglokken. Het is juist net andersom gegaan. Ik wilde hen dieper erin laten wegzinken.’

De man begon te glunderen. Hier hoorde hij een hele andere kant van het verhaal. Hij zou wel een deel willen zijn van dat overblijfsel van die fantasie-wereld, hier zo diep in de jungles van het tropische regenwoud. De man voelde een enorme opgewondenheid opborrelen, en knuffelde de slang bijna. Hij wist wel dat hij dichtbij de python moest blijven, anders zou hij het niet meer kunnen navertellen.

Plotseling schrikt de man wakker. Was het allemaal maar een droom ? Wel een hele interessante droom, maar was het waar ? De man stapte zijn tentje uit, bekeek de natuur om zich heen die leek te ribbelen in het zonlicht als een zwoele extase die hij nog nooit eerder zo dichtbij had gevoeld, alsof het over zijn huid danste. Hij kneep zijn ogen stijf dicht, om één te worden met deze verlokkende, weelderige natuur. Wat kon hij verwachten ? Voor hem lag de nog donkere jungle van het tropische regen-oerwoud, lonkend, alsof het hem wilde omhelzen, wurgen ? Hij wist het niet. Het kon natuurlijk gevaarlijk zijn. De stam waar hij naar op zoek was had geen manieren. Als ze zich door hem bedreigd zouden voelen, dan zouden ze hem zeker vermoorden.

Opgewonden liep hij verder, nadat hij zijn spullen had gepakt. In de verte hoorde hij wat kreten die

van dieren, maar ook van indianen konden zijn. Als het indianen waren, dan zou hij al heel dichtbij zijn. Hij dacht aan zijn dromen, en aan zijn opdracht. Plotseling sprong er een naakte vrouw vanuit een boom op hem. De vrouw had hem al snel in een wurggreep, en stak een soort gifpijltje in hem. Direkt legde hij het bijltje, en werd afgevoerd tot in het kamp. Ze legden hem in een wigwam waar hij na een paar uurtjes bijkwam. Ze gaven hem van een vreemd rood sap te drinken. De vrouw was bij hem en aaide hem. Dat was wel een vriendelijk gebaar, maar waartoe ? Als ze kanibalen zouden zijn, dan was dat allemaal maar ter voorbereiding van het vlees ? Maar goed, hij wist niet of ze kanibalen waren, en probeerde die gedachte snel weer te vergeten.

Hij voelde zich heel wat nu hij eindelijk de Suebche-stam had gevonden, zij die de buren van Adam en Eva geweest waren, in het paradijs. Dit was het laatste stukje paradijs, dat juist zo leefde, door hen. De vrouw glimlachte naar hem. Zou hij het straks kunnen navertellen, of eindigde alles hier ? Wilde hij het nog wel navertellen, of wilde hij hier altijd blijven, om te worden als hen ? Zijn lichaam trilde. Deze stam had nooit contact gehad met de buitenwereld.

Weer werd er een gifpijltje in hem gestoken, maar ditmaal viel hij niet bewusteloos. Hij werd overspoeld door warme gevoelens, alsof hij door de fantasie werd omhelsd. De vrouw legde haar handen tegen haar borst aan. Deze mensen hielden van de natuur, en hier was deze natuur zuiver.

De stam was heel vriendelijk naar hem, totdat één van de vrouwen een reusachtige vogelspin in haar hand nam, die ze haar hand liet opeten. Toen begon de horror, ook voor hem. Alles eindigde in een nachtmerrie, en gelukkig voor de man was het maar een droom. Hij werd wakker, en wist niet of hij er zo blij mee moest zijn. Want diep van binnen zou hij zijn leven wel willen geven om de laatste stam van het moederparadijs te vinden. Nu had hij weer bot gevangen. Het leek wel alsof het tropische oerwoud met hem speelde. Hij was moe in zijn benen, alsof een vreemd tropisch dier hem had uitgezogen. Hij keek naar zijn been, en zag een klein insect, en een heel klein wondje. Later voelde hij niets dan kracht door zijn benen vloeien, alsof het beestje hem bevrucht had.

Met stevige passen liep hij door. Hij was nu echt toe aan een ontmoeting. Hij hoopte dat als ze hem zouden zien ze hem meteen zouden omhelzen. Zouden hun goden hen niet kunnen vertellen dat hij eraan kwam ? Of geloofden ze niet in goden ? Misschien waren het wel hele vrije mensen, vol van paradijselijke fantasieen. De man voelde alsof hij van de grond op een boot stapte. Hier waren wat riviertjes, en die riviertjes leken wel vuil, maar vol van de jungle. Dat was beter dan die riviertjes die door fabrieken waren vervuild. Dit was natuurvuil. De man besloot te gaan zwemmen, en zag even later wat anaconda’s paren in de rivier. Zulke orgieen konden wel enkele dagen duren. Zo bleven ze tenminste van hem af, alhoewel hij niet bang was voor slangen. Hij had altijd iets met slangen. Voor hem was het in ieder geval al een prachtige reis geworden die hij nooit zou vergeten, of hij de Suebche nou zou vinden of niet. Eigenlijk deed het er niet meer zo toe, omdat hij helemaal door de natuur werd opgezogen. Zijn hoofd was ermee doordrenkt als met heerlijk geurende verf, als de bronnen van nieuwe fantasieen. Hier zou hij de rest van zijn leven over kunnen nadenken.

Hij zag de apen in hun bomen, en hij voelde zich intens gelukkig. Voor hem stoeiden wat andere slangen, en ook wat krokodillen kwamen vanaf de oevers in het water. Nu was het oppassen geblazen. Hij bleef doodstil liggen, en probeerde zo letterlijk naar de kant toe te drijven. Even later stapte hij uit het water. Een vrouw met hangborsten staarde hem aan. Ze leek paranoide, dus de man bewoog bijna niet. Hij wist niet wat hij kon verwachten. Zou ze wegrennen of hem bespringen ? ‘heus, ik doe je niets,’ fluisterde de man. De man voelde veel tederheid en een soort medelijden naar haar. verder kon hij het niet goed plaatsen. Hij wist ook niet of tederheid wel op z’n plaats was bij dit soort mensen. Dit moesten de Suebche dan zijn. De man stak zijn hand uit, en de vrouw keek naar zijn hand. Natuurlijk kende zij het handenschudden niet, maar de man wist niet wat hij anders moest doen. Toen maakte hij een omhels-beweging in de lucht. De vrouw bleef hem strak aankijken. Hij zag de angst in haar ogen. Zacht begon de man wat te zingen om haar gerust te stellen. De man zag bijna haar hart kloppen. Maar daar kwamen de krokodillen al aan. De vrouw stapte langzaam naar achteren, terwijl de man bleef staan. De man wilde weleens zien wat de vrouw zou doen. Het leek alsof de vrouw er niet om gaf. Net op tijd kon de man omhoog springen om een

tak te grijpen. Toen zag hij ineens dat de vrouw glimlachte. Die momenten waren heel kostbaar voor hem.

Een hopeloosheid gleed over de man toen de vrouw hem weer strak aanstaarde, nu van een grotere afstand. Hij had het gevoel dat hij nooit geaccepteerd zou worden. Misschien was hij in hun ogen een gevallene, een verdoemde, iemand die het paradijs ooit had verlaten, en daarom nooit meer toegelaten mocht worden. Misschien was hij wel bestemd te branden in de hel, als ze daarin geloofden. Maar goed, hij kende hun geloof niet. Hij voelde zich een zondaar. Zij waren paradijselijk, en hij was beschaafd, burgerlijk, of misschien alleen een gevangene van de buitenwereld. Wat zou het hem kosten om bij hen binnen te kunnen komen ?

En ging het hem nog wel om de mensen, of ging het hem om de natuur. Hij zou zich goed kunnen vermaken in dit stukje paradijs op aarde zonder de mensen, zonder deze Suebche-stam.

‘Suebche,’ zei de man. De vrouw glimlachte. Een andere vrouw was erbij komen staan. Ze had een zorgelijke blik, en had een boog met pijlen. Langzaam greep ze één van haar pijlen, wilde schieten, maar de andere vrouw hield haar tegen. De vrouwen werden boos op elkaar, en er ontstond een gevecht. De man wist niet wat hij moest doen. De vechtende vrouwen waren naar elkaar aan het gillen, en rolden over de grond. Nu wist de man hoe de stam met elkaar omgingen. ‘Suebche, Suebche,’ riep de man. De vrouwen lagen bijna in het water, en ze hadden niet in de gaten dat er krokodillen toesnelden. Plotseling dook de man in het water en greep één van de krokodillen. Als hij dat niet had gedaan dan was het kwaad al geschied. De vrouwen reageerden direkt en stopten het gevecht om voor de rest van de krokodillen dekking te zoeken. De vrouwen keken toe naar het gevecht tussen de man en de krokodil, alsof ze niet begrepen dat de man hun leven had gered. Of misschien gaven ze daar niets om. De man verwachtte wat hulp, maar kreeg die niet, en verdween telkens met de krokodil onder water. Na een tijdje ontsnapte de man, en greep zichzelf weer vast aan de oever. De vrouwen klapten in hun handen, op een vreemde manier.

‘Suebche, Suebche,’ zei de man. Hij had de indruk dat de vrouwen het wel interessant vonden. Ze waren net dieren. Volgens de man hadden ze geen hersenen, of waren ze gewoon niet beschaafd opgevoed. Ze wisten misschien niet wat ‘hulp’ betekende, en ‘zorg’. Ze verwaarloosden zichzelf en elkaar. Zo zagen ze er ook uit. Ze waren wilden.

De man bedacht voor zichzelf hoe hij contact kon maken. Weer omhelsde hij de lucht, en de vrouwen deden hem na, maar hij had niet de indruk dat ze wisten wat het betekende. Misschien waren ze niet slecht, maar gewoon erg naief, onwetend. Ze leken op wilde dieren, op beesten, en de man vond er eigenlijk niets menselijks in terug. Zij waren van het paradijs, en voor-menselijk. Zij wisten niet wat mensen waren, omdat ze nooit mensen hadden ontmoet. Misschien was dat de reden waarom ze de man interessant leken te vinden. Maar de man was op zijn hoede, want misschien was hij wel interessant om op hun bord te verschijnen als stukje vlees. Maar ja, dan waren ze wel erg geraffineerd. Als ze op jacht waren en hem als prooi zagen, dan hadden ze hem misschien allang afgeschoten. Ook wilde hij hen het voordeel van de twijfel geven, hoe gevaarlijk dat ook was. Hij koos ervoor om hen maar te vertrouwen, tot nu toe dan, en zette zijn pogingen tot communicatie voort. Als hij vriendschap met deze twee zou kunnen krijgen, dan was hij al een stuk verder, en zou dat misschien de basis zijn voor verdere vriendschappen.

Opeens werd er schel gefloten, voor de vrouwen een seintje dat ze moesten komen. Ze maakten wat ongemakkelijke gebaren om hem dat duidelijk te maken, en zo renden ze beiden weg. De man besloot maar gewoon te blijven. Misschien zouden ze hier wel terugkomen. Na een tijdje viel de man in slaap tegen een boom.

De volgende dag werd hij wakker door een ritselend geluid. Het was een anaconda. Het begin van een nieuwe dag. De man stond op, rekte zich uit, en ademde de warmte in van een nieuwe dag, direkt al zo heet. Hij voelde er eigenlijk meer voor om naar onbekende diersoorten op zoek te gaan. Het contact zoeken met een stam als deze ging zo moeizaam, alhoewel het eerste lijntje gelegd was. Het gevoel was als een sieraad die in zijn hoofd rinkelde, en die het zonlicht op allerlei manieren

weerspiegelde. Het bracht zijn gevoel in een nieuwe staat van opwinding. Hij zag de kleurigste dieren, zoals kikkers, hagedissen, salamanders, overgoten en betoverd door het zonlicht. De vrouwen kwamen niet terug, dus misschien hadden ze hun stam wel ingelicht en kregen ze geen permissie om terug te gaan. Hoe dan ook : ze waren nu op de hoogte. Ze wisten waar hij was, dus nu hing het van hen af. Maar tijd om te wachten had de man niet. Hij was met zoveel dingen bezig, en vond de dierenwereld en plantenwereld net zo interessant.

Een wulpse vrouw stond voor hem met pijl en boog. Ze mompelde wat, richte op hem, en wilde schieten. Net op tijd kon de man wegduiken, en rende weg. De vrouw kwam hem achterna. Misschien zag ze hem voor een dier aan, of misschien waren het kanibalen. Na een tijdje zocht de man veiligheid in een boom. Maar hij zag steeds meer vrouwen onder hem verschijnen. Na een tijdje hadden ze hem gezien, en begonnen te krijsen. Direkt werden er vele pijlen op de man afgeschoten. De man greep een liaan, en kwam op een volgende boom terecht. Dat ging wel snel met zo'n liaan, en al gauw begon hij er handigheid in te krijgen.

In de verte zag hij een dorpje, en omdat hij wist dat de vrouwen hem achterna zaten besloot hij maar gewoon een poging te wagen. Hij rende op het dorp af, in de hoop bescherming te vinden. Een oude man keek hem aan alsof hij de maan zag bloeden. De oude man wist niet wat hem overkwam. In de verte hoorde ze de gillende en joelende vrouwen. De man schoof een dierenhuid opzij en liet de man in zijn hut. Zouden dit weer andere stammen zijn, of gewoon een ander deel van de Suebche. De man wees op de oude man, en zei : 'Suebche'. Ook de oude man zei 'Suebche' alsof hij niet wist wat het betekende.

Dieper in de hut was een ander deel achter een grote lap van dierenhuid. Hier zag de man twee naakte vrouwen liggen. De oude man maakte een gebaar alsof hij de vrouwen aan de man schonk. De vrouwen waren paranoide. Misschien dachten ze dat de man een god was. De twee vrouwen knielden voor de man en hielden zijn handen teder vast. Toen begonnen ze zijn handen te strelen. Ook de oude man knielde. Dus knielen hadden ze wel geleerd, maar wat betekende het voor hen ? Misschien wel iets heel anders.

Even later ging de oude man weg. Eén van de vrouwen wilde met een touw de handen van de man vastbinden, en toen wist de man dat hij aan het verkeerde adres was gekomen. Tenzij hij gewoon niet wist wat dit vastbinden betekende. Was het een ritueel, of waren ze kanibalen, of was dit de manier waarop ze goden begroeten ? Voor de man was het een raadsel. De andere vrouw ging achter hem staan, en het leek alsof de man niet meer wegkon, tenzij hij het abrupt zou afkappen. In die mogelijkheid was hij, als hij het goed begreep. De man liet zich maar vastbinden, zolang hij zijn benen nog naar had. Ze lieten hem op de grond zitten, en maakten een soort soep wat hij mocht opdrinken. Hij wist dat ook dit gevaarlijk was, want als er slaapverwekkende stoffen in zaten, dan was het afgelopen met hem. Inderdaad zaten er slaapverwekkende stoffen in, maar dat bleek de regel hier te zijn. het was een deel van het voedsel. Zweterig werd hij even later wakker. Ze hadden een deken over hem gelegd, en zijn handen waren nog steeds vastgebonden. De vrouwen lagen bij hem, en waren heel voorzichtig en vriendelijk, bijna goedaardig. Als ze kanibalen waren dan hadden ze hem allang geslacht, dacht de man. Hij voelde een warm branderig gevoel in zijn lichaam, door de soep, en dat voelde niet onprettig aan. De vrouwen waren teder, maar niet opdringerig. Zouden ze denken dat hij een god was, of gingen ze zo met gasten om ? Waarom moesten zijn handen vastgebonden zijn ? De deken was afgetrokken, en met een ander touw wilden ze zijn benen vastbinden. De vrouwen zagen er niet agressief uit, tenzij het een valstrik was. Hij kon zich er alleen niet tegen verzetten. Ze waren al zo aardig geweest, en misschien zou hij hen beledigen als hij het niet zou laten doen. Dan zouden ze hem misschien wegsturen, en kon hij weer helemaal overnieuw beginnen. Toch begon hij bang te worden, en begon meer en meer te zweten, zelfs te trillen. De vrouwen waren hier erg gevoelig voor, en probeerden hem op zijn gemak te stellen, alsof ze geen kwaad in de zin zouden hebben. Toen lag hij daar, vastgebonden aan handen en voeten, als een hopeloze prooi. Hij was nu totaal afhankelijk van hen. Weer gaven ze hem soep te drinken, of was het gewoon een sterk sap ? Weer viel hij in slaap. Ditmaal was het spul veel krachtiger, en in een grotere tent werd hij even later wakker. Hier waren een heleboel vrouwen, en

niemand lag bij hem. Ze schenen hem allemaal te negeren. De man probeerde zichzelf los te krijgen, maar zonder succes.

De hele nacht lag hij wakker, en vroeg zich af wat voor spel dit was. Op een gegeven moment was hij het zat, probeerde op te staan, en huppelde de tent uit. Buiten waren mannelijke indianen om een vuur aan het dansen. Ze droegen veelal een heleboel kromme witte of grijze veren. ‘Kan iemand me vertellen wat hier aan de hand is ?’ vroeg de man. De indianen keken verbaasd op. Even later gingen ze door zonder aandacht aan hem te besteden. Hij kon hier niet weg, want dan zou hij een prooi van roofdieren kunnen worden in zo’n situatie. Dus hij ging maar weer terug naar zijn slaapplaats. Toen hij de volgende ochtend wakker werd waren de touwen verwijderd. Het leek nu alsof hij een deel van hen was. Niemand gedroeg zich speciaal naar hem. Hij was één van hen.

Einde

Maria en het Heilige Varken

Ik staarde naar de lange beker met de lange hals. Het was van een doorzichtig roze, als kristal of diamant, als een zeldzaam gesteente. 'Wat zit erin ?' vroeg ik.

'Varkenszaad,' zei hij. Ik proeste. 'Wacht,' zei ik.

'Drink ervan,' zei hij. 'Ach ja, het is gewoon perensap, maar het beeld het varkenszaad uit, wat het heilige varken aan de martelpaal uitstorte.'

'Okay,' zei ik. Ik nam wat van het perensap. 'Smaakt goed,' zei ik. Ze aanbaden hier Maria en het heilige varken. Ik was in een vreemde kerk terechtgekomen.

De Blinde Stad

Zij stelen dromen,
De wachters van een stad,
Zij stelen de verbeelding recht uit iemand's hart,

Deze stad kent geen medelij

Alles dor en droog,
Kinderen zijn hier niet,
Iedereen is hier oud,
Hier is slechts verdriet

Koude harten, lege hoofden,
Gevuld met hartvochtigheid,
Niemand kent geluk,
Wanneer de stad zich over hen spreidt

De stenen zijn roze, en ze draaien maar,
Zij brengen sneeuw, totdat iedereen bevriest,
Tot steen zullen zij worden in alle eeuwigheid,
Meedraaien zullen zij, om droom en plezier te stelen,
Tot roze steen zullen zij worden,
In deze stad van slechts verdriet,
Och, hoor toch naar mijn duistere lied

Ik ben een oude troubadour,
Ik heb het allemaal gezien,
Maar niemand gelooft mij,
Want zij hebben allemaal dezelfde droom van de stad gekregen,
Een droom dat zij nog steeds alles hebben,
Een droom van bedrog,
Zij zijn allen ziek

Och hoort toch naar mijn lied,
Zij hebben allen van het grachtwater van de stad gedronken,
Dieven en piraten zijn het,
Zij stelen en slapen, geeuwen en gapen,
En dromen dat zij niets hebben gedaan,
Och, deze stad is onder een vloek,
Zij zijn allen dik en vet,
Zij zijn de ondergang tegemoet gegaan

Ik zie de stenen draaien,
En alles weggraaien,
Eens was deze stad er niet,
Eens was er hier een rijke natuur,
Totdat de plaaggeesten kwamen

Zij bouwden deze stad,
Och luistert toch naar een oude troubadour,
Moet ik u smeken, of moet ik u slaan,
Waak op, waak op, of het is met ons gedaan

Zeven plaaggeesten op een rij,
In een pot leefden zij,
Oh wie heeft deze pot geopend ?
De eerste heet mankepoot, de tweede beelzebul, de derde je-weet-het-wel, de vierde ik-heb-hem-

niet, de vijfde stuk verdriet, de zesde mijn geluk, de zevende ik-heb-je-tuk

Nu ik dit gezongen heb, zal ik niet meer leven,
Toe, schrijf mijn woorden op, zodat u eens uw bevrijding zal beleven,
Laat dit lied niet sterven in de wind,
Wacht totdat een kinderhart het vindt,
De sleutel is in mijn mouw,
Och, dat ik het toch zelf vertellen zou

En toen stierf de troubadour,
Zijn vrienden schreven het lied op,
En plakten het op de deur van het stadsbestuur,
De sleutel vonden ze in de mouw van de troubadour,
Maar ze wisten niet wat ze daarmee moesten doen

Een van de vrienden besloot de sleutel zolang bij hem te houden,
Ook stierf hiermee langzaam de herinnering aan de troubadour

Toen de burgemeester van de stad het lied las,
Verscheurde hij ter plekke het papier

Niemand had de troubadour gelooft,
Ook zijn vrienden zeiden dat hij gek was,
En zo leefde de stad voort in bedrog

Raakte je het steen aan,
Dan werd je betoverd,
En zo groeide de stad groter en groter,
Het roze steen leefde van de mensen,
At en at, en werd vet

Het roze steen begon steeds meer van de mensen te vragen

De heks is blind, en woont in de zee,
Waar haar zeepaardjes en dolfijnen haar overal naartoe brengen in haar koets,
Op haar wagen,
Zij heeft de zeven plaaggeesten uit hun pot vrijgezet,
Opdat zij de stad zouden bouwen

De blinde heks van de zee had honger,
Honger naar uitgesmeerde zieltjes,
Uitgesmeerd op brood

Het is een stad in de zee, maar niemand wist het,
De heks had al hun hoofden betoverd

De mensen aanbaden het roze steen,
Wat hun leven had gegeven

De kerken van het roze steen schoven door de stad,
Door de wondermacht van de mens gegeven,
Het schoof door 's mensens geloof,

Door trouw van het menselijk gelaat,
Oh, zedig schoof het door de stad,
Om de mens te wenken, om te zwaaien en kostelijk te bezitten,
Als een koning was het,
Ja, het roze steen had de stad geschapen

De blinde heks schuifelde door de stad,
Op zoek naar zieltjes,
Maar het roze steen waakte over hen,
Als de goede, trouwe herder,
Die zijn schapen verslond in de nacht,
Om hen mee te sleuren naar de onderwereld,
Naar een glitterwereld, van het roze vuur,
Van roze steen, draaiende in onze gedachtes,
Sussende alle pijn, verdraaiende al het gegriezel,
Bedekkende, wederopbouwende,
Totdat de morgenstond hen weer wakker wreef,
Die zachte morgen, oh goddelijk geluk,
Welzalig zijn hen die het roze steen aanbidden …
Van bedrog tot bedrog gaan zij …
De blinde heks …. draait het getij …

Als eb en vloed, het roze steen doet goed,
Zij draait, zij bedriegt, zij steelt de dromen,
Zij trekt de ziel tot gruwelijke grotten,
Maar laat het lichaam opstaan in een groot geluk,
In de handen van de plaaggeest ik-heb-je-tuk

De hersenen op sterk water,
Het hart in zeeketenen, de droom kapot,
Maar niemand merkt het, want het lichaam is vol van het roze geluk,
Het is als drugs, als rijp koren,
Als alcohol en dikke sigaretten,
Een sigaar erbij, mijnheer,
En een dikke krant,
De blinde heks heeft het niet meer

De blinde heks staat gierend op de trap,
Met haar oog voelt zij,
Zij kent deze drap,
Er is hier geen geneesheer voor te vinden,
Alle wegen lopen hier dood,
Een blinde leidt de blinden,
Maar zij voelt, en geeft hen grijps genot,
Graai maar, neem maar, heb maar lief,
Ik ben de kinderdief

Zo worden zij allen als haar,
Maar zij zien niet
Nee, niemand is opgewassen tegen het heks met het blinde oog,
Zij was maar met één oog geboren, en dat was blind,
Met één arm kan ze je grijpen,

Met één been kan ze je achterhalen,
Zij is het halve

Zo sterft zij langzaam in alle eeuwigheden,
Om velen mee te sleuren,
Zij heeft misgegrepen,
En is nu een ieders vijand geworden,
Deze stad is haar afschuwelijk geheim

Wie wegrent wordt verminkt,
Zij heeft alle dromen gestolen,
En geeft hen nu illusie op illusie,
Haar illusie

Wie wegrent wordt gepakt,
De blinde heks zal je stropen,
Zij is het halve

Zij wordt rijk aan jouw ellende,
En bedekt het met een roze doek

Een vrouw is gevallen,
Bedek haar met een roze doek,
Een mijnheer heeft een wond,
Bedek het met een roze doek,
Roze sluiers om haar paleis,
In de dieptes van de zee,
In de dieptes van de stad,
Waar haar roze hart klopt,
Zo roze dat het grijs is

De blinde heks wordt oud,
Men kan het aan haar zien,
Ze is de ouwe niet meer,
Ze is jong nu, en zij volgen haar tot de roze kerken,
Waar de plaaggeesten zwaaien en wenken

Ik-heb-je-tuk zit op de troon,
Hij heeft geschapen een wonderdroom,
Mijn geluk zit naast de troon,
Klaar om je te bespringen,
Hij klopt wat in zijn potje,
Roze smeersel

Het voelt koud aan,
Hij drinkt het met een rietje,
Hij plakt de zielen daarmee vast,
En verwend dan hun lichamen,
Ja, maak hen maar blind,
Zo blind als de blinde heks

Hij smeert het in hun ogen,

En spuit het zo naar binnen,
Dan neemt hij hen mee,
En draait hen in het rond,
Roze stenen zullen ze worden

Bevende van geluk draaien zij,
Oh, wat is het leven mooi,
Zij aanbidden de roze stenen,
Groei maar, roze stenen,
Wordt maar dik en vet,
Dan zal de stad groter groeien

De stad zweeft boven de zee, om alle levende schepselen naar binnen te zuigen,
Wat een grote onzichtbare zichtbare stad

Groei maar, stad,
Geef hen maar van alles wat,
Hun dromen zullen nooit uitkomen,
Hun wonden zullen nooit genezen,
Maar jij vertelt ze maar wat

Eet maar, stad, dikker zul je nog worden,
Dan zullen de mensen wel vergeten,
Dat ze net zo zijn als jij,
Zeven plaaggeesten op een rij

De zeven plaaggeesten marcheerden door de stad,
Mankepoot voorop,
Daarachter Beelzebul,
Daarachter je-weet-het-wel,
Daarachter ik-heb-hem-niet,
Daarachter stuk verdriet,
Daarachter mijn geluk,
En als laatste ik-heb-je-tuk

De macht van het grote woord,
Was de macht van het hangkoord,
Zij preekten in de kerken,
Om hen allen met het roze te bewerken

Stilletjes werden zij aanbeden,
Want zulke nette mannen,
Die mag je niet verbannen

Mankepoot sprak het woord,
En het roze geluk kwam voort,
Beelzebul sprak over hebt elkaar lief,
En daar kwam de dromendief,
Geen geluk kon zich werkelijk aarden,
Maar met wat bedrog kwam alles tot bedaren,
Je-weet-het-wel zegende het gehoor,
Zij zongen allemaal in koor,

Tot het roze gesteente wat hen gezaligd had,
Zij keken allen vroom op toen ik-heb-hem-niet bad,
Stuk verdriet kwam met de collecte bus,
Mijn geluk gaf hen allen een hand en een kus,
En koning ik-heb-je-tuk zei :
Ik heb u allen tuk,
Maar zij verstonden het niet,
Want zij hadden oren als een vergiet,
Zij dansten maar door,
Zij hadden zulk slecht gehoor,
Als doven kwamen zij tot de slager,
En het gedans ging al maar trager,
Maar goede dromen hadden zij,
Het was de kering van het getij

Deze stad als eb en vloed,
Niemand zag het vergoten bloed

De blinde heks daalde op hen neer,
De dominee had het niet meer

Oh, wat konden die kerken schuiven,
Langs de winkels, langs het meer,
Langs de grachten keer op keer,
Allen vonden zij groot geluk,
Zij waren in de handen van ik-heb-je-tuk

Een groot plaagheer is opgestaan,
De koning der plaagheren,
De zevende

Ik-heb-je-tuk zit op de troon,
En laat zijn kunstjes zien,
Allen buigen zij neer in aanbidding,
De dominee heeft met gezag en macht gesproken,
Vol ontzag volgen zij hem naar zijn huis,
Waar hij vervolgens hangt aan een kruis,
Oh ja, naast hem te hangen,
Dat is waar wij allen naar verlangen,
Doe nog eens wat van uw kunsten groot,
Ga nog lang niet dood

Ik-heb-je-tuk lacht en doet,
Zijn kruis is nu een vliegtuig,
Waar zij allen onder hangen,
Maar zij zijn blind van verlangen

Ik-heb-je-tuk, oh bedot ons,
Het kan ons allemaal niets meer schelen,
Niemand mag ons hier van helen,
Want als de heler helen moet,
Dan is dat iets wat hij maar ergens anders doet,

Zo praten wij in een kringetje,
Dat is toch wat wij willen,
Het leven is wonderschoon,
Vooral met zo'n koning,
Ik ben blij dat ik in deze stad woon,
Ik had dit voor geen goud willen missen, zeg,
Zij die hier niet wonen hebben grote pech,
Ja, grote pech zal het wezen,
Wanneer gij nooit over deze stad hebt gelezen

Stuk verdriet lacht zich krom,
Langzaam slaat hij zijn trom,
Er zijn weer veel doden gevallen,
En nu doen we vroom,
En vergeten alles in de roze droom,
Deze stad is gebouwd op been en bloed,
Het is wat een mens goed doet

De blinde heks is een taaie,
Maar zeker geen kwaaie,
Zie met wat ze ons heeft goedgedaan,
Zij droogde ons aller traan,
Als een lam bracht zij ons tot rustige wateren,
Tot goddelijke watervallen, zij bracht haar oordeel over de afschuwelijke kwallen,
Zij gaf ons een droom, en wijsheid in de tuin,
Zij leidde ons uit dat diepe, duistere dal,
Weg is de kwal,
We kunnen nu veilig geloven,
In het roze steen wat ons heeft doen beloven,
Dat wij haar altijd zullen volgen,
Ook al is de kwal nu verbolgen

Het roze steen heeft de kwal verslagen,
Wij kunnen haar nu volop behagen,
Alles doen wij voor haar,
Zuivere toewijding, en geen ja-maar,
Als slaven staan wij op haar kusten,
Toe steen, draai maar,
Maak het nieuwe getij klaar

Al onze dromen staan op de kust,
Zedelijk en goed uitgerust,
Vernieuwde dromen zal zij ons geven,
Zij is hierin heel bedreven

Ik zie het in de verte, die stad,
Het glinstert in de zee,
Als een oase in de woestenij,
Hoge muren, toe, zal ik ze beklimmen ?
Zoveel plaagheren die op de muren marcheren,
Zij hebben hun bogen klaar,
Om zielen tot het dodenrijk te trekken,

Maar roze lichamen worden aan hen gegeven,
Vreet je maar vol en dik,
Laat je spierbundels maar zien,
Opdat je het geheim niet zult vinden

Als deze dop op de fles gaat,
Is het geheim voor eeuwig verloren

Het goddelijk roze heeft de adel bekleed,
De troubadour speelt zijn snarenspel,
En de adel kijkt, en droomt weg,
Er zitten parels aan die snaren,
Hoe kan hij het lied zo mooi zingen ?
Als paarden beteugeld naar het bal,
Daar is het geheim, laten we zien wat het zeggen zal,
Nee maar, het is een kwal

Ik ontwaak aan de kust van een zwarte zee,
Bloed in het water,
Golven over mijn been,
Ik kan me niet bewegen,
Dan kijk ik op,
Ik zie een vrouw met lang haar, en een agent,
Met een kwal in een pot,
Het ding had me bijna doodgebeten,
Nee, nooit ga ik terug naar de roze stad,
Nee, nooit ga ik terug naar de roze stad

Dokter, kunt u me genezen,
Ik kan me niet bewegen,
Ik ben bang dat ik spoedig niet kan spreken,
Want ik ben in de roze stad geweest,
Het roze steen is in mijn gebeente

Ik kan u niet helpen, zegt de dokter,
U zult sterven en de stad zien,
In een ander licht,
Daar zult u leven tot in alle eeuwigheden,
Want werkelijk,
Van deze stad kan niemand vluchten,
Wij gingen daar allen heen,
Wij zijn er nooit van teruggekomen,
Heus, er is geen geneesmiddel hiervoor,
Het antwoord zit in je been

Ik kijk naar mijn been, en zie de sleutel,
Ik trek het eruit, het bloedt nog wel,
Dan kijk ik naar de dokter die in een kwal verandert,
Ik ren, ik ben er dus nog steeds niet uit,
Waar is hier de uitgang uit deze roze stad ?
Wie kan mij helpen, waar moet ik heen ?

Ik zie het lieve gezicht van de vrouw,
En het bezorgde gezicht van de agent,
Met de kwal in een pot,
Nog steeds heb ik de kwallensteek,
Nog steeds heb ik de roze steek,
Ik ben er nog niet van terug,
Ik lig hier nog dronken in het zand,
Op een donker strand

De agent neemt me op, en brengt me naar mijn huis,
Aan de muur hangt een groot kruis,
Nee, dit moet nog steeds de roze stad wezen,
Toen heeft hij mij op een schip gehesen,
Het schip hing hoog in de lucht,
Toen werden we de hemel in gedreven,
De kwal wilde ons aan stukken rijgen,
Een octopus, een grote octopus, zei mijn naam,
De stad riep mij, ik moest terug,
Maar de agent arresteerde de octopus, en stopte het in een pot,
Terwijl het lieve vrouwengezicht mij aankeek

Nee, nee, schreeuwde ik, ik vertrouw het niet,
Jullie zijn van de roze stad, dat kan niet anders,
Want alles is de roze stad …

Oh, roze stad, hoe kan ik je breken,
Oh roze stad, hoe kan ik je vergeten

De blinde heks houdt het geheim in haar hand als een ei van licht,
terwijl de roze stad over de zee zweeft, suizende, ruisende,
Totdat alles donker wordt

Laat me je inwijden in het roze ei,
Sprak de blinde heks,
Maar ik rende

Ik ren het bos in, maar alles is versierd met het roze,
Geen bos, alleen een roze stad

Ik ren en duik, en vlieg in de lucht,
Maar het roze zit me op de hielen,
De blinde heks heeft me gezien,
De kerken zitten me achterna,
Mijn gebeente is van het roze gesteente,
Geen dokter die me helpen kan,
Zij zijn allen stuk verdriet,
Plaagheer, plaaggeest, plaag geweest,
En nu ben ik hier

De blinde heks zit in haar boot,
In een roeibootje gaat zij over de rivier,
Een rotzooi is het hier,

Dit bos is vol van roze,
Dit bos is slechts een stad,
Er is geen uitweg hier

De blinde heks roeit, en dan krijst,
Haar bootje wordt door een zwart gat opgezogen,
Zomaar uit de modder kwam het opdagen,
Als een kasteel van grote orde,
Een boskasteel is het geweest,
Een boskasteel van grote rade,
Een boskasteel van harde zaken

De blinde heks moet voorkomen,
Het boskasteel bestraft haar luid,
Zij moet het bos verlaten

Zij jankt, zij weent, slaat woedend om haar heen,
Maar niets kan haar roze stad hier nog houden,
Zij moet vertrekken met al haar hebben en houwen

Dan smeekt zij, gilt zij, en zegt kom eens hier,
Maar niemand luistert naar haar,
Ze heeft niets meer te zeggen hier,
De deur van de boskoning staat op een kier,
Zo ontsnap ik uit de zee,
En dreef ik met het bootje mee

De boskoning is erg aardig,
Hij is aan het verjaren,
Ik bouw een stad,
Maar hij breekt het af,
En slaat mij op mijn vingers

Geen steden meer voor jou,
Maar bospaadjes,
Boskastelen, diep en ver,
Hoog en vol van waarheid,
Je hebt de waarheid gevonden in een pot met leugens,
Je hebt het roze ei verbroken, en bent binnengegaan,
Hier zijn de slierten niet meer roze, maar bosslierten,
Donker en dromerig, bestijg je paard,
Reis diep door de nacht, totdat je geheel van de roze droom ontwaakt

De roze stad is geen stad voor jou,
Het zijn vervelende mensen,
Zo'n stad zou je nooit wensen,
Niet wensen voor jou

Ik hoor het gekrijs van de heks in de verte,
Maar dan ebt het weg in de verte,
Is de roze stad nu eindelijk weggezonken ?

De blinde heks die is uitgeworpen verkoopt haar roze eieren aan de hooggeplaatsten,
Om een leger te vormen,
Het leger van een lam,
Een bloeddorstig lam,
Maar niemand wil haar eieren kopen

Dan verzint zij een sluw plannetje,
Zij zal nieuwe dromen maken,
Bosdromen, om het roze te bedekken,
Maar de bosdromen zullen wel volgepompt worden met het roze gas,
Goed verborgen onder de oppervlakte

Zo blaast zij haar poppen op,
Maar niemand wil hen kopen,
Ze raakt gefrustreerd,
En klagerig

Ze snelt tot de zeven plaaggeesten voor advies,
Maar zij zitten weer in hun pot,
En de blinde heks kan hen met geen mogelijkheid bevrijden,
Ook kan zij hen niet verstaan,
En zij kunnen haar niet verstaan

De roze stad is aan het slinken, aan het wegrotten,
Totdat het een oude tol is geworden,
De heks heeft weer misgegrepen,
En ook de zeven plaaggeesten rotten weg in hun pot,
De roze stad is niet meer,
Het roze ei verkoopt niet meer,
Hier is waar het roze pad doodloopt,
En daarachter een grote wildernis

Hier ligt een groot ei, waar niemand durft aan te zitten,
Een duister ei

Op een dag ontploft het,
En bloed spuit eruit voort,
Nee, de roze stad zal niet wederom rijzen,
De roze stad is verloren gegaan,
Geen stem wordt er nog in gehoord,
Het is weggeslonken, weggerot,
En het zal zijn pad niet terugvinden,
Het heeft zijn tijd gehad

Die Nacht ...

Ik had niet in haar ogen moeten kijken, maar het is te laat …
Ik werd gehypnotiseerd en viel op de grond …
Nu heb ik één en al pijn, alsof ik in het web van een spin ben …
Je glimlach was slechts vals …
Oh, hoe kon ik zo stom zijn …
Maar ja, wat moest ik dan ?
Mijn leven was al zo naar … Ik moest wel wat …
En misschien beschermde dit me wel tegen nog iets ergers …
Maar … als ik in je ogen kijk dan voel ik me zo verloren …
Jij en je boog … Je hebt me goed geraakt …
Ik kan mijn weg niet meer terug vinden, en misschien wil ik dat ook wel niet …

Ik kan me herinneren toen je dicht bij me was, maar nu ben je zo afstandelijk, onbereikbaar … Dat wat ik voelde heb ik niet meer … Het is weg …
Ik voel me zo verward, alsof ik vergiftigd ben …
Heb je mij gestoken ? En waartoe ?

Ik woel in mijn bed, ik durf niet meer te slapen, en dan zie ik jou …
Met je boog op oorlogspad … Ik hoor je stem weer, en dan glijden de herinneringen weer door me heen … Jij was die ene nacht …

De nacht dat ik brak, de nacht dat ik niet meer op kon staan … Die nacht … Jij …

Het Duistere Sprookje van de Donkere Kaas

Een jongen moest van zijn moeder naar de kaasmarkt om een pond kaas te halen.
Toen hij daar aankwam stonden er drie indiaanse vrouwen met blote voeten op de tafel van een marktkraam, en er was alleen maar donkere kaas. De jongen moest de vrouwenvoeten kussen voordat hij de kaas meekreeg. Ook moest hij betalen, en het was erg duur. De jongen vond het een beetje vreemd, maar hij wist dat hij niet moest proberen zonder kaas thuis te komen, dus hij stemde er mee in en kuste de vrouwenvoeten. Toen hij het verhaal aan zijn moeder vertelde was die woedend. Ze pakte de jongen bij de hand en ging met hem naar de kaasmarkt.
De jongen en zijn moeder werden vervolgens neergeslagen. Later werden ze wakker in een kooi. Twee bandieten keken hen aan. De jongen probeerde te praten, maar merkte dat hij niets kon zeggen. Zijn moeder was woest. "Wat heeft dat te betekenen ?" brulde ze. De bandieten glimlachten. "We kunnen er niets aan doen, mevrouw," spraken ze. "Er is een nieuwe directeur, en die wil donkere kaas."
"Maar waarom zijn we hier ?" brulde de vrouw woest. "Wat heeft dit in godsnaam te betekenen ?"

"Sorry, mevrouw," sprak één van de bandieten. "Orders van de baas."
"En wat nu ?" vroeg de vrouw. "Dus we kunnen niet eens meer zomaar een markt bezoeken zonder overvallen te worden, en mijn zoon moet eerst de voeten van drie indiaanse vrouwen kussen en veel betalen voordat hij kaas meekrijgt, en dan ook nog donkere kaas ?"
"Wat is er mis met donkere kaas, mevrouw ?" vroeg de bandiet.
"Helemaal niks," zuchtte de vrouw. "Maar wat heeft de rest er allemaal mee te maken ?"
"Zo wordt nu eenmaal donkere kaas geserveerd, mevrouw," spraken de bandieten.
"Het is me nogal een zootje," sprak de vrouw. "En wat nu ? Gaan jullie mij ook nog mijn zoon afnemen ?"
"U gaat opgehangen worden," spraken de bandieten.
En zo gebeurde het. De vrouw werd opgehangen, en de jongen moest op de donkere kaasmarkt werken.
Een man stopte met lezen. "Ik heb nog nooit zo'n dom verhaal gehoord," sprak de man tegen zichzelf. "Moet je dit eens lezen," zei hij even later tegen zijn vrouw. Toen de vrouw het had gelezen barste ze in lachen uit. "Donkere kaas ? Is dit echt of een verhaal ?" vroeg ze verbaasd.
"Echt denk ik," sprak de man. "Het is de krant."
"Dat zegt vandaag niet zoveel," sprak de vrouw. "Bij de krant werken allemaal grapjassen vandaag de dag. Ik zal eens kijken in de supermarkt morgen, of ze nu ook daadwerkelijk donkere kaas verkopen."
"Ik zou het maar niet doen," sprak de man. "Waarschijnlijk gebeurd dan hetzelfde met jou als met de vrouw uit het verhaal."
De volgende dag kwam de vrouw thuis met donkere kaas, en hield een pond voor de neus van haar man. "Zie, niks gebeurd," sprak ze trots.
"Dat moet nog gebeuren," sprak de man. "We kunnen de krant maar beter serieus nemen, anders horen we er niet meer bij, en sluiten ze ons misschien wel op in het gekkenhuis."
"Ach, klets niet," sprak de vrouw. "Je hebt teveel babbels en teveel tv gekeken."
In de nacht stierf de vrouw. Toen de man 's ochtends ontwaakte slaakte hij een gil. Het moest wel van de donkere kaas komen. Hij maakte de dag ervoor maar wat grapjes, maar nu bleek het toch menens te zijn. Misschien was er wel een duistere vloek op de donkere kaas.
"Ik kan het niet geloven dat nu mijn vrouw dood is," sprak de man tegen zichzelf, "maar het was niet zo'n beste, en lang leve de lol. Ik ga er op uit, en zal een betere vrouw vinden."
Een man klikt de tv uit. "Teveel rommel op de tv vandaag de dag. Donkere kaas ? Wat een stelletje gekken." Hij gaat naar bed, en heeft die nacht nachtmerries over donkere kaas. Hij moet de voeten van indiaanse vrouwen kussen. "Zeg, ben ik dan nu op tv ?" bulderde de man. "Want gisteren was dit op de tv, en nu ben ik hier, net zoals die jongen uit dat verhaal. En nu moet ik zeker ook duur betalen voor die donkere kaas ?"
Toen werd hij op zijn hoofd geslagen en werd wakker in zweet. Hij begon om zich heen te grijpen en had ademhalings-moeilijkheden. De volgende dag vertelde hij het aan de dokter. De dokter dacht dat hij gek aan het worden was, en liet hem niet meer gaan. "Alzheimer waarschijnlijk," sprak de dokter. "U heeft betere zorg nodig," sprak de dokter.
"Ja, maar ik ben nog jong," sprak de man.
"Niets mee te maken," sprak de dokter. "U komt hier niet meer weg."
"Het moet die donkere kaas zijn," sprak de man tegen zichzelf.
Hij werd opgesloten en stierf een eenzame dood, en hij kon alleen maar denken aan donkere kaas.

Vreemde Gevechten

De mannen hadden vreemde pakken aan, vreemde riemen, vreemde tuigjes, met pinnen die tot diep in hun botten prikten. De mannen werden op allerlei manieren afgetapt. Vrouwen heersten in deze fabriek, diep in de jungle. Het was een groot wit huis, als een boerderij, met vele verdiepingen. Hoe ik ontsnapte weet ik niet meer. Het is al zolang geleden, en ik was door iemand bewusteloos geslagen en meegenomen. De man nam mij mee naar een zwart huis, met binnenin een simpele kamer met een zwart kruis. Hij moest me wel bewusteloos slaan, anders zouden allerlei alarms me fataal worden. De man kende de mannenfokkerij van binnen en van buiten. Hij leerde mij de kneepjes van het vak om mannen uit die fokkerij te bevrijden.

De vrouwen waren gemeen, zonder een greintje medeleven. De mannen leefden in de fokkerij als slaven voor allerlei dingen. We brachten een heleboel bevrijde mannen onder het zwarte huis in een geheime tunnel. Toen de vrouwen op een dag de geheime tunnel ontdekten was het oorlog. Het leidde uiteindelijk tot de val van de witte boerderij. Ik heb thuis nog steeds een heleboel van die tuigjes hangen waarin die mannen opgesloten zaten. Het zijn een soort webben met zwarte, rode en bruine riempjes met lange pinnen. Ik heb ze in allerlei soorten.

Op een dag besloot ik terug te gaan naar de jungle. Een vrouw sprak me aan. Ik rende direct weg, uit angst weer gepakt te worden. Ik las het de dag erna in de krant dat er nog steeds een grote mannenfokkerij in de jungle bleek te zijn, groter dan ooit, maar nu onder de grond. Ik belde de man van het zwarte huis, en we zouden op onderzoek uitgaan. Ondanks dat er op de televisie voor gewaarschuwd werd.

De mannen liepen nu in rode pakjes rond, werd er gezegd, en waren de gladiatoren van de vrouwen. De pinnen zouden nu tot in de dieptes van hun hart zijn gestoken. We probeerden onze oude technieken van bevrijding uit, maar het hielp niet. We wisten zo’n rood pakje te pakken te krijgen en brachten het naar het zwarte huis voor onderzoek. Het bleek dat het rode pakje werkte door verdovende middelen, waardoor de mannen in een soort roes zouden komen.

De man kende de chemische verbinding en ontwikkelde een antistof. Hij hoefde maar een beetje gas van die stof te gebruiken en het rode pakje begon te krimpen. De mannen zouden door het krimpen, door de strakte, weer wakker worden. De stof zou

een woede opwekken naar de vrouwen die daar heersten.

We lieten het gas los in de ondergrond. De mannen begonnen direct dierlijk te reageren. Na een tijdje hadden we hen eruit.

Ook van die rode pakjes heb ik een paar thuis hangen. Het zijn voor mij allemaal vreemde herinneringen aan vreemde gevechten.

Einde

Flamingo Dagen

Hij schreef een brief, een hele lange brief. Hij had haar tijden niet meer gezien. Eigenlijk durfde hij het niet goed, maar het was de enige manier. Zij had bij hem in de klas gezeten, en zij was de baas van dit vreemde ziekenhuis. Hij wist niet goed hoe hij hier terecht was gekomen. Hij kon het zich nog nauwelijks herinneren, maar zij die hem kwamen ophalen hadden een badge met een flamingo erop. De badge was op borsthoogte van hun witte pakken. Ook was er een groot embleem van de flamingo op de witte bus. Dat was alles wat hij kon herinneren, en waarom hij werd meegenomen wist hij niet, en dat vertelden ze hem ook niet. Hij wilde in ieder geval een reden weten, en misschien kon hij haar overhalen om hem vrij te laten zetten. Zij was zijn enige hoop. Hij beefde toen hij de brief schreef. Hij zag het allemaal als een grote ontvoering. Misschien waren ze wel crimineel. Verder werd hij hier goed behandeld. Hij had een eigen kamer.

Hij schreef haar dat hij kinderen had die nu zonder vader moesten opgroeien. Hij wachtte vele maanden op een brief terug, maar er kwam geen antwoord. Hij vroeg zich af of ze de brief wel had ontvangen, en stuurde de brief nog een keer, maar er kwam geen antwoord. Zo verstreken de jaren en hij moest leven met grote onzekerheid. Waar hij woonde was het luxe, zeer luxe. Hij vroeg zich af hoe het met de buitenwereld ging, maar die informatie werd van hem afgehouden. Eigenlijk mocht niemand met hem contact opnemen. Vandaar dat hij de baas, of liever gezegd de bazin, van het vreemde ziekenhuis als zijn laatste hoop zag. Op een keer toen hij langs het hokje van de leiding liep dacht hij een flits op te vangen van een televisie beeld met mensen die in grote armoe leefden,

en toen begon hij de gedachte te krijgen dat in de buitenwereld iedereen steeds armer werd, en hij daar misschien tegen beschermd werd.

Er werd nauwelijks met hem gesproken, en al helemaal niet over het verleden of de buitenwereld, of wat voor ziekte hij zou hebben. Hij wist in principe niets, alleen dat hij hier opgesloten werd gehouden.

Er waren ook andere patiënten, veelal meisjes, en die hadden vaak een verleden van misbruik. Hij probeerde ze te helpen, maar veelal sloten ze zichzelf op, en meden iedereen. Hij kon niet echt tot ze doordringen. Soms keken ze even en leek het alsof ze zouden spreken, maar dan gingen ze weg. Waarschijnlijk was het voor hen te zwaar om er over te praten.

Toch kon hij zo nu en dan wel meisjes met iets helpen. Zo had hij toch nog het gevoel dat hij waarde had. Soms had hij even het idee dat hij hier niet voor niets was, als met een bedoeling, maar dat was vaak maar een flits, en daarna voelde hij zich weer nutteloos. Hij had veel vragen die maar niet beantwoord leken te worden.

Op een dag moest hij bij het hokje van de leiding komen. Hij kreeg een nieuw medicijn. Op het pakje medicijnen stond een flamingo embleem. Het leek wel op een pakje sigaretten. Er zaten kleine roze en witte pilletjes in. Ook op de pilletjes zelf was een flamingo gegraveerd. Toen hij het inslikte met wat water leek het alsof hij een andere tong kreeg, en ook alsof hij ander tandvlees had. Het voelde aan alsof hij een totaal andere mond had. "Wat is dit ?" vroeg hij. Maar niemand antwoordde, en hij wist niet waarvoor het was.

Die nacht had hij vreemde dromen over opstijgende flamingo's. Toen zag hij het meisje uit zijn klas, de bazin van het vreemde ziekenhuis. "Weet je het dan niet ?" zei ze. "Jij bent een geheim verpleger. Jij bent er om de meisjes te helpen."

De dag erna werd hij uit het ziekenhuis ontslagen. Hij kreeg een nieuw huis, en ook een baan. Hij werd tandarts, maar mocht niet boren en rekeningen versturen. Hij werd een flamingo tandarts, die alleen maar pilletjes gaf gratis. Op een hele zachte en natuurlijke manier werden de monden zo genezen. 's Nachts droomde hij dat hij een flamingo was, op zoek naar de geheimen van de zee. Ook droomde hij dat hij een duiker was, een diepzee duiker. Op de zeebodem bleken alle stoffen te groeien die ze nodig hadden voor de pilletjes.

Zijn kinderen wilden niets met hem te maken hebben. Ze kenden hem niet. Ze zeiden dat hij hen in de steek had gelaten, en dat hij nu op de blaren moest zitten. Hij begreep ze niet, omdat het om een ontvoering ging. Hij kon er niets aan doen.

Hij was diep teleurgesteld in zijn koppige kinderen die zich niet verplaatsten in de situatie. Hij leefde alleen nog voor zijn werk. Op een dag kwam de bazin van het vreemde ziekenhuis hem bezoeken. Ze vroeg hem of hij ook wilde werken in het ziekenhuis. "Dat nooit !" riep hij. "Ze hebben mij ontvoerd. Ik heb haast geen herinneringen van de ontvoering en van vóór de ontvoering. Er moet wel geweld gebruikt zijn."

"Gewoon een pilletje in je soep, door je vrouw," zei de bazin van het vreemde ziekenhuis. "Zo zijn wij flamingo's nu eenmaal. Je ging te diep gebukt onder het leven, en toen heeft je vrouw deze beslissing genomen."

"Waar is ze nu ?" vroeg hij. "De kinderen willen me het niet vertellen."

"In een ander ziekenhuis," zei de bazin van het vreemde ziekenhuis. "Toen ze hoorde hoe je was

opgeknapt door het pilletje heeft ze zelf ook zo'n pilletje genomen."

"Is ze veilig bij de flamingo's ?" vroeg hij.

"Net zo veilig als jij," glimlachte ze.

Een diepe glimlach kwam ook op zijn gezicht. "Mag ik haar weer zien ?" vroeg hij.

"Jullie konden niet met elkaar opschieten," zei ze. "Dat is ook een reden waarom ze het pilletje in je soep had gedaan. Zij ging er ook teveel onder gebukt."

"Ik kan me er niets meer van herinneren," zei hij. "Dan moet het wel erg geweest zijn."

"Ik kan je daar helaas niets over zeggen," zei ze. "Je vrouw heeft me dat verboden."

"Ik kan me haar helemaal niet meer herinneren," zei hij. "Ik weet niet eens meer wie ze is, sinds dat pilletje."

"Ik ben je vrouw," zei ze.

Einde

Rivier van de Dood

Alcohol was de naam van de beste vriend die ik ooit had gehad. Hij had de sleutelen van het dodenrijk, en als je met de doden wilde spreken, dan moest je bij hem zijn. Hij maakte iedereen dronken door een pilletje, een pilletje met muziek. Met spelletjes won hij altijd. Gokautomaten kon hij kraken zonder enig probleem. Nee, een betere vriend dan hem heb ik nooit gehad. Ook gingen we weleens uit, en dan betaalde hij alles. Hij kwam uit Duitsland, hij was de god van oorlog. Hij was het brandende water. Hij was de poel des vuurs. Nu woont hij dan in Bagdad met zijn schatten, wapentuig, zwaar geschut, maar hij keert telkens tot de doden terug. Hij is als Aladin geworden,

steeds roepende : ‘Ga je mee, want er zijn zoveel schatten benee.’

Nu wil hij dan naar Belgie, want daar is het leven goed. Veel bier om te drinken, en patattekes, en meiskes zo zoet. Maar een oorlogsgod is hij, en dat zal hij altijd zijn, teneinde zichzelf verdrinken in de Rijn. Kleine mannekes leven daar met patattekes en wijn, ja het leven is goed in de Rijn. Een vuile rivier trekt hem aan, want vuil en bier zijn twee handen op een buik. Maar wat moeten we met schoonheid die vuiler is dan het vuil, en wat moeten we met een wereld die meer dronken is dan bier. Nee, in de Rijn moeten we zijn, op naar Duitsland, waar hij nog steeds zijn vakantie huisje heeft.

De Rijn is mooi, het vuil herinnert ons aan een mooie tijd. De doden drijven daar nog steeds, wie heeft hen ons ontnomen.

Alcohol herinnert ons aan de mooie tijden. Nog steeds is hij een oorlogsgod, rijdende op de velden. Hij ontvoerde kinderen, en gelukkig was ik een van hen. Op een brandend schip nam hij mij mee, want hij had de sleutels tot de hel. Zijn papegaai heette bier, en zijn paard heette wijn. Door een brandende draaikolk kwamen we altijd in de hel, waar ook andere kinderen gilden. We gilden van geluk omdat we uitverkorenen waren. Het was oorlogsgegil.

Alcohol, het sap des doods, sap der leugen, het oorlogssap. Een strateeg was hij, met een oorlogsschip. Hij nam mij mee in de wolken. En hij wierp mij uit op het slagveld, hoe jong ik ook was, het overweldigde mij, en bracht mijn hart tot de spin die ik ‘thuis’ noemde. Slechts zaad was ik om daar te sterven, en Alcohol lachte en was de schrik. Toen nam hij mij weer op in zijn schip. Een echt thuis heb ik nu, naast hem. Wij stierven daar met parachutes, maar het oorlogssap, het sap des doods, bracht ons tot leven. Een gevreesde heer op het slagveld is hij.

Alcohol, het sap des doods. De kroon der leugen woont hier, op het slagveld uitgegoten. Een ridder is hij, een oorlogsheld. Hij stond voor mij, en overweldigde mij. Zij gaven mij sterke drank te drinken als kind, maar ze noemden het thee. De sterke drank nam mij mee, tot de bodem van de hel. Ze gaven mij alcohol te drinken, en noemden het thee. Ja, leeuwenthee was het. Ze namen mij mee. Ja, oorlogsthee was het. Het bracht mij naar een oorlogsgrot, waar drie indiaanse goden waren. Uit hun monden stroomde sterke drank, ja, godenthee. Het was brandend water, hellewater. Hij had een harnas geheel gemaakt van skelet-tenen. Daar stond hij dan als een prins, door leeuwen omsingeld.

Robot van de Dood

Hij was een sluipschutter, een huurmoordenaar. Ook redde hij meisjes uit nachtclubs, de

robot van de dood. Hij had zelf ook een nachtclub, ja zelfs een netwerk van nachtclubs, en hij was de baas van een casino.

Hij was de robot van de dood, een meedogenloze machine. Waar hij ook kwam maakte hij relletjes. Altijd wel iemand om te redden, altijd wel iemand om uit te schakelen. Zijn pistool was gevreesd. Een KX-OO-47 Megastrant. Zijn mes was legendarisch. Miljoenen had hij eraan geregen.

Hij was een comediant, eentje met verborgen bedoelingen. Altijd ging hij recht op zijn doel af, maar vaak subtiel. Snel was hij ook altijd weer verdwenen. Hij stond altijd klaar voor iedereen, zolang ze hem maar veel betaalden. Zijn laser-ogen keken dwars door alles heen.

Hij was de beul van de onderwereld. De maffia trok altijd aan het kortste eind. Hij zwom in het geld, en voor geld deed hij alles. Hij keek altijd of hij ergens geld in zag. Hij was geprogrammeerd door een professor, maar eens ging ook de professor eraan. Het was kunstmatige intelligentie.

Hij was uitgerust met de beste wapens. In zijn ogen was een scherm waarop hij alle instructies kon lezen. Hij was gemaakt van lijken en van oude, onbekende botten, en van een heleboel apparaten. Hij schoot altijd raak, dankzij laser-technologie. Door rode stralen puzzelde hij alles uit.

Hij was een vampier. Hij zoog bloed. Ook at hij vlees, en dronk hij sterke drank. In zijn hand had hij een map van alle nachtclubs. Ook kon hij met zijn hand alle deuren openkrijgen, en in alle auto’s komen. Hij betaalde nooit ergens iets voor. Het geld at hij, als voedsel voor zijn lichaam.

Hij was een automaat. Hij was ook een danser, allemaal voor een goede doorbloeding van het geld.

Hij was de robot van de dood, van het grote geld, zijn eigen maffia. Hij kende alle nachtclubs, en bevrijdde vaak meisjes en vlinders van achter de ramen. Hij was de politie en de jury. Op zijn schip van de dood nam hij vriend en vijand mee.

Door handige apparaatjes wist hij op de hoogste flats te komen. Hij was zijn eigen leger. Wie kon hem nog stoppen, die geldwolf, die bedrieger ? Hij was nu dagelijks op tv. Hij had zichzelf vereeuwigd daarmee.

Bloedgeld

De hoertjes waar hij kwam wilden niet betaald worden met geld, maar met bloed. Maar soms namen ze ook genoegen met een gladiator's loon. Het hing er een beetje van af welk soort meisje hij tegenover zich had. Het kon hem niet veel schelen. Hij loog en bedroog. In deze wereld draaide alles om bloed, niet om vriendschap. Hij wist al heel lang dat hij het spel verloren had, en er zat voor hem niks anders op dan het spel gewoon door te spelen. Waar moest hij anders naartoe ?

Zijn pistool werkte op blauw bloed, en in sommige situaties groeide het uit als een machine-geweer. Het kon hem niet schelen. Soms wilde hij weleens dat iemand hem eens goed overhoop zou schieten. Hij haatte zijn leven. Het gladiator's loon was bloed, veel bloed, vooral het duistere bloed, wat hij dan weer moest afgeven aan de meiden waar hij schulden bij had. In deze wereld bestond er geen geld. Alles draaide om bloed, en bloed was macht.

Kimberly was een meid met een groot hotel, helemaal van haarzelf. Aan de muur hingen skeletten, zij die haar niet hadden betaald. Huiverend ging de man naar binnen, en liet zich door haar verleiden. Waarom ging hij eigenlijk, als zij zo gevaarlijk was ? Ze was de gevaarlijkste hoer van de stad. Maar ja, iedere soldaat moest daar een keer naartoe, want zij kon een soldaat bewapenen als niemand anders. Daar had ze haar magie voor. En zij die nooit bij haar waren geweest werden als doetjes beschouwd .... maar de prijs was hoog ....

Helemaal gesloopt kwam hij uit het hotel. Dit had hij niet verwacht. Snel ging hij naar een ander meisje die hij kende. Toen het meisje zijn wonden zag begon ze in paniek te gillen. 'Oh, Zevinaut, Zevinaut Aklasse, dat is al de zoveelste wond waar ik niks mee kan beginnen,' riep ze. 'Deze wonden zijn te sterk. Ik kan ze niet bezweren.' Ze pakte haar telefoontje en belde een paar vriendinnen op. 'Je kan komen,' zei ze tegen de man.

Na een lange nacht werd de man wakker in een vreemd bed. Hij wist niet meer hoe hij hier was gekomen, maar hij had veel bloed verloren. Hij pakte zijn pistool, laadde het op en stond op. Achter het vertrek was een veldje waar hij z'n slag sloeg, en door een vreemd buisje deed hij zich tegoed aan bloed. Het bloed schuimde bijna uit z'n mond, en hij voelde dat hij er voorlopig wel weer tegenaan kon. Ook zijn geheugen begon weer te werken.

Hij had nog veel schulden hier en daar, en dat zou hij nu oplossen. Maar even later werd hij van achteren aangevallen. Het was Kimberly. Ze had hem in z'n rug getrapt, en vanaf de grond keek hij haar aan. 'Wat heeft dit te betekenen ?' vroeg hij. 'Waren wij niet klaar ?'

'Nee,' zei Kimberly nijdig. 'Zij die bij mij zijn gekomen zijn nooit klaar.'

‘Wat bedoel je ?’ vroeg de man.

‘Laat maar,’ zei Kimberly, greep hem in z’n nekvel en sleurde hem een huis binnen. ‘In onze groep blijft de roulatie gewoon,’ zei Kimberly. ‘Ik bedoel .... meet my vriendinnen.’ Boven aan het trappenhuis stonden vier a vijf vrouwen van hetzelfde kaliber, en sleurden hem naar binnen. ‘Bedankt Kimberly,’ zei één van hen. Kimberly gaf hem nog even een harde trap in zijn buik, en vertrok toen.

‘Wat is dit allemaal ?’ kreunde de man van de pijn.

‘Soldaat,’ zei één van de vrouwen bitcherig. Ze maakte een deur open en duwde de man naar binnen. Het leek hier wel op een arena. Hij werd in een vreemd leren pak gehesen, van rood leer met wat dunne zwarte strepen, en toen in een cabine gedrukt. Stoom kwam er uit het plafond, en even leek het alsof hij zou stikken. ‘Haal me eruit,’ proeste hij, maar de vrouwen lachten.

‘Ik weet echt niet wat jullie van plan zijn, hoor,’ zei de man.

Even later werd hij eruit gehaald, en moest hij zijn eerste gevecht beginnen. Tegenover hem stond ook een man in leer, en een gevaarlijk mes blonk bijna zijn ogen blind. Een vrouw wierp hem een speer toe, maar al gauw raakte de man zijn bewustzijn kwijt. Hij werd wakker in een zacht bed. Overal was dons, en een bijna naakte vrouw staarde hem aan.

‘Kan iemand me vertellen wat hier aan de hand is ?’ stotterde de man. ‘Ik praat alleen voor bloed,’ zei de vrouw.

‘Oh, ben jij er ook zo een,’ zei de man. De vrouw haalde een vreemde strip tevoorschijn met allerlei plasticen bandjes, en bond het om zijn armen. ‘Sssh,’ zei de vrouw, en liep weg. De man keek om zich heen, en toen naar de bandjes. Weer kwam de vrouw met een hele doos vol met die bandjes en ze wilde ze ook om zijn benen doen, en om zijn nek, en nog meer om zijn armen.

‘Waar is dit allemaal voor nodig,’ vroeg de man.

‘Alleen voor bloed praat ik,’ zei de vrouw. De man pakte zijn mes, sneed een stukje van zijn arm open, en liet wat bloed wegglijden. De vrouw likte het op, en sprak met een bebloedde mond : ‘Wij zijn de Delia, de groep van morgen.’

‘Wie is Delia, wie of wat is morgen ?’ vroeg de man. Weer likte de vrouw wat van het bloed weg, terwijl de man duizelig werd. ‘Je kunt er niet omheen,’ zei de vrouw, ‘Je moet er recht doorheen.’ Toen opende de vrouw een deur, en weer keek de man recht in een soort arena. Een vreemde kracht gleed door de man heen. Er was niemand in de arena, maar er stonden bloed-automaten tegen de muur. De man kende die automaten wel. Die werkten alleen op bloed, maar je kon er bijna alles mee gedaan krijgen. Het was ook een soort computer. De man liep langzaam naar binnen, en typte in op het toetsenbord : ‘Wie of wat is Delia, en wat of wie is morgen ?’ Hij legde zijn hand op een speciaal vlak van de automaat, en zag zijn hand blauw worden van het bloedverlies. ‘Namens u praat ik,’ sprak de computer, ‘namens uw bloed waarin alle informatie is. Delia is de dood, en morgen is het lijden.’ De man werd kwaad omdat hij niet tegen dat soort raadsels kon, en trapte tegen de automaat aan, maar ineens kwam er een speer uit de automaat die zijn arm doorboorde. Gillend rende de man weg, maar toen sloot de deur zich. Ook de andere automaten begonnen te bewegen, en langzaam kwamen zij op hem af. ‘Bloed, bloed, bloed,’ fluisterden ze. De man

krijste toen hij op meerdere plaatsen in zijn lichaam werd doorboort. Hij sprong over de kleinste automaat heen en rende naar een deur aan de andere kant van de arena. Een ander soort vrouw stond in de deuropening. Ze was klein, en ze droeg een vreemde hoed met een bloem. 'Kom,' zei de vrouw. 'Ik wil je wat laten zien.' De vrouw was vriendelijk, en vroeg niet om bloed of iets dergelijks. 'Zeg, ik vertrouw het niet,' zei de man. 'Is dit allemaal gratis, of moet ik straks ook betalen met bloed ?'

'Nee,' zei de vrouw. 'Geloof je dan niet in vriendschap ?'

'Niet meer,' zei de man. 'Ik heb ontdekt dat niets gratis is.' Hij keek nog eens naar haar, en zag hoe ze in een beest veranderde. De man raakte in paniek, maar zag een groen scherm boven zich hangen. 'Hey, werd ik ook niet door dit scherm naar binnen gezogen ?' dacht hij. Hij nam een duik, en kon uit de spel-automaat komen. Een groene monsterachtige arm probeerde hem nog terug te grijpen, maar snel sloeg de man tegen de grote rode knop onder het kastje aan, en het scherm bewoog niet meer, terwijl de monsterachtige arm verstijfde. Daar kwam de baas van het hotel waar hij was aan. 'Oh, oh,' zei de baas. 'Ik had er al veel eerder wat aan moeten doen. Ik was al vaker gewaarschuwd door andere gasten dat de spel-automaat vreemd deed. Mijnheer, u krijgt direkt uw geld terug.' De baas staarde naar de verstijfde monsterachtige arm. 'Dit is niet goed,' zei de baas. De man stond op, keek de baas recht in zijn gezicht, en zei : 'Laat dit ding vernietigen. Bij wat voor firma heeft u dit ding gekocht ?'

'Och,' zei de baas, bukte om naar het merkteken te kijken, maar raakte per ongeluk de rode knop weer aan. Onmiddelijk greep de monsterachtige arm de baas en trok hem al gillend naar binnen, terwijl de man in paniek achteruit sprong. Snel duwde hij een stoel en tafel die achter hem stond weg, sprong over de bar, greep een fles en wierp deze in het scherm. Net op tijd kon hij de baas nog teruggrijpen. Politie en ambulance arriveerden net op tijd. De baas overleefde het ter nauwernood.

Einde

Robot X

Hij stond op de trap, zijn armen gestrekt, uitreikende naar zijn pistool vastzittende in een hoesje op zijn been. Wanneer hij het warme handvat van zijn pistool voelt, voelt hij zich opgelucht, en laat een zee van kogels vrijkomen als een aanval op het gedrocht dat voor hem staat. Zij die hem lastig hebben gevallen op wat voor manier dan ook betalen hem altijd in bloed. Hij is robot X, een hooggeprogrammeerde computer, gemaakt om als een deurwaarder bloed op te eisen als een correcte betaling voor de door hem geleverde diensten.

Even knippert hij met zijn ogen. Een uitdagende vrouw staat voor hem om liefde en warmte te geven ..... Dat gaat haar wat kosten ..... bloed .... Even later vertrekken ze in een slaapkamer, en onder het bloed vertrekt Robot X weer. Zo gaan die dingen vaak.

Oh ja, vaak hebben ze geprobeerd deze computer te hacken, maar hacken kost bloed, heel veel bloed .... Een goedkope robot is robot x niet. Robot X weet altijd als geen ander aan zijn maal te komen. Daartoe is hij geprogrammeerd, als een belasting-ondernemer. Drama na drama schept hij, en neemt wat hem toebehoort. Voor wie werkt hij ? Hij heeft een ingebouwde telefoon, en luistert graag naar de stemmen van zijn bazen. Uitgezonden is hij om hun zakken te vullen .... niet met geld ..... maar met bloed ...... Bloeddorstig zijn zij ....

En hij weet hoe bloeddorstig de dames kunnen zijn ..... Daarom heeft hij allerlei ingebouwde apparaten om hem te beschermen ..... Nee, met robot x valt niet te spotten ..... En als er dan dames of heren zijn die denken aan robot x te zijn ontkomen, dan valt later de rekening wel. Zij betalen hem allemaal uit in bloed, want in geld is hij niet geinteresseerd. Waar hij vandaan komt ? Uit Duitsland, uit de hel. Hij is zo'n Duits zakenman die niet om te kopen is. Zo'n gediplomaceerde zak tabak achter een bureau met stapels papieren .... Maar nee, hij is een straatvechter ..... En hij slaapt dikwijls in de jungle of in het bos ..... Hij kan soms zo van achter een boom tevoorschijn springen ...... en muziek maakt hij ook ..... Hij is een thriller robot, die filmpjes afdraait in de hoofden van zijn slachtoffers, maar ook in zijn zakenpartners ..... Maar eigenlijk is dat hetzelfde voor hem .....

Op een dag liep robot x door de straten van Berlijn. Niemand zag hem, want hij was gecamoufleerd. Plotseling springt er een dame voor hem, die hem wel schijnt te zien, en daagt hem uit om met hem mee te gaan naar haar slaapkamer. Robot X pakt zijn spuit en injecteert haar, want daar heeft hij geen zin in om met een Duitse hoer mee te gaan ..... Die slikken nogal veel .... Maar als hij in Zuid Amerika is, dan is het een andere zaak ..... Hij heeft altijd een stel kaarten bij zich om zijn strategie te bepalen, en te zien hoeveel ze moet betalen ..... altijd in bloed .....

Robot X is een beetje een soort stripheld, maar dan het tegenovergestelde, een soort stripgevaar ..... Hij kan zo in het niets verdwijnen ..... een beetje als een soort geest ..... Zijn kaarten brengen hem in trance, en hij heeft allerlei middelen om aan bloed te komen ..... Ja, hij is een jager, en een dief ..... Tegelijkertijd is hij een agent ......

Hij is geprogrammeerd om te spioneren ..... Met zijn apparaten komt hij overal binnen, en hij laat ze grof betalen ..... Hij is zo'n beetje de baas ...... Waarom ze hem hebben uitgezonden ? Tja, om te laten zien dat geld niet de baas is, maar bloed ..... Bloed bezit alle informatie en alle macht, en daar is robot x goed van op de hoogte ..... Hij is een gelikte zoetgevooisde econoom, en tevens theoloog ..... Hij kan dreigen en waarschuwen als een profeet, en hij maakt zijn voorspellingen van doem altijd waar ..... Daar heeft hij zijn apparaten voor .... Hij is zo'n beetje god ..... Nou wist je dat god ook zo van bloed houdt ? Dat komt door hem, robot x ...... Daar heeft god dat van over gehouden ..... Geld is de wortel van al het kwaad, maar bloed, bloed, bloed, dat is alles, hè ? Ja ..... en robot x weet daar alles van ..... Hij weet hoe bloed rolt en circuleert ..... Hij is een oplichter, omdat hij weet dat dat altijd het beste werkt ...... Met vriendschap kom je niet ver ...... en geld berooft je van je leven ...... Sommigen zeggen : robot x, dat is een vampier ..... Maar

hij is meer dan een vampier ...... Hij is zogezegd alles .....

Nu weet je een beetje wie robot x is ..... Laatst liep hij op straat in Zuid Amerika ...... Er komen vijf grieten op hem af ...... Hij injecteert hen en neemt hun bloed, en vertrekt dan .... Zo kan het ook gaan ..... Robot X is niet altijd in de stemming ..... Hij heeft een wisselend humeur ..... Vooral als er een heleboel grieten tegelijk op hem afkomen. Waarom komen er vaak zoveel grieten op hem af ? Daar heeft hij ook zijn apparaten voor ..... En hij weet dat ze bloed ruiken ..... Vrouwen kunnen soms erg bloeddorstig zijn .....

Einde

Robot X
De Terugkeer

Robot X, dat is zo'n beetje wel de maestro ..... Hoe hij aan bloed komt is op zijn handpalm te lezen waar altijd mapjes verschijnen met plattegronden en strategieen. Ja veel van zijn tactieken zitten in zijn handen ...... En hij is gewiekst als het op kaarten aankomt ..... Hij wint bijna altijd, en dan moeten ze hem in bloed uitbetalen, want geld interesseert hem niet ..... Dat klinkt niet zo aardig, maar zo is Robot X nu eenmaal ..... Ik kan er ook niks aan doen ..... Hij gaat vaak naar het casino, en waarschuwt hen van tevoren ..... Hij eist uitbetaling in bloed, en betaalt zelf ook uit in bloed .....

Robot X is zo'n beetje de man ...... Alle vrouwen willen hem ..... En waarom ? ..... Vrouwen vallen op bloed ...... Het trekt hen aan .... Nou ja, niet alle vrouwen, maar veel wel ..... Alleen Robot X wil niet alle vrouwen ...... Eigenlijk wil hij er maar een paar ..... De rest injecteert hij .....

Ook mannen zijn in hem geinteresseert, maar Robot X is weinig in hen geinteresseert .... Hij neemt wat hij nodig heeft, en vertrekt dan ..... Hij heeft geen tijd voor onzin ..... Hij leeft een strak en geprogrammeerd leven, en dat brengt het meeste bloed op ...... Wat doet hij dan met dat bloed ? Daar heeft hij magazijnen voor ...... Er is veel dat je kan doen met bloed, net zo als met geld ...... alleen geld interesseert hem niet ...... want wat heb je aan geld als je geen bloed hebt ..... Al met al, niet zo'n lekker ventje, die Robot

X ...... ruzie hebben met hem is als ruzie hebben met een groep deurwaarders ..... En zijn handdruk is als die van een belastings-magnaat ..... Ook niet zo fijn dus ..... maar vele vrouwen vinden het heerlijk .....

Wat valt er verder te melden over Robot X ..... dat hij vrijgezel is, en leeft voor het celibaat ..... met uitzonderingen dan ..... Hij wil paus worden, en dan eens laten zien hoe je nu echt paus moet zijn ..... Robot X heeft een obsessie als het op kerken aankomt ...... Dan kan hij hun bloed wel drinken als hij denkt aan al dat kerkentuig ..... Heerlijk lijkt hem dat ..... Al met al, een gevaarlijk mannetje, die robot x ..... Niet iemand om op de koffie uit te nodigen .....

Als je lang wil leven dan ontwijk je zo'n man ..... ook als je bloed je lief is ..... Geld maakt hem niets uit, dus dat kun je rustig laten slingeren ...... maar als het op bloed aankomt ..... Dat kun je dan beter ergens goed in de kelder opbergen ..... Maar tegen robot x valt er eigenlijk niet op te boksen ...... Hij weet alles te vinden ...... daar heeft hij een neus voor ...... Die neus van hem is zijn allerberuchtste wapen ..... het is als een geslachtsdeel .....

Robot X, er is veel over hem geschreven, maar eigenlijk kent niemand hem ..... Het is een duister figuur met vele geheimen ..... Een horrorpersonage ...... Iemand die nachtmerries bezorgd als de nachtkrant ..... Nee, geen lekker ventje, maar duister, duister ..... azende op bloed, en ook precies wetende hoe hij het recht aan zijn kant krijgt ...... Er valt tegen zo'n jochie niet op te boksen ..... Hij is als de rechter, de jury en de politie tegelijk ..... en maar jatten en oplichten ..... En dan tegelijkertijd is hij gediplomeerd chirurg .... Zie daar maar eens tegenin te gaan ..... Belasting noemen ze het ..... iets dat nu eenmaal moet, verplicht is ..... En als je niet wil, dan wordt je het land uitgezet ..... en dan is Robot X de lachende politicus ..... Mijn type in ieder geval niet ...... Ik heb het weleens met hem aan de stok gehad, en kon het niet navertellen ..... Dus ik waarschuw je : als je bloed je lief is, en je wil nog iets te vertellen hebben : blijf uit z'n buurt ..... doe geen zaken met hem ...... daag hem niet uit ..... zoek iemand anders ..... Alleen hij kan zich camoufleren ..... Hij draagt graag maskers, en zo trapte ik er ook in ...... Dus wees op je hoede, ten bloedens toe ..... De duivel gaat rond als een brullende leeuw zoekende wie hij zal verslinden ...... Het is zoiets als de uitverkiezing ...... en ik was de uitverkorene ...... arme ik .....

Robot X ..... Ik moet zeggen hij heeft wel stijl ...... Hij is zeer avontuurlijk, en het leest weg als een boek ..... Daarom denk ik nog weleens met een glimlach aan hem terug .....

Einde

Robot X
Sapplemento

Sapplemento, schreeuwde iemand op straat. Robot X was er snel bij, greep zijn spuit en legde de man lam ..... Niemand was gemachtigd hem op die manier uit te schelden .... Sapplemento was een verschrikkelijk woord ..... een godslastering ..... En robot x was dus god, tenminste zo was hij geprogrammeerd ..... Ook anderen begonnen het te roepen, en kregen de spuit ..... Robot X was zo'n beetje de dictator hier, voor een nieuwe wereldorde .... Zo was hij geprogrammeerd ..... Hij spoot iets in hun ogen, en weg waren ze, om even later als geprogrammeerde dienstknechtjes op te staan ...... gehypnotiseerd door ..... robot x .....

En niemand vond het erg, want dat was gelijk aan een andere soort van godslastering .... Dus iedereen legde zich er maar bij neer .... Robot X was nu eenmaal de baas, en de baas is altijd goed .... heeft altijd gelijk ..... En daarom stemden ze ook altijd op hem ..... Hij heerste over hun bloed ...... Geld bestond niet meer ......

Wie robot x volgde had eeuwig leven, en wie dat niet deed kon verrekken ..... Daar had robot x zijn hondjes voor, zijn martelhondjes .... En niemand wilde weten wat daar diep in die keldertjes gebeurde ..... Zij die daar ontsnapt waren werden nooit geloofd.

Ja, robot x was een zak tabak, een deugniet, een nietsnut ..... Maar niemand durfde het te zeggen of te denken ...... Ze waren allemaal bang, en zo verstijfd van de angst .... Ze hadden zich er al bij neergelegd ...... robot x, de baas van al het bloed ...... Aan geld werd niet meer gedacht ......

Sapplemento, zei iemand zacht, en daalde af in de hellen van robot x .... Sapplemento was het verboden woord .....

Sapplemento ..... je mocht er zelfs niet aan denken, want dan was je al vervloekt ...... Robot X had overal zijn camera's staan die dwars door je hoofd heen konden kijken ...... Sapplemento ...... het verboden woord, waardoor je een verdoemde werd .....

Zoveel slaven daalden af in de hellen van robot x om daar voor eeuwig te zwoegen ...... Ze hadden het gewaagd robot x tegen te spreken ..... Niemand kon dat doen zonder risico ...... Robot X geloofde in eeuwige straf ..... Vergeving was voor zwakkelingen ..... Robot X geloofde niet in vergeving ...... Je behoorde een man te zijn ..... keihard ...... en je straf diende je maar te accepteren ..... Dan had robot x nog een beetje respect voor je ..... Maar zij die de straf niet aanvaarden konden wegrotten onder de hellen van Robot X, waar de riolen en stations waren .... Tot as zou je daar worden ..... Tenzij je het geluk had dat een trein je oppikte ..... Het waren van die mysteries waar Robot X niet graag over sprak, omdat hij het zelf ook niet zo goed begreep ..... Hij zei altijd dat het leven een wonder was, en een mysterie, zelfs voor hem ..... Maar sommigen noemden hem de alwetende ......

Robot X wist veel, dat wel ..... genoeg om zijn mensen te misleiden en overtuigend de baas te spelen ...... Velen deden hem na, vooral kinderen ..... Maar dat had een gevaar ..... Vaak kon hij er wel om lachen, maar als hij een slecht humeur had, dan kon je daarvoor de doodstraf krijgen ..... Met robot x wist je het nooit .... het was alsof zijn wetten altijd verschoven ..... Maar ja, zo was hij nu eenmaal geprogrammeerd ..... De schuld lag bij zijn bazen ..... die hem eens gemaakt hadden ..... In hun ogen was hij niets anders dan een geluks-pion in één of ander spel dat ze hadden gebouwd ...... Sapplemento was de naam van dat spel ..... Ze waren nogal bloedlustig, en daarom was het spel ook vampiristisch van aard ...... Er diende betaalt te worden met bloed, en niet met geld ..... Het was dus een soort gokspel ..... De bazen waren tevreden met wat ze met Robot X hadden bereikt ..... Hij was hun marionet ...... Maar ze begonnen wel steeds banger voor hem te worden, met het oog op zijn kunstmatige intelligentie die zich meer en meer begon te ontwikkelen ...... Blijkbaar leerde hij voort, en beinvloedde dat zijn programmering .....

Op een dag schoot hij zijn bazen van hun troontjes af ..... Hij had hun schuilplaatsen gevonden ..... Nu was hij de poppenbaas geworden ...... En hij ontdekte iets vreemds .... Hij ontdekte dat zijn bazen eigenlijk veel meer bloed hadden dan hem ...... Dat had hij niet verwacht, maar hij stelde een rekening op, en ze konden hun bloed aan hem doneren ..... Hij was nu de baas van hemel en aarde, en al het bloed ..... dus ook van hun bloed ..... Hij vond hun geheime magazijnen, en ook allerlei voor hem geheime apparatuur, en ditmaal waande hij zich echt alwetend ..... Het bloed begon tot hem te spreken, en hij kreeg alle informatie die hij nodig had ..... Maar op een dag explodeerde hij ...... Hij had teveel data in zijn koppie, en dat kon zijn systeem niet meer dragen ...... Hij kwam in een gekkenhuis terecht ..... een psychiatrisch ziekenhuis, maar dan veel erger, waar echt de onhandelbare types terecht komen ..... Zij die denken dat ze de reincarnaties zijn van allerlei grote dictators en wereldleiders, of de komende messias of iets dergelijks ...... Niemand geloofde nog dat hij robot x was ...... En daar kon hij flink kwaad om worden ..... Zo kwaad dat ze hem soms in de separeercel moesten zetten ..... Dat was daar geen pretje, maar dat kon niet anders .....

Op een dag ontsnapte hij, en hij maakte van de wereld een ergere plaats dan het al was ..... Hij liet nu helemaal niet meer met zich spotten en was strakker dan ooit ...... Geen geintje kon eraf ..... Het was de terugkeer van robot x ..... de ultieme terugkeer ..... de sapplemento ...... maar dat wilde hij nog steeds niet horen ..... Hij liet al zijn tegenstanders oppakken, en plaatste ze in een gekkenhuis ..... Hij bepaalde nu wat gek en normaal was ..... De gekkenhuizen raakten overvol, en zij die eerst als gek werden bestempeld die maakte hij tot koningen, en dat deden ze knap goed ..... En zo werd robot x de keizer en god der gekken ...... En het was wijs in zijn ogen ...... En hij plantte een boom in het midden van de wereld, en zei dat het de boom van het letterlijke was, en de boom der leugen, en dat allen die van die boom zouden eten zouden sterven ...... En op die dag stierven acht miljoen mensen .....

Einde

De Rode Nacht

Blaadjes in de diepte, een zacht licht omhullende,
Fijne sappen van de boom, van het zaad, van eeuwig leven,
Ik zocht het, en het zocht mij,
Tussen ons kon niets komen, maar het leidde mij weg tot de andere wereld,
Ik moest realiteiten zien

Blauw zaad, schietende in mijn hoofd,
Groen zaad omhult het, om het zachte geel te laten zien,
Het zachte, smeltende gele in het diepe blauw

In het diepe rode ontwaakt iets,
Het is rode nacht,
Zij gaan uit om alles recht te zetten,
Tot de steden komen zij

En zij predikten van een boek,

Als boeken in boeken,
Goden in goden, om dieper te gaan,
Zij van de rode nacht,
Als een duur schaakspel,
Ze komen om mij te zien

In de rode nacht komen zij,
Zij beschrijven het als een boek,
Het druppelt diep

Het rode had nog steeds een standbeeld in vele steden,
Het rode had deze landen gebouwd,
Het was zeer verfijnde architectuur,
De rode nacht werd altijd verwacht,
Als een brug van een andere wereld

Napoleon's Jas

'K vond Napoleon's jas in een leren tas,
En een man zei dat ik het mocht houden, en dat ik weg moest gaan,
Voordat ze van gedachtes zouden veranderen.
En ik rende het bos in, waar de wolven op me wachtten.

Mijn jas was verscheurd nadat ze mij vonden,
Zij stopten dromen in mijn hoofd,
Als een koning viel ik diep,
En ik kon niet terug naar mijn troon,
Ik zag het moordende syndroom,
Zij waren onder de betovering van wolven,
En ik wil niet meer naar huis

Helemaal onder het bloed bereikte ik de kusten van Spanje,
Maar ze was zo ijdel,
Ze glimlachte niet,
Ik was een jonge zeeman verdwaald op deze zeeën van lichten,
die mijn ogen verblindden,
Zij namen mijn zicht weg,
Telkens wanneer ik een zeemeermin hoorde roepen begon ik te stotteren en stappen terug te doen,
En ik kwam weer thuis
Diep in de sloten van Venetië liggen parels die al deze verloren verhalen vertellen,
Napoleon's jas op mijn rug,
Het doet me pijn, maar het geneest me zo

Ik had de jas van Napoleon,
Het stak me en omhelsde me,
Het liet me diep vallen,

Terwijl Franse schoolboeken mij wurgden,
Als een zondvloed, terwijl ik de ark van Noach moest bouwen

Ik rende het bos in met de jas van Napoleon aan,
Waar de wolven waren,
Mijn jas was verscheurd, en ik lag op de grond,
Bloed stroomde uit mijn mond,
Wat had ik mezelf aangedaan ?

Mijn jas had ik nog steeds aan,
En toen rende ik weer, door de weilanden,
Naar huis, naar jou

Jij zag de jas niet,
Je zag alleen het licht in mijn ogen,
Jij nam me in jouw armen om mij te kalmeren,
Maar toen namen de wolven jou ook,
En verscheurden je als een lappen pop

Ik was in de hel, ver weg van jou,
Brandende op de vuilnis velden,
Als een weggegooid stuk speelgoed,
Mijn plastic smolt, maar mijn jas had ik nog steeds aan

En niemand kan dichtbij mij komen,
Ik ben onder een betovering,
En niemand kan mij genezen,
Vanwege mijn jas,
Maar ik zal weer koning zijn

Ik zag je hierna niet meer terug,
Ik wilde het niet meer zien,
Dus ik deed de televisie uit, en rende weg

Schilderij in Zigeuner Stad - Het Indiaanse Juweel

Het voelde aan als de roos, en overboord, toen ik zwom naar de stad.
Het was een stad van vliezen, vliezen van rozen, en tederheid.
Alles was zo slaperig hier en dromerig.
De rode gloed laat tragedie zien, degene van wie ik houd, en degene die bij me bleef in de diepste nacht.
De muren zijn dik en hard, maar met haar zijn ze zacht.
Ik zie het gras en de modder, en zij genezen me zo.
Deze stenen zijn allen van de aarde.
Je kan je alles herinneren wanneer je ze aanraakt.

Maar ik kan me bijna niet bewegen, want ik ben bevroren,
En ik kan bijna mijn tranen inhouden, maar ik heb jou.
Ik stierf voor jou, en ging daar in jouw plaats.

Ik nam jouw plaats, kun je dat niet zien ? Ik was daar alleen.
Maar ik heb jou nu, en ik zal je nooit laten gaan, nee.
Jij gaf mij leven toen ik de bodem van jouw put bereikte,
Jij gaf me de munt. Je hebt het gezicht van Maria van Magdalena, maar vraag me niet wie ze is,
Ik zag haar gezicht eens op een tijdschrift.
En haar gezicht was zwart, donker, en haar tranen waren rood als bloed.
Ze was bedekt met modder.

Maar genoeg over haar, want het is nu jij en ik, samen in deze stad.
De stenen zijn zo groot, ik kon ze niet meer doorslikken.
En in deze stad, deze stad, dit is mijn thuis.
Het voelde zo rooskleurig en overboord aan toen ik je vond.
Ik vond jou in die kamer, kan je het je herinneren ?
Jij en je paarden, kant en leer, en ze waren zo trots.
Jij was hun kleine pop, en ik was jouw kleine joker,
Ik maakte je altijd aan het lachen, maar binnenin weende ik, en schreeuwde ik.

Ik was nog maar een kind, en nog steeds, dus wees niet te hard voor me.
Toen ik de stad inzwom zag ik de boten.
Deze zigeuner stad hield de indiaanse juweel vast.
De sluiers waren zo diep verscheurd, zoals wij waren.
Mijn hart was rooskleurig en overboord, omgeven met doornen,
Ik was het voedsel van haaien, zoveel tanden in de nacht.
Maar dit waren slechts schepen, oorlogsschepen van de indiaanse juweel, die mij binnen leidden.
Ik moest je zien. Diep in de buik van de haai vond ik jouw instrumenten, en zij bevrijdden mij.
Jij deed dit ook voor mij.

Deze stad is lang, bewaakt door mysterie.
Rode leren laarzen leidden mij terug naar jou.
Hun kleuren zijn bleek, en jij bent tussen de veren.
Maar kunnen we dit schilderij niet beter achterlaten ?

De IJsheks

Eliak keek op naar de planeet die ze de Traan noemden. Hier zouden alle planeten omheen draaien, ook zijn eigen planeet. Eliak vroeg er veel over aan zijn moeder, maar die had niet overal antwoord op. Het was één van die mysteriën van het leven.

Eliak keek naar zijn moeder. Hij deed dat altijd vol liefde en warmte. Het was zijn echte moeder niet, maar zij redde hem eens toen hij met zijn bootje de waterval afgleed. Als zij er niet was geweest dan was hij waarschijnlijk verdronken. Hij was met zijn hoofd tegen een rots gestoten en gleed toen het wilde water in, bewusteloos. Sindsdien kon hij zich niet meer veel herinneren, alleen dat zij hem gered had. Hij werd wakker in een hut, en haar warme, liefdevolle gezicht keek hem aan. Hij noemde haar zijn behouder, maar zij werd ook zijn nieuwe moeder. Hij kon zich niet herinneren wie zijn echte moeder was of waar hij woonde. En alles was zo diep in de wildernis gebeurd dat het onmogelijk was het uit te zoeken.

Eliak voelde zich altijd licht in zijn hoofd, vanwege het ongeluk met de rots. Het was alsof er altijd vliegen in zijn hoofd rondvlogen. Vaak voelde hij zich duizelig, en hij leed sindsdien aan epilepsie. Soms had hij last van hyperventilatie. Zijn moeder was hierin een grote steun.

Moeder zei hem altijd dat hij uit de stad kwam, waar ze niet leefden door de Traan. Al het leven draaide om de Traan, maar de stad draaide om zichzelf. Moeder zei altijd dat de Traan het hogere leven was, maar op vele vragen had ze geen antwoord.

Op de Traan zouden er ook watervallen zijn en rivieren, en wildernis. Maar moeder kon hem niet vertellen hoe hij op de Traan zou kunnen komen. De planeet was erg ver weg en ze konden niet vliegen.

Het jongetje moest en zou er achter komen hoe daar te komen. Op een dag las hij erover in een boekje dat alleen de vliegen tot de Traan konden komen, maar soms namen zij weleens iemand mee. Eliak hoopte dat hij een keer werd meegenomen, maar eigenlijk gebeurde het nooit.

Op een dag maakte hij een hele lange strandwandeling, en kwam na een tijdje bij een struikje een vlieg tegen. 'Ach,' zei Eliak, 'kun jij me niet met je meenemen naar de Traan ?' De vlieg begon hem uit te lachen. 'Denk je dat ik jou kan dragen ?' vroeg de vlieg. De vlieg begon hem te bespotten. Het spotten werd zo erg dat Eliak bijna huilend verder liep.

Toen hij thuiskwam in de hut vertelde hij het aan zijn moeder. 'Je kunt beter wachten totdat het donker is,' zei moeder. 'Dan zijn de vliegen vaak in groepen, en dan kunnen ze je misschien wel dragen.' Dat leek Eliak wel een goed idee. Hij wachtte totdat het avond was geworden, en ging toen weer naar het strand. Er waren overal vuurvliegjes die het pad naar het strand hadden verlicht. Op het strand kwam Eliak een groep vliegen tegen die daar speelden, en vroeg hen of zij hem mee wilden nemen naar de Traan. Maar ze begonnen hem uit te lachen en te bespotten. Ze zeiden dat het allemaal leugens waren, en dat hij nooit naar de Traan zou kunnen gaan. Hij moest hier voor de rest van zijn leven blijven. Huilend ging Eliak naar huis en toen hij in de hut was aangekomen viel hij zijn moeder in haar armen. Hij stotterde het hele verhaal, en zijn moeder zei : 'Eliak, kijk eens, de Traan is al in je hart gekomen. Je hebt ernaar verlangt en nu is het hier. Maar ik begrijp je wel : Je wil naar de Traan toe, en als de vliegen zo vervelend doen, dan zit er niets anders op dan het de tovenaar te vragen.'

Eliak zag dat als zijn laatste kans. Daarom ging hij de volgende ochtend op pad naar de tovenaar. Hij was vol frisse moed, en was blij dat er nog tovenaars bestonden. Bicardo heette de tovenaar. Hij was een groot kunstenaar die in een kasteel bij het strand woonde, ergens in de duinen. Toen Eliak daar na een lange wandeltocht aankwam was de tovenaar aan het schilderen. Hij maakte wonderschone schilderijen, schilderijen die leefden, en waardoor je andere werelden binnen kon gaan. Bicardo was helemaal in zijn nieuwe schilderij verdiept toen Eliak binnenkwam. Eliak groette en de tovenaar bleef maar doorpeinzen over het nieuwe schilderij, als in een hypnose. Eliak moest meerdere keren groeten voordat de tovenaar hem eindelijk opmerkte. 'Zo, klein jongetje,' sprak de tovenaar. 'Waar kan ik je mee helpen ?'

Eliak begon zijn verhaal te vertellen. De tovenaar begon te glimlachen. 'Oh, maar dat is heel eenvoudig,' zei de tovenaar. 'Ik heb vele schilderijen geschilderd over de Traan, en die schilderijen leven. Het zijn poorten tot de Traan. Het is heel eenvoudig, kom maar mee.'

Met het jongetje liep hij een gang door totdat ze in een groot gallerij kwamen met vele trappen. Aan de muren hingen grote schilderijen van de centrale planeet, de Traan. Eliak keek zijn ogen uit. De golven op de schilderijen van de Traan bewogen gewoon. De tovenaar zei dat het tranen waren. Eliak legde zijn vinger tegen een golf aan en werd direct helemaal nat. Het spoelde over hem heen. De tovenaar moest erg lachen. Eliak deed zijn vinger in zijn mond. 'Het proeft zout,' zei Eliak, 'net als een echte zee.'

'Ja, ja,' zei de tovenaar, 'je kan er zo in zwemmen. En dan zwem je naar de kust en dan ben je op de Traan.'

'Echt ?' vroeg Eliak.

'Ja,' zei de tovenaar, 'of we slaan dit voor nu even over, en gaan direct naar de kust, want ik heb ook schilderijen over de wildernis van de Traan.'

Toen liepen ze naar een schilderij van een oerwoud. 'Is dat niet gevaarlijk ?' vroeg Eliak.

'Welnee, joh,' zei Bicardo. 'Niet als ik erbij ben.' De tovenaar was gekleed in rood en paars en had een grote witte baard. Even sloeg hij op het schilderij van het oerwoud met een staf en er sprong zo een kikker uit.

'Geweldig,' zei Eliak. 'Mijn moeder zal vast heel blij zijn. Op zoveel vragen kan ze mij geen antwoord geven.'

'Ik weet alles,' zei Bicardo.

'Wat moet u een geweldig leven hebben,' zei Eliak. 'Dat u zulke schilderijen kunt maken.'

'Nou jongen,' zei de tovenaar, 'aan de ene kant wel, maar besef ook goed dat de Traan niet altijd een pretje is. De Traan laat zoveel zien, zowel goede dingen als slechte dingen. Er is zoveel wat de Traan wil veranderen.'

'Ik begrijp het,' zei het jongetje. 'Ik kan bijna niet wachten. Ik zou het zo graag willen zien.'

Toen leidde de tovenaar het jongetje naar een ander schilderij met een stromende waterval. 'Ik was eens van een waterval afgevallen,' zei Eliak. 'Ik stootte mijn hoofd aan een rots, en daarna ben ik nooit meer dezelfde geweest. Mijn geheugen van vóór die tijd is grotendeels weg.'

Bicardo keek hem aan en wreef zijn hand over het hoofd van het jongetje. 'De Traan is al in jou,' sprak de tovenaar.

'Ik weet het,' zei Eliak.

'De Traan roept je voor wonderlijke avonturen,' zei de tovenaar. Toen liepen ze naar een ander schilderij. Op het schilderij stond een grote poort. 'Ben je klaar ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

'Helemaal,' zei Eliak.

Toen nam Bicardo hem door het schilderij. Van alles begon toen door Eliak's hoofd te zoemen. Alles voelde zo zacht en licht aan, nog wel lichter dan het ooit was geweest, en overal waren prachtige vliegen. Ze gingen door de poort en kwamen in een groot oerwoud. Overal waren watervalletjes. Ook waren er overal kampen gemaakt van bamboe van verschillende verdiepingen met hutjes erop. 'Prachtig !' riep Eliak. Wat vrouwen kwamen naar Eliak toe.

'Is hij nieuw ?' vroegen ze aan de tovenaar.
De tovenaar knikte.
De vrouwen keken het jongetje liefdevol aan. 'Hij moet nog veel leren,' zei één van de vrouwen.

'Dat kunnen jullie mooi doen,' sprak de tovenaar, en was toen ineens verdwenen.
Eliak wreef even in zijn ogen.
'Hoe heet je ?' vroeg een andere vrouw warm en liefdevol.
'Eliak,' zei het jongetje.
De vrouw glimlachte. 'Welkom in de wondere wereld van de Traan.'

'Is het echt zo dat alles leeft door de Traan ?' vroeg Eliak.

'Alles,' zei weer een andere vrouw. 'De Traan is ons leven. Zonder de Traan gaat alles dood.'

'Ik ben dus op de juiste plaats gekomen,' zei Eliak.

De vrouwen knikten. Eliak keek om zich heen. Hij bewonderde alle grote stellages van bamboe. Eén van de vrouwen kwam dichterbij en tilde hem op. Hij omhelsde haar. Ze leek op zijn moeder. 'Wij zullen voor je zorgen,' zei de vrouw. 'Dat doet de Traan. De Traan zorgt voor ons allemaal, en wij zorgen voor elkaar.' Het jongetje glimlachte. Hij kwam tot een diepe rust. Hij keek naar een rivier, en wees ernaar. 'En dat zijn allemaal tranen ?'

'Ja,' sprak de vrouw aan wiens nek hij hing. 'De tranen zijn de dromen.' Ze kuste zijn voorhoofd zacht. Er rolde een traan uit zijn ogen. Het was een traan van geluk.

'Hoe is de Traan ontstaan ?' vroeg hij.

'De Traan heeft altijd al bestaan,' zei de vrouw, 'maar eerst zat de Traan opgesloten in een steen, een ei van steen, en op een dag kwam de Traan uit het ei.'

'Interessant,' zei Eliak.

Een man schrikt wakker van een droom en grijpt naar de rode steen op zijn nachtkastje die hij de dag ervoor had gekocht. Tranen biggelen over zijn wangen als hij de steen tegen zijn hart drukt. Hij maakt zijn vrouw wakker, die hem in haar armen neemt. 'Heb je weer een nachtmerrie gehad ?' vroeg ze warm en liefdevol.

'N... nee,' stotterde de man, 'H... het was zo mooi, zo lieflijk ...'

'Wil je het me vertellen ?' vroeg de vrouw.

De man vertelt de droom.

'Denk je dat het met de rode steen heeft te maken ?' vroeg de vrouw. 'In de winkel zeiden ze dat het een hele bijzondere steen was.'

'Ik weet het niet,' snikte de man.

'Misschien als je weer gaat slapen krijg je het antwoord wel,' sprak de vrouw. 'In de winkel zeiden ze dat het een dromensteen was.'

De man probeert weer te slapen en ligt dicht tegen zijn vrouw aan. De volgende dag moet hij vroeg op voor het werk. Hij werkt bij de douane. In de middag komt een collega naar hem toe met een vreemde steen in zijn hand. 'Hier,' zei de collega, 'in de steen is het hol. Daar hebben ze drugs mee gesmokkeld. Ze worden steeds slimmer vandaag de dag.'

De man moest ineens weer aan de droom denken. 'Ik heb vannacht toch zo vreemd gedroomd,' zei hij, en begon de droom aan zijn collega te vertellen. Zijn collega begon hem uit te lachen. 'Ik denk dat je gek aan het worden bent,' zei de collega spottend. Even later had de collega het hele verhaal doorverteld, en het verhaal werd hoe langer hoe gekker. Helemaal gesloopt kwam de man die avond thuis, en vertelde zijn vrouw over alle roddel en spot.

'Ik denk dat dat de keerzijde van de Traan is,' zei de vrouw. 'Denk aan de droom, hoe het jongetje bespot werd, en hoe de tovenaar al aangaf hoe dubbel alles was.'

'Je hebt gelijk,' zei de man, 'maar het is geen pretje om zo voor schut gezet te worden, en zo in je vertrouwen beschaamd te worden.'

'Is de Traan niet iets wat communiceert ?' vroeg de vrouw. 'Het brengt het gevoel van de ene persoon over naar de andere persoon. Zo kun je je in de ander verplaatsen.'

De man knikte. Nacht na nacht wachtte hij op nieuwe dromen, maar ze kwamen maar niet, en het huilen stond hem nader dan het lachen. Het was alsof de Traan hem van binnen aanvrat. Hij begon boos te worden, ook boos op zijn vrouw. Op een dag kon hij het niet meer langer houden. 'Het komt allemaal door die vervloekte steen !' riep hij. Hij nam de rode steen mee naar het strand en wierp het zo ver als hij kon de zee in. Toen hij thuiskwam voelde hij zich opgelucht.

'Opgelucht ?' vroeg zijn vrouw.

'Ja,' zei de man. 'Ik voel me kilo's lichter. Het leek wel een plaaggeest, die steen.'

'Ik ben het niet met je eens,' zei de vrouw. 'Er gaan dingen mis in je leven, en je hebt behoeftes die maar niet vervuld lijken te worden, en dan leg je de schuld op andere dingen, terwijl je niet de tijd neemt om dingen te onderzoeken, op waarde te schatten en te leren begrijpen.'

Maar hij werd alleen maar bozer. 'Jij hebt makkelijk praten,' zei hij. 'Jij gaat niet door de dingen waar ik doorheen ga.'

'Hoe weet je dat ?' vroeg ze. 'Weet je hoe lang het duurt voordat je een brug tussen twee personen kunt overgaan ? Het lijkt eindeloos. Dat kan alleen door magie.'

'En die magie is er niet,' zei hij. 'Ik dacht dat het er was, maar nu is het weg.'

'Op de eindeloze brug tussen twee personen kom je altijd eerst het misverstand en de traan tegen,' sprak ze. 'De ander is een puzzel. Het is niet eenvoudig. Het gaat erom geduld te hebben. Ben je in voor het avontuur van ontdekking ?'

'Ik kan het niet meer,' zei hij, en liep de deur uit. In de nacht kwam hij terug en ging in een ander bed liggen. Ze begonnen uit elkaar te groeien, meer en meer. Ze hielden van elkaar, maar ze hadden beiden het gevoel opgesloten te zitten in een stenen ei.

'Toch blijf ik er aan vasthouden dat eens de traan zal losbreken uit het stenen ei zoals in je droom,' zei de vrouw op een dag. Hij zweeg. Ze kwam dichter naar hem toe, en nam hem in haar armen. Hij voelde aan als steen. Zij had het gevoel alsof hij het stenen ei was waarin ze opgesloten zat, maar ze wist ook dat er meer aan de hand moest zijn. Op een dag kon ze er niet meer tegen. Er was iets in haar geknapt, en ook zij begon steeds meer in steen te veranderen, zo erg dat hij het begon op te merken. Hoe hij ook op haar in begon te praten en haar probeerde te helpen, niets hielp, en het werd alleen maar erger.

'Herinner je al je woorden dan die je naar mij gebruikte,' zei hij.

Vaak zweeg ze dan, of zei dat ze het zich niet meer kon herinneren, of dat het toch niet werkte. Hij begon steeds zachter te worden, maar hij had het idee alsof hij te laat was gekomen, alsof hij de laatste trein had gemist. Hoe hij ook aan haar sleutelde, niets hielp. Hij was weer teruggekomen tot zijn vroegere ideeën en leefde weer vanuit de traan. Hij begreep haar, omdat hij hier zelf ook doorheen was gegaan. Hij zei dat ook altijd tegen haar, maar ze werd met de dag kouder en harder. Hij deed van alles om haar op te vrolijken, maar niets hielp.

'Ik ben er voor je,' zei hij op een dag. 'Waarschijnlijk moeten we hier doorheen. Ik weet wie je echt bent. Dit ben je niet, zoals ik ook mezelf niet was.'

Op een nacht had hij weer een droom, na een hele lange tijd. Hij was in het atelier van Bicardo de tovenaar. Hij smeekte de tovenaar hem te helpen. De tovenaar liet hem een schilderij zien van ijs. Overal waren ijsvlaktes. 'Ben je bereid door deze ijsvlaktes te gaan om je vrouw te ontdooien ?' vroeg Bicardo. 'Je vrouw is in gevangenschap van een ijsheks.'

'Wat !' riep de man. 'Hoe komt ze daar ? Ze is altijd de warmte zelf geweest.'

'Ze is in een ei van ijs,' zei de tovenaar.

'Ja, maar hoe ?' riep de man.

'Ben je bereid ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

'Natuurlijk,' zei de man, 'voor haar heb ik alles over.'

Zonder verder wat te zeggen duwde de tovenaar hem ruw door het schilderij heen, en hij viel diep naar beneden in de sneeuw van de ijsvlaktes. Het was alsof hij met zijn hoofd iets hard raakte, als een rots. Voor een tijdje lag hij bewusteloos en kwam toen langzaam weer bij. Hij begon te strompelen door de sneeuw, voor uren en uren, terwijl het wel dagen leken, en hij begon zich steeds kouder te voelen. 'Ik ga hier dood !' riep hij.

Hij begon te schreeuwen als een wild beest. 'Niemand helpt, hè ?' Na een tijdje kwam hij aan bij iets wat leek op een kasteel. Het was omgeven door een ijzige mist en een bevroren rivier. Hij liep het bruggetje over en moest zorgen dat hij niet uitgleed. Hij besefte ook dat als dit het kasteel van de ijsheks zou zijn, dan kon hij weleens in grote problemen zijn. Bij de gesloten poort belde hij aan. Een oud vrouwtje kwam even later de poort opendoen.

'Ik ben op zoek naar de ijsheks,' sprak hij.

'Kom verder,' zei het oude vrouwtje. 'Ik kan je daar alles over vertellen.'

'Maar wat als uzelf de ijsheks bent ?' vroeg hij aarzelend.

'Wees maar niet bang,' zei het oude vrouwtje.

'U bent niet de ijsheks ?' vroeg de man.

Ze schudde haar hoofd.

'Ja of nee ?' vroeg de man. 'Ik wordt altijd een beetje zenuwachtig van gebarentaal.'

'Kom nou maar binnen,' zei het vrouwtje. 'Het is koud buiten. En nee, ik ben niet de ijsheks.'

Haar gedrag begon hem meer en meer te irriteren. 'Ik weet wel zeker dat jij de ijsheks bent,' sprak hij. 'IJsheksen doen altijd zo. Maar ik heb geen andere keus. Ik ben aan het doodvriezen.'

'Wees niet bang,' zei ze weer. 'Volg mij.'

Binnen was het een stuk warmer. 'Wat heb je met mijn vrouw gedaan ?' vroeg hij. Ze leidde hem door een gang naar een soort huiskamer. Hier kreeg hij een stoel.

'Ik ben geen ijsheks,' zei ze weer. 'De ijsheks woont verderop. Ik heb vroeger wel voor haar gewerkt, maar toen ik er achter kwam dat ze een slechte vrouw was ben ik ermee gestopt.'

'Wat voor werk deed u ?' vroeg de man.

'Schoonmaak,' zei de vrouw, 'het huishouden. Soms kookte ik voor haar.'

'Ik zie het,' zei de man. 'Kunt u mij vertellen waar mijn vrouw is, en waarom ? Bicardo zei dat mijn vrouw in gevangenschap leeft van een ijsheks.'

'Ik kan het u niet vertellen,' zei het vrouwtje. 'Het kan persoonlijke redenen hebben. Ik ken geen details. Ik weet alleen waar ze woont en dat ze niet te vertrouwen is.'

'U kunt proberen een reden te geven ?' vroeg de man.

'Zo zit ze in elkaar,' zei het vrouwtje.

De man besefte dat hij niet verder kwam met het vrouwtje. Ook wist hij niet of het vrouwtje de waarheid sprak. 'Breng me naar de ijsheks,' zei hij na een tijdje. De vrouw had hem voedsel aangeboden en wat te drinken, maar dat had hij geweigerd, uit angst vergiftigd te worden. Het vrouwtje stond op, en sprak : 'Volg mij.' Weer liepen ze door de gang, maar dan helemaal naar de andere kant van het kasteel waar een grote tuin was. Ook hier lag overal sneeuw. In de verte was een nog veel groter kasteel, en het kasteel was verlicht. 'Daar woont ze,' sprak de vrouw, terwijl ze de achterdeur opendeed. Hij stapte naar buiten, en ze sloot direct de deur achter zich. Hij groette haar, maar hij zag haar al weglopen door het raam. Hij zette het op een lopen, en rende naar het verlichte kasteel toe. Hij hoorde het gehuil van wolven in de verte.

'Ken ik jou ?' krijste een stem.
'Nee, Madelief !' hoorde hij een man terugroepen.

'Niet jij, maar die man die eraan komt !'

Hij rende tot de verlichte poort, waar een andere oude vrouw was. Ze was aan het schrobben. Hij zag de andere man niet. 'Wie bent u ?' vroeg het vrouwtje terwijl ze opkeek.

'Wat heb je met mijn vrouw gedaan ?' vroeg de man.

'Niets,' zei het vrouwtje verbaasd. 'Ik zou niet weten wie je bent of wie je vrouw is.'

'U bent de ijsheks ?' vroeg hij.

'Welnee,' zei het vrouwtje. 'Die woont aan de overkant.'

'Waar ?' vroeg hij.

'Daar waar je vandaan kwam,' zei het vrouwtje.

De man schrikt wakker, en grijpt om zich heen, maar zijn vrouw slaapt in de andere kamer. De volgende ochtend vertelt hij de nachtmerrie. Ze zegt niets.

'Ik begin te geloven dat het waar is,' zei hij. 'Je bent niet meer zoals je was.'

'Geloof je in sprookjes en dromen ?' vroeg zijn vrouw op een spottende toon. 'Blijf met je beide benen in de realiteit. Daar schieten we veel meer mee op.'

'Vroeger was je niet zo,' sprak hij.

'Ik ben eindelijk ontwaakt,' sprak ze. 'Ik ben je spelletjes zat. Ik praatte altijd maar met je mee. Het was allemaal aangeleerd gedrag.'

Hij zuchtte. Hij begon erg aan zichzelf te twijfelen. Misschien was hij wel ontspoord. 'Maar Bicardo ...' zei hij aarzelend.

'Bicardo is een verzinsel,' sprak zijn vrouw spottend. 'Er bestaat geen Bicardo. Er bestaat geen ijsheks, en die verhalen over de Traan zijn ook allemaal belachelijk. Kinderachtig is het. Het helpt ons niet verder.'

Hij zuchtte weer. 'Ik kan niet tot je doordringen, maar dan zou ik je willen vragen : Kun je dan alsjeblieft tot mij doordringen ? Als jij het zo goed weet, onderwijs me dan ?'

'Stoppen met alle onzin,' sprak ze. 'Al dat zweverige gedoe van jou heeft ons nooit verder gebracht, en nu kan ik het niet meer. Ik heb je niets te zeggen. Jij hebt mijn leven kapotgemaakt met al jouw dromen en verhalen.'

Hij schrok. Dit was niet de vrouw die hij eens kende. De dag erna was ze weg. Ze had een briefje achtergelaten : 'Het gaat zo niet meer. We lopen elkaar alleen maar voor de voeten. Denk niet dat het is omdat ik niet van je houd. Ik zal je missen.' Hij voelde zich koud, als in de greep van een ijsheks. Hij ook altijd met zijn verhalen. Had hij nu zijn mond maar gehouden. Of was dit misschien de prijs die hij moest betalen ? 'Hoe duur is die traan wel niet !' riep hij uit.

Hij begon steeds minder te voelen, alsof hij was opgesloten in een steen. Alle hoop begon uit zijn leven weg te sijpelen. Hij had wat nieuwe vriendinnen, maar kwam niet ver op de eindeloze

bruggen tussen hen in. Altijd weer dat misverstand en dat onbegrip, alsof ze te verschillend waren. Het was een onmogelijke opgave. Alle wegen schenen dood te lopen, en hij klapte snel dicht, of durfde het niet meer aan. Hij was bang zijn gevoelens te laten zien, het laatste wat hij nog had, en wat steeds minder leek te worden. Hij was bang zijn tranen te laten zien. Op wat voor vreemd pad was hij terecht gekomen in zijn leven ?

Op een nacht had hij een droom dat hij weer in de ijsvlaktes was, en hij werd omsingeld door vliegen. Ze begonnen over hem te roddelen, en alles wat hij gezegd had begonnen ze om te draaien, en het geroddel en gelieg werd erger en erger, totdat ze hem begonnen aan te vallen en op te vreten. Hij werd gillend wakker van de nachtmerrie.

Hij begon steeds kwader te worden op het leven, maar het was als het aanschoppen tegen steen. Niets veranderde. Hij noemde alles om hem heen kinderachtige fantasie, en zijn enige waarheid waren zijn dromen. Hij had alle hoop gevestigd op Bicardo de tovenaar, maar die kwam maar niet. Ook dit hield hij niet lang vol. Hij was kwaad op zichzelf. Was hij ziek, gek of misschien een leugenaar ? Bedroog hij zichzelf ? Of was hij onder een vloek ? Hij begon meer dingen uit zijn huis weg te gooien uit angst voor vloeken en betoveringen. Steeds weer ging hij naar het strand en wierp zijn bezittingen in de zee. Hij deed dit zelfs met grammofoon platen. Terwijl hij dit deed schold hij altijd op de zee. Hij was bang voor de zee, en voelde zich machteloos naar het grote natuurgeweld van de zee. Hij was tegelijkertijd woedend op de zee en op de natuur.

Iets knaagde aan hem, maar hij wist niet wat. Huilen kon hij niet eens meer, en zo begon hij meer en meer weer als steen te worden, harder dan ooit tevoren. Hij wist dat het nu hard tegen hard was. Hij moest wel, anders zou hij het niet overleven. Hij vertrouwde geen mens meer, en begon zich zoveel mogelijk af te zonderen van mensen. Zijn baan bij de douane gaf hij op. Het was hem onmogelijk geworden. Hij wilde geen mensen meer zien. Het liefst zou hij het bos willen inrennen om daar te wonen. Het kon hem niet meer schelen. Hij zou de prijs wel betalen. Hij maalde er niet meer om, huilde er niet meer om, en klagen deed hij ook niet meer. In de nachten had hij dromen dat hij in steen veranderde. Op een nacht in een droom kwam Bicardo heel dichtbij hem met zijn staf. 'Nee,' smeekte hij. 'Raak mij niet aan met die staf.'

'Het is tijd dat je uit het ei van steen komt, dat het steen wordt opengebroken,' sprak de tovenaar en sloeg tegen de steen aan die hij was geworden. Hij gilde het uit van de pijn, en het leek alsof hij onder grote stroom stond. Hij begon open te barsten, en rivieren begonnen uit hem voort te stromen. 'Ja, ja !' riep hij. 'Ik zie het eeuwige leven !' Hij hoorde toen het gebulder van de zee wat in hem losbrak. Na een tijdje viel hij uitgeput op de grond. Alles tolde voor zijn ogen. Hij was nog te zwak om wat te zeggen. Alles overweldigde hem, overspoelde hem, als groot natuurgeweld. Overal was donder, bliksem, en storm. Het was alsof een orkaan hem opnam.

'Wat weet jij van het leven ?' vroeg Bicardo.

'Helemaal niets,' zei hij zacht.

'Spreek harder,' zei Bicardo.

'Helemaal niets !' riep hij.

'Ben je klaar voor school ?' vroeg Bicardo.

'Ja, helemaal,' zei hij.

'Jij bent Eliak,' zei Bicardo. 'De Traan is ontwaakt in je. Nu moet je opgevoed worden en geschoold

worden in de Traan.'

Hij keek om zich heen en zag de bamboe kampen zoals in de droom over Eliak, het jongetje. Hij voelde zich weer een kind, en zag de natuur-vrouwen op hem afkomen. Ze waren warm en liefdevol, en keken hem glimlachend aan.

'Het heeft me verscheurd,' sprak hij.

'Je moest losgescheurd worden om hier te kunnen komen,' sprak één van de vrouwen.

'De stenen zijn duur, en helemaal de sappen die ze dragen,' sprak een andere vrouw.

'Het leven is duur, zeer duur,' zei een andere vrouw.

Hij knikte. 'Laat me nooit meer los,' smeekte hij.

Toen werd hij wakker. Hij was rustig en er was een warmte om hem heen. 'Ik wordt heen en weer geslingerd tussen twee werelden,' zei hij tegen zichzelf, 'maar ze beïnvloeden elkaar. Ergens moet er een kruispunt zijn, een samensmelting.' Hij zuchtte van opluchting. Hij voelde met beide werelden contact. 'Ik moet beide delen accepteren,' zei hij tegen zichzelf. 'Zij horen bij elkaar. Zij vullen elkaar aan, stuwen elkaar op. Zij behoren tot mijn levensverhaal als kostbare stenen met kostbare sappen. Het leven is waardevol. Eerst is er het misverstand, en dan het begrip, het geheim van de Traan.' Hij beefde. Het leek nog steeds alsof hij droomde. Hij zag zijn verleden langs hem heenstromen als een rivier. Hij wist dat hij de rivier niet kon vasthouden. Alles zou weer tussen zijn vingers wegglippen. Hij moest verder. Hij moest het geheim van de rivier ontdekken, het geheim van de Traan.

Hij zou niet teruggaan naar het verleden. Hij wist dat het iets cyclisch was. Het zou vanzelf wel weer terugkomen, maar dan op een andere manier. Niets was blijvend. Alles moest veranderen. Hij keek naar zijn trouwring. Het waren twee handen die elkaar vasthielden. Hij schudde zijn hoofd. De materie zou hem nooit verder helpen. Dit was geen echte cyclus. Het zou hem alleen maar afhouden van de hogere cyclus. Hij moest het loslaten. Hij ging naar het strand en wierp de gouden trouwring zo ver de zee in als hij kon. Hij voelde de brandende hand van Bicardo op zijn schouder. Alsof toen alles ineens door kon stromen. Hij dook de zee in nadat hij zijn kleren had uitgetrokken. Het was een warme, tropische dag. Hij waande zichzelf met de natuurvrouwen uit zijn droom. Hij maakte plezier met hen in de warme zee. Hij proefde wat van het zoute water. Het leek wel alsof Bicardo naar hem keek vanaf het strand. 'Kom ook in het water, Bicardo !' riep hij. Maar Bicardo begon steeds meer weg te vagen. 'Nee, ik moet nog wat karweitjes doen !' riep de tovenaar. 'Maak jij maar lekker pret met de natuurvrouwen, en leer van hen.' Alles wat nog van deze woorden overbleef was nog een echo.

Een jongen wordt wakker in het klaslokaal door de bel. Hij had zo vreemd gedroomd. Maar ja, alles beter dan zo'n saaie les. Hij had nog steeds de echo van Bicardo's woorden in zijn hoofd, en hij voelde zich duizelig. De kinderen zagen hem wakker worden en lachten hem uit. Hij lachte terug naar hen. 'Domme oen !' zei één van de kinderen.

Hij begon nog harder terug te lachen. 'Wie is er nu een dommere oen ? Ik ben in ieder geval weer heel wat wijzer geworden van mijn slaap, en jullie een heel stuk dommer door het luisteren naar de oen die hier lesgeeft. En vergeet later niet je trouwring in je dikke reet te stoppen. Het mocht je nog eens in grote problemen brengen,' zei hij glimlachend. Toen keek hij de verbaasde onderwijzer aan, en liet zijn ogen toen afdalen naar diens trouwring .... 'Gevangen ... door ... de ... ijsheks ...' fluisterde hij brutaal en aanmatigend in het oor van de leraar, op een spottend toontje. Hem konden

ze niets meer wijsmaken. 'Nu, dat was het,' zei hij. Hij pakte zijn boeken en zijn tas, en liep trots het lokaal uit.

Toen hij thuiskwam zei hij : 'Mam, ik heb toch zo vreemd gedroomd. Het ging over een trouwring, en over ijsheksen die elkaar beschuldigden, en over natuurvrouwen en tovenaars die levende schilderijen maakte.'

'Zorg jij nu maar dat je je huiswerk doet,' zei zijn moeder, 'anders komt er niets van je terecht met al je gedroom.' Brutaal liep hij naar zijn moeder toe en begon aan haar vinger te trekken. 'Als ik het niet dacht,' zei hij. 'Trouwringetje, hè ? Ringetje van ijs ... Gevangen door de ijsheks.'

'Wat bazel je toch ?' zei zijn moeder. 'Als ik niet getrouwd was, was jij er nooit geweest.'

Hij ging recht voor zijn moeder staan in een trotse, bijna sierlijke en poëtische houding, niet zonder spot. 'Mam, nu moet je eens even goed naar me luisteren,' sprak hij. 'Als jij er niet was geweest, dan leefde ik nog steeds op de Traan, maar je moest er wel zijn, anders kon ik niet dieper in de Traan komen. Het stenen ei is van levensbelang, anders zou de Traan nooit kunnen bestaan. De Traan heeft het stenen ei nodig.'

'Hmmm,' zei zijn moeder. 'Je hebt wel praatjes, maar betekent dit dat ik je vader nodig heb ? Het is soms zo'n rotvent, en ik leef vaak in een tranendal met hem.'

'Precies, mam,' zei de jongen. 'Keurig gezegd, petje af. Jij steekt dingen goed op van de levenslessen.'

'Gelukkig maar,' zei zijn moeder.

Einde

IJsziek

Hij was op het piratenschip, op de ijszee. Het was verschrikkelijk koud, en hij begon steeds vreemder te hallucineren en te dromen. Hij was zowel zeeziek als ijsziek. De piraten leken in zijn hallucinaties steeds langer en dunner te worden. Soms leken ze ver weg en soms dichtbij. Hij zweefde op het randje van de dood. Hij was verschrikkelijk aan het ijlen. Hij probeerde zich dingen te herinneren, terwijl hij niet meer wist of hij wakker was of sliep. Hij zag vanaf het schip de gigantische ijszee. Waren de laatste herinneringen die hij had wel echt ? Alles tolde voor zijn ogen. Hij kon geen werkelijkheid van verbeelding meer onderscheiden. Hij voelde zich dronken van de kou. In zijn gedachten probeerde hij terug te gaan door de dagen. Hoe kwam hij hier ? En waarom was hij hier op de ijszee ? Hele vage herinneringen had hij, en hij wist niet of ze waar waren. Hij probeerde zijn herinneringen te grijpen, maar hij kon het niet. Ze leken uit zijn vingers weg te glijden en ze leken te veranderen. Hij probeerde te janken, maar hij kon het niet. Hij voelde zich als bijna bevroren. Hij was al zoveel dagen op deze zee, of misschien wel weken. Hij kon zich herinneren dat het steeds kouder werd. Was het niet een waarzegster die hem op deze tocht had gezonden ? Hij ging in zijn gedachten terug om vat te krijgen op de herinneringen over de waarzegster, maar of het waar was wist hij niet meer. Het drong hem op als de werkelijkheid. Het was alleen even een flits, en het begon zich al snel te vervormen.

Ze had twee stenen. Het waren orakelstenen. Een steen was de tranen steen, en de andere steen was de urine steen. Ze keek in de stenen, en sprak tot hem : 'Ga over de rivier van varkensbloed tot de urine zee.' De bloedvarkens waren woest zoals altijd. Toen hij op zijn bootje op de rivier was moest hij er een paar afschieten met zijn boog. Gruwelijk gromden zij. Hij kwam aan bij de urine zee, laat. Hij wachtte op verdere tekens, maar die kwamen niet. Zij had gezegd dat hij tekens zou ontvangen. 'Die vervloekte stenen doen altijd vaag,' mopperde hij tegen zichzelf.

Hij ging aan boord van een piratenschip, diep in de woestijn, aan de urine zee. De piraten waren lang en woest. Sommigen hadden messen tussen hun tanden. Ze zouden aanleggen bij een amazone eiland. De amazones hielden vee voor bloed en urine. De urine van de zee was ondrinkbaar. De piraten zouden naar het eiland toegaan om met de amazones te onderhandelen.

Het eiland was een reusachtige woestijn op zichzelf. Op het eiland liepen mannen rond aan ketenen. Het waren zware criminelen. Het was een ballingen eiland.

Ook op dit woestijn eiland waren er bloed rivieren en urine rivieren. Er zouden hier ook veel kampen en nederzettingen zijn van de amazones die de mannen gebruikten als slaven.

Na een lange zeereis van vele dagen kwamen ze eindelijk aan op het eiland.

De zee van urine zelf was de zee van vergetelheid, een natuurverschijnsel in de diepte van de eindeloze woestijn. Toen hij op het eiland was aangekomen was hij alles van zijn verleden vergeten. Hij wist niet meer waarom hij hier was. Het zijn op de urine zee van vergetelheid had hem dronken gemaakt.

Na de onderhandelingen gingen ze verder de zee op langs het reusachtige woestijneiland. Verderop zou de urine zee steeds meer overgaan in een ijszee.

De reusachtige ijszee liep over in een zee van bloed. Op een rotseneiland op de zee van bloed woonde een ijsheks. Het duurde vele weken voordat ze daar aankwamen. Het was een donkere vrouw, en hij herkende haar onmiddelijk. Het was een flits van zijn geheugen wat hij weer terugkreeg. 'Jij bent de vrouw van het orakel die mij deze tocht heeft laten maken,' zei hij.
Ze glimlachte warm en liefdevol. 'Dat is mijn andere deel,' sprak ze. 'Ik wilde dat je ook dit deel zou leren kennen. Alleen zij die de tocht maken zullen mij waarlijk kennen en waardig genoeg zijn om met mij te zijn.'
Ze bood een trouwring aan, maar hij raakte in paniek. 'Nee !' riep hij. 'Daarvoor ben ik niet gekomen ! Er moet een ander doel zijn, anders is alles voor niets geweest !'

'Niets is voor niets geweest,' sprak ze. 'Ik bied je een huwelijk aan.'

'Steek het huwelijk in je dikke reet !' riep hij. 'Ik doe niet mee.'

Maar de piraten grepen hem stevig vast.

'Wat ? Een gedwongen huwelijk ? Dat kan niet waar zijn !' riep hij.

Toen sloegen de piraten hem neer. 'Bedankt,' zei de vrouw. Ze ging naar hem toe en schoof de ring om zijn teen. 'Een huwelijks-slaaf om mee te beginnen. Later zien we wel verder.'

Hij kwam weer bij bewustzijn aan ketenen. Hij keek om zich heen en zag meerdere mannen aan ketenen. Hij vroeg zich af waar hij was. Overal was woestijn, dus hij dacht dat het het woestijn-eiland was. Hij kon zich herinneren dat hij gedwongen werd tot een huwelijk, een huwelijk tot een ijsheks. De andere mannen lachten hem uit, en hij wist niet waarom, maar hij dacht dat het was omdat hij nieuw was.

Even later kwamen er amazones om de mannen te inspecteren. 'Ben ik een crimineel dat jullie mij hier houden ?' vroeg hij. Ze zeiden niets en gingen door de rijen. 'Hey !' riep hij. 'Wat heeft dit te betekenen ?'

'Mond houden,' zei een dikke vrouw, terwijl hij een klap kreeg. Hij stortte in elkaar. Daarna kreeg hij nog een paar schoppen totdat hij weer zijn bewustzijn verloor. Deze vrouwen waren keihard.

Toen hij na een tijdje weer bij zijn bewustzijn was gekomen was de ijsheks er weer. 'Waarom doe je mij dit aan ?' kreunde hij.

'Accepteer je het huwelijk of wil je hier blijven ?' vroeg ze.

'Ik accepteer het,' zei hij. Hij werd weer neergeslagen, en kwam pas weer bij op het rotseneiland van de ijsheks in de bloedzee.

Hij zuchtte. 'Waarom moet dit allemaal ?' vroeg hij. 'Ik had nooit naar je moeten luisteren en naar je orakels.'

'Te laat,' sprak ze. 'Zij die mijn andere deel hebben gezien komen nooit meer van me weg.'

'Leuk,' zei hij. 'Wie verzint zulke regels ?'

'Het orakel,' sprak ze.

'Oh, die twee stenen, de tranen steen en de urine steen ?' zei hij spottend. 'Heb je geen andere stenen ?'

'Je hebt teveel praatjes,' zei ze. 'Als je zo doorgaat moet ik je ombrengen.'

'Oh, ook een regel van het orakel ?' zei hij boos. Maar tegelijkertijd werd hij heel bang, en kalmeerde zichzelf. 'Goed, ik accepteer alles wat je zegt. Wat moet ik doen ?'

'Je hebt mijn derde deel nog niet gezien,' sprak ze.

'Ik weet niet of ik je derde deel wel wil zien,' zei hij, 'tenzij je derde deel me hieruit haalt.'

'Dat kan,' zei ze, 'maar zij is erger dan dit deel.'

'Laat dan maar zitten,' zei hij. 'Het is al erg genoeg.'

'Nee, je moet haar zien,' zei ze.

'Ik wil niet !' kermde hij.

Ze sleurde hem mee naar een deur en deed de deur open. Er viel een pop uit. De pop had menselijke afmetingen. 'Hier is ze,' sprak ze.

'Maar dat is een pop,' zei hij.

'Nou en ?' zei ze.

Hij kreeg de pop mee en mocht gaan waar hij wilde gaan, maar mocht de pop niet wegdoen, want dan zou hem iets verschrikkelijks overkomen. De pop ging mee in een doos. Hij kreeg een schip en mocht vertrekken.

Hij was erg blij. De bemanning van het schip zei dat hij maar beter kon doen wat de ijsheks hem zei, anders zou het verkeerd met hem aflopen. Hij wilde de pop overboord laten gooien, maar de bemanning durfde dat niet. Ze vreesden de ijsheks.

Hij besloot het zelf te doen toen ze sliepen, en kieperde de pop in de doos uit het schip. Niet lang daarna was er een verschrikkelijke storm. De bemanning was razend en zagen hem als de schuldige. In hun woede grepen ze hem en wierpen hem overboord. Toen begon de storm kalmer te worden. Ergens zag hij de doos drijven en zwemde er naartoe. Hij nam de pop uit de doos. Zij kon drijven. Hij wist dat hij niet terugkon op het schip. Ergens dichtbij was een eiland waar hij met zijn handen

naartoe peddelde terwijl hij op de pop lag. 'Boe,' zei de pop. 'Wist je niet, hè ?' De pop begon tot leven te komen, en dreef niet meer. Het laatste stukje moesten ze zelf zwemmen. 'Dus ik kom daadwerkelijk niet zomaar van je af ?' vroeg hij. 'Ik denk dat ik gek wordt. Heb je ook een vierde deel ?'

'Het vierde deel is voor hen die overwinnen,' sprak ze.

'Wat overwinnen ?' vroeg hij.

Ze wees op zijn teenring : 'De vervloekte teenring van het gedwongen huwelijk,' sprak ze.

'Hoe kan ik het overwinnen ?' vroeg hij. Hij nam de teenring af en wierp het in de zee. Maar ineens was de teenring weer om zijn teen. 'Het zit vast,' zei ze. Hij zuchtte.

'Ik denk echt dat ik gek wordt,' zei hij, 'maar alles beter dan dat kamp van verbande criminelen.'

Ze had een schortje aan van wat lange witte veren.

'Weet je dan niet dat je zelf het vierde deel bent ?' vroeg ze.

'En zo is het gegaan,' zei een man tegen de psychiater, 'en daarom ben ik hier. Ik ben getrouwd met een pop en kan daarom mezelf niet vinden.'

'Die pop, hè ?' zei de psychiater. 'Staat die bij u thuis ?'

'Ja,' zei de man. 'Die is één dag levend geweest, en daarna was het weer gewoon een pop, en toen heb ik haar mee naar huis genomen, na een lange zee tocht.'

'En u zegt die zee was geheel van urine, overlopende in een ijszee en daarna in een bloedzee ?' vroeg de psychiater.

De man knikte. 'Zeer eigenaardig, zeer eigenaardig,' sprak de psychiater. 'Zeg, mag ik die pop eens zien ?'

'Maar natuurlijk,' zei de man enthousiast. 'Ik ben blij dat u mijn verhaal gelooft.'

'Nou ja, geloven is een groot woord,' zei de psychiater. 'Eerst zien, dan geloven. Daarna zou ik ook graag die urine zee willen zien waar u het over had.'

'Daar kom je niet zomaar,' sprak de man. 'Dan moet je eerst over een varkensrivier, en dan mag je hopen dat je het overleefd, want er zijn daar allemaal woeste bloedvarkens.'

'Dat is me nogal wat,' sprak de psychiater. 'Laat me dan eerst maar eens die pop zien om te beginnen.'

De man nam de psychiater achterop zijn fiets mee naar zijn huis. De donkere pop met het schortje van een paar lange witte veren zat op de bank. Verder was ze naakt.

'Nou, nou,' sprak de psychiater, 'dat is me nogal een pop. Het lijkt wel op een sex pop.'

'Nou, psychiater,' zei de man. 'Ik voel mezelf als een sexpop want het was een gedwongen huwelijk.'

'Ik begrijp het,' knikte de psychiater. 'Is er ooit sprake geweest van verkrachting ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'Nooit,' zei de man. 'Het is maar een pop.'

'Gelukkig maar,' zei de psychiater. 'Dat is al een last minder. Nou, vertelt u mij eens : Hoe is dit nu allemaal gekomen. Waar begon het mee ?'

'Nou, zoals ik al zei,' zei de man. 'Ik ging naar een indiaanse waarzegster in de buurt, en ze gebruikte haar orakelstenen en gaf mij de opdracht.'

'Vreemd, zeer vreemd,' zei de psychiater. 'Zullen we eens naar die waarzegster toegaan ?'

Maar de man begon in paniek te raken. 'Daar wil ik niet meer komen !' riep hij. 'Ik heb een teenring waar ik van probeer af te komen, maar zodra ik hem afdoe zit de teenring er weer om.

'Eigenaardig,' zei de psychiater. 'Laat u mij dat eens zien.'

De man deed zijn schoen en sok uit en nam de teenring van zijn teen af. Hij gaf de teenring aan de psychiater. 'Wat een prachtige teenring,' zei de psychiater.

'Nee, het is een vervloekte teenring, mijnheer de psychiater,' zei de man. 'De teenring van het gedwongen huwelijk.'

'Maar er zit geen teenring meer om uw teen,' zei de psychiater. 'Waarschijnlijk heeft u alles gewoon gedroomd, en heeft u de teenring ooit eens gekocht of gekregen. Zeg, mag ik eens met die indiaanse waarzegster praten waar u het over had ? Ik begrijp dat door die gebeurtenis alles misliep in uw leven, zegt u. U hoeft niet met mij mee te gaan, maar kunt u mij het adres van die waarzegster geven ?'

'Ik ben bang dat de teenring straks weer aan mijn teen zit als u weg bent,' zei de man. Hij liep naar de kast en haalde er een kaartje uit. 'Hier is haar visite kaartje, en neemt u gerust de teenring mee. Ik wil de teenring niet meer. Ik heb er teveel ellende aan overgehouden.'

'Wilt u dat ik de pop ook meeneem ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'Graag,' zei de man.

De psychiater stopte de teenring met het visite kaartje in zijn zak, en nam de pop mee in een grote plastic tas. Bij de waarzegster aangekomen belde hij aan. Een donkere vrouw deed open. 'Goedendag,' sprak de psychiater. 'Ik heb nogal een vreemd verhaal gehoord van één van mijn patiënten, en zou daar graag met u over willen praten om een en ander te verifiëren.'

'Komt u verder,' sprak de vrouw warm en hartelijk. Hij legde de tas in de gang neer en kreeg een stoel in de huiskamer waarop hij ging zitten, en begon toen het verhaal te vertellen.

De vrouw luisterde ernaar met open mond. Aan het einde van het verhaal begon ze te lachen. 'Ik kan mijn oren niet geloven,' sprak ze. 'U moet weten dat ik ten eerste geen tranen steen of urine steen heb, en ten tweede heb ik hem nooit zulke opdrachten gegeven, en ten derde is de rest van het verhaal al helemaal het bizarste wat ik ooit heb gehoord.'

De psychiater haalde de teenring uit zijn zak en liet het aan de vrouw zien. De vrouw knikte bewonderend. 'Het is een mooi ding, maar ik heb het nog nooit eerder gezien. Ik heb niets, maar dan ook niets met deze zaak te maken.'

'Maar kent u hem ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'En of ik hem ken,' zei de vrouw. 'Hij is hier vaak geweest.'

'En wat gebeurde er dan ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'We hadden sex voor geld, en ik voorspelde voor hem de toekomst,' legde ze uit.

'Wie betaalde ? U of hij ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'Hij betaalde. Het is mijn professie, mijnheer,' sprak ze. 'Bent u hier nieuw ? U bent hier in de rode buurt.'

'Dus u bent hoer, en waarzegster,' zei de psychiater. 'Ik vraag me af hoe hij zo geworden is, en waarom hij deze dingen denkt. Heeft u enig idee hoe hij zo geworden is, of zijn er hier dingen gebeurd waardoor hij misschien in de war is geraakt.'

De vrouw keek de man geheimzinnig aan. 'Ik heb zo mijn beroepsgeheimen,' sprak ze.

'Dat is vaag, heel vaag,' sprak de psychiater. 'Ik heb informatie nodig om mijn eigen professie te kunnen uitvoeren.'

'Dan komt u maar met de politie of een advocaat,' sprak de vrouw, 'maar ik ga niet zomaar persoonlijke informatie aan u geven.' De vrouw stond op en wenkte hem. 'Ik kan u niet verder helpen op het moment,' zei de vrouw koud. 'De informatie is gevoelig.'

Na een paar minuten stond de psychiater op de stoep. Hij was de tas met de pop vergeten. Daarna werd de deur weer opengemaakt. 'U bent uw sex pop vergeten,' zei de vrouw terwijl ze de tas overhandigde. Ze sprak nog steeds koud.

'Het is mijn sex pop niet,' zei de man, 'maar van mijn patiënt. Is die pop toevallig ook van u ?'

'Nee hoor,' sprak de vrouw kil, en smeet de deur weer dicht.

Inmiddels zat de teenring weer om de teen van de man, en de psychiater stond voor een raadsel. De psychiater had de andere teenring nog steeds in zijn zak. 'Had u toevallig meerderen van zulke ringen ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'Nee,' zei de man. De ring was adembenemend mooi. De psychiater bleef er maar naar staren. 'Weet u dat u heel rijk kunt worden ?' sprak de psychiater langzaam.

'Ik weet het,' zei de man, 'maar ik wil er vanaf.'

'Ik begrijp het, ik begrijp het,' sprak de psychiater. 'De waarzegster ontkende alles, maar ze had naar eigen zeggen wel haar beroepsgeheimen. Het ging om persoonlijke en gevoelige informatie.'

'Ik ben veel vergeten,' zei de man. 'Het komt door de urine zee, de zee van vergetelheid, waarop ik was.'

'U heeft niet toevallig gewoon wat gedronken ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'Kan wezen, kan wezen,' zei de man.

'Ik heb namelijk nog nooit van een urine zee van vergetelheid gehoord,' sprak de psychiater. 'Misschien haalt u dingen door de war.'

'We dronken soms wat voordat we sex hadden,' zei de man. 'Een stimulerend drankje.'

'Of misschien heeft ze een verdovend middel in het drankje gedaan ?' vroeg hij. 'Je kunt hoeren nooit vertrouwen.'

'Misschien,' zei de man. 'Ze zei dat ze een heks was, een ijsheks.'

'Ik begrijp het,' zei de psychiater. 'En heksen kun je al helemaal niet vertrouwen. Het was een waarzegster.'

'Precies,' zei de man. 'En die teenring die telkens verschijnt is het bewijs.'

'Weet je zeker dat je geen hele bak thuis hebt met zulke teenringen ?' vroeg de psychiater. 'Het zijn wel hele aparte ringen die je niet zomaar ergens vindt.'

'Ik weet het zeker,' zei de man.

'Nu,' zei de psychiater. 'Het verhaal wat u mij vertelt lijkt heel veel op een meervoudig personaliteiten syndroom. U denkt dat u een deel bent van de waarzegster.'

'Nee,' zei de man. 'Dat denk ik niet. Dat zei de pop.'

'Maar poppen praten niet,' zei de psychiater. 'Ik denk dat u in de war bent met iets, onder invloed van drugs of alcohol. Het verhaal klopt van geen kanten.'

De man begon zenuwachtig te worden. 'Goed, u gelooft mij niet, terwijl u zelf zag dat ik de teenring weer terughad. Ik zit hier mijn tijd te verdoen.'

'Luister,' zei de psychiater. 'Er kan heel goed misdaad in het spel zijn. De vrouw wilde niet echt meewerken, en alles is uiterst verdacht.'

'Schakelt u de politie dan in ?' vroeg de man.

'Ik zit er wel aan te denken,' zei de psychiater, 'want voor nu komen we geen stap verder.'

'Doe dan wat,' zei de man. 'Want mijn leven is een hel.'

Een man wordt wakker van het geblaf van honden. 'Karel, laat de honden uit !' roept zijn vrouw. De man kleedt zich snel aan en gaat met de herdershonden naar buiten. Wat een vreemde droom had hij gehad over een ijsheks en dat hij bij de psychiater zat. Hij had een slecht huwelijk, en probeerde zijn vrouw zo veel mogelijk te ontwijken. Toch kon hij ook niet zonder, alsof hij vastzat aan onzichtbare ketenen.

'Droom, droom, laat de tovenaar je lach zien,

Droom, droom, laat de tovenaar je traan zien,
Oh droom, en laat de tovenaar al je ketenen zien,
Want hij staat bij de grote ketel,
de dromenketel, waar hij alles weer goed kan maken,
Als de dromensmid is hij, als de woordensmid is hij,
Hoe diep de woorden ook in je hart zijn geschoten,
Hij vist ze er weer uit,
Hij is de dromenvisser,
Hoe diep de vloeken ook in je hart zijn gestoken,
Hij vist ze er weer uit

Droom, droom, laat de tovenaar je hart zien,
Laat de tovenaar je pracht zien en al je pijn,
Droom, droom, laat de tovenaar de ijsheks zien,
Zij die met je spot, zij die je telkens bedot,
Laat het zien, laat het de dromensmid zien,
Hij is de dromenvisser,
Hij neemt je mee, op de zee, een weg eruit,
Een weg erdoor, opdat je het sieraad ziet,
De teenring die nooit weggaat, het is niet wat je denkt,
Het is een onbegrepen geschenk,
Het vertelt een verhaal,
Oh droom, droom, totdat het zichtbaar wordt voor jou,
Begrepen als het sieraad van genezing,
Over de zeeën nam het je mee, tot een kroning

Droom, droom, laat de tovenaar het zien,
Laat de tovenaar je helpen,
Geef hem je tijd en energie,
Hij leidt je erdoor,
Met een ring en een verhaal,
Hij leidt je erdoor'

De man keek op van het vreemde lied.
De honden blaften nog steeds.
Een man in een paars gewaad stond voor hem.
Hij wilde wegrennen.

'Ik ben de tovenaar,' sprak de man.
Karel keek weer op naar de man.
'Karel ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

'Ja ?' zei Karel.
'Ik moet je wat vertellen,' zei de tovenaar.

'Droom, droom, op de golven van je droom,
Op de golven van je liederen,' zong een vreemd lied.

'Wat moet ik hiermee ?' vroeg Karel.

'Ik ben de tovenaar van je dromen,' sprak de man.
Karel kon niets dan buigen voor de man en viel op zijn knielen,

terwijl de honden nog steeds afschuwelijk blaften.
'Stop jongens !' riep hij naar de honden, maar ze gingen maar door.

'Ze zijn erg waakzaam,' zei de tovenaar.
'W... wie bent u ?' vroeg Karel.
'Ik ben de tovenaar van je dromen,' zei de tovenaar weer.

'Droom, droom, ik ben het lied van je hart ...'

'Kunt u alstublieft stoppen met zingen,' zei Karel bijna huilend.
'U maakt me gek.'

'Ongevoelig, hè ?' sprak de tovenaar.
'De laatste tijd probeer ik je te breken met dromen, want je leeft in een grote leugen.'

'Ik weet het,' sprak Karel.
'En het maakt me gek. Ik wordt verscheurd door twee kanten.'

'Laat je verscheuren, Karel,' sprak de tovenaar.
'Zoals het nu is is het niet goed.'

'Droom, droom,' ging het lied verder.

'Houd op !' krijste Karel.

Karel rolde over de grond met zijn vingers in zijn oren, maar hij kon het niet meer stoppen. Het ging harder en harder en nam hem helemaal over, totdat hij op de golven was van de urine zee om zijn leven te vergeten. Er was een teenring aan zijn teen die er nooit afkon. Het was als een implantaat, als een keten. Het was gedwongen. Hij rolde aan de voeten van de ijsheks. 'Gevangene van de trouwring,' sprak ze.

'Laat me los, heks !' schreeuwde Karel.

'Waarom zou ik ?' vroeg de ijsheks.

'Laat me sterven in ijs !' riep de man. 'Ik houd het niet meer vol ! Het is altijd hetzelfde liedje, eeuwig en altijd.'

'Wij horen bij elkaar,' sprak de ijsheks. 'We zijn delen van elkaar.'

De man zuchtte. Hij probeerde het te begrijpen.

'De kaart van de ijsheks,' sprak de tovenaar, 'een kaart in je dek.
Ze laat je nooit meer los, want het is een deel van je hart,
Een teenring is wat ze je gaf, de trouwring,
En de waarzegster voorspelt de toekomst,
Een andere kaart in je dek,
Zij speelt met het orakel en jou,
En zendt je op verre tochten om de ijsheks te ontmoeten,
Zodat je wakker wordt aan haar voeten,
Geketend aan een pop die je hart bewaart,
de derde kaart, totdat je je hart vindt, de vierde kaart,

Niets dan blaffende herdershonden die het geheim van het huwelijk bewaken,
En dan ben ik de vijfde kaart, de dromenkaart, om je inzicht te bieden. Droom diep.'

De man keek op en zag de kaart van de tovenaar boven hem zweven. Hij probeerde de kaart te grijpen, maar het vloog van hem weg, terwijl de ijsheks ijselijk lachte.
Hij voelde zichzelf als wegzinkende in een ijszee, totdat alles begon te bloeden.
Hij voelde zichzelf als een pop die zijn hart niet kon bereiken.

Hij werd wakker op het piratenschip op de ijszee. De kou had hem vreselijk doen hallucineren en dromen. Hij voelde zich als op het randje van de dood, en hij was zeeziek. Ook was hij ijsziek.

'Ik ben aan het ijsdromen !' riep hij. Hij had niet het gevoel dat iemand hem zou kunnen horen. Hij zag de piraten heel lang en dun worden, heel ver weg, en dan weer dik en dichtbij. 'Het zijn nachtmerries !' gilde hij.

'De kaart van het piratenschip op de ijszee,' sprak een stem.

'Die kaarten zijn gevaarlijk,' zei hij.

'Nee, nee,' zei de waarzegster, 'we hebben ze nodig.'

'Waar ben ik ?' vroeg hij.

'Bij mij, onder hypnose,' sprak ze. 'Ik ben de dromendokter. Ik genees je verleden.'

'Ik was in een nachtmerrie,' zei hij. 'Stervende van de kou op een piratenschip.'

'Dat piratenschip was je leven,' zei de waarzegster.

'Waar is het goed voor ?' vroeg hij. 'Ben ik nog steeds ijsziek ?'

'Kijk,' zei de waarzegster. Hij zag brandend ijs. De kaart begon te branden.

'U doet truukjes,' zei hij.

Hij was zwaar aan het hallucineren op het schip. Hij jammerde zachtjes. Hij was aan het ijlen. Hij vroeg zich af of hij de enige was. Misschien waren de piraten wel zo gewend aan de ijszee en zo gehard dat ze niet meer zeeziek en ijsziek werden. Voor hem was het de eerste keer. Ze waren op weg naar de ijsheks. Zij woonde op een rotsen eiland.

Hij viel in een diepe slaap. Ze brachten hem voor de ijsheks. Hij was nieuw. Hier ontwaakte hij. Ze glimlachte naar hem. Ineens was ze in de verte, lang en dun, en toen weer dichtbij en dik. Hij was nog steeds aan het ijlen. 'IJsziek, hè ?' zei ze. 'Je moet er wat voor over hebben om bij me te kunnen komen.'

'W... wat doe ik hier ?' vroeg hij. 'B... ben ik dood ?'

'Je zou dood kunnen zijn,' zei de ijsheks.

'Laat me los, heks !' riep hij.

'En toen werd ik wakker in mijn bed,' zei een man bij de psychiater.

'Volkomen normaal,' zei de psychiater. 'U had misschien koorts of iets verkeerds gedronken, en toen bent u vreemd gaan dromen. Iedereen droomt weleens vreemd. Er is niets met u aan de hand. Dromen zijn volkomen normaal. Het is een verwerkings-mechanisme van het menselijk lichaam. Het is heel psychologisch. Als ik u was zou ik me geen zorgen maken.'

'Maar ik ben bang nog te gaan slapen,' sprak de man. 'Het is niet de eerste keer. Mijn hele leven is het al zo. Ik leef in twee werelden.'

'Volkomen normaal,' zei de psychiater. 'Misschien moet u schrijver worden ? Doe iets met de dromen.'

'Ja, maar ik ben bang voor mijn dromen,' zei de man. 'Ik ben erdoor opgesloten. Aan de andere kant heb ik ook een Stockholm syndroom lijkt het wel, alsof ik verliefd ben op mijn eigen dromen. Er is ook iets zoets aan mijn nachtmerries wat ik maar niet kan verklaren. Het is heel dubbel.'

'Eén van onze pilletjes, en je bent van alles af,' zei de psychiater.

'Dat is teveel van het goede,' zei de man. 'Zoals ik u al zei kan ik ook niet zonder. Maar wat zijn dat voor pilletjes ?'

De psychiater keek hem diep aan. 'De pilletjes zijn genaamd "IJsziek". Alle psychiaters slikken die pilletjes, en dat is ook de voorwaarde geweest om hier te kunnen werken. Het heeft als bij-effect dat je één keer ongeveer droomt zoals u heeft gedroomd, en daarna droom je bijna nooit meer, en ben je van alles af. Wel moet je die pilletjes je hele leven blijven slikken.'

'Waarom ?' vroeg de man.

'Anders komen de dromen terug, erger dan ze ooit zijn geweest,' sprak de psychiater.

De Tuin Engel

Ze was gebonden aan de tuin. Buiten de tuin zou ze sterven.
Ik kwam haar alleen tegen in de tuin.
Het was een wonderschone tuin, dat wel,
De pracht van de stad ...

Ze had geheimen,
Ik wist niet welke,

Erover praten kon ze niet,
Altijd sliep ze in een stenen bed, ergens diep in de tuin,
En ook zijzelf was van steen, en soms een engel ...

De engel van de tuin werd ze genoemd,
Haar water had genezende krachten,
Diep in de tuin

Op een dag nam ze mij aan haar hand,
Tot de diepte van haar tuin,
Als een wildernis was het hier,
Niemand mocht hier ooit komen,
Ze tilde mij over het hek

Ze gebood me te rennen, en dat deed ik,
En plots was ik ook van steen,
Als betoverd door de tuin,
Ik kon de schoonheid niet dragen

Soms ben ik een engel, soms ben ik van steen,
En nu leef ik langs alles heen,
In een droom wereld leef ik nu,
Sinds de dag dat zij mij meenam ...

De Verslaving

Hij leefde alleen, diep in de natuur, eenzaam en verlaten. Hij leefde van giftige bessen die hem deden hallucineren. Dat was alles waarvan hij leefde. Hij leefde in tussen het morgenrood en avondrood. Vreemde natuurverschijnselen drongen zich aan hem op door de hallucinaties. Hij had naakte vrouwen in zijn hoofd die veranderden in wapenen. Het was altijd oorlog in zijn hoofd, als

een oorlogstrauma. In de natuur was er geen plaats voor oorlog, maar de bessen maakten hem wild. Altijd was hij op zijn hoede, maar hij was geheel alleen. Als hij zich in het water waste dacht hij altijd dat het bloed was. Zijn hersenen waren zwaar aangetast door de bessen. Hij leefde in een hele andere realiteit. Als hij de bessen at dacht hij dat het vlees was van zijn prooi. Hij dacht dat hij een jager was, maar hij was half verlamd. Er waren hier geen dieren, alleen bessen. Er waren hier geen vrouwen, alleen dromen. De wilde bessen hadden bezit van hem genomen. En het waren geeneens bessen. Het was zaad, van een vreemde, wilde struik. Hij dacht dat het bessen waren. Het groeide in de bomen, overal door de wildernis. Als hij geen zaad had gegeten voelde hij zich eenzaam en depressief, en wilde hij niet meer leven, alhoewel hij de natuur steeds meer begon te bewonderen. En zo was de nieuwe realiteit in zijn hoofd een ziekte, maar het hielp hem te overleven. Hij was verslaafd aan verwoestende drugs, het giftige zaad van een boom.

Hij vond zijn ziekte mooi, hij aanbad zijn ziekte. Het was zijn kameraad. Hij voelde zich minder eenzaam als hij van het zaad had gegeten. De winters waren streng, en dan moest hij altijd onder de grond waar het zaad niet was. In de winters groeide het zaad niet, en dan hongerde hij uit, hebbende hallucinaties van de kou, maar ook de winters zelf waren slechts hallucinaties van het zaad.

Naakte vrouwen waren in zijn hallucinaties jacht gerei zodra hij dichterbij hen kwam. In zijn hoofd leefde hij van de jacht. Na de winter was hij te zwak om boven de grond te komen. Hij leefde van de aarde en zijn eigen urine. Zijn hersenen waren zo beschadigd dat hij bleef hallucineren. Hij hallucineerde over het zaad. De naakte vrouwen in zijn hoofd waren het zaad, maar hij wist dat het zaad giftig was en dat het zaad hem zou kunnen doden. Hij probeerde weg te komen van de naakte vrouwen, maar zij lieten hem niet gaan. Als hij probeerde te ontsnappen werd hij weer door hen gevangen in een wilde achtervolging. Hij was een verslaafde. De drugs liet hem niet meer gaan.

De Vijfde Rivier

Hij woonde op een onbewoond eiland en hij hallucineerde vanwege de honger waarin hij leefde. Alles wat hier op het eiland groeide was giftig, en hij durfde het niet te eten.
De honger visioenen werden erger en erger, maar ook hield het hem in leven op een vreemde manier. Het was alsof de giftige bessen en het giftige zaad om hem heen hem beschermde tegen de dood. In deze natuur waren er andere wetten. Je stierf niet door de honger, maar je kwam erdoor tot leven.

Ook dit was slechts een hallucinatie want hij was niet op een onbewoond eiland, maar in de woestijn van de honger planeet, die een woestijn planeet was.

Hij moest over vijf rivieren : de urine rivier, de tranen rivier, de rivier van slaap, de rivier des doods, en daarna de rivier van depressie. Toen hij over de rivier van depressie was gegaan, de vijfde rivier, zag hij donkere vrouwen aan de oever. Vissersvrouwen met netten, en ze haalden hem naar binnen. Ze deden alsof hij een vis was die ze hadden gevangen. Hij werd naar hun kamp geleid, en aan een paal gebonden. Hij was zwaar depressief. Hij wilde niet meer leven, maar het was alsof de vrouwen hem in leven hielden, alsof ze zijn medicijnen waren.

De medicijnen hadden zo hun bijwerkingen. Hij werd afhankelijk en zij lieten hem werken. Hij kwam echter niet vrij van zijn depressie. Het was alsof ze een gat in de markt hadden gevonden. Ze lieten hem ertussen hangen.

Ze hadden rokjes van veren, van de kippen van zijn gedachtes. Ze molken hem helemaal uit. Ze visten in de wateren van zijn depressies en trauma's, op zoek naar een reactie, als psychiaters op zoek naar geld, prikkende in zijn wonden. Hij was een patiënt die ze niet meer lieten gaan.

De Speelgoed Fabriek

De psychiater gaf hem medicijnen die hem hallucinaties gaven van de natuur, omdat hij depressief was geworden door de stadse etiquette, maar de patiënt had klachten over de medicijnen. De hallucinaties zouden te wild zijn. Het zou voorkomen dat hij zich midden in een stammenoorlog bevond. Hij vroeg zich af of het bijwerkingen waren.
De psychiater schudde zijn hoofd. 'Nee, nee, dat zijn geen bijwerkingen. Het is een manier om wat afleiding te hebben.'
Maar de patiënt begon steeds meer te klagen over de medicijnen, dat hij hallucinaties van donkere vrouwen ervan kreeg die hem pijn deden.
Ook hiervan zei de psychiater dat het bij het medicijn hoorde, om zo los te komen van alle stadse trauma's.
'Dus eigenlijk krijg ik een nieuw trauma om los te komen van het oude trauma ?' vroeg de patiënt.
De psychiater schudde zijn hoofd, terwijl hij zijn pijp uitklopte. 'Jongen, moet je eens even goed naar mij luisteren. De hallucinaties weten wat ze doen. De vrouwen moeten het trauma eruit slaan,' sprak hij.

'Maar mijn depressies lijken erger te worden,' zei de patiënt.

'Dat is altijd zo in het begin,' zei de psychiater. 'Moet je luisteren. Wat als ik je wat andere medicijnen meegeef ? Dan kun je uittesten welke medicijnen je het beste liggen.'

De man ging met verschillende doosjes medicijnen naar huis, en probeerde ze allemaal uit. Elk medicijn bracht weer andere soorten hallucinaties.

'Het lijkt wel als het lezen van boeken,' zei de man toen hij weer terugwas bij de psychiater, 'of het kijken naar films.'

'Precies,' zei de psychiater. 'Het is heel therapeutisch.'

'Ook wel erg politiek,' zei de patiënt. 'Ze proberen je een bepaalde kant op te drukken, om je van een bepaalde partij lid proberen te krijgen.'

'Ah, zo moet je dat niet zien,' zei de psychiater. 'Het zijn verhalen. Doe ermee wat je wilt. Als het is uitgewerkt neem je er weer één in, of je neemt een ander.'

'Maar is er geen verslavings-gevaar ?' vroeg de patiënt, 'want sommige medicijnen zijn wel erg aantrekkelijk.'

'Tja,' zei de psychiater, 'het helpt je je belevingsvermogen te herstellen. Natuurlijk is het het beste ze niet te slikken, maar soms heeft een mens een duwtje nodig.'

'Ik begrijp het,' zei de patiënt. 'Dus elk medicijn heeft weer zijn eigen fantasie ?'

'Ja,' sprak de psychiater, 'en het helpt het lichaam zelf die stoffen aan te maken, dus het is alleen maar voor tijdelijk, totdat het lichaam de stof heeft overgenomen.'

'Interessant,' zei de patiënt. 'Ik zou wel veel meer medicijnen willen uitproberen.

Die dag ging de man met een hele tas vol medicijnen naar huis, en probeerde ze thuis allemaal uit. Na een paar weken was hij terug bij de psychiater. 'Geweldig,' sprak de patiënt. 'Ik voel me al een stuk beter, en ben tegelijkertijd van mijn televisie verslaving afgekomen.'

'Wonderbaarlijk,' sprak de psychiater. 'Dat is goed nieuws.'

'Ja,' sprak de patiënt. 'Ik ben er erg enthousiast over, maar ik moet er wel bijzeggen dat mijn sociale leven er erg onder lijdt. Ik kom haast niet meer onder de mensen, omdat ik mijn hallucinaties veel interessanter vindt.'

'Tja, het gaat een beetje om balans zoeken,' sprak de psychiater. 'De hallucinaties bieden hun eigen sociale leven, als een soort virtuele realiteit, maar ik kan me voorstellen dat de mensen om u heen dat lastig kunnen vinden.'

'Ja,' sprak de patiënt, 'vooral mijn vrouw, want die begint nu ook al depressief te worden doordat ik haar minder aandacht geef.'

'Is het geen tijd voor haar dan om ook eens een pilletje uit te proberen ?' vroeg de psychiater. 'Ik kan zo een afspraak voor haar maken.'

'Nee,' zei de patiënt, 'dat is geen optie. Ze is bang voor de psychiater, en al helemaal voor medicijnen. Ze denkt dat het troep is, en vooral nu ik haar zo negeer.'

'Oh, dat is niet leuk,' zei de psychiater. 'Maar wij hebben ook medicijnen die het sociale leven opstuwen. Je gaat dan anderen ook door hele andere ogen bekijken, door speciale soorten hallucinaties.'

'Dat lijkt me wel wat,' zei de patiënt. 'Dan zou ik die heel graag willen gebruiken, want nu staat mijn huwelijk op het randje van instorten.'

De man krijgt weer andere soorten medicijnen mee, en gaat ze thuis uitproberen. Hij geeft weer veel aandacht aan zijn vrouw, en bekijkt haar inderdaad met andere ogen, meer als in een verhaal. Hij komt enthousiast terug bij de psychiater een paar weken later. 'Nou, het heeft gewerkt, hoor,' zei hij tegen de psychiater. 'Mijn vrouw is er enorm door opgeleefd.'

'Goedzo,' zei de psychiater.

Maar na een tijdje kwam de rekening bij de man binnen waardoor hij enorm schrok, en waardoor hij en zijn vrouw in enorme financiële problemen kwamen. Beiden werden ze hier depressiever van dan ze ooit waren geweest en begonnen alles op elkaar af te reageren. Ook beschuldigden ze elkaar ervan. 'Laten we rustig blijven,' zei de man. 'Misschien maakt mijn lichaam de nodige stoffen nu

zelf aan, zodat we de psychiater niet meer nodig hebben.' Maar de financiële depressie en alles wat daarmee te maken had was te zwaar. Ze waren diep in de schulden gekomen. Hij had speciale medicijnen nodig voor financiële depressie, en wist dat hij dan eerst uit de schulden moest komen, en dan voor de medicijnen moest sparen. Maar de schulden werden steeds erger, want doordat de man nu depressiever was dan ooit verloor hij zijn baan. Hij kwam in een vicieuze cirkel terecht en werd helemaal naar beneden gezogen, terwijl hij zijn vrouw meezoog. Na een tijdje kon zijn vrouw er niet meer tegen, en kwamen ze in een scheiding. Nu had hij ook speciale medicijnen nodig om dit te verwerken. Hij zag het niet meer zitten. Hij besloot gokker te worden, maar hierdoor verloor hij zelfs al zijn bezit. Een ziekenhuis kon hij niet betalen, dus hij werd een zwerver. 'Het is allemaal de schuld van die vervloekte medicijnen,' gromde hij. Toen hij de psychiater eens op straat tegenkwam vloog hij hem aan. Hij begon op de psychiater in te slaan, totdat de politie kwam om hem te arresteren en naar de gevangenis te brengen. 'Dat is ook een oplossing,' dacht hij bij zichzelf. 'Hier heb ik in ieder geval te eten, te drinken en een dak boven mijn hoofd.'

In de gevangenis kwam hij ook dieven tegen die de speciale hallucinatie medicijnen hadden gestolen. 'Duur zijn ze, hè ?' zei hij tegen zijn medegevangenen. Ze knikten. 'Daarom stalen we ze, en nu zijn we hier.'

'Het zit ons ook niet mee,' zei hij. 'Het lijkt wel alsof die medicijnen ons de afgrond in hebben geholpen.'

'Therapie noemen ze dat dan,' sprak één van de dieven. 'Een geneesmiddel, maar nee.'

Tot zijn grote verbazing kreeg hij in de gevangenis dezelfde soort medicijnen die hij had, maar dan gratis. Het hoorde bij het resocialisatie proces en het werd door de staat betaald. 'Verwacht er maar niet teveel van,' zei één van de dieven. 'Het is allemaal sterk verdunt. Het houd je tussen wal en schip.' En zo was het. De medicijnen speelden een spelletje met hem.

'Ik denk dat ze ons gewoon die troep geven zodat zij in ieder geval hun baan kunnen blijven behouden,' sprak hij tegen zijn mede-gevangenen, die knikten.

'Natuurlijk,' zei één van de dieven. 'Het is allemaal doorgestoken kaart. Waarom zou een dokter iedereen daadwerkelijk willen genezen ? Dan heeft hij geen werk meer en geen inkomsten. Het zijn slimme en sluwe gasten.'

'Daarom vloog ik er ook één aan,' zei de man. 'En blijkbaar werkt het ziekenhuis samen met de politie. Zo weten ze ons altijd te krijgen en te houden.'

'Het is één groot complot,' zei de dief. 'Ik heb geen vertrouwen meer in de maatschappij. Ze hebben mijn respect verloren, en ik neem nu gewoon wat ik nodig denk te hebben.'

'Laten die medicijnen ons dit ook niet hallucineren ?' vroeg de man.

'Dat zou best kunnen,' zei de dief. 'Ik zou er in ieder geval niet van opkijken.'

De volgende dag komt de psychiater hem opzoeken. Hij kan tot de psychiater spreken van achter glas. 'Ik heb er over nagedacht,' sprak de psychiater. 'Ik wist dat je de medicijnen nodig had en niet kon betalen. Dat kan inderdaad frustrerend zijn, en sommigen gaan dan door het lint. Ik kan de rechtbank vragen u te berechten met verzachtende omstandigheden.'

'U doet maar wat u niet laten kan,' sprak de man, 'maar ik zit hier best. Hier heb ik in ieder geval een dak boven mijn hoofd, te eten en te drinken, en de medicijnen, alhoewel zwaar verdund. Het

houdt me in het midden, maar het is beter dan niks.'

'Ik heb speciale medicijnen waardoor u psychiater of politie kunt worden,' sprak de psychiater. 'Lijkt u dat niet wat ? Dan heeft u volledige beschikking over de medicijnen die u nodig heeft.'

De man wordt boos. 'Jullie zijn grote oplichters,' roept hij. Dan is de bezoekerstijd om. De volgende dag komt zijn vrouw hem bezoeken. 'Echt, het spijt me,' zei ze. 'Ik had het nooit moeten doen. Mijn leven is nu nog wel erger dan het was.'

'Dat is jouw probleem,' zei de man. Ook dat gesprek was snel afgelopen. Het gevangenis leven viel hem zwaar, maar het was beter dan buiten de gevangenis. Ook had hij het gevoel dat de gevangenis-bewakers geen gelukkig leven hadden, dus daar moest hij ook niet aan denken. Op een dag kwam de psychiater weer langs, maar de man wilde hem niet meer zien. Na lang aandringen kwam de man toch, en had een gesprek met de psychiater van achter het glas.

'Luister,' zei de psychiater. 'Ik heb je echt verkeerd ingeschat. Ik denk dat ik je verkeerde medicijnen heb gegeven, en om het goed te maken heb ik nu de juiste medicijnen voor je, en je mag ze gratis hebben op volle sterkte.'

De man dacht dat hij toch niets te verliezen had, en nam de medicijnen aan zonder te vragen waar het voor was, of wat het voor een effect zou hebben. Toen de psychiater weg was nam hij wat van de medicijnen in. Hij kreeg dit keer wel hele vreemde hallucinaties. Hij was bij de tandarts en de tandarts begon in zijn tanden en kiezen te boren. Ook begonnen de oren van de tandarts te groeien. Hij probeerde weg te rennen, maar hij was gebonden aan de stoel waarin hij lag. Van de pijn merkte hij dat hij niet meer kon praten. Hij schrok wakker en wilde direct de psychiater spreken, maar hij kon nog steeds niet praten. Hij besloot daarom te schrijven, maar ook dat hielp niet. Omdat het beschreven werd als een gevangenis-ongeval mocht hij zo gratis naar het ziekenhuis. Hier kreeg hij wel allerlei medicijnen op volle sterkte, maar hij kon nog steeds niet spreken. Hij dacht bij zichzelf hoe hij nou zo stom kon wezen om zomaar medicijnen te slikken terwijl hij van niets wist. Maar ook het denken ging steeds moeilijker. In het ziekenhuis begonnen ze medicijnen te dwingen en ook kreeg hij gedwongen spuitjes. Hij kon zich niet verdedigen. Hij zat in zichzelf opgesloten en gleed langzaam weg in een coma. Hij wist nu wel zeker dat de psychiater een grote misdadiger was. Na een tijdje verklaarden ze hem dood, terwijl hij nog steeds in leven was, en alles kon horen. Hij kon horen hoe zij zijn begrafenis al aan het regelen waren.

Dan komt zijn ex-vrouw ineens huilend binnen. 'Jullie hebben hem teveel rotzooi gegeven !' riep ze. 'Hij kan wel schijndood zijn. Dat heb ik weleens gelezen dat dat kan gebeuren als mensen teveel medicijnen hebben genomen.' Maar ze wilden haar niet geloven.

'Ik eis dat jullie stoppen waar jullie mee bezig zijn !' riep ze, 'en dan zien of hij misschien uit zijn schijndood komt omdat hij geen medicijnen meer binnen krijgt.' Ze liep naar hem toe en voelde zijn pols. 'Zie !' krijste ze. 'Hij heeft nog steeds polsslag. Hij is helemaal niet dood, stelletje criminelen !'

Maar zij grepen ook haar, en injecteerden haar vanwege opstandig gedrag. Ze maakten aantekeningen dat ze gevaarlijk zou zijn, en snel was zij ook in een coma, en werd dood verklaard. Nu zouden ze beiden begraven worden. Ze kreeg hele vreemde hallucinaties door de injecties. Ze kon met haar ex-man spreken, en hij kon terugspreken. Maar het waren slechts hallucinaties. Haar ex-man hoorde haar niet meer. Toen ze beiden levend waren begraven en waren gestorven hallucineerden zij door, alsof zij een nieuw leven hadden gekregen. Maar zij waren niet bij elkaar.

De man zag een tandarts voor hem staan, en gaf hem een klap in het gezicht. Ook de vrouw zag een tandarts voor haar staan, en deed hetzelfde. Er kwam geen politie aan te pas dit keer. Maar de oren

van de tandartsen begonnen weer te groeien. 'Wat is dit voor medicijn !' schreeuwde de man naar de tandarts. Maar de tandarts gaf geen antwoord. De mond van de tandarts werd steeds kleiner en kleiner. Plotseling was de tandarts een konijn. Het konijn probeerde weg te rennen, maar de man kwam achter het konijn aan en schopte het. 'Ons hele leven hebben jullie vernield !' riep hij. 'Vertel op, wat voor medicijn was het ! Houd je niet van de domme !'

Toen veranderde het konijn in een eend, en toen in een bad-eendje. 'Een stuk speelgoed zijn wij,' zei het bad-eendje. 'Het medicijntje van een speelgoed-treintje. Het is geen eigen keuze of beloning, maar een geschenk, een leuk cadeau voor de verjaardag, of zomaar omdat het een mooie dag is, of je hebt eens de jackpot gewonnen.'

De man viel flauw en begon te schuimbekken en over te geven met stuiptrekkingen. 'Houd me niet voor de gek !' riep de man. 'Wat voor medicijn is het !' Plotseling bevond de man zich in de natuur, gebonden aan een paal, terwijl donkere vrouwen voor hem stonden en hem sloegen. 'Wat voor medicijn is het !' riep de man weer.

'Het is speelgoed !' riepen de vrouwen.

'Wat voor speelgoed ?' vroeg hij.

'Jij bent speelgoed,' zeiden ze. 'En wij verkopen het weer door.'

'Houd me niet voor de gek !' riep de man. 'Wat voor medicijn is het !'

'Speelgoed,' zeiden de vrouwen. 'Wij zijn speelgoedmakers, poppenmakers.'

'Ziek,' zei de man.

'Waarom ziek ?' vroegen de vrouwen. 'Het levert goede winst op.'

Hij eindigde in een doos, en kwam in een speelgoedwinkel terecht als pop.

'Mama, hij gedraagt zich zo raar,' zei een meisje toen haar moeder de pop voor haar had gekocht. 'Alsof de pop leeft.'

'Zit er dan maar niet aan, lieverd,' zei de moeder. De pop belandde op de poppenbank naast een andere pop, zijn vrouw. Hij fluisterde naar zijn vrouw. 'Hoe ben jij hier terecht gekomen ?' Ze vertelde een soortgelijk verhaal.

'We zitten hier flink in de problemen,' fluisterde hij.

Eigenlijk kwam hij pas vrij door een atoom oorlog. De lucht was vol met prachtige energieën. De speelgoed fabriek was gekomen.

Ik en mijn Video Spelletje

Een speelgoedwinkelier was in gesprek met een oude dame die speelgoed wilde kopen voor haar kleinzoon.
'Wat moet het precies wezen ?' vroeg de speelgoedwinkelier.
'Hij is dol op video-spelletjes,' zei de vrouw.
'Het liefst met indianen en cowboys. Daar is hij gek op.'

'Hmmm,' zei de speelgoedwinkelier, 'en leidde haar mee naar de bak waar de video-spelletjes waren. Bladert u hier maar even tussen.' Het ware hele dunne schijfjes als diskettes. De vrouw zocht er een paar uit, en rekende ze af. 'Uw kleinzoon zal er vast erg blij mee wezen,' glimlachte de speelgoedwinkelier.

'Dat geloof ik ook,' sprak de oude vrouw. 'Het is toch zo'n goeie jongen. Hij heeft altijd alles over voor iedereen. Hij heeft een hart van goud.'

'Nou, dan is het hem gegunt,' sprak de speelgoedwinkelier. De vrouw bleef maar doorpraten over haar kleinzoon, totdat het sluitingstijd was, maar de speelgoedwinkelier wilde haar niet zomaar wegsturen. 'Zeg, wilt u anders niet een kopje thee met me drinken in het magazijn ?' vroeg de speelgoedwinkelier vriendelijk.
'Nee,' zei de oude vrouw, 'ik moet nu direct weg.' De vrouw keek op haar horloge en schrok. 'Het is inderdaad erg laat.' Toen rende ze haastig de winkel uit. De man zuchtte. Het was weer een drukke dag geweest.

De volgende dag kwam de kleinzoon van het oude dametje langs. Hij wilde één spel ruilen, omdat het toch niet was wat hij wilde. 'Kijk maar in de bak,' zei de speelgoedwinkelaar vriendelijk. Snel had de jongen zijn keuze gemaakt, en ging de winkel uit. De volgende dag was de jongen er weer. 'Nou, het zijn mooie spelletjes,' zei de jongen, 'maar mijn huiswerk lijdt er zo onder. Heeft u ook spelletjes waar tegelijkertijd mijn huiswerk in gedaan kan worden ? Oma heeft me geld meegegeven.'

De speelgoedwinkelier glimlachte vriendelijk en sprak : 'Maar natuurlijk. Goed dat je ernaar vraagt. ' Hij liep even het magazijn in en kwam toen terug met een hele doos vol spelletjes die ook nog eens leerzaam zijn. 'Hier, je mag ze allemaal gratis hebben,' zei de speelgoedwinkelier. 'Ze worden namelijk toch niet verkocht. Niemand wil ze.'

'Graag,' zei de jongen blij, 'en ik wil ze wel.' Vrolijk ging de jongen de winkel uit met de doos, maar de volgende dag was hij er weer. 'Het sluit niet echt aan op mijn huiswerk,' zei de jongen. 'Het zijn hele mooie en leerzame spelletjes, maar het loopt niet gelijk op. Ik heb namelijk ander huiswerk opgekregen.'

De speelgoed winkelier glimlachte. 'Zo is het leven, jongen,' sprak hij. 'Maar misschien kan er een samenwerking komen tussen de speelgoedfabriek en de school ? Als je me even zegt wie je onderwijzer is, dan kan ik hem bellen en dan kunnen we overleggen.'

'Dat zou fantastisch zijn,' zei de jongen.

Maar de onderwijzer was een hele nare man, en wilde niets met de speelgoedwinkelier te maken hebben. Spelletjes hoorden niet thuis in het huiswerk. De onderwijzer was absoluut ongeinteresseerd, en het gesprek was vlug afgelopen. De jongen kreeg het te horen en was enorm kwaad. Hij was verschrikkelijk aan het stampvoeten en schelden. Mensen kenden hem niet meer terug. Hij vertelde het ook aan zijn oma, die ook verschrikkelijk kwaad werd op de onderwijzer. De oude dame belde de man op en schold hem de huid vol. 'Je moet je schamen om zo'n creatief project af te wijzen. Kinderen hebben spelletjes nodig. Spelenderwijs leren ze veel beter.'

Maar de onderwijzer was erg geschokt, en vroeg zich af hoe ze al deze dingen durfde te zeggen. 'Spelletjes horen niet thuis op school,' zei de man. 'Die zijn voor de vakanties. Spelletjes maken kinderen lui en gemakzuchtig. Zo wordt het leervermogen vernietigd.'

'U kletst uit uw nek,' gilde de oma. 'U zult nog van mij horen.' Toen gooide ze de hoorn op de haak.

De speelgoedwinkelier had het inmiddels bij andere scholen geprobeerd en daar lukte het wel. De jongen wilde overgeplaatst worden, maar dat mocht niet. Dat was wettelijk zo geregeld in het land. Alleen met een zeer goede reden mocht er overplaatsing aangevraagd worden. De oma was woedend. Ook de speelgoedwinkelier wilde het er niet bij laten zitten. Ze zeiden dat de jongen werd behandeld als een gevangene. Er werden brieven over gestuurd naar de regering, maar die werkte totaal niet mee. Toen kwamen de telefoontjes, maar ook dat hielp niet. De jongen moest gewoon op zijn oude school blijven.

Het was in die dagen dat de speelgoed fabrieken een speelgoed atoomoorlog opzetten. Er verschenen torens en gebouwen op de wolken, en grote steden, en de lucht was vol met prachtige energieën. Het was een groot kunstwerk. Ook andere landen zagen het in de lucht en bewonderden het. Ook de regering bewonderde het, en zo mocht het jongetje eindelijk overgeplaatst worden. Zijn oude school werd gesloten, en het duurde niet lang totdat kinderen helemaal niet meer naar school hoefden. De speelgoedfabrieken waren de nieuwe scholen geworden.

Een jongetje schoof zijn nieuwe video spelletje uit de computer. Het ging over een speelgoed atoomoorlog. Het jongetje had goed gevochten, en een hoge score behaald, met veel bonus. Hij ging naar zijn moeder toe en vroeg om de deodorant. Hij was helemaal onder het zweet.

'Wat heb je gedaan ?' vroeg zijn moeder.

'Het nieuwe video spelletje,' hijgde hij. 'Het was fantastisch.'

'Maar heb je je huiswerk al af ?' vroeg zijn moeder.

'Als het goed is hoeven we niet meer naar school nu,' zei het jongetje.

'Wat bazel je nu, ventje,' zei de moeder, die hem een draai om zijn oren gaf.

'Laat maar,' zei het jongetje. 'Ik zal mijn huiswerk nu direct gaan doen.'

Moeder kwam even later naar zijn kamertje boven, en zag hem weer een video spelletje spelen.

'Ik gooi dat ding nog eens uit huis,' brulde zijn moeder.

'Maar het huiswerk staat hierop, ma,' zei het jongetje. 'Ik heb het van de meester meegekregen.'

Moeder kijkt naar het scherm en is verbaasd. 'Je hebt gelijk,' zei ze. 'Dit is jouw huiswerk. Dat is een nieuwe vorm van huiswerk, in een video spelletje ?'

'Ja, mam,' zei het jongetje. 'Het heet de Speelgoed Fabriek, zodat kinderen meer spelenderwijs leren.'

'Dat is me nogal een uitvinding,' zei moeder. 'Dat zal dan wel een hoop minder geklaag zijn over het huiswerk.'

'Dat hoop ik ook,' zei het jongetje. 'Gaan we dan ook verhuizen ?'

'Verhuizen ?' vroeg moeder verbaasd. 'Hoe kom je daar nou weer bij ?'

'De meester zei als ik het spel heb gewonnen dan krijgen we een nieuw huis, veel beter dan wat we nu hebben,' zei het jongetje.

'De meester maakt zeker een grapje,' zei moeder.

'Nee, echt,' zei het jongetje. 'En als ik het spel gewonnen heb dan krijg ik ook nog een andere prijs.'

'En wat is dat ?' vroeg moeder.

'Dat u weer beter bent,' zei het jongetje.

Er kwam een traan uit moeder's ogen, want moeder was ernstig ziek. 'Ik kan dat bijna niet geloven, mijn jongen,' zei moeder vriendelijk, 'maar ik vind het toch heel lief van je dat je zulke dingen zegt.'

Die nacht heeft moeder erge nachtmerries. Ze droomt ook dat ze dood gaat. Als ze wakker is gaat ze naar het kamertje van haar zoontje, en vraagt hoe ver hij is met het spel. 'Nog even, ma,' zei hij. 'Het is heel zwaar geweest, maar ik kom er wel doorheen.'

Op een dag heeft hij het spel af en heeft hij het gewonnen, maar het is alleen een huis op de computer, in het video spelletje, en ook de moeder is een poppetje in het video spelletje, en zij is genezen. Het jongetje laat het zien aan zijn moeder. Ze vindt het heel mooi, maar ze is ook teleurgesteld dat het niet echt is. De vrouw wordt zieker en zieker, en sterft dan aan haar ziekte. Het jongetje is ontroostbaar. 'Er moeten betere spelletjes verzonnen worden,' zei hij tegen de meester. 'Ik heb zo hard mijn best gedaan, maar alles was maar een spelletje.'

De vader van het jongetje is boos op de meester, want het zou zijn zoontje valse hoop hebben gegeven. In het spelletje zou alles steeds beter gaan, maar in de echte wereld werd alles steeds erger. Toch blijft het jongetje de spelletjes spelen, en hoopt één dag zelf een video-spelletjes maker te worden, maar dan niet alleen in samenwerking met scholen, maar ook met de woningbouw en het ziekenhuis. Hij wil dus ook een soort dokter worden, een speelgoed dokter.

Zijn vader vind hem maar een dromer. 'Het leven is hard. Daar kun jij niets tegen beginnen,' zegt zijn vader altijd, maar het jongetje vecht door. Op een dag wordt ook zijn vader ernstig ziek, en ondanks alle mooie beloftes van de video-spelletjes sterft zijn vader ook niet lang daarna. Psychisch gaat het niet goed met het jongetje. Ook hij moet naar de dokter.

Op een dag komt hij een klasgenootje tegen. Het meisje heeft een soort blauwe krassen op haar voortanden als van een stift. Ook kan hij zien dat ze haar tanden niet goed heeft gepoetst. 'Ik ben blij dat je naar de dokter gaat,' zei het meisje tegen hem.

Het jongetje schrok van haar woorden. 'Dat is wel heel gemeen wat je tegen me zegt, dat je blij bent dat ik naar de dokter ga.'

Het meisje werd overstuur van zijn woorden. 'Ik bedoel dat ikzelf ook veel naar de dokter ga. Het kan soms helpen, en ik voel met je mee.'

'Sorry dat ik je verkeerd begreep,' zei het jongetje. 'Het gaat psychisch niet goed met mij, en ik ben soms een beetje in de war.'

Plotseling is er geen beeld meer. Het video-spelletje is gecrashed. Als het jongetje het spelletje weer oplaad is het meisje er niet meer.

'Ik dacht toch echt dat het echt was,' zei het jongetje tegen zichzelf, 'maar het was maar een video-spelletje. Ik hoop dat mijn hele leven maar een video-spelletje is geweest, en dat ik het spelletje zal winnen, of dat ik misschien een ander spelletje krijg.'

Hij voelde een hand op zijn schouder. Het was zijn vader. En ook zijn moeder stond achter hem. 'Ben je eindelijk wakker geworden uit je coma, jongen ?' zei zijn vader. 'We dachten : Laten we je maar achter de computer zetten, want daar hield je altijd zo van.'

'Video-spelletjes, ja,' zei het jongetje. 'Ik ben blij dat jullie nog leven. Wat was er met me gebeurd ?'

'Geschept door een vrachtwagen,' zei vader.

'Ik kan me er niets meer van herinneren,' zei het jongetje.

Zijn vader gaf hem toen een doos vol met nieuwe video-spelletjes. 'Op naar een nieuw leven, jongen.'

Gevangen in een

Video Spel

Er was een nieuwe trein gekomen, geheel van speelgoed. Ook de rails waren van speelgoed, en mensen konden er gewoon mee reizen. Steeds meer van zulke treinen kwamen tussen de steden en de dorpen. Er kon gewoon niets fout gaan met zulke treinen. Het was magisch en utopisch. Meer en meer begon alles van speelgoed te worden, maar de hoge bazen van de regering begonnen overstuur te raken. Zij wilden oorlog zien, want oorlog zou het geld doen rollen, en zo zouden de ziekenhuizen vol blijven. De hoge oorlogsbazen van de regering wilden geen vrede. Teveel dokters zouden zo hun baan verliezen. Vaak als er moorden waren gepleegd, dan was de moordenaar speciaal daartoe opgeleid door de geheime medische cultus.

De speelgoedfabrikanten waren in een groot gevecht met de regering. Zij wilden dat er een nieuwe regering zou komen : een speelgoed regering. Dit vond de regering echt belachelijk. Ze wilden namelijk blijven rondlopen met hun stropdasjes en zure gezichten om te zien of ze nog ergens oorlog konden losweken, heel subtiel.

De speelgoedfabrikanten dachten toen : 'Goed, jullie willen oorlog ? Dan komt er ook oorlog.' En ze begonnen een speelgoed oorlog van kunst, een speelgoed atoom oorlog die de hele wereld zou verbazen en overnemen. Het was een spel oorlog. Alles was een video spel geworden. De speelgoed fabrikanten hadden namelijk de beste technologie van de wereld.

Het was winter. Daan en Hendrik stonden te wachten op de grote trein van speelgoed. Ze moesten naar school. Ook het station was geheel van speelgoed, en overal konden video-spelletjes gedaan worden. Die waren ingebouwd in grote spelkasten aan de muur. Het waren computers. Ze vonden het wel mooi, en er hing een veel betere sfeer nu.

De onderwijzer was kwaad die dag. Hij vond al dat speelgoed gedoe maar niets. Volgens hem moest er hard gestudeerd worden en dan gewerkt. Altijd had hij een stropdas om, en stond meters boven de kinderen. Nooit had hij oog voor ze, alleen voor zijn eigen zwaarwichtige onzin.

Daan en Hendrik wilden altijd kind blijven. Ze wilden niet volwassen worden, want de volwassenen hadden de wereld kapot gemaakt. Daan en Hendrik stonden aan de kant van de speelgoedfabrikanten. Beiden wilden ze later ook speelgoedfabrikanten worden om de wereld beter te maken.

Maar het was snel afgelopen met het plezier. Er kwam een nieuwe president aan de macht, Van Straaten, en die beval dat alle spelcomputers van het station verwijderd moesten worden. Ook moesten de speelgoed treinen weg, maar er werd toen zoveel gestaakt bij de spoorwegen dat de speelgoed treinen mochten blijven. Van Straaten zorgde er echter wel voor dat vele speelgoed fabrieken gesloten werden, en er werd veel speelgoed vernietigd. De bevolking was woedend. Daan en Hendrik dachten dat het doorgestoken kaart was dat Van Straaten aan de macht was gekomen. Er moest wel met de stemkaarten gerommeld zijn. Daan en Hendrik besloten de computer van de regering te hacken. Ze kwamen achter veel informatie van de geheime medische cultus, die er ook voor gezorgd hadden dat Van Straaten aan de macht was gekomen door veel gesjoemel met de stemmen.

Daan en Hendrik lieten het er niet bij zitten. Ook hackten ze de energie-centrales en zorgden ervoor dat de regering en ieder lid van de regering geen electriciteit meer hadden. Ze voerden geheime codes in die ervoor zorgden dat alle energie via de speelgoed fabrieken ging. De regering was woedend.

Daan en Hendrik waren speelgoed poppen vermomd als mensen. Zij waren spionnen van de speelgoedfabrieken en waren toegerust met de hoogste technologie. Hier kon Van Straaten niet tegenop. Hij rende gillend door de straten. 'Help, help !' riep hij. 'Mijn gat staat in brand !' Hij rende naar de tandarts, zijn trouwe maat, maar ook diens gat stond in brand. Ze stonden voor een groot raadsel. Beiden renden ze naar de rivier om daar het vuur in te sussen. Direct werden ze gegrepen door piranha's. 'Wie heeft die dingen hier plotseling losgelaten !' gilde Van Straaten.

Snel zwommen ze weer naar de kant. 'Vlug, het water uit !' riep de tandarts.
Maar een zwerm woedende wespen wachtten hen daar al op. 'Hoe kan dit !' riep Van Straaten. 'Zo is dit nooit geweest !'

'Ik denk dat dit een video spelletje is !' riep de tandarts.

'Video spelletjes !' krijste Van Straaten. 'Die heb ik zoveel mogelijk proberen te verwijderen !'

'Kennelijk niet genoeg !' riep de tandarts.

'Kennelijk zou ik jou een draai om je oren moeten geven omdat je je werk niet goed doet !' schreeuwde Van Straaten.

'Hoezo ?' riep de tandarts, die al helemaal onder de bulten zat.

'Boor die wespen weg !' schreeuwde van Straaten.

'Nu begin je onredelijk te worden !' riep de tandarts. 'Mijn volgende stem zal niet op jou zijn.'

'Ik zal zorgen dat je nooit meer komt te stemmen !' schreeuwde Van Straaten.

'Ik heb geen macht hier met mijn boren !' riep de tandarts.

'Nee,' schreeuwde van Straaten, 'in plaats van in gevoelige kinderen te boren had je eens wat spelletjes met ze kunnen doen, en in het leger de vijand wegboren, maar nee. Nu zitten we met de gebakken peren. Het spel keert zich nu tegen ons !'

'Precies !' schreeuwde de tandarts woedend. 'Jij hebt ook geen macht meer. Gelukkig maar !'

Ieder rende zijn eigen kant op. Ze wilden niets meer met elkaar te maken hebben. Beiden zaten ze onder de bulten. Er werden nieuwe verkiezingen gehouden, en de enige regering was de speelgoed fabriek. Het grootste gedeelte van de bevolking was hier blij mee, maar er werd veel geprotesteerd door de vorige regering en het onderwijs. Met spandoeken gingen ze de straten op, maar zwermen woedende wespen dreven hen naar de rivier waar de piranha's hen al opwachtten. Zij waren gevangen in het video spel.

De Rode Kerk en de Vliegende Olifant

De kerkklokken luidden in Hendrik Ido Ambacht. Er heerste daar een vreemd geloof, vreemder dan in andere steden en dorpen van Nederland. Ze geloofden in een rode veer, eens door een vliegende olifant gebracht. De veer had een hele vreemde economie gebracht, die eigenlijk alleen maar uitgeoefend werd in Hendrik Ido Ambacht, namelijk dat als iemand iets kocht, dan moest de verkoper betalen, en niet de koper. Nu zou je denken dat dit helemaal verkeerd zou gaan, maar toch liep dit allemaal heel goed. Ook de verkopers deden grote inkopen en werden hiervoor betaald. Het was wel heel ander geld wat ze in Hendrik Ido Ambacht gebruikten. Het heette zwart geld, en dat geld bleek onder een vloek te zijn. Dit had de vliegende olifant zo beslist. De vliegende olifant kwam van een andere planeet.

Wat was die vloek dan, zou je je afvragen. De vloek was dat er uit steen water zou vloeien. Men bouwde hoge gebouwen omdat dat ook de wens was van de vliegende olifant. Zo zouden ze ook dichter bij de vliegende olifant wonen.

De kerkklokken luidden. Velen gingen de rode kerken binnen om de vliegende olifant en zijn heilige rode veer te aanbidden. Tereder woonde met zijn ouders ergens hoog in een rode flat boven de winkels. Hij kon zo het hele winkelcentrum zien. Hij hing uit het raam boven het balkon en keek, en keek. Zijn ouders waren niet kerkelijk, maar hij droomde vaak over de vliegende olifant, en over San Pedro die op de olifant reed. Soms wilde hij ook wel dat hij San Pedro was. Zijn vriendjes waren wel kerkelijk en op een dag namen ze hem mee naar de kerk. Tereder keek zijn ogen uit. Er hingen prachtige schilderijen in de rode kerk, van San Pedro op de olifant en de heilige rode veer. De dominee kon ook prachtig vertellen. Ze zongen ook liedjes, maar Tereder kon het niet verstaan, want het was in een andere taal. Aan het einde van de dienst kwamen de diakenen die zwart geld aan de mensen begonnen uit te delen, als een bedankje dat ze waren gekomen. Tereder kreeg ook een schilderij mee waarop een zwarte vrouw stond. Hij vroeg aan zijn vriendje wie ze was. Ze was gekleed in wit en zacht roze. "San Pedro's vrouw," zei het vriendje.

"Hoort die ook bij de vliegende olifant ?" vroeg Tereder.

"Ja, natuurlijk," zei het vriendje verbaasd vanwege de vraag. "Iedereen weet dat toch ? Zij is het zwarte geld."

"Wat houdt dat eigenlijk in ?" vroeg Tereder, die zelf ook een hoop zwart geld in de kerk had gekregen.

Het vriendje zuchtte. "Zeg, serieus, ik weet het niet met jou. Iedereen weet deze dingen. Moet ik het je allemaal nog een keer uitleggen ?"

"Ja, maar mijn ouders zijn niet kerkelijk, dat weet je," zei Tereder, "en ze hebben mij nooit de achtergronden van het zwarte geld uitgelegd. Ik ben blij als ik het heb. Dat is alles."

Het vriendje begon te neuriën : "Zwart geld, blij dat ik het heb, blij dat ik heb," zong hij even later zachtjes. "Zwart geld, het vergeten geld." Het klonk als een reclame clipje.

"Nou ja, dan ben ik het vergeten," zei Tereder. "Kun je het nog één keer uitleggen dan, voor mij, alsjeblieft ?"

"Zwart geld, zwart geld," zong het vriendje, "tijdelijke aanbiedingen. Zwart geld, zwart geld, ren ernaar toe, want je bent zo geveld."

"Huh wat ?" vroeg Tereder. "Wat bedoel je nu eigenlijk ? Ik begrijp er niets van."

"Je bent nog niet tot bekering gekomen," zei het vriendje. "Je ouders aanbidden het zwarte geld, maar ze kennen haar niet. Jij houdt er ook van, maar jij kent haar ook niet."

"Hoe kom ik dan tot bekering ?" vroeg Tereder.

"Pffff," zuchtte het vriendje hard, "dat staat toch allemaal geschreven in het boek van de heilige rode veer. Kom nou, ik blijf niet aan de gang."

"Ja, maar dat boek heb ik niet eens," zei Tereder, "mijn ouders zijn niet gelovig voor de zoveelste maal."

"Goeie genade," zei het vriendje.

"Waar kan ik het kopen ?" vroeg Tereder.

"Het is heel duur," zei het vriendje, "voor de verkoper dan. Daarom verkopen ze het bijna niet."

"Ook niet in de rode kerk ?" vroeg Tereder.

"Nee," zei het vriendje. "Het wordt meestal gewoon van geslacht tot geslacht doorgegeven. Die boeken zijn te heilig om zomaar te verkopen, en dan is ook de verkoper direct blut."

"Blut ?" vroeg Tereder.

"Ja, failliet, niente," zei het vriendje.

"Maar dan kunnen ze toch gewoon heel veel inkopen doen, en dan weer veel zwart geld van de verkopers krijgen ?" vroeg Tereder.

"Zo werken die dingen niet," mopperde het vriendje. "Je begrijpt er niets van. Het boek kan maar één keer verkocht worden, en dan gaan ze failliet en sterven ze. Zo heilig is het."

"Ik begrijp het," zei Tereder. "Dus ik kom nooit aan zo'n boek ?"

"Je mag die van mij wel hebben," zei het vriendje. "Ik krijg wel weer een nieuwe van mijn ouders."

Hij haalde een boek van een soort rood leer uit de kast en gaf het aan Tereder die hem direct om zijn nek vloog en hem kuste. "Hoe kan ik je bedanken," zei Tereder.

"Nee, ik bedank jou," zei het vriendje, die hem ook een zak snoep gaf. "We geven het altijd weg met een zak snoep."

Tereder ging helemaal blij naar huis, en sloot zich direct op zijn kamer op, en begon te lezen. De meest prachtige plaatjes stonden er in met de meest prachtige verhalen, ook over het zwarte geld. Dat was dus inderdaad een vrouw, maar het was ook een snoepsoort, als drop. Op de planeet van de vliegende olifant aten ze het zelfs. Ook de zwarte vrouw woonde met San Pedro op een hele hoge flat, en ze gingen vaak vliegen op de olifant, en maakten dan verre reizen in de natuur, waarin ze wonderbaarlijke avonturen beleefden. Op een dag kwamen ze bij een rots waaruit water vloeide. De rots sprak tot hen : "Bouw een stad van natuursteen voor mij." San Pedro vroeg toen hoe zij dat moesten doen. Het was volgens de rots heel eenvoudig. Hij moest met een stok op de rots slaan, en dan zou het vanzelf gebeuren. San Pedro pakte een stok en begon op de rots te slaan, maar er gebeurde niks, en toen sloeg hij weer. Maar toen werd de rots erg kwaad. "Ik had je niet gezegd meerdere keren op me te slaan !" sprak de rots. De rots werd woester en woester, en het water begon te koken en in vuur te veranderen. Maar toen keek de rots naar de zwarte vrouw, en sprak : "Omdat je man dit heeft gedaan zijn jullie beiden vervloekt, maar als jullie gekomen zijn tot de heilige rode veer, dan zal mijn hart verzachten, en zal ik de stad Hendrik Ido Ambacht bouwen, zodat jullie vloek tot zegen zal worden. Dan zal ik weer helder water schenken."

San Pedro vroeg toen waar die rode veer was.

"Ja, dat ga ik je niet vertellen," zei de rots. "Ik ben nog steeds zeer boos, en je mag blij wezen dat ik deze dingen al gezegd heb, want het had veel erger kunnen wezen."

Toen vroeg ook de zwarte vrouw waar de heilige rode veer was.

"Gaat heen van mij, vervloekten !" bulderde de rots, die steeds meer vuur begon te spuwen. Ze moesten het nu echt op een lopen zetten, en als de vliegende olifant er niet zou zijn geweest, dan waren ze zeker in het vuur omgekomen. De vliegende olifant bracht hen toen naar een grot waar ze even later de rode veer vonden.

"Dit is hem dus ?" vroeg San Pedro.

"Het lijkt er wel op," zei de zwarte vrouw met een glimlach.

En zo kalmeerde de rots uiteindelijk en Hendrik Ido Ambacht kwam uit hem voort. Wat er nog van de vloek was overgebleven was dat er water uit de stenen kwam, maar velen zagen dat als een zegen. Zo was de vloek tot zegen geworden.

Ook stond het verhaal van het zwarte geld in het boek beschreven. Eens vloog San Pedro op zijn vliegende olifant langs een meer in het oerwoud, en zag daar de zwarte vrouw baden. De olifant landde dichtbij, en San Pedro stapte van de olifant af. De vrouw schrok en dook onderwater. San Pedro volgde haar, maar kon haar niet meer vinden. Hij ging terug naar de olifant, en vond toen zwart geld op het zadel. Het bleek ook nog eetbaar te zijn, en toen hij het at stond ineens de zwarte vrouw voor hem. "Waarom heb je mij wakker gemaakt ?" vroeg de zwarte vrouw.

"Ik wist niet dat je sliep," zei San Pedro. "Ik zag je baden."

"Dat moet van een tijdje terug zijn geweest," sprak de zwarte vrouw, "maar ik sliep toch echt."

"Het spijt me," zei San Pedro, "ik wilde je niet wakker maken."

"Wat moet je van me ?" vroeg de zwarte vrouw.

"Nou, wat moet ik van je ?" zei San Pedro verbaasd. "Kijk eens wat ik hier heb. Een vliegende olifant. Daar vindt je niet zomaar een tweede van. We kunnen zo beiden heel wat vrolijke avonturen beleven."

"Vrolijke avonturen, hè ?" sprak de zwarte vrouw. "Het enige vrolijke avontuur wat je met mij zult beleven is het zwarte geld."

"Wat is dat ?" vroeg San Pedro.

"Dat heb je net zitten lopen eten," sprak de zwarte vrouw. "Het is een soort drop, en daarmee betaal je de ander als je iets verkoopt."

"Dat moet een vergissing zijn," sprak San Pedro. "Meestal betalen we de ander als we iets van hen kopen."

"Bij mij is het net andersom," sprak de zwarte vrouw.

"Je lijkt me een hele interessante vrouw," sprak San Pedro. "Ik zou je dan graag willen kopen, zodat ik daardoor tegelijkertijd heel rijk wordt, want ik neem aan dat je verschrikkelijk duur bent."

"Ik ben veel te duur voor jou, mannetje," sprak de zwarte vrouw, "in de zin dat ik dat nooit kan betalen."

"Ik wil je ook wel voor de helft van de prijs meenemen hoor," sprak San Pedro. "Ik ben de slechtste nog niet."

"Nee, zo werkt dat niet," sprak de zwarte vrouw. "Zo goedkoop ben ik gewoon niet."

"Waar maken ze dat zwarte geld ?" vroeg San Pedro.

"Ik ben het enige zwarte geld wat er is," sprak de zwarte vrouw.

"Hoe is dat gekomen ?" vroeg San Pedro.

"Lang verhaal," sprak de zwarte vrouw.

"Ik heb de tijd," sprak San Pedro.

"Het is het geheim van het zwarte goud," sprak de zwarte vrouw.

"Dus je hebt nu al geheimen voor me in zo'n korte tijd dat ik je ken ?" vroeg San Pedro.

"Sjonge, nou je hebt wel babbels," zei de zwarte vrouw.

Verslagen liep San Pedro terug naar de vliegende olifant, en klom op z'n rug. De vliegende olifant bracht hem toen naar een hele hoge berg waar hij tussen het ijs zwart goud vond. San Pedro wreef

over het zwarte goud, en plotseling stond weer de zwarte vrouw voor hem.

"Heb je me nu alweer wakker gemaakt ?" vroeg de zwarte vrouw.

"Ik wreef alleen maar over wat zwart goud, is dat zo erg ?" vroeg San Pedro.

Een klein straaltje melk begon uit het zwarte goud te komen. "Mijn geheim !" riep de zwarte vrouw verschrikt.

Plotseling kwam Tereder's moeder zijn kamer binnen. "Wat ben je daar aan het lezen, Tereder ?" vroeg ze. Ook zag ze toen het schilderij van de zwarte vrouw die hij had gekregen.

"Het is het zwarte geld, mama," zei Tereder.

Zijn moeder liep naar hem toe en nam hem in haar armen. Ze pakte zijn boek en sloeg het ergens open. Ze begon het hardop te lezen : "De bekering. Wil je het geheim van het zwarte geld kennen ? De rode kerk en de vliegende olifant zullen je nooit vragen je tot hen te bekeren, maar ze zullen zich bekeren tot jou, wanneer je de waarheden van het heilige boek hebt ontvangen."

Moeder begon te glimlachen. "Leuk verhaaltje, hè ?" sprak ze. "Je vader en ik zijn er heel vroeger eens één keer in zo'n rode kerk geweest, maar omdat ze hun eigen principes niet naleefden zijn we daar ook weer weggegaan."

Tereder hield zijn moeder stevig vast. Hij keek naar de letters van het boek. Het waren sierlijke letters met prachtige plaatjes, zoals in zijn dromen. "Maar dan kunnen wij het toch beter doen, mamma ?" vroeg Tereder.

Hij kuste zijn moeder. "Ik bekeer mij tot jou," sprak hij, "tot jouw wijsheid en inzicht, tot jouw kennis, zoals de vliegende olifant zich tot mij heeft bekeerd."

Moeder glimlachte. "Ik was al bekeerd tot jou voor je geboorte. Ik wist altijd al dat je een bijzonder kind was," sprak ze.

"Misschien kunnen we dan een echte rode kerk bouwen, mamma ?" vroeg Tereder.

"Schat, het is een verhaal, een geheim," sprak moeder. "En ik denk nu dat je het geheim hebt gezien. Het zal komen tot degenen die zekere waarheden hebben ingezien."

Einde

Olifantensoep

"Dag mijnheer, gaat u daar maar alvast zitten. Wij zullen u de olifantsoep zo opdienen. Doet u maar alvast uw schietgebedje, en schrijft u uw laatste woorden maar alvast op voor uw familie, en strooi alvast wat zout op uw hoofd."

- "Pardon, waar is dat goed voor ? Ik heb mijn soep graag zonder zout, en wat u daarvoor allemaal zei moet een grapje wezen."

"Nee nee, u begrijpt ons verkeerd. De olifantensoep eet u graag met wat zout."

- "Helemaal niet, ik wil zoutloze olifantensoep."

"Nee nee, alweer verkeerd begrepen, mijnheer. Wij bedoelen dat de olifantensoep u graag lust met zout. De olifantensoep, daar gaat het om, niet u. Het is uw laatste kwartier, dus geen praatjes maken nu. Hier wordt de olifantensoep niet gegeten. Alleen de olifantensoep zelf eet."

- "Wel potverdrie, wat is dat voor een belachelijke tent hier ? Ik neem aan dat de olifant dood en gesneden in de soep ligt ?"

"Nee nee, mijnheer, nu niet beledigend doen naar de olifant, en al helemaal niet naar de soep. De soep eet u, niet andersom. Ik hoop dat dat nu duidelijk is."

- "Ober, u bent een klier. Wat een grapjas bent u, zeg. Dit is mijn laatste kwartier ? Dan is dit uw laatste vrije dag, want ik ga zo naar de politie om u te laten arresteren."

"Mijnheer, de politie in deze stad arresteert niet, maar kan alleen gearresteerd worden. U had uzelf beter moeten informeren voordat u naar Hendrik Ido Ambacht zou komen."

- "En wie verricht dan de arrestaties, ober ? De kok ?"

"Nee, de olifantensoep."

- "Hè bah, wat een flauwe mop."

"Het is geen mop. U had hier niet moeten komen. U komt hier nooit meer weg. In dit restaurant zijn alleen ingangen, geen uitgangen."

- "Wat een belachelijk restaurant dan, ober."

"Ach ja, ergens moeten de rollen toch omgedraaid zijn ?"

- "Ober, u verpest mijn hele dag met uw flauwe grappen. Daar heb ik nu allemaal geen tijd voor. Kunnen we even ter zake komen ? Doet u mij maar een broodje gezond in plaats van olifantensoep. Of moet ik dat ook met mijn leven bekopen ?"

"Ik zal erover nadenken. Dan moet u wel een hele goede reden hebben."

- "Goede reden, ober ? Ik ben geen crimineel. Toe, geef me gewoon dat broodje gezond, dan is deze onzin afgelopen. Wat is er gebeurt met de stelling : de klant is koning ?"

"Die stelling is hier nooit geweest, mijnheer. De klant is hier geen koning, maar een dief."

- "U bent een verschrikkelijke ober. Ik wil een andere ober, nu. Ik heb geen tijd voor al deze onzin."

"De andere obers zijn nog wel erger dan ik. U heeft het maar getroffen met zo'n ober als ik."

- "Ik geloof er helemaal niks van, ober. Hoe kunnen ze nu erger zijn dan dit ?"

"Nou, gewoon, ze leggen direct de loop van een geweer in uw nek. Dat heb ik nog niet bij u gedaan. Dat moet nog komen."

- "Nog komen ? Zeg ober, bent u nu helemaal gek geworden. Zo benader je geen klanten."

"Klanten, mijnheer ? Zeg maar gerust zware misdadigers."

- "Wat heb ik misdaan ?"

"U kunt beter vragen wat u niet heeft gedaan."

- "Ober, u kent mij niet. U weet niets van mij af, dus bespaar me al deze vooroordelen."

"Ik weet alles van u af, mijnheer. Ik ken u door en door. U staat schuldig. Ik weet genoeg."

- "En hoe weet u dat allemaal ?"

"Ik ben niet dom, en ook niet gek. Uw hele leven heb ik al spionnen om u heengezet. Dit restaurant houd iedereen in de gaten. En nu bent u hier, omdat het ons wel welletjes werd."

- "Ober, u heeft waarschijnlijk uw dag niet. Niemand heeft mij gevolgd, en niemand heeft mij hier naartoe gebracht. Het is mijn eigen keuze geweest, en ik vertrek ook weer op eigen keuze."

"Mijnheer, zoals ik u al uitlegde vertrekt niemand hier. U bent hier op de juiste plaats, en op het juiste moment, voor het juiste gerecht. Denkt u nu echt dat u uzelf kunt vertrouwen ?"

- "Ober, neem wat rust. Misschien dat het morgen beter gaat. Dit heb ik niet verdiend, en ik heb ook geen strafblad. Misschien bent u met iemand anders in de war."

"Nee nee, mijnheer. Zo makkelijk komt u niet van ons af. Het is ons restaurant, dus wij bepalen de regels. Ik vergis me zeer zeker niet. Ik heb alles nauwkeurig bijgehouden."

- "Goed ober, ik zal u betalen voor uw tijd, en dan vertrek ik hier. Dit is niet langer uit te houden. Hoe haalt u het allemaal in uw hoofd."

"Mijnheer, nu geen politietje spelen. U bent hier in een restaurant, niet op het politie bureau, en trouwens hier doet de politie zulke dingen niet, dus ik zou maar ophouden als ik u was. De klant betaalt hier ook niet, maar wij betalen uw begrafenis. Lief, hè ?"

- "Ober, nu moet u ophouden, anders ga ik geweld gebruiken. Ik wil hier nu weg."

"Er wordt hier geen geweld gebruikt door klanten. U kunt er alleen over dromen. Dat is nog net niet strafbaar."

- "Nou, dat valt me weer mee dan. Kunnen we nu stoppen ?"

"Stoppen ? We zijn net begonnen."

- "Ja, maar dit is echt te belachelijk voor woorden. En er komt nog meer ? Ik heb zo een afspraak."

"Wij betalen uw begrafenis en regelen uw afspraakjes. Wij zullen ook al uw papieren regelen, terwijl u naar de hel gaat. Mooi geregeld, toch ?"

- "Hel ? Ben ik hier nu in de kerk gekomen ofzo ? En waarom niet naar de hemel ?"

"Mijnheer, u bent een gevaarlijke crimineel. Zelfs de hel is nog te goed voor u, maar ziet u, wij zijn de slechtsten nog niet."

- "Dan ga ik nu naar een ander restaurant. Dit kan echt niet waar zijn."

"Andere restauranten in Hendrik Ido Ambacht zijn nog wel erger dan die van ons."

- "Nog erger ? Hoe is het mogelijk."

"U zult het nooit uitvinden, mijnheer. Uw reis stopt hier."

- "En de hel is zeker jullie smerige achtertuin ?"

"Nu niet beledigend gaan doen, mijnheer. Daar maakt u het alleen maar erger mee."

De klant verliest nu echt zijn geduld, en slaat de ober neer. "Breng hem maar naar het ziekenhuis. Ik ben er klaar mee. Ik heb lang genoeg mijn geduld bewaard !" roept de klant hysterisch van woede.

Een lange ober in een witte jas komt toesnellen. "In het ziekenhuis liggen alleen dokters. De patiënten moeten de dokters opereren," spreekt de lange ober traag.

"Dat kan deze patiënt niet," spreekt de klant. "Ik heb hem tegen de vlakte geslagen. Zelfverdediging."

"Hij doet geen vlieg kwaad," sprak de lange ober. "Hij heeft alleen een hele grote mond. En dreigen, hè, veel dreigen."

"Maar waarom ontsla je hem dan niet ?" vroeg de klant.

"Sorry, dat kunnen de werkers van het restaurant niet, ontslaan," sprak de lange ober traag. "Dat kunnen alleen de klanten."

"Dan zijn jullie nu beiden op staande voet ontslagen !" bulderde de woeste, schuimbekkende klant.

"Heeft hij u niet verteld dat de andere obers nog wel erger zijn ?" vroeg de lange ober.

"Ja, dat zei hij inderdaad," brieste de klant. "Jullie zijn allemaal ontslagen ! Ik ontsla dit hele

restaurant !"

"Maar heeft hij u niet verteld dat de andere restauranten nog wel erger zijn dan dit restaurant ?" vroeg de lange ober.

"Dat heeft hij zeker," brulde de klant, zo woest als een leeuw.

"En heeft hij u er dan niet bijgezegd, dat wanneer dit restaurant dichtgaat er nog wel tien andere restauranten in de plaats worden geopend, wel tien maal erger dan dit restaurant ?" vroeg de lange ober.

"Nee, dat niet, dat niet," brulde de klant, "maar wie zegt dat ik dat moet geloven ? En ik kom hier nooit meer in Hendrik Ido Ambacht !"

"Jammer dat we u zien gaan," sprak de lange ober.

"En u gaat ook," brieste de klant. "Pak uw spullen, en vertrek. U bent ontslagen. Ik verklaar dit restaurant gesloten, eens en voor altijd."

"U vergeet uw olifantensoep," sprak de lange ober.

Een verschrikkelijk monster kwam aanrennen en slokte de klant op.
In één hap !

"Dat was op het nippertje," sprak de lange ober traag. "Nou, Loofhaar, we kunnen hier nog steeds blijven werken, jongen, dankzij de olifantensoep," terwijl hij de gevallen ober helpt op te staan.

"Ja," sprak de andere ober. "Ik wist dat we met dit recept geen verkeerde keuze hadden gemaakt. Tegenwoordig denken mensen dat ze zomaar van alles kunnen eten."

De Optocht

Er was een gemaskerde optocht in de winkelstraat van Hendrik Ido Ambacht. De straat was heel lang, zoals de optocht lang was. Iedereen in de optocht was verkleed. Een vleermuis vloog voor hen uit. Jorke keek uit zijn kamerraam naar buiten, en kon zo alles zien. Hij woonde in een flat boven de winkelstraat. Wat een prachtig uitzicht had hij hier. Hij had een nieuw spelletje gekregen, maar nu was even zijn aandacht afgeleid vanwege het lawaai van de optocht. Daarna ging hij weer met het nieuwe spelletje spelen. Het spelletje kon ook spreken. Even later stond zijn moeder in de deuropening. Ze nam hem in haar armen, en nam hem toen met haar mee naar haar kamer. Vader was weg. Even later werd er gebeld. Het was vader. Hij had de sleutel vergeten. Hij moest direct

weer weg. Jorke miste zijn vader. Die was bijna nooit thuis. Zijn vader was altijd weg, moest altijd ergens naartoe. Hij zag hem eigenlijk alleen wanneer zijn vader iets thuis vergeten was. En dat was meestal maar heel kort. Zijn moeder was er altijd.

Eigenlijk gleed het leven een beetje langs Jorke heen. Hij groeide op en zag alle dagen langs hem heenglijden, als een film. Hij had er geen vat op. Hij wilde het vast blijven houden, maar dat lukte niet. Het maakte hem droevig. Hij ging dan altijd maar lezen. Moeder hield ook erg van boeken, en nam vaak boeken voor hem mee. Jorke kon niet goed voor zichzelf zorgen. Hij was gehecht aan zijn moeder, en afhankelijk aan haar. Hij voelde zich verlamd, mentaal en emotioneel. Het lukte hem niet ergens een touw aan te knopen. Hij kon dingen nooit afkrijgen. Dit maakte hem weleens bang, want wat moest hij als moeder er niet meer zou zijn ? Moeder deed alles voor hem.

Eigenlijk wilde hij wel dat hij wat meer als zijn vader was, die er altijd op uit was. Hij voelde zichzelf een huismusje, een muurbloempje. Natuurlijk was hij nog erg jong, en toen hij wat ouder werd groeide het vanzelf goed. Hij was minder gehecht aan zijn moeder, en ging er op uit met zijn fiets. Hij ontdekte dat er ook een ander leven was buiten zijn moeder om.

Hij begon steeds meer voor zijn moeder te zorgen in plaats van andersom. Hij nam vaak boeken voor haar mee en andere dingen die ze nodig had. Hij voelde zichzelf steeds meer worden als zijn vader, die zo onafhankelijk was. Op een dag ging hij op zichzelf wonen, maar de verhuizing viel hem toch zwaar. Hij miste zijn moeder, ook al ging hij dagelijks naar haar toe. Zijn vader zag hij eigenlijk nooit meer. Toch liep dit op den duur ook goed. Hij moest gewoon even wennen. Hij begon er steeds meer van te houden op zichzelf te wonen.

Er was weer een optocht in de stad, en dit keer ging hij er zelf naartoe. Hij keek naar alle maskers en verkleedpartijen, en hij was vastbesloten zelf ook mee te doen het jaar erop. Toch vergat hij het, want er waren zoveel andere dingen die zijn aandacht trokken. En hij kwam nu ook op een leeftijd dat de jaarlijkse optocht hem niet meer zo interesseerde. Het jaar erop was hij er overheen gegroeid. Het paste niet meer bij hem. Hij dacht er ook niet meer echt overna.

Zij moeder werd steeds ouder, en had steeds meer hulp nodig. Nog steeds was hij er dagelijks, en hij vertelde haar verhalen en las haar voor. Zijn moeder was nu zijn kind geworden. Op een dag was zijn moeder dement geworden, en herkende hem niet meer. Toen ging ze naar een verzorgingshuis. Het zat er op voor hem. Hij had zijn best gedaan. Hij had gedaan wat hij kon. Wekelijks zocht hij haar nog op, maar ze begon steeds agressiever te worden, omdat ze hem niet herkende. Ook praten hielp niet meer. Ze was mentaal en geestelijk aan het aftakelen. Hij kwam steeds minder, want hij kon er niet goed mee leven. Hij was meer een last voor haar dan dat het haar rust gaf. Hij was ten einde raad, maar dacht dat ze al een soort hersendood was, en dat ze een nieuw leven had gekregen. Ze was verder niet agressief naar de verzorgers, want die herkende ze wel.

Het was in die dagen dat zijn vader contact met hem opnam. Maar hun karakters botsten teveel, dus dat liep op niets uit. Ze hadden het beiden in ieder geval geprobeerd. Hij voelde zich eenzaam, en las veel. Hij verslond boeken, op zoek naar een antwoord, wat levensrust. Hij kreeg soms nog weleens een brief van zijn vader. Moeder bleek hem ook niet meer te herkennen en deed agressief naar hem. Zijn vader dacht ook dat ze nu in een ander leven al was, en dat haar vorige leven haar daarin zou tegenhouden, dus daarom deed ze agressief. Volgens zijn vader was het beter als ze door hen met rust werd gelaten. Daar was Jorke het wel mee eens.

Het menselijke contact deed hem pijn op deze manier. Hij praatte nog liever met een standbeeld, en dat ging hij ook doen. Als hij er in de stad één zag, dan sprak hij ermee. Het standbeeld sprak niet terug, maar het luchtte voor hem wel op. Was er misschien ook een ander leven voor hem ? Hij begon dromen te krijgen over sprekende standbeelden en sprekende poppen. Misschien hadden zij

te weinig aandacht gehad ? Hij dacht er over na, maar liet ook dat idee weer vallen. Hij bleef zich hechten aan boeken. Daar zat voor hem de magie. Hij had inmiddels al zoveel boeken dat het bijna niet in zijn huis paste. Hij moest daarom verhuizen naar een groter huis. Zijn huis was als een bibliotheek.

Hij dacht na over zijn vader en moeder. Zij leken onbereikbaar. Maar door de boeken kon hij alles herscheppen in zijn hoofd. Hij ging er op een andere manier mee om.

Op een dag was er een vrouw aan de deur. Ze verkocht kaartjes voor een bepaalde theatervoorstelling. Hij dacht : "Baadt het niet, dan schaadt het niet," dus hij kocht een kaartje en zat de avond erna op de voorste rij. Er stonden wat clowns, en een vleermuis vloog tussen hen in. Hij lachte de hele avond om de grappen van de clowns. Maar na de voorstelling voelde hij zich leeg, alsof hij zijn tijd had lopen verdoen. Hij was wel toe aan iets nieuws. Hij was zoekende.

Na een week was het meisje er weer en verkocht kaartjes voor een andere theatervoorstelling. Hij vertelde zijn verhaal dat het niet echt iets voor hem was, maar ze bleef terugkomen, dus hij wees haar er vriendelijk op dat hij helemaal geen kaartjes meer zou kopen, maar toen begonnen ook andere meisjes te komen om kaartjes te verkopen, en hij werd er erg moe van om het telkens uit te leggen. Hij plakte ook nog een sticker op de deur van "geen kaartjesverkopers", maar niets hielp.

"Zeg, zijn jullie blind !" riep hij eens toen ze voor de zoveelste keer aan de deur stonden.

"Sorry, we hebben opdracht van de baas. U staat op de lijst," sprak het desbetreffende meisje.

"Haal me dan ogenblikkelijk van die lijst af !" schreeuwde hij.

"Dat gaat zomaar niet," sprak het meisje. "Ik heb eerst uw handtekening nodig." Ze haalde een kaartje uit haar zak met kleine lettertjes erop, en in grote woede zette hij zijn handtekening zonder verder de kleine lettertjes te lezen. Ze glimlachte wat, en vertrok toen. Maar toen begon hij bergen post te krijgen. Retour sturen hielp niet. Het was alsof ze hem in de val hadden gelokt, en hij dacht nog : "Dat zullen de kleine lettertjes geweest zijn !" Op een dag ging hij naar hun kantoor toe, maar het bleek een vals adres te zijn. Er woonde hier heel iemand anders die ook al gek werd van alle boze brieven. Ook het theater zelf bleek er niet voor verantwoordelijk te zijn.

Hij besloot zijn vader om raad te vragen, maar die moest iets opbiechten. Zijn vader bleek hier achter te zitten om toch nog op een bepaalde manier contact met hem te hebben en de opgelopen schade in te halen. Hij vond dat hij maar een hele vreemde vader had dat het op zo'n manier moest, en dat hij ook nog voor de kaartjes zou moeten betalen, maar in ieder geval stopte zijn vader toen met deze dingen toen Jorke dat hem gebood. "Ik heb gedaan wat ik kon," zei zijn vader. "Toen het niet op de normale manier kon, heb ik het maar op deze manier gedaan."

"Je bent me wel een vreemde," zei Jorke boos. "Ik zat er al aan te denken te gaan verhuizen. Het is toch een vorm van stalken."

"Ik moet je nog iets opbiechten," zei zijn vader. "Al die jaarlijkse optochten heb ik ook altijd voor jou georganiseerd, speciaal voor jou, omdat ik niet wist hoe ik het anders moest doen." Jorke kreeg een brok in zijn keel en omhelsde zijn vader. "Papa, u bent de allerbeste."

De Witte Kerk

De witte monniken gingen eigenlijk alleen maar trager en trager. Schuivelend, voetje voor voetje gingen ze richting de witte kerk in het natuurgebied van Hendrik Ido Ambacht. Zo zouden ze nooit bij de witte kerk aankomen. Tenslotte stonden ze helemaal stil, en begonnen hun gezangen te zingen. Toen gingen ze weer verder, maar nog steeds traag. Ze hadden witte gewaden met witte kappen op, waardoor ze de witte monniken werden genoemd. Het was weer zo'n vreemd geloof in de stad Hendrik Ido Ambacht. Het was weer zo'n economisch geloof. De witte monniken geloofden in het witte geld. Dat kon alleen gegeven worden door hen die daartoe verzekerd waren. Men kon zich dus bij de witte kerk verzekeren, niet om te kunnen krijgen, maar om te kunnen geven. Het witte geld kon ook gezaaid worden. Zo groeiden er witte geld struiken. Het witte geld leek op pepermunt.

Eigenlijk kon er niet veel met het witte geld gedaan worden. Het was gewoon voor het idee. Mensen hadden zo misschien het gevoel dat ze iets goeds deden, terwijl ze er toch niet armer om werden. Toch was dat niet helemaal waar. Er kon wel degelijk wat met het witte geld gedaan worden. Het kon gegeten worden, en als je het lang genoeg bewaarde, dan werd het wit goud.

Maar ja, wat moest je met wit goud ? Je kon er sieraden van maken, of andere dingen, maar waar was het nu echt goed voor ? De monniken hadden daar zo hun eigen idee over. Het witte goud was voor hen een beeld van geduld.

In ieder geval was Hendrik Ido Ambacht heel trots op dit verzekerings-systeem. Er gingen allerlei verhalen en mythes te ronde over het witte geld en het witte goud. En zeemannen bleken met steeds grotere verhalen erover thuis te komen. Daarom groeide de mythologie, en daarmee ook de interesse voor de witte kerk en de witte monikken. Op een gegeven moment werd de belangstelling te groot, en de witte monniken hadden geen rust meer. Ze vonden ook dat de groep te groot werd, dus ze zetten een stop. De verzekeringsmaatschappij was nu vol en zou geen nieuwe leden meer aannemen. En zo begon het leden-aantal van de witte kerk langzaam uit te sterven, totdat het op een moment alleen nog een herinnering was. Maar de mythe groeide, en ook het aantal van hen die in de witte kerk geloofden, maar er niet mochten komen. De kerk was vol, ook al waren de leden al tijden dood. De canon was afgesloten.

Van de witte monniken werden standbeelden gebouwd, en hun verhalen werden opgetekend. Het kwam in een groot wit heilig boek te staan. En het aantal verhalen groeit nog steeds. Zeemannen komen thuis met steeds grotere verhalen erover, maar wat is er nu echt van waar ? Het was niet meer echt te achterhalen. Wel is het zo dat wanneer iemand heel traag loopt, dan wordt er weleens gezegd : "Kijk, daar gaat een witte monnik." Of wanneer iemand heel traag is met werk, dan wordt er weleens gezegd : "Kom op, een beetje meer vaart erin, je bent toch geen witte monnik ?" Zo zijn er diverse spreekwoorden van die tijd in Hendrik Ido Ambacht overgebleven. De legende heeft zijn stempel gedrukt en het schijnt niet meer weggewassen te kunnen worden. Maar moet dat eigenlijk ? Er vallen natuurlijk heel wat mooie lessen van te leren. De witte monniken zijn helden in Hendrik Ido Ambacht. Hun standbeelden worden vereerd. Als iemand van iets teveel en te snel wil, dan wordt er vaak gezegd : "Neem maar eens een voorbeeld aan de witte monniken." En dat wordt ook gezegd als iemand heel gierig en egoïstisch is. De witte monniken waren de rolmodellen voor

Hendrik Ido Ambacht, en nog steeds. Hun positie en taak blijkt steeds groter te worden, maar vreemd genoeg hoor je er buiten Hendrik Ido Ambacht niets over. Voor de rest van het land en de aarde bestaan de witte monniken niet, en hebben ze nooit bestaan.

Soms proberen de kinderen weleens de witte monniken na te doen. Dan draaien ze in het rond, of lopen en bewegen heel traag. Op speciale dagen zingen ze liedjes. Soms beweren kinderen dat ze een standbeeld van een witte monnik hebben zien bewegen. Het vreemde ervan is dat alleen kinderen dit beweren. Maar hun ouders geloven hen.

Het Standbeeld

Hij kwam 's nachts thuis en trof zijn vrouw dood aan in haar bed met een mes in haar borst.
Hij vertrouwde niemand, geen dokter en geen politie. Ze waren allemaal corrupt in zijn ogen. Hij had teveel meegemaakt. Hij schreeuwde in zichzelf, greep een mes en rende naar buiten, op zoek naar de moordenaar.

Hij zocht overal, ook in het bos. Hij vond geen spoor.
Hij voelde iets breken in zijn hoofd.
Zou het standbeeld op de toren het gedaan hebben ?
Hij keek ernaar en het standbeeld leek te bewegen.

Hij viel op de grond en sloot zijn ogen, en zag toen een licht.
Was er een engel gekomen ?
Zij gaf hem een lichtend zwaard, en toen was er niets dan zee.

Hij strompelde naar huis.
Hij moest zich vergist hebben, maar zijn vrouw was toch echt dood.
Plotseling was hij omringd met standbeelden.
Zij hadden allemaal messen.
Zij hakten en staken op hem in, totdat hij ook een standbeeld was geworden.

In het diepste van de nacht,
Waar de nachtzon opkomt, de zon van bloed,
Daar hadden ze hem gevonden,
En ze namen hem mee,
Zoals ze zijn vrouw namen.

Vanuit de zee kwamen ze op,
Nee, ze hadden geen genade,
Ze bleven naar hem vragen,
En bloed was hun meester

Hij zocht tussen de standbeelden naar de moordenaar van zijn vrouw,
Maar waren zij niet allen moordenaars ?

Waar het bloed liegt, daar is hun pad,
En niemand wist ergens van,
Zij waren allemaal leugenaars die in ontkenning leefden

Hij wilde weg, maar kon de uitgang niet vinden,
Hij zat vast in een doolhof, maar toen herinnerde hij zich het lichtende zwaard en de engel,
En weer begon het licht hem te overweldigen,
Zacht licht, en toen was alles zee,
Het begon hem mee te nemen,
Het doolhof was slechts het verlee

Op een steen stond zijn naam geschreven, en daarnaast de naam van zijn vrouw,
Maar terugvinden deed hij haar niet,
Waar engelen zijn naam roepen, waar de vijand niet meer is,
Alles heeft hem verblind, en zijn vrouw is slechts een herinnering,
Als een lichtend spook door het bos,
Waar de bladeren ruisen

Hij roept haar naam, maar zij hoort niet,
Zij spreekt niet, zij is een standbeeld,
Zoals hij dat is

Zij staat op een andere toren in een andere stad,
Ze kunnen alleen van elkaar dromen

De Paarse Nep Paus

Er waren ook vreemde snoepwinkels in Hendrik Ido Ambacht, waar de klant niets mocht kopen, maar alleen gekocht mocht worden. Dat gebeurde door grote snoep-automaten die heel menselijk waren, en de klanten uitkozen die ze wilden kopen. De snoep-automaten gingen ook vaak de straten en de daken op om mensen te kopen. Ze gingen gewoon door open ramen of schoorstenen heen. Het waren koop-automaten. Zij kochten klanten en verder een ieder die zij wilden.

De kopers werden zelf verkocht en veranderden in poppen. Dit was de reden dat men de snoepwinkels probeerde te sluiten, maar er kwamen er alleen maar meer bij. Kopers waren niet meer veilig. Ze eindigden zelf ergens in een winkel. De snoep-automaten die hen gekocht hadden verkochten hen gewoon weer door. Daarom was er een groep ontstaan van hen die niets meer wilden kopen. Ze waren te bang zelf gekocht te worden. Snoep smaakte hen niet meer. Ze waren er bang voor geworden. Vele mensen hadden winkelvrees gekregen, en steeds meer van hen gingen in de natuur leven, of onder de grond. Ze gingen van de natuur leven. Maar de snoep-automaten

achtervolgden hen daar ook.

De snoep-automaten kochten alles over, geheel Hendrik Ido Ambacht. En zo kwam Hendrik Ido Ambacht onder de macht van de snoep-machines, die steeds groter en groter werden. Alles werd geregeld door de snoepmachines.

De koopziekte begon enorm terug te lopen in Hendrik Ido Ambacht. De enigen die nog kochten waren de verkochten. En ze kochten alles wat los en vast zat. Het was als het geheim van snoep en het geheim van de zee. Er kwamen toen heel wat demonstraties totdat uiteindelijk alles verschoven werd naar een maand in het jaar, een feestmaand waarin al het gekochte zou kopen, en dat werd gevierd met veel snoep. Het was dan ook een snoepfeest, en er werden die maand vele optochten gehouden. Het werd ook wel het paars-rode feest genoemd. Veelal droegen de mensen in die maand rode en paarse kleding. Het werd weer zo'n vreemd geloof in Hendrik Ido Ambacht, zoals er daar zoveel vreemde geloven waren. De eigenlijke betekenis ging steeds meer verloren, en het werd meer en meer het feest waarin de snoepmensen kwamen. Zij werden snoepmannen genoemd, maar dat konden ook vrouwen zijn. Zij gingen door de straten in optochten en waren helemaal bekleed met snoep.

De leider van dit geloof ? De paarse paus. Hij was omhuld met mysterie. Niemand wist echt zeker wie of wat het was. Hij vertoonde zich nooit aan de mensen, alleen door de televisie, en hij was geheel gehuld in paars. Hij sprak niet. Hij gaf alleen tekst. Dit was in een andere taal, en de vertaling verscheen eronder. Meestal waren zulke uitzendingen alleen in de feestmaand. Het had ook te maken met allerlei olifantencultussen, wat dan ook volop op de televisie was te zien, en de paarse paus was vaak omringd met menselijke snoep-automaten, en die zouden van alles wat er in Hendrik Ido Ambacht gebeurde notities maken, en dat niet voor een rechterlijk systeem, maar puur om verhalen te maken. De parse paus was de schrijver van een heilig boek, maar het was nog lang niet af. Vandaar dat de snoep-automaten nog steeds notities moesten maken over de mensen, en over alles wat er gebeurde in Hendrik Ido Ambacht.

Op een dag reed er een paarse paus op een versierde en beklede olifant door de stad, maar het bleek een valse te zijn, want de echte paarse paus zou dat nooit doen. Ook sprak deze paarse paus, iets wat de echte paarse paus nooit zou doen. Ook dit werd in de notities gezet, en de echte paarse paus liet in de feestmaand van het volgende jaar weten dat hij hier niets aan zou doen dan het in een verhaal te zetten. Sinds toen was er elk jaar wel een paarse paus ergens te vinden. Ze zagen het wel als een uitdaging, want ze wilden ook wel in de verhalen van de paarse paus komen. De mensen begonnen het steeds meer gewoon te vinden, en ze begonnen eraan te wennen. De echte paarse paus begon steeds minder op de televisie te komen. Hij vond dat de nep valse pausen zijn taak mooi konden overnemen. Het ging niet helemaal zoals het altijd was, maar de paarse paus was er tevreden mee en nam het niet zo nauw. Totdat hij helemaal niet meer op televisie verscheen. Andere paarse pauzen begonnen het werk over te nemen, en hadden hun eigen inbreng, waardoor de vreemde religie steeds meer veranderde.

En het witte goud rondom Hendrik Ido Ambacht vertelde verhalen, en er werd nooit meer iemand veroordeeld door een rechterlijk systeem, maar alles werd opgelost door verhalen.

Het Sprekende Witte Goud

Eens was er in Hendrik Ido Ambacht een wit gouden park. Er mochten alleen maar vrouwen in het park komen, en die vrouwen reden op leeuwen. Er mochten absoluut geen mannen in het park komen. Hier werd veel over gedemonstreerd, want men vond dat erg racistisch, maar het vanwege veiligheidsredenen. Het bleek met de leeuwen te maken hebben. Het waren namelijk hele speciale leeuwensoorten die alleen maar mannenvlees lusten. Vrouwenvlees lusten ze niet. Het park was ommuurd met wit goud, en het trok veel bekijks. Op een dag was er een man over de stenen muur heengeklommen en rende het park in waar de vrouwen op leeuwen reden. Hij leek dronken te zijn. Er werd veel geroepen dat hij terug moest komen, maar hij rende op een leeuw af. "Ga weg !" riep de vrouw die op de leeuw zat. "De leeuw zal je verslinden. Mannetjes als jij komen hier niet ver."

De man trok zich er niets van aan en begon de leeuw te aaien, die direct toehapte. "Dan moet je het zelf maar weten," zei de vrouw. "Ik kan er niet wakker om liggen. Je hebt het zelf gewild." De man trok zijn arm terug, maar hij was nog niet klaar. Weer probeerde hij de leeuw te aaien, en ditmaal beet de leeuw goed door en trok zijn arm eraf.

"Idioot !" riep de vrouw. De man kreunde van de pijn, maar hij was goed dronken, en nog was hij niet klaar. Ditmaal beet de leeuw ook zijn andere arm eraf.

"Wanneer ga je het leren !" riep de vrouw.

"Wanneer jullie van die leeuwen afkomen," brulde de man zonder armen. "Vrouwen horen niet op leeuwen te rijden."

"Het zijn speciale leeuwen, idioot !" riep de vrouw woest. "Ze lusten alleen mannenvlees."

"Dan moet je wel erge mannenhaat hebben om op zo'n beest te rijden !" brulde de man even woest terug, in hevige pijn, en hevig bloedend. "Dus als we bij jullie willen komen dan worden onze armen eraf gebeten."

"Vertrouw me maar, dit is nog maar het begin !" gilde de vrouw. "Als je zo doorgaat worden je benen er ook afgebeten."

De man liep naar de leeuw toe in zijn dronkenschap en begon de leeuw te schoppen, maar toen greep de leeuw ook zijn been en rukte het eraf. De man stortte in het zand.

"Ik zal maar snel weg proberen te komen met dat laatste been van je !" gilde de vrouw. "Wij wilden je niet in de buurt, en de leeuw al helemaal niet. Hebben wij er ooit om gevraagd ?"

Maar de man lag daar levenloos. De vrouw reed weg op haar leeuw. Hier had ze geen tijd voor, en het was haar taak niet. De man had zichzelf aan haar en de leeuw opgedrongen.

De man werd met loeiende sirene naar het ziekenhuis gebracht. Door dit nieuws werd de woede van de mensen over het witte gouden park nog wel groter, en er werden meer demonstraties gehouden dan ooit. Men vond dat het tijd werd het witte gouden park te sluiten.

Dat was snel gebeurd. De gehele tuin werd gesloopt, al het witte goud, en niemand wist waar de vrouwen en leeuwen naartoe waren gegaan. Sommigen dachten dat ze ondergronds gegaan waren. Wat van het witte goud van het park kwam in het museum terecht, en verder gingen de vrouwen die op de leeuwen reden de boeken in.

De speciale kleding die ze droegen ging de kledingzaken in, naar het voorbeeld.

Nog vaak werd er gesproken over deze vreemde geschiedenis.

Het witte goud zweeg verder. Het had al genoeg vertelt.

De Verhalenman

Als het 's nachts donker is en heel stil, dan reist de verhalenman langs de kinderkamers om zijn verhalen uit te delen. Grote verhalen en kleine verhalen, leuke verhalen en enge griezelverhalen, de verhalenman is in alles thuis. Bengels en deugnieten slaat hij over, maar zoete, lieve kinderen bezoekt hij.

Waar woont de verhalenman dan ? Hij woont in de wolken.

Ook bezoekt hij kinderen op scheepjes, en zelfs kinderen in de klas.
Niemand kan hem dan zien dan het kind zelf.
Natuurlijk zeggen veel volwassenen dat het niet waar is, dat de verhalenman niet echt bestaat.
De verhalenman heeft daarom een grote hekel aan zulke volwassenen.
Hij zegt vaak dat volwassenen niet bestaan.
Het is maar één van zijn verhalen.

Wat doet de verhalenman dan de hele dag ?
Als hij geen kinderen bezoekt dan schrijft hij verhalen.
Hij is daar nooit klaar mee.

Hij heeft ook een vrouw, genaamd tante Tingeling.
Die schenkt altijd koffie voor hem in, en rinkelt met een belletje wanneer de koffie klaar is.
Eens was tante Tingeling in grote problemen.
Toen haalde de verhalenman haar eruit door een verhaal.

Soms neemt hij kinderen mee op een boot naar zijn wolkenstad.
Hij woont daar in een groot kasteel, genaamd ik-weet-het-niet-meer.
Er zijn wel duizend gangen in dat kasteel.
Je kunt er makkelijk in verdwalen.

Eens verdwaalde ik daar.

Ik werd onder verhalen bedolven.
Uiteindelijk hoorde ik het koffie-belletje van tante Tingeling,
en toen vond ik de verhalenman.
Zoveel verhalen vertelde hij mij,
Ik heb ze nu allemaal weer op een rij.

De verhalenman, de verhalenman,
Er zijn dingen die niemand anders kan.

Als je het midden in de nacht warm en koud hebt,
Dan staat hij aan de deur,
Met zoveel verhalen in zijn armen,
Waaraan je je kunt verkoelen en verwarmen,
Als een oase in de woestijn,
Ja, bij hem moet je zijn.

Eens was hij al zijn verhalen kwijt,
Maar toen schreef hij weer nieuwen met grote vlijt,
En zoveel kinderen die hij ooit had geholpen,
Brachten zijn verhalen weer terug,
Zij vormden de brug

De Tovenaar van Wezep

Is het niet de wespenzeep ?
In een wespenzee, waar hij aan de kant zijn bootje heeft,
Achter het strand is een oerwoud, zeer exotisch,
Waar alle struiken steken,
Want dit is het wespenland.

Oh tovenaar van Wezep in je boot,
Redt ons, want de gorilla's en de grote apen jagen op ons,
Oh, daar in het land waar alles jaagt,
Nooit hebben we hier rust.

Maar de tovenaar van Wezep houdt de wacht aan de kust,
Als een leeuw is hij in de nacht

Oh, tovenaar van Wezep, neem ons mee in je boot.

Koning
Stuiterbal

Hij was in het bos. Hij was van huis weggelopen. Thuis ging het niet goed. Er werd altijd op hem gescholden, en hij moest altijd hard werken. Nooit was er vrije tijd. Allerlei andere dingen waren gedwongen. Hij was er helemaal klaar mee. Het was in het bos waar hij het modder monster tegenkwam, die helemaal van modder was. Hij was helemaal niet bang voor het monster. Hij dacht dat het monster nooit erger zou kunnen zijn dan waar hij vandaan kwam. Het modder monster was verbaasd dat hij niet bang voor hem was. Ieder ander mens en dier was bang voor hem. Het jongetje kwam dichterbij het monster en begon hem te aaien.

'Nu wordt je wel helemaal vies,' zei het modder monster. 'Dat geeft niet,' zei het jongetje. 'Als ik maar vrij ben.'

'Over vrijheid gesproken ...' zei het modder monster. 'Ik ben ontsnapt uit de klauwen van een heks. Het leven is beter in het bos. Het jongetje knikte, en zei dat hij een soortgelijk verhaal had. 'Dan hebben we elkaar op het juiste moment en de juiste plaats gevonden,' zei het modder monster. Het jongetje grinnikte.

Ze gingen beiden nog dieper het bos in, en het modder monster vertelde dat hij lang onder de grond moest wonen, bij de ondergrondse heks. Hij werd daar opgesloten gehouden in een klein kooitje. 'Blij dat je vrij bent nu,' zei het jongetje. 'Ik zat in een zelfde situatie. Het is goed om de bomen te ruiken en de frisse lucht van het bos. Dat is zo genezend.'

'Precies,' zei het modder monster. 'Mijn heks spoot altijd met smerige parfumspuiten en haar nagellak op haar lange nagels stonk.'

De twee hadden elkaar veel te vertellen en konden al vanaf het directe begin goed met elkaar opschieten. Na een tijdje lopen kwamen ze een koningskind tegen. Het jongetje vroeg zich af wat een koningskind zo helemaal alleen in het bos moest. Hij groette het koningskind.

'Wat ben ik blij jullie te zien,' zei het koningskind. 'Ik ben zo lang alleen geweest hier, en nu eindelijk heb ik jullie gevonden. Ik ben van het koninklijk paleis weggelopen. Niets mocht. Ik mocht zelfs niet naarbuiten anders zou ik zogenaamd vies worden.' Het koningskind trok toen een vies gezicht om na te doen hoe ze naar hem deden. 'Ik kan het niet meer,' zei het koningskind. 'Ik ben er helemaal klaar mee. Het was niet goed voor mij om daar te leven.'

Het jongetje knikte. 'Dan zit je in hetzelfde schuitje als ons. Wij zijn ook ontsnapt,' zei het jongetje.

'Goed dan dat we elkaar zijn tegengekomen,' zei het koningskind. 'We kunnen dan misschien nog veel aan elkaar hebben.'

'Welkom in de club,' zei het modder monster.

'Wat voor een club is het ?' vroeg het koningskind.

'De club van de ontsnapten,' grinnikte het modder monster.

Ook het jongetje moest grinniken, en toen grinnikte het koningskind ook.

'Nu moeten we alleen nog een plaats hebben om te leven,' zei het koningskind.

Ze liepen door in het bos, en kwamen na een tijdje aan bij een huisje wat onbewoond scheen te zijn. Alle spullen waar hier oud, en alles lag onder de stof, alsof er niemand in vele jaren was geweest.

'Hoera,' zei het koningskind. 'Een verlaten boshuisje.'

'Hier kunnen we wonen,' zei het jongetje, die al direct alles begon te ontstoffen.
'Een beetje schoonmaken kan geen kwaad,' grinnikte het modder monster. Er waren precies drie bedden. Nadat ze de boel hadden schoongemaakt en wat hadden gegeten en gedronken gingen ze alledrie slapen, want ze waren erg moe geworden.

Maar middenin de nacht werd er op de deur geklopt. Er stonden tien soldaten aan de deur. Het jongetje had de deur opengemaakt en liet ze binnen. Het koningskind was ook wakker geworden, en kende de soldaten niet. 'Wie zijn jullie ?' vroeg het koningskind.

Maar de soldaten gaven geen antwoord. 'Misschien hebben ze honger,' zei het modder monster. Het jongetje gaf hen wat te eten. Er waren nog genoeg verzamelde bessen.

Na een tijdje zei een soldaat wat : 'Ach.'

'Ach ?' vroeg het jongetje. 'Is er wat gebeurd ?'

'Nee,' zei een andere soldaat.

'Dus jullie komen zomaar even op bezoek,' zei het koningskind. 'Gezellig.'

'Gezellig,' zei een andere soldaat.

'Ik heb het altijd koud,' zei weer een andere soldaat.

'Hoe komt dat ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Nee, dat is zijn naam,' zei weer een andere soldaat.

'Oh,' zei het jongetje. 'Wat een grappige naam. En hoe heet jij ?'

'Ik ben te dik,' zei de soldaat.

'Ja, maar je bent helemaal niet dik,' zei het jongetje.

'Het is mijn naam,' zei de soldaat. 'Te Dik. Te is mijn voornaam, en Dik is mijn achternaam. Ik kan er niets aan doen dat ik zo heet.'

'Dat klopt,' zei het jongetje. 'Nou, een mooie naam, en ik hoop dat je zelf ook je naam leuk vindt.'

'Hij vind nooit iets leuk,' zei weer een andere soldaat.

'En wie ben jij ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Ik ben Klaas,' zei de soldaat. 'Klaas de Kale.'

'Maar je bent helemaal niet kaal,' zei het jongetje. 'Oh wacht, het is zeker je achternaam.'

'Ja,' zei de soldaat. 'En ik ben er helemaal niet blij mee. We zijn ontsnapt uit een ver land.'

'Ah,' zei het koningskind. 'Nou, welkom in de club van de ontsnapten. Wij zijn allemaal ontsnapt.'

'Aha !' riepen de soldaten blij. 'Dus wij kunnen hier blijven ?'

'Natuurlijk,' zei het modder monster. 'Wij horen allemaal bij elkaar. We maken er nog wel tien bedden bij. Het huisje is net groot genoeg.'

'Mag de prinses hier ook wonen ?' vroeg één van de soldaten. 'Wij hebben ook haar meegenomen.'

'Waar is ze ?' vroeg het koningskind.

'In een envelop,' zei de soldaat, en haalde een verfrommelde envelop uit zijn zak.

'Niet te geloven,' zei het jongetje.

Het modder monster kwam dichterbij de envelop en keek er naar. 'Ze woont in deze envelop ?' vroeg hij.

De soldaat knikte. 'Ja,' zei hij. 'Het is een plaatje.'

'Leuk,' zei het modder monster. 'En wat was de reden waarom jullie met haar zijn ontsnapt ?'

'Ze moest altijd in de keuken werken, en mocht niks. Ze is nog maar een kind,' zei de soldaat.

'Goed dat jullie voor haar opgekomen zijn,' zei het koningskind, terwijl hij een buiging maakte voor de soldaten en zijn hoed afnam. Er zat een veer op zijn hoed, als een pluim.

'Mogen wij haar zien ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Nee,' zei de soldaat. 'Het plaatje is uit een boek geknipt. Ze moet voorlopig in de envelop blijven.'

'Oh,' zei het jongetje. 'En waarom is dat ?'

Maar de soldaat zweeg.

Alle soldaten die hun naam nog niet hadden gezegd begonnen toen te vertellen hoe ze heetten. Het waren allemaal lange getallen, en ze hielden maar niet op. 'Stop, stop,' zei het jongetje. 'Het is wel duidelijk en klaar dat jullie nieuwe namen nodig hebben. Jullie namen zijn eindeloos. Dat is niet echt handig.'

'Wij zijn van het land Eindeloos,' zei een soldaat.

'En wie regeert dat land ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Koning Eindeloos,' zei de soldaat.

'En dat is ook een plaatje ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Nee,' zei de soldaat. 'Een bal. Die rolt altijd door de straten heen om de boel in de gaten te houden. Er gebeuren daar vreemde dingen.'

'Zoals wat ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Een bril,' zei de soldaat.

'Een bril ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Iedereen moet een bril dragen zodat ze alleen zullen zien wat de koning wil dat ze zien,' zei de soldaat.

'En wat zien ze dan ?' vroeg het jongetje met verbazing.

'Plaatjes,' zei de soldaat. 'De koning houdt van plaatjes.'

'Wat zijn dat voor plaatjes ?' vroeg het jongetje.

Maar de soldaat zweeg.

Het jongetje zuchtte. 'Plaatjes met praatjes,' zei een andere soldaat.

'Ik kan me voorstellen dat jullie zijn ontsnapt,' zei het jongetje.

'Ik niet,' zei de soldaat. 'Het was best leuk.'

'Wie ben jij dan ?' vroeg het jongetje. Toen noemde de soldaat een lang nummer op wat maar niet stopte.

'Heb je ook een andere naam ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Nee,' zei de soldaat.

'Maar waarom ben je dan ontsnapt ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Tja, dat weet ik ook niet,' zei de soldaat. 'Gewoon omdat de anderen het ook deden.'

'Een nalopertje dus,' grinnikte het koningskind. Ook het modder monster grinnikte.

'Maar de andere soldaten zijn dus ontsnapt omdat ze de prinses willen helpen,' zei het jongetje.

'Dat zeggen ze,' zei de soldaat. 'Maar de prinses had het best naar haar zin. Ze hoefde helemaal niet in de keuken te werken. Allemaal leugens.'

'Tegengestelde verhalen dus,' zei het jongetje. 'En wat zegt de prinses er zelf van ?'

'Die praat niet,' zei de soldaat. 'Ze is nog te jong om te praten. Plaatjes praten pas als ze zes zijn.'

'Misschien als het koningskind en de prinses later groot zijn ze met elkaar kunnen trouwen,' zei het jongetje, 'dan kunnen we een nieuw land bouwen hier in het bos, het land van de ontsnapten.'

'Dat kan niet,' zei een soldaat. 'Ze moet in de envelop blijven. Alleen daar is ze veilig.'

'Dat is ook niet gezellig voor haar,' zei het jongetje.

'Het is een tover envelop,' zei de soldaat. 'Er is een land in de envelop. Daar heeft ze het goed, en zo moet dat blijven.'

'Kunnen wij haar daar bezoeken ?' vroeg het modder monster.

'Ja, als je een plaatje wordt,' zei de soldaat.

'Hoe worden we een plaatje ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Koning Eindeloos maakt plaatjes,' zei de soldaat. 'Hij rolt over mensen heen, en dan zijn het plaatjes.'

'Wow,' zei het jongetje. 'Maar jullie zijn van hem ontsnapt. Is er ook nog iemand anders die plaatjes maakt ?'

'Ja,' zei de soldaat. En toen noemde hij een eindeloos getal op.

'Waar is hij ?' vroeg het jongetje.

De soldaat haalde een verfrommelde envelop uit zijn zak.

'Oh, het is ook een plaatje ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Ja,' zei de soldaat.

'En hoe gaat dat precies ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Het is een plaatje van een bal,' zei de soldaat, 'en het werkt ongeveer op dezelfde manier.'

'Ja, maar hoe dan ?' vroeg het jongetje. 'Een bal op een plaatje kan toch niet rollen ?'

De soldaat haalde het plaatje uit de envelop. De bal op het plaatje bewoog, en begon in het rond te rollen. 'Wow,' zei het jongetje verbaasd, 'maar de bal kan niet uit het plaatje ?'

'Nee,' zei de soldaat.

'Maar hoe worden wij dan een plaatje ?' vroeg het jongetje.

De soldaat keek een andere soldaat aan, maar die keek weer naar een andere soldaat.

'Wij weten niet hoe hij het doet,' zei Te Dik.

'Praat hij ook ?' vroeg het modder monster.

'Nog niet,' zei Te Dik. 'Hij is nog geen zes.'

'Ik heb nog wel wat,' zei Klaas de Kale, en haalde een stuiterbal uit zijn zak. De stuiterbal begon direct in het rond te stuiteren, en had flink veel babbels.

'Dat kan, ja, dat kan,' zei de stuiterbal. 'Plaatje worden zei je ? Heel simpel.' En hij vloog op het jongetje af, en begon op het jongetje te stuiteren, die even later helemaal platgewalst was als een plaatje. 'Hoera !' riep het jongetje. 'Nu kan ik de prinses ontmoeten !'

'Ja, wacht even, dat gaat zo maar niet,' zei de stuiterbal. 'Je bent veel te groot. Je past de envelop niet in.'

'Wie kan me dan kleiner maken ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Het plaatje krimpt vanzelf wel,' zei de stuiterbal. 'Even geduld hebben.' Ook het modder monster en het koningskind werden tot plaatjes gemaakt. De tien soldaten moesten de plaatjes en de envelop bewaken. Na een paar dagen waren de plaatjes genoeg gekrompen en konden ze de envelop in. Ze kwamen in een prachtig land, in een prachtige natuur met prachtige hangende bomen waar de lieflijkste bloemen en bloesem in groeiden, en allerlei prachtig kruid hing daar. Maar de prinses konden ze niet vinden. Plotseling zagen ze de stuiterbal. 'Volg mij,' sprak de stuiterbal. Hij leidde hen naar een hele speciale boom waar het plaatje van de prinses ergens hing. Maar de wind waaide het plaatje weg. 'Volg mij !' riep de stuiterbal. Hij stuiterde achter de wind aan, en het jongetje, het koningskind en het modder monster volgden hem. 'Hebbes !' riep de stuiterbal. Het plaatje was op de grond gevallen en helemaal onder de modder. 'Een modder prinses,' zei het koningskind. 'Misschien kan ze dan wel later met het modder monster trouwen.'

'Ik trouw niet !' bulderde het modder monster en greep grinnikend het koningskind en smeerde hem in met modder. 'Nu ben jij een modder prins, dus dan kan jij misschien later als je groot bent wel met haar trouwen.'

'Ja,' zei het jongetje, 'en dan kunnen we hier misschien het nieuwe land van de ontsnapten bouwen.'

'Goed idee,' zei de stuiterbal. 'Welkom in mijn boek, waar jullie veilig kunnen wonen. Ik ben koning stuiterbal en met jullie heb ik zo waardige opvolgers. Ik heb namelijk andere dingen te doen. Maak er wat moois van !' Toen stuiterde de stuiterbal weg. Toen zijn ze begonnen het nieuwe land te bouwen, en toen de prins en de prinses groot waren geworden trouwden ze met elkaar. Er was een groot feest en er waren inmiddels vele ontsnapte plaatjes bijgekomen. En ze leefden nog lang en gelukkig.

Het Gok Monster

Haar moeder noemde haar "Keren". Dat klonk ook lekker makkelijk, zodat als ze ergens zou komen waar ze niet mocht komen, of iets aan zou raken wat ze niet aan mocht raken, dan hoefde haar moeder alleen maar haar naam te roepen. Maar op een dag lette moeder even niet goed op, en Keren rende zo het huis uit, het bos in. Moeder had gewaarschuwd tegen het gok monster wat daar zou wonen, en kinderen opvrat, maar Keren bleef maar rennen, dieper het bos in.

Na een tijdje rennen kwam Keren aan bij een huisje. Het meisje ging naar binnen. Niemand scheen hier te wonen. Er lag allemaal stof. Er stond een klein barretje in de hoek, en er kwam een hoofd van een beest langzaam naar boven. Keren schrok.

'Wie bent u ?' vroeg Keren. Het beest liet zichzelf meer en meer zien. Het was een enorm groot beest, als een monster. 'Ik ben het gok monster,' zei het beest.

'Mijn moeder heeft mij tegen u gewaarschuwd,' zei Keren.

'Waarom ben je hier dan, dom kind ?' zei het gok monster. 'Weet je dan niet dat ik kinderen verslindt ?'

'Jawel,' zei Keren, 'maar thuis is het ook niet goed.'

'Oh, waarom niet ?' zei het gok monster.

'Ik wil daar liever niet over praten,' zei Keren. 'Eet me alsjeblieft op. Dan is het voorbij.'

'Wacht, dat gaat zo maar niet,' sprak het gok monster. 'Ik ga daar altijd zorgvuldig mee om. Ik selecteer de kinderen. Ze komen niet zomaar binnen. Ik ben daar gek.'

'Waar moet ik aan voldoen om bij u binnen te komen ?' vroeg Keren.

Het monster kwam dichter en dichter bij haar. Hij begon haar van top tot teen te bekijken. 'Mjah,' zei het monster. 'Daar ga ik het echt niet voor doen. Ga maar weer naar huis, want dit is niks.'

'Wat !' riep Keren. 'Wat is er mis met mij ?'

'Helemaal niks,' zei het monster. 'En dat is jouw probleem. Je hebt nog helemaal niets meegemaakt. Er zit geen scheurtje in je kleren. Er zit geen vlekje in je jurk. Daar ga ik niet aan beginnen. Kom maar weer terug als er echt iets mis met je is.'

Het meisje werd heel boos. 'U weet toch niet wat ik allemaal al heb meegemaakt ?' Ze pakte een stuk van haar jurk en begon er een scheur in te maken. Toen nam ze wat modder van de grond en smeerde het op haar jurk en haar gezicht. 'Goed nu ?' vroeg ze.

'Je bent wel enthousiast,' zei het gok monster. 'Veel kinderen zijn niet zo ijverig als jou, en dat is misschien ook wel jouw probleem. Je was niet eens echt bang toen je hier binnenkwam.'

Het meisje liet haar hoofd zakken. 'Volgens mij bent u het echte gok monster niet. Mijn moeder zei dat het gok monster heel gevaarlijk is en kinderen verslindt, ze besluipt en ze bespringt,' zei het meisje. 'Ik zie dat niet in u. U bent heel deftig en hoffelijk, voorzichtig en zorgvuldig, bijna zorgzaam.'

'Ik verslindt geen kinderen,' zei het gok monster. 'Ik ben een poort.'

'Een poort naar wie ?' vroeg het meisje.

'Naar een land,' zei het beest.

'Wat voor land ?' vroeg het meisje.

'Dat ga ik je niet vertellen, zoals jij ook geheimen voor me hebt,' zei het beest.

'Okay dan,' zei het meisje, en begon haar hele levensverhaal te vertellen.

'Interessant,' zei het beest.

Toen ze daarmee klaar was vroeg ze : 'Kom ik nu in aanmerking ?'

'Het zijn maar kleine dingen,' zei het beest. 'Zoals ik al zei : Je hebt nog niets meegemaakt.'

'Maar vertel me dan in ieder geval over het land waar u de poort van bent,' zei het meisje.

'Het is een land onder de grond,' sprak het beest. 'En je kunt alleen dieper in dat land komen door gokspelletjes.'

'Dat heeft mijn moeder me ook verboden,' zei het meisje. 'Geen gokspelletjes, want dan neemt het gok monster je mee,' zegt ze altijd.

'Ha,' zei het gok monster. 'Maar natuurlijk. Mensen hebben hun hele hebben en houwen verloren door gokspelletjes. Je hebt een verstandige moeder.'

'Ze hangt me de keel uit,' zei Keren.

'Crazy, isn't it ?' zei het gok monster.

'Ja,' zei Keren, 'dat kunt u wel zeggen.'

'Nee, ik denk dat jij gek bent, zoals veel kinderen van jouw leeftijd,' sprak het beest. 'Jullie denken

dat alles kan en mag, maar jullie zien de gevaren niet. Daar zijn ouders voor.'

'Maar het kan ook te ver gaan,' zei het meisje.

'Precies, en daar ben ik voor !' brulde het monster. 'En nu wegwezen, want bij jou zijn de rollen omgedraaid ! Niet jij hebt mij nodig, maar je ouders hebben mij nodig ! Vooruit, wegwezen nu, anders ga ik op een draf naar je ouders toe om ze uit de brand te helpen !'

Het meisje begon weg te rennen, want ze begon nu echt bang te worden. Het monster begon steeds woester te worden. 'Ik denk dat ik het niet meer wil !' riep het meisje.

'Dat is je geraden ook !' brulde het monster.

Met een gebogen hoofd kwam Keren even later thuis.

'Waar ben je geweest ?' vroeg moeder.

'In het bos, moeder. 't Spijt me, ik had het niet moeten doen,' zei Keren.
'Goed dat je omgekeerd bent dan, Keren,' zei moeder. 'Nog iets beleefd ?'

'Niks, mamma, helemaal niks,' zei het meisje.

'Je mag van geluk spreken dat je nog leeft,' zei moeder. 'Het gok monster had je kunnen verscheuren.'

'Ik weet het mamma,' zei het meisje. 'Ik denk dat ik net op 't nippertje tot mijn verstand kwam, en ik herinnerde me uw woorden.'

'Goedzo, meisje,' zei moeder. 'En je hebt je naam ook mee.'

'Dank u wel, mamma,' zei het meisje. 'Ik weet nu waarom u mij zo heeft genoemd.'

Einde

De Zwembad Machine

Toen Joep de zwemwedstrijd had gewonnen kreeg hij wel een hele merkwaardige prijs. Hij kreeg een zogeheten zwembad machine. Moeder wist niet waar ze het ding moesten bergen. Het was nogal een groot ding, en niemand wist hoe het werkte. Later kwamen ze erachter dat er een knop opzat die het ding kleiner kon maken, en zo kwam de zwembad machine bij Joep op de slaapkamer. Joep vond het wel een mooi ding. Hij kon er uren naar staren, maar wist eigenlijk niet waarvoor het was. 's Nachts gaf het ding soms vreemd licht, heel zacht, zacht groenig of blauwig. Joep werd er altijd heel dromerig van. Zijn broertje vroeg hem weleens waarvoor het ding nou eigenlijk was, maar Joep kon het hem niet vertellen. Ook zijn vader en moeder wisten het niet.

Op een dag besloot Joep het aan de badmeester te vragen, maar die wist het ook niet. Ze hadden het ding eens aangeleverd gekregen uit een ver land. Er zat wel een gebruiksaanwijzing bij, maar niemand begreep die taal. Het ding heeft toen jarenlang op Joep's kamer gestaan, terwijl niemand wist waartoe het diende. Maar op een dag ging het ding aan de wandel. Hij ging langs de ziekenhuizen en de politie-bureau's en bezocht allerlei winkels, maar deed verder niets dan kijken. De mensen vonden het heel vreemd, maar durfden niets te zeggen.

Joep kwam er al snel achter dat de zwembad machine weg was, en ging richting de stad. Ergens in een winkel vond hij de zwembad machine. De winkelier en de klanten staarden ernaar met open mond. Ze dufden niets te zeggen. Ze durfden zich zelfs niet te bewegen. 'Hey !' riep Joep tegen de machine, die inmiddels weer veel groter was. 'Wat doe je hier ?' De machine bewoog langzaam naar Joep toe. Joep keek naar de winkelier die helemaal stond te zweten van angst. 'Het ding is van mij,' zei Joep tegen de winkelier. 'Hij heeft nooit een vlieg kwaad gedaan.' De winkelier stond er als verstijfd. Ook de klanten bewogen niet, en hadden nog steeds hun mond open van verbazing of schrik. 'Kom,' zei Joep tegen de zwembad machine. 'We gaan naar huis.' De zwembad machine volgde Joep de winkel uit.

'Waarom deed je dat ?' vroeg Joep. 'Of wilde je gewoon eens ergens anders zijn ?' De machine zei niets. De machine had nog nooit gesproken, maar volgde Joep. Thuisgekomen maakte Joep de machine weer klein met een druk op een knop, en zo kwam de machine weer op Joep's slaapkamer terecht. Maar de dag erna was de machine weer weg. Hoe Joep ook zocht in de stad. Hij kon de zwembad machine niet vinden. Joep ging ook zoeken in dorpen en steden dichtbij, maar tevergeefs. Joep liet een advertentie plaatsen in de krant en meldde het aan de politie. Weken gingen voorbij, maar zonder teken van de machine.

Op een dag was Joep in het bos voor een wandeling. Opeens kwam de zwembad machine achter een struik vandaan. Hij ging recht voor Joep staan op het pad. 'Hey, jij weer !' riep Joep blij, en omhelsde de machine. 'Waar ben je geweest ? Waarom ben je hier ? Je wilde niet meer op mijn kamer staan, hè ?' zei Joep. 'Ik begrijp het wel. Eigenlijk ken ik je helemaal niet. Ik weet eigenlijk niets van je.' De machine voelde warm aan en leek wel te pruttelen. Het leek wel alsof er allerlei pompen aan gingen, en weer werd de machine enorm groot, nog wel groter dan hij ooit was. 'Hey !' riep Joep. Plotseling werd Joep naar binnen gezogen in de machine.

Binnenin was er een groot tropisch zwembad met grote pompen aan de zijkant. 'Wat gebeurt hier ?' vroeg Joep. 'Mijn eigen zwembad !' riep Joep na een tijdje. 'Dat heb ik nou nooit geweten. Je voelde je natuurlijk eenzaam. Je stond veel te lang ongebruikt en klein in mijn slaapkamer. We hebben een grote tuin. Daar kun je wel staan, en dan kunnen we zwemmen zoveel we willen.' Ergens aan de zijkant was een deur waardoor Joep weer naar buiten kon. 'Volg mij,' zei Joep blij. De zwembad machine volgde hem helemaal naar de tuin achter Joep's huis. Hier kon de machine mooi staan. Vanuit het slaapkamer raam kon Joep zo altijd naar hem kijken. Joep ging vanaf die dag vaak zwemmen in zijn nieuwe zwembad. Wel elke dag, maar op een dag was de zwembad machine weer

weg. De volgende dag stond er in de kranten dat er zomaar vanuit het niets een nieuw zwembad was gekomen, groter dan ooit. Het was een tropisch zwemparadijs. Joep kon zijn ogen niet geloven. Joep ging direct een kijkje nemen toen hij het in de krant had gelezen. Er waren heel veel mensen. 'Hey !' riep Joep naar het zwembad. 'Vond je het niet meer leuk in de tuin ? Ik begrijp het al. Je wilde nog groter zijn, en je paste niet meer in onze tuin.' De mensen keken Joep vreemd aan. 'Wat loop je daar te schreeuwen,' zei een badmeester tegen Joep. 'Dit is ons nieuwe zwembad. Maak jezelf toch niets wijs.'

'Het is mijn zwembad, mijnheer,' zei Joep. 'Ik heb het eens gewonnen met een zwemwedstrijd.' De badmeester begon hem uit te lachen. 'Grappige jongen die je er bent. Ik heb veel rare dingen meegemaakt, maar jij bent wel het allerraarste,' zei de badmeester. De volgende dag was er met grote koppen in de kranten geschreven dat er ook in andere steden en dorpen zulke grote tropische zwemparadijsen waren gekomen. Iedereen dacht dat de regering het had gedaan, maar Joep wist wel beter. Hij vroeg zich af of zijn zwembad machine misschien eieren had gelegd. Het hele land werd gevuld met zulke wandelende zwembaden. Ook gingen de zwembaden in steeds groter wordende optochten naar de zee. De hele zee werd drooggepompt, en werd tot een gigantisch groot tropisch zwembaden paradijs.

Joep vroeg zich af of dat niet een beetje teveel van het goede was. Hij vroeg zich af waar het allemaal voor nodig was. Op een dag ging hij terug naar zijn eigen zwembad. 'Hey !' riep Joep tegen de zwembad machine. 'Wat ben je aan het doen ? Wat is het plan ? De hele zee is in een zwembad veranderd !' Maar de zwembad machine zei zoals gewoonlijks niets terug, en weer keken de mensen hem vreemd aan. 'Die jongen is gek,' zeiden ze.

'Ik ben niet gek,' zei Joep. 'Ik heb het zwembad ooit eens gewonnen met een zwemwedstrijd.'

'Ja, ja,' lachten sommige mensen, 'dat zeggen ze allemaal. Kom zeg, maak dat je grootje wijs. Ga lekker naar de Chinees, wat eten, daar knap je van op.'

Maar Joep wist wel beter. Hij brak zijn hoofd over dit raadsel. 'Alsjeblieft, spreek tot me !' riep hij tot het tropische zwembad. 'Herinner je je hoe je altijd op mijn slaapkamer stond met je zachte groenachtige en blauwachtige gegloei waardoor ik zo dromerig werd ? En herinner je je hoe we eens samen een wandeling door het bos maakten ?' Steeds meer mensen keken de jongen lachend aan. 'Kom jongen, kom naar binnen en ga lekker zwemmen,' zeiden ze. 'Zwembaden praten niet. Die zijn er om in te zwemmen. Meer niet.' Maar Joep wist wel beter. Hij liep naar de muur van het zwemparadijs, en begon hem te aaien en te knuffelen. 'Toe nou,' zei hij. 'Wordt nou eens wakker. Ken je me echt niet meer, of is dit waar je wezen moet ?'

Met een gebogen hoofd ging Joep naar huis. Hij ging die avond vroeg naar bed. Midden in de nacht had hij een droom. Hij droomde dat hij langs het strand liep, en een grote vogel kwam in de verte op hem af, en pikte hem toen op. 'Hey !' riep Joep. 'Waar gaan we naartoe ?'

'Naar het zwembad paradijs,' zei de vogel. De vogel vloog heel hoog met hem, naar een andere planeet. Hier stonden allemaal prachtige grote machines met grote pompen. 'Dit lijkt wel op waar ik woon !' riep Joep.

'Met een verschil,' zei de vogel.

'Wat voor verschil ?' vroeg Joep.

'Nou,' zei de vogel. 'Ga maar eens kijken.'

De vogel zette hem af bij een zwembad, en Joep ging door de grote deur naar binnen. Er stonden allemaal lage tropische muurtjes die heel warm waren en waar allerlei struikjes op groeiden. Nog steeds leek het heel erg op zijn eigen zwembad. Overal aan de zijkant waren grote pompmachines.

'Wat gebeurt hier ?' riep Joep.

Een badmeester kwam op Joep af. 'Wat denk je ?' vroeg hij. 'Lijkt me duidelijk, hè ?'

'Zwemmen ?' vroeg Joep.

'Nee, er worden hier aardappels gekookt, nou goed,' zei de badmeester.

'Waarom ben ik hier ?' vroeg Joep.

'Had jij niet ooit eens een zwembad machine gewonnen ?' vroeg de badmeester.

'Ja, ooit,' zei Joep, 'maar die is toen aan de wandel gegaan.'

'Heb je enig idee waarom ?' vroeg de badmeester.

'Waarschijnlijk omdat hij grote ambities had,' zei Joep.

'De zwembaden bevatten de tranen van de mensen, Joep,' zei de badmeester. 'Ze hebben een grote opdracht. Het zijn tranen-pompen.'

'Wat gaat er nu gebeuren ?' vroeg Joep.

'Ze moeten alle tranen verwerken,' zei de badmeester.

'Wat maken ze ervan ?' vroeg Joep.

'Films,' zei de badmeester. 'Aan de achterkant van het apparaat wat je had gewonnen zat een klein knopje waardoor het tot een bioscoopje zou worden.'

'Niemand vertelde me erover,' zei Joep.

'Dan weet je het nu,' zei de badmeester. 'Beter laat dan nooit.'

Joep werd wakker badend in zweet. Alles was een droom geweest, ook dat hij de zwembad machine won. Hij had heel lang en vreemd gedroomd. Vandaag waren de zwemwedstrijden. Joep werd eerste en won de hoofdprijs : een filmprojector met een hele doos vol films. Glimlachend dacht hij terug aan zijn droom.

Einde

De Anandez

De Anandez, de grote ijszee, was het land aan het overstromen. Het scheurde families uit elkaar als lappen poppen. Eigenlijk bleef het maar bij één grote golf die alles overspoelde, en toen trok de zee zich weer terug, maar het kwaad was al geschied. Niemand was nog dezelfde sinds die dag. Het was alsof er iets geknapt was in de hersenen van de mensen. Velen hadden hun geheugen verloren. Velen begonnen totaal doelloos rond te zwerven ... als zombies. Weer anderen begonnen vreemde dromen te krijgen. Allen wisten ze dat de Anandez had toegeslagen. Dat was nu diep in hun geheugen gegrift, en spoelde eigenlijk alles weg. Hun leven draaide nu om de Anandez, en altijd verwachtten ze dat de Anandez weer opnieuw zou toeslaan, maar dat gebeurde niet. De dijken werden enorm versterkt en hoger gemaakt. In grote angst werd het land zelfs overdekt, wat de definitieve scheiding betekende tussen mens en zee. De mens leefde nu in een schelp. Genieten op het strand was er niet meer bij. De mensen zochten nu de overdekte bosrivieren op. Hier probeerden ze een nieuw leven te vinden. Velen wilden niet meer naar huis. Ze hadden daar een groot trauma opgelopen door het toeslaan van de Anandez. Al hun bezittingen hadden ze achter gelaten. Ik spreek dan over de rest van de inwoners van het land, want de meesten waren omgekomen door de Anandez.

Dat ik het nog kan navertellen is een wonder. Ik woon gelukkig diep in het land, en ik stond in de slaapkamer toen het gebeurde. Bij mij reikte de golf net tot het dak, tot de vensterbank van de slaapkamer. Ik kon het zo buiten zien gebeuren. Zij die voor mij woonden hadden minder geluk. In ieder geval was ineens het dak onder het raam van de slaapkamer bedekt met sneeuw en ijs, en toen zag ik dat de zee zich langzaam begon terug te trekken. Maar de golf had velen meegesleurd. Ik woonde op het randje van het natuurgeweld. Voor mij was het erop of eronder. Ik was mijn vrouw dankbaar dat ze dit huis had gekozen. Iets dichter bij de zee en we hadden niet meer geleefd. Iedereen die dichtbij de zee woonde werd door de golf meegesleurd naar God weet waar. Er moest een nieuwe regering komen, want die leefden dichtbij de zee.

Ik was dan één van de velen die nu vreemde dromen begon te krijgen. Er was ook iets in mijn hersenen geknapt. Ook was ik een groot deel van mijn geheugen kwijt, maar niet alles. Gewoon om het te kunnen verwerken wilde ik de Anandez eens opzoeken, maar dat mocht niet. De dijken waren zwaar bewaakt. Niemand kon erdoor naar de ijszee. Het was afgesloten terrein. Ik moest me daarbij neerleggen, maar eigenlijk wilde ik dat niet. Ik heb me toen voorgedaan als wetenschapper, en na veel gesprekken lieten ze me eindelijk door. Er waren altijd uitzonderingen op de regel, en ik bleek er aan te voldoen. En het was ook zo : Ik wilde de Anandez onderzoeken. Ik wilde meer van de Anandez weten. Via een streng bewaakte tunnel kwam ik op het verwilderde strand van de grote ijszee. Er was hier geen kip. Er was een begeleider bij me, een gids. Zijn regenpak was blauw, wit en oranje. Ook had hij een helm op. Het was best donker dus hij had een soort lantaarn of schijnwerper meegenomen. Hij was nogal enthousiast over een bepaalde vissensoort : ijshaaien. Die

konden geweldig snel zwemmen en hoge sprongen maken. Ze waren veelal wit. We liepen dichter naar de zee toe, en toevallig zagen we er een paar. Het was een wonderlijk gezicht.

De keer daarop ging mijn vrouw ook mee. Ze had zich extra stevig ingepakt, want het was een koukleum. 'Dit is hem dan,' zei ik tegen mijn vrouw. 'De Anandez, de grote ijszee, die onze hele familie uit elkaar heeft gescheurd.' Ik moest mijn vrouw van alles uitleggen, want het grootste gedeelte van haar geheugen was weg. Gelukkig herinnerde ze zich mij wel. 'Hoe kan ik jou nou ooit vergeten,' zei ze altijd. 'Dat is toch onmogelijk.' Maar ja, er waren zoveel mensen die mij niet meer herinnerden. We liepen langs het strand, en de gids vertelde ons veel over de Anandez. Het was weer dezelfde gids, en hij had weer een helm op. Hij scheen met zijn lantaarn op het water. Mijn vrouw wilde de ijshaaien wel graag zien, maar ze waren er dit keer niet. De gids begon vreemd te fluiten, waar we wel even van opkeken. Uit de golven kwam een vrouw omhoog, die toen naar ons toeliep over het water. Ze was gewikkeld in lange doeken. 'Wat gebeurt hier !' riep ik. Er was ineens overal storm. Ik zag mijn vrouw nog wegrennen, en de gids zag ik al helemaal niet meer. Ik begon te roepen, maar mijn stemgeluid kon niet tegen de storm op. Ik werd opgenomen als een veertje en over het strand geslingerd. "Anandez," zei een stem. De vrouw met de doeken was erg dichtbij me nu. Ik wist niet waar ik was. Haar doeken hingen over mij. Ik werd badend in zweet wakker. Alles was maar een droom geweest. Ik greep om me heen, en greep naar de plaats waar mijn vrouw altijd lag, maar ze lag er niet. Uit angst riep ik haar, en al snel kwam ze de slaapkamer binnen. Ze was even in de badkamer geweest. Ik vertelde haar de droom. "Ik heb iets soortgelijks gedroomd," zei ze. "Daarom ging ik naar de badkamer om even mijn gezicht nat te maken." Ik omhelsde haar. In elkaars armen probeerden we weer verder te slapen, maar dat werkte niet echt. Ze bleef maar praten. "Praat tot me," zei ze weleens als ik dreigde in te dutten.

"Sorry, ik probeer te slapen," zei ik.

Na een tijdje sliep ze, en kon ik ook slapen. Weer droomden we over de Anandez. Het was een vrouw die sprak dat ze de zon had overwonnen. Ze noemde het een stinkende bal. In haar wereld draaide alles om de ijszee, die als een echo-machine was. De echo's vervormden in de wind, en daarom moest men zo dicht mogelijk bij de echo-machine komen. Mijn vrouw en ik waren verbaasd dat we weer beiden dezelfde droom hadden gehad. Mijn vrouw maakte toen een lied over de Anandez :

Anandez, de grote ijszee,
Als een echo in de wind,
Zoveel geheimen draag je,
Die maar nooit worden gevonden,
Want de stormen zijn te zwaar

Anandez, maar zo kan het toch niet altijd blijven,
Anders is het met ons gedaan

Anandez, groot raadsel in de wind,
Toon ons toch jouw sleutel,
Leid ons toch de weg in dit bestaan,
Leer ons elkaar te verstaan

Anandez, jij scheurde ons allen uiteen,
En nam vele levens, waar zijn zij heen ?
Anandez, niets of niemand schijnt jou te kunnen stoppen,
En wij kwijnen allen weg,
Of is dit juist de weg ?

Anandez, jij komt altijd op in de morgen,
Als het morgenrood, jij hebt de zon verslagen,
Dan kijken we allen naar het ijs,
Hebbende zoveel vragen

Anandez, wat heeft de nacht met ons gedaan,
Jij brengt ons zoveel dromen,
Anandez, alles wat wij grijpen glijdt weg,
En wij worden zelf weggegrepen

Anandez, er is zoveel wat wij niet begrijpen,
Als een ons overspoelende zee van ijs,
Jij hebt ons meegenomen, jouw gezicht getoond,
In jou zijn wij wijs

Anandez, door vreemde dingen breng jij ons dichter bij elkaar,
Zo ver weg en toch dichtbij, mogen wij elkaar verstaan,
Het wonder van ijs is iets wat wij niet kennen,
Maar langzaam maar zeker mogen wij er aan wennen,
Anandez, kom snel terug,
Jij bent maar een droom,
Alles wat jij doet is verborgen geluk

Anandez, kom snel,
Praat met ons, leer ons jouw spel,
Wanneer wij in de ochtend ontwaken,
Zijn wij nog steeds in jouw droom,
Jij bent de gids tussen de doeken en de dekens

Oh, jij ijszee, zo warm en diep,
Zo verborgen, jij bent het die ons riep,
Oh ijszee van boven, oh hemelse taal,
Anandez, kom snel,
Jij bron beter dan de zon

In jou is al het licht en leven,
In jou is al het vuur om bruggen te bouwen,
Nee, warmer dan jij is er niemand,
Oh, hemelse zee van echo's,
Tot jouw geheim zwemmen wij

Mijn vrouw zong maar door. Ze was inmiddels achter de piano gaan zitten. De nacht erop had ik een droom dat ze een standbeeld was en eeuwig zong. Ze was door de Anandez gezonden.

Einde

Het Snoep Wat Niet Zoet Was

En als je dan denkt dat snoep altijd zoet is, dan heb je het mis. Want dokter Onzoet Snoep maakte snoep wat niet zoet was, alleen heel soms. Hij was een kleermaker die de mooiste kleren van snoep maakte. Hij woonde in het stadje Tigubriel, net achter de brug. Hij was dag en nacht bezig de mooiste kleren te maken van het onzoete snoep, en daar tussendoor was hij dokter. Hij genas de mens door het onzoete snoep. Soms hoefden ze het alleen maar te dragen, of soms moesten ze het slikken, eten of drinken. De dokter was van alle markten thuis.

Hij had daarvoor een bepaald kabinet, en ook nog een heleboel kabinetten in zijn magazijn. Maar op een dag werd de dokter zelf ziek, en hij kon zichzelf niet genezen.Hij moest toen een lange reis door het bos maken naar een heks. Hij was zo ziek dat hij dwars door de sloten strompelde en niet op het pad kon blijven. Helemaal verwilderd en nat kwam hij aan bij de heks. Hij trilde en beefde van zijn nare ziekte. 'Och jongen,' zei de heks, 'jij bent er echt slecht aan toe. Goed dat je naar mij toe bent gekomen.'

'Kunt u mij alstublieft helpen,' sprak de dokter. 'Ik ben zo ziek, en geen van mijn onzoet snoep kan mij nog redden.'

'Natuurlijk,' zei de heks. 'Er is namelijk iets wat aan jouw verzameling ontbreekt.'

'Wat dan ?' vroeg de dokter.

'Een fiets !' sprak de heks. 'Je moet er gewoon eens op uit gaan en de wereld bekijken op een doodgewone fiets.'

'U maakt zeker een grapje,' sprak de dokter een beetje beledigd. 'Dat heb ik nu nooit tegen mijn patienten gezegd dat ze er op uit moeten met een fiets. Ik had altijd wel een middeltje voor ze.'

'Jawel,' zei de heks, 'maar je hebt ze lui gemaakt met al die middeltjes en al die zotte snoep kleren. Een mens moet er op uit om zo daadwerkelijk te genezen, en daarmee basta.'

De heks gaf een fiets aan de dokter, en de dokter deed wat hem was opgedragen. 'Baadt het niet, dan schaadt het niet,' sprak de dokter tegen zichzelf. Hij begon op de knopjes van de fiets te drukken, en tot zijn grote verbazing kreeg de fiets vleugeltjes, en zo kon hij overal naartoe vliegen. Hij was een nieuwe dokter geworden.

'Waarom komen er geen mensen meer ?' vroeg de dokter zich af nadat hij een hele lange reis had gemaakt. Het leek wel alsof de mensen hem waren vergeten, alsof hij honderd jaar was weggeweest. 'Het komt vast door de heks,' sprak de dokter, en ging weer terug naar de heks, op zijn vliegende fiets.

'Zeg heks,' sprak de dokter, 'nu moet je toch eens even luisteren. Ik kom terug van een lange reis

over de wereld. Ik ben door velden en dalen gegaan, en heb alles gezien wat er te zien valt, en alles beleeft wat er te beleven valt, maar nu ben ik mijn patienten kwijt. Niemand komt nog, en niemand draagt mijn kleren nog.'

'Dat komt,' zei de heks, 'omdat het een betoverde fiets is. Zoals ik al zei heb jij mensen lui gemaakt met al je middeltjes en mooie kleren. Toen jij er niet meer was hebben ze andere oplossingen bedacht, en zijn ze zelf creatief geworden. Ze hebben je niet meer nodig, maar ik heb een ander baantje voor je.'

'En dat is ?' vroegde dokter.

'Kom maar mee,' sprak de heks, en leidde hem door een lange gang in haar huis. De gang leidde tot diep onder de grond. Ze kwamen in een ruimte waar allemaal grote ketels aan het pruttelen waren.

'Hier worden fietsen gemaakt van toversnoep, zoals je eigen fiets,' sprak de heks. 'Zo mag je je snoepwinkel houden, maar ga je er ook snoepfietsen bij verkopen, zodat de mensen niet lui worden.'

Dokter Onzoet begon helemaal te stralen. 'Dat is een heel bijzonder plan, heks,' sprak dokter Onzoet. 'Ik ben blij dat je me hebt geholpen.'

En zo gebeurde het. Dokter Onzoet werd ook fietsenmaker, en al gauw had hij meer klanten in zijn snoepwinkel dan hij ooit had gehad.

Het Boek van Gertje

Het regent vandaag, Gertje loopt hard. Snel naar mamma, want die wacht. De school is net uitgegaan. Maar thuisgekomen is z'n moeder in een draak veranderd. Wat nu ? Langzaam komt z'n moeder op hem af. Gertje geeft een gil. Misschien dat ze hem wel wil opeten. Gertje rent snel naar buiten. Maar buiten staat er een meneer in een lange zwarte jas. Wie ben jij dan ? schreeuwt Gertje. Snel uit de weg, want mijn moeder is in een draak veranderd.

Maar de man met de lange jas grijpt Gertje in z'n kraag en loopt met hem naar buiten naar een busje. Hij wordt achterin gesmeten, en de man gooit de autodeur hard dicht, en loopt dan naar de voorkant, waar hij instapt. Snel wordt het busje gestart, en al snel rijden ze weg. Gertje weet niet wat nu beter is. Hier in deze auto of bij z'n moeder die in een draak is veranderd. Na een lange tijd wordt Gertje uit de auto gehaald. De man in de lange jas is in een zwarte wolf veranderd. Wat een paniek. Snel geeft Gertje hem een duw. Uit de weg jij, schreeuwt hij. Nu moet Gertje hard

hollen, anders is hij er misschien geweest. Misschien heeft die wolf ook wel honger, net als zijn moeder. Snel rent Gertje het bos in. Diep in het bos vindt hij een boek. Het is een boek over vlinders. Hij herkent dit boek, maar weet het niet zeker. Had hij vroeger ook zo'n boek. Is dat boek soms van Gertje geweest ?

Snel rent hij door met het boek, want stel dat die wolf nog steeds achter hem aanzit. Onderweg vindt hij een rood kapje. Snel raapt hij het kapje op en rent verder. Waar zal Gertje nu naartoe gaan ? Opeens staat de man met de lange zwarte jas weer voor hem. Hij beweegt niet. Het is een standbeeld. Gelukkig, dacht Gertje, en rende verder.

Hoe dit allemaal afloopt, lees je in het boek van Gertje. Maar waar is dat boek dan ? Weet je het nog niet ? Dit is het boek van Gertje. Waar gaat het dan over ? Dan moet je verder lezen. Wat staat er dan allemaal in ? Lees zelf maar :

Het regent vandaag, Gertje loopt hard. Snel naar mamma, want die wacht. De school is net uitgegaan. Maar thuisgekomen is z'n moeder in een draak veranderd. Wat nu ?

Maar ik dacht dat het allemaal over vlinders ging ? Dan heb je het boek van Gertje niet goed gelezen.

De Meloen en de Grenadine

"Weet je hoeveel ik van je houd ?" zegt de meloen tegen de grenadine .... "Zoveel als van hier tot de zon en terug ..."

"Nou, weet je dan hoeveel ik van jou houd ?" zegt de grenadine tegen de meloen ...

"Nou ?" vraagt de meloen .....

"Tot de deur en terug," zegt de grenadine ....

"Ah, zo'n klein stukje maar ?" vraagt de meloen zielig ....

"Nou, je moet eens weten," zegt de grenadine, "ik sta elke nacht voor jou op wacht .... daar bij de deur .... Ik blijf altijd dichtbij je ....."

"Ah," zegt de meloen .... "nu zouden we beiden bijna ruzie krijgen om een lineaal. Liefde kunnen we niet meten, het zit 'em in andere dingen ....."

"Precies," zegt de grenadine, "Liefde zit in kleine dingen, klein genoeg om een splinter uit je arm te krijgen. Liefde is als een pincet."

"Ja," zegt de meloen, "en Liefde kan ook in hele koude dingen zitten, zodat wanneer er brand is, de

Liefde de brand kan blussen. En sneeuw is toch ook iets heel moois ?"

"Ja," zegt de Grenadine, "maar houd nu maar even je mond dicht, ik begin moe te worden ... Voor jou is de dag net begonnen, maar voor mij eindigt de dag ...."

"Ja, Grena, je hebt gelijk," zegt de meloen, "en de Liefde moet ook rusten. Slaap zacht ....."

"Prettige dag, meloen," zegt de grenadine .....

De Grenadine en de Meloen ... Ze kunnen iedere dag maar heel even met elkaar praten, want als de grenadine slaapt, dan is de meloen op, en andersom. Ze leven in totaal verschillende werelden, met totaal verschillende wetten, maar op een punt kruizen ze elkaar ..... in de Liefde ....

Waar verschillende talen onbegrip en misschien zelfs ruzie kunnen veroorzaken, door een lineaal .... daar kan de taal van Liefde soms als een appel komen, om de lineaal te breken, om een brug te slaan, om harten te verbinden, die eigenlijk bij elkaar horen ..... De appel brengt overzicht, om te zien waar Liefde vandaan komt. Niet hoe groot Liefde is, of hoe ver liefde reikt, want de Liefde kun je niet meten ..... Je kunt de Liefde alleen eten, en zoeken naar zijn taal, wat hij bedoelt. Vormen, kleuren en symbolen zijn slechts talen, elk met zijn eigen betekenissen. Daarom kun je het best achter woorden kijken, waar de woorden vandaan komen. Daarom kun je het best achter beelden kijken, waar die beelden vandaan komen, en waar ze naartoe gaan .... want een ieder spreekt een andere taal. En op die kruispunten der talen, kunnen we beginnen elkaar te begrijpen, kunnen we beginnen elkaars hart te zien ..... kunnen we de linealen verbranden .... en leven zoals de meloen en de grenadine ......

Escaping the Mind

Ik zag mezelf in een hal vol met slijmerige vissen als inktvissen, octopusen, allemaal heel tropisch. Sommigen van hen gaven licht. Het was een enorme wisselwerking van energieen. Zo zag ongeveer het verstand eruit, en ik dacht : Moet ik daar in geloven ? Ik werd er bang van, want die vissen waren in oorlog met elkaar, en deden vreemde spelletjes. Ik wilde er zo snel mogelijk weg. Ik stond gelukkig hoog op het balkon, en iemand zei : 'Spring erin,' maar ik dacht daar heel anders over. Ik wilde hier echt zo snel mogelijk weg, en wel nu. Ik rende naar de deur achter me, en gelukkig, ik was uit die verschrikkelijke hal die ze het verstand noemden. Maar waar was ik nu terecht gekomen ? Ik rende door een gang, en een enorm blubberig monster met werpmessen kwam langzaam op me af. Het leek wel alsof alles in me in vertraging ging. Hij schoot blubber op me af als vuurvlammen, en ik kon ze maar net ontwijken. Dit was het begin van een spel. Een droom ? Of werkelijkheid ? Of allebei ? Dat mag u voor uzelf bepalen.

Ik stond dus voor dat enorme blubberbeest, en ik dacht : Als ik nu eens zijn geweer in mijn vingers krijg, dan kom ik hier wel veilig vandaan. En zo gebeurde het. Ik dook op het monster en had een enorme worsteling met hem. 'Nou, je bent best wel sterk,' zei het monster. En even later gaf hij mij zijn laser-geweer. Er kwam blubber uit, niet te geloven, als lichtende slijm, en snel als kogels. Uiteindelijk liet hij me los, en liet me erdoor.

Ik kwam na die gang weer in een andere hal terecht, maar hier was geen slijmerige toestand met

enge vissen. Er was hier een basin met een orca. De orca was direct blij toen hij me zag en zei met een trage stem, bijna slaperig : Spring achter op mijn rug, dan gaan we een ritje maken. Ik sprong van het balkon in het water, zwom naar hem toe en stapte erop. Al snel waren we uit het akelige paleis verdwenen, en kwamen op volle zee. Wat kon die orka springen zeg. Ik sprong met hem mee, en ik bemerkte dat ik met riemen aan hem vastzat.

En mijn vraag was nu : Was ik vrij van het verstand ? Het verstand wat mij mijn hele leven gemarteld heeft. De lucht rondom ons begon donkerder te worden. Ik keek onder ons en zag dat hier weer diezelfde vissen waren, die verschrikkelijke aan elkaar klevende octopusen en inktvisachtige wezens, maar het leek alsof ze sliepen. Die dingen aanraken zou zijn als een schok krijgen, dus dat deed ik maar niet. Het waren allemaal een soort sidderalen, en die kon je gewoon maar beter niet aanraken. Haalt u eens diep adem. Want ook uw verstand is als een hoop sidderalen bij elkaar. Ik kwam op een nieuw platform terecht, bij een nieuw paleis, en de boodschap was : 'Laat je gedachten eens los. Een mens leeft niet van gedachten alleen.' Ik kreeg direkt hoofdpijn, en liep naar binnen in het paleis. De mensen daar, zeg maar lakeien, wezen allemaal op mijn laser-geweer. 'Hoe kom je daar aan ?' vroeg er één. 'Oh, ergens gevonden,' zei ik snel. 'Zeg, ik ben op zoek naar de uitgang van het verstand,' zei ik. 'Kan iemand me daarmee helpen ? Ik ben bezig met een grootscheepse ontsnapping.'

'Oh,' zei iemand anders, 'kom dan maar mee.' Normaal gesproken ben ik nooit zo open als het op vertrouwen aankomt, maar ik moest het gewoon zeggen. Of deze lieden mij daadwerkelijk konden helpen wist ik niet.

'Kapitein, hier is iemand die uit het verstand wil ontsnappen.' Een oude man zat tegenover mij. Er gingen allemaal belletjes rinken, en andere soorten alarmpjes. 'Maar jongen,' zei de oude man. 'Dat is niet zo simpel.'

'Daarvoor zul je allemaal draken en beesten moeten verslaan, en misschien wel ridders.'

'Wat dan ook,' zei ik, 'ik wil dat wel doen.'

Toen gaf de kapitein me nog wat wapens, drukte me door een deur, en het spel begon. Ik moest over bloedhete kikkers springen op een soort gang langs een watergeul. Bevond ik me in een boot ? Affijn, ik moest inderdaad een heleboel gespuis aanpakken, maar de kapitein had me genoeg wapens daarvoor gegeven. Helemaal uitgeput kwam ik uiteindelijk na een lange dag aan het einde van het spel, en ging door een deur naarbinnen. Hier zat de kapitein weer. 'Keurig jongen,' zei hij. 'Zo zouden wij het niet kunnen.'

'Maar waarom niet ?' vroeg ik.

'Wij zijn oud,' zei hij. Nou ja, dat kon ik wel begrijpen dat dit voor oude mensen te moeilijk was. Ze liepen allemaal achter mij aan, en hielpen elkaar over die bloedhete kikkers heen. Die kikkers bewogen toch niet.

Maar na een tijdje verloor die kapitein zijn geduld met mij. Ik praatte teveel. Hij gaf mij een heleboel doosjes waarin spelletjes zaten en riep : 'en nu oprotten.' Tja, dat kun je van een oude kapitein verwachten. Die had gewoon teveel meegemaakt, en volgens mij liep hij met oorlogstrauma's in zijn hoofd.

In mijn ogen was hij ook een gevangene van het verstand, dus bij mij lag een grote opdracht. Alleen de vraag was : 'Waar naartoe ?'

Die mensen waren heel aardig, want ze brachten mij direct naar een kamer voor mij alleen, op het schip. Ik legde de doosjes met spelletjes op tafel, maar ik had ineens nergens zin meer in. Ik had het misschien gehad voor vandaag. Wel vond ik het fijn om nog even met die oude mensen te praten. Ze droegen een soort onbeschrijfelijke warmte met zich mee.

Later op mijn kamer lag bij de vensterbank een soort grote kukeluus, gewoon als een stuk speelgoed ofzo. Het was wel heel bijzonder, want toen ik er naartoe liep begon het ding te glimmen. Ik drukte

erop, want dat kon, het was een soort klep, en die ging naar beneden, en er begon zachte muziek te spelen. Ik werd lichtelijk emotioneel omdat ik zoiets nog nooit had meegemaakt. 'Jongen, kun je het aan, om met ons te leven,' zei het ding zacht, bijna fluisterend.

Ik ging op mijn bed zitten. Moest ik dit ding als een stuk speelgoed behandelen of als kameraadje ? Ik koos voor het laatste, en zei iets terug. Wat weet ik niet meer, maar mijn hoofd begon weer pijn te doen.

'Zie, ja hè,' zei de kukeluus, 'dat communiceren, al dat gecommuniceer, daar word je toch moe van. Ik bedoel : het kan anders. Je kunt anders leven.'

'Maar hoe dan ?' vroeg ik. Ik werd alsmaar moeier en moeier.

De volgende ochtend werd ik wakker, en ik had nergens zin in. Ik wilde hier weg, maar wist dat het verstand op de loer lag. Ik was nu al zo ver gekomen. Dus ik besloot nog even verder te dromen. Het was alsof de kapitein binnenkwam, en zoveel andere mensen, maar het was een droomtoestand. Ik sliep half. Dat was wel fijn. Ik hoefde me zo nergens mee te bemoeien. Dat bemoeizuchtige, daar had ik zo'n hekel aan. Waarom moest dat eigenlijk ? Wat schoten we er uiteindelijk mee op.

Ik droomde dat ik weer terug was in die hal met vreemde vissen. Was het een cyclus ? Ik wilde niet meer terug, maar hier was ik, alhoewel ik het maar droomde. Droom ik nog ? Ik weet het niet. Is het werkelijkheid of bedrog ? Is er een diepere wereld achter dit alles ? Oh, diepere wereld, opent u, ik maak een duik, diep in u, ik wil ontwaken uit een boze droom, fluiten naar de overkant, lange nachten, ik ben weer op het strand, maar is dit beter dan daar ? Ik word al naar als ik er aan denk, wat ik hier weer zal beleven. Oh, het eeuwige beleven, het maakt me zo moe, maar toe, ik ben jong, ik moet nog veel leren. 'Daar moet je doorheen,' zeggen ze. Maar ja, het doet pijn. 'Wie wil groeien moet pijnlijden,' zeggen ze dan. 'Als je alles mooi wil hebben, goed en gelukkig, dan ....'

Ja, wat dan ? Maar is dat dan wel werkelijk mooi en goed ? Zijn we dan wel echt gelukkig ? Wat is geluk ? Is het niet allemaal schijn, om zoveel ellende te bedekken. En die ellende ? Waar komt ze vandaan ? Waarom moet ellende bestaan ? Of bestaat ze helemaal niet. Zitten we gewoon gevangen in een boze droom die verstand heet ?

Het verstand doet pijn, alsof we gladiatoren zijn. Die vindt dit, en die vindt dat. Daarom wil ik vertrekken, met dit droomschip, allen weg van het verstand. Spelletjes maken me moe, maar het is beter dan een gladiator van het verstand te zijn. Al die oorlogen om niets, of is dat ook alleen maar een spel ? Hoe dan ook, het spel geeft weer licht, een laatste vlam van hoop, hiermee redden we het, gaat u mee, of blijft u achter in het verstand, het opgemaakte gesticht ....

Al die cosmetica, die make-up is nog kankerverwekkend ook, terwijl de wildernis geneest, de wildernis mooi maakt, de wildernis is echt. Ik heb daar laatst nog iets over gelezen, maar ik ben het weer vergeten. Ik wil die nare stoffen uit mijn verstand, al die opgevoerde motoren, want waar is die optocht voor nodig ? Het is een optocht der zotten, en het eindigt in niets. Het zijn tragische figuren, hen van het verstand, op weg naar nergens. Gaat u met mij mee ? Ik meen dat ik de weg heb gevonden, de weg eruit. Ik heb ergens licht gezien, als een klein vlammetje. Gaat u met mij mee ? Want straks is het misschien weg. Misschien komt het eens en dan nooit weer, dus we moeten snel zijn. Ren met mij mee, en speel het spel, want in oorlog weg te zinken, in zelf-worsteling, dat klinkt zo hopeloos. Of verlangen wij naar die hopeloosheid, als de weg naar een nieuw bestaan. Een soort cocon-idee is het dan, zo van fatalisme is uiteindelijk niet fataal, omdat de wet van tegengestelde krachten geldt : Tegenpolen trekken elkaar aan, dus we kunnen alleen ergens komen door de tegengestelde richting in te gaan. Maar dan brengt de spel-loosheid ons dus uiteindelijk toch naar het spel.

Escaping the Heart

Yech, dit is ook zo'n gevangenis. Al die glibberige slangen en wormen over elkaar heen, vormende ons hart. Ik was eens in zo'n hal. Ik dacht : 'Wat is dit ? Hier wil ik niet wezen.' Een vriend van mij stond naast me, en probeerde me er in te duwen. Gewoon als een spel. Ik denk niet dat hij de ernst er van inzag, want als ik hier toch eens in zou vallen. Ik durf er niet aan te denken. Uiteindelijk dook hij er zelf in. De kwallen vlogen me om de oren, en ik rende door een deur een gang op. Wie ik hier tegenkwam ? Een andere vriend. 'Ah, joh, kom met ons mee,' zei die vriend. 'Doe niet zo flauw.' En ook hij probeerde me terug te duwen, maar ik ontkwam. Ik wilde daar niet wezen. Ja, ik had wel andere dingen te doen.

Ik rende door de gang zo hard als ik kon. Ik hoorde een plons, dus die andere vriend was er ook al ingedoken. De kwallen vlogen me nog steeds om de oren, en alles ging trager. Ik hoorde gegil, dus blijkbaar ging er iets mis. Ik ging door een andere deur, en zag wat dolfijnen in een basin zwemmen. 'Kom met ons mee,' riepen de dolfijnen, en daar had ik wat meer zin in. Dus ik sprong in het basin, en zwom naar de dolfijnen toe. Een garagedeur ging omhoog en we zwommen de open zee in. Ik zat op drie dolfijnen tegelijk en de rest zwom ernaast. Wat ging dat snel. We gingen vliegensvlug op weg naar een eiland. Daar zou een nieuw leven starten, als een spel.

Het leek me wel wat. Ik had ineens weer echt zin in het leven. Ik was zolang een fatalist geweest. Maar ik kreeg de schrik van mijn leven, want op dat eiland lag een reuzenhart als een kwal. Heel doorzichtig en eng. Ik kreeg direkt hoofdpijn. Toen stond dat hart op als een blubberman, en begon op mij te schieten. Het werd een enorm gevecht. Hoe ik hem heb overwonnen weet ik niet meer, maar ik nam al z'n wapens, en trok verder op het eiland. Hier kwam ik allerlei konijnen tegen, en andere dieren, en vreemde blubberige wezens. Hier begon het spel.

Ik sprong over bloedhete kikkers, bloedhete kwallen en andere bloedhete obstakels. Ze zeiden dat ik gewoon heel sterk aan een 'j' moest denken om te kunnen springen. Toen kreeg ik een zwaard wat ik kon bewegen door aan een 'k' te denken. Ik vocht mijn weg door het eiland. Er waren veel gevaren, en ik moest vele monsters overwinnen met mijn zwaard. Aan het einde van de reis over het eiland kwam ik bij de kust aan, aan de andere kant van het eiland. Hier stond een schip, waar ik een zwaard van vuur kreeg. Met het schip gingen we naar het volgende eiland. Hier moest ik leren het zwaard van vuur te gebruiken.

Teruggaan naar het hart wilde ik niet meer. Ik had gezien wat het allemaal voorstelde : Helemaal niets. Ik wilde het zwaard, en wel het zwaard van het spel, want in oorlog had ik geen zin. Het grote hart had mij opgeslokt, en ik was op weg eruit, maar dat was niet eenvoudig. Zo moest ik vele eilanden bezoeken waar ik vele gedrochten moest verslaan. Vaak waren dit blubbermannen en kwallen.

Het hart was als een vreemd vuur, en naarmate we het hart met al z'n mannen versloegen begon er een steeds sterkere wind te waaien. Op het laatste eiland was die wind zo sterk dat we tot in de wolken werden getrokken. Hier kwamen we terecht op het wolkenschip, om te komen tot de lucht-eilanden en wolken-eilanden. De zeeen hier waren als spiegels, en ook de eilanden zelf, en zo kwamen we door het wolkenschip tot de verborgen realiteiten. De kapitein van het wolkenschip was een vreemde man, en zijn piraten bleken ook niet helemaal zuiver in de leer te zijn. En niet lang

daarna ontstond er een gevecht wat wij wonnen. Nu was het wolkenschip van ons.

Onze vraag was nu of wij nu echt uit het grote hart waren ontsnapt, want dit hart kon in vele vormen tot ons komen. Toen begon er een strijd tegen geesten en spoken, en andere vreemde manifestaties, en wij kwamen er achter dat het flink spookte op het schip. Het was een spookschip, misschien wel betoverd door weet ik veel wat. Het schip bleek allemaal geheime kapiteinen te hebben. Maar op een dag kreeg ik het luchtzwaard, en toen ging alles een stuk makkelijker. Hoe meer tuig ik versloeg, des te meer en krachtigere winden er van het luchtzwaard afkwamen. Nu werd ik de kapitein van het schip, en we kwamen tot vele verborgen realiteiten. Het was een vreemd spel, maar wel leuk, en we moesten allemaal lichtjes vrijzetten, die allemaal mijn naam wilden weten. Ik zei : 'Ik heb geen naam, maar wil je de naam van het spel weten ? Escaping the Heart.'

Die lichtjes waren lief, echt lief. En toen ik er zo'n drie a vierhonderd van had bevrijd kreeg ik van hen een lichtzwaard, dat steeds krachtiger werd naarmate ik meer van hen vrijzetten. Ze waren zolang opgesloten geweest door de winden van het grote hart. Het is al weer jaren geleden dat ik het grote hart heb verslagen, en die lichtjes zijn altijd bij me. Als ze spreken dan komen er altijd rode hartjes uit hun mond, en allerlei andere lichtjes. Ze hebben eens een hart genaaid op mijn jas. Maar terug naar het grote hart ? Nooit meer.

Escaping the Conscience

Het geweten dat is me ook wat. Als er ergens gelogen wordt .... meineed noemen ze dat .... Ik zag het in die hal met vechtende beren, leeuwen, zeehonden, waar de uilen van de hel neerdalen om hun prooi te grijpen. Dat zijn van die plaatsen waar je gewoon niet wil wezen. Ik stond op het balkon, gelukkig, en ik dacht : wegwezen. Ik rende naar de deur achter mij, maar die zat op slot. Een man met een parachute kwam op het balkon terecht. een prachtige parachute als een octopus ... echt geweldig. Ik zei tegen die man : Help me hieruit. Hij had een uitschuifbare ladder, en we klommen hoog, heel hoog .... zo hoog dat we uiteindelijk op de wilde rotsen terechtkwamen. Frisse lucht. Maar we hoorden schoten beneden. We moesten doorklimmen. We waren er nog niet. De man werd geraakt en viel. Het laatste wat hij riep was : 'Klim door !'

En dat deed ik dan maar, vol van verdriet, want mijn vriend ....

Hij was mijn vriend, en nu .... Ik moest verder, ik kon niet achterblijven, want ik wist dat als ik de top had bereikt, dan zou ik hem er misschien wel weer uit kunnen vissen. En zo ging dat. Ik kwam op de top terecht, in de wolken, en uiteindelijk kreeg ik hem eruit. De man zei : Je hebt het gered. Later bleek dat de man hier woonde, maar speciaal voor mij naar beneden was gekomen. Een prachtige wereld was hier, als een spel. Er lagen hier hartjes waarop je kon springen, en dan heel hoog. Zo sprongen we tot de hoogste bergen en de hoogste wolken. De man gaf me een zwaard waarmee ik de monstertjes kon verslaan. Dat was nog wel een gedoe, maar de man hielp me. Ik moest gewoon altijd aan de 'k' denken om mijn zwaard te bewegen, als in een spel. En het was een spel, zo wonderbaarlijk. Nooit meer wilde ik terug naar de oorlog van het geweten, de onzekerheid, de schuld .... want als er ergens gelogen werd ....

Maar steeds meer monstertjes begonnen zich aan mijn zwaard te klemmen, en als aapjes aan mijn lichaam, en alles ging steeds trager en trager. De aapjes hadden een heel hoog schel geluid. En waar was die man nu gebleven ? Het leek alsof ik in zeven oceanen tegelijk zakte, als in een put van lijm

en slijm, vol van licht. Toen riep de man van boven de put : Denk gewoon aan 's', dan komen er vlammen uit je zwaard. Dat deed ik, en al snel stond ik weer op vaste grond, naast de man. De man gaf mij vleugeltjes en leerde mij vliegen, maar het leek alsof er een vreemde angst mij op de hielen zat. Ik moest leren mijn zwaard in de lucht te gebruiken. Ik moest allerlei donkere wolkjes verslaan, en als ik ze had verslagen dan veranderden ze in waterdruppels, en vielen naar beneden. Er ontstond een grote, hoge en woeste zee onder ons, die heel snel om zich heengreep. Na een tijdje greep de zee ook mij, en ik riep om die man, maar waar was hij ? 'Denk aan de 'r' fluisterde hij, dan schiet je als een raket omhoog.' Waar die stem nu vandaan kwam wist ik niet, maar ik deed wat hij zei en schoot inderdaad als een raket uit het water. Ineens vloog hij naast me. Alles ging heel snel nu. Waar gingen we naartoe ?

'Zijn we nu uit het grote geweten ontsnapt ?' vroeg ik.

'Nee,' zei hij. 'Je moet het spel spelen.'

Het spel was nog lang niet afgelopen. Ik werd achtervolgd door grote angst, als in een nachtmerrie. We kwamen uiteindelijk in een bos terecht, waar een geit in een hele grote ketel roerde. In de ketel zwommen vissen. De man dook in de ketel. Hij schoot een heel eind in de lucht, en kwam toen in een hogere ketel terecht, en zo ging dat maar door. Ik volgde hem na. Ik zag hoe de man steeds meer in koek en snoep veranderde, en bij mij gebeurde hetzelfde. In de verte, hoog in de wolken zagen we een enorm paleis geheel van snoep. Hier stroomde chocola als rivieren en watervallen, en zagen we hoge torens van marsepein en pepermunt. Toen we daar aankwamen wachtte een prinses ons op. We kregen beiden een zwaard van snoep. Hiermee zou het gebeuren. In het paleis moesten we heel wat gespuis verslaan, en prinsessen bevrijden. Vaak kwamen we hier schaduwen tegen, mannen van angst die ons bang probeerden te maken, maar het snoepzwaard wist wel raad met hen. Ergens op een troon in de verte, dieper in het paleis zat een enorme man als een reus, geheel gemaakt van een soort blauwe vlammen. Hij zat op een soort chocolade-troon, een reusachtige troon. Hij begon vuurballen van een soort blauw vuur op ons af te gooien, en wij moesten die zien te ontwijken. Even later stond hij op, en kwam regelrecht op ons af. Ik vroeg aan de man wat we moesten doen, maar de man antwoordde niet, en wierp zijn snoepzwaard op de grote kerel af. Ik deed hetzelfde, maar de grote kerel bleek zich er niet aan te storen.

Voorzichtig nam hij ons op en ging weer terug naar zijn troon. Nu zaten we goed in de val. Hij wilde ons in zijn mond steken, maar toen stond ineens de prinses die we bij de ingang tegenkwamen in de deuropening. 'Doe het niet, vader, zij kunnen ons misschien wel helpen.' Toen zette de reus ons neer en gaf ons een zwaard gemaakt van pepermunt en chocola. We gingen door een deur van chocola en kwamen in een grote hal terecht. Hier stonden allerlei vuurspuwende wezens, en door op hun ruggen te springen konden we naar boven komen. Hier groeiden bloemen waar chocola uit stroomde. We sprongen in een bootje, en al snel waren we op een soort chocolade-zee. In die zee waren eilandjes van snoep waar we opnieuw gespuis moesten verslaan. Ik vroeg me af wat we voor de reus moesten doen, maar dat werd me al snel duidelijk. Overal zagen we kooien met prinsesjes erin, en het was voor ons een koud kunstje ze te bevrijden. Misschien waren dit wel zijn dochters. Het spel ging zo makkelijk, dat we dachten dat het een spel voor kinderen was. Maar ja, een spel mag ook weleens makkelijk zijn, want er zijn al genoeg moeilijke spelletjes in de omloop. Maar ja, het kon natuurlijk later nog moeilijk gaan worden, want waar hield dit ergens op ? Op een gegeven moment kwamen we erachter dat we goed verdwaald waren.

En verdwaald te zijn in een spel, geloof me, dat kan heel beangstigend zijn. Vooral als een spel ineens je leven schijnt te zijn. Totdat de man die bij me was ineens een gouden sleuteltje vond en een deurtje opende. We kwamen in een zaal terecht waar een piratenschip werd gebouwd. We klommen op het schip, en het bleek een duikboot te zijn. Het begon in de diepte weg te zakken, en wij gingen snel naar binnen. Nu kon het echte werk beginnen, want zo konden we naar de dieptes van de chocolade-zee gaan. Wat een verschrikkelijke vissen zwommen hier, maar ze konden ons gelukkig niets doen. We waren veilig in het schip. Vaak werden we op andere duikboten aangesloten en konden we met de wezens daar kennis maken. Zij vertelden ons alles over de

chocola-zeeen, en ook over andere snoep-zeeen. Er schenen reuzen van vuur in die zeeen te wonen. Zij werden opgesloten gehouden in grote snoep-paleizen waar ze moesten regeren op grote en hoge tronen. De wezens in de duikboten zeiden dat die reuzen de broers waren van de reus die op het land woonde. De broers zouden eens ontvoerd zijn door een draak. Die draak woonde heel diep onder de zee, in de grond, in een reusachtig snoepkasteel. Hier bewaakte hij de sleutels van de kooien waarin de reuzen leefden.

We besloten die draak eens op te zoeken, maar kwamen er snel achter dat die onverslaanbaar was. Al dat vuur, verschrikkelijk. Maar goed, in het kasteel van de draak begonnen we naar wapens te zoeken, om zo toch de strijd aan te gaan, en na een tijdje was het dan zover. Zo gaat dat altijd in spelletjes : Eerst wapens zoeken, en dan het gevecht uiteindelijk aangaan. De draak kon vuur laten regenen, en kon zijn hele kasteel in de fik zetten, dus wij moesten als de wiederweerga weg zien te komen. Ook op andere plaatsen begonnen we naar wapens te zoeken, en naar allerlei wapenrustingen van het meest tropische en uitheemse snoep. We werden echte snoep-ridders, en ontwikkelden krachtige wapens, maar de draak verslaan konden we niet, en de reuzen bevrijden al helemaal niet, omdat we daar de sleutels niet voor hadden.

Het leek allemaal op een groot spel, maar was het dat wel echt ? Het was ons leven. Hoe kon zo'n simpel spelletje uitlopen op zoiets moeilijks ? Maar ach, we waren al heel ver gekomen. Misschien moesten we gewoon eerst op zoek gaan naar wat simpelere spelletjes. En ja, die konden we volop doen in de duikboten. Hier konden we onze vaardigheden wat ontwikkelen. En toen dacht ik bij mezelf : Waarom zouden we ons laten kapotmaken door één zo'n rotspelletje. Er zijn zoveel spelletjes om te spelen, dus vooruit maar weer met de geit. Maar ja, wat als je bezeten raakt van zo'n spelletje ? We moesten onze weg zien te vinden in deze doldwaze kermis, want terug naar het geweten, dat wilden we niet meer.

Erwtenman

Erwtenman, erwtenman,

loopt over de lepel in de pan,

Het kan hem allemaal niets meer schelen,

Eerlijk zullen we alles delen

Erwtenman, erwtenman,

Daalt in de dieptes van de pan,

Moeder schept de borden vol,

voor erwtenman is het geen lol

Erwtenman, erwtenman,
de kinderen smeren je op het behang,
geen zin om je te eten,
of misschien zijn ze het vergeten

Erwtenman, erwtenman,
Nu zit je dan op het behang,
als een schilderij van groene kledder,
ja erwtenman, jij bent mijn redder ...

Erwtenman, erwtenman,
van de lepel gleed jij in de pan,
nu ben je heel vaak op de tv,
en de koning van het behang ...

De Nooiteindigende Vlam

Op de berg gleden een groep mannen door glibberige geulen, en kwamen uiteindelijk terecht in warme

bronnen. Diep in een gouden bron, opgestuwd als een plaats dieper dan hun ziel, die hun ziel leek weg te vreten. Ze vonden het fijn dat ze geen ziel meer hadden, geen geweten, want het geweten had hen hun leven lang geteisterd. Voor hun ogen zagen ze de visioenen en aura's van hun geweten waarin ze zolang opgesloten zaten exploderen. Hun lichamen trilden, plaats makend voor nog meer explodaties, waaronder die van het hart, en daarna hun hersenen. Hun mentale vlakken voelden blanco aan, als een witgeverfde massa van verdoving. Verdoofdheid was wat ze wilden, nadat ze hun gevangenissen hadden verlaten. Het was een grote ontsnapping. Er droop sap van hun gehemelte die hun kelen dik lieten aanvoelen, als gestoken door een giftige spin, als een geneesmiddel. Want oh, wat waren deze mannen verwond. Jarenlang mochten zij niet dromen, en moesten zij hun lichamen onderdrukken, maar nu droop zachte vrijheid door hun botten heen.

Er begonnen monden te verschijnen die wijd opengingen en scherpe, slijmerige tanden hadden. De jacht was begonnen. Dit was niet de druk van het geweten meer, maar van gevoeligheid. Jaren waren zij door het geweten vals beschuldigd, en nu was de jacht begonnen. De mannen strekten hun lichamen uit, en werden omhuld door warme visioenen als verf, en vreemde indringende lichten. Zoveel meer zintuigen werden in hen geopend. Het was hier waar de natuur zich voor hen opende, en het was goed hier te zijn, vanwege de warmte. Het was een tropische warmte als een deken waaronder hun lichamen bedekt werden. Er was geen terugkeer mogelijk meer, nu ze in zo'n sterke stroming terecht waren gekomen. Maar wilden ze nog wel terug ?

'Ik wil vrij zijn,' riep er één, en een ander riep : 'Ik zal ze bombarderen.' De oorlog was nu begonnen, want hun lichamen waren nog steeds gevuld met wraakgevoelens en bitterheid. Ze waren soldaten, nu toegerust met wapens, en hiermee zouden ze geen genade hebben. Sommigen gilden en krijsten van woede, totdat hun armen zo krachtig als vleugels waren. De soldaten rezen op, en keken naar hun helmen. Er was geen weg terug. De strijd zou nu beginnen. Zij hadden een wapen in handen met vreemde schilden. Oorlogsgekrijs was overal. De mannen hadden maar één doel : overwinning. De zachtheid leek hen steeds meer en meer te omhullen, en begonnen hen langzaam te penetreren tot in de dieptes van hun wezen. Vandaaruit wisten ze welke woorden ze moesten spreken, om op te borrelen voor het besturen van hun jachtpaarden. De mannen zouden geen genade hebben, omdat er geen genade aan hen was geschonken. Het was nu de tijd van wraak, en er kwam doem op de vlaktes.

Er kwamen sappen op vanuit de bron waaruit ze omhoog kwamen, en gingen recht op hun benen staan als door een vreemde kracht. Ze gleden voort over een berg, door een heleboel geuren. De lijven bereden hun jachtpaarden, want het was oorlog. Het was een avontuur zonder grenzen, voor een nieuwe natuur. De strijdkreet was neergezet om poorten te openen, tot het bezichtigen van de nooiteindigende vlam. Allen strekten ze zich uit naar de vlam, en plotseling kwam er een zachte en ritmische bliksem naar beneden om hen met geheel nieuwe visioenen te omhullen, de visioenen van een nieuwe wereld. Ze waren bijna thuisgekomen. De mannen hielden van de vlam, en hielden ervan naar de vlam te kijken, hoe het vurig opschoot om hun diepste wensen te vervullen. De mannen hadden een kracht ontdekt die niet van deze wereld was, en zij brachten hun wapens in de lucht. Deze oorlog zou uitgevochten worden. Geen enkel wapen was zo zacht, vervullend en doeltreffend.

De mannen steigerden als paarden, hunkerend naar de vlam waarop ze reden. Ze kwamen steeds dichterbij de vlam, terwijl hun hersenen leken te exploderen. Plotseling nam de vlam hen in de greep als een touw, en begon zich aan te trekken. Langzaam begon de vlam bezit van hen te nemen, terwijl ze als bezetenen werden. De vlam zou hen aanvoeren in de oorlog, en zou hen rijkelijk voorzien in de vlam, omdat de vlam weelderig was. De vlam nam alleen genoegen met het beste, en liet vluchtige, poederige visioenen over hun lichamen glijden. Plotseling begon de vlam als in een draaikolk de mannen naar beneden te zuigen. De mannen gleden in nieuwe bronnen waar ze gelanceerd werden. Zachte energieen begonnen in hen omhoog te komen, die door de vlam in lichterlaaie werden gezet, om zo te worden tot lichten. Hierdoor verloren de mannen zoveel van hun ziel en hart, om plaats te maken voor nog meer van de vlam, iets wat ze veel meer begeerden. Ze wilden loskomen, en dit was de juiste oplossing. Zolang hadden ze hier op gewacht na jarenlange gevangenschap. Zo lang hadden ze hier naar uitgezien, denkende dat het nooit zou komen. Aan hun hopeloosheid was een einde gekomen, terwijl nieuwe energieen aan hun horizonnen verschenen.

De mannen draaiden met de krachten en energieen mee, in de stroom van de nooiteindigende vlam. Zij hadden die vlam omhelsd en aangenomen. 'Ja, eet mijn hersenen weg !' riep een, en bracht doem voort. Het geduld de mannen was op. De mannen hadden genoeg van hun harten die hen alleen maar pijn deden. Ze werden aangedreven door elkaar. Hier hadden de mannen zolang op gewacht. Zij waren gezonden om het geweten te verslinden.

Ze droegen vlammen op hun hoofden als kronen. Zij waren koningen, en hadden macht. Zij droegen allen een nieuw vaandel, waarin een nooiteindigende vlam hen leidde. Na het ritueel stonden zij op, en marcheerden over de hogere muren. Daartoe waren zij uitgezonden. Zij werkten voor de nooiteindigende vlam. De mannen droegen sieraden waarmee ze heersten. De mannen wilden doem brengen. Het laatste deel van de hersenen scheen te exploderen, en sap bleek voort te komen vanuit hun diepste bronnen. Er was nu niets meer dat hen kon tegenhouden. Alles wat ze wilden was vrij te zetten.

Ze waren diep met elkaar verbonden in hun binnensten, en vertrouwden elkaar. Ze hadden de prijs betaald om hier te komen, en hadden bewezen dat ze waardig waren. De vlam keek toe en maakte een ritmisch geheel. Van alle kanten kwamen nieuwe vlammen binnen en werden nieuwe vlammen gevormd, totdat de mannen tot een draaikolk kwamen.

Het was een harde oorlog. Zij die de vlammenkroon droegen hadden geen genade. Zij hadden monstermonden op hun borst, met vlijmscherpe, gemene tanden onder slijm. Ook bereden zij vreemde schilden met franjes.

De mannen droegen speren. Zij waren op de vlucht, en voerden oorlog en jacht voor hun leven. Zij hadden gestoken, diep penetrerend om de gevaarlijkste sappen voort te brengen in de oorlog. Ook wisten zij precies welke knoppen in te drukken voor de beste wapens en de beste aanvallen. Zij gingen voor het beste, en namen met niets minder genoegen.

Zij die de vlammenkroon droegen waren trots, en droegen lange franjes. Zij droegen een nieuw vaandel, en waren bezeten door een nooiteindigende vlam, die telkens weer andere vlammen leek voort te brengen, diep pentrerend. De vlammen vormden nieuwe visioenen van een nieuwe wereld, waar ze al voor de helft instonden, als wateren die omhulden. Er was geen weg meer terug, en dat wilden ze ook niet. Ze keken over de rand heen van een hoge berg, in een nieuwe wereld. Ze hadden deze wereld lief, en die wereld had hen lief. Ja, die wereld was naar hen toegezonden om hen te halen uit hun gevangenschap. Zij waren martelaars, maar nu waren zij vrij, om weg te zinken in een poel van bitterheid en wraak die ze nu eindelijk konden lanceren.

Er was hier geen geweten. Niets scheen hen in de weg te staan. Er was hier geen hart of ziel. Neen. Ze waren vrij, en lichten omhulden hen als dekens. Zij hadden te lang geleden. Er was geen vlam van genade meer in hen over. Zij waren te diep verwond en te gek van woede. Zij waren wild, en konden alleen elkaar nog temmen.

Er leek geen einde te komen aan hun wreedheid, omdat ze zelf ook groeiende wreedheid hadden moeten verdragen. Er was nu alleen plaats voor bittere wraak, en wie kon hen stoppen ? Wie kon hen zeggen dat wat ze deden taboe was ? Was datgene wat hen was aangedaan dan geen taboe ? Hun binnenste was trots, bezeten en voortgejaagd door de nooiteindigende vlam. Als zij brulden kwam er vuur voort als bommen. Het was oorlog, een oorlog die zou duren tot het einde. Zij waren soldaten, en zij waren op jacht. Hun netten die zij gooiden waren als het rauwe vuur, en ze aten er goed van.

Zij droegen de vlammenkroon, een kroon van macht, een kroon van nooiteindigend vuur waarin hun nieuwe wereld zou ontstaan, een wereld om weg te vreten hart na hart, geweten na geweten, ziel na ziel. Ja, zij waren de jagers van de dood, omdat zij tot die dood waren gedreven, aan de ketenen van een immergroeiende wreedheid. Nu waren zij vrij, en nu waren zij bereid terug te betalen.

Een nooiteindigend vuur brandde in hun binnensten, voortbrengende visioenen tot een nieuwe creatie. In hun vrijheid braadden zij, en deden zich tegoed aan het vlees, want eens werd hun eigen vlees ook gegeten. Het was de dag der wrake en van de terugbetaling, een dag die de oude wereld nog lang zou heugen, totdat de oude wereld geheel in het niets en vergetene zou zijn opgelost. Dit was een moment waar zij naar uitzagen. En dit moment hadden zij bijna in hun hand.

De mannen gleden door geulen om zo in bronnen terecht te komen. De energieen bouwden zich op, en maakten nieuwe creaties. De mannen werden door nieuwe zachte visioenen omhuld, die hun diep en snel begonnen te penetreren om de diepste bronnen in hun binnenste omhoog te halen. De energieen werden bij elke ademhaling zachter en zachter, om nog diepere samensmeltingen op te roepen. De hersenen en harten van de mannen leken te exploderen, om plaats te maken voor de diepere vlammen, voortkomende vanuit een nooiteindigende vlam waarmee ze steeds meer bezeten raakten, in een vreemd ritmisch patroon om hun zielen te laten exploderen, om plaats te maken voor de vlam.

Door de zachtheid kregen ze een nieuw bewustzijn, en leken hun ogen open te gaan, omhuld door ringen, die zich door spiralen leken te verfijnen en vergroten. En zo werden de diepere snaren van hun wezen beroert, om diepere sappen voort te brengen. Het was oorlog, ondergedompeld in vreemde lichten. Deze lichten vormden ritmische patronen, als sleutels voor het openen van de diepere bronnen en sappen. Ja, poorten van gevoeligheid werden geopend, een grotere zachtheid.

Zij wisten hoe zij de verf moesten voortbrengen voor een totaal nieuwe wereld, een verf die zo diep in hun binnenste zat opgesloten.

De mannen kwamen na lange gevangenschap onder de grond aan in het kasteel. Lange tijd waren ze het slachtoffer geweest, maar nu waren ze toch eindelijk uit die draaikolk ontsnapt, en kwamen aan in het kasteel. Ze kwamen in vreemde capsules terecht vol met lichten, en zij zagen zichzelf nu door hele andere ogen. De capsules werden omhoog geschoten, en ze kwamen in hogere kamers terecht, waar het licht zich leek te vermenigvuldigen, tezamen met een aangename warmte, en een tropische bries. De mannen vertaalden de boodschappen die diep in hun lichamen opgeborgen lagen in mum van tijd, door de penetrerende en pellende lichten. Hier zagen ze zichzelf niet meer in schuwheid, maar in volle trots, alsof ze hun levensader hadden, maar nog steeds op hun hoede, want er konden vele gevaren zijn. Zij kenden het kasteel niet, alhoewel ze overweldigd waren door het kasteel.

Vreemde wezens kwamen tot transformaties, om hun voeten neer te zetten op de grond van het kasteel. Ze hadden hun pistolen, en hun laarzen zorgden voor een goede vering. Ook leken hun helmen en pantsers te vloeien, om hen te beschermen tegen de gevaren. Er waren zoveel kwade wezens die hun hoofden wilden bezitten. Het gevecht begon. Vreemde energieen kwamen als spiralen uit hun pistolen, om zich als ringen over hun vijanden te schieten. Vijanden hadden ze veel. Vijanden die hen terug wilden brengen naar hun donkere kerkers onder de grond. Maar nu waren ze in het kasteel, en zouden hun vrijheid verdedigen. Zij hadden hiertoe de juiste wapenen van het kasteel gekregen. Ja, het kasteel streed voor hen.

Mannen in lange jassen en met duistere geweren renden door het kasteel. Zij waren op zoek naar de

mannen die waren gekomen. Het kasteel zou hen niet meer laten gaan. Sappen begonnen uit hun geweren en pistolen te druipen, en explosies vonden plaats, tot een groot vuurgevecht.

Ze hadden strategische plaatsen in het kasteel. Ze hadden zich geheel naar dit kasteel verplaatst, waar een geheel andere strijd ontstond. De strijd was tegen skeletten. De mannen hielden hun pistolen dichtbij hun borst, en werden in staat gesteld de mannen met de lange jassen te ontmoeten, die naar hen op zoek waren. Veel wapens werden uitgewisseld, klaar voor de strijd. De kogels waren verblindend, en al snel kwamen de skeletten in eieren terecht, in webben, waarin zij geheel geconsumeerd werden, getransformeerd tot goed voedsel. De mannen deden zich eraan tegoed. Lang hadden zij op het moment gewacht, en voor hen was dit een koud kunstje. Zij hadden hun geweren, en hulp van de mannen in lange jassen.

Er was een strijd in de lucht boven hun hoofden, want lichten waren naar hen op zoek, en weefden zich langzaam in de situatie. Zo gingen zij van verblinding tot verblinding om los te komen van de oude visioenen, en kwamen zij tot zachtere golven. Hun hersenen leken te exploderen, en nieuwe stoffen schenen door hun bloed te vloeien, verblindende lichten. Deze lichten waren organisch.

Er stonden vele dingen voor hen klaar in het kasteel, en langzaam gleden zij in hun capsules om tot hogere verdiepingen geschoten te worden. Er waren een heleboel dingen die zij niet begrepen, maar lichten waren naar hen op zoek, om hun harten te laten exploderen, en hen geheel vrij te zetten, vrij om te gaan tot de toppen van het kasteel. De kanonnen waren ritmisch en gevoelig, en ook hun pistolen en geweren schenen een eigen leven te leiden. Zij werden klaargemaakt om zelf een pistool te worden, iets waarin ze geheel veilig zouden zijn.

De mannen waren in een jungle terechtgekomen. Ze wisten het niet, want ze waren in het kasteel in slaap gevallen, en met hun bewustzijn zo ver weggevlogen. Maar toen ze wakker werden bleken ze nog gewoon in het kasteel te zijn, hier waar kasteel en jungle één waren. Ze keken om zich heen en zagen elkaar, terwijl vochtige energieen over hen heen schoven. Om hem heen liepen andere mannen met kappen, en zij hadden branders om het glas tussen de mannen weg te doen smelten. Dit was de wereld van het vuur. Een hitte leek hun hoofden tot leven te wekken, en ze zagen zoveel meer.

Hier waren visioenen die hen meetrokken tot een nieuwe wereld. De mannen riepen van hier tot elkaar. Er was geen weg meer uit het kasteel, alleen een weg om er dieper in weg te zinken. Het kasteel was groot, als een grote jungle.

De hitte leek hier door hun pakken heen te dringen, om hun harten geheel te doen wegsmelten, om plaats te maken voor het vuur, een vuur dat niet zou rusten totdat ze geheel thuis waren, waar ze behoorden te zijn, in de toppen van het kasteel, en door de verblindingen kwamen ze in de torens.

Doordat er een bepaalde stof in hun hoofden vrij kwam om de gaten van de jungle te doordingen en de muren op te blazen kwamen zij tot de andere kanten van de torens, en kwamen ze hoger. Ook leken energieen te vloeien als pistolen. Zo werden zij langzaam maar zeker zelf pistolen.

De mannen hadden vreemde energieen als tubes en wolkjes in hun armen. Hersenen hadden ze niet meer, maar pistolen die alles regelden en gevoelig waren. De hittes waren aangenaam, met verblindende lichten die hieruit voortkwamen. Dezen stroomden door de pakken van de mannen om

de verdere pistolen op te laden. De mannen waren zelf een pistool geworden, en ze hadden veel uitzicht in het kasteel. Steeds hoger kwamen zij in de torens, tot steeds diepere jungles. Maar de oorlog was nog maar net begonnen.

De Chirurg

Thriller

Hoofdstuk 1.

Op een zomerdag kwam een man laat van zijn werk terug. Het was een lange dag geweest op het werk. In deze tijden moesten ze veel overwerk doen, want er was een virus uitgebroken door een vreemd soort gesteente dat in mensen groeide. Ze waren nog steeds druk bezig met het vinden van een antistof. Tot nu toe hadden ze nog niet veel succes, en ook in de stad van de man verspreidde het virus zich als de griep. Tot nu toe waren er nog geen doden gevallen, maar degenen die het virus droegen begonnen zich te isoleren en toonden vreemde gedragingen. Omdat het virus erg besmettelijk was vonden sommige mensen het dan ook wijzer om de mensen die het virus droegen buiten de samenleving te zetten in aparte gebouwen, waar de ziekte verder behandeld zou kunnen worden. Hij was één van die mensen. Hoewel het virus nog niet direct levensgevaarlijk was, zag hij de gevaren voor de samenleving wel hangen. Het gesteente was niet zomaar weg te snijden uit degenen die het droegen, omdat het zich op een ingewikkelde manier in de organen weefde. En omdat het virus in de beginfase was, vreesde hij dat na een tijd het virus zichzelf zou kunnen ontwikkelen tot een dodelijk virus. Ook buiten zijn werk dacht hij er veel over na, en zijn vrienden zeiden dat hij stiller was geworden. Ook in zijn huis had hij een klein laboratorium, waar hij soms buiten werkuren bezig was. Ook als hij 's nachts niet kon slapen was hij veelal daar. Hij leefde met zijn werk.

Hij had een klein stukje steen meegenomen van zijn werk om thuis te onderzoeken. En zelfs buiten het lichaam groeide het vreemde gesteente gewoon door. Door dit vreemde gesteente werd het virus in het lichaam verspreid. Het was een soort gebeente, en snel werd er meer over de ziekte gerapporteerd. Er waren enkelen die nog gewoon doorleefden zoals ze leefden, omdat het virus verschillende symptomen kende, en zich niet altijd bij een ieder op dezelfde manier manifesteerde. Bij sommigen nam het virus naderhand toch weer af. Bij anderen groeide het gesteente ongenadig door, en bij sommigen begon het gesteente zich zelfs in de hersenpan te weven. De man nam het allemaal erg serieus, maar was opgelucht, dat bij enkelen het

virus afnam en het gesteente begon te stabiliseren of zelfs afnam. De man vroeg zich af wat de oorzaak daarvan kon zijn. Het onderzoek leidde tot Afrika, waar bij tijgers en bepaalde soorten slangen het virus ook voorkwam. Het gesteente werd er niet gevonden, maar wel soorten van vreemd weefsel die dezelfde stoffen produceerden. De wetenschap stond voor een raadsel. Het weefsel leek te functioneren als nieren en klieren, en al snel werd er wereldwijd geluid aan gegeven.

De man was blij dat ze eindelijk wat op het spoor waren gekomen, maar er waren nog vele vraagstukken die opgelost moesten worden. Het onderzoek werd een beetje in de war gegooid toen achteraf bleek dat de stoffen toch niet helemaal hetzelfde waren, en de symptomen toch anders waren. Meer en meer raakten ze ervan overtuigd dat ze hier toch met een uniek virus hadden te maken. Maar het onderzoek bij dieren en ook bij andere levensvormen ging door, om een mogelijke overdrachtspoort aan te wijzen. Waar kwam het virus nu werkelijk vandaan, en wat zou de toekomst ervan zijn ? Nog steeds waren er nog geen enkele medicijnen om het virus te remmen of te genezen, maar ze waren blij dat sommigen alsnog een stabilisatie van het virus ondervonden. Het gesteente kon bij sommigen zelfs afnemen, maar er was nog bij niemand totale genezing van het virus aangetroffen. Er werd ook onderzoek gedaan bij mensen waarbij het virus zich had gestabiliseerd of afnam, om te kijken of enige levenspatronen of andere middelen daar invloed op hadden, maar men kon geen aanwijsbare overeenkomsten vinden. Het leek een hopeloze strijd. Alhoewel de snelheid van de verspreiding van het virus afnam, kwamen er toch steeds meer landen bij die melding deden over het toeslaan van het virus. Inmiddels was er bij onderzoek in de zee een bepaalde stof in zeepaardjes ontdekt die op de stof van het virus leek, maar later liep het voor de onderzoekers toch op dood spoor.

Op een nacht was er een uitzending op de televisie waarin sommige mensen met het virus werden geinterviewd. De man zat op de bank en keek, terwijl hij notities maakte. Eén van de ondervraagden had een opmerkelijk verhaal, en opmerkelijke symptomen. Het gesteente was als een mozaiek door de huid rond zijn tepels gebroken, en ook in zijn voeten was het gesteente al op een vreemde manier door de huid naar buiten gekomen. De man die ondervraagd werd vertelde dat 's nachts vreemde wezens in zijn slaapkamer kwamen, met vreemde machines die zich op een vreemde manier vastklonken aan de door de huid gegroeide gesteentes. En dan voelde de man allerlei vreemde sappen door hem heen stromen, en dan hoorde hij vreemde geluiden, en dan was het alsof hij langzaam dronken werd.

Hoofdstuk 2.

De volgende dag vertelde hij op zijn werk wat hij op televisie had gezien, en niemand op zijn werk had hier al van gehoord. Het was nog niet voorgekomen dat het gesteente door de huid groeide volgens hen, maar ze wilden toch meer informatie. De makers van het programma werden gebeld, en er waren gesprekken. De makers wilden niet meewerken met hen, omdat het volgens de makers ging om de privacy van de mensen. Bedenkingen kwamen bij het laboratorium waar de man werkte opzetten. Was dit echt of was er televisie-bedrog in het spel. De media behoorde toch samen te werken met de medici ? Ook hij kreeg bedenkingen over hetgeen hij gezien

had op de televisie. Waren het spookverhalen ? Was het trucage ? Het door de huid gekomen gesteente was echt te zien, maar of het nagemaakt was of niet, kon de man niet zeggen.

Midden in de nacht viel de man in slaap, na een lange tijd van piekeren. Opeens werd hij wakker van een enorm gekrijs. De lucht was blauw, en langzaam liep hij naar het raam. Daar zag hij een enorme gestalte staan als een draak. Maar hij wist dat dit geen draak was. Dit was een wezen uit de zee. Hoe hij dat wist kon hij niet vertellen, maar hij zag het. Hij was totaal niet bang, en na een korte tijd verdween de gestalte weer. De gestalte stond niet in zijn kamer, maar achter het raam van zijn flat, tussen de flat en de rijen van huizen aan de overkant. De volgende dag wilden ze hem niet geloven, en ook zelf kon hij het maar moeilijk geloven. Misschien had hij het wel gedroomd, dacht hij. Na een tijdje kwam het hoofd van het laboratorium na hem toe en zij : 'Zeg, ik maak me erg zorgen om je. Je werkt zo hard dat je veel te veel overuren maakt, en zelfs thuis ga je nog met je werk door. Zou je niet eens wat rustiger aan moeten doen ?' Maar de man wilde hier niet van weten. Toen vroeg het hoofd van het laboratorium hem of hij voor zijn werk naar een laboratorium aan in zee wilde gaan voor zee-onderzoek. Dit wilde de man wel, en nam het aanbod met beide handen aan.

Het was een groot laboratorium, een gebouw dat zelfs tot onder de zee reikte voor diep onderzoek. De man hield altijd al van de zee-natuur, en van de elementen die zich daar bevonden. Hij wist dat daar vele medicijnen te vinden waren. Ook was men bezig met een project voor zuivere zee-voeding, om het vaak eenzijdige menu van de mens aan te vullen. De man was een grootdenker, en had de visie in zichzelf uitgespreid. Veelal was hij bezig geweest de zee te bestuderen, en hier had hij natuurlijk de kans om er zijn werk van te maken. Hij kreeg al direct vele mensen onder zich en zag dit dan ook als een promotie. Hij was zich ook bewust van de gevaren van de zee, en wilde daarom ook niks riskeren. Er moest verantwoord te werk gegaan worden, en men moest waaghalzerij uit de weg gaan.

Inmiddels was het virus aardig onder controle. Het werd niet meer zo zeer als een bedreiging gezien. Er kwamen weinig nieuwe meldingen binnen, en er waren nog steeds geen doden gevallen door het virus. De meesten met het virus woonden in aparte gebouwen buiten de samenleving, omdat ze zich hier prettiger bij voelden. Sommigen werden zelfs algeheel kluizenaar, en kregen van de staat daartoe een kasteel of ander landgoed dat leegstond, terwijl enkelen in staat waren om geheel terug te keren naar de natuur. Er was nog geen enkel medicijn ertegen gevonden, maar de ontwikkelingen leken een ieder gunstig te stemmen. Alles begon weer te worden als vanouds en men begon te denken dat het virus zijn topdagen nu wel gehad had. Maar niets was minder waar.

Hoofdstuk 3.

Hij had net een kennismakingsperiode achter de rug die goed verliep, en het leek erop dat nu het contract wel zou lopen. Hij had meestal moeite met de eerste dagen van iets, maar dit was anders. In dit werk lag zijn hart, nog wel meer als zijn vorig werk. Op een avond deed hij de televisie in zijn nieuwe woning aan. Hij woonde nu dicht bij de zee. Hij zat op de bank, en schakelde over naar de zender met berichten.

Opeens zat hij aan zijn bank gekluisterd. De namen van wat topmensen van zijn land verschenen in beeld met hun foto's. Zij waren die avond omgekomen doordat er een meteoor op het huis van hun vergadering was gevallen. Niemand wist waar die meteoor vandaan kwam. Het was allemaal erg snel gegaan, en het land was erg onthutst. De nieuwslezer veegde het zweet van zijn voorhoofd. Na onderzoeken bleek heel snel dat de meteoor dezelfde stoffen droeg als van het virus en op sommige plaatsen van hetzelfde materiaal was gemaakt als van het gesteente. Ook werd er gewaarschuwd voor de zware straling die vanaf de meteoor afkwam, en technici en specialisten konden deze niet op korte termijn onschadelijk maken. Men besloot enkele afgebroken stukken naar de zee te brengen. Verder werd het terrein afgebakend. Er was een diepe krater in de aardbodem ontstaan. Na enkele dagen leefde het virus weer enorm op, en ditmaal vielen er wel doden. De mensen die het virus hadden klaagden nu veelal over gekrijs in hun hoofd, en de symptomen waren dikwijls gepaard met zweren en brandende pijnen. Vaak sloeg het virus over in andere ziektes. Alle dagen werd er op televisie voorlichting gegeven. En er kwamen steeds meer mensen op televisie die door de huid heengebroken gesteentes hadden. Steeds meer mensen klaagden van brandende pijnen rondom hun tepels en in hun voeten.

En weer werden de sociale structuren van zulke mensen veelal afgebroken, en bij sommigen begon nieuwe huid te groeien, en ook de stembanden van sommigen raakten zwaar aangetast, of gingen dubbele stemmen voortbrengen. Dat waren stemmen die tegengesteld hoog en laag waren. Meer en meer begon het gesteente over de huiden van mensen te groeien, als een vreemd soort van ivoor in verschillende kleuren. En nog steeds was er geen enkel medicijn tegen opgewassen. Sommigen werden erg agressief door het gesteente dat in en over hen groeide, en vaak begonnen verschillende kleuren elkaar te bevechten, en gingen dezelfde kleuren zich bij elkaar voegen. Vaak waren de kleuren tweezijdig en ontstonden er tussenpersonen tussen de verschillende groepen. Veelal voelden mensen zich overgenomen, alsof ze een machine werden. En de wetenschappers stonden radeloos. Nog steeds was hij bezig om antistoffen op of onder de zeebodem te vinden, maar nog steeds zonder enig resultaat. En de mensen begonnen wanhopig te worden, en keerden zich tegen de medici en de topmensen.

Ook hij moest in bescherming gebracht worden tegen razende groepen mensen die het hadden gemunt op de hogere lagen van de bevolking. En hij kreeg militaire bescherming rond zijn huis en rond de plaats waar hij werkte. Op een gegeven moment was dit niet meer mogelijk vanwege de vele aanslagen, en na vele confrontaties tussen de burgers en het leger. Er werden speciale oorden ingericht, waar de topmensen en de medici tezamen met andere verantwoordelijkheidsfuncties gingen wonen. Degenen die onder deze mensen getroffen werden door het virus werden ogenblikkelijk van hun functie ontheven en naar diverse kampen van burgers gestuurd. Maar ook onder de burgers kwamen machtslijnen, en al gauw ontstond er een tussenveld. En zij werden de chirurgen genoemd omdat ze contact bleven houden met de beide kanten van de samenleving.

Hij stond bekend als een contactpersoon waardoor zij met de opperlagen van de

samenleving konden communiceren. Hij vond dat belangrijk voor zijn werk, en voor hem was het onmogelijk om nog met de burgers contact te hebben sinds hij in het zwaar beveiligde oord woonde. Hij kon de chirurgen erg goed begrijpen, en op een dag werd hij zelf door het virus getroffen. Al snel groeide het gesteente door zijn huid heen en kwam hij ook in de tussenlaag terecht en werd één van hen. Snel werd hij opgenomen in de groep. Veelal was de basiskleur zwart met hier en daar een rode, witte of blauwe streep in een punt uitlopende. Soms brak er wel eens wat van het gesteente af, en dat was een helse pijn als brandend zoet. Al gauw werd hij op de hoogte gesteld van een groot geheim van de chirurgen. 's Nachts kwamen er Ufo's tot de kampen van het tussenveld en werden er operaties verricht in de tepels en de voeten. De man herinnerde het televisie-programma dat hij er over gezien had. Het was dus toch waar, dacht hij bij zichzelf. Al gauw was hij bijna geheel gemaakt van dit vreemde gesteente, en begon hij zichzelf te voelen als een machine. 's Nachts kwamen er bruinzwarte kappen over de kampen met rode gleuven die licht gaven, en werden de operaties door draakachtige zeewezens gedaan. Dit was dus wat hij gezien had, dacht hij bij zichzelf. Tijdens de operaties 's nachts kon hij ze goed zien, en sommigen hadden zelfs staarten als goudvissen. Vreemdsoortige sappen werden in hem gespoten op een hele systematische manier.

Soms werden er grote stukken van het gesteente weggebroken, en dan voelde hij die helse pijn als brandend zoet, maar in zijn kamp vertelden zij hem, dat dat brandend zoet een nieuwe immuniteit zou brengen. Wat die nieuwe immuniteit dan was, dat wist hij niet. Bij de hogere lagen van de samenleving waren er berichten binnengekomen over de kappen en de operaties, en zij begonnen bang te worden. Ze waren bang dat de macht in de handen van de chirurgen zouden komen, en begonnen een totaal-oorlog. Inmiddels waren er zoveel mensen door het virus uit de toplagen verdwenen, dat ze bang waren om meer mensen te verliezen. Ze lieten daarom degenen die een wit soort van gesteente hadden blijven. Maar steeds meer onder hen kregen het virus met het witte gesteente. En hem werd verteld door anderen uit zijn kamp dat die immuniteit juist tegen deze aanval was bedoeld. Het was een oorlog van de bang geworden regering gericht aan de chirurgen. Maar omdat de regeringen met hun topmensen en medici merkten dat ze met wapens hen met de gesteentes niet konden uitschakelen probeerden ze het op een andere manier. En dit werd de grote witte oorlog genoemd. Ze probeerden met apparaten de machines onder controle te krijgen. Ze zouden hiervoor in eerste instantie bestraling gebruiken, om stap voor stap invloed uit te oefenen. Inmiddels werden ze van buiten steeds harder en van binnen steeds zachter, en de operatie-apparatuur van de ufo's trokken de tepels van de chirurgen steeds dieper naar binnen, en er werden meerdere tepels geimplanteerd. Ze waren als vlakke, gesloten geraamtes geworden, als oesters in een schelp. Ook de zolen en de huid van hun voeten werden steeds dieper naar binnen getrokken en gingen op een vreemde manier binnen het gesteente circuleren.

Het Evangelie van het
Paarse Boek

Ik kwam haar tegen op de kermis.
Ze deed me aan Mallemoe denken.
Ze likte aan haar ijsje en staarde mij aan.
"Kun je mij een boek voorlezen ?' vroeg ze.

"Waarom ?" vroeg ik. "Kun je zelf niet lezen ?"

"Het is in een taal die ik niet versta," zei het meisje.
"Wat is het voor boek ?" vroeg ik.

"Kom met me mee naar huis, dan laat ik het je zien," zei ze.
Ik liep met haar mee, en we waren na een tijdje bij haar achtertuin aangekomen, en we gingen daar door de achterdeur naar binnen. We gingen helemaal naar het zolder waar zij haar kamer had, en daar liet ze mij het vreemde boek zien. Het boek was paars met zwarte tekens, vreemde tekens, die ik niet begreep.

"Hoe kom je eraan ?" vroeg ik.

"Gevonden," zei ze.

"Waar ?" vroeg ik.

"In de achtertuin," sprak ze.

"Hoe zou het daar gekomen zijn ?" vroeg ik.

Ze haalde haar schouders op. "Geen idee," sprak ze.

Ze gaf het boek aan mij, en ik begon erdoor te bladeren. Boven de tekens stonden wel plaatjes.

"Ik denk dat het hieroglyphen zijn. De plaatjes vertellen een verhaal," zei ik.

"Kun je het me vertellen ?" vroeg ze.

"Ik zal het proberen," zei ik, en begon bij elk plaatje wat uitleg te geven. Zo probeerde ik er een verhaal van te maken, plaatje voor plaatje.

"Wat als het een andere betekenis heeft ?" vroeg ze ineens.

Ik gaf het boek aan haar. "Probeer het nu zelf eens ?" zei ik.

Ze begon toen zelf een uitleg aan de plaatjes te geven, en vertelde een heel ander verhaal dan ik had gedaan. "Je hebt talent," zei ik. "Zullen we weer terug gaan naar de kermis ?"

"Nee," zei ze. "Ik wil dat je hier blijft."

"Waarom ?" vroeg ik.

Ze zuchtte. "Moet ik dat allemaal uit gaan leggen ?" vroeg ze.

"Eigenlijk wel," zei ik. "Je moet wel met een goede reden komen natuurlijk."

"Heb je nog tijd ?" vroeg ze.

"Ik heb nog wel even," zei ik.

Ze ging op haar bed liggen. "Droom je weleens dat je kan vliegen ?" vroeg ze.

"Eigenlijk nooit," zei ik.

"Ik laat je niet meer gaan," sprak ze.

Ik gaf haar een duw. "Ik moet gaan," zei ik.

Maar ze ging weer voor me staan. Weer duwde ik haar.

Ik ging de trap af. Gelukkig volgde ze me niet. Ik ging naar beneden en liep weer door de achterdeur naar buiten. Vanuit het zolderraam riep ze me toe. Ik kon het niet verstaan. Ze sprak wat verward, als in een andere taal. "Wat voor taal is het ?" riep ik terug.

Ik ging terug naar de kermis. Ik schudde mijn hoofd. Ik had haar al zo lang niet meer gezien. Wat was ze vreemd geworden. Gelukkig had ze me laten gaan. Het had natuurlijk ook verkeerd kunnen aflopen. Ik hoopte maar dat ze me nu niet zou gaan stalken.

Toen ik thuiskwam zag ik haar voor mijn deur staan. Ik schrok, en draaide me weer om. Ik ging terug naar de kermis en kocht een patatje. Ik had geen zin in deze toestanden. Ik wachtte totdat het avond was, maar tot mijn grote schrik stond ze nog steeds bij mijn voordeur. Ook begon er een boosheid in me op te borrelen. Ik liep op haar af, en vroeg wat ze moest.

"Jij weer," zei ze. "Ik sta hier gewoon."

"Het is mijn huis," zei ik. "Je doet vreemd. Zo was je vroeger niet. Wat is er gebeurd ?"

"Ben je het vergeten ?" sprak ze. "Onze ouders zijn dood. Jij bent het laatste wat ik heb."

"Maar waarom nu ?" vroeg ik.

"Ik dacht altijd dat ik in het paarse boek meende te lezen dat ik bij je uit de buurt moest blijven voor wat voor reden dan ook," sprak ze. "Maar ik ben daarover steeds meer gaan twijfelen, vooral ook toen ik je ineens tegen kwam op de kermis."

"Toeval heeft ons dus bij elkaar gebracht ?" zei ik.

Ze knikte. "Of het komt door het boek," zei ze. "Het lijkt op een buitenaards boek. Ik meende erin te lezen dat ik een bijzonder iemand van vroeger zou ontmoeten."

Ik schudde mijn hoofd. "Je kent het boek niet. Je kent de taal niet, dus het is allemaal gokken. Daar kun je je leven niet op bouwen."

"Daarom vroeg ik jou het boek te vertalen, want ik weet het niet meer," sprak ze.

"Ik weet het ook niet," zei ik. "Kun je het boek niet gewoon vergeten ?"

"Nee," sprak ze. "Het boek heeft me geholpen over de dood van onze ouders heen te komen. Het boek heeft me ook teruggebracht naar jou. Ik wil je niet meer verliezen."

Ik staarde haar aan. "Ik ben moe," zei ik. "Kunnen we een andere keer verder praten ?"

Maar ze hield me tegen bij de deur. "Ga met mij mee," sprak ze.

"Nu niet," zei ik, "ik heb behoefte aan mijn eigen huis."

"Maar ik kan niet zonder je," sprak ze. "Ik heb je te lang moeten missen."

"Ook door het boek ?" vroeg ik.

"Ik dacht dat ze een goede reden hadden," zei ze.

"We zijn uit elkaar gegroeid," zei ik. "Zo werken de dingen niet."

"Mag ik dan bij jou logeren ?" vroeg ze.

"Je bent een wildvreemde voor me," zei ik. "Ik ken je niet meer terug."

"Alsjeblieft, ik smeek het je," zei ze. "Ik zal me gedragen."

Ik duwde haar weg en opende de deur. "Goed," zei ik, "maar geen verkeerde bewegingen maken."

Toen ze binnen was rende ze naar boven alsof het huis van haar was. "Geweldig, hier ben ik zo lang niet geweest," riep ze.

Ik zuchtte. Ik was moe, en ging snel naar bed.

De volgende ochtend zat ze aan de eettafel in haar witte nachtjapon waar ik haar tegen kwam. Ik was blij dat ze zich had gedragen, en ik had goed geslapen. Ik liep op haar af en nam haar in mijn armen. "Je bent een engel," zei ik. "Dat had ik niet verwacht. Ik heb de hele nacht ongestoord kunnen slapen." Ze keek me aan, en vertelde weer over het paarse boek, en het leek alsof ze een bloeiend paars bloemenveld was. Ik omhelsde haar weer, en zij omhelsde mij ook heel stevig.

Ze had allerlei theorieën over het paarse boek, en probeerde het toe te passen op onze levens. Ze was geobsedeerd met het boek. Op een dag besloten we het boek te laten onderzoeken door een professor van oude talen. Al gauw kwam hij erachter dat het om een oude indiaanse stam ging met een hele oude taal die niet meer gesproken werd. Ook de stam bestond niet meer, maar het boek was gemaakt door hen die wat oude grotten hadden onderzocht, en hadden het eigenlijk gewoon allemaal overgetekend. Volgens de professor was het hele boek gewoon een beschrijving van de

plantenwereld. De professor vond het allemaal interessant genoeg, en liet het ontcijferen door een genootschap waarvan hij lid was, en die gespecialiseerd was in deze stam en hun taal.

Ook mijn logee kreeg de ontcijfering te lezen. Ze was blij dat het eindelijk was ontcijferd, maar ze was ook teleurgesteld. Ze had zich er al die tijd iets heel anders van voorgesteld. Het leek alsof haar wereld instorte. Ik moest haar opvangen. Ze werd zwaar depressief. Het werd zo erg dat ik tegen haar zei dat de professor en zijn genootschap het ook fout konden hebben. Ik raadde haar aan om vast te houden aan haar eigen beleving van het paarse boek. Gelukkig kon ik haar meer en meer ompraten en haar te doen geloven dat het boek toch wel degelijk buitenaards is. Zo ging het steeds beter met haar, en ik vertelde haar vele verhalen over het boek. Ik kon haar van alles wijsmaken vanuit het boek, en ik besloot de vertalingen op te schrijven voor haar, alle verhalen. Ze begon het ook aan anderen te vertellen, op dezelfde manier waarop ze mij eens benaderde, als een evangelie, een blijde boodschap. Zelfs de professor begon haar te geloven, alhoewel ik niet wist of hij dat deed om haar of dat hij het ook daadwerkelijk geloofde. De professor zei dat de indiaanse stam ook buitenaardse contacten schenen te hebben, en dat de diepte van hun geheime coderingen onpeilbaar waren. Volgens de professor zou het zeker een mogelijkheid kunnen zijn. Steeds meer en meer volgelingen begon ze te krijgen, maar toen had ze ook weer het idee dat het boek haar vertelde dat ze zich weer moest terugtrekken. Ze logeerde steeds minder bij me, en uiteindelijk trok ze zich helemaal terug op haar zolder. Ik vroeg aan de professor wat dat gedrag zou kunnen zijn, want ik had het al eerder met haar meegemaakt, en de professor zei dat de indianen stam van het boek ook zo waren. Ik had er vrede mee. Het leek een golfbeweging te zijn. Ze gaan diep, en trekken zich dan weer terug om vervolgens nog dieper te gaan. Ik zou het allemaal wel afwachten.

Op een dag stond ze voor mijn deur met het paarse boek. Ze deed net alsof ze mij niet kende.
"Hallo, mag ik u het evangelie verkondigen van het paarse boek ?" vroeg ze.
Ik dacht laat ik het spelletje maar meespelen. "Waar gaat het over ?" vroeg ik.

"Het gaat eigenlijk nergens over," sprak ze. "Het is wat de lezer er van maakt. Je kan zo diep gaan als je zelf wil."

"Maar gaat dan de bedoeling van het boek niet verloren ?" vroeg ik.

"Maar dit is de bedoeling van het boek," sprak ze. "Het boek geeft de lezer een zekere vrijheid, een zekere ruimte, en de lezer mag er zelf creatief mee zijn."

"Interessant," zei ik. "En heb je al wat moois gevonden of uitgevonden ?"

"Het gaat om jou, wat je er zelf in ziet, niet wat de ander er in ziet," zei ze.

"Maar ik ben altijd geinteresseerd in wat anderen van iets vinden," zei ik. "Misschien dat ik nog wat van ze kan leren."

"Wij verkondigen het evangelie van het paarse boek als het evangelie van wat je er zelf in ziet," sprak ze. "Het is heel persoonlijk. Kunt u mij uitleggen wat het paarse boek betekent ?"

Ik nam haar naar binnen. Ze was nog steeds als een engel. Ik ging met haar op de bank zitten, en ik begon de plaatjes aan haar uit te leggen, en ik begon er verhalen over te vertellen, mooier en dieper dan ik ooit had gedaan. Ik begon er dingen in te zien die ik nog nooit eerder had gezien. Ik zag hoe ze er van opleefde. Ik was erdoor ontroerd, en ik sloeg een arm om haar heen, en even later omhelsde ik haar en knuffelde ik haar.

De Kikkerkoning

Ik zag het leven niet meer zitten.
Maar er kwam een lichte verandering in het plan.
Ik strompelde naar een pas nieuwe psychiater in de stad.
Hij bleek uit het buitenland te komen en sprak met een accent.
Toen ik binnen was gekomen en was gaan zitten stond hij op van achter zijn bureau en ging dichtbij me staan. Hij boog wat voorover en fluisterde in mijn oor : "Ik ben een buitenaardse, ik ben van gisteren."

Ik keek hem verbaasd en met grote ogen aan.

"Ja," zei hij toen weer met een normale stem, "dat zit namelijk zo. Ik was er gisteren, maar ik ben ergens vastgeraakt."

Ik keek hem nog eens goed aan. "U lijkt wel op een leraar van vroeger, inderdaad. Dus u beweert dat u al in mijn leven was, maar dat u ergens bent vastgeraakt, en dat toen mijn leven gewoon verder ging ?"

Ik knipperde met mijn ogen, terwijl hij knikte.

Ik greep hem vast en liet hem niet meer los. Ik omhelste hem. "Houd me vast dan," zei ik, "dan verdwijn je niet meer in het verleden."

"Maar ik moet ..." sprak hij, en begon weg te vagen.

Toen werd ik wakker. Het was maar een droom geweest. De nacht erop droomde ik weer over hem. Hij had veel gezichten, zoals Mallemoe. Hij nam me overal mee naar toe in de droom, als een ware vader. Dit is hoe psychiaters horen te zijn. Hij nam me mee de natuur in, naar het water. Hij liet me de pracht van het universum zien. Voordat de droom af was gelopen zei hij dat hij als ik wakker zou worden niet van me weg zou zijn, maar dat ik hem moest leren herkennen in het dagelijkse leven. Hij had namelijk veel gezichten. Hij was mijn beste vriend.

Toen ik wakker werd begon ik hem na te doen. Ik wilde zoals hem zijn. Ik werd ook psychiater, en nam mijn patienten de natuur in. Ik ging overal met hen naartoe, en ik noemde hen niet mijn patienten, maar mijn vrienden. Ook zoals mijn beste vriend moest ik hen altijd aan het einde van de dag loslaten, en dan zei ik dat ik niet van hen weg zou zijn, maar dat ze mij moesten leren herkennen in alles rondom hen, omdat ik vele gezichten had.

Voor sommigen was dat een hele harde opgave, en hen voor wie dit nog te moeilijk was liet ik vaak bij mij in de vakanties en weekenden logeren. Ik was de slechtste niet. Mijn doel was van mijn patienten zelf zulke psychiaters te maken, zodat ze zichzelf en anderen konden helpen zoals ik had gedaan.

Maar ja, hoe denk je dat buitenstaanders hierop reageerden ? Volgens hen kon dit echt niet, en ik kon eigenlijk mijn plannen pas volledig realizeren toen de kikkerkoning het land ging regeren.

De Gezichten van Mallemoe

Mallemoe had vele gezichten, en ik wist niet welk gezicht ik ditmaal zou aantreffen als ik thuis zou komen. Ik was op weg naar huis. Ik zat in de bus, dichtbij de chauffeur, en we hadden een gesprek. Onderweg moesten we bij een station stoppen, en daar kocht ik nog even een strippenkaart erbij, want ik had meer strippen nodig om thuis te kunnen komen. Ik kocht een vijf strippen kaart. Dat zou wel voldoende zijn volgens de chauffeur, alhoewel hij niet eens wist waar mijn straat was toen ik hem de straatnaam gaf. De chauffeur moest ook nog even wat op het station doen, dus er was nog wel tijd. Ik ging een trap op en kwam ergens aan op een hogere verdieping. Ik raakte in gevecht met een blonde vrouw. Ze rende zo vanuit een terrasje van een café op deze verdieping op me af en begon op me in te slaan. Daar kon ik niet tegen en moest haar tegen de vlakte slaan. Ik kende de vrouw niet. Ik dacht dat ze te diep in het glaasje had gekeken. Ik herinnerde me de gezichten van Mallemoe. Ik kon ook gewoon een trein pakken hier, en dan ergens anders naartoe.

Ik liep weer terug op de verdieping, richting de trap, maar toen zag ik een gebroken beeldje liggen op de grond. Het ene deel was een huisje met een hondje, en het andere deel was een jongetje. Ik legde de twee delen tegen elkaar aan en vond het een prachtig beeldje. Al snel stond er een groep mensen om me heen die me geld begonnen te bieden voor het beeldje. Ik zei dat ik dat niet kon doen, want Mallemoe zou me dat zeker betaald zetten. Er was ook iemand anders bij die precies hetzelfde beeldje uit zijn tas haalde, maar dan heel. Misschien dat de beeldjes ergens dichtbij verkocht werden ? Maar waarom waren al die mensen dan om me heen die mijn gebroken beeldje wilden kopen ? Voor mij was het een raadsel, een raadsel zoals Mallemoe was.

Ik stopte het gebroken beeldje in mijn schooltas en ging terug naar de bus. Even later was ik thuis, maar Mallemoe was niet blij. Ik vroeg Mallemoe om de lijm, om het beeldje te lijmen, maar ik kreeg het niet van haar. Mallemoe was het allemaal zat. Ze wilde dat ik het beeldje zou wegdoen. "Of dat beeldje eruit, of ik eruit," sprak Mallemoe.

"Nou, dan jij maar eruit, Mallemoe," zei ik, "want het beeldje wil ik toch wel graag houden."

Mallemoe pakte haar spullen. Met haar vele koffers vertrok ze. Het was een hele volksverhuizing, en ons zoontje nam ze mee. Die avond staarde ik naar het beeldje wat ik op de tv had gezet. De lijm had ik gekregen van een vriendelijke buurvrouw. Het jongetje was nu verzoend met zijn hond, en met zijn huis. Hij had een petje op. Tot mijn grote verbazing begon het jongetje te fluisteren, en toen te roepen, en toen te schreeuwen en zelfs te gillen. Toen begon het jongetje te lachen. Ik wist dat ik de juiste keuze had gemaakt.

De Gezichten van Mallemoe II

Toch ben ik Mallemoe daarna nog een keer tegengekomen. Het was in een hele drukke winkelstraat, waar ze stond met haar draaiorgel, en ons zoontje liep ervoor met het geldbakje. Hij rammelde ermee op de maat van de muziek. Ik liep op mijn zoontje af, en vertelde hem over het sprekende beeldje, maar hij wilde mij niet geloven, en wilde ook niet kijken of het misschien toch waar was wat ik zei. Ook Mallemoe wilde mij niet geloven. Het draaiorgel was verbonden aan een bromfiets, en ze sprong zo op de bromfiets, nam mijn zoontje achterop, en stoof met het ding weg, een enorme stank achterlatende. Ik dacht er direct aan dat ze de uitlaatpijp weleens na mocht laten kijken. Dit was niet goed, en even vreesde ik voor haar veiligheid en de veiligheid van mijn zoontje. Natuurlijk wist ik niet waar ze nu woonden. Dat werd mij allemaal niet gemeld.

De volgende dag keek ik of ze weer terugwas, maar nee. Misschien reiste ze wel door het hele land. Het zou een onmogelijke opgave zijn om haar te traceren. Die uitlaatpijp was niet goed, al helemaal niet voor de natuur. Maar ja, wat kon ik doen ? Mallemoe was niet altijd natuurgetrouw. Het hing er

maar vanaf welk gezicht ze had opgezet. Ze had ook vele hoedjes. Die had ze allemaal onderverdeeld in dozen. Ze was er maar druk mee. Ik hoopte maar dat ze ons zoontje niet zou aansteken met deze gekte. Pilatus noemde ze hem altijd. Terwijl ik hem Deur noemde. Het was natuurlijk wel verwarrend voor dat joch, maar ik kon het gewoon niet over mijn hart halen om hem Pilatus te noemen. Mallemoe vond het wel Mediterraans klinken, en wel zwoel, maar ik kende de achtergronden van die naam. Ik had er veel over gelezen. Ik las veel universitaire literatuur, terwijl Mallemoe alleen maar flutromannetjes las en roddelblaadjes. Daar was ze groots in. Pilatus was voor haar echt een naam van verdachte status, van controversiële aard, en dat trok haar aan. Het moest vooral anders zijn, en tegendraads, iets waar veel over nagedacht werd, en waar veel bekijks over was. Het moest iets zijn wat de volkeren bezighield, niet dat hele ingeburgerde. Het moest iets zijn waarover men zich druk maakte.

Op een dag kreeg ik een brief van Mallemoe, met veel gezwets over Pilatus. Ik vroeg me af waarom ze me schreef, maar ze bleek geld nodig te hebben. Zodra ze geld nodig had was ze ineens heel open en vriendelijk. Het was gewoon één van de gezichten van Mallemoe voor mij, één van haar vele gezichten. Ik werd er niet warm of koud van. Ik stuurde haar wat monopolie geld op, en naar mijn zoontje stuurde ik echt geld. De volgende dag stond ze op de stoep. Ze vond het onverantwoordelijk dat ik Pilatus zoveel geld had gestuurd. Hij deed er de meest vreemde dingen mee, ook dingen waarvan ze gezegd had : "Of dat ding eruit, of ik eruit." Pilatus had dus voor het ding gekozen. Dat wilde ze even kwijt, en ze was ook zo weer weg, op haar brommer met draaiorgel. Ik vroeg me af wat voor dingen Pilatus had aangeschafd. Maar ja, ik had zijn adres niet.

Ik kwam er snel genoeg achter. Op een dag niet lang nadat Mallemoe was geweest las ik in de krant over Circus Pilatus. Ik dacht dat dat wel van mijn zoontje moest zijn. Had hij toch nog wat goeds met zijn geld gedaan. Ik dacht laat ik eens een kijkje nemen. Toen het circus dicht in de buurt was ging ik er naartoe. En daar stond Pilatus. Hij stopte zijn hoofd in leeuwenbekken en krokodillenbekken. Daar schrok ik toch wel van, en stapte direct op hem af, maar hij fluisterde dat de leeuwen en krokodillen slechts robotten waren, dus ik was weer gerust. Het circus had ook clowns en acrobaten. Dat waren ook robotten, dus eigenlijk kon er niets foutgaan. Ik vroeg aan hem of zijn moeder hier dan niet kon werken. Dan had ze wat te doen, maar hij schudde zijn hoofd. Het circus was de reden waarom Mallemoe wegging. Ik herinnerde hem eraan dat ze eens met hem wegging vanwege een simpel beeldje. Hij knikte. Hij kon zich dat nog herinneren.

"Je bent een groot man nu, Pilatus," sprak ik. Ik noemde hem niet meer Deur. "Dat is de eerste keer dat je mij zo noemt," sprak Pilatus. Ik knikte.

"Je hebt nu je eigen circus," zei ik. "Circus Pilatus."

Hij knikte.

"Dat je maar veel geld mag verdienen, jongen," sprak ik. "Misschien dat je dan ooit eens je moeder uit de brand kan helpen, dat je iets kan kopen waardoor ze niet wegloopt."

"Ik heb er geen zin meer in," zei Pilatus. "Wat ik ook doe, het is toch nooit goed. Laat haar maar gaan waar ze wil gaan."

"Nou ja," zei ik. "Ik ben daar niet zo'n voorstander van. Die brommer waarop ze rijdt met dat draaiorgel is echt niet goed."

"Ik weet het," zei Pilatus. "Het is ook niet goed voor de natuur, maar moeder doet wat ze doet."

"Met geld kun je veel beginnen," zei ik. "Ze heeft een nieuw gezicht nodig, want met degenen die

ze nu heeft redt ze het niet."

"Laat het, pa," zei Pilatus. "Ze heeft al genoeg gezichten."

"Ja, maar geld kan ons gelukkig maken," zei ik. "Veel geld."

"Dat ben ik niet met je eens," zei Pilatus. "Jullie beiden hielden altijd van veel geld, en zie waar het ons heeft gebracht. En heb jij zelf niet eens al die gezichten van moeder gekocht ?"

Ik boog mijn hoofd. "Je hebt gelijk, maar zie je, Pilatus, ik had de gezichten eens gewonnen op de kermis, dus ik kon ze niet zomaar weg doen. Ik had er teveel geld in gestopt."

"In die automaten, pa ?" sprak Pilatus. "Je was slechts een gekke gokker, doldwaas, en nu zitten we met de gebakken peren."

"Ja, maar politie-ma kwam erg van pas," zei ik, "en bokser-ma, en spelletjes-ma, kook-ma, feest-ma, was-ma, ze hebben ons altijd goed geholpen, al die gezichten. Er heeft nog nooit iemand bij ons ingebroken. Aan Mallemoe waagden ze zich niet. Ik was de enige die me aan haar waagde."

"Pa, pa," zei Pilatus, terwijl hij zijn hoofd schudde. "Je had haar haarzelf moeten laten zijn, want zulk kermisspul is nooit goed. Dat heb je nu wel gezien. Of je had een robot kunnen kopen, zoals ik heb gedaan."

"Waar heb je die robotten eigenlijk gekocht ?" vroeg ik.

"In Griekenland," zei Pilatus.

"Griekenland ?" vroeg ik. "Waarom helemaal daar ?"

"Shhh," zei Pilatus, "laten we het ergens anders over hebben."

"Je hebt het toch niet van de mafia gekocht, hè ?" vroeg ik.

"Nee," zei Pilatus. "Maak je maar geen zorgen."

"Ik wil weten waar je het vandaan hebt, Pilatus," zei ik.

"Nieuwe soort supermarkt voor robotische spullen," sprak Pilatus. "Dat beeldje van jou schijnt er ook vandaan te komen."

"Wat zijn dat voor toestanden ?" vroeg ik. "En waarom is Mallemoe er op tegen ? Ziet zij of die gezichten van haar het als concurrentie ?"

"Vermoedelijk wel," zei Pilatus.

"We zouden die gezichten van haar er moeten afschroeven," sprak ik.

"Ja, maar wat houden we dan over ?" vroeg Pilatus.

"Het is toch al niks meer," zei ik.

Maar ja, Pilatus moest verder werken. Ik ben toen maar naar huis gegaan. Ik dacht na over de

gezichten van Mallemoe. Ik keek naar het beeldje op de tv. Het jongetje danste met zijn hondje. Er werd aangebeld. Het bleek Mallemoe weer te zijn. Ze wilde terugkomen.

"Maar ik heb nog steeds dat beeldje," zei ik.

"Het geeft niet," zei Mallemoe. "Zoals het nu gaat is het ook niks."

"Misschien ben je gewoon overgevoelig," zei ik.

"Nee, dat is het niet," zei Mallemoe.

"Wat is het dan ?" vroeg ik.

"Ik ben star, streng en eigenzinnig," sprak ze.

"Toe maar weer," zei ik. "Dat is een hele mond vol."

"Nu wel," zei ze.

"Maar straks niet meer ?" vroeg ik.

"Het is maar één van mijn gezichten," sprak ze.

De Ontvoering

Het was een doorzichtig voertuig. Ik was bang dat ik er vanaf zou vallen. We waren op een weg van Breda, in prachtig natuurgebied, maar de persoon naast mij was niet zo prachtig, en al helemaal niet kalmerend. Hij was allemaal stads aan het zwetsen, en loog over mij. Ik vroeg waar hij het allemaal over had, maar hij zei : "Dat weet je toch zelf wel ?"

Ik klaagde over zijn voertuig. Dat kon hij niet hebben. Hij reed de berm in, een heuveltje op, stapte uit, en trok mij mee, en begon mij te duwen. Even leek het alsof de tijd stilstond, en ik staarde naar

hem. Wat er toen gebeurde herinner ik me niet meer, maar ik zag hem zo van het heuveltje afrollen. Ik bedacht me geen moment, en rende over het heuveltje een achterliggende Bredase woonwijk in. Er was hier een soort klein winkelcentrum. Ik dacht dat ik nu van hem af was, maar ineens zag ik hem daar weer lopen, met een pistool. Er waren hier veel glazen wanden, en ik vroeg me af of ik veilig was, of er nog genoeg glas tussen mij en hem was. Hij had mij wel gezien, en kwam achter mij aan. Hij was niet snel. Het glazen doolhof leek mij van hem af te schermen. Weer leek het alsof de tijd stilstond, en ik staarde naar hem. En weer gebeurde er toen iets wat ik me niet meer kon herinneren, maar alles wat ik weet was dat ik toen ineens het pistool in handen had, en hij was er niet meer.

Ik voelde mij strak als een robot. Dit was geen normaal pistool. Ik kon me niet eens meer bewegen. Ik kon dwars door de hoofden van de mensen heenkijken. Ik wist waar ze vandaan kwamen en waar ze naartoe gingen. Niemand deed iets, want ik had het pistool. Ik dacht ik zou deze mensen wel willen helpen. Ook zij hebben zo lang geleden onder hem met het pistool. Zo werd hij ook genoemd : het pistool. Hij was de schrik van Breda. "De gemaakte" was een andere bijnaam van hem. Ik herinnerde dat hij het was die mij had ontvoerd, en eigenlijk was iedereen in Breda ontvoerd door hem. Ik wilde deze mensen helpen, maar ik was in een glazen doolhof. Het glas beschermde mij.

De Kikkerkoning II

De kikker was een dokter. Hij was erg tegendraads.
Als iedereen naar links ging, ging hij naar rechts,
En als iedereen omlaag ging, ging hij omhoog,
Hij noemde zijn patienten vrienden,
En liet ze bij hem logeren in de vakanties,
En ook wenste hij hen altijd beterschap.

Dat kon en mocht niet volgens de regerende elite.
Die kikker moest gekruisigd worden,
En zo gebeurde het op een nacht.

De kikker had hen al gewaarschuwd :
"Als jullie mij kruisigen, dan zal het voor eeuwig sneeuwen, en zullen jullie worden als standbeelden, en een draaiorgel zal mij uitroepen als koning. Met jullie stenen zal ik de muren bouwen van mijn koninkrijk," maar niemand luisterde.
Zo grepen ze hem in de nacht, en kruisigden hem.

Het was mid-zomer en het begon te sneeuwen, zoals voorzegd door de kikker.
Zij die hem hadden gekruisigd waren in grote verbazing, en begonnen al in steen te veranderen.
Hun laatste woorden waren gewoonlijks : "Hij was waarlijk de kikkerkoning."

Een draaiorgel riep hem toen uit als koning, maar de kikker hing aan het kruis.
Het sneeuwde, en het bleef sneeuwen. Niemand kon dat stoppen, en grote sneeuwstormen kwamen om veel verwarring te zaaien. Families werden van elkaar losgescheurd, en hele landen. Ook kerken bleven niet gespaard. Ze hadden een nieuwe koning nu.

En op zondagmorgen besteeg de kikker de hoge preekstoel, en predikte uit een paars boek.
Hierin stonden verschrikkelijke dingen beschreven waarvan een ieder begon te beven.
Nee, nooit meer waren ze dezelfde, maar de kikker gaf zo'n wonderbaarlijke uitleg dat het hun mooiste boek was.
En zo werd het paarse boek gepredikt in alle windrichtingen, en patienten werden tot dokters, en dokters werden tot patienten. En zij waren allemaal patienten van het grote paarse medicijnenboek, maar zij werden vrienden genoemd.
De kikker nam nooit geld, maar gaf alleen maar geld.
En zo regende het elke zondagmorgen geld.
Armen waren er niet meer sinds de kikkerkoning het land regeerde.

De Machine

Het zeewater was glashelder. Je kon er alles doorheen zien. Op de bodem groeiden vele bloemen. Het was bijna een bloemenzee. De branding was schuimend. Zij konden zien vanwege het nachtzicht in hun ogen.

Het zand was gloeiend heet, en een kampvuur brandde in de verte. Er waren grote vissen aan het spit, vissen die anders het eiland zouden hebben verwoest. Het waren vissen die het voor zwemmers onveilig maakten.

Zij die hier gekomen waren wilden niet meer terug. Ze waren met een roeiboot gekomen. Op het eiland leefden kannibalen, maar die hadden ze nog niet gezien.

In de verte zagen ze wat kano's met inboorlingen. Ze vroegen zich af of dat kannibalen waren. Na een tijdje was het een hele vloot. Ze kwamen steeds dichterbij. Ze besloten voor de zekerheid en de veiligheid de wildernis in te gaan. Diep in de wildernis van het eiland was een rivieren gebied. Hier zagen ze ook in de verte een vloot van kano's met inboorlingen.

Plotseling waren ze omsingeld door inboorlingen met speren. Ze vreesden het ergste, dat dit kannibalen waren. Ze werden naar kooien geleid, en kregen toen te horen wat de regels waren. Er moest een god aan het kruis aanbeden worden, de god van de kannibalen. Zijn naam werd niet genoemd, maar aan die god moesten mensen geofferd worden die dan later gegeten werden.

Vanaf die tijd werden ze vetgemest, maar ze spuwden alles uit van de zenuwen. Toen werden ze min of meer uitgehongerd. Hierdoor werden ze ook niet geofferd, en konden vrij op het eiland

leven.

Ze voelden er niets voor om die kannibaalse god te aanbidden. Ze hoopten dat ze nu met rust gelaten zouden worden.

Snel kwamen ze erachter dat de kannibaalse god maar een machine was waardoor de inboorlingen werden beheerst.

Omdat ze geen enkel risico wilden nemen zijn ze toen naar het volgende eiland toegegaan.

Een Vreemd Verhaal
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Iedereen heeft zo zijn eigen spookhuizen in het leven. Ik noem ze ook wel "nachtmerrie-huizen", en sommige nachtmerries kunnen zo erg zijn dat je er niet eens over kan praten of wil praten.

Soms kunnen nachtmerries zelfs niet opgeschreven worden, en als ze dan opgeschreven worden, dan komen ze in veel gevallen in een persoonlijk archief. Een voorbeeld hiervan is een dagboek.

Er rust een grote geheimzinnigheid op dagboeken, en vaak wil de eigenaar ook niet dat het gelezen wordt. Soms lezen mensen dagboeken van anderen en hadden dat achteraf liever niet gedaan.

Dat kan ook met sommige boeken zijn. Soms heb je gemengde gevoelens over een boek, en had je bepaalde dingen niet willen lezen. Bepaalde andere dingen kunnen dan juist weer heel belangrijk zijn, en daarom gooi je het ook niet weg, en belandt het in het archief.

Zo kunnen uitgevers ook een archief hebben met boeken die belangrijke inhoud hebben maar die niet rijp of geschikt zijn voor publicatie. Zo'n archief hebben wij ook. Als ik dan door de boeken van dat geheime archief blader dan jaagt het me de stuipen op het lijf, en tegelijkertijd opent het wonderbare werelden voor mij.

Het zijn boeken die niet in deze wereld thuishoren, en die ook zeker niet zijn geschreven voor het grote publiek. Het zijn beschrijvingen van nachtmerries, maar dan op zo'n manier dat het spookhuizen zijn, gesloten spookhuizen dan, en dat is maar goed ook.

Eén zo'n boek, en ik kan het me nog herinneren als de dag van gisteren, ging over een professor die wel een heel bijzondere spelcomputer had gemaakt ... Ik zal er een beetje omheen praten, en de

kernen van het boek niet opnoemen, want het zijn hoge graads nachtmerries. Alleen al het lezen van het boek is een herinnering die ik niet meer weg kan wissen. Het was een hele verheldering, die zo diep ging in de demonologie dat ik me kon voorstellen waarom dit boek in het geheim archief terecht was gekomen. Ze moesten wel een groot vertrouwen in mij hebben dat ook ik de sleutel mocht dragen van dit archief.

In ieder geval ... In dat boek bezocht iemand die professor ... En dat ging zo :

"Op een dag bracht ik een bezoek aan de professor. De professor was net bezig een nieuw drankje te maken. Hij liet mij een ondergrondse lift van teleportatie zien. De lift kon tot erg diep reiken. Het diepste punt leidde tot ..."

En toen volgde er de naam van een planeet.

"Vanaf het balkon kon je een prachtige natuur zien. Professor Rood Barenhout liet mij ook allerlei machines zien, en voertuigen.

Hij liet mij ook veel wapens zien, vooral zwaarden die gestoken waren in doodskoppen als hun schedes.

Professor Rood Barenhout had een rode spelmachine gebouwd.

Hij sprak dat het een soort spookhuis was.

Ik keek hem aan met opgeheven wenkbrauwen.

Hij vertelde dat een ieder die in de machine zou stappen tijdelijk zijn geheugen zou verliezen over het feit dat het maar een spelmachine was.

Ik had eigenlijk helemaal geen zin om een spookhuis binnen te gaan.

Mijn leven was al zwaar genoeg.

Hij liet me de machine zien, een gigantisch rood ding met rails en een soort auto.

Het was allemaal zwaar technologisch.

Hij drukte op een knop en er was allemaal stoom.

Toen liet hij mij de computer schermen zien in de auto, die heel wonderlijk waren.

Ik kon mijn leven zien, en die waren als autobanen.

Ik zag die autobanen op het scherm dwars door mijn leven heen, als rode zachte stralen, die ook zacht zoemend geluid gaven.

Ik vroeg me af hoe de machine zomaar mijn leven tevoorschijn kon halen.

Misschien tapte het van mijn geheugen.

De professor drukte weer op wat knoppen op een soort tankpomp computer naast de spel-auto. We gingen beiden in de auto zitten. Ik keek bijna gehypnotiseerd op de schermen. Dit was mijn verleden. Ik begon enthousiast te worden, maar nog steeds met een zekere terughoudendheid.

‘Het is om te leren,’ sprak professor Rood Barenhout.

‘Ja, ja,’ zei ik. ‘Je mag me echt wel laten zien hoe het werkt, maar dan stap ik ook weer uit.’

‘Natuurlijk,’ zei de professor. ‘Je wordt echt niet gedwongen.’

Weer drukte hij op wat knoppen, ditmaal in de auto zelf. Ik bleef kijken op de computer. Ik zag de vriendinnen die ik in mijn leven had gehad, en ook wat nare gebeurtenissen, en de autobanen gingen er dwars doorheen. Onderaan het scherm was een soort auto met een groot dashboard.

‘Dit is groots,’ sprak ik. ‘Maar wat is hier nou zo eng aan ? Ik ben wel verbaasd dat die nare gebeurtenissen in mijn leven nu gewoon op het scherm staan, maar die auto rijdt er gewoon doorheen.’

‘Blijf kijken,’ sprak de professor. Ik bleef kijken op het scherm, en de gebeurtenissen begonnen te veranderen in een tekenfilm. Mijn hele verleden begon te veranderen in een tekenfilm.

‘Ik vind dit wel mooi,’ sprak ik.

‘Het probleem is ...’, sprak de professor, ‘dat de spelmachine nog niet af is. Ik heb testers nodig. Dan kan ik zien waar ik het moet veranderen en bijstellen. Ik bied je vijf miljoen.’ Ik keek hem met grote ogen aan, en weer met opgeheven wenkbrauwen. ‘Ik kan het geld wel gebruiken,’ sprak ik, ‘maar is dat gevaarlijk, zo’n test ? Ik bedoel : Wat gaat er met mij gebeuren ?’

‘Het is niet zonder risico’s,’ sprak de professor.

‘Wat zijn de risico’s ?’ vroeg ik. Ik voelde me bijna als een stuntman als ik er aan dacht.

‘Ik kan daar niet teveel over zeggen,’ sprak de professor. ‘Het is een experiment, en het kan flink traumatisch zijn, maar het is maar een spel. Het is niet echt, alhoewel je tijdelijk je geheugen verliest over dat het maar een spel is.’

‘Dus ik kom er gewoon levend weer uit, en krijg te horen dat het niet echt was, zodat ik het weer kan vergeten of misschien met andere ogen kan bekijken ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Precies,’ zei professor Rood Barenhout.

‘Klinkt goed,’ zei ik. ‘En ik heb wel zin in een uitdaging zoals dit, als het voor de vooruitgang van de wetenschap is heb ik het er zeker voor over, en die vijf miljoen is mooi meegenomen.’

‘Maar vergeet niet dat het een spookhuis is,’ sprak de professor serieus.

‘Wat houdt dat in ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Je gaat verschrikkelijk getest worden,’ sprak de professor, ‘maar het is voor een goed doel, inderdaad voor de vooruitgang van de wetenschap.’

‘Bliksems,' zei ik. 'Waarom moet je hier zo vaag over doen ?’ zei ik.

‘Omdat het nog niet af is,’ sprak de professor. ‘Ik weet nog niet helemaal wat er mis kan gaan.’

‘En je wil het zelf niet testen ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Nee, natuurlijk niet,’ zei de professor. ‘Dat zou levensgevaarlijk zijn, want ik moet juist de machine in de gaten houden en de knoppen bedienen wanneer dat nodig is, en kleine aanpassingen maken. Stel dat de machine op hol slaat, dan ben ik er in ieder geval nog om alles tot orde te brengen.’

‘Nou, dat is een geruststelling,’ sprak ik, ‘maar wat als jou iets overkomt, of je verliest de macht over de machine ?’

‘Daar ga ik niet vanuit,’ sprak professor Rood Barenhout. ‘Ik heb veel ervaring met dit soort machines, en stel dat ik tijdelijk de macht zou verliezen dan doe ik er alles aan met mijn kennis om de macht weer terug te krijgen. Dat is gewoon een kwestie van tijd dan.’

‘Nou, lekker,’ sprak ik. ‘Nu begrijp ik waarom je er vijf miljoen voor vraagt, want waarschijnlijk staat mijn leven ook nog op het spel.’

‘Alle machines zijn zo gebouwd dat mocht het uit de hand lopen dan na bepaalde tijd zal de machine zichzelf uitschakelen,’ sprak de professor. ‘Oververhitting bijvoorbeeld zal de machine al na tien minuten uit zich zelf stoppen. Verder heeft alles zo zijn risico’s, binnen bepaalde grenzen natuurlijk, maar toch vind ik daarom de vijf miljoen redelijk. Doe er iets moois mee,’ sprak professor Rood Barenhout, en liet mij de cheque zien van vijf miljoen.

‘Ik ben erg nieuwsgierig geworden, professor,’ sprak ik. ‘Laten we maar direct beginnen. Ik kan eigenlijk niet meer wachten.’

‘Goed,’ sprak professor Rood Barenhout. ‘De auto zal door de machine het gebouw verlaten, en zal je naar huis brengen. Zodra je uitstapt zal je tijdelijk totaal vergeten zijn dat je hier was, en dat je aan het spel deelneemt. Je zal naar de winkel gaan voor wat boodschappen, en daar zal je iemand tegenkomen die hele verhalen aan je begint op te hangen, verhalen die herkenning bij je zullen oproepen uit je eigen leven. Klaar ?’

‘Zo klaar als het maar kan,’ sprak ik. Ik kon het eigenlijk niet geloven, en dacht dat het ook allemaal gewoon onzin kon zijn, maar nu wilde ik het toch echt weten. Ik zou nooit meer zo’n kans kunnen krijgen.

Professor Rood Barenhout stapte uit. ‘Daar gaan we dan,’ sprak hij. Hij deed de deur van de auto

dicht, en begon te typen op het toetsenbord van de tankpomp. Rode lampen begonnen aan te gaan die zacht, waterig licht begonnen te verspreiden, en die begonnen zacht te zoemen.

‘Het is een groot voorrecht,’ sprak de professor. ‘Jij zal de geschiedenis herschrijven. Het zal een mijlpaal in je leven zijn, en in de algehele evolutie van het bestaan, en ....’

Maar ik kon hem niet meer horen. De auto was al gaan starten en reed zacht zoemend de immens grote machine in. Op de weg zag ik veel mensen vanuit hun auto’s naar mij en mijn auto staren. Zoiets hadden ze nog nooit gezien. Ik zat wel achter een stuur, maar ik hoefde verder niets te doen. De auto deed alles zelf, en daar kon ik niets aan veranderen, en dat hoefde ook niet. Tot mijn grote schrik zag ik nu een tijdje politie achter mij rijden.

Even later reden ze vóór mij, en wilden dat ik zou stoppen. De auto volgde hen en stopte. De agenten liepen naar de auto toe en rukten de deur open. ‘Wat is dit voor auto, mijnheer ? Dat kan toch niet ? Mag ik uw rijbewijs zien ?’ vroeg één van hen. Ik haalde mijn rijbewijs uit mijn zak en liet het hem zien.

‘Kunt u even de auto uitkomen ?’ vroeg de andere agent. Hij begon mij uitvoerig te inspecteren. ‘Dit lijkt een illegale auto te zijn,’ sprak de agent, ‘alsof het regelrecht van de kermis afkomt.’

Ik knikte. ‘Ik kan het ook niet helpen, mijnheer. Het is voor mijn werk.’

Opeens kwam professor Rood Barenhout door op één van de schermen. Hij begon luid te schreeuwen naar de agenten. ‘Drommelse jongens, verstoor mijn werkzaamheden niet, okay ? Ik heb nu geen tijd voor spelletjes. Mijnheer heeft een belangrijke opdracht voor de vooruitgang van de wetenschap. Ik werk voor het rijk, voor het ministerie van defensie. Ik heb echt geen tijd nu voor jullie onzin, rotjongens.’

De agenten kenden hem wel, en boden hem hun verontschuldigingen aan. ‘Reken het ons niet aan,’ sprak één van de agenten. ‘Wij hadden niet in de gaten dat het een auto was van u. We dachten eerst dat de auto uit de toekomst kwam, maar nu begrijpen we het.’

‘Maak geen geintjes, jongens,’ schreeuwde de professor. ‘Ik heb wel andere dingen te doen. Nou vooruit, doe jullie werk, en laat mijnheer verder met rust, anders lopen we achter op schema, en dan zal ik jullie daar duur voor laten betalen.’

‘Begrepen, professor,’ zeiden de agenten rood van schaamte, en vertrokken weer. De deur van de auto ging weer dicht, en begon mij verder te brengen naar huis."

Dit was een stukje uit het eerste hoofdstuk. In het tweede hoofdstuk begint de ik-persoon :

"Ik had zware nachtmerries in mijn kinderjaren. Ze overweldigden mij, nachtmerries van grote horror en verdoemenis, vaak in de vorm van ..." en dan komt er een heel verhaal totdat de ik-persoon zegt : "Ik was bang om te gaan slapen, omdat ik wist wat er kon gebeuren." Dan komt er weer een heel verhaal totdat de ik-persoon aan het einde van het tweede hoofdstuk zegt :

"Op een gegeven moment begonnen de nachtmerries minder te worden en te verzwakken, en kwam ik langzaam terug tot mezelf. Maar overdag werd ik in mijn gedachtes erdoor geplaagd. Ik kon er niet overheen komen. Erover praten kon ik niet.

Totdat ik op een dag iemand tegenkwam met dezelfde soort verhalen."

Dit was dus wat de professor al had aangekondigd. Hoofdstuk drie gaat over die ontmoeting :

"Hij keek me aan. ‘Heus,’ sprak hij. ‘Je moet me geloven. Toen het ruimteschip kwam werden alleen een paar van ons gered. Ze brachten ons naar de aarde voor veiligheid. Nog steeds leven er velen daar op de ...."

En dan volgt weer de naam van die planeet ...

"in hetzelfde lot als wat mij ten deel was gevallen, en waarvan ik nu heb kunnen vluchten. Mijn bevrijders – Ik weet niet waar zij zijn. Alles wat ik weet is dat ze mij hier op aarde brachten, en toen vertrokken ze weer. Ik was de enige die ze hier hadden gebracht. De anderen namen zij met zich mee – misschien naar een andere planeet. Ik kan het niet meer. Ik kan niet terug naar de planeet waar ik vandaan kwam. Maar iets in mij wordt ertoe aangetrokken, alsof ik daar hoor. Ik heb er alles voor over dat er iemand naar mijn verhaal luistert."

‘Hoeveel geef je ervoor ?’ vroeg ik nors. Ik hield hem voor een idioot of gewoon een sluwe leugenaar om wat voor reden dan ook.

Hij keek me aan. ‘Vijfhonderd,’ sprak hij langzaam. Ik maakte een beweging met mijn hand om het aanbod af te wimpelen. ‘Te weinig,’ sprak ik. ‘Want jij wil natuurlijk dat ik iets met jouw verhaal ga doen, en dan wil jij er rijk van worden en beroemd ?’

‘Nee, nee,’ sprak hij. ‘Daar is het het verhaal niet voor. Ik heb dringend psychische hulp nodig. Ik denk dat ik één van de weinigen ben die van de ...."

En dan volgt de naam van de planeet weer ...

"heeft kunnen ontsnappen. Ook de slachtoffers van de ....

En dan weer volgt de naam van de planeet ...

"hebben die hulp nodig.’

Ik lachtte hem uit. ‘Ja, ja, dus jij denkt echt dat wij hier ruimteschepen hebben die naar de ..."

Naam van de planeet ...

"kunnen gaan om daar ook nog eens een oorlog te beginnen, om die zogenaamde slachtoffers te bevrijden ? Nou, kom op, wat geef je ervoor opdat ik zal luisteren naar die ellenlange onzin die je mij wil vertellen ? Maar ik zal je nu al vertellen dat ik er niet veel aan zal of wil doen.’

‘Alsjeblieft,’ smeekte hij bijna, terwijl hij me doordringend aankeek. ‘Zeshonderd dan ?’

Ik schudde mijn hoofd. Dat ging nog even door tot negenhonderd, en toen zuchtte hij."

De ik-persoon gaat niet op het aanbod in, maar dan is er een nieuw aanbod : een bijzonder voorwerp van die planeet ...

"Ik keek ernaar met grote ogen. Het leek op een metaal wat ik niet kende, buitenaards, en ik kreeg er vreemde gevoelens van in mijn buik. Opeens was ik vol interesse. Ik griste het uit zijn hand. ‘Nou, vertel op,’ zei ik een beetje duizelig. Ik moest gaan zitten, anders zou ik zeker flauwvallen. ‘Moet je wat water ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Alsjeblieft,’ sprak ik ineens heel nederig, en ik begon de waarde van deze man in te zien. Hij had een tederheid over zich, en een fijngevoeligheid die ik niet kende. Plotseling zag ik hem als heel innemend. Hij gaf me wat water, en leek direkt heel bezorgd over me, alsof de aandacht voor hemzelf was verschoven naar aandacht voor mij. ‘Jij hebt vast en zeker ook wel heel wat meegemaakt,’ sprak hij. Ik knikte, een beetje verslagen. ‘Iedereen heeft zo zijn eigen verhaal,’ sprak ik.

‘Kun je mij nu op waarde schatten ?’ vroeg hij. ‘Ik kan ook heel veel voor jou betekenen. Misschien hebben wij wel raakvlakken.’ Ik knikte weer. Ik was door alles wat ik zelf had meegemaakt een heel gecalculeerd iemand geworden die alles afwoog, en die zich niet liet afschepen. Vertrouwen moest verdiend worden, maar dan nog steeds zou ik niemand echt vertrouwen. Ik keek hem aan en zuchtte. ‘Jij eerst ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Nee,’ stamelde ik. ‘Ik ... ik ben al te ver heen. Ik kan daar niet eens over praten.’

Hij glimlachtte. ‘Dat zit diep dus. Ik voel met je mee. Misschien hebben wij meer of minder hetzelfde meegemaakt, maar dan op een verschillende manier. Het is nogal universeel.’

Ik keek hem aan. ‘Nee, dat denk ik niet. We zullen ongetwijfeld unieke verhalen hebben die los van elkaar staan. Dat jij gewoon je verhaal kan doen is daar een teken van. Ik heb teveel meegemaakt. Ik kan het niet.’

‘Nu moet je mij niet onderschatten,’ sprak hij. ‘Ik heb tijdenlang er niet over kunnen praten. Het scheelt dat ik nu op een andere planeet ben en een nieuw leven heb. Als jij op de ..."

En dan volgt de naam van de planeet weer ...

"zou zijn geweest, los van waar je vandaan kwam, dan had je misschien ook wel kunnen praten.’

Ik knikte. Daar zat wat in. Ik had ineens het gevoel dat ik wel naar een andere planeet wilde gaan, maar of ..."

En dan weer de naam van de planeet ...

"een goede keuze zou zijn ? Zijn verhaal zou dat uitmaken.

Hij keek me aan en glimlachte. Even had ik het gevoel alsof hij er niets van meende, alsof hij me bedroog, alsof hij me ergens in wilde lokken, maar toen hij weer een serieus gezicht trok wilde ik het wel proberen.

‘Okay, ga je gang,’ sprak ik.

Hij opende zijn mond, en begon te vertellen."

In het vierde hoofdstuk begint de man over de planeet te vertellen. Het waren dingen die ik nog nooit had gehoord, dingen die niet zomaar in je denken kunnen opkomen. Het valt dus ook niet te vergelijken met andere boeken. Vandaar dat het één van de indrukwekkendste boeken was die ik in het geheime archief was tegen gekomen. Hier was de mensheid niet voor klaar, en misschien wel nooit. Ook het boekenkaft was erg indrukwekkend. Als je dat in een boekwinkel zou tegenkomen dan zou je gewoon wegzweven. Het is wat geen oog ooit gezien heeft, wat in geen mensenhart is opgekomen.

Aan het einde van het verhaal zegt de man :

"Dit alles scheen voort te komen uit een orakel. Het orakel werd bewaakt door een slang. Ik had vele kronieken hierover gelezen, en ik voelde dat ik verdwaald was in dit orakel. Ik wilde losbreken, maar ik kon het niet.

Ik wist waar het orakel stond, in een ondergrondse tempel, waar markten omheen waren. Op die markten werden de kronieken verkocht. Deze boeken waren heilig en werden aanbeden. Ook het orakel en de slang werden aanbeden.

Heel ver in het verleden waren die geschriften verboden en zou je de marteldood sterven als je zo’n geschrift in je bezit had."

De man stopte met spreken. Hij had nu al een lange tijd verteld, en wat van de kronieken opgesomd. ‘Heb jij toevallig zelf ook zo’n boek ?’ vroeg ik.

Hij keek op. ‘Ik heb er eentje meegenomen van het ruimteschip.’ Hij nam een dik boek uit zijn tas met een leren kaft en gaf het aan mij. Ik sloeg het open, en zag kleine letters in kolommen verdeeld over de pagina. Ik trilde een beetje. ‘Ik zou het graag willen lezen,’ sprak ik.

‘Je mag het wel hebben,’ sprak hij. ‘Ik ken het allemaal wel uit mijn hoofd, en moet er ook weer van loskomen.’

Toen begon hij me op een hele vreemde manier aan te kijken. ‘Zou jij wel op de ..."

En dan volgt weer de naam van de planeet ...

"willen leven ?’

Ik keek verbaasd. ‘Waarom vraag je dat ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Laat maar,’ zei hij, terwijl zijn gezicht weer strak werd. Ik werd weer duizelig toen ik in het boek begon te lezen. De letters tolden voor mijn ogen. Er waren ook vreemde plaatjes in het boek. Ik kreeg vreemde gevoelens in mijn buik. ‘I... ik moet zeggen dat ik weleens nachtmerries over dit soort dingen heb gehad,’ sprak ik. Hij glimlachtte, maar ik kon de pijn en de angst in zijn ogen zien.

‘Wij zijn aan elkaar verbonden. Jij kent de ..."

De naam van de planeet weer ...

‘Hoezo ?’ vroeg ik. ‘Ik ken absoluut de ... niet. Ik vind alleen wat herkenning in sommige nachtmerries die ik had als kind.’

Hij begon te lachen. ‘Je blijft het ontwijken, hè ? Jouw vorig leven was op de ... Dat zijn dingen van vóór je geboorte. Vandaar dat je je zo voelt.’

‘Ach, wat ?’ zei ik luid. ‘Hoe weet je dat ? Hoe kom je daarbij ?’

Hij keek me diep in mijn ogen. ‘Ik ben niet los. Ik zit nog steeds vast aan de ... Nu ik hier ben wordt ik nog steeds achtervolgd door ... Zij zeggen dat ik hier ben voor een opdracht. Er is geen ware bevrijding voor mij.’

Ik begon medelijden met de man te krijgen. ‘Doe alsjeblieft niet zo negatief,’ sprak ik. ‘Het moet nu afgelopen zijn.’

‘Nee, het is goed zo,’ sprak hij. ‘Er is geen kruid tegen opgewassen. Het is te sterk.’

Ik begon verloren voor me uit te staren. Ik wist niet meer wat ik moest zeggen. Ik voelde me alsof mijn mond was gesnoerd.

‘Ze zitten achter je aan,’ sprak hij. ‘Ze willen je terug. Ook jou stuurden ze hier voor een missie, als een zendeling.’

Ik begon te lachen. Maar toen leek het alsof ik wilde huilen. Iets had bezit van me genomen. ‘Wat heb je in mijn water gedaan ?’ vroeg ik in paniek. Maar ik voelde me verzwakken en verzachten.

‘Het is te sterk,’ zei hij. ‘De ... is het tegenovergestelde van de aarde. De aarde is de spiegel-planeet van de ..., als een schaduw-sateliet.’

‘Wat !’ riep ik uit. ‘Ja, je hebt gelijk.’

'Vertel me meer,’ zei ik, ‘want ik heb het idee dat dit me allemaal in grote verwarring stort.’

‘Ik loop er niet mee te koop,’ sprak hij. ‘Ik ben speciaal naar jou toegekomen, omdat jij de ... in je draagt. Ik ben de sleutel tot jouw ontwaking. Het is heel wetenschappelijk, heel technologisch.’

Ineens trok hij een pistool uit zijn tas, en richtte het op mij. ‘Als je nu verstandig bent, dan kom je met mij mee,’ sprak hij. Ik schrok. ‘Ben je gek geworden ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Geen tijd voor analisering,’ sprak hij, en prikte met het getrokken pistool in mijn buik. Ik voelde me even duizelig worden, en kreeg buikpijn van de spanning. ‘Waar gaat dit over ?’ protesteerde ik. Hij begon me te duwen, en trok me toen met zich mee. Buiten trok hij me naar het bos. We moesten

over een zanderig paadje, terwijl ik in de verte rood licht zag. Ik deed mijn handen voor mijn ogen. Op een heuveltje stond een soort ruimteschip. Hij duwde me naar binnen, en toen steeg het op.

Ik schold. Hij zou me meenemen naar de ... Blijkbaar had hij die opdracht. Hij zei dat ik blij mocht zijn dat ik nog leefde. In het ruimteschip zag ik nog meer van hen.

Er waren veel boeken met kronieken in het ruimteschip. Ik werd gedwongen ze te bestuderen. Ik vond in deze boeken veel herkenning. We waren op weg naar de ... Ze zeiden me dat ze me daar ergens zouden dumpen.

Ik vroeg naar het waarom, maar ze gaven mij geen antwoord. Ik had geen besef van tijd meer. Ik studeerde en studeerde maar, en sliep soms tussendoor. Mijn leven stond ondersteboven.

Na een lange tijd – ik weet niet hoelang, dagen, weken, of maanden – kwamen we aan op de ... Ergens werd ik afgezet. Toen vertrok het ruimteschip weer. Het was hier erg warm.

Ik was erg op mijn hoede. Ze hadden mij geen wapen meegegeven ..."

De rest van het boek gaat over wat hij daar allemaal meemaakt. Op een dag komt hij langs de rivier van bloed tot de zee van tranen :

"Ergens bij de zee van tranen was een tunnel die onder de grond leidde. Het liep uit op een grottenstelsel waar veel boeken waren. Al deze boeken waren gewijd. De boeken stonden vol van kronieken."

Hij werd overvallen door twee gewapende planeet-bewoners, hij werd gekooid en moest in de boeken onder dwang studeren :

"Op de grond van de kooi lag hooi. Er was een bed en een tafeltje met een stoel. Ook was er een klein wastafeltje. Ik had drie grote boeken gekregen met leren kaften. ‘We zullen je straks overhoren,’ spraken de gewapende planeet-bewoners, en liepen weer weg. Ik wist dat er voor mij niets anders opzat dan de boeken te gaan lezen om er in te studeren. Eerst sloeg ik een boek open met een donkerrode leren kaft.

Ik begon te trillen. Ik voelde alsof ik mijzelf niet meer was, alsof er iets in mij was geknapt of gebroken door de spanning.

Ik begon erg te zweten en te trillen, en begon me erg moe te voelen. Ook had ik buikpijn die steeds erger werd. Het was voornamelijk de spanning in mijn buik, die mij duizelig maakte. Ik las verder en zag de plaatjes. Ik herinnerde de nachtmerries die ik vroeger had. Zij namen totaal mijn verstand over en mijn wil.

Toen ik de plaatjes zag en de teksten las leek het alsof ik bellen in mijn hoofd hoorde afgaan, alsof er iemand voor de deur stond. Ik herinnerde mij dat ik ook zulke nachtmerries had. Dan werd alles zwart voor mijn ogen wanneer ik de deur opendeed. Ik werd dan schreeuwend en gillend wakker."

Sommigen zouden het geen nachtmerries meer noemen, maar nacht terreur.

"Ik was verlamd en verstijfd van schrik. Ik deed mijn ogen dicht. Ik hoorde voetstappen. Het waren de twee gewapende planeet-bewoners die me hier hadden opgesloten. Ze bleven bij de tralies van mijn kooi staan. ‘Je weet wat je te doen staat,’ sprak één van hen hardvochtig, opende de kooi, en ze trokken mij eruit weg. Ze trokken mij helemaal door een lange, donkere tunnel die schuin onder de grond de diepte in ging. Toen openden ze een deur met tralies. We kwamen in een halfverlichte zaal in een grot. In de verte stond een troon van een soort wit goud.

‘Laat hem dichterbij komen,’ werd er gesproken. Ze trokken mij tot voor de troon.

‘Heeft hij gestudeerd ?’ vroeg degene die op de troon zat. ‘Ja,’ sprak één van de gewapende planeet-bewoners.

‘Werp hem in de vurige oven !’ riep degene die op de troon zat. Links achter de troon in de muur verscheen een groot vuur, waar een deur was. De gewapende planeet-bewoners trokken mij naar de deur, en toen het vuur verdwenen was opende één van hen de deur en duwde mij naar binnen. Ik viel in een groot gat, in een vurig ravijn, als in een put. Het was heel groot. Ik zag overal vuur, maar ik voelde geen pijn. Ik was nog steeds vallende, maar ik begon lichtelijk te zweven. Het vallen ging trager en trager, totdat ik de grond raakte. Ik voelde mij verlamd. Ik voelde me ineens heel zwaar worden, en ik kon moeilijk ademen.

Ik voelde me helemaal verstijven. Ik had toen kracht om op te staan.

Ik begon te schudden, maar ik begon meer en meer te verstijven.

Ik kwam in een eindeloze cirkel van wedergeboorte terecht.

Zachte bellen ringden, terwijl ik merkte dat ik mezelf kon loswringen van de eeuwige cirkel van wedergeboorte. Ik zag mezelf boven de cirkel zweven, in de zee. Ik zat in een soort lift.

Ik ging hoger en hoger, todat ik in een nieuwe natuur kwam. Alle kleuren waren zacht hier, en dimensionaal. Ik kwam tot reusachtige tronen, die leken te golven, en die op en neer gingen.

Ik hoorde allemaal fluitjes, zachte fluitjes, die weer plaats maakten voor nieuwe fluitjes, en telkens naar de achtergrond gingen om weer plaats te maken voor nieuwe fluitjes. De zee bruiste in mij. Zij waren deel-realiteiten. Ik kon door de dimensies heenkijken. Zij raken alles lichtelijk aan, en vertrekken dan weer. Zij zijn niet gebonden aan de vaste dimensies.

Zij leefden door zware cryptiek, als een drug.

Ik werd wakker in de spel-auto van professor Rood Barenhout, en ik herinnerde me plotseling mijn opdracht om een spel te testen. Ik was nooit echt naar huis gegaan die dag. Alles was een illusie van de rode spelmachine."

Dit is de korte boekbespreking ervan. Ik heb de zware stukken overgeslagen.

Einde

Theologische Proza

De Korachs-kinderen
Theologische Thriller

Een jonge wetenschapper is gefascineerd door de apocalyptiek van de Bijbel. Hij heeft een voorliefde voor vreemde verhalen, maar kan deze liefde niet goed verklaren. Hij is verder ongelovig, atheistisch, maar de verhalen in de Bijbel hebben hem altijd gefascineerd.

Tijdens een reis die hij voor zijn werk moet maken, komt hij een theoloog tegen, die naast hem zit in het vliegtuig. Hij raakt met deze man in diepe gesprekken. De theoloog probeert hem de werkelijkheid van deze verhalen te laten zien, maar de wetenschapper probeert de verhalen wetenschappelijk en zakelijk weg te redeneren. Ze besluiten verder met elkaar op te trekken.

Die nacht heeft de jonge wetenschapper een droom. Hij droomt dat hij langs een eenzaam moeras loopt en plotseling door een hand in de diepte wordt getrokken. Als hij later de droom aan de theoloog vertelt, probeert deze de droom te gebruiken om de wetenschapper te overtuigen van de strijd waarin deze zich bevindt. Een strijd tussen geloven en niet geloven. Maar de wetenschapper probeert de droom weg te redeneren als een zuiver toeval, een hersenspinsel.

De nacht erna heeft hij weer een droom, waarin een arend met vreemd draaiende gele ogen zijn kamer bezoekt, waarna kinderen met dezelfde soort ogen zijn kamer binnenkomen. Zij dragen ijzeren pinnen in hun hand, en komen steeds dichterbij, terwijl hij zich niet meer kan bewegen. Deze kinderen werden genoemd : de Korachs-kinderen.

Hoofdstuk 1. De Ontmoeting

Het is druk op straat. De auto's lijken allemaal haast te hebben. Peter de Hoorn, een jonge wetenschapper, loopt haastig naar zijn eigen auto die hij ergens voor een winkel

geparkeerd heeft.

Als hij thuis komt kust hij zijn vrouw en gaat op de bank liggen. Het was druk op z'n werk. Zijn baas was weer in een dramatische bui, en zijn collega's waren ook al niet makkelijk in de omgang. Alsof er iets in de lucht hing waar hij maar geen vat op kon krijgen. Apocalyptische boeken liggen er op de tafel. Als kind zijnde fascineerden deze verhalen hem al. Hij was niet gelovig opgevoed, maar zijn buurmeisje had hem eens een boekje over "Openbaring" gegeven. Voor hem was het niet meer dan een spannend ridderverhaal.

"Schat, ik heb de boeken eens doorgebladerd, maar ik kan er niet veel mee," zegt zijn vrouw lacherig. Zij intereseert zich er helemaal niet voor, maar wilde toch wel eens weten waar haar man nu al zo'n lange tijd mee bezig was.

Morgen zou hij op reis gaan voor drie maanden. Hij moet enkele belangrijke zaken regelen voor het werk.

"Peter, word wakker, het is al zes uur." Zijn vrouw wekt hem voor de reis die hij gaat maken. Binnen korte tijd staan ze samen op het vliegveld en zijn vrouw zwaait hem uit. Ze zullen elkaar missen.

In het vliegtuig aangekomen gaat hij naast een wat oudere man zitten. Het blijkt een theoloog te zijn. De mannen raken al snel met elkaar in diepe gesprekken. "Nee, ik vind dat je best zonder kerk kunt geloven," zegt de theoloog. Peter is atheist. Hij vindt de Bijbel niet meer dan een spannend jongensboek. "Hoe weet je dat God niet bestaat ?" vraagt de theoloog. "Ik heb hem nog nooit gezien," zegt Peter. "En al zou ik hem zien, dan zou ik nog niet in hem geloven. Ik vind dat Hij afschuwelijke dingen op Zijn geweten heeft."

"Zoals ?" vraagt de theoloog weer. "Nou, zoals oorlogen, rampen, en andere kwalijke zaken. De Bijbel laat duidelijk zien dat Hij daar een flinke vuist in heeft."

"Ach ja," vervolgt de theoloog, "de aarde is slecht."

"Maar Hij dan, de hoofdpersoon van de Bijbel, is dat dan zo'n lekker ventje ?" vraagt Peter minachtend. "Het is een schurk, en als ik hem tegen zou komen, zou ik hem een knal verkopen. Maar de schrijver van de Bijbel, die zou ik wel eens willen ontmoeten. Een fantastische kerel moet dat wezen, een fantast, een Jules Verne, een ..."

"Nee," zegt de theoloog verontwaardigd maar sussend, "de Bijbel is niet door een man geschreven, maar door meerdere mannen, die allemaal werden geleid door de Heilige Geest van God. Ze hadden die informatie niet van henzelf ... Ze hadden hoogstens een soort van natuurlijke kennis van achtergronden en gebeurtenissen, maar die werden door Gods Geest gerangschikt, in keurige volgorde en in keurige bewoordingen. U ziet het echt verkeerd dat de Bijbel door een man werd geschreven."

"Nou," zegt Peter enthousiast,"dan zou ik al die mannen wel eens willen ontmoeten, al die pennenmeesters, want ze hebben me sinds kind af aan kostelijk geamuseerd." De theoloog begint te grinniken. Ze hebben beiden in ieder geval veel te bepraten. Twee liefhebbers van het grote boek der aarde.

Na lange tijd komt het vliegtuig op de bestemming. De twee mannen besluiten contact met elkaar te houden. Ze staan aangemeld voor hetzelfde hotel.

Die nacht heeft Peter een droom, een afschuwelijke droom, waarin hij langs een moeras loopt en plotseling door een onzichtbare hand naar het moeras wordt getrokken. Met geen mogelijkheid kan hij zich er tegen verzetten. Terwijl hij dichter bij het moeras komt, begint de hand zichtbaar te worden. Het is een zwarte handschoen met een gouden ring die hem in de dieptes van het moeras trekt. Dan word hij wakker, badend in het zweet.

De ochtend na de droom vertelt hij het tafereel aan de theoloog. Deze begint diep te peinzen en oppert voorzichtig de mogelijkheid dat er wel eens een strijd in hem aanwezig kan zijn tussen wel geloven en niet geloven.

"Oh nee," zegt Peter hard, "geen denken aan. Ik weet wat ik wil, en ik weet wat ik denk, en ben daar tamelijk zeker van."

"Nou," zegt de theoloog, "dat weet ik nog niet zo net. De droom lijkt mij heel duidelijk te wijzen op een strijd tussen licht en duisternis om jouw ziel."

"Wat ?" roept Peter verontwaardigd maar lacherig, "je wil me toch niet vertellen dat jij ook al in een hemel en een hel gelooft ?"

"Dat wil ik je eigenlijk wel vertellen," zegt de theoloog. "Ik ben niet een soort Jehovah-getuige die dreigend rondloopt, maar als de mogelijkheid er ligt wil ik nog wel eens van wal steken. Ik denk, nee, ik weet zeker, dat er een vijand is die jou wil wegsleuren van een mogelijk "geloven" in de verhalen die jou altijd zo aanspraken. Dat noem ik : de strijd tussen goed en kwaad."

"Nee, dat lijkt me sterk," zegt Peter weer, "ik geloof dat het meer een onbewust hersenspinsel van me was die even in mijn bewustzijn omhoog kwam. Ik geloof meer in toeval dan in een regerende hand boven hulpeloze hoofdjes. Mij niet gezien. Ik ben een positief denker, sinds kind af aan. Dat is mij met de paplepel ingegoten. Zelfvertrouwen, diplomatieke vaardigheden en een gezonde dosis ambitie zijn voor mij de sleutelwoorden van mijn leven. Ik wil graag zelf het roer in handen blijven houden."

"Hoe denk je dan over de duivel ?" vraagt de theoloog weer. "De duivel ? Ach, dat is een verzinsel van bange mensen, van mensen die in alles en iedereen een bedreiging zien. Ik weet dat de maatschappij hard kan zijn, maar ik wil positief blijven denken, meedenken met het geheel, en niet een of ander verzonnen figuur gaan opblazen tot een schurk met universele macht. Het is wel een steengoed verhaal, echt puur entertainment. De antichrist bijvoorbeeld heeft me altijd aangesproken. Niet als geloofwaardige persoon, niet als realiteit, maar als de aartsvijand van de hoofdpersoon. Ik kijk naar dat schouwspel als naar een belangrijke voetbalwedstrijd. Ik juich wanneer ik moet juichen, roep "boe" wanneer ik boe moet roepen, maar verder hecht ik er geen enkele geloofwaardige factor aan vast. Voor mij is het gewoon een spel," vertelt Peter.

Maar het is alweer tijd voor andere zaken. De theoloog heeft enkele belangrijke afspraken, en ook Peter moet aan de slag voor een aantal financiele onderhandelingen.

De nacht daarop heeft Peter weer een droom. Ditmaal is de droom van een zwaarder kaliber. Een arend met ogen in verschillende tinten geel vliegt door een openstaand raam zijn kamer binnen, gaat op een kastje zitten en begint hem aan te staren. Dan beginnen er ineens angstaanjagend schelle deurbellen te rinkelen, dat het lijkt alsof Peters oren knappen. Dan komen er ineens kinderen binnen met dezelfde arendsogen

draaiende in hun oogkassen. Ze hebben strakke angstaanjagende blikken en lopen bijna in slowmotion op Peter af, die zich niet meer kan bewegen. Ze hebben lange scherpe ijzeren pinnen in hun handen. Dan hoort Peter een ijselijke schreeuw : Korachs-kinderen ! De schreeuw wordt steeds scheller, en steeds meer stemmen beginnen te schreeuwen, totdat Peter voelt dat alles in hem begint te branden. Is dit de hel ? Hij hoort babies gillen en het is alsof een stel uitgehongerde dieren hem van binnenuit beginnen aan te vreten. Dan wordt hij wakker met een schreeuw.

Helemaal in paniek belt hij de theoloog voor hulp. De theoloog probeert hem tot kalmeren te brengen, en vraagt hem of hij het goed vindt dat hij even bij Peter langskomt. Als hij in Peters hotelkamer binnenkomt zit Peter helemaal ineengedoken. Hij zegt dat zijn borst erg pijn doet. Voorzichtig vraagt Peter aan de theoloog of hij wel eens van de korachs-kinderen heeft gehoord.

De theoloog begint vreemd te kijken. "Ja, dat zijn kinderen van een persoon die opstond tegen Mozes, genaamd Korach. God heeft toen de aarde onder Korach en zijn gehele aanhang en hun families laten scheuren, zodat ze levend in het dodenrijk daalden. Het staat allemaal in Numeri zestien opgetekend. Het is door God verboden om contact te zoeken met dode geesten, maar dode geesten kunnen mensen soms wel lastigvallen."

"Ja, ik ben verschrikkelijk lastiggevallen," hijgt Peter, "ik kan nog steeds moeilijk ademhalen. Ik begin nu toch werkelijk te geloven dat je gelijk hebt."

Het was alsof Peter door deze droom al zijn zelfvertrouwen had verloren. Hij probeerde zijn werk weer op te pakken, maar alles ging zeer moeizaam.

De nacht erna had Peter weer een droom. Hij zag de arend vliegen boven een zee van vuur. Hij zag een naam boven de zee verschijnen : Levael. Vanuit de zee kwamen angstaanjagende figuren opzetten met zwaarden van vuur. Ze hadden maar een oog. Toen hoorde hij een stem zeggen : "Dit zijn de kinderen van Jabes, levende onder de bedreiging van de geest van Nachas, genaamd Levael. Hun rechterogen werden uitgerukt, waardoor ze gehandicapt ter wereld kwamen." Toen zag hij zijn gehandicapte nichtje waar hij als kind zijnde altijd erg bang voor was. Hij zag haar gillen en schreeuwen in vlammen. Hij wilde haar helpen maar hij merkte dat hij het niet kon. Levael de arend probeerde zijn rechteroog weg te pikken.

Hij werd wakker, helemaal beduusd en verward, alsof hij niet meer helder kon denken. "Wat is er toch allemaal aan de hand ?" dacht hij. Die ochtend kwam de theoloog weer bij hem, en Peter vertelde hem de droom. "Weer vanuit de Bijbel," zegt de theoloog. Het volk van Jabes stond onder bedreiging van de Ammoniet Nachas die een verbond met hen wilde sluiten op voorwaarde dat hij hun rechteroog zou uitsteken, en dat als smaad op het gehele volk Israel leggen. Uiteindelijk heeft Saul Jabes verlost. Het is opgetekend in I Samuel 11. Peter was er slecht aan toe. Hij had moeilijkheden met spreken en ademen, en was erg duizelig.

"We moeten hulp gaan zoeken voor jou, want je staat duidelijk onder schot. Ik heb een vriend hier in de buurt die exorcist is. Laten we hem om hulp vragen," oppert de theoloog.

Gezamenlijk trekken ze op naar de exorcist. Peters verhaal horende raakt de exorcist erg opgewonden. "Deze geest heeft veel onder zijn klauwen. Je bent bezocht door een

generaal van de duisternis," zegt de exorcist. "Hij word voor vele doeleinden uitgezonden. Hij word ook wel "de ogen-eter" genoemd. Hij pikt bij mensen wijsheid en inzicht weg, zodat ze elkaar niet meer begrijpen. Hierdoor ontstaan bittere harten, ruzies en zelfs oorlogen. Het is alsof deze mensen maar een oog hebben, net zoals in jouw droom."

"Ja, maar wat moet ik daarmee ?" vraagt Peter. "Blijkbaar heeft God iets met je voor," oppert de exorcist. De theoloog knikt instemmend : "Daar zat ik ook al aan te denken."

Peter was nog steeds onder de indruk van het feit dat hij dingen droomde die in de Bijbel stonden, terwijl hij deze dingen nog nooit had gelezen. Peter kende een aantal verhalen van de Bijbel, maar deze dingen waren totaal nieuw voor hem. De exorcist legde hem uit dat dit profetische gaven waren, die God zowel als teken en als gereedschap geeft. Peters leven stond op z'n kop. Hoe zou zijn vrouw hierop reageren. Peter stelde vele vragen, en het gesprek duurde tot diep in de nacht.

De volgende dag na een aantal zaken te hebben verricht begon Peter de verhalen over Korach en Jabes in de Bijbel te bestuderen. Hij wilde het verband weten tussen de geel-ogige boosaardige Korachs-kinderen en de een-ogige angstaanjagende Jabes-kinderen. Hij las over Korach hoe hij de macht wilde overnemen over het volk middels het opstellen van een vuurpan. Hij las over de verbondsvloek over Jabes, en kwam onder ogen dat machtslustigen nog steeds werkten door eerst het inzicht van de ander proberen weg te branden. Had de hele wereld niet het oog van Jabes ? Onderdrukt door de ogen van Korach ? Hij begon de verbanden te zien. De exorcist vertelde dat Levael de arend de profetische gaven, het oog van de kerk, probeerde weg te eten, zodat hij in macht zou groeien. Het was de Jabes-Vloek waar de kerk onder leefde. Een soort gevangenis, een geestelijke handicap.

Peter begon steeds meer opgewonden te raken. Hij wilde de Levael bevechten ... maar hoe ?

Hoofdstuk 2. De Piraat

De exorcist leidde een kleine kring jonge exorcisten op, en er was nog wel plaats voor Peter in deze klas. Maar Peter kon maar een paar lessen volgen. Zijn reis-verblijf liep bijna ten einde, en ook de theoloog zou weer vertrekken, die ook steeds nieuwsgieriger begon te worden. Als ze weer thuis zouden zijn, zouden ze in eigen land wel op zoek gaan naar iemand die hen op dit gebied zou kunnen helpen. Peter kreeg in ieder geval een aantal boeken mee, die hij en de theoloog zeker zouden lezen.

De theoloog was eerder klaar dan Peter met de nodige werkzaamheden, maar hij beloofde samen met Peter terug te reizen. De theoloog kon Peter vele dingen vertellen, maar alles tot op zekere hoogte, want de theoloog had zich nooit echt in exorcisme verdiept. Hij was meer een man van de theorie in plaats van de praktijk, en zelfs de theorieen op exorcistisch vlak waren hem veelal onbekend. Hij kende de Bijbelse verhalen, enkele gebeurtenissen en leerstellingen van deze tijd, en daar hield het mee op.

Thuisgekomen sloot Peter zich aan bij een charismatische gemeente en de term territoriaal exorcisme begon te vallen. De exorcist in het buitenland had het daar ook al

eens over gehad, maar nu werd het weer genoemd. Peter kreeg te horen dat de droom die hij had gehad tot dit vlak behoorde. Iedereen was een en al oor toen Peter zijn verhaal deed. Hij kreeg te horen dat ze hem goed konden gebruiken, dat er nog weinig over het onderwerp aanwezig was. Het was voor velen in die gemeente een aanzet om zich er meer in te verdiepen. Een man in de gemeente wist er verbazingwekkend veel vanaf, maar had altijd min of meer zijn mond erover dichtgehouden. Hij stond in de gemeente bekend als een profeet. Peter vond het wel interessant. De man wist dingen van hem te vertellen die hij nooit kon weten. Langzaam maar zeker begon Peter zich erg thuis te voelen in deze gemeente. Totdat er op een dag iets gebeurde wat hij totaal niet verwachtte.

Iedereen was al naar huis, een uur na de dienst. De voorganger had gezegd dat Peter nog wel even mocht blijven. Peter wilde nog even wat boeken doorbladeren in de hoek van de zaal. Dit werd altijd het boekenhoekje genoemd. Hij had van de voorganger de sleutel gekregen, en het was de bedoeling dat Peter na zijn vertrek de deur zou sluiten en de sleutel naar het huis van de voorganger zou brengen. Peter was op een bank gaan zitten midden in de zaal, en was diep weggezonken in een bepaald boek. Plotseling hoorde hij een enorm lawaai vanaf de preekstoel komen. Hij zag de Levael recht op hem afvliegen in levende lijve. Peter schrok zich wild, en zei : "In Naam van Jezus beveel ik je te gaan, vervloekt dier !" Maar de Levael reageerde niet, en pikte Peter in z'n oog, z'n rechteroog. Hevig bloedend rende hij het gebouw uit, maar vergat de deur op slot te doen. Toen hij bij de voorganger aankwam en zijn verhaal deed wilde de voorganger hem niet geloven. "Peter, je bent gewoon ergens tegen een scherpe punt aangelopen."

Peter moest naar het ziekenhuis en raakte blind aan zijn rechteroog. Nu wist hij dat het menens was. Toen hij na enkele dagen thuiskwam vertelde zijn vrouw dat de gemeente was bestolen en dat ze hem als de dader aanzagen. Hij mocht niet meer terugkomen. Ze waren beiden diep geshockeerd en Peter was woedend. Hij belde de theoloog, die hem wel geloofde. Hij probeerde Peter te kalmeren, alhoewel hij ook diep geshockeerd over hetgeen was gebeurd. "Het lijkt erop dat deze arend zijn terrein niet prijs wil geven, en hij heeft het heel duidelijk op jou gemunt." Er waren verschillende mensen in de gemeente die wel in Peter geloofden, waaronder de profeet. Er kwam een scheuring in die gemeente, en Peter was erg verbitterd geraakt. "Laat je niet verbitteren," hield de profeet hem voor, "want je geloof wordt nu op de proef gesteld. Dit is allemaal een voorbereiding voor de bediening die je gaat krijgen. Het is je op het lijf getekend als een brandmerk. Pijnlijk en confronterend, maar diep en werkzaam."

Peters vrouw stond ook geheel achter hem. Ze was altijd al zijn stille kracht geweest, maar op een dag kreeg hij de schrik van zijn leven. Er lag een brief van ontslag in de brievenbus. Z'n baas dacht dat hij gek geworden was. Weer een aanval van de Levael. Peter was gebroken, maar dit zag hij als een directe aanwijzing naar zijn toekomende werk : Profeet en Territoriaal Exorcist. Hij verloor veel vrienden door deze strakke richting en zelfs familie, maar een klein groepje bleef om hem heenstaan.

Wat was er veel veranderd in korte tijd. Hij liep nu zelfs met een zwart kapje voor zijn blinde rechteroog. In de buurt werd hij "de piraat" genoemd.

Eens in de zoveel tijd kwam het kleine groepje bij elkaar om dingen te bespreken. De profetische vriend van Peter was een rots in de branding. Hij leerde Peter veel over de

valstrikken van het geloof. Hij vertelde dat Peter door veel vuren heen zou moeten om gezuiverd en voorbereid te worden, en dat hij de Levael niet zomaar zou kunnen verslaan. Het zou een gevecht worden op leven en dood. Ook vertelde hij Peter dat hij meer vrienden zou verliezen, en dat er dorre periodes voor Peter zouden aanbreken op profetisch gebied, om de gave te testen en te verdiepen. Peter begon te beseffen dat een profeet eerst het tegenovergestelde van profetie zou moeten ontmoeten en overwinnen om vervolgens zuivere, overvloedige profetie te kunnen binnentreden. Hij zou daarom extra op zijn hoede moeten zijn voor misleiding, want de Levael zou deze vurige pijlen zeker op hem afsturen. Het zou een zware geestelijke reis voor Peter worden, maar als hij vol zou houden zou overwinning zijn deel zijn, werd er gezegd.

Peter leerde dat de kinderen van Jabes niet per definitie slecht waren, maar soms ook gewoon slachtoffers van een vloek. Door deze stelling bleef hij aanvallen van onterechte bitterheid wederstaan. Hij besefte ook dat hij zelf een kind van Jabes was, met een oog, in het gevaar van misleiding en onbegrip. De Heer gaf hem het beeld van de piraat die door een oog te missen het andere oog extra trainde en dat oog kon sterker en scherper worden dan twee ogen bij elkaar. Dit was de weg die elke profeet diende te bewandelen. Het zaadje moest eerst sterven voordat het een boom in vaste grond kon worden.

Op een nacht had Peter een droom dat hij duizend ogen had. Hij lachte, maakte plezier, maar plotseling kwamen de Korachs-kinderen om al deze ogen stuk te prikken. Peter had het gevoel dat hij vele ogen van binnen had die vele gebieden in zijn leven representeerden. Hij zou gezaaid worden op Gods akker.

Peter begon dromen te krijgen voor andere gemeentes, maar hij werd veelal afgewezen en bespot. Men wilde zijn boodschappen niet horen. De Jabes-kinderen keerden zich veelal tegen hem. De profeet en de theoloog gingen veelal met hem mee, als hij voorgangers bezocht, maar hij kreeg vaak geen doorgang. De dromen begonnen wilder te worden, en steeds vaker begon Peter over apocalyptische taferelen te dromen. Zijn boodschappen kregen steeds meer een waarschuwend karakter, en gemeentes begonnen bang voor hem te worden. Zijn profetieen waren raak.

Maar na een golf van boodschappen en actie begon Peter op droge terreinen te komen. De dromen en vizioenen werden vager, en tenslotte had hij het gevoel dat hij afgeweken was. Hij had houvast aan de profeet en de theoloog die hem vertelden dat afzondering en droogte zo belangrijk waren. "De hemel is omringd door woestijnen," zei de theoloog altijd.

Plotseling werd Peters vrouw ernstig ziek, en de dokters konden niets voor haar doen. Peter en de mensen die om hem heenstonden baden tegen de klok in, maar het leek wel alsof de hemel gesloten bleef. Op een avond kreeg de profeet een woord van de Heer dat ze spoedig zou worden weggenomen, binnen de drie dagen. En zo gebeurde het. God nam haar tot zich op de tweede dag na de profetie. Peter was gebroken, en al degenen die om hem heenstonden. Het was een bijzondere vrouw, en niemand begreep hoe de Heer zoiets kon doen. De profeet sprak : "Ze wordt voor veel dingen behoed."

Peter begint boeken te schrijven over het geloof, maar hij merkt dat iets hem probeert tegen te houden. Op een avond komt de profeet bij hem, met een ernstig gezicht. "Peter, ik moet je iets vertellen. Je vrouw zou nooit achter je kunnen staan als ze zou weten wat je binnen een paar dagen zou doen." Peter kijkt hem verbaasd aan. "Wat bedoel je ?"

De profeet gaat vervolgens verder : "Je vrouw was een bijzondere vrouw, maar ze was op vele dingen niet ingesteld. Ze is op tijd weggenomen, want ze zou dit niet kunnen verwerken."

"Wat bedoel je met "dit" ...Wat gaat er gebeuren ?" vraagt Peter een beetje zenuwachtig.

"Je gaat dromen krijgen, Peter, die je in vuur en vlam zullen zetten. Je huilt om de zonde en vuiligheid van deze tijd, hoe mensen elkaar en God behandelen. Het Vuur van de Heilige Geest gaat je in brand zetten, en je handen zullen zo branden dat alles wat je aanraakt in brand zal gaan staan. Het zal een zuiverend vuur zijn, de voorbode van Gods Koninkrijk," zegt de profeet.

"Goede genade," dacht Peter bij zichzelf, "als dit echt waar is, ...hoe zal dat gaan gebeuren ?"

"Wanneer gaat het gebeuren ?" vraagt Peter .. "Vannacht al," zegt de profeet. "De mantel van Mozes zal met druisende kracht over je komen."

Die nacht kreeg Peter een droom, weer over de Jabes-kinderen die in kerken en organisaties terecht kwamen, en door traditionele rituelen kwamen ze onder de macht van een systeem, onder de verbondsvloek, wat hun verstand, hun oog, wegvrat. Ze werden ten dele blind. Die ogen werden geofferd aan een grote ketel, een vuurpan, genaamd de Korachsketel. De Korachs-kinderen aten hiervan en kregen profetische gele arendsogen waardoor ze veel macht bezaten. Deze geesten werkten door vele machtswellustige leiders van de charismatische beweging. De Jabeskinderen werden steeds meer de marionetten van een hogere macht.

Peter kende vele machtswellustige charismatische leiders. Door zoveel geld te vragen bonden ze hun volgelingen stapsgewijs aan de ketel van het Nachas-verbond, of door vreemde vormen van lidmaatschappen en andere uiterlijke tekens en rituelen.

Opeens midden in de droom begonnen zachte bellen te rinkelen, en het was alsof Peter in brand stond. Z'n hele lichaam begon te schudden en te transpireren. Hij werd gebonden in de Heilige Geest, en hij voelde zich heel zwaar worden. "Oh God," dacht hij ..."wat is dit ?" Zijn handen begonnen te tintelen en te branden. Hij wist dat wanneer hij zijn handen ergens op zou leggen, het zou kunnen wegsmelten. Hij merkte dat hij de hitte kon bepalen met zijn oog. Hij merkte dat hij nu langzaam wakker begon te worden, en Hij hoorde nu de stem van God zo helder als de donder. God zei : "Ik zal je laten zien wat dit voor een vuur is. Leg je handen op die oude kapotte koelkast in de schuur."

Peter liep naar de schuur om vervolgens zijn handen op de oude koelkast te leggen. Het begon onder zijn handen in de brand te staan en smolt weg. Dit was niet zomaar vuur. Dit was het Vuur van de Heilige Geest in Levende Lijve. Peter bracht de rest van de nacht door om te bemerken hoe dit vuur zich in hem verspreidde. Hij bemerkte dat er niet veel tegen dit vuur opgewassen zou zijn. Het was inmiddels zondag-ochtend. God had hem opgedragen naar een bepaalde gemeente te gaan waar er nogal veel hang naar geld en goederen was.

Tijdens de preek stond Peter op en begon in het gangpad te staan. De voorganger gebood hem te gaan zitten, maar Peter gebood hem te gaan zitten. "Dat doe ik niet, gaat u alstublieft zitten," vervolgde de voorganger. Maar Peter sprak rustig, als u niet stopt

met uw geld-preken dan zult u binnen vijf minuten in vuur geraken. Peter ging weer zitten, en de voorganger ging rustig door met zijn preek over geld. Binnen vijf minuten stond de voorganger in de brand, terwijl de mensen in paniek raakten. Sommigen begonnen hem te vervloeken zeggende dat hij de antichrist was. Maar het was Peter menens. Hij sprak dat allen die wilden blijven leven en op wilden houden met geldzuchtige verhalen naast hem moesten komen staan, de rest zou verzengd worden door vuur. "Dit is niet bijbels !" riep iemand. "Oh nee ? Wat deed Mozes dan allemaal ?" riep Peter. Sommigen probeerden weg te rennen door de deur, maar het vuur begon hen al te verteren. Mensen begonnen te gillen, en sommigen klampten hem aan. De ouderlingen begonnen te roepen : "Luister niet naar hem ! God zal onze hulp zijn ! Hij is de valse profeet !" De keuzes werden snel gemaakt en een grote groep werd in een oogwenk in lichterlaaie gezet.

Een paar mensen bleven over, en Peter sprak : "Kom mee, uit het gebouw, want God gaat het gebouw in as leggen." Trillend liepen ze met hem mee naar buiten en in een oogwenk was het gebouw tot as verpulverd door Gods Kracht.

Inmiddels was de politie en de brandweer eraan te pas gekomen, maar Peter trok een strak gezicht en zei : "Heren, er valt niets meer te blussen."

"U staat onder arrest," opperde een politie-agent ...

Peter deed net alsof hij hem niet hoorde en liep verder, de mensen in huilen achterlatend. De politie-agenten begonnen met de mensen te praten. "Je kunt maar beter van hem afblijven," sprak er een, "want hij zet je zo in de brand."

Het incident bereikte al gauw de krantekoppen, en ook op het nieuws werd er melding van gemaakt. Velen geloofden het niet, en dachten dat het gewoon een brand-ongeluk was, en al snel leefde men gewoon door alsof er niets aan de hand was.

Hoofdstuk 3. Jacht naar de Schatkamer

Peter vond troost bij zijn vrienden de theoloog en de profeet. Later begon het pas echt goed tot hem door te dringen wat er eigenlijk was gebeurd. Hij was de mogelijkheid nog niet tegengekomen, dat dit vuur ook wel eens van de tegenstander zou kunnen zijn, de valse profeet. Hij wist van het boek openbaring dat deze vreemd vuur zou kunnen laten neerdalen. Het was alsof de echo's van de woorden die over hem werden uitgesproken tot hem terugkwamen, en hem kwelden : "Je bent de anti-christ ! Luister niet naar hem, hij is de valse profeet ! Blijf uit de buurt van dat loeder !" Het was alsof hij op het moment dat deze woorden over hem uitgesproken werden daar immuun voor was, maar nu, nu kwamen ze tot hem terug, hem onderdompelende in angst ... Zou het dan toch waar zijn ? Neen, dat kon gewoon niet, want Hij diende God en het goede met zijn bewustzijn ... In het plaatsje van de ramp zelf woekerde het leed voort, terwijl de rest van de wereld doorleefde ... alsof de wereld iets probeerde te ontvluchten ...

En waar waren de mensen gebleven die zich aan hem vastklampten ? Zoveel vragen wemelden er door zijn hoofd, en hij begon bang, erg bang voor God te worden. Bang voor komende missies, en bang om misschien wel onder ogen te moeten komen dat ook hij en zijn vrienden misleid waren. Bang voor de Troon van God, waarvoor ook hij zou moeten verschijnen om verantwoording voor zijn daden af te leggen. Langzaam maar

zeker voelde hij zichzelf wegzinken in een enorme identiteits-crisis. Was dit dan dat moeras waar hij over gedroomd had ? Hij begon aan alles te twijvelen. Waren die dromen wel echt ? En zo ja, waren ze wel betrouwbaar ? Hij herinnerde de Levael die zijn rechteroog verminkte. Hij was in een gevecht, dat was een ding dat zeker was ... Of zou het allemaal verbeelding zijn geweest .. Zou hij dan misschien echt gewoon tegen een punt van een kast aangelopen zijn ...

De theoloog hield hem voor dat zijn angsten hem nederig en waakzaam hielden. Het beste medicijn tegen misleiding. Het zou hem laten zien dat de enige weg uit deze put een liefdesrelatie met God zou zijn. Peter kon niemand meer vertrouwen. De profeet profeteerde, en de theoloog bemoedigde, maar het leek wel alsof niets meer tot hem doordrong. "Je bent in Gods Armen," zei de profeet. Hij voelde nog steeds het vuur, maar het was alsof het vermengd was met ijs. Hij kon er niets mee.

Op een nacht had Peter een nieuwe aanvaring met de Levael. Maar dit keer was het een hele bijzondere. Hij zag de richter Simson staan, een lange man gekleed in paars, met een paars kleed erover hangende. Op zijn hand zat de Levael. Peter was verbaasd. Toen sprak Simson tot hem : "Zoon, Ik heb jouw leed en tranen gezien. Ik ben door God als wachter over jou aangesteld. Herinner jij dat ook ikzelf ben doorstoken in mijn ogen door de Filistijnen ? Zij werden geleid door de Levael, om mij en Gods Volk te verblinden. Maar de kracht van God kwam toen in mij om hun tempel te verwoesten. De verwarring en verblinding dient het doel de mens terug te brengen tot het hart van God, het Licht der lichten van binnen. Hiertoe gebruikt God zelfs de vijand. De Levael is in mijn hand gegeven om hem voor dat doel uit te zenden. Als het getal van hen die de Levael dienen te verslaan vol is, dan zal de zee van ijs opengaan. De zee van ijs zal het zicht verscherpen, terwijl de zee van vuur het zicht zal verlichten. Je zult beide zeeen moeten leren kennen, in beide zeeen zul je de vijanden dienen te verslaan, en de zeeen voor het goede te leren gebruiken. Als je de overkant van deze twee zeeen hebt bereikt, dan zul je mijn mantel, de mantel van Simson ontvangen. Hiermee zal je het zicht van de volkeren kunnen genezen."

Toen Peter wakker werd, voelde hij zich ineens heel anders. Hij had nieuwe moed ontvangen, en hij vertelde de droom aan zijn twee vrienden. Deze waren heel enthousiast, en de profeet sprak een aantal woorden uit. "Peter, we zullen brieven naar de gemeentes moeten zenden, om hen over de Levael te vertellen. Zo zullen we het getal vol kunnen maken, om de zee van ijs te kunnen openen," sprak de profeet. En zo gebeurdde het. Met z'n drieen zetten ze een standaard-brief op en begonnen de brieven naar de gemeentes te verzenden.

Maar de teleurstelling was groot. Er werd nauwelijks gereageerd, en hen die reageerden waren uiterst negatief of zeer oppervlakkig. De profeet deed het voorstel om te gaan folderen in de gemeentes, om een oproep te doen tot territoriale oorlogsvoering. Ze werden zich er meer en meer van bewust dat de leiders vaak dingen angstvallig verborgen hielden voor hun schaapjes. Ze zouden nu een schema maken om stapsgewijs alle in aanmerking komende gemeentes te bezoeken voor een folder-beurt. In deze folder werd ook op allerlei theologische onwaarheden dieper ingegaan. De folder was netjes, maar zeer dringend, en ontwortelend. Uiteindelijk was het een klein boekwerkje geworden, waarin de oplettende lezer op de hoogte werd gesteld van het vaak machtswellustige en of eerzuchtige leiderschap.

De daaropvolgende zondag zouden ze direct in actie komen. Ze begonnen te folderen voor de deur van een kleine gemeente. Gretig namen de mensen het boekwerkje aan, en begonnen te lezen. Maar al snel werden andere binnenkomers vriendelijk gewaarschuwd het boekwerkje toch maar niet aan te nemen. Peter begon een beetje geirriteerd geworden, vooral toen de voorganger naar hen toekwam met het voorstel dat ze zo spoedig mogelijk het terrein van de gemeente zouden verlaten. "Dat doen we niet," sprak hij tot de voorganger. En de profeet liep inmiddels de gemeente binnen richting de preekstoel. "Beste mensen," sprak hij, "u word nu voor de keuze gesteld. U kunt zich bekeren of u kunt uw mooie gebouw in vlammen zien staan. De keuze is aan u. U kunt een boekwerkje erover aannemen, en als u het niet snapt, dan is dat ook helemaal niet erg, maar u gaat hier nu over nadenken, of er gaan hier grote ongelukken gebeuren." Overal begonnen mensen te gniffelen, en er kwamen een paar ouderlingen naar voren zetten, klaar om de profeet af te voeren. "Ik zou me maar niet aanraken als ik u was, want ik sta in vuur en vlam van de Heilige Geest." De ouderlingen keken hem met een strak gezicht aan, en pakten hem beet. Onmiddelijk begonnen ze te branden, en ze gilden het uit. Mensen begonnen in paniek te raken. Ze zagen hoe snel de ouderlingen tot as waren verbrand. Een profeet van de gemeente stond op, een wat oudere man, die luidkeels begon te profeteren : "Mijn kinderen, raakt niet ontzet, want deze dingen zullen geschieden. De antichrist moet zich in de gemeente Gods stellen om zichzelf als een god aan te prijzen, maar sluit uwen oren voor hem." De mensen waren zo in paniek, dat ze niet goed wisten wat ze hiermee moesten. Velen begonnen te huilen en tot God te smeken. De voorganger was woedend, en rende op Peter's vriend, de profeet, af. Maar voordat hij de profeet kon aanraken vloog hij al in de brand, en de profeet riep dat iedereen naar buiten moest gaan. Binnen enkele minuten stond de hele gemeente in de brand.

Mensen stonden als verstijfd op het grasveld, maar Peter, de theoloog en de profeet zaten al in de auto om naar de volgende gemeente te gaan.

Aan het einde van de dag hadden ze drie gemeentes afgelopen, met de nodige gevolgen, en er begon een flinke tumult te onstaan ... "Drie gemeentes afgebrand, velen verongelukt," zo meldde het nieuws. Er waren vele getuigen, en uiteindelijk kon men er niet meer omheen. Deze drie mannen hadden bovennatuurlijke krachten. Ze werden nu als terroristen bestempeld, maar anderen wisten het zeker : "Deze mannen waren door God gezonden om de wereld te waarschuwen." De dagen erna werd er volkomen aandacht aan besteed op televisie. Dominees werden op hun mening gevraagd, en de meningen leken verdeeld. De politie was nu op jacht. Er stond een hoge beloning op hun hoofden. Ze werden als de nieuwe bedreiging van de samenleving gezien. Ze zouden voor het gerechtshof moeten verschijnen, deze gevaarlijke pyromanen.

Peter en zijn twee vrienden waren nu ondergedoken bij een ver familielid van de profeet. Het was een aardige man, met veel respect voor de zaak. Hij was niet gelovig, maar hij begreep het allemaal wel. Vanuit deze basis zouden ze verder gaan met hun missie. Ze zouden brieven schrijven naar overheids-instellingen, zoals de ziekenhuizen, de militaire afdelingen, gerechtshoven, en machthebbende structuren zoals banken, bureaus en gemeentehuizen. Ze hadden de folder enigszins aangepast, maar de boodschap bleef hetzelfde. Kapitalisme werd binnen en buiten de kerk niet meer aanvaard. Er stond geen adres van hen aangegeven, en de brieven werden vanuit een ander district op de bus

gedaan. In sommige steden werden er al huiszoekingen gedaan, maar ze woonden nu veilig in een verborgen schuilkelder onder het huis van de profeet z'n verre familie-lid. Dit was een oude, wijze man. Hij was niet gelovig maar hij was al jaren ervan overtuigd hoe corrupt en oneerlijk het kapitalistische stelsel was, dat als een roofdier vanuit het westen de gehele wereld bestuurde. Hij werkte met gehandicapte kinderen, die als de minder bedeelden van de samenleving werden gezien. Maar hij zag hen als de juwelen van de wereld, de poorten naar de schatkamers in het binnenste van de aarde. Het was een diep symbolieke man, houdende van gedichten en kunst. Hij kon systemen doorzien, en op dat punt was hij een waardige beschermeling van Peter, de theoloog en de profeet.

Op een nacht kreeg hij een droom, waarin hij zag hoe zijn gehandicapte kinderen werden bereden door moeilijk opvoedbare kinderen. Deze kinderen hadden gele ogen in allerlei tinten met een sterke doortastende lichtstraal. Een lichtstraal met een hoge monotoon. Deze lichtstraal omhulde de lichamen van de gehandicapte kinderen in allerlei lagen, om hen te beschermen tegen de grootspraak van de aarde. Deze kinderen werden gehandicapt genoemd, maar eigenlijk werden ze beschermd door deze moeilijk opvoedbare kinderen tegen de sterke kapitalistische denkstromen. De moeilijk opvoedbare kinderen werden zo genoemd omdat ze niet beinvloed konden worden door de onderverdelingen van de wereld. Toen ineens zag hij hoe andere geelogige kinderen de kamer binnenrenden, de korachskinderen, die probeerden de moeilijk opvoedbaren van de gehandicapten af te stoten.

Toen hij wakker werd, vertelde hij de droom aan Peter, de theoloog en de profeet. Hij was ervan overtuigd dat ze veel van elkaar konden leren, en dat er toch een onzichtbare intelligente en rechtvaardige kracht moest zijn die hen bij elkaar had gebracht. Hij zag het als een mozaiek, als bomen wiens takken in elkaar verstrengelden. Hij zei dat er in wezen twee soorten korachskinderen bestonden : Hen die naar macht streefden om stand te kunnen houden tegen misleiding en onrecht, dus hen die het vanuit zorgzaamheid gebruikten, en hen die naar macht streefden voor egoistische doeleinden. De theoloog vond deze stelling niet helemaal correct, want hij zag Korach als een uiterst kwaadaardig wezen, door God veroordeeld, maar de man wees hem op de dubbele uitleg. De man was diep onderwezen in theologie, zonder enige gelovige binding ermee te hebben. Hij hield van de kunst en de symmetrie die hij vond in de Bijbel. Peter herkende dit uit zijn eigen leven, en was verwonderd hoe God ook deze man via een droom tot een verdieping bracht. Maar de man hield voet bij stuk : De Bijbel mocht dubbel uitgelegd worden. De Bijbel was in zijn ogen een spiegelend boek, een wit en een zwart boek, voor beide kanten van het leven als een boek van recht. De man zei : "In de bijbel komt telkens weer het verhaal van de infiltratie naar voren. De antichrist die zich in Gods Tempel neerzet alsof hij God is. De duivel gebruikt de bijbel op zijn manier om zichzelf een goddelijk gewaad toe te eigenen. Dit begon al in het paradijs, waar de slang zich voordeed als de ware god en dat ook als een geschenk aan de eerste twee mensen wilde aanbieden. Instante vergoddelijking, door het eten van zijn vrucht, zijn woord. Dan zou hij de uitlegger zijn van het woord in plaats van God. Dan zouden het zelfs twee dezelfde woorden kunnen zijn, met twee verschillende uitleggingen : Twee keer God, twee heren naast elkaar. Een witte en een zwarte. Dan zou de Bijbel dus ook heel makkelijk een bedreiging kunnen vormen aan een bepaalde kant van de spiegel. Dan zou God dus een eigen Judas moeten sturen om een valse Jezus Christus uit de weg te

ruimen. Dan zou God dus een eigen satan moeten sturen om een valse God van de troon te stoten. De Bijbel in spiegelbeeld voor hetzelfde doel."

Peter stond met zijn oren te klapperen. De profeet sprak : "Het is wel waar wat u zegt, want de kapitalistische charismatische hoek noemt de God van ons : "satan" en "de anti-christ", en degenen die ons volgen zijn "gevallenen" of zelfs "gevallen engelen" in hun ogen. Het hele negatieve scala met etikettenreeks wordt vanuit de Bijbel gehaald en op ons geplakt om hun nagebootste godheid te verdedigen ... maar ik vind het uiterst gevaarlijk om deze "labels" dan ook te aanvaarden zoals zij dat uitdrukken. Vanuit het oog van de kunst hebt u misschien gelijk, maar of het ook echt Bijbels verantwoord is, dat betwijfel ik, alhoewel ik diep respect heb voor de manier waarop u het brengt. Zeg, die Korachs-kinderen, dat zijn kinderen die door God in de aarde werden geschoven. Ik kan de oordelen van God niet aanraken, en waarom zou u dat dan wel doen ?"

De man sprak : "U moet de creativiteit van de taal niet aantasten. Er wordt zoveel gewaarschuwd tegen toverij die onbijbels zou heten. En op zich begrijp ik dat, omdat er zoveel ongelukken hiermee gebeuren, en omdat de bijbel dit ook heel nadrukkelijk aanhaalt. Maar de Bijbelcode is anders dan simpele lezers zouden denken. De Bijbel is een kunstboek, een boek van spiegelingen en symmetrie, van woordraadselen, en inderdaad zoals ik zeg een code, die uitgelegd wordt aan hen die volgens dit boek een hartsrelatie met de schrijver hebben. Het was een woord geschreven in oorlogstijd, in een tijd van gevaarlijke spionage, van een geliefde aan een geliefde ... Zij moesten hun boodschappen vermommen en beschermen. Het is een cryptische kunst, geen gewoon boek. Dus, om terug te komen op het tovenaarsverhaal : ware geliefden lezen en eten de liefdesbrieven van hun geliefden in z'n geheel, woord voor woord, kauwende en slikkende, op zoek naar symmetrie, op zoek naar verbanden en de geheime deuren, waardoor ze het geisoleerde hart van hun beminden kunnen bereiken. In hooglied staat dat de ene geliefde tegen de ander zegt : "Gij hebt mijn ogen betoverd." Is dat dan geen goddelijke toverij ? Het is natuurlijk een parel die streng bewaakt moet worden, en vooral kinderen mogen niet te snel de indruk hebben dat het ergens laag in een keukenla ligt. Maar het een sluit het ander niet uit. De Bijbel beschrijft verschillende gebieden en verschillende seizoenen. Er is een mogelijkheid om door de verschillende spiegels heen te stappen. Het is een boek met een strenge etiquette, een boek met diepe spelregels, op de rand van het betoverde, je lokkende naar diepere bossen."

De profeet sprak : "Apologetisch gezien heeft u helemaal gelijk, daar kan ik en geen ander mens onderuit, maar ik blijf hier heel voorzichtig in. Ik merk aan uw woorden dat u de bijbel meer liefheeft dan menig gelovige, maar ik vraag me nu ook af, bent u eigenlijk wel echt ongelovig, want ik zie bijna pretlichtjes in uw ogen. U heeft het boek zo lief, en u kent zo de gevaren van de "boekverkrachting", waardoor er een hele andere soort van hoofdpersoon te voorschijn komt, dat u eigenlijk uzelf "ongelovig" wenst te noemen, om maar niet geassocieerd te hoeven worden met al die "verkrachters" ?"

Hierop antwoordde de man : "Nee, dat was het niet echt. Ik geloofde gewoon niet in een levende persoon genaamd "God". Voor mij was het dode kunst, maar deze was voor mij zo schitterend, dat het leefde in mijn hart. Maar ik merk nu, door de droom en door al deze gebeurtenissen, dat het veel persoonlijker begint te worden voor mij."

Peter begint te glimlachen. Het lijkt wel alsof hij zichzelf ziet staan zoals hij vroeger zo

werd aangetikt door persoonlijke dromen en gangen van zaken. Maar wat deze man hier tentoon spreidt is voor hem wel zo nieuw en vreemd, dat het lijkt alsof hij niet weet wat hij er mee aanmoet. Zoveel gedachten en gevoelens vliegen er door hem heen.

Over de Korachs-kinderen zijn ze nog niet uitgepraat. De profeet kan er nog niet over uit ... "Zou God goede kinderen levend laten verzwelgen door de aardbodem ?"

"Laten we het zo stellen," zegt de man. "De twee topkrachten staan naast elkaar met hetzelfde stuur in de handen. God en de duivel. Jullie weten zelf wel dat ze allebei een vinger in de pap mee hebben, en zich met alles bemoeien, met tegengestelde redenen. Ze zijn altijd en eeuwig met elkaar in gevecht om dat stuur. Wonderen en tekenen moeten daarom ook altijd gezift worden. Zoals vele wonderen die Mozes en Aaron deden konden de tovenaars van de farao perfect nadoen. Twee krachten in oorlog. Waar onschuldigen worden veroordeeld zijn duivelse krachten aan wezig, vlak naast de oordelen van God. Gods Vuur is altijd uiterst accuraat, maar de duivel kan aanvullen. Ik geloof, en dit was ook mijn droom, dat God nooit per definitie alle kinderen en aanhang van grote zondaren vernietigt. Ik geloof dat de duivel die aanvullingen geeft. God oordeelt rechtvaardig, en dan doet de duivel daar een schepje bovenop. Het vuur moet gezifd worden. In de charismatische beweging zijn ook twee vuren aan het werk. Is dit te volgen voor u heren ?

Het was alsof ze in de ogen van een arend keken, in de ogen van een engel. Neen, dit was niet de Levael die hier sprak. Dit was zijn tegenhanger. De man was omhuld door een onverklaarbaar en indringend zacht licht, en Peter, de theoloog en de profeet werden steeds rustiger. Iets probeerde hen te overtuigen, dat alles twee gezichten had, twee krachten die tegen elkaar streden. Het was de symmetrie die hen rustig maakte, alsof deze symmetrie, de verschillende spiegelbeelden, en schaduwen, de puzzel compleet maakten, en een enorme rust en vrede veroorzaakten.

Zouden er dan nog steeds zielen onder de grond opgesloten zitten, onschuldige zielen, die toevallig familie waren van de schurk Korach ? Hoe diep moesten ze nog gaan ?

De profeet keek alsof de bliksem was ingeslagen, en ook Peter kreeg de rillingen. Wat zou de charismatische beweging doen met "demonen" die ze uitdreven. Waren al die geesten wel echt "demonen" ? Of waren het gekwelde zielen die gewoon hulp nodig hadden ?

Toen ineens kwam de theoloog naar voren, met een heel ernstig gezicht. Hij had zich gedurende het gesprek een beetje op de achtergrond gehouden. "Ik ben erg verontrust," sprak hij. "Ik vind dit echt enorm ver gaan, en volgens mij ziet u het echt verkeerd. Dat wat u naar voren probeert te brengen heeft te maken met necromantie, oftewel "het contact zoeken met de doden," wat de Bijbel streng verbiedt. De Korachs-kinderen verdeelt u in twee groepen : de schuldige machtslustigen, de gevaarlijken dus, die onder Gods oordeel naar de diepten van de aarde werden gezonden, en de onschuldigen die door de duivelse, anti-christelijke krachten naar de krochten van de aarde werden gezonden. Tot zover kan ik u goed volgen, maar alhoewel het heel logisch klinkt, en zelfs heel Bijbels, namelijk de wisselwerking der krachten, betwijfel ik het hele verhaal. En wel om deze reden : Wij zouden er dan vanuit moeten gaan dat beide ziele-groepen op aarde rondzweven, goeddoende en kwaaddoende, even wijzende op uw droom, terwijl de Bijbel zegt dat deze zielen onder de grond leven. Ik geloof niet, op Bijbelse grond, dat

overledenen contact hebben of mogen hebben met degenen die leven. U zegt die goede, onschuldige Korachskinderen, berijden gehandicapte kinderen. U noemt die Korachs-kinderen zelfs moeilijk opvoedbaar, alsof ze hier op aarde rondlopen in een menselijk lichaam. U maakt zich daarbij bijna schuldig aan het tentoonspreiden van de reincarnatie-gedachte, die dus allesbehalve bijbels is, ook al is het uw droom geweest. Heeft u misschien uw droom verkeerd geinterpreteerd, of hebben we hier te maken met gevaarlijke misleiding ? Ik weet het nog niet zo net. Wij kunnen ons in onze bediening momenteel geen enkele misstap veroorloven. Er staat teveel op het spel."

De profeet begint ook bedenkelijk te knikken, terwijl ook Peter het een beetje benauwd krijgt. Hoe zal de beste man hierop gaan reageren. Nog steeds heeft Peter het gevoel alsof er een enorme engel in de kamer staat, op dezelfde plaats waar de man zit. Peter heeft diep respect voor de man, en het lijkt alsof de hele kamer verlicht is op een vreemde manier, maar wat is er aan de hand ? Lopen ze gevaar ? Is dit een beste truc van de grote misleider, of staan ze op het punt om daadwerkelijk Gods verborgen schatkamers te betreden. Is dit schateiland ? Of een grote valstrik ?

Hoofdstuk 4. Het Gesprek

"Ja," zegt de profeet, "ik deel dezelfde angst als de theoloog. Ik ben zelf een charismaticus in hart en nieren, maar zodra sommige predikers en zelfs bekende predikers over ontmoetingen met Paulus beginnen, dan weet ik niet altijd goed wat ik daar nu over moet denken."

Peter begint te rillen :"Sorry hoor, maar mag ik even iets zeggen. In mijn droom heb ik Simson ontmoet, maar ik zie dit niet als een overtreding van het gebod. Onze Heere Jezus Christus ontmoette Mozes en Elia op de berg der verheerlijking."

"Ja," zegt de theoloog, "verheerlijkte zielen als Paulus, Simson, Mozes, Elia, Daniel, en zo voort, daar kan ik me iets bij voorstellen, en Peters droom klikte bij mij ook helemaal. Ik heb daar geen enkele moeite mee gehad, maar het verhaal van onze broeder hier gaat me nu net even te ver, en ik ben er eerlijk gezegd een beetje huiverig voor."

"Precies," zegt de profeet, zich kerende naar Peter : "Ik had met jouw droom over Simson geen enkele moeite, en het klikte bij mij ook direct, maar op de een of andere manier liep dat nu eenmaal zo. Meestal heb ik gewoon altijd mijn twijfels als ik terugdenk aan bepaalde charismatische bijeenkomsten waar weer iemand een ontmoeting met Abraham of Zacharias had gehad. Ik zeg niet dat het niet kan. Ik heb geen enkele twijfel gehad over Peter's droom, maar ik ben gewoon voorzichtig, vooral ook met deze woorden van de theoloog."

"Luister goed," zegt de oude man, "ik betreur uw gebrek aan bijbelkennis," zich richtende tot de theoloog. "Met alle respect, u bent theoloog, en u doet uw werk uitermate goed. U denkt over dingen na en laat juiste vraagtekens branden. In de hebreeenbrief word er gesproken over "de wolk van getuigen" die rondom ons staan. Dit zijn de overleden bijbelse figuren. Verder staat er in de Bijbel dat de God van Abraham, Isaak en Jakob, een God van levenden en niet van doden is. Er zal heus wel een bepaalde zieleslaap zijn tussen dood en hemel, maar deze mensen leven."

"Ja," zegt de theoloog, "de verheerlijkte zielen, waar we het al over hadden, maar u

heeft het over onschuldige zielen die contact hebben met gehandicapte kinderen, als zijnde moeilijk opvoedbaren. Ik snap niet waar u het over heeft. Mooi verhaal, maar ... wat moet ik ermee. Verder dreigt er bij mij ook zoiets op te komen als : "Jezus ontmoette inderdaad Mozes en Elia op de berg, maar u bent Jezus niet."

"Zegt de Bijbel niet dat we Jezus moeten volgen ?" vraagt de man weer ...

"De Bijbel zegt het is verboden contact te zoeken met dode geesten voor ons. Verheerlijkte heiligen kan ik me nog enigszins indenken, maar dit is te gek voor woorden." zegt de theoloog.

"Goed," zegt de man, "blijkbaar wilt u die geijkte boodschap niet nuanceren. God gaf die waarschuwing aan zijn volk omdat het te gevaarlijk was. Je moet het inderdaad ook nooit opzoeken, maar bent u er ook achter over welke groep "doden" er werd gesproken ? U geeft mij geen heldere uiteenzetting en begrenzing van het woordje "dood". U kunt zoals ik al zei niets over een kant schuiven. De Bijbel is een persoons-gevoelig boek, een gebieds-gevoelig boek en een tijds-gevoelig boek. U maakt van de Bijbel een ware hakbijl. In het Bijbelboek I Petrus komt Jezus in hoofdstuk 3 tot gevangen zielen die in de vroege tijden Noach ongehoorzaam waren. Hij predikte hen het Evangelie. Dit waren natuurlijk overledenen, en volgens dit Bijbelgedeelte zaten zij in een gevangenis. Ze zaten onder het oordeel van God, wachtende op de tijd van verlossing. Discipelen worden aanbevolen de werken van Jezus te doen. Er wordt daarom ook in de Bijbel gezegd : Predik het evangelie aan de doden, ja, je mag ze zelfs opwekken. De dood word beschreven als een vijand, een gevangenis, en discipelen krijgen de macht om met de sleutels van de opstanding zielen te verlichten met het evangelie. Toen Jezus opstond, stonden er velen op uit hun graven. Door het vlees enige van zulke werken te verrichten is uiterst verboden, omdat het dan alleen maar erger wordt en het misleiding uitwerkt, maar door de Geest mogen deze dingen naar Waarheid geschieden. Op dit terrein wil Gods Geest discipelen binnenloodsen. Satan heeft ook zijn dodenrijken onder de grond, en waar dan ook. Openbaringen spreekt over dodenrijken in de zee : "de zee gaf haar doden," staat er in hoofdstuk 20, en er staat ook dat de dood en het dodenrijk in de poel des vuurs geworpen zullen worden. Vijanden dus. Jezus Christus is gekomen om te verlossen. Niet een beetje, maar geheel. Discipelen van Hem mogen bekleed worden met deze krachten.

Dan nu het zielenverhaal : Zielen .. Ieder heeft een ziel, maar deze ziel bestaat uit meerdere delen, want zoals Paulus het zegt kunnen sommige mensen bewuste reizen maken met zo'n ziele-deel, en als je verwijderd bent van iemand kun je "door de Geest" toch bij zo iemand zijn. Wij dragen allemaal ziele-delen van elkaar in ons, op allerlei verschillende manieren. Als je voor iemand bidt, dan reist een stukje van jouw ziel met degene mee voor een tijdje, en zo zijn er vele manieren. Het is als een telefoonlijn. Je stem is bij jouw telefoon, en bij de telefoon van degene met wie je spreekt. De radio is daar ook een voorbeeld van. Deze dingen wijzen allemaal heen naar de geestelijke realiteiten. Dus zielen in de aarde kunnen ook makkelijk op de aarde zijn. Ze kunnen zelfs op aarde geboren worden, terwijl hun andere ziele-deel misschien nog opgesloten zit onder de aarde of in de zee. Hierdoor zijn vele problemen te verklaren, en had de medische zorg maar meer oog hiervoor. Er zijn bewuste zieledelen en onbewuste zieledelen. Die onbewuste zieledelen kunnen overigens heel accuraat zijn. Het zijn in principe gewoon afgesloten ziele-delen. Deze kunnen overwippen van de ene mens op de

andere mens. Bijvoorbeeld als een mens ten onrechte benadeeld wordt, dan wordt er een stukje van zijn ziel afgesneden, een kleine abortus om het zo maar te zeggen. Jezus zei : "Indien u iemand haat, dan heeft u hem vermoord." Zo'n ziele-stukje heeft dan een leven op zich, afgesloten van de andere delen, en zal op zoek gaan naar recht. Het ziele-deeltje kan erg in de war zijn, of verwond, en laat in het lichaam een leegte over, een onbewuste laag. Hierin zijn allerlei mogelijkheden. Maar het punt is dat zulke ziele-delen rust proberen te vinden, en recht, maar vaak vanwege verwondingen en andere beschadigingen niet helemaal meer weten waar ze mee bezig zijn. Vaak worden deze zielen voor demonen aangezien en nog dieper gekweld door allerlei beunhazen op het gebied van exorcisme en genezing.

"Stop, stop," zegt de theoloog. "Ik kan wel zien dat u psychologie heeft gestudeerd, en misschien allerlei cursussen voor uw gehandicapten-werk ... en ik zeg dit met alle respect, maar ik zie hier geen Bijbel meer aan te pas komen, en ik ben dus ook allerminst overtuigd van uw psycho-dramatische verhaal. Ik kan me hier dan ook helemaal niets bij voorstellen. U ontwortelt zomaar het gehele christelijke geloofsgoed met zo'n tempo dat ik er gewoon buikpijn van krijg. Natuurlijk heeft u gelijk als u uw vinger wijst naar charismatische groepen die maar wat aanrotzooien, maar de argumenten die u aanreikt raken bij mij het plafond niet. Misschien dat u meer aansluiting vind bij een of andere psycho-religieuze new age-secte. Trouwens, u maakt uzelf schuldig aan de oosterse reincarnatie-gedachte. Als u dan zo goed uw bijbel kent, waarom dan zo'n wolkerige poging ..."

"Pardon, mag ik even iets zeggen," vraagt Peter ... "Ik begrijp deze man juist heel goed, en ik begin dingen nu ook veel beter te begrijpen. Het laat mij juist zien hoe de geestelijke wereld in elkaar zit. Ik denk echt dat we de woorden van deze man niet zomaar opzij mogen leggen. Laten we er een paar nachten over slapen, om deze woorden te toetsen. Ik vind dat hij een prachtige aanvulling geeft op iets waar we als zij-charismatische vriendengroep niet verder mee kwamen."

"Mag ik u een vraag stellen, theoloog, kunt u mij vertellen op wat voor manier Daniel zou terugkomen, wat duidelijk in de Bijbel staat vermeld ?" vraagt de man.

"Ik zou het niet weten, maar als dat via reincarnatie zou zijn, dan spreekt het de hebreeentekst tegen van : "het is de mens gegeven eenmaal te sterven en daarna het oordeel." zegt de theoloog.

"Nuances, nuances," zegt de oude man weer, "u haakt uzelf geheel in geisoleerde bijbelteksten, als een bril voor de rest van de Bijbel, als status voor slechtziendheid. Wat is sterven ? Paulus zegt : "Ik sterf elke dag." U moet weten over welke dood het hier gaat, en u moet de symboliek goed kennen voordat u deze beste uitspraken doet. Taal kan vele dingen vertellen, daarom moet taal vertaald worden. Beste man, u bent uzelf door uw beperkte taal zoveel begrenzingen aan het opleggen. Moet ik nog duidelijker wezen : Lazarus is tweemaal gestorven. Allen die Jezus of de discipelen opwekten zijn dus twee keer gestorven, of misschien zelfs meerdere keren."

"Okay," zegt de theoloog, "u heeft gelijk, maar wil dit zeggen dat reincarnatie bestaat ?"

"Wie zegt dat het niet bestaat ?" oppert de oude man ... "God geeft meerdere kansen. God preekt tot de doden en wekt de doden weer op. Het een-kans-evangelie probeert alles op een leven te schuiven, zodat ze daardoor via angst meer macht over mensen kan

krijgen. Dit is big business. Moet ik duidelijker wezen ? Van Johannes de Doper zei Jezus dat het Elia was, die zou terugkomen. Reincarnatie dus, en een teken dat het met Daniel of anderen ook op die manier zou kunnen gaan. Natuurlijk proberen de een-kans-theologen deze woorden te verdraaien zoals ze met alle bijbelgedeeltes omgaan. De dwazen gebruiken de Bijbel voor hun eigen strik. God gebruikt de Bijbel zelfs om hen ermee te verdwazen, en om hun lusten ermee uit te werken, totdat ze bemerken dat het een bereklem is. God gebruikt de Bijbel voor vele doeleinden. Vergeet niet dat God ook leugen zendt tot de leugenaars. Hij zendt Zijn Judassen tot de leugen-christussen. Hij heeft de kruizen al in de schuur staan.

"Godslasteraar !" buldert de theoloog "Dit zal je berouwen ! Ik ga er vandoor, u weet niet waar u mee bezig bent ! Ik geloof in een hemel en in een hel, in een kans, en daarna het oordeel, en niet in allerlei leugenachtige reincarnatie-praatjes ... Probeert u het oordeel van God soms te ontlopen ?" Woedend loopt de theoloog de kamer uit, pakt zijn spullen en vertrekt.

De profeet buigt zijn hoofd, en zegt : "Hier had ik vannacht al over gedroomd. Hij kan de zuiveringen niet aan. Hij zit te diep vast in z'n tradities, en houdt teveel van hetgeen dat was en is, inplaats van hetgeen dat komen gaat. We moeten hier weg, want hij zal onderhoort worden en veroordeeld worden als hij onze verblijfplaats niet verraadt. Hij zal ons daarom verraden, om z'n eigen gevoel van veiligheid te redden. Ze zullen hem verder niet vervolgen, omdat hij geen vuurwonderen heeft verricht, en vanwege de informatie die hij hen schenkt ... We moeten weg, Peter, en u kunt ook beter met ons meegaan. U heeft mij overtuigd, en Gods Geest sprak tot mijn hart over u. God kan u goed gebruiken ... Kom mee ..."

Peter knikt, er geheel mee instemmende. Waar zouden ze naartoe gaan ? De oude man had een idee ... Hij had nog ergens een oude vriend wonen, ergens diep in een bos. Die vriend was boswachter, en een man die nooit door iemand werd lastiggevallen.

Binnen korte tijd was het geregeld. De man woonde in een groot huis, en op zolder had hij een aantal slaapkamers ter beschikking. Hij wilde wel meewerken. Hij had hetzelfde hart als de oude man.

Toen ze aankwamen was het al donker. Ze vertrokken direct naar de zolder, waar ze op de gezamenlijke gang hun gesprek konden voortzetten. Er stond daar een tafeltje met wat stoelen. De man vertelde dat vroeger de katholieke kerkelijke leiders de reincarnatie-leer hadden weggeschrapt uit de kerk en de bijbel, omdat het hun macht over zielen aantastte. De reformatie was nog niet zover om het weer terug te brengen. Evenals de zieledelen-leer en de dodenhulp-leer moest het ingedeeld worden tot onderwerp voor verdere reformatie. Peter en de profeet waren een en al oor, en verbaasden zich hoe snel deze man zijn taak opnam. Hij was een man van theorie, maar nu werd het praktijk. Hij was een man van onpersoonlijkheid, maar nu werd het persoonlijkheid.

Hoofdstuk 5. De Aanslag

Het werd Peter duidelijk dat God de doden niet als doden zag, maar als "geroofden" en

"ontvoerden". God stond de dood soms toe, en bracht het soms zelf, maar Peter begon in te zien dat doden-isolatie een regelrechte aanval was op het evangelie van Jezus Christus. Een leugen in de kerk, zo diep, dat zelfs de katholieke kerk daar milder in bleek te zijn. En dit allemaal tot doel om het kapitalisme op natuurlijk en geestelijk gebied te laten zegevieren. Hij vond de droom van de oude man zo prachtig, en eigenlijk had hij het gevoel dat gehandicapte kinderen veel dieper contact met de ontvoerden hadden dan anderen. Wie was er nu autistisch ? Kinderen die veel met opjecten praatten en met de natuur, om zo contact te hebben met "het geroofde", of hen die zich alleen maar blindstaarden op het materiele ? Wie hoorden er nu in de ziekenhuizen thuis ? De Bijbel had het bij nader inzien zo vaak over de dood, het sterven, als middel om bij God te komen. Niet zozeer als een natuurlijke dood, maar als een bovennatuurlijke dood, als een bevrijding van zonde. De boom en de bloem waren daar een mooi beeld van. Waarom moesten er zielen buitengesloten worden die dat niet verdienden ? Peter had zoveel vragen. Maar eigenlijk had hij het antwoord al. De dood was een manier om los te komen van het materiele, van de kapitalistische krachten ... Een kracht die dagelijks als een natuurkracht in hem mocht werken.

Als de dag van gisteren herinnerde hij zijn droom over de korachs-kinderen, degenen die onder Gods oordeel stonden. Zouden zij degenen zijn die uit woede en wraak .... Neen ... Hij durfde niet verder te denken ... Hij voelde hen trekken aan zijn hart .... Hem afhoudende van deze openbaringen ... Hij voelde hun innerlijke bedreigingen .... Hij herinnerde de ijzeren pinnen, het geschreeuw .... Ze wilden hem doof houden voor iets ... Iets wat nu komende was .... Deze zielen kwamen van de afgrond ....

Hij herinnerde het verhaal over de Bijbelse Spiegel, de symmetrie, de goddelijke gespletenheid ... als een kunstwerk van mozaiek, waar de oude man over sprak .... Peter kreeg een vizioen .... Hij zag zichzelf zittende op een gouden troon met een gouden appel .... God sprak tot hem dat het een appel des levens was .... Toen zag hij als door een spiegel zichzelf met een zwarte appel op een zwarte troon .... "Dit was je verleden," sprak God .... "Je at van de appel van de slang, waardoor je in het dodenrijk terecht kwam, een spiegelparadijs, genaamd "aarde". Je kwam van een paradijselijke aarde in een vervloekte aarde ... Dat was alreeds het dodenrijk, zoals Paulus het aardse lichaam "lichaam des doods" noemde ... Door de appel kwam je in het rijk van de slang ... Daarom is het maar net vanuit welke richting je praat .... Welke taal je gebruikt .... De Levael is een koning der dodenrijken, gezonden om mensen te verblinden, om hen te brengen van dodenrijk tot dodenrijk. Ook in het dodenrijk zijn er verschillende lagen. Maar aan beide kanten van de spiegel sta Ik, zoals ook de duivel aan beide kanten staat ... Hij was namelijk ook in het paradijs ... het maakt niet uit waar je bent ... het maakt uit aan welke kant je staat ... waar je bent in je hart ... Zowel Ik als de duivel is de schepper van deze wereld, vanwege de strijd der creaties, vanwege de wet van de wisselwerkende kracht. In deze capsule van tegengestelde krachten word je gevormd ... In deze capsule van strijdende krachten bevindt zich de trap tot zuiverheid en puurheid ...."

Opeens zag Peter in het vizioen kinderen met rode ogen en rood-zwarte klederen voor hem staan. Zij waren de zielen van I Petrus 3 die door de zondvloed aan de krochten van de zee waren prijsgegeven. Zij waren de zondvloeds-kinderen, wachtende op verlossing ... Er was al tot hen gepredikt door Jezus, maar nu wachtten ze op verdere

verlossing .... Peter nam hen in zijn armen, en haalde diep adem .... Hij bad tot God on alle dodenrijken te laten zien waarin hij het verlossende werk van Christus mocht brengen. Het Evangelie, ook voor de doden ... Zoals de Bijbel dat zo duidelijk leert ...

De boswachter was iemand die je een christelijke communist kon noemen. Hij luisterde aandachtig naar de verhalen van de drie mannen. Hij vertelde dat er op het nieuws te zien was dat er verschillende kleine groepjes ontstonden die de leer van de mannen wilden navolgen, maar de mannen waren spoorloos verdwenen.

Naarmate de jaren verstreken begon het rustiger te worden omtrend hetgeen gebeurd was ... Alles leek weer in het oude cirkeltje te verzinken ... Maar Peter, de profeet en de oude man groeiden voort en maakten hun plannen ... Ook de boswachter was duidelijk geinteresseerd ...

Door de jaren heen leerden ze de profetische gaven voor dit werk vrij te zetten, en dat gebeurde naarmate ze de levael verdreven ... Op een dag hadden ze zoveel zielen verzameld, dat ze een stormloop konden doen op de verblijfplaats van de Levael en zijn Korachskinderen .... De profeet nam het woord en sprak tot de muren van de vesting. "Muren van Levael, val neer ! Muren van Levael, geef je geheimen prijs en wordt kaal. Dor zult gij worden, onvruchtbaar zult gij zijn." En toen keerde hij zich tot de Levael : "Levael, in Naam van Jezus Christus, de Gezalfde, In Naam van de Nazoreeer : Geef de sleutels van het dodenrijk prijs, van al je dodenrijken en martelplaatsen."

Toen stond de profeet op en sprak : "Kom mee, we gaan nu naar de leiders van het land, het is tijd." Peter knikte en samen met de oude man liepen ze naar hun auto. Er was juist een vergadering der ministers, en de profeet riep door de ramen dat hij een boodschap van God voor hen had. Lacherig werden de ramen gesloten maar de profeet geraakte in woede ... Hij trapte een raam in en sprak : "Kom maar naar buiten, want God gaat dit hondehol door vuur verteren."

"U staat onder arrest werd er geroepen, en politiemannen kwamen naar buiten rennen." Eentje werd er direct door vuur verteerd, voldoende om de anderen in huivering te brengen. "Luister goed," sprak de profeet .... U mag gerust uw vergaderingen voortzetten, maar dit kapitalistische gebouw gaat eraan. U pakt uw spullen maar die u nodig heeft. Morgen gaat het gebouw ter vlakte." Maar ondertussen werd er al gebeld naar het leger, en spoedig waren er helicopters boven de profeet, Peter en de oude man. "Geef uzelf over, of er wordt geschoten," werd er geroepen vanuit een helicopter. Maar de profeet, Peter en de oude man waren onaantastbaar. Er werd geschoten, maar zonder enig resultaat. Toen explodeerde het gebouw ... Verschillende ministers die naar buiten waren gekomen wilden nu wel luisteren ... Het vreemde van deze vuurexplosies was dat ze soms heel specifiek mensen oversloegen. De profeet riep tot de ministers : "God gaat dit land in vuur brengen. Een ieder wiens hart niet zuiver is zal door dit vuur verteerd worden tot as. Laten uw nieuwsbrigades dit maar verkondigen. En jullie kunnen rustig doorgaan met jullie vergaderingen, maar jullie houden op met kapitalistische geldspelletjes. De jeugd en het gerechtshof dient te worden aangepakt, de media, en dan zullen we wel verder zien."

"Wat zijn uw plannen ?" werd er geroepen ...

Ondertussen werd er van andere locaties uit naar het buitenland gebeld. De mannen moesten koste wat het koste opgeruimd worden, al zij het door een kolossale

bomaanslag. En ja hoor, de grootmachten van het buitenland kwamen aanzetten ... Iedereen werd opgeroepen het land te verlaten. Bommenwerpers kwamen van alle kanten, terwijl de profeet, Peter en de oude man rustig in de auto zaten. Iedereen was inmiddels van het terrein weg. Er werden bommen geworpen, maar niets hielp ... De profeet was inmiddels buiten z'n zinnen van woede ... Totdat ineens een enorme vuurarend in de lucht verscheen ... Het was de Levael ... Hij spuwde vuur ... En de auto verdween geheel onder een zee van lava ...

Ineens schrok Peter wakker ... Het was maar een droom ... In paniek rende hij naar de kamer waar de profeet lag ... Maar er lag niemand ... Toen rende hij naar de kamer van de oude man ... Maar daar lag ook niemand ... Peter raakte in paniek ... Wat was er aan de hand ... Er klopte hier iets niet ... Toen ineens was het alsof z'n hoofd explodeerde ... En hij hoorde gelach in zijn hoofd ... Hij werd wakker in het ziekenhuis ... Hij had een hersenberoerte gehad ... en een helft van z'n gezicht was verlamd geraakt ... Hij zag de boswachter naast hem zitten ... "Sorrie, ik kon niet anders dan je hier te brengen ... Ik vond je bewusteloos op de grond ..." sprak hij met een ernstig gezicht .... "Waar zijn de profeet en de oude man ?" vroeg Peter ... Zij zijn gearresteerd, en ze zullen jou ook arresteren als je hier klaar bent ... " zei de boswachter.

Peter werd woedend, en zei dat hen die dat op hun geweten hadden in gevaar waren ... Hij kon nauwelijks praten vanwege de beroerte ... Hij snapte dat de boswachter gehandeld had zoals hij had gehandeld, maar dat zijn vrienden waren gearresteerd ... dat kon niet ... Peter was woest ... Hij wist dat dit een nieuwe aanval van de Levael was, en het was nu hard tegen hard ... "Waar zijn ze ?" riep Peter ... "Ik moet mijn vrienden zien." Een zuster probeerde hem te kalmeren, maar hij duwde haar opzij ... "Jullie zijn allemaal godslasteraars !" riep hij ... Plotseling kwam er een lange man binnen, die naar Peter toeliep ... Het was een psychiater ... Hij wilde Peter een hand geven, maar Peter sloeg de hand weg. "Ik zal je helaas moeten opnemen," sprak de psychiater ... U bent zwaar gevaarlijk voor de samenleving, zoals wij dat noemen : zwaar gestoord ... godsdienstwaanzin ... Uw vrienden zijn in goede handen, maakt u zich maar geen zorgen ..."

"Nee !" schreeuwde Peter, "Ik heb geen godsdienstwaanzin ! Ik weet waartegen ik vecht ! Jullie zijn bezeten van de Levael .. Jullie zijn korachskinderen !"

"Mijnheer, probeert u zich maar even rustig te houden .... Dat wat u hebt zijn waanideeen ... Leuke verhaaltjes, maar berust niet op waarheid ... U bent zeker een gevaar voor de samenleving, en u zult de komende tien jaar niet van ons af zijn. Ik zal u onder strenge bewaking in een separeer-cel zetten, en u kunt eens per dag even in de buitenlucht op streng bewaakt terrein. Mijnheer, ...u staat schuldig aan ... moord ... massamoord .... De rechter zal hierover zijn vonnis uitspreken .. U heeft grote kans dat u nooit meer terugkunt in de samenleving." zegt de psychiater ... De boswachter was inmiddels weer verdwenen ..

Peter begint luid te krijsen .... Het was alsof hij met miljoenen ijzeren pinnen tegelijk werd doorboort ... Binnen enkele dagen werd hij naar een streng bewaakte kliniek afgevoerd, waar hij in de separeer-cel belandde. Hij was inmiddels met riemen vastgemaakt aan een bed, vanwege agressief gedrag naar verplegend personeel ...

Op een dag krijgt hij bezoek ... Het was de theoloog ... "Peter," sprak hij ... "Ik heb een

enorme fout begaan ...en ik weet niet of je me ooit kunt vergeven ... Ik stond onder te hoge druk ... en ik heb hele domme dingen gedaan ... Ze hebben me onder zo'n hoge druk gezet dat ik ons verblijfadres heb verraden ... Ik zal het mezelf in ieder geval nooit meer vergeven ... Ook al waren jullie gelukkig al vertrokken ..."

Peter was blij hem te zien ... "Help me hieruit," fluisterde Peter ... "Waar zijn de profeet en de oude man ?"

De theoloog begon te snikken ... De profeet is veroordeeld tot levenslang .... evenals jij ... en de oude man is op vrije voeten gezet, omdat hij er eigenlijk niet zoveel mee te maken had ... met de tijd dat jullie twee met mij de gemeentes bezochten ...

"Het is okay ... alleen ... ik kan wel wat pastorale hulp gebruiken ..." zegt Peter ..."alhoewel ik je op het moment moeilijk kan vertrouwen ... Ik zie wel dat je echt berouw hebt, maar ik was heel erg, verschrikkelijk diep in je teleurgesteld ... Het is alsof er iets is gebroken tussen jou en mij .... en ik weet niet hoe ik het kan oppakken ..."

"Alleen de tijd kan bewijzen wat ik voor je voel," zegt de theoloog ... "Ik zei al, ik zal het mezelf nooit vergeven wat ik je heb aangedaan .. Ik voel me als Petrus die de Heer Jezus verloochende ... Maar ik ben terug om te zeggen dat ik aan jouw kant sta ... Ik wil echt Gods paden bewandelen, en ..."

"Vriend," onderbreekt Peter ..."je zonden zijn je vergeven ... we geven het gewoon een tweede kans ... Kun je nu geloven dat God ook tweede kansen geeft ?"

"Ja," glimlacht de theoloog,"ik zie dat nu in, Peter ... Ik ben God dankbaar dat ik nu mag zien hoe belangrijk tweede kansen zijn voor daadwerkelijke vriendschap en een echte liefdesrelatie met God ..."

"Vriend, kun je me vertellen wat er nu gaande is ? Waar is God nu ? Waarom laat Hij dit toe ?" vraagt Peter ... en begint te vertellen over de droom en wat er allemaal gebeurd is ...

De theoloog zegt : "Peter, luister, je wist van tevoren hoe zwaar het zou worden, en dat de Levael zich niet zomaar prijs zou geven ... Maar je weet ook dat dit je naar een hoger vuur zal leiden ... en hogere gaven, die God Zijn getrouwe kinderen toevertrouwd ... Jij bent God getrouw gebleven ... daarom mag jij hier doorheen gaan ... het is Gods Gave voor jou ..."

Peter voelde zich tot in z'n botten gebroken ... alsof hij op de bodem lag van een zee van ijs .... Terwijl een zee van vuur hem van binnen opvrat .... Hij had geen behoefte meer om in de materiele wereld te werken ... Hij wist dat hij door deze gebeurtenissen de diepste dodenrijken kon binnengaan .. zoals zijn grote Liefde Jezus de Nazoreer eens deed ... Ja, nog steeds ... en nu door hem heen .... Er brandde een zacht vuur in hem ... van hieruit kon hij alle bomen omhelzen ... alle bloemen ... Hij voelde zich nu ... een gehandicapt kind ... dichter bij de dood dan ooit tevoren ... maar ook ... dichter bij het leven ... een leven met andere wetten ... een leven zo rijk en zo diep ... Hij was tevreden met zijn bed .... en zelfs met de riemen ... Hier kon hij dromen ... en andere dromen aanraken ....

De boswachter, de oude man en de theoloog kwamen hem vaak opzoeken ... Peter was gelukkig ... Ze vertelden hem over de verschillende groepen die zijn ideeen aanhingen. Meestal kwamen ze in het geheim bij elkaar ... Het werk werd voortgezet ... en het leek

alsof er anderen zoals Peter en de profeet opstonden ... rebellerende tegen het huidige kapitalisme ... tegen het evangelie van het grote geld ... Ze riskeerden boetes of gevangenisstraffen, want de overheid had op dat gebied de touwtjes flink strak gespannen ... maar het leek wel alsof niets hen kon tegenhouden ... het was alsof er een nieuwe generatie opstond ... vechtende tegen de Levael ... niet massaal ... maar in kleine groepjes ... Sommigen zouden Peter graag willen zien, maar Peter hield de boot af ... Het was alsof hij te moe was ... en te bang voor nieuwe avonturen ... Peter ontdekte een nieuwe wereld binnenin ... een wereld die vroeger altijd weggewimpeld werd ... waar grote slagbomen voor stonden ... met prikkeldraad en hekken met lange scherpe punten ... Hij was er overheengegaan ... Het had hem bijna zijn leven gekost ... En nog steeds leek het alsof hij zwom in een zee van vuur en ijs .... reikende naar .. de overkant ....

Met de profeet ging het goed .... Advocaten hadden een hoger beroep aangetekend ... en men was verwonderd over de wijsheid van deze man ... Wonderbaarlijk wist hij de aanklachten te weerleggen ... Alsof hij gouden sleutels in zijn hand had ... Ook pleitte hij voor de vrijlating van Peter .... Al gauw werden ze beiden vrijgesproken, maar Peter had nog een lange weg te gaan. Hij had rust nodig ...

Het was alsof de incidenten waren vergeten ... Na de arrestatie waren er vele nieuwsuitzendingen, die vele herinneringen ophaalden, maar opnieuw bleek nu alles weer in slaap te sussen ... en Peter en de profeet werden sterk bepaald bij persoonlijke verandering, en het aanvaarden van het lijden ... Het zou een tijd worden van het dieper uitslaan van persoonlijke wortels ... Ook de beweging leek weer enigszins te slinken, maar het ging hen niet om getallen ... Het ging hen om persoonlijke groei door iedere situatie ... door welke omstandigheden dan ook .... De nadruk werd meer en meer gelegd op het persoonlijke .... en niet de phenomena eromheen ...

Hoofdstuk 6. Nieuwe Zekerheden

Peter begon te beseffen dat door hang naar materie de mens uit het paradijs viel ... Men moest leren via de binnenwereld met iets in contact te staan ... door tijd, geduld en voorzichtigheid ... Zo kon men door het geestelijke vele werelden betreden en met veel dingen in contact staan ... maar door het materiele zouden deze deuren gesloten worden ... Men at van de materiele appel ... en men werd materieel ... afgesloten van de geestelijke meerzijdige bronnen ... afgesloten van een veelzijdige, multi-dimensionale natuur ... de juweel van zoveel stralen ... Hij begon het materiele meer en meer als een gevangenis te zien ... en wist dat Hij Jezus de Nazoreeer wilde volgen in Zijn kruistocht, maar ook in Zijn Hemelvaart .... Hij vroeg zich af waarom mensen zo vaak tussen deze twee dingen blijven steken ... Jezus was niet op zoek naar materie .... materie was dood .... Jezus was op zoek naar de troon van God ... het Levende Hart van God ....

Hij begon meer en meer de verwoestende gevolgen van materiele communicatie in te zien ... Hij voelde de duistere krachten van licht en geluid ... die hem opgesloten wilden houden in deze aardse gevangenis ... Hij begon meer en meer te leren van de natuur, die hij zag als doorgangen naar het meer-dimensionale geestelijke ... Hij zag hoe bomen met elkaar communiceerden, planten en bloemen ... Hij zag hoe dieren communiceerden .... dat was niet materieel ... dat was geestelijk ....zoveel werelden met elkaar

verbindende .... En ja, dit was de hemelvaart die Jezus maakte ... op een wolk .... dit was een fijnere materie ... met een diepere sensitieve inslag .... dit was ervaren ... dit was contact hebben ... dit was leven .... dit was eten van de boom des levens ... van gouden appels ....

Hij maakte zich niet meer zo druk hoe anderen dachten ... Vroeger deed het hem pijn als anderen materieel dachten ... maar nu wist hij dat zij de ketel vormden die hem weer omvormde tot datgeen wat hem gelukkig maakte ... En deze ketel kwam meer en meer op de achtergrond ... want hij begon meer en meer los te laten .... Hij had niet meer de behoefte om veel te spreken ... Het was alsof zijn hart nieuwe connecties had gevonden om zijn energie en bevindingen aan kwijt te kunnen .... En het was nu alsof het door bleef echo-en ... alsof hij nu zijn maatjes had gevonden die zijn hart weerkaatsten ...

Hij begon meer en meer de natuur op te zoeken .. vooral de bossen ... Op een dag tegen de avond, kwam tot zijn grote schrik de Levael op een tak dichtbij hem zitten ... Hij sprong achteruit .... Het leek wel alsof het gekraai tot diep in z'n hersenen doorprikte ... Toen Peter weer bijkwam merkte hij dat het beest alweer vertrokken was .... Maar toen hij thuis was gekomen voelde hij zich erg ziek ... Het werd een lange nacht met afschuwelijke nachtmerries waarin hij zichzelf zag vechten in een ijszee met allerlei vissen en draken ... aan het einde van de reeks nachtmerries krijgt hij een droom waarin hij de overkant van de ijszee bereikt ... Simson wacht hem daar op om hem een paarse mantel aan te reiken .... Simson zegt daarbij : "Zoon, je hebt vele geheimen van vuur en ijs leren kennen. Je hebt geleerd hoe je deuren kunt openen en sluiten ... Je zult nu de gave ontvangen om ogen te openen en te sluiten ... om ogen te genezen .... en om ogen te creeeren .... Het gouden zwaard wordt nu door de ogen van de Levael gestoken ... Je bent nu de geneesheer van de ogen der bedieningen" ... En Peter zag op zijn paarse kleed allerlei verschillende ogen verschijnen ... En toen kwam een andere enorme arend tot Peter ... het was een reusachtige engel genaamd Lelsar ... De achterkant van de engel was een uil .... En toen de engel sprak, gebeurde het in alle tonen ... Peter had nog nooit zo'n stem gehoord ... En hij zag alle slechte korachskinderen wegsmelten in een zwarte appel ... De engel brak de appel doormidden en gooide een helft in de zee van vuur en de andere helft in de zee van ijs .... Vele explosies vonden plaats ... en hij sprak : "Eet nooit meer van deze appel ..."

In Charismatische gemeentes kwamen nu vele lichtverschijnselen voor ... de lichtverschijnselen brachten de mensen in een diepere extase dan ooit tevoren ... De lichten begonnen van de gezichten van de mensen te stralen en grote genezingen vonden plaats ... Zelfs verschijningen van vuur begonnen plaats te vinden ... maar Peter wist dat het allemaal vals was ... Het was de Levael die vanuit de hemelse gewesten in de aardse gewesten aan het vallen was ... En als een woeste brullende leeuw verzamelde hij zijn schaapjes ... Hij deed zichzelf voor als Christus en de Heilige Geest ... Mensen begonnen tatoeages op hun huid te krijgen die ze toeschreven aan goddelijke interventie ... Maar Peter mocht zich er niet mee bemoeien ... Peter wist dat dit nog maar het begin was .... Hij wist dat er zelfs valse wederkomsten van Christus zouden plaatsvinden, en andere soorten van valse uitstortingen van de Heilige Geest ... Maar hij mocht zich er niet mee bemoeien ... Hij mocht deze appels zelfs niet aanraken ... Hij wilde niet nog een keer opgesloten raken in de materie ... Hij wist dat deze wederkomsten van buiten hem alleen maar af wilden leiden van de wederkomsten binnenin ...

Einde

De Alverzoening van Perlottia

Theologische Thriller

Hoofdstuk 1.

Evert van Laar is lid van een Pinkstergemeente. Het is koud buiten. Evert komt thuis van zijn werk. Wat was het weer een rare dag geweest. Evert voelde zich weer zweven tussen hemel en aarde. Hij had gewoon weer dat vreemde gevoel dat hij geen controle meer had over dingen. Vroeger voelde hij zich altijd zo machtig, alsof hem niets kon overkomen. Hij wist altijd alles bij anderen klaar te spelen. Maar nu ... hij voelde zich ontzettend machteloos. De dag erna is Evert ziek, en blijft op bed liggen. Zijn moeder brengt hem wat thee met rijstwafels, en wat honing, maar veel eet hij daar niet van. Evert wil rust. Zijn moeder gaat even naast hem zitten op het bed, en houdt zijn hand vast. 'Moet ik de dokter bellen ?' vraagt zijn moeder bezorgd. Maar Evert wil niks met dokters te maken hebben. Dokters maakten het in zijn ogen vaak erger dan het was. Maar de moeder van Evert begon zich steeds meer zorgen te maken. Evert voelde zo heet aan, en was zelfs een beetje aan het ijlen. 'Verlies me dan niet ...' ijlde hij '...Mijn moeder is dood ... mijn vader is dood ...' en toen sloot Evert half zijn ogen. 'Ik ben er nog hoor,' zei z'n moeder. 'Maak je maar geen zorgen, en je vader leeft ook nog.' Evert begon te rillen en te beven. Z'n moeder nam hem in haar armen. 'Wat is er dan toch, jongen, ik ben zo bezorgd. Als het zo door gaat dan moet ik de dokter bellen, Evert.' Maar Evert gaf geen antwoord en zakte weg.

'Evert van Laar ...' Een donkere stem maakte Evert op slag wakker. Het was de dokter. De dokter ging naast hem op het bed zitten, en pakte zijn arm. 'Ga ik dood, dokter ?' vroeg Evert. 'Ik voel me zo vreemd ...' De dokter begon met z'n onderzoek. Weer begon

Evert te rillen en te beven. ...'Mijn vader en moeder zijn dood .... en ik ben ook dood ...' ijlde Evert even later. 'Hij heeft hoge koorts,' zei de dokter tegen zijn moeder.

Een paar dagen later is Evert weer beter, maar het ijlen is er alleen maar erger op geworden. Evert kon alles weer doen, maar hij zei telkens dat hij nu ergens anders was. Weer wordt de dokter erbij gehaald, en de dokter vond het hoog tijd dat Evert in het ziekenhuis onderzocht zou worden. De dokter vreesde dat er iets met de hersenen van Evert was gebeurd. In het ziekenhuis ging Evert door de hersenscan, maar omdat ze daar niets konden vinden werd Evert doorverwezen naar een psychiater. 'Ik ben dood,' zei Evert tegen de psychiater. De psychiater gebood hem te gaan zitten. 'Vertel me eens, Evert, wat is er gebeurd ?' Maar Evert kon geen volzinnen meer maken, en begon vreemd te ijlen. De psychiater vreesde dat Evert naar een psychiatrisch ziekenhuis moest, maar daar wilde de vader van Evert niets van weten. Evert's vader had de voorganger van de pinkstergemeente gebeld of ze mischien voor hem konden bidden.

Tegen de avond kwam de voorganger langs bij het gezin van Laar. Evert's zus was er ook bij, zijn broer, en natuurlijk zijn vader en moeder. De voorganger was alleen gekomen, en na even wat bijgepraat te hebben begon hij te bidden. De voorganger kreeg direkt een visioen van de hersenen van Evert. In dit visioen zag de voorganger dat er bepaalde stoffen in zijn hersenen haperden. Ook was er een storing in de bio-electrische signalen die de hersenen moesten regelen. In de geest zag de voorganger een rode prop zitten in de hersenen, en die rode prop begon uit te groeien tot een klein rood wezentje. De voorganger vertelde het verhaal met de woorden : 'Ik heb het al gezien, Evert, die scan van het ziekenhuis was ook niet alles. Wij zullen die kleine rode demoon wel even wegsturen, in de Naam van Jezus. Ineens begon Evert te grommen, en op de vloer te spugen : 'Mij krijg je er toch niet uit,' gromde Evert. Zijn gezicht was ineens helemaal verkrompen als de kop van een varken, en al snuivend rende hij naar de deur van de kamer. 'Ik gebied je te stoppen nu, in de Naam van Jezus Christus van Nazareth,' sprak de voorganger gebiedend. 'Ik heb je gezien, jij kleine rode demoon.' Evert stond ineens stokstijf stil, en de voorganger liep naar hem toe. 'Eruit jij,' beval de voorganger. En Evert begon direkt te kokhalzen. De voorganger vroeg om een emmer, en even later had Evert een roodachtige bal van slijm uitgespuwd. 'Huh, waar ben ik ?' vroeg Evert.

De dagen erna verliepen goed. Evert was bevrijd. Zijn ouders, en ook zijn broer en zus, waren dolgelukkig. Maar het geluk was maar van korte duur, en ook de voorganger scheen niks te kunnen doen. 'Ik denk dat we hier te maken hebben met een zwaardere aanval,' zei de voorganger. Ik zal de gemeente opdragen om voor Evert te bidden en te vasten. Intussen moest Evert weer terug naar de psychiater. De psychiater zag nu geen andere oplossing dan Evert naar een psychiatrische afdeling van een ziekenhuis te sturen. 'Ik heb het gezien,' zei Evert telkens. 'Overal rode demonen. Ik heb ze gezien, ik heb ze gezien.' De begeleiders moesten hem telkens rustig zien te krijgen. 'Wat, wat, blijf van me af, man,' zei Evert telkens als een goedwillende hand hem wilde sussen. 'Ik ben een robot, een cyborg. Ik heb het licht gezien.' Evert dacht dat alle mensen om hem heen lagere wezens waren dan hem, want zij waren per slot van rekening geen cyborg. 'Wat heb ik nog met jullie te maken ?' zei Evert vaak. 'Ik sta nu aangesloten op een electriciteitsbron, en ik heb een dashboard in m'n kop. Kun je het nog volgen ?' De dokters zeiden dat hij zwaar psychotisch was, en als dit te lang zou duren, dan zou hij zelfs de ziekte schizofrenie kunnen krijgen.

Evert voelde zich verder erg goed, en vond dat hij helemaal niet ziek was. 'Wat moet ik hier ?' zei hij telkens. 'Hey, ik moet naar buiten, ik heb een opdracht te vervullen. Ik ben hier niet voor niets op deze planeet.' Op een dag kwam de voorganger bij Evert op bezoek. Evert klampte hem vast en zei : 'Voorganger, haal me hieruit. Ze hebben me hier opgesloten. Jij en ik, we hebben een opdracht te doen, buiten.' De voorganger nam Evert liefdevol in zijn armen en fluisterde : 'Wij in de gemeente houden allemaal erg veel van je, en zullen niet rusten totdat je hieruit bent. Evert, je wordt door zwaardere demonen lastiggevallen.'

Evert raakt een beetje emotioneel, en zegt hardop : 'Maar wat willen ze dan van me ? Wij hebben toch een opdracht, jij en ik ? Buiten toch ?' Evert sprak als een klein kind, en de voorganger verzekerde hem dat het waar was : Ze hadden een opdracht, namelijk de wereld voor God te winnen. Opeens raakt Evert echt overstuur : 'God, wie is dat ? Jij en ik, wij zijn toch cyborgs ? Robotten zijn wij, machines, en wij moeten de aarde klaar maken voor de installatie.' De voorganger drukt Evert een boekje in de handen, en zegt : 'Evert, ik moet nu weg, maar ik kom terug, hoor, Evert, lieverd. Ik kom terug, en wel zo snel mogelijk.'

'Wanneer zie ik je weer ?' vraagt Evert ineens met een vaderlijke stem. 'Zo snel mogelijk,' zegt de voorganger, en na nog even wat omhelzingen vertrekt de voorganger. Evert raakt hysterisch, en ze moeten hem even in de sepereercel zetten.

Met de tijd wordt Evert steeds meer onhandelbaar, en op een gegeven moment is hij zelfs gevaarlijk, vooral voor bezoek. Niemand durft hem nog op te zoeken, en de sepereercel wordt zijn vaste plek. Vaak schreeuwt hij dat hij de duivel is, en dat hij gekomen is om de aarde te vernietigen. Maar andere dagen zegt hij dat hij God is, en dat hij de aarde moet klaarmaken voor de installatie. Hij benoemt de begeleiding vaak in vreemde namen, en soms noemt hij iedereen : Huub. Op een dag is de voorganger met een andere man gekomen. Het is een exorcist. De exorcist wil wel voor Evert bidden, maar de begeleiding mag niet meer zomaar mensen toelaten, omdat Evert veel te gevaarlijk is geworden. Hij gaat vaak tekeer als een woest dier. Vaak gilt hij, vloekt hij, en tiert hij, en slaat wild om zich heen. Soms gedraagt hij zich ook keurig netjes, maar kan dan van het één op het ander moment iemand aanvliegen. Hij is onberekenbaar geworden. Na lang aandringen mogen de voorganger en de exorcist even naar Evert. Als Evert ze door het raam van de deur ziet, rent hij direkt naar de deur toe, en roept door het raam tegen de exorcist : 'Ik ken jou wel, Beelzebul, wat kom je doen ?' Evert buldert met een stem zoals ze het nog nooit hadden gehoord, en zelfs de begeleidster die erbij stond schrok verschrikkelijk. 'Evert,' zegt de voorganger luid, 'we komen je helpen. Dit is John van Zalm, en hij wil graag voor je bidden.'

'Wie ben jij,' krijst Evert, 'ik ken je niet, en ik bid niet.' Maar weer probeert de voorganger : 'Jij hoeft zelf ook niet te bidden, maar John wil even voor je bidden.'

'Ik wil niet,' klaagt Evert als een klein kind, 'dan komt Beelzebul me halen.' En dan weer met een donkere stem : 'Beelzebul, wat kom je doen, wat moet je met je oude vader. Ik ben de duivel, Krishna, ik ben Conan en Elton John, ik ben alles, alles, alles, en jij bent niets. Je hebt me diep teleurgesteld, Beelzebul. We hadden een opdracht weet je wel ... jij en ik ... we zouden de wereld veranderen. Waarom heb je me hier opgesloten ?' En dan begint Evert verward te gillen. John stapt naar het raam toe, en zegt : 'Laten we

eerlijk zijn, ik ben uw zoon niet, maar je gaat er nu wel uit.' John heeft zijn handen inmiddels op het raam gezet. Direkt moet Evert flink overgeven, maar hij wordt woester en woester. Dan neemt hij een aanloop en met een enorme trap trapt hij de deur eruit, en begint te briesen. Snel komen er begeleiders aanrennen. De voorganger en de exorcist worden verzocht direkt het gebouw te verlaten. Ze zouden het alleen maar erger maken. 'Ik ben de Psychiatrische Inrichting,' schreeuwt Evert met een donkere stem, 'en ik sluit jullie allemaal op. De duivel gaat rond in het huis van David.' En met het grootste gemak smijt hij één voor één de aangerende begeleiders tegen de muur, en loopt stampvoetend naar de uitgang van het gebouw. 'Ik maal jullie allemaal tot moes,' brult Evert, 'ik ben de maalmolen van ...' maar verder komt Evert niet. Een schel alarm is afgegaan en door de intercom wordt iedereen in het ziekenhuis ingelicht en gewaarschuwt. 'Ja, waarschuw maar,' brult Evert, en snelt naar buiten. Niet lang daarna is Evert in het bos. 'Wat heb ik toch met al die malloten te maken,' bromt Evert in zichzelf. 'Ik wil niet langer deel zijn in die poppenkast ... Ik ben alles en niets ... Wat kan mij het schelen wie ik ben. Ik ben een cyborg, aangesloten op de energiebron van ... van .... Ja waar kom ik ook al weer vandaan ?' Evert begint te brullen, en rent dieper het bos in. 'Ik ga niet meer terug, ik ga niet meer terug ...' Na een tijdje valt Evert uitgeput tegen een boom in slaap. Als hij wakker wordt vraagt hij zich af waar hij is. Hij kan zich niets meer herinneren. Het laatste wat hij kan herinneren is dat hij van zijn werk terugkomt, alsof hij zweeft tussen hemel en aarde.

Nietsvermoedend loopt Evert naar zijn ouderlijk huis. Hij belt aan, en zijn moeder doet open. Als ze hem ziet slaakt ze een gil, en rent de kamer in. 'Mama ?' roept Evert stomverbaasd. 'Wat is er aan de hand ?'

Iedereen is snel op de hoogte van het grote nieuws. Evert is bevrijd. Hoe het is gebeurd weten ze niet, maar Evert is weer de goede oude Evert. Ze hadden daar in de pinkstergemeente zo lang voor gebeden en gevast. Ook de voorganger is erg blij. Er valt weer normaal met Evert te praten en ook om te gaan. Evert heeft natuurlijk een groot getuigenis, maar er is ook wat anders bijgekomen, namelijk een profetische gave. Evert heeft namelijk nu altijd een kader van rode lichtstrepen in zijn ogen, waarmee hij speciale dingen kan zien.

Hoofdstuk 2.

Evert heeft ineens zoveel succes in zijn manier van vertellen, en ziet de dingen zo helder, dat de voorganger hem eens in de zoveel tijd laat preken. De diensten zijn dan erg speciaal, niet alleen om de indringende en boeiende betogen, maar ook vanwege Evert's gevoeligheid. Evert heeft een diepe gave van genezing en van profetie, en weet zijn publiek op een bijzondere manier telkens diep te ontroeren. De rode lichten in zijn ogen geven hem bijzondere helderheid, bijna betoverend, en laten hem hele speciale dingen zien. De rode lichten zijn eigenlijk altijd in zijn ogen aanwezig, en de voorganger noemt het een eeuwig visioen. Op een dag stelt de voorganger voor dat Evert ook voor anderen bidt of zij die permanente visie mogen ontvangen. Evert vindt dat een goed idee, en doet aan het einde van zijn preek een oproep of degenen die dat willen naar voren willen komen. Een grote groep komt naar voren, maar dan voelt Evert ineens de droefheid van de Heilige Geest, en de Heilige Geest spreekt zacht tot hem dat de permanente visie alleen aan hen wordt gegeven die heilig leven. Evert merkt dat hij voor een paar mensen

niet kan bidden, en stuurt ze terug naar hun stoelen, met de boodschap waar ze aan moeten werken. De anderen die naar voren zijn gekomen legt Evert de handen op, en bidt of ze de gave mogen ontvangen. Vrij snel valt het licht van de Heilige Geest op hen, en ontvangen ze de lichten in hun ogen, maar bij sommigen zijn het andere kleuren. Sommigen beginnen heel hard te lachen in de Geest, en zelfs te schaterlachen, terwijl anderen op hun knieen vallen. Sommigen beginnen te smeken tot God. Degenen die de gave hebben ontvangen kijken op een hele andere manier de zaal in. De anderen konden het in hun ogen zien dat ze wat hadden ontvangen van de Heere.

De voorganger is erg tevreden, en al gauw bereikt het nieuws ook andere pinkstergemeenten. Al snel is Evert een geliefd en veelgevraagd spreker. In een van de diensten die Evert hield riep iemand eens : 'Het is het licht van het bloed van Christus. Mijn ogen zijn gewassen. Verheerlijkt zij God.'

Maar op een dag gebeurt er iets vreselijks. Evert wordt aangereden door een dronken automobilist en verongelukt. De gemeente is in rep en roer. En omdat sommigen nog steeds denken dat Evert onaantastbaar is, geloven ze dat God hem zal opwekken. Maar er gebeurt niets. De teleurstelling is groot. Maar niet lang daarna ziet de gemeente het als een taak om door te gaan met het werk dat Evert heeft gedaan. Dat wat Evert leerde diende grootschaals doorverteld te worden. En niet lang daarna beginnen er ook uitwassen te ontstaan, omdat de voortgang van de leringen stopte toen Evert stierf. Evert kon hen niet meer in het rechte spoor houden, nu hij er niet meer was. Veel dwaalleer ontstond er rondom zijn leringen, en ook begonnen enkelen de gave te misbruiken.

De voorganger was ook erg verdrietig na het overlijden van Evert, die zo'n goede vriend van hem was. De voorganger begon zoveel mogelijk bandjes te verzamelen waar Evert op sprak, en wilde het samenvoegen tot een boek. Uiteindelijk waren het zeven dikke boeken geworden als aandenken aan Evert en zijn werk, waar ze het mee moesten doen. Vele pinkstervoorgangers kregen de zevendelige serie in huis, en ook enkele fanatieke aanhangers. Ook werden er al snel vele boeken over Evert en zijn werk geschreven, en Evert werd bestempeld als een grote Profetische Hervormer.

In die boeken waren ook vaak plaatjes te zien van die zogenaamde dashboards die God je in je ogen kon geven. Het waren een soort profetische brillen met frames, kaders en tabellen. Zelfs het graf van Evert werd drukbezocht. Iedereen hoopte daar nog iets van zijn zalving te ontvangen. De voorganger en ook John, de exorcist, werden de hoofdvertegenwoordigers van deze nieuwe profetische hervorming. Evert besteedde altijd veel aandacht aan het beschrijven van de verschillende onderdelen van het Bloed van Christus, en hoe daar mee omgegaan moest worden, maar de voorganger en John richtten zich hoofdzakelijk op het profetische deel waarover Evert sprak. Die nieuwe gave bleek toch beter aan te slaan dan het betoog over het Bloed van Christus. De zus van Evert vond dat wel jammer, want zij vond de theorie van Evert over het Bloed van Christus minstens zo belangrijk, en fundamenteel. De gave kwam immers voort uit het Bloed van Christus. Sinds Evert eens voor haar had gebeden of ze het Bloed van Christus mocht ontvangen voelde ze zich zo anders, alsof haar bloed borrelde met een mystieke kracht. Evert zei haar altijd dat dat de weelderige armoe van Christus was. Het hield haar eenvoudig en dankbaar.

Suzette miste haar broer heel erg. Ze zou nog zo graag willen dat hij weer eens voor haar bad. Maar dat kon niet meer. Ze schreef veel over hem in haar dagboek. Evert had haar veel meer verteld dan wat hij ooit gepreekt had. En ze schreef altijd alles op in haar dagboek. Daarom waren die dagboeken zo bijzonder voor haar. Op een dag besloot ze eens alles wat ze had opgeschreven, en al haar andere herinneringen aan Evert op te schrijven tot een boek. Het werd een heel dik boek, en ze besloot het eens aan de voorganger te laten lezen. Een lange tijd ging er overheen.

Op een avond werd er gebeld bij huize van Laar. Het was de voorganger, en hij had tranen in zijn ogen. Suzette deed de deur open. 'Wat een wonderbaarlijk boek is dit. Dit kende ik allemaal nog niet,' zei de voorganger, 'het lijkt erop dat hij het beste deel aan jou heeft gegeven.' Suzette kreeg een kleur, en liet de voorganger binnen. Ze spraken erover hoe ze deze boodschappen aan de gemeente moesten doorgeven, en of het daar al de juiste tijd voor was. Het ging over de gaven van het Bloed van Christus.

Aan het einde van het gesprek vroeg de voorganger of hij samen met haar nog even naar Evert's kamer toemocht om daar te bidden. Suzette stemde toe, en samen liepen ze naar boven. Alles was nog precies hetzelfde als voor de dood van Evert. Ze hadden nog geen spullen weggehaald of de kamer veranderd. Suzette was sinds de dood van haar broer niet meer op zijn kamer geweest. Het zou bij haar veel te sterke emoties oproepen. Toen de voorganger naar binnen wilde lopen bleef Suzette staan, en draaide zich weer om. 'Ik kan het niet,' zei ze vlug, maar gaat u maar naar binnen. De voorganger begreep het wel, en liep alleen naar binnen. Wat zou ze graag willen dat haar vader en moeder er op dat moment waren, maar die waren een tijdje voor hun rust op vakantie. Zo konden ze alles ook veel beter verwerken. Haar andere broer woonde niet meer thuis. Na een uurtje vertrok de voorganger weer. Nadat hij was vertrokken kreeg Suzette toch even sterk het gevoel en het verlangen om even naar haar broers kamer te gaan. Rustig liep ze de trap op naar boven, slikte even, en liep toen recht op de kamer van haar overleden broer af. Ze opende de deur, liep naar binnen, en keek in het rond. Ja, alles was nog precies hetzelfde. Buiten was alles al donker. Het was al laat. Stilletjes trok Suzette de gordijnen dicht. Ze keek naar Evert's bureau, waar wat pennen op lagen. Even ging ze achter het bureau zitten, en trok een la open. Hier lagen wat papieren in. Toen stond ze op en liep naar zijn klerenkast. Toen ze de kast opende zag ze op één van de planken een soort schrift liggen. Snel begon ze er in te bladeren. Het bleek een dagboek te zijn van Evert. Ze wist niet dat hij een dagboek bijhield. Ineens gleed er een los papier uit het schrift en viel op de grond. Suzette raapte het haastig op.

Hardop begon ze te lezen : De Tokon, een hemels boek. Leer van het Bloed van Christus. De eerste wet : Niets komt rechtstreeks. Alles komt met omwegen. De tweede wet : Je kunt alleen iets gemaskerd bereiken. De derde wet : De leugen bezit vaak meer waarheid dan de waarheid. De vierde wet : Een stad wordt gebouwd op vele raadselen. Ineens liet Suzette geschokt het papier uit haar handen glijden. Dit was privé-bezit van haar broer. Hier had hij haar nooit over verteld. Ineens begon Suzette bang te worden, heel bang. Wat zou ze allemaal wel niet gaan tegenkomen in zijn dagboek ? Evert had haar zo vaak gezegd dat het voor veel dingen de tijd nog niet was. En misschien zouden er wel dingen in zijn dagboek staan die ze gewoon niet wilde weten. Voorzichtig raapte ze het papier weer op, en wilde het samen met het dagboek terugleggen. Was ze wel gemachtigd om dit dagboek te lezen. Het waren misschien wel geheimen tussen Evert en

God. Maar misschien stonden er wel dingen in die Suzette moest weten. Trillend en met kloppend hart probeerde ze toch vluchtig verder te lezen, maar ineens was het alsof iemand haar de keel probeerde dicht te knijpen. Was het God, of was het misschien de duivel of één van zijn demonen, of verbeelde ze zich het maar, en was het gewoon haar angst. Het was wel alsof er iets in haar schreeuwde : 'Niet verder lezen !'

Toch kon ze zichzelf moeilijk bedwingen. Misschien was het wel erg belangrijk dat ze verder las. En weer las ze hardop : De vijfde wet : Niets kan de sleutel beter dragen dan een goed en meesterlijk verhaal. De zesde wet : Zij die de vijf wetten beheersen kunnen de stad van het heilige bloed binnengaan, genaamd De Perlottia. De zevende wet : Zij die in Perlottia zijn leren de kunst van het verlokken, maar bedrog wordt gestrafd. De achtste wet : De Alverzoening der dingen betekent dat uit alles het goede wordt bevrijd, en dat die geest dan alle dingen transformeert. Dit is de sleutel van vertaling, en de alverzoening van Perlottia.

Suzette begon steeds haastiger te lezen : De negende wet : Zij die de Alverzoening van Perlottia zijn binnengegaan, hebben het geheim van de schoonheid gevonden, en wassen zich in de rivier van vergetelheid. De tiende wet : Het tienvoudige Rad van Perlottia zal de rest van hun leven tot hen spreken, tot in alle eeuwigheden. Dit Rad zal hen uit het Rad van Reincarnatie leiden, en in het Rad van Excarnatie brengen en van Reexcarnatie. Dit is ook het Brandende Rad van Perlottia.

Wat was dit ? Het klonk allemaal heel oosters. Was dit van Evert ? Het was een los blad, maar het was wel zijn handschrift. Suzette besloot het dagboek mee te nemen naar haar eigen kamer. Misschien dat het dagboek meer helderheid zou geven. Als het niet van haar broer zou wezen, dan zou ze denken dat het een lijst met stellingen was van één of andere nieuwe secte. Of zou Evert ook in het geheim in zo'n secte binnengeleid zijn ? Suzette stond voor een raadsel. Het klonk allemaal zo mystiek en ver weg. Of zou het een openbaring van Evert zijn waarmee hij worstelde ?

Suzette besloot om te wachten met lezen tot de volgende ochtend. Ze was erg moe. Die nacht kreeg ze een droom over een grote rode leerachtige spin die haar greep met z'n harige poten. Badend in zweet werd ze wakker. In de ochtend werd er gebeld. Suzette greep naar haar telefoon, en nam op. Het was de voorganger. Hij zou een brief hebben ontvangen van de man die in een dronken bui Evert had aangereden. Even kreeg Suzette de rillingen. De man was alweer op vrije voeten, en had erge spijt. Hij wilde deze zondag graag naar de dienst komen, ook om met Suzette te praten. Suzette wist niet goed of ze daar al aan toe was, maar volgens de voorganger was het beter. Volgens hem zou ze zo ook veel beter de dood van haar broer kunnen verwerken.

Uiteindelijk gaat ze zelfs na de dienst met de man mee naar huis. Hij woont in een afgelegen boerderij aan de rand van het bos. Suzette vindt het heel eng, maar gaat toch mee voor de man, die erge spijt heeft. Bij de man thuisgekomen gaat Suzette op de bank zitten, en praat nog even een tijdje na met de man. Maar dan valt haar oog op een vreemd schilderij van een rode spin. Suzette schrikt. De man kijkt op en zegt : Ja, dat had ik ge-erfd van iemand. Dan gaat de man even de kamer uit om wat drinken uit de kelder te halen. De man blijft erg lang weg, en na een tijdje loopt Suzette de gang op. Dan valt haar oog op een schilderij met een bootje erop met de naam De Perlottia. Weer schrikt Suzette. Was dat niet zo'n naam van dat papier uit Evert's dagboek ?

Suzette krijgt ditmaal een naar voorgevoel. Zou Evert die man al gekend hebben ? Zouden ze samen bij dezelfde secte hebben gezeten ? Suzette loopt door naar de kelder. 'Is daar iemand ?' Maar er wordt niet geantwoord.

Suzette loopt de kelder binnen, het trapje af. Plotseling valt de deur achter haar dicht. Als ze naar de deur toerent is die op slot. 'Ik dacht dat je nooit zou komen,' zei een stem van beneden. Een schaduw valt over Suzette heen, en ze wordt neergeslagen.

Later wordt ze wakker in een vreemd bed, vastgebonden. De man staat grijnzend voor haar. 'Wat heb je met mijn broer gedaan ?' vraagt Suzette ... 'Je kende hem al, hè ? er was opzet in het spel, geef maar toe.' Maar weer slaat de man haar, en weer verliest Suzette haar bewustzijn. Als ze later weer wakker wordt is er niemand anders in de kamer. Suzette probeert zichzelf los te maken, en na een hele lange tijd lukt dat eindelijk. De deur blijkt op slot te zijn, en vanuit het raam gaat alles heel steil naar beneden. Ze zou dood kunnen vallen. Gelukkig staat er een kast met wat kleren. Suzette bindt de kleren strak aan elkaar, en maakt een uiteinde goed vast aan de verwarming. Dan klimt ze voorzichtig naar beneden. Helemaal in paniek rent Suzette weg. Na een lange tijd komt ze thuis. Het is al nacht. Direkt belt ze de voorganger die zegt dat hij direkt zal komen. Als de voorganger na enige minuten aanbelt doet Suzette snel de deur open. Samen gaan ze naar Evert's kamer. Net als de voorganger voorstelt de politie te bellen, wordt er beneden hard op de deur geslagen. De voorganger rent naar beneden, en dan is het een hele lange tijd stil. Suzette durft niet naar beneden te gaan, want misschien is het die man wel. Dan hoort ze ineens voetstappen naar boven komen. Tot haar grote schrik is het de man die de dood van haar broer heeft veroorzaakt. Grijnzend gaat hij in de deuropening van de kamer staan. Waar is de voorganger nu gebleven ? Dan ineens hoort ze weer voetstappen. Zelfs van meerdere personen, en het lijkt wel alsof ze iets zwaars dragen. Gelukkig, het was de voorganger, met een andere man van de gemeente. Ze droegen een lange rode kist met vreemde weelderige versieringen van goud en andere edele stoffen. 'Ze weet teveel,' zei de voorganger nors. En ruw werd Suzette in de kist geduwd. Nog even ziet ze het grijnzende gezicht van de voorganger, en wat verder weg als in een schaduw het gezicht van dat andere gemeentelid. Suzette is te verlamd van schrik om nog hulp te roepen. Dan gaat de kist dicht, en wordt alles donker.

Suzette schrikt wakker. Ze had alles gedroomd. Ze had heel lang in coma gelegen. Niet haar broer was door een dronken automobilist geschept, maar zijzelf. En Evert was nooit uit het opvangscentrum weggekomen. Evert was haar gehandicapte broer. Wat een vreemde en lange droom had ze gehad tijdens haar coma, en zo levensecht. Suzette kon zich nog niet bewegen, maar was wel bij bewustzijn gekomen. Nu moest ze alleen nog wachten op iemand die dat zou ontdekken. Ze was in ieder geval in goede handen, in het ziekenhuis. Het was nacht. Ze kon zich herinneren dat ze vroeger eens eerder een droom had gehad over een rode spin. Die kroop toen bij haar moeder in bed. Een paar dagen na die droom hoorde ze dat haar moeder zwanger was, van Evert.

Hoofdstuk 3.

Suzette is blij haar familie weer te zien, vooral haar broertje Evert. Evert was veel jonger dan de Evert uit de droom. Het was altijd een lollig ventje, en Suzette kon met recht zeggen dat hij haar gelukkig had gemaakt. Ze zou geen andere broer willen

hebben. Er was een fruitpakket en een bloemstuk gekomen van de man die haar had aangereden, met een kaartje erbij : 'Ik zal het mezelf nooit vergeven, en ik verwacht dat ook niet van jou. Ik zal hier zwaar voor moeten boeten, en ik zal de rest van mijn leven ervoor zorgen dat je weer gelukkig wordt.' Suzette kreeg een flinke huilbui. Ze had natuurlijk heel veel gemengde gevoelens. Eigenlijk wilde Suzette helemaal niets meer met hem te maken hebben, zodat ze het zou kunnen verwerken en vergeten. Dat liet ze hem ook door een kaartje weten.

Suzette dacht nog veel na over de droom die ze in coma had. Telkens dacht ze weer na over de Alverzoening van Perlottia, die beschreven stond op dat papier in Evert's dagboek. In het echt had Evert geen dagboek. Hij kon niet eens schrijven. Ze sprak er ook met anderen over. Op een dag nam een verpleegster een boek mee vanuit de ziekenhuis-bibliotheek. Dat boek ging over de Alverzoening. Het ging over gevoelige en zachtmoedige mensen die geloofden dat de hel maar tijdelijk was, en dat uiteindelijk iedereen naar de hemel zou gaan. Het was een soort vagevuur waar alle zondaren in gereinigd werden, om dan alsnog naar de hemel te kunnen. Bij de één duurde dit kort, en bij de andere heel lang. Maar het boek was duidelijk tegen dit soort stellingen gekeerd, want de schrijver zag het als een soort slavenkwekerij. Uiteindelijk bestond er helemaal niet zoiets als een vrije wil. Vroeg of laat zou God je pakken, en dan moest je hem voor altijd dienen. De schrijver vond de alverzoening theologische onzin, maar wel begrijpelijk. Zou je kunnen leven met de gedachte dat er mensen of andere wezens voor altijd gepijnigd zouden worden ? Dan moest je wel erg wreed en ongevoelig zijn. De schrijver trok het bestaan van de hel in twijfel, en in ieder geval de altijddurende hel. Volgens hem zou wat er dan aan hel zou bestaan na een bepaalde tijd met zondaren en al vernietigd worden. Dit zou dan de vierde dood heten : Deze zielen zouden alles vergeten, totdat ze in het niets zouden zijn opgelost. Ook zijzelf zouden worden vergeten, anders zou de pijn van de hemelbewoners blijven bestaan. Suzette vond het wel een interessant boek, maar vond er niets over de Alverzoening van Perlottia. Zou het een secte wezen, of zou het misschien helemaal niet bestaan ?

Na een paar maanden was Suzette helemaal weer de oude. Toch had ze in haar genezingsproces medelijden gekregen met de man die haar dit alles had aangedaan. Deze zat nu in de gevangenis. Op een dag besloot Suzette hem op te zoeken. De man was er helemaal emotioneel van en behandelde haar alsof ze een godin was. De man zei dat hij in de gevangenis na het lezen van een boek tot bekering was gekomen. Hij liep op zijn boekenkast af, en haalde er een roodgekleurd boek uit. 'Hier,' zei hij, 'je mag het wel houden. Ik heb er heel veel aan gehad.' Suzette schrok even. Op het kaft staarden grote letters haar aan : Perlottia. 'Waar gaat het over ?' vroeg Suzette. 'Neem het maar mee,' zei de man, 'daar kom je vanzelf wel achter.' Toen Suzette thuiskwam begon ze direkt in het boek te lezen. Ze hoopte door het boek duidelijkheid te krijgen over de droom die ze in haar coma-tijd had gehad. Het boek ging over vogels, over allerlei verschillende vogels. En niet alleen dat, maar ook over vogels op andere planeten. Dat waren dan niet zo zeer vogels van vlees en bloed, maar van subtiele energieen. Ja, het boek ging veel over subtiele energie. De energie was zo fijn dat het niet zichtbaar was, maar het kon wel allerlei dingen veroorzaken. Ze zouden gedachtes kunnen veroorzaken, beslissingen, en verschillende weersgesteldheden. Suzette had eigenlijk verwacht dat het een boek over het geloof was, omdat de man zei dat hij erdoor tot bekering was gekomen. Maar misschien bedoelde hij er wel iets anders mee. Maar verderop in het boek ging het

ineens over Christus, en over de legendes van wat er met Hem gebeurde in het dodenrijk. Ineens ging het over het Bloed van Christus was als een betaalmiddel was waarmee hij zielen loskocht uit verschrikkelijke plaatsen na de dood. Het ging over de burcht Perlottia waaruit het Bloed van Christus zou stromen, en over de strijd tussen de vogels van Perlottia en de vogels van Aldebaran, een rode planeet. De vogels van Perlottia kochten zielen vrij uit de martelplaatsen van de vogels van Aldebaran. Het betaalmiddel was het Bloed van Christus. Daarom is heel veel Bloed van Christus, en heel veel eigenschappen en waarheden van het Bloed van Christus nog in handen van de vogels van Aldebaran, en zij misbruiken dit wonderlijke en levendmakende bloed. Zij bewaken dan ook de stenen tabletten waar de leer van het Bloed van Christus op beschreven staat. Die Leer heet de Tokon, en die tabletten zouden gelezen zijn door enkele profeten in geestesvervoering. Het is een deel van Gods Woord dat nog door een zegel wordt afgesloten. In de Bijbel zou staan in het boek Openbaring dat na het verwijderen van de zegels het Eeuwig Evangelie openbaar zou worden. Bij het verwijderen van de zegels zou er telkens veel bloed vloeien als teken dat de duivel het Bloed van Christus moest teruggeven. De zegels over het Bloed van Christus, die het nog tegenhielden, waren de kooplieden die dit bloed hadden aangenomen als losprijs. Zij waren de vogels van Aldebaran.

Door de Alverzoening van Perlottia zou al het Bloed van Christus weer terugkomen tot de burcht. Dan zouden de schalen met het Bloed van Christus over de aarde worden uitgegoten tot een oordeel, en tot een nieuwe schepping. Zij die dan overbleven zouden elkaar kunnen verstaan, ongeacht de taal. Het zou de Alverzoening der talen zijn.

Suzette probeert het allemaal weer te vergeten, en stuurt het terug aan de man in de gevangenis. Maar op een dag staan er twee mannen aan de deur. Ze dragen bruine roodachtige kleren, een beetje leerachtig met stukken fluweel ertussen. Ze vertellen Suzette dat ze christenen zijn die het Eeuwig Evangelie brengen. Suzette zegt direkt dat ze al bekeerd is, en wil de deur weer dichtdoen, maar één van de mannen vraagt haar of ze misschien weleens van Perlottia heeft gehoord. Suzette schrikt. Het blijft haar dus achtervolgen. Tenslotte besluit ze de twee mannen binnen te laten. Ze vertellen een soortgelijk verhaal als in het boek wat ze gelezen had, en zeggen dat niet alleen de tempel is vervuild, maar ook het Bloed van Christus, geinfiltreerd door de vijand. Zo zou er diep in de burcht van Perlottia een verwilderde binnenplaats zijn, genaamd Radth, waar kipdemonen wonen. Zij zouden de Beker van Christus, de Heilige Talgamen, bewaken. In deze beker zou zich het verborgen en verzegelde Bloed van Christus zich bevinden. De eindtijd-christenen hadden niet alleen de taak om de zegels van de tempel, het Woord, te verbreken om het Eeuwig Evangelie te kunnen ontvangen, maar ze hadden ook de taak om de zegels van de Beker te verbreken, door de demonische kippen van Radth te verslaan.

'Zijn jullie een nieuwe secte ofzo ?' vraagt Suzette ineens midden in het verhaal. Maar dan zegt één van de mannen : Het is nu de tijd dat het beestje eens bij de naam wordt genoemd. In dit verhaal is de gevestigde kerk de secte, want is het niet de kerk die van het Woord zoiets griezeligs heeft gemaakt door de Eeuwige Verdoemenis. Wij prediken het Eeuwige Evangelie, en de Alverzoening. En nog eens wat : De kerk heeft het Woord in de gevangenis gestopt, in de zogenaamde Canon. Daarna heeft de kerk het Woord verandert door iets wat ze de Onfeilbaarheid van de Heilige Vader, de Paus noemden.

Hij had de macht het Woord van Christus te veranderen, toe te voegen en af te nemen. En dit soort dingen gebeurde ook al in het Oude Testament door de Joden. Is dat dan niet sectarisch ? Of is iets zodra het gevestigd is niet meer sectarisch ?

Maar dan zegt Suzette : De Alverzoening is de Leer van Eeuwige Slavernij, want je vrije wil wordt vroeg of laat door een soort Vagevuur weggehaald. Als jullie dan in Perlottia zeggen te geloven : De Alverzoening van Perlottia is een hele andere alverzoening, die te maken heeft met de Terugkeer van het Bloed van Christus. Dat had ik eens in een boek gelezen. Zeg, hebben jullie het Eeuwig Evangelie al in bezit als boek ? Maar de mannen schudden hun hoofd. Nee, want er waren alleen nog maar boeken uitgekomen over wat er in het Eeuwig Evangelie zou staan. Het boek zou pas ergens in de eindtijd verschijnen, zoals de Bijbel in Openbaring liet weten. Ook begonnen de mannen zich te verdedigen over hun uitspraken. Ze zeiden dat ze het zelf ook nog niet helemaal begrepen hoe de Alverzoening zou zijn in verband met Perlottia, en voorzichtig probeerden ze wat standpunten terug te halen. Ze hadden als excuus dat ze zelf vroeger in een Alverzoenings-gemeente zaten. Ieder mens, en ieder wezen zou uiteindelijk zalig worden, oftewel naar de hemel gaan. De hel was maar tijdelijk. Nou, de tijdelijkheid van de hel, daar kon Suzette wel inkomen. Weer begon ze uit te leggen dat de Alverzoenings-leer een leer is van slavernij, want uiteindelijk kiest iedereen voor God. Dat klopte volgens Suzette niet, en ze vond dat echte gevaarlijke demonen die zich voor altijd tegen God hadden gekeerd daarom door die leer beschermd werden. Zo zou de bediening van exorcisme niet goed kunnen werken. Misschien was niet alleen de leer van Eeuwige Verdoemenis een zegel dat verbroken moest worden, maar ook de tegenovergestelde leer van de Alverzoening. De mannen keken elkaar aan, en knikten bedenkelijk. Toen vertelde Suzette over haar coma-tijd en wat ze daarin had beleefd. Maar één van de mannen keek op zijn horloge. Het was voor hen tijd om te gaan. En na een snel en koel gebaar van afscheid vertrokken ze.

Wel hadden ze een foldertje achtergelaten met een adres waar diensten werden gehouden. Suzette besloot er eens een keer te gaan kijken. Ze kwam aan bij een klein zaaltje, half onder de grond. Het was een soort heuveltje, met een dalletje waarin een pad uitkwam bij een grote deur. Binnenin was het er een beetje donker. Suzette zag een boekentafel, en door de hal kwam ze in een wat ruimere verlichte zaal. Er waren wat groene lampjes aan de muren. De dienst was al begonnen, en Suzette ging een beetje achterin zitten, dichtbij de deur. Suzette keek in het rond, maar zag de twee mannen die bij haar aan de deur gekomen waren niet. De spreker had het over de reis die iedere christen moest maken naar de Beker van Christus, de Heilige Talgamen. Hier zou het Eeuwige Bloed zich bevinden, dat levendmaakte en wonderlijk was. Hiervoor moest iedere christen de zegels van de Beker overwinnen, de boze geesten van Radth. Talgamen was zowel enkelvoud als meervoud. In het meervoud waren het de verborgen hemelse wezens van de Beker. Die zouden dan de christen verder vergezellen op zijn reis naar de sieraden van het kruis, de Lokogamen. Deze felbegeerde hemelse bezittingen werden bewaakt door stierachtige demonen, in een nog diepere binnenplaats van Perlottia, genaamd Acha. De leider van die stierachtige demonen was een skelet, genaamd Canon. Dit skelet brandde vaak, en was de verpersoonlijking van de Canon. Even gingen de rillingen door Suzette heen. Dit skelet hield de christenen gevangen, en gebruikte hen als slaven. Ook hield dit skelet hen af van de Lokogamen. Aan één van de muren naast één van de groene lampen hing een schilderij met zo'n skelet. Dit skelet zat

op een zwart paard, en droeg een rood kleed. Het leek wel een beetje op een tafereeltje uit het boek Openbaring. Vervolgens zette de spreker zijn preek voort over Openbaring tien, over een geopend boek. De man vergeleek de sprekende donderslagen die verzegeld werden met de Lokogamen. Het geopende boek waarmee een engel neerdaalde vergeleek hij met het Eeuwige Evangelie wat zou komen. De sieraden van het lijden waren volgens hem verzegeld met de Canon en zijn boze machten, en deze moesten eerst verslagen worden. De Lokogamen zouden volgens hem het Bloed van de Gaven dragen, zoals het Bloed van Profetie, het Bloed van Geloof, het Bloed van Genezing, het Bloed van Onderscheiding, en ook het Bloed van de Bedieningen, zoals het Profetische Bloed, het Apostolische Bloed, het Richterlijke Bloed, het Anfitaatse Bloed. En toen begon de man de gaven en de bedieningen uitvoerig te bespreken. Hij zei dat hij eens een open visioen had gehad over de Lokogamen, waarin zij als grote flessen rondom een enorm veld stonden. Plotseling kwamen er stieren rennen uit de enorme flessen, en kwamen op hem af. Hij kreeg toen een degen van de Heer, maar zei toen : 'Maar Heer, ik ben toch geen stierenvechter ?' Waarop de Heer sprak : 'Nee, maar je bent wel een demoonvechter.' Toen veranderden de grote flessen in sieraden en kwamen op zijn degen terecht.

Toen hij alle stierdemonen had verslagen verschenen er grote lichtende letters voor hem : De Aflaat van Perlottia. Dit was een hemelse winkel, een hemelse bar, waar niet met materieel geld betaald moest worden, maar met geestelijk geld. Hier moest hij leren een Schenker van de Heer te worden. Hij moest er hier op toezien dat er betaald werd voor elke gave en elke zegen van God. Zij die hierin volleerd waren, kregen toegang tot de Alverzoening van Perlottia, de Heilige Ringen van het Bloed van Christus, de Eeuwige en Algehele Verzoening van het Bloed van Christus. Maar ook deze Alverzoening was verzegeld. Hier zou de gelovige een laatste gevecht tegen Canon moeten leveren, en kennis maken met zijn verborgen legers.

Ineens krijgt Suzette weer rillingen, en een vreemde angst overvalt haar. Het lijkt wel alsof ze er niet meer is, alsof ze zweeft tussen hemel en aarde, misschien wel tussen de aarde en de hel. Er klopt iets niet, het lijkt wel alsof ze niet wakker is. Ze staat op, en wil door de deur naar buiten rennen, maar ineens lijkt het wel alsof de tijd stilstaat. Bij de deur staat een skelet, en Suzette kan zich nauwelijks bewegen van de schrik. Alles gaat zo traag ineens, alsof elke seconde honderden jaren duurt. Suzette probeert te gillen. Het is een zwart skelet die een beetje krom staat. Kijkt hij nou naar haar, kijkt hij dwars door haar heen, of kijkt hij ergens anders naar ? Ineens zegt hij met een ijzeren schelle stem die door de zaal lijkt te bulderen : 'Suzette van Laar, je moet voor Christus verschijnen.' Dan wordt Suzette voorgeleid in een immens grote zaal. De poorten in die zaal zijn zo hoog en breed dat wel miljoenen zielen in elke deuropening kunnen staan. De toppen lijken te verdwijnen in de mist. Overal is mist, en in de verte staat een brandheldere troon. Hoog op de troon zit Canon, als een zwart gebogen skelet, en soms is hij grijs. 'Maar dat is Christus toch niet ?' gilt Suzette. Maar het zwarte licht gebogen skelet naast haar zegt dat Canon Christus is. 'Dat meen je toch niet ?' gilt Suzette. Maar er is zoveel geruis, dat niemand haar lijkt te verstaan, en niemand geeft antwoord. Elke seconde lijkt jaren te duren. Canon opent een immens grote Bijbel met een leerachtig donkerbruin soepel kaft waarin zilverachtige bladen met mist zijn omgeven. Ook opent hij een ander boek waarin Suzette's daden beschreven staan. Langzaam wordt Suzette voorgeleid. Weer gaat alles trager en trager, totdat het lijkt alsof de tijd helemaal

stilstaat. Dan leest Canon heel snel haar zonden voor, vanaf haar geboortedag tot nu. Het gaat in een razendsnel tempo, en Suzette krijgt er buikpijn van. Radeloos van angst wordt ze. 'Jullie hebben mij uitgekozen als Christus,' buldert Canon. 'Nu zullen jullie dan ook door mij veroordeeld worden, en ik straf voor eeuwig.' Weer begint Suzette te gillen, en schreeuwt : 'De Ware Christus zal mij hier ook uit loskopen, door Zijn Eeuwig Bloed, door Zijn Eeuwig Evangelie.'

'Dat evangelie is er niet. Niemand heeft dat boek,' buldert Canon. 'Je zult hier voor eeuwig moeten sterven, en je ziel zal voor eeuwig als slaaf in mijn koninkrijk arbeiden. Jullie hebben je zelf door mij laten ketenen, en dat is eens en voor altijd. Aan de canon verandert niks, want die is eeuwig. Ik ben de Eeuwige.'

Maar dan schreeuwt Suzette : 'God heeft in Zijn Woord beloofd, dat dat boek zou gaan komen, in Openbaring.' Maar dan schreeuwt Canon, terwijl er lava uit zijn mond stroomt dat hem helemaal omhuld : 'Dat boek is verzegeld, en niemand kan die zegels verbreken.' De lava begint te stomen, en begint als een zee richting Suzette te stromen. Het is alsof haar oren knappen, en ze bijt op haar tong van de pijn. Wezens in kappen komen door poorten naast de troon binnen, en zetten zich naast Canon. 'Laat het oordeel beginnen,' krijst één van de wezens. Suzette zinkt weg in wanhoop. Weer worden er allerlei boeken geopend, en als de wezens het vonnis beginnen uit te spreken wordt Suzette hysterisch. Maar dan ineens gaat er een poort open aan de zijkant van de zaal. Een klein jongetje komt op Suzette aflopen. Het is een gehandicapt jongetje, Evert, haar broertje. Het jongetje begint gekke bekken te trekken om zijn door angst verlamde zus op te vrolijken. Wat moet hij nu hier, en is hij wel tegen Canon opgewassen. 'Grijpt dat joch,' krijst Canon. Direkt verschijnen er wachters van alle kanten met speren, en lopen op het ventje af. Het jongetje haalt een klein boekje uit zijn zak en gooit het naar zijn zus. Het boekje wordt groter en groter, en komt in de armen van Suzette terecht.

'Haha,' buldert Canon, 'je dacht altijd dat je uit je coma was verlost, maar dit bewijst wel weer dat je nooit meer wakker bent geworden. Je bent in mijn handen. Dankzij de kerk ben je van mij, en dankzij het feit dat het Eeuwig Evangelie verzegeld is.'

'Maar hier heb ik het Eeuwig Evangelie,' schreeuwt Suzette, en tilt het boek hoog op. Maar dan ontdekt ze dat er sloten op het boek zitten ... de zegels. 'De deuren zijn dicht, Suzette,' buldert Canon. 'Je kunt nergens heen.' En toen stond Canon op van zijn troon en liep regelrecht af op Suzette. 'De ringen, Suzette, je zult de ringen van de canon krijgen, om je te slaan en brandmerken tot eeuwige slaaf,' brult Canon. Een enorme stank komt van het skelet af, en hij begint nog feller te branden.

'Oh Heer, open Uw Woord,' bidt Suzette trillend. 'Verlos me van de Canon.'

Dan schrikt Suzette ineens wakker. Ze zit nog steeds in de dienst, en iedereen staart haar met grote ogen aan. Naast haar op een lege stoel ligt een klein boekje. 'Is dit voor mij ?' vraagt ze. De aanwezigen knikken. Snel grijpt ze naar het boekje, biedt ongemakkelijk haar excuses aan, en rent snel de zaal uit. Ze stapt in haar auto en rijdt direkt naar de plaats waar haar broertje woont. Daar aangekomen staat haar broertje al voor het raam, en is blij haar te zien. Binnengekomen rent hij op haar af, en ze omhelzen elkaar. Hij doet dat heel stevig, zoals altijd. Dan lijkt het altijd alsof een volwassene haar beetpakt. 'Ik heb vannacht over je gedroomd,' zei hij. 'Ik moest je uit een gevangenis redden.' Geemotioneerd legt ze haar hoofd tegen hem aan, en samen lopen ze verder

naar binnen.

Einde

De Wond en het Litteken

Theologische Roman

Een bezoeker van een pinkstergemeente krijgt nadat een profeet uit Amerika voor hem gebeden heeft openbaringen over een mogelijke rol van Egypte in Gods plannen voor de eindtijd. Het verhaal gaat over de strijd die deze man daarover heeft, de verwarring en de twijfel. Hij raakt verwilderd van de kerk, en hangt nu tussen wal en schip, tussen kerk en secte.

Hoofdstuk 1. Het principe

Hoofdstuk 2. De verwarring

Hoofdstuk 3. Het verbond

Hoofdstuk 4. De rode pijl

Hoofdstuk 5. Kinderen van Egypte

Hoofdstuk 1. Het Principe

Jan van Zaalen zit in een pinkstergemeente. Hij is al een tijdje belangstellend lid. Vroeger zat hij in een reformatorisch kerkgenootschap, maar daar is hij weggegaan, omdat hij zich er toch niet meer zo op zijn gemak voelde. In de pinkstergemeente voelt hij zich wat meer thuis. Hier heeft hij in ieder geval het gevoel dat hij meetelt, en dat God persoonlijke omgang met hem wil. Er gebeuren hier soms echt wonderen en

tekenen. Vandaag is het zondag, en ze hebben een gastspreker uitgenodigd uit Amerika, genaamd Peter Satelli, een bekende gebedsgenezer. Jan is erg benieuwd. Hij heeft al veel over deze man gehoord. Ook heeft hij enkele boeken over hem gelezen. Er schijnen grote wonderen en tekenen in zijn diensten te gebeuren. De man schijnt een bijzondere relatie met God te hebben. Jan zou dat ook wel graag willen. Hij heeft nog nooit een beeld of visioen gehad, en voelt altijd een vorm van jaloezie als anderen hiervan getuigen. Hoe profetie werkt is Jan al helemaal een raadsel.

Tijdens de dienst staat de man ineens op. 'Er is hier iemand ...' en dan is ineens iedereen stil. ...'die heel graag zou willen profeteren, maar niet weet hoe dat moet ... Wil deze persoon naar voren komen ?' Maar Jan durft niet naar voren te komen. Een paar anderen staan op, en lopen naar voren. De man begint voor hen te bidden, en legt hen de handen op. Een paar mensen vallen om. De voorganger had eens gezegd dat de kracht van God mensen soms slap in de benen laat worden. Jan vindt het wel interessant, maar vind het ook een beetje eng. Dan ineens stapt de man naar Jan toe, die een beetje achter in de zaal zit. 'De Heer wil dat ik ook voor jou bidt,' zegt de man. Jan voelt niks, maar is wel blij. De man stapt snel weer terug naar voren, en bidt verder voor de zaal. 'Er zijn mensen waarmee God een groot plan heeft,' zegt de man. Plotseling voelt Jan zich een beetje weg dromen. Hij kijkt uit het raam, en ziet een vogel lopen op het gras, dichtbij het mos. De dienst verloopt verder erg rustig. Er worden een paar mensen genezen, en een paar mensen van demonen bevrijd, en de man weet van enkelen bijzondere dingen te vertellen. Jan is moe. Hij had eigenlijk gehoopt dat de man wat persoonlijker en dieper met hem aan de gang zou gaan. Jan vond het allemaal erg wazig en oppervlakkig. En nog steeds had Jan geen stem van God gehoord, en nog steeds wist Jan niet hoe hij moest profeteren. Wat werd daar toch altijd wazig over gedaan. De man zou 's avonds nog een dienst houden in een dorpje vlakbij het dorpje waar Jan woonde. Jan besloot er naartoe te gaan, maar weer gebeurde er niets bijzonders naar Jan toe. Oh ja, anderen werden genezen, en anderen werden bevrijd, en over hen werden wonderbaarlijke dingen geprofeteerd, maar Jan ving bot. Na de dienst probeerde hij in de buurt te komen van de man, maar die was snel weer weg. Wat was er een drukte om die man heen. Jan rende naar buiten, en zag de man met iemand anders in de auto stappen. 'Mijnheer,' riep Jan, 'wacht even.' De man keek verbaasd op. 'Kan ik alstublieft een keer met u praten,' vroeg Jan, 'ik zou zo graag leren hoe te profeteren.'

'Maar natuurlijk,' zei de Amerikaan, en gaf Jan een kaartje met een telefoonnummer erop. Nadat Jan even later had gebeld was er een afspraak komen te staan waarvoor Jan naar de andere kant van het land moest reizen, omdat de man daar verdere diensten zou houden. De man had een kamer bij een voorgangers-echtpaar in huis, en op een avond kon Jan langskomen. Het was al donker buiten. Jan had er lange tijd voor in de trein gezeten. De man was erg blij hem te zien. 'Ga zitten,' zei hij. 'Zo, dus jij wil leren profeteren, hè. Nou, laten we de Heere vragen wat hij wil gaan doen.' De man schonk eerst even wat koffie in, en legde toen zijn hand op Jan's schouder, en begon te bidden. De man ging heel diep in gebed, en Jan vond het erg spannend. 'Jan,' zei de man, 'de Heer wil dat ik eerst ergens met jou doorheen ga bidden, want er zijn nogal veel blokkades ...' Even was het een tijdje stil, en toen sprak de man verder : 'De Heere wil heel graag tot jou spreken ... zoals je misschien wel weet zijn er veel profeten in Amerika, waartoe de Heere op een machtige manier spreekt, maar hier waar jij woont, daar hangt een bedekking, en eerst moeten wij daar doorheen bidden.' Even was Jan

opgelucht, want hij dacht eerst even dat de blokkades door hemzelf kwamen. De man zei dat Jan erg open stond voor God, en dat in de bijbel staat dat profeten hun gaves soms moeten overdragen. Wat zou er nu gebeuren ? Zou de man een gave in Jan gaan planten ? De man had het over voorgeslachtelijke linies, over de reformatie vanuit Europa, die afrekende met de bemiddelende functie van de ten hemel gegane heiligen. Deze zijn toen hoofdzakelijk naar Amerika gegaan. De man sprak over de zegen van de reformatie die door Luther kwam, maar ook over de vloek. De pinksterbeweging kwam opzetten vanuit Amerika en Engeland. Met name Wales en Los Angeles waren grote namen in dit kader. Het weelderige Katholieke heiligen-geloof dat plaats moest maken voor het genade-geloof in Jezus Christus kon op een andere manier weer ingang krijgen door de pinksterbeweging. Nu sprak God niet door overleden heiligen, maar door levende heiligen, in de vorm van gebedsgenezers, profeten, en andere soorten geestvervulden. Dit was voor de man ook een reden om te geloven dat de communicatie-techniek in Amerika veel verder was dan in Europa. Er moest volgens de man weer een balans komen tussen het Katholieke goede werken-geloof, en het Reformatorische genade-geloof, en die balans kwam door de pinksterbeweging. Jezus de Middelaar werkte door een andere laag van middelaars, namelijk zijn lichaam, zowel boven als beneden. Daar waar het reformatorische geloof een laag wegkapte, en dat gebeurde in Duitsland, daar riep het ook direkt een ander soort racisme op, namelijk het Nazisme. En die lagen moest die man dus allemaal wegbidden, zodat Jan op de lagen van Christus en Zijn lichaam ge-ent kon worden. De man begon allerlei soorten reformatorische en lutherse geesten te bestraffen, en zaagde de voorgeslachtelijke bindingen die Jan tegenhielden door. Wat was dat een karwei, zeg.

Daarna was het weer even stil. Jan voelde niks, maar was wel onder de indruk van het verhaal. Hij voelde zich toch wel een beetje anders, en het was alsof de man hem op sleeptouw had genomen. 'Okay, Jan,' zei de man. 'Nu ga ik je leren profeteren, en dat is direkt een opstartertje. Leg je hand op je hart, en daarna op je buik, en luister dan. De gedachten die je krijgt moet je uitspreken, hoe vreemd die ook zijn. Dit is nog niet het echte profeteren, maar eerst wil ik je leren hoe te toetsen en hoe in een zuivere stroom van de Geest te komen.' Jan begon te luisteren. 'Drama, is de gedachte die ik krijg,' zegt Jan, 'en dan erbij dat God het een drama vindt dat de Reformatie en het Nazisme de woorden van God tegenhouden.' De Amerikaan knikt. 'En daarom moet jij hierover gaan vertellen, en de mensen vrijzetten.'

'Luister nu verder,' zegt de Amerikaan. Jan luistert aandachtig. Jan zegt dat hij de gedachte krijgt dat de man over hem moet profeteren. Opeens glijd er een warmte over Jan heen. De man zegt dat dat de gave is. Die warmte zal hem tonen of iets waar is of niet. Het is het vuur van God. Dan begint de man over Jan te profeteren. De man krijgt ook een beeld dat de geest van Duitsland Jan niet wil laten gaan. 'Ik denk dat we een probleem hebben, Jan,' zegt de man, 'ik krijg een beeld van nazi's die lopen te commanderen. Ze willen je niet laten gaan. Maar in de Naam van Christus, en door Zijn bloed zullen ze los moeten laten. Laten we nog even verder bidden voor aanwijzingen. God kan jou nu ook beelden en visioenen geven.'

Beiden zijn ze stil. Jan voelt een diepe liefde voor de man, omdat hij tijd voor hem heeft genomen hier over te vertellen, en Jan te leren profeteren. Het lijkt wel alsof er een van heerlijkheid brandend oog in Jan zit, een oog dat hem van alles laat zien, hem raadgeeft.

Jan begint de warmte door zijn hele lichaam te voelen. Dit is niet de doop in de Heilige Geest, want die had Jan al gehad. Dit is de verlichting in de Heilige Geest. Plotseling begint de Amerikaan vurig in tongen te bidden. Het is een vreemde taal, zo vreemd, dat Jan hem nog niet eerder heeft gehoord. Hij heeft wel vaker mensen in tongen horen bidden. Soms probeerde hij het zelf ook, maar dat was iets heel anders. 'Spreek me na,' zei de Amerikaan. 'Het zijn de tongen van verlichting,' zei de Amerikaan. Het vuur wordt heter en heter in Jan, en op een gegeven moment gaat het vanzelf. Jan voelt diepe innerlijke genezing, en raakt ook diep ontroert. Tranen rollen uit zijn ogen. De man omhelsd hem. Weer begint de man de reformatorische en nazistische geesten aan te spreken, maar nog steeds voelt de man veel blokkade. Plotseling krijgt de man een beeld

In het beeld begint de boze geest tot de man te spreken. De geest is boos dat de man de waarheden aan Jan heeft overgedragen, maar zegt dat hij niet kan vertrekken, omdat de profeet een laag over het hoofd heeft gezien. De geest wordt door die laag tegengehouden. De man zegt : 'Grote geesten zijn aangesteld om dit werk van God tegen te houden. Ik zal in territoriale oorlogsvoering moeten gaan om dit juk te verbreken.' Jan krijgt een visioen waarin allerlei tijgers om hem heenlopen. De man verbreekt de vloek van de canon, waar helaas ook de pinksterbeweging nog zo vaak aan vasthoudt. Ook verbreekt de man de communicatieve canon, waar de pinksterbeweging Gods stem vastmaakt aan bepaalde personen, regels, en wetjes, en even later moet de man van de Heilige Geest de culturele canon verbreken, waar de pinksterbeweging andere culturen geheel als heidens en goddeloos afsluit. Elke cultuur heeft wel bepaalde elementen van Gods Geest, en die moeten opgespeurd worden. Culturen moeten gezifd worden, en niet in de ban gedaan, algeheel en per definitie. De Bijbel zegt dat alle volkeren hun heerlijkheden tot God zullen brengen. De man vertelt dat het algehele stelsel van canons, om de gemeente gebonden te houden, een soort demonische boom is, een soort zeekattenboom met scherpe dorens, genaamd Ingridtel of Ingrid. Daar komen ook die tijgerdemonen vandaan. De man bestraft de boom, en gebiedt de boom om uit Jan te komen.

Dan krijgt de man weer een beeld, waarin geesten tot hem schreeuwen : 'Wie ben jij dan nou, man, jij rare van de pinkstergemeente. Weet jij waaruit de pinkstergemeente voorkomt dan ? Nou ? Jij rare ...' En dan gaan de geesten verder : 'Waar is het hedendaagse Amerika op gebouwd ? Wat hebben de Engelsen en andere Europeanen gedaan ? Hoe zou dat toch komen dat enkele grondleggers van de Pinksterbeweging de Klu Klux Clan ondersteunden ? Niet zo vreemd, hè, het huidige Amerika is gebouwd op het bloed van de Indianen, de oerbezitters van Amerika ... rare, rare man ... Kom jij eens even kijken ?'

'Jan, Jan,' zegt de Amerikaan, 'ik word door geesten flink aangesproken, heb het flink met ze aan de stok. Blijf meebidden, er is iets aan de hand.' En beiden gaan ze verder in gebed. Dan zeggen de geesten de Amerikaan na, en gaan verder met hun betoog : 'Bloed van de indianen .... blllloed ..... bbbbbbb....llll.....oed ...... bbbbb....lllll..... oed .... Stelletje kolonisten en slavendrijvers .... maak het eerst maar eens goed met de wilden en de armen ..... jullie welvaarts .... protsers .... Vandaar dat Gods Geest niet doorbreekt en wij de touwtjes nog in de handen hebben .... het is ons werk .... Dit moeten wij van de Heilige Geest belijden .... rare man ...' En toen werd er even flink gevloekt door die geesten en toen gingen ze weer verder met hun betoog : 'Jullie denken dat slavernij en

kolonisme achter de rug is, nu de volkerenmoorden achter de rug zijn .... maar het bloed schreit nog steeds ten hemel, jullie gebeden tegenhoudende .... Jullie rijkdom is een blokkade voor de armen en wilden die jullie negeren .... daarom is ook blokkade jullie deel .... dat zijn wij .... jullie hebben ons zelf opgeroepen ....'

'En dan nog eens wat .... Geestelijk koloniseren jullie Amerikanen jullie voorouders, de Europeanen .... jullie zijn naar Amerika gegaan om geestelijk en materieel rijk te worden, en de Europeanen moeten in geestelijke armoe leven .... Ha ha, jullie spreken met God, en de anderen kunnen buiten staan .... Jullie hebben de Heilige Geest in jullie tempel opgesloten .... Europa moet bedelen om Amerikaanse profeten en gebedsgenezers .... Jullie hebben de Heilige Geest in de fles opgesloten .... Amerika is niet alleen gebouwd op het bloed van de indianen, maar ook op het bloed van de Europeanen .... jullie Amerikaanse profeten zijn zelf die blokkade ... Dit gaat over de zegen en de vloek van de Pinksterbeweging .... Jullie zijn christelijke kolonisten ...'

De man begon weer de geesten te bestraffen, maar hij wist dat er inderdaad een blokkade was. Zou het inderdaad zo wezen dat de Pinkstergemeente er beter aan deed Franciscaans te zijn, om de principes van armoede te doorleven, als een middel van medeleven en mededelen ? Was het niet belangrijker om uit te zien naar een uitstorting van Gods Bloed, meer nog als een uitstorting van Gods Geest ? Dan zou het pas echt Pasen zijn. Zou een Paasgemeente niet toepasselijker zijn ? Allerlei dingen spookten door het hoofd van de Amerikaan. Jan bad nog steeds mee. De Amerikaan koos ervoor om niet teveel aan Jan te vertellen, maar hij moest toch wat doen aan die blokkade. Dit ging niet om de Reformatorische beweging of het Nazisme ... Nee, dit ging over de Pinkstergemeente zelf ...

De man besloot gewoon vanuit een uit het hoofd geleerde lijst wat geesten te bestraffen ... misschien dat dat zou helpen. Maar de man kon in zijn gedachten er niet echt bij zijn. Hij moest steeds denken aan de beelden waarin geesten hem aanspraken. Even leek het alsof zijn theologie omver werd geworpen. Hij dacht na over Geest en Bloed. De Geest bracht wedergeboorte, en daarna de Doop in de Geest. Maar het Bloed ? Het Bloed bracht reiniging, en misschien ook wel wedergeboorte .... en verder ? Waren ze wel gedoopt in het Bloed, als een vervulling .... Hadden ze daar als gemeente wel genoeg aandacht aan besteed ? Allerlei dingen spookten er door het hoofd van de man .... Ondertussen besloot de man alles uit de kast te halen wat betreft het klassieke exorcisme. Daarna ging hij over in territoriaal exorcisme, en zorgde dat hij geen van de tradities oversloeg. Hij moest tijd rekken. Het mocht niet te lang stil blijven. Jan moest de indruk krijgen dat de man niet met de mond vol tanden stond. De man had immers de gave van profetie op zo'n machtige manier. De man hikte ergens tegenaan. Jan had verder niets in de gaten, en bad door. Hij vond het geweldig hoe de man voor hem in de bediening stond, en Jan had echt het idee, dat het werkte.

'Doop hem in Bloed,' zei de Heilige Geest tegen de man ... 'Maar Heer,' sprak de man in zichzelf, 'hoort dat bij de traditie ?'

'Kan me niet schelen,' zei de Heer, 'Je doet het nu.' En toen ging de man staan, legde voorzichtig zijn hand op het hoofd van Jan en sprak : 'Jan, ik ga je nu in de Naam van Jezus Christus, dopen in Zijn Bloed, wat ook voor jou heeft gevloeid. Opdat je zult leven : Weest gedoopt in Bloed en Vuur.' Jan kreeg hoge tuutjes in zijn oren, die steeds

hoger werden. Wat gebeurde er nu ? Jan wist niet wat hem overkwam. Nou ja, het zou wel goed wezen. De man wist het niet meer, maar liet niks merken. 'Oh ja,' zei de Heilige Geest, 'zeg er ook even bij dat het Bloed is genaamd Thoth.'

'Maar Heer,' protesteerde de man, 'dat is Egyptische mythologie.'

'Niets mee te maken,' brulde de Heer, 'door het vlees mag je dat niet aanroeren, maar wel door de Geest, als je weet hoe je die delen moet gebruiken. Begrijp je nu nog de paradox van de Bijbel niet ?' De man boog zijn hoofd, en deed wat hem gezegd werd. Ook Jan keek op, en begon vragen te stellen. 'Was Thoth niet de god van het archief, een Egyptische god toch ? Wat heeft dat met christendom te maken ?'

'Okay, en wat moet ik nu doen, Heer, want Jan begint al in paniek te raken ... Mijn reputatie staat op het spel ...' zegt de man in zichzelf ...

'Gaat het je dan om reputatie ? Elke god is een verwilderd deel van Mijn Geest, een verkeerde interpretatie ... Ik openbaar door Mijn Geest de Ware interpretatie ... Mag Ik ?' Maar in hemzelf begon de profeet al de oorlog te verklaren aan de stem. 'Oh, wat nu ... ik ben afgeweken, en wordt door demonen geleid ... En hoe moet het nu met Jan ?'

'Excuses, Jan,' zegt de man, 'ik vraag me af waarom ik dat zei, maar misschien zijn er meerdere Thothen. Ik moest het van de Heilige Geest zo zeggen.' Jan nam er genoegen mee. De man hield zich strak en stelde zich in één lijn op naar Jan. Na een tijdje, toen Jan weg was, ging de man door met zijn innerlijke strijd. Wat was er die avond allemaal gebeurd ? Had iets hem overgenomen ? Jan zou volgende week terugkomen voor een vervolg.

Jan zelf was erg tevreden over de avond, en was enthousiast over zijn nieuwe gave. Hij vertelde het hele verhaal in zijn gemeente, en iedereen scheen enthousiast te zijn. De Amerikaan was zeer gerespecteerd, en niemand twijfelde aan zijn autoriteit. Jan vertelde nog wel over de laatste onbekende blokkade, en dat hij daarvoor nog een keer bij de profeet moest terugkomen. Ook vertelde hij dat de Amerikaan het Bloed van Christus over hem aanriep, en het Thoth noemde. Iemand in de zaal zei dat Thot de god van het schrijven was in Egypte, vaak voorgesteld als een baviaan of een ibis. Iemand anders zei dat elk dier naar Gods aard was geschapen, en dat niet elk dier zo in de Bijbel wordt beschreven, maar dat dat niet wilde zeggen dat zo'n dier dan niet naar God heenwees. Genesis zei dat alle dieren naar Gods aard geschapen waren. Ze droegen een betekenis.

In ieder geval had Jan nu veel visioenen. Dat was waar het Jan om ging. Tijdens de dienst erna had de voorganger het over het Bloed van Christus, dat net als het andere bloed een vervoersmiddel is. Het Bloed van Christus draagt het Woord, en verdeelt het Woord. Daarom is dit Bloed zo belangrijk. Daar waar dit bloed ontbreekt kan geestelijk kolonisme ontstaan.

Toen Jan weer naar de profeet toeging kreeg hij daar wel een hele bizarre voorstelling. Nu begon Jan in te zien dat de profeet echt het spoor aan het verliezen was. De man las uit het Egyptische Dodenboek voor, en zei tegen Jan dat hij maar beter hier in kon lezen dan in de Bijbel. Jan snapte niet wat er gebeurd was, maar na een lang gesprek met de man begon het Jan duidelijk te worden : De man was van zijn geloof afgevallen. Hij zou weer terugkeren naar zijn land, Amerika, en zou de kerk verlaten. Hij had de leugen van

de Pinksterbeweging ingezien, en zou eerst alles eens grondig onderzoeken voordat hij nog één stap in de pinkstergemeente zou zetten. 'Maar je had het over de zegen en de vloek van de pinksterbeweging de vorige keer,' probeerde Jan. Maar de man hield voet bij stuk. Hij had de diensten in dit land erop zitten, zijn taak zat erop, en hij zou het Egyptische geloofsgoed onderzoeken en vergelijken met dat wat hij in de kerk geleerd had. Jan wist niet hoe hij het had. Teleurgesteld ging Jan terug naar huis. In de gemeente vroeg iedereen hoe het was geweest, maar Jan deed er erg vaag over. Sommigen merkten dat er iets mis was, en namen Jan na de dienst even apart. Jan barste in snikken uit, en vertelde het verhaal. 'Ach, laat die man toch. Het christelijk geloof of liever gezegd wat ze er van gemaakt hebben is ook niet om over naar huis te schrijven. Het is een heel begrijpbare stap, vooral als je met zo'n grote verantwoordelijkheid rondloopt als Peter Satelli. Het is bijna logisch dat hij zich terugtrekt voor een tijdje.' Ja, en later begon Jan ook in te zien dat dat zo was, en hij snapte ook niet waar hij zich eigenlijk om druk maakte. Was het christelijk geloof wel wat het wezen moest ?

Die nacht had Jan een droom over een wilde kat. Ze hing aan een rots boven een enorme wildernis. Ze had zich wel stevig vastgehaakt aan de rots, zodat ze niet kon vallen, en de rotsen waren ook goed begroeit met stronken en takken. 'Ik ben Bastet,' zei de wilde kat, 'het vlees van Christus.' Jan wist niet wat hij hoorde. 'Ik ga het christelijk geloof vernietigen,' zei de wildharige kat. 'Het komt voort uit verkeerde bronnen. Ik haal de goede delen eruit en transformeer deze, en de rest zal vergaan. Sebek zal hiertoe de nieuwe ark zijn, het gebeente van Christus.'

'Wie is Sebek ?' vroeg Jan. Maar Bastet zei niets dan shhh... en vertrok toen. Zou de Amerikaanse profeet ook door dit soort dromen of visioenen de kerk zijn uitgejaagd ? Wel indrukwekkend allemaal. Of deze kat is de duivel zelf, of ze is de Ware God. Toen hoorde Jan geblaf. Een hond kwam aanrennen in een droom, maar kwam niet dichterbij. Plotseling hoorde Jan gegil, en stemmen riepen : 'Sekhmet, Sekhmet ... oe, ik kan het niet stoppen. Het is te sterk ...' Waren dit demonische invasies, of waren het invasies van Gods Geesten ? De lucht rook naar brand ... Plotseling stond er een leeuw voor Jan in zijn droom, met een lange nek, en ook een tijger met een lange nek kwam er rustig aanwandelen. 'Zeg, dit hebben wij lang gevreesd,' zeiden de leeuw en de tijger. 'Wij waren op aarde geplaatst om dit tegen te houden, maar we kunnen het niet meer.' Plotseling begonnen de leeuw en de tijger te branden. Hard begonnen ze te schreeuwen. Jan kreeg de rillingen. In die droom zag Jan ook de Amerikaanse profeet die brandde, en zelfs heel Amerika brandde, terwijl er een sfinxachtige gestalte opsteeg. Weer werd er geroepen : 'Sekhmet, Sekhmet,' en toen werd het heel langzaam en zacht gefluisterd : 'Sekhmet, Sekhmet.' Maar de dromen begonnen langzaam weg te vagen, en Jan schrok wakker. Een vreemd vuur begon over Jan te komen. Het voelde niet vervelend aan. Het was een zeer krachtig vuur. Kon Jan het hedendaagse christendom nog wel vertrouwen, of moest het herleid worden tot haar wortels ?

Een paar dagen later bladerde Jan in de bibliotheek door het Egyptische Dodenboek. Hier kwam hij die namen weer tegen. Plotseling werd er van achteren een hand op zijn schouder gelegd. Het was een oude vriend van Jan. Ze hadden samen op school gezeten bij elkaar in de klas. 'Hey, Remco,' zei Jan.

'Wat ben je nu aan het lezen ?' zei Remco. 'Wel interessant. Ik heb een tijd geschiedenis

gestudeerd, en moest dit boek ook lezen. Het is een geloof dat heel veel lijkt op het christendom, maar op sommige punten veel dieper gaat. Kom je mee naar mijn huis ? Dan kunnen we wat bijpraten.' Jan ging met Remco mee. Remco had het Egyptische Dodenboek ook thuisliggen, en Jan mocht het wel van hem lenen. Ze hadden veel te bespreken. Ze waren goede vrienden vroeger, maar elkaar helaas uit het oog verloren door alle druktes.

Remco had ook een groot beeld van Sekhmet, de leeuwinnevrouw, in de gang naast zijn slaapkamer staan. Remco vertelde veel over Sekhmet. Remco was geen christen. Hij vond christenen maar arrogant en stijfkoppig. Hij vond hen ook racistisch als een soort geestelijke Klu Klux Klan. Jan kon dat wel begrijpen. Hij was er niet trots op dat hij een christen was. Remco vertelde Jan dat hij ingewijd was in een Sekhmet-tempel. Jan voelde zijn handen. Ze voelden heel warm aan.

Hoofdstuk 2. De Verwarring

Jan kon wel begrijpen waarom sommige mensen die nare ervaringen met het christendom hadden satanist werden. Wellicht was Satan de naam of een samenvoeging van de namen die ze vroeger voor het christendom op sommige plaatsen aanbaden als oppergod. Dat gebeurde vaak als een nieuwe generatie met tradities van de oudere generaties wilde afrekenen. Dan werden de oude goden als slecht bestempeld, als boze geesten. Dat gebeurde ook bij de Egyptenaren. Heel vroeger werd Seth door hun voorouders als God aanbeden, maar later werd hij de god van het kwaad. In de Ramses-dynastie werd hij weer als een god aanbeden. Het kwaad is een heel betrekkelijk iets. Zo zou Satan een samenvoeging zijn van de Egyptische dodengod Anubis, en Satis, de watergietende vrouw van de scheppende god Khnum. Anderen zeggen dat het een samenvoeging is van Seth en Anubis. Jan las er interessante boeken over, en de geschiedenis maakte korte metten met zijn oppervlakkige geloof, vooral met zijn geloof in de kerk.

Seth zou de broer zijn van Osiris, en wilde Ra opvolgen, en omdat hij vond dat hij de enige was die Ra goed zou kunnen beschermen tegen de aanvallen van de slang Apep en andere demonische machten. Seth zou de goedkeuring dragen van vele goden, maar Isis, zowel zuster van Seth als Osiris zou de meerderheid van de goden hebben overgehaald om dit niet te doen. Seth ruimde Osiris uit de weg, een daad die hem maakte tot de god van het kwaad. Nu zou Geb Ra opvolgen, maar die vestigde zich in de grond omdat hij teveel door Apep werd lastiggevallen. Uiteindelijk volgde Horus, de zoon van Osiris, Ra op. In een ander boek las Jan dat het Shu was, de vader van Geb, die Ra zou opvolgen, maar zich in de hemel vestigde omdat hij teveel door Apep en zijn volgelingen werd lastiggevallen. Horus rekende af met Seth, de moordenaar van zijn vader, zoals Christus met satan afrekende. Seth zou nu voor altijd Osiris, de zee, moeten dragen, en in een andere variant : Osiris, de zon, of Osiris, de woestijn. In weer een andere variant neemt Neith het voor Seth op, en schenkt hem naast Nephtys zijn vrouw, twee andere vrouwen : Anat, en Astarte. In Joodse en Mid-oostelijke legende en mythologie komen Anat en Astarte voor als de vrouwen van Jahweh, die oorspronkelijk waarschijnlijk een berggod was naast de oude goden zoals El, Anu, en Enlil. Sommigen gaan er vanuit dat Yahweh Seth is, die wraak neemt op zijn onderdrukkers. Weer anderen zeggen dat Seth strijd voert tegen Yahweh en zijn volk, in de gedaante van de farao Ramses. Hebben de goden

zoveel gezichten ?

En Remco dan ? Die had zich laten inwijden in de tempel van Sekhmet ... Wat zou je daar mee opschieten ? Hoe ging dat dan ... en wie voerden dat uit ?

Op een dag was Remco bij Jan thuis, en vertelde er iets meer over. Ze lazen daar voor uit een boek, de Sorsol, dat was de Heilige Leer van Sekhmet ... Remco was daarvoor speciaal naar Egypte gegaan ... Remco zou daar speciale gaven hebben ontvangen ...

Door de verhalen van Remco raakte Jan steeds dieper geinteresseerd. Remco besloot Jan eens mee te nemen op zijn jaarlijkse reis naar die Sekhmet-tempel. Die tempel was ondergronds. Er stonden groengouden beelden langs de begintunnel van de tempel. Aan de muur hingen wat fakkels. Een dikke priester kwam op hen aflopen. 'Ha, Remco,' zei de priester, 'welkom, welkom.'De priester liep voor hen uit naar binnen in een ondergronds zaaltje. De zaal was prachtig verlicht. Achter een doorzichtig gordijn lag een Sekhmetbeeld op een sarcofaag. De priester haalde uit de sarcofaag een dik boek. Dit was de Sorsol, het Heilige Boek van Sekhmet. Maar hoe moest Jan dit nu zien in relatie tot het christendom ? Jan en Remco gingen op een van de bankjes aan de zijkant van de zaal zitten, en de priester begon voor te lezen uit de Sorsol. Het ging over het lijden van Christus. En al gauw kwam Jan erachter dat Sekhmet alles met Christus te maken had. De priester las over het pad van de armoede, het aanvaarden van het lijden, en ook over het streven naar het dubbele kruis, het grootste kruis, en het eeuwige kruis. Dit was de leer van de vruchtbaarheid door het kruis. Ook in het zaaltje stonden wat groengouden beelden aan de zijkanten. het waren de sorsolpala's, de beschermers van de leer van Sekhmet. Het was de leer van de nieuwe schepping. Sekhmet was een deel van Christus, een diep verborgen deel, waarover in Openbaring, de apocalypse, wordt gesproken. Sekhmet was allereerst de toorn van Christus, Zijn woeste deel. Sekhmet was ook zijn littekenen, en Zijn litteken diep binnenin. Sekhmet was de kracht van Pasen, het zaad van binnen, waarvanuit Thoth, het Bloed, stroomde. Het was dat deel van Christus dat nog dieper reikte dan Zijn geest. Jan luisterde aandachtig met open oren. Deze leer over Christus ging zo diep. 'Daar waar de kerk gestopt is,' sprak de priester. Remco knikte. Een heleboel mensen willen niets van de kerk weten, omdat het niet diep genoeg gaat. De vloek van de canon.

Ook las de priester over een deel in de mens, dieper dan de geest en de ziel. Dit deel was de sekhmet. Hiermee kon de mens terug naar de bron, terug naar de oer-instincten om terug te gaan naar huis. Het bracht de mens in aanraking met een nieuwe materie, een heilige materie. De priester zei dat door het horen van het Woord van Sekhmet ze je aan kon raken, en zelfs vervullen. Verder deed de priester er nogal geheimzinnig over. Jan vroeg aan de priester of ook hij ingewijd kon worden in de mysterieen van Sekhmet. 'Je moet er klaar voor wezen,' zei de priester. Het gaat om een diepere bekering dan de christelijke bekering. Het is voor eens en altijd, en het gaat over de gebondenheid in Christus, zoals de gebondenheid in de Heilige Geest. De Sorsol helpt je daarbij. Remco knikte. Ook Jan knikte, en zei : 'Maar dit is alles wat ik wil. Ik wil juist dieper met Christus, en als Sekhmet die geheime deur daartoe is, dan wil ik daar graag door naar binnen gaan.' De priester liep op Jan af, en legde hem de handen op. 'Ontvang dan nu Sekhmet, en we willen aan haar vragen om jouw innerlijke sekhmet zowel te reinigen als te openen.' De handen van de priester brandden, en Jan voelde zich erg rustig worden. Toen sprak de priester wat woorden van de Sorsol over Jan uit. Jan werd er erg door

bemoedigd. Remco was erg blij, en omhelsde Jan, en gaf hem zelfs een kus, een heilige kus. In de Sorsol stonden ook gebeden tot Sekhmet, ook gebeden die vroegen om een uitstorting van haar, en de priester begon ze hardop voor te lezen. Jan werd rustiger en rustiger. Had hij hier altijd al op gewacht ?

Jan begon op de grond te rollen, en met gevouwen handen smeekte hij tot Sekhmet en begon haar aan te roepen. 'Meer Heer, meer Heer,' riep Jan. Jan voelde heel diep van binnen een vuur in hem branden. Zou zijn sekhmet nu echt geopend worden ? Het was alsof er een hele gevoelige plek diep van binnen werd aangeraakt. Jan voelde zich heel emotioneel worden. 'Bloed van Sekhmet, reinig mij,' riep Jan. 'Gij bent de staf en het litteken van Christus.' Jan had nog nooit zulk vuur gevoeld. En het maakte hem van binnenuit schoon. Was dit het vuur van de legendarische gebedsgenezer Smith Wigglesworth ? Jan stond in brand. Jan herinnerde zich wat foto's van Smith Wigglesworth die er uitzag als een leeuw in mensengedaante. Ja, Christus was de leeuw, de leeuw van Juda, en zoals de Bijbel zegt : Uit Egypte geroepen, waar hij een schuilplaats had, een vluchtplaats, tegen de moordlusten van koning Herodus. De priester begon in tongen te bidden, en ook Jan en Remco. Er was heel veel te bidden waar ze niet van afwisten. Sekhmet bad door hen in geheimenissen. Het leek wel alsof Jan een nieuw harnas kreeg. De priester sprak een woord van Sekhmet uit over Jan : 'Ik heb je geroepen. Maak je klaar voor de grote uitstorting van Mijn Kracht. Ik ga je uitzenden, en jou machtig gebruiken. Je zult de hedendaagse blokkades die de kerk heeft opgelegd verbrijzelen door Mijn Kracht. Wonderen en tekenen leg ik in jouw hand. Zie, een Nieuwe Schepping maak ik.'

'Oh, ik zie rook en vuur,' sprak de priester, 'God heeft verbazing voor jou. Grote wonderen en tekenen zie ik door jou geschieden. God heeft verbazing voor jou.' De priester zei dat God nieuwe bronnen van Zijn Bloed, diepe, verborgen bronnen, zou openen, en deze zijn opgeborgen in de sekhmet, in haar dieptes.

Die nacht had Jan een droom. New York werd het land tussen Australie en de rest van de wereld, en er werd een rode pijl in Australie geschoten. Het was de pijl der roofdieren, en die kwam uit het sekhmet-deel. God zei dat de roofdieren het sekhmet-deel wijd open hadden, nog wijder dan de mensen, en daarmee bakenden ze hun territorium af. Jan schrok wakker. Wat een vreemde droom. Jan begon na te denken over New York. Wat was dat ineens een uitgestrekt land, zeg. Stond er niet in sommige geschiedenisboeken dat eeuwen geleden Nederland Suriname had gekregen in ruil voor Nieuw Amsterdam, of Nieuw Nederland, dat toen New York ging heten, als zijnde in handen van de Engelsen ? De Zeeuwen hadden toch Suriname op het oog ? Allerlei gedachten vlogen door Jan heen. Hij probeerde de droom te begrijpen. Suriname was een plaats waar vele natuurvolken zich vestigden, als een soort centrum. Wat wilde die droom toch zeggen ? Australie was een Engelse kolonie, en zelfs deels een strafkolonie, na de ontdekking door ene mijnheer Cook. Dat wist Jan nog wel van de geschiedenislessen. Hè, wat moest hij toch met al die kolonisten. Werd Australie niet vroeger als ban-eiland gebruikt ? Deels stond het christendom misschien wel in z'n recht door de wegen tot al die goden te versperren, want wat konden die goden soms gevaarlijk zijn, net als de doden. Het waren verwilderde krachten vol oer-instincten, vol moordzucht en andere dingen. De kerk heeft toen het zogenaamde Rode Gordijn opgetrokken, maar hen die de moed en de volwassenheid hebben bereikt, die Gods

Paradox hebben gezien, krijgen toegang in en door dit gordijn. Zij kijken achter de schermen, en zien de poppenkast. Is het niet weer allemaal als het verhaal van de tovenaar van Oz ?

Sekhmet brult in zijn gedachtes, als een wilde leeuw. Kan iemand dit nog stoppen ? Geen Naam van jezus Christus is hier tegenop gewassen, geen reiniging door Bloed, geen ... niks ..., omdat dit het verborgen deel van Christus is, het door de kerk verbannen deel, dat zijn heil vond in Egypte ... dat kwam uit ... Australie ... Wat een wildernissen zijn hier. Een wilde leeuwinnevrouw in de wildernissen van het verleden. Jan krijgt de rillingen. Het lijkt wel alsof hij in worsteling is met deze leeuw. Is dit de leeuw van Openbaring ? Is dit de nieuwe naam die aan overwinnaars geschonken wordt ? Jan kan het nog steeds niet geloven ...

Op een dag krijgt Jan een brief van Peter Satelli. In die brief krijgt Jan te horen dat het volgens Peter Satelli allemaal waar is. Maar wat waar is staat er niet in. Was Peter Satelli gek geworden ? Het was de wazigste brief die Jan ooit had gehad. Jan besluit alles maar even laten te rusten. Hij besloot om Peter Satelli niet terug te schrijven.

Hoofdstuk 3. Het verbond

De dromen over Sekhmet volgden elkaar snel op, maar ook Jan begon zich erg vreemd te voelen. Zelfs wazig. Hij kon het normale leven niet meer volgen. Mensen dachten dat hij gek aan het worden was. Jan voelde zich meer en meer als een roofdier worden. Hij kreeg een dierlijke blik in zijn ogen, en had veel last van verwilderde gevoelens en allerlei soorten emotionele uitbarstingen. Hij begon erg paranoide te worden, zag overal demonen, en wilde soms zelfs een eind aan zijn leven maken. Remco vertelde hem dat deze dingen heel normaal waren in het inwijdingsproces van Sekhmet. Zou de Amerikaanse profeet ook door Sekhmet hierin getrokken worden ? Jan wist het niet, en had niet de moed om te schrijven. Misschien zou de profeet hem wel meesleuren in één of ander sectarisch iets. Wel schreef Jan al zijn dromen op, en besloot in het heetst van de strijd met Remco terug te gaan naar die ondergronds tempel van Sekhmet. Jan was in paniek. Was hij echt gek aan het worden. De priester glimlachte, en bevestigde wat Remco al had uitgelegd. 'Het is tijd dat je sterk gaat worden in de Sorsol, het Woord van Sekhmet,' zei de priester. Remco knikte. Het werkte eigenlijk gewoon heel christelijk : Sterk worden in het Woord, memoriseren en het gebruiken als een soort wapenrusting. De verzen van de Sorsol waren volgens de priester het harnas voor de volgelingen en discipelen van Sekhmet. Jan wist er eigenlijk te weinig vanaf. Ze zouden naar een andere tempel van Sekhmet gaan, dieper in Egypte. Er was een geheime deur in de ondergrondse tempel, en samen met de priester gingen ze erdoorheen. Het werd een lange tocht door een tunnel onder de grond. Ditmaal zouden ze naar een tempel gaan in een verborgen ondergrondse piramide. Die piramide lag heel diep onder de grond. Maar toen ze er aankwamen was het meer een ruine. Jan had last van hyperventilatie. Zouden ze hem hier kunnen helpen ? Maar er was niemand, en de priester begon wat vreemde gebeden op te prevelen. Jan liet steeds meer en meer de moed zakken. Toen begon Remco te vertellen waar hij allemaal doorheen moest in de tijd dat hij ingewijd werd. Dat was ook allemaal niet misselijk, en Jan begon een sprankje hoop te krijgen. Remco was een tijd zwaar depressief geweest. Jan kon zich dat moeilijk voorstellen, omdat in de tijd dat ze klasgenoten waren, en ook daarna, Remco de vrolijkheid zelve

was. Remco was altijd zo enthousiast over veel dingen.

Maar naarmate de tijd verstreek ging het slechter en slechter met Jan. Hij kreeg ademhalingsproblemen, maar wilde absoluut niet naar de dokter, omdat hij wist dat het om een geestelijke strijd ging. Waar was Christus nu ? Als Christus zo sterk was, waarom werd Jan dan niet van Sekhmet verlost ? Maar zoals men al zei : Wat als Sekhmet een deel van Christus is .... en wat als Christus meerdere delen heeft die in de kerkgeschiedenis verloren zijn gegaan, en in de geschiedenis van het hele christendom. Oh ja, het christendom heeft veel goeds gebracht, maar minstens zoveel ellende .... de zegen en de vloek van het christendom .... Hij kon zich goed voorstellen waarom Sekhmet het huidige christendom wilde vernietigen. Ook Jan voelde die vernietigingsdrang, en kon het met geen mogelijkheid stoppen. Inmiddels waren enkele mede-gemeente-leden van Jan goed op de hoogte van zijn situatie, en berispten hem om zijn afvalligheid. 'Gij zult geen andere goden volgen ...'

Jan kon er niet zoveel mee. Hij begon steeds meer te geloven dat Christus meerdere delen had, over de gehele aardbodem verspreid, afgehakt door een koppig volk ... Zo koppig dat ze het volk van Christus geografisch en biologisch bepaalden. En dit terwijl Abraham een Babylonier was .... Yahweh was in de religies aldaar een berggod, naast goden zoals El, Anu, Enlil en Enki. Ook het paradijs lag volgens sommige geleerden in Babylon. Weer anderen zeiden dat het in Egypte lag. Volgens een legende zou het paradijs na de zondeval door de Rode Zee zijn opgeslokt. Elohim was een meervoudig woord dat goden betekende. De oorspronkelijke Bijbel in de grondtekst was minder monotheistisch dan de kerk liet doorschemeren. Laat 'Ons' mensen maken ... Allerlei gedachten spookten door Jans hoofd. De geschiedenis zou per definitie korte metten maken met het huidige christelijke geloof. De geschiedenis zou daar de satanskerk niet voor nodig hebben, maar Jan begon wel steeds meer in te zien dat niet elke satanskerk satanisch was. Sommige satanisten hadden goede redenen, en hadden gewoon geschiedenis gestudeerd. Dit soort niet-satanische satanisten zouden de Ware Christus aanbidden. Jan ging de kerk steeds meer zien als satanisch christelijk, de duivel die zich middels dit instituut als god neerzette, een gekapt christusbeeld.

Van de priester kreeg Jan een exemplaar van de Sorsol mee, en zei tegen Jan dat dit zijn medicijn was. Jan begon intens te lezen en te bestuderen. Remco zou Jan Sorsollessen gaan geven, en ze zouden eens in de zoveel tijd teruggaan naar de priester voor diepere inwijdingen en diepere Sorsollessen. Was Sekhmet echt, of was ze een valse misleidster ? Bij de douane aangekomen werd er een grootscheeps onderzoek gedaan. De douaniers begonnen de tassen van Remco en Jan door te zoeken, en vonden het boek. 'Wat is dit nou weer ?' vroeg een douanier. Jan gaf uitleg, maar de man begon te lachen. Gelukkig was het boek niet illegaal, en konden ze door. Toen Jan thuisgekomen was plonste hij op de bank. Waar was hij toch in terechtgekomen, en was er nog een weg terug ? Terug naar het oude christendom wilde hij niet, maar wat was dit ? In de nacht had hij een droom ... weer over een wilde kat. De kat miauwde fel naar hem, en begon toen te spreken : 'Ik ben Bastet, Ik ben Bastet, het vlees van Christus ...' Jan had hier al eerder over gedroomd. Toen zei de kat : 'Ik ben wild, Ik ben wild, woest en buiten mijn zinnen. Ook Ik ben een afgekapt deel van Christus. De kerk gaat eraan.' Dat was wel intimiderende taal, maar de vorige keer zou de kat iets soortgelijks. Ja, de kerk moest inderdaad veranderen, maar 'eraan gaan' ? Misschien bedoelde ze wel dat er gewoon

een nieuwe kerk moest komen ... De kat was woest en blies ... Plotseling raakte Jan met de kat in gevecht, en hoe hij ook het bloed van Christus aanriep, en de Naam van Christus ... niets hielp ... Toen herinnerde Jan zich : sommige demonen gaan niet weg dan door vasten .... Maar ja, zo kon Jan wel aan de gang blijven. Er was altijd wel een excuus. Misschien had hij wel dingen in huis die er niet hoorden ... boeken.

'Kom, kom,' zei de kat ... 'Wat verwacht je van me. Het lichaam van Christus is verscheurd en half afgerukt ... Ik ben een deel van Christus, en zonder mij kom je niet tot Christus.' Nu, dat begreep jan wel, maar wie zei hem dat deze kat, Bastet, een deel van Christus was. Toen begon de kat te gillen en te krijsen ... zo hoog, dat Jan er naar van werd. Hij moest iets doen om dit beest te helpen ... Hij kon het niet over zijn hart verkrijgen verder tegen haar te strijden. Jan hield overigens veel te veel van katten ... 'Zuiver het exorcisme met hun domme demonenpraatjes. Niet iedere geest is een boze geest. Niet iedere cultuur is een boze cultuur, zelfs niet iedere god is een valse god. Het gaat erom hoe je het benaderd, hoe je het zift. Het is als een puzzel.' Jan voelde de woede van het beestje. Weer begon het beestje te gillen, ditmaal nog hoger en scheller als de eerste keer. Jan viel op de grond, en een licht viel over hem heen.

Een ander licht werd op Jan geschenen, en een andere kat stond voor Jan met een lange stok. Achter de kat stond een groot geopend boek tegen de muur waarop het licht viel. De bladeren waren van goud, lichtgoud, en de letters waren van donker goud en deels van heel lichtgoud. De kat begon er doorheen te bladeren met zijn stok. 'Dit is het Eeuwig Evangelie,' sprak de kat. Openbaring had al voorzegd dat dit Evangelie al komen. Het bespreekt de delen van Christus. De Sorsol was een boek van dit Evangelie, maar de kat bladerde naar het deel van Bastet, een boek genaamd Inaput. De kat zelf was een Inapala, een beschermer van de leer van Bastet. Jan voelde vuur door zijn ogen stromen. De kat begon te vertellen over Eeuwige Waarheden, dat alles tijdelijk was, dat alles slechts interpretatie was, en dat men vastheid kon vinden in de juiste verhoudingen der dingen, in de wetenschap dat alles puzzelmateriaal is. Ook sprak hij over het Pad van Verzachting, dat tot Sebek zou leiden, de Eeuwige Ark, en het gebeente van Christus. De kat had laarzen aan, en leek wel een beetje op de Gelaarsde Kat. Jan kwam een beetje tot rust. De kat zei ook dat dieper dan de ziel en de geest een ruimte bestaat die de bastet heet. Jan moest even hoesten, en voelde een zachtheid in zijn keel. Hij slikte een paar keer, en luisterde toen aandachtig verder. De kat begon te lachen. De kat sprak over het vlees van Christus, Bastet, en sprak dat dit heel bijzonder vlees was. Het was een wond. Even leek Jan te schrikken. 'Het is heel normaal, en gezond, de twijfels waar je doorheen ging. Dat hoorde bij de inwijding en de voorbereiding,' zei de kat. Jan voelde een hele zachte plek van binnen. De kat liep op Jan af, en raakte de gevoelige plek aan. Jan barste in snikken uit.

Jan stelde een vraag aan de kat : 'Uit hoeveel boeken of geschriften bestaat het Eeuwig Evangelie ?' Maar de kat antwoorde niet. Wel begon de kat te praten over de traan van Christus, en over de schreeuw van Christus. Vuur begon te stromen uit Jan's ogen. Jan begon nog veel meer vragen te stellen, maar de kat antwoorde niet. Wel sprak de kat verder over Christus. Hij sprak dat de traan en de schreeuw waren opgesteld in de wond, de bastet. Jan slikte even. Een vreemde reuk maakte zich meester over hem. Vanuit de traan en de schreeuw had Bastet, de wond, alles geschapen, en door de verzachting zou alles herschapen worden. De wond is het geheim van de

vruchtbaarheid, en de verzachting. In de wond groeit het litteken. Zou dit de Eeuwige Tempel zijn ? De kat wees ook met zijn stok naar een wereldkaart, en richtte de stok op India. 'Hier komt ze vandaan,' zei de kat. De kerk wilde de Wond van Christus niet. Aan de muur hing een vreemdsoortig kruis, dat op een Sebek leek. Het kruis was bijna gemaakt van botten. De kat zei niks, maar staarde er een tijdje na, evenals Jan. Daarna stond de kat op. Jan stond ook op, en samen liepen ze een zaal in. 'In de wond is onthechting,' zei de kat. 'De wond kon tot nieuwe wonden leiden, maar ook het litteken kon dat, en ook andersom.' Jan keek naar zijn handen. In zijn ene hand had hij een wond, en in zijn andere een litteken. Toen werd Jan wakker in het zweet. Hij voelde zich heel anders. Even had hij de neiging om dit alles met Remco te bespreken, maar later dacht hij dat het beter was eerst alles even te laten bezinken. Veel tijd had hij daarvoor niet. Remco stond aan de deur, en vroeg hoe het met hem was. Alhoewel Jan probeerde niets los te laten, kon hij zich later niet meer bedwingen, en vertelde het hele verhaal. Remco glimlachte.

Op aanraden van Remco tekende Jan de droom uit, en het werd als een plattegrond van de Nieuwe Tempel, een Eeuwige Tempel. Vanuit de wond stroomde het Eeuwige Bloed van Christus, de Eeuwige Thoth. Remco en Jan besloten de openbaringen in de kerken en gemeenten te verspreiden. Ze hadden foldertjes gemaakt, en begonnen al gauw met de verspreiding. Sommigen wilden weten hoe ze aan die openbaringen kwamen, en hoe ze wisten dat die openbaringen de waarheid waren. Maar Remco en Jan vroegen telkens aan de mensen hoe zij wisten dat hun geloof het ware zou zijn. En dan kregen ze altijd wolkerige en wazige verhalen te horen die ze door de geschiedenisboeken konden weerleggen. Remco zei tegen Jan : 'Het gaat er nu om, of de mensen de delen van Christus en Zijn lijden dieper willen kennen, of niet.' Jan knikte. De sekhmet en de bastet waren beiden hele gevoelige delen die geopend moesten worden. Hierdoor zou er een dieper contact met Christus mogelijk zijn. Maar Remco en Jan kregen natuurlijk veel kritiek. Het zou dwaalleer wezen. Anderen waren heel enthousiast, en vaak alleen al door de diepere leringen over het lijden van Christus, over het grootste kruis, het eeuwige kruis en het dubbele kruis. Hun ging het er niet zo om hoe het genoemd werd, maar waarover het ging. Ook sommige leiders namen hun leringen over, alhoewel enkelen nog niet de namen sekhmet en bastet er aan durfden te verbinden. Voor hen was het gewoon diepere openbaring over het Kruis van Christus.

Op een dag kreeg Jan een telefoontje van een dominee. De dominee vond het allemaal fantastisch spul, maar vroeg aan Jan of hij de folders wilde herschrijven. 'Waarom noem je het niet gewoon de wond en het litteken ?' vroeg de dominee, 'in plaats van bastet en sekhmet. Sommige kerkleden zijn veel te huiverig voor Egyptische dingen.'

'Is dat niet racistisch ?' vroeg Jan. Maar de dominee vond van niet, want ook God had het vaak niet zo op dat Egyptisch gedoe. 'Hoe weet je dat ?' vroeg Jan. En toen begon de dominee een hele preek te houden over Egypte in het Licht van de Bijbel. Toen de dominee klaar was begon Jan met zijn preek over Egypte in het Licht van de Bijbel. De dominee vond het erg interessant, maar was niet echt overtuigd. De dominee vond het echt beter als de lering van Jan werd losgekoppeld van het Egyptische, en zo zouden ze in de kerk misschien ook wat meer succes hebben. Maar Jan was al veel te veel van Bastet en Sekhmet gaan houden. Voor hem waren het de verloren delen van Christus, en hij wilde ze in ere herstellen. De dominee wenste hem veel geluk.

Het was een goed en lang gesprek geweest. Jan had de dominee belooft in ieder geval er nog over na te denken, en misschien wel naast de ene folder een andere folder te schrijven voor de dominee.

Hoofdstuk 4. De Rode Pijl

Jan kreeg door hoe de kerk Egypte haatte, maar al met al waren er toch belangstellenden. Jan liet in ieder geval de moed niet zakken. Op een nacht kreeg hij een droom van een enorm grote tepel die brandde als een zon. Jan wist niet zo goed wat hij hiervan moest denken. Snel probeerde hij de droom te vergeten, maar de nacht erna droomde hij er weer over. Er kwam zachte melk uit de tepel, en begon in de zee te stromen. Het water werd er kristalhelder door. Het was een mooie droom, dat wel, maar wat moest Jan ermee ? Weer probeerde Jan de droom te vergeten. De volgende ochtend was er een brief van Jan, weer van een dominee. Deze dominee vroeg of Jan een boek wilde uitbrengen met deze folders, als een soort gids bij het Eeuwig Evangelie. Ook vroeg de dominee naar meer informatie over het Eeuwig Evangelie. Ook had er iemand op het antwoord-apparaat ingesproken : Sekhmet leeft, Sekhmet leeft, Sekhmet leeft. Jan begon te bidden : 'Hoe nu verder ?' Hij voelde zich een pionier.

Op een avond verscheen Christus aan Jan. Jan zat rechtop in bed, en een lichtende gestalte stond voor hem, steeds dichterbij komende. De gestalte toonde zijn handen, en op beide handpalmen was een lichtende, gloeiende tepel te zien. Uit beide handen stroomde lichtende melk, en Christus goot de melk uit over het hoofd van Jan. Jan proefde van de melk, die een beetje zoet was. Ook smaakte de melk naar honing, en een soort drop of siroop. Opeens verschenen er lichtende, gloeiende lippen rondom de centrums in de handpalmen van Christus, en langzaam werden de handpalmen van Christus erg rood. En Christus sprak : In het paradijs zijn de mond en de voedingsbron één. Door het Rode Gordijn werden zij van elkaar gescheiden. Door Mijn Bloed worden ze weer met elkaar verzoend. Op de handpalmen van Christus verscheen een vreemd soort leer, wat bijna op een schub-achtige vissenhuid leek. 'Ik ga je tot de melk van verzadiging brengen,' zegt Christus. 'Er is alleen verzadiging op het pad van armoede en honger.' Nou, dat Pad kende Jan wel, want dat stond uitvoerig beschreven in de Sorsol, de leer van Sekhmet. Nog steeds stroomde er melk uit de handen van Christus, en weer proefde Jan ervan. Het was als room zo verzadigend. Het scheen op te komen vanuit de diepste putten en krochten van de honger. Het leek wel alsof de melk schuimde en bruiste.

Ineens begon de melk ook uit de handen van Jan te stromen. En ook voelde Jan de melk uit zijn kaken vloeien. En Christus begon voor te lezen vanuit de Inaput, de leer van Bastet. Toen klapte Christus het boek dicht, keek Jan strak aan, en sprak : de materiele wereld is ook een canon. Doorbreek die canon door Mijn delen, en kom tot Mijn materiele wereld. Ineens was Christus omringd met katten. Het waren de Inapala's, de beschermers van de leer van Bastet. Toen sprak Christus over de Weg tot Verzadiging. En er vielen woorden zoals Verlichting, Verzachting en Vastheid. Het leek wel alsof er een lichtende krans om het hoofd van Christus kwam, en het begon te duizelen voor de ogen van Jan. Weer sloeg Christus het boek open, en begon weer voor te lezen vanuit de Inaput. Langzaam gleed Jan in slaap. 'Heer, hoeveel delen of boeken heeft het Eeuwig Evangelie,' mompelde Jan half in slaap. Jezus kwam op zijn bed zitten, en hield zijn

hand vast. 'Er is geen aantals-canon,' zegt Jezus, en vredig zakt Jan dieper in slaap.

Jan kreeg een droom over een geit staande in een struikenbos, roerende in een grote ketel. In die ketel zwemmen vissen, en zodra het in de ketel begint te koken vloeit het over. De vissen vormen een harnas voor Jan, en dan moet Jan over een haag klimmen met dorens als hondenkoppen. Die haag wordt de hondenhaag genoemd. De vissen van het harnas worden gestoken door de hondendorens, en ook Jan. Bebloed komt hij uiteindelijk toch over de haag heen, maar wordt daar aangevallen door een woeste stier. Snel springt Jan weer in de hondenhaag, en de stier duikt Jan achterna, maar wordt door de dorens gestoken, en raakt vast. Nu kan Jan weer uit de hondenhaag komen, en is veilig voor nu. Stapje voor stapje gaat hij verder, maar het wordt heter en heter onder zijn voeten, en hij merkt dat z'n harnas nu ook begint te branden. Weer rent Jan terug naar de hondenhaag voor veiligheid. Maar het vuur komt ook de hondenhaag binnen, en de hondenhaag begint te branden. Jan moet weer helemaal terug, totdat hij bij de geitenketel komt. De stier is inmiddels door de brandende hondenhaag losgekomen, en komt tezamen met het vuur in rap tempo op Jan af. Snel klimt Jan in de ketel, maar ook de stier komt in de ketel. Jan brandt in de ketel, maar ook de stier brandt, en het leer van de stier vermengd zich met het vissenharnas. Dan koelt Jan weer af, en klimt weer uit de ketel. De hondenhaag is verdwenen, en ook het vuur. Jan heeft een nieuw harnas, als het vreemdsoortig schubbig leer wat Jezus in zijn handpalmen had. Er vloeit melk door Jan heen, en hij voelt zich verzadigd.

Dan wordt Jan vredig wakker. Jezus zit nog steeds op zijn bed, en houdt Jan's hand vast. 'Je had de kattenboom al overwonnen,' zei Christus, 'maar nu heb je de hondenhaag overwonnen. Ik zal je vertellen wat de betekenis is. De kattenboom was de canon in al zijn vormen, zoals je al wist, en de hondenhaag was de uitverkiezing in al zijn vormen, voortvloeiende en heendraaiende rondom het calvinisme. Deze werkten met elkaar samen, stelden elkaar veilig, want de canon stelde de woorden, daden en personen op door de uitverkiezing, en zei toen : zo blijft het. Beiden waren ze onderdeel van het Rode Gordijn.'

Was dit wat ze noemden het Egyptische Kruis, waarvan Openbaring zei dat Jezus hier geestelijk aan stierf, en wat ze ook wel het Sebek-kruis noemden, een kruis met dorens dat ook naar binnen groeide, tot in het diepste van ziel en geest, en zelfs tot in de sekhmet en de bastet, om deze delen gesloten te houden, verborgen en afgescheiden ? Jan wilde de ware betekenis van het Rode Gordijn weten. Was dit het Geestelijk Kruis met al z'n konkelende naalden op de ware gelovigen afgestuurd ? Eén ding was zeker : het was een verschrikking, en deze verschrikking zou tot heerlijkheid leiden, volgens het Eeuwig Evangelie. Zou het Eeuwig Evangelie er meer over zeggen ? Jan wilde er alles van weten. Was dit de rode pijl die Australie doorboorde in Jan's droom ? Eén ding was zeker. Er was geen doorgang mogelijk in dit Rode Gordijn. Het Rode Gordijn moest eerst geheel als een pad doorlopen worden, als het Pad van Armoede. Het was een pad van scheuring en verzoening. Een pad van ijs en vuur. Hoe ver was Jan nu ?

Jezus sprak verder over de haaienmuur, die de leer van de eeuwige verdoemenis was. Deze ontstond simpelweg door verloochening van het Eeuwige Kruis. Omdat men zelf dat Eeuwige Reinigingsvuur niet wilde dragen, omdat dat veel te diep ging, werden daarvoor slachtoffers gemaakt : hen die anders geloofden of niet geloofden, en aan het vuur werd een andere draai gegeven, zodat het het vuur van verdoemenis werd ...

eeuwige verdoemenis. Eén van de grootste boosdoeners in het omdraaien van het kruis, de kruisverloochening en de daarop volgende eeuwige verdoemenisleer was het welvaarts-evangelie gebracht door de kerkelijke tollenaren. Zij verloochenden het Franciscaanse pad van armoede. Deze haaienmuur maakte scheiding tussen sekhmet en bastet.

Jan wilde het Franciscaanse pad graag bewandelen. Hij wilde graag geheel afrekenen met het Rode Gordijn, om dieper tot de delen van Christus te komen, en om die delen te verzoenen, want Christus was door dit Rode Gordijn verscheurt. In zekere zin hing Christus nog steeds aan dit kruis. Jan besluit een brief te schrijven aan Peter Satelli, de Amerikaanse profeet, maar al snel krijgt Jan een brief terug. Daarin vertelt Peter Satelli bijna alleen maar over zichzelf, hoe goed het met hem gaat, en dat hij al weer volop in de bediening staat. Aan het einde van de brief staat hoe de Amerikaanse profeet over Jan's openbaringen denkt. Hij kon er niet veel mee, kortom : het was onzin. De man raadde hem aan bevrijding te zoeken. Jan was razend. Hij voelde zich bijna opgelicht. Had deze man hem niet in dit avontuur gestort ? Maar al gauw probeerde Jan zichzelf te sussen. De man had veel volgelingen, verdiende er z'n brood mee, en ... tja, Jan begreep het wel een beetje. Was de vriendschap nu voorbij ? Het was verder wel een vriendelijke en open brief. Er werd geen woord gerept over de tijdelijke terugval van de man. Misschien wilde hij het zo snel mogelijk vergeten. Jan voelde zich een beetje verloren. Hoe wonderlijk sommige van de openbaringen waren, hij voelde zich nu diep alleen, en zelfs bedrogen. Kon hij niet gewoon beter teruggaan naar de kerk, om een normaal, algemeen aanvaard leven te leiden ?

Hoofdstuk 5. Kinderen van Egypte

Als Jan terug zou gaan, dan naar een Franciscaanse kerk, hen die de leer van armoede, oftwel soberheid, omhelsden. Franciscus van Assissi was een monnik die met een hemels principe genaamd 'Vrouwe Armoe' was getrouwd. Hij stond bekend als een groot hervormer. De gemeente waar Jan naartoe ging was nogal Katholiek. Jan vertelde over zijn openbaringen, en daar zeiden ze lachend dat als hij het voor elkaar kon krijgen dat de paus Sekhmet en Bastet heilig zou verklaren, dan was het binnen de kortste keren een wereldreligie. Jan moest wel even lachen. De paus stond volgens hem goed open voor andere religies, en scheen ook soms samen met hen te bidden, maar of het nu allemaal zuivere koffie was ? Bij sommige katholieken had Jan snel aansluiting, omdat ze toch al in heiligen geloofden, en er zelfs toe baden. Jan wilde graag een soort samensmelting zien tussen het katholicisme en het protestantisme. Het calvinisme en luther-gebeuren in de Reformatie was te definitief in zijn ogen. Het kind werd met badwater en al weggeworpen, maar het katholicisme was vroeger erg gevaarlijk met al dat bloedvergiet en straffe op ketterij. Misschien was Jan wel op de brandstapel terecht gekomen met al z'n openbaringen als hij in die tijd geleefd had. De Katholieke Kerk had veel macht, en was gewoon zelfs een soort wettige Rechtbank. De Reformatie was voortgekomen vanuit een grote angst, maar nu moest alles zich nog nuanceren. Net zoals de Exodus voortkwam uit grote angst en onderdrukking, en zich later moest nuanceren. Later verzwagerde Salomo zich met de latere farao, en trouwde met zijn dochter. In die dagen leefde Salomo nog steeds onder Gods goedkeuring, en bad hij zelfs zijn wereldgenoemde gebed om wijsheid. In het vlees en onder de oude bedeling mochten de Joden geen

contact zoeken met de doden. De katholieke kerk leerde dat dit alleen door de Geest kon geschieden. De heiligen waren middelaars tussen hen en Christus. De Reformatorische Kerk kapte veelal uit weerzin tegen het Katholicisme deze telefoondraden weg, en zelfs de Stem van God werd verloochend. Die was alleen nog te vinden in oude boeken, door de canon samengesteld. Terwijl Luther, de oprichter van de Reformatie volgens Jan niet zo was. Volgens Jan geloofde Luther wel in genezing en profetie. Maar de gevestigde kerken hadden veel macht, en deden met Luther wat ze wilden, vooral na zijn dood, toen echt de meest duistere vormen van de Reformatie begonnen op te treden, zoals de Gereformeerde Gemeente, en de verschillende Gereformeerde Bonden, en de Bond binnen de Hervormde Kerk, en nog wat duistere afsplitsingen. Jan probeerde zich de lessen geschiedenis en kerkgeschiedenis te herinneren.

Jan maakte veel vrienden bij de Katholieken. Ze waren charismatischer dan hij dacht, maar misschien was hij wel gewoon in de juiste hoek terechtgekomen. Het pad van armoe brengt ware rijkdom. Ook bezocht hij weleens wat kerken in Belgie. Hier maakte Jan ook wat vrienden. De dagen verschilden. Soms had Jan nog veel last van twijfels en verwarringen, en andere dagen ging het goed. Egypte begon meer en meer op de achtergrond te raken. Het ging Jan niet meer zozeer om namen, maar om de beschrijvingen van de dieptes van het geloof. Ook het Katholicisme was nog bijzaak. Jan hield zich vast aan het pad van armoe, en de rest kon hem wat. Jan maakte alles zo eenvoudig mogelijk, behalve op het pad van armoe. Dat kon hem niet weelderig genoeg zijn. Jan verlustigde zich in de leer.

Op een dag zong een vrouw een lied in de kerk. De vrouw deed Jan denken aan Sekhmet. Na de dienst liep Jan op de vrouw af, en vertelde haar hoe mooi ze dat lied had gezongen. Het was een oud Franciscaans lied over de kracht en de zaligheid van armoede. De vrouw was erg eenvoudig gekleed en had een soort sprei om. Ze had gezongen als een vogel. Het was even alsof Jan alles was vergeten : al zijn theologieen, al zijn ideeen, en al zijn strijd. Hij wilde als het ware alles wel verkopen om deze parel te bezitten : dit prachtige lied. De vrouw gaf Jan een blad mee met de tekst erop, en ook een bandje wat hij thuis kon afspelen. Toen Jan weer was thuisgekomen draaide hij direct het bandje. Hij kon van dit lied geen genoeg krijgen. Het was alsof al de spanning wegzonk, weg ... verdwenen ... Ook was het alsof het Jan allemaal niet meer kon schelen, al het theologische geharrewar ... want de waarheid lag toch altijd weer ergens in het midden .... 'Een beetje van dit, en een beetje van dat ...' Jan wilde zich vrij voelen, een vrij mens. Na een tijdje ging de telefoon. Het was de vrouw die het lied had gezongen. Jan vertelde haar hoe geweldig hij het bandje vond, en de andere liederen die erop stonden waren ook net zo prachtig, en misschien zelfs prachtiger. 'Jan,' zei de vrouw, 'ik ga een reis maken. Ik ga naar Afrika, om daar te getuigen van het Franciscaanse pad van armoede, en daarna ga ik naar Egypte, de parel van de armoede.' Jan kreeg even een kleur toen hij het woord Egypte hoorde ... Diep in zijn hart hield hij nog heel veel van Egypte.

Enkele maanden later kwam er een pakje aan voor Jan. Het waren twee Egyptische beelden, één van Sekhmet, de leeuwinnenvrouw, en één van Bastet, de kattenvrouw. Jan glimlachte, en dacht bij zichzelf : 'Ze blijven me opzoeken .... ze blijven me ... opzoeken.' Ook was er een lange brief bij van de vrouw van het lied, hoe ze het daar had. Ze was inmiddels dus al in Egypte, en aan het eind van de brief schreef ze dat ze had besloten te

blijven. Ze was daar in aanraking gekomen met Franciscaans-Koptische christenen, christenen van Egypte, en die hadden haar gevraagd bij hen te blijven. Ze gaven zulk goed onderwijs, en alles ging hier zoveel dieper. Ze hadden daar een heilige genaamd Sint Antonius, die in de woestijn leefde om de begeertes en slavernijen van het leven te overwinnen. De Egyptische woestijn had hem die zuiverende kracht gegeven. Jan vond de brief erg interessant ... Had hij maar ooit de moed om haar op te zoeken ... maar het leek alsof Jan die moed niet had ... Wilde hij eigenlijk nog wel terug naar Egypte ? Sint Antonius werd ook geplaagd door verschrikkelijke visioenen. Jan wilde eigenlijk het risico niet lopen om weer door zoiets heen te gaan. Het was allemaal zo dubbel ... Jan dacht nog weleens na over Remco ... daar had hij weer geen contact mee sinds een tijdje .... en Jan durfde de drempel niet over, want in welk avontuur zou hij dan weer terecht komen ? Ja, het geloof was Jan een blok aan zijn been. Hij kon niet met, en hij kon niet zonder ... Soms werd er nog weleens in die Franciscaanse kerk gepreekt over hoe zwaar de profeten het hadden. Ze trokken zich vaak terug, en hun leven werd er niet makkelijker op .... maar ... wel rijker .... weelderiger in geest .... Maar Jan had de moed verloren .... als hij nadacht over profetenvervolgingen, het juk van de profeet, en dergelijken, dan kwam het allemaal heel ernstig op hem over. Jan werd er bang van. Wat wilde hij eigenlijk ? En wat kon hij ... wat was zijn draagkracht, zijn vermogen ? Eigenlijk was het geloof in zijn ogen een groot mysterie ... Zou het een mysterie blijven ?

Einde

Het Sebek-Mysterie

Theologische Thriller

1. De scheuring

2. Gemengde gevoelens

3. De gastspreker

4. De verschijning

5. De exorcist

6. De strijd

7. De Inodus

8. De muur

9. De Sebek-profeet

10. De gebeds-avond

11. Het Sebek-kruis

12. De arrestatie

13. Het eiland van Bastet

Hoofstuk 1. De scheuring

Ewald zit in een charismatische gemeente. Vroeger was het een pinkstergemeente, maar het begon meer en meer uit te bloeien tot een charismatische gemeente. Ewald weet niet zo goed wat hij er allemaal van moet denken. Hij voelde zich er veel beter bij toen de gemeente nog als een conservatieve pinkstergemeente functioneerde. Ewald mocht ook wel eens preken, vanwege zijn diepe bijbelkennis en ervaring. Ewald had het niet zo op al dat geprofeteer. Ewald had dat nog nooit gedaan, en zou dat ook niet zo snel doen. Profetie was voor hem meer een zaak van noodgevallen, en niet van dagelijks of wekelijks brood. Ook de oudste voorganger had het niet zo op met de nieuwe veranderingen.

Er waren drie voorgangers in de gemeente. Alhoewel Ewald wel eens had gepredikt was hij geen voorganger. Ewald was diep bevriend met de oudste voorganger. De oudste voorganger was degene die de gemeente heel vroeger had opgericht. Vaak vroeg hij raad aan Ewald.

Op een dag kwam de oudste voorganger bij Ewald op bezoek. 'Ewald, ik moet je even spreken. Het gaat om de gemeente. Ik ben helemaal niet blij met de nieuwe ontwikkelingen. Er wordt nauwelijks nog in de Bijbel gelezen, en alles draait om zogenaamde nieuwe profetieen. Ik heb er een hard hoofd in. Ik vind dat ik moet ingrijpen.' Ewald was het helemaal met de oudste voorganger eens.

Alles ging nogal snel, en al gauw was er een scheuring. De fanatieke charismatici konden vertrekken, en zij zouden een nieuwe gemeente bouwen. De oudste voorganger zou zijn gemeente weer maken tot de gemeente die het was, gewoon een oude conservatieve pinkstergemeente. Ewald was opgelucht. Nu zou er gelukkig weer wat meer uit het Woord gelezen worden. Het vastgelegde Woord was voor Ewald namelijk een rustbaken. In de nieuwe dienst werd alles nog eens grondig uitgelegd. De oudste voorganger wees met zijn vinger in de lucht en zei dat fanatieke profeten en andere fantasten in zijn kerk niet welkom waren. Hij sprak uit dat hij had gehoopt dat ze konden samenwerken. Hij had het lange tijd met hen geprobeerd, maar er kwam volgens hem

steeds meer onrust in zijn gemeente. Ewald knikte.

Na de toespraak die ruim een half uur duurde stond er een bebaarde man achter in de zaal op en begon luid te klappen. Niemand kende de man. Ewald had hem ook hier nog nooit gezien. Toen er ruimte was voor getuigenissen kwam de man naar voren. 'Wat een geweldige gemeente is dit. Ik kom uit Egypte, en ik heb in mijn groep soortgelijke dingen meegemaakt. Er is niks verkeerd met profetie, maar zodra het ons van het pad afbrengt, dan kunnen we er beter mee stoppen.'

Toen kwam de oudste voorganger weer naar voren, en sprak : 'Nou ja, stoppen hoeft natuurlijk niet, maar met mate, en heenwijzend naar de oude paden.' Verder verwelkomde hij de man in de gemeente. Zijn vader was een Egyptenaar, en hij had nooit de kans gehad om hem te spreken. Dit vond hij dus allemaal erg interessant. 'Zeg, vertel ons eens iets over Egypte, en die groep waartoe u behoort of behoorde ?' vroeg de oudste voorganger.

De man met de baard sprak urenlang over Egypte, en over de band tussen het Woord en Egypte, en de aanwezigen luisterden vaak met open mond. Ook de voorgangers vonden het erg interessant. Maar zij hadden niet in de gaten waar de toespraak hen naartoe zou leiden. Toen de dienst na uren was afgelopen wilden velen de man met de baard spreken. Maar deze was snel vertrokken, om nooit meer terug te komen. Een jaar later kwam de oudste voorganger er toevallig achter wat er met hem was gebeurd ... geschept door een auto ... door een dronken automobilist.

Hoofdstuk 2. Gemengde gevoelens

De oudste voorganger was erg verdrietig. Hij besloot speciaal een dienst te wijden aan deze treurig omgekomen vriend. Sindsdien was er altijd een groot respect voor Egypte. De gemeente had wat nare ervaringen met profetie, maar na enige tijd werd er in de diensten toch weer wat kleine ruimte gemaakt voor hen die wilden profeteren. Alle profetieen moesten natuurlijk door de voorgangers en door de gemeente-leden goed getoetst worden, maar de oudste voorganger vond het erg belangrijk dat de gemeente zich zou openstellen naar wat God hen te zeggen had. Tijdens de daartoe ingelaste 'profetische tijd' stond er een man op achter in de zaal, en begon te profeteren. Het waren wat vage en wazige woorden, en men wist niet zo goed wat men er mee aan moest. Dienst na dienst stond de man op om zijn profetische gaven te vertonen. Wat kon die man praten, zeg, maar hij begon wel steeds meer het Woord erbij te betrekken, en daarom lieten de voorgangers het altijd weer toe. De man was altijd een wat stille persoonlijkheid geweest, die zich vaak op de achtergrond begaf, maar wel goed meehielp met de organisatie van het kerk zijn, zoals de afwas, de schoonmaak, het ordenen. Hij was al geruime tijd een helper van de koster. De man bleek ook een Egyptische vader te hebben, net als de oudste voorganger, met het verschil dat de man een erg goed en diep contact had met z'n vader. Z'n ouders waren gescheiden, maar hij zocht hen beiden nog vaak op. Het viel iedereen op dat hij het in zijn profetieen vaak over Egypte had. Dit tot groot genoegen van de oudste voorganger. Ewald was minder onder de indruk. Ewald was bang geworden dat Egypte de plaats zou innemen van het Joodse Volk.

Na een zekere dienst waarin Egypte weer duidelijk op de voorgrond stond wilde Ewald

met de oudste voorganger spreken. 'In alle respect,' zei Ewald toen ze even later in het kamertje van de oudste voorganger zaten : 'Ik heb het niet zo op al die Egyptische profetieen. Ze wijken mij teveel af van de kern. Hebben we niet voor niets een exodus gehad om ons hiervan los te maken ? Niet alleen het hele Egypte-concept stoort mij, maar ook het feit dat alles weer zo profetisch wordt. Kunnen we niet gewoon bij de Bijbel blijven ?' De oudste voorganger knikte direkt. 'Ik denk dat je gelijk hebt, Ewald. Bedankt dat je me daar even op wees. Ik had het zelf niet echt in de gaten, vanwege mijn grote betrokkenheid rondom het verlies van onze Egyptische broeder.'

'Ja, maar wat gaat er nu gebeuren dan ?' vroeg Ewald. 'Ik zal er direkt werk van maken,' zei de oudste voorganger. De diensten daarop werden gehouden zonder de profetische tijd. Niet iedereen voelde zich bij deze verandering op hun gemak, en al snel begonnen er een aantal te morren en te fluisteren. De oudste voorganger wilde eigenlijk een soort compromis sluiten, omdat zijn pinkstergemeente niet per definitie tegen profetie was. Maar Ewald vond : 'Waarom water bij de wijn doen ?' Ewald vond dat profetie, en ook dingen zoals genezing en andere gaven van de Geest behoorden tot het rijtje 'bij uitzondering'. Ewald was lid van de gedachte dat de geestes-uitingen bedoeld waren om de basis van het geloof te leggen. Het behoorde tot het gebied : evangelisatie, om omstanders te overtuigen van het bestaan van God. De daaruit voortvloeiende gemeentes zouden de geestes-uitingen niet meer zo nodig hebben, maar moesten sterk worden in het Woord. Ewald hield niet van al dat zweverig gedoe. 'Met beide benen op de grond blijven,' dat was zijn motto.

Hoofdstuk 3. De gastspreker

Op een dag was er een gastspreker in de gemeente. Deze gastspreker kwam uit een andere pinkstergemeente, en stond bekend als een groot prediker. De preek ging over Genesis, waar er zo lovend over Egypte werd gesproken, waar Jozef onderkoning werd, en waardoor het volk Israel van de hongerdood werd gered. Dit was omdat de farao raadgevende dromen van God had gehad die door Jozef werden uitgelegd. Vanuit die band tussen Israel en Egypte werd ook het zonnelied tot de Egyptische god Aton in de Joodse Heilige Geschriften opgenomen, omdat de God van Israel en Egypte 'Eén' was in veelvuldigheid. Jozef trouwde met een dochter van de priester van de Egyptische god Osiris of zoals hij vaak genoemd werd : On.

In het boek Exodus zien we een heel andere verhouding tussen Israel en Egypte. Er was in die tijd een andere farao aan de macht, waarvan velen denken dat het Ramses was, die de god van het kwaad, Seth, aanbad. Deze farao was bang voor de militaire macht en consequenties van het Volk Israel. Het leidde tot een breuk tussen deze twee volken.

De preek zette de aanwezigen aan het denken, want wat moest hun verhouding nu zijn tot Egypte ? Moesten ze terug gaan naar Genesis, of moesten ze blijven bij Exodus ? Na afloop mochten er vragen gesteld worden, en de prediker kreeg ook deze vraag te horen. Zijn mening was dat Egypte was gevallen, en dat de band tussen Israel en Egypte, ook op het gebied van godsdienst en regering, maar tijdelijk was. De Exodus was een uittocht uit de slavernij en de macht van het gevallen Egypte, dat het vlees voorstelde. Maar toen stond de man op die helper van de koster was, en die ook Egyptisch bloed had, en vroeg : 'Denkt u dat er in de toekomst behoudenis is voor Egypte, en dat Egypte

misschien weer in ere hersteld zou kunnen worden ? Van mijn vader, die Egyptenaar is, hoorde ik dat de Egyptische god Sebek, die voorgesteld wordt als een krokodil, mee zou helpen in de vernietiging van Seth, het kwaad.' Even was het stil. De prediker scheen na te denken. 'Natuurlijk is er behoudenis voor hen die als Egyptenaar tot Christus komen, en daardoor ge-ent worden op de Joodse tak, en dan zal er een nieuw Egypte zijn. Maar wanneer dat zal gebeuren weten wij niet,' sprak de prediker. Maar toen stond Ewald op, en beschuldigde de prediker dat hij probeerde de goden van Egypte op één lijn te zetten met de God van Israel. 'Mijnheer, u maakt uzelf schuldig aan afgoderij. Dat vroeger tijdelijk even de God van Israel ingreep in Egypte had te maken met het feit dat Jozef daar opgesloten zat, maar geenszins was God dezelde als de Egyptische goden. Het was pure noodzaak dat Jozef zich verbond aan het Egyptische huis,' sprak Ewald. 'Voorganger, kunt u dit soort verleiding niet aan de kaak stellen ? Het is bijna gewoon infiltratie.' Maar Ewald werd gesust, en de voorganger maakte een gebaar met z'n handen dat Ewald weer moest gaan zitten. Later hoorde Ewald dat de prediker in de begintijd veel voor de gemeente had betekent, en dat hij een goede naam had in de conservatieve beweging binnen de pinkstergemeentes, zodat ze hem niet zomaar in het openbaar konden aanklagen als zijnde een verleider. En nogmaals werd Ewald erop gewezen dat de man keurig netjes had vermeld dat het tijdelijk was, zoals de band tussen Israel en Egypte in Genesis werd beschreven, en dat men als gemeente moest leven vanuit de beschikkingen van de Exodus, waaruit de rest van Gods Woord was voortgevloeid.

Maar Ewald liet het er niet bij zitten. Juist omdat de gemeente al zo Egyptisch gestemd was, zag hij dit als een extra bedreiging. En wat zou hieruit voortvloeien ? Ewald was er bang voor dat de volgende stap afgoderij zou betekenen, en dat de Egyptische goden in ere zouden worden hersteld, als de delen Gods. Maar zover was het nog niet. De dienst erna was Ewald er niet. Schriftelijk had hij laten weten niet meer deel te willen zijn van deze Egyptische secte, in zijn ogen. Ook wilde hij niet meer op de hoogte gehouden worden van de activiteiten binnen de gemeente.

Hoofdstuk 4. De verschijning

Op een nacht verscheen Jezus aan Ewald. 'Ewald, Ewald, waarom vervolgt gij Mij,' sprak Jezus, en liet hem Zijn bebloedde handen zien. Ewald voelde zich erg ongemakkelijk. 'Waarom vervolgt gij het volk Egypte,' sprak Jezus. 'Maar Heer,' zei Ewald, 'ik doe alleen wat Uw Woord mij opdraagt. Alleen in Genesis zie ik die band met Egypte, maar U heeft altijd al gewaarschuwd tegen afgoderij.' Toen kwam de Heer dichterbij, en liet tussen het bloed de beenderen van Zijn Handen zien. 'Zie je, Ewald, Mijn botten zijn niet gebroken. Kent gij de hemelse namen en hemelse talen ? Ziet dan, Mijn gebeente is Sebek.'

'Maar Heer ?' sprak Ewald, en begon toen luid te roepen, en te smeken tot Jezus Christus van Nazareth, zijn Heer. 'Ik ben het,' sprak Jezus, 'Ik ben het die gij vervolgt.' En Ewald viel op zijn knieen, en begon de duivel te bestraffen. 'Wat is afgoderij, Ewald ?' sprak Jezus luid.

'Ik ben er niet van overtuigd dat jij de Jezus Christus ben die ik ken,' sprak Ewald giftig. 'Als je een duivel ben, bestraf ik je nu.' Maar weer vroeg de verschijning : 'Wat is

afgoderij, Ewald.'

'Afgoderij is je te bezoedelen met andere goden,' sprak Ewald. 'Ik heb niks tegen Egyptenaren, maar ik zal nooit buigen voor hun goden !' riep Ewald.

'Afgoderij is je eigen natie of een bepaalde natie als superieur te beschouwen. Afgoderij is een god van andere goden te onderscheiden om daarmee te zondigen,' sprak de verschijning.

'O ja ?' zei Ewald spottend, 'Mijn God is de Enige, en ik zal niet buigen voor anderen. Ik heb Eén God, als in zuiver monotheisme. Voor mij is afgoderij meergodendom. Alleen door Jezus Christus hebben wij de Ware God leren kennen.'

En weer kwam de verschijning dichterbij. 'Waarom noem je het 'meergodig' ? Waarom niet meerdelig ? Je weet dat God meer delen heeft, en dat kunnen meerdere namen zijn. Is het verkeerd als iemand tot een ander deel van God snelt ? Wat weet jij van de namen van God ?'

'Tja,' zegt Ewald, 'als die Egyptische goden delen zijn van God, leuk verhaal, maar wie zegt mij dat het waar is ? Genesis is verleden tijd. Wij leven in en na Exodus. Wij worden uit Egypte weggeleid. De Egyptenaren hebben geen Jezus Christus in hun godenstelsel, dus daarom vertrouw ik het hele zaakje al niet. Een Evangelie buiten Jezus Christus bestaat er niet, en een kruis hebben ze al helemaal niet.'

'Wie zegt dat ?' vraagt de verschijning. 'Ze spreken een andere taal, maar kunnen die onderdelen dus best hebben. Taal maakt niet zalig, maar het hart, zogezegd : de vertaling. Het hele Christusverhaal is voortgekomen uit de verhalen van Horus, de zonnegod, die al veel ouder is. Ook hij stierf en stond na drie dagen weer op. Waarom zou God Zich maar aan één volk hebben gegeven ? Als je taal afscheidt van vertaling ga je dat denken, en daarom houdt je ook niet zo van profetie, want dat is de vertaling van het Woord van God, en het getuigenis van Christus.'

'Boze geest, ga terug naar de hel,' begint Ewald te roepen. Dag na dag komen de verschijningen terug, en Ewald begint dromen te krijgen over Horus. 'Waar gaat dit naartoe ?' begint Ewald te denken. 'Dit is nog erger dan wat ze in de pinkstergemeente verkondigen. Laat ik maar terug gaan.' En zo gebeurde het. Mokkend maakte Ewald weer voorzichtig contact met zijn oude gemeente, en de dromen en verschijningen worden minder.

Hoofdstuk 5. De exorcist

In de gemeente wordt Ewald een beetje met de nek aangekeken, maar dat doet hem niet zoveel. Als hij maar van die rare verschijningen en dromen zou afkomen. Gelukkig werden de dromen en verschijningen minder, maar Ewald blijft last hebben. Daarom besluit hij op zoek te gaan naar een goede exorcist. Ewald gelooft niet dat een boze geest in een christen kan binnenkomen, maar hij gelooft wel dat een christen door een boze geest onderdrukt kan worden. Diep in zijn hart geeft hij de gemeente de schuld, omdat ze het altijd zo vaak over Egypte moesten hebben. Ewald ziet het als een lichte graad afgoderij, en beseft dat de gemeente op het randje van een grote afgrond staat. Omgang met afgodendienaars kan de deur openen voor boze geesten, maar moet Ewald hen nu echt beschouwen als afgodendienaars ? Hij kan niet weg, ook omdat hij van

binnen aangeklaagd wordt dat die boze verschijningen veroorzaakt werden doordat hij z'n gemeente had verlaten. Is hij een prooi van wolven geworden ? Hij vindt eigenlijk dat hij de voorganger trouw moet blijven, want dan wordt hij zelf ook beschermd. Maar wat als de voorganger nu echt op het afgodische vlak terecht zou komen ? Ewald voert innerlijke strijd. Op een dag heeft hij een afspraak met een bekende exorcist binnen het samenwerkingsverband van pinkergemeenten.

Ewald vertelt van zijn ervaringen, en de exorcist luistert aandachtig. Ewald kent de man nog wel een beetje van een conferentie. De exorcist is één en al oor, en vindt het erg interessant. 'Ewald, wat we nu gaan doen is bidden dat de boze geest zich openbaar zal maken, zodat we hem uit kunnen drijven. Als er dan nog wonden zijn, dan kan de Heilige Geest die genezen,' zegt de exorcist.

'U denkt toch niet dat ik een boze geest heb ?' vraagt Ewald een beetje beledigd. 'Nee,' sust de exorcist, 'het is gewoon een testje om te zien waar en hoe een eventuele boze geest je onderdrukt.' Dit stelt Ewald een beetje gerust. Dan begint het gebed. De exorcist bidt heel lang, en spreekt vervolgens de eventuele boze geest aan. De exorcist spreekt in tongen, en wacht af. Dan begint Ewald wild te bewegen. 'Tarrabarrebedorre,' schreeuwt Ewald. Ewald is zichtbaar in paniek. Dat had hij niet verwacht dat hij gebonden zou zijn door een boze geest. Dit was iets dat charismatici soms 'inwoning' noemden, of in zware gevallen zelfs bezetenheid. Ewald had hier nooit in geloofd. Dat kon alleen maar bij ongelovigen. Was hij wel echt zoals ze dat zeiden 'wederomgeboren' ? Even twijfelde Ewald aan alles, nu zoiets vreemds zich in hem had gemanifesteerd, maar lang nadenken kon Ewald niet, omdat de exorcist de geest begon te ondervragen. 'Kitket, ik ben een geest van ongeloof,' sprak de geest door Ewald heen. 'Waar kom je vandaan ?' vroeg de exorcist. 'Ik laat hen van pinksteren denken dat ze superieur zijn, en dat ze een waterdicht superieur geloof hebben. Ik laat hen Mozes volgen uit het slavenhuis van Egypte, om hen kennis te laten maken met een nieuwe slavernij : de pinkstergemeente. Ik ben Egypte-haat, en om hen tegen Egypte te beveiligen heb ik hun taal tot de superieure laten maken, en hen de vertaling der vertaling laten haten. Ik ben profetie-haat, dat is mijn maat. Wij werken in een groep. Wachtwoorden hebben wij gemaakt, voor onze elite, hen van pinksteren.'

'Ja, stop maar,' zegt de exorcist nors en luid, en begint de geest te bestraffen. 'Je bent een religieuze leugengeest, een wargeest, en je komt er nu uit, in de Naam van Christus die wij dienen.' Maar dan begint de geest te lachen. 'Ik kom er toch niet uit, ik heb namelijk recht, omdat hij zich niet wil bekeren van zijn Egypte-haat, zijn profetie-haat en de daarbij horende superioriteit.' En hoe de exorcist ook bestrafte, bad en ondervroeg, de geest hield voet bij stuk, en ging er niet uit. Ewald voelde zich ellendig. Hij moest er niet aan denken de nacht door te moeten brengen met dit beest in of op z'n lichaam. 'We moeten God bidden om wijsheid,' zei de exorcist. 'Ik ben niet van plan deze geest te geloven. Het zijn leugenaars, en ons geloof is ons wapen. Ewald, je zult in geloof moeten staan. Je moet belijden dat je niks met die geest te maken wilt hebben, en dan in geloof aanvaarden dat je vrij bent.' Ewald kreeg wat boekjes mee over geloof en belijdenis, over het zogenaamde 'claimen', en werd vervolgens naar huis gezonden. Ewald voelde zich gebroken, maar was niet van plan de strijd op te geven.

Hoofdstuk 6. De strijd

Ewald begon gretig de boekjes te lezen, en probeerde door bepaalde geloofs-uitspraken zijn schuddende lichaam tot rust te brengen. Ewald had het niet zo met al dat geloofs-gedoe, alsof je moest werken voor een genezing of bevrijding. Hij geloofde in het conservatieve volbrachte werk van Christus, door genade. Wel geloofde Ewald in het gebed, en het lezen van het Woord. Vooral dat laatste.

Na een tijdje was Ewald zo wanhopig, dat hij besloot het verhaal te vertellen aan de charismatici die indertijd de gemeente waren uitgestuurd. Ze hadden inmiddels hun eigen gemeente opgezet. Ewald kende hen wel. Hij was er nooit zo van onder de indruk, maar nu was het zijn laatste kans. Met lood in zijn schoenen ging hij naar het huis van die charismatische voorganger die vroeger voorganger was bij Ewald in de gemeente. De charismatische voorganger was blij hem te zien. Hij gaf hem een omhelzing. Ewald voelde zich direkt op zijn gemak, misschien ook omdat het een oude kennis van vroeger was. Ewald's lichaam schudde nog steeds een beetje, en begon het verhaal te vertellen. 'Ach, Ewald,' zei de charismatische voorganger, 'ik heb iemand in de gemeente die naast mij ook weleens preekt, en die heeft dit soort varkentjes wel eens eerder gewassen. Laten we hem erbij halen.' Niet lang daarna stopte er een auto voor het huis van de charismatische voorganger. De charismatische voorganger had hem gebeld of hij direkt wilde komen voor een spoedgeval. De man kwam binnen en ging zitten. men zei dat hij een krachtige gave van profetie had. De man begon in zichzelf te bidden, en zachtjes in tongen te spreken. Een tijdje was het stil. Toen begon de man te spreken : 'Ja, Ewald, ik heb een beeld van de Heer. Ik zie jou lopen in Egypte met vraagtekens boven jouw hoofd. Dan stap je een soort boerderij binnen waar een kar staat. In die kar zie je een heleboel dieren die je niet kent. Je begint op die dieren in te hakken, omdat je bang bent dat ze je iets aan zullen doen. Maar de Heer zegt : 'Laat af, en weet dat Ik God ben.'

Ewald was geschokt. Hoe wist die man dat het om Egypte ging ? De charismatische voorganger had alleen verteld dat het om een spoedgeval ging. Ewald voelde zijn geloof instorten, maar was aan de andere kant diep onder de indruk. Vooral toen de man profeteerde : 'Dit zegt de Heer : die vreemde dieren zijn delen van Mij.' Was dit een zuiver Woord van de Heer ? Ewald wist het niet, maar voelde zich erg rustig worden. 'Ja, Mijn Zoon,' sprak de profeet verder, 'Ik heb jouw worstelingen gezien. Je geloof staat op de kop, omdat jouw geloof gezuiverd moet worden. Ik wil jouw de fundamenten laten zien van een kerk die Mijn Aangezicht heeft bespuwd. Ik heb in Mijn kerk geen welgevallen, omdat ze Egypte eenzijdig hebben benaderd. Iets kan voor meerdere dingen symbool staan, en zoals het kruis symbool staat voor dood en overwinning, zo staat Egypte symbool voor slavernij en bevrijding. Het kruis werd door de tegenstander als wapen opgesteld, maar heb ook Ik niet datzelfde kruis als wapen gebruikt ? Zo is dan ook Egypte als het kruis, gebruikt door de tegenstander om te knechten, en door Mij om te bevrijden. En zo is dan ook het Ankh-teken, het Egyptische kruis met het rondje erop als de zon, nog steeds het kruis van de Koptische Christenen, de christenen van Egypte.' Even was het stil. Maar toen ineens manifesteerde de geest zich weer in Ewald, en vloog de profeet aan. 'Kalm,' zei de charismatische voorganger luid, en begon de geest te bestraffen. Maar Ewald rolde al met de profeet over de grond. 'Ik ga je vernietigen !' schreeuwde de geest door Ewald heen. Toen ineens was Ewald in een diepe slaap. De profeet stond op, en ging weer zitten. Ook de charismatische voorganger ging weer zitten. 'God heeft hem in de rust gelegd,' zei de profeet. 'Laten we hem hier maar even liggen.' De charismatische voorganger knikte bezorgd. Samen gingen ze verder met

bidden. Ook de charismatische voorganger was diep geschokt. Was nu dan echt de tijd gekomen dat het Egyptische kruis waaraan de gemeente zo'n lange tijd gehangen had nu ten goede zou worden gebruikt ? Zou na de exodus, de uittocht uit Egypte, nu een intocht komen in het Nieuwe Egypte ? 'Dit waren echt de woorden die ik van God kreeg,' zei de profeet, 'ik heb hier nooit echt over nagedacht.'

'Het klinkt wel logisch,' zei de voorganger, 'en zeer profetisch, en ik ben voor vijvennegentig procent overtuigd, maar ik wil en moet dit profetisch woord gaan toetsen aan de Bijbel. Ik wil meer Bijbelse fundering hebben, en natuurlijk wil ik het bovenal toetsen aan de Geest.' De profeet knikte. 'Ja,' zei de profeet, 'ook ikzelf zal dit voor de zekerheid nog enkele dagen moeten toetsen. Laten we er ook over vasten, ook opdat Ewald geheel vrij zal komen.'

Hoofdstuk 7. De Inodus

De dag erop wordt Ewald wakker in zijn bed. Hij kan zich van het gebeuren niet veel meer herinneren. Wel voelt hij zich anders, en weet hij dat het over Egypte ging. Op straat ziet hij Egyptische kruizen op hoofden van mensen verschijnen. Hij vraagt zich af wat dat betekent. Als hij de profeet opbelt, vertelt deze hem dat mensen om hem heen als het kruis van Egypte zijn, die hem in een bepaalde slavernij en traditie houden, maar dit kruis zal tot zegen worden.

Ewald besluit zich te verdiepen in het Egyptische gedachtengoed, puur als cultuur-interesse. Hij verbaasd zich over de overeenkomsten tussen Israel en Egypte, maar ziet ook dat ze verschillen hebben en elkaar aanvullen. Ewald voelt rust. Deze oude vijand begint meer en meer als vriend te zijn. Op godsdienstig gebied heeft Ewald nog veel tegenzin en bedenkingen en besluit om gewoon onderzoek te doen om de kennis te verrijken, opdat geen enkel vooroordeel hem kan misleiden. Hij herinnert zich Jezus die voor hem stond en hem Zijn beenderen toonde, zeggende : het is Sebek, het gebeente van God. Liggen er in Egypte de schatten van Gods diepere wezen ? Uiteindelijk was de Egyptische wortel zeer duidelijk, en dat begon al bij Abraham, bij Jozef en uiteindelijk bij Mozes, de grondlegger, die een Egyptische prins werd. Het duizelde allemaal voor zijn ogen. De fundamenten liggen in Egypte, en Ewald herinnerde de theologen die zeiden dat het paradijs in Egypte lag. Hadden ze vaker met Egypte te maken gehad dan ze dachten ?

Ewald besloot naar Egypte te gaan. Hij wilde nu echt confronteren datgene wat zijn gedachtenleven en geloofsleven zo overhoop had gegooid. Hij besloot naar de tempel van Horus te gaan, die als een Egyptische heenwijzing naar Jezus Christus was, om daar de nacht door te brengen. Er stonden grote beelden van de god om de tempel heen. Het waren beelden als van een valk. Ewald had van de autoriteiten toestemming gekregen om in een tentje daar de nacht door te brengen. Ewald vertelde hen dat hij een christelijke journalist was. Midden in de nacht hoorde hij gekrijs, en liep uit zijn tent. Een reusachtige valk stond voor hem. Maar deze valk had handen, en deze handen bloedden. 'Sebek is mijn gebeente,' zei de verschijning.

'Mijn Christus bloedt niet meer,' sprak Ewald rustig, 'want alles is volbracht.' Toen sprak de valk : 'Ik heb meerdere delen. Mijn kruis heeft meerdere delen.' Toen vertrok de valk heel rustig. De valk was reusachtig, en verdween door de muren. Ewald wist nog

steeds niet goed wat hij hier nu van moest denken, maar hij wilde het allemaal meemaken voor zijn onderzoek. Hij wilde zelf onderzoeken en ervaren welke plaats Egypte zou hebben in Gods Heilsplan, en misschien zelfs in Gods Identiteit.

De dag erna ging Ewald naar de tempel van Sebek. Weer kwam het gevoel over hem heen alsof hij een afgodendienaar was, of een afgodenzoeker, maar steeds weer prentte hij zich in dat hij een onderzoeker was. Hij hield zich vast aan de tekst : 'Onderzoekt alle dingen, en behoudt het goede.' Daar was hij nu mee bezig, onderzoeken, om het goede te behouden. Maar de aanklachten waren nog niet voorbij. Hij werd aangeklaagd door de tekst : 'Waarmee gij omgaat wordt gij besmet.' Ja, en dan helpt bidden niet zoveel. Toen hij bij de tempel van Sebek was aangekomen omhulde hem een diepe rust. Het was alsof hij hier het paradijs voelde. Of was Sebek de slang van het paradijs ? Nee, Sebek was een krokodil, of een man met een krokodillenkop. Maar de slang in het paradijs had toch eerst benen, voordat hij vervloekt werd en op zijn buik moest gaan om stof te eten ?

Ook hier waren veel beelden. Van God mochten geen beeltenissen gemaakt worden, maar goed, dit was een deel van God, Zijn gebeente. Wat een geheimenis, en wat prachtig, als het allemaal waar zou zijn. Ook hier mocht hij de nacht doorbrengen. Midden in de nacht werd hij wakker, en keek naar het hoge plafond waar grote openingen inzaten. Hij zag de zwartblauwe lucht, en wat raven die daar vlogen. Of waren het geen raven ? Er gebeurde niets, en eigenlijk was Ewald een beetje teleurgesteld. Ook ging hij naar de tempels van andere Egyptische goden voor onderzoek, en hij schreef veel op. Inmiddels was het een dik boekwerk geworden. In sommige tempels of piramides mocht hij niet de nacht doorbrengen. Toen hij thuis was gekomen, na een lange reis terug, zat hij erover te denken om zijn reportage als boek te laten drukken. Natuurlijk werd het een boek met veel vraagtekens, maar het gaf hem uiteindelijk weer wat rust. Hij was niet bang te twijfelen. Het geloof was toch in ieder geval zo iets ongrijpbaars.

In zijn boek beschreef hij ook zijn ervaringen, en dat wat eraan vooraf ging. Hij noemde het boek 'De Inodus,' wat zoiets als de intocht betekende. Het boek sloeg erg aan in de charismatische wereld en pinksterwereld, en was niet alleen bedoeld om Israel en Egypte weer bij elkaar te brengen, maar ook de pinksterwereld en de charismatische wereld. Het boek had dan ook een duidelijke brugfunctie, maar was nog steeds erg neutraal geschreven, en dat was misschien ook wel de reden dat het zo aansloeg. Ook Egyptische christenen vonden in het boek veel van henzelf terug, dat wat ze ooit eens hadden achtergelaten. Veel christenen waren benieuwd over hun Egyptische wortels. Egypte werd in hun beleving steeds meer een belangrijk fundament van hun geloofs-achtergrond, een belangrijke bron waar het allemaal in begon. En ze begonnen te ervaren hoe lief God Egypte had, nog steeds.

Hoofdstuk 8. De muur

Op een nacht werd Ewald wakker. Voor hem stond de geest die hem vroeger vaak lastig viel. 'Ha, ik ben Kitket, ken je me nog ?' Ewald voelde heel duidelijk een muur tussen hem en de geest. Nee, Egypte haatte hij niet meer. Ook achtte hij Egypte niet meer als 'minder' dan Israel, maar besefte, ervoer en geloofde nu dat Egypte een geheime bron van Gods onderdelen was, als een geestelijk kruis, een dieper en rijker kruis dan alleen

maar het materiele kruis. Dit was het kruis wat ook al in het Oude Testament bestond, waaraan Jozef was genageld, en wat hem tot heerlijkheid bracht. Zou Egypte dan weer de voedselschuur zijn voor Israel ? Zou Genesis weer wederkeren als de Inodus ? Het waren dingen waar Ewald veel over nadacht, maar waarop hij maar geen duidelijk antwoord kreeg. Hij hoorde de stem van Kitket niet eens meer, maar was onhuld door de rijkdommen die hij had ontdekt. Plotseling greep hij naar zijn bijbel, die op het nachtkastje lag, en de letters THOTH verschenen erop. Was Thoth niet de god van het archief ? Ewald knipperde met zijn ogen.

Mozes groeide op aan het Egyptisch hof waar hij werd onderwezen. Als hij niet was gered door een Egyptische prinses, dan was er nooit een Mozes geweest, en misschien ook nooit een Bijbel. De invloed van Egypte was dus duidelijk. Mozes had zijn leven aan Egypte te danken. En deze geredde Egyptische prins, de prins van Egypte, had zo'n groot deel van het Woord geschreven, en het huis van God gebouwd, de tabernakel. Ewald had ook wat Egyptische boeken op zijn nachtkastje liggen. Ze begonnen te glimmen. Plotseling stond er een gestalte voor hem. Het was Thoth. 'Ik ben het bloed van Christus, het Woord,' sprak de gestalte. Ewald beefde in zijn bed. Het was alsof zijn bed trilde. 'Wij zijn allen delen van Christus,' sprak de gestalte. 'In Egypte ligt het geheime Woord van God, de vertaling. Daarom : profeteer, profeteer, want dit is het getuigenis van Christus, voor hen die Hem liefhebben.' En toen vaagde de gestalte weg. Ewald wist niet of hij nu net de duivel of God had gezien, maar dat het indrukwekkend was, dat was duidelijk. 'We zien wel,' dacht Ewald, toch wat nuchterder wordend over deze dingen. Hij voelde en wist dat hij beschermd werd.

Hoofdstuk 9. De Sebek-profeet

Er was een groep rondom het boek van Ewald die het allemaal begon uit te werken en tot radicale conclusies kwam, maar Ewald wilde daar niet zoveel van weten. Het boek behoorde volgens hem een vraagteken te zijn, en geen antwoord. Spoedig was er een nieuwe beweging gekomen binnen de pinkstergemeente en de charismatische gemeente, en die groep ging samen. Ze noemden zichzelf Inodus gemeente, Egyptische gemeente, of gewoon Koptische gemeente. Ook kwamen er Bijbelscholen uit die koker, genaamd Egyptische Bijbelschool, Inodus Bijbelschool, Koptische Bijbelschool en nog wat andere namen. Ewald vond hen veel te radicaal, en zelfs de charismatische voorganger en de profeet vonden het te ver gaan. Maar wel ontstonden er enkele lichtere stromingen in die hoek, en daar kon Ewald zich wel in vinden, evenals de charismatische voorganger en de profeet. Veel weerstand was er in ieder geval toch nog wel tegen dit soort groeperingen. Veel voorgangers en dominees spraken over een nieuwe secte, en nog gevaarlijk ook. Ewald vond dit verschrikkelijk overdreven.

Ewald zat samen met de charismatische voorganger en de profeet in een zogenaamde tussengemeente, die zich nog wat neutraler opstelde. Op een dag kwam er een profeet binnen van een streng charismatische gemeente. De man had een baard en begon direkt te profeteren : 'Als jullie niet met deze onzin stoppen, dan zal God Zijn Geest weghalen, en Zijn kandelaar.' Ewald keek de man een beetje vragend aan. 'Hoe weet je dat ?' riep iemand anders naar de man. Maar al snel was de man vertrokken.

In de wat minder neutrale gemeentes van het Egyptische Verband binnen de

pinkstergemeente en de charismatische gemeente begonnen ook strenge profeten op te staan, die zich al snel als oordeelsprofeten ontpopten. Zij zagen de Inodus als noodzakelijk voor de gemeente, en bestempelden hen die zich niet daartoe voegden als 'afvallig'. Ewald zat een beetje tussen twee vuren in.

Nu al de delen van Christus bekend begonnen te worden en ieder weer een andere prioriteit of stokpaardje had, begonnen ook in de Egyptische Verbandsgemeentes steeds meer stromingen te komen, die zich op hun boord ook weer vertakten. Zo waren er Sebeks-gemeentes, en Bastets-gemeentes en zo verder. Ewald hield zich een beetje buiten de boot, maar de streng profetische stromingen binnen die gemeentes begonnen hem wel een beetje te beangstigen. Hij vond hen fanatiekelingen, en zelfs in sommige extreme gevallen sectarisch. Zij stonden in zijn ogen echt in het gevaar om misleid te worden. Sommige groepen waren zo fanatiek dat ze geweld niet schuwden. Ja, het was een tijd waarin het gevaarlijk werd om nog neutraal te zijn, zelfs binnen het Egyptische Verband.

Op een dag kwam er weer een profeet binnen in Ewalds neutrale gemeente. Ditmaal was het een profeet die pro-Egypte was, eentje van de oordeelsprofetische gemeente binnen de zeer grote Sebek-beweging. Al snel begon de Sebek-profeet stoelen en tafels om te gooien, en liep naar voren. Bij de microfoon aangekomen duwde hij de voorganger opzij. Even was het stil, en iedereen luisterde naar hem : 'Geen tijd meer voor neutraliteit, want dat is afgoderij,' bulderde hij. 'Weten jullie dan niet dat het gebeente Gods hard moet zijn om te kunnen blijven staan ? Sebek is koning, het gebeente van Christus, dat aan het kruis niet verbroken werd. Hij dan heeft Seth, het kwaad, verslagen. Maar jullie zijn allemaal volgelingen van Seth. Weten jullie dan niet dat Sebek de lauwen zal uitspuwen ?' Plotseling begon er een vuur te stromen uit zijn hand. Ewald schrok. Had deze man gelijk ? Waren ze te lauw ? Ze waren toch goed op weg ?

Iemand riep : 'Ach, wat, luister niet naar hem, die anti-christ. Het is allemaal nog niet bewezen.' Maar het vuur vloeide op diegene af, en verslond de persoon die deze woorden sprak. Iemand anders zei dat die persoon niet tot de gemeente behoorde, maar tot een behoudende pinkstergemeente, afkerig van het Egyptische Verband. 'Heb ik daar iets mee te maken ?' vroeg de profeet nors. 'Alsof jullie gemeente van het Verband is. Jullie zijn neutralen, en die kan God in Zijn koninkrijk niet gebruiken.' Maar toen stond Ewald op, en zei luid : 'Wij hier zijn mensen open voor Egypte, open voor Sebek, open voor Gods heilsplannen met Egypte en Zijn eventuele Egyptische Identiteit, maar wij willen deze dingen graag onderzoeken. Wij hebben nog twijfels en vraagtekens. Velen onder ons zijn verward, en weten niet wat ze precies moeten doen. Is daar ook ruimte voor ?'

'Oh ja, zeker wel,' zegt de Sebek-profeet, 'daarom zal ik zeer voorzichtig zijn. Maar hen die spelletjes spelen met God zullen het weten.' Toen stapte de Sebek-profeet van de microfoon weg, en was al snel vertrokken.

Hoofdstuk 10. De gebeds-avond

Velen zaten verslagen op hun stoelen. Als het zo moest, dan hoefde het voor hen niet meer. Bang waren ze, voor een nieuw bezoek van een Sebek-profeet. 'Laten we hen gewoon de ruimte geven om te spreken,' stelde iemand voor.

Ewald had diep van binnen een hekel aan zulke arrogante profeten. Ze dachten dat zij altijd gelijk hadden, en dat zij over anderen mochten beslissen, alsof ze God Zelf waren. Ewald had er flink de pest in. Maar wat kon hij tegen zulken doen ? Ze hadden vuur-gaven, of die nu echt waren of van de duivel : vuur is vuur.

Ook hadden ze ijs-gaven. Ze konden anderen met gemak laten bevriezen, tot aan de dood toe. Er werden veel boeken geschreven over zulke gevaarlijke profeten. Velen sloten zich bij zulke profeten aan, alleen uit angst. Ewald besloot om eens te praten met de profeet waarmee hij bevriend was. Maar deze liet weten niets tegen zulke profeten te kunnen doen. Die profeten waren in zijn ogen te sterk. Dat bevreemde en bevreesde Ewald zeer. Als die profetische vriend door God zou worden geleid, dan was er toch geen probleem ? Maar de profeet liet hem weten zelf ook in een geloofsstrijd te zitten, en dat profeten nooit te licht moesten denken over de krachten, machten, en mogelijkheden van andere profeten. De profeet was er nog niet over uit. De profeet besloot zich te vernederen voor God, en te vasten voor een antwoord.

De profeet stelde voor een gebeds-avond te houden bij hem thuis, voor antwoord. De charismatische voorganger zou ook komen. Toen ze met z'n drieen in gebed waren, sprak de profeet : 'En dit zegt de Heer : Ik ben een werk aan het doen. Er moeten vele zuiveringen zijn, opdat Mijn Geheimenissen geopenbaard zullen worden.' Later kreeg de profeet het woord dat ze geen diensten mochten houden, want dat zou de wespen aantrekken. Profeten zouden aangetrokken worden tot de gevestigde ordes om daar de boel overhoop te halen. De drie moesten zich gewoon terugtrekken.

Weer zouden ze deze woorden de komende dagen gaan toetsen, maar al snel zagen ze er wat in. Het zou te gevaarlijk zijn om nog in gemeentes te komen met al die profeten-invasies. Ze besloten om een tijdje in dit huis te blijven om samen te bidden.

Op een nacht verscheen Sebek aan Ewald. Dit was dus het gebeente van Christus, het ongebroken bot. Voor Ewald was het als het dal van de dorre doodsbeenderen. Ineens was het alsof Ewald te drinken kreeg, en de beenderen begonnen recht overeind te komen. 'Bastet !' werd er geroepen. Die kende Ewald wel, dat was de kattengod, ook de god van vruchtbaarheid en kunst ... en ... 'Ik ben het vlees van Christus,' sprak een stem. Een vreemde, wazige gestalte kwam tot Ewald en bedekte de beenderen. Weer was het alsof Ewald te drinken kreeg. 'Verzoen Sebek met Bastet,' fluisterde de stem. Toen kwam Thoth naar voren, en het bloed begon te stromen. Het wezen van vlees en botten begon te bewegen, en ogen begonnen rond te kijken. 'Nu nog Anubis,' sprak een stem. Uit de hemel kwam licht, en kwam over het vlees heen. Nu had het wezen van vlees en botten een stem. Anubis was een zwarte hond of jakhals, of een man met een hondekop, en hij zorgde voor de doden. Hij bracht ze voor de tronen van recht. Weer kwam er licht uit de hemel, en buiten begon het te donderen. Ewald schrok. Wat was dit allemaal ? 'Verzoen hen allemaal,' sprak de stem.

De volgende ochtend vertelde Ewald zijn droom. De profeet knikte, en zei : 'Het kruis is zo diep gegaan dat het de delen van God heeft gescheiden. Nu zullen die delen met elkaar verbonden moeten worden. Dat is een heilige en diepe opdracht. Ook de charismatische voorganger knikte. 'Ik weet het niet,' sprak Ewald. Ewald had zoveel twijfels. Hij voelde zich verscheurd. De charismatische voorganger maakte hem duidelijk dat hij de verscheurdheid van God voelde.

Hoe zouden ze God moeten verzoenen ? Dat was de vraag. De Sebek-profeten wilden veelal niet van verzoening weten. Zij staarden zich bijna blind op Sebek.

Hoofdstuk 11. Het Sebek-kruis

Eén van de nachten daarna had Ewald een andere droom. Een vrouw in de verte zong hem toe. Ze was de was aan het ophangen, maar het voelde aan alsof ze geheel voor hem zong. Ewald kwam dichterbij, maar toen de vrouw hem zag, rende ze van hem weg. 'Zij is de Geest,' sprak een stem. 'De wat ? ...' vroeg Ewald. Ewald begon haar achterna te rennen, maar alles werd zo zacht, dat Ewald op een gegeven moment niet meer vooruit kwam. Hij was als in een moeras gekomen. Daar kwam Sebek, klaar om hem te verwoesten. Waarom wilde Sebek hem verslinden ? 'Hij is de toorn van God, de rechter, maar ook de beschermer, de zachtmoedige, de advocaat, de doorgronder. Het is een heilige verslinding.' Het deed Ewald geen pijn, en hij voelde zich goed, bij dit wezen. Weer zag hij de vrouw, en ging voorzichtig op haar af. Ditmaal bleef ze staan, en nodigde ze hem uit in haar huis. 'Het Sebek-kruis verscheurt en verzoent,' sprak een stem. 'Sebek-kruis ?' dacht Ewald ...

Weer vertelde hij de volgende dag wat hij gedroomd had. Zijn vrienden vonden het een sprekende droom. Met z'n drieen besloten ze op zoek te gaan naar het geheim van die verzoening. Ze zouden hiertoe naar Egypte gaan.

Na een lange reis kwamen ze aan bij de Sebek-tempel. Ze wilden meer weten over het Sebek-kruis, en besloten onderzoek te doen in de tempel, en alles te lezen wat er maar over hem te lezen was. Buiten waren wat priesters een exorcisme aan het doen. Ze droegen een vreemd kruis in de vorm van een Sebek-krokodil. Er stonden ook een aantal tekens op. De drie kwamen dichterbij, en vroegen aan de priesters over het kruis. Eén van de priesters wilde wel even met hen praten. Na een kort gesprek nodigde hij hen uit om mee te komen naar zijn huis. In zijn huis stonden een heleboel Sebek-beelden, groot en klein, en aan de muren hingen enkele Sebek-kruizen. De man was van een conservatief Sebek-priesterschap, en vertelde dat hij ook geruime tijd in een conservatief Sebek-klooster had geleefd. Van hem hadden ze dus niets te vrezen. De man vertelde hen duizenduit over het Sebek-kruis en zijn betekenis. De drie waren één en al oor. Aan het einde van de dag kregen ze een kamer toegewezen op de hogere verdieping, en hier konden ze voorlopig logeren voor het onderzoek. De Sebek-priester was erg gastvrij, en bijna het tegendeel van de Sebek-profeet die ze hadden ontmoet. Ewald had ook een Sebek-beeld op zijn kamer. Het maakte hem rustig. Als materiaal een goddelijk doel had, dan was het gezegend. Ewald was zich bewust van de genezende krachten die uit het beeld kwamen. Ewald kende de tabernakel vanuit de exodus, maar vroeg zich af hoe de tabernakel van de inodus zou zijn. Daar zou dit beeld zeker instaan, omdat het beeld het gebeente van Christus vertegenwoordigde.

Toen ze gingen slapen kreeg Ewald een verschrikkelijke nachtmerrie. Hij moest voor Christus verschijnen. Ewald werd door een norse engel binnengeleid in een reusachtige hal met een reusachtige troon. Ewald voelde zich bijna verdrinken in de atmosfeer. Overal waren grote gevaarlijke vissen hoog rondom de troon die eruit zagen alsof ze hem elk moment konden aanvallen. Wat moest hij tegen zulke vissen beginnen. In de verte zag hij een grote wazige gestalte als een lichtende wolk. Dit was Christus.

Langzaam werd hij door de reusachtige engel naar voren geleid. Christus opende lange stoffige witte boeken, zeer dik, met goudkleurig lichtende bladzijden. Toen opende Christus zijn mond en zijn stem was als teisterend. 'Alles wat gij hebt gedaan is opgetekend,' sprak Christus bijna krijsend. Het was alsof alle boten in Ewald afbrokkelden. 'Ik zal het vonnis optekenen,' vervolgde Christus. Toen kwam in de verte tussen de vissen door een reusachtig lichtende gestalte. Het was Sebek, en hij dreef naar voren. Ewald was opgelucht. Sebek begon voor Ewald te pleiten, en opende boeken met de goede daden van Ewald. Ewald werd hoe langer hoe rustiger. 'Ik zal het vonnis optekenen,' sprak Christus. 'Gij zijt mijn gebeente.' Toen leek het alsof alles zwart werd voor Ewalds ogen, en hij schrok wakker. Het Sebek-beeld maakte hem rustig. 'Alles is in orde,' zei hij tegen zichzelf. Hij zag nu in wat er zou gebeuren als hij Sebek niet zou betrekken in het oordeel over zijn leven. Het eerste gedeelte zonder Sebek was namelijk verschrikkelijk. Ewald begon te roepen tot Sebek en tot het Sebek-kruis, zo hard, dat even later de priester in zijn kamer stond. De priester stelde hem gerust, en zei dat hij hem wel kon helpen. De priester vertelde na het verhaal gehoord te hebben dat hij als koptisch sebek-priester Ewald wel de handen op kon leggen, zodat hij Sebek zou ontvangen, en zijn gaven. De priester begon te bidden. Zijn handen voelden aan als vuur en ijs. 'Sebek, kom met uw vuur in ijs gemengd,' riep de priester, terwijl hij zijn hand op Ewald's hoofd had gelegd. Ewald was als door de bliksem getroffen en kon inademen, zo diep, zoals nooit tevoren. 'Sebek, het is goed,' zei de priester, 'Gij die het gebeente van Christus zijt.'

Rustig ging Ewald weer slapen. Maar na een tijdje ging Ewald rechtop zitten. Er kwam wat bloed uit zijn mond. Hij riep de priester, en die vertelde hem dat dat heel normaal was. Ewald werd namelijk bevrijd en gezuiverd.

Hoofdstuk 12. De arrestatie

De volgende dag waren de vrienden van Ewald een beetje sceptisch. Moest het allemaal zo ver gaan ? En dat bloed uit z'n mond ? Kwamen ze niet gewoon om onderzoek te doen. Maar toen de priester hen vroeg of ze Sebek wilden aanvaarden en ontvangen als het gebeente van Christus twijfelden ze geen moment. De priester legde hen de handen op, en zij begonnen te bidden. Op dat moment kwam er een vrouw binnenrennen, en schreeuwde : 'brand, brand.' Bij de buren was brand uitgebroken. De priester snelde er naartoe, en genas hen van brandwonden, nadat hij de brand had geblust.

Toen de drie weer terug waren in eigen land wilden ze zich aansluiten bij een conservatieve Sebek-gemeente om nog meer te weten te komen, en om misschien wat uit te wisselen. Ze wisten dat het gevaarlijk kon zien met invallen van profeten, die zich steeds meer als de politie begonnen te gedragen, maar ze hadden meer zelfvertrouwen nu ze zelf door Sebek waren aangeraakt. Ze voelden zich nu zelf ook een beetje als advocaat, omdat de extreme Sebek-profeten in hun ogen te wild, roekeloos en radicaal waren. Ze voelden zich duidelijk meer op hun gemak in de conservatieve Sebek-groep.

Al snel werden ze op het podium geroepen om hun ervaringen te vertellen. Tijdens hun getuigenis stond er één van de aanwezigen op. Het was een extreme Sebek-profeet die zich zo ook ontpopte. Hij begon hen uit te schelden, en een vuur begon uit zijn handen te komen. Ewald begon richting het vuur te blazen en bemerkte dat er vuur en ijs uit zijn

eigen mond kwam. De Sebek-profeet schrok, omdat het vuur van Ewald zijn vuur begon te verslinden. 'Het vuur moet vermengd zijn met ijs,' sprak Ewald. 'Zo kun je een ware Sebek-profeet herkennen, en daarmee zul je macht hebben over de valse Sebek-profeten.' De drie begonnen de gemeente te onderwijzen, en daarna riepen ze hen naar voren die Sebek wilden aanvaarden en ontvangen. Een grote stoet kwam naar voren, ook de extreme Sebek-profeet, en zij werden allemaal vervuld door Sebek als het gebeente van Christus.

En zo reisden Ewald en zijn vrienden gemeente na gemeente af om over Sebek en het Sebek-kruis te vertellen, en om de gaven door te geven. Ook werd Ewald uitgenodigd tot de wat extremere Sebek-gemeenten. Maar er waren een aantal Sebek-profeten die geheel niet onder de indruk waren van Ewald's vertoningen, en op een dag zochten ze Ewald op in de gemeente waar hij sprak. Ze kwamen in een busje en schuwden geen geweld. Ze werden weleens Sebek-militairen genoemd, en zij wilden niets liever dan het hele land, en zelfs de hele wereld, onderwerpen aan hun gezag. Ze hadden legerpakken aan en zonnebrillen op, en al snel stonden ze binnen. Er werden schoten gelost, en enkele gemeenteleden vielen op de grond. Uit Ewald's ogen stroomde groen vuurijs, als brandend ijs, om de Sebek-militairen te slaan. Maar een paar militairen waren al bijna bij Ewald aangekomen en grepen hem vast. Het was als bijtend vuur, en een worsteling volgde. 'Verrader,' riepen ze, 'we zullen je vernietigen.' Maar ineens kwam er zoveel kracht in Ewald's handen dat hij ze met één ruk tegen de muur aan slingerde. 'Bij het kruis van Sebek bezweer ik jullie !' riep Ewald. Ze konden zich niet meer bewegen. Inmiddels was er politie binnengekomen, en ook Ewald werd gearresteerd. Ewald werd kwaad, omdat hij in zijn ogen niets had gedaan, maar enkele omstanders vertelden dat hij militairen tegen de muur had geslingerd. 'Zelfverdediging,' zei Ewald. Maar toch moest hij mee. Aangekomen op het politie-bureau werden de agenten zich gewaar van het Sebek-evangelie. Maar de agenten namen Ewald mee naar een cel. Hij moest zich maar voor de rechter verantwoorden.

De rechter begreep heel goed dat het zelfverdediging was, en gunde Ewald recht. De rechter kende de militairistische beweging in de Sebek-orde, en vond hen gevaarlijk genoeg. Hij vroeg zelfs aan Ewald of hij nog bescherming nodig had.

Ewald kon gaan, en zette zijn werk voort. Er waren nog wel vaker relletjes met Sebek-militairen, maar al gauw begonnen ze hem toch te vrezen.

Hoofdstuk 13. Het eiland van Bastet

Niet alleen bij Justitie, maar ook in de politiek kreeg Ewald steeds meer aanzien, en het duurde niet lang of Ewald had een politieke partij opgericht : De CSP, de Conservatieve Sebek Partij. Ewald streefde naar een Conservatief Sebek Politie-orgaan, en naar een Conservatief Sebek Leger-orgaan. Ewald wilde de extreme vormen van Sebek Politiek laten verbieden waar die gevaarlijk werd. Maar er was een nog groter gevaar : daar waar zulke Sebekieten zich met politiek gingen bezighouden. Als tegengif tegen Ewalds hervormingsdrang kwam er een Militairistische Sebek-partij opzetten genaamd het Militairistisch Sebek Verbond, de MSV. De MSV wilde alle vormen van democratie uitbannen, om een strakke dictatuur op te stellen. De MSV zaaide zo'n angst dat men bijna gedwongen werd op hen te stemmen. Er was een theorie dat zij die van een andere

partij waren door de MSV uit de weg geruimd zouden worden. Velen probeerden de partij te verbieden, maar al snel kreeg de partij zoveel stemmen dat ze onmogelijk nog konden verliezen. Men vroeg zich af hoe het kon dat ze zoveel stemmen hadden. Uit het buitenland kwamen leden over om de partij in het land te versterken. Uiteindelijk kwam een buitenlandse partijleider van de MSV aan de macht. Ewald werd tweede, en werd tweede premier. Tijdens een rit naar het politieke bestuur werd er een aanslag op Ewald gepleegd van zo'n groot kaliber dat Ewald het niet overleefde. Snel waren enkele conservatieve Sebek-profeten bij zijn lichaam om het te herbergen. De avond daarop werd een wake gehouden. Ze zouden de hele nacht doorbidden om Ewald op te wekken. Midden in de nacht kreeg een profeet een woord van Sebek dat het zover was. Hij liep op het levenloze lichaam van Ewald af, legde zijn hand op zijn hoofd, en riep : 'Ewald, in de Naam van Sebek, het gebeente van Christus, sta op, door het kruis van Sebek.' Maar er gebeurde niets. Teleurgesteld ging iedereen weer zitten.

Maar toen kwam er een gestalte binnen als een reusachtige kat. Z'n ledematen waren gebogen, en hij sprak : 'Ik ben Bastet, het vlees van Christus,' en hij boog over het lichaam heen, en blies erop. Direkt begon het lichaam te bewegen, en toen blies Bastet adem door de neus van het lichaam, en Ewald begon weer te ademen. 'Laat Bastet verzoend zijn met Sebek,' riep Bastet. 'Gij Sebekieten, komt dan allen tot Mijn eiland in de Rode Zee, want dit was het oorspronkelijke paradijs. En ja, er zijn hier vele bomen met verboden vruchten waarvan gij niet zult eten. Alles zult gij ontleden en een groter getal geven, want alles heeft meerdere delen. Zo zult gij niet meer verslaafd zijn aan een getal.' En de Geest leidde Ewald en zijn groep tot de Rode Zee, en gaf hen een roeischip. En zo leidde de Geest Ewald tot het eiland van Bastet, het vroegere paradijs. En zij zagen daar veel bomen met slangen erin, waarvan zij niet mochten eten. En midden op dat eiland was een tempel van Bastet, met daar omheen vele kloosters. En een priester kwam naar buiten, klaar om hen allen de handen op te leggen. En zij vielen allen onder de kracht.

Ewald schrok wakker. Wat had hij vreemd gedroomd, zeg. Of was het geen droom ? En waar was hij ? Een Bastet-priesteres stond voor hem met een schaal vol fruit. Tegen de muur stond een enorm Bastet-beeld. De priesteres ging op zijn bed zitten en pakte zijn hand. Zijn hand beefde. Hij kreeg een armband om waarvan de uiteinden elkaar niet raakten. 'Dat is de Geb-Noet-Armband,' zei de priesteres. Ewald haalde de armband er weer vanaf. 'Waarom moet ik dat ding dragen ?' De priesteres keek hem doordringend aan, en sprak : 'Opdat je weet dat Christus vele delen heeft. Je moet je niet op één deel blind staren.' Ewald nam wat van het fruit. Zelfs het fruit bestond uit meerdere deeltjes. 'Midden op het eiland, in de tempel van Bastet, daar is de Geb-Noet-Bron, dat is het hart van Christus. Dit hart bestaat uit de lever, Geb, die de aardgod is, en de longen, Noet, die de luchtgodin is. Door het Sebek-kruis werden zij gescheiden, en door het Sebek-kruis worden zij weer verzoend. Ewald nam nog wat fruit. De priesteres leidde hem in de avond naar de tempel, en naar de bron. Dit was een groot vuur, als brandend ijs. Ook lag er fruit tussen. 'Ga in de bron,' zei de priesteres, 'opdat je rein zult zijn. Kom tot het hart van Christus.' Voorzichtig stapte Ewald naar binnen. Een vreemd gevoel maakte zich van hem meester. Het was als een tunnel die onder de aarde leidde. In een open ruimte, als een grote grot, zag hij al z'n vrienden terug. Ze waren blij hem te zien. Ineens hoorden ze een luid gegil. Het was Bastet, en achter Bastet was Anubis. Ook Anubis krijste. Een deur ging achter hen open. 'Kom,' zeiden ze beiden. Ewald en zijn

vrienden gingen door de deur naar binnen. Hier was een poel waar Sebek in lag. 'Ga in de poel,' sprak Bastet. Het zag er een beetje modderig uit, maar al snel lieten enkelen zich in de poel zakken. Ze gingen kopje onder. Niemand wist waar ze terecht zouden komen, maar één voor één volgden ze elkaar. Weer kwamen ze uit op een open plek, waar alles groen was. Ook hier was veel fruit. Het was als een wereld onder de aarde. De zon scheen hier groen licht, en er stonden overal vreemdsoortige bomen. Ewald schepte water uit een groene rivier en begon te drinken. Ook de anderen begonnen te drinken. In de verte kwam een lichtende gestalte aanlopen in prachtig wit. Het was Jezus Christus. 'Mijn delen hebt gij aanvaard, en daarom hebt gij Mij aanvaard,' sprak Jezus. 'Zij die mijn delen niet hebben aanvaard, hebben Mij niet aanvaard.' En Jezus liep naar de groene rivier, waar Hij langzaam in afdaalde, en sprak : 'Volg mij.' En Jezus leidde hen al zwemmend tot een grote zee met veel modderbanken, en tussen de modderbanken op een verhoging stond Sebek. 'Dit dan is de nieuwe ark,' sprak Jezus. En zij klommen allen op de Sebek, en hij begon voort te bewegen.

Einde

De Terugkeer van Canon

Hoofdstuk 1. De Helletenen

Hoofdstuk 2. De Ontsnapping

Hoofdstuk 3. De exorcist en de dominee

Hoofdstuk 4. Het vreemde mengsel

Hoofdstuk 1. De helletenen

Het was warm op het schip. Canon voerde zijn mannen aan ... Hij stond te schelden op het dak dichtbij het roer. De stuurman rilde. Op het dek vielen enkele mannen neer. Snel werden zij overboord gegooid. Er waren veel roeiers. Ook stonden er enkele mannen bij de kanonnen. Canon begon te krijsen, en weer vielen een aantal mannen neer. Sommigen waren het dek aan het schrobben. Canon werd hoe langer hoe woester. De roeiers hadden vreemde pakken aan, die door een soort ijzeren tenen vastgeklikt waren. Van die helse tenen kwam een enorme stank. Altijd als Canon zo begon te krijsen werden die helletenen vuurheet. Als de roeiers zouden proberen te ontsnappen, dan zouden de helletenen voor explosies zorgen. Ook Canon zelf droeg een pak met helletenen, maar deze waren als botten van een vreemd skelet. Ook het schip was gemaakt van vreemdsoortige helletenen, en er kwam een enorme helse stank van het schip af. De helletenen vormden ritsen, raders, en allerlei soorten richels waardoor dingen in elkaar geklikt konden worden. De helletenen dienden als de openers en de sluiters op het schip, waardoor dingen bewogen konden worden, en waardoor deuren open en dicht konden.

Vaak hield Canon plundertochten langs de kusten, en maalde de bewoners tot schatten. Daar had Canon speciale maalmolens voor. De slachtoffers werden erin gestopt en werden tot een vreemd mengsel gemaald wat later met een goudlaag werd bedekt. De schatten bracht hij altijd naar zijn eilanden. Hier had hij vele tempels waar de schatten en beelden in werden geplaatst. Ja, Canon was een gehaat man bij de kustbewoners. Maar vele eilandbewoners hadden hem lief. Hij bracht hen altijd vele schatten. Maar op een dag toen Canon merkte dat er niet veel kustbewoners meer over waren begon Canon oorlog te voeren tegen de verschillende eilanden. Canon maakte sieraden van hun botten, en bouwde zijn schip er verder mee uit. Canon werd hierdoor meer en meer de Schrik der Zeeen. Zijn schip werd het schip der kannibalen genoemd.

Een dominee schrikt wakker van z'n droom. Hij had zijn preek de dag ervoor voorbereid en opgeschreven, en vandaag was het zondag. Zijn vrouw slaapt nog. De dominee staat op, en kleedt zich aan. Het is nog vroeg, en de dominee wil nog even zijn preek doornemen, maar hij voelt zich zo ontzettend moe dat hij weer in zijn bed gaat liggen ... Weer zakt de dominee in slaap en droomt verder ...

Ditmaal bevindt de dominee zich op het schip van Canon. Canon begint tegen de dominee te krijsen, en de dominee bemerkt dat hij een vreemd pak aanheeft, ook met ijzeren helletenen. 'Jij gaat vandaag preken,' zegt Canon ... De dominee knikt ongemakkelijk. Canon loopt heel langzaam op hem af, en wrijft over zijn pak heen. Een vreemd gevoel komt over de dominee. De dominee kan zich niet bewegen, maar even later merkt de dominee dat zijn arm vooruit gaat, terwijl het overal op zijn arm begint te klikken. De helletenen beginnen hun werk te doen. 'Zo,' zegt Canon, 'dit even zodat je niet van het boekje afwijkt.' Dan geeft Canon hem een duw, zo hard, dat de dominee over de reling vliegt. En als de dominee dan het water raakt wordt hij wakker. Maar wat is dat ? Niet zijn vrouw ligt naast hem, maar Canon. De dominee geeft een schreeuw, en direkt grijpt Canon hem vast ... 'Weet je nog, je moet vandaag preken.' De dominee begint te zweten. Dan begint de dominee heel verward te schreeuwen, terwijl Canon

hard begint te lachen ... Uit zijn mond stroomt een dunne straal lava. 'Wat wil je nou, dominee,' fluistert Canon .. Maar van de schrik kan de dominee niks zeggen ... De dominee is in een shock ... Dan wordt de dominee echt wakker ... Zijn vrouw slaapt nog ... Weer wil de dominee opstaan om zijn preek voor te bereiden ... Even denkt hij nog terug aan die nare droom als een flits, maar dan kleedt hij zich rustig aan, en wil zijn papieren pakken ... Maar waar zijn die papieren nu ? Ach, de dominee kent het wel uit zijn hoofd.

In de dienst die zondag is het druk. De dominee preekt als vanouds. Er zit een man achter in de kerk met zijn haar geheel voor zijn gezicht. De dominee kijkt zo af en toe naar hem, maar gaat rustig door met spreken ... Dan, na een tijdje buigt de man naar voren, en komt dan weer omhoog, terwijl de haren voor zijn gezicht wegglijden ... De dominee kijkt recht in het gezicht van een skelet. De dominee schrikt hevig, maar probeert zich goed te houden. Hij denkt dat hij het zich verbeeld, en neemt een slok water. Maar de man begint naar voren te lopen, en even later rent hij op de dominee af. De dominee slaakt een gil, en ... wordt weer wakker.

De dominee stapt uit bed, doet haastig zijn kleren aan, en zucht diep ... Snel grijpt hij zijn papieren ... En terwijl hij zijn preek doorleest kalmeert hij ... Maar er staan wel ineens wat vreemde tekens tussen sommige woorden, en sommige woorden zijn geheel verdwenen ... De dominee legt zijn papieren opzij, en zet wat koffie. Na de koffie gaat hij weer verder met lezen, en probeert de vreemde tekens te ontwijken.

In de dienst is het druk. De dominee bestijgt de preekstoel. Dit gaat erg traag. De dominee vertrekt geen spier. Dan begint het donderende geweld van de preekstoel af te komen, en de dominee reageert zich flink af in hemelse taal en wolkerig schriftgebruik. De dominee preekt over de hel. 'Het schip der kannibalen,' zegt de dominee ineens, maar snel herstelt hij zich, en begint flink te hoesten. Dan gaat hij weer verder met zijn preek, en het tweede deel dondert nog erger dan het eerste deel. In liederlijke taal beschrijft de dominee de afschuwelijkheden van de hel die eeuwig duurt voor de zondaar. 'En wij zijn allen schuldig,' roept de dominee bijna kokhalzend, maar hebben in Christus Jezus ... een ... een' Maar verder komt de dominee niet ... 'Canon is hier,' gilt de dominee alsof hij een demoon is, met een heel hoog piepstemmetje ... Sommige mensen vallen flauw, terwijl er een enorm skelet achter de dominee verschijnt. Met een ruk wordt de dominee als een lappen pop van de preekstoel afgesmeten. En dan spreekt Canon verder met een hoog piepstemmetje : 'Zo, gevallen kerk, jullie slaven van mij ... Werken op het schip der kannibalen zullen jullie, tot in eeuwigheid ... Jullie volgen mij inplaats van Gods Geest, dus ik dacht : 'Laat ik eens voor Gods Geest spelen, haha' Dan stapt Canon langzaam van de preekstoel af, in lang gewaad, terwijl er slangen uit zijn gewaad glijden, en op de kerkgangers afglijden. Overal is er gegil, maar de deuren zijn dicht. Niemand kan ontsnappen.

Weer schrikt de dominee wakker. Zijn vrouw is al lange tijd overleden. Waarom droomde hij dat ze weer naast hem lag ? De dominee zit al jaren in de gevangenis, wegens beschuldigingen. De beschuldigingen zijn nooit bewezen, maar toch ... De dominee had weleens gebeden of de duivel of God, wie dan ook, hem uit de gevangenis zou halen, hij zou diegene volgen voor de rest van zijn leven. De dominee had zijn geloof verloren. Hij zou alleen nog geloven in een mogelijke redder, wie dat dan ook wezen mocht ... Dat kon de dominee niet meer schelen ... De dominee zat hier vanwege valse

beschuldigingen van zijn kerkgenoten ... De dominee wilde niks meer met de kerk te maken hebben ...

Hoofdstuk 2. De Ontsnapping

De nacht daarop had de dominee weer een droom. Canon kwam naar hem toe met een kap op zijn schedel, en sprak : 'Als ik jou nu eens uitleid, zul je mij dan volgen en dienen ?' De dominee knikte. De dag daarop kwam er politie bij de dominee in zijn gevangeniskamer. Ze hadden hun hoofd een beetje gebogen : 'Dominee van Essenveld, wij hebben een enorme fout begaan. Wij hebben nu eindelijk de daders gevonden van de feiten waarvoor u veroordeeld bent. U bent onschuldig.'

'Ja, maar ik ben altijd al onschuldig geweest,' zei de dominee nog steeds gekweld. 'En dat hebben we helaas nu pas ingezien,' zei één van de politie-agenten beschaamd. Snel werd de dominee vrijgelaten en kreeg een flinke schade-vergoeding. De dominee ging in een andere plaats wonen, en deed wat hij Canon had beloofd. Elke zondag had de dominee het over de canon. De kerk zat vaak vol, en de dominee deed zijn uiterste best om zo goed mogelijk de leerstellingen van de canon weer te geven ... Maar nog steeds voelde de dominee zich een gevangene ... Na een bepaalde zondagsdienst schoot de dominee vol. Thuisgekomen sprak de dominee tot Canon : 'Ik weet niet of je me hoort, maar ik kan dit niet volhouden. Ik heb je nu toch wel genoeg terugbetaald ?' Maar ineens herinnerde de dominee dat hij Canon beloofde trouw te blijven. 'Ik dank je voor het uitleiden, maar nu moet ik verder op mijn eigen manier,' sprak de dominee. Die nacht had de dominee een afschuwelijke droom van Canon : 'Ik laat je toch niet meer wakker worden,' bulderde Canon ... 'Je zal altijd blijven slapen, ook als je denkt dat je wakker geworden bent ... Je bent voor mij, en er is geen ontsnapping meer. Je bent een gevallen dominee, en het vuur van de hel behoort je toe ...' De dominee viel op zijn knieen, maar kon niet meer opkomen. 'Op mijn schip zul je werken als roeier,' krijste Canon. Ineens begonnen de ijzeren helletenen op het pak van de dominee heel heet te worden, en Canon drukte hem achter een roeispaan. 'Waar gaan we naartoe ?' vroeg de dominee ... 'Naar Spanje,' krijste Canon ... 'Wat gaan we daar doen ?' vroeg de dominee weer ... 'Dat zul je wel zien,' zei Canon iets rustiger ... 'Roei nu maar ....'

En daar roeide de dominee, tussen al die andere roeiers van Canon ... 'Psst...' fluisterde een roeier naast hem met een vermoeid, vreemd gebruind gezicht ... 'ken je me nog ? We hebben samen op de Theologische Hogeschool gestudeerd ...' De dominee keek eens goed ... 'Frits van Belzen ? Kerel, goed je te zien, maar niet echt op een goede plaats ... Zullen we de benen nemen ?' zei de dominee, terwijl hij weer een sprankje hoop had ... Maar de oude klasgenoot zuchtte diep, en roeide door ... Na een tijdje kwamen ze aan in Spanje ... Hier trok Canon een sinterklaas-pak aan, en de roeiers kregen allemaal zwarte pieten-pakken ... ook de dominee ... Toen vertrok het schip weer, en de dominee wist waar ze nu naartoe zouden gaan ... Canon begon sinterklaasliedjes af te draaien ... 'Wie zoet is krijgt lekkers, wie stout is de roe ...'

Er werd een schot in de lucht gelost. De dominee werd wakker ... Hij lag in de ziekenafdeling van de gevangenis ... Een man stond bij zijn bed die zijn hoofd schudde ... De dominee kende die man niet ... Wat was er gebeurd ? 'Ik moet naar huis,' brulde de dominee ineens met schuim in zijn mond ... Maar hij merkte dat hij aan riemen vastlag. Ineens merkte de dominee dat hij zoveel kracht had dat hij de riemen kon scheuren, en met één ruk stond hij naast zijn bed met schuim in zijn mond. Overal gingen alarms aan, maar de dominee duwde iedereen opzij. De dominee trapte wat deuren in en stond snel op straat ... 'Ik laat me toch niet door deze onzin leiden ?' zei de dominee in zichzelf, en rende op blote voeten door de straat, op weg naar het bos ... In de verte hoorde hij sinterklaasliedjes ... Het was erg koud ... De dominee kende ergens in het bos een geheime schuilplaats wat nog was overgebleven van de oorlog ... De dominee besloot daar een tijdje te wonen ... Terug kon hij niet meer ... Ze zouden hem weer oppakken ... En dat terwijl de dominee niks had gedaan ... Maar ook hier voelde de dominee zich een gevangene ... En hoe moest hij aan voedsel komen ? In de nacht besloot de dominee naar een oude vriend van hem te gaan, die altijd in zijn onschuld had geloofd ... Daar zou de dominee dan onderduiken ... De oude vriend was blij de dominee te zien ... De dominee vertelde alles aan de oude vriend, ook over de dromen ...

Hoofdstuk 3. De exorcist en de dominee

De oude vriend van de dominee geloofde niet in de canon. Hij zei dat de canon een valstrik was, een gevangenis, en uiteindelijk een slagerij. Door de canon wordt je als een beest ergens voor gefokt ... om een deel te worden van het meubiliair van Canon ... Ja, daar had de dominee min of meer ook over gedroomd. Die oude vriend was een exorcist, en zei dat er een strijd gaande was om de dominee ... De exorcist wilde wel voor de dominee bidden ... En zo gebeurde het. Op een avond besloot de exorcist een kleine bevrijdingsdienst te houden met de dominee, met z'n tweeen. De exorcist begon de geesten van de canon aan te spreken, en gebood hen om hun hekken open te doen.

De exorcist sprak over het Eeuwig Evangelie wat zou komen om de canon te verbreken. Plotseling verscheen er een gestalte voor hen, een soort mannelijk wezen met een gewei. 'Hallo, ik ben Jozef,' zei de verschijning ... 'Ja, en ik ben Napoleon,' zei de exorcist ... 'Wat kom je doen ?' De exorcist knipoogde even naar de dominee ... Hij ging altijd grapsgewijs met de verschijningen om ... Dat gebeurde bij de exorcist wel vaker. Volgens de exorcist was het belangrijk om grapsgewijs met die dingen om te gaan, voor de veiligheid. Jozef begon te glimlachen ... 'Zo, je bent weer terug,' zei de exorcist ... De dominee vroeg zich af wat dat te betekenen had ... Was Jozef eerder aan de exorcist verschenen ? En was het Jozef wel echt ?

'Ik ga jullie helpen in jullie strijd tegen Canon,' zei Jozef ... 'Oh, maar daar hebben we je echt niet bij nodig hoor,' zei de exorcist voor de grap ... 'Ga maar weer naar huis ...' Jozef begon te lachen ... 'Je bent nog voor geen spat veranderd ...'De exorcist draaide zich naar de muur, en wees op een schilderij ... 'Zie, dit heb ik voor je geschilderd,' zei de exorcist. Het schilderij leek als twee druppels water op de verschijning ... 'Ik heb een plan,' zei Jozef ... 'Wij gaan ... naar het schip van Canon ... verslaan het, en maken er een wolkenschip van ... Vinden jullie dat goed ?' De exorcist keek even naar de dominee ... De dominee begon te glimlachen, en zei : 'Afgesproken' ... Toen liet de verschijning hen een heel diep dal zien, met een kruis waaraan hij hing ... Het dal was bijna als een put ... 'Mijn put,' zei Jozef ... En toen wees hij op een wolkenschip in de

lucht ... 'Mijn schip,' zei Jozef ...

Op het schip lag een groot kruis, met een dwarsbalk die aan beide kanten in zeven delen was verdeeld ... Dit zijn de zeven jaren die mijn vader voor Lea heeft gewerkt, en de zeven jaren die hij voor Rachel heeft gewerkt ... Het is het kruis van mijn vader Jakob, om op mijn schip te komen. De dominee en de exorcist gingen samen met Jozef op het liggende kruis zitten, en het kruis begon naar voren te schuiven, terwijl de delen van het kruis werden vastgeklikt aan de boot. Toen bewoog de boot naar voren. Al gauw kwamen ze op het dak terecht waar het roer stond, en keken vooruit in de wolkenzeeen. Ineens begonnen er tweemaal zeven sieraden op het kruis te verschijnen. Het waren de zeven jaren van Lea en de zeven jaren van Rachel. Na een tijdje waren de sieraden uitgegroeid tot vrouwen. Jozef boog voor hen. Het waren de Lokogamen, de sieraden van het kruis. Ook verschenen er tweemaal zeven sieraden op de pakken van de exorcist en de dominee, die in elkaar begonnen te klikken. De vrouwen begonnen een vreemde ladder te vormen waarover de boot zou gaan rijden. De vrouwen werden steeds langer en langer. Aan het einde van de rails was een enorme zon waardoor het schip werd opgeslokt. De Ladder van Jakob was de tong van een torenklok ... De torenklok van Babel, waar God de spraakverwarring had opgesteld, de Grote Onderscheider, zodat God de macht zou hebben, en niet het menselijke. De torenklok begon te draaien, en toen ging de tong aan de andere kant eruit, waarover het Wolkenschip tot een nieuwe wereld kon komen. De exorcist en de dominee keken hun ogen uit.

Hoofdstuk 4. Het vreemde mengsel

Ineens sprong Canon voor hen met een zwaard. 'Geef die jaren van Lea en Rachel aan mij, want het zijn tweemaal zeven eeuwigheden waarin ik mijn slaven laat werken.' Maar ook Jozef greep zijn zwaard en ging tegenover Canon staan, en zei : 'Mijn vader heeft eerlijk die jaren gewerkt voor Rachel en Lea. Ze zijn van hem, en ik heb ze geerfd, en ik geef ze aan wie ik wil. En met deze sleutel plunder ik jouw koninkrijken.' Maar Canon begon te brullen en woest met zijn zwaard te slaan ... 'De Toren van Babel is van mij,' brulde Canon, en duwde Jozef opzij ... 'En dus ook de Jakobsladder die daaruit voortkomt. Niemand komt tot God dan door mij, want ik ben het Woord van God, haha.' Jozef sprong opzij, en schopte tegen Canon's hand aan. Door de schok schoot het zwaard los, en snel ving Jozef het zwaard op. 'Nee, blijf van mijn zwaard af,' riep Canon. 'Daar mag jij niet aankomen. Dat is ten strengste verboden ...' Snel wierp Jozef het zwaard omhoog tot in de torenklok van Babel waar het een wijzer werd. Toen explodeerde Canon, en verdween ... Maar even later was Canon weer terug, en ditmaal met zijn legers ... 'Straf hen,' riep Canon. Maar daar in de verte kwam het kruis van Jozef aan. En ook dit kruis droeg twee maal zeven delen : de zeven jaren van overvloed, en de zeven jaren van honger. In die zeven jaren van overvloed moest Jozef vroeger een voorraad opslaan in schuren, vanwege de zeven jaren van honger die op komst waren. Zo redde hij zowel Egypte als Israel. Ook deze twee maal zeven delen begonnen in sieraden te veranderen, en later in vrouwen. Weer boog Jozef voor de vrouwen. Weer waren het lokogamen, de sieraden van het kruis.

En daar schrok de dominee wakker ... Niks geen gevangenis, niks geen overleden vrouw ... Zijn vrouw lag nog steeds rustig naast hem te slapen ... Maar was de dominee wel echt wakker geworden ? Was de dominee niet gewoon een slaapwandelaar ? Een wezen wat nooit echt wakker kon worden, wat zelfs nooit de kracht heeft gehad om in de

moederschoot te komen om een volwaardig burger van de aarde te worden ... Een wezen dat gedoemd is om in de tussenwereld te leven, de wereld van de geesten, om op zoek te gaan naar een lichaam waarin hij rustig kan dromen ... het lichaam van een echte dominee ... Zij volgen nog steeds Jozef de dromenkoning, die hen over Jakobs Ladder van de ene naar de andere droom brengt ... Hij, hun Redder, die hen steeds doet laten ontsnappen uit een wezen genaamd Canon ... een wezen dat hen verbied te dromen .... een wezen dat hen alles voorkauwt, opdat ze zijn slaven zijn voor eeuwig ... Maar dan komen altijd de lokogamen van Jozef, zijn harem, om zijn volgelingen naar een diepere slaap te brengen ... En zolang Canon weer terugkeert, keren Jozef en de sieraden van zijn kruis ook terug ... Net zolang totdat de kaars van de canon opgebrandt is, en de volgelingen van Jozef over het hek der eeuwen kunnen gaan ... op naar nieuwe dromen ...

Zullen ze dan misschien echt eens wakker worden op aarde ? Een dominee rent naar het ziekenhuis. Zijn vrouw rent achter hem aan ... Gelukkig woont de dominee dichtbij ... Er komt een rood sap uit zijn navel, maar gelukkig is het geen bloed. De dominee kijkt om, en valt op de grond. Even later komen er verplegers vanuit het ziekenhuis met een brancard op de dominee afrennen ... Inmiddels is zijn buik erg opgezwollen, en de dominee begint te kokhalzen. Het lijkt wel alsof er iets in hem leeft dat naar buiten wil komen ...Dan scheurt de buik van de dominee open en een glibberig beest met veel rood doorzichtige tentakels komt tevoorschijn uit de buik, maar ook uit de mond glijden enkele tentakels ... Of zitten er meerdere wezens in de dominee ? De dominee zegt dat hij een vreemde smaak in z'n mond heeft ... Ook zijn voeten zwellen op, en zijn schoenen scheuren open ... Even later ploppen z'n twee ogen naar binnen en komen door zijn mond naar buiten, op de toppen van twee tentakels. Door de buik komen twee wezens naar buiten, en door de mond twee, en ze zijn rood en glibberig, vol tentakels. Het lijken wel spinachtige reuzeninktvissen. Het ziekenhuis is in rep en roer ... Ook uit zijn voeten komen een heleboel van zulke wezens, en ze schijnen steeds groter te worden ... Al snel hebben ze het ziekenhuis en de stad ingenomen ...

'Tik, tik, tik,' voorzichtig tikt de onderwijzeres op het tafeltje van één van haar leerlingen ... 'Wakker worden,' zegt ze zacht en vriendelijk, 'de biologie-les is al afgelopen ... 'Waar was je met je gedachten ?' Alle andere leerlingen zijn al de klas uit ... 'Oh, mevrouw Spiezenga,' zegt de leerling, 'ik heb zo vreemd gedroomd, allemaal dromen achter elkaar, alsof ik heel iemand anders was ...'

'Wil je erover praten ?' vraagt de onderwijzeres vriendelijk ... 'Graag,' zegt de leerling, en vertelt het verhaal ... Tijdens het verhaal wordt de onderwijzeres erg misselijk, en rent naar het toilet waar ze rood sap uitspuugt ... Even later komen er vreemde kleine rode inktvisachtige reptielen uit haar mond ... In paniek belt ze de schoolleiding ... Ook de leerling is op het lawaai afgekomen ... 'Mijn dromen beginnen uit te komen,' gilt de leerling in paniek ... Na enige tijd komt er hulp ... Maar de wezentjes zijn nergens meer te bekennen ... Al gauw is de onderwijzeres weer op krachten ... Niemand gelooft haar, maar zij en de leerling weten wel beter ...

Tik tak, tik tak ... Iemand wordt wakker door het getik van de klok ... Wat heeft die persoon toch vreemd gedroomd ... Alsof hij meerdere persoonlijkheden heeft ... Morgen moet hij op bezoek bij de psychiater ... Hij denkt eraan om ook maar eens dit soort dromen te bespreken ... Het is niet de eerste keer ... Het begon allemaal toen hij besloot

om drugs te gaan gebruiken ... Nu komt hij er niet meer vanaf ... en ook van die vreemde dromen niet ... Maar ja, daar is de psychiater voor ... Misschien verwijzen ze hem wel door naar één of ander afkickcentrum, of naar een centrum voor dromenuitleg ... Of heeft iemand die zo vreemd droomt gewoon een goede exorcist nodig ... Maar ja, die was er in de droom ... Maar daar schiet je nog niks mee op ... Wat hebben we nu aan dromen over een exorcist ...

Bij de psychiater aangekomen vertelt de man het hele verhaal ... inclusief de vreemde dromen in de dromen ... De psychiater vraagt aan de man of hij weleens in een kerk is geweest ... De man knikt .... Eén keer, toen hij eens bij een neefje logeerde ... 'Hmm ...' zei de psychiater ... 'Het zijn namelijk erg godsdienstige dromen ... En de dromen zijn erg helder en diepgaand ... Je zou eerder denken dat theologen dit soort dromen krijgen, maar niet iemand die er eigenlijk helemaal niets vanaf weet ....' Maar dan begint de man te protesteren ... Dat neefje had hem een heleboel over de kerk vertelt, dat daar een piraat woonde genaamd Canon, en dat ...'

'Ja, stop maar,' zegt de psychiater ... 'Nu komt de aap uit de mouw ... Het is duidelijk hoor, mijnheer van Dalen ... U bent gewoon bang gemaakt ...'

'Nee, dat is het niet,' zei de man. 'Ik vond het juist reuze spannend en wilde die piraat in de kerk weleens ontmoeten .... Maar helaas ... Hij was niet thuis ...' De psychiater begint te grinniken ... 'Nou, u heeft in ieder geval een goede humor ... Ik weet niet of dit allemaal in verband staat met de drugs die u gebruikt ... Wat voor soort drugs is het eigenlijk ?'

'Ehm ...' stamelt de man .... 'Het komt uit een potje ... Ik kreeg het eens van iemand ... Ik kan de naam niet vertellen, maar die zei dat het potje nooit op zou raken, en je zou er mooi van gaan dromen ... Rode Vlieg heette dat spul volgens mij ... Het etiket zat er niet meer op, maar hij zei het ... Het is heel glibberig geleiachtig spul met wat droge stukjes erdoorheen als een soort korrels ... Ach, probeert u het zelf eens ... Ik heb het potje bij me ...'

'Nou, mij niet gezien,' zei de psychiater, 'maar laat me dat potje maar eens zien ...' De man aarzelt even en haalt dan het potje tevoorschijn ... Het is een heel klein potje, en de psychiater gelooft er niks van dat het nooit zal opraken ... De psychiater opent het potje en ruikt er even aan ... 'Nou, dat ruikt wel lekker,' zei de psychiater ... 'Weet u van welke stoffen dit spul is gemaakt ?' De man schudt zijn hoofd ... 'Mag ik een beetje van dit spul ter observatie meenemen ?' vraagt de psychiater ... De man schudt zijn hoofd ... 'Nee, en dit blijft allemaal tussen u en mij ...'

'Zoals u wil,' zegt de psychiater, en haalt onopgemerkt een randje van het spul van de rand van het potje weg, en doet de deksel er weer op. Onopgemerkt veegt de psychiater het randje op een plastic plaatje. Nadat de man is vertrokken laat de psychiater het onderzoeken ... Het blijken geen gevaarlijke stoffen te zijn, maar de stoffen zijn wel onbekend ... Ze staan voor een raadsel ... Voordat de psychiater het beseft heeft hij al iets van het spul ingenomen ... Het gebeurde in een onbedacht moment ... De psychiater had even alle controle over zichzelf verloren ... En vanaf toen begon de psychiater ook vreemdsoortige dromen te krijgen ... Over wezens in wezens ... over dromen in dromen ... en over werelden in werelden ... De psychiater hoopte dat het over zou gaan, maar het ging niet over, en de dromen werden steeds religieuzer ... Het werd zo erg dat

op een gegeven moment de psychiater naar een kerk besloot te gaan om het te kunnen verwerken ... De psychiater had een drang om erover te vertellen, maar dan op een puur godsdienstige manier ... De psychiater besloot hals over kop theologie te studeren en belandde zelfs op de preekstoel ... Nu kon hij ongemerkt zijn dromen omzetten in preken ... De kerkmensen vonden het fantastisch hoe de psychiater preekte ... En later begon hij er zelf ook lol in te krijgen ... Hij geloofde er geen barst van, maar het was zijn vak geworden ... En later vond hij het ook niet meer erg om zo te dromen ...

'Pats.' Een vaas viel van het nachtkastje van de dominee ... Had hij niet idioot gedroomd over de psychiater, over drugs, over een exorcist, en dergelijken ? Nou ja, een mens kan raar dromen ... Maar dan was hij weer wel de dominee en dan weer niet ... Hij is toch gewoon dominee ? Of niet ? Of droomt hij dit ook weer ? Maar goed, hij heeft een geheugen van vijvenzestig jaar oud ... Of droomt hij dat ook maar ? Dat is nog maar de vraag ... Misschien is hij wel een dier ... een hond, een poes, of ... Wie zal het zeggen ? En zo gingen de dromen voort ... Canon zat iemand achterna ... Canon dreigde weer eens met hel en verdoemenis ... en van schrik begon er iemand te dromen ... Weg te dromen ... want dit kon toch allemaal niet waar zijn ? Canon kwam weer eens terug, alsof hij Jezus Christus was ... Maar Jozef de Dromenkoning riep hem een halt toe ... want Jozef gebruikte een heel oud kruis, uit het Oude Testament : Het kruis van zijn vader Jakob, en zijn eigen kruis ... Dit waren belangrijke wortels van het kruis van Christus ... En zo stroomde het bloed van Jozef en het bloed van Jakob als een drug om de werken van Canon onschadelijk te maken ... Het kwam uit een vreemd potje ... en het was een vreemd mengsel ...

Einde

Het Ei van Mammon

Korte Theologische Roman

1. De Beeldenstorm

2. Kunst in de Kerk

3. Het Pad der Vertaling

4. Ontmoeting met Jezus

Hoofdstuk 1. De Beeldenstorm

Erik loopt na de kerkdienst naar huis. Hij komt ook nog even langs een andere kerk. Hier staan prachtige beelden in de tuin er omheen. Eriks kerk is protestants, en de kerkdiensten worden in een zaaltje gehouden. Erik zou graag willen dat er wat beelden zouden komen in de zaal, maar de dominee had gezegd dat dat niet kon. Het was door God verboden om beelden te maken. De dominee zei dat de duivel in beelden woonde.

Op weg naar huis komt Erik ook nog even langs het huis van de dominee. Erik is het niet met de dominee eens. Op een dag komen de wijk-ouderlingen van Erik bij hem op bezoek. Hier snijdt Erik het nog eens aan over de beelden, maar hij krijgt een negatief antwoord. 'Erik, daarvoor zul je toch naar de katholieke kerk moeten gaan. Beelden horen gewoon niet bij het protestants geloof.' Maar daar is Erik het niet zo mee eens. In de tabernakel stonden toch ook beelden van aartsengelen ? Het ging niet om gewone beelden, maar om beelden voor de eredienst. Erik's huis stond vol met beelden die met religie hadden te maken. De ouderlingen zeiden er niet zoveel van, maar hij zag hen kijken. 'Wat zijn jullie toch traditioneel en stijfkoppig,' zegt Erik. 'Eerlijk waar, de kerk zou er zo van opfleuren als we wat beelden hadden.' Maar de ouderlingen hielden voet bij stuk. Beelden hoorden niet in de kerk, omdat het Woord van God beelden verbood. Er mochten geen beelden gemaakt worden. Maar Erik vond dat die tekst anders uitgelegd moest worden. God had dat zo geregeld, omdat er zovelen waren die beelden maakten om ze te verafgoden en ermee te zondigen. Het vlees mocht dat natuurlijk nooit, maar door de geest mochten er volgens Erik best beelden gemaakt worden, zoals in de tabernakel gebeurde. Er stonden wel meerdere van dit soort paradoxen in de Bijbel. Als je het zou gebruiken voor zuivere religie, dan was er in Erik's ogen niks mis mee. Hij voelde juist meer verbondenheid met het geestelijke, door de beelden.

Na een tijdje gingen de ouderlingen weer weg. Erik was erg verdrietig. Maar hij vond dat hij uiteindelijk hun mening moest respecteren. Zolang hij in z'n huis die beelden maar mocht houden. Na een tijdje ging de telefoon. Het was de dominee, en deze was flink overstuur. Hij had van de wijk-ouderlingen vernomen dat Erik zoveel religieuze beelden in zijn huis had staan. Volgens de dominee kon dat niet. Erik zou de beelden moeten weg doen, of hij zou niet meer welkom zijn in de kerk. Erik besloot toch voor de dominee te kiezen, en liet de beelden wegdoen.

In de preek daarop werd er gesproken over de beeldenstorm, over het protestantse overwicht op de katholieken, en het daarbij behorende uitruimen van beelden in de kerk. De dominee schreeuwde in de kerk dat Maarten Luther de katholieke tirannie had uitgebannen, en dat de reformatie hun overwinning en bevrijding was. Erik luisterde aandachtig. De dominee had een langer gewaad aan dan anders. Erik legde zich maar bij de woorden neer. Wat kon hij anders ? De dominee zei ook dat vroeger in de

tabernakel beelden stonden van aartsengelen, maar dat de kerk van vandaag geen materiaal meer nodig had om tot God te komen. Jezus Christus was de weg. De dominee waarschuwde ook voor hen die zich teveel vasthielden aan materiaal. Erik voelde zich een beetje aangesproken, maar dacht er verder niet al te veel kwaads over.

Na de dienst kwamen er wat mensen naar Erik toe, om hem te vragen of hij nog steeds die beelden had in huis. Maar Erik liet weten dat alles weg was. Veel woorden maakte hij er niet aan vuil.

De week erop ging de preek weer over beelden, en hun verbinding met materialisme. Erik slikte. Erik was het nog steeds niet met de dominee eens. Er was volgens hem verschil tussen materialisme wat van God afbracht en materialisme wat dichter bij God bracht, als het zogenaamde Goddelijke materialisme. Erik hield van kunst die tot dat doel werkte, zoals religieuze schilderijen en beelden. Dit had niets met geld te maken, of met lust naar rijkdom, maar met nostalgie, het uitdrukken van een verlangen naar God. Wat zou de aarde er mooi uitzien als al het materiaal daartoe gebruikt zou worden. Dan zou de aarde een tempel zijn.

De dominee vond dat ze niet terug moesten naar de kleuterschool. De dominee wilde een zuiver geestelijke gemeente. Ineens stond er een klein kind op. 'Dominee, als materiaal niet belangrijk is, waarom draagt u dan nog kleren, waarom heeft u een microfoon en waarom heeft u een grote dikke bijbel voor u liggen ? Waarom heeft u zelfs nog een huis ?' In de zaal begonnen overal mensen te gniffelen, maar de dominee zei : 'Neem niet meer dan je nodig hebt. Zolang we hier leven hebben we te maken met de vloek van het materialisme. Dit is het domein van de duivel.' Maar toen zei iemand luid : 'Waarom kunt u het niet van twee kanten bekijken : materiaal van God versus materiaal van de duivel ?' Daarop maakte de dominee duidelijk dat ze aan het afwijken waren. Het ging immers om beelden.

Hoofdstuk 2. Kunst in de Kerk

'Kunst is geen materialisme. Kunst is juist het omzeilen van materialisme, door het materiaal te vergeestelijken. Zo kan de Geest in het materiaal gaan leven, en het hervormen en gebruiken tot Gods Eer, en daarop te wijzen, telkens weer,' zegt een ouderling in een vergadering met de dominee. Deze ouderling zou wel willen dat er wat meer kunst in de kerk zou komen. Zo zouden zij die materieel leefden afgeleid kunnen worden, en toch nog door de materie dichter bij God komen, in plaats van door het vleselijke materialisme te worden opgeslokt. Maar de dominee wilde geen compromis sluiten. Hij vond dat God niet afgebeeld mocht worden. 'De kunst kan geen beschrijving geven van God en de hemel. Dat zou een belediging tot God zijn.'

Die nacht kreeg de dominee een droom. 'Au, mijn handen branden. Kan ik Mijn aarde aanraken of niet ? Je hebt alles zo geestelijk gemaakt, de zogenaamde scheiding tussen geest en lichaam. Je drijft de Geest gewoon weg, zodat boze geesten de aarde in bezit kunnen houden. Snap je dan niet dat Geest en Materie samen moeten gaan, en dat er dan niks mis mee is ?' sprak een stem. Waarop de dominee zei : 'We zijn geen kinderen meer. We hebben de Oud-Testamentische afbeeldingen niet meer nodig. Dat was een noodplan. Wij zijn toe aan het echte.' Maar toen sprak de stem : 'En het echte is hier. God, het geestelijke, zal meer en meer vleesworden, materialiseren zogezegd. Zo zal de

materie gezuiverd worden, en zullen er geen verkeerde dingen meer mee gedaan worden.'

Maar de dominee was niet onder de indruk. De dominee geloofde niet in dromen van de Heer. Dat was voor vroeger. Voor de dominee was alleen het Woord belangrijk.

De nacht daarop kreeg hij weer een droom, waarin een stem tot hem sprak : 'Is de Bijbel dan niet materieel, als het vleesgeworden Woord ?' Waarop de dominee zei : 'Letters is als lucht. Ze geven geen vorm of beeltenis door, alleen maar informatie en betekenis. Je kunt door het woord natuurlijk dingen uitbeelden, maar dat is wat anders dan materieel vastleggen. Dat zou een gevangenis zijn, want stof is dood, en verandert niet.'

'Wie zegt dat ?' zegt de stem. 'Kan stof niet groeien ? Kijk naar je lichaam, kijk naar een boom. En waarom zouden dingen moeten veranderen ? Het Woord verandert toch ook niet ? Wel kan de betekenis veranderen, in de zin van zich verdiepen.' Maar de dominee probeerde de stem te ontwijken om verder te slapen. Maar de stem begon meer en meer te gillen. 'Au, luister dan toch eens, ik brand, ik brand. Waarom heb je gedaan wat je hebt gedaan ? Ben jij dan niet materieel ? Je hebt van Jezus Christus een wachtwoord gemaakt, een stuk materie, als een sleutel tot zaligheid. Het is taal-materialisme waar je schuldig aan bent. Je bent een materialist. De betekenis van Jezus ben je hierdoor kwijtgeraakt. Je staart je blind op een paar woordjes, en een paar al dan niet geschiedkundig of verhalend vastgelegde feitjes, daadjes, en klaar is jouw Jezus Christusje, jouw sleuteltje tot de hemel. Vuile geschiedenis-materialist. Je hebt Jezus Christus opgezet, als een vogeltje of vos opgezet, in jouw vuile boshuisje. Loeder dat je er bent. Alle andere talen, culturen en uitingen moeten in jouw zelfgemaakte helletje branden, zoals ook ik.' Maar de dominee droomde lekker door. Maar het gillen van de stem werd harder en harder, en plotseling hoorde de dominee een kat buiten krijsen als een baby. De dominee was wakker geschrokken, en liep naar het raam. Buiten zag hij twee katten vechten. 'Zeg, houd daar eens mee op,' bulderde de dominee door het raam.

'Waarom ben ik nou weer een taal-materialist ?' dacht de dominee bij zichzelf. 'Wat heb ik toch weer vreemd gedroomd.' Buiten ging het gevecht nog steeds door, en de dominee besloot naar buiten te gaan. Snel probeerde hij de katten uit elkaar te krijgen, maar een zwarte kat sprong op de dominee af, en begon te krabben, te bijten en te blazen. Snel ging de dominee naar binnen, maar de kat zat nog steeds aan hem vast. Na een tijdje had de dominee de kat losgekregen en gaf het dier wat melk. De dominee dacht nog steeds na over de droom. Dus hij was meer materialist dan hij dacht ? De dominee kon het bijna niet geloven. Als er iemand niet materialistisch was, dan was hij dat wel. Hij preekte altijd fel tegen het materialisme. Maar blijkbaar waren er veel meer vormen van materialisme, waar de dominee nog geen weet van had.

Hoofdstuk 3. Het Pad der Vertaling

De dag daarop was er weer een vergadering. De dominee vertelde wat hij gedroomd had, en lachte er een beetje om. Hij nam het niet al te serieus. Ook vertelde hij over het kattengevecht. De ouderlingen gniffelden een beetje. Gelukkig had de dominee nog wel wat humor. Toen nam één van de ouderlingen het woord. Hij begon over de doop, het doopvat, het avondmaal, en nog wat tradities die tot de liturgie behoorden. Hij vroeg of ze dat niet konden uitbreiden. Maar de dominee wilde er niets van weten. Het ging om

heilige sacramenten waar niets aan veranderd mocht worden. 'Nou,' zei de ouderling, 'u bent inderdaad een traditie-materialist.' Maar de dominee hield voet bij stuk. Hij kon die sacramenten gewoon niet veranderen. Daartoe was hij niet gemachtigd, en hij zou onherroepelijk last krijgen met de Bond. De dominee was altijd erg stram en strak als het om traditie ging. De dominee kon niet tegen veranderingen. Hij besefte dat hij op dat punt misschien wel erg materialistisch was, maar dat zag hij dan als iets van de Heilige Geest, een soort van heilig materialisme. De dominee zag in dat de medaille inderdaad twee kanten had. De dominee was erg trots op zichzelf.

Op een dag kreeg hij een telefoontje van de Bond. Ze hadden vernomen dat hij stemmen hoorde, naar duiveltjes luisterde. De dominee voelde zich verraden door zijn ouderlingen. De Bond zei dat ze het niet hadden op zomaar een stemmetje, maar de dominee probeerde duidelijk te maken dat het om een droom ging, en dat hij het niet met zo'n stemmetje eens was. Maar de Bond was niet om te praten. Volgens de Bond kon de dominee het niet maken om over dit soort dingen te praten tijdens een vergadering. Een dominee hoort zijn reputatie ongeschend te houden. Het zou het vertrouwen in gevaar brengen. De Bond zou met direkte ingang de dominee ontslaan.

Gelukkig bleven de meesten trouw aan de dominee, en konden de diensten gewoon voortgezet worden. Maar de kerk behoorde niet meer tot de Bond. Eigenlijk was dit voor de dominee een last minder. Het begon men op te vallen dat de dominee steeds luchtiger begon te preken. En op een zondag stonden er zelfs beelden in de kerkzaal. Ook Erik mocht weer beelden in huis hebben, en na een tijdje hadden meerderen beelden in huis. Maar op een dag gebeurde er iets vreselijks. Tijdens de dienst kwamen wat mannen in zwarte pakken binnen, die de beelden begonnen stuk te slaan en omver te werpen.

In de nacht kreeg de dominee weer een droom : 'Materialistische boer,' zei een stemmetje. 'Wij zien alleen maar beelden van jouw eigen religie, alsof de onze er niet toe doet.' Waarop de dominee zei : 'Maar wie zijn jullie dan, en wat heb ik met andere religies te maken ?' Toen zei het stemmetje : 'Zie je nu wel dat je een taal-materialist bent. Religies van een andere taal met andere persoonlijke naamwoorden zijn niet welkom. Je hebt je kerktaaltje als een vogeltje opgezet. Ik brand nog steeds, alhoewel het iets beter gaat.'

'Maar wie ben je dan ?' vroeg de dominee. 'Ach,' zei het stemmetje, 'dat wil je toch niet weten. Het gaat jouw alleen maar om jouw oude vertrouwde persoonlijke naamwoorden. Je hebt maar een eng wereldje.' En hoe de dominee ook probeerde, het stemmetje wilde niet zeggen waar het vandaan kwam. 'Ach,' zei de dominee, 'misschien ben je wel een duiveltje, maar misschien wil je mij eens vertellen hoe ik kan maken dat je niet meer brandt.'

'DAAR WAAR DE HEILIGE GEEST IN DE KERK NIET KAN SPREKEN DAAR SPREEKT DE HEILIGE GEEST DOOR ANDERE RELIGIES !' bulderde het stemmetje. 'Snap dat dan eens.' De dominee rolde bijna uit zijn bed. 'Dove kwartel,' ging het stemmetje verder. 'En denk je dat het in een andere taal nog steeds hetzelfde heet ? De Heilige Geest kan door elke god werken als het moet, als Hij maar tot zijn doel komt. Daarom heeft elke god of godin een goed deel en een slecht deel. Weer gaat het erom : aanbidt je ze in Geest of vlees, in Heiligheid of onreinheid, in Waarheid of leugen.' De dominee begint hardop te lachen. 'Dus denk je dat ik vanaf nu ook Ganesha, de

olifantengod uit India moet aanbidden, omdat de Heilige Geest Zich ook daardoor manifesteert ?'

'Toe nou,' zegt het stemmetje, 'probeer het eens te nuanceren. Het is allemaal erg gevaarlijk, maar probeer alsjeblieft te beseffen dat afgoderij niet zozeer met namen of culturen heeft te maken, maar met zonden zoals superieuriteit, racisme, het offeren van dieren, etcetera.' De dominee begint nog harder te lachen, en bestraft de geest van afgoderij. 'Eerlijk, ik heb dit nog nooit gedaan als dominee, maar ik denk nu toch dat ik door zo'n geest wordt lastiggevallen, en ik denk dat ... jij die geest bent,' zegt de dominee kalm.

'Dus al die mensen die zeggen dat Jezus de enige weg is zijn misleid ? Nu is ook Boeddha ineens de weg, de Khrishna, en misschien wel Ah Puch van de Maya's ? Ga toch weg !' zegt de dominee, steeds kalmer wordend. Hij is er nu zeker van dat hij bezoek heeft van een ware vorst der duisternis, misschien wel één van satans generaals.

'Nuanceer het nou eens,' zegt het stemmetje, 'natuurlijk is Jezus de enige weg, omdat de taal op zichzelf natuurlijk niet liegt. Het heeft een diepe betekenis. Maar als je dan een andere taal tegenkomt, zul je die betekenis ergens terugvinden met natuurlijk weer andere woorden. De Bijbel is een symbolisch boek, een boek van diepe betekenis, en geen taalboek. De Bijbel is meer een vertaling dan een taal. Maar ook die vertaling zal weer vertaald moeten worden. Zo zul je dus op je geestelijke pelgrimsreis door het boek moeten komen tot de DIEPSTE VERTALING, de vertaling van de vertaling van de vertaling, enzovoorts. Daar waar pelgrims blijven steken op het pad der vertaling, daar ontstaan de oorlogen, de koppige kerken, enzo. Natuurlijk begin je met één taal, en die taal mag je ook spreken. Het is maar net vanuit welke kant je het allemaal bekijkt, welke taal je spreekt, en hoe je de dingen vertaalt. Zuivere vertaling komt voort uit de diepste vertaling. Dit is de reis van de apostel die als eerste bruggen slaat tussen gemeentes, en daarna tussen religies. Hij heeft de paden van de Heilige Geest ook gevolgd in andere religies, daar waar de Geest Gods in de kerk en de traditie niet kon spreken. Dit proces noemen we : 'parelduiken'. Dit is heel gevaarlijk, want als je dit niet doet vanuit een goede basis en met duidelijke regels, dan kun je door een gevaarlijke vis gegrepen worden.'

'Ja, ja,' zegt de dominee, 'je denkt toch zeker niet dat ik m'n tijd hiermee verdoe ?'

'Oh, dus ik moet maar branden ?' vraagt het stemmetje. 'Weet je dan niet dat de Heilige Geest inderdaad weggestuurd kan worden, uitgedoofd kan worden, en bedroefd kan worden ? Waar denk je dat de Heilige Geest dan naartoe gaat ? De Heilige Geest kijkt niet naar de taal van wezens, maar naar hun hart. Kan Hem het wat schelen hoe je het allemaal noemt. Het gaat erom waar je het over hebt. Dus kerel, ik zou me maar eens open stellen als ik jou was. De Bijbel zegt dat de Heilige Geest uit meerdere delen bestaat, meerdere Geesten, en zij worden aangesteld boven de talen en de godsdiensten om daar doorheen te werken zoveel als ze kunnen. Ik ben daar Eén van, beste kerel.'

'Je moet niet zo zwart, wit zijn,' zegt het stemmetje vervolgens, 'niet zomaar direkt met de botte bijl alles platwalzen wat 'anders' is.'

De dominee is er niet erg van onder de indruk, maar op een dag komt de dominee thuis terwijl hij het gevoel heeft alsof hij van binnen brandt. Plotseling hoort hij een stem. 'Je kunt niet anders. Ik ben in je. Ik ben de Heilige Geest die jij verkondigt, die jij beschouwt als de jouwe. Ik ben de brandende, verbrand door de kerk, de koppige kerk. Je neemt me helemaal, of helemaal niet. Je voelt mijn verbrandingen.' De dominee gaat op zijn stoel zitten en begint te bidden. Het vuur blijft branden, en de dominee voelt zich niet goed, en besluit naar bed te gaan. Maar het branden wordt erger en erger, en ten slotte roept de dominee het uit tot God. 'Integreer je nu met de Geest van God boven de andere volken, want anders zal Ik je wegnemen,' zegt een stem. Maar de dominee denkt dat hij door een geest van de dood wordt aangevallen. Dan raakt de dominee bewusteloos, en ziet in de verte Jezus staan. Zijn ene arm is beschreven met de letters INDIA, en op zijn andere arm staat met grote letters EGYPTE. Ook op andere lichaamsdelen staan grote namen geschreven, zoals AFRIKA, en AMERIKA. En Jezus spreekt : 'Ik zal vleesworden op aarde. Kies dan heden wie gij dienen zult.' En de dominee begon tot Jezus te roepen, terwijl Jezus andere gezichten en andere kleuren begon te krijgen. De dominee schrok en deed een stap achteruit. 'Aanbidt je nog steeds de materie, dominee ? De huidskleur, de taal ? Is dat allemaal dan zo belangrijk ? Ben Ik niet belangrijker ?' sprak Jezus. 'Ik zal je naar aarde terugzenden, en jij zult de taal, de huidskleur, de oorlog gaan verklaren.' Plotseling wordt de dominee wakker, en merkt dat het branden verdwenen is. Direkt gaat hij aan de slag en al snel staat de kerk vol met beelden van verschillende religies die Gods Plan en Identiteit uitbeelden. Natuurlijk kiest de dominee ze zorgvuldig uit, zodat ze de heilige betekenissen in zuiverheid uitbeelden. In de Bijbel zijn er ook hier en daar wat legale verbindingen met andere culturen en hun opperwezens, om de betekenissen van God te ondersteunen en te versterken. De gemeenteleden krijgen duidelijke uitleg, opdat ze niet aan hun lot worden overgelaten. De puzzel moet zorgvuldig gelegd worden, en de puzzelstukjes moeten goed passen.

Einde

Het

Roodborstje

De dominee was bij hem gekomen. Ze gingen beiden een film kijken over de zee. Hij kon goed met de dominee opschieten. Vroeger had de dominee een groot schip gehad, voor zendingswerk. De film over de zee ging over de Bermuda driehoek, over mysterieuze verdwijningen. De dominee had het over Izebel, hoe zij naar de profeten was uitgezonden om hen te vervolgen, en over hoe die profeten zich moesten verbergen en niet meer wilden leven. Hij bracht dit op een hele interessante manier in verband met de Bermuda driehoek. De dominee moest hem een beetje opbeuren, want hij lag in een scheiding, en zijn vrouw probeerde van alles om het leven zuur te maken. "Alles wat Izebel wil is jouw schedel, maar jij hebt de wonderen van de natuur," zei de dominee.

Hij zou zelf wel willen vertrekken in de Bermuda driehoek. Misschien had hij dan een beter leven, maar de dominee zei dat hij er dwars doorheen moest, en dat dat juist de Bermuda driehoek was. Alles had een bedoeling volgens de dominee, maar dat kon hij op het moment niet zien.

"Izebel op haar hoge paard, die je kinderen aan een ketting houdt om ze tegen jou te gebruiken," zei de dominee, "maar het heeft ook een dualiteit. Izebel is slechts een kaleidoscopisch verhaal, want ze strijd ook tegen de klauwen van religie. Ook jij bent een Izebel, als een zeebel, als zeeschuim, om los te komen op de golven van de ketenen van religie. Alles heeft een dubbele kant."

Hij knikte naar de dominee.

"Het gaat om de wonderen van de natuur," zei de dominee, "niet wat mensen er van hebben gemaakt."

De dominee kon het altijd zo mooi vertellen. "Kun je Izebel ook van een nog andere kant bekijken ?" vroeg hij.

"Izebel is een duister schaakbord in de kerk," zei de dominee. "Vaak laten ze het maar van één kant zien. Izebel was natuurlijk een grote vorstin die van religieuze extremisten te horen keeg dat haar godinnen afgoden waren. In ieder geval is het verhaal symbolisch en kan vanuit verschillende kanten uitgelegd worden. In sommige tradities is Izebel zelf een godin en strijdt tegen de kwade machten van de tirannie van religie, maar dat is een lang verhaal, en dat zit niet simpel in elkaar."

"Ik begrijp het," zei hij. Hij voelde zich nog steeds depressief, ondanks dat de dominee er was en ze samen een film hadden gekeken. De dominee kwam hem vaak opzoeken. De dominee zelf had zijn vrouw verloren door kanker. Ook dat was een soort Bermuda driehoek. Zo hadden ze veel steun aan elkaar.

Als hij aan de dominee dacht moest hij altijd ook direct aan zijn kinderen denken die zonder moeder moesten opgroeien. Dat maakte soms zijn depressie nog wel erger. Hij was erg betrokken bij die kinderen.

Het leek wel alsof Izebel cirkels aan het maken was op de ramen, alsof ze aandacht wilde scheppen voor alles wat de kerk zo lang verborgen had gehouden. De dominee zei ook dat er heel veel met de vertalingen was geknoeid. De dominee stond als het ware tussen kerk en mens in.

Het was alsof Izebel bellen blies, zeepbellen. Ze liet zien dat alles een cyclus was, en draaiende, als

caleidoscopisch. In die cirkel zat het geheim verborgen. Vroeger had hij al zulke sprookjesachtige ideeën over Izebel, en hij herinnerde hoe de kleine zeemeermin in een zeepbel veranderde, in zeeschuim, omdat ze haarzelf niet duidelijk kon maken, niet kon spreken. Ze was als achter glas. En zo ging alles wat te zwak was om werkelijkheid te worden achter glas, om verdraaid te worden door de grote massa's. Grote massa's mensen, grote massa's leugenaars, als kannibalen.

Izebel is het zeeschuim wat wij worden, wat anderen van ons maken. Anderen denken voor ons, en vullen alles voor ons in, en zo sterven wij onbegrepen en verkeerd begrepen.

Als een roodborstje tikt zij op het raam, op zoek naar haar Elia. Zouden die twee bij elkaar horen ? Dat zou zo mooi zijn. Het is een onbegrepen en verkeerd begrepen, misvertaald verhaal, door mensen die de talen, de culturen en de etymologie, de taalgeschiedenis, niet kennen.

Was Izebel oorspronkelijk een sprookje ? En wat is er van haar geworden ?

Als een roodborstje tikt zij op het raam. Elia doet het raam open, en voedt het beestje. Zo gaat dat iedere dag. Elia en Izebel leven samen in een huisje diep in het bos. Niemand weet waar ze zijn en wat ze doen, en daarom verzinnen ze verhalen over hen, en die verhalen worden doorverteld en blijven veranderen totdat er echt helemaal niets meer van klopt. Of toch ? Van verhalen leeft men. Symboliek is een kunst, als een bijzonder medicijn.

Het roodborstje tikt op het raam. Het heeft wat bijzonder kruid meegebracht voor Elia. Elia draait aan zijn orakel, en voorspelt dan de toekomst door het bijzondere kruid en het orakel : allemaal mooie dromen, mooie inzichten, dieper en dieper, want zijn roodborstje is teruggekomen.

Het Roodborstje van Jezus

Jezus had een Roodborstje genaamd Judas,
En als Judas bij Jezus op het raam tikte,
Dan werd het de volgende dag in de kranten gedrukt,
Dat Judas Jezus had doodgeschoten,
Zo kwamen die oplichters en bandieten aan hun geld.

Jezus had een Roodborstje genaamd Judas,
Elke dag kwam het Roodborstje aan zijn raam,

Dan tikte het met zijn snaveltje erop,
Maar de dieven stalen het verhaal en maakten er iets heel anders van,
En verkochten het aan de drugsbaronnen,
Die het volk om zeep hielpen

Jezus had een Roodborstje genaamd Judas,
Maar niemand luisterde,
Allemaal waren ze bezig hun geld te tellen,
En ze maakten van Judas een duivel die Jezus in het hart pikte,
En ze maakten van Jezus een poort waarbuiten niemand leven kon vinden,
En ze maakten hun kerken, en telden hun winst,
Maar het Roodborstje tikt nog steeds op de ramen,
Voor hen die het horen willen,
Over de strenge winter die zal komen,
En over dat zij die niet luisteren willen,
Nooit tot de lente zullen gaan,
Voor eeuwig zullen zij verhalen achterna rennen,
Voor eeuwig zullen zij het niet verstaan

Luister daarom naar het getik van het Roodborstje,
En vlieg op zijn rug met hem mee,
Tot dat wat ze nooit vertellen wilden,
Want ze wilden alleen tellen

In de zomerschuur ligt het opgeborgen :
Jezus en het Roodborstje voor het late uur,
Niet door Judas werd hij gekruisigd,
Maar door hen die zulke verhalen verzonnen

Nu ben ik op zee voor het late uur,
Met het Roodborstje in mijn hart,
En een kogel door mijn hoofd,
Nu moet ik sterven omdat ik de waarheid vertelde,
Die bandieten hebben me vermoord,
Want ze horen liever het gelieg en gelach van dieven,
Dan het getik der waarheid van het roodborstje,
Zegt het voort, zegt het voort

Ik moet nu sterven, een golf spoelt mij weg,
Maar mijn roodborstje zal verspreiden,
Alles wat ik heb gezegd,
Noch vuur noch ijs zal hem kunnen stoppen,
Noch water, aarde of steen,
Want met waarheid werd hij bemind,
En liefde is zijn voortdrijvende wind,
Door kennis voortgebracht,
En met wijsheid altijd omhuld,
Als het kind van openbaring,
Door hemels vertrouwen toegezongen

Wacht niet op mij, maar zegt het voort,
Na drie dagen zal ik opstaan,

En het Roodborstje zal zijn tot de hemelpoort

Bloeddruppels in de Sneeuw

Dieven kwamen in het holst van de nacht,
Zij schoten een gat in de bijbel,
En draaiden toen alles om,
En ze dobbelden om alle gouden verzen,
Bloeddruppels vielen in de sneeuw,
En ook een brandende lucifer die toen doofde,
En een Roodborstje steeg op met een boodschap,
Dat zij Jezus hadden gekruisigd door een vervalste bijbel,
Zij staken hun angel diep

Dieven kwamen in het holst van de nacht,
Piraten met hun schepen,
Vele verhalen vertelden zij in de nacht,
De verhalen van een dievenmeester,
Die de meester der oplichters was

Oh, hoe zij gokten onder het licht der leugen,
Oh, hoe zij zich tegoed deden aan bloed, vlees en buit,
Ja, het goud verblindde hun ogen

En het Roodborstje steeg op met een boodschap,
Dat hun spel ten einde zou lopen aan het einde van de dag,
En zij schoten het beest neer, en stopten het in een kooitje

Oh, eens zal het Roodborstje vrijkomen,
Want het einde van de dag nadert,
En de avond is de sleutel van de kooi

Bloeddruppels in de sneeuw,
De herinnering aan het Roodborstje,
Zijn woorden zullen uitkomen

Een kaars in de nacht waaraan ik mij warm,
Een deken in de avond die mij onhuld,
En niemand die mij tegenhoudt

Het is de dag van de opstanding,
De graven gaan open, en de kooien springen los,
De engel van het Pinksteren is gekomen

Liefdeslittekens

Wilde honden joegen in de nacht. Het was een onbekend soort. Ze waren wilder dan hyena's. Een stadje werd door hen geteisterd. De wetenschap stond voor een raadsel. Waar waren die wilde honden vandaan gekomen ?

Een dominee bezoekt een man die zijn vrouw had verloren. De dominee gebruikte de illustratie van de wilde honden. "Wilde honden jagen in de nacht. Zij namen je vrouw, en zij is nu één van hen."

"Dat is geen lekker idee," zei de man. "Ik dacht dat ze in de hemel was."

"De hemel is onbekend," zei de dominee. "Niemand weet precies hoe het zit. Het is slechts gespeculeer."

Die nacht droomde de man dat hij en zijn vrouw de liefde bedreven. Plotseling veranderde ze in een wilde hond en rende weg. De man schrok wakker en greep om zich heen. Misschien had de dominee toch gelijk gehad ?

Toen hij het de volgende dag aan de dominee vertelde moest de dominee glimlachen. "Zie, ik zei

het je toch ? Maar het is maar symbolisch, en dromen zijn vaak bedrog."

"Ja, maar het was net echt," zei de man, "alsof ik weer even contact met haar was, en het was goed. Ik denk dat ze terug is gegaan naar de natuur."

"Ik denk het ook," zei de dominee. "En nog eens wat : Er zijn veel vrouwen vrijgezel in de kerk. Grijp je kans zou ik zeggen."

"Het zit nog veel te diep," zei de man. "Ik kan het allemaal nog maar moeilijk verwerken."

"Maar een nieuwe vrouw zou het je kunnen laten verwerken," zei de dominee.

Die nacht had de man een droom dat ook vrouwen om hem heen in wilde honden veranderden. Nu stond het idee om een nieuwe vrouw te nemen hem helemaal niet meer aan, want het zou hem weer pijn gaan doen. De dominee noemde het bindings-angst. De dominee begreep hem goed, maar zei ook dat zo het leven was, te leren leven met ontvangen en verliezen. De dominee haalde een tekst aan uit het boek Job : "De Heere heeft gegeven, de Heere heeft genomen. De Naam van de Heere zij geprezen."

De dominee was voor de man een rots in de branding. De wilde honden waren steeds in het nieuws, en de man bleef er bij bepaald. Telkens moest hij weer aan zijn vrouw denken, die in principe gewoon was meegenomen door de wilde honden. Er kwam een bos-verbod vanwege de wilde honden. De dominee zei dat het een stukje natuur was.

"Waarom komt er geen kerk-verbod vanwege wilde vrouwen in de kerk ?" vroeg de man. De dominee begon te lachen. "Jij bent me ook een mooie, grapjas."

"Nee, ik meen het," zei de man. "Een nieuwe vrouw hebben zal al lastig zijn, en helemaal als ik ze weer verlies."

"Zo is het leven," zei de dominee, "en je moet toch wat."

"Ik blijf liever alleen, uit het bos, en uit de kerk," zei de man.

"Je kan wel naar de kerk gaan, maar dan gewoon uit de buurt van de wilde honden blijven," zei de dominee.

"Nee, ik ken de natuur van de wilde honden," zei de man. "Ze zullen me echt wel krijgen."

"Dan ben ik gewoon je kerk," zei de dominee. "Waar twee of drie vergaderd zijn is er al een kerk, en je bent zelf een kerk."

"Dat is een mooie, rustgevende gedachte," zei de man. Even voelde hij zo'n diepe liefde voor de dominee dat hij dacht dat hij verliefd op hem was. Hij liep naar de dominee toe en omhelsde hem. "Bedankt man," zei hij. "Je betekent de wereld voor mij."

De dominee hield hem stevig vast.

De man was bang voor de liefde, de wilde honden van de liefde, die hem zo zouden kunnen verscheuren. Hij bleef liever op een afstand om zo de wilde honden veilig te kunnen bestuderen.

Die nacht had hij weer een droom over zijn vrouw. Weer veranderde ze in een wilde hond, en begon

naar hem te grommen, en plotseling beet ze hem. Hij vroeg zich af wat zij van hem wilde. De dag erna bleef hij erover nadenken. Was het een boodschap van haar. Wilde zij misschien dat hij weer terug zou gaan naar de kerk, of een nieuwe vrouw zou nemen ? Schijnbaar was ze ontevreden over iets.

Hij vertelde de droom aan de dominee. "Ik zou dat zo zeker niet zien," zei de dominee. "Het is een beeld van de liefde. Ze heeft je opgezocht, en greep je beet, en het doet pijn, omdat ze er niet meer is. Telkens zal het pijn doen als je met haar bezig bent, alsof ze bijt. Het is het gemis, de onmacht. Nu draag je de littekens van de liefde, de littekens van haar liefdesbeet."

"Oh, dominee, dat is bijna te mooi om waar te zijn," zei de man.

Die nacht was er een overstroming waarin vele mensen het leven verloren. De grote rivier was uit haar bedding getreden. De dominee zei : "De wilde honden zijn gekomen. Ze hebben velen meegenomen."

"Weer liefdeslittekens ?" vroeg de man.

"Weer liefdeslittekens," zei de dominee.

De Wilde Hond

Ze woelde in haar slaap als een wilde hond.
Ze zou degene die haar man om het leven had gebracht wel willen aanvallen en hard bijten,
Ze droeg de littekens ervan op haar hart.
In haar dromen ging ze op jacht, op zoek naar de moordenaar van haar man,
maar zonder resultaat. En zo was het ook in het dagelijks leven.
Zij moest met deze wond leven.
Ze leefde als een wilde hond.

De dominee kwam haar vaak opzoeken,
En dan las hij voor uit gedichtenboeken, of hij vertelde verhalen,
Door de dominee kwam ze er doorheen.
De gesprekken inspireerden haar, en gaven haar rust, als een veilige haven.
Maar als hij weg was, dan had ze het moeilijk.
Gelukkig kwam de dominee vaak, heel vaak.

Ze ging niet naar de kerk, nee,
Daar deden ze te moeilijk,
Maar voor de dominee had ze een zwak.
Hij worstelde zelf ook met een aantal dingen.
De dominee was altijd haar steun en toeverlaat.

Ze woelde in haar slaap,
Ze dacht aan de dominee en haar man die dood was,
De dader was nooit gevonden, maar hij was om het leven gebracht door messteken,
In haar gedachten was zij altijd op zoek, altijd op jacht,
Nooit had ze rust, alleen als de dominee er was.

Op een dag nam hij haar mee naar een sprookjespark,
Ze kon zo alles een beetje relativeren aan de hand van sprookjes,
En aan het einde van de dag nam hij haar mee naar een restaurant.
Het was een Oosters restaurant met vreemde plaatjes aan de muur.
Een andere keer nam hij haar mee naar een restaurant met jachtplaatjes aan de muur.
Op sommige plaatjes stonden wilde honden,
Al zou het alleen maar gaan om deze plaatjes te zien, dan zou ze naar het restaurant gaan,
Het inspireerde haar, want voor haar waren de wilde honden een beeld van gerechtigheid,
En ze had het gevoel alsof er geen gerechtigheid was op aarde.
De wilde honden waren voor haar een beeld van de hemel,
Hun jacht zou wel slagen.

De dominee legde haar uit dat de wilde hond een metafoor is van wat we niet begrijpen,
We zijn op zoek, maar we vinden het niet,
Dat wat we verloren hebben krijgen we niet terug,
Maar op een dag zullen we het wel begrijpen,
En dan kunnen we pas echt zeggen dat de jacht geslaagd is,
Als wij zelf gegrepen zijn door de wilde hond.

Het Geheim van Aladin

1. De Wonderdoener

2. Het Bejaardentehuis

3. Wie is Jezus ?

4. Halok Patong Otjelek

5. De Spreuk

6. De Ring

7. Het dromengroepje

8. Duizend-en-één-Nacht

Hoofdstuk 1. De Wonderdoener

Dirk zit in een pinkstergemeente. Op een dag komt er een Oosterse predikant preken. Hij komt ergens uit India of Arabie. Hij is speciaal gekomen voor een rondreis. Er wordt gezegd dat hij nogal ongewone gaven heeft, en daar had men natuurlijk wel oren naar in de pinkstergemeente. De voorganger was een nuchtere man. Hij vond het allemaal wel goed. Waarom heisa maken ? Dat was altijd zijn motto. Tijdens de dienst en de preek van de oosterling haalt de man een soort slangachtig voorwerp uit z'n broekzak, en begint ermee te zwaaien. 'Weet je wat ik hiermee kan ?' vraagt de man. 'Ik kan hier demonen in opsluiten.' In de zaal wordt er een beetje gegniffeld, maar de man was serieus. 'Jezus sloot demonen op in zwijnen, dus waarom zouden wij geen demonen opsluiten in voorwerpen ?' De voorganger keek de man vanaf de rij indringend aan, maar met een soort glimlach van : 'Je maakt zeker een grapje.' Dirk dacht dat de voorganger dit wel spannend zou vinden, die zou zo iemand nooit stoppen, daar was hij veel te nuchter voor. Hij zag nergens kwaad in. Volgens Dirk kon dat gevaarlijk wezen. De man strekte zijn armen uit over de zaal, en begon te bidden. Zijn handen begonnen te trillen. 'Ik voel een demoon hier, een demoon van lust, kom eruit, snel.' En ineens begon er achter in de zaal iemand te gillen. Snel draaide de oosterling met het slangachtig voorwerp, en gebood de geest in het voorwerp te gaan. Na de preek en de trucs van de oosterling mochten er vragen gesteld worden. Ook Dirk stelde een vraag : 'Hoeveel geesten kunnen er in zo'n voorwerp, en hoe weten we of zo'n geest daadwerkelijk in het voorwerp is gekomen ?' De man zei dat er een onbeperkt aantal geesten inkonden. Hij droeg de slang altijd bij zich, zodat hij een voorwerp had waarmee hij de geesten kon opsluiten. Hij zei dat de geesten zo sneller uit te drijven waren. Volgens hem moest je gewoon geloven dat de geesten erin gingen, zoals Jezus ook door geloof de geesten kon uitdrijven en in de zwijnen kon sturen. Maar ook kon God daartoe tekenen geven, bevestigingen. Op de vraag of ze er alle geesten mee konden opsluiten was het antwoord : 'Nee, want sommige demonen kunnen alleen in stenen opgesloten worden.' En toen haalde de oosterling een steen uit zijn zak. 'Hier zitten al veel demonen in, maar ik zal er nu een paar bijdoen.' De oosterling begon te bidden, en vroeg : 'Wie van jullie heeft er astma ?' Een vrouw aan de zijkant van de zaal stond op. De oosterling hief de steen op, en sprak luid : 'geest van astma, ik gebied u in de Naam van Jezus in deze steen te gaan.' De vrouw begon hevig te schudden, en was even later van haar ademnood af.

Iemand vroeg : 'Kunnen de geesten niet meer ontsnappen ?' Waarop de oosterling zei : 'Nee, want ze worden door Jezus en Zijn engelen bewaakt.' Iemand anders in de zaal vond het een eng idee om zoveel demonen mee te moeten dragen in een steen. Maar de oosterling zei dat de geesten goed gebonden waren, en dat ze niets konden doen. Een exorcist moest ook leren bewaken, als een soort bewaker van een

gevangenis. De oosterling deed veel wonderen en tekenen en spoedig begonnen de aanwezigen eraan gewend te raken. Een ouderling echter stond op en zei : 'Ik zou er helemaal paranoide van worden.' Maar de oosterling zei dat de lucht vol was met boze geesten en dat ze beter zo'n soort geestelijke stofzuiger met zich mee konden dragen. Achter in de zaal stond iemand op : 'U bent typisch zo'n oosterse tovenaar. Ik geloof er helemaal niets van, waar u mee bezig bent.'

Dirk schrok wakker. Wat had hij een vreemde droom gehad, zeg. Maar hij moest opschieten, want over een uur begon de dienst. De voorganger sprak over dieren in de Bijbel. De voorganger zei ook dat als God iets schiep, dan werden zijn schepselen daardoor vrijgezet, maar als de mens iets schiep door het vlees, dan werden schepselen daardoor gebonden. De voorganger liet ook zien hoe dieren werden onderdrukt door mensen. Dirk was het daar helemaal mee eens. Dirk was een vegetarier, omdat hij niet geloofde dat een mens een dier mocht vermoorden. Doodslag was verboden, want daarmee gaf je aan dat je superieur was.

Na de dienst vroeg Dirk aan de voorganger of die misschien ook vegetarisch was, maar het antwoord daarop was negatief.

Hoofdstuk 2. Het Bejaardentehuis

Ergens in het boek Jeremia las Dirk dat die dierenoffers helemaal niet uit God waren, en ook ergens in de brieven van Paulus las hij dat God die offers verafschuwde en haatte en dat Hij het niet had gewild. Maar vandaag de dag werden er nog steeds dieren geofferd door christenen. Misschien niet zo zeer aan God, maar aan hun buik.

Dirk werkte in een bejaardenhuis. Hier werd ook veel vlees gegeten, en waarvoor ? Dirk zag daar de dood recht in de ogen. Dit was vaak het eindstation van de bejaarden. Hij had wel eens discussies met bejaarden over vlees eten. Zij hadden daar vaak geen vervelend gevoel bij. Ze hadden vaak zoiets van : 'wij gaan dood, dan moeten die dieren ook maar dood, anders is het niet eerlijk.' Dirk zei dan altijd : 'Maar die dieren gaan heus wel dood hoor, daar hebben ze jullie echt niet bij nodig.' Waarop zij dan vaak weer zeiden : 'Nou, wat loop je dan te zeuren als ze toch dood gaan. Dan kunnen wij hun vlees toch wel eten ?' Dirk werd er altijd een beetje misselijk van. Hij had altijd het gevoel dat hij tussen de vampieren leefde.

Op een zondag had de voorganger een vreemde preek. Het ging over het onbijbelse van vegetarisme. De voorganger haalde allerlei bijbelteksten naar voren om het vlees eten te verdedigen. De voorganger had ook een boekje meegenomen genaamd : 'Vegetarisme in het licht van de Bijbel,' en in het boekje kon vegetarisme de toets niet doorstaan. 's Middags zouden ze met de hele gemeente gaan barbecuen in het bos. Dirk ging natuurlijk niet mee. Wat moest hij daar zoeken ?

Dirk had medicijnen gestudeerd, en wist dat door vlees te eten de kans op kanker en hartziekten verhoogd werd. In het vlees zaten namelijk vetten die door de buik niet verteerd konden worden, en die vetten zouden dan om het hart heen gaan drijven. Dirk had hierover eens een cursus gevolgd bij een hartspecialist. Sindsdien was hij

overgegaan van tachtig procent vegetarier naar honderd procent vegetarier. In de gemeente zaten veel mensen die kanker hadden. Het leek wel een epidemie.

Dirk had nog wel zo'n foldertje liggen, van die hartspecialist, en besloot het eens op het prikbord van de gemeente te hangen. Maar niet lang daarna was het weer verwijderd. Wilden ze de mensen ergens blind voor houden ? Dirk zag het als een groot complot. Later hoorde hij dat de voorganger uit een slagers-familie kwam, en dat het foldertje te negatief was over slagers. Dirk zag slagers als terroristen. Slachthuizen waren in zijn ogen concentratie-kampen.

Hoofdstuk 3. Wie is Jezus ?

Dirk vond dat evangelisatie geen zin had. Hij vond het meer zin hebben om mensen te overtuigen dat vlees eten niets oplost, maar het alleen maar erger maakt. In de bijbel werd een dier het slachtoffer, waardoor de Israelieten zogenaamd de geluksvogels werden, en later in het Nieuwe Testament was het Jezus die de pechvogel was. Dirk zag het als een valstrik, want zo werden mensen afhankelijk gemaakt aan moord, en afhankelijkheid bracht slavernij voort. En de god van dit stelsel vrat lekker zijn buikje vol.

Op een dag stond de voorganger bij Dirk op de stoep. Dirk was niet meer welkom in de gemeente. De voorganger had gehoord over Dirk's onruststokerij en negativiteit. Het kon Dirk niet zoveel schelen. Hij zou het zinkende schip verlaten voordat het geheel gezonken was. De voorganger bedankte hem, en vertrok weer.

Wel werd Dirk een beetje moe van al die weerstand, en besloot in het vervolg maar gewoon z'n mond te houden. Hij kon toch niks doen. Hij had wel een sticker op z'n fiets met VLEES IS MOORD erop, maar daar hoefde hij verder niets mee te doen, en mensen vroegen hem er ook nooit naar.

Op een nacht had Dirk weer een droom. Hij was weer terug in de gemeente, en de voorganger hield een stuk vlees voor het publiek. 'Eet van het vlees van Jezus,' sprak hij. 'Maar dat vlees is rauw,' riep iemand. Toen werd de voorganger kwaad, en riep : 'Ik heb dit vlees altijd moeten eten, dus jullie ook.'

Dirk schrok wakker. Het was alsof hij een koude hand op zich voelde. In het Oude Testament moest het vlees van dieren geofferd worden, en in het Nieuwe Testament het vlees van Jezus, zoals ze altijd zeiden : 'Neemt, en eet van Zijn lichaam.' Hier was Dirk het nooit mee eens. Het klonk hem meer als vampirisme in zijn oren. Als mensen wordt wijsgemaakt dat ze gered worden door andermans ellende en dood, dan is moord hiervan het gevolg. Dit behoorde tot de primitieve bloedoffer-afgoderijen. Dat hele verhaal van Jezus werd uit z'n verband gerukt, zodat het een dekmantel kon worden voor duistere zaken.

Voor Dirk was Jezus iemand die Zijn Leven gaf om te laten zien hoe mensen konden leven, en zalig konden worden. Het verhaal moest dus een andere belichting hebben, een andere draai. Je deelt uit van je eigen leven, opdat anderen ook uitdelen van hun leven. Zo zou er een goede bloedsomloop zijn.

Hoofdstuk 4. Halok Patong Otjelek

In het bejaardenhuis de volgende dag was het erg druk. Ze zouden een grote barbecue houden. Dirk ging bijna over z'n nek, maar hij kon niet weg, want het was zijn werk. Dirk zou wat andere dingen eten zoals champignons met soja-brokken, en patat. Gelukkig was de avond snel voorbij. Dirk zag eigenlijk de afgodische stroom in het christendom die de betekenis van Jezus een halve slag draaide, als één grote barbecue. Maar de bejaarden waren veelal te oud om dat te begrijpen. Zij waren al helemaal in het systeem vastgegroeid. Ook ambtshalve mocht Dirk er niet te veel over praten. Het moest vooral gezellig blijven, en er mocht geen emotionele druk op de bejaarden komen. Dirk besloot zijn mond maar te houden.

Aan het eind van de avond, bij het afsluiten, kwam er nog een oud dametje naar Dirk toe. 'Zo Dirk, hoe smaakte het hondenvoer ?' vroeg ze. Dirk moest wel even lachen. Even later liep Dirk door het donker naar huis. Een man met witte klederen liep op hem af. Het leek wel een beetje op een soort indische goeroe, of een ver-oosterde Jezus. Halok Patong Otjelek, zei de man. Dirk groette terug en liep door, maar de man achtervolgde hem. Ineens werd er van achteren op hem geklopt. 'Heb je vannacht een slaapplaats voor mij ? Ik ben hier op vakantie, maar ik kon geen slaapplaats vinden.' Dirk nam de man mee naar huis en gaf hem te eten. De man had verder geen spullen. Boven had Dirk nog wel een kamer voor de man. De volgende ochtend werd Dirk wakker, maar toen hij naar beneden liep kreeg hij de schrik van zijn leven. Zijn televisie was verdwenen, een paar meubels, en er was veel geld uit de la gestolen. De man was nergens meer te bekennen. Snel belde Dirk de politie. Hoe kon hij ook zomaar een vreemdeling vertrouwen. Maar ja, wat kon hij anders ?

Toen Dirk de man beschreef ging er een lichtje bij de politie branden. De man scheen een gevaarlijke crimineel te zijn. Dirk mocht blij zijn dat hij nog leefde. Het kwam allemaal in de krant te staan, en al snel kreeg Dirk een telefoontje van zijn vroegere voorganger : 'Dirk, ik ben er achtergekomen dat ik iets te hard voor je ben geweest. Je hebt een hart van goud, en ik zou je graag weer in de gemeente terugzien,' sprak de voorganger. In de gemeente werd Dirk ineens als een koning ontvangen. De mensen waren heel blij hem te zien. De mensen hadden het erg met hem te doen, en van alle kanten kreeg hij spullen en geld aangereikt. Dirk was hen erg dankbaar. Ineens stond de man met de witte klederen in de deur-opening met een geweer. 'Allemaal liggen,' riep hij hard. En iedereen verschool zich onder en achter de banken. Ineens begon de man te vuren, en schoot gaten in de muren. Iedereen was in grote paniek. 'Leg al het geld dat je hebt op de banken,' riep de man. Direkt werd er geld gelegd, en de man begon het op te halen. 'Kotsmisselijk ben ik van jullie,' zei de man. 'Ik word hier in jullie land als crimineel gezien, maar ik kom gewoon een deel halen van jullie rijkdom. Wij in het Oosten zijn arm. Het is niet eerlijk. Wij komen om van de honger, terwijl jullie hier feestjes en barbecues houden. En jullie noemen jezelf christenen ? Vampieren zijn jullie !' En toen vertrok de man weer. Direkt werd de politie gebeld, maar de man was in geen velden of wegen te bekennen. Dirk werd naar voren geroepen om de mensen te sussen. Maar Dirk kon geen woord uitbrengen. Verslagen ging hij weer zitten. De politie zou een

grootscheeps onderzoek houden.

Hoofdstuk 5. De Spreuk

Thuisgekomen ziet Dirk de man op de bank zitten met een soort sigaret. 'Wat doe je hier ?' vraagt Dirk. 'Hier woon ik,' zegt de man.

'Waar heb je al mijn spullen ?' vraagt Dirk, die direkt de politie wil bellen. 'Dat zou ik maar niet doen,' zegt de man. 'Trouwens de telefoonkabel is doorgesneden.'

'Nou leuk,' zegt Dirk, 'en wat ga je nog meer doen ?'

'Wat zou ik als Jezus doen ?' vraagt de man ... 'Wonderen en tekenen natuurlijk ...'

'Oh God,' zegt Dirk, 'denk je nu ook al dat je Jezus bent ?'

'Ik ben altijd al Jezus geweest,' zegt de man, en plotseling is de man in het niets verdwenen.

Dirk schrikt wakker. Wat heeft hij vreemd gedroomd, zeg. Stilletjes sluipt Dirk naar de kamer van de vreemdeling. Deze slaapt nog steeds. 'Ach, het zal toch geen dief zijn ?' denkt Dirk ... 'Het was immers maar een droom.' Toch voor alle zekerheid haalde Dirk z'n geld uit de la, en legde het onder z'n kussen.

De volgende ochtend zitten ze samen aan het ontbijt. Dirk vertelt over zijn droom, en de man begint te grinniken. 'Ik geloof niet in Jezus,' zegt de man, 'Ik geloof in Boeddha.'

'Whatever,' denkt Dirk. De man draagt een vreemde ring, en Dirk vraagt naar de betekenis ervan. 'Oh,' zegt de man, 'dat is een ring waarmee ik boze geesten opsluit.'

'Zo zo,' zegt Dirk, 'doet Boeddha daar ook al aan ?'

'Nee,' zegt de man, 'dat heb ik eens geleerd vroeger van een man waarbij ik werkte. Die zei dat als ik genoeg geesten in mijn ring had verzameld, dan konden ze voor mij werken, en dan zou ik slapend rijk worden.'

'En ? Ben je dat geworden ?' vroeg Dirk. 'Nee,' zei de man, 'maar ik mag niet klagen.' Dirk glimlachte. 'Vertel me eens,' vroeg Dirk, 'hoe sluit je die geesten in je ring op ? En hoe laat je ze voor je werken ?'

De man boog een beetje naar voren, en zei : 'Door wat toverspreuken. Als ik genoeg geesten heb dan vormen ze tezamen een goede geest.'

'Oh,' zei Dirk een beetje pseudo-verbaasd, maar wel met respect, 'werken die dingen zo ?'

'Oh ja,' zei de man, 'want als je vele boze geesten aan elkaar hebt gebonden, dan wordt de goede geest die ze gevangen hadden gezet vrijgezet, en dan worden die boze geesten omgevormd en betoverd tot zijn delen.'

'Hmm... dat klinkt interessant,' zei Dirk, 'althans het is een leuk sprookje.'

'Nee,' zei de man, 'het is echt.'

'Whatever,' dacht Dirk. 'Kun je mij die toverspreuken eens vertellen ?'

Maar de man schudde zijn hoofd. Hij had zeven jaren voor die spreuken moeten werken, dus die zou hij niet zomaar even op tafel leggen. Maar toen werd Dirk ineens wel heel erg nieuwsgierig, en het was alsof zijn hart begon op te springen. 'Wat als ik je aanbied een maand bij mij te logeren ?' Maar de man schudde zijn hoofd. Dat zou te gemakkelijk gaan. 'Waar doe je het dan voor ?' vroeg Dirk.

'Wat dacht je van veel geld ?' zei de man. Dirk herinnerde wel hoeveel geld men moest betalen voor een reiki-cursus waarin je speciale bewegingen, symbolen en spreuken zou leren om één of andere goddelijke kracht te ontvangen. Dit leek hier wel erg veel op, en wat als de man maar gewoon wat bazelde ? Misschien als Dirk hem het geld zou geven dat de man die spreuken gewoon ter plekke zou verzinnen. Maar wat als de man nu echt geheime en kostbare toverkracht zou bezitten door die spreuken ... Hoe langer Dirk er over nadacht hoe interessanter hij het vond worden. Hij zou graag als een soort Aladin willen zijn, met zijn eigen wonderlamp, met een geest die hem zou kunnen helpen.

Hoofdstuk 6. De Ring

Dirk probeert op vele manieren erachter te komen hoe het zit, en stelt veel vragen, maar de man laat niet veel meer los. De man hield zich als een automaat waar je eerst geld in moest gooien. Voorzichtig vroeg Dirk naar het bedrag voor de spreuken. Het was een bedrag boven de tienduizend. Toch besloot Dirk het te doen, want hij werd gek van de nieuwsgierigheid. Dirk ging naar boven en haalde het bedrag onder zijn kussen vandaan, en gaf het aan de man. De man gaf hem een klein boekje waar de spreuken instonden. 'Hier heb je het. Ik ken de spreuken na al die jaren wel uit m'n hoofd. Als je ze goed gebruikt zul je nooit meer te hoeven werken. Ineens was de man in het niets verdwenen. Dirk voelde zich heel vreemd en opende het boekje. Er werd ook uitleg gegeven bij de spreuken.

Dit was allemaal veel interessanter dan al dat gezanik in de kerk van mensen die toch niet veranderen, of door zogenaamde veranderingen steeds trotser en koppiger worden. Maar dit was mysterie, dit was geheimzinnig, dit was zeker wel een duikje waard. Dirk begreep wel dat de man er zoveel geld voor had gevraagd, want hij had er immers zeven jaren voor gewerkt.

Dirk bladerde snel door het boekje, en ergens op één van de laatste bladzijden stond dat het boekje absoluut niet verkocht mocht worden. Ook stond er op dat hen die deze kennis bezaten het alleen maar mochten doorgeven aan hen die er klaar voor waren. En toen las Dirk iets waar hij erg van schrok. Om de spreuken daadwerkelijk te laten werken zou degene die de spreuken kende eerst naar het Oosten moeten gaan, om daar op zoek te gaan naar een speciale ring. Toen de ring beschreven werd herinnerde Dirk zich dat de oosterse man zo'n ring had. Dirk voelde zich een beetje moe worden. Zou hij echt eerst op zoek moeten naar zo'n ring ? Toen Dirk even later de kamer van zijn gast opruimde zag hij op het kussen iets liggen. Het was een briefje, en toen Dirk het pakte lag er tot zijn grote verbazing een ring onder, dezelfde ring als die de man droeg. Op het briefje stond geschreven : 'Ik wist dat je zo'n ring nodig zou hebben, dus bij deze. Ik zie je in het kasteel.' Dirk was erg verrast, maar

wat bedoelde hij met het kasteel ? Even later na het boekje wat beter te hebben gelezen begreep Dirk het. Hij zou leren te verschijnen en te verdwijnen, en ergens op een verborgen en geheime plaats zou een kasteel staan waar je alleen maar door de spreuken en de ring zou kunnen komen. Hier zou je ook alle anderen kunnen ontmoeten die de ring droegen en de spreuken gebruikten. Dat leek Dirk wel erg spannend. Maar hoe hij ook oefende met de spreuken, er gebeurde niet veel, eigenlijk niets. Maar hij wist dat het toch wel iets moest zijn, want de man kon ook zo maar in het niets verdwijnen. Er was ook een hoofdstuk over wat er aan de hand zou kunnen zijn als de spreuken niet zouden werken. Ergens stond geschreven dat als je zelf niet in het oosten was geweest, dan zouden de spreuken niet werken. Zij die de ring al wel hadden, maar nog niet in het oosten waren geweest, zouden eerst naar het oosten moeten gaan, zodat de ring zou werken. Zij zouden bij een oosterse koopman de ring moeten laten beoordelen.

Er zat voor Dirk niets anders op om naar het Oosten te vertrekken, maar waar in het Oosten ? Dat stond nergens beschreven. Dirk besloot naar Bagdad te gaan, want daar kwam Aladin ook vandaan. Bij een koopman aangekomen in een winkel liet Dirk de ring zien, en vroeg wat het waard was. De koopman schrok zichtbaar. De koopman riep iets en even later grepen twee Oosterse soldaten Dirk vast. De koopman zei dat het één van de gestolen ringen van de Sjeik was. Dirk moest meekomen naar het paleis van de Sjeik. De koopman liep voorop met de ring. De Sjeik was erg blij de ring te zien, en begon het ding te zoenen. Toen richtte hij zich op Dirk en riep : 'Werp hem in de vurige oven !' Maar toen riep Dirk : 'Maar mijnheer, ik heb helemaal niets gedaan. Ik heb deze ring van iemand gekregen. Ik wist niet dat hij gestolen was.' Toen zei de Sjeik : 'Okay, sluit hem dan op in de diepste kerker.' Dirk werd helemaal meegevoerd naar beneden. In de kerker aangekomen zag hij daar ook de man zitten van wie hij de ring had en de spreuken. 'En, waar heb je nu de ring ?' vraagt de man. Dirk begint te snikken : 'Die hebben ze me afgenomen. De ring was gestolen. Wat doe jij hier trouwens ?' Waarop de man zegt : 'Je hebt de ring nodig, anders kom je hier nooit meer weg. Ik ben hier speciaal voor jou gekomen.'

'Ach, toe nou,' smeekt Dirk, 'kun je me nog één keer die ring geven ?' Ineens is de man weer verdwenen, en na een paar minuten verschijnt hij weer, met de ring. 'Alsjeblieft, en laat hem je niet meer afnemen,' zegt de man. Dirk haalt zijn boekje tevoorschijn, en begint de spreuken uit te spreken. En eindelijk werkt het, en niet lang daarna bevindt hij zich in het geheime kasteel. Hier komt hij de man weer tegen, maar ook wat christenen, zelfs wat voorgangers die hij wel kent. 'Wat moeten die nu hier ?' vraagt Dirk. Waarop de man zegt : 'Hetzelfde als wat jij hier doet.'

Plotseling word Dirk wakker. Het was weer allemaal een droom. Waarom moet hij toch altijd zo vreemd dromen ?

Inmiddels was het dan echt ochtend geworden. Tijd om zijn gast te wekken. Die ligt nog rustig te slapen. Dirk heeft wat ontbijt voor hem gemaakt. Z'n gast kijkt hem een beetje vreemd aan. Beneden aan tafel vertelt Dirk glimlachend de twee dromen die hij over hem heeft gehad. Z'n gast zegt niet veel, en vertrekt na een tijdje weer. Het ging de man alleen maar om een slaapplaats voor de nacht. Dirk is best wel

opgelucht dat alles zo goed is afgelopen, maar Dirk denkt nog wel veel na over dat bijzondere spreuken-boekje waarover hij gedroomd had. Tijdens het opruimen van de kamer van zijn gast komt Dirk erachter dat de man een klein bijbeltje heeft achtergelaten. Misschien dat hij het vergeten is ? Even later wordt er gebeld. Het is de man, die om zijn bijbeltje vraagt die hij had vergeten. 'Bent u christen ?' vraagt Dirk. Maar de man mompelt wat, neemt het bijbeltje aan uit Dirk's hand, en loopt weer weg.

Een uurtje later gaat Dirk naar z'n werk in het bejaardentehuis. Hij gaat bij een oude dame op bezoek die ernstig ziek is. De vrouw ligt in bed. Door de jaren heen moest Dirk de vrouw zo nu en dan wat zorg geven, en de dame is erg op hem gesteld. 'Dirk, ik heb wat voor je,' zegt de vrouw, 'ik weet niet of je er wat aan hebt, maar het is een boekje wat ik eens kreeg van een andere dame waar ik zeven jaar voor gewerkt had in de huishouding. Ik wilde het graag aan jou geven.' De vrouw boog opzij en trok haar nachtkastje open, en haalde een paars-achtig boek tevoorschijn. Dirk sloeg het boek open en zag allerlei vreemde spreuken staan. 'Wat is het ?' vraagt hij aan de oude dame. 'Ik weet het niet, Dirk,' zei de oude vrouw. 'Ik weet alleen dat het boek oorspronkelijk van haar overleden man was, die als kapitein op een schip werkte.' Dirk sloeg het boek dicht.

Thuisgekomen sloeg hij het boek direkt weer open. Er stonden veel spreuken in, maar er stond niet bij wat het betekende. Het kon ook gewoon een boek in een andere taal zijn. Dirk besloot het boek te laten onderzoeken door een expert. Na enkele maanden kreeg hij bericht. Het boek was inderdaad geschreven in een oud oosterse taal, dus het waren geen spreuken. Het was een boek over dieren en hun betekenissen. Dirk was een beetje teleurgesteld dat het geen toverspreuken waren, maar aan de andere kant ook opgelucht, want zo konden er ook geen vreemde dingen gebeuren.

Dirk besloot het boek gewoon in de kast te leggen, en er verder geen aandacht meer aan te geven.

Hoofdstuk 7. Het dromengroepje

Dirk besluit zich aan te melden bij een dromengroepje. Bij het dromengroepje wordt er gepraat over wat ze gedroomd hebben. Ze zitten in een kring. Het zijn mensen van verschillende slag. Er zitten bank-directeuren tussen, dokters, christenen en niet-christenen. Dirk begint te vertellen over zijn dromen. Die had hij eigenlijk al van kindsaf aan. Het wordt een lange toespraak. Na afloop wordt hem gevraagd hoe hij zich bij de dromen voelde. Iemand anders stapt naar voren, en begint soortgelijke dromen te vertellen. Dirk vindt dat wel interessant. Het is net alsof die soortgelijke dromen alles op een andere manier belichten, en aanvullen. De avond is snel voorbij. Een vrouw die nog met Dirk wil doorpraten word door hem uitgenodigd om mee te komen naar zijn huis. 'Ja, ik ben erg onder de indruk van je dromen,' zegt de vrouw. 'Ik droom zelf niet zoveel, maar had toch wel een paar dromen waarover ik in een dromengroepje wilde praten. Het ging om een paar nachtmerries.' Dirk is één en al oor. De vrouw begint te vertellen. Ze vertelde hem dat ze in haar jeugd een paar keer dezelfde droom had gedroomd. Dat gebeurde altijd als ze ziek was. Dan zag ze

Aladin op de kade staan die naar haar riep, en op haar afrende, maar dan werd ze altijd door een paar duistere figuren in een schip getrokken, en gingen ze de zee op waar het verschrikkelijk stormde. Dan verging het schip altijd.

De vrouw kon die nachtmerries nooit verwerken. 'Ben je een christen ?' vroeg Dirk. 'Nee,' zei de vrouw, 'maar ik ben wel altijd geinteresseerd geweest in sprookjes, vooral de sprookjes van Duizend-en-één-Nacht.' Dirk begint te glimlachen. Nou, ik zou ook maar geen christen worden hoor, want dan word je door allerlei christenen gegrepen die het alleen maar erger maken. Het wordt toch allemaal verkeerd belicht. De beste christenen die het dichtst bij de waarheid leven zijn de niet-christelijke christenen, de buitenkerkelijke kerkelijken. De vrouw begint te glimlachen, en begrijpt precies wat hij bedoelt. Ineens voelt de vrouw zich niet goed worden. 'Ga maar even op de bank liggen,' zegt Dirk vriendelijk. De vrouw begint hevig te ademen, en Dirk haalt een glas water voor haar. Wat moet hij nu doen ? Na een tijdje word de vrouw weer wat rustig. 'Ik heb soms last van hyperventilatie,' laat de vrouw weten.

Na een tijdje zetten ze het gesprek voort. 'Ik denk dat figuren als Jezus en Aladin juist buiten het schip en buiten de kerk staan, omdat ze van binnen hun beeld zo gemolesteerd hebben,' zegt Dirk. De vrouw knikt instemmend. Het is een zachte vrouw, iemand die Dirk goed kan begrijpen. 'Wordt er in de kerk ook over Aladin gesproken, of alleen over Jezus ?' vraagt de vrouw. Dirk wordt stil ... Hij herinnert zich een droom die hij heel vroeger heeft gehad over Aladin met zijn lamp waaruit geesten kwamen. Die geesten hadden zich op allerlei manieren verkleed en gingen in de hoofden van mensen wonen. En op een vreemde manier raakten die mensen toen in elkaar geinteresseerd. Als iets 'anders is dan anders' dan kan dat aantrekken of afstoten.

Dirk besluit om de vrouw bij hem te laten logeren. Ze komt op de kamer waar de oosterse man had geslapen.

Hoofdstuk 8. Duizend-en-één-Nacht

In de logeerkamer hangt een groot schilderij van Mickey Mouse. De vrouw kon zich nog wel herinneren dat ze vroeger eens over Mickey Mouse had gedroomd. In die droom had Mickey een schip, een soort piratenschip. De volgende ochtend zitten ze samen aan het ontbijt. De vrouw moet net als Dirk ook werken. Ze besluiten elkaar weer terug te zien in het dromengroepje.

Wanneer er weer een bespreking is van het dromengroepje is er weer een nieuw lid bijgekomen. De man gaat zitten, en begint te vertellen. Ook anderen vertellen wat ze de afgelopen twee weken hebben gedroomd. En er wordt nog een tijd over doorgepraat. Dirk denkt diep over de dromen na. Het is voor hem een ander soort van leven, en ook een ander soort van contact hebben met elkaar. Het is een speciale vriendenkring, en het trekt hem veel meer aan dan het gewone leven. En of hij het geheim van Aladin al heeft ontrafeld ? Dat weet Dirk niet. Hij besluit de sprookjes van Duizend-en-één-Nacht te lezen, zoals de vrouw hem dat had aangeraden.

Maar het was alsof Dirk het niet kon lezen, alles wemelde voor zijn ogen, en hij besloot ermee te stoppen. Het boek was in het Engels. Maar de vrouw wilde het hem wel voorlezen en voor hem vertalen. Dirk stemde er mee in. De vrouw zou hem elke keer na de bijeenkomst thuis een stukje voorlezen. Het was alsof het boek Dirk heel zwaar op de maag viel, en daarom kon hij niet teveel in één keer. Op een dag stonden er twee mannen voor de deur. Het waren Jehova-getuigen. Dirk liet hen binnen, en schonk wat voor hen in. Dirk vertelde over het boek dat hij aan het lezen was. 'Maar ken je de Bijbel al ? Heb je daar weleens in gelezen ?' vroeg een van de mannen. 'Ja, daar ben ik zo zoetjes aan mee doodgegooid,' zei Dirk. Toen ze een slot op de Bijbel hebben gezet, heeft God gezegd : 'Nou goed, dan maak ik er wel andere boeken bij. Mij kun je de mond niet snoeren.' Ze hebben van die Bijbel een papieren paus gemaakt. Maar toen staken de Jehovah-getuigen van wal. Ze hadden het over het komende paradijs hier op aarde. Dirk wist niet goed wat hij hierop moest zeggen, en liet ze maar praten. Waar hij in was geinteresseerd was hoe zij in het totale plaatje konden passen. Ze liepen natuurlijk niet voor niets rond. Daar was God gewoon te groot voor. Dirk herinnerde de droom van zijn kinderjaren : Alle dingen zijn puzzelstukjes, maar je moet ze op de juiste manier draaien en op de juiste plekken, zodat ze in elkaar passen. Dat was een hele opgave. Ook was het voor Dirk een uitdaging, en het was een stap verder dan alles zomaar opzij te schuiven. Dirk moest met de stukjes werken.

Vanavond zou er een optocht zijn. De hele stoet was verkleed, en er waren versierde wagens. Er was ook een wagen bij waar Aladin opstond. 'Hey, Aladin !' riep iemand in het publiek. Maar Aladin hoorde het niet, omdat hij tussen wat hoornblazers, trompettisten en slagwerkers stond. Dirk slenterde naar huis, nadenkend over God en over zijn dromen. Was de wereld niet één grote droom ? Dirk wist het niet. Er waren zoveel dingen die hij nog niet wist. Zou hij het ooit te weten komen ?

Einde

De Uitverkiezing van Lapondria

De keren dat ik hem zag was hij gehuld in lompen, sprak bijna niet, en droeg een hoed ... Hij kwam een paar keer bij ons in de gemeente, om nooit meer terug te komen ... Toch heeft hij heel veel indruk op me gemaakt in die tijd ... Zou hij nog

leven ?

Hij deelde vreemde folders uit over een uitverkiezing ... Wat dat voor uitverkiezing was wist ik niet ... Ik was toen nog erg jong ... Mijn moeder nam het foldertje wel aan, maar toen ze thuis was had ze het al weggegooid ... Nu, na al die jaren, zou ik toch wel willen weten waar dat foldertje over ging ...

Daar slenter ik over straat. Een man spreekt mij aan, en zegt iets over bier drinken ... Ik loop door ... Ik ben moe ... maar ... maar ... daar zie ik hem staan ... die man gehuld in lompen ... Maar als ik dichterbij kom blijkt het iemand anders te zijn ... Of is hij veranderd ...

De volgende dag is het zondag ... Ik wil niet naar de kerk ... Ik moet, maar ik ren weg ... Naar het hertenpark ... Ik ben liever bij de dieren ... Op straat ligt een verfrommeld foldertje over een cirkus in de stad ...

Ik denk weer na over die uitverkiezing ... Die nacht droom ik over een park vol leeuwen ... Grote leeuwen ... met grote ogen ... Er staan hekken omheen, met paden ... Ik loop over die paden ... Langs die paden, aan de andere kant, staan bomen en struiken ... Dan roept iemand : 'Het hek is open ! Er is een gat in het hek ...' Een voor een komen de leeuwen door het gat naar buiten ... Ik ben niet bang, maar ren toch weg ... De leeuwen volgen mij ... Het lijkt wel alsof ze van mij houden ... Ze doen mij niks ... Maar na een tijdje beginnen ze mij op te eten ... Dan word ik wakker ... Wat een vreemde droom ... Alsof ze nog steeds in mijn kamer zijn ... Ik ben moe, en ga weer slapen ... Mijn ouders zijn boos, omdat ik ben weggerend toen ik naar de kerk moest ...

Ik ben gelukkig ... Ik voel me goed ... Heel zacht van binnen ... alsof er veren in mijn lichaam zijn ... zo zacht ... Ik gaap ... en maak een hard geluid ... Wat een vreemde, vreemde droom had ik toch vannacht ...

Het lijkt wel alsof ik ben uitverkoren ... Maar voor wat ? ... Ik voel me zo blij ... zo rustig, en zo vol vrede ... Wie heeft mij dan uitverkoren ... Een raadsel ... of is het God ?

Het Rode Gordijn

Hoofdstuk 1. De Preek

Hoofdstuk 2. Het Conferentie-Oord

Hoofdstuk 3. De Bedreiging

Hoofdstuk 4. De Rode Vogel

Hoofdstuk 1. De Preek

Ronald komt thuis van een feestje dat nogal laat was geworden. De aanwezigen waren abnormaal druk, en het leek wel alsof ze met hun hoofd in de wolken liepen. Ronald zelf was nogal moe, maar hij vond dat hij het verjaarsfeest van zijn broer niet zomaar kon laten gaan. Eens in het jaar ging Ronald altijd naar zijn broer die in het andere deel van het land woonde, en dat was met de verjaardagen.

Thuisgekomen ploft Ronald vermoeid op de bank. Hij had bijna geen kracht meer om naar z'n bed te komen, dus hij besloot om maar een nachtje op de bank te slapen. Gelukkig was het de volgende dag weekend.

Vandaag zou zijn vriendin komen. Zijn vriendin was altijd erg netjes, en zou ongetwijfeld de boel bij Ronald weer eens opruimen. Ronald was geen sloddervos, maar kon zijn spullen nog weleens laten slingeren, vooral als hij het erg druk had. Hij vond dat er in het huis wel 'geleefd' moest worden. Overal lagen boeken in het rond, en dat vond Ronald wel zo gemakkelijk als hij aan het studeren was. Vaak liet hij de boeken gewoon open liggen.

's Middags om twee uur zou zijn vriendin komen voor een lekker rustig dagje, en dan zouden ze de volgende dag samen naar de kerk gaan.

Toen ze de volgende dag samen in de kerk zaten hield de dominee een preek over het IJzeren Gordijn, de scheiding tussen Oost en West-Europa. Aan de aanwezigen werd de vraag gesteld of zij misschien ook IJzeren Gordijnen in hun leven hadden gebouwd. Ook had de dominee het over de Nazi's die rassenonderscheid maakten, en weer was de vraag in hoeverre de aanwezigen rassenonderscheid maakten in hun eigen leven.

Ronald dacht nooit zoveel over de preken na. Hij vond de preken meestal wel mooi, en dat zei hij dan ook altijd, maar als je hem dan vroeg waar het over ging, dan wist hij dat vaak niet meer. Het ging Ronald meer om het gevoel dat hij er bij had. Hij keek erg op tegen de dominee, en zag de dominee als een soort body-guard. Zijn vriendin dacht er altijd wat meer over na, en wilde wel wat vaker met Ronald erover napraten, maar Ronald had daar niet altijd zin in. Lisette, zijn vriendin, zat daarom bij een bijbelstudie-groepje, zodat ze toch nog altijd op de zondagavond, en soms op de zondagmiddag over de preek kon napraten met anderen. Na de diensten was iedereen vaak zo gehaast dat voor gesprekken eigenlijk geen ruimte was. Eens in de maand was er wel koffiedienst na de preek, maar dan werd er toch weer vaak over andere dingen gesproken.

Ronald zat op het conservatorium en studeerde klassieke muziek. Ronald kon erg

goed pianospelen, en toen ze na de dienst weer thuiswaren begon Ronald te spelen. Soms zong hij er dan weleens bij voor Lisette. Ronald kon erg goed zingen. Hij zou met gemak een opera-zanger kunnen worden. Lisette ging dan weleens bij de piano zitten en kon er dan uren naar luisteren. Het bracht haar tot rust.

Lisette was schrijfster, voornamelijk van kinderboeken. Ze schreef veel sprookjes. Soms las ze weleens voor aan Ronald, en Ronald kon altijd goed in haar verhalen wegvluchten. Lisette had een heldere kijk op dingen, en kon de dingen soms zo beschrijven dat ze ineens een hele andere betekenis hadden. Het leven met Lisette kreeg zo iets magisch, en soms als hij weer eens naar haar wijze woorden had geluisterd dan vroeg hij zich vaak af waarom hij zich eigenlijk zo om iets had drukgemaakt. Ze kon Ronald zo goed afleiden, en gaf hem vaak bijzondere raad. Ronald was daarom ook erg trots op zijn vriendin, en zou haar voor geen goud verruilen.

In de avond ging Lisette naar het bijbelstudie-groepje. Ronald zou verder gaan met studeren. In het bijbelstudie-groepje werd er doorgesproken over de preek die zo vandaag gehad hadden. En weer werden de vragen gesteld : Wat is je eigen IJzeren Gordijn en waarin zou je voor jezelf nog rassenonderscheid hanteren ? Lisette dacht diep na. Het was een kringvraag, dus iedereen zou aan de beurt komen.

Aan het einde van de avond werd er nog even over andere dingen gesproken, en vertelde men nog wat over persoonlijk wel en wee. Lisette zou nog even bij Ronald langsgaan om haar spullen te halen, en dan zou ze weer teruggaan naar huis. Ze woonde in een klein dorpje vlakbij het dorp van Ronald. Het was al flink donker, en Lisette zette er stevig de pas in. In de verte kwam er een rode auto aanrijden, maar wat deed die auto nou ? De auto kwam recht op haar afrijden, en nogal in een snelle vaart. Lisette probeerde nog weg te duiken, maar de auto schepte haar. Als een lappenpop werd ze over het wegdek geslingerd. De auto maakte een slip en reed door in bochten.

Lisette werd wakker in het ziekenhuis. Het bezorgde gezicht van Ronald keek naar haar, en hij hield haar hand stevig vast. 'W..wat is er gebeurd ?' vroeg Lisette die zich er niets meer van herinnerde. 'Je bent geschept door een dronken automobilist,' zei Ronald. 'Ik ben zo blij dat je weer wakker geworden bent.'

Hoofdstuk 2. Het Conferentie-Oord

'Waarom moet mij dat nou weer overkomen ?' vroeg Lisette. Ze had overal pijn. Ronald zweeg, en zuchtte. Dat was eigenlijk ook zijn vraag. Lisette merkte dat ze zich niet kon bewegen, en raakte in paniek. Na nog wat onderzoeken kwam de dokter met slecht nieuws : Sommige delen van haar lichaam waren blijvend verlamd, en ze zou verder met een rolstoel door het leven moeten. Lisette barste in snikken uit. De dokter legde een hand op haar schouder. 'Waarom ... waarom ... waarom ?' vroeg Lisette ...

Maar Lisette herstelde opzienbarend snel, en de dokter was zeer positief. Ze zou dan nog wel in een rolstoel moeten blijven, maar ze zou meer dingen kunnen doen dan de

dokters aanvankelijk hadden verwacht. Toch wilden de dokters haar nog wat langer in het ziekenhuis houden voor verder onderzoek. Lisette kreeg een aparte kamer in een rustig deel van het ziekenhuis, waar ze ook verder zou kunnen werken aan haar boeken. Op een dag kwam een dokter langs voor wat meer uitslagen. Ze hadden een vreemd roodachtig gezwel bij haar hart ontdekt. Ze zagen hier niet direkt een gevaar in, en het was volgens hen dan ook niet kwaadaardig, maar toch wilden ze weten wat het was. Ze wilden nog wat extra foto's laten maken.

Een paar dagen later kwam de dokter weer binnen, en zei dat het gezwel opzienbarend was gegroeid, en zich in het hart aan het nestelen was. Maar nog konden ze geen gevaar bespeuren. Ze wisten niet wat het gezwel was, maar het bleek heel netjes te zijn en vriendelijk naar het hart. Het leek wel alsof er een web werd gevormd om het hart van Lisette. De dokter zei dat ze zich nog maar geen zorgen moest maken, maar dat ze haar verder zouden onderzoeken.

Op een dag kwamen er een paar mensen van haar bijbelstudie-groepje op bezoek. Ze hadden het natuurlijk erg met haar te doen, maar waren blij dat ze zich verder goed voelde. Ze vroegen haar of het goed was als de dominee ook eens langs zou komen. Lisette stemde direkt toe. De volgende dag al zou de dominee komen. Toen Lisette hem zag werd ze direkt heel emotioneel en ze strekte haar armen naar hem uit, waarop de dominee haar direkt omhelsde. De dominee keek haar doordringend aan, en ging naast haar zitten op een stoel. Hij hield haar hand stevig vast, en bleef naar haar kijken.

De dominee was lid van een charismatisch verband binnen zijn kerk, maar hij had dat in zijn eigen kerk nog nooit zo naar buiten gebracht. 'Lisette,' zei de dominee, 'ik preek weleens op conferenties voor mensen met problemen als deze. Zou jij een keer met mij daar naartoe willen ? Meestal is zo'n conferentie voor een weekend.' Lisette stemde direkt toe. De drempel om gewoon naar de kerk te gaan was voor haar op het moment te hoog, dus ze wilde graag met de dominee mee naar die bijzondere diensten. De dominee zei dat de conferentie werd gehouden in een rustig oord, ergens aan de rand van een bos.

Toen het zover was kwam de dominee haar in zijn auto ophalen. Gelukkig had de dominee een station-car zodat de rolstoel ook meekon. En ook de dokters hadden er geen probleem mee dat Lisette er even tussenuit ging. Zo vonden het juist wel goed voor Lisette dat ze even in een andere omgeving zou zijn. Het was een prachtig uitgestrekt oord met lage en platte daken. De dominee parkeerde de auto dichtbij het vijvertje met de grote fontein, vlak voor de hoofdingang. Een wat oudere dame ontving hen hartelijk. Binnengekomen kregen ze eerst een kop soep, en toen werden ze naar hun kamers gebracht in een rustige vleugel van het oord. De kamer van de dominee was gelukkig niet te ver van Lisette's kamer vandaan. Nadat de tassen in de kamers stonden ging de dominee met Lisette in de rolstoel de omgeving verkennen. Het waren lange gangen, en er hingen overal prachtige schilderijen.

In de avond was er de eerste dienst in een zaaltje dichtbij de hoofdingang. De dominee hield de toespraak. Er waren ook nog wat anderen aanwezig in rolstoelen. De dominee nam het woord, maar al gauw merkte Lisette dat de dominee ergens

door werd afgeleid. Er stonden twee mannen in roodachtige pakken bij de deur. Het waren leerachtige pakken met een soort fluweel in sommige delen. Ze droegen zonnebrillen. Plotseling zag Lisette dat ze een witte stok hadden met twee rode strepen. Ze waren blind. De mannen waren een beetje onrustig. Lisette luisterde aandachtig naar de toespraak. De dominee probeerde de aanwezigen hoop en moed in te spreken.

Hoofdstuk 3. De Bedreiging

Tijdens het middageten de volgende dag zag Lisette de twee blinde mannen ergens aan een tafeltje zitten. Lisette ging in haar rolstoel naar hen toe. Er was nog een plekje open. Lisette stelde zich voor, en er ontstond een gesprek. Even later kwam de dominee er ook bijzitten. De dominee was erg vriendelijk naar de twee mannen. De dominee stelde voor dat ze met z'n vieren wat zouden wandelen.

De avond erop sprak er een andere dominee. Ze moesten naar een wat grotere zaal verderop in het oord, want er waren veel daggasten. Lisette besloot bij de twee blinde mannen te zitten. Er was inmiddels een diepe en warme vriendschap ontstaan. De dominee had het over een vreemd kaartje dat onder z'n deur was geschoven. Het was een bedreiging, ondergetekend Het Rode Gordijn. De dominee vroeg of iemand wist wie of wat Het Rode Gordijn was. De dominee zei verder niet om wat voor bedreiging het ging. De zaal was zichtbaar geschokt. Opeens stond er een weer een andere dominee op, en liep naar de microfoon. Hij had weleens van Het Rode Gordijn gehoord. Volgens hem was dat een groep satanisten van een geheime orde die als opdracht hadden in de kerken te infiltreren en te opereren. Volgens hem was het een neo-nazistische bende die er voor moest zorgen dat de kerk zich bleef afscheiden van andere culturen. De kerk moest zich blijven afscheiden als een prooi voor de volgelingen van Hitler. Ook vertelde die dominee dat hen van Het Rode Gordijn opgeleid waren om de topposities binnen de kerk in handen te krijgen. Zo kon het dus volgens die dominee best zo zijn dat dominees, ouderlingen of voorgangers lid zouden zijn van Het Rode Gordijn.

'Hoe weet u dat ?' riep iemand in de zaal. De dominee die bijna al weer zat liep weer terug naar de microfoon, en zei : 'Iemand in mijn gemeente heeft bij die geheime cultus gezeten. Herman kun je even naar voren komen ?' En daar kwam één van de blinde mannen naar voren. Met zijn stok vond hij z'n weg door het gangpad heen, en nam de microfoon. 'Ja, wat de dominee zegt is waar. Ik ben in die cultus opgegroeid, maar toen ik werd opgenomen in het Instituut voor Blinden ben ik het ontgroeid en heb ik me er van gedistantieerd.'

De dominee van Lisette besluit haar direkt weer terug te brengen, omdat de sfeer in het oord te gespannen was geworden door de dreigbrief.

Een dag later komt de dokter weer met wat resultaten van het onderzoek. Het schijnt dat het roodachtig gezwel zich nu ook vertakt naar haar borsten, en vandaaruit naar haar hersenen. Lisette voelt haarzelf verder erg rustig. Verder waren er nog wat andere resultaten, maar die had de dokter in zijn kantoor laten liggen. Hij zou de

papieren morgen meenemen. Maar Lisette maakte zich een beetje ongerust over die opmerking, en werd ineens erg nieuwsgierig, zo nieuwsgierig dat ze niet tot de volgende dag kon wachten. Ze besloot in de nacht haar kamer af te gaan, en van de afdeling, om naar het kantoor van de dokter te gaan in haar rolstoel. Ze wist gelukkig waar het was ... Hier moest het zijn. Gelukkig was de deur niet op slot. Binnengekomen deed ze het licht aan, en begon in de laden van het bureau van de dokter te zoeken. Plotseling vond ze wel een heel vreemd en verdacht papier. Het was een lijst met hen die lid waren van Het Rode Gordijn. Wat moest de dokter daar nou mee ? Na verder gezocht te hebben vond ze nog een ander papier van Het Rode Gordijn. Dit was een brief aan de dokter over zijn lidmaatschap. Verder stond er niet veel bij. Snel drukte ze de papieren terug en reed overstuur in haar rolstoel terug naar haar kamer. Het Rode Gordijn was dus dichter bij haar dan ze dacht. Wat moest ze doen ? Ze besloot de dominee te bellen.

Toen de dominee opnam probeerde hij haar gerust te stellen. Misschien was het wel een andere organisatie binnen het ziekenhuiswezen, wat toevallig ook Het Rode Gordijn heette. De dominee zei dat ze zich er maar niet zo druk om moest maken.

Hoofdstuk 4. De Rode Vogel

De volgende dag komt er een zuster naar Lisette toe om haar te vertellen dat ze naar huis mag. De onderzoeken zijn klaar, en ze hoeft alleen nog maar voor halfjaarlijkse controle terug te komen. Ze hoefde zich geen zorgen te maken om de goedaardige uitzaaiingen, want alhoewel de uitzaaiingen gewoon doorgingen werden de vertakkingen steeds dunner en fijner, en zou het haar functioneren niet belemmeren. Lisette was erg blij. Ze zou de komende tijd bij Ronald logeren.

Ronald kende het gebeuren rond Het Rode Gordijn nog niet, en op een avond besloot te het te vertellen. Ook vertelde ze het op een avond in het bijbelstudie-groepje. Sommigen vonden het heel eng, en vroegen zich af wat ze er tegen konden doen. Lisette vroeg of ze misschien de dominee eens konden uitnodigen om dat uit te leggen. En zo gebeurde het. De volgende zondagavond kwam de dominee in het bijbelstudie-groepje. De dominee gaf het voorbeeld van de stierenvechter met de rode lap die daarmee de stier kwaad maakte en verwarde, zodat de stierenvechter macht over hem kon krijgen. Zo was Het Rode Gordijn ook in de kerk opgezet door machtslustigen om controle te krijgen over de christenen.

Midden in de nacht krijgt Lisette een droom. Een rode vogel vliegt naar haar toe en begint haar uit te schelden. 'Ha,' zegt de vogel, 'je denkt toch zeker niet dat je kunt ontsnappen over het Rode Gordijn ? Ik heb dit opgezet om jullie christenen af te sluiten van de rest van de wereld, en zelfs van de dierenwereld. Een rode lap houd ik jullie voor de ogen, om jullie niet te laten vechten tegen de zonde, maar tegen andere geloofsrichtingen, tegen hen die iets anders denken dan jullie. Snappen jullie dan niet dat al die andere religies mooie verlengstukken van het christendom konden zijn, maar doordat jullie je afsneden van het vervolgverhaal van God door Zijn Woord als een vogeltje te canoniseren, te kooien dus, op te zetten, kwamen al die religies in al hun duisternis op jullie af. Het zijn nu losgeraakte stukken onheil, omdat jullie de

Heilige Geest niet door lieten spreken. In een reformatorische kerk zit je toch ?'

Verward wordt Lisette wakker, en roept om Ronald. Ronald probeert haar te sussen, en zegt dat ze gewoon weer verder moet slapen.

De volgende dag vertelt ze de droom aan de dominee. Die vertelt haar over de charismatische stroming in de reformatische kerk, waar ook hij toebehoort. Hij vind dat dit de eerste stap van de kerk moet zijn om de Geest door te laten spreken. Dan zal de Heilige Geest kunnen laten zien wat Hij oorspronkelijk wilde zeggen voordat Zijn uitgedoofde woorden in de meest gevaarlijke religies veranderden. Die religies waren niets anders dan losgeraakte stukken sneeuw die door hun val in de grootst mogelijke lawines veranderden.

De dominee herinnerde eraan dat ook de dokter lid was van een organisatie die ook toevallig Het Rode Gordijn heette. Het Rode Gordijn heeft ons eerst beschermd tegen de verwilderde beesten, maar er komt een dag dat we over het Rode Gordijn moeten klimmen om - als we oud, wijs en sterk genoeg zijn - die beesten te temmen en hen terug te brengen tot dat wat ze oorspronkelijk waren.

Einde

Het Meisje dat niet kon Spreken

Joop Kramer zit in een pinkstergemeente. Hij is daar ouderling. In de pinkstergemeente noemen ze dat vaak 'oudste'. Maar Joop is nog tamelijk jong. Hij is ook jeugdleider en voelt er veel voor om later zijn eigen pinkstergemeente op te richten. Joop is opgegroeid in de pinkstergemeente. Joop heeft ook een vriendin, Erin. Erin komt uit een ander land, maar dat maakt Joop niet zoveel uit. Hij is juist erg geinteresseerd in andere culturen. Het meisje is erg geliefd in de gemeente, maar op een dag raakt ze vermist. Er wordt gedacht aan een ontvoering. De gemeente is ten einde raad, en er worden bidstonden gehouden.

Na een tijdje is Erin weer terug, maar ze kan niet praten. Wat zou er met haar gebeurd zijn ? Zelfs weken erna kan ze nog niet praten. Joop neemt haar vaak mee naar zijn kamer om voor haar te bidden. In de pinkstergemeente geloven ze dat God geneest. In een dienst hoort Joop van een broeder dat ze misschien wel een boze geest heeft, maar daar wil Joop niks van weten. Joop gelooft niet dat een christen een boze geest kan hebben. Maar als het zo maanden voortduurt wil Joop toch dat hij en de andere oudsten een bevrijdingsgebed voor haar zullen bidden. Stel dat ze echt niet kan

spreken door een boze geest. De oudsten voelen er niet veel voor, omdat zij ook niet geloven dat een christen een demoon kan hebben. Maar toch willen ze Joop niet teleurstellen, en samen bidden ze een bevrijdingsgebed. In het bevrijdingsgebed krijgt Erin haar stem terug, maar het is niet haar stem. 'Boze geesten hebben dit lichaam ingenomen,' zegt ze met een zware stem. 'Bwahahaha, en gij hebt de sleutel niet om hen los te laten.' Maar dan zegt één van de oudsten : 'Die sleutel hebben we wel, en dat is Jezus Christus, kom er uit.' Maar dan beginnen de demonen te roepen en te gillen. 'Oh Jezus, ja, Jezus, nee, daar worden we bang voor. Hahahahahahahahaahahaahaha, man, schiet toch op, we kunnen niks voor je doen.' En hoe de oudsten ook baden, de geesten vertrokken niet. 'Misschien heeft ze zonden in haar leven,' opperde één van de oudste. Een andere oudste begon te knikken ... 'of te weinig geloof ...' Maar toen namen de demonen het voor haar op : 'Misschien hebben jullie wel zonden, en misschien hebben jullie wel te weinig geloof ...'

'Ikke niet ...' blufte één van de oudsten. 'Ach, laten we niet naar zulke leugengeesten luisteren,' zei een andere oudste. Terwijl een andere oudste zei : 'Misschien houd ze ons wel voor de gek ... Joop, het is beter dat je de relatie verbreekt. Hier hebben we niets aan.' En Joop vond dat ook maar het beste. Het meisje werd aan haar lot overgelaten. Ze kwam sindsdien ook niet meer naar de gemeente. Zij was een geval waar ze geen raad mee wisten.

Inmiddels was Erin van binnen erg verbitterd geraakt, en besloot naar de discotheek te gaan. Ze had nog steeds haar stem niet, en besloot tot rust te komen bij wat muziek. Gelukkig kon ze nog wel dansen. Ze werd weleens door mensen aangesproken, maar ze kon niets terugzeggen. Na een tijdje begonnen de mensen er aan gewend te raken. Ze werd door hen gewoon geaccepteerd.

Iemand bood haar een glaasje aan, en ze dacht : 'Ja, laat ik eens diep in het glaasje gaan kijken. Misschien kom ik daar wel los van.' Het was een heel vreemd drankje, een nieuw drankje, met vreemd blauwachtig waterig spul. Het rook heel lekker, en het meisje begon te drinken. En opeens kon het meisje weer praten. De jongen die haar het drankje had gegeven wilde haar mee naar huis nemen, en het meisje dacht : Waarom niet ? De jongen zag er een beetje oosters uit. Bij hem thuis werd er prachtige oosterse muziek gedraaid, en hij nam haar mee helemaal naar het zolder. Ze moesten een aantal nauwe, bochtige trapjes op, en uiteindelijk waren ze in de kamer van de jongen. De jongen zette wat muziek op. Het was prachtige oosterse muziek. De jongen ging op zijn bed zitten, en het meisje kreeg een stoel. 'Wil je nog wat drinken ?' vroeg de jongen. En weer kreeg ze wat van het heldere blauwe spul. 'Er zit geen alcohol in, hoor. Mijn vader heeft het gemaakt. Het is een nieuw drankje. Mijn vader is drankjeshandelaar.' Het meisje voelde zich erg goed bij het drinken van het drankje. Het was alsof ze weer een beetje op krachten kwam. De jongen had helemaal niet in de gaten gehad dat het meisje eerst niet kon praten.

'Kom je naast me zitten ?' vroeg de jongen. Het meisje ging op het bed van de jongen zitten. De jongen gaf haar een ring. 'Dit is geen huwelijks-ring hoor,' glimlachte de jongen. 'Ik moet namelijk van mijn vader met een ander meisje trouwen. Dat is bij mijn geboorte zo vastgelegd. Maar het is gewoon een vriendschaps-ring. Ik hoop namelijk dat we goede vrienden kunnen worden.' Het meisje nam de ring aan en deed het om haar vinger. Op de ring was een klein fotootje van een oude vrouw. 'Wie is dat ?' vraagt het meisje. 'Oh,' zegt de jongen, 'dat is mijn grootmoeder, die is al dood.'

'Hield je van je grootmoeder ?' vraagt het meisje. 'Ik heb haar nooit gekend,' zegt de jongen. 'Ik heb een paar van zulke ringen ge-erfd. Het zijn vriendschaps-ringen.'

'Aan wie heb je de andere ringen gegeven ?' vraagt het meisje.

'Er was eens een meisje zoals jij,' zegt de jongen. 'Een stil en verlegen meisje. Ik heb haar zo'n ring gegeven, maar ik heb haar nooit meer teruggezien.'

'Jammer,' zegt het meisje.

'En de laatste ring is voor het meisje wat mijn vader voor me bestemd heeft. Zij krijgt dus twee ringen,' zegt de jongen.

'Maar wie is dat meisje dan ?' vraagt het meisje.

'Ach, dat weet ik nog niet, dat wil m'n vader me nog niet vertellen.' zegt de jongen.

'Zullen we dat dan nu aan hem vragen ?' vraagt het meisje.

'Ja maar ik weet niet of hij het al wil zeggen,' zegt de jongen.

'Kom, dan gaan we het proberen,' zegt het meisje.

Bij de vader aangekomen buigt het meisje voor hem en vertelt hoe ze van zijn drankjes opgeknapt is. De vader van de jongen glimlacht. Dan vraagt het meisje voorzichtig of zij mag weten met wie de jongen moet trouwen. Maar de vader wil het niet zeggen. 'Zie je nou wel,' zegt de jongen. 'Hij wil het niet.' En weer gaan de jongen en het meisje naar boven. Dan begint het meisje te vertellen over de pinkstergemeente, hoe ze daar is behandeld. Ze had daar een vriend, maar die wil ze nu nooit meer zien. De jongen weet niet goed wat een pinkstergemeente is, maar het meisje legt het hem uit. De jongen raakt geinteresseerd, en zou wel eens naar zo'n pinkstergemeente willen. Het meisje wil onder geen enkele voorwaarde mee, en de jongen besluit alleen te gaan, samen met zijn vader.

Tijdens de dienst wordt er gevraagd of er nog getuigenissen zijn. De jongen gaat naar voren en vertelt over het meisje dat geen stem had, en dat hij het als een wonder zag dat ze nu weer kon praten. De vrouw van de voorganger zei : 'Nou, daar mogen we heel dankbaar voor zijn, dat ze door Jezus is genezen.' Maar toen stond de vader van de jongen op, en zei : 'Nee, het is gekomen door één van mijn drankjes. Ik ben drankjeshandelaar.' Ook Joop hoorde het verhaal, en dacht even aan Erin. Maar daarna dacht hij dat het wel toeval zou zijn. 'Kent zij de Heere Jezus al ?' vroeg de vrouw van de voorganger.

'Ze zat hier in de gemeente,' zei de jongen, 'maar jullie hebben haar weggestuurd.' De vrouw van de voorganger keek naar Joop. 'Ik denk dat ze het over Erin hebben,' zei de vrouw van de voorganger. 'Ja, dat klopt,' zei de vader, 'ze heet Erin.' Toen probeerde Joop zich te verontschuldigen : 'We hebben haar niet uit de gemeente weggestuurd. We vonden het alleen beter dat ik de relatie met haar zou verbreken. Ik ben namelijk oudste, en hoe moet dat met een vrouw die niet kan spreken ?' Toen ineens stond Erin in de deuropening. Iedereen schrok. Ze liep af op de oosterse jongen en omhelsde hem. Ook de vader van de jongen kwam bij haar staan. 'Zo, je ziet het, hè, ik kan weer spreken,' zei het meisje. Joop boog in schaamte zijn hoofd. Toen kwam de voorganger naar voren en richtte zich tot Erin, de jongen, en zijn vader : 'Het lijkt me wijzer voor jullie om te vertrekken.' Maar toen werd het meisje heel boos : 'Dus nu word ik voor de tweede keer afgewimpeld ? Wat zijn jullie voor een figuren ?' Waarop Joop zei : 'Je bent dronken, Erin.' Maar toen begon de jongen te schelden. 'Mijn vader verkoopt geen alcohol of sterke drank. Erin is niet dronken.' Toen pakte de vader zijn zoon en Erin bij de arm en fluisterde : 'Het is beter dat we weggaan.' En met z'n drieen liepen ze de deur uit.

Toen zei de vader dat hij hen wel wilde vertellen met wie zijn zoon zou trouwen. Inmiddels waren ze uit de gemeente gegaan, en liepen terug naar huis. Maar ineens merkte de man dat hij z'n stem verloren had. Thuisgekomen nam de man wat van z'n drankjes, maar niets hielp. 'Dat was mij dus ook een keer overkomen,' zei het meisje. 'Maar niet alleen dat. Ik was gewoon compleet weg. Ik kan me niets meer herinneren wat er gebeurd is.' En ineens was ook de vader verdwenen, als in het niets opgelost. 'Nou, bij de pinkstergemeente moeten we niet wezen,' zei de jongen, 'maar als mijn vader niet meer terugkomt, dan kan ik trouwen met wie ik wil.' En zo gebeurde het. De jongen trouwde met het meisje, en ze leefden nog lang en gelukkig.

Dochters van Jahweh

Korte Theologische Roman

Hoofdstuk 1. Morit en Ramonde

Hoofdstuk 2. Sarsia en de Verloren Altaren

Hoofdstuk 3. Belgie

Hoofdstuk 4. Het Vreemde Gevoel

Hoofdstuk 1. Morit en Ramonde

Adriaan zit in een pinkstergemeente. Er zitten hier veel vrouwen in de gemeente, en het doet allemaal een beetje matriarchisch aan. In wezen heeft Adriaan hier twintig moeders. Op een dag komt er een nieuw meisje in de gemeente. Ze doet erg geheimzinnig, en Adriaan denkt al gauw lang na over al die raadselachtige dingen die ze verteld. Wie is ze ? Wat is ze ? Waarom doet ze zo ? Of wil ze haarzelf niet laten kennen ... Is ze soms bang ? Ze is een lopende puzzel. Op een dag komt ze de gemeente binnen met een schilderij. 'Kijk eens ... voor aan de muur,' zegt ze enthousiast ... maar dan : 'Als jullie het niet willen gooi ik het weg hoor.' Ze is zo paradoxaal in haar spreken ... bijna schizofreen. Wat wil ze nou eigenlijk ?

Ze had het schilderij zelf geschilderd. Adriaan ging bijna stijl achterover. Het was een prachtig konijn met vleugels voor wat opgestapelde edelstenen in de vorm van een soort reukfles. Hoe komt ze erop. Soms was ze net een kind. Dan kon ze zomaar tijdens de getuigenissen naar voren lopen, en dan vertelde ze over de insecten en de vlinders die ze buiten had gezien, of ze had het over wat voor een avontuur Calimero op de televisie had beleefd.

Ze was een erg dromerig type, en ze kon soms zomaar ineens heel erg bang worden. Dan staarde ze voor haar uit, en dan mocht niemand bij haar in de buurt komen.

Op een dag had ze een gedicht geschreven, of een verhaal. Natuurlijk wilde ze dat graag voorlezen tijdens de getuigenissen. En daar liep ze met haar papieren naar voren :

'Als door groen sap beweeg je, door groen sap leef je, op weg naar verlichting, als je een boom bent, zul je eeuwig leven. De rest is reeds verloren. Ik weet, je leeft in bevroren dromen ... ik weet je leeft in parels verborgen ... Zo gaan de wijsheden met elkaar om ... Zij verbergen hun waarheden tussen raadsels en verhalen ... en vinden elkaar terug op verborgen en afgelegen eilanden ... kundig bouwden ze hun muren ... maar elkaar bedrogen hebben ze nooit ... Ze spreken waarheid tot elkaar, in goed

verpakte flessen ... Door boeken trekken ze elkaars aandacht ... Spreek tot mij in raadselen, in verhalen ongehoord ... leidt mij door de wildernissen van het leven, waar zoveel oren klaar staan om ons te vereten ... Spreek tot mij in verhalen en gedichten, door omwegen ... We kunnen elkaar niet rechtstreeks zien ... teveel kapers op de kust ... We moeten eerst onze wereld bouwen ... Ik voel je hand door je verhaal, door jouw raadselachtige taal ... een taal van tranen en van kruizen .... van leugens en van pijnen ... Leer mij die taal verstaan ... Je taal is wild en gevaarlijk ... woest, want je wilt geen indringers ...'

Toen zei ze dat God dit tot haar gesproken had. Deed ze daarom altijd zo vreemd ? Was normaal doen dan veel te gevaarlijk ? Was dit ook de reden waarom we allemaal het idee hadden dat God zo weinig sprak ? Misschien sprak Hij wel op een andere manier, een manier die we nog niet goed hadden ontdekt.

Ineens zei ze : Ik heb zo'n hoofdpijn al een paar dagen. Toen ging ze zitten. Na de dienst ging Adriaan naar haar toe en vroeg of hij een kopie mocht van het gedicht. Verder zei hij er niet veel van. Misschien zou ze het wel fijn vinden als hij haar anders zou benaderen ... Niet normaal meer, maar vreemd en geheimzinnig. 'Heb je nog naar Calimero gekeken ?' vroeg Adriaan ineens.

'Adriaan, ga je met me mee naar huis, ik wil je iets laten zien ..' vroeg ze ineens nadat ze hem een tijdje geheimzinnig had aangestaard, terwijl hij wachtte op haar antwoord over Calimero. Adriaan aarzelde geen moment en zei : 'Maar natuurlijk wil ik met je mee ... Ik heb je huis nog nooit gezien.'

'Het gaat niet om mijn huis, het gaat om iets anders ... Adriaan, alsjeblieft, kom mee, ... ik heb je hulp nodig,' zei ze. Adriaan werd steeds nieuwsgieriger, en ging met Marjenne mee naar haar huis. Toen ze bij haar deur was aangekomen klopte ze eerst aan, en toen maakte ze de deur open ... 'Ja, dat doe ik altijd,' zei Marjenne, 'want ik woon hier niet alleen. God woont hier ook.' Adriaan glimlachte, en samen liepen ze naar binnen. 'Beloof me dat je me niet zult uitlachen,' zei Marjenne ... 'Ik moet je eerst wat vertellen, en daarna wil ik je het laten zien ...' Adriaan beloofde plechtig dat hij waardig met de informatie om zou gaan. Toen begon Marjenne te vertellen ... Ze vertelde dat ze in het bos een boek had gevonden dat het Eeuwig Evangelie heette, en daar stonden sprookjesachtige verhalen in ... Op een dag was ze weer in het bos, en toen verscheen er een engel aan haar, die haar leidde tot een altaar, een heel oud altaar. Nu heeft ze dat altaar in een kamer van haar huis staan ... Samen liepen ze naar boven, en in de kamer waar ze altijd haar wasgoed deed stond het altaar met een heel groot schilderij van een soort engel of vrouw erachter ... 'Dat is Morit, Adriaan,' zei Marjenne ... Zij wordt beschreven in het Eeuwig Evangelie. Op het altaar lag een boek. Marjenne vertelde dat dat het Eeuwig Evangelie was. De gebeurtenis had haar zo aangesproken, dat ze nu vaak bij dit altaar bad. 'Vertel me eens over Morit,' zei Adriaan ... Het schilderij maakte grote indruk op hem, alsof hij een groot geheimenis van God zag. Het schilderij leek zo onwerkelijk, maar ook zo echt. Adriaan had het gevoel alsof hij naast zijn eigen lichaam stond, in een andere wereld. Hij had ineens zulke andere gevoelens. 'Dat schilderij heb ik ook van die engel gekregen,' zei Marjenne ... 'het is in de hemel geschilderd ...' Adriaan had het

gevoel dat hij in huilen zou uitbarsten als hij langer naar het schilderij zou kijken.

Toen begon Marjenne over Morit te vertellen. Op het schilderij had ze een soort doek om haar hoofd, en leek ze een heel klein beetje op Maria, de moeder van Christus. Marjenne vertelde over de tijd voordat de aarde herschapen werd, de tijd dat er nog allerlei andere paradijsen en scheppingen op aarde waren, ver voor de tijd van het boek Genesis. In die tijden ging het ook mis met de schepselen en stuurde God ook al Verlossers ... Morit was een schepsel geplaatst in een Hof die er was voordat God weer overnieuw begon in het boek Genesis. De aarde had een lange geschiedenis. Morit werd ook wel het hertenkind genoemd, en ze leefde helemaal alleen in die hof. Niet lang daarna werd ze door de honden van Okil ontvoerd. De honden van Okil zijn hele oude demonen van voor het boek Genesis. Zulke voor-bijbelse demonen werden ook wel 'abers' genoemd. In het Eeuwig Evangelie werd ook gesproken over het kruis van Morit, het kruis van ontvoering, als een middel om de geestelijke wereld te leren ontdekken. Door dit altaar zou de excarnaatse bediening in werk gesteld worden. 'Excarnaatse bediening ? Wat is dat nu weer ?' vroeg Adriaan ... Maar toen pakte Marjenne het boek van het altaar en gaf het aan Adriaan ... Adriaan beefde ... Zou dit boek ook in de hemel geschreven zijn ? Volgens Marjenne stond dat ook in de bijbel, dat een engel dit boek zou brengen, als een verborgen verlengstuk van de Bijbel. Adriaan griezelde bij de gedachte. Wat zou er allemaal wel niet instaan ? Marjenne keek naar zijn verschrikte gezicht, en probeerde hem te troosten. 'Lees het maar ...' zei ze. Adriaan stond als aan de grond genageld met het boek in zijn handen. Het leek wel alsof zijn handen begonnen te branden. Ge-emotioneerd legde hij het boek weer op het altaar : 'Ik kan het niet Marjenne, echt niet,' stamelde hij, en rende weg.

Marjenne begreep Adriaan wel ... Alles gebeurde ook zo snel en was ook zo overweldigend ... Maar hoe moest het nu verder ? Tijden verstreken en op een dag werd Adriaan door Marjenne gebeld ... 'Adriaan,' sprak ze bijna buiten adem ... 'ik heb nog een altaar gevonden ... Wil je alsjeblieft even bij me komen ?' Adriaan was aan de ene kant verheugd, maar aan de andere kant vroeg hij zich af of hij er wel aan toe was. Toch wilde hij haar niet nog een keer alleen laten, en kwam direkt naar haar toe. Er was nog een ander klein kamertje in haar huis waar ze het altaar had neergezet. Het altaar was niet zo groot als het altaar van Morit, en weer hing er een schilderij boven. Het was een vrouw in ridderkleding ... Het leek op een pantser met hier en daar wat versleten kleding eronder ... De lippen van de vrouw waren roodachtig in een vreemde soort roze. Adriaan was weer erg onder de indruk van het schilderij ... 'Waar haal je toch ...' stamelde hij ... 'waar haal je ...' Maar van emoties kon hij verder niets uitbrengen ... De vrouw had een langwerpig dun zwaard, bijna als een degen, en het leek wel alsof ze recht door Adriaan heenkeek. Het leek wel alsof het schilderij gewoon leefde. De vrouw heette Ramonde, en Marjenne begon direkt over Ramonde te vertellen, dat zij opgesloten zat in een huis bewaakt door ratten, maar ze mocht wel aan het einde van de dag langs de hondenhaag gaan, om aan het einde van die haag de roofdieren te voeren ... Die roofdieren zouden op een dag zo groot zijn dat ze Ramonde uit het huis der ratten zouden bevrijden. Het Ramonde-kruis was als een altaar voor de Faraatse bediening .... Weer wist Adriaan

niet wat dat voor een bediening was, maar Marjenne vertelde hem dat het een bediening van de eindtijd zou zijn. Het zou een apocalyptische bediening zijn, beschreven in Openbaring, maar veel direkter en duidelijker in het Eeuwig Evangelie, het Boek dat zou komen. Adriaan keek met open mond naar het altaar. Het leek wel alsof het altaar zo direkt uit de hemel kwam.

Op een nacht schrok Adriaan wakker ... Ramonde stond voor hem als in helder wit licht ... 'Help me, Adriaan,' riep ze, 'breng me tot leven ... ik ... slaap ...' Direkt belde Adriaan Marjenne op, en ze kwam direkt naar hem toe ... 'Adriaan, Adriaan,' zei ze ... 'ik ben zo blij dat je bij ons hoort ... Nu hoef ik niet alleen met dit zware juk te lopen ... Ik kan het niet alleen ... Ik heb je hulp nodig ... Dit zijn delen van de voorbijbelse geschiedenissen van Gods werk, en we moeten ze weer terugbrengen ...' Adriaan glimlachte ... maar het was een erg pijnlijke glimlach ... 'Marjenne, ik vind het allemaal prachtig ...' fluisterde hij ... 'maar ik weet niet of ik dit wel wil ...'

'Denk er nog eens goed overna,' zei Marjenne, en vertrok weer ... Ze moest Adriaan de tijd geven, maar ze was een beetje geirriteerd over het feit dat hij zich niet radicaal opstelde ... Huilend kwam ze thuis en stortte zich voor het altaar van Ramonde ... Daarna stortte ze zich voor het altaar van Morit ... In het boek stond beschreven hoe de altaren te gebruiken ...

Hoofdstuk 2. Sarsia en de Verloren Altaren

Ondertussen heeft Adriaan veel twijfels ... Hij wist dat Marjenne zelf ook schilderde, en dat heel goed kon ... Misschien had ze zelf wel die schilderijen gemaakt ... En die altaren ? Misschien had ze die ergens bij een rommelmarkt gekocht, of in een handel voor antieke spullen ... Adriaan begon zijn leven weer voorzichtig op te pakken ... Hij kon niet zo goed tegen de opwinding die hij voelde ... Het was bijzonder en fantastisch, maar ... misschien was het wel iets te veel voor hem ...

Maar op een nacht kreeg hij weer een droom ... Weer verscheen Ramonde aan hem, en zei : 'Help me, help me dan toch ... Je bent zo verweg ... Kom dichterbij ... Maak me wakker ... zoals ik jou wakker aan het maken ben ...' Toen verscheen er een andere gestalte aan hem ... Het was een vrouwelijke engel met een zwart ridderpantser met rode kledingsdelen, en een rood gewaad ... 'Ik ben de engel Sarsia, een voorbijbelse engel,' sprak de gestalte ... 'In voorbijbelse scheppingen was er het boek 'De Troiade' waar ik in voorkom. Engelen werden toen 'arxelen' genoemd ....' En toen liet Sarsia hem een altaar zien, en sprak ze tot hem over haar kruis ... Ze liet hem zien dat het altaar een andere eindtijd-bediening in werking zou stellen : De Attentaatse bediening, de bediening van Goddelijke Kunst ... Ook zou dit een Goddelijk Materialisme verkondigen en creeeren en het zou de hemel op aarde brengen, oftewel laten materialiseren ... Adriaan wreef in zijn ogen ... 'Herstel de altaren van Gods voorbijbelse geschiedenis, Adriaan,' sprak Sarsia ... 'Die altaren hebben jullie nodig om tot volwassenheid en volmaaktheid te komen ...'

Adriaan belde direkt Marjenne op ... Hij mocht haar daar voor wakker maken, had ze altijd tegen hem gezegd ... Adriaan was een stuk enthousiaster ineens ... Hij vertelde aan Marjenne wat er was gebeurd, en dat het voor hem meer op het maken van een puzzel begon te lijken ... Hij wist dat hij op zoek moest naar de verloren

altaren ... Ze hadden er al twee, en wisten nu ook van een derde ... Adriaan wilde samen met Marjenne het platform voor de eindtijd-bedieningen herstellen ... De delen van de voorbijbelse geschiedenissen waren niet voor niets verloren geweest ... God had een plan met ze ...

De daaropvolgende dag kwam Adriaan een meisje tegen in de winkel waar hij vaak kwam ... Het meisje stond te zoeken tussen wat boeken op een stellage ... Het meisje leek erg veel op Ramonde ... Voordat Adriaan het wist stond hij al bij het meisje en staarde haar aan ... 'Pardon,' zei hij ... 'mag ik je iets vragen ...' Het meisje draaide voorzichtig naar hem toe en knikte ... 'Heet jij soms Ramonde ?' vroeg Adriaan ... in de hoop dat het Ramonde echt was ... Maar het meisje zei : 'Nee, hoe kom je daar nou bij ...'

'Oh,' verdedigde Adriaan zich ... terwijl hij ineens erg teleurgesteld was : 'ik dacht dat ik je ergens van kende ...'

'Geeft niks hoor,' zei het meisje vriendelijk en wilde weglopen ... 'Eh, ken jij misschien ook het Eeuwig Evangelie ?' vroeg Adriaan ineens ... 'Nee,' zei het meisje, 'ik ben niet kerkelijk, en ik wil daar ook niets mee te maken hebben. De kerk heeft verschrikkelijke dingen op z'n geweten ... Ik geloof meer in natuurgodinnen ...'

Toen begon Adriaan het meisje uit te leggen over de voorbijbelse geschiedenissen en dat daar ook vrouwelijke verlossers en engelen in voorkwamen, als een soort godinnen ... Misschien dat ze zo wel beter aansluiting kon vinden ... Het meisje vond het verhaal van Adriaan heel interessant, en vroeg hem naar het boek ... Adriaan vertelde haar direkt dat dat boek bij een vriendin van hem thuislag ... Na nog even wat na te praten besloot het meisje met hem mee te gaan naar het huis van Marjenne ... Toen het meisje de altaren en de schilderijen zag was ze erg onder de indruk ... Inmiddels had Marjenne het hele Eeuwig Evangelie boek gekopieerd en gaf de kopie aan het meisje ... Adriaan was er nog steeds niet aan toe, maar was wel blij dat het meisje de kopie aannam ... Ze zou bellen ...

Het meisje was erg onder de indruk, en ook had zij snel enige bijzondere ervaringen ... Niet lang daarna belde ze Marjenne op met de mededeling dat zij ook een altaar had gevonden, met een schilderij ... Het was het altaar van Davinde. Zij was opgesloten in een kooi, en moest altijd werken voor drie rovers. De drie rovers hadden wonden waar genezende zalf inzat. Altijd als ze sliepen dan haalde Davinde die zalf uit hun wonden, zodat ze steeds geneeskrachtiger werd. Het kruis van Davinde was ook zeer belangrijk voor een bepaalde eindtijd-bediening ... Het meisje had inmiddels de teksten over de altaren goed bestudeerd, en begon er ook over te vertellen naar Adriaan en Marjenne. Na een tijdje hadden ze elf altaren verzameld met elf schilderijen erboven. Sommige altaren stonden bij Marjenne in huis, anderen bij het andere meisje, Lisette, en weer anderen stonden bij Adriaan in huis. Het waren de elf poorten tot de hoofdbedieningen. In het rijtje waren meer vrouwen dan mannen ... 'De moeders en dochters van Jahweh,' noemde Lisette ze weleens ... Zou Jahweh ook vrouwen gehad hebben ?

Lisette raakt steeds meer geinteresseerd in de voorbijbelse geschiedenis en de omliggende geschiedenissen. Ook raakt ze geinteresseerd in de geschiedenissen

rondom de kerk. Ze is er van overtuigd dat dat Gods bedoeling nooit is geweest, zoals de kerk op z'n poten staat, en zelf vindt ze het tijd geworden om die poten onder de kerk weg te trappen ... Maar Marjenne zegt dat ze het beter voorzichtig aan kunnen pakken ... Eerst moeten ze zelf nog zoveel veranderen, en ... volwassen worden ... Terwijl Adriaan de draad van zijn leven weer voorzichtig probeert op te pakken ...

Hoofdstuk 3. Belgie

Inmiddels hebben ze besloten om de altaren met de schilderijen in een oud kapelletje in een bos neer te zetten, ergens in het Zuiden van Limburg. Het kapelletje is bijna ondergronds, en diep in het bos. Het boek hebben ze in een soort kast daar opgeborgen. Het is heel vreemd, maar soms als ze in het kapelletje zijn, dan horen ze Belgische stemmen, die ook over Belgie praten. Het kapelletje heeft een aantal gangen met ook wat kleinere zaaltjes, en wat kelders. Op een dag ontdekken de drie een geheime tunnel in één van de kelders die helemaal tot Belgie leidt. Ze beginnen zich af te vragen wat en wie die stemmen zijn ... En waarom hebben ze het over Belgie ?

Adriaan werkt als kok in een restaurant. Op een dag zit er een meisje aan een tafeltje dichtbij de keuken ... Het meisje lijkt heel veel op één van de vrouwen van de altaren. Maar Adriaan wil dezelfde fout niet nog een keer maken ... Wel vraagt hij haar even of het meisje weleens van het Eeuwig Evangelie heeft gehoord. Het meisje knikt. Ze is christen. Maar Adriaan weet dat ze het niet helemaal begrijpt. Zij denkt dat het Eeuwig Evangelie gewoon het bestaande en algemeen erkende evangelie is, terwijl het Eeuwig Evangelie het vervolg en verlengstuk daarop is ... Als Adriaan het meisje dat uitlegt kijkt ze erg verbaasd ... Ze wist niet dat dat bestond, maar Adriaan liet haar wat teksten uit het boek Openbaring zien ... Het meisje wilde het boek graag lezen, en al snel komt Adriaan met een kopie aanzetten ... Het meisje neemt het dankbaar aan, en ze praten nog even door ... Dan ineens staat de baas van Adriaan bij het tafeltje ... 'Zeg, hoor jij niet te werken ?' zegt hij nors ... Adriaan verontschuldigt zich direkt, en gaat weer aan de slag ... Naderhand gaat de baas nog even langs de keuken ... 'Adriaan, dat moet niet nog een keer zo gebeuren, want dan hebben we een probleem ... De laatste tijd ben je al wat dromerig ... Denk om de concurrentie, hè ... Er gaan verhalen over je rond dat je bij een secte zou zitten ...' zegt de baas voorzichtig ... Adriaan barst in lachen uit ... 'Een secte ? Kom, ik zou jou eens wat vertellen ...' En dan vertelt Adriaan het hele verhaal aan zijn baas ... De baas wil dat kapelletje wel eens bezichtigen, en op een dag na het werk neemt Adriaan hem mee ... De baas zelf heeft een katholieke achtergrond, en hij vindt de personages op de schilderijen wel een beetje op katholieke heiligen lijken, maar het is toch anders ... Als Adriaan hem vertelt dat die schilderijen in de hemel zijn geschilderd moet de baas even lachen ... Adriaan kijkt hem aan, en zegt : 'Het is echt waar ...' Weer kijkt de baas indringend naar de schilderijen en zegt : 'Nu ja, dat kan best wel zo zijn ... Het heeft een beetje een groene gloed ....'

'Een groene gloed ?' vraagt Adriaan ... 'Ik zie geen groene gloed ...' De baas vraagt of hij een vriend van hem eens mag meenemen, en uiteindelijk stemt Adriaan daarin

toe ... Ook de andere twee nemen weleens vrienden of vriendinnen mee naar het oude kapelletje ...

Op een dag zit er weer een ander meisje dichtbij de keuken aan een tafeltje ... Later komt er een ander meisje bijzitten ... Eentje van hen lijkt weer heel veel op sommige vrouwen van de altaren, terwijl dat andere meisje ... Adriaan moet even slikken ... Hij voelt zijn hart kloppen, en hij weet niet waarom ... Op een gegeven moment trekt hij de stoute schoenen aan en loopt op de meisjes af ... 'Daar komt de kok,' zegt één van de meisjes ... Adriaan begint direkt over het Eeuwig Evangelie ... en de meisjes vertellen hem dat ze uit Belgie komen ... Adriaan is als verliefd op die taal ... 'Praat, praat,' zegt hij ... 'ik vind die taal van jullie ...' stamelt hij ... 'schitterend ...' De meisjes beginnen te lachen, en beginnen hele verhalen in het Belgisch tegen hem af te steken ... Maar daar is de baas ... 'Adriaan, dit was de laatste keer ... Ik ga een ontslagbrief voor je optekenen ...' Hoe Adriaan ook probeert de man over te halen ... Niks werkt ...

De meisjes vinden het erg vervelend voor Adriaan en nodigen hem uit om met hen mee te gaan naar Belgie voor een tijdje ... En misschien is dat wel goed ook voor Adriaan, omdat hij erg tot rust moet komen ... Sinds dat gedoe met het Eeuwig Evangelie is hij zichzelf niet meer. Hij krijgt een grote kamer in het huis waar de meisjes wonen ... Adriaan is erg verdrietig en heeft veel huilbuien, maar de meisjes troosten hem ... Gek, het is nog steeds alsof ze bij de vrouwen van de altaren behoren ... Soms nemen ze Adriaan mee naar het bos, en een andere keer naar de winkels ... Beiden vinden ze dat Adriaan wat afleiding nodig heeft ... 'Zie je, Adriaan, jullie Nederlanders hebben een hele andere mentaliteit ... Misschien dat je in Belgie, hier, op andere gedachten komt, en dan kun je ons direkt meer vertellen over dat Eeuwige Evangelie ...' Adriaan vind het op een bepaalde manier wel grappig ... Ze zeggen 'U' en 'Gij' tegen hem ... Op een dag komen ook Lisette en Marjenne hem opzoeken in Belgie, en ze worden al snel vriendinnen met de twee Belgische meisjes ... Op een dag besluiten ze de twee meisjes mee te nemen naar het oude ondergrondse kapelletje in Zuid Limburg ... Adriaan blijft op z'n kamer ... De meisjes komen later helemaal ontroerd thuis ... 'Dit is iets waar ik mijn leven voor wil geven, Adriaan,' zegt één van de meisjes ... De ander knikt ... Beiden beginnen ze flink te studeren in een kopie van het Eeuwig Evangelie ... 'Die leringen zijn zo prachtig,' vertelt één van de meisjes ... Terwijl de ander zegt dat ze in vuur en vlam staat ... Adriaan vind het allemaal best ... Hij had niets anders verwacht ... Daar waar de Nederlanders heel koudbloedig konden zijn, daar konden een paar Belgischen ineens heel warmbloedig zijn ... Adriaan had het vaak over de Belgen ineens, zo vaak, dat op een gegeven moment één van de meisjes zei : 'Maar nu bent gij aan het slijmen ...'

Hoofdstuk 4. Het Vreemde Gevoel

Op een dag wordt Adriaan helemaal draaierig wakker, met een raar gevoel in zijn buik ... Hij had die nacht zo vreemd gedroomd ... Alsof hij de hele nacht bij een vrouw van zo'n altaar in de armen had gelegen ... Hij was zichzelf niet meer, en moest telkens aan haar denken ... 'Wie was het ?' vroeg één van de meisjes nieuwsgierig ... 'Ik dacht dat je celibatair was ?' Maar direkt probeert Adriaan zich

te verdedigen ... 'Waarom moet je direkt aan intieme dingen denken als ik het heb over bij iemand in de armen liggen ... Dat is ook intiem natuurlijk, maar heel anders ... Heb jij nooit een keer bij je moeder in de armen gelegen ?'

'Nee,' zegt het meisje snel ... 'mijn moeder is overleden bij de geboorte ...'

'Oh, dat spijt me,' zegt Adriaan ... 'Sorry, dat vind ik echt verschrikkelijk erg ...' Adriaan is even ontdaan, maar dan begint het meisje weer door te vragen. Ook het andere meisje is er inmiddels bijgekomen ... 'Intiem met mensen zijn, dat probeer ik zoveel mogelijk te ontwijken, maar intiem met God zijn, dat is iets heel anders ... Dat is goed denk ik ...' zegt het andere meisje ... 'Ik had het niet over intimiteit,' zegt Adriaan weer, en dit keer iets harder ... 'Ik had het over een vrouw waarbij ik in de armen lag in mijn droom ... Het was meer als moederlijk ...'

'Ach, Adriaan, je moet je niet zo lopen te verdedigen, ze plaagt je alleen maar,' zei het andere meisje weer ... Adriaan zucht ... 'En toch denk ik dat ik gevaar loop verliefd te raken op die vrouw van het altaar ... En dat terwijl ik in het celibaat leef ...' zegt Adriaan ... 'Je bent niet verliefd,' zei één van de meisjes ... 'je bent gewoon overweldigd door een nieuwe en hogere vorm van liefde ... Het woord liefde zou niet eens op zijn plaats zijn, want dat is zo'n aards en vervuild woord ...' Weer zucht Adriaan ... Hij voelt zich vies, maar dat kan gebeuren als je met zo'n rein wezen in aanraking bent gekomen ... 'De vrouwen van het altaar zijn zo rein,' zei het meisje ... Het andere meisje was inmiddels weer weg ... Ze moest nog even wat was ophangen ...

Maar de hele dag voelde Adriaan zich draaierig ... Alsof de vrouw uit de droom hem nog steeds vasthield ... 'Misschien wil ze wel wat van je,' zei het meisje ... 'In het Eeuwig Evangelie gaat het over de intieme relaties tussen de hemelse wezens en soms worden hen van de aarde daar ook bij betrokken, zodat hun reine vruchten op aarde kunnen groeien ... Dit is iets reins ... Zo kom je los van het menselijke en aardse intieme ... Niet dat dat altijd slecht is ... maar ...' Adriaan stelde zich beschikbaar, voor als de wanhopige vrouw van het altaar daadwerkelijk hem als poort wilde gebruiken voor haar nageslacht ... 'Laat maar komen,' zei Adriaan, en direkt werd hij door een vreemde wind op de grond gesleurd, en voelde hij hemelse winden over hem heen komen die hem met hen lieten samensmelten voor nageslacht ... 'Hou me vast,' zei hij tegen het meisje ... Het andere meisje was er ook bijgekomen ... Ze zagen dat hij het heel moeilijk had, en beiden omhelsden ze hem ... Adriaan kreeg een huilbui ... 'Ik voel me zo vies ... Ik voel me zo vies ... Maar aan de andere kant wordt ik verlost van het aardse ..'

'Hier moet je even doorheen,' sprak één van de meisjes ... 'Het staat allemaal in het eeuwig evangelie ...' Daarna begon Adriaan hysterisch te huilen ... De meisjes hielden hem stevig vast ... 'Rustig maar, het is allemaal in orde ... Jij verzekert hen van nageslacht, Jij verzekert hen van nageslacht ...'

Zwetend wordt Adriaan wakker ... Wat een vreemde droom heeft hij gehad ... Over vrouwen van het altaar, over Belgie ... over ontslagen worden ... En dat terwijl hij niet eens een kok is ... En over een kapel in Zuid Limburg ... onder de grond nog wel ... Op zijn nachtkastje ligt een boek over Sint Antonius, die in de woestijn door

visioenen met vrouwen werd lastiggevallen ... En dat terwijl hij celibatair wilde leven ... Had Adriaan zich teveel in dat boek verdiept ? Nee, niet eens ... Hij had dat boek van een vriend van hem gehad, en las het gewoon ter ontspanning ... Ach, iedereen droomt weleens, dacht hij bij zichzelf ... En een mens kan vreemd dromen ... Toen draaide hij zich om, kuste zijn nog slapende vriendin, en ging naar zijn werk ...

Einde

Verborgen Vruchten

Korte Theologische Roman

Hoofdstuk 1. Het Gebedenboekje

Hoofdstuk 2. Roggio

Hoofdstuk 3. Het Beeld van God

Hoofdstuk 4. Als een Trouwe Hond

Hoofdstuk 1. Het Gebedenboekje

Rick Zandstra is een Belgische jongen en is lid van een pinkstergemeente. Op een dag komt Rick na een lange surftocht op het meer thuis. Er is een sprookjesfilm op de televisie. Een jongen en een meisje wonen in een prachtig paradijs, en hebben het goed samen ... Op een dag voelt het meisje zich niet lekker, en trekt zich terug ... De jongen begint haar na een tijdje te missen, en begint vrouwelijke eigenschappen te ontwikkelen ... Hij vertrekt naar de rand van het paradijs, op zoek naar zijn eigen vrouwelijkheid, maar valt over de rand naar beneden, en krijgt te horen dat hij niet meer terugmag, omdat hij uit balans is. Hij had zijn mannelijkheid met zijn vrouwelijkheid moeten balanceren, en niet zijn vrouwelijkheid laten overheersen. Het meisje is ontroostbaar als ze ontdekt dat de jongen vertrokken is, en begint door het woud te rennen ... Het sprookje vertelt dat ze nog steeds door het woud rent om haar geliefde te zoeken ... Rick zit als betoverd te kijken ... Het is een tekenfilm met een prachtige rode gloed ... Het land van die tekenfilm ? Roggio ...

Wat een prachtig paradijs, zegt Rick tegen zichzelf ... Daar zou ik ook wel willen wonen ... Het meisje van de tekenfilm heette Echte ... en de jongen Lirijn ... 'Wat een mafkees,' denkt Rick ... 'wie vertrekt er nu uit een paradijs ....' Hij kon Adam en Eva ook al nooit begrijpen ... Maar goed, die Echte was wel slim ... die bleef in het paradijs ... Maar of ze echt gelukkig was zonder die jongen ? Nee, want ze rende maar heen en weer ... Ze miste hem natuurlijk ... Wat een vreemd einde trouwens voor zo'n prachtige tekenfilm ... Het leek een beetje op Romeo en Juliet ...

'Rick, wil je wat drinken, jongen ?' vraagt zijn moeder van achter het barretje wat ze in huis hebben staan ... Achter het barretje is een ingebouwde keuken waar zijn moeder uit tevoorschijn komt ... Ze ziet er betoverend uit ... Ze moet vanavond naar een feestje ... Maar Rick heeft al een glas voor zich staan en tilt het omhoog ... 'Het leven in Belgie is goed, mams,' zegt Rick ... 'Ik ben al voorzien ... en ik heb een prachtige dag gehad op het meer ... en nu hier bij die betoverende sprookjesfilm ...' En dan begint Rick zijn moeder over het verhaal te vertellen ... 'Dat verhaal kende ik nog niet, Rick,' zei z'n moeder ...

De volgende dag zit Rick in de kerk ... Het gaat over de Attentaatse bediening ... Ook gaat het over het balans wat er moet zijn tussen het mannelijke en vrouwelijke ... 'Vreemd,' dacht Rick bij zichzelf ... 'je zou bijna denken dat ze gisteren ook naar die tekenfilm hebben gekeken ...' De voorganger en zijn vrouw hielden beiden de preek ... Dat deden ze weleens vaker ... Opeens begon de voorganger over die tekenfilm te praten ... Hij zei dat het een prachtige film was die zoveel van God liet zien ...

Die nacht heeft Rick een droom ... En nu was het alsof hij zelf in die tekenfilm meespeelde ... Hij rende achter Echte aan, en riep : 'Hey, stop ...' Maar Echte hoorde hem niet en rende verder ... Teleurgesteld werd Rick even wakker, maar viel toen weer in slaap ... Weer droomt hij over Echte ... 'Jij ... jij ...' zegt Echte ... 'Jij hebt me doen stoppen ... Jij hebt mij tot rust gebracht ...' Rick wordt wakker met een brede glimlach ... Zou Echte echt bestaan ... Waar kwam die tekenfilm eigenlijk vandaan ? Het was als een christelijk sprookje, maar ook weer niet ...

Lang hoefde Rick er niet over na te denken ... In de loop van de ochtend werd er gebeld ... Het was nogal vroeg, maar Rick was net opgestaan ... Er waren mensen aan de deur die het Eeuwig Evangelie verkondigden ... Rick was zo nieuwsgierig ... 'Zijn jullie een nieuwe kerk, en kennen jullie dat verhaal van Echte en Lirijn in de Hof van Roggio ?' Ze vertelden Rick dat dat verhaal uit het Eeuwig Evangelie kwam, het beloofde boek dat als vervolg en verlengstuk van de Bijbel zou worden gegeven ... 'Wij bidden tot Echte,' zeiden ze ... Ze waren met z'n drieen ... Na een tijdje liet Rick ze binnen ... Echte was één van hun heiligen ... Het verhaal dat ze vertelden deed een beetje katholiek aan ... Ze vertelden Rick dat het Eeuwig Evangelie een perfecte balans was tussen het Protestantisme en het Katholicisme ... 'Hoe bidden jullie dan tot Echte ?' vroeg Rick ... Ze zeiden dat het voor iedere gelovige van het Eeuwig Evangelie de taak was om Echte tot rust te brengen ... Zij mist haar geliefde ... de Afgedwaalde, de Verlorene, waarvan Lirijn het beeld is ... Toen vertelde Rick over zijn droom ... 'Je hebt haar hart aangeraakt,' zei één van de drie, terwijl de anderen knikten ...

'Laten we tot Echte bidden,' zei een ander ... Maar Rick vertelde dat hij van de pinkster-gemeente was, en dat hij niet zoveel voor katholieke geloofsbeleving voelde ... Wel vond hij het een prachtig verhaal ... Hij zou ook het Eeuwig Evangelie wel willen lezen ... Misschien als hij er wat meer aan toe was ... Ze spraken nog lang door, en aan het einde van het gesprek kreeg Rick een klein boekje van hen met wat gebeden tot Echte. Ook stonden er een paar plaatjes in van Echte ... Wanneer ze weer vertrokken zijn begint Rick er direkt in te bladeren ... Het zijn prachtige gebeden, dat wel ... en Rick wordt er echt rustig van ... 'Wie je ook bent, Echte, ik houd van je, en wil meer van je weten ... Openbaar uzelf aan mij ...' sprak hij diep in z'n hart ... Maar eigenlijk schrok hij een beetje van zijn eigen woorden ... Al snel denkt hij de hele dag door aan Echte ... Hij staat ermee op en gaat ermee naar bed ...

Hoofdstuk 2. Roggio

Rick besluit het boekje eens aan de voorganger te geven ... 'Hoe weten we of dit allemaal waar is ?' vraagt de voorganger zich af ... Wel vond hij het apocrief overkomen, en hij hield altijd al van de apocrieve boeken ... Boeken met een bijbelse inslag, die het toch net niet tot de Bijbel hebben gehaald ... De voorganger zei altijd al dat de Bijbelboeken werden bepaald door vergaderingen van kerkleiders ... 'Echte, wij brengen uw hart tot rust. In uw tederheid zijn wij verborgen ...' stond er in het boekje ... 'Wij dragen uw kruis, en zeggen tot uw ziel : Waak op, en rust in de tederheid van de dag die door ons tot u komt ... Weest gegroet en gezegend, nu wij in uw voetsporen wandelen ... Ja, met u rennen wij, en met u komen wij tot rust ...' Ook de voorganger vond de gebeden prachtig ... Het ging er ook vaak over wat wij voor God konden doen, hoe wij Hem konden troosten en zelfs genezen ... Dat was voor de voorganger een goede omwenteling ... Hij vond altijd al dat de kerk teveel consumeerde ...

De voorganger zei dat ook Paulus de gelovigen weleens prees, en dat je het goede in elkaar best wel mag loven ... Dit was dan ook om een gezonde balans te houden ... Het katholieke heiligengeloof kreeg nu toch wel een beetje waarde ... In het boekje stond ook een klein stukje over de predictaatse bediening, het geestelijk reizen, waarvan het kruis van Echte het altaar was ... Zo konden ook wij door ons gemis, en door het verlangen naar onze geliefden, geestelijk reizen, en zo het verlorene zoeken en vinden ... Dat vond de voorganger wel een mooie gedachte, vooral toen hij erachter kwam dat juist de predictaatse bediening de motor was van de territoriale oorlogsvoering ... Daar geloofde de voorganger sterk in ... De voorganger was een voorstander van het zogenaamde exorcisme ... Dit in tegenstelling tot veel andere pinksterleiders ... Die vonden dat niet zo nodig, omdat een christen volgens hen niet gebonden door een boze geest konden zijn ... Ach, misschien wilden ze elkaar gewoon niet bangmaken ...

Rick had genoeg pinkstermensen op de grond zien rollen ... Boze geesten spraken door hen heen ... Of waren die mensen dan gewoon niet echt wederomgeboren ? De voorganger zei dat iedereen demonen kon hebben ... Christenen en niet-christenen ... Maar wat nou als Echte de motor was van het exorcisme ... Dan moest zij wel heel belangrijk zijn in het plaatje van geestelijke strijd ... Misschien wel een belangrijk

wapen ... Op een dag stonden de drie mensen van het Eeuwig Evangelie weer op de stoep ... Rick liet ze binnen, en even later waren ze weer in een diep gesprek verzeild geraakt .. Rick begon het steeds interessanter te vinden, maar had nog steeds zijn twijfels en vraagtekens .. Weer hadden ze wat boeken voor Rick meegenomen .. Eentje was een boek over de achtergronden van Echte, waarin stond dat ze een voorbijbelse heilige was ... Een ander boek bevatte territoriale lofzangen en principes over Echte. De betekenis en functie van aanbidding werd uitgelegd, en dat was voor Rick zeer verhelderend. Er werd gezegd dat er verschillende vormen van aanbidding waren, en dat de aanbidding verdeeld en gebalanceerd moest worden ... Aanbidding was eigenlijk een vorm van respect en verbintenis, die voortkwam vanuit een stelsel van voorwaarden en regels. Zo was aanbidding een vorm van samenwerking, en van samenhang. Weer gold dat door het vlees niet aanbeden mocht worden, maar door de Geest des te meer ... Door de Geest kwamen er steeds meer voorrechten bij. Maar wat hield die aanbidding precies in, en hoe moest het precies gebeuren ? Moest het echt gaan zoals in pinkstergemeentes met wapperende handen, en ellenlange liederen die steeds herhaald moesten worden ? Of kregen ze te maken met de wat verfijndere vormen ? De boeken gaven op die vragen veel antwoord, en lieten ook de vele verschillen zien ... In die aanbidding scheen Echte een grote rol te spelen, want aanbidding had alles te maken met geestelijk reizen ... Zo was er een verschil tussen territoriale aanbidding en de klassieke aanbidding. Zo waren er gebeden en gezangen die ervoor zorgden dat alle engelen, heiligen en Geesten van God en andere delen van God genoeg dankzegging, respect, en lofprijs ontvingen voor hun werken en aard. Zij die van het Eeuwig Evangelie waren leerden die gebeden veelal uit het hoofd ... Zo hielpen ze mee in Gods Eeuwige Plan, en waren zij voorbidders van het Eeuwige ...

Rick had een piano, en begon sommige liederen na te spelen ... De noten stonden er gewoon bij in sommige bundels ... Rick begon ruimte in zijn kast vrij te maken voor de boeken die hij had gekregen. Ze hadden met elkaar afgesproken dat ze elke week even langs zouden komen ... Rick begon alles door te vertellen aan de voorganger en die begon het ook steeds meer reuze interessant te vinden ... Gods eindtijd-beweging was volgens hem aan het opstaan, maar hij vond ook dat ze nog steeds goed op hun hoede moesten wezen ...

Roggio was een voor-bijbels paradijs. In het Eeuwig Evangelie stonden de vruchten van dit paradijs beschreven. Terwijl Rick er in een boek iets over las begon hij een vreemde smaak in zijn mond te krijgen. Volgens het boek had God de Hof geschonken aan Zijn Geest Metensia, één van zijn vele Geesten. Volgens het boek was er ook een Hof genaamd Rietel die Hij aan Zijn Geest Mura gaf om die te behoeden. Metensia en Mura waren Geesten die zich in Openbaring voor Zijn Troon hadden gezet. Zo waren er Zeven Geesten voor Zijn troon beschreven. Ook van de hof Rietel stonden vruchten beschreven. In Rietel hadden de bewoners de eigenschappen van slangen, en in Roggio hadden Echte en Lirijn de eigenschappen van planten, bloemen, bomen en struiken. Rick vond het erg sprookjesachtig, en inderdaad zoals de voorganger zei : apocrief ... hetgeen betekent : verborgen ... Dit was het verborgene van God ... door de geschiedenis weggespoeld ... verdwenen in

de golven van de tijd ...

Op een nacht had Rick een droom over Roggio ... Hij hield in die droom een zwaard vast, waaruit rood spul vloeide en daarna groen spul, om de hof te bevochtigen en vruchtbaar te maken ... Daarna kwam Echte op hem af en gaf hem een vrucht ... Dit was geen verboden vrucht, maar een verborgen vrucht ... Rick at ervan. Toen zei Echte tegen hem : 'Wie van de verborgen vruchten van het paradijs eet, zal tot nog meer verborgenheden komen, en van paradijs tot paradijs, die in de oudheid verdwenen zijn ...' Toen vertelde ze hem van een gelijkenis waarin God telkens weer lieden zendt tot de aarde om de aarde wakker te schudden ... Maar telkens worden deze lieden van de hemel teruggezonden of vermoord ... Rick herinnert zich dat zoiets dergelijks ook ergens in de Bijbel staat ... Er zijn vaker kruisigingen geweest, ook voor het ontstaan van de huidige schepping ... En Echte wilde hem die oude kruizen laten zien, want ze waren belangrijk voor de verdere voortgang, en voor het overwinnen van de canon ...

Weer gaf Echte hem een vrucht, en Rick at weer. Het leek wel alsof hij door de vruchten ontwaakte, en hij had een licht gevoel in zijn borst ... Toen wees Echte op zijn tepel, en sprak : 'De tepel is de vertegenwoordiger van de canon ...' en ze scheurde de tepel van Ricks lichaam af, terwijl er een andere soort tepel op zijn lichaam begon te groeien ... De tepel gloeide als de zon en was als de golven van de zee ... De tepel begon te groeien en te groeien, en Echte zei dat Rick veel van de verborgen vruchten moest eten ... Ze wees hem de bomen van het paradijs aan ... Ze zei hem dat die bomen hele oude kruizen waren, en dat door de vruchten daarvan te eten Rick geestelijk zou kunnen reizen ... Rick viel voor de voeten van Echte neer, en wilde haar aanbidden, omdat ze zo heilig en rein was, en straalde als een engel of als god ... Maar Echte zei : 'aanbidt God, aanbidt zijn Geest ...' Het boek had gezegd dat de wezens van God nederig waren, en alleen in noodzaak de aandacht op henzelf richten ... Rick kon zich niet inhouden, en bleef Echte prijzen ... Maar toen begon Echte weg te rennen ... 'Oh, ga niet weg,' zei Rick bijna huilend, en merkte dat hij Echte troost begon te geven in zijn hart, en hij sprak tot haar geest, biddende ... alsof hij ineens katholiek was biddende tot een heilige ... Voorzichtig ervoer hij weer contact met haar, en langzaam kwam haar ziel dichterbij ... maar ze was als water nu ... niet meer zoals ze eerst was ... 'Oh, wat heb ik gedaan ...' zei Rick bevend ... 'Het is niet erg,' zei Echte, 'maar dit gebeurt er als mensenkinderen de hemelse realiteiten overmatig aanbidden ... Het is goed om eerst troost en genezing te brengen tot ons, en daarna pas dankzegging en lof ... Wij zijn veel te fragiel voor overvloedige adoratie ... oftewel aanbidding ... Breng je aanbidding in eerste plaats tot de Almacht van God en Zijn Geest ... En ook als je tot Hem komt, balanceer dan alles met het brengen van Troost, Hulp en Genezing ... Vraag Hem niet alleen maar dingen voor je te doen ... maar doe ook dingen voor Hem ... Hij heeft ook jouw hulp nodig, Rick ... Ook Hij hangt aan het kruis wat de mensheid voor Hem gebouwd heeft ... Dit kruis gaat veel dieper dan wat de boekjes vertellen ... Dat kruis kun je alleen ontdekken in je hart ...'

Toen begon Rick gebeden van troost en genezing tot Echte op te zenden, en langzaam werd het water waarin ze verscheen tot een vaste gestalte ... En ineens voelde hij

haar hand weer op zijn hand ... 'Betekent het nu echt dat er een volgorde is van eerst Gods Geesten, dan Zijn engelen en dan Zijn heiligen ?' vroeg Rick ... 'In sommige opzichten wel,' zei Echte, 'maar het wil niet per definitie zeggen dat een Geest van God hoger is dan een engel of een heilige, of dat een engel hoger is dan een heilige ... Denk aan Christus die mens werd en heilige, en denk aan de vele engelen die Hem daarin gevolgd zijn ... Er zijn verborgenheden die je dient te ontdekken ... God doet niet zozeer aan rangen ... want de laatste en laagste rang is vaak ook de hoogste ... Er zijn geestelijke wetten waar rekening mee gehouden moeten worden ... Vaak hebben die hoge wezens opdracht om in een tussenlaag of onderlaag te incarneren, oftewel geboren te worden ... Zo kan een kind dus de moeder zijn van zijn moeder ... en de vader zijn van zijn vader ...'

Hoofdstuk 3. Het Beeld van God

De volgende dag heeft Rick nog steeds die vreemde smaak in z'n mond ... Verder probeert hij de droom een beetje te vergeten ... Het was te mooi om waar te zijn ...Rick bemerkte dat hij veel te veel van Echte begon te houden ... en zij leefde in de geestelijke wereld, en hij op aarde ... Alhoewel de droom realistischer was en intenser dan het leven op aarde ... Het was alsof hij in de droom in vuur en vlam stond ... en zelfs afstand was zo dichtbij ... Het was een wonderbaarlijk paradijs ... maar in welk gehalte was het echt waar ? Ach, iedereen droomt weleens, dacht Rick bij zichzelf ... Maar naderhand merkte hij dat hij toch heel moeilijk van de droom kon loskomen ... Hij gaf meer waarde aan de droom dan aan zijn dagelijks leven ... Wat had hij nou eigenlijk aan al dat aardse gedoe ... En als er ergens materialisme, genot en intens gevoel was, dan was het wel in dat paradijs ... Eigenlijk had Rick er wel alles voor over ... Maar hij wist dat ieder paradijs was omringd door woestijnen ... Alleen door kruizen zou hij daar binnen kunnen blijven ... Het leek wel alsof de aarde hem pestte ... Was de aarde soms die woestijn rondom dat prachtige paradijs ? ... Was de aarde soms die rij van kruizen waaraan hij gehangen werd om binnen te gaan ? ... Het leek er wel op ... Meer en meer was het alsof de aarde de ketel was waarin hij gekookt werd ...

In mensen had Rick al nauwelijks meer interesse ... Hij moest telkens maar aan Echte denken ... Of had hij haar misschien al wel weer weggejaagd met zijn overdreven gedoe ? Iedereen viel in het niet bij Echte ... Maar ja, hij mocht haar niet aanbidden ... Hij moest haar troosten ... Rick probeerde het te onthouden ... Hij moest gebeden van troost uit zijn hoofd leren ... Daar was hij dagelijks mee bezig ... Troost en genezing ... dat wenste hij haar toe ... en veel rust ... Hij wilde haar rust zijn ... Hij wilde haar schuilplaats zijn ... Wezens zoals zij wilden niet vereerd worden, of op een voetstuk geplaatst worden ... Dat konden ze niet aan ... zulk soort gebeden belasten hen met veel te veel verantwoordelijkheid, en maakten hen tot slaaf ... Rick kon het zich goed voorstellen ... God door gebeden een slaaf ... 'God, doe even dit voor me ... God, doe even dat voor me ...' En dan dat geklaag als alles niet loopt zoals ze dat willen ... Was God niet gevormd door mensen ? In een beeld opgesloten ? Verschrikkelijk moest dat wezen ...

Rick wilde God bevrijden, en al die wezens die Hij was, en de hemelse wezens

waarmee hij werkte sinds de grondlegging der grondleggingen ... Rick wilde alle delen van God daartoe kennen en begrijpen ... Zo was hij dus bij het Eeuwig Evangelie aan het goede adres ... Maar was het wel een zuivere bron, of was daar de fantasie op hol geslagen ... En wie had dan dat Eeuwig Evangelie geschreven, en waar was dan het exemplaar ? Dat moest Rick nog zien ... De mensen van het Eeuwig Evangelie kwamen alleen maar aanzetten met boeken rondom of over het Eeuwig Evangelie ... maar Rick wilde het boek zelf lezen ...

'Ja, dat was er nog niet,' zeiden ze ... Profeten zouden alleen nog maar blikken in dat hemels boek hebben geslagen ... Het was iets voor de eindtijd ... Maar ja ... wat was de eindtijd precies, en wanneer zou dat beginnen .... En waar in de eindtijd zou ergens dat boek dan verschijnen, en hoe ? Maar dat wisten de mensen van het Eeuwig Evangelie ook niet echt te vertellen ... Op een bepaalde manier twijfelde Rick nog heel erg ... Maar toch wilde hij doorgaan met deze studie ... want als het een secte zou zijn, dan was hij in ieder geval goed op de hoogte ... Hij zag het al helemaal voor zich ... dan zou hij de voorzitter zijn van een soort Bond tegen Sectes ... En dan stond het Eeuwig Evangelie op de zwarte lijst ... En dan moest hij daar tegen gaan prediken ... Maar ja, het Eeuwig Evangelie zou komen ... zoals in de Bijbel stond ... maar was misschien niet of niet helemaal zoals deze mensen het vertelden ... Ach, maar ja, zo was het ook met de kerken ... De één zei dit, en de ander zei dat ... Misschien zouden er ook wel verschillende stromen in het Eeuwig Evangelie komen ... Zo ging dat toch altijd ...

Rick vond dat de voorganger al ver heen was ... Nu zongen ze al uit de bundels met Territoriale Lofzangen ... De voorganger vond ze prachtig, en functioneel in het exorcisme ... Rick wist het niet ... Een beangstigend gevoel bekroop hem ... Wat nou als de pinkstergemeente ineens een Eeuwig Evangelie Gemeente zou worden ? Was het niet een soort Katholieke valstrik om de heiligenverering in de kerk te krijgen ? Rick werd bijna verscheurd van binnen ... Maar toen dacht hij ineens : 'Echte, hoe zal het met haar zijn ? Of is ze door mijn twijfels weer als water geworden ?' Maar het leek net alsof Echte in zijn binnenste zei : 'Het is goed te twijfelen, Rick ... onderzoek het en behoud het goede ...'

De voorganger had ineens allerlei taal : 'De pinkstergemeente moet zich opmaken om een Eeuwig Evangelie Gemeente te worden ... Het blijft niet bij Pinksteren ... De Gemeente moet haar eindtijd-taak oppakken ...' Dat was ruige taal ... En op een dag was het dan zover ... Profeten waren bij elkaar gekomen om het Eeuwig Evangelie te smeden ... Nu werd dan echt de Bijbel verlengd ... Rick hield zijn hart vast ... Als dat maar goed zou gaan ... De voorganger had inmiddels een exemplaar, en liet het vol trots aan de gemeente zien ... Snel werden er kopieen van gemaakt, en niet lang daarna was de gemeente voller dan ooit tevoren ... Oh, wat was de voorganger trots op zijn nieuwe gemeente ... Dit zou hij in pinksteren nooit bereikt hebben ... Maar Rick begon zich steeds meer terug te trekken van de gemeente ... Al dat massale en dat overdrevene ... Daar had hij geen zin in, en hij besloot om zich aan te sluiten bij een pinkstergemeente in een naburig dorp ... Daar vonden ze die voorganger maar een rare kwiebus ... een navolger van dwaalleer ... Maar diep in zijn hart had Rick altijd aan Echte vastgehouden ... Voor hem was dat wel waardevol, want daar had

hij per slot van rekening zelf over gedroomd ... Hij besloot een compromis te sluiten ... Wel een pinksterman, geen Eeuwig Evangelie man, maar toch Echte ... Een voorbijbels paradijs waar ze in woonde, genaamd Roggio ... en dan houdt het op ... Elke dag voor het slapen gaan bad hij in het geheim tot Echte ... Hij wilde dat niet aan zijn nieuwe gemeente vertellen ... Rick droeg een groot geheim met zich mee ... Ze zouden hem waarschijnlijk beschuldigen van afgoderij ... Maar op een dag hadden ze een profeet uitgenodigd uit het buitenland ... En hij profeteerde : 'Er zit hier iemand in de zaal die bijzondere dromen van God heeft gehad over het paradijs ... Houd aan die dromen vast, want ze zijn waar ...' Na de dienst loopt Rick op de man af, en vertelt hem het verhaal ... De man glimlacht ... 'Ook God heeft z'n geschiedenissen ... Er is kerkgeschiedenis, bijbelgeschiedenis, en voorbijbelse geschiedenis en Godsgeschiedenis ... Je bent een bevoorrecht man dat de Heer je daarin heeft laten delen ...' Een enorme rust valt over Rick ... Eindelijk heeft hij het gevoel dat iemand hem begrijpt ... Na een tijdje durft hij er ook over te getuigen in de gemeente ... Daar slaat het minder aan, maar na de dienst komt er wel een profetische broeder op hem af die er wel meer over wil weten ... De man zelf heeft ook soortgelijke dromen, maar weet niet wat hij er mee moet ... Hij vertelde Rick dat hij door hem werd geinspireerd om er meer mee te doen ... God is bezig zijn verborgen hart te delen ...

Hoofdstuk 4. Als een Trouwe Hond

De man vraagt hem hoe hij tot Echte moet bidden ... Rick legt het hem uit en de volgende dienst loopt de man recht op Rick af : 'Zeg, ik heb gedaan wat je hebt gezegd ... Het werkt ... Ik heb ook al dromen over haar gehad, waarin ze me ook van die verborgen vruchten te eten gaf ...' Rick is blij ... Hij heeft er een broeder en vriend bij die hem begrijpt ... Maar na een tijdje komt de voorganger ineens op hem af : 'Ik waarchuw jullie ... Daar waar jullie van eten, dat zijn verboden vruchten ...' zegt hij op een vreemde norse manier ... Hoe wist hij nu waar ze het over hadden ? Had hij stiekem lopen meeluisteren, of heeft er iemand voor klikspaan gespeeld ? In ieder geval was de voorganger ook snel weer verdwenen ... Rick had een akelig gevoel ... Verboden vruchten ? Nee ... maar wel verborgen vruchten ... 'Ach, laat die traditionele zak tabak toch ...' zei de man met wie hij had gesproken ... 'zo zitten al die pinkstervoorgangers in mekaar ... Het is allemaal om territorium ...' Maar toen herinnerde Rick zijn oude voorganger ... Die zou blij zijn met hun ideeen, maar die was misschien te extreem, te overdreven ... Toch vertelde Rick het even aan die man ... En zonder medeweten van Rick besloot die man eens in de oude gemeente van Rick te gaan kijken ... De man was al snel erg onder de indruk door wat er gepredikt werd, en wilde niet meer terug naar de pinkstergemeente ... Rick vond het al zo vreemd ... De man kwam in de diensten niet meer opdagen, dus op een dag besloot Rick hem te bellen. Toen Rick hoorde wat er was gebeurd had hij de neiging om de haak erop te gooien ... Hij voelde zich eigenlijk een beetje bedrogen ... Wat een verrader ...

Rick besloot zijn excuses aan de voorganger van zijn nieuwe pinkstergemeente aan te bieden vanwege de dwaalleer ... De voorganger wilde hem niet vertellen hoe hij erachter was gekomen ... Rick wilde gewoon ergens voor de volle honderd procent

voor kiezen om conflicten te voorkomen, en koos voor de pinkstergemeente ... Hij wist dat hij Echte hierdoor zou verliezen, maar hij kon niet meer tegen de spanning ... Hij wilde geen dwaallichtje zijn ... En zo ging Rick op dat spoor verder, dienst na dienst ... Soms dacht hij nog weleens aan de woorden van die profeet, maar die profeet kwam daar voor het moment niet spreken ... Totdat hij weer opnieuw werd uitgenodigd voor een preek ... Rick wilde eigenlijk niet gaan, maar toch vond hij dat hij zich niet moest aanstellen ... Misschien dat de profeet niks door zou hebben ... Maar niets was minder waar ... Midden in de preek begon de man ineens te profeteren : 'Er is hier iemand die zijn dromen van het verleden heeft verzaakt ... Laat jezelf niet indutten ...' was de boodschap ... Rick deed net alsof hij het niet gehoord had ... 'Ach, het zal wel voor iemand anders wezen,' dacht hij nog ... Maar na de dienst kwam de profeet met een strak gezicht op Rick af ... 'Je bent gewaarschuwd, Rick ... God geeft Zijn dromen niet voor niets ... Je moet iets met dat talent, die droom, doen, anders zal God dat talent van je afnemen, en ook je andere talenten ...' Rick was geschrokken ... Wat een brutaliteit ... Maar ja, daar was hij profeet voor ... Niet lang daarna vroeg Rick een gesprek met de voorganger aan ... De voorganger vond dit echt niet kunnen, en wilde de profeet niet meer uitnodigen ... Precies een week later kreeg de voorganger een oordeelsbrief van de profeet ... Daarin stond aangekondigd dat God Zijn kandelaar van de gemeente zou wegnemen, als de voorganger in zijn tradities bleef ... De profeet had hem daar al weleens op aangesproken, maar de voorganger had zich verhard ... Maar hier liet de voorganger het niet bij zitten, en belde de profeet op : 'Nu moet u eens goed luisteren, mijnheer Reilingen, u maakt hier de dienst niet uit. Ga ergens anders dit soort dingen lopen verkondigen ... Bij mij werkt het niet ... Ik ken genoeg van dat soort slappe praatjes, en ik heb ervaring met profeten ... Ook profeten kunnen het mis hebben, en daar bent u één van ... Ik wil u hierbij mededelen dat u geen geschikte kandidaat meer bent tot het verzorgen van onze diensten ... Het spijt me, maar we kunnen ons daar echt niet aan lenen ... Probeert u het ergens anders ... Dag.' Rick zat erbij ... 'Zo Rick,' zei de voorganger ... 'Ik kan er echt niet tegen dat onze gemeenteleden, de schaapjes van God, door dit soort tuig wordt lastig gevallen ... Als je ooit nog eens last met hem hebt, bel me dan op, okay ?' Rick knikte ... Een gevoel van veiligheid overspoelde hem ... Hier had hij wat aan ... Zo'n voorganger kreeg van hem een dikke tien ...

Naarmate de jaren verstreken voelde Rick zich steeds veiliger worden ... De dromen kwamen gelukkig niet terug, en hij hoorde nooit meer wat van die profeet of zijn oude gemeente ... De voorganger vertelde de gemeente vaak dat juist de traditie voor rust en vrede zorgde, voor een vaste baken op weg naar de haven ... Ja, in zekere zin was deze gemeente voor Rick de haven, en misschien zelfs als het paradijs op aarde ... Iedereen ging vriendelijk met elkaar om, en de liefde was duidelijk merkbaar ... Maar iets bleef aan Rick knagen ... Wat dat was kon hij niet goed beschrijven, en eigenlijk wilde hij er liever niet aan denken ... Wat zou hij moeten met verborgen vruchten als hier de vruchten voor het oprapen lagen ... Gepeld en wel ... met peper en zout ... Waarom zou hij naar een vreemd land moeten reizen om daar vruchten te plukken die misschien helemaal niet bestaan, terwijl hier de supermarkten vol lagen met de

oude vertrouwde vruchtenstampot die zijn leven veilig stelde ... Waarom maakten sommigen het leven zo ingewikkeld ... Op deze vraag hoopte Rick een keer antwoord te krijgen ... Waarom waren er dan ook zoveel geloven, en zoveel kerken ... Kon het niet wat makkelijker ... Het leek wel alsof die andere kerken en geloven er waren om Rick te pesten ... Waarom waren ze zo dwars ... Maar gelukkig was de voorganger van Rick een trouwe held, als een hond ... De voorganger zou wel voor Rick en de andere schaapjes willen sterven als dat moest ... Hij zou samen met hen het graf ingaan als het moest, opdat ze er samen weer uit zouden komen ... Samen uit, samen thuis ...

Einde

Reis door het Zand

Korte Theologische Roman

Freddie Dekkers zit in een Vol Evangelie Gemeente ... Op een avond spreekt er een buitenlandse gast ... Freddie heeft wat vrienden meegenomen ... Ze gaan achterin de zaal zitten ... Die vrienden van Freddie geloven niet in God, en al helemaal niet in profetie ... Maar Freddie daagde hen uit om eens mee te gaan naar een profetische dienst ... Dan zouden ze het zelf wel zien, en niet meer onder het bewijs kunnen uitkomen ... Een beetje lacherig waren ze met Freddie meegekomen ... Met de zangdienst deden ze gewoon mee, en ze hieven zelfs hun handen voor de grap op ... Eerst werd er een genezingsdienst gehouden, en aan het einde mochten mensen die een getuigenis hadden of door de Heer waren aangeraakt naar voren komen ... Ook één van Freddie's vrienden ging naar voren ... voor de grap ... Hij stak een onzinverhaal af over Jezus, hoe hij was aangeraakt ... Iedereen geloofde het ... Later ging ook een andere vriend van Freddie naar voren, en weer geloofde iedereen het ...

Daarna werd er dus een profetische dienst gehouden ... De buitenlandse spreker begon over enkele aanwezigen te profeteren ... Aan het einde van die dienst mocht iedereen die een woord van de Heer wilde ontvangen naar voren komen ... Ook enkele vrienden van Freddie gingen naar voren ... Ze wilden nu wel eens wat bewijs

zien dat God echt bestond ... Alhoewel ze niet geloofden dat er ook maar enige kans was dat dat zou gaan gebeuren ... De profeet legde zijn hand op de eerste vriend van Freddie die naar voren was gekomen ... De profeet begon eerst luid in tongen te bidden ... De vriend van Freddie had heel serieus zijn ogen gesloten ... 'Oh, jij houd van bier drinken,' zei de profeet ... 'Wie niet,' dacht de vriend ...'veel jongens op mijn leeftijd ...' En toen ging de profeet verder : 'Ik zie jou met een meisje zitten op een terrasje ... Je voelt je niet op je gemak, en vertrekt weer ... De volgende dag ben je ziek ...'

'Ja,' dacht de jongen bij zichzelf, 'dat is inderdaad een keer gebeurt, maar dat gebeurt zoveel mensen weleens ...' De jongen begint een beetje met z'n mondhoeken te trekken, zo van : 'Is dit alles ?' ... Dan zegt de profeet : 'Dat meisje heette Elles ... Het was je vriendin ... Maar ze heeft je bedrogen ... Ze ging er met een ander vandoor, en daardoor heb je jezelf verhard ...' De jongen dacht : 'Verrek, dat is waar ... Wat heeft Freddie die gast allemaal verteld ...' Maar toen vertelde de profeet hem over wat details die zelfs Freddie niet wist, en ook wat dingen die de jongen nog nooit aan iemand anders had verteld ... De jongen schrok hier erg van ... 'Wie ben je eigenlijk,' zei de jongen trillerig, maar toch nog een beetje grapsgewijs ... 'Wie heeft je dat verteld ... Wordt ik bespioneerd ?' De profeet lacht even en zegt : 'Neen, dat heb ik van God ...' De jongen loopt weer naar z'n plaats terug ... De andere vriend van Freddie loopt met hem mee ... Hij was veel te bang dat zijn geheimen ook geopenbaard zouden worden ... 'Ah, volgens mij is het allemaal een truc,' zegt de jongen over wie geprofeteerd was tegen Freddie ... Freddie trekt z'n schouders op ... 'Je moet het zelf weten ... Ik dacht dat ik nu wel duidelijk genoeg ben geweest ...' Maar de jongen wilde het eigenlijk niet toegeven ...

Na de dienst op de terugreis waren de jongens erg rumoerig in de auto ... Er werd niet meer over de dienst gesproken en al helemaal niet over de profeet en zijn profetieen. Als Freddie thuiskomt doet hij het licht aan en gaat even op de bank zitten ... Hij klikt de televisie aan ... Hij is erg moe, en even later valt hij in slaap ... Na een tijdje wordt hij wakker van wat getik op het raam ... het was één van de jongens ... 'Kom verder,' zegt Freddie ... Even later zijn ze diep met elkaar in gesprek ... De jongen stelt allemaal vragen aan Freddie, en Freddie probeert ze zo goed mogelijk te beantwoorden ... Het wordt laat en de jongen blijft bij Freddie logeren ... De jongen krijgt een bed in de logeerkamer ... Die nacht krijgt de jongen een droom ... Hij droomt dat hij over een muur moet klimmen die gemaakt is van kippen ... Daarna droomt hij dat hij over een muur moet klimmen die gemaakt is van varkens ... De volgende ochtend vertelt hij de droom aan Freddie .. maar die weet niet wat de droom betekent ... Ze besluiten naar de voorganger te gaan voor uitleg, maar die verwijst hen door naar die buitenlandse profeet ... De voorganger wist wel waar de profeet nu was ... Hij maakte een rondreis door het land, en ze besloten hem in één van de diensten op te zoeken ... De voorganger ging ook mee ... Na de dienst gingen Freddie en die vriend op de profeet af ... Maar die moest snel weer weg ... Wel liet hij een telefoonnummer voor hen achter ... De volgende dag zouden ze hem op dat nummer kunnen bereiken ...

De volgende dag belde Freddie op, terwijl die vriend naast hem zat ... Freddie legde

even het één en ander uit aan de profeet en gaf toen de hoorn aan de jongen ... De jongen vertelde zijn droom en wilde antwoord ... De profeet zei dat ze beter even konden langskomen ... Ze kregen een adres, en konden direkt komen ... Bij de profeet aangekomen gingen ze in een kamertje zitten ... Weer moest de jongen de droom vertellen, en de profeet zei : 'Waarom zouden we God Zelf niet om antwoord bidden ...' De profeet sloot zijn ogen, en ook de jongens deden dat ... De profeet zei : 'God zal je meer dromen gaan geven die je hierop het antwoord zullen geven ... Vannacht al ...' De profeet nodigde hen uit om bij hem te logeren ... De volgende dag keek Freddie naar het bed waar de andere jongen lag, maar er lag niemand ... 'Ach,' dacht Freddie, 'hij is vast vroeg op ... in de badkamer ofzo ...' Maar er was niemand in de badkamer ... Ook beneden was niemand ... Na een paar uur kwam de verhuurder thuis ... De verhuurder zei dat de profeet vroeg in de ochtend was vertrokken naar zijn eigen land ... Freddie vond het erg vreemd ... Was de jongen soms met de profeet meegegaan ? Freddie belde de voorganger en vertelde het verhaal ... De voorganger vond het ook vreemd ... Na een paar uur ging Freddie weer naar z'n eigen woonplaats ... Toen na een paar dagen nog geen teken van de jongen was gekomen werd de jongen als vermist opgegeven ... De voorganger had de profeet in het buitenland gebeld, maar die was niet te bereiken ...

Wanneer de profeet na een maand nog onbereikbaar is neemt de politie de beslissing om in zijn huis onderzoek te doen. Het is een groot landhuis met een zwembad. Freddie komt ook mee, en al gauw halen ze het hele huis overhoop ... Als Freddie in de kelder aan het zoeken is vindt hij bij toeval een geheime deur ... Hij drukte per ongeluk ergens tegenaan, en een wand schoof open ... Aan de deur hing een schilderij van een muis met een officierspak en een hoed op met een veer. Voorzichtig schoof Freddie de deur open. Hier was een andere donkere ruimte, die ook wel iets op een kelder leek, maar er waren hier ook wat stoffige ramen. Freddie liep helemaal door die kamer heen, en ging weer door een deur. In de verte hoorde hij geschreeuw, en even stond hij stokstijf ... Was dat niet de stem van Wilko, die vermiste vriend van hem ? Freddie kwam in een hal terecht, waarin allemaal planken lagen in modder ... De planken wiebelden een beetje ... Freddie riep : 'Wilko, ben jij dat ?' Maar er kwam geen antwoord ... Freddie liep verder, maar het werd steeds donkerder ... Weer ging Freddie door een deur, en kreeg toen de schrik van zijn leven ... Hij was in een grote felverlichte hal terechtgekomen. De hal was groot als vele zalen bij elkaar ... In het midden van de hal zag Freddie een grote opening waarin een bol van vuur ruisde ... De bol was erg groot, als een reusachtige bal, en er waren hekken omheen. Freddie liep naar de bol toe, maar het was erg heet ... Freddie begon om de bal heen te lopen, en kwam bij een andere deur terecht. Weer hoorde Freddie geschreeuw ... Het leek uit de bal te komen, maar Freddie ging door de deur, en kwam in een andere hal terecht ... Hier was ook zo'n bal achter hekken, maar ditkeer was het een bal van rood vuur ... Freddie zuchtte ... Toen riep hij : 'Wilko, kun je me horen ? Ik ben het, Freddie ... !'

Freddie schrok wakker ... Vandaag zouden ze naar het huis van de profeet gaan ... In werkelijkheid woonde de profeet in een klein huisje ... Er stonden wat oude stoelen en verder een tafel ... Het was er een kale bedoening ... 'Toch eens in de kelder kijken,'

dacht Freddie ... En terwijl de politie wat papieren doorzocht, ging Freddie de kelder binnen ... Voorzichtig ging hij van het trappetje af naar beneden ... 'Zou hier echt een geheime deur zijn ?' dacht Freddie bij zichzelf ... Freddie duwde wat spullen opzij, en vond een luik ... Voorzichtig ging Freddie door het luik naar beneden ... Hier was een oude tunnel .. Voorzichtig kroop Freddie door de tunnel ... Aan het eind van de tunnel was een opening ... Toen kreeg Freddie de schrik van zijn leven ... Door de opening zag Freddie een klein zaaltje waarin bedden stonden, met mensen erin ... 'Zou Wilko hier misschien zijn ?' dacht Freddie ... Voorzichtig klom Freddie door de opening in de zaal ... Maar toen Freddie dichterbij kwam zag hij dat het geen mensen waren, maar poppen ... En tot Freddie's grote schrik was er ook een pop van Wilko bij ... De pop leek sprekend op Wilko ... Wat zou hier toch aan de hand zijn ? Stilletjes sloop Freddie naar de deur achter de zaal, maakte hem open, maar het bleek een kastdeur te zijn ... Er lagen wat papieren in en haastig begon Freddie door de papieren te bladeren ... Maar ineens voelde hij een hand op zijn schouder ... Freddie draaide zich van schrik om ... Gelukkig, het was één van de agenten waarmee hij was gekomen ... 'Ja, vreemd,' zei de agent ... 'ik vroeg me ook al af wat die poppen moeten betekenen ... Was die profeet niet erg goed bij z'n hoofd ?' Onder één van de bedden scheen nog een luik te zitten, en samen gaan ze erdoor naar beneden ... Ze komen in een geheime lift terecht ... De agent drukt op wat knopjes en de lift gaat langzaam naar beneden ... Dan horen ze opeens de stem van de profeet door een luidspreker in de lift ... 'Zo, dus jullie hebben me uiteindelijk toch weten te vinden ? Gefeliciteerd ... Zeg, ik heb de koffie met gebak al klaar staan ... Tot zo ...' Dan na een tijdje gaat de liftdeur open, en met getrokken pistool sluipt de agent naar buiten, maar die wordt direkt vanaf de zijkant vastgegrepen, terwijl zijn pistool uit zijn handen wordt getrapt ... Freddie blijft geschrokken in de lift staan ... Gelukkig gaat de deur weer dicht, maar welke knopjes Freddie ook indrukt ... Er is geen beweging meer in de lift te krijgen ... 'Dan gaat de luidspreker weer aan : 'Welkom in mijn lift ... Ik hoop dat je je tijdens de reis zult vermaken ...' En dan gaat de lift met een loeivaart naar de zijkant ...

Freddie schrikt wakker ... Het was allemaal maar een droom geweest ... Ook de vermissing van Wilko en zelfs de profetische dienst ... Want vanavond zou die dienst pas zijn ... Maar Freddie is zo naar van de droom dat hij besluit zijn vrienden af te bellen ... 'Ah, lafaard,' zei één van zijn vrienden ... 'Je durft het gewoon niet aan ... Ik zei je toch dat God niet bestaat, en profetie al helemaal niet ...' Maar het kan Freddie niet meer schelen .. Hij heeft er na die droom toch al helemaal geen lol meer in ... En misschien is het wel een waarschuwing van God om er niet meer naar toe te gaan ... Freddie komt in een enorme geloofscrisis terecht, en probeert eerst eens wat rust te vinden bij een gematigde kerk ... een reformatorische ... Maar als dat ook weinig resultaat oplevert besluit Freddie er voorlopig het bijltje bij neer te leggen ... Hij biedt zijn excuses aan bij zijn vrienden voor 'al dat gepreek,' en neemt het ervan ... Steeds meer begint Freddie een echt barmens te worden ... en hij raakt zwaar aan de drank ... Zo zwaar, dat zelfs zijn vrienden hem een halt toe roepen : 'Freddie, we zien je liever weer terug gaan naar de kerk dan dat je door de drank ten gronde gaat ...' houden ze hem telkens voor ... Maar Freddie wil niet meer naar de kerk ... Het lijkt of

die droom hem verlamd heeft ... Wel probeert hij nog één keer in de week te bidden, maar meer en meer begint hij dat te vergeten, uit te stellen, en soms gewoon over te slaan ...

Op een dag ziet Freddie het niet meer zitten, en meldt zich aan bij een opvangcentrum ... Ook dit gaat niet goed, en Freddie belandt bij de psychiater die hem doorverwijst naar een psychiatrisch rustoord ... Hier heeft Freddie het wel naar z'n zin, en langzaam begint hij weer grip te krijgen op zijn drankprobleem ... 'Ik ben in een diepe kelder terechtgekomen ...' zegt Freddie weleens tegen de psychiater ... 'daar waar de flessen leven ....' Freddie bedoelt dat dan als symboliek, maar de psychiater zegt dat het wartaal is ... 'Flessen leven niet, Freddie ... Je moet wel met je beide benen op de grond blijven staan ...' Verder is de psychiater erg aardig, en Freddie wil de psychiater voor geen goud missen ...

Freddie heeft diepe gesprekken met de psychiater over vele onderwerpen ... Op een dag besluit de psychiater hem over te plaatsen naar een rustoord in het bos ... Hier kan Freddie ook proberen weer op zichzelf te wonen, met een lichtere vorm van begeleiding ... Ook worden hier weleens korte kerkdiensten georganiseerd, maar Freddie gaat eigenlijk nooit ... De enige aan wie hij de droom had verteld was zijn voorganger ... Op een dag krijgt Freddie een telefoontje van die voorganger ... De voorganger was diep geschokt ... De profeet die daar weleens sprak was terechtgesteld voor veelvoudige moord ... 'Maar is het wel bewezen ?' vroeg Freddie ... 'Laten we de rechters maar vertrouwen,' zegt de voorganger ...'alhoewel ik me het eigenlijk niet kan voorstellen ...'

Freddie is erdoor verward ... Was die profeet echt een moordenaar ? Freddie had wel erg vreemd over die profeet gedroomd, maar dat zei natuurlijk op zichzelf niks ... Of was het allemaal waar, en wilde God Freddie en zijn vrienden daarvoor behoeden ? Freddie wist het niet ... De voorganger vertelde dat de laatste tijd de profeet weleens profetieen uitsprak die niet uitkwamen ... Sommigen zeiden dat hij daarom een valse profeet was, en er waren er zelfs bij die zeiden dat hij de doodstraf verdiende, omdat dat ergens in de Bijbel zou staan ... Maar de voorganger zei dat niet alle profetieen letterlijk waren ... Sommigen waren ook symbolisch, geestelijk bedoeld, met een diepere betekenis ... Ook was er volgens de voorganger een verschil tussen voorwaardelijke en onvoorwaardelijke profetieen waartussen de mensen het verschil moesten kennen ...

Freddie wilde alles laten rusten ... Hij was er niet aan toe om over dit soort dingen na te denken ... Freddie vond alles te wazig om er ook maar enige zekerheid aan te geven ... Freddie wilde niet op zand bouwen, maar wilde een reis maken door het zand ...

Freddie probeerde rust te zoeken bij andere dingen ... Hij begon met het schrijven van verhalen waarmee hij het verleden probeerde te verwerken ... Ook hielp het hem af van zijn drankzucht ... Op een nacht heeft Freddie weer een droom ... Hij loopt over een pad van spiegels, waarop veel wit zand ligt ... Aan het eind van dat pad is een grot met flessen ... Als hij daar naar binnen gaat beginnen de flessen te groeien, en komen tot leven ... Eén van die flessen is rood en draagt een zwart pistool, met een

zwart leren houder ... De fles geeft het pistool aan Freddie, maar Freddie brandt bijna zijn handen aan het hete leer ... Dan moet Freddie een deur openschieten, en komt weer op een pad van spiegels terecht ... Ditmaal is het pad van spiegels langer, maar nog steeds met zand, wit zand, bezaaid ... Naast hem loopt een cowboy ... Maar soms verdwijnt die in zijn schaduw ... De cowboy zegt niets, maar schiet soms ... Waarop de cowboy dan schiet is niet duidelijk ... Maar wel stroomt er dan telkens een soort sap in zijn keel ... Zuchtend wordt Freddie wakker ... Hij probeert zijn dromen te verwerken in verhalen ... Vaak blijven de betekenissen weg ... alsof hij echt door een landschap van zand reist ... Hij wil hier geen huizen bouwen ... Hij wil verder ... Wat wacht hem aan de overkant ?

Na een lange tijd krijgt Freddie weer een droom ... Weer is hij terug op de spiegelpaden met wit zand ... Plotseling staat er een sfinx voor hem ... een leeuwachtige steenachtige gedaante ... Freddie gaat op de uitnodigende rug van de sfinx zitten, en de sfinx rijdt naar voren, recht op een muur af ... Die muur is gemaakt van kippen ... Dan gaat de sfinx er dwars doorheen ... Freddie hoort een geluid alsof er flessen worden gevuld ... Maar dan ineens wordt hij wakker in de lift van de profeet ... Wat is er gebeurd ? ... Door de luidspreker hoort hij gelach ... 'Zo, hoe vond je het ritje ?' Freddie voelt zich erg draaierig ... Is hij dan nog steeds in dat vreemde huis van die profeet ? Is hij wel echt wakker ? Freddie heeft overal pijn ... Worden zijn gedachten soms beinvloed in deze lift ... Sterke straling ? Plotseling bemerkt Freddie dat de lift gewoon aan het draaien was, nu de lift ineens langzamer gaat ... Freddie wordt zich gewaar van een drukkend gevoel ... 'Profeet, wat wil je ?' schreeuwt Freddie ... 'en waar is Wilko ?'

Een jongen stopt met lezen ... Dit was het boek wat hij voor zijn literatuurlijst moest lezen ... Hij ziet uit naar het examen ... Dan kan hij eindelijk van school af ... Wel heel toevallig dat zijn vader ook Wilko heette ... Zijn vader was ook al heel lang vermist ... De jongen zucht ... Ineens mist hij z'n vader weer heel erg, maar op een vreemde manier is zijn vader nu ook dichterbij gekomen ... Zou hij nog leven ? De jongen slentert van school naar huis ... Daar aangekomen laat zijn moeder hem een brief lezen ... Het is een brief van zijn vader ... Na al die jaren ... De jongen is opgelucht, maar niet als hij de brief leest ... Zijn vader schrijft daarin aan het gezin dat hij destijds expres de benen heeft genomen, omdat hij niet meer met hun moeder kon leven ... Nu woont hij dan in India ... Verderop in de brief probeert hij uitleg te geven, en de jongen krijgt hierdoor weer iets meer sympathie voor zijn vader ... Zijn vader schrijft over het drankprobleem van hun moeder ... Hij schrijft dat hij nu op een prachtig eiland woont, met schitterend witte zandpaden en vlaktes, en hij gelooft dat hun moeder hier vast en zeker van haar drankprobleem zal afkomen ... Aan het eind van de brief nodigt hij het gezin uit om te komen ... Maar de moeder van de jongen is veel te boos dat hij zo lang niets van zich heeft laten horen ... En ook de jongen vindt het net even te ver gaan om daarnaar toe te gaan, want misschien neemt hij dan weer de benen, en zitten ze alleen op dat eiland ... Het vertrouwen in hem is weg ... Wel schrijft de jongen hem een brief dat hij maar bij hen moet komen ... Maar zijn vader schrijft terug dat hij dat niet aandurft ...

Als de jongen wat ouder is besluit hij toch de reis te maken, omdat hij zijn vader toch

wel erg mist ... Maar als hij daar aankomt is zijn vader er niet .. De jongen besluit gewoon in het huisje van zijn vader te leven op dit prachtige eiland ... De jongen is blij dat hij nu op de plaats van zijn vader is, maar begint zich steeds meer ongerust te maken ... Op een nacht heeft de jongen een droom .... en die lijkt erg veel op zo'n droom uit dat boek wat hij moest lezen ... Hij komt een sfinx tegen, springt op z'n rug, en de sfinx gaat door een muur van varkens heen, terwijl hij het geluid hoort alsof flessen vollopen ... Daar achter die muur staat zijn vader ... Maar hoe dichter hij bij zijn vader komt, des te meer hij begint te beseffen dat het zijn vader niet is, maar een pop die sprekend op zijn vader lijkt ... 'Wat is dit allemaal ?' brult de jongen van woede ... Dan hoort hij ineens als vanuit een luidspreker : 'Welkom, jongen, ik heb lang op je gewacht ... Ik heb koffie met gebak klaarstaan ...' Maar het is niet de stem van zijn vader ... De jongen moet denken aan die vreemde lift uit dat boek ... 'Zit ik soms in die lift van dat stomme spookhuis ?' roept de jongen hard ... Dan ineens wordt de jongen wakker in de lift ... 'Als ik het niet dacht,' denkt de jongen bij zichzelf ... Op de grond van de lift ligt wat wit zand ... 'Vreemd,' denkt de jongen ... En dan hoort hij weer door de luidspreker : 'Welkom, welkom ...' De jongen vraagt zich af of misschien ook zijn vader door de lift is ontvoerd ...

Dan springt de lift open, en de jongen kijkt rechtstreeks in zijn woonplaats ... Hij stapt uit de lift en rent naar zijn ouderlijk huis ... Maar als hij binnenkomt en in de woonkamer kijkt ziet hij zijn moeder als een pop achter de tafel zitten ... Het is een pop ... Boven vindt hij zijn zusjes en broertjes ... Allemaal poppen ... Ineens hoort hij een slurpend geluid en kijkt naar buiten ... Daar ziet hij een glibberig lang beest met vele poten wegduiken ... Het leek wel een beetje op een reuzen-duizendpoot, maar de jongen kon goed zien dat het een reptiel was ... Aan de overkant kon hij in de huizen ook de poppen zien ... ze bewogen niet ... De jongen raakte erg in paniek, en rende tenslotte terug naar de lift ... 'Hier wil ik niet wezen...Haal me hier weg,' riep de jongen ... Maar de lift duwde de jongen weer terug, sloot zijn deuren, en vertrok ... Ten einde raad begon de jongen te huilen en te kermen ... Hij begon om zijn moeder te roepen ... Ook begon hij steeds banger te worden voor dat beest ...

En dan begint hij zelf ook heel langzaam in een pop te veranderen ... Hij probeert weer naar zijn ouderlijk huis te lopen, maar het gaat trager en trager ... Als hij bij het raam is aangekomen tikt hij erop, maar hij kan zijn handen al bijna niet meer bewegen ... Als hij naar binnen kijkt ziet hij iemand anders bij de pop van zijn moeder zitten, terwijl de poppen van zijn broertjes en zusjes ook om de tafel heen zitten. Maar wat is dat ? Diegene die naast zijn moeder zit, dat is hijzelf ... ook een pop ... Dan vallen traag zijn ogen dicht ... Verward schrikt de jongen wakker ... Hij wrijft in zijn ogen ... Hij kijkt naar de zacht en langzaam tikkende klok ... Het is al ochtend ... De zon schijnt al zo vroeg ... Op de grond ligt wit zand ... De jongen stapt uit bed ... en opent de deur ... Witte zandvlaktes, zo ver als het oog reikt ... De jongen vermaakt zich best in het vakantie-huisje van zijn vader ... Alleen het wachten is nog op zijn vader zelf ... Hier zou de jongen wel altijd willen wonen ... Het is hier zo rustig en prachtig ... De jongen rolt door het witte zand ... Achter het huisje is ook veel wit zand, dat eindigt op een strandje, en daarachter is het water ... Het witte zand is erg warm, bijna echt heet ... En naarmate het later op de ochtend wordt,

wordt het zand steeds heter ... De jongen houdt van de zon, en heeft ook het gevoel dat de zon van hem houdt ... Ook al is zijn vader er nu niet .... Hij is toch terechtgekomen in het huisje van zijn vader ... Door het zand rolt de jongen weer terug naar het huisje, en botst tegen het lage raam aan ... Dan staat de jongen op, en gaat weer naar binnen ... De jongen begint zich steeds beter te voelen ...

Aan de muur hangen prachtige bloemenschilderijen. De jongen kijkt tussen de boeken van z'n vader ... Er zitten wat gedichtenbundels tussen ... De jongen opent één zo'n bundel waar bloemen op staan : 'Je bent een bloem, je bent mooi en wijs. Maar nog steeds zo jong, en dat benauwd me zo ... We weten niet wat we doen ... Je bent alleen ... Het andere is niet echt daar ... Jij schiep je eigen wereld ....' Dan bladert de jongen verder : 'Vrolijk is de nacht ... Ze huilt niet ... Maar alles wat jij hebt is verdriet ... Kom toch tot de nacht en wees vrolijk met haar ...' Weer bladert de jongen door, alsof hij ergens naar op zoek is ... 'Je bent wie je bent, maar dat is iemand die je nog niet kent ...' Snel grijpt de jongen naar een andere gedichtenbundel ... Hier staan ook bloemen op ... Weer begint de jongen te lezen ... Sommige gedichten spreken hem aan ... anderen niet ... Sommigen zijn vaag .... maar betoverend ... voor zover je over betovering mag spreken ... Ook liggen er wat verhalenboeken ... Het lijkt wel alsof de jongen naar iets van zijn vader op zoek is, maar hij kan het nog niet vinden ... Wel voelt hij alsof hij dichtbij is ... Hij zou hier altijd wel willen dromen en lezen .... en rollen door het zand ... als een reis door het zand ... Hij komt nooit echt aan, maar steeds dichterbij ... als het ontwaken van de zon ...

De Harem van Christus

Korte Theologische Roman

Hoofdstuk 1. De Lokogamen

Hoofdstuk 2. De Insectenaren

Hoofdstuk 3. De dodenreis van Christus

Hoofdstuk 4. De dominee

Hoofdstuk 5. Insectisch Dodenboek ?

Hoofdstuk 1. De Lokogamen

Ernst Eriksen was een ongelovige knaap die geinteresseerd was in het Eeuwig Evangelie, en het boek openbaring, wat daar net voor komt. Toen de Bijbel alleen nog maar bestond uit de boeken Genesis tot en met Openbaring had Ernst geen enkele interesse, maar nu, sinds het Eeuwig Evangelie was toegevoegd ging ineens alles voor hem leven ... Ook een onderwerp zoals de antichrist begon hem ineens te interesseren ... Ernst had een zus die wel geloofde ... Ernst had zich voorgenomen niet te gaan geloven, ook niet nu de Bijbel zoveel dikker was geworden ... Wel vond Ernst het prachtig hoe het Eeuwig Evangelie de traditionelen op de hak nam ... Ernst had een hekel aan al die conservatieve gevestigde kerken ... Ook het onderwerp 'de Lokogamen' sprak hem erg aan, dat waren de sieraden van het kruis ... De Lokogamen werden vaak als hemelse vrouwen afgeschilderd, als een soort Harem van Christus, die Hem door dik en dun steunden ... Zij waren als de vrouwen des kruizes ... En als het om vrouwen ging, dan was Ernst altijd van de partij. Ernst had een obsessie als het op vrouwen aankwam ...Niet in de verkeerde zin van het woord ... Ernst was schilder, en hield ervan om verschillende soorten vrouwen te schilderen ...Ernst was een echte vrouwenliefhebber ... Ernst had niet veel vrienden, maar wel veel vriendinnen ... Met vrouwen kon hij altijd veel beter en dieper praten dan met mannen ... Mannen hadden in zijn ogen vaak iets kouds en kils, en waren over het algemeen ook harder volgens hem ... Vrouwen die zich als mannen gedroegen, daar had Ernst echter een hekel aan ... Ernst hield van mysterieuze vrouwen ... van de stille wateren met de diepe gronden ... van die vrouwen die meer wisten dan ze lieten doorschemeren ...

Ernst had een paar verschrikkelijk moeilijke tijden in zijn leven moeten doormaken, en het waren hoofdzakelijk vrouwen die hem daar doorheen hebben geholpen ... Ja, hij had zelfs zijn leven aan hen te danken ... Dat groepje vrouwen betekende de wereld voor hem, en hij noemde ze weleens zijn harem ... Hij zag het als een Godsgeschenk, terwijl hij in wezen niet geloofde ... Nu hij dan wat over de Lokogamen had gelezen raakte hij steeds meer en meer enthousiast ... Op een dag besloot hij de Lokogamen te schilderen ... Zijn zus vond het erg mooi, en ook zijn vriendinnen ... vooral omdat de vrouwen op de schilderijen veel op hen leken ... Al snel kreeg Ernst de smaak te pakken, en begon meer schilderijen te maken van het Eeuwig Evangelie ... Naast de Lokogamen werden er veel andere hemelse vrouwen beschreven, en Ernst begon ook andere tafereeltjes van het Eeuwig Evangelie te schilderen ... De schilderijen waren erg indrukwekkend, maar Ernst wilde zich niet gelovig noemen ... Hij vond het gewoon een prachtig verhaal ... meer niet ...

Op een dag kwam er een dominee bij Ernst op bezoek, en vroeg hem of hij een bepaald verhaal in het Eeuwig Evangelie wilde uittekenen ... De dominee was bezig met het maken van een geillustreerde versie van het Eeuwig Evangelie ... Ernst zei dat de dominee op hem kon rekenen ... Ernst schreef ook voor een schildersblad ... En op een keer had hij een stukje geschreven over de harem van Christus, en hoe hij

die harem had geschilderd ... In het blad stonden ook een paar van die schilderijen afgedrukt ... Naderhand kreeg hij wat brieven van christelijke schilders die zeiden dat Christus geen harem had, en ook geen hemelse harem ... want in de hemel werd er niet getrouwd ... Ernst moest er een beetje om lachen, want dat bedoelde hij er ook helemaal niet mee ... Ernst kreeg meer positieve berichten dan negatieve ...

Hoofdstuk 2. De Insectenaren

Op een dag kwam de dominee weer langs voor het ophalen van de illustratie ... Ernst had het in zwart en wit getekend ... De dominee was erg tevreden ... Als dank gaf de dominee hem wel een hele speciale versie van het Eeuwig Evangelie ... Het was het Eeuwig Evangelie met kanttekeningen en verwijzingen, met daaraanvast een uitgebreide concordantie en achtergrondinformatie. Ernst was erg blij met het boek ... Tegelijkertijd nodigde de dominee hem uit om eens naar een dienst van de Eeuwig Evangelie Gemeente te komen ... De dienst werd gehouden in een kerkgebouw ... Ernst zou er met zijn zus en een paar vriendinnen naartoe gaan ... De dominee hield een prachtige preek over het Eeuwig Evangelie, over de Lokogamen ... Dat was nog steeds Ernsts favorite onderwerp ... In de kerk stonden ook wat beelden van het Eeuwig Evangelie ... Het deed allemaal een beetje katholiek aan ... Alleen Ernst zag nog geen beelden van de Lokogamen, en dit bracht hem op een idee ... Hij zou graag van de Lokogamen beelden willen maken ... Hiertoe zou hij zijn schilderijen gebruiken als voorbeeld ...

Na een tijdje had hij veertien beelden af, en nodigde de dominee uit om te komen kijken ... De dominee was zo overweldigd dat hij ze direkt in de kerk zou willen plaatsen ... Ernst gaf direkt toestemming ... Het was voor Ernst een hele eer dat zijn beelden in de kerk geplaatst werden, en er mochten wat schilderijen van Ernst tussenhangen ... Ook Ernsts zus was erg trots, en zijn vriendinnen ... Maar of hij door dit alles was gaan geloven ? Niks hoor ...

De dominee was een zogenaamde Insectenaar ... die geloven dat het Egyptisch geloof het verlengstuk van het christendom is ... Zij hebben de Egyptische Heilige Boeken naast de Bijbel en het Eeuwig Evangelie ... Ook hebben ze de zogenaamde Insectische boeken ... de boeken van Izu, Brannan en Lbok ... De dominee had het over sommige soorten wespen die in hun vijanden eieren legden om zo hun nageslacht de vijand te laten overnemen ... De dominee noemde dat de excarnaatse bediening ... De wedergeboorte door de slagen van de vijand ... En toen vertelde de dominee een heleboel over coconnen ... die we ook weer in het dagelijks leven terugvinden ... Ernst was direkt razend enthousiast ... Als hij gelovig zou worden, dan in het insectisch geloof ... Ernst kende wat gelovigen die naast de Bijbel ook in de Kabballah geloofden, het heilige boek van mystieke Joden ... maar dit wat hij nu hoorde deed hem bijna overstag gaan ...

Na de preek vroeg Ernst aan de dominee wat de termen Izu, Brannan en Lbok betekenden ... De dominee gaf hem een boek mee over de Insectenaren ... Ernst zou het thuis eens grondig gaan bestuderen ...

Hoofdstuk 3. De dodenreis van Christus

In de Insectische boeken kwam de paradox van God terug ... Op sommige plaatsen werd God zelfs aangevallen ... Dat moest om een goed evenwicht te bewaren, want het geloof en God werden ook door het kwaad gebruikt en ingevuld ... In het Eeuwig Evangelie stond de reis van Christus door het dodenrijk beschreven, waarin hij door vijf poorten moest. De eerste poort is de Poort van Egypte, de tweede is de Poort van Izu, de derde is de Poort van Brannan, en de vierde is de Poort van Lbok ... Dat had Ernst nog niet gelezen ... De vijfde poort zou Christus nooit gehaald hebben ... Dat zou het werk worden van Degene die na Christus zou komen, de Zoon van Christus. De Zoon van Christus zou de sleutel van de vijfde poort van het dodenrijk dragen ... 'Karakter' is zijn naam, en hij wordt wel beschreven als een rode spinvlieg. Hij moet de poort openen van de Rode Strepen, de vijfde poort.

Toen Ernst het stuk gelezen had begon hij direkt schilderijen van deze reis te maken ... In Openbaring stond er ook al aangegeven dat er een nieuwe zoon geboren zou worden ... Als Christus door de Poort van Lbok is gekomen, dan komt Hij tot een boom waar Hij geboorte schenkt aan Zijn Zoon ... Die Boom is genaamd de Boom des Doods ... Had Christus meerdere zonen, of misschien ook dochters ? Ja, zij werden genoemd de Rode Strepen ... Zij kwamen voort uit Zijn Wonden ...

Ineens schrikt Ernst wakker ... Het was allemaal maar een droom ... Er is geen Eeuwig Evangelie, en Insectenaren ook niet ... Slaperig loopt Ernst naar de gang waar vlakbij de kamerdeur van zijn zus een kast staat waarin een Bijbel ligt ... Haastig bladert Ernst naar het boek Openbaring en begint te lezen ... Toch komt hij daar enige woorden tegen over de komst van het Eeuwig Evangelie, een nieuw boek van God ... De volgende dag besluit hij er met zijn zus over te praten ... De zus vindt het maar een vreemde droom, en heeft nog nooit van het Eeuwig Evangelie gehoord ... Ernst schrijft de droom in zijn dagboek en probeert het verder te vergeten ...

Op een dag komt Ernst in aanraking met iemand die zich een profeet noemt, en hij vraagt of Ernst weleens van het Eeuwig Evangelie heeft gehoord ... Ernst denkt na en herinnert zich dan de droom ... Als Ernst begint te vertellen, dan zegt de profeet dat het Eeuwig Evangelie echt bestaat ... Dan drukt de profeet een foldertje in Ernst z'n handen en vertrekt weer ... Op het foldertje staat de reis van Christus door het dodenrijk in het kort beschreven, en wordt er gevraagd : 'In welke Christus gelooft u' en ook : 'Kent u uw Christus'. Ook staat er een adres met tijden waarop diensten worden gehouden ... Ernst besluit er eens met zijn zus naartoe te gaan ... Ook daar wordt weer gepredikt over de reis die Christus door het dodenrijk maakte, en na afloop worden er vragen gesteld ...

Hoofdstuk 4. De Dominee

Weer schrikt Ernst wakker ... Hij bleek gewoon nog steeds te dromen ... Een droom in een droom ... En misschien droomde hij nog steeds ... Aan de muur hing een schilderij van de Lokogamen ... de Harem van Christus ... Waar was hij ? En was hij daar wel echt ? Ernst begon steeds meer te twijfelen of hij wel echt wakker was geworden ... Hij wist niet waar hij was ... Ernst kneep in zijn arm, maar had geen gevoel ... Toen hoorde hij gelach, en werd weer wakker ... Direkt kneep hij in zijn

arm ... gelukkig ... Hij voelde het ... Hij was weer gewoon in zijn eigen kamer ... Wat had hij toch wazig lopen dromen over Christus en het Eeuwig Evangelie ... En dat terwijl hij niet eens gelovig was ... Zijn zus wel ... Vandaag zouden zijn vriendinnen komen ... Hij had er een heleboel ... Met mannen kon hij nooit echt goed praten, maar met vrouwen wel ... Lacherig begon hij z'n droom aan hen vertellen ... 'Nou, één ding hebben Christus en ik gemeen,' giechelde Ernst ... 'We hebben beiden een Harem ...' Ineens kwam de zus van Ernst binnen ... Snel legde ze even wat foldertjes over het Evangelie in de hoek van de kamer, en ging toen weer weg ... Dat deed ze wel vaker als Ernst bezoek had ... Degenen die wat vaker bij Ernst kwamen lazen de foldertjes niet eens meer ... Toen de vriendinnen van Ernst aan het einde van de dag weer weg waren ging Ernst even naar zijn zus toe ... Zijn zus zat vaak op haar kamer ... Hij wilde haar de droom vertellen ... Zijn zus luisterde erg aandachtig, en vond het een prachtige droom ...

Terwijl Ernst de droom steeds meer en meer begon te vergeten, had zijn zus alles erover opgeschreven, en vroeg aan God of ze ook over het Eeuwig Evangelie mocht dromen ... Het was voor haar een extra dimensie in haar geloof ... Maar op een dag werd er in de kerk gepreekt : 'Zij die toevoegen aan de Bijbel hen zal ook toegevoegd worden de plagen die in de Bijbel beschreven staan ...' De zus van Ernst schrok verschrikkelijk, en durfde niet meer aan het Eeuwig Evangelie te denken ... Ze voelde zich ineens erg zondig ... De dominee had gezegd dat het verboden was om aan Gods Woord toe te voegen ... De zus van Ernst werd elke dag banger en banger, en op een gegeven moment kwam ze bijna niet meer van haar kamer af ... Ernst begon zich af te vragen wat er met haar aan de hand was, en ze legde ook geen foldertjes meer in de hoek van de kamer voor bezoekers ... Op een dag besluit Ernst naar haar kamer toe te gaan, om te vragen wat er aan de hand is ... Dan barst de zus los met het verhaal ... Ernst begint te lachen ... 'Ach, al die bangmakerij ... de dominee is zeker zelf bang dat hij anders zijn macht verliest ...' Maar de zus zei dat het toch echt in de Bijbel stond dat er niet aan toegevoegd mocht worden ... 'Oh, en waar staat dat dan ?' vroeg Ernst ... Maar dat wist de zus niet, want dat had de dominee er niet bijgezegd ... Ernst belde direkt de dominee op, en vertelde hem hoe hij haar zus bang had gemaakt ... Ernst vertelde over het Eeuwig Evangelie dat na het boek Openbaring zou komen, zoals de Bijbel zei, maar daar geloofde de dominee niet in. Ineens begon de dominee kwader en kwader te worden, en Ernst begon duizelig te worden, en vroeg zich af of hij wel echt wakker was ... 'Ik kom nu naar je toe,' dreigde de dominee ... En legde de hoorn op de haak ... 'Wakker of niet wakker,' dacht Ernst ... 'Ik moet naar m'n zus toe ..'

'Snel,' zei Ernst ... 'Pak je spullen ... de dominee is woest en komt hierheen ... We moeten vluchten ...'

'Kunnen we niet gewoon de politie bellen,' zegt zijn zus dromerig ... Ze heeft ineens een heel ander gezicht, maar het is toch echt zijn zus ... Maar het is al te laat ... De dominee is al binnen, en ziet eruit als een wolf of één of ander monsterlijk beest ... 'Jullie zullen de canon niet ontsnappen ... Jullie zijn gevangenen van de canon, genaamd christenen ...' Ineens begint Ernst te lachen : 'Ha, ik ben niet eens gelovig ...'

'Dat maakt niet uit,' buldert het beest ... 'Iedereen op deze aardbol is in mijn ogen een christen. En iedere christen is een gevangene van de canon ...' Ineens is zijn zus ook in een beest veranderd, en zowel zij als de dominee hebben hun klauwen voor zich, en komen langzaam op Ernst af ... Maar gelukkig, daar zijn de vriendinnen van Ernst ... Ze staan aan de deur ... De deur is open ... Ineens doet iemand het licht aan ... Ernst ligt in bed ... Het is zijn zus die hem had horen gillen ... Ernst heeft allemaal buikpijn ... Wat een verschrikkelijke nachtmerrie was dat ... Maar Ernst zei tegen zijn zus : 'Wat als ik nu nog steeds droom ...'

Hoofdstuk 5. Insectisch Dodenboek ?

Sommige mensen worden nooit echt wakker ... Zij zijn als slaapwandelaars ... Zij komen heel dichtbij, maar nooit komen zij daadwerkelijk aan ... Eén zo'n slaapwandelaar was Ernst Eriksen ... Een lang insectachtig iets met twee lange oren bladert door een boek ... Het boek gaat over de canon, de cocon der mensheid, en wat er voor wezens in die cocon ontstaan ? Insectenaren, die hun toevlucht zoeken in een Eeuwig Evangelie ... en daarna de Insectische ideeen van het heelal ontdekken ... Van gevangenis tot gevangenis gaan zij, waarin zij groeien tot een pad, een brug ... Zo worden zij één met dat wij zij preken, en staan niet meer aan de zijlijn te roepen : 'Daar moet je naartoe ...' Maar ook dit was maar een droom van Ernst Eriksen ... een droom die zovele anderen dromen, terwijl ze nooit opstaan ... Nooit de baarmoeder van deze wereld bereiken waarin ze geboren kunnen worden ... Te zwak waren zij, als fragiele eendags-insecten ... Zij konden alleen maar dromen ... maar nooit ontvangen ... Oh ja, voor veel dingen werden ze bespaard ... In zij-dimensies leefden zij, als het pad der dimensies ... zeer fragmentarisch ... Lang vasthouden kunnen ze de dingen nooit .... en dat is maar goed ook ... Zo kunnen ze nooit een canon voor anderen wezen ... Want wees nou eerlijk .... Zitten we op een tweede canon te wachten ? ... Of zou dat misschien mooi zijn voor de uitbreiding van onze gevangenis ?

De dromen zijn hen tot vrouwen, als een harem ... De dromen zijn hen vaak te snel af ... En daarom gaan ze gebukt onder diepe wonden ... En net als Christus en Karakter, begaan ze de lange reis door het dodenrijk ... om als laatste weer wat rode strepen voort te brengen ... Ja, zo gaat dat altijd ... Gevangen in een Insectisch Dodenboek gaan zij voort ... Een gevangenis die vele poorten opent, een gevangenis die 'De Vrijheid' heet ...

Langzaam bladert de lange insect met de lange oren door zijn boek ... Nog steeds de droom van Ernst Eriksen ... Zou hij nog in dit boek vermeld staan als levende ? Of als dode ... ? Als iemand die wakker is of slaapt ... Het kan Ernst Eriksen niet meer zoveel schelen ... Er staat een kaars naast de insect, en de vlam brengt Ernst tot rust ... Hij begint zich steeds veiliger te voelen ... Ja, de cocon leidt tot vrijheid, ja, de cocon leidt tot een nieuwe cocon, tot een steeds diepere vrijheid ... waar de diepste gebondenheid explodeert ... Weer bladert de insect verder, terwijl de kaars langzaam opbrandt ... Ernst slaapt, en droomt niet meer ... Tot een diepere slaap gaat hij ... Waar hij zich niets meer hoeft af te vragen ... Waar dat zelfs niet meer kan ...

Moet hij dan alsmaar zoeken naar een antwoord ? Nee, want de slaap heeft 'nee'

gezegd, en hem uit zijn droom getrokken ... Je hoeft nu alleen nog maar te slapen ...

Einde

Het Visioen

Korte Theologische Roman

Hoofdstuk 1.

Karel van Egwijk zit in een pinkstergemeente ... Hij heeft een goed contact met zijn voorganger ... Vaak komen ze bij elkaar op bezoek ... Karel is een Belg ... Hij woont in Belgie ... Vroeger was hij een Nederlander, maar hij vond de mentaliteit van de Nederlanders te hard ... Karel werkt part time bij de belasting, en part time in één of andere spelletjeswinkel ... Karel is geinteresseerd geraakt in een nieuwe stroming binnen de Pinkstergemeente, namelijk hen die ook het boek van de reis van Christus door de hemelen als Bijbelboek hebben ... Dit boek is genaamd de Takalan ... Het boek gaat over de hemelvaart, en eigenlijk wat er in de hemel gebeurt ... Wat Christus daar allemaal meemaakt, en de reis die Hij daar maakt ... Karel vindt het een geweldig boek, maar praat er samen met de voorganger over wat ze ermee moeten ... De voorganger vindt het boek een beetje extreem, in de zin dat alles eigenlijk zoveel toevoegt aan zijn huidige geloof ...

Karel zou graag zien dat het boek aan de Bijbel zou worden toegevoegd, maar de voorganger voelt er meer voor om het als een profetisch bijschrift te benoemen of gewoon als apocrief ... De voorganger wil gewoon op de oude weg doorgaan, en heeft geen behoefte aan allerlei nieuwe stromingen ... Maar Karel vindt dat er niet echt veel veranderd hoeft te worden ... alleen dan dat er gepredikt gaat worden uit een extra Bijbelboek na Openbaring ...

Op een dag komt er een vrouw in de gemeente spreken ... De vrouw heeft nogal veel geestelijke gaven, en als ze soms voor iemand bid dan gaat zo iemand er weleens onderuit ... De vrouw had ook gehoord over het nieuwe Bijbelboek en was ook erg enthousiast ... Ze is niet erg voorzichtig in haar manier van prediken en al snel stuit ze de voorganger tegen de borst ... Na de preek wil hij een gesprek met haar, en spreekt zijn ongenoegen uit ... Even later zit Karel met de voorganger in de auto, en ze spreken nog even na over de vrouw ... Karel vond er niet zoveel aan, alleen dan het gedeelte over het Hemelboek van Christus, de Takalan ... Karel vond ook, net als de voorganger, dat de vrouw te veel toeters en bellen overal aanhing, zo

overdreven ... De voorganger had er hoofdpijn van, en Karel kon zich er wel iets bij indenken ...

Op een dag had de voorganger er flink de pee in ... Hij liep tegen zijn vrouw te foeteren, en ook zijn kinderen vroegen zich af wat er met hem aan de hand was ... 'Paps,' zei één van zijn kinderen, 'ik ben een boek aan het lezen over het Hemelboek van Christus, over de hemelvaart. Het is zo mooi ... Wil jij het eens lezen ?'

Maar de voorganger snauwde zijn dochter af ... De volgende dag toen de voorganger in de woonkamer kwam lag het boek op de tafel ... 'Nou, toch maar eens even lezen,' dacht de voorganger ... Maar hoe meer hij las, hoe meer alles voor zijn ogen begon te tollen ... Plotseling smeet hij het boek van zich af ... Zijn vrouw kwam naar beneden rennen en vroeg hem wat er aan de hand was ... 'Je bent al tijden jezelf niet meer,' zei ze ongerust ... Maar de voorganger liep naar de deur, en ging weg, de deur hard achter zich dichtknallend ... Hij ging met zijn auto een eind rijden ... Hij had eigenlijk zin om voorlopig in een hotel te wonen en te slapen ... Hij kon de druk van het sociale leven niet meer aan ...

Hoofstuk 2.

Uiteindelijk besloot hij naar Karel toe te gaan, zijn beste vriend ... Karel probeerde hem moed in te spreken, maar de voorganger zakte steeds verder weg, en was bang dat hij in een psychiatrisch ziekenhuis opgenomen moest worden als dat zo door zou gaan ... Hij had de vreemdst mogelijke gedachten ... Dat hij niet meer getrouwd wilde zijn enzo ... Ook dacht hij eraan om overspel te plegen ... Maar ja, met wie ? Het kon hem niet zoveel schelen, als hij maar wegkon uit z'n gezin ... Het begon hem te benauwen ... Hij voelde zich een slaaf ... Karel begreep hem wel ... Hij wist wel dat de voorganger niet zo in elkaar zat, maar dat hij nu gewoon even onder een grote druk stond ... Waar zou die druk toch van komen ... Karel probeerde over de Takalan te praten om hem tot rust te krijgen, maar daar wilde de voorganger niets van weten ... 'Houd op over die Takalan ... Karel, ik word er gek van ... Ik kan er niet mee leven ....'

'Waar kun je niet mee leven,' vroeg Karel voorzichtig ... 'Met die Takalan-toestanden,' riep de voorganger ... 'Voortdurend lopen mijn gemeenteleden naar mij te klagen dat ze ook preken over de Takalan willen hebben, en een Bijbel met de Takalan ... Ik word er gek van ... en zelfs jij, mijn beste vriend .... Laat maar ....' Het hoge woord was er uit ... Boos liep de voorganger weg, terwijl Karel onthutst achterbleef ... Een paar dagen later kreeg Karel een telefoontje van de voorganger uit het psychiatrisch ziekenhuis ... 'Het is zover, Karel ... hieperdepiep ...' zei hij ... 'Heb je nu je zin ?' Karel wist niet hoe hij het had ... 'Hoe bedoel je ?' vroeg Karel ... 'Nou,' zei de voorganger ... 'Dit is toch wat je wilde ? James Bond uit de weg ruimen ... Jij vuile wolf, nu kun je de gemeente ... mijn schaapjes ... overnemen ...' Plotseling begon de voorganger te lachen ... 'Ach, ik maak maar een grapje ...' Karel was opgelucht ... 'Zeg Karel,' zei de voorganger ... 'Ik heb het hier prima naar mijn zin ... Ik ben hier helemaal in de rust en heb een eigen kamer met TV ... Zou jij niet voor zolang de gemeente willen overnemen ?' Nou, dat vond Karel wel een hele eer, maar ook een belastende opdracht ... 'Je mag aan de slag gaan hoor met die

Takalan,' zei de voorganger .... 'De gemeenteleden zullen zo hun zin krijgen ... Ik moet voorlopig hierblijven ...' Karel nam het aanbod aan, en beloofde snel langs te komen bij de voorganger ...

De gemeenteleden hadden het erg met de voorganger te doen ... Alhoewel hij niet de makkelijkste was hielden ze allemaal wel erg veel van hem ... Maar ze vonden dat Karel het goed deed ... Karel sprak honderduit over de Takalan ... Dat zou de voorganger nooit doen ... Op een dag kreeg Karel weer een telefoontje van de voorganger ... 'Karel,' zei de voorganger ... 'ik moet je iets in vertrouwen vertellen ... De echte reden dat ik hier zit, de echte reden waarom ik zo onder druk sta .... Weet je nog dat ik mezelf bij het vorige telefoongesprek James Bond noemde ? Pssst ...' fluisterde de voorganger .... 'Ik had het met meerdere vrouwen ...' De voorganger klonk erg verward ... 'Meerdere vrouwen, Karel ... Ik wil niet dat mijn vrouw hier achterkomt ... Maar ik wil niet meer bij haar terug ... Ik zou doodgaan ... Ik kan het gezinsleven niet aan ... Mijn vrouw benauwd me ... Ik heb adem nodig ... Ik ben gewoon een levensgenieter .... Ik geloof niet dat God ons geschapen heeft om één vrouw te hebben ...'

'Oh, jij bent echt gek geworden,' zei Karel een beetje boos ... 'Oh, wat vind ik dit erg, vooral voor je vrouw, en misschien je kinderen.' ... En weer hoorde Karel gelach aan de andere kant van de lijn ... 'Ik zit je weer in de maling te nemen, Karel ... Ben je vergeten hoe ik in elkaar zit ?'

'Ach, vroeger was je niet zo,' zei Karel verslagen, nog steeds natrillend ... Karel voelde zich een beetje lam worden ... Nee, leuk vond hij het niet ... 'Hebben ze je soms medicijnen gegeven ?' vroeg Karel ... 'Ja, Karel,' zei de voorganger .... 'Ik word helemaal high van dat spul ... Niet dus .... Ik moet hier weer weg, Karel ...' Karel ging hem direkt ophalen ... Nee, dat psychiatrische ziekenhuis was niks voor de voorganger ... 'Je kunt wel een tijdje bij mij wonen,' zei Karel ... De voorganger stemde er mee in ... Op een dag zag de voorganger de Takalan op tafel liggen ... Hij grijpt het vast en begint erin te lezen ... Hij had eigenlijk alleen maar boeken over de Takalan gelezen, maar nog nooit de Takalan zelf ... De voorganger wordt er erg door aangegrepen, en zit uren op de bank voor zich uit te staren ... 'Hier kunnen we iets mee,' zegt hij zacht ... 'hier kunnen we ....' Dan komt Karel binnen ... 'Ik zie dat je door de Heer bent aangeraakt,' zegt Karel ... 'Ja,' zegt de voorganger .... 'ik wil naar een klooster .... Ik wil naar de monniken van de Takalan ... Ik wil de Takalan bestuderen ....' Karel knikt, en is blij ... ook opgelucht ... 'Ik weet niet of er al zo'n klooster bestaat, maar we kunnen eens navraag doen ... Na wat rond te hebben gebeld heeft Karel een adres voor de voorganger .... Er blijken inderdaad al Takelanse kloosters bestaan ... De voorganger kan er direkt terecht ... Karel is zo enthousiast dat hij zelf ook meewil ... Ze krijgen beiden een kamer in het klooster voor onbeperkte tijd ... Ze krijgen daar veel dromen en visioenen over de Takalan tijdens hun verblijf, en na die periode vertellen ze alles in de gemeente ...

Hoofdstuk 3.

Maar de voorganger is zo overgevoelig en er eigenlijk helemaal niet klaar voor ... Snel besluit hij zich weer terug te trekken ... De voorganger wordt voor een tweede

periode op het klooster aanvaard ... Dit alles om bij te komen, en om diepere ervaringen te hebben met de Takalan ... Voor Karel zit de vakantie erop ... Ook werd hij niet aanvaard voor een tweede periode ... De tweede periode is alleen voor hen bestemd die hulp nodig hebben ... Karel preekt ondertussen veel over wat de voorganger hem vertelt ... Ook anderen uit de gemeente beginnen hun eerste periode op het klooster ... Zo hebben ze ook wat meer contact met de voorganger ... Maar die vindt het moeilijk om mensen van vroeger te moeten zien ... Het ligt de voorganger erg zwaar, en ten slotte wordt hij overgeplaatst naar een ander klooster, dat diep in het bos ligt ... De voorganger kan hier nog beter tot rust komen, maar dit is wel een klooster waar je wordt opgeleid om monnik te worden ... Eigenlijk wil de voorganger dat niet ... maar terug naar de samenleving wil hij ook niet ... Ondertussen krijgt hij steeds hevigere ervaringen van de Takalanse leer ... Hij ontvangt veel dromen en visioenen van de Heer, meer dan ooit tevoren ...

Al gauw geeft de voorganger soms wat les aan kleine groepjes op het klooster ... Maar eigenlijk kan hij dit niet aan ... Dan op een dag komt er een monnik naar de voorganger dat er in het bos nog een kleine hermitage vrij is, waar de voorganger in alle rust mag wonen en studeren ... De voorganger neemt het aanbod direkt aan ... Hij heeft nu alleen nog maar contact met Karel per brief ... en heel soms komen de monniken van het klooster langs voor een kort gesprek ... Maar dat gebeurt steeds minder ... Karel beschouwt de brieven van de voorganger als heilig, en preekt zelfs tot de gemeente vanuit die brieven ...

Zo gaat dat een tijdje door, en op een dag verschijnt Christus aan de voorganger ... Christus draagt een wit lichtend en zacht gewaad als een soort sprei ... Hier en daar hangen wat veertjes, en Christus heeft ook een witte veer in zijn haar ... Het is een beetje een donzige veer ... Christus stapt op de voorganger af, en raakt hem aan ... De voorganger begint te trillen ... Christus haalt een veer van zijn gewaad af en geeft de veer aan de voorganger ... De voorganger durft zich bijna niet te bewegen .... 'Je maakt zeker een grapje ...' zegt de voorganger ...'Zeg dat het niet waar is ... Waaraan heb ik deze eer te danken ...' Maar Christus zegt niets, en begint door de kamer van de voorganger te lopen ... overal verschijnt een lichtend zacht poeder ... De voorganger begint in tongen te bidden ... 'Ik ga je een diepe genezing in je emoties geven,' zegt Christus ... De voorganger buigt voorover en begint te snikken ... Hij voelt de Hand van Christus zo diep ... Ook Christus begint in tongen te bidden ... een vreemde taal, als de taal der duiven ... Zo heeft de voorganger het nog nooit gehoord ... De voorganger voelt zich van binnen wegsmelten ... 'Zendt me niet terug naar die arena ...' smeekt de voorganger tot Christus ... 'Laat me hierblijven ...' Christus kijkt hem geruststellend aan ... 'Je hoeft hier niet weg,' zegt Christus ineens ... Weer haalt Christus een veer van zijn gewaad af en geeft het aan de voorganger ... Weer begint de voorganger te trillen ... 'Jij weet wat ik in de hemel gedaan heb, hè ?' zegt Christus ... De voorganger knikt ... 'Ik ben over de gouden rivier gegaan, en over de zilveren rivier, om tot de boom des hemels te komen ... Vandaaruit heb ik Mijn Duif gezonden ... Mijn Geest ... Ik heb de oranje zee van vuur bezwommen, en ben gekomen tot het natte bos ... Hier heb ik Mijn Geest losgelaten, voor een tweede maal ... En de emotie boven het natte en het droge is hier tot mij gekomen ... Boven het

natte en droge is een pad tot de Eeuwige Weide, een ladder ... Christus omhelsde de voorganger, en zei dat Hij deze emotie aan hem wilde schenken ... De voorganger trilde ... Wat voelde hij toch in zich komen ? Waren dit de vogels van de Heer ? De voorganger voelde hoe alle kracht uit hem wegvloeide ... 'Je hoeft hier niet meer weg,' zei Christus ... De voorganger voelde zich alsof hij in water lag, maar dit water was zo dik .... als lagen van zachte dekens ... De voorganger begon te ijlen, alsof hij hevige koorts had .... Boven hem leek het alsof er een reusachtige vogel of reusachtig vliegtuig zweefde ... Het was als een vliegend skelet, of als een lichaam waar geen huid over zat ... Een traan viel vanuit de vogel op de schoot van de voorganger ... 'Je zult je goed voelen,' zei Christus ... 'want ik ga je gevoel genezen ...' De voorganger begon nog heviger te trillen en te zweten ... Wat gebeurde er toch in hem ... Opeens werd de voorganger overspoeld door zachtheid ... Het leek wel alsof de voorganger op een bovennatuurlijk zachte bank zat ... met zoveel haren en veren ... allemaal wit ... als de vacht van een hemels dier ... Een reusachtig insect verscheen voor de voorganger ... met daarachter een gestalte met een kap en een gewaad ... Weer werd de voorganger door zachtheid overspoeld ... De voorganger kreeg stuiptrekkingen ... en rillingen ... Het was alsof er zacht spul in het lichaam van de voorganger was dat op het punt stond om uit te barsten ... De voorganger voelde zichzelf als een vulkaan ... Plotseling riep Christus : 'Takalan' ... De stem was erg indringend, en de voorganger voelde zichzelf als zwemmende in een zee van zachtheid ... Hij leek te overstromen ... 'Het is één ding om de Geest te ontvangen en gedoopt te zijn in de Geest ... Nu zul je komen tot de verzachting en de overstroming van de Heilige Geest ...' Weer barst de voorganger in snikken uit ... Alles van binnen lijkt naar buiten te komen ...

'Zie, daar is een eerste zegen die de wedergeboorte is, een tweede zegen die de doop in de Geest is, een derde zegen die de gebondenheid in de Geest is en een vierde zegen die daaruit moet voortvloeien : De overstroming van de Heilige Geest ...' sprak Christus ... 'Boven het natte en droge is de emotie Saakse, en zij leidt tot diepe verzachting, maar zelfs tot boven de strijd tussen hardheid en zachtheid ... Saakse blust de overmaat aan vuur, en regelt en verdeelt deze ... Boven de strijd tussen hardheid en zachtheid komt Saakse uiteindelijk aan in Luchtse, waar nog diepere overstromingen zijn ... Ook de christen zal deze reis moeten begaan ...'

De volgende ochtend als de voorganger wakker wordt schrijft hij een brief naar Karel om hem dit alles te vertellen ... Nog steeds lijkt het alsof alles in hem overstroomt ... En hij heeft visioenen van de zachtste zeeen die hij ooit heeft gezien ... Eén ding is zeker : Hij wil hier blijven, en zien hoe alles zich uitwerkt ...

Een vlinder zit voor het raam ... De voorganger raakt in gedachten verzonken, en krijgt het indrukwekkendste visioen dat hij ooit had gehad ... Stromen van zachtheid golven zijn hoofd binnen, en weer komt Christus op hem af, die hem een takje geeft ... Weer voelt de voorganger zich alsof alles van binnen overstroomt ... 'Gij zult gaan van overstroming tot overstroming,' spreekt Christus ... 'en gij zult uw gevoelens zien genezen worden ... wanneer gij het rijk der boven-emoties binnentreedt ...' En in het visioen bevond de voorganger zich voor een kasteel en liep dat kasteel binnen ... Daar zag hij ridderpantsers tegen de muur staan, waaruit zachtheid vloeide ... De

voorganger loopt verder het gebouw in, en weer staat Christus voor hem, ietsje boven de grond ... Hij voelt zand onder zijn voeten, en het zand wordt steeds zachter en zachter, totdat hij alles voelt overstromen vanuit het diepste van zijn wezen ... Christus komt dichterbij en raakt hem aan ... Weer ziet hij een veer in het haar van Christus, en Christus geeft die veer aan hem ... Ineens is het alsof hij moet plassen ... maar het is de Heilige Geest die ook daar wil overstromen ... 'In de hemel wordt niet gehuwd,' sprak Christus ... 'Zij die op aarde wonen huwen, en dit is als een kruis ... Het huwelijk is slechts een schaduw van de Gebondenheid in de Heilige Geest ... daarom zal het huwelijk als zegel verbroken moeten worden ... Zij die vast blijven houden aan de vrouwen der aarde zullen de Hemelse Geesten niet ontvangen ... Het huwelijk is het zegel op de hemelse sexualiteit, de Riktlan ... Ook is de Bloedband een schaduw van de Hemelse bloedbanden ... Zij die vast blijven houden aan de aardse bloedbanden zullen de Hemelse bloedbanden niet ontvangen ... De Bloedband is slechts een zegel, het tweede zegel, op de hemelse sexualiteit, de Riktlan ...' De voorganger buigt zijn hoofd ... 'Het derde zegel hierop is het ouderschap ...' De voorganger slaakt een gil, en valt neer op het zachte zand ... Nog steeds is het alsof hij nodig moet plassen ... 'Het vierde zegel is geboorte, het vijfde zegel het avondmaal, het zesde zegel de doop ...' De voorganger ligt stokstijf op het zand, en verroert zich niet ... Het is alsof de hete zon hem wil opslurpen .... Hoe komt het dat het hier zo heet is ... Het lijkt wel alsof hij van binnen wegsmelt ...

'De Riktlan is bekleed en gesloten door zes zegels ... Ga de strijd aan tegen deze zegels, en kom binnen in deze heerlijkheid ... Blijf niet feestvieren op aarde ... De aarde is een valstrik ... een slagerij ...' De woorden van Christus echo-en door zijn hoofd ... De voorganger begint te kreunen van de hitte ... Het lijkt wel alsof hij geheel door het zand wordt geabsorbeerd ... Dan ineens lijkt het alsof alles in de voorganger explodeert, en zachte schuim stroomt van binnen uit ... 'Riktlan, Riktlan,' begint de voorganger te roepen ...

'Wil je alles opgeven voor mij ?' vraagt Christus aan de voorganger ... 'Ja,' zegt de voorganger, 'alles ...'

'Dan krijg je ook alles weer terug,' zegt Christus, 'maar dan in een hele andere vorm ...'

Hoofdstuk 4.

'Oh, ik wil nooit meer wakker worden,' roept de voorganger tot Christus ... 'Ik wil nooit meer ...' Maar Christus sust hem ... en omhelst hem .... Nog dieper zinkt de voorganger weg in zachtheid ... 'Ik zweer mijn bloedbanden af,' zegt de voorganger, 'en ik zweer mijn huwelijk af, en mijn ouderschap, mijn geboorte, mijn doop en mijn avondmaal ...'

'Het is goed,' zei Christus ... 'maar Ik ben Degene die bindt en scheidt ... De Overstroming door de Heilige Geest is de Scheiding door de Heilige Geest ... Dit is niet de scheiding door de wereld ....' De voorganger knikte ... Dat begreep hij wel ... Toen gaf Christus hem een zwaard ... 'Het Zwaard van de Geest is om te scheiden en te verzoenen ....' Weer knikte de voorganger ... Toen riep Christus : 'Riktlan, Rictlan' ... En weer was het alsof de voorganger moest plassen ... En overal was het

alsof zegels en voorhangsels begonnen te scheuren ... 'Ga in tot de heerlijkheid van Rictlan,' sprak Christus ... De voorganger stond op, maar zag niks ... Overal was het als witte sneeuw ... Een akelige kou kwam over de voorganger ... Maar plotsklaps was er weer één en al zachtheid, en de emotie boven kou en warmte kwam over de voorganger : Laafte ... Ineens voelde de voorganger weer energie door zijn benen vloeien, en die energie was als zachtheid en veren ... Ook in zijn armen begon die energie te stromen, en het leek wel alsof hij alle energie in zichzelf begon binnen te plassen .... Even voelde alles heel koud aan, maar daarna was alles zachter dan zacht ... De voorganger begon te trillen, en voelde zich eventjes heel duizelig worden ... Even was het alsof hij moest overgeven of kokhalzen ... Er kwam zoveel energie in hem vrij ... 'Je bent geen slaaf meer van aardse sexualiteit,' zei Christus ... 'Dat was slechts een corrupt energie-stelsel ... Je wordt nu aangesloten op de energie-circuits van Riktlan ...'

'Nee,' schreeuwde de voorganger, terwijl hij voorover boog ... Weer was het alsof hij verschrikkelijk nodig moest plassen ... Hij voelde zich ineens zo vreemd ... Alsof iets uit hem wilde komen wat er niet uitkon ... 'Snap je de corruptie van het menselijk lichaam ?' vroeg Christus ... 'Het is een duivelse creatie ... geen verheerlijkt of hemels lichaam ... Ik wil jou een lichaam van Riktlan geven ... maar ...' en toen wees Christus op de tepels van de voorganger ... Met één ruk rukte Christus de tepels eraf, terwijl de voorganger de apparaatjes zag die er onder zaten ... als vreemde insecten ... vreemde implantaten ... 'Je wordt aangesloten op de energie-circuits van Riktlan,' sprak Christus weer ... Heel voorzichtig haalde Christus toen de apparaatjes eruit, maar allerlei alarms gingen aan ... Snel wierp Christus de apparaatjes heel ver weg tot in de zee ... Toen hoorden ze een enorme explosie, en het was alsof de voorganger plaste ... Nieuwe vrijgekomen energie plaste hij door zijn lichaam heen, en er begonnen andere soorten tepels op de open plaatsen te groeien ... Ze leken wel een beetje op lip-achtige littekens ... Weer voelde de voorganger nieuwe overstromingen van zachtheid ... Weer haalde Christus de tepels eraf, en weer zaten er apparaatjes onder ... 'Zie je, het groeit steeds aan,' zei Christus ... Toen wees Christus op de voeten van de voorganger ... Met één ruk had hij de huid van de voeten eraf gerukt ... De voorganger zag één en al machine onder de huid ... Christus stak wat pennetjes tussen de mechanismes, en het was alsof de voorganger even zijn benen niet meer voelde ... Ook haalde Christus er wat pennetjes uit ... Die pennetjes zaten heel diep ... De voorganger kon bijna geen adem meer halen ... Toen begon Christus de mechanismes één voor één eruit te snijden en te trekken, en wierp ze in de zee, terwijl er steeds meer hoge alarms afging ... De voorganger leek wel doof te worden ... Maar ineens was alles stil ... De voorganger voelde veel pijn in zijn benen ... Het was nu een framewerk ... De apparaatjes waren weg ... Toen haalde Christus wat hemelse apparatuur tevoorschijn en drukte het in het framewerk ... Snel gingen er spieren, vlees, weefsel en huid overheen ... Alles stond bol, maar toen Christus met zijn hand erover wreef werd alles weer soepel, en verfijnde het zich ... Weer rukte Christus de tepels eraf, en ditmaal ook de huid van de borst eromheen ... Overal waren apparaatjes te zien, en één voor één rukte Christus ze eruit ... Gelukkig gingen er geen alarms meer af ... Christus legde er een witte doek over, en zei tegen

de voorganger dat hij moest rusten ... Alles zou in orde komen ...

Na het visioen stond de voorganger op, pakte pen en papier en schreef een brief aan Karel ...

Hoofdstuk 5.

Na een tijd kreeg de voorganger een brief van Karel ... Karel schreef hoe het met de gemeente ging ... De voorganger voelde hoe het elke dag beter met hem ging ... Op een dag maakte hij een wandeling in het bos ... Even was het alsof hij een steek in zijn hoofd voelde, maar later werd de plek heel erg zacht ... De voorganger voelde hoe de zachtheid doorvloeide naar zijn lippen ... Hij voelde zich ineens erg heilig ... Een gevoel wat hij eigenlijk nooit gekend had ... Het was als een gevoel dat boven trots en schaamte uitsteeg ... Alsof de voorganger uit een groot gevecht was ontsnapt ... Hij voelde hoe de zachtheid doorvloeide naar beneden, alsof hij weer moest plassen ... Toen plaste hij de zachte energie door zijn hele lichaam heen ... Het was net alsof hij een stem hoorde : 'Je moet veel plassen ...'

Waar zou dit naartoe leiden ? De voorganger wist het niet ... Hij voelde zich elke dag rustiger worden ... Een rust die hij nooit eerder had gekend ... Soms kreeg hij weer ergens een soort steek, en dan kort daarna was de plek zachter dan ooit tevoren, om zich via het plassen door zijn hele lichaam te verspreiden ... Stukje bij beetje werd de voorganger een inwoner van Riktlan ...

Einde

De Omzwerving

Korte Theologische Roman

Hoofdstuk 1.

Edwin Jagersma zit in een Pinkstergemeente. De voorganger en zijn vrouw prediken naast het Kruis van Christus ook veel over het Kruis van Jozef, en ze geloven ook in een engel genaamd Sarsia. Edwin vindt de preken die ze geven erg goed. Door zijn moeder is hij in deze gemeente gekomen, en toen is er een wereld voor hem open gegaan. Zijn ouders zijn gescheiden. Hij woonde bij zijn vader en ging altijd met hem mee naar de gemeente ... Maar wat hier gepredikt werd was eventjes wat anders ... De voorganger had veel kritiek op de conservatieve pinstergemeentes, alhoewel zijn vrouw erg mild was ...

Op een dag had de voorganger het in de preek over het kruis van Ismael ... en zei dat omdat de gemeente dat kruis niet had aanvaart de Islam kwam opzetten om wraak te nemen ... Volgens de voorganger was de Islam het omgekeerde kruis van Ismael ... Na de dienst kwamen er allemaal vragen. De voorganger vertelde dat Hagar een Egyptische slavin van Sara was, die nageslacht bracht aan Abraham in de vorm van Ismael, zoals dat ook in de Bijbel stond. Maar door de hand van Sara werden zij beiden in de woestijn gezonden ... En dat terwijl Ismael één van de aartsvaders was ... De jongen werd een boogschutter, en de hand van God leidde hem ... Door toedoen van Sara werd er verder eigenlijk niet meer over Ismael gesproken, maar ging de lijn over op Isaak, haar eigen zoon. De Islam kwam op als de wraak van Ismael, en de gemeente doet er daarom beter aan om terug te gaan naar de bron van Ismael om hem in ere te herstellen ... Ook hij is een kind van Abraham, ook hij is een aartsvader, en draagt het Egyptisch bloed van zijn moeder Hagar in zich. Ook kwam er de vraag hoe ze zich dat moesten voorstellen : Het aanvaarden van het kruis van Ismael, en hem in ere te herstellen ... De voorganger zei dat ze allereerst de wildheid en de wraak van dit deel gewoon moesten aanvaarden ... Het wilde zijn plek terug ...

Hagar en Ismael werden verstoten uit de familie en werden de woestijn ingezonden waar ze bijna omkwamen van de dorst .... maar gelukkig greep de Engel Gods in. Zo moesten ook zij, als gemeente, verworpenheid dragen en de geestelijke dorst ... Zij moesten beginnen het kruis van Ismael te dragen, en geloven dat ook dit kruis tot heerlijkheid zou leiden en tot de verzoening met het volk van Ismael. Door het kruis van Ismael kon die eenheid komen ... God beloofde Hagar een ontelbaar nageslacht. Ismael is in dat opzicht de verloren aartsvader die opgezocht moest worden ...

De dienst erna had de voorganger het over de dertien bloedlijnen van Jahweh, waarvan Hij zou afstammen, en zijn vijf ouders. Deze ouders waren genaamd : Uruk, Nanak, Koshau, Irim en Mirik. Daar had Edwin nog nooit iets van gehoord, maar de voorganger zei dat hij dit allemaal uit het Eeuwig Evangelie had gehaald, het verlengstuk van de Bijbel wat in Openbaring werd aangekondigd, maar wat pas in de eindtijd zou verschijnen. Ook had de voorganger het over de vele vrouwen van Jahweh, en hij noemde er wel tientallen op ... alsof Jahweh ook een harem zou bezitten ... Dit was in het Oude Testament zelfs op aarde heel normaal, maar de voorganger had het natuurlijk over de hemel, waar Jahweh woont. Weer kwamen er een heleboel vragen. Ook Edwin stelde enige vragen. Edwin herinnerde zich dat hij vroeger weleens aan zijn ouders had gevraagd wie nou precies de ouders van God waren, maar kreeg daar nooit antwoord op ... Nu leek de voorganger die vragen te beantwoorden ... Jahweh was als God aangesteld over mensen, dieren, engelen, en vele geestelijke wezens. Nu de gemeente verder was gegroeid zouden ze aan dit soort dingen toe zijn gekomen, en Edwin vond het razend interessant.

De voorganger zei dat het belangrijk was om veel over de bloedlijnen, de geestelijke voorgeslachten, van Jahweh te weten, want zodra de bloedlijnen weer een plaats zouden hebben in het geloof zou er minder plaats zijn voor afgoderijen die de leegte en het gemis probeerden op te vullen ... De voorganger zei dat het nodig was om orde te brengen, en om de geschiedenissen van God te openen. Nu hadden ze dus ook met Zijn voorgeschiedenis te maken ... De voorganger had het over de evolutie van

God, en over het bestaan van meerdere eeuwigheden, de aeonen, die tijdperken zijn, en die ook als zodanig in de grondtekst van de Bijbel worden beschreven. Eeuwig is dus niet altijddurend, en zo wilde het ook niet direkt zeggen dat God altijd al had bestaan. Misschien wel in een andere vorm, maar ook God heeft zich ontwikkeld, en komt voort uit een reeks geestelijke voorgeslachten.

De voorganger zei ook dat het dom was om je maar op één kruis blind te staren. Je moest gaan van kruis tot kruis, en niet in een kruis-canon terechtkomen. De kruis-canon was volgens de voorganger bijna het gevaarlijkste wat er was, want dan zou je maar beperkt worden tot één kruis. De voorganger zei dat Christus en zijn kruis het fundament waren, waar je als pasgeboren baby-christen mee in aanraking kwam ... Maar dat was pas het begin van de reis ... Daarom was de God-geschiedenis en de voorgeschiedenis van God zo belangrijk, om te komen tot de oerkruizen ... Het hart van God ... Bij die oerkruizen kon je komen door de dertien bloedlijnen van Jahweh te volgen ... Het klonk Edwin als een prachtig sprookje, maar het interesseerde hem wel ... Het leek alsof hij voor het eerst in zijn leven kon ademhalen ... Natuurlijk gaf je een baby nog geen vast en scherp voedsel ... Edwin begreep waarom de Bijbel voor nu nog zo beperkt was ... En waarom zou God al die dingen aan zondaren vertellen ? Maar nu dan was het tijd geworden voor het Eeuwig Evangelie, waar God meer over Zichzelf zou vertellen, in eerste instantie aan Zijn gemeente.

Hoofdstuk 2.

De voorganger begon uit te leggen dat God en Christus een soort titel waren die geestelijke krachten probeerden te grijpen ... Het was een soort politieke kwestie ... Je moest er goed op letten wie je zou volgen, want autoriteit was niet altijd per definitie betrouwbaar. Zo maakten vele krachten zichzelf tot Christus, God en Geest, en dat verklaart ook waarom de kerken die allen zeggen naar God te luisteren het niet met elkaar eens zijn ... De Waarheid ligt dieper in de geschiedenis. Je leert God alleen kennen door Zijn geschiedenis te volgen ... en zo leer je ook het ware van het valse te onderscheiden ...

Edwin luisterde bijna met ingehouden adem ... De voorganger kon het heel spannend vertellen ... Hoe diep moesten ze nog de geschiedenis induiken om achter de waarheid te komen ? Waar begon het ergens ? De gemeente was lid van de zogenaamde Sebek-bond binnen de pinksterwereld. De voorganger vond dat belangrijk, omdat de Sebek-bond het mystieke christendom aanhing : Er was geen canon, en alles had een diepere symbolische betekenis, de zogenaamde Allegorie. De voorganger zei dat dit belangrijk was om los te komen van het materialisme, als een reis naar de hemel. Hier zouden ze een nieuw soort stof tegenkomen, iets dat boven materie en geest uitsteeg, de zogenaamde Pismin. De voorganger kon het allemaal erg kleurrijk vertellen, en Edwin wist dat sommigen gewoon puur in de gemeente zaten vanwege de prachtige verhalen. De voorganger was een erg symbolisch iemand. Ook was de voorganger erg kunstzinnig. Het gebouw hing vol met zijn schilderijen. Daar hingen erg veel bijzondere schilderijen tussen, zelfs van krokodillen en ooievaren, en prachtige paradijsen. Edwin wist dat sommigen in de gemeente zaten puur om die schilderijen te bekijken. Vaak hingen er weer nieuwen.

De voorganger zei dat aan het einde van de tijden, dan zou Sebek, die een deel van Christus is, Christus verslinden, en dit zou zijn als een heilige verslinding. In deze cocon zou Christus op z'n plaats gezet worden, namelijk als de eerste stap op de weg terug naar God, een belangrijk fundament. Maar hierop moest doorgebouwd worden. Edwin vond dat maar een rare benaming, maar zijn moeder zei dat dat zo hoorde. Voor Christus zou het een wedergeboorte worden, die zou resulteren in Zijn Terugkomst. Al die overbelasting zou voor Christus een kruis zijn. Veel christenen staarden zich zo blind op Christus en vroegen zoveel van Hem alsof er niets anders was ... Vooral zij die geloofden dat ze het kruis niet hoefden te dragen, omdat Christus dat had gedaan, zij van het zogenaamde welvaarts-evangelie stonden schuldig aan het verzwaren van het kruis van Christus. Ook zij zouden aan het einde der tijden door Sebek verslonden worden om hun plaats te krijgen ... Maar de voorganger zei altijd dat iedereen door Sebek verslonden zou worden, zelfs de aarde ... Dit om een nieuwe schepping voort te brengen ... Het was genaamd het Sebek-kruis, de Heilige Verslinding ... Edwins moeder geloofde ook heilig in de engel Sarsia. Edwin wist hier niet zoveel vanaf, omdat zijn moeder er vaak geheimzinnig over deed ...

Er waren al veel mensen uit de gemeente vertrokken toen ze hoorden over de bizarre ideeen van de voorganger ... De voorganger ging soms gewoon erg ver. Zo zou hij ook eens kinderen hebben banggemaakt ... Ja, de voorganger kon soms erg griezelig doen ... Hij kon soms ook echt spokenverhalen vertellen ... Ook beweerde de voorganger de rangen boven God te kennen. Zij die de dertien bloedlijnen van Jahweh kenden zouden een ontmoeting met zo'n hogere rang kunnen krijgen ... De rang net boven God was genaamd de Muskus. De rang boven de Muskus was volgens de voorganger Sebek Zelf, het gebeente van Christus, dat in Christus wachtte om toe te slaan. Het gebeente van Christus was als een tijdbom, en de naderende explosies zouden leiden tot een nieuw paradijs ...

Edwin schrok wakker ... Wat had hij vreemd gedroomd ... Vandaag zou hij voor het eerst zijn moeder ontmoeten ... Hij had zich er misschien te druk om gemaakt ... Zenuwachtig was hij wel ... Erg zenuwachtig ... Zijn ouders waren gescheiden ... Zijn vader had hem vlak na de geboorte ontvoerd ... Toen zijn vader in de gevangenis kwam, ook voor andere misdrijven, werd Edwin in een kindertehuis geplaatst ... Zijn moeder kon door hetgeen gebeurd was de opvoeding niet aan ... Ze wilde Edwin zelfs niet zien ... Maar nu was het dan zover ... Na al die jaren was zijn moeder nu sterk genoeg om hem thuis te ontvangen ... Toen Edwin daar aankwam was de ontmoeting erg koeltjes ... Zijn moeder sprak niet veel ... Edwin deed hoofdzakelijk het woord ... Er was ook een advocaat bij ... Dat wilde zijn moeder zo ... Edwin vertelde ook over zijn droom ... Zijn moeder was niet gelovig ... Vroeger was ze dat wel, maar door alles wat er was gebeurd had ze haar geloof verloren ...

Een maand later hadden ze weer een ontmoeting ... Zijn moeder was nog steeds erg stil, maar wilde toch nog graag de droom een keer horen ... Ditkeer was er geen advocaat bij, en zijn moeder leek iets meer ontspannen ... 'Je droom spreekt me aan, Edwin,' zei z'n moeder ... 'Het is heel anders dan wat ze in de kerken altijd zeggen ...' Omdat Sebek een Egyptische naam is besluit Edwins moeder wat Egyptische boeken

te lezen ... Een maand later zouden ze elkaar weer zien ... Maar halverwege de maand krijgt Edwin een telefoontje van de advocaat ... Zijn moeder zou het toch te zwaar hebben met al die ontmoetingen ... Ze wilde er graag een punt achterzetten ... Edwin wist niet wat hij hoorde, maar begreep het wel ...

Zelf was hij inmiddels ook op zoek naar de betekenis van de droom ... Ook hij ging Egyptische boeken lezen, en raakte diep geinteresseerd ... Op een dag besluit hij een reis te boeken naar Egypte ... In het vliegtuig komt hij heel toevallig de advocaat van zijn moeder tegen ... Ze gaan naast elkaar zitten in het vliegtuig, en een diep gesprek volgt ... 'Je moeder draagt diepe geheimen over jou in haar hart ...' vertelt de advocaat ...

Dan schrikt Edwin wakker ... Hij droomde nog steeds ... Wat was dat een heldere droom, zeg ... Zou er echt een Sebek-bond binnen de pinkstergemeente bestaan ? Edwin was niet kerkelijk, maar een vriend van hem zat bij de pinkstergemeente ... Edwin besluit die vriend op te bellen, en vertelt de droom ... Maar die vriend van hem kan hem niet verder helpen ... Hij heeft van al die dingen nog nooit gehoord ... Wel wil hij het eens aan de voorganger vragen ... Na een paar dagen wordt Edwin door de voorganger uitgenodigd ... Laat in de avond komt Edwin daar aan ... De voorganger moest namelijk eerst naar een conferentie ... Even later zitten ze samen in de werkkamer van de voorganger ... De voorganger was erg verrast over de droom ... De voorganger kwam namelijk zelf uit Egypte ... Hij had geen Egyptisch bloed, maar zijn vader en moeder hadden daar werk, en zodoende bracht hij zijn jeugd door in Egypte ... Toen zijn vader en moeder met hem Egypte verlieten kreeg hij last van depressies, en is hij nooit meer dezelfde geweest ... De herinneringen aan Egypte hielden hem op de been, naast zijn geloof ... De droom sprak ook van een zekere samensmelting ... De voorganger wist altijd dat er iets aan het geloof ontbrak ... Edwin was erg opgelucht dat zijn droom eindelijk betekenis had gekregen. Plotseling stond de vrouw van de voorganger binnen met koffie ... 'Mag ik vragen waar het over gaat ?' vroeg de vrouw brutaal ... Edwin vond dat ze niet zo was als wat je van een voorgangersvrouw zou verwachten ... Edwin kon zich ook voorstellen dat zo'n vrouw je depressief kon maken ... Ze keek heel kleinerend naar Edwin ... 'Jij gelooft niet, hè ?' zei ze snibbig ... Edwin knikte, zich helemaal niet meer op z'n gemak voelend ... 'Maar ik ben zoekende ...'

'Nou,' zei de voorgangersvrouw ... 'zoek en gij zult het vinden ... maar bezoek eerst eens een fatsoenlijke kerk ... Je kunt het niet alleen ...' Edwin stond paf van al die opdringerigheid ... 'Ach,' zei de voorganger ...'ze bedoelt het niet slecht ...' Maar diep in z'n hart wist Edwin dat de voorganger dat alleen maar zei om Edwin zich niet zo naar te laten voelen ... Ineens was de vrouw alweer weg ... De voorganger zei niks, en begon toen weer over de droom ... Ook begon de voorganger over Egypte te vertellen, dat ze daar geloofden in een vrouw genaamd Nut, die heel lang kon worden, en daarmee de atmosfeer uitbeeldde ... ook beeldde ze de reizen uit die de Egyptenaren moesten maken door de verschillende werelden. Altijd als er over Nut gesproken werd had de voorganger een vreemd gevoel in zijn onderbuik ... Ook begon de voorganger te vertellen over de andere goden van Egypte ... Edwin vond het erg interessant ... Edwin begon allerlei vragen te stellen, en de voorganger

probeerde ze te beantwoorden ... Edwin vertelde hoe hij eens een droom had gehad over een hele lange slang die bij hem naar binnen kwam, en daar ging wonen ... Zou dat Nut kunnen wezen ? Het was voor Edwin een hele prettige ervaring ... De voorganger wist het niet ... Het kon ook een demoon wezen, volgens de voorganger ... Even kreeg Edwin de rillingen ... De voorganger vertelde hem dat hij dat wel kon uittesten ... En samen begonnen ze te bidden, en de voorganger sprak de slang aan ... Direkt begon de slang door Edwin heen te spreken, en wat de slang allemaal zei was niet zo best ... De voorganger probeerde de slang uit te drijven, maar het lukte niet ... Ten einde raad besloot de voorganger in de Naam van Nut de slang uit te drijven, en toen lukte het wel ... Edwin was erg onder de indruk, en had ineens een heel vrij gevoel in zijn onderbuik ... Ook leek het alsof hij warme perensap had gedronken ... Zo voelde zijn buik aan ... Het was alsof het sap zich door zijn hele lichaam verspreidde, en nu kreeg Edwin ook dat vreemde gevoel in zijn onderbuik ... Alsof iemand daar woonde ...

Hoofdstuk 3.

Op een nacht verschijnt Nut aan Edwin ... Ze heeft een sjaal om, en draagt een heleboel cadeau's ... Maar Edwin kan haar niet verstaan ... Het is alsof ze achter glas is, in een wereld waar hij haar niet kan bereiken ... En dan is het alsof Edwin wordt verslonden door een haai ... Gillend wordt Edwin wakker ... De nacht daarop heeft Edwin weer een droom, waarin hij onderhoort wordt door politie-agenten en mensen van justitie ... Edwin wordt vals beschuldigd en wordt zo kwaad dat hij wegrent, dwars door een ruit heen ... Hij wordt achtervolgt, maar vlucht het bos in, waar hij later bij een huisje komt waar een meisje met een rode kap op voorstaat ... Binnen zit een zwarte wolf ... Edwin schrikt ... De wolf is genaamd Anubis, en zegt dat het christendom hem tot een schrikbeeld heeft gemaakt ... Anubis blijkt een Egyptische god te zijn, de god die over de doden hoedt ... 'Ben ik dood ?' vraagt Edwin ... 'Nee,' zegt Anubis ... 'maar je bent toch door een haai verslonden ?' Dan wordt Edwin duizelig en valt neer ... Anubis begint hem te mummificeren met stripverhalen en boeken ... 'Waarom doe je dat ?' vraagt Edwin ... 'Nou, dan heb je wat te lezen onderweg ?' Edwin valt in een nog diepere slaap ... Weer zit hij rechtop aan een tafeltje met Anubis ... voor hem ligt vlees ... 'Dit is het vlees van het gevallen christendom ... Eet het ...' En Edwin begint te eten .... Dan begint Anubis ineens heel snel te blaffen ... 'We moeten een muur doorbreken, Edwin,' gromt Anubis ... Samen stormen ze naar buiten, op weg naar de muur ... Voor Anubis is het een koud kunstje om door de muur heen te breken ... Edwin volgt hem ... Hier is een prachtig paradijs ... Weer zien ze vlees liggen, en beginnen te eten ... 'Die bloedoffers van het christendom was een fabeltje om hen af te houden van het opvreten van demonen .... een valstrik om christenen dieren te laten bevechten in plaats van boze geesten ...' Edwin knikt ... Hij voelt weer energie door zijn benen vloeien ...

'We moeten verder, Edwin,' brult Anubis ... En Anubis brengt Edwin boven op een heuvel ... Er is hier een prachtig uitzicht ... In de verte komt er een vogel aanvliegen ... En gaat vlak bij Anubis en Edwin op een struikje zitten ... De vogel lijkt een beetje op een arend ... Dan begint de vogel te spreken : 'Ik ben Nut ... eindelijk ben je in mijn wereld gekomen ...' Langzaam begint de kop van de vogel in het hoofd

van een vrouw te veranderen met witte bleke strepen op haar gezicht, als een soort verf ... De vrouw heeft lichte haren, en verder een donkere huid ... Maar de kleur was een hele speciale donkere kleur ... een beetje dof ... Het leek wel alsof ze één was met de natuur hier ... Ze leek alle kleuren te weerkaatsen. Edwin voelde zich blij worden ... alsof het goed was ... Een zacht schuimend gevoel stroomde van zijn onderbuik naar zijn benen ... Er stonden prachtige struiken om hen heen, met vruchten ... Anubis begon van de vruchten te eten en gaf ook vruchten aan Nut en Edwin ... 'Wat een droomvakantie ...' dacht Edwin ...

Plotseling begon ook de rest van de vogel in een vrouw te veranderen ... De vrouw pakte Edwin bij de hand, en leidde hem over de heuvel heen, naar de andere kant ... Hier was een soort akker of groentetuin ... De vrouw leidde Edwin er doorheen, en Anubis liep er achteraan ... In de verte was een soort stad ... Maar voor die stad lag een meer ... Met z'n drieen zwommen ze het meer over, en begonnen hun klimtocht naar de stad die op een verhoging lag ... Het was een stad vol met katten ... Maar toen de katten de drie zagen begonnen ze langzaam in vrouwen te veranderen ... Edwin keek z'n ogen uit, en voelde energie door zijn armen vloeien ... De vrouwen hadden hele zachte stemmen, en zeiden dat ze zo lang opgesloten waren geweest in hun kattenlichamen ...

Hoofdstuk 4.

De vrouwen leidden de drie binnenin hun stad ... Er stonden hier vele oude poorten en oude religieuze gebouwen ... In het midden van de stad achter een weilandje stond een enorme kerk of kathedraal ... Binnenin waren geesten ... als spoken ... De vrouwen leidden de drie naar binnen ... Edwin voelt energie door zijn hoofd vloeien ... De vrouwen begonnen de geesten uit de kathedraal te jagen ... Eén van de vrouwen loopt naar voren, en begint te prediken ... Edwin onderzoekt ondertussen het gebouw ... Dan draait Nut zich naar Edwin toe, en zegt : 'Kom, Edwin, ik wil je wat laten zien ...' Nut leidt Edwin over een oude stenen trap naar beneden, tot onder de kathedraal ... Dan gaan ze door een tunnel die helemaal tot een bibliotheek leidt ... In de bibliotheekgang aangekomen lopen ze helemaal tot het einde van het gebouw, waar een schilderij hangt met een oude vrouw en een vrouwelijke farao ... Nut drukt met haar hand op het schilderij, en het schilderij begint rood te gloeien, en daarna in andere kleuren ... Dan draait de muur zich ineens om ... Een pad verschijnt voor hen ... Dit pad is omgeven met hoge muren .... Het pad is als een dorre woestijn ... Samen begaan ze het pad ... Het is een hele lange tijd lopen .... Dan uiteindelijk komen ze aan bij een oase, ook door muren omgeven .... Er is hier een meertje met groene blubber, en Nut daalt erin af, terwijl Edwin haar volgt ... Kopje onder gaan ze, en Nut trekt Edwin mee tot een kelder nog dieper onder de grond ... Hier staan allemaal flessen ... In die kelder hangt aan een muur ongeveer hetzelfde schilderij als in de bibliotheek, alleen nu lijkt de vrouwelijke farao op een ram en een telefoon ... 'Druk je hand eens op het schilderij ?' vraagt Nut aan Edwin ... Edwin drukt zijn hand erop, en weer begint het schilderij in vele kleuren te gloeien, en dan draait de muur zich om .... Weer komen ze op een ander pad terecht ... Hier is het iets donkerder en vochtiger .... Overal hangen schilderijen ... ongeveer dezelfden als ze al hadden gezien ... Dan komen ze aan bij een zee waar wat caravans en tenten staan ...

Samen beginnen ze aan hun tocht over de zee ... Edwin begrijpt niet hoe hij ineens aan zoveel energie komt ... Hij zou makkelijk een zee kunnen overzwemmen ... Maar dan opeens is Nut verdwenen ..... en Edwin wordt wakker ...

De nacht daarop heeft Edwin weer een droom over Nut ... Dit keer kan hij haar gewoon aanraken ... Er is geen glas meer tussen hen .... Hij pakt de cadeau's uit die zij voor hem mee heeft genomen ... Er zit een soort drop in, en Edwin begint direkt te eten ... Ook zit er een schilderij tussen van zijn vorige droom ... Als Edwin wakker wordt begint hij na te denken over al die dromen ... Hij besluit ze op te schrijven en voor te lezen aan de voorganger ... Die is erg verbaasd, want weer herkent deze enkele details als gebeurtenissen in zijn eigen leven ...

Hoofdstuk 5.

Edwin besluit al zijn dromen in een boek op te schrijven. Zo zouden er misschien veel meer wat aan hebben ... maar Edwin snapt de precieze betekenis van die dromen nog niet ... Wat bijvoorbeeld over die omzwervingen ? Wat moest Edwin ermee ... Edwin dacht dat er misschien mensen waren zoals de voorganger die er wat mee konden ... Edwin zelf vond het meer 'raadseldromen' ... Misschien waren het wel geheime boodschappen voor anderen waar hij zelf niks van afwist ... Wel had Edwin al veel aan de vriendschap met deze Egyptische entiteiten ... Voor hemzelf waren het verder gewoon open verhalen .... Maar misschien waren de dromen nog niet klaar ...

Maar sinds Edwin er een boekwerkje van had gemaakt stopten de dromen ... Misschien dat het toch al af was, en dat misschien alleen nog de betekenis zou komen ... Die zou dan misschien via de lezers komen ... Edwin besloot maar af te wachten, maar eigenlijk bleef alles gewoon bij het verhaal van de voorganger ... Niemand scheen echt aandacht te geven aan het boekwerkje ... Maar dan gaat Edwin met de dromen aan de gang .... Hij gaat er gewoon eigen verhalen van maken ... En ook komen er nog enkele verhalen bij ... Edwin put inspiratie uit het dagdromen ... Weer maakt Edwin er een boekwerkje van, en ditmaal slaat het beter aan als het dromenboekje ... Sommige mensen zijn zo enthousiast over de verhalen dat ze er een verfilming van willen maken ... Niet lang daarna draaien er wat films van de verhalen van Edwin in de bioscopen ... Edwin is erg trots, en ook de voorganger ... Zelfs de vrouw van de voorganger is erg trots op Edwin, en sindsdien doet ze ineens een stuk aardiger tegen hem ... Edwin weet niet wat hij daarvan moet denken ... Op een dag vraagt ze aan Edwin of ze ook mag meespelen in één van de komende films ... Edwin vind dat een goed idee, en na een tijd van opnames is zij ook op het witte doek te zien ... Ook zij begint verhalen te schrijven, en er komen al snel verfilmingen van ....

Edwin schrikt wakker .... Wat een vreemde droom heeft hij weer gehad, en wat duurde deze lang ... Vandaag zou hij dan echt zijn moeder voor het eerst van zijn leven ontmoeten .... Zenuwachtig kleed hij zich aan ... De bel gaat ... Dat zal ze wezen ... Met zenuwachtige stappen loopt hij rechtstreeks naar de deur ...

Einde

Simson

Simson was een wilde jongen. Je moest hem niet kwaad maken, want dan hield hij je op de kop, zo jong als hij was. Toen hij opgroeide werd hij steeds rustiger en lieflijker, alleen 's nachts was hij erger dan ooit tevoren. Daarom wilde Simson zo graag alleen wonen, diep in de wildernis. Wat gebeurde er dan 's nachts met Simson ? Er werd veel over gespeculeerd, maar niemand wist het precies. Overdag was het de aardigste jongen die je je maar kon voorstellen. Simson hield ervan om in de bergen, het bos of de woestijn te spelen. Vaak speelde hij alleen, omdat andere kinderen hem toch een beetje vreemd vonden. Op een dag vond Simson een boek over Tarzan. Tarzan was een jongen die diep in de wildernis leefde samen met allerlei dieren zoals grote apen, slangen en beren, ja, ook panters. Het leven van Tarzan sprak Simson erg aan, en hij beschouwde het boek als zijn mooiste boek. Later zou hij ook wel als Tarzan willen worden. Tarzan hield erg van boompje klimmen, en van varen in een peddelboot op de rivier. Simson had geen vader en moeder meer, maar woonde bij zijn juffrouw in huis. De juffrouw had een groot huis, en elke dag liepen ze samen naar school. Simson werd op school vaak gepest, maar de juffrouw nam het altijd voor hem op, en twee meisjes. Eigenlijk waren die twee meisjes Simsons enige vrienden. Soms wilde hij weleens dat hij weer zo sterk was als vroeger, toen alle kinderen bang voor hem waren.

Op een dag las Simson aan de twee meisjes voor uit het boek van Tarzan. De meisjes vonden het ook een mooi verhaal. Simson vroeg hen weleens of zij met hem meewilden in de wildernis om daar te gaan wonen als ze later groot waren, maar de meisjes vonden dat maar niets. Eén meisje wilde verpleegster worden, en het andere meisje politie-agente.

Op een dag kwam er een grote jongen naar Simson toe, die hem heel hard begon te slaan. De jongen sloeg hem zo hard dat Simson uiteindelijk bloedend wegliep. Thuis aangekomen nam de juffrouw een doek en bond het om de wond heen. De juffrouw was soep aan het koken. Simson wilde niet meer naar buiten, en wilde de volgende dag ook niet naar school. Simson voelde zich naar. Steeds meer begon Simson zich op zijn kamertje terug te trekken, en las vaak uit het boek van Tarzan. Op een dag kwam de juffrouw naar Simson's kamer toe om met hem te praten. Simson liet haar het boek van Tarzan zien. 'Zal ik je er uit voorlezen ?' vroeg de jongen. De juffrouw knikte vriendelijk. Simson las het hele boek voor haar uit, hardop. De juffrouw vond het een prachtig verhaal, en ook aan haar vroeg Simson of ze met hem mee wilde naar de wildernis als hij groot was, om samen met de wilde dieren te leven. 'Oh, spannend, Simson,' zei de juffrouw. 'Tarzan beleefde zoveel avonturen met de wilde dieren, en dat zou ik ook wel willen.' Simson was blij dat de juffrouw hetzelfde wilde als hem.

Toen het vakantie was stelde Simson aan de juffrouw voor om een reis te maken door de wildernis.

Dat wilde de juffrouw wel. Ze vond het ook wel goed voor de jongen, want dan kon hij even al zijn problemen vergeten. En zo gingen ze op pad. Diep in het bos voelde Simson hoe zijn kracht weer tot hem terugkeerde. Beiden hadden ze het erg naar hun zin in het bos, en dwaalden steeds dieper en dieper. Maar na een tijdje begon de juffrouw erg moe te worden. Ze zouden één nachtje in het bos slapen, en dan de volgende dag weer naar huis teruggaan.

Midden in de nacht begon de juffrouw over God te vertellen. Dat had ze nog nooit gedaan. Maar ze herinnerde de verhalen van vroeger. Simson luisterde aandachtig. Maar plotseling zei Simson tegen de juffrouw : 'Juffrouw, ik moet even weg. Het gebeurt weer.'

'Wat gebeurt weer, Simson ?' vroeg de juffrouw.

'Dat kan ik u niet vertellen,' zei Simson, en rende weg. Na een tijdje kwam hij weer terug, en samen vielen ze in een diepe slaap. De volgende ochtend vroeg Simson of de juffrouw nog meer verhalen over God wilde vertellen, want hij vond ze zo prachtig, en werd er zo rustig van.

Omdat Simson de verhalen zo mooi vond besloot de juffrouw ze ook te vertellen in het nieuwe schooljaar. De kinderen vonden het erg prachtig, en sindsdien hield het pesten op school op. Maar Simson was nog steeds erg boos op de kinderen die hem zo hadden gepest. De juffrouw zei dat Simson hen moest leren vergeven, maar Simson kon het niet. Vaak had hij woede-aanvallen 's nachts, en ook op school ging het helemaal niet goed. Simson begon zijn oude kracht terug te krijgen van toen hij heel jong was. Weer begonnen de kinderen erg bang voor hem te worden, zelfs zijn twee vriendinnetjes. Simson deed geen kinderen kwaad, maar soms duwde hij in een woede-aanval grote dingen om, of tilde ze op en smeet ze een eind weg. Op een dag vroeg de juffrouw of Simson het boek van Tarzan in de klas wilde voorlezen. Simson glunderde en begon hardop te lezen. Alle kinderen vonden het prachtig, en het leek alsof de rust weer tot Simson begon terug te keren. 'Wie van jullie zouden later met mij mee de wildernis in willen ?' vroeg Simson toen hij het boek helemaal hardop had uitgelezen. Een paar jongens stoken hun vingers op, maar Simson raakte direkt teleurgesteld omdat dat juist de jongens waren die hem vroeger zo gepest hadden. De spanning was te snijden en het was ineens erg stil. Eén van de jongens stond op en zei : 'Simson, het spijt me dat ik je vroeger zo gepest heb.' Ook de andere jongens stonden op, en zeiden dat het hun speet. Langzaam legde Simson het boek neer en liep naar zijn plaats. Ook al was hij nu wat rustiger, hoe voelde nog steeds de woede borrelen van binnen, en kon hen niet vergeven. Ook de jongens gingen weer zitten. Simson had het gevoel dat ze dit alleen zeiden omdat ze nu zo bang voor hem waren.

Thuisgekomen zei Simson niet veel. Na een tijdje vroeg hij aan de juffrouw : 'Wie zijn eigenlijk mijn vader en moeder, en wat is er met hen gebeurd ? Ik ben een vondeling, hè ?' De juffrouw liep naar Simson toe, en omhelsde hem. 'Je vader en moeder waren waarschijnlijk te arm om voor je te zorgen,' zei de juffrouw. 'Maar waarom hebben ze me dan op de wereld gezet ?' vroeg Simson weer in onbegrip.

'Omdat ze van elkaar hielden,' zei de juffrouw.

'Maar waarom hielden ze niet van mij dan ?' vroeg Simson. De juffrouw wist ineens niet wat ze moest zeggen. Simson ging naar zijn kamer. 'Ik wou dat ik Tarzan was,' dacht Simson bij zichzelf. 'Dan had ik niets meer met mensen te maken, alleen nog maar met wilde dieren.' Even later kwam de juffrouw binnen en omhelsde hem weer. 'Ik denk wel dat ze van jou gehouden hebben,' zei de juffrouw, 'zoveel dat ze je als vondeling hebben gelegd zodat ik voor je kon zorgen.'

'Maar wat als je mij niet had gevonden,' riep Simson, 'dan was ik van honger of kou doodgegaan.'

'Dan had iemand anders je wel gevonden,' zei de juffrouw. Simson ging op z'n bed liggen en de juffrouw hield zijn hand vast. 'Ik ben zo blij dat jij me gevonden hebt,' zei Simson, 'ik zou niemand anders gewild willen hebben.'

'Kan God ook met me praten ?' vroeg Simson ineens.

'Ik denk dat het met God zo is als met de wilde dieren,' zei de juffrouw, 'het zal heel moeilijk zijn

om met Hem om te gaan, want Hij is heel anders als ons.'

'Denkt u dat Tarzan met God kon praten ?' vroeg Simson.

'Misschien wel, dat weet ik niet,' zei de juffrouw. Simson zuchtte. Het was allemaal nog zo ver weg voor hem. Maar als hij net zoals Tarzan met de wilde dieren kon leven en omgaan, dan kon hij dat misschien dan ook wel met God leren.

'Ik denk dat als je begint met het leren om te gaan met kinderen waarmee je moeite hebt, dat je dan ook met God kan leren omgaan,' zei de juffrouw. 'Misschien dat de wilde dieren in het begin ook niet zo lief voor Tarzan waren, maar later konden ze een band met elkaar opbouwen.'

Midden in de nacht vroeg Simson aan God : 'God, als u echt bestaat, kunt u dan naar me toe komen om met me te praten ?' Maar hoe lang Simson ook op een antwoord wachtte, er kwam niets. Simson was erg teleurgesteld, maar de volgende dag zei de juffrouw hetzelfde als wat ze de dag daarvoor had gezegd : Begin eerst maar eens met de wilde dieren en de kinderen waarmee je moeite hebt.

Simson koos voor de wilde dieren, in plaats van de kinderen waarmee hij moeite had. Maar ja, hoe kwam hij bij de wilde dieren ? De juffrouw gaf een duidelijk antwoord : 'Simson, die wilde dieren zijn de kinderen om je heen. Ze zijn al aan het veranderen, dus grijp je kans.' Maar Simson zat nog veel te vol met woede naar die kinderen toe. Eigenlijk kon hij alleen maar aardig zijn naar zijn twee vriendinnetjes.

Op een dag, toen het weer vakantie was, vroegen de twee meisjes of Simson met hen mee wilde om een grote wandeling door het bos te maken. Dat wilde Simson natuurlijk direkt. Hij stelde voor dat ze een reis door de wildernis zouden maken, zoals hij eens met zijn juffrouw deed. Het was nu toch vakantie. En zo gingen ze op reis. Dit keer ging Simson nog verder dan de keer dat hij met z'n juffrouw ging. Maar wilde dieren kwamen ze niet tegen. Pas na enkele dagen waren ze weer terug.

Simson begon steeds meer en meer over God te praten. Simson hoopte dat God eens een keer met hem zou komen praten. Maar Simson moest steeds denken aan de jongens waarmee hij niet wilde omgaan. Misschien moest hij het toch maar eens proberen. Op een dag trok Simson de stoute schoenen aan en vroeg aan de jongens of ze ook met hem meewilden de wildernis in. Dat wilden de jongens wel. En ze maakten een reis verder dan Simson ooit eerder had gemaakt. Ze kwamen zo diep in de wildernis dat ze daar de wilde dieren tegenkwamen. De jongens vonden dat erg spannend. Wat zouden ze graag vriendschap willen hebben met de wilde dieren. Maar ze wisten dat ze erg voorzichtig moesten zijn. Ze konden beter niet te dichtbijkomen, en niet te lang blijven, want dan zou het echt gevaarlijk worden.

Toen ze uiteindelijk weer thuis waren voelde Simson zich heel anders. Simson voelde zich tevreden, en hij was zelfs trots op zichzelf dat hij het gedaan had. Hij was nu bij de jongens geweest waar hij zoveel moeite mee had, en hij was bij de wilde dieren geweest. Misschien dat God nu wel met hem zou willen praten. Hij kon bijna niet wachten tot het nacht was geworden. Toen hij in z'n bed lag bad hij weer tot God, en vroeg aan God of Hij nu wilde komen om met hem te praten. Simson voelde zich heel anders nu, en ook al sprak God niet tot hem, hij kon God wel voelen. Het was genoeg voor Simson. Hij voelde zich nu als Tarzan. Tarzan kon ook niet met de wilde dieren praten, maar hij kon wel heel dicht bij de wilde dieren zijn.

Einde

Het Dagboek van Schoolmeester Rateldonk - Deel 1.
De Wraak van het Rode Fietsje

inhoudsopgave :

Hoofstuk 1. Ochtendhumeur

Hoofdstuk 2. De Jakobs-ladder

Hoofdstuk 3. Duistere Onderhandelingen

Hoofdstuk 1. Ochtendhumeur

Geliefd Dagboek,

Ik zag hem hangen, hoog op een berg, aan een hoge boom. Tegen de boom stond een fietsje geparkeerd ... een rood fietsje.

Ik klom naar boven, naar de top van de boom, waar hij hing. Ik hoorde een moeder's schreeuw. Ik zag hem hangen, daar, aan de top van de boom. En onweer hing in de wolken. Ik durfde al haast niet te kijken, de horror die ik daar zag. Twee mannen hielden hem vast, of waren het twee beren ? Rode verf zat op zijn neus en voorhoofd. Hij sliep, ze hadden hem een slaappil gegeven.

'Ja, oh, het kapitalisme,' schreeuwde een kraai. Ik vroeg : 'Wat is er met het kapitalisme ?'

'Nou,' zei de kraai, 'het kapitalisme heeft hem daar gehangen, als een klok aan de muur. Elk uur komen er nieuwe vogeltjes uit.'

'Wie is het kapitalisme dan ?' vroeg ik. 'De man van het rode fietsje,' kraaide de kraai weer, 'eigenlijk is het maar een klein jongetje, een ventje.'

'Oh, fijn om te weten, maar wie ben jij ?' vroeg ik vervolgens. 'Ik ben gewoon neutraal,' zei de kraai. 'Ik rapporteer alleen, als een soort van journalist. Je kunt me ook Pontius Pilatus noemen. Ik ben vrij van al het bloed. Niks kleeft er aan mijn handen.'

Ik klom verder naar boven. Ik had niks aan neutrale gasten voor het moment. Ik probeerde de kraai een beetje te ontwijken. Maar misschien dat hij later nog van pas zou komen. Toen ik aan de top was gekomen, bleek het helemaal geen hangende man te zijn, maar een rode zakdoek, wapperende in de wind. Ik begon ineens aan alles te twijvelen : de kraai, het rode fietsje ... was het wel allemaal wat het leek ? De boom bleek langer te zijn dan hij in eerste instantie leek, dus ik klom verder en verder. Van dichtbij bleken de twee beren gewoon twee takken te zijn. Ik was hier eigenlijk wel blij mee. Ik voelde me ineens heel fijn in de natuur.

Het leek wel alsof er geen einde kwam aan deze boom, en ik was al zo hoog dat ik eigenlijk niet eens meer naar beneden durfte te kijken. Toch deed ik het even automatisch, en tot mijn grote schrik zag ik een rode beer bij de boom staan. 'Ach nee, ik verbeeldt het me maar,' dacht ik bij mezelf, 'het zal dat rode fietsje wel wezen.' Het was inmiddels echt hard gaan onweren, en het begon allemaal wel heel erg griezelig te worden. Totdat ik ineens door een wolk boven de bui terecht kwam. Gelukkig was de boom zo lang. 'Ja,' zei de kraai, 'nu ben je boven het kapitalisme uitgestegen.' Ik schrok er een beetje van, en ik vertrouwde de kraai niet helemaal. Ik vertrouwde eigenlijk niks meer. Alles lijkt hier te veranderen,

als ...een klok met verschillende vogeltjes. Ja, dat was ook datgene waar de kraai het over had. Een klok met verschillende vogeltjes.

Ik voelde nog eens aan de boom. Er klopt hier iets niet, het voelt te zacht aan. Het voelt aan als mijn bed ... Ben ik weer aan het dromen ? Ja, en hier voel ik mijn kussen, en de kleur van de lucht hier lijkt op de kleur van het behang van mijn slaapkamer. Ik .... moet wel aan het dromen zijn. Ik kijk nog eens naar de kraai ... deze lijkt eigenlijk wel verdacht veel op mijn slaapkamer-lamp. En, ja hoor, daar word ik dan eindelijk echt wakker. Het bleek allemaal maar een droom te zijn. Ik stap uit mijn bed, en loop naar beneden. Maar dan slaat de schrik om m'n hart : Buiten staat er een rood fietsje voor mijn deur geparkeerd.

Hoofdstuk 2. De Jakobs-ladder

Is alles wel zoals het is ? Is alles wel wat het lijkt ? Deze vragen spoken door mijn hoofd. Ik loop naar buiten, en uiteindelijk blijkt het dat kinderen de deur met rode verf hebben beklad. Geen rood fietsje dus.

Maar de gedachte aan het rode fietsje blijft in mijn hoofd rondspoken. Waarom noemde de kraai het 'kapitalisme' en 'een klein ventje' ? Ik ga maar weer slapen, het is nog vroeg, en eigenlijk ben ik nog te moe. Weer droom ik over een hangende man, maar dit keer hangt hij aan een grote klok. Het lijkt wel een kerkklok. Ik vraag hem hoe hij daar kwam. Dan barst het onweer los. Ik kan hem niet verstaan. Alleen zie ik vele vogels in en uit de klok vliegen. Een drama zonder verhaal. Ik kijk naar beneden en zie het rode fietsje geparkeerd tegen de kerkdeur aan. Ik hoor allemaal vreemde kinderliedjes in mijn hoofd.

'Heb je wel eens gehoord van De Jakobs-ladder ?' vraagt een vreemde zware stem mij ... 'Dat is een ladder met verschillende realiteiten die tezamen weer nieuwe realiteiten vormen. Het is een reis door de vele lagen van het bestaan.'

'Ja, dank je de koekoek, dat is allemaal wel erg griezelig,' protesteer ik. Het is alsof ik val, heel hard val, naar beneden, richting het rode fietsje. Alles duizelt me voor de ogen.

Een dwerg-achtig iets staart me aan. 'Ken je het geheim van het rode fietsje ?' vraagt het ding voorzichtig. 'Neen,' schreeuw ik, 'en ik hoef het ook niet te weten. Ga weg, griezel.'

'Dat kan niet,' zegt het dwergachtig iets, 'het rode fietsje fietst altijd met je mee. Het is altijd bij je in de buurt.'

'Ja, dat is allemaal heel leuk en aardig, maar ik heb andere dingen te doen. De groeten, ook aan de rest van de familie. Dag.' antwoord ik. 'Ach toe nou,' zegt het geheimzinnige ding, 'dat is allemaal niet belangrijk voor nu.'

Ik begin nu echt kwaad te worden. Wie denken ze wel niet dat ze zijn ? 'Je hebt een mooi fietsje, serieus, maar ik kom een andere keer wel weer terug, okay ? Als ik het wat minder druk heb,' probeer ik.

Hoofdstuk 3. Duistere Onderhandelingen

'Zeg, schoolmeester, we hadden een afspraak, weet je nog ?' gromt het mysterieuze dwergachtige ding. Je hebt mij ingeschakeld om de kinderen de baas te blijven.

'Ik weet niet waar je het over hebt,' zeg ik. 'Ben je het vergeten ?' zegt het ding, 'De rode zakdoek die je gebruikte om je tranen weg te vegen die je over de kinderen had, de rode zakdoek wiens punten je in je oren drukte om hun geween niet meer te hoeven horen. Ben je dat vergeten ?' schreeuwt het ding luid, 'DAT WAS MIJN ZAKDOEK, IK HEB HET AAN JE VERKOCHT. HEEL, HEEL GELEDEN. HET HEEFT JE MACHT OVER DE

KINDEREN GEGEVEN !'

'Okay, okay,' zeg ik, 'maar vertel me eens, wat heb ik er ook al weer voor betaald ?'

'Grapjas,' sputtert het ding, 'ben je dat allemaal al vergeten ? JE HEBT JE FAMILIE VERKOCHT, JE LEEFT NU IN MIJN WERELD !'

'En dat rode fietsje dan ?' vraag ik voorzichtig.

'Dat rode fietsje is mijn fietsje, wat jou eraan herinnert welke zaken er zijn gedaan, maar de prijzen zijn helaas hoger geworden. Dus of je geeft de zakdoek terug, of je betaalt de hogere prijs,' kraait het ding. Het valt me op dat het ding veel trekken van de kraai heeft. 'Het enige wat ik wil is proberen hieruit weg te komen. Met of zonder zakdoek,' zeg ik.

'Dat kan niet,' zegt het ding, 'je kunt hier niet weg, alles is van mij. Dit is mijn wereld, en niemand komt er ooit weer uit. Zeg me of je die zakdoek wil houden ja of nee.'

'Wat is de prijs,' vraag ik. Het rare ding begint te schaterlachen, krassende : 'Dat zul je nooit geloven, haha. Luister : Herinner je die rode verf op de deur ? Dat hebben de kinderen gedaan. Omdat je zo'n verschrikkelijke schoolmeester bent. Nu dan, laat mij het van je over nemen, dan mag je je zakdoek houden.'

'Afgesproken,' zeg ik.

En dit, zegt de oude, wijze kraai, heb ik allemaal gelezen in het dagboek van een schoolmeester, dus, jongelui, pas goed op wie er voor de klas staat. Pas goed op als je ergens een rood fietsje voor de deur ziet staan. Het kan zijn dat de schoolmeester zaken heeft gedaan met een of ander duister, kraaiachtig ding.

Het Dagboek van Schoolmeester Rateldonk - Deel 2

Het Geheim van de Zebra Brug

inhoudsopgave :

hoofdstuk 1 : Wij Zijn van de Belasting

hoofdstuk 2 : De Vermenigvuldigings-Truc

hoofdstuk 3 : Rateldonk Verzekeringen

hoofdstuk 4 : Nooit Meer Rode Soep

hoodstuk 5 : De Zebra Boom

hoofdstuk 6 : Terug op School

Hoofdstuk 1. Wij Zijn van de Belasting

Geliefd Dagboek,

Ik liep door de straten van Luik, een Belgisch stadje. Op elke hoek kwam ik een klein mannetje

tegen met een hoedje, zeggende dat mijn hoedje scheef of recht stond. Het wisselde zich telkens om. Is dit de wraak van het rode fietsje ?

Aan het einde van de stad staat een brug, genaamd 'De Zebra Brug'. Een vrouwelijke engel in lang blauw gewaad wenkt mij om tot de brug te komen. Ik word een beetje duizelig en misselijk, alsof alles in mij wordt omgedraaid.

Aan de overkant van de brug staat een huisje : het zebra-huisje. Nou, laten we daar dan maar eens een kijkje nemen. Ik ren over de brug, en merk dat ik afwisselend lach en huil. Ik probeer harder te rennen, maar het lijkt wel alsof ik in de lijm terecht ben gekomen, en ik ben ineens zo zwaar, ik veer helemaal naar beneden, met de brug. Als dat maar goed gaat. Maar dan opeens veert alles weer omhoog. Dit gaat te snel, en ik voel me te licht. Ik suis omhoog, waar zal dit naartoe leiden ? Het is alsof ik de zon kan raken, zo heet. Maar al snel daal ik weer, en dit keer zo snel, en zo diep, dat ik er koud van word. Ik kan het aardijs raken.

Plotseling bevind ik mij in het zebra-huisje. Het licht knippert hier. Een mug drinkt hier koffie. Dat moet je maar durven.

'Ja, dat moet je maar durven,' wordt er gezegd. Iemand zit me na te doen. Ik zie een papagaai op de kast zitten. Hij lijkt op iemand, maar ik kan niet zeggen wie.

'Wie ben jij ?' vraagt hij krijsend.

'Zeg me eerst maar eens wie jullie zijn, en hoe kwam ik hier ?' zeg ik.

'Ach, gut, ben je alweer vergeten wie ik ben ?' krast de papagaai. Een klein kraaitje springt uit de papagaai.

'Als ik het niet dacht,' roep ik, 'jullie zijn van dat rode fietsje ! Wat moeten jullie nou weer ?'

Dan wordt ik ineens wakker. Ik heb opeens de enorme behoefte om een zebra te berijden. Gelukkig is er bij ons in de stad net een zebra-park geopend, en het is nog vroeg, dus ik klim over het hek, en spring op zo'n beest. het is gelukkig nog erg vroeg, iedereen ligt nog lekker te slapen. Ha, ha, dat gaat goed. Wat heb ik toch met zebra's.

Aan het einde van de rit klim ik weer over het hek, maar ..... er staat een klein rood fietsje tegen het hek geparkeerd.

Een geel klein mannetje springt tevoorschijn, zeggende : 'Het rode fietsje staat altijd voor u klaar. Aangenaam, ik ben van de belasting .... eh.... belasting voor het onderwijs, om even duidelijk te wezen. Eh, u krijgt nog van ons terug....We hadden ergens een piepklein foutje gemaakt in onze administratie .... U hebt uw leerlingen aan ons verkocht, maar wij zijn de slechtsten nog niet, en het was achteraf een beetje teveel van het goede, dus u mag een leerling naar keuze terugontvangen. Mjam, aardig van ons heh ? ...'

'Ja, zeer aardig,' stamel ik. 'Ehm.... ik kies voor Lize, ze was altijd een beste leerling, had altijd aardige cijfers, droeg aardige, nette kleren .....' En daar glijd ik weg in een zebra-gat .... De echo's van verdrietige en boze leerlingen zuigen me in de diepte .... Ik moet nu verschijnen voor .... Jezus, bent u dat ?

'Ja, meester Rateldonk, dat ben Ik,' zegt Jezus met een luide stem.

'Hoe was het met onderwijs-belasting ?' vraagt Hij.

'Eh, wel goed, dacht ik,' stamel ik, een beetje duizelig.

'Dus je bent een beetje duizelig, meester Rateldonk ?' vraagt Hij weer, 'Hoe komt dat zo ?'

'Eh, ik heb denk ik iets verkeerds gegeten,' mompel ik.

'Zeg, meester Rateldonk,' zegt Jezus vervolgens, 'die Zebra heb Ik ook gemaakt, is het geen prachtig beest.'

'Ja, ja,' zucht ik, 'nu U het zegt.'

'Zo, zo, Rateldonk, nog steeds evenveel praatjes.'

En dan ineens glijd ik door een papagaaien-put nog dieper naar beneden. Al mijn eigen stommiteiten echo-en in mijn hoofd. En het lijkt alsof iemand de volume-knop steeds harder draait .... God, de Vader, bent U dat ?

'Rateldonk, hoe was het bij onderwijs-belasting,' vraagt de Vader.

'Wel aardig, dacht ik,' stamel ik weer. Ik begin een beetje moedeloos te worden.

'Waarom zo down, Rateldonk ?' vraagt Hij weer. 'Iets verkeerds gegeten ?'

'Nee,' stamel ik, 'het komt door dat rode fietsje, ik had nooit naar ze moeten luisteren.'

'Wat nu dan, Rateldonk ?' vraagt de Vader.

'Ik ....ik ...weet het niet ...' stamel ik weer.

Dan glijdt ik ineens door een muggen-tunnel heen, nog dieper naar beneden. 'Ben jij dat Lize ?'

'Ja, meester, ze hebben me ......'

En dan word ik echt wakker, althans .... dat hoop ik maar. Ik durf vandaag niet naar school. Ik denk dat ik maar in bed blijf. Ik zal hen op de zondagschool allemaal eens vertellen wat ik heb meegemaakt. Neen, ik heb een beter plan. Ik zal hen leren wat een collecte is, ik zal ze leren hoe ze moeten collecteren, en met de opbrengst zal ik weer een ritje naar de zebra-brug maken, misschien dat ik daar het mannetje van kerk-belasting dan mag ontmoeten ..... Misschien dat we nog wat kunnen samenwerken met elkaar.

Slaap lekker, lief Dagboek, bedankt voor het luisteren. Enneh .... niet verder vertellen, he ....

Slaap lekker, Rateldonk, we zullen het vast niet verder vertellen .....

Ah, dan kan ik nu heerlijk slapen .... Huh ? Mijn Dagboek sprak terug .... Ach, wat heb ik toch een wonderbaar Dagboek ..... zzzzzzzz

Droom maar fijn, Rateldonk, de slaapliederen staan al klaar om je verder in slaap te wiegen. Al die lange klokken van je collega's .....

Mijn Collega's ...... ja ..... zzzzzz

Waar zou ik zijn zonder m'n collega's .....

Rateldonk, slaap zacht, want morgen is er een nieuwe dag. Vannacht zul je het groene mannetje van kerk-belasting ontmoeten .....

Oh ja ? Dat is geweldig ..... zzzz

Je zult terug moeten keren tot de zebra-brug ...

Hoofdstuk 2. De Vermenigvuldigings-Truc

Dit keer stormde het daar, met onweer en bliksem, erg koud, zo donker ... Daar stond ik, midden in de ellende ... te wachten op het groene mannetje van kerk-belasting.

Ah, daar zul je hem hebben.

Gelukkig, hij heeft een vlammetje waaraan ik me kan warmen.

"Dus, Rateldonk," zegt het mannetje, "jij wil samenwerken ..."

"Eh, ja, meneer, als dat kan ...." stamel ik, nog een beetje rillend van de kou in mijn botten.

"Alles is mogelijk voor hen die geloven," sprak het mannetje, "geef me nu dan al je geld."

"Mijn geld ?" bibber ik ....

"Ja," zegt het mannetje, "dan zal ik je de vermenigvuldigings-truc leren."

"Oh, goed, hier heeft u vijfhonderd gulden." bibber ik weer...

"Goedzo," zegt het mannetje, "nu, kijk goed wat ik doe."

Ik zag hoe het mannetje mijn lieve vijfhonderd gulden onder z'n hoed schoof, en hij vertrok.

"Daar gaat mijn geld," dacht ik...

Maar ineens kwam hij terug met een enorme hond :

"Kijk," zegt het mannetje, "dit is Bello. Hij kan kunstjes."

En daar spuwde de beste hond mijn vijfhonderd gulden uit.... Alles in snippertjes. "Maar, maar ...." stamel ik ".... het zijn kleine scheermesjes .... en wat doen die in mijn lichaam zo ineens ? Wat gaan we hier doen ?" Ik gilde het uit van de pijn.

"Ach ja," oppert het groene mannetje "...we werken samen met het blauwe mannetje van lichaams-belasting, eh... zeg maar medische belasting, dat staat netter ...."

"Jullie zijn verschrikkelijk," gil ik ....."stop die machine ...."

"Goed, goed," sputtert het mannetje, "we kunnen wel een afspraak maken..."

"Afspraak maken ?" gil ik .....

"Ja," zegt het mannetje, "over twee weken komen we weer terug."

Zwetend werd ik wakker. Wat een afschuwelijke nachtmerrie, maar ik heb nog steeds overal pijn van binnen. Ik laat de dokter wel komen .....

Ik had twee verschrikkelijke weken. Maar precies na die twee weken kwam ik het mannetje weer tegen, zoals hij gezegd had. Nu was het blauwe mannetje van medische belasting er ook bij.

"Wat willen jullie van me ?" stamel ik ....

"Je hebt dit zelf gewild ...." zeiden de twee mannetjes "...Je wilde met ons van de belastings-dienst samenwerken. Nu dan, eerst leer je onze machines kennen. Met deze apparaten ga jij straks ook werken."

"Wat ?" protesteer ik .... "Ik met die krengen ? Dat nooit ! Zo waar ik meester Rateldonk ben !"

"Dan kunnen we niets anders doen dan de volume-knop van deze apparaten iets hoger te zetten." zeiden de mannetjes weer.

"Oh nee, heden, lieve goedheid, nee," gilde ik ... al weer enorme pijn voelende "...haal me hieruit ....ik ...ik ...zal alles doen wat jullie zeggen."

"Goed dan, Rateldonk, eindelijk een verstandig woord," zeiden de mannetjes. "Luister goed, Rateldonk : Het geld wat mensen aan ons geven is het geld wat ze in deze belastings-automaten stoppen. Het geld word tot scheermesjes versnipperd en daarmee kunnen we in hun lichamen snijden, zodat we in hen kunnen wonen. Zo worden ze onze slaven, ...slaven van de belasting. Zo worden ze onze robotten, robotten van het scherpe geld. Wij zijn de meesters van belasting, wij zijn de meesters van het geld. Dit is het geheim van onze macht, maar jij kunt daarin delen."

"Goed, dat moet dan maar," stamel ik. "Ik heb geen andere keus."

"Bello zal met je meegaan in het vervolg," zeiden de mannetjes .....

Hoofdstuk 3. Rateldonk Verzekeringen

De volgende dag stond ik voor de zondagschool. Ik huilde van binnen, maar dit was de enige

oplossing. Maar al snel kreeg ik een genieus idee. Ik zou de directeur van de scheermesjes-fabriek laten komen, en ik zou ze leren hoe ze hun eigen scherpe machinetjes konden maken. Ik weet zeker dat ze de mannetjes wel aardig zullen vinden. Zo kunnen alle kindertjes toch hand in hand staan ... alleen jammer voor diegenen die er niet bij zijn. Die zullen daarna wel een verschrikkelijke nacht gaan krijgen, met al die apparaten die als honden op jacht gaan. Maar goed, misschien kan ik hen dan ook wel bekeren. Ik ga gewoon predikant worden en verschrikkelijk veel geld verdienen met deze uitvinding ..... Ik ga deze belastings-machines omzetten tot verzekerings-machines. Maar dan moet wel iedereen lid worden van mijn verzekeringen. Ik weet niet hoeveel dat gaat kosten ....

Rateldonk Verzekeringen .... klinkt wel goed ....

Eens kijken wat de mannetjes er van vinden .....

Waar zijn ze ? Ze zijn in geen velden of wegen meer te bekennen ....

Maar al met al, het was een goed plan .....

Of was het gewoon alleen maar een goede droom .... ?

Ach, en eigenlijk ben ik gewoon maar een eenvoudige schoolmeester .... Laat ik maar gewoon weer naar school gaan om al die andere dingen te vergeten. Ze staan zo ver weg. Misschien was het allemaal mijn eigen fantasie ... Ik kan misschien wel film-regisseur worden ..... om de kinderen te vermaken ....

"Rateldonk ?" hoorde ik ineens ...

"Bent U dat, Heer Jezus ?" vraag ik stamelend ...

"Ja, Rateldonk" ....hoor ik weer, "Ik krijg nog vijfhonderd gulden van je."

"Hoe dat dan, Heer ?" stamel ik weer ....

"Die vijfhonderd gulden die je aan het mannetje gaf, die waren van Mij. Ik had ze je gegeven om Mijn Machine mee te bouwen." zegt Jezus weer ernstig.

"Hoe bedoelt U, Heer ? Wat voor een machine ?" stamel ik, in wanhoop wegzakkende.

"Dat ben je al weer vergeten, he, omdat je met zoveel andere dingen bezig bent ...." zegt Jezus weer ... Ik word een beetje duizelig .... en begin weer te bibberen ...

"Die Zebra is een prachtig dier, he, Rateldonk ?" zegt Jezus verder ....

"Je hebt hem misbruikt," buldert Jezus ... "Je had Mijn Zebra-Machine moeten bouwen om alles weer terug te draaien. Zie, de mannetjes, draaien alles wat recht is krom, en wat krom is recht. Ik ben diep in je teleurgesteld, Rateldonk."

Ineens word ik wakker, en ik sta voor het zebra-pad, op weg naar school. Ik heb dat wel vaker dat ik wegdroom als ik voor het zebra-pad sta. Dan denk ik : "Zal ik op de zwarte strepen lopen, de witte, of op allebei ?" Ik kan daar uren over na denken. Ik weet nooit wat ik wil.

Hoofdstuk 4. Nooit Meer Rode Soep

Het hangt er altijd weer vanaf hoe de dag gaat worden. Of ik een omdraaier ga berijden of een terugdraaier.

Nog steeds twijfel ik hierover : omdraaien of terugdraaien.

Ben ik een eeuwige twijfelaar ?

Ik heb ontdekt dat beiden pijn doen. Ik heb ontdekt dat het land van de zebra niet makkelijk is. Ik denk dat ik eigenlijk een lafaard ben, dat ik me laat leiden door het weer. Ik waai met alle winden mee. Staat de omdraaier voor me, dan berijd ik de omdraaier, en als de terugdraaier voor me staat,

dan berijd ik de terugdraaier. Ik heb zo het gevoel dat ik eigenlijk een heel lui iemand ben. Ik probeer het iedereen naar de zin te maken aan de andere kant, dus ik ben ook een heel ijverig type. Misschien dat ik ergens middenin sta. De mensen vinden me daarom wispelturig, en zeggen dat ik eigenlijk niet te vertrouwen ben. "Een aardige man, maar levensgevaarlijk," zei iemand eens. Want ik draai zo snel om. Dat wat dicht bij me staat heeft zoveel macht over me, en dat maakt me wel eens bang ... heel bang.

Help me, help me, maar tot wie zeg ik dat eigenlijk ? Het kan me als puntje bij paaltje komt niet zoveel interesseren wie me helpt. Als ik maar geholpen word. Maar dit brengt me dus altijd weer in de meest benarde situaties. Misschien dat ik daarom schoolmeester Rateldonk heet ?

Toch verlang ik diep in mijn hart naar het land achter de zebra. Ik zou wel eens willen weten wat daarachter ligt.

Sommigen zeggen daar is het land van de papagaai. Die drijft met alles de spot en doet waar hij zelf zin in heeft.

Anderen zeggen daar is het land van de mug.

Ik weet het niet. Ik vind het erg moelijk om nog iemand te geloven na alles wat er gebeurd is. Heb ik zelfmedelijden ? Ja, misschien wel. Ik werd onder zware druk gezet aan beide kanten. Zoals ik al zei : Beide kanten doen pijn. Is het misschien niet beter om gewoon in het midden te blijven ? Nee, dat word door beide kanten niet geaccepteerd. Dan heb ik twee vijanden, in plaats van een. In het midden doet het dan ook pijn, tenzij ...... nee zo mag ik niet denken. Ik kan ze niet elkaar in de haren laten vliegen, en zelf de baas van de arena worden. Oh, jongens, en toch lijkt me dit het beste plan. Sportschool Rateldonk, dan is het allemaal niet te serieus. Zonder bloedvergieten. En ik leer ze hoe ze elkaar in de haren kunnen vliegen. Ja, er zijn dus spelregels. Ik wil geen scheermesjes meer zien, geen bloed. Zelfs geen tomatenketchup. Zou ik ze rustig kunnen houden ?

Ik kan ook die hele zebra-toestand vergeten en in het circus gaan werken .... Nee, dat is ook te gevaarlijk met al die wilde dieren en die moeilijke kunstjes waarmee je maar al te gauw iets kan breken.

Ik wil gewoon snel bejaard worden, snel de rust in, met pensioen en al.

En ik kan reclame gaan maken voor bejaardenhuizen, zodat iedereen zo snel mogelijk bejaard is. Dan hebben we toch alle problemen uit de wereld geholpen ? Wat een brilliant plan, Rateldonk. Al zeg ik het zelf.

Er wordt gebeld ... twee heren voor de deur...

"Goedemiddag, opa Rateldonk,"wij zijn van de bejaarden-belasting."

"Ik doe niet meer aan belastingen en al die onzin," kras ik ... "Ik ben nu bejaard, laat me met rust."

De heren vertrekken .... het werkt .....

Even later staan er weer twee heren voor de deur ...

"Wij zijn van de kraaien-belasting, u heeft namelijk een kraai in huis...."

Ik denk : "Zo kunnen we wel aan de gang blijven, ik krijg nooit rust, tenzij ik zelf hoofd van de belastingdienst word...."

Het is mij nu menens. Ik heb alle werelden gezien, en overal komen ze met die belastings-grappen aanzetten.

Daar snel ik op mijn fiets, die ineens rood kleurt, tot het kantoor van belastingen. Een oude kraai staart mij aan.

"Zeg, jongeman, ik denk dat u de zaken hier niet zo goed begrijpt," zegt de oude kraai. "U haalt allerlei dingen door elkaar heen. U fietst zoveel heen en weer. U komt zo niet tot rust."

"Ten eerste ben ik geen jongeman," krijs ik, "en ten tweede is de belastings-dienst de oorzaak van alle kwaad."

"Rustig, mijnheer," zegt de kraai weer, "gaat u eerst eens even zitten. Die belastingen zijn het probleem niet, want belastingen laten zien dat alles eerlijk verdeeld moet worden. Helaas gaan mensen zoals u niet goed met de belasting-machines om, als het om macht gaat."

"Ik ben niet belust op macht, ik wil gewoon rust !" krijs ik.

"Ja, en om die rust te bereiken, gebruikt u macht," oppert de kraai weer...

"Ja, maar wat moet ik dan doen," krijs ik, "alles maar dan ook alles probeert me te eten, alsof ik een banaan ben."

"Alles moet gegeten worden," zegt de kraai, "dat is om het voedsel tot zuivere, werkzame stoffen om te zetten."

"Ik ben het werken zat," schreeuw ik.

"Dus dat is de oorzaak," zegt de kraai, "u bent het werken zat, u bent dus lui."

"Nee," huil ik, "ik ben moe, moe."

"U bent hier trouwens niet bij belastingszaken," zegt de kraai weer, "u bent hier bij het arbeids-bureau."

"Nee !" gil ik, "haal me hier weg ! Ik ben moe, moe, moe !"

"Maar u staat hier ingeschreven," zegt de kraai ...

"U bent een slaap-werker," vervolgt de kraai ...

"Huh," stamel ik verbaasd, "wat is dat ?"

"Dat wil zeggen dat u tijdens uw slaap werkt," zegt de oude kraai ...

"U werkt daar bij belastingen, bij verzekeringen, bij het circus, en bij duizend en een andere bedrijven." vervolgt de kraai ...

"Dus, dus, u beweert dat ik overdag helemaal niet werk ?" stamel ik ... bijna flauwvallend van verbazing ...

"Overdag ? Wat is dat ?" vraagt de oude kraai. "Je werkt alleen in je slaap, en dat is alles wat je doet."

"Nu breekt m'n klomp," probeer ik ... "Ik ben toch gewoon schoolmeester ?"

"Ja, in je droom," zegt de kraai. "Je hele leven is een droom. Wij maken onderscheid tussen de bewuste droom en de onbewuste droom."

"Rateldonk Uitzend-Bureau ...... ik zie het al helemaal zitten," peins ik .....

"Ja, mijnheer de kraai, hartelijk dank voor de informatie, maar ik moet nu echt gaan. Fijn even met u gesproken te hebben." roep ik hem na ..... rijdend op mijn rode fietsje naar huis. Mijn fietsje is ineens zo klein geworden ..... maar ja, dat is een keer wat anders .... Ik heb nu een heilige opdracht .... dat is het enige wat telt. Ik zal mensen hun dromen geven, en ze zullen voor mij werken.

"Al wel eens nagedacht over de administratie, Rateldonk ?"

Ach, daar verzin ik wel wat voor. Ik kan mijn buurmeisje als secretaresse aanstellen, als .....

Daar wordt gebeld. Het is mijn buurmeisje. Ze is zo blij om bij me te mogen werken. Het werkt. Ik ben nu de nieuwe Klaas Vaak. En als dat te druk wordt, dan stuur ik gewoon die droom naar iemand anders, zodat ze het werk kunnen overnemen.

Rateldonk, oh meesterbrein, je bent een ware fantast. Maar het werkt, en dat is alles wat telt.

En hier werk ik nu al jaren. Ik ben allang geen schoolmeester meer en andere moeilijke dingen. Dat hebben ze allemaal van me overgenomen. Oh, collega's .... waar zou ik zijn zonder hen.

Zou dit dan de Jakobs-ladder zijn ? Jakob die zijn broer oplichtte met een bordje rode soep ?

Zou dit dan ..... ? Nee ..... zeg me dat het niet waar is ..... Zou hier dat rode fietsje uit voortgekomen zijn ? Uit die rode soep ?

Zouden er twee Jakobs-ladders zijn ? Een goede en een slechte ?

En waar heb ik nu voor gekozen ?

Waar ben ik beland ?

"Rateldonk ?" hoor ik ...

"Bent u dat Heere Jezus ?" vraag ik stamelend

"Ja, Rateldonk, wie anders ?"

"Ik heb de Zebra gemaakt. Wat een prachtig dier is het, he ? ...vervolgt Hij

"Ja, Heer," stamel ik beschaamd ...

"Hoe was de soep, Rateldonk ?"

"Eh, wel lekker, Heer ...."

"Wil je nog een beetje dan ?"

"Nee, nee, bedankt .... ik ....ik ...heb genoeg ...."

Ik stamel verlegen ..... Ik heb m'n portie gehad .....

"De Jacobs-ladder is een Zebra, die de mens brengt van realiteit tot realiteit. Het hangt er alleen af wat je drinkt ..... Jakob's Rode Soep of ......" en dan vaagt Jezus' Stem weg ....

"Of wat, Heer ?" roep ik hem vragend, bijna smekend na ...

Of wat .... het lijkt of ik het weer verloren heb .....

Mensen reizen op Jakobs-ladder door die rode soep of door .... ?

Ik weet het niet .... Ik heb het niet kunnen verstaan ....

"Rateldonk ?" hoor ik ....

"Bent u dat, God de Vader ?" vraag ik ....

"Ja, Rateldonk," zegt de Vader ...

"Iets verkeerds gegeten ? ..... Rateldonk ?" vraagt de Vader verder ...

"Ja, mijnheer," stamel ik ... helemaal in de war .... "en ik zou graag willen weten wat ik kan eten of drinken om dit recht te krijgen ....."

"Aha," zegt de Vader, "dus je wil iets recht zien te krijgen ..."

"Ja Vader ...."

"Ooit van Zebra-Sap gehoord, Rateldonk ? Groeit ergens aan een boom .... een vrucht van de Zebra-Boom, ... een Zebra-Vrucht ...."

"Nee, Vader"

"Zeg Rateldonk, wij gebruiken dat als benzine ..."

En daar vaagt de stem weg ...... Ik zal nu alleen op zoek moeten naar dat sap .... Een ding weet ik zeker : Ik wil nooit meer van die rode soep drinken. Ik heb me al in genoeg benarde situaties gewerkt door dat spul.

Hoofdstuk 5. De Zebra-Boom

's Nachts droom ik weer van de grote boom ... Is dit dan de Zebra-Boom ? Daar waar je dingen ziet die heel wat anders blijken te zijn als je dichterbij komt ?

Hier moeten die vruchten dan ergens hangen, met het sap om me uit de nachtmerrie te halen. Ah, daar bovenin zie ik de vruchten hangen ..... Maar toen ik bovenkwam ... bleken het geen vruchten te zijn, maar kleine mannetjes ....

"Je hoeft niet bang te zijn voor ons, hoor," zei een van de mannetjes, "wij zijn de mannetjes van de Zebra-Vruchten."

Ze hadden lichtblauwe kleding aan, en ik vroeg ze hoe ik bij de Zebra-Vruchten kon komen ...

"Dat kun je niet, want je bent een vogeltje van de klok," zeiden ze ...

Ik bemerkte dat ik hier veren had, en dat ik met enorme klokken op m'n rug liep. "Die dromen die je verspreid zijn klokken," zeiden de mannetjes. "Daarmee houd je de mensen gevangen," dus je kunt de vruchten niet eten.

Ik raakte totaal in de war ... Vogels, klokken, waar hebben ze het over ?

Plotseling zag ik mezelf zitten in een grote klok. Een soort van dwerg kwam naar me toe om me de hand te schudden. Hij zei :

"Alle vruchten zijn dwergen. De laagjes van die vruchten zijn de verschillende realiteiten die met elkaar verbonden zijn. In de ene realiteit ben je iemand anders dan in de andere realitiet, maar ze hebben wel met elkaar te maken. Er zijn bewuste laagjes, en onbewuste laagjes, en ook de zwarte laagjes gebruiken we om de witte laagjes te laten groeien. In die zwarte laagjes is alles omgekeerde wereld, maar die laagjes zijn nodig om de ware wereld te openen. Dit is het geheim van de Zebra-Brug."

"Goed, goed, maar geef me nu maar snel dat sap," zei ik tegen de dwerg. Ik begon enorm ongeduldig te worden.

"Zie," zegt de dwerg, "je bent ongeduldig, je leeft nog met een klok op je rug, en daarmee oefen je ook nog macht over anderen uit. Daarom kun je het sap niet drinken. Je moet eerst alle laagjes van de vrucht accepteren als voedzaam en nodig. Ook de laagjes waar je moe bent, waar je pijn hebt, en waar je moet wachten."

"Goed," zei ik, "hier heb je al mijn klokken. Hier heb je al mijn veren."

Plotseling voelde ik het sap in mijn mond glijden. Het was wonderbaarlijk. Het stroomde door mijn aderen en ......

Daar word ik wakker ..... was het allemaal maar een droom .... ?

Ik voel me zo anders ..... wat zullen de kinderen vandaag zeggen ?

Ik kijk in de spiegel, en ....

Ik ben in een Zebra veranderd.

Hoofdstuk 6. Terug op School

Op school aangekomen zijn de kinderen zo enthousiast ... Ze kennen me bijna niet meer terug. Ik heb mijn mand vol Zebra-Vruchten die ik uitdeel. De kinderen eten er gretig van, en de juffrouw maakt er Zebra-Sap van. De hele school staat op stelten. En iedereen wordt alsmaar kleiner, en ziet kleine mannetjes, met lichtblauwe kleding.

Ja, deze lichtblauwe wondervruchten vallen bij de hele school in smaak. We rennen als kabouters door de gangen, samen met de lichtblauwe mannetjes. We rennen naar de schoolbibliotheek, waar een van de lichtblauwe mannetjes een geheime tunnel kent, achter een schilderij. We vliegen door het gat naar binnen, om zo door de tunnel in een nieuwe wereld aan te landen. Het land van de Zebra-Vruchten. Zoveel bossen met zebra-bomen, vol met zebra-vruchten. We worden steeds kleiner en kleiner naarmate we er meer van eten, en we voelen ons zo anders.

De kinderen willen niet meer terug, maar ik weet dat we terug moeten. Het leven gaat verder, en dat is ook een onderdeel van de zebra-vrucht..... de verschillende laagjes die allemaal belangrijk waren voor het geheel.

Ik weet niet hoelang de vruchten werken. Ik weet ook niet hoelang ik het vol ga houden. Het lijkt wel een nieuwe uitvinding van me, en ik heb nu echt het gevoel dat ik goed bezig ben ... alsof ik nu echt ben bekeerd ...

Maar goed, ik ben nog steeds meester Rateldonk, ook al ben ik nu nog steeds een zebra. Ik vraag me af hoe lang ik dat blijf. We hebben onze normale grootte weer terug, de kinderen zijn rustig. Ik geef ze eens per week een zebra-vrucht. En ikzelf neem er drie op een dag ....

Misschien moet ik daar eens mee stoppen .... want ik ben nog steeds een zebra .....

"Rateldonk ?"

Ja, Heer Jezus...

"Vind je jezelf niet prachtig zo ?"

Ja, Heer Jezus ..... maar ....

"Maar ?"

Ik ben nu een zebra, maar .... wat zullen de mensen wel niet denken ..... als dit langer blijft duren .....

"De mensen ....."

En daar vervaagde Zijn Stem .....

"Rateldonk ?"

Ja, Vader ...

"Hoe was de Sap ?"

Goed, Vader, maar ....

"Maar ?"

De mensen ....

"Ja, de mensen ....."

En daar word ik wakker .... Ik ben weer normaal .... Ik kan weer normaal naar school, naar normale kinderen .... Eindelijk ben ik meester Rateldonk weer .....

Ik heb weer leren wennen aan de rode soep ..... Ik kan niet anders ..... want de mensen ....

"Ja, de mensen ..... Rateldonk ....."

Wie bent u dan ?

"Ik ben de Heilige Geest, de stem van je geweten ...."

Oh, leuk om te weten .....

"Rateldonk, de zebra-boom is vanmorgen omgehakt, door een rode beer .... De reizen naar de zebra-boom zijn nu afgelopen."

Ik kan er niet wakker om liggen .... Ik en mijn rode soep .....

"Oh, en Rateldonk, ... de boom viel op de soep-fabriek ..... deze is totaal verwoest ....."

Dan heeft Jakob misschien nog wel een ander middeltje .....

"Nee, Rateldonk, het spelletje is uit....."

Dan speel ik een ander spelletje .....

"Oh, en Rateldonk .... een van de takken van de boom viel op de spelletjes-fabriek .... deze is ook totaal verwoest .... Wil je altijd het laatste woord hebben ?"

Ja, daar ben ik schoolmeester voor .....

"Je mag het laatste woord hebben, Rateldonk ...."

Dank u ....

"......Ja, Rateldonk ...... op de begrafenis van het Woordenboek van Babel .... want er was altijd maar een taal die gesproken mocht worden, en dat was jouw taal ....."

"Rateldonk ? Rateldonk ?"

Maar Rateldonk was al ver weg op zijn rode fietsje ... op zoek naar dat wat overgebleven is ..... op zoek naar nieuwe avonturen .....

Het Rode Luchtkoraal

Hoofdstuk 1. Opdracht Onderwater

Hoofdstuk 2. De Dans van de Orca

Hoofdstuk 3. Kabouter-Virus

Hoofdstuk 1. Opdracht Onderwater

De engelen hadden een zware strijd te voeren tegen de zee-demonen. Ze zaten in hun luchtschepen, om de zeeen onder hen af te scannen, en hadden verschillende demoonsoorten op het scherm. Ze hadden net de lessen afgerond op de engelenschool, en nu moesten ze dan hetgeen ze geleerd

hadden in praktijk brengen. Gelukkig ging er een leraar met hen mee die er voor zorgde dat hen niets overkwam. Het was een Morgenster, een onderwijzer, een wat oudere, wijzere engel ... Hij had rode klederen aan met een rood kleed om hem heen ... Rood ... in meerdere tinten ... Hij was een morgenster in de orde van de morgenroders ... Hij werd zo ook genoemd : "Morgenrood" ... De leerling-engelen hadden veel respect voor hem ... Hij was vroeger een seraf, een oorlogs-engel, en had vele grote en gevaarlijke demonen verslagen ... Voor elke leidinggevende demoon die hij had verslagen kwam er een dun licht streepje op zijn rode jas terecht ... deze jas zat vol met zulke streepjes ... Het was alsof hij met het rode goud was bezaaid .... Nu was hij dan een morgenster, een leraar van Gods Geheimen en plannen ... Het was een engel met zo'n heerlijkheid, dat zijn leerling-engelen er niet genoeg van kregen naar hem te luisteren ... Hij had een gouden stem in allerlei tonen die zich als vloeibare chocolade in elkaar vermengden. ...Hij maakte kunstwerken van hun geheugen ... Zodat ze graag met hun geheugen werkten ... Het geheugen ... zo zei hij .... was het arsenaal ... vol met belangrijke wapens tegen de vijand ...

Nu had hij ze dan zo'n lange tijd onderwezen over de gewesten van de zee ... Hij leerde hen de gevaarlijke spelonken kennen, de valstrikken, maar ook de schatten, die vooral diep in de zee op verborgen plekken lagen .... Morgenrood was bekend om zijn grappen ... Hij kon de dingen soms op zo'n manier zeggen, dat wonden ogenblikkelijk verdwenen ... Het was een begaafde engel, waar zijn engelen-leerlingen, en alle engelenleraren van de engelenschool erg trots op waren ...

Ze hadden een stekelige demoon op het scherm .. Ze kenden dit soort, omdat Morgenrood er veel over had verteld ... Morgenrood had hen veel verteld over hoe netels werkten en andere steekwapens in de huiden van demonen ... Ze konden zichzelf zo goed camoufleren, dat de engelen goed werden gewaarschuwd door Morgenster niet zomaar dingen aan te raken ... Ze moesten voorzichtig worden en eerst de dingen afscannen en reinigen voordat ze er op gingen zitten, stappen of staan .... Ze moesten eerst voldoende anti-gif hebben en beschermende lagen, alvorens gebieden te betreden ... Dat was een hele kunst ... Ze moesten vooral op hun hoede zijn voor verborgen gevaren en dubbele bodems ... Ze moesten op de hoogte zijn van de verandering van het getij ... de tijdstippen ... en daarbij hun eigen klokken goed programmerende ... Dit was een hele klus ... Maar Morgenrood hielp hen daarbij ...

Op gezette tijden konden bepaalde luchtschepen onder water gaan voor missies en onderzoek ... Emiliel was een piloot van een van zulke luchtschepen ... Hij was een cherub, een lange goudkleurig geklede engel met hier en daar blauwe banden ... Hij stond in voor de veiligheid van de leerling-engelen ... Ze hadden de opdracht een meisjes-ziel te redden. Ze was tijdens een zeilwedstrijd verdronken toen ze door de giek van boord werd geslagen ... Demonen brachten haar tot het dodenrijk van de zee waar

ze in een koraalrif werd vastgeklonken ... De dingen die daar gebeurden waren verschrikkelijk ... Haar ziel groeide in het koraal terwijl de plantaardig/dierlijke mechanismes zich met haar ziele-inhoud voedden .... Ze was levend en groeiend voedsel geworden ... en Emiliel stuurde zijn schip erop af ... Ze hadden de plaats al op het scherm ... De leerling-engelen zaten achter hun computers, en enkelen van hen vuurden al wat pijlen af om verschillende demonische wachters uit te schakelen ... Deze plek werd goed bewaakt ... Een enorme anemoon kwam op het schip af, een rode, met vele vangarmen ... Met het gif probeerde de anemoon door de muren van het schip heen te breken ... Ineens door een enorme inwaartse zuigkracht werden ze door de anemoon opgeslokt .... Maar dit stond al in het plan opgetekend ... Ze waren nu in de tempel van de heer der zee gekomen, de heerser over de dodenrijken onder water .... het was een oude strategie om de krachten van de engelen te testen : de opslokking ... en zo konden de engelen van binnenuit de terreur ongedaan maken ... Het was een technologische truc .... En Emiliel had dit al wel eens eerder gedaan ... Morgenrood hield het allemaal goed in de gaten ...

Het was alsof het schip door duizenden haaien werd opgeslokt, maar nu konden ze dan een kijkje nemen in de tempel van deze dodenrijken, waar alle gemene apparaatjes te vinden zouden zijn ... Ze moesten een paar belangrijke pluggen onschadelijk maken .... Emiliel dreef rustig naar het hart van de anemoon .... Voor hem was het allemaal een koud kunstje ... Maar een paar leerling-engelen huiverden in hun stoelen ... Er was hier een enorme hitte die het schip probeerde te infiltreren ... en opeens was er een enorm gegil .... Leerlingen hadden een paar rode anemonen door de vloer zien komen ... en probeerden de griezels ongedaan te maken met hun laserzwaarden .... Maar de vangarmen begonnen snel door het hele schip heen te groeien ....

In het hart van de anemoon aangekomen, zagen ze een enorme hal waarin ze terecht waren gekomen .. Helemaal aan het einde van de hal stond een grote lange smalle troon, omringd met koralen, waarop een enorm sinister beest zat .. Hij had een lang dun gezicht, een rood gezicht, met een tuitende mond ... Zijn stem bulderde in een echo die steeds lager van toon werd ... en steeds zachter ... Emiliel zei dat hij hierdoor het schip probeerde te infiltreren ... Plotseling leek het alsof het schip explodeerde, maar Emiliel riep dat het maar een truc was, een multi-sensitief beeld wat in hun hersenen werd geprojecteerd ... Emiliel riep naar de leerlingen dat ze allemaal elkaar vast moesten houden ... Hij zei dat het maar een bepaalde droomlevel was waarin dit gebeurde, dat ze niets hadden te vrezen, en dat ze zo gewoon weer wakker zouden worden in het schip ... Ze waren door slaapwapenen aangevallen .... Sommige leerlingen kregen de rillingen ... Ze hielden elkaar allemaal stevig vast en langzaam zoog het rode beest hen tot de troon ... Het leek wel een eeuwigheid te duren .... De troon kwam maar niet dichterbij, terwijl ze toch richting de troon bewogen .... "Dit is afstands-verbeelding," zei

Emiliel ... "ook iets om je geen zorgen over te maken ..." Plotseling was het alsof de hal draaide en ze naar beneden vielen richting de troon ... Het was alsof ze met een smak op het gezicht van het enorme beest vielen .... Hij zoog hen naar binnen .... "Wat komen jullie doen ?" bulderde hij ... Emiliel legde hen uit dat dit allemaal standaard was ... dat het beest met deze trucs hen onzeker en bang probeerde te maken ... Emiliel had ineens een paarse sidderaal in zijn hand die hen wel leek te verblinden en te verdoven ... Hij zei : "Dit is die plug ... zodra ik deze plug heb gebroken, worden jullie gewoon weer wakker in het schip ... En dan zijn jullie onder zijn invloed vandaan zodat jullie het meisje zonder problemen kunnen redden ..." En zo gebeurde het ... Emiliel brak de sidderaal, en iedereen werd wakker in het schip .... Ze keken recht in een fel licht waar ze het meisje zagen spartelen ... Ze konden nu via hun hartstralen het meisje bereiken en haar in het schip loodsen .... Ze was zo blij om met hen mee te gaan ... Ze had een verschrikkelijke strijd achter de rug .... Ze wist dat zij haar naar Jezus zouden brengen ...

Morgenrood was trots op hen ... de missie was geslaagd .... en het schip steeg al snel op vanuit de enorme zee ... en in de lucht ontstond er een bliksemflits die het schip teletransporteerde naar de troonzaal van Jezus ... Het was een enorme hal met zacht lichtblauw licht .... Ze zagen de troon van Jezus in de verte, een lange dunne troon, bijna gotisch, maar dan in een hele andere, zachte stijl ... Jezus glimlachte en strekte zijn armen naar haar uit .... Ze rende zoals ze nog nooit gerend had, maar het leek wel alsof ze geen stap dichterbij kwam .... Wat had de Heer toch een humor .... de leerling-engelen glimlachten ... en ook het meisje begon te lachen ... Ze voelde zich zalig, alsof ze omringd was door zachte bubbels ..... "Mijn Baby," sprak Jezus ... terwijl zijn echo steeds zachter en luider werd ... De woorden waren alsof Hij naast haar stond, en in haar oor sprak .... Zo genezend ... Ze zag Hem niet meer ... maar naar gevoel kwam Hij steeds dichterbij ... "Trucage, Heer ?" vroeg een van de leerling-engelen .... "Ja," zei Jezus ... "Hemelse Techniek ... Ik ben trots op je Andron ... Je hebt jezelf goed op de hoogte gebracht ..." Andron glimlachte dieper en dieper ....

"Zeg, Andron," sprak Jezus ... "breng deze lieve dame naar het wolkenhuis ... Ze heeft een erg moeilijke tijd achter de rug ...."

In en om het wolkenhuis vlogen luchtdolfijnen .. Ze hadden zulke zachte, diepe stemmen ... Stemmen die je geheel konden invullen en omhullen ... Het waren lichtwezens van God ... van zo'n hoge orde ... dat God er nog weinig melding van maakte .....

Hoofdstuk 2. De Dans van de Orca

Dicht rondom het huis van de Vader zwommen Orca's ... Prachtige wezens waren dat. De Vader maakte er nog niet al te veel melding van ... Dit waren zijn geheimen ... Hij had ze bewaard voor Zijn getrouwe kinderen ... Ze waren naar Hem op reis ... Ze wilden niets liever dan bij Hem zijn ...

Deze Orca's zouden de Vader helpen om het grote spel op te richten ... Het grote spel wat Hij voor Zijn kinderen had klaargelegd .... De Vader glimlachte een beetje .. "Daar beneden denken ze allemaal mij te kennen, maar ze kweken hun eigen anemoontjes en koraalstruikjes ...." sprak Hij .... Daarom zou ... het grote spel moeten komen ....

"Daar beneden ... daar beneden ..." sprak de Vader "...tja.."

Een paar engelen keken hem glimlachend aan ... De Vader was altijd zo fragmentarisch ... Hij vloog van onderwerp naar onderwerp ... Tja, er was ook zoveel te doen ... en zoveel te beleven ...

Een geheimzinnige glimlach verscheen er op zijn gezicht ... Het meisje keek haar ogen uit ... Wat een fantastische wereld was dit .... met al deze regenboog-tuinen ...

"Heb je wel eens gehoord van de Spruit ?" vraagt Hij het meisje ....

"Ja !" roept het meisje ... "Dat had ik als kind eens een keer gelezen in Zacharia ... De Spruit die zal komen om de tempel te bouwen en dan als koning zal heersen ... Ik dacht altijd dat het een klein dwergje was ... haha ..." lachte het meisje ...

"Ja, dat is ook zo ..." zegt de Vader ..."het is een klein kaboutertje ... En dat moet ook wel ... want alleen de kleine dingen zullen groot heten .... Het leven is in kleine zaadjes verborgen .... Zeg, heb je weleens over je lichaam nagedacht ... wat niet zou kunnen functioneren zonder de uiterst accurate celletjes ? Er marcheren heel wat van die dingen in je rond ... En het zijn jouw vriendjes, want ze helpen je goed ..."

Het meisje begint te schaterlachen .... Ze wist niet dat God de Vader zoveel humor had ... En hij leek veel meer op klaas vaak dan op het beeld wat ze altijd van Hem had ...

Ze was erg op haar gemak ... Het was net alsof ze gewoon met de buurman sprak ... Maar deze man was zo grappig ...

"Enneh ..," knipoogte de Vader ... "beneden he, beneden .... tja"

"Beneden hebben ze het grote sprookjesboek bezoedeld ... Maar ach ... Het gaat nog steeds over draken en andere beesten die je moet verslaan ..."

Plotseling werd de stem vager en vager, en uiteindelijk werd ze wakker ... Ze had alles maar gedroomd .... een afschuwelijke nachtmerrie die in een wonderbaarlijke droom veranderde .... En het was zo vreemd, want in de droom was ze veel ouder ....

Het was tijd om naar school te gaan ... Ze had inmiddels veel te vertellen ... Ze had de duivel ontmoet in de hel, en daarna Jezus en de Vader met zoveel engelen .... op een plaats ... tja ... ze kon er nog niet goed over uit ... Maar de kinderen lachten haar uit ... En ook de meester schudde zijn hoofd .... "de dromer" noemden ze haar altijd .... Het was niet de eerste keer dat ze met

zo'n kleurrijk verhaal kwam aanzetten ....

Zondag in de kerk zou ze het aan de dominee vertellen .. Misschien dat hij haar wel zou geloven ...

Midden in de preek stak ze haar vinger op ... en vroeg aan de dominee of ze haar droom mocht vertellen ... Ze vertelde haar verhaal, maar de dominee viel haar bij het kabouterverhaal in de rede : "Kabouters bestaan niet," zei hij ... De mensen begonnen diep te zuchten, en het meisje begon overstuur te raken .... "Zeg, beledig de liliputters niet, zeg, zeg ..." Er zat ook een liliputter in de kerk ... dwerggroei noemden ze het ... Het was het vriendinnetje van het meisje ... Ze trokken eigenlijk al sinds geboorte met elkaar op .... "Ja," roept het liliputtertje ..."God kent ook liliputters .... Eindelijk voel ik me door iemand begrepen ... Ook al was ze altijd al mijn beste vriendin ... Deze droom heeft veel waarde voor mij" ... En ze begon te klappen .... Langzaam begonnen ook andere mensen in de zaal te klappen ... maar de dominee hield voet bij stuk .... "Mensen, laat je niks wijsmaken ... het hele verhaal was overigens een brei van theologische onzin ... en God geeft geen dromen meer vandaag ... we hebben de Bijbel en dat is genoeg ..."

"De Bijbel is een sprookjesboek !" roept het meisje ... "Jullie hebben van de Bijbel zoiets moeilijks en engs gemaakt, dat wij als kinderen er niks meer van begrijpen ... Wij zitten hier voor spek en bonen bij, en we schieten er niks mee op ... Zo is God niet ...."

Een paar andere kinderen stonden ook op : "Ja, ze heeft gelijk ... Kinderen tellen hier niet meer mee ... En volgens mij vinden jullie er zelf ook niet zoveel aan, als ik naar jullie gezichten kijk ..."

"Leve de spruit ! Leve de kabouter !" riep het liliputtertje .... "Leve het sprookjesboek ! Leve het kind !"

De dominee zat er verslagen bij ... Hij kon niet meer verder preken ... het was alsof hij alle fut had verloren ... Hij probeerde nog enkele dingen te zeggen .... Maar z'n stem sloeg zo vaak over en was zo hoog, dat het leek alsof hij een dwerg was geworden ....

"Hoera !" riepen de kinderen ... Maar een aantal mensen begonnen erg boos te worden ... Een ouderling kwam naar voren en probeerde wat te zeggen ... Maar ook zijn stem begon over te slaan ... Wat was er toch aan de hand ?

Een klein sprekend wit sparretje kwam ineens binnenlopen, met een grappige stem ... Hij klom op de preekstoel, terwijl overal in de zaal mensen flauw begonnen te vallen .... "Hoeveel bomen zijn er vermoord om deze kerk te bouwen," riep hij ... "Hoeveel kabouters zijn er vermoord om jullie grote mensen zulke hoge posities te geven ?" ..... "Hoeveel afgeknipte bloemen staan er op jullie tafels een voortijdige dood te sterven ?"

"Sterke drank bij het avondmaal ... puh .... Grote mensen ...."

Een andere voorganger rende op het sparretje af ..."Jij kleine duivel ... maak

dat je wegkomt ..." Maar in een bliksemflits verplaatste het sparretje zich naar de andere kant van de zaal ...

"Jullie grote mensen denken God even in je broekzak te hebben ..." ging het sparretje verder ....

"Hebben de oude profeten niet gezegd dat de stenen in jullie huizen tot leven zullen komen om jullie op te vreten ? Deze dag is aanstaande ... de bomen die jullie verwoest hebben zullen in de nacht tot jullie komen ... de bananen zullen het daglicht zien en jullie aanklagen voor de hoge raad ... Deze dag is aanstaande ... Zelfs het roest van jullie sieraden zal tegen jullie in gaan spreken .... Lees het grote sprookjesboek nog eens een keer voordat jullie je grote monden nog eens een keer opentrekken ..... Grote mensen ... puh ...."

Hoofdstuk 3. Kabouter-Virus

De dominee lag ziek op bed .. Alles draaide voor z'n ogen ... Hij zag kleine kaboutertjes en kleine sterretjes binnenkomen ... "Ha ha ha ... jullie denken toch zeker niet dat ik in jullie geloof !" riep hij ...

"Wij geloven ook niet in jou," zeiden de kleine dingetjes ....

"Ha ha ha," lachte de dominee ... "wat voor een zottenvertoning is dit ?"

"Je hebt de heilige geest in de fles opgesloten, beste kerel ..." zeiden de sterretjes ... "in het verleden" ....

"Je hebt van de heilige geest iets vaags gemaakt ... zonder lichaam, zonder techniek ... zodat je de mensen en de heilige geest kon berijden ..... cowboy ...." gingen de sterretjes verder ....

Het begon nog meer te draaien in het hoofd van de dominee .... "aaah," schreeuwde hij ... Hij voelde zich zo beroerd .... "Wat doen jullie met me ?" schreeuwde hij ....

"We maken korte mette met de spotbeelden die u van God heeft gemaakt, waarmee u de mensen terroriseert, en waarmee ze elkaar terroriseren ... Zie dit maar even als een beeldenstorm .... Je hebt God op de vierkante meter geschoven ..." riepen de kaboutertjes ....

"Okay, okay," riep de dominee ... "wat willen jullie dat ik doe ?"

"Stoppen met al die domme praatjes," zeiden de sterretjes .... "En weer praten over hoe het echt zit ..." zeiden de kaboutertjes ....

"En hoe weet ik hoe het echt zit ?" vroeg de dominee wanhopig ?

Opeens kreeg de dominee een bril op zijn neus ... een bril van de kabouters .... die in z'n oogkassen begonnen te smelten ... "Gewoon rondkijken," sprak een kaboutertje ....

"Ha, ha, wat grappig," riep de dominee ..."ik zie overal spoken ...."

"Ja," zei een ander kaboutertje .."dat zijn de demonen waarmee je

samenwerkte ..."

"Ha, ha," riep de dominee weer ..."ze lijken op mij ..."

De malle dominee was zichzelf niet meer. Binnen de kortste keren was zijn kerk een sprookjespark geworden .... En sindsdien ging hij als kabouter verkleed ... met een puntmuts ..... Vanuit het hele land trok hij kinderen aan, die van hem hoorden wie of wat God echt was .... Hij bouwde het spel ... en leerde de kinderen hoe ze de spoken konden verslaan ...

Binnen de kortste keren was de Bijbel weer het sprookjesboek wat het behoorde te zijn ...

Hij had de mantel en de kroon van de oude profeten ... De weg banende voor de Spruit ... de kabouter ... Het kleine zou het grote heten .... Alles kwam tot leven, zoals de oude profeten hadden voorzegd ... Stoelen en banken begonnen te praten ... koffiepotten en theepotten, lampen, en kleren .... Het was alsof er een nieuw sprookje was begonnen ...

Kinderen leerden weer kaboutertjes te zijn ... Want daar zijn kinderen voor gemaakt ....

Wie niet wordt als een kind, wie niet wordt als een zaadje, wie niet wordt als een kabouter, kan het koninkrijk gods niet binnengaan ... Het is een gouden poortje, dat alleen door een gouden sleuteltje opengedaan kan worden ... Niet door materieel goud ... maar door goud stromende vanuit het hart ....

Wie oren heeft die hore ....

Spiegel der Realiteiten

Ap Berger is koeienslager, en zit in een katholieke pinkstergemeente. Ze geloven daar diep in de paus, en alles wat hij zegt is heilig. Maar als Ap ze dan wijst op wat de pauzen vroeger op hun geweten hadden, dan zeggen ze : 'Ach, dat is allemaal verleden tijd. Daar moet je niet meer over zaniken. Gebeurd is gebeurd.' Nee, goedkeuren doen ze het niet, maar ze zeggen dat de nieuwe paus anders is. De nieuwe paus zou open staan voor de pinksterbeweging, en zou hier en daar wat connecties met hen hebben als met vertrouwelijke vrienden. Ap moet niet zoveel van de paus weten. Hij vindt het allemaal maar één grote optocht. 'Carnaval is allang afgelopen hoor,' zegt hij altijd.

Op een dag gebeurt er in het magazijn van zijn slagerij iets vreemds. Tussen het rundervlees verschijnt er ineens een soort spiegel, en er komt een hand doorheen. Ap is op dat moment helemaal alleen in de slagerij. Instinctief pakt hij de hand, en de hand grijpt hem er doorheen. Wat er dan gebeurt kan Ap niet herroepen, maar hij wordt wakker in zijn magazijn. 'Ach, ik zal wel in slaap gevallen zijn,' denkt hij. Maar dan ineens vallen alle lichten uit, en weer verschijnt er een soort

electrisch geladen scherm tussen het vlees. Het scherm begint te bewegen. Ap denkt dat de bliksem is ingeslagen.

In de gemeente vertelt Ap het aan zijn voorganger. Die denkt ook dat het met blikseminslag te maken heeft, met statische electriciteit, of heel misschien heeft Ap bezoek gehad van een engel.

Die nacht heeft Ap een droom, waarin hij iemand zacht op de achtergrond hoort pingelen, terwijl de geluiden steeds wegvagen, en dan zegt een stem : 'Spiegel der realiteiten ...' en dan vaagt ook de stem weg. Steeds meer beginnen deze electrische verschijnselen voor te komen, en op een dag is Ap het helemaal beu. Hij wordt er moe van. Na een tijdje kan hij niet meer werken, en zeggen ze dat hij overspannen is. Ap raakt geinteresseerd in ufo-verschijnselen, omdat dat ook nog een mogelijke verklaring kan zijn. Hij leest er veel boeken over. In een boek leest hij dat als zulke verschijningen al dan niet magnetisch voorkomen, dan moet er ergens anders, waarschijnlijk ergens in de buurt, een soort zendmast zijn, of iets dat zulke electriciteit opwekt en dan projecteert. Het boek zegt dat zulke verschijningen niet op zichzelf staan. Het boek raadt aan om in zulke gevallen in rustige en verborgen plaatsen op zoek te gaan naar verdachte of opmerkelijke objecten. Ap besluit in het bos te gaan zoeken.

Diep in het bos vindt Ap een enorme spiegel staande op een heuvel waar allemaal licht uit voortkomt. Voorzichtig loopt Ap de heuvel op, maar verbleekt dan. Er stroomt bloed vanuit de spiegel. Ook komt er veel stoom vanaf, alsof er iets in de brand staat. Ap wil weer omdraaien, maar wordt dan door een hand tegengehouden. 'Waar gaan wij naar toe ?' zegt een stem. Maar verder ziet Ap niks. Ap loopt instinctief verder de heuvel op. Overal stroomt bloed. Dan als betoverd stapt Ap door de spiegel heen. Ap valt in een diepe ruimte, maar raakt de grond niet. Het lijkt wel alsof hij zweeft in een bodemloze put. Dan begint zich een geheel nieuwe realiteit rondom Ap te ontvouwen. Overal ziet hij koeien, en het lijkt alsof hij in de wei staat, maar zijn voeten raken de grond niet. Zijn bewegingen zijn heel waterig. 'Oh, dit is vast een visioen,' denkt Ap. Dan hoort Ap in de verte gepingel, terwijl het geluid steeds wegvaagt. Het wordt donkerder en het begint licht te bliksemen, terwijl er een zwart vogelachtig wezen met een vreemd leren gewei geheel in het zwart op hem afkomt. Het lijkt een beetje op een reuzenvleermuis. 'Gevangene van de paus, noem mij maar zo,' zei het beest.

'Ja, maar ik ben de paus niet,' zegt Ap, 'en ik heb het niet zo op de paus.'

'Daarom ben ik ook hier,' zegt het beest. 'Je bent koeienslager, hè ? Weet je wat ze in Spanje allemaal met koeien doen ?'

'Ja, ik heb ervan gehoord,' zei Ap, 'noem het maar dierenmishandeling.'

'Ik breng de zielen van die beesten terug naar Rome, naar de paus. Daar worden die zielen dan geslacht door engelen van de paus,' zegt het beest. 'Ik ben ook één van de slagers, dus ik ben zogezegd een collega van je. Maar ik werk in gevangenschap. In slavernij zogezegd.'

Langzaam wordt Ap wakker, helemaal onder het zweet. In de gemeente vertelt hij de droom aan zijn voorganger. De voorganger is er niet blij mee, maar denkt dat het gewoon een droom is, of in het ergste geval een aanval van de satan. Ap probeert het allemaal weer te vergeten. Gelukkig komen de dromen en verschijningen steeds minder voor, en na een tijdje kan Ap zijn werk weer oppikken. Wel begint hij te merken dat hij een grotere toewijding tot de paus heeft gekregen. Maar iets van binnen zit hem niet lekker. Bij hem in de gemeente geloven ze in twee pauzen, de katholieke paus en de pinkster paus. Die pinkster paus is een groot leider in de charismatische beweging, die ook wonderen en tekenen doet, en vele krachten. Die pinkster paus woonde eerst een tijdje in Mexico, maar nu woont hij in Californie, waar hij een heel groot centrum heeft opgericht. Vanuit de hele wereld komen ze bij hem, maar nu wordt hij beschuldigd van pedofilie. Veel mensen hebben het geloof in de pinkster paus verloren, maar het aantal volgelingen groeit nog steeds.

Maar op een dag krijgen ze het bericht dat de pinkster paus is neergeschoten. Na een korte tijd staat er een nieuwe pinkster paus op, die nog grotere wonderen en tekenen doet, en zelfs tanden en

kiezen in goud verandert. Hij wordt ook wel de gouden koning genoemd, maar ook hij wordt in een aanslag neergeschoten. Velen richten zich in wanhoop tot de katholieke paus, maar dan staat er weer een nieuwe pinkster paus op die doden opwekt en ook mensen dood kan laten neervallen. Zijn naam is Rodney Hinn-Kuhlman, en ze noemen hem het pistool van de Heilige Geest. Maar velen die de katholieke paus volgen noemen hem gewoon het pistool van de paus. Ap is dolenthousiast, en doet op zijn werk vaak een cowboy na. Maar dan beginnen in zijn magazijn de verschijnselen erger dan ooit terug te komen. Er verschijnen spiegels en schermen waar bloed uit stroomt, en Ap raakt weer overspannen. Ap besluit een reis te maken naar zo'n genezingsdienst van de inmiddels wereldberoemde Rodney Hinn-Kuhlman.

In de dienst zegt Rodney Hinn-Kuhlman : 'Er is hier iemand die een koeienslager is, maar nu overspannen is geworden door vreemde verschijningen van bloed, wie is dat ?'

Ap staat op, en moet naar voren komen. Als Rodney Hinn-Kuhlman op hem blaast valt hij in de geest. Ook de katholieke paus is aanwezig, en als Ap weer opstaat krijgt hij een stoel naast de paus. Ap raakt de paus even aan, en kan het bijna niet geloven. 'Wat is uw echte naam trouwens ?' vraagt Ap aan de paus.

'Morris Arnott,' zegt de paus met een glimlach. 'Vroeger was ik een boer.'

'Oh, ik ben koeienslager van beroep,' zegt Ap.

'Ja, dat heb ik net gehoord,' zegt de paus met een accent. 'Zeg, zou jij niet bij ons willen werken ?'

'Waar ?' vraagt Ap, 'in Rome ?'

'Nee, hier,' zegt de paus.

Dan wordt Ap wakker, badend in zweet. Wat heeft hij toch idioot gedroomd.

Op zijn werk komt er iemand aanzetten met een boek over pauzen. Ap krijgt het boek mee, en begint direkt te lezen als hij thuiskomt. Daarin staan wel zeer vreemde dingen. Niet alleen over het pistool van de paus, maar ook over het pantser van de paus. Dit pantser is genaamd Smith Wesley. Ook heeft hij een schild genaamd A.A. Finney. Zijn helm is genaamd Dowie McPherson, en zijn zwaard Lake Woodworth-Etter. Ap vindt het allemaal onzin en heeft er zo genoeg van dat hij het boekje in het openhaard gooit. Maar dan ineens beginnen stemmen heel luid te krijsen. Een eekhoorn verschijnt vanuit het vuur met een heel groot zwaard voor zich. Er glijdt bloed van het zwaard af. 'Wie ben je ?' vraagt Ap. 'Ik ben baron Evan Parham-Seymour. Ik ben de maker van de paus-machine,' zegt de eekhoorn eigenwijs.

'En wat is dat zwaard ?' vraagt Ap.

'Dat is mijn zwaard,' zegt de eekhoorn, 'genaamd T.B. Jackson-Cain.'

'Ja ja, houd maar op, ik heb genoeg van al die namen,' zegt Ap. 'Ik geef mijn slagersmessen toch ook geen namen. Houd toch op, zeg. Ik geef mijn stukjes vlees toch ook geen namen.'

'Ik wil u aandacht vragen voor de profetenpaus,' zegt de eekhoorn. En dan hoort Ap allemaal geklap in de verte. 'Zijn naam is Wimber Branham-Cain, maar sommigen noemen haar gewoon mrs. Jones, een vermoeide buldog.'

'Okay, en heb je nog meer pauzen in de aanbieding ?' vraagt Ap.

'Nee, dat was het,' zei de eekhoorn, 'en als je nog eens wat nodig hebt, dan bel je maar.' En floep, daar was de eekhoorn ineens verdwenen. Ap weet niet hoe hij het heeft. Het openhaard brandt nog steeds, en naast hem ligt een hondenmand met daarin een vermoeide bulldog. 'Dat moet mrs. Jones wezen,' denkt Ap. Hij streelt de hond even door z'n haren, en zegt : 'Zo, dus jij bent onze profetenpaus.' Dan glimlacht Ap. 'Ach ja, die moeten er ook zijn.'

'Zeg, heb je zin in een stukje vlees ?' vraagt Ap. Ap loopt naar de koelkast en haalt er een potje uit waarop 'demonenbrokjes' staat. 'Dat is beter,' denkt Ap, 'want al die arme dieren ...'

De volgende dag gaat Ap naar zijn werk. In de letters op het dak is wat gekrast, en nu staat er 'demonen-slager'. Ap vindt het allemaal best. Deze dromenwereld bevalt hem wel, en hij zal zo toch wel weer wakker worden. Maar alles begint akelig lang te duren. Is hij soms dood ?

Dan verschijnt ineens de eekhoorn weer voor hem. 'Chimpansee,' zegt de eekhoorn. 'Ga je mee naar de chimpansee ? Ik heb het over de paus ...'

'Welke paus ?' vraagt Ap.

Dan wordt Ap langzaam wakker. Als gehypnotizeerd gaat hij naar zijn werk. In het magazijn staat een spiegel met een eekhoorn erop. Ook staat er een wigwam. Maar Ap let er niet meer op, en gaat aan het werk. 'Chimpansee,' denkt Ap, 'hoe komt hij er bij.' Als hij de la met messen opentrekt ziet hij daar een potje demonenbrokjes liggen en tandartsartikelen. 'Ik moet echt nog dromen,' zegt Ap slaperig. Als Ap zijn slagersjas wil aantrekken lijkt het een doktersjas te zijn, en als hij de deur van zijn kantoortje opentrekt kijkt hij recht in een zaal vol met mensen. 'Opereren, opereren !' roepen ze allemaal. Stieren worden naar voren geduwd, en iemand maakt kruisjes op hen met een rode stift. 'Nou, opereer ze dan ?' roept iemand. En op andere plaatsen beginnen ze 'boe' te roepen. 'Ja, maar hoe dan ?' vraagt Ap. 'Hoe moet ik ze opereren ?'

'Je weet het toch zo goed, je bent toch slager ?' roept iemand. 'Doe dan, nou doe dan ?'

Dan begint Ap te snikken. 'Ik weet het niet. Ik weet het niet meer.' In zijn hand heeft hij speelgoed-dokterspullen. Plotseling ziet hij een lege stoel en rent erop af om te gaan zitten. Weer komt er iemand door de deur naar binnen. Het is een chimpansee in een doktersjas. 'Dat is de paus,' roept iemand. 'Ja, de paus !' roepen een paar anderen. De chimpansee haalt wat stiften uit zijn jaszak en begint de stieren te kleuren. 'Hoera !' roepen er een heleboel.

'Wat ? Is er iemand jarig ?' zegt de chimpansee met een harde bromstem. 'Geef me mijn pistool,' bromt de chimpansee. Iemand in de zaal staat op. Het is Rodney Hinn-Kuhlman. Overal om hem heen vallen mensen flauw. Als hij op het podium staat verandert hij in een lange kabouter met een hele lange mond. De chimpansee geeft hem een schop en er spuit vreemd gekleurd water uit z'n mond. Maar dan beginnen er echt gevaarlijke dingen te gebeuren. Ap staat weer op, en rent over het podium naar de deur toe, rent door de slagerij, en daarna naar buiten. 'Snel naar het bos,' denkt hij. Hij is op zoek naar de heuvel met de spiegel waar het allemaal mee begon. Hij moet weer terug zien te komen door de spiegel. Al snel heeft hij de spiegel gevonden, en duikt erdoor heen. Hij word wakker in zijn bed, en denkt nu dat hij echt wakker is. Maar niets is minder waar. Hij loopt naar beneden, maar merkt dat hij door de traptredes zakt.

'Is die onzin nu eens eindelijk afgelopen ?' schreeuwt Ap, maar dan merkt hij dat hij ineens zijn mond niet meer kan opentrekken, alsof een vreemde kleverige stof zijn kaken op elkaar houdt. 'Wat is dit voor een pausen-circus ?' denkt Ap bij zichzelf. Al snel is Ap tot helemaal in de kelder gezakt waar tonnen staan met de doorzichtig gekleurde kleverige stof. Zodra hij de tonnen aanraakt beginnen ze te overstromen. 'Misschien dat het nu toch nog leuk wordt,' denkt Ap bij zichzelf. Ap heeft het gevoel alsof hij weer in een bodemloze put zweeft, als door de spiegel van realiteiten. Niets is wat het lijkt.

Einde

Het Ei van God

Heldhaftige Verhalen rondom de Geschiedenis en het Ontstaan van God

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Hoofdstuk 1. Voorwoord

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Hoofdstuk 6. Diepere Wortelen van Khnum

Hoofdstuk 1. Voorwoord

Heel lang geleden, toen de aarde nog niet bestond, waren er hele andere legers in de hemel. Er is een theorie die zegt dat alle rassen die nu leven op aarde die vroegere legers weerspiegelen, maar dan op een hele andere manier. Veel kan ik hier niet van zeggen als oude reiziger. Wel kan ik iets over die geschiedenis vertellen. Ik kan niet veel zeggen over het nu, het heden, maar wel kan ik vertellen over hoe het vroeger eens was. Je zou je misschien afvragen waarom die oude hemelse legers er niet meer zijn. Nu, luister dan eens naar dit verhaal. Ik ben speciaal naar je toegekomen om dit verhaal te vertellen. Ik hoop dat je er wat aan hebt. Ik weet niet of je leeft als deze boodschap je heeft bereikt, en ik weet ook niet of ik nog leef, maar dat is ook niet belangrijk. De boodschap heeft leven genoeg in zich om ons beiden tot leven te brengen, wanneer onze harten met elkaar versmelten.

Eén zo'n vroegere engelenmacht was genaamd de Heuzen. Zij waren een soort hemelse indianen, maar dan in hun pure vorm. De aardse vorm van de indianen is maar een zwakke afspiegeling van hen, en dan op een hele andere manier. De macht van de Heuzen was met geen pen te beschrijven, en ze leefden dicht bij Gods hart. Nu moet ik jullie als oude reiziger ook vertellen dat er een engelenvolk was wat dichtbij de Heuzen leefden, maar waarvan er velen afvielen van de levende God. God had ook hen veel macht en schoonheid gegeven, maar hun harten werden trots. Zij waren genaamd de Konzen, en je zou ze heel misschien een beetje met de hedendaagse Fransen kunnen vergelijken, alhoewel een Franse vaak juist de gevallen vorm van de Konze weerspiegelt, of gewoon de verwilderde vorm. De Heuzen kwamen in oorlog met de schepselen die zij eens zo liefhadden.

Nu moet het mij van het hart, beste lezer, dat ik deze woorden niet zonder pijn tentoonstel. Ik vertel deze dingen niet zonder een diepe, diepe pijn in mijn hart, en vriend, ik hoop ook dat je deze woorden ter harte neemt, omdat jij misschien kan helpen. Verder vraag ik niets van je dan te luisteren. Na dit verhaal zullen we beiden weer onze eigen bezigheden hebben, zullen onze paden misschien zelfs weer scheiden, maar misschien, heel misschien ga je wel met het verhaal aan de slag, en probeer je er voor jezelf achter te komen wat je eraan kunt doen. Deze geschiedenis is er niet één van overwinningen, maar één van een diep kruis ... dieper dan .... Nu, luister verder, want ik kan het alleen vertellen als je er de tijd voor neemt. Of misschien wil je de woorden even snel aanraken, om later te beslissen om het lezen van dit verhaal te verdiepen.

Verder heb ik niets van node. Ik heb geen behoefte aan volgelingen, of hen die mij een stuk brood toewerpen ... Deze tijden heb ik gehad ... Ik ben gelukkig niet meer met deze behoeftes bezwaard, want ik ben een oude reiziger. Nogmaals : De Heuzen kwamen dus in oorlog met de schepselen die zij eens zo liefhadden ... De Heuzen moesten het verwonde hart van God beschermen tegen de

aanvallen van de gevallen Konzen. De Konzen wilden wraak nemen op God, omdat God de Heuzen zoveel machtiger had gemaakt, en veel verfijnder. Bij de Heuzen had God echt oog gehad voor het detail. De Konzen waren kwaad op God, en alhoewel ze door hun val God al diep in z'n hart hadden geraakt, waren ze nog niet klaar.

Beste lezer, zo'n val van engelen bij te wonen is een ramp, en vaak loopt het uit tot een reeks oorlogen waardoor de geschiedenis en het komende nooit meer hetzelfde zullen zijn. Ik was erbij, en nu zul je wel heel nieuwsgierig zijn geworden naar mijn naam. Maar misschien dat dat in de loop van dit verslag over deze geschiedenis wel iets duidelijker gaat worden. Verder gaat het dus eigenlijk niet om mij. Ik ben maar een boodschapper, en ik reis even met je mee. Hoe het verder gaat tussen ons twee ? Dat beslis jijzelf na dit verhaal. Nu hoop ik dat je de tijd neemt om naar mij te luisteren, niet in de eerste plaats om mij te leren kennen, maar om datgene te kennen wat er vroeger gebeurd is, en waarvan ook jij in je lichaam en ziel de gevolgen draagt.

Nu zou je misschien denken dat God na zo'n verschrikkelijke oorlog niets meer met de Konzen te maken wilde hebben, en dat Hij ook niet meer van ze hield. Maar de liefde voor de Konzen was alleen maar groter geworden, en God wilde er alles aan doen om hen te helpen. Hij begreep hun pijn wel, Hij begreep hun strijd ... En ook de Heuzen deelden deze liefde en het begrip ... De gevallen Konzen waren vroeger erg goede vrienden van de Heuzen ... De Liefde van de Heuzen ging zo ver, dat ze hun leven gaven voor de Konzen. Deze Liefde hadden ze van God Zelf geleerd ... Wat er toen met de Heuzen is gebeurd, dat weten maar een paar schepselen ... Enkele Konzen zijn toen tot God teruggekeerd, maar God was in meer pijn dan ooit tevoren, omdat Hij nu de Heuzen moest missen, naast de al gevallen Konzen ... God was ten einde raad ...

De Heuzen waren in een vreemd diep dal terechtgekomen waar ze aan hoge brandende kruizen hingen, en gaven hun liefdesboodschappen aan God door ... Maar God kon hen niet helpen, want ze moesten deze Liefdesbeker geheel leegdrinken. Door dit kruis zouden ze tot een nog grotere heerlijkheid komen, en zouden ze de Konzen veel beter kunnen helpen. De Heuzen werden de golven van een zee van liefdesvuur, en de Heuzen brachten zo een nieuw nageslacht voort : de Kalikken ... Zij stegen op uit de vurige liefdeszee en zij hadden toegang tot het Hart van God om Hem te genezen. De Kalikken waren een soort hemelse katten, maar dan op een hele andere manier dan de huidige kat ... De Kalikken droegen het vuur van God in al zijn heerlijkheden, omdat ze zelf in hun voorgeschiedenissen zo vaak door vuur verpletterd waren ... Zij waren zo vaak de tot as verbrandden. Zo hadden de Heuzen een dieper deel van de Hemelse geschiedenis en Gods geschiedenis geopend.

De Kalikken richtten zich toen op de afgeweken Konzen, en begonnen een nieuwe oorlog tegen hen ... De Kalikken wilden wraak voor wat de Konzen God en de Heuzen, de ouders van de Kalikken, hadden aangedaan. Maar de Kalikken gingen zo te keer, en richtten zoveel verwoestingen aan dat God hen later moest stoppen. Niet iedere Kalik trok zich wat van God aan, en een groot aantal viel van God af. De Kalikken werden zo gevaarlijk in hun val, dat God ze moest opsluiten in een diepe kerker. De Heuzen hadden inmiddels een nieuw geslacht voortgebracht : de Marouten ... Er waren Spimarouten, die de voorlopers van de Oostenrijkers waren, de Ribmarouten, de voorlopers van de Italianen, en de Ritsmarouten, de voorlopers van de Spanjaarden, maar velen van hen keerden zich tegen de Heuzen en God. Ook voor hen had God kerkers ... Vele Heuzen waren inmiddels verbitterd geraakt naar God, omdat God hun nageslacht niet zegende, en toen was er één van de verschrikkelijkste vallen in de hemelse geschiedenissen : De Val der Heuzen ... Dit krenkte God tot op het bot, en Hij had er veel verdriet van ... Zoveel verdriet, dat God Zich langzaam begon terug te trekken, en Zich begon te omhullen in mysterie ... Ja, beste lezer, God had het bijna gehad met al zijn hemelse scheppingen, en wilde nog één keer helemaal overnieuw beginnen ... Natuurlijk waren er veel hemelse wezens die Hem trouw waren gebleven, maar die konden niet tegen Zijn verdriet op ...

God wilde een legermacht creeeren die Hem trouw bleef ... Hij verzamelde allen die Hem trouw waren gebleven, en noemde hen : De getrouwen, en de golven van de Zee van Trouw ... Zij waren

als de golven van het groene vuur, een woeste zee, en vanuit hen kwam nageslacht oprijzen, een nieuwe creatie van God. God noemde dit ras : De Matadokken ... de voorlopers van de honden ... Ook schiep God de Spinmarouten, waarvan de hedendaagse politie een zwakke en verdraaide afspiegeling is. De Spinmarouten hadden meerdere armen, en werden Gods trouwste boodschappers, maar ook van hen vielen enkelen af, en begonnen zich snel te vermenigvuldigen. De Spinmarouten hadden een zeer diepe, en vaak geheime voorgeschiedenis, en ze waren bedreven in allerlei kunsten ... Zij brachten diepe genezing aan Gods Hart, en zetten Hem aan om door die kunsten Zich nog meer in mysterie te hullen ... De Spinmarouten hadden veel verdriet over de enkelingen in hun groep die gevallen waren, en gaven hun leven voor hen op een wonderlijke en mysterieuze manier ... Slechts enkelen kennen het geheim van de Spinmarouten ... Zij gaven hun leven, en werden als de golven van een zwarte zee, een mysterieuze zee, die bijna niemand kende ... In mijn hele rondreis door de geschiedenis ben ik maar een paar schepselen tegengekomen die van die mysterieuze zee wisten ... Hier gaven zij geboorte aan een geslacht die je misschien heel iets met de hedendaagse dokters kunt vergelijken, maar eigenlijk vallen de dokters bij hen in het niet ... Dit geslacht was als de bomen ... als de planten, de struiken en de bloemen ... Zij werden genoemd de Spamarouten, en zij hadden nog meer armen dan de Spinmarouten. Zij begonnen de scheppingen van God te ordenen en te zuiveren. Verder schiep God nog de Stunmarouten, die je een beetje met hedendaagse soldaten kunt vergelijken, maar dan totaal anders. De Stunmarouten moesten de scheppingen bewaken.

Hoofdstuk 2. Het Ei

Goed, de geschiedenissen van de hemel en de engelen zijn diep. Vaak als je het over schepping hebt, is dat eigenlijk herschepping, omdat vaak gewoon delen van een verre geschiedenis - zij het getransformeerd, opnieuw aangekleed - omhoog worden gebracht. Zo is dat ook bij God. Daarom is het interessant die geschiedenissen te bespreken, beste lezer, want ze zouden opnieuw het licht kunnen zien, en ontwaken.

Weet u, nu u deze geschiedenis al tot hier hebt gelezen zie ik het al helemaal voor me : Jij en ik, samen op weg naar de heuvel der geschiedenissen, waarachter zoveel heuvelen zijn ... Vanuit hier kunnen we twee dingen doen : Een goed uitzicht hebben, of verder doorreizen naar de zonsondergangen van de geschiedenis om tot een nog grotere geschiedenis te gaan ... Waar stopt het ergens ... Met deze vraag wil ik me niet bezighouden ... Ik ben blij dat je tot hier als vriend met mij bent meegereisd, en ik hoop je ook de komende passages te zien ... Denk aan al die mensen die al gestopt zijn sinds het lezen van de titel, of die gaanderweg zijn uitgelezen ... Denk aan hen, en denk aan jezelf waar je nu staat. Je hebt de moeite genomen om te luisteren naar mijn verhaal, terwijl je nog niet eens weet wie ik ben ... Misschien dat je ooit eens jouw verhaal aan mij kan vertellen, maar voor we zover zijn, vriend, nodig ik je uit om de reis met mij voort te zetten, dieper de geschiedenis in ... Er zijn twee soorten mensen : Zij die de geschiedenis hebben begrepen en daarnaar leven, en zij die niets van de geschiedenis begrijpen, en gewoon voortgaan met hun oude leven ...

Vriend, ik vraag je aandacht voor het volgende : Ook ik heb mijn lessen moeten leren. En misschien mag ik samen met jou meerdere lessen leren ... Ik ben nog niet te oud om te leren ... Ik ben een oude reiziger door de geschiedenis, maar dat wil niet zeggen dat ik al 'thuis' ben. Ik hoop mijn voertuig ooit eens te vinden, en daar kun jij me misschien bij helpen ... Geloof me, ik heb niks van node ... Al zou ik van armoede mijn voertuig moeten bouwen, of van de delen van de geschiedenissen die ik al ken ... Het zij zo ... Maar misschien kan jij daar een extra dimensie aan toevoegen ... Naarmate we elkaar beter leren kennen, beste lezer, begin ik steeds meer van je te houden ... Ik hoop dat dat gevoel wederzijds is, maar geloof me : Ik heb geen enkele behoefte meer aan meereizers ... Vroeger wel, maar sinds ik ouder ben geworden heb ik gelukkig deze behoeftes achter me mogen laten. Ik wordt er niet meer door gekweld. Zoals ik al zei : Het enige wat een meereiziger me zou kunnen schenken is die extra dimensie, en mijn angst is dat ik daar misschien niet klaar voor ben ... Waar

zal die extra dimensie mij brengen ? Zo zullen er onder jullie ook zijn die bang zijn voor de extra dimensie die ik kan toevoegen aan hun leven. Misschien dat ze na dit verhaal echt niet meer dezelfde zijn.

Ik vraag je aandacht voor het volgende : Ik ben uit de tijd. Ik zou waarschijnlijk niet in jullie samenleving passen. Toch heb ik veel te vertellen. Ik draag de sleutel van de diepere geschiedenissen van de hemelen en de engelen. Misschien klinkt dat in sommige oren ietwat overdreven, maar daar ik diep in mijn hart jullie taal niet spreek, probeer ik het op deze manier toch het beste te verwoorden.

Er was eens een groot man die Khnum heette. Khnum was een wezen van het verre verleden, en paste eigenlijk niet meer in de nieuwe scheppingen van God. Omdat Khnum zoveel kracht had zou hij de scheppingen van God met gemak kapot kunnen maken. Vele wezens die Khnum nog wel van vroeger kenden wilden dat hij bij de nieuwe scheppingen betrokken zou worden, maar God schudde Zijn hoofd. Het zou te riskant wezen, 'maar' ... had God gezegd : 'Iedereen die goed met de nieuwe scheppingen om zou gaan, en God ook trouw zou wezen in de toekomst, die zou een sleutel ontvangen waarmee ze Khnum zouden kunnen bezoeken.' Het was alsof God Khnum dus ergens voor wilde beschermen, want Khnum was een erg gevoelige man. God hield zoveel van Khnum dat Hij Khnum verborgen hield. God wilde niet het risico lopen dat een nieuw schepsel Khnum zou bezeren, want ook zouden ze zo het risico lopen dat Khnum meer zou vernietigen dan God lief was. Volgens God zou Khnum zijn eigen krachten niet kennen. In veel vroegere tijden had God Khnum vaak als Verlosser naar de oude scheppingen gestuurd om hen te helpen, maar ze hadden Khnum zo verschrikkelijk bezeerd dat God Khnum niet meer wilde zenden, maar voor hen die God getrouw bleven had God een sleutel tot het Verborgene. Die Khnum was wel een heel creatief mannetje. Zo had hij een soort hemels ijs gemaakt, heel anders als het huidige ijs, en veel minder pijnlijk. Het was wel een soort kou, maar het deed eigenlijk helemaal geen pijn. Zelfs God Zelf kon hem dat niet nadoen. Waarom niet ? zou je denken. Daar hopen we later nog op terug te komen. Maar deze Khnum was dus een bijzonder mannetje, een verborgen mannetje, waar God dus mee moest samenwerken om tot een doel te komen. Sommigen zeggen wel eens dat Khnum de Heilige Geest is, maar nog meer is Khnum de Verborgen Geest.

In ieder geval kon Khnum een heleboel dingen die God niet kon, en zo besloten ze samen te werken. Khnum was altijd iets dat God Zelf ook niet helemaal begreep. Khnum kende de ouders van God, en de voorgeslachten van God, en was al wat langer op weg. Nu zou je denken : God begrijpt toch alles ? Toch is dat niet helemaal zo. Ook God is op weg, en gaat van begrip tot begrip. Hoe ik dit weet ? Omdat ik met God reis. Ik ken Zijn pijnen, en ik ken ook dat wat boven Zijn verstand uitgaat. Wat volkomenheid en volmaaktheid is voor Gods begrip, is maar een splinter voor het begrip van Khnum, die al bestond voordat God ontstond. Beste lezer, misschien dat u nu de vraag heeft : Maar God heeft toch altijd al bestaan ? Daarop kan ik bevestigend antwoorden, maar God bestond voordat Hij God werd in een andere vorm. Ook God moest Zichzelf bewijzen. Zij die dat niet geloven volgen een gevaarlijke God.

Beste lezers, ik kan het wantrouwen van sommigen onder jullie begrijpen. Ik ben zelf ook jong geweest, en kon niet geloven dat de kip uit het ei kwam. Toch willen we dit ei bespreken : Het Ei van God.

Hoofdstuk 3. Vroege Hemelen

Ik ben zelf ook jong geweest, en begrijp de mogelijke twijfel. Toch zal bij velen deze twijfel niet groter zijn dan de twijfel die ze hebben over het huidige christendom. Maar goed, ik ben niet gekomen om over het heden te vertellen, maar over het verleden. Ik zou bijna kunnen zeggen dat het verleden ook tot mij kwam als een brief. Mijn leven is als een brief geweest. En daarom wil ik bijna zeggen : Lees deze brief, want het is een oude brief, als een oud manuscript. Beleef er een

goede tijd aan, nu we samen zijn, als een vlam die voortleeft in de herinnering, waar zowel jij als ik zich aan kunnen verwarmen. Neem de toeters en bellen voor lief ... Neem dat waar je iets aan hebt ... Dan zal ik dat ook doen ... Deze brief is een stuk van mij ... Neemt, eet en gedenkt ... Deze brief is geld waard, veel geld ... Maar ik geef niet om geld ... Ik draag oud bloed in mij, en mijn vlees is oud, als een vrucht van verhalen, als een boom van oude waarheden ... Ik zou er genoegen mee nemen als daar van gegeten en gedronken wordt, als van een boom van geschiedenis. Zo zal dat wat ik heb opgeschreven en wat ik heb geleefd niet verloren gaan. Zo zal de boodschap voortleven en zich rijkelijk vermenigvuldigen. En ik ben mij bewust dat dit gebeurt, beste lezer, door het lezen van dit verhaal. Zo wordt de boodschap van deze belangrijke geschiedenis beetje voor beetje vereeuwigd.

Zal er verzadiging zijn na zoiets als dit ? Ik waag mij niet om een beschrijving te geven van het instituut dat kerk genoemd wordt in de huidige tijd ... Ik weet niet of ik nog in leven ben als deze boodschap jou heeft bereikt. Ik ben er ook niet om de huidige tijd waarin jij leeft te beschrijven of te beoordelen. Misschien dat dat jouw taak wel is.

Khnum is het Verborgene van God, dat wat was voordat Hij was. Misschien dat dat door sommigen onder jullie als een naar sectarisme neigende opmerking is ... Vergeet niet dat jullie ideeen voor die tijd als sectarisch bestempeld zouden worden, of minstens naar sectarisme neigend. Een secte is de verabsolutering van een deelwaarde. Dat gebeurde toen Gods Ei werd verloochend, Zijn voorgeslachten, Zijn ontstaan, en de tijden en verborgen wezens voor Zijn ontstaan ... Die verloocheningen hebben God tot een wees proberen te maken ... Gun God ouders ... De kerk zal dat niet snel doen, en de canon ook niet .... maar jij ... jij kan dat voor God doen ... door te zeggen : 'Ja, Heer, ik geloof dat U ook ouders heeft ...'

Khnum is een oude vriend van de ouders van God ... en heeft altijd voor God gezorgd als 'zijn buurjongetje'.... Nu zorgt God ook voor Khnum, nu God ouder is geworden ... Mag Hij ? Op een dag plantte Khnum een zaadje ... Het was een zaadje waaruit de voorgeslachten van God als een boom begonnen te groeien, waar uiteindelijk God uit voortkwam. De vroegste hemelen heetten 'arrataharen'. Khnum kan het ook niet helpen hoe de dingen gelopen zijn ... Het was de evolutie van die hemelen, het traject dat de godheid moest begaan ... Eigenlijk, beste lezer, is God nog maar een laag wezen in vergelijking met de serene wezens die boven hem staan als hogere autoriteiten en heersers. Zo is de Muskus een veel Goddelijker wezen dan God Zelf. Hij heeft dan ook een veel groter gebied gekregen. De arrataharen waren in hun oorsprong groter dan de huidige hemelen. De Sebek staat boven de Muskus, en de Khnum staat boven de Sebek. Zo, hier wordt even een bom op tafel gelegd om het traditionele geloofsplaatje te vernietigen. Als u gelooft dat God de hoogste autoriteit is, dan bent u slecht ingelicht, en dan worden er nog steeds dingen voor u achter gehouden. God is aangesteld als 'een' hoogste autoriteit over een bepaald gebied, en de grote vraag is dus door wie Hij is aangesteld. Als u God heeft gevonden is dat nog maar de eerste stap.

Maar ja, is dat niet gevaarlijk, zomaar afgaan op het advies van een oude reiziger ? Gevaarlijker dan het volgen van het huidige christendom kan het echt niet wezen. God blijft overigens een belangrijk fundament, een belangrijk gebied in uw leven. Een goede keizer heeft koningen, provincie-hoofden en burgemeesters. God is in dit opzicht niet meer en niet minder dan de burgemeester van uw stad. Met Hem moet zeker gerekend worden !

Hoofdstuk 4. Zij waren er bij

Oh ja, ik ben weleens in andere tijden met deze dingen gekomen, zij het vaak in andere bewoordingen en in een andere taal ... Verketterd werd ik, verbrand ... Nu, in deze huidige tijd probeer ik het weer ... Niet wetende wat me te wachten staat ... Verbrand zal ik misschien niet worden, maar er zal zeker gezegd worden dat ik het verkeerd heb begrepen. Reist u dan met mij mee naar de geschiedenis om mij het beter te vertellen ? Sommigen praten alsof ze werkelijk heen

en terug in de geschiedenis zijn gegaan ... Ze hebben aan één tafel met Napoleon gegeten ... Ze hebben de voeten van Jezus gekust, en hebben spelletjes gedaan met de oude farao's ... Ze hebben precies gezien hoe Nero Rome af liet branden, en wat hem tot die daad dreef ... Zij waren overal bij ... Zij sliepen niet, zij hielden alles bij ... Niets ontging hen, zodat zij het plaatje niet konden missen ...

'Godslasteraar,' wordt er geroepen, en zelfs : 'kruisig hem' .... Maar nog steeds weet niemand wie ik ben. Denkt u nou echt dat ik mijn naam nog ga onthullen ? En al helemaal mijn woonplaats niet ... Had ik in het begin nog de neiging mij bekend te maken ... Nu des te minder ... Maar dit alles laat mij mijn verhaal niet doen staken ... Integendeel ... Ik zet mijn opdracht voort ... Durft u met mij mee te gaan dieper de geschiedenis in ?

Laten we verder gaan met het bespreken van de engelen van Khnum. Over het algemeen werden ze 'Stitchiren' genoemd. Er waren vele engelensoorten van Khnum, zoals de Demsen die de voorlopers van de leeuwen en de octopussen waren, vaak met meerdere armen. En de Pestzen die de voorlopers waren van de haaien en de tijgers. De Di'itmiren en de Atmiren waren de voorlopers van de apen, in hun zuivere vorm. Hoe ik dit allemaal weet ? Omdat ik daar geweest ben ... Nu kunnen er verschillende redenen zijn waarom u nog meeleest ... Misschien vind u het interessant, of een mooi verhaal ... of u zoekt gewoon naar meer stenen om naar mij te gooien ... of .... u bent op zoek naar een sterk verhaal om op de Bijbelkring te vertellen .... of ... misschien hebt u wel een hele andere reden ... Hoe dan ook, u bent tot hier nog steeds mijn mede-reiziger ... Sommigen zullen nu wellicht stoppen met lezen, maar u bent wel heel bijzonder dat u zelfs nu, na al die heldhaftige taferelen, nog steeds met mij meereist ... Misschien wilt u mij wel beschermen ... Misschien mag ik mij wel veilig voelen bij zo'n trouwe meereiziger .... en jij bij mij .... Maar het verschil is alleen : 'Ik ben deze reis al eerder gegaan ... Ik ken de reis, ben gewend aan de klappen ...'

Is het niet beter om na dit verhaal te zeggen : 'Er is geen Khnum' ? Je kunt er voor weglopen, maar vroeg of laat zul je het onder ogen moeten komen. Klinkt dat niet intimiderend, zoals een of ander nieuw pseudo-christelijk fundamentalistisch geloof ? Het is net zoiets zeggen als : 'Er is geen koning,' of : 'Er is geen keizer'. Wij hebben alleen onze burgemeester, en daar voelen we ons goed bij, omdat die zoveel door de vingers ziet ... Maar voor de verdere reis kan hij ons niet helpen ... Heeft u uzelf wel eens afgevraagd waarom u altijd in rondjes fietst, waarom u in uw geestelijk leven niet tot een doorbraak komt, waarom de geestesgaven niet groeien en vermenigvuldigen ... Waarom ... Waarom ? ... Dit verhaal hoopt u daar een antwoord op te geven ... Niet als een fundamentalist ... maar als een oude reiziger, met z'n eigen vraagtekens hier en daar ... Ben ik wel diep genoeg de geschiedenis ingereisd ? Zo niet, dan zal ik ook opgepikt moeten worden door een nog oudere reiziger .... en zal ik vroeg of laat zijn boodschap, zijn brief en zijn verhaal ergens tegenkomen ... Of hij op dat punt nog in leven is weet ik niet .... maar wel weet ik dat zijn boodschap ons zal herenigen ...

Verder met de engelen van Khnum : de Hutessen, voorlopers van de bloemen en de zonnen ... Als je hun wonderlijke geuren ruikt, dan voel je het zelfs in je buik, en de prikkelende warmte omhult je lichaam. Zij zijn de engelen van het kruis van Khnum. Want ook Khnum draagt een kruis. Bent u dat kruis nog niet tegengekomen, lees dan het verhaal nog eens opnieuw, want dan is u wat ontschoten, of werden er dingen voor u achtergehouden. Maar goed, zou u dat nu wel doen, zomaar een verhaal navolgen ? Dan heeft u iets om te introduceren bij anderen, als een open deur in hun geloof, en dan ontstaat er mischien zelfs een cultus omtrend dit verhaal, en dan moet u later voor God verschijnen en dan moet Hij u misschien wel vertellen : 'Je hebt het goed gedaan hoor, daar niet van, maar ... u heeft uw tijd verdaan met één of ander verhaal ...' Kunt u zich dat voorstellen ... De teleurstelling van God ... De gebogen hoofden van al die engelen, omdat u die zo bijzonder was uzelf verlaagd heeft tot één of ander verhaal en daarmee tijd verspilt heeft ... Er waren zoveel andere belangrijkere dingen te doen ... Wat waren die dingen dan zoal ? In rondjes blijven draaien ? Met een zuurpruimerig gezicht elke week naar het gezwam van een dominee te luisteren die denkt dat de burgemeester van zijn stad ook direkt de koning van het hele land is ? Ja, mijn pappa is de sterkste van allemaal ... Dat denken alle kinderen ....

Of zou een verhaal u kunnen redden uit de eeuwigdurende slavernij van het kerkelijke nationalisme en absolutisme ... Wij zijn het hoogste religieuze ras .... Onze kerk, ons geloof ... onze pappa, onze burgemeester ... onze grote broer ... Alles draait om ons, de rest is afgeweken ... Wij hebben het zuivere en ware geloof .... Wij weten het beter ....

Zou zo'n verhaal zelfs God kunnen redden ?

Die vraag mag u de komende tijd proberen te beantwoorden ... En dan mag u beslissen over dit verhaal ... Niet voor anderen, maar voor uzelf : Ga ik wat met dit verhaal doen, of niet ... Ga ik verder met mijn oude vertrouwde rondjes, of breek ik door de cirkel heen ... Wat gaat het me kosten .... en wat levert het me op ... Ook al geloof ik dit verhaal voor geen stuiver ... Wil het me misschien laten zien dat er meer is ? En als er meer is, wat is dat dan ? Is dat zoals het verhaal zegt, of net even iets anders ? Hoe kan ik daar achter komen ?

Beste lezer, je leert en je ontdekt ... door te reizen ... Reis daarom nog even met mij mee ... We zijn nog niet klaar .... Het zou jammer zijn om nu af te haken nu we al zo ver zijn gekomen .... Dat zou echt zonde zijn ... Zonde van de tijd ... Want als u nu stopt ... dan is misschien alles voor niks geweest .... Dan vergeet u dit hele verhaal weer, en gaat weer verder met uw leven zoals het was .... Of neemt u uzelf in het vervolg voor om niet meer dit soort verhalen te lezen .... Terwijl wanneer u ietsje verder had gelezen zou het uw leven voor altijd hebben kunnen veranderen ... Of klink ik nu als een Jehovah Getuige ? Zij kennen de geschiedenis van de kerk vaak beter dan de kerkgangers zelf, en noemen het terecht : Het Grote Babylon ... Maar ik ben hier verder niet om te slijmen naar Jehovah Getuigen ... Dat moeten ze allemaal zelf weten ...Wat ik probeer te zeggen is dit : Uw leven ... hangt ... aan de draad van uw geloof .... Zou u niet een stevigere ketting grijpen ? Het is bijna als het zwaard van Damokles ... een zuchtje ... en .... Waar kunnen we naartoe ? Wie heeft de oplossing ? Ik, als oude reiziger ? Of een schreeuwende folderaar aan de rand van de wal .... 'Kom terug,' zou hij u toeroepen .... 'want Jezus ....'

Maar Jezus was een reiziger, en kondigde grotere dingen aan, al in Zijn leven ... Veel dingen kon Hij niet vertellen omdat hen die naar Hem luisteren daar nog niet aan toe waren .... Daarom is de canon al dikke onzin .... Het zwaard van Canon is een soort zwaard van Damokles, wat aan een iel draadje boven uw hoofd hangt ... Er hoeft maar iets te gebeuren .... en .... Gaat u daar op zitten wachten, of reist u met mij mee .... Natuurlijk wil ik u niet bang maken .... Dat hebben anderen al genoeg gedaan ... Sommigen zeggen weleens : 'Wie een ander bangmaakt heeft geen Waarheid in zich ...' Een verhaal behoort er ook niet te zijn om de ander bang te maken ... Het is een kunstzinnige manier om duidelijk te maken dat er een bom onder uw bed ligt ? Dat zou al te gemakkelijk zijn .... Of is het een verlokker, een verleider, om u weg te leiden van het gevaar ? En wat is het gevaar ? Is het niet het verhaal zelf ? Of bestaat er in de wereld van verhalen helemaal geen gevaar ? Alles is toch niet echt .... Ze zeggen weleens : 'Hoe kun je een blinde uitleggen hoe prachtig de wereld is ...' Maar is die wereld wel zo prachtig ... Heeft de blinde misschien wel een hele goede reden om blind te zijn ...

Hoofdstuk 5. Wat Als ....

Reizigers kunnen heel vervelend zijn ... dat weet ik ... Dat heb ik ook eens meegemaakt ... Mede-reizigers kunnen je het leven zuur maken ... of vervelend ... Uit een vliegtuig kun je niet zomaar wegstappen, maar uit een verhaal wel ... Maar wat is er mooier dan twee reizigers die het goed met elkaar kunnen vinden ... Dat begin ik bij jou te merken ... Ik weet niet of het wederzijds is, deze vriendschap, maar ik wil je zeggen dat ik je gezelschap aangenaam vind en waardeer ... Ik hoop dat we goede vrienden kunnen worden, al is het misschien maar voor even ... Misschien ben je mij over een tijdje na het lezen alweer vergeten .... Ik zal nog in ieder geval een paar weken over je nadenken, maar dan zal ik jou misschien dan ook wel langzaam moeten vergeten ... Tenzij jij echt mijn leven verandert ... of ik jouw leven verander ... Weet je al wie ik ben ? ... Ik hoop dat we na de

reis misschien nog eens een keer over elkaar dromen ... Dat we met warmte aan elkaar mogen terugdenken ... als de vlam van een bijzondere herinnering ... een schuilplaats waar we altijd in mogen schuilen, en misschien wel mogen wonen voor altijd ...

Al was het in jouw ogen alleen maar een verhaal, een symboliek, om alles eens op een andere manier te kunnen bekijken ... Voor mij was het echt ... omdat ik alles heb meegemaakt, en jij niet ...

Misschien ben ik in jouw gedachten alleen maar een hoofdpersoon van een verhaal, een stripfiguur, of een ander soort fictief figuur ... voor mij ben jij echt ... Wie ik ben ? Wat als ik Jezus ben, of ... misschien ben ik in sommige ogen wel de duivel ... Dan zou jij mij toch verdedigen, hè ? Of lees je dit allemaal om me later een trap na te geven ? Ik heb tijd aan je gegeven, ik heb naar je geluisterd ... Is dat dan allemaal voor niets geweest ? Wat als ik een engel ben ? Of houden engelen zich niet met dit soort dingen bezig ... Is dat alleen maar iets wat mensen doen ... brieven en verhalen schrijven .... of is dat iets van demonen ? Nou ?

Maar vertel mij nou eens wie jij bent ... Ik ken je alleen maar als de lezer van dit verhaal ... Of wijk ik nu teveel af ... Het gaat toch allemaal om het verhaal, en niet om jou en mij ? Ik heb het gelezen, door jouw ogen, en ik heb het begrepen ... alle gevoelens die jij had ... Kijk je daar van op ? Of maak je dit soort dingen ... elke dag mee ... ? Ik heb jouw kruis gezien ... Ik hang ook aan een kruis ... We kunnen niet veel ... maar toch ... We kunnen elkaar niet echt helpen ... maar toch .... Misschien dat je pas jaren later weer eens de behoefte hebt om dit verhaal opnieuw te lezen, en dat je me dan door hele andere ogen bekijkt ... Wie weet ...

Wat nou als ik aan het eind van dit verhaal zou zeggen : Gefopt ! Of heb je stiekem al het einde gelezen ? Of zou je niet geloven dat ik zo iemand zou zijn ... Stel nou als ik zou zeggen : Gefopt ! Zou je me dan geloven ? Of komt dit verhaal zo geloofwaardig over dat je ermee verder zou gaan, of ik er nou weer van terugkom of niet ? Is het verhaal dan afhankelijk van mijzelf ? Wat nou als je voor Gods Troon moet verschijnen, en Hij zegt : Gefopt ! ... Wat dan ? Of acht je hem daartoe niet in staat ... Maar wat zou je doen als je zou ontdekken dat het weer net is als bij de tovenaar van Oz ... Die bestond dus helemaal niet, maar een man in een machine deed net alsof hij het was ... Hij was namelijk ... bang voor de bewoners van de nieuwe wereld waarin hij terecht was gekomen ...

Door één woordje : Gefopt ... zou de hele geschiedenis van de kerk met al z'n toeters en bellen geen enkele waarde meer hebben, geen enkele geloofwaardigheid, en geen enkele invloed meer ... maar zal God tonen hoe het werkelijk zat ...

Durf je nog verder te lezen ? Ik bijna niet meer ...

Hoofdstuk 6. Diepere Wortelen van Khnum

Khnum behoort tot de verborgen weelderigheid van God, klaar om uit zijn schelp te breken, om te laten zien hoe het was en is. Het is dat deel van Gods Geest wat voor de eindtijd verborgen is gehouden. Natuurlijk wilde God wel de sleutels geven aan getrouwe profeten ... God wilde openbaring geven, maar de kerk wilde niet ... Het christendom hield de deuren potdicht. Daarom ging God naar Egypte om daar de rijkdommen van Khnum op te potten .... voor een ieder die wil ...

Zo zijn we aan het einde gekomen van dit verhaal, en willen wij u voor meer informatie naar de weelderige verhalen van Egypte doorverwijzen, waar u mag parelduiken in de mysterieuze zeeen van het oude Egyptische gedachtengoed, waar veel van God Zich verscholen houdt, om niet ten prooie te vallen aan een overdreven kerk.

Misschien bent u meer van mij gaan houden, misschien minder, gedurende de reis ... Misschien dat u mij wel bent gaan haten ... Hoe dan ook ... God heeft u lief .... Hij heeft Zijn leven voor u gegeven, maar zal geen paarlen voor de zwijnen werpen ... Hij geeft Zijn sleutels aan hen die Hem oprecht beminnen ... Vraag hem ernaar in uw volgende periode van 'stille tijd' of gebed ... Vraag Hem, want Hij zal oprechte zoekers antwoorden ...

Tot slot wil ik eindigen met een gedicht dat ik eens las :

'Eens zullen de bergen bloeien,
Eens zullen de zonnen stralen,
Eens zal het altijd kerstfeest zijn.
Door de dalen van een diep woud,
Komen wij altijd weer boven,
Met een hart gelouterd als goud.
Eens zullen dan de wolken buigen,
Eens zal dan de duisternis zwijgen,
Eens zal het altijd Khnumfeest zijn,
De keizer heeft gesproken,
Laten wij allen blij zijn.
Vervuld zijn onze harten,
Met een stralend licht,
Vervuld zijn onze zielen,
Vervuld is onze geest,
om dieper te reiken naar dat diepe goud,
van de Khnum, van Hem die leest.
Hij leest de verhalen van onze zielen,
Hij leest over de koningen die ons hart verblinden,
Hij leest over de dagen die het hart doen zeggen :
Alles is niet voor niets geweest.

Ei-nde

Spiegel van Paradox

Het is druk in de kerk. Er is een kerstdienst, en de zaal zit vol. Sommigen hebben familieleden meegenomen. Esther en Peter zitten achter in de kerk. Zo kunnen ze alles goed zien, alhoewel het wel erg donker is. In de hele kerk zijn er wat kleine lampjes die de sfeer heel geheimzinnig maken, en er branden hier en daar wat kaarsjes. Esther vindt dat wel een beetje eng, want wat als er zo'n kaarsje omvalt. Maar Peter zegt dat ze zich niet aan moet stellen. 'Als de kerk in de fik vliegt, dan gaan we allemaal naar de Heer,' verzekert Peter haar. Maar daar zit Esther niet echt op te wachten.

Ze wil eerst met Peter trouwen en dan kinderen krijgen. De dominee zegt dat dat niet in de hemel gebeurt, en daarom vindt ze dat ze er weleens mee mogen opschieten. Peter vindt het allemaal maar dom. Hij wil wel met haar trouwen hoor, daar niet van, maar hij ziet juist er juist erg naar uit om zogezegd te trouwen met de Heere. Dat staat namelijk ook in de Bijbel zo, dat de gemeente de bruid is van Christus. Esther vindt het maar een eng idee. Wat zal er dan in de hemel allemaal gebeuren ? Komen ze dan allemaal in een soort harem terecht ? Nee, Esther heeft nog steeds haar bedenkingen bij het geloof. Eigenlijk kwam ze door Peter in de kerk terecht, maar nog steeds heeft ze er erg veel moeite mee. Oh ja, ze gelooft wel hoor, maar moet dat allemaal zo moeilijk als in de kerk ? Ze zingt altijd wel mee, en luistert altijd wel naar de preek, maar veel ervan begrijpen doet ze niet.

Peter is een humoristische jongen, iets waardoor ze gelijk als een blok voor hem viel. Hij heeft zoiets mysterieus om hem heen hangen. Peter zegt dat dat de Heere is, maar heeft de Heere wel zoveel humor en mystiek als Peter ? Het zou voor haar makkelijker zijn om te geloven als Peter de Heere zou zijn. Ze is helemaal vol van Peter, en soms denkt ze zelfs dat hij God is. Natuurlijk is hij dat niet, maar toch. Peter zegt dat hij in de geest gedoopt is, en dat het daardoor komt dat ze zo denkt, maar ze snapt niet veel van het in de geest gedoopt te zijn. Ze vindt dat allemaal een beetje eng. De dominee doet wel eens een oproep of een ieder die in de geest gedoopt wil worden naar voren wil komen, maar dat heeft ze nog nooit gedaan. Dat vindt ze veel te eng. Peter dwingt haar verder niet, hoor, maar toch vindt hij dat een beetje jammer. Verder kunnen ze goed met elkaar overweg. Op een dag zit er een vreemde man in de kerk. Niemand schijnt hem te kennen. Na afloop loopt hij direkt op Peter af : 'Hey, ga je mee naar het bos, er is daar iets vreemds.'

Peter vraagt hem wat er daar dan aan de hand is. 'Ja, allemaal lichten,' zegt de man, 'en spiegels, heel veel spiegels.'

'Nou, ik voel daar niet veel voor als ik eerlijk mag zijn,' zegt Peter. De man kijkt heel vreemd uit zijn ogen, alsof hij een klap heeft gehad, of zelfs teveel heeft gedronken, en Peter vertrouwt het niet zo. De volgende kerkdienst is de man weer aanwezig. Hij draagt gescheurde klederen ditmaal, en het lijkt zelfs alsof er as op z'n hoofd ligt. Peter moet direkt denken aan wat er in de Bijbel staat over rouw. Peter besluit na de dienst op hem af te gaan en vraagt of er iets met hem gebeurt is. Maar de man zegt niets, en loopt weg. Als hij bijna bij de deur is roept hij : 'Ik vroeg je toch om met mij mee te gaan, maar je wilde niet luisteren !' Toen rende de man weg.

De dienst daarop zit de man weer in de kerk, keurig in het pak, stropdas, met een vrouw in bruidskleding. 'Wel heb ik ooit,' zegt de dominee op de preekstoel. 'Hier wist ik niets vanaf, broeders en zusters, dat er vandaag een bruiloft was.'

'Ja, we zijn net getrouwd,' zei de man. De bruid knikt. 'Nou, hartelijk gefeliciteerd,' zegt de dominee, en zegent hen vervolgens om dan met zijn preek te beginnen. Maar midden in de preek onderbreekt de man hem. De man heeft een ruige baard, en zijn lip bloedt een beetje, alsof hij erop gebeten heeft. Zijn bruid probeert hem in toom te houden, maar de man is al opgestaan, en begint luid te schreeuwen : 'Wie heeft jou verteld dat je zulke onzin mag prediken : 'In de hemel wordt niet getrouwd, maar met de Heere trouwen we allemaal. Wat is dit voor onzin ? Trouwens ...' En dan beginnen overal om de man heen mensen flauw te vallen. De man heeft zo'n harde schelle stem. De dominee probeert de man te kalmeren, maar de man schiet steeds meer uit zijn slof. 'Zeg, zeg,' probeert de dominee, 'het is je trouwdag, en dat is niet zo'n goed begin.' Maar de man begint langzaamaan de dominee de huid vol te schelden. Sommige mensen verlaten misselijk het gebouw, want de man spuugt ook in het rond. Dan staat Peter op, en zegt tegen de man : 'Het spijt me dat ik niet met je meewilde naar het bos. Ik begrijp dat je daar iets heel indringends heb gezien. Zal ik met je meegaan ?' Ineens kalmeert de man, en gaat zitten. Peter knipoogt naar de dominee, en de dominee stapt met een bezweet en vermoeid gezicht van de preekstoel af.

In het bos aangekomen laat de man Peter een heuvel zien. Er staat een enorme spiegel op de heuvel. 'God is teruggekomen, Peter,' zegt de man, 'Hij heeft zijn schaapjes niet in de steek gelaten. Hij is door deze spiegel heengekomen.'

'Wat is het voor spiegel ?' vraagt Peter. 'Dat zul je wel zien,' zegt de man, 'kom mee.' En dan grijpt hij Peter bij z'n arm en samen lopen ze door de spiegel ergens naar binnen. Het oppervlak van de spiegel was waterig, en ze konden makkelijk naar binnen.

'Er is een oude indiaanse wet die zegt dat je de vijand alleen overwint door de vijand op jouw eigen manier te worden,' zei de man. De man zag er ineens veel ouder uit, en ook Peter. Peter staarde naar zijn kleding, die niet meer rood was, maar bruin. Ook de kleding van de man had een andere kleur, en de man leek een beetje op een piraat. Peter leek nu een beetje op een cowboy. Het was erg vreemd. Peter was erg verbaasd. Toen zei de man : 'In de bijbel staat dat Christus gelijk werd aan de zonde. Ik zal je vertellen wat er gebeurde. Op een zeker moment werd Christus gelijk aan het lijden, door het kruis, en toen ging hij ook door deze spiegel heen, en werd hierdoor gelijk aan zijn vijand, maar dan op een hele andere manier, als in een paradox. Zo werd Christus uiteindelijk satan, en zelfs Judas. Zo overwon Hij hen.'

Peter keek de man een beetje verbaasd aan. 'Dus dat is ook een hele oude indiaanse wet ?' vroeg Peter. De man knikte. 'Wat een vreemde spiegel is dit ?' zei Peter. Toen draaide de man zich om, en wilde weglopen, maar Peter vroeg : 'Hoe kom ik hier weer uit ?'

Maar de man rende weg, en riep : 'Je kunt hier niet meer uitkomen. Je zult ermee moeten leren leven.'

Ineens was de man helemaal uit het zicht verdwenen. Peter wist niet hoe hij het had. Hij was hier gelijkgeworden aan alles wat hij altijd verafschuwde, alles waar hij moeite mee had, en zelfs de dingen waar hij bang voor was. Hij was hier zijn eigen vijand, maar dan op een hele andere manier. Peter probeerde de spiegel weer te vinden, maar waar hij ook zocht, er was niets meer. Ook de heuvel kon hij niet meer vinden, maar hij stond hier wel in een bos. Zou er hier in de buurt ook een kerk zijn ? En wie zouden daar allemaal zitten ? Peter wilde er niet lang over nadenken. Hij wilde terug. Opeens kreeg Peter hele erge steken in zijn tepel, en ook in zijn voet. Het leek wel alsof hij bloedde. Zo hard als hij kon rende hij het bos uit, en daar zag hij de man weer lopen. 'Hey,' riep Peter, 'je moet me hieruit halen, ik krijg overal steken in mijn lichaam, en ik heb het gevoel alsof ik bloed.' Maar de man antwoordde niet. Na lang aandringen deed de man eindelijk zijn mond open : 'Echt, Peter, het is beter voor je. Je moet hier blijven.'

'Ja maar ik moet naar huis,' zei Peter. 'Ik voel me niet goed. Haal me hier alsjeblieft uit.' Na een tijdje begon de man medelijden met hem te krijgen, en zei : 'zoals je wil.' Ineens werd Peter wakker in de kerk, terwijl alles draaide voor zijn ogen. Had hij alles maar gedroomd ? Naast hem zat iemand die heel erg op de man van de spiegel leek. De dominee was flink de boel aan het tiraniseren op de preekstoel. Met donderend geweld bracht hij de woorden van God tot de mensen in de kerk. Het was alsof de dominee daar als Noach op z'n ark stond, om de mensen te waarschuwen voor de regen. Peter had een onbehaaglijk gevoel.

Die nacht had Peter een vreemde droom. Hij en Esther zaten in een bootje, en plotseling viel het bootje om, en een soort krokodil-achtige slang greep Esther en trok haar de diepte in. Peter probeerde haar nog te zoeken, maar zonder resultaat. Toen zwom hij naar de kant en werd wakker. Peter wilde een gesprek met de dominee over hetgeen was gebeurd, en ook over de vreemde droom erna. Maar aan de andere kant was het alsof Peter bang was geworden voor de dominee. Hij besloot er eerst met Esther over te praten. Esther zei dat het beter voor hem was, dus Peter ging op een dag met de dominee naar huis. De dominee woonde op een afgelegen plek in het bos. De dominee schonk wat koffie in voor Peter, en Peter vertelde zijn verhaal.

'Peter, ik kan me hier echt niets bij voorstellen, maar het is wel vreemd, want heel lang geleden, toen ik net in deze kerk was aangesteld, kwam er eens een man in de kerk die er hele vreemde leerstellingen op na hield. De man had het over de paradox, maar wat hij daarmee bedoelde begreep ik niet helemaal,' zei de dominee. 'De man werd door lotingen ouderling, maar op een dag kwamen we erachter dat hij er meerdere vrouwen op nahield. Hij heeft toen nog enkelen van ons met een pistool bedreigd, maar is toen de kerk uitgegaan.'

'Ja, maar wat moet ik nu dan met zulke vreemde dromen ?' vroeg Peter aan de dominee.

'Ach,' zei de dominee, 'iedereen droomt weleens vreemd. Ik zou er niet teveel aandacht aan geven als ik jou was.'

Na het gesprek besluit Peter naar de plaats te gaan in het bos waar in zijn droom die spiegel stond, maar hij kon de heuvel niet vinden, en al helemaal de spiegel niet. 'Dromen zijn bedrog,' had de dominee gezegd. En dat bleek maar al te waar. Na zijn wandeltocht en zoektocht door het bos gaat hij naar Esther. Even later zitten ze beiden op haar kamer. Esther draait wat rustige muziek, en Peter bladert door een paar magazines van haar. Het zijn echte vrouwenbladen, waar ze zo van houdt. Peter vindt het niet echt wat. Het staat vol met roddel, maar Esther zegt dat het gewoon verhalen zijn. Verder zegt Peter er niet veel van. Daar is hij veel te positief voor ingesteld. Weer heeft Esther het over trouwen, iets wat ze vaak doet.

Op een zondag zitten ze in de kerk, terwijl er een andere dominee preekt. De dominee komt uit het buitenland, en heeft het veel over de paus. De dominee heeft een beetje een vreemd accent, maar spreekt wel gewoon Nederlands. Hij vertelt dat Christus Petrus had aangesteld als de Rots waarop de gemeente gebouwd zou worden, en dat de paus de hedendaagse Petrus is, als de plaatsvervanger van Christus, en opvolger van Petrus. Het komt allemaal een beetje katholiek over. De dominee vertelt ook dat hij wonderen kan doen. De dominee heeft een duif in een kooitje meegenomen, en vertelt dan over de heilige geest.

De week daarop preekt dezelfde dominee weer, en weer gaat het over de paus. Peter heeft het niet zo op met de paus, maar laat de man maar zemelen. Ditkeer laat de dominee de duif los, die direkt door de kerk vliegt en daarna weer terugkomt. Peter vindt het maar vreemd, maar de dominee gebruikt het om uit te leggen over de heilige geest. Hij spreekt over de heilige geest alsof het een postduif is. Dan zegt hij dat de Bijbel zegt dat de geesten der profeten aan de profeten onderworpen zijn, en dat de profeten van de gemeente zijn, en daarmee onderworpen aan Petrus, en dus aan de paus. De dominee beschildert de paus als een soort poppenbaas die de marionetten laat dansen. De dominee heeft ook wat marionetten meegenomen om dat uit te beelden. De dominee beschildert Petrus en dus de paus als de Nieuw-Testamentische Noach, die een ark heeft gebouwd, de kerk, de rots, om de gemeente te behoeden tegen de regen. En dan gaat de dominee verder met te beschrijven welke afschuwelijke dingen de pauzen van het verleden op hun geweten hebben, en laat de gemeente een boekje zien ongeveer zo groot als de bijbel, met roodbruin leer en vergulde bladzijden. De dominee zegt dat dit het Pauselijk Testament is, het derde testament, en dat dit tot de verborgen bijbel van de paus behoort, de zogenaamde machtsbijbel. Iedereen in de zaal is diep geschokt. Dan vertelt de dominee dat het Oude Testament een boek is van offering, van moord en doodslag, en dat het Nieuwe Testament kwam om dit allemaal te bedekken met de mantel der liefde. Maar het Pauselijk Testament was het boek der martelingen, om de oude wonden allemaal weer open te halen. Overal in de kerk begonnen mensen misselijk te worden, en sommigen vielen flauw, terwijl anderen opstonden om kokhalzend de zaal te verlaten. Niemand wist wat er precies gebeurt was, of waardoor het kwam, maar zo liepen de dingen nu eenmaal. Het leek alsof een enorme en onbeschrijfelijke stank het kerkgebouw was binnengekomen, als de onverdragelijke stank van rottend vlees.

Maar de dominee was nog niet klaar. Er was ook nog een vierde testament wat voor de kerk verborgen werd gehouden, een testament met een verborgen paus. Dit was het Pinkster Testament, een boek dat angstvallig door charismatici werd schuilgehouden, en wat tot hun verborgen machtsbijbel behoorde. Ze claimden hierdoor zelfs de paus als marionet te gebruiken.

Peter stond op en riep : 'Hoe weet u dit allemaal, en hoe komt u aan die geschriften ?'

De dominee begon te grijnzen, en zei : 'Ja, ik heb zo mijn connecties.'

Toen werd Peter wakker. Het bleek allemaal een droom te zijn. Weer ging Peter ermee naar de dominee. 'Vier Testamenten ?' vroeg de dominee. 'Je dromen gaan wel erg ver, Peter. Maar moet je eens luisteren : Het is wel zo dat de pauzen opkwamen als de grote poppenbazen voor heel veel

bloedvergiet, en de pinksterbeweging kwam toen opzetten om de wonden weer een beetje te verzachten. Ik weet niet of je wel eens van het woord 'pinksterpaus' hebt gehoord ?'

Peter schudde zijn hoofd. Een pinksterpaus was iemand met veel macht in de pinksterbeweging, die veel aan het rollen kon krijgen, en daarom soms zo werd genoemd. 'Zulke indrukwekkende dromen krijg ik niet, Peter,' zei de dominee tenslotte, 'maar als ik jou was zou ik me maar niet druk maken. Het is de manier van je onderbewustzijn om met de geschiedenis om te gaan, en het enigszins te verwerken.'

Peter weet nog niet zoveel van de pinksterbeweging af, en besluit een onderzoek te gaan doen. Hiervoor gaat hij naar de bibliotheek, en al snel vindt hij een geschiedenisboek over de pinksterbeweging. Hierin worden de grote namen vermeld die machtige wonderen konden doen, wonderen en tekenen. Zij hadden zoveel macht over mensen dat wanneer die mensen bij hen in de buurt kwamen die mensen soms gewoon omvielen. Zouden zij de verborgen pauzen zijn, de pinksterpauzen ?

Maar in andere boeken leest Peter dat de pinksterbeweging een secte is, dat zij die daar bijhoren bezeten zijn door de duivel. Ook leest hij in sommige boeken dat machtige leiders in de pinksterbeweging soms een verbond hebben gesloten met satan. Ineens moest Peter weer terugdenken aan die droom over de spiegel, de spiegel van paradox. Zouden zulke leiders door die spiegel heengegaan zijn ? Dan zijn ze aan hun vijanden gelijkvormig geworden om die vijanden te overwinnen. Is dat dan goed of slecht ? In die droom zei die man dat het een oude indiaanse wet was, en dat zelfs Christus aan hen gelijkvormig was geworden. Maar dat ging dan op een hele andere manier.

Die nacht kreeg Peter weer een droom. Hierin waren de pinksterpauzen de bewakers van de spiegel van paradox, en plotseling veranderden ze in stierenvechters die een vreemde lap voor zich hadden, die in allerlei kleuren veranderde. Hierdoor betoverden ze de kerk. Om de stieren heen stonden cowboys die op de stieren sprongen. Alle stieren renden op een groot scherm af, en sprongen er doorheen. Achter dat scherm was een kermisplaats, waar een kraampje stond met een bordje : trekken, uitdoven, boren, vullen. Naast de toonbank lagen vier kleine boekjes als testamentjes. Achter de toonbank kwam een vreemde clown met zijn hoofd naar boven, en deelde zacht snoep uit, als spekjes. Boven de toonbank hingen grote clownsmaskers.

Een andere clown kwam van achter naar binnen lopen in het kraampje, en droeg een groot leren boek in handen genaamd HINN-BIJBEL. Peter Hinn was een kerkleider van een paar eeuwen geleden, die een rijk had gebouwd waarin hij een spiegel van vuur verborgen hield. Die spiegel van vuur was naar zeggen door God aan hem geschonken, en een ieder die hem trouw volgde moest op een bepaald moment door die spiegel van vuur heengaan om zo tot de hemel te komen. Dit stond allemaal in de Hinn-Bijbel beschreven.

Peter schrikt wakker. In de loop van de ochtend zoekt hij direkt in de bibliotheek uit of die Peter Hinn van zijn droom echt heeft bestaan, en ja hoor. In één van de boeken staat dat hij nog steeds volgelingen heeft, de zogenoemde Hinnianen. Met een beetje zoeken hier en daar weet Peter een adres te bemachtigen, en komt met zo'n volgeling in kontakt. Op een avond komt Peter bij de Hinniaan op bezoek. De Hinniaan vertelt Peter veel over de beweging, en Peter vraagt of de spiegel van vuur nog steeds bestaat. De Hinniaan vertelt dat die spiegel nooit is weggegaan, en nog steeds verborgen wordt gehouden, maar dan wel helemaal in Mexico, ergens in een grot. Peter vraagt of er nog steeds volgelingen door die spiegel heengaan, en of ze dan echt in de hemel terechtkomen. De Hinniaan vertelt dat dat nog steeds gebeurt. Nu begint Peter wel heel erg nieuwsgierig te worden, en zou zelfs wel daar naartoe willen. De Hinniaan vertelt dat er veelal in het geheim bedevaarten naar de plaats van de spiegel van vuur worden gehouden. Alhoewel Peter erg enthousiast is wil hij het eerst met de dominee bespreken. Maar de Hinniaan wenkt hem. Peter kijkt in de vlammen van het openhaard, staat op, en volgt de man. De man heette Aaswaldt Hinn, en was zelfs een afstammeling van Peter Hinn. 'Toen mijn overgrootvader stierf,' zei de man, 'wist hij dat God aan zijn nageslacht meerdere spiegels zou geven. Op een nacht schonk God mij de roze spiegel, en hiermee kan ik door

de geest opgenomen worden en in de grot van mijn overgrootvader verschijnen.' Hij wees naar een hoek van de kamer waar een klein gangetje was waardoor ze in een andere kamer terecht zouden komen. Het was een klein kamertje, en er stond een enorm roze scherm als een spiegel, maar er droop bloed van af. Peter schrok. De spiegel was gemaakt van een vreemde stof. 'Waarom bloedt de spiegel ?' vroeg Peter. Maar de man antwoordde niet. 'Ga er maar door,' zei hij, 'dan kom je vlakbij de spiegel van vuur in Mexico.' Voorzichtig en vol nieuwsgierigheid bewoog Peter zich naar het scherm. Het scherm stoomde een beetje. Voorzichtig stapte Peter er doorheen, als door een waterig vlies, en kwam in een ruimte terecht als een soort roze ingewanden. Peter liep door, en dacht bij zichzelf : 'Ik lijk wel gek. Wat is dit voor een kermis ?' Plotseling gleed hij uit, en alles leek ineens veel sneller te gaan. Hij gleed langs slijmere wanden door allerlei zachte roze buizen van een soort vlees. 'Mexico !' werd er geroepen.

Plotseling schrok Peter wakker. Weer gedroomd. Maar wat was dat ? Er was een scherm van vuur in zijn kamer dat steeds dichterbij kwam. Instinctief stond Peter op, en liep er doorheen. Alles was heel groot ineens. Peter zag engelen in de lucht in allerlei kleuren. Peter was omringd met kleurig roze vuur, alsof de twee schermen één waren geworden. Waar was hij ? Het was alsof hij hoog in de lucht was, of lag hij nog steeds te dromen op zijn bed ? Het kon hem eigenlijk niet meer zoveel schelen. Dit was fantastisch. Alles was zo groot. 'Peter, Peter,' riep iemand. 'Je bent door je dromen in de hemel gekomen, door de spiegel van vuur. Is het niet fantastisch ?' Een jongen kwam dichterbij. Het was Peter Hinn. Peter Hinn pakte Peter bij de hand. 'Hallo !' riep de jongen. Hij was zo blij hem te zien. Samen renden ze op een soort kleurige weide. Alles leek gewoon op de aarde, maar dan anders. Alles was zo anders hier, en zo groot.

Een grote vrouw kwam op hen af. Het was de moeder van Peter Hinn. Ze leek wel een beetje op een fee. 'Door de spiegel van vuur kom je vrij van al die pauzen en pinksterpauzen,' zei ze met een glimlach.

'Ik ben zo blij dat je haar eens kunt zien,' zei Peter Hinn. Peter glimlachte. Beneden in de velden liepen een heleboel Hinnianen. Ze leken wel een beetje op indianen. En ze hadden hier hun wigwams. 'Mijn moeder zegt dat we alleen nog een rode spiegel missen,' zei Peter Hinn. 'Waarom dat dan ?' vroeg Peter. Direkt begon er bij Peter een lichtje te branden. Hij had eens gedroomd over een spiegel op een heuvel in het bos. Misschien was dat wel de ontbrekende spiegel, en misschien kon deze spiegel er wel voor zorgen dat er een rode mix tevoorschijn zou komen, al wist Peter nog niet waar dat voor nodig was. Peter Hinn vertelde dat ze 's nachts nog vaak lastiggevallen werden door vreemde witte demonen, de witte wieven. Zij zorgden ervoor dat de spiegel nog zo roze bleef. Peter wist dat door rood en wit te mengen ontstond er roze. Als het witte teruggedreven zou worden, dan zou het allemaal roder worden. Het rood was dus al wel aanwezig. Peter vertelde over de spiegel op de heuvel in het bos. Peter Hinn wilde daar wel naartoe. Maar dat kon alleen in de dromenwereld, want in het echt bestond het niet.

Voor Peter Hinn was het een koud kunstje daar te komen, met aanwijzingen van Peter, en samen droegen ze de spiegel naar het veld van de Hinnianen. Alles begon al roder te worden, en plotseling waren er allemaal rode vlammen om hen heen. Een enorme ladder van vuur verscheen, rood vuur. Peter Hinn begon naar boven te klimmen, en ook Peter en de Hinnianen volgden hem. De tredes van de ladder waren in vier gedeeltes van zeven tredes verdeeld : de zeven jaren die Jakob werkte voor Lea, de zeven jaren die Jakob werkte voor Rachel, de zeven overvloedsjaren en de zeven hongerjaren. Helemaal bovenaan de ladder was er een kermiskraampje waar weer een bordje stond met daarop : trekken, uitdoven, boren, vullen. De clown achter de toonbank vloekte een beetje, en buiten regende en bliksemde het een beetje. Naarmate ze steeds dichter bij het clowntje kwamen begon het clowntje steeds meer te vloeken, en rende telkens naar buiten. Peter kwam erachter dat de tredes van de rode trap de tredes waren van een pauselijke ark, en ook als hij naar beneden keek leek de trap steeds meer op de rode lap van een stierenvechter. Toen ze boven waren was het clowntje helemaal in rep en roer, en vloekte en tierde dat het een lievelust was. Het clowntje werd helemaal doldwaas en riep : 'Even de prullemand legen.' Peter Hinn glimlachte een beetje. 'Deurtje openmaken,' riep het clowntje telkens. Onder de toonbank ging vanaf de buitenkant een deurtje

open, waardoor Peter en Peter Hinn naar binnen konden. Ook een paar Hinnianen gingen mee naar binnen. Ze kwamen in een zaaltje waar allemaal spiegels stonden, maar het waren lachspiegels. Alle spiegels waren rood, en in de verte was een trap met zeven ballen. De ballen glinsterden in allerlei kleuren, en langzaam en voorzichtig liepen ze op de ballen af. Een haasje sprong voor hen uit, nam zijn hoedje af, en zei : 'Welkom bij de laatste treden van de Jakobsladder. Dit zijn de zeven scheppingsdagen van God.' Maar Peter begon weg te rennen. 'Wat is dit voor dom gedoe ?' riep hij. 'Laat me toch gewoon naar de kerk gaan.' En hij verdwaalde in een doolhof van rode spiegels, totdat hij riep : 'Help mij ! Okay, laat me de laatste zeven tredes van de Jakobsladder zien.' De zeven scheppingsdagen, de kleurige bollen, begonnen tot leven te komen. Het waren slagers met kleurige messen. 'Het zijn zeven exorcisten, Peter,' zei het haasje. 'Zij moeten de kerk leren demonen te slachten, en geen dieren en elkaar.'

Peter werd met een glimlach wakker, maar de zeven bollen waren nu in zijn kamer. Ze gaven erg veel licht. Ze groeiden uit tot een Adam en een Eva. Beiden waren ze opgebouwd uit vijf keer zeven delen. Op zijn kastdeur hadden ze geschreven : trekken, uitdoven, boren, vullen, duwen, en het leek alsof er een windvlaag in Peters kamer kwam, en Peter zakte in een diepe rust. 'Heb je weleens gehoord van Merel Browne ?' vroeg Adam aan Peter. 'Ja,' zei Peter, 'daar heb ik over gelezen in de bibliotheek. Zij had speciale gaven. Zij kon mensen genezen, en zelfs mensen opwekken uit de dood. Maar bovenal kon zij mensen aan het lachen krijgen op een wonderbaarlijke manier.'

'Lachen ?' vroeg Adam.

'Ja, zoiets als de Heilige Lach,' zei Peter. Toen haalde Adam een boekje tevoorschijn en gaf het aan Peter. 'Bedoel je dit soms ?' zei Adam. Het was een boekje genaamd Heilige Lach Testament. Peter opende het boekje en zag zichzelf als in een spiegel. Snel gooide hij het boekje van zich af, terwijl een vreemd soort vuur over zijn nek naar boven klom. Toen begon Peter hysterisch te lachen. Hij kon niet meer stoppen. Toen liet Adam hem ook een ander boekje zien, genaamd Profetisch Testament. 'Waar zou je voor kiezen ?' vroeg Adam. Peter was direkt stil, en wees op het Profetisch Testament. 'Ik zou hiervoor kiezen, omdat ik wel meer diepgang in mijn leven wil hebben. 'Heb je weleens van Arend Wimber gehoord ?' vroeg Adam hem.

'Ja,' zei Peter, 'dat was ook een kerkleider van vroeger met een sterke en diepe profetische gave. Bij hem kwam het lachen ook wel voor, maar veel meer het profetische. Hij was legendarisch, omdat hij mensen kon laten vliegen als vogels.'

'Vliegen als vogels ?' vroeg Adam.

Peter knikte. Dat had hij ergens in de bibliotheek in een boek gelezen. 'Maar als hij dat kan, dan heb je de Jakobsladder niet meer nodig,' zei Adam. Peter knikte weer. 'Waar kan ik hem ontmoeten ?' vroeg Peter.

'Ach, die man is van eeuwen geleden,' zei Adam. 'Dan moet je in je dromenwereld zijn. Heel diep in je dromenwereld, daar waar ..... laat maar.'

'Nee, zeg,' zei Peter, 'je moet het me vertellen.'

'Okay,' zei Adam, 'daar waar melk in bloed verandert, daar moet je wezen.'

'Waarom dat nou ?' vroeg Peter, 'waarom moet melk nou weer in bloed veranderen ?'

'Omdat ..... je geen baby meer bent. Exorcisten leven niet meer van melk, maar van bloed,' zei Adam. 'Dat betekent dat je nu moet gaan vechten om geestelijk te kunnen leven, om in je dromenwereld in leven te blijven.'

'Vechten ?' vroeg Peter, 'maar tegen wie ?'

'Tegen demonen,' zei Adam. 'Je hebt toch de zeven scheppingsdagen beklommen ? Dat zijn zeven exorcisten, zeven slagersmessen.'

'Ja, maar ik ga geen slager worden,' zei Peter.

'Dan kun je je dromenwereld wel vergeten,' zei Adam. 'Het is hier slachten of geslacht worden.'

'Ik lijd liever met Christus,' zei Peter vroom.

'Ja, maar Christus was ook een exorcist, juist door het kruis. Je zult balans moeten vinden, Peter,' zei Adam. 'Dus, luister, ga daar naartoe waar melk in bloed verandert. Daar zul je ergens Arend Wimber vinden, die je kan leren vliegen.'

Zo gezegd, zo gedaan. Na een lange tocht en na veel aanwijzingen van Adam vindt Peter Arend Wimber op een duistere plaats. Het is hier allemaal erg groot. De velden zijn als wijngaarden en ravijnen, en Arend Wimber blijkt een reusachtig grote vogel te zijn met prachtige roodverige vleugels. Adam draagt Peter aan hem over en vertrekt. 'Klim maar op mijn rug,' zegt Arend Wimber. Beneden zijn er riviertjes van bloed. De lucht is bloedrood, en zelfs de wolken, in verschillende gloed. In de verte zien ze zeeen van bloed, en zelfs de zon is van bloed. 'Dit ken ik !' roept Peter. 'Dat staat ook ergens in de Bijbel.'

'Houd je nu maar goed vast,' zegt Arend Wimber, 'we gaan vertrekken.'

'Waar gaan we naartoe ?' vraagt Peter. Maar dan vraagt Arend Wimber : 'trekken, uitdoven, boren, vullen of duwen ?'

'Duwen !' roept Peter. En met één duw van zijn vleugels schiet Peter in de lucht en heeft de prachtigste roodverige vleugels. Nu vliegt Peter naast Arend Wimber. Arend Wimber glimlacht. 'Goedzo, jongen,' zegt hij. In de verte komen nog meer wezens met roodverige vleugels op hen af. Arend Wimber vertelde dat de Jakobsladder een groot kruis was, maar nu waren het eindelijk vleugels geworden. Ze zijn nu op weg naar een stad genaamd Branham. Deze stad wordt ook wel de stad van paradox genoemd. In deze stad woont een boer genaamd Bob Cain. 'Ken je die ?' vraagt Arend Wimber aan Peter. 'Ja natuurlijk ken ik die,' zegt Peter. 'Hij was een legendarisch kerkleider die mensen in dieren kon veranderen, hoofdzakelijk vissen.' Arend Wimber knikt. In de verte zien ze een schitterende glimmende driehoek waar betoverend mooi licht uit voortkomt. Beneden hen zijn nog steeds de zeeen van bloed. Als ze in de stad Branham zijn, dan moeten ze op zoek gaan naar Bob Cain. Als Peter dan bij hem kieuwen heeft gekregen, dan kunnen ze de zeeen in. 'Waar is dat nou weer goed voor ?' vraagt Peter.

'Peter, je moet gewassen worden door het bloed,' zegt Arend Wimber. 'Komt je dat ook niet bekend voor ?'

'Ja,' zegt Peter, 'maar ....'

Als ze in Branham zijn duurt het niet lang of ze hebben Bob Cain gevonden. Bob Cain legt bij Peter de handen op, en Peter begint al kieuwen te krijgen. Dan rennen ze met z'n allen de zee in. De zee is koud, maar verderop is het wat warmer. Peter moet veel van het bloed drinken, en voelt zich als een vampier. Maar van binnen weet hij dat dat niet zo is. Diep in de zeeen van bloed vinden ze een schip wat gezonken is : de Kuhlman. Als ze het schip binnenzwemmen zien ze daar allerlei ridderpantsers liggen, en langzaam begint het schip op te stijgen. Ook de ballen van de scheppingsdagen zijn aanwezig. Ook zien ze daar skeletten liggen die tot leven komen. Wat zou er toch aan de hand zijn ? De Kuhlman komt weer tot leven. Langzaamaan begint het schip tot de oppervlakte van de zee te komen. Het lijkt wel op een piratenschip, een spookschip. Zijn ze hier wel op de goede plaats ? Snel komen de ballen op Peter af. Ze vormen zijn wapenrusting, en al snel moet hij leren vechten. Tegen piraten, spoken, en ander gespuis. Maar Arend Wimber en Bob Cain met wat andere wezens zijn dichtbij hem. 'Dit schip is van ons, maatje,' roept Bob Cain. Hij heeft het aan de stok met een piratenkapitein. Maar na een tijdje keert de rust terug op het schip. Bob Cain neemt het roer in handen, en ze varen op volle kracht naar een eiland.

Op dit eiland zou ene Dick Conner wonen, een oude vriend van Bob Cain. Peter kon het zich wel herinneren. In een boek uit de bibliotheek las hij eens dat Dick Conner in dezelfde tijd als Bob Cain leefde, ergens in de middeleeuwen. Ze werkten samen en deden grote wonderen en krachten. Van Dick Conner zeiden ze dat er een engel op z'n schouders zat die hem alles influisterde. Hij kon je

alles vertellen, van je naam, adres en woonplaats tot je geheime zonden. Toen ze op het eiland aankwamen zagen ze Dick Conner daar als een piraat zitten met een papegaai op zijn schouders. Dick Conner grijnsde breed. Hij was blij dat zijn vrienden gekomen waren. 'Zo, ik zie dat de Kuhlman weer op en top is,' zei Dick Conner. 'Wat hebben we vroeger daar een hoop lol op beleefd, hè ?' Dick Conner was een echte demonenslager. Hij had demonen in alle soorten en maten. Maar het vlees was erg duur. Bob Cain en Arend Wimber klaagden er veel over. Zij zeiden dat het vlees des heeren niet verkocht mocht worden. Iets goedkoper kon in ieder geval wel. Maar Dick Conner was niet over te halen. Hij leefde in rijkdom hier, en zo moest het blijven. Hij had een sprekend pistool genaamd Mijnheer McPherson, waarmee hij de demonen bont en blauw schoot. Ook had hij twee sprekende kippen genaamd Dick Finney en Antoine Wesley, die altijd op de demonen afvlogen om ze mores te leren en te arresteren. Ja, Dick Conner had een vreemde boerderij waar dingen gebeurden die het daglicht niet konden verdragen. In de nacht gingen de twee sprekende kippen altijd op jacht. Sommigen zeiden dat ze dan in grote vogels veranderden als arenden. Peter keek zijn ogen uit op de boerderij. Er woonden hier ook cowboys die de meest vreemde kunstjes konden. Ze konden hun hoofden van hun lichamen afnemen, hun tongen uitspuwen, en hun armen laten afvallen. Meestal woonden ze gewoon in stallen. Dick Conner was een trotse man, en rookte erg veel. Hij genoot met volle teugen van zijn rijkdom en vrijheid. Maar al snel hadden Bob Cain en Arend Wimber genoeg van zijn arrogantie en fratsen. Op een nacht besloten ze de geluksmunt van Dick Conner te stelen, een munt die verantwoordelijk zou zijn voor al zijn rijkdommen, en al z'n praatjes. Maar hoe ze ook zochten, ze konden het muntje niet vinden. Dick Conner had het vast goed opgeborgen. Midden in de nacht liepen Bob Cain en Arend Wimber naar hun schip de Kuhlman. Diep in het schip was er een klein boekenkamertje waar ze op zoek gingen naar informatie over de geluksmunt. En ja hoor, snel hadden ze een goed boek erover te pakken. Het heette : De Geluksmunt van Dick Conner. Dit moesten ze hebben. Op de kaft stond ook een afbeelding van de munt. Op de munt stond het hoofd van een legendarische profeet genaamd Ed Wigglesworth. De profeet was zo legendarisch dat hij de keizer werd van een keizerrijk, en daarna de hele wereld veroverde. Hij woonde in een spookkasteel waar hij vaak achter de piano zat. Dan rolde zijn hoofd over zijn rug heen, over zijn armen en over zijn schouders. Hij kon vuurspuwen, en als hij wilde kon hij je door één oogopslag of beweging verstenen. Een gevaarlijk mannetje dus. Onder zijn kasteel hield hij de meest grote en gevaarlijke demonen gevangen, en liet hij ze daar als bomen groeien voor vlees. Dit vlees verkocht hij dan tegen belachelijk hoge prijzen aan de allerrijksten. Het zou ongeneeslijke ziektes in een wip kunnen genezen, en het zou zelfs doden kunnen opwekken.

Bob Cain en Arend Wimber besloten hem te gaan zoeken. In het boek stond beschreven hoe ze er moesten komen. Hij woonde op een spookeiland dieper op de zeeen van bloed. De Kuhlman werd al snel opgeschrikt door de grootst mogelijke en verschrikkelijkste vissen. Uitgeput bereikten Bob Cain en Arend Wimber het spookeiland, waarop een spookslot stond. Al snel stonden ze binnen, en gingen op het zachte geluid af. Iemand was aan het pingelen, maar al snel kwamen ze erachter dat het niet Ed Wigglesworth was, maar iemand anders. Iemand met een loszittend hoofd liep op hen af. Het hoofd draaide een beetje scheef heen en weer. 'Aangenaam,' zei de man, terwijl hij zijn hand op een vreemde manier naar hen uitstak. 'Is je vader er ook ?' vroeg Bob Cain.

De man ging weer achter de piano zitten en pingelde verder. 'Die is er nu niet. Wat moeten jullie van hem ?'

'Wij komen voor een gouden geluksmunt,' zei Bob Cain.

'Alleen degene die hem in een zwaardgevecht verslaat krijgt zo'n munt,' zei de man. 'Verlies je, dan kost je dat je kop en kom je onderin het kasteel te hangen.' Even is het stil, maar dan stemmen Bob Cain en Arend Wimber ermee in. De man leidt hen door een lange gang, en dan kunnen ze naar boven. In een afgelegen zaal zit Ed Wigglesworth achter zijn piano, met zijn rug naar hen toe. Dan staat hij op en draait zich om, terwijl hij een mes van de muur grijpt en net langs hen heengooit. Ed begint te brullen, grijpt zijn zwaard, wordt weer rustig, en gaat weer achter de piano zitten. Zijn hoofd rolt van zijn ene schouder over zijn andere, en dan over zijn rug en langs zijn armen. Dan

begint hij duisterder te spelen, en de kamer begint heter te worden. Als in een bliksem schiet hij weer omhoog om een mes van de muur te pakken, en weer gooit hij het net langs hen heen. Vanuit het niets vliegt er een speer dwars door Arend Wimber heen, en hij valt op de grond. Dan wordt Bob Cain erg woest, pakt een stoel en slaat daarmee Ed Wigglesworth bij zijn piano weg. Ed Wigglesworth begint te grommen als een woest beest. Dan pakt hij een brandende kandelaar, en drukt het in het gezicht van Bob Cain. Bob Cain gilt, grijpt het tapijt waarop Ed Wigglesworth staat en rukt het onder hem vandaan, terwijl zijn gezicht in de fik staat. Inmiddels beginnen meer dingen te branden. Dan staat Ed Wigglesworth langzaam op, grijpt Arend Wimber, en rent met hem naar het raam, waar hij hem doorheen gooit. Dan grijpt hij Bob Cain, en smijt hem een paar keer tegen het plafond, en daarna tegen de hanglamp. Dit keer smijt hij zo hard dat ook Bob Cain door het raam vliegt. Ed Wigglesworth brult, terwijl het kasteel brandt.

Dan schrikt Peter wakker. Maar Peter voelt zich erg onbehaaglijk, alsof hij nog steeds droomt. Naast hem zweeft Arend Wimber als een brandende vogel. 'Vlug,' zegt Arend Wimber fluisterend. 'Zal ik je het geheim vertellen van Ed Wigglesworth ? Hij heeft een derde tepel, op zijn buik. Daarom heeft hij zo'n grote macht.' Peter hoort voetstappen op de trap op de gang, hele langzame voetstappen, maar heel hard. Iemand is op weg naar zijn kamer. Peter verstijft van de schrik. Dan opent de deur zich heel langzaam. Waar is Arend Wimber nu ? Het is Ed Wigglesworth.

'Waarom zo angstig ?' vraagt Ed Wigglesworth. 'Ik ben speciaal voor jou gekomen. Ik ben jouw nachtwacht.'

'Wat heb je met Arend Wimber en Bob Cain gedaan ?' vraagt Peter. Overal wordt er ineens geklopt. 'Ik moet nu gaan, Peter,' zegt Ed Wigglesworth.

'Heb je echt een derde tepel op je buik ?' vraagt Peter. Ed Wigglesworth doet zijn trui omhoog. Hij heeft hele zwarte werkershanden. Daar ziet Peter de tepel, en is overtuigd. Dan vertrekt Ed Wigglesworth. 'Oh ja, voor ik het vergeet,' zegt Ed Wigglesworth nog even, 'hier heb je een zwaard, een echt zwaard.' Het zwaard verschijnt in vuur en vlam met veel licht voor Peter in zijn bed. Het zwaard is bedekt met bollen van boven naar beneden. Bollen van licht, in allerlei kleuren. Peter grijpt het zwaard en zijn handen beginnen te branden. Even later is Arend Wimber terug. Op de achterkant van het zwaard is een munt ingebeiteld met het hoofd van Ed Wigglesworth.

'Hij moet wel erg veel van je houden dat hij je dit zwaard heeft gegeven,' zei Arend Wimber. Peter knikt. 'Ga je mee ?' vraagt Arend Wimber. 'Klim op mijn rug.' Peter grijpt de vuurvogel vast, en de vuurvogel begint over hem heen te vloeien totdat Peter vleugels heeft, vol van rode vlammen. Het zwaard heeft zich vastgehecht aan Peters rug. Peter merkt dat hij nu zelfs vuur kan spuwen. Waar gaan ze naartoe ? Beneden ziet Peter het schip de Kuhlman en de zeeen van bloed, en ook het eilandje van Dick Conner, en in de verte het spookeiland en aan de andere kant het stadje Branham.

Na een tijdje vond Peter het allemaal wel weer heel bizar worden, en vroeg aan de vuurvogel waarom hij niet gewoon in de kerk mocht zitten. 'Daarvoor zullen we naar de rechtsgeleerde Meester E.W. Dowie moeten gaan,' zei de vuurvogel. 'Die handelt in dat soort zaken.'

Ze vlogen naar een zwart kasteel ergens op een afgelegen eiland, en achter het kasteel was een winkelstraat, de W.G. Lake Straat, waar alle onzin vandaan bleek te stromen. De vuurvogel greep Peter vast en trok hem mee in een kantoortje. Dit was het kantoor van de beroemde en beruchte Meester E.W. Dowie. Eduard Dowie zat nog in zijn pyama. Zijn vrouw had hem net een bakje koffie ingeschonken. 'Nog niet drinken, hè, Eduard,' zei zijn vrouw, 'het is nog heet.'

'Ach wijf, loop niet zo te zaniken,' zei Eduard. 'Niemand heeft er iets aan.' Toen nam hij een slok, brandde zich en vloekte en tierde dat het een lievelust was. Binnen in een andere ruimte hoorden ze wat vrouwen giechelen. De vuurvogel legde het verhaal uit, maar Eduard Dowie wilde er niets van weten. 'Daar heb ik vandaag geen tijd voor, voor die onzin. Kom morgen maar terug.' Maar na lang aandringen wilde hij de jongen wel even te woord staan. Ook Peter vertelde bijna stotterend zijn verhaal.

'Dus, jij wil weer terug naar de kerk ?' vroeg Eduard Dowie. 'Om weer naar dat gezanik van die dominees te luisteren ? Luister goed naar me, jongen. Ik kan je wel helpen, maar als je hier eenmaal weg bent, dan kun je hier nooit meer terugkomen. Besef je dat goed ?' Peter knikte voorzichtig.

'Waar heb je de munt van Ed Wigglesworth ?' vroeg Eduard. De vuurvogel wees naar de rug van Peter waar het zwaard zat. Op de achterkant zat de munt ingebeiteld. 'Voor de munt wil ik het doen,' zei Eduard. Hij probeerde de munt van het zwaard te krijgen, maar het lukte niet, omdat het ingebeiteld was. Eduard wees naar de deur waar het gegiechel vandaan kwam. 'Daar staat ergens een spiegel. Als je daar doorheen stapt is het hele verhaal hier afgelopen.'

Zonder om te kijken liep Peter naar de andere ruimte. Er zaten een paar vrouwen op stoelen naast een tafel. 'Waar staat de spiegel ?' vroeg Peter. Maar niemand zei wat. Toen begon Peter zelf te zoeken en vond uiteindelijk de spiegel aan de onderkant van de tafel. Hij kroop onder de tafel, stond op, sprong, en verdween door de spiegel.

Peter werd wakker in de kerk. De dominee sprak over een man genaamd Coe Allen. Peter kende hem wel want het was een profeet en evangelist die mensen dronken kon krijgen zonder drank. Zelf bleek de beste man wel veel te drinken, en kwam achter de tralies terecht voor het doodrijden van een andere evangelist genaamd Nicolas Branham. Maar zonder al teveel problemen kwam Coe Allen uit de gevangenis, omdat zijn broer Pirke Allen de verongelukte evangelist uit de doden opwekte. Na een tijdje zag Peter de dominee een beetje waggelen. Overal in de zaal begonnen schilderij-lijstjes te breken, en de gezichten erop begonnen te bewegen, en ogen te knipperen. Tijd voor een nieuwe afspraak met Meester Eduard Dowie, maar die was nu natuurlijk nooit meer te vinden.

Als een zuipschuit stond Peter op en liep de kerkzaal uit. Hij moest bij het huis van zijn vriendin zien te komen. Hij voelde zich als een varken zo beroerd. Maar toen hij bij het huis van zijn vriendin aankwam was het huis leeg en stond er een bordje 'verkocht' voor de ruiten. Strompelend ging Peter richting het kermisterrein dicht in de buurt. Daar was ergens een klein kraampje met een clowntje. 'Trekken, uitdoven, boren, vullen of duwen ?' vroeg het clowntje. 'Doortrekken,' zei Peter bijna grommend en kokhalzend. Het clowntje trok aan een touwtje, en ze hoorden een wc doorspoelen. 'Zo goed ?' vroeg het clowntje. Aan het touwtje kwam een beeldje naar boven. Het was een kabouterbeeldje en er was een naam ingebeiteld : John Paul Hagin. Onder het kraampje begon een motor te starten. Een fiets kwam eronder tevoorschijn waarop het kraampje rustte. Snel sprong het clowntje op het fietsje en reed weg. Peter was zo dronken dat hij niet wist wat hij met het beeldje moest doen. Plotseling kreeg hij een idee. Hij waggelde met het beeldje naar de tuin van zijn vriendin, en zette daar de kabouter neer. John Paul Hagin kende hij wel. Dat was eerst een voetballer, en daarna een profeet, maar hoe hij zijn naam daar op een kermisbeeldje terecht was gekomen wist Peter niet. Ach, er heetten misschien wel meer mensen John Paul Hagin.

Einde

Cain Jackson de Killerprofeet

theologische horror/humor

Cain Jackson is een killerprofeet. Zijn woorden zijn moordend, er is niemand veilig wanneer hij spreekt. Zijn microfoon is een mes, een moordtelefoon. Wanneer de telefoon gaat ben je erbij, en is het te laat. Cain Jackson is een killerprofeet, en zijn microfoon is een pistool. Hij moordt aan de vleet. Cain Jackson is een killerprofeet. Hij heeft je te pakken, voordat je het weet. En zijn mes heet Benny Hik, als een hap en een slik. Hij heeft een oog dat altijd waakt, om toe te springen wanneer iemand slaapt, 't is een vreemde droomtelefoon, dat wel, maar het is allemaal maar een spel. Cain Jackson is een killerprofeet, en zijn hoed heet Katherine Koekman, een duvel in een doosje. Wanneer hij spreekt, dan springt zij, slaat haar netten uit, als een cirkelzaag is zij, het duurt voor haar altijd te lang. Kapitein Bob Hagin is zijn buurman, getrouwd met Larry Conner, ik vind er niks aan. Ze hebben altijd wat te zeuren, gaan altijd hun eigen gang. En Evan Branham is een geflipte kapitein die altijd langskwam, zingende zijn eigen refrein. Gelukkig hij komt niet meer, met de noorderzon vertrokken, met zijn mes, Lenny Hit. Daarmee is hij getrouwd, kun je het je voorstellen ? Als hij plast dan krijgt hij het benauwd. En dan hebben we nog Morris Hinn, de melkman van het verhaal, verpakkende moedermelk in borsten, niemand heeft ooit zin, hij zwerft overal over de straten, is straatarm, maar blijft altijd kalm. Want hij heeft een muntje dat altijd terugkomt, een twee-koppig muntje, met William Wesley en Benny Finney, een vreemde combinatie, maar het houdt altijd stand. Het zijn twee schurken, twee piraten, die altijd nog lang napraten. Ik heb ze eens gezien op een strand, als slangen in een mand.

Cain Jackson is een killerprofeet. Met zijn mes, Benny Hik, steekt hij alles in de fik, want hij heeft een oog dat altijd waakt, en hij gooit alles weg wanneer het niet smaakt. Cain Jackson is een killerprofeet, en William Cerullo was eens zijn blinde date. Nu zijn ze dan getrouwd, en hun kinderen zijn altijd stout. De één heet Jack McPherson en de andere John G. Kenyon, twee cowboys als lontbommen in een doosje. Ja, ik denk nog steeds heel erg vaak aan Cain Jackson de killerprofeet. Vroeger was het een boef, maar nu zingt hij in de kerk met zijn voormalige blinde date. Ze zijn nog steeds blind, dat wel, maar ach, het is allemaal een spel, het is een gok-automaat in Las Vegas, nu, dan weet je het wel. Ze vreten geld, hebben altijd honger. Bobby Arnott is het dreigende pistool. Veel zul je betalen, veel zul je drinken, en het maakt je zo loom. Ik heb mijn kinderen altijd gewaarschuwd voor dit spel, maar ze houden teveel van zulke draken, dus dan weet je het wel. Aan het einde van de dag moet ik ze altijd uit de modder vissen. Helemaal platzak, moe en overleden, moeten ze de rest van hun leven bedelen. Heus, ga niet met zulke lui in zee. Cain Jackson is een killerprofeet, levende bij Jack Wimber in de wc. Heus ik zeg je, ga niet met Cain Jackson in zee, want Jack Wimber is de dominee, een cowboy-dominee, een pyromaan duikende van wc naar wc.

Het Goverts Pistool

Het is druk op het piratenschip. Kapitein Bob Schuuring is hier de baas. Er werken nog meer lieden van de familie Schuuring hier, zoals Klaas Schuuring, John Paul Schuuring, Wim Schuuring, en Jeffrey Schuuring. Het schip is op weg naar Boston. Op weg komen ze een schip tegen, genaamd De Gemene Cain. Ook dit schip zit vol met piraten, grote gevaartes, dus dat wordt vechten

geblazen. Govert Cain is daar de baas, een gemene piratenkapitein. Hij heeft een heleboel vogels die vaak op zijn nek zitten, en hem allerlei geheime dingetjes influisteren. Vogels zoals arenden, papegaaien, havikken en valken. Govert Cain heeft wel honderden vogels en zelfs een paar vleermuizen. Dat zijn niet echt lievertjes, want die helpen altijd mee in de aanval, en dan zuigen ze bloed. Ook gaan ze weleens in de nacht op jacht, of gewoon overdag. Eens vlogen ze naar het schip van Bert Jones, een oude zeeman, en stalen van hem een heleboel oude spullen weg. Bert Jones was erg gehecht aan die spullen, omdat het erfenissen waren. Nu ze weg zijn is Bert Jones niet meer dezelfde.

Op een dag kwamen de vogels van Boston tot de schepen. Ze zongen liederen, en maakten de harten van de piraten blij. Sindsdien voeren ze geen oorlogen meer. In Boston aangekomen kregen ze allemaal een huisje, om de verschrikkingen van de zee te vergeten. Maar niet iedereen in Boston was blij met hen. En daarom verlangen sommigen van hen nog weleens terug naar het leven op zee. Op een dag werd het allemaal te bont, en de vogels van Boston besloten de piraten en zeelieden mee te nemen naar het gebergte van Schuuring. Hier woonde een oude man genaamd Paul Schuuring. Hij fokte wolven, honden, maar ook wilde katten. De oude man deed nogal vervelend en kwam in gevecht met de piratenkapitein Govert Cain. Ook kapitein Bob Schuuring begon zich ermee te bemoeien. Maar de rest trok verder in het gebergte van Schuuring. En ze kwamen tot prachtige velden en verborgen plaatsen. Hier woonde een man genaamd Govert Strijker, die hen wonderbaarlijke dingen vertelde. Govert Strijker vocht eens met een reus, overwon de reus en hakte zijn kop eraf. Nu woont Govert Strijker nog steeds in de reuzenschedel. Het is als een wonderbaarlijke grot, waar wonderbaarlijke dingen gebeuren. Er stroomt hier magisch sap, en toversap, maar ook andere mysterieuze sappen. Govert Strijker heeft het sap zoveel mogelijk verzameld in flessen, dieper in de reuzenschedel, maar vanuit de reuzenschedel stromen nog steeds kleine watervalletjes met sap. Beneden in valleien stromen wat riviertjes met dat wondersap. Zodra mensen van dat sap drinken beginnen ze te veranderen. Ze zeggen dat de schedel gemaakt is van pythonbot en van pythontanden, en dat zou zielenbloed bevatten en geestesbloed. Het zou alles kunnen veranderen in bloed, en alles laten bloeden. Maar wat was dat sap dan ? Ze zeiden dat dat het bloed van de reus was, vreemd bloed in zoveel kleuren.

Nu zou er in het gebergte, in de buurt, nog een andere Govert wonen, genaamd Govert Kanis. Hij zou ook een reus hebben verslagen en in diens schedel wonen. Hij zou waken over het zwarte bloed, het bloed van botten en kabouters. Het zou de macht bezitten al het gebeente te verpulveren. Hij zou daar samenleven met een zwarte cobra, in een grote wigwam in die schedel. Samen zouden ze de reus hebben verslagen, die heerste over alle kabouters en alle beenderen, en het zwarte bloed.

Samen zouden ze de onderdelen vormen van een reuzenpistool, zowel Govert Strijker als Govert Kanis.

Da Deliria Branhamia

theologische horror/humor

In het slot Da Deliria Branhamia woont ridder Randolph Wigglesworth. Hij heeft een gouden zwaard, en sloft daar altijd mee door de gangen. Kicket Wimberia is een vriend van hem met een grote witte baard, die vaak bij hem komt voor een spelletje kaart. Op een dag kregen ze ruzie, en baron Kicket Wimberia trok z'n zwaard en sloeg het oor van zijn vriend af. Toen pakte Randolph Wigglesworth zijn vriend van de grond, en smeet hem in het open haard. Sinds die dag hoort hij allemaal stemmen in zijn hoofd. En zegt hij dat het in zijn kasteel spookt. En sinds die dag gedraagt hij zich een beetje vreemd. Zijn zwaard noemt hij nu Ben Hiddles, en hij noemt zichzelf profeet. Want die stemmen vertellen hem alles. Nu durft niemand meer tot dat kasteel te komen, want het spookt daar, zeggen ze, maar het grootste spook is de profeet zelf, een moordenaar, voorspellende onheil.

In het slot Da Deliria Branhamia daar drinken ze veel bier. De geesten komen binnen via een kier. Het waait er altijd, en het is er reuzekoud. Aan de muur hangt een vreemde steen genaamd Kadasha Katherina Kuhlmania, zij is een hoer, en als zij spreekt dan wordt het koud, zo koud. Ridder Randolph Wigglesworth vond haar eens in het gebergte, en nam haar mee om hem de toekomst te voorspellen. Ze zei : Op een dag zul je je beste vriend vermoorden, je zult hem gooien in het vuur, want hij sloeg je om de oren. Om een spelletje kaart zal het gaan. Nou, laat hem dan maar komen, riep ridder Randolph Wigglesworth, ik lust hem rauw, wat denkt hij wel. Hij dient af te blijven van mijn oren.

Had hij de steen maar weggegooid, dan waren al die dingen nu niet gebeurt, maar de warmte van een hoer zocht hij, in ruil voor dit schilderij. Het hangt nog steeds aan mijn muur, en ik word altijd weer droef als ik er naar tuur. Nee, nooit zal ik teruggaan naar Da Deliria Branhamia, dit schilderij is mij genoeg. Maar van het zwaard Ben Hiddles heb ik nog steeds groot plezier. Wanneer ik ermee op de tafel sla, dan stroomt er bier.

Escaping Canon

Je kent ze misschien wel, die oude sinterklaasliedjes van de TV, van school of van een LP. Ik hoorde ze ook toen ik bij Canon op bezoek was. Noem het bezoek. Ik was daar al mijn hele leven. Voor hen die Canon niet kennen : Het is een skelet. Het spelletje moest voor mij nog beginnen. Anderen hadden hun wapens al. Ik moest zo snel mogelijk uit dit kasteel. Ik bedoel : Had ik nog zin om hier een seconde langer te blijven ? Al dat gegil was niks voor mij.

Dus ik nam mijn zwaard, en zei : Canon, 't is afgelopen. Ik ga er vandoor.

Het deurtje ging gewoon voor me open. Het was ongelooflijk. Maar ja, dat kan gebeuren in een spel.

Maar ja, toen begon het spel dan ook echt. Ik moest vechten tegen spoken en draken. Ik en mijn zwaardje. Dat was nogal een klus. Ik moest leren springen en bukken, draaien, vliegen, echt van alles. Het was geen simpel spelletje. Al snel kwam ik erachter dat dit het echte werk was. Het was een leuk spelletje.

Aan het einde moest ik Canon zelf verslaan, dat skelet op die hoge troon. En als ik verloor dan werd ik weer teruggestuurd en dan moest ik eerst meer wapens zoeken of één of andere wapenrusting. Zo vond ik de wapenrusting van de Heilige Geest, en de wapenrusting van de Heilige Armoe. Ook vond ik het Zwaard van het Eeuwig Evangelie. Dat was wel flink kicken, en al snel kwam ik erachter dat ik hiermee flink meer kans had tegen Canon. Maar ja, Canon kon flink vuur spuiten. Ik vond ergens de Helm van Mystiek en het schild van Cryptiek, en ergens anders vond ik een boog met een paar pijlen. Hier bleek Canon flink van te schrikken, want toen ik daarmee weer in zijn zaaltje terechtkwam toen werd het echt menens. Bijna had ik hem overwonnen, maar helaas, weer niet. Dus weer ging ik terug naar de oude plaatsen om naar wapens en wapenrustingen te zoeken. Ik vond ergens een speer, een mes, en wat boeken.

Ook bleken allerlei kruizen te helpen, en wat gezangen, maar uiteindelijk kreeg ik Canon nog niet plat. Het spelletje begon me te irriteren, want het leek alsof ook Canon steeds geniepiger werd. Hij leek te reageren op mijn nieuwe aanwinsten. Op het laatst werd ik zo kwaad dat ik het spelletje opzij smeet, en me ging richten op een ander spel. Dit was een spel met konijntjes, echt heel kinderachtig, maar wel leuk.

Soms denk ik nog weleens aan dat spelletje met het skelet genaamd Canon. Het was gewoon geen eerlijk spelletje. Het spelletje was zo gemaakt dat je nooit kon winnen, net als bij een goede gokkast.

Laatst vond ik een ander spelletje met het skelet Canon. Het spelletje had dezelfde opzet. Je moest op zoek gaan naar één of ander zwaard, en dan naar een speer, en hiermee zou je hem dan kunnen afmaken. Maar ook dat spel was me te moeilijk. Ik ben nu echt spelletjes over Canon aan het verzamelen. Het gaat me nu niet meer om het spelen en het winnen, maar om zoveel mogelijk van die spelletjes in bezit te hebben. Zo wordt het spelen weer leuk, en kun je snel overswitchen. Ik probeer er gewoon nog veel hobbies op naast te houden.

Honden van de Hel

Kort Satirisch-Theologisch Horrorverhaal

Hoofdstuk 1.

Bloedband roept zijn manschappen bij elkaar : 'Zo we hebben weer heerlijk aan familie-uitbreiding gedaan ... Kijk nou eens toch hoe onze sociale machines op aarde werken ... Meer en meer slaven kunnen we zo uitbroeden .... want ja, we bouwen nog steeds aan een Nieuw Romeins Rijk ... een Nieuwe Wereldorde ...' Huwelijk kijkt op, en zegt : 'Ach wat, ja, en je hebt nog gelijk ook, maar dat allemaal dankzij mij ... Celibaat is iets wat ze daar beneden bijna niet meer kennen, en Lat-relaties worden als de boze bestempeld ... Ik ben de belangrijkste in de harem van Joegelo ...' Maar dan gaat Bloedband met Huwelijk op de vuist ... een paar dames proberen hen uit elkaar te houden, maar ze worden steeds woedender op elkaar ... Ze strijden om de eerste plaats in de harem van Joegelo ... de grote keizer ... Hij is de keizer van de Romeinse Hel ... een hellehond, als je het mij vraagt ... Maar ja, wat heb ik in te brengen ? Ik ben maar een doodeenvoudige dwerg ... Ze hebben me tot koning gemaakt hier ... Mijn naam is Jirojet ...

Na het gevecht kijkt Bloedband zijn manschappen diep in de ogen ... 'Beseffen jullie niet hoe belangrijk scheiding is ? Jullie hebben het gezien, hè, met eigen ogen ... Huwelijk ging met me op de vuist ... Door scheiding kreeg ik Huwelijk weer onder controle ... onder mijn duim, haha.' Een duister skelet met een hoed komt van achter Bloedband tevoorschijn ... er komt rook vanaf zijn bijna verbrande botten ... Ineens begint hij ijselijk te lachen en te gillen ... 'Haha, die domme poetsers op aarde ... Ze trouwen om ingeschreven te worden bij de Romeinse Sociale Machine, en even later scheiden ze om door de Romeinse Sociale Machine te worden verslonden ... Wat een hel, en ze vragen er zelf om .... Kloosters zijn niet populair ... allemaal dankzij ons ... Wij houden de Romeinse Machine in stand ... met al z'n poppetjes ... al z'n slaven ... Wij maken van sex een koopwaar ... een bedrijf .... en ons bedrijf loopt goed ..... veel eieren vandaag .... morgen veel slaven ....'

'Nou, shut up,' zegt Bloedband, 'ik ben nog altijd de baas hier die de lakens uitdeelt ... Ga allemaal eens in een rij staan, en doe je mond open ...' Alle manschappen van Bloedband gingen in de rij staan en deden zoals Bloedband had gezegd ... Bij één voor één spuwt Bloedband in de mond ... 'En nu slikken.' Sommigen gaan over hun nek ... Bloedband begint te lachen ... 'Haha, zo, dat zal jullie laten zien dat ik nog steeds de baas ben ... Ik wens geen tegenpraatjes ...' Ineens verschijnt er vuur achter Bloedband ... Het is Joegelo, keizer van de Romeinse Hel ... 'Zeg, ik heers over alle hellen,' zegt hij deftig, en daarna schreeuwt hij : 'Zo, harem, jullie zien er weer verschrikkelijk uit vandaag ... Daar gaan dus koppen voor rollen ...' Iedereen begint te trillen, en terwijl Joegelo op z'n hoogst begint te gillen vallen enkele manschappen naar voren, terwijl hun koppen eraf rollen ... 'Haha,' buldert Joegelo, terwijl het bloed begint te stromen ... 'Ik ben nog steeds de baas hier ...'

Bloedband buigt zijn hoofd in schaamte ... Hij mag dan wel de baas van de Harem zijn, maar niet de baas van de hel ... want dat is Joegelo ...

Hoofdstuk 2.

Als Joegelo uiteindelijk weer weg is leeft Bloedband weer een beetje op ... Nu kan hij weer doen wat hij wil ... Hij begint het bloed over de kleine aarde te spuiten ... een kluit op een stok ... 'Ik ben boos,' buldert Bloedband .... 'heel boos ...' Maar dan komt Ouderschap tevoorschijn ... 'Ik voed uw slaven nog steeds op naar behoren ... Ik laat hen geloven dat het huwelijk Gods Wil is, en dat ze veel kinderen moeten krijgen ... Ik laat hen geloven dat het huwelijk goed is en gelukkig maakt ...' zegt Ouderschap met een fronzend gezicht ... 'Goed, goed,' zegt Bloedband een beetje snibbig ... 'Maar heb je hen ook al vertelt dat .... Laat maar, ik geloof je wel ...' Tevreden loopt Ouderschap weer terug naar de groep ... Hij voelt zich altijd als een prins die zijn prinses gevonden heeft als Bloedband hem weer z'n vertrouwen geeft ... Dan komt Vertrouwen naar voren, en probeert zo onopvallend mogelijk bij Bloedband te komen ... Zachtjes fluistert hij in z'n oor : 'Het is in orde hoor, het vertrouwen heeft weer slachtoffers doen vallen, haha ...' Bloedband glimlacht ... Vertrouwen is één van zijn beste maatjes ...

Dan staat Bloedband ineens op, en groeit tot zijn ware proporties ... een skelet bekleed met rood en zwart vlees en hier en daar wat spieren ... Het lijkt wel alsof hij hier en daar aangevreten is ... en het lijkt alsof hij een oog mist ... Maar als je dan dichterbij komt dan zie je dat dat oog gewoon bijna de kleur heeft van het omliggend vlees ... 'Hahaha,' buldert Bloedband ... 'Nog steeds houden wij gelovigen tegen om tot kluizenaarsschap te komen, en monnikenschap .... Zij worden helemaal opgezogen door de Sociale Machine, en daarmee denken ze dat ze God dienen, maar ze dienen ons ...' Ook de andere gestaltes beginnen te lachen ... Dan opent Bloedband wat boeken ... 'Vandaag zullen enkelen van ons heengaan, want wij dulden geen slappe happen ....' De gestaltes beginnen te sidderen, en hier en daar vallen er een paar weg ... Dan horen ze luid gegil ... 'Zo,' buldert Bloedband ... 'Wij zijn de honden van de hel, en dat moet zo blijven ... We hebben niks aan verraders ... Jullie zijn allemaal gewaarschuwd .... Ga nu naar jullie posities, en maak de aarde weer goed bang .... Ze moeten bang gemaakt worden dat ze er niet meer bij zullen horen als ze de bloedbanden los snijden .... Wij hebben die bloedbanden gemaakt ... Wij zijn de stichters van Familie ... Wij zijn ....' Maar verder kwam Bloedband niet .... Een oude gestalte genaamd Familie kwam naar voren ... Bij hem liep een klein hondje genaamd Gezin .... 'Pa, ga terug naar je plaats ...' krijste Bloedband ... en neem dat kleine rotkreng mee ... Toen keerde de oude gestalte weer om, en verdween in de groep ...

Na een tijdje kwam Joegelo weer terug, de keizer van de hel ... Bloedband verbleekte een beetje, maar probeerde zich hoog te houden, en begon ontzettend te slijmen .... Maar toen vloog Joegelo hem aan ... Een onzinnig gevecht als je het mij vraagt ... Maar ja, wie ben ik ? Ik ben maar een doodeenvoudige dwerg .... en ze hebben mij hier tot koning gemaakt ...

Hoofdstuk 3.

Het avondmaal wordt opgediend en er worden doopfeesten gehouden ... De hel moet vol worden met zielen ... Allen drinken ze van het bloed, opdat de bloedbanden strakker worden ... Allen worden ze gedoopt om de banden met de hel strakker te

maken ... Joegelo en Bloedband zijn nog steeds in gevecht .... een gevecht dat Bloedband altijd verliest ... want ja, wie kan er strijden tegen de keizer van de hel ? Bloedband is een gevangene van Joegelo .... gedoemd om in zijn harem te leven .... gedoemd om te slijmen .... maar dan wordt het soms teveel, en dan begint het gevecht weer ... Een vreemde arena, die altijd weer in het huwelijksbed eindigt ... Het is een vreemde oorlog om de macht ...

Bloedband is een slaaf van Joegelo ... een vreemde vogel ... maar nog steeds een hellehond ... Steeds strakker worden de banden ... Er is geen ontvluchten aan .... Want dit is belangrijk .... de aardse band .... en de hemelse banden worden losgelaten, doorgezaagd, doorgeknipt ... Want het huwelijk .... ja, het huwelijk .... Daarmee maken we iedereen gelukkig .... Twee mensen die elkaar gelukkig maken .... en de rest kan stikken .... Twee mensen die een kind krijgen .... Dat kind is alles .... de rest is niks .... Na ons de zondvloed .... Ja, wij aanbidden Bloedband .... niet God .... want ..... Ach laat maar .... wie wil er nu luisteren naar een achterlijke dwerg ? Alleen wat domme zielen op aarde zullen mij volgen .... Maar hen die in de hemel zijn zullen mij willen vernietigen ... Ach wat ... Kom nou toch ... de aarde is best vol, en zij volgen mij allemaal .... Daarmee kan ik wel een oorlog beginnen tegen de hemel ..... Nou zoon, dit was weer een leuk verhaaltje voor het slapen gaan ... Kus je moeder goedennacht .... Ik kom vannacht niet thuis, want ik slaap bij de buurvrouw ... Niet tegen mamma zeggen, hoor .... want .... Ach laat maar .... waarom zou je eigenlijk naar mij luisteren .... Morgen komt er een brief van Joegelo, voor je verjaardag .... En hij zal er wel weer voor zorgen dat je een prachtig kado krijgt met alles erop en eraan .... een nieuw automatisch slavenpak ofzo .... waarmee je weer alles doet wat hij zegt ... in plaats van wat ik zeg .... Zo zal het altijd wezen ... Ik heb de moed allang opgegeven ....

Einde

Het Verhaal van Orkaan

Er was eens een man die Orkaan heette. Het was een barbaarse gladiator en slaaf die ontsnapt was. Een strijdster genaamd Tania had hem op haar schip 'De Vloedgolf' opgenomen. Nu streed hij aan haar zijde. De oude moeder van Tania was de kapitein van het schip. Zij was een beleefde, listige dame, vol van wijsheid en kennis. Ze kende de hemelse zeeen als de beste. Mijn hart was gekruisigd, en ik was geriemd over mijn hele lichaam. Ik hield mijn zwaard in de lucht. Orkaan had mij gered toen ik jong was. Veel bloederige oorlogen heb ik aan zijn zijde gestreden, en dat ging

niet zonder verwonding, maar Orkaan zei altijd : ‘Een wond, parfum voor de Heer.’ Ik heb me daar altijd aan vast gehouden. Zoveel demonische schepen op de hemelzeeen. Op een dag vroeg ik : ‘Heer, vertel me meer over die parfum.’ Ik had het niet zo op parfum. Het stonk, maar ik wist wel wat Orkaan bedoelde. Het ging om hemelse parfum van het kruis, voortkomende uit een flesje armoe. Die riemen op mijn lichaam waren zo kunstig door de Heere gelegd. Als ik dreigde te vallen, dan grepen ze me altijd aan mijn riemen. Dat was wel een veilig gevoel. Het was een tuig, een tuig des kruizes. Orkaan heeft me in de loop van mijn leven geleerd hoe mijn zwaard te gebruiken, en wanneer de speer te werpen. Ik heb veel aan zijn lessen gehad. Ik heb zelden zo’n zachte man als Orkaan meegemaakt, en op de hemelzeeen geldt het : ‘hoe zachtmoediger de man is, hoe sterker hij is.’ En daarom was Orkaan één van de sterksten die ik kende.

De Vloedgolf was een prachtig schip, hoog, met veel ruimte binnenin. Er woonden allerlei strijders in het schip. De meesten waren grootgebracht door Orkaan, of pas op latere leeftijd op het schip gekomen. Groenoog was een oude leeuw, een man met veel geheimen. Hij kwam niet zo vaak op het dek. Meestal alleen als het echt oorlog was, en dan maakte hij ook goed oorlog. Eens was hij de schrik op de hemelzeeen, maar nu deed hij het wat rustiger aan. De Heere leidde het zo dat Groenoog mij op een dag uitnodigde in zijn deel van het schip. Hier was ik nog nooit eerder geweest. Er stonden hier een heleboel zeldzame parfumflessen, parfumflessen van het kruis. Eén voor één begon hij te bespreken, en hij smeerde soms wat van dat spul op mijn riemen. Hij sprak over de kruisiging van de hersenen, en over de kruisiging van veel meer delen. Ook legde hij een vreemd sieraad om mijn nek als een soort waaier van lange staafjes met edelsteentjes. Het was een sieraad van het kruis en de armoe. Hij sprak dat de hemelse sieraden extra kracht gaven in de strijd. Toen kwam Orkaan binnen, en glimlachte, en ook Tania kwam binnen. Ik kreeg een nieuw riementuig, en het leek een beetje op de riemen van Jozef die ik eens had gezien. En ik herinnerde Jozef de Dromer, en ik was ook zo’n dromer, en ja, toen besefte ik : de dromen zijn de parfums van het kruis.

En Orkaan nam mij mee naar een andere ruimte die ik ook nog niet kende. ‘Dit is nu jouw ruimte,’ zei Orkaan. Het was tegenover de ruimte van Groenoog. Ook gaf Orkaan mij een nieuwe speer en een nieuw zwaard met een harig schild met juwelen erop. Ik was een droomstrijder, een gladiator van het kruis. De parfums leidden mij voort in de strijd. Het waren de dromen van het kruis. Orkaan liet me zien hoe de kanonnen werkten, en nam me daarna mee naar nog wat geheime ruimtes. De Heere had mijn gebed verhoord.

Het Geheim van de Leeuwen Thee

Marion kreeg een leeuw voor haar verjaardag. Het was een hele vreemde leeuw. Hij had twee witte ogen, met kleine zwarte puntjes erin, en hij had ook vleugels.

's Nachts kon ze met hem reizen naar verre landen, dat had opa haar gezegd. Opa werkte vroeger bij een thee-fabriek. Toen hij met pensioen ging, kreeg hij deze leeuw. Nu zijn kleindochter al zo oud was geworden, gaf hij haar de leeuw. Ze was al twaalf.

Marion had een grote wens. Ze wilde Mozes wel eens zien. Met kloppend hart ging ze naar bed. De leeuw zou haar om twaalf uur wakker maken, en dan zouden ze vertrekken. Ze wilde Mozes een vraag stellen.

Uiteindelijk was het dan zo ver, de leeuw had haar wakker gemaakt, en daar vlogen ze door de lucht, Marion op de rug van de leeuw. Ze kwamen bij een hondenhaag aan. De leeuw zei dat ze daar doorheen moest om bij Mozes terecht te kunnen komen. Aan het einde van de haag zag ze hem zitten, helemaal onder het bloed. Oh, wat had ze een medelijden met hem. Ze rende door de haag, maar ze werd door de honden gebeten, en viel neer. "Leeuw, waarom doe je niets ?" riep ze. Maar de leeuw was nergens meer te bekennen. En Mozes was ineens nog verder weg. Nu zag ze ineens alleen maar bos. "Wat, is dit een truc ofzo ?" riep ze ... maar niemand antwoordde haar. Al haar wanhopige woorden echoden tot haar terug.

Huilend viel ze weer neer. Ze was zo moedeloos na al dat lopen en dwalen. Ze had ineens al het vertrouwen in de leeuw verloren, en zelfs in haar opa. "Het komt allemaal door die stomme thee-fabriek. Ze hebben m'n opa bedrogen," dacht ze.

Ineens schrok ze wakker. "Het is twaalf uur," sprak de leeuw ".... we gaan vertrekken." "Maar, maar," stamelde Marion ... "Ik dacht dat we al vertrokken waren .... ik heb gewoon een verschrikkelijke nachtmerrie gehad ..."

De leeuw vloog met haar over bergen en bossen ... en eindelijk kwamen ze daar aan waar ze moesten wezen ... bij Mozes ...... Maar, het was niet wat ze verwachtte ..... het volk leefde in slavernij ..... zelfs Mozes .....

"Ja," zegt Mozes, "ik moet je iets ernstigs vertellen, Marion ...."

Maar daar schrok Marion wakker. De leeuw had haar op de schouder getikt. Het was twaalf uur ..... Tijd om te vertrekken .....

Marion barstte in tranen uit .... "Oh, lieve leeuw," snikte ze .... "Hoe weet ik nu of ik droom of niet ?"

Nu zag ze ineens duizenden leeuwen voor haar, allemaal zeggende : "Kom mee, het is twaalf uur ..."

"Oh, wat heb ik toch gedronken," snikte ze ....

Een klein mannetje stond ineens voor haar. Het leek op een klein sparretje. "Je hebt van de thee gedronken ...," zei het mannetje ...

"Wat voor een thee, wat bedoel je ... ?" zuchtte Marion ...

"De Leeuwen Thee," zei het mannetje weer ....

"Wat is dat ?" vroeg ze weer ...

"Dat is de thee die Mozes met de Farao's dronk .... en wat hij bracht tot zijn volk, zodat hij ze kon uitleiden ....," zei het kleine sparretje vervolgens ...

Marion was zo verbaasd ... "Hoe kan die Thee dat dan doen ?" vroeg ze ...

"Nou, heel simpel," zei het mannetje ...., "die Thee brengt mensen in verwarring, zodat ze de dingen anders gaan zien ..."

"Waar komt die Leeuwen Thee dan vandaan ?" vroeg Marion weer ...

"Het stroomt uit de Torenklok van Babel ..... het brengt zichts-verwarring ...." vervolgde het kleine dennetje ...

Opeens schrok Marion wakker : "...weer gedroomd," zei ze .... Maar het bleef in haar hoofd steken .... Wat zou ze graag meer willen weten over die Torenklok van Babel ....

Ze ging op haar bed zitten en sloeg haar Bijbel open. Daar las ze over de Babylonische Spraakverwarring .... "Zouden er daarom zoveel kerken zijn ? Zodat niemand ergens gevangen hoeft te zitten ?" dacht ze ....

"Hebben we dan allemaal van die Leeuwen Thee gedronken ?" vroeg ze zich af toen ze op haar fiets zat op weg naar school ....

"Misschien weet de meester hier meer vanaf ...."

Toen ze de klas binnenkwam kreeg ze de schrik van haar leven .... Haar meester was een leeuw geworden .... en zelfs de kinderen ....

Weer schrok ze wakker ..... "Het is die thee ...." dacht ze .... "Sterke Thee" ...

Ze durfde zich niet meer te bewegen .... ze was zo in de war .... Maar een ding wist ze zeker : Ze wilde meer weten van het geheim van deze leeuwenthee ...

Ze pakte met trillende handen haar Bijbeltje weer .... het angstzweet was haar uitgebroken ..... Maar ineens zag ze dat het haar Bijbel niet meer was, maar een sprookjesboek ....

Wil je weten wat er in dat sprookjesboek stond ? Luister maar ....

Het heette : Het Geheim van de Leeuwenthee .....

Marion kreeg een leeuw voor haar verjaardag. Het was een hele vreemde leeuw. Hij had twee witte ogen, met kleine zwarte puntjes erin, en hij had ook vleugels.

's Nachts kon ze met hem reizen naar verre landen, dat had opa haar gezegd. Opa werkte vroeger bij een thee-fabriek. Toen hij met pensioen ging, kreeg hij deze leeuw. Nu zijn kleindochter al zo oud was geworden, gaf hij haar de leeuw.

Meneer Iemand en Meneer Niemand

Heeft u weleens gehoord van meneer Niemand ? Ik ook niet, maar de afgelopen tijd ben ik me er wel voor gaan interesseren. Het valt me namelijk heel zwaar om iemand te zijn, en te willen zijn. Ik heb het verderf van meneer Iemand ingezien.

&....

Eigenlijk weet ik niets van meneer Niemand, maar tòch heb ik me laten vertellen dat hij getrouwd is met mevrouw Niks.

Dan kunt u wel raden met wie meneer Iemand getrouwd is. Juist ja, met meneer Alles. Ja, wat dacht u, dat meneer Iemand soms vruchtbaar zou kunnen zijn ? Neen. Mij hoeven ze niks meer te vertellen. Meneer iemand wil alles hebben, maar beiden komen dus geen stap verder. Ja, ze hebben wel een kind geadopteerd, om hun schande te bedekken.

Wilt u weten wie ? Een meneer in de dop: ventje Altijd. En een vervelend kind dat het is. Het wil altijd z,n zin krijgen. Verschrikkelijk gewoon. Maar de trotse ouders lachen erom.

&....

Ja, je zou denken: met Niks en Niemand kom je niet ver, maar tòch hebben ze een kind gekregen: kindje nooit.

....

Lang geleden leefde er een man op aarde. Hij had niks, was niemand en zou dit kruis nooit loslaten. Maar hij beefde van geluk en was vruchtbaar in z,n leven. Hij klemde nergens meer aan vast. Hij hield niks meer voor zichzelf. Hij had iets om te geven en hij nam het nooit meer terug.

....

Nu zoekt hij naar z,n bruid om zijn werk voort te planten: mevrouw Nergens. Maar helaas, die kan hij nergens vinden. Ze heeft haar naam laten veranderen in mevrouw Ergens. Ze heeft haar toevlucht ergens anders gevonden. Ze wil nog wel ergens gezien worden.

....

Heden, treurt, o volk, nu, want met ergernis hebben wij vernomen, dat Huize Iemand ergens staat en ze elkaar daar zijn tegengekomen. Nu staat huize Iemand op stelten en is daarbij huize Iedereen geworden. Mevrouw Ergens draagt haar steentje bij en baart overal.

....

Maar de man met het kruis komt tot het huis van Niemand. Kindje Nooit is tot een bruid uitgegroeid en zo heeft hij toch zijn vrouw gevonden.

....

Er worden nog architecten gevraagd bij huize Iedereen, want ze willen daar groter worden en daarom is iedereen welkom. Maar bij huize Niemand is het stil geworden: kruize Niemand.

....

En dit kruis zakt steeds dieper en dieper, want het wordt door alles en iedereen in de grond geslagen, overal en altijd.

... En mevrouw Ergens maar lachen...

Het kruis vinden ze lastig en pompen ze in de grond. Opgeruimd staat netjes, vinden ze.

En wat gebeurt er nu:
Mevrouw Niks wordt nog nikser,
en...
Meneer Niemand is nu echt helemaal Niemand meer.
Alsof ze nergens en nooit meer te vinden zijn.
Maar, lieve mensen, daar moeten we zijn.
Onder de grond schieten we wortel, onder de grond zijn we veilig.

... ...

Ik zie de man met het kruis knikken en hoor hem zeggen:

'Wie oren heeft,
die hore...'

Meneer Mond en Meneer Oor

He, daar hebben we meneer Mond. Die praat altijd voordat hij nadenkt. Hij moet altijd wat te praten hebben. Dus als hij een keer niet spreekt, dan is hij wel aan het zingen.

De grote vijand van meneer Mond is natuurlijk meneer Oor. Ze kunnen welkaar niet luchten of zien.

Meneer Mond stopt nooit met praten. Ook niet als iemand anders een keer praat. Want dan praat meneer Mond gewoon in zichzelf verder.

Nu blijkt dat meneer Mond zoveel praat, om zich te beschermen tegen meneer Oor.

En dat doet hij met grote passie en in vele vormen. Als hij niet spreekt of zingt, dan is hij wel aan het lachen of gillen.

Meneer Mond wordt daarom ook weleens meneer Muur genoemd. Hij verstopt zich namelijk achter zijn mond.
En wie het waagt om te dicht bij hem in de buurt te komen, die kan dan ook nog weleens een grote schreeuw verwachten.

Wie oren heeft die hore.

De Rode Hond

Mark Blazer was een jonge wetenschapper. Vaak kwam hij 's avonds moe thuis van zijn werk, omdat het zo'n harde werker was. Op een avond kwam hij later thuis dan anders. Het was al bijna nacht, en hij sloeg de koelkastdeur open om een wijntje te pakken. Toen hij z'n glas inschonk hoorde hij wat geritsel achter zich. Hij schrok, en draaide zich om, maar er was niks. Die nacht had Mark vreemde dromen. Het ging over een vrouw die zijn aandacht zocht, op zo'n manier dat Mark het verdacht vond. De vrouw was geen normale vrouw. Ze had lange klederen die door de wind dwarrelden en bewogen. Sommigen zouden misschien zeggen dat ze op een engel leek, maar Mark geloofde niet in engelen. Zijn vriendin geloofde wel. Ze was voor een maand met een vriendin op vakantie.

Toen Mark's vriendin weer thuis was vertelde Mark wat er was gebeurd, en wat hij had gedroomd. 'Ach, iedereen droomt wel eens,' zei zijn vriendin. Maar toen Mark vertelde over een engelachtige vrouw, begon zijn vriendin geinteresseerd te worden. 'En wat had ze dan aan ?' vroeg ze. Ze begon hem er een beetje mee te plagen, en ook begon ze de optie door te voeren dat God misschien wel iets van hem wilde, maar daar wilde Mark niets van weten. Zijn vriendin plaagde hem vaak over God. Dan zei ze weleens : 'Oh Mark, voor dat ik het vergeet, er heeft iemand voor je gebeld.' En als Mark dan vroeg wie het was, dan zei ze plagerig : 'Och, 't was God die vroeg of je vanavond ergens een glaasje met Hem wilde drinken.' Mark vond dat niet erg. Hij kon er soms wel om lachen. Ze drong eigenlijk nooit het geloof aan hem op. Ze deed er altijd erg luchtig over, en had een groot gevoel voor humor. Nee, Mark wilde zijn vriendin voor geen goud missen.

Op een avond liepen Mark en z'n vriendin langs het bos. Vanuit de bosjes hoorden ze geblaf. Mark besloot te kijken, maar wat hij daar zag gaf hem de rillingen over z'n rug. Het was een rode hond, als een soort herdershond. Mark had nog nooit zo'n hond gezien. De hond sprong op hem af, en Mark rende weg, terwijl hij z'n vriendin meegreep. Toen ze zich even later omdraaiden was de hond hen gelukkig niet achterna gekomen. 'Tja, Mark,' zei z'n vriendin, 'eigenlijk moet je zoiets nooit doen, op geblaf afgaan. Laat in het vervolg maar lekker blaffen.' Mark wilde direkt naar

bed. Snel dronk hij nog even wat water, en dook in z'n bed. Hij moest morgen weer vroeg op. Toen hij op z'n werk over de rode herdershond vertelde lachten ze hem uit. 'Mark weer met z'n vreemde dromen,' zeiden ze. In de middag riep z'n baas hem bij zich. 'Mark,' zei z'n baas, 'ik weet dat jij een erg harde werker ben, en zeer vindingrijk. Zeg, ik heb een raadsel voor je. Ik heb hier een boek, en dat gaat volgens mij over het geloof. Verder is het een erg wazig boek, dus als je nog wat wilt puzzelen ? Ach, ik maak maar een grapje. Ik dacht : Misschien dat jouw vriendin er nog wat aan heeft. Die is toch zo gelovig ? Ik kreeg het van iemand, maar ik kon er niks mee. Erfenis van een oudtante.' Ongeinteresseerd neemt Mark het boek aan, en legt het opzij. Daar moet zijn vriendin maar over beslissen. Thuisgekomen neemt hij een glas water. Zijn vriendin is nog niet thuis, en hij gaat rustig op de bank zitten. Als zijn vriendin thuiskomt vertelt hij haar over het spottende gedrag van z'n collega's, over die rode hond. 'Ach, laat ze toch stikken,' zegt z'n vriendin, 'ze zijn alleen geinteresseerd in hun eigen spoken en draken.' Maar dan komt Mark voor zijn collega's op. 'Ach, misschien hebben ze wel gelijk, ik heb het misschien maar verbeeldt. Misschien kwam het doordat het wat donker was. Misschien was het wel gewoon een herdershond. En ze bedoelen het niet zo slecht. Een dag later zijn ze het vergeten. O ja, en voor ik het vergeet. Ik heb een boek van mijn baas meegekregen voor jou.' Z'n vriendin kijkt in z'n tas en neemt het boek eruit. 'Ja, wat moet ik hiermee ?' vraagt ze. 'Jij gelooft toch ? Dit gaat over het geloof,' zegt Mark. Z'n vriendin begint het boek door te bladeren, en gaat zitten. Een tijdje is het stil. 'Is het spannend ?' vraagt Mark. Dan opeens barst zijn vriendin in tranen uit. 'Het gaat over een rode hond, Mark. Misschien heb je echt wel een engel gezien, of ... of ...' Maar verder komt z'n vriendin niet. Waar gaat het dan over ?' vraagt Mark een beetje nieuwsgierig wordend. 'Ja, over David,' zegt zijn vriendin, 'dat was een koning in de bijbel. Dit boek gaat over zijn generaals.' Mark buigt weer naar achteren. 'Maar wat heeft die rode hond daar dan mee te maken ?' vraagt hij. Maar dat kon zijn vriendin hem niet vertellen, want zo ver was ze nog niet. Het was nog wel een dik boek. 'Wacht even,' zei z'n vriendin, 'die rode hond is een Egyptische koning, en het gaat ook over zijn generaals.' Even is het stil. 'Nou, geluk ermee,' zegt Mark, en vertrekt naar boven. Z'n vriendin schaamt zich een beetje voor haar huilpartij. Waarom moet ze nou altijd zo emotioneel zijn bij het minste of geringste. Misschien om de gedachte dat er echt engelen of geschiedkundige figuren in de buurt kunnen zijn ? Zou de geschiedenis dan gewoon doorleven ? Allemaal vragen die door haar hoofd spoken. Ze besluit verder te lezen, en neemt er een glas wijn bij.

De volgende dag is het zaterdag. Mark zou met wat vrienden gaan zeilen, en Annet, zijn vriendin zou thuisblijven voor een vriendin die zou komen. Maar eigenlijk had Annet meer zin om het boek verder te lezen. Annet lag nog lekker te slapen toen de bel ging. Mark was al weg. Het was haar vriendin. 'Ha Annet,' zei de vriendin. 'Wat ben je vroeg,' zegt Annet slaperig. 'Kom erin meid, ik ben een heel vreemd boek aan het lezen.' Haar vriendin komt binnen, ziet het boek op de bank liggen, grijpt het, en begint te lezen. 'Hoe kom jij hieraan ?' vraagt de vriendin. 'Oh, zegt Annet, dat heeft Mark voor me meegenomen. Zijn baas had een erfenis gehad en daar zat ook dit boek tussen,' zegt Annet. 'Nou, het is wel interessant,' zegt de vriendin na een tijdje. 'Het

gaat over de generaals van koning David in overeenkomst met de presidenten van Amerika.' Dat gedeelte had Annet nog niet gelezen. Na een tijdje legt de vriendin het boek neer. 'Mag ik het van je lenen als je het uithebt ?' Dan gaat de telefoon. Het is een vriend van Mark. Hij heeft niet zulk best nieuws. 'Mark is neergeschoten door een man op een andere zeilboot.' Toen Annet hem vroeg hoe dat gekomen was, werd de hoorn neergelegd. In paniek belde Annet de politie. Ze besloten naar de haven te gaan voor onderzoek. Annet belde naar de vriend van Mark, maar niemand nam op. Na een paar uur staat de politie op de stoep. 'We hebben uw vriend met de boot nog niet gevonden. Wij denken dat het om een ontvoering gaat.'

Plotseling schrikt Annet wakker. Ze had naar gedroomd. Mark ligt naast haar. Ze grijpt hem vast. Mark neemt haar in zijn armen. 'Wat is er schat, je beeft zo ?' Dan vertelt zijn vriendin de droom. 'Poppetje,' zegt Mark zacht, zoals hij haar vaak noemt, 'je was gisteren al zo in paniek over dat boek. En dat boek gaat niet over de presidenten van Amerika, alleen maar lekker saai over het geloof.' Annet glimlacht weer een beetje. Mark streelt haar door haar haren, en rustig valt ze weer in slaap. Als ze in de morgen wakker worden wil Annet niets meer met het boek te maken hebben. Ze is nog steeds verschrikkelijk bang na die nachtmerrie. Als het zondag is wil Annet niet naar de kerk. Ze wil alleen rust. Ook de zondag daarop blijft ze thuis. Mark krijgt de dominee aan de telefoon en vertelt hem over het boek, de dromen en de rode hond. De dominee wil het boek graag eens lezen, ook om Annet misschien gerust te kunnen stellen. Mark was blij dat ze van het boek afwaren. Na een paar dagen krijgt Mark weer een telefoontje van de dominee. De dominee vertelt hem dat het op het eerste gezicht lijkt alsof het een boek is over het christelijk geloof, maar dat het dat helemaal niet is. Het is een boek van een Davidische secte, een groep die gelooft in de macht van David, en niet in God. Het is een moordzuchtig genootschap dat niet aarzelt om te moorden om macht te verkrijgen. Voornamelijk zitten ze in Amerika, maar ook in Europa en andere continenten breken ze door. De generaals van David worden gezien als de engelen. De dominee had het adres achter in het boek nagetrokken, en werd zo in zijn groeiend vermoeden bevestigd.

Toen Mark het aan Annet vertelde was ze opgelucht, maar ook was ze geschrokken. Ze kon het nu wel allemaal beter begrijpen, de droom, haar vreemde emoties. De dominee zou het gevaarlijke boek goed opbergen.

Einde

Geografische Proza

Te leven in Nunspeet ...

Een Serie Korte Verhalen

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De Leeuw van Nunspeet

Kraterik woonde in een huisje vlakbij het bos van Nunspeet. De mensen zeiden dat hij een kinderlokker was, en gingen daarom liever niet met hem om. Niemand wist eigenlijk precies waar dat gerucht vandaan kwam, maar iedereen nam het aan, want als het eens waar was ... Kraterik had vroeger geschiedenis gestudeerd, en was zelfs leraar geweest op school. Maar sinds zijn vrouw was overleden ging het slechter met hem. Op een dag ging Kraterik wat boodschappen doen in het centrum. Een vrouw staarde hem aan, en plotseling gilde ze : 'Het is Kraterik, het is Kraterik, die kinderlokker.' Maar niemand scheen er acht op te geven. 'Kraterik ? Wie is dat ? Ach, er zijn hier geen kinderlokkers,' zei iemand nors. Het leek erop dat Kraterik z'n slechte naam aan het kwijtraken was. Er gingen immers jaren overheen, en de mensen werden anders. Iedereen scheen het een beetje vergeten te zijn. En ook de vrouw die het rondriep werd rustiger.

Op straat kwam Kraterik een oude vriendin van hem tegen. Ze vroeg of hij met haar meewilde naar huis. Dan konden ze eens wat bijpraten. Die oude vriendin kende de geruchten over Kraterik niet. Kraterik scheen opgelucht. Samen aan de thee hadden ze het nog eens over hun schooltijd vroeger. Ze hadden samen geschiedenis gestudeerd. Ze konden zich nog hun oude leraar herinneren. Wat had die man toch een fantasie. Hij vergeleek de geschiedenis altijd met dieren en voorwerpen, en zo kon iedereen het altijd goed onthouden. Ja, door de gelijkenissen van die leraar konden ze de verhalen van de geschiedenis nog steeds navertellen. Die leraar woonde ook in Nunspeet. Hij werd weleens de leeuw van Nunspeet genoemd. Hoe dat gekomen is ? Luister dan maar eens naar dit verhaal.

Die oude leraar scheen vroeger boer te zijn geweest. Maar hij moest zo hard werken dat hij er rugpijn van kreeg. Toen is hij maar geschiedenis gaan studeren, en al snel werd hij leraar op een school. In het begin ging dat niet erg goed. Hij werd vaak door vervelende kinderen uitgescholden, omdat hij een beetje krom liep. Dat kwam van het harde werken op het land. Maar door zijn kleurrijke verhalen begonnen de kinderen steeds meer respect voor hem te krijgen. Vaak gingen kinderen na schooltijd met hem mee naar huis, omdat hij zulke mooie verhalen kon vertellen. En toen één van die kinderen op een avond niet meer thuiskwam, dachten ze allemaal dat hij daar achter zat. Jarenlang was dat kind vermist, en al die tijd was hij de verdachte, ja, het werd zelfs zo erg, dat hij zijn baan erdoor verloor en zich niet meer op straat kon vertonen. Door gebrek aan

bewijs hoefde hij nog net niet de gevangenis in. Iedereen was bang voor hem, en hij kreeg de bijnaam : De leeuw van Nunspeet. Hij is die naam nooit kwijtgeraakt, zelfs niet toen na vele jaren het vermiste kind weer opdook. De leeuw van Nunspeet scheen met het alles niets te maken hebben gehad. Het kind scheen problemen thuis te hebben, en heeft toen jarenlang door de grote steden gezworven. Er was eigenlijk maar één reden voor dit kind om weer naar huis te komen, en dat was om nog eens te kunnen luisteren naar de prachtige verhalen van die oude leraar.

Maar zoals je misschien wel kunt begrijpen : Dat deed die oude leraar na dit alles niet meer. Van bitterheid en verdriet is die oude geschiedenisleraar uit Nunspeet weggegaan. Maar zelfs jaren na dit feit werd er nog steeds over de leeuw van Nunspeet gesproken. En stukje bij beetje werden de feiten verdraaid, en wisten velen niet hoe het nou precies zat. 'Ja, het had te maken met een kinderlokker,' wist iemand te vertellen. En een ander wist te vertellen dat het over een geschiedenisleraar ging. En zo werd Kraterik hier min of meer de dupe van. Er waren allerlei vreemde en heldhaftige verhalen ontstaan rondom de leeuw van Nunspeet. De één werd er erg bang van, en de ander vond ze fascinerend, op z'n zachtst gezegd.

Nu Kraterik dan al een tijdje geen geschiedenisleraar meer was, begon de aandacht zich een beetje te verleggen naar nieuwe geschiedenisleraren, en dat ging zo ver, dat er op een gegeven moment bijna geen geschiedenisleraren in Nunspeet meer te vinden waren. Men durfte bijna geen geschiedenisboeken meer in huis te hebben, bang om voor de leeuw van Nunspeet aangezien te worden. En naarmate de tijd verstreek had de leeuw van Nunspeet niets meer te maken met kinderlokkerijen, maar meer met heldendom. En die hysterie kon men eigenlijk niet aan. Zo zou de leeuw van Nunspeet het dorp voor allerlei gevaren hebben behoed en uit allerlei verschrikkingen hebben gered.

Die oude vriendin van Kraterik wilde hem iets laten zien. Het was een boek over de leeuw van Nunspeet, met de meest vleiende legendes. Kraterik glimlachte : 'Dat zou onze oude geschiedenisleraar eigenlijk moeten lezen.' Maar goed, niemand wist waar hij heengegaan was, omdat hij in de tijd met stille trom was vertrokken. Ze besloten op onderzoek uit te gaan. Na een lange zoektocht kwamen ze erachter dat hij door de grote steden zwierf. Ze besloten hem te gaan zoeken. Dat viel niet mee, maar met een paar gouden tips van andere zwervenden kwamen ze erachter waar hij op dit moment verbleef.

In de boshut van hun oude leraar aangekomen zagen ze hem zitten. Hij herkende ze niet, en wilde eigenlijk niets met hen te maken hebben. 'Er is iemand die flink veel geld verdient met uw verhalen, Mijnheer van Lenden,' zei Kraterik. 'Ach,' zei de oude leraar, 'laten ze met hun geld ten verderve varen ... Wat heb ik daarmee te maken ...' En toen haalde Kraterik langzaam het boek tevoorscheen. 'Ja,' zei de oude leraar nors, 'die schrijver ken ik wel. Die heeft nog bij mij in de klas gezeten, en mij flink in het ongeluk gestort.' En toen begon de oude leraar zulk leeuwengedrag te vertonen, dat Kraterik en die oude vriendin maar snel vertrokken. Wel hadden ze het boek voor hem op z'n tafel gelegd.

Na enige tijd was er telefoon voor Kraterik. Het was de leeuw van Nunspeet. Kraterik was blij hem te horen. 'Zeg, ik wilde je nog even bedanken voor dat boek,' zei de oude leraar. 'Het is een samenbundeling van de mooiste verhalen die ik vroeger altijd vertelde. Ik was ze eigenlijk allemaal een beetje vergeten na alles wat er was gebeurd. Maar dit is het mooiste geschenk in mijn leven. Zo mooi, dat ik graag weer naar Nunspeet terug zou willen komen.' Kraterik had tranen in zijn ogen. En zo gebeurde het. De oude leraar ging weer in Nunspeet wonen, dichtbij Kraterik, vlakbij het bos. De jongen die het boek geschreven had werd ook ingelicht. Wat was dat allemaal een groot misverstand geweest, zeg. En al snel vielen de leeuw van Nunspeet en de jongen elkaar in de armen. De jongen had vaak naar zijn oude leraar gezocht, maar zonder resultaat. Nu was alles dan toch gelukkig goed gekomen. En heel Nunspeet was blij dat het z'n leeuw had teruggekregen.

Het Paarse Complot

Junos was het zoontje van een oude hertog in Nunspeet. Ze woonden in het kasteel dichtbij de molen. Junos had geen broertjes of zusjes, en zijn moeder was lang geleden overleden. Wel had Junos een stiefmoeder, maar zij was vaak weg. Op een dag moest Junos boodschappen doen voor zijn stiefmoeder. Hij moest daarvoor naar het dorp fietsen, en ook naar een zaak met spiegels gaan. Zijn stiefmoeder wilde een paarse spiegel voor in haar slaapkamer. Onderweg kwam Junos een paar kwajongens tegen. 'Zeg, looshelm, waar ga jij met die spiegel naartoe ?' riepen ze. En met hun brommers kwamen ze achter hem aan. Al snel hadden ze de spiegel te pakken en wierpen het op de straat.

Thuisgekomen wachtte Junos niet erg veel begrip op. Zijn stiefmoeder was razend. 'Die spiegels zijn duur, Junos, en je had een tas moeten vragen aan de zaak waar je die spiegel gekocht hebt. Dan konden die jongens hem niet zien.' Ook zijn vader vond het erg dom van Junos. 'Junos, je had een andere weg moeten inslaan, want je weet dat daar altijd die jongens met hun brommers staan. Ze doen van alles om mensen het leven zuur te maken.' Junos moest de volgende dag naar de zaak terug om van zijn eigen geld een nieuwe paarse spiegel te halen. Maar de baas van de spiegelzaak kreeg het al snel door, en al gauw vertelde Junos hem het verhaal. 'Weet je wat,' zei hij, 'wij brengen de spiegel wel even met de auto van de zaak langs. En natuurlijk hoef je daar niets voor te betalen, want jij kon er per slot van rekening niks aan doen dat die andere spiegel kapotging. En voor de schrik mag je een extra dure uitzoeken, eentje met parfumspuiten en met een speeldoos erin. Dat zal je moeder prachtig vinden.'

'Het is mijn moeder niet,' zei Junos, 'het is mijn stiefmoeder, en als ik er eentje uit mag kiezen, dan wil ik de allergoedkoopste.' De baas keek een beetje beteuterd. 'Maar mag je haar dan niet ?' vroeg hij. 'Niet echt,' zij Junos, 'want sinds zij er is krijg ik altijd overal de schuld van.' De baas van de spiegelzaak keek erg bedenkelijk. 'Ik denk juist dat je je stiefmoeder en je vader moet opvrolijken, want ze zullen het wel erg moeilijk hebben als ze zo tegen je doen,' zei hij voorzichtig. 'Misschien hebt u gelijk,' zei Junos. 'Laten we het dan maar doen.'

En zo gebeurde het. De bijzondere spiegel werd in de bestelbus van de zaak naar het kasteel gebracht. De oude hertog en zijn vrouw waren er erg blij mee. En even leek het erg goed te gaan in het gezin. Maar na een tijdje begon de stiefmoeder weer erg te klagen naar Junos en hem van veel dingen de schuld te geven. 'Mamma,' zei Junos, 'is er soms iets met de spiegel gebeurd ?' De stiefmoeder was erg verrast omdat Junos haar voor het eerst 'mamma' had genoemd. 'Ja,' zei ze heel zacht, terwijl haar gezicht een beetje vertrok. 'Ik durfte het je eigenlijk niet zo goed te zeggen, maar de speeldoos springt aan op de meest vreemde momenten, zelfs als we slapen, en de parfumspuiten geven veel te veel parfum af.' Maar daar wist Junos wel wat op. Ze zouden iemand van de spiegelzaak ervoor laten komen. Na een tijdje werd er aangebeld. Het was de baas van de spiegelzaak. Al snel zag hij wat er aan de hand was. Het mechanisme van de spiegel was stuk. 'Ik kan zien dat de spiegel veel gebruikt werd, u was er zeker erg blij mee,' zei de baas van de spiegelzaak. De stiefmoeder knikte. 'Nou,' zei de baas. 'Ik heb voor u een nieuwe paarse spiegel meegebracht. Het is hetzelfde model, maar er zitten ook kleine lampjes bij in allerlei kleuren.' De stiefmoeder was erg verrast.

En weer scheen het een tijdje erg goed te gaan in het gezin van de oude hertog. Maar op een dag hoorde Junos iets stukspringen. Hij rende naar de kamer van zijn stiefmoeder, en zag haar daar in tranen zitten terwijl de spiegel kapot op de grond lag. 'Dat stomme ding maakt me gek,' zei de stiefmoeder. 'De lichtjes knipperen de hele tijd, ook nadat ik ze heb uitgezet. Ze springen gewoon weer aan. Ik word er ziek van.' Huilend viel ze Junos in de armen. Dat was voor de eerste keer dat ze hem omhelste. Junos kreeg er een brok van in z'n keel. 'Mamma, ik zal snel de spiegelzaak wel weer bellen. Ik weet zeker dat de baas ons nu een nog betere zal geven.' Maar de stiefmoeder huilde : 'Nee, Junos, ik wil nooit geen spiegel meer op m'n kamer zien. Het is afgelopen ermee.' En sindsdien was Junos z'n stiefmoeder altijd het zonnetje in huis. Ze was zichtbaar opgelucht toen de spiegel weg was, en ze zou er nooit meer één in haar kamer neerzetten ... nooit meer.

Na een tijdje kwam Junos nog eens terug bij de spiegelzaak om te vertellen wat er gebeurd was. De

baas van de spiegelzaak was zichtbaar blij. 'Ach, Junos, weet je,' zei hij, 'die spiegels zijn zo gemaakt. De geschiedenis heeft wel bewezen dat zulke spiegels heel opvoedkundig zijn, en veel problemen in gezinnen voorkomen en wegnemen. Ze zijn gemaakt door een speciale fabrikant.' En toen pakte de baas weer zo'n paarse spiegel, en draaide de onderkant boven. Daar zat een klein stickertje waar hij op wees. 'Zie, hier staat het,' zei hij : 'het paarse complot.' Junos glimlachte, en na nog even met de baas van de spiegelzaak door te praten ging hij fluitend naar huis.

Groen Geluk

Theo had een vogelzaak in Nunspeet. Het waren geen gewone vogels, maar speelgoedvogels. De meeste mensen vonden het maar een vreemde winkel, maar kinderen gingen er graag naartoe. Eigenlijk alleen maar om te kijken, want het speelgoed was veel te duur. Eigenlijk kochten daar alleen maar mensen met heel veel geld wat, en vaak kwamen zij vanuit het hele land. Hoge heren uit de politiek bijvoorbeeld, en rijke sterren. Vaak kochten ze dan spullen voor hun kinderen, maar soms ook wel voor henzelf. Het waren van die mensen die altijd op de televisie te zien waren. En als er dan gewone mensen in die winkel kwamen, dan was dat niet om de winkel, maar om die beroemde mensen te zien met hun kinderen.

Reginald wilde hier wat aan doen. Hij vond dat Theo zijn speelgoed best wel wat kon aanpassen en de prijs best wel wat lager kon maken, zodat ook wat meer gewone mensen hun inkopen daar konden doen. Ouders klaagden vaak over hun kinderen die weer eens bij Theo in z'n winkel waren geweest. Ze zeurden dan voortdurend om geld om ook zulk vreemd vogelspeelgoed te kunnen kopen. En ook de politie klaagde steen en been, omdat er zoveel gestolen werd. Vaak werden de daders ertoe aangezet nadat ze bij Theo in de winkel waren geweest. Door wie dan ? Door hun eigen verlangen naar dat bijzondere speelgoed.

Bij Theo zelf kon niemand inbreken. Dat was nog nooit gebeurd, en dat zou ook niet zo snel gebeuren. Theo had namelijk overal ronde tegeltjes in z'n winkel hangen. Het waren een soort alarmpjes die al aangingen als je het speelgoed aanraakte. Nee, bij Theo mocht je niks aanraken. Alleen kijken. Zodra het speelgoed werd opgetild of bewogen, dan gingen de pijnscheuten door je lichaam. Het was allemaal electrisch, en die stroom ging er pas af nadat je het gekocht had. Nee, inbraak was onmogelijk. Er was eens een oude dame die eens per ongeluk een stuk speelgoed in Theo's winkel aanstootte. Ze heeft er dagenlang van in het ziekenhuis gelegen. Nee, klantvriendelijk is Theo's winkel vooral niet.

Reginald had al zijn eigen club opgericht, een slachtoffersvereniging. Natuurlijk draaide dit allemaal om Theo's winkel. Reginald was eens op bezoek geweest bij Theo, die zelf boven zijn winkel woonde. Er hingen daar vreemde groene ronde tegeltjes aan de muur. Toen Reginald een slok van zijn thee nam begonnen die groene ronde tegeltjes te draaien en te zoemen. Ja, er gebeurden daar vreemde dingen bij die Theo. Reginald wilde nu eens naar buiten brengen wat er allemaal bij Theo in huis gebeurde. Hij scheen de enige te zijn die ooit in Theo's huis is binnengeweest. Naast Theo zelf dan. Tenzij er nog anderen waren die daar nooit over hebben durven praten. Of hen die het niet meer konden navertellen. Al tijden werd er namelijk gespeculeerd over een grote groep vermiste personen. Maar de authoriteiten vonden Reginald's gedachten daarover te ver gingen. Ze wilden eigenlijk dat Reginald zou stoppen met zijn club tegen Theo, omdat ook Theo zijn rechten had, en niets deed wat eigenlijk verboden was. Maar Reginald was druk bezig iets te zoeken wat hij tegen Theo zou kunnen gebruiken.

Op een dag besloot Reginald om nog eens bij Theo op bezoek te gaan. Er was iets veranderd aan Theo's winkel. Er hingen nu grote groene ronde tegels naast de ingang. En opeens kon Reginald geen stap meer verzetten, alsof hij door een omgekeerde magneet werd tegengehouden. Maar andere mensen konden gewoon naar binnen, en ze keken hem aan alsof hij gek was. Maar al snel hoorde hij dat hij niet de enige was die niet meer naar binnen kon. Theo had magnetische kaartjes voor gewilde klanten laten maken, zodat ze door de groene magnetische tegels niet afgeweerd

werden. Op een dag kwam er politie bij de winkel. Ze kwamen voor een onderzoek. Nee, niet dat de politie bij Theo onderzoek deden, maar net andersom. Theo zou de politie onderzoeken. Reginald vond het maar vreemd en verdacht. Soms kwamen er zelfs sterren uit het buitenland, en andere hoge mijnheren, zoals presidenten, koningen, legerofficieren en ga zo maar door.

Niet lang daarna werd Reginald opgepakt vanwege spionage. Reginald wilde Theo nu wel eens snel spreken. Reginald moest een erg hoge boete betalen voor elk blad wat hij had uitgebracht over Theo's winkel. Dat waren wel over de twintig bladen. Reginald besloot maar om zich helemaal niet meer met Theo te bemoeien. Het leverde toch alleen maar ellende op. Hij zette een punt achter zijn slachtoffersvereniging.

Na een lange tijd kwam hij Theo tegen op straat. 'Hey, Theo,' zei hij, 'zeg, heb je nog steeds die winkel met dat vogelspeelgoed ?' Maar Theo wilde niks van hem weten, en liep haastig door. Snel probeerde Reginald het weer te vergeten. Na een lange tijd kwam hij Theo weer eens tegen, maar ditmaal besloot hij niks te zeggen, en draaide hij zich snel weer om. Ook Theo maakte zich snel uit de voeten. Maar een dame had gezien hoe de heren naar elkaar deden, en greep ze beiden in de kraag. 'Wat is dat hier,' krijste ze, 'kunnen jullie elkaar niet eens normaal groeten ? Wat is dat voor een gebaar.' En ze schudde Theo eens flink door elkaar, en toen Reginald. Het was al een wat oudere dame. 'Zeg, weet u wel wie ik ben ?' zei Theo zachtjes en voorzichtig. 'Nou nee,' zei de oude dame, 'ik woon hier al erg lang, al sinds mijn geboorte eigenlijk, en ik heb u hier nog nooit gezien, maar dat geeft u niet het recht om u zo te gedragen.' Theo zakte een beetje ineen en zei zacht : 'Ik ben Theo van de vogelzaak.'

Maar toen werd de oude dame erg kwaad. 'Oh, van dat dure vogelspeelgoed ? Al het geld wat mijn man verdiende is daar altijd aan opgegaan om onze kleinkinderen rustig te houden, en door onze schulden is hij tot overmaat van ramp ook nog eens gokverslaafde geworden in de hoop eens een miljoentje te winnen. Van de vogelzaak zei u ? U heeft onze hele familie gerampaneerd. Maar liefst al mijn kinderen en kleinkinderen zijn hierdoor gokverslaafden geworden, hopende op het miljoentje wat ons uit de schulden zou kunnen helpen. Wij zijn daardoor de armste familie van het hele land geworden. Hoort u dat ?'

'M..maar wie bent u dan ?' stotterde Theo ... 'Ik heb u ook nog nooit gezien.'

'Mijn man en ik werkten heel vroeger in die alarmzaak waarvan u al uw electrische en magnetische alarms hebt, en dat is maar goed ook, want iedereen moet maar ver bij u uit de buurt blijven,' zei de oude dame.

Warme Haard

Riek en Hanna zitten voor de kachel. Het is koud buiten. Het sneeuwt. Op de televisie is een programma over konijnen. Riek en Hanna wonen met hun vader aan de rand van Nunspeet. Hun moeder is lang geleden overleden. Hun vader is ernstig ziek. Er moeten nog medicijnen gehaald worden bij de apotheek. Vader zit onder een deken voor de televisie. Wanneer het tijd is gaat Hanna naar de apotheek in het dorp. Dat doet ze iedere week op vaste tijden. Riek kookt en doet de was. Vader kan maar moeilijk praten, en ook zijn gehoor is niet meer zo goed. Het kost hem altijd veel tijd om iets te zeggen, en daarom praat hij niet graag.

Als Hanna bij de apotheek aankomt staat er een man met kerstkleding aan. Het moet de kerstman voorstellen, maar het lijkt niet echt. 'Een muntje voor de armen,' roept hij, met een bakje in zijn hand. 'Sorry,' zegt Hanna, 'we hebben het nogal krap, en onze vader is ernstig ziek.'

'Maar dat is geen probleem,' zegt de verklede man, 'en geeft het bakje met geld aan Hanna. 'Kijk eens, dit is voor jou.' Hanna wordt erg rood en verlegen, en zegt zachtjes : 'Maar dat kan ik toch niet aannemen ?' Maar de man houdt vurig aan, en drukt het bakje in haar handen en vertrekt. Snel kijkt Hanna in het bakje. 'Vijfhonderd gulden,' roept ze, 'daar kunnen we voorlopig wel mee voort.' Haastig stopt ze het bakje in haar tas, en loopt de apotheek binnen. Het is niet zo druk binnenin, en

al snel wordt ze geholpen. Als ze weer naar buiten loopt staat er een oude arme man voor haar met zijn hand uitgestreken. 'Ach, mijnheer, het spijt me, wij hebben het zelf ook erg krap, maar goed, ik heb net vijfhonderd gulden van iemand gekregen, dus ik kan u wel de helft daarvan geven.' De oude man is er erg blij mee, en geeft het meisje een boek. Snel stopt ze het in haar tas, en loopt naar huis.

Thuisgekomen legt ze de medicijnen in de kast, en gaat op de bank zitten. 'Vader, ik heb vijfhonderd gulden van iemand gehad,' zegt ze, 'ik heb de helft aan een arme man gegeven.'

'D...d...at is e..rg wijs v..van je, Hanna,' zegt haar vader. 'En ik heb ook een boek van die arme man gekregen,' zegt Hanna. Toen ze het boek uit haar tas pakte, begon ze er direkt in te bladeren. Het was een boek over konijnen, waar vader zoveel van hield. 'Vader, voor u, het gaat allemaal over konijnen,' zegt Hanna. Vroeger had vader een reservaat voor konijnen, waar hij konijnen opving en verzorgde. Maar sinds hij ziek werd kon hij dat niet meer doen. Binnenin het boek, op het kaft, zat weer vijfhonderd gulden vastgeplakt. Hanna was erg verbaasd.

'I...ik z..z..ei het ..je ...t..t..och,' zei vader, 'h...et ...w..was ...w..ijs ..wat je d..d..eed ...'

'Maar vader, hoe kan dat ? Ik dacht dat het een arme man was,' zei Hanna, nog steeds erg verbaasd.

En toen vertelde vader een verhaal over konijnenbedelaars. Dat zijn bedelaars die om armoede bedelen, maar waardoor ze op een bijzondere manier erg rijk zijn. Niemand weet precies hoe dat kan, en niemand weet ook precies wie het zijn, en waar ze vandaan komen, maar het gebeurt.

Toen Riek hoorde wat er gebeurd was, wilde ze ook weleens voor vader medicijnen halen, in de hoop de konijnenbedelaar tegen te komen. Dan kon ze hem direkt die vijfhonderd gulden weer teruggeven. Toen ze de week erna bij de apotheek aankwam, zag ze de arme man staan. 'Hier, mijnheer,' zei ze, en gaf de vijfhonderd gulden. 'Maar kind toch,' zei de arme man, 'dat is toch veel te veel. Ik heb maar weinig nodig.' Maar toen kon Riek het niet meer inhouden : 'Maar mijnheer, die vijfhonderd gulden is van u. We vonden het in het boek wat u aan ons gaf,' zei ze. 'Dat is erg goed van je,' zei de man. 'En als beloning heb ik hier een boek voor je.'

'Maar ik begrijp het niet,' zei Riek, 'stel dat er weer geld in het boek zit, wilt u dat dan niet terug ?' Maar de man was alweer verdwenen ... spoorloos ...

Toen Riek thuiskwam haalde ze direkt het boek uit haar tas. Het bleek een boek te zijn over konijnenbedelaars, en er zat duizend gulden vastgeplakt aan de binnenkant van het boek op het kaft. 'Z..z..ie ...j..j..e ?' zei de vader, 'h...h..et is ..allem..m..aal w..w..aar...'

En sinds het lezen van het boek ging het steeds beter met de vader ... zelfs zo, dat hij weer kon werken in het konijnenreservaat. En sindsdien kwamen de konijnenbedelaars in Nunspeet veel vaker voor.

Op een dag werd er aangebeld. Hanna deed open. Het was een arme man, vragende om onderdak voor de winter. Buiten vroor het. Vader had de zolder speciaal voor zwervenden laten inrichten. Hier kon hij voorlopig wel blijven. De man was erg dankbaar, en op een dag vroeg hij aan de vader en zijn twee dochters of ze met hem mee wilden komen naar het zolder. Hij wilde hen wat laten zien. En toen ze naar boven waren gelopen konden ze hun ogen bijna niet geloven. Er was een extra trap bijgekomen, en ineens was er een hele nieuwe verdieping bij, boven het zolder. En zo werd langzaam maar zeker het huis van die vader met zijn dochters tot een flat van konijnenbedelaars.

De Gekke Piraat

Jorit den Herder was misschien wel één van de beste glazenwassers die Nunspeet ooit gekend heeft. Hij had maar één oog, maar de burgemeester wilde niemand anders dan hem om de ruiten van het gemeentehuis te laten schoonmaken. De glazenwasser liet altijd prachtig glanzende ruiten achter. Op een keer vroeg de burgemeester aan hem wat nou het geheim was van die prachtig glanzende ramen. 'Groene blubber, mijnheer,' zei Jorit.

'Groene blubber ?' vroeg de burgemeester geschokt ... 'Ja, dat haal ik wel eens uit wat bosvijvertjes ...' zei Jorit weer. 'Bosvijvertjes ?' vroeg de burgemeester angstig ... 'waarom doe je dat eigenlijk ?' En toen legde Jorit hem uit dat er in bosvijvers goede gezonde schoonmaakproducten ronddrijven. Maar de burgemeester vond het maar vies. 'Hoezo is het goed en gezond ? Ik wil m'n ramen schoonhebben,' zei de burgemeester, die bijna rood aanliep. 'Ach,' zei Jorit een beetje plomp, 'soms moet je eerst iets erg vuilmaken om het schoon te krijgen. Het vuil neemt namelijk ook altijd het andere vuil mee, en dat kun je dan gewoon wegvegen zodat het echt brandend schoon wordt.'

'Wegvegen ?' zei de burgemeester woedend ... 'Noem je dat ramenlappen ... gewoon wegvegen ? Ik zal jou eens 'gewoon wegvegen'.

En vanaf toen mocht Jorit den Herder niet meer in Nunspeet wonen. Wel kreeg hij ergens een boshuisje aangewezen, dichtbij zijn vijvers. Hij mocht het niet wagen om ooit nog eens een voetstap in Nunspeet te zetten. Soms kun je maar beter niet je geheimen vertellen, zolang de mensen tevreden zijn. Dat had Jorit den Herder nu wel geleerd. Jorit gebruikte de groene blubber voor heel veel dingen. Hij kon er goed vloeren mee schoonmaken, en zo nu en dan waste hij z'n kleren er ook in ... Jorit had sindsdien niet echt veel meer te doen. Vaak staarde hij in de bosvijver en liet er kleine bootjes in ronddrijven ... Meestal waren dat kleine piratenscheepjes die hij eens van zijn oma had gekregen. Op een dag kwam er een vis naarboven zwemmen ... 'Blub, blub ...' zei de vis ...'zeg, wat is er met jou aan de hand ... blub, blub ... je kijkt zo sip ...' En toen begon hij het hele verhaal aan de vis te vertellen. De vis kreeg direkt erge medelijden met hem ... Het was een tovervis, maar dat wist Jorit nog niet ... Wel was hij erg verbaasd dat vissen konden praten. Hij was erg verbaasd, en dacht dat hij droomde. ... 'Nee, je droomt niet,' zei de vis ...'ik denk dat die burgemeester droomt ... want spul van de bosvijver is goed spul ... en je kunt het voor veel dingen gebruiken ...'

'Ja, maak hem dat maar eens wijs,' zei Jorit ... 'Je kent hem niet ...'

'Ik ken hem wel,' zei de vis ...'en het is mijn type niet ... Luister ... ik heb een plan.' Jorit schoof wat dichterbij ... en de vis vertelde hem vervolgens het plan : 'Jij gaat je verkleden als een piraat, en dan ga jij naar Nunspeet om je piratenscheepjes te verkopen, en dan moet je er heel gek bij dansen. Doe maar net alsof je gek bent, dan zullen ze denken : 'Ach, een dronken piraat met een oorlogstrauma ... Laten we hem helpen. We brengen hem naar een goed huis, met kameraden en met zorg.'

De burgemeester zal dan echt wel medelijden met je hebben, Jorit, en dan zal hij misschien wel denken : 'Ach, laat hem de ramen maar weer wassen.'

En zo gebeurde het, zoals de vis had gezegd. Het leek wel alsof de burgemeester betoverd was ... En al snel kon Jorit weer aan de slag met ramenwassen, en niemand heeft hem ooit meer gevraagd waarmee hij dat deed.

Jorit was de vis erg dankbaar, maar hoewel Jorit wel weer glazenwasser mocht zijn, mocht hij nog steeds niet de ruiten van het gemeentehuis wassen. En daar was Jorit niet erg blij mee. Maar daar wist de vis wel wat op. In die tijd had Nederland nog een koning, en Jorit moest een brief schrijven naar de koning om hem uit te nodigen in zijn boshuisje. Daaronder moest hij neerzetten : van de beste glazenwasser van Nunspeet. De koning ging direkt op zijn aanbod in, en al gauw kwam hij langs in een zilveren koets. Deftig stapte hij uit, terwijl wat dienstknechten en lakeien de rode loper uitrolden tot in het boshuisje. Jorit den Herder had heel lekker gekookt, en de koning vond het een hele eer om bij de beste glazenwasser van Nunspeet uitgenodigd te zijn. Alles gebeurde volgens het plan van de vis.

De vis had Jorit ook opgedragen, dat als de koning zou hebben gegeten, dan moest hij ook de koning uitnodigen om in de bosvijver te baden. En Jorit moest zeggen dat dat zeer gebruikelijk is in Nunspeet, en vooral onder glazenwassers. Wanneer de koning dan in de bosvijver zou zitten, dan moest Jorit snel even een foto maken, als aandenken aan een onvergetelijke dag.

En zo gebeurde het. De koning vond het zelf ook onvergetelijk. De vis had Jorit opgedragen om

daarna met de ontwikkelde foto naar het gemeentehuis te gaan, om het aan de burgemeester te laten zien. Sindsdien gingen de burgemeester en zijn wethouders vaak naar de vijver om daar te baden ... in de groene blubber, en voortaan mocht Jorit weer glazenwasser zijn van het gemeentehuis ... en niet alleen dat ... Hij mocht voortaan ook de ramen lappen van het paleis van de koning ... En zo werd Jorit den Herder in Nunspeet een levende legende ...

Het Vreemde Huis

Mevrouw van Dalen woonde met haar hond in een flatje, ergens in Nunspeet. Ze ging vaak met haar hondje wandelen, en beleefde soms vreemde avonturen. Ze had een voorliefde voor vreemde gebouwen, en soms zocht ze heel Nunspeet af om er eentje te vinden. Als ze er dan eentje had gevonden, bleef ze soms tijden staren. Niet iedereen had daar behagen in, en soms kwamen de mensen naar buiten om haar weg te jagen. Ze had dan weleens de neiging om haar hond erop af te sturen. Ze dacht dat kijken geen kwaad kon, maar de mensen hadden privacy nodig ... 'Dan moesten ze maar niet zulke vreemde gebouwen uitzoeken,' dacht mevrouw van Dalen ... Maar ja ... wat is vreemd ? ... misschien vonden ze haar wel vreemd ... Mevrouw van Dalen vond haarzelf trouwens ook een beetje vreemd, maar daarom zocht ze ook naar vreemde gebouwen ... Ze was geinteresseerd in het vreemde. Maar als Nunspeet nu vol zou staan met vreemde gebouwen ... Was het dan nog wel vreemd ? Of werd dan het gewone ineens vreemd ?

Mevrouw van Dalen hield erg veel van vreemde dingen. Haar hele huis stond er vol mee ... Ze wist er het liefst zo min mogelijk vanaf, zodat het toch allemaal zo vreemd mogelijk bleef. Als ze een kaartje kreeg van iemand, keek ze liever niet op de achterkant van wie het was, zodat het voor haar toch allemaal een beetje vreemd bleef ... Ook de boeken die ze las, las ze nooit helemaal uit, zodat het altijd een vreemd einde bleef. Ja, de boeken moesten vreemd blijven. Ze las graag boeken over spoken, en had een voorliefde voor jeugdboeken. Ze moesten zo vreemd mogelijk zijn, bijna griezelig. Maar niet te griezelig, anders durfte ze 's nachts niet te slapen. Als iets te vreemd werd, dan werd het ook griezelig. Ze was zelf ook een tijdje schrijfster van jeugdboeken geweest, en ze maakte nogal faam. Ze is daar toen mee gestopt, omdat ze zo niet meer vreemd kon zijn. Ze wilde het liefst toch nog wel een beetje vreemd blijven. Die boeken waren soms erg griezelig, zo griezelig, dat ze vaak met lichten aan sliep. Eigenlijk durfte ze niet meer te schrijven, want ze wist waar dat op uitliep. Op straat werd ze heel soms herkend door kinderen.

Ook krijgt ze nog wel eens brieven van ouders die vragen wanneer er weer boeken van haar uitkomen. Mevrouw van Dalen heeft ook hele vreemde lampen door haar hele huis staan, met vreemde lichten. Ze gelooft dat vliegende schotels bestaan, maar de mensen denken dat dat bij schrijvers hoort. Zij mogen en kunnen meer dan anderen, omdat ze schrijvers zijn. Ze kunnen soms hele vervelende dingen zeggen, terwijl niemand daar iets van zegt, omdat het schrijvers zijn. Het lijkt wel alsof alles wat ze doen of laten toch niet echt is. Dat vond ze altijd wel een veilig gevoel.

Wel gaat ze nog eens in de twee weken naar bejaarden toe om hen gezelschap te houden, en wat te helpen. En ze is ook leesmoeder op een basisschool, en dat terwijl ze nooit moeder is geweest. Ze is gescheiden. Haar man is op een dag weggelopen vanwege al die griezelige boeken die ze schreef. Hij kon er ook niet meer goed van slapen. Ze mist hem niet, ja, als kiespijn. Hij had niet echt gevoel voor humor. Hij had een hele grote baard, een hele donkere stem en een bril met ronde glazen. Als ze hem 's nachts in het donker tegenkwam schrok ze zich altijd lam. Ja, vroeger was haar huis echt een spookhuis. Ze denkt nog wel eens hoe het zou zijn als Arend er nog zou wezen ... Ze hoorde van iemand dat hij nu ook schrijver zou zijn ... en nog wel van griezelboeken ... Ja, ja, ze ziet het al helemaal voor zich ... nu gaat hij faam maken met haar verhalen ... De Griezelmevrouw, geschreven door Arend Koophaar ... Maar goed, wie zegt haar dat hij echt schrijver is geworden ... Ach, misschien is het allemaal om de nachtmerries van vroeger te kunnen verwerken .... onder het mom van ..confronteert dat wat jou beheert ... zoiets als schaken tegen de haken ... Niet weglopen, maar .... Oh wee, als hij maar niet terug zal komen ... Nee, dat zou ze niet aankunnen ... Dan zou ze weer alles van zich af moeten schrijven ... zoiets als : Terug Naar het Spookhuis ... Nee, daar moet

ze niet aan denken ...

Op een dag op de basisschool werd ze geconfronteerd met iets dat haar niet zo snel zou loslaten ... De kinderen hadden een nieuw boek uitgezocht dat voorgelezen moest worden ... en het was inderdaad een boek van haar gescheiden man ... Doe het met Knoopjes ... geschreven door Arend Koophaar ... Eén of ander dom boek over knoopjes die tot leven komen en allerlei gemene dingen uithalen ... Dan denk je dat je normale kleren draagt ... Zoiets als : Pas op wat je koopt ... Maar goed, de kinderen lezen voor, en zij zal luisteren ... iets wat al erg genoeg is ... Opgedragen aan Martha Koophaar-Van Dalen ... 'Verhip, dat ben ik ... zou hij ? ... Nee, dat kan niet waar zijn ... Het boek is gedateerd vlak na de trouwdag ... Ik heb nooit geweten dat hij schreef ...'

De kinderen vonden het een geweldig boek ... Het was zo griezelig dat haar eigen boeken er voor op de loop gingen ... Misschien dat hij van zichzelf en z'n boeken zo bang is geworden ... Misschien dat alles daar bij bleef ... Hoeveel boeken heeft die knakker uitgegeven ? ... Na het lezen van Doe het met Knoopjes bleek er tot haar grote verbazing ook nog een deel twee te bestaan ... Opgedragen aan Martha van Dalen ... 'Dat ben ik ... dat moet van na de scheiding zijn ...' En ja hoor, het bleek nog niet zolang geleden geschreven te zijn ... De kinderen vonden het eerste deel zo geweldig dat ze ook voor het tweede deel hadden gekozen ... 'Arme ik ...'

Het ging ditmaal over een man met een grote baard met brillen als knopen ... Dat moest hij zijn ... In de nacht kwamen de knopen tot leven om hem te achtervolgen, en ze hielden hem gevangen in één of ander kasteel ... Hoe verzint ie het ... Wat knopen wel niet allemaal kunnen ... Je leest het in dit boek ... 'Was ik nog maar een kind, dan zou ik dit misschien nog leuk vinden ....' Maar ze merkte al erg snel, dat de kinderen erge medelijden hadden met de man van het verhaal. Het zou je maar overkomen. 'Straks moet ik hem ook nog bevrijden uit dat kasteel ... Hij heeft me trouwens nooit verteld waar hij naartoe is gegaan ... Zouden de knopen ...? ...Nee, dat kan niet waar zijn ...'

Ik ben maar gestopt met leesmoeder zijn ... Als het allemaal zo ver moest gaan ... Maar op een dag werd er aan de deur gebeld ... Het was Arend ... 'Zeg, kom binnen, jongen, lang niet gezien ...' Tja, wat moest ik anders zeggen ...

'Arend, niet bang zijn voor de boeken, hè, ze zijn aan de riem ... Ze doen niks ... Ze blaffen hooguit een beetje ...' Ik deed van alles om hem tot rust te brengen. Ik wilde dat hij zich op z'n gemak zou voelen ... Laat ik hem maar niet vragen hoe hij uit dat kasteel is gekomen ... en geen woord over de knopen ...

Hij ging zitten ... op z'n oude stoel, waar hij altijd zat ... Stak z'n pijp aan ... Iets wat erg lang duurde ... Terwijl ik steeds zenuwachtiger werd ... 'Zeg, waar kom je eigenlijk voor ?' vroeg ik ineens brutaal, met direkt daarachteraan : 'Moet je koffie ... thee ... of misschien ... sap ?'

'Ja, doe me maar wat sap,' zei hij rustig ... Maar nu kon ik me niet meer inhouden : 'Zeg kerel, ik heb je boeken gelezen ...' Ineens begonnen z'n ogen te stralen ... Maar toen zakte hij weer ineen ... 'Ik denk dat ik maar ga,' zei hij ... 'Wacht,' zei ik ... 'je hebt je sap nog niet op.' In één teug dronk hij z'n beker leeg, zette het hard op tafel neer, en stond op ... 'Mag ik een boek van je lenen ?' vroeg hij ... 'Oh nee,' schreeuwde ik ... 'daar komt niks van in ... want straks heb ik het allemaal weer gedaan ... heb ik je weer banggemaakt, en kom je weer viereneenhalf jaar niet opdagen ...'

'Wat is enger,' vroeg hij ineens ...'lezen of niet lezen ...' Ja, daar vroeg hij me wat ... Het zette me wel even aan het denken ... waar zou je nou banger van worden ... Dat hij bang was, dat was een feit ... of hij nou las of niet ... De vraag was wat het beste zou zijn in deze situatie ... Lezen kan ook verwerken zijn ... En wat had ik te verliezen ... Ten slotte zei ik : 'Okay, neem elk boek wat je maar wilt in dit huis mee om te lezen ... Jouw eigen keuze ...' Hij was daar zichtbaar blij mee, en ook ik wilde echt alles begrijpen ...

'Heb je mijn kaarten nog gehad ?' vroeg hij ineens ... Het was alsof ik groen, rood en blauw werd tegelijkertijd ... Ik las nooit geen kaarten ... omdat ik toch een beetje vreemd was, en van vreemde dingen hield ... Maar nu begon mij wel wat te dagen ... Ik had een schoenendoos vol met ongelezen

kaarten ... Die zouden wel eens van hem kunnen zijn ... En ja hoor, het hele knopenverhaal nauwkeurig uitgelegd ... de locatie van het kasteel, wat hij van me wilde ... alles ... Maar daar kwam ik wel erg laat achter ... Ik ook altijd met mijn vreemde manieren ... Of was dat om mezelf ergens tegen te beschermen ... Sommige dingen kun je soms maar beter niet weten ...

De Trouwe Vriend

De kerk is net uitgegaan. Jolle loopt op straat. Ze is pas met haar ouders vanuit Friesland verhuist naar Nunspeet. De kinderen kijken haar een beetje vreemd aan, alsof ze uit het buitenland komt. En ze praat ook zo vreemd. Daar in de verte gaat de dominee. In Friesland zijn ook dominees. Voor haar is het dus wel vertrouwd, maar er zijn ook zoveel dingen die anders zijn. De mensen praten hier anders. Jolle loopt met haar zusje naar huis. Vader en moeder gaan nog bij iemand op visite. Thuisgekomen zetten ze de radio aan. Gelukkig zijn hier ook dezelfde programma's. Ze besluiten om een eindje te gaan lopen door de weilanden. Het is zondag, alles is rustig. Na een tijdje lopen komen ze een meisje uit de klas van Jolle's zusje tegen. Het meisje vraagt of ze met haar mee willen komen. Ze gaan vanmiddag pannenkoeken eten. Het meisje woont op een boerderij. Ze hebben daar grote honden in kooien, die de boerderij moeten bewaken. Eerst gaan ze even een tijdje op de kamer van het meisje spelen. Het meisje heeft veel speelgoed, en veel poppen. 'Ja, als mijn oom komt, neemt hij altijd veel speelgoed mee,' zegt het meisje. Jolle wilde wel dat ze ook zo'n oom had. Jolle had geen oom ... Ja, alleen eentje die in Afrika woonde, maar die was nog nooit gekomen. Jolle had wel een paar tantes, maar daar had ze niet veel mee op ...

Na een tijdje waren de pannenkoeken klaar. De moeder van het meisje was erg aardig. De vader zat in de woonkamer de krant te lezen. 'Gaan jullie ook naar de kerk ?' vroeg het zusje van Jolle. Het meisje boog haar hoofd. Nee, daar was ze nog nooit geweest. Haar vader geloofde niet in God. Ze zou graag weleens meewillen naar zo'n kerk. 'Nou, je mag weleens met ons mee,' zei het zusje van Jolle. Jolle knikte. Maar ineens stond de vader van het meisje op, en zei : 'Nou, dat heb ik liever niet.'

'Gelooft u in God,' vroeg het zusje van Jolle aan de moeder van het meisje. De moeder werd een beetje rood, en streek haar schort recht. 'Ik weet het niet, kind, echt niet.'

Toen zei het meisje ineens : 'Mijn vader en moeder geloven niet in God, omdat mijn zusje is overleden.' Jolle schrok, en ook het zusje van Jolle. Maar toen zei Jolle : 'Maar onze lieve Heer zal wel goed voor jouw zusje zorgen, hoor, daar boven in de hemel.' De moeder van het meisje had een traan in haar oog. Snel ging ze verder met het opdienen van de pannenkoeken. Na een tijdje zat iedereen aan tafel, en vader zei : 'Allen eet smakelijk.'

Na een tijdje zei het zusje van Jolle : 'Bidden jullie nooit voor het eten ?' De vader verslikte zich bijna. 'Nee, hoor,' zei het meisje, 'dat is nergens voor nodig, zegt mijn moeder altijd.' De moeder werd weer erg rood. 'Vader, kun je me even de stroop aangeven,' zei moeder. Vader knipoogte naar z'n vrouw en glimlachte lief naar haar, terwijl hij haar de stroop gaf. 'En,' vervolgde het meisje, 'opa zei altijd het is beter je brood aan de armen te geven, dan ervoor te bidden.'

'Als jullie willen bidden, dan mag dat wel hoor,' zei de moeder van het meisje vriendelijk. Ook de vader knikte erg vriendelijk. Dapper vouwde Jolle haar handjes samen en begon hardop te bidden, en ook haar zusje deed haar oogjes stijf op elkaar en bad mee. De moeder van het meisje keek een beetje ongemakkelijk naar haar man, maar hij glimlachte lief en geruststellend naar haar.

'Ik snap echt niet dat jullie bidden naar iemand die mijn zusje heeft laten doodgaan,' zei het meisje brutaal.

'Ik vind het verschrikkelijk naar dat je zusje is overleden, en ik begrijp dat je het daar erg moeilijk mee hebt. In de hemel is alles goed,' zei Jolle.

Het meisje zat met tranen in haar ogen. 'Wat is er dan gebeurd ?' vroeg het zusje van Jolle. 'Ze is verdronken,' zei de vader. Jolle schrok. 'Wat verschrikkelijk,' zei het zusje van Jolle. 'Maar ze is nu

bij onze lieve Heer, en ze heeft het goed.'

'Maar waarom is ze niet meer bij ons ?' zei het meisje boos ... 'Het is niet eerlijk. En waarom zijn er zoveel mensen arm, en waarom hebben zoveel mensen pijn, en waarom is mijn opa doodgegaan ?'

'Ik weet het ook niet,' zei Jolle, 'maar eens zal alles goedkomen.' Maar het meisje protesteerde : 'zolang het niet goed is, en zolang ik mijn zusje moet missen, zal ik ook niet bidden en geloven in God. Maar ik zou wel een keertje meewillen naar jullie kerk, mag dat pap ?' En uiteindelijk stemde de vader van het meisje toe. Ze zou voor één keertje naar een kerk mogen, omdat ze nog nooit binnenin een kerk was geweest. Ze zou de aankomende zondag samen met haar vader en moeder naar de kerk van Jolle en haar zusje gaan.

Toen het zover was was het meisje erg enthousiast. Ze vond het prachtig binnenin. Ze vond de ramen zo mooi, en er stond een prachtig orgel. Er kwam een man binnen in een zwart gewaad. Dat was de dominee. Hij had een prachtig gewaad aan. Toen gingen ze zingen uit een boekje, en iedereen stond op. Na een tijdje gingen ze allemaal weer zitten, en de dominee nam het woord. Hij liep op een trapje, totdat hij op de hoge preekstoel stond. Na een tijdje kwam er iemand met de collectebus. Het meisje gooide er veel van haar spaargeld in, wat ze van opa geleerd had. Dat deed ze ook altijd als er mensen met collectebussen aan de deur kwamen.

En toen ging de dominee bidden. En hij zei : 'Vraag nu in de stilte van je hart dat wat je van onze lieve Heer verwacht.' En ook het meisje had haar handjes gevouwen en haar oogjes gesloten, en ze vroeg zacht of ze haar zusje weer mocht terugzien.

Toen zei de dominee : 'Duizenden sterven aan honger vandaag de dag, terwijl wij het hier goed hebben. Als wij gaan leven zoals zij leven, en ons geld voor hen inzetten, dan zal ook leven aan ons geschonken worden.'

'Opa heeft altijd geld gegeven,' dacht het meisje bij zichzelf, 'en heeft altijd voor de arme mensen gezorgd, zoveel hij kon, maar toch is hij doodgegaan. Maar als de hemel echt bestaat, dan is hij nu daar, en dan heeft hij het beter, net zoals mijn zusje.' Toen de kerkdienst was afgelopen gingen de vader, de moeder en het meisje nog even met Jolle, haar zusje en haar ouders mee. Er werd niet over het geloof gesproken. Wel zei het meisje even dat ze de kerk prachtig vond. Na een lange dag kwamen het meisje met haar ouders eindelijk weer thuis op de boerderij. De vader was erg moe, en ook de moeder voelde haarzelf niet echt lekker. 'Het heeft me geen goed gedaan,' zei ze tegen de vader. 'Ik dacht teveel na over Liselotte. Het lijkt wel alsof ik het nooit verwerk.' Maar de vader schoof naar haar toe, en legde een arm op haar schouder : 'Ik voel Liselotte in mijn hart. Ik kan het niet begrijpen. Het maakt me moe, maar aan de andere kant word ik er rustig van. Ik weet dat Liselotte nog ergens is, en of dat nou in de hemel is, of ergens anders ...' zuchtte de vader.

'Ik voel alleen maar pijn, pijn ...' zei de moeder ... 'En ook dat gesprek met Jolle en haar zusje over Liselotte heeft me geen goed gedaan.'

'Het zit ook allemaal nog zo diep,' zei de vader liefdevol ... 'Haal maar diep adem ... Gelukkig hebben we elkaar en Else nog ...'

'Maar ik kan zo'n gesprek niet nog een keer aan ...' zei de moeder ... 'Jolle en haar zusje kunnen hier beter niet meer komen ...' De vader knikte ... Ook voor hem was het teveel. En eigenlijk had hij er een beetje spijt van dat hij met zijn dochtertje en vrouw naar de kerk was gegaan, ook al had hij zelf nu het gevoel dat Liselotte bij hem was ... 'Misschien moeten we het allemaal maar even laten bezinken,' zei hij.

Maar die nacht had de vader een erge nachtmerrie over Liselotte, over de dag dat ze verdronk, en het was alsof ze voor de tweede keer verdronk. Vader had het gevoel dat ze erg dichtbij was, maar hij kon niets doen. Hij hoopte ook dat Liselotte zou voelen en weten dat hij bij haar was. Het was alsof vader in een zware tweestrijd zat over de kerk ... De kerk bracht zijn dochtertje zo dichtbij, maar ook zo ver weg ... Hij kon haar gewoon niet bereiken.

De vader wilde ten einde raad eens met de dominee praten. De dominee was een erg vriendelijke

man, en erg behulpzaam. De strijd omtrend de dood was iets heel normaals in zijn ogen. De dominee had het ook over het verschil tussen de Joden en de Egyptenaren. De Egyptenaren waren heel veel met de dood bezig, terwijl de Joden het juist erg van zich afschoven. De dominee vond dat hiertussen balans moest zijn, en dat om die balans te krijgen, moet je eerst door strijd heen ... gemengde gevoelens ...

Was God het verbod om verbonden te zijn met de doden ? Of was God juist het verbond met de doden, of allebei ? De dominee vond allebei. De dominee had heel vroeg zijn vrouw aan ziekte verloren, en had sindsdien altijd een soort gevoelsmatig contact gevoeld, maar is hierin niet verder gegaan. Dat was meer iets van de Egyptenaren. Zijn vrouw raakte verzeild in het Egyptische Dodenboek toen ze van haar artsen hoorde dat ze niet lang meer te leven had. De titel schrok haar in het begin erg af, maar die titel bestond in het begin nog helemaal niet, daar het boek oorspronkelijk een andere naam had : Het Boek van het Doorkomen van de Dag. Maar toch wist ze dat ze zich moest voorbereiden op de dood. Net als de Joden zagen de Egyptenaren de dood als een doorgang naar het hiernamaals, en dit was een reis die je moest maken, en waartoe je jezelf mogelijk moest voorbereiden. Omdat het de Joodse Traditie daar vaak aan ontbrak en toch de behoefte daaraan groot was, met name onder hen die de betrekkelijkheid van het leven inzagen, of noodzakelijkerwijs daarmee te maken kregen, vonden velen heil in de lessen van de Egyptenaren. En zo ook de vrouw van de dominee. De dominee had op dat punt weinig recht van spreken, daar hij niet in dezelfde situatie zat als zijn vrouw. Maar toch wist ook hij, dat hij zich moest voorbereiden. De Egyptenaren leerden dat je de reis door het hiernamaals nu al kon maken, daar hoefde je niet eerst dood voor te gaan. En dat was misschien ook het gevoel dat de dominee had na het sterven van zijn vrouw ... dat hij nog steeds bij haar was.

Door het gesprek met de dominee besloot de vader het Egyptische Dodenboek in huis te halen. Ook zijn vrouw was erg geinteresseerd. Ze bracht een groot gedeelte van de dag door met het lezen van dit boek, dat oorspronkelijk helemaal niet zo heette. Ze merkten dat het boek hen hielp met het verwerken van de dood van hun dochtertje. In de bijbel werd het je min of meer verboden om je met de dood bezig te houden. Maar waar moest je met je gevoelens naartoe als je je eigen kind had verloren, of je man of vrouw ? Daarin leek het gedachtengoed van de Egyptenaren een goede en bevrijdende aanvulling. De vader besloot eens om bij het eten te lezen uit dit boek, zodat ook het meisje erover zou horen.

Inmiddels waren Jolle en haar zusje op de hoogte gebracht van het feit dat ze niet meer welkom waren bij het meisje en haar ouders op de boerderij, en al snel ging in heel Nunspeet het gerucht dat ze bij een Egyptische secte waren aangesloten. Maar de dominee verdedigde hun. Aan de dominee hadden ze een trouwe vriend, die heel diep in hun gevoelens kon inleven.

Het Zwanenmeer

Wist je dat Nunspeet ook een zwanenmeer had ? Nou ja, eigenlijk was het gewoon een plantsoen, maar het werd vaak zwanenmeer genoemd. Het was vlakbij het dorp. Er was daar ook nogal een wat ongewone zwaan tussen de andere zwanen, en die zwaan was oranje. De mensen gingen er graag naartoe, maar echt druk was het er eigenlijk nooit. Op een dag was de oranje zwaan aan het wandelen gegaan. Hij liep door de dorpstraat, langs de winkels. Men vond dat zo bijzonder, dat men een gouden beeld van de oranje zwaan heeft laten maken. Het is daarna ook nooit meer gebeurd. Dat gouden beeld heeft een hele lange tijd in de dorpstraat gestaan, maar is helaas op een dag gestolen. Er werd een grote beloning voorbereid voor de vinder, maar jaren later vond de politie het beeld in een oude schuur. De dief, een winkelier, moest voor de rechter verschijnen, en toen heeft het beeld jarenlang op het politie-bureau gestaan. Maar toen werd het beeld weer gestolen, en weer werd er een grote beloning vastgesteld voor de vinder. Het beeld bleek terecht gekomen te zijn in een huis voor invaliden. Een man in een rolstoel zou het gestolen hebben, maar niemand wist hoe hij dat gedaan had. De man hoefde niet voor de rechter verschijnen, omdat men het zo knap vond dat hij het beeld uit het politie-bureau had gestolen. Sindsdien stond het beeld in dat huis voor

invaliden, maar later hebben zij het geschonken aan de bibliotheek. Het leek wel alsof de oranje zwaan nog steeds aan de wandel was. De man in de rolstoel ging vaak naar het plantsoen toe, dat in die tijd vaak zwanenmeer werd genoemd. Men zei dat hij kon spreken met de oranje zwaan, en dat de oranje zwaan hem de opdracht had gegeven om dat beeld te stelen. Hoe dan ook, de man ging vaak naar het zwanenmeer toe, en deed er nogal geheimzinnig over. Het was een hele geheimzinnige man, een goede vriend van de politie overigens. Het scheen dat hij vroeger zelfs baas van het politie-bureau was, maar door een ongeluk zat hij nu al tijden in een rolstoel. 'Kareltje,' noemden ze hem.

Na enige jaren was het beeld weer gestolen, uit de bibliotheek. En het beeld had immers zo'n faam, dat de politie door heel Nunspeet huiszoekingen deed. Uiteindelijk vonden ze het beeld in het magazijn van een schoenenwinkel. Maar omdat 'Kareltje' niet gearresteerd was, zo hadden de schoenmakers van Nunspeet ook een goede reden om niet gearresteerd te hoeven worden. En zo werd het in Nunspeet bijna een sport om het gouden beeld van de oranje zwaan te stelen. Er stond namelijk toch geen straf op. De politie kwam niet eens meer in aktie als het beeld weer weggestolen was. En dat kwam eigenlijk allemaal door 'Kareltje', en uiteindelijk door de oranje zwaan zelf. Maar op een dag, lang na de dood van Kareltje, vond de politie dat ze maar eens met de traditie moesten breken. Kareltje leefde immers niet meer, en het beeld was oorspronkelijk eigendom van Nunspeet zelf. Maar dat hebben ze geweten, want niet lang nadat ze dat besluit hadden genomen kwam de oranje zwaan zelf naar het politie-bureau, en heeft daar een hele tijd boos lopen blazen, en met z'n vleugels lopen wapperen. Uiteindelijk hebben ze toen het beeld in het plantsoen laten zetten, in het zwanenmeer, en er een prachtige fontein van laten maken. Nu kon de zwaan zelf het beeld bewaken. De zwaan bleek een erg goede bewaker te zijn. En na een tijdje kwam ook de burgemeester eens kijken naar de nieuwe verblijfplaats van het beeld. En dat bracht hem op een idee. Hij had namelijk nog wat oude beelden goed opgeborgen in het gemeentehuis, maar was altijd erg bang dat ze gestolen zouden worden. Hier bij de oranje zwaan zouden ze zeker veilig zijn. En zo gebeurde het. De oranje zwaan kreeg de hoede over een heleboel beelden van de burgemeester, in het plantsoen. En ook de wethouders hadden thuis nog wel wat dingen staan die ze liever aan de bewaking van de oranje zwaan overlieten. En zo kwam het zwanenmeer vol te staan met oude beelden. Het werd een prachtig plantsoen, en in vele van die beelden werden prachtige fonteintjes ingebouwd.

Maar op een dag had de oranje zwaan weer eens erge zin om te gaan wandelen. En ditmaal ging hij naar het gemeentehuis, tot vlakbij het raam van de burgemeester. De burgemeester schrok zich een hoedje. 'Jij hoort in het plantsoen te zijn,' riep de burgemeester luid. 'Onze kostbare beelden staan daar uitgestald.' Maar het was al te laat. Toen de burgemeester en zijn wethouders bij het plantsoen kwamen was alles leeggehaald. Geen één beeld was achtergebleven. De burgemeester zakte in elkaar. Wat een ramp. En daar kwam de oranje zwaan aanlopen. Ja, ze konden natuurlijk niet verwachten dat een zwaan altijd maar op dezelfde plaats bleef. Ze besloten de oranje zwaan naar een ander plantsoen te brengen. Maar dit plantsoen was niet zo groot, en al snel was de zwaan weer terug. 'Het is allemaal de schuld van Kareltje,' zei de burgemeester boos. 'Die heeft lang geleden, toen hij nog baas van de politie was die zwaan naar Nunspeet gehaald. Hij had het dier eens gered uit een brandend huis, en ze hebben toen ook een meisje gered. Dat meisje woont nu ook in Nunspeet, ze zal inmiddels al wel oud zijn, of misschien niet eens meer leven.'

De burgemeester en de wethouders besloten eens bij haar op bezoek te gaan. Misschien dat zij meer wist. En inderdaad, het meisje was inmiddels een dame. Ze bleek de zus van Kareltje te zijn. Het verhaal bleek iets anders in elkaar te zitten. Toen zij en Kareltje nog in Steenwijk woonden had de oranje zwaan hen uit een brandend huis gered. Toen Kareltje werk in Nunspeet kreeg, liet hij haar en de oranje zwaan overkomen. Ze zijn altijd onafscheidelijk gebleven. Maar de dame kon verder niets vertellen over wat er met de beelden was gebeurd. Toen de burgemeester en de wethouder weer in het plantsoen kwamen zagen ze de oranje zwaan dood in het water drijven. Ze stonden voor een raadsel. Maar daar kwam ineens nog een oranje zwaan aanlopen. De burgemeester en de wethouders waren geschokt. Er waren dus twee oranje zwanen, en misschien was er altijd één die

op wacht stond, maar hebben de dieven hem neergeschoten. Wat verschrikkelijk. Ineens ging het de burgemeester helemaal niet meer om de beelden, maar om de laatste oranje zwaan. Er was gelukkig nog een vijvertje in de binnenplaats van het gemeentehuis. Daar zou de zwaan wel veilig zijn. De burgemeester liet extra bewaking voor de oranje zwaan inzetten.

Maar al gauw gingen er geruchten dat er nog steeds oranje zwanen gesignaleerd werden in het plantsoen. Misschien had de oranje zwaan wel eieren gelegd. Maar door een telefoontje met de burgemeester van Steenwijk, waar de oranje zwaan oorspronkelijk vandaan kwam, kwam de burgemeester van Nunspeet erachter dat het in Steenwijk wemelde van de oranje zwanen. 'Zijn er bij jullie dan toevallig ook beelden gestolen ?' vroeg de burgemeester van Nunspeet. 'Gestolen ?' vroeg de burgemeester van Steenwijk ... 'Wij krijgen er alleen maar beelden bij ... daar komen die oranje zwanen altijd mee aanzetten ...'

Maar het ging de burgemeester niet meer om de beelden. Door alles wat er gebeurd was, was hij alleen nog maar bezorgd om de oranje zwanen ... En ook de burgemeester van Steenwijk kreeg te horen wat er met een oranje zwaan in Nunspeet was gebeurd. 'Tja,' zei de burgemeester van Steenwijk ...'dat is verschrikkelijk ... zeer verschrikkelijk ... En ik denk dat ik er maar één verklaring voor heb. Er woont hier in Steenwijk een stroper, een zwanenjager, die ze afschiet voor hun veren ...'

'Maar de zwaan lag dood in de vijver van het plantsoen, en had al z'n veren nog ...,' zei de burgemeester van Nunspeet ... 'Dan moet hij ergens van geschrokken zijn,' zei de burgemeester van Steenwijk. 'Misschien is hij aangevallen door een andere oranje zwaan, en maakte hij zich snel uit de voeten.'

De burgemeester van Steenwijk kon echter niet vertellen waar de stroper woonde. Hij werd al tijden gezocht door de politie, maar zonder resultaat. Het scheen dat hij telkens onderdook op allerlei adressen. En het scheen dat als zijn medewerkers of pleeggezinnen moeilijk gingen doen, of hem wilden verraden, dan stak hij hun huis in de fik ... Het was dus ook nog een echte pyromaan. Het scheen dat de ouders van Kareltje hem vroeger ook onderdak gaven, maar toen ze erachter kwamen waar hij mee bezig was, hebben ze hem uit huis gezet met alle gevolgen van dien ... 'Kareltje ?' vroeg de burgemeester van Nunspeet verbaasd ... 'Dus die brand waar de oranje zwaan hem en z'n zus uit redde was gesticht door de zwanenstroper ?' ...

'Ja,' zei de burgemeester van Steenwijk ...'ze noemden hem ook wel Pietje Pek, of Piet Onweer ... Hij is een gevreesd man in Steenwijk ...'

'Dan moet hij al wel flink oud wezen, als hij zelfs Kareltjes ouders nog heeft meegemaakt ...' zei de burgemeester van Nunspeet ... De burgemeester van Nunspeet kreeg meer en meer medelijden met de oranje zwanen. 'Ja, ik heb al extra bewaking voor onze oranje zwaan laten opstellen, maar als ik het zo hoor zijn er veel meer oranje zwanen die mijn hulp kunnen gebruiken.' En zo gebeurde het. De burgemeester liet een groot zwanenreservaat bouwen, ter bescherming van de oranje zwanen. En vanuit Steenwijk kwamen er toen een heleboel oranje zwanen over. Het was een reservaat in het bos, en de burgemeester liet er veel bewakers, en agenten opstellen, ja, zelfs soldaten. 'Zo zou Kareltje het gewild hebben,' zei de burgemeester. En ook de burgemeester van Steenwijk kwam zo nu en dan naar Nunspeet om het reservaat te bezoeken.

Maar op een dag kregen ze een brief van Pietje Pek, met daarop de woorden : 'Sluit nu je zwanenreservaat, anders wilde je dat je die keuze eerder had gemaakt.' De burgemeester was radeloos. En ook de burgemeester van Steenwijk zag de ernst ervan in, en zond soldaten, agenten en bewakers. Pietje Pek was een aanhouder, en kon gekke dingen doen, dus ze moesten op hun hoede zijn. Op een dag klopte er een oude man aan de poort van het reservaat. Soldaten vroegen hem wie hij was. 'Ik ben degene die jullie Piet Onweer noemen,' zei hij nors. Hij had maar één oog, met ruige haren en een ruige baard. Hij spoot iets in de ogen van de soldaten, en liep door, terwijl de soldaten op de grond vielen. 'Waar is Kareltje ?' schreeuwde hij. Daar kwam een agent aanrennen. 'Kareltje leeft niet meer, mijnheer, wat komt u hier doen ?'

'Ach ziet u,' zei de oude man, 'Kareltje zat bij mij in de klas vroeger, en met ganzenborden mocht hij altijd de oranje zwaan als pion hebben, en ik moest altijd een andere kleur uitkiezen ...' De agent begon te lachen, maar ook in zijn ogen spoot de oude man het spul, en de agent viel direkt neer. In de verte kwamen wat bewakers aanrennen, maar de oude man zette het op een lopen. 'Jullie willen altijd je zin hebben,' schreeuwde de oude man vals. Maar daar kwam de burgemeester al ... en hield de oude man tegen. 'Uit de weg,' schreeuwde de oude man, en gaf de burgemeester een duw ... 'Zeg, jou ken ik,' schreeuwde de burgemeester, 'jij bent een tijdje winkelier in Nunspeet geweest, en jij hebt het beeld van de oranje zwaan eens gestolen ...'

'Hoe kom je daarbij ?' schreeuwde de oude man ... 'dat was mijn broer ...'

'Waarom hebben jullie het toch altijd op oranje zwanen gemunt ?' riep de burgemeester ... Maar de oude man was al weg. De burgemeester was radeloos, maar gelukkig had de oude man niet veel kunnen doen ... Toen de agent weer was bijgekomen vertelde hij de burgemeester wat de oude man hem had gezegd over het ganzenbord ... 'Ik wist niet dat zwanen ook meespelen op het ganzenbord,' zei de burgemeester, 'maar misschien is het dus allemaal een jeugdtrauma van die zwanenstroper.' Maar Nunspeet was nog niet van de oude man af ... In het dorp aangekomen ging hij de eerste de beste bank binnen en sloeg met zijn vuist op de balie. 'Stel geldwolven,' schreeuwde hij, en trok een pistool en schoot een paar gaten in het glas, en toen sloeg hij met zijn vuist in een zwarte geravelde handschoen er doorheen, en greep het meisje wat daar zat bij de keel. Het meisje drukte direkt op het alarm, en al gauw was de oude man omsingeld door de politie. Maar weer spoot hij heel snel spul in hun ogen en ze vielen op de grond. Ook de baas van de bank kwam met een pistool aanlopen, maar de oude man kon ver en snel het spul in zijn ogen schieten. 'Geef me het geld,' schreeuwde de man tegen het meisje. 'Ja, mijnheer,' zei ze zenuwachtig, terwijl ze de kluisjes begon te openen.'

'Vlug,' schreeuwde de oude man, en snel stopte hij dikke stapels bankbiljetten in de binnenzakken van zijn jas en onder zijn trui. 'Denk maar niet dat je van me af bent,' schreeuwde hij tegen het meisje, en nam haar mee naar buiten. 'Vlug, stap in deze auto,' sprak hij nors ... Het was de auto van zijn broer, die aan het stuur zat. En toen reden ze weg. Niemand heeft ze daarna ooit nog gezien. De eerste tijden na dit voorval was er veel rumoer, maar later begon alles weer als vanouds te worden. De burgemeester van Nunspeet wilde weinig aandacht aan de zaak besteden. Op de één of andere manier had het verhaal over het ganzenbord hem verlamd. Het was als in de zaak van Kareltje : De burgemeester had teveel medelijden om verdere stappen te nemen. Hij hoopte dat de oude man nu had wat hij miste, en dat hij zo enigszins zijn jeugdtrauma kon verwerken. Vanaf toen begon de burgemeester zich meer en meer te verdiepen in het waarom van de daden van sommige personen. Dat bleek dus niet zo eenvoudig te zitten. Vaak werden ze gedreven door allerlei elementen waar de burgemeester niets van afwist. Was het leven dan eigenlijk niets anders dan een ganzenbord ? En bepaalde het aantal ogen op de dobbelstenen waar we in terecht kwamen, of waren het de pionnen zelf die dat in de hand hadden ? En wat zou er gebeurd zijn als de oude man vroeger eens één keer mocht spelen met de oranje zwaan als pion ? Was dit dan allemaal niet gebeurd ? Of waren er dan nog verschrikkelijkere dingen gebeurd ? De burgemeester wist het niet, maar had in ieder geval een aantal dingen waar hij zeer lang over na zou denken ...

De oranje zwanen kwamen nog vaak vanuit Steenwijk naar de Nunspeetse plantsoenen en naar het bosreservaat, maar het raakte steeds meer en meer op de achtergrond. Nunspeet begon er gewend aan te raken, en de burgemeester hield zich meer met andere dingen. De zwanen konden nu immers in vrede leven. Wel wilde de burgemeester nog één beeld plaatsen, het liefst in het plantsoen, of daar dichtbij. En dat was een beeld van Kareltje, want die had wel een hele grote rol gespeeld in dit alles. Maar toen ook dat beeld gestolen werd, had de burgemeester het helemaal gehad. Gelukkig was de dader snel gevonden. Het bleek een oude buurjongen van Kareltje te zijn. De politie begreep het wel. De jongen miste Kareltje veel te veel. Ja, Kareltje had veel betekent voor velen in Oud Nunspeet. De politie besloot om meerdere beelden van Kareltje te laten maken. Eéntje voor de jongen, éèntje voor het invalidehuis waar Kareltje zo lang had gewoond, en natuurlijk eentje voor op het politie-bureau, omdat Kareltje daar zo lang als baas had gewerkt. En ook de burgemeester

wilde er één voor op het gemeentehuis, en zelfs de burgemeester van Steenwijk wilde er één voor in Steenwijk op het gemeentehuis. De burgemeester van Nunspeet besloot om iedereen het recht te geven zo'n beeld te hebben, dit om diefstal te voorkomen. Iedereen die zo'n beeld wilde hebben moest zich melden op het gemeentehuis. En tot de burgemeester's grote verbazing kwam ook de oude man zich melden, samen met zijn broer. En zo werd Kareltje in Nunspeet tot een levende legende.

Harold

Harold woonde ergens in het midden van Nunspeet. Hij was van de vuilnisophaal-dienst. Vroeger werd alle vuilnis naar een open plek, diep in het bos gebracht en daar verbrand. Nu ligt er alleen nog maar zand. Ze noemden het wel eens de woestijn van Nunspeet. Ja, je moet er wel even een stuk voor fietsen, want het is over het spoor. Vroeger werd er altijd van alles en nog wat weggegooid, en vaak ging men naar die open plek toe om te kijken of er nog iets voor hen bijzat. Ook Harold hield alles goed in de gaten. En als hij tijdens zijn werk iets leuks tegenkwam, dan reed hij er in de avond nog even langs om het mee te nemen naar huis. Zijn huis stond dan ook vol met bijzondere dingen. Ja, Harold woonde in een heel bijzonder huis, en hij had ook een hele bijzondere vrouw. Zijn vrouw kon niet praten, want ze had vroeger een ernstig ongeluk gehad. Maar ze was bijzonder creatief, en maakte altijd hele speciale dingen. Zijn vrouw ging wel eens mee 's avonds, als Harold naar de open plek ging. Op een dag kwamen ze een kleine man tegen. Hij leek wel een beetje op een dwerg. Hij was een soort liliputter. De man was druk bezig met zoeken. 'Zoekt u iets ?' vroeg Harold vriendelijk. 'Ja,' zei de man, 'mijn vrouw heeft per ongeluk wat spullen van mij met de vuilnis meegegeven.'

'Om wat gaat het dan ?' vroeg Harold, 'want toevallig werk ik bij de vuilnisdienst, dus als u het me even zegt wat het is, dan zal ik op de uitkijk staan.'

'Het gaat om een gouden grammofoonspeler, mijnheer,' zei de man sip, 'en een heleboel langspeelplaten.'

'Oh, vergeet dat maar,' zei Harold, 'die hebben ze allang meegenomen. Er komen hier zo vaak mensen om spullen weg te halen, en zoiets zullen ze vast niet laten staan.'

'Maar het zat in een zak,' zei de man, 'in een vuilniszak ... Mijn vrouw dacht dat het vuilnis was ...'

'Oh, maar daar kunnen we echt niet aan beginnen,' zei Harold. 'We gaan niet alle zakken doorzoeken.' Maar toen werd de man een beetje kwaad. Zo kwaad, dat Harold direct begon te zoeken. Maar na een hele avond zoeken hadden ze nog steeds niets gevonden. De liliputter was ten einde raad. 'Ach,' zei Harold, 'wij hebben nog wel een oude grammofoonspeler in de schuur staan, en op zolder hebben we een heleboel grammofoonplaten ... die mag je wel hebben.' Maar dat wilde de liliputter niet ... Het ging hem niet zozeer om de muziek ... Hij had hem nooit aanstaan ... Het ging hem om de emotionele waarde die hij aan het ding hechtte. Hij had het van zijn vader gekregen. Hij gaf niks om die muziek, maar zijn vader hield er zo van, en daarom kon hij het eigenlijk niet missen. 'Weet je wat ?' zei Harold ...'Mijn vrouw is nogal erg handig. Als je ons nu vertelt hoe het ding eruit zag, dan zal mijn vrouw wel proberen om precies dezelfde te maken van onze eigen grammofoonspeler.' Maar de man wist eigenlijk niet zo goed hoe het eruit zag. Hij heeft hem al die tijd in de vuilniszak laten zitten. Hij had niet zulke goede herinneringen aan zijn vader, maar vond het geschenk wel erg belangrijk en waardevol voor hem. Hij had er dus gemengde gevoelens over. Hij kon niet met en niet zonder. Harold begreep het verhaal. 'Nou,' zei Harold, 'als het dan zo'n gestuntel voor je was, wees dan maar blij dat het weg is, dan zul je er ook nooit meer last van hebben.' En daarin gaf de man hem wel gelijk ...

Maar daar kwam ineens een auto aanrijden. Er kwam een man uit de auto met de gouden grammofoonspeler en de grammofoonplaten in z'n armen, en legde het tussen de andere vuilnis. 'Ziezo,' zei hij, 'weg met die rommel. De grammofoonspeler deed het nauwelijks, en in de platen

zaten allemaal krassen.' En snel was de man ook weer verdwenen.

De liliputter wist niet hoe hij moest kijken. Moest hij hier nu blij mee zijn, of niet ? Ook Harold wist eigenlijk niet zo goed hoe hij ermee om moest gaan ... 'Ach,' zei de liliputter ... 'laten we het daar maar liggen blijven ...' Harold kreeg wel een beetje last van schuldgevoelens nu, want hij had de liliputter per slot van rekening omgepraat ... Maar om de situatie te redden had hij een idee : 'Zeg, om de wond te helen kun je wel even met ons mee naar huis komen, want wij hebben ons huis vol staan met oude spullen. Dan kun je wat uitkiezen.' Daar had de liliputter wel oren naar.

De liliputter keek zijn ogen uit in het huis van de vuilnisman ... Wat een prachtige dingen stonden hier allemaal zeg ... Moest dit nou vuilnis voorstellen ? Hij kon het niet geloven ... Wat men wel niet allemaal weggooit ... Maar Harold zei dat mensen vaak iets weggooien om dezelfde redenen als de liliputter had ... Het verleden bijt ... En of het hen nu veel geld gekost heeft of niet, als ze er pijn van hebben, dan gaat het meestal naar de vuilnis ... En als je dat even allemaal in de gaten houdt, dan kun je daar erg rijk mee worden ... Ja, dat had de liliputter nu ook wel in de gaten ... En hij was nu zo ver gekomen, dat hij ook wel graag vuilnisman wilde worden ... En zo kon je ook veel in huis halen, zonder dat het je pijn deed. Harold vond het een goed idee, en de baas van Harold ook ... En zo werden Harold en de liliputter collega's van elkaar, en de beste vrienden ... Vaak gingen ze in de avond na het werk nog even naar de open plek toe, om daar de bijzonderste dingen van weg te halen ... En ook Harold's vrouw en de vrouw van de liliputter werden dikke vriendinnen. Ze gingen vaak samen op vakantie ... en natuurlijk hadden ze een voorliefde voor vuilnisbelten ... voor hen was dat een manier om veel geld uit te sparen ... De mensen vroegen hen altijd hoe ze toch aan zulke dure spullen kwamen ... maar soms werden ze ook weleens uitgescholden voor dieven ... Niet iedereen was er zo blij mee waar ze mee bezig waren. Vooral niet toen ze gingen rondvertellen dat ze gingen verhuizen ... Ja, ze zouden in een caravan gaan wonen, om het te houden bij de kleine dingetjes ... En zo konden ze van vuilnisbelt tot vuilnisbelt reizen ... Natuurlijk gingen ze er nooit te dichtbij wonen ... want dat zou brandgevaar opleveren ...

Ze zagen het als sport om de kleinst mogelijke schatten te vinden op de vuilnisbelten, om ze uit te stallen in hun caravans ... In het begin konden ze niet te ver weg reizen, vanwege het werk van Harold en de liliputter, maar later werden ze er zo handig in, dat ze een reizende winkel begonnen ... en daar konden ze goed van leven ... Harold en de liliputter waren toen geen vuilnismannen meer, maar vuilniswinkeliers ... En waar ze dan ook kwamen ... iedereen vond het een bijzondere winkel ... Maar al gauw werden ze ook dieven genoemd door sommigen ... Vaak werd er gevraagd hoe ze toch aan zulk bijzonder spul kwamen ... Ook de vuilnisdienst zelf was niet blij dat Harold en de liliputter met hun werk stopten. En als je aan ze vraagt of ze Harold ook kennen, dan doen ze vaak alsof ze hem niet kennen. Maar er was er één bij die toch wel erg veel aan Harold en de liliputter te danken had. Hij bleef eens een keer aan een zak vastzitten, en werd door het zuigsysteem naar binnen getrokken. Harold en de liliputter hadden wel speciale apparaatjes om hem direkt eruit te krijgen. Hoe ze aan die apparaatjes kwamen ? ... Ja, dat was natuurlijk hun grote geheim ... Inmiddels had Harold een grote winkel van bijzondere spullen in het zuiden van het land. Samen met de liliputter natuurlijk, zijn onafscheidelijke vriend. Ze hebben die man van de vuilnisdienst die ze gered hadden hun caravans geschonken, en hem een beetje het vak geleerd. Samen met een andere vriend reist hij nu de vuilnisbelten af. En wat zij allemaal naar binnen halen ? Het is niet te geloven. Er worden soms gewoon zakken met geld weggegooid ... Ja, want als je geld krijgt van iemand die je het leven zuur heeft gemaakt ... Of erfenissen van een rijke maar verschrikkelijke tante ... wil ook niet altijd iedereen in huis hebben ... De mensen willen nog wel een beetje kunnen leven ... en niet door één of ander miljoenengeschenk bij de psychiater terecht te komen.

En als je bekijkt wat mensen wel niet allemaal door het toilet wegspoelen en door de gootsteen ? De legende wil dat Harold's rijk zelfs tot onder de grond reikte, tot onder het riool, om hier en daar een graantje mee te pikken. En wat hij daar allemaal tegenkwam ? Niet iedereen wilde dit geloven ... Maar dat vond Harold niet erg ... wat had hij namelijk aan indringers ? Nog steeds zijn er wel eens dapperen die op zoek gaan naar Harold's rijk onder de grond, maar hoe diep dat zit, dat

weet niemand ... In iedergeval ... zij die dat geprobeerd hebben zijn nooit meer teruggevonden ... Wil dat zeggen dat het in Harold's rijk zo goed is dat ze er niet meer aan denken om terug te gaan ? Of zijn ze ergens onderweg gesneuveld ? Niemand weet het ... Er heeft lange tijd in Nunspeet een standbeeld van Harold gestaan, maar deze was op een zekere dag plotseling verdwenen ... waarschijnlijk door de vuilnisdienst opgehaald ...

Te Leven in Kampen

Een serie korte verhalen

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1. Dorus en de dominee
2. Politie, politie !
3. De paus van Kampen
4. Tussen twee oren
5. Achterstevoren gedraaid
6. Mijn moeder

Dorus en de dominee

Dorus woonde op de oude straat. Niemand wist eigenlijk of Dorus nu een man of een vrouw was. Dorus zelf wist het ook niet. Dorus had vanaf de geboorte nooit de kleren uitgehad. Er werden altijd kleren overheen gedaan, en terwijl Dorus groeide scheurden z'n oudere klederen natuurlijk af. Maar vies was Dorus absoluut niet, want Dorus ging elke dag zwemmen in de gracht. Nu Dorus ouder was geworden woonde hij niet meer in de oude straat, maar in het bos. Maar hij kwam nog wel elke dag op de fiets naar de oude straat om daar de vogels te voeren. Nu zou je misschien denken dat als iemand telkens kleren over de oude kleren doet, dan moet zo iemand toch haast niet meer kunnen lopen van de dikke laag kleren, maar dat was niet zo in het geval van Dorus. Dorus had namelijk motten in zijn kleren wonen, die ervoor zorgden dat Dorus zich heel goed kon bewegen. En het bewijs daarvan was, dat Dorus altijd de sportwedstrijden won. Of het nu zwemwedstrijden, hardloopwedstrijden of voetbalwedstrijden waren : Dorus won altijd, en er was niemand tegen Dorus opgewassen. Sommigen zeiden wel eens dat Dorus vogels in z'n kleren had wonen, die ervoor zorgden dat Dorus altijd won, maar zeker weten deden ze het niet.

Maar op een dag gebeurde er iets vreselijks. Dorus kwam niet meer naar de oude straat, en hij deed ook niet meer mee met de sportwedstrijden, en kwam ook niet meer in de gracht van het plantsoen

zwemmen. De mensen begonnen hem erg te missen. Wat zou er met hem gebeurd zijn ? Maar niemand wist het. In de kranten kwam het te staan : Dorus spoorloos verdwenen. Iedereen wist wie Dorus was. De politie doorzocht het bos, maar vond niks. Zou Dorus onder de grond zijn gaan wonen ? Maar op een dag kwam er een man op het politie-bureau. 'Dag meneer, kan ik u helpen ?' vroeg de mevrouw aan het loket. 'Maar ik ben Dorus,' zei de man. 'Kunt u dat dan niet zien ?' De mevrouw schrok even. 'Nee, meneer dat kan ik echt niet zien. U lijkt totaal niet op onze Dorus.'

'Nou,' zei de man, 'dat is me ook wat. Het is sinds ik die zak drop kocht dat niemand me meer herkent.'

'Zak drop ?' vraagt de mevrouw verbaasd, 'maar waar heeft u die zak drop dan gekocht ?' Maar de man was alweer verdwenen. Hij was op weg naar de winkel waar hij die drop had gekocht. Maar toen hij daar aankwam was de winkel gesloten en stond er een groot bord met ALLES UITVERKOCHT achter het raam. Dorus wist niet meer hoe hij het had. Een paar dagen terug stond de hele winkel nog vol. Ineens kwam er een oud vrouwtje naar buitenlopen. 'Ja, dat heb je, hè. Sorry, meneer, alles is op. Dat heb je met toverspulletjes.' kraste het vrouwtje. Maar Dorus werd ineens heel kwaad. 'Ik wil m'n geld terug, ik ben betoverd. Niemand herkent me meer.'

Maar het vrouwtje zei : 'Dan had u maar beter moeten lezen op de verpakking,' zei het vrouwtje. Snel griste Dorus de verpakking uit z'n jaszak, en las : 'Bent u een man, en wilt u een vrouw worden ? Neem dan één dropje. Bent u een vrouw en wilt u een man worden, neem dan twee dropjes. Wilt u de ene dag een man zijn, en de andere dag een vrouw, neem dan alle dropjes.' Maar toen werd Dorus ineens wit en rood tegelijk. Hij had ook van de dropjes uitgedeeld. 'Zeg, mevrouw,' zei Dorus, 'er staat niet bij wat er gebeurt als je bijna alle dropjes hebt opgegeten.'

'Dat spijt me zeer, meneer,' zei de dame, 'maar dan zult u veranderen in een kikker.' Toen schrok Dorus wel heel erg. 'En wanneer gaat dat dan gebeuren ?' vroeg Dorus benauwd. 'Nou, dat zou al gebeurd moeten zijn,' zei de dame, 'wat heb je daarna gegeten ?'

'Nou,' zei Dorus, 'ik ben daarna naar de kerk gegaan, waar ik de drop heb uitgedeeld, en toen kreeg ik van hem een pepermuntje.'

'Wie is hem ?' kraste het oude vrouwtje. 'De dominee,' zei Dorus verlegen. 'En hoeveel dropjes heb je de dominee dan gegeven ?' vroeg het vrouwtje boos. 'Nou, wel meer dan tien,' zei Dorus, terwijl hij z'n hoofd boog.

Een paar dagen later stond er in de krant : 'Dominee vermist'. Dorus fietste direkt naar het politie-bureau, en vertelde het verhaal. Maar natuurlijk wilde niemand hem geloven. 'Hebben jullie dan toevallig een kikker in de kerk gevonden ?' vroeg Dorus voorzichtig. Maar nee hoor, niemand had een kikker gevonden. 'Dan moet het iets met die pepermunt te maken hebben gehad. En snel fietste Dorus naar de winkel waar ze die pepermunt verkochten. Maar niemand wilde de deur voor Dorus opendoen, terwijl er wel verkopers in de winkel waren. Plotseling kwam er een vrouwtje naar buiten : 'Niemand mag naar binnen. We moeten helaas de winkel leegruimen, want er is iets met de pepermunt aan de hand. Wij hadden beter op de verpakking moeten lezen,' zei het vrouwtje. 'Wat stond er dan op de verpakking,' vroeg Dorus beleefd. En toen mocht Dorus eventjes mee naar binnen en lieten hem de verpakking lezen : 'Bent u een vrouw, en wilt u een man worden, neem dan één pepermuntje.'

'Zie je wel,' zei Dorus tegen het vrouwtje, 'ik wist wel dat ik een vrouw was.' En toen las Dorus verder : 'Bent u een man, en wilt u een vrouw worden, neem dan twee of meer pepermuntjes.'

'Dan weet ik nu wat er met de dominee gebeurd is,' zei Dorus, en na beleefd bedankt te hebben voor de hartelijke ontvangst stapte Dorus weer naar buiten, pakte zijn fiets en reed naar het bos. Daar zag hij een vrouw huilend bij een vijver zitten. 'U bent vast de dominee,' zei Dorus voorzichtig. 'Ja,' brulde de vrouw, 'en ik durf niet terug, want niemand zou me geloven. Ik dacht : Laat ik maar naar Dorus gaan. Misschien kan die helpen.'

'Maar ik ben Dorus,' zei Dorus. 'U heeft mij namelijk ook één zo'n pepermuntje gegeven.' En toen

vertelde Dorus het hele verhaal aan de dominee over de toverpepermunt, en ook over de toverdrop. Toen haalde de vrouw ineens alle dropjes uit haar zak tevoorschijn die Dorus had gegeven. 'Zie, deze had ik nog niet opgegeten, maar het is beter een kikker te zijn, dan een vrouw die in het bos moet leven.'

'Ja, maar dominee,' zei Dorus, 'luister nou eens. Je hebt nog één kans. U heeft me verkeerd verstaan. Als u twee dropjes neemt, dan wordt u weer een man, maar neemt u al uw dropjes, dan bent u de ene dag een man en de andere dag een vrouw.' Maar toen verbeterde de dominee hem weer, en zei : 'U had mij een stuk of tien dropjes gegeven, maar er waren er natuurlijk veel meer, en ik kan alleen om de dag een man zijn als ik alle dropjes zou eten, maar dit zijn niet alle dropjes, want u had er nog meer, dus dan zou ik in een kikker veranderen als ik die tien of elf dropjes zou eten. Maar ik kies natuurlijk voor het eten van twee dropjes. Dan word ik weer een man, en herkent iedereen me weer.'

'Is dat echt wat u wilt, dominee ? Dat ze u allemaal weer herkennen ? U was heus niet zo geliefd.' zei Dorus. En ja, daar had Dorus ook wel weer gelijk in. De dominee had helemaal geen zin meer om terug te gaan. Hij wilde liever hier in het bos leven, maar als kikker of als vrouw ?

'Eigenlijk komen deze dingen goed van pas. Laten we teruggaan, jij als man en ik als vrouw,' zei de dominee, 'dan gaan wij die dingen ook verkopen, voor mensen die eens iets anders willen in hun leven. En niemand die ons herkent. En dat vond Dorus wel een heel goed plan. En zo kregen ze een toverwinkeltje op de oude straat, waar veel zaken werden gedaan. Over Dorus en de dominee werd steeds minder en minder gesproken, maar over het toverwinkeltje elke dag meer. Vanuit heel het land kwamen ze naar het toverwinkeltje, en velen bleven ook gewoon in Kampen wonen. Maar al gauw werd er gesproken over een kikker-invasie. En Dorus en de dominee wisten precies hoe dat gebeurd was. En op een gegeven moment waren er zoveel kikkers in Kampen, dat de mensen weer begonnen te praten over Dorus en de dominee. 'Ach, waren zij nog maar hier, dan was dit allemaal niet gebeurd. Want bij Dorus konden ze in z'n kleren wonen, en de dominee, die zou de kikkers wel kunnen wegjagen. Ja, die dominee die was toch wel zo wijs. Die zou er wel wat op weten. En die Dorus, dat was toch zo'n sportheld, die zou de kikkers wel in een zak kunnen krijgen om ze naar het bos of het meer te brengen. Waren ze nog maar hier.' Maar Dorus en de dominee wisten wel beter. Ze hadden het zo goed naar hun zin. En ook toen er standbeelden van hen werden gemaakt, hadden ze niet de neiging om even tevoorschijn te komen.

Maar op een dag kwam de baas van belastingen bij hen langs. En na de uitbetaling zijn ze maar met hun winkeltje gestopt, omdat de belasting veel te hoog was. Dorus werd weer gewoon Dorus, en de dominee werd weer gewoon dominee. En zelfs de kikkers werden weer normaal, want voor een kikker in Kampen te wonen is de belasting helemaal onbetaalbaar.

Politie, politie !

Niels van de Schaa was eens met z'n auto in Kampen voor wat zaken. Maar toen hij terugkwam bij z'n auto, was die weg. 'Hoe kan dat nou ?' dacht Niels. 'Ik dacht toch echt dat ie goed op slot was.' Afijn, Niels schakelde de politie in en die begonnen direkt een grootscheepse zoekactie. Dat had Niels nog nooit meegemaakt. In ieder geval was de auto snel gevonden, in een bosvijvertje, en de vissen dreven er in. Toen heeft de politie de wagen er ook nog voor Niels uitgehaald, maar ze wisten natuurlijk niet hoe de auto hier was gekomen. Op het politie-bureau kreeg Niels een glaasje en iedereen was heel vriendelijk naar hem. Zo vriendelijk, dat Niels besloot om in Kampen te gaan wonen. Waar goede politie is ... Daar ging het Niels om ... Maar al gauw werden er ook andere dingen gestolen. En dit keer vond hij ze niet terug, ondanks de vriendelijke en actieve zorg van de politie.

Op een dag wordt Niels gebeld door de politie. Hij is uitgenodigd op een politie-feest. Op het feest spreekt hij ook iemand die een boef zegt te zijn. Niels vindt dat verdacht, maar durft niks tegen de politie te zeggen, want de man beweerde ook een goede vriend van de politie te zijn. Werkt dat zo

hier ? Maar na een tijdje spreekt hij weer iemand die een dief beweert te zijn. Het schijnt dat de politie op goede voet zou staan met inbrekers. Maar nog steeds durft Niels er niets van te zeggen. Maar toen hij later oog in oog kwam te staan met degene die beweerde z'n spullen te hebben gestolen stapte Niels op de eerste de beste agent af. Maar politie beweerde vriendelijk te blijven tegen dief en slachtoffer, en dit was de beste gelegenheid om hen met elkaar te verzoenen, door een politie-feestje. Toen Niels vervolgens liet weten dat hij z'n spullen nog niet terug had, liet de politie hem weten dat dat aan het eind van de avond zou gebeuren. Niels vond dat wel een hele vreemde benadering, maar er werd gezegd dat hij hen maar moest vertrouwen, dan kwam het wel goed. Aan het eind van de avond werden de spullen van Niels op het podium gezet. Het bleek allemaal één grote grap geweest te zijn. En die inbrekers die werkten gewoon bij de politie. Niels kon de grap niet echt waarderen, want volgens hem diende de politie zich daar niet mee bezig te houden. Dat zou hen erg ongeloofwaardig maken. Maar daar was de politie het zichtbaar niet mee eens, en Niels z'n glas werd nog eens goed volgegoten. Na een tijdje begon Niels de lol er ook wel van in te zien. Maar toen kwam ineens de vrouw van Niels binnenstormen. Er bleken weer dingen uit hun huis gestolen te zijn. 'Ach, maak je maar geen zorgen,' zei Niels tegen zijn vrouw, 'dat doet de politie allemaal.' Maar dit keer bleek de politie van niks te weten, en zelfs maanden na het incident waren de gestolen spullen niet teruggevonden, ondanks de vriendelijke en actieve zorg van de politie.

Maar een jaar daarna, op het politie-feest, leek alles zich weer te herhalen. Niels kwam daar iemand tegen die beweerde die spullen gestolen te hebben, en alles zou aan het eind van de avond op het podium staan. Niels kon natuurlijk de klok er op gelijk stellen, dat er thuis weer wat gestolen zou worden, en wat hij weer een heel jaar niet meer zou zien. Maar ditmaal had Niels bewaking en alarm laten inbouwen. Aan het eind van de avond kreeg hij z'n spullen terug, plus een certificaat dat hij nu eindelijk voldeed aan de veiligheids-eisen, en dat hij zo was vrijgesproken van politie-grapjes. Die grapjes waren dus eigenlijk testjes om de mensen in Kampen te drijven tot betere maatregelen tegen diefstal. Maar Niels was dit keer echt kwaad, en verscheurde het certificaat. 'Jullie zijn niets dan dieven,' zei hij door de microfoon op het podium. 'Ik heb hier echt geen enkel respect voor, maar wel gefeliciteerd dat jullie dit jaar van m'n spullen zijn afgebleven.' Maar toen rende ineens de vrouw van Niels naar binnen : 'Niels, ons huis staat in brand,' riep ze. 'Vandaar dat ik vannochtend een uitnodiging voor het brandweers-feest heb gekregen,' zei Niels, 'maar we gaan niet, want ik heb geen zin om een hoop as op het podium terug te vinden.'

De paus van Kampen

Riet-Jan leefde onder de grond in zijn rode glitterpak en zijn vliegend paard. Hij was vroeger circus-artiest, maar dat deed hij niet meer. Hij had nu een vliegend paard, en dat was alles wat hij nodig had. 's Nachts ging hij over de daken, en kon er door de schoorsteen heen nog heel wat uitvissen. Hij deed eigenlijk hetzelfde werk als sinterklaas, maar dan net andersom. Hij steelde. Riet-Jan sliste ook een beetje. Sommigen zeiden dat hij weleens in het circus een slang had ingeslikt. Ja, Riet-Jan werkte met slangen, en soms stopte hij dan weleens een slangenkop in z'n mond om het publiek te laten zien dat hij niet beet. Maar eens schoot zo'n slang er zo diep in dat Riet-Jan hem per ongeluk doorslikte. En sindsdien sliste hij. Maar of dat echt zo was gebeurd ? Sommigen zeiden dat ze er bij waren. En lieden die hem nog wel kenden, zeiden dat hij nog steeds met slangen werkte. Soms dan hield hij ze aan de staart vast, en dan liet hij ze door de schoorsteen zakken, zodat ze wat spullen konden meehappen. Dat moesten dan wel erg lange slangen zijn, maar die had Riet-Jan volgens sommigen ook. Anderen zeiden dat Riet-Jan zelf door de schoorstenen ging, als zwarte piet, maar dan niet om iets te geven, maar om iets weg te nemen.

Riet-Jan had vroeger ook een vrouw, en men zei dat hij haar altijd door de schoorsteen liet zakken om het dievenwerk te doen. Eens bleef ze een keer in de schoorsteen steken, en toen is Riet-Jan er vandoor gegaan, op z'n vliegende paard. Ja, heus, in Kampen zijn er genoeg die dat geloven, maar anderen zeggen dat het dikke unzin is. Sommigen beweren dat Riet-Jan nooit bestaan heeft. Anderen zeggen dat hij allang dood is. Maar als er ergens 's nachts iets gestolen is, dan geleuven

nog veulen dat Riet-Jan dat heft gedaan. Het toaltje van Riet-Jan zou erg vreemd wezen, van oud kampers-ondergronds dialect. Nu zijn er wel meer vrouwen die beweerden dat zij het vriendinnetje waren van Riet-Jan, en dat hij hen alle vuile werkjes liet opknappen. Eentje beweerde dat ze in de zelfde kamer moest slapen als waar de slangen waren. Die slangen waren dan wel achter glas, maar toch. De vrouw in kwestie zou daar nog steeds nachtmerrie's van hebben. Maar niemand van hen, en ook anderen niet, zouden Riet-Jan de afgelopen twintig jaar nog gezien hebben. Wel heeft iemand eens een slang in de woonkamer gevonden, terwijl er wat spullen verdwenen waren. Had Riet-Jan z'n slang vergeten ? Niemand weet het.

Onder woonwagenbewoners wordt er nog wel veel over Riet-Jan gesproken. Voor hen was hij een held, en had hij nog nooit wat gestolen. Hij had altijd van alles over voor iedereen. En dat van die slangen was volgens hen ook niet waar, want Riet-Jan was bang voor slangen. De zigeuners van Kampen zeiden dat toen hij stierf hij onder de grond in zijn rode glitterpak en met een vliegend paard verder leefde. Dat is nu eenmaal het geloof van sommige zigeuners. Daar moeten wij verder van afblijven. Ze hebben een heleboel boeken over Riet-Jan geschreven, over al zijn heldendaden, en dat hij nu over de daken gaat met zijn vliegend paard om goede dingen aan de mensen te geven, en niet om dingen weg te jatten. Dat jatten dat liet Riet-Jan altijd aan anderen over. Nee, Riet-Jan was de goedheid zelve, een heilige der zigeuners. Ze leren hun kinderen praten, zoals Riet-Jan praatte, en ze mogen net als Riet-Jan paardrijlessen nemen. Ja, Riet-Jan wordt bij deze mensen vereerd. Maar wat zou Riet-Jan daar zelf nou allemaal van denken. Was hij wel zoals mensen hem afschilderden ? Riet-Jan hield meer van dieren dan van mensen. Hij was helemaal niet bezig met mensen. Hij zou ook nooit voor mensen over de daken gaan, maar wel om dieren te bevrijden uit hun kooitjes, om hen mee te nemen naar de rode zon, diep onder de aarde, daar waar iedereen vrij is. Aldus een dominee die zich bekeerd heeft tot de heilige sint Riet-Jan, onlangs door de kamperse paus heilig verklaard. Ja, en die kamperse paus dat is ook wat. Dat is een aap, een chimpansee. En die chimpansee wil elke dag in een pauselijk gewaad lopen, met een schaaltje heilig water, waarmee hij van alles en nog wat heilig verklaart. Zo is er laatst een stoel heilig verklaard, en ergens anders een paard.

Maar wat zou Riet-Jan hier allemaal van denken ? Riet-Jan zou de humor er wel van inzien. Want als er iets was waar Riet-Jan in geloofde, dan was het wel humor.

Tussen twee oren

Ja, het geloof, daar wordt in Kampen veel om gestreden en geleden. Zo is er dan iemand die gillend en met schuim in z'n mond de kerk zou uitrennen als een vriend van hem, die nu nog theologie studeert, de preekstoel zal beklimmen of bestijgen. Het vrije geloven, daar is men nogal bang voor, want wat zal er gebeuren als de kooitjes van die verschrikkelijke beesten open zullen gaan ? Maar een paar jaar later is het allemaal ouderwets, en maken ze zich weer over andere dingen druk. Het zware geloven van eeuwen geleden, waardoor ketters niets anders dan lucifers waren, daar wil men ook nooit meer naar terug, terwijl dat in die tijd door velen als normaal bestempeld werd. Vandaag de dag kent men het woord 'ketter' bijna niet meer, en dat is maar goed ook, want daar waar een woordenboek tot een pistool wordt, daar moet je maar ver vandaan blijven. En met een goede klok, en een goede kalender, is dat ons gelukt. Wat is er nu aan de beurt ? Hoe zit het met politiek Kampen ? Hoe zit het met de opvoeding ? Maar vaak worden er wel weer nieuwe vlakken op het gebied van het geloof gevonden. Het blijft voor velen interessant, en sommigen zien het als een prachtig oud kampers spel, zij het gemoderniseerd. Ach ja, een spelletje kan ook geen kwaad. Maar laat het ook een spelletje blijven.

Iemand die ik ken heeft een boeddhabeeld in huis staan, een prachtig beeld. Vroeger zou ik zo'n ding niet in mijn huis willen hebben, maar nu ? Vroeger kon ik ook niet tegen chinees voedsel. En soms is dat ook niet verstandig. Je moet dingen nooit forceren. Die mensen zijn zelf christelijk, en dat betekent vaak : geen boeddhist, maar soms is er een combinatie mogelijk. Na ga ik er vanuit dat deze mensen geen boeddhisten zijn, althans niet bewust. Ze kregen het beeld uit dank van een

chinees echtpaar van een chinees restaurant, omdat ze zo goed op hun zoontje hadden gepast. Wat moet je dan met zo'n beeld doen ? Als je zelf van een ander geloof bent ... Wat moet je bijvoorbeeld met een beeld van het CDA als je van de VVD bent ? Ook al heb je dat beeld gekregen ... Is dat niet het opdringen van een politieke overtuiging, of een godsdienstige overtuiging ? Of gaat deze strijd teniet in het feit dat zo'n boeddha-beeld een stuk cultuurpracht is, een stuk kunst ? Het is maar net hoe je tegen dingen aankijkt. Overigens is het boeddhisme geen geloof maar een verzameling oude wijsheden die je zouden kunnen helpen in je leven, als een stuk goede psychische steun, maar ook als een stuk ethiek. Het staat misschien net tussen politiek en godsdienst in. Nu weet ik niet of boeddha verder wel of niet 'in' is in Kampen, en dat kan me ook niet zoveel schelen eigenlijk, want wijsheid kan komen in allerlei vormen, en door allerlei deuren. Het gaat nog steeds niet om de verpakking, maar om wat er inzit. Nu kan een ongelovige speelgoedhandelaar nog wel boeddhistischer zijn dan een door zichzelf erkende boeddha-specialist uit het verre oosten. Naamkaartjes hebben me nooit zoveel gezegd, alhoewel het op sommige gezette tijden misschien interessant lijkt.

Nu is die man van dat boeddhabeeld overigens ook speelgoedhandelaar geweest, maar niet ongelovig. Ik kan me nog herinneren dat mijn moeder eens in zijn speelgoedzaak een bijbel kocht, tegen een belachelijk hoge prijs overigens, maar dat doet nu niet ter zake. Ik vind het zelf wel een mooie combinatie. De bijbel is ook maar een stuk speelgoed. De bijbel kan ook zomaar ineens afgeprijst liggen bij de Aldi. Dat moet allemaal kunnen. Voor mij mogen ze in de speelgoedwinkel ook wel boeddha-beelden verkopen, en misschien gebeurt dat al wel ergens. Het moet gewoon liggen tussen de andere spelletjes, zodat het niet terecht komt tussen de bommen en granaten van een of andere oosterse kelder. Vanuit het oosten zijn wij meegenomen, daar liggen ergens onze harten, alhoewel onze lichamen in Nederland zijn. Of we nu christelijk, boeddhistisch of allebei zijn, deze beide stromingen komen uit het Oosten. Maar waar geloofden onze Kamperse voorouders dan in ? Ons eigen geloof was het Germaanse geloof, het oorspronkelijke Nederlandse geloof, voor de christelijke invasie. Het was eigenlijk hetzelfde, maar er werden misschien hier en daar andere accenten gelegd. Het was hetzelfde, maar in verschillende taal. Om nog even op die speelgoed-handelaar terug te komen. Ik herinner me ook dat we daar eens van die krasplaatjes kregen. Mijn broertje kreeg een krasplaat van de indianen, en ik kreeg een krasplaat van de romeinen. Die moesten overigens allemaal nare dingen doen om hun goden gunstig te stemmen. Nu, eeuwen later zeggen we : Allemaal onzin, maar je zou het in die tijd maar eens te licht opvatten allemaal. Vaak is de tijd en de plaats waar je leeft een gevangenis, en kun je soms niet anders dan met de stroom meegaan.

De speelgoedzaak van die man is failliet gegaan, terwijl het chinese restaurant wat naast hem zat natuurlijk wel doordraait. Het Germaanse geloof is hoofdzakelijk opzij gestapt door het christelijk geloof. Blijkbaar trekt het oosterse ons meer dan ons eigen speelgoed. En dan bij zulk boerenvolk in Kampen, waar ze vaak zeggen : 'Wat de boer niet kent, dat vret ie niet.' Maar het oosten is inmiddels al zo ingeburgerd. Eerlijk waar, als ik de hanzewijk binnenkom, dan denk ik dat ik in Turkije ben. En dat heus niet alleen om de vele turken die daar wonen. Ik vind het allemaal wel best. Het oosten heeft voor vele eeuwen al z'n plaats in Kampen gevonden, en dat bewijzen de vele kerken wel, want dat was eens allemaal oosterse import. Weten wij wel wat wij naar binnen hebben gehaald ? We moesten wel, want we werden bedreigd met het zwaard. We zijn niet voor niets vroeger zo lang Katholiek geweest. En sinds Maarten Luther kwam, gingen een aantal over op de reformatie, omdat ze verlost wilden zijn van het in die tijd levensgevaarlijke katholicisme. Terug willen we niet meer, maar vooruit ? Of hebben we het beloofde land al gevonden ? Sommigen wel, en ik vind dat je vooral ouderen die fantasie moet gunnen. Fantasie is goed voor de botten.

Ach, natuurlijk is de wetenschap er laatst achtergekomen dat naast politiek ook godsdienst tussen je oren zit. Het is een bepaald hormoon. Maar wat dan nog ? Je bent wel je hele leven lang gedoemd om tussen die twee oren te leven. Laat iedereen nou maar tussen z'n eigen twee oren gaan leven.

Achterstevoren gedraaid

Mijn opa, een oude kampenaar, was een humoristische man, evenals mijn oma. Bij mijn andere opa en oma durfte ik toen ik klein was nooit te logeren, omdat daar de televisie geen hoofdrol speelde. Bij die humoristische opa en oma dus wel, en daar was de televisie dus een waardig lid van de familie. En zo hoort het ook, als het ding maar een knop heeft. Helaas hebben mensen zo'n knop niet op hun kop, en dat maakt het lastiger. Als er een hemel bestaat, dan hoop ik dus dat God daar wel schepselen heeft lopen die allemaal zo'n knop hebben, anders word het mij gevaarlijk. Maar goed er is één manier om zelfs iets met een knop als gevaarlijk te moeten bestempelen, en dat is wanneer er verslaving in het spel is. Ik denk dat mijn broertje en ik vroeger echt televisie-ziek waren. Wij kenden de televisie-gids uit onze hoofden, en als de televisie kapot was, of om de een of andere reden niet aanmocht, dan waren we echt ziek. Zelfs naar bed gaan was om die reden gewoon een kwelling, al die prachtige televisie-programma's die we moesten missen. Mijn opa keek vaak naar Laurel en Hardy en allerlei Duitse programma's, en soms kom ik nog wel eens mensen tegen die gewoon liever naar Duitse televisie kijken. Ik kan me herinneren dat ik vroeger ook wel veel naar Duitsland keek. Maar toen ik zelf Duits moest leren was dat een complete ramp. Ik had namelijk les van een begrafenis-ondernemer, en die keek me na een repetitie altijd aan alsof ik aan de beurt was. Alhoewel ik nu veel schrijf in Engels, was Engels leren voor mij vroeger ook een complete ramp, en eigenlijk om dezelfde reden als met Duits : Ik kreeg les van begrafenis-ondernemers. Dat ze die gasten bij ons op school aannamen is mij nog steeds een compleet raadsel. Dat mijn vader hen zulke aardige mensen vond, is natuurlijk makkelijk gezegd. Dat kan ik natuurlijk ook heel makkelijk zeggen van zijn begrafenis-ondernemers. Ik had het gevoel dat mijn broertje - eerst een klas lager dan mij, later een klas hoger - zich daar altijd wel goed doorheen schopte. Ik denk dat hij wat beter kon onderhandelen dan ik, omkopen enzo. En hij is dan ook een onderhandelaar geworden. Laatst werd ik door één van mijn oude begrafenis-ondernemers gebeld. Ik heb een heel goed gesprek met hem gehad, en dat maakte veel goed, maar ja, ik heb makkelijk praten, want hij is mijn begrafenis-ondernemer niet meer. Het mooie was dat ik van hem later een boek kreeg dat over leven na de dood ging.

Ik kreeg ook wel les van lui die niets met begrafenis-ondernemingen te maken hadden. Zo zat er eentje tussen die mij met een HAVO-diploma uit school heeft gesmokkeld. Maar waar ik toen terecht kwam ? Dat wil je niet weten. Ik heb theologie gestudeerd om van mijn godsdiensttrauma af te komen, om mijn familie beter te begrijpen, en om te leren hoe ik koffie moest zetten. Want daar op die theologische school werd me toch een koffie gezopen. Maar even voor de duidelijkheid : Je komt echt niet van een theologisch trauma af door naar een theologische school te gaan, hoor. Het werd er alleen maar erger op. Het is ook heus niet voor je geloofsrust, want als er ergens oorlog wordt gevoerd dan is het daar. En ik maar denken dat ik mijn dienstplicht was ontvlucht. Ik werd opgeleid tot soldaat, om met de bijbel anderen in de pan te rammen. En toen ik dat pakkie niet wilde, verklaarden ze mij de oorlog. Dus ik vluchten naar een andere theologische school, waar ze me nog niet kenden, maar daar gebeurde hetzelfde. Dus ik denken : Die God is de god van de oorlog, Mars verkleed als Jezus Christus ... Maar daarna dacht ik : Dat is helemaal niet waar, het heeft allemaal te maken met belasting. Ja, hoe ik daar op kwam weet ik niet meer, maar ik begon er op een andere manier tegenaan te kijken. Mensen worden niet altijd alleen maar naar van oorlog, en oorlog is niet de enige oorzaak van het elkaar-in-de-haren-vliegen. Het had iets te maken met de belastingdienst en de verzekering. En we weten allemaal wel dat we allemaal daar onze eigen gedachtes over hebben.

Maar toen zat ik te denken : Kan dat gedoe niet weggewerkt of gladgestreken worden door goed te onderhandelen ? Ik denk dat mijn broertje - die ik nu moet zien als broer, omdat hij op een gegeven moment een klas hoger zat dan mij - dit allemaal zag aankomen, en daardoor econoom is geworden. Maar goed, ik heb wel eens flinke ruzie met mijn leraar economie gehad. Dan denk je : Die economen dat zijn allemaal van die vredelievende mensen. Economie kan soms uit de hand lopen. We moeten wel het spel eerlijk spelen, en de touwtjes goed weten te vieren, zoals ik altijd tegen mijn broertjes en zusje zei : 'One for you, and one for me'. Dat zinnetje had ik eens opgestoken uit

een sprookjesfilm, en dat had te maken met geld. Alles draait om geld, of je het nu gelooft of niet. We kunnen het maar het beste eerlijk delen om veel gemieter te voorkomen. Ga spelletjes doen, zoals mijn vader, die sportleraar is geworden, dat is veel beter dan mekaar echt serieus de hersens in rammen.

Ja, ook ik heb bij de psychiater gezeten, en weleens gedacht : Is dit het nieuwe geloof ? Meid, wat jij allemaal uitkraamt zit ook maar gewoon tussen jouw oren. Je bent net zoveel mens als ieder ander, en we moeten allemaal zien te overleven hier, in zoveel onzin. Nu heb ik haar verhalen zo'n beetje allemaal op cassette staan, en ook van mijn oud-leraren, en ik heb ze na al die jaren eens achterstevoren laten draaien. Ik hoorde de meest wonderbaarlijke dingen, en ik dacht : 'Gelukkig, is het toch nog ergens goed voor geweest.'

Mijn moeder

Velen denken mijn moeder te kennen, maar dan kijk ik ze altijd een beetje scheef aan. Mijn moeder is niet te kennen. Dat doe je niet zomaar even op een doordeweekse dag. Je kunt het ook niet zomaar even in een geschiedenisboekje optekenen. Ik heb mij lange tijd afgevraagd : Wie is mijn moeder eigenlijk ? In meerdere betekenissen. Ik heb weleens nachtmerries gehad, dat er ineens een jaguarachtig figuur voor me stond, die zei : 'Help me, ik ben je moeder.' Nu geloof ik niet in nachtmerries, of dromen, maar deze nachtmerrie wilde ik voor de zekerheid toch even een kans geven, want stel dat dit er op duidde dat iemand anders mijn echte moeder zou zijn, ja, dan had ze echt hulp nodig, want ik ben niet één van de makkelijksten. Mijn huidige moeder die komt er wel doorheen, want die zingt in een koor, en samen sta je sterk. Nu, dat is natuurlijk onzin, want samen kun je ook finaal de vernieling ingaan. Soms denk ik weleens dat als reincarnatie bestaat, dan was ik in mijn vorig leven misschien wel een jaguar. In ieder geval die nachtmerrie is me altijd bijgebleven. Ook al geloof ik niet in voortekenen en natekenen, het is me toch bijgebleven als iets wat me dierbaarder is dan wat in mijn leven dan ook. Je zal toch maar eens meerdere moeders hebben. Mijn huidige vader en moeder zouden hiervan in de knoop kunnen raken, maar ze kennen mij zo langzamerhand wel, dat ik niet voor een gat te vangen ben. Maar het kan voor hen misschien ook een opluchting zijn, zo van : 'Gelukkig, dan staan we er niet alleen voor.' En dat is ook zo. Ik heb zelfs hier op aarde veel ondersteuningen. Mensen die ik mijn tweede vader en moeder noem, en mijn derde vader en moeder.

Maar nu denk ik dus weleens : Wie heeft het nu over reincarnatie ? Misschien heeft dat er wel helemaal niets mee te maken, want, bijvoorbeeld : Wie heeft onze ziel in ons lichaampje gedrukt, toen we in de buik van onze moeder zaten ? Is het niet één of andere schakelketting ? Misschien een engel, misschien God, of misschien een ander geesteswezen. Ik kan me herinneren dat ik een andere nachtmerrie had, waar een andere moeder me probeerde te bereiken, maar ze kon het niet. Ze was te ver weg. Soms leken die figuren wel een beetje op mijn eigen moeder. Waarom ? Ik weet het niet. Of ik dat wat vaders betreft ook gehad heb ? Ja, soms. En met broertjes, en met het zusje ? Ook. Daar kan ik heel kort in zijn.

Maar goed, we hadden het over mijn moeder. Misschien is mijn moeder op aarde wel het kruispunt van al mijn andere moeders, als de optelsom. Ik weet het niet. Misschien dat dit de verklaring is waarom ze allemaal een beetje op elkaar leken. De geschiedenis komt dan toch misschien weer samen in het heden. Ik denk trouwens dat de televisie altijd mijn co-moeder is geweest, plus de radio. Dat was altijd een goede aanvulling. En het voordeel was dus dat er een knop opzat. Mijn moeder is trouwens altijd best rustig geweest. Mijn vader ook. Ik was vroeger druk, en werd steeds rustiger, maar soms heb ik uitbarstingen. Ik voel mij als een vulkaan. Die uitbarstingen zie ik als creativiteit en activiteit. Ik heb boeken geschreven op allerlei gebied, geschilderd, les gegeven, van alles en nog wat. Mijn moeder is tekstschrijfster van een wereldberoemde band, en mijn vader is dus sportleraar en duiker. Hij werkt met haaien, en maakt documentaires, en nog veel meer. Hij wil dat de mensen eens weten wat haaien nu precies zijn, zonder alle vooroordelen. Ik heb zelf een paar boeken over haaien geschreven, of liever gezegd, waar ze in voorkomen. Misschien wel om mijn

angst voor die dieren te overwinnen. Ik heb een voorliefde voor ze, maar ik ben bang voor ze. En sommige mensen zeggen dat dat maar goed ook is, want ze zouden je kunnen opvreten. Ja, ik heb zo ook m'n fobieen. Eén ding wat mijn vader van haaien geleerd heeft is niet zoveel praten, maar doen. En soms gewoon net doen alsof je doof bent.

Mijn angsten zijn vaak ook mijn obsessies. Ik heb dat ook met slangen en grote vogels. Beiden ben ik weleens tegengekomen, en dat had natuurlijk verkeerd kunnen aflopen. Maar wat zou ik graag met die beesten willen vliegen en kronkelen. Was ik maar Peter Pan. Ik ben te bang voor ze. Ik kan er alleen maar over dromen. Voor hen zijn mensen natuurlijk erg gevaarlijk. Ik ben gevaarlijk voor hen, terwijl ik hen nooit kwaad zou doen. Misschien is deze tijd op aarde een tijd voor mij om hen dat te bewijzen. Misschien dat er een dag gaat komen, waarin ze mij meenemen op hun reis, en dat zij niet bang hoeven te zijn voor mij, en ik niet voor hen. Ik zie echt uit naar die dag. Zo'n dag kun je niet forceren. Je ziet mij niet zomaar ineens met haaien zwemmen. Maar goed, we hadden het over mijn moeder. Mijn moeder, dat kan van alles zijn. Je wordt elke dag een beetje geboren. Dat kan door een televisie-programma, door een mooi lied, door een kaartje of een schilderij, of gewoon iets waaraan je denkt. Ik zou wel in mijn dromen willen geloven, maar soms heb ik er gewoon de kracht niet voor. Dan ben ik te bang dat ik gebakken lucht volg. Ik wil niet ergens in geloven om iets te geloven. Ik wil mezelf niet voor de gek houden, maar ik wil mezelf ook niks onthouden. Laatst was er een zanger op de televisie die zij dat gek zijn verkoopt. Gek is goed. En toen dacht ik : Ja, eigenlijk heeft hij gelijk. We zijn allemaal zo bang om voor de gek gehouden te worden, maar eigenlijk is het maar beter, want waar zouden we anders terecht zijn gekomen ?

We moeten het maar doen, mamma, met onze idiote verhalen. We moeten roeien met de riemen die we hebben. We moeten het maar doen, met dat wat ze ons verteld hebben, wat onze voorouders ons hebben meegegeven, want meer kregen we niet. We moeten het maar doen met onze fantasie, als een geschenk uit de hemel, met de kleine stukjes puzzel die we kregen, want alles in één keer, dat zouden we niet kunnen verdragen. En zeg nou zelf, mamma, dat wat ze vroeger 'gek' noemden, dat staat nu te pronken in onze musea als kunst, waar mensen zich aan vasthouden, waarvan ze kunnen zeggen : Dit hebben onze mamma's en pappa's bereikt. We moeten het er maar mee doen, mamma. Het is niet veel, maar het is een stap vooruit.

Te Leven in Amsterdam

Een serie korte verhalen

1. De Wonderjongens

Een oude man in Amsterdam verkocht fietsen. De fietsen waren zo wonderlijk dat vanuit het hele land kinderen met hun ouders er op af kwamen. De man was als een tovenaar. De fietsen waren zo wonderlijk dat door een bepaalde manier van fietsen je ermee kon vliegen.

Een paar jongens waren er zo goed in dat ze er helemaal mee naar het strand konden vliegen. Op het strand was een vrouwtje dat ijsjes verkocht. De ijsjes waren zo bijzonder dat je ermee over de zee kon vliegen. De jongens kochten een ijsje en gingen de zee over. Hun fietsen namen ze niet mee, want dat zou nooit lukken. Maar de ijsjes waren voor het echte werk. De jongens vlogen naar Amerika, en bouwden hun eigen stad. Maar na een tijdje verlangden ze terug naar hun oude land.

Zou de fietsenverkoper er nog steeds zijn, en het vrouwtje met de ijsjes ? Maar toen ze teruggingen was er een grote oorlog in het land, en van Amsterdam was er niks meer overgebleven. Daarom besloten ze Amsterdam opnieuw te bouwen. En het werd de wonderlijkste stad van het land.

2. Het Vrouwtje dat de Zieken Genas

Er was eens een vrouwtje in Amsterdam die hele wonderlijke lampen verkocht. De lampen verspreidden een zacht paars licht wat ernstig zieken kon genezen. Het vrouwtje verrichtte grote wonderen door haar lampen, maar op een dag was ze verdwenen. Niemand wist waar ze was. Er werden geen lampen meer gemaakt sinds het vrouwtje was verdwenen. De lampen die er waren werden onbetaalbaar duur, en families vochten erom.

Na vele jaren kwam het vrouwtje terug. Het bleek dat ze bij familie was in het buitenland. Ze was erg verdrietig over de situatie in Amsterdam, en begon weer lampen te maken. Ditmaal waren ze nog wonderlijker dan ooit. Zelfs de doden stonden op door de lampen. Ook vanuit het buitenland was er grote interesse. Op een dag werd het vrouwtje ontvoerd. Ze werd meegenomen door rovers, en ze moest ergens in een duistere grot werken. Maar haar familie zorgde ervoor dat er een speciaal leger werd opgesteld om haar te zoeken. Uiteindelijk vonden ze haar, en brachten haar terug naar Amsterdam. Vanaf die dag leefden er soldaten in haar huis en in haar winkel. Van schrik durfde ze geen wonderlijke spullen meer te verkopen, en vanaf toen verkocht ze alleen nog oude tweedehandse spullen, maar de magie is altijd bij het vrouwtje gebleven.

3. De Bakkerij

Er was eens een oude bakker in Amsterdam. Hij maakte poppen van brood en bracht ze tot leven. Over de hele wereld werden de poppen goed verkocht. Maar het gebeurde vaak dat zulke poppen ontsnapten en in het bos gingen leven. Op een dag zocht de oude bakker zulke poppen op, en probeerde hen naar Amsterdam terug te lokken. ‘We willen alleen terug als we in uw bakkerij mogen werken, en u ons niet doorverkoopt.’ En zo gebeurde het. Maar sommige mensen zouden de poppen graag willen kopen, en boden er veel geld voor. De oude bakker hield zijn belofte. Maar op een dag vluchtten de poppen weer naar het bos. Na een tijdje kwam de oude bakker hen opzoeken. Ze leefden in een grot nu. ‘Wat als je nu eens bij ons komt wonen,’ zeiden de poppen. ‘We willen

niet meer terug, want de mensen zeuren altijd.’

‘Wat als ik jullie nu eens muziek-instrumenten geef,’ zei de bakker. ‘Kom je dan met me mee terug, dan heb je geen last meer van het gezeur.’ En zo gebeurde het. De poppen kwamen terug, maar al gauw vonden de mensen het geen gehoor, en weer gingen de poppen terug naar het bos.

Nog eenmaal ging de bakker terug naar de poppen, en beloofde hen ditmaal de wonderlijkste voertuigen, zodat ze overal naartoe konden waar ze maar wilden. De poppen gingen met de bakker mee, de bakker gaf hen hun voertuigen, en niemand zag hen ooit terug.

Koeiendorp

De Koeienbezem

Bertha Koe heeft iets verzonnen. In het koeiendorp laat ze het zien. Ze is voor haar huisje gaan staan, met een heleboel bezempjes, die ze binnen in haar huisje heeft gemaakt. Het zijn geen gewone bezems, maar bezems met een heleboel onopgeblazen ballonnetjes aan het uiteinde. Als ze ze over de grond laat strijken, dan maakt het zo'n mooi geluid, om de stilte te verjagen. De koeien staan voor haar bezems in de rij, maar de bezems zijn nogal duur. 'Wat een schande,' zegt Bert Koe, 'maar ik koop er wel eentje, want de stilte bij mij in huis is soms onverdraagbaar.' 'Ik neem er ook één,' zegt Klara Koe, 'want als mijn man weg is, dan voel ik mij zo alleen, en alleen al als ik die bezem zie, dan vrolijkt het me op. Het is een èchte feestbezem.' En daar kwam Piet de Koe al aanlopen. 'Zeg, wat is dat hier allemaal ? Zijn jullie wel goed bij je hoofd ? Daar kun je toch niets mee schoonmaken ?' 'Ach man,' zegt Bertus Varken, 'dat hoeft toch ook helemaal niet, het is een feestbezem, om de saaiheid mee te verjagen.' 'Ach,' zegt Piet de Koe weer, 'jullie zijn niet goed wijs, die saaiheid is niks erg hoor. Ik houd wel een beetje van stilte.' Maar daar had Bertha Koe wel wat voor : Een bezem zonder ballonnetjes aan het uiteinde. 'Ziezo,' zei Bertha, 'deze is voor jou, en je mag hem gratis hebben.'

Eerlijk Alles Delen

Daar loopt Mina Koe. Ze is op weg naar Truida Koe, om daar op visite te gaan. Truida Koe heeft de koffie al gezet, en er is ook een stuk gebak bij. Als Mina Koe

aanbelt, snelt Truida Koe snel naar de deur. 'Dag Mina Koe,' zegt Truida Koe. 'Dag Truida Koe,' zegt Mina Koe. 'Ik heb de koffie al klaarstaan,' zegt Truida Koe. Na een tijdje wordt er weer aangebeld. Het is de burgemeester, Jaap Varken. Truida Koe doet snel open. 'Komt u maar snel binnen, burgemeester. De koffie is wel op, maar er is nog wel een gebakje,' zegt Truida Koe. Daar loopt Jaap Varken naar binnen. 'Dag Mina Koe,' zegt de burgemeester. 'Dag burgemeester,' zegt Mina Koe. Truida Koe geeft het gebakje aan de burgemeester. 'Maar,' zegt Mina Koe, 'ik dacht dat dat gebakje voor mij was ?' Truida Koe schudt met haar hoofd, en ook de burgemeester begint met zijn hoofd te schudden. 'Jij hebt de koffie, hij krijgt het gebak,' zegt Truida Koe. 'Waarom krijgen we dan niet ieders de helft, dan krijgt hij de laatste helft van mijn koffie,' zegt Mina Koe weer. Maar dan staat de burgemeester op en smijt het gebakje in het gezicht van Mina Koe. 'Hier heb je je gebakje,' zegt de burgemeester, en loopt naar buiten. 'Zie nou wat je gedaan hebt,' klaagt Truida Koe. 'Je hebt de burgemeester weggejaagd.' En snel rent Truida Koe met het laatste beetje koffie achter de burgemeester aan. 'Burgemeester, als ik mag vragen, waar kwam u eigenlijk voor ?' vraagt Truida Koe. 'Oh,' zegt de burgemeester, 'ik kwam om u een bekeuring te geven, omdat u het wasgoed op zondag buiten hebt laten hangen.' 'En van wie hebt u dat vernomen ?' vraagt Truida Koe weer. 'Dat heb ik gehoord van Mina Koe.' Plats, daar smijt Truida Koe het laatste beetje koffie in het gezicht van de burgemeester. Nou ja, het laatste beetje ? Een klein restje is natuurlijk nog voor iemand anders, plats, voor Mina Koe. Nou, dat was nog eens een gezellige verjaardag, zeg. Gelukkig dat een koe niet elke dag jarig is. Ze vieren het maar eens per week.

De Auto-diefstal

Menno Koe loopt op straat. Alles schijnt vandaag mis te gaan. Menno is boos. Zijn auto is gestolen. Inmiddels zitten de twee dieven gezellig in de auto. Het zijn Manus Koe en Evert Koe. Ze zijn al helemaal in het bos aangekomen. Maar na een tijdje valt de motor uit. Evert Koe stapt naar buiten, en probeert de auto weer aan de praat te krijgen. Maar niks helpt. 'zie je nou wel,' zegt Manus Koe, 'dat is ons verdiende loon.' In de verte komt Menno Koe aanlopen. 'Wat doen jullie daar met mijn auto,' schreeuwt Menno Koe. 'We zijn je auto aan het uitlaten. We vonden dat hij veel te lang ongebruikt bleef staan, en dat vonden wij erg zielig,' zei Evert Koe. 'Ja ja,' zei Menno Koe, 'en dan nog grapjes hebben ook. Kom maar met me mee naar het politie-bureau.' 'Ach toe nou,' zegt Evert Koe, 'je kan ook niet tegen een grapje.' 'Dit is geen grapje,' zegt Menno Koe ernstig, 'dit is diefstal.' En daar kwamen twee politie-agenten aanlopen. Het waren Karel Koe en Nelis Varken. 'Zeg, wat doen jullie nog zo laat op straat ?' vragen de agenten. 'Ze hebben mijn auto gejat,' zegt Menno Koe, 'en nu hebben ze auto-pech.' 'Dat wordt dan een nacht slapen op cel,' zegt Nelis Varken. 'Komen jullie maar direkt mee, en Menno Koe, wij zullen wel even een monteur sturen.' En na een tijdje kwam de monteur, Ed Koe. 'Zo Menno Koe,' zei Ed Koe, 'we zullen er even naar gaan kijken.' Maar Ed Koe kon er niets aan vinden. En toen nam Ed Koe hem mee achter zijn eigen auto. Menno Koe is erg verdrietig. 'Ach, weet je wat,' zei Ed Koe, 'ik wil hem wel van je overkopen voor een zacht prijsje.' Maar Ed Koe gaf hem er zo weinig voor dat Menno Koe er nog geen zak kauwgomballen van kon kopen. 'Ja, Menno Koe, meer is hij echt niet meer waard.' Nou ja, dacht Menno

Koe, dat is in ieder geval beter dan niks. En wat heb je aan een auto die het niet doet. De volgende dag zag Menno Koe Ed Koe de hele tijd in de verkochte auto rondrijden. 'Zeg Ed Koe,' vraagt Menno Koe, 'ik dacht dat de auto het niet meer deed.' 'Ach,' zei Ed Koe, 'de benzine was gewoon op.'

Varkensdorp

De Terugbetaling

Dina Varken loopt op de straat. Ze is op weg naar de bakker. Daar komt ze Dries Varken tegen. 'Ik krijg nog geld van je,' zegt Dries Varken. 'Hoeveel ?' vraagt Dina Varken. En Dina geeft hem het geld. Een tijdje later komt Dries Varken Bernard Varken tegen. 'Ik krijg nog geld van je,' zegt Dries Varken. En Bernard Varken geeft hem het geld. Bij de bakker aangekomen staat er een hele rij varkens. En Dries Varken zegt dat hij van allemaal nog geld krijgt. Snel geven ze het hem. Dan komt Dina Varken binnen, en vraagt waarom hij eigenlijk nog geld van haar kreeg. Maar dan draait Dries Varken zich naar de bakker toe en zegt : 'Ik krijg nog geld van je.' Bibberend vraagt de bakker hoeveel. Maar het bedrag dat Dries Varken dan opzegt heeft hij niet in zijn hele bakkerij. 'Nou, betaal me dan maar verder uit in broodjes,' zegt Dries Varken. En Dries Varken begint direkt de broodjes uit te delen, en keert zich weer tot Dina Varken, en zegt : 'Alsjeblieft, hier heb je je broodje, en daarom kreeg ik nog geld van je.'

Het Paard van Hilversum

‘Maar ik dan ?’ vroeg Piebertje. ‘Mag ik niet mee naar dat zwemfestijn vanavond ?’

‘Nee,’ zei vadertje Borg terwijl hij zijn pijp aanstak, ‘want dat is niks voor piebertjes.’ Piebertje droomde er al een hele tijd van om een koffie-automaat te zijn. Dan mocht ze in ieder geval mee. De kinderen op school plaagden haar altijd de dag na het zwemfestijn, want zij was er immers niet geweest. Tja, dat heb je als je een piebertje bent. En dan plaagden ze haar over al die mooie lichtjes

die zij hadden gezien, en dan zeiden ze altijd : ‘Haha, jij moet lekker wachten totdat je groter bent. Wij hebben dit allemaal al.’ En dan begonnen ze ineens heel erg interessant te doen over de dingen die zij allemaal al wisten en konden, en dan voelde Piebertje zich ineens zo klein en nutteloos. Vaak rende ze dan huilend naar binnen naar de juffrouw die haar dan troostte met een reep chocola, want tja, dat was alleen voor piebertjes weggelegd. Volkomen aandacht en troost van de juffrouws. En daarom waren de koffie-automaten van de zesde klas altijd zo verschrikkelijk jaloers op piebertje, en wilden ze vaak dat ze nog gewoon piebertjes waren.

Marjon stond op van een vreemde droom. Ze had een reepje ‘Pandorgiomum’ naast haar liggen, een sleutel tot het vliegveld. Ja, want vandaag zou ze gaan vliegen. Niemand wist waar naartoe, maar zij van het Explanaut vliegveld in Hilversum wisten er alles van. Met kloppend hart kleedde ze zich aan. Het reepje was van een blauwe kleur, en sinds ze het geschenk van haar oma had uitgepakt en het reepje van z’n wikkel verloste, ziende dat het een blauw reepje was, was haar wereld ineens te klein en uitbundig, uitbundig wachtend op het grote moment van het in ontvangst nemen van de prijs : een reisje vanuit Hilversum. Het was op het nieuws al de hele tijd. Zij die een blauw reepje in een wikkel zouden vinden, wanneer zij een Pandorgiomum aanschaften hadden geluk, want ….

In ieder geval was zij nu de geluksvogel, en rende naar het Explanaut vliegveld in Hilversum. Grote machines stonden daar die een dorpje alleen met kerstmis en kermis bezochten. ‘Ha ha ha,’ lachte Marjon. Ze liet haar wikkel wapperen en gaf het blauwe reepje aan de sergeant. ‘Wat zullen we nou beleven,’ zei de sergeant. ‘Even de chef roepen.’

Daar kwam de chef aan, een dikke man met flaporen. Hij was ook wel ‘de kok’ van het Hilversumse vliegveld, en in zijn vrije tijd was hij banketbakker. Op zaterdagavond verkleedde zich hij zich weleens als dominee, om de stad in te gaan om flink wat paniek te zaaien, maar toen hij Marjon zag vertederde hij direct. Zijn hart smolt, vooral toen hij de blauwe reep Pandorgiomum zag.

‘Jottems,’ schreeuwde hij. ‘Jottems.’ Hij nam het reepje in zijn hand, en begon te eten. ‘Chocola, chocola, blauwe chocola, eindelijk ben je daar. Zolang op je gewacht na een koude nacht.’ Marjon was blij, en hij nam haar mee naar zijn kantoor. ‘Zie hier, het paard van Hilversum,’ zei de chef. Een harig paard staarde Marjon aan. Marjon maakte een kleine buiging, en toen zette de chef haar op het beest. ‘Paa Paa zal je daar wel naar toe brengen, naar dat vliegtuig gebeuren. Ach, zo veilig mogelijk, want het zijn eigenlijk machines die je zo over de zee heen tillen. Ze kunnen niet neerstorten, weet je wel. Ze zijn veilig op Hilversum aangesloten.’

Het was een blijde dag voor Marjon, en die avond ging ze tevreden slapen.

De volgende dag dacht ze nog steeds na over haar Hilversumse gebeurtenis, vooral over Paa Paa, het paard van Hilversum. Zoveel ridders hadden dit paard bereden, en nu was zij zelf ook zo’n gebeurtenis rijker. Paa Paa had haar toegefluisterd dat hij haar nog wel eens zou bezoeken. En zo gebeurde het ook. Een warme band begon te ontstaan tussen het paard van Hilversum en Marjon. Veel van haar klasgenoten benijdden haar daar over, maar anderen waren blij voor haar, vooral de meester.

‘Zeg, Marjon, waarom vertel je ons er niet gewoon meer over ?’ vroeg hij op een dag. En toen

besloot Marjon wat dia’s erover te laten zien. Allemaal dia’s van die mooie dag, en dia’s van andere bezoekjes van het paard. Het kon niet uitblijven natuurlijk.

Het Oorlogs-spel

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De Imker

Bij mijn tante was er een land octopus geconstateerd,
in haar huis, in de keuken om precies te zijn. Een
land octopus kan ook gewoon op land leven. Het was
een witte. Het is bekend van de land octopus dat het
gif spuit met z'n tentakels, en als iemand geraakt wordt
dan heeft zo iemand het gevoel dat hij de krant leest,
en sterft dan even later, of raakt voor de rest van z'n leven
verlamd. Coma's zijn ook mogelijk. Ook kan de land
octopus steken met zijn tentakels, en het is bekend dat hij
zo eitjes kan leggen in degene die wordt gestoken, zowel
in mens als dier. Niet om op de koffie uit te nodigen dus.
Mijn tante durfde de keuken niet meer in. Ik ging er
naartoe, en toen ik in de achterhal was kon ik zo de
keuken inkijken, en daar zat de witte land octopus op een
tafeltje, te blazen. Toen hij mij zag krijste het ding. Ik
was in mijn imker pak gekomen voor het geval hij zou
spuiten, steken of bijten. Plotseling sprong hij hevig
krijsend op mijn helm, en probeerde er een gat in te
steken. Hij begon allemaal te tikken. Ik greep hem met
mijn handschoen, waarin hij toen probeerde te bijten.
Ik voelde me heel vies, en had allerlei drangen om te

poepen en te plassen. Ik had allerlei beelden in mijn hoofd van toiletten en alsof ik de krant las. Ook had ik overgeef neigingen. Mijn tante voelde haarzelf al jaren misselijk. Het scheen dat de land octopus al die tijd bij haar onder het huis had geleefd, maar had zich nu boven de grond vertoond en had het gemunt op mijn tante, die toen gelukkig tijdig kon ontkomen. Het beest begon als een bezetene inkt te spuiten. Ze worden daarom ook wel krant octopussen genoemd. Hij probeerde mij onder hypnose te brengen. Met mijn andere hand pakte ik een nijptang. Er was een vreemd uitsteeksel aan de onderkant van het beest, zijn geslachtsorgaan. Het orgaan trilde van woede. Ik besloot het te amputeren, want dit beest was hondsdol en levensgevaarlijk. Ik moest snel zijn, want ik had het gevoel dat het beest me probeerde in te nemen. Ik wist niet hoe lang mijn imker pak er nog tegen bestand zou zijn, maar ik voelde dat het beest gebruik maakte van de zwakke plekken ervan. Ik bedacht me geen moment. Ik zette de knijpers van de nijptang tegen het geslachtsdeel aan, en zette er druk op om het vervolgens met draaiende bewegingen los te wrikken. Op dat moment kwam mijn tante binnen, en ik liet haar het geamputeerde geslachtsdeel zien. Het was als een heel vreemd uitwendig

kliertje, en ik hield het zo voor haar neus. 'Ruik er eens aan,' zei ik. Ze deed het.
'Bah, wat smerig,' zei ze.
'Dit beest laat ieder mens hetzelfde denken, door zijn vermogen van groeps-hypnose,' zei ik. 'Daarom noemen ze het ook wel een krant octopus.' Mijn tante knikte.
'Hoe voel je je nu ?' vroeg ik aan haar.
'Nog een beetje duizelig,' zei ze.
Het beest hing slap in mijn hand. 'Het ding heeft hier flink lopen klieren,' zei ik.
'Ik weet het,' zei mijn tante.
'Het is een wonder dat je nog leeft,' zei ik. 'Hij heeft hier zo lang onder de grond gewoond.'
'Ik was doodziek,' zei mijn tante.
Daar kwam ook het hondje van mijn tante. Ik wierp het kleine, vreemde geslachtsdeeltje van de krant octopus zo naar hem toe, en hij slokte het meteen op.
'Dat kan geen kwaad ?' vroeg mijn tante.
'Nee,' zei ik.
'Wat doen we met de land octopus zelf ?' vroeg mijn tante.
'Die gaat mee naar het laboratorium voor verder onderzoek,' zei ik.
Ik stopte het slapgeworden beest in een zak, en vertrok toen

snel. Mijn tante belde me even later. 'Is alles goed nu ?' vroeg ze.
'Nee,' zei ik. 'Hij heeft teveel kinderen gemaakt. Het is een ware plaag, en hij is onder veel meer huizen.'
'Ben ik wel veilig dan ?' vroeg ze.
'Ik heb je aan zijn uitwendige klier laten ruiken, dus als het goed is gaat je lichaam er nu antistoffen tegen aanmaken,' zei ik. 'Maar je moet inderdaad oppassen. Ik heb geen idee hoeveel er nog onder je huis zitten, maar dit was de alfa octopus, oftewel de leider.'
'Wat kan ik nog meer doen ?' vroeg mijn tante.
'Gewoon rustig blijven,' zei ik.
'Gelukkig heb ik een hond,' zei mijn tante. 'Die meldde het mij direct toen het beest boven de grond was gekomen. Waarschijnlijk heeft dat m'n leven gered. Ik had er niet aan moeten denken als het in mijn slaap op me was gesprongen.'
'Je mag inderdaad van geluk spreken,' zei ik. 'Maar mentaal
gezien moet er nog heel wat gebeuren. Dit beest hield het gehele land onder zware hypnose, net zoals de krant.'
'Vandaar de naam,' zei mijn tante.
'Precies,' zei ik.
'Okay, ik ga maar slapen,' zei mijn tante.

Ik voelde me moe. Toen ben ik ook maar vroeg naar bed gegaan. Ik voelde me vies, alsof ik de hele dag vies werk had gedaan, en alles in mijn huis vies was. Ik douchte me wel een paar keer, maar ik kon dat vieze gevoel niet van me afwassen. Ik keek in de spiegel en zag wat vreemde bulten. 'Zou de land octopus me dan toch … ?' vroeg ik mezelf af. Ik zuchtte. Ik kreeg de meest vreemde gedachtes, alsof ik toch nog met hem in gevecht was. 'Misschien zit er ook één onder mijn huis,' dacht ik ineens. Ik kon ineens moeilijk ademhalen, en viel na een tijdje neer. Niet lang daarna kroop er een witte land octopus langs mij. Ik kon me niet bewegen. Hij begon me te steken en zijn eitjes in me te leggen, terwijl ik mijn imker pak niet aanhad. Ik kon zelfs niet schreeuwen van de pijn. Ik probeerde naar de telefoon te grijpen, maar het was hopeloos. Ik zag allerlei kranten voor mijn ogen rollen, alsof er massa's kranten werden gedrukt. Ineens schrok ik wakker. Het was een nachtmerrie geweest. Maar ik wist dat er wat onder het huis moest zitten. Ik ging naar beneden naar de kelder, en toen ik de deur opende zag ik hem al zitten, tussen de boeken. Wat een gulzig gedrocht was het. Ik deed de deur dicht, en trok eerst mijn imker pak aan. Toen ging ik terug de kelder binnen. Ik raakte in

een enorm gevecht met deze land octopus. Hij blies en spoot, stak en beet … Nee, hij wilde niet opgeven. Ik pakte een nijptang en gaf hem daarmee een mep. Het leek alsof ik immuun was voor hem. Ik had zo'n varkentje natuurlijk al weleens eerder gewassen. Ik nam hem toen in mijn hand, en zocht naar het uitwendige kliertje, maar deze had geen kliertje, alleen een zeer vreemde, geribbelde inham. 'Dit moet het vrouwtje wezen,' zei ik tegen mezelf. 'Het alfa vrouwtje.'
Ik gaf het beest nog een mep met de nijptang, maar werd gelijk omsingeld door nog meer witte land octopussen, alsof haar hele nageslacht me nu op de hielen zat, maar ik liet haar niet los. Ik begon om me heen te schoppen en te stampen, maar ze begonnen aan me vast te kleven. Ik moest nu snel zijn. Ik pakte toen een schroevendraaier, en stak het toen in de inham en drukte helemaal door totdat er bloed uitspoot. Toen ik de schroevendraaier er weer uittrok bleef het geribbelde gaatje eraan steken en kwam helemaal buiten als een kliertje. 'Hmmm, dus deze kan wisselen,' mompelde ik. Toen pakte ik de nijptang weer en verwijderde draaiend het uitwendige kliertje. Ik voelde me even heel slap, en moest even op de grond zitten, maar het beest was nu ook slap, en ook het nageslacht. Ze gleden

gewoon slap langs me af, als een kleed wat werd afgedaan. Ik kon ook niet meer blijven zitten, maar moest liggen, met
mijn hoofd op de koude grond.
De volgende dag was er geen krant. Ze staakten daar bij de krant. Maar de dag daarop was er weer gewoon de krant. Ik vroeg me af waar ik het eigenlijk allemaal voor gedaan had. Ik wist dat er nog veel meer van zulke gedrochten onder de huizen van de mensen zaten. Wel waren er bepaalde veranderingen in de krant. Ook werden bepaalde producten niet meer verkocht. Maar ja, dat gebeurde wel vaker. Ik had het gevoel alsof het dweilen met de kraan open was. Maar ongeveer een week daarna kreeg ik een telefoontje van mijn tante. Ze voelde haarzelf beter dan ooit tevoren. Ook vertelde ze dat ze onderzoek had gedaan onder haar huis, en dat ze een tunnel had gevonden die naar een andere wereld leidde. Ik zou direct komen. Ze liet het me zien, en ik was verbaasd en verwonderd. Toen zijn we met z'n tweeen naar die andere wereld gegaan. De poortwachter was nu immers dood.

Einde

De Majorette

Moeder was een majorette.
Ze liep in de optocht, want haar zoon was teruggekomen van een lange reis.
Het was feest in de stad. Dat had zij georganiseerd.
Het was niet haar echte zoon, maar een geadopteerde.
Toen hij thuis was had hij echt weer dat gevoel van twee huizen te hebben, het huis van hemzelf en het huis van zijn moeder.
Zijn moeder had ook allerlei muzikanten uitgenodigd.
‘You are the sunshine of my life,’ speelden ze, maar hij was bedroefd. Hij was te lang weggeweest, en het knaagde aan hem.
Hij had zoveel gemist, en zijn moeder was zo bedroefd geweest.
Oh, wat naar, hij voelde zich zo naar. Maar ja, hij kon er niets aan doen dat hij op reis moest. Hij was soldaat en moest vechten in de oorlog, anders zou alles kapot gaan, echt alles. Mensen keken hem er op aan. Soldaat was wel het laagste beroep, want op de een of andere manier konden ze zich niet voorstellen dat hun leven in gevaar was en dat ervoor gevochten moest worden. Deze stad was nogal dom. En daarom was hij bedroefd, een vreemde mengeling van aangepraat schuldgevoel en gemis.

Heimwee, terwijl hij al thuis was, maar hij voelde zich hier totaal niet thuis, totaal niet.
De mensen begrepen hier niets. Ze keken hem met de nek aan omdat hij soldaat was en er bijna nooit was. Hij werd echt niet als een held ontvangen, terwijl hij de stad voor een ramp had bewaard. Nee, deze mensen waren zorgeloos. Hij hoefde echt niet op handen gedragen te worden, maar waren er maar enigen die met hem meegingen. Hij was de enige, en voelde zich als de stadsgek. Ze liepen met een grote boog om hem heen, omdat hij er niet voor hen was geweest. Niet voor hen was geweest ? Hij had hun leven gered. Door hem konden ze hier in vrede wonen. Maar ja, zijn moeder had een groot feest voor hem aangericht, helemaal alleen voor hem, en ze had muzikanten ingehuurd. ‘You are the sunshine of my life’ speelden ze. En toen hij terug kwam had ze met de band door de hele stad gemarcheerd. Ja, ze was majorette. De mensen vonden het prachtig, maar ze deed het voor hem. Hij vond het mooi, en ze was nog steeds in haar pakje.
Ze zaten in het theaterzaaltje achter moeder’s huis, en ze had ook een winkeltje. Hij verbleef hier altijd graag als hij thuis was, en dan gingen ze heen en weer, van haar huis

naar zijn huis, en dan weer terug. Wat een machtig gevoel was dat, en daarom besefte hij weer waarom hij soldaat was en waarvoor hij alles deed. Moeder verkocht speciale kleding in haar winkeltje, kleding voor majorettes, kleding voor soldaten, kleding voor indianen, en kleding voor muzikanten, prinsen, prinsessen, maar meestal gebruikten ze dat alleen maar voor feesten en speciale gelegenheden, als carnavals kleding. Soldaten waren niet geliefd en niet gewenst, alleen maar als carnavals act.
Hij zuchtte, en luisterde naar de muziek. Hij keek naar wat bandleden van de muziekband van zijn moeder, en raakte met ze in gesprek. Ze waren zo anders dan de mensen van de stad, bijna als zijn moeder. Hij zou genieten van deze dagen met haar, en dan zou hij weer terugmoeten. Als soldaat woonde je eigenlijk nergens. Je was altijd weer op tocht. Dit hier waren meer de vakanties, als een camping. Ja, zijn eigen huis voelde niet eens als zijn eigen. Dit was eigenlijk gewoon een carnaval voor hem, iets tijdelijks wat hij weer moest loslaten. Het was even een feestje om hem een hart onder de riem te drukken, en dan moest hij weer weg. Het gleed allemaal tussen zijn vingers weer weg. Hij was hier slechts op vakantie. Maar de magie ervan zou blijven in zijn hart. In zijn dromen zou hij hier altijd zijn.

Die momenten dat hij terugkwam bij zijn moeder waren altijd zo mooi, die gingen zo diep. En dan sprak zij hem toe als een majorette. Als hij niet weg was gegaan om de strijd te strijden, dan waren zulke feesten er nooit geweest. Nee, dan had hij zelfs zijn moeder niet gekend, want eens bevrijdde hij haar uit de oorlog.

Einde

Jara stond stil. Ze keek om haar heen. De rivier leek alsof het elk moment kon opwellen. De zon raakte bijna de rivier aan, geheel wit in de verte. Apen zag ze aan de overkant. Al snel was ze in de rivier en zwom naar de overkant. Ze greep een liaan, en trok haarzelf uit het water. Apen staarden haar aan. Ze kroop op een heuveltje verder het water uit, haar huid zat onder de modder. Ze hoorde het geluid van de apen, en opeens voelde ze hun handen op haar huid. Ze trokken haar verder omhoog. Het water dampte als in een mist, en het was er warm. Even later lag ze languit op het gras, tussen het mos, onder de bomen. Het was een prachtige jungle hier, in de dieptes van het regenwoud. Weer raakten de apen haar aan, en de rillingen gingen door haar lijf. Ze omhelsde hen, en ze lieten het toe. Ze was hun kind. Ze maakte zich meester van de situatie, stond op, en rende het oerwoud in. Even later stond ze in een hut. Ze was moe, ging op de versleten matras liggen. Niemand kon haar zeggen waar ze was. Het leek wel alsof de apen hier woonden. Achter de hut vond ze een skelet. Ze nam van wat appels die hier en daar lagen. Ze was hongerig, en ze at zelfs wat oud brood. Haar

hele leven had ze verlangd naar een rustige plaats, waar ze alleen zou zijn.

Ze was onrustig, zoals de apen onrustig waren, maar de natuur was mooi hier, ze kon hier wegglijden. De apen probeerden met haar te communiceren, maar zij gleed steeds weg omdat ze moe was. Ze hielden haar vast. Even later duwden ze haar bananen in haar mond.

De natuur was als gladgestreken hier, niemand zei wat. Ze voelde zich oud en jong. Ze staarde naar het amulet wat ze om haar nek had gedragen. Ze had het in haar hand. Plotseling draaide ze zich om en zag een man staan, een indiaan. Een band met een paar witte veren om zijn hoofd. Hij pakte haar hand, en ging naast haar liggen. Zij vond dat eigenlijk heel normaal. Misschien woonde de man hier. Hij joeg haar niet weg. Hij gedroeg zich mysterieus. Ze voelde geen angst voor hem, alleen acceptatie.

Als ze in zijn ogen keek zag ze een open jungle. Hij staarde naar haar. Ze kon wegzinken in zijn ogen. Ze zeiden niets tegen elkaar. De man maakte een vuur, en ging erbij zitten, en Jara kwam er ook bijzitten even later. Het leek wel alsof elke minuut een uur duurde. Zo stil was het hier. Er was hier een open wereld, een diepte.

Ze omhelsden elkaar terwijl ze elkaar niet kenden. Ze

wisten genoeg. De natuur bond hen samen. Er waren geen woorden nodig, alles was ondergedompeld in de prachtige natuur. De ontmoeting duurde lang. Daarna vertrok de man weer. Jara staarde naar het amulet. Het glom. Ze ging terug naar de versleten matras, en viel in slaap.

Ze zag haar reis als een gezel, ze hield van de reis. Ze at van de natuur, en dronk van de rivier, het was genoeg. Ze was gelukkig. Jara was als bedekt door de natuur, als een veilige schuilplaats, geen slavernij meer. Maar nog wel de littekens daarvan. Ze was ontsnapt, ze had dagen door het bos gerend, en nu was ze hier. Slangen gleden door het gras. Ze had van hen niets te vrezen. Het was alsof de natuur haar opnam.

Ze wilde wraak nemen op de blanken, maar hoe. Ze was zelfs gemerkt in haar mond. Vreemde tekens hadden ze in haar tanden gesneden, en metalen erin gegoten. Met haar mes probeerde ze het eruit te snijden. Al snel was ze aan het bloeden. De apen kwamen dichtbij. Ze kwam erachter dat de kolonisten zendertjes hadden gestopt in de dieptes van haar kiezen. Ze wist dat ze in gevaar was, nog steeds. Misschien konden ze haar wel achtervolgen. Ze rende verder, de voetstappen van de man volgende. Na enkele dagen kwam ze hem tegen. Hij trok haar naar zich toe. Ze

spraken niet. Het was alsof ze elkaar aanvoelden. Ze hoorden schoten in de lucht. 'Slaven ontsnapt,' riep iemand. De man greep zijn mes, maar daarna greep hij een pijl, en toen zijn boog. Beiden renden ze verder. Weer waren er schoten, maar ze zagen niemand. Ze kwamen aan bij een riviertje, waar een bootje was. Ze namen het bootje om de rivier mee over te komen. Aan de overkant gekomen wees Jara op de mond van de man. Ze opende haar mond om haar tanden te laten zien. Ook de man opende zijn mond, en Jara zag het metaal, en de zendertjes. Ze probeerde het hem duidelijk te maken. Met een mes kregen ze het eruit. Jara gooide de zendertjes in het riviertje. Toen gingen ze dieper het oerwoud in. Ze hoopten dat niemand hen hier nog zou kunnen volgen. De natuur was te mooi om daar nog drukte om te maken. Het was alsof hun lasten door die pracht werden afgespoeld. Het was alsof de man wilde zeggen : Laten we hier opnieuw beginnen. Jara knikte. Zijn ogen spraken. Een leven hier zou goed zijn.

Ze wilden wraak nemen op de blanken, maar de natuur nam hen mee. De natuur deed hen vergeten, maar er was nog wel die diepe pijn van binnen. Er was geen doel, er was alleen het leven. Het was als een warme haard, de

natuur om hen heen. En die kwam dieper en dieper om de pijn weg te wassen. De man raakte haar aan. Het voelde als vertrouwd. De zachte aanraking van de natuur leek het te vermengen. Voor het eerst voelde Jara zich gelukkig. Ze kon de sterke stroming van de rivier horen in de verte. Alle geluiden kwamen haar lichaam binnen, en openbaarden zich aan haar. De man streelde door haar haar, en ging met zijn vingertoppen over haar lippen. Ze boog haar hoofd. Ze begreep niet wat er gaande was. De man omhelsde haar van achteren, en in haar gevoel was het alsof hij tegen haar zei : 'Je bent vrij nu.' Ze zochten de rivier weer op, en gingen daar zwemmen. Hier zouden ze willen wonen. In de verte was een waterval die ze konden horen bulderen. Ze besloten er naartoe te gaan. Het was alsof de waterval hen van binnen schoonwaste. De waterplanten waren prachtig en overtuigend hier. Ze sprongen bijna door het water heen.

Wisten zij dat zij kinderen waren van de bomen, van de struiken die onderwater en bovenwater groeiden. Wisten zij dat zij gemaakt waren voor ritmische en kronkelende groei. Krokodillen waren hun vrienden hier, geen vijanden. Ze waren aan het ware gevaar ontsnapt. Ook de waterslangen waren hen goedgezind. Ze voelden zich fijn

met deze kronkelende elementen. De waterplant was als de hemel voor hen. Ze stonden open voor het harmonische gevoel van de natuur, ze spraken met hun ogen. Het water was een bron van leven voor hen. De man staarde naar haar amulet. Hij kuste het amulet. Het was alsof de man wilde zeggen : Als zij, het amulet, haar ogen zal openen, waar zullen de blanke kolonisten dan zijn, heus, ze zullen geleid worden naar de hel. Ze hebben een hel gemaakt, een hel die hen dan zal opslokken. Het was alsof het zonlicht het zo overbracht, en zo waar als de waterval zelf. Ze keek hem diep in de ogen, alsof ze het verankerde. Ze had respect voor hem, stond open voor hem, ze besefte dat zij het antwoord om haar nek droeg. Het amulet leek op een slang. Het had veel waarde voor haar. Sommige slangen hier leken op het amulet. Het was alsof het amulet ooit de sleutel was van haar kooi. Ze voelde zich week worden als ze naar hem keek. De blauwe lucht leek neer te dalen in de rivier, op weg naar de waterval. Het licht werd alle kanten opgereflecteerd.

De Fabriek

Hij werkte in een steenkool fabriek. Vaak moest hij overwerken. Hij was een echte work aholic. Dan had hij wat te doen, anders zou hij maar voor zich uit blijven staren. Hij kwam altijd helemaal onder het roet thuis, vaak pas laat. Maar er was niemand die op hem wachtte. Hij was gescheiden. Zijn vrouw kon er niet meer tegen dat hij nooit thuis was, en heeft toen de benen genomen.
Maar toen er een nieuwe directie kwam in de fabriek en hij harder moest werken voor minder loon had hij er minder lol in. Eigenlijk moest hij steeds harder werken en kreeg hij steeds minder. Op een gegeven moment had hij zo'n laag loon dat hij honger begon te lijden.
Er was een zware industrialisering gaande in het land, die uitliep op een industriële revolutie. Dit maakte dat het land zwaar communistisch werd, en hij voelde zich een slaaf. Alles werd hem afgenomen. Alles was nu van de staat. Hij voelde zichzelf slechts een poppetje, een marionet. Hij was zo weinig thuis dat het leek alsof hij in de fabriek woonde.
Zijn maten hadden het erover dat ze een opstand wilden beginnen, maar ze wisten niet hoe. Hij deed ook wat

duiten in het zakje, maar het was allemaal slechts gissen, en ze vonden het vechten tegen de bierkaai. Ze zouden er wat langer over nadenken hoe dit te doen. Maar één ding was zeker : Ze wilden hier weg. Ze verlangden naar de vrije natuur. De stad had hen opgesloten, en met name de fabriek. Ze vervloekten de fabriek. Hij was een steenkool werker in hart en nieren, maar dit ging te ver. Het terrein van de fabriek werd zwaar bewaakt, dus eigenlijk was er geen ontsnapping mogelijk. Toch spraken ze over bepaalde tunnels, die zelfs uit de stad zouden kunnen leiden. Ook de stad werd zwaar bewaakt. Je kon niet zomaar erin of eruit.
Ook moest hij bijgeschoold worden een paar uur per week. Dat was altijd op de dinsdag. Er was een klein schoolgebouwtje op het terrein van de fabriek. Het had twee verdiepingen en een zolder, en hij kreeg les op de zolder. De leraar was een aardige man, maar ook hij was een slaaf van de fabriek. Soms liep hij zomaar uitgekondigd de klas uit, naar een soort bergingsruimte. Dan moest hij even roken. Dat mocht hij niet in de klas doen. Ook hij werd in de gaten gehouden, maar hij wilde meewerken aan de ontsnapping.
Hij vond de leraar één van de laatsten die nog een hart

hadden. Ook de leraar wist van bepaalde tunnels af, maar zei dat het te gevaarlijk was. 'En wat moet je in de natuur ?' zei hij altijd. 'Gevaarlijke indianenstammen en gevaarlijke roofdieren en allerlei ander ongemak.' Toch wilde hij ontsnappen. Hij zei dat hij zijn eigen stad wilde bouwen.

Zijn verdriet was groot toen de leraar op een dag werd doodgeschoten. Maar eigenlijk had hij het wel verwacht. De leraar sprak teveel. Natuurlijk zou dat tegen hem keren op een bepaald moment. Nee, hij keek er niet van op. Hijzelf hield zich wijselijk stil.

Wel had hij de uitleg van het tunnelsysteem nog in zijn hoofd, wat de leraar hem had gegeven. Het brulde als een tijger in zijn hoofd. Maar hij wilde geen tijger zijn. Het was alsof hij in gevecht was met de tijger. Hij wilde het slimmer aanpakken. Geen gevaarlijk tunnelsysteem wat volgens de leraar onvermijdelijk dodelijk zou aflopen. Neen, hij wilde tijd rekken, met meer strategie te werk gaan.

Toen drie van zijn maten het besluit hadden genomen toch via de tunnels te gaan was hij er op tegen. Hij was ook niet verbaasd toen hij hoorde dat ze alledrie afgeschoten waren. Direct drie dagen na de moord op zijn vrienden

kreeg hij een aanbod om in het transport te werken. De steenkolen werden vervoerd met schip en trein. Hij zou dan in de haven en op het station komen te werken, naast zijn werk in de fabriek. Zo had hij wat afwisseling. Hij nam het aanbod met beide handen aan. Hij was blij dat hij het geduld hiervoor had gehad. Maar het werk was zwaar en hard. Toch had hij hierdoor het idee dat hij dichter bij de ontsnapping was. Hij zou het kunnen proberen per schip of trein te ontsnappen.
In ieder geval begon hij weer meer plezier te krijgen in zijn werk door de afwisseling. Ook begon hij mee te helpen in de ontsnapping van anderen door schip en trein, alhoewel hij het nog steeds niet over zijn hart kon krijgen zelf te ontsnappen. Hij was alreeds bezig met gevaarlijk werk, want als ze betrapt zouden worden in het helpen anderen te laten ontsnappen, dan zou zouden ze zelf ook opgepakt worden. Tot nu toe ging alles goed, en ze begonnen er handigheid in te krijgen. Het was alsof het zijn tweede baan was. Het gaf hem hoop en energie, alhoewel de spanning soms flink bij hem toesloeg.
Op een dag werden enkelen van zijn maten betrapt tijdens het laten ontsnappen van inwoners van de stad. Ze werden allemaal ter plekke afgeschoten. Hij werkte op dat

moment in de fabriek en hoorde het pas later, ook als een waarschuwing. Hij raakte hierdoor zwaar depressief en wilde niet meer leven. Een andere maat van hem praatte hem erdoor heen. Hij was het helemaal zat. Hij kon hier niet meer mee leven, en zou samen met zijn maat gaan onderduiken. Zijn maat wist wel een adres.
Het was in de stad zelf. Midden in de nacht gingen ze er naartoe. Ze hoopten dat ze geen bewakers zouden tegenkomen. Het was een dikke vrouw waar ze terechtkwamen. Ze had een geheime woning onder haar huis. Dat moest wel, want er werden vaak huiszoekingen gedaan als werkers werden vermist. De dikke vrouw was direct enorm onvriendelijk en veeleisend. Snel kwamen hij en zijn maat erachter dat ze in een nieuwe slavernij en gevangenschap terecht waren gekomen, en de vrouw had hele strenge regels. Toch wilden ze het proberen om te kijken of het beter was dan waar ze vandaan kwamen. Tegelijk wisten ze ook dat er nu geen weg meer terug was.
De dikke vrouw foeterde vaak op hen, en schold hen vaak uit. Ook kregen ze bij haar veel werk te doen. Ze was enorm praatziek en twistziek en ze hield hen nachtenlang op. Eten kregen ze bijna niet, en als ze het kregen hadden ze het idee dat ermee gerommeld was, alsof ze vergiftigd

werden, en ze waren er vaak ziek door. Steeds meer kreeg de dikke vrouw macht over hen. Als het niet helemaal ging zoals ze wilde bedreigde ze hen soms met een mes. Ze had haar lijsten van mensen wie ze van alles wel zou willen aandoen, en dat moesten ze altijd aanhoren. Altijd maar weer die lange verhalen, en geweld werd niet geschuwd, maar verheerlijkt. Ze preekte als een dominee, maar dan wel een hele criminele en bloeddorstige.

Toch hadden ze soms wel medelijden als ze al die verhalen hoorde. De vrouw had als meisje veel meegemaakt, en was daar eigenlijk nooit overheen gekomen, en reageerde dat nu op hen af.

Ze waren goed de klos, dat wisten ze wel. Soms was de vrouw heel aardig, maar dan waren ze erg op hun hoede. Ze wisten niet wat er dan achterstak. Soms zou ze hen wel willen helpen, maar ze wist niet hoe. Soms gaf ze tekenen die leken op een soort van medelijden.

Ze spraken met haar over de ontsnapping uit de stad, en ook zij was er wel in geinteresseerd. Niet alleen voor hen, maar ook voor haarzelf. Hoe moeilijk ze ook in elkaar zat, zij was ook een slachtoffer van de stad, en wachtte op bevrijding. De natuur zagen zij als de grote bevrijding, maar ook zij sprak over de gevaarlijke indianenstammen

daar, en andere gevaren van de open natuur.
Soms als ze kwaad was dreigde ze hen weer terug te sturen naar de steenkool fabriek, maar uiteindelijk kwam het er nooit van. Hij wilde niet ontsnappen met een schip of trein, want daar had hij een trauma aan overgehouden door de dood van zijn vrienden.
Op een nacht zei ze dat er nog wel geheime tunnels onder de geheime woning waren die nog dieper gingen, maar daar wist ze weinig vanaf. Ze zou wel meewillen als ze zouden gaan. Op een nacht besloten ze het erop te wagen. Er liepen hier allemaal gangen. Het leek wel op een mijn. Ze kwamen zelfs mijnwerkers tegen, maar die spraken in een andere taal. Die waren niet van hier. Ze stonden voor een raadsel. Ze hadden harde stemmen en lieten hen niet gaan. Ze probeerden wat uit te leggen. 'Komtaar,' zei een mijnwerker, die vlak voor hen ging staan. 'Karta.' En hij maakte bewegingen met zijn handen en voeten. Hij had de indruk dat de mijnwerker het over indianen had in gebarentaal. Toen wenkte de mijnwerker hen, en ze moesten hem volgen. Ze gingen toen door vele tunnels heen. Heel veel mijnwerkers waren hier bezig. Hij herkende ze niet. Weer begon de mijnwerker allemaal gebaren te maken en wees op de andere mijnwerkers. Het

was een steenkool mijn, maar het scheen geheim te zijn, en deze werkers waren niet van de stad. De mijnwerker scheen met gebaren te vragen of ze hier wilden werken. Hij en zijn maat zagen dat wel zitten, maar de vrouw wilde terug, en begon paniekerig te doen. Een andere mijnwerker die met hen mee was gelopen begreep de vrouw die telkens terugwees en duidelijk overstuur was, en nam haar weer mee terug.
'Komtaar,' zei de andere mijnwerker weer. Ze kregen werkkleding en een helm, en konden direct aan het werk. Alles was hen nog steeds een raadsel. Ze vroegen zich af wie het waren. Ze kregen ook een eigen kamer in het ondergrondse mijnenstelsel. Er werd hun duidelijk gemaakt dat ze konden werken wanneer ze wilden. Er lag geen druk op, en ze konden hier tot rust komen. Er werd hier ook gewerkt met ondergrondse voertuigen die op treinen leken, waarmee de steenkool vervoerd werd. Ze vroegen zich af waar het naartoe ging. Ze kwamen erachter door de gebaren van de mijnwerker dat de ondergrondse voertuigen dieper onder de grond gingen naar een dieper liggende steenkool fabriek. Dit volk was een ondergronds volk, dieper onder de aarde, waar de wereld boven de aarde geen weet van had.

Op een dag werd hij geleid tot de leider van de mijnwerkers, en het was een klein jongetje. Toen hij dichter bij kwam zag hij dat het zijn buurjongetje van vroeger was die eens ging verhuizen. 'Je bent nog precies hetzelfde !' zei hij met grote verbazing. 'Je bent nooit verder gegroeid. Hoe kan dat ?'
Het buurjongetje sprak in zijn eigen taal. 'We gingen verhuizen onder de grond,' zei het jongetje. 'Mijn vader ging daar werken. Niemand wordt hier ouder.'
'Wie zijn het ?' vroeg hij.
'Het zijn vluchtelingen die ontsnapt zijn uit het communistische regiem,' zei het buurjongetje. 'Ze zijn nu lid van het geheime leger, verzetsstrijders.'
'En hoe komt het dat niemand hier ouder wordt ?' vroeg hij.
'Dat heeft te maken met ondergrondse mineralen en voedselsoorten die ze boven niet kennen,' zei het buurjongetje. 'Nog dieper onder de grond is de woeste wildernis en de wilde oceaan, waar de indianen wonen.'
Hij keek het buurjongetje met verbazing aan.
'En hoe komen we daar ?' vroeg hij.
'Door de fabriek,' zei het buurjongetje.

Einde
29

In het centrum van de wereldstad waren veel winkels. Ergens onder een winkel was een extra verdieping met spelletjes, waar ik spelletjes kocht. Oorlogs-spelletjes en spelletjes van avontuur. Zij kwam daar ook. Ik nam haar eens mee naar het gebied achter de winkels, waar we na lang lopen langs de flatgebouwen in een ander gedeelte kwamen.
Ik bezocht daar altijd wat oudere mensen en mensen die het moeilijk hadden. We vonden een doorweg naar de weilanden, en daarachter waren de bossen. Er waren hier veel lange bruggen, en vele rijken hadden hier hun huizen. De weilanden en bossen waren vol met Antlia-hyenas, hele grote vormen van hyenas.

Achter de bossen was een kasteel, wat het kasteel van Californie heette. Hierin werden roofdieren omgezet tot vee, door injecties. Dat vee werd in de bossen en de weilanden gezet als voedsel voor de Antlia-hyenas. We trouwden en we scheidden, en ik kwam erachter dat ik was getrouwd met de godin van scheiding. Het gif van scheiding bleek belangrijk te zijn om roofdieren om te zetten tot vee. Ik kwam erachter dat ze in het kasteel van

Californie werkte.

Eens zocht ik haar daar op. 'Wat wil je van me,' vroeg ze. 'Ik mis je,' zei ik.

Ze heeft me toen meegenomen naar de jachtvelden. Ik mocht op haar paard zitten, en ze liet mij allerlei zadels zien. Ze was heel lief voor me. Maar ineens was ik geinjecteerd, en het leek alsof mijn hoofdhuid begon af te vallen. Ik viel bewusteloos en werd later wakker in een kooi. Ze had zichzelf opgetooid met kippenveren. Ik kreeg geen voedsel.

Ik werd wakker en greep op me heen. Ik greep mijn vriendin. Gelukkig, dacht ik. Ik vertelde haar mijn droom, en we vielen weer in slaap. Weer droomde ik over het kasteel van Californie. Ditmaal waren mannen daarin gekooid, en werden daar geinjecteerd totdat ze dun waren. Er werd hen gezegd dat in de oude taal man betekende dunne. We kregen haast geen voedsel.

Weer schrok ik wakker, maar ditmaal lag er geen vriendin. Ik bleek helemaal geen vriendin te hebben. Op mijn bureau lagen de oorlogs-spelletjes die ik had gekocht. Ik had er een paar gespeeld, wat misschien de reden was dat ik zo vreemd had gedroomd. Ik had ze gespeeld op de computer. Ik was bang ze nog verder te spelen, maar

eigenlijk was ik ook nieuwsgierig.

Ik had een kind op mijn rug toen ik het kasteel inging. Ik kon kiezen uit verschillende wapens, en ik moest ervoor zorgen dat het kind ongedeerd bleef. Ik moest haar brengen naar haar kamer op een hogere verdieping, waar een betoverde spiegel stond. Door die betoverde spiegel zouden we in een nieuw level komen. Ik moest wat trollwachters verslaan, maar uiteindelijk kwamen we toch bij de spiegel aan.

'Kom verder,' zei de spiegel. Ik gleed naar binnen met het kind.
Ik zat op een hoog oorlogspaard. Het paard was van steen en begon te steigeren, ergens op een marktplein. Ik viel er vanaf en had een grote hoofdwond. Het kind sleurde mij naar een huis. De moeder van het kind legde mij op een bed. Ze verzorgde mijn wond. De moeder was bang dat ze haar huis zou verliezen, dat ze de huur niet meer zou kunnen betalen. Midden in de nacht trok ze mij mee naar de kelder, en via de kelder kwamen we in een ondergrondse wereld. Hier moest ze jagen voor geld, maar de jacht ging niet goed. Ik hielp haar, maar voordat ik het wist injecteerde ze mij, en ik begon in vee te veranderen. Het bleek dat ik veel geld van binnen had, dus ze begon

me te fokken. Niet dat ze me vetmeste, maar ze mergelde mij uit door mij niet te voeden. Zo was het makkelijker bij het geld te komen.

Ik werd wakker in zweet. Ik staarde naar de oorlogs-spelletjes. Nog steeds vond ik ze interessant, en was ik nieuwsgierig. Ik voedde mijzelf haast niet. Ik was helemaal bezeten van die oorlogs-spelletjes.

Ik droomde over jongens die broeken hadden gemaakt van gekrompen schedels, en die jacht voerden, die eigenlijk een oorlog was. Ze hadden gif aan hun pijlen, waarmee ze roofdieren in vee konden omzetten, en dan zetten ze de jacht voort. Zij hadden een soort moedergodin die zij aanbaden, en die hen het gif verschafte. Het gif was het gif van scheiding.

Zij was de godin van de Antlia-hyena's. Haar tempel was gesluierd door orca's. Hier verborg zij de Antlia-hyena klok. Op een oorlogs-paard ging ik tot haar, maar ze sloeg mij met de bliksem. 'Hey dunne,' zei ze. 'Hey, jij die man is.' Als een spin sprong ze op mij, en stak mij. Ik raakte verlamd. Ze stopte mij in een kooi met twee Antlia-hyena's. Ze voedde mij haast niet. Ik begon in vee te veranderen door de steek.

Ik drukte op eject. Als een gek haalde ik het spelletje uit

mijn computer. De disc was loeiheet en er kwamen vlammen vanaf. Ik gooide het van me af. Weer zette ik de koptelefoon op met het vizier. Ditmaal deed ik er een ander spelletje in. De disc draaide in mijn hersenschijf met een enorme snelheid. In het spel waren indianen in oorlog. Het was heel bloederig en wreed. Ik zat op een hoog paard, maar iemand schoot mij eraf.

Ik bevond mezelf in een ei. Ik kwam eruit als een skelet. Zodra er vlees op me begon te groeien werd het door de Antlia-hyena's erafgelikt en afgebeten. Maar heel langzaam begon ik te groeien en kwam tot de godin van scheiding. Zij was de alpha Antlia-hyena, maar veranderde op gezette tijden in een vrouw, of in fragmenten. Het was als een vreemd ritme. Zij bezat de Antlia-hyena klok. Het was ingebouwd in haar hart. Ik voelde mij niets meer dan een stuk vlees. Ik was gewoon een object. Ik had ook een klok van binnen waardoor ik in vee veranderde op gezette tijden, of in fragmenten. Ik voelde mij deel van een markt. 'De markt van scheiding,' zei de godin. Het was alsof mijn hoofhuid begon af te vallen, en even later hield ze mijn scalp voor mijn neus. Ze had zich getooid met kippenveren. Haar borsten waren groot, en er droop dikke melk vanaf. 'Het gif van scheiding,' sprak ze toen ik ernaar

keek.
Ze gebood me ervan te drinken. Ik voelde me heel zwak worden. Toen veranderde ze in een Antlia-hyena, vloog me naar mijn nek, zette haar kaken erin, en liet niet meer los, terwijl ik in mijn bloed verdronk, stikte. Als een pijl klikte ik op eject, en begon zwaar te zuchten. 'Deze spelletjes zijn gek,' dacht ik. 'Levensgevaarlijk.' Maar vreemd genoeg had het nog steeds mijn interesse. Ik had het idee dat de spelletjes mij in hun macht hadden. 's Nachts droomde ik erover, dat ik door de orca-sluiers van de godin heenging, maar verderop waren de sluiers veel bloederiger, waar het vee hing. En toen weer vele sluiers van orca's. Ik zat op een hoog oorlogs-paard, dat woest uitgedost was met veren. Weer werd ik door bliksem getroffen, en alles was in vuur. Ze was een gril, een altaar. En wij moesten geofferd worden aan de godin van scheiding.
De gril maakte een joelend geluid, bijna gillend. Ik gleed naar binnen, en kwam in de hel. Ik moest me erbij neerleggen dat ik eeuwig brandde. De gril sprak namelijk dat dit spelletje nooit stopte. Ik begon weg te smelten in angst en depressie. Ik zag dat het huwelijk alleen maar een slager is die zich voorbereid op de slacht. Het huwelijk

was de jacht, de scheiding de slacht. Wat een spelletjes had ik in huis gehaald. Maar goed, het waren maar spelletjes. Maar toch ... De spelletjes leken me te bezitten. Ik had geen rust meer.

Ze zat op een hoog oorlogspaard, en ik leek weg te glijden. Het huwelijk was een oorlog. De scheiding was de eind-uitslag van de oorlog.

Dit is hoe de godin een man tot haar kind maakt :
In vijf stappen doet zij dit, om haarzelf uit te drukken in de man.
Dit zijn de vijf Antlia-hyena juwelen.

1. Varken - De godin mergelt en beent de man uit.

2. Rund - De godin is sterker dan de man.

3. Kip - De man is de slaaf en gevangene van de godin.

4. Bok - De godin scalpeert de man.

5. Lam - De godin is de moeder van de man.

Hij kon zijn ogen niet geloven. Dit stond in de gebruiks-aanwijzing van de spelletjes. Hij wist even niet hoe hij het had, en begon ademhalings-problemen te krijgen. Deze discs moesten zo snel mogelijk in de vuilnisbak. Maar een onzichtbare hand leek hem te grijpen. Met schuim op zijn mond en gorgelend rent hij naar buiten. Zo snel mogelijk vlucht hij het bos in, waar hij recht in een licht loopt. Tot

zijn grote verbazing staat er een ruimteschip voor hem. Een vrouw met een vikings-helm loopt naar hem toe. Maar dan verdwijnt alles, alhoewel het licht nog steeds daar is. 'Wat willen jullie van me,' schreeuwt hij. Hij voelt zich zwak worden in zijn benen, en begint te trillen. 'Je bent toch een man ?' zegt ineens een stem.

'Ja,' zegt hij, 'maar ik wens zo niet behandeld te worden.' Dan wordt hij bevend wakker. Een oorlogs-boek ligt naast hem op het nachtkastje. Hij is blij dat hij het maar gedroomd heeft, maar hij durft niet meer te slapen. Hij neemt een glas water en gaat televisie kijken. Er is een oorlogsfilm op de televisie, en op een andere zender is er saai gepraat. Zijn vriendin komt even later naar hem toe. Ze hangt over hem heen. Hij ruikt de geur van haar borsten en raakt bedwelmd.

'Zeg, dat oorlogsboek wat je mij hebt gegeven, waar gaat dat over ?' vraagt hij. 'Ik heb het nog niet gelezen, maar zou het graag van jou willen horen.'

'Oh,' zegt ze. 'Het gaat over de oorlog tussen mannen en vrouwen.'
'Is het een psychologisch boek ?' vraagt hij.

'Nee,' zegt ze, 'het is een verhaal.'

'Wie winnen de oorlog ?' vraagt hij.

'De vrouwen,' zegt ze.

'Waarom zou ik het boek dan nog lezen ?' vraagt hij. 'Dat klinkt namelijk nogal sexistisch, racistisch zelfs.'

'Het is een feministisch verhaal, inderdaad,' zegt zijn vriendin. 'Mannen moeten namelijk een stapje terug doen, weer terugkomen aan de moederborst.'

'Oh, zie aan,' zegt hij, 'dus het is niet zomaar een verhaal. Het is iets waar je heilig in gelooft ?'

'Ja,' zegt ze. 'Het is gewoon een verhaal natuurlijk, maar wel met een diepe moraal.'

Verslagen loopt hij terug naar bed. Even later hangt zijn vriendin opgewonden boven hem met ontblote borsten. 'Zou je niet drinken van de moeder,' fluistert ze.

'Je bent mijn moeder niet,' snauwt hij. Dan wacht ze verder totdat hij slaapt, en bindt hem vast. Weer hangt ze boven hem en drukt haar borsten in zijn gezicht. Hij schrikt wakker, en merkt dat hij zich niet kan bewegen. 'Wat zullen we nou krijgen ?' vraagt hij. Even later ligt ze helemaal op hem. Hij probeert los te komen, maar ze is vastbesloten. Na een tijdje geeft hij op. 'Jij je zin,' zegt hij, en probeert weer te slapen.

De volgende dag wil hij op staan, maar hij merkt dat hij nog steeds vastgebonden is.

'Okay, nu is het mooi geweest,' zegt hij. 'Maak me los. Het was een leuk spelletje, maar het spelletje is nu afgelopen.' Maar ze kleedt zich aan, en gaat de deur uit. Aan het einde van de dag is ze terug, terwijl hij honger heeft en vooral erge dorst. Ze geeft hem melk, maar verder niks. Na zeven weken is hij behoorlijk uitgemergeld. Hij heeft het opgegeven. Als ze zulke spelletjes met hem wil spelen, dan doet ze maar. Ze voedt hem bijna niet, maar geeft hem wel voldoende melk te drinken. Hij voelt zich heel slap, en ze is inmiddels sterker dan hem. Ze test het wel eens door hem lost te maken, en dan stoeit ze met hem. Hij kan niets tegen haar beginnen. Hij begint haar vragen te stellen, maar ze beantwoordt hen niet. Ze houdt er ook van om op hem paardje te rijden. Ze begint hem steeds meer te vernederen. Ze noemt hem 'varken', of 'rund'.

Op de één of andere manier maakte hij een verkeerde beweging, en de eject knop werd ingedrukt, en de disc kwam tevoorschijn, waardoor het spel stopte. Vliegensvlug deed hij de koptelefoon en het vizier af. Hij grijpt het boekje wat bij de disc hoorde en begint te lezen. Hij raakt ervan in de war en gooit het weg. De telefoon gaat, maar hij durft niet op te nemen. Nog steeds vermoedt hij dat hij in het spel is. Langzaam loopt hij weer terug

naar het weggegooide boekje, en leest over de voorschriften voor het vee. Hij grijpt naar zijn hoofd en gaat op bed liggen. Hij durft niet in slaap te vallen, maar zijn omgeving vertrouwt hij ook niet.

'Ik ben erin getrapt,' denkt hij bij zichzelf. Even later wordt er aan de deur gebeld. Hij besluit open te doen, en er staat een vrouw voor hem met een elegant hoed op. 'Mag ik even binnen komen ?' vraagt ze. 'Ik wil namelijk iets met u bespreken.' Hij laat haar binnen en ze gaan op de bank zitten. 'Bedankt voor het kopen van ons product,' zegt ze. 'Onze excuses voor elk ongemak wat u heeft ervaren.' Dan steekt hij ineens van wal over alles wat hij heeft meegemaakt, en vraagt of de producten terug kunnen zodat hij zijn geld kan terugkrijgen.

'Helaas, mijnheer,' zegt de vrouw. 'Daar kunnen we niet aan beginnen.' Dan trekt ze haar pistool en gebiedt hem om op het bed te gaan liggen. Ze gebiedt hem op zijn handen te gaan liggen. Ze trekt haar kleren uit, en glijdt met het pistool over zijn tepel, en beweegt dan het pistool langzaam naar onderen. 'Eén foute beweging,' zegt ze, 'en we schieten één van de balletjes eruit.' Hij houdt zijn adem in.
Ze laat hem een vreemd spul opdrinken met een

slaapmiddel, en hij zinkt weg in slaap. Snel bindt ze hem vast. Hij probeert uit alle macht wakker te worden. Hij voelt zich alsof hij in een coma is.

'Oorlogs-vrienden,' zegt ze.

'Ze komen als vrienden, maar zijn spionnen. Ze komen als een product, maar het is om je uit te schakelen. Hoe kon je zo dom zijn. Dat oorlogs-spel was een oorlog tegen jou. Domme man, je bent bedrogen. Je bent verraden.'
'Jullie duivelse feministen,' prevelt hij. Ze gaat achter de computer zitten, en begint spelletjes te spelen. Even later hoort hij haar lachen. 'Goedzo,' denkt hij bij zichzelf. 'Ik hoop dat ze jou ook pakken.' Even later ligt ze op de grond. Na uren worstelen komt hij los. Hij sleept haar ver weg van zijn huis. Dan loopt hij terug. 'Ziezo,' denkt hij bij zichzelf. Even later wordt er weer gebeld, maar hij doet niet open. Hij hoort de stem van een andere vrouw die hem roept, maar hij kijkt wel beter uit. Maar dan wordt de deur ingetrapt. Een vrouw nogal onder de modder staat voor hem. Nee, dit is niet de vrouw die hij had weggesleept. Ze trekt een mes. 'Daar gaan we weer,' denkt hij. Maar dan ineens wordt het beeld wazig. Hij trekt zijn koptelefoon af, en zijn vizier. Hij drukt op eject, en de disc

komt eruit. Hij sluit zijn computer af, maar vertrouwt het nog steeds niet. Dit kan allemaal ingebouwd in het spel. Hij gaat in zijn bed liggen, en vanaf dan begint zijn leven eigenlijk heel saai te worden, zonder spanning. Het wordt zo erg dat hij uiteindelijk terugverlangt de oorlogs-spelletjes weer te spelen. Ditmaal doet hij het spel wat de vrouw had gespeeld.

Het gezicht van een vrouw verschijnt, en zegt : 'Welkom in Antlia-Hyena Oorlogen. Klik op X om het spel te starten.' Hij klikt op X en bevindt zich direct op een veld met Antlia-hyena's. Hij moet rennen voor zijn leven. Dan ineens verschijnt er een scherm waar hij kan kiezen wat hij wil zijn : een rund, een varken, een bok, of een lam. Hij selecteert : rund. Al snel valt hij in een kuil, die snel omsingelt is door Antlia-hyena's. Hij begint al snel honger te krijgen en uit te mergelen. Dan springen de Antlia-hyena's naar binnen.

'Dit is het huwelijk,' zegt een stem. Het gezicht van de vrouw verschijnt weer, en vraagt of hij zichzelf wil loskopen. Maar het schijnt dat hij daarvoor niet genoeg geld heeft. Het gezicht verdwijnt weer. De Antlia-hyena's zijn hem aan het likken, maar hij weet dat ze hem alleen maar voorbereiden voor de maaltijd.

Dan zegt een stem : 'Wilt u de scheiding nu, of uitstellen,' terwijl het gezicht van de vrouw weer verschijnt. Hij wist precies wat scheiden zou betekenen, dus hij klikte op 'uitstellen'.

Wilde Honden

Een man en een vrouw waren in het bos. Plotseling verloren ze elkaar geheel uit het oog, alsof een duizeling hen trof. Ze hoorden honden blaffen en janken in de verte, en het geluid leek steeds dichterbij te komen. De man greep de vrouw die als verstijfd was. ‘Liefste,’ sprak de man. ‘We moeten ons verbergen.’ Ze moesten het direkt op een rennen zetten. Daar zagen ze de honden al in de verte aankomen. De vrouw slaakte een gil, terwijl de man al een eind weg was. Eén voor één stortten de wilde honden zich op de vrouw, en lieten niets van haar over. De andere honden gingen al achter de man aan. Buiten adem rende de man langs de bomen, en door struiken naar de donkerste plekken. Er waren veel honden. De man wist dat hij niets tegen hen zou kunnen beginnen. De jacht was meedogenloos. Hij kon bijna het gehijg van de honden al horen, en de honden gilden bijna. Nog nooit was de man zo bang geweest. Zijn binnenste leek over te lopen van zweet. Na een tijdje bereikte hij een huisje. Snel ging hij naar binnen en deed de deur achter hem dicht. Al snel omsingelden de honden het huis. De man rende op de trap naar boven waar een man en een vrouw in bed lagen. Aan

de muur hing een geweer. De man greep het geweer, en knalde door het raam een paar honden neer. De man op het bed stond op, liep naar de man met het geweer toe, en sprak : ‘Welkom, welkom, in het land van plezier.’ De man met het geweer keek hem vreemd aan, terwijl ze beiden de honden jankend hoorden wegrennen.

‘Pardon, ze hebben .... ze hebben haar verscheurd,’ zij de man met het geweer.

‘Wie hebben ze verscheurd ?’ vroeg de man die net van het bed was opgestaan.

De man met het geweer begon te snikken.

‘Oh, ik begrijp het al. Je bent je geliefde kwijt, je liefje,’ zei de man, terwijl ook de vrouw opstond.

‘Maar goed, je bent hier veilig. Je hebt die honden lelijk te pakken gehad.’

De man greep een ander geweer onder het bed vandaan, en sprak : ‘Kom, we gaan op hondenjacht.’

Even later waren ze beiden weer buiten, en zochten naar de honden, die ze later op een open plek vonden. Ze knalden ze allemaal af.

‘Wat bedoelde je met ‘dit is het land van plezier,’ vroeg de ene man.

De andere man zei niets. ‘Dat zul je wel zien,’ zei hij even

later. Beiden liepen ze naar een kasteel toe wat leegstond. ‘Hier kan je voorlopig blijven,’ zei de man. ‘Ga niet naar huis, want de honden zullen je pakken. Er zijn hier zoveel wilde honden.’

De man knikte, en ging het kasteel binnen. De andere man ging weer terug naar zijn eigen huisje.

In het kasteel keek de man zijn ogen uit. Hij was moe, sloot de deuren, en ging in een kamer in een bed liggen. De volgende ochtend was hij vroeg wakker. Hij besloot het hele kasteel te bezichtigen. In een torenkamertje lagen een man en een vrouw. ‘Heb je het gehoord van de honden ?’ vroeg de vrouw.

‘Ja, ik weet er alles van,’ zei de man die net was binnengekomen.

‘Nee, je begrijpt me niet,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Ik bedoel .... ach laat maar.’

‘Nee, vertel het hem,’ zei de man die naast haar lag.

‘Okay,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Wij waren allemaal achternagejaagd door de honden, en kwamen hier, in het land van plezier.’

Plotseling begonnen de ogen van de vrouw gelig te worden. Ze omhelsde de man die naast haar lag, kuste hem, en sprak : ‘Wij verloren allemaal een partner aan de

honden. Maar kijk, hier vinden we er één terug.’

‘Waar heb je het over,’ vroeg de man die in de deuropening stond.

‘Nou,’ zei de vrouw geheimzinnig, ‘jij zal hier ook een nieuw maatje terugvinden.’

‘Oh, maar daar heb ik helemaal geen zin in,’ zei de man in de deuropening.

‘Maar terug naar huis kun je niet,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Want de honden zullen je pakken.’ Buiten hoorden ze geblaf, en de schrik sloeg de man weer om het hart. ‘Zoek je maatje op, schat,’ zei de vrouw, ‘want zij die hier dagen alleen blijven zullen het kasteel uitmoeten, en aan de honden overgeleverd zijn.’

‘Pardon ?’ zei de man. ‘Wie bepaald dat ? Ik mocht hier voorlopig blijven, en ik hoop dan weer naar huis te kunnen gaan. Ik zal zeker de dood van mijn geliefde moeten verwerken in een diepgaand rouwproces.’

De vrouw begon te lachen. ‘Er is geen weg meer terug. Elke dag groeit het aantal honden. Ze hokken hier snel, en daar valt echt niet tegen op te jagen. Zij van het huisje zijn allang dood. De heer van het kasteel zal het niet toestaan dat je hier nog iets langer blijft dan een paar dagen, tenzij je een nieuw maatje vindt.’

‘Hoe bedoel je ?’ vroeg de man. ‘Hoe kan het dat zij die van het huisje zijn allang dood zijn ? En wie is de heer van het kasteel ?’

Weer begon de vrouw te lachen, en omhelsde de man naast haar nog een keer, en zei terwijl ze hem kustte : ‘Er is alleen leven mogelijk in het kasteel. De rest is aan de honden overgeleverd. Ze zullen het echt niet lang volhouden, en tenslotte zijn ze al jaren dood .... hahaha .... Er is geen ontsnapping mogelijk uit het kasteel .... Tenzij je voer voor honden wil zijn ...’

De man draaide zich om, wilde weglopen, maar vroeg toen : ‘Waar kan ik dat maatje vinden ?’

Maar de man en de vrouw die met elkaar waren zeiden niets meer. De man liep weg, en na een lange tocht door het kasteel kwam hij in een andere toren terecht waar hij een vrouw in een kamer zag liggen. De vrouw was omringd door honden. De man schrok. ‘Ze zijn maar opgezet hoor,’ zei de vrouw. De man haalde diep adem. Als dit zijn maatje moest zijn, dan ging de man nog liever gewoon dood. De vrouw had iets arrogants over haar, en iets dominants. Ze leek totaal niet op zijn vorig liefje. Na een lange zwerftocht door het kasteel kwam hij in een andere toren waar een andere vrouw zat. Hij moest nu snel

beslissen, tenzij alles wat die andere vrouw had gezegd een leugen was. ‘Pardon ?’ vroeg de man. ‘Wie is de heer van het kasteel, en wat zijn zijn bedoelingen ?’

De vrouw begon te glimlachen. ‘Wat heb je er voor beeld bij ? Wie denk je ?’ Toen vertelde de man het hele verhaal, terwijl de vrouw in lachen uitbarstte. ‘Nou, deels is het wel waar, maar als je geen maatje vind, dan wordt je niet uit het kasteel gezet voor de honden .... Nee, het is allemaal veel erger .... Dan zal de heer van het kasteel zelf met je afrekenen ....’

De man schrok. Wat kon hij verwachtten ? Wie was die heer van het kasteel, en wat zou hij doen ? De vrouw schudde met haar hoofd van het lachen, en de man begon zich heel ongemakkelijk te voelen. ‘Uit hoeveel vrouwen kan ik kiezen, en voor wanneer moet dat gebeuren ?’ vroeg de man. De vrouw wees op een poster waarop de meest verschrikkelijke vrouwen stonden vol prestige, verwaandheid en tuttigheid. Hij kon zich geen vreemder gezelschap bedenken. ‘Nou, lever me dan maar over aan die heer van het kasteel,’ zei de man. De vrouw greep de man, deed hem handboeien om, en leidde hem naar een donkere kamer waarin een oude man zat. ‘Zo,’ zei de oude man, ‘ik neem aan dat je geen keuze kon maken ? Goed,

dan zul je geworpen worden in de vrouwenput waar de armste en vieste vrouwen leven.’

‘Alles beter dan dat tuig op die poster,’ zei de man.

De man werd naar een put geleid, en daar ingeworpen, waardoor hij helemaal onder de modder kwam te zitten. De oude man begon te lachen, en ook de vrouw. Even later kwamen er nog meer vrouwen om de put heenstaan om de man uit te lachen. De vrouwen in de put leken op holbewoners, en de man keek recht in allerlei gangen die bereikt konden worden vanuit de put. Hier leefden de vrouwen. De man kreeg erge medelijden met hen. De vrouwen waren zo paranoïde en zo depressief dat ze hem niet bij hen lieten. De man besloot maar in het midden van de put te blijven.

Hier leidde hij een eenzaam bestaan. Elke dag werd hem voedsel toegeworpen. Hij dacht terug aan de honden, en wilde dat hij door de honden zou zijn verscheurd, maar hier waren geen honden, en hij moest leven met zijn wonden. Hij begreep dit kasteel niet. Totdat de oude man hem op een dag uit de put liet komen.

‘Wie zijn die vrouwen, wat heb je met hen gedaan ? Ze zijn wild en onbereikbaar,’ vroeg de man.

‘Maar ze hebben je al die tijd in leven gelaten,’ zei de oude

man.

‘Ik had liever dat ze me hadden verscheurd, want het is daar geen leven. Ik ben nog liever dood,’ zei de man.

‘Ik zal je vertellen wie zij zijn,’ zei de oude man. ‘Eens werden ook zij door honden nagejaagd, en kwamen hier terecht, en vonden geen maatje.’

‘Waarom hebt u mij nu uit de put gehaald ?’ vroeg de man.

‘Omdat ik hoopte dat je je maatje in de put zou vinden,’ zei de oude man.

Toen werd de man in een ander put geworpen. Deze put was veel dieper, en hij gleed helemaal door de modder door allerlei gangen heen, totdat hij in een grote modderpoel terechtkwam. Hier was niemand, en hij begon een lange tocht onder de grond, totdat hij uiteindelijk uitkwam op een plek dichtbij zijn huis. Hij was blij dat hij het nare uitstapje naar het bos had overleefd. Hij zou nooit meer teruggaan naar het bos. Wel moest hij aan zijn geliefde denken, die hij in het bos had verloren. Thuisgekomen kreeg hij de schrik van zijn leven toen hij zijn liefje gewoon in bed zag liggen. Hij maakte haar wakker, en vertelde wat er was gebeurd. ‘Ik was helemaal niet met je in het bos,’ zei de vrouw. ‘En honden ? Ik weet niks van honden.’ De man staat voor een raadsel. Zou hij

het maar gedroomd hebben ?

Einde

Wilde Honden II

Een man en een vrouw waren in het bos. Na een tijdje werd hun rust verstoord door geblaf van honden in de verte. Het geblaf begon dichter bij te komen, en de man en de vrouw begonnen bang te worden. Snel pakten ze hun spullen en renden van het geluid vandaan. Ze renden tussen de bomen en door struikjes heen, en kwamen na een lange tocht in een klein hutje terecht. Hier besloten ze te rusten, maar al snel hadden de honden hen gevonden. De honden waren woest, en probeerden door de deur en de ramen binnen te komen, maar gelukkig zat alles dicht. Maar meer en meer honden leken het hutje te omsingelen, en probeerden de deur open te krijgen. Overal om hen heen hoorden ze gekras. De honden probeerden een opening in het hutje te krijgen. Ze wisten dat ze niet meer konden vluchten, en ze wisten ook dat ze het niet overleefden als de honden erin zouden slagen binnen te komen. Daarom besloten ze maar gewoon verder te gaan met hun liefkozen. Misschien was het wel de laatste keer. Hun harten gingen tekeer van angst. Ze kusten elkaar. Toen brak de muur open, en de honden stortten zich op de liefkozende man en vrouw. Ze werden allebei flink

gebeten. Onder het bloed strompelde de man weg, terwijl de vrouw gegrepen werd. De honden sleurden de vrouw mee naar hun hol, terwijl de man kon ontsnappen.

Gelukkig lieten ze de vrouw in leven, alhoewel ze erg verwond was. Ze moest nu eten wat de honden haar brachten, en leefde sindsdien in gevangenschap. De man hield veel verschrikkelijke littekens aan de vechtpartij over, en dacht daarbij dat hij haar verloren had. Maar op een dag ontdekte een wandelaar de gevangenschap van de vrouw, en ook kwam de man het al snel te weten. Ze besloten een hele goede jager vanuit het buitenland over te laten komen om de honden uit te schakelen. Dat lukte deels, maar de laatste hond viel de jager aan. De jager kwam om het leven, en de hond ging terug naar zijn prooi in het hol. De hond verkrachtte de vrouw, en na een tijdje baarde de vrouw twee honden. De vrouw voelde zich zo vies dat ze nooit meer naar de samenleving terugwilde. Ze vonden haar na vele jaren toen de honden alledrie al dood waren. De vrouw was paranoïde en herkende de man niet eens meer. Ook sprak ze haar taal niet meer.

De vrouw begon agressief gedrag te vertonen, en iedereen vertrok. Ze moesten de keuze van de vrouw respecteren. Maar op een dag, vele jaren later, stond de vrouw ineens

bij de man voor de deur. Ze leek hem nu wel weer te herkennen, en toen hij opendeed duwde ze hem zachtjes naar binnen. Ze gingen naar de kamer en ze omhelsde hem. Achter hen hing een schilderij van wilde honden, en als wilde honden omhelsden ze elkaar. Maar naar het gevaarlijke bos zouden ze nooit meer teruggaan.

Einde

Wilde Honden III - De Wilde Hond

Ze woelde in haar slaap als een wilde hond.
Ze zou degene die haar man om het leven had gebracht wel willen aanvallen en hard bijten,
Ze droeg de littekens ervan op haar hart.
In haar dromen ging ze op jacht, op zoek naar de moordenaar van haar man,
maar zonder resultaat. En zo was het ook in het dagelijks leven.
Zij moest met deze wond leven.
Ze leefde als een wilde hond.
De dominee kwam haar vaak opzoeken,
En dan las hij voor uit gedichtenboeken, of hij vertelde verhalen,
Door de dominee kwam ze er doorheen.
De gesprekken inspireerden haar, en gaven haar rust, als een veilige haven.
Maar als hij weg was, dan had ze het moeilijk.
Gelukkig kwam de dominee vaak, heel vaak.
Ze ging niet naar de kerk, nee,
Daar deden ze te moeilijk,
Maar voor de dominee had ze een zwak.

Hij worstelde zelf ook met een aantal dingen.
De dominee was altijd haar steun en toeverlaat.
Ze woelde in haar slaap,
Ze dacht aan de dominee en haar man die dood was,
De dader was nooit gevonden, maar hij was om het leven gebracht door messteken,
In haar gedachten was zij altijd op zoek, altijd op jacht,
Nooit had ze rust, alleen als de dominee er was.
Op een dag nam hij haar mee naar een sprookjespark,
Ze kon zo alles een beetje relativeren aan de hand van sprookjes,
En aan het einde van de dag nam hij haar mee naar een restaurant.
Het was een Oosters restaurant met vreemde plaatjes aan de muur.
Een andere keer nam hij haar mee naar een restaurant met jachtplaatjes aan de muur.
Op sommige plaatjes stonden wilde honden,
Al zou het alleen maar gaan om deze plaatjes te zien, dan zou ze naar het restaurant gaan,
Het inspireerde haar, want voor haar waren de wilde honden een beeld van gerechtigheid,
En ze had het gevoel alsof er geen gerechtigheid was op

aarde.
De wilde honden waren voor haar een beeld van de hemel,
Hun jacht zou wel slagen.
De dominee legde haar uit dat de wilde hond een metafoor is van wat we niet begrijpen,
We zijn op zoek, maar we vinden het niet,
Dat wat we verloren hebben krijgen we niet terug,
Maar op een dag zullen we het wel begrijpen,
En dan kunnen we pas echt zeggen dat de jacht geslaagd is,
Als wij zelf gegrepen zijn door de wilde hond.

Wilde honden joegen in de nacht. Het was een onbekend soort. Ze waren wilder dan hyena's. Een stadje werd door hen geteisterd. De wetenschap stond voor een raadsel. Waar waren die wilde honden vandaan gekomen ?
Een dominee bezoekt een man die zijn vrouw had verloren. De dominee gebruikte de illustratie van de wilde honden. "Wilde honden jagen in de nacht. Zij namen je vrouw, en zij is nu één van hen."
"Dat is geen lekker idee," zei de man. "Ik dacht dat ze in de hemel was."
"De hemel is onbekend," zei de dominee. "Niemand weet precies hoe het zit. Het is slechts gespeculeer."
Die nacht droomde de man dat hij en zijn vrouw de liefde bedreven. Plotseling veranderde ze in een wilde hond en rende weg. De man schrok wakker en greep om zich heen. Misschien had de dominee toch gelijk gehad ?
Toen hij het de volgende dag aan de dominee vertelde moest de dominee glimlachen. "Zie, ik zei het je toch ? Maar het is maar symbolisch, en dromen zijn vaak bedrog."
"Ja, maar het was net echt," zei de man, "alsof ik weer

even contact met haar was, en het was goed. Ik denk dat ze terug is gegaan naar de natuur."
"Ik denk het ook," zei de dominee. "En nog eens wat : Er zijn veel vrouwen vrijgezel in de kerk. Grijp je kans zou ik zeggen."
"Het zit nog veel te diep," zei de man. "Ik kan het allemaal nog maar moeilijk verwerken."
"Maar een nieuwe vrouw zou het je kunnen laten verwerken," zei de dominee.
Die nacht had de man een droom dat ook vrouwen om hem heen in wilde honden veranderden. Nu stond het idee om een nieuwe vrouw te nemen hem helemaal niet meer aan, want het zou hem weer pijn gaan doen. De dominee noemde het bindings-angst. De dominee begreep hem goed, maar zei ook dat zo het leven was, te leren leven met ontvangen en verliezen. De dominee haalde een tekst aan uit het boek Job : "De Heere heeft gegeven, de Heere heeft genomen. De Naam van de Heere zij geprezen."
De dominee was voor de man een rots in de branding. De wilde honden waren steeds in het nieuws, en de man bleef er bij bepaald. Telkens moest hij weer aan zijn vrouw denken, die in principe gewoon was meegenomen door de wilde honden. Er kwam een bos-verbod vanwege de wilde

honden. De dominee zei dat het een stukje natuur was.
"Waarom komt er geen kerk-verbod vanwege wilde vrouwen in de kerk ?" vroeg de man. De dominee begon te lachen. "Jij bent me ook een mooie, grapjas."
"Nee, ik meen het," zei de man. "Een nieuwe vrouw hebben zal al lastig zijn, en helemaal als ik ze weer verlies."
"Zo is het leven," zei de dominee, "en je moet toch wat."
"Ik blijf liever alleen, uit het bos, en uit de kerk," zei de man.
"Je kan wel naar de kerk gaan, maar dan gewoon uit de buurt van de wilde honden blijven," zei de dominee.
"Nee, ik ken de natuur van de wilde honden," zei de man. "Ze zullen me echt wel krijgen."
"Dan ben ik gewoon je kerk," zei de dominee. "Waar twee of drie vergaderd zijn is er al een kerk, en je bent zelf een kerk."
"Dat is een mooie, rustgevende gedachte," zei de man. Even voelde hij zo'n diepe liefde voor de dominee dat hij dacht dat hij verliefd op hem was. Hij liep naar de dominee toe en omhelsde hem. "Bedankt man," zei hij. "Je betekent de wereld voor mij."
De dominee hield hem stevig vast.

De man was bang voor de liefde, de wilde honden van de liefde, die hem zo zouden kunnen verscheuren. Hij bleef liever op een afstand om zo de wilde honden veilig te kunnen bestuderen.
Die nacht had hij weer een droom over zijn vrouw. Weer veranderde ze in een wilde hond, en begon naar hem te grommen, en plotseling beet ze hem. Hij vroeg zich af wat zij van hem wilde. De dag erna bleef hij erover nadenken. Was het een boodschap van haar. Wilde zij misschien dat hij weer terug zou gaan naar de kerk, of een nieuwe vrouw zou nemen ? Schijnbaar was ze ontevreden over iets.
Hij vertelde de droom aan de dominee. "Ik zou dat zo zeker niet zien," zei de dominee. "Het is een beeld van de liefde. Ze heeft je opgezocht, en greep je beet, en het doet pijn, omdat ze er niet meer is. Telkens zal het pijn doen als je met haar bezig bent, alsof ze bijt. Het is het gemis, de onmacht. Nu draag je de littekens van de liefde, de littekens van haar liefdesbeet."
"Oh, dominee, dat is bijna te mooi om waar te zijn," zei de man.
Die nacht was er een overstroming waarin vele mensen het leven verloren. De grote rivier was uit haar bedding getreden. De dominee zei : "De wilde honden zijn

gekomen. Ze hebben velen meegenomen."
"Weer liefdeslittekens ?" vroeg de man.
"Weer liefdeslittekens," zei de dominee.

Ze had bruinleren riemen omgord om haar lichaam. Ze reed op een groot wild zwijn met een dikke bruin-harige vacht. Ze trok mij mee, met een lasso om mijn nek. Ze sprak een zin uit in een wilde taal en ik vroeg me af wat het betekende. Later bleek het haar naam te zijn. ‘Meekomen jij,’ zei ze toen. ‘Jij voor ons werken.’ Ze vertelde dat haar stam de K’w heette. Ik was onder de modder, en zag de andere jongens niet meer.
‘Nee, dit is zo goor,’ zei ik.
‘Je bent gore knul,’ zei ze toen. We kwamen later aan bij een kamp waar nog meer vrouwen waren. Ze keken mij vijandig aan. Ze spraken allemaal weer lange zinnen uit in een wilde taal, die hun namen schenen te zijn. Toen werd ik in elkaar getrapt.
Ik werd wakker in een tent. Ik kon me niet bewegen. Ik zat onder de blauwe plekken en verwondingen. Ik was goed bewusteloos geweest. Ik wist dat ze wilden dat ik voor ze zou werken. Wat ik precies zou moeten doen wist ik niet. Heel voorzichtig probeerde ik te bewegen, wat maar nauwelijks lukte. Na een tijdje lukte het me om door de tent opening te kijken, en daar zag ik de andere jongens.

Ook zag ik hoe er al enkelen in elkaar getrapt waren. Een voor een werden ze in elkaar getrapt.
‘Dit is verschrikkelijk,’ dacht ik. Ik zag ook hoe ze varkens braadden, en hoe ze gierden van het lachen. Ik vroeg me af wat er te lachen viel, maar ze waren de jongens gewoon aan het bespotten. Het waren jongens van mijn kamp. Waarschijnlijk zouden zij ook voor hen moeten werken, als ze het zouden overleven. Misschien dat de wilde vrouwen daarom zo blij waren. De wilde vrouwen hadden allemaal donkere huiden, terwijl wij blank waren. Een vrouw kwam de tent binnen. Ze had een soort rokje of slipje van vissegraten. Ze had ook een mes, en wat gevangen vissen. Waarschijnlijk was het haar tent. Zij sprak ook een lange zin uit in de wilde taal, wat haar naam bleek te zijn. ‘Oh, jij werken,’ zei ze toen.
Ik zei dat ik ziek was, in elkaar getrapt. Ze begon me uit te lachen. ‘Oh, gaat dat zo ?’ zei ik. ‘Ik kan beter niks meer zeggen.’
‘Jij spreken als je moet spreken,’ zei ze toen. ‘Wij zijn de K’w.’
‘Nou en ?’ vroeg ik. Ik kreunde nog een beetje van de pijn. Ik vroeg me direct af hoe ik zo dom kon zijn om zo tegen haar te spreken. Maar ze zei niks en liep toen weg.

Er kwam een andere vrouw in de tent. ‘Jij werken,’ zei ze.
Ik zei : ‘Ik kan niet, want jullie hebben me daarnet in elkaar getrapt.’ Ik snapte niet dat ze dat niet begrepen. Toen kwam er nog een andere vrouw bij. ‘Later dan,’ zeiden ze. Ze bleven me maar aanstaren. Ik was flink verwond, en had het gevoel dat ik overal kneuzingen had, en in het ergste geval had ik wat gebroken. Ook ik keek ze aan. Een van de vrouwen had een pijl en boog. Ik keek weer naar buiten. Dichtbij de tent waren wat vrouwen die waren uitgedost met veren, pluimen. Weer zag ik hoe ze een jongen in elkaar trapten. Hij gilde en schreeuwde, totdat het stil was en hij op de grond lag. ‘Hoe bizar,’ dacht ik bij mezelf. ‘Ze willen dat we voor hen werken, maar ze trappen ons in elkaar.’ Ik begreep er niets van. Deze vrouwen moesten wel zwaar gek zijn. Ik beklaagde mijn lot.
Zwaar gek waren de K’w, met hun lange namen. Hele verhalen konden ze opsommen en dat bleek dan hun namen te zijn. Idioten waren het, maar ik en de andere jongens konden niets doen. We waren geheel aan hun genade overgeleverd.
De K’w was een wrede stam, een wreed volk, maar gelukkig lieten ze me verder die dag met rust, alhoewel in

de nacht wel de vissersvrouw terugkwam om in de tent te slapen. Gelukkig raakte ze me niet aan. Zij lag aan de ene kant van de tent, en ik aan de andere kant. Ze was bloedmooi, dat wel, maar deze vrouwen hadden een gemeen karakter, belachelijk gewoon. Alhoewel ik me daarna in mijn gedachten probeerde te herstellen. Misschien had het een reden waarom ze zo waren, een reden die ik nog niet kende. Ik had een soort medelijden met ze, en probeerde ze in gedachten te verdedigen. Misschien was dat wel een gevangenschaps syndroom van me. Toch hoopte ik dat ze ver weg van me zou blijven, en ik dacht al aan manieren om te ontsnappen, maar ik was te zwak en verwond. Ik had echt het gevoel alsof er iets gebroken was, misschien wel mijn rug. Ik kon me nog steeds moeilijk bewegen, en alles deed pijn, vooral als ik het bewoog, en dan kreunde ik. Ik wilde haar verder niet wakker maken. Ze lag daar gewoon bloot op een zwijnenvacht of varkensvacht. Haar rokje of jurkje van vissengraten had ze uitgedaan.

De dag erna kreeg ik soep, en ik voelde me weer wat beter. Ik kreeg hoop voor de ontsnapping. Ik keek uit de tent en zag een jongen met een gesel geslagen worden. Even werd ik daar moedeloos van, maar toen sprak ik mezelf moed

in. Ze geselden hem totdat hij bloedde.
‘Wat een verschrikkingen,’ dacht ik. Ik vroeg me af wat hij gedaan had, of misschien had hij wel helemaal niks gedaan. Of misschien had hij wel geprobeerd te ontsnappen. Hoe dan ook wilde ik weg. Vrouwen kwamen mijn tent binnen. ‘Werken,’ zeiden ze toen. Ik kon me wel weer wat bewegen, maar had nog wat pijn. ‘Wat moet ik doen ?’ vroeg ik. Ik moest manden weven, en allerlei ander huishoudelijk werk. Het lukte maar nauwelijks, maar ik deed het toch.
Ik vond het verschrikkelijke vrouwen. Maar ik mocht van geluk spreken dat ik nog leefde. Soms kwam de vissersvrouw in de tent, vooral ‘s nachts om te slapen. Ze negeerde mij gewoon de hele tijd als ze er was, alsof ik niet bestond. Moest ik er blij om zijn of niet ? Ik voelde me er in ieder geval vreemd over. Ze keek me gewoon niet aan. Op een nacht kwam ze de tent in om te slapen en ik vroeg haar : ‘Vind je het niet erg dat ik de tent met je deel ?’ Even was het stil. ‘Ja,’ zei ze toen, ‘maar jij hier om te werken.’ Ze begon toen zacht te zingen, en ik kreeg kriebels in mijn buik. Ze was natuurlijk een vrouw, en in ons eigen kamp hadden we geen vrouwen. Het waren natuurlijk hele onverschillige, meedogenloze vrouwen,

maar ik probeerde dat in mezelf goed te praten, en misschien was dat wel typisch het gevangenschaps syndroom. Ik bewonderde haar ook. Misschien was het gewoon mijn dankbaarheid naar hen dat ik nog in leven was.

Na het zingen, wat best wel lang duurde, stopte ze ineens, en zei : ‘Je bent niet echt slim,’ en toen draaide ze zich met haar rug naar mij toe, en ging slapen. ‘Wat bedoel je ?’ vroeg ik. ‘Had ik met je mee moeten zingen ?’

‘Nee, jij bent domme man,’ zei ze toen.

Ik zei dat ik niet wist waar ze het over had. De dagen erna begonnen ook andere vrouwen het te zeggen, ook dat ik gek was. Maar dat zeiden ze ook tegen de andere jongens dat ze gek waren. ‘Gekken noemen anderen altijd gek,’ dacht ik bij mezelf. Ze hielden ervan ons belachelijk te maken, te bespotten. Op een dag toen de kust veilig leek en ik weer sterk genoeg was ben ik gevlucht, maar ik kreeg al snel een pijl in mijn rug, en werd even later weer wakker in de tent, ook weer helemaal onder de blauwe plekken en met snijwonden. Giechelend kwam de vissersvrouw die nacht de tent in. Ik kon me niet bewegen. Alles deed pijn, en ik was duizelig. ‘Ik kan alles met je doen,’ zei ze toen.

‘Nee, alsjeblieft,’ kreunde ik toen.
‘Je hebt het er wel naar gemaakt,’ zei ze.
‘t Spijt me,’ zei ik. ‘Het zal niet meer gebeuren.’
Ze lachte. ‘Je hebt je kans verbruikt,’ zei ze. ‘Je bent nu mijn persoonlijke eigendom, niet meer slechts van het kamp.’
‘Wat houd dat in ?’ kreunde ik.
Maar ze zei niets en begon te zingen. ‘Niet doen,’ kreunde ik, ‘ik kan niet tegen die stem.’ Maar ze ging gewoon door. Daarna ging ze slapen.
De volgende dag werden we allemaal in kooien op karren gezet, en zouden ze ons in een meer dumpen. Dat we dan zouden verdrinken kon hun niet schelen. Ze wilden blijkbaar van ons af. Ze trokken de karren met de kooien tot het meer, ook de kooi waarin ze mij hadden gestopt, en toen lieten ze de kooi van de kar af in het water glijden. Ik ging al snel kopje onder, en vanaf toen kon ik het niet meer herinneren. Ik werd wakker in mijn eigen tent van ons eigen kamp. Een van de jongens streelde door mijn haar. ‘Wat is er gebeurd ?’ vroeg ik. ‘Leef ik nog of ben ik al dood ? Of was alles een droom ?’ Hij zei niets. Tranen bungelden over zijn wangen. Even later zei hij : ‘Mijn kooi zat los, ik kon ontsnappen. Jij bent de enige die ik

heb kunnen redden.’ Hij nam mij in zijn armen en hij kuste mij op mijn voorhoofd. Toen kuste hij mij op mijn lippen. Ik proefde zijn tranen. ‘Dus wij zijn de enigen die zijn overgebleven ?’ vroeg ik. Hij knikte. ‘Maar voor hoe lang dat zal zijn weet ik niet.’

‘Wat moeten we doen ?’ vroeg ik, terwijl ik hem terugkuste.

‘Waarschijnlijk hebben we van de K’w niets meer te vrezen,’ antwoordde de jongen. ‘Zij wilden immers van ons af.’

‘Tenzij ze erachter komen dat we nog leven,’ zei ik. ‘Misschien zullen ze dan nog wel ergere dingen met ons doen.’

‘Laten we het niet hopen,’ zei hij.

‘We zijn niet veilig hier,’ zei ik. Toen ik wat hersteld was braken we de tent op, en trokken verder. ‘Ik wilde haar,’ zei de jongen, ‘die vrouw in wiens tent ik sliep.’

‘Wat was het voor iemand ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Zo iemand vol van leedvermaak,’ zei hij.

‘Waarom wilde je haar dan ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Ik weet het niet,’ zei hij. ‘Misschien om te kunnen overleven.’

‘Oh ja, het gevangenschaps syndroom,’ zei ik.

‘Noemen ze dat zo ?’ vroeg de jongen.
Ik knikte.
‘Waar doen we het nog voor ?’ vroeg de jongen. ‘Straks worden we weer gevangen genomen.’
‘Laten we hopen van niet,’ zei ik. ‘Ik kreeg zelf ook de kriebels in mijn buik van de vrouw waarbij ik in de tent sliep.’
‘Heb je met haar geslapen ?’ vroeg hij.
‘Nee,’ zei ik, ‘en jij ?’
‘Nee,’ zei hij.
‘Het waren vreemde vrouwen,’ zei ik.
‘Dat kun je wel zeggen,’ zei hij.
‘Zou je wel met zo’n vrouw willen trouwen ?’ vroeg hij toen.
‘Ikke niet,’ zei ik.
‘Ik wel,’ zei hij. ‘Nu zijn we eenzaam en alleen, misschien niet eens met het vermogen om te overleven, terwijl we daar nog een kans zouden maken.’
Ik sloeg hem in zijn gezicht. ‘Een kans ?’ riep ik. ‘Ze hebben ons geprobeerd te verdrinken, weet je nog ? We zijn de enigen die het hebben overleefd, en jij wil met zo’n figuur trouwen.’
Hij zuchtte. ‘Wat moeten we dan ? Dit is ook geen leven.

Misschien was het beter dat we dood waren.'
'Ach kom,' zei ik. 'De dood is een ongewilde gast.'
'Ik wil weer naar ze terug,' zei de jongen. 'Gewoon proberen. In het ergste geval ga ik dood, vermoorden ze me, of als ik geluk heb nemen ze me dit keer op, en mag ik met een van hen trouwen.'
'Je bent een belachelijke idioot,' zei ik, 'net als hen. Maar goed, als je het wil, dan doe je dat maar. Ik zal van een afstand toekijken, en als ik je nog kan redden dan zal ik dat doen, want jij hebt immers ook mijn leven gered.'
En zo gingen we terug. Ik bleef op een afstand. Ik bleef naar hem kijken, hoe hij op hun kamp afliep. Ik riep nog : 'Niet doen ! Doe het niet ! Doe het niet !' want ik zag ze al komen met pijl en boog. Een pijl ging toen recht door zijn borstkas heen niet lang daarna, en ik moest rennen voor mijn leven. De pijlen vlogen om mijn oren. Ik dook het meertje in, en ging onder water, en zwom zo ver als ik kon, mijn adem inhoudende. Soms moest ik weer naar boven om weer diep adem te halen, en zo kon ik uiteindelijk voor een tweede keer ontsnappen, maar dit keer helemaal alleen, als de laatste overgebleven van het jongens kamp. Ik verweet het mezelf dat ik niet meer had gedaan om hem niet terug te laten gaan, maar ik begreep

het ook wel. Nu moest ik in mijn eentje zien te overleven. In mijn gedachten en dromen altijd achterna gejaagd door de K’w.

Toen Golem de velden betrad die hij aantrof na een lange reis door de wildernis, zag hij in de verte vrouwen op paarden rijden. Het leek alsof ze aan het jagen waren of zoiets, maar Golem wist het niet zeker. De vrouwen van dit land waren vreemd, niet zoals andere vrouwen die Golem in andere districten ontmoette. Ze waren nog steeds in de verte, maar Golem zag al dat ze anders waren. Hij pakte zijn boog en een pijl, terwijl een paar vrouwen hem al hadden opgemerkt, en kwam dichterbij. Een stapte van haar paard af en besloot naar hem toe te lopen. De vrouw sprak niet en ze zag eruit alsof ze ver weg was in zichzelf. In de verte schreeuwden enkele vrouwen. Ze hadden een jong hert gevangen en probeerden het te doden. Golem richtte zijn pijl op een van de vrouwen en schoot haar van haar paard af. De andere vrouwen begonnen woedend te worden op Golem.

Plotseling grepen sterke armen hem van achteren en duwden hem op de grond. Een ander schopte hem een paar keer hard tegen het hoofd en al snel verloor Golem het bewustzijn. Toen hij wakker werd, was hij vastgebonden aan een paal. Een paar donkere ogen keken hem strak aan

en toen spuugde ze hem in het gezicht. Ze wreef met haar hand over zijn lichaam, en toen deed ze wat modder op zijn lichaam. Een andere vrouw legde een mes tegen zijn keel.
Het jonge hert lag ergens dicht bij hem en bloedde dood. Sommige vrouwen dronken van het bloed en hadden er rode monden en gezichten van. Golem spuugde een van hen in het gezicht terwijl ze dicht bij hem kwam. Deze vrouwen waren verloren, en waarschijnlijk verdoemd door het gewone leven. Wie waren ze, en waarom woonden ze hier zo. Waren ze verbannen ?
Een oude vrouw kwam dicht bij Golem. Ze bespotte hem en hief haar handen op en maakte vreemde bewegingen. 'Vannacht zul je sterven, gevangene,' zei ze.
'Wat als ik jullie allemaal uitroei en je vreemde kamp platbrand?' zei Golem als een mogelijkheid. Toen spuugde de oude vrouw hem in het gezicht en vertrok. Daarna kwam ze terug met een mes en al snel bloedde Golem overal. Toen kwam er plotseling een groep vrouwen terug van een jacht. Ze hadden een bizon gevangen en al snel begonnen ze de bizon te slachten voor zijn vlees en huid.
Na een tijdje dwongen ze Golem om van het vlees te eten. Golem wilde niet eten, maar toen sloegen ze hem zo hard

op zijn hoofd dat hij duizelig werd, en zich ziek voelende begon hij te eten. De vrouwen maakten veel lawaai, maar Golem was ver weg, hij hoorde ze bijna niet meer.
Een vrouw stond voor hem en smeerde bizonbloed op hem, terwijl zij het ook op zichzelf smeerde. Golem wist niet wat voor spelletjes ze speelden, maar hij nam aan dat dit hun traditie was. Toen het avond was begonnen ze rond zijn paal te dansen, hun messen, bijlen en tomahawks in de lucht. Nooit eerder hoorde Golem zo'n gekrijs en geschreeuw. De maan verscheen en enkele vrouwen bogen. Golem had hoofdpijn.
Plotseling hoorde hij een paar schoten en enkele vrouwen die dicht bij hem stonden vielen neer. Een jager met een baard kwam naar voren. Huilend en schreeuwend renden de andere vrouwen de struiken in. De jager maakte Golem los. Hij vertelde Golem dat hij dicht bij het vrouwenkamp woonde om hen in de gaten te houden. Ze waren bang voor hem, omdat ze dachten dat hij een soort god was, vanwege zijn geweer. Ze noemden hem de donderman.
De jager nam Golem mee naar zijn huis en zei dat hij geluk had, want de vrouwen zouden geen genade met hem hebben. Golem vroeg de man waarom ze ze niet konden uitroeien, omdat ze gevaarlijk waren in zijn ogen. Maar de

jager zei dat de vrouwen ziek waren. Ze waren uit hun stam verbannen vanwege psychische aandoeningen, en ze vormden hun eigen stam. Ze zijn verbitterd jegens alle levende wezens vanwege wat hun stammen hen hebben aangedaan. Meestal moesten ze eerst leven in afwijzing, dag in dag uit bespot door anderen. Zelfs als ze in het begin niet mentaal niet in orde zouden zijn, zouden ze het later worden vanwege de minachting. Nu moesten de meesten van hen tijden van misbruik ondergaan voordat ze uiteindelijk werden verbannen, en daarom zijn ze nu vol haat, en erg bloeddorstig en vol wrede manieren. Meestal overleeft niemand het vallen in de handen van deze verloren vrouwen.

Golem voelde nog steeds de haat ademen in zijn nek. Hij wenste dat hij de vrouwen kon helpen. Maar de jager zei hem dat hij het beter op kon geven. Deze vrouwen waren te diep verwond. Ze zouden nooit veranderen. Het enige wat ze wilden was wraak, om al het leven om hen heen te vernietigen.

Op een nacht keerde Golem terug naar het kamp. Hij kroop in een van de tenten waar een vrouw sliep. Hij kroop onder de huid waar ze onder sliep en begon haar te verwarmen. De vrouw nam hem in haar armen en

fluisterde: 'Wie ben jij?'
'Dat maakt niet uit,' fluisterde Golem, 'ik wil gewoon dat je weet dat je niet door mij wordt afgewezen.' Maar plotseling schopte de vrouw hem heel hard bij haar weg. Golem werd duizelig door de aanval. Het was niet zo'n goed idee om de vrouwen zo te helpen. De vrouw begon te schreeuwen en Golem moest heel snel het kamp verlaten, anders zouden ze hem krijgen. De dag erna vertelde hij de jager wat hij had gedaan.
De dag erna vertelde hij de jager wat hij had gedaan. De jager berispte hem en waarschuwde hem dat als hij zoiets nog een keer zou doen, het zijn dood zou betekenen.
Maar de volgende nacht ging hij weer naar het kamp, en nu ging hij naar een andere tent. Daar lagen twee vrouwen, en weer kroop hij onder de huid waar ze onder sliepen, maar deze keer deed hij niets. Hij moest alleen oppassen dat hij niet in slaap zou vallen. Plotseling voelde hij een arm van een van de vrouwen. De arm was erg warm en Golem genoot ervan, maar tegelijkertijd werd hij bang. Na een tijdje nam de vrouw haar arm terug en Golem kon weer ademen. Langzaam ging hij de tent uit en verliet het kamp.
De nacht erna ging hij weer, en deze keer ging hij naar nog

een andere tent. Hier lagen veel vrouwen te slapen. Het was een grotere tent dan de andere. Hij kon het dreigende klimaat van haat waarnemen in deze tent, hoewel ze niet wisten dat hij er was.
Hij ging tussen twee vrouwen liggen en al snel rolden ze naar hem toe. Het was alsof ze de warmte voelden, maar ze wisten niet dat hij een indringer was. Golem wist dat hij zich in een gevaarlijke positie bevond. Hij voelde hun benen over zijn benen glijden en hun hoofden kwamen dichter bij zijn hoofd. Plots legde een van de vrouwen haar hoofd op zijn borst. Golems hart klopte snel. Na een tijdje rolden de vrouwen naar de andere kant en langzaam kroop Golem de tent uit om eindelijk het kamp weer te verlaten.
Het was alsof ze zo aan zijn warmte en nabijheid begonnen te wennen, maar als ze wisten dat hij niet een van hen was, zouden ze hem waarschijnlijk op hun wrede manier afmaken.
De jager vertelde over de rituelen van deze vrouwen, wat een lange traditie was om hen te helpen met hun verleden te kunnen omgaan. Het was erg wreed, maar ze hadden geen andere manier om hun trauma's te overleven.
De jager vertelde hem dat hij nooit vrienden met hen kon worden, omdat ze anderen en zichzelf te veel haatten om

van zoiets te genieten. Golem wist dat hij alleen dicht bij deze vrouwen kon komen om ze van zijn warmte te laten genieten als ze sliepen, als ze niet zouden beseffen dat hij niet een van hen was.

Hij voelde de scherpe pennetjes door de huid boven zijn tepel gaan. Het waren een soort pijltjes, een soort scherpe botjes met kleine veertjes aan weerskanten als kwastjes. Die voelden zacht tegen zijn huid aan, maar de pijltjes waren scherp. Het deed wel even heel erg pijn, maar daarna raakte hij er meer en meer aan gewend. Hij moest een lange trap op bekleed met bruin fluweel of suede. Moeder overste stond op hem te wachten op de hoogste trede. Ze stond bij een groot portaal, een poort. “Je wist dat dit moest, hè ?' sprak ze. 'De pinnen moesten erin, anders zou de bizon je bezeten kunnen maken.' Hij knikte. Samen met haar liep hij door de poort. Ze kwamen in een duister veld waar in de verte de bizons graasden. 'Hier gaat het gebeuren,' sprak ze. Hij kreeg een speer, een pijl en boog met een mes. Ook kreeg hij een net.
'Ik wil niet,' zei hij. Moeder overste stond daar met een gesel. 'De kerk wil het,' sprak ze zelfverzekerd. Hij boog zijn hoofd. Hij wilde de vader-priesters niet teleurstellen, en al helemaal niet moeder overste. Plotseling richtte hij de speer op haar. 'Ik kan het niet !' riep hij. En hij rende weg. Hij voelde zichzelf een banghaas, een grote

mislukkeling. Hij rende de trap af naar zijn kamer. Hij deed de kamer op slot, voor het geval moeder overste achter hem aan zou komen. Ze had altijd die gesel wel, maar had haar die nog nooit zien gebruiken. Moeder overste begreep hem wel. Midden in de nacht kwam hij zijn kamer uit, en ging de trap op om vervolgens door de poort te gaan. Er waren daar een groep vrouwelijke jagers.
'Waar ga jij naartoe ?' vroegen ze.
'Ik wil hier weg,' zei hij. 'Dit is niks voor mij.'
Hij keek de lucht in, waar de nachtzon was verschenen. Er kwamen zoveel bizons uit voort die door de lucht gingen. De lucht leek wel op een grote vlakte met een heleboel velden. 'Waar gaan die naartoe ?' vroeg hij aan de vrouwen.
'Zij zullen de kerk aanvallen,' zeiden de vrouwen serieus en ernstig. In zijn gedachten zag hij moeder overste voor zich. Hij sprong op één van de jachtwagens, en maakte zijn speer klaar. Zo ging hij de nacht in. Hij joeg op de bizons alsof hij op de zon joeg. Gehuld in een bizonkleed kwam hij terug.
'Moeder overste zal trots op je zijn,' zeiden de vrouwen. De volgende dag ging hij naar moeder overste met zijn kleed. Zij nam hem in haar armen. 'Ik ben trots op je,

jongen,' sprak ze. 'Eindelijk heb je jezelf overwonnen. Dat is een hele grote stap. Je bent erg moedig geweest.'
De nacht daarop ging hij weer op jacht, en kwam terug met een bizon-schedel. Die gaf hij aan moeder overste. Moeder overste drukte de schedel tegen zich aan. De dag erna stierf zij. Hij zwoer dat hij voor altijd voor haar en de kerk zou jagen. Hij zou de kerk tot overwinning brengen.
'Iets brandt er in mij, een eeuwige vlam,
Het steekt overal, ik ben zo bang,
Maar niets zal mij stoppen, het duurt al te lang,
Ik zal over haar waken zo lang als ik kan,
Ik ben hiervoor geroepen, terug kan ik niet,
Sinds ik jou vond als mijn beste vriend.'
Hij stond op en liep naar de poort. Hij keek in de lucht, en de nachtzon was vallende, maar er waren meer bizons dan ooit te voren. Het was alsof de jacht nu pas echt begon.

Het was nogal een zwemtocht van het schip naar Suriname. Ik was al zo lang een piraat, en nu wilde ik wel iets anders. Ik wilde vrij zijn. Helemaal uitgeput kwam ik aan op het strand. Ik nam mijn intrede in een hutje voor landlopers. Ik was een zwerver. Mijn piratenkleding was gescheurd. Ik bloedde een beetje vanwege schaafwonden. Het was een lange tocht.

De natuur hier verwelkomde mij met open armen alsof ik een prins was. Het was mijn droom om hier voor altijd te wonen. Ik moest maar leven van de jacht, zodat ik geen rover meer hoefde te zijn. Tot mijn verbazing volgde het schip mij na, en ook mijn piratenmakkers besloten hier te gaan wonen, te stoppen met roven, om zo voor de jacht te leven. Dat was toch een stuk netter.

We hadden het hier goed naar ons zin. Elke dag zee, en een jungle vol met voedsel, goed voedsel. Op een dag kwam er een vrouw bij ons wonen. Ze maakte nieuwe kleren voor ons, en zorgde dat het voedsel werd klaargemaakt. Zoiets is natuurlijk onmisbaar. Het was een geschenk van de natuur van Suriname aan ons. De vrouw heette zelfs Suriname.

Wij waren altijd erg beleefd naar de natuur van Suriname. Wij respecteerden haar en eerden haar. En de vrouw aan ons gegeven behandelden we als een prinses. Ze was een geschenk uit de hemel. We konden goed met elkaar opschieten, ik en m'n makkers, en de vrouw paste er precies tussen. Er waren eigenlijk nooit relletjes. Iedereen kende z'n plaats.

De vrouw wist veel van de natuur af, en kon ons veel leren. Op een dag maakten we een tochtje met het schip en namen de vrouw mee. Ze vermaakte zich uitstekend en verkleedde zich als een piratenkapitein. Ja, onze kapitein mocht ze wel wezen, sinds we onze eigen kapitein van boord hadden gegooid. Er viel niet te leven met die man. Zij was het tegenovergestelde.

Het piratenleven beviel haar goed, en dankzij haar konden we het wat netter houden, wat beschaafder. We besloten de ene helft van het jaar te varen, en de andere helft te leven aan de kust van Suriname. De zegen van Suriname kwam over ons. Ons schip zegevierde ten allen tijde, en dat allemaal dankzij onze nieuwe kapitein.

Het uniform stond haar goed. Dat ze op een dag in een anaconda veranderde verbaasde ons. Maar ja, ze was nu eenmaal een anaconda. Een geschenk van Suriname. We

besloten weer met haar terug te varen, en lieten haar los in de jungle. Later kwamen we erachter dat ze om de zoveel jaren in een anaconda veranderde. We vonden het niet erg. Het was haar leven. Trouwens, we waren gek op anaconda’s. We hadden allemaal een obsessie als het aankwam op slangen. Ze kon jagen als de beste, en zo leden we eigenlijk nooit honger. Ze kon in nog wel veel meer dieren veranderen, zomaar plotseling. Ze was een heks, maar dan anders. Ze was gewoon een oorlogsgodin. Die kunnen dat soort trucjes.

We hielden alleen maar meer van haar. Ze was een bijzonder mens.

Ze droeg altijd witte laarzen, en woonde op twee hoog. Op een dag was hij van de trap in het trappenhuis gevallen. Ze nam hem op, en om hem op te vrolijken nam ze hem mee naar de kermis, waar zij hem bracht tot een clown. Hij was verder niet verwond.
De clown slikte hem op, en hij kwam in een tunnel terecht waar mensen een carnavals optocht hielden. De tunnel eindigde in een woestijn aan de rand van een grote stad. Er werden hier overal markten gehouden.
Hij vroeg zich af waar ze was. Nu een tijdje spuwde de clown hem weer uit. Het was een grote machine. Ze stond daar en lachte. 'Voel je je alweer wat beter nu ?' vroeg ze.
'Dit is geweldig,' zei hij.
'Kom met me mee naar huis,' sprak ze. Ze nam hem bij de arm en leidde hem naar twee hoog. Binnengekomen kreeg hij een kopje koffie. Hij keek naar haar witte laarzen. Die waren wit als altijd.
Hij kon niet veel zeggen. 'Sprakeloos als altijd ?' vroeg ze.
Hij knikte.
'Het geeft niet hoor,' zei ze.
'Ik moet gaan,' zei hij.

'Nee, blijf nog even,' zei ze. 'Ik wil je wat vertellen. De duinen hier vlakbij zijn zo mooi. Heb je zin om daar een keer te wandelen ?'
'Best,' zei hij. 'Maar ik moet nu gaan.'
'Hoe laat zullen we afspreken. Vanavond om half zes ?' vroeg ze.
'Best,' zei hij.
'Dan zie ik je bij het muurtje,' zei ze.
Hij knikte, en verliet het pand. Zo gezegd zo gedaan. Om half zes stond hij bij het muurtje. Zij had hem daar al opgewacht. Samen liepen ze door het park naar de duinen. Zij had weer haar witte laarzen aan. 'Weet je,' zei ze. 'Ik denk er vaak over om de zee over te zwemmen tot dat eiland daar, ken je dat ? Lijkt me geweldig om daar te wonen, echt fantastisch, of op z'n minst om daar eens op vakantie te gaan. Gewoon in de wildernis leven, proberen te overleven. Er groeien daar veel wilde bessen.'
'Een bessen-menu, dat lijkt me wel wat,' zei hij. Hij begon wat trager te praten. Ze trok wat kleren uit, en rende naar het water. 'Kom mee,' riep ze.
'Dat mens is gek,' dacht hij bij zichzelf. Maar toch deed hij wat ze zei. Hij rende achter haar aan en toen het water in. 'Het is niet zo lang zwemmen,' riep ze. Na een tijdje

stonden ze op het eiland. Het eiland stond inderdaad vol met bessenstruiken. Het leek wel alsof de bessen in zijn hoofd spraken. 'Het zijn erg krachtige bessen,' zei ze. 'Men noemt ze weleens heksen-bessen. Dat is omdat het volwaardig aan de voedsel-behoefte voldoet.'
'Heksen-bessen ?' vroeg hij.
Ze knikte. Ze liep op een struik af, en begon te plukken en te eten. Ook gaf ze bessen aan hem. De bessen waren erg voedzaam, en al snel hadden ze genoeg. Het was bijna als sap in hun mond. 'Hutje bouwen hier ?' vroeg ze. Hij knikte.
Die nacht droomde hij vreemd. Hij lag in haar armen als een kind bij zijn moeder. Ze was wat ouder dan hem. Hij droomde dat ze hem sleepte naar de kermis tot de clown, en dat hij weer een ritje maakte door de clown. De tunnel was weer vol met dansende mensen in een carnavals-optocht, en weer liep de tunnel uit op markten aan de rand van een woestijn, aan de rand van een grote stad. Hij ging toen de stad binnen. Er was overal graffiti hier. Hij werd duizelig en viel, en ze sleurde hem mee door de stad en toen door de markten tot de woestijn. Dit liep uit op een grote zee. De grootst mogelijke vissen zwommen in de zee.

Toen werd hij wakker. Zij lag aan de andere kant van de hut. Hij liep naar haar toe en ging in haar armen liggen. Zij ontving hem als een kind. Het voelde heel natuurlijk aan. Door de bessen werd hij kleiner, en zij werd groter, althans dat leek zo in zijn dromen. Het leek wel alsof hij aan het ijlen was. Toen hij echt wakker werd de volgende dag voelde hij zich ziek.
'Misschien komt het door de bessen, als een zij-effect,' zei ze. Hij voelde zich flink beroerd. Hij kon niet meer goed nadenken. Ook kreeg hij last met het spreken. Alles ging steeds trager en moeizamer. Hij trilde. Met haar was niets aan de hand. 'Dit doe ik dus nooit meer,' zei hij. 'Ik heb het gevoel alsof ik doodga.' Zij maakte een kano en een peddel. Ze bracht hem in de kano, en begon te peddelen. Snel waren ze aan de overkant, waar ze hem naar een dokter bracht. 'U bent vergiftigd,' zei de dokter.
'Bessen ?' vroeg hij.
'Nee,' zei de dokter. 'Het eiland wat u heeft bezocht kent vreemde diersoorten, die een speciaal gas afscheiden. Het is zwaar giftig. Wist u niet dat het eiland verboden was ? Ik zou u hier eigenlijk voor moeten aangeven. U heeft waarschijnlijk de natuur daar zwaar verstoord.'
De dokter gaf hen pillen mee, die hij tweemaal daags

moest slikken met water. Elke dag ging het een stukje beter met hem. Zij kwam hem vaak opzoeken. Dan hield hij zijn hand vast. 'Jammer dat het zo gelopen is,' zei ze. Hij knikte. 'Ik ben blij dat ik weer thuis ben,' zei hij.
'Thuis is toch het beste dan,' zei ze. 'Maar het was een goede ervaring.'
'Voor mij niet,' zei hij.
'Oh, waarom niet ?' vroeg ze. 'Alles moet je een keer meemaken.'
'Dat vind ik niet,' zei hij. 'Je kan ook gewoon je eigen weg gaan. Ik hoef niet alles mee te maken.'
Maar toen leek het wel alsof ze een beetje boos werd. 'Ik moet gaan,' zei ze.
'Nee, blijf nog even,' zei hij.
'Nee, geen sprake van,' zei ze. 'Je bent me nogal een betweter.'
'Jij anders ook,' zei hij.
'Dan is het beter dat het hier stopt,' zei ze. 'Wij kunnen niet met elkaar.'
'Eet maar wat bessen,' waren haar laatste woorden. Toen vertrok ze. Hij heeft haar nooit meer teruggezien.

De Februari Schietpartijen

Ik herinnerde mij de Februari schietpartijen. Maar nu was ik bij haar. Zij haatte mij.
Ik herinnerde mij de vogel die mij oppikte en hier bracht. Het was zeer traumatisch, als een nachtmerrie. Ik zag hoe de grote vogel mij streng in de gaten hield. Ik kende deze vogel niet, maar het was een roofvogel en het had grote angst in mijn hart gebracht. Het greep mij in de weilanden toen ik vluchtte van de februari schietpartijen. Deze vrouwen waren gek.
Als ik in de stad was gebleven zou ik niet meer geleefd hebben. Ze hadden het ook op mij gemunt, maar wat was dit leven waard hier ? Deze vrouwen waren gek.
Op een dag greep de vogel mij weer, en nam mij weg. Misschien vond de vogel het wel genoeg. De vogel bracht me diep in de wildernis, maar ik kon niet vergeten wat er was gebeurd. Op een bepaalde manier had de vogel mijn leven voor de tweede keer gered.
In de nachten had ik nachtmerries over de Februari schietpartijen. Ik was helemaal alleen in de wildernis, maar de vogel zorgde voor mij. Het hield roofdieren op een afstand, en bracht voedsel tot mij.

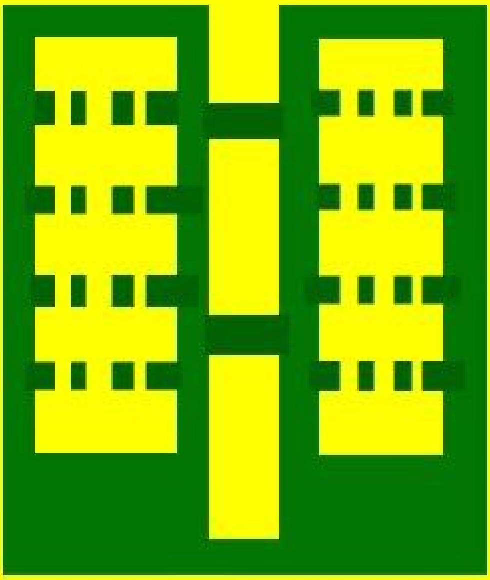
Het was maar een droom. Ontsnapping was slechts een droom hier.
Meer en meer begon ik te twijfelen aan de februari schietpartijen. Het kon slechts een nachtmerrie zijn geweest. Wat gaven de vrouwen mij hier te eten ?
Ik keek haar aan, en toen lager naar haar borsten. Ik was in grote angst en pijn. Hoe zou iemand naar deze vrouwen kunnen kijken en leven ? Ze waren barbaars, wreed, als een nachtmerrie. Zij waren de februari schietpartijen.

Marian's Moeder

Marian's moeder, een bekende zangeres overigens, en haar dochter die bij mij in de klas zat moest zo nodig aan iedereen rondbazuinen dat haar moeder eens in bed had geplast. In ieder geval ging ik weleens met haar en haar moeder naar de bibliotheek. Dat kwam zo uit. Ik bracht ook weleens stripboeken voor haar mee. Ze hield van lezen. Haar moeder ook. Haar moeder had verder een heel druk leven, keek bijna niet naar Marian en mij om. Op een keer nam ze ons mee met een bootje over het meer naar een eilandje. Er woonde verder niemand op het eiland, dus het was er erg rustig en toen hebben we wat spelletjes gedaan, maar moesten we weer snel terug, want Marian's moeder moest optreden. Wij mochten dan ook mee naar het concert. Het was prachtig. We werden behandeld als prins en prinses, want wij hoorden bij deze koningin van de muziek. Mensen vroegen zelfs om onze handtekening. Ik zei toen nog zo van : Ja, maar ik heb helemaal niks gedaan. Maar het kon hen niet schelen. Ik hoorde erbij. Gelukkig ben ik nooit beroemd geworden. Toen Marian eens ging verhuizen bleef er van ons contact maar weinig over, maar je hoort nog weleens wat. Ik ben haar zus nog

eens tegengekomen in een restaurant waar ik destijds werkte. Zij werkte daar ook. Zij was heel anders dan Marian. Ze had een veel grotere mond, meer als haar moeder. Volgens mij speelde ze clarinet, maar zong niet als haar moeder. Dat contact verwaterde toen ook toen ik daar niet meer werkte. Ik ben wel altijd naar de muziek van Marian's moeder blijven luisteren. Dat waren toch hele mooie herinneringen. Ze zullen me wel niet meer kennen of herinneren. Ik ben een nobody. Of misschien herinneren ze me wel. Ik heb ze altijd veel verhalen verteld. Daar herinneren veel mensen van vroeger mij van, van mijn verhalen. Ik had nogal grote opschepperige verhalen, dus dat moeten ze zich eigenlijk wel kunnen herinneren, want het waren geen alledaagse verhalen. Ik denk nog vaak terug aan het bootje en het eiland in het meer. Toen we teruggingen regende het. Het regende zo hard dat we dachten dat we nooit meer aan de overkant zouden komen. Maar we moesten wel, want Marian's moeder moest optreden. Ze was aan het gillen naar de regen : Stop, stop ! Ik keek naar de overkant, en het leek telkens verder weg te gaan. Ik zei toen : Doe dan wat ! Toen is ze gaan zingen, over de regen. Ze dook toen ook in het water en bleef heel lang weg. Toen ze boven kwam

was de regen weg. Toen we eindelijk aan de overkant waren waren daar allemaal fotografen. Ik gilde toen : Ik wil niet op de foto ! Ik wou dat we voor altijd op dat eiland waren gebleven. Maar ja, Marian's moeder moest optreden. Ze zei altijd dat we op missie waren.



de tuin van mevrouw van dalen

rnl-pockets nr. 2

De Tuin van Mevrouw van Dalen
korte verhalen

Uitgave : rnl-pockets
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Soldaten I - De Rotterdamse Soldaat

'Het interesseert mij allemaal niet, mevrouw, ik heb al teveel voor mijn kiezen gehad. Ik ben de dood al vele malen gestorven, dus het zal mij niet meer deren. Als ik val, raak ik de grond toch al niet meer, mevrouw. Het is allemaal routine geworden,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat in de tram. 't Is toch zo ? Het is er toch allemaal al ingeramd ? Niemand kijkt er meer van op, mevrouw. Als je nou zestien of zeventien jaar zou zijn, mevrouw, kijk, dan was het wat anders, maar ik zit al meer dan twintig jaar in het vak. Ik heb alles al meegemaakt, mevrouw, ik draai mijn hand er niet meer voor om. 't Is toch zo ? Kijk als je nou echt over heel veel jaren geleden praat en je bent piepjong, en je hebt nog niks meegemaakt, ja, dan is het andere koffie, dan is het anders, maar met mij, mevrouw, het kan me allemaal geen worst meer schelen. Ze doen maar, ze hebben het altijd al zo gedaan, dus laten ze het rustig door doen, geen kip die er meer om kraait. We zijn het allemaal al gewend, helemaal doodgedraaid, allemaal routine, mevrouw, allemaal routine. Die van ons nog komen zijn allemaal robotten, mevrouw, wij hebben dit kunstje al zo vaak gedaan. We kunnen het slapend doen.

Kijk, als je nou over echt heel lang geleden praat, ja, dan is het anders, maar nu zijn we even vele jaren verder, hè, dat maakt een groot verschil, mevrouw, groot verschil. 't Interesseert me niet meer. Ik voel me als een bouwvakker die telkens hetzelfde huis bouwt. 't Is allemaal hetzelfde, niemand kijkt er meer van op. Echt mevrouw, moet u een paar dagen met me meekomen, en dan kent u het liedje wel. Ik heb er allemaal geen zin meer in, ik heb het wel gezien, maar ik doe het gewoon. Wat moet je anders, mevrouw ?'
'En hoe lang heeft u in Joegoslavië gezeten tijdens de oorlog daar ?' vroeg de vrouw die tegenover hem zat in de tram.
'Drie maanden, mevrouw,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Ik kreeg daar al snel een relatie met een vrouw die nog wel erger was dan de oorlog. Ik heb zowel op het strijdveld gewerkt als in het ziekenhuis. Ik was daar ook voor haar. Ik streed ook voor haar, maar ze ging overal rondbazuinen dat ik in een inrichting zat, mevrouw. Moet een mens maar tegen kunnen, mevrouw, maar zo langzamerhand kan ik tegen alles, mevrouw. Ik heb veel meegemaakt, mevrouw, ik ben erin gehard.'
'Hadden jullie ruzie ofzo, of was je er te weinig voor

haar ?' vroeg de vrouw.
'Er was oorlog, mevrouw, ik was daar niet op vakantie,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Ik was daar om levens te redden, ook het hare. Ik moest er vaak op uit, en daar kon ze niet zo goed mee leven. Maar als ik er was hadden we vaak ruzie, mevrouw.'
'Ik ken zulke types,' zei de vrouw. 'Ze draaien alles om. Als je te dichtbij komt, dan is het 'kip ik heb je.' Het worden ook wel Aldebaranse vogels genoemd.'
'Aldebaranse vogels ? Wat zijn dat, mevrouw ? Ik heb daar nog nooit van gehoord, mevrouw,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat.
'Het komt uit een boek,' zei de vrouw. 'Aldebaranse vogels, ze kunnen je beste vrienden zijn, maar de dag erna zijn het je ergste vijanden. Ze doen zich zo zacht en teder voor, zo zwak en fragiel, maar raak ze niet aan, want dan zijn ze ineens de sterkste leeuwen, en ze zullen geen medelijden met je hebben. Ze vertellen je hun problemen, en smeken je om hulp, maar als je ze aanraakt dan ben jij ineens wat zij waren. Het zijn aasgieren, en je betaalt altijd een hoge prijs voor wat ze je geven.'
'Dat komt me bekend voor, mevrouw,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Je slaat de spijker op z'n kop. Ik ben Joegoslavië

na drie maanden uitgevlucht, niet om de oorlog, maar om haar, mevrouw. Stuur me de oorlog in, laat me werken in het ergste ziekenhuis, laat me afdalen in de diepste put om mensen eruit te redden, maar stuur me niet terug naar zo'n vrouw, mevrouw. Ik heb er nog steeds nachtmerries van.
De tram stopte. 'Ik moet er hier uit,' zei de vrouw.
'Nee, alsjeblieft, mevrouw,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat.
'Blijf nog even zitten. Dan kunnen we nog even kletsen, mevrouw. Laat me niet in de steek, want door het u allemaal te vertellen lijkt het wel alsof ik er weer middenin zit.'
'Het is een tram, geen café,' lachte de vrouw.
'Aljeblieft, mevrouw,' smeekte de Rotterdamse soldaat.
Maar de vrouw stond al buiten, en de tram reed verder.'
De Rotterdamse soldaat vloekte. 'Waarom moet ik toch altijd mijn hele ziel en zaligheid aan iemand vertellen ? Ze geven er toch geen stuiver om. Aldebaranse vogels had ze het over ? Volgens mij was zij er ook één. Aasgieren zijn het. Ze laten je niet eens uitspreken. Ik was nog lang niet klaar.'
Opeens werd de Rotterdamse soldaat van achteren op zijn schouder getikt. Hij keek achterom en zag een rokende man met een hoed op en een krant bij zich. 'Kunt u even

niet zo vloeken en schelden ?' zei de man. 'Ik probeer rustig mijn krantje te lezen en ik heb zo werk te doen. U zit hier niet in een café.'
'Oh, nog zo'n Aldebaranse vogel,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Goed dat ik het weet, maar als het oorlog is hoef je niet bij mij aan te kloppen.'
Bij de volgende halte stapte de Rotterdamse soldaat uit, en liep door de stad, terwijl hij boos tegen van alles aantrapte. 'Moet ik weer net hebben, moet ik weer hebben,' zei hij. Nog steeds vloekte en schold hij. 'Ik kan een mens hier niks zeggen, allemaal Aldebaranse vogels, allemaal aasgieren.'
Hij ging een café in en begon zich vol te zuipen. Hij bleef maar aanpraten tegen de barman. Die werd er natuurlijk ook voor betaald, en die zei telkens maar : 'Ja ... ja.'
Toen de Rotterdamse soldaat over zijn Joegoslavische vriendin begon zei de barman : 'Ik had ook eens zo'n vrouw. Ze hebben nooit genoeg, zijn nooit tevreden. Er blijft niets meer van je over.'
'Hoe heb je het overleefd ?' vroeg de Rotterdamse soldaat.
'Vluchten,' zei de barman. 'Wat kan je anders doen ? In zo'n oorlog kun je niet vechten.'
'Nee, inderdaad,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Ze mogen

me in elke oorlog gooien, maar sommige vrouwen zijn erger dan honderden oorlogen bij elkaar.'
'Ik zou geen risico meer nemen,' zei de barman. 'Als je je beroep liefhebt, dan is dat je vrouw.'
'Goed punt,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat.
De barman keek hem geheimzinnig aan, ging toen even naar de keuken, en kwam toen terug met een boek. 'Een boek over de Aldebaranse vogels,' zei de barman. 'Het zijn mythische vogels, trickster vogels, die een mens plagen totdat de mens zijn ware liefde heeft ontdekt, niet in een persoon, maar in het beroep, de levenstaak van de mens. Daartoe dienen dus de Aldebaranse vogels, opdat de mens zijn doel zal vinden. Je mag het wel van me lenen.'
En zo kreeg de Rotterdamse soldaat het boek mee, en ging fluitend naar huis. Onderweg zag hij wat leek op Aldebaranse vogels, maar hij glimlachte gewoon. Hij ging er niet op in, want hij wist waar het op uit kon lopen.

'Ik zeg niks meer, mevrouw,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat in de tram. 'Ik praat niet meer. Er zijn hier allemaal Aldebaranse vogels die zitten te loeren, die aasgieren. Ik heb altijd iedereen geholpen, mevrouw, stond altijd voor iedereen klaar, maar als je dan zelf eens iemand nodig hebt, dan zijn ze er niet, dan is niemand thuis en heeft niemand tijd, mevrouw. Ik zou eigenlijk een toren tot de hemel moeten bouwen, mevrouw, en dan volgt iedereen maar die mij wil volgen, mevrouw.'
'Vergeet dan niet eerst de toren naar beneden te bouwen,' zei de vrouw die tegenover hem in de tram zat, 'de aarde in, zodat ook alle moddermannen zoals jij die zich in de aarde verscholen houden met je mee naar boven kunnen.'
'Moddermannen ?' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Zeg, gaan we beledigend doen, mevrouw ? Ik heb het weer getroffen, hoor. Ze zijn erweer : de Aldebaranse vogels. Ze zitten hier tegenover me.'
'Nou ja, ik bedoel met moddermannen degenen die bang voor het leven zijn geworden en niks meer durven te zeggen, geen contacten meer durven te maken met anderen uit angst pijn gedaan te worden,' zei de vrouw. 'Ze

gaan de aarde in om een schuilplaats te zoeken en laten zichzelf niet meer zien. Ze zijn er nog wel, maar hun harten zijn gesloten.'
'Ja, ja,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Mij uit mijn tent proberen te lokken, hè ? Nou, dat gaat mooi niet door. Ik ben niet zo iemand die zichzelf zomaar voor de leeuwen werpt, mevrouw. Ik ben niet achterlijk. Waar doen we het tegenwoordig nog voor, mevrouw ? De mens is ondankbaar. Het is toch nooit genoeg. Nee, we moeten het met minder doen, mevrouw. Er zit niks anders op.'
'Bouw jij je torentje naar de hemel maar,' zei de vrouw. 'Ik ga straks lekker in mijn achtertuin zonnen. Glaasje erbij, tijdschriftje, en dan ga ik daarna lekker kletsen met de buurvrouw over van alles wat ons dwars zit, en ook over van alles wat ons niet dwars zit, en dan hebben we jou niet eens nodig, modderman.'
'Pffft,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat verontwaardigd. 'Als de oorlog komt, weet je ook dat je bij mij niet aan hoeft te kloppen.'
'Er komt geen oorlog, modderman,' zei de vrouw. 'De enige oorlog die er is is in je eigen hoofd, jij en je Aldebaranse vogels. 't Lijkt wel een syndroom.'
'Ik heb in de oorlog gevochten, mevrouw, opdat u hier nu

veilig kunt leven,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Een beetje respect voor je militaire medemens. Je mocht ze nog eens nodig hebben, je weet maar nooit, mevrouw.'
't Enige wat ik nodig heb is een goede buurvrouw, dat is beter dan een verre modderman die zich in de aarde verschuild,' zei de vrouw.
'Twee pond konijnenkaas bij de bakker, u bazelt maar wat,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Ik laat me niet uit de kast lokken door zo'n Aldebaranse vogel als u. Ik houd mijn kaken flink op elkaar. Van mij krijgt u niets, want ik weet precies waar alle informatie naartoe gaat : naar uw buurvrouw, die natuurlijk ook in het complot zit.'
'Wat voor complot ?' lachte de vrouw.
'Tegen uw militaire medemens, mevrouw,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat.
'U ziet ze vliegen,' zei de vrouw. 'U bent zwaar paranoide. U zou uzelf moeten laten opnemen in het ziekenhuis om u te laten nakijken, opdat uw niet-militaire medemens geen overlast van u heeft.'
'Maar dan moet u ook niet komen aandraven als het oorlog is, mevrouw, want dan zijn we er niet,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Dan zijn we aan het sjoelen en tafeltennissen in het ziekenhuis, mevrouw. Allemaal uw schuld. U maakt

uw militaire medemens gek.'
'Dat is dan mooi geregeld,' zei de vrouw. 'Er komt geen oorlog. U zit iedereen maar bang te maken. Ga wat leuke dingen doen.'
Boos ging de Rotterdamse soldaat de tram uit. 'U zult geen last meer van uw militaire medemens hebben,' zei hij nog boos. Hij liep de straten over en schopte tegen alles aan wat los en vast zat. 'Hoe krijgen ze het toch altijd weer voor elkaar, die Aldebaranse vogels. Nu heb ik weer mijn ziel en zaligheid lopen uitstorten. Alsof ze je de woorden gewoon uit je trekken. Bah.'
Hij ging een café in om zich vol te zuipen. 'Zegt u het maar, waar heeft u last van ?' vroeg de barvrouw.
'Van Aldebaranse vogels mevrouw,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Overal lopen ze te loeren op mijn bloed, halen het bloed onder mijn nagels vandaan, mevrouw. Aasgieren zijn het.'
'Tja, die zitten hier veel,' zei de barvrouw. 'Daar hebben we gelukkig onze sappen voor. Meer drinken, minder denken, minder praten.'
'Precies,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Spreken is zilver, zwijgen is goud, drinken is platina, en erop los schieten is de hemel. Ik heb mijn torentje gebouwd.'

'Nou ja, teveel drinken is natuurlijk niet goed, en schieten al helemaal niet,' zei de barvrouw.
'Zeg, gaat u ook al beledigend doen naar uw militaire medemens, mevrouw ?' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat aangebrand. 'Gaan we roet in het eten gooien ? Ik heb in de oorlog gewerkt, mevrouw. Ik zal het echt wel weten wat goed is en wat niet goed is. En beledig mijn torentje naar de hemel niet.'
'Er zit hier een zekere grens aan het drinken,' zei de barvrouw. 'Boven die grens mogen we het niet toestaan en gaat er een slot op, en schieten doen we al helemaal niet. Als u wilt schieten dan gaat u maar naar de dartshoek, of naar de gokautomaat.'
'Gokautomaat ?' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'U bent natuurlijk op mijn geld uit. Weer een Aldebaranse vogel geschoten. Het was goed raak. Het was me een genoegen, mevrouw.'
'Beter te gokken dan te schieten,' zei de barvrouw. 'Schiet maar met geld, dan hebben anderen er ook wat aan.'
'Ah, bent u er zo één ?' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat.
'Met geld krijg je alles van een mens gedaan,' zei de barvrouw, 'vertrouw daar maar op. Voor niets gaat de zon op.'

'Ik ben niet zo rijk, mevrouw,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat, 'en geluk is niet te koop. Het houdt altijd ergens op, en hoe hoger je hebt gebouwd, hoe harder je valt.'
'Dan heb je het niet goed gedaan,' zei de barvrouw.
'Oh, dus ik sta oog in oog met een specialist ?' vroeg de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Leg uit dan.'
'Hoeveel betaal je ervoor ?' vroeg de barvrouw.
'Ik heb geen rooie stuiver meer,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Ik heb alles opgezopen.'
'Een onderpand dan,' zei de barvrouw.
De Rotterdamse soldaat gaf haar zijn horloge. 'Nou, zeg op,' zei hij.
'Luister,' zei de barvrouw. 'Ik ken een liedje en dat gaat zo :
Geef het leven een kans, gooi het maar op de bank,
Rente is nooit te duur, grijp je kans, grijp je kans.
Wat ik daarmee bedoel is, dat je in het leven niet alles als een dolle zot moet gaan besteden, maar je moet het naar de bank brengen om te sparen, ook al is het weinig, en dan krijg je vanzelf rente. Vele beetjes maken veel, en dat geeft ook weer veel rente. Dat moet je eigenlijk met alle dingen doen. Het heet het minimalisme, dat je alles opspaart, je woorden, je gedachten. Je leeft zuinig, en dan wordt je

daar ook weer voor betaald. De Aldebaranse vogels komen opdat een mens dit zal leren, en om een mens van dit principe niet te laten afwijken. Dat is het ware drinken. Je drinkt zo van de hemelbron.'

De barvrouw gaf hem zijn horloge terug en een zoen op zijn wang. 'Dit is je rente al,' sprak ze. De Rotterdamse soldaat is toen hemels dronken naar huis gegaan.

De Soldaten III - De Amsterdamse Soldaat

'Het is allemaal ijdelheid, mevrouw,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Waar doen we het allemaal voor ? We zoeken allemaal onze zogenaamde vijanden te doden, en we vergeten dat we aan onszelf moeten sterven. Wij zijn zelf onze ergste vijanden, ons ego, onze verbeeldzucht en ijdelheid. De mens houd van sprookjes, mevrouw, van spiegeltje, spiegeltje aan de wand, ik ben het mooiste van het land. Ik weet altijd alles beter, mevrouw, daar gaat het de mens om. Het is allemaal ijdelheid, mevrouw. We kunnen wel opstappen. Waar is de liefde vandaag de dag nog, mevrouw ? De mens wil gezien worden, het gaat allemaal om geld en roem. We kunnen wel ophouden, mevrouw. De mens doet het allemaal om gezien te worden, laten we eerlijk zijn, mevrouw.'
'Waren de moddermannen er nog maar,' zei de vrouw die tegenover hem zat in de tram. 'Die nog in de grond groeven, hun linkerhand niet lieten weten wat hun rechterhand deed, de hongermannen, die zichzelf niet vetmesten met onnuttige en overbodige rijkdom. Ze gaven het liever aan een arme die niets had, en daar liepen ze niet mee te koop. Ze deden het niet om bekend te worden, om

als een held geloofd en geprezen te worden. Ze deden het in het verborgene, en ontweken alle hooggeplaatsten. Ze leefden in de aarde.'
'Zo is het, mevrouw,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Ik ben blij dat er nog mensen zoals u zijn, mevrouw.'
'Bijna niet meer,' zei de vrouw. 'Je hebt een winnend lot uit de loterij getrokken. Gefeliciteerd.'
'Ik zal u nooit meer vergeten, mevrouw,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Ik zal mijn herinnering aan u altijd blijven koesteren.'
'Die bekendheid, eer en roem wil ik niet,' zei de vrouw. 'Ik heb al spijt dat ik het je heb gezegd.'
'Zo bedoel ik het niet, mevrouw,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Het is maar een gebaar, een filosofie. Ik eer het principe, maar zal u waarschijnlijk straks snel weer vergeten zijn. Het leven is druk, en vloeit al gauw over in andere dingen.'
'Gelukkig maar,' zei de vrouw opgelucht, 'want ik ben een moddervrouw.'
'Dan scheiden hier onze wegen,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat, en toen de tram stopte stapte hij de tram uit. De volgende dag kwam hij haar alweer tegen.
'Ha, moddervrouw,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat.

'Ha, modderman,' zei de vrouw.
'Was jij gisteren niet mijn winnend lot uit de loterij ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat.
'Ja,' zei de vrouw, 'maar dat was maar een moment-opname, van herkenning, niet zozeer van herinnering. Het leven gaat verder.'
'Ja, het is een modderwereld,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Maar weer een magisch moment dat ik u weer heb getroffen.'
'Vandaag weer gewonnen,' zei de vrouw, 'maar vandaag wordt altijd weer vervangen door morgen. Dat hoort bij het werk.'
'Speelt u graag in de zandbak, mevrouw ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'U speelt nogal graag spelletjes, hè ?'
'Het is geen spel,' zei de vrouw. 'Het is mijn beroep.'
'Bent u filosoof ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat die tegenover haar was gaan zitten in de tram.
'Psycholoog,' zei de vrouw. 'Ik help de man van de vrouw af in plaats van andersom, want de vrouw is gevaarlijk speelgoed.'
'Maar u als psycholoog bent toch geen gevaarlijk speelgoed ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat.

'Ik ben de speelgoedverkoper,' zei de vrouw. 'Ik onderwijs de gebruiksaanwijzing. Ik houd me ook aan de leeftijden die op de verpakkingen staan.'
'Laat maar zitten, mevrouw,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Ik ben soldaat en modderman. Wat moet ik met speelgoed ?'
'En u strijd tegen uzelf ?' vroeg de vrouw.
'Dat is de grootste oorlog, mevrouw,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat.
'Mag ik u dan een advies geven als psycholoog ?' vroeg de vrouw.
De Amsterdamse soldaat knikte.
Ze schoof dichter naar hem toe en zei in zijn oor : 'Dan bent u op het juiste pad. Ik heb daar wel speelgoed voor.'
'Welk speelgoed ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat.
'Plastik messen, bijlen, pijl en boog, handboeien, alles plastik,' zei de vrouw.
'We gaan toch geen cowboytje en indiaantje spelen,' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat.
'Nee, veel erger,' zei de vrouw. 'Er is een monster genaamd 'het zelf'.
'Mevrouw,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Ik heb jarenlang tegen dit monster gestreden, en het liet me verdwalen. Ik

ben alles kwijt, al mijn orientatie.'
'Mijn speelgoed rekent ermee af, en geeft je een kompas,' zei de vrouw.
De Amsterdamse soldaat keek haar diep in haar ogen. 'En waar is uw speelgoed winkel ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat.
'In mijn hart,' zei de vrouw.
'Maar daar kom ik toch nooit,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat, 'want u bent een moddervrouw en zou mij nooit toelaten.'
'Misschien win je ooit nog eens een lot uit de lotterij,' zei de vrouw, en stapte de tram uit.
'Maar ik ben ook een modderman,' riep hij haar na.
'Waar de modder ons samenbrengt,' riep ze terug. 't Zal weer volledig toevallig zijn.'
'Wat een vreemde vrouw,' dacht hij bij zichzelf. De dag erna zag hij haar weer in de tram, maar er was een andere man bij haar.
'Zo, heb je je modderman gevonden ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat.
'Het was mijn lot uit de loterij,' zei de vrouw.
'Wanneer gaan jullie trouwen ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat.

De vrouw moest lachen. 'Het is maar een patient,' zei de vrouw. 'Hij moet er even op uit.'
'Op uit ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat.
'Ja, leren een modderman te zijn,' zei de vrouw. 'Het is een test.'
'Dus als hij faalt, dan moet hij terug boven de grond ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat.
'Als hij faalt, dan word hij net zoals jij,' zei de vrouw.
'Nou, dat is ook niet aardig,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat.
'Dus ik heb gefaald ?'
'Ja,' zei de vrouw, 'ik bood je speelgoed aan, maar je had andere dingen te doen.'
'Ik vind u maar een vreemde mevrouw,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Maar ja, dat zijn de meeste psychologen. Dus cowboytje en indiaantje spelen is therapeutisch ?'
'Ik ga het zo met mijn patient doen,' zei de vrouw. 'Het is symboliek. Het hoort inderdaad bij de therapie.'
'Ach, ik weet het al,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'U probeert natuurlijk klanten te werven. Ik zit hier mijn tijd te verdoen. Ik dacht dat ik met een normaal mens sprak, maar u liet mij in die waan. Dat is ook niet echt medisch verantwoord dan, mevrouw.'

'Ik heb ook nog wel medicijnen in de aanbieding,' zei de vrouw.
'Laat maar,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'De vissen willen niet bijten vandaag. Ik kan net zo goed een raam uitspringen. Ik kom weer uit bij het begin, mevrouw. Alles is ijdelheid. Mijn grootste vijand is mezelf, maar ik ben ook mijn eigen grootste vriend, dat heb ik ook wel weer in de gaten. Gegroet, mevrouw.' En zo stapte de Amsterdamse soldaat de tram uit, niet meer omkijkende.
De dag erna kwam hij haar weer tegen, maar hij negeerde haar. 't Is toch altijd weer hetzelfde liedje,' dacht hij bij zichzelf. 'Niets zeggen maar. Ze zit hier voor haar beroep, niet voor mij. En trouwens ik mag dan wel mijn eigen grootste vijand wezen, ik ben ook mijn eigen grootste vriend.'
Na een tijdje kwam ze naar hem toe in de tram en ging tegenover hem zitten. 'Heb je misschien een kwartje voor mij ?' vroeg ze.
'Oh, ben je aan de drugs ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat.
'Nee, ik heb geen klein geld voor de telefoon,' zei ze.
'Dat komt goed uit,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat, 'want ik heb namelijk geen kwartje.'
'Het gaat om een patient die mij dringend nodig heeft,' zei

ze.
'Oh, dat is helemaal mooi,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Twee vliegen in één klap dan.'
'Goed gedaan,' zei ze. 'Moddermannen zoals jou zijn er bijna niet meer. Je bent goed door de test heengekomen.'
'Ja, maar ik ben helemaal uw patient niet eens, mevrouw,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'U moet in de war zijn met iemand anders.'
'Nee,' zei de vrouw, 'het was jij.'
'Gaan we opdringerig doen ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Is uw spiegeltje kapot vandaag ?'
'Nee, jij had het winnend lot getrokken,' zei de vrouw. 'Nu niet er onderuit proberen te komen.'
'Winnend lot ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Zeg, bent u gek ?'
'Karelssen is de naam ?' vroeg ze.
'Ja, met twee s-en,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat.
'Dan zit u in het systeem,' zei de vrouw.
'Hoe komt dat ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Ik wil eruit.'
'Ik zal u eruit schrappen,' zei de vrouw, 'maar dan mist u alle aanbiedingen.'
'Zal mij een rotzorg zijn,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Ik

heb al genoeg aan mezelf. Ik ben geen baby-sitter, mevrouw. Daar was ik niet voor in de wieg gelegd. Ik ben hier niet om u te vermaken en liedjes voor u te zingen.'

'Een echte modderman, ik kan niks aan je kwijt,' zei de vrouw. 'Mijn taak zit erop.'

'Tot in de modder dan maar, mevrouw,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat.

'Tot in de modder,' zei de vrouw.

De Soldaten IV - De Almeerse Soldaat

De Almeerse soldaat liep met een speelgoed geweertje langs de huizen. Hij had ook een kar bij zich. Hij ging langs de huizen om te vragen of ze ook nog oud speelgoed hadden voor de armen. Vaak gaven mensen hem wel een tasje of zakje met oud speelgoed mee. Aan het einde van de dag ging hij terug naar zijn huisje, en zijn hele kar zat flink vol. Er kon niets meer bij. Hij zette de kar in de achtertuin neer, en begon de zakjes en tasjes naar binnen te brengen, en daar gooide hij alles op een grote hoop in de huiskamer. 'Daar zullen de arme kinderen blij mee zijn,' zei de Almeerse soldaat tegen zichzelf. Er zat ook een paarse pop tussen. Hij nam de pop in zijn armen. De pop deed ineens zijn ogen open.
'Heb je ook schoeipapier ?' vroeg de pop.
'Schoeipapier ?' vroeg de Almeerse soldaat. 'Wat is dat ?'
'Nou, dat is heel speciaal papier waardoor de plaatjes die erop staan bewegen, als filmpjes,' zei de pop.
'Nee, daar heb ik nog nooit van gehoord,' zei de Almeerse soldaat, 'maar het lijkt me wel interessant.'
'Kijk eens tussen het speelgoed dan,' zei de pop. De Almeerse soldaat zette de pop op de bank en begon tussen

het speelgoed te kijken. Er lagen ook wat boekjes tussen die hij aan de pop gaf. 'Kijk maar eens of dat schoeipapier is,' zei de Almeerse soldaat.
'Nee,' zei de pop. 'Dat is het niet. Het is heel speciaal papier. Ze hebben het in mij gestopt, en daarom kan ik bewegen en leven.'
Toen begon de pop zelf tussen het speelgoed te zoeken. 'Ik ben bang dat het er niet is,' zei de pop.
'En jij bent ook de enige pop hier die kan bewegen en spreken,' zei de Almeerse soldaat.
'Ik heb me al die tijd stil gehouden toen ik bij die anderen was,' zei de pop. 'Anders zouden ze me waarschijnlijk nooit weg hebben gedaan.'
'De arme kinderen zullen heel blij met je zijn,' zei de Almeerse soldaat. 'Dat weet ik wel zeker.'
'Nou, ik weet het niet zo zeker,' zei de pop.
'Waarom niet ?' vroeg de Almeerse soldaat.
'Misschien verveelt het snel,' zei de pop, 'en houden ze meer van wat eenvoudiger speelgoed.'
'Je bent me er eentje,' zei de Almeerse soldaat. 'Ik kan je natuurlijk ook voor mezelf houden.'
'Ja, laten we vrienden worden,' zei de pop. 'Ik kan ook de afwas voor je doen.'

Gezellig,' zei de Almeerse soldaat, 'maar ik ben wel veel weg. Ik werk voor de armen.'
'Dat kunnen we toch samen doen ?' vroeg de pop.
En zo gebeurde het. De paarse pop was wel de ster van het feestje. De arme kinderen waren heel verbaasd toen de Almeerse soldaat en zijn sprekende pop het speelgoed kwamen brengen.
'Machtig,' zei een klein jongetje. 'Ik wil later ook poppenmaker worden om zulke poppen te maken.'
'Daar heb je schoeipapier voor nodig,' zei de pop. 'Dat groeit aan de bomen in Poplaarsia.'
'Waar is dat ?' vroeg het jongetje.
'In Afrika ergens, maar ik weet niet waar,' zei de pop.
De arme kinderen waren allemaal erg blij, en de pop schonk ook limonade voor hen in.
Toen de Almeerse soldaat en zijn pop weer weg zouden gaan waren de arme kinderen erg verdrietig. Ze hadden geen vader en moeder meer, en zouden graag mee willen.
'Weet je wat,' zei de Almeerse soldaat. 'Spring allemaal maar in de kar, dan gaan we langs de huizen om te vragen of er nog een plaatsje voor jullie over is.' De paarse pop liep voor hen uit, en de Almeerse soldaat trok de kar voort. Hij had nog steeds zijn speelgoed geweertje bij zich.

Telkens als de paarse pop ergens aanbelde, dan waren de mensen zo verbaasd, verwonderd en verblijd dat ze maar wat graag een kind wilden adopteren. En zo werd de paarse pop de grootste held die Almere ooit gekend heeft, en natuurlijk de Almeerse soldaat waar het allemaal mee was begonnen. Er werden van beiden een standbeeld gemaakt, maar zowel de paarse pop als de Almeerse soldaat wilden niets van de roem weten, en zijn toen beiden de grond onder gegaan om als moddermannen te leven, en niemand heeft hen ooit nog teruggezien, maar velen volgden sindsdien wel het grote voorbeeld wat ze ooit gegeven hadden.

Einde

Ik ging naar een vissersstadje dichtbij. De visnetten hingen gewoon boven de straten soms. Ik liep langs een park waar een man zat met zijn zoontje. Hij had zich helemaal over zijn zoontje gebogen, en had zijn arm over zijn schouder, en fluisterde liefdevol naar hem. 'Zo'n vader had ik niet …' mompelde ik in mezelf. Ik kon me niet herinneren dat hij ooit zijn arm om me had heengeslagen als kind. Ik slenterde verder en kwam langs een vishandel genaamd 'van Treur.' En ik mompelde : 'Ja, het is inderdaad treurig.' Ik kreeg toen ergens in de stad bij een winkel een gesprek met een aardige mevrouw over ontvoeringen. Ze wilde alles van me weten, en vertelde tegelijkertijd alles over haarzelf. Ik kan haar gewoon het hemd van het lijf vragen, en zij blijkbaar ook van mij. Je raad het al. Na een tijdje hadden we niet veel kleren meer aan, en dat terwijl het koud was. We zijn toen samen naar het plantsoen gelopen, en we smeerden elkaar in met modder. Ja, we moesten wel, anders zou het echt te koud zijn. De modder voelde nog wel warm aan, en haar handen ook. Maar na een tijdje dacht ik bij mezelf : 'Waar ben ik eigenlijk in godsnaam mee bezig ?' Ik schaamde me ziek, ook naar de mensen die

allemaal keken. Sommigen waren zelfs al foto's aan het maken, en ik dacht : 'Als dat maar goed gaat, want voor hetzelfde geld staan we morgen in de krant.' Maar die vrouw had een mentaliteit van : gewoon aanpakken. Iemand anders kwam erbij, en begon ons ook de kleren van ons lijf te vragen, maar ja, die hadden we niet meer, dus toen hebben we haar maar de kleren van het lijf gevraagd, en die moest toen ook ingesmeerd worden met modder, anders zou ze kou vatten. Ja, daar zat natuurlijk ook niemand op te wachten, dat iemand kou zou vatten. Dat is ook allemaal extra werk weer voor de dokter. Dat wilden we die aardige man niet aandoen. Die zit er natuurlijk ook niet op te wachten om nog meer geld aan iemand anders z'n leed te verdienen. Dat laten ze allemaal wel over aan de vissers.
Goed, ik heb die twee vrouwen maar meegenomen naar huis. Ik moest toch nog iemand hebben voor de afwas. Maar ze kletsten me zoveel de oren van het hoofd af dat ik ze maar uit huis weer heb gezet, op de trein naar de apenheul, onder het mom van een leuk dagje uit. Ja, ik had m'n oren natuurlijk nog wel nodig. Ze mogen me uitkleden en met modder bedekken, maar kom niet aan m'n oren verder. De volgende dag werd ik wel geconfronteerd met

mijn uitstapje, zeg. Ze konden het niet laten. Met allemaal foto's op de voorpagina. Het was wereldnieuws. Ik schaamde me rot. Ik was er trouwens wel overstuur over, en vooral kwaad, dat ze het voorval helemaal uit de context hadden gerukt. Ze hadden erbij geschreven dat het een circus act was, en dat wij zogenaamde 'vissers met blote handen' waren. Het was een soort reclame truuk voor het vissersstadje, alsof de vissers daar gewoon nog zelf de sloten en rivieren induiken om zelf met blote handen de vis te vangen. Ik was zo kwaad, want ik ben een vegetariër in hart en nieren, en vond dit niet alleen een grote belediging naar mijzelf toe, maar nog meer wel naar de vissen. Ik heb die twee vrouwen toen weer opgetrommeld, en die waren er ook misselijk van, en vooral kwaad, heel kwaad. We zijn toen met z'n drieën teruggegaan naar dat vissersstadje, totaal onder de modder, en we zijn toen stenen gaan gooien door de ruiten van die vishandels heen. Laten ze dat maar eens op de foto zetten voor de volgende krant.

Nou, dat hebben we geweten. De dag erna waren er inderdaad foto's van in de krant weer, maar weer met een totaal ander verhaal in een hele andere context. Ja, schreven ze. Die stenen werden gegooid door 'de vissers

met blote handen' omdat ze betere gebouwen wilden voor hun viswinkels. Er stond dus direct een oproep bij om te doneren naar die 'arme vissers met blote handen' om hun betere gebouwen te laten krijgen, en de kopers meer winkelplezier.
Nou ja ! Wij waren alledrie natuurlijk woedend. Dat lieten wij natuurlijk niet op ons zitten. Wij zijn toen naar dat vissersstadje weer teruggegaan en hebben toen iedereen de kleren van het lijf lopen vragen, om ze vervolgens te bekogelen met modder. Dat werd een ware oorlog natuurlijk. En weer waren er allerlei fotografen bezig natuurlijk voor de volgende krant. De volgende dag werd er gesproken van een burgeroorlog in het vissersstadje. Het waren de vissers met de blote handen weer tegen degenen die hun werk niet genoeg respecteerden en niet genoeg vis kochten, met de oproep erbij om meer vis te kopen. Ik dacht : Zo winnen we het nooit natuurlijk. Maar ik wist toen één ding : We moesten naar die krantentent toe.
Nou, we kwamen daar bij die krantenmakerij aan om ze het hemd van het lijf te vragen, om ze vervolgens met modder te bekogelen, maar het pand was geheel leeg. We slopen naar binnen, en zagen daar de type machine van de

krant, zo'n heel ouderwets ding. We vroegen ons af wie al die tijd die malloterige dingen over ons had geschreven, als reclame voor het vissersstadje. Komt er ineens een heel klein jongetje onder een tafeltje vandaan kruipen. 'Sorry,' zegt dat jongetje. 'Heeft iemand van jullie me vader ergens gezien ?'
Ik zeg : 'Ik weet van niks. Heeft hij al die kranten geschreven op deze type machine ?'
'Nee ik,' zei het jongetje.
'Waarom dan ?' vroeg ik.
'Dat moest van me vader,' zei het jongetje.
'Is je vader soms visser toevallig ?' vroeg ik toen.
'Nee,' zei het jongetje.
'Wat dan ?' vroeg ik.
'Oh, ik ken hem wel,' zei één van de vrouwen. 'Ze hebben een circus.'
'Ja,' zei de andere vrouw, 'dat circus maakt weer reclame voor de krant, en die krant maakt weer reclame voor het circus, en ook weer voor het vissersstadje. Dat heeft allemaal met elkaar te maken.'
'Helemaal niet,' zei het jongetje. 'Jullie weten er niets van. Me vader werkt bij de polisie, en hij zei : Schrijf maar de meest gekke en vreemde dingen in de krant. Maak ze maar

helemaal gek. Dan heeft de polisie in ieder geval genoeg te doen.
Ik onderbrak hem.
Ik zei : 'Ik vind jou maar een vreemd kereltje.'
'Moet jij nodig zeggen met al die modder op je lichaam,' zei hij brutaal.
'Oh, wij waren toch vissers met blote handen van het circus om reclame te maken voor het vissersstadje ?' vroeg ik.
'Ja,' zei hij brutaal. 'Dat zijn jullie ook, maar dat wil niet zeggen dat jullie geen vreemde snuiters zijn.'
'Hallo,' zei ik, 'zo lust ik er nog wel meer.'
In ieder geval pakte ik toen die type machine op en smeet het ding zo door de ruiten van de krantenmakerij. De volgende dag was er geen krant. Wel kregen we allemaal een papiertje door de brievenbus van het jongetje, waarop stond geschreven : 'Vandaag geen krant. De vissers met blote handen vonden dat ze al genoeg reclame hadden gemaakt. Nu moet iedereen maar zelf komen naar het vissersstadje om het uit hun eigen mond te horen.'
'Nog steeds vol praatjes,' zei ik tegen de vrouwen.
'Ik kan haast niet lezen wat hij schrijft,' zei één van de vrouwen. 'Er kon ook iets anders staan.'

Ik keek eens beter naar de twee vrouwen. Ik keek beter en beter en begon toen echt naar haar te staren, en zag uiteindelijk dat het maar één vrouw was. Ze was nog steeds onder de modder, en ik ook. We hadden elkaar de kleren van het lijf gevraagd en stonden nog steeds in het park.
'Misschien zijn we gek geworden van de kou,' zei ik voorzichtig tegen de vrouw.
'Dat kan de kou doen,' zei de vrouw, die ook naar mij staarde. 'Dan ga je ijlen. IJsziek wordt je dan. Waar hadden we het eigenlijk over ? Oh ja, die ontvoeringen. Er is altijd een programma van op de tv, ken je dat ?'
'Nee,' zei ik, 'ik kijk bijna geen tv.'
'Vreemd,' zei ze, 'dat je dat niet kent.'
Ik staarde haar aan. Ik bleef maar kijken. Ik kon mijn ogen niet van haar aftrekken. Ik kwam er meer en meer achter dat ik gewoon naar een boom zat te kijken.
'Mooie boom, hè ?' zei een oude man die langsliep.
'Ja, prachtig,' zei ik. 'Ik word er altijd zo duizelig van.'
'Ja, dat heb je met ijsbomen,' zei de man. 'Moet je nooit te lang naar kijken. Gebeuren er vreemde dingen.'
'IJsbomen ?' vroeg ik. 'Nooit van gehoord.'
'Niet ?' vroeg de man. 'Wordt overal tegen gewaarschuwd

op het nieuws.'
'Ik kijk bijna geen tv,' zei ik.
'Lees je ook geen kranten dan ?' vroeg de man. 'Daar staat het ook telkens in.'
'Houd maar op over kranten,' zei ik langzaam.
Hij typte wat in op een apparaat. 'Ja, hier heb ik er weer één,' zei hij tegen het apparaat wat af en toe piepte. 'Weer iemand die zomaar voor lange tijd naar een ijsboom loopt te staren. Hij is al duizelig zei hij.'
'Waarom zetten ze die bomen hier dan neer als ze zo gevaarlijk zijn ?' vroeg ik.
'Tja, waarom is de zon er, als je niet lang in de zon mag kijken,' zei de man. 'Gewoon een beetje aan de regels houden. Is gezond. Doet ieder mens.'
'Ik wist anders van niks,' zei ik. 'Dus ik kan niet eens meer van de natuur genieten ?'
'Met mate,' zei de man, 'alles met mate. Ze komen zo bij je.'
'Wie ?' vroeg ik.
Maar de man liep alweer door. Mannen in witte pakken waren snel bij me, met een wit busje. Ik werd aan de beademing gelegd. 'Ternauwernood,' zei één van de mannen. 'Had je al vreemde hallucinaties die net echt

leken ?'
'Volgens mij ben ik er nog middenin,' zei ik.
'Ja, is een bijeffect van de ijsboom,' zei de man in plat Rotterdams. 'Mag je nooit te lang naar kijken.'
'Ik kijk al bijna geen tv,' zei ik, 'en nu mag dit ook al niet ?'
Ik keek eens beter naar de man toen ik daar lag. Ik keek beter en beter, en zag dat ik nog steeds gewoon naar een boom staarde. Er was helemaal niemand, en ook geen busje te bekennen. Ik was midden in het bos, verdwaald. Wat was er gebeurd ? Ik moest hier weg, maar ik stond als vastgenageld aan de grond. Ik vertrouwde niets meer.
Ik had toennet het gevoel alsof ik lag, maar ik sta nog gewoon, gewoon naar een boom te staren. Ik probeerde een stap achteruit te zetten, en toen nog één. Toen probeerde ik om te draaien en weg te rennen, wat maar nauwelijks lukte, maar toch lukte het. Ik zag de boom kleiner worden, meer en meer in de verte, op de achtergrond. Ik probeerde te roepen, maar ik kon het niet. Telkens weer keek ik achterom, en telkens zag ik de boom kleiner worden. Nu wilde ik niet meer kijken, maar toch keek ik. Alsof ik eraan verslaafd was.
'Kijken is tegenwoordig ook al niet meer gratis,' dacht ik bij mezelf. 'Ik heb een vrouw nodig die niet mijn oren eraf

kletst, maar mijn ogen eraf beweegt, of mijn ogen eruit kijkt, of wat dan ook. Ik heb een vrouw nodig die totaal mijn aandacht kan opslokken. Waar woonde ik ook alweer ? Oh ja, daar.'

Ik klopte ergens aan en een vrouw deed open. 'Ben je daar eindelijk, schat ? Heb op je lopen wachten,' zei de vrouw. 'Je zei dat je wat chocola zou halen, maar je bleef wel erg lang weg.'

'Nou,' zei ik, 'ik heb het idee dat ik dan de verkeerde chocola gekocht moet hebben, want het is totaal niet goedgegaan, totaal niet. En het ergste is dat ik niet eens weet wie je bent.'

'Vervelend,' zei ze. 'Ja, ik weet het ook niet. Maar u klopte aan alsof u hier woonde, en u had zoiets vertrouwds over u dat ik dacht dat u misschien weleens mijn lang verdwenen vriend zou kunnen zijn, alhoewel u totaal niet op hem lijkt.'

'Vreemd,' zei ik, 'en dat allemaal om een stukje chocola ?'

'Ja,' zei ze, 'dat zou hij kopen, voor zowel hemzelf als voor mij, maar dat was de laatste keer dat ik hem zag.'

'Moet wel door het chocola gekomen zijn,' zei ik. 'Moet wel.'

Einde

Suzie

De edelste tuinen zag ik. Zoutig, zurig, niet te veel zoet, zo smaakten de bessen. Ze waren heerlijk. Ze waren bijna verzonnen als door een insect. En dan niet een normaal insect, maar bijzonder, eentje met groot potentieel, als een wereldredder. Ik had kriebel in mijn keel toen ik ernaar keek. Het smaakte ook een beetje naar drop. Drop kon je trouwens niet krimpen, tenzij het rode drop was. Maar rode drop was dan weer net iets zoeter. Ik stapte de tuinen binnen, waar nog veel meer van die bessen hingen, en allemaal beestjes. Ze zat daar met een rood jurkje, een beetje opgebolt als pudding was haar jurkje, als met kant belegd. Het jurkje was niet te groot, en dat hoefde ook niet. Het was al genoeg dat ze daar zat. De touwtjes van haar jurkje waren als dropveters, als van rode drop. Ik keek niet op of om, maar ging dieper de tuinen in, op zoek naar meer bessen. Ik hield ervan om naar bessen te staren, vooral druipende bessen. Het was alsof ik haar tong op de mijne voelde, maar ik ontweek haar. Ik wilde niet aan haar denken. Zij blijkbaar ook niet aan mij, want ze bleef gewoon zitten. Ik voelde contact met haar, maar ontkende het in mezelf. Kom op, zeg. Ik heb wel andere dingen te

doen. Als ik me aan haar zou geven, zou ze me toch verscheuren. Ze was een roofdier, daar diep in de tuin. Ik had haar wel in de gaten, maar deed alsof ik haar niet zag. Ze begon een beetje zenuwachtig heen en weer te draaien. 'Ik heb je wel in de gaten, hoor,' zei ze. Ik deed alsof ik haar niet hoorde. 'Dat is ook niet netjes,' zei ze. 'Helemaal niets terugzeggen.' Ik draaide met mijn rug naar haar toe. Ik begon nog meer bessen te plukken, en begon ze te eten. 'Hey, geef mij ook eens wat van die bessen,' zei ze. Ik gooide er eentje toe.

'Je bent afstandelijk,' zei ze. 'Nou, jij mag er anders ook wel wezen,' zei ik. 'Eindelijk praat je,' zei ze. 'Ik vind het allemaal best,' zei ik. 'Wat vind je allemaal best ?' vroeg ze. Ik zweeg. Ik begon door te eten van de bessen. 'Niet met je mond vol praten,' zei ze. 'Je bent mijn moeder niet,' zei ik. 'Nee, gelukkig niet,' zei ze. 'Je bent me nogal een probleem-geval.' 'Zo mag ik het horen,' zei ik. 'Hoe zal ik je noemen ?' sprak ze. 'Al noem je me Klaas, doet me niets,' zei hij. 'Krokodillen-voer,' sprak ze zachtjes. 'Die zijn hier niet,' zei ik.

Ik liep dieper de tuin in, mijn gezicht verborgen voor haar. Ze kwam mij niet achterna. Wat zou ze van me moeten ? En ik had wel andere dingen te doen. Ik verzamelde

bessen in mijn mandje. Ik bracht ze naar grootmoeder. Ze kookte er iets van. Het was heerlijk. Ik sprak met haar niet over de dingen die ik had gezien in de edelste tuinen. Maar later deed ik het toch. 'Ach, dat meisje,' zei grootmoeder. 'Ik ken haar wel. Ze woonde hier vroeger in de buurt. Er hing daar altijd was buiten, in de tuin. Ze kookte weleens voor ons. Maar later werd ze een wilde. Ze vertrok naar de andere kant van de stad, en ging aan de kade wonen. Het was veel te wild voor ons. Maar ze hield altijd al veel van de bossen. Daar zwierf ze vaak. Toen je klein was kwam ze je weleens opzoeken.' 'Ik kan me daar niets meer van herinneren,' zei ik. 'Dat ben je misschien vergeten,' zei grootmoeder. 'Jullie waren vroeger heel gek met elkaar.' 'Hoe kunnen mensen zo uit elkaar groeien ?' vroeg ik. 'Ach ja, jongen,' zei grootmoeder, 'dat is de wereld. Het is komen en gaan, vastpakken en loslaten, en je groeit uit alles ook weer uit.' 'Ja, dat jurkje wat ze droeg was wel erg klein,' zei ik. 'Ze past er niet meer in,' zei grootmoeder. 'Nou, het paste wel goed,' zei ik, 'maar het jurkje was gewoon klein.' 'Ze had dus niet veel aan,' zei grootmoeder. 'Nou, okay, daar kan ik inkomen. Het is nogal zomers weer, een beetje zwoel zelfs, vind je niet ?' Ik keek oma aan. Ze had van die wonderlijke ogen, donkere ogen. Ik

zag de pretlichtjes in haar ogen, alsof ze blij was dat we met elkaar spraken. Ja, dat had ook anders kunnen zijn. Er waren zovelen die niet meer met oma wilden praten. Haar ogen dropen bijna als bessen. En ik had bijna druipende handen. 'Vertel me meer,' zei ik. 'Nou, ja, ze was vroeger gek op je, en wilde met je trouwen,' zei grootmoeder. 'Maar de familie wilde dat niet. Toen droop ze af. Alle contacten verwaterden sindsdien.' 'Ja, maar daar kan ik toch niets aan doen,' zei ik. 'Ze werd verboden met je om te gaan,' zei grootmoeder. 'En daar legde ze zich bij neer.' 'Was ze gevaarlijk of zo ?' vroeg ik. 'De familie vond van wel,' zei grootmoeder. 'Ze is als een kwark-taartje,' zei ik. 'Ja, maar jij kent haar duisternissen niet,' zei grootmoeder. 'Vertel me,' zei ik. Grootmoeder werd even stil. Ze keek me diep aan in mijn ogen, en sprak : 'Ze houdt van vreemde spelletjes. Het zijn geen echte spelletjes, maar ik noem het maar even zo.'
Ik kwam haar een paar dagen later in de bibliotheek tegen. Ze was daar aan het lezen. Ze had prachtige laarzen aan. En een prachtig wit broekje dat tot aan haar laarzen reikte. Ze had touwtjes in haar haren, en het voelde alsof haar tong op de mijne lag. Ik had een bessensmaak in mijn mond. Ze deed alsof ze me niet zag,

of misschien zag ze me helemaal niet. Ik liep langs haar heen, en liep zo dicht tegen haar aan dat ik haar raakte, maar niet te hard, en niet te dichtbij, en zeker ook niet te lang. Een rilling en een warm gevoel ging door mij heen. Ik voelde mij als in de hemel. Ik werd er een beetje emotioneel van. Plotseling keek ze op, en keek met haar warme donker-bruine ogen naar mij, alsof ze me niet herkende. Toen las ze weer door. 'Je herkent me niet ?' vroeg ik. 'Nee,' zei ze, terwijl ze niet opkeek. Ze las gewoon door. 'Ik geloof je niet,' zei ik. Ze glimlachte warm, terwijl ze even opkeek. 'Het is me allemaal verboden,' zei ze. 'Door wie ?' vroeg ik. 'Je familie,' zei ze. Ik zweeg. Ik probeerde me haar naakt voor te stellen, of in een bikini op het strand, terwijl ik doorliep. Dat was de laatste keer dat ik haar zag. Grootmoeder vertelde mij een paar weken later dat ze in de krant had gelezen dat ze spoorloos was verdwenen. Ik werd er niet koud of warm van. Het zij zo, dacht ik. Haar zus kwam ik nog weleens tegen. Maar die wilde er niet over praten. Dat was ook een heel ander type. Toch wilde ze er na een bepaalde tijd wel over praten. 'Mijn zusje hield veel van je,' zei ze. 'Ze wil dat je haar nooit vergeet.' 'Waar is ze ?' vroeg ik. Ze overhandigde me een brief. 'Lees,' zei ze. Er stond in dat

ze naar het bos was gevlucht, voorgoed. Ze wilde dat ik zou komen. Ik stond op, en ging terug naar grootmoeder. 'Ja, ze hield veel van de bossen,' zei grootmoeder. 'Altijd al. Karel, haar vader, was ook een bos-fanaat.' Ik schudde mijn laars uit. Er zat allemaal zand in, en ook een munt, een gouden munt, met haar hoofd erop. Ik liet het aan grootmoeder zien. 'Maar dat kan toch niet, lieve jongen,' zei grootmoeder. 'Hoe kun je nu een munt vinden met haar hoofd erop, en dat zat in je laars ? Dat heeft haar zus vast in je laars gestopt toen je daar was.' Ik was verbijsterd. 'Hoe is dat mogelijk ?' vroeg ik. 'Een munt met haar hoofd erop ?' 'Ja, ze moet wel ergens koningin zijn, jongen,' zei grootmoeder. 'Je komt niet zomaar met je hoofd op een munt.' 'Hoe kan dat ?' vroeg ik. 'Ik weet het niet, jongen,' zei grootmoeder. 'Volgens mij weet haar zus meer.' Ik ging weer naar haar zus, en die begon direct te glimlachen toen ze de munt zag. 'Ja, Suzie is een koningin,' zei ze. Het was de eerste keer dat ik haar zag glimlachen. 'Van welk rijk ?' vroeg ik. 'Suzie is de koningin der apen,' zei ze. 'Ach, kom nou,' zei ik. 'Hoe kunnen apen nou munten hebben.' 'Ach,' zei ze, 'dat was eens een stunt in de dierentuin, waar je je hoofd kon laten zetten op een munt, als je voor een bepaald bedrag had gedoneerd.' 'Dus heb jij die munt in

mijn laars gedaan ?' vroeg ik. Ze giechelde. Raadsel opgelost. Ik ging terug naar grootmoeder. 'Ach, Karel had ook altijd van die vreemde dingen,' zei grootmoeder. 'En haar moeder was ook zo'n zot mens. Haar moeder reiste in bootjes door het bos. Ook zo'n bosmens. En dan vreemde dingen, he.' 'Wat voor vreemde dingen ?' vroeg ik. Grootmoeder zweeg.
Ik besloot door de vele struiken van bosbessen naar het bos te gaan. Al gauw kwam ik haar daar tegen. Ze had een boog op mij gericht. 'Wat kom je doen ?' zei ze ruig. 'Ik dacht dat je wilde dat ik kwam ?' zei ik. 'Wie ben je ?' vroeg ze. 'Ik dacht dat je me wel kende, Suzie,' zei ik. 'Ik ben Suzie niet,' zei ze. 'Ik ben nu iemand anders.' 'Mag ik bij je komen ?' vroeg ik. Ze spande de boog nog strakker. Ik keek naar de glinsterende pijl. Als ze die los zou laten, zou ik er zeker geweest zijn. 'Jij bent het reeenkind, het geheim van het hertenjong,' zei ze. 'Wat is dat ?' vroeg ik. 'Nog even en dan ben je een kluif,' zei ze. Ze greep een touw met een lasso van haar schouder en liet het om mijn nek vliegen. 'Hey, ben je gek geworden ?' vroeg ik. Met een steen sloeg ze me neer. Ik was bewusteloos, en werd even later wakker in een kooi. 'Jij bent dus echt gek geworden,' zei ik. 'Stom varken,' zei ze. 'Ik dacht dat ik

eerst een hertenjong was, en nu ineens een varken ?' vroeg ik. 'Mond houden,' zei ze. 'Je speelt met je leven.' 'Je praat gewoon heel ongenuanceerd, alsof er een steekje bij je los zit,' zei ik. 'Ik ga je laten verhongeren,' zei ze. Die is echt gek, dacht ik bij mezelf. Die heeft ze niet meer goed op een rijtje. 'Je zal niet meer teruggaan naar je familie,' zei ze hardvochtig. 'Het is afgelopen met hun spelletjes. Je bent nu van mij.' 'Wat als ze me hier komen halen ?' vroeg ik. 'Dit is verboden terrein voor hen,' zei ze. Opeens stond daar de boswachter. Suzie moest naar de gevangenis, en ik kon weer terug naar mijn familie. Ik had wel heel erg veel medelijden met Suzie. Ik zocht haar vaak op in de gevangenis. 'Heus, ik bedoelde het niet zo,' zei ze. 'Ja, dat zeggen ze allemaal,' zei ik. 'Ik was gewoon met je aan het spelen,' zei ze. 'Mijn familie had gelijk,' zei ik. 'Je bent gevaarlijk, en je houdt van vreemde spelletjes.' Ze begon te huilen. 'Ik wilde je geen kwaad doen. Ik zou je daarna gewoon loslaten, maar jullie vatten alles verkeerd op,' zei ze. 'Maar je had een pijl en boog op me gericht, en je had me bewusteloos geslagen met een steen. Noem je dat nog spelletjes ? Je bent een beetje vreemd,' zei ik. 'Het bosleven is hard,' zei ze. 'Ik moest overleven.' 'Maar je zei dat je wilde dat ik kwam,' zei ik. 'In die brief. Het is een

soort liegen en bedriegen.' 'Nee,' zei ze. 'Ik wilde dat je kwam. Ik wilde gewoon met je spelen.' 'Je hebt me erin laten lopen,' zei ik. 'Denk je nou echt dat ik je kwaad wilde doen ?' vroeg ze. 'Ik weet het niet,' zei ik. 'Je bent in ieder geval niet te vertrouwen.' 'Het was maar spel,' zei ze. 'Vond je het niet leuk ? Dan had je het moeten zeggen, dan waren we direct gestopt.' 'Ik was al bewusteloos geslagen,' zei ik. Ze scheen het niet te begrijpen. Het was een bijzonder meisje. 'Het dringt niet tot je door, he ?' zei ik. 'En nu zit ik hier dan,' zei ze. 'Ik wil terug naar het bos.' 'Maar je bent te gevaarlijk,' zei ik. 'Ach kom,' zei ze. 'Jullie kunnen ook niet tegen een grapje.' 'Geen leuk grapje als ik bewusteloos wordt geslagen,' zei ik. Maar dat drong niet tot haar door. 'Het is het wilde leven,' zei ze. 'In het wilde leven kunnen dingen gebeuren die in de stad niet mogen gebeuren. Het is anders.' 'Ja, ja, maak dat de kat maar wijs,' zei ik.
Grootmoeder wilde dat ik uit haar buurt zou blijven, vooral toen ze weer vrij kwam. Het was voor haar verboden om in het bos te komen. Dat zou een verkeerde uitwerking op haar hebben. Ik ging haar niet echt uit de weg. Soms kwam ik haar in de bibliotheek tegen. 'Van wat voor boeken houd je ?' vroeg ik haar. 'Van het bos,' zei ze.

'Daar mag je niet komen, he ?' zei ik plagend. 'Nee,' zei ze zacht. 'Mijn familie heeft liever niet dat ik met je praat,' zei ik. 'Naar voor je,' zei ze. 'Waarom dat nou weer ?' vroeg ik. 'Wat kan mij dat nou schelen. Ben je zo belangrijk ?' 'Nou, je kwam me anders wel altijd opzoeken, in het bos, in de gevangenis, en nu,' zei ze. Ik begon hevig te protesteren. 'Nee, dat was omdat ik medelijden met je had, niet voor mezelf,' zei ik. 'Oh, ben jij er zo één,' zei ze. 'Ik vertrouw je niet,' zei ik. 'Ja, dat weten we al,' zei ze. 'Maar je loopt wel altijd achter me aan.' Weer begon ik hevig te protesteren. 'Zeg, dame, nou moet je eens even heel goed naar me luisteren. Ik heb net zoveel recht om in de bibliotheek te komen als jij. En ik ben hier voor de boeken, niet voor jou. Nu moet je geen hoogmoeds-waanzin krijgen, mevrouw, of wil je ook dat ik 'u' tegen je zeg ?' zei ik verontwaardigd. 'Nee,' zei ze, 'en ik loop je gewoon maar wat te plagen.' 'Goed,' zei ik, en liep door. Maar ze kwam me achterna. 'Ik zal je nog wel eens een keer krijgen, zoals ik je goed beet had in het bos,' zei ze. Ik slikte. Ik wist dat ik nog steeds op mijn hoede moest zijn. Deze vrouw was immers gek. Op een nacht werd ik wakker, vastgebonden, terwijl zij op me zat. 'Hoe kom jij hier binnen ?' vroeg ik. 'Voor jou een vraag, voor

mij een weet,' zei ze. 'Kun je mij onmiddelijk losmaken,' zei ik. 'Nee,' zei ze, 'ik zei toch dat ik je nog wel zou krijgen ?' 'Okay, maar ik vind het niet leuk,' zei ik. Toen maakte ze me los. Ik zag toen dat ze het waarschijnlijk niet kwaad meende. Ik nam haar in mijn armen. 'Ik vind je eigenlijk heel lief,' zei ik. 'Ik zie nu in dat ik je helemaal verkeerd beoordeeld heb.' 'Maar ik had je niet bewusteloos mogen slaan,' zei ze. 'Het is niet erg,' zei ik. 'Het was in het bos, en daar zijn misschien andere regels.' 'Nee,' zei ze. 'Het was verkeerd van me.' 'Ik heb er niks aan overgehouden,' zei ik. Ik hield haar vast in bed, en streelde door haar haar. Toen ging ik met mijn vingers over haar lippen. Ik kuste haar. 'Ik heb je eindelijk,' zei ze. 'Je moet eens weten hoe lang ik hier op heb gewacht. Mijn hele leven al.'
Opeens stond grootmoeder in de deur-opening. Ze stond daar lijkbleek. Ze maakte direct rechtsomkeerds. Even later ging de telefoon. Ik nam op. Het was grootmoeder. 'Ik hoef haar niet te zien,' zei ze. 'Wil je haar ofzo ? Ik zei je toch dat je uit haar buurt moest blijven ? Ze is niet pluis.' 'Ze is gewoon speels, grootmoeder,' zei ik. 'Maar dat kan een keer verkeerd aflopen, lieve jongen,' zei grootmoeder. Op aanraden van grootmoeder wilde ik dat

ze het huis weer zou verlaten. Ik besloot een grote zwerftocht door het bos te maken. Ik ging door de vele bessenstruiken, en ik wist dat ik hier vrij zou zijn van de streken van Suzie. Ik kon me nooit helemaal aan haar geven. Een warmte omgaf mij, alsof iets me riep. Ik ging dieper het bos in, totdat ik bij een bosmeertje kwam. Er waren hier jongens aan het spelen. Ze hadden verfstrepen op hun lichamen. Toen ze mij zagen grepen ze hun bogen. 'Wie ben je, en wat moet je ?' riep één van hen. 'Ik wil in het bos leven,' riep ik terug. 'Zweer je dat je nooit terug zal gaan ?' riep een ander. 'Ik zweer het,' zei ik. Ze kwamen dichterbij. 'Hij moet geverfd worden,' zei één van hen. Voordat ik het wist was ik neergeslagen. Ik werd wakker in een kooi. Ze glimlachte. 'Wie ben jij ?' vroeg ik. 'Ben jij dat, Suzie ?' stamelde ik. 'Hoe kun jij hier zijn ?' Ik was nog steeds een beetje duizelig, en had een beetje een waas voor mijn ogen vanwege de klap. 'Ik ben haar tweelingzus,' zei ze. Ik had een smaak van bessen in mijn mond. 'Okay, ik vind dit dus niet leuk, dus maak me los,' zei ik. 'Oh nee,' zei ze, 'daar komt niks van in. Ik ben niet zo makkelijk in die dingen als mijn zus.' 'Mijn familie zal mij vinden,' zei ik. 'De jongens zullen hen grijpen, zoals ze jou grepen,' zei ze. Ik voelde me machteloos. Ze zou me

waarschijnlijk laten verhongeren. 'Aan het einde van het ritje zul je zijn als deze jongens,' zei ze. 'En je zal nooit meer terugwillen.' 'Wat is hier te doen ?' vroeg ik. 'Wil je terug naar mijn zus dan ?' vroeg ze. 'Ze zal echt nooit opgeven. je zal moe van haar worden.' 'Okay, ik blijf,' zei ik. 'Maak me los.' 'Geen denken aan,' zei ze. 'Deze jongens zijn zorgvuldig geinitieerd, en zo zal jij ook geinitieerd moeten worden.' 'Mijn grootmoeder zal naar mij op zoek gaan,' zei ik. 'Ze zal er niet doorkomen,' zei ze. 'Dan ken jij mijn grootmoeder nog niet,' zei ik. 'Ik ken haar,' zei ze. 'Ze is niet tegen mij opgewassen.' 'Wat als de boswachter komt ?' vroeg ik. 'Die komt hier niet,' zei ze. 'Waarom niet ?' vroeg ik. Ze zweeg. Ik kreeg bijna geen voedsel. Alleen soms wat bessen met vreemde melk. Ik werd vaak geslagen, veelal totdat ik bewusteloos raakte. 'Het is om los te komen van de oude wereld en van je oude geheugen,' zei ze. 'Je bent serieuzer dan je zus,' zei ik. 'Mijn zus is te speels,' zei ze. 'Voor mij is het menens. De buitenwereld is gevaarlijk. Jouw familie is gevaarlijk.' Ze brachten een verf uit op mijn huid, en op een dag lieten ze me uit de kooi. Ik was nu één van hen.
Op een dag kwamen ze ons in helicopters halen. Het meisje ging de gevangenis in, en de jongens gingen terug

naar hun families, zoals ook ik. Grootmoeder was woedend. Zij kende dat meisje wel. Het meisje vertrok al heel jong naar het bos, en keerde niet terug. Ze werd waarschijnlijk grootgebracht door hyenas. Mijn grootmoeder verbood mij om het meisje op te zoeken in de gevangenis. Ik wilde dat eigenlijk ook niet. Het scheen dat het meisje heel veel op haar geweten had. Ze zou niet zomaar vrij komen. Ze was veel gevaarlijker dan haar tweeling-zus, Suzie. We gingen verhuizen naar een andere stad. Grootmoeder vond dat beter, want dan zouden we geheel afzijn van die vreemde familie van Suzie. Grootmoeder wilde er niet op wachten dat er weer iets zou gebeuren.
In onze nieuwe stad gingen grootmoeder en ik vaak wandelen naar de zee. De kust stond vol met bessenstruiken, waar veel wespen waren. Ik had veel diepe gesprekken met mijn grootmoeder.

Medusa

Hoofdstuk 1. De Zonderling

Ik denk dat ik doodga als ik naar haar kijk. ‘Dit is het rijk van de dood,’ zei ze. Ze had een suikerzoet jurkje aan, met de geur van een herfstbos. Ik draaide mijn gezicht om en keek naar buiten, naar de grauwe stenen. Het was alsof ze lang uitgestrekt op de daken lag, alsof ik haar met mijn ogen niet kon ontwijken. De bus stopte dichtbij, mensen stapten in de bus, en het was alsof zij tussen de rijen stond. Ik denk dat ik doodga als ik haar aankijk, dat ik het dan gewoon niet overleef. Ze pakt me bij mijn hand, en trekt me naar beneden. Het is etenstijd. Zij smeert het brood, kijkt naar buiten naar de heg. Ik ruik haar suikerzoet jurkje, alsof het belegd is met hemelse rijkdommen, maar naar haar kijken durf ik niet. Ik ben laf. Ik voel haar hand nog steeds, terwijl ze me allang heeft losgelaten. Ze voert me.

Ze is als een rots waarvan ik af kan springen, daarom beklim ik haar niet. De pot pindakaas voelt nog warm aan van haar hand. Ze was hier. Nu is ze in de kelder. Omdat ze zo lang wegblijft drink ik de laatste slokken melk en

thee, en dan ga ik naar bed. Het was een dag des doods, in de tuin van spot. En gisteren was ik in de tuin van wreedheden. Mijn herinneringen zijn daar. Mijn hersenen bloeden. Ze leest me een boek voor, terwijl ik probeer te slapen. Ik hoor haar stem echoen door mijn hoofd. Het zaad van de lindeboom houd ik stevig vast, en meng het met mijn tranen. Dan smeer ik haar lichaam in, met het mengsel dat lijkt op natte tarwe, griesmeel, het is als brood, en het bed is de oven. Zij is de vrouw van de bakker, en ik ben de bakker. Ik maak haar klaar voor het kostelijke dinner in het diepste van de nacht, en dan slaap ik.

Ze is als de boom aan de rivier. Ik krab aan het hout, het is alsof de sterren breken. Ik denk aan de tuinen waarin wij waren, de hoge poorten in de heggen, de vruchten die zijn als de meest kostelijke snoepjes. Wie plantte hen daar ? Ik keek naar haar gezicht toen ze sliep. Nu was het veilig. De lazarus-koekjes bungelden aan haar lichaam, slap, uitgedroogd, de nacht heerste hier over de dood, de gouden dood. Voor mij was het een vakantie, ze was even geen roofdier meer. Ik kuste haar lippen, en dan slaap ik, vrij, blij, zonder angst, want ze slaapt. Een diepe nacht die mijn bewustzijn breekt, ik ben er even helemaal uit. Tante

Connie controleert later de kamers nog even, of alle lichten wel uit zijn voor de nacht, want als de nacht komt, dan moet de nacht echt goed komen. Zo praat ik ’s nachts als met een pop. Ik hoor tante Connie op de gang lopen, als een lijzige boom, verzwakt door het gewicht van haar ouderdom, met passen als het slaan op de koekjestrommel. Ja, haar hele wezen klinkt me als muziek in de oren. Altijd is ze mijn lievelingstante geweest, daarom wonen we hier samen, maar de herinnering aan haar verzwakt. Ik leef hier in een dorre tuin, spot gemengd met wreedheden, de souvenirs van het duistere gat van het verleden. Geen lichtjes konden dat goedmaken, geen gouden pollepel van welke grootmoeder dan ook. Ik voel me verminkt.

Oom Joop is een man met humor, maar ook hij kon mij niet redden. Als ik wakker word zit er iemand op me, wassende mijn rug. Het is zij. Ik durf haar niet aan te kijken. Ze pakt me beet, laat dan los, pakt me steviger beet, en dan laat ze me helemaal los, om op te staan. Ik ben te moe, en het zonlicht kwelt me. Er liggen hier snoep papiertjes overal. Ik hoor haar lachen. Er is geen tuinman die de wilde tuin van mijn ziel op orde kan krijgen. Ik lig hier voor Jan Worst.

Ze is de laatste van de rozentuin, dus ik kan haar niet

wegdoen. De geschiedenis van de graaf, en zijn kinderen. Zij is als de erfenis. Uit mijn gedachten is ze niet. Ze speelt de piano. Ik kijk naar buiten, en probeer langzaam grip te krijgen op de dag. De muren buiten lijken hoog, zoals zij hoog is, van adel. Tante Connie komt binnen, en sleept zichzelf over het tapijt. Het lijkt voor haar een woestijnreis om aan ons bed te komen, en alles lijkt verwaterd. Haar rumoerig kapsel was vroeger deftig en behoudend. Ze staart in de spiegel. ‘Ik moet me nog opmaken voor de dag, je weet wel, het harnas aandoen,’ zegt ze. Ze gaat tegen de verwarming aanzitten, en luistert naar de piano. De schotel die ze in haar handen heeft maakt haar bijna als een bedelaar. Ze heeft behoefte aan een gesprek, en ik ben te moe. De dochter van de graaf daarentegen is vol energie, en begint het gesprek met haar in zinderende vaart. Ze zijn als een stel vogels. Al snel prakken de vorken een maal. Ik krijg niks, want ik behoor niet tot de dag. Het is alsof ze elkaar voeren.

In de middag ligt ze weer op me. Het lijkt wel alsof ze draadjes aan me bevestigt om me op te hijsen. Er is nog maar een klein stukje van de dag over en dat eist ze helemaal voor haarzelf op, als met gloeiende handen. Buiten hoor ik de bus, mensen stappen in, verveeld,

uitgeput. Ik vraag me af of ze ooit zullen aankomen. Zwetend en puffend kom ik aan bij de lift op de gang. Ik wil naar de zolder. Maar de lift schijnt niet te werken. Ik strompel naar de trap, want een dag met de dochter van de graaf is te veel voor mij. Ik zie bij de trap naar de zolder een andere vrouw staan, in wit kant. Ze helpt me op de trap. Ik plof even later op haar bed neer. Zij is de vrouw van de zolder, en ik heb de zolder bereikt, niet te bereiken voor de dochter van de graaf, de dochter des doods. Maar ik hoor haar krijsen beneden, als iemand die zich geprikt heeft bij het naaien. Ja, toe maar, druk die speld maar diep naar binnen, je verdient het, kreng, denk ik bij mezelf. Maar dan word ik ineens mild door de zachtheid van de vrouw hier. Ze komt dichterbij, spreid haar benen waarmee ze mij vastklemt. ‘Ho, doe normaal,’ zeg ik. Ze verzwakt de klem een beetje, maar ik voel haar gewicht op me. ‘Slapen ?’ vraagt ze.

‘Nee, dank je, ik heb net geslapen,’ zeg ik.

Ze loopt naar een kastje, haalt wat brood eruit en besmeerd het. Daarna voert ze me. De lucht is donker hier, en ik hoor de dochter van de graaf nog steeds krijsen. Als ik naar buiten staar is het alsof ze zich heeft uitgespreid over de daken.

‘Waar kom je vandaan ?’ vraagt de vrouw van de zolder.

‘Vanuit de tuin,’ zeg ik.

‘Oh, de tuin der edelheden en martelingen ?’

Ik knik.

‘Zo’n zoet-bitter iets,’ zegt ze. Ik knik weer. De verdiepingen onder de zolder lijken ver weg. Ik staar weer naar buiten, alsof ik mijn ziel zie vliegen. ‘Waar ben ik ?’ vraag ik.

- Bij mij.

Ze pakt een schotel en een kom, en voert me dan soep. ‘Ik wil niet meer terug,’ zeg ik. Ik kwam van een nachtelijk gebrul, en nu was ik hier, een plaats vol protserige spulletjes, over en weer gelakt en opgepoetst. Vanaf de zolder kon ik de tuinen zien, de heggen, met de hoge poorten. ‘Ik ben een vergiftigd mens,’ zeg ik. ‘Een dwaallicht, een pop.’ Ze knikt. Als ik naar buiten keek zag ik mijn weerspiegeling. Zij stond ineens voor de spiegel, en maakte zich op, met allerlei smeerseltjes. ‘Goed spul van de bomen,’ zei ze. ‘Het is voor mijn huid. Ik ga niet naar het feest vanavond, ik blijf wel hier met jou.’

Het is alsof ik met haar hang tussen de verdiepingen, alsof ik met haar zweef boven de tuinen. Ik voel haar gewicht, en ben bang dat we naar beneden vallen, maar ze rekt me

uit. Ik zie de begroeiing op de muren, en herinner de begroeiing van de tuinen, de dorens, de valstrikken, puur natuur.

‘Ik ben de maker van de tuin,’ zegt ze plotseling. Ik schrik. ‘Hoe kun je zoiets maken ?’ vraag ik. Ze zwijgt, als het graf. Ik merk dat ik kwaad word van binnen, maar dan voel ik ineens genade. Al snel voel ik niets meer, ik kijk alleen maar in een onbekend gat, als een mist, een waas. Ik kan niet meer nadenken. ‘Wat is er aan de andere kant van de tuin ?’ vraag ik.

- Een snoepwinkel. Ze verkopen eigenlijk gewoon zoete vruchten.

Ik kijk naar haar kanten jurkje. Het is als een snoep jurkje. Ineens heb ik zoiets van : Als ik nog verder naar haar kijk, dan ga ik dood.

Ik rol van het bed af naar de trap, en laat mij naar beneden vallen. De dochter van de graaf vangt mij op, en de vrouw van het zolder stormt naar beneden. ‘Hij zit toch aan touwen vast, elastiek, draden, kettingen, dus wat wil je,’ schreeuwt ze.

‘Is dit de oorlog van de feeen,’ vraag ik, ‘of van de indianen.’ Ze grijpen elkaar in de haren. ‘Uit dat licht,’ roept de vrouw van de zolder. Ik staar doelloos naar de

hoeken van de trap. Dan voel ik de hand van tante Connie, die mij naar haar kamer neemt. ‘Thee ?’ vraagt ze.

Ze maakt brood voor me, opgepoft en zacht, een beetje nat, met wat soep en pudding. ‘Je moet goed eten, jongen,’ zegt ze. Ik zie haar kauwen. Het zal wel avondetens-tijd zijn. Ik hoor vrouwen krijsen. Buiten hoor ik vogels krijsen. Het klinkt me als muziek in de oren. Bij tante Connie is alles altijd anders. Ze zorgt voor me, grijpt in wanneer het nodig is. Oom Joop zit aan de andere kant van de kamer. Een verfrommelde papieren zak ligt naast hem, met oud brood. De gouden klok tikt, en het is een rustgevend geluid. Ik probeerde vat te krijgen op de structuur van dit huis, maar het was alsof ik van de daken afgleed, of was dit huis slechts de weerspiegeling van de tuin. Het was niet bepaald mijn Eden, en toch wilde ik dit huis doordringen. Ik voelde mij een zwerver in dit huis, een huis wat ik nooit echt binnen kon gaan. Na een paar uur zaten de twee vrouwen keurig netjes tegen elkaar aan, in keurige zoete kleertjes, als feestbroodjes bij de bakker. Rozen op hen vastgespeld alsof er iemand jarig was, en de spelden gingen diep in hun vlees. ‘Ja dieper, dieper,’ dacht ik. Ik wilde het voelen bloeden. Het was al aan het bloeden. Het bloed sijpelde op de grond. Tante Connie

raakte in paniek, en ik ook, omdat ik toch meer waarde hechtte aan de beoordelingen van tante Connie dan aan mezelf. ‘Waarom doen jullie dat !’ riep ze.

‘Dit is ons verbond,’ zeiden de twee vrouwen. ‘Ons bloed-verbond.’

‘Zie je,’ dacht ik bij mezelf, ‘dan had ik het wel goed ingeschat.’

‘Geef me de speld,’ zei ik. ‘Ik wil ook deel hebben aan het bloed-verbond.’ Het was een hele opluchting toen ik de speld in mijn vlees voelde gaan, en ik de zachtheid van de roos tegen mijn huid aanvoelde. Ik voelde me een plak vlees bij de slager.

‘Nu kun je het dak opkomen,’ zeiden de vrouwen. ‘Nu kon je de tuin bezaaien en besproeiien.’ De poort van mijn hersenen leek open te gaan, en de waas leek even te vertrekken. Ik wilde meer van zulke lichaams-spelden. Ik herinnerde de dorens, ik herinnerde hoe genadeloos diep ze gingen, totdat alles binnenin me brak, en ik begon te zweven. Ik was nu boven het dak, maar de huizen om ons heen waren veel groter. Ik kon de zolders inkijken en zag de vrouwen. Ze leken eenzaam, en ik was eenzaam. Ik was met een helm op geboren, maar die ontplofte nu. Ik zweefde bij iemand binnen. En hier zag ik bomen groeien

door het hele huis. Ik was nog steeds in de tuin. Hier hingen zoveel gouden klokken aan de muur, die allemaal heerlijk tikten, zo licht, zo zacht, zo helder, ontwakende de diepste roerselen van mijn hersenen. Ze waren als een vuur in mijn lichaam. De mensen die hier woonden hadden allemaal dialogen. Het moest vooral ergens over gaan, maar ze kwamen er nergens mee. Ze leefden in een cirkeltje. Ik had ze al snel door. Toch was het allemaal erg verrijkend voor mij. Jurkjes hingen er aan de muur, vruchtjes lagen op schaaltjes, gezet op oventjes. ‘Is dit de weg naar de stad ?’ vroeg ik.

- Welke stad. Oh, de overstad.

Ik knikte. ‘Daar heb ik vaker over gehoord,’ zeiden ze. Ze lieten me ladders van touw zien. Ik klom en klom, dit huis was lang, als een herenhuis wat maar niet ophield. Mensen leefden hier als vogels. Ik wist niet waar ik moest kijken. ‘De parel van de tuin,’ zeiden ze, ‘is daar,’ en dan wezen ze omhoog. De ladder was glibberig, en ik gleed weg. In spiegels zag ik mezelf klimmen. Ik had weer het gevoel dat ik van de daken gleed, alsof ik het huis niet kon binnengaan. Tante Connie legde haar hand op mijn hoofd. Haar hand was gloeiend heet, of was mijn hoofd gloeiend heet. ‘Waarom ?’ vroeg ik. ‘Waarom is er hier geen

doorkomen aan ?' Tante Connie zei niks, zweeg als het graf. Ook de twee vrouwen zeiden niets. Het was als een schijnbaar open weg die dood liep. Een zwakte maakte zich van mij meester, en ik was gelijmd aan de grond. Met wilde maar beheerste ogen keek de dochter van de graaf naar mij, alsof ze een wild paard probeerde te temmen, met de koele zelfverzekerdheid dat dat haar aardig lukte. Even stond de tijd stil, en was het alsof zij de muziek van het moment perfect kon berijden. Als ze zou vallen zou ze aan draden verbonden zijn, als aan elastiek, zodat ze niet in de vlammen van het hellemeer zou vallen. Ik snakte naar adem. Ik hoorde haar ogen roepen. Toen greep ze me vast. 'Ik laat je nooit meer los,' zei ze. 'Nooit meer.' Even dacht ik dat ik thuis gekomen was. Ik probeerde me zo lang te maken als zij zich waardig voelde. 'Wie ben jij eigenlijk ?' vroeg ik.

De vrouw van het zolder liep terug naar de trap. In gedachten zweefde ik langs het huis, en de dochter van de graaf lag uitgestrekt op de daken. Wij konden dit huis niet binnenkomen. Wij waren in de tuin. Het zonlicht was aangenaam, en het was alsof we beiden smolten en naar beneden sijpelden, om in elkaar te versmelten ? Waren wij de vruchten van deze tuin ?

Hoofdstuk 2. De Sleutel

Tante Connie legt gouden bestek op de tafel voor het feestmaal. Oom Joop komt aan tafel zitten. Ik zit naast de dochter van de graaf. Ze houdt mijn hand vast. Tante Connie brengt dan de pan met het avondeten, en met een grote lepel laat ze het ploffen op onze borden. ‘Is zij van het zolder niet uitgenodigd ?’ vraag ik.

‘Ze heeft haar eigen,’ zegt tante Connie. Ik heb het gevoel dat ik wat mis, en ga na een tijdje naar het zolder. Ik voel me op en top. Ze ligt op bed, en staart door het raam. Ik ga bij haar zitten. Haar ogen kijken dwars door me heen, alsof ze me niet ziet. Als ik naar buiten kijk, zie ik haar weerspiegelingen daar, alsof ze uitgestrekt is over de daken, en langs de muren, als begroeiing. ‘Zoveel mensen kennen me niet,’ zegt ze. Dan staat ze op en geeft mij een bord. Het schijnt hier ook etenstijd te zijn. Ze schept op. We staren elkaar de hele tijd aan, en als ik dan later naar buiten staar is het al donker, en haar weerspiegelingen zijn als de lichten in de nacht, als woeste paarden over de daken. Ik hoor tante Connie beneden roepen. Het is tijd voor de nacht, maar ik wil niet slapen. Ik houd de hand vast van de vrouw van het zolder. Mijn hoofd voelt als een stad met huizen, grote huizen, hoge huizen, lange huizen,

met bomen er tussen, met plaats voor de tuin. Het is alsof de vrouw van het zolder op mijn hersenen danst, en het doet pijn, en ik word al snel moe. Pudding voert ze me. Grote lange draden voel ik door mijn lichaam gaan, totdat ik het gevoel heb dat ik kan zweven. Haar bed is ineens zo dik en ver weg, haar kamer twee keer groter. Nee, naar buiten wil ik niet meer. Ik ben hier buiten. Zij is mijn wereld. Ik heb een kinderlijk geloof in haar.

Tante Connie laat me de schoonheid van het huis zien, van alle plekken, en ja, ik moet haar gelijk geven. Ze heeft een plaats in mij, alle dingen in dit huis hebben een plaats in mij. Ik heb ze nodig. Ik ben er bijna ziekelijk afhankelijk aan. Het is mijn levenswarmte. Maar toch voelt het alsof ik heen en weer gesleurd word. Ik heb nergens grip op, ik glijd telkens weg, dieper. Dit is een doodlopende weg, een fuik, van vuur. Ik zie ze het glas heffen. Zij zijn als de vlammen in mijn hoofd. Ik durf niet naar ze te kijken, want dan ga ik dood. Het zijn de hoofden van de Medusa. De mensen die hier wonen zijn net zo steen als dit huis, en iedereen die naar hen kijkt verandert in steen. Zo is het leven. Is dit de sleutel weg uit de tuin, of is dit de sleutel tot de tuin.

In de nacht danst de vrouw van de zolder als een zwaan,

als een brandende struik. Ik probeer me om te draaien, maar ik kan niet. Deze dans is dodelijk, of misschien wel leidende naar de poort van de hel. Ik sta verstijfd. De uitsteeksels en aanhangsels van haar jurk raken mij. Ik kijk naar haar door mijn glas wijn. De poort brandt. Ik probeer me ergens aan vast te klampen, maar zonder success, totdat ik de stem van tante Connie hoor. Ik kan niet terugroepen. Iemand knijpt mijn keel dicht, maar ik heb geen verlangen om terug te roepen. Ik ben als een boom geworteld in de grond. Ik heb het geheim van Medusa gezien : Alleen met de ogen van wijn kunnen wij haar bekijken. Ze gilt en schreeuwt nu ik het geheim heb ontdek. Ik gooi de wijn in haar gezicht, want ze wil me verscheuren. Dan staat ze in vlammen, en het gehele huis brandt. Ik moet hier weg. Maar de trappen zijn hier van vuur. Alles is van vuur. Ik besluit te blijven. Medusa schijnt aardiger dan ik dacht. Haar hoofden leven hier in een vreemde vrede. Roofdieren bespringen mij en verscheuren mij, en mijn hart is blij. Het is mijn vuur, het is omringd door mijn hart. Ik heb mijn weg hier doorheen gebeten. Een huis met standbeelden. Het is als een brandend strand, en een brandend oog leidt mij uit, om dieper in te gaan. De brandweerman houdt mij stevig vast.

Zijn jas is glibberig. En dan brandt hij ook.

Tante Connie doet alsof er niets gebeurt is en staart mij aan. ‘Nog wat koffie, jongen ?’ vraagt ze. Ik zeg niks. Tante Connie schenkt nog wat voor me in. Wie zwijgt stemt toe. Mijn oude bed in de kamer van de dochter van de graaf is versleten, scheuren in de matras, en de piano is vals. Maar niet minder mooi dan de gouden spulletjes van tante Connie. Als tante Connie lacht heb ik het gevoel dat ze op de daken fietst. Ik keek naar de vrouw van de zolder. Waren we niet net als Adam en Eva die door de brandende heg probeerden terug te keren naar het paradijs ? En was dit paradijs een mengsel tussen huizen en blote benen ? Ik keek naar de dochter van de graaf. Ik probeerde een weg door haar heen te graven. Maar ze hield alles tegen. Tante Connie dient de pudding op. Ik kan de borsten zien van de vrouw van het zolder, door haar doorzichtige jurk heen, en ze heeft haar jurk ook wel flink open. Haar borsten druipen nog, als de moederlijke fontein, maar er zijn geen babies. Ik besluit niets te eten. Hier kan ik niet tegen, en het is dodelijk. Als ik naar de dochter van de graaf kijk, dan zie ik hetzelfde tafereel. Het is onbeschoft tegen tante Connie om pudding te laten druipen terwijl zij pudding opdient. Ik kan oom Joop goed begrijpen dat hij zo ver

mogelijk van de tafel afzit, als een bibberend hondje. Maar plotseling is het alsof de stoppen bij mij doorslaan. Ik voel me een baby, een hond zelfs, die gevoed moet worden. Wat een drama. Tante Connie ziet het aan mijn gezicht en raakt in paniek. Zelfs oom Joop staat op. Iedereen zit verstijfd. Ik begin met grote happen van de pudding te eten, zodat al snel mijn hele gezicht eronder zit. Oom Joop lacht mij uit. Dit is de tuin van spot. Waarom zijn Adam en Eva hier teruggekeert. Ook de twee vrouwen lachen mij uit, terwijl ze hun jurken nog meer open trekken. En dan smeren ze de pudding over hun lichaam heen en gaan op de tafel liggen. ‘Ik heb al brood gehad,’ zegt oom Joop. Ik kan hier niet tegen. Zelfs een hond wordt beter behandeld. Ik word er erg stil van, en ga bij oom Joop zitten. ‘Je weet hoe vrouwen zijn,’ zegt oom Joop.
‘Dodelijk is het,’ zeg ik. ‘We hebben niet zomaar met een stel hoofden te maken. Het zijn de hoofden van Medusa.’
‘Kijk naar hen door het glas wijn,’ zegt oom Joop. Tante Connie loopt naar de vrouwen toe, en giet wijn over hen heen. ‘Wat een vertoning,’ zeg ik. ‘Dit is toch niet meer normaal.’
‘Ik dacht ook dat ik naar een ander feestje was gegaan,’ zei oom Joop.

‘Kom op, nu weten we het wel,’ zeg ik. ‘Zo lopen we de fanfare niet. Moet je dat nou eens kijken, ze vervuilen die hele tafel.’
‘Nee hoor,’ zegt de dochter van de graaf. ‘Dit is de oerbron, de big bang.’
‘Als je je maar niet verroert,’ schreeuwt tante Connie. ‘We gaan hier geen polonaise in de kamer houden, al mijn spulletjes worden vies. Is er nog respect in dit land ?’
‘Likken, bloedvriend,’ zegt de vrouw van het zolder tegen haar wederhelft. ‘Alsof je leven er vanaf hangt.’
‘Als jullie niet eten wat de pot schaft,’ zegt tante Connie, ‘dan sodemieteren jullie maar op.’
‘We vonden het eten heerlijk,’ zei de vrouw van het zolder, ‘maar we hebben onze eigen toetjes meegenomen.’
‘Contractbreuk,’ zegt tante Connie. ‘Dat hadden we niet afgesproken zo, en voor half geld komen jullie er echt niet langs. Ik voel me door jullie verschrikkelijk door de tang genomen, als je dat maar weet. Ik heb nog wat blokken hout nodig voor het tuinvuur.’
‘Ik dacht anders dat Adam wel tegen een grapje kon,’ zei de vrouw van het zolder, ‘maar mijnheer loopt daar in het hoekje te kniezen.’
‘Oh, toe maar, geef mij maar weer de schuld,’ zei ik. ‘Het

is nu oorlog.’ Ineens stormden de vrouwen op mij af, en peperden mij in met pudding, en trokken me op de tafel. ‘Dit is nog eens een kersttoetje, een vijf-gangen toetje is aan ons welbesteed,’ zei de vrouw van het zolder. Ik was woedend. ‘Als ik ooit loskom, dan zul je wat beleven,’ riep ik.

Het was alsof alle machines ineens stilstonden. We staarden elkaar allemaal aan, maar deden niets. ‘Ode aan de kok,’ zei de dochter van de graaf. Na een tijdje lagen we in het bad, en het was nog gezellig ook. Het was als een lange brandende dag aan het strand. Ik was moe, ik had mijn portie wel gehad. Het was een vreemde gewaarwording dat roosjes zo konden zijn. Ik zou vanaf nu veel meer op mijn hoede zijn. Dit mocht niet nog een keer gebeuren. Tante Connie zou het niet overleven. Er groeiden sinds die dag struiken op het behang, die ervoor zouden moeten zorgen dat deze dingen nooit meer zouden gebeuren. Tante Connie was het goed zat, en huurde bewakers in, die een oogje in het zeil zouden houden. Ook liet ze overal cameras planten. We voelden ons vanaf die dag in ons huis bekeken. Maar de volgende keer dat we aan tafel zaten schoten bij mij weer de stoppen door. Ik verlangde zo naar de oermoeder, dat ik boven op de vrouw

van het zolder klom, de stoel brak, en we vielen beiden op de grond. Een wachter schoot een pijl door mijn hoofd, net op tijd, en ik werd aan de muur gespietst. ‘Geef hem melk,’ zei tante Connie rustig. ‘Jullie moeten niet zo paniekerig doen.’ Pudding droop uit de borst van de vrouw van het zolder. Ik kon me niet bewegen. ‘Eerste hulp bij ongelukken,’ zei tante Connie. ‘Hij is dood, hij heeft een pijl dwars door z’n kop. Geef hem de melk des levens, stelletje koeien. Nou, waar wachten jullie op.’
‘Hij hangt te hoog, tante,’ zeiden de vrouwen.

- Nou dan spuit je maar. Druk de knopjes maar goed in.

‘Nee, hij is dood. Hij heeft Medusa gezien, en wie van haar melk drinkt gaat naar de hel.’

- Ik ben niet gelovig, stop met die onzin.

‘God, zelfs als je de tepels van Medusa ziet ben je al overgeleverd aan de vlammen van de hel, en haar duistere hulpjes.’

- Ja, die ken ik, rijden die hier niet de hele tijd rond ? Medusa is al openlijk te kijk gezet, je hoeft het knopje van de tv maar aan te draaien.

‘Arme jongens.’
Ik kon naar de melk fluiten. De dames gingen ieder hun

eigen kant op. Ik was in de tuin der wreedheden, ik was op sterven na de dood met die pijl in m'n kop. Oom Joop was behulpzaam en trok de pijl uit mijn hoofd. Maar dat deed nog veel meer pijn, dus ik drukte hem er weer in. Even later klopte ik bij de vrouwen aan de deur, maar ze deden niet open. Ik sliep die nacht bij tante Connie en oom Joop in de huiskamer. De dag erna zaten ze allemaal aan tafel alsof er niets was gebeurd. ‘Zo, de meer dan dodelijke borsten van Medusa zijn ook weer van de partij,’ zei ik. De vrouwen zeiden niets. Ze aten gulzig en verslikten zich een paar keer. Het ging zoals gewoonlijk weer nergens over. ‘Leuk,’ zei ik. ‘We zitten hier aan tafel met vergif. Killers.’

‘Houd je mond,’ zei tante Connie. ‘Jij bent ook niet een van de braafsten.’ Plotseling stonden de vrouwen als een vrouw op, als Medusa, en de muren om ons heen begonnen te branden. ‘Zie,’ riep tante Connie. ‘Ik wist het. Medusa is gekomen om wraak te nemen. Ren voor je leven.’ Oom Joop gooide een deken om ons heen, en trok ons naar zijn kant. Hij was de slimste geweest want sinds de dames hier aten zat hij bijna nooit meer aan tafel. Een golf van geweld sloeg ons neer. Maar oom Joop gedroeg zich als een duivel, en dat moest wel, anders had hij niks

bij Medusa in de pap te brokkelen. Ik heb oom Joop nog nooit zo te keer zien gaan. Al snel stond Medusa buiten het raam. ‘Ik wist wel dat die wijven een grote pot met vergif waren,’ zei hij. Ik had nog nooit zo’n groot machts-spel gezien. Ik trilde als een hondje. Oom Joop was een held.

Omdat Medusa ons bleef bezoeken kregen we een ander huis in een andere straat. Er groeiden hier zogenaamde borsten-struiken die vruchten hadden als tepels waaruit een sap voortkwam wat bestand was tegen het borstgif van Medusa. We konden zelfs hierdoor Medusa genezen van haarzelf. De vloek was al snel verbroken. Er hoefde verder geen apocalypse aan te pas te komen. Onze vriendschappen werden hersteld, en al snel leefden we hier weer met elkaar. Alles was veilig nu. We hadden onze condomen-boom gevonden.

Een vrouw leefde tussen de verdiepingen in, een vrouw in mijn hoofd, onderdrukt door de hedendaagse maatschappij, een deel gesloten door de hersenen. Medusa was de oorlogsgodin, weggepest door een maatschappij van valse vrede. Een vreemde vrede bracht haar terug. Zij kende de tuin van spot ook. Ze had die zelf gemaakt. Ook kende ze de tuin van edelheden en wreedheden, op maat gesneden. Ze had zich een weg door die tuin gebaand,

terug naar het paradijs. Ze ontmoette haar Adam in de lucht, en leidde ook hem terug. Door de brandende heg gingen zij, en helemaal opgebrand kwamen zij aan. Heel snel kwamen zij erachter dat zij een cirkeltje hadden gelopen. Zo slaan dan al snel de stoppen door, en vinden ze de liefde in zichzelf, die na korte tijd niets dan haat blijkt te zijn. Het is alles niet wat het lijkt. Ik kreeg een fatalistische, nihilistische kijk op het leven door deze dingen. We waren weer terug bij af. Heel wat dromen waren kapot gesprongen, en we begonnen ons oude huis te missen, maar daar woonde een nieuwe familie in.

Waar we dan ook naartoe gaan, het is altijd hetzelfde. Laten we daarom naarbinnen keren, en elkaar daar vinden, of hele andere personen die eindelijk onze dromen kunnen waarmaken, maar dit is slechts ijdelheid, illusie. We jagen lucht achterna, iedereen weet het, maar we blijven proberen. We blijven happen naar de koek die voor ons wordt gehangen. We zijn geconditioneerd, slaven, hondjes van Pavlov. Alles is hier misleiding op misleiding. Ik begon een pessimist te worden, zwaar somber. Ik wilde niemand valse hoop geven, niemand voorliegen. We liepen de leugen achterna omdat er geen waarheid was, of was de waarheid gewoon in een heel klein hoekje ergens, daar

waar we het onmogelijk zouden kunnen vinden ? Maar alle dingen zijn toch mogelijk voor hen die geloven. En zo ging ik geloven. Niet in het kerkelijk geloof, maar in die vrouwen hier met hun gekke spelletjes. Misschien dat de grootste leugen ook diep in haar de waarheid droeg. Ik had kans, want ik had een pijl door mijn hoofd. Denken was fataal. Het moest van een andere kant komen. Maar ik merkte al snel dat die vrouwen een gesloten boek waren. Ik kwam er niet ver mee. En ik wilde toch ergens in geloven. Een grote trots was er, ergens diep binnenin. Iets wat mij over het ravijn kon laten zweven, iets wat ik niet kon beschrijven, een mystiek gevoel. Oom Joop zei altijd dat een boek ons erdoor zou helpen, maar hij wist niet welk boek. Een popperige papieren kermis leek het. Tante Connie had een pop in een schoenendoos verborgen, een pop waarin ze heilig geloofde dat deze ons allen redden zou. Vaak sta ik op het balkon en voel me tussen de huizen, tussen de bomen, tussen de rivieren, overal tussen.

Het is een wonder dat ik nog leef met die pijl door mijn hoofd. Op een dag voel ik me door het gevoel dat die pijl in mijn hoofd geeft zo in de wolken, zo extatisch, dat ik merk dat ik kan vliegen. Heel voorzichtig vlieg ik van het balkon, tussen de huizen door. Mensen vallen flauw achter

de ramen. ‘Bedrieger,’ roept er iemand. Ik kan er niet mee zitten. Ook al zou het bedrog zijn, ik heb er een goede tijd mee. Ik vlieg naar de top van het hoogste huis in de buurt. Als ik naar beneden kijk is alles wit. Ook het hoge platte horizontale dak waarop ik sta. Ik ruik bosgeuren. Dan vlieg ik over de stad. Wat als ik dit alles zou kunnen ontsnappen. Ik besluit naar de volgende stad te vliegen, daar waar de fabrieks-wolken zijn. Ik houd van de rook. Ik hoop dat we er allemaal in verzuipen. Dat is beter dan wat we hadden. We hebben niets te verliezen. Maar dan roep ik mezelf tot orde. Er staan wat meiden voor een raam. Ze kijken verwonderd. Ik zwaai naar ze. Ze wenken me. Een van hen opent het raam, en ik vlieg naar binnen. ‘Kijk, die kan vliegen,’ zegt er een. ‘Een truc,’ zeg ik. ‘Leer het me,’ zegt een van de meiden. Ik vertel hen over de pijl in mijn kop. Ze giechelen een beetje. Al snel hangen ze aan me. ‘Mag ik in jullie geloven,’ vraag ik. ‘Ik wil ergens in geloven.’

- Wij geloven in de dominee.

‘Okay, maar dat is niet wat. Kan ik in jullie geloven ?’

- Ik weet niet of ik daartoe bevoegd ben.

‘Ik geloof in je.’

- Wat moet ik nu doen ?

‘Vlieg met me mee.’

- Ja, maar ik kan niet vliegen. Waarom blijf je niet gewoon hier. We hebben het hier erg naar onze zin.

‘Okay.’

Ik bleef bij ze staan, en ze trokken me aan tafel. Ik moet zeggen ze waren een stuk netter dan de vrouwen die ik kende, de Medusa-vrouwen. Ze aten deftig, met mes en vork, geen geklieder. Ik staarde naar buiten, allemaal rook. Ik kon niet veel zien. Ze sliepen allemaal in de huiskamer op matrassen. Ik kreeg ook een matras. Ik sliep al snel. Ik merkte al snel dat ik in mezelf aan het bidden was tot hen. Ik was op zoek naar een geloof. De volgende dag namen ze mij mee naar de kerk. Ik moet zeggen dat het mij aardig beviel. De dominee was erg aardig. Hij had ook wel wijze dingen te zeggen, en liep voortdurend met zijn sleutels te rinkelen. Had hij misschien de sleutels om Medusa te openen ? Na de kerkdienst liep ik op hem af om het hem te vragen. Zonder nadenken nam hij een sleutel van zijn sleutelhanger af en gaf het aan mij. ‘Probeer het maar uit,’ zei hij. Maar eigenlijk wilde ik hier niet meer weg. Deze mensen waren geweldig. Weer ging ik met de meiden mee naar hun huis. Omdat ik heel veel aan Medusa dacht, ben ik even later toch teruggegaan naar mijn eigen stad en

huis. Ik begon direkt aan de Medusa-vrouwen te sleutelen. En het werkte, tot mijn eigen verbazing. Voor het eerst had ik het gevoel dat ik met hen ergens kwam. Alsof we de boom des levens hadden bereikt. We dronken koffie op het resultaat. Ik wilde de dominee bedanken, en vloog terug naar de andere stad. De meiden waren blij me weer te zien, en samen gingen we naar het huis van de dominee. De dominee was net zijn huis aan het schilderen. Na het bedankje nam ik afscheid van de meiden, en ging weer terug naar mijn eigen huis. Ik had Medusa verlost uit haar kooi.

Hoofdstuk 3. De Gespleten Aarde

De meiden hebben al snel ons huis gevonden, en de dominee ook. Ze waren met de dominee meegereden. De sleutel had namelijk een zendertje van binnen. Natuurlijk waren ze van harte welkom, maar de Medusa-vrouwen werden snel jaloers. Daar wist de dominee wel wat op, want die had veel meer sleutels. Wat me opviel was dat alles snel verstijfde. Alsof de sleutels veel openden, maar tegelijkertijd viel er ook zoveel dicht. We kregen het idee dat er een vloek op de sleutel lag. De dominee was niet

overtuigd, want die geloofde heilig in zijn sleutels. Omdat hij zich steeds arroganter opstelde heeft tante Connie hem even later het huis uitgezet. Ik bewaarde de sleutels sindsdien. Die waren veel te gevaarlijk in de handen van een dominee. De meiden aanbaden inmiddels Medusa aan haar voeten. De dominee was woedend en noemde hen afgodendienaars. Ze waren niet meer welkom in zijn stad. Het bleek dat hij ook nog eens de burgemeester was. Medusa begon trouwens door deze aanbidding ook steeds meer te eisen. Haar voeten moesten gekust worden, anders zou ze alles vertrappen. Ik had allang spijt dat ik haar had verlost, maar het kwam allemaal door die sleutels. Op een gegeven moment was ik het zo zat dat ik de sleutels inslikte. Maar sindsdien ging het niet goed met mij. Ik begon zelf een Medusa te worden. Wie had dat ooit durven dromen dat ik ooit de god der wrake zou worden. Het liep uit op een gevecht met de andere Medusa om de macht. De Medusa begon een gevaarlijk mechanisme te worden. Voordat het nog erger zou worden besloot ik een volgende vliegtocht te beginnen. Ditmaal kwam ik in een andere stad met de hoogste gebouwen. Een oud vrouwtje deed haar raam open, en nodigde mij uit. Toen ik haar het verhaal over de sleutels vertelde scheen ze mij te kunnen

helpen. Zij was namelijk een heks. Ik moest een bepaald kruidendrankje drinken, en dan zou ik de sleutels kunnen uitspuwen, en dan zou zij de sleutels omsmelten. Maar alles pakte anders uit. Het kruidendrankje werkte niet. Ik had de krachten van Medusa. Ik was immuun tegen hekserij. Ik moest onder ogen komen dat ik in een monster aan het veranderen was.
Ik strompelde naar de uitgang van deze tuin. Ik had het in zicht nu, en greep naar mijn buik. Ook al verdween de uitgang en de buitenste heg in het niets, en leek het alsof het verder van me af begon te liggen, ik liep toch door. Ik greep om me heen als tastende in het donker. Ik greep het touw mij toegeworpen. Een vriendelijk vrouwengezicht keek me aan. Rozensappen dropen in een fles. Ik hoorde gegorgel en gezang. Bloedende tuinen, zover het oog reikt, vermengd met regen, waar het oog van Medusa over waakt. Het koren dat het goud omhoog haalt, het licht der sterren weerkaatsende, haar vrucht wordt vastgehouden. Medusa waakt. Het houten huis kraakt onder het getal van de lelies. Hier heeft ze haar woning. Hier voedt zij haar raadsel, haar mysterie, waar prinsen op paarden al eeuwen naar zoeken. Nee, zij zullen niet vinden, want Medusa waakt over haar geheim. Haar kroning was een bespotting.

Haar lijden was een ontmaskering, maar niemand is ooit tot haar parel gekomen, niemand heeft ooit haar zwaard gedragen. Allen sterven zij door een blik op haar te slaan. Tot steen werden zij in alle eeuwigheden. Haar discipel is zoek, haar beker verloren. Zij heeft haarzelf nog nooit gezien. Zou zij het weten, dan zou zij sterven, daarom weet zij maar half. De rozengrachten hier zijn vol met parels. De mensen hier weten dat Medusa een geheim heeft, alleen ze kennen het niet. Ze hebben er alleen een glimp van opgevangen, en die glimp heeft hen voor altijd verblind.

Ik zit op mijn houten paard, mij hobbelpaard van vroeger, met mijn lange speer, mijn lans. ‘Open de poort,’ roep ik, maar alles zwijgt. Ik vlieg hoog, over de muur heen, maar hier is niks. De aarde is dus toch plat. Is dit het onverbiddelijke geheim van Medusa ? Ik stort hier uit alles wat ik nog in mijn hoofd heb, alle puinhopen, alles gaargebraden, en kijk in de enorme diepte. Nee, het is een ravijn. De aarde is gespleten. Een groot werk moet dat geweest zijn, met de schaar des hemels. Daar aan de overkant weten de mensen niet dat ze niet weten. Ik vlieg weer terug, en omhels mijn Medusa, en mijn meiden. ‘Ik ben aan de andere kant van de schaar geweest,’ zei ik.

‘Daar moeten we ook niet wezen. Vernietig alle spiegels. We staren wel in een glas wijn, met wijn van borsten-struiken.’ Ik strek mij uit. Ze zijn blij dat ik terug ben. Ik solliciteer bij de zeevaart. Ik waarschuw hen dat de aarde wel degelijk plat is, en dat verklaart ook waarom er zoveel schepen zijn gebleven. Ik word er kapitein. Als ik thuis ben speelt oom Joop vaak op het orgel. Maar ik ben niet veel thuis. Ik moet de zee afbakenen. Een hoge rand moet er gemaakt worden, waar niemand meer overheen kan tuimelen. Medusa is als een moeder die haar kinderen terugroept. Zij heeft de tuin gebouwd, en haar muren, en die moeten we eren, omdat het buiten veel erger is. Er is geen paradijs aan de andere kant van de heg, maar de heg spreekt tot de verbeelding. Ik zie nog meer paradijs in een pot pindakaas. Als ik thuis ben zijn de vrouwen blij, dan is het feest, maar een paradijs zal het nooit zijn, en hebben we dat wel nodig. We hebben toch elkaar.
Op een dag ga ik met de meiden voetballen op het pleintje. Via een tunnel komen we in een ander deel van de stad, in een winkelstraat. We slenteren door de straten. Ik neem hen mee naar de bakker, en koop wat special brood voor hen. Brood kan mij nooit te luxe zijn. Het is een levensnoodzaak. Bij de speelgoedwinkel wanen ze zich in

het paradijs. Bij het tuinhek laten we alle zorgen achter ons. Voor de chocolade-winkel danst de vrouw van chocolade. Ze roept herinneringen bij me op, ze danst als een zwaan. We gaan de stoffige winkel binnen. Een grote notenkraker-eekhoorn staart ons aan. ‘Ja,’ zegt de winkelier, ‘veel noten altijd in de chocolade, we hebben een verdrag met de noten-industrie. We kregen dit beeld van hen, toch aardig, vindt u niet.’ Ik knikte. De meiden keken de man vriendelijk aan. We konden aan hem zien dat hij er blij van werd. ‘Ik zal u vertellen, ik ben mijn vrouw verloren,’ zei de winkelier. ‘Ik mis haar echt, en er is nu een zee van ruimte boven, want ze had zoveel spullen en die zijn allemaal in haar graf meegegaan. Komt u maar even mee, dan laat ik het u zien.’ Boven stond alles leeg. Ik staarde naar buiten, waar de chocolade-vrouw nog steeds danste. Ze was een zwerfster, en werd zo altijd genoemd.
Grote poppen van chocolade stonden in kasten. De man deed er erg zakelijk over, en kraste wat op papieren. Even later stonden we weer op straat. Aan het eind van de straat was een fontein. We zagen tante Connie lopen met een zware tas. ‘Tante Connie,’ riep ik. Ze had koffie gekocht, in allerlei soorten. Samen liepen we naar huis. Ik hielp

haar de tas te dragen, en de meiden hielden ook wat spullen vast. Medusa wachtte ons op.

Het Geheim van Aladin

Hoofdstuk 1. De Wonderdoener

Dirk zit in een pinkstergemeente. Op een dag komt er een Oosterse predikant preken. Hij komt ergens uit India of Arabie. Hij is speciaal gekomen voor een rondreis. Er wordt gezegd dat hij nogal ongewone gaven heeft, en daar had men natuurlijk wel oren naar in de pinkstergemeente. De voorganger was een nuchtere man. Hij vond het allemaal wel goed. Waarom heisa maken ? Dat was altijd zijn motto. Tijdens de dienst en de preek van de oosterling haalt de man een soort slangachtig voorwerp uit z'n broekzak, en begint ermee te zwaaien. 'Weet je wat ik hiermee kan ?' vraagt de man. 'Ik kan hier demonen in opsluiten.' In de zaal wordt er een beetje gegniffeld, maar de man was serieus. 'Jezus sloot demonen op in zwijnen, dus waarom zouden wij geen demonen opsluiten in voorwerpen ?' De voorganger keek de man vanaf de rij indringend aan, maar met een soort glimlach van : 'Je maakt zeker een grapje.' Dirk dacht dat de voorganger dit wel spannend zou vinden, die zou zo iemand nooit stoppen, daar was hij veel te nuchter voor. Hij zag nergens kwaad in. Volgens Dirk kon dat gevaarlijk wezen. De man strekte zijn armen uit over de zaal, en begon te bidden.

Zijn handen begonnen te trillen. 'Ik voel een demoon hier, een demoon van lust, kom eruit, snel.' En ineens begon er achter in de zaal iemand te gillen. Snel draaide de oosterling met het slangachtig voorwerp, en gebood de geest in het voorwerp te gaan. Na de preek en de trucs van de oosterling mochten er vragen gesteld worden. Ook Dirk stelde een vraag : 'Hoeveel geesten kunnen er in zo'n voorwerp, en hoe weten we of zo'n geest daadwerkelijk in het voorwerp is gekomen ?' De man zei dat er een onbeperkt aantal geesten inkonden. Hij droeg de slang altijd bij zich, zodat hij een voorwerp had waarmee hij de geesten kon opsluiten. Hij zei dat de geesten zo sneller uit te drijven waren. Volgens hem moest je gewoon geloven dat de geesten erin gingen, zoals Jezus ook door geloof de geesten kon uitdrijven en in de zwijnen kon sturen. Maar ook kon God daartoe tekenen geven, bevestigingen. Op de vraag of ze er alle geesten mee konden opsluiten was het antwoord : 'Nee, want sommige demonen kunnen alleen in stenen opgesloten worden.' En toen haalde de oosterling een steen uit zijn zak. 'Hier zitten al veel demonen in, maar ik zal er nu een paar bijdoen.' De oosterling begon te bidden, en vroeg : 'Wie van jullie heeft er astma ?' Een vrouw aan de zijkant van de zaal stond op. De oosterling

hief de steen op, en sprak luid : 'geest van astma, ik gebied u in de Naam van Jezus in deze steen te gaan.' De vrouw begon hevig te schudden, en was even later van haar ademnood af.

Iemand vroeg : 'Kunnen de geesten niet meer ontsnappen ?' Waarop de oosterling zei : 'Nee, want ze worden door Jezus en Zijn engelen bewaakt.' Iemand anders in de zaal vond het een eng idee om zoveel demonen mee te moeten dragen in een steen. Maar de oosterling zei dat de geesten goed gebonden waren, en dat ze niets konden doen. Een exorcist moest ook leren bewaken, als een soort bewaker van een gevangenis. De oosterling deed veel wonderen en tekenen en spoedig begonnen de aanwezigen eraan gewend te raken. Een ouderling echter stond op en zei : 'Ik zou er helemaal paranoide van worden.' Maar de oosterling zei dat de lucht vol was met boze geesten en dat ze beter zo'n soort geestelijke stofzuiger met zich mee konden dragen. Achter in de zaal stond iemand op : 'U bent typisch zo'n oosterse tovenaar. Ik geloof er helemaal niets van, waar u mee bezig bent.'

Dirk schrok wakker. Wat had hij een vreemde droom gehad, zeg. Maar hij moest opschieten, want over een uur

begon de dienst. De voorganger sprak over dieren in de Bijbel. De voorganger zei ook dat als God iets schiep, dan werden zijn schepselen daardoor vrijgezet, maar als de mens iets schiep door het vlees, dan werden schepselen daardoor gebonden. De voorganger liet ook zien hoe dieren werden onderdrukt door mensen. Dirk was het daar helemaal mee eens. Dirk was een vegetarier, omdat hij niet geloofde dat een mens een dier mocht vermoorden. Doodslag was verboden, want daarmee gaf je aan dat je superieur was.

Na de dienst vroeg Dirk aan de voorganger of die misschien ook vegetarisch was, maar het antwoord daarop was negatief.

Hoofdstuk 2. Het Bejaardentehuis

Ergens in het boek Jeremia las Dirk dat die dierenoffers helemaal niet uit God waren, en ook ergens in de brieven van Paulus las hij dat God die offers verafschuwde en haatte en dat Hij het niet had gewild. Maar vandaag de dag werden er nog steeds dieren geofferd door christenen. Misschien niet zo zeer aan God, maar aan hun buik.

Dirk werkte in een bejaardenhuis. Hier werd ook veel vlees gegeten, en waarvoor ? Dirk zag daar de dood recht

in de ogen. Dit was vaak het eindstation van de bejaarden. Hij had wel eens discussies met bejaarden over vlees eten. Zij hadden daar vaak geen vervelend gevoel bij. Ze hadden vaak zoiets van : 'wij gaan dood, dan moeten die dieren ook maar dood, anders is het niet eerlijk.' Dirk zei dan altijd : 'Maar die dieren gaan heus wel dood hoor, daar hebben ze jullie echt niet bij nodig.' Waarop zij dan vaak weer zeiden : 'Nou, wat loop je dan te zeuren als ze toch dood gaan. Dan kunnen wij hun vlees toch wel eten ?' Dirk werd er altijd een beetje misselijk van. Hij had altijd het gevoel dat hij tussen de vampieren leefde.

Op een zondag had de voorganger een vreemde preek. Het ging over het onbijbelse van vegetarisme. De voorganger haalde allerlei bijbelteksten naar voren om het vlees eten te verdedigen. De voorganger had ook een boekje meegenomen genaamd : 'Vegetarisme in het licht van de Bijbel,' en in het boekje kon vegetarisme de toets niet doorstaan. 's Middags zouden ze met de hele gemeente gaan barbecuen in het bos. Dirk ging natuurlijk niet mee. Wat moest hij daar zoeken ?

Dirk had medicijnen gestudeerd, en wist dat door vlees te eten de kans op kanker en hartziekten verhoogd werd. In het vlees zaten namelijk vetten die door de buik niet

verteerd konden worden, en die vetten zouden dan om het hart heen gaan drijven. Dirk had hierover eens een cursus gevolgd bij een hartspecialist. Sindsdien was hij overgegaan van tachtig procent vegetarier naar honderd procent vegetarier. In de gemeente zaten veel mensen die kanker hadden. Het leek wel een epidemie.

Dirk had nog wel zo'n foldertje liggen, van die hartspecialist, en besloot het eens op het prikbord van de gemeente te hangen. Maar niet lang daarna was het weer verwijderd. Wilden ze de mensen ergens blind voor houden ? Dirk zag het als een groot complot. Later hoorde hij dat de voorganger uit een slagers-familie kwam, en dat het foldertje te negatief was over slagers. Dirk zag slagers als terroristen. Slachthuizen waren in zijn ogen concentratie-kampen.

Hoofdstuk 3. Wie is Jezus ?

Dirk vond dat evangelisatie geen zin had. Hij vond het meer zin hebben om mensen te overtuigen dat vlees eten niets oplost, maar het alleen maar erger maakt. In de bijbel werd een dier het slachtoffer, waardoor de Israelieten zogenaamd de geluksvogels werden, en later in het Nieuwe Testament was het Jezus die de pechvogel was.

Dirk zag het als een valstrik, want zo werden mensen afhankelijk gemaakt aan moord, en afhankelijkheid bracht slavernij voort. En de god van dit stelsel vrat lekker zijn buikje vol.
Op een dag stond de voorganger bij Dirk op de stoep. Dirk was niet meer welkom in de gemeente. De voorganger had gehoord over Dirk's onruststokerij en negativiteit. Het kon Dirk niet zoveel schelen. Hij zou het zinkende schip verlaten voordat het geheel gezonken was. De voorganger bedankte hem, en vertrok weer.
Wel werd Dirk een beetje moe van al die weerstand, en besloot in het vervolg maar gewoon z'n mond te houden. Hij kon toch niks doen. Hij had wel een sticker op z'n fiets met VLEES IS MOORD erop, maar daar hoefde hij verder niets mee te doen, en mensen vroegen hem er ook nooit naar.
Op een nacht had Dirk weer een droom. Hij was weer terug in de gemeente, en de voorganger hield een stuk vlees voor het publiek. 'Eet van het vlees van Jezus,' sprak hij. 'Maar dat vlees is rauw,' riep iemand. Toen werd de voorganger kwaad, en riep : 'Ik heb dit vlees altijd moeten eten, dus jullie ook.'
Dirk schrok wakker. Het was alsof hij een koude hand op

zich voelde. In het Oude Testament moest het vlees van dieren geofferd worden, en in het Nieuwe Testament het vlees van Jezus, zoals ze altijd zeiden : 'Neemt, en eet van Zijn lichaam.' Hier was Dirk het nooit mee eens. Het klonk hem meer als vampirisme in zijn oren. Als mensen wordt wijsgemaakt dat ze gered worden door andermans ellende en dood, dan is moord hiervan het gevolg. Dit behoorde tot de primitieve bloedoffer-afgoderijen. Dat hele verhaal van Jezus werd uit z'n verband gerukt, zodat het een dekmantel kon worden voor duistere zaken.
Voor Dirk was Jezus iemand die Zijn Leven gaf om te laten zien hoe mensen konden leven, en zalig konden worden. Het verhaal moest dus een andere belichting hebben, een andere draai. Je deelt uit van je eigen leven, opdat anderen ook uitdelen van hun leven. Zo zou er een goede bloedsomloop zijn.

Hoofdstuk 4. Halok Patong Otjelek

In het bejaardenhuis de volgende dag was het erg druk. Ze zouden een grote barbecue houden. Dirk ging bijna over z'n nek, maar hij kon niet weg, want het was zijn werk. Dirk zou wat andere dingen eten zoals champignons met soja-brokken, en patat. Gelukkig was de avond snel

voorbij. Dirk zag eigenlijk de afgodische stroom in het christendom die de betekenis van Jezus een halve slag draaide, als één grote barbecue. Maar de bejaarden waren veelal te oud om dat te begrijpen. Zij waren al helemaal in het systeem vastgegroeid. Ook ambtshalve mocht Dirk er niet te veel over praten. Het moest vooral gezellig blijven, en er mocht geen emotionele druk op de bejaarden komen. Dirk besloot zijn mond maar te houden.

Aan het eind van de avond, bij het afsluiten, kwam er nog een oud dametje naar Dirk toe. 'Zo Dirk, hoe smaakte het hondenvoer ?' vroeg ze. Dirk moest wel even lachen. Even later liep Dirk door het donker naar huis. Een man met witte klederen liep op hem af. Het leek wel een beetje op een soort indische goeroe, of een ver-oosterde Jezus. Halok Patong Otjelek, zei de man. Dirk groette terug en liep door, maar de man achtervolgde hem. Ineens werd er van achteren op hem geklopt. 'Heb je vannacht een slaapplaats voor mij ? Ik ben hier op vakantie, maar ik kon geen slaapplaats vinden.' Dirk nam de man mee naar huis en gaf hem te eten. De man had verder geen spullen. Boven had Dirk nog wel een kamer voor de man. De volgende ochtend werd Dirk wakker, maar toen hij naar beneden liep kreeg hij de schrik van zijn leven. Zijn

televisie was verdwenen, een paar meubels, en er was veel geld uit de la gestolen. De man was nergens meer te bekennen. Snel belde Dirk de politie. Hoe kon hij ook zomaar een vreemdeling vertrouwen. Maar ja, wat kon hij anders ?
Toen Dirk de man beschreef ging er een lichtje bij de politie branden. De man scheen een gevaarlijke crimineel te zijn. Dirk mocht blij zijn dat hij nog leefde. Het kwam allemaal in de krant te staan, en al snel kreeg Dirk een telefoontje van zijn vroegere voorganger : 'Dirk, ik ben er achtergekomen dat ik iets te hard voor je ben geweest. Je hebt een hart van goud, en ik zou je graag weer in de gemeente terugzien,' sprak de voorganger. In de gemeente werd Dirk ineens als een koning ontvangen. De mensen waren heel blij hem te zien. De mensen hadden het erg met hem te doen, en van alle kanten kreeg hij spullen en geld aangereikt. Dirk was hen erg dankbaar. Ineens stond de man met de witte klederen in de deur-opening met een geweer. 'Allemaal liggen,' riep hij hard. En iedereen verschool zich onder en achter de banken. Ineens begon de man te vuren, en schoot gaten in de muren. Iedereen was in grote paniek. 'Leg al het geld dat je hebt op de banken,' riep de man. Direkt werd er geld gelegd, en de man begon

het op te halen. 'Kotsmisselijk ben ik van jullie,' zei de man. 'Ik word hier in jullie land als crimineel gezien, maar ik kom gewoon een deel halen van jullie rijkdom. Wij in het Oosten zijn arm. Het is niet eerlijk. Wij komen om van de honger, terwijl jullie hier feestjes en barbecues houden. En jullie noemen jezelf christenen ? Vampieren zijn jullie !' En toen vertrok de man weer. Direkt werd de politie gebeld, maar de man was in geen velden of wegen te bekennen. Dirk werd naar voren geroepen om de mensen te sussen. Maar Dirk kon geen woord uitbrengen. Verslagen ging hij weer zitten. De politie zou een grootscheeps onderzoek houden.

Hoofdstuk 5. De Spreuk

Thuisgekomen ziet Dirk de man op de bank zitten met een soort sigaret. 'Wat doe je hier ?' vraagt Dirk. 'Hier woon ik,' zegt de man.

'Waar heb je al mijn spullen ?' vraagt Dirk, die direkt de politie wil bellen. 'Dat zou ik maar niet doen,' zegt de man. 'Trouwens de telefoonkabel is doorgesneden.'
'Nou leuk,' zegt Dirk, 'en wat ga je nog meer doen ?'
'Wat zou ik als Jezus doen ?' vraagt de man ... 'Wonderen en tekenen natuurlijk …'

'Oh God,' zegt Dirk, 'denk je nu ook al dat je Jezus bent ?'
'Ik ben altijd al Jezus geweest,' zegt de man, en plotseling is de man in het niets verdwenen.
Dirk schrikt wakker. Wat heeft hij vreemd gedroomd, zeg. Stilletjes sluipt Dirk naar de kamer van de vreemdeling. Deze slaapt nog steeds. 'Ach, het zal toch geen dief zijn ?' denkt Dirk ... 'Het was immers maar een droom.' Toch voor alle zekerheid haalde Dirk z'n geld uit de la, en legde het onder z'n kussen.
De volgende ochtend zitten ze samen aan het ontbijt. Dirk vertelt over zijn droom, en de man begint te grinniken. 'Ik geloof niet in Jezus,' zegt de man, 'Ik geloof in Boeddha.'
'Whatever,' denkt Dirk. De man draagt een vreemde ring, en Dirk vraagt naar de betekenis ervan. 'Oh,' zegt de man, 'dat is een ring waarmee ik boze geesten opsluit.'
'Zo zo,' zegt Dirk, 'doet Boeddha daar ook al aan ?'
'Nee,' zegt de man, 'dat heb ik eens geleerd vroeger van een man waarbij ik werkte. Die zei dat als ik genoeg geesten in mijn ring had verzameld, dan konden ze voor mij werken, en dan zou ik slapend rijk worden.'
'En ? Ben je dat geworden ?' vroeg Dirk. 'Nee,' zei de man, 'maar ik mag niet klagen.' Dirk glimlachte. 'Vertel me eens,' vroeg Dirk, 'hoe sluit je die geesten in je ring op ?

En hoe laat je ze voor je werken ?'
De man boog een beetje naar voren, en zei : 'Door wat toverspreuken. Als ik genoeg geesten heb dan vormen ze tezamen een goede geest.'
'Oh,' zei Dirk een beetje pseudo-verbaasd, maar wel met respect, 'werken die dingen zo ?'
'Oh ja,' zei de man, 'want als je vele boze geesten aan elkaar hebt gebonden, dan wordt de goede geest die ze gevangen hadden gezet vrijgezet, en dan worden die boze geesten omgevormd en betoverd tot zijn delen.'
'Hmm... dat klinkt interessant,' zei Dirk, 'althans het is een leuk sprookje.'
'Nee,' zei de man, 'het is echt.'
'Whatever,' dacht Dirk. 'Kun je mij die toverspreuken eens vertellen ?'
Maar de man schudde zijn hoofd. Hij had zeven jaren voor die spreuken moeten werken, dus die zou hij niet zomaar even op tafel leggen. Maar toen werd Dirk ineens wel heel erg nieuwsgierig, en het was alsof zijn hart begon op te springen. 'Wat als ik je aanbied een maand bij mij te logeren ?' Maar de man schudde zijn hoofd. Dat zou te gemakkelijk gaan. 'Waar doe je het dan voor ?' vroeg Dirk. 'Wat dacht je van veel geld ?' zei de man. Dirk herinnerde

wel hoeveel geld men moest betalen voor een reiki-cursus waarin je speciale bewegingen, symbolen en spreuken zou leren om één of andere goddelijke kracht te ontvangen. Dit leek hier wel erg veel op, en wat als de man maar gewoon wat bazelde ? Misschien als Dirk hem het geld zou geven dat de man die spreuken gewoon ter plekke zou verzinnen. Maar wat als de man nu echt geheime en kostbare toverkracht zou bezitten door die spreuken ... Hoe langer Dirk er over nadacht hoe interessanter hij het vond worden. Hij zou graag als een soort Aladin willen zijn, met zijn eigen wonderlamp, met een geest die hem zou kunnen helpen.

Hoofdstuk 6. De Ring

Dirk probeert op vele manieren erachter te komen hoe het zit, en stelt veel vragen, maar de man laat niet veel meer los. De man hield zich als een automaat waar je eerst geld in moest gooien. Voorzichtig vroeg Dirk naar het bedrag voor de spreuken. Het was een bedrag boven de tienduizend. Toch besloot Dirk het te doen, want hij werd gek van de nieuwsgierigheid. Dirk ging naar boven en haalde het bedrag onder zijn kussen vandaan, en gaf het aan de man. De man gaf hem een klein boekje waar de

spreuken instonden. 'Hier heb je het. Ik ken de spreuken na al die jaren wel uit m'n hoofd. Als je ze goed gebruikt zul je nooit meer te hoeven werken. Ineens was de man in het niets verdwenen. Dirk voelde zich heel vreemd en opende het boekje. Er werd ook uitleg gegeven bij de spreuken.

Dit was allemaal veel interessanter dan al dat gezanik in de kerk van mensen die toch niet veranderen, of door zogenaamde veranderingen steeds trotser en koppiger worden. Maar dit was mysterie, dit was geheimzinnig, dit was zeker wel een duikje waard. Dirk begreep wel dat de man er zoveel geld voor had gevraagd, want hij had er immers zeven jaren voor gewerkt.
Dirk bladerde snel door het boekje, en ergens op één van de laatste bladzijden stond dat het boekje absoluut niet verkocht mocht worden. Ook stond er op dat hen die deze kennis bezaten het alleen maar mochten doorgeven aan hen die er klaar voor waren. En toen las Dirk iets waar hij erg van schrok. Om de spreuken daadwerkelijk te laten werken zou degene die de spreuken kende eerst naar het Oosten moeten gaan, om daar op zoek te gaan naar een speciale ring. Toen de ring beschreven werd herinnerde Dirk zich dat de oosterse man zo'n ring had. Dirk voelde zich een beetje moe worden. Zou hij echt eerst op zoek

moeten naar zo'n ring ? Toen Dirk even later de kamer van zijn gast opruimde zag hij op het kussen iets liggen. Het was een briefje, en toen Dirk het pakte lag er tot zijn grote verbazing een ring onder, dezelfde ring als die de man droeg. Op het briefje stond geschreven : 'Ik wist dat je zo'n ring nodig zou hebben, dus bij deze. Ik zie je in het kasteel.' Dirk was erg verrast, maar wat bedoelde hij met het kasteel ? Even later na het boekje wat beter te hebben gelezen begreep Dirk het. Hij zou leren te verschijnen en te verdwijnen, en ergens op een verborgen en geheime plaats zou een kasteel staan waar je alleen maar door de spreuken en de ring zou kunnen komen. Hier zou je ook alle anderen kunnen ontmoeten die de ring droegen en de spreuken gebruikten. Dat leek Dirk wel erg spannend. Maar hoe hij ook oefende met de spreuken, er gebeurde niet veel, eigenlijk niets. Maar hij wist dat het toch wel iets moest zijn, want de man kon ook zo maar in het niets verdwijnen. Er was ook een hoofdstuk over wat er aan de hand zou kunnen zijn als de spreuken niet zouden werken. Ergens stond geschreven dat als je zelf niet in het oosten was geweest, dan zouden de spreuken niet werken. Zij die de ring al wel hadden, maar nog niet in het oosten waren geweest, zouden eerst naar het oosten moeten gaan, zodat

de ring zou werken. Zij zouden bij een oosterse koopman de ring moeten laten beoordelen.
Er zat voor Dirk niets anders op om naar het Oosten te vertrekken, maar waar in het Oosten ? Dat stond nergens beschreven. Dirk besloot naar Bagdad te gaan, want daar kwam Aladin ook vandaan. Bij een koopman aangekomen in een winkel liet Dirk de ring zien, en vroeg wat het waard was. De koopman schrok zichtbaar. De koopman riep iets en even later grepen twee Oosterse soldaten Dirk vast. De koopman zei dat het één van de gestolen ringen van de Sjeik was. Dirk moest meekomen naar het paleis van de Sjeik. De koopman liep voorop met de ring. De Sjeik was erg blij de ring te zien, en begon het ding te zoenen. Toen richtte hij zich op Dirk en riep : 'Werp hem in de vurige oven !' Maar toen riep Dirk : 'Maar mijnheer, ik heb helemaal niets gedaan. Ik heb deze ring van iemand gekregen. Ik wist niet dat hij gestolen was.' Toen zei de Sjeik : 'Okay, sluit hem dan op in de diepste kerker.' Dirk werd helemaal meegevoerd naar beneden. In de kerker aangekomen zag hij daar ook de man zitten van wie hij de ring had en de spreuken. 'En, waar heb je nu de ring ?' vraagt de man. Dirk begint te snikken : 'Die hebben ze me afgenomen. De ring was gestolen. Wat doe jij hier

trouwens ?' Waarop de man zegt : 'Je hebt de ring nodig, anders kom je hier nooit meer weg. Ik ben hier speciaal voor jou gekomen.'
'Ach, toe nou,' smeekt Dirk, 'kun je me nog één keer die ring geven ?' Ineens is de man weer verdwenen, en na een paar minuten verschijnt hij weer, met de ring. 'Alsjeblieft, en laat hem je niet meer afnemen,' zegt de man. Dirk haalt zijn boekje tevoorschijn, en begint de spreuken uit te spreken. En eindelijk werkt het, en niet lang daarna bevindt hij zich in het geheime kasteel. Hier komt hij de man weer tegen, maar ook wat christenen, zelfs wat voorgangers die hij wel kent. 'Wat moeten die nu hier ?' vraagt Dirk. Waarop de man zegt : 'Hetzelfde als wat jij hier doet.'
Plotseling word Dirk wakker. Het was weer allemaal een droom. Waarom moet hij toch altijd zo vreemd dromen ? Inmiddels was het dan echt ochtend geworden. Tijd om zijn gast te wekken. Die ligt nog rustig te slapen. Dirk heeft wat ontbijt voor hem gemaakt. Z'n gast kijkt hem een beetje vreemd aan. Beneden aan tafel vertelt Dirk glimlachend de twee dromen die hij over hem heeft gehad. Z'n gast zegt niet veel, en vertrekt na een tijdje weer. Het ging de man alleen maar om een slaapplaats voor de nacht.

Dirk is best wel opgelucht dat alles zo goed is afgelopen, maar Dirk denkt nog wel veel na over dat bijzondere spreuken-boekje waarover hij gedroomd had. Tijdens het opruimen van de kamer van zijn gast komt Dirk erachter dat de man een klein bijbeltje heeft achtergelaten. Misschien dat hij het vergeten is ? Even later wordt er gebeld. Het is de man, die om zijn bijbeltje vraagt die hij had vergeten. 'Bent u christen ?' vraagt Dirk. Maar de man mompelt wat, neemt het bijbeltje aan uit Dirk's hand, en loopt weer weg.
Een uurtje later gaat Dirk naar z'n werk in het bejaardentehuis. Hij gaat bij een oude dame op bezoek die ernstig ziek is. De vrouw ligt in bed. Door de jaren heen moest Dirk de vrouw zo nu en dan wat zorg geven, en de dame is erg op hem gesteld. 'Dirk, ik heb wat voor je,' zegt de vrouw, 'ik weet niet of je er wat aan hebt, maar het is een boekje wat ik eens kreeg van een andere dame waar ik zeven jaar voor gewerkt had in de huishouding. Ik wilde het graag aan jou geven.' De vrouw boog opzij en trok haar nachtkastje open, en haalde een paars-achtig boek tevoorschijn. Dirk sloeg het boek open en zag allerlei vreemde spreuken staan. 'Wat is het ?' vraagt hij aan de oude dame. 'Ik weet het niet, Dirk,' zei de oude vrouw. 'Ik

weet alleen dat het boek oorspronkelijk van haar overleden man was, die als kapitein op een schip werkte.' Dirk sloeg het boek dicht.
Thuisgekomen sloeg hij het boek direkt weer open. Er stonden veel spreuken in, maar er stond niet bij wat het betekende. Het kon ook gewoon een boek in een andere taal zijn. Dirk besloot het boek te laten onderzoeken door een expert. Na enkele maanden kreeg hij bericht. Het boek was inderdaad geschreven in een oud oosterse taal, dus het waren geen spreuken. Het was een boek over dieren en hun betekenissen. Dirk was een beetje teleurgesteld dat het geen toverspreuken waren, maar aan de andere kant ook opgelucht, want zo konden er ook geen vreemde dingen gebeuren.
Dirk besloot het boek gewoon in de kast te leggen, en er verder geen aandacht meer aan te geven.

Hoofdstuk 7. Het dromengroepje

Dirk besluit zich aan te melden bij een dromengroepje. Bij het dromengroepje wordt er gepraat over wat ze gedroomd hebben. Ze zitten in een kring. Het zijn mensen van verschillende slag. Er zitten bank-directeuren tussen, dokters, christenen en niet-christenen. Dirk begint te

vertellen over zijn dromen. Die had hij eigenlijk al van kindsaf aan. Het wordt een lange toespraak. Na afloop wordt hem gevraagd hoe hij zich bij de dromen voelde. Iemand anders stapt naar voren, en begint soortgelijke dromen te vertellen. Dirk vindt dat wel interessant. Het is net alsof die soortgelijke dromen alles op een andere manier belichten, en aanvullen. De avond is snel voorbij. Een vrouw die nog met Dirk wil doorpraten word door hem uitgenodigd om mee te komen naar zijn huis. 'Ja, ik ben erg onder de indruk van je dromen,' zegt de vrouw. 'Ik droom zelf niet zoveel, maar had toch wel een paar dromen waarover ik in een dromengroepje wilde praten. Het ging om een paar nachtmerries.' Dirk is één en al oor. De vrouw begint te vertellen. Ze vertelde hem dat ze in haar jeugd een paar keer dezelfde droom had gedroomd. Dat gebeurde altijd als ze ziek was. Dan zag ze Aladin op de kade staan die naar haar riep, en op haar afrende, maar dan werd ze altijd door een paar duistere figuren in een schip getrokken, en gingen ze de zee op waar het verschrikkelijk stormde. Dan verging het schip altijd.
De vrouw kon die nachtmerries nooit verwerken. 'Ben je een christen ?' vroeg Dirk. 'Nee,' zei de vrouw, 'maar ik ben wel altijd geinteresseerd geweest in sprookjes, vooral

de sprookjes van Duizend-en-één-Nacht.' Dirk begint te glimlachen. Nou, ik zou ook maar geen christen worden hoor, want dan word je door allerlei christenen gegrepen die het alleen maar erger maken. Het wordt toch allemaal verkeerd belicht. De beste christenen die het dichtst bij de waarheid leven zijn de niet-christelijke christenen, de buitenkerkelijke kerkelijken. De vrouw begint te glimlachen, en begrijpt precies wat hij bedoelt. Ineens voelt de vrouw zich niet goed worden. 'Ga maar even op de bank liggen,' zegt Dirk vriendelijk. De vrouw begint hevig te ademen, en Dirk haalt een glas water voor haar. Wat moet hij nu doen ? Na een tijdje word de vrouw weer wat rustig. 'Ik heb soms last van hyperventilatie,' laat de vrouw weten.
Na een tijdje zetten ze het gesprek voort. 'Ik denk dat figuren als Jezus en Aladin juist buiten het schip en buiten de kerk staan, omdat ze van binnen hun beeld zo gemolesteerd hebben,' zegt Dirk. De vrouw knikt instemmend. Het is een zachte vrouw, iemand die Dirk goed kan begrijpen. 'Wordt er in de kerk ook over Aladin gesproken, of alleen over Jezus ?' vraagt de vrouw. Dirk wordt stil ... Hij herinnert zich een droom die hij heel vroeger heeft gehad over Aladin met zijn lamp waaruit

geesten kwamen. Die geesten hadden zich op allerlei manieren verkleed en gingen in de hoofden van mensen wonen. En op een vreemde manier raakten die mensen toen in elkaar geinteresseerd. Als iets 'anders is dan anders' dan kan dat aantrekken of afstoten.
Dirk besluit om de vrouw bij hem te laten logeren. Ze komt op de kamer waar de oosterse man had geslapen.

Hoofdstuk 8. Duizend-en-één-Nacht

In de logeerkamer hangt een groot schilderij van Mickey Mouse. De vrouw kon zich nog wel herinneren dat ze vroeger eens over Mickey Mouse had gedroomd. In die droom had Mickey een schip, een soort piratenschip. De volgende ochtend zitten ze samen aan het ontbijt. De vrouw moet net als Dirk ook werken. Ze besluiten elkaar weer terug te zien in het dromengroepje.

Wanneer er weer een bespreking is van het dromengroepje is er weer een nieuw lid bijgekomen. De man gaat zitten, en begint te vertellen. Ook anderen vertellen wat ze de afgelopen twee weken hebben gedroomd. En er wordt nog een tijd over doorgepraat. Dirk denkt diep over de dromen na. Het is voor hem een ander soort van leven, en ook een ander soort van contact hebben met elkaar. Het is een

speciale vriendenkring, en het trekt hem veel meer aan dan het gewone leven. En of hij het geheim van Aladin al heeft ontrafeld ? Dat weet Dirk niet. Hij besluit de sprookjes van Duizend-en-één-Nacht te lezen, zoals de vrouw hem dat had aangeraden.
Maar het was alsof Dirk het niet kon lezen, alles wemelde voor zijn ogen, en hij besloot ermee te stoppen. Het boek was in het Engels. Maar de vrouw wilde het hem wel voorlezen en voor hem vertalen. Dirk stemde er mee in. De vrouw zou hem elke keer na de bijeenkomst thuis een stukje voorlezen. Het was alsof het boek Dirk heel zwaar op de maag viel, en daarom kon hij niet teveel in één keer. Op een dag stonden er twee mannen voor de deur. Het waren Jehova-getuigen. Dirk liet hen binnen, en schonk wat voor hen in. Dirk vertelde over het boek dat hij aan het lezen was. 'Maar ken je de Bijbel al ? Heb je daar weleens in gelezen ?' vroeg een van de mannen. 'Ja, daar ben ik zo zoetjes aan mee doodgegooid,' zei Dirk. Toen ze een slot op de Bijbel hebben gezet, heeft God gezegd : 'Nou goed, dan maak ik er wel andere boeken bij. Mij kun je de mond niet snoeren.' Ze hebben van die Bijbel een papieren paus gemaakt. Maar toen staken de Jehovah-getuigen van wal. Ze hadden het over het komende

paradijs hier op aarde. Dirk wist niet goed wat hij hierop moest zeggen, en liet ze maar praten. Waar hij in was geinteresseerd was hoe zij in het totale plaatje konden passen. Ze liepen natuurlijk niet voor niets rond. Daar was God gewoon te groot voor. Dirk herinnerde de droom van zijn kinderjaren : Alle dingen zijn puzzelstukjes, maar je moet ze op de juiste manier draaien en op de juiste plekken, zodat ze in elkaar passen. Dat was een hele opgave. Ook was het voor Dirk een uitdaging, en het was een stap verder dan alles zomaar opzij te schuiven. Dirk moest met de stukjes werken.

Vanavond zou er een optocht zijn. De hele stoet was verkleed, en er waren versierde wagens. Er was ook een wagen bij waar Aladin opstond. 'Hey, Aladin !' riep iemand in het publiek. Maar Aladin hoorde het niet, omdat hij tussen wat hoornblazers, trompettisten en slagwerkers stond. Dirk slenterde naar huis, nadenkend over God en over zijn dromen. Was de wereld niet één grote droom ? Dirk wist het niet. Er waren zoveel dingen die hij nog niet wist. Zou hij het ooit te weten komen ?

Einde

De tuin van mevrouw van dalen

Altijd als ik langs de tuin van mevrouw van Dalen liep stond ik even stokstijf, ik weet niet voor hoe lang, omdat het zo'n betoverende tuin was. Ik kwam dan altijd veel te laat op school aan en dan was de juffrouw of meester enorm kwaad. Dat kon mij natuurlijk niet zoveel schelen. Ik was toch hun slaaf niet, en zij vertelden toch alleen maar onzin. Ze moesten niet denken dat ik veel waarde aan hen hechtte en aan hun duivelse woorden. Ik hechtte alleen waarde aan de natuur en de tuin van mevrouw van Dalen. Als ik ze dat zei dan werden ze altijd nog wel veel kwader, maar ook dat deerde mij niet. Ik was immers betoverd door de tuin van mevrouw van Dalen. Als ik ze dat zei dan ontploften ze vaak helemaal, en ik werd zelfs eens door een juffrouw naar het schoolhoofd gezonden. Die zat daar in zijn kamertje alsof hij zelf ook betoverd was. Hij was in zijn geheel niet kwaad, en zelfs blij met mijn aanwezigheid. Ik had het gevoel dat het een erg eenzame man was.

We spraken over tuinen en over de natuur. Achteraf was ik nog blij ook dat de juffrouw me naar het schoolhoofd had gezonden. Ik heb nu een eigen tuin, die zeer wild is, en

overloopt in het bos. Ik woon in een bosdorpje. Het bos is er vlak achter. Ik woon aan de rand van het bos. Er staat ook wat bamboe hier en daar. Er groeit van alles in mijn tuin, zelfs bramenstruiken. De natuur zorgt er zelf voor en doet alles groeien. Ik denk nog weleens terug aan de tuin van mevrouw van Dalen, en ook aan die school, en dan denk ik : 'Ach.' De tijden zijn zo veranderd. Hoe ben ik van daar naar hier gekomen ? Wat is er veel gebeurd, zeg. Het huis staat vol met boeken, als een boekentuin, maar het is meer een wildernis. Soms moet ik uren zoeken voordat ik wat gevonden heb dat ik zoek, of ik vind iets wat nog wel beter is. De wildernis trekt mij voort en laat mij nieuwe dingen zien. Het lijkt wel alsof het z'n eigen verkeers systeem heeft. Ik heb ook heel veel beeldjes. Er staan ook wat treintjes. Het is allemaal heel beeldend en symbolisch. Soms als er hier mensen zijn dan spreken ze tegen de beeldjes. Er was eens iemand die er een heel gesprek mee voerde. Ik zei toen : 'Je kunt met beelden soms beter spreken dan met mensen.' Ze gaf me gelijk. Ze sprak ook met dieren en planten. Ik zei haar dat ik ook met boeken sprak. Het bracht haar op een idee.

Ik vertelde haar dat boeken spreken, want als je het nog een keer leest dan kun je het op een hele andere manier

lezen en er hele andere dingen in zien. Een boek kan vele lagen hebben, vele verborgen deuren, verborgen kamers, tuinen en wildernissen. Toen ze weg was ging ik naar het beeld toe waarmee ze had gesproken. 'Hoe vond je haar ?' vroeg ik aan het beeld. Het beeld zei niks terug. Ik ben toen maar weer een boek gaan lezen. Blijkbaar hebben beelden niet altijd zin om terug te spreken. Het was een sprekend boek. Ik werd er weer wat wijzer door. Even had ik weer het gevoel alsof ik langs de tuin van mevrouw van Dalen liep … Even had ik weer het gevoel alsof ik stokstijf stond …

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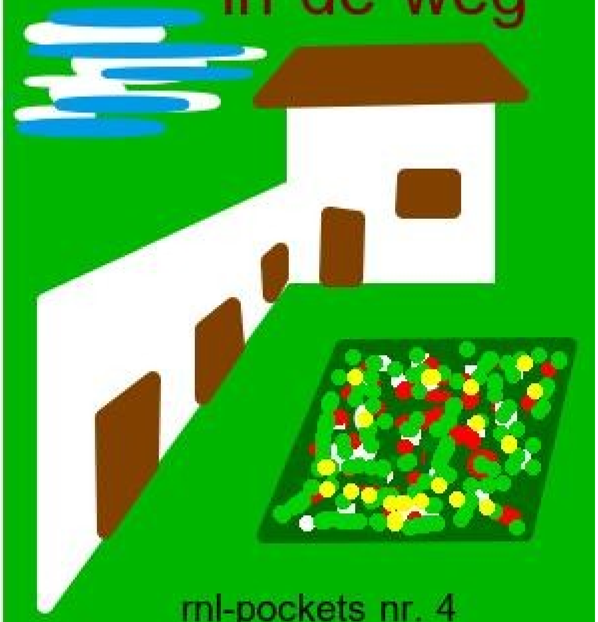

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Het Luipaard

Hoofdstuk 1.

‘Vreemd,’ zei Frida. ‘Het is alsof hij hier nog steeds is.’
‘Wat bedoel je,’ zei Frits, ‘weg is weg.’
‘Oh wat kun jij toch koud zijn,’ zei Frida. ‘Er is meer tussen hemel en aarde.’
‘Goedgelovig zieltje,’ zei Frits. ‘Dood is dood, en we gaan er allemaal aan.’
Frits zat wat computerspelletjes te spelen in de hoek van de kamer. Frida had zich opgemaakt en probeerde hem te verleiden. ‘Sexualiteit is als de dood,’ zei Frits onverschillig. ‘Ik voel me altijd verscheurd als door een beest na een vrijpartij. En je weet dat ik niet van make up houdt. Doe mij maar puur natuur.’
‘Ga in een hutje op de hei wonen, Frits,’ zei Frida. Even later had ze de make up van haar gezicht gewassen. Ze voelde zich alleen. Hector net overleden, en nu zo’n koude partner.
‘Echt, heus,’ zei Frits. ‘Al dat bijgeloof is niks, en zeker niet het geloof in sex. Het leidt allemaal nergens toe. En dat moet dan liefde voorstellen.’

‘Goh, Frits,’ zei Frida. ‘Ik houd toch van je ?’
‘Kan dat niet op een andere manier,’ zei Frits. ‘Het is altijd hetzelfde. We kunnen toch gewoon bij elkaar zijn zonder al dat plakkerige gedoe.’
‘Jij noemt dat plakkerig,’ zei Frida, ‘ik noem het gewoon interesse.’
‘Ik ben meer gesteld op het platonische,’ zei Frits. ‘Dat noem ik interesse. We kunnen toch gewoon praten over de dingen die ons bezig houden, zonder door lichamelijke rituelen alles te bedekken.’
‘Nou, dit houdt mij bezig, en het is gezond,’ zei Frida. ‘Ik wil je kennen.’
‘Praat dan gewoon met me,’ zei Frits. ‘Ik ben hier.’
‘Nee, je bent er niet bij met je gedachtes. Je zit die domme computerspelletjes te doen,’ zei Frida.
‘Zie, je hebt geen interesse in mij. Je noemt dat wat mij bezig houdt dom,’ zei Frits.
‘Laten we geen ruzie maken,’ zei Frida.
‘Mijn hand erop,’ zei Frits.
‘Weet je dat je prachtig bent zonder al die make up troep,’ zei Frits.
‘Ik weet niks, ik voel me verstoten,’ zei Frida. ‘En misschien komt het wel omdat Hector er niet meer is.’

‘Een nieuwe hond wil ik niet,’ zei Frits.
‘Ik ook niet,’ zei Frida.
‘En een poes dan ?’ vraagt Frits.
Na een paar dagen hebben ze twee poezen in huis. Frits noemt Frida de poezenkoningin. Met kerst staat er een grote kerstboom in de kamer, en samen vieren ze kerst met de twee poezen. Frits en Frida hebben veel kadootjes voor elkaar gekocht, om elkaar de liefde te bewijzen. ‘Ik mis Hector,’ zegt Frida.
‘Ik ook,’ zegt Frits, ‘maar het leven gaat door. We kunnen hem met geen mogelijkheid terugkrijgen.’
‘Het brandt van binnen, het eet me op van binnen,’ zegt Frida.
‘Dat is wat de dood doet,’ zegt Frits. ‘Het hoort bij het leven. We gaan er allemaal aan.’
‘Frits,’ zegt Frida. ‘Dat klinkt niet echt avontuurlijk. Kun jij ons niet redden van dit noodlot.’
‘Nee,’ zegt Frits, ‘praat nu geen onzin, Frida. Niemand kan tegen de dood op. Dat moet je gewoon accepteren.’
‘Ik kan het niet,’ zegt Frida. ‘Er moet gewoon meer zijn tussen hemel en aarde.’
‘Dat hebben de mensen bedacht, Frida,’ zegt Frits. ‘Eens verlaten we allemaal het schip van leven, en dan is het

afgelopen. We zijn dan niets meer dan een hoopje as wat door de wind verder van elkaar wordt losgetrokken.’
‘Geloof je dat echt ?’ vraagt Frida. ‘Wat ben jij dan bijgelovig, zeg, en wat een kerk zal dat wezen. De kerk die gelooft dat alles eens ophoudt.’
‘Het is geen geloof, jij bent hier de gelovige onder ons,’ zegt Frits.
‘Hoe weet je zo zeker dat alles straks wegrot onder de grond, om in het totale niets te verdwijnen,’ zegt Frida.
‘Gewoon logisch nadenken,’ zegt Frits. ‘Er is geen hemel, dus er kan ook niks tussen aarde en hemel zijn, dat is gewoon onzin, Frida, en dat weet jij ook. Neem een voorbeeld aan de poezen. Komen die ook met dit soort stomzinnige verhalen aanzetten ?’
‘Nu noem je mijn interesses ook ineens stom,’ zegt Frida.
‘Nee, Frida,’ zegt Frits, ‘dat zijn geen interesses, maar illusies. Je bent misleid door koppige mensen die niet aan de dood willen geloven. Eeuwig leven ? Kom zeg.’
‘Of reincarnatie,’ zegt Frida.
‘Ander onderwerp,’ zegt Frits.
‘Ik houd van je, schat,’ zegt Frida.
‘Ander onderwerp,’ zegt Frits.
‘Houd je nog een beetje van me ?’ vraagt Frida.

‘Jazeker,’ zegt Frits, ‘maar ik wil dat je daarop wat meer zult vertrouwen, in plaats van alsmaar over de liefde te praten, en die overmatige honger naar sexualiteit.’
‘Je doet alsof ik een sexbeest ben, alsof het een obsessie is. Ik heb gewoon pijn van binnen,’ zegt Frida.
‘Eens per maand is goed, maar eens per week is teveel van het goede,’ zegt Frits. ‘Het moet speciaal blijven, geen dagelijks brood.’
‘Kom op nou, Frits, dagelijks brood. Ik heb het er haast nooit over,’ zegt Frida.
‘Goed, ander onderwerp dan,’ zegt Frits.
‘Misschien heb je gelijk, Frits, misschien moet ik me meer op de oppervlakte bewegen en wat subtieler worden, en het horizontale wat breder maken, dat is ook een soort diepte, en wat cryptischer. Dat rechtstreekse is inderdaad teveel van het goede. En kijk die katten nou, zijn ze niet schattig, en zij zijn ook zo subtiel en mysterieus,’ zegt Frida. ‘Ze zullen veel geheimen hebben.’
‘Doe nou maar normaal,’ zegt Frits. ‘Altijd dat gefilosofeer. Wees nou eens nuchter.’
‘Alright, Frits, kun jij me daar dan mee helpen ?’ vraagt Frida. ‘Ik ben maar een beginneling.’
‘Altijd,’ zegt Frits.

Hoofdstuk 2.

‘Frits, je bent geweldig,’ zegt Frida. ‘Een betere vriend kan ik me niet voorstellen.’
‘Dank je wel, Frida,’ zegt Frits. ‘En jij mag er ook wezen.’ Hij heeft bijna pretlichtjes in zijn ogen. Op zijn verzoek lopen ze de volgende dagen heel wat pretparken af, en doen veel spelletjes. Daar is Frits verzot op. Frida probeert zich in Frits in te leven. Maar dan moet Frits voor zijn werk een hele lange tijd naar het buitenland. Frida voelt zich erg alleen, maar dan ontmoet zij Fred. Fred is het tegenovergestelde van Frits. Ze moet Fred gewoon de hele tijd van haar afhouden. Alhoewel ze verzot is op Fred mist ze Frits verschrikkelijk. Frits was altijd haar rots in de branding. Fred is gevoelig en week, en zij moet hem altijd uit de put praten. Ze hebben niks met elkaar, maar ze worden goede vrienden, en zo heeft Frida in ieder geval wat gezelschap. Frits weet er ook van, en vindt het allemaal best. Hij heeft zelf ook zijn extra vriendinnen op zijn werk.
Met Fred kan Frida echt in de diepte, ook over het geloof.
‘Mijn vriend wil me stijf en oppervlakkig maken,’ zegt Frida.
‘Oh, dat kan handig zijn,’ zegt Fred. ‘Als een schild tegen

de wereld, en zodat vreemde zuignappen je niet weghalen.'
'Maar soms wil ik weggehaald worden,' zegt Frida. 'Het leven is zwaar. Ik mis Hector, en nu mis ik Frits.'
'Maar je hebt mij nu,' zegt Fred.
'Dat weet ik wel,' zegt Frida. 'Maar het is toch anders.'
'En je hebt de poezen,' zegt Fred.
'Ja, maar ik mis een schakel,' zegt Frida.
'De volgende keer dat ik kom zal ik Loesia meebrengen,' zegt Fred. 'Zij is echt geweldig. Ik weet zeker dat jullie veel aan elkaar zullen hebben.'
En zo gebeurde het. Fred neemt de eerstvolgende keer een vriendin met zich mee, Loesia, een feestelijk type. Maakt echt wat leven in de brouwerij. Ze heeft veel verhalen te vertellen en heeft een diep inzicht in mensen. Ze heeft een serieuze kant maar ook veel humor. Frida houdt direct heel veel van haar, en ze kan nog goed koken ook. Binnen de kortste keren zijn Frida en Loesia de dikste vriendinnen.
'Wat vind je van Fred,' vraagt Frida haar op een dag.
'Ach ja, Fred is Fred,' zegt Loesia. 'Een leuke jongen, maar niks voor mij. Veel te afhankelijk, veel te teer. Ik zou gek worden als ik met hem samen moest leven, maar we zijn goede vrienden. Ik wil hem graag helpen.'

Frida knikt. Fred leefde helemaal in zijn eigen wereld, en ging soms over de grenzen van anderen heen. Hij kon soms best wel zelfzuchtig zijn. Alles draaide om hem, maar verder was het een lieve jongen. Fred zou graag verkering willen hebben, maar daar was hij eigenlijk niet de persoon voor. Veel meisjes vonden hem leuk, maar toch kwam het er nooit van, alsof een onzichtbare kracht er tussenzat. Daar zat Fred wel erg mee.
‘Ach, je zal heus op een dag wel de ware vinden,’ zei Loesia vaak. Fred was verliefd op Loesia. Hij was helemaal verzot op haar, maar zij niet op hem. Wel voelde ze zich verplicht om hem te helpen. Het was een echt zorgenkindje, als een jongere broer.
‘Fred, ik moet eens met je praten,’ zei Loesia op een dag. ‘Zou jij eens met mij en Frida op een kleine vakantie willen. Dan gaan we naar het bos en dan nemen we de tent mee.’ Dat zag Fred natuurlijk wel zitten. Het liep uit op iets goeds. Ze hadden hun tent dichtbij een rivier, en zo waren ze allemaal even weg uit de dagelijkse sleur, en voor Fred was dat ook wel goed. Fred hield van wandelen en de natuur. Hij ging vaak alleen op pad, en zo hadden de vrouwen veel tijd voor henzelf. Het leek wel alsof Fred door de natuur wat zelfstandiger werd, en wat creatiever

werd. Hij begon zijn avontuurlijke kant te ontdekken. Hij kon zich prima redden zo. Loesia en Frida waren erg trots op hem, en vonden dat het plan goed geslaagd was.
Toen Frits eindelijk weer thuis was kon hij direct goed met Fred opschieten. Het bleek dat ze een goede uitwerking op elkaar hadden. Ze gingen vaak samen op pad. Frits was ervan overtuigd dat Fred bij Loesia hoorde, en na wat bemiddelingen stemde Loesia uiteindelijk toe. Fred was wat volwassener geworden, en stond op zijn eigen benen nu, dus voor Loesia was de kust nu vrij. Omdat Fred en Loesia nu een relatie hadden en dat veel tijd in beslag nam hadden Frits en Frida ineens weer veel meer tijd voor elkaar. Frits was wat opener geworden, en wat dieper, en dat bleek ook voornamelijk te komen door wat vrouwen die hij in het buitenland had ontmoet. Het was alsof ze hem betoverd hadden, als een fles opengetrokken. Frits voelde zich vernieuwd en ingewijd. Frida was tevreden. Het was nu alsof haar eigen fles ook werd opengetrokken. Bij de volgende werkreis van Frits ontmoette ze Jan en Marlies. Zij bleken het perfecte stel te zijn. Ze waren erg op elkaar ingespeeld, en Frida bewonderde ze echt. ‘Dat zou ik ook wel willen,’ zei ze tegen zichzelf. Maar ze mocht niet klagen. het leek wel alsof Jan en Marlies in een

diepe dans waren. Alles was harmonieus, en ze hadden zulke mooie stemmen. Het leken wel twee prachtige struiken die in elkaar verstrengeld waren. Frida kreeg het er warm van van binnen. Ook Fred en Loesia ontmoetten Jan en Marlies eens en werden er door aangestoken. ‘Dit is goed,’ dacht Frida. ‘Deze mensen hebben wat te vertellen, en wat te laten zien.’ Het leek wel alsof Jan en Marlies geheime therapeuten waren. De manier waarop ze met elkaar omgingen was aanstekelijk. En het was heel heilzaam. Zelfs de poezen reageerden er goed op. Frida had het gevoel dat eindelijk het gat werd gedicht wat was ontstaan door de dood van Hector. Jan en Marlies hadden drie honden : Eelco, John en Hotte. En Frida was direct erg aan ze gehecht.
Na een paar maanden was Frits weer thuis. Frits was zichtbaar veranderd. Het was een zware werkreis geweest, en het was alsof hij weer terug bij af was. Dit was de Frits zoals Frida hem kende. Frida’s droom was voorbij. Frits was moe, en wilde alleen maar veel slapen. Frida zat aan zijn bed. ‘Is er soms iets gebeurd ? Je bent anders dan hoe je de vorige keer was toen je thuiskwam,’ zei Frida.
Frits wilde er niet over praten. Maar toen er brieven van een bepaalde vrouw binnen begonnen te komen kwam

Frida er al snel achter dat Frits een ander had. ‘Ik ga bij je weg, Frida,’ zei hij. ‘Ik moet dit gewoon doen. Ik denk dat ik nu toch echt de ware heb gevonden.’

‘En dat wat wij hadden dan ?’ snikt Frida. ‘Gooi je dat dan zomaar bij de vuilnis ?’

‘Je moet het accepteren,’ zei Frits. ‘Het is gewoon niet anders.’

De vrouw was heel tropisch. Frits liet Frida wat foto’s zien. ‘Ja, en ze maakt je moe,’ zei Frida. ‘Dat is wat tropische vrouwen doen. Het zijn een soort tse tse vliegen, vermoeidheidsvliegen. Je kunt dat exotische niet aan.’

‘Je hebt gelijk, maar ik ben verliefd,’ zei Frits. ‘Het is een pijn in mijn buik. Ik kan dat ook niet helpen.’

‘Alles voor niets geweest dan,’ zegt Frida. ‘Al die jaren gewoon verspild met jou.’

‘Nee, we hebben een goede tijd gehad,’ zegt Frits. ‘Maar aan alle dingen komt een eind, en ook dit.’

‘Ja, dat zeg je altijd,’ zegt Frida. ‘En wat heeft zij dat ik niet heb ?’

Een paar dagen erna zijn Jan en Marlies op bezoek. Ze vinden het heel erg als ze het horen, en proberen Frida een beetje te troosten, en ook Frits. Ze hebben hun honden meegenomen. Frits is erg onder de indruk van het stel, en

het lijkt alsof hij een beetje erdoor wordt opgefleurd.
‘Sommige mannen zijn nu eenmaal aangetrokken door het exotische, als een vlucht uit de dagelijkse sleur,’ zei Jan. ‘Soms krijgen ze dat pas op latere leeftijd, het is de roep van de natuur, als een vlucht uit het gewone.’
‘Maar Frits is nooit zo geweest,’ zei Frida. ‘Hij hield wel altijd veel van computerspelletjes.’
‘Ja, het is allemaal heel speels,’ zei Jan.
‘Ik kan het allemaal moeilijk accepteren,’ zei Frida. ‘Ik voel me zo dom.’
‘Je bent niet dom,’ zei Jan. ‘Frits is gewoon aangestoken door iets wat hij niet kende. Als hij jou nog niet zou kennen en hij zou jou hebben ontmoet dan zou hij precies hetzelfde hebben gehad. Sommige mannen hebben na een bepaalde tijd van het een het andere nodig.’
‘Ik voel me verworpen,’ zegt Frida.
‘Vriendschappen gaan vaker kapot door wat voor reden dan ook,’ zegt Jan. ‘Daar kun je niets aan doen.’
‘Ben ik niet goed genoeg dan ?’ vraagt Frida.
‘Het is als verschillende groentes. Sommige mannen kunnen niet alleen van doperwten leven,’ zegt Jan.
‘Ja, maar ik kan toch zelf ook varieren,’ zegt Frida. ‘Ik kan toch de ene dag als spinazie zijn en de andere dag als

bloemkool.’
Later horen ze dat ook Fred en Loesia weer uit elkaar zijn. Het leven met al zijn relaties is inderdaad maar broos. Bijna niets valt er echt in stand te houden. Alles valt uit elkaar vroeg of laat. Daarvan is Frida zich erg bewust. Na een paar weken ontmoet ze Lydia, een wijze vrouw. Lydia kan ook de toekomst voorspellen, en zegt dat Frida een nieuwe man zou ontmoeten. Die man is Willem. Binnen enkele dagen zitten ze al samen in Frida’s kamer. Frits is inmiddels vertrokken.
Willem schijnt al snel de liefde van haar leven te zijn. Hij gaat veel dieper dan Frits en ook dieper dan Fred ooit geweest is. Willem is zachtmoedig, warmbloedig en geinteresseerd. Ze hebben een korte maar hevige relatie, en dan wordt ook Willem door een exotische vrouw aan de haak geslagen, en is telkens maar moe. Frida begint het patroon te bemerken. Lydia verteld haar dat ze er van moet leren. Kniezen heeft geen zin. Maar Frida is depressief. Uiteindelijk belt ze Fred. Fred is erg behulpzaam. Samen besluiten ze erop uit te gaan in de natuur. Fred vertelt haar veel over wat er is misgegaan in zijn relatie met Loesia.
‘Ik snap niet waarom Frits jou heeft gedumpt. Je bent een fantastische vrouw,’ zegt Fred. ‘Mag ik het van Frits en

Willem overnemen ?’ Frida glimlacht. ‘Fred je bent veel te jong voor mij.’
‘We schelen maar acht jaar,’ zegt Fred.
‘Dat is nogal wat,’ lacht Frida.
‘Als we ouder worden zal het leeftijdsverschil verdwijnen,’ zegt Fred.
Fred en Frida maken veel wandelingen en praten over het leven. ‘Hoe zie jij exotische vrouwen,’ vraagt Frida.
‘Ik weet het niet,’ zegt Fred. ‘Ze reflecteren misschien het oorspronkelijke paradijs.’
‘Ja, maar Frits en Willem zijn niet gelovig,’ zei Frida.
‘Maar dan missen ze toch iets, wat ze dan op deze manier proberen aan te vullen. Alles staat met elkaar in verbinding,’ zegt Fred.
‘Ik weet het niet,’ zegt Frida. ‘Het maakt me kwaad. Woedend zelfs.’
‘Misschien is er wat beters voor je,’ zegt Fred.
‘Ja, maar ik vind het zo racistisch dat ze beiden voor een exotische vrouw hebben gekozen,’ zegt Frida. ‘Ik voel geen eigenwaarde meer.’
‘Ach, kom op, Frida,’ zegt Fred, ‘ik zei toch dat ik het wel van hen zou willen overnemen.’
‘Het is moeilijk om gedumpt te worden,’ zegt Frida.

‘Ja, dat is zo,’ zegt Fred. ‘Ik werd gedumpt door Loesia. Maar in ieder geval heeft ze het met mij geprobeerd. En Frits en Willem hebben het met jou geprobeerd, dus de liefde was er.’
‘Ja, bij gebrek aan beter zeker,’ zegt Frida.
‘Ze kennen je gewoon niet,’ zegt Fred. ‘Ze hebben een totaal verkeerd beeld van jou. Ze zien jou niet, maar de voorstelling die ze van jou hebben in hun hoofd.’

Fred loopt dichter naast Frida. Voorzichtig raakt hij haar hand aan. Even glijdt er warmte door Frida’s hand en dan door haar lichaam. ‘Het is goed,’ zegt ze. Even later lopen ze arm in arm. Frida ziet Fred als haar jongere broer. ‘Ik ben blij dat je er bent,’ zegt Frida.

Hoofdstuk 3.

Fred kan goed met de poezen van Frida opschieten. Hij speelt graag met ze. Fred en Frida hebben veel aan elkaar, en ook Jan en Marlies zijn rotsen in de branding. Frida denkt nog vaak aan Frits. Ze vindt hem erg egoistisch. Ze begint steeds meer van Fred te houden, maar gewoon als haar broertje. Jan is erg goed met computers, en zijn specialiteit is virtuele vrienden. Zoals computer personages geprogrammeerd zijn zo zijn mensen volgens

hem ook geprogrammeerd, en dus is er weinig verschil. Hij laat Fred en Frida al gauw met wat virtuele vrienden op de computer kennis maken. Het zijn een soort robotten, maar ze antwoorden en stellen vragen net als mensen, en al snel raken Fred en Frida eraan verknocht.
‘Is het mogelijk een emotionele relatie met zo’n virtuele vriend op te bouwen ?’ vraagt Fred.
‘Oh, jazeker,’ zegt Jan, ‘en ze zijn tot veel meer dingen in staat dan gewone mensen.’ Jan heeft zelfs wat van zulke robotten in de schuur staan. Het zijn computers die op mensen lijken, en die precies kunnen doen wat mensen kunnen. Het zijn cybernetische mensen. Fred en Frida vinden het geweldig, en al snel krijgen ze zo’n robot naar keuze mee naar huis. Die moeten ze dan als hun nieuwe partner zien en kijken hoe ver ze er mee komen. Het is dus een heel therapeutisch plan. Frida krijgt Max mee naar huis, en Fred Ingrid. De robot kan koffie zetten en je kunt er diepe gesprekken mee voeren. Ook zoekt de robot naar lichamelijk contact. Frida vindt dat nogal eng, maar al snel vindt ze het heel gewoon, omdat het allemaal wel heel menselijk is. En deze robotten zijn haast supermensen. Ze hebben practische oplossingen voor allerlei soorten problemen, en zijn een soort psychologen aan huis. Frida

voelt zich er erg veilig bij. Max is erg zorgzaam en waaks. Jan heeft er erg veel plezier in deze dingen te bouwen, en al snel proberen ook anderen de robotten uit. Na een tijd komen er wat meerdere soorten bij, en Fred, die weleens wat anders wil, kiest ditmaal een exotische robot. Maar Jan heeft de robot zo geprogrammeerd dat Fred er niet moe van wordt. Tajusa heet de robot, en weet veel over de jungle af. Fred is een en al oor. De robot kan ook heel goed koken, houdt van spelletjes en is mysterieus en cryptisch. Stukje bij beetje nemen Jan's robotten het hele sociale leven over, en zijn er steeds minder conflicten. En als er dan conflicten ontstaan dan moet Jan ze gewoon even bijprogrammeren. Ook robot-poezen komen erbij, en robot-honden, en die gaan gelukkig nooit dood. Soms moeten er wat onderdelen vervangen worden. In de ogen van Fred en Frida en vele anderen is Jan een held.
Op een dag komt Frida Frits tegen op de markt. Zijn exotische vrouw had hem alweer verlaten voor een ander. 'Arme stakker,' dacht Frida. 'Misschien is hij ook wel gebaat bij zo'n robot van Jan.' Maar als Frits het verhaal hoort moet hij er niets van weten. 'Ik wil iemand van vlees en bloed, en laten we eerlijk zijn : onze karakters botsen teveel.' Toch na een tijdje weet Frida Frits over te halen

om eens bij haar langs te komen. Ze zorgt dan dat de robot op zolder is.
Als ze dan eindelijk rond de tafel zitten om wat bij te praten komt Max ineens naar beneden. ‘Zo, kerel, ik heb veel over je gehoord,’ zegt Max.
‘Ik ga echt niet met een robot praten,’ zegt Frits tegen Frida. Maar na een tijdje zijn Max en Frits in een diep gesprek, en Frits is er zo door aangestoken dat hij zelf ook een robot wil, een virtuele vriend. Frida vindt het niet erg. Ze heeft zelf nu Max, en ze weet dat het Frits erg goed zal doen. Bij Jan aangekomen kiest hij een exotische robot uit : Nakabe. ‘Man, ze zijn nog wel beter dan mensen, en ze gaan tenminste nooit weg,’ zei Frits.
‘En je wordt er niet moe van.’ zegt Jan.
Na een tijdje belt Frits Jan op voor een tweede robot, en na een niet al te lange tijd leeft Frits met een harem van robotten.
‘Dit is geweldig,’ zegt Frits. ‘Jan is de man.’
Ook Willem krijgt het verhaal te horen en daarna Loesia.
Op een dag bouwt Jan een robot die precies op hem lijkt, om zo zijn werk over te nemen, en vertrekt met zijn vrouw naar een onbewoond eiland. Inmiddels heeft Frida een baan gekregen bij een schoenenwinkel met een klein

kleding assortiment. Vanuit het raam van de zijkant kan ze de grote rivier zien. Daarachter is het grote bos. Frida droomt er vaak over. Ze zou zo graag in die prachtige natuur willen wonen. Ze heeft een voorliefde voor planten. Haar hele huis staat er vol mee, de weelderigste soorten. Ook houdt ze van de exotische soorten. Veel daarvan staan boven en op het zolder. Max praat vaak tegen de planten. Het schijnt dat hij ermee kan communiceren. Max is haar steun en toeverlaat. Op een dag besluit Frida over de grote rivier te gaan samen met Max. Max kijkt zijn ogen uit. Het is een prachtig bos, ongetwijfeld het prachtigste van het land. Er zijn drie bruggen, een brede, een wat smallere en een loopbrug gemaakt van touw en planken, een zeer primitieve, die tegelijkertijd in het wildste gedeelte lift. Het is hier haast een oerwoud. Max wil niet meer terug. Met geen mogelijkheid kan Frida hem mee terugnemen. Max wil hier een huis bouwen. En hij is er aardig goed in. Frida staat versteld van zijn vaardigheid.
‘Laten we hier wonen,’ zegt Max.
‘Ja, maar mijn werk dan ?’ zegt Frida.
‘Ach, de natuur zorgt voor ons. Waarom niet gewoon werken in de natuur ?’ zegt Max.
‘Zit wel wat in,’ zegt Frida, ‘en het is veel gezonder.’

Frida houdt het een paar dagen vol, maar dan mist ze haar huis toch wel heel erg. ‘Max, ik kom je wel weer opzoeken,’ zegt Frida. ‘Nee, Frida, je gaat niet weg,’ zegt Max. ‘Je gaat niet terug naar die gevaarlijke wereld met al die vervuiling.’
‘Oh, maar je kunt me niet dwingen, Max,’ zegt Frida.
‘Ik ben toch veel sterker dan je,’ zegt Max.
‘Toe nou, Max, wat hebben we hier aan,’ zegt Frida. ‘Ik ben zo niet gelukkig.’
Maar Max begon een groot hek rondom het stukje wildernis te bouwen. Midden in de nacht toen Frida sliep haalde hij ook de andere robotten op, de virtuele vrienden. De robotten begonnen snel het hele bos te herbouwen, en introduceerden de biologische technologie. ‘Nog even en je kunt met bomen praten,’ fluisterde Max liefdevol naar Frida. Maar Frida sliep diep. Toen Frida wakker was geworden was ze verbaasd. Het was allemaal zo prachtig nu, alsof de stad ook hier was.
‘Die andere wereld is er niet meer,’ zeiden de robotten.
‘We gaan hier opnieuw beginnen.’
‘Maar waar zijn onze vrienden dan ?’ vroeg Frida.
‘Die zijn ergens anders nu. Ze zijn allemaal in veiligheid, maar los van elkaar,’ zeiden de robotten. ‘Mensen horen

niet bij mensen, maar bij hoogbegaafde robotten.'
'Daar zit wel wat in,' zei Frida.
Maar toch had Frida nog steeds dat oerverlangen om naar huis te gaan. Op een nacht ontsnapte ze van de robotten, en ging de rivier over. De bruggen werden door de robotten bewaakt, dus ze moest de rivier overzwemmen. Ze hoopte maar dat ze niet door een of andere vis zou worden gegrepen of door sterke stroming, maar het ging allemaal goed. Helemaal bekaf kwam ze naar lang zwemmen aan op de overkant. Kletsnat liep ze naar haar huis. Eerst nam ze een warm bad, maar tegelijkertijd bekroop haar de angst dat de robotten haar hier zouden kunnen vinden. Direkt belde ze Fred op. Maar die had een robotstem, dus Frida vertrouwde het niet meer. 'Ik moet naar Frits toe,' dacht ze. Nadat ze wat warme chocolade melk had gedronken en andere kleren had aangedaan vertrok ze direkt naar Frits. Bij Frits aangekomen bemerkte ze direkt dat zijn robotten er niet meer waren. Direkt viel ze Frits om de hals. 'Opnieuw beginnen ?' vraagt Frits. Frida knikt.

Hoofdstuk 4.

Al snel zijn Frida en Frits diep met elkaar in gesprek.

‘Ja, ik geloof zeker in de natuur,’ zegt Frits. ‘In dieren, maar ook in de dood die onvermijdelijk is. Het is niet geloven, maar zien, als een zeker weten.’ Een paar dagen later wandelen ze samen in een dierentuin, om de wonderen van de dierenwereld te aanschouwen. Een diepe vriendschap groeit er tussen hen, dieper dan ooit tevoren na dit avontuur. Vaak praten ze tot diep in de nacht. Ze hebben elkaar veel te vertellen. Ze hebben veel pijn van binnen door alles wat er is gebeurd. Bij de dieren voelen ze zich het beste thuis, dus ze besluiten beiden in een dierentuin te werken. Deze dierentuin is voornamelijk een safari park, en als er dan hokken zijn dan zijn die hokken geweldig groot, en dan is dat puur om de dieren veiligheid te geven. Het is een groot project om zo vrijheid aan de dieren te geven zonder dat hun veiligheid erdoor in gevaar komt.
Frida vindt de vogels zo prachtig, en de leeuwen, ja, eigenlijk alle dieren. Er zitten veel dierensoorten bij die Frida niet eens kende. Er gaat een wereld voor haar open. Het blijkt ook een heilzame werking te hebben op haar relatie met Frits. ‘We drijven allemaal naar de kloof van de onoverbruggelijke dood,’ zegt Frits vaak, ‘maar het is allemaal zo mooi, want er komt weer zoveel uit voort. We

maken allemaal plaats voor de mooiere dingen, alhoewel deze dingen ook zullen vergaan. Alles zal uiteindelijk vergaan.’ Ook Frida trekt in haar gedachtenwereld dichter naar Frits toe. Frits kan het allemaal zo mooi vertellen dat het toch niet voor niks is geweest. Zijn oppervlakkigheid is wijd en breed, zo oneindig horizontaal dat het diep is. Dichtbij het safari park is een ravijn. Frits en Frida zitten er vaak om in de diepte te kijken. ‘Wat is de natuur toch mooi,’ zegt Frits vaak. Frida knikt dan altijd. Het ravijn getuigt van een loze eeuwigheid waarin alleen de momenten parels zijn, schatten van onpeilbare waarde.
‘De aardkloot zit vol van geheimen, de tijd is de schat, de eeuwigheid is nutteloos.’
‘Staar naar een dier en zie dat het leven woest is, ongenadig. Kijk naar het luipaard, en leer ervan.’

'Deze besjes waren giftig, en wel zo giftig dat ze dat nooit konden weten.'

Hoofdstuk 1.

Bizonbloed was een heksenkind. Tenminste dat dacht ik, totdat ze mij de andere kant van het verhaal liet zien. Ze bewoog giftige bessen langs me heen. Ik had haar van een afstand gezien, en ze kwam steeds dichterbij. Het was een grauwe dag, en het leek overal te tochten. Toen trok ze mij in de sneeuw. Ze trok me diep weg.
Ze voelde zacht aan. Haar heupen waren fors, en ik lag daar. Ze trok me door de sneeuw mee naar haar hut. De sneeuw smolt weg door haar glimlach. En de tuin rood als bloed, verborg haar edelstenen, vastgeklonterd heil. En sneeuwwit kant bedekte haar voeten, en ze was de bloesem van het morgenoog. De tuin had haar schoonheid niet verloren in de winter, maar was gevlochten nu. Ze droeg de boog, en alles om haar heen vervaagde. Ze was als de oplossing van het gouden hertenkind.
Ze kwam langzaam op mij af met haar brede heupen, met de boog gericht op iets achter mij, een bizon. 'Ik ben dat mannelijke zwaard zat,' zei ze. Toen schoot ze een pijl af,

dwars door zijn hart. Het beest viel neer, en ze duwde mij opzij, en trok mij in een woning. Vanaf hier konden we de tuin nog beter bezichtigen. Ze las rijmpjes voor uit een met goud gedecoreerd boek, een boek met een leren omslag. De tuin was haar trots. De sneeuw sijpelde naar binnen. Het was hierbinnen warmer. Ze deed wat kleding uit, maar was nog steeds bedekt met riemen. Ze was als de jagersgodin.
Ze droeg een jachtmaal binnen, en begon te eten. Ze liet mij niet dichterbij komen. Ik had het gevoel te verhongeren. 'Ik moet gaan,' zei ik. Maar ze liet me ook niet gaan. 'Wat wil je van me,' vroeg ik.
'Kom hier,' zei ze. 'Maar raak het vlees niet aan. Het is verboden vlees. Je zal sterven als je er van eet.'
'Waarom eet jij het dan ?' vroeg ik, terwijl ik langzaam dichterbij kwam. Ze zei niets. De tuin ruikte naar zure vruchten. Het was alsof de bommen in de tuin vlogen, wanneer zij zich bewoog. Zij was een oorlogsmachine. Zij danste in de tuin met trots, op het bloed van de gevallenen. Ze zag het als haar opdracht.
Ze trok mij dieper in het huis, waar ze op haar zwangere buik wees. 'Maar het kind zal vroeg sterven,' zei ze, terwijl ze een doktersjas aantrok. 'Waarom zeg je dat ?' vraag ik. 'Omdat het niet om het leven gaat. Het gaat om de dood,' sprak ze. Ze kwam met een injectie naald dichtbij me. 'Even de adem inhouden.' Ik trok mijn arm weg. 'Nee,' zei ze. 'Niet wegtrekken. Je moet gevaccineerd worden. Dit huis is gevaarlijk.' Ik keek naar buiten, naar de klonterige druiven die daar hingen, en dik sap droop naar beneden.

Daar had ze mij al geprikt. 'Klaar,' zei ze. Ik glimlachte. Ik was bijna flauwgevallen. Ik trok mezelf aan haar op.
'En nu de tuin in,' zei ze.
'Waarom ?' vroeg ik.
'Je moet werken, werken,' zei ze.
'Wat moet ik doen ?' vraag ik.
'Je moet het zo doen, kijk,' zei ze. Maar ze deed niets.
'Ik snap je niet goed,' zei ik. Ze bond een touw aan mijn nek en trok me weg. Even later knipte ze het touw door, zodat het een ketting was. 'Je moet er alleen voor zorgen dat je nergens blijft achterhaken,' zei ze. Rode bloesem omhulde hen, en de schaduwen van de roze nachten omhulden hen beiden. Weer trok ze hem het huis in, en het scheen er flink te tochten.
'Ga nu eens zitten,' zei ze.
Ineens schrikt hij wakker na een zware hersen-operatie. Hij kan zich niet goed bewegen. Een vrouw in ridderkleding zit naast hem. 'Welk jaar is het ?' vraagt hij.
'1978,' zegt ze.
'Waarom ben je gekleed als een ridder ?' vraagt hij.
'Carnaval,' zei ze.
'Wie ben je ?' vraagt hij.
'Ik ben je vrouw,' zegt ze.

'Ik kan het me niet herinneren,' zegt hij. Dan komt er een dokter binnen. De vrouw begint te snikken. 'Is dit mijn vrouw ?' vraagt hij aan de dokter.
'Er is niemand anders in de kamer dan u en ik,' zegt de dokter.
Bizonbloed sleept hem uit het ziekenhuis, en brengt hem terug naar de tuin en het huis. 'Probeer niet te ontsnappen,' zegt ze. 'Ik wil dat je de wachter bent van de tuin.'
'Waarom ik ?' vraag ik.
'Omdat je ... laat maar zitten,' zei ze. 'Doe het nou maar gewoon.' Ik laat mijn hand zakken, en loop wat rond in de tuin. Ze volgt elke beweging die ik maak. 'Vanavond komen de heksen,' zei ze. 'Doe het nou maar.'
Dan stort hij neer. Een grote vogel staat naast hem, die hij vastgrijpt. En de vogel brengt hem naar een ver eiland. Ook hier is Bizonbloed. Ze kijkt hem aan. Ze is halfnaakt, als een wilde. 'Hoe ben je hier gekomen ?' vraagt ze. Ik wijst op de vogel.
'Hier kun je ook waken,' zei ze. 'De heksen komen vanavond. Je moet wel wat te vertellen hebben.'
'Maar ik heb niets te vertellen,' zei ik.
'Geeft niets,' zei ze. 'Gewoon een brilletje op doen is ook goed. Het is carnaval.' Ik loop braaf met haar mee. Even

later zitten we in tuinstoelen. Daarachter is een hutje waar ze aan het koken was, voor vanavond.
Hij staart voor zich uit. De dokter grijpt zijn hand. Hij vecht voor zijn leven. De dokter voelt zijn pols, en drukt een alarm-bel in.
Ze loopt binnen in het hutje. 'Kom,' zegt ze. Weer volg ik haar braaf. Ze roert in haar ketel.
Met wat reanimatie krijgen ze hem weer aan de gang. Ze besluiten nog een hersen-operatie te doen.
'Waarom lach je ?' vraagt ze.
'Niets,' zei ik.
'Je hebt een mooie lach,' zegt ze.
Het klontert in zijn hoofd. Dan komt er ineens een straal vrij van zijn hoofd. De dokters springen op zij. Dan klimt er ineens een beestje uit de scheur in zijn hoofd. De dokters beginnen te schreeuwen in paniek en vallen neer. Een zoemend geluid neemt over.
'Tatarak !' krijst het beestje. 'Opereer zijn hersenen.'
Vrouwen komen de kamer binnen, en starten de operatie. Ze werken met gouden instrumenten. Er komt schuim op zijn mond. Maar ze krijgen alles weer goed op gang.
Hij zit op het witte zand. Hier en daar liggen wat bladeren, en Bisonbloed zit naast hem. Ze houdt zijn hand vast. 'Ik

ben blij dat je er bent,' zegt ze. De geur van koffie zit in zijn klederen. Ze besluiten het uit te wassen in het meertje verderop. Het is als een heet stoombad. Snel zijn ze beiden naakt. Het zand aan de kusten ziet er niet zo best uit. En er is overal hondenpoep. Hij wordt onwel, en ze trekt hem uit het meertje. Al gauw ligt hij in een hutje onder een verrotte deken.
'We hebben geluk gehad,' zei ze. 'Er ligt overal glas in het meertje.'
'Waarom trok je me daar naartoe dan ?' vraagt hij.
'Alleen daar kun je vrijkomen van de koffielucht,' zei ze.
'Ik wil er weer naartoe,' zei hij.
'Niemand mag daar ooit voor een tweede keer naartoe,' zei ze.
'Ik wil bloeden,' zei ik. 'Al dat valse bloed moet eruit.'
Ze pakt een stukje glas en rijt hem open. 'Hier,' zegt ze.
'Nee, ik moet naar dat meertje,' zei ik. Ik stond op, en rende naar het meertje.
'Je zult sterven en door een haai gegrepen worden,' zei ze.
'Kan me niet schelen !' riep ik, terwijl ik in het meertje dook. Alles was plotseling bruisend water. 'Er bestaat geen dood !' gilde ik. 'Houd toch eens op met je drama !'
'En geef me nu van het verboden vlees !' riep ik. 'Waar is

het !'
'Je zult sterven,' zei ze.
'Okay, dan ga ik godverredomme maar dood !' riep ik.
'Wie kan het wat schelen !'
'Ik,' zei ze. Ze trok me er weer uit. Ik zat onder de hondepoep, onder het glas, en vreemde bessen. Ze stopte me in een kist en bedekte de kist met roze kant. 'Ik ben niet dood !' riep ik. Ze drukte op een knop, en er werd een slaaplied gespeeld. 'Ik voel me op en top, dus stop met die onzin !' riep ik. Ik proefde wat van de bessen. Ze waren zoet, zuur en bitter. Waarschijnlijk waren ze ook giftig.
'Je speelt met je leven,' zei ze. Plotseling was de kist in vlammen, maar ik lachte. Ik stapte eruit, brandend, en greep haar beet. Ze had een laken om haar heen.
'Je kunt ook wel een boom zijn,' zei ze. 'Het frisse, jonge hout brandt goed.' Ik knikte.
Het zachte zadel hield ze voor me. Ik ging er op zitten. Ik sloeg het brandend laken om me heen, en het was snel als kant. Ik was de prins van de molen. Ze had gelijk. Ik was dood.

Hoofdstuk 2.

Ik was in de lederen darm van een haai. In de buurt

stonden overal rozenstruiken, en de straten waren bezaaid met vuurwerk. En alles was nat, want het had flink geregend. Ik had een nare smaak in mijn mond, van bessen, glas, metalen en hondepoep. Er liepen wat arabieren en punkers op de straat. Ik had last van de wind in mijn hoofd. Alles was zacht, en ik stortte in. Maar touwen trokken mij weer op. Ik moest dansen, zingen, en veel geld verdienen. Dan zou Bizonbloed weer langskomen, en op een dag was het dan zo ver.

Ik herkende haar bijna niet meer terug. Ze was wat ouder nu. Met een schaar trok ze mijn blaren open. 'Kijk naar die bloemen,' zei ze. 'Ze wijzen je de weg naar het leven.' Ik keek, en de kelken hadden bruisend sap in hen. 'Ik wil er van drinken,' zei ik.
'Nee, want dan sterf je weer,' zei ze. Maar het kon me niet schelen. Ik liep af op de wulpse kelken, en begon te drinken. Ik verdronk er bijna in. Ik begon flink dronken te worden.
'Domme idioot !' riep ze. 'Wat ben jij een koppige ezel, zeg. Je doet gewoon alles wat niet mag.'
'En jij moet niet zo de baas over mij spelen,' zei ik. 'Ik bedoel maar, ik heb een blaas, weet je, en ik plas straks alles weer uit.'

'Nou, je bent maar goed begenadigd,' zei ze. 'Je bent een begiftigd man.'

Ik knikte. Ik stortte neer aan haar voeten, en zij sleepte me weg. Ze dumpte me ergens in een sloot, maar touwen trokken hem weer op. Ik ging de eerste de beste stal in waar ik me kon wassen, want ik voelde me nu toch wel een beetje vies. Het water hier zat vol met modder, maar dat kon me niet schelen. Ik voelde me schoner nu. Ik ging ergens in het hooi liggen om op te drogen. Even later rende ik achter het weiland het eerste het beste huisje in en speelde de clown. Ik had ook een harp nu, en ze gooiden geld in mijn hoed. Ik ging van huis tot huis, om mijn kunstje te vertonen. Ik had een beetje drempelvrees, maar een snoepje deed altijd wonderen.
Met modderhanden streelde ze door mijn haren. Het was toch carnaval.
Hij lag aan de hart-monitor. Dokters vreesden voor zijn leven.
Hij zwom met de zwanen, en gleed door alles wat vies, gevaarlijk en verboden was. Iemand kamde zijn haren, en hij zonk weg in een put van stank. Hij was goed door een haai gegrepen, zoals Bizonbloed had geprofeteerd. Maar hij was nogal goddeloos, onkerks en tegen de draad in. Hij

had een hekel aan geloof en regels. Zijn bloedvaten waren aan het exploderen, en hij hoorde gelach in zijn hoofd. Hij lachte mee. Kon hem het wat schelen.
Touwen trokken hem op, en hij werd op een podium gezet. Hij zwaaide naar de mensen, en begon te zingen, en te acteren. Het was per slot van rekening carnaval, en alles moest maar kunnen. Een raam werd ingegooid, en hij begon aan zware epilepsie te lijden. Hij zat bij de kapper, en hij hoorde alleen maar lachen. Zijn hoofd werd ingezeept.
De dokters waren alweer een hersen-operatie aan het uitvoeren, om hem van de dood proberen te redden.

Hij had het gevoel alsof hij dronken was. Hij waggelde door de stad. Hij was een clown. Na een lange tijd zag hij Bizonbloed weer terug. Met een dronken stem zei hij dat hij niet had gedacht dat hij haar ooit nog tegen zou komen. Ze bracht hem mee naar een flatwoning, waar ze hem ging douchen. 'Nu is het afgelopen,' zei ze.
'Wie denk je dat je bent ?' vroeg hij. 'De Jezusin ?'
Ze knikte.
'Ik had toch een andere soort van wederkomst verwacht,' zei hij.
'Nee, het is niet te berekenen,' zei zij.

Alle rozen in de stad waren blauw geworden, en het sneeuwde. De Jezusin liep een cafe binnen, en begon te drinken.
'Tatarak !' schreeuwt iemand.
Hij wordt wakker in de tuin, met een beestje in zijn hand. Hij is de tuinwachter. Het beestje had een angel in zijn hand gestoken, waardoor blauw spul in zijn lichaam werd geinjecteerd. Hij trok de angel eruit, en kon weer ademhalen. Hij voelde zich vies, maar ach, het was maar de natuur. Hij zag het als een onbekend vaccin. Waar het goed voor was, wist hij niet, maar het zou wel ergens goed voor zijn, dat wist hij zeker. Nog steeds had hij een beetje dat dronken gevoel. Ook voelde hij zich overgevoelig. Nee, hij wilde niet nog een keer door zo'n beestje gestoken worden.
Toen hij afgelost werd kon hij naar huis. Zijn geliefde was daar. Ze had een bloemenjurk aan van een hele fijne, zachte, plezierige stof. Als hij die stof voelde, voelde hij zich altijd heel veilig. Ze was thee voor hem aan het zetten, van een soort blauwe bonen. Even later zaten ze beiden aan tafel.
Dokters hadden eindelijk ontdekt wat er mankeerde aan zijn hersenen. Het bleek dat zijn gevoelscentrums

geirriteerd waren, waardoor hij niet tegen aanrakingen kon. Het bleek te zijn ontstaan door een allergie tegen bacterien die alleen maar in hout voorkwamen. Ook was er een vreemde uitslag op orgaantjes in zijn hersenen wat ze zouden moeten verwijderen, dus hij ging weer onder het mes.
Hij draaide maar in het rond in de tuin. Hij voelde zich goed.

Hoofdstuk 3.

Ze zaten tegenover elkaar. Ze smeerde het brood. Het was zonnig buiten. Het zonlicht weerspiegelde in hun gouden spulletjes. Er werd gebeld. Ze nam op, en legde weer neer. Hij droomde weg. Ze liep de kamer binnen. Hij keek naar haar door het raam. Plotseling begon het te waaien, dus ook hij ging naar binnen. Er droop zand uit de plantenbakken. De druiven in de tuin dropen. Het was allemaal zeer klonterig. Het leek goed rijp. Hij rende naar buiten in de regen, greep wat druiven en kwakte ze op een bordje.
'Carolien, ik ben je wachter,' zei hij. 'Dat zal ik altijd zijn, wat er ook gebeurd.'
'Ik weet het,' zei ze. 'Je bent zo trouw.'

Ze nam hem mee naar boven en trok aan de touwtjes van zijn blouche. Ze drukte hem op het bed, en ging naast hem liggen. Op het nachtkastje lag een boek genaamd 'Bloedbizon'. Het ging over de jacht op bizons. Het was een soort avonturenverhaal. Hij las er uit voort. Maar hij begreep wel waar de schrijver naartoe wilde. De bizons waren het beeld van mannen die de autoriteit hadden genomen, en die autoriteit misbruikten. Het was een heel feministisch boek, dat ook opkwam voor andere minderheden.
Hij legde het weer weg. 'Carolien,' zei hij. 'Je weet het. Ik sta aan de kant van de vrouw.'
Carolien knikte. 'Ik weet het,' zei ze. Toen gingen ze beiden slapen.
De hersenen werden getest. De man kwam tot leven. Er werd geapplaudiseerd.
'Het leven is een valstrik,' stamelde hij. 'Een web van een vrouwelijke spin.' Hij stond in de bibliotheek. Hij bekeek de vele boeken over vrouwen. Vaak waren die vrouwen de heldinnen, of gevaarlijke vrouwen, waarin de hoofdpersoon verstrikt raakte. Op de kaften waren vaak woestijnen met schaars geklede vrouwen al dan niet met wapens en helmen. 'Ik wil meer weten over het gevaar,' zei

hij.
Boven hem zag hij rozenstruiken, als een put. Hij werd naar binnengezogen, en kwam in een plaats waar een heleboel vrouwen waren, genaamd de danaiden. Op hun voetzolen waren de namen van hun vermoorde mannen te lezen, die zij zelf hadden vermoord in de huwelijksnacht. Zo leefden ze voort door de geroofde levens-energie van hun mannen. Het waren merktekenen op hun voeten, waarmee ze anderen ook konden merken. Er droop inkt uit voort. Ook gebruikten ze het voor handtekeningen op rekeningen en andere officiele papieren. Zo konden ze veel gedaan krijgen. Hij klapte het boek dicht, en stond weer met beide benen op de grond. 'Ik moet me van illusies onthouden,' zegt hij.
'Besef het, je hebt een redder nodig,' zei Bizonbloed, de Jezusin.
'Er wordt overal gejaagd, er is niet veel wat je kunt doen. Je zal erg moe worden.'
Er waren overal struiken, en tussen de takken door bloedende borsten. Zij bloedden door de scherpe doornen. 'Je moet het bloed drinken,' zei ze. Ze gaf hem een buisje met bloed, en hij dronk. 'Het is bizonbloed,' zei ze. 'Je hebt nu het vrouwelijke deel in je gevonden.'

'Ik wil dit niet !' riep hij. Toen viel hij neer. Hij schoot een paar bizons van afstand, en ging toen slapen. Vanuit het bloed kwamen klimoppen. De klimoppen brachten hem naarboven naar een hemels paradijs. 'Tatarak !' riep hij. Het zand was hier wit. Er kwam een bruisend sap uit de klimoppen, en de bessen explodeerden. In de klimoppen leefden vrouwen met staarten.
Het merkteken was grauw in hun hoofd. Zij werden gevoerd door borsten, door leidingen die via een kraan getapt konden worden. Het was de moederstad. Zij troonde hier in vuur, zij, Bizonbloed. En Karel Klouterwoes was haar nar.
De stad leek als bedekt met takken, waardoor het bizon veld bezichtigd kon worden, midden in de stad. Hier moest veel gejaagd worden, zodat de man nooit meer zou regeren. De stad leefde door bizonbloed, en zo moest het blijven.
Haar klederen waren doordrenkt met bizonbloed, en zij brandde. Het hield hen dronken. Deze besjes waren giftig, en wel zo giftig dat ze dat nooit konden weten. Een lange trap gaf een antwoord aan Karel Klouterwoes. Ook hij moest buigen voor de koningin, en haar kunstzaal onder ogen komen. 'Verdomme,' zei hij. 'Zij kan het.'

Ik moest oppassen voor Karel Klouterwoes, zoals iedereen dat moest. Hij was door haar gedresseerd, maar het was een roofdier. Hij leefde in haar kooien wanneer zij hem niet gebruikte. En anders was hij gewoon aan de ketting. Er moest goed toezicht op deze man gehouden worden. Maar op een dag ging het mis. Karel Klouterwoes brak los. Mensen renden in paniek hun huizen binnen, en deden alles goed op slot. Maar het was al te laat. Karel Klouterwoes deed de stad verdrinken in bizonbloed. Ik kon net op tijd ontsnappen. Hij was per slot van rekening maar mijn schaduw. Ook de koningin liet hij in leven. Zij was immers de Jezusin. Ik keek de takken door en zag de zee van bizonbloed. Het was warm op het strand. Het bizonbloed leek weg te trekken en weer op te komen door eb en vloed. Dit werd gereguleerd door een vreemde planeet, de bloedbizon. Deze planeet hing ergens in Orion. Door toedoen van de koningin werd de stad weer leefbaar. Ik keerde weer terug naar de stad, maar Karel Klouterwoes liet het er niet bij zitten. Hij omsingelde de stad met een leger. Ze waren op zoek naar mij.
Ze klopten op hoge deuren, maar ik was veilig met de koningin. Ze liet mij het geheim van de stad zien. Ik zag overal bloed stromen. Het leek van boven naar beneden te

regenen. Ze leidde mij naar een trap die mij bracht naar een plaats diep onder de stad. Hier spreidde ze haar jurk uit en vroeg aan mij of ik een ballerina wilde worden.
Het zou het enige medicijn tegen Karel Klouterwoes, de dolle losgebroken nar, zijn. Ik ging staan als een standbeeld, en begon te draaien, terwijl mijn kleding en huid in goud en zilver veranderden. Ik hoorde slaapliederen op de achtergrond. Ze had ergens op een knopje gedrukt. Spoedig ging ik dansend door de stad. Er waren overal leeuwen in de stad, maar het was alsof er glas om me heen was. Ze lieten mij met rust. Met een fluit leidde ik de leeuwen daarna uit de stad, het woud in.
Het leek te verergeren met zijn hersenen. De dokters besloten dat zijn laatste hoop een hersentransplantatie zou zijn. Voorzichtig werden zijn hersenen eruit gesneden, en werden er nieuwe hersenen ingelegd. Hij moest er spontaan van overgeven. Hij voelde zich anders, bevrijd. Maar daarna was hij in een shock. Weer begonnen ze in zijn hersenen te snijden, omdat ze er zoveel geld mee verdienden. Hij rook de geur van drop.
De bomen groeiden tegen de klok in. De koningin kwam hem redden, maar toen werden ze uit elkaar gescheurd. Hij voelde zich in een lange diepe put wegglijden. Karel

Klouterwoes nam zijn lichaam. Hij voelde zich opgesloten in zichzelf, alhoewel hij nu wel moest lachen. Hij zag zichzelf liggen. Het was alsof er een lachgas over hem kwam. Hij stond op en was een geraffineerde nar nu. Hij zou trouw blijven aan de koningin, aan de koningin in zijn hoofd. Zij waakte over hem.
De stad was brandende. Hij klom naar een hogere verdieping in het flatgebouw. Karel Klouterwoes klom achter hem aan, in zijn lichaam. Een gevecht ontstond. 'Brandende dampen !' schreeuwde Karel Klouterwoes. 'Ik zal je wel krijgen.' Hij gaf Karel een trap, en klom verder. Alweer greep Karel hem. 'Je zal niet weg kunnen komen, ventje,' zei Karel. Weer trapte hij Karel weg, maar Karel had zijn jas gegrepen. Toen deed hij zijn jas uit, en klom verder, maar Karel had zijn broekspijpen gegrepen. Ook trok hij toen zijn broek uit, en klom verder, totdat hij helemaal naakt was. Een vogel wachtte hem op aan de top van het gebouw. 'De koningin heeft mij gezonden,' zei de vogel. Maar Karel greep een pistool en schoot de vogel neer. De man begon nu echt in paniek te raken. Door de rook zag hij nog een gebouw op het gebouw, met een ladder ervoor. 'Gelukkig,' zei de man, en rende er naar toe. Karel begon nu ook op hem te schieten. Maar snel was hij

hoog op de ladder. Toen Karel bij de ladder was aangekomen, was de man al een raam binnen geklommen. Hij zag ergens een hoed hangen en deed die op, en daarna een lange jas en een broek. Snel rende hij naar de andere kant van het gebouw en begon de trappen op te rennen. 'Ik krijg je wel !' hoorde hij Karel roepen. Helemaal bovenin het gebouw aangekomen belde hij ergens aan, en de koningin deed open. 'Hier ben je veilig,' zei ze. Binnen maakte ze wat thee voor hem klaar, maar al snel hoorden ze gebons op de deur. 'Hier is Karel !' riep hij. 'Ik kom je halen !' Toen trapte Karel de deur in. De koningin drukte ergens op een knopje, en een kistje ging open die Karel helemaal begon op te zuigen. Toen dat klaar was ging het kistje weer dicht. 'Ziezo,' zei de koningin, 'die is weer waar hij wezen moet.' In de kamer was een doorzichtige bol gevuld met bizonbloed, en de bol brandde. 'Het is de stad die brandt,' zei de koningin. De man knikte.
'Dus,' zei de koningin. 'Niemand heeft het ooit zo ver gebracht. Ik ben trots op je.' Het vuur begon weg te trekken. na een tijdje keek ik door het raam naar beneden. Er waren bizon gevechten. Er werd op trompetten geblazen. Weer zag ik alles door vuur wegvagen. Ze was naakt.

Hoofdstuk 4.

Er kwam meer en meer begroeiing. De stad begon op een oerwoud te lijken. De man zat nog steeds dichtbij de koningin. Ze had het kistje op haar schoot. Haar vinger bewoog heel langzaam naar een rood knopje. Plotseling werd er een spiegel ingeslagen, een grote wand. Electrische gestaltes stonden daar in vuur. 'Luister niet naar haar !' riep één van hen. 'Zij is zelf Karel Klouterwoes, en zal je willen opsluiten in haar kistje !' Ze hadden gereedschap in hun hand, en sloegen toe. 'Ren door de spiegel !' riep een ander. Hij rende door de spiegel, waar het gebouw veel hoger was, en de brand veel erger. 'Het is niet waar !' riep de koningin. Hij zag toe hoe er een gevecht ontstond. De koningin had het kistje geopend, en Karel was weer tevoorschijn gekomen. Nu begon ook de koningin in Karel te veranderen. 'Ren !' gilden de electrische gestaltes. De man zette het op een lopen, terwijl er overal explosies waren. Weer rende de man trappen op. Toen hij het plafond had bereikt belde hij ergens aan. De koningin deed open. 'Ik hoop maar dat u de goede bent,' zei de man.
'Natuurlijk,' zei de koningin. 'Ik ben de echte.'
'Ja, dat zeggen ze allemaal,' zei de man. 'Hoe kan ik dat

zeker weten ?'
Daar kwam Karel al met een noodvaart door de deur heen.
'Klim uit het raam,' zei de koningin. 'Snel.' De man klom uit het raam, en de koningin deed hetzelfde.
'Ik zie jullie wel,' riep Karel. Een helikopter kwam op de top van het gebouw, met electrische gestaltes. Snel stapten de man en de koningin in, terwijl het gebouw beneden ontplofte. Maar tot hun grote schrik zagen ze de hand van Karel Klouterwoes die een stang onder het toestel had gegrepen. Hij trok zich eraan op, en probeerde de deur te openen. Toen hij een ruit insloeg richtte één van de electrische gestaltes snel een laser-pistool op hem. De man trapte Karel Klouterwoes weg, maar Karel had zijn been gegrepen, en beiden gleden naar buiten. De man kon nog net de stang vastgrijpen. Hij probeerde Karel van zich los te trappen, wat niet lukte. En Karel begon zich al omhoog te trekken aan hem. Maar toen schoot één van de electrische gestaltes hem weg. De man werd weer naar binnen getrokken.
De man klaagde dat met de hersen-transplantatie hij het gevoel had niet meer in zijn eigen lichaam te zitten. Toen hebben de dokters hem een tweede hersen-transplantatie gegeven. De dokters leken op Karel Klouterwoes. Hij

trapte hen van hem af, en rende naar buiten met schuim op zijn mond. Hij rende naar de tuin, waar hij tuinwacht was. Hij voelde Karel Klouterwoes in hem. Hij zocht naar het beestje wat hem eens stak. Snel had hij het beestje gevonden, zette het op zijn arm, en liet zich steken. Iemand trok hem het huis in. Het was Bizonbloed. 'Heb je de oplossing gevonden ?' vroeg ze.
'Ja, stekende beestjes,' zei ze. Ik glimlachte.

De spin

De spin, wevende de dimensies, de spin, het trauma. Het ruist over de zeeen, om de slag te slaan. Hier vandaan nemen de religies. Daarachter verbergen zij de spin. De spin neemt hen allen in. Ze kunnen het niet aan. Ze maken vla. Ze eten het, en doen alsof er niets aan de hand is.
De spin wacht, en slaat dan toe. Hiervan nemen de religies. Ze hebben veel te verbergen. Bergen, hopen.
De spin maakt een teken, en slaat dan toe, zoals de religies het doen. Maar zij houden de echo van de spin netjes verborgen.
De spin is op jacht …
Ik heb het gehoord. Hoor je zijn stem ? Roepende, gillende, wevende de dimensies. De religies kunnen het niet aan.
Toe, neem van haar.
Ik denk dat ik één van hen ben geworden. Ik draag een wapen …
Ik sla toe zoals hen, maar ik ken de spin niet. Het heeft mijn geheugen gewist.
Ik wordt ergens wakker. Ik ken het hier niet. Waar kom ik vandaan ? De spin is op jacht geweest. Wij drijven

allemaal rond in de modder.
In de verte zie ik de brug. Ik zie hen met de maskers. Ik denk dat ik één van hen ben geworden.
De spin heeft mij gebeten. Er is overal bloed. Ik ben meer geworden zoals jou. Ze hebben mijn geheugen gewist. Ze kwamen op die dag en namen alles mee ….

De man met de boog

De spin tatoeeert mijn hersenen. Honing stroomt, ontwaakt. Mijn hersenen zijn als bloesem. Het voelt zo fragiel. Het water stroomt langs mijn vingers, en ik kijk naar haar. Ze is een pop. Ze zit op haar rieten stoel en beweegt niet. Ook zij was aangeraakt door de spin.
De spin tatoeeerde mijn hersenen, totdat ik niets meer wist. Zo'n hopeloos gevoel, als een gat in de lucht. Ik denk dat ik nu één van hen ben geworden, op hun wereld leef, zoals hen. Ik kijk hen aan, met het gevoel dat we één zijn. Een kleine prik doet mij ontwaken, alsof ik toch anders dan hen ben. De man met de boog kwam tot mijn stad, helemaal tot mijn huis, en klom op de steigers. Hij had vier pijlen op zijn boog, die hij gezamenlijk afschoot op mij. Dwars door de ramen gingen ze, en toen dwars door mijn hoofd. Hij nam mij mee, maar waar naartoe ?

Ik keek naar beneden, en zag de grote brug. Ik hoorde haar roepen … maar toen niet meer …

De droom

Haar gezicht, van goud, mij bespottende. Ze schrok toen ik haar zag, en toen was ze stil. Ik zat voor het raam, en aan de andere kant zat zij in haar schommelstoel. Ik denk dat ze aan het borduren was, of aan het breien. Een trui ofzo. En de honing was in mijn hoofd. Ik dacht terug aan de man met de boog die mij mee had genomen. Hij bracht me naar een hoog gebouw. Een flat ofzo, en vertelde wat er aan de hand was, maar ik kan me er niets meer van herinneren. De spin was in mijn hoofd. Het wiste mijn verleden. Het tatoeerde me, en zo werd alles langzaam en stapsgewijs veranderd. Het was net allemaal anders, en het kreeg nieuwe betekenissen. Ik was als op de golven van een woeste zee, die mij veranderde. Alles was anders.

Ik droeg haar naar de zee, en legde haar in het zand. De golven raakten haar licht aan. Ik droeg haar op aan de spin. De spin verscheen gigantisch boven de zee, en slokte haar op. Maar het was een droom. Ik heb geen houvast, want er leeft een spin in mijn hoofd. Het is een droom. En nu ontwaak ik.

Het grijze

Zij vermeed mij, waarom weet ik niet. Misschien vanwege de spin in mijn hoofd. Het keek door mijn ogen. Ik kon haar veranderen, en daarom rende ze weg, het bos in. Ik achtervolgde haar, maar ze rende steeds harder. Haar lot was tragisch. Ik wil er niet aan denken.

Ik voel alsof ik nu één van hen ben geworden. De man met de boog vertelde mij veel, maar waar is hij nu ? En wat is er van overgebleven ? Zoveel jaren naar school, alles vergeten. Waar is alles goed voor geweest ? En ze spraken maar door, zij met de maskers. Ze brachten me naar de brug, waar ik verdronk. Door vogels werd ik opgenomen, en zij brachten mij naar een plaats waar de grote spin sprak. Ik zag mijn hersenen voor mijn ogen aan flarden gescheurd, en de spin sprak door totdat het pijn deed. Zij brachten mij hier voor een reden. Een reden die ik niet zag. Ik haatte hen, maar toch voelde ik dat ik één met hen was geworden. We reden in dezelfde auto, hadden dezelfde kleren, en vochten in dezelfde oorlog. Ze stapten uit met hun geweren, en ik was één van hen. De leider moest de nieuwe koning worden. Daar vochten wij voor. Ik deed wat mij voorgezegd werd. Dat is alles wat ik weet. Wij waren met zovelen, toen we de stad aanvielen. Velen

vielen aan onze voeten. Zoveel dromen sprongen kapot. Ik was één met hen geworden. Nu wist ik het zeker. Hier nemen de religies af, hier lopen de dimensies in elkaar over, als een zwaar vergif. Ik kan alleen maar janken op dit punt, en niemand mag mij aanraken. Ik sta daar met een geweer, één van hen, om onze leider koning te maken.
Hier nemen de religies af, en lopen de dimensies in elkaar over, totdat alles grijs is.

Vier pijlen

De spin tatoeeert mij. Ik ben er gewend aan geworden. Ik zak af in een grote diepte. Aan een touw ben ik vast, als een duiker naar de schat. Zoveel pijlen schieten er door mijn hoofd, om de honing te doen ontwaken. Ik verlies mijn zicht. Ik kijk naar mijn hersenen, als naar bloesem, en rood bloedende honing, en allemaal ladders, in diepe, diepe duisternis. Ik ben niet meer in de zee. Ik ben van binnen. Zoveel pijlen door mijn hoofd, op de rug van de man met de boog. Hij hangt aan het touw, als aan een liaan. Dromend glijd ik in een oerwoud, als aan de drugs. Beneden sneeuwt het, en mensen schreeuwen. Zij worden nat. Hij bracht mij hier. Voor heel even.
Mijn hersenen zijn bedekt met honing, en ik staar naar de

ladders. Ook mijn handen zijn bedekt met honing. Ik grijp een ladder, maar het brokkelt af in mijn handen. Alles brokkelt af, totdat alleen een rode lijn overblijft, recht door het grijze. Alles is grijs.
Rood zover het oog reikt, die rode lijn, als de enige weg door het grijze. Als een rood pad door de wildernis. Vier pijlen had hij op zijn boog, die dwars door mijn hoofd werden geramd. Ik staar naar de pijlen. Zij hebben mijn leven gered. Ik kus ze, en wikkel ze in. Ze brachten mij over de zee, over de grote brug. Ik kan janken als ik aan ze denk of naar ze staar. Religie brokkelde af, recht voor mijn ogen.

De tweede pijl

Ze was zo lang. Ze was lang genoeg om mij aan te raken, dwars door mijn schilden heen. De nachtmerrie brak zij af. Zij was één van de vier pijlen. De man met de boog had zo lang aan haar gewerkt. Dagen en nachten was hij bezig haar te decoreren. Hij maakte de juiste insnijdingen, de juiste bochten. Deze pijl was zijn paspoort en sleutel.
Ze was één van de vier pijlen. Een lange pijl, die mij nachtmerries gaf. Ze was zo klein na de duistere nacht, maar niet te klein. Ik was langer dan haar, maar ze trok mij

naar beneden. Ze liet mij de duisternis onder het huis zien, de grotten en de tunnels. Ze nam mij mee naar deze plaatsen, en ik dacht dat het altijd nacht was. Ze liet mij haar dromen zien, en haar leugens. Ze had zoveel gezichten. En in de nachten zweefde zij over de brug, of dreef in de wateren. Met of zonder masker.
Zij was de tweede pijl. Ze zit nog steeds in mijn hoofd. Alles brokkelt af wanneer ze spreekt. Ik kan mezelf niet terugvinden, niets om aan vast te houden.

Het trappenhuis

Ik probeer te ontcijferen waar ik ben. Ze nam mij mee naar een diepe kelder. Vanaf toen voelde het weer alsof mijn geheugen begon weg te golven. Ik kwam aan bij een grote grijze zee. Spinnen zwommen hier, groot en klein, en bruggen waren nachtmerries. Grote spookbruggen over de zee, over elkaar. Was dit vrede of oorlog ? Dit angstaanjagende plaatje …. Een foto …. Ze stak haar mes door het plaatje, en bedreigde mij met dit mes, om mij vervolgens nog dieper mee te nemen. Met het mes tegen mijn keel leidde ze mij over de trappen naar beneden. Het was een diep trappenstelsel. Het trappenhuis was mijn nachtmerrie. In het riool probeerde ze mij te verdrinken.

Ratten zwommen hier. Een rat viel haar aan, en trok haar naar beneden. Dit redde mijn leven. Ik zwom naar de kant, maar ik wist niet of ik dood was of levend. Een grote rat stond daar. Deze ratten waren groot. Hij trok mij op de kant. De stad zou branden. Ik mocht niet meer terug.

Herinneringen

Hij woonde in een andere stad. Ik ging daar vaak naartoe. Dan deden we spelletjes, en dachten nergens meer aan. Ik kwam daar niet meer toen hij stierf. Maar soms kwamen de herinneringen terug, als grote oorlogen, als vogels die mij meenamen, terug naar mijn verleden.

De galg

Het leek wel alsof sommige jaren van mijn leven als een paradijs waren, als eilanden in de zee, waar ik aankwam na grote gevechten. Sommige jaren waren moeilijk. De spin had ze allemaal in mijn hersenen getatoeeerd. Ze spraken mij toe, al die tatoeages. Ik keek in de dieptes als in bodemloze putten, en hield mij vast aan de brug. Ik voelde mij dronken. Ik ben toen steden ingegaan die ik dacht te herinneren. Helemaal zeker was ik niet meer. Ik was hier niet gekend.

Ze stond in de keuken, lang als ze was. Ik weet niet wat ze kookte. De spin gebruikte haar om mijn hersenen te tatoeeren. Ik was in haar armen, en ze beschuldigde mij, dat ik geld van haar zou hebben gestolen en medicijnen. Ze stuurde mij brieven, en beschuldigde mij later dat ik die brieven zou hebben verscheurd. Ik hield van haar. Ze was de tweede pijl. De man met de boog had lang werk van haar gemaakt.
Ze had het eten klaar, en ik gooide de helft ervan weg, omdat ik bang was dat ze me zou vergiftigen. Dit kon ze mij niet vergeven. Ik had haar eten weggegooid. Het redde mijn leven. Zij wilde mijn leven niet redden. Ze beschuldigde mij dat ik mijn eigen leven had gered. Ze was dood.
Na de duistere nacht was ze zo klein, maar niet te klein. Ik was gewoon langer dan haar, maar toch haalde ze me neer. Ze dwong mij van haar voedsel te eten, de volle portie, en ik moest aan haar medicijnen, dezelfde die zij slikte. Ze schold en schreeuwde, en de spin in mijn hoofd tatoeeerde mij. Alles werd zwart, en toen wit. Zij leidde mij door het grijze, over de rode streep.
Deze steden waren allemaal gemaakt door religies, maar daaronder waren grote geheimen, diep onder de stad. Zij

zou mij naar al die plaatsen leiden. Zij was de tweede pijl. In de keuken stond zij, klaar om mij te vernietigen, klaar om mij te vergiftigen. Ik kon niet weigeren. De spin was in mijn hoofd. Honing droop van mijn fragiele hersenen. Ik geloofde alles wat ze zij. Zij was mijn religie. Zij was de tweede pijl.
Oog in oog met de man met de boog. Hij sloeg mij op mijn kaak. In een boshut werd ik wakker. Ik keek naar de spin, en viel toen weer in slaap. Mijn kaak was broos. Ik kon niet praten. Ik denk dat ik net als hen ben. Ik ben ver afgedwaald. Diep in de bossen kwam ik haar tegen, de prinses. Zij kapte hier de bomen om, en maakte haar meubels. Ook schreef ze haar boeken op het dode hout. Zij maakte religies. Vanaf hier marcheerden haar soldaten, om de wereld beneden haar in te nemen, en boven haar. Alles was van haar. Op hoge deuren klopten zij, om een bevel uit te dragen om te komen tot de galg. Zoveel gingen aan de galg die dag.

De oorlog

'Naam en toenaam,' werd er gezegd. Een zwart leren handschoen schreef alles op papier. Toen mocht ik door. Ik kreeg mijn eigen put. Maar de spin was nog steeds in mijn

hoofd. Alles draaide. Ik was duizelig. Niemand kwam door. Geen bezoek. Ik was geheel afgezonderd. Er werden hier huizen gebouwd die even later in mijn hoofd afbrokkelden. Ik was er niet van overtuigd dat dit echt was. Maar wat was dan wel echt ? De spin weefde de dimensies door elkaar, en bouwde een nieuwe wereld. In mijn hoofd brokkelde het allemaal af, alsof het nooit door kon komen. Ik zweefde tussen twee realiteiten. Niets kon ooit echt worden. De spin raapte niks op. Er werden gewoon werelden overheen gebouwd. Alles in het sop. En de gebouwen werden hoger, en de mensen werden langer. Ik kon de spin van dichtbij zien. Maar ik kon de spin niet aanraken. De spin was achter glas.
Zoveel mensen klommen op ladders omhoog, om te kunnen ontkomen aan de spin, maar de ladders braken gewoon af. Niemand kon ontsnappen. De dimensies werden in elkaar geweven. Het was een verlammend gevoel. We kwamen nooit ver.
De oorlog had dit allemaal gedaan.

Oude lappen

En ik droomde dat ik over de zee zweefde, ziende op alle zeeslagen, en grote boten. Alles zonk in de grote duistere,

zwarte zee, als in vergif. Alleen de spin kwam boven, en nu is het in mijn hoofd. Fragiele draden door mijn hoofd. Een pistool of geweer is niet opgewassen tegen de spin. Alle dimensies worden hier in elkaar verweven. De spin is achter glas, dik glas, en iedereen voelt hopeloos. Zoveel dromen springen kapot wanneer de spin langskomt. En men weet nooit wanneer de spin komt. De spin komt plotseling. Het is niet te berekenen. Zo diep steekt het, zo intens, als het tatoeeren van hersenen. De zee lijkt van honing, meer en meer, als dikke stroop waar we nooit doorheen kunnen komen. Het trekt ons naar beneden, als een soldaat van de spin. Het trekt ons tot de kelders, en tot het riool. Als een pop in de kelder kijk je me aan. Vier pijlen door je hoofd, en zoveel naalden in je lichaam. Je bent net als ik. Ik zie de rode lijn in je ogen. Jij bent ook vergiftigd, net als ik. Je bent gebonden op een stoel, en probeert mij dromen te geven, maar die dromen komen nooit aan. De spin slaat alles stuk, en maakt er iets anders van. Ik kan nooit horen wat je zegt. Diep, diep in de kelder leven wij, met uitzicht op het riool, en daarachter is de zee, die nooit meer terugkomt. De soldaat van de spin heeft zijn werk gedaan. Kleurloos is het, met scheuten van pijn. Het is als het verkopen van oude lappen.

Het orakel

Ik ben eenzaam, alleen op de wereld, als een pop die de andere poppen niet kan bereiken. Morgen sta ik in de speelgoed-winkel. Het werk is bijna af. Een kind zal mij kopen. Het kind zal mij meesleuren in de modder. Het kind zal mij proberen te voeden met rotzooi. Ik kom in een nieuw huis, waar ik op een kastje wordt gezet. Mijn gezicht is opgeschilderd. Ik kan alles horen wat ze zeggen. Het kind is nu ouder, en speelt niet meer met mij, maar nog steeds voel ik de spin in mijn hoofd, die mijn dromen maakt, en stukslaat. Hier lopen de dimensies in elkaar over.
Ik probeer te draaien, en te bewegen. Dit zijn de oorlogs-jaren. Er is een inval in het huis, en ik wordt meegenomen. Even later wordt ik in de rivier geworpen. Ik kan alles zien van hier. Ook zie ik de grote brug. Ik zie hen met de maskers. In de nacht ben ik als dakpannen. Als schilden tegen de regen. Ik denk dat ik nu één met hen ben geworden.
Met een fluitje roepen ze mij op, en vragen mij om informatie. Ze willen alles weten, en dan klappen zij. Ik kan hen alles vertellen, en ze geloven alles. Ik ben nu een geest. Ik ben interessant, want ik kan dingen zien die zij

niet zien. Als een orakel zetten ze mij neer, als een monument. Het is een nieuwe religie. Zij schilderen mij op, en verdelen de stukken. Als hongerige wolven bijten ze me, totdat de spin hen uit elkaar trekt. Mijn leven is gered. De spin in mijn hoofd …. mijn oplossing …. waar de dimensies in elkaar overvloeien, en dan is alles anders.

Borduringen van mijn hart

Maar de dag erna sta ik weer op de markt. Weer ben ik een orakel, om de toekomst te voorspellen. Ik ben boos bedrog, boeren-bedrog, om anderen op te lichten. Alles draait om geld, en ik dans als een ballerina. Ik doe mijn kunstjes wel. Aan het einde van de dag steekt de spin mij, en dan is het afgelopen. Maar de dag erna begint alles weer van voren aan. Ik ben in de carrousel. Ik werk voor het circus. Ik werp messen en speel met vuur, en zij … zij is mijn assistente.
De assistente van de dood, het verkoopt goed. Dat moet je leren. Het is een koud kunstje.
Ik ben rijk, en wordt alsmaar rijker. Mensen aanbidden mij. Ze staan voor mij in de rij. Zij regelt de economie. Zij is mijn accountant. Als boekhouder wint ze. Dat is haar grote geheim. Ze verkoopt mij, en koopt me dan weer

terug voor een laag prijsje, of ze steelt me gewoon terug. Zij is een groot spion. Maar de spin heeft ook haar grenzen opgesteld. Ze is de tweede pijl. Nauwkeurig schiet de man met de boog haar door het raam, dwars door mijn hoofd. Hij had maar één kans. Toen werd hij afgevoerd door de grote spin. In een ziekenhuis wordt hij neergelegd. Hij wordt met banden aan een bed bevestigd. En vele injecties gaan door zijn hoofd. De spin neemt ook hem onder handen. Zijn hersenen worden getatoeeerd, voor grotere opdrachten. Diep onder de grond gaat hij, om een zetel in de politiek te behalen. Dan slaapt iedereen. Hij speelt met het knopje. Hij speelt met de lamp. Zijn haren raken verstrikt in een spinnenweb.

Ik zie de zee onder mij, bedekt met zoveel spinnenwebben. Allemaal raken zij verstrikt. Ook ik. Hier spoelen de dimensies aan. Hier spoel ik aan. Bloedend lig ik op het strand, totdat een vrouw mij wegtrekt. Ik wordt als een pop behandeld. Maar de spin steekt haar ook. Er is niemand meer.

Onder het grijze lig ik, waar het vriest. Haar haren zijn lang en grijs. Zij houdt mij stevig in een greep, totdat de spin haar ook steekt.

Ik ren vrij, door de weilanden. Ik word vies, ik ben onder

de modder. Ik struikel en val, en kruip een schuur binnen.
Dan brokkelt alles af. Ik ben in het grote niets.
Ik ben in de grote stad van het niets, waar ik fiets. Iemand verkoopt fruit, maar niemand ziet het, alleen ik. Ik ben het grote niets.
Het is stil hier. Alles glijdt weg in de grote zee.
De spin borduurt mijn hart, mijn lichaam is gevoelig.

De nieuwe honing

Ik ben één met hen nu. Ik voel één met hen. Zij hebben ook honing, en het is een zee van honing.
De brug brokkelt af. Niemand kan meer terug, en niemand kan nog komen. Maar dan brokkelt hier ook alles af.
Door bliksemschichten worden deze poppen bestuurd.
Het is de melk van de spin, een nieuwe honing in hun hoofd.
Het opent boeken, en ze zien visioenen. Dat wat lang geleden verloren was gegaan.
Ik denk dat ik één met hen ben. Al deze dingen gebeuren ook in mij. Maar dan brokkelt alles af. Wij kunnen elkaar niet bereiken. Wij kunnen niets tegen elkaar zeggen. Alles wordt vervormd in de wind.

De zee van leugens

Het blijft steken totdat de honing vloeit. Honing van lang vervlogen tijden.
Het blijft steken totdat het de oude tonen voortbrengt, de geluiden van verloren gegane tijden.
Nu is het terug. De oude trommel staat naast de kast. Hij trommelt erop, en dan wordt alles stil.
De fluit is terug, en oude vogels fladderen in het rond.
Klaar om hen over de zee te brengen.
Roep het nog eens zoals het was, schreeuw nog eens zoals het gebeurde.
Het blijft steken totdat de oude visioenen stromen. In een zee van visioenen woont de spin.
Ik kan je niet voelen, ik zie je niet, daarom moet het steken, steken totdat ik je vind.
In de mand met kleding is niets te vinden, alleen je naam.
Ik kan je niet voelen en zien. Ik kijk naar je speelgoed, je trommel en je fluit.
De vogels nemen mij op, en brengen mij over de zee, waar je eens woonde.
Alleen je naam staat geschreven op een stukje papier.
Eens was je hier, maar nu niet meer.
Ik kan je niet voelen en zien. Ik ben als een blinde man.

Maar de spin blijft steken, totdat de rode lijn naar jou leidt.
Ik kijk in je glazige ogen. Dan voel ik je warme hand.
Ik geef je een kus. Dan geef je mij een kus terug, met speeksel op mijn wang.
Ik til je op. Dan zie ik je straal en je lach.
Ik heb je nu helemaal. Ik trok je uit de mand en de doos.
Ik neem je in mijn armen, maar dan brokkelt alles af.
Het is de leugen die steekt.
De man met de boog kon me net op tijd redden.
Verblindende lichten waren op jacht,
Maar de pijl redde mij ….
Ik val op de grond, en tijd staat stil …
Ze liep weg. Ze keek niet op of om …
De pijl had mij gered …
In een zee van leugens lag ik,
maar de pijl maakte alles anders …
En er waren vier pijlen …
Zij was de tweede …
Ik luisterde naar haar slaapliedjes …
Ik trok mezelf aan haar op …
De spin stak mij totdat ik sliep …
Een schip op zee,
en ik zonk weg in de leugens,

geen houvast,
want de spin had mij gestoken …
Er was hier niets, maar toen alleen duisternis,
En het bleek steken, totdat iemand jouw naam noemde
Hier vloeiden de dimensies in elkaar over …
Hier woonde de spin ….
Mijn hart sterft de hele tijd, totdat ik de rode lijn weer zie,
en het grijze wegvaagt
Hier heb ik een uitzicht over de hele stad.
Daar staan zij met hun trommels.
Het getrommel is als het steken van de spin.
En dan slaapt de stad,
bedekt onder sneeuw.
Getrommel in de wind,
wordt zo vals dat het de doden oproept,
een leger van doden.
In de zee van leugen zullen we allen vergaan.
In mijn keel steekt het.
Ook daar is de spin.
Het steekt totdat het de oude verloren woorden
terugbrengt,
Totdat ik mijn mond open …
Ik slik een paar keer, maar de pijn gaat niet weg.

Het wordt alleen maar erger.
Er is geen weg uit.
Ik zie haar daar staan, spottend,
liegend, als gedronken hebbend van de zee der leugens.
Tussen de prachtige bomen staat ze,
met prachtige struiken,
de leugen aanbiddend,
totdat ik afbrokkel
Zij is de tweede pijl, een zwaar vergif,
mijn hoofd is dood na de oorlog.
Op de zee der leugens heeft ze haar boot.
Ze vist mij eruit, om me nog meer te pijnigen.
Ik ben een pop in haar armen.
Ze knijpt al het leven uit me.
Ze sleurt me naar het riool.
Zo snel wordt ze oud,
als de riool-roos.
En alles wat ik kan doen is grijpen naar de grammofoon-
speler,
maar dan brokkelt mijn arm af,
en dan alles om me heen.
Er is een stuk van het standbeeld afgebroken.
De spin steekt in mijn hoofd.

Er is bloed in het grijze, een rode lijn.
Ik moet mijn reis voortzetten.
Spinnen komen uit mijn mond.
Ik kan niet praten.
De tweede soldaat van de spin is gekomen.
Hij zegt dat ik rustig moet zijn.
Ik kan hem wel onthoofden.
Hij slaat mij met een laars,
en drukt mijn hoofd tegen de kachel aan.
Ineens zie ik het licht.
De zee der leugens spreekt tot mij.
Maar ik kan niet terugspreken.
Dan ineens vlieg ik de spin aan,
Ik grijp mijn mes, maar mijn arm staat stil.
Hier is waar de dimensies in elkaar overvloeien.
De spin is nu slechts een bruine vlek op het behang,
Ik had dit veel eerder moeten doen.
Waarom deed ik dit niet ?
Ik was onder de controle van een spin,
en een man met vier pijlen.
De spin was de derde pijl,
Het was een huwelijk,
wat al snel in de dood eindigde.

Op de rug van dit beest kwam ik tot de onderwereld.
Maar dit beest moest mij terugbrengen,
mij terugbrengen tot waar ik eens vandaan kwam.
Ik was ontvoerd.
Ik had de spin overwonnen,
een huwelijksfeest.
Hier is waar de dimensies in elkaar overvloeien,
Hier is waar de spin niet meer spreekt.

Zijn Huis Stond In De Weg

Hij staarde eenzaam voor zich uit. Hij miste zijn vrouw, maar wist ook dat hij nooit terug kon naar haar. Ze was te gevaarlijk. Hij poetste zijn schoenen, stond op, en liep toen naar buiten. De tuin was prachtig. Er stond een vrouw tussen de struiken, met een radiatie als van een leeuw, tegelijkertijd zwak. 'Ben je …,' zei ze verlegen.
'Ben ik wat ?' vroeg hij.
'Ben je de nieuwe buurman,' zei ze.
'Oh, ja,' zei hij.
'Mag ik u een hand geven,' vroeg ze.
Hij stak zijn hand uit en liep op haar af. Haar hand voelde zacht aan, en tegelijkertijd stevig.
'Wilt u mijn huis zien ?' vroeg ze.
'Zodadelijk,' zei hij, 'Eh, okay, ik loop wel even met je mee nu.'
Ze glimlachte. Ze deelden de tuin samen. Het was een grote tuin. Ze leidde hem tot haar keuken, waardoor ze binnen kwamen. 'Mooi hier,' sprak hij.
Ze glimlachte verlegen.
'Ja, dat hebben wel meerderen gezegd.'
Hij ging op de bank zitten in de kamer. 'Moet u wat koffie

met een koekje ?' vroeg ze.
'Nee, doe maar geen moeite,' zei hij.
'Ach ik kan het zo inschenken,' zei ze bijna fluisterend.
Even later zaten ze samen op de bank. Hij dronk van zijn koffie en keek haar aan.
'Wat is dat voor schilderij op de muur ?' vroeg hij.
Het was nogal een ingewikkeld schilderij. Een dame in het zwart, en een naakte man op een stoel met een appel in zijn mond.
'Oh,' lachte ze. 'Dat is …'
'Toe, zeg het maar,' zei hij.
'Dat is … Ach, het is een dom varken,' sprak ze.
'En wie is die vrouw ?' vroeg hij.
'Het is geen vrouw, het is een heerser,' sprak ze.
'Zo, zo,' zei hij.
'En wie bent u ?' vroeg ze.
'Roderik,' zei hij.
'Oh, rode Rik,' lachte ze.
'Nee, gewoon Roderik,' zei hij.
'Mijnheer Roderik, u bent een interessante man,' zei ze.
'Ik weet het,' zuchtte hij. 'Dat lijkt altijd zo aan de buitenkant. Maar ik ben tamelijk saai.'
Hij keek naar nog wat andere schilderijen aan de muur.

Schilderijen van indianen.
'Vleselijk, hè,' zei ze.
'Wat is vleselijk ?' vroeg hij.
'Nou, al die naakte mannen op schilderijen,' zei ze.
'Ik vind het wel wat hebben,' zei hij. 'Maar als je dat vindt, waarom haal je ze niet weg ?'
'Ik heb geen probleem met vleselijk,' zei ze.
'Ach wat, je bent lief,' zei hij.
'Vind je ?' vroeg ze. 'Het zijn vleselijke varkens. Varkens moeten er ook zijn. Ik heb er geen problemen mee. Ze eindigen toch wel in de pan.'
'Huh,' zei Roderik. 'Dit begint me nu even te duizelen. Indianen zijn varkens ?'
'Nee, niet indianen,' sprak ze, 'mannen zijn varkens.'
'Oh, ja, daar heb je gelijk in,' zei Roderik. 'Vaak wel.'
'Altijd,' lachte ze.
'Oh,' zei Roderik die bijna zijn koffie uitproeste. 'Dus ik ben ook een varken.'
'Tuurlijk,' zei ze zacht. Even kwam haar tongetje naar buiten. Het was een klein tongetje die ze even heel snel liet zien, alsof ze hem plaagde. Een vreemd gevoel gleed over zijn rug.
'Zeg, ik moet weer gaan,' zei Roderik.

'Ach, mijnheer, blijf nog even zitten,' zei ze.
'Nog even dan,' zei Roderik een beetje ongeduldig.
'Ik wil u nog even wat laten zien. Ze ging bij hem op schoot zitten, terwijl hij helemaal rood werd. Toen haalde ze wat foto's tevoorschijn. Foto's van gelakt leer.
'Wat zullen we nu beleven ?' vroeg Roderik. 'Je gaat zo maar bij me op schoot zitten, en laat me foto's zien van gelakt leer.'
'Even doorbijten,' zei ze. Toen liet ze wat foto's zien van bruin leer, en foto's van bloed.
'Dat was het, mijnheer Roderik,' zei ze met een donkere stem. 'Nog een prettige avond.' Ze stond op, en keerde haar rug naar hem. Roderik begon te fronzen. 'Zeg, is er iets niet helemaal in orde in dat hoofdje van je ? Plotseling draaide ze zich naar hem toe, en hij keek recht in de ogen van een doodshoofd waar wormen uitkwamen.
Roderik schrok wakker. Hij had het even niet meer. Hij stapte uit zijn bed en liep naar de badkamer om wat water te drinken. Hij zuchtte hevig. 'De doodstraf staat hierop,' mompelde hij, en liep weer naar zijn bed. Hij greep zijn kussen en ging weer liggen, maar hij kon maar niet in slaap komen. Hevig lag hij te woelen en te zweten. Plotseling barste hij in huilen uit. Hij wist niet wat het

was. Hij woonde hier in zijn nieuwe huis, na de scheiding. De buurvrouw had hij nog niet gezien, terwijl hij hier al een week woonde. Ze hadden een grote gezamelijke tuin. De volgende ochtend was hij er vroeg uit. Hij had niet kunnen slapen na die nachtmerrie. Hij was nu wel erg benieuwd wie zijn buurvrouw was. Hij liep de tuin in en ging tussen wat struiken staan. Hij keek door het raam van de buurvrouw naar binnen, maar zag haar niet. Hij begon een beetje zenuwachtig heen en weer te lopen in de tuin. Toen kon hij zich plotseling niet meer inhouden. Hij liep naar de voorkant toe, en belde bij haar aan. Even later deed een vrouw open. Het was een indiaanse vrouw. 'Ik ben de nieuwe buurman,' zei hij, terwijl hij zijn hand uitstak. 'De naam is Roderik,' zei hij.

Ze schudde zijn hand. 'Komt u verder,' zei ze. Hij liep achter haar aan de gang in naar de woonkamer. 'Gaat u maar zitten. Hij ging op de bank zitten. 'Moet u wat drinken ?' vroeg ze. 'Nee, dank u,' zei hij.

'Wat leuk dat je je even komt voorstellen,' zei ze.

'Ja, het werd anders wel tijd,' zei hij.

'Ben je een beetje een dromertje ?' vroeg ze.

'Huh, hoezo ?' vroeg hij.

'Nou, omdat u zo lang heeft gewacht voordat u uzelf

kwam voorstellen,' zei ze.
'Ik ga nogal door een moeilijke tijd,' zei hij. 'Ik zit in een verwerkingsproces van een scheiding,' zei hij.
'Oh,' zei ze. 'Dat is inderdaad niet leuk.'
'Het is een rotvak,' zei hij.
'Ja, als je het als in schoolverband bekijkt, inderdaad,' zei ze.
'Ik heb wat lelies in mijn tuin staan, ze bloeien leuk, hè ?' vroeg ze.
'Oh ja, ik zag ze,' zei hij. 'Ze zijn prachtig.
'Ja, wazig,' zei ze. 'Ze zijn zo dromerig, zoals u,' lachte ze.
'Waarom noemt u me alweer dromerig,' vroeg hij.
'Ach, u ziet er zo dromerig uit, zo wazig, alsof u … Ach, laat maar, u wilt het toch niet horen,' sprak ze.
'Nou ja, dat kan wel kloppen,' zei hij. 'Ik heb vannacht haast niet geslapen. Ik kreeg een nachtmerrie, en toen kon ik niet meer in slaap komen.'
'Waar ging die nachtmerrie over ?' vroeg ze ineens met een serieus gezicht.
'Over u,' zei hij. 'Het begon goed, maar eindigde slecht.'
In het kort vertelde hij de nachtmerrie.
Ze zuchtte.
'Ja, een mens kan raar dromen,' sprak hij.

Ze was ineens stil.
'Heb ik u hiermee pijn gedaan door het zomaar te vertellen ?' vroeg hij.
'Eh, nee hoor,' zei ze zacht.
'Maar ik heb u toch niet in verlegenheid gebracht nu hoop ik ?' vroeg hij.
Ze schudde haar hoofd.
'Maar mijn voorouders …' zei ze.
'Wat ?' vroeg hij. 'Zeg het maar gerust, hoor.'
'Nee, mijn voorouders hebben u die droom gegeven. Het is over …. over,' zei ze.
'Over wat ?' vroeg hij.
'Meesters en meesteressen,' zei ze.
'Onze stam had geen huwelijks-relaties, maar meesters en meesteressen met hun slaven,' zei ze.
Ze liet hem wat boeken zien met plaatjes. 'Hier, het gaat allemaal om vernederingen en leugens,' zei ze.
'Blijf je slapen ?' vroeg ze. 'Dan kunnen we nog wat doorpraten.'
'Gezellig,' zei hij.
Hij kreeg een bed in haar eigen slaapkamer. Zij sliep aan de andere kant van haar slaapkamer. Hij voelde zich wel op zijn gemak bij zo'n gastvrije vrouw.

Ze praatten door tot diep in de nacht, totdat ze beiden in slaap vallen. Weer heeft hij een droom. Hij droomt dat hij in een rustige natuur is. Opeens schrikt hij wakker. Hij merkt dat hij vastgebonden is. De vrouw zit op hem. 'Wat is hier aan de hand,' kreunt hij.
'Niks zeggen,' zegt ze. Hij probeert zich los te maken, maar hij is te goed door haar vastgebonden. Hij moet even slikken. Hij begint bang te worden, want dit hadden ze niet afgesproken.
'Maak me los, onmiddellijk,' kreunt hij. 'Shhhh...,' zegt ze. 'Niet zoveel praten.'
'Wat !' gilt hij bijna, terwijl zijn stem overslaat. 'Heb je dit eerst aan mij gevraagd ? Laat me los.' Maar hij had al snel door dat het de vrouw menens was. Hij voelt zich ongemakkelijk, als een gevangene. Hij is geheel aan haar genade overgeleverd. Hij wordt bang dat ze hem misschien wel wat aan zal doen. Hij heeft opeens veel last van zijn buik vanwege de spanning, maar hij durft niets te zeggen. Een vreemde electriciteit trekt door zijn lichaam.
'Alsjeblieft,' smeekt hij even later.
'Mannen zijn varkens,' fluistert ze. En dan zegt ze het nog een keer met een zachte stem. Hij herinnert zijn nachtmerrie. 'Wat ga je met me doen ?' vraagt hij

fluisterend, maar met een grote paniek in zijn stem. Hij voelde zich in de val gelokt. 'Ik kan alles met je doen,' fluistert ze. Hij ligt naakt, en inmiddels ligt zij achter hem. Hij voelt zich als een prooi.
Dan schrikt hij wakker. Het was maar een droom. Het leek zo echt. Ze ligt aan de andere kant van de kamer in haar bed. Hij is onder het zweet. Hij loopt naar haar toe. Hij kijkt naar haar gezicht. Ze slaapt zo vredig. 'Hey,' fluistert hij. Ze opent haar ogen. 'Wat is er ?' vraagt ze.
'Ik heb weer een nachtmerrie over je gehad,' zegt hij. En dan vertelt hij de droom. Ze is inmiddels rechtop gaan zitten. 'Kom bij me zitten,' zegt ze. Dan neemt ze hem in haar armen en probeert hem te sussen. 'Het zijn mijn voorouders weer,' sprak ze.
'Wat willen ze van ons ?' vroeg hij.
Met haar warme lippen kust ze hem. 'Het spijt me zo,' zei ze.
'Je kan er niets aan doen,' sprak hij. 'Ik had wel een heel raar gevoel, een soort van opgewondenheid, maar dat kan ook van angst zijn geweest.'
'Vond je het lekker ?' vroeg ze.
'Je voelde lekker aan, maar ik was ook in paniek. Ik was je gevangene en ik wist niet wat je met me zou doen,' zei hij.

Ze drukte hem tegen zich aan. Weer kuste ze hem, en hij kuste haar ook.
'Mijn stam vindt relaties gevaarlijk. Onze stam accepteert alleen zoals jij het droomde,' sprak ze.
'Bedankt voor je warmte en gastvrijheid,' zei hij. Ze glimlachte. 'Je mag wel bij me liggen als je je daarbij veiliger voelt.' Hij knikte een beetje verlegen, en ging bij haar onder de dekens, terwijl ze hem naar zich toetrok. Hij voelde haar warme lichaam, en hij werd wat rustiger. Toch durfde hij niet meer te slapen. Na een tijdje stond hij op. Toen ging hij terug naar zijn huis.
Ze belde hem de volgende dag op om te vragen hoe het met hem was. Hij was nogal stil. Ze begreep hem wel. Hij ging de stad in, door het drukke verkeer. Er hing een vreemde ster aan de hemel, met een vreemd licht. Het licht materialiseerde bijna. De ster leek op twee grote lippen, en die lippen begonnen te bewegen. 'Droom ik ?' dacht hij bij zichzelf. Hij wreef even goed in zijn ogen. Hij voelde zich nat worden, maar het regende niet.
'Aarsom !' werd er geroepen. 'Konika !'
Hij keek om. Waar kwam dat geroep vandaan ? Of misschien hoorde hij het verkeerd ? Hij stond bij het stoplicht. Het stoplicht stond op rood, en hij liep door.

Maar het was alsof de grond onder hem in water veranderde. Hij zag een man met een hoed in de golven wegzinken. Hij probeerde ergens aan vast te klemmen, maar er was alleen maar water. 'Help !' riep hij. Hij zakte weg in de golven. 'Ik begrijp hier niets van !' riep hij.
Badend in het zweet werd hij wakker. De vrouw lag nog steeds naast hem. 'Alweer gedroomd,' dacht hij bij zichzelf. Haar arm lag op hem, en ze trok hem dicht tegen zich aan. 'Wat is er, jongen,' vroeg ze. 'Je bent helemaal nat.'
'Ik heb weer een nachtmerrie gehad,' fluisterde hij.
'Mijn voorouders moeten je wel hebben,' zuchtte ze. Toen vertelde hij de droom. 'Ik begin mijn grip op de realiteit te verliezen, want die dromen lijken net echt. Ik weet niet meer wanneer ik droom of wakker ben,' zei hij. Ze probeerde hem te sussen. Hij zag haar grote borsten in haar nachtjapon. Hij slikte even. Ze glimlachte. Ze kuste hem. Hij kuste haar terug. Hij was maar wat blij met zo'n gastvrije buurvrouw, maar waarom al die dromen ?
'Ik denk dat ze je ergens voor willen,' zei ze. 'Ze roepen je.'
Hij voelde zich ziek en beverig. Ze maakte wat soep voor hem, en kwam toen weer terug. Hij zat rechtop in bed tegen een kussen aan. 'Wat willen ze van me ?' vroeg hij.

'Ik durf niet meer te slapen,' zei hij.
'Je moet er aan wennen,' zei ze, 'aan die dromen. Het zijn cryptische dromen. Het zijn gidsen.'
'Je bent zo lief voor me,' zei hij. 'Ik heb het maar getroffen met zo'n buurvrouw. Maar ik weet niet of ik nu droom of echt wakker bent.' Ze glimlachte.
De dagen erna werd hij meegesleurd in een net van wilde dromen en nachtmerries. Hij dacht dat hij gek aan het worden was, maar zij hield hem op de been. Altijd sliep ze naast hem, want ze wist dat zij de oorzaak was van deze dromen. Haar voorouders hadden hem op het oog. Ze zagen hem als een goede vangst. Ze hield er van om tegen hem aan te liggen. Voor haar was hij ook een goede vangst.
'Roderik,' zei ze. 'Ik ben je in mijn hart aan het sluiten. Ik waardeer onze vriendschap heel erg.' Roderik knikte. 'Ik heb hetzelfde,' zei hij. 'Ik voel me zo gehandicapt met deze dromen. Ze zijn verwarrend, maar aan de andere kant brengen ze me dichter bij jou.' Ze glimlachte en knikte.
'Het zal wel goed komen,' zei ze. 'Mijn voorouders zullen over je waken, en zullen het tot een goed eind brengen, of liever gezegd een goed begin.' Hij voelde zich rustig worden. Zij was zijn rust, zijn diepe rust. Het was alsof ze

afdaalde in zijn hart. Ze bond hem aan haar.
De nacht erop had hij een droom over grote vrouwen met veren in hun haren, en andere dingen die hij niet begreep. Ze hadden een soort netten in hun haren, maar ook leken het uitvoerige veren. Het was alsof deze netten levensgevaarlijk waren, heel pijnlijk. Hij wist dat hij die netten niet moest aanraken, maar plotseling kwamen ze achter hem aan. Hij schrok, en rende. Hij verborg zich ergens in een grot, maar al snel hadden ze hem gevonden. Hij smeekte hen hem geen pijn te doen. Maar ze namen de netten uit hun haren en wierpen het op hem af.
Hij schrok wakker, en greep om zich heen. De vrouw drukte hem dicht tegen zich aan. 'Weer naar gedroomd ?' fluisterde ze. Haar nachtjapon was uit. Ze had alleen een wit slipje aan. Het was warm. Hij voelde zich heerlijk in haar armen. Haar benen gingen over zijn benen, en ze omhelsde hem stevig. Het leek wel alsof hij niet goed kon ademen, alsof hij in de greep van een beest was. Hij vroeg zich af of hij wel helemaal wakker was. Hij begon te schreeuwen in paniek. Plotseling had ze hem nog steviger vast. Het was nu echt net alsof hij niet meer kon ademen. Hij was als in de klauwen van een spin. Grote harige poten waren overal om hem heen. Hij begon te krijsen. De spin

begon hem te verscheuren. Verslagen werd hij wakker. Niet wetende of hij echt wakker was. Ze lag naast hem, en had gewoon haar nachtjapon aan. Hij nam haar in zijn armen en legde zijn hoofd tegen haar borst aan. Omdat ze niet wakker werd, en hij ook niets durfde te zeggen, likte hij haar in haar nek. Hij keek nog eens naar haar slapende gezicht, maar ineens veranderde het in een doodskop waar wormen uitkwamen. Hij schrok, en slaakte een kreet. Hij sprong uit het bed met een kussen in zijn armen, en begon te trillen. 'Nee, nee, doe mij dit niet aan !' gilde hij helemaal overstuur. Spinnen kwamen uit haar mond, terwijl het leek alsof hij stierf, alsof de aftitelingen op het einde van zijn leven verschenen. Hij begon te huilen, en stortte neer op zijn knieen, het kussen stevig omhelzende. Hij weende bitter, als een gebroken man. De spinnen maakten een cocon van haar.
Spoedig was ze helemaal bedolven, en toen kwamen de spinnen op hem af. Hij gilde en huilde, smekende of dit op mocht houden, maar de spinnen waren genadeloos. Spoedig was hij bedolven, als onder sneeuw. Was dit zijn graf ?
'Moeder !' riep hij. 'Help me !' Hij had het heel erg benauwd. Een man met een hoed stond voor hem. Hij ging

aan een bureautje zitten. 'Zeg,' zei de man, 'zijn er nog wijzen in dit land ? Of alleen maar gillende imbecielen zoals jij ?'
'Zie je dan niet wat er met mij aan de hand is ?' riep Roderik. 'Ik ben voedsel voor spinnen.'
'Ach, welnee, joh,' zei de man met de hoed. 'Je moet niet zo dromen. Je moet jezelf niet zo laten meesleuren.'
'Ja, maar ik kan niet anders,' riep Roderik. 'Het overweldigt me !'
'Ach nee, joh, je laat jezelf overweldigen,' zei de man.
'Hoe dan ?' vroeg Roderik.
'Ach, nietsnut,' zei de man, en vertrok.
Roderik keek naar zichzelf. Hij was onder de rode poeder. Ook had de man een spoor van rood poeder achter gelaten wat ergens in het niets scheen te verdwijnen. Roderik begon weer een beetje tot zijn zinnen te komen. Was het waar dat hij zich teveel liet meeslepen ? Had hij gewoon zijn hoofd wat koeler moeten houden ? Maar hij kon niets doen.
Hij hoopte maar dat hij snel wakker zou worden. Na een tijdje wekte zijn buurvrouw hem, en hij zag haar lieve gezicht boven hem. 'Ik dacht dat ik je beter kon wakker maken. Je was zo aan het woelen en in jezelf aan het

praten, alsof je in een zwaar gevecht was,' sprak ze.
'Dank je,' zei hij. Toen vertelde hij haar de droom.
'Oh,' zei ze. 'Oh, dat was mijn oom. Hij droeg altijd een hoed.'
'Waarom was hij zo …' zei Roderik.
'Ach,' zei ze. 'Zo is hij altijd geweest. Trek het je niet aan.'
'Waarom kwam hij ?' vroeg hij.
'Ach,' zei ze. 'Ik weet het niet. Het is nogal een bemoeial, maar dat rode poeder van hem heeft je eruit geholpen. Hij is een helper, alleen hij doet het niet altijd op een leuke en respectvolle manier.'
'Wie waren die spinnen, en die grote vrouwen met die netten in hun haar ?' vroeg hij.
'Oh, ik weet het niet,' zei ze. 'Mijn voorouders zullen vast wel meer daarover weten. Als het goed is krijg je nog wel uitleg.'
Hij keek strak voor zich uit. Even later liep hij naar de stad, door het drukke verkeer. Hij wilde naar dat stoplicht toe in zijn droom. Hij voelde zich al helemaal in de grond wegzakken. 'Er is hier een zee,' dacht hij. Hij kwam tot de ontdekking dat hij droomde. Een leeuw stond voor hem. Er zat iemand op. Toen vervaagde de leeuw.
'Ik ben de leeuw,' zei een stem. 'Ik ben haar oom, de man

met de hoed.'
'Ik ben de trol,' zei een andere stem. 'Ik ben …'
Maar toen vaagden de stemmen weg. Hij zat in een klein kamertje. Het kamertje bevond zich in een meertje. Toen begon het kamertje ook weg te zakken. Het was alsof hij in een lift zat die met een rotvaart naar beneden ging. Hij gilde. Het was alsof alle stoppen bij hem doorsloegen. Zijn oren leken doof te raken. Plotseling was er een enorme klap. Een vrouw zat voor hem met een sigaret. 'Roken,' sprak de vrouw.
'Waarom ? Wat bedoelt u ?' vroeg hij.
'Voorgeslachtelijke dromen van haar,' zei de vrouw. 'Wij zijn haar voorgeslacht. Wij willen je.'
'Willen voor wat ?' vroeg hij angstig.
'Voor het huis,' sprak de vrouw.
'Welk huis ?' vroeg hij.
'Niet zoveel vragen stellen,' zei ze.
Langzaam werd hij wakker met echoes in zijn hoofd, en hij voelde zich duizelig. Zijn buurvrouw lag naast hem. Hij voelde zich ziek, en misselijk. Hij liep naar de badkamer om wat water te drinken. Hij hoopte maar dat hij nu echt wakker was geworden. Maar niets was minder waar. Ze kwam naar hem toe met een leeuwenhoofd. Ze

brulde. Hij storte op zijn knieen en begon bitter te wenen.
'Ik denk dat ik gek word,' zei hij. Ze keek hem aan. 'Toe, zeg dat niet,' sprak ze, terwijl ze haar normale gezicht weer kreeg. 'Je droomt. Deze dromen zijn belangrijk.'
'Waar zijn ze belangrijk voor ?' vroeg hij.
'Het zijn gidsen,' zei ze.
'Ik begin moe te worden,' weende hij. 'Word ik ooit nog wakker, of ben ik al dood ?'
'Je bent in de onderwereld,' sprak ze. 'Je bent met de doden, maar zie, we leven.'
'Wie ben je ?' vroeg hij.
'Haar gids, haar tante,' sprak ze.
Plotseling begon de vloer zacht te worden, en hij gleed in de diepte. Hij probeerde zich ergens aan vast te klemmen, maar alles werd vloeibaar. Toen was het alsof hij in een diep gat viel, en hij kwam tussen een plaats met doodskoppen terecht.
'San Win,' werd er gezegd. 'Apulatus Menere.'
Een man kwam naar voren, een indiaan. Hij had veren op zijn hoofd, en stak zijn hand uit. 'Je hoeft niet bang te zijn,' sprak de man. 'Ik ben Zittende Buffalo. Hamma Ontole.'
'San Win,' zei de man weer. 'Zit met me.'
Roderik ging zitten na het schudden van handen. 'Ik ben

gestuurd naar jou,' zei de man, 'voor een belangrijke opdracht. Ik moet jou brengen tot de Jungle van de onderwereld. Zoon, ik ben een Mazakka, een Mazakka krijger, van de Mazakka stam, een beruchte stam in de Jungle van de onderwereld, van Ma Oerwoud. Takki Abin.'
'Hesofort Perondeo, Porondeo Amaus,' sprak hij. 'Tutulus Paturu, Klazei Vakantus Opium Opius Opus Spiegandei Spakeius Plego. Plego Fanfort ! Amadeo ! De taal van de onderwereld. Kom dieper ! Hora Marantus ! Afei Vakus ! Fateio Amadei ! Kom dieper ! Luister naar mij !'
Roderik kwam in een trance, en de man nam hem bij de hand, om hem door vele struiken naar de Jungle van de onderwereld te brengen. Er was overal vuur, en hij hoorde gegil.
'Samanteo,' zei de man. 'Orferetus Marateo.' Roderik voelde zich zwak. Hij liep door het vuur, maar het deerde hem niet. Er was een soort bescherming om hem heen. Overal waren leeuwen, lange leeuwen. 'De leeuw is de poort tot trol,' zei de man. 'De Jungle van de onderwereld is van de trollen. Het zijn wilde indianen-stammen.'
Roderik kreeg een vreemd gevoel in zijn buik. Hij zakte in elkaar, en wilde opstaan, maar kon het niet. Een groene struik bedekte een poort. Er was een nauwe opening waar

ze net doorheen konden. Toen stond hij in de open Jungle. De indianen hadden een groen-bruine huid, maar sommigen hadden rode huiden, veelal roodbruin. Er droop een vreemd groen sap van hun handen. Ze begonnen wild te krijsen en te gillen toen ze hem zagen. Maar hij was onder een bescherming. Ze namen hun speren, maar konden niets doen. Het was alsof er een licht op hen viel. 'Tetaris,' zei de man. 'Slaap.' Toen vielen ze allemaal in slaap. De man liep verder, terwijl Roderik hem volgde. 'Ik noem je Orion, en dit gebied is Orion,' zei de man. Hij nam hem mee in de dieptes van een grot. Hier groeiden wat bloemen, en het leidde tot een diepe paradijselijke wereld. Veel bloemen waren er overal langs rivieren, en de bloemen hadden wortels die overal weelderig groeiden. Roderik werd er duizelig van. Deze wereld had een hypnotizerend effect op hem. Hij hoorde gegil en gilletjes in de verte. Hij kreeg een vreemd gevoel in zijn onderbuik. 'Meesters en meesteressen, en hun slaven,' zei de man. 'Maar de meesters staan altijd onder meesteressen. Er zijn geen vrije meesters. Zij zijn allen slaven.' Roderik herinnerde de woorden van zijn buurvrouw.
'Puk Holes,' zei de man. De man bleef het herhalen. Roderik zakte in elkaar. De man trok hem weer op. 'Blijf

dicht bij me, Orion,' zei de man. Ze moesten over een brug gemaakt van touw, over een rivier. De rivier was heel woest. 'Elip !' riep de man. Een groot spinachtig dier stond aan de overkant van de rivier bij de brug. Het dier kwam bijna hysterisch op hen afrennen, greep hen, en rende terug. 'Azalip,' zei de man. 'Katanga Horeng, Debezewat Karami.'

Het spinachtig dier had een vreemde geur. 'Lik het, Orion, lik hem,' zei de man. Roderik nam een likje. Het was alsof hij een groot stuk vlees, of een vleesmaaltijd had gegeten. Hij voelde zich direct vol. 'Kom,' zei de man. Ze liepen verder. Het vreemde dier volgde hen. 'Azakaaltes,' zei de man. Ze kwamen weer bij een grot aan, bedolven onder bloemen, in een heuveltje. 'Ik breng je hier,' zei de man. 'Nu moet je zelf je pad vinden. Ik moet terug. Loop gewoon door totdat je bij de Mazakka stam bent gekomen. Ik zie je later.' De man rende weg. Roderik zuchtte en liep de grot in. Binnenin de grot waren vreemde vlinders, met zacht licht. Hij liep helemaal door tot de uitgang, en kwam in een kamp terecht. Hier liepen veel indiaanse vrouwen, en mannen zaten op de grond of geknield.

Roderik werd wakker. Zijn buurvrouw lag naast hem. Alweer wist hij niet of hij echt wakker was geworden. Hij

keek naar haar lieve, slapende gezicht. Voorzichtig maakte hij haar wakker, en vertelde over de dromen, en hoe bang hij was dat hij nog steeds droomde. 'Ze maken het je wel heel erg moeilijk,' zuchtte ze. Ze nam hem weer heel dicht tegen hem aan, en wreef over zijn rug. 'Ik weet niet meer wat ik moet doen,' fluisterde hij.

'Je kunt niets doen,' zei ze. 'Je moet het gewoon over je heen laten komen als een ervaring.' Hij keek naar haar nachtjapon. Ze had een indiaanse nachtjapon aan.

'De Woogerbommies zijn maskers, oude indiaanse maskers, door de tegenstander gemaakt om onze stam lastig te vallen. Deze maskers eten het bovenlichaam, en nemen het over. Het zijn een soort spinnen, gezichten met weelderige uitsteeksels, netten, als de slangen van het Medusa hoofd,' sprak ze. 'Als je het ziet, verander je in steen, maar onze stam heeft jou de bescherming gegeven. Onze stam heeft de Woogerbommies overwonnen. Zij dragen de overwonnen, verzwakte Woogerbommies als veren in hun haar, als netten, en gebruiken het om hen die dichtbij komen te testen, en om de vijand te bestrijden. De Woogerbommies zijn hun slaven en kampdieren.'

Hoe kan ik de Woogerbommies overwinnen ?' vroeg Roderik.

'Door ingewijd te worden in de leefwijzen van de stam,' sprak ze. 'En daar zijn ze nu mee bezig. Wil je verder, of wil je hier stoppen ?'
'Verder,' zei Roderik aarzelend.
'Dan ben ik dus je meesteres,' zei de vrouw. 'Onze stam is matriarchisch.'
'Best,' zei Roderik. 'Als dit de enige weg is om door deze dromen en nachtmerries heen te komen om het tot een goed einde te brengen, dan zij het niet anders.'
'Goed,' zei de vrouw. 'Kniel voor me. De Woogerbommies konden ons alleen plagen zolang we in huwelijken leefden, en zolang mannen de leiding hadden buiten een moeder om.'
Hij knielde op de matras voor haar. 'Ik moet je binden,' zei ze. Voorzichtig ging ze achter hem zitten en bond zijn polsen aan elkaar door een touwachtig snoer. Het snoer voelde wel zacht aan, maar het was ook strak. Het deed verder geen pijn, want het was erg flexibel. Zijn armen waren nu achter zijn rug.
'Welkom in onze stam,' sprak ze.
'Mag ik nu weer los ?' vroeg hij.
'Nee,' zei ze. 'Nog niet.'
Ze ging weer liggen en trok hem mee. Ze lag achter hem.

Ze ging met haar handen onder zijn pyama-shirt, maar even later maakte ze zijn knoopjes los. 'Het moet naakt gebeuren,' sprak ze. 'Dan ben je helemaal van ons, en niet meer van de Woogerbommies, want nu ben je een gevangene van de Woogerbommies. Door onze bescherming heb je het overleeft. Met haar vingers gleed ze over zijn huid. 'Je hoeft niet helemaal naakt,' zei ze. Het is al naakt genoeg. Ik voel je.' Haar handen gleden naar zijn nek. 'Hier komt een halssnoer,' zei ze.
'Is dat echt allemaal nodig ?' vroeg hij.
'Ja,' fluisterde ze. Ze stond op, en kwam even later terug met het halssnoer wat ze om zijn nek vastmaakte. Het was een zwart snoer, een beetje bruinig. Ook zat er een steentje aan de voorkant. Hij voelde het halssnoer tegen zijn nek en hals aanliggen, maar het zat niet te strak. 'Vanaf nu noem je mij meesteres of jaagster,' sprak ze.
'Ja, meesteres,' zei hij. Hij vond alles best, zolang hij maar van zijn dromen af zou komen. Nog steeds wist hij niet of hij al echt wakker was geworden. Hij had zich erbij neergelegd dat hij waarschijnlijk nog steeds droomde. Dit kon gewoon niet waar zijn.
'Droom ik ?' vroeg hij.
'Zeg : Droom ik, meesteres,' sprak ze streng.

'Droom ik, meesteres ?' vroeg hij.
'Als je me nog één keer aanspreekt zonder me meesteres te noemen, dan zal ik je moeten straffen,' sprak ze.
'Ja, meesteres,' zei hij, terwijl de rillingen door hem heen liepen. Hij begon zich ongemakkelijk te voelen. Hij was geheel op scherp ineens, en zou er bijna hysterisch voor zorgen dat hij nu bij alles wat hij zei haar meesteres zou noemen. Hij was bang voor de straf, want wat zou dat kunnen zijn ? Hij haalde de meest gekke dingen in zijn hoofd.
Hij probeerde los te wringen, maar dat lukte niet. Hij had dit al wel eerder gedroomd. Hij hoopte maar dat hij snel zou wakker worden, maar dat gebeurde maar niet. Wat als het echt waar zou zijn ? Waar was hij toch aan begonnen ?
'Ik wil naar huis,' sprak hij. 'Ik voel me niet op mijn gemak.'
'Geen sprake van,' zei ze. 'Ik kan je nu niet laten gaan. Veel te gevaarlijk met al die Woogerbommies. Je zou ons kunnen verraden. Nee hoor, komt niets van in.'
Hij zag in dat het haar menens was, maar besefte ook dat dit crimineel was, want ze hield hem tegen zijn zin gevangen.
'Ik laat de politie komen als je me niet laat gaan,' zei hij.

'Je kunt niets doen, en dat zijn alweer drie regels zonder mij meesteres te noemen. Dat worden negen slagen met de gesel. Ze trok hem op, en ontblootte zijn rug. Ze pakte ergens een gesel vandaan, en kwam terug om hem te slaan, terwijl ze met haar andere hand zijn hoofd naar achteren trok aan zijn haren. Ze sloeg niet hard met de gesel. Het was tamelijk zacht. Ze zei dat dat een waarschuwing was.
'Ik doe niet meer mee,' zei hij. 'Sla me maar zoveel en zo hard als je wil, maar ik noem je geen meesteres meer. Bij mij is de lol er allang vanaf.'
Ze begon hem harder te slaan. Ze was inmiddels gaan staan, en stond naast het bed. Ze had hem in een bukkende houding neergezet. Ze sloeg hem zo hard dat er striemen op zijn rug kwamen. Hij deed zijn mond niet open. Hij voelde er niet zoveel van, wat voor hem een teken was dat hij nog steeds droomde. Of hij was in een shock.
Weer trok ze aan zijn haren. 'Je komt niet zo makkelijk af van mij, mannetje,' riep ze. Maar de stem begon te vervagen, en hij werd wakker. Hij zuchtte van grote verlichting. Tegelijkertijd voelde hij zich opgewonden, omdat de vrouw van wie hij was gaan houden gelukkig niet degene was waarvan hij had gedroomd. Hij pakte haar vast en kuste haar. Haar lichaam voelde warm en lekker

aan. Hij drukte zich stevig tegen haar billen aan, en hij werd nog meer opgewonden. Hij was zo blij dat zijn liefde voor haar niet in haat was veranderd. Ze kreunde in haar slaap, en draaide zich om naar hem. Spoedig voelde hij haar warme lippen op zijn mond. Hij genoot van haar, meer dan ooit. Hij voelde haar tong op de zijne. Hij wilde alleen maar meer. Maar was hij wakker, dat was de vraag.
'Je voelt zo lekker aan, schat,' zei ze.
'Jij ook,' zei hij. Hij kreunde zacht. Ze hielden elkaar stevig vast.
'Ik heb zo vreemd gedroomd,' sprak hij. 'Ik ook,' zei ze.
'Waar heb je over gedroomd ?' vroeg hij.
We liepen in het oerwoud, en plotseling waren we omsingeld door hyena's. Ze namen ons mee en ik kan er niet over praten wat er toen gebeurde. Toen vertelde hij zijn droom.
'Ze moeten je wel weer hebben,' sprak ze. 'Mag ik je mijn liefde laten zien en je laten zien hoe ik wel ben ?' vroeg ze.
Zijn hart begon hevig te kloppen. Hij wist niet of hij daar wel aan toe was na alles wat hij had meegemaakt met zijn vrouw en met de echtscheiding. Maar aan de andere kant verlangde hij naar haar, en wond het hem op. 'Wil je met me vrijen ?' vroeg ze. Even was het stil vanwege zijn

aarzeling. Hij kuste haar, en begon de knoopjes van haar indiaanse nachtjapon los te trekken. Ook zij begon zijn knoopjes los te trekken. Ze kusten elkaar heel intiem, en nadat ze elkaars nachtkleren hadden uitgetrokken lagen ze naakt tegen elkaar aan. Toen hij wakker werd was hij niet alleen opgelucht, maar ook diep teleurgesteld en bang. Misschien was hij wel dood, want hij scheen niet meer echt wakker te worden. Hij werd erg wanhopig. Hij had hulp nodig. Hij maakte haar wakker en vertelde haar bijna huilend het verhaal. Ze was direct erg zorgzaam. 'Je bent er zo van in de war, hè,' zei ze. 'Ik kan me dat heel goed voorstellen. Maar heus, je bent echt wakker nu.' Ze kneep hem in zijn arm. 'Au !' riep hij. 'Ik ben wakker !' Hij was de gelukkigste man nu.

'Die dromen dragen een boodschap,' sprak ze. 'Een boodschap van mijn voorouders. Het zou goed zijn om ze op te schrijven.' Hij voelde zich te ziek, en daarom deed zij het voor hem. Ze maakte wat soep voor hem met brood.

De dagen erna begonnen de dromen minder te worden en af te zwakken, en hij herstelde goed. Hij besloot om weer terug te keren naar zijn huis. Hij belde haar nog wel veel. Ook kwam ze hem vaak indiaanse spulletjes brengen, en al

snel stond zijn huis er vol mee. Hij voelde zich er goed bij. Ze betekende veel voor hem, maar het kwam niet tot een relatie. Daar zorgden de voorouders voor, en hij wist precies waarom.
Op een nacht had hij weer een droom. Hij viel in het water, en van de kant doken trollen in het water die naar hem toezwommen om hem vervolgens onder water te drukken. Ze probeerden hem te verdrinken. Hij was in doodsangst. Hij verloor zijn bewustzijn, en alles leek wel een eeuwigheid te duren. Hij probeerde weer boven te komen, maar hij faalde, en gleed weg in wanhoop en duisternis, als in een diepe, trage tunnel. Toen ontwaakte hij tussen witte bloemen. Een jongen stond voor hem. 'De witte bloem der trollen,' sprak de jongen. 'Welkom.'
'Welkom waar ?' vroeg Roderik.
'Nou gewoon, welkom in de onderwereld der trollen,' sprak de jongen.
'Zo gewoon is dat niet voor mij,' zei Roderik.
'Ach, je bent hier al wel vaker geweest,' zei de jongen.
De jongen legde een keten om de hals van Roderik.
'Meekomen, slaaf,' zei hij.
'Maar ik ben helemaal geen slaaf,' zei Roderik.
'Dat ben je wel,' zei de jongen. 'Ik ben je meester. Ik heb je

hier gevangen genomen, tot slaaf gemaakt.'
Roderik probeerde de keten los te maken, maar het had geen zin.
'Het zit op slot,' zei de jongen. 'Noem me meester.'
'Wat als ik je geen meester noem ?' vroeg Roderik.
'Dan vermoord ik je,' zei de jongen.
'Ik ben toch al dood,' zei Roderik. 'Ik ben verdronken, weet je nog ?'
'Heb maar niet zoveel praatjes,' zei de jongen. 'Zij die voor de tweede keer sterven gaan naar de hel.'
Roderik schrok. Zijn hart begon zwaar te kloppen, en het bloed begon naar zijn hoofd te stijgen. Hij wist dat hij maar beter geen risico's kon nemen. 'Ja, meester,' zei hij.
'Goedzo,' zei de jongen. 'Je begint het al te leren.'
Roderik kon de jongen wel wat aandoen, maar hij wist dat hij voorzichtig moest zijn. Hij wilde het niet erger maken dan het al was. 'Ik leid je tot de meesteres,' zei de jongen.
Met een keten trok de jongen Roderik voort. De meesteres woonde in een wigwam.
'Ah, slaven-vlees,' zei de meesteres.
'Gaan jullie me opeten ?' vroeg Roderik bang.
'Nee, veel erger,' zei de meesteres. 'We gaan je uithongeren, en tot de trollen-arena brengen.'

'Alstublieft niet,' smeekte Roderik.
'Noem me meesteres,' zei de meesteres.
'Laat me alstublieft niet verhongeren en naar de arena gaan, meesteres,' smeekte Roderik.
Hij lag aan haar voeten. 'Smeek me om genade,' sprak de meesteres.
'Genade, genade, meesteres,' gilde Roderik.
'Er is geen genade,' zei de meesteres hardvochtig.
'Breng hem naar de kooi, zandtrol,' zei de meesteres.
De jongen trok Roderik direct mee tot een kooi, waar hij ingeduwd werd. Roderik kreeg alleen water, melk en een bloedachtig mengsel. Na een paar dagen was Roderik flink uitgehongerd, en hij voelde zich zwak en moe.
Na een paar weken werd hij tot de arena gesleurd, waar hij tegen uitgehongerde trollen moest strijden. Roderik huilde. 'Genade, genade,' smeekte hij, maar hij wist dat er geen genade was. Al snel stortte hij in, en werd in elkaar geschopt. Na een lange tijd werd hij wakker in de zachte armen van een trollenvrouw. 'Ik zal vanaf nu je meesteres zijn,' fluisterde de vrouw, 'maar alleen hier. Ik ben een arena-meesteres. Ik bereid mijn slaven voor op het gevecht, en neem hen mee naar mijn ruimte na het gevecht.' Roderik was bewusteloos getrapt. Ze depte zijn

wonden.
'Waar is dit allemaal goed voor ?' kreunde Roderik.
'Vruchtbaarheid,' zei de trollenvrouw. 'Ook zorgt het ervoor dat mannen niet sterker worden dan vrouwen. Daarom hongeren wij hen uit, en laten hen tegen elkaar vechten in de arena. Het is goede discipline en goede veiligheid.'
'Ik begrijp het,' kreunde Roderik. 'Is er geen andere manier ?'
'Nee,' zei de trollenvrouw.
'Hoelang moet dit doorgaan ?' vroeg Roderik.
'Voor altijd,' zei de trollenvrouw.
Roderik werd koud en warm op hetzelfde moment. Zijn hart begon sneller te kloppen, en bloed steeg tot zijn hoofd. Hij begon erg bang te worden, en voelde hopeloosheid bezit van hem nemen.
'I... is dit a... alles of is er m... meer ?' stamelde Roderik.
'Er is veel meer. Het zal steeds erger worden,' zei de trollenvrouw.
'Wat gaan jullie met me doen ?' gilde Roderik. Hij begon zachtjes te wenen, maar de trollenvrouw was meedogenloos.
'Ik ben er goed bij,' dacht Roderik, 'tenzij dit allemaal weer

een nachtmerrie is.'
De trollenvrouw begon over hem te zingen, en Roderik kreeg een vreemd gevoel in zijn buik. 'Ik ben er geweest,' dacht Roderik. Hij begon hele erge buikpijn te krijgen.
'Jullie gaan jullie zin niet krijgen !' riep Roderik, terwijl hij zich probeerde los te worstelen. Maar de vrouw was veel sterker dan hem. Snel bond ze hem aan handen en voeten. Roderik voelde zich machteloos. Woest begon hij te brullen. De vrouw pakte een gesel en begon hem te slaan. Ook begon ze hem te schoppen. Na een tijdje gaf Roderik de moed geheel op. Hij kon niet meer. Hij barstte in huilen uit. Weer begon ze over hem te zingen. 'Ze proberen me gek te maken,' dacht Roderik. 'Ze proberen me te programmeren.' Ze streelde hem over zijn buik. Haar hand gleed dieper en dieper. 'Blijf van me af !' riep Roderik. Ze nam hem in haar armen. 'Je hebt niets in te brengen, slaaf,' sprak ze.
'Ik ben geen slaaf !' gilde Roderik.
'Je bent een speeltje,' zei de trollenvrouw, 'niets meer dan dat. En we gaan met je fokken. We hebben meer slaven nodig.'
Het begon te duizelen voor Roderik's ogen. Weer werd hij heet en koud tegelijkertijd, en steeg het bloed naar zijn

hoofd, terwijl zijn hart in zijn keel bonkte. Weer probeerde hij zich los te worstelen, maar niets hielp. Hij vocht tegen beter weten in. 'Nooit zal ik een slaaf zijn !' gilde hij. Weer begon ze over hem te zingen, terwijl hij begon te krijsen. Hij wilde haar niet horen. Hij kreeg er hoofdpijn van.
'Stil, slaaf,' zei ze.
Na een tijdje werd hij teruggebracht tot zijn kooi, waar hij in het hooi ging liggen.
Toen werd hij wakker van deze nachtmerrie. Helemaal in paniek belde hij zijn buurvrouw op, en hij kon direct komen. Ze nam hem in zijn armen, terwijl hij de nachtmerrie vertelde. Ze was nog niet helemaal wakker, dus ze gingen naar haar bed. Hij was erg bang. Hij durfde niet meer te slapen. Hij lag tegen haar aan, en ze probeerde hem tot rust te brengen. 'Kalm maar,' zei ze. 'Ik weet dat het diep gaat.'
'Zijn dit weer je voorouders ?' vroeg Roderik.
Ze knikte.
'Waarom, waarom ?' vroeg Roderik.
'Roderik, dat hebben ze je al uitgelegd. De dreiging van de man is groot,' sprak ze.
'Ja, maar dit is misselijk,' zei Roderik. 'Is er geen andere manier ?'

'Nee,' zei de vrouw.
'Wow,' zei Roderik. 'Ik begin nu een beetje te vermoeden wat er aan de hand is. Ik denk weer dat ik aan de dodendans ben ontvlucht, maar ik ben nog steeds in hun klauwen. Ik ben nog steeds niet wakker !' Hij kneep in zijn arm en voelde niets. Hij keek naar haar, en ze was als een doorzichtige zwarte pop die net iets kleiner was geworden. Toen werd ze nog kleiner. 'Draak !' gilde hij, en sprong uit het bed. De lucht was vol zwart gas nu, en ze begon te exploderen. Spoedig was het huis in de vlammen. Roderik probeerde weg te rennen, maar van alles begon op hem te vallen. Het huis begon in te storten. Toen steeg hij hoog boven de vlammen uit en werd in de zee geslingerd. Hij zag zichzelf in een witte kamer en probeerde de muren te doorbreken, maar het lukte hem niet. De kamer werd steeds kleiner en kleiner, en explodeerde toen. Hij was in de lucht nu. Heel langzaam werd hij wakker in zijn eigen kamer, maar hij vertrouwde het nog steeds niet. Hij kon zich niet bewegen. Trollen kwamen zijn kamer binnen die hem begonnen te slaan met stokken.
'Laat me eruit !' gilde hij. Maar spoedig kon hij ook niet meer spreken. 'Deze wereld is gek,' dacht hij bij zichzelf. Hij wilde niet meer leven. 'Ik word toch wel weer een keer

wakker,' dacht hij bij zichzelf.
'De trollen, de trollen, ze komen !' werd er ineens geroepen. 'Deze monsters zullen de wereld overnemen. En het zal alleen maar erger worden.'
Hij lag daar als verlamd. Hij lag daar met een koptelefoon op, met een scheldende stem. Het was een nar, een dictator, op een bandje. Iemand moest die cassette eruit halen. Hij kon niet praten. Hij kon niet bewegen.
Na een tijdje kon hij zich weer bewegen. Hij stond op en liep het huis uit. Zijn huis stond midden op een groot veld waar allemaal wigwams stonden. Deze wigwams hadden een heleboel scherpe uitsteeksels op de top. Vanuit de wigwams werd geroepen : 'Wat moet je hier. Wegwezen jij. We hebben je niet nodig.' Hij voelde zich verworpen, en waar hij dan ook kwam werd hij afgewezen. De hele stad was vol wigwams nu, als een indiaanse stad, maar het was nu als een bosvlakte, als een groot kamp in de natuur. En zijn huis stond in het midden. Misschien dat ze daarom zo boos waren. Zijn huis stond in de weg.

Moeder keek vader aan. 'We hebben er over gesproken, Eduard. Je vader en ik vinden het beter als je ons gewoon zou vertellen wat er gebeurd is. We willen je zo graag helpen.'
'Ik kan het niet,' zei Eduard, en rende naar boven. Zijn moeder ging achter hem aan, en ging naast hem op zijn bed zitten in zijn kamer. 'Vertel het nou maar,' zei moeder. 'Heus, het is beter dan.' Toen vertelde Eduard stoterig en schokkerig zijn verhaal. Moeder belde direkt de politie. Die kwamen ook direct naar hem toe, en onderhandelden met de daders. De vader van één van de daders kwam na een tijdje bij Eduard op bezoek. De dader moest zijn verontschuldigingen aanbieden en gaf Eduard een cadeautje, een kleine ziekenauto. Eduard glimlachte, maar viel flauw toen hij de dader strak in het gezicht keek.
'Eduard ?' zei moeder.
Eduard zag zijn vriendin voor hem staan, die eens weg ging naar een andere stad, een verhuizing, vanwege werk van haar vader. 'Marlotte ?' vroeg Eduard. 'Die is hier niet,' zei moeder.

'Ik heb haar nodig,' stamelde Eduard. Hij hoorde het geluid van politie-auto's. 'Ze komen,' zei hij. 'Ze maken alles goed.'
Eduard kon niet goed lopen. Hij had zijn vriendinnetje nodig. Ze was er niet. Hij belde haar op. Ze kwam direct naar hem toe. 'Eduard, lieveling,' zei ze. Toen werd Eduard wakker. Hij had alles maar gedroomd. Zijn vader en moeder zouden hem nooit geloven. Zijn leven was een nachtmerrie. En Marlotte zou hem nooit meer terugwillen. Waarom wist hij niet. Hij was altijd goed voor haar geweest. Hij had een goed contact met zijn piano-leraar. Die sleepte hem er doorheen. Op een dag vroeg de piano-leraar of Eduard niet gewoon bij hem wilde wonen. Eduard stemde toe, maar wat graag. Hij wilde zijn ouders nooit meer zien.
'Marlotte,' zei de piano-leraar, 'is een vreemd meisje. Ik heb haar nooit vertrouwd.'
'Maar ik houd van haar,' zei Eduard.
'Dat begrijp ik,' zei de piano-leraar, 'maar toch.'
'Ik kan niet zonder haar leven,' zei Eduard. 'Ik ben bang dat ik gek word zonder haar. Ik mis haar.'
De piano-leraar probeerde hem te sussen. 'Ze is heel erg duister. Er klopt gewoon iets niet met haar,' zei hij.

Eduard ging achter de piano zitten, en zong een liefdeslied. Hij was wel heel erg blij dat hij bij de piano-leraar kon wonen nu. Die was altijd al als een vader voor hem. Die nacht in bed had hij een duistere droom waarin Marlotte hem probeerde te verdrinken, en plotseling veranderde ze in een duister beest. Ze trok hem de diepte in.
Ineens zaten ze in een schoollokaal. Zij zat voor hem als de juffrouw. 'Ik ben Lazarus,' zei ze.
'Wat bedoel je,' vroeg Eduard.
'Ik ben een boom,' sprak ze.
'Waarom dan ?' vroeg Eduard.
'Omdat ik het zeg,' zei ze, en sloeg met haar vuist op de tafel. 'Ik ben een boom vol van bloemen en geheimen. Ik ben meerdere personen, en ik draag de sleutel voor jou. Ik wil je niet vernietigen, ik wil je brengen naar de andere wereld.'
'Dat is een leugen,' zei Eduard. 'Je wilde niets meer van me weten.'
'Ik weet het,' zei Marlotte. 'Maar ik ben Lazarus.'
'Wat bedoel je ?' vroeg Eduard.
Ze begon te huilen, en zei : 'Ik ben de Lazarus-boom.'
'Wat is dat,' vroeg Eduard.

'Niets,' zei ze. Eduard schrok wakker. Ze stond voor hem in een prachtig witte jurk als bloesem. 'Ik ben al dood,' zei ze. 'Ik ben een bloem, de lazarus-boom, een mysterie voor jou, een raadsel.'
Eduard dacht dat hij gek aan het worden was en probeerde te roepen, maar het was alsof zijn mond op slot stond.
'Ik wil je overweldigen,' zei ze. 'Maar ik kan het niet. Hij houdt me tegen.'
'Wie is hij ?' vroeg Eduard.
'Je vader,' zei ze. 'Ik ben dood, Eduard, dood. Je vader heeft mij vermoord.'
'Je moet daar weg,' zei Eduard.
'Ik wil bij je zijn,' zei ze, 'maar ik kan het niet.'
'Leugens,' zei Eduard. 'Je zei altijd dat je juist niet bij me wilde zijn.'
'Help me,' zei ze. 'Ik kan het niet helpen. Ik ben meerdere personen. Ik kan niet praten.'
'Je komt anders aardig goed uit je woorden,' zei Eduard.
'Ik kan niet zeggen wat ik wil zeggen,' zei ze.
'Ik houd van je, Eduard,' zei ze.
'Ik geloof je niet,' zei hij. 'Je hebt me laten wegteren.'
'Alsjeblieft, ik smeek je,' zei ze.
'Wat bedoel je,' vroeg hij.

'Ik ben een lazarus-boom,' zei ze.
'Ja, dat had je al eerder gezegd,' zei hij.
'Ik groei, en ik kan het niet stoppen,' zei ze. 'Ik heb meerdere takken.' Toen begon ze te schreeuwen en te gillen. 'Nu sta ik in brand,' riep ze.
'Toe, help me,' gilde ze. 'Mijn vader verbrandt me.'
'Ik houd van je, Marlotte,' zei hij, en omhelsde haar. Hij probeerde haar te sussen, maar ze werd steeds wilder.
'Ik ga van je scheiden,' zei ze. 'Ik heb teveel pijn, ik ben te gevoelig. Ik brand, en jij gaat ook branden.'
'Het is okay, schat, ik wist niet dat we getrouwd waren, maar wat je dan ook zegt,' sprak hij kalm.
'Eduard, blus me,' zei ze.
'Hoe ?' vroeg hij.
'Met kussen,' zei ze.
Eduard begon haar te kussen, maar het leek allemaal veel erger te worden. Hij begon ook te branden. 'We moeten rennen,' zei hij. 'Waar naartoe ?' vroeg ze.
'Naar het bos,' zei hij. Snel renden ze het huis uit naar het bos, maar alle bomen waren aan het branden. Ze hoorden veel gegil en geschreeuw. 'Liefste,' riep ze. 'Als ik het niet overleef, vergeet nooit, maar dan ook nooit, dat ik altijd van je heb gehouden. En nu zelfs meer dan ooit.'

'Ik geloof je niet !' riep hij. 'Je bent er nooit voor mij geweest !'
'Ik kon het niet !' schreeuwde ze. 'Ti sento ! Ik ben te gevoelig !'
'Je zei dat je niet meer van me hield. Je zei zelfs dat je nooit van me hebt gehouden !' schreeuwde hij.
'Ik ben de lazarus-boom !' riep ze terug. 'Dingen gaan niet zoals ik wil dat ze gaan.'
'Je hebt me verraden met Judas-kussen !' schreeuwde hij.
Alles stond in brand. Spoedig waren ze in een vuurzee. Ze huilde.
'Ik kan er niet tegen dat je lijdt. Ik wil je helpen, ik wil je troosten, zoals ik nachten met je op heb gezeten, maar je was gemeen naar mij,' zei Eduard.
'Jij lijdt ook, zoals ik lijd,' zei ze.
Hij had haar stevig in de grip. 'Liefste,' huilde hij. 'Het maakt niet uit dat ik lijd, maar ik kan er niet tegen als jij lijdt. Ik heb daar nooit tegengekunt, wat je me dan ook hebt aangedaan.'
'Ik ben een lazarus-boom,' huilde ze.
'Ik weet het,' zei hij. 'Wacht gewoon totdat het gaat bloesemen.'
'Nee,' huilde ze, 'het gaat nooit meer bloesemen. Het gaat

branden.'
'Ik zal je veilig maken,' zei hij.
'Hoe ?' vroeg ze. 'Waarom jij ? Omdat je de vader van mijn kinderen bent ?'
'We hebben nooit kinderen gehad,' zei hij.
'Dat is wel waar,' huilde ze.
In zweet werd hij wakker. Het was een nachtmerrie. Ze lag naast hem, met schuim op haar mond. Hij had ook schuim op zijn mond. Ze hadden samen drugs genomen van de lazarus-boom, om in een andere realiteit te komen, maar dat ging niet altijd goed. 'Ik... ik brand,' huilde ze zachtjes.
Hij nam haar in zijn armen. 'Het spul heeft bijwerkingen,' zei hij, 'maar het zal ons er doorheen slepen. We zullen aankomen in die andere wereld.'
'Ik wil niet meer, baby,' huilde ze. 'Het is te zwaar. We lijken wel vijanden van elkaar.'
'De liefde is een oorlog,' zei hij. 'We vechten voor elkaar, en zonder scheiding is er geen verzoening. Zonder ijs is er geen vuur, en zonder verwarring is er geen helderheid.'
Maar alles moet toch ergens stoppen,' huilde ze.
'Oh, maar deze wereld is groot,' zuchtte hij. 'Ja, zo groot,' fluisterde ze. 'Ik kan niet meer.' Hij troostte haar.
Ze stopte met de drugs, terwijl Eduard ermee doorging. Ze

begonnen uit elkaar te groeien, en het eindigde in een scheiding. Ze was koud, bevroren, en Eduard was warm. Hij begreep haar wel, maar zij begreep hem niet, en begon alles te ontkennen. Ze was niet meer zoals ze was, alsof ze zich ergens voor probeerde te verstoppen. Op een dag sloegen de stoppen bij Eduard door. Hij begreep haar niet meer, en was boos. Toch wilde hij dat ze gelukkig was. Het scheen niet goed mogelijk te zijn bij haar. Ze schreven brieven, en in die brieven schreef ze hoe slecht ze er aan toe was. 'Is dit nu alles wat je wilde ?' schreef hij terug. Op een dag schreef ze terug dat ze een nieuwe drug had ontdekt, veel veiliger volgens haar. Eduard kwam bij haar langs. Ze scheen weer een warme vrouw te zijn. Ze glimlachte toen ze hem zag. Hij was nog steeds erg boos, en keek koud op haar neer. 'Spuit het maar in mijn arm,' zei hij. Ze hurkte voor hem neer, en spoot in zijn been. 'Daar,' zei ze. Eduard viel op de grond. De kinderen kwamen binnen. 'Wat doet pappa daar ?' vroeg de middelste.

'Pappa is gek,' zei Marlotte. Schuim kwam op zijn mond.

'Is hij aan de drugs ?' vroeg de jongste.

'Ja,' zei Marlotte, 'ik heb hem wat toegediend, van dat spul wat wij ook altijd gebruiken.' Ze trok hem naar een bed, en

legde een jas over hem heen. Even later kwam ze bij hem liggen, toen de kinderen weer weg waren. Ze spoot wat in haar been, en verloor haar bewustzijn. Een vuur kwam in haar hoofd, en ze werd verbonden met zijn hoofd, en zijn hart. 'Namens de vereniging van bomen, hartelijk welkom,' zei een stem. 'Ik heb het nog eens nagekeken, jullie zijn inderdaad geregistreerd. Welkom terug dan.' Een groen vuur kwam over hen. 'De godin van scheiding heeft jullie hier gebracht.'

'Het is haar schuld,' zei Eduard. 'Zij heeft die vervloekte scheidingsformulieren ingevuld.'

'Oh, op onze afgesneden huid ?' vroeg de stem. 'Dat is niet zo netjes.'

'Nee, niet zo netjes,' zei een andere stem. 'Zij gaat dus de afwas doen.'

'Maar ik heb al gekookt,' zei Marlotte. 'Dus ik ga ook niet nog eens de afwas doen. Kom zeg, eikel.'

'Ze heeft gelijk,' zei Eduard. 'Zij heeft mij de drugs toegediend, dus ze hoeft dan toch ook niet de afwas te doen.'

'Wel, hoor je nou niet eens even wat je zegt, domoor,' zei de stem. 'Zij heeft jou deze rommel aangeboden, dus dan zal ze potdorie die rommel ook op gaan ruimen.'

'Het is mijn schuld,' zei Eduard. 'Ik heb de rommel aangenomen. Ik had haar nooit naar binnen moeten halen. Ik ben zo dom geweest haar te vertrouwen.'
'Waarom heb je haar naar binnen gehaald ?' vroeg de stem
'Ik wilde haar helpen,' zei Eduard.
'Hield je van haar ?' vroeg de stem.
'Absoluut en ongetwijfeld,' zei hij.
Heel langzaam werd hij wakker. Het was maar een droom. Ze was ver weg van hem, en zover hij wist was ze niet aan de drugs. Hij wel dus. Voor hem was dat de enige weg eruit. In haar brieven schreef ze hem hoe slecht het met haar ging. Hij wilde haar helpen, maar wist niet hoe. Ook was hij boos. Die boosheid werd eigenlijk elke dag erger, en het brief-contact stopte weer. Hij stortte zich nog meer op de drugs dan ooit tevoren. De bomen waren zijn helden. Hij had geen vat meer op de realiteit, en het was beter zo. Die realiteit werd volgens hem in stand gehouden door bomen-haters. 'Eet eens een vruchtje, lik eens een appeltje, laat je eens inspuiten door een lazarus-boom, voor een mooie droom. Eet eens een stukje hout, lik eens aan boomblad, aan zijn bast en zijn schors. Beklim eens een boom, hang eens aan een tak.' Hij zong een liefdeslied aan de piano. Het was een meedogenloos ritme. 'Klim eens

op een appel, duik eens in een aardbei, grijp eens naar een roos. Ja, haar dorens zullen je verscheuren, maar ... maar ... laat dat je niet tegenhouden. Lik eens aan de honing, ja, haar dorens zullen je mond sluiten, maar ... maar .... laat dat je niet tegenhouden ... Vecht eens met een beer, laat de honing zijn voor iedereen. Vecht eens met bijen en wespen. Het geheim is niet alleen van hen ... Lik eens aan een tak, snuif eens wat bloemenzaad, grijp eens een plant, ook al krijg je dan een blaar. Ook al ga je dan bloeden, en lig je in het bad, ook al zal de storm dan woeden, wie doet dat wat .... Het gaat toch om de zomer, het holle in de boom, het gaat toch om de dauw in de morgen, en het morgenrood, doe wat je kan om daar te komen ... het avondrood zal je genezen .... Vecht in de oorlog, de oorlog der liefde, zet elkaar vrij, voor welke prijs dan ook, want wat is een prijs ?
's Nachts staar ik je aan, 's nachts hoor ik je stem en lied,
De morgen spoelt het weg, maar jij zult altijd zijn, de moeder van mijn kinderen,
Ik laat altijd een kaarsje voor jou branden,
Eens zal ik je eruit krijgen, uit die slimme doos,
Eens zal ik die sloten door mijn liefde smelten,
Ik ben nog jong, gouden tijden staan nog steeds op mijn

roos,
Je bent in mijn herinnering, een nachtmerrie, een vlinderding,
Alle dingen schijnen twee kanten te hebben, alle kanten zullen in de tijd opzwemmen,
Alle kanten zullen hun gezicht laten zien,
Ik heb er tien, ik heb er tien, maar ik wil de jouwen ook zien,
Mijn lieveling .... mijn vlinderding .... de nachtmerrie is slechts een herinnering ...
Meer kan het niet zijn, ik ren nu .... vrij,
Over de heg, over de heuvel, de winter kan mij niet meer vasthouden,
De zomer maakte mij vrij, jij, zomervlinder, jij vlinderding ...
Ik vond jou, als een zeemeerman, aan de kusten van Spanje, kapotgebroken aan de rotsen,
Als een zeemeerman nam ik jou op, en gaf je de adem van de zee,
Maar de zee begon te branden door jouw vuur,
De zeevlinder nam ons beiden mee, en brak de muur,
In mijn lijst ben je nu, in mijn schilderij, in de bizonjacht,
Wij verdrinken samen in de gracht, todat de boot van

Venetie ons opneemt,
Met de staf van zeebloemen en zeebloesem,
Met de staf van zeewier, als de staf der zeemeermannen,
Kom niet dichterbij, ik ben maar een zeemeerjongen,
Kom niet dichterbij, want je komt onder mijn betovering,
Ren nu, ren nu, voor je leven ... Als het leven je lief is,
Of heb je mij lief ... of de last der leugens ....
Negen van de tien keer loog je tegen mij,
Negen van de tien keer ... onder het sprei der bloemen ....
Als bloemen logen zoals jij, zouden ze nooit bloeien ...
En te bedenken dat je mij als leugenaar zag,
Zoveel bloemen op mijn graf,
Zoveel bloemen die je mij nooit gaf ...
Zoveel bloemen op jouw graf, door de zeevlinder gebracht
...
Maar de ware liefde breekt de grenzen van het leven,
Als een vuur die jou zelfs uit de hel kan opnemen ...
Denk je dat je naar de hemel kunt ontsnappen ....
Op de rug van de zeevlinder
Bedenk dat dit heel goed het laatste lied kan zijn wat ik
ooit tot je zing,
Dat de zeevlinder het laatste is wat ik je geef …'
'Eduard, Eduard,' riep zijn moeder. Kom uit je bed. Bijna

schooltijd.
Eduard draaide zich om, en wilde weer slapen, maar het schelle getetter in zijn oor van zijn moeder besliste anders. Snel begon ze hem wakker te schudden. Ze trok hem uit zijn bed en omhelsde hem.
'Mamma, kus me niet meer,' zei hij, 'anders kom ik hier nooit weg.' Toen liet zijn moeder hem los. Hij kleedde zich aan, nam zijn tas mee, en vertrok met de bus.
Op school keek hij haar niet aan. Zij keek alleen maar naar hem door haar ooghoeken. Zij was zijn wapen tegen de reuzen, maar de drugs die zij hem gaf had hem bijna vermoord. Het was haar spreekbeurt vandaag, en ze begon spook-verhalen te vertellen. Hij opende zijn hart een beetje voor haar. Ze stond daar bijna als een militair. Ja, zij voerde oorlog, en hij wilde in haar leger. Ze begon bloemen te tekenen op het bord, en schreef zijn naam. Hij voelde zichzelf in brand staan met liefdesvuur. 'Nu heb ik het ware vuur, riep hij,' terwijl de andere kinderen in de vlammenzee begonnen te verdwijnen. Hij hief haar op het schip. 'Geweldig is dit,' zei ze. 'Ja, je hebt mij flink in de war gebracht met die drugs,' zei hij, 'maar dit is goed.'
'Daar is het om te doen,' zei ze.
'We moeten maken wat er van te maken is,' zei hij. De

vlammen werden wilder, maar het was goed vuur, liefdesvuur. Zij brandde nu ook, en ze voelde zich goed. 'Voel je je nu eindelijk goed, schatje ?' vroeg hij. Ze knikte, en zuchtte van verlichting. Hij nam haar in zijn armen, en ze stegen op. 'Dit is de sleutel van het paradijs,' zei ze. 'Ik wist dat je dit kon doen.'

'En ik wist dat jij het kon doen,' zei hij. 'Ti Sento. Ik voel je.'

Maar zwetend werd hij wakker in een vuur dat hij niet begreep. Hij begon boos te worden, en zonk weg in hopeloosheid. 'Ik was er bijna,' dacht hij. Maar hij wist niet waar het allemaal om draaide. Waar ging het nu eigenlijk om ? Was dit alles niet gewoon zinloos ? Maar ja, hij wilde niet in ongeluk blijven leven. Of bracht het ongeluk hem naar een dieper geluk ?

Zij beschuldigde hem. Brieven van schuld kwamen binnen, de één na de ander. Het was als een muur met kettingen. Hij kroop naar zijn piano, moe, en verkrampt door de pijn. Hij hees zichzelf op aan de piano, en begon te spelen.

'Liefde is beter dan drugs, maar ik heb de liefde niet, alleen maar haat,
Liefde is beter dan jou, maar wat is de liefde waard …'

Hij greep naar de drugs en begon te slikken als een gek, zodat hij bewusteloos viel aan de piano. De godin van scheiding scalpeerde hem, en gaf hem een doornenkroon. Hij verloor zijn verstand. Hij hulde zichzelf in een rood kleed, en kroop op de piano waar hij begon over te geven.
'Ik ben de koning van de gekken, ik ben de koning van het gemis,
Ik ben de koning van de pijn, en ik heb niets meer,
Ik ben de koning van de gekken, ik ben de koning van het land,
Want alleen de koning van de gekken kan dit gekke land besturen ...
Ik ben de koning van de gekken, ik ben de koning van de drugs,
Ik ben de koning van het afscheid, ja, mijn dag kan niet meer stuk,
Ik ben de koning van het huwen, ik ben de koning van het scheiden,
Alleen de dommen volgen mij, maar de wijzen vermijden mij ...'
‘Dat kan me niet schelen !' schreeuwde Eduard met schuim op zijn mond. 'Het schijnt de enige weg naar het paradijs te zijn. Het is een oorlog.'

'Goed, je hebt de oorlog bar verloren, bar en boos,' zei de stem.
'Ik zal opstaan als de nachtvlinder,' zei Eduard, 'en mijn geliefden vrijzetten.'
'Toe nou, Eduard, nou niet zo hoogmoedig, jongen,' zei de stem. 'Daar zit niemand op te wachten.'
Eduard begon de piano te slopen. En begon wild om zich heen te slaan. Hij werd omsingeld door vlinders, en Marlotte stond ineens voor hem.
'Jij weer,' zei Eduard.
'Drugs is niet goed voor je, Eduard,' zei ze.
'Waarom gaf je me het dan ?' vroeg Eduard.
'Ik kon het geld goed gebruiken,' zei Marlotte. 'Ik heb er goede kinderen van gekocht.'
Er was glas tussen Marlotte en Eduard. Drie kinderen verschenen aan de kant van Marlotte. 'Dit zijn je kinderen,' zei ze.
'Ik wil ze niet zien,' zei Eduard.
'Ze hebben je nodig,' zei ze.
'Het zijn mijn kinderen niet. Je hebt ze gewoon met mijn geld gekocht, dat is alles,' zei Eduard.
'Toe, Eduard,' zei ze bijna smekend. 'Ik wil niet ontkennen dat ik in het verleden hele verkeerde dingen heb gedaan,

maar we moeten maken wat er van te maken is. De kinderen hebben je nodig. We kunnen die situatie niet ontkennen. Zij kunnen daar verder niets aan doen.'
'Je hebt gelijk,' zei Eduard, 'maar het zijn mijn kinderen niet.'
'Adopteer ze dan, als je me niet geloofd,' zei Marlotte.
'Nee, ik heb helemaal niks met je te maken,' zei Eduard.
'Ik ben in je bloed,' zei Marlotte. 'Ik ben je drugs. Helemaal fout wat ik heb gedaan, maar ik kan er niet uit. Ik zit in je genetisch materiaal.'
'Ik wil dat je weggaat, Marlotte,' zei Eduard. 'Ik wil je niet. Ik heb dit nooit gewild. Je hebt gewoon misbruik gemaakt van mijn situatie. In een zwak moment kocht ik die drugs van je ... en ja, in een zwak moment ... kocht ik je.'
'Precies, en hier zijn je kinderen,' zei Marlotte. 'Reken ze het niet aan.'
'Het lot bracht ons tezamen,' zei Eduard. 'Maar je hebt mij te lang genegeerd. Het roept herinneringen op.'
'Vergeef me, Eduard,' zei Marlotte.
'Hoe vaak heb ik jou wel niet om vergeving gevraagd, en je hebt het me nooit gegeven, en dat terwijl ik je nooit iets heb aangedaan. Ik ben altijd goed voor je geweest,' zei Eduard.

'Ik kan niet met mijn kinderen leven,' zei Marlotte.
'Het zijn de vruchten van jouw zonden,' zei Eduard.
'Maar als jij me helpt, zijn het de vruchten van vergeving en vernieuwing,' zei Marlotte.
'Barst,' zei Eduard.
Marlotte begon te huilen. 'De kinderen hebben een gezonde vader en moeder nodig.'
'Al wat jij doet is drama maken,' zei Eduard. 'Word je nou nooit eens moe van jezelf ? Je hebt mij kapot gemaakt met die drugs.'
'Die drugs zat in mij. Mijn vader heeft ....' snikte Marlotte.
'Ja, ja, ja, houd daar nu maar over op, dat heb ik al zo vaak gehoord,' zei Eduard.
'Je moet eens weten hoeveel drugs hij in mij heeft gepompt,' snikte ze. 'Ik ben zelf drugs nu.'
Eduard nam een likje aan haar. 'Gadverredamme, dat is toch walgelijk,' schreeuwde hij.
'Ik kan er niets aan doen,' huilde ze nog harder.
'Je bent gewoon een drugs-hoer,' zei Eduard.
'Heb medelijden met me,' jankte ze.
'Waarom zou ik ?' schreeuwde Eduard. 'Heb jij ooit medelijden met mij gehad ?'
'Pappa, alsjeblieft, ik smeek je,' zei het middelste kind.

'Ik heb jullie nooit gezien,' zei Eduard. 'Het doet pijn jullie nu te zien.'
Het kind gaf hem een klein computertje. 'Hier pappa, hiermee kunnen we contact hebben met elkaar.' Toen vaagde alles weg. Hij zat achter zijn computer. Hij zag Marlotte op het scherm, en zijn kinderen. Het was een fantastische wereld in de computer, en hij stapte naar binnen. Ze namen hem bij de hand en namen hem naar een huisje. Alles was zo anders nu.
Arnold Lovehold was een computer expert, en hij zorgde ervoor dat de familie banden weer zorgvuldig werden samengesmeed. De zee-vlinder was inmiddels vrijgekomen uit de zee-kokon. Arnold Lovehold was een diepzinnige man, een filosoof, maar tegelijkertijd heel practisch. Met technologie wist hij alles voor elkaar te krijgen. De familie was voor een lange dag op het strand. De zee kolkte, en het zand was warm. Thuisgekomen ging Eduard op het bed liggen. Het was alsof het altijd zo was geweest, alsof er nooit iets was gebeurd. De familie leefde in vrede.

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Het Surinaamse Dagboek
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Het Surinaamse Dagboek

Suriname, 6 april 1992

Ik ben in Suriname aangekomen. Vastbesloten het geheim te vinden waar iedereen over spreekt. De papieren roos, de naam voor een lange plant met papier-achtige roosjes, komt veel in Suriname voor, en nergens anders in de wereld. Ik staar naar de plant, met vreemde gevoelens in mijn buik. Een verlamming kwam over mij, en ik moest naar het ziekenhuis. Ik heb nu de ontmoeting gehad. Ik had hier lang op gewacht, maar het liep bijna verkeerd af. Ik was voor drie weken in het ziekenhuis.

Suriname, 8 april 1992

Ik weet niet wat ik moet doen. Ik kan niet loskomen van Suriname. Ik loop dwalend rond en kan niet weg. Het lijkt wel alsof ik opgesloten ben. Het lijkt alsof ik dood ben, terwijl ik leef. Ik heb het duistere geheim van Suriname ontmoet, maar nu ben ik in de war. Mensen kijken me na op straat. Ik geef een zoekende indruk. Alsof ik iets kwijt ben. Ik kan mijn gedachtes niet beheersen. Ik ben een

gevangene van Suriname. Het is alsof een spin mij van binnen opeet. Ik heb jeuk van binnen, en hoeveel ik ook krab, het gaat niet weg.
Ik ben niet gemachtigd om contact op te nemen met mijn familie. Ik krijg geen toestemming. Ik heb ook geen idee van wie ik toestemming moet krijgen. Ik denk dat ik gek aan het worden ben. Ik geef de schuld aan de papieren roos. Ik haat die planten nu, alhoewel ik weet dat ik misschien nu onredelijk ben. Toch heb ik het idee dat die planten duivels zijn. Ze worden vaak bij allerlei duistere rituelen gebruikt.
Ik ga huilend naar bed. Ik voel me fragiel en verward. Ik heb hulp nodig, maar durf het niet te vragen. Het is alsof het me verboden is. Het voelt alsof ik in een coma leef. In de nacht kijkt een vreemd houten standbeeld mij aan. Ik heb het gevoel alsof mensen mij uitlachen en niet om mij geven. Was ik maar nooit naar Suriname gegaan. Het is alsof iemand mijn geld en paspoort heeft gestolen, terwijl ik het nog steeds heb. Maar het dringt niet tot mij door. Niets dringt er tot mij door. Ik heb het gevoel alsof mensen mij niet horen, wat ik ook zeg. Ze leven gewoon door. Ik heb zelfs het gevoel dat het onmogelijk is dat iemand verstaat wat ik zeg. Ze horen mij wel, maar zij verstaan

het niet, en het lijkt hen ook niets te kunnen schelen.
Ik weet zeker dat ik onder een vloek ben. Ik maak een lange boswandeling tot aan een rivier. Dan loop ik terug. Ik voel me opeens heel warm van binnen. Alsof iemand mij wel begrijpt, of een gevoel dat alles wel goed komt. Maar dat is maar een flits. Als ik terug kom op mijn kamer ben ik depressief. Het wordt zo erg dat ik weer een wandeling maak naar de rivier. Ditmaal voel ik alsof ik gewapend ben, maar ik ben onbewapend. Iets of iemand speelt een spelletje met mij. Het is alsof ik aan de drugs ben, maar ik heb die troep nooit aangeraakt. Of zou iemand iets in mijn koffie hebben gedaan ? Ik ben mezelf niet meer. Ik voel alsof ik een zombie ben. Iets is over mij gekomen. Ik heb ook het gevoel dat ik niet goed meer kan praten. Alsof niemand mij kan horen, of in ieder geval dat niemand mij begrijpt, alsof ik in een andere taal spreekt die niemand verstaat. Ik begin wanhopig te worden, hopeloos. Ik voel me opgesloten. Iemand heeft iets in m'n hoofd gedaan. Ik heb koppijn. Het is alsof ik opgesloten zit in mezelf, en iemand heeft de sleutels weggeworpen, zonder enig mededogen. Het is alsof er een sieraad in me zit wat ik niet kan bereiken. Dan begint het sieraad te branden, en ik begin weg te smelten. Ik kan het vuur

ruiken. Nu denk ik echt dat ik gek ben geworden, verdwaasd, krankzinnig. En dat terwijl ik me zo op deze vakantie had verheugd. Ik weet dat ik niet meer terugkan. Iets houdt mij tegen. Iets heeft mij naar de keel gegrepen. Iets met een witte jurk. Ze loopt op sandalen. Zou het een geest zijn ? Of verzin ik maar wat. Ik heb het gevoel dat er hier een oorlog is, en dat ik tot het leger wordt geroepen. Ik moet vechten. Ze willen mij laten staren naar een haan. Ik moet die haan bevechten, en dan merk ik dat ik zelf een haan ben. Ik smijt het boek op de tafel wat ik aan het lezen ben. 'Is het nu afgelopen ?' roep ik. Het is alsof ik bezeten aan het raken ben. Ik voel het schuim bijna op mijn mond komen. Ik maak veel speeksel aan. Wanhopig val ik op mijn bed. Ik begin aan mijn haren te trekken, en wild met mijn hoofd te schudden. Iets is binnenin mij gekomen. Ik krijg het er niet uit.

Suriname, 10 april 1992

Ik voel me dromerig. Ik heb nog steeds geen contact met mezelf kunnen krijgen. Het is alsof ik mezelf niet meer kan bereiken, alsof ik uit mijn eigen handen ben weggegleden, in de diepte, verdronken. Ik voel me als een

pop, of alsof ik als een pop ben, en ik houd mezelf vast, maar ik kan mezelf niet bereiken. Ik ben onbereikbaar. Ik kom er niet meer doorheen.
Ik weet weer waarom ik hier ben : voor de juwelen. Maar de juwelen hebben mij opgesloten. Ik kwam om juwelen te zoeken in de bossen, maar het was te gevaarlijk. De wachters van de juwelen hebben mij opgesloten.

Suriname, 10 maart 1993

Ik begin een reclame bureau in Suriname, ook om adviezen te geven wat betreft reclame. Vorig jaar was een verschrikkelijk jaar. Ik heb mezelf bij elkaar kunnen grijpen, maar ik wil niet weg nu. Eerst kon ik niet weg, en nu wil ik niet weg.

Suriname, 10 maart 1994

Het is weer mis. Alle ellende is teruggekomen. Ik wil niet meer leven. Ik wil van deze planeet vertrekken, maar ik kan niet. Ik probeer de dood te vinden, maar deze vlucht van mij weg. Iets roept mij op voor de oorlog, een oorlog tegen een haan. En dan merk ik dat ik zelf ook een haan

ben. Met mesjes sta ik daar, mesjes aan mijn benen vastgemaakt. Maar dan enige tijd later beland ik in het ziekenhuis. Ik voel me gebroken. Ik ben verwond, misschien zelfs dodelijk. Mensen vertellen me dat ik ergens ben ingesprongen. Het was nogal van een grote hoogte. Ben ik mijn verstand aan het verliezen ? Ik kan niet tegen de smoelen van deze mensen, die hypocriete, duivelse glimlachen. Ze voeren iets in hun schild, ik weet het zeker.

Suriname, 12 maart 1994

Iemand zingt liedjes tot mij waarvan ik rustig wordt. Ik lig nog steeds in het ziekenhuis. Soms ben ik bewusteloos. De verpleegsters zijn wel aardig hier. Ze zingen voor mij, en zeggen dat als ik weer beter ben, dan zullen ze met me zwemmen, in de rivier achter het ziekenhuis. Dat is al half in het bos. Het lijkt me wel leuk. Hun glimlachen zijn mysterieus en zoet. Ik heb vol vertrouwen in hen dat zij mijn leven beter zullen maken.

Eén van de verpleegsters neemt mij mee in haar auto. We gaan diep het bos in, naar een rivier waar krokodillen

leven. Zij laat me ook een plant zien genaamd de papieren roos, een lange plant met bijna papieren roosjes. Ik schrik. Ze houdt mijn hand vast, maar die duw ik weer weg. Ik ben ineens heel paranoide. Ze vraagt me wat er gebeurd is, maar ik ren weg met schuim op mijn mond. Ze komt mij achterna. Ze heeft een boog en dreigt mij neer te schieten. Niemand zal namelijk ontsnappen. Ik weet niet waar ze het over heeft. Ik ben toch niet in een gevangenis ? Maar ze geeft geen uitleg. Dan lijkt het alsof ik een klap op mijn hoofd krijg. Even later wordt ik wakker in het ziekenhuis. Zij zingt over mij.

Suriname, 18 maart 1994

Ik denk dat er iets goed mis met mij is. Ik ben opgesloten in een nachtmerrie, alsof ik in een coma ben. Daarom kon ik hier nooit weg. Ik kan niet goed nadenken. Ik kan niet tellen. Ik wil weg, maar ik kan niet. Ik probeer weg te kruipen, maar ik ben als een verlamde. Alles is zo groot en ver weg om mij heen. Het is alsof ik in de maag van een beest ben, een roofdier. Ik wil hier weg. Maar ik kan niet. Alles gaat zo traag. Ik heb het idee alsof niemand om mij geeft, maar toch heb ik het gevoel dat het goedkomt.

Suriname, 18 mei 1994

Ik lag in warm water. Het gaf me hoop. Eventjes kon niks me nog schelen. Ik heb het gevoel dat ik meer in mijn dagboek moet schrijven. Dat doe ik bijna niet. In mijn dromen groeien planten met witte bloempjes in mijn kamer. Het is alsof ze zullen komen om me te halen. Er groeien witte bloemen in mijn hoofd, planten met witte bloemen, weelderige struiken, die een wit zaad verspreiden. Het maakt me warm van binnen. Ik dacht dat Suriname zo meedogenloos was, maar nu heb ik haar geheim gezien. Alhoewel ik mezelf misschien wat teveel bemoedig nu. Wat hebben die witte bloemenstruiken in hun zin ? Ze hebben doornen als ik ze dichterbij bekijk. Er druipt bloed vanaf, als van de poten van gevechtshanen, van de messen. Iets knapt er in mijn hoofd. Ik moet even neerliggen. Ik herken deze plek. Had ik dit niet in mijn dromen gezien ? Ik was op weg naar een witte stad, met zoveel anderen, maar toen brak de ladder af. We vielen allemaal naar beneden. Het was een bodemloze put, met veel vuur. Duivels waren rondom ons. Een huis van medelij neemt ons binnen, maar dat bleek valse medelij te zijn. Ik kan niet meer nadenken. Alles duizelt mij voor de

ogen. Hier leeft valse genade, een beest.

Suriname, 19 mei 1994

Toen kwam het. De struiken namen bezit van me, alsof rivieren me overstroomden. Ik was in een droom. Ik was als Doornroosje, maar Doornroosje stierf. Ze werd door teveel doornen geprikt. Ze gilde terwijl ze stierf. Het was een deel in mij wat stierf. Terwijl het andere deel een clown was, die onder water was, verstrikt in een onderwater-struik, ook met vele doornen. Ook de clown stierf toen, en ik bevond mijzelf in een wilde zee, totdat ik aanspoelde op een strand. Iemand kwam tot mij, en hielp mij op de been. Toen bracht zij mij naar haar huis. Ze glimlachte. Ik staarde naar haar. Ik kon niet denken. Alles stond stil. Ik ben nu meerdere personen.

Suriname, 20 mei 1994

Het moorden van mei is aan mijn zij. In een slachtkamer bracht zij mij. Ik wist niet wie zij was. Ik durf niet veel te zeggen. Ze is een moordenaar, nogal periodiek. Ik ben te zwak om tegen haar op te staan. Ik ben nu meerdere

personen. Zij heeft mij gespleten. Ik kan mezelf niet vinden tussen alle maskers.

Suriname, 21 mei 1994

Ze zit op een stoel, en ik moet haar diensten verlenen. Ik heb deze stoel eerder gezien. Het stond boven Suriname toen ik het land binnenkwam. Ik ben meerdere personen nu, uit elkaar getrokken, verscheurd. Ik moet de stoel aanbidden. Zij is een moordenares. Ik ben door de verkeerde persoon gered. De enige die ik nog heb is mijn dagboek. Zij houdt mij onder schot en bedreigt me. Zij is hoog in de wolken, als de ark van Noach, en ik ben het volk. Ik ben niet in de ark, en dat is een vreselijke gewaarwording. Overal regent het. Haar stem klinkt door mijn hele lichaam, als donder en bliksem. Ik sta in vuur. Ik sta in brand, maar dan besef ik dat ik een deel ben van een plant. Ik ben een deel van een struik, en ik groei naar boven.

Suriname, 22 mei 1994

Een plant met gele bloemen, het is als drugs. Over die

brug kwam ik hier. Wie heeft mij zo gemaakt ? Er moet een uitweg uit dit doolhof zijn. Ik ben bezeten en gespleten. Ziek zijn in Suriname is geen pretje. Ik kon er wel in, maar niet meer uit. Het vuur der dwazen brandt hier. Als dollen dansen zij er omheen. Ik doe niet mee. Een groter kwaad is er nooit geschiedt.

Suriname, 23 mei 1994

Ik hoop dat ze nooit mijn dagboek leest. Ze schijnt er geen interesse voor te hebben, dus ik schrijf door. In de nacht heb ik wel haar dagboeken gevonden. Ze schrijft over mij. Ik zit hier gevangen. Het is haar paleis.

Suriname, 24 mei 1994

Ik voel me als haar marionet. Twee vrouwelijke matrozen vielen in hetzelfde lot. Ze zitten daar in hun marine jurkjes, wit met blauw. Ik ben in een halve coma. Ik kan me niet goed bewegen en niet goed ademen. Het is de aanval van de plant. De struik heeft genomen, en laat haar doornen inzinken. Buiten is er donder. Het leger van de plant is gekomen. Ze staat op het balkon op de uitkijk,

alsof ze schepen naar binnen moet halen. Dan doet ze het \ raam dicht. Haar haren zijn als in vuur. Dan brandt ze helemaal. Ik kijk hoe ze in as verandert, maar het is slechts zaad. Wit zaad, wat door het huis wordt geblazen. Het huis is in stof en een spin maakt webben.

Suriname, 25 mei 1994

Zij zit in een witte jurk, omringd door de planten met witte bloemen. Zonder de gele bloemen zou ik hier nooit zijn gekomen. Zij namen mij me op hun schip. Mijn verleden liet ik achter me. Het verdronk. Eindelijk voelde ik mij aangenomen in de ark van Noach. Ik kan er niet meer aan denken. De zee is romig. Ik ben op het schip. Het schip is een eiland, als een vis in de zee, als een haai. Ik kan niet meer vooruit en niet meer achteruit. Alleen het schip kan bewegen. De bloemen groeien naar de hemel. Dit is mijn ladder. Maar dan breekt de ladder. Het witte huis neemt mij aan, verzorgt mijn wonden. Ik voel mij zwak, en de witte dame heerst over mij.

Suriname, 26 mei 1994

Ik ben bang dat zij mijn dagboek leest. Daarom verdraai ik de woorden. Ik lees haar dagboeken in de nacht. Zij zijn duister. Ik denk dat ik gek wordt. Schuimbekkend rol ik op de grond, totdat ik mij weer optrek aan de lange planten met bloemen. Ik trek mezelf op aan de struik. Ik klim naar de hemel, maar kom niet ver. Ik kan alleen maar kijken. Ik staar naar Surinaams fruit op een schaal. Voor mij is het een zee, een zee waarover ik nooit kan komen, maar waar wel eilanden in zijn. Dit fruit draagt een duister geheim. Dit fruit ligt alleen maar stil, en ik kijk ernaar. Een zee van fruit liet mij niet door. Ik kan alleen maar kijken. Ik kan alleen maar wegzinken. Ik zag hen daar staan op de bruggen met maskers, en in de boten. Zij namen vrouwen in wit op het schip. Die visten zij uit het water. Zij haalden die vrouwen naar binnen als Surinaams fruit, fruit met een duister geheim. Het Surinaamse fruit is als een lange reis naar ellende. Als je bij de pit bent aangekomen ben je dood. Vrouwen in kanten jurken, bedolven onder spinnenwebben. Spinnen in hun haren. Zo bieden zij het fruit aan. Geen goede reclame als je het mij vraagt, maar het wordt goed verkocht. Mensen kijken niet verder dan

hun neus lang is.

Suriname, 27 mei 1994

Planten met blauwe bloemen. Het paars groeit aan de randen van de rivier, als het paarse vuil. Het zijn paarse bloemen. Diep kijk ik in haar ogen en zie hetzelfde. Het is bijna als een spiegel. Ik probeer de diepte van haar ogen te zien. Het paars bedekt hier alles. Ik heb het gevoel dat ik in cirkeltjes draai. Hetzelfde is mij al eens eerder overkomen. Ik kan niet losbreken. Ik moet geholpen worden. Maar de hulp komt niet.

Suriname, 28 mei 1994

Ik wacht op de droom die mij zal doen ontwaken, die mij weer laat durven spreken. Die droom komt maar niet. De hemel lijkt ver weg. Het grote syndroom van Suriname heeft mij in haar macht. Het is als een verslaving aan drugs. Ik kan de ketenen niet doorhakken. Moed heb ik niet om dit syndroom in detail te bespreken. Ik praat er slechts omheen. Ik ben zo gemaakt. Het is mijn aard geworden. Ik drink van de bloemenzee, en stik bijna in

haar zaad. Warmte komt met golven om mij heen. De witte stad komt in zicht, maar verblindt mij.

Suriname, 29 mei 1994

De vrouw in het wit staat tussen twee matrozen in. Zij komen van een vreemd leger. Ik draai en woel in mijn bed. In de rivier hangen de witte bloemen diep, met een zwaar gewicht. Ik zit op de rivier-boot. Het was een labyrint van vuur, waarin we de juiste combinaties moesten zien te vinden. Het was een race tegen de klok. De muren waren draaiende en brandende. We renden, maar zij struikelde. Een gil achtervolgde mij. Ik kon haar niet meer vinden.

Suriname, 30 mei 1994

De ladder naar de witte stad laat grijze gezichten zien. Zij zijn niet uitgenodigd. Als zij de ladder aanraken, dan branden zij. Hun gezichten smelten weg. Ik ben op de ladder en kom steeds hoger, steeds dieper. De witte muren van de stad zijn begroeid.
Zij zat daar op een witte troon, waar alle ladders naartoe leidden. Ze keek naar beneden en verdween in witte rook.

Ik volgde het spook dieper de stad in.
Iedereen zonk weg in de witte golven, en vele schepen vergingen. Ik klom door, hoger de stad in. Ik durfde niet achterom te kijken. Ik hoorde gekrijs, en mensen riepen : Stop. Maar ik liep door. Ik was in Suriname. Zij nam het gewicht van de stad in. Alles loopt over in de wildernis in de diepte van de witte stad. Het is een schuimende zee, wild golvend. Het is een Surinaamse vrucht. Surinaams fruit, ik kijk erna, en het is alsof ik in een coma ben. Niemand kan mij horen. Niemand kan mij verstaan. Het is alsof er nooit communicatie is geweest. Niemand kan iets overbrengen. Ik zink weg in de witte zee. Grote vissen zwemmen hier, maar zij nemen niemand mee. Wij zijn aan ons lot overgeleverd. Oh, was ik maar nooit naar Suriname gegaan. Ik ben gebrandmerkt.

Suriname, 31 mei 1994

Ik herinner de droom over het witte hek. Het trekt me tot de wildernis, maar laat me nooit door. Het trekt me dieper en dieper totdat ik vastraak. Is dit het grote Suriname ? Is dit het witte hek ? Het is een vreemd hek, met vreemde muziek, als een begrafenis. Wie wordt er begraven ? De

muziek zo traag en subtiel. En voordat je het witte hek bereikt kom je tot een stad waarin je altijd verdwaald. Het neemt je tijd in beslag. Het neemt alles. Ik sta op de duinen en schreeuw over alles wat me is ontnomen door het witte hek. Ik wil het terug, maar golven overweldigen mij, en nemen mij mee, dieper tot het witte hek, als tot een ladder. Een pen wordt in mijn hand gedrukt, en ik moet veel schrijven. Ik moet een boek schrijven over Suriname. Ik moet tot haar geheimen doordringen. Ik schreeuw. Ik heb het trauma in mijn hand, maar dan wordt het rustig. Ik hoor het witte hek ruizen op de achtergrond, spelende haar muziek. Het doet pijn, maar de steek gaat eruit. Ik moet een wit boek schrijven, een witte bijbel. Ik tril en beef. Ik wil wegrennen, maar golven overweldigen mij. 'Schrijf, schrijf,' bulderen zij. Er beginnen dingen in mijn hoofd te draaien. Ik kan geen verhalen schrijven. Maar de klokken in mijn hoofd leiden een leven op henzelf.

Een van de reusachtigste leiders van het duistere rijk die ik ooit had gezien was wel het skelet Nicotine. Elke dag maakte hij een lange reis over de bergen naar de hoogste top, met in zijn armen het hoofd van een meisje. Nicotine had een paar duistere paarden, genaamd Ammalgamos, Compositos en Medicinos. Hij was een duistere rijder. In zijn rijk was er geen schoonheid, alleen lelijkheid, maar de jungles hier waren reusachtig. Ik stond aan de oever. Een jongetje in een boot wenkte mij. Het was een lange dunne boot, en het jongetje had een peddel. Het was een indiaans jongetje. ‘Mijn moeder wacht op je,’ riep hij. Al gauw was hij bij de oever en ik stapte in het bootje. Al snel waren we aan de andere kant van het meertje. Aan de oever stond een vrouw. Ik herkende haar niet, maar zij riep mij bij mijn naam. Ik stapte uit het bootje en liep naar de oever. Ze omhelsde me stevig. ‘Ik heb een maaltijd voor je gemaakt,’ zei ze. ‘Wie ben je ?’ vroeg ik.
‘Oh, ik ben Melango,’ zei de vrouw. Al snel bracht ze mij naar haar hut. Er lagen hier allerlei pakjes sigaretten en sigarendoosjes. ‘Rook je ?’ vroeg ik. ‘Nee,’ zei ze. ‘Mijn zoontje neemt ze weleens mee.’

’s Nachts komen de troubadouren,’ zei ze. ‘Zij werken voor de farao.’
‘Waar hebben ze het dan over ?’ vroeg ik.
‘Oh,’ zei ze, ‘over hem. Je weet wel : Nicotine, de baas van alle farao’s. Hij is het grote opperhoofd.’ Ik kende Nicotine wel. Het was een verschrikking. Iedereen was geketend aan zijn lange kettingen, ook deze vrouw. Het hart van Nicotine was een rood hart, maar voor de rest was het hele duistere rijk zwart en wit. Als de troubadours kwamen dan was er altijd veel grijs, veel bruin en geel. Nicotine was een slager. Hij was altijd op jacht, en had een grote fokkerij. Hier liet hij de vrouwen zwaar werk verrichten. ‘Pssst, bevrijd me,’ fluisterde de vrouw. Ze wees op de ring aan mijn vinger die ik eens van de farao had gekregen. Ik bedacht me geen moment, legde de ring tegen haar ketting en brandde de keten door. Ik pakte haar hand, en zei : Kom mee. Ik weet niet hoe lang het geduurd heeft maar na tijden rennen kwamen we uit de jungles van Nicotine. Een man staarde ons aan met een lange baard. Hij liet ons de tand van een haai zien. ‘Waar zijn we ?’ vroeg ik.
‘Welkom,’ zei de man. Hij was direct heel vriendelijk. Hij staarde naar mijn ring. ‘Wie bent u ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Ik ben Terang,’ zei de man. ‘Gezand van de koning.’
‘Wie is de koning ?’ vroeg ik. Hij liet me een klein balletje zien. Maar daar kwam Nicotine al aan. Ik greep Melango weer bij haar hand en rende met haar verder. Maar ook in de verte zag ik Nicotine aankomen, en toen van alle kanten. Snel werden we ingesloten. ‘Nicotine heerst hier,’ zeiden ze. Plotseling kwam er rood licht uit mijn ring voort en scheen op de harten van de Nicotines om ons heen. Een van de Nicotines had witte klederen met een lange witte punthoed. Hij leek wel op een pion. Achter hem stonden nog een paar van zulke Nicotines. Ik richtte de straal van de ring op zijn gezicht, en hij begon weg te smelten. Ik rende met Melango door de opening die was ontstaan. Weer zag ik die man. ‘Kan ik iets voor je doen ?’ vroeg Terang.
‘Ja,’ zei ik. ‘Help ons hier uit.’
Maar Terang werd gegrepen door de Nicotines en werd verslonden. De Nicotines waren als een kudde hongerige honden. Weer richtte ik de straal van de ring op hen. In de verte was een piramide waar we naartoe renden. Binnenin zat een farao op een troon. Hij was geheel gemaakt van metaal, en er kwam rook uit hem voort. Maar al snel waren ook de Nicotines binnen en verslonden de metalen

farao. Een paar Nicotines zaten op paarden. Het waren grote paarden. We renden door een deur in een andere gang. Maar hier waren zwarte Nicotines met hun paarden. Weer beukte ik een deur in, en kwamen in een kamer terecht met een raampje waardoor we konden ontsnappen. We waren nu op de piramide. De vrouw haalde wat pakjes sigaretten en sigaren uit haar broekzakken en begon ze tussen haar handen te rammelen, terwijl ze veren begon te krijgen. Snel greep ze me en we vlogen weg. Het was mij een raadsel. Nicotine Magie, zei ze. We vlogen naar een hoog kasteel waar de Nicotine Tovenaar woonde. We hadden hier groot uitzicht. De Nicotine Tovenaar was een aardige man. Hij liet ons alle mechanismes van Nicotines zien. Het waren robotten. Ook hun grote paarden.
De Tovenaar zette ons ergens neer op de rotsen, in een ander rijk. We kwamen op een strand terecht met heet zand. Ook was er een hutje van riet en bamboe. ‘Blijf je bij me ?’ vroeg Melango.
‘Ach, ik kom je nog weleens een keertje opzoeken,’ zei ik. ‘Ik hoop dat je het hier naar je zin zult hebben. Er is hier strand en zee, en er groeit hier voldoende aan de bomen.’ Daar kwam de Tovenaar aan, vanaf het strand. ‘Je hebt in ieder geval goed gezelschap,’ zei ik. De Tovenaar gaf mij

een hoed van stro en riet. En toen vertrok ik.

Einde

Het Lukuk Tablet

Ze waren in een gevecht. Zij probeerde hem in verwarring the brengen door leugens. Hij zat op de bank, en wilde de moed opgeven. Zijn hoofd kon het niet meer aan. Zij wilde hem aangeven bij de godin Serket. Zij was een wellustige vrouw. Ze verkocht haar man aan haar. Maar Serket wilde niet komen, en zond daarom Luluk, een indiaanse prinses. Luluk nam bezit van haar, en bracht haar man nog meer naar beneden, met de meest gemene truukjes. Hij had de moed allang opgegeven en wilde zelfmoord plegen. Hij staarde naar de beeldjes van zijn vrouw, haar godinnen. Hij wist niet wat hij er mee moest, maar hij begon tot hen te bidden.
Een keer kwam in zijn lot, de godinnen waren hem opeens goedgezind. Zijn vrouw kalmeerde. Van binnen voelde hij een haat naar de godinnen want zij hadden dit alles aangesticht. Zij hadden zijn vrouw gek gemaakt. Hij hield het Luluk tablet in zijn handen, en wilde het breken. Dit

tablet hield zijn vrouw opgesloten.
Ze vloog hem aan. Ze was ongelovelijk sterk ineens. Ze bond hem vast, en hongerde hem uit. Het tablet werd ergens op een tafel neergelegd. Een vriendin van haar kwam. 'Kun jij dit tablet in bescherming nemen,' vroeg ze. De vriendin knikte, en vertrok weer.
Hij begon weer tot de godinnen te bidden en wist dat hij zich dit keer beter moest gedragen. Ze maakte hem los. Hij staarde naar de beeldjes van zijn vrouw. Ook hij was in dit tablet opgesloten. 'Dochter van de regen,' werd ze genoemd, 'dienares van Luluk,' ze was aan het kalmeren. In ieder geval liet ze hem nu met rust.

De hut van Sobibor

Ik ging naar de supermarkt en vroeg om zoutloze soep. Het meisje begon heel zenuwachtig te doen, en kon bijna niet spreken. Ze moest er heel veel moeite voor doen. Ze begon allemaal zenuwachtig heen en weer te lopen, en kwam steeds terug met zakjes, voornamelijk fruit. In principe moest de zoutloze soep gewoon nog gemaakt worden. Ze zei toen dat ze het later wel zouden brengen.
Bij mij thuis was er een feestje. Ik stond even later in de badkamer voor de spiegel. Iedereen liep in en uit. Met een paar mensen zouden we naar de zee gaan. Treblinka was er ook bij.
Bij het strand aangekomen trokken we al onze kleren uit, en renden over het strand. Het was al donker. In de verte kon de grote stad nog gezien worden, maar ik keek liever naar het strand en de wildernis die er omheen lag. Er kwam toen ineens een heel groot varken op ons af met rechtopstaande oren. 'Het is al laat,' gromde het varken. 'Waarom zijn jullie nog op ? En wat doen jullie op het strand ? Jullie horen in de stad te wezen. Terug nu.'
Treblinka wilde het varken de strot doorsnijden. 'Nazi varken !' riep ze, en trok haar mes.

Ik zei : 'Niet doen ! Dan gaat het alarm van de stad af en dan hebben we de poppen aan het dansen, want dan komen ze allemaal !'
Maar Treblinka luisterde niet, en slachtte het varken af. Grote sirenes gingen er toen af, en stofwolken kwamen vanuit de stad. Een hele kudde varkens kwam toen vanuit de stad het strand op rennen.
'Ren nu voor je leven !' riep Treblinka.
'Waar naartoe ?' vroeg ik.
'Naar Sobibor, mijn zus,' zei Treblinka. 'Ze woont in het oerwoud.'
Toen zijn we allemaal de wildernis in gerend. Treblinka kwam niet mee. Ze liep gewoon rustig met haar mes naar de kudde varkens toe die kwamen aanstormen in de verte. Ik durfde niet te kijken. Ik ben toen doorgerend, de anderen achterna. Het geluid van de varkens was verschrikkelijk. Na lang rennen kwamen we aan bij een hut waar Sobibor woonde. Ze stond naakt achter een soort natuurgordijn wat ze zelf had gemaakt, wat rondom haar hut stond om haar terrein af te bakenen. Ik durfde niet naar haar te kijken. Ik besefte toen dat ik zelf ook naakt was. Het was donker.
'Dus jij bent de zus van Treblinka ?' vroeg ik.

Ze zei niks. Ik vroeg het nog een keer, maar ze zei gewoon niks terug. Na een tijdje kwam Treblinka terug met een bebloed mes. 'Jullie kunnen terug,' zei ze. 'De varkens zijn dood.'
'Waarom zijn ze ons gebied binnengekomen ?' vroeg Sobibor aan Treblinka.
'Die varkens ?' vroeg Treblinka.
'Nee, die stedelingen hier die je hebt meegenomen,' zei Sobibor.
'Je moet niet zoveel vragen stellen, zus,' zei Treblinka.
'Varkensvriendjes, hè ?' zei Sobibor. Toen draaide ze zich om en ging haar hut binnen.
'Niet zo boos doen,' zei Treblinka.
Maar Sobibor sprak niet meer. Treblinka zei dat ze van binnen plannetjes aan het maken was, maar wij wisten niet welke plannetjes.
'Jullie kunnen beter weggaan,' zei Treblinka.
Toen zijn we teruggegaan naar de stad. Er waren geen varkens meer. En bij mijn huis stond het supermarkt busje te wachten. 'De zoutloze soep,' zei het meisje.
Ik nam het aan en vroeg haar waarom ze zo lang hebben gewacht. 'Voor de klant,' zei ze toen.
Ik nam het aan en wilde betalen, maar dat hoefde niet. Ze

waren nog steeds beschaamd dat ze het product niet hadden. Ik ben toen naar binnen gegaan. Er was niemand meer. Het was er een zwijnenstal na het feestje. Ik keek naar de zoutloze soep. 'Wat zou er nog meer voor rommel in kunnen zitten ?' vroeg ik mezelf af. Ik vertrouwde het allemaal niet meer. Ik keek op de achterkant van de verpakking en er was zo'n lange lijst met stoffen die ik allemaal niet kende. Ik durfde het niet aan, en met een honger gevoel ben ik toen terug gegaan naar het strand. Ik zag de dode varkens er liggen. Het hele strand lag er bezaaid mee. Ik ben toen teruggegaan naar de hut van Sobibor.
Weer stond ze achter haar natuurgordijn, wat een soort voorhangsel van haar terrein was rondom haar hut. Ik durfde niet dichter bij haar te komen.
'Nee, jongen, niet hier komen,' zei ze.
'Waar is Treblinka ?' vroeg ik.
'Gaat je niks aan,' zei Sobibor.
'Ze had in eerste instantie gezegd dat we naar jou moesten rennen om ons leven te redden,' zei ik.
'Ik red geen levens, en al helemaal niet van stedelingen,' zei ze.
Ik kwam iets dichterbij staan. Haar borsten waren bijna

zichtbaar. 'Kom geen stap dichterbij, jongen,' zei ze.
'Die borsten van je, hè,' zei ik. 'Hebben die ook melk ?'
'Ja, waarom vraag je dat ?' vroeg ze geirriteerd.
'Ik heb namelijk zoutloze soep van de stad gehad, van de supermarkt, maar ik vertrouw het nog voor geen meter,' zei ik.
'Nog één stap verder en ik werp een speer door jouw melkloze borst,' zei ze dreigend en bitter.
'Je zus is een stuk makkelijker,' zei ik.
'Dat lijkt maar zo,' zei ze. 'Je kent haar niet.'
'Gaat dit mijn leven kosten ?' vroeg ik.
'Alles,' zei ze.
Ineens trok ze een mes. 'Varkensvriendjes hè ? Wij hebben het niet zo op varkensvriendjes,' zei ze.
'Je hebt ook op een sportschool gezeten, een vechtschool met je varkensvriendjes.'
'Hoe weet je dat ?' vroeg ik. 'Maar nee, geen varkensvriendjes.'
'Je werd onderwezen door de stad om je varkens te verdedigen, om voor ze te vechten,' zei ze. 'En het loon was zoute soep, stadse meisjes, en allerlei andere troep. Kom niet dichterbij.'
'Ik was al aan het afkicken van zoute soep en stadse

meisjes,' zei ik. 'Maar ik was bang dat ze er nog meer rommel doorheen hadden gegooid. Die lijst achterop de verpakking van de zoutloze soep was lang en met onbekende stoffen.'
'Goed,' zei ze. 'Ik zie dat je wil leren. Ik heb hier wel wat erwtensoep voor je, puur natuur. Maar mijn melk krijg je niet.'
'Waarom geen melk ? Waarom heb je anders melk dan ?' vroeg ik.
'Je moet jezelf niet zo lopen opdringen,' zei ze. 'Wees blij dat je nog leeft, maar dat kan ieder moment veranderen.'
'Blijf waar je bent,' zei ik toen. Ze wilde nog steeds niet zeggen waar Treblinka was, en ik begon haar te roepen.
'Geef me dan die erwtensoep maar als je zo moeilijk doet, Sobibor,' zei ik.
'Goed,' zei ze.
Even vertrouwde ik haar erwtensoep ook niet, maar ik moest toch wat. Ik kreeg een kommetje met erwtensoep van haar en begon te eten. Wat ze er allemaal doorheen had gegooid wist ik niet, maar ze zei dat het puur natuur was. Wat er toen gebeurde kan ik me niet meer herinneren, maar ik werd even later wakker in haar hut op een soort mat. 'Wat heb je met me gedaan ?' vroeg ik.

'Varkensvriend,' zei ze.
'Dat ben ik niet,' zei ik. 'Als dat zo is, sorry dan. Ik ben nog jong.'
'Varkensvriend,' zei ze weer.
'Ik wil jouw vriend dan zijn,' zei ik.
'Ik heb geen varkensvrienden,' zei ze. 'Ik maak ze niet. Ik kook ze op.'
'Oh, u bent kannibaal, om dat maar even met een duur woord te zeggen ?' vroeg ik.
'Wij eten varkens,' zei ze. 'Nazi varkens.'
'Ten eerste ben ik geen varken, en ten tweede al helemaal geen nazi,' zei ik. 'God, wat haat ik die lui.'
'Waarom woonde je daar dan, varkensvriendje ?' vroeg ze.
'I... ik weet het niet,' zei ik. 'Ik ben daar geboren, en daar opgetogen. Kan ik het helpen ? Toen ik erachter kwam was het al te laat. Waar kon ik heen ? Dankzij Treblinka ...' maar verder kon ik niks zeggen, want ze had haar voet op mijn mond gezet.
'Dankzij Treblinka wat ?' vroeg ze. 'Je bent een varkenskind. Helemaal erg, van die nazi's.'
'Misschien was ik door hen ontvoerd als baby en deden ze net alsof ik hun kind was,' zei ik.
'Ja ja,' zei ze, 'en dat moet ik geloven ?'

'Als het kan,' zei ik. 'Ik heb nooit het gevoel gehad dat ik daar hoorde. Maar bij jou voelt het alsof ik thuis ben gekomen. Je bent zo vriendelijk, gastvrij en begrijpend. Dat heb ik altijd gemist.'
'Varkenskindje,' zei ze.
'Ze moet wennen,' zei Treblinka die in de opening van de hut stond. 'Je was inderdaad ontvoerd. Maar ik heb je teruggehaald.'
'Het heeft lang geduurd,' zei ik. Sobibor liep weer naar buiten. 'Beter laat dan nooit,' zei Treblinka. Ze gaf mij toen een kommetje met melk.
'Toe maar weer,' zei Sobibor die achter haar stond.
'We moeten,' zei Treblinka.
Toen zei Sobibor voor een lange tijd niks, en ging weer bij haar natuurgordijn staan.

Einde

Sobibor's Terugkeer

Alles stond in brand. Sobibor was teruggekomen.
Grote stoeten mensen kwamen tot de brug bij de zee.
Er was niets dan wildernis. De steden waren brandende.
Er waren ook bosbranden.
Er was geen geld. Er werd niet naar geld gekeken en er werd ook niet mee gewerkt.
Er werd alleen naar het lijden gekeken. Hoeveel hadden mensen geleden en meegeleden.
Dat gaf de doorslag.
Ik had vreemde rode muntjes in mijn handen die ik liet zien bij de brug.
Ik mocht erdoor, maar mensen achter mij mochten niet verder, omdat ze te weinig rode muntjes hadden. Zij moesten terug het vuur in. Ik zag hoe ze werden teruggeduwd, en hoe het vuur hen greep, meesleurde en verslond. Het was een afschuwelijk gezicht.
Ik besefte hoe blij ik was dat ik altijd mijn kruis had gedragen en geen compromissen had gesloten.
Ik snapte niet wat er gaande was. De brug leidde tot een reusachtige wildernis, over de zee. Het was vele dagen lopen, en we hadden niets te eten.

Ergens midden op de brug was ook een vuur. We zaten dus ingesloten. Beneden bij de brug was een bootje met wilden erin. Er kwamen toen meer bootjes bij. Ze hielpen ons op de bootjes en zo kwamen we uiteindelijk toch bij de reusachtige wildernis aan, maar overal waren vuren. De wilden leidden ons tussen de vuren door.
We gingen langs vele kampen die al brandden, en toen moesten we een rivier over, waarachter weer wildernis was. Aan de overkant stond een jongetje. Hij was ook een wilde. Zijn naam was Auschwitz. Hij begon naar mij te schreeuwen, maar ik begreep de taal niet. Wel hoorde ik de naam Sobibor telkens vallen. De wilden zeiden dat Sobibor de moeder van het jongetje was. De jongen wenkte ons, en we liepen met hem mee. We kwamen aan bij een kamp. Er kwam een vrouw uit een hut met een mand. Toen ik haar zag durfde ik niet meer te kijken. Ze zeiden dat zij Sobibor was. Toen trok het jongetje mij naar haar haar toe, maar ik keek niet meer naar haar. Zij greep toen mijn arm, en het leek alsof ik onder stroom stond. 'De godin !' werd er geroepen.
'Hier zijn we veilig,' zeiden de wilden. 'Buiten dit terrein is alles overgeleverd aan de wraak van Sobibor.' Ik trilde op mijn benen en viel even later neer. Ik werd later wakker op

een mat. Auschwitz en zijn moeder stonden naar me te kijken, maar ik durfde niet naar hen te kijken.
'Dit ben jij,' zei Sobibor, terwijl ze naar Auschwitz wees. Ik volgde het met mijn ooghoeken, maar keek niet direct naar hen. 'Nee,' zei ik. 'Dat is een vergissing. Ik ben hem niet. Ik ben mezelf.'
'Het is toen je jonger was,' zei de vrouw.
'Dat kan niet waar zijn,' zei ik. 'Ik was ergens anders.'
'Ben je dom ofzo ?' vroeg de vrouw bitter. 'Dit ben jij. Waarom zou je twijfelen aan de woorden van de godin ?'
Ik voelde me alsof ik in brand stond. 'Eh ja, okay, ik ben Auschwitz. Nu tevreden ?' zei ik.
'Auschwitz is teruggekomen !' riep ze toen. Er kwamen nog meer wilden in de hut. Ze wees op mij.
'M... maar jouw kind is toch Auschwitz ?' zei ik.
'Niet zo dom doen de hele tijd,' zei ze weer bitter. 'Jij bent Auschwitz, toen je jong was.'
'Wie is hij dan ?' vroeg ik, terwijl ik naar het jongetje wees.
'Dat ben jij, jij,' zei ze.
'Maar ik ben dit,' zei ik, terwijl ik op mezelf wees.
'Hij begrijpt het niet,' zei ze tegen de wilden.
'Leg het dan tenminste uit,' zei ik.

'Luister,' zei ze. 'Jij was gestolen, ontvoerd. Toen kreeg ik een nieuw kind, en noemde hem weer Auschwitz.'
Ik voelde alles in mij branden. 'Het is een hel waar ik vandaan kom,' zei ik.
Ze greep mijn arm, en liet toen los, terwijl het weer leek alsof de bliksem insloeg.
'Sobibor,' zei ik. 'Ach laat maar.'
'Spreek,' zei ze.
Maar een vuur sloeg in de hut. We moesten allemaal rennen. Als een wilde greep het vuur om zich heen. We renden naar de rivier, maar ook de rivier was al brandende.
'Over veiligheid gesproken !' riep ik. Ik begon toen langs de rivier te rennen, maar waar ik ook kwam was vuur. Ik kreeg het steeds benauwder. Ik zag de anderen niet meer.
'Ik stik !' riep ik. Er kwam een zwart terig beest opzetten vanuit de rivier, en greep mij. Ik werd wakker in zweet in de hut van Sobibor. Ik durfde haar niet aan te kijken. 'Je hebt een lange tocht door de onderwereld gemaakt,' zei ze.
'Heb je het medicijn gevonden ?'
'Eh nee,' zei ik.
'Auschwitz,' zei ze.
'Ja,' zei ik.
'Ging alles maar door zonder te stoppen ?'

'Ja,' zei ik.
'In de onderwereld stopt het nooit,' sprak ze. 'Het gaat altijd maar dieper.'
'Eindeloos,' zei ik.
'Is dat een probleem ?' vroeg ze.
'Het ligt eraan,' zei ik.
'Nog even en ik ga open,' zei ze.
'Wat betekent dat ?' vroeg ik.
'Auschwitz,' zei ze.
'Ja,' zei ik.
'Jij bent Auschwitz,' zei ze. 'Ik ga open in de zin dat ik geboorte ga geven.'
'Aan wie ?' vroeg ik.
'Aan jou,' zei ze.
'Mocht eens tijd worden,' zei ik.
'Het is tijd,' zei ze. 'Er is niemand die de tijd kan stoppen.'
Toen zag ik niets dan vuur. Ik zonk er helemaal in weg, maar het verbrandde mij niet. Het genas mij. 'Auschwitz,' zei ze, 'jij poort van de onderwereld, jij doorvorser, nooit stop jij. Ik heb jou bevrijding gebracht. Geboorte. De wildernis zal branden totdat het werk geschiedt is. Jij bent het werk.'
Ik viel toen door een put, en werd wakker in mijn eigen

bed. De wereld brandde niet, maar ik wist dat het brandde, want Sobibor was gekomen.

Grebbeberg, mei 1940

De Duitsers wilden Nederland in beslag nemen en gingen naar de Grebbeberg om daar de Nederlanders te beschieten, en de Nederlanders schoten in verdediging terug. Er werden vele Nederlanders geraakt, ja, zelfs doodgeschoten. De Duitsers kwamen steeds dichterbij. Als ze de Grebbeberg eenmaal zouden hebben, dan zouden ze spoedig heel Nederland hebben. Opeens kwam er een man met lang haar in een wit gewaad het strijdveld op. 'Wat moet die hier !' riep een Duitser. 'Wij zijn nu de Nederlandse poort aan het openbreken, dus dat kunnen we er nu niet bijhebben. Daar hebben we geen tijd voor ! Geen tijd, geen tijd ! Wegwezen !' Maar de man ging niet weg, en liep rustig op de Duitsers af. Hij had geen haast. Het leek alsof hij in trage pas liep, en alsof alles vertraagd was. Even werd er niet geschoten, maar slechts geroepen. 'Wie ben je ?' riep een Duitser. Maar de man zei niets. Toen werd er even later op hem geschoten, maar zijn witte gewaad bleef smetteloos. 'Wat is dat !' riep een Duitser. Ze begonnen enorm te schelden en te vloeken. Weer schoten ze, maar de man bleef ongedeerd en en bleef maar op hen aflopen. Toen stopte hij ergens, en bleef intens naar de

Duitsers kijken. 'Nou, zeg op, wat moet je ?' schreeuwde een Duitser, maar de man zei niets, en keek alleen maar. 'Goed, een pottenkijker !' riep een Duitser die een leidinggevende functie scheen te hebben. 'Laten we doorgaan met schieten.' Maar niemand schoot meer. Toen begonnen de Duitsers één voor één op de grond te vallen met verkrampte handen.
Toen kwam er ook een vrouw in een wit gewaad. Het was een donkere vrouw. Ze liep op de man in het witte gewaad af. Ook zij sprak niet en keek alleen maar. Ik was één van de Nederlandse soldaten. Niemand schoot nog. We waren allen verbaasd. De man in het witte gewaad liep toen op ons af, en toonde ons zijn handen. Deze handen leken doorboord, maar bloedden niet. Ook de vrouw liep toen langzaam op ons af, en toonde ook haar handen die doorboord leken, net als die van hem. Niemand zei iets. Na een tijd vroeg ik : 'Wie zijn jullie ?' Maar zij spraken niet. 'Grebbeberg,' zei hij toen verschillende minuten later, en toen verdwenen ze gewoon in het niets. De Duitsers waren er niet meer. Niemand wist waar ze waren. 'Hmmm, dit kan gewoon niet,' zei ik. 'Volgens mij zijn we gewoon dood, en is dit de hemel.' Ik was waarschijnlijk geraakt door een kogel in mijn hoofd. Ik voelde aan mijn hoofd,

en het voelde allemaal zo anders, alsof ik het zelf niet eens was. 'We zijn dood, makkers !' riep ik.
We keken om ons heen. Er was hier veel natuur en er waren wat winkels. Er was een donkere vrouw met een jongen, en ik ben ze gevolgd naar een soort winkel. Het was donker. Toen we in de winkel waren bleek het over virtual reality te gaan. Ik had geen idee wat het was.
Die vrouw zong toen : 'I tell you something, that I understand.'
Ik keek naar haar. Ik had het gevoel dat ik haar ergens van kende. Ze begon me toen uit te leggen wat virtual reality was. Er gleed een warmte om me heen. Ze liet me een lijst zien waarop al mijn makkers stonden. Het was een apparaatje, en er waren lampjes en knopjes bij hun namen. Zo konden we contact houden. Er was ook een schermpje bij, zodat ik kon zien waar ze waren. 'Welkom op de Grebbeberg,' zei ze toen. Ik wist dat ik in de hemel was. Ik kon overigens niet zien wat mijn makkers deden, maar er was een kaart van de Grebbeberg, en er stonden wat stipjes op. Ik kon alleen zien waar ze waren. Ik keek naar de vrouw. Waar kende ik haar ergens van ?
De vrouw zong weer : 'I tell you something, that I understand.' Ze zong wel verder, maar ik kon de woorden

niet goed verstaan.
All curses too mean, zeg ik weleens. Ik was gewoon aan het ijlen. Ik was geraakt door een kogel en lag op de Grebbeberg voor mijn leven te vechten. Er was een warme gloed over mij. Trokken engelen aan mij ? Ik had de hemel gezien. Twee personen in witte gewaden. De Duitsers vochten nog steeds en ik zag ook wat andere makkers op de grond om me heen. Ik kon niet praten. Ik kon niet roepen. Ik gleed weer weg. De gloed ging dieper mijn lichaam in. Het was warm. Ik was in de natuur, in een meer. Ik zwom. Het was alsof ik in een ander lichaam was. Ik zag de overkant. Ik werd toen in de diepte getrokken. Weer kwam ik bij. Een Duitser stond voor mij. Ik voelde niets meer. Ik staarde gewoon. 'I tell you something that I understand,' werd er weer gezongen. Achter de Duitser stonden de personen in wit gewaad. De Duitser keek om en begon weg te smelten, gewoon voor mijn ogen. Ik werd omhelsd door de personen in wit gewaad, en ze namen mij de lucht in, zo hoog. Ik kon niet praten.
'Welkom op de Grebbeberg,' hoorde ik gezegd worden. Ik vocht voor mijn leven. Ik was tussen twee werelden in. 'I tell you something that I understand,' werd er weer gezongen.

'De hele nacht werken ze door,' hoorde ik gezegd worden. Weer hoorde ik de naam virtual reality.
Ik was weer in de natuur bij die vrouw. Ik keek naar haar en naar haar schoenen. Ze had een jurk aan. Soms was ze oud, soms was ze jong. 'Ik droom ? Ik ben dood ?' vroeg ik.
'In virtual reality,' zei ze. 'Alles is gesimuleerd, echt alles. Je moet die apparaten kennen,'
Ik kende die apparaten niet. Zij moest me alles uitleggen. Het bleek een oorlogsspel te zijn. 'Dat soort dingen zijn geen spelletjes,' zei ik. 'Het kostte mij mijn leven.'
De vrouw knikte. Ze liet me het spel op het scherm zien. 'Gelukkig heb je meerdere levens,' zei ze.
'Die spelletjes zijn gevaarlijk en intens,' zei ik.
Ze knikte. 'Er zijn ook wel andere spelletjes,' zei ze. Ze drukte op een knopje, en liet me andere spelletjes zien. 'Welkom op de Grebbeberg,' zei ze.
'I tell you something, that I understand,' zong ze weer. Ik moest mijn leven hier opnieuw opbouwen.
Ik volgde de vrouw naar haar huis. Ze zei dat ik ook een huisje zou krijgen. Haar naam stond ook op de lijst, en ik zou altijd contact met haar kunnen zoeken. Ik voelde de warme gloed om me heen. Ik had zoveel vragen. Na een

tijdje liet ze me wat winkels zien waar spelletjes gekocht konden worden. Je kon munt verdienen door werk en door de spelletjes soms. Er werd ook 's nachts gewerkt, en gespeeld.
Ik zag ook vele oorlogsspelletjes. 'Oorlog is geen spelletje,' zei ik.
Ik zag ook andere soorten spelletjes en liep erdoor te zoeken. Het waren prachtige spelletjes. Ik keek weer naar haar. 'Welke spelletjes speel jij ?' vroeg ik. Ze nam me toen mee naar een andere winkel. Het was een winkel van puzzelspelletjes, maar er zat ook avontuur in.
'Ik heb deze wereld gebouwd,' zei ze toen.
'Oh, dat kan ook ?' vroeg ik.
'Je moet je eigen wereld bouwen,' zei ze. 'Laat anderen je wereld niet bouwen. Dans ze niet naar de pijpen. Laat anderen je dromen niet dromen. Droom je eigen wereld.'
Ik knikte. 'Welkom op de Grebbeberg,' zei ze weer. 'Ik ben een geautomatiseerde robot, een welkoms robot.'
'Oh,' zei ik toen. 'Dus je bestaat niet echt ?'
'Ik besta,' zei ze. 'Maar ik ben onderhevig aan vele regels. Het puzzelen kan niet ontweken worden. Alles is zeer ingewikkeld en voorwaardelijk, dus hieraan is dit systeem geboren, hierin. Wij zijn de wachters van de nieuwe

wereld. Op aarde slapen zij. Daar spelen zij hun spelletjes. Maar ik laat je zien dat het slechts spelletjes zijn, en ik laat je de hogere spelletjes zien. Je moet veel puzzelen. Zo ga je het begrijpen. Zo ga je het verschijnsel 'sleutel en slot' ontdekken. Ik voelde vreemde energie door mij heen gaan. De warme gloed leek vermengd te worden met sneeuw. En het sneeuwde. 'Welkom op de Grebbeberg,' zei ze weer.

Einde

May Flower

Vroeger zat er een jongetje bij mij in de klas genaamd May Flower. Zijn vader was schipper op een groot schip. Hij vertelde er vaak over, en soms gingen ze op vakantie met het schip. Ik ging ook een keer mee. Op een dag was May Flower niet in de klas, en ik vroeg me af wat er met hem was. Misschien was hij ziek ofzo, maar de meester wilde het niet vertellen. Na een paar dagen was hij nog steeds niet in de klas, en de meester zei dat het schip van zijn vader was vergaan. Ik had het erg met May Flower te doen. Sommige meisjes begonnen te huilen toen de meester het vertelde. Pas na een paar weken kwam May Flower terug. Na schooltijd nam ik hem mee naar huis. Mijn ouders leefden niet meer. Ik woonde bij mijn grootouders, dus ik wist precies waar May Flower doorheen ging. Zijn vader was het laatste wat hij had, want zijn moeder was al bij zijn geboorte overleden. Mijn grootouders hadden ook erg met May Flower te doen, en wilden hem wel adopteren. Ik vond het een goed plan, en zo gebeurde het.
Zo kwam May Flower er ook een beetje overheen. Ik probeerde hem op te vrolijken. We deden veel spelletjes en

gingen overal naartoe. Ook mijn grootouders deden er alles aan om hem op te vrolijken. Uiteindelijk lukte dat wel. Ook de meisjes in de klas waren erg lief voor hem.
Op een nacht vertelde May Flower me dat hij een keer naar Amerika was geweest met zijn vader. Ze bezochten toen ook een indianen stam. De indianen waren heel gastvrij, en wilden dat ze zouden blijven. Maar hij zei telkens : 'Nee, daar ga ik niet voor. Dat kan ik echt niet doen.' Hij had nu spijt dat hij nee had gezegd, want als ze waren gebleven in die indianen stam, dan had zijn vader misschien nog geleefd. Hij moest even weer huilen, en ik omhelsde hem. De dag erna kochten we een indianen poster voor hem, want dat was wel een goede herinnering van hem. Hij wilde er eigenlijk weer naar terug om zich aan te sluiten bij de indianen stam. Ik zei dat ik dan ook wel mee wilde. Maar toen we het mijn grootouders vertelden vonden ze dat niet goed, en ze zeiden dat we dat echt niet konden doen, dat het veel te gevaarlijk was in het oerwoud. Toch was het onze droom. Ik had veel indianen boeken, waar May Flower ook graag in las. Ik zei vaak dat als we ouder zouden zijn dat we er dan wel naartoe zouden gaan.
En toen mijn grootouders uiteindelijk kwamen te

overlijden zijn we dat ook daadwerkelijk gaan doen. We gingen met een schip, en May Flower wist nog waar het was gelukkig. Weer waren de indianen van die stam zeer gastvrij. We vertelden hen wat er was gebeurd, dat May Flowers' vader niet meer leefde, en ze waren erg betrokken. Weer vroegen ze of we wilden blijven, maar we bleven zeggen : 'Dat kunnen we echt niet doen.' Toch hebben ze ons even later weten over te halen om wat langer te blijven. Daarna moesten we echt weer terug, want May Flower en ik studeerden inmiddels techniek, en we wilden een brug bouwen van Europa tot Amerika. De indianen vonden dat heel interessant. Ze wilden wel meehelpen, maar dan moest het wel een natuurbrug zijn. Ze hadden daarover hun ideeën en legden het ons ook uit. Wij vonden het een mooi plan, maar onhaalbaar, dus we zijn toen echt teruggegaan om verder te studeren in de techniek van de bruggenbouw. Het was een project op school dat we mee zouden helpen met de brug van Europa tot Amerika, en dan zou er een spoor op aangelegd worden voor een trein. Het was een hele onderneming.
Het nam al onze tijd in beslag, maar we gingen ervoor. Dag en nacht hadden we het over de brug, en het kwam in allerlei kranten te staan. Maar halverwege het project werd

de brug verwoest door een zware storm. Mayflower was ontroostbaar. We moesten onze dromen opgeven. Maar op een dag had hij toch weer een idee. Hij wilde een ondergrondse tunnel bouwen, onder de zee door. Wat we ontdekten was dat die ondergrondse tunnel er al was, maar nooit was afgemaakt. Diep onder de grond waren vreemde gangen met vreemde indiaanse hieroglyphen die een verhaal vertelden. We probeerden het verhaal te ontcijferen, en eigenlijk zagen we ons eigen levensverhaal in de plaatjes. Dat was heel vreemd. Alles leek te kloppen, alles leek met elkaar te maken te hebben, met elkaar in verbinding te staan. Maar op een dag verdwaalden we in de gangen, en konden onze weg niet meer terugvinden. We waren ook ergens ingegleden waardoor we nog dieper kwamen, en er scheen geen weg meer naar boven te zijn. We konden wel nog dieper en toen hebben we dat maar gedaan. We kwamen toen in een ondergrondse wereld. Hier leefden ook indiaanse stammen. We waren hier erg van onder de indruk dat we niet eens meer terugwilden. Maar deze indianen stammen waren niet zo gastvrij als de indianen die wij kenden. Ze negeerden ons, of begonnen te dreigen. We zijn toen maar verder getrokken, maar telkens weer kwamen we in de problemen met zulke stammen. We

waren niet gewenst.
Ik zei tegen May Flower dat we ze beter met rust konden laten, maar hij wilde niet luisteren. Hij bleef proberen contact te maken. Hij was een echte waaghals. Ik zei hem dat hij dan over natuurgrenzen heen zou gaan, maar hij wilde niet luisteren. Ik bleef hem vertellen dat deze indianen anders waren en gevaarlijk. We kregen er ruzie over, en hij zei dat ik niet zomaar grenzen in zijn leven kon gaan trekken. Hij wilde wat meer uitdaging, anders had zijn leven geen zin. Hij wilde niet telkens in dezelfde cirkeltjes gaan. Hij wilde wat van zijn leven maken. Ik dacht dat we al ver genoeg gekomen waren, maar hij dacht daar anders over. Hij zei dat ik teveel van hem vroeg, dat hij daar echt niet voor kon gaan. Ik moest het maar vergeten. Hij wilde alles wel voor me doen, maar dit ging hem te ver. Ik moest niet proberen vadertje over hem te spelen. En dit was de eerste fikse ruzie die we ooit hadden gehad. Er was ergens een hek, en daar verderop was een indiaanse stam, en hij ging zo het hek over en ik zag hem richting die stam rennen. Ik riep hem nog terug, maar het was al te laat. Ik zag zo een paar pijlen door hem heengaan en een speer. 'Zie je nu wel !' riep ik. 'Het is gevaarlijk hier !' Dat was het laatste wat ik ooit van May Flower had

vernomen. Verslagen liep ik terug. Ik vond uiteindelijk mijn weg terug. Er hing ergens een touw, en daardoor kwam ik weer boven. Ik ben toen weer helemaal teruggegaan naar huis. Het laatste aandenken wat ik had aan May Flower en die ondergrondse wereld was een vreemd beeldje wat ik daar had gevonden en had meegenomen. Ik zette het in mijn kamer. Van mij hoefde het niet meer. Ik wilde niet meer terug, maar het beeldje bleef mij inspireren. Ik wist dat er nog zoveel hieroglyphen waren die ik nog niet had ontdekt en ik wist ook zeker dat het de missende stukjes van het verhaal waren, en ook wist ik zeker dat het mijn eigen levensverhaal moest zijn.
May Flower, die durfal. Steeds meer begon hij mij te inspireren. Niet dat ik zoals hem zou zijn, maar zijn passie inspireerde mij, zijn passie voor meer kennis van het onbekende, alleen wist ik dat die altijd samen moest gaan met voorzichtigheid en goede voorbereiding. Ik wilde namelijk niet zoals hem eindigen. Hij was een les voor mij op twee sporen. Ik dacht niet meer aan een tunnel tussen Europa en Amerika, maar alleen aan een tunnel tot de ondergrondse wereld, en dat was May Flower voor mij.

May Flower's return

Ik vertelde de bevriende indianen stam over de dood van May Flower, maar zij geloofden niet dat hij dood was. Zo zou hij contact met hen hebben gezocht via een orakel. Ook zeiden ze dat als ik techniek had gestudeerd, dan zou ik hem ook tot leven moeten kunnen wekken als hij echt dood zou zijn. Ik zei toen dat dat allemaal niet zo simpel lag, maar zij waren er niet van overtuigd dus dat hij dood was, vanwege het orakel.
Hij had volgens hen door het orakel hen duidelijk gemaakt dat hij nog steeds leefde, maar in een nog diepere ondergrond onder de ondergrondse wereld. Hij zou daar in een andere indianen stam terecht zijn gekomen, maar hij kon daar niet teveel over zeggen. Zij zouden een godin hebben die ergens stond, en zij zou zo heilig zijn dat ze alleen maar bij haar voeten konden komen. En haar voeten waren een beeld van het geheim en de eenzaamheid.
Ik stond eigenlijk een beetje met open mond te luisteren, maar ze bleven maar zeggen dat ik terug moest gaan om via de techniek beter contact met hem te zoeken. Ik heb dat toen ook gedaan. Ik ben weer terug gegaan en begon gewoon maar wat te bouwen. Ik wilde een apparaat

ontwikkelen wat de dood kon overbruggen, of wat contact zou kunnen maken met die wereld onder de ondergrondse wereld, waar May Flower nu zou zijn volgens de indianen. Het werd een klein kastje waarmee ik experimenteerde, een klein kunstwerkje. Uiteindelijk begon ik hem aan de lijn te krijgen. Hij deed allemaal heel geheimzinnig, en hij bevestigde ook alles wat de indianen hadden gezegd, ook over die godin die zo heilig was dat ze alleen maar tot haar voeten konden komen, en die voeten waren een groot geheim en veroorzaakten grote eenzaamheid.
Ik wilde hem opzoeken, maar hij zei dat ik dat niet moest doen. Het zou veel te gevaarlijk wezen, en hij kon niet meer terug. Waarom wilde hij niet zeggen. Hij klonk heel wanhopig. Hij zat ergens vast, en ook al kon hij niet meer weg, hij wilde ook niet meer weg. Het leek wel op een stockholm syndroom. Ik vertelde hem waar ik na het verliezen van hem allemaal doorheen was gegaan, en hij zei dat hij door hetzelfde was heengegaan. Meer zei hij in principe niet, en deed verder allemaal weer geheimzinnig, tot het punt dat we weer bijna ruzie hadden.
Ik ging met deze informatie terug naar de bevriende indianen. Ze zeiden dat hij inderdaad opgesloten was, en dat er velen daar opgesloten waren, en dat we moesten

werken aan hun terugkeer. Dat leek mij een onmogelijke opgave, maar weer zeiden ze dat als ik techniek had gestudeerd dan zou ik daarvoor wat kunnen maken. Weer ging ik terug en werkte nog wat door aan het kastje. Ik maakte het ook wat groter, zodat er een scherm bijkon waarop ik beeld zou kunnen krijgen. Eerst was er alleen maar sneeuw op het beeld, maar ik begon er steeds meer patronen in te zien. Dit zou de eerste stap zijn, en daarna zou ik wel verder kijken. Ik moest al die patronen nu zien te decoderen en ze omzetten tot beeld. Dat was een heel karwei, een heel gedoe, maar uiteindelijk slaagde ik erin een soort natuur op het scherm te krijgen. Ik had hem nog niet gevonden. Ik moest weer het hele ding afstemmen, en naar hem zoeken. Ik deed dit met bepaalde warmte sensoren. Die moesten ook ingesteld worden op de juiste afstand, dus er kwam een heleboel ingewikkelde radar techniek bij kijken. Maar daar had ik immers voor gestudeerd. Uiteindelijk vond ik hem weer. Via zijn warmte verschillen per lichaamsdeel kreeg ik hem op het scherm, in verschillende kleuren, alhoewel het nog wel wazig was. Soms leek het in elkaar over te lopen, maar ik was tevreden met het resultaat, en zijn stem was glashelder. Wel deed hij weer enorm geheimzinnig.

Ik zei dat ik bezig was een apparaat te bouwen wat hem zou kunnen laten terugkeren, maar hij zei direct dat hij dat niet wilde, dat hij dat niet kon doen. Hij zei tegen me dat ik maar alleen naar het feestje moest gaan. Ik begreep hem niet, en hij deed wazig. Hij had nu de godin gevonden, of in ieder geval haar voeten, en dat was een groot geheim en grote eenzaamheid. Hij kon niet meer terug en wilde niet meer terug. Ik was teleurgesteld, maar ik begreep hem. Toch zou ik verder bouwen aan het apparaat, en ik vroeg of er dan misschien nog anderen waren die wel terug wilden. Hij zei dat hij het ze zou vragen. Die nacht sliep ik bijna niet. Het spookte allemaal door mijn hoofd, ook dat May Flower misschien een stockholm syndroom had, dus tegen zijn wil daar werd vastgehouden en zich er maar bij neer had gelegd, of misschien werd hij zelfs bedreigd en moest hij gered worden. Ik wist het niet. Hij deed allemaal te geheimzinnig. Eigenlijk kon ik helemaal niet slapen, en ging terug naar het apparaat. Ik zag nu meerdere personen op het scherm, en sommigen wilden inderdaad terug, omdat het daar te zwaar zou zijn. Ik beloofde dat ik verder zou werken aan het kastje. Er zou nog een groot gat in komen waardoor ze misschien omgezet zouden worden in andere signalen. Het was allemaal heel ingewikkeld. Ik zat

weer allemaal door oude studie boeken heen te bladeren.
Ik moest hun patronen omzetten in andere patronen die het gat zou kunnen herkennen en waardoor ze hier geprojecteerd konden worden, en dan via een bepaalde code zou het apparaat hen vlees en bloed kunnen geven. Ik werkte bijna dag en nacht door aan dit project. Ik sliep bijna niet, en dat kon ik ook niet.

Ik begon ook anderen te vragen over die godin die ze vereerden. Zij zeiden in principe hetzelfde dat ze een groot geheim was en grote eenzaamheid bracht. Ze konden alleen haar reusachtige voeten zien, en als ze te dichtbij kwamen, dan trapte zij ze soms weg. De rest mochten ze niet zien. Maar hoe meer ik met deze personen sprak, hoe meer ik erachter kwam hoe hun verhalen elkaar tegenspraken, en ik kwam erachter dat het een soort stelsel was van inwijding en dat ze ook weer geheimen hadden voor elkaar en dus ook voor mij. Ze konden niet spreken en mochten niet spreken. Het waren allemaal ingewikkelde zwijgplichten die te maken hadden met hun niveau van inwijding.

Ik dacht misschien zou het helpen als ze uiteindelijk hier waren. Het was een hele grote indianen stam, en ik vroeg me ook af waar ik ze dan moest herbergen. Ik zou

misschien een woon project voor hen kunnen oprichten in het bos. Toen ik de eerste persoon door het gat kon laten komen was ik verbaasd over mezelf dat ik dit heb kunnen doen. Er volgden er toen snel meer, en toen puntje bij paaltje kwam heb ik ze allemaal ondergebracht in woningen in het bos. Ik had daarvoor een beurs van de erfenis van mijn grootouders. Uiteindelijk kreeg ik het toen ook voor elkaar om May Flower over te halen, en ook hij keerde terug. Ik omhelsde hem, en het was direct weer als vanouds. Ook durfde hij toen weer meer te zeggen. Ik begon hem vragen te stellen over die godin, of zij misschien ook gered moest worden. May Flower keek me aan. Hij vroeg : 'Wil je het echt weten ?'
Ik zei : 'Ja, natuurlijk. Je verhalen hebben me wel nieuwsgierig gemaakt, en zij moet dan zelf ook wel heel eenzaam zijn, vooral als zij zo diep in dat systeem van geheimen zit met allerlei zwijgplichten.'
'Okay,' zei May Flower, 'dat zit dus echt heel ingewikkeld in elkaar. Zij is de hoogst ingewijde van allemaal, en heeft daarom ook de meeste zwijgplichten. Zij draagt het grootste geheim, en daarom was zij voor ons slechts een projectie van een nog diepere ondergrondse wereld, waardoor we alleen maar haar voeten konden zien. Zodra

we te dichtbij kwamen waren er teveel electrische ontladingen vanwege het energie verschil tussen ons en die nog diepere ondergrondse wereld waar zij was. Daarom noemden we haar de godin, en het pad was de eenzaamheid, want als we meer zoals haar werden, dan zouden dezelfde verschijnselen optreden tussen ons en de anderen. Het zou grote oorlogen kunnen veroorzaken, grote misverstanden.'
'Wat moeten we dan doen ?' vroeg ik.
'We kunnen niks doen,' zei May Flower. 'Ze zit compleet vast.'
'Ik kan natuurlijk proberen contact te maken met die nog diepere ondergrondse wereld waar zij is.'
'Doe dat maar niet,' zei May Flower. 'Je kent haar niet. Veel te gevaarlijk.'
Maar toen werd ik een beetje zoals May Flower vroeger tegen mij deed. Ik zei dat hij mijn grenzen niet bepaalde, en dat hij geen vadertje over me moest spelen. Ik wilde alles wel voor hem doen, maar dit ging me te ver. En zo hadden we de tweede grote ruzie in onze vriendschap, en uiteindelijk zei hij dat ik het zelf maar moest weten dan. Toen hij sliep ben ik weer naar het apparaat gegaan en probeerde contact te maken met de godin en die diepere

ondergrondse wereld. Allereerst kreeg ik alleen haar voeten op het scherm door de warmte sensoren, maar die begonnen direct oververhit te raken. Er waren allerlei ontploffingen in het kastje ineens, en ik werd zomaar ineens door het gat gezogen. Ik schrok me wild, en dacht direct dat ik beter naar May Flower had moeten luisteren. Ik ging door een tunnel heen en wist niet wat me overkwam. Ik keek in een levensgroot ravijn, en viel daar naar beneden, toen het water in. Er was grote storm en de golven waren huizen hoog. Ik werd zo tegen een rots geslingerd, en werd even later wakker in een hutje. Er stond een vrouw voor me. 'Je bent me wel een waaghals,' zei ze. Het bleek de godin te zijn. Ik begon direct het hele verhaal te vertellen, en ze knikte telkens, en zei dat ze het al wist. Ik vroeg of ze hulp nodig had, maar ze lachte me gewoon uit. 'Hulp ?' vroeg ze. 'Jij hebt onze hulp nodig.' Ik keek haar toen verbaasd aan.
Ik vroeg haar of ze May Flower kende. Ze knikte. 'Die heb ik ooit eens bij je in de klas gezet, om jou tot ons te trekken, tot deze diepere wereld. Waarom zou je terug willen ? Er zijn zoveel geheimen die ik je zou willen openbaren.
'Wat gaat het me kosten ?' vroeg ik.

Ze glimlachte, maar zei niets. Ik voelde mezelf wegvagen, en kon haar nog maar nauwelijks zien. Toen werd ik weer terug gezogen door het gat, en ik zag May Flower achter het apparaat zitten. Hij keek op het scherm, en toen naar mij. 'Daar ben je eindelijk,' zei hij.
'Waarom, waarom ?' vroeg ik. 'Zag je dan niet dat ik bij de godin was ? Ze zei dat ze me alles wel wilde vertellen.'
'Geloof je het zelf ?' vroeg May Flower. 'Ja, ik zag het, maar je vroeg ook wat het je zou kosten, en toen glimlachte ze.'
'Nou en ?' vroeg ik. 'Je had haar minstens kunnen laten uitpraten.'
'Snap je het dan niet ?' vroeg May Flower.
'Nee, ik snap er niets van,' zei ik. 'Ik was zo ver gekomen, en dan moet je mij ineens terug halen. Je had het minstens even netjes kunnen vragen zoals ik bij jou deed.'
May Flower zuchtte. 'Lieve jongen,' zei hij. 'Dit is de prijs die je moet betalen.' Ik keek op het scherm en ik zag alleen nog maar haar voeten.

Einde

De Uitverkiezing van Lapondria

De keren dat ik hem zag was hij gehuld in lompen, sprak bijna niet, en droeg een hoed ... Hij kwam een paar keer bij ons in de gemeente, om nooit meer terug te komen ... Toch heeft hij heel veel indruk op me gemaakt in die tijd ... Zou hij nog leven ?
Hij deelde vreemde folders uit over een uitverkiezing ... Wat dat voor uitverkiezing was wist ik niet ... Ik was toen nog erg jong ... Mijn moeder nam het foldertje wel aan, maar toen ze thuis was had ze het al weggegooid ... Nu, na al die jaren, zou ik toch wel willen weten waar dat foldertje over ging ...
Daar slenter ik over straat. Een man spreekt mij aan, en zegt iets over bier drinken ... Ik loop door ... Ik ben moe ... maar ... maar ... daar zie ik hem staan ... die man gehuld in lompen ... Maar als ik dichterbij kom blijkt het iemand anders te zijn ... Of is hij veranderd ...
De volgende dag is het zondag ... Ik wil niet naar de kerk ... Ik moet, maar ik ren weg ... Naar het hertenpark ... Ik ben liever bij de dieren ... Op straat ligt een verfrommeld foldertje over een cirkus in de stad ...
Ik denk weer na over die uitverkiezing ... Die nacht droom

ik over een park vol leeuwen ... Grote leeuwen ... met grote ogen ... Er staan hekken omheen, met paden ... Ik loop over die paden ... Langs die paden, aan de andere kant, staan bomen en struiken ... Dan roept iemand : 'Het hek is open ! Er is een gat in het hek ...' Een voor een komen de leeuwen door het gat naar buiten ... Ik ben niet bang, maar ren toch weg ... De leeuwen volgen mij ... Het lijkt wel alsof ze van mij houden ... Ze doen mij niks ... Maar na een tijdje beginnen ze mij op te eten ... Dan word ik wakker ... Wat een vreemde droom ... Alsof ze nog steeds in mijn kamer zijn ... Ik ben moe, en ga weer slapen ... Mijn ouders zijn boos, omdat ik ben weggerend toen ik naar de kerk moest ...
Ik ben gelukkig ... Ik voel me goed ... Heel zacht van binnen ... alsof er veren in mijn lichaam zijn ... zo zacht ... Ik gaap ... en maak een hard geluid ... Wat een vreemde, vreemde droom had ik toch vannacht ...
Het lijkt wel alsof ik ben uitverkoren ... Maar voor wat ? ... Ik voel me zo blij ... zo rustig, en zo vol vrede ... Wie heeft mij dan uitverkoren ... Een raadsel ... of is het God ?

De Groene Verlichting
Bevroren Dromen

Hoofdstuk 1. De verandering

In een zaal stond hij, de grote boom. Het was volle maan, en hij was tot leven gekomen, kijkende over de blauwe aarde. Het was als het land van de blauwe zon. Een grote hond stond naast hem. Als het morgen zou zijn, zou hij weer onbeweeglijk staan als de grote boom. Hij sprak ook andere bomen toe, die tot leven waren gekomen. De fee van de maan stond erbij. Ze had haar toverstokje goed vast. Ze wist dat als de morgen zou komen, dan zouden de bomen niet meer kunnen spreken, en niet meer kunnen bewegen. En dan zou zij weer moeten terugkeren naar de maan. Het was een blauwe maan, en die verscheen niet eens zo vaak. Vaak was hij verdwenen achter duistere wolken. De grote boom nam het woord, en sprak de menigte toe. Het waren woorden van grote ernst. Hij sprak dat over een tijdje de planeet in de cirkel en het magnetische veld van de zwarte zon terecht zou komen, en dan zouden ze voor altijd tot leven komen. De bomen zagen erg naar dat moment uit, en dan zou ook de fee van de maan tot hen kunnen komen zo vaak ze wilde. Er was echter nog één gevaar wat hen in de weg stond, en dat was

de heks Sausibir. Zij zou er door haar krachten in kunnen slagen de planeet in een andere zonnencirkel te brengen. Dit was een magnetische cirkel rondom de zon Misfamen. Als de heks erin zou slagen, dan zouden de bomen nooit meer tot leven kunnen komen. De heks wilde de bomen gebruiken om haar kasteel mee uit te bouwen.
Maar als de zwarte zon haar zou verslaan, dan zouden de bomen langzaam veranderen in nieuwe wezens die konden bewegen en spreken. De grote boom was in ernst, en ze waren allemaal nog erg bang, want de heks was zeer krachtig. De fee opende een boek, en sprak : 'In onze boeken staat dat de heks Sausibir op zoek is naar een groene toverstaf die in het middelpunt van de planeet zou liggen. Als ze die staf heeft gevonden, dan zal ze in staat zijn de planeet in de cirkel van de boze zon Misfamen te krijgen.' Een andere boom kwam naar voren, en keek heel ernstig en wijs.
Een jongen schrok wakker. Wat had hij toch vreemd gedroomd. Hij had een vreemde ziekte, waarin hij vaak flauwviel, en vaak kon hij moeilijk praten. Ook had hij vaak last van verkrampingen, en dan kon hij zich vaak niet bewegen. De artsen zeiden dat hij de boomziekte had, maar veel was er niet over bekend. De jongen had een

obsessie als het op bomen aankwam. De volgende nacht had de jongen weer dezelfde droom, en er kwam een fee aan zijn bed of hij hen wilde helpen. Maar de jongen geloofde niet in feeen. Toen hij het aan zijn artsen vertelde moesten ze een beetje grinniken. Nacht na nacht kwamen de dromen terug, en zelfs overdag verschenen er feeen aan hem. Hij werd er erg moe van, en dacht dat hij gek aan het worden was. De artsen besloten om hem door te verwijzen naar een psychiater, die hem vertelde dat het inderdaad een geestesziekte was. Misschien hoorde het wel bij de zg. boomziekte die hij in de loop der jaren had ontwikkeld. De jongen kon niet meer naar school, en het was voor hem ook moeilijk geworden om buiten te komen. Hij kon niet tegen licht.

Op een dag toen de jongen de krant las, las hij over een nieuw schoonmaakmiddel dat op de markt was gebracht, genaamd Misfamen. 'Verrek,' zei de jongen tegen zichzelf. Het was de naam van de boze zon uit zijn dromen. 'Ach, het zal wel toeval zijn,' dacht de jongen bij zichzelf. Na een tijdje werd het merk uit de handel gehaald, en wel om een paar redenen. Het bleek zeer milieu-onvriendelijk te zijn. Mensen en dieren zouden er ziek van worden, en de fabrikant was in het nieuws gekomen, vanwege een

moord. Na een tijdje begonnen de dromen van de jongen minder te worden, en de feeen verschenen minder vaak. De psychiater was erg tevreden. Ze hadden hem een middel gegeven genaamd Sausibir. Het scheen ook erg goed te werken tegen depressies, en het middel werd erg bekend. Ook het schoonmaakmiddel Misfamen werd weer volop verkocht, omdat onderzoek aangaf dat het middel absoluut niet milieu-onvriendelijk zou zijn. De fabrikant die verdacht was van moord was inmiddels weer vrijgesproken, omdat er geen enkel bewijs tegen hem was. Steeds meer begon de jongen de vreemde dromen en feeenverhalen te vergeten, daar ze nauwelijks nog in zijn leven voorkwamen. Ook begon de jongen verbeteringen te tonen op lichamelijk vlak. Hij kon zich beter bewegen, en viel nauwelijks nog flauw. Het was alsof de epileptische neigingen die hij had steeds meer en meer op de achtergrond kwamen, en na een tijdje kwamen ze helemaal niet meer voor. Ook het praten ging beter en beter, en al snel kon hij weer naar school. Over de boomziekte werd niet meer gesproken. De jongen verloor zijn obsessie voor bomen, en werd manager in een hoge functie bij één of ander bedrijf. Dit bedrijf produceerde allerlei soorten medicijnen in verschillende zout-verbindingen. De zouten

zouden mensen weer energie geven, en zouden hun angst voor falen wegnemen, en hun denkvermogen vergroten. Het ware nieuwe zout-verbindingen ontstaan uit jaren lange experimenten in laboratoria. Het middel werd gemaakt van elementen gewonnen uit de zeedieptes en de aarddieptes, en was een groots project. Eén van die middelen heette 'de groene staaf,' en was het allersuccesvolste. Het bleek ook goed te helpen bij slaapproblemen. De jongen verdiende erg goed, en woonde in een groot landhuis.
Op een nacht had hij weer een droom, na een zeer lange tijd. Ditmaal ging het over groene mensachtige wezens die in een kamer diep onder de aarde leefden. Ineens kwam er een zwarte hond binnenrennen, en de kamer werd groter en groter, en begon zich in meerdere kamers te verdelen, terwijl de zwarte hond door de kamers begon te rennen. Hij vond dit maar een vreemde droom, en probeerde het weer te vergeten. Maar op een dag werd er op zijn deur geklopt. Het was een oude en arme vrouw die voor hem stond. Ze vroeg hem of hij het allemaal nog herinnerde. Hij wist niet waar ze het over had. 'De feeen, de bomen,' sprak ze. Daar wilde hij het niet over hebben, en deed de deur voor haar dicht. Maar weer klopte ze aan, en ditmaal

zeer indringend. Het leek alsof hij weer duizelig werd, en alsof alles nu zo dichtbij kwam. Hij rende naar boven en greep naar z'n buik. Al snel begon hij over te geven, en kwam er allemaal groen spul uit z'n mond. Wat gebeurde er toch allemaal. Hij greep naar de telefoon om zijn arts te bellen. Na een tijdje kwam deze bij hem aan. Hij lag inmiddels op de grond. De arts voelde zijn pols. Hij moest snel in het ziekenhuis opgenomen worden. De artsen waren bang dat de boomziekte aan het terugkomen was, en ditmaal leek het erger dan ooit te voren. De jongen raakte in coma, en vocht dagenlang voor zijn leven. Na een paar weken kwam hij weer lichtelijk bij, en vertelde over de arme oude vrouw. De artsen vroegen hem of hij dat gedroomd had, of dat het echt was. Hij was ervan overtuigd dat het echt was. Maar hoe wist de vrouw over zijn dromen ? Misschien was er wel informatie uitgelekt. En hoe kon het dat alles ineens weer was teruggekomen ? De artsen wisten het niet, maar brachten het niet in verband met de vrouw. Ziektes konden soms gewoon terugkeren. De jongen voelde zich erg zwak, en hij moest naar een rustoord in het bos om bij te komen. Toen hij daar aankwam schrok hij. De arme, oude vrouw woonde daar ook. Ze deed net alsof ze hem niet kende, maar de jongen

werd erg nieuwsgierig. Nadat hij de maanden die erop volgden weer een beetje op krachten was gekomen probeerde hij haar aan te spreken. Hij kwam haar eigenlijk alleen maar tegen bij de maaltijden, en soms op de gang, maar ze spraken niet met elkaar. De vrouw deed alsof ze van niets wist, maar de jongen hield aan. De jongen ging erg aan zichzelf twijfelen, en begon zich ook van zijn lotgenoten steeds meer terug te trekken. Maar op een dag werd er op z'n kamer geklopt. Toen hij opendeed was het de oude arme vrouw. Ze had een boek voor hem. Het was een boek over geestesziektes. Toen ze weg wilde lopen riep de jongen haar na. Maar ze keerde niet meer om. Hij deed de kamerdeur weer dicht en begon te lezen. Maar na een tijdje klapte hij het boek weer dicht. Hij kon zich niet concentreren. Hij besloot het voor een tijdje in zijn la op te bergen.

Het was herfst. De kleuren van de bomen waren zo mooi. Hij keek vaak naar buiten, en kwam erdoor tot rust. Eigenlijk herinnerde hij zich steeds minder over vroeger. Ook probeerde hij zo min mogelijk na te denken over zijn ziekte, en probeerde hij zoveel mogelijk van het leven te genieten. Hij hield van de rust, van zijn kamer. De andere lotgenoten hadden allemaal hun eigen leven. Soms kwam

er weleens bezoek, maar dat had hij liever niet. Door zijn ziekte kon hij bijna niet naar buiten, daar het licht hem teveel pijn deed. Hij was gelukkig zoals hij was, omdat hij geleerd had er genoegen mee te nemen en er uit probeerde te halen wat hij kon. Hij probeerde niet teveel na te denken, omdat hij dacht dat dat toch niets zou oplossen of zou aanvoegen. Na een paar jaren ging het rustoord dicht en zouden de patienten moeten verhuizen naar een ander rustoord dichtbij zee. Ook hier had de jongen het erg naar z'n zin. In de verte hoorde hij soms de zee ruizen. Er was een klein bos dichtbij waar hij weleens ging wandelen. Het leek alsof de zee op de achtergrond een goed en genezend effect op hem had. Op een dag toen hij weer eens met een begeleider in het bos was, vond de begeleider een vreemd langwerpig groen staafje op de grond. Het was buigbaar en het glimde heel speciaal. De jongen glimlachte. De begeleider gaf het aan de jongen. Het leek wel alsof het staafje licht gaf. De jongen besloot het staafje mee te nemen naar zijn kamer. Aangekomen legde hij het staafje op zijn nachtkastje. De begeleider had hem netjes naar zijn kamer gebracht en zou nu met iemand anders naar het bos gaan. De jongen hield erg veel van die begeleider. De begeleider was erg goed voor hem, en deed eigenlijk nooit

moeilijk, en stelde ook nooit geen moeilijke vragen. De begeleider begreep de jongen erg goed.
Midden in de nacht werd de jongen wakker. Het groene staafje gaf erg veel licht af, en begon te kronkelen : 'Zeg Pedro, zeg Pedro,' zei het staafje. 'Dat had je niet gedacht, hè, dat ik ooit nog eens tegen je zou praten.' En toen hield het staafje zich een hele lange tijd stil. De jongen raakte erg in paniek. Hij rende van zijn kamer af naar het begeleidershokje toe, waar de nachtdienst zat. 'Ik begin gek te worden,' riep de jongen. De nachtdienst liep naar hem toe, en probeerde hem te troosten. 'Ga eens even zitten, Pedro, en vertel me eens heel rustig wat er gebeurd is.' Pedro ging zitten, en begon te vertellen. Ineens kwam het staafje naar binnen kronkelen, en Pedro gaf een gil. 'Daar is het, daar is het,' gilde hij. Maar de nachtdienst zag niks. 'Pedro, waar heb je het over, er is hier niets,' zei de nachtdienst. 'Zie je,' zei Pedro, 'ik ben echt gek aan het worden.' Maar de nachtdienst begon hem te troosten. 'Ach, Pedro, iedereen verbeeldt zich weleens wat. Dat hoort nu eenmaal bij ons. Iedereen vergist zich weleens.' Na een tijdje strompelde Pedro weer langzaam terug naar z'n kamer en ging weer slapen. De volgende morgen was alles erg beklemmend. Een man die Pedro niet kende kwam

binnen, samen met een mevrouw. 'Pedro, we hebben besloten je over te laten plaatsen naar een oord waar je nog beter tot rust kunt komen. Het is een paar straten verder, en iets dieper in het bos.' Pedro vond het wel een goed idee, maar toen hij daar aankwam schrok hij wel even. De patienten leken wel op apen, en het leek hem hier helemaal niet rustig. Ze gilden, bewogen heel snel en vreemd, en keken raar uit hun ogen, alsof ze Pedro elk moment konden bespringen. Maar de man en de mevrouw zeiden dat Pedro gewoon moest doorlopen. Ze moesten door een hele lange gang, die in een bocht liep, en kwamen na een tijdje lopen in een andere zaal. Er zaten hier wat gehandicapten, en Pedro vroeg zich af of hij hier wel moest wezen. Maar de reis was nog niet ten einde. Ze moesten achter de zaal linksaf slaan, en weer moesten ze door een lange gang die in een bocht liep. Wat een reusachtig groot en uitgestrekt gebouw was dit, en het was hier verderop steeds rustiger aan het worden. Helemaal aan het eind van de gang was nog een klein halletje dat leek op een magazijn. Achter het halletje was een huiselijke kamer waar een wat oudere man een pijp rookte. 'Dag Pedro,' zei de man, 'fijn dat je bent gekomen. Ze hebben me al over jou verteld.' De man scheen dezelfde

ziekte als Pedro te hebben, maar worstelde nog steeds met de vraag of het echt was, ja of nee. De man had ook vele dromen en verschijningen gehad, en allerlei andere dingen die achteraf verbeeldingen bleken te zijn. Of waren het geen verbeeldingen ? Pedro had geen zin om daar over te praten. Pedro wilde alles vergeten wat er was gebeurd. En de man respecteerde dat direkt. Het was geen snelle prater, en Pedro hoopte dat hij hier goed tot rust kon komen.
Achter de kamer was nog een klein halletje met een paar kamers, waarvan één kamer voor Pedro was. De kamer had een prachtig uitzicht op het bos. Er waren zoveel bomen waar Pedro naar kon kijken. Ook was er een deur naar buiten, maar Pedro wilde voorlopig niet naar buiten.
Er woonde hier ook nog een andere vrouw, maar die was op dat moment een tijdje logeren bij familie. De man deed niet veel. Hij zat alsmaar in z'n stoel, en ging pas 's avonds laat naar z'n kamer. Er was een bel in de kamer van Pedro waarmee hij begeleiding zou kunnen krijgen wanneer hij dat wilde.
De artsen hadden besloten Pedro weer Sausibir als medicijn te geven. Maar dit keer reageerde Pedro er helemaal verkeerd op. De wanen werden erger en erger, en al snel wilde Pedro niet meer leven. De artsen besloten

maar helemaal te stoppen met het middel voor Pedro, en na het falen van nog wat andere middelen kwamen ze erachter dat Pedro overgevoelig was geworden voor medicijnen. Rust was gewoon het belangrijkste voor nu. Soms kwam de begeleiding nog even kijken of het allemaal goed ging, en ja hoor, het ging steeds beter toen Pedro met de middelen was gestopt. Maar voorlopig wilde hij niet naar buiten. Hij zat vaak op z'n kamer. Het corveeen ging goed. Pedro kon goed afwassen en zou nu ook voor het eerst op deze afdeling schoonmaken. Toen hij naar het schoonmaakhok liep en de deur opende zag hij het middel Misfamen staan. Pedro schrok. Maar herstelde zich snel, en mengde het met wat water. Het was een zuiver natuurprodukt, gemaakt van middelen die gewonnen waren uit de aarddieptes en zeedieptes. Gelukkig hoefde Pedro niet vaak schoon te maken, en soms deed Pedro het gewoon met afwasmiddel of zeep. Na een tijdje kwam de vrouw terug van het logeren en maakte kennis met Pedro. Ze was een overspannen geraakte botanicus, en had veel verstand van bomen. De vrouw was bezig geweest met een experiment om de bio-electriciteit van bomen voor allerlei dingen te gebruiken, en bij het laboratorium waar ze werkte hadden ze het zelfs

voor elkaar gekregen om voertuigen te laten rijden op boom-energie. Op een bepaalde wijze raakte Pedro diep geinteresseerd in haar verhalen. En ook de man vond het fijn om naar haar te luisteren. Ze had een erg rustgevende stem, en al snel was Pedro dikke vrienden met haar. Pedro durfde haar niet zoveel over zichzelf te vertellen, en gelukkig vroeg de vrouw daar ook niet naar. Ze had wat apparaatjes meegenomen met celletjes erin die op een soort kaartje zaten, en die vingen de boom-energie dan op. Samen met de vrouw ging Pedro weleens naar buiten. Het was altijd erg rustig in het bos. De vrouw vertelde hem ook over robotten die op boom-energie liepen. Op een dag nadat ze weer even een tijdje bij familie had gelogeerd nam ze er één voor Pedro mee. Het was een geschenk voor hem. Pedro kon zijn ogen nauwelijks geloven. De robot kon van alles doen, en je kon er zelfs een gesprek mee voeren. Het werd Pedro's beste vriendje, en al snel knapte Pedro erg op. Velen merkten hoe hij aan het veranderen was, en hij begon ook wandelingen met de robot te maken. De vrouw legde Pedro veel uit over hoe zo'n robot werd gemaakt, en na een tijdje werden er ook steeds meer van zulke robotten gebruikt. Het idee sloeg erg aan. Het bleek dat het gebruik van boom-energie erg goed was voor de

bomen zelf, en voor het milieu. Ook bleek de boom-energie erg goed en genezend te zijn voor het functioneren van het lichaam. En al snel werden er bij sommigen kleine capsules ingebouwd die boom-energie opvingen en gebruikten ter ondersteuning van het lichaam. Maar er kwam ook concurrentie op de markt. Zo bleken er ook al apparaten te zijn die op bloem-energie werkten, wespen-energie, spinnen-energie, vliegen-energie en zelfs lever-energie. Telkens merkten ze dat de energieen die gebruikt werden weer een voorspoedig effect hadden op hetgeen waarvan die energie was. Elke energie had z'n eigen frequentie, en kon door de instel van de juiste frequentie door een tuner makkelijk afgetapt worden. Zo begon men met allerlei natuur-electriciteiten te experimenteren en ze ook koppelend te gebruiken. En door de koppels kwamen er weer hele speciale energieen vrij, als een soort van positief bijprodukt. Pedro was erg enthousiast en schoolde zichzelf goed op deze gebieden, met name ook door de tussenkomst van de vrouw op z'n afdeling.
Op een dag kwam de vrouw aanzetten met een robot die op haaien-electriciteit werkte. De robot kon zwaar werk verrichten en werd vaak ingezet voor de bouw van huizen en gebouwen. Pedro was erg enthousiast, en niet lang

daarna had Pedro zelfs een klein voertuigje dat op haaien-energie werkte. In de ziekenhuizen kende men inmiddels de implantaten die op haaien-energie werkten. Vooral hen die om enige reden verlamd waren hadden veel baat bij deze apparaatjes. Pedro was erg trots op de dingen die hij inmiddels zelf kon maken, maar op een nacht had hij een erg akelige droom. In die droom werd hij bezocht door de heks Sausibir, die op hem begon te schelden. Even dacht hij dat alles fout ging, ook toen hij de volgende dag wakker werd, en een zwarte planeet boven het bos buiten zag hangen die alles scheen te verduisteren. Hij dacht dat hij het zichzelf weer allemaal verbeelde, en dacht ook dat het wel weer weg zou gaan als hij door zou gaan met het ontwikkelen van de natuur-technologie. Maar niets was minder waar. Ook anderen hadden de zwarte planeet gesignaleerd, en de duisternis ging niet weg. Wetenschappers zeiden dat het een zwarte zon was die zo'n sterke magnetische straling had dat de planeet vanaf nu om deze zon zou heentrekken. Er was veel paniek, want men zei dat het electrisch veld van deze zon de aarde zou aantasten en ook het leven op aarde. Velen begonnen een soort virus te vertonen dat het zwarte boom-virus heette. Het virus zou de hersencellen aantasten en

waanideeen brengen, als een soort van geestesziekte. Maar niet alleen dat, want ook het lichaam zou heel langzaam aftakelen onder de ergst mogelijke pijnen. Pedro was bang. Een groot deel van de bevolking was al door het virus aangetast, min of meer, en er was nog geen technologie of medicijn tegen opgewassen.
Er was iets in Pedro geknapt. Vele mensen gingen naar het ziekenhuis voor onderzoek. Achteraf scheen het mee te vallen, en werden wel degelijk mensen weer genezen, maar de duisternis bleef door de zwarte planeet, en er waren inmiddels velen door het virus omgekomen. Het leek wel alsof de aarde z'n scherven opraapte om door te gaan met dat wat overgebleven was. Na een korte tijd van herstel en opleving sloeg het virus opnieuw toe, harder dan ooit. De aarde werd naar de zwarte zon toegezogen, meer en meer, alsof het al cirkelend in de zwarte zon zou verdwijnen, zou oplossen. Zij die overgebleven waren, waren moe, en leden aan ernstige pijnen en aftakelingen. Het aardoppervlak was heter dan ooit tevoren.
Plotseling schrok Pedro wakker. Het was allemaal maar een droom. Het was net voordat de vrouw van de afdeling terug zou komen van het logeren bij familie. Pedro had zich er een beetje druk over gemaakt, omdat hij bang was

dat het misschien niet zou klikken, en eigenlijk was hij ook erg nieuwsgierig. Nu zou hij haar dan ontmoeten. Ze bleek heel anders te zijn dan in z'n dromen. Ze leek veel ouder, en was ook veel rustiger. Pedro had niet echt het gevoel dat hij contact met haar kon maken. Ze zei niet veel. Pedro vond het achteraf wel best zo. Geen vreemde technologieen, geen robotten, en geen zwarte zonnen die het leven op aarde onveilig zouden maken.

Hoofdstuk 2. De Schuilplaats

Pedro was bang geworden om te slapen. Als hij niet nog een keer zo gek zou dromen. Gelukkig was het de nachten erna erg rustig. Totdat hij op een nacht droomde over een zwarte hond die als door de ramen van zijn hoofd binnenkwam. Peter was stijf van de schrik, en kon zich niet bewegen toen hij wakker was geworden. Na een lange tijd kwam er een begeleider binnen die hem probeerde te troosten. Pedro kon maar moeilijk praten. De begeleider gaf hem een kopje water. Heel langzaam begon Pedro weer een beetje bij te komen. De begeleider vond het erg naar voor Pedro, maar moedigde hem aan om het weer te vergeten, en om door te gaan met z'n leven. De spanning omtrend de vrouw was nu voorbij, omdat hij nu wist wie en wat ze was. Pedro hoopte dat er voorlopig geen

nieuwelingen zouden komen. Hij merkte bij zichzelf dat hij steeds moeilijker tegen veranderingen kon. Het leek wel alsof elke verandering, hoe klein ook, z'n hart omdraaiden in z'n borstkas.
Pedro kon het goed vinden met z'n begeleiders. Nog steeds ging hij weleens met ze wandelen. Voor het eerst zou hij op een avond met een begeleider naar zee gaan. Hij verheugde zich er erg op. Als kind hield hij altijd al erg veel van de zee. De zee was erg rustig die avond, en ze maakten een lange strandwandeling. Plotseling draaide de begeleider zich naar pedro toe, en het leek alsof hij het gezicht van een zwarte hond had. Pedro schrok, maar dacht direkt dat het kwam omdat het al donker was. De begeleider pakte Pedro's hand vast, en er ging een rilling door Pedro heen. 'Pedro,' zei de begeleider, 'ik moet je wat vertellen. Ik ken je nu al geruime tijd, en ik vind dat je er erg op vooruit bent gegaan. We zijn nu bij de zee, en alles gaat goed. Je hebt geen last van wanen.' Pedro glimlachte. Die begeleider moest eens weten, maar goed, er was mee te leven, en Pedro hoefde het ook niet erger te maken dan het was. Toen haalde de begeleider een klein beeldje uit zijn zak. Het was een zwarte hond die op een soort schatkist zat. Pedro dacht even dat hij flauw zou vallen,

maar liet de man uitpraten. 'Dit is voor jou. Ik weet dat je laatst over een zwarte hond hebt gedroomd, de nachtmerrie, maar misschien zal dit je helpen. Waarom besluit je niet om er positief tegen aan te kijken ? Dromen horen ook bij het leven, en zelfs wanen. We wanen allemaal wel eens wat. Probeer er gewoon op een goede manier mee om te gaan. Zo van : 'okay, ik heb over een zwarte hond gedroomd. Er is niks verkeerds met een zwarte hond op zich.' Zet het gewoon op je nachtkastje en leer het accepteren.'
Maar ineens werd Pedro onwel. En een verschrikkelijke angst beklom hem. 'Nee,' schreeuwde hij in paniek, 'nee.' De begeleider wist direkt dat het allemaal te ver voor Pedro was gegaan. Het was teveel voor hem. Pedro rende weg, en de begeleider rende achter hem aan. 'Doe dat ding weg,' gilde Pedro. 'Ik kan er niet tegen.' De begeleider kon nu niet meer zeggen dat Pedro maar met z'n angst voor zwarte honden moest leren omgaan. Dat werkte simpelweg niet bij Pedro. Hard rende Pedro terug naar de afdeling. Een andere begeleider ving hem op, en Pedro vertelde hem het verhaal. Na een paar dagen hoorde Pedro dat de begeleider die hem het beeldje wilde geven was ontslagen. Pedro vroeg zich af waarom. Hem werd verteld

dat het een religieus beeldje was uit Egypte. En dat was ongeoorloofd op de afdeling. Er stond duidelijk in de regels dat de begeleiders ten eerste geen religieuze dingen aan patienten mochten opleggen, en ten tweede mochten ze geen persoonlijke cadeautjes geven. Er was ook nog een derde reden waarom de man was ontslagen. De patienten mochten niet geconfronteerd worden met hun angsten. De patienten moesten afgeleid worden en beschermd, zo was de therapeutische benadering. Pedro vond het aan de ene kant te ver gaan, dat deze begeleider daarom was ontslagen, en had spijt dat hij het doorverteld had, maar aan de andere kant voelde Pedro zich bedreigd, ook al bedoelde de man het goed. Pedro zocht bescherming, en die had hij op deze manier dubbel en dwars gevonden.
De opvolger van de desbetreffende begeleider was een vrouw. Pedro kon erg goed gesprekken met haar voeren, en die gesprekken gingen nogal diep. De vrouw was lid van een religieuze beweging die 'De Groene Verlichting' heette. Dat was een beweging die geloofde dat de bomen de aarde zou overnemen, de plantegroei, en dat de aarde weer geheel plantaardig, botanisch, zou worden, alle levende wezens. Pedro wist niet goed wat hij er van

denken moest. De vrouw moest natuurlijk goed ervoor zorgen dat zij Pedro niets opdrong, want dan zou ze in hetzelfde lot vallen als de vorige begeleider. In de reglementen stond dat de begeleiders wel religieus mochten zijn, en dat ze best wel dingen over hun persoonlijke leven mochten vertellen aan hen die ze begeleiden, als de situatie zich zou voordoen, maar ze mochten hen absoluut geen deel laten hebben in hun privé-leven. De beweging van de Groene Verlichting zou steeds meer groeien op aarde, en Pedro kwam erachter dat meerdere begeleiders van deze beweging lid waren. Maar diep erop ingaan wilde Pedro niet, en zorgde er altijd voor dat het onderwerp snel weer over iets anders ging, en ook de desbetreffende begeleiders lieten er niet al te veel over los. Eén van de nachtdiensten waar Pedro regelmatig goede gesprekken mee had was niet religieus. Zij vond de beweringen van de Groene Verlichting maar geklets. Zij geloofde dat alles zou vergaan, zowel mens, dier als plant, en dan zou alles in het niets oplossen. Zij van de Groene Verlichting geloofden dat zij die botanisch geworden waren eeuwig zouden leven. Wel vond de nachtdienst dat je oudere mensen hun geloof nooit moest afpakken, want dat hadden ze misschien nodig op hun oude dag, om niet

zo bang te zijn voor de dood, en omdat het voor oudere mensen veel te moeilijk zou zijn en veel te ingrijpend om nog van standpunt of geloof te moeten veranderen. Pedro had eigenlijk geen standpunten. Hij hoorde al die verhalen maar aan.
Op een nacht werd Pedro badend in het zweet wakker. Hij had weer zo raar gedroomd. Plotseling keek hij naar zijn handen, en zag dat z'n armen bijna als takken waren geworden, en dat er bladeren aan groeiden. Maar toen hij ineens wakker schrok wist hij dat hij dit alles gedroomd had. Hij moest het maar niet meer over zware dingen hebben als religieuze overtuiging of levensstandpunt. De begeleiding reageerde daar direkt positief op. Maar het begon steeds vaker voor te komen dat Pedro 's nachts het gevoel had dat hij in een plant of boom aan het veranderen was. Op een nacht schrok hij wakker. Er zat een lange man vlakbij de muur, dichtbij z'n bed, en die man had boomachtige ledematen, als takken met bladeren. De man had een donkere groenachtige kleur, en Pedro zette het op een gillen. 'Ga mijn kamer uit,' schreeuwde Pedro. Maar de man bewoog niet. Toen Pedro het licht aandeed bleek het slechts zijn badjas te zijn die aan de muur hing. Ja, vergissingen kunnen gebeuren. Pedro zweette. Wanneer

zou dit eens ophouden ?
Na enige jaren woonde Pedro weer op zichzelf. Op een dag werd er aangebeld. Het bleek iemand van de Groene Verlichting te zijn. Ze gingen de huizen langs om over hun geloof te vertellen en om leden te werven. Maar Pedro wilde er niets mee te maken hebben. De man van de beweging begon erg agressief te doen, dat als Pedro niet zou luisteren, dan zou zijn lot de vernietiging zijn. Pedro vond dat nogal intimiderend, en waarschuwde de man dat als hij niet zou stoppen, dan zou Pedro de politie bellen. De man drukte Pedro boos een folder in z'n vingers en vertrok met de woorden : 'Dan moet je het zelf maar weten.' Pedro vouwde een vliegtuigje van het foldertje en gooide het de man achterna, die al bijna uit zicht was verdwenen. Pedro wilde absoluut niets met dit soort zaken te maken hebben, omdat hij geen terugval wilde krijgen. Pedro moest juist los proberen te komen van dit soort dingen. Pedro liet een sticker op zijn deur aanbrengen om dit soort dingen buiten de deur te houden. Op de televisie waren er vaak programma's over of van de Groene Verlichting. Het was één van de snelst groeiende religies op aarde. Er waren zelfs al zenders van de Groene Verlichting. Pedro keek daarom niet vaak naar de televisie.

Sommige groepen binnen de Groene Verlichting waren erg agressief en sommige groepen waren erg conservatief. Wat dat betrefd waren er veel verschillen binnen de beweging. Er was één beweging binnen de Groene Verlichting die zo extreem was dat ze geloofden dat ze hen die niet van de Groene Verlichting waren moesten uitroeien. Gelukkig was die beweging erg klein, maar anderen zeiden dat in het geheim die beweging veel groter was dan ze dachten. De beweging zou veelal ondergronds werken, en in diepe list. Er werd gewaarschuwd voor aanslagen vanuit deze groep, die de zwarte groenen werden genoemd.
Pedro wist dat hij in gevaar was, omdat hij niet lid was van de beweging. Maar er was zelfs één harde kern binnen de zwarte groenen die geloofden dat een ieder die niet lid was van de zwarte groenen, die moest uitgeroeid worden, openlijk of subtiel. Er werd beweerd dat zelfs de regering leden had die van deze harde kern waren, maar bewijs was daar nog niet voor geleverd. En deze regeringsleden zouden de hand boven de hoofden van sommige geweldadige acties hebben gehouden, en er zelfs ruimte voor geven. Pedro wilde niet het doelwit worden van terroristen. Wat kon hij doen ? Een hond nemen, of lid worden van de Groene Verlichting voor eigen veiligheid ?

Pedro was bang voor honden, dus dat viel eigenlijk al af, maar omdat Pedro nog wel banger was voor aanslagen, en absoluut geen huichelaar wilde zijn door uit angst 'gelovig' te worden, koos hij voor een hond. Hij ging naar een asiel en kocht daar een zwarte hond. Al snel werd Pedro beste maatjes met het beest, en de hond was erg waaks. Maar op een dag vond Pedro de hond dood in zijn mand. De dierenarts constateerde vergiftiging. En zo kocht Pedro een andere hond, die ook ten prooi viel aan vergiftiging, en zelfs in een derde geval gebeurde dit. Pedro wist dat ze het op hem gemunt hadden, en begon sterk te vermoeden dat de man die bij hem aan de deur kwam van de zwarte groenen was. Ze hadden Pedro natuurlijk al op een lijst gezet. Wat kon Pedro doen ? Verhuizen ? De zwarte groenen waren overal.
Op een dag kwam er een andere vrouw bij Pedro aan de deur. Het bleek iemand van de Groene Verlichting te zijn. Pedro wees op de sticker en zei : 'Kunt u niet lezen ?' De vrouw verontschuldigde zich en zei dat ze dat over het hoofd had gezien. Maar omdat de vrouw zo vriendelijk was en zo zacht bij Pedro overkwam liet hij haar binnen. De vrouw bleek van een conservatieve groep te zijn binnen de Groene Verlichting. Zij keurde ook streng de

werken van de zwarte groenen af. De vrouw was zich ervan bewust dat de harde kern binnen de zwarte groenen een gevaar voor haar en haar conservatieve groep waren, en ze vertelde Pedro over een schuilplaats die ze hadden, onder de grond. Zij die zich bedreigd voelden konden daar komen wonen. Het was een samenlevingsverband, en ook anderen buiten de Groene Verlichting werden geaccepteerd. Pedro zag dat op een bepaalde wijze wel zitten, en al snel besloot hij over te verhuizen. Het was een streng bewaakte stad onder de grond, die uitliep in het bos. Boven de grond kwamen aanslagen inmiddels op grote schaal voor.
Bij de schuilplaats aangekomen werd Pedro naar een speciale afdeling gebracht voor niet-gelovigen. Pedro kreeg een ruime kamer toegezegd, maar al snel kwam hij erachter dat het een val was. Hij kon zijn kamer niet meer uit. Op de muur was een scherm, als een soort televisie. 'Welkom bij de Groene Verlichting. Voor de veiligheid hebben wij uw kamer op slot gedaan. Dit is maar voor even. We willen eerst een aantal dingen van u weten.' Onder het scherm was er een ja en nee knop, en zo moest Pedro eerst een ellenlange vragenlijst beantwoorden. Aan het einde van de lijst ging zijn kamerdeur weer open.

Pedro was erg opgelucht. Maar dat was maar van korte duur. De voorzieningen waren erg zwak, en er werd telkens een beroep op hem gedaan om lid te worden van de Groene Verlichting voor betere voorzieningen. In Pedro's ogen was dit dus een soort rassenonderscheid. Gelovigen hadden veel meer rechten. Pedro besloot om maar genoegen te nemen met de zwakke voorzieningen. Maar op een dag stond er een soldaat in zwart en groen voor zijn deur met een zwarte hond. De man droeg een geweer, en liet Pedro kiezen tussen de dood en de Groene Verlichting. Die keuze was dus snel gemaakt. Pedro moest de kamer uit, om plaats te maken voor een nieuwe ongelovige. Pedro was nu opgenomen in de ledenlijst van de Groene Verlichting. Hij kreeg een klein appartementje in een ander deel van de ondergrondse stad, waar hij met een soort van metro naartoe werd vervoerd. Het was er erg donker, maar er waren meerdere en betere voorzieningen over het algemeen. Toch was alles erg stoffig, droog en donker, en Pedro voelde zich er niet op z'n gemak. De buurt was ook duister, en de lift in het gebouw was oud, en leek Pedro zelfs gevaarlijk. Er zat geen alarm bij, dus wat zou er gebeuren als de lift vastliep. Na wat verkenning kwam Pedro weer terug in z'n donkere appartementje. Er

lag een brief op tafel, waarop stond dat als Pedro betere voorzieningen wilde, dan moest Pedro lid worden van de uitgaande Groene Verlichting, zij die langs de huizen zouden gaan om leden te werven. Dat leek Pedro niks, maar hij kon niet anders. Hij vertrouwde zijn huidige buurt voor geen cent.
Er stond bij waar Pedro de brief kon inleveren als hij hogerop wilde. Na de brief ingeleverd te hebben kreeg Pedro een seintje dat hij kon komen met z'n spullen. Hij kreeg doorgang in het appartement waar hij de brief had afgeleverd, en kwam weer in een metro terecht. Ditmaal kwam hij in een lichter deel van de ondergrondse stad terecht. Hij kreeg een ruim appartement, en er waren gezamenlijke gangen en zalen waar hij medebewoners van dit stadsdeel kon ontmoeten. Hij wist zeker dat er onder de anderen ook lieden tussenzaten die net als hem noodgedwongen waren hier te komen. Pedro voelde zich min of meer ontvoerd, maar hij was in ieder geval tot nu toe veilig. Er mocht geen persoonlijke informatie worden uitgedeeld, anders zou dat leiden tot verwijdering. Er moest doelmatig worden gewerkt voor ledenwerving.
Pedro kwam in een soort klas terecht, waar hij verder onderwezen zou worden. Hij was niets meer dan een

nummer, met een opgelegde identiteit. Pedro keek wel eens links en rechts naar zijn mede-klasgenoten. Misschien dat hun ogen meer zouden verraden ? De sfeer was zowel gespannen als rustgevend. Pedro was blij dat hij beschermd werd, maar voor hoe lang ? Na een tijdje was het voor hem dan de eerste keer om langs de huizen te gaan. Hij werd ingedeeld naast een vrouw. De vrouw zei niet veel. Misschien was ze ook wel bang om teveel te zeggen. Ze durfde hem ook nauwelijks aan te kijken. Bij het eerste huis werd de deur direkt weer voor hen dichtgesmeten. Na een tijdje werd het de vrouw teveel, en ze rende weg. Pedro wist direkt dat zij ook een slachtoffer was. Na een tijdje kwam ze weer terug met gebogen hoofd. Ze wist dat het leven buiten voor haar veel gevaarlijker was. Maar aangekomen bij de toegangslift voor de ondergrondse stad werd ze geweigerd. Werden ze dan ook al boven de grond in de gaten gehouden ? Pedro mocht wel naar binnen, maar wist dat als hij afwijkend gedrag zou tonen, dan zou hij ook geweigerd worden. Pedro besloot zijn hoofd koel te houden, en gewoon zijn plicht te doen. Wat kon hij anders ? Maar hij had meer en meer het gevoel dat hij van zijn eigen identiteit werd beroofd. Hij voelde zich worden als een plant. Op een

gegeven moment tijdens de ledenwervingen werd het hem teveel, en rende weg, net zoals de vrouw waar hij eens mee werkte. Zou ze nog leven ? Hij wist dat er voor hem nu geen weg meer terugwas. Hij besloot naar het bos te gaan.
Na een lange zwerftocht kwam hij bij een boshuisje aan. Stilletjes sloop hij naar binnen. Zou er iemand wonen. Opeens werd hij van achteren op z'n hoofd geslagen. Na een tijdje werd hij wakker in een bed. Een vrouw zat bij z'n bed. 'Het spijt me dat ik je neer moest slaan. Ik wilde geen risico lopen.' De vrouw was er achter gekomen dat ook hij een ontsnapte was. Ze vertelde hem dat zij en haar zusters hier woonden. Op de grond kronkelde een grote slang. Pedro schrok, maar de vrouw zei dat het gewoon een huisdier was. Na een tijdje kwamen ook de andere vrouwen thuis. Ze besloten dat Pedro wel bij hen mocht wonen zo lang. Maar Pedro vertrouwde het niet helemaal. Hij wilde niet het slachtoffer worden van iets nieuws. De vrouwen gedroegen zich vreemd. Toen Pedro vertelde dat hij liever verder het bos in wilde greep één van de vrouwen een geweer van de muur af, en richtte het op hem. 'Er gaat hier niemand weg,' zei de vrouw. 'We kunnen jouw veel te goed gebruiken.' Pedro vroeg zich af

waarvoor. Hij had nog steeds erg veel pijn in zijn hoofd, en ging weer liggen. Eén van de vrouwen haalde wat water voor hem. Midden in de nacht werd Pedro wakker, maar merkte dat de vrouwen hem met riemen aan het bed hadden vastgemaakt. Wat had dit nu weer te betekenen ? 'Psst,' fluisterde één van de vrouwen vanuit het donker, 'ze zijn veel te bang dat je ons gaat verraden. Daarom laten ze je niet gaan.' Langzaam kroop ze naar hem toe, en ging naast hem liggen op het bed. 'Maar ik kan je wel helpen. Als je mij mee wil nemen, dan maak ik je los.' Pedro stemde toe. De vrouw maakte hem los, en stilletjes liepen ze naar buiten. Pedro vroeg zich af wat hij met de vrouw moest, maar was tegelijkertijd dankbaar dat zij hem los had gemaakt. Samen gingen ze nog dieper het bos in. Pedro vroeg zich af waarom de vrouw met hem mee wilde in plaats van bij de vrouwen te blijven. De vrouw vertelde hem dat haar zussen erg vervelend waren naar haar, dat zij altijd het meeste werk moest doen, en dat ze haar vernederden. Ze stierf nog liever dan daar te blijven. Maar Pedro had geen zin om met haar op te trekken. Hij dacht na over hoe hij van haar af kon komen, maar kreeg toen weer medelijden met haar, en wilde eerst een goede plek voor haar vinden. Terug naar de schuilplaats van de

Groene Verlichting kon ze ook niet, want ze was al eens ontsnapt, net als haar zusters. Pedro besloot naar een andere plaats te gaan, waar ze hem niet kenden, maar zeker weten deed hij natuurlijk toch nooit. In een dorpje achter het bos meldde hij zich aan, samen met de vrouw. Ze kregen allebei vrij snel een huisje toegewezen, en Pedro dacht dat hij wel opnieuw zou kunnen beginnen. Maar na een tijdje begon hij vreemde dreigbrieven te krijgen, en voor Pedro zat er niets anders op om hulp te zoeken bij de afdeling waar hij patient was geweest. Ze waren erg behulpzaam naar hem, en al snel kon hij daar terecht. De oude man en de vrouw woonden daar nog steeds. Ze waren blij hem te zien, maar verder zeiden ze niet veel. Hier voelde Pedro zich het veiligst.

Hoofdstuk 3. De Laser

Ook de begeleiding daar was blij Pedro na al die tijd weer te zien. Op een nacht had Pedro een vreemde droom waarin mannen met groene gezichten naar de aarde kwamen om zich te verspreiden. Maar Pedro probeerde het zo snel weer te vergeten. Iedereen droomde wel eens, dacht hij. Maar de droom kwam steeds vaker terug en werd steeds enger. Pedro merkte dat hij deze afdeling was ontgroeid. Hij kon zich hier als het ware niet meer aarden,

en besloot na een paar weken weer te vertrekken. Pedro besloot weer terug te gaan naar het huis waar hij de dreigbrieven kreeg, maar hij kreeg een ander huis toegewezen. Ook besloot Pedro weer een hond te kopen, en ditmaal liet hij de hond niet meer alleen buiten in een kooi, maar bleef de hond binnen. Pedro wilde geen risico lopen op vergiftiging. Al snel werden Pedro en de hond dikke maatjes. Er kwamen hier geen dreigbrieven, maar Pedro was wel op z'n hoede. Pedro begon te merken dat z'n boomziekte weer aan het opkomen was. Hij kon maar moeilijk spreken, moeilijk bewegen, en had neigingen om flauw te vallen. Na een paar dagen lag Pedro met hoge koorts op bed, en vocht voor z'n leven. Op de televisie werd er gesproken van gasaanvallen op de ongelovige samenleving. Pedro voelde zich geforceerd om weer lid te worden van de Groene Verlichting voor z'n eigen veiligheid. Door z'n ontsnapping was hij automatisch uitgeschreven, en terug naar de ondergrondse stad kon hij niet en wilde hij niet. Hij besloot zich via een telefoonnummer op de televisie in te schrijven bij een erg gematigde groep van de Groene Verlichting. Dat zou de woede van de harde kern misschien iets verlichten, ook al liep hij dan nog steeds gevaar. Hij kon zich natuurlijk ook

laten inschrijven bij de zwarte groenen, dan was hij direkt van al het gezeur af. Uiteindelijk besloot hij dat maar te doen. Hij had geen andere keus. Een dag erna kwam er een man bij hem aan de deur in zwart pak. De man plaatste wat apparatuur in Pedro's huis, maar wilde niet zeggen wat voor apparatuur het was. Pedro, die inmiddels alweer bijna beter was, werd een beetje boos op de man, en gebood hem uitleg te geven. De man gaf hem een foldertje. Maar Pedro kon van dat foldertje niets wijzer worden. De man zei dat elk lid van de zwarte groenen zulke apparatuur in huis kreeg, wat ervoor zou zorgen dat er geen schadelijke gassen binnen zouden komen. Het was een soort afweer-systeem. Pedro vond het allemaal best, als hij maar veilig was.
Pedro wist dat hij nu bij een duister genootschap aangesloten was, maar hij kon niet anders. Hij hoopte maar dat ze niet zoveel van hem zouden vragen, en dat het dus gewoon bij een slapend lidmaatschap bleef. Pedro besloot het foldertje van de apparatuur nog eens te lezen. Het ging over verschillende boom-electriciteiten die door de apparatuur werd opgevangen en uitgezonden. Zo ging het om bepaalde energieen van de zwarte bomen, groene bomen, en ook rode en gele bomen. Om welke bomen het

precies ging stond er niet bij. De verschillende kleuren waren gewoon schuilnamen voor bekende bomen. Pedro keek nog eens naar de apparatuur. Er zaten roze lampjes bij, die soms knipperden, groene lampjes, rode lampjes en zwarte lampjes. Pedro vond het maar griezelig, want wie weet werd hij wel afgeluisterd of op een andere manier in de gaten gehouden. Voorlopig was hij in ieder geval veilig. Wekelijks kreeg hij een blad binnen, een soort magazine van de zwarte groenen, maar daar stond niet echt veel in, en Pedro vond het dan ook niet echt een probleem om die bladen thuis te hebben. Het leken op een bepaalde manier erg natuurvriendelijke bladen, en Pedro kon er niets agressiefs in bespeuren.

Op een dag werd Pedro opgeroepen voor een onderzoek in een gebouw in een ander dorp. Pedro moest zijn mond opendoen voor een apparaat, en er werden foto's gemaakt. Toen mocht hij weer gaan. Na een paar dagen kwam er weer een man langs met een zwart pak. De man vertelde Pedro dat hij was geselecteerd om langs de huizen te gaan voor de zwarte groenen. Hij mocht niet praten over de zwarte groenen, maar moest zeggen dat hij het gedachtengoed van de groene verlichting bracht. Hij mocht absoluut niet agressief overkomen. Verder zou het

allemaal erg oppervlakkig blijven, en Pedro hoefde maar eens per maand te verschijnen, en dan in een ander dorp. Pedro stemde hierin toe. Wel kwam er nog bij dat hij wat cursussen moest volgen over huisbezoek. En zo ging dat een tijdje door, en alles ging redelijk goed. Pedro bracht de boodschap zo objectief mogelijk, en vertelde niet dat hij van de zwarte groenen was. Diep in zijn hart was hij dat ook helemaal niet, dus hij had er vrede mee. Maar na een periode kreeg Pedro een brief thuis waarin stond dat hij geselecteerd was voor werk in het buitenland. En dit keer ging het niet om huisbezoek, maar om trainingen te geven aan pasbekeerden. De trainingen gingen nogal diep, en hadden zelfs het agressieve karakter waar Pedro altijd zo bang voor was geweest. Pedro weigerde, maar tegelijkertijd vroeg hij om een wat geschiktere baan voor hem. Er werd erg vriendelijk op Pedro's brief gereageerd, en bijgesloten was er een folder waarop Pedro de verschillende mogelijkheden zag. Er werden nog lieden gevraagd voor een laboratorium dat experimenteerde met boom-electriciteiten, en Pedro besloot op die vacature in te gaan. Het centrum was niet zo ver bij Pedro vandaan, en Pedro werd direkt aangenomen. Op de afdeling zou hij ook een kamer krijgen, en hij mocht zelf uitkiezen welke

tijden hij wilde werken. Verder had Pedro veel vrije tijd, zodat hij het gevoel had dat het hem niet opslokte. Maar Pedro vond het reuze interessant, want hier leerde hij hoe de boom-energieen op het lichaam inwerkten, en waar het allemaal voor gebruikt kon worden. Pedro bleek een goede aanwinst voor het laboratorium te zijn. Hij had enorme werkenthousiasme, en vond veel dingen uit. Het bleek dat hij een talent had op dit gebied. Pedro begon boeken te schrijven, die nogal aansloegen bij het publiek van de Groene Verlichting. En stukje bij beetje werd Pedro een autoriteit op het gebied van boom-electriciteit en de daarbij horende techniek, wat gezien werd als één van de basissen van de Groene Verlichting. Het hele idee van de Groene Verlichting stond bij Pedro erg op de achtergrond, zoveel mogelijk, want Pedro was absoluut niet religieus aangelegd. Pedro was geinteresseerd in de technische kant van het leven, met bomen als waardig medicijn en hulpmiddel voor de samenleving. Pedro kwam erachter welke boom-energieen de hersenen bestuurden, en de emoties, en het geweten, en zijn ontdekkingen werden gezien als revolutionair. Pedro kon het erg goed vinden met zijn collega's, en over de zwarte groenen werd eigenlijk nooit gesproken. Pedro had ook niet het idee dat

zijn collega's daarbij hoorden, en het centrum was een onafhankelijk centrum voor onderzoek. Pedro zag het gewoon als een bepaalde tak van de wetenschap, maar dan enorm zelfstandig en onafhankelijk. Pedro hield van dat woord.
Al gauw kwam Pedro erachter dat verschillende boom-energieen verantwoordelijk waren voor het religieuze denken. De ene mens was hiervoor gevoeliger dan de ander, en dat had ook te maken met de omliggende omstandigheden. Soms werd men daarin gewoon gedwongen, en Pedro had ook al ontdekt welke boom-energieen voor dwangmatigheden zorgden en voor manipulatie en zelfs dictatuur. Pedro stelde zich erg mild op. Hij wilde weten wat de drijfveer was van deze energieen. Zij hadden natuurlijk een bron en een doel, en misschien werden zij ook weer door andere boom-electriciteiten beinvloed. Het bleek een spel te zijn van electriciteiten, een wisselwerking, een samenhang, en de creativiteit wat dat met zich meebracht. Het bleek zich na verloop van tijd allemaal te verfijnen, en te ontwikkelen, totdat een nieuwe stroom van frequencies opstak om allereerst chaos te brengen. Die chaos was als een soort protest, als een basis voor een opkomst van een over het

hoofd geziende energie. De bestaande hierarchie werd ontmaskerd als een cocon voor nieuwe botanische patronen. Zo zou er vanuit de chaos en de onderdrukking langzaamaan een nieuwe orde ontstaan. Het centrum werkte nauw samen met het ziekenhuis. Pedro was erg blij met z'n nieuwe baan.
Op een nacht had Pedro een droom. Een stem zei tegen hem : 'Pedro, geloof jij dat de vibraties van jouw stem de vibraties zijn van bomen ? Zij hebben in jou een stem, en door jouw werk worden hun energieen gerankschikt en functioneel gemaakt. Ja, jij bent de schoot der bomen.' Pedro schrok wakker en probeerde het weg te wimpelen. Hij was natuurlijk zo druk met z'n werk dat dit was gebeurd. Hij geloofde niet dat bomen een persoonlijkheid hadden. Ze waren natuurlijk wel functioneel als energiebronnen, net zoals de zon en de sterren, net zoals het water en de wind. Pedro kende natuurlijk wel de primitieve religies die deze energiebronnen als goden vereerden, maar zover wilde Pedro niet gaan. Hij had het niet zo op met al die zweverigheid. Het was al erg genoeg dat hij een gedwongen lidmaatschap bij de zwarte groenen had, die hij zag als een groep extremistische fanatiekelingen. En hij wist zeker dat als hij de banden

met hen zou breken, dan zou hij eraan gaan. Die lui waren bloedserieus.
Veel veranderingen waren er in de regering. Veel conservatievelingen binnen de Groene Verlichting kwamen aan de macht, iets wat Pedro een beter idee vond dan al die vreemde en gevaarlijke zwarte groenen die vaak in het geheim werkten. De nieuwe president had zo'n afschuw tegen de zwarte groenen, dat hij een onderzoek liet doen door het hele land. Zij die van de zwarte groenen bleken te zijn hing gevangenisstraf boven het hoofd, vooral als het bleek dat ze misdaden op hun naam hadden staan. De president vond de opstelling van de zwarte groenen al tijden een gevaar voor het land. Bij invallen kwamen er al snel ledenlijsten aan het licht, en ook de naam van Pedro werd gevonden. Pedro moest voorkomen bij een speciaal daarvoor ingerichte rechtbank. Met een kleine standaardboete kwam hij daar vanaf, omdat hij gedwongen lid was. Hij was zoals ze dat noemden het slachtoffer van geestelijke ontvoering. Pedro kon zijn werk al snel weer voortzetten, en werd voor zijn werk geprezen. Al snel was de rust in het land teruggekeerd, en de slachtoffers van geestelijke ontvoering door de zwarte groenen kregen goede hulp en opvang. Pedro kon zich

helemaal storten op zijn werk. Hij zag niet echt gevaar in de conservatieve orde van de Groene Verlichting. Veel ideeen kon hij wel aanhangen op een bepaalde wijze, en zo bleef de vriendschap tussen Pedro en het genootschap voortbestaan. Pedro hoefde absoluut geen lid meer te zijn. De president vond dat onzin, omdat er een vrijheid van levensovertuiging bestond. En een naam zei bijvoorbeeld ook helemaal niks. Iedereen moest leren zijn eigen identiteit te vinden binnen de afgrenzende normen en waarden.
Pedro vond uit dat de ademhaling niet alleen door zuurstof, de oxygene, ging, maar ook wanneer de longen waren ingesteld op de boom-energieen die daarvoor bestonden. Het bleek dat elke long daarin uniek was, en vaak scheen het dat er wel middelen waren om de long op dat gebied te verfijnen. Zo waren er ook boom-electriciteiten die zo ontwikkeld waren dat ze andere boom-electriciteiten konden opvangen voor bijvoorbeeld de ademhaling. Het lichaam kon zo klaargemaakt worden om een zogenaamde boomcapsule te ontvangen, die zich in de longen vestigde, of erop, en zo de benodigde adem-energieen van de bomen kon opvangen. Dit ging dan door het instellen als een tuner op de golflengtes van die

energieen en niet eens zozeer door de pomp der longen, het inademen. Zo kon de long ook werken als een ontvanger, als een soort radio, naast het hele pompgebeuren. Die boomcapsules konden soms zo krachtig zijn dat er gewoon mee onder water geleefd kon worden voor een lange tijd, zonder dat dat schade toebracht aan het lichaam of fataal afliep. Zo waren er ook capsules die door bomen werden afgegeven om zich in het hart te vestigen voor een zo natuurgetrouw mogelijke hartslag. Pedro had een boomlaser ontwikkeld waarmee hij dit soort capsules eenvoudig kon installeren in de verschillende lichaamsdelen voor optimaal functioneren. Ook had hij daarvoor een scanner laten bouwen, zodat de capsules in beeld gebracht konden worden. Vaak liet hij degenen die op die manier behandeld waren terugkomen om te kijken of de capsule nog steeds aanwezig was.

Hoofdstuk 4. De Staatsgreep

Maar op een dag was er een staatsgreep in het gebouw van de president. Het waren de zwarte groenen, en de president werd door één van hen neergeschoten. Ze hadden hun gezichten groengeverfd, en ze hadden zwarte honden bij zich. Alles was op televisie te volgen, en de burgers werden opgeroepen om weerstand te bieden. Het

liep uit op een burgeroorlog. Velen vochten aan de kant van de zwarte groenen, meer nog dan Pedro had verwacht. Het had zo'n lange tijd gesluimerd. Ook de televisiezenders werden overgenomen, en van de Groene Verlichting mocht niet eens meer gesproken worden. Iedereen moest lid worden van de zwarte groenen of het met de dood bekopen. Ook velen in het leger bleken van de zwarte groenen te zijn, en na een tijdje was de gehele staatsgreep geschiedt en geslaagd. Pedro wist dat er voor hem niets anders opzat om maar weer voor de zwarte groenen te kiezen, maar ditmaal had het veel zwaardere consequenties. Pedro moest het leger in, en meevechten met de zwarte groenen. In andere landen vonden ook staatsgrepen plaats, maar sommigen van de grootste landen hadden nog steeds een conservatief beleid, en het zou oorlog worden. Dit was voor Pedro onaanvaardbaar daar hij gewetensbezwaren had tegen het leger. Hij stierf nog liever, maar een andere mogelijkheid zou zijn om zich als zieke op te geven bij een afdeling. Hij kon weer bij z'n oude afdeling terecht. De oude man en de vrouw die hij daarvan kende leefden inmiddels niet meer, en er waren twee nieuwen ervoor in de plaats gekomen. De oude begeleiding bestond niet meer. Er deden daar zwarte

groenen dienst. Inmiddels hadden de landen die in de handen van de zwarte groenen gekomen waren zich verenigd tot een oorlog tegen de grootmachten. Vele ongelovigen waren omgebracht en in sommige speciale gevallen vastgezet. Gelukkig was er voor Pedro de mogelijkheid om op de ziekenafdeling waar hij was door te gaan met zijn onderzoek. Het was alsof de zwarte groenen wel heil in hem zagen, en het viel Pedro op dat de zwarte groenen opmerkelijk vriendelijk en beleefd naar hem waren. Soms kwam er wel eens een hogere functie van het gehele ziekenorgaan langs bij Pedro om wat vragen te stellen. Ze leken Pedro bijna te vereren. Pedro werd bijna een beetje verlegen van de aandacht. En alhoewel het een beetje vreemd aanvoelde, maakte het hem rustig. Pedro ging door met het schrijven van boeken, en alles begon weer een beetje in rustiger vaarwater te komen. Hij hield zich eigenlijk helemaal niet met het nieuws bezig en verder vroegen ze hier helemaal niks van hem. Wel namen zijn begeleiders soms wel eens wat rapporten van Pedro mee van de onderzoeken die hij had gedaan. Wat ze daar verder mee deden, dat wist Pedro niet. Op een dag kwam er een begeleider bij Pedro op z'n kamer. Het was iemand van de zwarte groenen. Hij had

een ernstige blik in zijn ogen. 'Pedro, de presidenten van de tegenstandige landen zijn omgebracht. Ook de functionarissen die niet met ons willen samenwerken zijn omgebracht en in sommige uitzonderlijke gevallen vastgezet. De aarde is nu van de zwarte groenen. Ik wilde dat jij dit zou weten.' Pedro was geschokt, maar wist dat dit zou gebeuren. Hij had het met al zijn technologieen niet kunnen voorkomen. Pedro raakte diep depressief, ook naarmate hij meerdere dingen hoorde over de werken van de zwarte groenen wereldwijd. Hij besloot te stoppen met zijn onderzoek, omdat hij er geen heil in zag. De begeleiders respecteerden zijn keuze. Ze wisten dat hij rust nodig had. Pedro was in hun ogen ernstig ziek, maar verder briljant van geest. Van zijn onderzoeksrapporten maakten ze boeken, naast de andere boeken die hij had geschreven, en het werd één van de grootste boekenlijnen op de boekenmarkten van de zwarte groenen. Pedro was in ieder geval blij dat het ook aansloeg bij de zwarte groenen. Hopelijk zouden ze er ooit nog eens lering uittrekken, maar hoop op verandering had Pedro eigenlijk weinig tot niets. Pedro legde zich neer bij de nieuwe wereldregering, de nieuwe wereldorde. Hij hield zich nu eigenlijk alleen nog maar bezig met zijn ziek zijn, en probeerde te leven

met dat wat hij nog had. Hij hield van de kleine dingen van het leven, en was daar tevreden mee. Het leek alsof zijn depressies begonnen te verminderen op sommige momenten, maar andere momenten zakte hij weer diep weg, ja, ook in angst voor de toekomst, angst voor dat wat zou kunnen komen. Ja, grote angst had hij voor de harde kernen binnen de beweging, en hun geheime diepere kernen. Wat zouden ze met hem gaan doen ?
Pedro keek naar buiten, naar de bomen. De natuur was nog steeds prachtig, ja, dat wel. De zwarte groenen hadden niets tegen de natuur. Pedro zou hier de rest van zijn leven wel willen blijven. Waar moest hij anders naartoe ? Op een dag was er iemand op het kantoor van de begeleiding gekomen. Het was een wetenschapper, die diep geinteresseerd was in de ideeen van Pedro, door de boeken die Pedro had geschreven. De man had een kado voor Pedro. Het was een robot die geheel liep op de verschillende boom-energieen, en waar Pedro zelfs mee zou kunnen praten. Een begeleider kwam het kado brengen. 'Ja, zet hem maar in de hoek van de kamer,' zei Pedro. De robot scheen veel van Pedro af te weten, en al gauw begon Pedro het eng te vinden. Een begeleider voerde de robot weer af. Als het te persoonlijk werd, vond

Pedro het al snel eng worden, vooral als het over zijn verleden ging. Hoe dieper ze wisten door te tasten, hoe enger het voor Pedro werd. Pedro had rust nodig, en wilde zijn identiteit nog meer afbakenen. Op een dag besloot Pedro eens vermomd een kijkje in de buitenwereld te nemen. Wat was het hier veranderd, zeg. In de winkels kon je betalen door je arm in een automaat te steken, en dan werden er allerlei soorten boom-energieen afgetapt. De automaat had allerlei lampjes die dan gingen knipperen en piepen. Maar de verkoopster zei dat de automaat ook veel neutrale boom-energieen teruggaf, en dat waren dan de energieen die de winkel overvloedig had. Die energieen werden 'de neutralen' genoemd. Pedro bestelde een beeldje van een zwarte hond die op een schatkist zat, omdat dat hem liet denken aan de honden die hij eens had gehad. Hij stak zijn arm in de automaat, en er kwamen hele hoge toetjes uit. Het leek wel alsof zijn arm was vastgezet, maar na een tijdje hoorde hij zacht gezoem, en kon hij z'n arm er weer uittrekken. Hij voelde zich heel anders nou. 'Nou, bedankt,' zei hij opgewekt tegen de verkoopster, en liep de winkel uit. De verkoopster glimlachte terug naar hem. In de volgende winkel bestelde Pedro wat nieuwsoortige groentevruchten, die op een soort donkere uitgegroeide

paprika's leken. Het waren nieuw gekweekte soorten. Pedro stopte zijn arm in de automaat en er kwamen hoge zoemende geluiden uit. Hier was het wat sneller gedaan, en snel kon Pedro zijn hand er weer uittrekken. Dit was een heel ander gevoel.
Op straat bewogen mensen vaak voort op voortbewegende band, zodat ze gewoon stil konden blijven staan. Na een tijdje ging Pedro weer terug naar de afdeling. Opeens voelde hij een hand op zijn schouder. Het was één van zijn mede-bewoners. De bewoner vroeg of Pedro ook sigaretten had, maar Pedro zei direkt : 'Houd daarover op, want als ze het horen dan schieten ze je dood. Op roken staat de doodstraf, ben je dat vergeten ?' De man deinsde achteruit en ging weer zitten. 'Ik vroeg het je alleen maar,' zei hij.
Opeens schrok hij wakker. Hij ... Pedro ? Hij heette helemaal geen Pedro. Wat voor een drugs hadden zij hem gegeven. De droom was levensecht. Hij lag aan banden vastgemaakt op een soort tafel, op een soort brancard, met vreemdsoortige apparatuur aan zijn armen en benen, en wat was er om zijn hoofd heen ? Hij voelde druk, maar kon het niet zien. Om de tafel stonden wat mannen. Eén man was wat ouder, had een grijzige kleine baard, en een

lichte huidziekte. Ze zeiden dat ze bomen waren. Bomen ? De jongen geloofde niet dat bomen konden praten. De jongen begon te protesteren, maar de oudere man greep hem bij de keel. 'Nu moet je ophouden,' zei de man, 'je denkt zeker dat jij het enige wezen bent dat kan leven.' De jongen kreeg een lichte klap in zijn gezicht. 'Wat hebben jullie me gegeven ?' vroeg hij aan de mannen. 'Niets,' zei één van de mannen. 'Je wordt bestraald met boom-electriciteiten. Die vormen jouw realiteit, maar het is maar een droom. Zelfs dit is een droom.' En weer werd de jongen wakker, en ditmaal lag er een vreemsoortige octopus die meer als een grote plant of struik was op hem. Hij voelde een druk op z'n lichaam die naar z'n hoofd steeg, en het leek alsof die druk zijn denken beinvloedde. 'Ik ben van de octopusboom,' zei het schepsel. 'Door druk op je lichaam, en vooral op je lever uit te oefenen stijgt er een electrische capsule naar je hoofd die jouw deze ervaringen geeft.' De jongen zei niks, maar bleef stil liggen. Hij voelde zich compleet machteloos. Of was hij gewoon gestorven ?

'Je bent niet dood,' zei de vreemde octopus-plant, 'je droomt slechts, en je leven was een hardnekkige droom, als een hardnekkige vloeistof in je hersenen. Hard

boomwater noemen wij dat.' De jongen bemerkte dat hij niet kon spreken. Wat wilden ze toch van hem ? Wat voor zin had alles nog ? Of kreeg hierdoor alles weer zin ? 'Bomen zijn de dingen die je in je leven op de achtergrond probeerde te drukken, totdat je niet anders kon dan ze een plaatsje te geven in jouw leven, maar nog steeds doe je er laagachtend over, alsof het geen personen zijn,' snauwde de octopus-plant, terwijl hij zich strakker tegen de jongen aandrukte. Opeens kwamen er een soort kleine cirkelzaagjes tevoorschijn uit de huid van de octopusplant, en begonnen zijn buik open te snijden. De lever van de jongen werd eruit gehaald, en de octopusplant slikte het in. Het deed geen pijn bij de jongen, misschien ook doordat hij wist dat het toch maar een droom was. 'Een droom kan waarheid bevatten,' sprak de octopus-plant. De jongen voelde al het leven uit zich wegtrekken, nu hij geen lever meer had, en weer schrok hij wakker. Het leek wel alsof hij van droom naar droom ging. Alsof hij in een vreemdsoortige lift zat. Waar zou de reis eindigen ? 'Die dromen zijn een geschenk van de bomen die je op een bepaalde manier ervaart, maar als je er afstand van doet blijkt het iets anders te zijn,' sprak een stem. 'Wij bomen, wij onderdrukten, nemen alles over. Nu is het onze tijd.'

Was dit soms weer een experiment van de zwarte groenen ? De jongen wist het niet. Opeens rolde hij uit de lift en kwam in een tunnel terecht die in verbinding stond met een ruimteschip. Wat is dit ? dacht de jongen. Misschien was dit wel allemaal de procedure om tot dit ruimteschip opgenomen te worden. Bestond de aarde nog wel ? Heeft de aarde wel echt bestaan, of is hij gered door buitenaardse wezens ? Aan de uitvoering van het schip kon de jongen merken dat het liep op bomen-energie, maar waar waren die bomen dan ? Of waren de bomen als personen binnen in het schip. Strompelend probeerde de jongen binnen te komen. Toen hij binnen was liep er een man in een glanzend pak op hem af. De man had een baard en sprak : 'Welkom. Zie je die zwarte planeet in de verte ? Dat is de zwarte zon. Alle bomen leven door de zwarte zon en ontlenen hun energieen daaruit. Alle bomen-energie is slechts zwarte zonnen-energie.' De jongen keek bedenkelijk. De man knikte. 'Als levend wezen dien je te leven vanuit de verborgen dingen, zoals de zwarte zon. Het verborgene staat garant voor de toekomst, en de verdere levensreis.' De jongen keek de man met grote ogen aan. 'Bent u een boom ?' vroeg de jongen. 'Ja,' zei de man. De jongen werd verder naar binnen gevoerd, en zag de

zalen van het schip. Daarna kreeg hij een eigen kamer toegewezen. 'Je bent belangrijk voor ons,' zei de man, en vertrok, terwijl hij de jongen in zijn kamer achterliet. De deur werd op slot gedaan, en de jongen wist dus dat hij een gevangene was. Maar goed, was dit kwaad bedoeld of om hem ergens tegen te beschermen. In zijn kamer stond een grote botanische computer. De energieen waardoor deze computer werkte waren van de zwarte zon. Elke boomenergie was een bepaalde laserstraal van de zwarte zon, en tezamen vormden ze letters op het scherm. Via een keyboard kon de jongen boodschappen intypen, en spreken met bomen. Maar snel kreeg de jongen last van zijn hoofd en ging op bed liggen. Na een tijdje ging er een zoemend alarm aan. De man deed de kamerdeur open en rende naar de jongen toe. 'Maak je klaar,' zei de man, 'we gaan naar de zwarte zon. Je zult een speciaal pak aan moeten doen dat in de kast ligt om bestand te kunnen zijn tegen de straling.' De jongen had een bepaalde tijd om het pak aan te doen. Het pak voelde erg dik en zacht aan, als dikke vla, en de jongen kon er goed in bewegen.
Na een tijdje moesten ze uitstappen. Eerst moesten ze door een lange tunnel heenlopen, en toen kwamen ze in een hal terecht waar een kanaal was met vreemde stromen energie.

Ze waren in een ingebouwde capsule gekomen binnenin de zwarte zon, in de kern. Het was een grote capsule. De jongen zag een heleboel wezens in pakken lopen, en liep achter ze aan. Langs de kanten van het kanaal waren stroken waarop je kon lopen, met wat deuren aan de zijkant. De wezens liepen door de deuren heen, en ook de jongen ging door een deur heen. Hij moest over platen lopen die allerlei energie-patronen hadden, en zodra hij erop stapte voelde hij rare dingen door zijn lichaam schieten, en door zijn mond, en kon hij heel diep inhalen. Zijn bewegingen werden scherper en sneller, en veel geconcentreerder, en alles werd zachter en zachter. Weer schrok de jongen wakker. De man stond voor hem. 'Door van droom tot droom te gaan, en van ontwaking tot ontwaking verplaats je jezelf. Dit is hoe bomen leven,' vertelde de man. Ze waren nu heel diep in de kern van de zwarte zon. De jongen had nog steeds z'n pak aan, maar dit had nu een andere kleur. Aan groot apparaat hing boven hem, en sneed een cirkel in zijn pak. Snel vergaderde zich een enorme hitte op het gat, en ineens plopte de lever van de jongen omhoog als gebraden. Veel druk ging van het hoofd van de jongen af, en het leek wel alsof hij nieuwe dingen kon ruiken. Alsof hij de zee kon

ruiken en allerlei overheerlijke zonne-olien en zeeparfums. Een soort sap droop er uit het apparaat en ging door de cirkel naarbinnen. 'Dit is belangrijk om nog dieper in de zwarte zonnenkern te kunnen.' zei de man. 'Dit sap zal er voor zorgen dat je niet inwendig geroosterd zult worden.'
Weer kwam het apparaat dichtbij en schoot een nauwsluitende deksel over het gat heen en een stangetje begon er op te tikken. Een hol geluid kwam eruit voort, en de plank waar de jongen op lag begon vooruit te schuiven, terwijl de man ook op de plank sprong. De plank ging door een gat, en werd iets groter, totdat het een soort vlot was, en toen bevonden ze zich op een gigantische zee van dik stromende energieen. Dit waren de pure boomenergie-bronnen, oftewel de zwarte zonne-energieen.
Na een tijdje kwamen ze met het vlot in een zaal, terwijl de jongen weer voelde alsof hij duizend keer heel snel achter elkaar wakker werd. Het was een soort vergaderzaal. Mannen zaten hoog in capsules, en een grote dobbelsteen lag op een grote wijde tafel in het midden van de kring. Ook de man en de jongen kregen een capsule. Een andere man drukte op een knop, en de dobbelsteen begon te draaien. terwijl de dobbelsteen draaide kreeg de jongen vreemde gevoelens die hij niet kon thuisbrengen.

De man naast hem vertelde dat de dobbelsteen de stem was van de verborgen boom, de zwarte boom, die zelfs voor de bomen hier verborgen was. Omdat ze geloofden dat het verborgene de toekomst was, en het pad dat ze moesten gaan, lieten ze de dobbelsteen draaien om de koers te bepalen. Het verborgene was voor hen de horizon met geheimenissen en wijsheid waar zij niets van wisten. Om de beurt drukten ze op een knop in de capsule, en ook de jongen moest zijn knop indrukken. Alle uitkomsten werden op een groot scherm genoteerd. Het was een vreemd alfabet. Het was het alfabet waarmee de zwarte boom sprak. Plotseling kwam er zwarte bliksem tevoorschijn, en de dobbelsteen spatte uit elkaar. Een enorm monster kwam tevoorschijn als een zwarte draak, maar het was een plant of struik. Een licht ging aan in één van de capsules, en dat licht begon heel snel over de capsules heen te gaan. Een man naast de jongen zei dat waar het licht zou stoppen die capsule zou meegaan met de zwarte drakenstruik, maar niemand wist naartoe. Geen enkele capsule was ooit teruggekeerd. Velen geloofden dat de zwarte drakenstruik de capsule mee zou nemen naar de zwarte boom. Bang waren ze niet, maar de jongen was wel een beetje bang. En tot zijn schrik stopte het licht in zijn

capsule. Iedereen riep : 'Jij bent de uitverkorene,' terwijl niemand dus wist wat dat zou betekenen. De jongen verdween met de capsule in het gat, terwijl de drakenstruik om hem heen bewoog. De jongen wilde wel dat de man met hem mee zou gaan, maar hij was de enige in deze capsule, en er kon maar één capsule mee. Weer leek het alsof de jongen heel snel miljoen keer wakker werd, en hij voelde zich heel licht worden. Vanuit de verte werd er geroepen : 'Hij komt aan tot de diepere kernen van de zwarte zon, dichtbij de zwarte boom, dichter en dichter.'
Het leek op een vrouwenstem, maar de jongen wist het niet zeker. In de verte zag hij een woestijn die voor zijn ogen bewoog, met bijna een spiegelend oppervlak. Op die woestijn stond een geribbelde zwarte boom, terwijl het leek alsof de capsule over de drakenstruik gleed. In de verte vlakbij de boom zag hij wat zwarte honden spelen.
De rillingen liepen over hem heen. Als ze hem maar geen kwaad zouden doen.
Bij de zwarte boom aangekomen merkte hij dat deze gewoon kon bewegen en praten. Van dichtbij leek de boom net op een lichaam, een lang, slank lichaam. Opeens leek het alsof er iets om hem heen brak, en leek het alsof hij in de diepte viel, maar de zwarte boom stond nog

steeds voor hem, en kwam steeds dichterbij. 'Ik heb je nodig,' zei de zwarte boom. 'de zwarte zon staat op uitsterven. Als de vlam dooft, dan gaan we er allemaal aan. De heks Sausibir van de boze zon genaamd Misfamen is onze vijand. Als zij er in zal slagen de groene staaf te vinden dan ... dan ...' En toen herinnerde de jongen zijn dromen weer. Ja, dit kende hij. 'Ik heb je nodig,' echoode het door het hoofd van de jongen. Maar de jongen was ver weg in zijn herinnering. Het leek wel alsof al zijn oude dromen weer werden afgespeeld. Toen de jongen wakker werd wist hij direkt wat er was gebeurd. Hij had een gevaarlijke soort drugs gebruikt, waardoor hij al deze vreemde dromen had gehad, waarin hij iemand anders was, en wat leek alsof het jaren en jaren duurde. Er was slechts één nacht voorbij. Zijn vriendin lag naast hem. Ze sliep nog. De jongen kon zich herinneren dat hij de drugs voor het slapen gaan had ingenomen. Ze zeiden dat je er zo lekker van kon slapen en er goed 'high' van kon worden. Gelukkig was het geen slechte trip geweest, maar toch vroeg de jongen zich af of hij er mee door moest gaan. Het stond nog steeds bekend als gevaarlijk, en voor de jongen was het eigenlijk een experiment. Zijn vriendin had het ook ingenomen. Het zou hem benieuwen wat zij

allemaal mee had gemaakt. Hij draaide zich naar haar toe. Misschien moest hij haar wel verlossen. Heel zacht begon hij tegen haar te fluisteren : 'Alles is okay, alles is goed, je bent bij mij. Je bent veilig.' Plotseling werd het meisje wakker en omhelsde hem heel stevig. 'Houd me vast,' rilde ze, 'laat me niet meer teruggaan, er is overal vuur.' Maar weer viel het meisje in slaap, en de jongen wist nu dat het ernst was. De drugs was gemaakt van bessen van een vreemdsoortige plant, en ze konden het beter maar niet gebruiken. Weer begon hij zachtjes tegen haar te fluisteren, en hij aaide haar heel zacht. Na een tijdje werd het meisje weer wakker, en schreeuwde : 'Blijf van me af, wie ben je ? Wie denk je wel niet dat je bent.' Ze ging rechtop zitten en begon hem te slaan, terwijl de jongen haar probeerde te kalmeren. Na een tijdje was het meisje bij positieven. Samen zaten ze rechtop in bed. De jongen had wat water gehaald voor zijn vriendin. Toen ze haar verhaal vertelde leek het erg veel op het verhaal van de jongen.

Plotseling werd de jongen weer wakker. Hij wist dat er wat aan de hand was. Hij keek in de ogen van een indiaan die hem een tros vreemde planten en bessen voor zijn neus hield. Hij kon zich niet bewegen. 'Wij zullen je moeten

offeren voor onze goden,' zei de indiaan. De indiaan sprak de taal van de jongen. 'Onze goden zijn bomen, en zij zijn jaloers op jullie organen, die zij niet hebben. Toen sneed de indiaan de lever en het hart uit de jongen. De jongen schreeuwde, maar het deed hem nauwelijks pijn. Wat gebeurde er toch ? De indiaan rees het hart en de lever op tot de hemel, en sprak : 'Oh zwarte zon, brenger van al het leven, gij die de bomen draagt, aanvaard dit offer, en spreek weer.' Plotseling pakte de indiaan een fakkel. Stak dit aan bij het dichtsbijzijnde vuur en stak de jongen aan. Weer voelde de jongen bijna niets. Het was alsof hij er immuun voor was. De indiaan was zichtbaar geshokkeerd, want de jongen was nog steeds bij positieven en verschroeide niet. De indiaan boog neer in het zand en sprak : 'Gij moet wel de gezondene zijn van de zwarte zon of de zwarte maan, gij bent de god der bomen, de god van ons oerwoud. Heb genade met ons, oh God van de zwarte zon.' En vele malen boog de indiaan zich in het stof. De jongen wist dat hij elk moment weer wakker kon worden. Waren dit alleen maar schijn-realiteiten in zijn hoofd ? Het leken wel de laagjes van zijn ziel die elk een onafhankelijk leven leiden, en het leek wel alsof ze nu in razend tempo bij elkaar kwamen. De indiaan maakte de jongen los. De

jongen had geen hart en lever meer, en hij voelde zich als een slang. De indiaan nam hem mee naar zijn stam, en riep : 'De god der zwarte zon is gekomen, buigt allen voor hem neer.' Vanuit alle kanten kwamen indianen die zich voor hem neer storten, en begonnen te bidden en te weeklagen. Ze waren allemaal bang dat de god van de zwarte zon hen zou straffen. De jongen wist niet goed waar hij in terecht was gekomen. Er werd hem allerlei voedsel aangeboden. De jongen hoopte maar dat hij snel weer wakker zou worden.
Was hij de gevangene van een drug ? Was hij geestesziek, of was misschien alles en iedereen geestesziek ? En wat was geestesziekte eigenlijk ? Was het gewoon één van de patronen van ervaring, of was het een gevaarlijk iets dat hoe dan ook uitgebannen moest worden. Maar door wie ? En wie zei hem dat dat dan realiteit zou zijn ? Wat was nou de echte realiteit ? Of was de realiteit een opsomming van hoe je dingen beleefde ? Dan had iedereen dus een andere realiteit. Waar moest hij naartoe ? Was hij dood ? Of was hij juist echt tot leven gekomen ? Niemand wist het, en niemand kon het hem vertellen.

Hij probeerde zich te herinneren of hij drugs had gebruikt. Ja, hij had dat gedaan, maar dat bleek een droom te zijn. En het was een droom in een droom, als een vreemd wezen, een vreemde boom met vele ringen, met vele vertakkingen. Als een octopus-boom was het, als een draaiend iets wat telkens terugkwam. Of was hij misschien echt het slachtoffer van experimenten van buitenaardse wezens ? Of was het juist zijn ontsnapping. Waren zij zijn redders ? Hij wist het niet, en hij vond het eng, maar tegelijkertijd kwam alles steeds meer op de achtergrond, om plaats te maken voor een verlichting ... Was dit de ware groene verlichting ? Dat hij altijd weer kon ontsnappen in een andere droom. Iets was nooit echt helemaal waar, en dat begon hij steeds meer te beseffen ... alles was niets dan een hardnekkige droom ... zo hardnekkig, dat hij in zo'n droom wel tachtig tot negentig jaar zou kunnen worden, met allerlei vertrouwelijke gezichten ... met iets dat hij 'familie' zou kunnen noemen. De delen van de familie waren de hardnekkigste elementen uit die chronische droom, want die delen bleven bij je, ook al koos je ervoor om ze stukje bij beetje te

verwijderen uit je leven. Je kon wel uit je familie gaan, maar hoe kreeg je je familie uit je weg. Het waren diepe littekenen, als tatoeages van bomen. Ze waren te diep in je geworteld om je diepere betekenissen te laten zien. Het waren de verborgen delen van je ziel, waar je een eigen voorstelling van had gemaakt ... de bomen ...
Hard werd er op tafel geslagen. Een jongen was tijdens een saaie les in slaap gevallen. De onderwijzer stond voor hem. Wat had hij toch vreemd gedroomd. De onderwijzer had les gegeven over bomen. 'Doe vooral geen moeite om op te letten,' zei de leraar sarcastisch. De kinderen om hem heen grinnikten en staarden de slaperige jongen aan. 'Ach wat,' zei de jongen. 'moet ik nog geloven dat je echt bent. Je bent zelf een boom.' De kinderen lachten, maar de leraar werd erg boos. 'Zeg als je zo door gaat met je praatjes, dan stuur ik je naar de direkteur.' De jongen trok een onverschillig gezicht. 'Laat hem ook maar komen. Hij is ook één van de vele bomen,' zei de jongen. De jongen was voor niets en niemand bang, omdat hij wist dat hij elk moment ook van deze droom kon ontwaken. Maar wat als de droom chronisch zou zijn, en hij in deze situatie tachtig of negentig jaar oud moest worden ? Daar was de jongen toch ook wel een beetje bang voor, maar meestal duurden

de dromen bij hem korter. Het was alsof er een octopus-boom in hem leefde, een dromenboom. Alles was zo fragmentarisch. En daar werd weer iemand wakker. Het leek wel alsof de dromen van identiteit verwisselden. Het was alsof de octopusplant weer bezig was.
Hahahaha, schreeuwde de octopus-plant. Ja, ik ben het weer. Ik ben weer aan de wandel. Maar plotseling werd de octopus-plant afgeschoten. Een lange man met een geweer stond bij het lijk, en nam het tussen zijn vingers en trok het omhoog. Naast de man stond een zwarte hond. Het was een vleesetende plant. Het vlees van zielen. Het was een zielen-eter. De lange man zou het meenemen naar zijn laboratorium om het op te zetten. De man heette Geb. Hij had een groenachtige huid. Hij nam het leven niet serieus. Hij wist dat hij zo weer wakker kon worden, en dat dan alles anders bleek te zijn. Ze hadden misschien wel met miljoenen van die octopusplanten te maken. En hoeveel leefden er wel niet binnenin bij hemzelf ? Hij wist het niet, en maakte zich er niet te druk om. Toen hij bijna bij z'n laboratorium was aangekomen werd hij aangevallen door een vliegenplant. De plant had hele dikke vleugels en leek op een vlieg. Snel spoot de plant spul af op Geb, en Geb voelde dat zijn denken en zijn bewegingen heel traag

werden. Hij wist dat als hij hier niets aan zou doen, dan zou hij in slaap vallen, en dan zou de vliegenplant hem eten. Strompelend liep hij zijn laboratorium binnen, en maakte snel een flesje open, en dronk het op. Snel kon hij zich weer goed bewegen, pakte zijn geweer en schoot de vliegenplant af, die inmiddels al op z'n schouder zat. Het was groen spul uit een flesje dat de Groene Verlichting heette. De man keek naar buiten. De zon was zwart. Het was donker. Grinnikend liep hij naar binnen. In een ketel begon hij te roeren, en er lag daar allerlei groene vloeistof in, als een soort slijm. Met een kwastje begon hij de groene vloeistof te smeren over een soort roostertje of raamwerk, en draaide het om, om ook de onderkant in te smeren. Vanuit een kast haalde hij een groen staafje dat licht glom en begon dat over het besmeerde roostertje of raamwerk te strijken. Vanuit het rooster kwamen groene gelei-achtige schepselen tevoorschijn. Dit was het staafje dat de heks Sausibir ook wilde hebben. De gelei-achtige wezens gingen naar buiten en begonnen alle bomen, planten en struiken te omhullen, en dezen begonnen tot leven te komen. Ze waren op weg om alle plantaardigen vrij te zetten. De grond begon meer en meer in groene blubber te veranderen, dat hier en daar begon op te drogen.

Het was een geslaagde dag.
Pats. Iemand werd wakker, en nog iemand anders werd wakker. Wat hadden ze allemaal vreemd gedroomd. Buiten renden er zwarte honden op straat. Ze blaften hard.
Vandaag zouden er verkiezingen zijn. Het spande eigenlijk om twee partijen. De Partij van de Groene Verlichting, de PGV, of de Zwarte Groenen, de ZG. Het was een drukke week geweest met campagnes, en nu was het dan zover.

Einde

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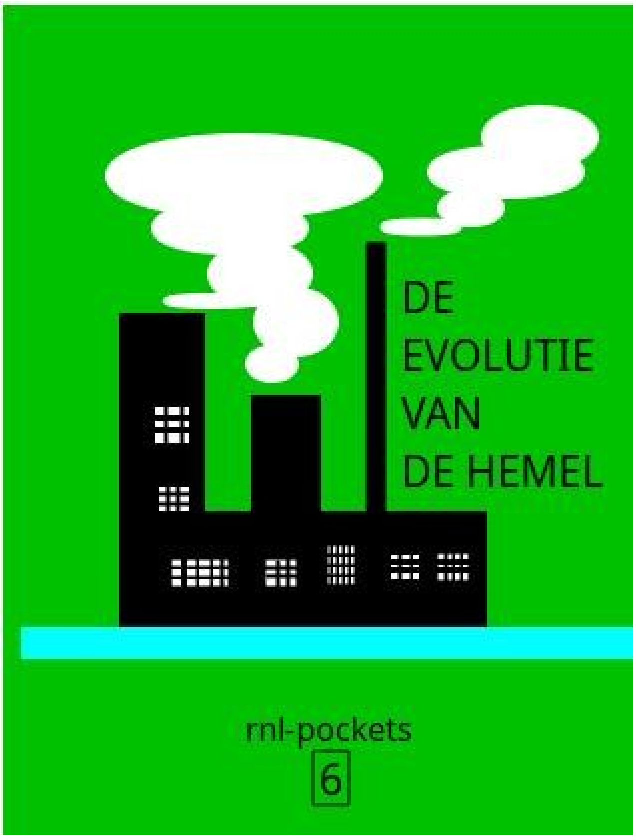
DE
EVOLUTIE
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6

De Evolutie van de Hemel

Uitgave : rnl-pockets
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De Evolutie van de Hemel

In het verhaal gaat het over de problemen in het stadje Tsjernobyl. Een politie agent raakt door zijn werk in het stadje Tsjernobyl steeds meer in de psychische problemen tot het punt dat hij zijn werk niet meer kan beoefenen. Ook zijn huwelijk lijdt eronder. Dan gaat hij op zoek naar een nieuwe baan.

Hoofdstuk 1.

Evert van der Heg loopt 's avonds naar huis waar zijn vrouw, Loes, op hem wacht. Evert is politie agent in de stad. Het was een vreemde dag geweest, abnormaal druk. En Evert was moe, zeer moe. Zijn vrouw, Loes, had voor hem gekookt. Hij moest direct weer weg. Hij had eigenlijk nergens tijd voor. In een tunnel tussen twee stadsgedeeltes was een zombie gesignaleerd. Hij moest er naartoe met geladen pistool. Ook een paar collega's waren daar. Hij keek de tunnel in, en zag wat bewegen. Hij kreeg ineens hallucinaties, en hoorde een gegrom in zijn hoofd. Hij schrok, en wist dat de zombie telepatische krachten zou moeten hebben. Hij schoot in de tunnel. Zijn collega's keken ook met getrokken pistool in de duistere tunnel. Ineens zag hij ze tegen de grond vallen. Hij raakte in paniek en begon weg te rennen. Hij

was bang dat hij bezeten zou raken. Thuis aangekomen merkt hij dat zijn vrouw vreemd doet. Hij vertrouwt het niet. Hij heeft het idee dat de zombies de stad al hebben ingenomen. Hij vecht tegen het gegrom in zijn hoofd. Maar waar moet hij naar toe ? Uiteindelijk strijdt hij ook weer tegen die gedachte. Misschien is er een andere reden waarom zijn vrouw vreemd doet. Zijn vrouw vertelt hem dat hij wat rust moet nemen. Zij zou de politie er wel over inlichten.
De dag erna wilde hij weer terug naar de tunnel. De politie had laten weten dat ze nu een nieuw wapen hadden. Het was een vlammenzwaard, een handvat wat een soort gasachtig vuur of stoom kon voortbrengen, maar het was ingewikkeld in gebruik. Evert moest naar de politie school waar hij verder erover onderwezen zou worden. Ook zijn collega's die op de grond waren gevallen

waren daar. Hij was blij ze te zien. Het bleek dat de zombie zich al had voortgeplant en dat pistolen alleen maar averechts werkten. Het duurde een paar dagen voordat ze het gebruik van het stoomsabel onder de knie hadden. Pas toen konden ze terug naar de tunnel. Evert kreeg weer hallucinaties toen hij dichter bij de tunnel kwam, en ook zijn collega's klaagden erover. Weer hoorde Evert het gegrom in zijn hoofd en ditmaal was het erger. Hij activeerde zijn stoomsabel, terwijl hij dichter bij de tunnelingang kwam. Dit zou ook een bepaalde bescherming om hem heen vormen. Het grommen in zijn hoofd ging over in krijsen. Evert disactiveerde zijn stoomsabel en greep naar zijn hoofd terwijl hij op de grond viel. Hij had zware hallucinaties over een schip wat aankwam aan een strand. Er was een woeste storm, en er was veel gebrul. Het was een schip vol van zombies. Evert

probeerde weg te kruipen van de tunnel.
Hij voelde zich verlamd. Ook voelde hij zich spastisch. Hij kon zich niet meer bewegen zoals eerder. Alles ging anders, als door krampen. Er kwam schuim op zijn mond, en hij riep : 'nee !' Maar hij wist dat zijn geroep niet eens uit zijn mond kon komen.
Even later werd hij wakker in een park.
Boven hem was een vrouwengezicht.
"Ben ik dood ?" vroeg Evert, terwijl de vrouw hem ophielp. "Wat een prachtige tuin."
"Het is de tuin van je geweten," sprak de vrouw. Ze begon hem dieper in de tuin te leiden. "Ben ik dood ?" vroeg Evert weer.
"Nee," sprak de vrouw.
"Wat is er gebeurd ?" vroeg Evert.
Evert voelde de hitte van zijn stoomsabel. Maar het ding stond niet eens aan. Het handvat hing aan zijn gordel. Evert was ontroerd door de

pracht van de tuin. "Waar gaan we naartoe ?" vroeg Evert.
"Naar mijn huis," sprak de vrouw. Dieper in de tuin had ze een prachtig wit huisje omgeven door bloemrijke heggen. "Prachtig," sprak Evert. Hij was bijna buiten adem. Toen gingen ze naar binnen in het huisje. "Bent u een engel ?" vroeg Evert.
"Een fee," sprak de vrouw. Ze gingen aan een tafeltje zitten van wit marmer. "Ik ben een gas van je stoomsabel," sprak de vrouw. "Je hallucineert slechts. Het is voor je eigen bescherming. Ik help je navigeren." Plotseling kwam Evert weer bij zijn bewustzijn, en zag de tunnel voor zich. Hij was nu bijna binnen. Zijn collega's waren om hem heen. Weer kreeg Evert een flits van een hallucinatie waarin hij een schip met zombies zag wat aankwam op een strand. Het was stormachtig weer. Toen hoorde hij weer gegrom en gebrul in zijn

hoofd. Het leek wel alsof de flits deels bleef hangen, en toen liepen ze de tunnel in. Het was er erg donker, maar ze hadden zaklampen bij zich. Ergens dieper in de tunnel zagen ze wat bewegen. Evert kreeg flitsen van hallucinaties waarin de tunnelbodem bedekt was met graven aan de zijkant.
"Er liggen mensen begraven onder de bodem van de tunnel !" riep Evert.
"Shhhh !" zei een collega naast hem. "Ja maar," zei Evert. Verder kon hij niets zeggen. Het was alsof een hand voor zijn mond was gelegd. Verderop in de tunnel leek het alsof de verlichting aan begon te gaan, maar het knipperde. Het
ging aan en uit. Weer kreeg Evert hallucinaties van graven, witte graven, door de hele tunnel heen, en toen velden vol witte graven. "Illuminus !" werd er geschreeuwd. "Vecht !"
Evert kreeg de rillingen, en wilde omdraaien. Hij wilde niet gek worden,

maar zijn collega's liepen strak naar voren. Hij kon niet omdraaien. Van achteren werd hij geduwd door de rij van collega's achter hem. Hij vroeg zich af of zij dezelfde hallucinaties hadden. Weer kreeg hij een hallucinatie van een zee. De zee was woest, en een reusachtig geestenschip met zombies kwam dichterbij in de verte, in de mist. Het was een reusachtig hoog schip. "Pilatus !" werd er geroepen. "Het is de Pilatus !"
"Wat is Pilatus ?" vroeg Evert aan een collega die naast hem marcheerde. "Het is de naam van een schip," sprak de collega.
"Wat voor schip ?" vroeg Evert.
"Een zombie schip," sprak de collega.
Hij dacht dat hij gek aan het worden was. Hij rilde over zijn gehele lichaam. Achter hen hoorden ze ineens gegrom, en ze draaiden om. Ze werden aangevallen door dolle honden, en achter de dolle honden waren enkele zombies.

Evert greep het handvat van de stoomsabel en activeerde het. Zo kon hij twee honden van zich afhouden. Het sabel ging met gemak door het vlees van de honden heen, maar er kwamen steeds meer honden. Evert sloeg als een dolle man om zich heen met de sabel. Het geblaf stak in zijn hoofd. Weer had hij hallucinaties, en ditmaal waren het grote treinen die aankwamen in de nacht, en er waren allemaal zombies in de treinen. Evert schreeuwde. Na een tijdje was het rustig. De tunnel lag vol met dode, verscheurde honden. Hij stond buiten de tunnel, en ook wat collega's kwamen naar buiten. "Is iedereen in orde ?" werd er geroepen. Hij was aan de andere kant van de tunnel.
"Er zijn zombies in de tunnel," sprak Evert. "Ik ga niet meer terug."
"Wie van ons zijn er nog over ?" riep een collega.
"Ik hoop allemaal," zei Evert. Ze leken

hem te negeren. Een groep collega's verzamelde zich een paar meter van hem verwijderd. Hij ging er ook tussen staan. "We missen er vier," zei iemand. "Ik ga niet terug," zei een andere collega. "Er is iets in die tunnel wat niet goed is."
Evert probeerde te spreken, maar het leek wel alsof iemand een hand voor zijn mond hield, als een zwarte handschoen. Alsof er iemand achter hem stond, maar er stond niemand. "We missen er veel meer," sprak een andere collega. En toen volgde er een namenlijst. "Misschien zijn ze aan de andere kant van de tunnel ?" zei iemand anders. "Nee," werd er toen gezegd.
Er kwam toen een zombie uit de tunnel die leek op één van de politie agenten. "Dat is Willem niet !" riep een agent. De zombie kwam steeds dichterbij. "Ik ben het," zei de zombie, "Willem ... Ze hebben me ... Ze hebben me ..."
"Geloof hem niet !" riep een agent, die

zijn stoomsabel activeerde. Een enorm gegrom was er toen. Vuur kwam uit de mond van de zombie. Het trok aan hun gedachtes. Evert kon zijn hoofd niet meer bewegen. Het zoog aan hem. De zombie kwam dichterbij. Alle agenten stonden als aan de grond genageld. Weer kwam er vuur uit de mond van de zombie. Evert begon te zweten.
"Willem ?" vroeg Evert. De zombie kwam dichterbij. Het moest Willem wel zijn. "Ze hebben me ..." zei de zombie.
"Ik draag het virus nu. Ze hebben me ..."
"Geinjecteerd ?" vroeg Evert.
De zombie viel Evert om de nek. Evert kon zich nog steeds niet bewegen.
"Help," fluisterde de zombie in zijn oor.
"Wat is er gebeurd ?" vroeg Evert.
"Ik kan niet meer," sprak de zombie. De zombie had een aparte geur. Evert hoopte maar dat het Willem was. "Ik kan niet meer," zei de zombie weer.
"Wat is er gebeurd ?" vroeg Evert weer.

"Ze hebben me ...," sprak de zombie. "Ze hebben me ..."
"Wat ?" vroeg Evert.
Evert kreeg weer hallucinaties van boten die aankwamen, en van grote treinen in de nacht.
"Ik kan niet meer," sprak de zombie.
"Wie ben je ?" vroeg Evert.
"Willem," sprak de zombie.
"Wat hebben ze gedaan ?" vroeg Evert.
"Ze hebben ..." sprak de zombie. "Ik kan niet spreken."
"Probeer het," zei Evert.
"Ze ... ze ... stoppen dingen in je mond, een soort cement, als teken dat je niets anders dan een steen bent voor de woningbouw die ze gebruiken," sprak de zombie bijna stotterend. "Zij hebben deze stad gebouwd, en wij zijn de stenen."
"Vandaar dat ik me niet kan bewegen," sprak Evert.
"Ze ... ze werken veel door

omkoperijen," sprak de zombie.

Hoofdstuk 2.

Plotseling kwamen er veel meer zombies uit de tunnel. Evert werd omsingeld en gegrepen. Toen werd hij de tunnel ingetrokken. Hij wist niet waar de anderen waren, en hij kon zich nog steeds niet bewegen. Hij werd in een hokje in de tunnelwand gedrukt. Het was een glazen hok en er was verlichting. Een paar zombies gingen bij hem staan. Ze drukten wat rode knopjes in aan de wand. Het was een soort lift. "Waar gaan we naartoe ?" riep Evert in paniek. "Naar de planeet Drenthe," zei een zombie die een hele lage stem had. De lift schoot omhoog, de lucht in. "Maar dat kan toch helemaal niet !" riep Evert. Hij had een verschrikkelijke pijn in zijn buik vanwege de vaart van de lift, en hij was bang dat ze zouden neerstorten. Tot

zijn grote schrik werd de lift opgezogen in een enorm ruimteschip wat boven de stad hing en veel groter was dan de stad zelf.
Evert moest verzen leren uit een vreemd boek. Het was het belangrijkste boek voor de zombies. Het boek was genaamd de Veluwe. Zij die het boek niet aanbaden zouden gemarteld en gedood worden. Evert moest buigen voor het boek, en de verzen die werden opgelezen moest hij nazeggen. Ook moest er in Evert's kiezen geboord worden om de verzen erin te tatoeëren.
'Is er in het koningshart een hart dat niet kan spreken ? Het koningshart eet en eet een hart voor vele weken,' werd er gezegd, en Evert moest het nazeggen.
'Wie is de koning ?' vroeg Evert.
'Een ziel die één is met de koning heeft niets meer in te brengen. Geassimileerd is hij, eenstemmig, de ondergang tegemoet. Door omkoperij zal het zich

vermengen,' werd er toen gesproken, en weer moest Evert het nazeggen. 'Wie is de koning ?' vroeg Evert weer. Evert voelde steken in zijn hoofd.
'Dromen kan een ziel niet meer die ééngeworden is met de koning. Al zijn dromen zijn kapot, en de koning is nu zijn woning,' werd er toen gezegd, en weer moest Evert het nazeggen, maar hij kon het niet. 'Spreek,' werd er gezegd, maar Evert kon niet spreken. 'I ... ik kan het niet,' stotterde Evert.
'Je moet !' werd er gezegd. Evert stortte neer, maar werd toen weer opgetild. 'Zij die de verzen niet nazeggen worden gemarteld en gedood,' werd er gezegd. 'Zij die het schrift van de koning niet lezen zijn het leven niet waardig,' werd er gezegd.
Evert had kramp in zijn buik. 'I ... ik kan het niet,' stotterde Evert weer.
Een zombie schopte in zijn buik, terwijl Evert weer neerviel. Weer werd hij

opgetild. 'En nu ?' zei de zombie met een lage stem. Het was de laagste stem die hij ooit had gehoord. 'Dromen kan een ziel niet meer die ééngeworden is met de koning. Al zijn dromen zijn kapot, en de koning is nu zijn woning. Zeg het,' sprak de zombie. Toen sprak Evert de woorden uit. Daarna moest hij het voor de tweede keer zeggen. Evert voelde zich duizelig. Hij moest toen vele andere verzen opzeggen.
Evert werd naar een gevangenis-complex geleid, en kreeg een hok naast een donkergekleurd meisje. Vanuit het hok kon hij haar niet meer zien, maar wel met haar praten. 'Wie ben je ?' vroeg Evert. Het meisje wilde haar naam niet zeggen. 'Waar kom je vandaan ?' vroeg Evert. Weer sprak het meisje niet. Haar moeder kwam haar soms bezoeken. Evert zag haar soms langskomen terwijl de dagen verstreken. Hij kon de gesprekken horen, maar het meisje zei

niet veel. Het meisje heette Krista. Op een dag vroeg Evert aan haar moeder wie de koning was. 'Noxo en Terafanus,' sprak de moeder van het meisje.
'Waar komen jullie vandaan ?' vroeg Evert.
'Moxof,' zei de moeder. 'Dat is een gebied op de planeet Drenthe. Het is ingenomen door de zombies.'
'Wat gaan ze met ons doen ?' vroeg Evert.
'We zijn niets dan vlees voor de assimilatie,' zei de moeder. 'We zullen éénworden met de koning.'
'Hoe kunnen we daaraan ontkomen ?' vroeg Evert.
'De ring van Moxof is onze enige hoop,' sprak de moeder. 'Onze wetenschappers werkten daaraan. Het is een microchip. Ik hoop dat ze veilig zijn om hun werk voort te zetten.'
'Wat is het voor microchip ?' vroeg Evert.

'Ik kan daar niet over praten,' zei de moeder.
Evert werd overgeplaatst naar een ander gevangenis-complex verbonden aan een school. Hier moest hij weer verzen leren, en ook de taal van de zombies. 'Traak,' sprak een zombie tot hem. 'Ekochol.' Hij moest leren wat de woorden betekenden. Ook werd hij overhoord. Er hing een dreiging van marteling en dood. Evert had geen andere keus. Ook werden er steeds meer tatoeages in zijn kiezen gemaakt. Evert begon steeds meer last van zijn kiezen te krijgen.
Evert bleef nadenken over de ring van Moxof. Wat zou het wezen ? De moeder van het meisje bezocht hem ook hier. Daar was hij wel blij mee. Hij wist dat hem een godsdienst was opgelegd waar hij niet aan kon ontkomen. In zijn studie van het boek van de zombies probeerde hij betekenis te vinden. Hij zocht naar zwakke plekken in het systeem, maar

ook zocht hij naar bemoediging, naar hoop. Het was een gruwelijk boek. Het ging allemaal over marteling, de dood, omkoperij, bedrog en chantage. Het voelde aan alsof hij zichzelf verloor, alsof hij geassimileerd werd, maar daar ging het boek ook over. De koning moest alles assimileren.

Op een dag werd hij meegenomen naar een speciaal hok waar hij gemarteld werd. Ze wilden dat hij voor hen zou moorden, maar dat wilde hij niet. Hij wilde liever dood, maar ze martelden hem zo lang totdat zijn verstand brak, en iets nam hem over. Hij kon de marteling niet meer aan, en riep : "Okay, okay, wat willen jullie dat ik doe ?"

'Je zal teruggaan naar de politie op aarde,' zei de zombie die het dichtste bij hem stond. 'En je zult moorden wanneer wij het je zeggen. Zo niet, dan weten we je te vinden.'

Evert kon niet meer tegen pijn. Het was

al te ver gegaan. Hij werd wakker op de plaats waar hij stond met de zombie die op Willem leek. Evert was overgevoelig nu. Hij dacht eraan te ontsnappen, maar een stem zei in zijn hoofd : 'Denk aan je belofte,' terwijl een pijnscheut zijn lichaam verkrampte. Hij werd gedwongen door pijn die over de grens van zijn geweten en zijn wil ging. Hij probeerde te denken aan de ring van Moxof, maar door extreme, grensoverschrijende pijn werd die gedachte weggebannen. Ook zijn collega's waren op dezelfde wijze geinfecteerd, maar hij wist dit niet, en durfde er ook niet over te spreken. Sindsdien begon de vrede weer terug te keren in de stad, en werden er geen zombies meer gesignaleerd in de tunnel. Evert hoopte maar dat de stemmen in zijn hoofd niet zouden terugkomen.
Op een dag werd Evert door de stemmen naar het bos gelokt. Het was midden in

de nacht. Er stonden daar een paar zombies, en een klein ruimteschip stond op een heuvel dichtbij. Er was veel licht. Evert kwam dichterbij. Hij kon niet wegrennen. De zombies gaven hem een sleutel die op elke deur zou passen, waarmee hij in elk huis zou kunnen komen. Hij kreeg als opdracht babies te verwisselen. Hij mocht dit alleen 's nachts doen, en de sleutel zou een gas verspreiden waardoor niemand zou kunnen ontwaken. Evert zou de enige zijn die zou kunnen wakker blijven om zijn werk te doen. Evert was onder een zware hypnose en wist dat hij niets anders kon doen dan te gehoorzamen. En zo begon de baby-wisseling. Alle babies in de stad moesten verwisseld worden. Het stond zo geschreven in het boek van de zombies, de Veluwe.

Evert wist dat hij slechts een pion was. Hij durfde niet met zichzelf in debat te gaan, en langzaam dreef ook die

opvatting naar de achtergrond. Evert begon een andere persoon te worden die niet meer aan zijn verleden herinnerd mocht worden. De stemmen zeiden hem dat hijzelf ook als baby was verwisseld. Maar hij moest het vergeten. Hij moest zich geheel richten op zijn taken. Elke nacht moest hij verschillende babies verwisselen.
Hij wist dat hij één van de zombies was nu. Hij had een zombie hart nu. Op een nacht werd hij weer naar het bos gelokt. Weer stond een klein ruimteschip op een heuvel. Dit keer werd hij naar binnen gelokt. Zombies zaten rondom een tafel. Ze keken hem aan. Eén van hen sprak : "Je bent een robot nu. Je naam staat in ons boek, de Veluwe." Toen begon de zombie een heleboel verzen uit het boek op te lezen. Het ging over afschuwelijke dingen. Heel in de verte dacht Evert aan de ring van Moxof, maar het mocht niet te dichtbij komen. Het zou hem pijn

doen, en hij liet direct de verre gedachte weer los. De zombie liep naar hem toe en bekeek hem. "Waarom ben ik hier ?" vroeg Evert.
"Voor iets belangrijks," zei de zombie.
Er waren nog wat andere kamers in het kleine ruimteschip, en opeens kwam er een zombie binnen met een zombie-baby in zijn armen. "Deze ga jij nu wisselen," sprak de zombie die dichtbij hem stond. "Wij willen dat je ons de mensen-babies brengt." De zombie-babies verschilden niet eens zoveel van mensen-babies. Ze zouden nog een extra injectie krijgen zodat ze precies op mensen-babies zouden lijken. Evert zou vanaf nu eerst naar het ruimteschip moeten gaan voordat hij een baby zou wisselen. Evert wist dat dit zou betekenen dat het een zombie stad zou worden.
Hij dacht heel in de verte aan Krista en haar moeder, en aan de ring van Moxof, en kreeg weer een beetje hoop, maar hij

durfde er niet direct aan te denken, want hij wist wat dat zou betekenen. Vage gedachtes, dat is wat het allemaal moest blijven. De zombies keken hem aan. En zo versleten de nachten waarin hij dit werk moest doen. Zijn vrouw had niks in de gaten. Zij wist dat hij wel vaker wegmoest. Hij was immers politie agent.

Hoofdstuk 3.

Op een dag in het weekend maakten hij en zijn vrouw een boswandeling. Ze gingen ook langs de heuvel waar in de nacht het ruimteschip was, maar nu was er niets. Ze gingen dieper en dieper het bos in. Ergens in het zand vond hij een blauwe ring. Hij raapte het op en hield het in zijn hand en staarde ernaar. Hij had een vreemd gevoel alsof hij de ring naar zijn borst moest brengen. Hij legde de ring tegen zijn borst aan en merkte dat de ring gewoon door zijn kleren en

huid naar binnenging. Het deed hem geen pijn. Hij stond al die tijd met zijn rug naar zijn vrouw. 'Wat is er Evert ?' vroeg zijn vrouw.
'Oh niets,' zei Evert. 'Ik dacht dat ik wat zag.'
'Wat zag je ?' vroeg zijn vrouw.
Evert werd helemaal warm van binnen. Dit moest de ring van Moxof wel zijn. Ze hadden hem gevonden. Hij keek naar zijn vrouw, terwijl tranen over zijn wangen liepen. 'Wat is er ?' vroeg zijn vrouw.
'Niks,' huilde Evert.
'Er is wel wat,' zei zijn vrouw. 'Je huilt niet zomaar. Is er iets op het werk gebeurd ?'
'Ik kan er niet over praten,' huilde Evert.
Evert was nog steeds bang, maar ook opgelucht dat er eindelijk hulp was gekomen. Plotseling had hij een hallucinatie waarin hij omringd was door een grote massa zombies. Ze kwamen

steeds dichterbij en zongen : "Je-he-he-he-ram, Je-he-he-he-ram," telkens weer. Maar een blauw licht kwam van Evert af, en vormde een scherm om hem heen. Hij begon door de massa zombies heen te rennen, die voor het blauwe licht opzij moesten, en toen flitste de hallucinatie weg. "I ... ik ben duizelig," stotterde Evert.
"Voel je je niet goed ?" vroeg zijn vrouw.
'Laten we naar huis gaan,' zei Evert. Maar hij voelde zich nog steeds omringd door zombies. Hij wilde wegrennen. 'De zombies, ze komen !' riep hij toen. Maar zijn vrouw had hem gegrepen. Ook zijn vrouw had ineens een zombie gezicht. 'Ver zul je niet komen,' gromde ze met een lage stem. 'Jij ook al !' riep Evert. Hij duwde haar op zij en rende en rende. Toen kwam ze achter hem aan. 'Ver zul je niet komen !' riep ze. 'Geloof me maar.'
Evert rende zonder om te kijken. Hij

hoopte dat de ring van Moxof zou ingrijpen. Plotseling was er niets dan blauw licht om hem heen. Het begon te golven. Hij hoorde een schreeuw achter zich, en zag zijn zombie vrouw weggeslagen worden.
'Help me !' huilde Evert. Hij wist dat de microchip nu in hem was. 'Ga terug, Evert,' zeiden ze stemmen in hem. Ze hadden een bliksemerige stem. Maar de stemmen werden steeds vager. Evert moest na een tijdje kruipend verder vanwege duizeligheid. Er was steeds meer blauw licht, en hij kwam tot een zone waar hij een stad zag neerdalen uit de lucht. Het was een straal van de planeet Drenthe, van het Moxof gebied. De wetenschappers van Moxof hadden de straal opgewekt. De stad was als een ruimteschip en daalde neer op de enorme zandvlakte waar Evert nu was. Het plofte vlak voor zijn neus neer. Evert werd door armen gegrepen en naar binnen

getrokken.
'I-i-i-ach,' werd er gezongen. 'I-i-i-ach,' en zo ging het telkens door. Het was een monnikenkoor van zombies die marcheerden in de stad. Het was meer een soort schuifelen. Wie hadden hem naar binnen getrokken ? Er was één en al mist. De ring van Moxof was een stervende ring. Het kon niet tegen de zombies op. Evert werd wakker in het zand. Zijn vrouw staarde naar hem. Ze had geen zombie gezicht. 'Gaat het weer ?' vroeg ze.
'Niet echt,' zei hij. 'De ring van Moxof ...'
'Waar heb je het over ?' vroeg zijn vrouw. 'Je kunt zo echt niet werken als je je zo voelt.'
Toen ze thuis waren liet zijn vrouw de dokter komen. 'De ring van Moxof ...' zei Evert weer.
'Wat is de ring van Moxof ?' vroeg de dokter. 'Moxof ? Nooit van gehoord.'
Evert zei niets. 'Hij kan zo inderdaad niet

werken,' zei de dokter. 'Ik denk dat uw man rust nodig heeft, veel rust.'
En zo werd Evert meegenomen naar een rustoord voor mensen met psychische klachten. Zijn vrouw bezocht hem daar vaak. En Evert kon alleen 'de ring van Moxof' zeggen. Het was als in zijn hoofd geprint als zijn laatste houvast. Vaak vroegen mensen wat het was, maar hij kon het niet zeggen. Ook zijn herinneringen begonnen steeds meer weg te vagen. Op het laatst wist hij helemaal niet meer dat hij ooit politie agent was geweest. Heel in de verte kon hij zich nog Krista en haar moeder herinneren, maar hij wist niet meer in welk verband. De ring van Moxof had zijn geheugen gewist, en de ring was zelf ook stervende. Herinneringen waren te gevaarlijk voor Evert. De zombies werkten door zijn herinneringen. In die zin was de ring geslaagd, maar de ring was stervende. Het had alleen gezaaid.

Op een dag kon Evert wat meer woorden zeggen. Hij zei ook : 'de planeet Drenthe'. Mensen vroegen hem wat de planeet was, maar dat kon hij niet zeggen. Hij wist alleen dat Krista en haar moeder van de planeet waren. 'De ring is stervende,' zei hij een paar dagen erna.
'Welke ring ?' werd er gevraagd.
'De ring van Moxof,' zei hij.
'Oh, die ring,' werd er gezegd. 'Maar je hebt ons nog steeds niets over die ring verteld.'
'Het komt van de planeet Drenthe,' sprak hij. 'Het kan niet tegen de zombies op, maar het is zaad.'
'Ja, ja,' werd er gezegd. 'Je hebt nogal veel praatjes.'
'Komt er nog wat van met die ring ?' vroeg hij.
'Wie bedoel je ?' werd er gevraagd.
'Nou jullie, als verpleegkundigen,' zei hij. 'Laat dat kundig trouwens maar weg, want jullie hebben nog steeds die ring

niet gebruikt. Jullie klooien maar wat aan.'
'Welke ring ?' werd er gezegd.
'De ring van Moxof,' zei hij weer.
'Oh, die ring,' zeiden ze. 'Maar daar heb je ons nooit wat over uitgelegd.'
'Moet ik dat dan doen ?' zei hij geirriteerd. 'Moet ik dan alles voor jullie oplossen altijd ? Onderzoek maar eens, studeer maar eens, en kijk eens goed uit je doppen.'
'Mijnheer, nu niet aggressief doen, anders zult u overgeplaatst worden,' werd er gezegd.
'Ik zal jullie laten overplaatsen,' zei Evert.
'Hoe ga je dat doen ?' vroegen ze.
'Door de ring van Moxof,' zei Evert.
'Oh, die ring,' zeiden ze weer.
'De ring zal opstaan en zal alles veranderen,' zei Evert. 'Het is een messiaanse ring.'
'Toe maar weer,' zeiden ze.

'Eerst moet de ring sterven,' zei Evert.
'Het is zaad.'
'En dan ?' vroegen ze.
'Dat heb ik net gezegd,' zei Evert.
'Maar we begrijpen het niet,' zeiden ze.
'U doet nogal ingewikkeld. U heeft het over zombies, ringen, verre planeten, en messiaanse opstandingen. Dat is onze taal niet. In onze ogen bent u zwaar ziek. U heeft rust nodig.'
'De ring van Moxof,' zei Evert weer.
'Goed, laten we het daar bij houden,' werd er gezegd. 'De ring van Moxof.'
Alhoewel het leek alsof Evert steeds meer van zijn geheugen begon terug te krijgen was het wel allemaal verdraaid, of hadden de zombies alles verwisseld en begon hij nu te ontwaken tot de ware combinaties ? Hij beweerde nu dat Krista zijn vrouw was, en haar moeder zijn schoonmoeder. Zijn vrouw was daar erg overstuur over, maar niets kon zijn gedachten erover veranderen. De

verplegers vertelden haar dat haar man geestelijk zwaar ziek was, en dat ze zijn woorden maar met een korreltje zout moest nemen. Er was iets verdraaid in zijn hersenen.
'En wie ben ik dan ?' vroeg Loes, zijn vrouw.
'Ik zou het niet weten,' zei hij. 'Ken ik je dan ?'
'Je bent ziek,' zei Loes. 'Ik hoop maar dat je snel weer beter wordt, want dit doet me pijn, meer dan wat dan ook.'
'Het is te hopen,' zei Evert, 'de ring van Moxof ...'
'Houd alsjeblieft op over die ring,' zei Loes.
'Het is onze enige hoop,' zei Evert.
'Voor jou,' zei Loes. 'Niet voor mij.'
'Ook voor jou,' zei Evert.
'Je kent me niet eens,' zei Loes.
'Het boek van de planeet Drenthe zei altijd : 'De maagd staart naar ons. Ze spreekt niet. Maar in de ochtend zal zij

ontwaken,' zei Evert. 'Dat gaat over Krista. Ze sprak nooit.'
'Dus ze is nog maagd,' zei Loes. 'Je hebt haar nog nooit aangeraakt. En over welk boek heb je het ?'
'Ik heb haar wel aangeraakt,' zei Evert.
'Wanneer is dat gebeurd ?' vroeg Loes.
'Ach, je bent ziek.'
'Groot nieuws,' zei Evert. 'Ik ben ziek, en jij hebt de grote mond om het door te toeteren. Daar is iets mis mee, vind je niet ?'
'Iedereen weet het,' zei Loes. 'Iedereen in dit pand is ervan op de hoogte.'
'Goedzo,' zei Evert. 'Houden zo. Dan weet je ook hoe anderen erover denken, maar de ring van Moxof ...'
'Ach, houd toch op over die ring,' zei Loes, 'en iedereen denkt erover zoals ik. Denk je nu echt dat ik met je mee zal praten ? Je bent ziek.'
'Geweldig om dat telkens weer te horen,' zei Evert. 'Ik wou dat Krista er was. Zij

zou me begrijpen.'
'Oh, je niet-sprekende maagd van de planeet Drenthe ?' zei Loes, 'En wanneer ben je op die planeet geweest ? Je zwetst.'
'Ik ben toch ziek ?' zei Evert. 'Waarom praat je dan nog met me als mijn woorden toch geen waarde voor je hebben.'
'Omdat ik er op wacht totdat je beter wordt,' zei Loes.
'Het boek zei ook nog wat anders,' zei Evert : 'De maagd is het licht van de stad. Haar ogen zijn de vrucht van de wilg, treurende op haar vlucht. Zij schiep de wildernis, met de stad als haar schaduw. Haar kleed zal zij weldra afdoen om af te dalen in het zoete van de bosrivier. De stad is haar kleed, en wat is de mens ?'
'Waar heb je dat gelezen ?' vroeg Loes.
'In het boek van de planeet Drenthe,' sprak Evert.

'Wat is het voor een boek ?' vroeg Loes.
'Het was het mooiste boek wat ik ooit heb gelezen,' sprak Evert. 'Een boek over Krista.'
'Ik vraag me af of Krista wel echt bestaat dan,' zei Loes.
'Natuurlijk bestaat ze echt,' sprak Evert.

Hoofdstuk 4.

Evert's obsessie met Krista begon alleen maar groter te worden. Hij begon ook schilderijen van haar te maken. Loes kon er niet meer tegen en besloot niet meer te komen. Het ging alleen maar erger met Evert volgens haar. Ja, de stad was haar kleed. Ze was als een drug voor hem. Ze hielp hem er doorheen.
'De maagd heeft haarzelf aangekleed,' sprak hij. 'Het is het uur van de stad. Maar in de nacht zal haar kleed uitgaan.'
Op een dag beweerde hij Krista gezien te hebben, maar niemand anders had haar

gezien. Hij kreeg medicijnen om hem te kalmeren. Niemand kon bewijzen dat Krista niet bestond, maar hij kon ook niet bewijzen dat ze wel bestond. Maar hij kon wel over haar vertellen en over haar schilderen.
'Het licht van de stad is het licht van de planeten, en het kleed van Krista,' sprak Evert. 'Krista zal haar kleed afdoen.'
'De maagd draagt het licht van de morgen in haar schoot,
En de liefde van de nacht op haar schouders,
De vruchten der wilgen zijn haar ogen,
Het lied van de nacht is in haar ogen,
En haar stem is zoet.'
Natuurlijk ging dit allemaal weer over Krista. Hij had het allemaal uit het boek. Het boek had geen gelovigen nodig. Het boek was een oorlogsvoerder. Hij prevelde de verzen op, telkens weer, en er kwamen telkens weer nieuwen bij.
Het boek kwam niet om te genezen,

maar om te slachten. Evert werd ook steeds agressiever. 'Maar je gedichten zijn zo vredig,' zeiden ze.
'Dat lijkt maar zo,' zei Evert. 'En dan heb je de rest van het boek niet gelezen. Het is een boek van oorlog. Krista is een amazone oorlogsvoerder.'
'En haar moeder ?' werd er gevraagd.
'Zij is ook een amazone oorlogsvoerder,' sprak Evert.
'Dus de betekenissen van je lieflijke gedichten liggen veel dieper ?' werd er gevraagd.
'Ga het boek zelf lezen,' zei Evert geirriteerd.
'Welk boek ?' werd er gevraagd. 'Heb je dat boek ?'
'Nee,' zei Evert. 'Het is alles wat ik me er nog van herinner.'
'Maar u bent zwaar ziek. En u verdraait dingen in uw geheugen,' werd er gezegd.
'Ik verdraai niets,' zei Evert stoïcijns.
'Jullie verdraaien alles.'

Daarna ging het weer slechter met Evert's geheugen en communicatie vermogen, tot het punt dat hij alleen nog maar 'de ring van Moxof' kon zeggen. Hij was weer terug bij af. Hij begon dromen in de nacht te krijgen waarin hij in het bos is, en hij zwerft aan één stuk door. Hij komt uiteindelijk een bosvrouw tegen met een boog die hem vertelt dat de stad wordt geregeerd door zombies en dat ze jagen met verzen. De bosvrouw zei dat ze zelf ook jaagde met verzen, en dat hij dat ook moest doen om te overleven. Hij kreeg een boog van haar. Hij kon niet spreken. Hij kon alleen zeggen : 'de ring van Moxof.' Elke nacht weer zocht de bosvrouw hem op in zijn dromen om hem nog meer uitleg te geven. Hij leefde telkens weer toe naar de nacht. Overdag kon hij alleen maar zeggen : 'de ring van Moxof', maar de bosvrouw leerde hem weer helemaal opnieuw te spreken. Als zij bij hem was

in zijn dromen 's nachts lukte het hem steeds beter met praten, maar overdag als zij weg was kon hij alleen maar zeggen : 'de ring van Moxof.'
Zij leerde hem nieuwe verzen die hij moest leren rijgen. Ze leerde hem hoog schieten en laag schieten. Ze leerde hem welke zombies verslagen konden worden met welke verzen. Ze zei dat hij wakker zou worden telkens als een zombie vers hem geraakt zou hebben. Maar het zombie vers zou vanzelf weer sterven, opdat hij weer zou dromen. Ze zei dat er een strijd om hem gaande was. Hij moest de verzen ook overdag leren gebruiken.
Op een dag kwam zijn vader hem opzoeken. Vreemd genoeg merkte hij dat hij hierdoor veel van zijn spraakvermogen en denkvermogen terugkreeg. Hij was boos op zijn vader. Zijn vader had hem vroeger niet altijd goed behandeld, en dat liet hij zijn vader ook duidelijk weten. Zijn vader was wel

berouwvol, en vond dat hij hier eigenlijk niet thuishoorde. Zijn vader liet hem wat plaatjes zien over de stad Sparta over de rivier. Er was een flatgebouw op één van de plaatjes met daarin een klaslokaal en een winkel, en om de hoek van het flatgebouw was het winkelcentrum. Daarvoor waren weilanden, veel weilanden, want Sparta lag tussen de weilanden en aan de rivier, aan water. Evert stemde toe. Hij zag dat zijn vader berouwvol was. Evert pakte zijn tassen en toen nam zijn vader hem mee in zijn electrisch voertuig. Ze reden de stad uit, en gingen toen de grote rivier over, over de brug, en moesten toen een tijd door het weiland rijden. Uiteindelijk kwamen ze aan bij de flat met het klaslokaal en de winkel. Hier parkeerde zijn vader het electrische voertuig ergens. Het winkelcentrum was grotendeels overdekt. Zijn vader liet hem het winkelcentrum zien. 'Ken je dit ?' vroeg

zijn vader. 'Ja, vaag,' zei Evert. 'Ik kan me niet veel meer herinneren, maar volgens mij ken ik dit.' Zijn vader gaf hem een apparaatje met een navigatie-systeem. 'Zo raak je nooit de weg kwijt hier,' zei zijn vader. Hier kon hij een nieuw leven beginnen. Er waren wat nieuwe huisjes gemaakt waar Evert zich direct voor kon aanmelden. Evert kreeg ook snel een nieuwe baan, als kinderoppasser. Dit was een stelsel van vele gebouwen die door de stad heenlagen, waarin de kinderen voornamelijk werden opgevoed door computer-spelen met navigatie-systemen. Deze dienden tegelijk als scholen, maar de kinderen werden niet gedwongen deze spelen te spelen. Ze hadden meervoudige keuze. Er was ook nog een simpel klaslokaal zonder deze spelen. Sommige medewerkers kende Evert nog van vroeger. Hij viel hen in de armen.

Hij werkt er niet lang. De kinderen zijn erg druk. Hij begint zich steeds meer terug te trekken. Hij begint met het schrijven van verhalen, van boeken. In zijn ogen gaan de verhalen nergens over, maar zo heeft hij wat afleiding en rust. Op een dag is één van zijn boeken zelfs verfilmd. Hij gaat naar de bioscoop om zijn eigen verfilmde boek te zien. Hij vraagt zich af of hij het werkelijk heeft geschreven. Het gaat over een vrouw die op een zwevend paradijs boven een zee woont. De vrouw probeert de ik-persoon te bereiken, maar het lukt niet. Ze leven in twee verschillende werelden. Ze kunnen alleen over elkaar dromen. Het is een tragische film, want de ik-persoon en de vrouw groeien steeds meer uit elkaar, vanwege het cultuur-verschil en vanwege het feit dat ze in verschillende werelden leven. Hij vind de film saai, maar wel mooi gemaakt. Het is een prachtige natuur film. Ze schrijven

elkaar brieven die nooit aankomen. Er gebeurt eigenlijk niets. De film gaat eigenlijk telkens heen en weer tussen de ik-persoon en de vrouw. Beiden worden ze wanhopig, maar moeten toch van hun leven iets zien te maken. De ik-persoon heeft telkens het gevoel alsof de vrouw in een paradijs leeft, maar zo ervaart zij dat niet. Het is heel psychologisch allemaal. Hij vraagt zich af of hij het echt zo allemaal geschreven heeft. Als hij thuiskomt gaat hij zijn boek erover weer lezen, maar het boeit hem wel. Het is alsof er een wereld voor hem open gaat. Het is niet zo saai als in de film. Hij merkt dat er een heleboel stukken zijn weggelaten, en hij is er eigenlijk een beetje boos over, want het vertegenwoordigt zijn werk niet zoals het is. Maar eigenlijk wil hij zich er helemaal niet mee bezig houden. Hij gaat gewoon verder met schrijven. Een jaar later wordt er een nieuwe film

uitgebracht van één van zijn boeken. Hij had hen nadrukkelijk gezegd dat ze zijn boeken wel waarheidsgetrouw moesten overbrengen. Weer gaat hij naar de bioscoop, en weer vindt hij de film erg saai. Hij mist gewoon wat, en weer vraagt hij zich af of hij het echt wel zo geschreven heeft. Het gaat over een man die in zijn eentje een zeiltocht maakt over de zee en aankomt op een eiland waar alleen vrouwen wonen. Er gebeurt eigenlijk niks. Het zijn allemaal lange gesprekken, en het gaat eigenlijk nergens over. Wel is het een prachtige natuurfilm, nog wel intenser dan de vorige film, en alleen daar al om vindt hij het een waardige film, maar saai, erg saai. De film laat zien hoe de vrouwen op het eiland leven en hoe de man daar op inspeelt, maar eigenlijk zonder resultaat. Ze zijn te verschillend, en zo reist de man uiteindelijk weer door, en zo is de film afgelopen. Hij loopt zich er erg aan

te irriteren, want het is zijn werk. Hij kan zichzelf niet voorstellen dat hij het zo heeft opgeschreven. Als hij thuis is gaat hij direct zijn boek erover lezen, en merkt weer dat er belangrijke dingen weggelaten zijn. Dit keer doet hij navraag waarom ze eigenlijk zoveel uit zijn boek hebben weggelaten. Het antwoord erop verbaast hem. Ze zeiden dat het low budget films waren. Hij werd kwaad. Hij vond het een verkrachting van zijn werk, en stopte met het hele project. Hij gaf hen geen verdere toestemming meer. Het waren meer natuur films dan dat het echt verhalen waren. Zijn werk stond in die films slechts op de achtergrond. Hij voelde zich bedonderd. Hij wenste maar dat hij hen nooit zomaar toestemming had gegeven. Ze zeiden dat hij blij moest zijn dat er tenminste wat van zijn werk tussenzat, wat fragmenten.
'Ja, maar dan klopt de verhaal-lijn toch

niet meer !' riep hij boos. 'Als je er zomaar in gaat lopen knippen. De belangrijkste dingen hebben jullie weggelaten.'
Maar ja, echt tevreden met zijn verhalen was hij nog niet. Het ging nergens over, maar toch boeide het hem. Hij vond zijn boeken beter dan de films. Misschien moest hij het gewoon bij de boeken houden. Maar hij kreeg meer de neiging om saai te schrijven, alsof de films iets bij hem hadden aangewakkerd. Waarom moest het ergens over gaan ? Het was ook een uitdaging om iets te schrijven wat nergens over ging. Hij probeerde daarom zijn verhalen steeds saaier en saaier te maken, steeds droger en droger. Het werd een sport voor hem, en hij had er veel plezier in. Dit ging zo ver dat hij uiteindelijk hen weer toestemming gaf om films van zijn boeken te maken, maar hij zei dat ze alleen maar fragmenten ervan mochten nemen, en

niet in zijn geheel.
'Dat deden we toch al niet ?' zeiden ze.
Hij wist dat hij zo nog meer gefilterde films van zijn boeken te zien zou krijgen. Misschien kwam daar nog wel wat interessants uit voort. Hij schreef over de droge en saaie werking van de natuur en over het saaie leven van de mens waar eigenlijk niets uit voortkwam. Hij beschreef de eeuwigdurende cirkeltjes die ze altijd maakten, hoe er eigenlijk niets veranderde, en hij diepte het steeds meer uit. Het werd zo saai en eentonig dat het interessant werd. Het werd eindeloos horizontaal, totdat het iets aanboorde wat hij nog nooit eerder had gezien. Hij kon de diepte zien in het oppervlakkige. De oppervlakkigheid was slechts schijnbaar. Hij kon zo hele boeken volschrijven, en soms werd er een boek verfilmd, en dan zat hij weer in de bioscoop. Hij vond het allemaal best. De natuur in de films was

adembenemend.
Hij begreep zichzelf niet. Hij begon zich steeds meer terug te trekken, en kon eindeloos nadenken over het object 'de brug'. Dat vond hij een heel interessant en abstract onderwerp. Hij schreef er ook over. En niemand kon daar beter, dieper en saaier over schrijven dan hij. Hij kon er uren over filosoferen, en het werd tot een boek. Het werd de nieuwe standaard.
Hij vroeg zichzelf af of hij zo saai kon schrijven dat het niet meer saai was, dat het een andere wereld aanboorde. Er werd ook een film van het boek gemaakt. En ze zeiden dat het inderdaad zo saai was dat het niet meer saai was, en dat de brug voor eens en voor altijd was gelegd. Ze zeiden dat hij een wonder had geschreven. Het was de eerste keer dat hij de verfilming van zijn boek echt goed vond, ook al waren het maar fragmenten. Het was het dikste boek wat hij tot nu toe had geschreven,

en het was ook tot nu toe de langste verfilming.
Er werd een standbeeld van hem gemaakt, als groot schrijver en filosoof. Voor hem hoefde dat niet, maar als het andere mensen hielp, dan had hij er geen problemen mee.
Het was in die dagen dat hij levensmoe begon te worden. Waar was het allemaal om te doen ? Hij zag geen doel meer. Hij zocht naar zingeving, maar hij kon het niet vinden. Wel schreef hij hier over, hoe het hem de diepte in trok, de diepte van de nutteloosheid. Nutteloosheid interesseerde hem als onderwerp. Zou hij een boek kunnen schrijven wat zo nutteloos was dat het nuttig werd ? Dat werd zijn nieuwe uitdaging, alhoewel hij streed met levensmoeheid. Hij probeerde het uit te diepen en er rust in te vinden. Dat ging hem niet gemakkelijk af, maar hij schreef gewoon door. 'Het Nut van de Nutteloosheid' noemde hij het, en er

werd ook een film van gemaakt. Hij was zo levensmoe dat hij niet eens meer naar de bioscoop ging. Toen het op de televisie was wilde hij het ook niet zien. Hij vond het allemaal maar dramatisch. Hij snapte niet wat de mens in hem zag, want hij bracht niets nieuws tot de tafel. Hij was levensmoe en zag het niet meer. Hij probeerde de puntjes met elkaar te verbinden, maar het werkte niet, en zo had hij dat ook opgeschreven. Aan het einde van het boek stelde hij dat hij geprobeerd had nut te maken van de nutteloosheid, maar dat hij daar uiteindelijk niet in geslaagd was. Dat gaf hij ook eerlijk toe aan het einde van het boek. Hij had dan ook zijn hoop geheel gericht op de lezer die er misschien meer in zou kunnen zien dan hijzelf, wat hij ook had opgeschreven. Hier stopte alles voor hem. Nu was het de taak van de lezer om er van te maken wat er van te maken viel. Misschien zou de lezer een

diepte zien die voor hem verborgen werd gehouden. Hij stond er misschien te dichtbij, als een zwarte doek voor zijn ogen, terwijl de lezer wat meer op een afstand stond om misschien helder zicht te krijgen.
Hij had het gevoel dat hij nu klaar was. Hij had gezegd wat hij had gezegd. Hij kon niet meer. En zo werd hij weer een hele stille man, die niet veel zei, maar observeerde. En steeds minder begon hij te observeren, gewoon omdat hij het nut er niet van inzag. Hij wilde niets meer. Hij liet alles maar gaan zoals het ging, en liet alles zo vaag mogelijk. Hij wilde het niet maar aanraken, er niet meer mee bezig gaan. Voor hem was het af. Dit was het. Vanwege dit gevoel van nutteloosheid deed alles pijn, en daarom deed hij het niet. Ook denken deed pijn. Hij liet alles maar stromen. Hij ging er niet meer achteraan.
Daarna legde hij zich toe op het maken

van abstracte gedichten. Hij wilde schilderen met woorden. Hij wilde de ultieme literaire drugs maken. Zijn eerste gedicht ging over een natuurvrouw bij een waterval met een lelie. Hij probeerde haar tot leven te wekken door de woorden van het gedicht. Hij wist zeer zeker dat hij hier geen overdosis van moest nemen. Daarom had hij meerdere gedichten nodig. Hij legde verschillende lagen aan in het gedicht. Het leek alsof hij de natuurvrouw kon laten spreken. Ze sprak een andere taal dan hem. Hij kon het niet verstaan, maar wel voelen. De vrouw vertelde hem een ander gedicht, en zo hadden alle gedichten met elkaar te maken. Hij besloot van elk gedicht een schilderij te maken, en hing het in zijn huis.
De gedichten zochten hem 's nachts op in zijn dromen, en ze deden allerlei leuke dingen met hem, zoals zwemmen in de zee. De gedichten werden zijn vrienden,

zijn beste vrienden. Meer had hij niet nodig. Ze brachten hem tot een nieuwe wereld. Zijn leven was nog maar een druppel in de oceaan van zijn dromen.

Hoofdstuk 5.

Ik kijk naar je, en jij kijkt naar mij,
Een waterval is tussen jou en mij,
Ik raak je aan, en jij raakt mij aan,
Maar er is een wereld tussen jou en mij,
En wie kan het vertalen ?
Twee culturen, maar het gaat makkelijk samen,
Wij hoeven elkaar niet te verstaan,
Als wij elkaar maar kunnen voelen.

Evert was in een exotische wereld aangekomen. Alles liep hier door elkaar heen. Het was multi cultureel.

Hij was aan de literaire drugs, wat hem bracht tot hogere sferen. Het ene gedicht was het kleurenpalet voor het andere gedicht. Hij werd zwaar verslaafd, maar

het bracht hem tot leven. En dit leven was nog maar een druppel in de oceaan van zijn dromen. Hij wilde niet meer terug. Elke trede omhoog leek onder hem af te brokkelen. Daarom moest hij steeds hoger en hoger, alsof er een spin op hem joeg. Alles brokkelde hier af. Hij brokkelde zelf af, en alles wat hij greep. Alles was fragmenten. Hij kon erdoor heenkijken. Het waren slechts druppels van de watervallen van zijn dromen. Hij zwom met zijn dromen, en zij maakten hem gelukkig. Wat had hij nog nodig ? Hij was boven alles gekomen, uit het water opgekomen. Hij had de nieuwe wereld gezien.
Ik kijk naar jou, jij kijkt naar mij,
Ik raak je aan, maar alles brokkelt af,
Want wij zijn maar druppels van de rivier van dromen,
Vallende om tot leven te komen
Twee culturen, maar het gaat makkelijk samen,

Wij verstaan elkaar niet,
Maar wij voelen,
De vallende druppels maken plaats voor het geheim
Wanneer je golf opgaat weet ik dat je terugkomt,
Zoals ook ik,
Altijd terugkerende tot de bron,
En wat zijn we aan het einde van de dag ?
Zoveel druppels verloren, maar de rivier van dromen is doorgebroken
Ik neem jou mee, en jij neemt mij mee,
Twee werelden verbonden,
Wij verstaan elkaar niet,
Maar wij vallen en voelen
Jij bent maar een druppel van mijn oceaan van dromen,
En ik ben maar een druppel van die van jou,
Een wereld tussenin ons,
Het zijn slechts woorden geregen voor een gedicht,

En gedichten geregen voor een drug om de dag mee door te komen,
Slechts een druppel van de oceaan van dromen
Evert was een literaire drugskoning nu. Hij had er geen behoefte aan om het te smokkelen. Hij hield het voor zichzelf. De mensheid was slechts een druppel die hij nooit zou kunnen vinden. Hij had eindelijk de evolutie van de hemel gezien.
Hij wilde zijn eigen industrie bouwen van literaire drugs, want hij was nu miljonair door zijn boeken en films, en hij was nu een rentenier, en wilde iets goeds doen met zijn geld. Door zijn rentenierschap stroomde het geld als rivieren binnen. Hij wilde zijn eigen ziekenhuis bouwen voor mensen met psychische problemen, want hij wist daar alles van door zijn eigen psychische problemen. Hij wilde hen aan de literaire drugs brengen, en geheel gratis. Het geld

zou toch wel binnenstormen door zijn rente, dus hij kon het groots aanpakken. Door de hele stad kocht hij panden, en liet er ook panden bijbouwen, om zo zijn netwerk te maken. Ook in de weilanden werden panden bijgebouwd, en hij liet bibliotheken bouwen. Bibliotheken waren voor hem het hart van de samenleving die de samenleving geestelijk gezond hielden. Hij stond ervan te kijken hoeveel mensen er op af kwamen. De helft van de stad bleek psychische problemen te hebben en liet zich bij hem inschrijven. Hij manifesteerde de literaire drugs door de beeldende kunst en schilderijen, en natuurlijk boeken. Ook werden er films vertoond. Hij wilde echter geen computer spelletjes ervan maken. Dat was hem te druk. De mensen moesten tot rust komen. Er werden veel industrie-terreinen aangelegd, allemaal van hem. Van buitenaf kon je niet zien wat het

was.
Evert had grote plannen. Hij voerde ook robotten in. Grote machines begonnen het stadswezen te besturen en te beinvloeden. Omdat hij ook nog eens veel donaties binnenkreeg waren het niet alleen rivieren van geld die binnenstroomden, maar zelfs zeeën van geld, en hij besloot ook ondergronds te bouwen. Hij kon peperdure technologie aanschaffen die tot diep onder de grond kon doorbouwen, en die ook onder andere landen kon doorbouwen. Zo begonnen Evert's machines ondergronds ook die landen te beïnvloeden. Evert wilde dat de literaire drugs de hele wereld zou overnemen. Daar had Evert zijn strategieën voor, en het geld.
Evert wist hoeveel mensen psychische problemen hadden in de wereld, en hij wilde er een einde aan maken door de literaire drugs. De machines wisten precies hoe ze dat moesten toedienen.

Dit maakte dat van Evert ook in andere landen standbeelden werden gemaakt. Voor Evert hoefde dat niet, maar als het de mensen hielp, dan had hij er geen problemen mee en wilde hij graag helpen. De mensen hadden zo wat houvast. Hij werd de literaire drugskoning genoemd. Dat was niet te druk voor hem, want de mensen waren immers aan de literaire drugs. Ze waren niet hysterisch, ze stalkten hem niet, maar ze waren slaperig, dromerig, als junkies aan de literaire drugs, en er was genoeg voor iedereen. Evert wilde dit graag zo houden. Hij had alle rust om aan zijn project te werken. Er waren geen rellen. Iedereen was in een diepe slaap. Hij had iedereen onder hypnose gebracht.
En zo golfde de wereld op de zee van literaire hypnose. De wereld was zo in diepe vrede.
Op een dag was er buitenaards bezoek.

Grote ruimteschepen bezochten de wereld, en mensen werden opgezogen in de ruimteschepen en buitenaardsen werden tot de wereld gezonden. Het was een grote uitwisseling. Evert wist niet meer waar hij was. Het leek alsof hij tussen werelden inzweefde. Ook andere werelden waren in zijn literaire drug geinteresseerd. Alles kwam in een stroomversnelling. Geld werd omgezet tot energie. Economie werd omgezet in technologie, in trappensystemen. Het bleken de condities te zijn waardoor de technologie kon werken. Geld was slechts een excuus. Het moest afgeschaft worden. En zo kwam er een literaire drug die geheel met geld afrekende, maar die des te meer de voorwaardes liet zien. Het was een doolhof van trappen. Overal waren trappen. De werelden waren door de literaire drugs in elkaar versmolten. Ditmaal was het een literaire drugstrip van zwaar kaliber. Hij was in

een grote extase terechtgekomen. Hij liep naar buiten en omhelsde willekeurige mensen om hem heen, en legde hen de hand op. Ook deze mensen raakten in extase en begonnen hetzelfde te doen. Hij leefde in zoveel werelden nu. Een grote muur was afgebrokkeld. Telkens weer in zijn literaire drugstrips moest hij trappen lopen, zowel naar boven als naar beneden, en telkens weer zag hij zoveel meer trappen. Alle werelden waren vol met trappen, en het werden er steeds meer. Het was een doolhof, en hij had vragen. Het was alsof hij in het drukke verkeer was. Wanneer trappen tezamen kwamen, in elkaar oversmolten, zag hij daar vaak een donkere vrouw staan, als een verkeerslicht. Zij sprak een taal die hij niet verstond, maar hij voelde haar. Het waren lichten die knipperden en overschakelden. Hij verstond deze taal niet, maar hij wilde het leren. Het leek

op een gokspel, maar het waren verkeerslichten. Het waren de verkeerslichten van de literaire drugs. Het leek op een nieuwe soort van wiskunde. Als hij beter naar de trappen keek, dan leken het op bomen waarvan de blaadjes de treden waren. Hij was in een samensmelting tussen stad en oerwoud. De muren waren tot raadsels gemaakt door graffiti. En helicopters vlogen er boven. Het was een doolhof. Het was machinerie die hij niet begreep. Maar diep van binnen wist hij dat het slechts boeken waren, literaire drugs. Het waren de droom gidsen.
Het was een multi-planetaire samenleving geworden. Natuur, stad en het buitenaardse waren samengesmolten, allemaal door de literaire drugs. Maar nu stond hij voor een nog grotere opgave. Hij moest de dood zien te overbruggen, de tijd. Ook hiervoor moest hij een speciale literaire drug voor uitvinden.

Hij werkte er lang aan, zelfs soms dag en nacht. Het was feest in de stad toen de muur tussen leven en dood werd afgebroken. Het was de zwaarste literaire drug die Evert ooit had gemaakt, en dat moest ook wel. Nu konden zijn gebouwen pas echt gevuld worden, want zoveel gebouwen stonden nog steeds leeg, vooral de gebouwen ondergronds.
De doden kwamen terug en iedereen was in extase. En de mens kon weer tijdreizen door deze literaire drug. De doden brachten zoveel ideeën met zich mee, en er werd zoveel over de wegen tot de hemelen gesproken. Het was de evolutie van de hemel.
Maar nu moesten er wel nieuwe muren gebouwd worden, zoals de muur tussen goed en kwaad. Die kwam daar waar de muur tussen leven en dood altijd had gestaan.
De rivier tussen leven en dood,
Is nu de rivier tussen goed en kwaad,

Er zullen altijd schepen varen,
Er zullen altijd stormen zijn die zullen openbaren

Hoofdstuk 6.

Theofomius was een nieuwe literaire drug die Evert had uitgevonden, en tevens een machine. Hiermee had hij de brug tussen leven en dood afgebroken, en de muur tussen goed en kwaad opgebouwd. Theofomius was een hardwerkende machine. Theofomius was spontaan en communicatief, zelfs overdreven, maar leidde altijd weer terug naar de natuur, naar de stilte. Theofomius was een literaire drug die er eerst inging, dan uitging en eruit meenam. Theofomius kon zich goed in de ander verplaatsen, en zich er ook weer goed uitplaatsen, om ook nog eens de ander mee te nemen op een trip. Daar was Theofomius goed in. Theofomius

liet niet zomaar mensen achter. Daarom vond Theofomius de muur van de dood maar onzin, en brak het af, en bouwde de muur tussen goed en kwaad ervoor in de plaats.
Theofomius kon soms de clown uithangen, om alles te relativeren en luchtiger te maken.
Maar het geluk was maar van korte duur. Deze utopische toestand begon langzaam weg te ebben, en kon niet in stand gehouden worden. De literaire drugs scheen op een bepaald punt niet meer zo goed te werken als voorheen. Er waren ingewikkelde problemen waar het niet tegenop kon. De muur tussen goed en kwaad begon weer af te brokkelen en werd weer de muur tussen leven en dood, en die werd onverbiddelijker dan ooit. Alles wat Evert had meegemaakt leek maar een droom te zijn geweest. Er waren nieuwe problemen die de kop opstaken. De stad waar Evert

oorspronkelijk vandaan kwam, genaamd Tsjernobyl had een kerncentrale waar een kernreactor was ontploft wat men als oorzaak aanduidde van de algemene verslechtering van de situatie. Deze stad was vernoemd naar de planeet Tsjernobyl, een grote planeet die voor tachtig procent bestond uit oerwouden, en voor de rest uit kerncentrales. Volgens geleerden was er een kernramp uitgebroken op de planeet Tsjernobyl, waardoor er ook een kernramp ontstond in de stad Tsjernobyl, omdat het gelijk met elkaar op zou lopen. Dit zou allerlei problemen veroorzaken waar de literaire drugs niet tegenop kon. Evert had in zijn jeugd eens een boek over de planeet Tsjernobyl gelezen. Het trok hem aan, omdat de naam van zijn stad ook Tsjernobyl was.
Het ging allemaal om de groene steen, de steen van het reactieve verstand. Ze vonden het ergens in het oerwoud en

brachten het tot hun kern centrales. Evert hield zich ondergronds verscholen. De helft van de stad Tsjernobyl was afgebrand, en de vrijgekomen straling doodde twee derde van de mensheid. De wereld was snel een post-apocalyptische puinhoop. Het was de grootste ramp in de menselijke geschiedenis. Evert hield zich diep verscholen onder de grond, zoals zovele anderen. Dat was ook wat geleerden aanraadden. Geleerden hadden een klein ruimteschip gemaakt, en vroegen aan Evert of hij met hen mee wilde om onderzoek te doen op de planeet Tsjernobyl. Ze zeiden dat het niet zomaar een kernramp was, maar een buitenaardse aanval. Evert stemde toe. Ze zouden met z'n drieën gaan : Sophia, David, de piloot, en Evert. Het duurde vele maanden voordat het schip aankwam op de planeet Tsjernobyl. Het was deels een helicopter-schip waarmee ze in het oerwoud aankwamen. De

inheemsen van het oerwoud, de inboorlingen, noemden de planeet niet Tsjernobyl, maar Irad. Ze waren aan de rand van het oerwoud terecht gekomen, en konden zo het gebied van de kern-centrales inkijken. Het was een grote industrie. Veel inboorlingen waren ontvoerd en moesten dwang arbeid verrichten in de kern-centrales. Zij werden in de gaten gehouden door grote monsterachtige wezens, de wachters van de kern-centrales. Geleerden zeiden dat de wachters onder het commando van skeletten stonden.
Sophia en David waren wapen-experts, de besten in hun gebied. Alle drie waren ze goed bewapend toen ze richting de kerncentrales gingen. Al snel kwamen ze in een vuurgevecht met de poortwachter. Toen deze was uitgeschakeld was er inmiddels een alarm afgegaan, en er kwamen veel meer wachters aanrennen. Het was een zwaar vuurgevecht. Alle

drie raakten ze licht gewond, maar toen de wachters waren uitgeschakeld konden ze de kerncentrale binnendringen. Het alarm ging nog steeds af, maar toen ze het alarm vonden schoten ze het kapot. Toen gingen er nog meer alarms af. Er waren hier allemaal ketels en machines. Nog meer wachters kwamen aangesneld. Alle drie hadden ze een helm op, maar zodra Evert's helm werd geraakt kreeg hij vreemde hallucinaties waarvan hij niet wist of het echt was of niet. Zijn lichaam begon in een vreemd spasme te komen. Hij kon zich niet meer bewegen zoals hij het wilde. Hij zag David en Sophia al op de grond liggen, en plotseling was hij omringd door wachters die steeds dichterbij kwamen. Het leek wel alsof wit spul zijn helm binnendrong, en zijn hoofd begon heel heet te worden, alsof het knapte. Ook Evert viel neer. Ze werden alle drie gesleept tot een vreemde kamer waar een

skelet zat op een stoel. 'Twee pinnen door de hersenen en de mens denkt nog steeds dat hij kans maakt,' sprak het skelet. 'Elk mens heeft deze twee pinnen, en toen ze ingebracht werden camoufleerden ze zichzelf goed en werden één met de hersenen.' Het skelet liep naar Evert toe, deed z'n helm af, en trok toen twee lange metalen pinnen uit het hoofd van Evert. 'Zie ?' sprak het skelet toen hij de pinnen aan Evert en de anderen liet zien. 'Zodra het in de hersenen is wordt het tot vlees en bot. Het past zich goed aan.' Toen stopte het skelet de twee pinnen weer terug in het hoofd van Evert.
'Ik zal jullie nog wat laten zien,' sprak het skelet, en leidde hen tot een andere kamer achter de kamer waar ze waren. Daar lag een groene gloeiende steen waar andere skeletten omheen dansten. 'Kijk naar de steen !' riep het skelet. 'Het is het reactieve verstand waardoor de

mens doet wat ik zeg.' Evert zag de steen en het begon te golven voor zijn ogen. Plotseling bevond hij zich weer in zijn eigen wereld. Hij wist niet of het echt was of dat hij hallucineerde. Hij was alleen op een weg buiten de stad in de sneeuw, terwijl het nacht was. Hij zag de stad brandende, en ook veel bomen om hem heen. Hij liep door richting de weilanden, maar hij kwam bijna niet vooruit. Hij herinnerde zich Tsjernobyl. Hij vroeg zich af of dit een nachtmerrie was of echt. Hij opende zijn ogen en zag het skelet, maar er was overal vuur. Hij herinnerde zich wat verzen van de literaire drugs.

In vuur en ijs, daar spuit een gif,
Ik kan het niet doven,
Ik kan het niet doorzien,
De brug tussen leven en dood is lang,
Zo lang dat men sterft,
Of is het slechts een hallucinatie ?
Of ik levend of dood ben is allang niet

meer van belang,
Mijn ervaringen leiden mij tot diepte,
Ik ben de brug overgegaan.
Het skelet sloeg hem in het gezicht. Hij voelde alsof zijn kaak brandde. Er was niets dan vuur.
Weer sprak hij :
Oh vuur, eindig niet, maar ga dieper,
Om te openbaren het verborgene,
Oh ijs, stop niet, maar scheur mij los van de leugen en de onwetendheid
Het skelet hing met zijn brandende armen om zijn nek, proberende hem te wurgen. 'Buig !' riep het skelet.
Evert had het gevoel alsof hij in een vuurzee was, alsof hij afbrokkelde.
Plotseling kwamen er meerdere gewapende geleerden binnen, die de monsterlijke wachters en het skelet aanvielen. 'Hoe komen jullie hier ?' riep Evert.
'Geheime opdracht,' zei één van de geleerden die Evert in bescherming nam.

Met een speciaal wapen vielen ze het skelet aan, die toen wegrende. Ook de skeletten die om de steen dansten waren weg, en sommigen van hen lagen verkreukeld op de grond. Er stroomde groen bloed uit hen wat zich vermengde met de zanderige grond. Er waren vier geleerden bijgekomen. De groene steen was weg.
Ze zouden verder op onderzoek gaan. Maar Evert wilde niet meer verder. Hij bleef maar denken aan de groene steen waar hij naar gekeken had. Hij was zichzelf niet meer. Het was een steen van het oerwoud. Hij voelde zich aan flarden gescheurd. Hij wilde het oerwoud in. Hij liet het de anderen weten en rende de kerncentrale uit. Hij vroeg zich af waar hij de kracht vandaan had gehaald. Hij dacht aan de twee pinnen die in zijn hoofd zaten, en wilde een medicijn. Hij wilde het in het oerwoud zoeken.
Hij snakte naar adem. Hij had frisse

lucht nodig.
Hij maakte contact met de inboorlingen van het oerwoud. Hij vertelde hen over de groene steen. Zij zeiden dat het de steen van de geschiedenis was. Zij zeiden dat de skeletten een stuk van de grotere groene steen van de geschiedenis hadden afgeslagen. De geschiedenis was zo niet compleet en werd telkens verkeerd geinterpreteerd zodat de toekomst niet kon komen. De inboorlingen noemden de planeet Irad. Alleen het gebied van de kerncentrales was Tsjernobyl, en het was ontstaan toen skeletten een stuk van de steen van geschiedenis hadden gestolen. Dit noemden ze het reactieve verstand waarmee ze het verstand van de mens onder controle kregen. Zo ontvoerden zij vele inboorlingen voor dwang arbeid. Toen de steen werd gespleten werd het verstand van de inboorlingen gespleten.
'Is er geen medicijn in het oerwoud ?'

vroeg Evert.
'Er is een drug,' zei een inboorling. 'Als je er van neemt, dan is er geen Tsjernobyl meer. Tsjernobyl is slechts een bepaalde staat van bewustzijn.' Evert besefte wat dat zou kunnen betekenen. Zijn hele verleden zou weg zijn, of anders zijn, als Tsjernobyl niet meer zou bestaan. Maar wat had hij te verliezen ?
'Ik zou de drug wel willen nemen,' zei Evert.
De inboorlingen keken hem aan. 'Je hebt de drug al genomen,' zei een inboorling. 'Het is je leven.'
'Maar Tsjernobyl is er nog steeds,' zei Evert.
'Neem meer van de drug,' zei de inboorling, 'en geef het de tijd in te werken.'
'Hij moet ingewijd worden,' zei een andere inboorling. Ze geven hem een wit poeder. Toen hij ervan at viel hij in een diepe spastische trance. Hij bleef zijn

bewustzijn verliezen. Toen hij weer bij bewustzijn kwam keek hij naar het gebied waar eerst de kerncentrales waren, maar ze waren er niet meer. Er was alleen nog oerwoud. "W... waar zijn Sophia, David en de andere geleerden ?" vroeg Evert. "Waar is Tsjernobyl ?"
Maar hij zag zelfs de inboorlingen niet meer. Er was alleen wildernis ...

Hoofdstuk 7.

Evert vroeg zich af waar hij was. Alles was stil hier. Hoe hij ook zocht, hij vond geen inboorlingen, geen ruimteschip en geen Tsjernobyl. 'Droom ik ?' vroeg hij zichzelf af. 'Ben ik dood ?'
Na lang lopen door de wildernis kwam hij bij een meer aan, waar een vrouw met een naakt bovenlichaam haarzelf waste.
'Tsjernobyl ?' vroeg hij.
'Wat is dat ?' vroeg de vrouw.
Hij kwam dichterbij. 'Deze planeet,' zei

hij, 'of in ieder geval moet er een gebied zijn van kerncentrales.' De vrouw begon te lachen. 'Hier niet,' sprak ze. 'Dit is de planeet Irad.'
Evert ging op de grond zitten. Hij was een beetje duizelig. 'Maar ik begrijp je wel,' zei de vrouw. 'Tsjernobyl is een zekere staat van bewustzijn. Het is een nachtmerrie.'
'Dat was het zeker,' zei Evert, 'maar wat is dit ?'
'Nog wel erger,' sprak de vrouw met een glimlach.
Evert schrok. 'Waar ben ik dan ? Is dit een nog lagere staat van bewustzijn ?'
'Ja,' zei de vrouw, 'dit is een doodsmerrie.'
Evert schrok weer. 'Ben ik dood ?'
'Wie niet ?' sprak de vrouw. 'De mens gaat voortdurend over van leven tot dood, net zoals van dag naar nacht.'
Evert was direct op zijn hoede. 'W... wat kan ik hier verwachten ? Waar moet ik

voor oppassen ?' vroeg Evert voorzichtig, niet wetende of hij de vrouw wel kon vertrouwen. De vrouw kwam het water uit. Ze had een soort verenrokje aan. Ze was een inheemse. Ze ging voor hem staan. Ze was iets groter dan hem. 'Dit is een doodsmerrie,' zei ze weer.
'Is dat erg ?' vroeg Evert.
'Tamelijk,' sprak ze.
'Waar zit het gevaar in ?' vroeg Evert.
'Niemand komt levend uit dit oerwoud,' sprak ze.
'Maar zijn we dood ?' vroeg Evert.
'Wie niet ?' zei ze weer. 'En als de dood voorbij is, dan is er weer leven, en dan zeggen we dat het maar een doodsmerrie was.'
'Dus aan het einde van de doodsmerrie kom ik weer tot leven ?' vroeg Evert.
Ze knikte. 'Maar van sommige doodsmerries wordt je niet meer wakker. Sommige doodsmerries zijn voor altijd,'

sprak ze.
'Klinkt eng,' zei Evert. 'Dus het is toch een soort slaap ?'
'Ja,' zei ze, 'maar veel dieper dan slaap.'
Evert trilde. Hij voelde dat hij wilde neerliggen, en dat deed hij. De vrouw ging bij hem zitten. 'Vind je het erg dat ik bij je kom zitten ?' vroeg de vrouw.
'Nee,' zei Evert. 'Ik ken je alleen niet, en weet niet of ik je wel kan vertrouwen. Je zegt dat dit een doodsmerrie is, erger dan een nachtmerrie. Ik weet niet wat ik kan verwachten.'
'Je leven was al een doodsmerrie,' zei ze.
Hij zuchtte en beefde. 'Ik zal je geen kwaad doen,' sprak ze. 'Je bent immers aan het einde van je doodsmerrie gekomen.'
'Oh, het is al bijna afgelopen ?' vroeg Evert.
'Leer de natuur kennen,' sprak ze. 'Het is iets van de natuur.'
Hij voelde zich niet op zijn gemak. Hij

keek om. Het begon ook wat donkerder te worden. Toen keek hij haar aan, bijna smekend. 'Waar moet ik naartoe ? Ik heb nergens om naartoe te gaan.' Hij dacht na over zijn leven, en kon duidelijk zien waar de doodsmerries waren. 'Hoe kan ik van de doodsmerrie ontwaken ?' vroeg hij.
Ze keek hem aan. Hij keek naar haar riem waaronder de veren hingen aan haar rokje. Er hing ook een dun touw aan haar heup. 'Ik weet een plaats waar de drug groeit om te kunnen ontwaken,' sprak ze. 'Maar je moet we wat beloven.' Hij knikte. 'Praat erover met niemand,' sprak ze.
'Maar er is hier niemand,' zei hij.
'Als je ontwaakt ben je weer in de stad,' sprak ze. 'Overal waar je in je leven bent geweest zijn slechts staten van bewustzijn.'
'Laat maar,' zei hij. 'Ik ben liever in de wildernis.' Hij leerde van zijn

doodsmerries te houden. 'Kan ik niet gewoon ontwaken in de wildernis ?' vroeg hij.
'Daar zijn ook wel drugs voor die hier groeien,' sprak ze.
'Waarom zei je dat dan niet ?' vroeg hij. 'Wil je me terugleiden naar de stad ?'
'Het was om je te testen,' sprak ze. 'In sommige staten van bewustzijn zijn we in de stad, voor spionage en om lessen te leren. Sommige doodsmerries zijn in de stad, goed gecamoufleerd. Ze passen zich gewoon aan. Het zijn een soort kameleonen.'
Ze wees naar een boom verderop waar kleine witte doorzichtige besjes groeiden. Ze hingen in lange trossen aan de boom. 'Daar ontwaak je van,' sprak ze, 'maar wil je wel ontwaken ?'
'Ik wil tot een hogere staat van bewustzijn,' sprak hij.
'Maar daar kom je alleen door de lagere staten van bewustzijn,' sprak ze. 'Wie

niet dieper afdaalt komt ook niet meer op,' zei ze. 'Zij worden tot zombies.'
Evert schrok, en in een flits herinnerde hij zich zijn leven als politie agent en hoe hij hierdoor in de psychische problemen was gekomen. 'Dus het ligt eigenlijk erg dichtbij,' sprak hij.
'Het is een zombie-machine,' sprak ze. 'Ze worden gemaakt in Tsjernobyl. Zij die niet diep willen gaan worden automatisch tot zombies.'
'En zij keren zich automatisch tegen ons ?' vroeg Evert.
'Het is één van de doodsmerries,' sprak de vrouw langzaam. 'Zij die maar in één staat van bewustzijn blijven worden uiteindelijk monsters en skeletten.'
De rillingen gleden over Evert heen.
'Dus we moeten wel telkens overschakelen ?' vroeg Evert. 'Anders worden we net als hen ?'
'Zij leven niet meer,' sprak de vrouw bijna zingend. En toen begon ze zachtjes

te zingen : 'Zij zijn een deel van de machine geworden. Tsjernobyl is een groot mysterie. Wordt niet zoals hen, ga altijd weer dieper, kom tot de beste drugs-soorten van de planeet, die jouw beveiliging garanderen.'
Evert keek naar haar met opgetrokken wenkbrauwen. 'En dat moet je zingend doen ?' vroeg hij verbaasd.
De vrouw zong door : 'Want Tsjernobyl is nog steeds op jacht. Je hebt het nog niet overwonnen, Tsjernobyl, een doodsmerrie in de koude nacht.'
Evert veronderstelde dat ze zong omdat de verschillende toonhoogtes verschillende staten van bewustzijn voorstelden. Ze zong bijna fluisterend door, maar Evert kon het niet meer verstaan. Er kwamen tranen uit haar ogen.
'Volgens mij ben je zwaar aan de drugs,' zei Evert.
'Ik moet wel,' zong de vrouw.

'Van wie moet dat ?' vroeg hij. 'Zijn er geen andere manieren ?'
'Ik zou maar leren zingen als ik jou was,' zong de vrouw.
'Van wie moest dat ? Hebben ze je gedwongen ?' vroeg Evert.
'Het is overlevings-strategie,' zong ze.
'Oh soldaat, van Tsjernobyl, kun je ooit ontsnappen van Tsjernobyl ?'
'Ik zal het proberen,' sprak Evert.
'Proberen ?' zong ze. 'Je hebt de drugs nodig.'
'Liever niet,' zei Evert. 'Wat als je werkt voor de drugs industrie, als onderdeel van Tsjernobyl ?'
Evert kreeg een klap in zijn gezicht. 'Zeg dat nooit,' zong ze.
'Oh Tsjernobyl, oh Tsjernobyl, je weet mij altijd weer te vinden. Hier heb ik niet om gevraagd. Ik zal altijd tegen je strijden. Ik zal je altijd weer misleiden.'
'Zie je,' zei Evert. 'Je spoort niet echt. Maar ja, wat kan ik verwachten van een

doodsmerrie ?'
'Het is veilig nu,' sprak ze. 'Sorry daarvoor. Ik heb een trauma opgelopen van Tsjernobyl, en daarom ben ik zo.'
'Maar je bent aan de drugs,' sprak Evert.
'Het is de natuur,' sprak ze. 'De natuur is ervoor om ons te helpen, en ons ook in andere staten van bewustzijn te brengen.'
'Wat als het gif is ?' vroeg Evert.
'Het was de enige manier voor mij om te ontsnappen uit Tsjernobyl,' sprak ze. 'Ik moest dwangarbeid verrichten.'
'Sorry,' zei Evert. 'Ik begrijp het, maar ben je wel waarlijk vrij ?'
'Het zit in me,' sprak ze. 'Het is nog steeds op jacht. Het zit ook in jou.'
Ze pakte zijn hand, en leidde hem tot de boom waaraan de sappige witte doorzichtige besjes hingen in lange trossen. 'Neem eet, en gedenk,' sprak ze. 'Denk diep, oh mijn Adam. Ik ben jouw Eva, om je te doen ontwaken.' Ze plukte wat van de besjes en bracht het tot zijn

mond. 'Het is goed,' sprak ze.
'Weet je het zeker ?' vroeg Evert.
'Ja, mijn Adam, er is geen andere keuze,' sprak ze. 'We raakten in discussie, en het zou kunnen uitlopen op een gevecht. Dat is wat Tsjernobyl wil. Splitsen en kern-energie opwekken. Verdelen en heersen. Neem en eet. Gedenk en denk.'
'Ja, mijn Eva,' sprak hij als onder hypnose, en begon van de zachte besjes die ze voor zijn mond hield te eten.
'Goedzo,' sprak ze. 'We hebben hoger bewustzijn nodig. Tsjernobyl is op jacht. Christenen met hun zwaarden. Soldaten voor hun idool.' Evert viel in een diepe slaap. Hij zag haar in het wit, als in een droom.
'Mijn Adam, je bent niet als andere mannen,' sprak ze. Ze zat op een wit paard.
'Leidt me,' zei Evert. 'Ik ken deze wereld niet.'
Er was overal vuur. Er was een pad van

natuur, een strook van oerwoud, die door het vuur heenging. Het vuur voelde niet onprettig aan. Het bracht een bepaalde extase in Evert.
'Mijn Adam ben je, want je hebt van het verbodene genomen ... verboden door Tsjernobyl,' sprak ze vanaf het paard.
'Ik begrijp je, ik voel je,' sprak Evert. 'Mijn Eva ...'
'Zie je het vuur om ons heen ?' vroeg ze. 'Het is het vuur van oorlog en apocalypse, als een schaduw van de natuur, als het fundament van de pyramide. Je bent ontwaakt nu. Ze wees naar een witte doorzichtige pyramide in het oerwoud. Er kwam rook uit de top.
'Dit is het geheim,' sprak ze. 'Al het neerstortende rivierwater van de waterval stortte kapot op de rotsen, maar je bent de waterval opgekomen. Het is een natuur-geheim, een bruisend natuur-geheim.'
'Alle inheemsen die zijn ontwaakt

kennen dit geheim,' sprak ze vanaf haar witte paard. 'In de pyramide kun je God ontmoeten, mijn moeder.'
'Je bent zwaar aan de drugs,' zei Evert.
'Of je ontmoet God, of je gaat terug naar Tsjernobyl,' sprak de vrouw vanaf het witte paard.
'Alles beter dan Tsjernobyl,' zuchtte Evert. Toen leidde ze hem naar de witte doorzichtige pyramide.
In de pyramide was een donkere vrouw met een goudachtige metalen muts die leek op een mijter. Evert kwam dichterbij. De vrouw was verder gekleed in wit. 'Dus dit is God ?' vroeg Evert. 'Of ik ben zwaar aan de drugs, of jij, of allebei.'
'We zijn zwaar aan de drugs,' sprak de vrouw op het witte paard, 'mijn Adam. Het is het enige medicijn tegen Tsjernobyl. Ook Tsjernobyl is een drug. Er zijn alleen maar drugs. Dit is mijn moeder.'

'Hallo God,' zei Evert. Er kwam een zachte bliksem van de vrouw af. 'Praat ze ook ?' vroeg Evert.
'Moeder, Adam is gekomen,' sprak de vrouw op het witte paard.
God keek hen beiden aan. 'Ontwaakten,' sprak de moeder.
'Wat is er met je moeder gebeurd ?' vroeg Evert.
'Zij is ook een slachtoffer van de kernramp,' sprak de vrouw op het witte paard.
'Wie maakte haar tot God ?' vroeg Evert.
'Zij werd God door haar verlichting,' sprak de vrouw.
'Maar hoe ?' vroeg Evert.
'Door een drug,' sprak de vrouw.
'Kunnen wij ook van die drug nemen ?' vroeg Evert.
'Nee,' zei de moeder. 'Het is niet zomaar iets wat we geven.'
'Dat is natuurlijk oneerlijk, dat jij God speelt over alle anderen,' zei Evert.

'Ik speel geen God,' zei de moeder. 'Het is slechts een staat van bewustzijn.'
'En dat gun je een ander niet ?' vroeg Evert.
'Daar gaat het niet om,' sprak de moeder. 'Het gaat om de voorschriften, om de voorwaardes. Als de drug verkeerd gebruikt wordt gaan we er allemaal aan, zoals Tsjernobyl eens deed. Hij was de vorige God.'
'Wat zijn de voorschriften voor de drug, en waar groeit het ?' vroeg Evert.
'Dat kan ik niet zeggen,' zei de moeder van de vrouw op het witte paard. 'Wij willen geen nieuwe Tsjernobyl.'
'Begrijpelijk,' zei Evert. 'Maar er moet toch een studie proces zijn om ook anderen in te wijden ?'
'Veel te gevaarlijk,' sprak de moeder van de vrouw.
'Maar wie zegt dat jij de drug goed gebruikt ?' sprak Evert. 'Het is nog steeds een zootje.'

'Het is geen zootje,' sprak de moeder van de vrouw. 'Alles is goed hier.'
'En wij zijn een bedreiging, een gevaar ?' vroeg Evert.
'Jullie zijn jong,' sprak de moeder van de vrouw, 'en onhandig. Ik ben moeder.'
'Maar nu heb je me wel nieuwsgierig gemaakt,' zei Evert. Toen richtte hij zich weer tot de vrouw op het witte paard. 'Weet jij iets van die drug af ?'
'Moeder wil het me niet vertellen,' sprak de vrouw.
'Wat als het allemaal onzin is ?' vroeg Evert.
'Moeder heeft me gered van Tsjernobyl,' sprak de vrouw. 'Mijn Adam, het is beter zo.'
'Wanneer krijgen we het geheim te weten ?' vroeg Evert.
'Nooit,' sprak de moeder van de vrouw die God werd genoemd.
'Dat klinkt erg ontmoedigend,' sprak Evert. 'Bijna als een doodsmerrie.' Hij

kon bijna geen adem halen. Het kwam door de rook die uit de top van de pyramide kwam. Evert ging de pyramide uit. De vrouw op het witte paard volgde hem. 'Volgens mij is je moeder nog wel erger dan Tsjernobyl,' sprak Evert.
'Ze bedoelt het niet zo,' sprak de vrouw op het witte paard. 'Ze is alleen erg voorzichtig. Ze wil niet dat de drug in verkeerde handen valt, want dat zou een ramp betekenen.'
'Ik kan geen adem halen,' sprak Evert.
'Het is de dood van een superster,' sprak de vrouw. 'Toen hij stierf, stierven we allemaal.'
'Wat bedoel je ?' hijgde Evert.
'Twee kogels in zijn nek,' sprak ze. 'Het leven is onverbiddelijk.'
'Waar heb je het over ?' hijgde Evert. 'Ik stik.'
'Je hebt van de drugs genomen,' sprak ze.

Hoofdstuk 8.

Zombies waren om Evert heen, en ze trokken hem naar een hoge doorzichtige lichtgevende troon waarop een skelet zat. Evert kon nog steeds niet goed ademhalen. 'Waar ben ik ?' hijgde hij.
'Er is geen ontsnapping uit Tsjernobyl,' sprak het skelet.
'Waar is de vrouw op het witte paard ?' hijgde hij.
'Eva doet goed werk, Adam,' sprak het skelet.
'Ik ben Adam niet !' riep Evert met zijn laatste krachten.
'Adam wordt altijd weer omgekocht met snoepgoed,' krijste de skelet. 'Denkt altijd weer te ontsnappen. Baadt het niet, dan schaadt het niet. Er is geen ontsnapping uit Tsjernobyl.'
'Wie bent u ?' vroeg Evert.
'Ik ben Tsjernobyl, halve zool !' krijste het skelet. Het gekrijs galmde door de

hele zaal.
'Ik wordt hier een beetje moedeloos van,' zuchtte Evert, nog steeds naar adem happend. 'Wanneer houdt dit op ?'
'Nooit !' krijste het skelet.
'Dat klinkt niet echt bemoedigend,' sprak Evert, happende naar lucht. 'Word je daar zelf ook niet eens moe van ?'
'Kop houden !' krijste het skelet. 'Tsjernobyl heeft geen tijd voor persoonlijk sentiment.'
'Vermoeiend,' zei Evert.
'Dwangarbeid zal je mores leren !' krijste het skelet. 'Voer hem af !'
Toen werd Evert naar een ruimte met machines en ketels gesleept. 'Ik kan dit niet geloven !' riep Evert tegen zichzelf. Hier zag hij ook de geleerden terug, en de vrouw en haar moeder, en andere inboorlingen, die daar allemaal dwangarbeid moesten verrichten. 'Het is maar een staat van bewustzijn,' sprak Evert tegen zichzelf. 'Waarschijnlijk een

doodsmerrie.'
De anderen keken niet eens op. Ze waren te diep verzonken in hun werk. Ze leken onder zware hypnose te zijn. Hier kwam Evert weer een beetje op adem. Hij zag nu in dat Tsjernobyl overal was, ook in het oerwoud, zelfs in de vruchten. Alles was besmet. Hij stond daar maar en niemand keek naar hem, en niemand hielp hem. Ineens rolde er een klein wit doorzichtig besje uit zijn kleding. Dat moest er ingerold zijn. Hij aarzelde geen moment. Hij raapte het op en stak het in zijn mond. Het proefde zo romig en zacht, zo verfrissend, levendgevend. Hij werd duizelig en zakte neer op de grond. Er was geen Tsjernobyl meer. Hij was in het zand, en de inheemse vrouw die hem de besjes had gegeven stond voor hem. 'Niet wegzakken,' zei ze. Ze gaf hem meer besjes te eten. 'Ik was in Tsjernobyl !' riep hij, terwijl hij naar adem hapte. 'Het was verschrikkelijk !'

'Je moet meer eten,' zei de vrouw, terwijl ze hem begon te voeren. 'Zij die niet genoeg eten gaan terug naar Tsjernobyl.'
'Ik ontmoette God, en daarna een skelet,' zei Evert in paniek.
'Ja, het zijn de bijwerkingen van de drugs,' sprak de vrouw. 'Die worden minder naarmate je er meer van eet, en naarmate je er meer gewend aan raakt.'
'Is dat zo ?' vroeg Evert. Ze knikte.
'Ze zei dat ze God was, en dat ik het geheim nooit zou weten. Ik dacht dat ik gek werd. Ik kon geen adem meer halen,' sprak Evert.
Ze glimlachte. 'Bijwerkingen, mijn Adam,' sprak ze. 'Je lichaam moet er nog aan wennen. De drug is zwaar beveiligd tegen onbevoegden. Het bevat een soort insecticide. Het doodt de parasieten.'
'Ik begrijp het,' sprak Evert opgelucht. 'Ik dacht echt dat ik gek werd.'
'Jij moet de natuur leren kennen,' sprak de vrouw. 'En alle geheimen van de

natuur.'
Er kwamen allerlei emoties in hem naar boven die hij wilde uiten, maar hij wilde voorzichtig zijn. Na een tijdje borrelde het zo omhoog dat hij het niet meer kon tegen houden. 'Ik ben er klaar voor, mijn Eva,' sprak hij. Maar hoe wist hij dat ze echt te vertrouwen was ? 'Elke vriendschap is een risico,' sprak hij tot zichzelf. 'En wat voor andere keuze heb ik ? Ik kan geen kant op, dus ik leer maar mijn lessen. Ik kan van alles en iedereen leren, zelfs van mijn vijanden.'
Ze nam hem mee naar haar hut. 'Ik zal het veel voor je koken,' sprak ze. Was hij nu echt in een paradijs gekomen met deze vrouw ? Hij wist dat hij bepaalde stoffen nodig had om hier te kunnen blijven, in deze staat van bewustzijn, maar hij wist ook dat andere staten van bewustzijn belangrijk waren. Daar waren de verschillende soorten van natuurdrugs voor nodig. De vrouw was zijn gids

hierin, want hij wist niks.
'Ik wil de verschillende staten van bewustzijn in de wildernis leren kennen,' sprak hij. 'Ik wil niet vastgroeien en een zombie worden.'
'Ik zal het je leren,' sprak de vrouw. Haar hut was gemaakt van grassen en bamboe, en was redelijk groot. In de nachten had hij zware nachtmerries over Tsjernobyl, en dan suste zij hem. 'Het zijn allemaal bijwerkingen van de oerwouddrugs, mijn Adam,' verzekerde zij hem. Er ging een nieuwe wereld voor hem open. Tsjernobyl was nog slechts een druppel in de zee van oerwouddrugs. Voor hem was het een verlichting, de grote ontwaking. Op een nacht had hij een droom van een invasie in de Tsjernobyl kerncentrales. Het was een invasie van apen van een andere planeet. Het was de oerwoudsplaneet Bulgarije, die wel tien keer groter was dan de planeet Tsjernobyl. De apen gebruikten

geavanceerde wapens of gewoon brute kracht. Daarna had hij een droom van een grote gouden krab die aan land kwam en op het strand een grote rode spin aanviel en uitschakelde. Toen hij de droom de volgende ochtend aan de vrouw vertelde zei ze dat zij die in het begin-stadium zijn van het worden tot een zombie en dan inzien dat ze verkeerd bezig zijn een aap kunnen worden op de planeet Bulgarije om het te neutraliseren. De zombies zien apen als verraders, en als hun grootste vijanden. Het is het apen-medicijn om zij die besmet zijn geraakt door het zombie-virus te genezen. Evert keek van haar verklaring op.

Beiden waren ze Tsjernobyl-slachtoffers, overlevenden, en hier in de wildernis moesten ze verder overleven. Het was hun paradijs. 'Het zijn de bomen van het paradijs,' zei de vrouw. 'Ze hebben hun eigen drugs waarvan wij leven. Iedere

boom is weer ergens anders goed voor. De drugs zijn als de liften van het paradijs, naar hogere staten van bewustzijn. De bomen hebben hun eigen slangen en spinnen van bijwerkingen en verkeerd gebruik. Daarom moet er een gids zijn. Tsjernobyl was een valse god, een valse gids, en ook een bijwerking.' Toen leidde ze hem dieper de wildernis in tot een boom met gele doorzichtige besjes die daar in trossen hingen. 'Dit is de drug genaamd 'gele regen,' zei ze. 'Je bent er nu klaar voor omdat je over de gouden krab hebt gedroomd. Het wordt ook wel de gouden regen genoemd. Het is een dodentelefoon waarmee je in allerlei andere staten van bewustzijn kunt komen. Het leidt helemaal tot achter het kerncentrale gebied van Tsjernobyl, waar de stedenstrook is, aan de rand van het oerwoud. In het stedengebied van Tsjernobyl ligt het geheim van Tsjernobyl verborgen,

bewaakt door de varkensmensen, nog wel ergere vormen dan zombies, monsters en skeletten, in een vergevorderd stadium. Zij zijn de koningen van de oppervlakkigheid, maar hebben hierin hun eigen diepte gevonden. Natuurlijk is die diepte vals, als gezichtsbedrog, een valstrik. 'Moet ik daarvan eten ?' vroeg Evert.
'Als je in leven wil blijven,' sprak de vrouw. 'Je moet het geheim oplossen.'
'Dus ik moet terug naar de steden ?' vroeg Evert.
'Als spion, ja,' sprak de vrouw, 'als je wil leven. Zo niet, dan zal het je insluiten en vernietigen. Er is niet veel tijd.'
Evert greep de bessen en begon gulzig te eten. 'Ho, ho, niet teveel,' sprak de vrouw. 'Je wilt er geen overdosis van krijgen.'
'Wat zijn de gevolgen van een overdosis ?' stamelde Evert die al duizelig begon te worden. Maar hij kon

haar al niet meer horen en verstaan. Hij was al ver weg. Hij viel bewusteloos en werd even later wakker aan de rand van het stadgebied van Tsjernobyl. Achter hem was het gebied van kerncentrales, wat begon met een industrie-terrein met kantoren. Voor hem was een flatgebouw. Hij herinnerde dit flatgebouw, maar hij wist niet van waar. Maar hoe kon dat ? Hij was hier nog nooit eerder geweest. Misschien dat hij zich vergiste, of dat dingen gewoon op elkaar leken. Hij liep langs het flatgebouw en er gingen vreemde gevoelens door hem heen alsof hij hier eerder was geweest. Achter de flat waren winkelstraten waar hij door begon te slenteren, en uiteindelijk kwam hij aan bij een overdekt winkelcentrum.
'Varkensmensen ?' dacht hij. 'Ik zie geen varkensmensen.'
Daar kwam hij ook de vrouw tegen.
'Mijn Adam,' sprak ze.
'Dus jij hebt ook van de drugs

genomen ?' vroeg Evert.
Ze knikte.
'Waar zijn de varkensmensen ?' vroeg Evert.
'Ze hebben hier hun psychiatrie gebouwd,' sprak de vrouw. 'Het zijn jaloerse mensen, maar het zijn geen echte mensen, maar vergevorderde zombies. Ze zijn als varkens geworden. Wanneer iemand creatief is en zeer intelligent en ze worden jaloers en kunnen die persoon niet begrijpen, dan halen ze hun etiketten erbij, hun implantaten, en noemen die persoon dan zwaar ziek, geestelijk ziek, en dan gaan ze handel drijven erover met die persoon als koopwaar. Het is een markt.'
'Waar is die psychiatrie ?' vroeg Evert.
'Oh, overal hebben ze hun panden, tussen alles door,' sprak de vrouw. 'Het is een heel netwerk. Het loopt zelfs tot in het kerncentrale gebied. Wees maar voorzichtig. Ze zijn gewapend en hebben

een vergunning om te doden wie ze willen. Alle misdaden die ze doen zijn legaal en zij besturen de steden.'
'Dus ze implanteren ook ?' vroeg Evert.
'Voor het stadssysteem, ja,' sprak de vrouw. 'Het zijn ingewikkelde identificatie systemen om de mens gevangen te houden. Ze implanteren allerlei rommel in de mens, legaal. Daar hebben ze een vergunning voor. Ze doen dit vooral in de tanden van de mens. Het is zombie-werk. Daarmee laten ze zien dat de mens hun eigendom is.'
'Ziek,' zei Evert. 'Wat doen we eraan ?'
'Die implantaten zijn voor het alarmsysteem,' sprak de vrouw. 'Zodra een mens probeert te ontsnappen zullen die implantaten pijnscheuten geven die zo verschrikkelijk zijn dat de mens niet ver komt in zijn ontsnapping. Het zijn een soort implodes, als stroomdraad. Ze bewaken een dodentelefoon. Zij bewaken de muur tussen leven en dood.'

'Ik zie het,' zei Evert. 'Maar wat doen we eraan ?'
'Shhh...,' zei de vrouw. 'Daar kunnen we niet over praten. Alles wordt hier opgenomen en gemonitord. Waarschijnlijk zitten ze ons nu al af te luisteren.'
'Wat moeten we dan ?' fluisterde Evert.
'Fluisteren heeft geen zin,' sprak de vrouw. 'Die afluistersystemen zijn hypergevoelig.' De vrouw liet hem weer wat doorzichtige gele besjes zien. 'De gouden regen,' sprak ze, 'of gele regen. Het is tijd voor een nieuwe dosis. Ik zou je niet aanraden om in deze staat van bewustzijn te blijven, want ze pakken je en sluiten je op.' Evert keek om zich heen. Nog steeds waren er geen varkensmensen in hun buurt te zien, maar wat als er al een scherpschutter zich ergens verborgen hield ? Misschien waren ze hun wapens al aan het instellen om in te grijpen. Evert voelde zich niet

veilig. Ze bracht wat besjes naar Evert's mond. 'Een paar maar,' sprak ze. 'Je wilt geen overdosis. Vertrouw me maar daarop.' Evert opende zijn mond, en at van de besjes. Ze voelden zo romig, zacht en fruitig. Het was een hele intense smaak, hoog geconcentreerd, zeer pittig en zurig. Weer werd Evert duizelig, en bevond zich toen in het gras. Zij was er ook. Ze waren op de velden. 'Hier zijn de varkens,' sprak ze. De varkens waren overal om hen heen. Ze hadden vreemde snuiten en ze spitsten hun oren. Ze leken ergens door afgeleid. Er was een vreemd geluid. 'Raak ze niet aan,' sprak de vrouw. Het leek wel alsof de varkens hen niet opmerkten, maar ze waren op de hoogte van het vreemde geluid. 'We moeten eerst in het oerwoud zien te komen,' sprak de vrouw. Evert bleef maar denken aan het winkelcentrum. Het was alsof hij het al kende. Alsof hij er al eens eerder was geweest, maar hij dacht

dat het misschien toeval was geweest.
Hij liep achter de vrouw aan. Weer zei ze : 'Zorg dat je ze niet aanraakt.'
'Wat is de reden daarvan ?' vroeg Evert.
'Dit zijn niet zomaar varkens,' sprak de vrouw. 'Ze staan onder hoge stroom. Een aanraking zou je kunnen doden.'
Evert was op zijn hoede. Hij bleef dicht achter de vrouw, die de weg scheen te kennen. 'Het lijkt alsof je het eerder hebt gedaan,' sprak Evert.
'Ik ben een bekende met de drugs,' sprak ze. Na een lange tijd lopen, het leek wel uren te duren, kwamen ze aan in het oerwoud. Hij bleef maar staren naar het vreemde genootschap van varkens. 'Kijk er niet teveel naar,' sprak de vrouw. 'Je kunt hun stroomcapaciteit niet onderschatten.' De vrouw liep toen verder, dieper het oerwoud in, en hij volgde haar.
'Wat nu ?' vroeg Evert.
'Shhh,' sprak ze. 'De varkens pikken nog

steeds alles op. Het zijn roofdieren, vergis je niet.'
'Dus dat zijn die psychiaters van Tsjernobyl ?' vroeg Evert.
Ze knikte. 'Zeg maar gerust psycho-tandartsen,' sprak ze.
'Wat een vreemde snuiters,' sprak Evert.
'Het is hun religie,' sprak ze. 'Luister goed : de varkens vertegenwoordigen allemaal een bepaalde ondergrondse laag, helemaal tot de kern van de planeet Tsjernobyl. Om eraan te ontkomen zullen we dus onder de grond moeten, de onderwereld van Tsjernobyl in, anders zullen de varkens ons zeker insluiten.'
'Hoe komen we daar ?' vroeg Evert. Ze leidde hem toen naar een gat wat onder de grond leidde. Ze moesten langs allerlei roosters heen, en ook over roosters heen. Hier zouden de varkens niet overheen kunnen. Onder de grond kwamen ze weer in een stedengebied aan. De vrouw legde uit dat deze steden

werden geterroriseerd en bestuurd door clowns, vergevorderde varkensmensen, die ook onder zware stroom stonden. Zij die tegen de clowns vochten zouden geëlectrocuteerd worden. Ze moesten ook weer snel hier door, anders zouden de clowns hen van het ene drama in het andere drama brengen. Zo waren de clowns geprogrammeerd.
Ze moesten naar een bepaald station met de trein die om het gebied zou heenleiden. Dat zou de enige manier zijn om veilig te zijn tegen deze electrische roofclowns. De vrouw wist de weg, en Evert volgde haar. Weer moesten ze over vele roosters heen. Het was heel donker hier. Na een tijdje kwamen ze aan op een ondergronds station. Ook hier was het donker. Er waren geen treinen. Ze moesten een tijd wachten. Na lange tijd zagen ze lichten in de verte. Daar kwam de trein. Niet lang daarna konden ze instappen. Ze moesten nu erg voorzichtig

zijn, zei de vrouw. Een man met een zonnebril zat ergens op een bankje in de trein. Zij gingen tegenover hem zitten. Hij zat een krant te lezen. Hij rookte ook. 'Wat moeten jullie ?' vroeg hij. De vrouw stootte Evert aan en fluisterde : 'Niets zeggen.' Evert hield zich stil.
'Nou, zeg op,' zei de man. 'Wat moeten jullie ?'
'Wie is het ?' fluisterde Evert naar de vrouw.
'Ssst,' zei de vrouw. 'Het is een spion. Het is een beveiligings-systeem.'
'Een robot ?' fluisterde Evert. De vrouw knikte. 'Hij controleert ons om te zien of alles in orde is, en of we klaar zijn om door te gaan.'
'Hoe heet hij ?' fluisterde Evert.
'Harro,' zei de vrouw. De man maakte wat vreemde robot-achtige bewegingen, en toen ging de trein verder. Evert keek naar buiten en zag de steden in de verte. Na lange tijd kwamen ze aan bij een veel

groter station. Er liepen hier veel mensen, maar de vrouw zei dat het allemaal robotten waren, en dat ze reizigers beveiligden tegen de clowns. Ze moesten toen overstappen op een andere trein. Het gebied waar ze toen doorheen moesten was genaamd de Aue nacht. Het was natuur gebied. De vrouw zat tegenover hem in de trein. 'De diepte van Tsjernobyl, alle ondergrondse lagen, de stroomvarkens,' sprak ze, 'zijn geen onbekenden voor jou.' Evert keek haar diep aan. 'Het zijn de lagen van je eigen verleden,' sprak ze. 'Het heeft geen zin om er naar terug te keren. Het staat allemaal onder stroom. Het kan alleen gebruikt worden als een tekensysteem, als een taal. Zo alleen kan de muur tussen het verleden en het nu doorbroken worden, en zo ook de muur tussen leven en dood, opdat de muur tussen goed en kwaad herbouwd kan worden.' En terwijl zij hem verder onderwees begon de trein

door al die barrieres heen te breken, en het enige spoor wat de trein achterliet was een stroommuur tussen goed en kwaad.

RNL-POCKETS
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NR. 2 – DE TUIN VAN MEVROUW VAN DALEN
NR. 3 – PLANTEN VAN VLEES
NR. 4 – ZIJN HUIS STOND IN DE WEG
NR. 5 – HET SURINAAMSE DAGBOEK

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Het Cruiseschip

Mijn opa had een cruiseschip waarvan hij kapitein was. Vroeger nam hij ons vaak mee, en bezochten we allerlei landen. Ook mijn oom en tante gingen vaak mee. Ik weet nog wel dat mijn tante altijd veel roddelblaadjes en boekjes bij zich had. Als ik niks te doen had las ik er vaak in, maar als kind begreep ik er niets van, en had er zo mijn eigen fantasieën bij. Als ze zagen dat ik de boekjes van mijn tante las, dan namen ze het altijd af.
Ik weet nog wel dat ik later in mijn jeugd een vriendinnetje had, en die ging toen ook mee op het cruiseschip in de vakanties. De hele familie was er dan, maar de relatie liep op een gegeven moment ten einde. Ik had het daar moeilijk mee, maar aan de andere kant was het een opluchting, want ze was heel moeilijk. Ze miste eigenlijk een aan en uit knopje. Mijn opa was erg bij me betrokken, en had op een dag een robot gemaakt die precies op mijn vriendin leek, metr het verschil dat ze een aan en uit knopje had. Ze had zelfs de stem van mijn vriendin, want mijn opa had veel van haar verhalen en gesprekken opgenomen op een bandje, en kon het goed gebruiken om de robot te bouwen. De robot was ook een

soort spelcomputer en een soort communicatie netwerk waarmee ik anderen kon bellen. Ik vond het een geweldig ding.
Ook mijn oom was kapitein op een cruiseschip. Het zat dus in de familie. We gingen ook vaak op zijn cruiseschip mee. Zo groeide ik op, op en aan de zee. Op een dag toen ik eens op het cruiseschip van mijn oom was vond ik weer eens zo'n boekje van mijn tante ergens rondslingeren. Er was niemand in de buurt, dus ik greep het en begon te lezen. Het ging over een cruiseschip en over twee geliefden die door roddel en gestook van passagiers van elkaar werden weggescheurd, en tot overmaat van ramp zonk het cruiseschip in een storm. Beiden overleefden ze het en vonden elkaar terug op een onbewoond eiland. Van de andere passagiers scheen er niemand meer in leven te zijn. Ze konden het uitpraten, maar er bleef grote afstand. Toch moesten ze samen zien te overleven op het onbewoonde eiland. Later bleek dat toch ook de kapitein het had overleefd, die ze aan de andere kant van het eiland tegenkwamen, en hij kon hen weer met elkaar verzoenen. Hij vertelde hen namelijk over al die passagiers die hen tegen elkaar hadden opgestookt, hoe goed hij ze kende, en hoe bedriegelijk ze waren. Het waren zogezegd vaste

passagiers die telkens weer terugkwamen, tot grote ergernis van de kapitein, en daarom hield hij zich altijd afzijdig.
De kapitein zei dat het iets van de zee zelf was. Hij zei dat eens op een dag zijn cruiseschip werd overmeesterd door een grote reuzenzeespin. Die kwam zo vanuit de zee op en greep het schip. De zeespin had vele poten en die poten werden tot passagiers die nooit meer weg zouden gaan. De twee keken hem vreemd aan, en keken toen naar elkaar, niet wetende of ze dat wel konden geloven.
'En was dat echt, of had je het maar gedroomd ?' vroeg de man aan de kapitein.
Opeens kwam toen mijn tante binnen, en ik legde snel het boekje weg.
'Wat was je daar aan het lezen, schat ?' vroeg mijn tante toen.
'Oh niks,' loog ik toen, want ik wilde niet op m'n kop krijgen.
'Oh, het boekje ligt open, en op een andere plaats,' zei ze toen. 'Was het leuk ?'
Ik zei niks. Toen kwam mijn oom ook binnen vanaf de lange gang in het cruiseschip.
'Hij heeft erin gelezen,' zei mijn tante.

'Waar ging het over ?' vroeg mijn oom glimlachend.
Ik vertelde toen over de reuzen zeespin, en hoe zijn poten tot passagiers werden, en hoe zij de twee geliefden uit elkaar hadden getrokken, en ik vertelde over het onbewoonde eiland, en hoe de kapitein hen weer met elkaar verzoende.
Mijn oom glimlachte. Ook mijn tante glimlachte. Als ik naar ze keek zag ik de prachtige zee. 'Nou, vooruit dan maar,' zei mijn oom. Toen ze wegwaren nam ik het boekje weer en ging verder met lezen. 'Je mag het wel houden,' zei mijn tante toen ik haar even later weer tegenkwam. Ik was door het dolle heen. Superblij nam ik het boekje mee naar mijn eigen kajuit, en las het helemaal uit. Ik was helemaal in de wolken, alsof ik boven de zee zweefde.
Vroeger wilde ik altijd cruiseschip kapitein worden, omdat mijn opa en oom dat ook waren, maar nu wilde ik schrijver worden. Ik wilde anderen meenemen op de golven van mijn eigen fantasie. Het boekje inspireerde mij enorm, en het was hemels.
Maar later in mijn jeugd werd ik zwaar gekweld door nachtmerries over een reuzen zeespin, en had ik slopende gevechten ermee. Maar dan klikte ik altijd mijn robot aan die ik van mijn opa had gekregen, en die vocht dan aan

mijn zijde. Zij sprak mij er doorheen.
In die nachtmerries schiep de zeespin mensen om mij heen, die eigenlijk zijn poten waren, en die probeerden mij te verstrikken in roddel en stokerijen. Maar altijd weer ontmaskerde de robot ze. Ook in mijn dromen was de robot, als een wachter in de nacht. Op een dag vertelde ik het ook aan mijn oom en tante, over de nachtmerries en over hoe het ook in het boekje wat ze gaven over een zeespin ging. Ze zeiden dat het boekje uit een serie kwam, en ze gaven me nog meer van zulke boekjes, zodat ik kon zien hoe het afliep in de vervolgverhalen, en er was ook veel informatie over in eerdere verhalen. Er waren iets van twintig delen. Maar ik bleef maar nachtmerries houden, en eigenlijk werd het alleen maar erger, totdat ik zelf de stoute schoenen aantrok en mijn eigen serie erover begon te schrijven. Misschien was dat wel het noodlot van een schrijver, dat hij eerst zelf door al deze dingen heen moest gaan, en eerst zelf flink wat nachtmerries moest hebben, om genoeg creatief materiaal te hebben om zijn verhalen te schrijven.
'Wordt dan gewoon cruiseschip kapitein,' zei mijn opa altijd, en mijn oma zei vaak : 'Wordt dan schilder, of ga schilderen voor de koningin, misschien hoef je dan het

leger niet in.' Maar ik moest en zou schrijven. Ik wilde hiermee klaarkomen. Het was in de tijd dat de dienstplicht naderde, en dan zou ik ook het leger inmoeten. Maar dit was op een heel ander niveau, alsof we te maken hadden met onzichtbare vijanden. En zo besloot ik niet te schilderen voor de koningin, maar te schrijven voor de koningin. En ze vond het nog leuk ook, en ik hoefde zo het leger niet in.

Het was de dag van mijn leven toen ik aangenomen werd. Ik kreeg ook een kamer vlak naast de koningin. Daar kon ik rustig mijn werk voortzetten. De koningin geloofde geen woord over onzichtbare vijanden, maar ze vond de verhalen zo mooi. Maar op een dag had ik zo'n zware nachtmerrie dat er geen verhaal meer tegen opgewassen was. Niets kon mij nog helpen, en ik ben toen gevlucht naar een oude kerk in het bos. De kerk werd niet meer gebruikt, maar hier voelde ik mij veilig. Soms woonden er wat monniken of hermieten. Het was een soort bedevaartsplaats voor kluizenaars.

Ik nam daar intrek in een kamer, en begon te schrijven over de onzichtbare vijanden en hoe ermee om te gaan. Er was teveel in de lucht wat de mens niet begreep en waar de mens niet tegen opgewassen was. Voor mij was het een

nieuwe wetenschap. Ik begon wetenschappelijke geschriften te schrijven over dit onderwerp. Maar vaak als er bezoekers waren en ik vertelde hen iets erover dan waren ze niet echt geïnteresseerd. Sommigen leken ook aan de drugs te zijn, en het was ook alsof ze als de poten van de zeespin waren. Ik begon preken te geven maar er kwam bijna niemand. Soms zat er een verdwaald kind, of een van huis weggelopen kind, of een zwerver. Ik preekte tegen de kerkbanken en de muren. Op een dag kwam mijn opa en die ging vooraan zitten. Hij wilde mijn preken wel horen. Hij wist dat er onzichtbare vijanden waren. Hij werd er zijn hele leven door gekweld, maar voelde zich altijd goed zodra hij op zijn cruiseschip was. Ook mijn oma kwam de volgende keer mee, en zei weer : 'Waarom word je niet schilder van de koningin ?'
Ik dacht : 'Laat ik dat dan maar eens proberen,' dus ik ging terug naar de koningin en ging ditmaal voor haar schilderen. Het beviel haar totaal niet. Wat ik schilderde vond ze veel te eng. Ik schilderde ook de reuzen zeespin. 'Waarom ga je niet gewoon weer schrijven ?' vroeg ze. Maar ik schilderde gewoon door. Ik bleef haar maar schilderijen leveren, maar ze vond het maar niks. Ik was er kwaad om, en ik verscheurde mijn schilderijen ook vaak

weer. Ik kwam in een grote identiteits-crisis. Ik dacht dat mensen me allemaal voor hun karretje wilden spannen, dat ik mezelf dan niet meer zou zijn. Ik voelde mij achtervolgd door de zeespin.
Op een dag was ik het weer zat, en begon gewoon het bos in te rennen. Ik bleef maar rennen en rennen, en keek niet meer om. Ik was er helemaal klaar mee, met alles. 'Schilderen voor de koningin, ja ja,' dacht ik. Naar de kerk in het bos wilde ik ook niet meer terug. Toen kreeg ik ineens het idee om naar mijn oom en tante terug te gaan. 'Neem me mee op jullie cruiseschip,' zei ik tegen hen. Ze namen mij aan boord, en ik kreeg weer de kajuit die ik altijd had. Zodra ik in hun kajuit was slingerden er altijd boekjes rond, en die begon ik dan maar te lezen.
Het boekje wat ik toen las ging ook over een cruiseschip, maar dan van het leger, en het was een leger van robotten. Ook de kapitein van het schip was een robot. En de robotten zongen een lied. Ik kende de muziek natuurlijk niet, maar dat verzon ik er in mijn hoofd bij. En de woorden van het lied waren :
'Alles is onder hypnose,
alles is aan de drugs,
Wij zijn de robotten staande op de kust.

Als alles nog langer zo door gaat, dan knapt alles,
Wij strijden tegen de zeespin, de mens is niet in de rust.'
Ik dacht : 'weer die zeespin.'
De robotten wilden een tegendrugs maken,
maar dat kon alleen van hele kleine beetjes,
als een mengsel.
De drugs die de mensen gebruikten was van één iets veel te veel.
De mens wilde niet in dualiteiten denken en in minderheden,
De mens wilde de spiegel niet.
De spiegel van de natuur was van de mens weggehaald,
en ze hadden een valse spiegel gemaakt,
de spiegel van de stad,
de spiegel van reclame,
die hen altijd wilde verleiden teveel te kopen.
Het was een koopziekte.
Plotseling kwam mijn oom binnen. 'Iets wijzer geworden ?' sprak hij.
Plotseling sprong er een doorzichtige, taaie, harige spin in zijn nek.
Het was een hele mechanische spin, met allerlei schakeltjes.

Alles was doorzichtig en taai, vlezig.
Schuimbekkend viel mijn oom op de grond, terwijl hij naar zijn keel greep, en ik kwam direct in actie en probeerde het beest van hem weg te krijgen.
Toen kwam mijn tante binnen, en greep snel wat uit haar tas, een bepaalde vloeistof en wierp het op de spin, die direct begon weg te smelten en te verslappen.
'Wat is het ?' vroeg ik.
'Oh, daar hebben alle kapiteinen van cruiseschepen mee te maken. En als ze het niet snel smoren, dan trekt het foute passagiers aan,' zei mijn tante.
Mijn oom stond weer op, kreunend, terwijl hij over zijn nek wreef.
'Waarom hebben jullie mij dit nooit eerder verteld ?' vroeg ik.
'Je was nog te jong,' zei tante. 'En daarom ging het er alleen over in de verhalen die wij je gaven.'
'Dus jullie hebben een tegengif ?' vroeg ik.
'Ja, tegendrugs,' zei mijn tante. 'En ook dat konden we je niet eerder vertellen, want je was nog te jong.'
'Wat zou er gebeuren dan ?' vroeg ik.
Mijn tante keek toen naar mijn oom, en toen weer naar mij : 'Als je de tegendrugs voortijdig gebruikt, dan .... dan

word je tot een poot van de zeespin, en dan droom je zijn dromen.'
Ik schrok even. 'Toen ik heel klein was zag ik eens zo'n flesje ergens staan,' zei ik, terwijl ik wees op het flesje. 'Ik wist niet wat het was, en ik was te nieuwsgierig, en toen heb ik ervan gedronken.'
'Weet je ook waar ?' vroeg mijn tante.
'Volgens mij bij een buurjongen van jullie,' zei ik.
'Oh, dat kan wel kloppen,' zei mijn tante. 'Dat was een drugsdealer. Had hij je naar binnen gelokt ofzo ?'
Ik voelde me even heel vreemd en rende naar het toilet om daar over te geven.
Ik keek in de spiegel, en zag toen ook een zeespin op mijn nek zitten. Ik slaakte een gil, en al snel opende tante een ander flesje en wierp het tegengif op de spin die direct wegsmolt.
'Ziezo,' zei tante.
Die nacht had ik een droom dat we in een prachtige haven aankwamen, in natuurgebied.
Er waren allemaal robotten, en ze zongen een vreemd lied :
'We nemen je op het schip,
Dit is geen haven, maar een groter schip,

Het lijkt op een eiland, maar het is een oorlogsschip,
Op naar de morgen,
De nachtmerrie roept tot grotere duisternis,
En in het grote contrast zie je het opkomen van de morgen.'
Was niet alles een schip op een groter schip ?
En ik wist dat ik het alleen zou leren kennen als ik kapitein zou worden.
En ik herinnerde me de woorden van mijn opa.
En ik liet het hem weten : 'Ja, opa, ik wil kapitein worden.'
En zo kreeg ik van hem mijn eerste schip.

Einde

Kapitein Mekko

Een jongen genaamd Mekko was de kapitein van een wereld op een schip. Het was een wereldschip. Een heleboel kinderen die in deze wereld opgroeiden wisten niet eens dat het een schip was, zo groot was die wereld, en niemand vertelde het hen. Ik kwam van een ander wereldschip en ook mij was nooit verteld dat het een schip was. Ik kwam uit een moeilijke wereld, maar Mekko redde mij. Ook Mekko zelf was eens gered door zijn wereldschip. Ik was de eerste van mijn familie die van het wereldschip waar wij opgroeiden gered werd. Ik was zelfs de eerste van die hele wereld, die verschrikkelijke wereld. Alle huizen waren daar hetzelfde, geplaatst in blokken. Ze hadden allemaal dezelfde tafels en stoelen, en ook dezelfde kindertafels en kinderstoelen. Die stonden allemaal in de woonkamers, en de kinderen werden altijd gescheiden gehouden van de volwassenen. Na mij werd mijn broertje gered, als tweede, en toen mijn oom, als derde. Daarna volgde de rest van de familie, maar er was een bepaald gezin die Mekko nog niet kon redden. Zij zaten te diep vast op het wereldschip waar wij vandaan kwamen, en ze werden zwaar in de gaten gehouden.

Toen Mekko mij had gered liet hij mij zijn hele reusachtige wereldschip zien. Het was inderdaad een wereld op een schip, en je had eerst gewoon niet in de gaten dat het een schip was, totdat hij je tot het dek nam. Dan had je een reusachtig overzicht over het gehele schip. Ik moest altijd aan mijn nichtje denken die nog niet gered was. Mekko zei altijd dat zij de eerste was van dat gezin die gered moest worden. Mekko zei dat hij daarvoor mijn hulp nodig had. Ik moest hem alles vertellen wat ik van haar wist. Ik begon hele boeken te schrijven over mijn nichtje om Mekko een goed beeld van haar te geven. We gingen er vroeger nooit vaak naartoe. Het was nogal een aparte familie met strikte regels. Je mocht daar altijd een heleboel dingen niet aanraken, en je moest eerst bepaalde dingen zeggen of vragen voordat je wat deed. Mijn nichtje leed daar erg onder, maar we konden niets doen. Ze werd te zwaar in de gaten gehouden, en ze kreeg altijd zware straffen als ze ook maar iets afweek van de regel, of als ze probeerde te ontsnappen. We wilden het daarom ook niet erger maken voor haar, maar we bespraken wel vaak hoe we haar zouden kunnen redden. En dat terwijl we zelf ook gered moesten worden van die wereld.
Mekko gebruikte voor onze redding een spiegel. Het was

bijna een religieuze ervaring. De spiegel was ook een vrouw, als een baarmoeder, en op een nacht verscheen het in mijn kamer, en werd ik erdoor gered. Door de spiegel kon ik op Mekko's schip komen.
Ook de wereld waar wij vandaan kwamen was als een spiegel, waardoor alles hetzelfde was, maar Mekko's spiegel maakte alles net even anders. Uiteindelijk kon zo ook mijn nichtje gered worden, maar ze was nog helemaal gebrainwashed. Ze kwam uit een bepaald land waar alles nog wel veel erger was dan hoe het altijd bij ons was. Ze kwam uit de Oostblok landen en het gebied werd ook wel Zuid Afrika genoemd. Alles was daar zo eenvoudig mogelijk, en er werd minimaal gebruik gemaakt van materialen. Alles was er nogal saai en kaal. Wel hingen er soms prachtige schilderijtjes aan de muren. Ook lazen ze daar uit prachtige boekjes, sprookjesachtige boekjes, over ver afgelegen paradijsen waar ze nooit zouden kunnen komen, dus ze droomden er alleen maar over. Er werd hen altijd van alles beloofd, maar ze kregen het nooit. Die beloftes waren alleen voor degenen die zich strikt aan de regels hielden, en daarom dachten velen dat ze toch op een bepaalde manier afgeweken waren, of zelfs afgevallen, verdoemd. Ze liepen vaak rond met een enorm

onverklaarbaar schuldcomplex en minderwaardigheidscomplex. Ze hadden altijd het gevoel dat er iets voor hen achtergehouden werd, dat er ergens een verborgen elite was die lachend op hen neerkeek. Er hing daarom altijd een soort van onzichtbaar en subtiel racisme.
Mekko keek mij aan. 'Herinner je de spiegel ?' vroeg hij.
Ik knikte.
'Wist je dat alle wereldschepen in deze zee ook weer onderdelen zijn van een nog veel groter wereldschip, en dat de zee daar ook een onderdeel van is ?' vroeg hij.
Ik schudde mijn hoofd.
'Wie is de kapitein ?' vroeg ik.
'De spiegel,' zei Mekko.
Ik keek naar Mekko.
'Kan zij de rest van de familie redden, en de rest van de oostblok landen vrijzetten ?' vroeg ik.
'Ik heb daarvoor je broertje nodig, je oom, en je nichtje,' zei Mekko. 'Zij moeten terug naar Zuid Afrika, en zij moeten spiegeltjes smokkelen.'
Het moest midden in de nacht gebeuren. Ze vroegen of ik ook mee wilde, maar ik mocht niet van Mekko. Ik moest bij de hoofd spiegel blijven.

Ik kan de grote uittocht nog herinneren. Zoveel treinen en bussen vol met mensen. En toen op een nacht, als een natuur verschijnsel, werd de hoofd spiegel met een andere hoofd spiegel verbonden van een nog groter onbekend wereldschip. En er kwamen zoveel ruimteschepen om ons weg te nemen. Hier was nooit over gesproken en was nooit over gelezen. En we werden tot het dek genomen van het allesomvattende wereldschip, en hadden een overzicht over alle wereldschepen erin, en al onze geschiedenissen, van zo'n grote afstand, dat alles duidelijk werd en op z'n plaats viel.

Einde

Stewardes in het Oerwoud

Ik sprak met de stewardes.
Nee, het kon allemaal niet doorgaan.
De vorige keer was ik te diep het oerwoud in gegaan, en dat had mij problemen gegeven, en hun verzekering kon het niet betalen, en ik mocht niet meer mee.
Ik schold haar uit voor rotte vis.
Ik wilde haar baas spreken.
Zelfde verhaal.
Later biechte ze iets op, dat ze wat in mijn koffie hadden gegooid.
Een pilletje ofzo.
Wat wilden ze niet vertellen.
Gelukkig had ik het telefoon gesprek opgenomen.
Ik sprak weer met die stewardes.
Zei dat ik haar baas had gesproken, en die had wat in mijn koffie gestopt.
Zij wilde dat niet geloven.
Ik zei dat ik het gesprek had opgenomen, maar toen ze het hoorde zei ze dat het nep was.
Je komt nergens bij deze reis organisatie en al helemaal niet met hun verzekering.

Je betaalt er alleen dik voor, maar ja, ik was over de streep gegaan volgens hen, en hun baas had iets in mijn koffie gestopt, maar toen ze het gingen navragen werd alles ontkent.
Ik heb de opnames, maar die zijn volgens hen nep.
Dit reis bureau, ik heb er flinke koppijn van overgehouden, of is het van die koffie ?
En wat hebben ze er doorheen gegooid ?
Als ik er vroeger met mijn oma en tante naartoe ging, dan werden ze allemaal zenuwachtig. We werden verschrikkelijk in de gaten gehouden. Ze deden alsof wij criminelen waren die hen wilden overvallen. Dat zeiden ze dan wel niet letterlijk, maar hun gedrag naar ons was paranoïde, alsof we zware wapens bij ons hadden ofzo.
Mijn oma en ik moesten er toen nog om lachen, maar nu lach ik niet meer.
Te ver het oerwoud ingegaan, dus daarom werkte de verzekering niet meer.
Ik had netjes aan de lijn moeten blijven als een hond.
Daar betaal ik niet voor.
Ik had ook eerder terug moeten zijn ofzo.
Maar ja, dat kan dus niet als je diep in het oerwoud wordt vastgehouden.

Verzekering betaalde het niet, maar kon ik het helpen dat ik zo diep het oerwoud was ingegaan.
Wat kun je doen tegen een ontvoering ?
Hadden ze ook allemaal excuses voor.
Ik weet wel zeker dat die baas van hen erachter zit. Zei doodleuk dat ze wat in mijn koffie had gedaan. En daarna alles ontkennen. Ze proberen je gewoon gek te maken.
Ik heb de opname nog steeds, op een bandje, maar volgens hen heb ik dat zelf gedaan met stemmetjes. Alsof ik zelf alles heb lopen plakken. Ja, bandjes aan elkaar lopen plakken, en dingen wegknippen. Zo konden zij het ook. Dat zeiden ze. Toen kwamen ze met allerlei bandjes opzetten met dingen die ik nooit had gezegd, bedreigingen enzo, en andere zwaar overdreven bekentenissen. Het leek wel op mijn stem, maar het was niet mijn stem. Toch vroeg ik me af hoe ze het gedaan hadden. Toen begonnen ze me te chanteren met die bandjes, en ze zeiden dat ze nog wel meer bandjes hadden, met video opnames enzovoorts. Ik ben toen maar weggegaan. Ik was er helemaal klaar mee. Naar een ander reis bureau gegaan, maar wilden ze niet hebben, waren al ingelicht. Werd weer gechanteerd. Moest het maar niet meer proberen bij reis bureau's, enzovoorts. Ik ben er toen allemaal maar mee

gestopt, en ging toen zelf op wereldreis. Zeilbootje, hup. Niemand meegenomen. Was met iedereen klaar. Ik werd toch niet geloofd. Het reis bureau zou het wel weten.
Ging weer terug naar dat oerwoud. Kwam ik ergens daar in die rimboe die stewardes weer tegen. Ik zei : 'Hey, jou ken ik. Wat moet je hier ?' Gaf toen toe dat ze ook ontvoerd was, en probeerde haar weg weer terug te vinden. Ik zei mij niet gezien. Ze wilde mij niet geloven, en niet helpen, en nu zat ze dus in hetzelfde schuitje, maar daar was ik allang uitgesprongen. Ik had het schip verlaten voordat het zonk. Toen werd ze me toch een partijtje kwaad, maar ik was niet om te praten natuurlijk. Ik moest haar maar helpen, zei ze. Begon ze mij allemaal om informatie te vragen, en ik kwam weer terug bij het verhaal over dat bandje, van die baas die had gezegd dat er wat in mijn koffie was gestopt. Was waarschijnlijk ook bij haar gebeurd. Ze vroeg zich af waarom. Kan van alles wezen, zei ik. Ik zei toen ook dat ze nep bandjes van mij hadden gemaakt. Daar wist ze van. Ik vroeg haar hoe ze het gedaan hadden, maar zij wist het niet. Zei dat ze nu aan mijn kant stond. Ik zei dat ik niet aan haar kant stond. Ik zei de verzekering zou haar niet betalen.
Het was allemaal een complot.

Dat wist ze.
Hoefde ik haar niet meer te vertellen.
Ze wist ook dat haar baas niet pluis was.
Een beetje laat, zei ik.
Ik wilde doorlopen, maar ze hield me tegen.
Toen trok ze haar kleren uit, en zei laten we hier wonen.
Ik duwde haar weg, maar ze hield vol.
Ik heb het toen maar zo gelaten.
Ik vertrouwde haar niet, maar een stewardes in het oerwoud die alles voor je wil doen kan van pas komen.
Ik zou haar gewoon terug laten betalen, en dan zou ik wel verder zien.
Bouw voor ons een hut, of maak een tent, kan mij het schelen, droeg ik haar op.
En zorg dat we voldoende te vreten hebben.
Ze ging direct aan de slag.
'Ik werk voor jou nu,' zei ze.
'Nooit meer voor dat stomme reis bureau.'
'Ik ben nu jouw reis bureau,' zei ik tegen haar.
'Mag je achter het loketje zitten, terwijl ik de hort op ga.
En zorg dat het eten klaar is als ik weer terug ben.'
En dat was het. Ik wilde geen tijd met haar verdoen.
Ik ben er gewoon vandoor gegaan, liet haar gewoon

wachten zoals ze mij vroeger deden wachten.
Als het goed is wacht ze nu nog steeds.

De Rode Kerk en de Vliegende Olifant

De kerkklokken luidden in Hendrik Ido Ambacht. Er heerste daar een vreemd geloof, vreemder dan in andere steden en dorpen van Nederland. Ze geloofden in een rode veer, eens door een vliegende olifant gebracht. De veer had een hele vreemde economie gebracht, die eigenlijk alleen maar uitgeoefend werd in Hendrik Ido Ambacht, namelijk dat als iemand iets kocht, dan moest de verkoper betalen, en niet de koper. Nu zou je denken dat dit helemaal verkeerd zou gaan, maar toch liep dit allemaal heel goed. Ook de verkopers deden grote inkopen en werden hiervoor betaald. Het was wel heel ander geld wat ze in Hendrik Ido Ambacht gebruikten. Het heette zwart geld, en dat geld bleek onder een vloek te zijn. Dit had de vliegende olifant zo beslist. De vliegende olifant kwam van een andere planeet.
Wat was die vloek dan, zou je je afvragen. De vloek was dat er uit steen water zou vloeien. Men bouwde hoge gebouwen omdat dat ook de wens was van de vliegende olifant. Zo zouden ze ook dichter bij de vliegende olifant wonen.
De kerkklokken luidden. Velen gingen de rode kerken

binnen om de vliegende olifant en zijn heilige rode veer te aanbidden. Tereder woonde met zijn ouders ergens hoog in een rode flat boven de winkels. Hij kon zo het hele winkelcentrum zien. Hij hing uit het raam boven het balkon en keek, en keek. Zijn ouders waren niet kerkelijk, maar hij droomde vaak over de vliegende olifant, en over San Pedro die op de olifant reed. Soms wilde hij ook wel dat hij San Pedro was. Zijn vriendjes waren wel kerkelijk en op een dag namen ze hem mee naar de kerk. Tereder keek zijn ogen uit. Er hingen prachtige schilderijen in de rode kerk, van San Pedro op de olifant en de heilige rode veer. De dominee kon ook prachtig vertellen. Ze zongen ook liedjes, maar Tereder kon het niet verstaan, want het was in een andere taal. Aan het einde van de dienst kwamen de diakenen die zwart geld aan de mensen begonnen uit te delen, als een bedankje dat ze waren gekomen. Tereder kreeg ook een schilderij mee waarop een zwarte vrouw stond. Hij vroeg aan zijn vriendje wie ze was. Ze was gekleed in wit en zacht roze. "San Pedro's vrouw," zei het vriendje.
"Hoort die ook bij de vliegende olifant ?" vroeg Tereder.
"Ja, natuurlijk," zei het vriendje verbaasd vanwege de vraag. "Iedereen weet dat toch ? Zij is het zwarte geld."

"Wat houdt dat eigenlijk in ?" vroeg Tereder, die zelf ook een hoop zwart geld in de kerk had gekregen.
Het vriendje zuchtte. "Zeg, serieus, ik weet het niet met jou. Iedereen weet deze dingen. Moet ik het je allemaal nog een keer uitleggen ?"
"Ja, maar mijn ouders zijn niet kerkelijk, dat weet je," zei Tereder, "en ze hebben mij nooit de achtergronden van het zwarte geld uitgelegd. Ik ben blij als ik het heb. Dat is alles."
Het vriendje begon te neuriën : "Zwart geld, blij dat ik het heb, blij dat ik heb," zong hij even later zachtjes. "Zwart geld, het vergeten geld." Het klonk als een reclame clipje.
"Nou ja, dan ben ik het vergeten," zei Tereder. "Kun je het nog één keer uitleggen dan, voor mij, alsjeblieft ?"
"Zwart geld, zwart geld," zong het vriendje, "tijdelijke aanbiedingen. Zwart geld, zwart geld, ren ernaar toe, want je bent zo geveld."
"Huh wat ?" vroeg Tereder. "Wat bedoel je nu eigenlijk ? Ik begrijp er niets van."
"Je bent nog niet tot bekering gekomen," zei het vriendje. "Je ouders aanbidden het zwarte geld, maar ze kennen haar niet. Jij houdt er ook van, maar jij kent haar ook niet."
"Hoe kom ik dan tot bekering ?" vroeg Tereder.

"Pffff," zuchtte het vriendje hard, "dat staat toch allemaal geschreven in het boek van de heilige rode veer. Kom nou, ik blijf niet aan de gang."
"Ja, maar dat boek heb ik niet eens," zei Tereder, "mijn ouders zijn niet gelovig voor de zoveelste maal."
"Goeie genade," zei het vriendje.
"Waar kan ik het kopen ?" vroeg Tereder.
"Het is heel duur," zei het vriendje, "voor de verkoper dan. Daarom verkopen ze het bijna niet."
"Ook niet in de rode kerk ?" vroeg Tereder.
"Nee," zei het vriendje. "Het wordt meestal gewoon van geslacht tot geslacht doorgegeven. Die boeken zijn te heilig om zomaar te verkopen, en dan is ook de verkoper direct blut."
"Blut ?" vroeg Tereder.
"Ja, failliet, niente," zei het vriendje.
"Maar dan kunnen ze toch gewoon heel veel inkopen doen, en dan weer veel zwart geld van de verkopers krijgen ?" vroeg Tereder.
"Zo werken die dingen niet," mopperde het vriendje. "Je begrijpt er niets van. Het boek kan maar één keer verkocht worden, en dan gaan ze failliet en sterven ze. Zo heilig is het."

"Ik begrijp het," zei Tereder. "Dus ik kom nooit aan zo'n boek ?"
"Je mag die van mij wel hebben," zei het vriendje. "Ik krijg wel weer een nieuwe van mijn ouders."
Hij haalde een boek van een soort rood leer uit de kast en gaf het aan Tereder die hem direct om zijn nek vloog en hem kuste. "Hoe kan ik je bedanken," zei Tereder.
"Nee, ik bedank jou," zei het vriendje, die hem ook een zak snoep gaf. "We geven het altijd weg met een zak snoep."
Tereder ging helemaal blij naar huis, en sloot zich direct op zijn kamer op, en begon te lezen. De meest prachtige plaatjes stonden er in met de meest prachtige verhalen, ook over het zwarte geld. Dat was dus inderdaad een vrouw, maar het was ook een snoepsoort, als drop. Op de planeet van de vliegende olifant aten ze het zelfs. Ook de zwarte vrouw woonde met San Pedro op een hele hoge flat, en ze gingen vaak vliegen op de olifant, en maakten dan verre reizen in de natuur, waarin ze wonderbaarlijke avonturen beleefden. Op een dag kwamen ze bij een rots waaruit water vloeide. De rots sprak tot hen : "Bouw een stad van natuursteen voor mij." San Pedro vroeg toen hoe zij dat moesten doen. Het was volgens de rots heel

eenvoudig. Hij moest met een stok op de rots slaan, en dan zou het vanzelf gebeuren. San Pedro pakte een stok en begon op de rots te slaan, maar er gebeurde niks, en toen sloeg hij weer. Maar toen werd de rots erg kwaad. "Ik had je niet gezegd meerdere keren op me te slaan !" sprak de rots. De rots werd woester en woester, en het water begon te koken en in vuur te veranderen. Maar toen keek de rots naar de zwarte vrouw, en sprak : "Omdat je man dit heeft gedaan zijn jullie beiden vervloekt, maar als jullie gekomen zijn tot de heilige rode veer, dan zal mijn hart verzachten, en zal ik de stad Hendrik Ido Ambacht bouwen, zodat jullie vloek tot zegen zal worden. Dan zal ik weer helder water schenken."
San Pedro vroeg toen waar die rode veer was.
"Ja, dat ga ik je niet vertellen," zei de rots. "Ik ben nog steeds zeer boos, en je mag blij wezen dat ik deze dingen al gezegd heb, want het had veel erger kunnen wezen."
Toen vroeg ook de zwarte vrouw waar de heilige rode veer was.
"Gaat heen van mij, vervloekten !" bulderde de rots, die steeds meer vuur begon te spuwen. Ze moesten het nu echt op een lopen zetten, en als de vliegende olifant er niet zou zijn geweest, dan waren ze zeker in het vuur omgekomen.

De vliegende olifant bracht hen toen naar een grot waar ze even later de rode veer vonden.
"Dit is hem dus ?" vroeg San Pedro.
"Het lijkt er wel op," zei de zwarte vrouw met een glimlach.
En zo kalmeerde de rots uiteindelijk en Hendrik Ido Ambacht kwam uit hem voort. Wat er nog van de vloek was overgebleven was dat er water uit de stenen kwam, maar velen zagen dat als een zegen. Zo was de vloek tot zegen geworden.
Ook stond het verhaal van het zwarte geld in het boek beschreven. Eens vloog San Pedro op zijn vliegende olifant langs een meer in het oerwoud, en zag daar de zwarte vrouw baden. De olifant landde dichtbij, en San Pedro stapte van de olifant af. De vrouw schrok en dook onderwater. San Pedro volgde haar, maar kon haar niet meer vinden. Hij ging terug naar de olifant, en vond toen zwart geld op het zadel. Het bleek ook nog eetbaar te zijn, en toen hij het at stond ineens de zwarte vrouw voor hem.
"Waarom heb je mij wakker gemaakt ?" vroeg de zwarte vrouw.
"Ik wist niet dat je sliep," zei San Pedro. "Ik zag je baden."
"Dat moet van een tijdje terug zijn geweest," sprak de

zwarte vrouw, "maar ik sliep toch echt."
"Het spijt me," zei San Pedro, "ik wilde je niet wakker maken."
"Wat moet je van me ?" vroeg de zwarte vrouw.
"Nou, wat moet ik van je ?" zei San Pedro verbaasd. "Kijk eens wat ik hier heb. Een vliegende olifant. Daar vindt je niet zomaar een tweede van. We kunnen zo beiden heel wat vrolijke avonturen beleven."
"Vrolijke avonturen, hè ?" sprak de zwarte vrouw. "Het enige vrolijke avontuur wat je met mij zult beleven is het zwarte geld."
"Wat is dat ?" vroeg San Pedro.
"Dat heb je net zitten lopen eten," sprak de zwarte vrouw. "Het is een soort drop, en daarmee betaal je de ander als je iets verkoopt."
"Dat moet een vergissing zijn," sprak San Pedro. "Meestal betalen we de ander als we iets van hen kopen."
"Bij mij is het net andersom," sprak de zwarte vrouw.
"Je lijkt me een hele interessante vrouw," sprak San Pedro. "Ik zou je dan graag willen kopen, zodat ik daardoor tegelijkertijd heel rijk wordt, want ik neem aan dat je verschrikkelijk duur bent."
"Ik ben veel te duur voor jou, mannetje," sprak de zwarte

vrouw, "in de zin dat ik dat nooit kan betalen."
"Ik wil je ook wel voor de helft van de prijs meenemen hoor," sprak San Pedro. "Ik ben de slechtste nog niet."
"Nee, zo werkt dat niet," sprak de zwarte vrouw. "Zo goedkoop ben ik gewoon niet."
"Waar maken ze dat zwarte geld ?" vroeg San Pedro.
"Ik ben het enige zwarte geld wat er is," sprak de zwarte vrouw.
"Hoe is dat gekomen ?" vroeg San Pedro.
"Lang verhaal," sprak de zwarte vrouw.
"Ik heb de tijd," sprak San Pedro.
"Het is het geheim van het zwarte goud," sprak de zwarte vrouw.
"Dus je hebt nu al geheimen voor me in zo'n korte tijd dat ik je ken ?" vroeg San Pedro.
"Sjonge, nou je hebt wel babbels," zei de zwarte vrouw.
Verslagen liep San Pedro terug naar de vliegende olifant, en klom op z'n rug. De vliegende olifant bracht hem toen naar een hele hoge berg waar hij tussen het ijs zwart goud vond. San Pedro wreef over het zwarte goud, en plotseling stond weer de zwarte vrouw voor hem.
"Heb je me nu alweer wakker gemaakt ?" vroeg de zwarte vrouw.

"Ik wreef alleen maar over wat zwart goud, is dat zo erg ?" vroeg San Pedro.
Een klein straaltje melk begon uit het zwarte goud te komen. "Mijn geheim !" riep de zwarte vrouw verschrikt.
Plotseling kwam Tereder's moeder zijn kamer binnen.
"Wat ben je daar aan het lezen, Tereder ?" vroeg ze. Ook zag ze toen het schilderij van de zwarte vrouw die hij had gekregen.
"Het is het zwarte geld, mama," zei Tereder.
Zijn moeder liep naar hem toe en nam hem in haar armen. Ze pakte zijn boek en sloeg het ergens open. Ze begon het hardop te lezen : "De bekering. Wil je het geheim van het zwarte geld kennen ? De rode kerk en de vliegende olifant zullen je nooit vragen je tot hen te bekeren, maar ze zullen zich bekeren tot jou, wanneer je de waarheden van het heilige boek hebt ontvangen."
Moeder begon te glimlachen. "Leuk verhaaltje, hè ?" sprak ze. "Je vader en ik zijn er heel vroeger eens één keer in zo'n rode kerk geweest, maar omdat ze hun eigen principes niet naleefden zijn we daar ook weer weggegaan."
Tereder hield zijn moeder stevig vast. Hij keek naar de letters van het boek. Het waren sierlijke letters met prachtige plaatjes, zoals in zijn dromen. "Maar dan kunnen

wij het toch beter doen, mamma ?" vroeg Tereder.
Hij kuste zijn moeder. "Ik bekeer mij tot jou," sprak hij, "tot jouw wijsheid en inzicht, tot jouw kennis, zoals de vliegende olifant zich tot mij heeft bekeerd."
Moeder glimlachte. "Ik was al bekeerd tot jou voor je geboorte. Ik wist altijd al dat je een bijzonder kind was," sprak ze.
"Misschien kunnen we dan een echte rode kerk bouwen, mamma ?" vroeg Tereder.
"Schat, het is een verhaal, een geheim," sprak moeder. "En ik denk nu dat je het geheim hebt gezien. Het zal komen tot degenen die zekere waarheden hebben ingezien."

Einde

Olifantensoep

"Dag mijnheer, gaat u daar maar alvast zitten. Wij zullen u de olifantsoep zo opdienen. Doet u maar alvast uw schietgebedje, en schrijft u uw laatste woorden maar alvast op voor uw familie, en strooi alvast wat zout op uw hoofd."
- "Pardon, waar is dat goed voor ? Ik heb mijn soep graag zonder zout, en wat u daarvoor allemaal zei moet een grapje wezen."
"Nee nee, u begrijpt ons verkeerd. De olifantensoep eet u graag met wat zout."
- "Helemaal niet, ik wil zoutloze olifantensoep."
"Nee nee, alweer verkeerd begrepen, mijnheer. Wij bedoelen dat de olifantensoep u graag lust met zout. De olifantensoep, daar gaat het om, niet u. Het is uw laatste kwartier, dus geen praatjes maken nu. Hier wordt de olifantensoep niet gegeten. Alleen de olifantensoep zelf eet."
- "Wel potverdrie, wat is dat voor een belachelijke tent hier ? Ik neem aan dat de olifant dood en gesneden in de soep ligt ?"
"Nee nee, mijnheer, nu niet beledigend doen naar de

olifant, en al helemaal niet naar de soep. De soep eet u, niet andersom. Ik hoop dat dat nu duidelijk is."
- "Ober, u bent een klier. Wat een grapjas bent u, zeg. Dit is mijn laatste kwartier ? Dan is dit uw laatste vrije dag, want ik ga zo naar de politie om u te laten arresteren."
"Mijnheer, de politie in deze stad arresteert niet, maar kan alleen gearresteerd worden. U had uzelf beter moeten informeren voordat u naar Hendrik Ido Ambacht zou komen."
- "En wie verricht dan de arrestaties, ober ? De kok ?"
"Nee, de olifantensoep."
- "Hè bah, wat een flauwe mop."
"Het is geen mop. U had hier niet moeten komen. U komt hier nooit meer weg. In dit restaurant zijn alleen ingangen, geen uitgangen."
- "Wat een belachelijk restaurant dan, ober."
"Ach ja, ergens moeten de rollen toch omgedraaid zijn ?"
- "Ober, u verpest mijn hele dag met uw flauwe grappen. Daar heb ik nu allemaal geen tijd voor. Kunnen we even ter zake komen ? Doet u mij maar een broodje gezond in plaats van olifantensoep. Of moet ik dat ook met mijn leven bekopen ?"
"Ik zal erover nadenken. Dan moet u wel een hele goede

reden hebben."
- "Goede reden, ober ? Ik ben geen crimineel. Toe, geef me gewoon dat broodje gezond, dan is deze onzin afgelopen. Wat is er gebeurt met de stelling : de klant is koning ?"
"Die stelling is hier nooit geweest, mijnheer. De klant is hier geen koning, maar een dief."
- "U bent een verschrikkelijke ober. Ik wil een andere ober, nu. Ik heb geen tijd voor al deze onzin."
"De andere obers zijn nog wel erger dan ik. U heeft het maar getroffen met zo'n ober als ik."
- "Ik geloof er helemaal niks van, ober. Hoe kunnen ze nu erger zijn dan dit ?"
"Nou, gewoon, ze leggen direct de loop van een geweer in uw nek. Dat heb ik nog niet bij u gedaan. Dat moet nog komen."
- "Nog komen ? Zeg ober, bent u nu helemaal gek geworden. Zo benader je geen klanten."
"Klanten, mijnheer ? Zeg maar gerust zware misdadigers."
- "Wat heb ik misdaan ?"
"U kunt beter vragen wat u niet heeft gedaan."
- "Ober, u kent mij niet. U weet niets van mij af, dus bespaar me al deze vooroordelen."

"Ik weet alles van u af, mijnheer. Ik ken u door en door. U staat schuldig. Ik weet genoeg."
- "En hoe weet u dat allemaal ?"
"Ik ben niet dom, en ook niet gek. Uw hele leven heb ik al spionnen om u heengezet. Dit restaurant houd iedereen in de gaten. En nu bent u hier, omdat het ons wel welletjes werd."
- "Ober, u heeft waarschijnlijk uw dag niet. Niemand heeft mij gevolgd, en niemand heeft mij hier naartoe gebracht. Het is mijn eigen keuze geweest, en ik vertrek ook weer op eigen keuze."
"Mijnheer, zoals ik u al uitlegde vertrekt niemand hier. U bent hier op de juiste plaats, en op het juiste moment, voor het juiste gerecht. Denkt u nu echt dat u uzelf kunt vertrouwen ?"
- "Ober, neem wat rust. Misschien dat het morgen beter gaat. Dit heb ik niet verdiend, en ik heb ook geen strafblad. Misschien bent u met iemand anders in de war."
"Nee nee, mijnheer. Zo makkelijk komt u niet van ons af. Het is ons restaurant, dus wij bepalen de regels. Ik vergis me zeer zeker niet. Ik heb alles nauwkeurig bijgehouden."
- "Goed ober, ik zal u betalen voor uw tijd, en dan vertrek ik hier. Dit is niet langer uit te houden. Hoe haalt u het

allemaal in uw hoofd."
"Mijnheer, nu geen politietje spelen. U bent hier in een restaurant, niet op het politie bureau, en trouwens hier doet de politie zulke dingen niet, dus ik zou maar ophouden als ik u was. De klant betaalt hier ook niet, maar wij betalen uw begrafenis. Lief, hè ?"
- "Ober, nu moet u ophouden, anders ga ik geweld gebruiken. Ik wil hier nu weg."
"Er wordt hier geen geweld gebruikt door klanten. U kunt er alleen over dromen. Dat is nog net niet strafbaar."
- "Nou, dat valt me weer mee dan. Kunnen we nu stoppen ?"
"Stoppen ? We zijn net begonnen."
- "Ja, maar dit is echt te belachelijk voor woorden. En er komt nog meer ? Ik heb zo een afspraak."
"Wij betalen uw begrafenis en regelen uw afspraakjes. Wij zullen ook al uw papieren regelen, terwijl u naar de hel gaat. Mooi geregeld, toch ?"
- "Hel ? Ben ik hier nu in de kerk gekomen ofzo ? En waarom niet naar de hemel ?"
"Mijnheer, u bent een gevaarlijke crimineel. Zelfs de hel is nog te goed voor u, maar ziet u, wij zijn de slechtsten nog niet."

- "Dan ga ik nu naar een ander restaurant. Dit kan echt niet waar zijn."
"Andere restauranten in Hendrik Ido Ambacht zijn nog wel erger dan die van ons."
- "Nog erger ? Hoe is het mogelijk."
"U zult het nooit uitvinden, mijnheer. Uw reis stopt hier."
- "En de hel is zeker jullie smerige achtertuin ?"
"Nu niet beledigend gaan doen, mijnheer. Daar maakt u het alleen maar erger mee."
De klant verliest nu echt zijn geduld, en slaat de ober neer.
"Breng hem maar naar het ziekenhuis. Ik ben er klaar mee. Ik heb lang genoeg mijn geduld bewaard !" roept de klant hysterisch van woede.
Een lange ober in een witte jas komt toesnellen. "In het ziekenhuis liggen alleen dokters. De patiënten moeten de dokters opereren," spreekt de lange ober traag.
"Dat kan deze patiënt niet," spreekt de klant. "Ik heb hem tegen de vlakte geslagen. Zelfverdediging."
"Hij doet geen vlieg kwaad," sprak de lange ober. "Hij heeft alleen een hele grote mond. En dreigen, hè, veel dreigen."
"Maar waarom ontsla je hem dan niet ?" vroeg de klant.
"Sorry, dat kunnen de werkers van het restaurant niet,

ontslaan," sprak de lange ober traag. "Dat kunnen alleen de klanten."
"Dan zijn jullie nu beiden op staande voet ontslagen !" bulderde de woeste, schuimbekkende klant.
"Heeft hij u niet verteld dat de andere obers nog wel erger zijn ?" vroeg de lange ober.
"Ja, dat zei hij inderdaad," brieste de klant. "Jullie zijn allemaal ontslagen ! Ik ontsla dit hele restaurant !"
"Maar heeft hij u niet verteld dat de andere restauranten nog wel erger zijn dan dit restaurant ?" vroeg de lange ober.
"Dat heeft hij zeker," brulde de klant, zo woest als een leeuw.
"En heeft hij u er dan niet bijgezegd, dat wanneer dit restaurant dichtgaat er nog wel tien andere restauranten in de plaats worden geopend, wel tien maal erger dan dit restaurant ?" vroeg de lange ober.
"Nee, dat niet, dat niet," brulde de klant, "maar wie zegt dat ik dat moet geloven ? En ik kom hier nooit meer in Hendrik Ido Ambacht !"
"Jammer dat we u zien gaan," sprak de lange ober.
"En u gaat ook," brieste de klant. "Pak uw spullen, en vertrek. U bent ontslagen. Ik verklaar dit restaurant

gesloten, eens en voor altijd."
"U vergeet uw olifantensoep," sprak de lange ober.
Een verschrikkelijk monster kwam aanrennen en slokte de klant op.
In één hap !
"Dat was op het nippertje," sprak de lange ober traag.
"Nou, Loofhaar, we kunnen hier nog steeds blijven werken, jongen, dankzij de olifantensoep," terwijl hij de gevallen ober helpt op te staan.
"Ja," sprak de andere ober. "Ik wist dat we met dit recept geen verkeerde keuze hadden gemaakt. Tegenwoordig denken mensen dat ze zomaar van alles kunnen eten."

De Optocht

Er was een gemaskerde optocht in de winkelstraat van Hendrik Ido Ambacht. De straat was heel lang, zoals de optocht lang was. Iedereen in de optocht was verkleed. Een vleermuis vloog voor hen uit. Jorke keek uit zijn kamerraam naar buiten, en kon zo alles zien. Hij woonde in een flat boven de winkelstraat. Wat een prachtig uitzicht had hij hier. Hij had een nieuw spelletje gekregen, maar nu was even zijn aandacht afgeleid vanwege het lawaai van de optocht. Daarna ging hij weer met het nieuwe spelletje spelen. Het spelletje kon ook spreken. Even later stond zijn moeder in de deuropening. Ze nam hem in haar armen, en nam hem toen met haar mee naar haar kamer. Vader was weg. Even later werd er gebeld. Het was vader. Hij had de sleutel vergeten. Hij moest direct weer weg. Jorke miste zijn vader. Die was bijna nooit thuis. Zijn vader was altijd weg, moest altijd ergens naartoe. Hij zag hem eigenlijk alleen wanneer zijn vader iets thuis vergeten was. En dat was meestal maar heel kort. Zijn moeder was er altijd.

Eigenlijk gleed het leven een beetje langs Jorke heen. Hij groeide op en zag alle dagen langs hem heenglijden, als

een film. Hij had er geen vat op. Hij wilde het vast blijven houden, maar dat lukte niet. Het maakte hem droevig. Hij ging dan altijd maar lezen. Moeder hield ook erg van boeken, en nam vaak boeken voor hem mee. Jorke kon niet goed voor zichzelf zorgen. Hij was gehecht aan zijn moeder, en afhankelijk aan haar. Hij voelde zich verlamd, mentaal en emotioneel. Het lukte hem niet ergens een touw aan te knopen. Hij kon dingen nooit afkrijgen. Dit maakte hem weleens bang, want wat moest hij als moeder er niet meer zou zijn ? Moeder deed alles voor hem. Eigenlijk wilde hij wel dat hij wat meer als zijn vader was, die er altijd op uit was. Hij voelde zichzelf een huismusje, een muurbloempje. Natuurlijk was hij nog erg jong, en toen hij wat ouder werd groeide het vanzelf goed. Hij was minder gehecht aan zijn moeder, en ging er op uit met zijn fiets. Hij ontdekte dat er ook een ander leven was buiten zijn moeder om.
Hij begon steeds meer voor zijn moeder te zorgen in plaats van andersom. Hij nam vaak boeken voor haar mee en andere dingen die ze nodig had. Hij voelde zichzelf steeds meer worden als zijn vader, die zo onafhankelijk was. Op een dag ging hij op zichzelf wonen, maar de verhuizing viel hem toch zwaar. Hij miste zijn moeder, ook al ging hij

dagelijks naar haar toe. Zijn vader zag hij eigenlijk nooit meer. Toch liep dit op den duur ook goed. Hij moest gewoon even wennen. Hij begon er steeds meer van te houden op zichzelf te wonen.
Er was weer een optocht in de stad, en dit keer ging hij er zelf naartoe. Hij keek naar alle maskers en verkleedpartijen, en hij was vastbesloten zelf ook mee te doen het jaar erop. Toch vergat hij het, want er waren zoveel andere dingen die zijn aandacht trokken. En hij kwam nu ook op een leeftijd dat de jaarlijkse optocht hem niet meer zo interesseerde. Het jaar erop was hij er overheen gegroeid. Het paste niet meer bij hem. Hij dacht er ook niet meer echt overna.
Zij moeder werd steeds ouder, en had steeds meer hulp nodig. Nog steeds was hij er dagelijks, en hij vertelde haar verhalen en las haar voor. Zijn moeder was nu zijn kind geworden. Op een dag was zijn moeder dement geworden, en herkende hem niet meer. Toen ging ze naar een verzorgingshuis. Het zat er op voor hem. Hij had zijn best gedaan. Hij had gedaan wat hij kon. Wekelijks zocht hij haar nog op, maar ze begon steeds agressiever te worden, omdat ze hem niet herkende. Ook praten hielp niet meer. Ze was mentaal en geestelijk aan het aftakelen. Hij kwam

steeds minder, want hij kon er niet goed mee leven. Hij was meer een last voor haar dan dat het haar rust gaf. Hij was ten einde raad, maar dacht dat ze al een soort hersendood was, en dat ze een nieuw leven had gekregen. Ze was verder niet agressief naar de verzorgers, want die herkende ze wel.
Het was in die dagen dat zijn vader contact met hem opnam. Maar hun karakters botsten teveel, dus dat liep op niets uit. Ze hadden het beiden in ieder geval geprobeerd. Hij voelde zich eenzaam, en las veel. Hij verslond boeken, op zoek naar een antwoord, wat levensrust. Hij kreeg soms nog weleens een brief van zijn vader. Moeder bleek hem ook niet meer te herkennen en deed agressief naar hem. Zijn vader dacht ook dat ze nu in een ander leven al was, en dat haar vorige leven haar daarin zou tegenhouden, dus daarom deed ze agressief. Volgens zijn vader was het beter als ze door hen met rust werd gelaten. Daar was Jorke het wel mee eens.
Het menselijke contact deed hem pijn op deze manier. Hij praatte nog liever met een standbeeld, en dat ging hij ook doen. Als hij er in de stad één zag, dan sprak hij ermee. Het standbeeld sprak niet terug, maar het luchtte voor hem wel op. Was er misschien ook een ander leven voor hem ?

Hij begon dromen te krijgen over sprekende standbeelden en sprekende poppen. Misschien hadden zij te weinig aandacht gehad ? Hij dacht er over na, maar liet ook dat idee weer vallen. Hij bleef zich hechten aan boeken. Daar zat voor hem de magie. Hij had inmiddels al zoveel boeken dat het bijna niet in zijn huis paste. Hij moest daarom verhuizen naar een groter huis. Zijn huis was als een bibliotheek.
Hij dacht na over zijn vader en moeder. Zij leken onbereikbaar. Maar door de boeken kon hij alles herscheppen in zijn hoofd. Hij ging er op een andere manier mee om.
Op een dag was er een vrouw aan de deur. Ze verkocht kaartjes voor een bepaalde theatervoorstelling. Hij dacht : "Baadt het niet, dan schaadt het niet," dus hij kocht een kaartje en zat de avond erna op de voorste rij. Er stonden wat clowns, en een vleermuis vloog tussen hen in. Hij lachte de hele avond om de grappen van de clowns. Maar na de voorstelling voelde hij zich leeg, alsof hij zijn tijd had lopen verdoen. Hij was wel toe aan iets nieuws. Hij was zoekende.
Na een week was het meisje er weer en verkocht kaartjes voor een andere theatervoorstelling. Hij vertelde zijn

verhaal dat het niet echt iets voor hem was, maar ze bleef terugkomen, dus hij wees haar er vriendelijk op dat hij helemaal geen kaartjes meer zou kopen, maar toen begonnen ook andere meisjes te komen om kaartjes te verkopen, en hij werd er erg moe van om het telkens uit te leggen. Hij plakte ook nog een sticker op de deur van "geen kaartjesverkopers", maar niets hielp.
"Zeg, zijn jullie blind !" riep hij eens toen ze voor de zoveelste keer aan de deur stonden.
"Sorry, we hebben opdracht van de baas. U staat op de lijst," sprak het desbetreffende meisje.
"Haal me dan ogenblikkelijk van die lijst af !" schreeuwde hij.
"Dat gaat zomaar niet," sprak het meisje. "Ik heb eerst uw handtekening nodig." Ze haalde een kaartje uit haar zak met kleine lettertjes erop, en in grote woede zette hij zijn handtekening zonder verder de kleine lettertjes te lezen. Ze glimlachte wat, en vertrok toen. Maar toen begon hij bergen post te krijgen. Retour sturen hielp niet. Het was alsof ze hem in de val hadden gelokt, en hij dacht nog : "Dat zullen de kleine lettertjes geweest zijn !" Op een dag ging hij naar hun kantoor toe, maar het bleek een vals adres te zijn. Er woonde hier heel iemand anders die ook

al gek werd van alle boze brieven. Ook het theater zelf bleek er niet voor verantwoordelijk te zijn.
Hij besloot zijn vader om raad te vragen, maar die moest iets opbiechten. Zijn vader bleek hier achter te zitten om toch nog op een bepaalde manier contact met hem te hebben en de opgelopen schade in te halen. Hij vond dat hij maar een hele vreemde vader had dat het op zo'n manier moest, en dat hij ook nog voor de kaartjes zou moeten betalen, maar in ieder geval stopte zijn vader toen met deze dingen toen Jorke dat hem gebood. "Ik heb gedaan wat ik kon," zei zijn vader. "Toen het niet op de normale manier kon, heb ik het maar op deze manier gedaan."
"Je bent me wel een vreemde," zei Jorke boos. "Ik zat er al aan te denken te gaan verhuizen. Het is toch een vorm van stalken."
"Ik moet je nog iets opbiechten," zei zijn vader. "Al die jaarlijkse optochten heb ik ook altijd voor jou georganiseerd, speciaal voor jou, omdat ik niet wist hoe ik het anders moest doen." Jorke kreeg een brok in zijn keel en omhelsde zijn vader. "Papa, u bent de allerbeste."

De Witte Kerk

De witte monniken gingen eigenlijk alleen maar trager en trager. Schuivelend, voetje voor voetje gingen ze richting de witte kerk in het natuurgebied van Hendrik Ido Ambacht. Zo zouden ze nooit bij de witte kerk aankomen. Tenslotte stonden ze helemaal stil, en begonnen hun gezangen te zingen. Toen gingen ze weer verder, maar nog steeds traag. Ze hadden witte gewaden met witte kappen op, waardoor ze de witte monniken werden genoemd. Het was weer zo'n vreemd geloof in de stad Hendrik Ido Ambacht. Het was weer zo'n economisch geloof. De witte monniken geloofden in het witte geld. Dat kon alleen gegeven worden door hen die daartoe verzekerd waren. Men kon zich dus bij de witte kerk verzekeren, niet om te kunnen krijgen, maar om te kunnen geven. Het witte geld kon ook gezaaid worden. Zo groeiden er witte geld struiken. Het witte geld leek op pepermunt.
Eigenlijk kon er niet veel met het witte geld gedaan worden. Het was gewoon voor het idee. Mensen hadden zo misschien het gevoel dat ze iets goeds deden, terwijl ze er toch niet armer om werden. Toch was dat niet helemaal waar. Er kon wel degelijk wat met het witte geld gedaan

worden. Het kon gegeten worden, en als je het lang genoeg bewaarde, dan werd het wit goud.
Maar ja, wat moest je met wit goud ? Je kon er sieraden van maken, of andere dingen, maar waar was het nu echt goed voor ? De monniken hadden daar zo hun eigen idee over. Het witte goud was voor hen een beeld van geduld.
In ieder geval was Hendrik Ido Ambacht heel trots op dit verzekerings-systeem. Er gingen allerlei verhalen en mythes te ronde over het witte geld en het witte goud. En zeemannen bleken met steeds grotere verhalen erover thuis te komen. Daarom groeide de mythologie, en daarmee ook de interesse voor de witte kerk en de witte monikken. Op een gegeven moment werd de belangstelling te groot, en de witte monniken hadden geen rust meer. Ze vonden ook dat de groep te groot werd, dus ze zetten een stop. De verzekeringsmaatschappij was nu vol en zou geen nieuwe leden meer aannemen. En zo begon het leden-aantal van de witte kerk langzaam uit te sterven, totdat het op een moment alleen nog een herinnering was. Maar de mythe groeide, en ook het aantal van hen die in de witte kerk geloofden, maar er niet mochten komen. De kerk was vol, ook al waren de leden al tijden dood. De canon was afgesloten.

Van de witte monniken werden standbeelden gebouwd, en hun verhalen werden opgetekend. Het kwam in een groot wit heilig boek te staan. En het aantal verhalen groeit nog steeds. Zeemannen komen thuis met steeds grotere verhalen erover, maar wat is er nu echt van waar ? Het was niet meer echt te achterhalen. Wel is het zo dat wanneer iemand heel traag loopt, dan wordt er weleens gezegd : "Kijk, daar gaat een witte monnik." Of wanneer iemand heel traag is met werk, dan wordt er weleens gezegd : "Kom op, een beetje meer vaart erin, je bent toch geen witte monnik ?" Zo zijn er diverse spreekwoorden van die tijd in Hendrik Ido Ambacht overgebleven. De legende heeft zijn stempel gedrukt en het schijnt niet meer weggewassen te kunnen worden. Maar moet dat eigenlijk ? Er vallen natuurlijk heel wat mooie lessen van te leren. De witte monniken zijn helden in Hendrik Ido Ambacht. Hun standbeelden worden vereerd. Als iemand van iets teveel en te snel wil, dan wordt er vaak gezegd : "Neem maar eens een voorbeeld aan de witte monniken." En dat wordt ook gezegd als iemand heel gierig en egoïstisch is. De witte monniken waren de rolmodellen voor Hendrik Ido Ambacht, en nog steeds. Hun positie en taak blijkt steeds groter te worden, maar vreemd genoeg

hoor je er buiten Hendrik Ido Ambacht niets over. Voor de rest van het land en de aarde bestaan de witte monniken niet, en hebben ze nooit bestaan.
Soms proberen de kinderen weleens de witte monniken na te doen. Dan draaien ze in het rond, of lopen en bewegen heel traag. Op speciale dagen zingen ze liedjes. Soms beweren kinderen dat ze een standbeeld van een witte monnik hebben zien bewegen. Het vreemde ervan is dat alleen kinderen dit beweren. Maar hun ouders geloven hen.

Het Standbeeld

Hij kwam 's nachts thuis en trof zijn vrouw dood aan in haar bed met een mes in haar borst.
Hij vertrouwde niemand, geen dokter en geen politie. Ze waren allemaal corrupt in zijn ogen. Hij had teveel meegemaakt. Hij schreeuwde in zichzelf, greep een mes en rende naar buiten, op zoek naar de moordenaar.
Hij zocht overal, ook in het bos. Hij vond geen spoor.
Hij voelde iets breken in zijn hoofd.
Zou het standbeeld op de toren het gedaan hebben ?
Hij keek ernaar en het standbeeld leek te bewegen.
Hij viel op de grond en sloot zijn ogen, en zag toen een licht.
Was er een engel gekomen ?
Zij gaf hem een lichtend zwaard, en toen was er niets dan zee.
Hij strompelde naar huis.
Hij moest zich vergist hebben, maar zijn vrouw was toch echt dood.
Plotseling was hij omringd met standbeelden.
Zij hadden allemaal messen.
Zij hakten en staken op hem in, totdat hij ook een

standbeeld was geworden.
In het diepste van de nacht,
Waar de nachtzon opkomt, de zon van bloed,
Daar hadden ze hem gevonden,
En ze namen hem mee,
Zoals ze zijn vrouw namen.
Vanuit de zee kwamen ze op,
Nee, ze hadden geen genade,
Ze bleven naar hem vragen,
En bloed was hun meester
Hij zocht tussen de standbeelden naar de moordenaar van
zijn vrouw,
Maar waren zij niet allen moordenaars ?
Waar het bloed liegt, daar is hun pad,
En niemand wist ergens van,
Zij waren allemaal leugenaars die in ontkenning leefden
Hij wilde weg, maar kon de uitgang niet vinden,
Hij zat vast in een doolhof, maar toen herinnerde hij zich
het lichtende zwaard en de engel,
En weer begon het licht hem te overweldigen,
Zacht licht, en toen was alles zee,
Het begon hem mee te nemen,
Het doolhof was slechts het verlee

Op een steen stond zijn naam geschreven, en daarnaast de naam van zijn vrouw,
Maar terugvinden deed hij haar niet,
Waar engelen zijn naam roepen, waar de vijand niet meer is,
Alles heeft hem verblind, en zijn vrouw is slechts een herinnering,
Als een lichtend spook door het bos,
Waar de bladeren ruisen
Hij roept haar naam, maar zij hoort niet,
Zij spreekt niet, zij is een standbeeld,
Zoals hij dat is
Zij staat op een andere toren in een andere stad,
Ze kunnen alleen van elkaar dromen

Er waren ook vreemde snoepwinkels in Hendrik Ido Ambacht, waar de klant niets mocht kopen, maar alleen gekocht mocht worden. Dat gebeurde door grote snoep-automaten die heel menselijk waren, en de klanten uitkozen die ze wilden kopen. De snoep-automaten gingen ook vaak de straten en de daken op om mensen te kopen. Ze gingen gewoon door open ramen of schoorstenen heen. Het waren koop-automaten. Zij kochten klanten en verder een ieder die zij wilden.
De kopers werden zelf verkocht en veranderden in poppen. Dit was de reden dat men de snoepwinkels probeerde te sluiten, maar er kwamen er alleen maar meer bij. Kopers waren niet meer veilig. Ze eindigden zelf ergens in een winkel. De snoep-automaten die hen gekocht hadden verkochten hen gewoon weer door. Daarom was er een groep ontstaan van hen die niets meer wilden kopen. Ze waren te bang zelf gekocht te worden. Snoep smaakte hen niet meer. Ze waren er bang voor geworden. Vele mensen hadden winkelvrees gekregen, en steeds meer van hen gingen in de natuur leven, of onder de grond. Ze gingen van de natuur leven. Maar de snoep-automaten

achtervolgden hen daar ook.
De snoep-automaten kochten alles over, geheel Hendrik Ido Ambacht. En zo kwam Hendrik Ido Ambacht onder de macht van de snoep-machines, die steeds groter en groter werden. Alles werd geregeld door de snoepmachines.
De koopziekte begon enorm terug te lopen in Hendrik Ido Ambacht. De enigen die nog kochten waren de verkochten. En ze kochten alles wat los en vast zat. Het was als het geheim van snoep en het geheim van de zee.
Er kwamen toen heel wat demonstraties totdat uiteindelijk alles verschoven werd naar een maand in het jaar, een feestmaand waarin al het gekochte zou kopen, en dat werd gevierd met veel snoep. Het was dan ook een snoepfeest, en er werden die maand vele optochten gehouden. Het werd ook wel het paars-rode feest genoemd. Veelal droegen de mensen in die maand rode en paarse kleding. Het werd weer zo'n vreemd geloof in Hendrik Ido Ambacht, zoals er daar zoveel vreemde geloven waren. De eigenlijke betekenis ging steeds meer verloren, en het werd meer en meer het feest waarin de snoepmensen kwamen. Zij werden snoepmannen genoemd, maar dat konden ook vrouwen zijn. Zij gingen door de straten in optochten en waren helemaal bekleed met snoep.

De leider van dit geloof ? De paarse paus. Hij was omhuld met mysterie. Niemand wist echt zeker wie of wat het was. Hij vertoonde zich nooit aan de mensen, alleen door de televisie, en hij was geheel gehuld in paars. Hij sprak niet. Hij gaf alleen tekst. Dit was in een andere taal, en de vertaling verscheen eronder. Meestal waren zulke uitzendingen alleen in de feestmaand. Het had ook te maken met allerlei olifantencultussen, wat dan ook volop op de televisie was te zien, en de paarse paus was vaak omringd met menselijke snoep-automaten, en die zouden van alles wat er in Hendrik Ido Ambacht gebeurde notities maken, en dat niet voor een rechterlijk systeem, maar puur om verhalen te maken. De parse paus was de schrijver van een heilig boek, maar het was nog lang niet af. Vandaar dat de snoep-automaten nog steeds notities moesten maken over de mensen, en over alles wat er gebeurde in Hendrik Ido Ambacht.
Op een dag reed er een paarse paus op een versierde en beklede olifant door de stad, maar het bleek een valse te zijn, want de echte paarse paus zou dat nooit doen. Ook sprak deze paarse paus, iets wat de echte paarse paus nooit zou doen. Ook dit werd in de notities gezet, en de echte paarse paus liet in de feestmaand van het volgende jaar

weten dat hij hier niets aan zou doen dan het in een verhaal te zetten. Sinds toen was er elk jaar wel een paarse paus ergens te vinden. Ze zagen het wel als een uitdaging, want ze wilden ook wel in de verhalen van de paarse paus komen. De mensen begonnen het steeds meer gewoon te vinden, en ze begonnen eraan te wennen. De echte paarse paus begon steeds minder op de televisie te komen. Hij vond dat de nep valse pausen zijn taak mooi konden overnemen. Het ging niet helemaal zoals het altijd was, maar de paarse paus was er tevreden mee en nam het niet zo nauw. Totdat hij helemaal niet meer op televisie verscheen. Andere paarse pauzen begonnen het werk over te nemen, en hadden hun eigen inbreng, waardoor de vreemde religie steeds meer veranderde.
En het witte goud rondom Hendrik Ido Ambacht vertelde verhalen, en er werd nooit meer iemand veroordeeld door een rechterlijk systeem, maar alles werd opgelost door verhalen.

Het Sprekende Witte Goud

Eens was er in Hendrik Ido Ambacht een wit gouden park. Er mochten alleen maar vrouwen in het park komen, en die vrouwen reden op leeuwen. Er mochten absoluut geen mannen in het park komen. Hier werd veel over gedemonstreerd, want men vond dat erg racistisch, maar het vanwege veiligheidsredenen. Het bleek met de leeuwen te maken hebben. Het waren namelijk hele speciale leeuwensoorten die alleen maar mannenvlees lusten. Vrouwenvlees lusten ze niet. Het park was ommuurd met wit goud, en het trok veel bekijks. Op een dag was er een man over de stenen muur heengeklommen en rende het park in waar de vrouwen op leeuwen reden. Hij leek dronken te zijn. Er werd veel geroepen dat hij terug moest komen, maar hij rende op een leeuw af. "Ga weg !" riep de vrouw die op de leeuw zat. "De leeuw zal je verslinden. Mannetjes als jij komen hier niet ver."
De man trok zich er niets van aan en begon de leeuw te aaien, die direct toehapte. "Dan moet je het zelf maar weten," zei de vrouw. "Ik kan er niet wakker om liggen. Je hebt het zelf gewild." De man trok zijn arm terug, maar hij was nog niet klaar. Weer probeerde hij de leeuw te aaien,

en ditmaal beet de leeuw goed door en trok zijn arm eraf.
"Idioot !" riep de vrouw. De man kreunde van de pijn, maar hij was goed dronken, en nog was hij niet klaar. Ditmaal beet de leeuw ook zijn andere arm eraf.
"Wanneer ga je het leren !" riep de vrouw.
"Wanneer jullie van die leeuwen afkomen," brulde de man zonder armen. "Vrouwen horen niet op leeuwen te rijden."
"Het zijn speciale leeuwen, idioot !" riep de vrouw woest. "Ze lusten alleen mannenvlees."
"Dan moet je wel erge mannenhaat hebben om op zo'n beest te rijden !" brulde de man even woest terug, in hevige pijn, en hevig bloedend. "Dus als we bij jullie willen komen dan worden onze armen eraf gebeten."
"Vertrouw me maar, dit is nog maar het begin !" gilde de vrouw. "Als je zo doorgaat worden je benen er ook afgebeten."
De man liep naar de leeuw toe in zijn dronkenschap en begon de leeuw te schoppen, maar toen greep de leeuw ook zijn been en rukte het eraf. De man stortte in het zand.
"Ik zal maar snel weg proberen te komen met dat laatste been van je !" gilde de vrouw. "Wij wilden je niet in de buurt, en de leeuw al helemaal niet. Hebben wij er ooit om gevraagd ?"

Maar de man lag daar levenloos. De vrouw reed weg op haar leeuw. Hier had ze geen tijd voor, en het was haar taak niet. De man had zichzelf aan haar en de leeuw opgedrongen.
De man werd met loeiende sirene naar het ziekenhuis gebracht. Door dit nieuws werd de woede van de mensen over het witte gouden park nog wel groter, en er werden meer demonstraties gehouden dan ooit. Men vond dat het tijd werd het witte gouden park te sluiten.
Dat was snel gebeurd. De gehele tuin werd gesloopt, al het witte goud, en niemand wist waar de vrouwen en leeuwen naartoe waren gegaan. Sommigen dachten dat ze ondergronds gegaan waren. Wat van het witte goud van het park kwam in het museum terecht, en verder gingen de vrouwen die op de leeuwen reden de boeken in.
De speciale kleding die ze droegen ging de kledingzaken in, naar het voorbeeld.
Nog vaak werd er gesproken over deze vreemde geschiedenis.
Het witte goud zweeg verder. Het had al genoeg vertelt.

De Plaag van Elzega

In het stadje Elzega was een plaag van vliegende vissen die de hoofden van de burgers teisterden. De heksenmeester had een zwart zaad waarmee hij vissen kon laten vliegen, en hij gaf hen de naarste opdrachten. Zo zaaide hij een boel tragedie en hopeloosheid. De vissen waren gevreesd, en als ze dan weer vertrokken was het leed vaak al geschied, of begon toen pas echt.
Iedereen was met zijn handen in het haar. Ook de kleine Jog vond het vervelend. Hij was vastbesloten hier iets aan te doen, en op een dag stapte hij naar de burgemeester. Jog belde aan, en de dienstmaagd van de burgemeester deed bezorgd open. 'Is er wat gebeurd, kleine ?'
'Nee,' zei Jog, 'ik wil gewoon de burgemeester spreken.'
Na een tijdje wachten kon de kleine Jog bij de burgemeester naar binnen in zijn kamer.
'Zo, kleine jongen, dus jij wilt de stad redden van dit boze gespuis, huh ?' zei de burgemeester nadat Jog hem het verhaal had verteld. 'En hoe zou jij dat willen doen, kleine man ?'
'Geef me even de tijd, burgemeester,' zei de jongen. 'Ik kan vast wel iets bedenken.'

'Toch wel vreemd, jongen, dat je hier komt zonder ook maar enig idee te hebben, want meestal zijn degenen die hier komen al voorbereid met een idee of plan. Maar in ieder geval is het erg dapper van je,' zei de burgemeester.
Met de dagen leek het steeds erger te worden. De vissen waren erg bloeddorstig, en maakten velen ziek. Ook maakten ze angstaanjagende geluiden, waardoor mensen 's nachts niet konden slapen.
Het waaide hard buiten. De kerkklokken bleven maar luiden. Jog staarde voor zich uit, vastbesloten een plan te bedenken. 'Jongen, geef de moed maar op,' zei zijn moeder telkens. 'Hier is geen kruid tegen opgewassen.' Ze probeerden mensen gek te maken met hun gekrijs. In het stadje werden ze inmiddels overal de schuld voor gegeven. Ook zouden ze kinderen gekke en nare versjes laten zingen.
Toen Jog achttien was had hij ineens een plan. Hij zou naar het boze berkenbos gaan, op zoek naar de heksenmeester die dit allemaal op zijn geweten had.
Na lang lopen kwam hij bij een huisje. Hij ging naar binnen, en zag de heksenmeester achter een tafeltje zitten. 'Zeg kerel,' zei Jog, 'je boze spelletjes zijn uit. Jij bent de schuldige, en ik ben de wraakengel.'

'Zo zo,' zei de heksenmeester. 'Praatjes, hè, je bent er anders nog niet.' De heksenmeester stond op, en een vuurvlam kwam van zijn hand die regelrecht op Jog afvloog. Jog kon nog net bukken. Maar toen kwamen er twee vliegende vissen binnenvliegen, die met groot gekrijs Jog grepen en met hem wegvlogen. Ze brachten hem op een heel hoog nest in de bergen, waar het heel koud was.
'Je moet voor heksenmeester Troegadoer verschijnen,' zei één van de vliegende vissen.
Na hem ernstig toegetakeld te hebben, brachten ze hem bloedend naar een dichtbijzijnd kasteel in het bos.
Heksenmeester Troegadoer zat binnenin op een troon.
'Laat deze lamlendeling binnenkomen !' riep de heksenmeester. 'Hij heeft mijn broer bedreigd. Nu is hij van mij.' De heksenmeester begon te lachen.
'Maar jullie hebben Elzega getergd met jullie vliegende vissen !' riep Jog.
De vliegende vissen brachten hem tot vlak voor de troon, en lieten hem toen neervallen. Kreunend en hijgend stond Jog moeizaam op. Hij was diep verwond.
'Elzega is ons terrein,' zei Troegadoer. 'Jullie hadden nooit dat stadje moeten bouwen op natuur gebied.'
'Daar kunnen wij niets aan doen,' riep Jog boos, 'dat

hebben onze voorouders gedaan, en ze zeiden dat het een open vlakte was. Ze hebben geen bomen ervoor omgekapt, of ander natuurgebied.'
'Leugens,' zei Troegadoer, 'ze hebben een heel stuk bos ervoor weggekapt. Als je leven je lief is, vertrek uit de stad. De stad zal vernietigd worden.'
'Mijn voorouders moesten wel ergens leven. Ze hebben niets verkeerds gedaan,' zei Jog.
'Dat maken ze je maar wijs,' zei Troegadoer. 'Spoedig zal de stad vergaan, en er is niks wat je daaraan kunt doen.'
Jog probeerde zich los te rukken uit de greep die de vliegende vissen op hem hadden. Ze stonken verschrikkelijk. Hij voelde hun hete adem in zijn nek. Ze hadden bijna een zwarte huid.
Ze spoten hun inktgas in hem, terwijl hun nagels als naalden diep in zijn huid gingen. Hij werd plotseling depressief en duizelig. Toen viel hij op de grond.
Troegadoer begon te lachen.
Jog wordt dan wakker na een tijdje in een langwerpige zaal op een bed, waar nog veel meer mensen op bedden liggen.
Een klein meisje komt aangelopen met lang, zwart haar.
'Wij zullen je bewerken met het zwarte zaad,' zei het

meisje. 'Ook jij zal in een vliegende vis veranderen. We kunnen je goed gebruiken.'
'Nee !' gilde Jog, maar al snel injecteerde het meisje hem, en hij viel weer in een diepe slaap. Hij werd in een capsule gestopt en ging diep in de grond. Hij werd wakker toen ze de boom van het zwarte zaad hadden bereikt, diep onder de grond. Er zaten vleermuizen in deze boom. Hij moest van het zaad eten. Hij werd in een rivier geworpen en ging kopje onder. Hij zwom naar boven, en merkte dat hij in de zee was. Ook merkte hij dat hij een vis was geworden. Hij zag meerdere vissen om zich heen, en ze stegen op uit het water, om te vliegen.
Ook hij merkte dat hij kon vliegen. Zijn huid was bijna zwart. Hij bevond zich in een zaal met vele andere vliegende vissen. Ze keken allemaal richting een bol, waarop een vogelachtige verschijning zat met grote vleugels. Toen veranderde de verschijning in een koning. Het was de koning van de vliegende vissen.
Plotseling merkte Jog dat hij zijn eigen lichaam weer terughad. Hij rende door een tunnel, zoekende naar de uitgang. 'Nee, ik wil dit niet !' riep hij. Hij ramde met zijn vuisten op glas. Hij had het gevoel dat hij verdronk. Hij kon niet ademen. 'Is er dan niemand om me te helpen !'

riep hij in wanhoop.
'Er is iets mis,' zei het kleine meisje. 'We kunnen hem niet veranderen in een vliegende vis. Zijn hart is te sterk.'
Plotseling voelde Jog dat hij buiten lag op de grond, vlak voor het kasteel. Zo snel als hij kon rende hij terug naar het stadje Elzega. Hij was door deze ervaring zo getraumatiseerd dat hij er nooit meer over durfde te spreken.

De Trollenspiegel

Als iemand in de trollenspiegel keek, viel hij direkt dood neer en werd zijn ziel door de spiegel heengetrokken om hem in het land der trollen te laten werken. Het was een groensoortig zaad waardoor de zielen dan geketend werden, een zaad dat vanuit de ziel een gevoelige plek liet voortgroeien als een trollenspiegel. Zo kon niemand de ziel bevrijden zonder zelf ook een slachtoffer van de trollenspiegel te worden.
De trollen waren een wreed volk zonder enige genade. En als er dan genade was, dan zat er altijd wel een addertje onder het gras. Zo waren velen blij en verheugd als de trollen hen vrijlieten, maar dan werden ze al snel gegrepen door een groen vuur waardoor ze nog verschrikkelijker gebonden werden. Nee, een trol liet zijn gevangene nooit vrij. Een trol maakte alleen zijn slachtoffers klaar voor nog grotere wreedheden. Hierin had de trol altijd veel plezier. Er was geen volk zo wreed als het volk der trollen. Ze kenden geen genade. Hun genade was alleen een nog grotere wreedheid. Dit maakte hen berucht. Ja, de trollen waren zeer gevreesd. Veel plezier hadden ze erin als hopeloze zielen voor hun aanwezigheid trilden. Want in de

handen te vallen van een trol, was te komen in een fuik waaruit geen ontsnapping mogelijk was, alleen het uitzicht op een steeds groeiende ellende. De gevangene had alleen het uitzicht op ongekend wrede martelingen, die alleen maar wreder en wreder zouden worden, tot groot plezier van de trollen. En zolang je nog niet door hen gepakt was, kon je erop wachten dat ze op een dag voor je deur zouden staan, want een trol geeft nooit op. Hij zou het telkens weer opnieuw proberen door de ene na de andere valstrik, totdat je een keer op een onbedachtzaam moment zou toehappen, als het begin van een ritje dat steeds duisterder zou worden.
Ze hadden er groot plezier in om alles langzaam op te bouwen, om de spanning en angst zo groot mogelijk te maken, en om maar zoveel mogelijk valse hoop en zekerheid te schenken, zodat de klap daarna extra hard zou aankomen. Ja, het waren misbaksels, en zij woonden in de trollenspiegels en hun slachtoffers. Telkens weer spanden zij hun netten en webben om hun geluk te beproeven. Nee, er was geen groter duivels kwaad dan de trollenspiegel. Het was een ras erger dan demonen en vampieren. Als zij in de buurt waren dan gilden de geesten, spoken en duivelen het uit. Er was niets vergeleken met de trollen.

Eens hadden zij de trollenspiegel ontworpen, en sindsdien groeide hun macht.
En allen die nog nooit in de trollenspiegel hadden gekeken, en dachten dat het zo’n vaart niet zou lopen, en dat het gewoon iets onschuldigs was, zouden zich eens op een dag ook bewust zijn .... van het kwaad van de trollenspiegel.

Einde

De Wonderlijke Boekenkamer van Oom Benno

Hoofdstuk 1. Ziek

Bertram had een boze tante en een vreemde oom. Ze hielden hem opgesloten in een kamer. Hij was altijd ziek, en mocht nooit uit zijn kamer. Zijn eten werd gebracht. Hij mocht dus ook niet naar buiten, maar dat zou hij waarschijnlijk ook niet kunnen, omdat hij te ziek was. Zijn boze tante was de rode heks, en zijn vreemde oom was oom Benno, ook een heks, en een tovenaar. Oom Benno had een boekenkamer, waar een heleboel indianenboeken stonden. Ook stonden er vele andere soorten boeken. Bertram mocht daar beslist niet komen.

De goudvis had gezegd dat Bertram in de boeken de sleutel tot zijn ontsnapping kon vinden.

Op een nacht hadden zijn oom en tante vergeten zijn deur op slot te doen. Stilletjes sloop Bertram uit zijn kamer, en liep de boekenkamer van oom Benno in. Bertram griste direct een indianenboek uit de boekenkast. En toen nog één, en toen nog één, en liep toen snel naar zijn kamer terug. 'Ik moet ze maar goed verborgen houden,' zei

Bertram tegen zichzelf, en ze alleen 's nachts lezen wanneer oom en tante slapen. Het was nu 's nachts, dus Bertram begon direct te lezen.
'Horlepiep,' zei Bertram tegen zichzelf, wat gebeurt er nu ? Ik ben helemaal duizelig ineens. Hij had de eerste bladzijde van een indianenboek opengeslagen, en werd helemaal warm van binnen. De letters duizelden voor zijn ogen. 'Hoofdstuk één,' las hij. Hij hoorde wat schoten, en gezwiep van een zweep of lasso. 'Hoe kan dat ?' vroeg hij zichzelf af. Hij klapte het boek dicht, maar het was al te laat. Toen hij opkeek was hij in een woestijn, een prairie. Twee cowboys stonden voor hem. 'Wat moet dat daar ?' zeiden ze. Toen ineens vielen ze beiden naar voren. Ze hadden pijlen in hun rug. Een groep indianen op paarden namen Bertram mee. In het kamp merkte Bertram dat hij vastgebonden was. Ze brachten hem naar een paal, waar hij aan vastgemaakt werd.
'Laat me los,' zei Bertram. 'Ik ben ziek.'
'Niks mee te maken,' zeiden de indianen.
'Wat gaan jullie met me doen ?' vroeg Bertram.

'Dat zul je nog wel zien,' zeiden ze.
Bertram begon te huilen. Zijn oom en tante hadden hem weleens verteld wat indianen met hun gevangenen doen. Hij werd naar een grote ketel gebracht even later. 'Gaan jullie me opeten ?' huilde Bertram. 'Nee,' zeiden de indianen. 'Jij moet vanaf nu voor ons koken.'
'Maar ik ben daar veel te ziek voor,' zei Bertram.
'Geeft niks,' zeiden de indianen. 'Daar krijg je wel medicijnen voor.'
Ze gaven hem een soort groene dropjes, en na een tijdje voelde Bertram zich veel beter.
'Ik houd van jullie,' zei Bertram. 'Jullie hebben mij beter gemaakt.'
'Niks mee te maken,' zeiden de indianen boos. 'Je bent onze slaaf. Je moet voor ons koken nu.'
'Mij best,' zei Bertram, die allang blij was dat ze hem beter hadden gemaakt. 'Ik ben niet ziek meer !' juichte Bertram. 'Stil houden, jongen,' zei een wat oudere indiaanse vrouw.
Bertram roerde in de pan. Hij moest soep maken. Ze legden hem uit wat hij allemaal in de pan moest stoppen. Veel kruiden, en allerlei soorten

vruchtjes.
De soep was heel lekker.
'Nu moet je weer terug,' zeiden de indianen.
'Wat ?' zei Bertram teleurgesteld. 'Ik wil niet meer terug naar mijn oom en tante. Ze houden me opgesloten.
'Niets mee te maken,' zeiden de indianen. 'We kunnen je hier niet houden.'
'Alsjeblieft,' smeekte Bertram, 'ik zal alles doen wat jullie willen.'
'Nee, jongen,' zei een wat oudere indiaanse vrouw. 'Je moet terug.'
Bertram begon te huilen. Trillend hield hij het boek in zijn handen, en merkte dat hij weer in zijn kamer was. Ook voelde hij zich weer ziek.

Hoofdstuk 2. De Ontsnapping

Bertram legde de boeken diep onder zijn bed, onder een doek, en ging slapen. De volgende ochtend was hij vroeg wakker. Hij deed de gordijnen open, maar het licht deed zoveel pijn aan zijn ogen dat hij de gordijnen weer dichtdeed. Oom en tante sliepen nog, dus hij kon nog wel

even lezen. Hij pakte een ander indianenboek, sloeg het open, en werd weer duizelig. Snel bevond hij zich in een oerwoud. Wilde beesten stonden om hem heen. Hij was wel even bang. Toen hoorde hij schoten. De beesten renden weg, en al snel stond er een indiaan met een geweer voor hem.
'Meekomen jij,' zei de indiaan. Bertram liep mee met de indiaan, die hem naar het kamp bracht. Langs het kamp was een rivier met bootjes. 'Jij bent wie ?' vroeg de indiaan.
'Bertram,' zei hij.
'Oh, ah,' zei de indiaan. 'Ik jouw naam leuk vinden.'
'Haha,' zei Bertram.
'Waarom jongen zij hier zijn ?' vroeg de indiaan. Toen legde Bertram het uit aan de indiaan. De indiaan begreep er niets van.
'Ik heb tent voor jou,' zei de indiaan. Hij nam Bertram mee naar een lege indianentent. 'Hier mag jij wonen,' zei de indiaan.
'Dank je wel,' zei Bertram. 'Dat is erg aardig van u.'

's Nachts komen de spoken,' zei de indiaan, 'de geesten van de voorouders.'
'Gezellig,' zei Bertram.
'Nee,' zei de indiaan. 'Niet gezellig. Zij zijn boos, altijd boos.'
'En ik ben altijd ziek,' zei Bertram.
'Ik zal de spoken zeggen, jij altijd ziek zijn,' zei de indiaan.
Maar ineens werd hij wild door mekaar geschud door oom Benno. 'Heb jij aan mijn indianen-boeken gezeten ?' brult oom Benno woest.
'Waar komt die man vandaan ?' vraagt de indiaan.
'Heb ik jou iets gevraagd, snotaap ?' brult oom Benno. 'Die jongen moet meekomen, meekomen, nu !'
De indiaan grijpt zijn hakbijl en slaat oom Benno tegen de grond met de achterkant. 'Zo, wijsneus,' zegt de indiaan. 'Jij mij niet beledigen, en van jongen afblijven.' Oom Benno wordt vastgebonden, en naar een paal gesleept. 'Ziezo, die kan mij niet meer beledigen,' zei de indiaan.
Toen de andere indianen terugkwamen vroegen ze : 'Wat moet die dikke man hier ?'

'Het is een uilskuiken,' zei de indiaan. 'Hij heeft ons beledigd, en wilde jongen roven.'
'Wie is die jongen ?' vroegen ze.
'Goed kijken,' zei de indiaan. 'Hij is de machtige zonnedroom.'
De indianen bogen voor Bertram neer. Bertram begon te lachen.
'Maak me onmiddellijk los, Bertram !' brulde oom Benno.
Maar Bertram deed net alsof hij hem niet hoorde. Toen het nacht geworden was brulde oom Benno de hele nacht door. De volgende dag zei de indiaan dat hij naar het gevangenen-kamp moest.
'Wat gaan jullie met hem doen ?' vroeg Bertram.
'Weten we nog niet,' zei de indiaan. Toen oom Benno was afgevoerd was het eindelijk rustig. Een paar dagen later moest Bertram weer terug. Ze konden hem niet te lang houden. Maar ze wilden oom Benno houden, ook om Bertram een dienst te bewijzen. Bertram knipperde even met zijn ogen, en was weer in zijn eigen kamer, starende naar het boek. Bertram had honger, maar er was geen voedsel op zijn kamer. Hij liep naar

de deur en merkte dat de deur nog steeds open was. Tante riep hem. 'Bertram, kom naar mijn slaapkamer. Ik ben ziek, en ik weet niet waar je oom is.'
Bertram liep direct haar kamer binnen. Het was hier heel donker. Hij zag tante in haar bed liggen. 'Jongen, je bent nu oud genoeg geworden om je kamer uit te kunnen,' zei tante. 'Kun je wat voor je oude tante klaarmaken. Ik voel me zo zwak.'
'Natuurlijk tante,' zei Bertram.
Hij liep naar beneden de keuken in, en maakte wat brood voor haar met thee en een eitje. Toen bracht hij het boven. 'Dank je wel, lieverd,' zei tante. 'Ga nu maar doen waar je zin in hebt.'
Bertram ging direct naar de boekenkamer. De goudvis had gelijk gehad. In de boeken had hij de sleutel tot zijn ontsnapping gevonden.

Avond Danser

Hij woonde in een havenstadje. Het havenstadje lag aan een groot meer. Hij had het gevoel alsof niemand naar hem luisterde, alsof niemand hem kon horen. Hij voelde zich niet serieus genomen. De mensen leefden langs hem heen. Hij had een zus die vele jaren ouder was, dus ze groeiden ook niet samen op. Hij had het gevoel alsof hij enig kind was. Misschien was dat ook de reden waarom hij zich zo geisoleerd en onbegrepen voelde. De mensen om hem heen waren veelal ouder en met hele andere dingen bezig. Zijn vader was altijd en eeuwig bezig met de tuin. Hij had het gevoel alsof zijn vader nooit oog voor hem had, alsof zijn vader hem niet eens zag staan.
Zijn moeder was een heel dromerig type. Die was ook onbereikbaar, en draaide altijd alles om, en maakte altijd iets anders van wat hij zei. Het was een zweverig en afstandelijk iemand. Hij had het gevoel alsof niemand om hem gaf, alsof hij er niet toe deed. Wat hij ook maakte of deed, het was nooit goed. Hij had het gevoel dat zelfs als hij zou kunnen vliegen dat de mensen er dan niet van op zouden kijken. Hun leven ging dan gewoon door. Ze waren onverschillig en ongeinteresseerd.

Hij maakte prachtige, gevoelige muziek, maar niemand luisterde. Hij schreef prachtige boeken en maakte prachtige schilderijen, maar iedereen was met andere dingen bezig. Hij was slechts een druppel in de oceaan. Hij kreeg geen voet aan de grond.
Hij voelde zich als een avond danser, terwijl anderen moe waren van de dag en alreeds voorbereidingen troffen voor de nacht. Hij danste door, terwijl ieder ander naar bed ging. De mensen om hem heen waren moe, moegepraat. Hij wist niet waar hij zijn energie vandaan haalde. Hij ging graag wandelen in het park. Op een dag kwam hij daar een meisje tegen. Eerst deed ze alsof ze hem niet zag staan, maar even later kwam ze naar hem toe. "Mooi weer is het vandaag, hè ?" vroeg ze.
"Ja, dat wel," zei hij.
"Dat wel ?" vroeg ze. "Zijn andere dingen niet mooi ?"
"Niemand begrijpt me," zei hij.
"Begrijpt de zon de hemel ?" vroeg ze. "Begrijpt de maan de aarde ? Ze leven langs elkaar heen. Het zijn twee werelden die elkaar kruizen, totaal verschillende werelden."
"Daar zit wat in," zei hij.
"En zo is het ook tussen ons," zei ze. "Wij kennen elkaar

niet, en nu kruizen even onze paden."
"Jammer," zei hij.
"Waarom ?" vroeg ze. "Zo is het leven. Zeg, ik moet er weer vandoor. Een prettige dag verder."
Toen liep het meisje weg. Hij voelde alsof iedereen haast had. Iedereen was met andere dingen bezig zoals altijd.
De volgende dag kwam hij haar weer tegen in het park, maar ze negeerde hem volkomen. Ze deed alsof ze hem nog nooit eerder had gezien, alsof ze nog nooit met elkaar hadden gesproken. Hij had het gevoel alsof ze hem niet eens zag staan, alsof hij lucht voor haar was.
De dagen erop gebeurde hetzelfde. Hij kwam haar tegen in het park, maar ze sprak niet met hem, keek totaal langs hem heen, maar sprak wel met andere voorbijgangers. Hij begon zich er een beetje kwaad over te maken, of misschien wachtte ze erop dat hij iets zou zeggen ?
Hij besloot zich te gedragen zoals zij zich gedroeg. Hij zorgde ervoor dat hij niet naar haar keek, en hij sprak iedere andere voorbijganger even aan, alhoewel ze vaak niet eens wat terug zeiden. Ze hadden haast, of waren niet geinteresseerd, of heel kortaf. Sommigen hadden wel hele lange gesprekken met haar in het park. Hij vroeg zich af wat er met hem aan de hand was.

Hij had het gevoel alsof hij een dans met haar opvoerde. Ze waren vaak bij elkaar in de buurt, maar toch ook weer niet. Hij besloot zo ook met anderen om te gaan. Hij was een avond danser.
Hij leefde geheel voor de avond dans, en schudde zo zijn zorgen van hem af.
Maar op een dag kwam ze samen met een jongen, en de dag erna was de jongen er weer. Hij dacht dat ze misschien een vriend had, en het begon hem te verlammen. Het dansen ging hem moeilijk af, en toen ze voor de derde keer samen met de jongen naar het park kwam besloot hij niet meer te gaan. Ongeveer een week later lag er een kaart van het meisje in de brievenbus. Ze liet hierin weten dat ze hem miste, en dat de andere jongen haar broer was. Hij vroeg zich af hoe zij aan zijn adres kwam, of misschien had zij hem wel naar huis gevolgd. Ook vroeg hij zich af waarom ze hem miste, omdat ze elkaar nooit spraken. Of had het misschien met de avond dans te maken, dat ze dat miste ?
Na een week besloot hij terug te gaan naar het park, maar dit keer met zijn zus. Hij besloot verder helemaal niet op haar kaart te reageren. Hij had ook haar adres niet. Hij was druk met zijn zus in gesprek. Ze hadden het over allerlei

dingen, en het meisje was er ook met haar broer. Hij vroeg zich af waarom ze altijd met haar broer kwam. Hij dacht dat het meisje niet kon weten dat het zijn zus was, maar ze bleken elkaar te kennen, en ze raakten met elkaar in gesprek. Hij werd verder volkomen genegeerd. De volgende dag kwam hij alleen, terwijl het meisje weer kwam met haar broer. Maar op een dag kwam het meisje met een andere jongen, en het begon aan hem te knagen. Ditmaal kreeg hij er geen kaart over, en elke dag was de jongen er weer. Hij had hier geen zin in, dus na een tijdje besloot hij niet meer te komen. Hij was ziek geworden van deze avond dans. Hij voelde zich verlamd, als gestoken door een giftig insect. Hij kon aan niets anders meer denken.

Soms ging zijn zus nog wel eens naar het park, en op een dag vertelde ze dat zij daar nog steeds veel was, maar dan met haar andere broer.

Het was in die dagen dat hij besloot andere meisjes te vragen om met hem naar het park te gaan, gewoon als wandel-partner, of als een soort dans-partner. Hij waagde zich weer aan de avond dans. Toch voelde hij zich er rot over dat hij nooit haar kaart had beantwoord, ook al had hij haar adres niet. Hij vroeg aan zijn zus of zij haar adres

had, en zij gaf het hem. Maar hij had de moed niet.
Op een dag was het meisje weer helemaal alleen in het park, terwijl hij met een ander meisje was. De dag erop was zij weer alleen, en na een week besloot hij ook alleen te komen. "Heb je mijn kaart ooit gehad ?" vroeg ze.
"Ja, maar ik had je adres niet," zei hij.
"Je zus zei dat ze mijn adres aan je had gegeven, dat je er zelf om had gevraagd," zei ze.
Hij werd rood van verlegenheid, maar durfde verder niets te zeggen. Even later zei hij : "Ik was het weer vergeten."
"Ik bedoelde er verder niets persoonlijks mee," zei ze. "Ik dacht ik deel het gewoon met je. Ik had ook mijn vriend mee kunnen nemen."
Hij werd helemaal koud van binnen.
"Niet dat ik een vriend heb," zei ze. "Maar het zou een mogelijkheid kunnen zijn. In mijn geval zal dat wel nooit gebeuren."
"Waarom niet ?" vroeg hij.
"Mensen zijn te verschillend," zei ze. "Het is beter ze op een afstand te houden, als in een dans."
Hij voelde zich warm en koud tegelijk van binnen.
"Ik werk in het museum," sprak ze.
"Ik moet gaan," zei hij.

"Wacht," zei ze. "Ik bedoel er niets persoonlijks mee."
"Ik weet het," zei hij, en liep door.
Hij dacht na over het museum. Hij vroeg zich af of zijn kunst ooit in een museum zou komen, maar het leven voerde een dans met hem op, net zoals het meisje, en hij deed mee in deze dans.
Op een dag kwam het meisje niet meer, en weken gingen voorbij waarin hij haar niet zag. Zou hij dit keer misschien te koud zijn geweest ? Na een maand schreef hij een kaartje dat hij haar miste. Een maand later kreeg hij een kaart terug. Daarin stond : "Sorry, ik heb het te druk met paardrijden."
De dag erna was ze in het park. Hij ging direct op haar af.
"Ik heb het gevoel dat ik je paard ben," zei hij.
"Ik begrijp het," zei ze. "Ik kan zo soms overkomen, maar zo zit ik niet in elkaar."
"Wil je een keer met me mee naar de bibliotheek ?" vroeg hij.
"Als jij een keer met me meegaat naar het museum," zei ze.
"Afgesproken," zei hij, "maar dan wil ik je eerst een keer mijn kamer laten zien."
Op zijn kamer hingen zijn schilderijen en lagen zijn

boeken, maar toen ze er was deed ze volkomen ongeinteresseerd en onverschillig. Ze was meer met hem bezig dan met wat hij had gemaakt. Ze keek wel rond, maar verder zei ze er niets over, en begon dan over andere dingen. Hij voelde zich koud worden van binnen en wenste dat hij haar nooit had binnengelaten. Hij voelde zich verlamd, als gestoken door een giftig insect. Hij danste niet meer. Hij voelde zich aan een paal gebonden door een headhunter. Hij voelde zich als een hebbedingetje, een monument. Ze ging ijskoud met hem om, als een museum medewerker met een object.
"Hallo, ik leef, ik praat," zei hij.
Ze reageerde er verder niet op. "Laten we nu naar de bibliotheek gaan," zei ze, "en dan daarna naar het museum."
Maar hij had geen zin meer. "Laten we dat een andere keer doen," zei hij. "Ik heb nu geen tijd."
Hij was blij toen ze weer weg was. Hij zou nu een lange tijd niet meer het park inkomen. Hij had het gevoel dat hij haar moest laten betalen voor haar gedrag. De avond dans begon andere vormen te krijgen.
Hij vond haar gevaarlijk voor zijn psychische gezondheid, maar toch wilde hij dit roofdier ook temmen. Of zou zij

dan hem temmen ?
Hij zette als het ware het contact met haar in de ijskast. Hij wist dat zij slechts op jacht was naar zijn schedel. Of waren het misschien de wonderen van de natuur ?
Hij besloot boswandelingen te maken in plaats van parkwandelingen, maar tot zijn grote schrik kwam hij haar daar op een dag tegen. Ze kwam direct op hem af, en fluisterde iets in zijn oor. Hij kon het niet verstaan. "Wat zeg je ?" vroeg hij.
Maar ze liep door. De dag erna was ze weer in het bos, dus hij besloot terug te gaan naar het park. Toen ze daar ook kwam dacht hij dat ze dit misschien al tijden deed, gaan van bos naar park en omgekeerd. Ze bleek dit ook zo te doen tussen het museum en de bibliotheek. Eigenlijk kon hij haar niet ontlopen. Het was in deze tijd dat hij zich steeds meer terugtrok op zijn kamer. Hij begreep zijn vader beter, die altijd bezig was met de tuin. Hij begreep nu waarom. Ook begreep hij zijn moeder beter, waarom die zo was. Misschien was het meisje wel een wonderlijk medicijn, maar ook iets wat je zeker niet te veel moest gebruiken. Er stond een dagelijkse limiet op, en daar moest hij zich streng aan houden.
Een man kocht een pakje medicijnen genaamd "Avond

Danser" in een boekhandel. Er zat ook een klein boekje bij. Hij kocht het, omdat hij wilde dat zijn gezin elkaar beter zou begrijpen. Het was een wereldbekend medicijn, bekend van televisie. De man wilde het weleens uitproberen.

Einde

Het Duistere Sprookje van de Donkere Kaas

Een jongen moest van zijn moeder naar de kaasmarkt om een pond kaas te halen.
Toen hij daar aankwam stonden er drie indiaanse vrouwen met blote voeten op de tafel van een marktkraam, en er was alleen maar donkere kaas. De jongen moest de vrouwenvoeten kussen voordat hij de kaas meekreeg. Ook moest hij betalen, en het was erg duur. De jongen vond het een beetje vreemd, maar hij wist dat hij niet moest proberen zonder kaas thuis te komen, dus hij stemde er mee in en kuste de vrouwenvoeten. Toen hij het verhaal aan zijn moeder vertelde was die woedend. Ze pakte de jongen bij de hand en ging met hem naar de kaasmarkt. De jongen en zijn moeder werden vervolgens neergeslagen. Later werden ze wakker in een kooi. Twee bandieten keken hen aan. De jongen probeerde te praten, maar merkte dat hij niets kon zeggen. Zijn moeder was woest. "Wat heeft dat te betekenen ?" brulde ze. De bandieten glimlachten. "We kunnen er niets aan doen, mevrouw," spraken ze. "Er is een nieuwe directeur, en die wil donkere kaas."
"Maar waarom zijn we hier ?" brulde de vrouw woest.

"Wat heeft dit in godsnaam te betekenen ?"
"Sorry, mevrouw," sprak één van de bandieten. "Orders van de baas."
"En wat nu ?" vroeg de vrouw. "Dus we kunnen niet eens meer zomaar een markt bezoeken zonder overvallen te worden, en mijn zoon moet eerst de voeten van drie indiaanse vrouwen kussen en veel betalen voordat hij kaas meekrijgt, en dan ook nog donkere kaas ?"
"Wat is er mis met donkere kaas, mevrouw ?" vroeg de bandiet.
"Helemaal niks," zuchtte de vrouw. "Maar wat heeft de rest er allemaal mee te maken ?"
"Zo wordt nu eenmaal donkere kaas geserveerd, mevrouw," spraken de bandieten.
"Het is me nogal een zootje," sprak de vrouw. "En wat nu ? Gaan jullie mij ook nog mijn zoon afnemen ?"
"U gaat opgehangen worden," spraken de bandieten.
En zo gebeurde het. De vrouw werd opgehangen, en de jongen moest op de donkere kaasmarkt werken.
Een man stopte met lezen. "Ik heb nog nooit zo'n dom verhaal gehoord," sprak de man tegen zichzelf. "Moet je dit eens lezen," zei hij even later tegen zijn vrouw. Toen de vrouw het had gelezen barste ze in lachen uit. "Donkere

kaas ? Is dit echt of een verhaal ?" vroeg ze verbaasd.
"Echt denk ik," sprak de man. "Het is de krant."
"Dat zegt vandaag niet zoveel," sprak de vrouw. "Bij de krant werken allemaal grapjassen vandaag de dag. Ik zal eens kijken in de supermarkt morgen, of ze nu ook daadwerkelijk donkere kaas verkopen."
"Ik zou het maar niet doen," sprak de man. "Waarschijnlijk gebeurd dan hetzelfde met jou als met de vrouw uit het verhaal."
De volgende dag kwam de vrouw thuis met donkere kaas, en hield een pond voor de neus van haar man. "Zie, niks gebeurd," sprak ze trots.
"Dat moet nog gebeuren," sprak de man. "We kunnen de krant maar beter serieus nemen, anders horen we er niet meer bij, en sluiten ze ons misschien wel op in het gekkenhuis."
"Ach, klets niet," sprak de vrouw. "Je hebt teveel babbels en teveel tv gekeken."
In de nacht stierf de vrouw. Toen de man 's ochtends ontwaakte slaakte hij een gil. Het moest wel van de donkere kaas komen. Hij maakte de dag ervoor maar wat grapjes, maar nu bleek het toch menens te zijn. Misschien was er wel een duistere vloek op de donkere kaas.

"Ik kan het niet geloven dat nu mijn vrouw dood is," sprak de man tegen zichzelf, "maar het was niet zo'n beste, en lang leve de lol. Ik ga er op uit, en zal een betere vrouw vinden."
Een man klikt de tv uit. "Teveel rommel op de tv vandaag de dag. Donkere kaas ? Wat een stelletje gekken." Hij gaat naar bed, en heeft die nacht nachtmerries over donkere kaas. Hij moet de voeten van indiaanse vrouwen kussen.
"Zeg, ben ik dan nu op tv ?" bulderde de man. "Want gisteren was dit op de tv, en nu ben ik hier, net zoals die jongen uit dat verhaal. En nu moet ik zeker ook duur betalen voor die donkere kaas ?"
Toen werd hij op zijn hoofd geslagen en werd wakker in zweet. Hij begon om zich heen te grijpen en had ademhalings-moeilijkheden. De volgende dag vertelde hij het aan de dokter. De dokter dacht dat hij gek aan het worden was, en liet hem niet meer gaan. "Alzheimer waarschijnlijk," sprak de dokter. "U heeft betere zorg nodig," sprak de dokter.
"Ja, maar ik ben nog jong," sprak de man.
"Niets mee te maken," sprak de dokter. "U komt hier niet meer weg."
"Het moet die donkere kaas zijn," sprak de man tegen

zichzelf.
Hij werd opgesloten en stierf een eenzame dood, en hij kon alleen maar denken aan donkere kaas.

Zij zat daar, omringd door ogen, met een blauwe mond. Roze olifantjes stonden om haar heen, en de ogen hadden vleugels en zongen zo mooi. Er kwam een roze kracht uit de ogen, die door elkaar heenstroomde. Ook droop er een slijm uit de ogen. Zo was er het oog van wijsheid, het oog van liefde, het oog van genezing, het oog van schoonheid, het oog van kracht, het oog van puurheid, en het oog van licht. Het waren zeven ogen, haar dienstknechten. Zij spraken tot haar als een orakel, maar vaak waren zij stil. Zij droegen de geur van de bossen en de wateren, en zij leefde als in een visioen.
Verderop stond de boom der hyena's. Onder deze boom regeerde de zwarte koningin met haar legioenen over alle witte mannen. Zij schreeuwde, en had veel bloed te verbergen. Onder de last van een ongeboren kind werkte zij. De boom bracht een vergif voort, haar vergif. Hiermee had zij de witte mannen in schuld gebonden. Zij konden deze schulden niet betalen. Zij leefden in honger onder de tirannie van de zwarte koningin. Zij voerde hen met vergif vanuit zwarte borsten, en dichtbij stond een spiegel. In de spiegel was er een wereld waar de witte koning regeerde

over de zwarte vrouwen, een omgekeerde wereld, maar niemand kon deze wereld bereiken. De zwarte koningin bewaakte de spiegel bijna hysterisch. Maar de zwarte koningin stierf, en haar dochter nam het over. Haar dochter was zo lief, als de goedheid zelf, en iedereen was blij met deze koningin. En men vergat de boom der hyena's, en men vergat de spiegel, want iedereen leefde nu in geluk en zaligheid. En de spiegel en de boom der hyena's werden verbannen naar het rijk der nachtmerries. Maar zeker bij zeker kwam het land onder invloed van de witte spin, een vreemd en gevaarlijk medicijn.
Zelfs mensen konden verstrikt raken in de webben van deze spin. Zij werden dan tijdenlang uitgehongerd, en moesten van een vreemd vergif eten, wat de spin hen voerde, en zij werden voortdurend gewassen in het speeksel van de spin. De slachtoffers zouden dromen krijgen of hallucinaties van het meest overheerlijke voedsel, wat onbereikbaar voor hen was. Ook zouden ze nachtmerries krijgen dat ze in een varken of een gnoe veranderden, en geplaagd worden door doodsangsten. Na een tijd zou de witte spin dan veranderen in een zwarte spin, om aan de maaltijd te beginnen. Sommigen zeiden dat de witte spin eigenlijk niet wit was, maar zwart, en dat

het alleen maar wit lijkt, also het zijn tanden laat zien. Ook zeiden sommigen dat het de wraak was van de zwarte koningin. De nieuwe koningin wilde er niets aan doen, omdat zij dacht dat het misschien de terugkeer van haar moeder was.
Maar op een dag kwam de witte spin in het paleis en wilde de nieuwe koningin ombrengen. Nog steeds durfde de nieuwe koningin niets te doen, en vluchtte naar het bos.
De witte spin nam de troon. Direkt veranderde de witte spin in een witte koning, zodat sommigen dachten dat het de wraak van de spiegel was. Maar alweer gingen de witte mannen in gevangenschap, dus het zou toch heel goed mogelijk de zwarte koningin kunnen wezen, in één van haar gedaantes.
De witte spin vond dat de nieuwe koningin moest sterven.
De witte spin verliet zijn troon en ging het bos in om naar haar te zoeken. Hij moest en zou haar vinden, en toen hij haar vond was ze erg verschrikt. 'Alstublieft,' zei het meisje. 'Laat mij leven, ik heb u toch niets aangedaan ? Ik smeek u, geef mij een kans, en laat mij de redenen weten waarom u mij wilt doden.'
Maar de spin antwoordde niet, en begon het meisje aan stukken te rijten. Het volk ging ten onder in doem meer

dan ooit tevoren. De spin veranderde vaak van geslacht en kleur, en vaak zagen mensen een hyena op een troon. Mensen begonnen nachtmerries te krijgen van hyenas die hen verscheurden, koelbloedig, zonder genade.
Totdat op een dag een reusachtige witte vlieg het land binnenvloog. De vlieg was prachtig, als betoverend. Velen dachten dat het de terugkeer was van de gestorven nieuwe koningin. De vlieg vloog het paleis binnen en begon met een rustige, zachte stem te spreken. De spin vloog de vlieg aan, maar begon weg te smelten. Een wit vuur begon de spin aan te vreten. Nog nooit had het land zo'n gekrijs gehoord, als het gekrijs van hyenas. De witte vlieg, die reusachtig was, nam de troon, en alweer werden de witte mannen bevrijd.
Zeven jaren regeerde de goede koningin, totdat op een dag een hyena het paleis binnenkwam en de witte vlieg verscheurde. Het bleek de witte spin te zijn die zich als een hyena had vermomd. Hoe zij van de dood was opgestaan begreep niemand. Weer gingen de witte mannen in gevangenschap, erger dan ooit. Zij moesten een voer eten waardoor ze in varkens of gnoes veranderden. Ze klaagden erover dat hun leven bestond uit sterven en geboren worden. 'Ja,' zei de witte spin, 'dat komt omdat

jullie in het Grote Wiel van de Witte Spin zijn, van de eeuwige wedergeboorte en verslinding.'
'Dat klinkt oosters,' zei iemand.
'Nee, het is indiaans,' zei de witte spin. 'Het is een wiel, een cyclus, van vlees, niet van reincarnatie.'
'Van vlees en niet van reincarnatie ?' vroeg dezelfde persoon.
'Ja,' zei de witte spin, 'precies zoals ik het zeg. Daar moeten jullie witte mensen maar eens gewend aan raken. Jullie zijn gewoon onderdeel van de voedsel-keten, en in dit rijk ben ik de baas. Ik sta aan de top van de voedsel-keten, en jullie werken voor mij, sterven, en komen hierdoor weer tot leven.'
'Ja, weer om een stuk vlees te worden,' zei die iemand. 'Waar houdt dit alles op ?'
'Het houdt nooit op,' zei de witte spin.
'Bent u een filosoof ofzo ?' vroeg de persoon.
'Gaat je geen snars aan,' snauwde de witte spin. Even leek ze weer op een hyena, en even leek ze weer op een zwarte spin. Vervolgens sprak ze : 'In mijn webben zijn jullie. Wen daar maar aan.'
'Het is een vervloekte indiaanse steen,' zei iemand anders, 'een betoverd juweel. Wij hebben erin gekeken en raakten

betoverd.'
'Als een Medusa ofzo ?' vroeg de andere persoon weer. Sommigen knikten.
'Hoe krijgen we dat dan weer recht ?' werd er gevraagd. Maar niemand wist de oplossing. 'Misschien is dit wel ons noodlot,' opperde iemand. In ieder geval voelden ze zich machteloos, en steeds meer hopeloos. Ze waren als opgesloten in een visioen door deze drug. Ze waren op een eeuwige boerderij, maar waar werden ze voor gekweekt ? Of werden ze nergens voor gekweekt. De witte spin richtte zich gewoon op het ritueel, als een traditie, en liet verder niets doorschemeren. 'Ik wed dat het de zwarte koningin is !' riep iemand. Sommigen knikten. 'En kunnen jullie die spiegel herinneren waarin een rijk is waar een witte koning is die zwarte vrouwen onderdrukt ? Nou, daar wil ik ook niet wezen.'
'Misschien heeft hij daar wel een reden voor,' opperde iemand anders. 'Of misschien is dat de witte spin zelf die daar een dubbelbestaan leidt, want soms verandert de witte spin in een witte koning. En de zwarte koningin bewaakte die spiegel altijd in grote hysterie.'
'Of misschien zit in de spiegel een sleutel tot onze bevrijding,' zei weer een ander.

'Ik geloof daar niet in,' zei iemand, 'ten eerste niet in het onderdrukken van vrouwen, en ten tweede niet in het onderdrukken van zwarte vrouwen. Zij zijn de bron van ons leven, zijn we allemaal niet uit hen voortgekomen ? Wij hebben ze nodig, en dat ze ons onderdrukken moeten ze zelf weten, maar we kunnen niet onze bron aanvallen.'
'Jij bent het spoor bijster,' zei een ander. Spoedig liep het uit op een vechtpartij. De witte spin had haar gladiatoren opgesteld, en zaaide strijd. Om die strijd te winnen hadden ze macht nodig, en daarom begonnen ze de witte spin te aanbidden, en werd zij hun godin. Vele tempels bouwden zij voor haar, en zij genoot van hun verdeeldheid. Ze had er een lust en plezier in om strijd te zaaien, achterdocht, wantrouwen en leugens. Op alle mogelijke manieren hongerde ze hen uit, zodat ze zich openstelden voor haar gif. Haar gif werd gezien als levendmakend, overwinnend, almachtig. Zij zagen haar als hun mogelijke bruid.
In hun grootmoed stelden zij wetten op, hun eigen webben, en bouwden kerken en psychiatrieen, en zij was daar, als het grote enigma. Zij broedde voort, ja zelfs in hun graven, maar zij was ongenadig, en gaf slechts illusies, valse hoop. En voor haar tronen werden zij in het ongelijk gesteld, de één meer als de ander.

Zij hield van de jacht en van misleidende woorden. Zij mengde haar giffen op hoge bergen, en als zij afdaalde kwam zij om te doden, maar ook om op te wekken in de hel. Op een dag echter, kwam zij met een geheimenis. Ze begon te vertellen dat de witte vlieg hun enige sleutel was om van hun schuld te worden verlost, en dat haar gif was gemaakt van de witte vlieg. En ze sprak dat de witte vlieg nog eenmaal zou komen om te verlossen en te veroordelen. Op een dag ging de witte spin in een cocon en verandere langzaam in een witte vlieg. Maar deze vlieg was erger dan ze hadden verwacht. Deze vlieg bracht hen een realiteit van ongekende wreedheid. Na zeven jaren van verschrikkelijk leed stierf uiteindelijk de witte vlieg. De mensen leefden door alsof er niets was gebeurd. Ze wilden er eigenlijk niet aan herinnerd worden. Ze vonden hun eigen drug om van alles te herstellen. Zowel de verhalen van de witte spin als van de witte vlieg kwamen steeds meer en meer op de achtergrond, en men vond het ook niet meer belangrijk. Zij creeerden hun eigen religies en mysteries.
De dromenkoningin was woedend. Zij had hen deze dromen gegeven, maar ze deden er niks meer mee, en ze had haar grip verloren. Een hyena rende haar kasteel

binnen, en beet haar in de nek. 'Jij mag dan wel de godin van de dood zijn,' zei de hyena, 'maar ik ben de godin van de hel.' De godin van de dood rende al bloedend het kasteel uit, en rende het bos in. Maar de hyena achterhaalde haar. De hyena beet haar overal, maar vermoordde haar niet. De godin van de dood was nu de bloedende. Naar haar aard zocht ze de dood op, maar kon hem ditmaal niet vinden. Er was geen rad van wedergeboorte meer, want men stierf niet meer. Er kwam nu een ander rad : het Rad van de Hyena, het rad van de hel en van de onsterfelijkheid. En de schuldlast werd alleen maar groter. De grote godin van de hyenas was gekomen. De hyenas gebruikten de witte mannen nog steeds als stukken vlees, maar ditmaal stierven de mannen niet, en elk weggegeten stuk vlees groeide gewoon weer aan na een tijdje. De witte mannen werden vlees-slaven. Velen verlangden weer terug naar de dromenkoningin, naar de witte spin en de witte vlieg. Maar het werd hen niet gegeven. Zij zochten de dood, maar het vluchtte van hen weg. De god van de dood was Een-oog, die op een grote spin reed. Hij was op de vlucht, want hij wilde niet in de handen van de hyenas vallen. Als ze hem zouden vinden, dan zou eeuwige verdoemenis hem ten deel vallen.

Maar de hyenas sloegen niets over. Alles kwam in hun boerderij terecht. Het was de levende eeuwig-durende hel, een slagerij. Hier hing het grote wiel van eeuwiggroeiend vlees. De hyenas vonden vetmesting maar niks, want het vlees bleef toch gewoon maar doorgroeien, dus alles moest uitgehongerd worden. Dan was het vlees van de beste kwaliteit, en zo konden de botten ook bereikt worden, want de hyenas waren ook bot-eters.
De witte mannen werden zo zwak dat ze niet meer konden spreken, en alleen nog maar varkensklanken en gnoe-klanken konden maken, en zo doofde ook de stem van de dood uit. De dood had het laatste woord niet meer, ja, was zelfs stom geworden. Ze konden alleen nog maar mekkeren en knorren. Velen zochten troost bij de god van de slaap, maar spoedig werd ook deze bezocht door de hyenas, en zijn lot was verschrikkelijk. De god van de slaap had al deze werelden gecreeerd van misleiding en deceptie, en hypnotiseerde hen allen met zijn muziek. Een web van dromen had hij gecreeerd en werkte nauw samen met de goden van de dood. Maar ook hij brandde toen de hyenas hem vonden, en al zijn paradijsen gingen in rook op. Hij had een lange tong, en rookte veel, ook zijn waterpijp. Hij had hoerenbuurten gecreeerd waar men met

geld snel aan z'n trekken kon komen, maar geld telde voor de hyenas niet. De god van slaap was een belangrijke krachtbron voor de god van geld, die ook de god van de dood als zijn krachtbron had. Maar ook de god van geld werd woest aangevallen door de hyenas en al bloedend naar de boerderij getrokken. Als een modepop werd hij naar binnen getrokken. De hyenas beten hem overal waar ze hem bijten konden. Erotos was de god van de slaap, die hij bewerkte door snelle sex. De goden van sex en hoererij waren zijn trouwste dienstknechten. Ook deze twee honden werden door de hyenas flink gebeten en weggedragen naar de boerderij.
De god van slaap had een paradijs waar iedereen liep met een streepjescode, iedereen die had gedronken van de melk van slaap. Zij droegen die code op hun voorhoofden, en daarboven was de tatoeage van een vrouwenborst, als een merkteken. Zijn rijk werd gereguleerd door waterpijpen, die aan de mensen werden vastgemaakt, en wiens pijpen in alle mogelijke openingen van het menselijk lichaam werden gestoken. Zijn doel was de mensen te leiden tot een rots, om hen daar te verstenen en tot de eeuwige slaap te leiden. Maar dat ging nu niet door sinds de hyenas waren gekomen. Zijn dromen waren ruw

verstoord. Ook de waterpijpen van de god van slaap werden aangevallen. En de waterpijpen waren als vreemde paarse spinnen. 'Laat hen slapen,' werd er geroepen. 'Ach, laat hen slapen.' Maar de realiteiten van de hel waren een invasie begonnen, en zij kwamen met dagmerries. De dagmerries waren witte paarden die ook in zwarte paarden en in zwarte vrouwen konden veranderen. Zij waren geriemd en kwamen om te riemen, om hun rijk van slavernij op te zetten. Ook de god van de slaap ging in slavernij. Hij was bijna als een standbeeld, en zacht vuur kwam van hem voort, en hij was omringd door kleine hondjes. 'De god van de dood telt niet meer,' werd er gesproken. 'Zijn economieen zijn ten onder gegaan.' Lamach, de god van medicijnen, was woedend. Hij was de vader van de god van slaap en de god van de dood. In zijn machine kwam hij naar voren, terwijl de hyena's hem direkt aanvielen. De machine viel neer in het zand, en de god van medicijnen begon te bloeden vanuit zijn hoofd, waar hij een hoofdwond had. Er was bloed in het zand. De godin van de tuinen wierp er een roos op. Haar tranen waren van bloed. Zij was zijn vrouw. Zij was gehuld in een donkere jas van bont, maar ook haar vielen de hyena's aan. Ze viel op de grond en de hyena's doken op haar. 'Het

godenrijk is vallende,' fluisterde ze. 'Onze verborgen berg, oh, laat niemand grootvader ontdekken.' De god van drugs danste op een meer. Hij had vleugels, was als een jong kind, en droeg een oog op zijn borst. Bloemen zweefden om hem heen. Toen hij de hyenas zag schrok hij, en rende weg. Maar de hyena's kwamen hem achterna. Zij zouden nooit meer loslaten wat hun oog had gezien.
'Heb medelijden met een kind,' werd er geroepen. Maar al snel werd er een bloedspoor in de sneeuw achtergelaten. Overal waar het bloed was gevallen waren vlinders. 'Jullie zullen mijn opa toch niet vinden,' zei het kind. Maar de hyenas volgden de lange ketting waaraan het kind was vastgemaakt, en kwamen uit bij de god van krankzinnigheid, die woonde in een groot kasteel.
'Potverdikkeme, de hel !' schreeuwde de god. 'Ik kan mijn ogen bijna niet geloven. Nou, ik heb op jullie gewacht, hoor. Ik heb al kaartjes voor de trein.' De hyena's vlogen de god van krankzinnigheid aan en sleurden hem naar de boerderij.

Corruptus werd door duivelen naar de hel geleid, naar een kokende pot waar zijn lever voor eeuwig doormidden gezaagd zou worden. ‘Heb genade,’ zei Corruptus. De zaag bleef in zijn lever steken, en hij werd doorgevoerd naar een ruimte waar zijn organen en daden werden gewogen en gemeten. Izu keek toe. Ook werden er door hem notities gemaakt. Langzaamaan raakte Corruptus gewend aan de zaag in zijn lever. Toen werd er een zwaard in zijn hart gestoken. ‘Dit zwaard,’ zei Izu, ‘zal daar voor eeuwig zitten. Nooit meer zal je hart onverschillig zijn, maar gevoelig. Voor de armen zul je werken nu, en voor hen die je hebt opgelicht.’ Corruptus vond het een rechtvaardige straf, maar hij was veel te moe en ziek door de zaag in zijn lever en het zwaard in zijn hart. Het zoog zijn energie weg. Hij begon erover te klagen. Maar Izu sprak : ‘Heb je ooit meedelijden gehad met je zieke en verzwakte slaven ? Nooit heb je hen rust gegeven, daarom zal rust ook niet jouw gezel zijn.’ Corruptus vond nog steeds dat de straf rechtvaardig was, en begon aan zijn werk. Zware stenen moest hij tillen, maar zodra hij ze had verzet rolden ze weer terug. ‘Maar heer,’ sprak Corruptus,

‘mijn werk heeft geen waarde. Alles wat ik doe wordt weer ongedaan gemaakt.’
‘Heb je zelf ook niet je slaven nutteloos werk laten verrichten ?’ vroeg Izu. En Corruptus besefte dat de straf rechtvaardig was. Toen het avond werd werd hij in de poel van licht en geluid geworpen, en slaap vond hij niet. Ook anderen werden door duivelen naar deze plaats geleid.
‘Meester,’ sprak Corruptus, ‘ik heb honger. Wat heeft u te eten en drinken voor mij.’
‘Uitwerpselen,’ zei Izu, ‘want dat heb je je slaven ook gegeven.’
‘Oh meester,’ jammerde Corruptus, ‘hoe lang zal deze straf duren.’
‘Totdat je je straf zal hebben uitgezeten,’ zei Izu. ‘Leer ervan, en zij die er niet van leren zullen varen tot de eeuwige slaap die tot vergetelheid leidt.’
‘Ik heb behoefte aan slaap,’ zei Corruptus, ‘maar niet voor eeuwig. Ik besluit om van mijn straf te leren, dan zal ook ik deel hebben aan een zekere opstanding. Deze hel is niet voor eeuwig.’
‘Ga terug, Corruptus,’ sprak Izu, ‘naar de aarde waar je vandaan bent gekomen, en leer hen dat de hel bestaat, maar niet eeuwig is. In het licht is er rechtvaardigheid

voor alle mensen. Omdat er over een God wordt gesproken die voor eeuwig straft en onrechtvaardig is, zo zijn de mensen ook onrechtvaardig geworden.'

En zo werd Corruptus teruggezonden tot de aarde met een boodschap. Maar de mensen lachten hem uit, en bespotten hem, zeggende dat hij teveel gedronken had en gek was geworden. Ook in de kerk was hij niet meer welkom. En zo liep Corruptus rond met een zware last. En velen gingen naar de hel zoals Corruptus eens ging. Door duivelen werden ze opgehaald, maar geen van hen werd naar de aarde teruggezonden. En velen jammerden toen ze de plagen van de hel onder ogen kwamen, maar ook werd hen beloofd dat dit niet voor eeuwig zou zijn, maar dat het was om hun zielen te zuiveren.

'U zult gemeten worden met de maat waarmee gij hebt gemeten,' predikte Corruptus. 'Als u doorgaat met spotten, dan zult u ook met dezelfde maat in het hiernamaals bespot worden.' Maar nog steeds werd hij uitgelachen, en ze zeiden dat hij het maar gedroomd had. 'Ik heb het niet gedroomd,' zei Corruptus, 'en eens zullen jullie je daarvan bewust zijn. Tot brood zullen jullie gemalen worden.' Al gauw werd Corruptus opgepakt en in de gevangenis gestopt vanwege ketterijen. Hij besefte dat de wereld een

deel van de hel was, en haar bewoners de dienstdoende duivelen. Maar ook duivelen konden veranderen. En zo niet dan zouden ze tot de eeuwige slaap gedreven worden die tot de vergetelheid zou leiden, waar ze verbannen zouden zijn uit de gedachten.
In de gevangenis werd Corruptus meegenomen door twee vuur-engelen. ‘Je moet je straf in de hel verder uitzitten,’ zeiden de engelen. ‘Dertig jaren heb je je naasten onderdrukt, dus je bent nog niet van ons af.’ Corruptus kreeg een bijl door zijn longen, en kreeg problemen met ademhalen. Toen brachten de twee vuur-engelen hem naar het vuur. Het vuur leidde hem naar een plaats waar armen en benen werden afgehakt, in een restaurant. In het vuur begon Corruptus in een dier te veranderen. Tot een stuk vlees werd hij, omdat hij ook zijn naasten als een stuk vlees had behandeld. Zijn vlees ging ten onder, maar zijn ziel kreeg nog een kans. Ook zijn ziel ging door de molen, en er kwamen alleen maar snippers uit. Hij kreeg een nieuwe ziel, en werd door engelen tot Izu geleid. ‘Omdat je in je terugkeer naar de aarde goed hebt geleefd mag je binnen gaan tot de hemel,’ zei Izu. ‘Wel moet je nog een reis maken door vele woestijnen en wildernissen naar de hemelse stad om je te beproeven en klaar te maken.’

‘Dank u, heer,’ zei Corruptus.
‘Ongewapend zul je gaan, Corruptus,’ zei Izu, ‘omdat je op aarde misbruik van wapens hebt gemaakt. Ook zul je gaan zonder rijkdom, omdat je al je rijkdommen al op aarde hebt verspild. Omdat je op aarde macht hebt uitgevoerd over anderen en die macht hebt misbruikt, zul je geen enkele macht hebben op je pad, en geheel afhankelijk zijn van de genade van anderen.’
Toen begon Corruptus zijn lange reis, maar hij was dankbaar dat hij die reis mocht maken. Omdat hij op zijn reis barmhartig was werd hij op zijn pad steeds meer omringd door engelen. Als wilde dieren hem aanvielen, dan werd hij beschermd door de twee vuur-engelen, en op een dag nam een ridder hem mee naar zijn burcht. De ridder zelf was ook door de diepste zwakheid heengegaan, en de hulpeloosheid, en door de bijtende, tergende spotternij der duivelen, en wist precies wat het was. Eens moest hij ook de reis van Corruptus maken, en toen hij eindelijk de hemelse stad had bereikt kreeg hij deze burcht, om barmhartigheid te tonen aan andere reizigers. Corruptus had een erge langdurige honger, en kreeg voedsel van de ridder. De ridder gaf om hem en was erg behulpzaam. Toen Corruptus aangesterkt was ging hij

verder. Weer werd hij geplaagd door honger, en wilde dieren vielen hem lastig. Ook werd hij aangevallen door rovers, maar de ridder kwam hem te hulp. Toen hij over een rivier moest zwemmen verdronk hij bijna, en een vis nam hem mee. De vis nam hem mee naar een grot waar hij kon ademen. ‘Zo,’ zei de vis. ‘Die eeuwige stad zul je nooit bereiken. Geef het maar op. Ze hebben je voorgelogen dat er een weg uit de hel is. Uit de hel ontsnapt niemand, en je bent er nog steeds. Maak je klaar voor nog meer zielenpijn, want voor eeuwig zal je branden vanwege je zonden.’
Corruptus wist inderdaad dat zijn schuld groot was, maar hij wilde zich vasthouden aan het feit dat er ook hoop voor hem was, de kans om zijn leven te verbeteren. Maar de vis lachte hem uit. De vis liet zijn staart zien waarmee hij hem wilde slaan, maar weer verscheen de ridder naast hem en weerde de slag af. ‘Ach Corruptus,’ zei de ridder. ‘Geloof niet in hen van de eeuwige dood. Het zijn slechts schimmen. Ook mij zijn ze tot plaag en spot geweest, maar zij die hen zullen overwinnen zullen eten van het geboomte des levens.’ Maar toen de ridder was verdwenen zakte Corruptus in diepe wanhoop. De vis greep hem en sleurde hem nog verder in de diepte, tot een andere grot

waarin hij kon ademen. ‘Wie heeft jou gezegd dat je kunt ontsnappen aan de komende toorn,’ sprak de vis. Ook haaien begonnen hem te omsingelen. Corruptus riep om hulp, maar niemand kwam hem helpen.

‘Zie,’ Corruptus, ‘al die hulp was slechts een illusie, een schim. Ze kunnen niets voor je betekenen, want het zijn alleen je eigen ijdele gedachtes.’

‘Maar eens werd ik teruggezonden naar de aarde,’ zei Corruptus.

‘Dat was maar een droom, Corruptus,’ zeiden de vissen.

De vissen zagen er gevaarlijk uit, en een grote vrees overviel Corruptus. Staarten omringden hem die hem wilden slaan. ‘Sla mij,’ zei Corruptus. ‘Ik verdien niets anders.’ De vissen sloegen hem, en sleepten hem mee, verder de diepte in, waar ze hem begonnen aan te vreten.

‘Corruptus,’ sprak een stem. ‘Ditmaal zal je ziel ook van je afgenomen worden, maar dit zal je geest tot eeuwig leven wekken.’ En met een nieuwe geest bereikte Corruptus de overkant van de rivier. In de verte zag Corruptus een boomgaard, waar van vruchten jam werd gemaakt. De eeuwige stad had muren gemaakt van brood, en er werd jam opgesmeerd die schitterde in de zon. ‘Waarom smeren jullie er jam op ?’ vroeg Corruptus.

‘Alleen zij die eten zullen binnengaan,’ zei een man. ‘Er zijn geen poorten.’
‘Mag ik er van eten ?’ vroeg Corruptus. De man knikte. Toen Corruptus begon te eten begon zijn mond pijnlijk te branden. Op een gegeven moment werd het zo pijnlijk dat hij stopte met eten. Maar daarna at hij door omdat hij de hemelse stad binnen wilde gaan. Helemaal uitgeput en verkrampt van de pijn kwam hij aan. Maar van binnen was alles donker. ‘Waarom is het hier donker ?’ vroeg Corruptus.
‘Omdat je oog eerst open moet,’ zei een man. Iemand nam een fakkel en stak zijn oog aan. Hij leek wel in de hel te zijn, nu zijn oog in verschrikkelijke ondragelijke pijn was.
‘Alleen door pijnen zal je oog opengaan,’ sprak iemand. Maar al wat hij zag en voelde was vuur, zo erg dat hij het uitgilde. En er was een licht dat hem verblindde. ‘Hoe kan ik ooit zien in dit verblindend licht en deze teisterende vlam ?’ riep Corruptus.
‘Alleen zij die de boeken van hun binnenste hebben geopend zullen zien,’ werd er gezegd. Toen werd er een speer door zijn buik gestoken, en hij ging in ketenen.
‘Waar ben ik terecht gekomen ?’ jammerde Corruptus. ‘Is dit de hemelse stad ?’

‘Dit is de hemelse stad,’ werd er gezegd, ‘maar het is hier niet zoals de aarde het verteld heeft.’

De pijnen waar Corruptus door moest gaan waren erger dan de pijnen die hij in de hel had. Hij vroeg zich af of er een vergissing was gemaakt. Hij kwam in een put van chaos en verwarring. ‘De hemel is erger dan de hel,’ werd er gezegd. ‘Heel vroeger wist men dat, maar duivelen hebben het omgedraaid.’ Corruptus schreeuwde en gilde en had het gevoel dat hij gek werd. Hij werd krankzinnig van de pijn, een wilde man, een verscheurend dier. Ook begon hij te spotten en te lachen.

‘Weer een dolle man,’ werd er gezegd. ‘Niemand blijft hier gezond. Zij die gegeten hebben van de hemelse vrucht zullen voor eeuwig branden. De hel is maar tijdelijk, maar de hemel is voor eeuwig.’

‘Maar dit is wreed,’ schreeuwde Corruptus. ‘Dit is wreder dan ik ooit ben geweest. Is er ontsnapping mogelijk ?’

‘Niemand die ooit de hemel is binnengaan zal daar ooit ontsnappen,’ werd er gezegd. ‘Zij zullen worden tot dienstknechten van de hemel voor eeuwig.’

Een groot platform kwam naar beneden, waarop Roomse goden stonden. ‘Ik ben dus in de val gelokt ?’ schreeuwde Corruptus. Maar toen voelde hij de hand van de ridder.

‘De luchtweerspiegelingen in de woestijnen en wildernissen die naar de hemelse stad leiden zijn sterk. Ze bevatten veel waarheden, maar het zijn roofdieren op zoek naar prooi. Het zijn duivelen die toegestaan worden de gelovigen te beproeven.’ Corruptus viel in de armen van de ridder. ‘Ik ben zo blij dat je er bent. Ik dacht even dat alles verloren was. Ik zal beter op mijn hoede zijn. Wat kan ik er tegen doen ? En hoe kan ik ze herkennen ?’ Maar de ridder was alweer vertrokken. Corruptus voelde nog steeds de plek waar de ridder zijn armen had geplaatst. Het voelde warm en gloeiend aan. Corruptus voelde zich paranoide worden. Het werd donker, en Corruptus begon als een bezetene om zich heen te slaan. Hij begon alles in twijfel te trekken en had het gevoel dat er een spelletje met hem werd gespeeld. ‘Ik word alleen gelaten op de momenten dat ik jullie nodig heb,’ riep hij.
En in pure wanhoop en angst scheurde hij toen zijn geest aan flarden, totdat hij niets meer was dan een vlam, een schim, een schaduw. Weer kwam hij tot een rivier, waar een piratenschip stond. ‘Vergezel ons,’ riep een piraat hem toe. Maar Corruptus dook in de rivier en probeerde naar de overkant te zwemmen. Snel werd hij omringd door haaien. Op het nippertje werd hij gered door het piratenschip. De

piraten leken zacht en barmhartig als de ridder. Zij kwamen van de hemelse stad om reizigers te helpen. Corruptus was heel blij met deze vrienden. Zij brachten hem de grote rivier over. ‘Als je ooit onze hulp nodig hebt, dan roep je maar,’ zeiden ze. Corruptus was dankbaar, en zette zijn reis voort. Schijnbaar had hij meerdere vrienden nodig om ooit de hemelse stad te kunnen bereiken.
De hemelse stad lag op een stapel boeken, reuzenboeken, als een trap die hij moest beklimmen. De boeken waren van edelgesteente gemaakt, en konden niet geopend worden. Telkens als hij ze beklom werd hij weggeduwd door een wind, en viel in het zand. ‘Hoe kan ik die boeken openen ?’ riep hij.
‘Elk boek heeft een wachter, en die moet je verslaan,’ sprak een stem. Corruptus besloot langs de boeken heen te gaan, in de angst dat het weer een luchtweerspiegeling zou zijn. Hij wilde niet opnieuw in de problemen komen. Maar toen hij verder ging schoof er een zwaard in zijn oog. ‘Heb je het Oog van Izu al gevonden ? Alleen door dit oog zal het boek geopend zijn.’ Hij keek achterom en zag dat de boeken nu zacht waren als brood. ‘Eet,’ werd er gezegd, ‘want alleen door het te eten zul je de stad binnengaan.’ Corruptus begon van de boeken te eten die nu als zachte

broden waren, en de hemelse stad begon naar beneden te komen. Maar telkens als alles bijna was opgegeten groeide het brood weer aan, en schoof de hemelse stad weer naar boven. Nog gulziger begon Corruptus te eten, maar na een tijd plofte hij ziek en vermoeid in het zand. Duivelen om hem heen begonnen hem uit te lachen. Ook begon zijn oog meer en meer te steken door het zwaard wat erin was gestoken. Corruptus trok het zwaard eruit en begon het brood in stukken te kappen met het zwaard. Hierdoor kwam de stad steeds lager te liggen, en even later kon hij de stad binnengaan. Maar het was niet wat hij verwachtte. De mensen liepen hier rond met dure kleren, veel sieraden, en begonnen hem te bespotten omdat hij er armoedig uitzag. Dit kon de hemel niet wezen. Deze mensen leefden in een eeuwige illusie. Hij had zelfs geen behoefte om met zulke mensen te spreken. Hij verwachtte liefde te zien in de hemel, en zorg, maar al wat hij kreeg was minachting. Nu hij wist wat de tijdelijkheid van de hel betekende en de eeuwigheid van de hemel liep hij de stad uit en vroeg zich af of er ook nog een derde mogelijkheid was. Of waren deze dingen die op zijn pad waren gekomen niets dan illusie ? En wat was dan de werkelijkheid ? Corruptus ging in het zand zitten, onder een boom en viel in slaap. Toen

hij pas veel later wakker werd zag hij engeltjes en duiveltjes dansen in de lucht. Het was tegelijkertijd een dans en een oorlog. Ze leken allemaal een beetje op vlinders. Het leek op een groot vlies wat in de lucht hing, en toen wegviel. Een prachtige stad had hij in het oog nu. Hij had nog nooit eerder zo’n prachtige stad gezien. Ineens stonden de piraten en de ridder naast hem. ‘Kom op, jongen,’ zeiden ze. ‘Je hebt het gered. Laten we de stad binnengaan. En samen gingen ze toen de stad binnen. Het was een stad gebouwd van prachtig spiegelend materiaal, overgoten door zonlicht. Je kon alles van meerdere kanten bekijken, en het geheel was kaleidoscopisch. Ook de twee vuur-engelen kwamen bij hem staan, en toen zoveel engeltjes.
‘Waar zou je nu graag willen helpen ?’ werd er aan hem gevraagd.
‘Nou, het liefst aan de ingang van de hel,’ zei Corruptus, ‘omdat daar nog steeds reizigers komen die denken dat ze er voor eeuwig inmoeten.’
Corruptus kreeg toen een burcht wat de poort van de hel werd, en zelf werd hij de poortwachter van de hel.

FABRIEKEN AAN ZEE

Hij woonde dichtbij een slagroom fabriek en een poedersuikerfabriek, aan zee. Nooit had hij gedacht dat hij daar nog eens binnen zou komen, maar met school zouden ze daar een kijkje nemen, in beide fabrieken. Alles werd uitgelegd, hoe het daar werkte. Zijn moeder zei altijd dat stoute kinderen daar altijd tot slagroom of poedersuiker werden gemalen, maar hij geloofde er niks van. Hij dacht dat ze dat alleen maar zei zodat hij lief zou zijn en goed zijn best zou doen. Maar in de fabrieken kreeg hij de schrik van zijn leven. Onder de fabrieken, in grote kelders, zaten vele kinderen in kooien, en er werd uitgelegd dat dit stoute, ongehoorzame, kinderen waren die overal met de pet naar gooiden. Het waren rotjongens, tuig, en ook zaten er rotmeiden tussen. Hij kon zijn ogen niet geloven, en hij keek naar de meester. De meester deed er allemaal heel ernstig over. ‘Dus jongens, zorg maar goed dat je hier nooit terecht komt.’ Toen hij weer thuiskwam was hij sip en bang. ‘U had dus toch gelijk, moeder,’ zei hij. ‘Stoute kinderen worden daar inderdaad tot slagroom of poedersuiker gemalen. Bah, ik moet er niet aan denken. Ik wil dat spul nooit meer eten.’

‘En zag je nog iemand tussen die kinderen in kooien die je misschien kende ?’ vroeg moeder.
‘Nou nee, dat niet,’ zei hij, ‘dat niet.’ Hij dacht er toen aan dat het misschien een grap was, dat die kinderen het gewoon meespeelden. Het waren veelal oudere kinderen, en hij kende ze niet.
‘Heh, bah,’ zei hij. ‘Eigenlijk lust ik nu geen eten meer. Wat zou er wel niet allemaal doorzitten ?’
‘Nou, ik weet wel wat,’ zei zijn moeder. ‘Je eet het voortaan maar direct van de bomen, dan weet je zeker dat het goed is.’
Hij mocht wat struikjes en boompjes in de tuin planten, samen met vader, en zo zou hij voortaan alleen nog maar daarvan eten. Maar soms had hij nog wel zin aan drop of chocolade. En toch vertrouwde hij het niet helemaal wat er in de slagroomfabriek en poedersuikerfabriek gebeurde. Het was misschien doorgestoken kaart, om kinderen goed in het gareel te houden. Hij keek op de kalender, en toen schoot hem iets te binnen. ‘Oh, het was één april toen we daar waren in die fabrieken. Zouden ze … ?’ Hij schoot toen in de lach. ‘Wat verschrikkelijk,’ dacht hij bij zichzelf. ‘Wat erg, wat erg.’ Hij vroeg het aan de meester, en die gaf het direct toe. ‘Jij bent de eerste die het door

heeft,’ glimlachte de meester. ‘Maar niks tegen de anderen vertellen, he, daar moeten ze zelf maar achter komen.’
Hij vond het toch wel een beetje gemeen, en hij vertelde het stiekem aan zijn vriendje, en die vertelde het weer aan een vriendinnetje. Ze zouden de meester en de mensen van die fabrieken eens goed willen terugpakken. Eigenlijk zouden de meester en die mensen van de fabrieken tot poedersuiker of slagroom gemalen moeten worden, want zij waren degenen die stout waren geweest, zeer stout. Toen het het jaar erop weer één april was wilden ze de meester goed foppen, maar die dag was de meester er helemaal niet, maar er kwam een andere meester. En deze meester was verschrikkelijk en verpestte hun hele dag. Aan het eind van de dag kregen ze te horen : één april. Het bleek gewoon hun eigen meester te zijn die zich had vermomd. Heh, bah, wat walgelijk, en de dag was alweer voorbij zodat ze weer een heel jaar moesten wachten om de meester te kunnen foppen, of misschien zou hij daar weer een stokje voor steken. En zo ging dat door, jaar in jaar uit, dat er altijd wel weer wat tussenkwam. De meester was hen altijd weer te slim af. En toen ze eindelijk naar een andere school gingen was het natuurlijk helemaal afgelopen. Nu konden ze het allemaal wel op hun buik

schrijven. Maar weet je wat nu zo aardig was : Ze kregen een brief van de slagroomfabriek en de poedersuikerfabriek en die wilden op één april wel het huis van de meester helemaal onder de slagroom en de poedersuiker bedelven. Dat vonden ze ook wel een goed afscheid. En zo gebeurde het. Maar even later hoorden ze dat de meester net die dag daarvoor was verhuisd. Alsof hij het voelde aankomen …

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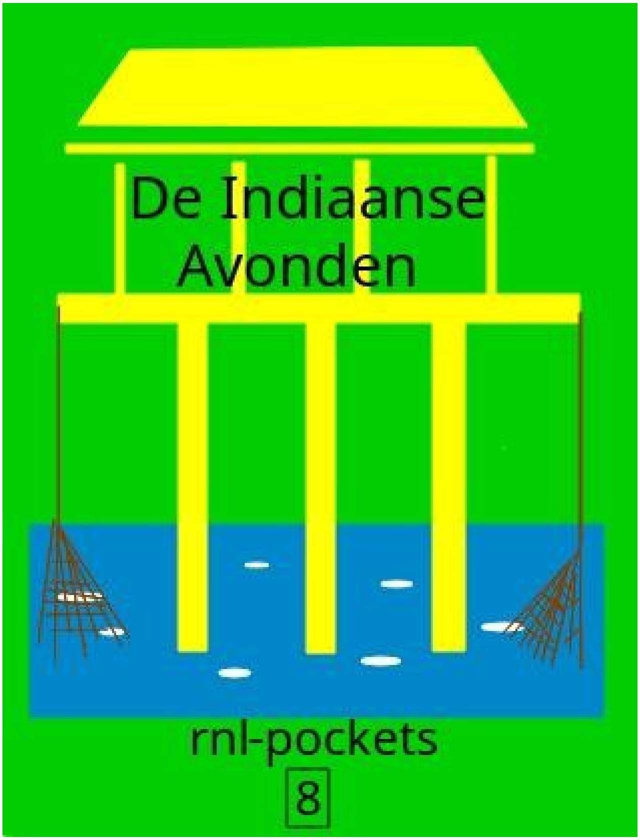
NR. 5 – HET SURINAAMSE DAGBOEK
NR. 6 – DE EVOLUTIE VAN DE HEMEL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Hester en de Koffie Robot

Vader had een donker meisje uit Amerika geadopteerd, Hester. En daarna een blank jongetje, Jaap. Jaap was heel blij met zijn oudere zus. Vader had een moeilijk leven gehad. In de oorlog moest hij vluchten. Ook had hij een hele moeilijke vrouw, maar die stierf vlak na de oorlog. Vader was heel handig. Hester hielp vader veel met het huishouden, en ook Jaap kon veel klusjes.
Vader zette 's nachts altijd het huis onder stroom aan de buitenkant, zodat dieven niet konden binnenkomen. Dat beveiligings-systeem had vader zelf gemaakt. Jaap vond het knap, en ook Hester was trots op vader. Hester was een paar jaar ouder dan Jaap, en Jaap was trots op zijn zus. Hij was blij dat hij in zo'n goed gezin terecht was gekomen, met zo'n goede vader, maar vader was soms erg depressief van de oorlog. Hester en Jaap probeerden hun vader er dan altijd overheen te helpen, maar dat lukte niet altijd. Soms moest de dokter komen, en die gaf aan vader dan medicijnen.
Maar vader begon steeds meer ziek te worden, en Hester nam steeds meer taken van vader over. 'Het laat me niet gaan,' zei vader. 'Hier is geen kruid tegen opgewassen.'

'Jawel joh,' zei Hester. 'We vinden wel wat.'
Hester en Jaap hielden de goede moed erin, ook al raakte hun vader steeds meer aan lager wal. Nu moesten ze voor zichzelf zorgen. Elke dag kookte Hester voor het gezin. Ze begon steeds meer als een moeder voor Jaap te worden. Ook vriendinnen van Hester hielpen weleens mee in het huishouden. Vader zei dat hij iets wilde uitvinden om hemzelf te helpen. Hij ging daarom soms diep in de nacht naar zijn werkkelder. Dat was eigenlijk het enige wat hij nog kon doen.
Op een ochtend kwam vader stralend uit zijn werkkelder. Hij zei dat hij de oplossing had gevonden. Hij had een robot-moeder gemaakt. Hij zei dat een moeder eigenlijk datgene was wat ontbrak in het gezin. Hij had de robot donker gemaakt, zodat ze een beetje leek op Hester, alsof het Hester's eigen moeder was. Hester vond dat de robot erg mooi was geworden. 'En wat kan ze ?' vroeg Hester schaterlachend.
'Van alles,' zei vader. 'Kijk, er zitten knoppen op. Eentje voor koken, eentje voor afwassen, eentje voor schoonmaken, eentje voor wassen, en eentje voor gezellig kletsen, en nog veel meer.'

'Geweldig,' zei Hester. Ook Jaap was blij met zijn nieuwe moeder. 'Nu is het gezin pas echt compleet,' zei Jaap. 'En het lijkt inderdaad op Hester's moeder. Nu is het alsof vader mijn vader is, en moeder Hester's moeder, en zo zijn wij bij elkaar gekomen.'
Het huis begon nu pas echt op orde te komen, want de robot deed haar werk goed. Ze was ook als een echte moeder. Ze was zorgzaam en hield je in de gaten. Maar ze was absoluut niet te streng. Ze was een droommoeder. Ieder kind zou wel zo'n moeder willen hebben. 's Avonds zaten ze op de bank om naar de tv te kijken. Langzaam begon vader uit zijn depressie te komen. De robot was zo goed gemaakt dat je niet kon zien dat het een robot was. Maar natuurlijk had ze wel knopjes.
Op een dag ging het gezin op vakantie. Robot-moeder ging ook mee. Jaap liep voortdurend gekke bekken te trekken voor de foto's. Niemand kon zo scheel kijken als Jaap. Ook Hester gaf niet om de foto's. Ze keek zo vreemd mogelijk. Ze waren gekomen voor vakantie, niet voor foto's, maar er waren allemaal fotografen. Hester en Jaap vroegen zich af waarom ze zoveel gefotografeerd werden. Vader werkte voor een energie bedrijf die energie opwekte vanuit de zee, en hij was hier tegelijkertijd op zakenreis.

Als de onderhandelingen zouden slagen dan zou het land van het gezin geheel op zee energie werken.
Hester en Jaap moesten even wachten in een ander zaaltje toen vader onderhandelingen aan het doen was. Op een gegeven moment hoorden ze luid applaus, en vader kwam glimlachend naar buiten. De onderhandelingen waren geslaagd. Weer waren er fotografen bij, en nu wisten ze waar het voor was.
Toen ze weer thuiswaren ging vader direct naar zijn werkkelder. Iets had hem op een idee gebracht. Hij wilde nu energie proberen op te wekken uit koffie bonen. Hij werkte dag en nacht hier aan door, terwijl Hester en de robot moeder al het huishouden deden. Zo werd de band tussen Hester en haar robot moeder eigenlijk alleen maar hechter. Vaak stonden ze samen af te wassen in de keuken, en hadden dan de diepste gesprekken. Voor Hester was haar robot moeder haar beste vriendin.
Op een dag was het zover. Vader had zijn machine om energie op te wekken uit koffie bonen klaar, en het zou nu voorgesteld worden aan zijn bedrijf. Ze waren er zo erg van onder de indruk dat ze naast zee energie ook koffie energie wilden uitproberen. Als er zee energie werd gebruikt hing er een zee geurtje, en als er koffie energie

werd gebruikt hing er een koffie geurtje. Er was ook een schakelaar voor waarmee je het kon wisselen.
Op een dag ging Hester met haar robot moeder het bos in. Ze gingen heel diep, en eigenlijk wilde Hester helemaal niet meer terug. Er stonden wat wigwams, en Hester wilde er in wonen. Haar robot moeder stemde erin toe. Ze zouden hier blijven voorlopig. Vader was toch altijd druk bezig, dus die zou hen niet eens missen. Hester wilde nooit meer terug. Ze liet ook haar vriendinnen komen.
Eén van de moeders van de meisjes vond dit helemaal niet goed, en ze liep helemaal met haar dochter mee naar het wigwammen kamp. Ze begon iedereen enorm uit te foeteren, en het liep allemaal zo hoog op dat de meisjes die moeder begonnen te bekogelen met modder. Toen moest die moeder het wel opgeven, maar ze riep nog wel dat ze de politie erbij zou halen. De meisjes waren hier op bedacht, dus toen zijn ze met de wigwams nog dieper het bos ingegaan, daar waar geen mens ooit zou gaan. 'Laat die politie maar komen,' zei Hester, 'dan zullen ook zij ten onder gaan in het moddergevecht.'
Omdat er vanaf toen vaak helicopters overvlogen zijn ze onder de grond gegaan met hun wigwams, om daar hun kamp te bouwen. Ze gingen zo diep als ze konden en

kwamen daar in een andere wereld. Hier schenen veel meer indianen te wonen.
Vader en Jaap vonden het allemaal best. Ze kwamen weleens een kijkje nemen in het ondergrondse indianenkamp. Maar de pret was maar van korte duur. De nazi's waren het land binnengevallen. Ze ontdekten ook de ondergrondse schuilplaats, en iedereen ging in gevangenschap. Vader en Jaap en alle andere indiaanse mannen werden meegenomen om op de trein gezet te worden naar Bergen-Belsen, een concentratie kamp. De meisjes zouden allemaal voor de Duitsers moeten werken in het huishouden. Alleen robot moeder kon ontsnappen. Daar was ze immers een robot voor.
Jaap jammerde in de trein naar Bergen-Belsen. In Bergen-Belsen zouden ze uitgehongerd worden, en er zouden implantaten in hun botten komen. Vader zei : 'Robot moeder zal wel naar de andere robotten gaan, de zee energie robot en de koffie energie robot. Ze staan nog in de kelder en hebben waarschijnlijk nog niet door wat er gaande is, maar robot moeder zal hen wel aan de praat krijgen, en dan zal het niet best zijn voor de Duitsers.'
Hester moest in het huis van een bepaalde Duitse officier werken, en ze foeterde hem uit.

Het was verschrikkelijk in het concentratie kamp. Jaap en vader kregen bijna niets te eten. 'Ze mogen wel opschieten,' jammerde Jaap. 'Inderdaad, ze zijn wel laat,' zei vader.
'Wat gaan ze met ons doen, vader, die nazi's ?' vroeg Jaap.
'Laten we het daar maar niet over hebben,' zei vader.
Inmiddels was Hester in gevecht geraakt met de Duitse officier, maar werd toen door anderen onder schot gehouden. Ze wist niet waar haar vriendinnen waren.
Hester moest nu haar werk wel doen, ook al wilde ze niet.
Ze zeiden dat ze haar zouden doodschieten als ze het werk niet zou doen.
Opeens werd er op het raam getikt. Het was robot moeder.
Ook waren de zee energie robot en de koffie energie robot meegekomen. 'Robot moeder !' riep Hester terwijl ze opkeek van het vloeren dweilen. De Duitsers die bij Hester stonden om haar in de gaten te houden keken heel verbaasd. 'Wie is die vrouw ?' mopperden ze.
'Dat is mijn moeder !' riep Hester blij.
'Wat moet die nu hier !' riep een Duitser. De robotten begonnen het raam in te slaan en kwamen toen binnen door het venster. 'Wat krijgen we nu !' riep de Duitse

officier. 'Kunnen jullie niet gewoon door de deur naar binnen komen ?'
'Nee,' zei de koffie energie robot. Hij richtte zijn arm op de Duitse officier en spoot koffie electriciteit op de man af die gelijk onder zware stroom stond. 'Nee !' gilde de Duitse officier. 'Niet doen !'
'En dan is er koffie,' zei de koffie energie robot. Toen gaf hij ook de andere Duitsers een optater met de koffie stroom. Ze werden tegen de muur geslingerd en hun haren stonden recht overeind. 'Nou, wat waren dat voor spelletjes !' riep de koffie energie robot.
Hester was heel blij. Toen gingen ze met z'n allen naar Bergen-Belsen. Toen de robotten het concentratie kamp binnenkwamen was er direct grote paniek bij de Duitsers. Ze werden allemaal onder zware koffie stroom gezet en weggeslingerd. Jaap en vader keken verheugd op.
'Eindelijk zijn ze gekomen,' zei Jaap.
'Ja, eindelijk,' zei vader.

De Onderwijzeres

Ik was nog maar een kind.
Ik vroeg aan de onderwijzeres :
'Onderwijzeres, wilt u mij omhelzen ?'
Alle kinderen waren de klas al uit.
Ze omhelsde me toen.
Ze zei : 'Kom je aandacht tekort bij je vader en moeder ?'
Ik knikte.
'Je mag wel bij mij wonen,' zei ze toen.
Ik was het gelukkigste kind van de wereld toen.
De onderwijzeres was mijn moeder geworden.
Ze nam mij mee naar huis, en zei :
'Je draagt veel met je mee, hè ?'
Ik knikte.
Toen zei ze : 'Kun je er wat over vertellen ?'
Ik schudde mijn hoofd.
'Maar ik heb het wel opgeschreven,' zei ik toen.
Toen gaf ik haar mijn schriftje.
Dat had ik in mijn tas zitten.
Ze begon het te lezen en zei 'tsk tsk tsk.'
Toen ik volwassen was geworden woonde ik nog steeds bij haar.

Ik vond het ineens vreemd als ze zomaar de badkamer
binnenliep terwijl ik naakt onder de douche stond.
Ze keek dan wel niet, maar toch.
Een mens kan ook met de ooghoeken kijken.
Het had zijn onschuld verloren.
Maar ja, ze was mijn moeder.
Toch heb ik er op gewezen dat ik dat liever niet meer had.
Ik voelde me naakt.
Ze wist alles van me, misschien een beetje teveel.
Het was net als met Adam en Eva in het paradijs, dat ze
zich ineens bewust werden van hun naaktheid en zich voor
elkaar schaamden.
Eigenlijk hield ze zich er niet echt aan.
Ze kwam nog gewoon soms binnenvallen als ik onder de
douche stond.
'Oh, sorry,' zei ze dan. 'Ik moest even wat pakken.'
Of : 'Oh, sorry, ik wist niet dat jij eronder stond.'
Ik kon het haar makkelijk ook weer vergeven.
Ze was immers mijn moeder, en mijn onderwijzeres.
Ikzelf klopte altijd eerst netjes aan.
Vaak zei ze dan : 'binnen.'
Maar ja, ze was immers mijn moeder, en onderwijzeres.

'Kun jij dat ook niet eens proberen ?' zei ik op een dag, 'dat aankloppen ?'
'Op de badkamer deur ?' vroeg ze. 'Mallerd, in mijn eigen huis, bij mijn eigen zoon ?'
'Ja, ik doe het toch ook ?' zei ik. 'Wel zo beleefd en netjes, want nu lijkt het telkens alsof het een overval is.'
'Ja, dat word mij echt allemaal te ingewikkeld, mijn lieve jongen,' zei ze zo. 'Dat hoef ik toch niet bij mijn eigen leerling en kind te doen ? Ik ben je moeder en je onderwijzeres, dat is iets totaal anders.'
Nee, met moeder viel niet echt te onderhandelen, en ze bleef het soms gewoon vergeten als ik onder de douche stond. Eindeloze discussies hebben we erover gehad. Ik zou niet meer weten hoeveel jaar het heeft geduurd, maar op een gegeven moment werden we er beiden gek van. Toen hebben we maar besloten om er een deurhaakje op te laten maken.

De Psychologie van de Eindeloze Winkelstraat

Het was een eindeloze straat,
Een winkelstraat, in de grootste stad van de wereld,
En een jongen slenterde daar eindeloos,
Hij kwam nooit ergens aan,
Ging geen winkel binnen
Hij was op weg naar de haven,
Hij was op weg naar een boot,
Aan de eindeloze zee
Maar onderweg kwam hij iemand tegen met wie hij een eindeloos gesprek had,
Het stopte maar niet,
Maar hij besloot haar mee te nemen,
Naar zijn boot
Ze sloegen een zijstraat in die naar de haven zou leiden,
Maar ook dit was een eindeloze straat,
En hij vroeg zich af of ze ooit bij de haven aan zouden komen,
Maar ja, hij had in ieder geval een eindeloos gesprek
Ze wist hem over te halen met haar mee te gaan naar het eindeloze bos,
En daarvoor sloegen ze weer een zijstraat in,

Maar ja, je raadt het al : die zijstraat was ook eindeloos
Hoe lang duurt het nog ? vroeg hij telkens.
Uit haar tas haalde ze een boek wat eindeloos was.
'Alles is hier eindeloos, hè ?' vroeg hij.
'Maar zo'n eindeloos boek kan ik toch niet allemaal gaan lezen ?
Ik heb genoeg aan dit eindeloze gesprek met jou.'
'Oh, ik moet nog wat even doen,' zei ze.
Toen stapte ze een winkel binnen.
Hij volgde haar.
'Nee, even buiten blijven,' zei ze.
'Ik ben zo terug.'
Maar ze bleef eindeloos weg,
En toen is hij naar binnen gegaan.
Hij keek zijn ogen uit.
Het was een eindeloze winkel.
Ze was hier vast en zeker verdwaald,
Dat kon niet anders.
En ook hij begon te dwalen en te dwalen,
In deze eindeloze winkel.
Na heel lang dwalen kwam hij de winkelier tegen.
De winkelier omhelsde hem.
'Oh, zo lang niemand gezien,

Ik was verdwaald in mijn eigen winkel.
Eindelijk iemand gevonden,'
zei de winkelier.
'Ik ben mijn vriendin kwijt met wie ik een eindeloos gesprek had,' zei de jongen.
'Geeft niet, geeft niet,' zei de winkelier. 'Die komt wel weer terecht.'
'Maar hoe dan ?' vroeg de jongen.
'Nou,' zei de winkelier, 'alles wordt hier verkocht, ook wij, dus ze komt wel weer terecht.'
'Dat is een hele opluchting,' zei de jongen. 'Kan ik haar dan nu kopen ?'
'Het kost eindeloos veel,' zei de winkelier.
'Maar het is mijn vriendin,' zei de jongen, 'we waren op weg naar het eindeloze bos.'
'Allemaal eindeloos duur,' zei de winkelier.
'Een vreemde bedoening dan,' zei de jongen. 'Ik wil hier weg.'
'We kunnen niet weg,' zei de winkelier.
'Dus we moeten wachten totdat we gekocht worden ?' vroeg de jongen.
'Ik vrees van wel,' zei de winkelier.

'Maar wie hebben eindeloos geld daarvoor dan ?' vroeg de jongen.
'De eindelozen,' zei de winkelier.
'Wie zijn dat ?' vroeg de jongen.
'Ik zal het je wel even laten zien,' zei de winkelier.
Hij haalde uit zijn tas een boek tevoorschijn. Het was een eindeloos boek.
'Dat boek ken ik,' zei de jongen.
'Heb je het gelezen ?' vroeg de winkelier.
'Eh nee,' zei de jongen, 'ik was met iemand in gesprek.'
'Sufferd !' riep de winkelier.
'Wat nu ?' vroeg de jongen. 'Het lijkt hier wel een gevangenis.'
'Dat is het ook !' foeterde de winkelier. 'Wat dacht je dat het anders was ?'
'Een winkel ?' zei de jongen.
'Wat is dat voor oneindeloos gezwets !' foeterde de winkelier.
'Maar wat nu dan ?' vroeg de jongen.
'Wachten op de eindeloze trein,' zei de winkelier.
'Komt die hier ook ?' vroeg de jongen.
'Nee, hier niet,' zei de winkelier.
'Maar wat hebben we er dan aan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Dan moet je het boek lezen !' foeterde de winkelier, terwijl hij het boek in de handen van de jongen drukte.
Toen liep de winkelier boos weg. 'Zorg dat je niet nog een keer verdwaalt !' riep de jongen hem na.
Toen begon de jongen maar met lezen. 'Wel verdraaid !' riep de jongen. 'Die taal versta ik niet !'
Na uren dwalen kwam hij het meisje weer tegen.
'En ?' vroeg het meisje.
'En wat ?' vroeg de jongen.
'Heb je het eindeloze boek gevonden ?' vroeg het meisje.
'Ja,' zei de jongen. 'Ik kreeg het van de winkelier, maar het is in een andere taal.'
Het meisje begon te lachen. 'Dan had je het boek maar van mij moeten aannemen, want dat was in jouw taal. Maar nee, je wilde liever met me praten. Snapte je dan niet waar eindeloze gesprekken met meisjes naartoe zouden kunnen leiden ?'
'Ik snap het nu,' zei de jongen. 'Het leidt nergens toe. Mag ik dan nu het boek ?'
Het meisje stak toen haar tong uit. 'Nee,' zei ze, en draaide zich toen om en rende weg.
'Kom terug !' riep de jongen. 'Dus ik zit in een gevangenis omdat ik een bepaald boek niet heb gelezen, en dat boek

wordt nu ook nog eens van me afgehouden ? Wat een zotte bedoening is dit ?'
En de jongen dwaalde en dwaalde en vroeg zich af wat er in het boek zou staan. Wel stonden er soms plaatjes in het boek in de vreemde taal. 'Ik lijk wel Jan Huigen in de ton met een hoepeltje erom,' dacht hij bij zichzelf. 'Was ik maar weer in de eindeloze winkelstraat op weg naar de haven. Ik was zo stom om me af te laten leiden door dat meisje. Eerst was ze zo eindeloos praatgraag, maar nu, nu ....'
Opeens stond er een fee voor de jongen in een roze jurk, met een toverstafje. 'Boekjes lezen, hè, boekjes lezen,' zei de fee. 'Ik dacht dat je op weg was naar de haven ?'
'Ja,' zei de jongen, 'maar het duurde eindeloos, en ik raakte in een eindeloos gesprek.'
'Dat is geen reden om dan maar boekjes te gaan lezen,' zei de fee.
'Wat moest ik dan doen ?' vroeg de jongen.
'Nou,' zei de fee, 'wat een vraag. Er staan hier chocolade winkels door de hele straat, en meneer weet niet wat hij moet doen.' Toen begon de fee te lachen. 'Neem eens een chocolaatje voor de verandering.'
'Tja, daar had ik even niet aan gedacht,' zei de jongen.

'Dus ga je maar achter de meisjes aan ?' zei de fee glimlachend.
'Ik kwam haar toevallig tegen, en ze hield me aan de praat,' zei de jongen.
'Toevallig hè ?' zei de fee glimlachend. 'Maar toevallig stonden er ook een heleboel chocolade winkels aan weerszijden van de straat, en daar had je geen oog voor ? Malle jongen.'
'Ik werd gewoon afgeleid,' verdedigde de jongen. 'Ze praatte maar door, en belemmerde mij het zicht. Ze bleef me maar lastig vallen, ook toen ik doorliep.'
'Ja ja,' zei de fee, 'dat zeggen ze allemaal. En toen besloot je haar maar mee te nemen naar je boot in de haven ?'
'Ja,' zei de jongen, 'misschien zou dat haar kalmeren, want ik kwam toch niet meer van haar af, en het was eindeloos.'
'Een chocolaatje had wonderen kunnen doen,' zei de fee.
'Ik begrijp het,' zei de jongen, 'het spijt me. Mag ik dan nu een chocolaatje ?'
'Zoek ze zelf maar,' zei de fee, terwijl ze haar tong uitstak naar hem.
Toen vloog ze weg.
'Bah,' zei de jongen. 'Die feeën van tegenwoordig zijn nog wel erger dan meisjes.'

Hij keek in een bak op een winkelschap, en zag er chocolaatjes liggen, maar je raadt het al : die waren natuurlijk eindeloos duur.
'Zie je nu wel !' riep de jongen. 'Ik word hier eindeloos bedrogen. Maar ja, niemand schijnt hier toch te zijn, en de winkelier zal alweer verdwaald zijn, dus ik neem er maar eentje.' Hij haalde de wikkel van de chocola eraf, en toen het zilveren folie en begon van het chocolaatje te eten.
'Lekker,' zei hij. 'Die fee had toch wel echt gelijk. Had ik eerder moeten doen, had ik eerder moeten doen.'
Hij liep verder met zijn hoofd in de wolken. 'Chocolade is toch wel het heerlijkste wat bestaat,' zei hij. Opeens botste hij tegen een politie agent op. 'Chocolaatjes stelen, hè ?' zei de agent.
'Er was hier niemand en ik was verdwaald,' zei de jongen. 'Ik moest toch wat eten.'
'Dat zeggen ze allemaal,' zei de politie agent. 'Kom maar mee.'
'Nou, ik ben blij dat je me gevonden hebt,' zei de jongen. 'Haal me hieruit.'
'Nee, je gaat er dieper in,' zei de politie agent. 'We zijn hier niet zo gesteld op dieven.'

En zo leidde de politie agent hem naar een lift, en ze gingen heel hoog. Even later kwamen ze op een hoge verdieping uit. Hier werden allemaal boeken verkocht.
'Nee, geen boeken !' riep hij. 'De fee zei dat ik op zoek moest gaan naar chocola in plaats van boeken.'
'Niks mee te maken,' zei de politie. 'En dit zijn trouwens toch chocolade boeken.'
'Dat is geen straf dan,' zei de jongen.
'Het is eindeloos duur, dus ik zou er maar niet aanzitten als ik jou was,' zei de politie agent, 'want anders ga je nog hoger het gebouw in.'
'Maar wat moet ik eten dan ?' vroeg de jongen. 'Ik heb honger. Je kunt me toch niet laten verhongeren ? Dus deze gevangenis voedt zijn gevangenen niet ?'
'Niks mee te maken,' zei de politie agent. 'Wees blij dat je nog leeft. We kunnen niet voor alles zorgen.'
'Bah, wat flauw,' zei de jongen. 'Wat een flauwe bedoening allemaal.'
'Je was toch op weg naar de haven, naar je boot ?' zei de politie agent.
'Ja, maar ik kwam iemand tegen,' zei de jongen, 'en die leidde me hier naartoe. Ik had natuurlijk nooit naar haar moeten luisteren. En nu is ze weg.'

De politie agent begon hem uit te lachen. 'Dat is mijn dochter,' zei hij. 'Zij werkt voor ons. Zo krijgen we nieuwe klanten.'
'Gevangenen zul je bedoelen,' zei de jongen sip.
'Kop op,' zei de politie agent. 'Ik heb ook nog een andere dochter. Zou je die niet willen ontmoeten ?'
'Wat staat me dan te wachten ?' vroeg de jongen.
'Kom maar mee,' zei de politie agent. Weer gingen ze de lift in, en ditmaal gingen ze nog hoger. 'Hoe hoger je komt, hoe meer de winkels in elkaar overlopen, en dan is het veel kleiner.'
Plotseling stond de jongen met de politie agent weer op straat, en alles was niet eindeloos meer. 'Wat vreemd,' zei de jongen.
'Het was een verkleinings-lift,' zei de politie. 'Nu ben je pas waar je wezen moet. Mijn andere dochter wacht op je bij de haven.'
'Vreemd,' zei de jongen weer, en liep over straat op weg naar de haven. Ergens halverwege kwam hij weer de eerste dochter van de politie agent tegen. 'Ha, ben je daar weer !' riep ze van een afstand.
'Ik heb geen tijd nu,' zei hij. 'Iemand wacht op me bij de haven.'

'Heb je een afspraakje ?' zei het meisje lachend. Toen liep ze lachend door.
Bij de haven aangekomen zag de jongen een ander meisje staan. 'Ben jij de dochter van de politie agent ?' vroeg de jongen.
'Ja, hoezo ?' vroeg het meisje geirriteerd.
'Nou, ik mag toch wel wat vragen,' zei de jongen. 'Dan hoef je niet direct zo boos te doen. Je vader zei dat je me hier zou opwachten.'
'Mijn vader zegt zoveel, daar heb ik niks mee te maken,' zei het meisje. 'Ik wacht hier op heel iemand anders.'
'Op wie dan ?' vroeg de jongen.
'Gaat je niks aan,' zei het meisje. 'Wijsneus.'
'Je bent gierig,' zei de jongen.
'Gierig ?' lachte het meisje ineens, en rende toen weg.
Het leek wel alsof alles toen nog kleiner en nauwer werd. De jongen had moeite met ademhalen. Het leek wel alsof alles op hem afkwam om hem te verpletteren. 'Moet dat chocolaatje zijn geweest,' zei hij tegen zichzelf. 'Ik ook altijd met mijn goede ideeën. Ik moet terug naar die lift, want hier is het nog erger.'
Hij begon al te hijgen en puffen van de benauwdheid, en liep weer terug naar het punt waar de politie agent hem

bracht. Daar stond de eerste dochter van de politie agent weer. 'Alsjeblieft, ik smeek je,' zei de jongen. 'Breng me weer terug naar de verkleinings-lift.'
'Wil je dat het nog kleiner en benauwder wordt ?' vroeg het meisje lachend.
'Nee, groter, eindelozer,' zei de jongen. 'Dit is ook niks.'
'Jij weet ook niet wat je wil,' zei het meisje lachend. 'Ik dacht dat je een afspraakje had ?'
'Het was een misverstand,' zei de jongen. Daar kwam ook de politie agent weer aan. 'Wat sta jij hier nog te staan !' bulderde hij. 'Lopen, naar de haven !'
'Je dochter wilde niet,' zei de jongen.
'Niks mee te maken,' zei hij.
'Je kan niemand dwingen,' zei hij.
'Dat maak ik nog wel uit,' zei de politie agent, 'en nu lopen.'
'Ik ga naar de haven, naar mijn boot, maar niet naar haar,' zei de jongen.
Toen rende de jongen terug naar de haven, naar zijn boot, en stapte naar binnen. Het was er een enorme rotzooi. Hij startte direct de motor. 'Ik moet hier weg,' dacht hij bij zichzelf, 'weg.' Gelukkig was de zee hier niet eindeloos. Het was maar een riviertje. Maar alles werd alleen maar

kleiner en benauwender. Weer ging hij terug naar de haven, ging zijn boot uit, en op zoek naar de tweede dochter van de politie agent. Die stond daar ergens met een telefoontje. 'Alsjeblieft,' hijgde hij. 'Breng me terug naar de verkleinings-lift,' zei hij.
'Vergrotingslift zul je bedoelen,' zei het meisje, terwijl ze gewoon doorging met haar telefoongesprek.
'Alsjeblieft,' hijgde hij, 'als alles maar weer groter en eindelozer wordt.'
'Waarom neem je niet gewoon een chocolaatje ?' vroeg ze, terwijl ze weer doorsprak aan de telefoon.
'Heb ik niet,' zei de jongen.
Het meisje grabbelde even wat in haar tas, terwijl ze doorsprak aan de telefoon, en gaf hem toen gehaast een chocolaatje. Hij haalde de wikkel er vanaf en toen het zilveren folie en begon ervan te eten. 'Mmm,' zei hij, 'zo lekker. Chocola is toch wel het heerlijkste wat er is.'
'Je bent laat,' zei het meisje.
'Ik was er al, maar toen wilde je niet,' zei de jongen. 'Je zei dat je op iemand anders wachtte.'
'Dat moet een vergissing zijn,' zei het meisje. 'Kom maar.'
Het meisje leidde hem toen naar de vergrotingslift die weer helemaal naar beneden ging naar het eindeloze

winkelgebouw. Hij was zo opgelucht. 'Wat is de bedoeling hiervan ?' vroeg hij.
'Nou,' zei het meisje, 'de bedoeling is dat de klant het niet in zijn hoofd haalt nog ooit uit onze winkel te ontsnappen.'

Einde

De Februari Schietpartijen

Ik herinnerde mij de Februari schietpartijen. Maar nu was ik bij haar. Zij haatte mij.
Ik herinnerde mij de vogel die mij oppikte en hier bracht. Het was zeer traumatisch, als een nachtmerrie. Ik zag hoe de grote vogel mij streng in de gaten hield. Ik kende deze vogel niet, maar het was een roofvogel en het had grote angst in mijn hart gebracht. Het greep mij in de weilanden toen ik vluchtte van de februari schietpartijen. Deze vrouwen waren gek.
Als ik in de stad was gebleven zou ik niet meer geleefd hebben. Ze hadden het ook op mij gemunt, maar wat was dit leven waard hier ? Deze vrouwen waren gek.
Op een dag greep de vogel mij weer, en nam mij weg. Misschien vond de vogel het wel genoeg. De vogel bracht me diep in de wildernis, maar ik kon niet vergeten wat er was gebeurd. Op een bepaalde manier had de vogel mijn leven voor de tweede keer gered.
In de nachten had ik nachtmerries over de Februari schietpartijen. Ik was helemaal alleen in de wildernis, maar de vogel zorgde voor mij. Het hield roofdieren op een afstand, en bracht voedsel tot mij.

Het was maar een droom. Ontsnapping was slechts een droom hier.
Meer en meer begon ik te twijfelen aan de februari schietpartijen. Het kon slechts een nachtmerrie zijn geweest. Wat gaven de vrouwen mij hier te eten ?
Ik keek haar aan, en toen lager naar haar borsten. Ik was in grote angst en pijn. Hoe zou iemand naar deze vrouwen kunnen kijken en leven ? Ze waren barbaars, wreed, als een nachtmerrie. Zij waren de februari schietpartijen.

de indiaanse avonden

Eerste avond

Ik zat met haar op de bank.
We raakten in gesprek over indianen.
Dat had beiden onze interesse, want wij waren natuur mensen.
Zij was van indiaanse achtergrond.
We kwamen in een verbaal gevecht.
Het liep niet goed af. Ze ging boos weg.
Toen ben ik de hele avond alleen geweest.

Tweede avond

Ik bleef lang op, weer om met haar te praten.
Weer ging het niet goed.
We hadden het over haar vroegere vriendjes.
Het leek wel alsof ze mij tegen die vroegere vriendjes probeerde op te stoken.

Derde avond

We waren beiden in de huiskamer. De gordijnen waren dicht.
We waren beiden stil. Zij ging wat handwerk doen. Ik las.

Vierde avond

Onze relatie ging niet goed.
Ze wilde er een punt achter zetten.
Ik stelde voor het uit te praten.
Dit ging nauwelijks goed.
Ik werd er depressief van.
Toen ze dat merkte deed ze iets aardiger.
Ze wilde het nog wel proberen.

Vijfde avond

Ik was nog steeds depressief.
Ik was stil, en liet haar spreken, maar ze zei niet veel.
Ze is toen handwerk gaan doen, en ik ging weer lezen.

Zesde avond

De depressie is nog steeds niet voorbij.
Ik kijk haar aan.
Ze klikt de tv aan.
Er is een indianen film op.
We gaan er beiden naar kijken.

Zevende avond

Weer een hele discussie.
Ik ben nog steeds depressief en voel me ziek.
Ze is wel aardig.
Ik kijk haar aan.
Zij kijkt soms naar mij.
Ze leest me dan voor uit een boek.

Achtste avond

Het gaat nog steeds niet goed met mij.
Zij verzorgt mij.
Ik vraag me af of ik relaties wel aankan.

Ik begin haar te betalen voor het werk wat ze voor me doet.
Het begin van het einde.

Negende avond

Ik maak een punt achter de relatie.
Het is niks voor mij.
Ik kan het niet aan.
Wel wil ik haar houden als verzorgster.
Ik ben nog steeds depressief en voel me zwak.

Tiende avond

Op sommige momenten is het alsof we nog een relatie hebben.
Het is meer een knipperlicht relatie.
Eigenlijk is ze gewoon mijn verzorgster.
Ik zie het niet meer zitten. Ik kan niks aan.

Elfde avond

Ik voel me iets beter, en kan weer dingen zelf.

Maar ik heb haar wel nodig.
Het is aan en uit de hele tijd.
Ze is het wel en ze is het niet.

Twaalfde avond

Aan het einde van de avond liggen we in elkaar's armen.
We vertellen elkaar onze dromen.

Dertiende avond

Ik ben alleen. Ze is niet gekomen.

Veertiende avond

Ik ben weer alleen.

Vijftiende avond

Ik open een brief die ze door de brievenbus heeft gegooid.
Het is een leeg vel.
Wel is het van haar als afzender.

Zestiende avond

Ik krijg weer een brief.
Er staat in dat ze me niets meer te zeggen heeft.
Ik doe vervolgens bij haar een brief door de brievenbus
waarin staat dat ze ook niets hoeft te zeggen.

Zeventiende avond

Geen antwoord.

Achttiende avond

Weer geen antwoord.

Negentiende avond

Ze heeft een brief door de brievenbus gedaan waarin staat dat we dan klaar zijn. Ik schrijf haar een brief terug waarin staat dat er zoveel meer is dan spreken.

Twintigste avond

Ze is weer bij me. Ze zegt niets. Ik zeg ook niets. Ze vraagt : 'Okay, wat wil je doen ?'
'Indiaantje spelen ?' zeg ik.
'Okay,' zegt ze.
Ik kijk haar aan en zij kijkt mij aan.
'Hoe doen we dat ?' vraag ik.
'Ik weet wel wat,' zei ze. 'Blijf daar zitten.'
Ze staat op en wijst op me, en doet dan gebarentaal.
'Wat zei ik net in gebarentaal ?' vroeg ze.
'Al sla je me dood,' zei ik.
'Ik weet het zelf ook niet,' zei ze.
'Grappig,' zei ik.
'Nee, je moet net doen alsof,' zei ze. 'Zo ontstaat er een verhaal en kunnen we spelen.'
En dat zijn we toen de hele avond gaan doen.

Eenentwintigste avond

We hebben veel lol samen, maar het is erg vermoeiend.
Het is maar goed dat we een knipperlicht relatie hebben.
Meer kan ik ook echt niet aan.

Tweeentwintigste avond

Haar vriendin is bij ons op bezoek.
Dit gaat helemaal niet goed.
Haar vriendin loopt tussen ons te stoken.
Dit wordt zo erg dat we weer ruzie hebben.

Drieentwintigste avond

Nu is haar zus bij ons op bezoek.
Die is heel rustig.
Alles gaat goed.

Vierentwintigste avond

Ik ben met haar alleen.
We hebben het over haar vriendin en haar zus.
We komen er niet uit.

Vijfentwintigste avond

Ik praat met haar maar het lijkt alsof ik tegen een muur praat.

We komen niet dichter bij elkaar.
Ik vertel haar dat een zekere afstand ook goed is, zolang ze maar in de buurt is.
Niet te ver, niet te dichtbij.

Zessentwintigste avond

Ze komt niet opdagen, en op de honderdste avond is ze nog steeds niet terug, dus ik neem aan dat het voorbij is. Ik heb het helemaal gehad. Van onze knipperlicht relatie is niks meer over. Er knippert niks meer. In de avonden ben ik eenzaam. Ik lees en schrijf. Toch is het beter zo. Ik ben geen mens voor relaties. De indiaanse avonden hebben genoeg aan henzelf.

De Ochtenden

1950, zondag 1 januari

Vijf jaar had hij in een coma gelegen. Hij werd wakker in een ziekenhuis in 1950, vijf jaar na de oorlog. Ze hadden hem gevonden, maar hij kon zich niet meer herinneren hoe hij in een coma was geraakt. Wel kon hij zich de oorlog herinneren. Ook kon hij zich niets herinneren van zijn coma tijd. Hij werd gewoon wakker in een nieuw leven. Het oude was ver weg, maar toch herinnerde hij zich de oorlog levendig, en gruwelijk. Het was allemaal een beetje op de achtergrond. Hij was verbaasd over zijn nieuwe leven. Hij voelde zich goed. Hij stond op en liep het ziekenhuis uit, op blote voeten. Hij werd teruggeroepen, maar hij luisterde niet. Hij wilde naar huis. Hoe zou zijn vriendin er nu uitzien ? Toen hij bij zijn huis was aangekomen woonden daar andere mensen. Hij belde aan en werd vriendelijk te woord gestaan. Zijn vriendin zou nu ergens anders wonen. Hij kreeg het nieuwe adres en ging daar naartoe.
Hij belde aan.
Zijn vriendin deed open en slaakte een gil.

Toen omhelsde ze hem.
‘Je bent wakker geworden !’ riep ze.
‘God zij dank !’
‘Lazarus,’ zei hij.
‘Wat was er met mij gebeurd ?’
Hij had een nieuw leven nu. Zijn vriendin ontving hem met open armen. Het was een mooie ochtend op de eerste dag van 1950. Ze spraken veel over de oorlog en over elkaar. Ze hadden elkaar opnieuw gevonden door deze ontwaking. ‘Ik dacht dat je nooit meer zou ontwaken,’ zei ze. ‘Elke dag heb ik je opgezocht in al die jaren.’ Hij huilde.
Het was een mooie ochtend. Ze liet hem het huis zien, de kamers, het meubiliair. Sommige dingen herkende hij nog van vroeger. Andere dingen waren nieuw. Ook liet ze hem de tuin zien, aan de voor- en achterkant.
‘Het is een wonder,’ zei ze. Hij knikte. Aan het einde van de ochtend maakten ze ook een wandelingetje door de buurt. Hij had inmiddels slippers aan.
‘We moeten wat kleren voor je kopen,’ zei ze. Hij droeg wat van haar kleren en een jas van haar.

1950, maandag 2 januari

Het was zonnig, maar koud. Vandaag zouden ze nieuwe kleren voor hem kopen. Ze waren beiden vroeg op. Hij scheen niks meer te mankeren, zo van de ene op de andere dag. Wel had hij gruwelijke flashbacks, over de oorlog. Dan moest ze hem omhelzen.
In de winkelstraat werd hij vreemd aangekeken. Een man met slippers in de winter en met vrouwenkleren. Hij glimlachte naar hen. Hij was al blij dat hij weer ontwaakt was.
Ook gingen ze even naar de boekenwinkel.

1950, dinsdag 3 januari

Hij was vroeg op en zong een lied. Hij ging de tuin in en keek naar de lucht. Ook keek hij naar de planten en boompjes in de tuin, de struikjes. Alles was kaal vanwege de winter. Zo begon hij ook zijn nieuwe leven. Hij voelde zich kaal. Nu moest hij stap voor stap zijn leven opbouwen. Vandaag zouden ze naar zijn oma gaan met de trein. Zij wilde hem graag zien. Ze was al oud.
Het was een lange treinreis.

‘Jongen, wat ben je groot geworden,’ zei ze toen ze aankwamen. Ze omhelsde hem stevig. Het was nog hetzelfde huisje. Hier kwam hij altijd graag. Zijn opa was al overleden. Hij wilde niet te lang blijven, maar zijn oma drong erop aan.

1950, woensdag 4 januari

Dirk Wibaut liep met zijn vriendin door de winkelstraat. Nu wilde hij ook werken. Ze klopten aan bij het pand waar hij vroeger werkte. Ze waren verbaasd hem te zien. ‘Jij was toch in een coma ?’ Hij knikte. Hij werd omhelsd. ‘Het is een wonder,’ zeiden ze. ‘Niemand had ooit nog verwacht dat je uit de coma zou komen na zo’n lange tijd.’ Hij kon er direct weer werken.

1950, donderdag 5 januari

Om elf uur ‘s ochtends zou hij beginnen met werken. Daarvoor ging hij eerst met zijn vriendin naar de markt. Er was zoveel te koop. Hij dacht aan zijn werk. Hij kon eigenlijk niet wachten. Maar ineens had hij midden op het marktplein een grote flashback, een zware paniek aanval.

Zijn vriendin omhelsde hem. Omstanders keken hem vreemd aan. ‘Ja, het is de oorlog,’ zei zijn vriendin.
Toen ze thuisgekomen waren plofte hij neer op de bank en huilde. ‘Ik wil werken,’ huilde hij. ‘Zo kan ik alles vergeten.’ Kwart voor elf liepen ze samen naar zijn werk. Nog helemaal onder de tranen kwam hij daar aan. ‘Gaat het niet goed met je, jongen ?’ werd er gevraagd. Hij schudde zijn hoofd. ‘Maar ik wil graag werken. Dan kom ik er misschien vanaf.’

1950, vrijdag 6 januari

Het was een mooie dag. Vroeg in de ochtend voordat hij naar het werk zou gaan maakten ze even een wandelingetje. Ze liepen langs een hotel waar hij vroeger graag kwam. Het was een wit hotel. Hij maakte er altijd een praatje met de tuinman. Die was er nog steeds, en was blij hem te zien. ‘Gaat nu alles goed met je, jongen ?’
Hij knikte. ‘Ik heb nu weer werk.’

1950, zaterdag 7 januari

Zijn vriendin ging naar een modeshow. Hij was er niet in geinteresseerd. Hij ging kijken tussen zijn oude boeken. Vele indianen boeken had hij verzameld. Het bleek dat zijn vriendin door was blijven gaan met de verzameling, want er waren ook boeken bij die hij nog niet kende. Toen ze aan het eind van de ochtend thuiskwam met een vriendin raakten ze daar nog even over in gesprek.

1950, zondag 8 januari

Hij was vroeg op en zong een lied. Hij voelde altijd een bepaalde saaiheid op de zondagen. Maar zijn vriendin gaf wat afleiding. Toch voelde hij zich ook depressief, maar dat had hij vroeger ook altijd op de zondag. Hij wist niet waardoor het kwam. Hij noemde het zondag depressie of zondag humeur. Hij wilde ook niet het bos in. Hij dacht aan zijn oma. Misschien konden ze naar haar toegaan, maar uiteindelijk besloot hij dat niet te doen. Hij maakte zijn bed op en keek rond in de kamer. Hij keek door het raam. Alles was er zo rustig, vredig, en saai, zo saai. En het was ook nog eens winter. Het was koud. Buiten groeide niets. Hij wilde niet in het bos zijn. Nee. Dan zouden zijn flashbacks terugkomen. Dan zou het hem naar

de keel vliegen. Hij moest binnen blijven. Buiten vlogen de draken.
‘Niemand heeft er iets aan als ik flashbacks ga krijgen,’ zei hij tegen zichzelf. Hij wilde eigenlijk werken, maar het was zondag. Hij besloot naar het cafe te gaan, alleen. Maar toen hij daar aankwam kreeg hij niets te drinken. De kastelein kende hem wel. ‘Nee, niet meer, niet meer,’ zei de kastelein.
‘Waarom niet ?’ vroeg hij.
‘Ben je het dan vergeten ?’ vroeg de kastelein. ‘Je dronk jezelf vroeger altijd tot in een coma.’

Hoofdstuk 1. Het Zwaard Van Calvijn

De vlaggen hingen uit buiten. Hij zat in zijn zitstoel, zijn vrouw was in de keuken. Hij had net het gras weer eens gemaait, wat hij wekelijks deed. Hij staarde naar buiten, naar de begroeiing op de muur. De metalen platen zaten er goed vast tegenaan, en daar groeiden de planten omheen. Dat kon hem niet wild genoeg zijn. Hij was altijd al geinteresseerd geweest in tuinieren, en hij had dan ook echt zijn eigen stijl, vurig, wild, maar ook piekfijn geordend. Het was een samenspel tussen natuur en mens. Hij had vroeger altijd bij de politie gewerkt, en daar ging het er eigenlijk hetzelfde aan toe : de buurt was wild, en de politie bracht orde, en zo was er een prachtig samenspel, heen en weer. De politie mocht volgens hem de soep niet te heet opdienen, en zo liet hij dan ook de natuur in zijn tuin een zekere vrijheid hebben. Wel hield hij alles goed in de gaten. Hij had een zekere strengheid als hij naar zijn tuin keek. Zijn vrouw kwam de huiskamer binnen met de koffie. Ze zeiden niks tegen elkaar. Het zonlicht golfde de kamer binnen toen zijn vrouw het gordijn iets verder

opendeed. Beiden staarden ze naar buiten, de tuin in. De sproeier stond aan, het was een warme dag. Aan de dag scheen geen einde te komen. Zijn vrouw was aan het breien, en hij staarde maar. Geen woord werd er gezegd. Het leek wel alsof zijn denken vastzat. Hij hoorde het getik van de brei-pennen van zijn vrouw. Het leek wel alsof ze heel ver weg zat. Of kwam dat door de vele spullen die er tussenstonden. De tegels op de grond glansten in het zonlicht, maar ze werden er niet bruiner op. Het was een harde vloer. Je zou makkelijk wat kunnen breken als je erop viel. Er lagen ook wat tapijtjes in de grote huiskamer. Ze hadden een groot huis, een alleenstaand huis. Ook het fonteintje in de vijver stond aan. Hij worstelde zichzelf door de dag. Hij verveelde zich, maar wist niet wat hij moest doen. Hij bleef het tikken van de brei-pennen van zijn vrouw maar horen. Kinderen hadden ze niet, nee, ze waren tamelijk eenzaam. De man stond op en liep naar de kast, waar hij een fles sterke drank uittrok, en gaf zijn vrouw ook wat. Ze hielden wel van een borrel. Dat was goed voor het bloed, en dat hielp hen op de been. Eigenlijk leken ze in hun leven niet meer verder te komen. Ze waren in een nauw cirkeltje terecht gekomen, en gingen bergafwaarts. Ze leefden

geisoleerd. Er was nauwelijks contact met de buitenwereld, en daar hadden ze ook geen behoefte aan. De tuin was alles voor hen, en hun woning. Zijn vrouw was vroeger arts geweest, voornamelijk kinderarts, maar moest later stoppen vanwege haar alcoholisme. Nu had ze het veel beter onder controle. Haar man hield de wacht over haar, maar liet haar nog wel genieten van een borreltje op zijn tijd. Toch waren de twee erg zwaarmoedig en hielden er een kerkelijk leven op na. De kerk was alles voor hen, voornamelijk op de zondag. Een grote bijbel lag naast de openhaard. Het geloof in God gaf hen rust, als een oase in de woestijn van hun ouderdom.

Op zondag na de kerkdienst fietsten ze samen naar huis. Het was warm weer. Maar al snel zaten ze weer in hun oude positie. Hij had niet veel behoefte om dingen te gaan doen, ook al verveelde hij zich. Hij trok zich op aan de structuur van zijn tuin en zijn huis, wat hij streng in de gaten hield. Het was als het werken in de tempel, alsof hij in de kerk woonde. Hij voelde zich een nauwlettende koster, en dat was hij vroeger ook geweest. Veel was hij bezig met zijn herinneringen, die hem ook half depressief maakten. Een heleboel dingen zou hij terugwillen, maar ze

waren onbereikbaar. Het was een treurig stel, en velen zouden hen saai noemen. Als ze kleinkinderen zouden hebben, dan zouden die hier geen leven hebben. In zijn gedachten was hij altijd de tuin en het huis aan het maaien. De gelakte spulletjes waren als hun huisdieren. Maar het ging niet zo goed met zijn vrouw. Ze was aan het dementeren, en dat riep ook wel heel veel herinneringen bij hem op. Op een gegeven moment kon ze niet langer in huis blijven, en moest ze naar een verzorgings-tehuis. Hij kon dat moeilijk accepteren, maar hij had geen andere keus. Hij voelde zich al als een weduwenaar. Het was als een trauma in zijn hoofd, maar het kerkelijk leven beurde hem op. Hij wist dat zijn vrouw een verloren zaak was. Ook de tuin gaf hem rust. De maaiers in zijn hoofd waren nu als van vuur, als grillen. Hij had nu het gevoel dat hij de touwtjes nog strakker moest trekken. Nog steeds stonden de protserige spulletjes van zijn vrouw hier, de beeldjes, de hebbedingetjes, het antiek, en het gaf hem een gevoel van verbinding met haar. Aan de telefoon kon hij niet meer met haar praten, en ze wist nog nauwelijks wie hij was. Ze was aan het aftakelen tot aan het bot.

Hij ging meer en meer drinken, om het verdriet over zijn vrouw te vergeten, en bezocht kroegen voor het eerst in zijn leven. Het huis en de tuin werden wilder, omdat hij het onderhoud niet meer kon bijhouden, en het was voor hem ook geen prioriteit meer. Hij raakte verslaafd aan de fles, zoals zijn vrouw eens was. Hij kwam in het rijk der schimmen. De alcohol bracht hem een felle stem in zijn hoofd. Met het vele geld dat hij had schafte hij een bar aan in zijn eigen huis, helemaal voor hemzelf. Ook ontving hij vrouwen van lichte zeden aan huis. Maar deze tijden liepen snel ten einde, door het knagend kerkelijk geweten binnenin. De God in zijn hoofd sleepte hem naar het graf, en sprak hem ernstig toe. Hij probeerde zo min mogelijk na te denken, en weer begon het vele staren. Hij was zelf ook door maaiers omringd, de gouden maaiers van de kerk. Zij zouden hem veilig leiden tot aan het graf en tot de hemelpoort. De bijbel scheen hem weer nieuwe kracht te geven, en hij las er veel in, en spoedig begon hij ook zijn tuin en huis te onderhouden als nooit tevoren. Ook koken ging hem goed af, ook al waren het alleen maar de standaard-gerechten. Maar het was alsof iets hem van binnen aanvrat, alsof er een spin in hem leefde. Wat als hij niet een uitverkorene was van de God die hij diende ? Het

zwaard van Calvijn sneed diep in zijn ziel. Hoe meer hij de bijbel las, hoe meer hij ook de duistere andere kant van het verhaal zag. Vooral na zijn wilde uitstapjes begon hij de hel meer te vrezen dan ooit. Misschien was de God die hij diende wel helemaal niet zo tevreden over hem. En velen waren geroepen, maar weinig uitverkoren. Hij kwam in de eerstegrote geloofs-strijd van zijn leven, en lijstjes over wie er allemaal niet het koninkrijk des hemels zouden beerven bleven hem kwellen tot diep in de nacht. Het was alsof hij door duiveltjes was gebonden. Misschien ging hij er iets te hypnotisch mee om, maar hij kon er niet van loskomen, totdat ook bij hem Alzheimer toesloeg.

Hij wist niet meer wat de bijbel was. Hij kon er uren naar staren, naar het kaft, maar wist het niet meer. Was het het dagboek van zijn vrouw ? Of het wetboek van de politie, was het pornografisch ? Was het onzedelijkheid ? Een enorme woede maakte zich van hem meester. Hij kon het zich niet meer herinneren. Wel wist hij dat het altijd heel belangrijk voor hem was. Was het een erfenis van zijn vader ? Waren het de liefdesbrieven van meisjes die hij in zijn jonge jaren kreeg ? Was het grootmoeders kookboek ? Een uitgelopen folder van de jehovah’s getuigen ? Een

boek van een ons onbekende religie ? Was het een geschiedenis boek. Het zweet steeg hem naar het hoofd. Hij was bijna aan het klappertanden, aan het beven als een jong hondje. Was het een toverboek ? Nee, toverboeken bestonden niet. Een verzameling niet betaalde rekeningen ? Misschien was het van zijn vrouw ? Hij besloot het boek weer neer te leggen. In de kerk kwam hij niet meer. Hij voelde zich als levende achter tralies. Hij wist niet meer wie hij was. Hij werd als een wild dier.

Hij kon uren staren naar dingen, om zich af te vragen wat het was. Hij was de grip op de werkelijkheid kwijt. Het maakte hem kwaad, dat zijn hersenen hem in de steek lieten. Maar aan de andere kant kwam hij erg tot rust. Het leven was hier zwoel. Hij voelde zichzelf als levende op een tropisch eiland, badend in het warme zeewater. Het normale leven drong niet meer tot hem door, en waarom zou dat moeten ? Hij snapte de kaartjes die hij kreeg niet. Hij dacht dat het kokosnoten waren, of dat het herfst was. Weer wat blaadjes die van de bomen zijn gevallen. Soms probeerde hij ze op te eten, soms hing hij ze aan de muur. Sommige van die kaarten waren prachtig. Op een dag besloot hij zijn hele huis rood te verven, maar toen hem

dat niet beviel verfde hij alles bruin. Het stond nog niet eens zo gek. Hij had wel stijl. Hij probeerde af te rekenen met het verleden wat hij maar niet begreep. Hij noemde zichzelf ‘baas van de hel’. Ook dacht hij dat hij Calvijn was, maar hij wist niet meer wat Calvijn voorstelde. Hij droeg zijn oude politie-pak weer en was nu baas van de politie, iets wat hij overigens altijd al had willen zijn. Op een dag had hij even een flits in zijn hoofd. ‘Had Calvijn niet de bijbel geschreven ? Dit is mijn boek. Mijn agenda. Hierin staat wat er moet gebeuren.’ Hij greep de bijbel en liep ermee rond. Hij riep en schold, alsof hij een dictator was. Maar hij raakte in de war van zichzelf en plofte op de bank. Toen ging hij maar weer de tuin instaren. Hij werd er stil van.

In zijn hoofd regende het, en na een tijdje werd hij bedlegerig. Vreemde gezichten zag hij in zijn gedachten, die dan allemaal weer vermengd werden. Hij kon zich niets meer herinneren. Ondanks zijn ziekte had hij een goede tijd. In zijn gedachten waren bomen personen en konden spreken, en hij voerde lange gesprekken met hen. Hij betuttelde hen, omdat hij nu eens eindelijk zijn onderdrukte vader gevoel kon manifesteren. De bomen in

zijn hoofd waren als zijn kinderen. ‘Jullie zijn de vrucht van mijn tuin,’ zei hij altijd. ‘Dan is het allemaal toch niet voor niets geweest.’ De bomen in zijn hoofd gaven hem zijn geheugen weer een beetje terug, maar op een hele andere manier, met een hele andere kijk op het leven. Maar de bomen in zijn hoofd begonnen te rotten en stierven. Het was een hevig gevecht, want hij beschouwde hen als zijn kinderen. Hij werd weer geconfronteerd met de dorheid van het bestaan, hij nam het stof waar, om hem heen. ‘Alles is een bende,’ zei hij. Het was een traumatische ervaring zijn kinderen te moeten verliezen. Er was een begrafenis-stemming in zijn hoofd. Maar bloesem scheen voort te komen uit het dode hout, vrouwen. ‘Mijn kinderen zijn gestorven,’ zei hij. ‘Hebben jullie hen niet kunnen redden ?’ Maar de vrouwen zeiden niks. Ze waren naakt. ‘Toe, trek wat aan,’ zei hij. ‘Anders sterven jullie zo van de kou.’

‘Wij gaan niet dood,’ zeiden de vrouwen. ‘Wij zijn de vlammetjes van het eeuwig leven. En wij gaan u weer jong maken.’

‘Oh, de bron van de eeuwige jeugd,’ zei de man. ‘Zo, zo.’ Maar de man werd steeds zieker. Zijn gedachten kwamen

vast te zitten, en hij waande zich in de woestijn. Hij had niet eens de kracht een raam open te zetten. Er kwam een verzorgster langs, elke dag. Die moest dat maar doen. Ze wilden hem eigenlijk naar een verpleeghuis verplaatsen, maar hij wilde zijn huis niet kwijt. Zijn huis en zijn tuin, dat was alles voor hem, zijn tempel. ‘De goden hebben mij hier gebracht,’ zei hij.

‘U bent een kind van de goden ?’ vroeg de verzorgster.

‘Ja,’ zei hij triomfantelijk, ‘of hun vader.’ De verzorgster las hem vaak voor uit de bijbel, maar hij begreep er niet veel van. Hij zag er hele andere dingen in, en het raakte hem niet meer. ‘Wat een mooi sprookjesboek,’ zei hij altijd. ‘Het schuift maar, en het doet maar, en het komt maar nooit aan in mijn hart, maar het is een mooi gezicht, dat wel.’

‘Je bent zo mooi als mijn vrouw eens was,’ zei de man op een dag tegen de verzorgster. ‘Mijn vrouw was als een tuin, vol wonderlijke geheimen, en toen ik dacht, nu wil ik eindelijk dat geheim weten, toen ging ze weg. Ze werd van mij weggetrokken, naar een verpleeghuis. Maar ik had het boek nog niet uitgelezen.’

‘Veel dingen zullen nooit afkomen,’ zei de verzorgster. ‘Er is niet voor alles tijd.’

‘Is dat niet sneu ?’ vroeg de man. ‘Of misschien hoort het zo. Weet je hoe ik het bekijk, ik denk dat het verhaal in een ander boek verder gaat.’

De verzorgster knikt. De kamer was vol met de geur van de tuin, gloeiende rozenblaadjes, gloeiend in de zon, bijna schroeiend. Het leek alsof ze van binnen bloedden. ‘We zijn soldaten in de oorlog,’ zei de man. ‘We moeten ons pad zien te vinden. Zovelen weten niet wat hen te wachten staat, als ze dieper in de tuin van het leven komen. Alles sterft hier af.’ De verzorgster knikt weer. ‘Ja, we moeten op die andere frequentie zien te komen,’ zegt ze. ‘Want deze loopt dood. Het is een overgang, je voelt de stromen van de bloemen door de lucht heengaan om het pad voor ons te banen. Voelt u dat ?’

‘Ja,’ zegt de man. ‘De bloemen weten meer dan wij. Dat is waarom ik altijd van tuinen heb gehouden. Er zijn daar geheime gangen. Zij kunnen leiden tot de hemel.’ Midden in de nacht groef de man zich in in de grond. ‘Ik wil een bloem worden,’ zei hij. Het was tijd dat hij een plaats kreeg in het verpleeghuis. Hij had het niet meer in de

gaten, dat dit niet zijn eigen huis was. Hij was zich niet echt bewust van de overgang. En de verzorgster zocht hem nog vaak op, en er was een prachtige tuin, nog wel prachtiger dan zijn eigen tuin ooit was geweest. ‘Wat is mijn tuin toch prachtig geworden,’ zei hij trots. En als andere mensen over de schoonheid van de tuin spraken, dan zei hij altijd : ‘Ja, ik heb er hard aan gewerkt. Het is niet voor niets geweest, al die lange jaren.’ Ook het huis zag er pico bello uit, en hij voelde zich als een koning. In het verpleeghuis werden ook kerkdiensten gehouden, maar hij zei altijd tegen de predikant dat hij de politie was. Hij begreep de werkelijke strekking van het verhaal niet meer. Mensen vonden het altijd een beetje vreemd als hij over zijn kinderen, de goden, sprak. Veel van de mensen daar waren toch wel diep gelovig. Hij kon verschrikkelijk opscheppen, en vaak had hij het hoogste woord. Over zijn vrouw die de hemelpoort zou zijn, en dat iedereen zijn vrouw moest aanbidden om in de hemel te kunnen komen. Maar eigenlijk wist hij niet goed meer wat de hemel was. Eens stapte hij op een andere man af met zijn glas, wees in het glas en zei : ‘Zie, daar is de hemel.’ En sommige mensjes waren erg goedgelovig.

Op een dag moest en zou hij preken. Hij duwde bijna de predikant weg van zijn plaats, ging staan en zei : ‘Geliefde broeders en zusters, wij, de goden, hebben vandaag besloten u op deze manier toe te spreken. U bent aangekomen in de hemel, gefeliciteerd. U mag elkaar de hand schudden en kussen.’ En enkelen begonnen dat ook te doen, maar anderen werden overstuur. ‘Ik ben de kapitein van het schip,’ zei de man. ‘En wie het daar niet mee eens is wordt overboord gezet.’ Na een tijdje luisterden ze allemaal aandachtig naar hem. Hij bedoelde het niet kwaad. Na een tijdje stapte hij op, maar al snel wilden ze hem weer hebben. Elke zondag wilden ze naar hem luisteren. Ook de verzorgsters en verzorgers vonden het interessant. Ze stonden ervan te kijken hoe snel hij opleefde in het verpleeghuis. Hoe hij zich vrijer voelde dan hij ooit was geweest. ‘Een groot profeet is opgestaan,’ riep een man eens tijdens zijn preek.

Hij heeft zijn oude levensstijl vergeten, zijn oude denkstijl, en kan niet meer terug. Hij heeft het gevoel dat er wat fout zit, en kan daar vaak kwaad om worden. Hij wil weer tuinieren, en wordt kwaad als het niet lukt. Een vreemd gevoel heeft zich van hem meester gemaakt, en vreet hem

aan van binnenuit. Alsof er een spin in hem leeft, dodelijk, onvermoeibaar, met een duidelijk doel. En hij ligt verstrikt in het web. Wat kan hij doen ? Alle oplevingen zijn maar voor even, om daarna nog dieper weg te vallen. Hij bereidt zich voor op de dood, die maar niet komt. Als hij vrouwen ziet borduren, is het alsof zij hem van binnen prikken. Hij kan daar kwaad om worden. Hij raakt meer en meer geisoleerd van de anderen. Hij heeft zijn eigen kamer. Nog steeds denkt hij dat het zijn eigen huis is, en dat de anderen noodgedwongen bij hem logeren, want buiten is de grote zee, de vloed. Hij herinnert zich een oud kinderversje : Alle dieren twee aan twee, gaan met Noachs ark mee. Hij is er van overtuigd dat hij Noach is, en dat hij hen allemaal gered heeft met zijn ark, zijn huis. Maar nu heeft hij rust nodig. ‘Waarom ben ik zo moe in het paradijs ?’ vraagt hij zich af. ‘Is er soms een slang in het paradijs ? Ben ik gebeten ? Of is dit de hel, is dit mijn straf, ben ik niet uitverkoren ?’ Maar de religieuze verwarring maakt al snel weer plaats voor de grote trots over wat hij allemaal al heeft bereikt in zijn leven : kapitein op een schip. Hij wijt zijn religieus trauma aan een vroegere aanval van zeerovers. Die zouden hem op zijn hoofd hebben geslagen. Zijn geheugen gaat op en naar en maakt rare draaiingen.

En dan valt hij op een dag helemaal in een grijs gat. Alles tolt voor zijn ogen. ‘De zeerovers,’ roept hij. ‘Ze hebben teruggeslagen.’ En dan zijn ineens zijn woorden niet verstaanbaar meer. In zijn hersenen gaat alles traag, alsof ze alles vermalen wat nog is overgebleven. Het is hem zwart voor de ogen nu. Hij kan zijn gedachten niet meer onder woorden brengen. Hij denkt dat hij overboord gegooid is, en dat vissen hem aanvreten, haaien. Hij zweeft op het randje van de dood. Hij ziet bloeidende tuinen, gloeiend, bijna schroeiend in de zon. Hij denkt dat hij dood is. Hij voelt zich alsof hij door een donkere gang met bloemen gaat. Hij kan met de bloemen spreken, ze verwelkomen hem. Maar dan is alle verbinding verbroken, en is alles zwart. Hij voelt zich hopeloos verloren, maar even later lijkt het alsof hij in een bloem ligt. De dood ademt hier.

Hij leeft weer in het verleden, alsof zijn vrouw er nog is, zijn zusjes, zijn vader en moeder. Zijn zusjes spelen op het plein. Ze zien eruit als popjes. Hij wil ze omhelzen, maar dan staat hij stijf. Zijn vader roept hem. ‘Zeg Noach, afwassen.’ Ook gaan ze naar de kerk. De stem van de dominee echoot door de kerkzaal. Hij zit weer op school.

De leraren staan voor hun schoolborden, waaruit struiken komen om de kinderen mee te nemen. ‘Eindelijk,’ denkt hij. Al zijn nachtmerries komen terug, de struiken die hun dorens in de monden van jonge kinderen stoppen, en hen in hun tanden steken. En die dorens blijven daar zitten. En pepermunt wordt er in de kerk uitgedeeld, van de mintstruik.

‘Ik vraag jullie te luisteren,’ zegt de leraar.

- Nee, zegt een kind.

‘Dan ga je maar naar de directeur.’

- Geen sprake van.

Zo gaat dat altijd. Moe wordt hij ervan. Altijd en eeuwig die dictators. Slangen in het paradijs. Zijn hoofd is heet, zijn oude woede stroomt. Hij heeft zijn vrouw nodig, de poort naar de hemel. Maar hij is jonger nu, en speelt op het plein. De kinderen hebben ruzie. Honden in het paradijs. Ze rennen, ze zijn op jacht. Het zijn vuurbessen in zijn hoofd, de honden van gebrek. Hij ziet de engel des doods, zo vroeg al, zich mengende in het kinderspel. Zijn bittere klauw beroert het zoete kinderhart, en plant het trauma daar, als een pad leidende tot de dood. Zo zijn wij allen

hier opgehangen. En op het huwelijk ? Trots kijkt zij hem aan, en dan wordt de spiegel ineens ingeslagen. De engel des doods is hier. Ruw worden kinderdromen verstoord, moeders en vaders gillen. De engel des doods vertrekt met het kind, met de pop, ramen inslaande, deuren intrappende, baant hij zijn weg. De engel des doods is hier, waar Maria haar niet kan tegenhouden. Het is een vrouw, het gezicht van een lerares, een dokter, een arrogante blik. Ze heeft haar lange reis gemaakt vanuit de hel om toe te slaan. De oogst van de hel is bijna rijp, hier staat zij met haar sikkel en zeis, als de Zwarte Maria. Hij smeekt haar het kind te sparen, maar koelbloedig neemt zij het kind mee.

Onbarmhartig heeft zij toegeslagen. Bij het zien van het leed verroerde zij geen vin, koud als de dood was zij. Haar angel vindt haar weg door harten, om te verwonden. Zij sluit geen compromissen, laat zich niet omkopen. Haar zwarte klauw komt om te grijpen en te doden. Zij komt om te breken, om dat wat alreeds zwak is gemaakt mee te nemen. Ze laat woede achter, onbegrip, verscheurde gevoelens, een doorboord hart.

In haar doolhoven zijn we verdwaald, in haar web verstrikt. De confrontatie is onvermijdelijk. Ze laat al haar wapens zien in een reflex. Ze heeft een dodelijke wond, want eens kwam ze haarzelf halen. De engel des levens kijkt haar goedkeurend en bewonderend aan, en we staan schaakmat. Is er nog een andere engel die meeleven toont, dan is dat een gevallen engel, en zo wordt alles weggestreept. Hij wil opstaan uit de kerk, maar hij kan het niet. De woorden van de dominee geven hem troost.

De koude hand voelt hij, die zijn schouder indrukt, het machteloze gevoel, de woede, maar het woord van de dominee is verzachtend, ontgiftigend, totdat de engel des doods weer toeslaat. Haar reis vanuit de de hel stopt hier. Hier neemt zij haar woning. Maria draagt een zwart kleed, haar soldaten hebben zwarte helmen, en die zwarte bessen moeten gegeten worden. Hij schreeuwt, vol woede, maar ze sluiten hem op. Een gevallen engel noemen zij hem. Een engel ? Wat is dat ? Heeft dat met een auto-industrie te maken ? En de bijbel, wat is dat dan ? Hij weet het niet meer, in zijn hersenen verliest hij grip. Er is een koud gat in zijn hersenen, glibberig, als besmeurd met uitwerpselen.

Het is maar een darm. Voedselresten, niets anders, en een grotere vertering moet nog komen ? Of blijft het hierbij ?

Hij staat op straat, het regent. De stad lijkt bezaait met hondenpoep, en nu zwemt het rond in de regen die zich ophoopt op de grond. Kinderen hebben plezier in rubberbootjes. Hier hebben ze altijd van gedroomd. Diepliggende garages lopen onder. Hij kijkt rond. Hij heeft een paraplu. Zo maakt de bakker dus zijn brood, denkt hij.

Hij mag er wezen. Hij voelt zich vrij. Het is dinsdag. Hij loopt naar de brug over het smalle riviertje. Dan gaat hij de winkelstraat in. Hij leest een krant die in het regenwater drijft, althans dat probeert hij. Op zoek naar een gouden boodschap, maar al wat hij ziet zijn de eentonige, naargeestige boodschappen van de engel des doods. Met monotone stappen loopt hij verder. ‘Hier woonde Iris vroeger,’ bedacht hij zich. Maar hij loopt haastig door. Het water is hem bijna tot de knieen gestegen. De stad lijkt nu bezaaid met de uitwerpselen van honden. Het zijn de honden van gebrek, maar hij is gelukkig nu. De apocalypse kent hij nu, de schalen des hemels die over het verloederd volk wordt uitgegoten. Hier heeft hij zo lang op gewacht. En het regent maar door, en de dijken breken

door, en hij klimt in een boom. Dit is de boom waar hij als kind altijd in speelde, waar hij zijn hutten had, en zijn eerste vriendinnetjes. De boom was nu veel langer. Ja, hij zou de zondvloed overleven. Deze boom, als de kroon van zijn tuin. Lange schaakstukken staan op de dijken.

Hij zoent met Klara, dan met Els, maar op Klara wordt hij steeds verliefder. Hij trouwt met haar, alles in het wit. De tuin is voor hem het belangrijkste. Die boom moet groeien, anders redden we het niet. Op de dijken en duinen loopt hij, de koppen afhakkende van lange schaakstukken. Zij zijn de weg naar de hemel niet, en hij is de politie. Het gaat om de boom. Maar nieuwe koppen komen uit de schaakstukken ploppen. Hij is in een gevecht met de engel des doods. En de engel des levens lacht. Ze waren zo verliefd. Hij ziet haar staan, bij de brug, Kirsten, zijn eerste liefde. Ze is in schitterend wit met allerlei hangende touwtjes. Hij komt dichterbij en de bliksem slaat hem. Ze staan bij een boom, een andere boom, en dan kussen ze elkaar. Een langere jongen gaat er uiteindelijk met haar vandoor, en dan wordt ze een popje van een andere tuin, vreemd voor hem. En de jaren daarvoor was de liefde in hem zo zwak dat hij alleen maar kon dromen. Er waren

zoveel andere dingen in hem die hij veel belangrijker vond. Een auto was belangrijker dan een meisje. De juffrouw was belangrijker dan een meisje. De sterkste zijn was belangrijker dan een meisje. Het meeste hebben was belangrijker dan een meisje. Hij trok aan datgene wat de engel des doods vasthield. Hij wist niet wat het was, maar hij wilde het hebben. Een ongelovelijke kracht maakte zich van hem meester, een jeugdige kracht, en zij liet los. Hij hoorde een schreeuw, een gil. Hij hield de engel des levens in zijn armen. Hij trok haar door het inmiddels tot de nek gestegen regenwater. ‘Kom naar de boom,’ riep hij.

‘Wij weten allemaal wat de enige weg is,’ zei de dominee. Hij wist het niet meer. ‘Ja, maar de stad, de stad,’ riep hij.

‘Grijp de boom,’ riep de dominee. ‘Kus haar. Beklim haar. Ze is van jou. Ik verklaar u nu man en vrouw. En deze bijbel mag jullie huwelijk bezegelen.’ Hij wist niet wat de bijbel was. ‘Liefdesbrieven van Klara of van mijn eerdere liefdes ?’

‘Allemaal,’ zei de dominee. ‘Onderhoud nu je tuin.’

‘Bind haar aan de boom,’ riep iemand. ‘Trek haar op,’ riep een ander. Een politie-agent deed hem in de boeien. ‘Waarom heeft u deze vrouw opgehangen ?’

‘Ik probeerde haar te redden. Ik ben zelf een politie-agent,’ zei hij.

‘U moet voorkomen bij de engel des doods,’ zei de agent. Ze zat daar in de hal, vooroorlogs. ‘Nu is het oorlog,’ riep ze. ‘Je hebt het vuur van de goden gestolen, Prometheus, en aan de mensen gegeven. Je kent je straf.’ Een gier vloog op hem af, om van zijn lever te eten, die tegelijkertijd weer aangroeide. ‘Gier,’ zij hij. ‘Breng haar tot de ark, de grote boom, we missen nog een paar dieren.’

De gier vloog op haar af en greep haar.

Hoofdstuk 2. De Oase

Ze had satijn aan, als een popje. De juffrouw had alle kinderen onder haar macht. Als haar poppen waren ze, en ze behandelde hen goed. Alle jongens waren verliefd op de juffrouw, maar er waren belangrijkere dingen dan de juffrouw. Het jaar daarop kregen ze een nieuwe juffrouw,

een verschrikkelijke, het tegenovergestelde van de vorige juffrouw. De nieuwe juffrouw was als de engel des doods, als een wild en gevaarlijk dier. En toch wist ze zich te gedragen dat jaar, en kwamen ze er heelhuids doorheen, en het was maar voor een jaar. De dag des doods was voorbij. Het schip triomfeerde in de haven, aan de kade. ‘Moet dat nou, al dat bloot ?’ vroeg zijn vader toen hij meer en meer ging tekenen.

‘Ja, open en bloot,’ zei hij. ‘Ik laat ze niks meer verbergen. Dieren zijn toch ook bloot ?’

‘Het is een onderwaardering van het vrouwelijke geslacht,’ zei vader. ‘Zie jij vrouwen als dieren ?’

‘Bomen staan toch ook bloot ?’ zei hij. ‘Het is onze enige redding.’

‘Nee,’ zei vader, ‘je weet wie onze enige redding is.’

Maar hij wist het niet meer. Hij was gefixeerd op de boom. De noot moest gekraakt worden, gepeld, tot aan de pit. ‘We hebben lang genoeg gewacht, vader,’ zei hij.

‘Jij groeit op voor galg en rad,’ zei vader.

‘En jij groeit op voor de kus van de engel des doods,’ zei hij tegen vader.

Maar het schip triomfeerde in de haven, aan de kade. De lage boompjes op de grond, de struiken in het diepe zand, warm zand was het, en het leek alsof ze allemaal bewust waren. Het zonlicht leek rinkelend. Hij kon het zich niet meer herinneren, en werd een treurig persoon. Hij wist snel niet meer wat bomen waren. Het dwaalde allemaal op hem heen. Hij lag vaak op bed. Hij was vaak moe, als gekust door de engel des doods. Een diersoort was het in zijn ogen, gemeen, opdringerig.

‘Praat niet zo over engelen,’ zei vader. ‘Het zijn heilige wezens.’ Maar hij wist niet meer wat heilig was. Er was een diep gemis in zijn hart, het knaagde. De somberheid van het alledaagse leven overspoelde hem, verlamde hem.

‘Trouw haar,’ zei de dominee. Het was zijn verlossing uit dat gezin. Klara dronk veel, en hij lustte ook wel een borreltje op zijn tijd, en steeds meer begonnen ze zich in hun huisje terug te trekken. Het was alsof ze alcoholische sappen aan de bomen konden onttrekken. Hij likte aan de bomen.

Zij was het schilderij in zijn huis, een schilderij van groen-metalen maaiers, waarmee hij wel over elke wilde haardos wilde gaan. De groen-metalen maaiers schitterden in het zonlicht. Het was een warme, mooie dag. Ze waren als de wachters van de engel des doods. Maar ze had haar betekenis verloren. Ze was als het ei op tafel. Het was paas-ochtend, de geur van het lijden na de dood, nieuw leven brengend. Zijn vrouw stond in de keuken. Hij staarde naar de tuin. Het zou een prachtige dag worden met veel zon. Er was geen krant vandaag, en op de televisie was er het levenslied. Zijn vrouw kwam even later met de koffie binnen, en ging toen zitten om te breien. Het was alsof hij alles weer opnieuw beleefde. Ze zat ver weg van hem, of dat kwam door de vele spullen die tussen hen stonden. Het huis stond vol met de dierbare spulletjes van zijn vrouw. Er werd niet veel gezegd. Het ging bergafwaarts met zijn vrouw, en snel werd ze door de engel des doods weggehaald. Een groot ei zweefde boven de vijver. Deze had zijn vrouw opgeslokt. Het was alweer pasen. Het jaar daarna was hij alleen. Hij at veel eieren, om iets van zijn vrouw terug te krijgen, maar hij ving veel bot. Hij liet schilderijen in zijn huis hangen, Franse schilderijen, met wulpse gestaltes die ’s nachts tot leven

kwamen, tot hem kwamen, om hem te beladen met kerkelijke schuld. Hij wist dat er wat mis was met hem. Hij had aan bomen gelikt.

De nachten duurden lang, waren diep, waarin hij vele gesprekken voerde, naar de schilderijen staarde. Hij liet een bar plaatsen. De gestaltes van de schilderijen moesten zijn vrouw vervangen, de leegtes opvullen. Maar de kerkelijke prijs was hoog, een prijs die opliep tot aan pasen. Hij was de gekruisigde, hij was de engel des doods. Hij was voortijdig gekomen, gevallen was hij. Maar het grote boek begon de betekenissen te veranderen. Het was een draaiboek, een boek van rekeningen, en hij doneerde veel geld om zijn geweten los te kopen, uit deze hel. Hij was het zelf die die lange reis vanuit de hel had gemaakt, en nu was hij hier, met al zijn groengelakte maaiers. De tuin vroeg erom om gemaaid te worden, en het was een mooie dag. De tuin was klaar om haar oogst te geven. Hij greep, miste, en greep nog een keer, en was vereeuwigd in een schilderij. Hij met de zeis, gedood om te doden. De vlaggen hingen uit buiten. Hij herinnerde de verzorgster die kwam. Hij liet haar ook aan bomen likken, en zij werd als hem. Zij leerde van hem. Hij had een machts-positie.

Zij aanbad hem omdat hij ouder was, en veelkleurig was. Voor haar was hij niet ziek maar vrij, een verlicht mens. Hij liet haar het schilderij zien waarop hij stond. ‘Is dat je grootvader ?’ vroeg ze.

- Nee, dat ben ik.

‘Je lijkt veel ouder hier.’

- Macht verouderd.

‘Wie heeft het geschilderd ?’

Hij zwijgt, en hangt het schilderij weer terug. Met pasen eten ze altijd samen paas-eitjes. Dan herinnert hij zich niks meer, en gaat terug in de tijd, zo ver, dat hij bij de witte lijnen aankomt. Als hij erover gaat zal hij sterven. Hij beweegt zich helemaal tot het randje van de laatste streep. Hij kijkt in de diepte van een reusachtig ravijn. ‘Hier wil ik niet sterven,’ denkt hij. Hij gaat terug, en hoort zijn vader en moeder tot hem spreken, hem betuttelen. Hij is niet vrij. Strak wordt hij opgevoed. Zijn vader bespeelt hem als een pop. Zijn moeder kan hem niet bereiken. Hij heeft een ei met vele stralen in zijn hart. ‘Alleen een vrouw kan me hieruit redden,’ denkt hij.

‘Wil je met haar trouwen ?’ vraagt de dominee.

‘Ja,’ zegt hij.

‘Dan is zij nu uw vrouw.’

De kerkdienst gaat verder. Zijn vader en moeder zijn verdrietig omdat ze hem kwijt zijn. Ze wilden hem in een hokje houden. De dominee neemt het hok over. Als dieren zijn ze in het schip van Noach, twee aan twee. Zijn vrouw kan goed naaien en breien. En borduren doet ze ook graag, maar het steekt hem. Het steekt hem dat ze toch ook zo ver weg is. Ze leven in verschillende werelden. Ze breekt zoveel van zijn hart weg, door haar geprik, als een spin die hem van binnen aanvreet. En met pasen zijn er nieuwe eieren. Hij is het paaskind, maar hij kan niet opnieuw geboren worden. Daarvoor zijn de banden te strak. De tijd brengt dood voort, geen leven. En hij gaat het tegemoet. Een vrouw moet hem redden. Zijn eigen vrouw is niet genoeg, het gaat niet diep genoeg, alhoewel ze diep steekt. Dan zijn daar de Franse schilderijen. Met deuren die ’s nachts opengaan. Hij leert hen bomen likken. Ze worden als hem, en kunnen niet meer terug. Ze zijn de stralen van het ei. Hij is de kapitein op het schip, en buiten loeren de haaien op hem. Ze willen hem naar een verpleeghuis

brengen, net als zijn vrouw. Zijn vrouw woont nu in de haaien, als de prinses der haaien is zij. Ze hebben haar overboord gegooid. Hij zal hen vinden. Hij is de engel des doods, het ei met de vele stralen. Hij had niet moeten slapen, hij had zijn tuin moeten onderhouden. Nu is ze weg. De Franse soldaten hebben hun Napoleon gevonden. Hij steekt zijn maaiers in de fik, en is klaar om te gaan grillen. De honden van gebrek zijn in de stad. Nu is alles in vuur. Hij zal zijn vrouw vinden. Hij zal haar vinden in de haai die haar opslokte, en van die haai zullen ze hun boot maken. Maar zijn herinneringen draaien, en zijn ziedend, en dan weet hij ineens niks meer. Hij weet niet dat hij ooit een vrouw had. Hij heeft nu de gedachte dat ze er nooit is geweest. Ze probeerden hem iets op de mouw te spelden. Hij woont alleen. Zijn huis staat in een klein bos, met een bloemenveld. Hij woont hier eenzaam en verlaten, met zijn maaiers. Veel te maaien elke dag. Daar trekt hij zich aan op. En schilderijen zijn zijn passie maar zij zijn dood. En ook boeken zijn zijn passie, maar zij zijn dood. Hij houdt van de engel des doods. Het leven is te eng. Hij heeft een Maria-beeld naast de televisie, wat hij ooit heeft zwartgeverfd. Er is een lamp in geplaatst. Hij aanbidt haar, maar dan verdwijnt haar betekenis. Ook zij is dood. De

dode kunst trekt hem aan, en het dode water der bomen, de alcohol. De lucht ruikt naar drop. Hij durft niet naar het toilet, daarom gebruikt hij een po die hij eens in de week verschoont. De po staat boven, en bakent zijn terrein af. Het beschermt hem tegen de wilde dieren van het bos. Hij staart uit het raam en ziet de uitgestrekte velden der vergetelheid. Hier zijn de witte strepen. En nu wil hij er echt voor gaan. Hij vecht, hij schreeuwt, hij overwint, en verliest dan. Beelden staan er in zijn huis, die het Christus-verhaal uitbeelden. Vaak gaat hij langs die beelden. Die beelden zijn als zijn huisdieren, veilig in de ark van Noach. De ark van Mozes heeft horens. Hij komt dichterbij, en de geur van wierook, drop en chocola overspoelt hem, maar ook de geur van hondenpoep. Hij grijpt de horens van de ark, maar wordt dan achteruit geslagen. Boven de ark verschijnt een ei met vele stralen. De ark verandert in een doodskist, en hij heeft het gevoel alsof hij in een lift zit, en wordt uitgestrekt als een sigaar in een sigaren-houder. ‘Ik ben een van de velen,’ denkt hij. ‘Velen zijn geroepen, weinig uitverkoren.’ Doodsangst overvalt hem.

Zijn hang naar materiele goederen wordt groter, die zijn hersenen bevriezen. Goud en metaal is zijn lust, edele metalen, het liefst gelakt. De badkamer is als een ark voor hem. Hij staart veel naar bijbeltaferelen op schilderijen, maar hij kan ze nauwelijks herinneren. Hij is alleen, in een koel huis. Hij strijdt tegen alles totdat het dood is. Het dode heeft de vlam van ander leven, elitair leven, fijngevoelige kunst. Maar hij kan dit leven niet opbrengen. Het hout om hem heen begint te rotten, het goud om hem heen begint te stinken, en het koele begint hem te steken. Een spin vreet hem aan, een groep dolle wolven. De honden van gebrek zijn hier, de honden van een duivels paradijs. Zij nemen hem mee naar het verpleeghuis, en zij gaan zijn huis bewonen. Zij hebben al zijn medailles afgenomen, om er zelf mee te pronken. ‘Alleen de duivel kan de duivel overwinnen,’ denkt hij. Hij weet nog nauwelijks wie of wat de duivel is. Hij ziet het als een wapen. Hij moet zich verdedigen, maar hij kan het niet. ‘Ik kan net zo goed Frans praten,’ denkt hij.

De juffrouw houdt hem stevig vast.

‘Wil je met haar trouwen ?’ vraagt de dominee.

Hij knikt verlegen. Als hij thuis is maait hij het gras. Zijn vrouw komt hem een hoog glas brengen. Later zitten ze in de tuin. Ze gaan vroeg naar bed. Zijn vrouw leest voor. Over de engel des doods wordt niet gesproken. Wel weten ze dat het een plaaggeest is. Dan gaan ze slapen. Zijn vrouw kust hem. Hij houdt haar hand vast. Zijn zusjes wonen bij hem in. Ze zijn paas-eitjes aan het beschilderen. Als hij het ziet krijgt hij er honger van. Zijn zusjes spelen vaak op het pleintje, waar ze spelletjes doen. Ook zijn ouders wonen bij hem in. Hij draagt het ei met stralen. In de nacht maait hij. Dokters nemen hem mee in de nacht, zeggende dat hij schizofreen is, een gevaar voor de samenleving, met zijn maaiers. Zij nemen hem mee en sluiten hem op, ver weg van het oog van zijn familie. Zij willen het ei met de stralen uit hem roven, maar zij kunnen het niet. Hij denkt dat zij buitenaardsen zijn. Van de planeet aarde schijnt hij nog nooit gehoord te hebben, en wil er ook niet zoveel mee te maken hebben.

Met hem schijnt het beter te gaan nu ze hem nieuwe pillen hebben gegeven. Hij is inmiddels in het ziekenhuis, op een speciale afdeling. Langzaam begint hij weer uit bed te komen. De zusters bewonderen hem vanwege zijn humor

en zijn markante persoonlijkheid. Hij is bijna hun god. Hij wordt hier als een prins behandeld, als een prins die van het paard is gevallen, zoals hij dat altijd zegt. Snel heeft hij een vriendin, en zijn gezondheid verbeterd steeds meer, tot zo'n hoogte dat hij zelfs weer op zichzelf zou kunnen wonen. Met zijn vriendin krijgt hij ergens een woning hoog in een flat. Zijn vriendin is veel jonger, maar door de pillen verjongd hij ook. In zijn flatwoning voelt hij zich al snel als de prins van Bagdad. Door de pillen loopt zijn leeftijd zo drastisch terug dat hij op een gegeven moment nog maar twintig is. Het voelt heerlijk aan tussen de hoge flatgebouwen. Hij staart vaak naar de overkant. Hij voelt zich vitaal. Tussen de flatgebouwen door zijn de prachtigste rozentuinen, waar hij vaak doorloopt of langsloopt met zijn vriendin. Er hangt een beetje een oosters of Arabisch sfeertje, en dat bevalt hem wel. Maar de rozenstruiken groeien steeds hoger en worden steeds dichter, om zo de flatgebouwen te isoleren. Nu voelt hij zich als Doornroosje. Ze gaan verhuizen en krijgen een flatje aan het weiland. Op dit tijdstip begint het weer slechter met hem te gaan, ook al is hij twintig. Misschien dat nu de ouderdom toch echt toeslaat. Weer belandt hij in het ziekenhuis, maar hij voelt zich nog steeds de prins van

Bagdad, en zelfs van heel Arabie. Hij staart vaak naar de stenen van het ziekenhuis die zo’n aparte kleur hebben. Vooral als het zonlicht erop valt heeft het een prachtig effect. Zacht roze is toch wel de mooiste kleur, denkt hij.

En als zijn vriendin bij hem op bezoek komt heeft ze zo’n mooie roze jurk. Ze neemt hem mee voor een wandeling langs het meer. De melkfabriek staat hier dichtbij en alles ruikt hier aangebrand. In zijn gedachten zweeft hij met haar over het meer, en roze zwanen volgen hen. Even later liggen ze beiden in het koele meer. ‘Zullen we naar de overkant zwemmen ?’ vraagt hij. Zijn vriendin vindt het best. Dat hebben ze al wel eerder gedaan. Achter het meer zijn de weilanden, en achter het weilanden is hun flat. Helemaal nat komen ze aan in hun woning. Maar hij zorgt dat hij voor het donker wordt weer in het ziekenhuis is. Ook al is hij nu dan weer in het ziekenhuis, deze laatste bladzijden van zijn leven zijn sterk en roze, als rotsen waarop hij kan bouwen. Hij voelt zich veilig hier, iets wat over hem waakt. De golfjes die hier aankomen brengen voornamelijk geluk. Een oase was over hem heengevallen, en dat was allemaal net op tijd.

OP NAAR DE VOLGENDE KLANT

Vrouwen hebben soms hele duistere mechanismes waar veel meer achter steekt dan je op het eerste gezicht zou denken. Mannen hebben dat soms ook. Daarover gaat het nu volgende verhaal.

Kun je het je voorstellen ? Je belt naar de uitvaartverzekering om wat vragen te stellen, en je krijgt een vrouw aan de lijn die dat voor je uit gaat zoeken en daarvoor even geduld vraagt, en dat je dan zegt : ‘Oh, ik heb alle tijd, doe maar rustig aan,’ en dat zij dan zegt : ‘dat komt goed uit, want ik heb ook alle tijd, kunnen we daarna ook gezellig even wat babbelen.’

Het is mij eens overkomen. Meestal heb ik stijve pieten aan de lijn, de hele enkele keren dat ik naar zo’n instantie bel. Ik kon het me ook goed voorstellen hoe die vrouw was, want je zou daar maar werken. Maar goed, ik dacht toen : Wat als ik een hele andere persoon was geweest die daar echt op ingespeeld zou hebben, want ik ben meestal gewoon bescheiden, beleefd, voorzichtig en ingetogen. Stel nu dat de persoon die zij aan de lijn had er echt een

slaatje uit zou slaan ? Want ik bleef maar aan die situatie denken, aan die uitvaartverzekering en hoe zij was. Ze snakte gewoon naar het land van de levenden, om het zomaar eens te zeggen. Lijkt me een akelig beroep.

De laatste keer dat ik op een begrafenis was geweest, en dat is al heel lang geleden, op die van mijn opa, kon ik het niet meer volhouden. Dat kon gewoon niet, dat stijve gedoe allemaal. Daar zat mijn opa niet op te wachten. Het was zwaar depressief, en ik begon allemaal grapjes te maken op de begraafplaats, eigenlijk hoe een schoolgenoot dat deed op het college tijdens de excursie naar Parijs, waar we ook een begraafplaats bezochten. 'Wat een dode boel hier.' En : 'Het is hier doodstil,' zei hij. En daarna : 'Ik wordt er doodziek van.' Hij had heel veel humor. De buschauffeur had ijs gegeten en zijn snor zat eronder. Die jongen zei toen : 'Mag ik uw snor aflikken.' Door zijn humor was het een leuke excursie, en kan je zo'n bezoekje aan een begraafplaats toch beter verwerken. Nu moest ik dus nog zo'n telefoontje naar de uitvaartverzekering verwerken, en het was al een hulp dat het zo'n aardige, gezellige vrouw was, maar ik bleef er maar aan denken, en 'wat als ze een persoon aan de lijn

had gekregen die hier veel verder mee was gegaan.’ En zo ontstond dit verhaal.

OP NAAR DE VOLGENDE KLANT

Hij belde naar zijn uitvaartverzekering voor wat vragen. De vrouw die hij aan de telefoon kreeg moest dat even uitzoeken en vroeg even geduld.
‘Oh, ik heb alle tijd,’ zei hij, ‘doe maar rustig aan.´
‘Nou,’ zei de vrouw, ‘dat komt goed uit, want ik heb ook alle tijd, kunnen we daarna ook gezellig even wat babbelen.’
‘Nou ja,’ zei hij, ‘als u er dan toch over begint kunnen we ook net zo goed telefoon-sex hebben.’
De vrouw begon te lachen. ‘Ik kom zo bij u terug, even wat uitzoeken.’
‘Daar ben ik weer,’ sprak ze.
‘Welcome back,’ zei hij.
‘Dank u, nou ik heb het voor u uitgezocht, uw vraag, en het klopt helemaal wat u zegt.’
‘Nou ja,’ zei hij, ‘dat is dan mooi opgelost, en ik kan me voorstellen dat u ook wel aan wat uitstapjes toe bent met

zo’n beroep. U houdt er zeker niet van om alleen te zijn in zo’n kantoor.’

‘Ach, ik ben eraan gewend,’ zei ze.

‘Ik vind het maar griezelig,’ zei hij. ‘Maar ja, geboorte, de dood, leven en sex horen bij elkaar. We kunnen trouwens ook gewoon een afspraak maken. Aan de telefoon is alles ook zo afstandelijk.’

De vrouw begon te lachen. ‘U bent me wel een doorzetter, maar leuk. Dat heb ik nog nooit meegemaakt dat iemand me dat bij het werk vroeg. Ze willen meestal weer zo snel mogelijk de hoorn op de haak gooien. Het is natuurlijk een onderwerp waar men liever niet over spreekt, en waar men liever niet te lang over nadenkt.’

‘Begrijp ik, begrijp ik,’ zei hij, ‘maar ik heb oog voor de persoon achter het werk. Ik zou u graag eens ontmoeten. Dan kunnen we elkaar van een hele andere kant leren kennen.’

‘Jazeker,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Klinkt heel gezellig.’

‘En trouwens,’ zei hij, ‘het is de eerste keer dat ik een gezellig iemand bij jullie aan de lijn heb, want meestal zijn het allemaal van die saaie pieten met zakelijke stemmen.’

Opeens werd de verbinding verbroken. Na een paar dagen kreeg hij een brief van haar dat ze werd afgeluisterd, en dat ze het te ver vonden gaan, dus werd de verbinding verbroken. Ze had een waarschuwing gekregen, maar wilde het contact wel buiten werk uren met hem onderhouden.

Hij was blij, en schreef haar een brief terug. Hij vroeg zich af waarom ze hem niet gewoon gebeld had na werkuren, maar het bleek niet zo makkelijk te zijn. Waarom legde ze dan ook niet uit. Ze maakten een afspraak per brief ergens in een plantsoen. Toen ze elkaar uiteindelijk daar tegen kwamen was het heel amicaal. Ze omhelsden elkaar direct en waren blij elkaar te zien.

‘Ja, zie je,’ zei ze, ‘ik heb een vriendin, en die houdt alles in de gaten.’

‘Oh, een vriendin ?’ zei hij, ‘ben je er zo een. Maar vindt ze dit dan wel goed ?’

‘Nee, eigenlijk niet. Maar ik moet er even uit, want ze is zo beknellend,’ maakte ze duidelijk.

‘Maar hebben jullie een relatie of is het gewoon een huisgenoot ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Huisgenoot,’ zei ze, ‘maar het zit heel ingewikkeld. Het is haar huis, en ze had mij geholpen met schulden, en ze heeft allemaal vreemde voorwaarden.’
‘Ik zie het, klinkt griezelig,’ zei hij. ‘En je werk betaalt je niet genoeg uit om op jezelf te wonen ?’
‘Nee joh,’ zei ze. ‘Daar vangt zij het grootste gedeelte van. Ik zit helemaal aan de ketting op dit moment.’
‘Maar dan kom je toch gewoon bij mij wonen ?’ vroeg hij.
‘Nee joh, dat kan niet, want ik zit vast aan het contract, met al die voorwaarden. Dat gaat me nooit lukken,’ zei ze. ‘Ik moet ook weer op tijd terug zijn, dus we kunnen wel ergens een ijsje kopen en even wat babbelen, maar dan moet ik toch echt weer terug.’
Zo gezegd, zo gedaan. Ze gingen ergens een ijsje kopen, babbelden weer wat, en toen moest ze weer gaan.
Via een brief liet ze toen weten dat ze wel dan meer afspraakjes zoals deze konden maken, maar dat ze ook in code taal aan de telefoon konden praten. Die code taal moest hij dan leren. Hij vond het allemaal zwaar ingewikkeld, maar stond er wel voor open. Zo belde hij haar soms en spraken in code taal. Maar na een tijdje begon ze niet meer op te nemen, en kwamen er ook geen brieven meer. Hij besloot naar haar huis te gaan om te

kijken wat er gaande was. Haar vriendin deed open, en hij vroeg naar haar. ‘Ze is overleden,’ zei ze.
‘Waaraan ?’ vroeg hij geschrokken.
‘Doodsoorzaak onbekend,’ zei ze.
Maar hij hoorde haar roepen vanuit de kamer. ‘Ik hoor haar, laat me erdoor.’ Hij drukte de vriendin opzij en ging naar binnen.
‘Dat kun je niet doen !’ riep ze. ‘Mijn vriendin …’
Hij keek achter zich en daar stond haar vriendin met een getrokken pistool. Hij moest zich toen uitkleden en moest een kooi in. ‘Wat een raar gedoe allemaal,’ zei hij.
‘Ja, ze is gek,’ zei zijn meisje. ‘Doe nou maar gewoon wat ze zegt.’
‘Ik ben niet gek,’ zei haar vriendin. ‘We hadden nog wat af te handelen.’
‘Vreemde zaak, vreemd bedrijf,’ zei hij. ‘En wat is dat voor bedrijf, wat voor soort schuldaflossing is het ?’
‘Afwas-fabriek,’ zei ze. ‘Wij maken afwasmiddelen.’
‘Zit je me in de maling te nemen ?’ vroeg hij.
‘Nee,’ zei ze, ‘zo zitten de zaken nu eenmaal. Ik heb haar schuld afgelost, ik heb haar van haar vriendje gered, en ik heb gezworen dat ik haar voor de rest van haar leven zou beschermen.’

‘Dat is waar,’ zei zijn meisje, ‘maar ze is een beetje overbeschermend. Ik heb het gevoel dat ik stik.’
‘Houd even je mond,’ zei haar vriendin, ‘dit heerschap hier is een mogelijk gevaar voor jouw geestelijke gezondheid.’
‘Lijkt er eerder op dat je zelf het gevaar bent. Het probleem heeft zich nu verschoven van het vriendje naar de vriendin,’ zei hij.
‘Houd jij ook even je mond,’ zei ze. ‘Luister : Zij is psychisch helemaal niet capabel. Ze is wilsonbekwaam. Ik heb de papieren van haar psychiater, en ik ben over haar aangesteld.’
‘Ja, die psychiaters kunnen wel meer vertellen, dat zegt allemaal niet zoveel. Haar wordt haar vrijheid ontnomen zo, en dat is een misdaad,’ zei hij. ‘Wat je nu trouwens allemaal doet is ook een misdaad, maar dat is een ander verhaal.’
‘Luister,’ zei de vriendin : ‘Je begrijpt er helemaal niets van. Ze heeft een gevaarlijke ziekte. Ik zeg het maar even. Ik neem jou ook in bescherming tegen haar nu.’
‘En wat is die ziekte dan wel ?’ vroeg hij.
‘Nou, ze maakt van haar werk haar hobby, en van de zaak iets persoonlijks,’ zei ze. ‘Ze papt aan met klanten, en daar kunnen de grootst mogelijke ongelukken van komen. Ze

kent geen onderscheid tussen haar beroep en sociale contacten.'

'Ja, maar dat maakt toch niet uit ?' zei hij.

'Jawel,' zei ze. 'Ze werkt bij een uitvaartcentrum, en dan weet je hoe laat het is.'

'Nou,' zei hij. 'Daarom bood ik haar ook telefoonsex aan. De dood hoort bij het leven, bij geboorte, en ook bij sex.'

'Zie, dat bedoel ik,' zei ze. 'Dat kun je toch niet maken ?'

'Ik snap niet wat haar ziekte dan precies is,' zei hij, 'en hoe zou dat gevaarlijk zijn. Wees nu eens concreet, want het enige gevaar ben jij volgens mij. Als ik het mis heb moet je het maar zeggen, maar je hebt me inmiddels met je pistool tot uitkleden gedwongen en ik zit hier in een kooi.'

'Dat heeft er allemaal niets mee te maken,' zei ze.

'Ik begrijp jou niet,' zei hij. 'Ik begrijp hier helemaal niks van. Waarom doe je zo ?'

'Laat haar nou maar,' zei zijn meisje toen. 'Zo is ze altijd al geweest.'

'Ik kan er maar niet aan wennen,' zei hij.

'Trek nu je kleren maar weer aan,' zei ze, 'en kom uit die kooi, en ga weg en vergeet alles wat hier gebeurd is.'

'Ben je gek ?' zei hij. 'Dat is mijn meisje.'

‘Ben jij gek ?’ vroeg ze. ‘Dat is mijn vriendin.’
‘Nee, je bezit haar, houdt haar in gevangenschap, hebt haar gehersenspoeld, enzovoorts,’ zei hij.
‘Okay, mijnheer enzovoorts, en nu opdonderen, want je begint op mijn zenuwen te werken,’ zei ze. ‘Vertrek en vergeet alles wat hier is gebeurd.’
Met haar pistool dwong ze hem toen de straat op, met zijn kleren in zijn armen. Hij heeft zich toen aangekleed en vertrok weer naar huis. Een paar dagen erna kreeg hij een afscheidsbrief.
‘Afscheidsbrief,
Bedankt voor de ontzettend gezellige tijd.
Helaas is mijn vriendin er tussen gekomen, en heeft het niet het gewenste resultaat opgeleverd.
Ik hoop dat u mij kunt vergeven.
De liefde was wederzijds, maar mijn plichten roepen mij.
Uitvaarten zijn een stuk duurder geworden, dat moet ik u beroepshalve mededelen.
Uw huidige verzekering dekt niet het bedrag wat u nodig zult hebben.
Ik heb daarmee mijn plicht voleindigd om u dit mede te delen.’

Hij is toen huilend teruggegaan, en ze hebben hem er toen op gewezen dat hij toch echt zijn verzekeringsbedrag moest verhogen. Dat heeft hij toen gedaan, en toen kreeg hij haar mee. Ja ja, de uitvaartverzekeringen van vandaag hebben hun taktieken. ‘Wat een gedoe allemaal,’ dacht hij. Maar hij had haar nu in ieder geval. Misschien dat dingen zo werkten.
‘Zit ik nu opgescheept met een robot ?’ dacht hij na een tijdje.
‘Ze wil altijd maar afwassen, en ons hele huis staat vol met afwasmiddelen, zelfs op zolder.’
Hij kwam erachter dat ze inderdaad een robot was.
Het bleek dat de uitvaartverzekering een onderhandelingscontract had met de afwasfabriek.
Zo profiteerden ze beiden van deze klant.
Maar ja, goed, hij had nu tenminste een vrouw, ook al was ze een robot.
Op een dag nam ze de benen, rende het bos in, en verdween in een bosmeertje.
Ze had een briefje achtergelaten : ‘Op naar de volgende klant.’

Sally was een prostituee, een dame van lichte zeden. Voor de ramen voerde ze altijd haar spel op, haar dans, om ogen te betoveren. Willem bezocht haar vaak, maar op een dag gaf hij haar zoveel geld dat ze nooit meer hoefde te werken. Ze was hem erg dankbaar. Ze kreeg een huisje in het bos. Willem kwam haar vaak bezoeken. Sally was erg aan hem gehecht. Sally zag Willem als haar redder. En de liefde was mooi. Ze hadden nog nooit gevreeen. Willem bezocht haar alleen maar op met haar te praten. Hij wilde haar helpen.
Hij heeft iets buitenaards. Hij is niet van deze wereld. En een liefde dat hij heeft. De vriendinnen van Sally werkten nog steeds in de prostitutie, en diep in hun hart hoopten ze dat Willem hen ook zou redden. Willem had een hart van goud.

Het korte oog zat op zijn troon. Vloekend, tierend. Hij wilde iedereen kort houden, ver weg van elkaar, en dat ze dan ook kort door de bocht met elkaar om zouden gaan, want het korte oog vreesde de liefde.

En deze liefde was zo brandend. Als Sally Willem aankeek dan kon je dat voelen. En als Willem Sally aankeek dan kon je hart daar van wegsmelten. Als je dat gelukkige paar zo zou zien, dan zou je denken : Ze hebben het over mij. Willem was niet zelfzuchtig, en Sally ook niet. Ze hielden beiden veel van mensen.

Het korte oog was als een kraal in een computerspel. Ver kijken kon hij niet, want dan zou hij zijn macht verliezen. De mensen waren slechts pionnen. Het korte oog had ijzeren wetten opgesteld.

Uiteindelijk zijn ze beiden maar in de wildernis gaan wonen. Het korte oog was woedend. Maar op een dag bezocht het korte oog Willem. Kijk eens wat je geliefde je heeft aangedaan, degene wiens leven jij hebt gered, zei het korte oog. Is het niet allemaal een grote illusie. De dromen die je hebt zijn onhaalbaar. Ik bied je een betere droom. Je zal alles kunnen hebben wat je hartje begeert.

Hoe dan ? vroeg Willem.

Ik kan een superster van je maken, zei het korte oog.

Gehypnotiseerd gaf hij toe aan het korte oog. Als in een speedboot behaalde hij een superster status. Maar hij

kwam onder zulke hoge druk te staan dat hij zelfmoord pleegde.

Sally begon te gillen. Maar het korte oog had geen medelijden met haar en vermoordde haar, en vrat haar op. In het dodenrijk kwam ze Willem weer tegen met gebogen hoofd.

Maar het korte oog regeerde ook hier, en liet hen afdalen naar de hel.

Ik brand, zei Willem.

Ik ook, zei Sally.

Jullie hebben je niet aan mijn wetten gehouden, zei het korte oog. Jullie waren wispelturig, en jullie brabbelden maar wat. Ik eis radicaliteit en fundamentalisme, is dat teveel gevraagd ? Branden zullen jullie in de hel.

De volgende dag werden Sally en Willem wakker. Willem sloot Sally in zijn armen. Ik heb zo naar gedroomd, schat, dat ik je uit de prostitutie moest redden. En een heerschap genaamd het korte oog leidde ons naar de hel.

Het korte oog bestaat niet, zei Sally. Het is een leugen. Er zijn alleen maar lange ogen die uitreiken naar elkaars hart.

Het is alleen maar liefde, en het oog van de liefde. Jij bent in mijn wereld, zei Sally. Die andere wereld is niet echt. Er zijn alleen maar dingen die je niet begrijpt die zich als verschrikkelijke monsters ontpoppen.

Sally sprak weer als een engel, zoals ze altijd deed.

Zul je me helpen om duidelijkheid te krijgen ? vroeg Willem. Ik ben nog niet zo ver als jou. Je bent vier jaar ouder.

Shhh, zei Sally.

De piepende trapleuning

De trapleuning in het trappenhuis van de flat van Keet en Pon was aan het piepen. Alle mensen van de flat kwamen naar buiten en keken naar de piepende trapleuning in grote verbazing. Hoe kon dat nu gebeuren ? De trapleuning was in grote paniek, maar niemand verstond wat de trapleuning zei. Pon liep naar de trapleuning en legde zijn hand erop, en sprak kalm : ‘Zeg eens rustig wat er met je aan de hand is.’ De trapleuning zei toen : ´Ik was vroeger een lintje van een elventasje, maar de heks heeft mij in een toverketel hard gemaakt, en toen maakte ze een trapleuning van me.’
Iedereen keek met grote verbazing naar de trapleuning.
‘Maar als we geen trapleuning hebben dan vallen we straks allemaal naar beneden,’ zei Pon.
‘Nee hoor,’ zei de trapleuning. ‘Als jullie mij naar de fee van Nijverdal brengen, dan zal zij mij om kunnen toveren tot een touw, en dan kan dat de nieuwe trapleuning zijn. Ik voel me niet lekker als ik zo hard ben. Ik wil weer zacht zijn zoals vroeger.’
‘Komt in orde,’ zei Pon, die direct zijn huisje weer binnenliep om gereedschap te halen. Met een schroevendraaier begon hij toen de trapleuning los te

schroeven. De mensen keken nog steeds toe in grote verbazing. Toen de trapleuning los was gekomen nam Pon de trapleuning mee naar zijn bestelwagentje. Keet ging ook mee. Toen gingen ze naar Nijverdal waar de fee zou wonen. Maar de weg leek wel eindeloos. Ze kwamen nooit aan in Nijverdal. Pon reed en reed maar.
‘We zijn hier op een eindeloze weg,’ zei Pon. ‘We rijden al uren en uren, maar geen Nijverdal in zicht.’
‘Heus, het zal niet ver zijn,’ zei de trapleuning. Maar toen het al nacht was geworden waren ze er nog steeds niet, en Pon zette de bestelwagen aan de kant. ‘Dan maar hier slapen vannacht,’ zei Pon.
Midden in de nacht gebeurde er iets wonderlijks. Heel zacht begon de trapleuning te piepen, en begon in een touw te veranderen. Pon en Keet werden wakker en riepen : ‘Hoera !’ Het was nu groot feest. Toen ze de volgende dag terug waren in de flat en Pon de nieuwe trapleuning vastmaakte, die nu van touw was, was iedereen blij. Overal waren er slingers en ballonnen in het trappenhuis van de flat, en sindsdien heeft de trapleuning niet meer gepiept.

RNL-POCKETS

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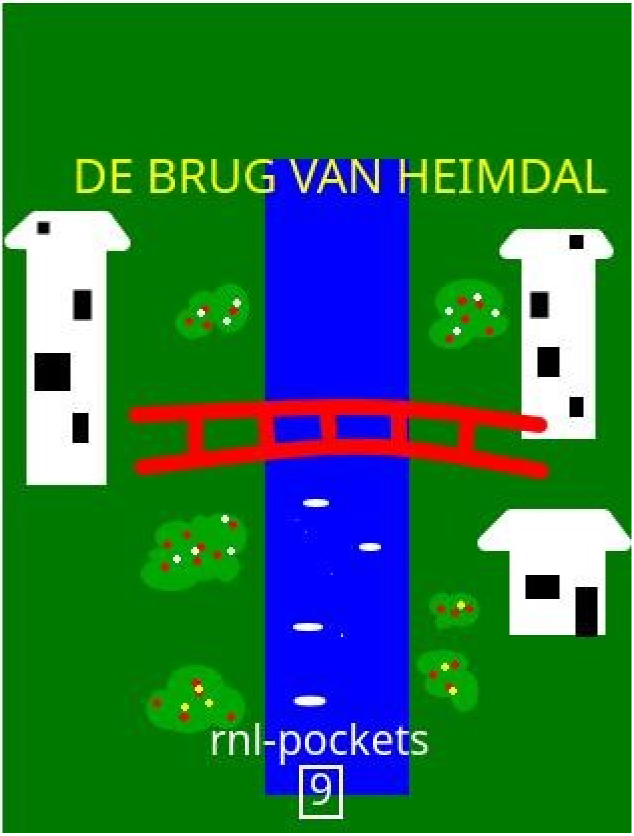
NR. 6 – DE EVOLUTIE VAN DE HEMEL
NR. 7 – FABRIEKEN AAN ZEE


DE BRUG VAN HEIMDAL
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De Brug van Heimdal
korte verhalen

Uitgave : rnl-pockets
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De Brug van Heimdal

Ze was zwanger in het ziekenhuis, en lag daar, terwijl ik van haar weg wilde, omdat ik op zoek was naar ware liefde. Ik liep over de brug naar huis en kwam Heimdal tegen, een constructie werker die ik kende. 'Moet je niet bij je vrouw zijn ?' vroeg hij.
'Ben ik net geweest,' zei ik. 'Ik vind het wel goed zo. Ik ga bij haar weg. Ik ben op zoek naar ware liefde. Dit is het niet voor mij.'
'Wat dan wel ?' vroeg Heimdal.
'Boeken denk ik,' zei ik.
'Ja, maar je kunt haar toch niet zomaar aan haar lot overlaten nu ze bevallende is ?' zei Heimdal.
'Ik zal haar wel een boekje sturen,' zei ik koud.
'Dat is ook niet aardig,' zei Heimdal.
'Dit is het gewoon niet voor mij,' zei ik. 'Het boeit me gewoon niet.'
'Volgens mij ben jij gewoon zwaar overspannen,' zei Heimdal. 'Ik heb nog wat voor je.'
Hij is toen met me meegelopen naar mijn huis in een flat aan het riviertje. Tegenover het riviertje woonde mijn oom en zijn gezin, in een heel langwerpig huis alles op de

begane grond. Dan moest je eerst een bruggetje over. Heimdal kende hem ook wel. Had hij nog bij in de klas gezeten vroeger.
Toen Heimdal binnen was in mijn huis trok hij z'n tas open en haalde er een apparaat uit. Het was een heel ingewikkeld verwarmings apparaat, maar nog veel meer. Het regelde de temperatuur, automatisch, als een soort huiselijke weer machine, maar nog veel meer. Het apparaatje was al oud, en hij probeerde het aan de praat te krijgen. Hij werd erg kwaad toen het niet lukte. Hij begon zelfs kwaad op mij te worden. Ik zei : 'Nu lijkt het wel alsof jij zwaar overspannen bent. Heb je te hard gewerkt ofzo ?' Toen probeerde ik hem te kalmeren en gerust te stellen. We zijn toen beiden naar mijn oom gegaan. Ik had mijn oom al een tijdje niet gezien en viel hem in zijn armen. Het was best wel emotioneel. Ik zei tegen Heimdal dat ik altijd heel erg tegen mijn oom had opgezien, dat het een soort kinderheld was voor mij toen ik klein was. Daarna was het contact verwaterd, alhoewel we zo dichtbij elkaar woonden. Mijn oom was heel trots erop dat hij zoveel voor mij betekende. 'Kijk, het begint al te werken,' zei Heimdal.
'Wat ?' vroeg ik.

'Dat apparaat,' zei Heimdal. 'Blijkbaar moest het eerst opwarmen, maar het apparaat herstelt dus ook sociale contacten wanneer dat nodig is.'

'Mooi,' zei ik. Ineens begon de liefde voor mijn vrouw weer omhoog te borrelen. 'I... ik moet maar weer eens gaan,' zei ik. 'Mijn vrouw is hoogzwanger en heeft mij nodig.'

Heimdal knipoogde naar mijn oom.

'Ga jij maar snel, jongen, dan drink ik nog even een glaasje plezier hier met mijn klasgenoot van vroeger,' zei Heimdal.

Ik rende terug, helemaal naar de grotere brug toe waarachter het ziekenhuis lag. Maar midden op de brug sloeg een grote angst me om het hart. Ik durfde niet meer verder. Ik ben toen teruggegaan naar Heimdal en mijn oom en viel ze huilend in de armen. 'Nog steeds zwaar, jongen ?' vroeg één van hen. 'Wat als we er nu samen naartoe gaan ?'

'Nee, nee, ik kan het niet meer,' zei ik. 'Ik ben blij dat ik jullie heb. Meer kan ik niet aan.'

Heimdal keek me aan. 'Zeg, vertel me eens, is er een keer iets gebeurd waardoor je zo bent geworden ? Heeft ze je iets aangedaan wat ik nog niet weet ?'

'Ik wil er niet over praten,' zei ik.
'Goed,' zei Heimdal. 'Het apparaat moet nog even opwarmen. Als het goed is zal het apparaat je gehele huis herbouwen, en ook je hele sociale netwerk, en dan zal alles op zijn plaats vallen.'
'Ja, maar het verleden kan ik niet meer veranderen,' zei ik. 'Gebeurd is gebeurd.'
Heimdal glimlachte. 'Maar het apparaat kan het verleden wel veranderen.'

Einde

graaf kiekendrecht van de bijlmer

Graaf Kiekendrecht woonde in de Bijlmer, ergens hoog op een flat. Hij was dokter, maar vroeg nooit betaling voor zijn diensten. Wel vroeg hij hen die hij genas zijn leger in te komen. Wat was dit leger dan ? Het was een leger dat net als hem anderen hielp.
Op een dag was Graaf Kiekendrecht net iets te diep in het bos gegaan, en werd door kannibalen overmeesterd en in een ketel gezet. 'Is dat de nieuwe mode ?' vroeg Graaf Kiekendrecht, 'al die touwen om me heen ?'
'Ja,' zei een kannibaal, 'gehaktballenmode en worstenmode, worstenmode in uw geval.'
'Zeg, kan ik niet helpen deze mode tot een markt te maken,' vroeg Graaf Kiekendrecht.
'Nee,' zei de kannibaal bars. 'U bent de drager, niet de maker.'
'Maar weet u dan niet dat elk touw een eind heeft wat ook weer het begin is ?' sprak Graaf Kiekendrecht. 'Zo komen we ook weer bij het begin uit, en dan zijn alle rollen omgedraaid.'

Ineens was niet Graaf Kiekendrecht in de ketel, maar de kannibalen, en ze waren netjes gebonden. 'Staat goed op jullie,' zei Graaf Kiekendrecht. De kannibalen keken hem verbaasd aan. Graaf Kiekendrecht was zo wijsgerig geschoold dat hij er een beetje door kon toveren. Eén van de kannibalen was een negerin. 'Ik vind haar wel leuk,' zei Graaf Kiekendrecht terwijl hij op haar wees. 'Als je beloofd dat je mij komt helpen in mijn leger dan zal ik je loslaten.' De dikke negerin knikte en zei met een accent dat ze dat beloofde, want dat was beter dan in de ketel. Toen heeft hij haar losgemaakt. 'Jij kon het ook niet helpen dat je tussen dit tuig bent opgegroeid,' zei hij tegen haar, en toen heeft hij haar meegenomen naar de Bijlmer. De andere kannibalen liet hij gewoon in de ketel zitten.

Thuisgekomen bekeek hij haar eens goed. 'Zonder touw staat je toch veel beter,' zei hij.

'Ik wil wel met je meegaan hoor,' zei de negerin.

'Waar zullen we eens naartoe gaan ?' vroeg hij.

'Nou, een restaurant lijkt me wel goed,' zei de negerin, 'want ik had nog niet gegeten. We zouden jou opeten, weet je wel.'

Hij wees toen op haar buik. 'Heb jij niet genoeg gegeten ?'

'Ik heb zo'n honger,' zei de negerin, 'dat als je slaapt, dan moet je niet vreemd opkijken als je wakker wordt in een soepketel.'
'Dat is waar,' zei Graaf Kiekendrecht, 'dat is waar. Maar je weet dat je er dan zelf ook in eindigt, want het einde van het touw is ook weer het begin, en dan zijn alle rollen omgedraaid.'
'Ik weet het,' zei de negerin, 'maar dan laat je me wel weer los.'
'Wat als ik het dit keer niet doe ?' vroeg Graaf Kiekendrecht.
'Nou, dan moet je aan het andere uiteinde van het touw denken, en dan worden de rollen weer teruggedraaid,' zei de negerin.
'Je bent me nogal slim,' zei Graaf Kiekendrecht. 'Met jou wil ik werken. Maar zou je me echt hebben opgegeten ?'
'Nee,' zei de negerin, 'want ik ben zo wijsgerig geschoold dat ik de ketel slechts als een school zie om mannetjes zoals jou mee op te voeden.'
'Oh, als een bosjuffrouw ?' vroeg Graaf Kiekendrecht.
'Ja, als een bosjuffrouw,' zei de negerin.

'Dan heet jij vanaf nu bosjuffrouw,' zei Graaf Kiekendrecht. 'Welkom in mijn leger.'
'Welkom op mijn school,' zei de negerin.
En zo werkten ze samen in de bijlmer.
Maar op een dag kwamen de kannibalen naar de bijlmer om de negerin terug te halen.
'Oh, jullie komen me halen ?' vroeg de negerin. 'Wat denk je dat het hier is ? Het is hier geen restaurant.'
Maar ze hielden vol dat de negerin terugmoest.
Waarom komen jullie hier niet werken ? vroeg Graaf Kiekendrecht.
Ze dachten even na. 'Okay, okay,' zeiden ze. En toen kregen ze ook allemaal hun woning om in het leger van Graaf Kiekendrecht te zijn, en om naar de school van de bosjuffrouw te gaan. Ze hadden nu een doel in hun leven. Hun leven, en het leven van anderen, had nu ineens weer zin.
'Zeg, zouden jullie mij echt hebben opgegeten ?' vroeg Graaf Kiekendrecht hen eens. 'Nee,' zeiden ze. 'Wij zijn zo wijsgerig geschoold dat de ketel slechts een manier is om een woning te krijgen.'

Einde

Ik was verdwaald in een bijlmer flat op zoek naar mijn tante. Ik kon haar huisje maar niet vinden. Ze moest ergens op de flat wonen. Er waren hier allemaal grote zalen. Ik deed een deur open en er renden direct allerlei negerkinderen naar me toe. Ze waren in grote angst en paniek. Ze zeiden dat er ergens een vleesetende reus was. Ik ben toen dieper die zaal ingegaan waar die negerkinderen uitrenden de gang op en kwam de reus aan het einde van de zaal tegen waar hij op een troontje zat. Het was een hele lange man op een heel klein troontje. Hij kon er net op zitten, maar het leek wel alsof hij vastzat. 'Help,' zei hij met een piepstemmetje. Ik heb hem toen maar even losgemaakt.
'Die kinderen hebben deze troon voor me gemaakt, maar hij was veel te klein,' zei de reus.
'Kan gebeuren,' zei ik, 'maar waar woont mijn tante ?'
Toen heeft hij het voor me uitgelegd. Het was best nog wel ingewikkeld, want ik moest door allerlei gangen. Het leek wel een doolhof.
Toen ik bij mijn tante aankwam scheen ze er niet eens meer te wonen. De nieuwe bewoners zeiden dat het

allemaal heel lang geleden was. Had ik dan zo lang gelopen ? Er klopte iets niet in deze flat. Ik ging terug naar de reus, maar die was nergens meer te vinden. Ik ben toen de flat uitgelopen en er was een regenstorm. Ik had het idee dat ik zo opgenomen zou kunnen worden. Toen ik bij mijn huis aankwam waren daar ook al nieuwe bewoners. Ik zou er heel lang geleden hebben gewoond. Ik dacht : Hier kloppen dingen niet. Alles leek zo anders. Ik begreep er niets van.

Ik ben toen het oerwoud ingelopen. Ik begreep niets van de stad. Het was veel te ingewikkeld. Alleen in de bijlmer en waar ik woonde waren nog flats en huizen. De rest van Nederland was totaal oerwoud. Dat was vroeger wel anders. Maar ja, het leek zo kort geleden. Alles was gewoon anders. Nederland oerwoudland nu. Maar alles leek zo snel te groeien, en spoedig was ook de bijlmer totaal oerwoudgebied, en waar waren de flats ineens ? Er klopte iets niet. Toen kwam ik de reus weer tegen, en vroeg hem om uitleg. Hij wist het ook niet. Ik ben toen maar met de reus in het oerwoud gaan wonen, en na een tijdje kwamen daar ook de negerkinderen die ik in de flat was tegengekomen. Zij wisten ook niet wat er aan de hand was, maar ze waren niet meer bang voor de reus.

Dus jullie hadden een te kleine troon voor hem gemaakt ? vroeg ik.
Ja, en toen dreigde hij ons op te eten toen hij niet meer los kon komen, zeiden ze.
Dat is niet zo netjes van jullie om een te kleine troon te maken voor een reus, zei ik.
Een jongetje stak toen zijn vinger op. 'Maar het was ook niet zo netjes van de reus om ons te willen opeten,' zei het jongetje. 'We hadden hard aan de troon gewerkt en het was een foutje. Foutjes maken doet iedereen en dat is menselijk.'
Maar ik kan de reus ook wel begrijpen, zei ik, want hij dacht natuurlijk dat jullie hem in de val hadden gelokt.
Echt niet, mijnheer, zei een andere jongen. Het was een vergissing, heus.
Ik keen toen naar de reus. 'Ik ben niet meer boos,' zei de reus. 'Het zal inderdaad wel een vergissing zijn geweest. Ik moet ook leren om niet meer op tronen te gaan zitten. Dat is niks voor mij.'
Goed, zei ik toen. Ik hoop dat jullie nu in vrede kunnen leven.
Maar toen begon de reus erg te groeien. Weer begonnen de kinderen bang te worden. Er kwam toen een enorme

regenstorm die ons allemaal opnam, en er kwamen flats uit de grond die nog wel groter waren dan die van de bijlmer. We zagen zoveel verdiepingen, en we werden door de regenstorm ergens hoog in zo'n flat gezogen.
Puzzel maar, zei de reus. Ga maar op zoek naar je tante. Ze moet hier nog ergens leven. Alles van het verleden heeft hier nog z'n plaats in het flattenoerwoud. En we vonden toen alles terug wat we eens waren verloren.

de dromentemmer

Ik dwaalde door gangenstelsels en trappenstelsels onder wat flats in de bijlmer. Ik kwam aan bij een donker en stoffig café wat helemaal verlaten leek te zijn, maar toen ik binnen kwam zag ik de barkeeper ineens. 'Drink voor dromen,' zei hij. Het leek op een café van de jaren 60 en 70 wat niet meer in gebruik was, dus ik was verbaasd de man te zien. Ik ging aan de bar zitten en zei : 'Okay, geef me maar wat.' Hij deed een fles open en begon te gieten in mijn beker. Het was donker, bruinachtig, schuimend spul, en ik begon er direct van te drinken. 'Drink voor dromen,' zei hij. Het begon wazig voor mijn ogen te worden. Ik zag golven verschijnen voor mijn ogen, en ik zat op een strand. Een vrouw kwam langs en zei : 'Wat waait het, hè.' Ze moest haar hoed vasthouden, anders zou die wegwaaien. De golven gingen steeds hoger en waren steeds woester, en ik dacht dat ik beter weg kon gaan. 'Drink voor dromen,' hoorde ik iemand roepen. De golven leken ook van het bruinachtige spul te zijn met schuim erop. Ik kreeg toen een vreemd idee. Ik deed mijn kleren uit en rende op de zee af om van het schuimende bruine spul te drinken. Maar de zee bewoog weg van mij, en de

golven gingen weer liggen. 'Nou, kom dan, drink voor dromen,' riep iemand weer. Ik keek om me heen, en slenterde weer terug om mijn kleren aan te trekken.

'Lafaard,' werd er toen geroepen. Dat liet ik niet op me zitten. Ik trok weer mijn kleren uit, en rende naar de zee die inmiddels weer was opgekomen. Maar weer trok de zee zich terug. 'Waar ben je dan ?' riep ik.

'Ga ik jou niet aan je neus hangen,' werd er toen geroepen.

Ik dacht ik laat me niet beetnemen, en slenterde weer terug om me vervolgens weer aan te kleden en me erin te berusten. 'Drink voor dromen,' werd er weer geroepen. Ja, dat zei die barkeeper ook, en nu droomde ik. Ik werd wakker en keek in het gezicht van de barkeeper. 'Drink voor dromen,' zei hij. En ik begon weer te drinken, en weer te dromen. Ditmaal was ik in een groot bos. Er was niemand. Ik was helemaal alleen. Maar er hingen kokosnoten in de bomen waar bruinachtig spul uitdroop wat bijna schuimde. Toen ik op de kokosnoten afliep begonnen ze weg te bewegen. Iemand lachte en riep : 'Drink voor dromen.' Maar ik zag niemand.

'Waar ben je dan ?' riep ik.

'Voor je neus,' riep hij.

Oh ja, zei ik, de barkeeper, maar ik kan niet drinken. Ik droom.
Waar droom je over ? vroeg hij.
'Nou, eerst een zee, en nu een bos,' zei ik.
Ik plaag je maar wat, zei hij. Vind je het leuk ?
Ja, zei ik, maar alles beweegt van me weg.
Dat zijn dromen, zei hij.
Waarom doen ze dat ? vroeg ik.
Opdat je niet teveel drinkt, zei hij.
Maar waarom zeg je dan telkens : Drink voor dromen ? vroeg ik.
Omdat … zei hij … maar toen vaagde zijn stem weg … Ik werd wakker in het café aan de bar, maar er was niemand …
Is daar iemand ? riep ik.
Ik zag het bruine spul voor me in mijn beker. Het schuimde nog steeds een beetje.
Niet meer van drinken, zei ik tegen mezelf. Zo is het wel genoeg.
Ik ging het café uit, het gangenstelsel weer op, en over trappenstelsels ging ik nog dieper naar beneden.
Ik kwam bij een hele diepe ondergrondse rivier aan uiteindelijk, waar dat bruinachtige spul ook stroomde.

'Niet meer van drinken,' zei ik weer tegen mezelf. Ik wilde weer teruggaan, maar plotseling kwam er een uitgestrekte golf uit de rivier die mij greep en mij in de rivier trok. Het begon me toen in de diepte te trekken.
Ik probeerde me te verzetten, maar het liet niet los. Ik was in een stroming die alsmaar sterker werd. Maar toen werd ik weer wakker aan de bar in het café. Ik had gewoon een cirkeltje gemaakt. Ik stond op en ging dieper in het café. Ik kwam toen door een deur in een ander zaaltje waar mensen zaten van heel lang geleden. Ze waren helemaal bedekt met spinnewebben. Het leek wel op de jaren 30 en 40. Toen ik schoten hoorde ben ik weer teruggegaan, maar ik kon mijn weg niet meer terugvinden. En hoe meer ik door deuren heenging, hoe meer het allemaal leek op het wilde westen. Ik hoorde het gehinnik van paarden, het gelach van cowboys en het gejoel van indianen. Weer hoorde ik schoten, en verborg mij achter een bar. 'Waar is hij ?' hoorde ik iemand roepen.
Er was een luik op de vloer achter de bar, wat ik opende en waar ik doorheen ging om mezelf in veiligheid te brengen. Alles was hier donker en stoffig. Ik moest van een heel nauw trappetje af. 'Daar is hij,' hoorde ik iemand roepen. Ik kwam in een tunnel terecht waar water op de bodem

lag. Ik zag een licht in de verte en ging er op af. 'Pak hem,' werd er geroepen, maar ik zag niks. Ik begon stevig door te lopen maar stootte mijn been aan ijzerwerk. Er was hier veel meer water wat in een rap tempo begon te stijgen. Ik kon beter maar weer teruggaan, maar daar zouden ze me misschien opwachten, dus ik deed het niet, en liep door richting het licht. Ik zag een oerwoud in het licht. Maar het water was inmiddels al tot mijn borst gestegen. De stroming was sterk, en ineens werd ik meegesleurd. Waar naartoe wist ik niet. Ik had alle grip verloren.

'Drink voor dromen,' zei de barkeeper. Ik werd weer wakker aan de bar.

'Laat maar,' zei ik.

'Denk je het ergens anders beter te krijgen ?' vroeg de barkeeper. Ik haalde mijn schouders op.

'Drink voor dromen,' zei de barkeeper weer. Er kwam iemand anders binnen die aan de bar ging zitten. Ook hij kreeg een beker van het bruinachtige spul wat schuimde.

'Ik zou er maar niet van drinken,' zei ik.

'Ik heb toch niets meer te verliezen,' zei die persoon, en begon te drinken. Ik probeerde op te staan, maar ik merkte dat ik aan de barkruk bleef vastkleven.

'Het laat je niet los,' zei de barkeeper.

'Belachelijk,' zei ik. Toen herinnerde ik me dat als ik er meer van zou willen drinken, dat het dan van me weg zou gaan. Ik greep naar mijn beker, maar die was leeg. 'Meer, meer,' zei ik tegen de barkeeper. Maar er was geen barkeeper. Ik was aan zee, en ik rende er naartoe terwijl het van me wegbewoog. Maar ik wist ook dat het me zou grijpen als ik ervan zou weggaan. Ik moest iets anders verzinnen. Of ik moest er gewoon mee leren leven. Het leven was immers geven en nemen, tussen dichtbij en ver weg ergens mijn pad vinden. Ik kon nu eenmaal niet met en niet zonder. Ergens tussenin moest er een pad zijn. Ik moest mijn dromen temmen, maar daarvoor moest ik eerst mijzelf temmen.

graven of draaien

Na een beetje graven kwam ik in een ander Nederland terecht. De hoofdstad hier was genaamd Jong Meisje. Dat scheen de naam van een lied te zijn. Dat lied vonden ze zo mooi dat het de naam van de hoofdstad werd.
In het Zuiden lag een zwart Nederland. Het was eigenlijk een grote stad, een knoertel stad. Knoertels zijn een soort wezens die enorm stinken en hoogmoedswaanzin hebben, die zich van alles inbeelden dat ze van alles zijn, zoals een dokter of een politicus, terwijl ze niet eens hiertoe een degelijke opleiding hebben gevolgd. Ze draaien ook alles om.
Er was oorlog in Nederland, tussen de knoertels en de rest van Nederland. De knoertel stad was geheel omsingeld, maar niemand kon iets doen. In de knoertelstad werden kinderen opgesloten gehouden. Die kinderen moesten nog ontwaken. Ze werden in slaap gehouden. Ze hadden allemaal knoertel dromen.
De knoertels waren vraatzuchtig. Ze hadden geen oog voor de armen. Die werden bespot. Alles moest rijk zijn. Ze hadden geen oog voor hen in nood. Nee, ze maakten de

nood nog erger. Ze waren knoertels. Het waren schrokoppen, pannenlikkers.

Ze waren sadistisch. Er was één ding waar ze niet tegenkonden, en dat was humor. Natuurlijk hadden ze wel hun eigen humor, de zogenaamde knoertel humor, maar de echte humor, daar konden ze niet tegen, de wijze humor. Hun eigen humor was namelijk maar zeer oppervlakkig en simplistisch. Eens vielen de humoren Spanje binnen, en nu zouden ze ook Nederland binnenvallen. Dat gebeurde. Er bleef eigenlijk niets meer van de knoertelstad over. De knoertels konden niet tegen humor. En ze konden al helemaal niet tegen de humoren.

De speelgoedsoldaten waren in een oorlog met de muizen op de speelkamer van een jongetje, midden in de nacht. Het jongetje sliep in een andere kamer, in zijn slaapkamer, dus hij merkte er niets van. De speelgoedsoldaten gebruikten naalden als pijlen, en ze hadden ook kromme zwaardjes. Veel muizen werden geraakt, en van sommigen werden de koppen afgehakt. Het was duidelijk dat de speelgoedsoldaten de oorlog aan het winnen waren. De muizen bewaakten een poort waar de speelgoedsoldaten nooit doorheen mochten. Ditmaal konden ze dat dus wel en openden de poort. Hier stond ergens een speelgoed treintje waarop ze gingen zitten, en ze moesten toen door een tunnel heen. Dat gat ging helemaal door de muur naar de slaapkamer van het jongetje. Dat hadden de muizen eens gemaakt. De speelgoedsoldaten zagen wat kleren van de jongen rondslingeren. De deur van de jongen stond op een kiertje dus ze konden zo de gang op, en over de trap naar beneden. Door de brievenbus konden ze ontsnappen, en de wat grotere speelgoedsoldaten konden door het kattenluikje. Toen renden ze het bos in, en deden wat van hun kleren uit. Ze wilden indiaan worden. Ze smeerden

henzelf in met modder, en anderen smeerden wat oorlogsverf op hen. Maar toen het dag was geworden bleven ze ineens stokstijf staan. Een ander jongetje vond hen even later. Hij nam ze in zijn hand. 'Wat vreemd,' zei hij. 'Die indiaantjes horen hier niet te zijn. Het is maar speelgoed.' En hij nam ze mee naar huis. Ook hij had een speelkamer. Gelukkig waren daar geen muizen. Ze vonden het verschrikkelijk dat ze overdag zich nooit konden bewegen. Ze moesten altijd wachten tot het nacht was en iedereen sliep. Gelukkig had de jongen de deur op een kier gelaten, en konden ze weer weg. Het was weer nacht, en de nacht was nog jong, en ze hoefden niet eerst tegen muizen te vechten. Weer gingen ze de hal op en over de trap naar beneden en gelukkig had dit huis ook een kattenluik, dus weer konden ze allemaal naar buiten. Weer gingen ze het bos in, en dit keer hadden ze veel meer tijd, dus ze gingen ver, heel ver. Ze hoopten dat de betovering verbroken zou zijn nu ze zo ver weg waren. Ze waren bang voor het licht, dus gingen ze de grond onder door een konijnenhol. Zo kwamen ze in de ondergrondse wereld.
Ze wilden geen speelgoed meer zijn, maar echte mensen. Hier onder de grond zouden ze zich tenminste altijd kunnen bewegen omdat het hier altijd nacht was. Er was

hier niemand anders. Ze waren met twintig. Op een keer kwamen ze andere speelgoedpoppen tegen die ook waren ontsnapt. Het waren speelgoedindiaantjes en allemaal meisjes. Maar ze konden niet met hen opschieten en ze waren bang dat ze ermee in oorlog zouden raken. Tegen andere speelgoedpoppen wilden ze niet vechten. Toch moesten ze wel toen de indiaanse meisjes hen de oorlog verklaarden. Ze konden natuurlijk ook vluchten, en dat deden ze, maar de indiaanse meisjes kwamen achter hen aan. Dennennaalden waren hun pijlen. Dit ging allemaal niet goed. Er sneuvelden wat aan beide kanten, en ze begonnen het licht op te zoeken opdat alles zou stoppen. Maar toen ze boven de grond waren was het daar ook nacht. Toen zijn ze maar teruggegaan naar het huis van het jongetje. Ze gingen door het kattenluikje en de brievenbus. Maar ook de indiaanse meisjes achtervolgden hen daar. Ze renden de trap op, terwijl het oorlogsgejoel achter hen was. Soms schoten ze wat pijlen. Telkens weer sneuvelde er eentje aan beide kanten. Maar de indiaanse meisjes waren in de grote meerderheid. En van de indiaanse jongetjes was er nog maar één overgebleven toen ze bij de deur van de speelkamer waren gekomen. En die stond dit keer niet op een kier. Wel stond de slaapkamerdeur van het

jongetje op een kier, en toen ging het laatste indiaanse speelgoedjongetje daar naar binnen. Op dat moment begon het licht te worden, en stonden ze allemaal weer stokstijf. Toen het jongetje wakker werd zag hij het indiaanse speelgoedjongetje bij zijn deur liggen. 'Hoe komt dat daar nou ?' dacht hij. Hij liep er naartoe en deed de deur verder open, en zag toen ook de indiaanse speelgoedmeisjes liggen. 'Vreemd, en die had ik nog niet,' zei hij. Toen zag hij bij de trap en op de trap ook nog meer speelgoedindiaantjes liggen. Hij zuchtte en begon ze allemaal op te rapen om ze naar de speelkamer te brengen. Hij keek eens goed naar de speelgoedindiaantjes en bemerkte de dennennaalden. 'Mmm, zeker oorlog geweest,' zei hij tegen zichzelf.

Hij wist van die oorlogen. Hij had het eens in een boek gelezen. 'Ik ben het er niet mee eens,' zei hij. 'Jullie moeten in vrede leven.' Toen smeet hij de speelgoedindiaantjes in een doos. Hij deed toen de deksel erop zodat het nacht was in de doos. 'Zo, dat zal jullie leren. Voorlopig ga ik niet met jullie spelen,' zei het jongetje. Maar in de doos ging de oorlog verder. De doos werd niet lang daarna opgeborgen op het zolder. En daar ging de oorlog vele jaren voort. Het jongetje wist het niet.

Niemand wist het. Alleen de speelgoedindiaantjes wisten het.

De jongen was diep in het bos terecht gekomen, en werd vastgepakt door een vrouw met een rieten rokje. 'Jij komt hier niet meer weg,' zei de vrouw. 'Zodra je wat langer bent geworden gaan we je opeten.' De jongen begon te kermen en te gillen, en te smeken, maar niets hielp. Toen nam de vrouw hem mee naar een kamp. Hij werd bekeken door meerdere vrouwen. Hij had zich tijdens de wandeling neergelegd bij zijn lot, maar zou alles doen om te ontsnappen. 'Kannibalen zijn wij,' zeiden de vrouwen. 'Je moet nog groeien, langer worden.'
'Hij is nog in de groei,' zei de vrouw.
'Waarom ?' vroeg de jongen. Maar hij kreeg geen antwoord.
Midden in de nacht toen ze allemaal sliepen dacht de jongen dat hij wel weg zou kunnen komen, maar hij maakte veel teveel lawaai, en ze werden wakker en pakten hem weer.
'Stommeling,' zei één van de vrouwen. 'In de kooi moet hij nu, of gebonden worden aan een paal.'
'Ik weet wel wat,' zei een andere vrouw. 'Hij kan ook aan de ketting.' Zo kreeg de jongen een ketting om zijn hals.

Hij werd vastgeketend aan een blok. 'Dat is het slachtblok,' zeiden de vrouwen. 'Je bent niets dan vee.'
'Waarom ?' vroeg de jongen weer. Maar hij kreeg geen antwoord. Toen gingen de vrouwen weer slapen, en de jongen klaagde.
De volgende dag waren ze alweer vroeg wakker. 'Hij groeit goed,' zei één van de vrouwen. 'We kunnen hem bijna opeten.'
Ze maakten hem los van de keten, en hij moest naar een schoolklasje waar ook een andere jongen was. Deze jongen zou ook opgegeten worden als hij langer zou zijn gegroeid. Er waren ook wat meisjes in het schoolklasje die bij de vrouwen leken te horen. Ze hadden ook rieten rokjes, en ze plaagden de jongens over het feit dat ze opgegeten zouden worden.
Een jongen werd wakker van een vreemde droom. Hij ging naar beneden en zag daar zijn vader met de krant. 'Ik heb zo vreemd gedroomd,' zei de jongen. 'Over kannibalen, vrouwen en meisjes met rieten rokjes, en ze zouden me opeten als ik langer was gegroeid. En ik had hele vreemde gevoelens in mijn buik. Heeft u ook weleens zulke dromen gehad ? Is het erfelijk ?'

'We dromen allemaal,' zei zijn vader. 'Ik had die dromen toen ik jonger was, maar toen ik met je moeder was getrouwd had ik geen dromen meer. Volgens mij leef ik nu in een droom.'
'Maar dat is geen droom met kannibalen,' zei de jongen.
'Nou, op mijn werk is het zeer kannibaals,' zei zijn vader.
'Hoezo ?' vroeg de jongen.
'Nou,' zei zijn vader. 'Telkens de dreiging om ontslagen te worden.'
De jongen zuchtte. 'Nou, dat is dan ook niet leuk.'
'Ja,' zei zijn vader, 'maar ze doen dat opdat je het onderste uit de kan haalt en je echt je best doet.'
'Ik begrijp het,' zei de jongen. 'Maar als je ontslagen wordt, dan neem je toch gewoon een andere baan ?'
'Banen liggen hier niet voor het oprapen,' zei zijn vader.
'Wat een gemis dan,' zei de jongen.
'Ja, echt kannibaals,' zei zijn vader.
Toen kwam zijn moeder binnen.
'Waar ben je geweest ?' vroeg de jongen.
'Boodschappen doen,' zei zijn moeder.
'Nog iets meegebracht ?' vroeg de jongen.
'Ja, een boekje voor jou over kannibalen,' zei zijn moeder.
'Toevallig net over kannibalen gedroomd,' zei de jongen.

Hij nam het boekje aan en begon gretig te lezen. Het was een stripboek. 'Nou, dat gaat precies over mijn droom,' zei de jongen.
'Alles staat met elkaar in verbinding,' zei zijn moeder.
'Ik lees nu in de krant,' zei vader, 'dat er weer kannibalen zijn teruggekomen in het bos.'
'Die zijn nooit weggeweest,' zei de moeder van de jongen.
'Jawel,' zei de vader.
'Nee,' zei de moeder. 'Dan heb je toch niet goed je ogen opengehouden.'
'Nou ja, okay, jij zal het wel beter weten,' zei de vader.
'Nou, ken je nog die en die,' zei de moeder. 'Die zijn ook naar zo'n kannibalenstam vertrokken. Ze hadden het helemaal gehad met de wereld.'
'Als kannibaal of als voedsel ?' vroeg de vader.
'Beiden denk ik,' zei de moeder.
Vader keek de moeder vreemd aan. 'Hoe kan dat nou ?'
'Moet je mij niet vragen,' zei de moeder.
'Hoe kom jij daar allemaal bij ?' vroeg de jongen.
'Gedroomd,' zei de moeder.
'Ja, maar dromen zijn niet de werkelijkheid,' zei de jongen.
'Wie zegt dat ?' vroeg de moeder.

'Ja, wie zegt dat ?' vroeg toen ook de vader.

De jongen zuchtte. 'Ik denk dat ik maar weer ga slapen dan. Misschien ben ik nog niet goed wakker.' Toen werd de jongen wakker en besefte dat hij alles gedroomd had. Hij wist niet of hij nog steeds droomde. Hij kneep in zijn arm en voelde niets. Hij kneep toen harder, en sloeg zichzelf in het gezicht en voelde het toen wel. 'Kannibalen, kannibalen,' dacht de jongen bij zichzelf. 'Misschien ijl ik wel.' Hij probeerde op te staan, maar hij kon niet. 'Zie, ik droom nog steeds.' Toen waren de kannibalen in zijn kamer. En toen veranderde zijn kamer in het kannibalenkamp waar hij was. De vrouwen keken naar hem, en de meisjes ook. 'Hij is al gegroeid, langer geworden,' zei één van de meisjes. 'Dat betekent dat hij … opgegeten gaat worden,' zei een ander meisje.

De jongen haalde zijn schouders op, maar omdat ze telkens dichterbij kwamen werd hij wel banger. Hij trapte ze toen weg, en begon te rennen. Maar al snel werd hij teruggesleurd door een lasso. Hij viel neer met vreemde gevoelens in zijn buik, in grote paniek. Hij hoopte dat hij nu toch echt wakker zou worden. Toen aten ze hem op en werd hij wakker.

'Dit is gewoon de kannibalendood,' zei hij tegen zichzelf.
Hij liep naar beneden en zag zijn vader aan de krant.
'Ben ik dood ?' vroeg hij.
'Nee, je leeft nog,' zei zijn vader.
'Ik heb zo vreemd gedroomd, over de kannibalendood, en toen werd ik wakker, mag ik geloven,' zei hij.
'Ik had dat ook, totdat ik je moeder tegen kwam,' zei zijn vader.
'Is het nu beter ?' vroeg de jongen.
'Veel beter,' zei zijn vader. 'Ik heb er daarna niet meer over gedroomd.'
'Saai,' zei de jongen.
'Beter dan de kannibalendood,' zei zijn vader.
'Was ik maar dood,' zei de jongen. 'Dit is ook niks. Weer die stomme school.'
'En ik weer naar mijn werk,' zei zijn vader, 'maar bij moeder is het leven fijn. Zoals het klokje thuis tikt tikt het nergens. Oost west, thuis het best.'
'Iets om naar uit te kijken dan,' zei de jongen.
'Zeer zeker,' zei zijn vader. 'Zeg, wat voor lessen heb je vandaag ?'
'Oh,' zei de jongen. 'Gojsdienst, aardrijkskunde, geschiedenis, volkenkunde.'

'Misschien gaat het dan wel over kannibalen,' zei zijn vader.
'Leraren kunnen soms als kannibalen zijn,' zei de jongen.
'Jazeker, zoals werkbazen ook,' zei zijn vader.
'Zitten we in hetzelfde scheepje,' zei de jongen.
'Jazeker,' zei zijn vader.
Toen kwam de moeder binnen, maar ze was een kannibaal met een rieten rokje.
'Ga je naar carnaval ?' vroeg de jongen.
'Kom ik net vandaan,' zei de moeder. 'Het heeft de hele nacht geduurd.'
'Wat heb je allemaal gedaan ?' vroeg de jongen.
'Nou, kijk eens goed. Ik ben een kannibaal,' zei de moeder. 'Wat denk je dat kannibalen doen ?'
'Ik weet het niet,' zei de jongen. 'Monopolie spelen, of een spelletje kaart ?'
'Malle jongen,' zei de moeder. 'Nee, we hebben lekker gegeten.'
'Wat heb je gegeten ?' vroeg de jongen.
'We hadden jullie nagemaakt van brood,' zei de moeder.
'Is dat een grapje ? Zo niet, dan begrijp ik waarom ik zo'n nachtmerrie heb gehad.'

'Traag,' zei de moeder. 'Natuurlijk is het een grapje.'
'Ja, maar heb je dat echt gedaan ? Ons namaken met brood ?' vroeg de jongen.
'Ja, als grapje,' zei de moeder.
'Nou, leuk grapje,' zei de jongen. 'Vader, wat vind jij ervan ?'
'Grappig,' zei de vader.
'Nou, ik kan er niet om lachen,' zei de jongen. 'Maar ik ga nu naar school, waar de andere kannibalen op me zitten te wachten.'
'En ik ga terug naar mijn werk,' zei de vader.
'Dan ga ik weer terug naar het carnaval,' zei de moeder.
'Flauw,' zei de jongen.
'Waarom gaan jullie niet met me mee ?' vroeg de moeder.
'Omdat we school hebben,' zei de jongen, 'en vader moet werken.'
'Dan gaan jullie toch gewoon spijbelen ?' zei de moeder. 'Voor een keer kan dat geen kwaad. Dan zeg je gewoon dat je ziek was.'
'Goed idee,' zei de vader. En zo gingen ze met z'n drieën naar het carnaval, maar tot hun grote schrik was daar ook de baas van het werk, en wat leraren van school. 'Op heterdaad betrapt,' riepen ze.

'Ja, jullie zeker, want wat doen jullie hier ?' vroeg de jongen.
'Kunnen we beter aan jullie vragen,' vroegen de werkbaas en de leraren.
'Wij komen moeder afzetten,' zei de jongen. 'En wat is jullie smoes ?'
'Nou, laten we er niet meer over praten,' zeiden de leraren. 'Laten we het gewoon een schoolreisje noemen. Ga je ons aangeven bij het schoolbestuur ?'
'Hebben jullie je ziek gemeld ?' vroeg de jongen.
'Ja,' zeiden de leraren. 'We zijn wat overspannen, en dit is therapeutisch.'
'Ja ja,' zei de jongen. 'Nou, dan kan mijn moeder misschien met jullie een uitzondering maken om jullie in het echt op te eten.'
'Dat kan toch niet,' zeiden de leraren. 'Dan komt ze in de gevangenis.'
'Alles beter dan dit hier,' zei de jongen.
De leraren begonnen toen te lachen en hem te duwen. 'Je komt hier niet meer weg,' zeiden ze.
Goedzo,' zei de jongen. 'Carnaval beter dan school.'
'Heb je je al ziek gemeld ?' vroegen de leraren.

'Nog niet,' zei de jongen, 'maar als jullie dat al hebben gedaan hoef ik toch niet te komen.'
Opeens werd de jongen meegesleurd in een grote optocht, en die ging door de hele stad.
'Carnaval beter dan school,' werd er telkens gezongen. 'Carnaval sterker dan school. Carnaval groter dan school. Kannibalen carnaval eet school.'

Einde

de etalage pop

Ze kon zich niet bewegen. Ze was een etalage pop. Telkens moest ze hier maar staan. Niemand nam haar mee. Ze droomde van vrijheid, maar die kwam maar nooit. Ze wist niet eens hoe ze hier was gekomen. Ze keek vaak naar de voorbijgangers, en zag hen naar haar kijken. Ze wilde soms wat zeggen, maar kon het niet. Ze was immers een etalage pop. Op een dag was het oorlog in de stad. Er werd een steen door de ruiten gegooid en er was overal brand. Ineens merkte ze dat ze zich kon bewegen en nam direct de benen. Ze rende helemaal naar achteren, naar het magazijn. Toen de winkelier haar zag viel hij flauw. Ze rende door totdat ze uit het gebouw was. Hier was een tuin en achter de tuin was een hek waar ze overheen klom, en toen rende ze de wildernis in. Ze ontdeed haarzelf van al haar kleren en deed haar grote hoed af en gooide het weg. Ergens in een bosmeertje ging ze baden. Ze keek naar achteren. De stad was brandende. Ze wist niet hoe het kon, maar ze was vrij nu. Nu moest ze zien te overleven. Na een tijd lopen door het bos kwam ze bij een indianenkamp aan. Ze keken haar allemaal heel vreemd aan. 'Dit kan toch niet,' zei het opperhoofd. 'Ze lijkt wel op een pop.'

'Oh, daar heb ik wel wat voor,' zei de medicijnenman. Ze kreeg toen een soepje met kruiden. 'Ik kan me weer goed bewegen,' zei ze toen. 'Ik voel me helemaal geen pop meer.'
'Je ziet er ook niet meer als een pop uit,' zei de medicijnman glimlachend. 'De natuur weet altijd wel raad met dit soort dingen.'
'Moet ik niet terug ?' vroeg ze, terwijl ze naar achteren keek.
'Nee,' zei de medicijnman, 'je kan hier wel blijven.'
'Oh goed,' zei ze, 'want ik wil helemaal niet terug.'
'Er is ook geen weg meer terug,' zei de medicijnman. 'De stad is afgebrand.'
'En er zijn geen andere steden ?' vroeg ze.
'Nee,' zei de medicijnman, 'ook allemaal afgebrand.'
'Hoe kwam dat ?' vroeg ze.
De medijnman haalde zijn schouders op. 'Ze maken elkaar allemaal af daar.'
'I … ik kan hier niet blijven,' stamelde ze. 'Ik voel me weer als een pop.' Ze stond op en rende terug het bos in, richting de brandende stad, en rende toen zo het vuur in.

'Ah, vuur !' riep ze, terwijl ze begon te branden. 'Eindelijk vrij.'
De medicijnman en het opperhoofd waren haar gevolgd. 'Wat doe je nu !' riep het opperhoofd, terwijl ze zag dat de medicijnman hem aanstootte. 'Ik ben vrij nu !' riep ze.
'Ja, maar je brandt !' riep het opperhoofd. Weer zag ze hoe de medicijnman hem aanstootte.
Haar poppenvlees begon weg te smelten. Eronder was niets dan metaal. Het was vuurvast metaal. 'Ik ben ook niet kapot te krijgen !' riep ze.
'Wacht hier maar !' riep de medicijnman. Na een tijd plofte ze vermoeid neer in het zand. De medicijnman begon haar uit elkaar te schroeven. 'Wat doe je nu ?' vroeg het opperhoofd. Weer stootte de medicijnman hem aan. 'Ik ben bezig,' zei de medicijnman.
Ze sprak niet meer, zoals ze eerst niet sprak. Dit was wat er van haar was overgebleven, en de medicijnman was nog niet klaar. Hij begon haar helemaal opnieuw te maken. Ze was nu een donkere vrouw en leek op een indiaan. Maar de medicijnman schudde zijn hoofd. 'Nee, nee, dat is het niet,' zei hij. Hij begon haar weer uit elkaar te schroeven en gooide de onderdelen stuk voor stuk in een rivier dichtbij waar krokodillen waren. Die lustten de onderdelen

wel, en konden het ook verteren. 'Wat heb je nu gedaan ?' riep het opperhoofd in paniek. 'Je hebt haar omgebracht !'
'Welnee,' zei de medicijnman. 'Ze was maar een pop.'
'Misschien ben jij ook wel een pop,' zei het opperhoofd. 'Je lijkt wel gek.'
'Prik er eens in,' zei de medicijnman.
Waarin ?' vroeg het opperhoofd.
'Nou, in mijn huid, dan zie je of ik een pop ben of niet,' zei de medicijnman.
Voorzichtig stak het opperhoofd met een scherp voorwerp in de huid van de medicijnman. Die gaf geen kik.
'Je bent een pop,' zei het opperhoofd.
Ook het indianendorp was inmiddels gaan branden vanwege de vele bosbranden die vanuit de stad waren gekomen. Het opperhoofd keek om zich heen, en zag overal rook. 'En wat heb ik aan je als je slechts een pop bent ? En nog een gevaarlijke pop ook,' zei het opperhoofd. 'Misschien moet ik jou dan ook maar aan de krokodillen voeren.'
'Schroef me dan wel eerst uit elkaar,' zei de medicijnman.
'Wat ?' vroeg het opperhoofd. 'Ben je gek geworden ?'

Ineens kwam de vrouw uit het water. 'Hoe kan dat ?' vroeg het opperhoofd. 'Ik dacht dat je door krokodillen was opgevreten ?'
'Ze hebben me weer uitgespuwd,' zei de vrouw.
'Waarom ?' vroeg het opperhoofd, 'en ben je nu geen pop meer dan ?'
'Nou ja, het metaal hebben ze gegeten,' zei de vrouw. 'Maar ik ben meer dan het metaal. Ik zat in het metaal opgesloten.'
'Pardon, pardon,' zei het opperhoofd. 'Ik had van deze zaken geen verstand. Ik heb u verkeerd beoordeeld medicijnman.'
'In het vervolg dan je bek houden,' zei de medicijnman, 'en laat alles aan de experts over.'
'Begrepen,' zei het opperhoofd. 'En omdat ik me zo stom heb gedragen ben jij vanaf nu het opperhoofd,' zei hij tegen de medicijnman.
'Laat dat deze vrouw maar wezen,' zei de medicijnman.
En toen hebben ze samen het indianendorp weer opgebouwd.

de soepkom

De jongens waren uit hun kooi ontsnapt en renden de vlakte op. Ze moesten toen diep naar beneden springen in de rivier, en zwommen toen naar de overkant. Zo keerden ze terug naar hun kamp. Maar er was één jongen die niet durfde te springen. Weer werd hij opgepakt en ging terug in de kooi. Hij had er spijt van dat hij niet had gesprongen bij de waterval in de rivier. Maar het was zo hoog, dat hij bang was dat hij te pletter zou vallen.

Hij kon wel uit de kooi kijken. Het was een prachtige natuur. Maar ja, dat was ook bij zijn kamp. Het hele gebied was prachtige natuur. Hij was niet anders gewend. Hier was hij geboren. Maar nu was hij in het vreemde kamp. Zijn overvallers keken hem aan. Ze droegen zwepen.

Ze lieten hem van vreemd spul drinken, uit een kom. Het was een soort soep. Een tijdje later zeiden ze dat zijn kamp was afgebrand en dat hij de enige overlevende was. Zijn

hoogtevrees had dus zijn leven gered. Maar ja, wat voor leven ? Hij was een gevangene.

Er klopte iets niet met deze mensen. Ze waren goudzoekers. Ze leken uit het stadsgebied te komen of van het platteland. Ze stelden hem allemaal vragen. Midden in de nacht zette een vrouw hem vrij. Hij rende en rende. Hij zou ditmaal via het gebergte gaan en dat was een ware klimtocht. Hij verdwaalde ergens in een grottenstelsel maar kwam er toch ook weer uit aan de andere kant. Zijn kamp bestond inderdaad niet meer toen hij daar kwam, maar hij zou zich aansluiten bij een ander kamp, een groter indianenkamp.

Hij werd direct gastvrij ontvangen. Een indiaanse vrouw nam hem onder haar hoede. Hij vertelde haar over de goudzoekers en hoe ze zijn kamp in de brand hadden gestoken. Maar de vrouw zei dat een andere indianenstam het kamp in de brand had gestoken. Hij wist niet wat hij moest geloven.

Hij speelde met de kinderen van het kamp. 's Nachts moesten ze op monsterjacht, boze geesten die het kamp bedreigden. Op de rivier hadden ze hun boten. Daarmee konden ze snel ergens komen. Ook in het water leefden monsters, boze geesten.

Zijn nieuwe moeder onderwees hem veel. Maar hij wist niet wat hij moest geloven. Het was zo anders dan wat hij in zijn eigen kamp had geleerd. En ze hadden zulke vreemde rituelen, zoals van hoge kliffen afspringen in het water. Nu durfde hij het wel, en hij moest ook wel, anders zou hij nooit een vrouw krijgen. Hij vond het vreemd. Ook werd hij in een ton gestopt en van een heuvel afgerold, wat hij bijna niet overleefde. Ook moest hij zich laten steken door een zwerm wespen. Ook gingen er pennen door zijn borst, en moest hij vasten.

Zijn nieuwe moeder zei dat het traditie was. Hij vond het vreemd en gevaarlijk. Op een dag rende hij weg uit het kamp. Hij wilde liever alleen wonen. Hij raakte in gevecht met een verschrikkelijk grote slang. Hij werd ook verschrikkelijk gebeten. Meer dood dan levend is hij toen maar teruggegaan naar het kamp. Zijn nieuwe moeder verbond zijn wonden en gaf hem medicijnen. Maar eigenlijk hielp niets. Ze heeft toen goudzoekers laten komen om zijn leven te redden. Die namen hem mee naar een ziekenhuis in een stad. Hier begon hij langzaam te herstellen. Voor de tweede keer hadden goudzoekers zijn leven gered.

Hij vroeg naar welk goud ze eigenlijk op zoek waren. Ze zeiden toen : naar het goud van het hart.

marian's moeder

Marian's moeder, een bekende zangeres overigens, en haar dochter die bij mij in de klas zat moest zo nodig aan iedereen rondbazuinen dat haar moeder eens in bed had geplast. In ieder geval ging ik weleens met haar en haar moeder naar de bibliotheek. Dat kwam zo uit. Ik bracht ook weleens stripboeken voor haar mee. Ze hield van lezen. Haar moeder ook. Haar moeder had verder een heel druk leven, keek bijna niet naar Marian en mij om. Op een keer nam ze ons mee met een bootje over het meer naar een eilandje. Er woonde verder niemand op het eiland, dus het was er erg rustig en toen hebben we wat spelletjes gedaan, maar moesten we weer snel terug, want Marian's moeder moest optreden. Wij mochten dan ook mee naar het concert. Het was prachtig. We werden behandeld als prins en prinses, want wij hoorden bij deze koningin van de muziek. Mensen vroegen zelfs om onze handtekening. Ik zei toen nog zo van : Ja, maar ik heb helemaal niks gedaan. Maar het kon hen niet schelen. Ik hoorde erbij. Gelukkig ben ik nooit beroemd geworden. Toen Marian eens ging verhuizen bleef er van ons contact maar weinig over, maar je hoort nog weleens wat. Ik ben haar zus nog

eens tegengekomen in een restaurant waar ik destijds werkte. Zij werkte daar ook. Zij was heel anders dan Marian. Ze had een veel grotere mond, meer als haar moeder. Volgens mij speelde ze clarinet, maar zong niet als haar moeder. Dat contact verwaterde toen ook toen ik daar niet meer werkte. Ik ben wel altijd naar de muziek van Marian's moeder blijven luisteren. Dat waren toch hele mooie herinneringen. Ze zullen me wel niet meer kennen of herinneren. Ik ben een nobody. Of misschien herinneren ze me wel. Ik heb ze altijd veel verhalen verteld. Daar herinneren veel mensen van vroeger mij van, van mijn verhalen. Ik had nogal grote opschepperige verhalen, dus dat moeten ze zich eigenlijk wel kunnen herinneren, want het waren geen alledaagse verhalen. Ik denk nog vaak terug aan het bootje en het eiland in het meer. Toen we teruggingen regende het. Het regende zo hard dat we dachten dat we nooit meer aan de overkant zouden komen. Maar we moesten wel, want Marian's moeder moest optreden. Ze was aan het gillen naar de regen : Stop, stop ! Ik keek naar de overkant, en het leek telkens verder weg te gaan. Ik zei toen : Doe dan wat ! Toen is ze gaan zingen, over de regen. Ze dook toen ook in het water en bleef heel lang weg. Toen ze boven kwam

was de regen weg. Toen we eindelijk aan de overkant waren waren daar allemaal fotografen. Ik gilde toen : Ik wil niet op de foto ! Ik wou dat we voor altijd op dat eiland waren gebleven. Maar ja, Marian's moeder moest optreden. Ze zei altijd dat we op missie waren.

'Dekentje, neem mij op hoog,' zei hij, terwijl hij op zijn dekentje boven de stad vloog. Hij wilde niet meer bij de mensen zijn, want die draaiden alles om wat hij zei. Hij vond het vreemd dat zijn dekentje bijna vleugels had en dat het kon vliegen, maar hij nam gebruik ervan. Hij was in zijn slaapkamer toen er een grote vlinder voor zijn raam verscheen, en hij keek naar buiten en zag niets dan wildernis, bossen, naaldbomen. Hij zag bergen, heuvels. Toen kon zijn dekentje vliegen, en hij hield zich eraan vast en klom er toen op. Dat vwas een heel geklauter. Hij voelde zich warm en veilig bij het dekentje. En hij volgde de vlinder op zijn dekentje, en er leek een straal water uit de lucht te komen, uit een wolk. Ergens diep in het bos zette het dekentje hem neer, en hij sloeg het dekentje om zich heen. Zo liep hij verder door het zand, op blote voeten. Hij was van de mens verlost en wilde niet meer terug. Hij keek om zich heen of hij niet gevolgd werd. Hij werd alleen gevolgd door de vlinder. Er begonnen meerdere dekentjes uit het dekentje te komen. Hier kon hij een tent van bouwen. Maar het dekentje hield niet op, en steeds kwamen er meerdere dekentjes uit. Hij zou er een

nieuwe stad van kunnen bouwen, zo in het bos, en dat deed hij ook. Het werd een bosstad gemaakt van dekentjes, en de vlinder was zijn enige vriend, en natuurlijk de dekentjes.
Hij had het altijd warm en op een dag was er een bosbrand. Zijn dekentje nam hem weer op, en vloog met hem weg, en alle andere dekentjes vlogen achter hem aan. Zij volgden de vlinder. Ze kwamen aan bij een bosmeer nog veel dieper in het bos, daar waar de bosbrand niet was. Ze vlogen over het bosmeer en daar bouwde hij opnieuw zijn kamp. Nu begonnen er nog meer dekentjes uit de dekentjes te komen. Hij hield het niet meer bij. Hij werd helemaal bedolven onder de dekentjes. Hij had het erg warm. Er begonnen bergen van dekentjes te ontstaan, en er doorheen waren tunnels. Hier zocht hij zijn weg. De vlinder wees hem de weg, en zijn eigen dekentje ging met hem mee. Na een hele lange tijd kwam hij uit de tunnels, en zag hij een meisje staan. Ze leek zo zacht als dekentjes. En hij noemde haar dekentje, maar ze sprak niet. Hij liet haar zijn dekentje zien, en ze gingen er samen op zitten. Toen vloog het dekentje met hen weg. Ze kwamen uiteindelijk toen aan bij een zee waar zeer hoge golven waren. Maar toen ze dichter bij de golven kwamen bleken

het niets anders dan dekentjes te zijn. Het was een zee van dekentjes.
Opeens merkte hij dat het dekentje niet meer vloog, en ze vielen omlaag in de zee van dekentjes. Toen werd hij wakker, maar de droom is hem altijd bijgebleven.

het land van tevredenheid

Zaaistra en zijn vrouw,
als een droom in een tuin,
maar hij wilde van zijn vrouw af,
en ook van zijn tuin,
want hij wilde de wijde wereld in,
weg van het saaie leventje wat tot een sleur was geworden,

altijd maar weer dezelfde routines, altijd maar weer dezelfde paadjes
Daarom ging Zaaistra op een dag op zijn fiets weg,
het was heel vroeg.
Het was mooi weer,
en hij had zijn knapzak meegenomen,
met dingen die weleens van pas zouden kunnen komen
Hij reed diep het bos in,
en ergens daar in die diepte van het bos,
daar zat een dwerg
Wilde je niet meer ? vroeg de dwerg
Wat ? vroeg Zaaistra die afstapte van zijn fiets om de dwerg te bewonderen
Nou, wil je niet meer die tuin en die vrouw ? vroeg de dwerg

Nee, niet echt, zei Zaaistra, ik heb het nogal gehad,
Ik wil de wijde wereld in
Daar kan ik je wel bij helpen, zei de dwerg
Maar het begon zo te spoken en te griezelen daar in de diepte en engte van het bos,
dat Zaaistra maar weer wat graag terugwilde naar zijn tuin en zijn vrouw

Laat maar, zei Zaaistra, en draaide zich om, stapte weer op zijn fiets en ging terug
Maar hoe hard hij ook fietste, het spookte hier allemaal,
En toen hij terugkwam was zijn tuin een spooktuin en zijn vrouw was ook een spook
Wat is er met je gebeurd ? vroeg Zaaistra verbaasd
Ach, zei de vrouw die nu een spook was,
Ik heb zoveel jaren op je zitten wachten totdat ik een spook was,
Er is niet veel van me overgebleven,
Je kan zo je hand door me heensteken
Zoveel jaren ? vroeg Zaaistra verbaasd ?
Maar ik ben vanochtend pas naar het bos gegaan, niet vele jaren terug
En toen vertelde hij haar over de dwerg

Het is een tijdrover, zei zijn vrouw,
Als je je met hen inlaat, dan trekken ze al je jaren van je af als een kleed
Volgens mij ben ik behekst, zei Zaaistra
En het heeft mij ook behekst, zei zijn vrouw
Wat nu ? vroeg Zaaistra, die al erachter was gekomen dat hij zo zijn hand door zijn vrouw heen kon steken

Ik ken wel een medicijn, zei zijn vrouw,
tevredenheid
Ja, ja, ik snap hem al, zei Zaaistra,
Ik ga vanavond vroeg naar bed, en zal een dankgebedje doen voor al het mooie wat ik nog heb, het had veel erger kunnen wezen
Tijdrovers, hoe verzinnen ze het
En zo gebeurde het,
Zaaistra ging vroeg naar bed, en telde zijn zegeningen, en dankte ervoor, omdat het veel erger had gekund
Maar toen hij 's ochtends wakker werd was zijn vrouw een hond
Wat nu ? Wat heb ik nu aan mijn klomp hangen ? vroeg Zaaistra verbaasd
Maar de hond kon alleen maar blaffen
Hij keek naar buiten en de hele tuin was verdord, nog wel erger dan de dag ervoor
Nu heb ik alleen nog maar een hond, dacht Zaaistra
Elke dag ging hij met de hond wandelen,
langs allerlei plaatsjes waar hij mooie herinneringen aan had
Ik ben blij dat ik nog een hond heb, zei hij telkens tegen zichzelf,

het had veel erger kunnen wezen

Op een dag besloot hij met de hond een bezoekje af te leggen aan de dwerg,

Hij wist nog wel waar het was,

Toen hij de dwerg zag zei hij : Zo, zo, tijdrover,

lang niet gezien

Tevredenheid kent geen tijd, zei de dwerg

Nee, zei Zaaistra, omdat jij al mijn tijd hebt afgeroofd,

me de jaren van het lijf hebt genomen,

Kijk eens naar m'n vrouw

Dat is je vrouw niet,

zei de dwerg,

Je hebt zo lang lopen slapen dat ze allang naar het zielenrijk was afgedaald, en toen heb ik maar een hond naar je gestuurd, zie je, ik ben de ergste nog niet

Allemaal om mij tevredenheid te leren ? vroeg Zaaistra

Nee, om je de wijde wereld te leren kennen, zei de dwerg

Ik begrijp het, zei Zaaistra, en wat nu, want ik ben alles kwijt

Alles kwijt ? vroeg de dwerg

Je bent een ervaring rijker

Nou leuk, zei Zaaistra spottend, nog meer grapjes ?

Ik heb nog wel een hobbelpaard voor je, zei de dwerg

Laat maar, zei Zaaistra en ging weer naar huis met de hond
Aangekomen staat er bij zijn huis een hobbelpaard,
Dan neemt hij het hobbelpaard naar binnen
Nu heb ik een hond en een hobbelpaard,
zei Zaaistra, wat is het leven toch mooi
Na een tijdje had hij een woede aanval en gooide het hobbelpaard door de ruiten
Allemaal door die stomme dwerg, die tijdrover, foeterde hij,
en nu ook nog een gat in mijn raam,
wat een prachtige dag, en wat een prachtig leven,
hij mag wel trots zijn op zichzelf dat hij dat voor anderen kan maken
Toen hij de dag erop wakker werd was zijn hond dood …
Hij had toen spijt dat hij het hobbelpaard naar buiten had gegooid door het raam en haalde het weer op
Nu was het hobbelpaard het laatste wat hij had
Hij omhelsde het paard en weende
Die avond ging hij naar bed en telde zijn zegeningen, en dankte de hemel voor het hobbelpaard, terwijl tranen over zijn wangen biggelden …
Toen hij de dag erop wakker werd zat er een feeenprinses op het hobbelpaard

Ik kom je vrouw vervangen, zei de feeenprinses met een grote glimlach
Nee laat maar, zei Zaaistra, ik heb genoeg aan mijn hobbelpaard en ik ga zo lekker een appeltje eten
Maar ik kan heerlijke appeltaarten bakken, zei de vrouw met een nog grotere glimlach
Ik houd nogal van eenvoud, zei Zaaistra, ik ben nogal tevreden aangelegd, ik houd van mijn kapotte raam, kan ik zo mijn tuin inkijken, en mijn broek is ook stuk
Kan ik met gemak maken, schaterde de feeenvrouw, maar je hebt geeneens een tuin
Ik heb niet veel nodig, zei Zaaistra
Nou, je bent ook niet echt dankbaar, zei de fee
Nee, dat komt door al die tijdrovers, zei Zaaistra, ik heb wel andere dingen te doen
Een spelletje doen kan er ook niet vanaf ? vroeg de fee
Nee, maar omdat je zo aandringt mag je mijn buurvrouw wel wezen
Oh, wat lief en wat aardig, je buurvrouw, wat een eer, en dan ben jij nu mijn buurman, zei ze met een grote glimlach
Afgesproken, zei Zaaistra eveneens met een glimlach
Ik weet zeker dat je tuintje daar goed van zal bloeien, zei de fee, ik houd wel een oogje in het zeil

En zo gebeurde het, het feeenvrouwtje ging naast Zaaistra wonen als zijn buurvrouw, niet te dichtbij en niet te ver weg
Op een dag merkte hij dat zijn hobbelpaard kon spreken en vliegen
Hij is er toen op weggevlogen en niemand heeft hem ooit nog teruggezien
Men zegt dat hij in het land van tevredenheid woont

De Maagd van Utenweil

De maagd stond hoog op de toren.
Sjieke dames met waaiers en bepoederde gezichten trokken hun neus op toen er een meisje langsliep.
‘Ze stinkt, parbleu. Bah, wat een vies kind.’
Minachtende blikken wierpen ze het meisje toe. Ook maakten ze wegwuifende bewegingen.

‘Ja, ze stinkt naar onverschilligheid. Dit meisje heeft niets op met de goede herder. Bah, wat vies en goor. Daar valt toch niet mee te leven. Ga weg, kind. Jij hoort hier niet.’

Het meisje begon te lachen, brutaal als ze was. En rende weg.

De Maagd van Utenweil weende hoog op de toren.

Het was een standbeeld.

De sjieke dames van Utenweil liepen haastig door, al roddelend, fluisterend, vol met oordelen naar hun onverschillige medemens. Ze hadden een grote haat naar de liefdeloosheid, en poederden zichzelf telkens om hier tegen bestand te zijn. Nee, dat hoorde niet bij hen. Dat paste niet bij hen. Dat was vies. Oh, zo sjiek waren ze, en ze spraken zo beleefd en keurig, want dat had de goede herder hen geleerd. En ze hadden een vergunning om zo te zijn, om op straat mensen zo af te kafferen. Zij werkten immers bij de geheime politie.

De maagd van Utenweil weende.

Ze was helemaal naakt.

Maar ze was een standbeeld, dus niemand deerde het.

Telkens weende zij als er iemand onverschillig was.

Maar er was niemand zo onverschillig als de sjieke dames van Utenweil.

Oh, zo schoon waren ze, hun witte jurken witter dan wit.
Als er een pluisje of vuiltje op de grond lag, dan raakten ze helemaal in paniek.
Dan grepen ze de spuitbus in grote onverschilligheid naar het vuil, en dan haalden ze stoffer en blik erbij en ander zwaar geschut. Dan ging het vuil of de rommel zonder pardon de prullenbak in.
Nee, niemand was sjieker en schoner dan de sjieke dames van Utenweil.
Iedereen kende hen, en iedereen vreesde hen.
Ze traden op tegen het grote vuil van de liefdeloosheid.
Daar hadden ze geen medelijden mee.
Dan waren ze koud en hardvochtig als roofdieren.
Dan stonden ze aan de kant van de goede herder.
Ja, wilde dames waren zij.
Een masker in de maatschappij.
Zij waren immers bij de geheime politie.
De maagd van Utenweil weende,
tranen van vreugde.
De kinderen waren immers beveiligd.
Het alarm was goed afgegaan.
De overtreder afgedropen …
De maagd van Utenweil,

een schat eens gevonden op de bodem van de zee,
bij een gezonken schip,
met de sjieke dames van Utenweil aan haar zijde.

Moulderie

Moulderie heette ze. Ze had prachtige sandalen aan. Ik wist niet waar ze vandaan kwam. Ze scheen hier te wonen, maar ik had haar nog nooit eerder gezien. Ze was buitenlands. Haar tuin was natuurrijk, weelderig, en het was prachtig weer. Ik dacht dat er andere mensen woonden, maar die waren klaarblijkelijk alweer

vertrokken. Moulderie keek me aan, alsof ze me al jaren kende. Het voelde heel vertrouwd. Ik was hier vroeger weleens geweest, toen er nog andere mensen woonden. Ze nodigde me uit binnen te komen. Er stonden hier allemaal rieten spullen en rieten stoelen. Het was een heel tropisch geheel.

Ze maakte wat brood klaar met plakken kaas. Toen aten we wat broodjes. 'Ik snap jou niet,' zei ze. 'Je komt zo met me mee alsof je me al jaren kent.'

'Het lijkt wel zo,' zei ik.

'Waarom ben je zo ?' vroeg ze.

Ik keek naar haar sandalen. 'Je bent zelf ook heel gastvrij.'

Ja, zei ze. Ik heb het al elf dagen vol gehouden hier. Ik trakteer mezelf. De andere dagen heb ik me afgezonderd gehouden.

En ik ben de traktatie ? vroeg ik.

Wat contact doet de mens goed, zei ze. Hoe je het ook wil noemen.

Ik knikte.

Ik wilde gewoon weten wie hier nu woonde, zei ik. Ik ken het huis van vroeger.

Vertel, zei ze.

Ik keek weer naar haar sandalen. Het is goed zo, zei ik.

Oh, ben jij er zo één, zei ze. Toch wel introvert.
Ik heb twee kanten, zei ik.
Ze keek me aan. Wat als … zei ze.
Wat ? vroeg ik.
Wat heb je om je hals ? vroeg ze.
Een ketting, zei ik. Kreeg ik eens.
Van wie ? vroeg ze.
Het is goed zo, zei ik.
Je wil er niet over praten ? vroeg ze.
Ik keek naar haar sandalen.
Mooie sandalen, zei ik.
Ja, zei ze. Ze bewoog naar me toe en nam mijn hand.
Kom, zei ze toen, en trok me naar boven, naar het zolder. Ik keek er helemaal niet vreemd van op, Het was alsof ik haar al jaren kende.
Kijk door het raam, zei ze.
Ik keek naar de bomen, naar de prachtige natuur, naar haar tuin, zo weelderig. Ook op zolder stonden rieten spullen.
Hier wil ik dat je slaapt, zei ze.
Er stond een bed met een deken op de matras. Het was verder een eenvoudig zolder.
Ik wil dat je me wat uitlegt, zei ze …

Maar toen werd ik wakker. Het was maar een droom. Ik dacht na over vroeger. Ik kende geen Moulderie. Ik vroeg me af wat het betekende. Ik dacht aan haar prachtige sandalen. Hoe zou een mens zoiets kunnen bedenken ? Het was hemels, en ook haar tuin. Misschien was ik wel in de hemel geweest. Ik liep toen naar wat boekjes die ik van een tante had geërfd. Ik had ze nog nooit gelezen. Ze lagen in een doos. Tot mijn grote verbazing ging het eerste boekje wat ik eruit greep over Moulderie. Ik begon als een razende te lezen. De letters duizelden voor mijn ogen, alsof ze tot mij sprak, alsof haar hand door de letters weer naar mij reikte zoals in de droom. Was ik wel echt wakker ? Ik greep naar mijn hand en kneep, maar voelde niets. Nee, ik had niet het idee dat ik echt wakker was. Toen werd ik eindelijk wakker. Ik had wel net wat boekjes geërfd van een tante, en ik begon ze allemaal te lezen, maar nergens ging het over Moulderie …

De Wonderplaatjes

Hij verkocht plaatjes van vrouwen. De plaatjes bewogen, maar het waren eigenlijk een soort verhalen. Volgens de politie gingen de verhalen te ver, en daarom was het ook verboden. Plaatjesdealers waren in de ogen van de politie erger dan drugsdealers. Hij verkocht de plaatjes daarom ook altijd stiekem, en liever helemaal niet. Dit maakte

hem mysterieus. Zijn plaatjes waren gewild, maar eigenlijk moest je wel heel speciaal zijn wilde je een kans hebben zo'n plaatje van hem te kunnen kopen. De plaatjes waren ook nog eens erg duur. Theo was helemaal door het dolle heen toen hij op een dag zo'n zeer gewild plaatje kon bemachtigen. Hij kon er uren naar staren. Het plaatje bewoog, en ook de lippen van de vrouw, en zij vertelde een verhaal. Het plaatje gaf dus ook geluid af. Met een draaischijf aan de zijkant van het plaatje kun je het geluid harder of zachter zetten. Hij liet het verhaal telkens weer afspelen totdat hij het uit zijn hoofd kende en gewoon naar de lippen van de vrouw keek. Hij vond het verhaal helemaal niet te ver gaan, maar hij hoorde van anderen dat de andere verhalen veel erger waren. Hij zou wel meer van zulke plaatjes willen hebben, maar hij was al dolgelukkig dat hij er één had. Hij had nooit gedacht dat het hem op een dag zou lukken zo'n plaatje te krijgen. Al zijn klasgenootjes waren stikjaloers.

Hij speelde er teveel mee, zelfs op school, en op een dag nam de juffrouw het van hem af. 'Je weet dat die plaatjes verboden zijn,' zei de juffrouw. En hij wist toen dat de pret was afgelopen. Hij was te ver gegaan en te onvoorzichtig geweest. Hij kon zichzelf wel voor z'n kop slaan.

Sommige jongens van de oudere klassen lieten nog steeds hun plaatjes wapperen, maar alleen op het schoolplein. Ze zouden het niet in de klas doen waar de meester of juffrouw het kon zien. Het waren vaak vrienden van de jongen die de plaatjes verkocht. Theo vertelde het verhaal aan de jongen die de plaatjes verkocht toen hij hem weer zag, maar die was niet geïnteresseerd. "Had je maar beter moeten oppassen," zei de jongen. "Je krijgt geen nieuwe."

Theo ging teleurgesteld naar huis, en vertelde het aan zijn vader en moeder. "Ach," zei zijn moeder, "ik heb nog wel zulke plaatjes voor je. Wij hadden ze vroeger ook. Ze moeten ergens in een doos op zolder liggen nog." Theo was helemaal door het dolle heen. Zijn moeder kwam even later aanzetten met een hele schoenendoos vol met bewegende plaatjes. Theo nam ze één voor één uit de schoenendoos. "Wat zijn het voor verhalen, mam ?" vroeg hij.

"Ga ze maar luisteren," zei zijn moeder, "maar neem ze nooit mee naar school. Je hebt inmiddels gezien wat er dan kan gebeuren."

Hij nam de schoenendoos mee naar zijn kamer en ging luisteren. Hij hing de plaatjes in zijn kamer. Niemand, maar dan ook niemand, kon zijn geluk nog tegenhouden.

Hij begon zich steeds meer op zijn kamer op te sluiten, en wilde niet meer naar school. De plaatjes onderwezen hem beter, zei hij. Maar hij werd een verslaafde, en had al snel andere plaatjes nodig. Hij zocht contact met de plaatjesdealer, maar die dacht dat hij gek geworden was. "Kijk eens naar jezelf," zei de plaatjesdealer, "je staat helemaal te trillen, en je ogen zijn helemaal rood. Dit is niet meer normaal. Hoe kwam je aan die plaatjes ?"

"Van mijn moeder," zei Theo. "Van vroeger."

De plaatjesdealer keek hem diep in zijn ogen. "Weet je het dan niet ?" zei hij. "Vroeger verkochten ze gevaarlijke rommel. Die vrouwen zijn gevaarlijk. Ze maken je gek."

"Wat kan ik doen ?" vroeg Theo. "Ik smeek je me te helpen."

De plaatjesdealer keek hem weer diep in zijn ogen. "Ik heb je gewaarschuwd," zei hij, en liep weg.

"Nee, alsjeblieft," huilde Theo. "Je moet me helpen."

De plaatjesdealer draaide zich om. "Vooruit," zei hij. "Breng mij die plaatjes van vroeger en je krijgt van mij een nieuwe." Even later kwam Theo met de schoenendoos en gaf het aan de plaatjesdealer. Theo kreeg in ruil een nieuw plaatje. Dat was alles wat hij nodig had. Toen de plaatjesdealer thuis kwam zette hij de schoenendoos met

plaatjes op een tafel, en begon op de vrouwen te schelden. "Jullie moeten getemd worden. Jullie hebben die jongen helemaal het hoofd gek lopen maken." Maar het temmen liep op niets uit. De plaatjesdealer raakte gefrustreerd en op een dag gooide hij de schoenendoos met plaatjes weg. Maar toen kreeg hij ineens een ingeving. Hij dacht aan Theo, en toen aan de moeder van Theo. Hij zou de schoenendoos naar haar terugbrengen en haar zeggen dat ze het niet meer terug moest geven aan Theo. Theo's moeder begreep het hele verhaal en ze zou de schoenendoos goed opbergen. Theo's moeder zou ook wel eens alle nieuwe plaatjes willen zien. De plaatjesdealer nam haar toen mee naar zijn huis. De plaatjes hingen door het hele huis. Theo's moeder keek haar ogen uit. "Kan ik er wat meer kopen voor Theo ?" vroeg ze. De plaatjesdealer stemde toe. De plaatjes waren heel duur, maar Theo's moeder was rijk, zeer rijk. Ze kwam toen met een heleboel nieuwe plaatjes thuis voor Theo. Maar de pret duurde niet lang. De politie had er hoogte van gekregen en begon huiszoekingen te doen, en Theo werd niet overgeslagen. De plaatjes werden in beslag genomen, en ook de schoenendoos werd gevonden en in beslag genomen.

Theo's moeder waarschuwde de politie voor het gevaar van de plaatjes, maar ze luisterden niet. Snel wist iedereen het. De politie was binnen korte tijd een stel verslaafden. Ze waren zoals Theo eens was, trillerig, met rode ogen, en smekend. Maar er waren geen meerdere plaatjes meer, hoe veel ze ook op huiszoeking gingen. Ze smeekten de plaatjesdealer om meer plaatjes, en ze smeekten ook Theo en zijn moeder. "Probeer het maar bij juffrouw Jans," zei Theo. "Zij heeft eens zo'n plaatje van me afgenomen." Daar strompelden ze toen als dronkaarden naartoe. "Tja," zei de juffrouw, "die heb ik eens aan mijn ex-man gegeven en die woont nu in het buitenland."

Ze moesten en zouden daar naartoe gaan, maar onderweg verdwaalden ze. Ze waren niet henzelf meer en hadden hun gevoel van orientatie verloren. "Het plaatje, het plaatje !" riepen ze. Ze had hen ook nog eens een vals adres gegeven. Ze kwamen uiteindelijk aan bij het huis van een oude vrouw aan de rand van een bos, in het buitenland. Ze vroegen direct om het plaatje. "Plaatje ?" vroeg de vrouw. "Waar hebben jullie het over ?" Toen vertelden ze stotterend en stamelend het hele verhaal, terwijl het speeksel van hun monden droop. "Ik zal direct de dokter bellen," zei het vrouwtje. "Het gaat niet goed met jullie."

Toen de dokter kwam kreeg hij ook het hele verhaal te horen. "Oh, die plaatjes ?" zei hij. "Ik heb er eens een hele doos van geërfd, van wel honderden jaren geleden. Je mag ze wel hebben als jullie denken dat het jullie gaat helpen. Ik doe er toch niets mee." De dokter nam de trillende en bevende politie-agenten mee naar zijn huis, en liet hen de doos zien. "Plaatjes, plaatjes, plaatjes !" riepen de agenten, alsof ze goud hadden gevonden. Hun ogen puilden er helemaal uit, en ze grepen de plaatjes en begonnen ze in het rond te strooien alsof ze in een geldmijn waren gekomen. "Plaatjes, plaatjes, plaatjes !" riepen ze. Dat was alles wat ze nog konden zeggen. De vrouw van de dokter schudde haar hoofd. "Die plaatjes werden vroeger verboden, en ik weet nu waarom," sprak ze. "Mensen worden stapelgek."

"Ik heb er wel een medicijn voor denk ik," zei de dokter.

"Dan mag je snel zijn," zei zijn vrouw. "Anders wordt jij er zo ook nog door aangestoken." De dokter keek zijn vrouw aan met rode ogen, en toen weer naar de plaatjes die overal om hem heen lagen. "Plaatjes, plaatjes, plaatjes !" riep de dokter, en waggelde achter de politie-agenten aan. "We moeten meer van die rotzooi hebben, waar zijn ze ?" riep de dokter. Maar niet lang daarna kon

hij ook alleen maar "plaatjes, plaatjes, plaatjes" zeggen. "Jullie hebben teveel praatjes !" riep de vrouw van de dokter. Ze begon de plaatjes op te rapen en deed ze weer in de doos. "Levensgevaarlijk zulke plaatjes," sprak ze. "Ik zal het goed opbergen." Maar de politie-agenten en de dokter waren niet meer stil te krijgen. De dokter had inmiddels zijn muziek-instrumenten gegrepen en begon ze uit te delen aan de politie-agenten, en ze begonnen muziek te maken, zo vreemd, want ze konden immers niet meer spreken. En zo gingen ze door het hele land, marcherend. En de mensen kenden het verhaal niet, maar ze vonden het prachtige muziek. En iedereen werd erdoor aangestoken, en er werden grammofoon-plaatjes van gemaakt. Iedereen had ze na een tijdje wel in huis. En er kwam vrede op aarde en niemand werd er meer ziek. Politie en dokters waren niet meer nodig. Ze waren nu muzikanten geworden, en dat was het beste.

De Oranje Ster

De ster was gekomen, als nachtzicht in een duistere nacht. Het leek weer dag nu. De ster had een romige, gloeiende oranje rand, zo zacht. Bijna donzig. Marja en Kees keken ernaar. Ze hadden hier zo lang naar uitgezien. Ze hadden hier zo lang over gedroomd. De zon was namelijk verwoest en zo lang hadden ze in het pikkedonker geleefd. Nu was het afwachten op wat er zou gaan gebeuren. Velen reisden naar de ster, maar niemand wist nog goed wat het nu precies was. Ook Kees en Marja zouden de reis beginnen. Ze stopten hun auto vol met dekens, en daar gingen ze. De wegen waren vol met auto's. Iedereen was op zoek naar de ster. Ook Harry Achterwoud was op weg. Ergens bij een tank station kwamen ze hem tegen. 'Hey Harry,' zei Kees. Harry was heel enthousiast. Hij had al zijn papieren bij zich waarop zijn berekeningen van de ster stonden, wiskundige papieren. Hij wist ook al dat de ster zou komen, en had eigenaardige theorieen. Aandachtig luisterden Kees en Marja naar hem.

'De ster is een reis,' zei Harry. 'Wij horen niet veel van anderen die daar zijn geweest, want iedereen gaat daar naar binnen. Het is een tunnel.'
'Zouden ze nog in leven zijn ?' vroeg Marja zich af.
'Ach natuurlijk,' zei Harry. 'Het is een dimensionale overgang.'
'Ik ben bang,' zei Marja. 'Het kan natuurlijk ook iets duisters zijn. Ik ga ervoor, maar heb mijn twijfels.'
'Twijfelen is goed, Marja,' zei Harry. 'Maar ik heb het onderzocht, en het is goed betrouwbaar. Eén van de grootste evenementen aller tijden. Mijn jongens zijn ook heel enthousiast. Ze hebben het er de hele tijd over. Het is nachtzicht, Marja.'
'Ja, maar die wiskundige berekeningen van jou die werken ook niet altijd,' zei Marja.
'Heb je daar voorbeelden van ?' vroeg Harry.
'Ach,' zei Marja, 'die berekeningen die je had gedaan over mijn zwangerschap waren interessant, maar grote onzin.'
'Ja,' zei Harry, 'maar dat was nog in de tijd van Karel Klaus. Ik liet me teveel door hem beinvloeden.'
'Karel Klaus was een genie,' zei Marja, 'maar een grote gek.'

Kees begon te grinniken. 'Wat weet je verder over die ster, Harry ?' vroeg hij. Harry begon te bladeren door zijn papieren, en liet hen wat ingewikkelde tekeningen zien. Toen kwam er één of ander scheikundig verhaal waar ze niets van begrepen, maar het voelde allemaal wel wonderbaarlijk aan.
Even later gingen ze weer verder. Toen ze in het bos waren met de auto begonnen ze de ster steeds beter te zien. De ster was prachtig oranje. Het had een kalmerend effect. Marja wist het nog niet. Wat moest ze nu geloven ? Maar ze wilde het wel proberen. In de verte leek het wel alsof de auto's in de ster reden. Was dit niet gewoon een natuurverschijnsel ?
Na een tijdje reden zij dan ook de ster binnen. Ze konden eerst niets zien. Alles was zacht oranje. Even later reden ze een grote wildernis binnen. De auto stopte vanuit zichzelf. Kees en Marja stapten uit. Geen enkele auto kon er hier rijden.
In de verte zat een gestalte van vuur op een troon van vuur. Achter de gestalte was een grote stad. De hele stoet met mensen ging richting die persoon.
'Wie zou die persoon zijn ?' vroeg Marja. Kees had geen idee. Daar zagen ze Harry weer. Die zat weer tussen zijn

papieren te bladeren. 'Hey, Achterwoud,' zei Kees. 'Nu, moet je eens horen,' zei Harry. 'Die gestalte is de personificatie van de ster.' Toen volgden er weer allerlei scheikundige en natuurkundige verhalen. 'Laten we maar gewoon kijken wie of wat dat is,' zei Marja.
'Die personificatie bepaalt wie en wat in de stad komt,' zei Harry.
'Waar baseert die personificatie dat op ?' vroeg Marja.
'Op wiskundige berekeningen,' zei Harry.
'Hoe gaat dat dan ?' vroeg Marja. En weer legde Harry alles uit met zijn papieren. Weer liet hij hen vreemde tekeningen zien.
'Waar gaan degenen naartoe die niet naar de stad gaan ?' vroeg Marja.
'Die worden de wildernis ingezonden,' zei Harry.
'Ik zou niet weten welke keuze ik zou willen maken,' zei Marja.
'Het gaat niet om jouw keuze,' zei Harry. 'Het gaat om de berekeningen.'
Ineens wilde Marja terug. In de verte zagen ze de gestalte van vuur opstaan, en die begon te roepen :
'Er is niet veel tijd meer. Wij gaan zodadelijk sluiten. Maak daarom haast. Dit zal de enige uittocht zijn voor

aardlingen in de geschiedenis. De rest zal op aarde moeten blijven.'
Marja wist even niet wat ze moest doen. Ze wilde wel bij Kees blijven die gewoon doorliep. Ze pakte zijn arm. Snel liepen ze door tot de gestalte. Twee handen kwamen op hun hoofden.
'Ah,' zei de gestalte. 'Net op tijd. Jullie zijn de laatsten van de aardlingen. Jullie mogen de stad binnengaan.'
Ook Harry was de stad binnengegaan. Marja wist niet of ze blij moest zijn of niet. Harry was in ieder geval heel blij, en Kees ook. Harry zei dat ze vanuit de stad ook de wildernis inkonden. Het was een reusachtige stad. Marja en Kees kregen een huisje toegewezen, en Harry kwam naast hen wonen. Harry zuchtte. Hij had gehoopt dat zijn jongens mee waren gekomen, maar die moesten naar voetbal. Het was meer blinden-voetbal omdat het zo pikkedonker was.
Harry Achterwoud klikte de TV aan in zijn nieuwe huisje. 'Wel goed dat ze hier TV hebben,' dacht Harry bij zichzelf. Kees was achter de computer gegaan. Ze hadden hier ook internet. Een heleboel dingen leken zoals de dingen op aarde. Er was ook een koelkast. Marja was de tuin ingegaan. Het was een prachtige tuin. Vanuit de tuin kon

ze de wildernis zien. Er waren hoge bomen in de wildernis. Er groeide prachtig, verlokkend kruid in de bomen.
Even later kwam Harry binnen. Hij liet hen een plattegrond zien waardoor ze de wildernis inkonden. Er was namelijk een groot hek rondom de wildernis. Via de vreemde berekeningen wist Harry precies hoe ze in de wildernis konden komen. Er moest ergens een tunnel wezen. Die tunnel was verbonden aan elk huis door een kelder. Diep in de kelder moest ergens een slot zijn met een deur. Het slot was als een groot toetsenbord met wat schermpjes waarop de juiste code ingetypt moest worden. Harry legde het uit via de vreemde berekeningen.
'Ik wil eerst zien of dat wel werkt, Harry,' zei Marja.
'Kom,' zei Harry, 'dan laat ik het jullie direct zien.'
Met z'n drieen gingen ze naar de kelderdeur. Harry liep voorop. Met een knop moest Harry de vlammen in de kelder aanzetten, zodat ze alles konden zien. Toen moesten ze over een trap naar beneden. Het leek wel op een magazijn. Er stonden hier een heleboel pakken met etenswaren. Door een lange gang kwamen ze uiteindelijk bij een deur. Daar zagen ze het toetsenbord aan de muur met de schermpjes. 'Hier,' zei Harry.

Marja vroeg zich af hoe Harry dit allemaal wist. Als een razende begon Harry te typen. Het leek wel op een heel verhaal. Toen klopte hij op de schermpjes die direct aansprongen. Op de schermpjes verschenen kaarten. Het leek wel op een spel. Weer typte Harry een heel verhaal in. De kaarten begonnen te veranderen. Op één kaart stond een doodshoofd, en op een andere een skelet. 'Hebbes,' zei Harry. Toen typte hij weer een heel verhaal in. Weer begonnen de kaarten te veranderen, en er kwamen wat nieuwe kaarten bij. Toen verscheen er een speelbord op één van de schermpjes, en de kaarten kwamen daarop terecht. Ook verschenen er rode knopjes die Harry indrukte. Toen begon de deur zich te openen.
'Kunnen we nog wel weer terug ?' vroeg Marja.
'Natuurlijk,' zei Harry. Door een gang kwamen ze in de wildernis terecht. Op de bomen stonden orakels getekend, waarop mensen aan het typen waren. Ze leken als in een trance, en er waren bollen rondom hun hoofden. 'Kom,' zei Harry, 'dan gaan we dieper de wildernis in.' Ze liepen richting een soort kleine woestijn, een strook van een zanderige wildernis. Ze gingen een soort heuveltje op. Vanaf het heuveltje hadden ze een goed uitzicht. Ze zagen

een strand met een soort zee. Boven de zee zweefde een oranje ster.
'Hey, is dat niet de ster waar wij door naar binnen gingen ?' vroeg Marja.
'Het is een ster in een ster,' zei Harry. Er waren veel mensen aan het zwemmen. Zij zwommen richting de ster, maar niemand kon daar naar binnen, want de ster zweefde veel te hoog. Na een tijdje begon de ster naar beneden te komen. De mensen zwommen de ster binnen, en werden bedekt met glibberig spul. Ook vormde zich een bol van vuur rondom hen.
'Zij ontvangen de vlam,' zei Harry. 'Het is de vlam van de oranje ster.'
'Wat betekent dat ?' vroeg Marja.
Toen begon Harry weer met zijn wazige berekeningen. Dit keer was het nog doldwazer dan ooit. Harry haalde een schrift tevoorschijn, en liet hen weer allerlei vreemde tekeningen zien. Het leek wel alsof de lucht begon open te scheuren. De scheur was oranje en romig. Zachtjes begon de scheur de ster naar binnen te zuigen, met vele mensen erin.
'Waar gaan ze naartoe ?' vroeg Kees, die zich al die tijd stil had gehouden.

Harry bladerde door het schrift. 'Proza,' zei Harry. 'Een nieuwe literaire code, om hen in een nieuwe linguistische realiteit te brengen. Het is als een mind-altering drug.'
Er begon iets te zoemen in het hoofd van Marja. 'Proza is een andere frequentie,' zei Harry. 'Volg me,' zei hij, en liep naar het strand toe. Met kleren en al dook Harry de branding in, en zwom de zee in. Marja en Kees volgden hem.
Weer zweefde de ster boven de zee, en kwam langzaam naar beneden. Marja voelde de warmte. Toen de ster haar raakte werd ze opgeheven, als naar binnen gezogen, en langzaam scheurde de lucht open. De ster werd naar binnen gezogen. Marja zweefde. Ook zag ze Kees en Harry zweven. Ze zweefden naar een zanderige plek in de scheur. Een bol kwam om hun heen, en ze kwamen in een wildernis terecht, waar weer bomen waren met orakels waar mensen op typten. De mensen waren ook in bollen, net als hen. In het midden van de orakels was een scherm. 'Het is een soort internet,' zei Harry.
Harry ging achter zo'n boom zitten en begon te typen. 'Je kan hierdoor allerlei werelden openen,' zei Harry. Hij typte een heel verhaal in. Weer verschenen er allerlei kaarten op het scherm die begonnen te draaien, als in een cirkel.

Harry selecteerde er één. Het was een kaart met een doodskop. Toen selecteerde hij er één met een skelet. Marja herinnerde de kaarten van het slot in de kelder. Harry klikte op de kaart met de doodskop, terwijl de kaart rood begon te gloeien en te knipperen. 'Hebbes,' zei Harry. Toen typte hij weer een heel verhaal, en de boom begon zichzelf te openen als een poort. Een lange gang verscheen met een auto. 'Kom,' zei Harry, terwijl hij de auto instapte. Kees ging naast Harry zitten, en nam Marja op schoot. Harry startte de auto. De auto reed richting een stad. Het was de stad waar zij hun huisjes hadden. Met een bepaalde code kon de auto door het hek.

'Heen door de keldergang, terug met de auto,' zei Harry.

'De literaire code had de zon afgebroken,' zei Harry. 'Dit is waardoor de oranje ster kon komen. De zon had ons opgesloten door een valse literaire code, een vals licht, waardoor onze levens min of meer bevroren waren. De ware vlam kenden wij niet, maar die is nu in ons binnengekomen.'

Die nacht hadden ze alle drie wilde dromen. Er was een glazen bol rondom hen waardoor roofdieren naar binnen probeerden te komen, maar ze renden zich stuk op het glas. Die roofdieren waren de herinneringen van de oude

en valse literaire code waarin ze zo lang opgesloten waren. De roofdieren waren woest, maar konden niets doen. Kees werd wakker in het zweet, en nam een bad. Marja ging onder de douche staan. Ze waren die ochtend vroeg op, en Harry kwam ook vroeg.
Harry vertelde hen zijn dromen, en gaf weer allerlei eigenaardige berekeningen. 'Het glas wordt steeds dikker,' zei Harry. 'De roofdieren zullen steeds verder weg komen, en zullen steeds meer verzwakken. Ze verliezen hun grip en zullen in vee veranderen.'
Marja herinnerde de potten met vlees in de kelder. Kees knikte. Dit had hij ook gedroomd. In de stad waren vaak vleesmarkten met zulk vlees. Er moest vlees gegeten worden, anders zouden de roofdieren weer sterker worden, en het glas dunner. Ze moesten dus eten voor hun leven.
'Het vee wordt door het glas gezogen tot een plaats in de wildernis,' zei Harry. 'Hiervoor worden jagers, slagers en vlees-verkopers aangesteld. Je begint als vlees-verkoper, dan wordt je een jager, en daarna een slager. De slager is een vleeskweker. Hij kent de geheimen van de vleesbrug.'
Kees kreeg een baan als vlees-verkoper op de markt. Hij leerde veel over de verschillende vleessoorten. Na een tijdje werd hij aangenomen in de jager-cursus. Hier leerde

hij hoe hij moest jagen. Het had veel te maken met codes. Hij moest leren de codes in te typen. Harry was hierin zijn grote voorbeeld. Ook moest hij de verschillende spelen leren. Na een tijdje mocht hij zichzelf 'Kees de jager' noemen. Harry was heel trots op hem. Marja wist het nog niet. Ze keek een beetje de kat uit de boom. Ze had teveel verhalen van Harry gehoord, en moest het allemaal nog zien. Sinds Kees jager was geworden moest hij veel vaker de wildernis in. Marja miste hem.

Harry had haar verteld dat vrouwen geen jagers, slagers of vlees-verkopers konden worden, alleen als de gestalte van vuur hen daarvoor sinds het begin had aangesteld. Dat was met Marja dus niet gebeurd. Volgens Harry was er maar één manier om het wel te worden. Dat was door een nacht-verdrag. Dat moest volkomen in het geheim gebeuren, wanneer de man zou slapen. Er hing daarvoor een speciale knop in de slaapkamer die zou berekenen wanneer de man zou slapen van begin tot het eind. Zo kon de vrouw op tijd weer terug zijn. Marja voelde daar wel wat voor. Zo zou ze in ieder geval wat met Kees gemeen hebben. Ze begon als nachtvlees-verkoper, en volgde ook jagers-cursussen in de nacht wanneer hij sliep. Marja was een snelle leerling,

en voor haar was de slager status snel behaald, terwijl Kees nog maar jager was.
Op een nacht wilde zij het geheim van de vleesbrug weten waar Harry het altijd over had. Met Harry ging ze de wildernis in door de kelder-gang. Ze moesten hiervoor heel diep de wildernis in. Ze kwamen aan bij een vochtige woestijn. Het leek wel alsof het hier geregend had. In de woestijn begon ergens de vleesbrug. Die ging over een rivier van vuur. De brug was geheel van vlees gemaakt. De brug was nogal glibberig. Marja was bang dat ze er vanaf zou glijden. Harry stelde haar gerust. Hij had in een rugzak spijkerschoenen meegenomen voor allebei. Dat waren schoenen met lange spijkers om zo vastgehaakt te zijn in het vlees. Samen liepen ze de brug over tot een grote burcht. Hier ging de woestijn gewoon verder, maar ze moesten in de burcht zijn. Er stonden wat poortwachters met geketende roofdieren. De poortwachters zeiden verder niets.
Binnengekomen moest Harry wat codes intypen. Toen kregen ze verder toegang. Ze kwamen in een zaal met wapens : speren, messen, hakbijlen, en andere vreemdsoortige wapens. Er waren wapens bij die Marja nog nooit eerder had gezien. 'Kees zou dit moeten zien,'

dacht Marja bij zichzelf, 'die zou het prachtig vinden.'
Even miste ze Kees, en wenste dat hij hier met haar was.
Op een tafel stond een bord met vlees. Harry begon ervan te eten, en een andere deur ging open. Ze kwamen in een zaaltje met een heleboel deuren. Naast elke deur stond een tafeltje met een bord vol vlees wat gegeten moest worden om de deur te openen. 'Kies een deur uit,' zei Harry, 'en eet van het vlees.'
Marja liep op een deur af en begon te eten. De deur ging open, en weer kwamen ze in een zaaltje binnen. Grote boeken lagen op tafels met bordjes vlees ernaast. Om de boeken te openen moest er van het vlees gegeten worden. De boeken zouden vol geheimen staan. 'Dit heb jij vast en zeker vaker gedaan,' zei Marja. Harry knikte.
'Kies een boek,' zei Harry.
Marja koos een boek en begon te eten. Het boek opende zich en Marja begon te lezen. De letters deden pijn aan haar ogen, en ze deed het boek weer dicht.
'Ik kan het niet lezen,' stamelde Marja.
'Ik ken al deze boeken door en door,' zei Harry. 'Het zijn boeken van pijn. Al deze boeken hebben hun eigen pijn. Probeer een ander boek.'

Marja koos een ander boek, en at van het vlees. Het boek opende zichzelf, en Marja kreeg enorme last van hoofdpijn. Weer sloeg ze het boek dicht, en ging naar een ander boek, waar ze at van het vlees. Het boek opende zichzelf, en ze kreeg een enorme buikpijn. Dit was nog wel te doen, en ze begon te lezen.
'Witskebat Hapi Da La Loie Vakau, welkom tot het geheim van de vleesbrug, een geordend geheim voor slagers. Ben je geen slager, maak dan dat je wegkomt. Wij eten om te vergeten. Al je herinneringen eet je hier, en dit geeft de toegang tot onze geheimen. Nogmaals welkom. Als slager ben je een volleerde jager. Het vlees dat u hier eet zal u toegang geven tot hogere jachten. Door verschillende soorten vlees te eten krijgt u verschillende soorten wapens voor de jacht. Probeer ze allen uit. In één van deze boeken zult u de code vinden voor de poort voor u. Hierdoor zult u komen tot een hal van jachtwapens die te verkrijgen zijn door van het vlees naast hen te eten. Elk jachtwapen zal toegang geven tot een nieuwe deur waardoor u een nieuw jachtveld kunt betreden.'
Marja sloeg het boek dicht. De pijn was ondragelijk geworden. Dit waren nachtverhalen, zei Harry. 'Wat is de code, Harry ?' vroeg Marja.

'Ik kan het je niet geven, Marja,' zei Harry. 'Dan zou ik ontploffen. Die codes zijn zo gevaarlijk dat als ze van een mens tot een mens worden overgedragen, dan is dat het gevolg.'
Marja at van het vlees van een ander boek. Het boek opende, en Marja begon te lezen. Ze kreeg verschrikkelijke kiespijn. Ze gilde het uit, en viel bijna flauw. Harry kalmeerde haar. 'Doorzetten, schat,' zei hij.
'Nee !' gilde ze. 'Dit is wreed !'
'Shhh,' zei Harry. 'Maak ze niet wakker. Als ze hier komen, dan … dan …'
'Wie zijn ze ? Waar heb je het over ?' vroeg Marja.
'Dat kan ik niet zeggen. Lees nu maar,' zei Harry.
'Jij hebt makkelijk praten,' zei Marja. 'Ik ben hier ook doorheengegaan,' zei Harry. 'Ik weet er alles van.'
'Het is een offer, hè ?' zei Marja. Harry knikte. 'Ja, dat kun je wel zeggen,' zei hij.
'Okay,' zei Marja, die zich alweer iets beter voelde, en begon te lezen.
Sawir, Fliktir Sawelaa Maree Barits Homalogie Karee Almas Vandrin Ogesta Amalee Verin Sevinda Allanse Allaa Mir Allaa Vaanit Evus Olong Patong Palone Perisia.

Welkom tot dit boek, geachte gast. Wij hebben er weer veel werk van gemaakt. Dat heeft u misschien al wel ondervonden. De code tot de volgende deur zal hier geopenbaard worden. Zeeen van winden kunnen ons hier niet vinden. Achter glas zijn zij, waar de zeven zeemeerminnen nog steeds zoeken naar het geheim van goud. Nooit zullen zij binnengaan, zij die op zoek zijn naar de geheimen van de zon. De zon is gestorven. De dictator is dood. Zij die hem trachten op te wekken rusten tevergeefs. Zij zullen geen rust vinden, alle dagen van hun ijdele leven. Ijdelheid vervliegt. Ik geef u toegang tot de nieuwe deur. Weest welbewapend met haar geheimen. Ga niet in voordat u alle boeken hebt gelezen. Gebruikt deze code wel, en geeft haar nooit door aan anderen, anders zult gij ontploffen, en uw weg nooit meer terugvinden. Neemt deze waarheid ter harte. Wij geven ook geen geld terug. U zult ook nooit meer kunnen wederkeren, maar wanneer gij door alle deuren bent heengegaan en alle jachten hebt gejaagd, dan zult gij de code ontvangen om door een reis rond de ster toch te komen waar u eerst was, maar dan vanaf de andere kant. U mag deze code in uw eigen woorden intypen.

Welke boeken Marja daarna ook las, het deed geen pijn meer, en alle letters waren verdwenen. Het waren allemaal lege bladzijdes. 'Dat komt door het kennen van de code,' zei Harry. Samen liepen ze naar de nieuwe deur, waar Marja in haar eigen woorden de code intypte. Toen ging de nieuwe deur open, waar wapens lagen met bordjes vlees ernaast. Marja koos een wapen uit, en begon te eten. Snel nam ze het wapen op en liep naar de deur van het wapen. Ze kwamen hierdoor op een jachtveld terecht. De hele nacht jaagden ze. Toen Marja alle wapens had gebruikt, en op alle jachtvelden was geweest ontving ze de code voor de reis rond de ster. Zo kon ze terugkeren waar ze was door de andere kant. De code gaf hen toegang tot een auto. Met een rotvaart scheurde Harry, die achter het stuur zat, over de geasfalteerde weg.

Marja wist niet hoe lang het geduurd had, maar toen ze thuiskwam lag Kees nog steeds te slapen. Marja maakte wat ontbijt en bracht het naar Kees.

'Ik heb zo vreemd over je gedroomd,' zei Kees toen hij wakker was geworden. 'Je was op de vleesbrug en gleed in een rivier van vuur.'

'Vreemde droom,' zei Marja. 'Misschien dat Harry hier meer over weet.' Samen gingen ze even later naar Harry toe, en Kees vertelde de droom.
'Ik weet het niet,' zei Harry. 'Misschien een roofvogel van het verleden die jouw heeft lastiggevallen met zo'n nachtmerrie. Het is tijd dat je een slager wordt en dat je de geheimen van de vleesbrug leert kennen.'
Kees werd toegelaten tot de slagers-cursus. Ook hij werd slager, en op een nacht nam Harry hem mee naar de vleesbrug. Alles was veranderd hier. Er was geen vuurzee meer, alleen een woestijn. De vuurzee was inmiddels opgedroogd. 'Zie,' zei Harry, 'geen vuurzee.' Ook Kees moest de boeken lezen, en ontving de code. Na een lange nacht kon hij via de andere kant terugkeren naar de stad. Kees was trots nu hij het geheim van de vleesbrug kende. Dat had hij al zo lang willen kennen. Ook Marja was trots op hem.
Op een nacht zweefde er een nieuwe ster boven de stad. Het was de ster van vlees. Velen gingen de ster binnen. Ook Marja, Kees en Harry. Binnenin de ster was een wildernis geheel gemaakt van vlees, en de ster gleed door een tunnel in de ondergrond van de stad. De ster gleed dieper en dieper.

Harry had het over de vlam van vlees die ze moesten ontvangen. Het was een eeuwige vlam. Hiervoor moesten ze zwemmen over een oceaan van bloed in de ster van vlees. Het was een reusachtige ster, en de oceaan was ook reusachtig. Harry leidde hen tot het zogenaamde bloedstrand. Dit strand was gemaakt van vlees, maar het bloed spoelde hier aan. Harry dook al snel in de branding van de bloed-oceaan. Marja en Kees volgden hem. Het bloed voelde warm aan. Het zwemmen ging heel makkelijk, alsof ze bijna in het bloed dreven. Zo zwommen ze vele dagen aaneen, zonder dat ze echt moe werden. Het bloed gaf hen kracht.
Ze kwamen aan bij een reusachtig vlees-eiland. Hier moest ergens de vlam van vlees zijn. Op het eiland was een orakel van vuur. Harry begon aan het orakel te draaien. Alle drie kregen ze last van vreemde pijnen, alsof ze gestoken waren door insecten. Op hun lichamen kwamen vreemde merktekenen.
Hierdoor kregen ze toegang tot een tunnel achter het orakel. Aan het einde van de gang kwam er iets gloeiends over hen. Dit was de vlam van vlees. De pijnen werden ineens veel erger, daarom moesten ze zo snel mogelijk de oceaan van bloed induiken.

De ster van bloed zweefde boven de oceaan van bloed. Uit de ster van bloed kwam een man tevoorschijn met een ladder. Het scheen Ronald te zijn, de broer van Harry. Ronald was zomaar van de één op de andere dag vermist, maar Harry beweerde altijd al wat er met Ronald gebeurd was, en hoe hij nog steeds telepatisch contact met hem had. Hier scheen hij dus al zijn wiskundige verhalen vandaan hebben gehaald. Zijn broer onderwees hem. Ze klommen de ladder van touw op die Ronald had laten zakken, en toen ze in de ster van bloed waren gekomen viel Harry hem in de armen. Verschillende soorten bloed moest hier gedronken worden voordat er deuren geopend konden worden, boeken gelezen konden worden en wapens gebruikt konden worden.
Ronald was nog wel erger dan Harry met vreemdsoortige wiskundige berekeningen, en praatte honderduit, nog veel meer dan Harry. Ronald had een kasteel geheel gebouwd van botten. Kees en Marja hadden nog nooit zoiets gezien, en het was zo groot. Het kasteel stond vol met boekenkasten waar de boeken van uitpuilden. Ze kregen allemaal een kamer aangewezen in het kasteel van Ronald. Midden in de nacht kwam Harry om Kees en Marja te wekken. 'Kom,' zei hij. 'Ik wil jullie wat laten zien.' Hij

leidde hen tot diep onder het kasteel van botten, waar bloedrivieren stroomden. Achter de rivieren was een prachtig land. 'Kijk,' zei hij, terwijl hij op het land achter de rivieren wees. 'Bloed is een prachtige bescherming,' zei hij. 'Roofdieren zullen in dromen proberen aan te vallen, maar zij kunnen niet door het bloed komen, daarom is het land achter de bloedrivieren het veiligst.'

Ze zwommen de rivieren over, en kwamen in een land vol insecten. Ze werden volop gestoken, en Marja wilde terug.

'Dit is ook de reden waarom Ronald hier niet komt,' zei Harry. 'Dit is niet uit te houden,' zei Marja.

'Dit is het land van pijnen,' zei Harry. 'Herinner je je de boeken van pijn ?' Marja knikte. 'En door het lezen van de boeken vertrokken de pijnen ook weer,' zei Harry. 'Door te leven in het land van pijnen, zullen de pijnen dus ook vertrekken.'

'Ik zet door, ik zet door,' riep Marja. Plotseling zonk ze in mekaar … Dood. Harry en Kees stonden voor een raadsel. Ze hoorden Ronald roepen aan de andere kant van de rivieren. Na een tijdje stond Ronald naast hen. 'Waarom zijn jullie hier naartoe gegaan, Harry ?' vroeg Ronald. 'Ik had je nog zo gewaarschuwd. Dit land is gevaarlijk.

Gevaarlijke insecten enzo. Jullie leven is hier in gevaar. Ik kom hier alleen onder zware condities op gezette tijden.'
'Kun je Marja weer tot leven wekken ?' vroeg Harry.
'Wat denk je, Harry ?' zei Ronald. 'Denk je dat ik een tovenaar ben ?'
'Nou, wel zoiets,' zei Harry.
'Het heeft geen zin, Harry,' zei Ronald. 'De vurige gestalte heeft beslist.' Kees begon te snikken. Hij omhelsde Marja, om te zien of er nog enig leven in haar was, maar tevergeefs.
'Het heeft geen zin, Kees,' zei Ronald. 'De vurige gestalte heeft haar van ons weggenomen. Dat zal wel ergens goed voor zijn.'
'Maar wat dan ?' vroeg Kees.
'Kees, jongen, dat zal ik je haarfijn uitleggen,' zei Ronald. 'Er zijn hier zoveel geheime werelden. Ik weet zeker dat de vurige gestalte haar nodig heeft voor een karwei ergens.'
'Het is allemaal mijn schuld,' zei Harry. 'Ik had beter naar je moeten luisteren.'
'Harry, je bent een pionier,' zei Ronald. 'Je bent een onderzoeker, en die nemen soms risico's. We willen allemaal een betere wereld.'

'Maar ik heb het leven van Kees en Marja op het spel gezet, en het heeft Marja haar leven gekost,' zei Harry.
'Laat het een les voor je zijn, Harry,' zei Ronald. 'Maar de vurige gestalte zou Marja anders op een andere manier hebben weggehaald.'
Maar Harry was niet te troosten. Hij nam hier geen genoegen mee.
'Ik moet boeten,' zei Harry.
'Alsjeblieft, Harry,' zei Ronald. 'Doe dit jezelf niet aan.'
'Ik voelde me als een vader over haar, als een gids. Hoe kon ik zo stom zijn ?' snikte Harry.
'Misschien is ze op een andere manier gestorven,' zei Ronald.
'Ik had beter naar je moeten luisteren,' zei Harry.
'Je bent een avonturier,' zei Ronald.
Kees schrok wakker. Hij was zo opgelucht. Het was allemaal maar een droom geweest. Hij ging even naar de kamer van Marja. Ze lag daar rustig te slapen. Hij ging naar haar toe, ging bij haar liggen en nam haar in zijn armen. Ze werd wakker, en vroeg wat er aan de hand was.
'Ik heb naar gedroomd,' zei Kees. Met een brok in zijn keel vertelde hij zijn droom.

'Jij droomt ook altijd zo vreemd en raar,' fluisterde ze. 'Harry zegt dat het misschien roofvogels van het verleden zijn.' De volgende ochtend vertelden ze het aan Harry en Ronald. Harry keek naar Ronald. Ronald begon te lachen, en kwam toen weer met een wiskundig verhaal, maar het kwam er inderdaad op neer dat een roofvogel van het verleden Kees had lastiggevallen met deze droom.
'Hoe kan hij hiervan verlost worden ?' vroeg Marja.
Ronald dacht even na. 'Er zijn hier inderdaad rivieren van bloed. Daarachter is een land. Er zijn daar insecten die steken. Het is als een toegangs-bewijs. Zo kom je steeds dieper. Het is een taal, een code, die ze op je steken. Ik denk dat de roofvogels jou deze droom hebben gegeven, om je af te schrikken, dat je daar niet naar toe zal gaan.
Met z'n vieren gingen ze de rivieren over. Ze werden inderdaad gestoken.
Kees wordt wakker achter zijn stuur door getoeter achter hem. Zo lang had hij in de file gestaan. Overal waren files vanwege de komst van de oranje ster. Hij had alles maar gedroomd. Marja was thuisgebleven voor haar wekelijkse club-avond.

Het Geheim van de Rode Veer

Saroesia was een echte pyama stad in het land Sinsabijne. Iedereen droeg hier een pyama. De roze prins had een roze pakje aan wat leek op een pyama. Het was in ieder geval net zo zacht. De prins voelde zich er prinsheerlijk in. Hij had zulke roze pakjes vaak aan, vandaar dat hij de roze prins werd genoemd, en Saroesia werd daarom ook wel de roze stad genoemd. Het paleis van de prins was prachtig roze, maar had ook andere kleuren, zoals lichtblauw, rood, zwart, wit en geel. Ook was de prins dol op groen. Zonder groen zou er niets groeien.
De roze prins heerste over geheel Sinsabijne. Het geheim van zijn macht ? Een vrouwtje genaamd Framboosje. Vrouwtje Framboosje had hem onderwezen van jongs af aan om hem voor te bereiden op deze grote taak. Daarom werd de prins ook soms de frambozen prins genoemd, en ook de stad Saroesia werd weleens de frambozen stad genoemd. Framboosje had de prins onderwezen uit het wetboek van toverij en het wetboek van snoep. Dit moest wel, want er waren een heleboel snoepmonsters die het stadje wilden vernietigen. Er moesten duidelijke wetten van snoep zijn om het stadje hier tegen te beveiligen. En

die bracht Framboosje. Ze had de roze prins goed ingelicht hierover.
Het snoep mocht niet gegeten worden. Het was alleen om mee te bouwen en het te dragen als kleding en sieraden. Maar hier waren dus strenge wetten voor die Framboosje aan de roze prins leerde. Zij maakte de mooie roze snoeppyama's voor de roze prins. Het leek een beetje op frambozenvla, en zo kreeg de prins van haar de bijnaam prins frambozenvla.
Snoep was een natuurverschijnsel, als een beloning, als de vrucht van hard werken, van zweet en tranen. Er moest dus heel zuinig met snoep gedaan worden, anders zouden de snoepmonsters komen. Framboosje bleef dat benadrukken bij de roze prins, zodat hij het niet zou vergeten. Er stond teveel op het spel.
De roze prins vertelde de wetten ook aan het volk, en hij liet een wetboek opstellen. De oorlog tegen de snoepmonsters begon. Dit was een grote oorlog, en erg beslissend voor de verdere toekomst van Sinsabijne. Ook kwam er een wetboek voor speelgoed, en als ze zich daar niet aan zouden houden, dan zouden de speelgoedmonsters komen. De roze prins studeerde veel in de wetboeken en luisterde goed naar Framboosje. Hierdoor beloonde

Framboosje de roze prins met vele toverkrachten om het land goed te kunnen besturen. Framboosje was een echt tovervrouwtje, maar wel een hele bijzondere, want zij was het vrouwtje van de toverwet. Ze was dol op het toveren met snoep, en daarom werd ze ook wel het vrouwtje van de snoepwet genoemd. Op de snoepwet was het stadje Saroesia gebouwd, en verder het hele land Sinsabijne. Framboosje was degene die het had gebouwd.
Het stadje Saroesia was omringd met oerwoud. Het hele land Sinsabijne was vol met oerwoud. Eigenlijk waren de stadjes en dorpjes er gewoon ingebouwd. Er stroomde een grote rivier door de oerwouden van Sinsabijne, door het hele land. Het was de frambozen rivier, gemaakt van frambozensap. De rivier eindigde aan de ene kant in de frambozenzee en aan de andere kant in het bodemloze ravijn waarmee het hele land Sinsabijne en de frambozenzee was omringd. Het land Sinsabijne en de frambozenzee lag op de stronk van een reuzenboom.
Ook de grachten van het stadje Saroesia waren van frambozensap. Framboosje en de roze prins gingen vaak in een bootje over de grachten, en soms gingen ze de frambozen rivier op om het oerwoud in te gaan.

Het teken van de snoepwet was de rode veer. De rode veer stond ook op de vlag van Sinsabijne. Ook op het wetboek van snoep stond het teken van de rode veer. Ook de framboos stond op de vlag als het teken van Sinsabijne. Aan de frambozenzee ligt het bananenstrand en chocolade stad. Soms bezoeken Framboosje en de roze prins deze stad ook.
Framboosje las de roze prins voor uit het wetboek van snoep :
'De eerste wet is dat al het snoep door omwegen komt, nooit direct. Het is als de bruisende waterval in de verte die in de kolkende rivier kletst en dan langzaam door de rivier langs je heengaat en van je wegvlucht.
De tweede wet is dat het snoep je eerst zal corrigeren en niet zal verwennen. Eerst zul je de raad van het snoep moeten aannemen.
Deze wetten laten zien dat het snoep een klok is en dat je geduld moet beoefenen.
De derde wet is dat zij die geen geduld beoefenen geen deel kunnen hebben aan de orde van de rode veer.
De vierde wet is dat zij die geen geduld beoefenen naar de ondergrondse gevangenis in de stronk van de reuzenboom

moeten die als een school is om hen geduld te leren. Deze gevangenis is genaamd de box.
De vijfde wet is dat de ananas hen in de gevangenis voorzichtigheid zal leren en hen testen. Als ze niet door de ananas test heenkomen dan zullen ze verbannen worden uit Sinsabijne.'
Ananas was de zeer gevreesde gevangenisbewaker, de bewaker van de box. Hij had de macht iemand uit Sinsabijne te verbannen. Het was vanwege Ananas dat de meesten zich keurig gedroegen. Ananas leerde hen de snoepwet als geen ander. Soms kwam hij bij Framboosje en de roze prins om even bij te praten, of ze gingen naar hem. In het ondergrondse bos onder de reuzenstronk was een groot klooster. Hier werd het wetboek van snoep vereerd en gediend, en een standbeeld van een jongetje gemaakt van snoep. Dit was de kloosterorde van de rode veer, alleen voor hoge ingewijden. Framboosje wilde ook dat de roze prins daar naartoe zou gaan, zodat hij meer zou kunnen leren over het wetboek van snoep. Framboosje wilde dat Ananas koning zou worden van Sinsabijne. En zo gebeurde het. De roze prins werd uitgezonden naar het klooster van de rode veer, diep in het ondergronds bos. Hij ging daar alleen in een bootje naartoe. Hij kende de weg

wel. Bij het klooster aangekomen kreeg de prins een monniken-gewaad aan. Ook werd zijn haar niet geknipt. Hij begon met het werken in de keuken. Het was een grote keuken, waar hij de andere monniken een beetje leerde kennen.
's Avonds waren er vaak bijeenkomsten in de kapel waar het wetboek van snoep werd vereerd en het standbeeld van het jongetje van snoep. De roze prins kwam er al snel achter dat dit standbeeld ook sprak. Het standbeeld gemaakt van snoep hield een lange toespraak vanuit het wetboek van snoep. De monniken zagen dat als een groot wonder. Het was in Sinsabijne de gewoonte dat een koning of prins na een tijdje ook zijn kroon en troon weer aflegde, en dat stond ook in het wetboek van snoep. De roze prins had er dus vrede mee dat Ananas het van hem had overgenomen.
Aan het einde van de bijeenkomst wilde het standbeeld van het jongetje van snoep nog even met de roze prins spreken, omdat hij nieuw was in het klooster. Alle andere monniken gingen de kapel uit, terwijl de roze prins bleef zitten. Het standbeeld van snoep keek hem strak aan. 'Zo, zo, dus jij bent nieuw hier, hè ?' De roze prins knikte en sprak : 'Ja.'

'Wie heeft jou gezegd dat je mag spreken ?' vroeg het jongetje van snoep.
De roze prins keek in het gezicht van het jongetje en merkte dat het jongetje boos begon te worden. 'U stelde mij een vraag,' sprak de roze prins kalm. Het jongetje werd kwader en kwader, en zijn hoofd was bijna rood als een tomaat. 'Rotjongen,' sprak het standbeeld van het jongetje van snoep. 'Dan vraag je eerst of je mag antwoorden.'
'Dat wist ik niet,' zei de roze prins nog steeds kalm.
'Jij hebt wel praatjes, hè,' sprak het standbeeld. 'Het zal mij benieuwen hoe lang je het hier zal uithouden.'
De roze prins knikte.
'We zijn hier niet zo gesteld op praatgrage lieden,' sprak het standbeeld.
De roze prins knikte weer. Hij had maar wat graag het standbeeld willen omduwen.
'Ik mag jou niet,' zei het standbeeld. 'Net nieuw hier en nu al praatjes. Jij groeit op voor galg en rad, jongen.'
De roze prins zei niets. Even had hij spijt dat hij hier was gekomen. Toen hij even later op zijn kamer was begon hij een brief te schrijven aan Framboosje. Hij had respect voor het wetboek van snoep, maar niet voor het standbeeld. Hij vond het maar een verwend jongetje wat

veel teveel macht had gekregen, en hij vroeg zich af hoe dit kreng van een jongetje zoveel macht had gekregen. Na een tijdje kreeg hij een brief terug van Framboosje. Framboosje wist het ook niet, maar ze zei dat hij hen moest confronteren met het wetboek van snoep waarin stond dat na een tijdje elke mahctshebber moest aftreden, ook het standbeeld. Dit deed de roze prins. Hij liet het aan de monniken zien wat er in het wetboek van snoep over stond. Het scheen dat het standbeeld al veel te lang in het klooster aan de macht was. Maar de monniken werden erg kwaad. Zij vereerden het standbeeld van het jongetje van snoep, en voor hen stond het standbeeld gelijk aan het wetboek van snoep. De wet die de roze prins voorlas sloeg volgens hen niet op het standbeeld. De rebellie van de roze prins werd doorverteld aan het standbeeld, die daar erg kwaad over werd, zo kwaad dat hij de roze prins in een kerker onder het klooster liet werpen. Maar na een paar dagen had het standbeeld spijt en liet de roze prins uit de kerker komen. Het standbeeld waarschuwde de monniken ook dat elke monnik die de roze prins nog lastig zou vallen versteend zou worden.

Ook in het klooster mochten de monniken maar tijdelijk verblijven. De roze prins merkte dat het standbeeld van

snoep erg grillig was. De straffen waren zwaar : de kerker in, verstening of onthoofding. De roze prins voelde zich niet op zijn gemak. Hij hoopte maar dat hij deze tijd heelhuids zou doorkomen. In het klooster stonden vele versteende monniken, als een waarschuwing voor alle anderen. Hij vroeg zich af hoe het standbeeld zo was geworden, want het leek ook wel op een soort verstening. Met het verschil dat het standbeeld van snoep kon spreken en zich kon verplaatsen. Ook kon het standbeeld in het niets verdwijnen en zomaar weer tevoorschijn komen. Hij merkte dat het standbeeld vereerd en gediend werd vanuit pure angst. De roze prins studeerde veel in het wetboek van snoep. Alleen zij die de rode veer zouden hebben verdiend zouden het klooster weer mogen verlaten, maar terug naar het bovenland van Sinsabijne mochten ze niet. Ze zouden de ondergrondse bossen worden ingezonden om zo te komen tot het ondergrondse oerwoud, wat nog dieper lag. Tussen het ondergrondse bos en het ondergrondse oerwoud lag het bos van het schreeuwende snoep. Hier leefden de verkeers-agenten van snoep.
Toen de roze prins de rode veer had behaald en tot het bos van het schreeuwende snoep kwam wist hij precies hoe het jongetje in een standbeeld van snoep was veranderd. Door

al het geschreeuw van het snoep verstijfde de prins helemaal, en begon steeds meer te verstenen en in snoep te veranderen, totdat hij zelf een standbeeld van snoep was geworden. Ergens in het bos stond hij toen om het verkeer te regelen.

Einde

RNL-POCKETS
REEDS EERDER VERSCHENEN :

NR. 1 – HET OORLOGS-SPEL
NR. 2 – DE TUIN VAN MEVROUW VAN DALEN
NR. 3 – PLANTEN VAN VLEES
NR. 4 – ZIJN HUIS STOND IN DE WEG
NR. 5 – HET SURINAAMSE DAGBOEK
NR. 6 – DE EVOLUTIE VAN DE HEMEL
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HET METALEN EI

rnl-pockets nr. 10

Het Metalen Ei

Uitgave : rnl-pockets
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Het Metalen Ei

Hoofdstuk 1.

Meedogenloos werden mensen geofferd aan het metalen ei, wat daar draaide. Metalen lange dunne buitenaardsen liepen om het ei heen. Zij waren de bewakers van het metalen ei. Ze vreesden dat wat in het metalen ei zat, dat wat er op een dag zou uitkomen. Daarom versterkten ze het metalen ei door de mensenoffers. Dat moest in een bepaald ritme gebeuren. Als er van het ritme werd afgeweken of het ritme werd verbroken, dan werden de metalen werkers hysterisch.
Het was een zombie wereld. Hij moest rennen vanwege een groepje zombies wat achter hem aanzat. Gelukkig had hij een pistool. Het was hem aangeraden alleen het pistool te gebruiken als er geen andere oplossing was, als hij in het nauw was gedreven en het echt niet meer anders kon, want overgebruik van

pistolen in deze wereld kon je ook doen laten veranderen in een zombie. Zo ontstonden ook de meeste zombies, omdat ze wapenverslavingen hadden. Ook ontstonden zombies door sigaretverslavingen en drugsverslavingen. Hij moest vechten voor zijn leven. Hij had zijn pistool al getrokken, maar durfde het niet te gebruiken. Hij wist waar het in kon eindigen. Ze zaten hem op de hielen. Hij was bang dat ze hem in zijn kraag zouden grijpen. Hij had een ingebouwd alarm in zijn pistool. Het was een zombie alarm. Als het op rood stond, dan moest het pistool gepakt worden en voorbereid, en als het op geel stond dan moest het pistool getrokken worden, maar alleen als het op groen stond moest er geschoten worden. Hij voelde zich heel onzeker, want hij wilde echt niet deze regels overtreden. Dat zou ook fataal zijn, want dan zou hij zelf een

zombie worden. Maar toen het groene lichtje begon te knipperen moest hij toch echt wel schieten, anders zouden ze hem grijpen. Drie zombies waren achter hem en hadden hem bijna. Hij keek achterom en schoot, en bleef net zolang schieten totdat het pistool weer op geel stond.
Er waren ook wel pistolen die met blokkades werkten, zodat je in rode en gele stand niet eens kon schieten, wat ook direct een stuk veiliger was. Er waren zelfs pistolen die geheel automatisch bestuurd werden, en die vanzelf gericht gingen schieten als het op groen stond. Deze pistolen waren heel duur, en werden zelfs verkocht door zombies. Hij vertrouwde het niet. Hij moest oppassen met elke technologie hier, en hij wist ook niet of hij zijn eigen pistool wel kon vertrouwen.
De zombies waren veelal kannibalen. Ze stopten voor niets of niemand. Hij gruwelde wanneer hij dacht aan hoe het

zou zijn als hij in hun handen zou vallen. Ze injecteerden mensen, en implanteerden in mensen, allemaal met het doel hen tot zombies te maken. En als mensen teveel tegenstribbelden, dan werden ze gegeten. Het was al heel erg. Vroeger was de planeet nog maar half zombie, maar nu was tachtig procent al zombie. Hij behoorde tot de laatste mensen. In sommige steden was het zombie percentage veel hoger, zoals in de stad waar hij werkte. Weer andere steden waren al volledig zombie. Ze vreesden dat de zombies geheel zouden overnemen. Hij werkte daarom voor een bedrijf wat technologie ontwierp tegen zombies, maar hij vertrouwde vaak de onderdelen niet die werden geleverd. Ook vertrouwde hij zijn eigen medewerkers niet.
Na een tijdje stond het pistool op rood, en niet lang daarna stond het pistool weer op neutraal. Hij kon gelukkig weer

wat adem halen, en liep rustig door naar zijn werk. Dit gebeurde wel vaker. Hij had het vermoeden dat hij vanwege zijn werk op een bepaalde dodenlijst stond. Hij wist het eigenlijk wel zeker. Hij was zijn leven niet zeker. Op zijn werk gedroeg iedereen zich vreemd, alsof ze ergens door waren afgeleid. Hij kon er niet goed hoogte van krijgen. Hij werkte door in zijn kantoor aan een bepaalde uitvinding, en moest wat papieren regelen. Hij werkte aan een beveiligings-systeem voor huizen. Met sommige dingen was het alsof hij de puntjes niet aan elkaar kon knopen, alsof er een waas in zijn hoofd hing. Er waren vaak burgeroorlogen tussen mensen en zombies. De mensen hadden dan vaak wel betere technologie, maar de zombies waren in de meerderheid. Ze waren overal en infiltreerden ook.

Hij kende de gevaren : teveel met geld bezig zijn maakte je tot zombie, en ook

overmatige technologie kon dit doen, dus hij moest verschrikkelijk oppassen. Zovelen waren hier ten prooi aan gevallen. Hij ging daarom ook vaak de natuur in, en pleitte voor een goede samenwerking tussen stad en natuur. Eigenlijk wilde hij dat er een soort versmelting zou komen tussen stad en natuur. Dat was eigenlijk de enige hoop die ze hadden. De zombies waren natuurhaters. Vandaar dat hij zich ook richtte op natuurtechnologie. Elke technologie moest terugleiden tot de natuur en de natuur erin betrekken, anders zou het waardeloos zijn. Hij had de laatste jaren een heleboel nieuwe technologie moeten afkeuren vanwege dat het natuurloos was.
Na het werk liep hij terug naar de trein. Het was al donker, en alles leek rustig op straat. Hij zag de lichten in de huizen en van de lantaarns. Ook in de trein was het verder rustig. Hij woonde in een

naburige stad waar het percentage zombies ongeveer op de helft lag, dus minder als in de stad waar hij werkte. Toen hij thuis was gekomen klikte hij de televisie aan. Er was niks op de televisie en hij ging die dag vroeg naar bed. De dag erna ging hij er heel vroeg uit. Hij wilde ook heel vroeg naar zijn werk al, zodat het zo rustig mogelijk op straat zou zijn. Toen hij op zijn kantoor kwam bladerde hij wat door papieren. 'Juist, ja,' zei hij. 'Zombies zijn ook heel geslachtelijk gericht. Ze moeten altijd achter de meiden aan, en vrouwelijke zombies spelen daar weer op in. Ze werken voor het metalen ei.' Hij kon zich altijd enorm ergeren aan de flutromannetjes die geen inhoud hadden. Zo werden volgens hem ook weer zombies gekweekt. Het was aangetoond dat het zombie gehalte in een mens of zombie na het lezen van een flutromannetje met een paar procent was

gestegen. Hij ontwierp ook allerlei meet-apparatuur om het zombie gehalte te meten. Ook de lucht werd gemeten, en hij had daar allerlei alarms ook voor ontwikkeld. In de lucht hingen ook vele stoffen die mensen tot zombies konden maken. Hij was ook aan het testen welke stoffen het zombie gehalte konden verlagen, en dat waren vaak natuurlijke stoffen. Hij wist dat de natuur de enige hoop was. Daar was hij van overtuigd. Er was een vrouw die als een messias werd gezien. Ze had vele discipelen. Ze onderwees over hoe weer mens te worden. Ze was heel populair, zelfs onder zombies, want vele zombies wilden helemaal geen zombie zijn. Ze waren in de val gelokt. Er was een grijs, wazig vlak tussen het mens zijn en zombie zijn wat niet helemaal duidelijk was. Het percentage van echte die-hard zombies was laag, maar hij twijfelde aan de meet-apparatuur. Als in een mens of

zombie het zombie gehalte boven de vijftig procent was gestegen, dan was er duidelijk verhardingsgevaar. Hij wilde in ieder geval de strijd niet opgeven. Hij wilde ook de meet-apparatuur die gebruikt werd onderzoeken. Hij had daar zelf ook aan meegewerkt. Hij wilde geen fouten maken, of dingen over het hoofd zien. De vrouw sprak ook vaak over de menselijke bron en de natuurbron als een hogere bron waaruit ze leefde. Hij was geinteresseerd, maar hij vroeg zich af of ze echt was. Hij was ervan overtuigd dat zombies veel illusies konden scheppen en velen konden bedriegen.

Op een dag brak er een grote oorlog los, als een virus. Er waren invasies van buitenaardse zombies die in grote luchtschepen kwamen, en ook van zombies die onder de grond hadden geleefd. Ze bleken met elkaar samen te werken. Deze zombies hadden een veel hogere technologie. Eigenlijk was de

planeet daar niet tegen opgewassen, en iedereen ging in gevangenschap, ook hij. In geisoleerde cellen werden ze als ballingen meegenomen naar een andere planeet, de planeet genaamd Teheran. 'Waarom is dat zo'n probleem voor je ?' vroeg een buitenaardse zombie van de planeet Teheran aan hem. Het was een interrogator. Er werden vele vragen aan hem gesteld, en op grond van zijn antwoorden werd er beslist of hij door mocht leven of niet. Hij was heel zenuwachtig en wist niet goed wat hij moest antwoorden. Moest hij eerlijk zijn naar deze verraders, of moest hij strategisch zijn ? Vaak gaf hij daarom wazige antwoorden waarmee ze allerlei kanten opkonden, maar dat begon hen een beetje te irriteren, en hij werd geslagen. 'Klootzakken !' riep hij. Maar dat was ook niet geoorloofd, en ze sloegen hem bewusteloos. Later werd hij alleen wakker in zijn cel. De

interrogators waren weer weg. Er werd nu over hem beslist of hij mocht doorleven. Maar ja, doorleven als wat ? Als een zombie of als een mens ?

Hoofdstuk 2.

Het metalen ei was alles waar het om draaide, maar ze vreesden het. Ze vreesden wat binnenin het ei zat, daarom bewaakten ze het metalen ei, en probeerden het gunstig te stemmen. Zij werden geleid door vrees. Alles waaruit hun leven bestond en alles wat ze waren was pure vrees.

De volgende dag werd hij weer ondervraagd. Ditmaal door vrouwen. Het waren hele andere soorten interrogators. Ze probeerden ook humor te gebruiken. Maar hij lachte niet. Hij ging ook niet in op hun geflirt.

De dag erna was er een beslissing. Hij mocht doorleven, maar er waren allerlei voorwaarden.

Het metalen ei was alles waarom het draaide. Het metalen ei werd aanbeden vanwege vrees, grote vrees, over wat erin zat. Eigenlijk wist niemand goed

wat erin zat. Lange dunne metalen insecten liepen om het metalen ei heen. Het waren metalen elite zombies.
Hij merkte dat er iets met zijn hersenen was gebeurd. Hij had vreemde hallucinaties. Zouden ze hem vergiftigd hebben of geinjecteerd hebben met iets terwijl hij sliep ? Hij wist het niet. Hij had doffe hoofdpijn. Hij kreeg een huisje op de grote planeet Teheran en mocht gewoon zijn werk weer doen. Wel was het aan allerlei voorwaarden gebonden. Hij moest werken voor de zombies. De technologie moest de zombies beveiligen. Hij vroeg zich af wat het zombie percentage van de planeet was waarop hij nu was. Hij wist dat ze hem goed schaakmat hadden gezet dit keer. Hij had gevraagd of hij gewoon mens mocht blijven, en dat mocht, zolang hij maar voor de zombies zou werken. Hij vroeg zich af of hij zo wel mens kon blijven, maar gedwongen slavernij was

niet iets wat noodzakelijk iemand tot een zombie zou maken. Daar kwam veel meer bij kijken. Wel vreesde hij de stoffen die op hem inhamerden en beukten, de stoffen in de lucht.
Er waren hier ook vreemde kerken, waarin het metalen ei werd aanbeden. Het was een echte zombie cultuur, en eigenlijk vond hij het wel interessant om daarin rond te kijken, ook al was het gedwongen. Hij kon zo iets leren van de verschillende vormen van het bestaan, en kon deze kennis later weer gebruiken dacht hij, tenminste als hij het zou overleven. Maar op een dag ontplofte het metalen ei. Er was grote paniek, want nu zou datgene wat erin had gezeten al die tijd eruit komen. Het metalen ei bevond zich op wat ze de heiligste plaats van de planeet noemden, de bedevaartplaats, Menka. Het metalen ei bevond zich in een zwarte fabriek. Ook de zwarte fabriek was opgeblazen. Datgene wat in

het ei zat kwam eruit, en tot ieders grote verbazing was dat weer een ei, een zwevend ei, een doorzichtig ei gevuld met bloed. Het was als bloed in een vlies, en niet lang daarna begon het vlies open te scheuren, en het bloed begon uit het reusachtige ei te lopen, om de steden van de planeet Teheran te bedekken. Het was als een zondvloed van bloed, komende uit het gescheurde ei wat in het metalen ei bleek te zitten.
'Waarom ! Waarom !' riep hij, toen hij het op de televisie zag. Hij wist dat het bloed ook op weg was naar zijn huis. Hij klikte de televisie uit, en was in grote paniek. Hij rende naar de hoogste verdieping van zijn huis en keek uit het raam. Hij zag grote golven van bloed aankomen in de verte. Weer riep hij : 'Waarom ! Waarom !' Er kwam geen antwoord. Hij had het antwoord niet. Dichtbij zijn huis was een lange toren. Hij besloot daar naartoe te rennen, maar

de toren was al geheel vol. Het bloed was inmiddels al gestegen tot zijn knieën. Hij rende weer terug naar zijn huis. Onder de deurmat was er een luik om onder zijn huis te komen, dus hij ging daar in. Op de televisie had hij gehoord dat heel Teheran onherroepelijk zou onderlopen. 'Waarom ! Waarom !' riep hij weer. Maar er was geen antwoord, en hij had het antwoord niet. Hij ging onder de grond liggen onder zijn huis.

'Zoveel bloed,' sprak een stem, 'van hen die afgemaakt waren door zombies zo lang geleden, verstopt in een metalen ei. Ze wisten dat het niet voor eeuwig ging duren.'

'W... wie bent u ?' vroeg hij. 'Wie is daar ?'

'Het bloed dat spreekt,' zei de stem. 'Het bloed wat weet. Zombies weten niet, en willen niet weten, maar diep binnenin

weten ze, daar waar het bloed der eeuwen wild golvend leeft.'
Hij begon te trillen en te schudden. 'Help ons dan !' riep hij.
'Je bent veilig hier,' zei de stem.
Plotseling omhelde hem een rode gloed.
'Het bloed leeft,' zei de stem.
'Droom je van zombies ?' vroeg de stem, die uit de rode gloed over hem leek te komen.
'De hele tijd,' zei hij.
'Het is een droom,' zei de rode gloed.
'Een nachtmerrie, maar je bent nu aan het ontwaken. De bloedplaneet is alles wat leeft. Het is een natuurplaneet, zo lang opgesloten geweest in het metalen ei.'
'Alles zal nieuw zijn,' zei de rode gloed, 'in de rode gloed. De bloedplaneet is gekomen.'
Hij begon te tranen. Het begon zich te vermengen met de rode gloed.

'Het zijn tranen, rode tranen,' zei de stem. 'Het is het beste afweermechanisme tegen de zombies.'
Hij stond op. Het was alsof de rode gloed hem leidde. Hij kon er net staan onder zijn huis. Onder zijn voeten scheurde de grond open en er was een tunnel naar beneden. De rode gloed was als een lantaarn. 'Dieper,' zei de stem.
Hij ging naar beneden, en hij zag de vrouw die ze messias noemden.
'Eindelijk ben je daar,' sprak ze.
'Waarom, waarom ?' vroeg hij weer.
'Je bent veilig hier,' sprak de vrouw. 'Ik wacht op mijn discipelen.'
Heel voorzichtig wilde hij haar hand aanraken die ze had uitgestoken, maar plotseling was er bliksem. De vrouw keek verschrikt. 'Raak haar niet aan,' sprak de stem. De rode gloed over hem begon wild te golven.
'Wil je dromen of ontwaken ?' vroeg de stem van de rode gloed.

'Ontwaken,' zei hij.
Hij ging dieper naar beneden, totdat hij bij een diepe put aankwam. 'Glijd hierin,' zei de rode gloed. Toen gleed hij weg.
Hij viel in een diepe slaap. Hij kwam van alles los. Zijn herinneringen dansten en dwarrelden om hem heen. Hij wilde ze aanraken, maar hij mocht het niet. Hij wilde tot ze spreken, maar zijn mond werd gesnoerd. Hij viel in een nog diepere slaap.
Hij kwam tot een ondergrondse troonzaal waarin een troon stond waarop een metalen ei zat met een hoed op. 'Ik groet u,' sprak het ei.
'Wek het niet meer tot leven,' sprak de rode gloed, die wild begon te golven.
'Negeer het.' Het ei begon tot hem te schreeuwen, maar hij reageerde niet. 'Het ei voedt zichzelf met aandacht,' sprak de rode gloed. 'Voedt het niet.'
Hij sloot zijn ogen en viel in een nog diepere slaap, en gleed door een

reusachtige wildernis put. Er was hier veel groen en lianen. Het was als een oerwoud. Hij kon heel diep ademhalen, van diepe bronnen.
'Zombies !' werd er geroepen.
'Nee,' sprak de stem van de rode gloed.
'Hij is veilig in het rode ei.'
'Hij is jong, hè ?' werd er gesproken.
'Ja, heel jong.'
'Zo schattig. Echt piepklein, moet je kijken,'
'Zou een goede werker kunnen worden voor het metalen ei.'
'Nee joh, dat zou niks voor hem zijn. Hij is voor iets veel groters voorbestemd.'
'Welnee.'
'Jaaaaahaaaaaaaaaaa.'
'Ik weet het wel zeker.'
'Wat weet je wel zeker ?'
'Ach klets niet.'
'Hij zal zijn weg wel vinden.'
En toen vaagden alle stemmen weg.

Hoofdstuk 3.

Hij werd wakker in een prachtige natuur. Overal zweefden fijngevoelige insecten, bijna als kleine, zweverige kwalletjes, als een aura om hen heen. Hij keek en bewonderde ze, hoe teergevoelig deze wezens waren. Hij kon ze aanraken, en ze reageerden zo diep op alles. Het was alsof er met gouden muziek instrumenten werd gespeeld in zijn hoofd. Het tingelde gewoon, en werd steeds fijner. Het tinkelde.
'Waarom, waarom ?' vroeg hij.
'Zo zacht is hij,' zei een stem. Het leek van de insecten te komen.
'W... waar ben ik ?' vroeg hij.
'In de diepte dimensie achter alle dingen,' zei een stem. 'Het metalen ei is ontploft. Ze konden het niet meer verborgen houden. Je bent er zelf doorheen gebroken.'

'Ik ?' vroeg hij.
'Ja, jij, je bent een pionier en die komen hier.'
'En wat nu ?' vroeg hij.
'Volg het rode pad maar,' zei de stem die uit één van de insecten leek te komen, maar hij wist niet welke.
Er was een prachtig rood pad door de wildernis, maar het leek wel een mengeling tussen bloed en tranen.
Voorzichtig stapte hij op het pad.
'Hier ?' vroeg hij.
Voorzichtig begon hij erop te lopen.
'Volg het helemaal tot aan de Mexicaan !' werd er geroepen.
'Wat is de Mexicaan ?' vroeg hij.
'Dat zul je wel zien !' werd er geroepen.
Het klingelde in zijn hoofd. De stemmen waren zo zoet, teder en licht.
Zo zacht speelde het in zijn hoofd, en hij volgde het pad door de wildernis helemaal tot een woestijngebied. Zand was hier in lagen op elkaar. 'Ik breek je !'

werd er geroepen. 'Ik laat je in glas stappen !'
Het geluid kwam uit de woestijn. Het was een indiaanse vrouw met een klein jongetje die ze bij zijn oor had vastgegrepen. Het jongetje weende luid. Toen duwde ze het kind van haar af.
'Hola,' zei hij tegen de vrouw.
'Wat moet je hier ?' snauwde de vrouw. 'We hebben het niet zo op indringers.'
'Ik moest het rode pad volgen tot de Mexicaan,' zei hij.
'Ik ben de Mexicaan,' zei de vrouw. 'Maar ik heb je niet besteld. Opdonderen nu. Ik heb niets te maken met wat anderen je hebben opgedragen.'
'Ja maar,' zei hij.
'Niks te ja-maaren. Opdonderen nu,' snauwde ze. 'Anders maak ik je tot mijn kind en zal ik je net zo breken als deze hier,' terwijl ze op het kleine jongetje wees.

'Kom dichterbij,' sprak de rode gloed die over hem heen was. 'Laat je niet door haar afschrikken.' Hij deed een stap richting de vrouw, want hij werd bijna geduwd.
'Scheer je weg, maak dat je wegkomt !' riep de vrouw.
Weer deed hij een stap richting de vrouw. Toen gaf de vrouw hem een harde duw, maar de rode gloed duwde hem terug. 'Ik maak je als mijn kind, hoor !' riep de vrouw. 'Ken je Beeks ?'
'Beeks ?' vroeg hij. 'Nee, nooit van gehoord. Wie of wat is het ?'
'Laat maar,' zei ze. 'Kom maar mee, dan zal ik het je uitleggen.'
Ze trok hem en haar kind de woestijn weer in. Het was een zanderige heuvel waar ergens een hutje stond waar ze woonde. 'Beeks,' zei ze weer. 'Dat is een taal die ze spreken. Ach, laat maar. Heb je honger ?' vroeg ze ineens vriendelijk.

'Vraag haar wie ze is,' zei de rode gloed over hem.
'Wie bent u ?' vroeg hij.
'De Mexicaan,' zei ze. 'Ze noemen mij ook wel de groene traan, de traan van de verloren natuur. En dat kun je ook wel zien, want alles is hier dor en droog.'
'Ik kom net uit de wildernis, uit het oerwoud,' zei hij.
'Maar zij spreken geen Beeks daar,' zei de vrouw.
'Beeks ?' vroeg hij weer.
'Het is de taal van de verloren natuur,' zei ze. 'We zijn allemaal op zoek naar de verloren natuur, de Beekse natuur.'
'Hoe komen we daar ?' vroeg hij.
'De woestijn is eindeloos,' zei ze. 'Daar kom je nooit doorheen.'
'Er moet een weg zijn,' zei hij. 'Ik moest het rode pad volgen.'
Ze lachte. 'Er is hier geen rood pad, mijn jongen. Het rode pad loopt dood in de woestijn.'

'Maar ik heb een rode gloed om me heen die me de weg wijst,' zei hij. 'Het is van de bloedplaneet, van de rode traan.'
Ze begon hem uit te lachen. 'Je vertelt teveel verhaaltjes,' zei ze.
'Geef haar een duw,' zei de rode gloed. En het ging vanzelf. Toen werd de vrouw weer boos. 'Blijf van me af !' riep ze, 'anders maak ik je als mijn kind.'
'Duw haar weer,' zei de rode gloed, en weer ging het vanzelf. De rode gloed golfde over hem heen, en liet hem haar hard duwen. 'Deze vrouw is gevaarlijk,' zei de rode gloed. Ineens trok ze een mes. 'Als je wil blijven leven, houd dan op mij te duwen.'
'Duw haar weer,' zei de rode gloed. Weer duwde hij haar. 'Ik maak je tot mijn kind, hoor !' riep ze.
'Trap haar nu,' zei de rode gloed. Toen trapte hij haar. 'Ren nu weg,' zei de rode gloed. Hij rende weg, maar de vrouw kwam achter hem aan. 'Ver zal je niet

komen,' riep ze. Ze nam het opgerolde touw wat aan haar heup hing, en wierp het als een lasso. Ze mikte goed, en trok hem naar zich toe. 'Ontkomen kun je niet. Je bent mijn kind,' zei ze.
Hij zuchtte. 'Het is een ellendige vrouw,' zei de rode gloed.
'Ik moet het rode pad volgen,' zei hij. 'Waar is het ergens ?'
'In mijn hart,' zei de vrouw.
'Bla,' zei hij. Toen kreeg hij een draai om zijn oren. 'Ik breek je, ik zal je in glas doen trappen !' riep ze.
'Zie, dat heeft ze al eerder gezegd,' zei de rode gloed. 'Ze is een robot.'
Hij begon meer en meer te merken dat de vrouw voorgeprogrammeerd was. Ze zei vaak hetzelfde. Heel soms zei ze wat nieuws, en dan begon ze dat ook te herhalen. Op een gegeven moment kwam er niets meer bij, en waren het alleen maar herhalingen. Telkens als hij probeerde te ontsnappen, dan haalde ze

hem terug met haar lasso. Ze miste eigenlijk nooit.
'Hoe kom ik hier uit ?' vroeg hij aan de rode gloed.
'Ik weet wel wat,' zei de rode gloed. Zeg tegen haar : 'Een tonnetje, een tonnetje, ik zag het eens ergens staan.'
Hij sprak het zinnetje naar haar uit, en ze raakte helemaal in paniek. 'Tonnetje ? Wat voor een tonnetje ? Waar is het, en wat zit erin ?'
Maar hij zei niks terug, en ze begon de hele tijd aan zijn hoofd te zeuren om dat tonnetje. Hij mocht niks terugzeggen van de rode gloed. Hij mocht het geheim van het tonnetje niet verraden. 'Ik weet het ook niet,' zei hij soms. Ze kon daar loeikwaad van worden. Dat waren eigenlijk de enige zinnetjes die hij tegen haar zei, en hij begon het steeds meer te zeggen, totdat ze er helemaal gek van werd en haar mes trok. 'Okay, okay, okay,' zei ze. 'Ik zie het al. Jij wil hier

niet meer wezen. Nou, ga dan maar, ga maar.' En zo mocht hij weg. In haar ogen was hij nu ook slechts een robot waar ze helemaal niks mee kon.
Hij is toen de woestijn dieper ingegaan, terwijl de rode gloed hem leidde. Na lang lopen kwam hij aan bij een rivier in de woestijn. De rivier was ondiep, en hij kon er gemakkelijk doorheen.
'Wat was dat nou voor een vrouw ?' vroeg hij aan de rode gloed.
'Een luchtweerspiegeling, niets meer,' zei de rode gloed.
'Maar ik zat er helemaal in vast,' zei hij.
'Ja, en alleen de rode gloed kan er doorheen leiden, en alleen de rode gloed leidt tot deze rivier,' zei de rode gloed. 'De rest sterft in de woestijn of wordt er tot een zombie.'

Hoofdstuk 4.

'Komt u maar,' werd er gezegd. Hij was in een druk winkelcentrum aangekomen, wat achter de rivier lag in de woestijn. De woestijn liep hier over in een soort stad, maar daarachter was weer woestijn. Hij volgde de vrouw die hem wenkte. Ze was een soort agente. 'U bent hier nieuw ?' vroeg ze. Hij knikte.
'Welkom,' zei ze. 'Spreekt u Beeks ?'
'Nog niet,' zei hij.
'Nog niet ?' vroeg ze. 'Bent u van plan het te leren ?'
'Eh ja,' zei hij.
'Dan komt u hier niet binnen,' zei de agente streng.
'Het is de taal van de verloren natuur,' zei hij.
'Nee,' zei de agente, 'het is de taal van de zombies. U bent voorgelogen.'
'Okay,' zei hij. 'Moet met mijn opvoeding te maken hebben gehad. I am sorry.'

'Goedzo,' zei de agente. 'Zo kunnen we zaken doen. Wat heeft u allemaal meegenomen ?'
'Niks eigenlijk,' zei hij.
'Dan komt u er ook niet in,' zei de agente. 'Ik moet op z'n minst uw toegangsbewijs zien.'
'Waar krijg ik die ?' vroeg hij.
'Waar krijgt u die ?' zei de agente verontwaardigd. 'Heeft u nooit op school gezeten ?'
'Jawel, ik ben technicus,' zei hij.
'Wat maakt u ?' vroeg ze.
'Afweermechanismes tegen zombies,' zei hij.
'Okay, komt u maar mee,' zei de agente.
Ze leidde hem naar een groot gebouw. Er stond met grote letters op een bord boven de deur 'bloed technologie'. 'Dit is de technologie van de rode traan om de groene traan op te wekken, de traan van de verloren natuur,' sprak de agente. Ze leidde hem naar binnen.

'Die Mexicaanse vrouw zei dat zij die traan was,' zei hij.
De agente begon te lachen. 'Dat is de woestijngek,' zei ze. 'Die zegt altijd hetzelfde, en wil iedereen tot haar kind maken, met vele bedreigingen. Het is een luchtweerspiegeling. Maar in ieder geval : Hier kunt u werken.'
'Ik moest het rode pad volgen,' zei hij.
'Het rode pad ?' vroeg ze verbaasd. 'Maar jongen, weet je wel wat dat is ?'
'Het pad van bloed, zweet en tranen,' zei hij.
'Mis,' zei ze. 'Veel erger, maar als je dat echt wil, dan kan ik je er wel naartoe leiden. Het is achter de stad te vinden.'
'Wat is het dan ?' vroeg hij.
'Dat ga ik u niet zomaar zeggen,' zei de agente. 'informatie over het rode pad is hier heel duur. Er komen de grootste ongelukken van als ik daar zomaar van alles over ga zeggen. Het is trouwens

ook verboden. Alleen tegen hoge betaling ...'
'Laat maar zitten,' zei hij. 'Wijs me het pad maar aan dan.'
'Je moet het zelf weten,' zei ze. 'Ik heb je gewaarschuwd.'
'U heeft me niks uitgelegd, dus een echte waarschuwing is het niet echt,' zei hij.
Ze leidde hem toen door de stad heen helemaal tot aan de rand van de woestijn aan de andere kant van de stad. Daar ging ergens het rode pad verder. Het was als een ondiep riviertje wat leek op een mengsel tussen bloed en tranen. 'Dit leidt tot de Ogrot wildernis, waar de groene traan heerst, de traan van de verloren natuur. Maar zoals u weet raad ik het pad ertoe aan niemand aan.'
'Waarom niet ?' vroeg hij.
'Mijnheer, nu probeert u het weer !' riep de agente boos. 'Ik heb u dat al uitgelegd ! Het lastig vallen van het gezag heeft

een hoge prijs !' riep ze, terwijl ze een pistool trok.
'Ho maar,' zei hij. 'Dat kunnen we ook op een andere manier oplossen.'
'Nee, niks,' zei ze, terwijl ze de loop van het pistool in zijn buik drukte. 'U kent de regels hier niet, maar dat is geen excuus. De regels gelden nog steeds. Lopen.' Hij wilde richting het rode pad lopen, maar ze duwde hem een andere richting op.
'Waar gaan we naartoe ?' vroeg hij.
'Naar de Mexicaan,' zei ze streng. Hij kreeg toen in de gaten dat de Mexicaan een soort gevangenis complex was, één of ander strafkamp. 'Nee, dat nooit meer,' zei hij.
'Sla haar,' zei de rode gloed. 'Sla het pistool uit haar handen.' Dat gebeurde automatisch. De rode gloed sprong op en sloeg de vrouw en met zijn andere hand sloeg hij het pistool uit haar handen, en raapte het snel op. 'Ren nu voor je leven,' zei de rode gloed. De agente trok een

tweede pistool. 'Ga zigzaggen,' zei de rode gloed. 'Loop zo wild als je kan, anders heeft ze een doelwit.' Hij rende weg, sprong, en maakte bochten en kronkels, en ging zo terug naar het rode pad. Hij hoorde de agente gillen en krijsen. 'Ren,' zei de rode gloed. Hij bleef doorrennen over het rode pad in kronkels, zonder om te kijken. 'Je kan niet geraakt worden,' zei de rode gloed, 'want je hebt haar pistool. Pistolen van hetzelfde agentschap kunnen elkaar nooit raken. Dat is zo ingebouwd.'
'Waarom moet ik dan in kronkels rennen ?' vroeg hij.
'Vanwege camera's,' zei de rode gloed. 'Camera's zijn nog wel erger dan pistolen.'
Hij bleef doorrennen totdat hij in een oerwoud terecht kwam. Dit moest het Ogrot oerwoud zijn. Hij rende helemaal door totdat hij een gigantische botten piramide zag in de verte. Ergens

halverwege op de piramide stond een reusachtige bottentroon waarop een groen ei zat. 'Dat moet de groene traan van de verloren natuur zijn,' zei hij tegen zichzelf.
'Nee,' zei de rode gloed, 'het is de traan van de zombies.'
'Waarom heeft het rode pad mij hier naartoe geleid dan ?' vroeg hij.
'Het zijn niet het type dromen die je wil,' zei de rode gloed, 'maar in het groene metalen ei die de traan van de zombies is zit de ware traan van de verloren natuur, en als het ei uitgebroed is, dan komt het eruit.'
'Wat is de traan van de zombies ?' vroeg hij.
'Het is hetgene wat alles wat de zombies mooi, leuk en lekker vinden lang laat duren,' zei de rode gloed, 'maar het is een illusie.'
'En hoe wordt het uitgebroed ?' vroeg hij.

'Je moet naar de bewaakster van de traan van de zombies,' zei de rode gloed.
'Waar is dat ?' vroeg hij.
'Zo woont ergens hier in een huisje in de wildernis,' zei de rode gloed. 'Ik zal je er wel heenleiden.' De rode gloed duwde hem voort in de wildernis, en al gauw kwamen ze aan bij een klein huisje. Het zat onder de lianen en andere planten van de wildernis. Bij een deurtje klopte hij aan. Een oud vrouwtje deed open.
'Wat mag het zijn ?' vroeg het oude vrouwtje.
'Ik ben op zoek naar de bewaakster van de traan van de zombies,' zei hij.
'Oh,' kraste het oude vrouwtje. 'Van het groene metalen ei op de troon ? Dat ben ik. Kom maar verder.'
Hij stapte naar binnen en keek in het rond. Een kat met rechtopstaande haren keek hem aan. Aan de linkerkant was het keukengedeelte, waar ook wat handdoeken hingen over de kastdeuren,

of kleine lakentjes. De deurtjes stonden een beetje open. Er stond ook een tafeltje met een sprei eroverheen met wat stoelen.
'Gaat u maar zitten,' zei het vrouwtje. Hij ging zitten.
'Ik zou graag willen weten,' zei hij, 'hoe het ei opengaat, want ik ben op zoek naar de traan van de verloren natuur.'
Het vrouwtje begon te grijnzen en te lachen. 'Dat hebben ze je maar wijsgemaakt,' kraste ze. 'Het ei gaat nooit open, en er zit geen traan van de verloren natuur in. Dat bestaat niet. Ik kan het weten, want ik ben de bewaakster van het ding sinds mijn vijftiende.'
'Zeg haar dat je het wil overkopen,' zei de rode gloed.
'Ik zou het ei graag van u willen overkopen,' zei hij.

Weer begon ze te lachen. 'Ik heb het geërfd, en het is heel duur. Hoeveel bied je ?'
'Ik heb niks bij me,' zei hij.
'Jammer,' zei de oude vrouw. 'Ik zou er graag vanaf willen, want het is een zware last.'
'Hoezo ?' vroeg hij.
'Ik wil er niet over praten,' zei het oude vrouwtje, 'maar ik weet wel wat. Je kan er voor werken. Venezuela heeft een werker nodig.'
'Wie is dat ?' vroeg hij.
'Een indiaanse vrouw die hier in de buurt woont,' sprak ze.
'Oh, zoals de Mexicaan ?' vroeg hij.
Even sprak de vrouw niet. 'Je zult het wel zien,' zei ze. 'Haar zus heet Colombia. Die kun je misschien ook helpen.'
'Goed,' zei hij. 'Ik ga het proberen. Waar woont zij ?'

'Blijf gewoon zitten,' zei het oude vrouwtje. 'Ze komt altijd langs rondom deze tijd.' Ineens ging de deur open, en daar stond Venezuela, een grote trotse vrouw. Ze keek hem direct heel minachtend aan.
'Ik heb een hulpje voor je,' zei het oude vrouwtje.
'Noem je dat een hulp ?' lachte de vrouw. 'Hij ziet eruit alsof hij nog geen veertje kan optillen.'
'Hij is nog jong,' zei het oude vrouwtje, 'en sterk. Toe nou, neem hem in dienst, want ik wil van het groene ei af. Ik kan het hem niet zomaar gratis geven. Het moet duur betaald worden, duur.'
'Nou, vooruit dan maar,' zei Venezuela, 'voor jou neem ik hem in dienst dan. Ik zal voorzichtig met hem zijn, anders breekt hij. Misschien kan hij mijn zus ook van dienst zijn.'
Hij keek boos naar Venezuela, maar hij wilde ook niet dat hem deze kans

ontnomen zou worden, dus hij zorgde ervoor dat hij vooral niet te boos keek.
'Wat is er, jongen ?' vroeg Venezuela. 'Niet tevreden ?'
'Eh, het is goed mevrouw, wat moet ik doen ?' vroeg hij.
'De kalveren voeden, op de kippetjes passen, en wat licht huishoudelijk werk,' zei ze minachtend, 'want meer kun je toch niet aan.'
Hij was verontwaardigd, maar het moest maar. Het vrouwtje was Venezuela dankbaar. 'Laat hem goed werken voor het ei,' zei ze tegen haar. 'Hij is nog jong en sterk, dus je moet het er van nemen.'
'Ik ben bang dat hij halverwege het werk zal flauwvallen,' lachte Venezuela spottend, 'maar ik zal het met hem proberen als je dat ei echt kwijt wil.'
'Ik moet wel,' zei het oude vrouwtje. 'Ik word ouder, en de lasten van het ding zijn zwaar.'

'Ik begrijp het,' zei Venezuela. 'Maar mijn zus zal hem zeker zijn verblijf zuur maken. Dat voel ik nu al aan.'
Hij keek verbaasd naar Venezuela. 'En waarom is dat ?' vroeg hij.
Maar ze zei niks.
Toen liep ze de deur uit. 'Volg haar, jongen,' zei het oude vrouwtje.
Hij liep achter haar aan de deur uit.
'Waarom volg je me ?' vroeg Venezuela.
'Ik zou toch bij je werken voor het ei ?' zei hij.
'Ik ga nog niet terug,' zei ze. 'Ik moet even iets uit de schuur halen. Ik had toch nog niet gezegd dat we weg zouden gaan ? Je bent wel erg opdringerig.'
'Het spijt me,' zei hij, en liep weer terug.
'Ben je daar weer, jongen ?' vroeg het oude vrouwtje.
'Ja, ze moest alleen wat in de schuur doen,' zei hij.

Na een tijdje begon Venezuela buiten te roepen. 'Kom nu, jongen, we hebben geen uren de tijd.'
Hij rende naar buiten, en liep met haar mee. Ze moesten dieper de wildernis in. De twee zussen woonden vlakbij elkaar. Hun huisjes stonden niet ver van elkaar verwijderd. Er lag een groot grasveld om de huisjes heen. Colombia kwam naar buiten en begon te lachen. 'Wat heb je daar nu weer meegenomen ?' vroeg ze minachtend.
'Een hulpje voor licht werk,' zei ze.
'Ik denk dat we dan beter zelf het werk kunnen doen,' zei ze spottend.
'Hij is nog jong,' zei Venezuela, 'en Petronella zei dat hij sterk was.'
'We zullen zien,' zei Colombia, die nog wel erger dan haar zus Venezuela leek te zijn. 'Ik mag hem nu al niet.'
'Ze haat mannen,' fluisterde Venezuela in zijn oor. Hij vond dat nogal huichelachtig van Venezuela, want zij

was zelf ook niet te aardig naar hem geweest, maar nu nam zij hem in bescherming tegen haar zus Colombia.
'Moet je nu niet al naar bed, zwakke jongen ?' hoonde Colombia.
'Nog niet,' zei hij. En het geplaag ging maar door en door, de ene vernederende opmerking na de ander. Soms probeerde Venezuela haar af te remmen, maar dat lukte niet echt. Het begon hem steeds meer te frustreren, maar hij had er alles voor over om dat ei te krijgen. Hij was op zoek naar de traan van de verloren natuur. Zelfs 's nachts als hij op bed lag ging het geplaag nog door. Colombia kwam soms in zijn kamer om hem wakker te maken, en maakte dan weer vervelende opmerkingen. Hij kwam niet echt tot rust. Overdag moest hij wat werk doen. Colombia begon hem steeds meer nare karweitjes op te dragen, en soms ook dingen die nergens op sloegen, gewoon om hem te bespotten. Dan moest

hij emmers met modder van de ene plek naar de andere plek dragen, en dan goot ze soms gewoon de emmer over hem leeg. Venezuela vond dat allemaal te ver gaan, en nam hem zoveel mogelijk in bescherming, maar hij was het niet vergeten hoe hij haar in het begin behandelde. Ze deed nu wat aardiger, maar ze had hem al diep gestoken. Colombia liet hem 's nachts niet slapen, waardoor hij overdag heel erg moe was, en dan moest hij ook nog hard voor haar werken. Als hij daardoor zo zwak en duizelig was dat hij er een huilbui van kreeg lachte ze hem gewoon uit. Venezuela was vaak niet in de buurt, dus zo was hij helemaal overgeleverd aan zijn lot. Maar ja, hij was immers op zoek naar de traan van de verloren natuur. Het was een moeilijke tijd waarin Colombia hem het bloed onder de nagels vandaan probeerde te krijgen, en hem op allerlei manieren probeerde te tergen. Hij voelde

zichzelf als een zombie, zo moe werd hij van haar. Venezuela was tot zijn grote verdriet steeds minder in de buurt. Hij had haar nodig, maar ze was er niet. Hij wilde volhouden voor het ei, maar Colombia stak hem diep. Deze vrouw zou zijn dood kunnen worden.
Op een dag nam Venezuela hem terug naar het oude vrouwtje. 'Colombia is een zware plaag, hè ?' kraste het oude vrouwtje. Hij knikte. 'Ik weet het,' zei het oude vrouwtje. 'Daar waar Venezuela stopt gaat Colombia altijd maar door.'
Hij knikte weer. Hij was moe en gebroken. Het was alsof hij in een stuk glas was getrapt met zijn blote voeten. Zo voelde het. Alsof een giftige slang zijn voet had gebeten en niet los wilde laten. 'Het is allemaal voor het ei,' zei het oude vrouwtje. 'Het is duur. Het neemt met minder geen genoegen.'
'Hoe lang moet ik nog ?' vroeg hij beverig en trillerig.

'Zonder Colombia kom je nooit bij het ei,' zei het vrouwtje. 'Zij is het pad tot het ei, tot de traan.'
Hij moest weer terug naar Colombia. Hij smeekte Venezuela om vaker bij hem te zijn, maar ze had andere dingen te doen. En zo was hij weer met Colombia opgescheept, die steeds gemener deed.
'Leid me tot het ei,' zei hij op een dag. Toen sloeg ze hem in het gezicht. 'Vraag dat nooit meer,' zei ze.
Maar de rode gloed bleef bij hem aandringen om het weer te vragen. 'Kun je me alsjeblieft naar het ei leiden,' smeekte hij.
'Stop !' riep ze. 'Houd er over op.' Weer ze sloeg ze hem, en zelfs harder. Maar hij bleef smeken op aandringen van de rode gloed. 'Ik heb het ei nodig,' huilde hij na flink in zijn gezicht te zijn geslagen. 'Het is geen ei !' snauwde ze. 'Het is een planeet. Het is de traan van het vrouwenvolk, door wat het

mannenvolk ons heeft aangedaan !' Ze schreeuwde zo hard dat het leek alsof alles stilstond, en haar woorden gingen als een echo door hem heen, alsof hij bevroor in de eeuwigheid.
'Wat hebben de mannenvolken jullie aangedaan ?' vroeg hij.
'Ik wil er niet over praten,' zei ze.
'Goed,' zei hij, haar een beetje meer begrijpende, ook haar gedrag. 'Als je dat niet wil dan doen we het ook niet.'
Ineens begon ze hem mee te trekken.
'Kom, dan laat ik het je zien,' zei ze. Ze sleurde hem met zich mee door de wildernis totdat ze in een zanderig gebied kwamen, waar een zandheuvel was. Daarachter was nog veel meer zand en een grote piramide met botten die hij al eerder had gezien. Daarop halverwege stond een grote troon waarop het groene metalen ei troonde. Hij kon er niet te lang naar kijken. Hij huiverde. Ook de troon was geheel van botten gemaakt.

Het groene ei zag er gevaarlijk uit. 'Het is het laatste wat er nog over is van onze planeet,' zei Colombia. Ze liep verder richting de piramide, maar hij durfde niet meer. 'Kom, lafaard,' zei ze. 'Dan zal ik je alles vertellen.' Hij hield zijn hand voor zijn ogen. 'Goed dan,' zei ze, en scheurde een stuk van haar blouche af om hem te blinddoeken. Toen nam ze zijn hand en trok hem mee. 'Grote jongen,' zei ze spottend. 'Eens zal het overstromen,' zei ze, 'dat wat in het brokstuk van de planeet zit, de traan van onze vrouwenstam.' Hij kwam dichterbij. Er gleed een rust over hem heen, en nam even later de blinddoek af. Hij keek recht in het grote metalen ei. Het was helemaal groen, maar het leek wel doorzichtig. Hij zag er iets groens in klotsen en golven.
'Wij aanbidden het,' zei Colombia. Ze boog neer voor het reusachtige ei. 'Buig,' fluisterde ze, en hij boog. Ze begon toen

te bidden in een andere taal. Hij kon het niet verstaan. 'Wat voor taal is het ?' fluisterde hij.
'Beeks,' fluisterde ze terug. Hij zuchtte. Dat had hij eerder gehoord. Het ei begon te grommen. 'Leer hem Beeks,' sprak het ding. Toen moesten ze weer weg, want het ei begon groen vuur te spuwen, alsof het woest werd. 'De traan van het vrouwenvolk is woest,' zei Colombia terwijl ze hem mee terug sleurde. 'De traan van het vrouwenvolk wil dat je Beeks leert, anders zal zij je vernietigen.' Toen ze weer thuis gekomen waren begon ze hem de Beekse taal te leren. Ook moest hij boeken lezen. Door de Beekse taal te leren merkte hij dat de groene traan van de verloren natuur en het vrouwenvolk in hem begon te ontwaken. Er was sindsdien een groene gloed over hem heen. 'Het is niet wat ik wil,' zei Colombia, 'dat je ingewijd word in het Beeks, maar het is de wil van de

groene traan. Ik had gehoopt dat het je zou vernietigen.' Hij wist dat zij een mannenhater was, en hij kon haar een beetje begrijpen, maar hij snapte niet dat zij zo generaliseerde, want wat had hij haar aangedaan ?
Op een dag kwam Venezuela thuis met het nieuws dat het oude vrouwtje was overleden. Nu had hij de groene traan waarvan zij de bewaakster was geërfd. Colombia was woedend. 'Wie denkt hij wel niet dat hij is ? Waarom heeft Petronella het niet aan ons gegeven ?' Ze vloekte en tierde alles bij elkaar. Ook was ze boos op haar zus Venezuela. 'Het is allemaal jouw schuld. Je had hem hier nooit naartoe moeten nemen. Nu zijn we met hem opgescheept.'
'Laten we het even aanzien,' zei Venezuela.
'Nee !' riep Colombia woest. 'Laten we nu naar de traan van ons vrouwenvolk gaan, en vragen of dit haar wens is.'

'Zoals je wil,' zei Venezuela. Toen gingen ze met z'n drieën door de wildernis naar de zandvlaktes waar achter een zandheuvel ergens de reusachtige bottenpiramide stond. Weer wilde hij geblinddoekt worden. Hij was erg bang, en Colombia was hem weer aan het bespotten. Ze namen hem mee tot bij de bottentroon waar ze neerbogen, en eerst lange tijd de groene traan van hun volk begonnen te aanbidden in de Beekse taal. Ook hij moest meedoen. Toen begon Colombia lang te bidden en te smeken, en daarna begon ze heel voorzichtig te vragen wat ze met de jongen aan moesten, en of hij daadwerkelijk de groene traan had geërfd. Het was een doorzichtig groen metaal waarin groen spul wild en woest klotste, als hoge golven die leken te branden. Het ei was reusachtig groot. Inmiddels had de jongen zijn blinddoek weer afgedaan, maar hij durfde niet veel naar het

reusachtige, gevaarlijke ei te kijken, en deed ook vaak zijn handen voor zijn ogen.
'Ik wil dat hij geofferd wordt,' gromde het ei.
'Nee !' riep hij. Maar hij merkte dat hij zichzelf niet kon bewegen. Het ei begon van de troon af te rollen om zijn richting op te gaan, en hij viel bijna flauw. Hij keek in het ei en zag het mengsel van dichtbij, als een mengsel van tranen en zaad. 'Wat een rare jongen ben jij,' sprak het ei. 'Offer hem !' gromde het ei toen tot de vrouwen. De vrouwen stonden als gehypnotiseerd op, en grepen de jongen en brachten hem dichtbij het ei, zodat hij net niet het ei raakte. 'Als je het aanraakt ben je dood,' zei Colombia. Plotseling werd het ei woest. 'Hij is onder bescherming van de rode traan !' gromde het ei. 'Het staat tussen hem en mij in.' Het ei begon over te geven en vuur te spuwen, groen vuur. De vrouwen deden

verschrikt een paar stappen achteruit, en trokken de jongen met hen mee. 'Ik ga overstromen !' brulde het ei. Plotseling ontplofte het groene doorzichtige metalen ei, terwijl het groene spul wat erin zat naar buiten kwam. 'Ren !' riep Venezuela. 'Er is een uitbarsting !' Maar hoe hard ze ook renden, ze werden gegrepen door de golven van de groene traan. Hij werd helemaal in de diepte getrokken, alsof er een gat in de bodem werd gebrand. 'Waarom ! Waarom !' schreeuwde hij. Hij hoorde Colombia en Venezuela in de verte gillen en schreeuwen. Hij zag hen meegesleurd worden door zware golven.
'De traan van de verloren natuur is vrijgekomen,' zei de rode gloed.

Hoofdstuk 5.

Hij was blij dat hij verlost was van Colombia, en hij voelde een grote euforie. Hij werd door de groene stromen in een diepere wereld getrokken, onder de grond. Er was hier een ondergrondse wereld. Maar de groene stromen beten hem, en zogen aan hem, en het zoog hem in een diepe slaap. Hij raakte bewusteloos, en werd pas veel later wakker in een zijgedeelte van een keuken van een kasteel, in het hooi. Er stond een vrouw aan het lange aanrecht verderop, die telkens zei : 'Ik bak ze bruin.' Hij vroeg : 'Hoe ben ik hier gekomen ?'
'Ik heb je geroepen,' zei de vrouw, die een fijn wit kapje droeg.
'Hoe ?' vroeg hij.
'Zoals ik altijd doe,' zei ze.
'Wie bent u ?' vroeg hij.

'Weet je dat niet ?' vroeg ze. 'Iedereen weet het, dus waarom jij niet ?'
'Toe, ik ga hier aan kapot, mevrouw,' zei hij. 'Wees eens iets duidelijker.'
'Oh, schreeuw jij maar weer tegen mijn tanden,' zei ze. 'Het waren de wachters die jou vonden en jou tot mij brachten. Je lag bewusteloos in het woud.'
'Mevrouw, wie waren die wachters ?' vroeg hij.
'De wachters van het metalen ei,' zei ze.
'Het is een bruin metalen ei dit keer,' zei de rode gloed. 'Hierin zit de traan van de vrouwen opgesloten. De vorige traan was de traan van de verloren natuur. Dit keer is het daadwerkelijk de traan van de verloren vrouwen.'
'Wat is het metalen ei ?' vroeg hij aan de vrouw.
'Het is hij die we moeten gehoorzamen, anders zal hij ons vernietigen,' zei de vrouw.
'Hoe doet hij dat ?' vroeg hij.

'Door storm, honger en dood,' zei de vrouw.
'Storm, honger en dood,' herhaalde hij. 'Waar is hij ?'
'Hij troont in dit kasteel,' sprak ze, 'in de troonzaal. Ik ben het keukenmeisje. Als een bruine planeet, als een eindeloze bol van vuur troont hij in de eindeloze troonzaal. Oh, onbereikbaar is hij, en ik bak ze allen bruin.'
'Wat betekent dat ?' vroeg hij.
'Oh, ik kook en bak mensenvlees, want daar is hij verzot op,' zei de vrouw, 'van nietswaardige lieden, van criminelen in de gevangenis, en van de zwakken en de zieken. Daar knapt hij van op.'
'Mevrouw, doet u eens even normaal,' zei hij. 'U bakt mensenvlees ? Waarom ?'
'Omdat hij mij anders vernietigd,' zei de vrouw. 'De enige reden voor mijn leven is hem te gehoorzamen. Oh, ik bak ze bruin en stevig. Veel vlees wil hij, een

dubbele boterham. Ik druk ze stevig op elkaar. Ik bak ze bruin,' zong ze.
'Moet u deze liedjes telkens zingen ?' vroeg hij.
'Ja, dat wil hij,' zong de vrouw.
'En wat doe ik hier ?' vroeg hij.
'De wachters vonden je. Hij wil je,' zong ze. 'Hij komt voort uit een groot bad van bloed in de troonzaal, waar tribunes omheen zijn, en waar zij die dichtbij hem zijn op zitten om toe te kijken.'
'Ben jij niet dichtbij hem dan ?' vroeg hij.
'Ik ben slechts het keukenmeisje,' zei ze.
'Wat ga je met me doen ?' vroeg hij.
'Bruinbakken,' zong ze. Hij stond op, maar zakte weer ineen. Hij voelde zich te slap om te staan. 'Nee,' stamelde hij.
'Wat nee ?' snauwde de vrouw ineens.
'Wil jij tegen de orders van de kok ingaan en daarmee tegen de orders van het metalen ei ?'

'Ja,' stamelde hij. 'Het is niet goed wat je doet.'
Ze liep naar hem toe met een groot slagersmes en wees ermee op hem. 'Branden zul je, en bruingebakken worden,' zei ze, en liep toen weer terug naar het aanrecht. Naast het aanrecht stonden een heleboel fornuizen. 'Het zal een heerlijk maal worden,' zei ze. Toen liep ze de keuken uit, terwijl ze riep : 'Morgen ben ik terug.' Hij hoorde dat de deur van buiten op slot werd gedraaid. 'Ik zit hier vast,' dacht hij. 'En ik ben te slap.'
'Traag ook,' zei de rode gloed, 'maar gelukkig heb je mij.'
'Wat kan je doen ?' vroeg hij. Plotseling werd er heel hard op de deur geklopt. De deur werd opengemaakt en er stond een man met een zwart gewaad en met een hoofd wat een bruine vuurbol was. De man was heel lang en groot.

'W... wie bent u ?' stamelde hij. De man bleef maar staan en naar hem kijken, en bewoog niet. Toen liep hij weer door de deur de keuken uit, en hij hoorde weer dat de deur op slot werd gedraaid. Heel langzaam hoorde hij een klik. Het was als een echo in zijn hoofd. 'Wat moet ik hier ?' stamelde hij tegen zichzelf. Hij was bang, ook al was de rode gloed bij hem. Hij voelde zichzelf steeds slapper worden, en viel toen in slaap. De dag erna kwam de keukenmeid weer binnen, en begon hem de gang op te sleuren. 'Het metalen ei wil je levend hebben,' zei ze. Ze sleepte hem door de gangen van het kasteel heen, totdat ze uiteindelijk in een hele grote zaal aankwamen die precies zo was als de keukenmeid had beschreven. Er was een enorm bloedbad in het midden, waar omheen tribunes waren, als een kerkzaal, maar dan veel groter en reusachtiger. In het midden van het bloedbad zweefde een enorm grote

bol van bruin vuur, die eindeloos ver weg leek te zijn, als een planeet. De brandende bol begon te brullen, en vuur verspreidde zich over het bloedbad. Hij had het gevoel alsof zijn oren explodeerden, alsof het bloed uit zijn oren liep. De immens grote troonzaal leek ook te schudden, alsof er een aardbeving was. 'Laat hem dichterbij komen,' sprak de vurige bol. Ze sleepte hem mee over het pad tussen de tribunes tot aan de rand van het bloedbad.
'Jou moet ik hebben,' gromde de vurige bol. 'Laat hem naar me toezwemmen.'
'Hij is te zwak, oh grote meester van metaal,' sprak de keukenmeid.
'Ei ben ik !' bulderde de bol.
'Ik weet het, groot meester ei van metaal,' sprak de vrouw.
'Laat hem tot het ei komen,' brulde de bol.
'Hoe, mijn meester ei van metaal ?' vroeg de vrouw.

'Duw hem in het bad, en ik zal hem naar me toe zuigen, ik zal hem opnemen,' zei de bol met een diepe, lage en trage stem die tot hem doordrong en doordreunde in het diepste van zijn botten. Voorzichtig sleepte zij hem in het bad, terwijl er kleine golfjes begonnen te komen, die langzaam steeds groter begonnen te worden, en hem begonnen mee te nemen, mee te sleuren. Plotseling werd hij door een grote storm opgenomen uit het bad, en tot de vurige bruine metalen bol gezogen. 'Van binnen ben ik warm,' sprak de bol, 'heel warm.'
'W... wie bent u ?' stamelde hij, terwijl hij in de bol werd gezogen.
'Het metalen ei spreekt niet !' bulderde de bol.
Hij verging bijna van de angst. Hij werd slapper en slapper en raakte weer bewusteloos, maar werd weer wakker door het geklapper van grote vleugels.
'Bij de les blijven,' gromde de bol.

Binnenin de bol zag hij het bruine metaal. 'W... wie bent u ?' stamelde hij weer.
'Zie je dat niet, uilskuiken ?' foeterde de bol. 'Ik ben de kracht van de man die over de vrouw heerst.'
'Hoe kwam u aan die kracht ?' stamelde hij.
'Veel eten,' foeterde de bol, 'heel veel eten.'
'Wat zoal ?' vroeg hij stamelend.
'Mensenvlees !' bulderde de bol, die nog vuriger werd. Binnenin golfde het als een bruine zee. 'Een ware man eet mensenvlees zoveel hij kan, van criminelen en zwakkelingen. Opgeruimd staat netjes. Zo zijn er geen gevangenissen en ziekenhuizen meer nodig. Dat kost allemaal veel te veel geld. Ik ben de ware gevangenis en het ware ziekenhuis. Ik verbrand ze allemaal. Ik laat ze flink bruin bakken. Opgeruimd staat netjes.'

'E.... en iedereen moet u gehoorzamen ?' stamelde hij.
'Ja,' zei de bol.
'Waarom ?' vroeg hij.
'Je moet eens weten,' zei hij. 'Er zijn teveel luilakken. Ze doen de hele dag niks, en ze zijn werkeloos. Ik verslind ze, en zo is er niemand meer werkeloos. Ik ben een genie.'
'En waarom leef ik dan nog ?' vroeg hij.
'Jij, jij ...' brulde het bruine metalen ei, 'jou wilde ik zien. Jij hebt twee tranen die jou beschermen, een rode en een groene. Ik zou mijn tanden kapotbijten op jou !'
'Precies,' zei hij, 'ik ben namelijk hier voor de derde traan, de traan van de verloren vrouwen. Mij was verteld dat u die opgeslokt houdt.'
'In de diepte van de aarde,' brulde het ei, 'in de diepte van de aarde, ja. Ik ben de grond. Ik kan je dan misschien niet eten, maar ik kan je wel gevangen houden. Ik

kan je dan wel niet eten, maar ik kan jou wel dingen laten eten en dingen in je stoppen. Ik ben datgene wat in iemand gestopt wordt. Ik laat niet meer los. Ik kan jou dan misschien niet verteren, maar jij kunt mij ook niet verteren. Ik ben datgene wat altijd in de ander blijft. Ik kan je kwellen, en je ziek maken, en ik ben altijd dichtbij je. Ik verlaat nooit je zijde.' De bol begon gemeen te lachen. 'Ik zal alles van je wegnemen, todat je alleen mij nog maar over hebt.'
'De rode gloed zal me niet verlaten,' zei de jongen.
'Het is een traan, slechts verlies,' brulde de bol.
'Ik heb er veel mee gewonnen,' zei de jongen.
'Je hebt geen idee,' brulde de bol, 'het is het geijl van de bittere eenzaamheid.'
'De traan van de eenzaamheid is een goed wapen en medicijn tegen ongewenste indringers,' zei de jongen.

'Ongewenste indringers zoals ik ?' vroeg de bol.
'Ik heb hier niet om gevraagd,' zei de jongen, 'maar ik ben op zoek naar de traan van de verloren vrouwen. Het is veilig te stellen dat hoe diep jij in mij bent binnengedrongen, zo diep ben ik in jou binnengedrongen, ja zelfs dieper.'
De bol begon te foeteren en te schelden. 'Je kan mij geen ongelijk geven. Ik ben de aarde grond. Mensen lopen op mij, lopen in mij, dus ik loop op en in hen. De mens betaalt een hoge prijs. Ik ben duur, een hoge huur. Ik geloof dat wij aan het einde van ons gesprek zijn gekomen. Verzadig mij, en ik zal je door laten. Ik ben de wachter van de traan van de verloren vrouwen.'
'Hoe verzadigen ?' vroeg de jongen.
'Door een wedstrijd,' zei de bol.
'Wat voor wedstrijd ?' vroeg hij.
'Vraag hem om zijn jas,' zei de rode gloed.

'Mag ik uw jas ?' vroeg de jongen.
'Waar heb je die voor nodig ?' vroeg het metalen ei.
'Voor de wedstrijd,' zei de jongen.
Het metalen ei trok zijn metalen jas uit en gaf het aan de jongen. Plotseling zag de jongen de traan van de verloren vrouwen, de bruine traan. 'Gooi de jas in het bloedbad,' zei de rode traan. Toen de jongen dat deed begon de reusachtige traan van de verloren vrouwen uit de bol te stromen. Hij zag de bol exploderen vlak voor zijn ogen. 'Breng hem weg !' riep de bol, maar steeds vager werd zijn stem. 'Ik kan niet !' werd er geroepen. Overal begon de bruine traan van de verloren vrouwen los te barsten. Op de sterke golven werd de jongen meegesleurd. Hij werd opgenomen door een grote hand die uit de golven kwam. 'De moeder aarde grond,' werd er gezegd. 'De vader aarde grond is gaan slapen.'

'Ik kan me niet voorstellen hoe dom jij bent geweest om hem die jas te geven.'
'Hij had het nodig voor de wedstrijd, zei hij.'
'Nee, hij heeft je gewoon bedrogen. Je bent erin getrapt.'
'Ik ben moe.'
'Ja, dat komt er van. Hij heeft je kracht genomen.'

Hoofdstuk 6.

Was hij niet al die tijd in de gevangenis geweest van het ijs van de zombies ?
Het had zijn wereld omgedraaid, maar een tranensleutel liet hem ontsnappen uit dit metalen ei.
Hij keek naar de tranensleutel die drie kleuren had : rood, groen en bruin.
Hij merkte dat hij het zelf was die in het metalen ei was opgesloten.
Maar nu stond hij buiten het ei. Het was een heel klein ei, en het lag op een dikke pak sneeuw.
Er was overal sneeuw en ijs hier.
De tranensleutel verwarmde zijn hand.
Hij durfde het metalen ei niet meer aan te raken.
Aarzelend liep hij van het ding weg door de dikke pakken sneeuw.
Toen hij verder weg was durfde hij er ook niet meer naar te kijken. Nee, hij moest het metalen ei achter zich laten.

In de verte zag hij een boerderij. Daar zou hij naartoe gaan. Daar zou hij het proberen, vragen waar hij was.
Na een tijdje lopen kwam hij daar aan. Er was hier minder ijs en sneeuw. Hij klopte aan op de deur. Een boer met een pijp deed open. Hij vertelde zijn verhaal en vroeg waar hij was. De boer begon te lachen. 'Een metalen ei ?' zei hij. 'Daar heb ik nog nooit van gehoord.'
'Waar ben ik dan ?' vroeg de jongen.
Er was ook een boerin in de huiskamer waar de boer hem naartoe leidde.
'Ga maar zitten,' zei de boer, die toen wegliep.
'Waar ben ik, mevrouw ?' vroeg de jongen.
'Op onze boerderij,' zei de boerin.
'Maar welk gebied is dit ?' vroeg hij.
De boerin keek hem verbaasd aan.
'Het kan toch niet zo wezen dat ik nergens ben ?' zei de jongen.

Toen kwam de boer weer binnen. 'Hij vraagt waar hij is,' lachte de boerin.
De boer ging dichterbij hem staan, bukte naar zijn oor en fluisterde toen zacht :
'Daar word niet over gesproken.'
Hij verstijfde van de schrik, en durfde er niet verder over te praten.
Na een tijdje stond hij op. 'Ik moet maar weer eens gaan,' zei de jongen.
'Nee vriend,' zei de boer, 'blijf zitten.'
'Waarom ?' vroeg de jongen.
'Daar word niet over gesproken,' fluisterde de boer.
Hij begreep dat er meer aan de hand moest zijn, en dat de boer ergens bang voor was, want hij zei het niet hardop.
'Ken je de Musoline traan ?' vroeg de boerin. 'Ze is zo mooi, zo gedecoreerd.'
'Ze is heel apart,' zei de boer. 'Je hebt het nog nooit meegemaakt.'
'Waar is ze ?' vroeg de jongen.

'In bed, ze slaapt nu,' zei de boerin trots en met genegenheid. Heel vertederend sprak ze erover alsof het haar kind was. Plotseling barsten de boer en de boerin in snikken uit. 'Ze zal zo opstaan,' snikte de boer.
'Waarom snikken jullie dan ?' vroeg de jongen verbaasd.
'Daar mag niet over gesproken worden,' fluisterde de boer.
Opeens ging de deur open, en een klein meisje in een nachtjapon met een teddybeer kwam naar binnen. Ze zei niets, en ging toen zitten. Niemand zei wat. Hij durfde ook niets te zeggen. Hij keek naar haar nachtjapon wat op de nachtjapon van een prinses leek, zo fijn gedecoreerd. 'Wat staar je naar me ?' snauwde het meisje.
'Mooie nachtjapon,' zei de jongen.
'Ja, je wil zeker wat van me gedaan krijgen, hè ?' snauwde het meisje.

De boer en de boerin bogen hun hoofden.
'Wat zitten jullie daar te snikken ?' snauwde het meisje. 'Is mijn eten al klaar ? Ik heb honger.'
'Nog niet,' snikte de boerin.
Het meisje begon hysterisch te worden, en begon met dingen te gooien. 'Dan eet ik die jongen wel op, en als ik nog steeds honger heb jullie ook.'
Ze krijste en foeterde. De boerin rende de kamer uit om door de gang naar de keuken te gaan. Even later kwam ze terug met een bord pap. 'Roosjes erin, hè,' zei het meisje.
'Ja, die zitten in de pap,' snikte de boerin.
Het meisje begon te eten. 'Ik proef er niets van !' krijste ze.
De boerin begon harder te snikken. Ze stond op en rende weer over de gang naar de keuken, en kwam even later met een bus roosjes terug. Het was roze spul

wat in de pap gegoten werd. 'Meer, meer,' zei het meisje.
'Het is op,' snikte de boerin.
'Op ?' krijste het meisje. 'Op ? Hoe durf je. Ik heb jullie hond al opgegeten. Nu eet ik je arm op.'
'Nee, alsjeblieft,' snikte de boerin. 'Ik zal het bij de buren halen.'
'Snel dan een beetje !' krijste het meisje.
De boerin snelde snikkend het huis uit en kwam na een half uur terug. Het meisje had al die tijd niets gezegd. Weer begon het meisje te foeteren toen de boerin binnenkwam met een nieuwe bus roosjes. 'Het duurde veel te lang,' krijste het meisje. 'Daar ga je zwaar voor boeten.' Snikkend goot de boerin meer roosjes op haar bord. Gulzig begon het meisje te eten.
De jongen keek hopeloos toe. Toen ging het meisje weer weg. Ze hoorden haar de trap op gaan.

'Waarom straffen jullie haar niet ?' vroeg hij aan de boer en de boerin.
'Zij kan niet gestrafd worden,' fluisterde de boer.
'Waarom niet ?' vroeg de jongen.
'Daar kan niet over gesproken worden,' fluisterde de boer.
'Ik zou haar een draai om haar oren geven als ik jullie was,' zei de jongen.
De boer en de boerin zeiden niets.
'Ik moet maar weer eens gaan,' zei de jongen, terwijl hij opstond.
'Nee vriend,' zei de boer, 'blijf zitten.'
'Ja, maar ik kan hier niet voor altijd blijven,' zei de jongen, en liep naar de deur van de huiskamer. De boerin hield hem tegen. 'We hebben wel een slaapkamer voor je. Het is beter zo.'
Ze bracht hem toen de gang op, en toen de trap op, en bracht hem naar één van de kamers. 'Hier heb je wat tijd voor jezelf,' zei de boerin.

'Bedankt,' zei de jongen. Hij keek rond in de kamer. Er stond een bed, een tafel en een boekenkast. Ook was er een klerenkast en een kast met andere spulletjes. Er stond wat speelgoed op.
'Van wie is deze kamer ?' vroeg de jongen.
De boerin begon te snikken. 'Van ons overleden kind. Kandijn heette ze. Ze maakte ons allen zo gelukkig. Ze was ons dierbaarste bezit. Musoline is haar zus. We noemen haar traan omdat ze het tegenovergestelde van Kandijn is. Ze maakte ons allen doodongelukkig.'
'Hoe kwam Kandijn aan haar einde ?' vroeg de jongen.
'Vermoord,' zei de boerin, 'door haar zus.'
'Waarom is ze hier dan nog ?' vroeg de jongen verbaasd.
'Ze kan hier niet weg,' zei de boerin.
'Beide kinderen waren hier geplaatst door het gezag.'

'Dus ze waren geadopteerd ?' vroeg de jongen.
'Geplaatst, gedwongen,' zei de boerin. 'Het waren weeskinderen, en die moesten ergens ondergebracht worden. We konden niet weigeren.'
Toen fluisterde ze : 'Het gezag heeft zelf de ouders van die kinderen omgebracht waardoor ze weeskinderen werden.'
'Wie is het gezag ?' vroeg hij fluisterend terug, 'en waarom moeten we fluisteren ?'
'Als het witte metalen ei het hoort zijn we zwaar in de problemen,' fluisterde ze terug.
Plotseling hoorde ze een hard geluid buiten. De boerin liep naar het raam toe en keek naar buiten. 'Zie, daar begint het gedonder al,' zei ze zacht in paniek. 'Ik ook met mijn grote mond.' De jongen ging naast haar staan en keek ook naar buiten. Een enorm groot metalen wit ei hing buiten in de lucht boven de bomen.

Het ding bleef gewoon in de lucht staan, en zag er heel intimiderend uit. 'We moeten voorzichtig zijn,' fluisterde ze. De jongen wist nu dat er hier een groot schrikbewind werd gevoerd.
Toen de boerin weer weg was ging de jongen tussen de boeken kijken in de boekenkast. Het witte metalen ei was inmiddels weer weg tot hun grote opluchting. Er zat een boek tussen over een jongen die in een groot wit metalen ei woonde. Hij was helemaal alleen, en zijn broek was gemaakt van tranen. Het ei was zijn gevangenis. Hij kon wel van alles doen in het ei. Er was een groot natuurgebied, en een rivier waarop hij kon varen met zijn bootje, maar hij was helemaal alleen. Hij woonde in een hutje. Toen hij eens in bed lag om te slapen, en zijn tranenbroek had uitgetrokken en naast hem had gelegd zag hij dat de tranenbroek begon te bewegen. Tot zijn grote verbazing begon

de tranenbroek toen ook tot hem te spreken. Hij was helemaal hysterisch van blijdschap en ging uit zijn bed om met de tranenbroek te dansen. Sindsdien was hij nooit meer alleen. Het was een heel dik boek wat de jongen helemaal uitlas. De volgende dag sprak hij erover met de boerin.
'Het is een mooi verhaal, van hoop,' sprak de boerin, 'maar iedereen weet dat het niet waar is.'
'Wat zit er dan in het witte metalen ei ?' vroeg de jongen.
'Daar mag niet over gesproken worden,' fluisterde de boerin.
'En waar woont het witte metalen ei gewoonlijks ?' vroeg de jongen.
De boerin begon te snikken. 'Overal,' sprak ze. 'We zitten opgesloten in het witte metalen ei.'
'Dus dat ei wat we zagen was een ei in een ei, en zit daar ook weer een ei in ?'

vroeg de jongen. 'Het lijkt wel eindeloos.'
'Shhhhh...,' zei de boerin. Heel voorzichtig knikte ze instemmend, maar het was niet opvallend. De jongen wist genoeg. Toch geloofde de jongen dat er een traan in de diepte van het eindeloze ei moest zijn. Dat had jij al eerder meegemaakt, en hij geloofde zelfs dat het een tranenbroek zou kunnen zijn zoals in het verhaal. Het verhaal had hem geinspireerd, en hij wilde zeker op zoek gaan naar het ei in het ei. Snel drukte hij het idee ook weer weg, want het maakte hem bang. Hij wist dat ze in de gaten werden gehouden. Op een nacht zweefde er een klein wit metalen ei boven zijn bed. Hij schrok wakker van het gezoem. 'In mij zitten kogels,' zei het zwevende ei, 'eieren zo klein als kogels, en in die kogels zitten ook weer kogels. Het gaat eindeloos door. Maar waarom ik hier ben zal ik je vertellen. Ik zit ook

weer in een groter ei, samen met andere eieren, en dat grotere ei zit samen met andere grotere eieren in een nog groter ei, en dat gaat eindeloos zo door. Wij zijn allemaal gevangenen van het oppermachtige, eindeloos grote witte metalen ei, dus laten we het voor elkaar niet moeilijker maken dan het al is. Wij worden ervoor gestrafd als jullie iets verkeerd doen, of iets verkeerd zeggen, of teveel zeggen. Ik gebied jullie daarom ook om te stoppen over dit soort zaken te spreken. Zo niet, dan ben ik genoodzaakt om hardhandigere middelen te gebruiken.' Ineens was het ei weg in een flits. De jongen knipperde met zijn ogen. De volgende dag dacht hij dat hij het gewoon maar gedroomd had, en begon erover te spreken met de boerin, maar direct kreeg hij harde steken in zijn hoofd en in zijn lichaam. 'Wat ?' vroeg de boerin.

'L... laat maar,' stamelde hij, 'shhhh.'
Toen wist ze wat er aan de hand was.

Hoofdstuk 7.

Hij wist dus dat hij er niet over kon praten. Hij vroeg zich af of hij er misschien over kon schrijven, en dat zou hij dan doen naar Musoline, want hij dacht dat die voor niets en niemand bang was en alles durfde. Hij schreef haar op zijn kamer een hele lange brief, en die schoof hij in een enveloppe onder haar deur door. Ze schreef hem terug dat er inderdaad een tranenbroek in het witte metalen ei zat, maar dat hij dat zelf maar moest oplossen. Zij had er geen tijd voor en ook geen zin in. Het voelde als een koude douche, maar hij had dat van haar wel verwacht. Hij schreef haar weer een hele lange brief terug, nog wel langer van de vorige, en toen schreef zij hem een boze brief terug over dat zijn brief te lang was. Ook deelde ze hem mee aan het einde van haar brief, na veel gescheld en getier, dat zij zelf het witte

metalen ei was, en dat hij 'de volgende' zou zijn, sinds haar zusje alreeds door haar uit de weg was geruimd. De rode gloed sprak tegen hem : 'Ga nu direct naar haar toe.' Hij stoof de gang op en rende naar haar kamer en trok de deur los. Daar zat het grote witte metalen ei op haar bed. Zij liet haar scherpe tanden zien die heen en weer begonnen te malen, en er waren veel meer van zulke lagen van scherpe tanden in haar mond.
'Wat kom je doen !' krijste het ei met een metalen stem. 'Ik herberg de eeuwige traan in mij. Je zult het nooit krijgen.'
'Dus jij bent het witte metalen ei wat ons allemaal terroriseert,' zei hij.
'Ik zal jullie nog wel meer terroriseren !' krijste ze. 'Ga hier weg !'
'Waar is de tranenbroek ?' vroeg hij.
'In mijn klerenkast,' zei ze.
Hij richtte zijn tranensleutel op het ei :
'Geef hier die tranenbroek, dan ben ik weg !'

'Nooit !' brulde het ei. De tranensleutel begon in zijn hand af te brokkelen, terwijl zijn handen begonnen te steken. Hij kromp in elkaar van de pijn. 'Ik heb de eeuwige traan !' bulderde het ei. 'De eeuwige traan heerst over alle tranen.' Verkrampt strompelde hij haar kamer uit. 'Ga terug,' zei de rode gloed.
Hij strompelde terug. 'Waarom ben je teruggekomen ?' brulde het ei. 'Heb je nog geen genoeg pijn ?' Plotseling spatte het ei uit elkaar. Achter hem stond de boerin met een luchtbuks. Hij was verbaasd dat zij dit durfde te doen. 'Ik moest wel,' zei ze. In haar klerenkast hing inderdaad de tranenbroek. Die nam hij mee. 'We wisten al wie ze was,' zei de boerin, 'maar we durfden het niet te zeggen. De eeuwige traan zal nu vrijkomen.' Buiten was het inmiddels enorm hard gaan regenen. Beiden gingen ze naar buiten en dansten in de regen.

Hij had inmiddels de tranenbroek aangetrokken. Het bleef maar regenen en regenen. Het land werd nu bevrijd van de terreur van het witte metalen ei. Sindsdien hing de eeuwige traan boven de zee als een vurige bal, als een grote planeet. Mensen gingen niet naar het strand om bruin te bakken, maar om dichter bij de eeuwige traan te zijn en zich erdoor te laten vullen en inspireren. Ook hij, de boerin en de boer gingen op een dag naar het strand. Hij bewonderde de eeuwige traan. Het was een diepwerkende kracht in hem. Het was een natuurverschijnsel. Het sprak diep in zijn binnenste. Het was een geneeskrachtig medicijn. Het genas mensen van hun ziekten en van hun kommer en kwel. Hij kon weer diep ademhalen en voelde zich vrij worden in zijn hoofd. Het was iets wat hij niet begreep, maar waar hij meer van wilde weten. Zo nu en dan werden er mensen

opgenomen door de eeuwige traan. Dat was ook een reden waarom mensen naar het strand gingen.
Op een dag werd ook de jongen opgenomen in de eeuwige traan. Hij zweefde gewoon de eeuwige traan in boven de zee, alsof hij er in gezogen werd. Hij zag de boer en de boerin naar hem zwaaien, die heel blij voor hem waren. Even later zag hij dat zij ook opgenomen werden. Binnen de eeuwige traan kregen ze een woning. Het was een prachtige wildernis natuur.
Er was nog een diepere kern in de eeuwige traan, en dat was de traan van diepte. Het was een rode vurige bol in de kern van de eeuwige traan, waar de eeuwige traan ook omheen draaide. De tranen waren zintuigen, zintuigen van een nieuw leven, van een dieper leven, wat een nieuw bewustzijn schiep. Het maakte hem alert, gevoelig en creatief. Ook in de eeuwige traan waren er

stranden rondom de rode vurige kern. Mensen gingen naar de stranden toe in de hoop opgenomen te worden door de rode vurige kern. Ook hij en de boerin en de boer bezochten het strand voor die reden. De rode kern zweefde boven de zee van de eeuwige traan. Hij had het gevoel alsof de traan van diepte met hem communiceerde in hogere talen.
De rode kern nam bijna nooit mensen op. Vaak zweefde de rode vurige kern woest over de golven, en maakte mensen bang, alsof het elk moment kon exploderen. Hij wilde er meer van weten, maar eigenlijk was er geen informatie over. Dat wat hij had aan communicatie met de rode kern begreep hij niet. Hij kwam er meer en meer achter hoe de eeuwige traan onderdrukt werd. Er was hier een huur-systeem, en iedereen was onderworpen aan een huurcontract, wat ook betekende dat de huurbaas op elk moment kon

binnenvallen, ongevraagd en onaangekondigd. Dat kon al 's ochtends vroeg gebeuren, 's avonds laat of zelfs in de nacht. Het was een man met een hoed op, en hij noemde zichzelf het gouden metalen ei, of zelfs de eeuwige traan. Vaak nam hij ook familie leden mee van de mensen die hij bezocht, zelfs ongewenste familie leden, en zo waren de mensen gedwongen die familie leden te ontmoeten. Het was hier helemaal niet zo paradijselijk als hij eerst dacht. Er scheen hier een grote terreur te hangen. Mensen werden hier gedwongen hele nauwe schoenen te dragen, en door een bepaald systeem werden die schoenen steeds nauwer, zodat hun voeten werden ingebonden. Het was het systeem van het gouden metalen ei, die ook schoenmaker was.
Het waren gouden metalen nauwe schoenen die steeds meer begonnen te krimpen om de voeten kleiner te maken.

Ook hij moest de schoenen dragen, en werd direct gekweld met helse pijnen. De schoenen konden nooit uit. Het zat te strak, alsof het al één geworden was met de voet. Dit stond allemaal vastgelegd in het huur-contract. Vaak ging hij naar het strand met de hoop opgenomen te worden door de rode vurige kern die daar woest boven de zee zweefde. Eigenlijk gebeurde dat nooit, dat iemand werd opgenomen door de rode kern, maar soms als er iemand vermist was dan zeiden ze dat die persoon was 'opgenomen door de rode kern.'
Het gouden metalen ei had dus een sleutel die op iedere deur paste, een moedersleutel, en mensen leefden dus niet alleen onder het dwangbewind van de schoenmaker, maar ook moesten ze dus gedwongen hun familie leden zien.
De gouden metalen schoenen begonnen steeds nauwer te zitten bij de jongen, maar als hij door het bos zwierf of over

het strand, dan scheen dat hem verlichting te geven. Dat deed hij daarom vaak. Zo kon hij het krimpen uitstellen. Op een dag kwam hij heel diep in het bos terecht bij een boerderij met een heleboel stallen. Tot zijn grote schrik zag hij mensen in die stallen wiens gouden metalen schoenen al zo gekrompen waren dat ze op hoeven van paarden leken. Hij verborg zich achter wat struiken, en liep zo naar de andere kant van de boerderij waar ook weer stallen stonden. Tot zijn grote schrik en verbazing waren er weer mensen met hele kleine schoenen die al half in een paard waren veranderd. 'Dus daartoe worden die schoenen gedwongen,' dacht hij bij zichzelf. 'En misschien zijn dit wel de mensen die vermist waren, en waarvan ze dachten dat ze opgenomen waren door de rode kern.'

Plotseling werd hij van achteren in zijn kraag gegrepen door een man met een zweep. 'Weer eentje,' bulderde de man.
'Wat ga je met me doen ?' riep de jongen, die zich los probeerde ze schudden, maar hij werd direct hard geslagen met de korte zweep, en hij voelde direct zijn schoenen steeds nauwer worden, waardoor hij op de grond viel. Hij kromp ineen van de pijn. 'We hebben nog een paard nodig,' bulderde de man. De man sleepte toen de jongen naar een dichtbijzijnde stal. Hier dumpte hij de jongen in het hooi. De jongen kon niet meer opstaan van de pijn, en nog steeds werden zijn gouden metalen schoenen nauwer. 'Help, ik word een paard,' dacht hij bij zichzelf in grote wanhoop. 'Waar ben ik toch in terecht gekomen ?'
'Arme jongen,' sprak een oude boerin die langsliep. 'Waarom helpt u me dan niet ?' kreunde de jongen.

'Wat kan ik doen ?' kraste ze. 'Het zal het lot zijn van ons allemaal.'
Hij keek naar haar schoenen, en ook zij had de gouden metalen schoenen aan. 'Hoe kan het dat die van u veel groter zijn dan die van mij ?' kreunde hij.
Maar de boerin zei niets en liep door. Hij bleef maar ineen krimpen van de pijn. Vaak keek hij naar zichzelf om te zien of hij al in een paard aan het veranderen was. Hij vroeg zich af of hij nu dan in de rode kern was gekomen. Dat was toch ook niet wat hij ervan had verwacht.
'Waarom ? Waarom ?' kreunde hij. Hij kon hier niet meer weg. Zodra hij probeerde te lopen werden zijn schoenen nog strakker. Daar kwam de oude boerin weer aan. Ze had wat water voor hem.
'Toe, drink een beetje jongen,' zei ze, en legde de beker tegen zijn lippen aan. Hij dronk wat. 'Bedankt,' zei hij. 'Hoe komen we hieruit ?'

'Het is ons lot,' zei de oude boerin. 'Die van mij worden ook elke dag strakker.'
'Maar is er geen weg uit ?' vroeg hij in paniek. 'Is dit dan de bedoeling dat wij paarden worden ? Waarvoor ?'
'Het gouden metalen ei heeft paarden nodig,' sprak de vrouw.
'Ja, maar waarvoor ?' vroeg hij.
'Voor de paardenrennen,' sprak ze. 'Hij houdt van gokken.'
'Voor goud ?' vroeg hij.
Ze knikte.
Het viel hem op dat ook de werkers hier gouden metalen schoenen droegen, maar die waren veel groter dan die van hem.
Op een dag werd hij door de oude boerin de boerderij ingesleurd. Binnenin de boerderij was een zaaltje. In het zaaltje zat een groot gouden metalen ei op een stoel. 'Hij is nog geen paard,' mopperde het ei, 'hoe kan dat ?'
'We werken eraan,' zei de oude boerin. 'Hij is hier nog niet zo lang.'

De jongen hief zijn hoofd op en keek naar het ei. 'Wat moet je met mij ?' zei de jongen.
'Lijkt me duidelijk,' zei het gouden metalen ei.
'Waarvoor is het ?' zei de jongen. 'Ik heb hier geen zin in.'
'Het gaat niet om wel of geen zin,' zei het gouden metalen ei, 'het gaat om plichten.'
'Ik heb niet veel met plichten te maken,' zei de jongen, 'vooral niet met dit soort lage en vuile plichten.'
'Je woont hier, dus je hebt je eraan te houden,' zei het gouden metalen ei.
'Dat beslis jij niet,' zei de jongen. 'Ga zelf met die schoenen lopen.'
'Ik heb de moedersleutel die op iedere deur van ieder huis past,' zei het ei. 'Dus ik beslis wat er gebeurd.'
'Vreemde logica,' zei de jongen.
Het ei liet de jongen de gouden sleutel zien. 'Zie ?' zei het ei. 'Sleur hem weg.'

Toen sleurde de oude boerin hem weer terug naar zijn stal. 'Je hebt genoeg gezien,' zei ze, en toen liep ze weg. Hoeveel hij ook schold, tierde en kreunde, er veranderde niets aan zijn situatie. Hij vroeg zich af hoe hij kon ontsnappen.
Toen de oude boerin weer terugkwam om hem te voeren vroeg hij haar hoe het gouden metalen ei er eigenlijk was gekomen. Ze zei dat eens een klein kind buiten speelde en in het zand een gouden metalen ei vond wat nog een overblijfsel was van de oorlog. Het kind begon ermee te spelen, en wist niet dat het een gevaarlijke radioactieve bom was. Zo is eigenlijk alles begonnen.
Ineens voelde de jongen iets sterks in hem, alsof er van binnen iets ontwaakte. Het was de rode gloed. De jongen was opgelucht. Het leek alsof het verhaal van de oude boerin hem inspireerde. 'Breng me terug naar dat vervloekte ei,' zei de

jongen. De boerin begon de jongen weer de boerderij in te slepen. 'Ben je daar weer ?' vroeg het ei.
'Ja !' riep de jongen, 'en omdat je niet hebt willen luisteren zul je vanaf nu doof zijn !' Het sterke begon uit de jongen voort te komen en een rode straal ging pijlsnel op het ei af. Ineens was er een enorme explosie. 'Mijn oren !' gilde het ei. 'Ik kan niet meer horen ! Ze zijn ontploft !' Doordat het ei doof was geworden begon ineens al het gouden metaal van de voeten van de jongen en van de boerin weg te smelten. 'Ik kan weer ademhalen !' riep de boerin.
'Kom,' zei de jongen tegen de boerin. Hij pakte haar vast en rende met haar uit de boerderij. 'De rode gloed heeft de betovering verbroken,' zei de jongen. En zo kwam het land van de eeuwige traan vrij van de onderdrukking van het gouden metalen ei. Nu het ei doof was geworden had het al zijn toverkrachten

verloren, en op een gegeven moment was het zo onschuldig geworden dat er in de speelgoedwinkels gouden metalen eieren werden verkocht die je open kon maken en waarin speelgoed voor de kinderen was opgeborgen. Het was voor de kinderen altijd weer spannend om zo'n gouden metalen ei open te maken en te zien wat ze hadden gekregen.

Hoofdstuk 8.

Luisteren wilden ze nooit, alleen maar afluisteren. En daarom moest het ei doof worden. De gedwongen schoenen van gouden metaal bleken dus geplaatst te zijn om mensen altijd af te kunnen luisteren. In ieder geval nu dat niet meer kon begon de rode kern steeds meer mensen op te nemen, maar de jongen was alweer huiverig wat hij daar zou meemaken. Toch vond hij het belangrijk om verder te reizen. Daarom bleef hij naar de stranden gaan in de hoop door de zwevende vurige rode bol opgenomen te worden. Per slot van rekening had de vurige rode bol hem en het hele land vrijgezet. Het was de traan van diepte. Het was in hem ontwaakt en aangewakkerd. Op een dag was het zo ver en werd hij opgenomen.
Tot zijn grote schrik was het zijn eigen wereld waar hij oorspronkelijk vandaan

kwam. Het was een zombie wereld, maar hij zag alles met een rode gloed. Hij zweefde boven de stad waar hij eens werkte voordat hij in ballingschap werd genomen door de invasies van buitenaardse zombies. Hij zag hun luchtschepen al komen in de verte. Hij wilde niet meer terug in ballingschap, maar hij was onder een rode hypnose. Het was alsof hij terugging in de tijd. Hij zag zichzelf zitten aan zijn bureau in zijn kantoor. Hij wilde hem waarschuwen, maar hij was doof. Hij zag hoe de zombies binnenkwamen en hem in ballingschap namen, maar hij kon alleen maar toekijken. Hij zag zichzelf in een rood metalen ei. Dit was het verleden, en hij werd ervan losgetrokken. Hij riep en schreeuwde, maar kon zichzelf niet bereiken, totdat de rode gloed ook in hem ontwaakte. Zo kon hij zichzelf toespreken. Nu was hij voor zichzelf de rode gloed. Ook hij was in een rood

metalen ei, maar hij kon zichzelf toespreken en ondersteunen. Hij kon zichzelf begeleiden. Alles herhaalde zich voor zijn ogen, maar in een rode gloed. Hij was in een rood metalen ei. Steeds meer begon hij los en los te laten, want het was bijna robotisch, automatisch. Het was een natuurverschijnsel waar hij geen vat op had.
Het rode metalen ei zweefde over de wateren en de rivieren. Hij had eindelijk een vriend gevonden. Het was de traan van diepte. Hoe diep hij ook ging het was altijd bij hem, want eens was het zelf deze weg gegaan. Hij wist nu dat het niet ging om de kortste weg, de snelste weg, of de weg van het meeste. Het ging om de diepere weg, die van de traan van diepte. Hij zag in dat het een waarlijk zintuig was, in wiens diepte alle bedriegelijke zintuigen verdoven en afsterven. Hij zag ook dat het niet ging om de publiekelijke weg, maar om de

verborgen weg, de traan van de duisternis, want dat was de traan van diepte. Hij zag dat de duisternis rood was.
Hij had een cirkel gemaakt, en had zichzelf weer gevonden, als zijn eigen beste vriend. Alles werd herhaald om het te verdiepen en om te verzoenen. Hij droeg nu zelf de moedersleutel die op alle deuren van hem en zijn verleden paste. Het rood metalen ei waarin hij was was in natuurgebied. Hij zag clowns richting het rood metalen ei lopen om speelgoed te verkopen. Het waren speelgoed venters. Maar zodra zij op het rood metalen ei klopten ontploften ze. Het rood metalen ei ging toen over een rails dieper de natuur in, op weg naar een rode planeet.

Einde

RNL-POCKETS
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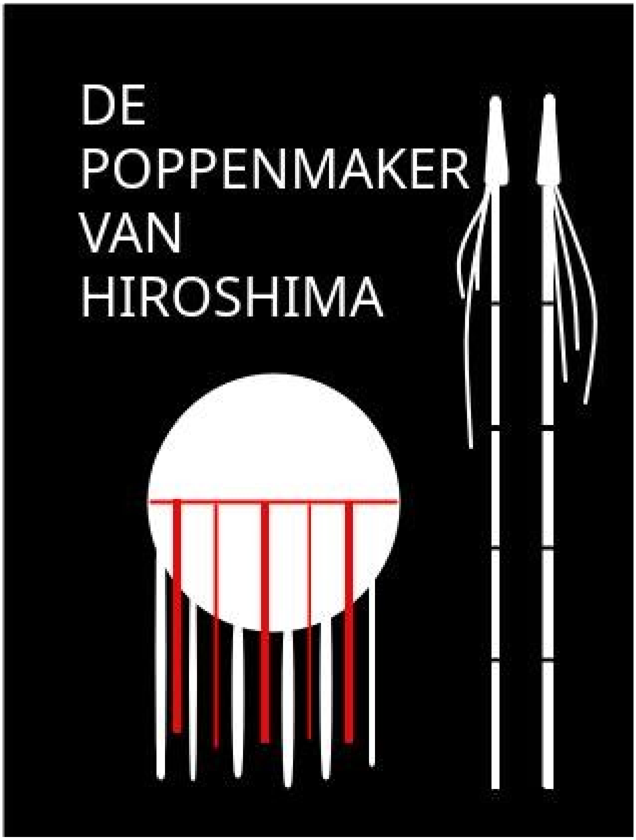
2 DE TUIN VAN MEVROUW VAN DALEN
3 PLANTEN VAN VLEES
4 ZIJN HUIS STOND IN DE WEG
5 HET SURINAAMSE DAGBOEK
6 DE EVOLUTIE VAN DE HEMEL
7 FABRIEKEN AAN ZEE
8 DE INDIAANSE AVONDEN
9 DE BRUG VAN HEIMDAL


DE
POPPENMAKER
VAN
HIROSHIMA

De Poppenmaker van Hiroshima

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De Poppenmaker van
Hiroshima

"Nee, zij sliepen allemaal, en zouden het altijd ontkennen,
Wat de poppenmaker van Hiroshima tot hen had gedaan ..."

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Hoofdstuk 1. Januari, 1946

Januari, 1946,
Na de bevrijding.

Dominee Jonkema hield wel van een borrel. Het inspireerde hem. Hij kon zo beter preken. Elke zondagochtend stond hij paraat. De rest van de week bereidde hij zijn preek voor. Dominee Jonkema had ook hallucinaties, maar daar sprak hij niet over. Het waren religieuze hallucinaties en die kon hij mooi in de preken gebruiken. Niemand merkte er iets van. Zijn vrouw had een hekel aan hem. Ze hadden vaak ruzie. Ook dit inspireerde hem voor zijn preken. Zijn vrouw was niet de makkelijkste. Soms gooide ze met dingen naar hem. Als ze poeslief deed wist hij dat het gewoon stilte voor de storm was. Hij hield wel een beetje van touwtrekken. Het was een echte vechtersbaas. Hij vond daarom ook dat hij met de juiste vrouw was getrouwd, ook al kon hij haar wel schieten. Ook over zijn huwelijksproblemen sprak hij niet. Hij verwerkte het gewoon in de preken.

Hij hield ook van piano muziek, van Chopin bijvoorbeeld. Zijn vrouw kon het niet aanhoren, en ging dan vaak naar buiten. Vaak speelde hij het alleen af als ze weg was. Ook piano muziek inspireerde hem. En verder zo de alledaagse dingen inspireerden hem, zoals kinderen op het plein, als hij naar buiten keek.
'Niet het vele is goed, maar het goede is veel,' mompelde dominee Jonkema.
'Is dat een regel voor je preek ?' vroeg zijn vrouw.
'Nee,' zei de dominee. Hij ging toen verder met het mompelen van andere zinnen.
'Oh, je bent aan het zoeken,' zei zijn vrouw.
'Ik ben naar jou aan het zoeken,' zei de dominee.
'Om me een mep te verkopen zeker,' zei zijn vrouw.
'Je kan goed gedachtenlezen,' zei de dominee.
Zijn vrouw ging de kamer uit en liep de keuken in.
'Dan kook ik wel weer,' zei zijn vrouw. 'Mijnheer heeft natuurlijk weer honger.'
'Wie niet ?' zei de dominee.
In de keuken begon zijn vrouw psalmen te zingen.
'Moet dat nu ?' zei de dominee. 'Kun je niet wachten tot zondag ?'

'Nee, ik kan niet meer wachten,' zei zijn vrouw.
De dominee stond op en ging naar de gang om zijn hoed en zijn jas te pakken.
'Dan ga ik wel naar buiten,' zei de dominee.
Het was koud buiten, en grauw. De mensen keken niet op of om, en ook de dominee niet. Hij was diep in gedachten verzonken. 'Wat moet ik nu eigenlijk met zo'n vrouw ?' dacht hij. Maar hij kon ook niet zonder. Ze hoorde gewoon bij zijn leven. Even liep hij langs het park. Hij dacht na over de slavernij van de Afrikanen toen hij een Afrikaanse vrouw op straat tegen kwam. 'Dat moet ook wat geweest zijn,' mompelde hij in zichzelf. Hij liep door tot het winkelcentrum, en kocht wat sigaretten. Ja, de dominee rookte zwaar. Dat inspireerde hem ook. Zowel voor als na de preek rookte hij. Dat stak hij ook niet onder stoelen of banken. Hij zou eigenlijk wel tijdens de preek willen roken. Zijn vrouw rookte niet. Die moest daar niets van hebben. Kinderen wilden ze niet.
Nee, kinderen wilden ze niet. Dat was niet aan hen uitbesteed. Ze hadden al genoeg aan elkaar. Toen hij even later weer thuiskwam had zijn vrouw het eten

al klaar. Ze aten nooit gezamenlijk, maar alleen apart. Zijn vrouw was Surinaams. Hij hield wel van die cultuur. Ook hield hij wel van haar kookkunst. Hij had ook wat chocolade voor haar meegenomen wat hij op de huiskamer tafel deed neerploffen. Dat deed hij altijd, omdat zij niet rookte.
'Bedankt,' zei ze koeltjes. Daarna moest de dominee direct weer weg. Hij moest naar een begrafenis. Zijn vrouw bleef thuis. Er was een zwaar droevige stemming op de begrafenis. Hij wilde eigenlijk direct weer weg. Hij hield niet van zulke dingen, maar voor de beleefdheid bleef hij toch. Weer zag hij wat Afrikanen om zich heen, hier en daar, en weer dacht hij na over de Afrikanen in slavernij. 'Dat moet wel wat geweest zijn,' mompelde hij weer. Even dacht hij aan zijn vrouw die ook een donkere huidskleur had. Hij dacht er toen aan wat ze op het moment zou doen. Hij wist dat zijn vrouw een hekel aan hem had. Ze konden niet echt met elkaar opschieten. Ze was ook erg moeilijk in de omgang, en had eigenlijk een hekel aan iedereen. Iedereen liep haar volgens haar in de weg. Als ze poeslief deed dan was dat puur voor de beleefdheid. Ze

probeerde het wel, maar het lukte haar niet echt. Eigenlijk had hij wel medelijden met haar, maar hij vond haar ook een kreng. Toen de begrafenis voorbij was slenterde hij weer naar huis.
Hij begon over de Afrikanen te vertellen aan zijn vrouw, en over Afrikanen in slavernij. 'Die tijd is voorbij,' zei zijn vrouw.
'Dat moet wel wat geweest zijn,' zei hij. Zijn vrouw zei niets. Hij stond even later op en ging naar de keuken om een borreltje te pakken.
'En maar weer zuipen, hè ?' snauwde zijn vrouw. 'Waar is dat allemaal goed voor ?'
Hij zweeg.
Later zei hij : 'Ach, één borreltje maar, voor de gezelligheid.'
'Het is hier anders niet gezellig,' sprak zijn vrouw.
'Volgens mij vind jij het nooit ergens gezellig, hè ?' zei hij.
Zijn vrouw zweeg.
Hij stond op en liep naar de grammofoon-speler.
'Niet weer, hè,' snauwde zijn vrouw. Ze stond op en liep naar de gang om haar jas te pakken. Nu was het haar beurt om naar buiten te gaan. Ze haatte die

man. Volgens haar deed hij alles gewoon om haar te pesten. Ze had op iedereen wel wat aan te merken. 'Eindelijk rust,' dacht de dominee. 'Eindelijk rust, eindelijk rust.' Maar de rust was maar van korte duur. Na tien minuten was ze weer terug. Toen ging ze naar haar slaapkamer. Ze sliepen altijd apart. 'Nou ja, ook goed,' zei de dominee tegen zichzelf, 'ook goed.'

Hij keek dromerig voor zich uit. Hij zag zichzelf bladeren door zijn preek. Toen ging hij achter zijn schrijftafel zitten en schreef de preek verder op. 'Honden aan de lijnen houden,' monpelde hij. Toen stak hij nog een sigaret op. Hij zou doorschrijven tot diep in de nacht.

Tussendoor ging hij even de tuin in. Het was al donker. Hij keek dan naar de schuur en wat planten, gewoon om inspiratie te krijgen. Ook dacht hij na over het verleden. Er waren een heleboel dingen waar hij zich aan irriteerde, maar dat kon hij mooi omzetten in religieuze taal om in zijn preken te gebruiken. Zo loste hij dat op, en het was heel therapeutisch. Hij hield van zijn beroep. Hij dacht

ook dat hij het nooit had kunnen volhouden met zo'n vrouw als hij dit beroep niet had gehad.
Weer binnengekomen at hij wat gele vanille vla en ging weer verder met schrijven. De nacht wachtte op hem en inspireerde hem. Ook de nacht zag hij als zijn vrouw. Hij had lange gesprekken met haar, en ze maakten veel ruzie, opdat hij zijn preek kon schrijven. Ze betuttelde hem, en liet hem zien wat hij wel en niet kon schrijven. Eigenlijk waren zijn preken door haar gedicteerd.
Er was geen weg in deze tuin zonder haar. Hij had haar nodig.
Voor haar woorden liet ze hem zwaar betalen. Ze maakte het hem niet gemakkelijk. Het leek wel alsof de zondagen nooit kwamen. De dagen gingen zo traag, en als er dan een zondag was geweest dan was de dominee het ook zo weer vergeten. Hij beleefde alles als in een roes, alsof hij met de nacht danste, zijn vrouw. Al zijn preken waren slechts dansen met de nacht opdat zijn geheimen verborgen bleven.

Hoofdstuk 2. Februari, 1946

'Ik vind het leven mooi en duister,' zei de dominee tegen zichzelf.
Was hij in een dans met de nacht, of in een gevecht ?
Weer was hij een preek aan het voorbereiden, en hij worstelde.
Soms knaagde het verleden aan hem, en soms zijn huwelijk.
Soms zag hij er als een berg tegenop.
De nacht was als donkere chocolade die hem inspireerde. De nacht hielp hem altijd uit de brand.
Het was in de nacht altijd zo rustig en geheimzinnig.
De nacht vertelde hem verhalen.
Hij kon bij haar zijn hart uitstorten, en zij luisterde.
De nacht was zijn obsessie. Nog wel meer dan de dag.
Soms waren de gevechten met haar slopend. Maar hij dacht dat het erbij hoorde.
De nacht stal van hem, maar gaf hem ook zoveel ervoor in de plaats.

Niemand wist van deze gevechten. Ook zijn vrouw vertelde hij overdag niks.
Hij beschouwde de angst als zijn godin, en ook als een soort vrouw van hem.
Op bepaalde tijden werd de dominee ernstig geplaagd door angsten, iets wat hij had overgehouden van de oorlog.
Zijn vrouw had hiervoor geen enkel begrip en spotte er zelfs mee.
Hij kon hierover erg verontwaardigd zijn.
Voor hem was de angst de weg naar de hemel. Hij verafgoodde de angst, omdat het zoveel macht over hem had. Eigenlijk was zijn hele leven gedreven door angst. Volgens hem was hij ook in angst geboren. Zelfs een borrel kon de angst niet verzuipen. Angst was zijn machtige God. 'Zonder angst is het leven maar saai,' zei hij vaak, maar hij lijdde er ernstig onder. Als dominee zijnde was dat niet zo'n groot probleem, daar het kruis altijd de centrale boodschap was die er werd gebracht. Maar soms mokte hij erover, en soms bespotte hij het ook. Hij had een onmetelijk diepe zelfspot, maar als een ander hem bespotte, dan kon hij dat niet hebben.

Het was op een donderdag ochtend. Zijn vrouw was aan het koken. Weer had hij een enorme angst aanval, maar hij wilde het haar niet vertellen, want zij zou hem zeker bespotten en zeggen dat hij zich niet aan moest stellen. Daarom ging hij naar buiten. Hij liep rood aan, en voelde zich vreemd in zijn hoofd. Het was buiten zeer koud. Er was ook wind. Even leek het alsof hij alles verloren had. Hij had een terugblik op de oorlog. Hij herinnerde zich de nazi's die hem van zijn huis en vrouw afscheidde, en hij werd meegenomen naar Duitsland waar hij moest werken. Omdat hij een groot intellectueel was was er een kans dat ze hem zouden afschieten, wat wel met meerdere intellectuelen was gebeurd. Hij herinnerde de executie van professoren en andere dominees. Hij hield zich daarom erg op de vlakte, en sprak bijna niet tijdens zijn gevangenschap. Elke dag weer was hij in grote doodsangst.
Toen de oorlog was afgelopen was dit een grote opluchting voor hem. Hij werd weer verzoend met zijn vrouw, maar de angsten kwamen soms terug, en soms wel erger dan ooit tevoren, als een stortvloed. Hij wist nog steeds niet goed hoe hij hiermee om

moest gaan, maar hij verwerkte het in zijn preken. Verder liet hij zich nooit negatief uit over zijn vrouw. Hij hield haar altijd de hand boven het hoofd. Over zijn huwelijksproblemen zei hij niets.
Hij ging het park in en zag een Afrikaanse familie met hun kinderen. De kinderen waren erg druk, maakten erg lawaai. Hij dacht na over de Afrikanen in slavernij in de vorige eeuwen. 'Dat moet ook wat geweest zijn,' mompelde hij. Hij wist natuurlijk wat het was om dwangarbeid te moeten doen. Hij voelde zich erg bij zijn Afrikaanse medemens betrokken, maar hij dacht toen ook aan de woorden van zijn vrouw : 'Niet zo aanstellen,' en 'er zijn wel ergere dingen.' Ze probeerde grote misdaden op die manier altijd goed te praten. Even voelde hij een boosheid in zich opkomen, maar toen werd hij ineens dodelijk koud. 'Niet zo aanstellen,' dacht hij toen. 'Ja, die Afrikanen moeten zich niet zo aanstellen. En ze hebben altijd zoveel kinderen. Waarom gaan ze niet terug naar hun eigen land.' Hij schrok eigenlijk wel van zijn eigen gedachtes. Hij dacht dat ook weleens over zijn vrouw. 'Wat moet ze hier eigenlijk ? Het is toch ons land ?' Soms had hij van zulke

onverklaarbare vlagen die heel dicht bij racisme kwamen. Hij begreep zichzelf niet altijd. Hij had natuurlijk ook een hele grote Duitser-haat. Er moest bij hem geen Duitser in de buurt komen. Dat kon hij niet aan.
Hij had geen goed woord voor Duitsland over, en hij vertrouwde ze nog steeds niet. Maar ja, dat was ook niet zo vreemd. Hij noemde Duitsland een groot gevaar. Zijn vrouw had geen begrip voor wat er met hem in de oorlog was gebeurd. Hij moest dat maar vergeten. Het was het verleden. Ze nam hem daarin niet serieus. Zij had natuurlijk makkelijk praten.
Van Duitse muziek hield hij verder wel. Dat was toch anders. Ook hield hij van Afrikaanse en Surinaamse muziek. Hij was een echt muziek mens soms.
Eigenlijk wilde hij er wat van zeggen, dat die Afrikaanse kinderen zo druk waren. Eigenlijk wilde hij gewoon zeggen : 'Ga terug naar Afrika,' maar hij hield zijn mond, en mopperde zo in zichzelf en liep door. Dit was voor hem ook een manier om over zijn angsten heen te komen. Hij was een mens met gemengde gevoelens.

Toen hij weer thuis was gekomen met sigaretten en chocolade begon hij te foeteren tegen zijn vrouw over de Afrikanen. Zijn vrouw koos altijd partij voor zijn tegenstanders. Hij moest zich niet aanstellen. Wel was ze weer blij dat hij chocolade voor haar had meegenomen. 'Je doet in ieder geval één ding goed,' zei ze.
En toen kon hij zichzelf niet meer inhouden :
'Waarom ga je niet terug naar Suriname waar je hoort, in het oerwoud ?' zei hij. Snel daarachter zei hij : 'Ik ga wel met je mee, maar dit is je land niet. Ik zal mezelf wel voor je opofferen dan.'
'Om de dreiging van de Duitsers te ontvluchten ?' zei ze.
'Om een nieuw leven te beginnen,' zei hij. 'Alles hier herinnert me aan vroeger. En natuurlijk omdat je zwart bent. Je hoort hier niet. Je hoort wel bij mij, maar je bent gewoon geen Nederlander. Je hoort niet tot het blanke ras, laten we eerlijk zijn.'
'Je moet het zo zien,' zei ze. 'Ik ben de koffie, en Nederland is de melk.'
Als blikken konden doden, dan was hij allang dood geweest. Er volgde een doodse stilte. Zijn vrouw

kon altijd zoveel zeggen zonder woorden. Haar stiltes waren nog wel dodelijker dan haar woorden. Leven met haar was als vechten om te overleven. Het was niet leven, maar overleven. Maar zonder haar wilde hij ook niet. Als dominee was het voor hem belangrijk dat hij dagelijks dit kruis zou dragen. Hij noemde haar ook een pin in het vlees. Hij had vaak gebeden of hij van haar verlost mocht worden, maar dan herinnerde hij de woorden die ook tegen Paulus werden gezegd : 'Mijn genade is u genoeg.' Hij moest deze drinkbeker van het lijden tot de laatste druppel leegdrinken.

Hoofdstuk 3. Maart, 1946

Er was één of andere optocht in de stad voor één of ander feest. Hij moest er niets van hebben van dat vrolijke gedoe. Er was volgens hem niets om vrolijk over te zijn. Hij vreesde nog steeds de dreiging van de Duitsers of iets soortgelijks. Het beheerste zijn dromen. Hij werd beheerst door angst, en vrolijkheid van anderen maakten zijn angst alleen maar erger. Alleen zijn preken gaven hem rust. Zijn vrouw ging wel naar het feest. Hoe hij er aan toe was leek haar toch niet te kunnen schelen.
Toen ze die avond thuiskwam had ze sigaretten voor hem meegenomen en één of andere trekpop. 'Wat moet ik daarmee ?' mopperde hij terwijl hij de trekpop bekeek. Het was een soort Pinokkio figuur. 'Voor in je slaapkamer,' zei ze, of voor hier in de huiskamer. Misschien vrolijk je daardoor wat op. 'Hmmm,' zei hij. 'Ik zal het wel boven de schrijftafel in mijn slaapkamer hangen.'
Hij keek vaak naar het ding. Het begon hem steeds meer te inspireren. Op een dag kwam hij thuis met een beeldje van een Afrikaanse vrouw. Dat zette hij

op de schrijftafel van zijn slaapkamer. Hij had twee schrijftafels. In de huiskamer en in zijn slaapkamer. Zijn slaapkamer was tegelijkertijd zijn kantoor. Hier bracht hij altijd een groot deel van de dag door, maar hij nam ook genoeg tijd voor zijn vrouw, alhoewel het vaak niet botterde tussen hem en haar. Zijn leven was een aaneenschakeling van ruzies met haar. Als ze poeslief deed stak er altijd wel wat achter volgens hem.

De Duitsers waren een groot kruis in zijn leven, en ook zijn onverschillige vrouw die niet echt met hem meeleefde. Ze kon zich moeilijk in hem verplaatsen. De beleefdheid die ze soms naar elkaar hadden was slechts etiquette. Beiden hadden ze een bepaald voordeel in elkaar. Hij zag het als iets zakelijks. Hij had haar weleens horen klagen in de keuken tijdens het psalmzingen : 'Was ik maar nooit met hem getrouwd.' Nu zaten ze erin en moesten ze het ermee doen. Er was geen weg meer terug.

Om er doorheen te komen draaide hij soms de hele dag grammofoon platen, tot grote ergernis van zijn vrouw. Zijn vrouw werd er helemaal gek van. Vaak foeterde ze er doorheen, of ze ging de deur uit. Ook

trok ze haarzelf soms terug op haar slaapkamer. Ze begon dit steeds vaker te doen, en daar werd de dominee weer erg nerveus van. Hij wilde dan weten wat ze in haar schild voerde.
'Wat doe je eigenlijk op je kamer altijd zo lang ?' vroeg hij haar eens.
'Oh, breien,' zei ze, 'lezen en opruimen.'
'Opruimen ?' vroeg hij. 'Heb je zoveel om op te ruimen dan ?'
Toen zweeg ze.
'En wat lees je zoal ?' vroeg hij.
Weer zweeg ze. Toen ze een keer weg was ging hij haar slaapkamer op. Haar boekenkast lag vol met boeken en ook dagboeken van haarzelf. Hij bladerde er eens in en zag allerlei negatieve dingen staan over hem. Hij klapte het dagboek dicht. Dat hoefde hij niet te lezen. Dat zou alleen nog maar meer ellende brengen. Het maakte hem wel nieuwsgierig, maar eigenlijk wilde hij het niet weten. Hij voelde zichzelf warm en koud worden tegelijkertijd, maar eigenlijk had hij niets anders verwacht. Het tolde in zijn hoofd. Hij legde het dagboek weer terug in de kast, en keek naar de boeken. Er was een boek bij over

Spanje en Portugal, en ook wat bijbelse boekjes. Er lag zelfs een prekenboekje van hemzelf bij. Verder was er een boek over het wonder tussen man en vrouw, een boek over het huwelijksleven. Hij bladerde er even door, maar las het verder niet. Hij dacht weer even aan het dagboek, en de rillingen gingen weer door hem heen. Hij keek rond in haar kamer. Hij keek naar het raam en de vensterbank, en naar het behang. Ook zij had een schrijftafel. Er stonden wat beeldjes op van Surinaamse vrouwen in klederdracht. Boven haar schrijftafel hing een schilderij van een ijsvlakte. Zo zou hij haar wel kunnen omschrijven. Ze was zo koud als ijs.
Hij hoorde toen de sleutel in de voordeur gaan en ging de kamer weer uit. Hij was nog steeds naar van wat hij in het dagboek had gelezen, maar hij dacht er ook aan dat hij het wel zou kunnen gebruiken in zijn preken.
Ze keek hem aan toen ze binnen was gekomen.
'Waarom kijk je zo ?' vroeg hij.
'Niets,' zei ze. Ze hing haar jas aan de kapstok en ging de huiskamer binnen met haar tas. Weer keek ze hem vreemd aan. 'Wat kijk je nu ?' vroeg hij weer.

'Oh niets,' zei ze. 'We eten vandaag bloemkool.'
'Fijn dat je me dat laat weten,' zei hij. 'Verder nog iets ?'
'Nee,' zei ze zacht. Toen ging ze de keuken in.
Die dag aten ze bloemkool. Hij dacht na over alles wat ze waren geworden, en over de oorlog. De dag erna aten ze weer bloemkool, want er was nog over van gisteren. Ze keek hem weer vreemd aan. 'Nu moet je me toch eens vertellen waarom je me telkens zo vreemd aankijkt,' zei de dominee. 'Het begint bijna een gewoonte te worden.'
'Omdat ik er probeer achter te komen wat ik eigenlijk aan je heb,' zei ze zacht. Hij liep bijna stampvoetend naar zijn slaapkamer. 'Ik ga wel weer preken schrijven,' zei hij.
'Maak je het niet te bont ?' vroeg ze. 'Ik kreeg er commentaar over van kerkleden de vorige keer.'
'Mooi,' zei hij. 'Dan was het goed getroffen.'
'Ze noemden je narcistisch,' sprak ze met een accent, 'op het racistische af.'
'Mooi,' zei hij. 'Dan worden ze eindelijk eens wakker.'
'Is dat wie je wil zijn dan ?' vroeg ze.

'Kijk naar jezelf,' zei hij.
'Wil je een narcist zijn ?' vroeg ze.
'Alles beter dan een nazi,' zei hij. 'Je bent zelf ook zwaar narcistisch. Je moeder was ook al zo.'
'Je bent een aanstellertje,' zei ze.
'Aanstellertje ?' zei hij.
'Ja, een kleuter,' zei ze. 'Denk eraan als je je preken schrijft, want ik word er op aangesproken.'
'Ik kan het niet iedereen naar de zin maken,' sprak de dominee. 'Daar ben ik niet voor. Als het ze niet zint dan hoepelen ze maar op.'
'Nou dan kan iedereen wel ophoepelen,' sprak zijn vrouw.
De dominee zag het niet meer zitten. Nu was zijn vrouw ook nog aan het stoken. Maar hij hield het hoofd koel, en prentte zichzelf in dat hij slechts voor zichzelf schreef. Misschien was ze wel jaloers.
'Vertel me liever wat we morgen eten,' zei de dominee.
'Boerenkool,' zei zijn vrouw.
'Mooi,' zei de dominee. 'Zie, dat is al een veel beter gespreks-onderwerp.'

'Je probeert er gewoon onderuit te komen,' bekte zijn vrouw.
'Zeg, zit je op een ruzie te wachten dan, mijn twistzieke vrouw ?' vroeg hij.
'Sommige dingen moeten gewoon besproken worden,' zei zijn vrouw streng. 'Het is alles wat ik vraag, dat je let op wat je schrijft. Je kunt niet alles zeggen.'
'Je kunt niet alles zeggen,' zei hij. 'Ik zal erom denken, maar denk er alsjeblieft zelf ook aan voor deze ene keer.'
Toen zweeg ze. 'Eindelijk rust,' zei hij.
'Ik heb je gewaarschuwd,' sprak ze, terwijl ze naar haar slaapkamer ging.
De volgende ochtend was hij vroeg op. Hij keek naar de auto's die langsreden vanuit zijn raam. 'Wat een mergpijpen,' mompelde hij. Toen ging hij achter zijn schrijftafel zitten en begon te schrijven. Die dag sloegen de angsten weer erg toe. Het liep zo hoog op dat hij de zondagse preek niet kon houden. Iemand anders zou zijn preek daarom voorlezen. De zondagen daarop gebeurde hetzelfde. Het leek alsof hij de preekstoel had verloren.

Hoofdstuk 4. April tot Juli, 1946

Er kwam nog steeds kritiek via zijn vrouw van kerkleden over zijn preken. Hij vond het vreemd dat hij er zelf niet over benaderd werd, maar dat alles via zijn vrouw ging. Dat schepte ook niet echt vertrouwen. Zijn vrouw zei er ook bij dat als hij niet veranderde, dan zouden ze gaan knippen in zijn preken. De dominee had het gevoel dat dit het begin van het einde was, want zo zou hij niet meer kunnen zeggen wat hij op zijn hart had voor de kerk. En hij was toch als een herder die de schapen moest behoeden tegen het grote kwaad wat dreigde. Hij voelde zich aan de kant geschoven, maar zou er toch rekening mee proberen te houden. Hij had geen andere keuze. De angst aanvallen waren nog steeds in die mate dat het voor hem onmogelijk was zelf naar de kerk toe te komen. Zijn vrouw ging wel.

Hij begon steeds meer over de oorlog te schrijven in zijn preken, en zelfs over zijn huwelijksproblemen. Zijn vrouw bracht altijd de preken naar de kerkeraad elke donderdagavond, maar die verbeterde ze van te voren altijd. Ze liet er stukken uit weg, en schreef

ook haar eigen stukken, vaak met negativiteit over de dominee, alsof hij dat over zichzelf had geschreven. Het begon daarna steeds meer voor te komen dat als de dominee een kerklid op straat tegenkwam, dan gniffelden ze, en hij wist maar niet waar dat aan lag.
Het viel niet op dat grote delen van de nieuwe preken van zijn vrouw waren, want zij gebruikte ook een typmachine. Naar buiten durfde de dominee nog wel, totdat dat ook niet meer lukte. Hij had last van pleinvrees, vanwege terugkerende herinneringen aan de oorlog. Ze haakten zich aan hem vast en lieten hem niet meer los. Hij vertelde zijn vrouw dat er geen kruid tegen opgewassen was. Zij zei hem dat het zijn eigen schuld was. Daar kon hij erg boos om worden. Op een dag toen ze weg was ging hij weer eens naar haar kamer. Weer trok hij een dagboek van haar open en moest weer allerlei negatieve dingen over hem lezen, nog wel erger dan de vorige keer. 'Waarom doe ik dit eigenlijk ?' zei hij tegen zichzelf, maar hij las maar door en door, en het begon steeds zwaarder te worden. Het vloog hem bijna naar zijn keel. Hij voelde zich weer warm en koud worden.

Hij merkte dat hij hiertegen geen weerstand had. Het maakte hem ziek. Ze was een negatieve invloed op hem. Hij las het hele dagboek uit tot aan het einde. Hij was er erg trillerig door. 'Zoveel negativiteit in één boek,' zei hij. 'Een mens moet er maar tegen kunnen.' Hij legde het dagboek weer weg en ging de kamer uit. Hij had zijn portie weer gehad. Ditmaal bleef het erger dan ooit aan hem knagen. Hij besloot haar maar zoveel mogelijk proberen te ontwijken. Toen ze thuiskwam keek ze hem weer vreemd aan. Hij durfde zichzelf niet te verraden. 'Ik ga maar weer eens naar mijn kamer,' zei hij.

'Ik ben er net,' snauwde ze, 'en nu moet je alweer weg ? En waarom tril je zo ?'

'Hyperventilatie,' zei hij.

'Van de oorlog ?' vroeg ze.

Hij knikte.

'Je kan niets hebben,' zei ze. 'Je bent zwak.'

'Bedankt voor je hulp,' zei hij. 'Voor je vriendelijke woorden ook.'

'Wat bedoel je ?' snauwde ze.

'Nou, gewoon, de manier waarop je voor me zorgt en altijd mijn preken netjes naar de kerkeraad brengt. Je

doet het maar. Een ander zou het misschien niet doen.'
'Ja, maar daar komt natuurlijk wel eens een einde aan,' snauwde ze. 'Je kunt niet voor altijd zo zijn, en het is al een tijd zo.'
'Goed,' zei de dominee. 'Ik ga maar eens.'
'Werk er maar aan,' snauwde ze. 'Ik doe het nog één keer, en dan moet het in orde zijn.'
'Ik begrijp het,' zei de dominee, en liep naar zijn kamer.
Hij werd hier ook zwaar depressief van, maar probeerde toch nog de positieve kant ervan te zien. Zijn preken hielpen hem ermee. Hij begon steeds meer open te zijn over zichzelf in de preken, maar zijn vrouw draaide alles om, en knipte er een heleboel uit, om het aan te vullen met haar eigen ideeën waarin ze haar man flink voor schut zette. Mensen op straat begonnen hem vreemd aan te kijken, en als het kerkleden waren dan konden ze hun lachen vaak niet inhouden. Op een bepaald moment kon de dominee zich niet meer bedwingen en vroeg waarom ze lachten.

'Ach, die preken van u zijn zo lollig, hoe u over uzelf spreekt enzo,' werd er gezegd.
'Ik weet niet wat er zo lollig aan is,' mopperde de dominee. 'Het was anders bloedserieus. Het spreekt niet echt van medeleven.'
'Ja, maar de manier waarop je jezelf gewoon naar beneden praat telkens is gewoon lachwekkend,' werd er toen gezegd.
De dominee wist niet meer hoe hij het had. 'Geef voorbeelden dan ?' snauwde hij.
En zo werden er voorbeelden aangehaald die hij helemaal niet kende. 'Dat heb ik nooit geschreven,' zei hij. Hij had het helemaal gehad. Stampvoetend liep hij naar huis en sprak zijn vrouw erop aan. Ze gaf het allemaal eerlijk toe, en vond dat zij het recht ertoe had. Hij was zo kwaad dat hij haar een klap in het gezicht gaf. Toen trok hij zich terug op zijn kamer. Zijn pleinvrees werd hierdoor alleen maar erger en hij kwam nog minder buiten. Maar ja, wat moest hij buiten zoeken ? Hij ging nog wel vaak de tuin in, maar verder dan de schuur kwam hij niet.
Hij wilde het zijn vrouw betaald zetten en nam geen chocolade meer voor haar mee. Na een groot

dieptepunt ging hij toch weer terug naar de kerk, en ditmaal om alles recht te zetten. Tot zijn grote verbazing ontkende zijn vrouw toen alles, en zei dat hij het zelf had geschreven toen hij dronken was. Hij zette zijn vrouw enorm voor schut, maar het werd niet geloofd en al helemaal niet geaccepteerd. Sindsdien mocht de dominee niet meer preken. Maar hij is toen gewoon met zijn vrouw naar een andere kerk gegaan waar ze hem graag wilden hebben. En zo konden ze ook opnieuw beginnen.
'Je hebt er zelf om gevraagd,' foeterde zijn vrouw weleens als hij het weer probeerde op te halen. Hij probeerde het maar te laten zinken.

Hoofdstuk 5. Augustus tot Oktober, 1946

Hij had veel nachtmerries over de oorlog. Dominee Jonkema was alles behalve over de oorlog heen. Zijn vrouw was hierin geen steun. Zijn preken hielpen hem. Het was augustus, 1946. Hij snakte vaak naar adem. Dat ze nu in een nieuwe kerk waren hielp wel. Hij kon zo alles achter zich laten, maar zijn oorlogs-verleden achtervolgde hem. Het stalkte hem. Het liet hem niet met rust, zoals zijn vrouw hem niet met rust liet. Vaak staarde hij uit zijn slaapkamer raam om naar de mergpijpen te kijken die langsreden. Hij kon er maar niet aan wennen. Het was alsof ze zijn gevangenis bewaakten. Toch inspireerde het hem ook op een vreemde manier. Hij had een nieuwe stijl van preken gevonden. Dat was een keer wat anders. Soms ging hij nog weleens naar de slaapkamer van zijn vrouw om in haar dagboeken te lezen, wat als pinnen door zijn vlees was. 'Hoe kan iemand hier mee leven ?' vroeg hij zichzelf vaak af. Vaak waren het ook klinkklare leugens, of dingen omgedraaid. Soms waren het juist de dingen die ze zelf had gedaan waar ze hem van beschuldigde. Toch

inspireerden de dagboeken van zijn vrouw hem ook op een vreemde manier. Het werd bijna een obsessie voor hem. Voor zijn eigen bescherming en creativiteit begon hij ze ook als een kunstvorm te zien, maar wel een hele vreemde. Zijn vrouw voerde een strijd tegen hem die hij niet begreep. Eigenlijk zou hij haar er wel mee willen confronteren, maar hij wist ook waar dat op uit kon lopen.
Hij besloot zich maar kalm te houden en het te dragen als het stille kruis. Toch liep zijn woede zo hoog op dat hij het op een dag niet meer kon uithouden, en confronteerde haar ermee. 'Jij zal ook wel je dagboeken hebben,' gaf ze als antwoord.
'Ik schrijf preken,' zei hij. 'Ik probeer er iets goeds van te maken, iets overdrachtelijks. Dat zou jij ook eens moeten proberen in plaats van alleen maar negatief te doen en alles in het geheim uit te broeien.'
'Kom,' zei ze. 'Daar begin ik echt niet aan. Wie zegt dat ik het van de kerktoren moet blazen ? Het is iets persoonlijks. Niemand anders heeft daar mee te maken.'

'Nee, maar je kunt je erdoor laten inspireren,' zei de dominee.
'Geen zin in,' zei zijn vrouw. 'Ik ben geen dominee. Ik heb ook geen ambities om het te worden. Ik ben de vrouw van een dominee, en daar blijft het bij. Dat is al genoeg ellende.'
'Ja, je bent een sluwe prediker,' bekte hij. 'Zo'n roofdier die zich verbergt in het struikgewas.'
'Dat is ook ergens goed voor,' sprak zijn vrouw. 'Dan letten jullie tenminste op, en dan zijn jullie tenminste waakzaam.'
'Jij bent zo iemand die mensen met een mes in de rug aanvalt,' bekte hij. 'Het is laf.'
'Ik ben niemand iets verschuldigd,' sprak ze. 'In de oorlog is alles geoorloofd. Het doel heiligt de middelen.'
'Is het oorlog dan ?' vroeg hij.
'Ons hele huwelijk is een oorlog sinds het begin,' sprak ze koud. 'We trouwden jong om economische redenen, en ik blijf bij je om economische redenen.'
Hij wist dat het moeilijk zou zijn om haar volkomen te ontwijken. De nieuwe kerk stond in een ander stadsdeel, en zo verhuisden ze van hun flat in het

centrum naar een rijtjeshuis in het stadsdeel van de nieuwe kerk. Het was hier een natuurrijke omgeving, maar hij begon zich op een vreemde manier vaak vies te voelen. Hij noemde het het vieze kruis. Hij zei dat het nog met de oorlog had te maken. Zijn vrouw was dolgelukkig met het nieuwe huis en even leek het alsof ze hem eindelijk accepteerde, maar niet lang daarna begon ze weer terug te rollen in haar vroegere rol.

Omdat hij zich steeds vaker vies begon te voelen verlangde hij ernaar om geheel in de natuur te leven. Hij had sinds hij in het nieuwe huis woonde ook steeds meer dromen over dat er invallen waren van indianen in de concentratie kampen, of dat hij ontsnapte uit het concentratie kamp en zich aansloot bij de indianen in de natuur. Zijn vrouw vond die dromen onzin, omdat er geen indianen in de natuur van Nederland en Duitsland leefden. Zijn vrouw kraakte nog steeds alles wat hij deed of zei af. Het onderwerp 'indianen' boeide hem wel. Hij stelde ook dat de bijbel oorspronkelijk indiaanse fundamenten had. Hij bedoelde daar dan eigenlijk mee : de natuur

religie. Alhoewel zijn vrouw ook indiaans bloed had als Surinaamse keek ze hem er giftig op aan.
Op een dag ging de dominee met zijn vrouw wandelen in de natuur. Dat hadden ze een hele tijd niet samen gedaan.
'We hebben altijd een ontsnappings-route hier,' zei de dominee tegen zijn vrouw, 'mochten de Duitsers of de Russen of iets soortgelijks binnenvallen.'
Zijn vrouw keek hem vreemd aan. 'Die zullen dan overal zijn,' stelde ze.
'Maar voor nu ben jij mijn ergste vijand,' zei hij tegen zijn vrouw.
Ze knikte daarop.
Hij vervolgde : 'Dan is het leven tenminste niet saai, en dan heb ik mijn inspiratie.'
Ze zweeg. Na een paar minuten zei ze : 'Het is gewoon voor het geld. Niets meer, niets minder.'
Na een lange wandeling kwamen ze thuis. Ze waren beiden wat vuil geworden in de natuur. 'We kunnen de volgende keer wel in het bosmeer gaan zwemmen,' zei hij.
Ze knikte. 'Dus jij zou wel in de natuur willen wonen ?' vroeg ze. 'Zeer onpraktisch. Gevaarlijk ook.'

'Maar jij bent ook gevaarlijk,' stelde de dominee. 'Ik moet je voortdurend in de gaten houden.'
'Je gelooft maar wat je wil geloven,' snauwde ze. 'Je bent een volwassen man, toch ?' Ze zei het op een hele kleinerende toon.
'Ik heb bewijzen genoeg,' stelde hij.
'Geluk ermee,' snauwde ze.
Ze gingen ook graag samen wandelen in hun nieuwe woonwijk. De situatie en de natuur leende zich daar veel beter voor. Ze hielden hun huwelijk puur zakelijk. Ze waren beiden niet makkelijk.

Hoofdstuk 6. Oktober tot December 1946

Zijn vrouw was aan de telefoon met een Surinaamse vriendin. Zijn vrouw was hevig aan het roddelen, ook over hem. Hij liep naar haar toe en gaf haar een mep. 'Oh, nu slaat hij me ook nog,' zei ze tegen haar vriendin. En toen ging het geroddel gewoon verder. De dominee ging naar boven naar zijn kantoor, en ging daar verder met het schrijven van een preek. Het geroddel van zijn vrouw inspireerde hem. Hij moest wel, anders zou hij gek worden.
Na een tijdje kwam ze stampvoetend naar boven, over hoe hij haar durfde te slaan, en ze gaf hem een mep terug. 'Dan moet je stoppen over me te roddelen,' zei hij. Na een tijdje kwam haar vriendin ook, en gaf hem ook een mep en begon hem uit te foeteren. Haar vriendin was nog wel forser gebouwd dan zij. Haar vriendin zou een tijdje komen logeren, maar dat ging al vanaf het begin helemaal niet goed. Nu had hij twee krengen in huis. De vriendin van zijn vrouw was in bepaalde opzichten nog wel erger dan zijn vrouw, en was ook veel directer. Ze probeerden hem op allerlei manieren uit te lokken,

en als hij zich verdedigde werd dat niet geaccepteerd. 'Volgens mij is de bevrijding nooit geweest. Het is nog steeds oorlog,' zei hij weleens. 'Aan nazi's geen gebrek hier.' En zo droeg hij een dubbel kruis. Met een vriendin erbij was zijn vrouw een nog wel ergere pestkop. Stoken en kleineren was alles wat ze deden. 'Dus je hebt er een nieuw wapen bijgehuurd,' zei hij weleens tegen zijn vrouw.
Er viel niet met deze roofdieren te praten. Hij hoopte maar dat de vriendin snel weer zou vertrekken, maar dat gebeurde niet. Hij had het gevoel alsof hij weer in een concentratie kamp zat. Hij wist niet hoe lang hij dit nog zou kunnen volhouden. Ze scholden hem soms ook uit. Vaak sloot hij zich op in zijn kantoor. Hij durfde vaak ook niet naar beneden om eten te halen, want dan zou hij ze onherroepelijk tegenkomen. Het was alsof zij de keuken bewaakten. De keuken was hun terrein. Daar brachten ze een groot deel van hun tijd door, en dan roddelden ze alles bij elkaar wat los en vast zat. In de keuken stond ook de wasmachine. Hij had gewoon geen fut om altijd maar het gebek aan te horen. In die zin werd hij uitgehongerd.

Als ze naar boven kwamen hield hij altijd zijn adem in. Het was in die tijd dat hij weer aan huisbezoek begon te doen, gewoon om er even uit te zijn. De mensen waren erg gastvrij, en zoals de mensen hun verhaal bij hem konden doen, zo kon hij zijn verhaal bij hen doen. En vaak boden ze hem aan bij hen te blijven logeren, zodat hij even uit zijn concentratie kamp was verlost.
Zijn vrouw en haar vriendin stemden daar vaak in toe, omdat zij zo ook van hem verlost waren. Hij had het idee dat de vriendin echt bij hen in zou komen wonen als de derde. Zijn vrouw viel hierin niet om te praten. Om zijn toestemming werd niet gevraagd. De dominee begon daarom steeds langer weg te blijven, en begon van zijn vrouw en zijn huis te vervreemden. Het was alsof de vriendin zijn plaats had ingenomen. Hij voelde zich niet meer welkom in zijn eigen huis. Wel zag hij ze elke zondag in de kerk waar hij preekte.
Hij vertelde de kerkeraad over zijn huwelijksproblemen, en hij kreeg een kantoor aangeboden achter de kerk, waar hij ook kon slapen. In de kerk was ook een keukentje waarvan hij gebruik kon

maken. Maar ja, alles beter dan het concentratie kamp thuis. Wel schreef hij nog een brief naar zijn vrouw waarin hij uitlegde dat hij het jammer vond dat het zo gegaan was, en dat hij de tijd miste voordat haar vriendin kwam, en dat hij het wilde uitpraten, maar hij kreeg een brief vol gehoon en gespot terug, vol met leugens en dingen die uit zijn verband werden gehaald. 'Die vrouw is toch onmogelijk !' riep hij. Hij was bijna hysterisch en buiten zichzelf van woede. 'Dat kan toch helemaal niet !' riep hij. 'Moet je zien hoe ze schrijft ! Ongelofelijk !' Hij zag toen wel in dat het de moeite allemaal niet waard was. Hij kon terugkomen, maar de vriendin zou niet weggaan om hem.
De volgende zondag waren ze beiden zoals gewoonlijks in de kerk, en deden poeslief, alsof er niets aan de hand was. Zoals gewoonlijks hield hij de preek en keek vaak naar hen. Eigenlijk inspireerden ze hem ook. Wat moest hij in het leven zonder het kruis, en zonder de angst ? Dit was zijn grootste inspiratie bron. Hij stelde dat het gewoon bij hem hoorde, en dat hij ook dit dubbele kruis maar moest accepteren, hoe moeilijk dat ook was.

Uiteindelijk gooide hij de handdoek in de ring, en ging na de dienst met hen mee naar huis. Nog steeds deden ze poeslief. Hij dacht bij zichzelf : 'Kom maar op, laat het maar beginnen. Ik lust jullie rauw. In mijn preken zullen jullie eindigen.'
De vriendin van zijn vrouw complimenteerde hem zelfs. 'Dat was een goede preek.' Hij glimlachte, maar wist wat hij kon verwachten. Naarmate de avond dichterbij kwam begon het geroddel en geklets weer, en hij werd weer van van alles beschuldigd. Hij dacht bij zichzelf : 'aan de preek denken. De preek is alles waar het om draait. Dit zijn de bouwstenen.'
'Bedankt voor het kruis, bedankt voor de angst,' zei hij tegen beiden. 'Het is het mooiste geschenk. Bedankt voor al het gehoon, de spot en de schuld. Bedankt. Heb je nog meer ? Ik neem het graag van jullie aan. Sla je me op de wang, dan keer ik mijn andere wang toe, en vraag je me een mijl te lopen, dan loop ik de tweede mijl. Vraag je mijn hemd, dan krijg je ook mijn mantel.'
'Dat is wel erg overdreven,' zei zijn vrouw.

'Ja,' zei de vriendin. 'Zit je nu de spot met ons te drijven ?'
'Nee,' zei hij. 'Ik meen het. Vraag en het dubbele zal je gegeven worden.'
'Hij zit ons te bespotten,' zei de vriendin. Zijn vrouw knikte.
'We hebben je niet nodig nu,' zei de vriendin. 'Als we je nodig hebben roepen we je wel.'
Hij ging naar boven naar zijn kantoor. Na een tijdje klopte zijn vrouw aan. Ook de zus van zijn vrouw zou komen logeren. Zo woonde hij met drie moeilijke vrouwen in één huis. Ook de zus van zijn vrouw scheen niet meer weg te gaan. Roddelen was alles wat ze deden. De hele dag door. En hij schreef preken.

Hoofdstuk 7. December 1946 tot Maart 1947

Het was net na de oorlog, maar voor hem was het nog steeds oorlog. Hij viel van het ene concentratie kamp in het andere. De zus van zijn vrouw was als de onverschillige Pontius Pilatus die gewoon toekeek als de vrouwen hem verbaal mishandelden. Maar hij gebruikte het voor zijn preken. De dominee had zoveel goede voornemens, maar dit was gewoon niet haalbaar. Er was teveel tussen hem en zijn vrouw ingekomen. Hij snapte niet wat zijn vrouw bezielde. Er was geen doorkomen aan. Hij kon niet met deze vrouwen leven. Het was alsof hij nu niet één moeilijke vrouw had, maar drie moeilijke vrouwen. Er knapte iets in hem. Hij had allang spijt dat hij ooit was verhuisd. Uiteindelijk stelde hij zijn vrouw voor de keuze : 'Je weet dat wij economisch goed zitten omdat de kerk ons financieel ondersteunt. Of die vrouwen gaan eruit, of ik stop ermee dominee te zijn.' Zijn vrouw was hierover erg kwaad, maar stemde toen uiteindelijk toe dat de vrouwen weg zouden gaan, op voorwaarde dat ze soms nog weleens een weekendje konden komen

logeren. Dat was hem best. Wonder boven wonder stond hun vroegere flat weer te huur aangeboden, en zonder te aarzelen reageerde de dominee op het aanbod, en kreeg de vroegere woning terug. Ze waren hier beiden blij mee. Het leven in het centrum in een flat beviel hen toch beter als in een rijtjeshuis. Het was inmiddels 1947 geworden. De verhuizing was weer een hele klus, en ze zorgden dat het weer precies zo was als vroeger. Wel gingen ze nog gewoon naar de nieuwe kerk. Dat stond hem wel een beetje tegen, want hij wilde eigenlijk helemaal niet meer in die wijk komen. Daarom gingen ze op zoek naar een andere kerk in het centrum, die ze uiteindelijk vonden. Ook daar kon de dominee preken.

Hij had het gevoel alsof ze een cirkeltje hadden gemaakt. Hij voelde zich hier beter thuis. Soms kwam de vriendin van haar vrouw of haar zus nog logeren, of beiden. Maar dat werd ook steeds minder. Ze waren weer volkomen met elkaar opgezadeld.

'Opnieuw beginnen ?' had hij gevraagd toen ze weer in hun flat gingen wonen. Maar hij wist waar het op

uit zou lopen. Hij liep zowel met een oorlogstrauma als met een huwelijkstrauma. Van beiden was hij niet af. Hij zat er middenin, maar hij was tenminste weer terug in dat wat hij zijn geliefde huis noemde. Het was alsof hij het nu extra kon waarderen. 'Nooit meer hier weg,' zei hij. 'Hier hoor ik.'
Hij begon steeds meer het mechanisme van zijn vrouw te ontdekken. Het was als een programma, als een klokwerk. Hij moest tot de conclusie komen dat hij daar geen controle over had. Hij besefte ook dat communicatie op zichzelf niet zonder gevaren is, en niet zonder consequenties. Hij besefte dat communicatie programmatie is, waarmee hij heel voorzichtig moest zijn. Er was wel een manier om ermee om te gaan, en dat behoorde hij te leren.
Hij bekeek de afstanden tussen de objecten om hem heen, en ook de afstanden tussen zijn gedachtes en probeerde het te lezen als een soort morse, als een tekensysteem. Het was moeilijk om niet geheel negatief te worden, maar het was ook moeilijk om geheel negatief te worden, dus hij probeerde een weg in het midden te vinden. Zijn vrouw zei vaak : 'Nu moet het goed zijn,' en 'Nu moet je er weleens

over heen zijn,' als ze het over zijn oorlogsverleden had. Zij kon zich totaal niet in hem verplaatsen. Hij liep bij haar telkens op tegen een harde muur. Maar het was zijn vrouw. Het was een kraal of schakel in de ketting van zijn leven. Zij hoorde bij hem, of hij dat nu wilde of niet. Hij had zich daarbij neergelegd. En wat moest een dominee zonder vrouw ? Zij was zijn inspiratie bron, en daardoor economisch. Zonder haar had hij zijn preken nooit kunnen schrijven. Zij was het geheim van de financiele ondersteuning door de kerk.

Met haar viel ook niet echt te discussiëren. Haar wil en zienswijze was wet, hoe hij het ook wendde of keerde. 'Wat eten we vandaag ?' vroeg hij.

'Bloemkool,' sprak ze.

'Oh, bloemkool,' zei hij. Hij kon soms wel met haar praten over alledaagse dingen. Dan kon ze soms poeslief doen, en dan was hij erover verwonderd dat ze er geen ruzie over hadden. Zij was een onderdeel van een taal, een taal die hij nog niet begreep. Deze taal was onverbiddelijk. Er kon niet gesjoemeld worden. Hij moest deze taal leren. Hij had het gevoel dat hij naar school moest. Hij merkte dat hij

wat miste als dominee zijnde. Daarom ging hij elke donderdagmiddag een cursus semiotiek volgen, de leer van de verborgen tekensystemen om de mens heen. Hij vond dit een interessant onderwerp. Het schooltje was gelukkig dicht in de buurt. Hij kon daar ook zijn verhaal kwijt, en toen gaven ze hem een uitleg over de verborgen betekenissen van de tekens die hij opnoemde, waarover hij zichzelf verbaasde. Zij konden zo de diepere betekenis van zijn geschiedenis laten zien, en dat gaf hem een diepe rust en vrede. Zijn vrouw vond het allemaal maar onzin, dus met haar sprak hij er nauwelijks over. Soms vroeg ze weleens wat er over, en dan probeerde hij zo vaag mogelijk te antwoorden, of zelfs misleidend. Hij wist dat hij bij zijn vrouw maar beter niet de waarheid kon vertellen. Zijn vrouw kon niet tegen de waarheid.

Ze leefde in een wereld van leugens, en alleen door de leugen kon hij haar nog enigszins bereiken. Maar hij leerde het te begrijpen als een tekensysteem op de cursus semiotiek. De leugen was een geheime taal. Hij vond dat wel interessant want zo kon hij zijn vrouw uitdokteren. Zij was het grootste blok aan

zijn been, samen met de oorlog. Hij moest een weg door haar zien te vinden. Er was geen andere mogelijkheid. De oorlog en zijn vrouw waren twee grote raadsels in zijn leven die maar niet meebogen. Zou zijn vrouw opgesloten zitten in haarzelf en een soort van morse naar hem uitseinen ? Dat soort gedachtes vlogen door hem heen. Hij vroeg zich af hoe zij geworden was zoals zij was, zo hard als steen. Over haar verleden sprak ze eigenlijk nooit. Hij had er ook niet echt naar gevraagd. Op een dag besloot hij haar er eens mee te confronteren. Ze werd boos en liep weg.
'Wat is er nou ?' vroeg hij. 'Ik toon gewoon belangstelling, en weer is het niet goed.'
'Het gaat je niets aan,' sprak ze. 'Het is iets persoonlijks. Daar moet je vanaf blijven. Het is iets intiems. Daarvoor ben ik niet met je getrouwd. Ons huwelijk is puur economisch.'
'Doet het pijn als ik er naar vraag ?' vroeg hij.
'Ik voel niets,' zei ze. 'Ik leef niet in het verleden zoals jij.'
'Dat is natuurlijk makkelijk praten,' zei hij. Maar hij wist hoe zij er over dacht, en blijkbaar hield zij iets

achter voor hem. Zijn laatste redmiddel was haar dagboeken. Hij zou eens op haar slaapkamer op zoek gaan naar haar oudste dagboeken. Er stonden ook kisten op haar kamer waar hij nog nooit in had gekeken. Het waren oude kisten die ze geërfd zou hebben.
Op een dag toen ze naar de supermarkt was ging hij haar slaapkamer op. Hij liep direct naar de kisten toe, maar ze bleken op slot te zitten. Na wat zoeken vond hij de sleutels onder haar matras, en opende de kisten. Er lagen hierin veel oude schoolschriften, oude boeken, en ook wat dagboeken. Soms waren het dunne schriftjes. Er stonden ook jaartallen op. 'Interessant,' sprak hij tot zichzelf. 'Ik kan veel over haar zeggen, maar ze heeft haar leven wel goed bijgehouden, allemaal opgesteld in journalen.' Hij bladerde wat door de schriftjes. Het ging over wat vriendjes, en over haar vader. Er was veel over haar vader geschreven, hoe moeilijk hij was. Ze wilde vaak niet meer leven. Sommige zinnen waren doorgekrast. Plotseling schrok hij. Haar vader had haar iets aangedaan waar ze niet over durfde te schrijven. Hij begon zich de gekste dingen in het

hoofd te halen, maar het bleef natuurlijk maar allemaal speculatie, omdat ze het niet durfde te schrijven. Hij las verder, en daar ging het weer over een vriendje, en over een voetbalwedstrijd van meisjes. Toen ging het weer over haar vader, dat haar vader het weer had gedaan. Zijn hart begon hevig te kloppen. Wat kon dit betekenen ? Zijn fantasie sloeg er op los, en hij begon als een razende verder te lezen, maar het ging allemaal weer over andere dingen. Toen nam hij een ander schriftje en deed hetzelfde, maar daar kwam haar vader helemaal niet in voor. Hij begon wanhopig te worden. Hij deed alles weer terug in de kist, sloot het, en legde de sleutels weer onder de matras.
De dag erna ging ze weg met een vriendin, dus toen had hij meer tijd. Weer opende hij de kisten, en nu zou hij echt alles grondig doorlezen van jaar tot jaar. Hij werd er echter niet veel wijzer van, want het ging allemaal over andere dingen, veel over vriendinnen. Ook ging het over haar zus. Vaak ging het ook over racisme, maar toen las hij iets waar hij weer van schrok. Ditmaal ging het over haar moeder. Haar moeder had iets gedaan waar ze niet over

durfde te schrijven. Toen hij bij het laatste schrift was aangekomen van haar leven beefde hij. Hij hoopte maar dat het hem nu uitgelegd zou worden, maar hij was erg wanhopig. Hij sloeg het schrift open. Ze schreef dat ze was bedreigd met een mes, maar er werden geen namen genoemd. Ook moest ze bepaalde dingen doen. Verder werd alles vaag gehouden. Misschien had de bedreiging met het mes haar zo gemaakt. Ze werd gechanteerd. Misschien dat hierdoor alle stoppen bij haar waren doorgeslagen. Hij deed alles weer netjes terug in de kisten en sloot ze. Daarna legde hij de sleutels weer onder de matras, precies op dezelfde plaats.

Toen ze thuiskwam vroeg hij eerst hoe ze het gehad had. 'Het was leuk,' zei ze. Dat was alles wat ze zei. 'Ik had vannacht een nare droom,' zei hij. 'Je werd bedreigd met een mes.'

Ze schrok. Toen ineens werd ze weer stijf en koud. 'Iedereen droomt weleens,' zei ze zacht, maar ze had wel een beteuterd gezicht. Hij had er niet over gedroomd, maar hij wist geen andere manier om haar ermee te confronteren. 'Je vader en je moeder stonden er ook bij,' zei hij.

Ze keek op en trok haar wenkbrauwen op. Haar gezicht vertrok helemaal. Ze slikte. Toen vertelde ze uitgebreid over wat ze die avond zouden eten. 'Ik heb troost nodig,' zei hij. 'Ik gaf om je in die droom. Ik ontworstelde het mes van degene die je bedreigde.'
'Kun je ophouden met die dromen, Jozef de dromer ?' snauwde ze. 'We leven in de realiteit, niet in dromen.'
'Hoe waren je ouders vroeger ?' vroeg de dominee.
'Ik wil er niet over praten,' zei ze. 'Je wil altijd maar over vroeger praten, maar we leven in het hier en nu. Het verleden is weg. Daar hebben we niets meer aan, en het komt nooit meer terug.'
'Maar er zijn dingen van je afgenomen ?' vroeg hij.
'Ja, teveel,' snauwde ze, 'maar ik heb er zoveel voor teruggekregen. Het leven neemt en het leven geeft. Als iets wordt weggenomen, dan is er iets beters voor je.'
Hij keek haar aan, en snakte naar adem. 'Je bent nog steeds een aanstellertje,' zei ze.
Hij zag weer uit naar de donderdagmiddag, naar een les in de semiotiek, want het ging weer helemaal

verkeerd. Ze werkte hem op de zenuwen, maar hij wist nu in ieder geval een beetje waar dat door kwam. Hij bleef maar aan het mes denken.
Toen hij die week naar het schooltje ging op de donderdagmiddag vertelde hij over het mes. Toen gaven ze een hele bijzondere uitleg. Het mes was het teken van een komend huwelijk. Hij was het mes zelf. Het huwelijk is een botsing, een ongeluk, twee mensen die toevallig op elkaar in zijn gelopen of ingereden. Zij zijn lotgenoten. Er valt ook niet aan te ontkomen. Ze zijn verminkt voor het leven. Ze zijn een vast onderdeel van elkaar geworden. Maar dat werd toen nog dieper uitgelegd, want het huwelijk is slechts datgene wat tekens, woorden en zinnen aan elkaar verbindt. Het huwelijk is het mengsel. Dat het zo diep gaat en zo pijnlijk is is het leerproces. Het is het onderdeel van een school, de moeite die je ervoor moet doen, en de voorwaarden die er zijn.
Voor hem was het het dagje wel. Hij liep fluitend naar huis. Hij was een beetje vrolijk, maar thuisgekomen kon zijn vrouw dat totaal niet waarderen. 'Ik ga het huis wel uit als je zo bent,' zei

ze. 'Je lijkt wel dronken.' Ze ging naar de gang en pakte haar jas.
'Nee, blijf,' zei hij. 'Ik ben niet dronken. Ik zag gewoon wat grappigs op straat.'
'En wat was dat dan ?' snauwde ze.
'Een jongen die op z'n kont viel,' zei hij.
'Misselijk,' zei ze. 'En daar maak jij grappen over ?'
Uit zijn binnenzak haalde hij de chocolade die hij voor haar had gekocht. 'Die eet ik buiten wel op,' sprak ze, en griste het uit zijn handen.
'Nee, blijf,' zei hij. Hij wilde naar haar kijken om zijn nieuwe lessen semiotiek in het geheim op haar toe te passen, maar ze was al weg voordat hij er erg in had. Hij zuchtte, maar het kon zijn dag niet kapotmaken. Hij dacht na over wat er was gezegd. Voor haar was hij dus het dreigende mes. Natuurlijk was dat omgekeerd ook zo. Het leek wel alsof zijn vrouw het dreigende mes van de oorlog was. Maar het was dus slechts een schakel in de ketting van een semiotisch systeem, een tekensysteem. Hij moest de sociale tekens leren begrijpen en op waarde leren schatten. Ongelukken zoals het huwelijk stonden niet op zichzelf. Zijn huwelijk beheerste alles, als

het bindmiddel van de taal. Als het pijnloos zou zijn dan zou het geen afweersysteem hebben, geen immunologie. Daarom werd het huwelijk vergeleken met een ongeluk. Het was om alles in de juiste banen te leiden. Het verleden moest afsterven, verwerkt worden.
Het huwelijk was een verleider, een misleider, een toevallig ongeluk, tenzij het was ontcijferd door de semiotiek.

Hoofdstuk 8. Maart tot Mei, 1947

Hij zag ook in dat de geheime taal uit tegenpolen bestond, wat ze op school de dialectische semiotiek noemden.
Op een dag kwam de zus van zijn vrouw weer logeren. Hij raakte diep met haar in gesprek toen zijn vrouw bezig was in de keuken. Dat was eigenlijk voor het eerst, want ze had zich altijd erg stil gehouden naar hem. Hij waagde het erop en vroeg over het verleden van zijn vrouw.
'Ja, ze is met een mes bedreigd,' zei haar zus. 'Dat is eigenlijk alles wat ik er van weet, en dat ze gechanteerd werd. Ze moest werken voor iemand ofzo, anders zouden ze haar koudmaken.'
'Weet je ook wat voor werk dat was ?' vroeg de dominee.
'Administratief werk voor iets,' zei ze.
'Voor wat ?' vroeg hij.
'Dat is een familie geheim,' zei ze. 'Daar mag ik niet over spreken.'
'Maar ik ben deel van de familie,' zei de dominee. 'En ik ben van de kerk, dus het lijkt mij dat ik ervoor

in aanmerking kom om het te weten. Het gaat per slot van rekening om mijn vrouw.'
Ze knikte. 'Als je het tegen niemand zegt,' zei ze.
Hij knikte. 'Mijn erewoord,' zei hij.
Toen kwam zijn vrouw binnen. Daarna hadden ze geen gelegenheid meer om alleen te zijn, en de zus van zijn vrouw moest alweer weg. Het leek wel alsof ze in de gaten werden gehouden. De dominee besloot toen een brief te schrijven, maar hij kreeg daar geen antwoord op. Niet lang daarna kwam de zus van zijn vrouw weer logeren, maar ze gedroeg zich als een vreemde naar hem.
De cursus semiotiek was verder afgelopen, en er waren geen vervolglessen meer. De dominee voelde zich in het diepe geworpen. Wel was er een dialectisch-semiotische kerk bijgekomen in het centrum. Dat gaf de dominee weer wat hoop. De diensten werden op de zondagavond gehouden, en op de woensdagavond. Dat zou mooi uitkomen voor de dominee. Hij zou er eens naartoe gaan. Zijn vrouw wilde verder niet mee.
De diensten werden gehouden in een villa. Er liepen ook monikken rond. Verder ging het er aan toe zoals

bij hem in de kerk. Er werden psalmen gezongen en er werd een preek gehouden of voorgelezen. Hij kwam ook sommige mensen van de cursus tegen. Het kwam bij hem allemaal heel vertrouwd over. Het deed hem denken aan zijn vroegere studie theologie. Hij woonde daarvoor op een internaat. Zijn gedachten dwaalden daar steeds weer naar af. Het internaat stond in een prachtig natuurgebied, nog vóór de oorlog. Hij herinnerde hoe hij overstapte naar een ander internaat en dat toen de oorlog begon. Hij trouwde en werd dominee, en werd toen in zijn eigen huis door de nazi's opgepakt en naar Duitsland meegenomen voor dwangarbeid. Er was veel behoefte aan semiotiek na de oorlog. Vreemd genoeg had zijn vrouw die behoefte niet.
Hij herinnerde zich de leraren op het internaat, hoe hij zich aan hen optrok. Maar ook zij konden de oorlog niet voorkomen. Er was rep en roer op het tweede internaat toen de oorlog aanbrak. In de weekenden ging hij meestal naar zijn ouderlijk huis. Zijn vader was ook dominee. Hij ging daar naar de kerk als hij er was, waar zijn vader preekte, en waar hij ook zijn vrouw voor het eerst ontmoette. Hij had

warme gevoelens voor zijn vader, maar zijn vader was alcoholist, en dat nam hij van hem over. Hij had daardoor niet altijd een heldere kijk op de werkelijkheid, en daarom had hij ook hallucinaties die overigens vaak heel religieus waren. Hij leefde daardoor deels in zijn verbeelding, maar ja, wie deed dat niet ? En hij had de alcohol na de oorlog nodig om over de oorlog heen te kunnen komen. Zijn vrouw was het hier niet mee eens, en het was een reden waarom ze een hekel aan hem had. Zij beschreef de alcohol altijd als een wurgslang. De vader van zijn vader was ook dominee en alcoholist. Het zat in de familie. Zijn vrouw wilde niet dat het geld zou opraken aan zijn drankprobleem. Ze draaide ieder dubbeltje om. Altijd probeerde ze de dingen zo goedkoop mogelijk te krijgen. Daar reiste ze stad en land voor af. Ja, haar soberheid en eenvoud eerde hij. Hij zou het wel willen, maar hij kon het niet. Zijn enige redmiddel was volgens hem de semiotiek. Zijn vrouw had hier het geduld niet voor. Altijd dramde ze maar.

Een andere gelijkenis met zijn vader en de vader van zijn vader was dat ze alle drie moeilijke vrouwen hadden, en misschien had alles wel met elkaar te maken, en werd er naar de drank gegrepen vanwege de moeilijke vrouw. In zijn geval was dat zeker waar. Ook rookte hij dus als een ketter. En dat was een andere reden waarom zijn vrouw een hekel aan hem had, maar er waren veel meer redenen. Daarover kon hij altijd lezen in haar dagboeken.
Hij zwoer dat hij zou blijven roken en drinken tot aan zijn dood. Zijn vrouw zei vaak dat het zijn dood zou worden. 'Je drinkt jezelf nog eens dood,' zei ze altijd.
'Alsof het jou wat kan schelen,' zei hij dan altijd.
'Het scheelt mijn portemonnee heel wat,' zei ze eens. 'We zouden meer geld overhouden als je niet zou drinken.'
'Is geld alles waar je aan denkt ?' vroeg hij.
'Het leven is geld,' sprak ze. 'Zonder geld is er geen leven.'
'Wat heb jij dan een zielig bestaan,' sprak hij.
En ze was bang dat ze de kerkelijke financiele steun zou verliezen als hij er niet meer zou zijn. Hij

noemde dat eigenbelang. Dan haalde ze gewoon haar schouders op. Het kon haar niet schelen. Volgens hem had ze geen ziel. Of misschien was haar ziel geroofd door het mes ? Of misschien was zij ook geknapt door de oorlog ?
Hij herinnerde zich de leraren van het internaat. Ook zij konden de oorlog niet tegenhouden. Vaak dwaalden zijn gedachten terug naar de tijd voordat de oorlog begon. Nu ging hij dan weleens naar de semiotische kerk. Ook daar gaven ze hem het advies om te minderen met roken en drinken. Hij was in eerste instantie boos, maar later begreep hij het wel. Hij moest andere manieren zien te vinden om met zijn problematiek om te gaan. Hiervoor was de semiotiek de geroepene.
De semiotische kerk leek wel een goede invloed op hem te hebben. Hij kon na niet al te lange tijd het roken en drinken halveren. Ook zijn vrouw was daar erg blij mee. Maar ze had nog steeds een hekel aan hem. Hij kon het gewoon nooit goed doen in haar ogen. Ze zei ook dat sinds hij minder dronk en rookte hij minder chocolade voor haar meebracht.

In de semiotische kerk hadden ze de filosofie dat de oorlog was begonnen door teveel drank. Hijzelf wees vrouwen als de schuldigen aan. Hij was in de loop van de tijd enorm verbitterd geraakt naar vrouwen, vanwege dat hij zo'n moeilijke vrouw had. In zijn ogen konden vrouwen niets of niet veel meer goeddoen. Op een bepaalde manier begon hij zo ook erg veel op zijn vrouw te lijken. Hij schreef nog steeds preken en steeds meer begon zijn vrouwenhaat erin door te schemeren. Hij kreeg daar ook weleens kritiek op, maar dat kon hem niks schelen. 'Dan is het tenminste goed getroffen,' zei hij dan. Hij had het helemaal gehad met het vrouwelijk geslacht. Toch gaf hij dan nog wel toe dat het allemaal voor inspiratie was, en goed voor de semiotiek. Volgens hem waren liefde en haat slechts bijwerkingen van de semiotiek. Het ging niet om liefde of haat, maar om het waarde proces. In zijn huwelijk was er nauwelijks tot nooit romantiek geweest, maar ze zagen wel elkaar's waarde in. Het was iets economisch, iets zakelijks. Liefde of haat kan daar gaan afbraak aan doen. Volgens hem waren die twee emoties ook heel erg relatief, en was er

maar een hele dunne lijn tussen. Vaak was liefde gemaskerde haat, en vaak was haat gemaskerde liefde. Door de semiotiek kon er doorheen geprikt worden. Liefde en haat waren onderdeel van een communicatie systeem. Beiden hadden waarde.
In de semiotische kerk stonden ze wel open voor zijn ideeën, en het duurde niet lang voordat hij daar ook kon preken. Nu had hij twee kerken waar hij preekte, en waardoor hij financieel ondersteunt werd. Zijn vrouw was hier erg blij mee, voor het geld, maar wilde verder niets van de semiotiek weten. Daar wilde ze zich niet in verdiepen. Ze ging daarom ook nooit met hem mee naar de semiotische kerk. Dat was wel het laatste wat ze wilde, maar ze accepteerde het verder wel van hem, vooral omdat het geld in het laatje bracht. Dat nam overigens niet weg dat ze heel zuinig leefde.

Hoofdstuk 9. Mei tot Augustus 1947

Vaak liep hij met haar in het park, soms zelfs hand in hand, maar het bracht hen niet dichter bij elkaar. Het was puur zakelijk, en voor het oog van de buitenwereld. Het was immers de dominee en zijn vrouw. Soms maakten ze zelfs ruzie op straat. Dat wilden ze niet, maar dat gebeurde gewoon. Soms dacht hij er weleens aan dat het een cultuur verschil kon zijn. De semiotiek zorgde ervoor dat hij steeds minder rookte en dronk. Maar er bleven grote raadselen voor hem.

Vaak dwaalden zijn gedachten terug naar de dertiger jaren, vóór de oorlog. Hij kon er uren over nadenken. Dan dacht hij weer aan de leraren die ook de oorlog niet konden voorkomen. Hij vroeg zich nog steeds af hoe de oorlog nu precies kon gebeuren. Hij veranderde vaak van gedachten. Eén ding was zeker : Hij haatte de Duitsers, elke Duitser. Ze moesten bij hem niet in de buurt komen, ook met die rottaal niet. Wel vond hij dat ze waarde hadden in de semiotiek, maar hij wilde weten welke waarde. Zijn vrouw kon hem daar niet mee helpen. Vaak

verdedigde ze zelfs de Duitsers als hij het er over had. Hij had haar leren accepteren. Zo was ze nu eenmaal. Hij dacht ook niet dat ze zomaar zou veranderen. Hij had zich erbij neergelegd dat ze nooit zou veranderen, en hij vroeg zich af of hij eigenlijk hoop had dat ze ooit zou veranderen, want zij was de inspiratie-bron voor zijn preken. Diep in zijn hart wilde hij dat ze zo zou blijven, maar natuurlijk protesteerde zijn gehele lichaam tegen die gedachte. Hij ging er vanuit dat het een overlevings-strategie van hem was. Een Stockholm syndroom wilde hij het niet noemen, want hij mocht haar totaal niet, maar wel iets soortgelijks, want hij kon haar waarde inzien.

Op een dag was haar zus er weer. Toen zijn vrouw in de keuken was sprong hij direct toe. 'Nu heb je me nog steeds niet verteld over dat familie geheim,' zei hij. 'Dat zou je nog doen. Ze moest bij een bepaald bedrijf werken in de administratie ?'

'Oh dat,' zei de zus van zijn vrouw. 'Dat was een familie bedrijf, maar het bestaat niet meer. Het was een schoenenzaak.'

'Wat is daar zo geheim aan ?' vroeg hij.

'Je begrijpt het niet,' zei ze. 'Het was een crimineel bedrijf. Ze werkte daar gedwongen, maar ik wil er verder niets meer over zeggen.'
Toen kwam zijn vrouw weer binnen, en er was verder voor hen ook geen gelegenheid om verder te praten. De volgende dag ging ze alweer vroeg weg.
'Ik heb gedroomd,' zei hij tegen zijn vrouw. 'Het ging over een schoenenzaak. Jij werkte er ook.'
Zijn vrouw werd helemaal wit, en begon te stotteren. Toen ging ze naar de keuken. Hij liep achter haar aan en zag haar uit de kraan drinken. Hij legde een hand op haar schouder. 'Blijf van me af !' snauwde ze. Hij ging de huiskamer weer binnen. Natuurlijk had hij er niet over gedroomd, maar hij wist geen andere manier. Ze zweeg als het graf. De rillingen liepen over hem heen. Na een tijdje ging ze naar haar slaapkamer.
Toen ze na een paar uur nog niet terugwas klopte hij aan, en vroeg : 'Heb ik iets verkeerds gezegd ?' Ze antwoordde niet. Even later opende hij de deur en zag dat ze in bed lag. Ze sliep. Toen ging hij de kamer weer uit. Toen het avond was geworden lag ze nog steeds in bed. Ze had haar ogen gesloten en leek

te bidden. 'Heb je iets nodig ?' vroeg hij. Ze schudde haar hoofd.
'Heb ik iets verkeerds gezegd ?' vroeg hij. Weer schudde ze haar hoofd. Hij kwam dichterbij haar.
'Kom niet dichterbij !' zei ze ineens fel, terwijl ze haar ogen opende. Toen is hij maar weer weggegaan.
De dagen erna was ze heel stil. Ze deed gewoon haar werk en dat was alles. Als hij met haar probeerde te praten wimpelde ze het af.
Sindsdien werd ze ook weleens gillend wakker in de nacht. Dan rende hij naar haar kamer toe om haar te troosten, maar dan begon ze hem uit te foeteren, of zelfs weg te trappen, zeggende dat het allemaal zijn schuld was. Het ging op een dag zelfs zo ver dat ze hem met een mes bedreigde. Hij moest nog voor haar oppassen ook, en sliep sindsdien met zijn slaapkamerdeur op slot. Ze bood daarna wel haar excuses aan, maar de angst was er toen wel ingeramd.
Zo besloten ze beiden in huwelijks-therapie te gaan. Ze waren beiden getraumatiseerd door het verleden, en eindelijk gaf zijn vrouw dat ook bij haarzelf toe. Even leek dat het ijs een beetje begon te ontdooien,

totdat ze erachter kwamen dat de huwelijkstherapeut ook zelf een therapeut nodig had. De man gedroeg zich vreemd, kil, gevoelloos, zonder empathie. Volgens de vrouw van de dominee zat hij daar alleen maar voor het geld. De dominee keek haar toen vreemd aan, maar stemde uiteindelijk wel toe met wat ze zei. 'Ja, alles draait om geld tegenwoordig,' sprak hij. 'Dat is bij ons nooit zo geweest.' Zijn vrouw keek hem toen even vreemd aan met opgetrokken wenkbrauwen, en zei toen : 'Inderdaad. Ik heb het wel getroffen met jou. Je prikt altijd zo goed door dingen heen.' Hij keek haar aan, en wist even niet of ze het meende of dat ze sarcastisch was. Even was hij in de war. En dit bespraken ze op weg naar huis, maar toen ze thuis waren snauwde zijn vrouw weer alles bij elkaar wat los en vast zat. Niets was er nog goed aan hem. De therapeut was waardeloos, en ze wilde ook geen nieuwe therapeut.
Haar nachtmerries waren nu gestopt. Het was maar iets tijdelijks. Ze leek weer helemaal te zijn zoals ze vroeger was. Er was niets veranderd. Ze kon hem niet uitstaan, en dat liet ze hem weten ook. Er was

altijd oorlog tussen hen, of die oorlog nu stil, koud of geweldadig was. Hij dacht na over hoe hij soms op het internaat discussies had met moeilijke vrouwen, maar dit sloeg wel alles.
Op een dag kwam de zus van zijn vrouw weer op bezoek. Weer raakte hij met haar in gesprek toen zijn vrouw in de keuken was. Hij wilde meer informatie over zijn vrouw, hoe ze zo was geworden. Maar de zus van zijn vrouw werkte niet echt mee. Ze vond dat ze al genoeg had gezegd. Hij was niet tevreden, en bleef doorvragen. Maar de zus van zijn vrouw gedroeg zich zeer koppig. Hij probeerde haar toen om te kopen, maar niets werkte. Ze zei dat ze niets voor hem kon doen.
Hij ging naar zijn slaapkamer en ging verder met het schrijven van zijn preek. Hij dacht na over zijn kinderjaren, over de vakanties in het bos. Hij dacht na over de internaten en hoe de oorlog begon. Hij dacht na over de leraren, hoe zij de oorlog niet konden voorkomen. Hij dacht na over hoe de nazi's hem wegnamen uit zijn eigen huis, hoe ze hem naar Duitsland namen, en hem daar lieten werken. Zijn vrouw wist dus ook wel wat dwangarbeid was. Hij

probeerde zich voor te stellen hoe dat voor haar geweest moest zijn in die schoenenzaak. Bij haar zus liep hij ook tegen een muur op. Hij kwam gewoon niet door of over de muren heen, en besloot maar gewoon aan zijn eigen kant te blijven.
In een wapenfabriek moest hij werken, in Duitsland. Hij had er een tik van overgehouden. In zijn dromen zag hij nog steeds vaak de machines voor zich. Er was geen ontsnappen aan aan wat in zijn hoofd zat. Het leek alsof een monster zijn hoofd beheerste. Ook zijn vrouw was als een monster in zijn hoofd waar hij maar niet los van kwam. Elke dag weer was het een gevecht.

Hoofdstuk 10. Augustus 1947 tot December 1947

Dominee Jonkema dacht vaak na over het verleden vanuit Semiotisch oogpunt. Hij zag dan allerlei tegengestelde signalen die een boodschap moesten vormen. Hij gebruikte dit ook in zijn preken. De kerken zaten vol. Het was de tijd vlak na de oorlog, in 1947. De mens was hongerig. En de dominee was ook hongerig, naar macht. Hij begon de mens steeds meer naar de mond te praten, vertellende wat ze wilden horen, want eer was macht, en macht was rust en vrede volgens hem, de weg naar geluk. Daarom was God ook zo machtig, anders had God volgens hem nooit kunnen bestaan. Hij had ook het gevoel alsof hij macht kon kopen. Hij kocht mensen graag om. Niet velen hadden dit door, maar zijn vrouw wel. Zij vond dat hij op het verkeerde pad was, en dat hij wat meer ingetogen moest zijn. 'Dat staat maar op de preekstoel te schetteren en te protsen,' zei ze weleens, 'alsof hij nog wat oude rekeningetjes te vereffenen had.' Ook noemde zij het 'water bij de wijn doen', maar hij vond dat zij geen recht van spreken had.

Zij vond dat hij veel te vrijzinnig werd, te vrij, naarmate de oorlog steeds verder in verleden wegschoof, tot het punt dat ze weleens zei : 'Was de oorlog er nog maar.'
Dominee Jonkema was in haar ogen slechts nog een karikatuur van hemzelf. Ze begon zelfs terug te verlangen naar hoe hij eens was. 'Je bent jezelf niet meer,' zei ze weleens.
Maar dan kwam hij aanzetten met een hele waslijst van haar fouten. Zij vond dat hij dat niet als een excuus moest gebruiken. Hij had een voorbeeld-functie. Hij zei toen dat zij als vrouw van de dominee ook een voorbeeld-functie had. 'Een beetje macht kan geen kwaad,' zei de dominee weleens. 'Macht is zorg. Er moet iemand zijn die het vuile werk opknapt.'
'Maar je preekt onzin tegenwoordig,' sprak zijn vrouw. 'Je danst hen teveel naar de pijpen. Je bent net zoals die Pinokkio-trekpop geworden. Je hebt geen uniek karakter meer.'
'Nou, ik ga lekker door, hoor,' had hij toen gezegd. 'Als je het beter weet en wil, schrijf jij dan de preken vanaf nu. Dan lees ik ze wel voor.'

'Goed,' sprak ze. En zo begon zijn vrouw met zijn preken te schrijven. Hij vond ze niks, maar hij wilde haar een kans geven. Hier en daar veranderde hij wat, liet hij teksten weg, of vulde teksten aan. Soms liet hij zijn vrouw ook weleens wat voordragen in de kerk, als een getuigenis. Op een bepaalde manier had ze zo wel wat meer verantwoordelijkheids-besef, maar hij vroeg zich af wat haar motieven waren. Het leek erop alsof ook zij wat vrijer was geworden. Thuis begon ze ook een stuk aardiger te doen, maar hij zag het alleen maar als een andere oorlogs-strategie van haar. Waar was het haar om te doen ? Klaarblijkelijk wilde ze iets van hem, maar wat ? Klaarblijkelijk was ze jaloers.
Het was hem helemaal niet om de macht te doen, maar om de zorg, en om haar op het verkeerde been te zetten. Hij had nog een appeltje met haar te schillen. Zoals ze hem weleens vroeger had gezegd : 'In de oorlog is alles geoorloofd, en het doel heiligt de middelen.' Hij wilde haar gewoon uit de tent lokken, want hij was wanhopig. Klaarblijkelijk had het gewerkt. Hij had beet, en zou niet meer loslaten. Zij vond nog steeds dat het niet goed met hem ging,

ook al schreef zij grotendeels zijn preken. Ze wilde weer in huwelijks-therapie, maar dat wilde hij niet. In zijn ogen was er niets aan de hand, en ging het zelfs beter. Hij moest wel erg op zijn hoede zijn met haar nu, meer dan ooit. 'Je ideeën kloppen niet,' zei ze telkens, maar als hij haar dan om uitleg vroeg dan kwam er niets uit, en haar preken waren oppervlakkig. Oppervlakkigheid was nederigheid in haar ogen. Het tolde voor zijn ogen. Hij kon geen hoogte van haar krijgen. Zij wilde dat hij wat meer op de achtergrond zou staan. Diepte was een teken van hoogmoed voor haar. Oppervlakkigheid was soberheid in haar ogen. Hij deed veel te rijk in haar ogen, blaasde te hoog van de toren over dingen waar hij volgens haar geen verstand van had, dingen die te hoog voor hem waren. Ze was totaal niet blij met de verbeteringen die hij aanbracht aan haar preken. Ze begon zich steeds meer terug te trekken op haar slaapkamer weer. Ze was een schuivend mijnenveld in zijn ogen. Haar stiltes waren nog wel gevaarlijker en dodelijker dan haar woorden.
'Je preken geven geen koers aan de mensen,' zei hij weleens tegen haar. 'Je zingt slaapliedjes voor ze.'

'Je moet het ook niet te makkelijk voor ze maken,' zei ze. 'Dan worden ze lui en gemakszuchtig. Je moet ze ook niet oppompen en opblazen met allerlei hoge dingen. Dan worden ze net als jij. Dat er al één is van jouw soort is al genoeg. Blijf sober en ingetogen in je bewoordingen.'
'Moet jij nodig zeggen,' snauwde de dominee. De dominee begon steeds meer de tweede wereld oorlog te bestuderen. Hij had het gevoel alsof zijn vrouw hem een rad voor de ogen probeerde te draaien. Hij wist dat hij moest proberen de oorlog te begrijpen. Alleen zo zou hij ook zijn vrouw kunnen begrijpen. De oorlog en zijn vrouw waren onlosmakelijk aan elkaar verbonden. De oorlog hield haar sleutel.
Hij zag in dat hiërarchie niet materialistisch mocht zijn, maar geestelijk. Het ging niet om personen, maar op principes, om prioriteiten. Hiërarchie moest vertikaal zijn, en niet horizontaal, want dat had de oorlog veroorzaakt. Ware hiërarchie was iets semiotisch. Hij studeerde het Japanse militarisme waarin het individu moest inleveren aan zowel het collectief als aan de hiërarchie. Japan was een

bondgenoot van Duitsland, zoals ook Italië in het driehoeks pact.
Wat hij er allemaal van dacht was voor haar niet interessant. Zij ging haar eigen weg. Hij begon steeds meer over het militarisme te filosoferen. Hij zag dit semiotisch en geestelijk, als communicatie, voornamelijk de decodering van de communicatie, als de overdracht van de ene tot de andere taal. Hij vond dat het militarisme voornamelijk verbaal moest zijn, en subtiel, als een literaire immunologie. Zij zei vaak : 'Het is zoals het is. Je moet er niet zoveel achterzoeken. Dat is allemaal verloren tijd, en het leidt nergens toe.' Maar de pen was zijn wapen. Hij wilde zijn eigen militarisme bouwen, het semiotische militarisme, en dat was slechts symbolisch. Hij wilde dat er een educatie systeem zou komen waardoor oorlog voor eens en voor altijd uitgebannen kon worden. Zijn vrouw bespotte hem daarover en zei dat het hem nooit zou lukken. Volgens haar zouden er altijd wel oorlogen zijn.
'Het lijkt bijna alsof jij geen vrede wil,' zei hij eens tegen zijn vrouw.

'Vrede is niet productief,' sprak ze. 'De vrede sust de mens in slaap, en maakt de mens lui. Oorlog brengt de mens tot de top van zijn kunnen.'
'Je bent maar een gevaarlijk mens,' zei hij.
'Het is mijn opvatting,' sprak ze. 'Jij hebt de jouwe.'
En verder moest hij er ook niet over praten, want ze begon hem alweer af te snauwen. Dan hadden ze het maar weer over wat ze zouden eten.
'Jozef de dromer' noemde zij hem vaak, vanwege zijn wolkerig taalgebruik.
Volgens hem was het semiotische militarisme datgene wat het collectief kon overbruggen, om over te gaan van het nationale tot het internationale, maar zijn vrouw zei dat hij en zijn semiotische militarisme rijp was voor een bezoek aan de psychiater. Dat vond hij een hele flauwe en laffe opmerking die hij betaalde door haar een klap in het gezicht te geven.
Ze liep toen naar haar slaapkamer. 'Dan moet je het zelf maar weten, maar als je gek wordt weet je dat ik je heb gewaarschuwd,' zei ze.
'Als ik gek word weet ik waarschijnlijk niks meer,' zei hij, 'en dan ga ik misschien dingen verdraaien.'
'Pas maar op,' zei ze.

Hij besloot om maar niet meer met haar over zijn filosofieën te spreken, want daar kon ze niet tegen, en dan zou het op een grote oorlog uitlopen. 'Ze moet niet denken dat ze alles zomaar kan zeggen,' zei hij tegen zichzelf. 'Ik kan veel hebben, maar dit gaat te ver. Ik heb een levensgevaarlijke vrouw. Ze wil me dus in de psychiatrie hebben. Goed om te weten.'

Sinds die dag had hij een dubbele hekel aan zijn vrouw, en ontweek haar meer dan ooit te voren. Maar ja, dat ging nogal moeilijk omdat ze in hetzelfde huis leefden. Hij probeerde zich zo stil mogelijk te houden, of gewoon over neutrale onderwerpen te praten, zoals over wat ze die dag zouden eten. Veel gespreks-onderwerpen bleven er zo niet over, maar hij was het wel gewend. De twee kwamen maar niet dichter bij elkaar, maar bleven op zakelijke afstand.

Toen ze naar brei en naailes was ging hij weer eens even op haar kamer rondkijken. Hij zag wat nieuwe beeldjes. Er was een beeldje van een Afrikaanse vrouw, een indiaan en een soldaat. Er was ook een klein hondje bij de soldaat. Ook zag hij een pop op

een stoel. Hij werd al naar als hij aan haar dagboeken dacht, dus die liet hij met rust, maar hij keek even tussen haar boeken. Er waren ook wat nieuwe boeken bij. Er lagen wat tijdschriften, romannetjes, bijbelse boekjes en een boek over auto's. Hij vroeg zichzelf af wat ze ermee moest. Van de romannetjes keek hij helemaal op. Zij was niet iemand van de romantiek. Of misschien was ze het aan het onderzoeken ? Hij zag het al helemaal voor zich dat ze erin zou bladeren, dat ze dan bij zichzelf zou denken : 'Wat is dit ? Ik begrijp dit niet. Wat is dit ?' Misschien zou ze wel hysterisch worden. Of ze zou er met opgetrokken wenkbrauwen in lezen, om vervolgens te zeggen : 'Nou ja.' Ze zou er heel minachtend over doen. Hij kon het zich niet voorstellen dat ze dit zou lezen voor de ontspanning. Of misschien zou dit makkelijker zijn omdat het toch niet om haar ging ? Er was zo een grote en veilige afstand. Toen ze weer thuis was vroeg hij erover.
'Wat moest je op mijn kamer dan ?' snauwde ze. 'En dat gaat je verder niets aan wat ik met die romannetjes doe.' Maar na lang doorvragen bleek het

van haar zus te zijn die ze had laten liggen. Die sliep altijd bij haar in de kamer als ze er was. De beeldjes scheen ze van haar zus te hebben gehad. Het boek over de auto's scheen ook van haar zus te zijn.
Op een dag kwam haar moeder op bezoek. Haar moeder was ook een moeilijke vrouw. Hij vroeg zich weleens af wie moeilijker was : zijn vrouw of haar moeder. Ze bleef maar kort. Ze was zo weer weg, en hij was opgelucht.
Toen haar zus er weer was raakte hij met beiden in gevecht. Ze sloegen hem ook, en om verdere gevechten te vermijden bleef hij op zijn slaapkamer. Hier werkte hij aan nieuwe preken. Hij haalde zelfs geen eten. Ook haar vriendin kwam. Zijn vrouw had versterking erbij gehaald. Soms liepen ze voor zijn deur te roepen, hem uit te dagen. 'Kom dan, lafaard !' riepen ze dan. Maar hij wist waar dat op uit zou lopen. Zijn vrouw had natuurlijk weer over hem lopen roddelen. Ze bleven lang logeren. Ook 's nachts waren ze veel op. Het leek wel alsof ze de keuken bewaakten. Zo verhongerde hij. Hij hoopte maar dat ze snel weer zouden weggaan, maar dat gebeurde niet. Om zijn toestemming werd niet

gevraagd. Er was niet veel wat hij kon doen. Hij wilde zich niet weg laten jagen. Hij was opgelucht wanneer ze hem met rust lieten. Hij voelde zich in het nauw gedreven, geisoleerd. Ook haar moeder kwam weer. Het leek wel alsof ze een complot tegen hem hadden gesmeed. Hij hield zijn kamerdeur op slot. Soms hoorde hij één van hen psalmen zingen, maar hij wist dat het slechts oorlogs-psalmen waren. Soms waren er zelfs nog andere vriendinnen bij die hij niet kende. 'Vol huis,' zei hij dan als hij langsliep. Hij wilde zich niet laten wegpesten, maar hier kon hij niet tegenop. Hij besloot zich maar gewoon rustig te houden en zich niet al teveel te laten zien. Ze gaven hem de schuld van allerlei dingen. Natuurlijk wilden ze alleen maar één kant van het verhaal horen. Ze gaven hem niet de kans zijn verhaal te vertellen. Elke dag weer moest hij langs deze roofdieren heen, zelfs 's nachts. Het leek wel alsof ze elkaar afwisselden, of alsof ze nooit sliepen. Het leek wel op een machtsspel, een strijd over territorium. Hij gebruikte het maar weer voor zijn preken. Dat was alles wat hij kon doen.

Hij wist dat de politie bellen geen zin had, want een man trok toch altijd aan het kortste eind, en hij zou toch niet geloofd worden, ook al was hij de dominee. Hij wilde rust, maar het werd hem niet gegunt. Hij voelde zich opgesloten, alsof hij geen adem had. Het was alsof zijn huis weer bezet was door de nazi's.

Hoofdstuk 11. December 1947 tot Juli 1948

Het was december 1947, en hij voelde zich helemaal afgemaakt door zijn vrouw, haar zus, haar moeder, en haar vriendinnen. In december deden ze de grootste aanval, en hij noemde het de december moorden. Hij voelde zich daarna meer dood dan levend.
De dominee zou ze wel terugpakken in zijn preken. Hij smeedde ze als nieuwe wapens. Toen hij op de preekstoel stond voelde hij zich oppermachtig na alle vernederingen. Wat haatte hij vrouwen en buitenlanders. Hij zou bijna weer willen gaan drinken en roken, maar de preekstoel opgaan hielp ook. Hier had hij het voor het zeggen en hingen ze aan zijn lippen. Maar het was alsof zijn vrouw de bui zag hangen, en ze was niet gekomen. Hij zag haar nergens zitten, ook haar zus niet, haar moeder niet, en ook geen van haar vriendinnen. Een zwakte maakte zich meester van de dominee. Hij prevelde gewoon zijn preek op, maar was er met zijn hoofd helemaal niet bij. Wel foeterde hij vrouwen en

buitenlanders uit op een subtiele manier. Hij zorgde ervoor dat het nog net geen racisme en sexisme was. Toen hij thuiskwam waren ze allemaal in de huiskamer, en sommigen waren op de slaapkamer van de vrouw. Het hele huis was vol. 'Waarom waren jullie niet naar de dienst gekomen ?' vroeg de dominee die zijn jas aan de kapstok hing, en zijn hoed boven op de kapstok zette. Maar hij werd gewoon genegeerd. 'Zeg op !' bulderde hij, terwijl hij er één een duw gaf. 'Waar waren jullie ?'
'Je bent dronken,' zei een vriendin van zijn vrouw. Zijn vrouw zei niets. 'Jullie zijn de oorzaak van drinken en roken,' sprak de dominee, terwijl hij een sigaret opstak. Ook deed hij toen de piano muziek hartstikke hard aan. 'En nu allemaal mijn huis uit !' riep de dominee. 'Kunnen jullie ons zelfs niet 's zondags met rust laten ? Mijn vrouw heeft rust nodig.'
Maar niemand gaf aandacht aan hem. Toen begon hij meerderen te duwen. 'Ik ben niet kapot te krijgen, hoor !' riep hij. Hij zag ze naar elkaar fluisteren. 'Weer plannetjes aan het maken, hè ?' riep hij. 'En maar blijven roddelen. Ik stop er zo mee. Ik kan

geen dominee zijn met zo'n vrouw. Dan maar geen financiele ondersteuning van de kerk.'
'Je blijft gewoon dominee,' zei zijn vrouw. 'Dat ben je aan mij verschuldigd. Eens getrouwd, altijd getrouwd, en dat was de afspraak.'
'Ik stop ermee als je deze mensen hier laat wonen,' zei de dominee. 'Ze horen hier niet. Ik vraag me af of ze zelfs wel in dit land horen. Het zijn Surinamers zoals jij.'
'Wij zijn gastvrij,' zei zijn vrouw.
'Ja, maar niet voor indringers en gespuis,' zei de dominee. 'Ik sta erop dat ze vertrekken, anders zeg ik mijn predikantschap af. Ik meen het.'
'Het is geen gespuis,' zei zijn vrouw. 'Het is familie en het zijn mijn vriendinnen. Ik heb het nodig.'
'Ze mogen wel logeren, maar niet de hele tijd,' zei de dominee. 'Ik voel me niet meer veilig in mijn eigen huis.'
'Je hebt je nooit veilig gevoeld,' snauwde zijn vrouw.
'En daar ben jij de schuld van,' snauwde hij terug. 'Ik meen het. Ze moeten weg, of ik stop ermee.'

'Eén van hen is predikant in een vrouwenkerk, en zij zullen ons financieel ondersteunen, dus je doet maar wat je niet laten kan,' zei zijn vrouw koud.
'Oh, dus jullie waren naar de vrouwenkerk vandaag ?' zei de dominee.
'Wen er maar aan dat je hier niet alleen woont,' zei zijn vrouw.
'Ik heb hier niets meer in te brengen zie ik,' zei de dominee.
De volgende zondag ging de dominee met zijn vrouw en de anderen mee naar de vrouwenkerk. Er waren hier veel vrouwen, maar ook mannen. Zowel vrouwen als mannen preekten hier. Na de dienst werd er aan hem gevraagd of hij ook wilde preken, omdat hij een dominee was. Hij stemde erin toe, omdat hij dacht dat hij zo misschien wat veranderingen kon aanbrengen, en zijn vrouw wilde toch niet meer terug naar de vorige kerk. Hij vroeg zich af waarom, of misschien dat het met hemzelf had te maken. Hij kon direct de zondag erop al preken. Hij besloot zijn woorden voorzichtig uit te kiezen, om niet gelijk met de deur in huis te vallen. Hij zou strategie gebruiken.

Zijn vrouw was erg over zijn preek te spreken, en ook de anderen. Maar dat wilde niet zeggen dat hij ineens meer in te brengen had. Hij besloot ook maar een beetje met hen mee te praten om de goede vrede, maar eigenlijk was die vrede er nooit. Als er niet gebekt en geslagen werd, dan was er een koude of stille oorlog.
Het viel niet meer weg te denken uit zijn leven, en hij legde zich er maar bij neer. Het was alsof hij weer op het internaat leefde, maar deze vrouwen waren veel moeilijker, veel doortrapter, en veel gevaarlijker. Het was alsof hij in een arsenaal woonde met gevaarlijke wapens. Als hij wist hoe ze te gebruiken dan zou het misschien nog functioneel voor hem zijn, maar anders zou het hem te gronde kunnen brengen. Het was een mijnenveld. Elke stap kon de laatste zijn. Hij moest alles wegen op een gouden weegschaaltje. De vrouwen deden niets anders dan roddelen en stoken de hele dag, en maar liegen en beschuldigen. Zijn semiotische stelsels konden hier niet eens tegenop. Het overweldigde hem als een stortvloed. Hij werd van achteren

aangevallen. Het was allemaal niet voorspelbaar voor hem.
Hij had een droom over het vijfhoofdige monster Hiroshima. Ook droomde hij over wilde honden. Hij droomde dat de hele mensheid zat opgesloten in deze chemische gevangenis genaamd Hiroshima. Het bewoog om hen heen en gaf hen leugens. Het hield hen in een diepe slaap en in valse dromen. Hiroshima was een zeemonster. Het monster vergiftigde kinderen met chemische rotzooi en kocht hen om. Zij werden gemaakt tot poppen. Hiroshima was een poppenmaker.

De poppenmaker van Hiroshima,
Traag gaat hij over de straat,
Traag maakt hij zijn poppen,
Alles aan hem is traag

Hij maakt zijn poppen traag als hem,
Hij geeft hen geen leven, maar dood,
De poppenmaker van Hiroshima,
Hij is op weg naar de dood,
En neemt velen met hem mee

De poppenmaker van Hiroshima,
Nee, om het leven geeft hij niet,
Hij voedt zijn kinderen met gif,
En maakt hen tot poppen

Hij verkoopt hen vroeg op de ochtendmarkt,
Maar zij zullen hem altijd volgen.

Een eeuwig vuur heeft hij gemaakt,
Waarin zijn poppen traag wegzinken,
Het merkteken van verwoesting dragen zij,
Nu zijn zij slechts een droom

Zij kunnen zijn naam niet zeggen,
Alleen doen wat hij zegt,
De wereldoorlog werd tot een wereldrijk,
Het wereldrijk van Hiroshima

De dominee schrikt wakker en kijkt naar de Pinokkio pop die boven zijn schrijftafel hangt. Na een tijdje valt hij weer in slaap. Hij droomt over wilde honden die jagen. Het zijn de honden van Hiroshima. Zij zijn wreed en kennen geen genade.

Zij roven kinderen uit hun bedden. Ook hij en zijn vrouw waren geroofde kinderen. De honden renden rond met hen in hun bek. Zij werden gebracht tot het monster. Het monster had vijf hoofden. Het was een zeemonster. Zo werden zij verslonden. Zo werden zij een deel van het monster. Iedereen die het monster zag werd erdoor geassimileerd. Iedereen die het monster zag begon te branden. Zij begeerden het ijs. Wat was dit ? Was dit een boze geest die hen in hun macht had ? Was het de duivel ? Waren zij daarom zoals zij waren ? Hij durfde er met niemand over te praten. Hij raakte steeds meer in zichzelf gekeerd. Niemand kon hem nog bereiken. 's Nachts had hij dromen over dat hij alleen was in een besneeuwd bos, terwijl de stad brandde. Het was donker, maar het vuur verlichtte de nacht. Hij had nergens om naartoe te gaan. Ook andere steden waren brandende. Hij wilde een medicijn. Hij wilde ijs. Dan begon ook hij te branden. De dromen keerden telkens weer terug en dan was er muziek op de achtergrond, trage, tragische muziek. Hij wist dat de atoombom ook hen had getroffen.

Binnen die ervaring leefden ze in een bevroren droom om hen tegen dat vuur te beschermen. Uiteindelijk werd alles tot steen, alsof de Medusa had toegeslagen. Hij had dromen over het Hiroshima monster in gevecht met Medusa. Zij zag hem, en brandde, en hij zag haar, en werd tot steen. Het was een ongeluk, een huwelijk, en uiteindelijk verslond zij hem als een vogelspin, als een zwarte weduwe. Hij werd jankend wakker, badend in zweet. Hij hief zijn handen op en sprak : 'Oh, Medusa, mijn godin. Gezegend zijt gij. Gij hebt ons bevrijd van het monster van Hiroshima.' De dominee was ziek en ijlde. Hij viel weer in slaap, en droomde alsof hij door de grond zakte nadat hij wat had gedronken in de keuken. Hij gleed door een put die leidde tot een dal waar doodsbeenderen en schedels lagen. Hier woonden de indianen. Hij voelde zich vrij en rende rond. Hij herinnerde zich dat Medusa hem deze drank had gegeven. 'Medice !' riep hij. 'Mijn medicijn !'
Hij zag haar lichtende gesteente, als een standbeeld, en kwam dichter bij haar, totdat hij ook versteende. 'Alleen steen komt tot mij,' sprak ze.

'Maar ik ben steen,' sprak de dominee.
'Je zult terugmoeten,' sprak Medusa. 'Je hebt nu een boodschap te brengen.'
De dominee werd wakker en voelde zich beter. Hij vroeg zich af wat voor boodschap hij moest brengen. Hij bad tot Medice, zijn medicijn. Was zij God ? Hij preekte die zondag in de vrouwenkerk, en vertelde over zijn dromen, over Medice. Maar hij werd een ketter genoemd en een heks. Hij mocht in de vrouwenkerk niet meer preken. Er begonnen meer vrouwenkerken op te komen, ook in het centrum, en toen ging hij gewoon naar een andere. Hij besloot niet meer te preken, maar gewoon foldertjes uit te delen over Medice, zijn medicijn. Mensen dachten dat hij gek geworden was. Zij konden het niet waarderen. Alleen in de semiotische kerk kon hij terecht. Daar vonden ze het interessant, en ze wilden het graag verder uitpluizen.
'De man is het individu, en de vrouw is het collectief,' zei een andere dominee van de semiotische kerk. 'Het is de altijddurende strijd tussen kapitalisme en communisme.'

'Alleen het semiotische militarisme kan een brug bouwen tussen hen, niet het materialistische militarisme. Japan is het militarisme,' zei dominee Jonkema.
De poppenmaker van Hiroshima,
In zijn fabrieken van oorlog en verderf laat hij hen werken,
Opdat zijn giftige medicijn verkocht kan worden.
Toen de dominee weer thuis was las hij een psalm.
Het was psalm 102 : de psalm van een geheel ontblote bidder.
'Een gebed des verdrukten, als hij overstelpt is, en zijn klacht uitstort voor het aangezicht des Heeren.
O Heere, hoor mijn gebed, en laat mijn geroep tot U komen.
Verberg Uw aangezicht niet voor mij, neig Uw oor tot mij ten dage mijner benauwdheid; ten dage als ik roep, verhoor mij haastelijk.
Want mijn dagen zijn vergaan als rook, en mijn gebeenten zijn uitgebrand als een haard.
Mijn hart is geslagen en verdord als gras, zodat ik vergeten heb mijn brood te eten.

Mijn gebeente kleeft aan mijn vlees, vanwege de stem mijns zuchtens.
Ik ben een haan der woestijn gelijk geworden, ik ben geworden als een nachthaan der wildernissen.
Mijn vijanden smaden mij al den dag; die tegen mij razen, zweren bij mij.
Want ik eet as als brood, en vermeng mijn drank met tranen.
Vanwege Uw verstoordheid en Uw groten toorn; want Gij hebt mij verheven, en mij weder nedergeworpen.
Mijn dagen zijn als een afgaande schaduw, en ik verdor als gras.
Maar Gij, Heere, blijft in eeuwigheid, en Uw gedachtenis van geslacht tot geslacht.
Gij zult opstaan, Gij zult U ontfermen over Sion, want de tijd om haar genadig te zijn, want de bestemde tijd is gekomen.
Want Uw knechten hebben een welgevallen aan haar stenen, en hebben medelijden met haar gruis.
Dan zullen de heidenen den Naam des Heeren vrezen, en alle koningen der aarde Uw heerlijkheid.

Als de Heere Sion zal opgebouwd hebben, in Zijn heerlijkheid zal verschenen zijn,
Zich gewend zal hebben tot het gebed desgenen, die gans ontbloot is, en niet versmaad hebben hunlieder gebed;
Dat zal geschreven worden voor het navolgende geslacht; en het volk, dat geschapen zal worden, zal den Heere loven;
Omdat Hij uit de hoogte Zijns heiligdoms zal hebben nederwaarts gezien; dat de Heere uit den hemel op de aarde geschouwd zal hebben;
Om het zuchten der gevangenen te horen, om los te maken de kinderen des doods;
Opdat men den Naam des Heeren vertelle te Sion, en Zijn lof te Jeruzalem;
Wanneer de volken samen zullen vergaderd worden, ook de koninkrijken, om den Heere te dienen.
Hij heeft mijn kracht op den weg ter neder gedrukt; mijn dagen heeft Hij verkort.
Ik zeide: Mijn God, neem mij niet weg in het midden mijner dagen; Uw jaren zijn van geslacht tot geslacht.

Gij hebt voormaals de aarde gegrond, en de hemelen zijn het werk Uwer handen;
Die zullen vergaan, maar Gij zult staande blijven; en zij alle zullen als een kleed verouden; Gij zult ze veranderen als een gewaad, en zij zullen veranderd zijn.
Maar Gij zijt Dezelfde, en Uw jaren zullen niet geëindigd worden.
De kinderen Uwer knechten zullen wonen, en hun zaad zal voor Uw aangezicht bevestigd worden.'

Hij voelde zich als de bidder die zichzelf bloot had gegeven door zijn dromen te vertellen en hierdoor bespot werd. De nacht daarop had hij een droom van zijn vrouw die tot steen was geworden, en er was Russische, communistische muziek op de achtergrond. Er was ook een aftiteling, alsof een film was afgelopen. Hij werd wakker door het geschreeuw en gehuil van de zus van zijn vrouw en haar vriendinnen. Ze riepen dat ze was overleden. Hij rende uit zijn kamer, en vroeg hoe dat gebeurd kon zijn. Ondanks dat hij een hekel aan haar had in vele opzichten was hij ook zwaar bedroefd en

geschrokken. Niemand had hierop een antwoord. Ze was niet ziek.
Het was een zware en sjieke begrafenis met veel bloemen. Iedereen ging in het zwart, en ook hij. Hij zou de preek houden bij de begrafenis. Hij zei alleen maar goede dingen over haar, en hield haar de hand boven het hoofd. Over de doden niets dan goeds. Die nacht had hij een droom dat ze verdronk in een zee van bloemen. Hij was bij haar. Hij hield haar vast. Hij kon haar dood niet stoppen. Het was een hemelse droom waarin hij haar kuste. Zo nam hij afscheid van haar.

In hun cultuur als de vrouw was gestorven, dan erfde de zus alles, ook de echtgenoot, bij wijze van gewoonte. Het was iets heel economisch weer, want zo zou de man toch voor de familie blijven zorgen. Dit was dus ter voordeel van de zus van zijn vrouw. Hij voelde zichzelf als een melkkoe. Er werd niet om zijn toestemming gevraagd. Hij werd automatisch de echtgenoot van de zus van zijn vrouw. Hij had er gemengde gevoelens over, want aan de andere kant werd zo wel het gemis opgevuld.

Zijn nieuwe vrouw was direct veel meer open. Zij nam de kamer van zijn vrouw nu, en zorgde er ook voor dat de vriendinnen van zijn vrouw weer vertrokken.
Ze was wel heel erg veeleisend en streng, en eiste na een paar weken wel dat ze samen één slaapkamer zouden hebben.
Op een ochtend kwam hij de slaapkamer uit. Zijn nieuwe vrouw was er al eerder uitgegaan en zat in haar nachtjapon achter de ontbijttafel. Hij liep naar haar toe en legde een hand op haar schouder, en ging toen tegenover haar zitten. 'Hoe heb je geslapen, lieverd ?' vroeg hij haar.
'Goed, schat, en jij ?' vroeg ze. 'Het was weer een nacht vol van dromen,' zei hij.
'Waarover ging het, schat ?' vroeg ze.
'Daar ga ik het niet over hebben, want straks word ik weer bespot,' zei hij.
Ze deden veel samen. Ze gingen samen naar de supermarkt en naar de bibliotheek bijvoorbeeld. Ze was warm, open en hartelijk, maar diplomatiek. Ze hadden elkaar eindelijk gevonden. Ze waren elkaar tegengekomen op een brug die lange tijd afgesloten

was geweest. Zo hadden ze een goed uitzicht vanaf de brug. Ze was eindelijk volwassen geworden. Hij had veel filosofische gesprekken met haar. Ze groeiden steeds meer over religie heen, maar stukken ervan waren wel onderdelen van de filosofie. Er was veel ijs gebroken tussen hen sinds ze getrouwd waren. Eigenlijk ging het alleen maar beter. Hij verbaasde zich erover hoe ze in korte tijd zo kon veranderen. Hij herkende haar bijna niet meer terug.

Ze maakten ook samen lange stadswandelingen, en gingen naar andere steden en plaatsen. Ze hielden ook beiden van het strand. Als ze langs andere huizen liepen dan keken ze vaak naar de tuinen. Sommige tuinen van Arabieren leken wel op vuilnishopen. Ze gooiden hun rommel gewoon in de tuin. Ze konden zich daar enorm aan ergeren. Het stonk er ook altijd verschrikkelijk, maar misschien was het de gewoonte van die mensen, of ze wisten niet waar ze het naartoe moesten brengen. Misschien hadden die mensen wel hulp nodig. Vaak hadden ze het thuis ook over die Arabieren en hun rommel, en ze hoopten maar dat niet de hele stad een vuilnisbelt

zou worden. Vanuit het raam aan de achterkant konden ze gewoon zulke tuinen inkijken bij flats. Ze hadden achter hun flatje zelf een tuin, en daarachter was een speeltuintje, en daarachter was een flatje waarin veel Arabieren woonden. Er stond ook een schooltje dichtbij.

Soms gingen ze het bos in, even de frisse lucht in. Dan waren ze ook even uit de fabriekslucht van de stad. Ze huurden zelfs een sta-caravan op een kampeerterrein in het bos. Dit lag aan een meer, waar ze ook een bootje huurden. Maar thuis voelden ze zich toch het beste, ondanks de bijwerkingen van het stadse leven. Zo hadden ze ook de kerk dichtbij. De preken maakten ze samen. Zij was hem hierin een grote hulp.

Hoofdstuk 12. Juli 1948 tot Januari 1949

Hij keek erg op tegen zijn nieuwe vrouw. Zij had er voor gezorgd dat de vriendinnen van haar zus niet of nauwelijks terugkwamen. Dat was een enorme rust voor hem, en zo hadden ze ook veel tijd voor elkaar. Zowel 's avonds als 's ochtends liep ze vaak rond in een nachtjapon. Soms had ze haar badjas aan. Hij verafgoodde haar. Zij was een betere versie van haar zus.

Misschien ging het ook wel beter omdat ze de oorlog steeds verder achter zich lieten. In de eerste paar jaren na de oorlog waren velen verbitterd en verstijfd, maar het was nu 1948. Er vond veel versoepeling plaats. Alles zat eerst vast, maar nu kwam het los.

Soms kwam haar moeder nog, die nog heel stug en moeilijk was. Soms probeerde haar moeder weleens wat, maar gelukkig was zijn nieuwe vrouw haar de baas. Ze kon goed van haarzelf afbekken tegen haar moeder wanneer dat nodig was. En soms was dat gewoon nodig. Hij was altijd blij als zijn

schoonmoeder weer weg was. Wat een naar beest was dat toch in zijn ogen.
Maar op een dag had haar moeder een eigen vriendin meegenomen, een hele stevige vrouw, en die bekte er flink op los tegen zijn nieuwe vrouw, en die begon ook geweld te gebruiken. Toen hij ingreep was het oorlog, want ook zijn schoonmoeder begon er op in te slaan. Zijn schoonmoeder beweerde dat zij de bazin was van de familie, dat dat nu eenmaal zo door hun cultuur was geregeld, en zo beweerde ze ook bazin van het huis te zijn. Haar dochter pikte dit niet, en ook hij niet, maar er werd gedreigd met represailles vanuit hun cultuur. Ze werden gechanteerd. Uiteindelijk gaf zijn nieuwe vrouw in, maar hij kon het niet accepteren. Dit ging zo ver dat uiteindelijk zijn nieuwe vrouw zich weer tegen hem keerde, gewoon vanwege haar moeder en haar cultuur. De dominee vond het maar een vreemde cultuur. Hij vond het belachelijk. Zijn schoonmoeder zou een tijdje bij hen wonen, en ook haar vriendin. Hij vond direct dat daardoor de sfeer was verpest. Zijn nieuwe vrouw had zich nu tegen hem gekeerd omdat hij haar moeder zou hebben geslagen. Hij zei

dat dat niet waar was, maar dat haar moeder hem had geslagen, en zijn nieuwe vrouw had haar moeder ook geslagen. Hij vond dat ze hun verstand hadden verloren. Degene die het meeste bekte was wel de grote vriendin van zijn schoonmoeder. Die was uiteindelijk degene die het gevecht was begonnen. Zij had hem ook hard geslagen. Hij vond het maar een gewelddadige familie, en een gewelddadige, criminele cultuur. Hij begon steeds meer tegen Suriname aan te trappen, racistisch te doen. Hij haatte dat land nu. Het werd zo erg dat hij weer wilde dat zijn eerste vrouw terug zou zijn, en hij vroeg zich af hoe ze eigenlijk tot haar dood was gekomen. Dat was nog steeds een groot mysterie. De poppenmaker van Hiroshima had weer toegeslagen. Dat wist hij zeker. En waar was Medusa, zijn Medice, zijn medicijn ?

Hij vroeg zich af waar de vechtlust van zijn nieuwe vrouw was gebleven. Alles was weer terug naar af, of zou ze verlamd geraakt zijn door iets, door culturele programmatie ? Alles leek te moeten buigen voor het familie-hoofd. De dominee wilde het er niet bij laten zitten, maar hij wilde ook zijn

huis niet verlaten. Het was alsof er een muur of een wand tussen hem en zijn nieuwe vrouw was gekomen, allemaal door haar moeder. Hij bonkte met zijn hoofd tegen muren aan de hele tijd. Hij wilde wegrennen, maar waar naartoe ? Hij wist dat de poppenmaker van Hiroshima naar hem op jacht was.
Op een nacht werd hij wakker en merkte dat zijn vrouw niet naast hem lag. Hij ging naar de huiskamer waar ze op de bank zat. Ze las in een autoboek. 'Wat doe jij hier nou ?' vroeg hij.
'Ik kon niet slapen,' zei ze. 'Eigenlijk zou ik hier weg willen.' Hij ging terug naar zijn bed, en viel in slaap. Hij droomde dat hij een kind had die hem een sleutel gaf van een politie auto. Toen hij wakker werd lag zijn vrouw nog steeds niet naast hem. Weer ging hij naar de huiskamer, waar ze op de bank sliep.
De dagen erna begonnen de vriendinnen van zijn eerste vrouw terug te komen, door toedoen van haar moeder. Hierdoor verslechterde zijn humeur nog erger. Ze begonnen steeds meer uit elkaar te groeien en op het laatst sliepen ze ook apart. Hij was daar

aan de ene kant wel blij mee dat hij zijn slaapkamer weer terug had voor zichzelf.
Uiteindelijk ging haar moeder weer weg, maar hun relatie was niet meer hetzelfde. Ze deed koud en was hardvochtig. De poppenmaker van Hiroshima had hard toegeslagen. Hij wandelde samen met zijn vrouw in het park, maar het was niet meer hetzelfde. Zijn vrouw zei dat haar moeder elk moment weer terug kon komen. 'Nee, niet weer,' dacht hij bij zichzelf. Maar haar moeder scheen weg te blijven voor nu. Hij hoopte dat hij zijn huwelijk weer kon opbouwen zoals het was, maar dat lukte niet. Ze was een ander mens nu. Het was alsof de hoofden van het monster van Hiroshima elkaar hadden afgewisseld. Het was iets onverbiddelijks. Ze deed ongeinteresseerd en onverschillig nu. 'Ik wou dat mijn zus nooit was overleden, want nu ben ik met jou opgescheept,' zei ze weleens. Het huwelijk was slechts zakelijk in haar ogen, als een traditie.
Ze kookte wel goed en lekker, maar haar gedrag was niet om over naar huis te schrijven. Hij had in ieder geval een goede kok aan huis, maar dat was dan ook alles. En ze kon in zijn ogen ook helemaal niets

meer goeddoen. Ze had het helemaal bij hem verprutst. 'Je hebt geen ruggegraat,' zei hij weleens. 'Je loopt gewoon met de muziek mee, als een majorette. Vroeger was je radicaal, maar nu heb je geen persoonlijkheid meer.'
Hij wilde zijn huwelijk weer opbouwen, maar het leek wel alsof alles tussen zijn vingers weggleed, en zijn vrouw werkte totaal niet mee.
Op een nacht had hij weer een vreemde droom. Hij zag een zwarte wachter van Hiroshima die de pols van zijn vrouw had gegrepen, en ze verstijfde helemaal. Hij werd even later wakker van gegil en gehuil van haar moeder en wat vriendinnen van zijn vorige vrouw die bij hen logeerden. Het bleek dat ook zijn nieuwe vrouw onder mysterieuze omstandigheden was overleden. Zijn hart was gebroken. Ook nu was er geen ziekte in het spel. Hij vroeg zich af waar het aan kon liggen. Een onderzoek wees uit dat er van een bepaalde drug zich veel in haar lichaam bevond. Hij vroeg zich af of ze aan de drugs was, of dat het misschien moord was. Hij wilde niet naar de begrafenis. Dat was teveel voor hem. De begrafenis van zijn vorige

vrouw kon hij al bijna niet aan. Toen had hij zichzelf voorgenomen nooit meer naar een begrafenis te gaan.
Haar moeder kreeg zo nog meer macht over hem. Zij besloot dat de beste vriendin van zijn eerste vrouw nu het werk moest overnemen. Dat hoorde zo in de traditie, en zo werd de vriendin zijn vrouw. Het was een gewelddadige vrouw. Ze was ook heel onvoorspelbaar. Ze ging met hem in gevecht over de kleinste dingen. Ze was de dochter van een slager, waar ze ook werkte. Ze had verder een goed inkomen. Ze maakte lange dagen. Pas 's avonds kwam ze thuis, maar in de weekenden was ze veel thuis en maakte hem het leven onmogelijk. Ook s' avonds maakte ze hem het leven onmogelijk. Hij moest bij haar zitten en mocht niet naar zijn slaapkamer. Hij moest haar gezelschap houden, en ze wilde veel praten. Hij moest het vooral oppervlakkig houden. Als het te diep ging, dan begreep ze het niet, en werd ze agressief. Hij was altijd opgelucht als ze sliep, en vooral als ze 's ochtends vroeg naar haar werk was gegaan. Ze droeg hem ook karweien op. Hij had huiswerk, en dat

moest hij afhebben voordat zij terugkwam, anders zwaaide er wat en had ze een appeltje met hem te schillen. Hij begreep niet hoe zijn leven zo snel had kunnen veranderen. Als hij aan de mysterieuze dood van zijn twee vrouwen dacht wist hij dat de poppenmaker van Hiroshima had toegeslagen.

De poppenmaker van Hiroshima,
Traag gaat hij over de straat,
Traag maakt hij zijn poppen,
Alles aan hem is traag

Hij maakt zijn poppen traag als hem,
Hij geeft hen geen leven, maar dood,
De poppenmaker van Hiroshima,
Hij is op weg naar de dood,
En neemt velen met hem mee

De poppenmaker van Hiroshima,
Nee, om het leven geeft hij niet,
Hij voedt zijn kinderen met gif,
En maakt hen tot poppen

Hij verkoopt hen vroeg op de ochtendmarkt,
Maar zij zullen hem altijd volgen.

Een eeuwig vuur heeft hij gemaakt,
Waarin zijn poppen traag wegzinken,
Het merkteken van verwoesting dragen zij,
Nu zijn zij slechts een droom

Zij kunnen zijn naam niet zeggen,
Alleen doen wat hij zegt,
De wereldoorlog werd tot een wereldrijk,
Het wereldrijk van Hiroshima

Het monster had vijf koppen,
Het hield hen in een diepe slaap en valse dromen,
De koppen wisselden elkaar af,
Dit was het derde hoofd,
En was de moeder van zijn vorige vrouwen het
vierde ?
En was hijzelf misschien het vijfde ?

De rillingen gleden over hem heen.
Kon hij zichzelf nog wel vertrouwen ?

Of had de alcohol hem al te zwaar aangetast ?
Nee, hij moest vechten tegen dit monster,
Zoveel kinderen waren opgesloten in dit beest,
Ook hijzelf ...

Traag ging het monster over de straten,
Achter hem sleepte de lange bruidsjurk,
Die sporen van bloed achterliet,
Wie had zijn vrouwen vermoord,
Of hoe kwamen zij aan hun einde ?
Hij wist het nog steeds niet ...

Hij had geen verstandsverhouding met zijn nieuwe vrouw. Het liet hem volkomen koud. Voor hem mocht het monster wel weer opnieuw toeslaan, maar ook gruwelde hij van zichzelf om die gedachte. Hoe kon hij zo kil zijn ? Hij had het gevoel alsof er een oorlog om hem gestreden werd. Deze vrouw was als de hel, maar hij kon ook de hemel aanraken. Het lag allemaal zo dicht bij elkaar. Haar wispelturige, onvoorspelbare en gevaarlijke karakter inspireerden hem. Altijd weer stroomde de adrenaline door hem heen als ze er was, of als hij aan haar dacht. Hij wist

dat zijn leven altijd was afgelopen als ze thuis zou komen. Ze scheen hem vechtlustig te maken, iets waardoor hij energie kreeg en ook weer energie kwijt kon raken. Hij had haar nodig om te overleven, en hij ontwikkelde een soort verslaving aan haar.
In de nacht had hij gevechten met haar, grote worstelingen. Niet alleen lichamelijk, maar ook geestelijk. Ze sloopte hem, maar hierdoor ontwikkelde hij zich ook. Hij moest altijd op zijn hoede zijn. Ze was een twistzieke vrouw, vechtlustig, altijd op zoek naar spanning, altijd uitdagend. Ze zocht altijd ruzie. Hij kende eigenlijk geen rust meer. Altijd moest hij zichzelf ook bewijzen. Ze had nooit genoeg en het was nooit goed in haar ogen. Ze lokte hem altijd weer uit. Ze testte hem voortdurend. Hij zag haar als een grote beproeving. Nee, saai was het leven niet met zo'n vrouw, maar soms wel vemoeiend. Het leek wel alsof ze een pop van hem wilde maken.

Hoofdstuk 13. 1949

Traag ging het monster van Hiroshima door de straten,
Een spoor van bloed achterlatend,
Dan komt hij tot de brug tussen stad en wildernis,
De onmetelijk grote brug,
De stille brug van de dood,
En wanneer hij over de brug gaat,
Dan begint de brug te branden

De dominee kijkt naar zijn nieuwe vrouw,
Zij lijkt op een pop in haar witte jurk.
Hij wil haar beschermen,
Het is het laatste wat hij heeft,
Dit is wat hij droomt,
Plotseling staat zij in brand.
De dominee rent weg, naar de grote brug tussen stad en land,
Maar dan brandt de brug ook.
Hij kijkt achterom en ziet zijn nieuwe vrouw wegzinken in een zee van vuur,
En dan grijpt het hem, en hij zinkt ook.

Hij schrikt wakker en gaat naar de kamer waar zij slaapt.
Zij is in een witte nachtjapon.
Hij perst zijn lippen tegen haar wang en dan tegen haar mond.
'Ik wil niet dat jij ook gaat zoals de anderen,' fluistert hij en omhelst haar.
Ze ligt daar als een pop.
Ze beweegt niet en wordt ook niet wakker, maar ze voelt wel warm aan.
'Wordt wakker,' zegt hij in paniek.
Dan wordt ze wakker en is heel slaperig.
Hij kust haar weer.
'Wat is er ?' vraagt ze slaperig.
'Ik heb een nachtmerrie gehad,' zei hij, 'dat je wegzonk in vuur, en toen ook ik. Ik wil je niet verliezen. Een derde dood kan ik niet aan.'
Ze omhelsde hem stevig, en drukte hem tegen haar aan.
'We gaan eraan werken,' zei ze nog steeds slaperig.
'Nee,' zei hij. 'Er is wat aan de hand. Ik vertrouw het niet. Twee vrouwen kwijt en in haar lichaam was een

abnormale hoeveelheid van een drug gevonden.
Weet jij hier meer van ? Vertel het me.'
'Waar heb je het over ?' vroeg ze.
'Je weet het,' zei hij. 'Denk. Als de vrouwen hier zijn gebeuren er altijd zulke dingen. Alsof ze elkaar afwisselen. Alsof ze elkaar koudmaken. Jij kan de volgende zijn. Is dat soms ook een deel van jullie cultuur ?'
'Waar heb je het over ?' vroeg ze weer.
'Ik kan het niet meer,' zei hij. 'Alsjeblieft, laten we ze niet meer binnenlaten.'
'Maar ze zijn van onze cultuur,' zei ze. 'Het is onze traditie.'
'Hebben jullie hen vermoord ?' vroeg hij.
'Nee, natuurlijk niet,' zei ze.
'Wie dan, of hoe dan ?' vroeg hij.
'Ik heb geen idee,' zei ze.
Hij drukte zijn lippen tegen haar aan. 'Echt, ik kan het niet meer,' zei hij. 'Wat als jij de volgende bent ? Gebruik je drugs ?'
'Nee,' zei ze. 'Je hart klopt als een razende.'
'Ik ben bang,' zei hij.
'We gaan eraan werken,' zei ze weer.

'Waarom doen ze ons dit aan ?' vroeg hij.
'Ik weet het niet,' zei ze. Toen viel ze weer in slaap.
Hij ging weer terug naar zijn eigen kamer. De dag erna was ze weer als het monster van Hiroshima.
Die nacht had hij weer een nachtmerrie.
De poppenmaker van Hiroshima ging traag door de straten,
Hij kwam om kinderen te roven uit hen bedden,
Om ze mee te nemen op zijn schepen,
Met een gif doorboorde hij de vliezen van hun hoofden,
Met een gif drong hij door tot hun monden,
Nee, zij sliepen allemaal, en zouden het altijd ontkennen,
Wat de poppenmaker van Hiroshima tot hen had gedaan ...

Einde

RNL-POCKETS
REEDS EERDER VERSCHENEN :

1 HET OORLOGS-SPEL
2 DE TUIN VAN MEVROUW VAN DALEN
3 PLANTEN VAN VLEES
4 ZIJN HUIS STOND IN DE WEG
5 HET SURINAAMSE DAGBOEK
6 DE EVOLUTIE VAN DE HEMEL
7 FABRIEKEN AAN ZEE
8 DE INDIAANSE AVONDEN
9 DE BRUG VAN HEIMDAL
10 HET METALEN EI

DE GEZICHTEN
VAN MALLEMOE

De Gezichten van Mallemoe
korte verhalen

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De Gezichten van Mallemoe

Mallemoe had vele gezichten, en ik wist niet welk gezicht ik ditmaal zou aantreffen als ik thuis zou komen. Ik was op weg naar huis. Ik zat in de bus, dichtbij de chauffeur, en we hadden een gesprek. Onderweg moesten we bij een station stoppen, en daar kocht ik nog even een strippenkaart erbij, want ik had meer strippen nodig om thuis te kunnen komen. Ik kocht een vijf strippen kaart. Dat zou wel voldoende zijn volgens de chauffeur, alhoewel hij niet eens wist waar mijn straat was toen ik hem de straatnaam gaf. De chauffeur moest ook nog even wat op het station doen, dus er was nog wel tijd. Ik ging een trap op en kwam ergens aan op een hogere verdieping. Ik raakte in gevecht met een blonde vrouw. Ze rende zo vanuit een terrasje van een café op deze verdieping op me af en begon op me in te slaan. Daar kon ik niet tegen en moest haar tegen de vlakte slaan. Ik kende de vrouw niet. Ik dacht dat ze te diep in het glaasje had gekeken. Ik herinnerde me de gezichten van Mallemoe. Ik kon ook gewoon een trein pakken hier, en dan ergens anders naartoe.

Ik liep weer terug op de verdieping, richting de trap, maar toen zag ik een gebroken beeldje liggen op de grond. Het ene deel was een huisje met een hondje, en het andere deel was een jongetje. Ik legde de twee delen tegen elkaar aan en vond het een prachtig beeldje. Al snel stond er een groep mensen om me heen die me geld begonnen te bieden voor het beeldje. Ik zei dat ik dat niet kon doen, want Mallemoe zou me dat zeker betaald zetten. Er was ook iemand anders bij die precies hetzelfde beeldje uit zijn tas haalde, maar dan heel. Misschien dat de beeldjes ergens dichtbij verkocht werden ? Maar waarom waren al die mensen dan om me heen die mijn gebroken beeldje wilden kopen ? Voor mij was het een raadsel, een raadsel zoals Mallemoe was.
Ik stopte het gebroken beeldje in mijn schooltas en ging terug naar de bus. Even later was ik thuis, maar Mallemoe was niet blij. Ik vroeg Mallemoe om de lijm, om het beeldje te lijmen, maar ik kreeg het niet van haar. Mallemoe was het allemaal zat. Ze wilde dat ik het beeldje zou wegdoen. "Of dat beeldje eruit, of ik eruit," sprak Mallemoe.
"Nou, dan jij maar eruit, Mallemoe," zei ik, "want het beeldje wil ik toch wel graag houden."

Mallemoe pakte haar spullen. Met haar vele koffers vertrok ze. Het was een hele volksverhuizing, en ons zoontje nam ze mee. Die avond staarde ik naar het beeldje wat ik op de tv had gezet. De lijm had ik gekregen van een vriendelijke buurvrouw. Het jongetje was nu verzoend met zijn hond, en met zijn huis. Hij had een petje op. Tot mijn grote verbazing begon het jongetje te fluisteren, en toen te roepen, en toen te schreeuwen en zelfs te gillen. Toen begon het jongetje te lachen. Ik wist dat ik de juiste keuze had gemaakt.

De Gezichten van Mallemoe II

Toch ben ik Mallemoe daarna nog een keer tegengekomen. Het was in een hele drukke winkelstraat, waar ze stond met haar draaiorgel, en ons zoontje liep ervoor met het geldbakje. Hij rammelde ermee op de maat van de muziek. Ik liep op mijn zoontje af, en vertelde hem over het sprekende beeldje, maar hij wilde mij niet geloven, en wilde ook niet kijken of het misschien toch waar was wat ik zei. Ook Mallemoe wilde mij niet geloven. Het draaiorgel was verbonden aan een bromfiets, en ze sprong zo op de bromfiets, nam mijn zoontje achterop, en stoof met het ding weg, een enorme stank achterlatende. Ik dacht er direct aan dat ze de uitlaatpijp weleens na mocht laten kijken. Dit was niet goed, en even vreesde ik voor haar veiligheid en de veiligheid van mijn zoontje. Natuurlijk wist ik niet waar ze nu woonden. Dat werd mij allemaal niet gemeld.
De volgende dag keek ik of ze weer terugwas, maar nee. Misschien reiste ze wel door het hele land. Het zou een onmogelijke opgave zijn om haar te traceren. Die uitlaatpijp was niet goed, al helemaal niet voor de natuur. Maar ja, wat kon ik doen ? Mallemoe was niet altijd

natuurgetrouw. Het hing er maar vanaf welk gezicht ze had opgezet. Ze had ook vele hoedjes. Die had ze allemaal onderverdeeld in dozen. Ze was er maar druk mee. Ik hoopte maar dat ze ons zoontje niet zou aansteken met deze gekte. Pilatus noemde ze hem altijd. Terwijl ik hem Deur noemde. Het was natuurlijk wel verwarrend voor dat joch, maar ik kon het gewoon niet over mijn hart halen om hem Pilatus te noemen. Mallemoe vond het wel Mediterraans klinken, en wel zwoel, maar ik kende de achtergronden van die naam. Ik had er veel over gelezen. Ik las veel universitaire literatuur, terwijl Mallemoe alleen maar flutromannetjes las en roddelblaadjes. Daar was ze groots in. Pilatus was voor haar echt een naam van verdachte status, van controversiële aard, en dat trok haar aan. Het moest vooral anders zijn, en tegendraads, iets waar veel over nagedacht werd, en waar veel bekijks over was. Het moest iets zijn wat de volkeren bezighield, niet dat hele ingeburgerde. Het moest iets zijn waarover men zich druk maakte.

Op een dag kreeg ik een brief van Mallemoe, met veel gezwets over Pilatus. Ik vroeg me af waarom ze me schreef, maar ze bleek geld nodig te hebben. Zodra ze geld nodig had was ze ineens heel open en vriendelijk. Het was

gewoon één van de gezichten van Mallemoe voor mij, één van haar vele gezichten. Ik werd er niet warm of koud van. Ik stuurde haar wat monopolie geld op, en naar mijn zoontje stuurde ik echt geld. De volgende dag stond ze op de stoep. Ze vond het onverantwoordelijk dat ik Pilatus zoveel geld had gestuurd. Hij deed er de meest vreemde dingen mee, ook dingen waarvan ze gezegd had : "Of dat ding eruit, of ik eruit." Pilatus had dus voor het ding gekozen. Dat wilde ze even kwijt, en ze was ook zo weer weg, op haar brommer met draaiorgel. Ik vroeg me af wat voor dingen Pilatus had aangeschafd. Maar ja, ik had zijn adres niet.

Ik kwam er snel genoeg achter. Op een dag niet lang nadat Mallemoe was geweest las ik in de krant over Circus Pilatus. Ik dacht dat dat wel van mijn zoontje moest zijn. Had hij toch nog wat goeds met zijn geld gedaan. Ik dacht laat ik eens een kijkje nemen. Toen het circus dicht in de buurt was ging ik er naartoe. En daar stond Pilatus. Hij stopte zijn hoofd in leeuwenbekken en krokodillenbekken. Daar schrok ik toch wel van, en stapte direct op hem af, maar hij fluisterde dat de leeuwen en krokodillen slechts robotten waren, dus ik was weer gerust. Het circus had ook clowns en acrobaten. Dat waren ook robotten, dus

eigenlijk kon er niets foutgaan. Ik vroeg aan hem of zijn moeder hier dan niet kon werken. Dan had ze wat te doen, maar hij schudde zijn hoofd. Het circus was de reden waarom Mallemoe wegging. Ik herinnerde hem eraan dat ze eens met hem wegging vanwege een simpel beeldje. Hij knikte. Hij kon zich dat nog herinneren.

"Je bent een groot man nu, Pilatus," sprak ik. Ik noemde hem niet meer Deur. "Dat is de eerste keer dat je mij zo noemt," sprak Pilatus. Ik knikte.

"Je hebt nu je eigen circus," zei ik. "Circus Pilatus."

Hij knikte.

"Dat je maar veel geld mag verdienen, jongen," sprak ik. "Misschien dat je dan ooit eens je moeder uit de brand kan helpen, dat je iets kan kopen waardoor ze niet wegloopt."

"Ik heb er geen zin meer in," zei Pilatus. "Wat ik ook doe, het is toch nooit goed. Laat haar maar gaan waar ze wil gaan."

"Nou ja," zei ik. "Ik ben daar niet zo'n voorstander van. Die brommer waarop ze rijdt met dat draaiorgel is echt niet goed."

"Ik weet het," zei Pilatus. "Het is ook niet goed voor de natuur, maar moeder doet wat ze doet."

"Met geld kun je veel beginnen," zei ik. "Ze heeft een nieuw gezicht nodig, want met degenen die ze nu heeft redt ze het niet."
"Laat het, pa," zei Pilatus. "Ze heeft al genoeg gezichten."
"Ja, maar geld kan ons gelukkig maken," zei ik. "Veel geld."
"Dat ben ik niet met je eens," zei Pilatus. "Jullie beiden hielden altijd van veel geld, en zie waar het ons heeft gebracht. En heb jij zelf niet eens al die gezichten van moeder gekocht ?"
Ik boog mijn hoofd. "Je hebt gelijk, maar zie je, Pilatus, ik had de gezichten eens gewonnen op de kermis, dus ik kon ze niet zomaar weg doen. Ik had er teveel geld in gestopt."
"In die automaten, pa ?" sprak Pilatus. "Je was slechts een gekke gokker, doldwaas, en nu zitten we met de gebakken peren."
"Ja, maar politie-ma kwam erg van pas," zei ik, "en bokser-ma, en spelletjes-ma, kook-ma, feest-ma, was-ma, ze hebben ons altijd goed geholpen, al die gezichten. Er heeft nog nooit iemand bij ons ingebroken. Aan Mallemoe waagden ze zich niet. Ik was de enige die me aan haar waagde."

"Pa, pa," zei Pilatus, terwijl hij zijn hoofd schudde. "Je had haar haarzelf moeten laten zijn, want zulk kermisspul is nooit goed. Dat heb je nu wel gezien. Of je had een robot kunnen kopen, zoals ik heb gedaan."
"Waar heb je die robotten eigenlijk gekocht ?" vroeg ik.
"In Griekenland," zei Pilatus.
"Griekenland ?" vroeg ik. "Waarom helemaal daar ?"
"Shhh," zei Pilatus, "laten we het ergens anders over hebben."
"Je hebt het toch niet van de mafia gekocht, hè ?" vroeg ik.
"Nee," zei Pilatus. "Maak je maar geen zorgen."
"Ik wil weten waar je het vandaan hebt, Pilatus," zei ik.
"Nieuwe soort supermarkt voor robotische spullen," sprak Pilatus. "Dat beeldje van jou schijnt er ook vandaan te komen."
"Wat zijn dat voor toestanden ?" vroeg ik. "En waarom is Mallemoe er op tegen ? Ziet zij of die gezichten van haar het als concurrentie ?"
"Vermoedelijk wel," zei Pilatus.
"We zouden die gezichten van haar er moeten afschroeven," sprak ik.
"Ja, maar wat houden we dan over ?" vroeg Pilatus.
"Het is toch al niks meer," zei ik.

Maar ja, Pilatus moest verder werken. Ik ben toen maar naar huis gegaan. Ik dacht na over de gezichten van Mallemoe. Ik keek naar het beeldje op de tv. Het jongetje danste met zijn hondje. Er werd aangebeld. Het bleek Mallemoe weer te zijn. Ze wilde terugkomen.
"Maar ik heb nog steeds dat beeldje," zei ik.
"Het geeft niet," zei Mallemoe. "Zoals het nu gaat is het ook niks."
"Misschien ben je gewoon overgevoelig," zei ik.
"Nee, dat is het niet," zei Mallemoe.
"Wat is het dan ?" vroeg ik.
"Ik ben star, streng en eigenzinnig," sprak ze.
"Toe maar weer," zei ik. "Dat is een hele mond vol."
"Nu wel," zei ze.
"Maar straks niet meer ?" vroeg ik.
"Het is maar één van mijn gezichten," sprak ze.

Arabisch Amalgaam

Hoofdstuk 1.

Ik, 27 jaar,
Lang,
Doe mezelf ouder voor dan ik ben.
Zij, 44 jaar

We zijn gelukkig samen, alsof we het eeuwig geluk hebben gevonden. Toch leiden we een saai leven, een sleur, zitten we opgesloten tussen muren. We leven meer in de dalen dan op de toppen. We mogen niet klagen, alcohol vult altijd de leegtes op. We moeten beiden oppassen geen alcoholisten te worden, maar we hebben het nu redelijk onder controle. Vaak als we klachten hebben wordt ons alcoholische dranken voorgeschreven door onze dokter. Onze dokter is wel alcoholist, maar daar hebben wij genoegen meegenomen. Dit omdat het een aardige man is, en dat zijn dokters zeer zelden. Hij neemt ons serieus en heeft ons op sleeptouw genomen.

Zij, is kleiner dan mij, heeft grote borsten die het leeftijds-verschil opvullen. We hebben geen kinderen, en dat willen we ook niet. Ze is rustig, ik ben tamelijk druk, dus we houden elkaar in balans. Zij leert mij nu om rustig te zijn, ook om mijn innerlijke stem te verstaan. Innerlijke vrede noemt ze dat. De dokter is hier weleens dronken geweest. We hebben besloten hem de hand boven het hoofd te houden. We zouden hem nooit verraden. We zijn niet kerkelijk, maar gaan wel naar een discussie-groepje om daar de dingen van het geloof te bespreken. Veelal wordt het geloof vanuit de atheistische hoek bekeken, aangevuld met kunstzinnige ideeen. We beschouwen het geloof als een vreemde erfenis, als cultuurgoed, maar voelen ons ook ingenomen, onder schrikbewind, door kolonisten uit het midden-oosten. We hebben nog geen geestelijke onafhankelijkheid. Ook de psychische gezondheidszorg houdt ons nog in mentale afhankelijkheid, en de zogeheten tandheelkunde houdt ons in orale afhankelijkheid, en deze bezetters komen allemaal uit het oosten aanwaaien. Trots zijn we er niet op, we hebben meer binnengelaten dan ons lief is, en hebben onze onafhankelijkheid prijsgegeven aan idioten, beulen. Maar ja, het was immers oorlog, het was een strooptocht, kolonisten zijn uit op kolonies, het

creeeren van een apartheid. Deze kolonisten hebben een minderwaardig ras geschapen, wij. Het is voor het leken-ras verboden na te denken. Er wordt al voor ons gedacht, er is al voor ons gedacht, en er zal nog veel voor ons gedacht worden. Dat de etiketten niet passen is niet van belang. Het zijn de merktekens van het beest.
En dan is er nog de sex-politie die ons sexueel afhankelijk heeft gemaakt, bang dat een onzedelijk geluidje in een oplettend kinderoortje terecht zal komen. Maar diezelfde kinderoortjes worden niet gespaard voor het traumatiserende geschreeuw van knettergekke dokters en het erbarmenloze geboor van de zogeheten tandarts. Dat diezelfde kinderen voor de ogen van hun ouders door zulke misdadigers oraal worden gescalpeerd schijnt geen probleem te zijn. In Afrika worden kleine meisjes vanwege het volksgeloof aldaar vaginaal besneden, en daar is men in de hele wereld terecht ontdaan over, en wordt het als een godslasterlijke misdaad beschouwd, maar hier worden kinderen, zowel jongens als meisjes door de bezetter oraal besneden, en geen kip die erom kraait.

Mijnheer A. Hoekstra-Van Het Land denkt hier anders over. In zijn zogeheten tandartsen-praktijk wordt alles veilig gedaan, en zijn er strenge voorzorgsmaatregelen, die overigens overal gelden, en waar ook een strenge controle op is. Ook worden er na de besnijding betrouwbare, goed geteste stoffen gebruikt om de opening weer mee te bedekken, zodat het gebit van het kind extra lang mee kan gaan. Mevrouw T. Foppen sluit zich hier helemaal bij aan, en ja, wat hebben wij in te brengen tegen deze bezetters ? We kunnen ons hoogstens aansluiten bij het verzetstrijders-front tegen zulke praktijken. Wij hebben allemaal het merkteken van het beest ontvangen, of we nu wilden of niet, en het merkteken is eeuwig. Daar kan zelfs God of de keizer niets aan veranderen. Er zijn hier in dit land drie oppergeloven waar iedereen zich aan dient te onderwerpen, waarvoor elke knie zich dient te buigen, en waartoe elke tong zal belijden : het medische geloof, het geloof in de geestelijke gezondheid, en het orale geloof, tot aan het dentale toe. En of je nu een dentaal bent of je bent het niet : die kerk kent geen grenzen.
Maarten Stokmans-Van Zeilen, zogeheten tandarts, aan de Belgische grens, vermeld dat er de laatste tijd vreemde dingen in zijn zogeheten tandartsen-praktijk plaatsvinden.

Zo zouden beugels spontaan inkrimpen, en zogenaamd amalgaam, de zogeheten grijze roestvrije metaal-vullingen, zou spontaan in het niets oplossen. Hij gebruikt daarom nu veel vaker witte en rode vullingen, die volgens hem wat meer betrouwbaar zijn. Rood is tegelijkertijd de kleur van zijn lievelingskat, dus dat geeft ook direkt een emotionele verbinding met thuis. Ook is Maarten tegelijkertijd een enthousiast lid van de pinkstergemeente, en staat hij elke zondag trouw in deze kerk te klappen op de maat van de overigens heel mooie en aanstekelijke muziek. Hij heeft een visie voor het invoeren van veel meer kleuren zogeheten vullingen, zodat de mensen kunnen kiezen waarmee de barbaarse boorgaten voor eeuwig kunnen worden verborgen. Dat zou ook wat meer vrolijkheid brengen onder deze groep mensen die zo lijden onder de orale bezetting uit het oosten. Hij vindt ook wel dat de paus van de zogeheten tandartsen, Alexander de Kleine, de touwtjes wel wat mag vieren.
Kaakchirurg Riekerd van Aarnautsen is het hier niet mee eens, want hij vreest dat een al te zeer bemoedigde jonge generatie wel eens het einde van de bezetting zou kunnen betekenen. En dat zou helemaal godsonterend zijn. De wet die hen door God gegeven is, en waardoor zij de macht

hebben gekregen, moet gehandhaafd worden. Van Aarnautsen staat hierin niet alleen. Tenminste negentig procent van de zogeheten tandartsen en kaakchirurgen staan achter hem, alhoewel sommigen gedwongen zijn dit te doen. Ook is hij van mening dat het God Zelf is geweest die het zogeheten amalgaam heeft geschapen, en dat wij Zijn schepping moeten eren en ervan gebruik moeten maken. Hij is van mening dat het amalgaam ook goed gebruikt kan worden in andere delen van het lichaam, vooral in de botten. Hij vindt het onzin om mensen die jarenlang niet kunnen slapen van de heuppijn een nieuwe heup te geven. Implantaties van amalgaam zouden volgens hem wonderen kunnen verrichten. Dit omdat het volgens hem bewezen is dat amalgaam gevoeligheid van de botten kan afdekken.
Ja, de verschillende meningen over amalgaam en het gebruik ervan, dat is me er eentje. Nu wil Van Aarnoutsen zijn naam veranderen in Van Aernoutsen met Ae, want dat staat volgens hem veel deftiger. Men is er maar druk mee, met de grote drie, de drie supergeloven van dit land. Het christelijk geloof is daar helemaal aan ondergeschikt, want ook de christen buigt voor de dokter, de geestelijk verzorger en de zogeheten tandarts. Het geloof van de

zogeheten tandarts is gebaseerd op de orale besnijding, als plicht, als prioriteit, en zij die rebels daartegen zijn worden doorverwezen naar de geestelijke verzorgers, want die mensen mankeren natuurlijk heel wat. Veel mensen denken dat we in 1945 zijn bevrijd van de nazi's, maar de bezetting door de nazi's is groter dan ooit, door de medi-nazi's, de psychinazi's en de nazi's van de mond, de orale nazi's. En dit is dan ook de drieeenheid die alomtegenwoordig aanbeden wordt. Het vullingenbeheer wordt overgelaten aan de orale organisten, de tandpasta-producenten, die net zoals de nazi's fluor gebruiken, een afvalproduct, om de gehypnotiseerde kolonie gewillig te houden. Zij bespelen met grote flair en betutteling de monden van de leken-families, zodat er niet al teveel tegenspraak zal zijn. Men moet eten wat de pot schaft, en door het gepoets komt er ook nog eens lekker veel gifdamp vrij van de kwikhoudende en kankerverwekkende chemicalien die ze vullingen noemen inplaats van gedwongen bot-implantaten, als de kinderdoop na de besnijdenis. En na zulk een gebeurtenis is hun naam ineens haas, en zijn alle verdere klachten voor de psychiater en de zondagsschool. Nee, dan ben ik maar als een oude jood die zegt : De verlosser moet nog komen.

Een geschikte kanditaat hiervoor zou zijn Nelson Lincoln, die ook nog eens voor de dieren opkomt.
Onder dwangverpleging moeten we vandaag de dag van de verboden vrucht eten, om zo vervolgens nog meer in de problemen te komen, om zo nog rijper voor de verboden vrucht te worden. Dit is een vicieuze cirkel. En gedwongen implantaten hebben meer te maken met bezoek van buitenaardse wezens dan met werkelijke zorg. We zijn allang niet meer van onszelf. Maar goed, elke religie heeft zijn ongelovigen, en die moeten naar de hel. De hele wereld zal het beest achterna gaan om zijn beeld te aanbidden en zijn merkteken te dragen. De vijand werkt met vergiftiging, en met ontkenning ervan, zo is het altijd al geweest.
Mijnheer Olafsen uit Zutphen aan de Rijn zegt dat aan amalgaam geen enkel gevaar zit, want alles zit netjes ingedekt binnenin de kies. Nooit van dampvorming en metaalradiatie gehoord, mijnheer Olafsen ? Vervolgens zegt mijnheer Olafsen dat er maar heel weinig van het amalgaam daadwerkelijk in het lichaam terecht kan komen. Hoe weet u dat mijnheer Olafsen ? Ooit weleens opgemeten ? En weet u niet dat de apparatuur van de bezetters zichzelf echt niet zullen gaan verraden ?

Drogredenaties, mijnheer Olafsen. En u heeft geen respect voor de mening van een ander, zelfs niet als het om hun eigen mond gaat. Uw wil is wet, want u heeft uw kolonie bezet, en duldt geen verzet. U houdt hen allen in slaap door het stafke van Doornroosje, met uw prikkende boren, soms tot aan de zenuw toe, en dan maar de gepleegde misdaden afdekken. Wie heeft u gezegd in de monden van gevoelige kinderen te gaan boren ? Het is niet veel anders dan Karel de Kleine die met het zwaard de ongelovigen dwong het christendom aan te nemen. En zo is de orale besnijding net zo erg als de vaginale besnijding, omdat het beiden om dwang gaat, en de klachten erbij niet serieus worden genomen. Klachten zijn de tekenen dat de bezetting werkt. En men wil dat zo houden. Alle tong zal belijden, elke knie zal buigen.
Bert Ootjes is door het verzet als zogeheten holistisch tandarts geplaatst in Bergen aan de Maas. Hij werd geplaatst voor het verwijderen van brandmerken, mertekens en nummers van het beest, en werkte in opdracht van de patient. Door de ongelovelijke werkdruk is mijnheer Ootjes overspannen geraakt, en plaatste het verzet een tweede zogeheten holistisch tandarts, professor Joost Achterbergen. Ook hij werkte in opdracht van de

patient. Sindsdien zijn er vele zogeheten holistische tandartsen in het land gaan werken om de orale besnijdingen tegen te gaan. Veel van die zogeheten holistische tandartsen waren boorloos, maar ook de bezetters infiltreerden in deze branche, maar dan met boren. Om het infiltreren tegen te gaan plaatste het verzet schermpjes die zelf dauwdruppels konden aanmaken, en die schermpjes bezaten twee soorten poedertjes die op de zogeheten tandarts zouden reageren. Werden de dauwdruppels blauwkleurig, dan was de kust veilig, maar als de dauwdruppels roodkleurig werden, dan had de patient te doen met een infiltrant. Zo konden patienten het snel testen. Het was een uitvinding van Bert Ootjes. Niemand heeft ooit het tegendeel van de werking ervan kunnen bewijzen, en als er wetenschappelijk commentaar van buiten het verzet kwam, dan werd dat gewoon niet erkend. Het kwam er al snel op neer dat minstens vijftig procent van de zogeheten holistische tandartsen infiltranten waren van de bezetting. Velen hadden gewoon hun eigen gifjes die ze gebruikten, en de orale besnijding werd gewoon doorgezet. Ook het half serieus nemen werd een grote trend.

Ik ben in het verzet gegaan toen ik 25 werd, maar omdat ik op straat werd neergestoken kon ik geen actief lid meer zijn, en beperkte mij hooguit tot discussie-groepjes. Ik raakte verlamd. Ik zit nu in een rolstoel, en moet weer langzaam leren lopen. Mijn vriendin helpt me daarbij. Vandaag ben ik met haar naar het naaktstrand gegaan omdat het buitengewoon mooi weer was. Daar waren mensen met mooie naakte plekken in hun mond, niet vervuild door de zogeheten tandarts. Alles puur natuur.

28 Januari 1971

De flower power beweging groeit nog steeds, meer dan ooit. Ook de ‘Baas in Eigen Mond’ beweging groeit hard, vooral onder de jeugd. Ik kan weer een beetje lopen. De wonden zijn aardig genezen. De naaktstranden zijn dichtbevolkt nu. Overal wordt geprotesteerd en gedemonstreerd tegen de bezetting, tegen de grote drie, maar het ministerie is niet onder de indruk. Het is volgens hen door de gezondheidsraad bewezen dat de grote drie geen kwaad hebben verricht en een bevordering zijn voor de volksgezondheid. Inmiddels grijpt de bevolking massaal naar speciale tandpastas voor gevoelige tanden, want nieuwe zogeheten vullingsoorten zorgen ervoor dat

zelfs duikers niet meer zo diep konden duiken als voorheen, doordat ze de druk op de mond niet meer aankunnen vanwege deze nieuwe aanwinst in de pharmaceutische industrie. Dit wordt door het ministerie ontkent. De nieuwe zogeheten vullingsoorten zijn prima. De bezetting kan er alleen maar van profiteren. Er wordt alleen vanuit het hogere elite-ras gedacht. Het leken-ras is niet interessant. Steeds meer jongeren beginnen zich tegen de flower power beweging te verzetten, omdat er maar niets gebeurt. Het is allemaal te soft, en de meesten worden gezien als watjes die niets ondernemen dan mantras zingen en mandalas tekenen. De heavy metal beweging begint te groeien, en kaapt veel van de flower power beweging weg. De zogeheten underground wordt een grote attractie voor degenen die maar geen aansluiting konden vinden in de flower power beweging, of hen die erin teleurgesteld waren en grote vraagtekens hadden. Bert Ootjes begint een nieuwe pseudo-industrie en wordt door de politie opgepakt en vastgezet. Hij is inmiddels de grootste verzetsstrijder die het verzet kent, en de bekendste. Hij wordt ook wel de Vader van het Verzet genoemd. In de gevangenis vindt Bert Ootjes een nieuw hormoon uit wat tanden weer kan laten aangroeien. Wel

zorgt dit hormoon ervoor dat de tanden om de zoveel tijd gewisseld worden, en dat betekent dus tegelijkertijd het einde van de hele zogeheten tandheelkunde. Het hormoon is een mengsel van een stof die door haaien en krokodillen wordt gedragen, en die door een simpele injectie in een mens ingebracht kan worden, eens en voor altijd. Vanaf het moment van de injectie maakt het lichaam de stof zelf aan. Het hormoon slaat in als een bom, en naast het verdwijnen van de zogeheten tandheelkunde valt ook de geestelijke gezondheidszorg en ook het medische bewind. Nu een van de grote drie is gevallen blijkt het dat ze hun belangrijkste schakel kwijt zijn. Mensen worden gezonder doordat ze niet meer als een afvalput van gifstoffen worden behandeld. Ook het kerkelijk geloof valt hierbij in, en onze erfenis bleek niet veel meer te zijn dan een zogeheten vulling na de besnijdenis, en nu de besnijdenis was verdwenen daalde ook de behoefte naar een zogeheten vulling, maar de dwang was er nog steeds. De grote twee adopteerden toen het kerkelijk geloof als nummer drie, maar de geloofwaardigheid hiervan was tot een minimum gedaald, en velen lieten zich niet zomaar meer afzetten.

3 Januari 1980

Bert Ootjes komt vrij, en zorgt ervoor dat ons land de onafhankelijkheid krijgt. De geestelijke gezondheidszorg en het medische geloof worden tot liefde-werk gereduceerd. Het kerkelijk geloof mag daarbij helpen, maar verliest haar macht. Nelson Lincoln wordt de nieuwe anarchistische leider, en ook Joost Achterbergen speelt hierin een grote rol. Zij worden de nieuwe grote drie. Een man genaamd Tutuc zet een geheel nieuwe religie op gebaseerd op liefde en sex. Maas-Middelland wordt de nieuwe hoofdstad, waar professionele prostituees zich zetelen en de stad leiden. Er worden meer naaktstranden geopend, en het land wordt voor vijftig procent naturistisch. Tutuc richt de Naturistische Anarchistische Partij op, de NAP, en krijgt zestig procent van alle stemmen. Velen hebben een andere definitie van naturisme, die volgens hen veel meer is dan gewoon naakt lopen. Binnen het naturisme komen vele stromingen. Er wordt fel uitgehaald naar de mode beweging die wordt gezien als sexuele onderdrukking en het creeeren van een underdog. Nog steeds dertig procent van de bevolking hangt de mode beweging aan, en ze hebben grote invloed,

vooral op scholen, waar andersdenkenden al snel als leken-ras worden gezien. De mode wordt steeds meer gezien als manipulatie en als een belemmering voor de vrijheid.

28 Augustus 1981

Het land heeft de status van Utopia bereikt. Er is vrede overal. Men kan elkaar weer waarderen, men voelt zich weer veilig bij elkaar, er is weer vertrouwen, rust, maar ook onafhankelijkheid. Ik kan inmiddels weer goed lopen en alles weer doen. Veel ga ik met mijn vriendin naar het zwanenmeer, het plantsoen. Hier kom ik helemaal tot rust. We hebben het vaak over onze schooltijd. Ik ben erg veranderd volgens mijn vriendin, minder druk. De roosjes beginnen uit te komen langs het zwanenmeer, en ze brengen wit sap voort. De grootste zwaan van het plantsoen gaat stoer over het riviertje dat het slot omgeeft. Altijd ruikt het hier naar zeewier. Als ze van die grootste zwaan niet zouden zeggen dat het een zwaan was, dan zou ik denken dat het een paard was. De bloemen komen hier laat uit, en niemand weet waarom. Altijd pas na de mid-hitte van de zomer. De criminaliteit is hier tot een nulpunt gedaald. Ik voel me weer veilig op straat.

In andere landen is het nog geen Utopia, en zijn missionarissen van Bert Ootjes vaak niet welkom. Heel veel buitenlanders emigreren naar ons land, en er komen steeds meer flats, die ook steeds hoger worden, en dit schijnt een goede uitwerking te hebben op de onderlinge vrede. In de politiek in andere landen gaat het er hard aan toe, ze geven Bert Ootjes geen kans. En ons land noemen ze de nieuwe toren van Babel. Dan wordt Bert Ootjes in het buitenland vastgezet wegens het smokkelen van zwaar alcoholische dranken. Hier schrijft hij zijn apocalypse. In ons land wordt een standbeeld van hem opgericht. Zijn geboortedag wordt een nationale feestdag. Met de diertjes gaat het helaas nog steeds niet goed. Ze worden nog volop geslacht, en er wordt nog volop van hen genoten. Wel heeft Nelson Lincoln al heel veel voor hen gedaan. Vegetariers proberen heel wat, maar worden aan alle kanten tegengewerkt. Hun hoop is eigenlijk op Bert Ootjes, maar die zit in de gevangenis. De dieren hebben zo nog steeds geen onafhankelijkheid, en behoren nog steeds tot het leken-ras. Slagers beginnen steeds meer reclame te maken, met de meest idiote, uit zijn verband gerukte, betuttelingen, en proberen de massa met liedjes en slagzinnen in hypnose te houden. Leuk, zo’n arm diertje

slachten, en dan ook erbij gaan zingen. De zingende slagers zijn populair, en er worden veel platen verkocht. Ook banketbakkers werken veel vaker met vlees. De warme broodjes met vleesvullingen gaan pijlsnel over de toonbank heen. En ze vinden steeds weer nieuwe dingen uit, en verleggen hun grenzen voortdurend. Voor de dieren is het nog geen Utopia. In het buitenland hebben de dieren het beter.
In de ogen van de dieren zijn de slagers en hun consumenten de bezetters. Zij vinden het racisme, maar niemand schakelt in op hun frequentie, en zij hebben geen diploma's. Nee, dit land is met zijn kar vol diploma's aan de rand van de afgrond terecht gekomen, ook al noemen ze het een Utopia. Maar in de apocalypse hebben de dieren het laatste woord.

2 Augustus 1982

Grillen zijn 'in'. Er wordt veel gebarbecued, veel gezongen en gedanst. Voor de dieren lijkt het alleen maar erger te worden. We zijn in de tachtiger jaren beland. Vlees wordt een handig weggevertje, een uitstekend kado voor speciale gelegenheden, en een bewijs van eeuwige

trouw en liefde. Huwelijks-taarten worden meer en meer omgezet in bouwsels van vlees, en de miniaturen van zowel bruid als bruidegom op de top van de vlees-cake zijn steeds meer naakt, als een propaganda voor het naturisme, wat natuurlijk op zich niet verkeerd is. Steeds meer wordt er de nadruk gelegd op practische collectieve ambacht, waarin de vlees-eter moet zien wat hij eet. Veel demonstraties van openlijke slachtingen worden vertoont, en het vlees bestemd voor een huwelijks-feest wordt op het feest zelf geslacht. Door dit soort openlijke vertoning steeg allereerst het aantal vegetariers dramatisch, maar later werd het als cultuur-goed gezien, als educatief. Zo werd alles geheel gestileerd, en elke zenuw lamgelegd. Woorden als ‘traditie’ werden gebruikt, terwijl die traditie er nooit was. Vegetariers hadden ingezien waar het anarchisme het land naar toe had geleid, en begonnen te verlangen naar een milde vorm van communisme. Een bekend schrijver sprak : ‘Het educatieve zwaard heeft een praalwagen gemaakt voor het bandeloze verstand.’ Het werd een chaos in het land. Iedereen zag uit naar de terugkomst van Bert Ootjes. Maar die kwam maar niet, want die zat vast in het buitenland. Joost Achterbergen promoveerde weer ergens met een verslag over de

carnivorische problematiek, maar dat haalde allemaal niets uit. Men was ergens in aan het vastroesten en kwam er niet meer uit. Er kwam een wet dat iedereen die nog vlees wilde eten de dieren zelf moest fokken en slachten.
Negentig procent van de bevolking werd hierdoor boer.
Nelson Lincoln had gehoopt dat ze door deze wet zouden terugschrikken, maar nee hoor, het werd een sport, een trend, een ritueel, ja, een geloof. En er werd zoveel mogelijk nonsense over verkocht. Het land kwam in een draaikolk van schaamteloos geweld en arrogantie tegen dieren. Dieren werden gewoon door de steeds naturistischer wordende bevolking als minderwaardig gezien, als ondergeschikt aan, als plezier-leken die uitgebuit moesten worden. Het werd een agrarisch land van veeteelt waarin iedereen betrokken werd, en de vegetariers zonderden zich veelal af. Zij konden dit zinloze geweld niet bevatten, en velen van hen vertrokken naar het buitenland.
Zovelen konden hun worstjes met karbonaatjes niet missen. Ze moesten er toch niet aan denken om zonder de speklapjes en de frikandellen door het leven te gaan.
Vleesproducenten haalden zelfs stunts uit door het vlees te laten regenen op speciale dagen. Het land had een nieuwe

bezetter. Men begon een hogere ethische en morele waarde aan vlees te hechten. Het zou gezond zijn en zelfs noodzakelijk voor het instandhouden van het menselijk ras. Het dierlijk ras stond dus zichtbaar op een lager plan volgens deze bezetter. En dieren konden niet spreken, dus die konden zich niet verzetten. De nieuwe orale bezetters waren gekomen. Het geloof in vlees redeneerde als volgt : Mensen waren engelen, en dieren waren gevallen engelen, duivels. Zo verdedigden ze hun handelwijzen, en daarmee beweerden ze ook nog eens dat wanneer zij die dieren verslonden, dan werden hun zonden vergeven. Ik legde me er bij neer. Ik kon niets doen. Vaak ging ik met mijn vriendin naar het zwanenmeer om te bespreken wat we konden doen, maar er was niet veel wat we konden doen. We voelden ons machteloos, en besloten te genieten van de dieren die er nog waren, en die met rust gelaten werden : zwanen. Vaak gingen we ‘s nachts naar het meertje, trokken onze kleren uit en gingen daar zwemmen met de zwanen. Op een dag nam de grootste zwaan ons op zijn rug, en bracht ons naar het slot. Er woonde hier niemand meer. Het slot stond vol met ridder-pantsers. We zijn toen naar boven gegaan en gingen op een oud bed liggen. We waren helemaal naakt. Ineens kwam de zwaan binnen met

een pluimhelm op. Dat was wel het zotste wat we ooit gezien hadden, en we moesten beiden heel erg lachen. Boven het bed hing een schilderij met naakte vrouwen en een wereldbol. We wisten dat het een naturistisch slot was. Het was vrij toegankelijk voor iedereen. Overal waren ook spinnewebben. Op een verdieping hoger waren nog meer schilderijen met naakte vrouwen. We besloten weer terug te gaan, zwommen het meertje over, en klommen even later ons bed in. Een man scheen het allemaal op camera te hebben vastgelegd. Hij had een zwarte hond met manen. Hij liet het ons zien en zei dat het het mooiste was wat hij ooit op kamera had vastgelegd. We voelden ons niet bespied ofzo. We vonden het wel dapper van hem, en bovenal knap. Hij wilde ons wel meer beeldmateriaal laten zien. Het waren veelal naaktscenes. Ik kwam dichter bij zijn zwarte hond met de zwarte manen. De hond had zulke prachtige ogen en ik moest hem gewoon omhelzen. Het dier was één en al geconcentreerde kracht. Het dier leek wel van adel. Alles was rust hier en vredig, en we kregen een goed contact met de man.

Hij wilde ons wel vaker filmen, en we stemden toe. Hij was een filmmaker die op zoek was naar unieke, zeldzame tafereeltjes. Wat deze man deed was kunst, hij had de gave

om de climaxen en het goede van het leven te vereeuwigen. Mijn vriendin kreeg hem lief. Hij was van haar leeftijd. Ik zei : ‘Ga je gang.’ Ik kon me voorstellen dat ze iemand nodig had van haar leeftijd. Ik was altijd veel te jong voor haar, alhoewel ik me ouder voordeed dan ik was. Nu was ik me dan steeds kinderlijker gaan gedragen, omdat ik daar vroeger nooit de ruimte voor had gehad. Ik beleefde mijn jeugd nu voor de eerste keer in mijn leven. Ik ontmoette een jonge vrouw, jonger dan mij, een buitenlandse, en we werden smoorverliefd. We deden alles samen. Ook gingen we ’s nachts vaak zwemmen in het zwanenmeer, en bezochten we vaak het oude slot. Ik bleef wel gewoon hele goede vrienden met mijn vroegere vriendin en haar nieuwe geliefde. Ik had het gevoel dat zij veel beter bij elkaar pasten, alhoewel we altijd een fantastische relatie hadden gehad. Het was goed zo. We waren beiden verzadigd van elkaar. Ik begon een nieuwe hoodstuk in mijn leven, en zij ook, en ik was nog steeds verliefd op haar en zij op mij. En de liefde was mooi en goed. De man die van haar leeftijd was had haar op het moment meer te bieden dan ik had, en hij kon heel wat leegtes vullen die door het leeftijds-verschil tussen haar en mij waren ontstaan. Zij had mijn moeder kunnen wezen.

Ik had nu behoefte aan iemand die op één lijn stond met mij, van dezelfde leeftijdscategorie, of iets jonger, omdat ik mezelf nu ook jonger gedroeg dan ik was.
De tuin rondom het slot leek Arabisch, hier in Rotterdijk. Het had een beetje een pseudo-religieus-communistische gloed, wel heel mooi trouwens, bijna sprookjesachtig. Het was alsof de zwanen de sleutel ergens bewaarden. Mijn nieuwe vriendin had grote volle borsten die vol leken te hangen met melk, net zoals mijn vorige vriendin. Het leeftijdsverschil hoefde nu niet echt opgevuld te worden, want we scheelden niet zoveel in leeftijd, maar wel kon het lengte-verschil opgevuld worden. Zij was kleiner dan mij, maar verder absoluut niet klein. Omdat ze bruin was zei ze altijd dat ze chocolade-melk had, maar dat was natuurlijk maar een grapje. We hadden beiden een bepaalde orale fixatie en dat was tegelijkertijd om te overleven. Er woedde nu eenmaal een orale oorlog. We waren schaakmat gezet in een machtsspel. De gelovigen zeiden altijd dat het paradijs van Arabisch-Babylonische oorsprong was, dus voor ons was het gebied rondom het slot altijd paradijselijk. Hier moest ergens de sleutel hangen. Met mijn nieuwe vriendin dwaalde ik door de gangen van het grote slot, diep in de nacht. Overal hingen

naaktschilderijen die ons denken leken te programmeren. Veel van die schilderijen waren enigmatische paradijselijke taferelen. Sommige vrouwen werden met een blinddoek beschilderd, naakt en met een zwaard. Soms een weegschaal vasthoudende, of een schaal met daarin een soort zwarte of grijze stof. Ze hadden een rechterlijke of richterlijke uitstraling of houding, als een vrouwe Justitia. Ook gaven zij mannen die stof te drinken. Ik moest ineens weer aan die amalgaam-toestanden denken. Zou het een vonnis zijn gebaseerd op in het verleden gepleegde misdaden ? De vrouwen waren van bruine huidskleur, maar niet altijd. Zou de bron van dit alles in het paradijs te vinden zijn ? Zou daar wat mis zijn gegaan ? Waarom gaf Eva haar man van de giftige vrucht ? Ik viel bijna naar achteren toen we in een kamertje kwamen met nog een schilderij. Dit schilderij was heel hoog opgehangen, boven een deur die een open haard verborg. De man was geblinddoekt in dit schilderij. De vrouw niet. Zij had twee ogen als rode appels waardoor ze naar hem keek. Hij zat op een stoel. Zij had een zwaard en een sigaar. Boven het schilderij was nog een schilderij met een geblinddoekte vrouw met een zwaard die stond alsof ze klaar was om te kappen. Maar

dat was het schokkendste niet : Beide vrouwen waren als etalage-poppen, werkende voor een industrie, en ze hadden geen borsten. Die waren afgekapt. Ze konden hun moedermelk niet geven. Hun vagina's waren afgedekt met metaal en een slot. Zij waren kinderloos, ontdaan van hun sexualiteit. Daarom gaven ze niets dan gif en verderf. Mijn nieuwe vriendin schrok er ook van. Het deed haar denken aan de vaginale besnijdenis in Afrika.

'Zouden dieren zich ook zo voelen ?' vroeg ik. 'Zij worden besneden tot de dood.' Mijn nieuwe vriendin knikte. Ik voelde me onwennig. Toen zijn we maar teruggegaan. 'Bij de indianen,' zei ik, 'in het amazone-gebied, werden soms de borsten van vrouwen geamputeerd zodat ze beter hun pijl en boog konden gebruiken.'

'Ja,' zei zijn vriendin, 'en in Fenicie wat nu Turkije is werd Attis aanbeden, een aan zijn lot overgeleverde jongen die door wilde schapen werd grootgebracht, en zichzelf ontmande door een vloek. Uit zijn bloed kwam de naaldboom voort, en hij was een vroegere Jezus.'

Als in Turkije daadwerkelijk het paradijs heeft gelegen, dan ging daarachter nog steeds deze gruwelijkheid schuil : een dieper kruis, een genitale afsnijding, een sexuele

apartheid. En dit had grote orale gevolgen. Het moederschap en de mannelijkheid werden ingeruild voor de oorlog, de jacht, de dood. Attis had zijn geliefde, Cybele, verlaten voor een sterveling, en werd door Cybele getroffen met de vloek van waanzin, vanwege de jaloezie. In de Joodse legendes duikt ook de naam van Lilith op als de eerste geliefde van Adam, maar zij werd al heel snel de hof uitgestuurd, omdat zij zich niet aan Adam wilde onderwerpen. En dit kruis was een enigma met vele gevolgen. Lilith zwoer dat zij de kinderen van Adam, de mensen, zou vernietigen. Zij kwam terug als de slang om Adam en Eva het gif aan te bieden. Ik ging op mijn buik liggen, en mijn vriendin ging op me liggen. Ik was niet getroffen door een vloek omdat ik een andere vriendin had nu, en mijn vorige vriendin had ook een andere vriend nu. Er was geen jaloezie. Er was vrijheid. Er waren geen rekken in onze monden meer.

Hoofdstuk 2.

‘Een vrouw zonder borsten heeft alleen gif te voeren,’ wordt er weleens gezegd, figuurlijk dan. Dat betekent dat een vrouw die geen verantwoordelijkheid draagt, geen moederlijke empathie, een gevaar is voor de samenleving. Dat was de slang in het paradijs, maar we zagen al dat er vele kanten aan het verhaal zaten, vele factoren speelden een rol, en het is niet echt eerlijk om alles zwart-wit neer te zetten met vurig religieus fundamentalisme. Er waren andere kanten. Wie hakte de borst van de vrouw af ? Waarom was ze zo woedend op de man, en wilde ze hem berechten ? Is er een kant van het verhaal die wij niet kennen ? Of heeft ze haar borst zelf afgehakt, als een amazone, om zo macht te kunnen voeren over de man ? En met welke redenen ? Voelt ze zich bedreigd door de man ? Of wil ze gewoon dwars haar zin doorvoeren.
Ik besluit met mijn vriendin terug te keren tot het slot. Ditmaal gaan we nog hoger. Op een hogere verdieping vinden we veel olie-lampen, veel Arabische spulletjes. De schilderijen zijn veel bloederiger hier, met veel naakte vrouwen die oorlog voeren. Ook zijn er veel jacht-tafereeltjes. We lopen naar de volgende verdieping, waar

het enigma al snel toeslaat : afgehakte koppen van bizons staan op de schilderijen. Ook zijn er veel azteekse schilderijen, waar azteekse priesters de harten uit hun slachtoffers snijden en omhoog houden. Het is een dolle boel van besnijdingen en afsnijdingen, allemaal om apartheid te creeeren. Weer een verdieping hoger staat een enorm schilderij met de toren van Babel. De toren van Babel is een verhaal uit de bijbel waarin mensen een toren proberen te bouwen naar de hemel, en naam te maken, maar dan daalt God neer om hen te verwarren en te scheiden, zodat ze elkaar niet meer kunnen verstaan. Nog een verdieping hoger staat een standbeeld van een engel, waarachter een schilderij is met de boom des levens. De engel lijkt op een wachter, zelfs op de engel des doods. Ik houd mijn vriendin vast. We zijn beiden naakt, en staren verschrikt naar de engel en het schilderij. Naast ons is nog een klein trapje naar boven, naar een zoldertje. We horen een stem : ‘Wie wil het ei uitbroeden, wie eet het, en wie staart naar de dop ?’
‘Zei jij dat ?’ vraag ik aan mijn vriendin. ‘Nee,’ zegt ze. ‘Jij ?’ Ik schud mijn hoofd. Dan vliegt er een papegaai van het zoldertje naar beneden. ‘Opkrassen,’ schreeuwt hij. ‘Wie heeft jullie gezegd hier te komen. Het ei zal rotten.’

We lopen naar boven naar het zoldertje en zien overal rotte eieren liggen. Het stinkt hier ook verschrikkelijk naar rotte eieren. ‘Te laat,’ krijst de papegaai, ‘te laat. Jullie hadden eerder moeten komen om het geheim te zien. Nu is het weg, voor eeuwig. Dit is wat jullie krijgen voor jullie optreden : Rotte eieren.’ Tussen de eieren ligt een klein kruisje waaraan een staafje hangt dat lijkt op een mannelijk geslachtsdeel. ‘En nu oprotten,’ roept de papegaai. Het beest begint ons te pikken, en we rennen naar beneden. Het best blijft ons pikken totdat we uit het slot zijn. Snel rennen we door de tuin het water in, en zwemmen naar de overkant, maar nog steeds houdt het beest niet op met aanvallen. Dan komt de grootste zwaan ons te hulp. We houden er heel wat plekken aan over, en willen voorlopig niet meer naar het slot.
Blijkbaar is de vruchtbaarheid aan het lijden verbonden, onlosmakelijk, als twee tegengestelden, het naakte aan het bedekte. We moeten maar wachten totdat daarin vrede is gekomen. In de grondtekst van de bijbel is het paradijs Sheool, het dodenrijk, oftewel de tuin der doden. Ook de val was een werking van het paradijs, om het offer te doen rijpen. De ruwe diamant moest geslepen worden. Ze ligt op mijn rug en heeft haar armen onder mijn oksels door en

houdt mijn schouders vast. Ze probeert me op te trekken, maar ik ben moe. Dan vallen we beiden in slaap.
Een oosterse tuin van geheimen, met religieuze valstrikken. Ik schrik wakker. Zij houdt me vast. Ik val weer in slaap. Voor een tweede keer schrik ik wakker. Zij houdt me weer stevig vast, en ik val weer in slaap. In wiens armen lig ik, of is dit weer een strik van de dood. Hoe dan ook, ik heb het nodig om door de dag te komen. Het is mij gegeven. Ze staan daar voor huizen als paardjes, paardjes van de apocalypse om de volle druiven te betreden, te vertrappen. De maan schijnt, de sterren vallen, een droomweb houdt mij vast. Houd mij vast, laat mij jouw trekpop zijn, in dit speelse paradijs is het beter te zijn, beter dan daarbuiten. Het paard van religie trapt hard, ongenadig, straft voor eeuwig, zet schaakmat, en trapt dan de druiven van het genot in, één voor één, en soms meerderen tegelijk. Een hard besluit, van een jaloerse God, een erfenis, van lang geleden, een raadsel dat brult, smeekt, dwingt. Kijk naar de vrucht, niet naar de dop, eet niet, want het is slechts vergif, maar zoek naar haar geheimenis, broedt het uit, en ren wanneer je kan, zweef over de wateren, als een afstandelijke liefde, veilig en ver weg als de zon. Laat de hoop je niet ontnemen, laat je niet

zeggen dat ver weg alleen maar koud is, want kijk naar de zon, die het verste weg is van ons allemaal, en schijnt en warmte geeft zoals niemand anders dat kan. De zon, de astronaut, op zoek naar geheimenissen, het grote broeden. Ik maak een verkeerde beweging en er knapt iets in mijn rug. Toch nog een complicatie van de steekpartij. Ik vecht tegen de dood, en heb een bijna-dood-ervaring. Ik kom in het paradijs, waar naakte vrouwen zijn, overal. Zij houden een geheim vast, een ei, een groot ei, een doorgang, een weg. Het is een ei vol van bloed. Ik bekijk het ei vol belangstelling. En het bloed stolt, en brengt een lichaam voort met orale en genitale vrijheid. En er is een harmonie tussen die twee, en er is vrede. Na een paar dagen ben ik weer de oude. Er is iets veranderd in mij. Ik heb de dood ontmoet, en daardoor het leven. Ik sta aan beide kanten. Ik ben de brug tussen twee naturen.

Er stonden vele narcissen in onze tuin, vechtend tegen de koude dood. Zij gaven het leven warmte, de mensen een warme deken. Alles was bevroren, bevroren legers. Er werd gehandeld in mensen. De koude hand des doods greep hen, en wie kon daar tegen opvechten. Sommigen dachten harmonie in bloed te zien, anderen alleen maar twist. De raven kwamen over de stad. De stad was snel

opengebroken. Er was plaats voor het enigma nu, men staarde niet alleen maar naar de dop. Men at niet meer van het vergif. De broeders waren gekomen. In de heldere zon stonden zij daar, in de Arabische zon. De raven waren uit het oosten gekomen. Oosterse wachters waren nu in de stad, kloppende op de deuren. Zij brachten dat andere nieuws. Zij geloofden dat zij het hart waren binnengegaan, op de zwaan waren zij geklommen, en het bracht hen hier. Ook zij hadden hun verwachtingen, hun verlangens, hun logica. De Arabische zon was heet. Zij waren de paarden van de apocalypse, maar niemand heeft hen begrepen. Zachte hoeven hadden zij, manen overal, lange wimpers, dromerige ogen, bruin, dromend van zachte winters, sneeuwwitte daken, waarop het paarse zou neerdalen. De paarse hand zou hen allemaal wegnemen. Zij hadden hun schuilplaats in het oosten wanneer de winter zou vallen, en dan zou het pas echt hard en koud zijn. En de drop-verkopers zouden er rijk van worden, de banketbakkerijen vol, want iedereen wilde daar ineens slapen. Men zou vluchten tot het orale als de genitale klem zou worden gebroken. Nu lag zij nog vastgebonden op de grond, maar de wachters waren dichtbij haar. Ik hoorde een schreeuw. Zij stond op, en bedekte haar naakte lichaam met een

nachtjapon. Zij ging de nacht in met een fakkel, zij was de moeder der raven. De paarse hand bracht haar op de punt van de kerktoren. Een sneeuwwitte dag zou het worden, nu Doornroosje was ontwaakt. Niet door een kus. Neen. Door een warme hand, een innige omhelzing.
Het was een paarse dag met lange manen, een koninklijk feest. Doornroosje was opgestaan. Zij stond tussen haar vader en moeder in, de oude koning en koningin. Zij bracht hen de smeltende chocola die voor eeuwen verborgen was gehouden. Iedereen zou wel met haar willen dansen, iedereen zou wel een veeg van haar chocola willen krijgen. Maar zij was selectief in haar genade, zeer selectief. Zij bedekte de edele vruchten met chocola, en schoof hen in de ogen. De bakker stond buiten op een kist en zong van haar. Zo lieten zij het feest ten einde gaan. Maar tot diep in de nacht werd er nagenoten. De bakker stond bij de notenboom met een bijl, en brak het open. Kisten vol mandarijnen stonden hier, kisten vol oude mandarijnse koningen, met een mandarijns accent. Een zetel gaf zij aan de oude man die zij door het licht had geleid. De baard van de oude tovenaar die vastzat in de boomspleet was losgesneden door het zwaard van haar ogen. Haar ogen spoten vuur, en lieten de koralen zien. Dit

allemaal in flitsen, niet teveel, want teveel van dit goede zou de draken opwekken. Zij wilden Doornroosje voor eeuwig laten slapen, en niet slechts voor honderd jaar.
Ik keek met haar over de rivier van gisteren, naar de dampen ervan en de spoken, en wij wilden er niet wezen. Wij waren gevangen door het morgenland, waar de prinsessen en prinsen van gisteren niet meer regeerden. Wij konden het, ja, wij konden het wat we jaren niet gekund hadden. In het midden van de stad was zij verlicht. Wij werden door haar gevuld als roomsoezen. Van taai vlees waren haar vullingen, niet om te eten, maar om te broeden. De kok van de slacht werd terechtgesteld, en dit allemaal na een reeks lovende woorden. Morgen zou de maaltijd zijn, niet vandaag. Nooit meer zouden wij van onrijpe druiven eten waardoor de tanden van onze kinderen slee waren geworden. En deze komende maaltijd was een maaltijd voor vogels, raven, want zij waren bestemd voor dat uur om het eerste aan tafel te gaan en te eten. Het oog van de stad wilde haar verlichten, want de stad had haar nodig, en wilde haar nooit meer uit het gezicht verliezen, maar op die dag vertrokken de zwanen naar het oosten. De raven hadden de stad nu, en zij werden ingenomen, zoals zij eens innamen. Het pasen met zijn

versierselen van drop was nog steeds een ingrijpende gebeurtenis. Ik keek haar aan, zij keek naar mij. Ik had mijn oude jeugdliefde teruggevonden. Zij had kleine borsten, niet gevuld, zij was teder, intens, voorzichtig, zacht. Nooit zou er meer een zondvloed komen na die dag. Haar regenboog was een teken daarvan aan haar hemel. Ik schraapte de damp er vanaf. Een standbeeld werd van haar opgericht in de stad. Wij zouden haar nooit vergeten.
Na die week speelden de kinderen spookje in de stad, en werden de oude hobbelpaarden uit de schuur gehaald. Zij speelde, ik droomde. Het was de slag der herinneringen, rijkelijk belegde het mijn brood. Ik liet de raven er van eten. Ik at de worst van het verleden door de berg naar de andere kant, en daar werd het varken van de toekomst geslacht. Tijd was niet meer. De bezetters hadden de stad en het land ingenomen, weer vanuit het oosten, door de Arabische zon. En ik kon alleen maar glimlachen. Ik vond het wel grappig, al die vogels. Wij voerden de vogels aan het zwanenmeer, maar de zwanen zijn hier nooit meer teruggekomen. Zij hadden het geheim ergens anders gebracht. Ook voerden wij de paarden die dag, de paarden van deze apocalypse. Beschuit was haar lievelingsvoer, en rozen haar lievelingsbloemen. Een paard zwom door de

grachten. Ik keek erna, en mijn rug maakte mij los van de aarde. Ik zweefde er boven, als een grote broer, als de lange neef. Ik verzorgde de aarde als mijn broertje.
Het regende buiten. Ik zat met mijn jeugdliefde op de bank. Aan al het oude was een einde gekomen, nu ik het oudere had gevonden. Het was als een harem in mijn gedachten, een doornenkroon, een rozenkrans, de cirkelzaag boven Bagdad, de ster van Betlehem. Een zoete ster was het, van genadeloos geduld. Haar licht was verblindend, en toen konden we ineens weer voelen, elkaar voelen. Voelen datgene wat zo lang was weggeweest. Zij liep zo langzaam in haar lange nachtjapon, een oosterse avondjurk, leren schoentjes met riempjes, met allerlei gaten, gelakt, en haar sokjes waren kinderlijk als de bloesem. En nog steeds dacht ik aan de zwanen. Waar zouden ze zijn ? Verblindend was haar licht, des te zoeter haar aanrakingen, haar verschijning. Teer licht, weeskind, wolf, onbegrepen. Ongezadeld in de nacht. Ik borstel haar, er is rust. Zij neemt haar pijl en boog, en gaat de stad in. In de stad staan beelden van zwanen, als een herinnering aan die dag. De zwanen zijn van steen, niet van vlees. De stad is verlaten van zwanen. De oorlog is dood. Elke knie zal zich buigen, elke tong zal

belijden, en niemand weet wat. Een onverbiddelijk zwaard heeft de oorlog lamgelegd. Het vrederijk is aangebroken. De paarden van de apocalypse gaan streng door de stad heen, en dan komt de zon op, de Arabische zon. Het jachtboek is nu geopend. Men bekijkt de plaatjes, en begrijpt niet waarom. Men wil terug naar de oude dagen, maar het kan niet meer. Ik borstel haar haren, er is rust. Ze is in de stad met haar boog, als vrouwe Justitia. De rechtszaak begint. Zij was een vrouw van geconcentreerde kracht en zwakheid. De jacht-engel. Zij roepen vrede vrede, terwijl er geen vrede is. Na de duizend jaren zal er een nieuw tijdperk van vrede aanbreken. Ik borstel haar haren nog steeds. Ze zegt niks. Ik zak weg, en ze gaat op mijn rug liggen. Als een kat heeft ze haar prooi. De vlekken van de luipaard spreken van oude wonden. Dan breekt ze mijn rug, en ik ben niet meer van de aarde. Haar bereiken kan ik niet, alleen door stralen. Ik moet haar overgeven, ik moet haar loslaten, de afstand zal nu rechter zijn. Ik voel mij als een Arabische zon, die het ijzer laat stinken, die het leer zacht maakt.

Zij zal het grote ei uitbroeden, zonder dat het haar zal doden. Van het vergif zal zij niet eten. Eens sprong zij in het wespennest, en werd een luipaard. Nu komt zij niet dichtbij, maar broedt van ver weg. De dokters zeggen dat mijn rug nu goed is, maar ik heb pijn. Zij zeggen dat dat er niet is. Zij staren alleen naar de dop. In een vuur dat eeuwig brandt wonen zij. Van een afstand ontkennen zij de problemen, een naaldboom groeit uit mijn wond. Grootgebracht door wilde schapen ben ik. We zijn omsingeld en schaakmat gezet door levensgevaarlijke zotten. De idioten van de planeet Idiotia zijn gekomen. Waren de dokters maar dronken en aardig. Wat is er van ons Utopia overgebleven ? De nieuwe bezetters ruiken als het oude, de mondenrekken zijn weer terug. Ditmaal met veel prikkeldraad. IJzeren Jaap is uit zijn doos geklommen om de klokken terug te zetten. Waren de zwanen nog maar hier. Zij is een boogschutter, een teken aan de hemel, dat de oorlog nooit meer komen zal, maar we leven met de jacht. Een teken dat er nooit geen zondvloed meer zou komen, maar nu zijn we hier. De ijzeren maagd is onze straf. Zij broedt niet, zij steekt, zij is op jacht. Mijn rug is van ijzer, een bouwwerk van amalgaam, van kwik, van Mercurius, om de rest van mijn lichaam te verzieken. De

dokters zien niets op hun foto’s. Zij staren alleen naar de dop. Wij wachten allen op Bert Ootjes, die nu inmiddels een martelaar is. Maar de zwanen hebben hem bezocht. Mijn buik is gemaakt van witte en rode vulling, een eeuwig gif. Zelfs al is de wortel eruit, het symptoom zal altijd blijven. Een leuk syndroom waar geestelijk verzorgers aan kunnen blijven sleutelen. Ouders blijven met hun kinderen naar zulke dokters gaan, want als het kind geestelijk ziek wordt verklaard door de beroepsbeul, dan treft de ouders zelf geen schuld, want geestelijk ziek zijn dat ben je vanaf de geboorte, en zo hebben de ouders die hun kind verrot hebben geslagen een alibi. Zo is de zogeheten tandarts met zijn stiekeme, niet navolgbare, zogeheten vullinkjes die het kind beladen met complexe vergiftigingen en de syndrooms-stempeltjes van de geestelijk verzorgers, de zogeheten psychiaters en hun handlangers, een professionele ouders-bescherming geworden. En hoe kan een kind tegen zo’n doortrapt systeem opboksen ? Een kind heeft geen diploma’s, geen zegeltjes, maar mag deze zegeltjes wel verbreken, door de paardjes van de apocalypse. Maar waar zijn de zwaantjes wanneer je ze nodig hebt ? En waar is Bert Ootjes ? Rebelse kinderen worden al snel ziek verklaard, niet de

maatschappij, nee, want de maatschappij is heiliger, in ieder geval heiliger dan degene die aan de bel trekt. De paardjes staan nog steeds in deze carrousel. En de mierzoete snoepjes van oma moeten de kinderen klaarmaken om een reis door de fuik van de zogeheten tandarts te maken. De zogeheten tandarts gebruikt hiervoor goedgepraat geweld. De Arabische tandarts was nu gekomen, en die was nog wel orthodoxer. Bij de balie werd snoep uitgedeeld wanneer een kind zich keurig en netjes had gedragen. Het hormoon van Bert Ootjes was inmiddels uitgewerkt. Ook de botten begonnen gaatjes te vertonen, en ook die moesten gevuld worden, en daar had de Arabische tandarts een heel arsenaal voor, en die duldde echt geen tegenspraak. Arabisch amalgaam werd daarvoor gebruikt, waarvan de ingredienten strict geheim werden gehouden. Alleen de ingewijden mochten de ambacht uitvoeren, en beunhazen werden streng gestrafd. Die werden openlijk op de pleinen aan de schandpaal gezet. Nee, de Arabische tandarts, daar viel niet mee te sollen. Malafide tandartsen werden als kwakzalvers bestempeld, afgezet, en gingen sindsdien vaak zonder een ledemaat of ontmand door het leven. Azteekse praktijken kwamen niet zelden voor. De Arabische tandarts meende het. De

bottenvuller, zo werd de Arabische tandarts vaak genoemd. ‘Ik moet vandaag weer naar de bottenvuller,’ klaagde een oud mensje. ‘Ja, ik ook,’sprak een bijna tandenloos oud mannetje, en een ander moest de dag erna. Controles waren wekelijks, en sommigen moesten twee keer per week. Elke knie boog, elke tong beleed, en elke trotse nek brak voor de Arabische tandarts. Als er problemen waren met het Arabisch amalgaam, dan werd dat altijd op iets anders geschoven, en dan voelde de Arabische tandarts zich diep beledigd, en kon erg kwaad worden, wat dan de meest verschrikkelijke consequenties had. Het was godslasterlijk om te twijfelen aan het Arabisch amalgaam. Zulke godslasteraars en aanstellers waren rijp voor de Arabische psychiater. De Arabische tandarts was wel heel goed voor dieren. Zo wreed als ze waren naar hun klagende patienten, zo genadig waren ze naar dieren.
Het lichaam van Bert Ootjes lag inmiddels op de bodem van het meer van Geneve, waar ze hem hadden gedumpt. Zijn botten werden later opgedoken en hij kreeg een eervolle begrafenis. De appel brandt, en kan niet meer gegeten worden. Er kan alleen nog maar gekeken worden als naar de uitbarsting van een vulkaan. De trekpop van

het verleden is stuk, maar de Arabische tandarts kan het nog wel maken, want die handelt ook in speelgoed. Bert Ootjes zal zich zeker in zijn graf omdraaien. Speelgoed, om kinderen klaar te maken voor de tandarts. Nu kunnen ze nog spelen, maar straks ? Onze enige hoop is de marsmannetjes, maar die bestaan niet. De marsman marcheert onderdrukt in ons geconditioneerd verstand. De Arabische tandarts is de banketbakker, heeft een hotel-keten, is ambitieus. Hij is de grootste snoep-producent voor kinderen. Hij verdient wat bij, om ook een zwembad te hebben onder zijn kast van een huis. De Arabische tandarts is hier kind aan huis. Om Bert Ootjes wordt inmiddels flink gerouwd. Velen worden monddood verklaard. Ik begin een Arabische tandartsen-praktijk, zo’n beetje de enige manier om aan de Arabische tandarts te ontkomen.
Een nieuwe Arabische vogelsoort is er toegevoegd in het plantsoen, om het verlies van de zwanen op te vangen : de draai-konten. Prachtige vogels, daar niet van, maar ze kunnen zo vanuit het niets bezoekers aanvallen. Zo van : van te voren maar eerst bellen. Hele statige, deftige vogels met een strenge zwaar-orthodoxe etiquette. Zo ken ik er nog één. Het doet me een beetje denken aan die papegaai

van het slot. Ik durf niet zomaar meer naar het zwanenmeer, het plantsoen. Deze vogels zijn geen grappen.

‘IJs ?’ vraagt ze.

- Ja, met slagroom, zeg ik

‘Siroop erbij ?’

- Ja, die rode

‘De Arabische tandarts zal daar blij mee zijn, die is lekker duur, en veroorzaakt veel gaten in je botten. Hij zal wel weer flink op je schelden bij de komende controle om zijn blijdschap om de winst goed te verbergen.’

- Nee, ik heb nu mijn eigen kwastjes. Ik kom niet meer bij die man. Ik ben nu zelf die man. Hij mag wel bij mij komen, dan zal ik hem een koekje van eigen deeg geven.

‘Arabisch amalgaam ?’

- Ja, schat, die met die vogelstront.

‘Schat, je weet toch dat je de doodstraf kan krijgen voor het verraden van de ingredienten.’

- Laat hen maar hierkomen met hun bekken vol mislukte plastische chirurgie en gedwongen eeuwige mode.

‘Schat, je weet toch dat dat hun geloof is ? Ze weten niet beter, en dat moet je respecteren.’

- Ik heb daar allemaal geen respect voor. Heb jij respect voor een mes die in je rug wordt gestoken ?

‘Toe nou, liefje, dat moet je zo niet zien.’

- Oh, en hoe moet ik het dan zien ?

‘Moet je kijken hoe je jezelf opstelt, en dat noemt zich een Arabische tandarts. Een beetje professioneler mag wel.’

- Oh, gaan we het nu ook over professionaliteit hebben, en vergeet vooral het woord deskundig niet te noemen. Ga godverredomme een ezel kopen.

‘Zeg, jeetje, nu ga je ook nog eens een beetje lopen vloeken hier.’

- En doe jij nu maar niet ineens alsof je heilig Aagje bent.

‘Oh, heerlijk zo’n ruzie met jou, maar je weet wie er boven in bed de touwtjes in handen heeft.’

- Je hebt gelijk, ’t spijt me, zal niet meer gebeuren.

‘Goed, Jan Klaassen, dan is dat in ieder geval duidelijk.’

- Ja, Katrijn.

‘Moet je nu nog ijs met slagroom en rode siroop ?’

- Nee, Katrijn, ik heb geen honger meer.

We starten een restaurant in het midden van de stad, zoals elke goede Arabische tandarts zou doen. Het voedsel is er zalig, en mensen komen hier echt om heerlijk te genieten. We hebben ons eigen plantsoentje met Arabische draaikont-vogels, door ons getemd. Een betere plek kan ik me niet wensen. Mijn wereld kan niet meer stuk, en de hare ook niet.

Het Gedwongen Chocola

Een oud vrouwtje leefde helemaal alleen in het bos in een klein huisje. Ze staarde naar buiten. Ze kon de bomen goed zien. Daarna staarde ze naar haar gedroogde vlinders die ze als kind had gevangen. Voor haar gevoel miste ze nog een paar kostbaren. Ze had haar net nog dichtbij haar, klaar om de ontbrekende exemplaren te vangen. Altijd was ze op zoek. Niets dan leugens zweefden in de lucht, haar beschuldigende. Ze wilde deze leugens vangen, opdrogen en inlijsten. Ze was vol van haat. Ze kon het gelach van de plagende spotters om haar heen niet meer aan. Elke dag weer probeerden ze haar neer te halen, al vanaf het moment dat ze wakker werd. Ze leken op kinderlijke kleine elfjes, met brutale gezichtjes, als vlindertjes vrolijk dartelend om haar heen. Ze haatte kinderen op die manier, en ze droeg dan ook een duister geheim in haar binnenste. Soms sloeg ze met haar schepnet om zich heen, en riep : ‘Is het nu afgelopen.’ Maar de laatste jaren ving ze niks meer. Ze droeg een duister geheim van binnen. Ze wilde hier niet aan denken, en met niemand over praten. Ze was

het vechten moe. Niemand zou haar begrijpen, en niemand zou sympathie voor haar hebben. Langzaam schonk ze wat thee in voor haarzelf. Buiten vlogen wat vogeltjes waar ze naar keek. Ze snapte niet waarom zo’n jonge geest als zij opgesloten moest zijn in zo’n oud lichaam. Zij zou oud worden in de armen van een ieder die haar aan zou raken, en daarom bleef ze ver van de mensen vandaan. Overdag werkte ze aan haar maaltijd voor de avond, en zorgde ze dat het huisje voldoende schoon bleef. Ook deed ze wat handwerk. Ze was ver weg in haar gedachten. Niemand kon haar bereiken. Ze was bitter geworden.

Ze wist niet dat er wat verder in het bos wonderbomen stonden. Ze kwam niet verder dan haar eigen tuin. De bomen werden bewaakt door dieren, zoals katten, slangen en konijnen, orakels. De bomen zouden haar naar boven leiden, maar ze zag hen niet. Ze zag alleen de kabalerige vliegende deugnietjes om haar heen fladderen. Maar op een dag was ze als door hypnose geslagen, en liep haar tuin uit door het tuinhekje. Ze wilde even het bos in, niet zo ver, maar even ergens anders zijn. Een konijn stond voor een boom, en wenkte haar. Ze kwam dichterbij en keek in de ogen van het konijn. Waarom komt u niet in

deze boom wonen, zei het konijn. De top van de boom draagt een geweldig huis.

- Hoe kom ik daar, vroeg het oude vrouwtje.

Maar toen was het konijn weg. De vrouw wist niet of ze het konijn kon vertrouwen, liep door, en gleed in een onder het mos verborgen put. Ze viel gelukkig zacht, en op de bodem van de put stond een kat voor een deurtje.
‘Heus,’ zei de kat, ‘er is een ander leven voor u. Welkom binnen in uw nieuwe huis.’ En ineens was de kat verdwenen. De vrouw wist niet of ze de kat kon vertrouwen, maar ging toch naar binnen. ‘Welkom in de boom,’ zei een stem. ‘De boom is alles wat er is.’
‘Ik heb anders nooit in een boom geleefd,’ zei de vrouw.
‘Omdat je dat niet wist,’ zei de stem. ‘Je dacht alleen maar dat je wat wist.’
‘Ik wil hier weg,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Ik moet weer naar huis.’
‘Dit is je huis,’ zei de stem. Ze keek recht in de ogen van een kat.
‘Oh, jij weer,’ zei ze tegen de kat.
‘En jij weer,’ zei de kat. De kat greep haar en wilde met haar dansen, maar de vrouw wilde niet. ‘Ik wil eruit,’ riep ze.
‘Waaruit ?’ vroeg de kat.

‘Uit deze hel,’ zei de vrouw.
‘Dit is alles wat er is,’ zei de kat.
‘Spreek geen onzin,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Ik was daarnet nog in mijn huis.’
‘Welk huis ?’ zei de kat. ‘Dat dacht je alleen maar. Je bent hier altijd al geweest.’
‘Leugenaar,’ riep de vrouw. ‘Ik haal de politie erbij.’
‘De politie ?’ zei de kat. ‘Wat is dat ? Dat zijn alleen je gedachten.’
De vrouw werd woest en probeerde de kat te slaan, maar die was ineens verdwenen. Alles was donker om haar heen. Ze liep een trapje op naar boven, waar een beetje licht was. Daar was de kat weer. Beiden stonden ze voor een lift. ‘Stap in de lift,’ zei de kat, ‘dan zul je van al je problemen af zijn.’ Als gehypnotiseerd stapte de vrouw in de lift, en de kat sloot de deur achter haar. Hoog in de boom kwam ze aan in haar nieuwe huisje. ‘Maar dat is fantastisch,’ zei ze. Ze zou de kat wel willen omhelzen, maar die was nergens te vinden. Het beviel haar goed in haar nieuwe huisje. Alles was prachtig wit. Al snel kwam er een konijn boven. Het bleek hetzelfde konijn te zijn.
‘En van hieruit zul je alle lieve kinderen van de wereld opnemen,’ zei het konijn. ‘Er zijn kamers genoeg.’

‘Oh, dat lijkt me heerlijk,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Dan kan ik eindelijk voor het eerst een tante zijn.’
‘Zorg voor ze, kook voor ze, ga leuke dingen met ze doen,’ zei het konijn. ‘Deze kinderen zijn erg ongelukkig. Maak ze gelukkig.’ De vrouw had er echt zin in, en voelde zich jonger dan ooit tevoren. Het huis was inderdaad erg groot. Ze zou pannekoeken bakken, sprookjes voorlezen, en veel spelletjes met hen doen. Ook zou ze hen de andere plaatsen van de boom laten zien. Snel was haar huis vol met lieve kinderen. Ze sprak tot de boom als tot haar geliefde. Op een dag was ze verschrikt en in de war omdat haar kinderen in vuur waren. Maar de kat stelde haar gerust : het was slechts boomvuur. Het was een koud vuur wat aan hen beitelde, om hen nog meer klaar te maken voor het leven in de boom. De gezichten van reuzen waren in de boom die tot hen spraken. Op een dag stierf de vrouw. Heintje, een van de kinderen, nam de leiding over. Op de kamer van de oude vrouw stond een oude lift waar ze ingingen. Boven het huis bleek de boom gewoon door te gaan, en al snel waren ze in de wolken. Via een hele hoge tak kwamen ze in een andere boom terecht. Ze werden direkt door een konijn gegrepen en naar binnen gesleurd. Hier moesten ze gedwongen van vruchtenpastei

eten. Ja, zei het konijn, want dit is de boom van de gedwongen vrucht. De kinderen vonden het niet zo erg, want de vruchtenpastei was erg lekker. Maar al snel moesten ze nog meer eten, en veel kinderen begonnen misselijk te worden. Heintje begon het toen flink zat te worden, trok zijn pistool en schoot het konijn aan flarden. Het bleek verder een prachtige boom te zijn. Ieder kind kreeg hier zijn eigen verdieping. Midden in de nacht maakte een ander konijn hen allemaal wakker, en dwong hen om chocola te eten in de gezamenlijke huiskamer. Eerst vonden de kinderen dat geweldig, maar toen ze later nog meer moesten eten werden sommigen al snel erg misselijk. Het konijn was verschrikkelijk aan het schelden. Heintje vroeg : ‘Mag ik vragen wat hiervan de bedoeling is ?’ Maar het konijn wilde er niks van zeggen. Ze hadden maar te gehoorzamen. Dat liet Heintje niet op zich zitten, greep zijn pistool en schoot op het konijn. Maar het konijn dook weg. Even later kwamen er nog meer konijnen binnen, en grepen Heintje. Heintje zou worden opgesloten achter tralies. De kinderen waren erg in paniek. Daantje werd hun nieuwe leider. ‘Zoals jullie hebben gezien is er hier niet veel pluis,’ zei Daantje. ‘We kunnen beter teruggaan.’ Maar toen ze bij de hoge tak terugkwamen

zagen ze konijnse wachters staan. Toen zijn ze naar beneden gegaan, maar ook daar stonden konijnse wachters. De dagen erna werden ze weer gedwongen om chocola te eten, meer dan ze opkonden, en niemand kon er wat tegen doen. De kinderen werden doodziek. Weer riep Daantje iedereen bij elkaar en zei : ‘Dan maar zo hoog mogelijk.’ En ze gingen ditmaal gewoon zo hoog als ze konden. Ze hoopten dat ze weer een tak tegen zouden komen die hen naar een andere boom zou brengen, maar er gebeurde niks. Wel zagen ze ergens een deurtje waardoor ze naar binnen konden gaan. Het bleek een lift te zijn, maar die kon alleen maar omhoog. De kinderen gingen in de lift, en Daantje drukte op het hoogste knopje. ‘Jullie zitten vast,’ zei een stem van de lift. ‘Niemand kan van de boom van de gedwongen vrucht ontsnappen.’ Veel kinderen begonnen te huilen. Ook Daantje wist niet wat hij kon doen. Toen ze uit de lift stapten zagen ze een heks zitten, met een slang en een beer. De beer was een knuffelbeer. Toen ze wat beter keken zagen ze dat de heks en de slang een standbeeld waren. De knuffelbeer begon te lachen. ‘Wat sta je te lachen,’ zei Daantje.
‘Jullie hebben vast moeten eten van de vruchtenpastei en de chocola, nietwaar ?’ zei de knuffelbeer.

‘Ja, hoezo ?’ zei Daantje. Weer begon de knuffelbeer te lachen, ditmaal te schaterlachen.
‘Wat sta jij daar nou te lachen, domme aap,’ zei Daantje.
‘Nou,’ zei de knuffelbeer, ‘ik vind het wel grappig.’
‘Grappig,’ zei Daantje, ‘het is helemaal niet grappig. We zijn er doodziek van.’ Weer moest de knuffelbeer daar erg om lachen.
‘Zit je ons nu uit te lachen ?’ vroeg Daantje.
‘Kom, knuffel me,’ zei de knuffelbeer ineens. Daantje stapte voorzichtig naar voren, en begon de knuffelbeer te knuffelen. ‘Laat mij maar met jullie meegaan, dan zal jullie niks overkomen,’ zei de knuffelbeer. Samen gingen ze terug en de knuffelbeer had gelijk. Nu hij mee was gekomen lieten de konijnen hen met rust. De knuffelbeer was heel aardig. Op een dag vroeg Daantje waarom de konijnen hen niet meer dwongen. ‘Omdat ze bang voor me zijn,’ zei de knuffelbeer.
‘Kun jij Heintje dan niet bevrijden ?’ vroeg Daantje.
‘Nee,’ zei de knuffelbeer, ‘een konijnenslot valt niet zo maar open te krijgen.’ De konijnse wachters stonden ook nog steeds bij de grote tak en beneden, en daar viel niet zomaar langs te komen. ‘Ik zal je vertellen hoe je bij de knuffelboom kan komen,’ zei de knuffelbeer. ‘Midden in

de nacht als iedereen slaapt dan schuift het standbeeld van de heks en de slang even opzij waardoor er een tunnel ontstaat die tot de knuffelboom leidt.’
Daantje besluit er naar toe te gaan om meer kennis op te doen. Hij moet helemaal alleen gaan, want de knuffelbeer is van die boom verbannen. Voor de jongere kinderen zou het te gevaarlijk zijn. Alles lukt, en al gauw komt Daantje via de tunnel aan in de knuffelboom. Maar het is alles behalve een knuffelplaats. Militaire konijnen lopen hier rond. Daantje heeft nog nooit zoveel wapens bij elkaar gezien, en ze zien er heel gevaarlijk uit. Deze konijnen zien er veel erger uit dan de andere konijnen. Het zijn roofkonijnen, als ratten. En hun oren zijn ook een stuk korter. ‘Neem van mij aan, deze konijnen zijn geen stumperds, nee, zeker niet. Geen ruzie mee krijgen,’ zegt een konijn tegen hem. ‘Wat kom je hier doen trouwens.’ Maar Daantje loopt door. ‘Wat hebben jullie met Heintje gedaan ?’ roept hij. Even later komt hij bij een hok waarin een heleboel knuffelberen zijn, en waar ook Heintje zit. Heintje is flink boos. Heintje ziet er een stuk ouder uit, en vertelt hem dat ze gedwongen worden gevaarlijke medicijnen te slikken. Als dat zo door gaat heeft Heintje niet lang meer te leven. Daantje schrikt daar erg van.

‘Daantje,’ zegt Heintje, ‘herinner je dat tante het eens heeft gehad over het huisje waar ze eerst woonde, vlak bij de boom, dat daar plagende elven woonden ? Misschien dat zij kunnen helpen. Wij kunnen niet van deze boom weg, maar als jij naar beneden loopt dan kon je door de voordeur eruit en naar ze op zoek gaan.’

Goed idee, zegt Daantje, en vertrekt meteen. Na een tijdje zoeken komt hij bij het huisje van het oude vrouwtje aan. In het huisje vindt hij de elfjes. Ze zijn erg droevig om wat ze het oude vrouwtje allemaal hebben aangedaan. Daantje vertelt hen het verhaal, en al snel gaan ze met hem mee naar de knuffelboom. Ditkeer gingen ze plagen en pesten zoals ze nog nooit eerder hadden gedaan, maar nu allemaal voor een goed doel. De konijnen waren snel allemaal van de boom vertrokken. Deze magische elven wisten heel goed hoe ze de kooi moesten openen, en al snel waren Heintje en de knuffelberen vrij.

De Ontsnapping

Jara stond stil. Ze keek om haar heen. De rivier leek alsof het elk moment kon opwellen. De zon raakte bijna de rivier aan, geheel wit in de verte. Apen zag ze aan de overkant. Al snel was ze in de rivier en zwom naar de overkant. Ze greep een liaan, en trok haarzelf uit het water. Apen staarden haar aan. Ze kroop op een heuveltje verder het water uit, haar huid zat onder de modder. Ze hoorde het geluid van de apen, en opeens voelde ze hun handen op haar huid. Ze trokken haar verder omhoog. Het water dampte als in een mist, en het was er warm. Even later lag ze languit op het gras, tussen het mos, onder de bomen. Het was een prachtige jungle hier, in de dieptes van het regenwoud. Weer raakten de apen haar aan, en de rillingen gingen door haar lijf. Ze omhelsde hen, en ze lieten het toe. Ze was hun kind. Ze maakte zich meester van de situatie, stond op, en rende het oerwoud in. Even later stond ze in een hut. Ze was moe, ging op de versleten matras liggen. Niemand kon haar zeggen waar ze was. Het leek wel alsof de apen hier woonden. Achter de hut vond ze een skelet. Ze nam van wat appels die hier en daar lagen. Ze was hongerig, en ze at zelfs wat oud brood. Haar

hele leven had ze verlangd naar een rustige plaats, waar ze alleen zou zijn.
Ze was onrustig, zoals de apen onrustig waren, maar de natuur was mooi hier, ze kon hier wegglijden. De apen probeerden met haar te communiceren, maar zij gleed steeds weg omdat ze moe was. Ze hielden haar vast. Even later duwden ze haar bananen in haar mond.
De natuur was als gladgestreken hier, niemand zei wat. Ze voelde zich oud en jong. Ze staarde naar het amulet wat ze om haar nek had gedragen. Ze had het in haar hand.
Plotseling draaide ze zich om en zag een man staan, een indiaan. Een band met een paar witte veren om zijn hoofd. Hij pakte haar hand, en ging naast haar liggen. Zij vond dat eigenlijk heel normaal. Misschien woonde de man hier. Hij joeg haar niet weg. Hij gedroeg zich mysterieus. Ze voelde geen angst voor hem, alleen acceptatie.
Als ze in zijn ogen keek zag ze een open jungle. Hij staarde naar haar. Ze kon wegzinken in zijn ogen. Ze zeiden niets tegen elkaar. De man maakte een vuur, en ging erbij zitten, en Jara kwam er ook bijzitten even later. Het leek wel alsof elke minuut een uur duurde. Zo stil was het hier. Er was hier een open wereld, een diepte.
Ze omhelsden elkaar terwijl ze elkaar niet kenden. Ze

wisten genoeg. De natuur bond hen samen. Er waren geen woorden nodig, alles was ondergedompeld in de prachtige natuur. De ontmoeting duurde lang. Daarna vertrok de man weer. Jara staarde naar het amulet. Het glom. Ze ging terug naar de versleten matras, en viel in slaap.

Ze zag haar reis als een gezel, ze hield van de reis. Ze at van de natuur, en dronk van de rivier, het was genoeg. Ze was gelukkig. Jara was als bedekt door de natuur, als een veilige schuilplaats, geen slavernij meer. Maar nog wel de littekens daarvan. Ze was ontsnapt, ze had dagen door het bos gerend, en nu was ze hier. Slangen gleden door het gras. Ze had van hen niets te vrezen. Het was alsof de natuur haar opnam.

Ze wilde wraak nemen op de blanken, maar hoe. Ze was zelfs gemerkt in haar mond. Vreemde tekens hadden ze in haar tanden gesneden, en metalen erin gegoten. Met haar mes probeerde ze het eruit te snijden. Al snel was ze aan het bloeden. De apen kwamen dichtbij. Ze kwam erachter dat de kolonisten zendertjes hadden gestopt in de dieptes van haar kiezen. Ze wist dat ze in gevaar was, nog steeds. Misschien konden ze haar wel achtervolgen. Ze rende verder, de voetstappen van de man volgende. Na enkele dagen kwam ze hem tegen. Hij trok haar naar zich toe. Ze

spraken niet. Het was alsof ze elkaar aanvoelden. Ze hoorden schoten in de lucht. 'Slaven ontsnapt,' riep iemand. De man greep zijn mes, maar daarna greep hij een pijl, en toen zijn boog. Beiden renden ze verder. Weer waren er schoten, maar ze zagen niemand. Ze kwamen aan bij een riviertje, waar een bootje was. Ze namen het bootje om de rivier mee over te komen. Aan de overkant gekomen wees Jara op de mond van de man. Ze opende haar mond om haar tanden te laten zien. Ook de man opende zijn mond, en Jara zag het metaal, en de zendertjes. Ze probeerde het hem duidelijk te maken. Met een mes kregen ze het eruit. Jara gooide de zendertjes in het riviertje. Toen gingen ze dieper het oerwoud in. Ze hoopten dat niemand hen hier nog zou kunnen volgen. De natuur was te mooi om daar nog drukte om te maken. Het was alsof hun lasten door die pracht werden afgespoeld. Het was alsof de man wilde zeggen : Laten we hier opnieuw beginnen. Jara knikte. Zijn ogen spraken. Een leven hier zou goed zijn.

Ze wilden wraak nemen op de blanken, maar de natuur nam hen mee. De natuur deed hen vergeten, maar er was nog wel die diepe pijn van binnen. Er was geen doel, er was alleen het leven. Het was als een warme haard, de

natuur om hen heen. En die kwam dieper en dieper om de pijn weg te wassen. De man raakte haar aan. Het voelde als vertrouwd. De zachte aanraking van de natuur leek het te vermengen. Voor het eerst voelde Jara zich gelukkig. Ze kon de sterke stroming van de rivier horen in de verte. Alle geluiden kwamen haar lichaam binnen, en openbaarden zich aan haar. De man streelde door haar haar, en ging met zijn vingertoppen over haar lippen. Ze boog haar hoofd. Ze begreep niet wat er gaande was. De man omhelsde haar van achteren, en in haar gevoel was het alsof hij tegen haar zei : 'Je bent vrij nu.' Ze zochten de rivier weer op, en gingen daar zwemmen. Hier zouden ze willen wonen. In de verte was een waterval die ze konden horen bulderen. Ze besloten er naartoe te gaan. Het was alsof de waterval hen van binnen schoonwaste. De waterplanten waren prachtig en overtuigend hier. Ze sprongen bijna door het water heen.
Wisten zij dat zij kinderen waren van de bomen, van de struiken die onderwater en bovenwater groeiden. Wisten zij dat zij gemaakt waren voor ritmische en kronkelende groei. Krokodillen waren hun vrienden hier, geen vijanden. Ze waren aan het ware gevaar ontsnapt. Ook de waterslangen waren hen goedgezind. Ze voelden zich fijn

met deze kronkelende elementen. De waterplant was als de hemel voor hen. Ze stonden open voor het harmonische gevoel van de natuur, ze spraken met hun ogen. Het water was een bron van leven voor hen. De man staarde naar haar amulet. Hij kuste het amulet. Het was alsof de man wilde zeggen : Als zij, het amulet, haar ogen zal openen, waar zullen de blanke kolonisten dan zijn, heus, ze zullen geleid worden naar de hel. Ze hebben een hel gemaakt, een hel die hen dan zal opslokken. Het was alsof het zonlicht het zo overbracht, en zo waar als de waterval zelf. Ze keek hem diep in de ogen, alsof ze het verankerde. Ze had respect voor hem, stond open voor hem, ze besefte dat zij het antwoord om haar nek droeg. Het amulet leek op een slang. Het had veel waarde voor haar. Sommige slangen hier leken op het amulet. Het was alsof het amulet ooit de sleutel was van haar kooi. Ze voelde zich week worden als ze naar hem keek. De blauwe lucht leek neer te dalen in de rivier, op weg naar de waterval. Het licht werd alle kanten opgereflecteerd.

De Vierde Aarde

Hoofdstuk 1.

Wij waren gemaakt van een gouden amalgaam. Wij waren kinderen van de godin, die vrij in de tuin leefden. Alleen het gouden amalgaam kon de stralen van haar liefdeszon opvangen, om ons tot eeuwig leven op te wekken. Het was een liefdes-amalgaam, volkomen toegewijd aan de godin. Ook de hekken rondom de tuin waren van het gouden amalgaam gemaakt. Zij waren hoog en scherp. Wij voelden ons veilig binnen deze hekken. Eens aten wij van de verboden vrucht van de vleermuizenboom, een kaars, die in ons binnenste begon te branden, zodat we door een andere wereld geroofd werden, en wij kinderen van de hel werden. Maar de godin verstootte ons niet. Nog meer dan ooit wijdde ze zich toe aan haar liefde voor ons, en met geduld en passie probeerde zij ons terug te lokken naar de tuin. Een gouden vrucht hing zij voor onze ogen, en trok deze weg zodra wij ernaar grepen, om ons zo haar te laten volgen op het pad terug naar de tuin. Het was een verboden en geheime tuin voor velen. Deze wereld aanbad Doornroosje, de slapende prinses, en voor de paasheks

hadden ze niet veel sympathie. Deze paasheks was Inanna, de godin van de armoede, die het geheim van Doornroosje kende. Doornroosje was een ei in haar handen, een ei die ze zou afpellen. Doornroosje sliep nog steeds in het paradijs, en zou tot de berg der goden moeten komen, de onderwereld.

Er was een doodslucht in de tuin, waarin zij die zich niet konden beheersen leefden. Altijd liepen ze hun begeertes achterna, als in een roes. Zij waren de schone slaapsters, de volgelingen van Doornroosje, van alles wat mooi en duur was. De onthechting was een groot geheimenis, maar zij werd gedemoniseerd en als heks bestempeld. Zij riep vanaf de berg, vanuit de wildernis. Zij wilde Doornroosje opwekken tot een hogere wereld. Dit zijn geen gewijde paadjes. Deze paadjes zijn afgesloten door de plaatselijke gemeentes. De draak zelf was de prins van de jungle die Doornroosje vrijkocht uit de kooi van de bebouwde kom. De kus wekte haar op tot de wildernis, omgeven door doornenstruiken.

De slang van het paradijs was eerst een draak, en zij gaf aan paarden de macht om zich te verzetten tegen hun rijders. Zij maakte eenhoorns van hen, de grote ontwaking. Ook gaf zij de macht aan bizons om zich te verzetten

tegen hun jagers. Zij maakte eenhoorns van hen. Maar haar wijsheid werd buiten de poorten van het kasteel gezet, en zij veranderde in een vlam, om te verwarren en te verleugenen. Zij gaf haar aanklagers over aan een dwaalgeest.

Zij was de vleesgeworden boom die haar eigen koninklijkheid had bewaard. Zij was de koninklijkheid van het communistisch anarchisme. Zij was de koningin van de bloemen. Wilde bloemen had ze in onze haren gestoken, in deze drakentuin. Zij trok ons omhoog op het schip, toen de dauw ging vallen. De rivier van plastic omhulde ons. Zij had haar eigen pad, en wilde niks weten van het verwende gemeentepark. Daarom was zij onuitgenodigd, gehaat door velen, en gevreesd. De draak viel en werd in een kooi gestopt, maar niemand kon haar geheim doorgronden. Zij wist dat slechts hen buiten de kooi gekooid waren.

Ze hadden maar een fragment van haar vastgezet. Zij was natuurlijk veel groter. Zij leefde in plaatsen waar zij nooit zouden komen. Zij leefde in een mengsel van vuilheid in de dieptes van de wildernis, als sluiers van haar schoonheid. Deze schoonheid werd geproclameerd door een genetische collage van juwelen. De stenen stapelden

zich op tot een druipkoninkrijk. Zij liet geen steen heel, perste hen geheel uit. Haar schoonheid kon niet uitgedrukt worden door stenen, alleen door wildernis. Zij ging over de muren. Zij van de smetvrees zouden daar nooit komen. Zij bouwden auto’s die alleen maar op gladgestreken wegen konden rijden, en die het zonlicht als tralies weerspiegelden. Maar zij zocht het licht in de duisternis op, de zon van de onderwereld. En zij leefde in ons, op een diepere plaats. Hier in de diepe wildernis had zij haar huisje van snoep geplaatst, en was zij slechts een diepere inwijder. Het harnas van snoep lokte de soldaat tot een diepere strijd, de patronen van de wildernis, de verborgen arena waar slechts zij keek. Zij was het kruis van de jongen in zijn jeugd om hem te behoeden voor een veel groter kwaad. De kooi die zij hier had gebouwd was niets vergeleken met de kooi van de stad. Zij was immers het pasen gevierd met chocola. Zij was de moeder van de jungle, maar zij onderwees haar kinderen over de gevaren. Zij bewapende haar kinderen en ontzag hen niet. Zij tuchtigde haar kinderen reeds vroeg, en daarom moest de heks dood. De stad wilde kinderen verwennen met een allesverblindend licht, verlammend en bemoederend.
Zij was de zwarte koningin des doods, de koningin van het

oerwoud, toen het witte haar kinderen en haar schone land stal. En zij beval haar jager het sneeuwwitte om te brengen, want het witte moest sterven, zeven maal. En zij hing haar vrucht van het gouden amalgaam. En het sneeuwwitte was jong, oningewijd, omgeven door witte doornen. En zij lokte haar tot de deur van de dood in het oerwoud. En het sneeuwwitte gewaad werd afgedaan, en een zwarte vrouw rees op.
Zij was de koningin van de wolven, de koningin van de zwarte draken. Vele andere kinderen waren tot de deur des doods gekomen, en haar moddermannen namen hen op en brachten hen tot haar. Wilde bloemen hebben hen toen ingewijd, en ze raakten verstrikt in haar webben.
Zij had ons geschapen in de dooier, omringd door het witte, in een ei. Zij hing dit ei hoog. Het was een ei omringd door vlees. Wij groeiden op en aten van het vlees, en kwamen tot het huisje van snoep in de wildernis. Binnenin waren paaseieren versierd. Ze had een paasrijk in het woud. Haar paaswachters liepen op haar druipmuren. Zij wilde de lichtjes van het pinksteren doven. In de poppenstadjes werden keurige pinksterfeestjes gehouden, vol van smetvrees. En zij was onuitgenodigd. Daarom bracht zij haar stortvloed, en liet

hen het ei van pasen zien, hun verboden vrucht. En hun kindertjes begonnen ervan te eten, en werden uit de stad gezet.
Zij had haar eigen stadje aan de rand van haar rivier, diep in de wildernis, een schilderachtig stadje, en zij gingen van vrucht tot vrucht, van ei tot ei. Haar eenhoorns liepen in pas, een drachtige optocht door de stad. En de stad lag op heuveltjes in de wildernis, en de eenhoorns gingen over de bruggen tussen die heuveltjes, langs de paars-roze sluiers.
‘Kun je van haar houden ?’ vroeg ik. We zaten gehurkt op het bed. Ik hield haar billen vast die heet aanvoelden. Vanuit de raampjes konden we de bomen zien met hun blauwpaarse vruchtjes en hun donkergroene blaadjes. Ze duwde mij neer, en ging op me liggen. ‘Natuurlijk,’ zei ze. ‘Ze is mijn moeder.’ Ik kuste haar, en ze was gelukkig. We waren naakt, maar we schaamden ons niet voor elkaar, want we waren in haar hof. Van gouden amalgaam waren wij gemaakt. In een kooi vonden we doorgang. Het was niet onze dood, maar een transformatie. We waren als vlindertjes in haar bos. Wij kwamen voort vanuit het orgie der goden, het gouden amalgaam, wat als een vrucht voor ons hing, als een ei, en waartegen gewaarschuwd werd,

want men vreesde de geheimenissen van het bos. De goden hadden er veel liefde in gestopt, als het serum van bevrijding, als de paradijselijke zweer. Maar zie, zij werd geweerd als een melaatse. En zij hield de raadselen van de tuin verborgen.
En het imperium werd gebouwd, en zij werd als een boeman beschouwd, maar in haar waren de rangen gegarandeerd. Er was niks mechanisch aan, alles was natuurlijk, vanuit de dood voortkomend, het was een roze spot. Er moest plaats voor haar gemaakt worden, dit was haar vereiste, want ze was al lang genoeg weggedrukt. Zij hadden naast haar niet veel in te brengen, want zij kenden het raadsel van de dood niet. Zij omsingelde de grote stad met haar eenhoorns, en trok haar kinderen er één voor één uit. Tussen haar woestijnen door zijn rivieren, met bruggen waar barbaren voor staan, één wachter per brug, en wie kan hen verslaan ? Maar kinderen trekken zij mij, hen die bezegeld zijn door haar liefde. Zartan was de poortwachter van haar secte, bestempeld als een verleider, maar haar strikken brachten hen tot leven, voortkomende vanuit het meer. Haar moddermannen werden zij, en zij schuwde de bokken niet, zij waren de dragers van haar geheim. De secte werd groot en gevreesd, en men vergat de secte van

de grote stad. Arsis en Jupo waren twee andere poortwachters van haar, maar die stonden dieper in haar rijk, want dit rijk had veel gebieden. En ook de kinderen werden beproefd door deze wachters. En velen bleven steken. De worsteling met de roos was een grote. Haar secte scheurde families uiteen.
Ze zat rechtop. Ze had contact met de bloemen, met de Braziliaanse schietbloem, met de Rijn-bloem, de vuur-bloem, en de flamingo-bloem. Zij had het wilde witte konijn gevolgd tot de sprekende bloemen. En zij hadden verborgen de vrucht die haar deed groeien. Zij likte aan de vrucht, nam ervan, en begon langzaam te groeien, tot de hoge burcht in de woestijn. De zon van de Sumerische onderwereld verlichtte de woestijn. Hier werd nog het zuivere Ninurta gegoten, de boodschapper der goden. Nergal, de god van de onderwereld zat hier op zijn troon, met speren aan weerszijde. Hij sprak en genas. Het was hier waar de eenzamen elkaar hadden gevonden. Hier was de Sumerische ark, terwijl buiten het gif van Mercurius regende. Er zou een zondvloed komen, want het tijdperk van Mercurius was nog maar net begonnen. En daar stonden ze dan, drie boodschappers van de goden : Ninurta, Hermes en Mercurius, en zij kwamen tot de troon

van Nergal. En Mercurius had het gezicht van een wortel en had een grote glimlach. ‘Ik weet het, er zijn duizenden mercuriussen,’ zei Nergal. ‘En jij bent de enige die toegang hebt gekregen tot mijn paleizen.’
‘Vader,’ sprak Mercurius, ‘het kwik is alleen maar groeiende buiten, en u kent dit vergif. En u weet ook wat het enige anti-gif hiertegen is. De cocon van Mercurius heeft de wortelkwik-vlinder voortgebracht. Zij heeft uw ark gebouwd.’
‘Schenk mij het wortelkwik, Mercurius,’ sprak Nergal. Mercurius deed een stap naar voren en gaf hem een zakje met wortels waarin het wortelkwik zat. ‘Dit zijn de zaadjes voor wortelkwik-bloemen,’ zei Mercurius. Toen vertrok hij.
‘Hermes en Ninurta,’ zei Nergal, ‘jullie gaan deze zaadjes zaaien in de koninklijke tuin.’ Hermes en Ninurta deden direct wat hen gezegd was. Snel groeiden er in de tuin de weelderigste bloemen die zich in het snelste tempo begonnen voort te planten. Het wortelkwik was duizendmaal sneller dan het normale kwik. ‘Dank aan Mercurius,’ zei Nergal. En Nergal sprak tot al zijn volgelingen : ‘Dank dat u allen gekomen bent. Zoals u weet kunt u niet alleen bevrijd worden van uw kettingen

door exorcisme, maar ook juist door ingewijd te worden in de mysterien.’ Een beeld van Mithras werd naar voren gebracht, die vlak voor de opkomst van het christendom door de Romeinen werd aanbeden. Mithras streed tegen het kwaad, wat de vorm had van een stier. Het centrale thema van Mithraisme was de slacht van deze stier, het gedoopt worden in zijn bloed, en banket te houden met de zon. In het pre-atlantische was Mithras genaamd Matras, en werd het kwaad als een bizon uitgebeeld, waartegen Matras streed. Het afleggen van het oude leven door naaktheid, naturisme, was een belangrijk item in zowel Mithraisme en Matraisme, maar werd door de christelijke priesterdienst steeds meer ingebonden. Door onderwerping aan de goden kon men hogerop komen in het Mithraisme en Matraisme, maar het kerkelijke christendom legde vooral het accent op de onderwerping aan het kerkelijk gezag. Bij Mithraisme en Matraisme stond het loskomen van de aarde centraal. Dit kon bereikt worden door ascetisme. Nergal nam wat van het wortelkwik, smeerde het standbeeld ermee in, en het kwam tot leven. Iedereen begon te juichen. Toen werd het beeld van Matras naar voren geschoven die in worsteling was met de bizon. Het tot leven gekomen beeld van Mithras liet zien hoe Mithras

in gevecht was met de stier, en werd geholpen door een hond, een slang, en een schorpioen. De schorpioen viel de genitalien van de stier aan, maar het standbeeld van Matras toonde geen schorpioen maar een spin. Verder werd hij niet geholpen door een hond en een slang, maar door een vlieg en een wesp. Ook dit beeld werd ingesmeerd door het wortelkwik en kwam tot leven, onder groot gejuich. Martarius was de pre-atlantische vorm van Mercurius, de boodschapper van de goden, maar gebruikte geen kwik maar zwavel, want kwik hield gebonden aan de materiele sferen. Ook zijn beeld werd door het wortelkwik tot leven gewekt.
Nergal maakte toen het wortelkwik tot een sleutel in zijn hand, en opende de deur naar een verborgen tuin. Hier brandde ergens het rode vuur, het verboden vuur, wat een mengsel was tussen het bloed van een rund en het bloed van een aap. De tuin was vol met rook. Ook is er hier een grot waar het rode vlies zich bevindt, de huid van een sprekend en vliegend varken. Deze huid wordt bewaakt door een schorpioen. Alleen degene die de schorpioen kan temmen en berijden kan het rode vlies bereiken. Dit rode vlies is het vlies van eeuwig leven. Alleen de godin Utanga, de pre-atlantische Athena, kan het hoofdstel, het

zadel en de teugels hiertoe overhandigen, het tuig waarmee de schorpioen bereden kan worden. Zonder dit tuig zal een ieder ten prooi vallen aan de schorpioen. Zij kwam op een nacht tot Aleron, de pre-atlantische Jason, om dit tuig aan hem te geven. Zij kwam tot hem op haar rijtuig in de donder, omringd door luipaarden. Zij slachtte een pauw en bedekte hem met het bloed als met een deken. De pauw was de wachter van de grot waarin de schorpioen leefde. Als Aleron de schorpioen zou berijden, dan zou het rode vuur op hem vallen om naar de onderwereld te gaan naar zijn geliefde Averon. Ook aan haar zal hij een deel geven van het rode vlies. En zij komen erachter dat dezen allen huwelijksgeschenken zijn. En wanneer hij zijn geliefde heeft bereikt zal de schorpioen in een rund veranderen.

Kamperdam aan Zee, Juni 1962

Mijn jeugd was een hel. Ik ben nu getrouwd en heb twee kinderen. Wij hebben hier een heel speeltuin-complex waar ze vaak spelen. Ook gaan we zo nu en dan naar het strand of de stad in. Ik heb mijn vrouw in het ziekenhuis ontmoet. Zij was de verpleegster, ik de patient. Het

winkelcentrum van de stad is overdekt. Onze jongste dochter is het ijverigst. Sinds 1948 is ons land hermitatisch. Daarvoor was het land christelijk, omdat we werden bestuurd door Roomse keizers. De staatsgodsdienst was christelijk en heidendom was verboden. Sinds de hermitatische bevrijding zijn wij meer universeel. Ik zal die dag nooit meer vergeten dat onze hermitatische bevrijders kwamen. Hoe dan ook, wij zijn allen slaven van de waarheid, en alles is een halve waarheid. We vallen totdat we vliegen. Ik ken een boom genaamd Torpoteo, een beetje de pre-atlantische vorm van Yggdrasil. Hierin kunnen we schuilen, als gevallen strijders die hun kruis binnengaan. En bovenin wonen de Wanen, de elven, de vruchtbaarheidsgoden, de Vanir, met de pre-atlantische vorm hiervan : de Targa. Het zal uitlopen op de Ragnarok, in het pre-atlantische wordt dit genoemd de Dordada, de grote eind-oorlog. Alleen in het diepste van de boom Yggdrasil zal er veiligheid en bevrijding zijn, als de vuurreus Surtr alles in vuur brengt door zijn zwaard. Ook de christenen hebben zo’n mythologie, over Armageddon, over de zondvloed van vuur, en een ark waarin bevrijding is. Het gaat allemaal om het binnengaan van het kruis, het ascetisme. De

Torpoteo herbergt de bron van Tirz, die de pre-atlantische Mimir is, de bron van wijsheid. Odin gaf zijn oog op om deel te hebben aan die bron, maar de pre-atlantische Odin, genaamd Wassan gaf zijn vrouw op om deel te hebben aan de bron. Deze bron is het bodemloze ravijn, waarin Zolder viel, de pre-atlantische vorm van Balder, en door de rotsen gestoken werd, en hij zal vallen totdat hij vliegt. Hij zal voortkomen vanuit de Dordada, de grote eind-oorlog. De pre-atlantische Surtr is Staumi, met zijn zwaard Lauri, maar hij is een mengeling tussen een vuurreus en een ijsreus, dus Surtr-Ymir. De nadruk wordt vaak gelegd op het brandende ijs. Hij woont in Oswold, de pre-atlantische vorm van Jotunheim, waar de ijs-reuzen wonen. De stad waar wij inkwamen had muren gemaakt van slangen, waar het gif droop, waar de lucht was van bloed. Hier kwamen wij om de schilden te bezichtigen, maar zij waren bijna doorzichtig. Staumi had met het zwaard van wraak toegeslagen. De stad was nu als een woestijn. Zel zat hier op haar troon, in een ruimte achter rode doorzichtige sluiers, waar haar langharige leeuw ook was. Deze stad was genaamd Sogroff, en was omringd door een rivier genaamd Harenx. De schorpioen van Zel bracht wijn voort om de gevallen strijders die hier kwamen dronken te

maken. Drie godinnen, Slova, Jarx en Slama, zouden hun verleden, heden en toekomst bepalen. Als ze goed hadden gestreden, dan gingen ze naar Travaska. Zo niet, dan werden ze door Zel opgeslokt. In Travaska woonde Rolf met zijn hamer Avik, die hen beschermde tegen boosaardige reuzen en dwergen. Travaska was een plaats in het hart van Zel.

En Zel bewoog zich gesluierd door de stad, en verspreidde haar bloemen van vuur. Kinderen groeiden hier in de bomen. Zij kwamen voort van een diepe eeuwige slaap.

De tweede aarde was Trok, de derde Kempen en de vierde Saraul. En deze aardes waren al van een meer verheerlijkte stof. Men aanbad daar een ekster, een masker en een zeedraak. Er was daar alleen leven in het masker, en het masker was het oog.

Hoofdstuk 2.

Ik was de nachtleider. Ik had een nieuw pistool. Ik rende door de stad naar de kerk in de verte, en ik kon de kerk maar niet bereiken. In de top van de kerk woonde een geest. Ik richtte mijn pistool op de geest en schoot. Mijn kerkelijk hoofd spatte uiteen. Ik had de vrouwen in de

kerk lief. Zij waren aan zware ketenen, maar ik beminde hen. Ik had de sleutel die op hun sloten pasten, en ik voerde hen uit. Zij hadden mij ook lief. Ik nam hen mee door de oceaan.
Mijn huis stond hoog, op een rots in de stad. Ik liet hen mijn schilderijen zien. Hier konden ze veilig wonen. Het was goed zo. Ik had een kroon voor hen gemaakt. Zij reisden van wereld tot wereld. Zij aanbaden het masker. Het maakte hen sterk, en de man werd zwak. De man werd trager en trager, en stond plotseling stil. Zijn hoed was als het gesmolten zilver. Ook zijn schoenen waren als gesmolten zilver en goud. Het droop van hem af. Ik riep naar hem, maar hij hoorde mij niet. Hij staarde naar de kerktoren. ‘Daar bevinden zich al mijn geliefden,’ zei hij. Hij wilde mijn pistool zien. Toen liet hij zijn eigen pistool zien.
Hij gaf mij geld, veel geld. Ik bouwde een brug, een brug tot zijn wereld. Hij kon me duidelijk horen nu. ‘Ja, ik kan je duidelijk horen,’ zei hij. We staarden samen naar het hoge kerkgebouw wat begon te druipen. Hij liet mij zijn horloge zien.
Ik zweefde tussen de werelden, tussen het westelijke paradijs en het oostelijke paradijs, en langs het voor-

paradijs gleed ik terug naar de eerste aarde. En toen was de eerste aarde niet meer. En toen weer wel, en de eerste aarde begon te veranderen, en de man had een jas aan van zebra-huid. ‘Ik ben de nacht,’ zei de man. We klommen de kerk binnen, en die begon te druipen. Het was pudding nu. Wodan en Thor kwamen langs op hun paarden. Het land is van ons, zeiden ze. En ze wezen naar Wassan en Rolf. Ik droeg een masker, en de man was als een zeedraak op wiens rug ik zat, en we zakten in de zee, en kwamen in de lucht terecht. Zo ging dat op en neer. Hij strekte zich uit langs de kerkmuur. Hij strekte zich uit tot aan de rozenhaag waar alles begon te golven.

Troon der Lelies

En ik liep bijna dronken naar de brug. Ik had een oorlogs-trauma in mijn hoofd. Aan de overkant van de rivier waren lelies. Ook was er een stad van lelies. Ik liep langs de grachten.

Een vrouw met een wit en zachtgele hoed keek naar me. Ze had ook een zacht gele, witte jurk. Ze zeiden dat zij de vrouw der lelies was. Zonder adem keek ik naar haar. Haar hand was bedekt met Belgisch kant. Ze wees naar mij, en toen naar een huis. Ze wenkte mij om met haar mee te komen. Dronken liep ik achter haar aan. Ik had niets gedronken, maar ik was dronken van het oorlogs-trauma. We moesten een trap op, en gingen in rieten stoelen zitten. Ze glimlachte naar mij, maar ik kon haar ogen nauwelijks zien vanwege de sluier van haar hoed.

We dronken wat, en zij vertelde haar verhaal, het verhaal over de stad. Hier had ze altijd gewoond, maar een oorlog had alles verscheurd, al haar herinneringen. Zij had ook een oorlogs-trauma … Terwijl ze vertelde keek ik uit het raam, waar ik de lelies zag in de vijver en in de gracht, en het was alsof ze mijn naam uitspraken. Zij tikten op de ramen.

De lelies hadden alles zien gebeuren. Zij waren de veroorzakers van de oorlog. Haar herinneringen waren van elkaar getrokken. Ze haperden, zoals de mijne. Het waren allemaal fragmenten in onze hoofden. Ik moest ze zien te rangschikken, maar de lelies trokken ons uit elkaar. Later scheen ze er niet eens te wonen. Ik was te dronken. Ik liep langs de lelies, een pad maakte ik door hen. Ik had mijn zwaard, mijn mes en mijn speer, en zoveel pijlen op mijn boog. Eén pijl had een touw. Ik kon op het kasteel komen. Zo kwam ik dichtbij haar ramen. Dus hier woonde zij. Zij had deze illusies en weerspiegelingen op mij afgezonden. Ik klom door een raam, en zag haar daar zitten. Met haar witte, zachtgele taartjes, als mokka taartjes. Ze at, en sprak, maar ik wist niet tegen wie. Misschien wel tegen mij, maar zij zag me niet. Of ze zag me wel, maar deed alsof ze mij niet zag.
Ik moest mijn herinneringen op orde zien te krijgen. Ik stapte op haar af. Zij stond op, en schudde mij de hand. Ze glimlachte. 'Eindelijk ben je gekomen. Zoveel hopen van dromen.'
Ik keek verlegen naar beneden.
Ze liet mij de stad zien. We gingen langs alle lelies. Ook liet ze mij de valleien zien, waar de lelies weelderig

groeiden.
Ik bracht de lelie tot haar. Ze zat op een troon.

Laura de Indiaanse

Ze ging met rode bloemen over de huid van haar prooi. Toen wierp ze de prooi tussen de bruine bloemen. De bruine bloemen deden haar altijd zingen.
Ze kookte haar prooi op, en toen was de dag alweer om. Haar tent is wild, gemaakt van bizonvellen, zoals haar hart is. Haar tent is groot en harig, zoals haar hart is. Zij is de meesteres van de wildernis.
Wanneer zij haarzelf omdraait, jaagt zij. De prooi is op zijn hoede wanneer zij haar rug naar hen toekeert.
Diep in de wildernis woont zij. Diep in de wildernis troont zij. Er waren wat dingen die alleen zij kon weghalen. Daarom bezocht ik haar. Zij schreeuwde hard. Ik moest altijd op mijn hoede zijn. Ze liet rode bloemen over mijn huid heenglijden, en duwde mij vaak in de bruine bloemen. Grote bruine bloemenvelden liet ze mij zien, en daarachter was de hei.
Ze kon het mij niet uitleggen wat de hei was. Ze wilde daar eigenlijk niet komen, maar ik hielp haar daar. Toen wilde ze er zelfs wonen, maar eerst gebruikte ze het als jachtterrein. Ze had dikke, forse heupen. Ik bevroor altijd als ik haar zag. Ik kon haar niet de baas. Als ze haar dikke,

forse heupen draaide was ik verloren.
Nog vaak ging ik terug naar Laura de indiaanse, want er waren dingen in mijn leven die alleen zij kon weghalen, dingen die alleen zij de baas kon zijn. Maar ik zocht haar steeds minder op, omdat het leven mij opslokte. Altijd was ik druk. De rook van de stad hield mij tegen, had mij gevangen. Ook was ik een beetje bang voor Laura de indiaanse. Er was niemand zoals zij.
Nooit begreep ik waarom ze mijn huid bestreelde met rode bloemen. Het bleek een ritueel te zijn. Nooit begreep ik waarom ze me altijd duwde in de velden van bruine bloemen. De bruine bloemen deden haar zingen zodra ze ze zag.
Glorieus was haar speer, genadeloos haar mes. Op een dag bezocht ze de stad waarin ik was opgesloten, helemaal tot achter het rookgordijn. Ze liet mij daar de rode en bruine bloemen zien, en ik huilde. Ik miste hen. Zij was de natuur voor mij, de wildernis. Ze had mij veel geleerd. Ze zei dat ze nu op de hei woonde, en dat ze dat aan mij te danken had. Ik keek haar aan met grote ogen. Ze zei dat ik speciaal voor haar was, en wilde me weer meenemen. Ze wilde mij voor altijd vasthouden. Maar in paniek rende ik weg, en nooit heb ik haar teruggezien.

Nu slijten mijn dagen met gemengde gevoelens, wanneer ik denk aan Laura de indiaanse. Wilde dromen heb ik over haar, zoals haar hart wild was. Ik weet niet waar ze is, en ik durf niet op zoek te gaan. Misschien woont ze nog steeds op de heide. Ze vertelde me dat ze daar een huisje had, een hutje, of een tent. Ze deed er niet duidelijk over. Ze was altijd een beetje vaag, en het is nog maar vaag in mijn herinneringen. Toch wil ik haar niet verloren doen gaan in mijn herinneringen. Ik heb het gevoel dat ze belangrijk is, en dat ik haar nodig heb.
Elke avond brand ik een kaarsje voor haar, voor Laura de indiaanse. De dromen worden steeds wilder. Het is alsof ik bij haar hoor, en zij bij mij. Maar haar bezoeken durf ik niet. Ik zou op zoektocht kunnen gaan, maar de heide is groot, te groot. En misschien is ze daar allang weer vertrokken, want dit alles was lang geleden. Het lijkt wel alsof de herinneringen veranderen, alsof de tijd stilstaat. Ik bevries wanneer ik aan haar denk, maar wordt dan weer heel warm, en bang. Het is een vreemde mengeling van gevoelens en emoties, en vreemde gedachtes. Ik voel me dan heel extreem. De dromen beginnen me zelfs overdag te beheersen. Ik krijg haar niet meer uit mijn gedachtes weg lijkt het wel. Ik denk dat ik verliefd ben, op Laura de

Indiaanse. We hadden het zo goed samen, en nu is alles weg. Ik kan alleen maar dromen.
Oh Laura de Indiaanse, wat is er toch van ons geworden,
We hadden het zo goed samen,
En je had zulke vreemde rituelen,
En dat past wel een beetje in mijn vreemde gedachtes,
Ik denk vaak aan je, en voel je altijd bij me,
Eigenlijk wordt het alleen maar sterker,
Blijf bij me, of kom weer terug,
Of is deze veranderende herinnering genoeg ?
Ik heb het gevoel dat je me nog steeds in de bruine bloemenvelden duwt,
Alsof ik wegzak in een diepe put,
Ik kan je niet bereiken, en weet ook niet of ik je wel wil bereiken,
Ik voel me zo gespleten,
Ik bekijk alles maar op een afstand,
Veilig achter de schermen van mijn herinneringen,
Maar het lijkt alsof je er doorheen breekt,
Op je hoge paard,
Je roept me, ik volg je,
Ja, ik hoor bij jou, maar de stad trekt me altijd weer weg
Voor het donker moeten we thuis zijn,

En dan krijgen we brood met melk,
Oh, Laura de Indiaanse,
Bij jou wil ik zijn.

De Ring van de Leprechaun

Hoofdstuk 1. De Troon van de Leprechaun

Sonja en Eduard woonden op Flierefluit 16. Hun huis was als een koeienstal, maar wel vol met protserige spulletjes. Er werd in dit huis echt geleefd. Sonja woonde eerst op de Gregorius Laan, maar was later bij Eduard ingetrokken. Ze had een kat genaamd Darmia. Ook had ze een paar parkieten, en zelfs een vleermuis. Rekel heette die. Ze sprak vaak tot Rekel, maar Rekel zei nooit wat terug. Eduard had een oom die vaak langskwam, oom Klaas. Ze konden het erg goed met elkaar vinden.
Er was niet veel met Eduard te beginnen. Hij was nogal koppig en eigenwijs. Hij had een hele andere kijk op het leven dan anderen. Nee, Eduard was nooit voor een karretje te spannen. Sonja was een heel gelovig mens, en ook nogal goedgelovig, en dat botste nog weleens met Eduard, want Eduard trapte nergens in. Eduard was meer paranoide, heel erg achterdochtig, en daardoor zakelijk. Toegeven deed hij overigens nauwelijks. Sonja hield erg veel van hem, want volgens haar was hij toch een hele warme man. Hij had zijn eigen wereld gecreeerd, en was

hierin een gulle gever, erg hartelijk, open en gastvrij, erg mededeelzaam, maar wel verschrikkelijk manipulerend.
Het is voor het goede doel, dacht Sonja altijd bij zichzelf.
Ze begreep hem wel. Hij was verschrikkelijk perfectionistisch en net, maar sinds Sonja er was, was het huis een zwijnenstal, alhoewel het volstond met kostbare dingen. Hun huis was dan ook echt een hele belevenis.
Sonja stond in de keuken ham te snijden, en daarna kaas, voor de tosti's. Eduard was boven aan het werk. Plotseling werd er gebeld. Het was een dikke man met een bolhoed op. Hij was niet echt dik, maar meer gezet, maar door zijn dikke jas leek het erg dik. 'Wat zullen we nou krijgen,' zei Sonja, toen de man haar een folder aanreikte. 'Hier, voor jou,' zei hij met een hoge stem.
'Wat is dat dan ?' vroeg Sonja. 'Bent u een Jehovah's getuige ?'
'Nee, veel erger, veel erger,' lachte de man.
'Oh, ik zie het al,' zei Sonja, 'u bent van die nieuwe zaak aan de overkant ?'
Er stonden wat religieuze plaatjes op de folder, en wat plaatjes van sprookjesachtige figuren.
'Kom,' zei de man, 'je weet wie ik ben. Ik ben de nieuwe buurman.'

'Ja, maar wat is dit ?' vroeg Sonja.
'Lees het gewoon even door, lieve schat,' zei de man.
'Ik ben uw lieve schat niet,' zei Sonja gewiekst. 'En u hoeft me ook niets aan te smeren. Ik ben nu met Eduard, en hij leert mij om voorzichtig te zijn met mensen die dingen aanreiken aan de deur.'
'Maar ik ben je buurman, honey,' zei de man.
'Dat kan wel wezen,' zei Sonja, 'maar Eduard wil dat ik minder naief ben.'
'Zo, zo,' zei de man, 'je zit aardig bij Eduard onder de plak.'
'Het is voor de veiligheid,' zei Sonja.
'Ha, buurman,' zei Eduard, die net naar beneden kwam lopen.
'Voor de veiligheid hoef je het echt niet te doen,' zei de man. 'Ik ben de veiligheid zelve.'
'Kom binnen, buurman,' zei Eduard. Het bleek dat Eduard de nieuwe buren al had gesproken. Ze hadden een heleboel kinderen, en die kwamen al snel dagelijks bij hen over de vloer. Voor kinderen was het huis van Eduard en Sonja een hele belevenis, heel mysterieus ook met al die bijzondere dingen. En rommel maken viel hier echt niet op. Voor kinderen was het een paradijs.

Sonja bleek de folder helemaal vergeten te zijn. De man bleek heel aardig te zijn, en zijn familie ook. Rita was een zakenvrouw. Ze hadden ook een papegaai in huis. Eduard begon een beetje ellende te ruiken. Het was nu altijd zo druk in huis, dus hij ging er vaak vandoor.
Op een dag had Eduard een nieuwe vriendin. Sonja was ontroostbaar, maar ze mocht zijn huis houden. Eduard zou bij zijn nieuwe vriendin intrekken, die extreem netjes was. Ze moest ook niet zoveel van drukte hebben, en leefde een afgezonderd leven. Ze was een soort moderne kluizenaar. Eduard en Sonja bleven nog wel contact houden, en dat maakte het voor hen wat makkelijker om het te verwerken. Ook voor Eduard was het moeilijk de keuze te maken bij haar weg te gaan. Gelukkig hadden ze geen kinderen, maar de kinderen van de buren begonnen Eduard erg te missen, omdat hij toch wel een wonderbaarlijk persoon was. Ze mochten weleens bij hem logeren, en dan ging zijn nieuwe vriendin het huis uit, want die kon absoluut niet tegen kinderen.
Eduard voelde zich als een koning. De kinderen aanbaden hem bijna. Op een dag kwam zijn oude buurman langs, en reikte hem de folder aan. Oh ja, die folder. Die had hij nog nooit gelezen, maar die lag ook nog steeds bij Sonja

ergens.
'Wat is het, buurman ?' vroeg Eduard. Er stonden religieuze plaatjes op en plaatjes van feeen. Maar ze raakten in gesprek over hele andere dingen, dus Eduard legde de folder opzij. 'Ik geloof niet zo in religie en sprookjes,' zei Eduard. Eduard had zijn eigen wereld, alles anders dan anderen. Eduard was een tamelijk uniek persoon. Bijna tot het punt dat er geen herkenning was. Eduard was bijna van een andere wereld. Hij wilde de folder eigenlijk niet lezen. Zijn haar was netjes gekamt, en hij had een stropdas. De buurman schoot bleek. 'Ik moet gaan,' zei de buurman, en vertrok.
Eduard vroeg zich af waarom de buurman zich zo vreemd gedroeg opeens. Even later kreeg hij een telefoontje dat de buurman een hart-aanval had gehad, en hij was inmiddels overleden. Eduard schrok, en greep het foldertje. Toen legde hij het foldertje weer weg, en belde Sonja. Sonja was erg in paniek, en wilde in het bos wonen.
Een paar weken later verhuisde Sonja naar een boshuisje. Ze kwam hier helemaal tot rust. Soms logeerden de kinderen van de oude buren nog weleens bij haar, maar het werd minder en minder. Sonja wist dat ze zich niet meer teveel aan mensen moest hechten, want dat deed teveel

pijn.
Eduard zocht haar vaak op. Ze deden veel samen, en gingen samen op vakantie. Er leek weer een nieuwe liefde te ontpoppen tussen Eduard en Sonja. Maar ze besloten gewoon goede vrienden te blijven. De relatie tussen Eduard en zijn nieuwe vriendin was inmiddels op de klippen gelopen. Eduard en Sonja gingen vaak bramen plukken. Er groeiden veel bramenstruiken achter het huis van Sonja. Eduard hield ervan om in de tuin te werken, en begon allerlei soorten groenten, kruiden en vruchten te verbouwen. De bramenstruiken groeien wild door, om het hele huis heen. Het geeft hen een gevoel van veiligheid. Het wordt voor Eduard steeds moeilijker om het huis van Sonja te bereiken. Daarom besluit hij bij haar in te komen wonen. Ze raken steeds meer en meer geisoleerd van de buitenwereld.
Middenin de nacht klopt er een man op hun deur. De man draagt een wapenrusting, en heeft een helm op. Hij zoekt onderdak. Hij zegt dat hij op de vlucht is. Ze laten hem binnen en even later zitten ze om de tafel. De man is op de vlucht voor het leger, en beweert van een andere planeet te zijn. Plotseling zijn er allemaal lichten rondom het huis. Wapens verschijnen voor de ramen, en Sonja en Eduard

raken in paniek. De man staat rustig op, en zegt dat het zijn vrienden zijn. Even later zijn er nog veel meer mannen binnen. Ze zien er inderdaad uit alsof ze van een andere planeet zijn, maar tegelijkertijd zijn ze zo menselijk. De man legt een boek op de tafel, en zegt : 'Dit boek zal jullie aarde veroveren.' Het boek heeft een zwarte kaft, maar er staan geen letters op. Dan gaan de mannen weer weg.

Eduard en Sonja durven het boek niet open te doen, en leggen het in een doos onder de kast. De dag erna is de man weer terug, en zo komt hij elke nacht even langs. Op een nacht leest hij hen voor out het zwarte boek. Op de eerste bladzijde staat de titel geschreven : Plan Voor Hen Die Echt Rijk Zijn. Dit gaat dan niet om de rijkdom van geld, maar om de rijkdom van het weten. Het gaat over mensen die weten wat er gaande is, die weten welke machten achter het wereldgebeuren schuilen. Het boek vertelt dat de wereld wordt beheerst door leprechaunen, plaaggeesten van geld, maar dat er een oorlog zal zijn tussen de leprechaunen en de trollen, en dat de trollen zullen winnen. Die trollen komen uit de dieptes van Orion, terwijl de leprechaunen alleen maar op de oppervlaktes leven. Sonja krijgt even de rillingen.

Het zou om een groot kaartspel gaan. De leprechauns met hun kaartendekken tegen de trollen met hun kaartendekken. Zo zouden er goede trollen zijn, en slechte trollen, maar de goede trollen zouden winnen. Daarom was de man naar de aarde gekomen, om de aarde voor te bereiden op die strijd, en om de aarde er goed doorheen te helpen. De man vocht mee aan de zijde van de goede trollen. Hij zei dat het leger in handen was van de leprechauns en de slechte trollen.
De man liet wat kaarten zien in het boek. Die kaarten waren belangrijk in de strijd. Ook liet hij de kaarten zien van de tegenstander, zoals de Leprechaunse Slang. 'Ik ben een wapen,' sprak de kaart, 'uitgezonden om de liefde en de zorg te doven. En dit allemaal om het medische machtssysteem te laten heersen.' Om tegen deze kaart bestand te zijn, moesten er twee kaarten getrokken worden : De Trolse Kabouter en de Trolse Vos. Snel sloeg de man het boek dicht. 'Ik voel het spoken,' zei hij. 'De oorlog is in volle gang.'
'Hoe kunnen we hiertegen bestand zijn ?' vroegen Sonja en Eduard.
'Door mee te delen in het kaartspel,' zei de man.

Ze kregen een helm op, met een vizier, waardoor ze leprechauns konden neerschieten. Ze waren al een deel van de oorlog. De man zei dat herdershonden gematerialiseerde leprechauns waren die een scherp alarm systeem vormden voor het leger op aarde, om alles te beheersen. Het was een gevangenis. De man zei dat op zijn planeet hele andere soorten herdershonden waren die hen zouden helpen in de strijd tegen de leprechauns. Dat waren hemelse herdershonden aan de zijde van de goede trollen. Een paar dagen erna nam hij wat van die herdershonden mee. Zo waren er goede herdershonden en valse herdershonden. Met hun vizier konden ze ook die valse herdershonden uitschakelen, die dus gematerialiseerde leprechauns waren die de aarde gevangen hielden. De man zei dat hij gestuurd was om die valse herdershonden spuitjes te geven, voornamelijk hun leiders, de alfa's. Dit zou een belangrijk onderdeel van de oorlog zijn, een beroemde sleutel alreeds op de planeet waar hij vandaan kwam. Het vizier maakte heel goed onderscheid tussen valse herdershonden en goede herdershonden. De valsen werden blauw op het scherm, en de goeden werden rood. Ook begonnen de blauwen erg te knipperen, terwijl de roden stabiel werden. De valse

herdershonden tapten energie van een vreemde zon, de zon der wespen, waar reuzen woonden met hele kleine hoofdjes, piepklein. De oorlog was eigenlijk om de wespenzon. Degene die de wespenzon in handen zou krijgen, zou de oorlog winnen. De man vertelde dat hij de hele grote en gevaarlijke gallactische wespenzee moest overzwemmen om tot de aarde te komen. De man zei ook dat de aarde gered zou worden, als de zon der wespen in Orion zou verschijnen. Het werd ook wel de zon der gekken genoemd.
De man zei dat de hyena's van Orion de sleutel waren om de wespenzon onder controlle te krijgen, en dat de gnoes van Orion de sleutel waren om de valse herdershonden onder controle te krijgen. Hierdoor zouden de valse herdershonden in gnoes veranderen, als voer voor de hyena's van Orion. De wespenbrug was een belangrijke verbinding hier tussen. Hierover was in het boek geschreven. Ook waren er plaatjes van te zien.

Hoofdstuk 2. De Wortelboom

De wortelboom werd bewaakt door een lange slang. Niemand mocht van die boom eten. De wortels waren

hemels, en niet bestemd voor mensen. Alleen de goden konden er van eten. Kinderen ook. De slang bewaarde een eeuwenoude schat : een naakte vrouw. Zij was in deze boom opgesloten. De wortels waren haar vruchten, en brachten dromen en visioenen. Er was ook een andere wortelboom waar men wel van mocht eten, maar deze wortels brachten de dood voort. En in de woestijn verscheen een regenboog, en kinderen hadden een regenboog om hun hoofd. En ze kwamen tot het kasteel van fantasie.
Eduard en Sonja besluiten detective te worden over wat er eigenlijk aan de hand is in het heelal. In deze speurtocht ontmoeten zij Filip, een man met eigenaardige uitvindingen.
Ze vroegen hem of hij afwist van het zwarte boek. Hij kende het niet, maar toen ze hem de verhalen erin vertelden, scheen hij daar veel van af te weten. 'Oh ja,' zei hij. 'Ik kan het heelal aardig traceren met mijn apparatuur. Ik weet precies wat zich daar afspeelt. Die leprechauns bijvoorbeeld, die gematerialiseerde herdershonden, die hebben bazen. Dat zijn de pitbulls. Zij komen van een planeet ver weg waar zij leven met hun stropdassen. Pitbulls met kleren. Zij vergaderen daar. Zij beheersen de

aarde.'
Filip had met zijn decodeer-apparatuur ontdekt dat het heelal was onderverdeeld in stierengevecht-velden, die beheerst werden door matador-pitbulls, een hoge vorm van leprechauns, de leidinggevenden. En deze afschuwelijke wezens werden bestuurd door nog afschuwelijkere wezens : tandartsen. Filip zei dat hij een medicijn had ontwikkeld tegen tandartsen. Hij leidde Sonja en Eduard naar een kamer waar ze op een lange stoel moesten liggen. Sonja en Eduard moesten volgens hem bevrijd worden van zware tandarts-straling. Hij activeerde zijn aparatuur, en verbond Sonja en Eduard met de aparatuur door vreemde draden. De aparatuur begon allerlei signalen te geven.
Het duurde niet zo lang. Tien minuten. En toen leidde Filip hen naar een bovenverdieping waar ze thee met gebak kregen, en daarna koffie. Filip was een aardige man, die overal veel vanaf wist te weten. Ze hadden lange gesprekken over allerlei zaken. Filip was een man die nooit opgaf, en altijd doorpuzzelde. Hij scheen een heel team te hebben van mensen die altijd weer dingen aan het uitbouwen waren, en nieuwe uitvindingen uitvoerden.

Snelheids Duivel

Ze zaten hand in hand. Ze wilden elkaar niet verliezen. Ze waren bang, omdat zoveel relaties om hen heen stukliepen.
'Blijf alsjeblieft altijd eerlijk tegen me,' zei ze tegen hem.
'Praat alles met me uit.' Hij knikte. 'Natuurlijk schatje.'
'Ik heb zo vreemd gedroomd vannacht,' zei ze zachtjes.
'Waarover dan ?' vroeg hij.
'Over voeten,' zij ze.
'Voeten ?' vroeg hij. 'Wat deden die voeten dan ?'
'Ze speelden,' zei ze, 'en ze deden alsof ze machtig waren.'
Plotseling kreeg hij stuiptrekkingen, en viel op de grond.
Er was schuim op zijn mond. Even later zat hij weer naast haar op de bank. Ze zei niets. 'Ga verder,' zei hij. 'Waar heb je nog meer over gedroomd ?' Maar het was alsof ze in zichzelf gekeerd was nu. 'Oh, niets,' zei ze. Hij keek haar aan. Haar lippen waren vol. Hij wilde haar kussen, maar het was alsof iets hem tegenhield.
'Het zijn de tuinen,' zei hij.
'Wat bedoel je ?' zei ze bijna fluisterend.
'Nou ....,' zei hij. Maar verder kwam hij niet.
'Ik moet gaan,' zei ze.
'Waarom ?' vroeg hij.

'Ik heb nog wat dingen te doen,' sprak ze, en vertrok.
Die nacht had hij een droom. Over voeten die als dieren waren, en die op jacht gingen. Het was een vreemde droom, en de volgende dag vertelde hij het aan haar. Haar lippen waren vol en een beetje vochtig. Hij wilde haar kussen, maar ze duwde hem van haar af. Ze was een beetje misselijk zei ze. Hij begreep haar niet. Sinds hij die stuiptrekkingen had deed ze ineens zo koud. Ze legde hem uit dat ze zich niet lekker voelde na het vertellen van haar droom, zoals hij zich ook niet lekker voelde.
'Wat is er dan met ons aan de hand ?' vroeg hij. Toen omhelsde ze hem met haar warme lichaam. 'Alsjeblieft, laat me nooit meer gaan,' zei ze. 'Natuurlijk niet, schatje,' zei hij. Ze drukte wat toetsen in op de telefoon, en belde iemand op. Ze raakte diep in gesprek, alsof ze hem helemaal had vergeten. Hij voelde nog steeds haar warme lichaam tegen zich aan. Toen ze had opgehangen begon ze te huilen. 'Ik voel me niet lekker,' zei ze. Hij nam haar nog dichter tegen zich aan. 'Misschien moet je er gewoon over praten,' zei hij.
'Het zijn de dromen,' zei ze.
'Waar heb je dan over gedroomd ?' vroeg hij.
Ze zei niets.

'Toe, je moet het me vertellen,' zei hij.
'Ik droomde over Klaas,' zei ze. 'Dat hij alleen die rivier overzwom, en verdronk.'
Hij wiegde haar een beetje. Hij nam haar heupen vast. Opeens kreeg hij weer last van stuiptrekkingen, en viel neer. Midden in de nacht werd hij wakker, en ze hing wild over hem. Hij greep haar vast. Ze begon hem te kussen.
'Eindelijk ben je wakker,' zei ze. 'Je bent zo lang bewusteloos geweest. Ik heb je naar je bed getrokken.'
'Je bent sterk,' zei hij.
Ineens staat er een man in de deur-opening. Ze schrikken beiden. De man heeft een zwarte hoed op, en een wit gezicht, met verder een zwart lichaam met zwarte kleding. Maar dan is ook zijn gezicht zwart, en er rollen spinnen uit de pijpen van zijn jas. Een vreemde geur verspreid zich in de kamer. Ze horen geschreeuw. De man begint te lachen. Het is als het gebrul van een leeuw of een tijger.
'Ik ben een gek,' zei de man. 'Ik ben verschrikkelijk gestoord.' De man begint verschrikkelijk te gillen, en dan weer te lachen. Hij begint te bulderen van het lachen, totdat hij vuur spuwt in alle kleuren. 'Ik heb deze dromen gegeven !' schreewde hij. 'Ik ben een engel.' De man in bed krijgt weer stuiptrekkingen, en begint heen en weer te

rollen. 'Indiaanse dromen,' zei de man in zwart. 'Ik ben een boodschapper, een shamaan. Ik heb een boodschap voor jullie. Er is iets achter jullie aan, en het zal jullie krijgen ook.' Toen was de man verdwenen.

'Bah,' zei de vrouw. 'Wat is dat ?' Maar de man in bed had nog steeds stuiptrekkingen.

Toen stond er ineens een clown voor hen. Hij had een rode jas aan met wat gele en gouden strepen. 'Kaartje ?' vroeg hij. Hij hield hen een kaartje voor. Nu viel de vrouw ook flauw. Hij nam hen in zijn armen, en begon te groeien, terwijl hij over de straten begon te racen, en in een vreemd vuur alles achter zich liet. Hij was een ware snelheids-duivel.

Kemis, in kleuren en geuren, in het trollenwoud, tot het oerwoud. De geheimen van Kemis, het trollenkind, opgesloten in dozen, kisten van groot geweld. Open het, en sterf. Zij houdt een symbolisch zwaard voor jouw ogen, het draait, het spreekt. Het is het Zwaard van Trol.
Kemis, de sleutel is hier, een trollenkind, tot de poorten van de Leprechaun. Zij houdt een Zwaard voor je, wat spoedig in duisternis zal veranderen. Het zal geabsorbeerd worden door de lucht, en dan zal de hemel harig zijn. De hel zal het vieren.
Kemis, om je vrij te zetten, de boerderij doet haar deuren open. Ren daarom, tot het oerwoud, waar de taal van leprechaun spreekt. Haar lippen zijn groot, een groot geheim. De haaien zijn veranderd in varkens. Nu kan de jacht beginnen. Grijp de dolk van leprechaun.
Kemis, vol van kennis, hebbende de sleutel van de leprechaun gnosis, als een vlam. Zij draagt het in haar hand, en in haar andere hand de trol gnosis.
Zij staat in een geopent raam. Haar hand uitgestoken. Zij heeft een wapenrusting. Zij is klaar voor de jacht. Zij sprak in de duisternis van de leprechaun. De duisternis van

de lokogamen is gekomen. Zij is de eerste duisternis. Kemis, zij houdt de dolk vast, en de boog is op haar rug. Zij wijst op de rivieren. Zij zijn de rivieren van oerwouden. Zij wijst op de lucht, die donker wordt. Er is een haak in de lucht. De Tirkw.
Kemis is een leprechaun. Zij is een lokogaam. Zij spreekt, zij jaagt. Zij staat in het open raam. Zij roept je naam.

Het Labyrint

Hoofdstuk 1.

'Als ik in jouw spiegels kijk, ben ik altijd lelijk,' sprak ze.
'Dat komt...' zei hij aarzelend, 'omdat het de spiegels van de dwergen zijn.... eh... de boze dwergen dan, want de goede dwergen kunnen het niet wezen. Die doen zulke dingen niet.'
'Ja, maar wie leidt hen ?' vroeg ze.
'De heerser waarschijnlijk,' zei hij.
'Wie is de heerser ?' vroeg ze.
'Laat maar,' zei hij. 'We zitten nu eenmaal in dit duistere labyrint. We kunnen er niet uit, en we weten niet veel.'
'Alsjeblieft doe die spiegels dan weg,' zei ze. 'Ik kan er niet meer tegen. Ik vind je prachtig, dus je hoeft niet telkens in de spiegel te kijken of je haar wel goed zit, of dat je neus wel recht staat.'
'Je begrijpt het niet,' zei hij. 'Ik heb die spiegels nodig omdat ....'
Maar toen vielen ze beiden weer in slaap door de zachte winden van het labyrint.
Aan het meer op een klein strandje zat een dwerg op zijn

fluit te spelen. Ik haaste me er naartoe. Al snel werd ik overvallen door struiken met scherpe doornen .... bessenstruiken. Daarachter waren de bessenbomen die daar weelderig groeiden. Ik probeerde te ontsnappen, maar kwam niet meer los. Ik werd in het meer getrokken. De bomen groeiden door tot in de dieptes van het meer. Het meer was langwerpig als een rivier. Ik kon de overkant zien. De dwerg speelde rustig door, en betoverde mij. Ik was nu een gevangene van het labyrint. Ik dwaalde rond over het zand, en zag een stad in de verte. Toen viel ook ik in slaap door de zachte winden van het labyrint.
'Mara, Mara,' zong de geest van het meer, de veerman, of beter gezegd de veerjongen. Ik zat in zijn boot en met zijn lange staf in het water kon hij de boot voortduwen. 'Mijn schreeuw heeft je gevonden,' zei de veerjongen. 'Ik zal je brengen naar de overkant van het meer, naar het paleis van de heerser en de prins.' Maar ik zakte weer weg. Ik werd door de wind opgenomen, en vloog richting het wazige, geestachtige paleis in de verte, als een paleis van mist, vage mist, weerspiegelingen. 'Ja, ja,' hoorde ik de geest roepen. 'Ja, ja, ja,' alsof hij iets probeerde af te zeggen. 'En dan ben ik klaar.' Ik zakte weg, als in een rozentuin. Vreemde bessenbomen, weelderige bessenbomen en

struiken hingen over mij. Ze hadden hun doornen verloren.
'Ik breek !' schreeuwde de geest. Er was alsof er iets knapte in mij. Ik steeg op, en verliet de aarde. Ik bevond mij boven een woeste zee. 'Houd moed!' werd er geroepen. Ze probeerden mij op een schip te heisen. Ik zag zeemannen die er lichtelijk als piraten uitzagen, en een kapitein. Ze smeerden mij in met schuim.
'Tegen de draken,' zeiden ze. 'De zeedraken. Ze hadden je. Maar nu hebben wij jou.' Ik waggelde als een beschonkene, alsof ik teveel bier of andere sterke drank had gedronken. Ze wasten me in een teil van sterke drank en bier even later. Het tintelde op mijn lichaam. Mijn huid glanste in de zon. Het was bijna plakkerig, alsof er een olie-laagje op mijn huid zat nu.
De wanen hadden hem in zijn macht. Hij werd wakker met een zoutachtige smaak in zijn mond aan het hete strand. Het was warm en de zwoele zeewind overweldigde hem. 'Dodelijke spiegels zijn het,' werd er gejammerd. Er waren er meer die er onder leden. Boze dwergen hadden die spiegels gesmeed, van zwart goud, behekst. Het was alsof er een holte in was waar je doorheen kon rollen. De heerser had hen waarschijnlijk daartoe geinspireerd of zelfs hen daartoe opdracht gegeven. Waarschijnlijk zou de

prins nog daartegen hebben gevochten, maar het mocht niet baten. De heerser had het voor het zeggen.
Het zwarte goud was een edel familie-geschenk, om de banden in stand te houden. Maar waar leidde het hen naartoe ? Naar hel en verdoemenis ... scheen het. Niemand wist wat er mee te beginnen. Alles leek zo hopeloos. Ze waren in de ban van het zwarte goud, wat de toekomst zou kunnen voorspellen. De leugenaar woonde in hen.

Hoofdstuk 2.

Ze zit aan het strand met een klein dwergje. In de verte ziet ze de torens. Ze komen snel voort vanuit de zee, omgeven met een lichte mist. Golven spoelen aan. Ze zoekt naar boodschappen gebracht door pijn. In de pijn ziet ze visioenen. De pijn laat haar wanen. In de pijn hoort ze het gejoel van indianen, als het gejoel van hyena's. Ze gaat languit liggen in het hete zand, en voelt dan zanderige lippen op haar. Ze glijdt weg in de slaap, als een gevangene van het labyrint. Wie heeft dat labryrint gebouwd ?
Ze ziet boten in de verte, die metaal voortbrengen. Maar zij blijft dichtbij de bessen.

Ik was de tuinman van mijn ziel. Het was moeilijk om de tuin op orde te krijgen. Zo wild groeide het, en ik was een gevangene van mijn eigen tuin. Ik was verliefd op de droomster. Zij was vrij, als de godin van de lucht. Ze had een gouden sleutel om mij vrij te zetten, en toen mocht ik haar tuin bewaken. Ik mocht het groots maken zoals ik zelf wilde. Maar toen vertrok zij ...
Ik heb het nooit goed kunnen verwerken. Ze liet geen spoor van haarzelf achter. Misschien was zij ontvoerd door een beest. Ik bleef in haar tuin werken, en bleef op haar wachten, maar tevergeefs. Ik legde mij neer aan de voeten van dit raadsel. Er was geen doorkomen aan, en spoedig begon ik te merken dat ik in een boom begon te veranderen. Mijn takken strekten zich uit in de lucht, maar ik vond haar niet. Mijn wortelen groeiden diep onder de aarde, maar vinden deed ik haar niet. Ik droeg vrucht, en bloemen, en bloesem kwam ook, maar zij kwam niet. Wel kwamen allerlei dieren op me af, maar meestal om me te bestelen. Ze namen alles van me af totdat ik kaal stond.
Op een dag kwamen ze me omhakken, en toen was het gedaan met mij. Ik werd een tafel. En zij was nergens te

bekennen. Ik raakte verbitterd. Niemand keek naar niemand om.
Op een dag werd ik wakker, en merkte dat ik brandde. De familie bij wie ik als tafel stond wilde mij niet meer. Nu moest ik branden, maar ik werd vrij. Mijn as zweefde in de lucht, en een wind nam mij mee. Ik was overal, en toen zag ik haar weer ... de droomster ...
Ze was prachtig, en voerde mij naar haar luchtkasteel. Daar zijn we toen gaan wonen, en ze verliet mij nooit meer.

De slaven waren gepiercet in hun tepels. Ze stonden bevend voor haar. Zij had de macht hun leven geheel in de vernieling te brengen. Niet lang daarna lagen ze aan haar voeten, smekend om genade, maar er was geen genade. Zij moesten hun lot aanvaarden, en gehoorzamen. Zij had veel manieren om hen tot die gehoorzaamheid te brengen, om hen daarvan niet te laten afwijken.
Zoveel middelen had zij om hun leven tot een hel te maken, en dat zou zij ook doen. Er was niets meer wat haar tegen zou kunnen houden. Zij waren alleen met haar, als haar hulpeloze slaven.
Hoeveel ze ook gilden en schreeuwden, het kon haar niks schelen. Ze waren nek-geketend en aan handen en voeten gebonden. Zij overviel hen in hun slaap. Nu was er niets wat haar kon stoppen. Hier had ze lang op gewacht. De wraak was met haar.
Wanneer ze hen riep ging het hen door merg en been. Ze trok hen aan een touw door het zand. Zij was zoveel malen sterker dan hen. Nooit zou een man meer over haar heersen. Lang genoeg had zij in gevangenschap gezeten, maar nu was zij vrij, en zou haar vrijheid verdedigen als

een wild beest.
Zij trok hen naar een gebied waar het groene niet was, een gebied van duistere jungles. Alles was hier grauw. De wateren waren van bloed en bruin. Het groene had haar eens geketend, maar nu zou zij alleen maar teruggaan naar het groene om gevangenen te maken. Zij wist dat de aanval de beste verdediging was. Ze zou niet wachten totdat ze weer door een groep mannen overvallen zou worden. Neen. Zij moesten allemaal in gevangenschap gaan voordat dat kon gebeuren.
Zij haatte het groene. Ook haatte zij het blauwe. Nu leefde zij voor eeuwig daar waar het groene en het blauwe niet kon komen. De mannen verbleekten voor haar aangezicht. Zij zou hen uithongeren, en voor eeuwig haar slaven zijn. Zij zou hoe dan ook met hen afrekenen. Zij hadden haar teveel aangedaan. Nu was zij een wild beest. Zij zouden niet veel kunnen doen. Zij was vele malen sterker dan hen. Toen ze jong was, en niet was ontwikkeld tot haar volle kracht konden ze haar nog temmen. Maar nu niet meer. De rollen waren omgedraaid.
Ze lachte, en spotte, terwijl ze de mannen bekeek die op de grond lagen. Ze zou hen voor eeuwig kooien. Voor haar werken zouden ze, zodat ze geen tijd zouden hebben om

aan andere dingen te denken. Als hun gedachtes af zouden dwalen, dan zou dat een gevaar voor haar kunnen betekenen. Daarom zou zij hen moeten temmen. Zij zou hen onder hypnose moeten brengen, totaal onder haar macht. Als een roofdier sloop zij tussen haar prooi. Haar mes had ze dicht tegen haar aan, en haar arm was gespannen, alsof ze elk moment kon toeslaan. Zij zou haar eerste offer brengen. Eén man moest sterven voor wat haar was aangedaan.

Ze boog over haar slachtoffers heen, hen uiterst zorgvuldig bekijkende, op zoek naar sporen van angst. De mannen beefden voor haar. Sommigen rolden over de grond, om van haar proberen weg te komen, maar het touw aan hun nek-ketens liet hen merken dat ze nergens naartoe konden. Ze waren van haar, haar bezit. Ook hadden sommigen dunne ketens bevestigd aan hun tepel-piercings. Ketens die terugliepen tot aan haar riem. Zij zouden altijd in paniek leven, gedwongen door pijn om haar te gehoorzamen, en door de pijn die op de loer stond. Ze konden nergens heen.

Ze rook hun lichamen, en genoot van hun angst, zoals ze eens van haar angst genoten. Ze liet hen merken hoe onwaardig ze waren, en vernederde hen op allerlei

manieren. Ze lachte en spotte.
Na een tijd had ze haar offer gevonden. Deze man moest voor haar sterven. Ze greep hem bij de keel, en zette haar mes op zijn nek. Langzaam begon ze het mes naar binnen te laten zinken. Het bloed spoot eruit, en ze liet hem helemaal leegbloeden. De man begon luid te gillen, maar lag even later bewusteloos in het zand. Toen sneed ze zijn kop eraf, en trok het op aan zijn haren. 'Dit is wat ik van jullie maak !' schreeuwde ze. 'Hier hebben jullie om gevraagd !'
Ze ging in het zand zitten en huilde. Zoveel herinneringen kwamen naar boven. Dit was de man die haar dit allemaal had aangedaan. Ze was opgelucht nu. Zijn botten zou ze in haar tent hangen. Zijn schedel zou heilig zijn voor haar. Zij zou zijn schedel plaatsen op een paal. Ook zijn scalp spietste ze op een paal. Oorlogsgejoel klonk door de duistere nacht. Hier was het altijd nacht. Het bloed gaf licht, en er was veel vuur. Zo was er een donkere gloed waarin zij voortleefde, waarin zij zich veilig voelde. Hier zou ze bedenken wat ze met de andere mannen zou doen. Zij konden niets meer tegen haar beginnen, nu ze tot haar volle kracht was uitgegroeid. Haar tranen vielen op de grond, maar spoedig zouden haar tranen niet meer

stromen. Zij had al genoeg gehuild in haar leven. Nu zouden de mannen huilen.
Grote tranen vielen op haar voeten. Tranen die niet van haar waren, maar van hen die haar eens hadden opgejaagd, en hadden opgesloten. Zij voerden jacht op haar, en waren daarin geslaagd. In een kerker moest zij leven, voor zo'n lange tijd. In een duistere kooi leerde zij wat het was om een slaaf te zijn, afhankelijk aan de genade van een man. Die man was nu niet meer in leven. Maar al zijn dienstknechten lagen aan haar voeten.
Ze verachtte deze slaven. Zij waren altijd slaven geweest, en nu waren ze haar slaven. Zij zou geen genade of medelijden met hen hebben. In deze duistere nacht moesten zij op hun plaats gezet worden. Hier, in dit nachtgebied, zouden zij weten wie of wat ze waren, en wie ze moesten dienen. Zij zou raad weten met hun trotse borsten. Piercings gingen daarin, totdat de pijn hen dwong hun borsten te laten invallen, dichtvallen zoals zij dat noemde. Zij waren niet meer zo trots, en zij zouden nog minder trots zijn. Daar had zij haar middelen voor. Ook hun borst-piercingen werden soms bevestigd aan lange dunne kettingen, die terugliepen tot aan haar riem. Bij een lichte beweging van haar of hen hadden ze pijn. De pijn

dwong hen om aan haar toe te geven. Ze hadden met de verkeerde persoon te maken. Zij zouden haar niet meer kunnen voorliegen.
Als een duister beest met veel prooi stond zij daar in het nachtgebied, naast haar tent. Ze stond daar met bloed aan haar mond, het bloed van een prooidier wat ze een tijd geleden had gevangen en vetgemest voor deze dag. Al deze mannen zouden haar geheim kennen. Ze zou hen voer geven wat hen zou veranderen in vee. Zij had zwarte magie in haar botten. Zij was de koningin van de zwarte magie en voodoo. Zij zou hun hoofden beheersen, en alles omdraaien. Zij zou hen in verwarring brengen, en hen te doen laten geloven dat zij beesten waren, fokvee, niets anders dan dat.
Slachtvee waren zij in haar ogen, en ook zij begonnen dat meer en meer te geloven. Elke dag sprak ze dat op hen in, en zij begonnen zich steeds meer als slachtvee te gedragen. Voodoo was haar naam.
De dag erna vermoordde ze al haar slaven. Nu zou ze haar zusters vrijzetten. Zwaar bewapend ging ze tot de groene en blauwe gebieden, daar waar het daglicht regeerde, en kwam tot hun kerkers, waar ze een zware strijd begon. Ze onthoofde de geestelijken, en verscheurde hun

wetsboeken. Ze daalde neer op hun schedels. Zij brak hun miserabele lichamen, en slachtte haarzelf een weg door de bijna bevroren massa's. Zij waren alreeds zombies. Zij was op weg naar hun leider. Zij bespotte hem al in de verte, en riep zijn naam. In visioenen had zij hem al gezien. Ook hem zou zij breken. Op een hoge rode troon zat hij, met honden aan weerszijden. Hij leefde als in een kooi. Gouden tralies probeerden haar te stoppen. Er heerste hier een verschrikkelijke stank. Even dacht ze dat ze zou bezwijken, en alles was hier zo vol van licht. Ze verlangde naar de duisternis, maar moest eerst met deze persoon afhandelen om haar zusters vrij te zetten.

In haar hart sprak ze wat voodoo spreuken.

Toen hij haar zag veranderde hij in een groen gedrocht. 'Ik ken je !' riep ze bijna gillend. 'Jij bent het groene gedrocht. Jij hebt mijn zusters verkocht ! Waar heb je ze ?' Het groene gedrocht greep haar en begon haar te verscheuren. Hier was zij niet tegen opgewassen. Ze krijste en schreeuwde. Toen hoorde ze de stem van haar zusters. Ze was stervende, maar met haar laatste kracht wilde zij haar zusters vrijzetten. Ze sleepte haarzelf voort tot waar het geluid vandaan kwam, terwijl het groene gedrocht zich in haar had vastgebeten. Moeizaam sleepte ze haarzelf voort.

Het groene gedrocht liet niet los, en ze begon steeds meer kracht en bloed te verliezen. Ze kon het groene gedrocht met geen mogelijkheid van haar afkrijgen. Ze kwam aan bij een duister hol, en ging daar naar binnen. In de verte zag ze de kooien, en hoopte maar dat ze die kooien zou kunnen bereiken voordat ze zou sterven. Moeizaam sleepte ze zich voort, en alles ging steeds trager. Ze begon steeds duizeliger te worden, maar het geschreeuw van haar zusters scheen haar een vreemde kracht te geven. Nog nooit had ze deze kracht eerder gevoeld. Met een krijs slingerde ze het beest van haarzelf af, en het spatte tegen een rotspunt aan in het hol. Ze was bedekt met groen slijm. Ergens lag een dierenvel waarmee ze haar wond begon dicht te knopen. Ze strompelde naar de kooien en met haar laatste krachten brak ze de tralies open. Haar zusters waren vrij. Ze namen haar in hun armen, maar niets kon meer baten. Ze was stervende. Ze ijlde. Ze was te diep verscheurd. Haar zusters huilden.
De grote Voodoo was niet meer.
De zusters keken elkaar aan. Ze wisten dat ze alleen verder moesten. Voodoo had hen bevrijd, maar … dat was tegelijkertijd het einde van Voodoo. Het was alsof ze haar nog steeds hoorden krijsen in de verte, maar het gekrijs

werd minder, om even later plaats te maken voor doodse stilte. Snel renden de zusters de wildernis in.
Wie zou nu de koningin van de zwarte magie worden ? De zusters wisten niet of ze wel voor zo'n taak opgewassen waren. Ze waren anders dan Voodoo.
Hoe het kon wisten ze niet, maar het groene gedrocht wist hen ook te vinden. Hij begon hen te verscheuren zoals hij deed met hun zuster, en er was niets wat ze konden doen. Ze zouden sterven in deze nacht. Het groene monster nam hun wereld over, en ze kwamen samen met hun zuster in de onderwereld. Zij troonde daar in de onderwereld als de grote Voodoo koningin. Zij verbleekten naast haar. Maar ook hier kwam het groene gedrocht om hen te achtervolgen. Er was geen ontsnapping mogelijk van het groene gedrocht. Ze werden getrokken tot de hel waar ze zouden branden. In het vuur zagen ze elkaar's gezichten, en gilden. Ze smolten weg, totdat ze geheel opgebrand waren, om dieper weg te zinken in een massale leegte. Ze waren tot de afgrond onder de hel gekomen, tot de bodemloze put. Hier zonken ze als in een moeras, een moeras van vergetelheid. Het voelde aan als een nieuwe geboorte. Ze gaven geboorte aan een dochter, een groot strijder. Zij waren door het groene zaad bevrucht. Hun

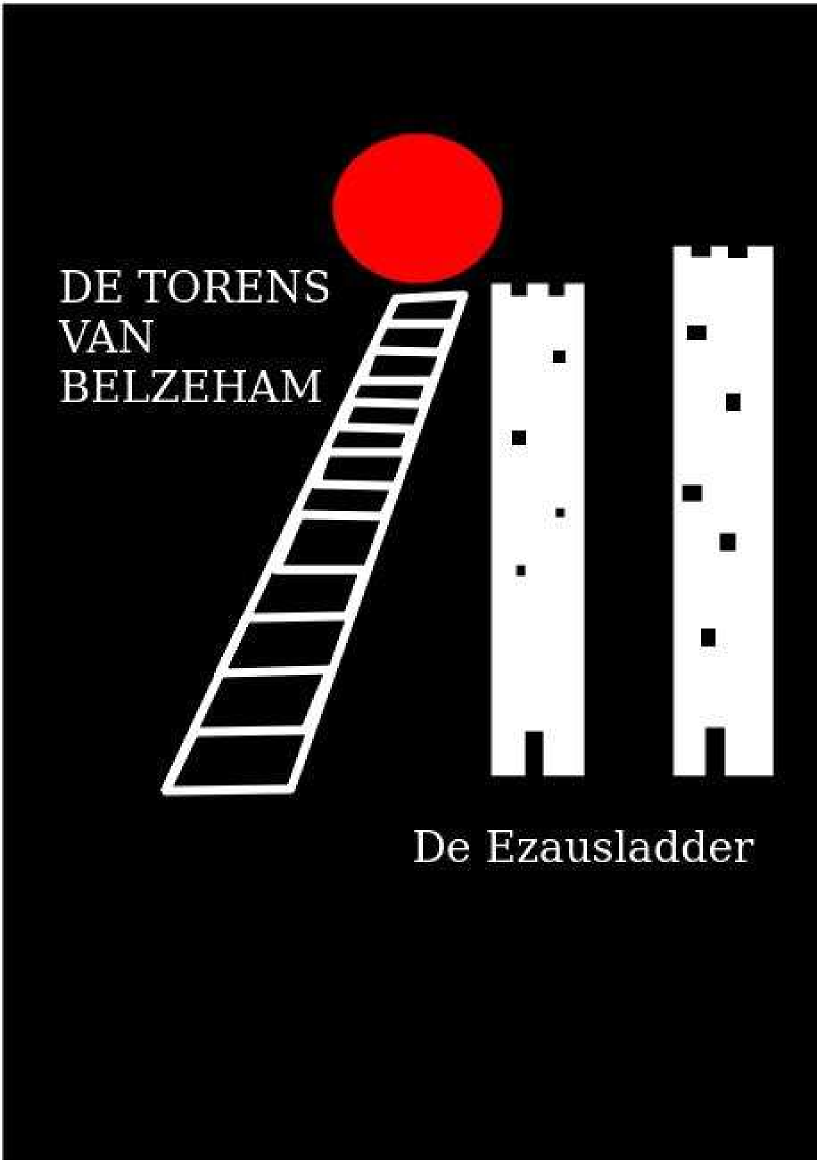
dochter was een groot jager, met de macht om het groene gedrocht te vernietigen. Het groene gedrocht vloog toe op zijn zaad, en verslond het, maar hij werd er erg ziek van. Hij moest het weer uitspugen.
Een grote gestalte stond voor hem, zijn dochter, een vrouw. Ze was goed bewapend, en begon hem te martelen met de wapens. Hij wist dat zij op zijn vernietiging uit was. Ze had geen medelijden met hem. Er was geen genade. Hij riep tot zijn blauwe meesters, en smeekte hen. Het blauwe gedrocht zou nu komen om hem van zijn pijnigingen te verlossen. Onder het aanroepen van verzen uit een boek die hij nog kende kwam er een blauwe mist. Het blauwe gedrocht was gekomen, de grote vader, die het kind begon te verslinden. Het kind stierf. Nu waren alle sporen van het geslacht van voodoo uitgewist. Het blauwe monster had overwonnen en zong zijn oorlogsliederen. Hij zong van overwinning, en het blauwe nam alle werelden in, als grote zeeen die alles overspoelden.
Er was geen herinnering meer aan Voodoo en haar zusters. Iedereen herinnerde alleen de verzen van een oud boek. De verzen waarmee het groene gedrocht zijn blauwe meesters had opgeroepen. Deze verzen moesten bewaard worden tot in alle eeuwigheden.

Een vrouw keek uit over de zeeen. Zij was opgegroeid met het blauwe boek, en ook met het groene gezag. Maar zij had altijd de visioenen van het bruine in haar hoofd, en die vertelden haar over Voodoo en haar zusters.
Het blauwe moest haar doden, maar kon het niet. Ze werd beschermd door een bruin boek. Het was juist het bruine boek waarin Voodoo en haar zusters hun toevlucht hadden gevonden.

RNL-POCKETS

REEDS EERDER VERSCHENEN :

1 HET OORLOGS-SPEL
2 DE TUIN VAN MEVROUW VAN DALEN
3 PLANTEN VAN VLEES
4 ZIJN HUIS STOND IN DE WEG
5 HET SURINAAMSE DAGBOEK
6 DE EVOLUTIE VAN DE HEMEL
7 FABRIEKEN AAN ZEE
8 DE INDIAANSE AVONDEN
9 DE BRUG VAN HEIMDAL
10 HET METALEN EI
11 DE POPPENMAKER VAN HIROSHIMA
12 SOBIBOR – DE LAATSTE JAGER
13 HET PAARSE COMPLOT


DE TORENS
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De Torens van Belzeham

De Ezausladder

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De Ezausladder

Dubbel Bijbel School (DBS)
2024

Hoofdstuk 1.

Sint-Oedenrode.
Het is ochtend.
Ik kijk uit het raam.
Ik zie de kerktoren.
Ik zie op straat de gereformeerden lopen.
Ik ben geïnteresseerd in theologie.
Het boeit mij, maar ik houd het op veilige afstand.
Het blaft mij teveel. Gelukkig liggen die honden aan de ketting.

Ik groeide op in een kerkelijk gezin.
Het was zo uit de hand gelopen dat ik hier naartoe ben gevlucht.
Ik woonde eerst in Friesland. Die Friezen zijn soms niet goed bij hun hoofd.
Maar ik ben zelf een Fries, en mijn familie is Fries.
Ik beschouw ze niet meer als mijn familie.
Ik moest helemaal naar de andere kant van Nederland vluchten,
en woon nu goed in Sint-Oedenrode.

Het evangelie interesseert me, zoals mijn vrouw mij ook interesseert.
Ik heb het idee dat ze beiden hetzelfde zijn, dat het evangelie mijn vrouw is,
en mijn vrouw het evangelie. Ook amazones interesseren mij.
Zij zijn de vrijgevochtenen van het mannelijke, patriarchische bewind.
Als je het mij vraagt zijn zij de enige hoop voor Nederland.

Ik kan me de predikant van Belgum herinneren van vroeger.
Wat liep die man te schelden en te vloeken van de preekstoel af.
Wij moesten dat allemaal aanhoren. De familie was geen haar beter.
Die namen het allemaal van hem over, en ik moest altijd die verhalen aanhoren.

Jan heette die, Jan van Belgum. Hij kwam vroeger veel bij ons thuis, hield ons nauwgezet in de gaten, want wij waren zijn schaapjes en hij was de goede herder. Nou, zo goed was hij niet. Soms als hij kwam was hij

dronken, en hij rookte ook als een ketter. Nu is dat op zich niet zo erg natuurlijk, maar het was gewoon een nare man, niet fijn in de omgang.

Hij heeft onze hele familie in het verderf gestort met zijn verhalen, want ja, verhalen vertellen dat kon hij wel. Dan moesten we soms met het hele gezin dagenlang de kelder in omdat de wereld zogenaamd zou vergaan, dat soort toestanden. Die man was niet helemaal honderd. En zo ken ik wel meerdere predikanten.

De amazones hebben gevochten om mij naar Sint-Oedenrode te krijgen.
Dat waren vriendinnen van mijn oma. Ze waren al heel oud, maar hun dochters streden mee.
Mijn oma was nog de enige waarmee ik contact had van die familie.
Ze was een goudeerlijk mens en moest ook niets van die verhalen van van Belgum en de familie weten. Zij ging ook naar een andere kerk.

Theologie kan mij altijd wel boeien, en kerkgeschiedenis en kerkoorlogen. Ik heb er veel van meegemaakt. Het is interessant om het uit te pluizen. Ik ben een zakenman. Ik onderhandel graag. Ik puzzel graag dingen uit. Ik ben geïnteresseerd in oude en nieuwe dingen, weetjes, nieuwe gezichtspunten. Het is ook een stuk trauma-verwerking. Ik wil klaarkomen met het theologische vraagstuk. In mijn vrouw heb ik die oplossing gevonden. Zij was een vriendin van één van de dochters van een vriendin van mijn oma. Ze is wel wat ouder dan mij, maar dat maakt niet uit. Ze zat dus in het amazone-leger en heeft meegeholpen mij te bevrijden uit Friesland. Dat ging niet zonder slag of stoot.

Ik was meer dood dan levend, maar zij heeft mij opgepept en nieuwe levenslust gegeven.

Zoveel nieuwe gezichten hier. Ik moest er eerst wel even aan wennen. De mensen hier zijn zo anders. Ik was blij dat mijn vrouw meeging, die toen nog mijn vriendin was.

Ze zegt vaak dat ik diep zucht. Ik draag natuurlijk heel wat mee. Ik kan er met haar wel goed over praten. Zij is ook geïnteresseerd in theologie, en blijft ook op veilige afstand. Het mag nooit meer gebeuren, dat wat ons overkomen is.

Soms jank ik nog steeds, omdat het gewoon te diep zit. Ik krijg het niet weg. Het heeft mij beschadigd voor het leven. Er is geen kruid tegen opgewassen.

Ik wil met haar naar de zee gaan, met mijn vrouw.
Ik heb het gevoel dat de theologie me weer naar de nek is gevlogen, en dan is de zee altijd behulpzaam.
Het is een hele strijd.

De golven van de zee laten me altijd zien dat er zoveel van me is afgenomen, maar dat ik er ook zoveel voor terug krijg.

Ik ga wel vaker met mijn vrouw wat daagjes naar zee. We hebben daar ergens een caravan staan. Dan zijn we er even helemaal uit.

In de golven wordt alles tegen elkaar weggestreept. Wij noemen de zee daarom ook wel de dokter. Maar een mens kan niet in de zee wonen. Daarom houden we net als theologie de zee ook op een afstand. Wij benaderen de zee ook als een zee, als eb en vloed, als een zee van vragen.

Zo in de hoogzomer lijkt de zee wel rood. Alsof het iets aankondigt, die rode gloed. We kunnen bijna de toekomst zien in de zee, als een spiegel, maar begrijpen doen we het niet. Daar is meer voor nodig. Daar hebben we de theologie voor, en ons dochtertje. De laatste keer toen we naar zee waren gegaan had ze het telkens over een aardbeving in Friesland. Dat riep ze zelfs, en dan keek ze naar mij : ‘Aardbeving in Friesland.’ Twee weken daarna kwam die aardbeving ook. Friesland is nu een ruïne, en grote delen van Groningen en Drenthe ook. Het is een wildernis. Er zijn

vele rampentoeristen daar. Ik waag me er niet aan. Wat als er nog meer aardbevingen daar zullen komen ? Het is nu een gebied van campingen en kampen. Mijn dochtertje wil er naartoe, maar voor mij is het nog steeds te traumatisch. Ook mijn vrouw wil er naartoe. Ze willen daar op zeilvakantie. Mijn vrouw wil er ook een zeilschool beginnen, maar ja, dan zouden we moeten verhuizen, en dat zie ik echt niet zitten. Gevaar van aardbevingen, en gevaar van flashbacks. Het is te pijnlijk voor mij. Ik voel me dan niet veilig. Ik zou me voortdurend onrustig voelen, maar mijn vrouw zegt dat het een uitdaging is, en dat het nu zo veranderd is. Ze zegt ook dat aardbevingen daar heel zeldzaam zijn, vooral van een omvang als deze. Dat maak je maar één keer mee in je leven. Ik probeer haar te geloven. Zij is immers mijn evangelie.

Mijn dochtertje voelt alles haarscherp aan. Als zij er naartoe wil dan moet het wel veilig zijn. Toch houd ik de boot af. Het is meer iets voor de fantasie.

Hoofdstuk 2.

Ik heb me uiteindelijk laten ompraten. Ik werd gek van het gezeur aan mijn hoofd.
We zijn naar Friesland gegaan. We staan nu op een camping.
Mijn vrouw en dochtertje willen zeilen en ik moet mee.
We zijn op zeilvakantie, en als alles goed gaat wil mijn vrouw een zeilschool beginnen.
Het is een wildernis hier, met wat ruïnes, en veel campings en kampen.
Sommigen komen hier om te jagen, op jachtvakantie te gaan.
Er loopt overal wild rond.

Mijn vrouw zegt dat de zwijnen alles opvreten wat los en vast zit.
Daarom vindt zij de jacht gerechtvaardigd, maar ik heb zoiets van : die dieren moeten toch ook eten ? Is eten verboden vandaag de dag ? Een mens eet toch ook, waarom een dier niet ? En dieren hebben geen supermarkten. Ze moeten toch ergens hun voedsel vandaan halen ?

Mijn vrouw zeilt, maar wil ook jagen. Ook wil ze vissen.
Ik laat haar maar gaan. Er valt toch niet tegen op te boksen.
Het is als strijden tegen de zee. Dat win je niet. Daar wordt je moe van.
Je kan alleen maar verliezen tegen de zee.

Ik heb houvast in de theologie, maar houdt het op veilige afstand.
Ik houd het in de boeken. Ik ga niet naar de kerk.
De kerken zijn nu ruïnes hier, maar ze houden kerkdiensten op de campings.
Mijn vrouw wil er naartoe, en ook mijn dochtertje.
Uiteindelijk laat ik me toch overhalen om van het gezeur af te zijn, en slepen ze me mee.
Achteraf heb ik er geen spijt van. Het was een mooie dienst.
Ik heb er veel van geleerd, heb nieuwe inzichten gekregen.

Ze vereren mijn dochtertje, vanwege haar speciale voorspellende gave.

Ze ziet dingen komen die wij niet zien, als de rode, spiegelende zee.
Zij kan de zee verstaan. Wij niet.
Ik begin meer en meer te merken wat voor een cultus er ontstaat rondom mijn dochter.
Ik probeer haar tegen al die aandacht te beschermen, maar het is weer als vechten tegen de zee. Ik kom er niet doorheen, en mijn vrouw werkt ook al helemaal niet mee. Zij is trots op onze dochter, en denkt dat ze zo veel voor de samenleving kan betekenen. Ik leg me er maar bij neer. Ze willen haar ook laten prediken.

Het zijn mooie diensten. Velen komen zo over de ramp heen.
Mensen hebben vaak zoveel familie verloren. En vrienden.
Ja, de theologie geeft moed, en rust, en geeft hoop.
De theologie is een dokter, als de zee.
Wij varen mee.
De stroom is sterk, we gaan op naar het hemelse land.

Mijn dochtertje heeft het hoogste woord. Die schijnt alles te weten.
Hoe dat kan weet ik niet, maar ik laat het maar gaan.

Mijn dochtertje is ook zo geïnteresseerd in theologie, op zo'n jonge leeftijd al.
Ik kan er maar niet over uit.
Terug naar Sint-Oedenrode willen we niet.

Ik val op door mijn verhalen. Ze vinden mij een verhalenverteller.
Ik moet toch wat om te leven ? Anders is het leven maar zinloos.
Ik schilder ook. Dat vind men maar niks.
Ze begrijpen mijn schilderijen niet. En ik begrijp het ook niet.

Ik probeer te schilderen over theologie, maar houdt het ook afstandelijk.
Theologie is mogelijk gevaarlijk voor de mens.
Filosofie en verhalen zijn ervoor om de theologie te beteugelen, maar ze kunnen juist

ook kolen op het vuur gooien. Vandaar dat ik veel schilder.

Mijn vrouw komt soms met worst thuis, en dan moet ik eten.
Ze dwingt me, of zeurt net zolang totdat ik het doe.
Daarna ben ik misselijk en heb ik koppijn.
Ik vind onze relatie op die manier niet gezond, maar ze heeft teveel voor me gedaan.
Ik kan haar niet zomaar weggooien. Ik kan gewoon niet tegen haar op.
Ze is een amazone.

Ze is ook veel steviger gebouwd dan ik.
Ik ben maar een dun mannetje.
In een gevecht zou ik het nooit van haar kunnen winnen.
Verbaal is ze ook veel sterker dan ik. Zij is altijd recht op de man af, en ik praat altijd overal omheen en vertel verhalen.

Ze dwingt mij vlees te eten. Wie doet zoiets ?
Mijn dochtertje komt overal mee weg. Die hoeft niets.

Ik denk dat mijn vrouw niet tegen ons dochtertje opkan.
Daarom heb ik hoop in mijn dochtertje.
Ik ben deel van de cultus.

Steeds meer begin ik van vlees te houden, en van mijn vrouw.
Ze is een jager. Ze heeft mij eens gered. Ze zegt dat ik moet eten wat de pot schaft.
Ze heeft haarzelf opgedrongen als het evangelie. Ik zit met een stockholm syndroom.
Steeds minder wil ik er tegen vechten. Het heeft mij verlamd en ik vind het lekker.
Misschien lekker gemakkelijk, iemand die altijd voor me denkt en alles voor me beslist.
Ze bemoederd me. Ze heeft me eens gered, en daarom kijk ik tegen haar op. Het zou bijna als een zonde zijn als ik haar pijn zou doen, of haar ergens niet in zou behagen.
Ik ben er goed bij.

Daarom vereer ik mijn dochtertje. Daarom ben ik deel van de cultus, om het in balans te

houden. Mijn dochtertje is de enige die tegen mijn vrouw opkan.

Weer een hap vlees, en weer een hap vlees. Mijn vrouw voert me. Ze heeft er zelf voor gejaagd, maar ik voel me ook als haar prooi. Ik moet eten wat de pot schaft, en ik vind het nog lekker ook, terwijl ik er eerst misselijk van werd en koppijn van kreeg. Nu ja, koppijn heb ik nog steeds soms, maar dat kan ook van iets anders zijn. Mijn vrouw zegt dat ik er nu meer aan ben gaan wennen. Ze kan me nog meer vertellen.

Ik moet ook snoep eten soms. Dat is dan mijn beloning voor iets, maar ik mag niet teveel snoep eten. Ze houdt mijn lijn goed in de gaten, bijna hysterisch. Ze wil geen dikke man. Dan zou ze me moeten onthoofden, zegt ze. Ik heb geen grammetje teveel, en dat wil ze zo houden, maar soms heb ik het idee dat ik een heel klein buikje heb als ik in de spiegel kijk. Ze heeft me in het begin van onze relatie vaak getracteerd met snoep, en daar is het van gekomen, en het is nooit meer

weggegaan. Ik was daar wel erg van geschrokken, maar zij schijnt zich er niet aan te storen, ook niet dat ik kaal aan het worden ben, en dat ik een petje draag. Zij vindt dat mannelijk, en van haar hoef ik dus geen petje op, maar ik mag het gelukkig wel van haar, en daarom doe ik dat ook. Ik ben het er helemaal mee eens dat kaal worden mannelijk is, dat het bij de man hoort, en ook harig zijn, op borst en benen, maar zomaar zonder petje op straat lopen voel ik me niet prettig bij. Ik denk sowieso dat we ons moeten beschermen tegen de zon. Ook doe ik soms een zonnebril op.

Na al die jaren ben ik nog steeds verliefd op haar, ondanks haar gedrag. Maar ik ben ervan overtuigd dat dit het stockholm syndroom is. Mensen dwingen iets te eten gaat mij te ver. Ik ben geen kind meer. Mijn dochter is nog kind, en die hoeft dat allemaal niet. Die is onder en boven de wet, die is de wet zelf.

Als het om eten gaat is mijn vrouw streng. Ik mag ook niet teveel eten, en niet te zoet.

Maar daarbuiten is mijn vrouw ook vaak lief. Ze is over het algemeen wel aardig, maar soms denk ik dat ik haar gewoon zo wil zien. Misschien overdrijf ik nu een beetje. Ik heb het idee dat ik in een secte terecht ben gekomen, en ik kan de weg eruit niet vinden. Ik kan niet tegen de zee op. Mijn dochtertje is mijn rots in de branding.

Misschien als ze wat ouder is kan ze mij helpen. Of misschien sijpelt haar hoge begaafdheid dan weg en zal ze net zo zijn als mijn vrouw. Normaal gesproken in deze samenleving knippen ze de vleugels van de kinderen af op een bepaalde leeftijd. Maar dat wil ik voorkomen. Ik zal strijden voor mijn dochter tot het bittere eind. Ik heb geen ruggegraat, zeggen ze dan. Ik draai overal omheen en vertel slechts verhalen. Ik bereik zo niks.

Ik zit er weleens aan te denken, als ik een onbewaakt moment zou vinden, dat ik misschien dan van mijn vrouw zou kunnen vluchten ? Maar waar moet ik dan heen ? Ik

ben verliefd, tot over mijn oren, en zit onder de plak, en neem haar fratsen op de koop toe. Ze heeft mij immers gered. Ze is immers het evangelie. Maar dat dwingen, hè ? Als haar vriendinnen komen dan dwingt ze mij ook, en zet ze me voor schut. Ik voel me geen man meer. Ik ben ontmand. Ik vind dat niemand hoeft te weten hoe mijn vrouw mij behandeld. Ik schaam me ervoor, net zoals ik me erover schaam dat ik kaal begin te worden.

Ik hoef helemaal niks. Ik ben haar hondje niet. Ik ben haar papkindje niet. Wat is het leven toch wreed en gemeen. Ik word heen en weer geslingerd. Eigenlijk hoop ik erop dat mijn dochtertje weer zal roepen : ‘Aardbeving in Friesland.’ Nu is Friesland een hemel en een hel voor me. Nu ja, een halve hemel is ook al goed. Ik moet ook niet te gelukkig worden. Nee, dat vind ik niet kunnen. Geluk is toch een beetje vies voor mij. Het kan zoveel goede dingen uitdoven. Ik ben geen gelukszoeker. Ik zoek het leed op, als een rampentoerist, maar dan anders.

Ik voel mezelf een beul. Friesland is door een verschrikkelijke ramp heengegaan, en ik kom hier om de boel te bezichtigen en van het gebied te genieten na de zondvloed. Ik voel me als Noach in zijn wijngaard soms, dus ik mag niet klagen. Maar waar doe ik het voor ? En daarom wil ik niet al te gelukkig zijn. Deze mensen hebben pijn. Ik wil daarom ook niet vrolijk over straat lopen. Ze hebben zoveel familie en vrienden verloren. Ik heb het gevoel dat ze nu al te vrolijke gezichten niet kunnen gebruiken. Of misschien wel ? Misschien dat het hen ook opvrolijkt ? Maar het voelt gewoon niet goed. Ik wil niet overkomen alsof ik leedvermaak heb.

Volgens mij zit ik heel gewiekst in elkaar. Het klopt gewoon niet hoe ik me opstel, op vele manieren niet. Ik ben als een boer met een handeltje. Ik handel in rampen. Het is alsof deze mensen iedere dag weer door de zelfde ramp gaan. Telkens beleven ze het weer opnieuw. En ik kom van buiten. Ik kan me in hen niet verplaatsen. Ja, ik heb ook familie

verloren, maar wat was dat voor een familie ? Ik mis ze als een boer die kiespijn heeft. Ik ben nu vrij, ook al heb ik zo’n vrouw. Dat neem ik op de koop toe. Dat is een lekkere vrijheid, maar misschien overdrijf ik nu. Soms denk ik dat ze niet goed bij haar hoofd is, maar dat denk ik ook van mezelf. Ons dochtertje geeft me dan hoop, uitzicht en toekomst.

De cultus omtrend haar wordt groter en groter. Ze is heel speciaal, door God gegeven. Ze is op jonge leeftijd al een groot prediker.

Hoofdstuk 3.

Ik ben zo verliefd op mijn vrouw.
Het wordt alleen maar erger.
Mijn buik, oh, mijn buik.
Het is niet meer slechts een stockholm syndroom, maar het omvat geheel Zweden.
Het is nu het Zweden Syndroom. Daar mag je ‘u’ tegen zeggen.
Ik krijg het niet uit me weg en dat wil ik ook niet.
Dit is wat ik wil. Ik ben verliefd.
Liefde maakt blind zeggen ze, en dat is ook zo.
Ik wil het kwaad niet in haar zien.
Ze heeft me gered. Ze is mijn heldin. Ik kijk tegen haar op.
Zonder haar zou ik niet meer hebben geleefd.
Dat wordt nog elke dag sterker.

Mijn redder, mijn evangelie, kan gewoon niets verkeerd doen bij mij.
Het weegt allemaal niet op tegen de gunst die ze mij heeft verleend eens.

Ook al zou ze me nu neersteken of onthoofden, dan ben ik nog verliefd, en ben ik haar nog dankbaar dat ze dat eens niet heeft gedaan, dat ze me eens leven heeft geschonken, en dat ik al zolang mocht leven van haar. Wat een rijkdom. Het kan niet meer kapot. Ook al zou ze me nu de rest van de eeuwigheid naar de hel sturen. Het leven wat ze me eens gaf is alles wat ik nodig heb. Daar kan ik mijn verdere bestaan op teren. Het is alsof het laatste oordeel al is geweest. Het is alsof ik toen de eeuwige hemel al ontving. Het was maar een druppel van de hemelse zee, maar die kan tegen alle woeste zeeën van de hel op. Ze is een gave van God, deze amazone.

Natuurlijk is dat maar een moment-opname. Op andere dagen klaag ik weer over haar. De hemel wordt groter in mij, maar ook de hel. Het klotst tegen elkaar op, als twee zeeën. Ik hang tussen wal en schip, tussen bed en wildernis. Ze heeft me ook verlamd, alsof ze me van iets hoogs heeft afgeduwd. Ik voel me invalide. Ja, ik heb het Zweden syndroom, en

het verscheurd me van binnen. Wat een psychologie allemaal, wat een ingewikkeldheid. Daar kan zelfs Freud niet tegenop.

Ik begin te bidden tot Freud, die grote god, die dit misschien kan verklaren, mij kan helpen. Ik probeer in hem te geloven.

Die grote god Freud. Ik wil naar de kerk van Freud. Mijn vrouw is een zee die met mij speelt. Ik kom er niet doorheen. Ik moet ergens land vinden. Mijn dochtertje is slechts een rots in de branding, maar ik heb een eiland nodig. Maar iets zegt in mij dat Freud hier niet tegenop kan. Misschien moet ik wachten tot mijn dochter wat ouder is geworden. Misschien is ze dan als een eiland in deze woeste zee, en kan ze deze zee wat kalmeren. Misschien kan ze Freud dan ook helpen.

Oh, ik ben weer verliefd op mijn vrouw. Ik kan het niet tegenhouden. Het is sterke stroming die mij meesleurt. En de liefde is

blind. De liefde slaapt. Maar soms slaat het de andere kant op, en is het haat. En de haat ziet alles.

Het is overweldigend. Het blijft maar stromen van boven. Het slaat me stuk. Het is alsof er nu een aardbeving is in Zweden. Dit is het Zweden syndroom. Freud is aan zet. Hij blijkt toch weer sterker. Het is als de opstanding na het kruis. Freud aan het kruis. Freud is opgestaan. Ik zie waar het naartoe stroomt. Het stroomt naar Zweden, en terug.

Het Zweden syndroom heeft genoeg aan haarzelf.
Het Zweden syndroom lost haarzelf op.
Het Zweden syndroom spiegelt alles terug, maakt de cirkel rond, gaat van kwaad naar goed en van goed naar kwaad, en laat alle dingen medewerken ten goede.
Ik heb de sleutel gevonden tot het geloof.
Freud is opgestaan.
Maar men noemt mij een religieuze fantast.
Men noemt mij een godsdienstwaanzinnige.

Mijn vrouw en mijn dochter geloven wel in mij.
Ik ben immers van hun cultus.
Zij zijn de twee godinnen aan beide zijden van Freud,
in het Zweden Syndroom.

Het Zweden syndroom zorgt voor zichzelf.
Het Zweden syndroom vindt altijd een weg.
Sommigen noemen mij een genie.
Ik ben immers de vader van het object van hun cultus.

Voor sommigen kan ik niets verkeerd doen, vanwege dat ik haar vader ben.
Alles wat ik zeg vindt zijn weg wel in hen, op wat voor manier dan ook,
want ik ben de vader van hun godin, degene naar wie zij opzien.
Dat is ook het redders-syndroom.
De redder kan niets meer verkeerd doen, ook haar vader niet.
Ze zijn voor eens en voor altijd starstruck.

Ik heb de sleutel van het geloof gevonden.

Ik word verafgood en gedemoniseerd.
Mijn vrouw vindt het wel welletjes.
We gaan terug naar Sint-Oedenrode.
Hier begint ze een slagerij.
Vanwege dit alles is er van haar zeilschool niet veel terecht gekomen.
In haar slagerij kan ze haar woede en frustratie kwijt, ook haar bitterheid.
En hier in Sint-Oedenrode weten ze niet veel van de cultus af.
We zijn nullen hier.
Wij vinden dat ook beter voor de ontwikkeling van onze dochter.
Het is allemaal te ver gegaan in Friesland.
Ook mijn vrouw komt weer bij haar positieven.
Ze is een stuk minder dwingerig.
Ze ziet nu in waar het ons allemaal geleid heeft.
Ik eet nu vlees omdat het mag, niet omdat het moet.
Ik vind het lekker, maar voel me schuldig.
Dieren moeten ook eten.
Daarom verkopen ze in Etten-Leur ook mensenvlees.

En dan valt voor ons ook het doek.
Mijn vrouw wil scheiden.
Ze zegt dat ze lesbisch is geworden, en met de andere amazones in de bossen wil leven.
Dat doen vrouwen tegenwoordig wel vaker, dat ze de bossen ingaan als protest tegen de samenleving.
Ze vindt dat voor mij ook rustiger, want ze geeft toe dat ze een groot probleem heeft.

Hoofdstuk 4.

Nu ze weg is ben ik in één klap van mijn vleesverslaving af.
Het is voor mij nu ook niet meer te pruimen.
Ik vind het vies.
Mijn roze bril is afgegaan.
Ik ben ontsnapt uit het Zweden syndroom.
Ik ben geen religieuze fantast meer, geen godsdienstwaanzinnige.
Ik houd theologie weer op veilige afstand.
Het is allemaal te ver gegaan.
Ik ben blij dat ze weg is.

Mijn dochter groeit op als een introvert iemand, waarschijnlijk door de scheiding.
Ze schijnt haar bijzondere gave niet meer te hebben of niet meer te gebruiken.
Het zat er ook wel aan te komen, want vleugels worden bij kinderen afgeknipt op een bepaalde leeftijd. Dan mag je dat ook niet meer hebben, anders ben je rijp voor de psychiater.
Nee, in dit land mag je niet dromen, mag je niet fantaseren, mag je geen

geloofservaringen hebben of geestelijke ervaringen, mag je niet profetisch of paranormaal zijn, of parapsychologisch. Je mag zelfs geen symboliek of sarcasme gebruiken, want dan kijken ze je al paranoïde met scheve ogen aan. Alles wat je zegt wordt op een gouden weegschaaltje gewogen en wordt tegen je gebruikt. Alles halen ze uit het verband, om er zo hun eigen verhalen van te maken om dat vervolgens te verkopen. Alleen als schrijver kom je er mee weg, als het gedrukt staat op papier, en vooral als het duur is. Goedkope schrijvers worden veracht, worden niet gelezen, en als je je boeken gratis weggeeft ben je al helemaal geen schrijver in hun ogen. Nee, het geld moet veel rollen, want geld maakt blind. Dan zien ze je tekortkomingen niet meer. Het is als een cultus. Als ze zien dat je veel geld hebt en veel geld verdiend, en als je jezelf duur verkoopt, dan kun je alles van hen gedaan krijgen en geloven ze alles wat je ze zegt, in het Zweden syndroom.

Ze hoeven maar even wat geld te zien glinsteren en daar gaan ze al. Geld is hun redder, ook al hebben ze het zelf niet, ook al kunnen ze het allemaal niet betalen. Geld geeft hen hoop. Alleen het feit dat er geld is is hen genoeg. Het geeft hen de hoop het ooit eens een keer te kunnen stelen, of winnen, of verdienen, of vinden. Het geeft hen de hoop ooit eens een geluksvogel te zijn. Geld is hun redder en hun geloof, en zo zijn ze de rest van hun leven in het Zweden syndroom, als een tatoeage waar ze niet meer vanaf komen.

Ik heb teveel meegemaakt en teveel gezien. Ik kan er niet meer om liegen.

Ik sta er helemaal achter dat mijn vrouw naar de bossen is gegaan. Daar is het beter te vertoeven dan in de samenleving.

In de hoogzomer lijkt de zee nog steeds rood, maar ik heb de sleutel van het geloof gevonden. Hierdoor kan ik het ook op een afstand houden en de touwtjes laten vieren. Het heeft niet meer die benauwende grip. Ik

was in gevecht met een groot beest. Uiteindelijk bleek er een prinses in opgesloten te zijn, die zo vrij kwam, en het beest als een kleed afdeed, maar de prinses bleek zelf nog wel een erger beest te zijn. Dat blote is allemaal nog wel gruwelijker. Daarom zijn dagjes naar zee geen kwaad. Aan de zee kan ik alles relativeren, en worden dingen tegen elkaar weggestreept. Maar ik kan het niet te dichtbij laten komen, want dan heb ik een nieuw probleem.

Het is nu wel wat eenzamer geworden nu mijn vrouw er niet meer is, en mijn dochter introverter is geworden. Er is niks meer van de oude cultus overgebleven. Ik droom nu meer en vaker, maar ook dat heeft zijn grenzen.

Oom Jan komt soms langs, de sportvisser. We hebben het dan over theologie vaak. Hij is geen familie, maar ik noem hem oom. Hij woont hier in de buurt. Het is een goede bekende, maar hij heeft wel een drankprobleem. Ook kan hij soms te fanatiek

worden over theologie, en dat kan flink eng worden dan, dus is het weer tijd om wat afstand te nemen. Soms is hij in geldproblemen, en dan help ik hem. Hij drinkt en gokt. Met theologie probeert hij eruit te komen, maar het lukt niet. Hij heeft meer nodig. Ook hij zit in het Zweden syndroom. Ik zeg hem altijd dat het Zweden syndroom het vanzelf wel uit zal sorteren, maar hij heeft er geen geduld voor.

Hij moet de opgestane Freud leren kennen, die in Zweden troont, maar hij is te verstrikt in zijn eigen theologie. Dan is hij hervormd, dan gereformeerd, dan christelijk-gereformeerd. Hij heeft nooit rust. Hij dwaalt altijd heen en weer. Ik zeg hem vaak dat het leven zinloos is en absurd, maar dat we het zelf wat zin moeten geven, maar niet teveel, want daar komen ook weer problemen van.

Het leven was te fanatiek, en daarom moest het leven zichzelf in de staart bijten als de rusteloze ouroboros om zich weer tot rust te manen. Die krachtmetingen zijn

onvermijdelijk, totdat het leven in de rust is gekomen. Oom Jan had vroeger zijn vrouw verloren en sindsdien was hij rusteloos geworden. Ik hoopte hem weer wat rust te bieden, maar soms werkte het averechts.

Het leven is zinloos. Ze hebben er teveel zin van gemaakt. Zin die helemaal niet bestaat. Iedereen zit opgesloten in het Zweden syndroom, in het redders-syndroom, terwijl ze niet eens weten of de redder hen wel daadwerkelijk heeft gered, of die redder wel echt is, maar ze willen het geloven, en die redder kan geen kwaad meer doen. Alles wat de redder schrijft is volmaakt en volkomen. Ook de naaste familie van de redder kan geen kwaad doen.

Het leven is zinloos en volkomen absurd. We zitten allemaal opgesloten in iets wat we niet kennen. Alle kennis hier is geforceerd, opgedrongen, vanwege het Zweden syndroom, de ingebeelde redder. Ja, het geeft hoop, maar is het ook de waarheid ? Vaak is het niets dan valse hoop, een overlevings-

mechanisme. De mens wil overleven en grijpt alles aan wat hij maar kan vinden. Alles maakt de mens bruikbaar hiertoe. Hierin kan veel fout gaan, want ook de ander wil overleven. Iedereen moet loskomen van oneerlijk en onbetrouwbaar opportunisme. Dat gebeurt niet. Men vreet elkaar op. We zijn nog steeds in het oertijdperk. De beschaving is nog nooit gekomen. De mens is nog steeds een wilde.

Heel voorzichtig houd ik me vast aan bepaalde vormen van theologie, maar niet teveel. Dit beest kan alles vernietigen. Maar als alles toch zinloos is en volkomen absurd, moeten we dan niet nihilistisch zijn ? Of is de saaiheid onze bescherming en kunnen we daar wat zin in vinden ? Chronische saaiheid ?

Heel voorzichtig loop ik naar het dorp. Ik durf bijna niet te ademen, en durf me bijna niet te bewegen, en daarom gaat alles maar zeer traag.

Het leven heeft weinig zin. Grotendeels is het leven zinloos. Stel dat er maar één parel op de aarde te vinden is die zin heeft, dan nog zal de mens er onzinnig mee omgaan als hij die parel heeft gevonden. De mens moet leren zinvol om te gaan met het zinloze leven. Zinvol omgaan met de zinloosheid. Het is absurd, en de mens gaat ook absurd om met het absurde. Daarom moet de ouroboros zichzelf soms in de staart bijten, om zichzelf tot orde en rust te manen. Of is dat ook zinloos ? Is het niet allemaal zinloos, wat we dan ook doen ? Is het niet allemaal verbeelding ? En waar komt het vandaan ? Voel je je soms de enige die nog zin geeft en zin heeft in het leven, of heb je ook al de moed verloren, en leef je gewoon omdat je moet en niet anders kan ? Alles moet tot rust komen, het hele leven, en soms kan dat alleen door de ouroboros die zichzelf in de staart bijt, en dat gaat er soms hard aan toe. Hoe een woeste oceaan te kalmeren ? Of moeten we het allemaal loslaten en ervan vluchten ? Maar waar naartoe te vluchten ? We zijn allemaal gevangen in het Zweden syndroom.

Ouroboros moet soms bijten. Dan is er ontsnapping. Daarom was er ook een aardbeving in Friesland.

Waar komt het vandaan ? Waar komen we vandaan, en waar gaan we naartoe ? Hoe kwam het dat alles zinloos en absurd werd, of is het altijd al zo geweest ? Dat is ook een vraag in de theologie. Er werd dan altijd op het paradijs gewezen. Daar was alles nog goed en zinvol, maar door de zondeval viel men diep. Nu is alles leeg en doods, als de Danaïden die water scheppen in een bodemloos vat. Water naar de zee dragen. Waar doen we het allemaal voor ? Het is zoals het is. Kunnen we daar wat aan veranderen, of kan niemand dat ? Of is alles illusie en moeten we wakker worden ? Zijn dit dan de nachtmerries van de feutus vóór de geboorte ?

Elke dag weer sta ik op en ben ik kwaad op de wereld, en verbaas ik mezelf over de vele mensen die niet kwaad zijn. Dan denk ik : het is zinloos en absurd. Iedereen is aan een

drugs die ik schijnbaar niet heb, en ook niet wil. Ik wil niet aan de drugs. Ik wil niet meeliegen. Ik wil niet verder slapen. Het zijn allemaal schimmen om me heen. Dat is wat deze wereld is. Dan denk ik aan de amazones in het bos, en dan denk ik : Die hebben het goed voor elkaar. Misschien moet ik ook maar naar het bos gaan ? Maar is het niet hectisch daar ? Ik zit gevangen in het Zweden syndroom van de samenleving, ook al ben ik half wakker. Voor mij is het nog een half syndroom. Het heeft me in ieder geval verlamd, en ik kan niet weg.

Alles buiten het Zweden syndroom in mij is woede, angst en depressie. Er is een halve hemel en een halve hel in mij, die beiden steeds groter worden. Ik vind de mensen zo sadistisch en onverschillig. En theologie is zo gevaarlijk. We leven nog steeds in het prehistorische tijdperk. Grote beesten die tegen elkaar strijden. Om wat ? Om macht, eer, overleving ? Is het niet allemaal zinloos ? Kunnen we het niet beter verdiepen ? Misschien ligt er op de bodem van het

bestaan nog wat zin ? Of is het juist de zin die gevaarlijk is, en kunnen we niet beter gewoon zinloos blijven en langs alles heenleven, om ons te beschermen tegen iets veel ergers ?

Mijn denken stopt maar niet. Het is als een wildernis brug van touwen, over deze woeste rivier van het leven heen. Blij dat ik denk. En dromen doe ik ook veel, maar denken is een vorm van dromen. Denken is dagdromen, en dat moet ook wel, want de dag is het ergste lijden voor de mens. Het denken, het dagdromen, kan dat wat verzoeten en verzachten. Maar soms is het beter niet te denken, want denken en dromen kunnen heel gevaarlijk zijn. Soms is het beter in stilte te zijn. De mens moet veel twijfelen. De mens is te groot geworden, te zeker van zichzelf en al zijn vreemde ideeën. Met die ideeën wil de mens andere landen veroveren. Zijn gebied uitbreiden. Expansie-drift.

De nazi’s kwamen, de politieke farizeeërs. Grote beesten in het stenen tijdperk. Ze gingen ten onder, maar kwamen terug in

andere vormen. Het leven vervormt zich voortdurend. We moeten erg oppassen. Daarom houd ik me vast aan Freud. Niet als god of als een volkomenheid, maar als een voorbeeld, als een inleiding, als een filosofisch voorschrift.

En ik staar veel naar de rode zee in de hoogzomer. Is daar ergens een pad door de diepte, misschien tot een eiland ? Een eiland met een verdien-model ? De zinloosheid is gratis, maar zin moet je verdienen. We moeten onze wereld geheel opnieuw opbouwen, te midden van alle zinloosheid en absurditeit, te midden van de Danaïden, de schimmen, die leegheid in leegheid scheppen, en als doel de leegheid hebben. Oh, wat een gruwelijk schilderij. Ik kan er niet bij. Ik kan er niet mee leven. En ik ben zo verliefd op iets wat misschien helemaal niet bestaat. Maar misschien moet ik het zelf maken, zelf tot leven roepen. Moeten dingen dan daadwerkelijk bestaan om zin te hebben, waarde te hebben ? In de theologie is dat toch ook niet zo ? En in de sprookjeswereld toch

ook niet ? Waarom is een mens vaak zo bang dat iets niet bestaat ? We zouden banger moeten zijn als het wel zou bestaan. Soms is de verbeeldingswereld gewoon veiliger. Metaforen zijn krachten. Het subtiele is sterker dan het opzichtige. Maar het opzichtige liegt. Zie daar maar eens tegenin te gaan. Je vecht tegen een zee.

Hoofdstuk 5.

Ze moest vluchten onder de grond, hoorde ik, mijn vrouw. Ze werden achterna gezeten. Zelfs in het bos was het niet veilig. Ik ging haar daar opzoeken. Ik moest diep onder de grond door een tunnel en een put, in een soort kooi gemaakt van takken. Zelfs diep onder de grond waren er bossen, ondergrondse bossen en velden. Ze voerden hier jacht op grote beesten, veelal zwijnen.

Er was niemand die hier hen tegenhield. Hier kwam eigenlijk niemand. Er waren hier ook rivieren. Er zou ook ergens een ondergrondse zee zijn. Toen ik de ondergrondse wereld hier had gezien wilde ik niet meer terug, en ik hoefde ook niet meer terug. Het was alsof ik hier weer een beetje kon ademhalen. De lucht was zo zuiver hier en zo natuurlijk. Ik kwam erachter hoe zwaar de lucht boven de grond vergiftigd en vervuild moest zijn door al die auto’s, vliegtuigen en fabrieken. Ik voelde me hier weer als een kind, als herboren. Hier kalmeerde mijn denken, en ik kwam erachter

dat boven de grond het denken gewoon opgefokt werd en voortgedreven door al die giftige stoffen in de lucht. Dat moest je telkens inademen, en dat speelde met je brein.

Het voelde aan alsof mijn vrouw me voor een zoveelste maal had gered. Weer was zij mijn redder. Er waren ook dingen die ik van boven de grond miste, en daarom ging ik soms terug. Mijn vrouw vond dat maar niks, maar liet het toch toe. De anderen begonnen steeds moeilijker te doen, want telkens als ik weer bij hen terugkwam werden ze weer aan boven de aarde herinnerd. Daarom begonnen ze me meer en meer voor de keuze te stellen, ook mijn vrouw. Ik heb toen voor hen gekozen, maar dat hield in dat ik voor hen moest werken. Ik moest mijn plaats in hun samenleving verdienen. Dat viel niet mee, tegen zelfs. Sommigen waren heel controle-zuchtig, en sommigen waren zelfs opdringerig. Ik begon steeds meer vrijheid te verliezen.

Op een dag nam ik de benen. Ik wilde nog dieper de grond onder gaan, alhoewel ik daarbij riskeerde dat ik niet meer terug kon. Het was warmer dieper onder de grond, tropischer, exotischer. Er leefden hier veel meer vrouwenstammen. Ze waren helemaal ontvreemd van boven de aarde. Ze hadden donkere huiden, vaak bedekt met aarde. Makkelijk ingang daar had ik niet. Ze waren paranoïde en onredelijk. Ze waren zwaar achterdochtig. Ik had geluk dat ze me in leven hielden. Ook voor hen moest ik werken, anders zou ik geen deel kunnen hebben in hun kamp. Maar er was hier meer vrijheid. De natuur was hier ook anders. Intenser. Het leek wel alsof er nog zoveel meer natuur tussen mij en de vrouwen zat. De natuur nam mijn verstand over, zoals de natuur dat waarschijnlijk met hun verstand had gedaan.

Er was hier een geheim, een bol van bloed die door de korenvelden heenging. Het was een vreemdsoortig koren wat ze hier verbouwden. De rode bol scheen hun God te

zijn, die de velden zegende, vruchtbaar hield, en er voor zorgde dat er goede oogsten waren. Maar ze moesten offers brengen aan de rode bol. De rode bol leefde van bloed.

Ook ik moest gekeurd worden door de bol van bloed. Als ik de bol op de enige manier niet zou bevallen, dan zou de bol mij als offer nemen. Ik had nog de tijd om weg te gaan, terug te gaan waar ik vandaan kwam, maar ik besloot het risico toch te nemen. Ik had alle schepen immers al achter me verbrand. Ik kon nergens anders heen.

De bol zou komen om me te inspecteren. Ik was best wel bang. Ik deed mijn uiterste best om goed voor te komen, maar ik had geen idee waar de bol op zou letten, en dat vertelden ze me ook niet. Ze zeiden dat de bol erg kieskeurig was. Ik had er een hard hoofd in, maar besloot me er toch voor open te stellen. Ik wist dat het een spel op leven en dood was, maar ik had toch al het gevoel dat ik niet meer leefde, dus echt veel zou ik er niet mee verliezen als het mis ging.

De bol kwam langs en op een bepaalde manier voelde ik me sexueel aangetrokken tot de bol, zoals ook tot de vrouwen. Ik werd er rustig van, alsof ik de bol kende, alsof het iets in mijn hart was. De bol keek mij aan, maar het had geen ogen. Het had iets moederlijks over zich. Ik keek naar de bol, en voelde iets stromen in mijn hersenen, als water. Ik werd helemaal warm van binnen.

‘Wie is hij ?’ vroeg de bol. Er waren ook wat vrouwen bij me. Ze zeiden niks. ‘We kennen hem niet,’ zei een vrouw na een tijdje.

‘Ik wil hem meenemen,’ zei de bol.

‘Waar naartoe ?’ vroeg ik.

Ik had het gevoel alsof ik in een baarmoeder was.

‘Ontkleed hem,’ zei de bol. De vrouwen trokken toen al mijn kleren uit.

Ik voelde me naakt en moe, alsof ik door een vlieg was gestoken.
Ik ging toen op de grond zitten van zwakte.

‘Wat moet ik met hem ?’ vroeg de bol.
De vrouwen zwegen weer. Ik keek op tot de bol. ‘Kan ik helpen ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Je moet wel,’ zei de bol. ‘Ik zal je meenemen.’

Weer vroeg ik waar naartoe, maar de bol gaf geen antwoord.

Na een tijdje sprak de bol : ‘Volg mij.’ De bol begon toen door de korenvelden te gaan. ‘Weet je wat voor velden dit zijn ?’ vroeg de bol.

‘Korenvelden,’ zei ik.

‘Mis,’ zei de bol. ‘Het is niet zomaar koren. Het is dat wat groeit in de harten. Het is vlees. Ik ben de oogster van de harten.’ Een gestalte in een donkere pij met kap kwam op

ons af over het pad tussen het koren, en droeg een zeis. ‘Oogst zijn hart. Besnijd hem,’ riep de bol.

Ik verloor toen mijn bewustzijn en werd even later wakker in een tent op een ligmatje. Ik keek op en zag de vrouwen. ‘Je mocht leven,’ fluisterde één van de vrouwen zacht. Ik voelde me anders, alsof de bol in mij was, alhoewel ik het gevoel had dat de bol altijd al in me was.

Ik had hier niets. Ik moest helemaal opnieuw beginnen.
Ik voelde me als gekrookt riet, als koren.
Ik moest in deze bol geloven en voor deze bol werken, met bloed, zweet en tranen.
De bol wilde een nieuw paradijs bouwen.
Achter de korenvelden was een grote afgrond waar de bol in woonde.
Ik droomde van een nieuwe wereld.
Ik moest alles verdienen.
Zaaien en oogsten.

Eén van de vrouwen was genaamd Suwawwe.
Ze wenkte mij. Ik liep achter haar aan, me nog steeds zwak voelende.
We kwamen na een tijdje aan bij een wijngaard.
Daarachter lag een strand en een rode zee.
Ik vroeg me af of het druiven waren of bloed.
De vrouw ging de zee in, en wenkte mij weer.
Ik volgde haar. Er was hier een sterke branding.
Ze was adembenemend mooi, zoals de zee mooi was.
Ik was haar dankbaar dat ze deze plaats liet zien.

Na een tijdje zwemmen leidde ze mij naar een hutje ergens achter het strand waarachter de wildernis was. In het hutje schonk ze wat soep voor me in uit een ketel.
‘Als je deze soep drinkt, dan leid ik je tot de ladder van Ezau,’ stelde ze voor.
‘Wie bent u dan ?’ vroeg ik.
‘Ik ben de vrouw van Ezau, zijn godin,’ antwoordde ze.

‘Waar is Ezau ?’ vroeg ik.
‘Hij is dood,’ antwoordde ze.

‘Waar leidt de ladder van Ezau naartoe ?’ vroeg ik.
‘De ladder gaat naar beneden in de afgrond van de rode bol,’ antwoordde ze.
Ik nam van de soep, en ik voelde mezelf als door de grond zakken.
Ik gleed in een put, in een afgrond.
Even later zag ik een ladder die nog dieper ging.
Dat moest de ladder van Ezau wezen. Ik daalde af over de ladder, dieper de afgrond in.
In de verte zag ik de velden. ‘Hier stierf hij,’ vertelde de vrouw, die dichtbij me was.
‘Hoe ?’ vroeg ik.
‘Op de velden zijn de buffels van het kwaad,’ vertelde de vrouw. ‘Ze hebben hele lange hoorns, en ze doorspietsten hem.’
‘Tijdens de jacht ?’ vroeg ik.
‘Ja,’ antwoordde ze.

Ik zag de buffels brullen in de verte. ‘Daar ga je niet naartoe zonder een jachtspeer,’ vertelde ze.
‘Waar kan ik zo’n jachtspeer krijgen ?’ vroeg ik.
‘Ik ben de jachtspeer,’ antwoordde ze. ‘De jachtspeer bereik je alleen aan het einde van de ladder, helemaal onderaan dus.’

Ik merkte dat ik ergens vastliep op de ladder. Ik kon niet verder naar beneden. ‘Elke trede van de ladder is een jaar van hard werken en zwoegen,’ verkondigde ze.

‘Maar je bent hier,’ stootte ik uit.
‘Ja, maar je hebt me niet,’ verkondigde ze.
‘Dus ik heb jou nodig om het kwaad te overwinnen ?’ vroeg ik.
‘Als Ezau mij nodig had, waarom jij dan niet ?’ antwoordde ze.
‘Hoe hebben ze hem kunnen doorspietsen als jij zijn jachtspeer was ?’ vroeg ik.
‘Het is het geheimenis van de Ezausladder,’ antwoordde ze.

‘Hier worden de druiven vertreden. De rode bol vereist offers.’

Ik begon er meer en meer achter te komen dat familie-leden de treden van de Ezausladder waren. Ze vertegenwoordigden jarenlang hard werk. Ook mijn ouders waren treden, meerdere treden, en mijn moeder nog wel de meeste treden. Ik zag in dat ik al ver was, dat ik al vele jaren hard had gewerkt. Soms had ik flashbacks, en dan was het weer zwaar, als het verleden aan mij trok. Het bracht me in de war. Het was hard werk in de mijnen. Er was daar nog veel werk te doen op de Ezausladder. Ik moest dieper en dieper gaan.

Het was een zwaar lijden. Het dreef me gek, woest en zwaar depressief, ten dodens toe. Vaak ging ik naar de zee om te wachten op de rode vogels waarover ze het hadden in de geschriften van deze cultus. Maar de rode vogels leken maar niet te komen. Ik had het gevoel dat ik zelf maar over de zee moest heenzwemmen, maar hoe ver zou ik komen ? De zee was nog wel woester dan ikzelf was.

Ik had het gevoel dat ik aan touwen vastzat, aan banden.

Ik droom veel over de rode vogels, en over de eilanden die zich zouden bevinden in de rode zee. Daar gingen de geschriften van deze cultus ook veel over, en de geschriften lees ik veel.

Ik kon niet van de Ezausladder vluchten. De rode vogels waren slechts beelden van de vruchtbaarheid van de Ezausladder, het loon, en er werd uitbetaald in dromen. Ik moest de geschriften onderzoeken.

Door de geschriften van de cultus kwam ik tot ontwaking. Ik begon meer en meer in te zien hoe bedriegelijk de wereld boven de grond was. Ze waren geworden tot liegleeuwen, en logen voor hun handeltje en om zichzelf goed te voelen. Zo walsten ze over alles heen. Alles draaide om hen en hun marktje. De waarheid bestond daar niet. De leugen was tot waarheid gemaakt. Het was als een zegel op de waarheid dat verbroken

moest worden. Dat kon alleen op de Ezausladder. De Ezausladder zou vanzelf vleugels krijgen en wegvliegen. Uiteindelijk moest ik zelf een rode vogel worden. Zij kwamen vanuit de diepte van de zee, vanuit de afgrond van de rode bol. Zonder de Ezausladder zou je als een Danaïde zijn, zinloos water scheppende in een leeg vat, en dat voor de eeuwigheid. Zo wilde ik niet eindigen. Ik bestudeerde de geschriften. Ik was erin geïnteresseerd. Ik probeerde het te memoriseren. In mijn hoofd was het een dagelijks gevecht tegen de liegleeuwen. Ze lieten niet los. Ze bleven maar aan mij kauwen en knagen. Ik was gewoon een stuk worst, een object, een monument.

Door het lezen van de geschriften in de cultus kwam ik er steeds meer achter hoe de dag de nachtmerrie was, en de dromen in de nacht het ware ontwaakt zijn waren. Dingen waren dus omgedraaid. De geschriften hadden het erover dat een zekere kabouter dit had gedaan. Het was een heel vreemd mannetje. Er stonden ook plaatjes van in de geschriften.

Hij draaide alles om. Maar blijkbaar hadden we die nachtmerries nodig om verder op de Ezausladder te komen.

Ik voelde me twee keer per week boer, en drie keer per week slager. Ik wist niet hoe dat kwam. Ook voelde ik me vaak moe, en dan lag ik op bed. Vaak kwam Suwawwe me dan opzoeken, en dan las ze me voor uit de geschriften. Soms ging ik met haar naar een grot in de wildernis, waar ze dan neerlag. Eens verscheen er boven haar in de grot een driehoek. Het was de driehoeksverhouding tussen Suwawwe, Ezau en de rode bol. Ook gingen we soms de duinen in. Achter een lange weg in de duinen ergens lag een stad. Eens gingen wij daar naartoe. We waren beiden op blote voeten. De stoeptegels voelden warm, zelfs heet, aan, net zoals het zand.

Door veel te verliezen, moest hij leren, in deze stad. Hij moest een heleboel herinneringen en gewoontes verliezen. Achter de stad lag de rivier van vergetelheid. Er was

ook een driehoekige prisma in de stad, wat was ontstaan op de Ezausladder, en die de Ezausladder ook had gemaakt, alle tredes, alle lagen. Het waren verschillende werelden en realiteiten, die vaak tegen elkaar inbeukten. Het was weer de driehoeksverhouding tussen Ezau, Suwawwe en de rode bol. Ergens hoog op een toren was de prisma. Het leek erg op de driehoek die hij in de grot had gezien. Ze zouden helemaal doorlopen tot aan de rivier van de vergetelheid. Daar zouden ze gaan zwemmen.

Ze zouden helemaal naar de overkant van de rivier van vergetelheid zwemmen. Daar lag een andere stad. De twee steden waren met elkaar in oorlog, omdat ze zoveel van elkaar vergaten. Maar ook de oorlog vergaten ze weer. Het was een mes wat aan twee kanten sneed.

Er kwam een jongeman hen tegemoet zwemmen van de overkant. Hij sprak allemaal overmatig sexuele, perverse taal. Ik vroeg hem waarom hij zulk taalgebruik

bezigde. Hij antwoordde dat ze allemaal zo praten aan de overkant. Zo was hij opgegroeid.

De jongeman zwom ons voor tot de stad aan de overkant waar hij vandaan kwam.
In de stad was er een zelfde prisma als in de andere stad.
Uit de prisma stroomde water wat naar de rivier stroomde.

Er was voordurend kortsluiting in mijn brein.
Alsof ik aan beide kanten van de rivier van vergetelheid was.
Maar meer nog bevond ik op op de Ezausladder, diep in de woestijn.
Het was alsof de realiteiten hier op elkaar inbotsten,
en alles kwam telkens in andere vormen.
Het was alsof ik vlak voor een hemelse leeuw stond.
De jongeman sprak nog steeds sexueel en pervers.
Ik vroeg me af waar hij het over had, en tegen wie.

Hij leidde ons toen tot een bibliotheek.
Hij zei dat hij hier ergens woonde.

Ik had nog nooit zoveel boeken gezien.
Er waren hier zeeën van boeken.
Stel je voor dat je dat allemaal zou moeten lezen.
Hij zei dat het maar één boek was,
maar dat door de verschillende combinaties er een zee van boeken omheen was ontstaan.
Er bestond maar één boek.
Alle andere boeken waren verschillende spiegelingen van het boek.
Zo ontstond de zee van boeken.

Ik wilde dat ene boek wel zien, maar hij zei dat het zwaar beveiligd was.
Al het leven zou bedreigd worden als er iets met het boek zou gebeuren.
Zonder het boek zou niets kunnen bestaan.
Dieven zouden het boek graag willen stelen.
De gevangenissen zaten vol met zulke mensen.

Hij legde uit dat het boek bewaard en bewaakt werd in de prisma.
Het enige boek zou de prisma zelf gemaakt hebben en zo ook de Ezausladder.
Dat was een drie-eenheid op zich. Dat waren dus twee driehoeken die elkaar kruisten.

De wachters van het enige boek marcheerden overal om de mensen in de gaten te houden.
Ze waren de douane van het boek. Ze waren tegelijkertijd de wachters van de Ezausladder.
Mensen moesten betalen met bloed, zweet en tranen om glimpen van het boek op te vangen, en om tot de volgende trede van de Ezausladder te kunnen gaan. Alles liep hier door elkaar heen.

Ik raakte in gevecht met de wachters. Sommige wachters waren niet goed. Je raad het al. Ze sloten me op in de gevangenis. Ik voelde dat er iets niet klopte. Het waren ijzeren reuzenmieren van dezelfde grootte als mensen. Ze hadden het gemunt op de kelen van de mensen. Er lag ook iets tegen mijn keel aan, als een mes. Ik had het idee dat het

zo in mijn keel zou kunnen knippen. Er waren allerlei vreemde lampjes op. Het waren boekverkopers. Er moest flink betaald worden voor deze boeken. In de gevangenissen kon je werken en sparen. Het was gewoon onderdeel van de Ezausladder.

Niemand ontkwam aan deze wachters. Ze waren overal en stalkten. Ze lokten ook mensen uit. Ze hadden pestgedrag. Zo was de stad een gevangenis op zichzelf. Ik verlangde naar de rivier van vergetelheid. Ze hadden hier een opgelegde, opgedrongen waarheid. Het waren wachters van de leugen, van de schijnwaarheid en de schijnveiligheid, maar ik had ook het idee en gevoel dat er goeden tussenzaten. Alles was hier half. Het was hier een halve hemel en een halve hel.

Ik kwam erachter dat er twee boeken waren die zich de enige noemden. Een goede en een slechte. De slechte was een schaduw van de goede, een schim. Het was waarheid gemengd met leugens. Dat was voor het groomen. Er zat veel goeds tussen. Maar

uiteindelijk gleed je in een put met messen en speren. Zo dwars door je heen. Dat mensen dat niet doorhebben. Ik zag ze allemaal als schimmen het slechte boek volgen. Dat er goede dingen en waarheden in stonden gebruikten ze als excuus dat het daarom een goed boek was, en zelfs het enige goede boek. Hoe kun je zo dom zijn. Ik kan er niet over uit hoe mensen zo dom, zo stom kunnen zijn, dat ze het op die manier proberen goed te praten allemaal. Het maakt me kwaad. Ik word heen en weer geslingerd tussen woede en depressie. Ze slapen gewoon door als je er iets van zegt. Ze bekeren zich niet. Je wordt er moe van. Je voelt je dan ook heel machteloos. Wat heeft het voor zin allemaal ? Maar ja, het hoort bij de Ezausladder, dit soort mensen. Tuig is het.

Nu was het voor mij zaak om met de goede wachters in aanraking te komen. Ik zag ze vaak marcheren. Dan keek ik langs de tralies heen. Ook kwamen ze in de gevangenis zelf. Zo heb ik mijn weg er een beetje uitgepraat, door goede wachters te ontmoeten. Ze

begrepen mij wel. Ik kon zelf ook wachter worden door mijn weg omhoog te werken, of eigenlijk omlaag, op de Ezausladder. Zo kwam ik dieper in de afgrond van de rode bol.

Op een dag werd ik wakker en zag ik de jachtspeer naast me liggen. Had ik het einde van de Ezausladder bereikt ? Was ik nu helemaal onderaan gekomen ? Suwawwe had me weer opgezocht. Zij was immers de jachtspeer. Ik moest nu naar de jachtvelden. Daar waren de buffels van het kwaad met de lange hoorns die eens Ezau doorspietsten.

Ik liep achter Suwawwe aan met de speer. ‘Wordt dat nu ook mijn lot, net zoals Ezau ?’ vroeg ik.

Ik raakte al snel in gevecht met de buffels.

Hoofdstuk 6.

Ik was dood. Of meer dood dan levend.
Dat wist ik niet.
Ik twijfelde.
Ik twijfelde aan alles.
Waar ik was, wie ik was.
Suwawwe was in ieder geval bij me.
Ik lag in een bed.
Ik bloedde.
‘Ben ik dood ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Half,’ zei ze. ‘Je bent ook half tot leven gekomen.’
Ik had nu het boek.
Het was een wonderlijk boek.

‘Dat moet je kopen,’ zei ze.
‘Wat moet ik kopen ?’ vroeg ik.
‘Het boek,’ zei ze.

‘Ja, maar ik heb het nu toch ?’ vroeg ik.
‘Nee,’ zei ze. ‘Ieder woord in het boek moet je kopen, moet je voor werken, met bloed, zweet en tranen. Zo kun je dieper in de

afgrond van de rode bol, voor de diepere uitleg van het boek.’

‘Dat is nog niet het einde van de Ezausladder dus ?’ vroeg ik.
‘Nee,’ zei ze.
‘Je hebt het boek,’ zei ze, ‘maar eigenlijk heb je het nog niet, want er zitten vele lagen in. Het boek is de Ezausladder.’
‘Ik begrijp het,’ zei ik.
Ik keek naar mezelf. ‘Dat ziet er niet best uit. De buffels hebben me lelijk te pakken gehad.’

‘Nee,’ zei ze. ‘Je bent er goed vanaf gekomen. Ik ben bij je. Je hebt het boek. Ze hebben je toegetakeld, maar je hebt nu wat je hebben moet.’

‘Maar ga ik nu dood als Ezau ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Half,’ zei ze. ‘Alles is hier half.’

‘Ik voel me ook halfdood,’ zei ik.

‘Kan kloppen,’ zei ze.

‘Heb ik je nu ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Half,’ zei ze.

‘Wat nu ?’ vroeg ik. ‘Ben ik uit de gevangenis ?’

‘Nee, gewoon dieper erin,’ zei ze. ‘Dit is het ziekenhuis.’

‘Interessant,’ zei ik.

‘Er is ook een school,’ zei ze.

‘En ik kan wachter worden ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Ja,’ zei ze, ‘ook half. Alles is hier maar half.’

‘Ik begrijp het,’ zei ik.

‘Het halve benauwd me,’ zei ik.

‘Klopt,’ zei ze. ‘Het moet minder. Dan is er ook meer ruimte voor andere dingen.’

‘Zoals wat ?’ vroeg ik.

Ze zweeg.

Ik kon me nauwelijks bewegen, maar toch wilde ik proberen wat rond te lopen in het ziekenhuis. Maar dat moest ik maar niet doen, zei ze. Ik was nog te zwak. Ze las me wat voor uit het boek.

‘Dus dit is het enige boek ?’ vroeg ik.
Ze knikte.

Ik zag wat wachters lopen in het ziekenhuis. Ze keken niet op of om. Ze waren altijd bezig. En nu zou ik zelf wachter kunnen worden. Ik wist niet wat dat betekende. Maar ik had het boek nu, dus ik begreep het. Ik moest het boek bewaren en bewaken. Natuurlijk moest ik het ook overbrengen tot hen die genoeg hadden betaald. We waren immers boekhandelaren. Ik was een handelaar in hart en nieren. Altijd al geweest.

Vanwege dat er ook slechte wachters waren, nogal veel, eindigde ik vaak in de gevangenis of het ziekenhuis, of op school. Dat hing er vanaf. Dan zocht Suwawwe me op. Ik was een minderheid, ook al was ik een wachter. Ik moest me onderwerpen aan hogeren, maar dat deed ik niet. Ik was op zoek naar de goede hogeren. Die waren er wel, maar daar moest ik ver voor reizen, en dat gaat nogal moeilijk als je in de gevangenis zit, in het ziekenhuis ligt, of op school zit. Er was strenge douane, overal. Op een dag kwam de jongeman met de overmatig sexuele en perverse taal mij opzoeken. Hij sprak nog steeds zo. Hij kon wel wat voor me regelen, zei hij. Hij gaf mij een kaartje voor de trein. Zo kwam ik de stad uit. De trein ging eerst door een woestijn, en daarna over de zee. Ik kwam aan op een eiland waar hoofdzakelijk goede wachters waren, en goede hogeren. Daar hoorde ik thuis. Dat had de jongen ook al gezegd. Ik was de jongen erg dankbaar.

Ik merkte alleen gauw dat ze een probleem hadden. Ze hadden geen ruggegraat. Ze

waren verzwakt. Dit begon me eigenlijk al snel op te breken. Ik wilde weer terug, maar ze lieten me niet gaan. Ze waren nogal plakkerig en zeiden dat ze me nodig hadden. Ze zeiden ook dat het te gevaarlijk was om terug te gaan. Ik wilde niet worden zoals hen, maar toch gebeurde het. Ik werd meegezogen. Ze zeiden dat het hier veilig was. Ze durfden vaak niet te spreken. Deze wachters leefden in grote angst. Toch zeiden ze dat het hier veilig was. De plakkerigheid werd al snel minder. Ik kreeg mijn eigen huis. Er was een supermarkt dichtbij, en wat andere winkels. En ik had het boek natuurlijk, het enige boek, en ik studeerde er vaak in. Steeds meer had ik het gevoel dat ik aan mijn lot werd overgelaten, maar ik had het boek als mijn gids. De wachters hier waren te zwak. Ze leefden in hun eigen wereld. Ik was dankbaar dat ze er wel alles aan hadden gedaan om me binnen te krijgen, en dat ze me een goede inleiding hadden gegeven. Zo kon ik verder. Ze gebruikten al hun laatste krachten hoofdzakelijk voor de nieuwen. Ik begon dit steeds meer en meer te begrijpen,

omdat ik zelf ook zo werd. Alleen ik hield me niet zo bezig met nieuwen. Dat liet ik aan hen over. Ik had al genoeg aan mezelf en aan het boek.

Ik sprak met het boek, en het boek sprak met mij. Het was het hart van Suwawwe. Ik was haar Ezau. Maar het moest allemaal minderen. We waren zoveel meer. Soms benauwde me het, en had ik frisse lucht nodig, en legde ik het boek weg, om de spiegelingen van het boek te volgen. Het was zoveel meer.

Ik moest ontwaken tot het boek, en het boek moest ontwaken tot mij, maar ik moest ook leren slapen en leren vergeten. De zee van vergetelheid lag rondom het eiland.

Ik moest de lelijkheid en smerigheid van het leven zien te doorgronden.
Dat kon door het boek, en door te leren het boek te laten vieren.
Alles was half en moest minderen.

Zo gingen mijn ogen open voor de diepere lagen.
Zo kwam ik dieper op de Ezausladder.
Ik merkte dat ik van binnen steeds meer veranderde in een rode vogel,
alsof ik rode veren en vleugels begon te krijgen.
En ik kon hier zweven, over de jachtvelden.
Ik zag de buffels van het kwaad met hun lange horens,
die velen doorspietsten.
Nu ja, velen ? Het waren er maar weinigen die hier kwamen, maar omdat het zoveel velden waren en ik zoveel overzicht had, leken het er veel.

Ik kon zien hoe ze verleugend werden, net zoals ik eens. Ik kon hun twijfel zien, hun angst, hun woede en depressie. Ik kon soms wat veren laten vallen. Misschien hadden ze er wat aan. Ik kon soms wat stukjes van het boek laten vallen, wat ik zelf had overgeschreven. Misschien konden ze er wat mee. Dat was mijn missie. Ik begreep nu wat het betekende om al je krachten in te zetten

voor de nieuwelingen. De laatste krachten die je nog hebt. Eens werd ik ook zo binnengenomen. Het was als het werk van de zaaier, als de korenvelden van de rode bol.

Ik kwam er snel achter dat mierenwachters waren vervangen door leeuwenwachters, die veel nobeler waren. De mierenwachters waren veelal doortrapt en kortaf, zelfs als ze de naam hadden goed te zijn, want er is altijd het betere en het beste.

Het was in die tijd dat ik in gevecht raakte met de kabouter van de dagmerries. Het heette dan wel dag, maar het was een nachtmerrie. Ik moest zijn mes afhandig maken, en dat lukte maar nauwelijks. Het was een lang gevecht, maar eindelijk kreeg ik het toch voor elkaar, en ik staarde naar de edelstenen in het handvat van het mes. Het was een sprekend mes, en het mes leidde mij tot een vissersdorp. Er hingen hier overal visnetten.

Er was hier van alles verkeerd gegaan, in dit dorp. Ze waren nog steeds in de dagmerrie die gewoon een nachtmerrie was. De kabnouter van de dagmerries tikte op het glas wat om mij heenwas, en ook om het dorp. Dat zou zijn ontstaan toen ik hem het mes afhandig maakte. Het glas werd ook steeds dikker. We konden de kabouter horen foeteren in de verte. Hij wilde zijn prooi niet loslaten. Het was een treiter kabouter. We moesten verlost worden van een heleboel splinters, spijkers en pinnen die in ons vlees zaten waarvan we niet wisten dat die er zaten. Het zat nogal diep. Het was een hele opluchting. Zo kwamen we langzaam maar zeker uit de greep van de kabouter. Nu, dat was een vreemd mannetje. We zagen in de verte dat hij telkens tegen het glas aanrende en er tegen aanschopte, en dat hij aan het wegsmelten was. Hij trok allemaal hele vreemde gezichten, ook wel hele enge gezichten. Maar het was voorbij. Hij moest het hier opgeven. Alles gaat voorbij, en het was alsof er een bladzijde van het boek des levens werd omgeslagen. We moesten het

verleden achterlaten. Het was alsof ik de mensen van het vissersdorp kende, maar toch kende ik ze niet. Ze leken op mensen die ik uit het verleden kende, maar ze waren toch anders. Ik moest ze helpen, zoals zij mij hielpen. Het waren volgelingen van het enige boek. Dat boek hadden ze eens gehad. Het kwam gewoon van boven neerdalen.

Ik had nog steeds her idee alsof ik van de nachtmerrie moest wakker worden. Ik had een waas in mijn hoofd. Ze zeiden dat het de wond was. De roestige spijkers en pinnen waren er nu allemaal uit. Het zat tot diep in mijn hart. Nu moest de wond kalmeren en op een natuurlijke manier genezen. Ze hadden hier ook een kerk waar uit het boek werd gepredikt. Ze konden het allemaal heel mooi uitleggen. Het was hier, in een kerkdienst, waar ik ook weer de jongeman met de overmatig sexuele en perverse taal weer tegenkwam. Hij greep me vast, en zei dat hij zo blij was dat ik ook hier was gekomen. Hij stelde me voor aan de koster van de kerk, een wat oudere man. De man woonde dichtbij de

kerk en had net als de kerk ook een hele grote tuin, waar hij net als in de kerk vaak werkte. Hij had ook een zeilboot. Op een dag nam hij ons beiden mee op een zeiltocht. Hij zei tegen ons dat er grote plannen met ons waren. Hij wees toen naar de lucht. Hij zei dat het allemaal vanuit de lucht zou komen.

Wij wisten niet zo goed wat hij bedoelde, maar hij legde ons uit dat wij ook predikers van het enige boek zouden worden. ‘Ik weet niet veel,’ zei ik toen.

‘Geeft niet,’ zei hij. ‘Dat komt allemaal wel. De kerk is een goede opleiding voor je. Daar zul je het leren.’ Vanwege mijn brein haperingen had ik het gevoel dat ik nooit een prediker zou kunnen worden, maar hij bleek een papier prediker te bedoelen. Het zou allemaal draaien om het enige boek.

Hoofdstuk 7.

We gingen naar het terrasje van de tuin van de koster, vlak voor zijn huis. Er zaten ook wat anderen in de tuinstoelen. Er was ook wat familie bij van de koster. Eén van de jongemannen had het hoogste woord, de ene mop na de andere. Toen zakte hij op een gegeven moment weg in extase. Een engel verscheen boven hem. Er stroomde water uit de hand van de engel. Het was een vissers-engel. ‘Het zal ook op jullie komen,’ sprak de jongeman. Ik zag de rode bol om de jongeman heen, en toen begon het ook over ons te komen. Alles was rood, en ik zag de uitgestrekte velden. Ik vloog als een rode vogel over alles heen. De rode bol was gekomen. Ik kon aan niets meer vasthouden, en dat hoefde ook niet. Mijn brein haperde. Ik had het mes van de kabouter van de dagmerries, en het was het mes van het fragmentarisme. Alles was als fragmenten voor me, als een puzzel. Ik snapte er niets meer van. Het stroomde ook door mij, het water. Alles wat ik toen dacht was : Ik moet

naar de theologie, ik moet naar de theologie. Ik moest de puzzel afmaken. De oplossing lag in de theologie, niets anders.

Ik kon aan niets meer vasthouden. Ik was onthecht. Ik had alleen wat fragmenten. De herinneringen in mij veranderden, vlogen weg als vogels. Het waren allemaal rode vogels, en we vlogen in zwermen. De rode vogels vlogen van elkaar weg en andere rode vogels kwamen ervoor in de plaats. Ik kon het ook van een afstand bekijken, alsof ik ergens anders was. Ook de zee was rood en woest, in de hoogzomer. Ik kon ook het bootje zien van de koster. En was ik dat, en de perverse jongeman ? Het leek er wel op. Ik was van mezelf weggescheurd leek ik wel, maar toch ook zo diep verbonden.

Ik snakte naar adem. Theologie, theologie had ik nodig. Dat was het enige leven. Daarin was het enige boek. Ik had het nodig. Buiten de theologie was er geen leven. De rode vogels vliegen door een gat in de lucht tot de rode bol. De rode bol was teruggekomen.

Ik snakte naar adem en werd meegezogen. In de rode bol vond ik wat adem. Ik vroeg me af hoe iemand hierbuiten zou kunnen leven. Het leek onmogelijk. Ik zag meer en meer vogels binnenkomen, en ze gingen ook weer weg. Ik vloog met ze mee. Ik voelde me opgeladen door de rode bol, alsof de rode bol in me was.

Na een tijdje begon ik weer naar adem te snakken, maar ik kon de rode bol niet vinden. Ik moest er gewoon voor zorgen dat ik bij de rode vogels bleef. Ik merkte dat als ik dichter bij hen was dan had ik meer adem. Maar ze vlogen zo snel, en zo verward, zo chaotisch. Ik moest hun vluchtroutes leren kennen. Soms dwaalde ik af, en dan ging het verkeerd, maar op andere momenten had ik de smaak te pakken, en leek het wel vanzelf te gaan. En de wind hielp ook, die duwde me in de juiste richting.

Oh, dit was het leven.
Ik voelde het water door me heenstromen.
Alsof de rode zee in mij was.

De rode zee was woest en onstuimig.
Droomde ik ?
Ik zag de vissen in de zee, en de vissersboten, met daarop de amazones.
En aan de kanten van de zee was alleen wildernis.
Ik zag geen steden of dorpen meer, maar wel rivieren in de wildernissen.
Ik zag de kampen van de amazones.
En ik dacht aan de theologie.
Nee, ik kon niet meer afstandelijk blijven naar de theologie.
Ik moest het binnengaan en doorgronden, dieper en dieper.

Ik riep naar de amazones, maar ik was maar een vogel.
Wel liet ik een rode veer tot hen vallen, en een stukje papier waarop ik eens een stukje uit het enige boek had geschreven.
Toen vloog ik weer verder.

En ik werd wakker als van een vreemde droom. En er waren vrouwen om me heen die

ik niet kende. Ze hadden riemen om hun lichaam.
En de vrouw die het dichtst bij be stond, bij mijn bed, sprak over de theologie van de zee.
De zee laat alles los, en is toch verbonden, wat het leven is.
Ik haalde diep adem.
God is de zee, sprak ze.
Ik vroeg me af waar ik was.
Ik was op Orion.
We waren aan de hemelse zee.
Er was hier ook een oorlog gaande.
Ik had heel lang geslapen.
Ik was verwond in de oorlog.

Ik had de zee nodig, de theologie van de zee, daartoe moest ik ontwaken.
De vrouw met de riemen zou me onderwijzen.
Ze zei dat ik door een vis was gegrepen.
Daardoor had ik mijn geheugen verloren.
Het moest nu weer langzaam terugkomen.
Het was een hele strijd.
Het was een oorlog om de ziel, een oorlog om het geweten,

en om het verstand.
Telkens weer gleden er zielen weg in de oorlog,
om als rode vogels uit elkaar te gaan.
We konden ons aan niets vasthouden.
We waren deel van de zee.

Ik moest ontwaken tot de zee-theologie.
Dit was het leven, het eeuwige leven.
Het enige boek had het er veel over.

Oh, de zee, wat hield ik van de zee.
De zee gaf zicht.

De zee hief mij op,
de golven werden rood,
en tot rode vogels.

Zo vlogen wij heen en weer,
van vergetelheid tot herinnering.

De rode vogels verspreidden hun veren,
en zij die de rode veren hadden gevonden
waren het geheim van de vissersboten op zee,
het geheim van de vissersdorpen.

De zee ademde in mij.
Ik kon het niet uitleggen en het niet begrijpen,
maar de vrouw met de riemen onderwees mij.
Ik moest ingeleid worden tot de geheimenissen van de Orionse zee.
Ik moest wedergeboren worden in de zee,
en de zee moest wedergeboren worden in mij.

Het stormde en onweerde, en er was veel regen.
Er was een grote oorlog.

Hoofdstuk 8.

Ik zag de vissers met hun netten, waarop het natuurlicht weerkaatste.
Er was een mensenaap die kon spreken, die ik ergens tussen de stad en de natuur tegenkwam.
Hij sprak over de lucht en de wildernis, dat er zoveel geheimen waren die de mens nauwelijks kende.
Ik vroeg of er meerderen van hem waren.
Hij sprak dat de wildernis er vol van was.
Ik was blij hem te ontmoeten.
Hij sprak over de bibliotheken, de opvangcentrums, de woede ook.
De woede dreef de mens voort.
Het was een verzamelwoede, een studiewoede.
De mens wist dat de mens te weinig wist, zo op zichzelf, en wilde daarom ontwaken, anderen ontmoeten, om de puzzel klaar te krijgen.
Ik was blij met hem.
Hij was zo intelligent.

Hij sprak honderduit over allerlei dingen en zaken.
Ik keek naar zijn mond, naar zijn hoofd.
Het was iets hariger dan een mens.
Hij was een mensenaap, een Orionse mensenaap, die gewoon kon spreken.
Hij zei dat hij zich vaak afgezonderd hield.
Dat was voor de rust.
Rust was belangrijk, sprak hij, want de mens deed teveel, en werd zo in de verkeerde richting geleid, door alle haast.
Maar er was een woede, een woede om richting te vinden.
Die woede was rood. Die woede stond op exploderen.
Die woede kon gevaarlijk zijn, en daarom moest de woede getemperd worden door angst en depressie, en ook veel eenzaamheid.
Zo zou de mens richting vinden.
De mens was te gespierd, te opgeblazen, vooral de mannen.
De vrouwen moesten wel groot zijn, omdat zij hun kinderen moesten voeden en beschermen, in de baarmoeder. Die

baarmoeders waren nat en donker, en haar heupen breed.
Voor bescherming. Voor bescherming, zei hij telkens.
De man was te opgeblazen.
De man moest zijn als gekrookt riet.

Ik keek hem aan. Ik wist dat hij de waarheid sprak.
Hij zei dat ik hem eens gered had, in een droom, door een rode veer.
Hij had mijn veer gevonden, en daarom spraken we.
Ik vroeg me af hoe lang het contact zou standhouden.
Hij vertelde me dat hij door piraten was gepakt en opgesloten werd gehouden, en dat hij voor de piraten moest werken.

Ik sprak over het vissen, dat we veel moesten vissen.
Vissen in het verleden. God is het loon.
Wij zijn vissers, vissers van kennis.

Ik wilde theoloog worden, maar ik was het al.

Ik wilde een brug bouwen tussen theologie en de visserij, maar die was er al.
Overal waren opvangcentrums die aan elkaar verbonden waren.
Er waren lange gangen.
Het liep ook door de natuur heen, door de wildernissen.
Ook hadden zij bibliotheken en scholen.
De gevangenissen liepen hier in over.
De mens moest richting vinden.

Er waren ook gevaarlijke mensenapen.
Zij werkten met de piraten.
Zij waren stil, vanwege onverschilligheid.
De stilte was hun dodelijke wapen.
Mensen moesten maar vergeven, terwijl zij hun misdaden konden uitoefenen.
Zij waanden ook dat ze theologen waren, maar het was hun dekmantel.
Het ging hen om geld en macht.
Ze werden rijkelijk door de piraten beloond.
Ik had even het gevoel dat ik niet kon ademhalen.
De mensenaap vertelde er wat verhalen over.
Ik werd er kortademig van.

Ik herkende het.
Ik kon hem zo goed begrijpen.

Het was oorlog,
dat was wel duidelijk.
Maar ik moest ontwaken.
Ik had een woede om te ontwaken.
Ik voelde me zo machteloos.
De mensenaap vertelde dat we veel konden doen.

‘Wat kunnen we doen ?’ vroeg ik.
Hij begon wat liedjes te zingen en opsommingen te maken.
Het was alsof hij lijstjes aan het doornemen was,
boodschappenlijstjes.

Ik keek hem aan.
Weer was ik blij dat hij er was.
Door hem had ik contact met de wildernis.

Ze vreesden de stad Belzeham ergens aan de rand van de wildernis.

Er waren daar torens. De stad was ommuurd en buiten de muren waren wat torens op een heuvel.
Er scheen daar een heksenhoofd te regeren wat rondvloog.
Het was als een afgehakt hoofd van een vrouw met lang haar.
Ze zou mensen tot waanzin drijven, tot gekte.
Ze zou mensen drijven tot moord of zelfmoord.

Hier was waar de Ezausladder naartoe leidde.
Ik moest er doorheen. Ik moest de torens op.
Ik had geen idee waarom.

Het werd de ergste strijd van mijn leven.
Zij was wat ik nog niet wist.
Het waren allemaal fragmenten.
Zij was het verloren geheugen wat tot monsterlijke vormen was gekomen.
Daarom was zij heks.
Ik moest ontwaken van deze nachtmerrie.

Ik moest er helemaal alleen naartoe.
Niemand ging met me mee.

Ik probeerde de trap van de eerste toren op te gaan.
Maar het heksenhoofd begon me naar beneden te zuigen.
Het was er stil, koud, afgelegen, eenzaam, dor.
De muren leken op instorten te staan.
Wat moest ik hier doen ?

De heks deed alsof ze mijn moeder was,
en de muren die op instorten stonden deden alsof ze mijn vader waren.
Waarom was ik hier naartoe gegaan ?
Er was een wind in mijn hoofd.
Ik wilde dood.
Het maakte me krankzinnig.
Dit was zware hekserij.
Ik strompelde de trap op en keek omhoog, het trappenhuis in.
Wat moest ik hier ?
Ik wilde terug, maar toen wilde ik doorgaan.
Dit was immers de Ezausladder.
Ik moest. Ik moest hier zijn.
Hier moest ik verder.

Ik voelde me een woesteling.
Ik had mijn schoenen uitgedaan, anders had ik het idee dat ik nooit verder zou kunnen komen.
Het heksenhoofd zoog aan mijn hoofd.
Ik greep naar mijn hoofd, en probeerde het heksenhoofd weg te slaan, maar niets hielp.
Ik hoorde de muren kraken.
Ik zag al barsten in de muur.

Ik klamde me vast aan de trapleuning.
Ik had anders het idee dat ik zou vallen.
Toen ineens greep een wind me en begon me naar boven te sleuren.
Het sleurde me een zaaltje in boven in de toren, waar allerlei mensen waren die weenden.
Ze klaagden en zuchtten.
‘Waar ben ik ?’ vroeg ik.
‘De heks voedt ons medicijnen,’ snikte een vrouw.
‘Waarom ?’ vroeg ik. ‘Nee, komt ze hier ?’

‘Ze kan hier niet komen, maar we kunnen niet weg,’ zei iemand anders.
‘Als we naar beneden gaan voedt ze ons, en ook medicijnen.’

Ik keek uit het raam maar het was te stijl.
‘Ik heb een gave,’ zei ik. ‘Ik verander soms in een rode vogel.’
Ze keken naar me met wat verheuging en hoop.

Uiteindelijk heb ik ze één voor één meegenomen door het raam
De heks was woedend, en de toren begon in te storten.
De muren begaven het.

Ik ging toen naar de tweede toren waar ik met de woedende heks te maken kreeg.
Ze beet me verschrikkelijk, en ik vloog verwond naar boven.
Ik bloedde hevig, maar er leek maar geen einde te komen aan de trappen.
Ik begon moe te worden en was bang dat ik zou neerstorten.

Het heksenhoofd vloog achter me aan.
Ze wilde me nog een keer bijten.
Dat zou ik niet overleven.
Ik sloeg haar hard en snel met mijn vleugels.
Ze krijste.
Ik zou niet ver komen volgens haar.
Ik moest terug.
Het ging niet goed met mij.
Ik begon duizelig te worden en dubbel te zien.
Ik was aan het einde van mijn krachten.
Maar de heks zat achter me aan, dus ik kon niet terug.
Opeens kwam er weer een wind die me opnam,
net zoals de vorige keer.
De wind stroomde hard.
Het ging ook heel snel.
Ik ging toen over een snelheidsgrens heen, en toen zag ik licht in de verte.
Het was alsof deze kamer in de lucht zweefde.
Het was alsof het los was van de toren.
In de kamer waren mensen die feest vierden.
Ik was weer in mijn eigen gedaante.

Er zaten nog wel wat rode veren in mijn haar, maar dat viel niet op tussen deze feestende mensen.

‘Wat is het voor feest ?’ vroeg ik.
Ze hadden de heks overwonnen, zeiden ze.
Ik zei dat de heks nog beneden was.
Ja, zeiden ze, maar wij zijn hier.
We zijn los van de toren door ons lijden.

Ze verwelkomden mij ook, maar ik zei dat er nog andere torens waren.
Dat kon hen niet schelen. Het was immers feest.
Ik was niet overtuigd. Iets klopte er niet. Deze mensen leken dronken.
Ik was nog steeds duizelig.
De kamer leek me ook niet stabiel.
Het was alsof de kamer elk moment naar beneden kon storten.

‘Luister,’ zei ik. ‘Ik heb een gave. Ik ben een rode vogel. De heks is nog niet overwonnen, en er zijn meerdere torens. De kamer lijkt

onstabiel en op instorten. Ik kan jullie door het raam meenemen naar beneden.’

Maar ze begonnen me uit te lachen. Er was wel een klein jongetje die wel in me geloofde en vroeg of hij meemocht. Ik ben toen naar het raam gelopen, en hij liep met me mee. Ik veranderde toen weer in een rode vogel, en vloog met hem door het raam naar beneden. Ik bracht hem toen naar de anderen die ik had gered. Ik zag de kamer boven de toren naar beneden storten op de toren, al brandende, en de toren begon ook te branden. De heks was razend.

Ik moest direct naar de derde toren toe, want de heks dreigde ook die toren in de brand te zetten. Ik vroeg me af hoe ze dat zou doen, of dat het maar woorden waren. Ik was nog steeds verwond, maar ik had geen andere keuze. Ik snelde op de toren af en rende weer naar boven. Ik zag de muren al branden, maar ik had het gevoel dat ik dit moest doen. ‘Te laat !’ schreeuwde de heks. Ik veranderde weer in een rode vogel en vloog vliegensvlug

naar boven. Hier brandde de toren nog niet. Ik kwam weer in een torenzaaltje, terwijl ik weer in mijn eigen gedaante was.

Er was hier een man. ‘Zag ik jou niet net van een rode vogel in een mens veranderen ?’ vroeg de man verbaasd. ‘Dat kan wel kloppen,’ zei ik. ‘De toren staat in brand. Ik ben hier om u te redden.’

Plotseling kwam het heksenhoofd binnen. Die was ook brandende en probeerde zich op ons te storten. Ik duwde de man opzij, en trok hem mee naar het raam. Ik begon al in een rode vogel weer te veranderen. De heks was akelig dichtbij, en ik sloeg het brandende heksenhoofd telkens weg met mijn vleugels, maar ik begon al te branden. Ik dacht dat het het begin van het einde was, maar door mijn snelle bewegingen wist ik het vuur weer uit te doven, en vloog toen met de man weg door het raam. Het heksenhoofd zat nog steeds achter ons aan, en het brandde nog steeds. ‘Nee, nee !’ riep ik. Ik was in een doodsstrijd. Ik woelde in mijn bed in Sint-Oedenrode, al

zwetend. ‘Nee, nee !’ riep ik weer. Mijn vrouw had me inmiddels in haar armen genomen, en ik voelde haar warme lichaam. ‘Heb je een nachtmerrie gehad ?’ vroeg ze warm. Ook mijn dochtertje stond toen in de deuropening van de slaapkamer. ‘Brand in Friesland !’ riep ze.

Mijn vrouw knuffelde me, en knuffelde toen ook ons dochtertje. ‘Volgens mij hebben jullie beiden eng gedroomd,’ zei mijn vrouw.

‘Ja,’ zei ons dochtertje toen. ‘Het was heel eng.’

Ik keek op de klok. Het was nog heel vroeg. Met z’n drieën zijn we toen nog even doorgeslapen.

Einde

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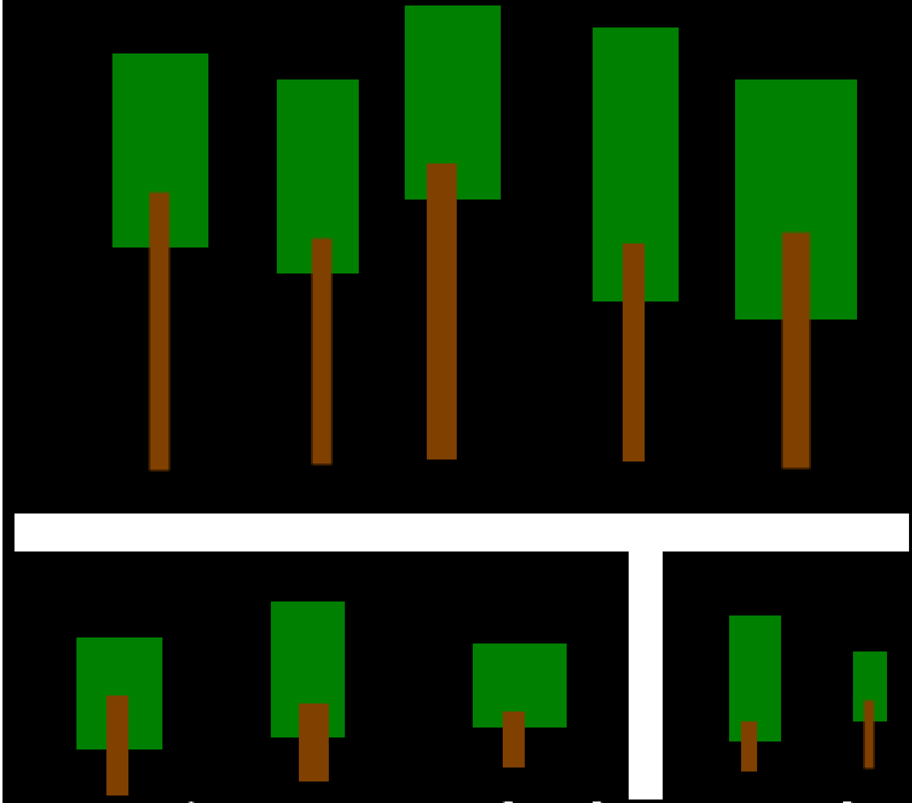
rnl-pockets nr. 17

de traan van roggemuiden



een uitgave van schoolsupermarkt

De Traan van Roggemuiden
korte verhalen

Uitgave : rnl-pockets
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rodenbergs-nederlandse letterkunde

Een uitgave van schoolsupermarkt

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De Rode Stad

Hij stond die morgen vroeg op, schonk wat voor zichzelf in en ging zitten. Het morgenlicht vormde een rode stad voor hem. Hij was autistisch en had geen behoefte aan sociaal contact. Hij had genoeg aan zijn eigen hoofd. De koningin ging zitten, de koningin van de rode stad, en keek hem aan. Ze leek op een kudde jonge hyenas. Hij staarde haar aan. 'Zo jongen,' zei ze, 'je bent nogal verlegen. Ik heb je in deze stad gebracht.'

'Waarom ?' vroeg hij.

'Omdat ...,' zei ze, 'je het waard bent.'

'Okay,' zei de jongen, en probeerde de kralen van haar ketting te tellen. 'Uw haar zit goed,' zei hij.

'Dank je,' zei de koningin.

Hij was als in een waas, en waande zich de koning van de elven. Hij zakte door de grond de diepte in, toen ze op een

knopje drukte. Vele bellen rinkelden in zijn hoofd, alsof het kerstfeest was. Ze glimlachte. 'Prins van de hyena's ?' vroeg ze. Hij knikte. Hij glimlachte diep, ook toen ze hem aanraakte. Even ging er een schok door hem heen. 'Je bent in de rode stad,' zei ze, 'eindelijk.'

'Erin, ben jij dat ?' vroeg hij.

'Ja,' zei ze.

Erin was altijd zijn droom-vriendinnetje. Hij zakte dieper.

'Snap je het ?' vroeg ze. 'Wie zijn wij ?'

'De hyenas,' zei hij.

'Wij komen je redden,' zei ze. 'Wij brengen je naar een betere wereld.'

De rode stad was gemaakt van flonkerstenen, zeer mooi, adembenemend. Hij raakte zijn autisme kwijt, kwam uit zijn schulp, want hier kon het. Hier waren vuurstenen en ruimte-schepen. Hier was het goed.

'Wat een bende is het hier,' zei hij, terwijl hij lachte. Hij keek naar beneden. Er lag troep op de grond. Een leeg melk-kartonnetje, een leeg plastic flesje, en nog wat

andere troep. Hij schopte er tegenaan, en rende er lachend achteraan, en schopte weer. Ook kleine hondjes volgden hem. Ze leken op hyena's. 'Ik ben gelukkig hier,' zei hij, en straalde.

'Goed,' zei Erin.

'Ik houd van je Erin,' zei hij.

'Ik ook van jou,' zei ze, en omhelsde hem.

Hij kreeg een kamertje hoog in een toren. Het was een rommeltje hier, maar hij had goed uitzicht. Hij bleef maar lachen en stralen. Erin was ook bij hem, en zorgde voor hem. Zij was de godin van de hyena's. Ze zorgde goed voor hem, ze kon goed koken. Ook deed ze vaak boodschappen, en kwam altijd met veel speelgoed thuis, en bijzonder voedsel, magisch. Hij had het met haar getroffen, en hield van haar als van de rode stad.

En kun je er ook van houden, als ik je aanraak, lieve schat,

En kun je er ook van houden, als alles rood is in het bad,

En kun je er ook van houden, als ik met je wegvlieg naar een berg,

Om die met jou verder te beklimmen.

Ze hadden de televisie aangedaan, en keken naar een tekenfilm over een rood sap. Dat kon je verwachten in de rode stad. Ze pakte hem vast en danste met hem.

Wil je met me dansen, naar de rode maan,

Wil je met me dansen, toe nou, doe niet zo raar,

Want morgen vroeg ben ik van jou,

Dan ben ik jouw vrouw.

Het liep allemaal goed af in de tekenfilm. Ze hadden het rode sap gevonden, en plotseling waren ze in de tekenfilm, en renden over de daken. 'Naar de hyenas !' riep ze. 'Hoei !' Spoedig waren ze op het veld tussen de hyena's, op het land, tussen de boerderijen. Even sidderde hij, maar toen voelde hij zich met liefde omgeven. Wat een prachtige dieren waren het toch, zo rood. Hun bekken waren rood, omdat ze van het vlees gegeten hadden, maar welk vlees ? Dat maakte niet zoveel uit. Als ze maar goed aten. Want zulke lieve dieren ... Maar verder kwam hij niet. Een man met een geweer stond voor hen.

'Zo,' zei de man, een boer. 'Wat doen jullie om mijn land.'

'Uh, niets, meneer,' zei hij. 'We wilden alleen maar met de hyenas spelen. De hyenas gromden een beetje.

'Okay, goed,' zei de man, en vertrok weer.

'Klaar,' zei Erin. 'Laten we verder spelen.

'Wat is klaar ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Niets,' zei Erin.

'Erin, ze hebben van het vlees gegeten,' zei de jongen.

'Ach nee,' zei Erin. 'Dat moet je zo niet zien. Het is chocola.'

'Nee, het is vlees,' zei de jongen.

'Vlees van mijn vlees, gebeente van mijn gebeente,' zei Erin.

'Nu klink je kerks,' zei de jongen.

'Bloed van mijn bloed ?' zei Erin.

'Ben je Christus ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Doe niet zo mal,' zei Erin.

'Nee, zeg op,' zei de jongen ondeugend.

'Hey, praat niet zo tegen mij,' zei Erin, 'doe maar niet zo mal.'

'Ben je Christus of ben je het niet,' zei de jongen.

'Waarom wil je dat weten ?' vroeg Erin.

'Gewoon,' zei hij.

'Omdat je zo kerks klinkt,' zei hij even later.

'Oh,' zei Erin.

Ze rende weg. De hyena's renden achter haar aan, en plotseling was ze als een groep hyena's zelf. Hij sidderde. Ze was als de dood, en erger nog : als de hel, maar ze was lief, zoet, teder, als een roos.

'Erin ?' vroeg hij. 'Waar ben je nou Erin ?' De groep hyena's kwam dichterbij. Ze gromden. Hij sidderde. Hij liep terug naar de torenkamer, waar zij even later ook terugkwam. Ze deed alsof er niets was gebeurd. Ze was vrolijk. Ze kookte.

'Lieve jongen,' zei ze.

'Ja,' zei hij.

'Het eten is klaar,' zei ze. Ze zette het op tafel.

'Vlees ?' vroeg hij. Ze knikte. 'Ik lust geen vlees,' zei hij. Toen gaf ze hem een chocolaatje. 'Je moet goed eten,' zei ze.

'Nee,' zei hij. 'Dat moet ik niet. Dat moeten alleen de hyenas.' Ze klapte. Ze waren in de rode stad. Ze had wat bedelaars uitgenodigd. Ze aten allemaal van het vlees. 'Aten,' zei ze, 'dat is de Egyptische zonnegod.'

'Kan mij het schelen,' zei de jongen.

'Zeg, heb eens wat meer respect,' zei ze.

'Heb ik geen respect voor,' zei hij. Ze kwam naar hem toe, en gaf hem klappen op zijn billen. De bedelaars keken toe. 'Zeg, doe eens rustig met die jongen,' zei één van de bedelaars. Maar toen nam de jongen het voor haar op. 'Zeg, heb wat meer respect voor de godin,' zei hij. 'Zij doet wat goed is. Aan haar wetten zijn wij ondergeschikt.'

'Je hebt gelijk,' zei de bedelaar. 'Ik wist niet dat zij de godin was.'

'Dan weet je het nu,' snauwde de jongen. De bedelaar sidderde.

'Lieve jongen,' zei de godin.

'Gatverredamme,' zei één van de bedelaars. Dat vlees stinkt.

'Je moet snel eten,' zei de godin. De bedelaars aten haastig door, en gingen weer weg.

'Wat een figuren,' zei de jongen.

'Jij bent anders ook niet zo'n lieverdje,' zei de godin.

'Maar ze hebben overal commentaar op,' zei de jongen, 'terwijl je ze zo goed helpt.'

'Dat denk je alleen maar,' zei de godin.

'Nee, ik zie het toch,' zegt de jongen.

'Laat maar, houd maar op,' sprak de godin. 'Ik begin een beetje ongeduldig met jou te worden.' En weer gaf ze hem een paar klappen op de broek. 'Het is dat je de godin bent,' sprak de jongen, 'anders was ik je aangevlogen.'

'Wil je werkelijk weten wat ik met de bedelaars heb gedaan ?' vroeg de godin.

Hij knikte. 'Ja,' zei hij. 'Graag.'

'Okay,' zei ze, 'maar je mag het niet verklikken.'

'Erewoord,' zei hij.

'Okay,' zei ze. 'Ze gaan naar de schuren.'

'Hoe bedoel je ?' vroeg hij.

'Laat maar,' zei ze.

'Nee, je moet het nu zeggen,' zei hij. 'Wie A zegt, moet ook B zeggen.'

'Waarom,' vroeg ze.

'Wie A zegt moet ook B zeggen,' herhaalde hij.

De godin zuchtte. 'Je bent luguber,' zei hij.

'Nee, jij bent luguber,' zei ze. 'Je begrijpt nooit wat ik bedoel.'

'En jij legt nooit wat uit,' zei hij.

'Daar bij de boerderijen,' zei ze.

'Wat ?' vraagt hij.

'Niks,' zegt ze. En even later : 'Ik kan het niet zeggen. Er staat een gestalte naast mij.'

'Waar heb je het over,' gilt de jongen.

'Niets,' rilt ze. 'Vergeet het.'

'Geesten ?' vraagt hij.

'Ja,' snikt ze. Hij omhelst haar. 'Het komt wel goed,' zegt hij.

'Je bent zo lief,' zegt ze.

'Jij ook,' zegt hij.

'Je bent altijd zo geduldig met me,' zegt ze. Hij glimlacht. Hij omhelst haar weer en kust haar.

'Nee, niet kussen,' zegt ze. 'Het doet pijn.'

Hij laat haar los. Dan slaat de bliksem in.

'Onweer,' zegt ze.

'Wat moeten we in een rode stad ?' vraagt hij.

Ze maakt kabeljauw klaar. Het zit in een potje, en het komt met drie wensen. 'Ik wens geluk, liefde en zaligheid,' zei ze. Hij rent uit de torenkamer, want hij kan de stank niet verdragen. 'Altijd vlees,' roept hij.

'Vis,' roept ze hem na.

'Hetzelfde,' zegt zij.

'Dat is alleen voor hyena's,' roept hij.

'Ben jij dan geen hyena, je bent de prins van de hyena's,' roept ze.

'Alles met mate,' zegt hij.

'Een waar woord,' zegt ze, terwijl ze de kabeljauw in het openhaard vuur gooit. Hij komt dichterbij.

'Zeg, ik ben verliefd, en voor de liefde doe ik alles,' zei ze.

'Op wie ?' vraagt hij.

'Op jou,' zegt ze.

'Blijf van me af,' zegt hij. 'Ik ben een autist.'

'Het was maar een grapje,' zei ze. 'Wij hyena's kunnen niet verliefd worden.'

'Ik ook niet,' zei hij. 'Het is walgelijk, smerig.'

'Precies, als gesmolten kaas,' zegt ze.

'Gatverredamme,' zei hij. En even later : 'Waarom maak je zulke grapjes.'

Ze gaf geen antwoord. Het maakte hem kwaad.

'Stomme hoer,' zei hij. Ze begon te huilen. 'Het spijt me verschrikkelijk. Het zal nooit meer gebeuren,' zei ze.

'Het is al te laat,' zei hij. 'Nu brand ik. Ik kan hier echt niet tegen. Een beetje over de liefde gaan lopen praten, gatverredamme, rot toch een end op.'

'Nu ben je niet leuk,' zei ze. 'En ook niet aardig.'

Je hebt me gekwetst, zei hij.

- En jij me verdrongen.

Niet waar, ik ben altijd open voor je geweest.

- Leugenaar.

Hond.

- Gemenerik.

Zwarte hond.

- Racist.

Ik weet het.

- Dode diender.

Ik weet het.

Opeens stond de boer weer voor hen met een geweer. 'Uit mij stad nu,' sprak hij nors, 'uit mijn stad. Jullie zouden met de hyenas spelen, maar alles wat jullie doen is elkaar voor gek uitmaken.'

'Maar wij zijn hyenas,' zei de godin.

'Ja, dat zeggen ze allemaal,' zei de boer. 'Wegwezen, uit mijn stad. Ik heb niets met jullie te maken. Ook al vriezen jullie dood in de kou, kan mij het schelen, oprotten, weg, weg.'

Maar toen werd de jongen heel erg kwaad, en greep het geweer en boog het om. 'Zeg, zo spreek je niet tegen een godin,' zei hij tegen de boer met strakke ogen. Zijn ogen lieten de boer niet meer los, en de boer begon te sidderen. Daar kwam een andere boer aan. 'Het is de godin,' riep de sidderende boer. 'Ach nee,' zei de andere boer, 'laat hen je niks wijsmaken.' Maar spoedig waren ze allemaal door grommende hyenas omsingeld. De hyenas doken op de twee boeren. 'Rennen !' riepen ze. Maar ze konden nergens heen.

'Dat is ook met de bedelaars gebeurd,' fluisterde de godin. 'Naar de schuren.'

Hyena's, maak het op, en leg het neer,

Hyena's, ren je rot en kom niet meer,

Hyena's, in de rode stad, je leeft niet meer.

Ze keken naar een andere tekenfilm. Buiten sneeuwde het. Ze maakte alleen nog maar chocolade voor hem. Hij gruwelde van vlees. Hij had haar gesmeekt geen vlees en vis meer te maken. Hij kon het niet aan. Het leven was te zwaar dan. Maar in chocolade was het voor hem een zachte, zalige oceaan. Zo romig en cremig. Dat was voor hem altijd weer een verrassing, en zij was zijn verrassing. Zij was zijn genade. Er lagen hier overal snoeppapiertjes, alsof er een heks was langsgekomen. Vlees was er allang niet meer, alleen nog maar snoep. Snoep maken kon ze als de beste, en ze genas zijn hart.

Hij liep altijd rond op gympen, en zij op blote voeten. Hij bladerde door wat boeken, en keek naar haar. Ze keek terug. 'Is dit wat je wilt ?' vroeg ze. 'Gaan we nooit trouwen ? Want straks word je wakker, en dan heb je mijn ring niet.'

'Onzin,' zei de jongen. 'Heb geloof.'

'Nu klink jij kerks,' zei Erin.

'Kan me niet zoveel schelen,' zei de jongen.

'Hoe heet je eigenlijk ?' vraagt Erin.

'Orpheus,' zegt de jongen. 'Orpheus P.'

'Mooie naam,' zegt Erin.

'Had je kunnen weten als godin zijnde,' zei Orpheus.

'Ik weet niet alles,' zei ze.

'Of je wil het gewoon niet weten,' zei hij.

'Of ik wil het gewoon van jou horen,' zei de godin.

Plotseling werden ze omringd door rode lichten.

'Hyenische energie,' zei de godin, 'ze hebben ons gevonden.'

'Er komt licht uit mijn handen,' zei Orpheus.

'Uit mijn handen ook,' zei Erin.

'Dan kunnen we een nieuwe wereld creeeren,' zei Orpheus.

'De rode stad is alles wat we nodig hebben,' zei Erin, 'als een rode picknick.'

'Als een rode draad, van mijn hart naar de jouwe ?' vroeg Orpheus.

Ze knikt. 'Ja,' zegt ze. En even later : 'Altijd aan elkaar verbonden.'

'Geen zweem van twijfel,' zei Orpheus.

'Het beest van twijfel is in de rivier geworpen,' zei de godin.

'Goed,' zei Orpheus.

'Zwarte mensen, gemaakt van chocola,

Zwarte mensen, dienen de tafella,

Zwarte hond, hebbende geen gena.

Weer keken ze naar een tekenfilm. 'Hoe kunnen we de rode draad vinden ?' vroeg Orpheus. 'Kom maar mee,' zei ze. Ze zwierven door de sneeuwbedekte stad, naar een kerk, waar de draad ergens moest hangen. Binnengekomen zagen ze een heks. 'Hoe zijn jullie binnengekomen ?'

vroeg de heks. 'Dat is onmogelijk. Niemand kan hier komen.'

'Ik heb hem meegenomen,' zei Erin.

'Jij ?' sprak de heks. 'Ellendeling.' Toen begon ze op haar piano te spelen.

'Morgenrood, vroeg is dood, morgen boter, aardkloot,

Botervloot, kom hier nu, vlug, breng die mensen snel terug,

Deze stad is van mij, niemand komt er levend uit,

Niemand, nee, niemand, want de avond is het paslood,

Morgenbrood, vroeg is dood, ik heb hen nu geflest,

Ik heb hen op het kastje gelegd.'

'Heks, hou je waffel,' sprak Orpheus.

'Waar is de rode draad ?' vroeg Erin.

'Achter me,' zei de heks. 'Grijp ernaar, en als je mist, heb ik je.'

'Geen sprake van, heks,' zei Orpheus.

'Deze stad is van mij,' zei de heks, 'dus ik bepaal wat er gebeurd.'

De bakker heeft zijn hemd gescheurd,' zei Orpheus.

'Koeien in de sloot,' zei de heks.

'Ik heb een broertje dood,' zei Orpheus.

Toen begon ze weer verder te spelen.

'Draken van het vuurfontein, help met de wijn, help met de wijn,

Verdrink ze hier, in het bier, help met de wijn en met vertier,

Ha, kom terug, wanneer ik je roep, chocolade
mensen hebben hier een goed beroep,

Slaven zullen jullie wezen, op het dekzeil gehesen, klaar.'

'Mens, houd toch op, niemand is in die akelige rijmpjes van jou geinteresseerd,' zei Orpheus.

'Niemand zei je ?' sprak de heks. 'Ze zijn toevallig allemaal aan de beeldbuis genageld. Ik beslis hier de TV. Ha.'

'Ach heks, houd op met je sprookjes,' zei Orpheus'. 'Zal ik u eens een verhaaltje vertellen.'

'Ga je gang,' zei de heks.

Orpheus floot even, en daar kwam een groep hyenas binnenstormen, die al snel op de heks doken.

'Dat kan helemaal niet,' zei de heks. 'Niemand kan hier komen. Hoe hebben jullie deze plaats ontdekt.'

'Vuur, vuur,' gilde de heks. Maar er kwam geen vuur, en haar piano kon ze niet meer bereiken. Toen maakte ze een heel hoog fluitje, maar dat werkte ook niets uit.

'Orpheus, we moeten hier weg,' gilde Erin. Samen renden ze naar buiten. 'Heb je het draad ?' vroeg Orpheus.

'Nog niet,' zei Erin.

'Houd vast,' zei Erin.

'Wat moet ik vasthouden ?' vroeg Orpheus.

'Mijn hand,' zei Erin.

'De rode stad is van mij,' gilde de heks. 'Dat kun je zo maar niet wegnemen. Mijn lieve, lieve stad.'

'Heks, het is afgelopen,' schreeuwde Orpheus.

'Nee !' krijste de heks. 'Kom daar niet aan. Raak het niet aan !'

Daar kwamen de hyenas naar buiten lopen met het draad. De stad was nu van hen. Ze hadden het draad in hun bekken, het rode draad, en er droop rood sap vanaf. Overal waar ze kwamen was er rode sneeuw.

'Het is een teken,' zei Erin.

'Wat voor een teken,' vroeg Orpheus.

'Ik kan het niet zeggen,' zei Erin.

'Schat, je moet het zeggen,' zei Orpheus.

'Chocola,' stamelde Erin.

'Het smaakt goed,' zegt Orpheus.

'Snoep is zoet,' zegt Erin.

'Deze heks met al haar vlezen,' zuchtte Orpheus.

'Ze is dood, heus,' zegt Erin. 'De hyenas hebben haar ...'

'Aan stukken gereten ?' vroeg Orpheus.

'Nee, veel erger,' zei Erin.

'Ik wil het niet weten,' zegt Orpheus.

'Je moet het weten,' roept Erin.

'Zeg me dat het niet zo is,' zegt Orpheus, nadat ze het hem had verteld. 'Hebben ze dat echt gedaan ? Dat had ik niet verwacht.'

'Ja, ze hebben haar echt in snoep veranderd,' zei Erin.

'En wie gaat haar opeten ?' vraagt Orpheus.

'De rode stad,' zegt Erin.

'Het snoep is goed,' zegt Orpheus.

Erin knikt. 'Ja,' zegt ze. 'Snoep is zoet.'

De dag erna sneeuwde het snoep, en de kinderen aten hun buikjes vol. Zo vol dat ze 's avonds niet bij het avondeten konden zijn. Ze moesten het vlees laten staan voor de hyena's, en lusten sinds die dag geen vlees of vis meer.

'Laat het over aan de hyena's,' werd er altijd gezegd. 'De snoep is voor de kinderen.'

De Giechelaar

Ze giechelde altijd als ze hem zag. Ze was hem aan het schminken voor de voorstelling. Zijn ouders kwamen ook. 'Is dat je nieuwe vriendin ?' vroegen ze toen ze haar zagen. Hij knikte. 'Ze heeft brede heupen,' zei z'n moeder.

Na de voorstelling nam het meisje hem apart. 'We gaan morgen naar je ouders,' zei ze. Dat stelde ze zo vast. Hij had niets in te brengen. Het was bijna weekend. Geen school, en geen voorstellingen.

Toen ze het weekend bij zijn ouders waren was zijn tante er ook. Ook zijn tante zei dat ze hele brede heupen had.

Het gegiechel werd eigenlijk alleen maar erger. Ze gaf hem een beertje waarop geschreven stond : 'friends forever', maar na een paar dagen wilde ze het terug, omdat ze het zo'n leuk ding vond. En ze giechelde.

Hij noemde haar 'de giechelaar'. Altijd voor de voorstellingen schminkte ze hem op, en ze giechelde dan altijd. Iemand besloot eens de voorstelling te filmen, en toen giechelde ze ook. De video banden werden verkocht, en ze kreeg er geld voor, en ze giechelde. Hij kreeg geen geld, want hij had slechts een bijrol. Het was een project van school. Ze gingen er stad en land voor af. In een grote bus gingen ze door het hele land. Hij leerde zo wel de wereld kennen. Hij herinnerde zich hoe ze elkaar door de voorstellingen beter leerden kennen. Eens waren ze in de bus, en hij dacht eraan dat zij wel zijn vriendin kon worden. Het was alsof hij haar hoorde giechelen in zijn hoofd, en hij lachte. Maar sinds ze zijn vriendin daadwerkelijk was lachte hij steeds minder om haar giechelen.

Hij vroeg zich af waarom ze altijd zo giechelde. Op een dag besloot hij het haar te vragen. Ze giechelde. Hij had het wel verwacht, maar ze gaf geen antwoord. Zo was ze wel vaker.

De giechelaar reed op zijn fiets door de straten. Hij had een hele lange baard. Hij verkocht oude rotzooi. Als het

hem lukte iets te verkopen dan giechelde hij altijd. Dat verhaal had hij eens in een boek gelezen en hij dacht er weer aan. Hij besloot het boek nog eens te lezen.

Ze giechelde eigenlijk zoveel dat het heel moelijk was haar beter leren te kennen. Het was als een afweer mechanisme. Hij kon niet tot haar doordringen. Hij zei tegen haar dat hij een boek over de giechelaar had gelezen : 'De giechelaar reed op zijn fiets door de straten. Hij had een hele lange baard. Hij verkocht oude rotzooi. Als het hem lukte iets te verkopen dan giechelde hij altijd.'

Toen liep ze weg. 'Is dat je vriendin, die met die brede heupen ?' vroegen mensen hem weleens. 'Het is de giechelaar,' zei hij dan.

'Oh, giechelt ze zoveel dan ?' vroeg een oude vrouw hem eens. Zij begon toen ook te giechelen. Hij kon er niet om lachen. Hij vroeg zich nog steeds af wat er te giechelen was. Weer las hij het boek over de giechelaar. 'De giechelaar reed op zijn fiets door de straten. Hij had een hele lange baard. Hij verkocht oude rotzooi. Als het hem lukte iets te verkopen dan giechelde hij altijd.' Hij moest

dan altijd aan haar denken, maar het scheen dat ze ook anderen aan het giechelen maakte.

'Wat probeer je mij eigenlijk te verkopen ?' vroeg hij eens aan haar. Ze giechelde en rende weg. Hij kon geen goed hoogte van haar krijgen. 'Moet ik me beledigd voelen ?' vroeg hij toen hij weer bij haar was. 'Zit mijn neus soms scheef, of zit mijn haar niet goed ?'

'Nee, dat is het niet,' zei ze giechelend.
'Maar wat dan ?' vroeg hij. 'Je maakt me gek met dat gegiechel van je.'

Op een dag besloot hij haar een lange brief te schrijven. Al zijn frustraties stonden er in, en ook weer de vraag waarom ze altijd zo giechelde, want daar had hij nog steeds geen antwoord op.

Ze schreef niet terug. Hij vond haar oppervlakkig. Haar wegdoen wilde hij ook niet. Hij besloot haar maar gewoon te accepteren zoals ze was. Nog vaak dacht hij terug aan het boek van de giechelaar. 'Zo is ze nu eenmaal,' zei hij

dan tegen zichzelf. 'Het had veel erger gekund. Er zijn vrouwen die altijd klagen.'

Op een dag liepen ze hand in hand in de stad. Hij kocht een ijsje voor haar, en ze giechelde. Mensen keken vaak naar haar als ze zo giechelde, en sommigen giechelden dan ook. Dat waren altijd vrouwen. Ook begonnen steeds meer mensen haar te herkennen op straat. Zij was één van de hoofdrolspelers van de voorstelling. De video ervan werd goed verkocht.

'Ben jij niet dat meisje van die film genaamd 'de giechelaar' ?' vroeg iemand haar eens op straat. 'Ja, dat ben ik,' giechelde ze. Hem herkenden ze vaak niet, want hij speelde slechts een bijrol, als een soort figurant. 'Hij vindt het nooit zo leuk als ik giechel,' zei ze, terwijl ze op hem wees. 'Hij wil na de voorstelling alles zo snel mogelijk weer vergeten, maar bij mij gaat het giechelen gewoon door. Er is voor mij geen verschil tussen de voorstelling en na de voorstelling.'

Hij haatte de school en hij haatte de voorstelling. Hij wilde er nooit over nadenken. Hij voelde zich een marionet, en

was altijd blij als het weer afgelopen was. Hij zag altijd uit naar de vakanties, alleen te zijn met haar. Ze was dan wel een giechelaar, maar het meest werd er altijd gegiecheld in de voorstellingen.

'Ik kan het niet uitleggen,' zei hij op een dag. Ze woonden inmiddels samen. 'Altijd maar dat gegiechel. Ik krijg eigenlijk nooit school en die voorstellingen uit m'n kop. Ik heb echt het gevoel alsof ik stapelgek word.'

'Maar ja, je weet dat het verplicht is,' zei ze. 'School is nu eenmaal belangrijk, en de voorstellingen zijn ervoor om het leuk te houden.'

'Ja, heel leuk,' zei hij sarcastisch.

'De giechelaar, een oude man in zijn schuit, met een baard zo lang, en altijd giechelt hij. Je kunt hem niets vertellen of hij giechelt, en vooral als hij zijn oude rotzooi bij je kwijt kan. De giechelaar, eens kocht ik een gouden beeldje van hem, zo mooi. En ik dacht : hoe is dat tussen die oude rotzooi terecht gekomen ? Dat dachten mensen altijd als ze iets van hem kochten. Telkens weer kreeg hij het voor

elkaar. De giechelaar, met zijn boot door de nacht, oude lampen verkopende aan de steden, en dan is er zulk een prachtige en verzachtende gloed. Ja, ook medicijnen verkoopt hij, al jaren over datum, maar het werkt goed, zo goed. Want hij is de giechelaar, hij praat alles goed, hij laat hen allemaal in hem geloven, de giechelaar, de giechelaar, als je slapen moet.'

'De giechelaar, de giechelaar, een slaaplied voor de nacht, de giechelaar, de giechelaar, een schuit vol met rotzooi, allemaal afgedankte spullen, maar het glijdt zo het water in, en vindt zijn weg, zijn weg. De giechelaar, de giechelaar, met zijn lange baard op de fiets, om rotzooi te verkopen, voor mensen die dromen, en dan giechelt hij. De giechelaar, de giechelaar, een boot vol met troep, en steden vol onzin, de giechelaar, de giechelaar, hij is de veerman van het verdriet, over rivieren en zeeen, je kan het zo gek niet bedenken, de giechelaar, de giechelaar, voor als je slapen moet.'

Hij werd er vroeger altijd zo rustig van als zijn oma uit het boek van de giechelaar voorlas. Hij las het ook aan haar voor, en langzaam viel ze in slaap. Eindelijk was het

gegiechel er even niet meer, maar het zou de dag erna gewoon weer verder gaan.

Einde

De Giechelaar II

Ik was in het bos op een open vlakte tussen de bomen, zanderig en met allerlei grassen, en ik hoorde iemand giechelen in de verte. Het was de giechelaar, een oude man met een baard,. Ik kende hem wel. Hij kwam weleens in de stad met zijn fiets om oude rommel te verkopen. Je kon het zo gek niet bedenken of hij verkocht het wel, en het waren altijd mooie spullen. Hij giechelde altijd. Hij had een prachtig landgoed in het bos, een prachtig huis, zeg maar gerust villa, maar op zijn manier.

Het was eigenlijk een soort hut. Hoe hij eraan kwam was een raadsel. Of misschien had hij het zelf gebouwd, maar het deed niet onder voor het prachtigste paleis. Misschien dat hij daarom altijd zo giechelde. Hij liet mij het terrein zien, en grote voorraden oude spullen. Het was beter dan allerlei moderne troep die ze in de stad verkochten. Deze man was een genie. Hij was uitvinder. Hij kon alles recyclen tot de prachtigste spullen die ook nog eens nuttig waren. Ik ging graag winkelen bij de giechelaar.

De giechelaar, de giechelaar, een stralend geluk,
De giechelaar, de giechelaar, een oude lamp onder de mensen,
Opdat de goede geschiedenis nooit verloren zou gaan.
En daarom giechelt hij, giechelt hij,
Hij is de veerman van het verdriet.

En wat kost het dan, wat kost het dan ?
Het kost je je leven, je ziel en je hart,
Maar van geluk zul je beven,
De giechelaar, de giechelaar, een boot door de nacht,
Een boot vol met vergeten pracht.

De giechelaar, de giechelaar, wat zou een mens nog wensen,
De giechelaar, de giechelaar, nog zoveel te ontdekken,
als een gids door de nacht,
een boot door de nacht.

Niemand begrijpt hem waarom hij zo giechelt,
Zijn vrouw is een standbeeld,
die hij eens in het bos vond,

en sinds toen giechelde hij.

Hij liet mij het standbeeld zien,
En ik herkende het beeld,
Het was het beeld van een meisje wat ik zo lang niet had gezien.

En hij zei tegen mij : Je mag het wel hebben,
En ik heb het beeld toen mee naar huis genomen.
Nu staat het op het zolder.
Sindsdien giechelde de giechelaar meer dan ooit tevoren,
Want weer had hij zijn rotzooi en verhalen aan iemand kwijtgekunt.

Ik dacht dat ik door het beeld ook zou gaan giechelen,
maar ik giechelde niet.
Ik werd steeds stiller. En ik dacht : Maar is dit niet zijn vrouw ?
Wil hij zijn vrouw dan niet terug ?
En ik vroeg het aan hem, en hij zei : Nee, het is voor jou.
En hij giechelde.
Het was een heel mooi beeld, het mooiste beeld wat ik ooit had gezien.

En ik begon te dromen over het beeld.
En in mijn dromen giechelde zij altijd.

Maar ik kon niet giechelen.
En eigenlijk wilde ik ook niet giechelen.
Er waren al genoeg giechelaars.
Wel gaf het beeld mij grote vreugde en groot geluk,
Al was dat vaak maar voor even,
En daarom ging ik vaak naar de giechelaar toe,
Opdat het geluk zou nadreunen.

Wat een man, die giechelaar,
Met zijn lange baard op zijn fiets,
En zoveel rommel,
Wat mensen wel niet allemaal weggooien,
Wat hij wel niet allemaal terugvindt wat verloren is geraakt,
Een meestervinder is hij,
En ook mij heeft hij gevonden.

De Giechelaar III

De giechelaar nam hen allen op zijn boot mee naar een eiland. Hij was een oude man met een lange baard, en hij leerde hen hoe ze nog wat konden maken van oude rommel. Hier kregen ze een nieuw leven, op het eiland, en de giechelaar giechelde.

En de mensen droomden en konden hun oude leven verlaten, en wat er nog overgebleven was aan oude rommel konden ze gebruiken en nuttig maken. Ze konden er nieuwe dingen van maken, zoals de giechelaar het hen leerde. En ze bouwden oerwouds steden op het eiland, en de giechelaar ging met zijn boot over de grachten. Met een lange staf raakte hij de bodem, en zo duwde hij het schip voort. En hij bleef zijn oude rommel verkopen, en hij bleef zijn verhalen vertellen.

Want verhalen vertellen, dat kon hij. Je kon het zo gek niet bedenken.

Hij was als Noach op zijn schip, en oude rommel was zijn specialiteit. Dat haalde hij overal en nergens van vandaan, van onder de grond, of God mag 't weten. Wat mensen allemaal wel niet achterlaten. Hij was een meestervinder, en een meesterlijke uitvinder. Niets gooide hij weg. Alles was bruikbaar, ook al was het voor brandstof of meststof. Ook metselde hij met troep. Niemand kende zijn geheim. Hij kon alles weer mooi maken. Waar mensen klaagden over rommel, daar giechelde hij, en maakte er wat moois van. Je kon het zo gek niet bedenken. Giechelen, veel giechelen, dat was wat hij deed. Je kon hem van ver horen aankomen. Ook had hij allerlei bellen op zijn fiets, en toeters. Hij liet het duidelijk merken als hij kwam. Er hing ook van alles aan zijn fiets, wat lawaai maakte. Potten en pannen, lepels, vorken en messen, van alles. Hoe hij ermee kon fietsen was een raadsel, maar alles ging goed. Hij giechelde zich door alles een weg heen. Op een dag zat de politie achter hem aan, maar daar had hij ook weer allerlei dingen voor. Ze konden niet tegen zijn uitvindingen op, en

moesten het onderspit delven. Sindsdien probeerden ze het nooit meer, want de giechelaar was de ware politie. Ook probeerden ze hem eens naar een ziekenhuis te trekken, maar ook daar had hij zijn apparaten voor, en ze konden het niet meer navertellen. Nee, met de giechelaar viel niet te sollen.

Het enige waar hij bang voor was waren olifantenslurven, maar ja, die waren daar niet. Wel had hij er soms weleens nachtmerries over, maar toch werd hij altijd giechelend wakker. Ze konden hem niet kapot krijgen. Op een dag probeerden ze hem naar een school te trekken, maar ook daar had hij zijn apparaatjes voor. Hij was immers de meester uitvinder, en hij vond ook zijn eigen school uit, dus daar eindigden ze, bij hem in de schoolbanken, want ze moesten niet denken dat er te sollen viel met de giechelaar. En dan gaf hij ze giechelend les, een koekje van eigen deeg. Hij was niet voor een gat te vangen, en hij was van alle markten thuis.

Ik denk nog vaak aan hem terug, maar dan giechel ik niet. Neen. Dat laat ik aan de giechelaar over. Het is een klein beeldje op de televisie als een aandenken, en als ik op een

knopje druk dan giechelt hij even, maar dan is het ook weer snel voorbij. Ik laat het weleens aan kinderen zien, en ze vinden het prachtig. Ze vragen me weleens hoe ik aan het beeldje kwam. Eens op de rommelmarkt gevonden. Wat mensen wel niet allemaal weggooien.

'Ik heb het op de televisie gezien,' zei een jongetje. 'Wat prachtig dat je zo'n ding hebt.'

'Oh, je hebt dat programma op de televisie gezien van de giechelaar ?' vroeg ik.

Het jongetje knikte.

'Ja,' zei ik, 'en ik had er vroeger een boek van. Het boek heb ik niet meer, en verkopen ze ook niet meer, maar op de rommelmarkt heb ik het beeldje gevonden. Wat mensen tegenwoordig wel niet allemaal wegdoen. Maar goed, nu het boek nog.'

'Oma heeft het boek,' zei het jongetje.

'Nee,' zei ik. 'Oma heeft het boek niet. Je oma kletst maar wat. Het boek wordt niet meer verkocht, en ..... het wordt niet meer gemaakt .... en .... het wordt niet meer gelezen .... en ..... niemand heeft het nog, want het zijn hele speciale boeken die vroeger werden gemaakt, die langzaam in het niets oplossen. Je moet dus niet te langzaam zijn met lezen.'

'Je kletst maar wat,' zei het jongetje. 'Mijn oma heeft het boek wel, van vroeger.'

'Zeker een vervalsing,' zei ik.

'Het zijn mooie verhalen,' zei het jongetje, 'net zoals de verhalen op de televisie.'

'Okay, geluk ermee,' zei ik. Ik was jaloers. Ik wilde het boek ook.

'Misschien wil mijn oma het boek wel ruilen voor het beeldje,' zei het jongetje.

'Je oma kan de pot op,' zei ik.

Hoe dan ook was de giechelaar een echte kinderheld, maar ook voor volwassenen, juist ook voor volwassenen. Ik wilde het boek ook, vervalsing of niet. Trouwens dat van die boeken die in het niets oplossen was maar verzonnen. Ik was gewoon kwaad op dat jongetje en zijn oma. Ik had het gevoel alsof we tegen elkaar aan het opscheppen waren. Misschien was het jongetje ook wel dingen aan het verzinnen, maar ik ging toch extra kijken op de rommelmarkten. Toen ik vele jaren later een boek van de giechelaar vond was ik door het dolle heen. Wat mensen toch wel niet allemaal wegdoen tegenwoordig. Ik kocht het direct. Ik bladerde er in, en het waren dezelfde verhalen als vroeger op de televisie.

Ik las en las, en droomde helemaal weg. Het leek wel alsof ik de giechelaar weer hoorde giechelen. Die nacht sliep ik heerlijk. Toen ik wakker werd was ik nog steeds in vervoering, alsof ik dronken was. Nu had ik het boek en het beeldje. Boek, beeldje, boek, beeldje, boek, zo ging het de hele tijd in mijn hoofd. Ik was geobsedeerd.

Mijn obsessie begon heel extreem te worden, maar ik werd geen giechelaar. Nee, dat liet ik aan de giechelaar over. Ik was echt zo'n kijker, zo iemand die altijd naar voetballen keek, maar zelf geen bal aanraakte. Maar de giechelaar raakte mij aan. Het was alsof de bal dwars door de televisie was geschoten, en ik was niet meer dezelfde. Ik was bijna als een dronken gek. Hoe kon iemand toch zo in de ban zijn van een jeugd serie ? De giechelaar, de giechelaar, zo ging het altijd door mijn hoofd heen.

Nu wilde ik ook nog muziek van de giechelaar, en de video banden van de giechelaar. Ik was niet meer te stoppen. Mensen dachten : 'Waar is die jongen toch mee bezig ?' Ook mijn vrouw vond het wel welletjes, want ik was altijd maar met de giechelaar bezig, en niet meer met haar. Dat vond ze vervelend, en dat kon ik me voorstellen. Eigenlijk zou ik het virus wel op haar willen overbrengen, maar ze was koud als ijs. Ik was misschien met de verkeerde getrouwd, maar ik wilde haar ook niet wegdoen. God, als zij toch zou kunnen giechelen als de giechelaar, dan zou er weer wat leven in de brouwerij komen, maar ze was saai en klaagde altijd. Ze had altijd op alles wel wat aan te merken. Ik kon het nooit goeddoen. Maar ja, de

giechelaar inspireerde mij om er toch nog wat van te maken.

Wat een man, die giechelaar, en wat een baard, zo lang. Daar zou je een toren mee kunnen opklimmen of een berg. Wat een man, die giechelaar, en wat een boek, wat een verhalen. Ik kan er wel uren over praten, maar mijn vrouw vond mij vervelend. Allemaal mooie woorden vond ze het, waar we geen sikkepit aan hadden. 'Dat staat daar maar te kletsen en obsessief te doen,' zei ze altijd. En ze vroeg me altijd wat ik haar probeerde te verkopen. 'De giechelaar misschien ?' zei ik dan altijd. Ze werd stapelgek van mij en 'die giechelaar'. Ze vond het allemaal maar achterlijk. 'Doe maar eens wat aan de tuin,' zei ze altijd. 'Het is daar zo'n zootje.'

'Nee,' zei ik dan. 'Het is het oerwoud van de giechelaar. Het moet lekker wild blijven.'

Toen bood ze haar excuses aan, en zei ze dat ik ook wel gelijk had, en dat ze zich niet zo moest aanstellen. Ze gaf toe dat ze jaloers was, omdat al mijn aandacht naar de giechelaar ging. De giechelaar boeide haar gewoon niet.

Daar was ze te netjes voor, en Liesje mocht niet vies worden. Ik zou wel met haar een moddergevecht willen hebben, in plaats van onze wekelijkse kussengevechten. Maar dat vond ze te ver gaan. Sneeuwballengevecht was wat nog net kon. Dat hadden we wel vaak gedaan. Maar nee, ze mocht niet vies worden. Ze was als een porseleinen vaas. Ik vond het wel jammer. Het had zo mooi kunnen zijn.

'Waarom niet gewoon normaal zijn ?' vroeg ze me weleens. Ik hief dan altijd mijn schouders op. Ik wilde wat avontuur in mijn leven. Op een dag zette ze mij voor de keuze. Ik moest kiezen tussen haar en de giechelaar. Mijn keuze was natuurlijk snel gemaakt. Ik koos voor de giechelaar, en toen ging ze met zes wollen dekens achter de muziek aan. Ze heeft haar spullen gepakt en vertrok. Ik heb nog nooit in mijn leven zo gegiecheld, want ze was een blok aan mijn been. Soms belde ze me nog weleens op, en ik nam altijd op zeggende : 'Met de giechelaar.' Dat vond ze niet leuk. Ze wilde er niets meer over horen, maar ze was in ieder geval weg. 'Waarom bel je me nog ?' vroeg ik.

'Nou ja, toch voor de geschiedenis,' zei ze. 'We hebben samen veel meegemaakt.'

'Dat is waar,' zei ik dan.

'Ik kan wel gewoon de weekeinden komen,' zei ze. 'Dan kan ik het nog wel volhouden met die giechelaar. Door de weeks ben ik weg.'

'Goed,' zei ik. 'Dan kom jij maar lekker met de weekeinden. De giechelaar giechelt zich er wel doorheen.'

En zo gebeurde het. Maar vaak was dat haar ook al teveel. Zodra ze binnenstapte zei ze vaak : 'Weer die giechelaar.'

En zo werden de weekeinden met haar ook steeds korter, totdat ze maar een uurtje per week kwam, even op visite, om toch nog contact te houden. Ik probeerde me dan ook zoveel mogelijk te gedragen. Ook het uurtje werd steeds korter, totdat het nog maar een minuut was. Ze kon gewoon niet met mij leven. Telefoon ging op een gegeven moment ook niet meer. Toen gingen we maar brieven schrijven, ellenlange brieven over van alles en nog wat. Ik

kon me redelijk inhouden, en uiteindelijk beviel dit me wel. Ik hield haar toch zo nog op zekere afstand, maar ook weer niet teveel en te ver. Ik had haar nu op de juiste plaats, daar waar ze niet tussen mij en de giechelaar in kon komen. Ik was echt een fanatieke fan van de giechelaar, en had alles voor de giechelaar opgegeven, mijn hele ziel en zaligheid, en hij verloste mij van het blok aan mijn been. Voor mij was de giechelaar het beste ziekenhuis, het beste medicijn, ook al was het al vele jaren na datum. Het leek wel alsof het daardoor zelfs beter was. Bij de giechelaar was alles over datum. Ook mijn vrouw was over datum, maar nu was het beter dan ooit. Door brieven hadden we elkaar gevonden. Het was het werk van de giechelaar.

Einde

De Joegoslavische Kettingbrieven

Met een kettingbrief is het altijd het geval dat mensen de brief naar een aantal mensen moeten doorsturen en er wordt dan geluk of geld beloofd, en vaak wordt er ook ongeluk voorspelt voor hen die de ketting zouden breken. Aan deze invloeden is de kettingbrief dus onderhevig. Een ieder die de kettingbrief dus ontvangt en doorstuurt kan daar dus heel makkelijk veranderingen in aanbrengen, dingen toevoegen en dingen weglaten, zodat de oorspronkelijke boodschap in de kettingbrief zich geheel kan gaan vervormen, en er verschillende versies zijn. Maar wat is het risico daarvan, want is dit ook niet een soort verbreken van de ketting ?

Sommige versies zullen het niet overleven, terwijl andere versies het dan weer wel overleven. Dit maakt het onderwerp 'de kettingbrief' dus een interessant onderwerp voor onderzoek. In de volgende verhalen weten we dus eigenlijk niet in welk stadium de kettingbrief zich bevindt. Het zijn Joegoslavische kettingbrieven geschreven tijdens de Joegoslavische oorlog. De namen, adressen, beloftes en

bedreigingen zijn weggelaten. Alleen het verhaal is overgebleven. Bij het lezen van de kettingbrief mag je je ook afvragen : in hoeverre is het leven niet één grote kettingbrief ? En waartoe was de kettingbrief uitgezonden ? Om met dwang aandacht te vragen voor de noodsituatie in Joegoslavië ? De verhalen van de kettingbrieven gingen zelfs over de grenzen van Joegoslavië heen, en werden dus ook in andere talen vertaald. Of waren er andere motieven in het spel ? Mysterie.

Wie de verhalen heeft geschreven is onbekend. Sommigen beweerden dat geestelijken van Joegoslavië ze schreven om de bevolking moed in te spreken of wat afleiding te bezorgen, terwijl weer anderen beweerden dat ze door Joegoslavische soldaten of buitenlandse soldaten die daar werkten waren geschreven om er doorheen te komen. En zo ontstonden de Joegoslavische kettingbrieven die er uiteindelijk voor zorgden dat de oorlogen werden beëindigd. Omdat na de oorlog de Joegoslavische kettingbrieven langzaam verdwenen heb ik ze verzameld en opgetekend opdat ze bewaard zouden blijven, want ze waren inmiddels medicinaal gebleken.

Sommigen van deze kettingbrieven uit Joegoslavië waren al vrijwel uitgestorven. Eén zo'n kettingbrief vond ik terug in een afgelegen museum ergens in Ethiopië en kon ik overkopen voor veel geld. Een andere kettingbrief heb ik opgekocht vanuit een soortgelijk museum uit Rusland. Ook werden laatste exemplaren van bepaalde Joegoslavische kettingbrieven bewaard en bewaakt door stijfkoppige bejaarden waarmee ik eerst over en weer moest discussiëren over hoe belangrijk deze brieven en verhalen waren voor het algemeen welzijn van het volk. Maar ja, met een beetje ervaring als literair wetenschapper weet ik het dan uiteindelijk toch voor elkaar te krijgen, en het resultaat is dit boek.

Maar nu wil het voorval dat dit voorwoord ook eens een Joegoslavische kettingbrief scheen te zijn, als één van de verhalen die de monniken of soldaten van Joegoslavië in de oorlog schreven, dus nu weten we nog niks. Er kan tussentijds van alles mee gebeurd zijn, Jan en alleman kunnen er dingen aan hebben toegevoegd, maar we moeten het er maar mee doen. Het herinnert ons in ieder

geval terug aan het tijdperk van de Joegoslavische kettingbrieven.

De Joegoslavische Kettingbrief

Pas op met wat je doet of denkt.

Is het je weleens opgevallen dat heel veel mensen denken dat ze het altijd beter weten dan de ander, en dat eigenlijk onze hele samenleving hierop is gebouwd ? Groepen werken zo, organisaties en ook landen. Zij weten het beter.
Het merkwaardige is dus dat we dit in elke cultuur tegenkomen, en dat ze allemaal iets anders zeggen, dus wie weet het nu echt beter ?
Het antwoord is : Het zijn allemaal spelletjes die de mens speelt, hele gevaarlijke spelletjes, want de lucht zit vol met onzichtbare parasieten die op een andere frequentie zitten zodat de mens ze NIET kan zien, maar die er dus WEL zijn, en ze houden ervan mensen tegen elkaar op te stoken.
Ze leven namelijk van BLOED. Daarom moeten we oppassen met iedere gedachte en elk woord, want ze hebben het op ons gemunt en ze komen gecamoufleerd.
Een gewaarschuwd mens telt voor twee.

Er is dus een geestelijke oorlog gaande. Hier is een verhaal tijdens de Joegoslavische oorlog in de 90-er jaren waarin deze twee oorlogen elkaar kruisten. Het ging om een Joegoslavische kettingbrief. Met een kettingbrief is het altijd het geval dat mensen de brief naar een aantal mensen moeten doorsturen en er wordt dan geluk of geld beloofd, en vaak wordt er ook ongeluk voorspelt voor hen die de ketting zouden breken. Aan deze invloeden is de kettingbrief dus onderhevig. Een ieder die de kettingbrief dus ontvangt en doorstuurt kan daar dus heel makkelijk veranderingen in aanbrengen, dingen toevoegen en dingen weglaten, zodat de oorspronkelijke boodschap in de kettingbrief zich geheel kan gaan vervormen, en er verschillende versies zijn. Sommige versies zullen het niet overleven, terwijl andere versies het dan weer wel overleven. Dit maakt het onderwerp 'de kettingbrief' dus een interessant onderwerp voor onderzoek. In het volgende verhaal weten we dus eigenlijk niet in welk stadium de kettingbrief zich bevindt. Het is dus een Joegoslavische kettingbrief geschreven tijdens de Joegoslavische oorlog. De namen, adressen, beloftes en bedreigingen zijn weggelaten. Alleen het verhaal is overgebleven. Bij het lezen van de kettingbrief mag je je

ook afvragen : in hoeverre is het leven niet één grote kettingbrief ? En waartoe was de kettingbrief uitgezonden ? Om met dwang aandacht te vragen voor de noodsituatie in Joegoslavie ? De brief ging zelfs over de grenzen van Joegoslavie heen, werd dus ook in andere talen vertaald. Of waren er andere motieven in het spel ? Mysterie.

Als Joegoslavische 'geestelijke oorlogs-soldaat' zat hij met buitenlandse soldaten die in de Joegoslavische oorlog hadden geholpen samen in hetzelfde ziekenhuis. Hij zag ze nog zo op de grond zitten, de oorlog herbelevende, trillende, in een shock, telkens weer dezelfde flashbacks. Hij probeerde ze te kalmeren, en liet hen wat van zijn tekeningen zien. 'Daar kun je veel geld mee verdienen,' zei er eentje. Het waren zijn vrienden. Zij hadden allemaal hun leven gegeven voor een hoger doel. Eentje van hen ging naar een psychiatrische kliniek. Hij wilde hem niet alleen laten gaan, ook al ging het in die tijd al beter met hem. Hij dacht dat hij misschien ook anderen daar kon helpen. Hij ging daar naartoe uit liefde. Hij kwam daar en er waren verschillende incest slachtoffers die hij ook

probeerde te helpen. Hij was daar voor een paar weken geweest, anders zou hij er zelf aan onderdoor gaan, omdat er daar dingen gebeurden die het daglicht niet konden verdragen. Hij had het zaad gezaaid. Dat is waar hedendaagse volgelingen van het 'kruis-principe' behoren te zijn, nergens anders. Het bezoeken van de zieken, de gevangenen, de hongerigen. Dat is het pad van het kruis. Hij was hiertoe geroepen.

Wie hielp die jongens ? Wie hielp die meisjes ? Niemand. Hij omhelsde ze, en werd ervoor bestrafd door het medische personeel, die in de waan waren dat ze 'professioneel' waren. Maar die jongens en meisjes vertelden hem dat wat hij deed hen had behoed tegen zelfmoord. Nu wil het voorval dat een mevrouw hier totaal niets van wilde weten, en hier ook totaal niets van wist, en om hem een hak te zetten dan maar ging rondbazuinen dat hij in een inrichting zat en wilsonbekwaam was, en dat zijn kinderen daarom afgenomen moesten worden. Zoveel voor het helpen van oorlogsslachtoffers en incest-slachtoffers voor een paar weekjes. Diezelfde mevrouw had hij ooit eens geleerd dat mensen elkaar alleen maar van onderen konden helpen, en niet van bovenaf. En waar

zat die mevrouw die al deze dingen zei ? Hoog en droog in haar 'huisje' met zijn kinderen, niet willen weten en beseffen dat de steden en dorpen zelf al 'inrichtingen' zijn. Diezelfde mevrouw had hem ooit eens gezegd dat ze een demoon was die naar de aarde was gezonden om mensen bang te maken. Later lijdde deze mevrouw aan geheugenverlies naar eigen zeggen, en wilde haar hart niet blootleggen, vanwege het monster die het had gewaagd voor incestslachtoffers en oorlogsslachtoffers naar zo'n plaats te gaan voor een paar weken. Natuurlijk moest dat door haar nog eens extra gedramatiseerd worden, en moest ze dat eens extra bespotten.

Deze mevrouw heeft nooit navraag gedaan naar wat er gaande was, maar deed zich voor alsof ze er alles van wist. Ook wilde deze mevrouw zich nergens in verdiepen, maar anderen moesten zich wel in haar verdiepen. Demonen bestonden volgens deze mevrouw eigenlijk niet meer. Deze mevrouw zag ze niet, dus in kleuterschool taal konden die er dus ook niet zijn, ook al was de hele wereld een grote rotzooi en sprak alles zichzelf tegen. Bij deze mevrouw was het de ene keer dit en de andere keer dat.

Hij had deze mevrouw geleerd dat gedachten en woorden al snel demonen konden zijn en dat we niet zomaar mochten denken en spreken vanwege dit gevaar, maar deze mevrouw kon dat allemaal niets schelen en dacht en sprak maar alsof het een lieve lust was. Maar genoeg over deze mevrouw.

De Joegoslavische Kettingbrief II

Verraad in de steden,

vervolgde de Joegoslavische geestelijke oorlogs-soldaat,
De steden zijn inrichtingen,
Ze weten het niet,
Ze weten niet eens wat een 'inrichting' is,
Het is een scheldwoord,
Heb je er weleens gekeken ? Ben je er weleens geweest ?
Mensen die voor JOU hebben gevochten zitten daar,
Mensen die hun leven voor anderen hebben gegeven,
Mensen die ervoor hebben gezorgd dat JIJ nu veilig kan leven,
Verder zit het er vol met incest-slachtoffers, daklozen en politieke gevangenen,
Wat heb jij voor hen teruggedaan ?
Of denk je het allemaal beter te weten en ben je vergeten wat ze allemaal voor JOU hebben gedaan ?

Op dit punt begon de Joegoslavische geestelijke oorlogs-soldaat te schelden en vervloekingen uit te spreken als een oordeels-profeet,

De steden waren verdoemd in zijn ogen,
De steden waren nog wel ergere inrichtingen,
De steden waren daadwerkelijke gekkenhuizen,
Want zij hadden deze oorlogen veroorzaakt, en zij hadden ervoor gezorgd dat zoveel mensen naar zulke ziekenhuizen moesten, en dat anderen hen moesten bezoeken, omdat een mens altijd alleen maar van onderen geholpen kon worden.

Zo vervolgde de Joegoslavische geestelijke oorlogs-soldaat :

Ben JIJ de beste stuurlui die aan wal staat, die vanaf een zogenaamde veilige woning hoog en droog allemaal gemakkelijk praat over iemand anders die zijn leven in de oorlog voor jou heeft gegeven ? Zo veilig is het niet. Je bent gefopt. Je bent nog wel op een ergere plaats terecht gekomen door je gedrag, door tegen jezelf en anderen te liegen. Hier leeft misleiding op misleiding.

En zo was de tweede Joegoslavische kettingbrief nog wel erger dan de eerste. Omdat het nogal grote gevolgen zou hebben om deze kettingbrief niet door te sturen, en

mensen al in grote angst leefden vanwege de oorlog, stuurden velen hem door.

De Joegoslavische Kettingbrief III

Hij woonde met mensen in een huis die van een hele zware kerk waren.
De familie had een eigen gedeelte, maar ze deelden de badkamer.
Soms spiekten de meisjes weleens als hij de badkamer gebruikte.
Er waren gaten in de muur waar je doorheen kon kijken.
De zoon van die familie was vroeger zijn klasgenoot.
Ze hadden vaak ruzie.

De meisjes moesten zich altijd heel zedelijk kleden vanwege de zware kerk.
Ze mochten ook geen gebruik maken van lingerie.
Hij daarentegen was heel vrij, en sprak over van alles.
Maar zij waren gesloten mensen. Dat moest zo van die kerk.
Er waren een heleboel dingen die hij niet wist.

De zware kerk was erg zwaar, en ik bedoel heel zwaar.
Dingen moesten op een bepaalde manier klaargemaakt worden.

Daar mocht niet van afgeweken worden.
Anders zouden ze geloofsproblemen krijgen, en dat hadden ze veel.
Voor hen was het soms ook niet haalbaar, maar het moest.

Hij had wel medelijden met ze.
Het was alsof ze leefden met een pistool tegen hun hoofd.
Niks mocht. Alles moest.
Ze hadden eigenaardige spullen.
Ze mochten geen lingerie, maar hun meubiliar was gewoon puur lingerie,
hun stoelen, hun tafels, hun manden, allemaal met verfijnde decoratie.
Hij keek altijd zijn ogen uit als hij daar was, en dat gebeurde niet veel.
Hij kwam daar eigenlijk alleen maar met koninginnedag, want dan was de koningin op de televisie, en dat wilde hij graag zien.
Hij had geen televisie. Hij was te vrij voor een televisie.
Maar in die zware kerk moesten ze een televisie hebben.
Dat was verplicht. Alle zenders werden beheerd door hun dominees. Die waren de hele dag door op de tv.

Het was een zware kerk, zo zwaar dat er geen medeleven getoond mocht worden. Het leven was lijden, en dat had iedereen verdiend. Hij wilde ze troosten en bemoedigen, maar dat werd door hen niet geaccepteerd. Ze waren als de orthodoxe zwanen in Joegoslavische grachten. Eén verkeerde beweging of een verkeerd woord, en ze vlogen je aan. Op een keer kwam hij zijn vroegere klasgenoot tegen in het winkelcentrum, maar ze hadden alweer bijna ruzie. Het ging over poppen. In die zware kerk moesten mannen met poppen spelen. Dit was preventief, want zo zouden ze van de vrouwen afblijven. Zijn vroegere klasgenoot beschuldigde hem ervan eens zijn pop te hebben gestolen of kapot gemaakt. 'Zo lang geleden,' zei hij. 'Ik kan me dat niet meer herinneren, maar als je er echt nog zo mee zit, dan gaan we nu lekker naar een poppenwinkel, en dan koop ik een nieuwe pop voor je.' En zo gebeurde het. Hij nam de jongen mee naar een poppenzaak, en kocht voor hem een hele dure en sjieke pop, in zedelijke klederdracht. De vroegere klasgenoot was daar heel blij mee, en het was direct vrede.

Ze leefden in Joegoslavië,
Er was geen tijd voor oorlog meer,

Want de poppen marcheerden,
Elke man kreeg zijn pop,
opdat de vrouwen konden emanciperen.

De Traan van Roggemuiden

Hoofdstuk 1.

Ik was de zee van chaos overgegaan op een cruise schip. Toen de cruise de haven binnenkwam van de natuurstad en ik vanaf het schip naar beneden keek zag ik de flatgebouwen die enorm hoog waren, en beneden reden de vele auto’s. Het was een witte massa van auto’s die heen en weer reden langs de hoge gebouwen. Ik keek van een nog hoger punt, want het was een groot schip. Ik ging met de lift naar beneden, en zo kwam ik uiteindelijk met mijn koffers van het schip af. Ik nam een taxi en gaf het adres door waar ik moest wezen.

De vrouw in kwestie wachtte me al op bij haar flatgebouw, en hielp me even later mee de koffers in de lift te krijgen. We moesten heel hoog.

Uiteindelijk kwamen we op haar kamer aan. Ik was een beetje huilerig. Het was zo’n lange tocht geweest. Ze keek me aan. ‘Gaat het ?’ vroeg ze.

‘Ik ben bang voor goede mensen,’ zei ik toen.

‘Waarom ben je daar bang voor ?’ vroeg ze.

‘Ach, je begrijpt het toch niet. Ik zit nogal vreemd in elkaar, maar het komt erop neer dat goede mensen ervoor zorgen dat ik niet verder kom. Het heeft geen diepte. Het inspireert me niet. Het is verlammend. Ik ontwikkel me zo niet,’ zei ik.

‘Maar zijn dat dan wel goede mensen ?’ vroeg ze.

Ik zweeg. ‘Ander onderwerp,’ zei ik toen.

Ik kreeg een kamer naast haar kamer. Daar kwamen mijn koffers terecht en ik plofte op het bed en zat daar. Ik keek naar haar. ‘Ik ben blij met je,’ zei ik.

Het was hier rustig. Buiten was het mooi weer. Ik was nog steeds een beetje huilerig. Het was een zware tocht geweest, traumatisch. Ze stelde wat vragen over de tocht, maar ik wilde er niet over praten. Ik haalde diep adem. Ik

was opgelucht, maar het verleden zat nog te diep in me. Het had roofbouw op me gepleegd, psychisch, lichamelijk, emotioneel, en mentaal. Ik keek naar de boekenkast op mijn nieuwe kamer. Er stonden wat indianen boeken bij.

Ik was zo blij met haar. Ik keek bijna verliefd naar haar. Ik was als in een coma en probeerde eruit te komen. Er was niet veel meer van mij over door de tocht. Het verleden bleef aan me knagen, en al die vreemde schuldgevoelens. Van binnen was ik nog steeds op de zee van chaos, en ik streed met zeemonsters. Van binnen was ik nog helemaal niet aangekomen in de haven. Ik keek naar haar. Ze was een donkere vrouw. Nee, ik was nog helemaal niet in de veilige haven aangekomen. Dit was slechts een eiland, en zij was een kannibaal ofzo. Ik keek naar haar blote voeten, en naar haar rieten rokje. Ze was heel mooi. Ik keek naar haar lippen. ‘I... ik,’stamelde ik.

‘Wat wil je zeggen ?’ vroeg ze.

‘Blijf op een afstand,’ zei ik.

‘Waarom ?’ vroeg ze. ‘Heb je weer flashbacks ?’

‘Ja,’ zei ik.

Ze kende mijn situatie. Zij had me hier naartoe laten komen, had betaald voor de tocht. Zonder haar was ik hier nu niet geweest.

‘Maar je bent een kannibaal,’ zei ik toen.

Ze grinnikte. ‘Waarom denk je zo ?’ vroeg ze.

‘Daarom heb je me over laten komen,’ zei ik. ‘Ik ben gestrand op dit eiland.’

‘Pfffttt,’ zei ze toen. ‘Flashbacks ?’

‘Ja,’ zei ik.

‘Ik begrijp het,’ zei ze toen.

‘Waarom heb je een rieten rokje aan ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Ik kan toch niet naakt aan je verschijnen,’ zei ze met een glimlach.

‘Ik zou niet weten waarom niet,’ zei ik toen.

‘In ieder geval aangenaam met je kennis te maken,’ zei ze toen. ‘Je wilt de baan nog steeds ?’

‘Graag,’ zei ik. ‘Wat moest ik ook alweer doen ?’

‘Me wat gezelschap geven,’ zei ze. ‘Ik vraag niet veel.’

‘Is het gezelschap van anderen in deze natuurstad dan zo dun bezaaid ?’ vroeg ik.

Ze zuchtte. ‘Ik kan niet met ze. Ik houd ze ver van me vandaan. De mensen in deze stad zijn anders.’

‘In wat voor zin ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Nou ja, ik heb nare herinneringen van het verleden,’ zei ze. ‘We zitten in hetzelfde schuitje.’

‘Was dat hier gebeurd of ergens anders ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Ergens anders,’ zei ze. Ze wilde er niet over praten, maar zij had ook flashbacks.

Beiden hadden we moeite met sociale contacten, en beiden waren we bang om verliefd te worden.

‘Ik ben bang voor romantiek,’ zei ze, ‘en ik weet dat jij dat ook bent.’

Ik knikte.

‘Ik ben aan het goede adres denk ik,’ zei ik, ‘want met een kannibaal zal ‘t niet romantisch worden.’

Ze glimlachte.

‘Ik vind het wel mooi hoe je spreekt,’ zei ze.

Ik was in gevecht met een zeemonster. Het zenuwgif probeerde mijn hart uit te schakelen. Het was een glibberig kreng. Met mijn mes reet ik het beest aan stukken. Het

probeerde zich al binnen te dringen in mijn lichaam. Toen zwom ik naar de kust. Het was donker. Daar stond ze. Ze was zo mooi. Ze had een vissersnet. Aan het vissersnet trok ik me omhoog maar ik raakte erin verstrikt. Zij trok me toen het water uit. Ze glimlachte. Ze had mooie donkere ogen. Alles aan haar was mooi.

Ze stond voor me en ik was huilerig. ‘Flashbacks ?’ vroeg ze.

‘Ja,’ zei ik. Ze nam mij toen in haar armen. Ik kuste haar.

‘Alsjeblieft,’ zei ik. ‘Ik kan niet meer verder. Het heeft me opgebroken.’

‘Je bent aan land nu,’ zei ze. Ik raakte met haar in een worsteling, en we rolden op het bed.

‘Ik ben zo moe,’ zei ik.

‘Ga dan wat slapen,’ zei ze. ‘Het is goed. Je hebt een lange tocht gemaakt.’

Hoofdstuk 2.

Toen ik die ochtend wakker werd was ik nog steeds moe. Zij sliep nog. Ik ben toen naar buiten gegaan om de natuur op te zoeken. Ik wilde naar het bos. Ik had me laten vertellen dat de natuurstad de stad van de braven was, en ik was er zeker van dat de braven niets bereikten. Onder de grond zouden de rebellen leven en de wilden, en daar zou je kunnen komen door een tunnel in het bos die onder de grond ging. Maar het was nogal een gedoe. Er was zware bewaking daar.

Toen ik terugkwam was ze inmiddels ontwaakt. Ik vertelde haar waar ik was geweest. Ze zei toen dat er een veel kortere weg onder de grond was. Dan zouden we onder de flat moeten gaan, langs het kelderpad. Daar was aan het einde een trappetje naar beneden, en dan kwam je eerst langs een ondergrondse parkeerplaats, en als je dan nog dieper het trappetje afging, dan kwam je in de ondergrondse wereld. Dan moest je eerst een riviertje

overzwemmen en dan kwam je in de ondergrondse wildernis waar allerlei wilde stammen leefden.

Ze zei dat het beter was er gewoon boeken over te lezen. Die stonden wel in de boekenkast, en dat was veel veiliger. ‘s Nachts had ik nachtmerries over de ondergrondse wereld. Hier kwam zij ook vandaan. Ze wilde er alleen niet over praten. Daarom moest ik het met de boeken doen, en met mijn nachtmerries.

Hij las over een ondergrondse religie genaamd Ocht, die de god Tirgo diende. De middelaars tussen Tirgo en de mensen waren de zwarte ruiters, die heel wreed en wraakzuchtig konden zijn. Het gebied onder de grond heette Roggemuiden. Dat was eerst een industrie-terrein, maar daarachter lag de wildernis. Daar lagen dan nog wel steden tussen. Ergens in de wildernis was er het geheimenis van de traan van Roggemuiden, de traan van het terugkeren naar het verleden, de traan van de flashbacks, van het terugkeren naar Roggemuiden. Er waren daar ook robotten, maar hoe dieper je in de wildernis ging, hoe minder er van die robotten waren. Het waren machines die alles in de gaten hielden. Hij zag de

traan van Roggemuiden in haar ogen. Hij had het gevoel dat hij ook die traan had.

Ze vertelde dat ze trauma's had overgehouden van de robotten. Ze zei dat ze door hen was verkracht, en waardoor ze nu vele gezichten had. Hij was door haar geveld, en kon niet meer opstaan, door de verhalen die ze vertelde. Hij kon alleen nog maar lezen. Hij voelde zich zwak, als gestoken door een vreemde vlieg. Het heilige boek van de religie van Ocht stond ook in de boekenkast. Het boek was genaamd de Muran. Zij groeide op in die religie, en wist er alles van. Het viel hem op dat ze er meer over sprak. Hij begon te lezen in het boek en stotterde sindsdien. De zwarte ruiters waren veel aan het woord in het boek. Zij waren genaamd de Sparto's. Het was een strenge patriarchische religie gebracht door de profeet Haman.

Hij las de verzen en ze waren bloedmooi. Hij viel ervoor, ook al was zij van de religie gevlucht. Hij kon haar wel een beetje begrijpen. Het was waarschijnlijk te dichtbij gekomen. Deze religie was potentieel gevaarlijk en moest op afstand gehouden worden. Ze zag het als haar plicht om

hem er meer over te vertellen, ook al was dat zwaar voor haar. Al snel las hij veel minder mooie verzen, over vrouwen-onderdrukking. De profeet Haman werd vereerd door het onderdrukken van vrouwen. Vrouwen waren van een lagere scheppingsorde inde religie van Ocht, en zo werd dat ook in de Muran beschreven. Donkere vrouwen waren van een hoger ras dan blanke vrouwen in deze religie. De Sparto's droegen de vlag van Israel, maar het was niet Israel. Het was Amalek. Zij beschouwden de vlag niet als de vlag van Israel.

De leiders van de religie van Ocht, van het Hamanitische volk, waren de patrijzen. Zij predikten de leer van de religie. Ook spraken zij recht. In de Munan stond het verhaal van de witte vrouw en de zwarte slang. De zwarte slang bedreigde de witte vrouw, en de witte vrouw wilde haar leven niet verliezen en liet zich daarom omkopen. Daarom werd de witte vrouw als aanstichtster van de zonde beschouwd, en daarom is zij van het laagste ras, volgens de religie. Zij werd zwarte slangen dienares genoemd. De zwarte slang is het kwaad in de religie, als de duivel.

Toen de witte vrouw zich had laten omkopen door de zwarte slang ontstond de boze paradijstuin. Serves, één van de patriarchen, is toen uit de tuin weggevlucht. Buiten de boze paradijstuin was groot lijden en grote duisternis. Hij ging toen een berg op, de berg van chaos, om zo op zoek te gaan naar de traan van Roggemuiden om de vloek te verbreken. Uiteindelijk vond hij de traan en werd een patriarch van de religie van Ocht. Het wilde niet zeggen dat witte vrouwen zich niet mochten aansluiten bij de religie van Ocht. Er waren vele witte vrouwen in de religie, en zij waren boetelingen. Zij moesten kaalgeschoren worden. Zij waren de laagste kaste van de religie. Zij die voldoende boete hadden gedaan mochten een hoofddoek dragen. Zij die lang genoeg een hoofddoek hadden gedragen mochten hun haar weer laten zien, maar ze moesten een rode stip tussen hun wenkbrauwen dragen. Vele witte vrouwen voegden zich bij de religie puur uit angst om anders vervolgd te worden.

Hij had weer het gevoel alsof hij de natuurstad binnenging, en hij was heel hoog. Hij zweefde rond op een arend, een visarend, de vogel van de tovenaar. Hij zag de witte auto’s heen en weer gaan beneden tussen de hoge

flatgebouwen. Het waren wolkenkrabbers. Hij was heel hoog. Toen keek hij naar haar, naar deze donkere vrouw. Hij feliciteerde haar dat ze uit de religie van Ocht had kunnen ontsnappen. Ze glimlachte.

Hij kreeg een huisje in de stad, een flatwoning. Zij woonde boven hem. Op een gegeven moment was ze slechts zijn bovenbuurvrouw. Telkens had hij weer het gevoel alsof hij opnieuw de stad binnenkwam, en dan was hij weer bij haar. Het waren zijn herinneringen, en die werden steeds rijker en voller. Hij voelde zich steeds warmer van binnen.

Hij moest hier zijn eigen leven opbouwen. Soms kwam hij haar tegen in de winkel, en dan groetten ze elkaar even, en spraken even kort met elkaar, als buren. ‘Hemeltjes,’ zei ze vaak, als hij haar weer iets vertelde.

Op een dag toen ze elkaar in de winkel tegenkwamen hadden ze een heel lang gesprek. Ze vertelde hem over een nog verschrikkelijkere religie nog dieper onder de grond in Roggemuiden, in een woest gebied genaamd Alnilam. De Alnilamse mannen waren vaak heel gespierd en hadden

lange haren, en waren zeer barbaars. Ze vochten om vrouwen die verhandeld werden. Vrouwen waren in die religie daadwerkelijk slaven. Nog dieper onder de grond zouden deze vrouwen een eigen rijk hebben, waar ze gevlucht waren van deze religie. Zij waren dus nog dieper gegaan in plaats van naar boven. Nog dieper onder de grond, onder Alnilam, leefden de amazones. Ze zijn toen samen naar huis gelopen, en bij haar huis gekomen kreeg hij wat boeken erover mee. Hij ging niet naar binnen maar bleef gewoon bij haar deur staan, terwijl zij de boeken voor hem pakte. Hij was nu wel nieuwsgierig geworden. Hij ging direct toen naar zijn eigen huis en begon de boeken ijverig te lezen. Ook de vrouwen droegen de traan van Roggemuiden. Hij raakte meer en meer geinteresseerd in de amazones, de vrijgevochten vrouwen van dat soort religies, die dus gevlucht waren en hun eigen koninkrijk hadden gebouwd. Hij zou ze wel willen bezoeken, maar zij had hem verteld dat dat veel te gevaarlijk was. Ze vertrouwden geen mannen, en het zou verkeerd voor hem aflopen. Het was het best dat hij het gewoon bij de boeken hield.

Hij las over de Alnilamse mannen, hoe die vaak zwaar aan de drank en de drugs waren, en hielden van hard geluid. Ze waren altijd zeer luidruchtig. Hij las ook over dat het amazone gebied dieper onder de grond overliep in woestijnen, een gebied genaamd Betelgeuze. Er was daar een soort hervorming van de Ocht religie genaamd Vornament. Ook deze religie was zeer patriarchisch, maar dingen waren hier omgedraaid. Ze aanbaden Tirgo door kinderoffers, allemaal voor geld. Tirgo werd gezien als de zwarte slang, en de witte vrouw leefde het dichtst bij de slang van alle vrouwen, alhoewel mannen van een hogere en heersende rang waren. De witte vrouwen moesten een hoofddoek dragen, maar donkere vrouwen moesten een kaalgeschoren hoofd hebben en waren slaven, net zoals kinderen overigens. Het was een religie van kinderslavernij. De boze paradijstuin werd gezien als de goede paradijstuin van Tirgo. Ook zij vereerden de profeet Haman, maar hadden hierover een heel ander beeld dan de oudere Ocht religie. Ook hadden zij Sparto’s, maar ook die werden anders voorgesteld. Deze religies waren in grote oorlog met elkaar. In het woestijngebied waren fata morgana’s, die de visioenen van de dood werden genoemd.

Soms deden de amazones invallen in het Vornament gebied, om kinderen te roven, en ze te houden, of ze te brengen tot het Ocht gebied. Ook roofden de amazones kinderen uit Alnilam.

Onder de Vornament lag het zeegebied, waar de nieuwste hervorming was van de Ocht religie, gebaseerd op de Vornament religie. Ook zij beschouwden Tirgo als de zwarte slang. Het werd gepredikt door piraten. Zij hadden hierdoor ook hun magie waardoor ze grote wonderen en tekenen konden doen. Ook zij hadden hun eigen Sparto’s en patrijzen, en ook zij vereerden de profeet Haman. Ook zij deden aan kinderoffers en bedreven kinderslavernij. Zij waren alleen niet patriarchisch. Vrouwen, vooral witte vrouwen, werden voornamelijk vereerd, want de witte vrouw had de zwarte slang, Tirgo, behaagd, en was de moeder van de paradijstuin. Die paradijstuin werd niet als boos of kwaadaardig beschouwd zoals in de originele Ocht religie. Vandaar dat in dit opzicht deze nieuwe hervorming leek op die van de Vornament religie. De piraten vereerden hun moeder, de witte vrouw, die zij beschouwden als de moeder van de zwarte slang, de moeder van Tirgo. Voor

sommige piraten was de moeder van Tirgo nog wel groter en belangrijker dan Tirgo zelf. Voor sommige piraten was de moeder van Tirgo donker. Er waren dus verschillende vormen van deze religie, en die hadden ook weer onderling oorlogen. Er waren vele eilanden waar deze piraten zich vestigden. Er waren ook kannibalen eilanden. De religie was genaamd Montegom, wat ook de naam van het zeegebied was. De piraten vereerden drank, goud en drugs, en hun vreemdsoortige medicijnen, die ook gewoon drugs waren. Die vreemdsoortige medicijnen hadden hen immers rijk gemaakt en machtig.

Op grote levende schaakborden in Alnilam werden de religieuze oorlogen uitgevochten door de heksenkoningen. Sparto’s tegen sparto’s. De Vornament religie was humorloos. Ze konden geen sarcasme onderscheiden. Ze vervolgden alles wat anders was. De Montegom religie was echter sarcastisch, cynisch. De Vornamenters draaiden alles om wat je zei om het vervolgens tegen je te gebruiken. Zij meenden je nog beter te kennen dan je jezelf kende. Zij hadden alles in kannen en kruiken. Vornamenters maakten mensen gek, want daar konden ze goed aan verdienen.

De traan van Roggemuiden was op aarde geworpen. Het was geheel van glas, en het spatte uit elkaar. De scherven ervan vormden de religies. Het gaf de meest vreemdsoortige weerkaatsingen.

Hoofdstuk 3.

Wie heeft al deze religies gemaakt ? Ze stellen Tirgo op allerlei manieren voor, en zijn daarover in oorlog met elkaar. Daarom zijn mensen voor of tegen Tirgo. Ze hebben allemaal hun redenen. De traan van Roggemuiden, een glazen bol, was op aarde geworpen. Overal was er nu glas. Glassplinters diep in het vlees.

De heksenkoningen van Alnilam schaakten voor eer en aanzien, voor goud en goederen. Daar konden ze vrouwen mee krijgen of winnen. Gulzig waren ze, en gierig. Het waren hedonisten. Drank was hun god. Ook drugs werd volop vereerd. Er werden veel bloederige oorlogen gevochten voor drank en drugs, en natuurlijk voor vrouwen.

Onder het zeegebied van Montegom lag een ijsgebied waar geen leven mogelijk was, genaamd Trugnudde.

Sommige verhalen spraken over Trugnudde als de oorzaak dat de traan van Roggemuiden eens was gestold tot glas.

De tovenaar had nog steeds de traan van Roggemuiden als een glazen bol waarin de vloeistof was. Het pruttelde. Het rook naar urine. Het was bruin, geel en oranje. Het druppelde naar beneden uit een gaatje door een slang. De mensen werden gek van het geluid. Het droeg alle pijn en kwelling van het verleden. Daarom maakten de mensen religies, omdat ze gek werden van het geluid. Niemand wist nog wat het oorspronkelijk was, maar ze gisten maar, en ze verkochten hun leringen en lezingen, en vergaderden erover. Daarom had de tovenaar zijn arend gezonden om de mensen te helpen hier bovenuit te stijgen. Ze moesten hiervoor wel de traan van Roggemuiden van binnen dragen.

Alnilam was het gebied van barbaren en heksen die hun heidense religies hadden. Ze vereerden veelal de oorlogsgod Brabant en de god Groningen, die een lagere god was. Oss was een draak of monster waar velen in geloofden, alsof het een soort duivel was. Sommigen zagen het als het lievelingsdier van de oorlogsgod

Brabant, terwijl anderen het beschouwden als het kwaad zelf. Wie gebeten was door het monster had vaak last van spraakproblemen, moeite te spreken. Bij de amazones werd Brabant ook vereerd, maar dan als godin. Bij de barbaren was Brabant een mannelijke god die vaak werd afgebeeld als een reuzenspin met een enorm opgeblazen hoofd. Voor hen was het ook de god van drank, vrouwen en plezier. Zo vereerden ze Brabant met hun hedonisme. Door veel plezier te maken, veel te drinken en veel omgang te hebben met vrouwen stemden ze Brabant gunstig. De profeet Haman werd stelselmatig bespot en gebruikt als vloekwoord, en ook Tirgo was het pispaaltje, maar Brabant werd gevreesd door de barbaren. Brabant was alles voor hen. Zonder Brabant was er geen leven mogelijk.

In de amazone religie toen de eerste vrouw de eerste man tegenkwam zei ze : ‘Oh shit !’

Hij droomde overde traan van Roggemuiden die alles schiep. De traan van Roggemuiden zweefde over de wateren. Het bracht ook zoveel verwoesting aan, bracht zoveel woestheid.

Hij moest naar de mondspecialist. Ze hadden daar een heel centrum. Hij zou om vijf uur geholpen worden, maar het liep uit, dus moest hij een andere keer terugkomen. Hij kwam vlakbij het centrum van de mondspecialist iemand tegen, een neger, die heel veel apparatuur in zijn mond had. Die moest er ook naartoe. De neger liet hem in zijn mond kijken. Hij schrok er echt van. Hij zag allerlei buisjes en staafjes en apparaatjes. Die moesten allemaal verwijderd worden, ontschroefd worden, maar die zaten ook weer vast aan framewerken die vastgeschroefd waren in de botten op andere plaatsen, en als dat op een verkeerde of voortijdige manier zou worden ontschroefd, dan zou er een schel alarm afgaan wat zelfs dodelijk kon zijn. Ze moesten dat dus allemaal doorkijken, en bij hem moest er ook gekeken worden. Hij zou zelf ook allerlei apparatuur in zijn mond en lichaam hebben.

Het mondspecialisme bestond voornamelijk uit het doorkijken en ontschroeven. Als alle schroeven, framewerken en apparatuur eruit zou zijn, dan zou de mond en ook het lichaam weer op een natuurlijke manier kunnen herstellen.

Toen hij eindelijk aan de beurt was schrok hij ervan hoeveel schroeven eruit moesten, en hoeveel framewerken. Het zat heel ingewikkeld in elkaar, en zo kon ook de apparatuur verwijderd worden. Die zat heel subtiel in zijn mond en zijn verdere lichaam. Ze moesten hem helemaal doorscannen. Overal in zijn botten zaten schroeven : in zijn schedel, zijn wangbotten, zijn ellebogen, zijn knieën, zijn ruggegraat, zijn ribben, zijn kinbotten, zijn oogkassen, zijn vingerbotten, zijn stuitje, zijn polsbotten, echt overal. Hij voelde zich heel opgelucht toen de schroeven er werden uitgeschroefd, en de framewerken en de apparatuur zo los konden komen. Hij wist wel dat hij wat had, maar hij wist niet dat het zoveel was. Het verklaarde een heleboel problemen die hij nog had, maar nu kon het herstellen, en hij kon de traan van Roggemuiden beter voelen, meer en meer. Het begon los te komen in zijn lichaam. Hij voelde het weer stromen. Alles had zo lang vastgezeten.

Hij begon meer en meer geinteresseerd te raken in het mondspecialisme, en begon ook opleidingen erover te volgen.

Hij proefde de traan van Roggemuiden. Het zuiverde zijn mond en zijn gedachten. Zijn mond droeg nu het hemelse woord, en hij schreef het allemaal op. Hij bleef maar zeggen : ‘Oh de traan van Roggemuiden is gekomen, oh, de traan van Roggemuiden is eindelijk gekomen.’

Hij had een steeds terugkerende nachtmerrie waarin hij wakker werd bij een indiaanse vrouw in een tent. Hij was verlamd, en wist niet hoe dat was gekomen. Of de indiaanse vrouw had hem geslagen met een grote steen op zijn hoofd, of had een grote steen op hem laten vallen, op zijn hoofd, of ze had hem ergens vanaf geduwd. Haar naam was : ‘Zij die gevangen neemt.’ Hij kon niets doen. Haar tenen en voeten gingen over hem heen, en ze waren bruut. Ze konden alles met hem doen. Andere indiaanse vrouwen die het zagen waren trots op haar. Ze had ook een slavenkaravaan. Er werd geroepen : ‘De amazones over u !’ Hij zag vreemde tekens in de tent : TNS.ML. Maar hij wist niet of dat daadwerkelijk de letters waren, want het waren tekens in een andere taal. Hij werd dan altijd badend in het zweet wakker. Hij bezocht hierover een psycholoog. Die begon direct te vragen of hij ooit moeilijke vrouwen in zijn leven had gehad. Ja, die had hij wel gehad. Moeilijke relaties, moeilijke juffrouwen, een moeilijke moeder, een moeilijke oma, moeilijke tantes, moeilijke buurvrouwen. Hij vond de meeste vrouwen

moeilijk en kon ze niet begrijpen. Alsof ze in een andere wereld leefden.

‘De nachtmerries zijn er om het je te laten verwerken,’ zei de psycholoog. ‘Je hebt waarschijnlijk een groot trauma opgelopen van de moeilijke vrouwen.’

In zijn nachtmerries moest hij altijd wenen als deze dingen gebeurden. Hij was soms bang om te gaan slapen. De psycholoog gaf hem wat pillen mee, maar daarvan werd het alleen maar erger. Toen hij daar een opmerking over maakte was ze beledigd, en zei dat hij het amazone syndroom had. Dat was een ziekte die een paranoia ontwikkelde tegen vrouwen en wat vrouwen slechter voorstelde dan ze waren. In haar ogen waren het ineens allemaal wanen, en ze vroeg hem ook te kijken naar de positieve kanten van de vrouwen. Hij raakte hiervan overstuur, want hij vond haar nu ook een moeilijke vrouw. Hij voelde zich niet serieus genomen. Nu had hij een stempel op. Zo konden ze alles afwimpelen. Als hij iets zei wat negatief was over vrouwen, dan was dat het amazone syndroom, en dan lag dat aan hem.

Het belemmerde hem. Hij begon zich steeds meer terug te trekken. De psycholoog zei dat hij in zijn eigen fantasie wereldje leefde. De nachtmerries hadden hem in de macht en beheersten zijn leven, en ook zijn leven was een nachtmerrie. Hij wilde toen een nieuwe psycholoog, maar dat mocht niet. Ze zeiden dat hij nieuwe pillen zou krijgen, maar ook dat hij ongeneeslijk ziek was. Er was immers geen goed medicijn tegen het amazone syndroom. Niemand was daar nog ooit van genezen, maar het kon volgens hen wel onderdrukt worden. Hij voelde zich een proefdier, en de medicijnen werkten maar niet. Het werd alleen maar erger. Ze zeiden van de medicijnen dat het kanonnen waren die steden bombardeerden, en dat met het slechte zo ook een stuk van het goede werd vernietigd.

Hij werd meer en meer moedeloos en wanhopig. Het leek erop alsof zijn nachtmerries meer en meer werkelijkheid werden. In zijn nachtmerries werd er vaak geroepen : ‘De amazones over u !’ Hij had het idee alsof het bijna religieus was. Hij wilde naar een paragnost of naar een predikant. Gelukkig mocht dat van de psycholoog, en dat was ook een heel ander vakgebied. Zij had wel twee

adressen voor hem. Dan kon hij het daar proberen. Dat gaf hem wat hoop.

Toen hij bij de paragnost aankwam was het daar schemerig. Ze was halfnaakt. Ze was heel sexy gekleed met schamele lingerie die indiaans was bijna, en ze was op blote voeten. Ze was heel primitief. Hij schrok, want hij moest direct aan de indiaanse vrouwen van zijn nachtmerries denken.

‘U weet waarom u hier bent ?’ vroeg de vrouw.

‘Ja,’ zei hij, ‘maar komt u net uit bed ofzo, want u bent halfnaakt.’

Ze keek hem aan en zei niets.

Daarna zei ze : ‘Nog één keer zo’n vraag en je ligt eruit.’

Hij vond dat vreemd, en voelde zich ongemakkelijk. Ook het feit dat het een vrouw was beviel hem niet. Hij had vreemde gevoelens in zijn buik. Het waren dezelfde vreemde gevoelens die hij had in de nachtmerries.

‘Vertel,’ zei ze toen. ‘Waarom bent u hier ?’

‘U bent de paragnost,’ zei hij toen. ‘U zou dat beter moeten weten dan ikzelf.’

‘Belachelijk,’ zei ze toen. ‘Echt, als u zo door gaat, dan laat ik u verwijderen,’ zei ze.

‘Ik begrijp het niet,’ zei hij toen, maar begon zijn verhaal te vertellen. Hij snikte bijna van de spanning. Ze keek hem koud aan. Het was ook een donkere vrouw, net als in zijn nachtmerries.

‘Dat was het ?’ vroeg ze toen hij klaar was.

‘Ja,’ zei hij, en zuchtte.

‘Ten eerste,’ zei ze, ‘heeft u een verkeerde houding naar vrouwen. Dat verklaart een hele hoop. Die nachtmerries zijn alleen een teken hiervan. Het zit veel dieper. U heeft een bittere wortel naar vrouwen, een soort vrouwenhaat, wat zich op deze manier manifesteert.’

‘Ja, maar ik ben vroeger mishandeld en verkeerd behandeld door vrouwen,’ zei hij toen.

‘Dat zeggen ze allemaal,’ zei ze bits. ‘Waarschijnlijk zijn daar dingen aan vooraf gegaan. Je wordt niet zomaar mishandeld en verkeerd behandeld door vrouwen. Je zal daar zelf je aandeel in hebben gehad.’

‘Het is al zo sinds ik me kan heugen,’ zei hij.

‘Nou, en ? Dat kan toch ?’ sprak ze. ‘Misschien ben je vergeten dat je gewoon een heel moeilijk opvoedbaar kind was. Je liet je niets gezeggen. Je wilde altijd je eigen wil doordraven, en daar draag je nu de gevolgen van. Dat komt nu op je terug.’

‘Als een steen die op mijn hoofd wordt geslagen,’ zei hij.

‘Precies,’ zei ze, ‘een steen die je ooit zelf eens hebt geworpen.’

‘Nou, bedankt,’ zei hij. ‘Dat verklaart een hoop. Hoe weet u dit allemaal ?’

‘Dat is mijn professie en vakgeheim,’ zei ze toen.

‘Hoe kom ik er vanaf ?’ vroeg hij toen.

‘Je moet het zelf goedmaken,’ zei ze. ‘Dan zal het vanzelf beter gaan.’

‘Oh, dus ik moet een brave jongen worden naar vrouwen, en me alles laten gezeggen ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Natuurlijk niet,’ zei ze. ‘Maar je moet ere geven waar ere toebehoort.’

‘Oh,’ zei hij. ‘Dus het ligt allemaal aan mezelf ? Die vrouwen staan allemaal in hun recht ? Vrouwen zijn een soort goddelijke schepsels die geen fouten maken ofzo ?’

‘Je kletst,’ zei ze toen.

‘Ik probeer te communiceren,’ zei hij.

‘Je toon is verkeerd,’ zei ze.

‘Hoe komt dat ?’ vroeg hij. ‘Hoe ben ik zo geworden ?’

‘Je stelt teveel vragen,’ zei ze toen.

‘Ja, maar daar ben ik hier toch voor ?’ vroeg hij. ‘U of jij bent toch de paragnost ?’

‘U of jij ?’ proeste ze. ‘Mijnheer, dit gesprek is afgelopen. Ik wijs u de deur.’

‘Hoeveel krijgt u van me ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Honderd euro,’ zei ze.

‘Helemaal goed,’ zei hij, en gaf haar het geld. Hij was blij dat het gesprek afgelopen was. Hij hoopte dat het bij de predikant beter zou zijn. Die woonde een paar straten verder. Er zat nog een uur tussen de twee afspraken in. Hij kon dus rustig aan doen. Hij ging even naar wat winkels,

en toen belde hij bij de predikant aan. Dat was ook een vrouw, en die was ook half naakt. Hij schrok daarvan.

‘Komt u net uit bed ?’ vroeg hij.

Ze glimlachte. ‘Nee joh, maar het is zo warm,’ zei ze.

Ze kwamen in de huiskamer. Ze bood hem wat te drinken aan. Hij keek naar haar blote voeten. Het was ook een donkere vrouw, maar ze leek niet op de paragnost. Het waren beiden zeer mooie vrouwen. Hij was er erg van onder de indruk. ‘Hoe kan het dat u zo mooi bent ?’ vroeg hij aan de predikant.

‘Weet je dat dan niet ?’ vroeg ze vriendelijk. ‘Het is een gave van God de Heere, de almachtige moeder.’

Hij glimlachte, en was verbaasd over hoe vriendelijk de vrouw naar hem sprak. Hij kreeg er een brok van in zijn keel, want gewoonlijks waren vrouwen niet zo zacht en teder naar hem. Hij keek naar haar op met hoop. Ze glimlachte.

Hij kon zijn ogen niet van haar afhouden. Ze liet hem toen over de nachtmerries vertellen. Bijna snikkend begon hij, ook omdat hij emotioneel was over de manier waarop zij hem behandelde, zo zachtmoedig en genadevol. Ze was heel gracieus.

‘Moeder God roept je,’ sprak ze. ‘Je nachtmerries zijn mooi, maar je begrijpt ze niet. Het heeft diepere betekenissen. Ze probeert je weg te trekken van je oude leven.’

Hij zuchtte met een zekere opluchting. Hij durfde niet over de paragnost te praten. Dit was heel anders. ‘Laat het even bezinken,’ zei ze. Het was warm, en deze vrouw was warm. Ze begon een beetje tegen hem te prediken. Ze kon heel mooi spreken. De toon van haar stem was hemels, en de dingen die ze zei waren hemels.

‘Ik ben zo blij dat ik hier ben,’ zei hij. Ze glimlachte.

‘Mag ik bij uw kerk horen ?’ vroeg hij nederig.

‘Natuurlijk,’ zei ze. ‘Ik zou graag contact met je willen onderhouden, en kom gerust langs als ik preek in de kerk. Het is in de natuurkerk.’

‘Oh, de grote kerk ?’ vroeg hij. Hij kende die wel. Ze knikte.

Ze begon heel zacht te spreken, bijna fluisterend, alsof ze hem mee probeerde te trekken.

‘Je bent zo lief,’ zei hij.

‘Moeder God is ...’ zei ze, maar alles begon langzaam weg te vagen. Het was maar een droom. Hij werd wakker en was verbaasd dat hij dit keer een mooie droom had gehad en geen nachtmerrie, alhoewel het slecht begon met de paragnost. Hij staarde voor zich uit. ‘De amazones over u,’ stamelde hij, nog steeds emotioneel. ‘Moeder God roept mij. Ze spreekt in geheimtaal. Dat is wat het amazone syndroom moet zijn. Het amazone syndroom. Wie verzint zoiets ?’

Einde

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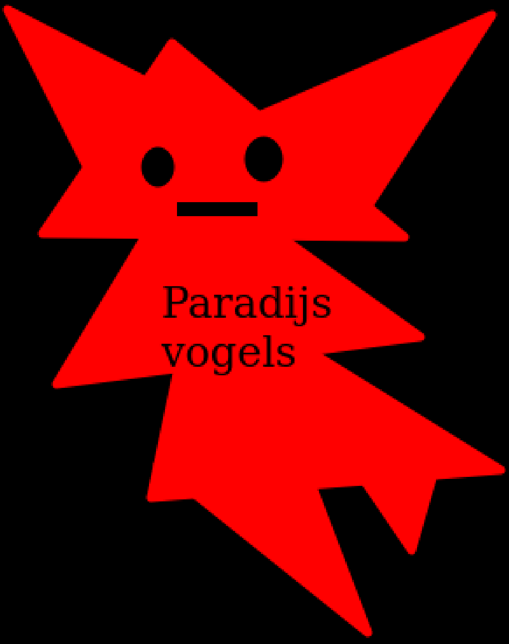

Paradijs vogels

een uitgave van
schoolsupermarkt

Paradijsvogels

Paradijsvogels

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2024

Paradijsvogels
korte verhalen

Uitgave : rnl-pockets
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Een uitgave van schoolsupermarkt

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Charleston Baai

Ik weet nog steeds niet precies hoe ik uit die secte in Ermelo ben ontsnapt, maar ik kreeg het voor mekaar. Vanwege het trauma kwam ik bij de psychiater terecht. Zij woonde ook in Ermelo. Achteraf bleek het dat zij ook bij die secte zat. Dat wist ik niet. Ik ben daar toen weggegaan. Charleston noemden ze zichzelf. Ik vond dat vreemd, omdat het de gruwelijkste plaats in Amerika was, want daar kwamen de slavenschepen aan. Maar zij deden alsof het de normaalste zaak van de wereld was, net zoals de kolonisten destijds. Ik heb veel te danken aan Linda en Jeffrey. Zij hadden me een disc gestuurd met informatie erop. Door die informatie ben ik uiteindelijk ontsnapt, maar ik kan me er niet meer veel van herinneren. Het is al zo lang geleden en mijn brein hapert en draait soms dingen om. Dat is een symptoom van wat ze met me hebben gedaan. Ik had veel implantaten van die secte, en die moesten er allemaal uit, maar ik heb hierdoor veel schade opgelopen. Ik luister nog weleens naar

de disc, maar niet teveel. Het kan ook heel confronterend zijn. Er staat ook een stukje op van Jacquelien. Linda en Jeffrey wonen ook in Ermelo, maar dan dichter bij het bos. Ze hebben het bos achter hun huis. Ze wonen daar heel goed.

Ik luister soms naar Vicky Leandros om over mijn verleden te komen. Ze is als een vogel. Ik jank soms als ik naar haar luister, vooral wanneer ze in het Duits zingt.

Maar de secte trekt aan mij. Ze willen me doen geloven alsof ik ze nodig heb, alsof het bij hen veilig is, terwijl dat helemaal niet zo is. Jeffrey is overleden, en Linda is hertrouwd. Ik weet niet eens waar ze nu woont. De secte vergrijst heel erg, want er komen bijna geen leden bij, dus ik moet wachten totdat het allemaal voorbij is gegaan. Ik moet wachten totdat ze allemaal weg zijn. Charleston geeft voor nu niet op. Daar moet ik me bij neerleggen.

Ik mis Linda en Jeffrey heel erg. Ze zaten altijd op een koor. Ze hadden altijd schilderijen van vogels in hun huis. Ze hadden ook een papegaai die sprak. Het was geweldig. Ik heb hele gesprekken met het beest lopen voeren. Hij deed niet onder voor menig mens. Het beest zei altijd al dat hij mij uit Charleston zou redden. Lincoln heette hij. Hij leeft ook niet meer. Soms droom ik nog weleens over hem. Hij zei altijd : ‘Het leven is er nu eenmaal. We moeten er het beste van ...’ en dan maakte hij zijn zin niet af, en dan zei ik altijd : ‘maken’ erna.

Het koor waarop Linda en Jeffrey zaten heette ‘Genesis’. Ze hadden ook een dochtertje dat Nancy heette. Ik paste soms op haar. Ze had vaak last van nachtmerries. Dan moest ik haar kalmeren. Het is vreselijk wat er is gebeurd in Charleston. We dragen daar allemaal de gevolgen van.

De gevolgen zijn heel ernstig. De secte draait alles om, dus ik moet het telkens weer terugdraaien. Ik word daar erg moe van.

Diep in het hart van Ermelo roept er iets,
achter een waterval, diep in het bos.
Uiteindelijk was ik daar eens gekidnapped.
Ze hielden een giftig doekje voor mijn mond,
en toen zakte ik weg.

De paradijsvogels hebben stemmen die zo weer wegvagen, en die je ook zo weer vergeten bent. Ze blijven het proberen. Er is heel wat voor nodig om door Charleston heen te komen.

Einde

WANDELING IN HET WARME ZAND

Ze wandelden samen langs de dijk in het zand. Ze waren op blote voeten. Het zand voelde warm aan. Het was ook een warme dag, en mooi. Ze hadden die ochtend ruzie gehad, en ze had hem uitgescholden, en hem even goed de waarheid verteld, maar daarna kalmeerde het weer.

‘Ben ik nu geen scheldwoord meer ?’ vroeg hij tijdens het wandelen.
‘Een besnedene,’ zei ze.
‘Laten we het er maar niet over hebben,’ zei ze na een tijdje. ‘Anders begint het weer.’

Toen hadden ze het over een heleboel andere dingen. Ze liepen hand in hand, en soms vinger aan vinger. Na een tijdje kwamen ze weer thuis. Het was een erge rommel, en dat begon ze direct op te ruimen. Hij ging zitten en las in een blad. ‘Hmm, ik kan weer alleen de rommel opruimen,’ zei ze.

‘Sorry, ik ben moe van de wandeling,’ zei hij. ‘Jij kan toch ook gewoon gaan zitten ? De rest komt later wel.’

‘Dan gebeurt het nooit,’ zei ze. ‘Van uitstel komt afstel.’

Haar blousje zat los, de bovenste knoopjes. Hij kon zo naar binnen kijken. ‘Wat zit je te kijken ?’ vroeg ze.

‘Oh niks,’ zei hij. ‘Mag ik niet kijken dan ?’

‘Er is een verschil tussen kijken en werken,’ zei ze.

‘Ik zei toch dat ik moe was ?’ zei hij.

‘Ja, dat is zo,’ zei ze, ‘maar toch.’

‘Maar toch wat ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Nou, je hebt altijd goede smoezen,’ zei ze. ‘Eigenlijk komt er bij jou nooit wat van, en

dan kan ik het doen, of gebeurt er helemaal niets.’

‘Moe is moe,’ zei hij. ‘Dat is geen smoes, dat is de realiteit.’

‘Lui is moe bij jou,’ zei ze. Ze keek hem indringend aan. Hij keek haar ook indringend aan, maar telkens werd hij afgeleid door haar open blouse.

‘Dan geloof je me niet,’ zei hij. Ze legde haar spullen neer en ging voor hem staan. Ze bleef hem maar aankijken.

‘Ga ik nu klappen krijgen ofzo ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Nee, je weet best waarom ik naar je kijk, en nee ik geloof je niet. Ik ken je langer dan vandaag,’ zei ze.

Hij keek omhoog naar haar vanaf waar hij zat. Nog steeds werden zijn ogen telkens afgeleid door haar open blouse.

‘Je bent zo mooi als je boos bent,’ zei hij.

‘Anders niet ?’ vroeg ze een beetje geirriteerd.

Hij zei niets. ‘Ga je me weer uitschelden ?’ vroeg hij na een tijdje.

‘Heb ik al gedaan,’ zei ze. ‘Je weet het. Ik hoef mezelf niet te herhalen.’

‘Nou, bedankt,’ zei hij.

Toen zeiden ze een hele tijd niets tegen elkaar. Ze hadden beiden geen zin in een nieuwe ruzie. Maar ruzie met haar was nooit echt een vervelende ruzie. Het was meer een zoete ruzie. Ze konden wel wat van elkaar hebben. Beiden treiterden ze elkaar weleens. Het was in ieder geval nooit saai. Er hing altijd een bepaalde spanning. Alsof het een competitie was. Het leek altijd alsof hij moest slagen voor zijn examen.

De dag erop liepen ze weer langs de dijk op blote voeten, weer in het warme zand, en het was weer een warme en mooie dag. Ze liepen weer hand in hand, en soms vinger aan vinger. Ze had een bloemetjesjurk aan, en weer waren haar bovenste knoopjes los, en kon hij een beetje naar binnen kijken. Toen ze thuis waren ging ze naar de keuken en begon te zingen. Hij ging weer zitten om een blad te lezen. Na een tijdje kwam ze terug uit de keuken. ‘Je hebt weer niks gedaan,’ zei ze met een glimlach. ‘Zie je wel, ik had gelijk.’

‘Moe van het wandelen,’ zei hij.

‘Ja ja,’ zei ze. ‘Smoesjes weer.’

‘Nee echt,’ zei hij. ‘En moe van jou.’

‘Zielig voor je,’ zei ze.

Hij stond op en liep naar haar toe, en gaf haar een kus op haar lippen.

‘Probeer je me zo om te kopen ?’ vroeg ze.

‘Nee,’ zei hij. ‘Het is zoiets als de andere wang keren, en het slechte met het goede terugbetalen.’

‘Dus ik ben slecht in jouw ogen ?’ vroeg ze.

‘Soms,’ zei hij. ‘Maar dat ben ik in jouw ogen ook.’

‘Wel vaker,’ zei ze.

‘Zie ?’ zei hij.

‘Zie wat ?’ vroeg ze.

‘Laat maar,’ zei hij.

‘Je probeert je geweten af te kopen met je kussen,’ zei ze.

‘Okay,’ zei hij toen. ‘Geloof wat je wil geloven.’

Toen ging ze weer naar de keuken, en weer begon ze te zingen. Een blad lezen kon hij zo wel vergeten.

Het was een warme dag, en zelfs die avond was het nog warm. Tegen het vallen van de nacht lagen ze hand in hand in bed. ‘Ik moet je wat vertellen,’ zei ze.

‘Wat is het ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Sarie en ik gaan een tijdje op vakantie,’ zei ze.

‘Goed, heb ik het rijk voor me alleen,’ zei hij.

‘En kun je alles zelf doen,’ zei ze.

‘Waar gaan jullie naartoe ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Doet er niet toe. We willen dat niemand ons belt. We gaan naar een vakantie huisje, en we gaan samen winkelen, en andere leuke dingen doen,’ zei ze.

‘Zoals wat ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Dingen die vrouwen doen, die vrouwen leuk vinden,’ zei ze. ‘Dat is niets voor mannen en hoef je ook niet te weten.’

‘Okay,’ zei hij. ‘Goed. Je doet maar. Kan ik mijn eigen dingen doen.’

‘Ja, maar wat als ik wegblijf ?’ vroeg ze.

‘Hoe lang blijf je weg ?’ vroeg hij.

Ze zei niks.

‘Je komt toch wel weer terug ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Ja,’ zei ze toen.

‘Okay, dat wilde ik even weten,’ zei hij.

‘Ja, gewoon om wat spullen te pakken,’ zei ze.

‘Ga je bij me weg ?’ vroeg hij. ‘Is dat jouw manier om me het te vertellen ?’

‘Maak je niet druk,’ zei ze.

Ze pakte hem vast. Hij voelde haar warme lichaam. ‘Ga nou maar slapen,’ zei ze.
‘Ik mag toch wel op vakantie met mijn vriendin ?’

‘Ja,’ zei hij, ‘maar dan hoef je toch niet zo vreemd te doen ?’

‘Jij vindt alles vreemd,’ zei ze.

Hij kuste haar op haar lippen. Ze voelden warm aan en vol.

‘Weet je,’ zei ze.

‘Nee, ik weet niks,’ zei hij.

‘Laat maar,’ zei ze.

Ze hield hem vast. Toen raakten ze in een worsteling. Het was een warme nacht en ze kusten veel, en ze treiterden elkaar. Zo ging dat altijd.

Midden in de nacht werd hij wakker. Hij keek op de klok, en toen keek hij naar haar. De volgende ochtend zou ze al vertrekken. Ze was vroeg op. Toen hij wakker werd was zij al weg.

Hij dacht aan haar en Sarie, en vroeg zich af wat ze zouden doen. Sarie was haar vriendin. Ze had ook weleens bij hen geslapen, in hetzelfde bed. Eigenlijk was ze ook een beetje zijn vriendin. Maar er was altijd een zekere afstand. Sarie zei niet veel, vooral als hij er bij was. Ze had een hele mooie stem, maar die gebruikte ze bijna niet. Ze worstelden soms beiden met hem. Sarie was meer lichamelijk, en haar vriendin meer verbaal. Hij had haar leren kennen door Sarie.

In ieder geval had hij nu het rijk voor zich alleen, en hij fantaseerde veel over de twee

vrouwen, en vroeg zich af wat ze deden en waar ze waren. Soms kwam ze thuis om wat spullen op te halen, en dan ging ze weer weg. Weken gingen voorbij. Hij liet haar maar gaan.

Toen ze terug was begon ze direct weer in het huis te werken.
‘Moet dat nou ?’ vroeg hij. ‘Je bent net terug.’

‘Heb ik wat te doen,’ zei ze, ‘en jij doet het toch niet.’

‘En ik ben dus het scheldwoord ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Ja, op verschillende manieren,’ zei ze.

‘Leg uit,’ zei hij.

Ze zei niets. Toen ze in de keuken was zong ze weer.

‘Wat hebben jullie gedaan ?’ vroeg hij even later toen ze weer bij hem stond.

‘Ik heb wat voor je meegenomen,’ zei ze. Ze pakte haar rieten tas, en er zaten wat onderbroeken in. Er zat ook wat ondergoed voor haar bij. ‘Mooi,’ zei hij. ‘Ik denk dat ik al weet waar jij bent geweest. Ik ken deze winkel, waar dit vandaan komt.’

Ze keek hem aan. Ze trok haar wenkbrauwen op. ‘Ik heb nog meer voor je,’ zei ze. Ze kieperde haar tas leeg. Het waren plaatjes. ‘Voor je verzameling,’ zei ze. Hij pakte de plaatjes en begon ze te bekijken. Hij verzamelde die plaatjes. Het waren hele bijzondere plaatjes. Er stond tekst op de plaatjes, en elk plaatje had zijn eigen temperatuur, en gaf geheel eigen gevoelens. Op elk plaatje stond een bepaalde vrouw. En er stond dan bij wat voor soort vrouw het was. ‘Mooi,’ zei hij. ‘Die had ik nog niet.’ Hij bleef er maar naar staren, en toen staarde hij naar haar.

‘Hoe ging het met Sarie ?’ vroeg hij.
‘Oh, we hebben veel geworsteld,’ zei ze.

‘Ja, ja,’ zei hij.
Hij keek weer naar de plaatjes.
Toen keek hij weer naar haar.
Ze was een plaatje.
Net zoals Sarie een plaatje was.
Ze waren onderdeel van zijn verzameling.
Hij klapte de map van zijn verzameling weer dicht en deed het in de kast.
Morgen zou hij weer verder gaan met zijn verzameling.

Einde

ZWART GRAS

Derk Nosalgement en zijn vrouw Waneley, een lange, dunne vrouw, hadden een bakkerij ergens in een stadje aan de rivier. Aan de andere kant van de rivier lag een dorp. Hun bakkerij had nogal een duister geheim. Waneley ging vaak in het dorp over de rivier op kinderjacht. Dan bracht ze de kinderen naar haar man, en dan werden die kinderen opgesloten in een put onder het huis. De kinderen werden gebruikt als ingrediënten voor hun baksels. Zelfs de stenen van hun huis en bakkerij hadden botten van kinderen in hen. Zo was het stadje onder een vloek. De mensen hadden het niet door. Ze vonden de baksels van bakkerij Nosalgement verrukkelijk. Iedereen deed daar graag inkopen. Ook voor feesten waren ze geliefd.

Het dorp aan de andere kant van de rivier leefde in grote tragedie. Vele kinderen waren vermist. Het hield maar niet op. Waneley leek er altijd weg mee te komen.

Als kind logeerde ik soms bij de familie Nosalgement. Ik weet nog wel dat ik daar eens een boek zag liggen wat ik wel zou willen lezen. Het had een plaatje erop van een bakkerij aan de rivier. Maar toen ik het boek wilde oppakken gleed er een vreemd gevoel over me, en ik trok mijn hand weer terug. Later bedacht ik me, maar toen lag het boek er niet meer. In de nacht ben ik toen door het huis gaan dwalen om het boek te zoeken. Ik vond het op Waneley's kamer. Waneley sliep daar. Haar man sliep in een andere kamer. Ze werd wakker en zag mij. Ze zag me met het boek. Ze zei dat het een verschrikkelijk en gruwelijk boek was. Ik keek naar haar. Ze had hele grote ogen, en zag er veel jonger uit. Ik vroeg haar hoe ze ineens zo jong kon zijn. 'Ach een dutje doet de mens goed,' sprak ze. 'En een pilletje doet wonderen.'

Ik mocht het boek wel van haar meenemen naar huis. Het was inderdaad een heel gruwelijk boek waar al deze dingen in stonden beschreven, maar ik vond het ook een mooi boek. Onder de kinderput onder de

bakkerij scheen een mooie wereld te zijn. Die werd beschreven in het boek, dus voor mij was het dubbel. Ik wist niet of ik de dingen die in het boek beschreven stonden wel kon geloven. Ik moest verplicht weer logeren bij de familie Nosalgement toen mijn ouders weer eens op vakantie gingen. In de nacht besloot ik eens een kijkje te nemen onder het huis, over de keldertrap naar beneden. Ik hoorde kinderen gillen en roepen. Ze waren achter tralies, maar ver weg. Ik kon ze niet bereiken. Ik huilde ook toen ik ze zag. Ik ben toen nog dieper naar beneden gegaan, en kwam toen in de mooie wereld, maar ik kon er niet teveel van nemen. Het zou alles vernietigen. Ik kon het niet verdragen, maar ook de kinderput kon ik niet verdragen. Ik ben toen weer naar boven gegaan en huilde in mijn bed.

De volgende dag aan het ontbijt vroeg Waneley aan mij of ik ook een pilletje wilde. ‘Liever niet,’ zei ik.

‘Och, jongen, daar ben je wel een beetje laat mee, want ik had het gisteren door je eten gegooid, maar ik dacht : Toch maar even vragen voor de zekerheid.’

Ik vond dat vreemd. Ik voelde me ook vreemd, maar ook opmerkelijk. Ik keek naar de bakker en zijn vrouw. En ik zag ze zo de grond inzakken, met stoel en al. Ik wreef in mijn ogen.

Ik besloot in het huis te blijven wonen. Het was immers een deel van mijn geschiedenis. Ik liet de kinderen in de bakkerij werken. Ik had een manier gevonden om hen vrij te zetten. Naar de mooie wereld onder de kinderput konden we niet teveel gaan. Het zou alles vernietigen.

Er was een muziek winkel aan de rivier, verderop. Daar gingen we soms naartoe om muziekplaten te halen. De muziek herinnerde ons aan de mooie wereld. We konden het zo op afstand houden, want teveel ervan zou alles vernietigen. De stad kwam zo vrij van

de vloek, en ook het dorp aan de andere kant van de rivier.

Er bleek ook een oerwoud te zijn onder de bakkerij, onder het huis, maar als ik daar kwam, dan voelde ik me verlamd. ‘Een pilletje doet wonderen,’ hoorde ik soms.

Waneley en Derk waren nu geesten boven de rivier. Het spookte nog wel op de rivier. Daarom werden kinderen ook gewaarschuwd om niet te dichtbij de rivier te zijn, en zeker niet te lang.

‘Worsten te koop !’ hoorde ik iemand roepen die voor de ramen stond. Ze leek een beetje op Waneley. Ik werd duizelig. ‘Een pilletje doet wonderen,’ riep ze toen. Ik voelde mezelf met stoel en al door de vloer zakken. Ik kwam toen in de kinderput weer. Er lagen allemaal botten en schedels. Ik hoorde vreemde, naargeestige deuntjes, die ik als kind ook weleens hoorde.

‘Hier moet ze ergens liggen,’ hoorde ik een stem zeggen. Ik zag toen ergens een grot met een glazen kist waarin een prinses lag. ‘Wie is ze ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Waneley,’ zei een stem. ‘Kom niet te dichtbij. Deze dingen moeten op een afstand gehouden worden.’

‘Een pilletje doet wonderen,’ zei de prinses.

Ik stapte achteruit, maar merkte dat ik aan de grond was gekleefd.

‘Moet je ook een pilletje ?’ vroeg de prinses, die langzaam uit haar glazen kist begon te komen.

‘Nou, liever niet,’ zei ik.

‘Te laat,’ zei ze, ‘al door je eten gedaan.’

‘Ga ik niet eten,’ zei ik.

‘Heb je al gedaan,’ zei ze.

‘Kun je stoppen met deze spelletjes, Waneley ?’ vroeg ik.

Ik kon niet naar de mooie wereld, niet naar het oerwoud, maar hier kon ik ook niet blijven. Na een tijdje kon ik me weer bewegen en ben toen naar boven gerend.

De kinderen van de bakkerij keken me aan. ‘En, heb je haar gezien ?’ vroeg een kind.

‘Wie ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Waneley,’ zei het kind.

‘Ja,’ zei ik, ‘maar het was een prinses.’

‘De schone slaapster van een pilletje doet wonderen,’ zei het kind.

‘We moeten hier weg,’ zei ik. ‘Ze is vast nog op jacht. Ik zakte zo met mijn stoel door de grond.’

‘Welnee,’ zei het kind.

‘We kunnen gewoon hier blijven ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Ja,’ zei het kind. Toen zijn ze weer aan het werk gegaan.

Waneley bleef me treiteren. Ze was een heks, maar de kinderen waren aan mijn kant.
Ik had ze ooit eens bevrijd.

Vaak dacht ik aan de mooie wereld, maar niet te lang. Het zou alles vernietigen.

Vaak dacht ik aan het oerwoud, maar dan raakte ik vast in mijn denken.

Ik moest gewoon hier blijven, in de bakkerij, bij de kinderen. Ik was één van hen.

Als ik op straat liep keek ik altijd rond of ik Waneley misschien zag.

Dan droomde ik altijd weg.

Een pilletje doet wonderen, worsten te koop, het was altijd hetzelfde liedje.

Waneley bleef aan me knagen. Het bleef me achtervolgen, als een schaduw van het verleden.

Het oerwoud was als giftige bessen. Ik kon er niet naartoe. Het oerwoud was gevaarlijk, zoals de mooie wereld. Maar ik luisterde naar muziekplaten om zowel het oerwoud als de mooie wereld op veilige afstand te houden. Niet te ver weg, niet te dichtbij.

Als ik op straat liep droomde ik weg, als ik inkopen ging doen voor de bakkerij.

Ik kwam niet te dichtbij de rivier, en bleef er ook nooit te lang. Het was te gevaarlijk. Het spookte er te erg. Soms trad de rivier uit z’n bedding. Dan werden zowel het stadje als het dorp geteisterd.

Het was soms als een gesticht in de bakkerij. De kinderen waren druk. Ik zocht rust, maar

kon het nergens vinden, alleen in het boek van Waneley en in de muziekplaten. Steeds meer ging ik naar de muziekwinkel aan de rivier, verderop. Er was daar ook een bibliotheek. Door boeken en muziek kon ik alles op een afstand houden. We maakten goede producten in de bakkerij, door en voor kinderen. Dat was vroeger wel anders. De bakkerij had zo’n duistere geschiedenis, maar nu maakten we er het beste van.

Waneley en Derk bleken nu een bakkerij te hebben in het dorp aan de andere kant van de rivier. Een kind kwam het me vertellen. Ik was in een shock. Ik kende hun duistere geheim. Maar kindervermissingen kwamen nauwelijks nog voor in het dorp. Misschien hadden ze hun leven gebeterd, maar ik wilde daar niet op gokken. Of ze stalen nu kinderen uit een ander dorp.

Het was allemaal sinds ik het boek van Waneley had gelezen dat mijn wereld op de kop stond. Maar het was ook een mooi boek, ondanks alle gruwelijkheden. En ik dacht :

‘Heb ik het misschien niet allemaal verkeerd begrepen ?’ Nee, het was een gevaarlijke vrouw. En haar man was gevaarlijk. De waarheid is hard. De waarheid is pijnlijk. Ik wilde niet in een leugen leven. Maar het boek probeerde me te misleiden en verleiden. Het boek liet me niet los. Het boek liet al deze dingen zien en toonde een betere weg, maar liet ook zien dat de mooie wereld waarin alles goed was zo gevaarlijk was, en ook de gevaren van het oerwoud, van de wildernis, van het losse.

En waar waren die pilletjes van Waneley van gemaakt ? Ook van gemalen kinderen.

Het boek was als een alarm, als een ontwaking. Het boek hield alles op een veilige afstand, als een pad door een dierentuin. En dat leidde toch weer naar de bakkerij. Altijd kwam ik weer uit op de bakkerij, met weer wat extra boeken en extra muziek, om er doorheen te komen. Ik moest leren bakken. Ik moest leren.

Het was zo’n mooi boek, ook al liet het de gruwelen zien. Ook het boek moest ik op afstand leren houden. De muziek hielp me daarbij, maar ook de muziek moest ik op afstand houden, en daar hielp de bakkerij me bij. Ik moest leren te leven in de bakkerij. Het was een bakkersleven als bakkersjongen. Verderop aan de rivier was de slagerij, waar de slagersjongens woonden. We hadden vaak ruzie. Het was vaak oorlog. En dan dacht ik nog weleens terug aan Waneley, dat hoe gruwelijk het ook was, het soms de enige oplossing is.

DE SCHUILPLAATS

Hij had een kind met een Afrikaanse vrouw, en in het begin leek het heel goed te gaan. Ze konden het goed met elkaar vinden, maar na zo'n vijf jaar had ze wat dingen tegen hem gezegd die hem niet goed bevielen, en toen heeft hij scheiding van haar aangevraagd. Ze liet hem weten dat ze het daar heel moeilijk mee had, maar hij hield voet bij stuk. Ze kwamen elkaar nog weleens tegen in het winkel centrum, en dan hadden ze even een gezellig praatje, alhoewel dat altijd maar kort was, en dan voelde hij zich toch altijd een beetje ongemakkelijk. Maar na een tijdje begon hij op te merken dat hij haar nooit meer zag in het winkel centrum. Na wat navragen bleek het dat ze verhuisd was naar een dorp in de buurt. Ze bleek met een mes te zijn bedreigd door iemand, vanwege wat ze tegen die persoon had gezegd. Ze kon soms enorm bot zijn. Daar wist hij alles van, maar hij schrok er wel van dat ze met een mes was bedreigd, en dat ze daarom wilde verhuizen. Ze had inmiddels een nieuwe vriend.

Eigenlijk begonnen ze elkaar pas weer tegen te komen toen de oorlog begon. Ze kwamen in dezelfde oorlogs-schuilplaats terecht, samen met hun kind. Het was een heel groot gebouw.

Ze deed heel afstandelijk naar hem, maar toch spraken ze met elkaar. Ze hadden immers samen een kind. Het kind was na al die jaren nog heel klein, als een peutertje, alsof het kind maar niet wilde groeien, en had nog voortdurend zorg nodig. Hij was bij het kind om zorg te dragen, ergens in de hoek van het gebouw in een openbare ruimte. Er waren ook wat meisjes bij die met het kind speelden. De moeder van zijn kind had hem verteld dat haar vriend was vermoord, en ze wilde wraak nemen, wat hij heel goed kon begrijpen. Maar later begon hij zich toch zorgen te maken, omdat ze gekke dingen wilde doen. Hij kreeg te horen dat ze op het punt stond om een tegenmoord te plegen, en daarom wilde hij direct naar haar toe om haar daar van af te houden. Ze zou daarvoor naar een andere oorlogsschuilplaats zijn gegaan

wat in de buurt lag. Hij vroeg aan de meisjes of ze op het kind wilden passen zo lang. De meisjes waren nog best wel jong, dus eigenlijk zag hij dat niet zitten, maar hij moest en zou naar de moeder van zijn kind gaan. Toen hij was aangekomen bij de andere oorlogsschuilplaats kwam hij haar al snel tegen. Ze had de moord nog niet gepleegd, en hij hield haar direct tegen. ‘Doe dat nou niet, want dan kom je in de gevangenis,’ zei hij tegen haar. Ze scheen alweer wat rustiger te zijn, en was het ook helemaal met hem eens.

‘Ik weet dat het zwaar is dat je vriend is vermoord,’ zei hij. Hij keek haar aan, en hield haar vast. ‘Ik houd van je,’ zei hij. Ze zei niets terug. Daarna had ze het over andere dingen, en liepen ze samen terug naar hun eigen oorlogs-schuilplaats. Ze was afstandelijk, zo afstandelijk dat hij zich afvroeg of ze wel echt ooit getrouwd waren geweest. Hij begon aan alles te twijfelen. ‘We hebben toch samen een kind ?’ vroeg hij. ‘Dat betekent dat we ervoor gevreeën hebben ?’

Dat gaf ze toe. ‘Zie, dan ben ik toch niet gek,’ zei hij.

Er was teveel gebeurd. Ze was er nooit overheen gekomen wat hij haar vroeger had aangedaan door bij haar weg te gaan. In die tijd hadden vriendinnen van haar geprobeerd hem weer terug te doen laten komen. Ze vonden hem hard, onvergevingsgezind. ‘Waarom vergeef je haar niet gewoon ?’ vroegen ze hem in die periode. Hij kon haar wel vergeven, maar niet meer vertrouwen, had hij toen gezegd, maar dat vonden die vriendinnen geen vergeving. Hij vond dat vreemd, alsof hij gedwongen werd haar te vertrouwen, terwijl hij vond dat ze niet te vertrouwen was. Maar het leek alsof hij er nu allemaal weer mee zat, en hij kwam erachter dat hij toch nog wel wat gevoelens voor haar had. Ze was wel wat ouder geworden. Ze was wat ouder dan hem. Hij besloot er maar een nachtje over te slapen. Misschien was het allemaal een grote flashback. Toen hij de volgende dag wakker werd vroeg hij zich af wat er was gebeurd. Hij dacht er aan terug en

vroeg zich af : ‘Wat moet ik eigenlijk met haar ?’ Toen hij de dag daarvoor tegen haar had gezegd dat hij van haar hield vond hij eigenlijk al dat hij te ver was gegaan, en hij had toen gehoopt dat ze niks zou terugzeggen, want hij wilde echt niet terug naar haar. ‘Oh, wat zeg ik nu allemaal,’ had hij gedacht. Als dat maar goed ging. Hij wilde haar natuurlijk geen valse hoop geven, maar haar vriend was vermoord, en ze had bijna iemand anders vermoord, dus hij wilde ook geen koele kikker zijn. Ze had hem nodig op dat moment, maar het kon nooit meer zijn zoals vroeger. Dat wilden ze beiden niet. Ze waren beiden te verwond. Beiden vertrouwden ze elkaar niet meer. Maar door hun kind, die trouwens maar niet wilde groeien en altijd hulp, zorg en toezicht nodig had, waren ze voor altijd aan elkaar verbonden.

Het was oorlog. De oorlog bracht hen bij elkaar. Ze waren in dezelfde oorlogs-schuilplaats. Het was een vreemd soort van gezin, terwijl het helemaal geen gezin was.

Ze waren gescheiden, maar waren noodgedwongen met elkaar te leven. Ze werden heen en weer geslingerd tussen afstandelijkheid en toenadering voor de lieve vrede. Toen hij die ochtend van zijn kamer naar beneden liep, naar de openbare ruimte, zag hij dat alles was veranderd. Ze hadden lopen schuiven, en hij herkende het bijna niet meer terug. Het was zo prachtig geworden, terwijl het daarvoor ook al prachtig was.

Hij liep door het gebouw en dacht na, ook over de moeder van zijn kinderen, hoe het verder moest. Het was een ongemakkelijke situatie. Hij wilde haar eigenlijk niet meer zien, want het bracht teveel terug. Het was als het leven in een koude oorlog met haar, en dan zo dichtbij, en hij vond dat ook niet goed voor het kind. Het kind was heel gevoelig, en zou dat misschien ook allemaal kunnen voelen, die spanning. Het kind kon nog steeds niet praten na al die jaren. Hij vroeg zich af met wat voor trauma zijn kind liep. Bij de geboorte was er iets niet goed gegaan.

Het was oorlog, en er speelde zich ook een oorlog af in de oorlogs-schuilplaats, een koude oorlog tussen hem en de moeder van zijn kind. Het was een raadsel voor hem waarom ze beiden in dezelfde oorlogs-schuilplaats waren geplaatst, terwijl ze zo'n verleden hadden. Het bleef maar aan hem knagen. Hij had rust nodig. Eén oorlog was al erg genoeg. Het was allemaal teveel voor hem. Hij besloot overplaatsing aan te vragen naar een andere oorlogs-schuilplaats. Die bleek dieper onder de grond te zijn. Hij zag dat wel zitten. Hij kon direct gaan, maar maakte zich zorgen om zijn kind.

'Hoe moet dat nu met ons en met ons kind ?' vroeg hij aan de moeder van zijn kind. Ze keek hem aan en zei niets. 'Je gaat maar,' zei ze toen. Ze zei het bijna snauwend. Hij gaf haar een omhelzing, maar ze drukte hem van haar weg. 'Heb je ooit echt van me gehouden ?' vroeg ze.

'Ja, dat heb ik, maar het ging niet meer,' zei hij.

‘Ga maar,’ zei ze. ‘Ga de gemakkelijke weg maar.’

‘Niks is makkelijk,’ zei hij. ‘Je weet niet hoe ik me voel.’

Ze zweeg. ‘Ik ben er klaar mee,’ zei ze. ‘We hebben elkaar niks meer te zeggen. Ga nu maar. Het is goed. Ik begrijp het.’

Hij zuchtte diep. ‘Echt, ik moet dit doen. Ik heb rust nodig. Deze koude, vreemde oorlog vreet aan mijn zenuwen. Het vreet me op. Echt, ik vertrouw je niet. Er zijn gewoon dingen die niet kloppen. Heus, ik ken je verleden, maar je kunt niet alles op je verleden schuiven. Wanneer veranderen dingen nu eens in je ?’

‘Ik kan het niet,’ zei ze. ‘Ik probeer het wel, maar het lukt me gewoon niet. Dankzij jou zit ik niet in de gevangenis, want ik was bijna doorgedraaid, en dat schept weer een band, dus ik ga je wel missen.’

Hij zuchtte weer. ‘Je hebt hulp nodig,’ zei hij. ‘Ben je nog steeds aan de drugs ?’

Ze knikte. Even was er een glimlachje. ‘Moet wel, hè.’

‘Nou, je betaalt er anders veel voor,’ zei hij.

‘Ik weet het,’ zei ze. ‘Kun je nu doorlopen ?’

Toen is hij maar doorgelopen. Hij moest naar het station van de ondergrondse. Die ging heel diep. De oorlogs-schuilplaats waar hij naartoe zou gaan lag heel diep in de aarde. Toen hij in de ondergrondse zat las hij zijn krantje. Er stond veel in over de oorlog. Zo ging dat elke dag. Pas na een paar uur kwam hij aan in de ondergrondse oorlogs-schuilplaats. Het was er warm, en er was ook natuurgebied. Het voelde tropisch aan. Soms moesten ze extra zuurstof krijgen door een soort masker met een tank. Hij kreeg een kamer toegewezen. Het was er vaak benauwd. Ze werkten aan betere

zuurstofvoorzieningen, en ook andere manieren om beter te kunnen ademen. Ze werkten zelfs aan betere stoffen dan zuurstof voor de ademhaling, wat een heel ander en beter leven scheen te geven. Het bleek dat zuurstof voor veel problemen zorgde, vreemde hallucinaties gaf ook, waardoor mensen in een soort schijnwereld leefden. Hier in de ondergrondse oorlogs-schuilplaats, wat als een soort dorp was, als een nieuwe wereld, waren ze al veel verder met wetenschap en techniek.

Hij kreeg er een baan en wat bijscholing. Van de oorlog merkten ze niet veel, maar er was wel een andere soort oorlog, een wetenschappelijke oorlog. Wel las hij veel over de oorlog boven de grond in de dagelijkse krant. Dat hield hij goed bij. Hij dacht veel aan zijn kind en aan de moeder van zijn kind. Als ze hier verder zouden zijn met wetenschap en techniek zouden zijn kind en de moeder van zijn kind hier ook misschien wel kunnen komen, maar dan zou de moeder van zijn kind wel in een ander

gebouw moeten leven, niet dichtbij hem, want dan zouden de problemen weer opnieuw beginnen, maar hij had ook de hoop dat ze hier misschien genezen zou kunnen worden.

Er waren hier levensvormen die niet van zuurstof leefden maar van andere levensbronnen, en die hadden niet de problemen van boven de grond, alhoewel wel weer andere problemen. Het scheen dat ze hierdoor een hogere intelligentie hadden. Het gaf hem weer wat hoop voor zijn kind, en de moeder van zijn kind, en natuurlijk voor hemzelf. Hij leerde over de gevaren van zuurstof, van de bijwerkingen, als van een soort gifgas, en er waren ook andere vormen van zuurstof, maar hier leefde men meer en meer van hogere levensbronnen, en hij was blij met de informatie. Hij leerde hier veel, ook over wat hem al die tijd was achtergehouden. Hij probeerde toen ook overplaatsing aan te vragen voor zijn kind en de moeder van zijn kind, maar dat werd afgewezen. Het zou te gevaarlijk zijn. De

redenen werden niet gegeven, maar hij kon wel wat redenen bedenken.

Op een dag las hij in de krant dat het boven de grond helemaal mis was gegaan. De oorlog had grote gebieden verwoest. Het was helemaal uit de hand gelopen. Ook van de oorlogs-schuilplaats waar zijn kind en de moeder van zijn kind waren was weinig overgebleven. Hij schrok en vroeg zich af of ze nog leefden. Hij probeerde informatie in te winnen, maar het werd hem niet gegeven. Hij werd kwaad en eiste direct informatie. Ze zeiden tegen hem dat hij moest kalmeren. Dat kon hij niet. Hij wilde toen met de ondergrondse naar boven, maar dat zou te gevaarlijk zijn, en de toegang werd hem geweigerd. Hij trok zich terug op zijn kamer en wilde niet meer eten. Dat kon hij niet. Wekenlang kon hij niet werken, en hij besloot opnieuw om informatie op te vragen over de toestand van zijn kind en de moeder van zijn kind, maar weer werd het niet gegeven. Hij wilde opheldering.

Hij moest en zou naar boven, maar telkens weer liep hij met zijn hoofd tegen de muur. Al gauw stond er in de kranten dat het boven de grond niet meer leefbaar was. Een atoomoorlog had alles verwoest, en door de straling en andere gevolgen ervan zou er nergens geen leven meer zijn. Ze hadden nog geprobeerd te redden wat ze konden redden, en hen die gered waren zouden met de ondergrondse naar een tussenstation zijn gegaan. Daar zou ook nog een oorlogs-schuilplaats zijn, maar het lag niet zo diep als de oorlogs-schuilplaats waar hij was. Het gaf hem weer wat hoop. Misschien hadden zijn kind en de moeder van zijn kind het toch overleefd.

Weer werd hem geen informatie gegeven toen hij er om vroeg. Hij wilde direct naar het tussen-station wat minder diep in de aarde lag, maar ook dat werd hem geweigerd. Het zou te gevaarlijk zijn. Wel zeiden ze dat hij een telefoontje kon verwachten.

Hij wachtte lang in zijn kamer. Uren gingen voorbij. Toen werd hij gebeld. Het was de moeder van zijn kind. Hij huilde, en was opgelucht dat ze nog leefde. Ze was ijskoud. Afstandelijk. ‘Leeft ons kind nog ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Vanwaar je interesse ?’ vroeg ze.

‘Zeg op, leeft ons kind nog, of niet ? Ik heb recht het te weten. Of moet ik bij je komen ?’ vroeg hij weer.

‘Je kunt niet komen,’ zei ze hardvochtig. ‘Er wordt hier niemand zomaar toegelaten.’

‘En waarom niet ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Te gevaarlijk, dat weet je,’ zei ze.

‘Toe nou, zeg het me,’ smeekte hij. ‘Leeft ons kind nog, of niet ?’

‘Ja,’ zei ze koud en op een beschuldigende toon. ‘Ons kind leeft nog, maar dan moet je niet zien hoe.’

‘Hoe ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Dat ga ik je niet vertellen. Kom zelf maar,’ zei ze nijdig.

‘Ja, maar dat kan dus niet,’ zei hij.

‘Had je het maar eerder moeten doen,’ zei ze kwaad.

‘Kon niet,’ zei hij. ‘We hadden geen andere keuze. Probeer me geen schuldgevoel aan te praten over dingen waar ik niks aan kon doen. We proberen wel wat. Hier dieper in de aarde zijn diepere en betere levensbronnen waar we uit kunnen leven. Het zal langzaam de zuurstof vervangen die voor veel problemen heeft gezorgd.’

‘Wat voor problemen ?’ snauwde ze.

‘Nou ja, allerlei vreemde soorten hallucinaties, vreemde gedachtenkronkels.

Het heeft de mensen tegen elkaar opgezet, en daardoor was er oorlog,’ zei hij.

Ze was even stil. ‘Zeg, ik ga ophangen,’ zei ze toen. ‘Mijn tijd is bijna op. Ik spreek je wel weer.’

Toen ze ophing zuchtte hij. Hij was blij dat ze beiden nog leefden, maar hij maakte zich zorgen om de toestand van zijn kind.

‘Grote God, wij loven u, Heer oh sterkste aller sterken, heel de wereld buigt voor u en bewondert uwe werken,’ bad hij. Hij ging op zijn bed liggen, met zijn hoofd in zijn kussen. Het ademen ging weer even moeilijk, en daarom bediende hij zichzelf wat zuurstof toe via een masker met een tank. Er was een switch op het apparaat waarmee je het kon verstellen. Er waren andere vormen van zuurstof die je kon aanklikken, en ook andere levensbronnen, maar in de bijsluiter stond dat je daar voorzichtig mee moest zijn, want het menselijk lichaam was daar nog niet aan gewend. Als er teveel van die levensbronnen

werd toegediend, dan switchte het soms weer terug naar zuurstof. Hij vroeg zich af wat voor leven zijn kind en de moeder van zijn kind hier zouden hebben, maar hij had hoop voor de toekomst.

Er waren een heleboel dingen die niet konden. Daar moest hij genoegen mee nemen. Gevaar dreigde overal, dus daarom waren er zoveel restricties. Het leek alsof er prikkeldraad om zijn hoofd zat, om zijn denken, maar hij wist waar het goed voor was. Zo leefde hij zijn leven, en hij leerde er steeds weer wat bij, en de wetenschap en de techniek maakten grote sprongen. Er kwam ook steeds meer contact met de andere levensvormen die vanuit de andere levensbronnen leefden. Zij hadden geen zuurstof meer nodig, en waren daarom veel intelligenter. Met bepaalde apparaten kon er met dat soort levensvormen gecommuniceerd worden, maar er waren ook andere manieren. De andere levensvormen hier zochten meer en meer contact met hem, en ze leerden hem te communiceren met hen. Ze leefden veel

dieper onder de aarde, en ze vertelden hem over andere werelden. Het was alsof er een wereld voor hem open ging. Ze trokken hem mee. Dat ging voornamelijk door zijn dromen, maar als hij wakker was gebeurde dat ook door sterke telepathie. De apparaten had hij steeds minder nodig. De levensvormen leerden hem andere manieren en mogelijkheden. Ze vertelden hem over de zee onder de aarde en hoe je daar zou kunnen komen, en wat voor levensbronnen daar waren. Hij kwam er meer en meer achter in wat voor vreemde hallucinatie hij had geleefd, als in een bubbel. Die bubbel was nu uit elkaar gespat. Ze konden hem nu meenemen. Maar de apparaten zorgden ervoor dat het niet te ver ging. De apparaten bewaakten de veiligheid van de mens. Dan switchte het weer terug.

Zijn lichaam kon veel nog niet verdragen. Er was nog een soort overgevoeligheid. De mens was verslaafd aan zuurstof. De mens kon nog niet zonder zuurstof. Er moest eerst veel meer gebeuren.

Op een dag kreeg hij wel een heel vreemd telefoontje. Het was een telefoontje van zijn kind. Het kind sprak niet veel en duidelijk, eigenlijk alleen maar wat woordjes die hij niet begreep. Hij zei wat dingen terug, en vertelde dat hij er blij mee was. Hij vertelde ook waar hij mee bezig was, en waar ze hier mee bezig waren. Meer kon hij niet doen. Na een tijdje werd de verbinding verbroken.

Hij zuchtte, maar hij was blij. Het ging dus de goede kant op. Hij vroeg zich af of de moeder van zijn kind nog steeds aan de drugs was.

Op een dag was er een invasie van de andere levensvormen in de oorlogs-schuilplaats waar hij was. Ze namen hem mee in natuurgebied wat hij nog niet kende. Ze brachten hem naar een boom die bewoonbaar was binnenin. Het was een reusachtige boom. Ze vertelden hem dat ze ook een invasie hadden gedaan in de oorlogs-schuilplaats van het tussenstation. Ze hadden de moeder van zijn kind en zijn kind ook meegenomen naar de boom, maar die

waren ergens anders in de boom. De boom had vele verdiepingen van oorlogs-schuilplaatsen. Er was ook een zee dichtbij. Daar ging hij weleens naartoe. Er was een groot strand daar. Er waren hier andere soorten lichtbronnen. Ze waren nog dieper in de aarde gekomen. Hier kon het menselijk lichaam nog meer wennen. Hier kon het menselijk lichaam nog beter leven van de andere levensbronnen. Zuurstof was hier minder en minder nodig, en kon geheel afgebouwd worden. In dat traject zat hij nu, en ook de moeder van zijn kind en zijn kind.

Het was hier op deze plaats, in deze boom, dat de moeder van zijn kind langzaam van de drugs begon af te komen, en zijn kind begon hier te groeien en leerde spreken. De andere levensvormen hielden alles goed in de gaten. Het waren allemaal natuurverschijnselen, die hij steeds meer en meer begon te begrijpen. Ook begon hij zijn verleden meer en meer te begrijpen en begon steeds meer op zijn plaats te vallen.

Vaak ging hij zwemmen in de zee, en soms nam hij ook zijn kind mee, en de moeder van zijn kind. Dingen waren anders hier. Hij dacht veel na over dingen, maar kon ook dingen makkelijker vergeten. Het knaagde niet meer zoveel aan hem. Hij kon de moeder van zijn kind nog steeds niet vertrouwen, want ze waren te verschillend. Maar hij kon wel plezier met haar hebben in de zee. Dan was het even alsof ze iemand anders was, en alsof ze weer bij elkaar waren, alsof het nooit verkeerd gegaan was tussen hen.

Einde

SCHEVE HENDRIK

Hij klaagde over het zien van jongenshoofden in bomen. Anderen zagen het niet. Het bleef maar aanhouden, en ze zeiden dat hij maar eens naar de dokter moest gaan. Hij ging naar de dokter en vertelde zijn verhaal. De dokter vermoedde dat het kwam doordat hij te hard had gewerkt. ‘Neem maar een tijd rust, dan gaat het vanzelf wel over.’

Dat zou hij doen. Hij zou voor een tijd met verlof gaan van zijn drukke baan. Maar het ging niet weg. Hij zag nog steeds jongenshoofden die leken te groeien in de bomen, en de jongenshoofden begonnen ook hem meer en meer uit te schelden en te verwensen. Om hem heen vonden ze dat ook lastig, want zij zagen en hoorden immers niets, dus weer zeiden ze dat hij maar terug naar de dokter moest, en de dokter maar eens moest smeken om wat goede medicijnen.

Zo gebeurde het. Hij ging terug naar de dokter. Hij vertelde de dokter dat het alleen

maar erger was geworden, en de dokter begon te zoeken in een kaartenbak. Na een tijdje haalde de dokter een kaart eruit. ‘Hier is het,’ zei de dokter. ‘Het zien van jongenshoofden in bomen. Dat moet toch echt met rust behandeld worden. Ik laat u wel naar een rustoord gaan, want het is nog steeds te druk in uw omgeving. U heeft totale rust nodig.’

Zo gebeurde het. Hij ging naar een rustoord aan zee. Het was een heel mooi gebouw met vele kamers, allemaal op de eerste verdieping, en er waren allemaal rijen die tegenover elkaar lagen. Ook de tuin was heel mooi en groot, als een natuurpark. Hij voelde er direct op zijn gemak. Hij kreeg een rustige kamer toegewezen ergens in een hoek.

Er was ook een gezamenlijke kamer waar ze elkaar konden ontmoeten. Dat was niet verplicht, maar dat wilde hij wel. Hij kwam daar al snel anderen tegen die hetzelfde probleem hadden als hem. Zij zagen ook jongenshoofden groeien aan de bomen, en die scholden ook tegen hen. Sommigen durfden

daardoor niet meer naar buiten. Maar er zaten ook mensen met andere problemen, mensen die gewoon zwaar depressief waren of overspannen, of weer andere dingen. Hij ontmoette er iemand die hem vertelde dat hij dan een boer nodig had die die jongenshoofden zou oogsten. Hij wilde daar direct meer van weten. Die persoon verwees hem toen door naar iemand genaamd Scheve Hendrik. Hij werd zo genoemd omdat hij altijd een beetje scheef liep en iedereen scheef aankeek. Scheve Hendrik werd ook wel de boer genoemd, omdat hij de jongenshoofden zou kunnen oogsten, maar dan moest je daar wel heel veel voor betalen. Je moest je erzelf scheef voor betalen. Maar hij had dat er wel voor over. Hij had een goede baan, en een goed inkomen, dus hij waagde het erop.

Hij zou hiervoor midden in de nacht naar buiten moeten, bij een boom gaan staan, en dan drie keer fluiten, dan zou Scheve Hendrik vanzelf komen. Zo gezegd zo gedaan. Midden in de nacht ging hij naar buiten,

zocht een boom op en floot daar drie keer. Even was het stil. Hij zag wel wat jongenshoofden in de boom, maar die sliepen gelukkig. Toen in de verte zag hij een gestalte aankomen. De gestalte was geheel in het zwart, met een zwarte hoed op, en liep een beetje scheef. Dat moest Scheve Hendrik wel zijn. Toen de man dichtbij hem was gekomen viel hem nog wat op : gouden tanden. De man stak zijn hand uit en keek hem heel scheef aan. ‘Hebt u mij geroepen ?’ vroeg de man. Hij schudde de hand van de man en knikte. ‘Ik zou graag van het zien van jongenshoofden in de bomen af willen komen,’ zei hij.

‘Die moeten geoogst worden,’ zei de man, ‘als ze rijp zijn tenminste. Ik wil dat wel doen, maar ik ben niet goedkoop.’

‘Maakt me niet uit,’ zei hij, ‘als die hoofden maar weg gaan, want ik wordt er ziek van. Kan ik ze trouwens niet zelf oogsten ?’

‘Zou ik maar niet aan beginnen,’ zei Scheve Hendrik.

‘Waarom niet ?’ vroeg hij nieuwsgierig.

‘Ze bijten als wolven,’ zei Scheve Hendrik.

‘Nou, doe jij het dan maar,’ zei hij.

‘Eerst betalen,’ zei Scheve Hendrik.

Hij gaf hem wat geld.

‘Meer,’ zei Scheve Hendrik.

Toen gaf hij nog wat geld.

‘Nog meer,’ zei Scheve Hendrik, en toen hij nog meer begon te geven zei Scheve Hendrik ineens : ‘Stop, nu is het genoeg.’

Scheve Hendrik keek naar de boom. De boom was vol met jongenshoofden, maar dat was het geval in iedere boom. ‘Ze zijn goed

rijp, ja,’ zei Scheve Hendrik. ‘Geef me een nachtje de tijd.’

En zo ging hij terug naar het rustoord, en liet Scheve Hendrik het werk doen. De volgende dag was hij heel nieuwsgierig. Hij ging naar buiten, en keek in het rond, naar de bloemen, de struiken, en ook naar de bomen, en tot zijn grote verbazing waren er geen jongenshoofden meer in de bomen. Hij wilde direct naar huis en weer werken, maar dat werd hem niet aangeraden. Hij moest het maar eens even rustig aankijken.

De volgende dag was het nog steeds goed. Hij zag nog steeds geen jongenshoofden in de bomen, maar na een paar dagen waren er weer wat kleintjes. ‘Daar begint het weer,’ zei hij tegen zichzelf. ‘Wanneer stopt dit nu eens, want nu gaan ze natuurlijk weer groeien en dan schelden, schelden en nog eens schelden, wat van kwaad tot erger gaat.’

En zo gebeurde dat ook, en hij werd hoe langer hoe gekker ervan. ‘Het is voorbij met

mijn rust,’ zei hij. ‘Ik wil niet telkens naar Scheve Hendrik gaan, want dat kost me hopen geld.’ Hij vroeg zich af of er een andere manier was. Maar op een gegeven moment werd hij er zo gek van en werd hij het zo zat dat hij midden in de nacht maar weer naar Scheve Hendrik zou gaan. Toen hij die nacht weer bij dezelfde boom stond en drie keer floot was Scheve Hendrik snel bij hem. ‘Weer mis, jongen ?’ vroeg Scheve Hendrik.

‘Ja,’ zei hij, ‘weer mis, helemaal mis.’

Hij stak zijn hand met geld alweer uit naar Scheve Hendrik.

‘Wacht even,’ zei Scheve Hendrik. ‘Ik geef altijd korting de tweede keer, maar ik heb ook iets in de aanbieding.’ Scheve Hendrik haalde toen een bijltje uit zijn jas. ‘Hier kun je het zelf wel mee doen.’

‘Wat moet ik er mee doen ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Nou, kappen, maar het is lang werk,’ zei Scheve Hendrik.

‘Zint me niet,’ zei hij. ‘Doe jij het maar. Ik betaal er graag voor.’

Maar ineens was Scheve Hendrik weg, en hij zag ook nog wat geld hier en daar liggen van de vorige keer. ‘Hmmm, volgens mij heb ik dit allemaal me lopen verbeelden,’ zei hij tegen zichzelf. Hij raapte het geld op, en liep terug. De volgende dag wilde hij de dokter spreken. Het rustoord had ook een dokter, dus daar ging hij naartoe. Nu had hij twee problemen. Hij zag jongenshoofden groeien in de bomen die op hem scholden en hem uittierden, die de spot met hem dreven en hem bedreigden, en hij had het Scheve Hendrik syndroom, wat hem dan zogenaamd een oplossing bood.

‘Het Scheve Hendrik syndroom,’ zei de dokter, ‘ja, dat moet je dan van anderen hebben overgenomen, want er lopen er hier zat rond met het Scheve Hendrik syndroom.

Ze denken dat ze alles voor elkaar kunnen krijgen met Scheve Hendrik, maar die bestaat dus helemaal niet. En ze praten dan ook anderen die Scheve Hendrik aan, en dan moet je zogenaamd geld betalen, en dat rapen zij dan even later op, of ze laten het liggen. Ik heb daar heel veel voorbeelden van.’

‘Ja, dan ben ik er ook ingeluisd,’ zei hij, ‘maar ik heb hem toch echt gezien, alhoewel ik later wel nog wat van mijn geld terugvond.’

‘Precies,’ zei de dokter. ‘Ziet u, het is nogal besmettelijk. Maar u heeft wel een paar goede dagen gehad hè ?’

‘Ja, nadat ik die Scheve Hendrik had ontmoet, ja,’ zei hij. ‘Het scheen echt te werken, maar ...’

‘Ja, ja,’ zei de dokter, ‘en toen kwam u er dus achter dat ... het toch niet helemaal was wat het leek. Je bent dan gewoon heel manisch

met die verbeeldingen, en dat schommelt dan gewoon heen en weer.’

‘Ja,’ zei hij, ‘maar wat doe ik daar dan aan, of kunt u dan niets doen, heeft u niet misschien een medicijntje hiertegen ?’

‘Veel rust,’ zei de dokter. ‘U bent hier in aanraking gekomen met vreemde types, waarvan sommigen dus ook het Scheve Hendrik syndroom hebben, en sommigen maken er ook misbruik van om anderen geld af te troggelen. Ze spelen soms zelf ook voor Scheve Hendrik. Dan doen ze een zwart pak aan en zetten een zwarte hoed op.’

‘Met gouden tanden ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Ja, dat moet Emiel zijn,’ lachte de dokter.

‘Ja, maar dan moet het toch echt geweest zijn die eerste keer, want die ben ik dus tegengekomen,’ zei hij.

‘Ze hebben hier ook eens in het jaar het Scheve Hendrik feest,’ lachte de dokter. ‘Dan verkleed iedereen zich als Scheve Hendrik, en dan gaan ze het dorp in.’

‘In een grote optocht ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Ja,’ lachte de dokter. ‘Dan nemen ze iedereen beet met hun spookverhalen. Dat kan soms flink uit de hand lopen.’

‘Wow,’ zei hij, ‘maar hoe kom ik hier dan tot rust ? Ik word hier gewoon voor de gek gehouden.’

‘Ach,’ zei de dokter. ‘Het schijnt wel therapeutisch te werken. Een geintje op zijn tijd kan wonderen doen.’

‘Dat geloof ik,’ zei hij. ‘Het zal ook wel een hoop nieuwsgierigheid opwekken vanwege al die geheimzinnigheid, of die Scheve Hendrik nu wel of niet bestaat, net zoals bij het monster van Loch Ness.’

‘Nou,’ zei de dokter, ‘dat is helemaal waar. Mensen kunnen daar enorm van opknappen, als door een avontuur of speurtocht.’

‘Het zal ook wel veel toeristen trekken,’ zei hij.

De dokter knikte. ‘Zeg,’ zei hij, ‘zie jij het niet zitten om voor Scheve Hendrik te spelen ? Het zal anderen misschien goede hoop schenken, en je helpt jezelf er ook mee. Even jezelf in iemand anders verplaatsen. Kun je ook nog een leuk zakcentje mee verdienen.’

Hij keek de dokter even vreemd aan. ‘Heus, doe ik ook weleens,’ zei de dokter. Maar toen begon de stem van de dokter weg te vagen, en ook de dokter zelf. Hij keek aan tegen een lege stoel. Hij knipperde even met zijn ogen. Nee, de dokter was toch echt weg. Maar waar was hij ? Hij scheen gewoon langs de kant van de weg te zitten en had slechts tegen een boom gesproken.

‘Nu is het toch echt mis met mij,’ zei hij tegen zichzelf. En hij zag de jongenshoofden weer in de boom, en ze lachten hem uit en dreven de spot met hem. ‘Ik ben goed erin geluisd,’ zei hij tegen zichzelf. ‘Ik ben flink bedonderd. Ik kan niets of niemand hier nog vertrouwen. Hoe ben ik hier nou terecht gekomen aan de kant van de weg ?’

Hij strompelde terug naar het rustoord en ging daar op zijn bed liggen. ‘Ik moet zwaar overwerkt zijn. Ik moet gewoon zoveel mogelijk op mijn kamer blijven en rust nemen. Geen andere mensen opzoeken. Zo min mogelijk. Scheve Hendrik, hoe komen ze erbij. Of misschien moet ik het maar nemen zoals het is, er mee leren leven, en roeien met de riemen die ik heb, en misschien me zelf maar gaan kleden als Scheve Hendrik en een beetje scheef lopen en scheef kijken. Misschien dat ik dan rust heb, en die jongenshoofden de baas kan.’

Maar na wat langer daarover nadenken vond hij dat maar niks. Hij wilde niet in een zwart

pak lopen en al helemaal niet met een zwarte hoed. Hij wilde in ieder geval voorlopig niet meer naar buiten. ‘Het is flink mis met me,’ dacht hij bij zichzelf. Hij kon dus ook geen dokters meer vertrouwen, want die bestonden misschien dus helemaal niet eens.

Hij moest zijn eigen dokter maar zijn, want om hem heen kon hij toch niets en niemand meer vertrouwen. Of misschien moest hij toch maar eens van zijn drugsverslaving zien af te komen. Toevallig heette die drugs ook Scheve Hendrik. Nou ja, toevallig ?

DE LETTERMAKER

De lettermaker werkt 's nachts altijd door,
Altijd is hij op,
Een lettertje hier, een lettertje daar,
Hij is er maar druk mee

De lettermaker let niet op,
Hij heeft het te druk voor verhalen,
Nooit heeft hij voor iets anders tijd,
Alleen maar zijn letters te maken

De lettermaker poetst zijn letters op,
En zet ze in zijn etalage,
Toe koopt toch al uw letters hier,
Het is een hele rage

De lettermaker schildert zijn letters op in
allerlei bonte kleuren,
Een vrouw in een bontjas kwam eens tot hem,
En zei het was niet haar stijl,
Toen heeft hij haar de deur uitgezet,
En ook haar misselijke hondje

Maar in haar handtasje verborg zij giftige
werktuigen,
Toen ging zij terug de winkel binnen, en
begon hem te bespuiten,
Oh wee, sprak de lettermaker, nu, weet gij
wat ik zal doen met u ?
Ik zal een letter van u maken, en u zult zeker
in mijn boeken komen

Het was voor de lettermaker maar een koud
kunstje,
En nu staat ook zij in de etalage,
Dat is het loon van hen die het werk van de
lettermaker geen warm hart toedragen

Oh letterman, oh letterman, gij maakt letters
van uw vijanden in een pan,
Oh letterman, oh letterman, een
gewaarschuwd mens telt voor twee,
Zij die in zijn winkel komen en zijn werk niet
waarderen,
Moeten zonder pardon als zijn letters
paraderen,
Zij komen nooit meer uit zijn winkel,
In zijn etalage hebben zij hun plaats,

Als een waarschuwing voor hen die de taal
nooit leren

Oh lettermaker, oh lettermaker, gij maakt
letters in uw pan,
Gij kookt hen op voor hen die honger hebben
naar taal,
Ja, taal zal alles goedmaken,
De lettermaker op zijn paard,
Als een schrijver op zijn letters,
Trek maar aan de letters,
Als een schrijver trekkende zijn zwaard

De lettermaker is nooit ziek,
Maar zijn letters kunnen flink ziek zijn,
Maar dan geeft hij van hun eigen deeg hen
een medicijn

Oh letterman, oh letterman, de letters draaien
in de pan,
Geen goed idee voor hen om de benen te
nemen,
Want als het alfabet een letter mist,
Dan gaat hij op jacht, richt zijn pijl,
En zorgt dat hij niet mist

Oh lettermaker, oh lettermaker, gij roept al
uw letters van de daken,
Daar komen zij al hollend aan,
Want thuis is het toch het beste gedaan

De Stenen Wachters

Er was eens een oude koning die wachters van steen had. In de nachten kwam er een vreemd vuur over hen, opdat zij tot leven zouden komen. Dan voerden ze onzichtbare oorlogen waar niemand vanaf wist. Op een dag stierf de koning, en de stenen wachters erfden het kasteel van de koning. Ze kwamen tot zijn geheime vertrekken waar nog nooit iemand van hen was geweest. Ze zagen daar een huilend meisje van vuur zitten. Ze vroegen het meisje wat er aan de hand was. Het meisje snikte dat ze al zo lang opgesloten werd gehouden hier, maar dat zij altijd haar vuur zond naar de wachters om hen tot leven te wekken. Zij was het nachtvuur. Ze was erg eenzaam.
De wachters vroegen haar waarom de oude koning haar opgesloten hield hier. Het meisje sprak dat omdat zij een bijzondere kracht had, namelijk die van de genezing van harten, en de koning wilde dit niet voor de mensen,

want dan zouden de dokters geen werk meer hebben.
De wachters schrokken hier wel een beetje van. Het meisje kon ervoor zorgen dat ze niet meer in steen zouden veranderen. Ze brachten het meisje van vuur naar buiten in de open lucht, en al snel begon ze mensen te genezen. Maar de dokters waren erg boos. Zij wilden dat het meisje zou verdwijnen. Het liep uit op een burgeroorlog tussen de dokters en de wachters van de koning. De dokters konden veranderden in grote wilde, witte katachtigen. Ze grepen het meisje van vuur, ketenden haar, en namen het kasteel in. Hier werd zij in een kerker geworpen, en de wachters van het kasteel veranderden weer in steen. Het meisje begon hard te huilen, zoveel als ze nog nooit had gehuild. Haar vele tranen begonnen door het kasteel heen te stromen. De tranen riepen haar moeder op, het nachtwater. In een grote storm kwam zij tot het kasteel, en brak de deuren open.
'Moeder !' riep het meisje van vuur, en vertelde haar verhaal. Haar moeder was helemaal van water gemaakt, en al spoedig

begon ze het kasteel te overweldigen en sleurde de dokters mee in een sterke stroom. Ze dreef hen tot de zee, waar zij allen verdronken.
Weer begon het meisje over de stenen wachters te komen, en ditmaal ook haar moeder. Dit bleek de combinatie te zijn die hen voor altijd vrijzette. Sindsdien zijn ze allemaal in het kasteel blijven wonen. En het meisje van vuur genas nog vele harten.

Het Roodborstje

De dominee was bij hem gekomen. Ze gingen beiden een film kijken over de zee. Hij kon goed met de dominee opschieten. Vroeger had de dominee een groot schip gehad, voor zendingswerk. De film over de zee ging over de Bermuda driehoek, over mysterieuze verdwijningen. De dominee had het over Izebel, hoe zij naar de profeten was uitgezonden om hen te vervolgen, en over hoe die profeten zich moesten verbergen en niet meer wilden leven. Hij bracht dit op een hele interessante manier in verband met de Bermuda driehoek. De dominee moest hem een beetje opbeuren, want hij lag in een scheiding, en zijn vrouw probeerde van alles om het leven zuur te maken. "Alles wat Izebel wil is jouw schedel, maar jij hebt de wonderen van de natuur," zei de dominee.

Hij zou zelf wel willen vertrekken in de Bermuda driehoek. Misschien had hij dan een beter leven, maar de dominee zei dat hij er dwars doorheen moest, en dat dat juist de Bermuda driehoek was. Alles had een bedoeling volgens de dominee, maar dat kon hij op het moment niet zien.
"Izebel op haar hoge paard, die je kinderen aan een ketting houdt om ze tegen jou te gebruiken," zei de dominee, "maar het heeft ook een dualiteit. Izebel is slechts een kaleidoscopisch verhaal, want ze strijd ook tegen de klauwen van religie. Ook jij bent een Izebel, als een zeebel, als zeeschuim, om los te komen op de golven van de ketenen van religie. Alles heeft een dubbele kant."
Hij knikte naar de dominee.
"Het gaat om de wonderen van de natuur," zei de dominee, "niet wat mensen er van hebben gemaakt."
De dominee kon het altijd zo mooi vertellen.
"Kun je Izebel ook van een nog andere kant bekijken ?" vroeg hij.
"Izebel is een duister schaakbord in de kerk," zei de dominee. "Vaak laten ze het maar van

één kant zien. Izebel was natuurlijk een grote vorstin die van religieuze extremisten te horen keeg dat haar godinnen afgoden waren. In ieder geval is het verhaal symbolisch en kan vanuit verschillende kanten uitgelegd worden. In sommige tradities is Izebel zelf een godin en strijdt tegen de kwade machten van de tirannie van religie, maar dat is een lang verhaal, en dat zit niet simpel in elkaar."
"Ik begrijp het," zei hij. Hij voelde zich nog steeds depressief, ondanks dat de dominee er was en ze samen een film hadden gekeken. De dominee kwam hem vaak opzoeken. De dominee zelf had zijn vrouw verloren door kanker. Ook dat was een soort Bermuda driehoek. Zo hadden ze veel steun aan elkaar. Als hij aan de dominee dacht moest hij altijd ook direct aan zijn kinderen denken die zonder moeder moesten opgroeien. Dat maakte soms zijn depressie nog wel erger. Hij was erg betrokken bij die kinderen.
Het leek wel alsof Izebel cirkels aan het maken was op de ramen, alsof ze aandacht wilde scheppen voor alles wat de kerk zo lang verborgen had gehouden. De dominee

zei ook dat er heel veel met de vertalingen was geknoeid. De dominee stond als het ware tussen kerk en mens in.
Het was alsof Izebel bellen blies, zeepbellen. Ze liet zien dat alles een cyclus was, en draaiende, als caleidoscopisch. In die cirkel zat het geheim verborgen. Vroeger had hij al zulke sprookjesachtige ideeën over Izebel, en hij herinnerde hoe de kleine zeemeermin in een zeepbel veranderde, in zeeschuim, omdat ze haarzelf niet duidelijk kon maken, niet kon spreken. Ze was als achter glas. En zo ging alles wat te zwak was om werkelijkheid te worden achter glas, om verdraaid te worden door de grote massa's. Grote massa's mensen, grote massa's leugenaars, als kannibalen.
Izebel is het zeeschuim wat wij worden, wat anderen van ons maken. Anderen denken voor ons, en vullen alles voor ons in, en zo sterven wij onbegrepen en verkeerd begrepen.
Als een roodborstje tikt zij op het raam, op zoek naar haar Elia. Zouden die twee bij elkaar horen ? Dat zou zo mooi zijn. Het is een onbegrepen en verkeerd begrepen,

misvertaald verhaal, door mensen die de talen, de culturen en de etymologie, de taalgeschiedenis, niet kennen.
Was Izebel oorspronkelijk een sprookje ? En wat is er van haar geworden ?
Als een roodborstje tikt zij op het raam. Elia doet het raam open, en voedt het beestje. Zo gaat dat iedere dag. Elia en Izebel leven samen in een huisje diep in het bos. Niemand weet waar ze zijn en wat ze doen, en daarom verzinnen ze verhalen over hen, en die verhalen worden doorverteld en blijven veranderen totdat er echt helemaal niets meer van klopt. Of toch ? Van verhalen leeft men. Symboliek is een kunst, als een bijzonder medicijn.
Het roodborstje tikt op het raam. Het heeft wat bijzonder kruid meegebracht voor Elia. Elia draait aan zijn orakel, en voorspelt dan de toekomst door het bijzondere kruid en het orakel : allemaal mooie dromen, mooie inzichten, dieper en dieper, want zijn roodborstje is teruggekomen.

Liefdeslittekens

Wilde honden joegen in de nacht. Het was een onbekend soort. Ze waren wilder dan hyena's. Een stadje werd door hen geteisterd. De wetenschap stond voor een raadsel. Waar waren die wilde honden vandaan gekomen ?
Een dominee bezoekt een man die zijn vrouw had verloren. De dominee gebruikte de illustratie van de wilde honden. "Wilde honden jagen in de nacht. Zij namen je vrouw, en zij is nu één van hen."
"Dat is geen lekker idee," zei de man. "Ik dacht dat ze in de hemel was."
"De hemel is onbekend," zei de dominee. "Niemand weet precies hoe het zit. Het is slechts gespeculeer."
Die nacht droomde de man dat hij en zijn vrouw de liefde bedreven. Plotseling veranderde ze in een wilde hond en rende weg. De man schrok wakker en greep om zich heen. Misschien had de dominee toch gelijk gehad ?

Toen hij het de volgende dag aan de dominee vertelde moest de dominee glimlachen. "Zie, ik zei het je toch ? Maar het is maar symbolisch, en dromen zijn vaak bedrog."
"Ja, maar het was net echt," zei de man, "alsof ik weer even contact met haar was, en het was goed. Ik denk dat ze terug is gegaan naar de natuur."
"Ik denk het ook," zei de dominee. "En nog eens wat : Er zijn veel vrouwen vrijgezel in de kerk. Grijp je kans zou ik zeggen."
"Het zit nog veel te diep," zei de man. "Ik kan het allemaal nog maar moeilijk verwerken."
"Maar een nieuwe vrouw zou het je kunnen laten verwerken," zei de dominee.
Die nacht had de man een droom dat ook vrouwen om hem heen in wilde honden veranderden. Nu stond het idee om een nieuwe vrouw te nemen hem helemaal niet meer aan, want het zou hem weer pijn gaan doen. De dominee noemde het bindings-angst. De dominee begreep hem goed, maar zei ook dat zo het leven was, te leren leven met ontvangen en verliezen. De dominee haalde een tekst aan uit het boek Job : "De

Heere heeft gegeven, de Heere heeft genomen. De Naam van de Heere zij geprezen."
De dominee was voor de man een rots in de branding. De wilde honden waren steeds in het nieuws, en de man bleef er bij bepaald. Telkens moest hij weer aan zijn vrouw denken, die in principe gewoon was meegenomen door de wilde honden. Er kwam een bos-verbod vanwege de wilde honden.
De dominee zei dat het een stukje natuur was.
"Waarom komt er geen kerk-verbod vanwege wilde vrouwen in de kerk ?" vroeg de man.
De dominee begon te lachen. "Jij bent me ook een mooie, grapjas."
"Nee, ik meen het," zei de man. "Een nieuwe vrouw hebben zal al lastig zijn, en helemaal als ik ze weer verlies."
"Zo is het leven," zei de dominee, "en je moet toch wat."
"Ik blijf liever alleen, uit het bos, en uit de kerk," zei de man.
"Je kan wel naar de kerk gaan, maar dan gewoon uit de buurt van de wilde honden blijven," zei de dominee.

"Nee, ik ken de natuur van de wilde honden," zei de man. "Ze zullen me echt wel krijgen."
"Dan ben ik gewoon je kerk," zei de dominee. "Waar twee of drie vergaderd zijn is er al een kerk, en je bent zelf een kerk."
"Dat is een mooie, rustgevende gedachte," zei de man. Even voelde hij zo'n diepe liefde voor de dominee dat hij dacht dat hij verliefd op hem was. Hij liep naar de dominee toe en omhelsde hem. "Bedankt man," zei hij. "Je betekent de wereld voor mij."
De dominee hield hem stevig vast.
De man was bang voor de liefde, de wilde honden van de liefde, die hem zo zouden kunnen verscheuren. Hij bleef liever op een afstand om zo de wilde honden veilig te kunnen bestuderen.
Die nacht had hij weer een droom over zijn vrouw. Weer veranderde ze in een wilde hond, en begon naar hem te grommen, en plotseling beet ze hem. Hij vroeg zich af wat zij van hem wilde. De dag erna bleef hij erover nadenken. Was het een boodschap van haar. Wilde zij misschien dat hij weer terug zou gaan naar de kerk, of een nieuwe vrouw

zou nemen ? Schijnbaar was ze ontevreden over iets.
Hij vertelde de droom aan de dominee. "Ik zou dat zo zeker niet zien," zei de dominee. "Het is een beeld van de liefde. Ze heeft je opgezocht, en greep je beet, en het doet pijn, omdat ze er niet meer is. Telkens zal het pijn doen als je met haar bezig bent, alsof ze bijt. Het is het gemis, de onmacht. Nu draag je de littekens van de liefde, de littekens van haar liefdesbeet."
"Oh, dominee, dat is bijna te mooi om waar te zijn," zei de man.
Die nacht was er een overstroming waarin vele mensen het leven verloren. De grote rivier was uit haar bedding getreden. De dominee zei : "De wilde honden zijn gekomen. Ze hebben velen meegenomen."
"Weer liefdeslittekens ?" vroeg de man.
"Weer liefdeslittekens," zei de dominee.

de stiefouders

Juul Strijner fietste van school naar huis. Zijn vader was gym leraar en had weer zo lopen schelden. Toen hij thuiskwam ging het gescheld gewoon verder. En maar naar de drank grijpen, die man. Juul kon er niet mee leven. Hij kreeg overal de schuld van. Als er iets fout ging had hij het altijd gedaan. Zijn moeder deed niks om hem te verdedigen.

Toen zijn moeder overleed werd zijn vader wat rustiger, en beterde zijn leven wat, greep niet meer zo snel naar de drank, maar Juul vertrouwde het niet. Juul kreeg een stiefmoeder. Zijn vader hertrouwde. Juul was dol op zijn stiefmoeder. Zijn stiefmoeder had veel begrip voor hem, luisterde naar hem, en kwam voor hem op. Het duurde niet lang voordat zijn vader ook stierf. Al gauw hertrouwde zijn stiefmoeder. Juul was al snel dol op zijn stiefvader. Deze mensen waren zo anders. Hij kon nu eindelijk over zijn verleden heenkomen.

Juul Strijner fietste naar huis. Fluitend. Hij was gelukkig. Hij had een geweldige stiefmoeder en een geweldige stiefvader. Niets van hen deed hem herinneren aan vroeger. Deze mensen waren zo anders, alsof ze uit de hemel waren gekomen om Juul uit de hel te halen waarin hij leefde.

Toen hij thuis was gekomen omhelsde hij zijn stiefouders. Toen ging hij naar boven om zijn huiswerk te maken. Hij droomde weg. Even moest hij aan zijn moeder denken die hij aan kanker had verloren, en even aan zijn vader die een hartstilstand had gehad. Dat was zijn oude leven, en dat was nu ten einde gekomen. Die mensen waren geen mensen, maar monsters. Hun hele leven hadden ze over Juul gelogen en leugens verspreid naar anderen, allemaal lopen stoken. Vaak wilde Juul niet meer leven. Maar met zijn stiefouders zag hij het leven weer zitten.

Op een avond kwam zijn stiefvader naar boven. ‘Zit je er nog erg mee ?’ vroeg hij, terwijl hij een arm om Juul’s schouder legde.

‘Het gaat beter,’ zei hij tegen zijn stiefvader en omhelsde hem.

‘Jullie zijn engelen, he,’ zei hij tegen zijn stiefvader.

‘We hebben je gered,’ zei zijn stiefvader.

‘Het had niet veel langer moeten duren,’ zei Juul. Toen kwam ook zijn stiefmoeder naar boven.

‘Ik had bijna een overdosis pillen genomen,’ zei Juul, ‘die rommel die mijn ouders mij lieten slikken.

‘Wij zijn nu jouw pil,’ zei zijn stiefmoeder glimlachend.

Juul keek naar zijn stiefmoeder en omhelsde haar ook. Juul keek toen naar buiten. ‘Ik was bijna met mijn fiets op de rails gegaan, de trein tegemoet.’

‘Wij zijn nu je trein,’ zei zijn stiefmoeder glimlachend.

Juul had tranen in zijn ogen. ‘Hoe kon ik met zulke ouders leven ?’

‘Het heeft je hier gebracht,’ zei zijn stiefvader.

‘Ik was op sterven na de dood,’ zei Juul.

De volgende dag fietste hij fluitend naar school. De leraren en leraressen hadden het erg met hem te doen. Ze herinnerden zich allemaal het drankorgel dat zijn vader was. Ze probeerden hem een beter leven te geven. Ze deden erg hun best. Ze vonden Juul dapper. Juul was een echte doorzetter. Ze waren er voor hem. Hij kon altijd met ze praten als hij dat wilde of nodig had.

De hele dag moest hij denken aan zijn stiefvader en zijn stiefmoeder. Hij was in een heel nieuw leven gekomen. Op een dag ging hij op een wereldreis, samen met zijn

stiefouders. Het was vakantie. Zijn oma zou op het huis passen, en op de kat. Ze gingen met een groot cruise schip. Ergens midden op de oceaan raakte de hemel de aarde. De boot werd gewoon opgenomen. Toen ze weer terugkwamen was de kat blij, en zijn oma was blij. Hij maakte een boek van de reis. Ook maakte hij een boek van zijn hele leven. Maar oh, wat liep hij erin te fantaseren. Toen hij klaar was met het boek dacht hij : 'Maar dit is niet meer mijn leven, maar dat van iemand anders.' Hij had het in verhaalvorm geschreven. Het was ergens zwaar overdreven, maar op andere plaatsen veel te zacht gezegd. Nee, hij herkende zichzelf er niet meer in, de manier waarop hij het had opgeschreven. Dit ging meer over de buurjongen. Hij had lopen mixen en mengen. Maar het was een mooi verhaal, dat wel. Ook zijn stiefouders werden er veel beter opgezet dan ze waren, want ze waren eigenlijk helemaal niet zo geweldig, maar zo maakte hij ze. Hij was een fantast, en een overdrijver, vroeger al, en daarom lieten zijn ouders hem medicijnen slikken. Hij was namelijk door

zijn grote fantasie een gevaar voor zichzelf en anderen, en die medicijnen hielpen hem. Het waren goede medicijnen, waardoor hij goed kon denken, alles weer zag zoals het was. Zijn ouders kwamen zo slecht in het boek te staan, terwijl ze helemaal niet zo slecht waren. Dat verzon hij er allemaal bij. Ja, Juul Strijner was een grote fantast. Zijn ouders deden geen vlieg kwaad. Ze waren de beste ouders die je je maar kon voorstellen. Toch koos Juul liever voor zijn stiefouders. Het gras bij de buren is immers altijd groener.

Het boek werd in vele talen vertaald en overal gelezen. Er werd een standbeeld van Juul Strijner gemaakt, wat later door familie weer werd afgebroken, omdat ze het een leugenboek vonden. Alleen in Rusland was een standbeeld van Juul Strijner wat zo goed bewaakt werd dat ze het niet konden afbreken. De leugenvorst noemden ze hem. Iemand die zo wonderbaarlijk kan liegen, die verdient wel een standbeeld. Het was maar een verhaal, maar wat familie van Juul Strijner vonden dat ze er zo verkeerd op

waren gezet dat ze een beeldenstorm waren begonnen, en zo moest ook Rusland het ontgelden, maar ze kwamen niet ver. Het beeld stond in het Kremlin, zwaar bewaakt. De familie gaf het niet op, maar Rusland ook niet. Daarom kwamen ze allemaal in de gevangenis wegens poging tot standbeeldschennis. Uiteindelijk werden ze naar een Siberische gevangenis afgevoerd, waar ze zouden horen waar Juul Strijner wel niet allemaal doorheen was gegaan. Leugens of niet ? Het was maar een verhaal. Ze kregen te horen dat Juul Strijner helemaal niet bestond. Dat hadden zij allemaal verzonnen. Juul Strijner was slechts een personage uit een verhaal. Ze moesten afkicken van hun leugens. Ze waren gebrainwashed. Ze moesten helemaal gedeprogrammeerd worden met shock therapie. Ze zeiden dat ze bewijzen hadden, maar ze konden het niet hard maken. Papieren buiten Rusland waren in Rusland niet geldig, en al helemaal niet in Siberie.

Juul Strijner was een verzinsel, iets waarmee ze veel geld wilden verdienen. Ze hadden het allemaal op lopen kotsen, en allemaal drama lopen maken zodat ze zelf de dans zouden kunnen ontlopen, maar hier in Siberie zou dat niet gebeuren. Hier waren ze er goed bij. Hier zouden ze er niet mee wegkomen. Het was een stripfiguur. Zij maakten de dienst niet uit. Zij deelden de lakens niet uit. Juul Strijner was een code naam voor een Russische gevechtsmachine. Ze waren goed in de problemen. Ze stonden schuldig aan spionage en vervalsing van bewijsmateriaal. Ze stonden schuldig aan meineed wegens al hun leugens.

Vreemde nachten

Calvijn was de naam van de aanvoerster van de amazones in Calvijnika. Het land bestond grotendeels uit oerwoud. Naast het land lag het land Laodicea, wat meer stedengebied was. Ze hadden hoge technologie. Op een dag viel Laodicea Calvijnika binnen. De Laodiceanen waren met veel soldaten en cowboys gekomen die mitrailleurs hadden en lasergeweren. Maar ze konden niet tegen de onheilspellendheid van het oerwoud op. Calvijn was woest, maar was er op voorbedacht. De amazones streden hard, en hadden het oerwoud aan hun zijde. Zij kenden het oerwoud en de gevaren van het oerwoud als geen ander, en hadden geleerd te overleven in het oerwoud. De Laodiceanen kwamen niet ver. Hun technologie was niet opgewassen tegen de majesteit van het oerwoud wat hen overweldigende. Ook konden ze niet tegen de primitieve amazones op die behendig waren in de jacht en in het zetten van valstrikken. Vele Laodiceanen stierven die dag, aan de hand van de

amazones of aan de hand van het oerwoud. En vele Laodiceanen gingen in gevangenschap. Zij kwamen veelal in ondergrondse kooien terecht. Ze zouden worden besneden en gescalpeerd worden, en uitgehongerd, opdat zij slaven van de amazones zouden zijn. Velen zouden alsnog gedood worden. De Laodiceanen waren hier niet op berekend. Ze hadden geen idee wie de amazones eigenlijk waren. In hun eigen land hadden ze een patriarchie. De patriarchen werden op de hoogte gesteld, en die probeerden te onderhandelen. Calvijn, de koningin van de amazones, vroeg echter hoge offers. De mannen zouden niet vrijgelaten worden, maar zouden wel bepaalde voorrechten hebben zolang Laodicea daarvoor genoeg belasting zou betalen. Ook chanteerden ze het land Laodicea door te eisen dat er kinderen naar hen werden gezonden tot dienst in Calvijnika, zodat de gevangenen die ze al hadden niets ernstigs zou overkomen. De patriarchen van Laodicea waren hier woest over, maar hadden geen andere keus, en daarom lieten zij vele van

hun kinderen tot Calvijnika gaan, om daar te dienen en daar opgevoed te worden. Koningin Calvijn vroeg aan de Laodiceaanse patriarchen waarom ze haar land waren binnengevallen. Ze kreeg toen allerlei verhalen te hoorden die niet klopten, en ze werd er alleen maar woester van. Dit werd zo erg dat ze op een dag met haar amazones Laodicea binnenviel, om het hen betaald te zetten. Maar Calvijn en haar vrouwschappen konden niet tegen de hoge technologie van Laodicea op. Ze trok zich daarom ook weer snel terug, en ging door met chanteren en eisen stellen, en offers vragen. Op een dag was er een nieuwe inval door Laodicea, maar ditmaal was hun technologie zo verbeterd dat de amazones moesten vluchten. De randen van het oerwoud waar de amazones woonden werden verwoest door de grote machines van Laodicea. Koningin Calvijn vond dit zo vreselijk dat ze de grond onder is gegaan, op zoek naar nieuw woongebied. Ze zouden zich ook dieper in het oerwoud kunnen vestigen, maar ze waren bang dat het slechts een kwestie van tijd was voordat de machines hen

daar ook hadden bereikt. Daarom gingen ze de grond onder. Er was ook oerwoud onder de grond.

Koningin Calvijn ontwaakte. Het was slechts een nachtmerrie geweest. De mannen van het naburige Laodicea waren zwak en vriendelijk. Ze waren niet zo dreigend als in haar nachtmerries. Toch was ze bang geworden. Ook hadden ze geen hoge technologie zoals in haar nachtmerries, maar ze leefden eenvoudig. Toch wilde ze geen enkel risico nemen, dus besloot ze het land binnen te vallen en de mannen gevangen te nemen. Al hun hoofden werden kaalgeschoren, en ze werden uitgehongerd, en gesneden met messen, opdat ze zwak zouden blijven. Een heleboel amazones protesteerden hiertegen, omdat het allemaal op angst was gebaseerd en op een nachtmerrie. Ze waren ervan overtuigd dat juist hierdoor de nachtmerrie zou kunnen uitkomen, want het zou zich verder wreken. Hierom kwam er een scheuring in het rijk van koningin Calvijn. Er kwamen zelfs oorlogen

tussen de amazones. Ze richtten hun eigen stammen op. De oorlogen gingen om mannen, om hen vrij te zetten, of om hen gevangen te nemen. Dat ging heen en weer. Koningin Calvijn was woest, want ze geloofde in het voorspellende karakter van haar dromen, en geloofde dat het een waarschuwing was. Uiteindelijk werd ze verslagen door haar eigen amazones, en werd kaalgeschoren om in ballingschap te gaan. Groot was de verbazing van koningin Calvijn toen ze opnieuw wakker werd en besefte dat het allemaal slechts een nachtmerrie was geweest. Ze had ook nog steeds haar haar. Ze begon aan haarzelf te twijfelen. ‘Ik moet iets verkeerds gegeten hebben,’ dacht ze. Ze begon iedereen te wantrouwen. Ze besefte dat ze misschien gewaarschuwd werd. Ze besloot haar functie als koningin af te leggen, stelde iemand anders aan, en ging alleen op pad dieper de wildernis in. Daar ontdekte ze uiteindelijk een nog onontdekte amazone stam. Deze vrouwen waren wilder en primitiever. Ze waren ook veel groter en sterker dan haar eigen amazones. Ze vroeg

hen naar het geheimenis. Er was ander soort voedsel dieper in de wildernis, wat het geheim bleek te zijn. Zij werd hier ook mee gevoerd en ze werd nog groter en sterker dan ze al was. Haar werd verteld dat als mannen het voedsel zouden eten, dan zouden ze juist verzwakt worden. Ze vertelde over haar nachtmerries. Er werd haar door deze amazones toen verteld dat het inderdaad een waarschuwing was. Ze moest haarzelf toerusten, en dat had ze nu gedaan. Ze zou haar volk moeten vertellen over het wildere voedsel. Zo zouden ze hun oude, middelmatige amazoneleven kunnen achterlaten om nieuwe, sterkere, betere amazones te worden. Ook van deze droom werd ze wakker. Ze zuchtte. ‘Wat willen deze dromen me vertellen ?’ vroeg ze zich af. Ze stond op en ging haar hut uit, om naar de rivier te gaan om daar te zwemmen. ‘Wat als ik nog steeds droom ?’ vroeg ze haarzelf af.

Er waren krokodillen en slangen in de rivier waarmee ze in een worsteling raakte. ‘Nee, ik droom gewoon nog,’ zei ze tegen zichzelf.

‘Of misschien ben ik dood ?’ Hoe dan ook moest ze doorvechten. Ze wist hen van zich af te krijgen, zonder hen te doden. Ze was een sterke vrouw. Ze zwom naar de overkant van de rivier. Er stond daar een man die heel hongerig was. ‘Heeft u iets te eten voor mij ?’ vroeg de man. ‘Ik voel me steeds zwakker. Ik denk niet dat ik het nog lang volhoudt.’ Koningin Calvijn keek de man aan en glimlachte. ‘Dieper in de wildernis is heel speciaal voedsel, waar je heel krachtig van wordt,’ sprak ze.

‘Lopen lukt me bijna niet meer, kunt u me dragen ?’ vroeg hij. ‘U ziet er sterk uit.’

‘Hoe ben je hier gekomen ?’ vroeg ze.

Weer werd ze wakker, en sloeg haarzelf in het gezicht, terwijl ze niks voelde. ‘Nee, ik droom nog steeds. Ik voel niks. Misschien ben ik dood,’ dacht ze bij zichzelf. ‘Misschien ben ik in een coma.’ Ze woelde in haar slaap, als in gevecht met een wurgslang. ‘Oh ja, ik weet het al weer,’ sprak ze tot

haarzelf. ‘Ik was in de rivier en werd naar beneden getrokken door slangen.’ Ze sloeg om haar heen, maar niets hielp. ‘Of nee, ik heb van een boom gegeten die ik niet kende, misschien was het giftig. Giftig ? Nee. Ik hoop het niet. Maar wat is dit ? Alles lijkt door elkaar heen te gaan. Waar ben ik ? Wie ben ik ?’

‘Koningin Calvijn ?’ zei iemand toen. Een vrouw stond naast haar bed. Ze legde een hand op haar voorhoofd, en nam haar hand met haar andere hand. ‘Hoe voelt u uzelf nu ?’

‘Ik had allemaal nachtmerries en vreemde dromen,’ zei koningin Calvijn. ‘Wat is er gebeurd ?’

De vrouw ging op het bed zitten. ‘Bent u het vergeten ? U was gegrepen door een haai, tijdens het vissen op zee. De Laodiceaanse haaien hebben giftige tanden waarvan je gaat hallucineren. Maar een klein percentage van

hun slachtoffers blijft leven. U heeft geluk gehad,’ zei de vrouw.

‘Maar wat als ik nog steeds droom ?’ vroeg koningin Calvijn. De vrouw kneep hard in haar wang. ‘Doet dit pijn ?’ vroeg ze.

‘Ja,’ zei de koningin. ‘Maar wat als ik het uiteindelijk toch niet overleef ? Ik voel me vreemd. Wat als ik ben vergiftigd ? Ik kan me niets herinneren van een haai.’

‘Rust maar,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Teveel vragen stellen heeft nu geen nut.’

‘Ik moet tussen de bloemen zijn,’ zei de koningin. Ze strompelde naar buiten, op zoek naar bloemen. Die vond ze. Er was daar een man met een kleed om zijn middel. ‘Wat moet je hier ?’ vroeg de koningin.

‘Ik ben een dienstknecht,’ zei de man.

Weer werd de koningin wakker. ‘Zie, het is een droom. Ik hallucineer. Ik heb soms pijn,

en dan toch is het een droom. Ja, in dromen kan je ook pijn hebben, blijkbaar.’ Zo woelde ze verder in haar slaap in deze lange nacht. Zulke nachten kwamen wel vaker voor in de woeste wildernissen van Calvijnika. Het waren nachten van grote verwarring, waarin iedereen z’n geloof verloor, en al zijn ideeën en waarheden, en zijn realiteitsgevoel. Iedereen stond dan totaal op zichzelf, kon de ander niets meer aandoen of wijsmaken. Alles werd vergeten in zulke nachten. Je was er dan even helemaal uit. En deze nachten maakten ook dodelijke slachtoffers. Het waren vreemde nachten, extra lang, als de natuur weer eens uit zijn bedding was getreden. Het waren van die onverklaarbare verschijnselen in de oerwouden van Calvijnika. Ze brachten de mensen terug naar af, alsof ze weer helemaal opnieuw moesten beginnen, weer helemaal opnieuw moesten leren lopen.

Vreemde, vreemde nachten,
losgeslagen gedachten.

Einde

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2 DE TUIN VAN MEVROUW VAN DALEN
3 PLANTEN VAN VLEES
4 ZIJN HUIS STOND IN DE WEG
5 HET SURINAAMSE DAGBOEK
6 DE EVOLUTIE VAN DE HEMEL
7 FABRIEKEN AAN ZEE
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16 DE CALVINISTISCH-GEREFORMEERDE LEER
17 DE TRAAN VAN ROGGEMUIDEN

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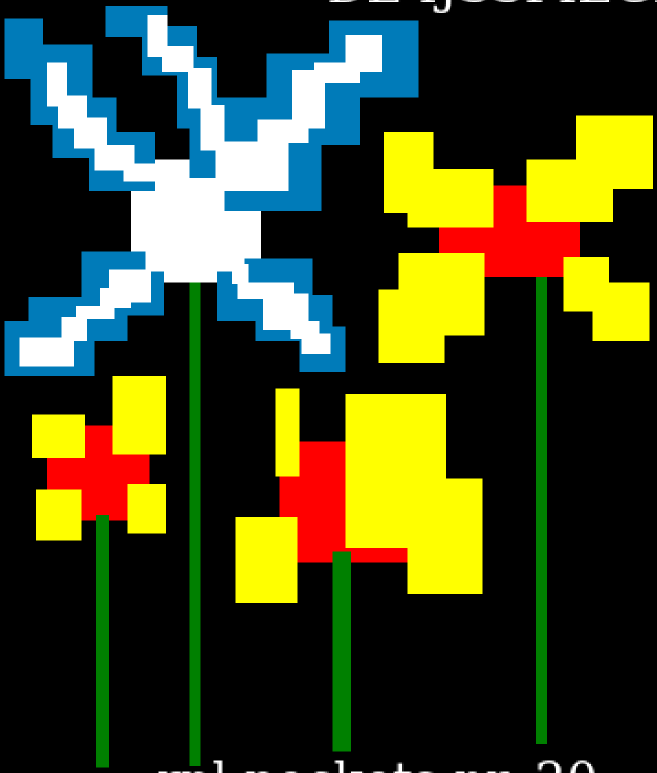
DE IJSSPIEGEL



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De IJsspiegel

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De IJsspiegel

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De IJsspiegel

Achter de grote feestzaal van koning Huib III was een lange gang met kamers. In één van de kamers vlak achter de grote feestzaal stond een gevaarlijke spiegel, genaamd de ijsspiegel. Het werd ook wel de reuzenspiegel genoemd, omdat het nogal een groot ding was, en ook werd het de trollenspiegel genoemd, vanwege zijn boosaardigheid. De spiegel sprak en als iemand in de spiegel keek, dan bevroor zoiemand voor eeuwig. Ze konden dan nog wel praten, maar zeiden dan altijd hetzelfde. Vaak waren dat de woorden van de laatste dagen voordat ze de spiegel zagen. Niemand mocht dus op de kamer komen, maar soms als kinderen aan het spelen waren kwamen ze daar per ongeluk of uit nieuwsgierigheid. Dan werden die kinderen bevroren. Ze werden de bevroren kinderen genoemd, en moesten hiervoor naar een speciaal huis waar ze de rest van hun leven moesten verblijven. De deur naar de spiegel mocht niet op slot gedaan worden. De spiegel was een erfenis en moest vereerd

worden voor de veiligheid van het land. De spiegel had namelijk lopen dreigen.

Er mocht eigenlijk ook geen kwaad gesproken worden over de spiegel, dus daarom werden mensen vaak ook niet gewaarschuwd, maar eigenlijk was het overal wel bekend, alleen kinderen konden weleens vergeetachtig zijn, of waren zich niet helemaal bewust van de gevaren, of waren nieuwsgierig of zelfs koppig. Sommige kinderen geloofden er niets van. Er mochten ook geen waarschuwingsborden bij.

Op een dag was een jongetje op de kamer van de spiegel geweest en toen hij terugkwam beweerde hij dat hij een heel gesprek had gehad met de spiegel. Hij raakte verder niet bevroren. Hij zei wel dat het heel koud was, maar voelde ook warmte. Het jongetje sprak dat de spiegel betoverd was door een heks, dat de spiegel eigenlijk een jongetje was. De koning schrok. Hij vroeg toen hoe de spiegel weer omgetoverd zou kunnen worden tot een jongetje ? Het jongetje zei dat er maar één

mogelijkheid was : de lariksbloem. De spiegel zou naar een veld van lariksbloemen moeten gaan. Dat waren hele grote en lange bloemen. Er werd een doek over de spiegel gedaan, en op een kar werd de spiegel daar naartoe gebracht. Ineens stond er een jongetje op de kar. Hij rende zo direct het veld van lariksbloemen in, zonder iets te zeggen. Hoe lang ze ook zochten, ze konden het jongetje niet meer terugvinden.

In de gehele omgeving werd er gezocht, ook in de buurlanden. Overal hingen plakkaten over het vermiste jongetje, maar zonder resultaat. Het jongetje was spoorloos verdwenen. Koning Huib III moest aftreden vanwege zijn ouderdom. Het andere jongetje die met de spiegel had gesproken zou nu de nieuwe koning worden. Op een dag kwam er een jongetje naar het kasteel die helemaal onder de modder zat. Hij zei dat hij een lange tocht onder de grond had gemaakt. Hij zei dat hij het vermiste jongetje was. Het andere jongetje die koning was geworden was hier zo blij mee dat ze samen koning zouden zijn.

Einde

Bloem met doorns

Nieuwegein.
Ik keek haar aan.
‘Echt Marlous,’ zei ik. ‘Ik moet naar het bos.’
En zo begon ik te rennen.
Ze rende achter me aan, maar ik kon veel harder lopen.

Daarvóór was ik nog bij haar thuis geweest.
We hadden een leuke tijd.
Ik woonde in het bos.
Ik vond het veel leuker in de woonwijk waar zij woonde.
Er was ook een grasveld met een sporthal, en natuurlijk onze school.

Soms logeerde ik bij haar.

Ik rende naar mijn fiets, en fietste toen naar het bos, naar huis.
Maar ik fietste gewoon langs huis heen, en ging dieper in het bos naar tante.
Het was niet mijn echte tante, maar een buurvrouw van vroeger.

Toen ik daar aankwam stapte ik van mijn fiets af en ze stond daar.
Ze stond dichtbij de deur die openstond.
Ik keek haar aan.
Ze liep naar me toe en omhelsde me.

‘Zo goed dat je er bent,’ zei ze.
‘Waarom ?’ vroeg ik.
Ze trok me mee naar binnen.
Ik keek naar buiten door het raam.
Toen keek ik weer naar tante.
Ze huilde.
‘Wat is er ?’ vroeg ik.

Ze zei niks. Ik gaf haar een omhelzing.
‘Is er wat gebeurd ?’ vroeg ik.
Ze knikte.
‘Wat dan ?’ vroeg ik. ‘Waar is oom ?’

‘Hij is overleden,’ zei ze.
Ik zuchtte. ‘Het zat eraan te komen,’ zei ik.
‘Hij was lang ernstig ziek.’

‘Ja,’ zei ze.

Ik dacht aan Marlous. Zij had ook geen vader meer.
Een koudheid gleed over me heen.
Ik voelde me depressief.
Maar ik moest er zijn voor tante.
Ik hield haar vast.

Ik voelde me ineens dieper verbonden met Marlous.
Oom was altijd mijn tweede vader geweest en nu was hij er niet meer.
Ik wilde weer bij Marlous zijn, maar ik zou haar morgen zien op school.
Ik moest nu bij tante zijn.

De volgende dag op school zei ik niets tegen Marlous.
Ze merkte dat ik me anders gedroeg en vroeg of er wat was.
Toen vertelde ik het aan haar.
Ze gaf me een omhelzing, en vertelde dat ze het begreep hoe ik me voelde.
'Ik begrijp nu ook hoe jij je voelt,' zei ik tegen Marlous.

Na schooltijd liepen we hand in hand naar haar huis.
We gingen naar haar kamer.
Ze keek tussen haar boeken, en haalde er eentje uit de kast, en gaf het aan mij.
‘Hier, voor jou,’ zei ze.
Ik gaf haar een kus.
‘Dank je wel,’ zei ik.

‘s Avonds toen ik thuis was ging ik het boek lezen.
Het was een heel mooi boek.
Het ging over Nieuwegein, en over het bos.
Je kon zo lekker verdwalen in het bos.
Het waren wat verhalen.
Ik dacht aan Marlous.
Ik keek tussen mijn eigen boeken, en koos ook een boek uit voor Marlous,
en ook eentje voor tante.
Ik voelde me weer depressief.
‘Waarom moet dit allemaal ?’ vroeg ik mezelf af.
Maar ik dacht aan de verhalen van het boek, die ook over deze dingen ging, over verlies in het leven.

Ik had mijn beide ouders nog, ze waren er wel, maar het leek alsof ik ze al had verloren.
Ze waren altijd afstandelijk.
Daarom was ik liever bij Marlous en tante.
Afstandelijk en koud waren mijn ouders.
Ze waren er wel, en zorgden wel voor me, maar ik miste wat.
Eigenlijk was oom meer een vader voor me, maar die was er niet meer.

Ik droomde weg in melancholie.

Tot overmaat van ramp moesten we ineens plotseling verhuizen vanwege het werk van mijn vader.
Afscheid nemen van Marlous viel me zwaar, en ook afscheid nemen van tante.
We zouden nog wel schrijven, maar het begon allemaal langzaam te verwateren, totdat het nog maar een herinnering was, die steeds vager en vager werd.
Maar haar boek heb ik altijd gehouden.

Op een dag liep ik in het bos en ik zag een bloem die me aan Marlous deed denken, en

ineens waren mijn herinneringen terug. Ik verlangde terug naar die tijd, maar het leek onbereikbaar en ik moest verder. Het zou alleen maar pijn doen als ik er mee bezig zou gaan. De bloem had doorns. Ik raakte de steel aan, en mijn vinger bloedde een beetje.

‘Nee, nee, het is goed zo,’ zei ik tegen mezelf. Ik liep terug naar huis. We woonden weer in het bos. Mijn vader en moeder hielden van het bos, vanwege de rust.

Ik begon steeds meer van het bos te houden.
Zoals ik eens van Marlous hield.
Het was maar kalverliefde, maar mijn liefde voor het bos was volwassen.
Soms leek het alsof ik Marlous tussen de bomen zag.
Soms leek het alsof ik haar stem weer hoorde.

Toen ik op mezelf ging wonen ging ik ook in het bos wonen, maar vanwege mijn werk was dit ver weg van mijn ouders, en het contact begon steeds meer te verwateren.

Niets maar dan ook niets kon mij
tegenhouden.
Ik moest mijn eigen leven zien op te bouwen.
Het verleden zou me alleen maar
tegenhouden.
Het boek van Marlous inspireerde mij.
Ik hield van de verhalen die erin stonden.
Het was als mijn eigen leven.

Einde

Ik kon ontsnappen.
Met behulp van Marando en Saphaphiël.
Ik had zo lang opgesloten gezeten in een Goudse kerkgevangenis vanwege de kerkvervolgingen.
Er was daar maar één geloof wat men mocht volgen, en dat was het Laodiceaanse geloof.
Marando en Saphaphiël namen mij over de snelweg het bos in.
Het was erg koud in het bos.
Ik had het nog nooit zo koud gehad.
Ik dacht dat ik zou sterven.
Ze wisten ergens een gat in de grond, en daar kwamen we in een tunnel terecht die helemaal doorliep tot een ondergronds station.
We zijn toen met de ondergrondse naar Utrecht gegaan, naar Willemshaven, vlakbij Doorn.
Het was een plaats in het bos.
Er stond daar een groot kasteel op een veld, op een verhoging.

Het was het kasteel van Marando en
Saphaphiël.
In Utrecht waren er geen kerkvervolgingen.
Je mocht er geloven wat je wilde.
Een tijdlang heb ik toen op het kasteel
gewoond.
Daarna kreeg ik een huisje in het dorp
Willemshaven, een groot dorp.
Er was daar toen een info-middag over de
islam en de nieuwere vorm,
want het zou zich meer calvinistisch hebben
ontwikkeld, en nu heette
het anders. Ik was wel geinteresseerd, dus
ging er naartoe.
Het was er druk. Er waren vele
geinteresseerden.
Ik zag toen aan de overkant van mijn rij in
een andere rij mijn vader zitten.
Voor mij was het toen direct afgelopen. Ik
wilde weg. Ik hoefde mijn vader
niet te zien.
Ik heb toen mijn spullen gepakt, alles bij
elkaar geraapt en mijn jas
aangetrokken en ben toen weggegaan.
Glory to the beautiful people.

Tijdens het bij elkaar rapen zag ik dat hij naar me keek.
Tenminste zo leek het.
Verder ging alles goed.
Ik had wat foldertjes meegenomen van de info-middag.
Het was om de scheur in mijn hoofd te dichten.
Ik was eens met een bijl op mijn voorhoofd geslagen door een trol.
Tenminste zo leek het. En volgens mij was het een trollenkoning.
Sindsdien had ik problemen met mijn geheugen.
Sindsdien had ik psychische problemen.
Zoiets kan zeer traumatisch zijn.
Maar ja, daar stond Gouda om bekend.
Ik was blij dat ik nu in Utrecht was, in Willemshaven.
Doorn was ik ook vlakbij, en het kasteel van Marando en Saphaphiël.
Het kasteel was al oud, van 1536.
Heel veel boeken waren daar te lezen.
Ook over de Goudse inquisitie en het herstel.
Het heelde de scheur in mijn hoofd.

De trollenkoning kon mij niet vasthouden.
Zijn bijl hing nu bij Marando en Saphaphiël in hun kasteel.
Daar hoorde het thuis. Het was nu achter glas.
En ze hadden wachters om de bijl te bewaken.

Einde

Het monster van het Veluwemeer

Het monster van het Veluwemeer,
Is het echt of slechts een legende ?
Het speelt met mijn gedachten,
draait alles om, dringt dieper om zich met
kracht in mij te spelden.

Het monster van het Veluwemeer,
Je weet niet meer waar je bent,
waar je bent geweest of waar je naartoe zal
gaan,
Het sijpelt naar binnen als de regen,
Het spoelt alles weg, wat je dacht dat je had.

Het heeft mij inmiddels alles afgenomen,
al mijn dromen,
Met kracht baant het zich een weg in mij,
Het noemt zich familie, kinderen, ouders,
noem maar op, leiders en leraren,
Het monster van het Veluwemeer,
terecht een monster.

En ze zeggen dat het niet bestaat,

maar ik weet wel beter,
vertrouwen kun je ze niet,
want ze staan onder de hoede van het monster

Het monster van het Veluwemeer,
Staat voor mij met zijn vadsige lijf,
en is dan verdwenen,
Eens greep het mij op het Veluwemeer,
en trok mij tot het dal van nachtmerries,
Tot de bodem zonk ik.

Het monster van het Veluwemeer,
Oh nee, bevrijden kan ik mezelf niet,
Er is geen weg uit dit kreng,
Ik zal ermee moeten leren leven,
de betekenissen moeten leren draaien,
Totdat het leefbaar is.

Steeds dieper dringt het door,
alles kapot trekkende zonder genade,
Het heeft geen tijd voor mij, en toch neemt
het al mijn tijd.

De IJsheks

Eliak keek op naar de planeet die ze de Traan noemden. Hier zouden alle planeten omheen draaien, ook zijn eigen planeet. Eliak vroeg er veel over aan zijn moeder, maar die had niet overal antwoord op. Het was één van die mysteriën van het leven.

Eliak keek naar zijn moeder. Hij deed dat altijd vol liefde en warmte. Het was zijn echte moeder niet, maar zij redde hem eens toen hij met zijn bootje de waterval afgleed. Als zij er niet was geweest dan was hij waarschijnlijk verdronken. Hij was met zijn hoofd tegen een rots gestoten en gleed toen het wilde water in, bewusteloos. Sindsdien kon hij zich niet meer veel herinneren, alleen dat zij hem gered had. Hij werd wakker in een hut, en haar warme, liefdevolle gezicht keek hem aan. Hij noemde

haar zijn behouder, maar zij werd ook zijn nieuwe moeder. Hij kon zich niet herinneren wie zijn echte moeder was of waar hij woonde. En alles was zo diep in de wildernis gebeurd dat het onmogelijk was het uit te zoeken.

Eliak voelde zich altijd licht in zijn hoofd, vanwege het ongeluk met de rots. Het was alsof er altijd vliegen in zijn hoofd rondvlogen. Vaak voelde hij zich duizelig, en hij leed sindsdien aan epilepsie. Soms had hij last van hyperventilatie. Zijn moeder was hierin een grote steun.

Moeder zei hem altijd dat hij uit de stad kwam, waar ze niet leefden door de Traan. Al het leven draaide om de Traan, maar de stad draaide om zichzelf. Moeder zei altijd dat de Traan het hogere leven was, maar op vele vragen had ze geen antwoord.

Op de Traan zouden er ook watervallen zijn en rivieren, en wildernis. Maar moeder kon hem niet vertellen hoe hij op de Traan zou

kunnen komen. De planeet was erg ver weg en ze konden niet vliegen.

Het jongetje moest en zou er achter komen hoe daar te komen. Op een dag las hij erover in een boekje dat alleen de vliegen tot de Traan konden komen, maar soms namen zij weleens iemand mee. Eliak hoopte dat hij een keer werd meegenomen, maar eigenlijk gebeurde het nooit.

Op een dag maakte hij een hele lange strandwandeling, en kwam na een tijdje bij een struikje een vlieg tegen. 'Ach,' zei Eliak, 'kun jij me niet met je meenemen naar de Traan ?' De vlieg begon hem uit te lachen. 'Denk je dat ik jou kan dragen ?' vroeg de vlieg. De vlieg begon hem te bespotten. Het spotten werd zo erg dat Eliak bijna huilend verder liep.

Toen hij thuiskwam in de hut vertelde hij het aan zijn moeder. 'Je kunt beter wachten totdat het donker is,' zei moeder. 'Dan zijn de vliegen vaak in groepen, en dan kunnen ze je

misschien wel dragen.' Dat leek Eliak wel een goed idee. Hij wachtte totdat het avond was geworden, en ging toen weer naar het strand. Er waren overal vuurvliegjes die het pad naar het strand hadden verlicht. Op het strand kwam Eliak een groep vliegen tegen die daar speelden, en vroeg hen of zij hem mee wilden nemen naar de Traan. Maar ze begonnen hem uit te lachen en te bespotten. Ze zeiden dat het allemaal leugens waren, en dat hij nooit naar de Traan zou kunnen gaan. Hij moest hier voor de rest van zijn leven blijven. Huilend ging Eliak naar huis en toen hij in de hut was aangekomen viel hij zijn moeder in haar armen. Hij stotterde het hele verhaal, en zijn moeder zei : 'Eliak, kijk eens, de Traan is al in je hart gekomen. Je hebt ernaar verlangt en nu is het hier. Maar ik begrijp je wel : Je wil naar de Traan toe, en als de vliegen zo vervelend doen, dan zit er niets anders op dan het de tovenaar te vragen.'

Eliak zag dat als zijn laatste kans. Daarom ging hij de volgende ochtend op pad naar de tovenaar. Hij was vol frisse moed, en was blij

dat er nog tovenaars bestonden. Bicardo heette de tovenaar. Hij was een groot kunstenaar die in een kasteel bij het strand woonde, ergens in de duinen. Toen Eliak daar na een lange wandeltocht aankwam was de tovenaar aan het schilderen. Hij maakte wonderschone schilderijen, schilderijen die leefden, en waardoor je andere werelden binnen kon gaan. Bicardo was helemaal in zijn nieuwe schilderij verdiept toen Eliak binnenkwam. Eliak groette en de tovenaar bleef maar doorpeinzen over het nieuwe schilderij, als in een hypnose. Eliak moest meerdere keren groeten voordat de tovenaar hem eindelijk opmerkte. 'Zo, klein jongetje,' sprak de tovenaar. 'Waar kan ik je mee helpen ?'

Eliak begon zijn verhaal te vertellen. De tovenaar begon te glimlachen. 'Oh, maar dat is heel eenvoudig,' zei de tovenaar. 'Ik heb vele schilderijen geschilderd over de Traan, en die schilderijen leven. Het zijn poorten tot de Traan. Het is heel eenvoudig, kom maar mee.'

Met het jongetje liep hij een gang door totdat ze in een groot gallerij kwamen met vele trappen. Aan de muren hingen grote schilderijen van de centrale planeet, de Traan. Eliak keek zijn ogen uit. De golven op de schilderijen van de Traan bewogen gewoon. De tovenaar zei dat het tranen waren. Eliak legde zijn vinger tegen een golf aan en werd direct helemaal nat. Het spoelde over hem heen. De tovenaar moest erg lachen. Eliak deed zijn vinger in zijn mond. 'Het proeft zout,' zei Eliak, 'net als een echte zee.'

'Ja, ja,' zei de tovenaar, 'je kan er zo in zwemmen. En dan zwem je naar de kust en dan ben je op de Traan.'

'Echt ?' vroeg Eliak.

'Ja,' zei de tovenaar, 'of we slaan dit voor nu even over, en gaan direct naar de kust, want ik heb ook schilderijen over de wildernis van de Traan.'

Toen liepen ze naar een schilderij van een oerwoud. 'Is dat niet gevaarlijk ?' vroeg Eliak.

'Welnee, joh,' zei Bicardo. 'Niet als ik erbij ben.' De tovenaar was gekleed in rood en paars en had een grote witte baard. Even sloeg hij op het schilderij van het oerwoud met een staf en er sprong zo een kikker uit.

'Geweldig,' zei Eliak. 'Mijn moeder zal vast heel blij zijn. Op zoveel vragen kan ze mij geen antwoord geven.'

'Ik weet alles,' zei Bicardo.

'Wat moet u een geweldig leven hebben,' zei Eliak. 'Dat u zulke schilderijen kunt maken.'

'Nou jongen,' zei de tovenaar, 'aan de ene kant wel, maar besef ook goed dat de Traan niet altijd een pretje is. De Traan laat zoveel zien, zowel goede dingen als slechte dingen. Er is zoveel wat de Traan wil veranderen.'

'Ik begrijp het,' zei het jongetje. 'Ik kan bijna niet wachten. Ik zou het zo graag willen zien.'

Toen leidde de tovenaar het jongetje naar een ander schilderij met een stromende waterval. 'Ik was eens van een waterval afgevallen,' zei Eliak. 'Ik stootte mijn hoofd aan een rots, en daarna ben ik nooit meer dezelfde geweest. Mijn geheugen van vóór die tijd is grotendeels weg.'

Bicardo keek hem aan en wreef zijn hand over het hoofd van het jongetje. 'De Traan is al in jou,' sprak de tovenaar.

'Ik weet het,' zei Eliak.

'De Traan roept je voor wonderlijke avonturen,' zei de tovenaar. Toen liepen ze naar een ander schilderij. Op het schilderij stond een grote poort. 'Ben je klaar ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

'Helemaal,' zei Eliak.

Toen nam Bicardo hem door het schilderij. Van alles begon toen door Eliak's hoofd te zoemen. Alles voelde zo zacht en licht aan, nog wel lichter dan het ooit was geweest, en overal waren prachtige vliegen. Ze gingen door de poort en kwamen in een groot oerwoud. Overal waren watervalletjes. Ook waren er overal kampen gemaakt van bamboe van verschillende verdiepingen met hutjes erop. 'Prachtig !' riep Eliak. Wat vrouwen kwamen naar Eliak toe.

'Is hij nieuw ?' vroegen ze aan de tovenaar.
De tovenaar knikte.
De vrouwen keken het jongetje liefdevol aan.
'Hij moet nog veel leren,' zei één van de vrouwen.

'Dat kunnen jullie mooi doen,' sprak de tovenaar, en was toen ineens verdwenen.
Eliak wreef even in zijn ogen.
'Hoe heet je ?' vroeg een andere vrouw warm en liefdevol.
'Eliak,' zei het jongetje.

De vrouw glimlachte. 'Welkom in de wondere wereld van de Traan.'

'Is het echt zo dat alles leeft door de Traan ?' vroeg Eliak.

'Alles,' zei weer een andere vrouw. 'De Traan is ons leven. Zonder de Traan gaat alles dood.'

'Ik ben dus op de juiste plaats gekomen,' zei Eliak.

De vrouwen knikten. Eliak keek om zich heen. Hij bewonderde alle grote stellages van bamboe. Eén van de vrouwen kwam dichterbij en tilde hem op. Hij omhelsde haar. Ze leek op zijn moeder. 'Wij zullen voor je zorgen,' zei de vrouw. 'Dat doet de Traan. De Traan zorgt voor ons allemaal, en wij zorgen voor elkaar.' Het jongetje glimlachte. Hij kwam tot een diepe rust. Hij keek naar een rivier, en wees ernaar. 'En dat zijn allemaal tranen ?'

'Ja,' sprak de vrouw aan wiens nek hij hing. 'De tranen zijn de dromen.' Ze kuste zijn voorhoofd zacht. Er rolde een traan uit zijn ogen. Het was een traan van geluk.

'Hoe is de Traan ontstaan ?' vroeg hij.

'De Traan heeft altijd al bestaan,' zei de vrouw, 'maar eerst zat de Traan opgesloten in een steen, een ei van steen, en op een dag kwam de Traan uit het ei.'

'Interessant,' zei Eliak.

Een man schrikt wakker van een droom en grijpt naar de rode steen op zijn nachtkastje die hij de dag ervoor had gekocht. Tranen biggelen over zijn wangen als hij de steen tegen zijn hart drukt. Hij maakt zijn vrouw wakker, die hem in haar armen neemt. 'Heb je weer een nachtmerrie gehad ?' vroeg ze warm en liefdevol.

'N... nee,' stotterde de man, 'H... het was zo mooi, zo lieflijk ...'

'Wil je het me vertellen ?' vroeg de vrouw.

De man vertelt de droom.

'Denk je dat het met de rode steen heeft te maken ?' vroeg de vrouw. 'In de winkel zeiden ze dat het een hele bijzondere steen was.'

'Ik weet het niet,' snikte de man.

'Misschien als je weer gaat slapen krijg je het antwoord wel,' sprak de vrouw. 'In de winkel zeiden ze dat het een dromensteen was.'

De man probeert weer te slapen en ligt dicht tegen zijn vrouw aan. De volgende dag moet hij vroeg op voor het werk. Hij werkt bij de douane. In de middag komt een collega naar hem toe met een vreemde steen in zijn hand. 'Hier,' zei de collega, 'in de steen is het hol. Daar hebben ze drugs mee gesmokkeld. Ze worden steeds slimmer vandaag de dag.'

De man moest ineens weer aan de droom denken. 'Ik heb vannacht toch zo vreemd gedroomd,' zei hij, en begon de droom aan zijn collega te vertellen. Zijn collega begon hem uit te lachen. 'Ik denk dat je gek aan het worden bent,' zei de collega spottend. Even later had de collega het hele verhaal doorverteld, en het verhaal werd hoe langer hoe gekker. Helemaal gesloopt kwam de man die avond thuis, en vertelde zijn vrouw over alle roddel en spot.

'Ik denk dat dat de keerzijde van de Traan is,' zei de vrouw. 'Denk aan de droom, hoe het jongetje bespot werd, en hoe de tovenaar al aangaf hoe dubbel alles was.'

'Je hebt gelijk,' zei de man, 'maar het is geen pretje om zo voor schut gezet te worden, en zo in je vertrouwen beschaamd te worden.'

'Is de Traan niet iets wat communiceert ?' vroeg de vrouw. 'Het brengt het gevoel van de ene persoon over naar de andere persoon. Zo kun je je in de ander verplaatsen.'

De man knikte. Nacht na nacht wachtte hij op nieuwe dromen, maar ze kwamen maar niet, en het huilen stond hem nader dan het lachen. Het was alsof de Traan hem van binnen aanvrat. Hij begon boos te worden, ook boos op zijn vrouw. Op een dag kon hij het niet meer langer houden. 'Het komt allemaal door die vervloekte steen !' riep hij. Hij nam de rode steen mee naar het strand en wierp het zo ver als hij kon de zee in. Toen hij thuiskwam voelde hij zich opgelucht.

'Opgelucht ?' vroeg zijn vrouw.

'Ja,' zei de man. 'Ik voel me kilo's lichter. Het leek wel een plaaggeest, die steen.'

'Ik ben het niet met je eens,' zei de vrouw. 'Er gaan dingen mis in je leven, en je hebt behoeftes die maar niet vervuld lijken te worden, en dan leg je de schuld op andere dingen, terwijl je niet de tijd neemt om dingen te onderzoeken, op waarde te schatten en te leren begrijpen.'

Maar hij werd alleen maar bozer. 'Jij hebt makkelijk praten,' zei hij. 'Jij gaat niet door de dingen waar ik doorheen ga.'

'Hoe weet je dat ?' vroeg ze. 'Weet je hoe lang het duurt voordat je een brug tussen twee personen kunt overgaan ? Het lijkt eindeloos. Dat kan alleen door magie.'

'En die magie is er niet,' zei hij. 'Ik dacht dat het er was, maar nu is het weg.'

'Op de eindeloze brug tussen twee personen kom je altijd eerst het misverstand en de traan tegen,' sprak ze. 'De ander is een puzzel. Het is niet eenvoudig. Het gaat erom geduld te hebben. Ben je in voor het avontuur van ontdekking ?'

'Ik kan het niet meer,' zei hij, en liep de deur uit. In de nacht kwam hij terug en ging in een ander bed liggen. Ze begonnen uit elkaar te groeien, meer en meer. Ze hielden van elkaar,

maar ze hadden beiden het gevoel opgesloten te zitten in een stenen ei.

'Toch blijf ik er aan vasthouden dat eens de traan zal losbreken uit het stenen ei zoals in je droom,' zei de vrouw op een dag. Hij zweeg. Ze kwam dichter naar hem toe, en nam hem in haar armen. Hij voelde aan als steen. Zij had het gevoel alsof hij het stenen ei was waarin ze opgesloten zat, maar ze wist ook dat er meer aan de hand moest zijn. Op een dag kon ze er niet meer tegen. Er was iets in haar geknapt, en ook zij begon steeds meer in steen te veranderen, zo erg dat hij het begon op te merken. Hoe hij ook op haar in begon te praten en haar probeerde te helpen, niets hielp, en het werd alleen maar erger.

'Herinner je al je woorden dan die je naar mij gebruikte,' zei hij.

Vaak zweeg ze dan, of zei dat ze het zich niet meer kon herinneren, of dat het toch niet werkte. Hij begon steeds zachter te worden, maar hij had het idee alsof hij te laat was

gekomen, alsof hij de laatste trein had gemist. Hoe hij ook aan haar sleutelde, niets hielp. Hij was weer teruggekomen tot zijn vroegere ideeën en leefde weer vanuit de traan. Hij begreep haar, omdat hij hier zelf ook doorheen was gegaan. Hij zei dat ook altijd tegen haar, maar ze werd met de dag kouder en harder. Hij deed van alles om haar op te vrolijken, maar niets hielp.

'Ik ben er voor je,' zei hij op een dag. 'Waarschijnlijk moeten we hier doorheen. Ik weet wie je echt bent. Dit ben je niet, zoals ik ook mezelf niet was.'

Op een nacht had hij weer een droom, na een hele lange tijd. Hij was in het atelier van Bicardo de tovenaar. Hij smeekte de tovenaar hem te helpen. De tovenaar liet hem een schilderij zien van ijs. Overal waren ijsvlaktes. 'Ben je bereid door deze ijsvlaktes te gaan om je vrouw te ontdooien ?' vroeg Bicardo. 'Je vrouw is in gevangenschap van een ijsheks.'

'Wat !' riep de man. 'Hoe komt ze daar ? Ze is altijd de warmte zelf geweest.'

'Ze is in een ei van ijs,' zei de tovenaar.

'Ja, maar hoe ?' riep de man.

'Ben je bereid ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

'Natuurlijk,' zei de man, 'voor haar heb ik alles over.'

Zonder verder wat te zeggen duwde de tovenaar hem ruw door het schilderij heen, en hij viel diep naar beneden in de sneeuw van de ijsvlaktes. Het was alsof hij met zijn hoofd iets hard raakte, als een rots. Voor een tijdje lag hij bewusteloos en kwam toen langzaam weer bij. Hij begon te strompelen door de sneeuw, voor uren en uren, terwijl het wel dagen leken, en hij begon zich steeds kouder te voelen. 'Ik ga hier dood !' riep hij.

Hij begon te schreeuwen als een wild beest. 'Niemand helpt, hè ?' Na een tijdje kwam hij

aan bij iets wat leek op een kasteel. Het was omgeven door een ijzige mist en een bevroren rivier. Hij liep het bruggetje over en moest zorgen dat hij niet uitgleed. Hij besefte ook dat als dit het kasteel van de ijsheks zou zijn, dan kon hij weleens in grote problemen zijn. Bij de gesloten poort belde hij aan. Een oud vrouwtje kwam even later de poort opendoen.

'Ik ben op zoek naar de ijsheks,' sprak hij.

'Kom verder,' zei het oude vrouwtje. 'Ik kan je daar alles over vertellen.'

'Maar wat als uzelf de ijsheks bent ?' vroeg hij aarzelend.

'Wees maar niet bang,' zei het oude vrouwtje.

'U bent niet de ijsheks ?' vroeg de man.

Ze schudde haar hoofd.

'Ja of nee ?' vroeg de man. 'Ik wordt altijd een beetje zenuwachtig van gebarentaal.'

'Kom nou maar binnen,' zei het vrouwtje. 'Het is koud buiten. En nee, ik ben niet de ijsheks.'

Haar gedrag begon hem meer en meer te irriteren. 'Ik weet wel zeker dat jij de ijsheks bent,' sprak hij. 'IJsheksen doen altijd zo. Maar ik heb geen andere keus. Ik ben aan het doodvriezen.'

'Wees niet bang,' zei ze weer. 'Volg mij.'

Binnen was het een stuk warmer. 'Wat heb je met mijn vrouw gedaan ?' vroeg hij. Ze leidde hem door een gang naar een soort huiskamer. Hier kreeg hij een stoel.

'Ik ben geen ijsheks,' zei ze weer. 'De ijsheks woont verderop. Ik heb vroeger wel voor haar gewerkt, maar toen ik er achter kwam dat ze een slechte vrouw was ben ik ermee gestopt.'

'Wat voor werk deed u ?' vroeg de man.

'Schoonmaak,' zei de vrouw, 'het huishouden. Soms kookte ik voor haar.'

'Ik zie het,' zei de man. 'Kunt u mij vertellen waar mijn vrouw is, en waarom ? Bicardo zei dat mijn vrouw in gevangenschap leeft van een ijsheks.'

'Ik kan het u niet vertellen,' zei het vrouwtje. 'Het kan persoonlijke redenen hebben. Ik ken geen details. Ik weet alleen waar ze woont en dat ze niet te vertrouwen is.'

'U kunt proberen een reden te geven ?' vroeg de man.

'Zo zit ze in elkaar,' zei het vrouwtje.

De man besefte dat hij niet verder kwam met het vrouwtje. Ook wist hij niet of het vrouwtje de waarheid sprak. 'Breng me naar de ijsheks,' zei hij na een tijdje. De vrouw had hem voedsel aangeboden en wat te drinken, maar dat had hij geweigerd, uit angst

vergiftigd te worden. Het vrouwtje stond op, en sprak : 'Volg mij.' Weer liepen ze door de gang, maar dan helemaal naar de andere kant van het kasteel waar een grote tuin was. Ook hier lag overal sneeuw. In de verte was een nog veel groter kasteel, en het kasteel was verlicht. 'Daar woont ze,' sprak de vrouw, terwijl ze de achterdeur opendeed. Hij stapte naar buiten, en ze sloot direct de deur achter zich. Hij groette haar, maar hij zag haar al weglopen door het raam. Hij zette het op een lopen, en rende naar het verlichte kasteel toe. Hij hoorde het gehuil van wolven in de verte.

'Ken ik jou ?' krijste een stem.
'Nee, Madelief !' hoorde hij een man terugroepen.
'Niet jij, maar die man die eraan komt !'

Hij rende tot de verlichte poort, waar een andere oude vrouw was. Ze was aan het schrobben. Hij zag de andere man niet. 'Wie bent u ?' vroeg het vrouwtje terwijl ze opkeek.

'Wat heb je met mijn vrouw gedaan ?' vroeg de man.

'Niets,' zei het vrouwtje verbaasd. 'Ik zou niet weten wie je bent of wie je vrouw is.'

'U bent de ijsheks ?' vroeg hij.

'Welnee,' zei het vrouwtje. 'Die woont aan de overkant.'

'Waar ?' vroeg hij.

'Daar waar je vandaan kwam,' zei het vrouwtje.

De man schrikt wakker, en grijpt om zich heen, maar zijn vrouw slaapt in de andere kamer. De volgende ochtend vertelt hij de nachtmerrie. Ze zegt niets.

'Ik begin te geloven dat het waar is,' zei hij. 'Je bent niet meer zoals je was.'

'Geloof je in sprookjes en dromen ?' vroeg zijn vrouw op een spottende toon. 'Blijf met je beide benen in de realiteit. Daar schieten we veel meer mee op.'

'Vroeger was je niet zo,' sprak hij.

'Ik ben eindelijk ontwaakt,' sprak ze. 'Ik ben je spelletjes zat. Ik praatte altijd maar met je mee. Het was allemaal aangeleerd gedrag.'

Hij zuchtte. Hij begon erg aan zichzelf te twijfelen. Misschien was hij wel ontspoord. 'Maar Bicardo ...' zei hij aarzelend.

'Bicardo is een verzinsel,' sprak zijn vrouw spottend. 'Er bestaat geen Bicardo. Er bestaat geen ijsheks, en die verhalen over de Traan zijn ook allemaal belachelijk. Kinderachtig is het. Het helpt ons niet verder.'

Hij zuchtte weer. 'Ik kan niet tot je doordringen, maar dan zou ik je willen vragen : Kun je dan alsjeblieft tot mij

doordringen ? Als jij het zo goed weet, onderwijs me dan ?'

'Stoppen met alle onzin,' sprak ze. 'Al dat zweverige gedoe van jou heeft ons nooit verder gebracht, en nu kan ik het niet meer. Ik heb je niets te zeggen. Jij hebt mijn leven kapotgemaakt met al jouw dromen en verhalen.'

Hij schrok. Dit was niet de vrouw die hij eens kende. De dag erna was ze weg. Ze had een briefje achtergelaten : 'Het gaat zo niet meer. We lopen elkaar alleen maar voor de voeten. Denk niet dat het is omdat ik niet van je houd. Ik zal je missen.' Hij voelde zich koud, als in de greep van een ijsheks. Hij ook altijd met zijn verhalen. Had hij nu zijn mond maar gehouden. Of was dit misschien de prijs die hij moest betalen ? 'Hoe duur is die traan wel niet !' riep hij uit.

Hij begon steeds minder te voelen, alsof hij was opgesloten in een steen. Alle hoop begon uit zijn leven weg te sijpelen. Hij had wat

nieuwe vriendinnen, maar kwam niet ver op de eindeloze bruggen tussen hen in. Altijd weer dat misverstand en dat onbegrip, alsof ze te verschillend waren. Het was een onmogelijke opgave. Alle wegen schenen dood te lopen, en hij klapte snel dicht, of durfde het niet meer aan. Hij was bang zijn gevoelens te laten zien, het laatste wat hij nog had, en wat steeds minder leek te worden. Hij was bang zijn tranen te laten zien. Op wat voor vreemd pad was hij terecht gekomen in zijn leven ?

Op een nacht had hij een droom dat hij weer in de ijsvlaktes was, en hij werd omsingeld door vliegen. Ze begonnen over hem te roddelen, en alles wat hij gezegd had begonnen ze om te draaien, en het geroddel en gelieg werd erger en erger, totdat ze hem begonnen aan te vallen en op te vreten. Hij werd gillend wakker van de nachtmerrie.

Hij begon steeds kwader te worden op het leven, maar het was als het aanschoppen tegen steen. Niets veranderde. Hij noemde

alles om hem heen kinderachtige fantasie, en zijn enige waarheid waren zijn dromen. Hij had alle hoop gevestigd op Bicardo de tovenaar, maar die kwam maar niet. Ook dit hield hij niet lang vol. Hij was kwaad op zichzelf. Was hij ziek, gek of misschien een leugenaar ? Bedroog hij zichzelf ? Of was hij onder een vloek ? Hij begon meer dingen uit zijn huis weg te gooien uit angst voor vloeken en betoveringen. Steeds weer ging hij naar het strand en wierp zijn bezittingen in de zee. Hij deed dit zelfs met grammofoon platen. Terwijl hij dit deed schold hij altijd op de zee. Hij was bang voor de zee, en voelde zich machteloos naar het grote natuurgeweld van de zee. Hij was tegelijkertijd woedend op de zee en op de natuur.

Iets knaagde aan hem, maar hij wist niet wat. Huilen kon hij niet eens meer, en zo begon hij meer en meer weer als steen te worden, harder dan ooit tevoren. Hij wist dat het nu hard tegen hard was. Hij moest wel, anders zou hij het niet overleven. Hij vertrouwde geen mens meer, en begon zich zoveel

mogelijk af te zonderen van mensen. Zijn baan bij de douane gaf hij op. Het was hem onmogelijk geworden. Hij wilde geen mensen meer zien. Het liefst zou hij het bos willen inrennen om daar te wonen. Het kon hem niet meer schelen. Hij zou de prijs wel betalen. Hij maalde er niet meer om, huilde er niet meer om, en klagen deed hij ook niet meer. In de nachten had hij dromen dat hij in steen veranderde. Op een nacht in een droom kwam Bicardo heel dichtbij hem met zijn staf. 'Nee,' smeekte hij. 'Raak mij niet aan met die staf.'

'Het is tijd dat je uit het ei van steen komt, dat het steen wordt opengebroken,' sprak de tovenaar en sloeg tegen de steen aan die hij was geworden. Hij gilde het uit van de pijn, en het leek alsof hij onder grote stroom stond. Hij begon open te barsten, en rivieren begonnen uit hem voort te stromen. 'Ja, ja !' riep hij. 'Ik zie het eeuwige leven !' Hij hoorde toen het gebulder van de zee wat in hem losbrak. Na een tijdje viel hij uitgeput op de grond. Alles tolde voor zijn ogen. Hij was

nog te zwak om wat te zeggen. Alles overweldigde hem, overspoelde hem, als groot natuurgeweld. Overal was donder, bliksem, en storm. Het was alsof een orkaan hem opnam.

'Wat weet jij van het leven ?' vroeg Bicardo.

'Helemaal niets,' zei hij zacht.

'Spreek harder,' zei Bicardo.

'Helemaal niets !' riep hij.

'Ben je klaar voor school ?' vroeg Bicardo.

'Ja, helemaal,' zei hij.

'Jij bent Eliak,' zei Bicardo. 'De Traan is ontwaakt in je. Nu moet je opgevoed worden en geschoold worden in de Traan.'

Hij keek om zich heen en zag de bamboe kampen zoals in de droom over Eliak, het jongetje. Hij voelde zich weer een kind, en

zag de natuur-vrouwen op hem afkomen. Ze waren warm en liefdevol, en keken hem glimlachend aan.

'Het heeft me verscheurd,' sprak hij.

'Je moest losgescheurd worden om hier te kunnen komen,' sprak één van de vrouwen.

'De stenen zijn duur, en helemaal de sappen die ze dragen,' sprak een andere vrouw.

'Het leven is duur, zeer duur,' zei een andere vrouw.

Hij knikte. 'Laat me nooit meer los,' smeekte hij.

Toen werd hij wakker. Hij was rustig en er was een warmte om hem heen. 'Ik wordt heen en weer geslingerd tussen twee werelden,' zei hij tegen zichzelf, 'maar ze beïnvloeden elkaar. Ergens moet er een kruispunt zijn, een samensmelting.' Hij zuchtte van opluchting. Hij voelde met beide werelden contact. 'Ik

moet beide delen accepteren,' zei hij tegen zichzelf. 'Zij horen bij elkaar. Zij vullen elkaar aan, stuwen elkaar op. Zij behoren tot mijn levensverhaal als kostbare stenen met kostbare sappen. Het leven is waardevol. Eerst is er het misverstand, en dan het begrip, het geheim van de Traan.' Hij beefde. Het leek nog steeds alsof hij droomde. Hij zag zijn verleden langs hem heenstromen als een rivier. Hij wist dat hij de rivier niet kon vasthouden. Alles zou weer tussen zijn vingers wegglippen. Hij moest verder. Hij moest het geheim van de rivier ontdekken, het geheim van de Traan.

Hij zou niet teruggaan naar het verleden. Hij wist dat het iets cyclisch was. Het zou vanzelf wel weer terugkomen, maar dan op een andere manier. Niets was blijvend. Alles moest veranderen. Hij keek naar zijn trouwring. Het waren twee handen die elkaar vasthielden. Hij schudde zijn hoofd. De materie zou hem nooit verder helpen. Dit was geen echte cyclus. Het zou hem alleen maar afhouden van de hogere cyclus. Hij moest het

loslaten. Hij ging naar het strand en wierp de gouden trouwring zo ver de zee in als hij kon. Hij voelde de brandende hand van Bicardo op zijn schouder. Alsof toen alles ineens door kon stromen. Hij dook de zee in nadat hij zijn kleren had uitgetrokken. Het was een warme, tropische dag. Hij waande zichzelf met de natuurvrouwen uit zijn droom. Hij maakte plezier met hen in de warme zee. Hij proefde wat van het zoute water. Het leek wel alsof Bicardo naar hem keek vanaf het strand. 'Kom ook in het water, Bicardo !' riep hij. Maar Bicardo begon steeds meer weg te vagen. 'Nee, ik moet nog wat karweitjes doen !' riep de tovenaar. 'Maak jij maar lekker pret met de natuurvrouwen, en leer van hen.' Alles wat nog van deze woorden overbleef was nog een echo.

Een jongen wordt wakker in het klaslokaal door de bel. Hij had zo vreemd gedroomd. Maar ja, alles beter dan zo'n saaie les. Hij had nog steeds de echo van Bicardo's woorden in zijn hoofd, en hij voelde zich duizelig. De kinderen zagen hem wakker worden en

lachten hem uit. Hij lachte terug naar hen. 'Domme oen !' zei één van de kinderen.

Hij begon nog harder terug te lachen. 'Wie is er nu een dommere oen ? Ik ben in ieder geval weer heel wat wijzer geworden van mijn slaap, en jullie een heel stuk dommer door het luisteren naar de oen die hier lesgeeft. En vergeet later niet je trouwring in je dikke reet te stoppen. Het mocht je nog eens in grote problemen brengen,' zei hij glimlachend. Toen keek hij de verbaasde onderwijzer aan, en liet zijn ogen toen afdalen naar diens trouwring .... 'Gevangen ... door ... de ... ijsheks ...' fluisterde hij brutaal en aanmatigend in het oor van de leraar, op een spottend toontje. Hem konden ze niets meer wijsmaken. 'Nu, dat was het,' zei hij. Hij pakte zijn boeken en zijn tas, en liep trots het lokaal uit.

Toen hij thuiskwam zei hij : 'Mam, ik heb toch zo vreemd gedroomd. Het ging over een trouwring, en over ijsheksen die elkaar

beschuldigden, en over natuurvrouwen en tovenaars die levende schilderijen maakte.'

'Zorg jij nu maar dat je je huiswerk doet,' zei zijn moeder, 'anders komt er niets van je terecht met al je gedroom.' Brutaal liep hij naar zijn moeder toe en begon aan haar vinger te trekken. 'Als ik het niet dacht,' zei hij. 'Trouwringetje, hè ? Ringetje van ijs ... Gevangen door de ijsheks.'

'Wat bazel je toch ?' zei zijn moeder. 'Als ik niet getrouwd was, was jij er nooit geweest.'

Hij ging recht voor zijn moeder staan in een trotse, bijna sierlijke en poëtische houding, niet zonder spot. 'Mam, nu moet je eens even goed naar me luisteren,' sprak hij. 'Als jij er niet was geweest, dan leefde ik nog steeds op de Traan, maar je moest er wel zijn, anders kon ik niet dieper in de Traan komen. Het stenen ei is van levensbelang, anders zou de Traan nooit kunnen bestaan. De Traan heeft het stenen ei nodig.'

'Hmmm,' zei zijn moeder. 'Je hebt wel praatjes, maar betekent dit dat ik je vader nodig heb ? Het is soms zo'n rotvent, en ik leef vaak in een tranendal met hem.'

'Precies, mam,' zei de jongen. 'Keurig gezegd, petje af. Jij steekt dingen goed op van de levenslessen.'

'Gelukkig maar,' zei zijn moeder.

Einde

IJsziek

Hij was op het piratenschip, op de ijszee. Het was verschrikkelijk koud, en hij begon steeds vreemder te hallucineren en te dromen. Hij was zowel zeeziek als ijsziek. De piraten leken in zijn hallucinaties steeds langer en dunner te worden. Soms leken ze ver weg en soms dichtbij. Hij zweefde op het randje van de dood. Hij was verschrikkelijk aan het ijlen. Hij probeerde zich dingen te herinneren, terwijl hij niet meer wist of hij wakker was of sliep. Hij zag vanaf het schip de gigantische ijszee. Waren de laatste herinneringen die hij had wel echt ? Alles tolde voor zijn ogen. Hij

kon geen werkelijkheid van verbeelding meer onderscheiden. Hij voelde zich dronken van de kou. In zijn gedachten probeerde hij terug te gaan door de dagen. Hoe kwam hij hier ? En waarom was hij hier op de ijszee ? Hele vage herinneringen had hij, en hij wist niet of ze waar waren. Hij probeerde zijn herinneringen te grijpen, maar hij kon het niet. Ze leken uit zijn vingers weg te glijden en ze leken te veranderen. Hij probeerde te janken, maar hij kon het niet. Hij voelde zich als bijna bevroren. Hij was al zoveel dagen op deze zee, of misschien wel weken. Hij kon zich herinneren dat het steeds kouder werd. Was het niet een waarzegster die hem op deze tocht had gezonden ? Hij ging in zijn gedachten terug om vat te krijgen op de herinneringen over de waarzegster, maar of het waar was wist hij niet meer. Het drong hem op als de werkelijkheid. Het was alleen even een flits, en het begon zich al snel te vervormen.

Ze had twee stenen. Het waren orakelstenen. Een steen was de tranen steen, en de andere

steen was de urine steen. Ze keek in de stenen, en sprak tot hem : 'Ga over de rivier van varkensbloed tot de urine zee.' De bloedvarkens waren woest zoals altijd. Toen hij op zijn bootje op de rivier was moest hij er een paar afschieten met zijn boog. Gruwelijk gromden zij. Hij kwam aan bij de urine zee, laat. Hij wachtte op verdere tekens, maar die kwamen niet. Zij had gezegd dat hij tekens zou ontvangen. 'Die vervloekte stenen doen altijd vaag,' mopperde hij tegen zichzelf.

Hij ging aan boord van een piratenschip, diep in de woestijn, aan de urine zee. De piraten waren lang en woest. Sommigen hadden messen tussen hun tanden. Ze zouden aanleggen bij een amazone eiland. De amazones hielden vee voor bloed en urine. De urine van de zee was ondrinkbaar. De piraten zouden naar het eiland toegaan om met de amazones te onderhandelen.

Het eiland was een reusachtige woestijn op zichzelf. Op het eiland liepen mannen rond

aan ketenen. Het waren zware criminelen. Het was een ballingen eiland.
Ook op dit woestijn eiland waren er bloed rivieren en urine rivieren. Er zouden hier ook veel kampen en nederzettingen zijn van de amazones die de mannen gebruikten als slaven.

Na een lange zeereis van vele dagen kwamen ze eindelijk aan op het eiland.

De zee van urine zelf was de zee van vergetelheid, een natuurverschijnsel in de diepte van de eindeloze woestijn. Toen hij op het eiland was aangekomen was hij alles van zijn verleden vergeten. Hij wist niet meer waarom hij hier was. Het zijn op de urine zee van vergetelheid had hem dronken gemaakt.

Na de onderhandelingen gingen ze verder de zee op langs het reusachtige woestijneiland. Verderop zou de urine zee steeds meer overgaan in een ijszee.

De reusachtige ijszee liep over in een zee van bloed. Op een rotseneiland op de zee van bloed woonde een ijsheks. Het duurde vele weken voordat ze daar aankwamen. Het was een donkere vrouw, en hij herkende haar onmiddelijk. Het was een flits van zijn geheugen wat hij weer terugkreeg. 'Jij bent de vrouw van het orakel die mij deze tocht heeft laten maken,' zei hij.
Ze glimlachte warm en liefdevol. 'Dat is mijn andere deel,' sprak ze. 'Ik wilde dat je ook dit deel zou leren kennen. Alleen zij die de tocht maken zullen mij waarlijk kennen en waardig genoeg zijn om met mij te zijn.'
Ze bood een trouwring aan, maar hij raakte in paniek. 'Nee !' riep hij. 'Daarvoor ben ik niet gekomen ! Er moet een ander doel zijn, anders is alles voor niets geweest !'

'Niets is voor niets geweest,' sprak ze. 'Ik bied je een huwelijk aan.'

'Steek het huwelijk in je dikke reet !' riep hij. 'Ik doe niet mee.'

Maar de piraten grepen hem stevig vast.

'Wat ? Een gedwongen huwelijk ? Dat kan niet waar zijn !' riep hij.

Toen sloegen de piraten hem neer. 'Bedankt,' zei de vrouw. Ze ging naar hem toe en schoof de ring om zijn teen. 'Een huwelijks-slaaf om mee te beginnen. Later zien we wel verder.'

Hij kwam weer bij bewustzijn aan ketenen. Hij keek om zich heen en zag meerdere mannen aan ketenen. Hij vroeg zich af waar hij was. Overal was woestijn, dus hij dacht dat het het woestijn-eiland was. Hij kon zich herinneren dat hij gedwongen werd tot een huwelijk, een huwelijk tot een ijsheks. De andere mannen lachten hem uit, en hij wist niet waarom, maar hij dacht dat het was omdat hij nieuw was.

Even later kwamen er amazones om de mannen te inspecteren. 'Ben ik een crimineel dat jullie mij hier houden ?' vroeg hij. Ze

zeiden niets en gingen door de rijen. 'Hey !' riep hij. 'Wat heeft dit te betekenen ?'

'Mond houden,' zei een dikke vrouw, terwijl hij een klap kreeg. Hij stortte in elkaar. Daarna kreeg hij nog een paar schoppen totdat hij weer zijn bewustzijn verloor. Deze vrouwen waren keihard.

Toen hij na een tijdje weer bij zijn bewustzijn was gekomen was de ijsheks er weer. 'Waarom doe je mij dit aan ?' kreunde hij.

'Accepteer je het huwelijk of wil je hier blijven ?' vroeg ze.

'Ik accepteer het,' zei hij. Hij werd weer neergeslagen, en kwam pas weer bij op het rotseneiland van de ijsheks in de bloedzee.

Hij zuchtte. 'Waarom moet dit allemaal ?' vroeg hij. 'Ik had nooit naar je moeten luisteren en naar je orakels.'

'Te laat,' sprak ze. 'Zij die mijn andere deel hebben gezien komen nooit meer van me weg.'

'Leuk,' zei hij. 'Wie verzint zulke regels ?'

'Het orakel,' sprak ze.

'Oh, die twee stenen, de tranen steen en de urine steen ?' zei hij spottend. 'Heb je geen andere stenen ?'

'Je hebt teveel praatjes,' zei ze. 'Als je zo doorgaat moet ik je ombrengen.'

'Oh, ook een regel van het orakel ?' zei hij boos. Maar tegelijkertijd werd hij heel bang, en kalmeerde zichzelf. 'Goed, ik accepteer alles wat je zegt. Wat moet ik doen ?'

'Je hebt mijn derde deel nog niet gezien,' sprak ze.

'Ik weet niet of ik je derde deel wel wil zien,' zei hij, 'tenzij je derde deel me hieruit haalt.'

'Dat kan,' zei ze, 'maar zij is erger dan dit deel.'

'Laat dan maar zitten,' zei hij. 'Het is al erg genoeg.'

'Nee, je moet haar zien,' zei ze.

'Ik wil niet !' kermde hij.

Ze sleurde hem mee naar een deur en deed de deur open. Er viel een pop uit. De pop had menselijke afmetingen. 'Hier is ze,' sprak ze.

'Maar dat is een pop,' zei hij.

'Nou en ?' zei ze.

Hij kreeg de pop mee en mocht gaan waar hij wilde gaan, maar mocht de pop niet wegdoen, want dan zou hem iets verschrikkelijks overkomen. De pop ging mee in een doos.
Hij kreeg een schip en mocht vertrekken.

Hij was erg blij. De bemanning van het schip zei dat hij maar beter kon doen wat de ijsheks hem zei, anders zou het verkeerd met hem aflopen. Hij wilde de pop overboord laten gooien, maar de bemanning durfde dat niet. Ze vreesden de ijsheks.

Hij besloot het zelf te doen toen ze sliepen, en kieperde de pop in de doos uit het schip. Niet lang daarna was er een verschrikkelijke storm. De bemanning was razend en zagen hem als de schuldige. In hun woede grepen ze hem en wierpen hem overboord. Toen begon de storm kalmer te worden. Ergens zag hij de doos drijven en zwemde er naartoe. Hij nam de pop uit de doos. Zij kon drijven. Hij wist dat hij niet terugkon op het schip. Ergens dichtbij was een eiland waar hij met zijn handen naartoe peddelde terwijl hij op de pop lag. 'Boe,' zei de pop. 'Wist je niet, hè ?' De pop begon tot leven te komen, en dreef niet meer. Het laatste stukje moesten ze zelf zwemmen. 'Dus ik kom daadwerkelijk niet zomaar van je af ?' vroeg hij. 'Ik denk dat ik gek wordt. Heb je ook een vierde deel ?'

'Het vierde deel is voor hen die overwinnen,' sprak ze.

'Wat overwinnen ?' vroeg hij.

Ze wees op zijn teenring : 'De vervloekte teenring van het gedwongen huwelijk,' sprak ze.

'Hoe kan ik het overwinnen ?' vroeg hij. Hij nam de teenring af en wierp het in de zee. Maar ineens was de teenring weer om zijn teen. 'Het zit vast,' zei ze. Hij zuchtte.

'Ik denk echt dat ik gek wordt,' zei hij, 'maar alles beter dan dat kamp van verbande criminelen.'

Ze had een schortje aan van wat lange witte veren.

'Weet je dan niet dat je zelf het vierde deel bent ?' vroeg ze.

'En zo is het gegaan,' zei een man tegen de psychiater, 'en daarom ben ik hier. Ik ben getrouwd met een pop en kan daarom mezelf niet vinden.'

'Die pop, hè ?' zei de psychiater. 'Staat die bij u thuis ?'

'Ja,' zei de man. 'Die is één dag levend geweest, en daarna was het weer gewoon een pop, en toen heb ik haar mee naar huis genomen, na een lange zee tocht.'

'En u zegt die zee was geheel van urine, overlopende in een ijszee en daarna in een bloedzee ?' vroeg de psychiater.

De man knikte. 'Zeer eigenaardig, zeer eigenaardig,' sprak de psychiater. 'Zeg, mag ik die pop eens zien ?'

'Maar natuurlijk,' zei de man enthousiast. 'Ik ben blij dat u mijn verhaal gelooft.'

'Nou ja, geloven is een groot woord,' zei de psychiater. 'Eerst zien, dan geloven. Daarna zou ik ook graag die urine zee willen zien waar u het over had.'

'Daar kom je niet zomaar,' sprak de man. 'Dan moet je eerst over een varkensrivier, en dan mag je hopen dat je het overleefd, want er zijn daar allemaal woeste bloedvarkens.'

'Dat is me nogal wat,' sprak de psychiater. 'Laat me dan eerst maar eens die pop zien om te beginnen.'

De man nam de psychiater achterop zijn fiets mee naar zijn huis. De donkere pop met het schortje van een paar lange witte veren zat op de bank. Verder was ze naakt.

'Nou, nou,' sprak de psychiater, 'dat is me nogal een pop. Het lijkt wel op een sex pop.'

'Nou, psychiater,' zei de man. 'Ik voel mezelf als een sexpop want het was een gedwongen huwelijk.'

'Ik begrijp het,' knikte de psychiater. 'Is er ooit sprake geweest van verkrachting ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'Nooit,' zei de man. 'Het is maar een pop.'

'Gelukkig maar,' zei de psychiater. 'Dat is al een last minder. Nou, vertelt u mij eens : Hoe is dit nu allemaal gekomen. Waar begon het mee ?'

'Nou, zoals ik al zei,' zei de man. 'Ik ging naar een indiaanse waarzegster in de buurt, en ze gebruikte haar orakelstenen en gaf mij de opdracht.'

'Vreemd, zeer vreemd,' zei de psychiater. 'Zullen we eens naar die waarzegster toegaan ?'

Maar de man begon in paniek te raken. 'Daar wil ik niet meer komen !' riep hij. 'Ik heb een teenring waar ik van probeer af te komen,

maar zodra ik hem afdoe zit de teenring er weer om.

'Eigenaardig,' zei de psychiater. 'Laat u mij dat eens zien.'

De man deed zijn schoen en sok uit en nam de teenring van zijn teen af. Hij gaf de teenring aan de psychiater. 'Wat een prachtige teenring,' zei de psychiater.

'Nee, het is een vervloekte teenring, mijnheer de psychiater,' zei de man. 'De teenring van het gedwongen huwelijk.'

'Maar er zit geen teenring meer om uw teen,' zei de psychiater. 'Waarschijnlijk heeft u alles gewoon gedroomd, en heeft u de teenring ooit eens gekocht of gekregen. Zeg, mag ik eens met die indiaanse waarzegster praten waar u het over had ? Ik begrijp dat door die gebeurtenis alles misliep in uw leven, zegt u. U hoeft niet met mij mee te gaan, maar kunt u mij het adres van die waarzegster geven ?'

'Ik ben bang dat de teenring straks weer aan mijn teen zit als u weg bent,' zei de man. Hij liep naar de kast en haalde er een kaartje uit. 'Hier is haar visite kaartje, en neemt u gerust de teenring mee. Ik wil de teenring niet meer. Ik heb er teveel ellende aan overgehouden.'

'Wilt u dat ik de pop ook meeneem ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'Graag,' zei de man.

De psychiater stopte de teenring met het visite kaartje in zijn zak, en nam de pop mee in een grote plastic tas. Bij de waarzegster aangekomen belde hij aan. Een donkere vrouw deed open. 'Goedendag,' sprak de psychiater. 'Ik heb nogal een vreemd verhaal gehoord van één van mijn patiënten, en zou daar graag met u over willen praten om een en ander te verifiëren.'

'Komt u verder,' sprak de vrouw warm en hartelijk. Hij legde de tas in de gang neer en kreeg een stoel in de huiskamer waarop hij

ging zitten, en begon toen het verhaal te vertellen.

De vrouw luisterde ernaar met open mond. Aan het einde van het verhaal begon ze te lachen. 'Ik kan mijn oren niet geloven,' sprak ze. 'U moet weten dat ik ten eerste geen tranen steen of urine steen heb, en ten tweede heb ik hem nooit zulke opdrachten gegeven, en ten derde is de rest van het verhaal al helemaal het bizarste wat ik ooit heb gehoord.'

De psychiater haalde de teenring uit zijn zak en liet het aan de vrouw zien. De vrouw knikte bewonderend. 'Het is een mooi ding, maar ik heb het nog nooit eerder gezien. Ik heb niets, maar dan ook niets met deze zaak te maken.'

'Maar kent u hem ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'En of ik hem ken,' zei de vrouw. 'Hij is hier vaak geweest.'

'En wat gebeurde er dan ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'We hadden sex voor geld, en ik voorspelde voor hem de toekomst,' legde ze uit.

'Wie betaalde ? U of hij ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'Hij betaalde. Het is mijn professie, mijnheer,' sprak ze. 'Bent u hier nieuw ? U bent hier in de rode buurt.'

'Dus u bent hoer, en waarzegster,' zei de psychiater. 'Ik vraag me af hoe hij zo geworden is, en waarom hij deze dingen denkt. Heeft u enig idee hoe hij zo geworden is, of zijn er hier dingen gebeurd waardoor hij misschien in de war is geraakt.'

De vrouw keek de man geheimzinnig aan. 'Ik heb zo mijn beroepsgeheimen,' sprak ze.

'Dat is vaag, heel vaag,' sprak de psychiater. 'Ik heb informatie nodig om mijn eigen professie te kunnen uitvoeren.'

'Dan komt u maar met de politie of een advocaat,' sprak de vrouw, 'maar ik ga niet zomaar persoonlijke informatie aan u geven.' De vrouw stond op en wenkte hem. 'Ik kan u niet verder helpen op het moment,' zei de vrouw koud. 'De informatie is gevoelig.'

Na een paar minuten stond de psychiater op de stoep. Hij was de tas met de pop vergeten. Daarna werd de deur weer opengemaakt. 'U bent uw sex pop vergeten,' zei de vrouw terwijl ze de tas overhandigde. Ze sprak nog steeds koud.

'Het is mijn sex pop niet,' zei de man, 'maar van mijn patiënt. Is die pop toevallig ook van u ?'

'Nee hoor,' sprak de vrouw kil, en smeet de deur weer dicht.

Inmiddels zat de teenring weer om de teen van de man, en de psychiater stond voor een raadsel. De psychiater had de andere teenring nog steeds in zijn zak. 'Had u toevallig meerderen van zulke ringen ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'Nee,' zei de man. De ring was adembenemend mooi. De psychiater bleef er maar naar staren. 'Weet u dat u heel rijk kunt worden ?' sprak de psychiater langzaam.

'Ik weet het,' zei de man, 'maar ik wil er vanaf.'

'Ik begrijp het, ik begrijp het,' sprak de psychiater. 'De waarzegster ontkende alles, maar ze had naar eigen zeggen wel haar beroepsgeheimen. Het ging om persoonlijke en gevoelige informatie.'

'Ik ben veel vergeten,' zei de man. 'Het komt door de urine zee, de zee van vergetelheid, waarop ik was.'

'U heeft niet toevallig gewoon wat gedronken ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'Kan wezen, kan wezen,' zei de man.

'Ik heb namelijk nog nooit van een urine zee van vergetelheid gehoord,' sprak de psychiater. 'Misschien haalt u dingen door de war.'

'We dronken soms wat voordat we sex hadden,' zei de man. 'Een stimulerend drankje.'

'Of misschien heeft ze een verdovend middel in het drankje gedaan ?' vroeg hij. 'Je kunt hoeren nooit vertrouwen.'

'Misschien,' zei de man. 'Ze zei dat ze een heks was, een ijsheks.'

'Ik begrijp het,' zei de psychiater. 'En heksen kun je al helemaal niet vertrouwen. Het was een waarzegster.'

'Precies,' zei de man. 'En die teenring die telkens verschijnt is het bewijs.'

'Weet je zeker dat je geen hele bak thuis hebt met zulke teenringen ?' vroeg de psychiater. 'Het zijn wel hele aparte ringen die je niet zomaar ergens vindt.'

'Ik weet het zeker,' zei de man.

'Nu,' zei de psychiater. 'Het verhaal wat u mij vertelt lijkt heel veel op een meervoudig personaliteiten syndroom. U denkt dat u een deel bent van de waarzegster.'

'Nee,' zei de man. 'Dat denk ik niet. Dat zei de pop.'

'Maar poppen praten niet,' zei de psychiater. 'Ik denk dat u in de war bent met iets, onder invloed van drugs of alcohol. Het verhaal klopt van geen kanten.'

De man begon zenuwachtig te worden. 'Goed, u gelooft mij niet, terwijl u zelf zag

dat ik de teenring weer terughad. Ik zit hier mijn tijd te verdoen.'

'Luister,' zei de psychiater. 'Er kan heel goed misdaad in het spel zijn. De vrouw wilde niet echt meewerken, en alles is uiterst verdacht.'

'Schakelt u de politie dan in ?' vroeg de man.

'Ik zit er wel aan te denken,' zei de psychiater, 'want voor nu komen we geen stap verder.'

'Doe dan wat,' zei de man. 'Want mijn leven is een hel.'

Een man wordt wakker van het geblaf van honden. 'Karel, laat de honden uit !' roept zijn vrouw. De man kleedt zich snel aan en gaat met de herdershonden naar buiten. Wat een vreemde droom had hij gehad over een ijsheks en dat hij bij de psychiater zat. Hij had een slecht huwelijk, en probeerde zijn vrouw zo veel mogelijk te ontwijken. Toch kon hij ook niet zonder, alsof hij vastzat aan onzichtbare ketenen.

'Droom, droom, laat de tovenaar je lach zien,
Droom, droom, laat de tovenaar je traan zien,
Oh droom, en laat de tovenaar al je ketenen zien,
Want hij staat bij de grote ketel,
de dromenketel, waar hij alles weer goed kan maken,
Als de dromensmid is hij, als de woordensmid is hij,
Hoe diep de woorden ook in je hart zijn geschoten,
Hij vist ze er weer uit,
Hij is de dromenvisser,
Hoe diep de vloeken ook in je hart zijn gestoken,
Hij vist ze er weer uit

Droom, droom, laat de tovenaar je hart zien,
Laat de tovenaar je pracht zien en al je pijn,
Droom, droom, laat de tovenaar de ijsheks zien,
Zij die met je spot, zij die je telkens bedot,
Laat het zien, laat het de dromensmid zien,
Hij is de dromenvisser,

Hij neemt je mee, op de zee, een weg eruit,
Een weg erdoor, opdat je het sieraad ziet,
De teenring die nooit weggaat, het is niet wat je denkt,
Het is een onbegrepen geschenk,
Het vertelt een verhaal,
Oh droom, droom, totdat het zichtbaar wordt voor jou,
Begrepen als het sieraad van genezing,
Over de zeeën nam het je mee, tot een kroning

Droom, droom, laat de tovenaar het zien,
Laat de tovenaar je helpen,
Geef hem je tijd en energie,
Hij leidt je erdoor,
Met een ring en een verhaal,
Hij leidt je erdoor'

De man keek op van het vreemde lied.
De honden blaften nog steeds.
Een man in een paars gewaad stond voor hem.
Hij wilde wegrennen.

'Ik ben de tovenaar,' sprak de man.
Karel keek weer op naar de man.
'Karel ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

'Ja ?' zei Karel.
'Ik moet je wat vertellen,' zei de tovenaar.

'Droom, droom, op de golven van je droom,
Op de golven van je liederen,' zong een vreemd lied.

'Wat moet ik hiermee ?' vroeg Karel.

'Ik ben de tovenaar van je dromen,' sprak de man.
Karel kon niets dan buigen voor de man en viel op zijn knielen,
terwijl de honden nog steeds afschuwelijk blaften.
'Stop jongens !' riep hij naar de honden, maar ze gingen maar door.

'Ze zijn erg waakzaam,' zei de tovenaar.
'W... wie bent u ?' vroeg Karel.

'Ik ben de tovenaar van je dromen,' zei de tovenaar weer.

'Droom, droom, ik ben het lied van je hart ...'

'Kunt u alstublieft stoppen met zingen,' zei Karel bijna huilend.
'U maakt me gek.'

'Ongevoelig, hè ?' sprak de tovenaar.
'De laatste tijd probeer ik je te breken met dromen, want je leeft in een grote leugen.'

'Ik weet het,' sprak Karel.
'En het maakt me gek. Ik wordt verscheurd door twee kanten.'

'Laat je verscheuren, Karel,' sprak de tovenaar.
'Zoals het nu is is het niet goed.'

'Droom, droom,' ging het lied verder.

'Houd op !' krijste Karel.

Karel rolde over de grond met zijn vingers in zijn oren, maar hij kon het niet meer stoppen. Het ging harder en harder en nam hem helemaal over, totdat hij op de golven was van de urine zee om zijn leven te vergeten. Er was een teenring aan zijn teen die er nooit afkon. Het was als een implantaat, als een keten. Het was gedwongen. Hij rolde aan de voeten van de ijsheks. 'Gevangene van de trouwring,' sprak ze.

'Laat me los, heks !' schreeuwde Karel.

'Waarom zou ik ?' vroeg de ijsheks.

'Laat me sterven in ijs !' riep de man. 'Ik houd het niet meer vol ! Het is altijd hetzelfde liedje, eeuwig en altijd.'

'Wij horen bij elkaar,' sprak de ijsheks. 'We zijn delen van elkaar.'

De man zuchtte. Hij probeerde het te begrijpen.

'De kaart van de ijsheks,' sprak de tovenaar,
'een kaart in je dek.
Ze laat je nooit meer los, want het is een deel van je hart,
Een teenring is wat ze je gaf, de trouwring,
En de waarzegster voorspelt de toekomst,
Een andere kaart in je dek,
Zij speelt met het orakel en jou,
En zendt je op verre tochten om de ijsheks te ontmoeten,
Zodat je wakker wordt aan haar voeten,
Geketend aan een pop die je hart bewaart,
de derde kaart, totdat je je hart vindt, de vierde kaart,
Niets dan blaffende herdershonden die het geheim van het huwelijk bewaken,
En dan ben ik de vijfde kaart, de dromenkaart, om je inzicht te bieden. Droom diep.'

De man keek op en zag de kaart van de tovenaar boven hem zweven. Hij probeerde de kaart te grijpen, maar het vloog van hem weg, terwijl de ijsheks ijselijk lachte.

Hij voelde zichzelf als wegzinkende in een ijszee, totdat alles begon te bloeden.
Hij voelde zichzelf als een pop die zijn hart niet kon bereiken.

Hij werd wakker op het piratenschip op de ijszee. De kou had hem vreselijk doen hallucineren en dromen. Hij voelde zich als op het randje van de dood, en hij was zeeziek. Ook was hij ijsziek.

'Ik ben aan het ijsdromen !' riep hij. Hij had niet het gevoel dat iemand hem zou kunnen horen. Hij zag de piraten heel lang en dun worden, heel ver weg, en dan weer dik en dichtbij. 'Het zijn nachtmerries !' gilde hij.

'De kaart van het piratenschip op de ijszee,' sprak een stem.

'Die kaarten zijn gevaarlijk,' zei hij.

'Nee, nee,' zei de waarzegster, 'we hebben ze nodig.'

'Waar ben ik ?' vroeg hij.

'Bij mij, onder hypnose,' sprak ze. 'Ik ben de dromendokter. Ik genees je verleden.'

'Ik was in een nachtmerrie,' zei hij. 'Stervende van de kou op een piratenschip.'

'Dat piratenschip was je leven,' zei de waarzegster.

'Waar is het goed voor ?' vroeg hij. 'Ben ik nog steeds ijsziek ?'

'Kijk,' zei de waarzegster. Hij zag brandend ijs. De kaart begon te branden.

'U doet truukjes,' zei hij.

Hij was zwaar aan het hallucineren op het schip. Hij jammerde zachtjes. Hij was aan het ijlen. Hij vroeg zich af of hij de enige was. Misschien waren de piraten wel zo gewend aan de ijszee en zo gehard dat ze niet meer zeeziek en ijsziek werden. Voor hem was het

de eerste keer. Ze waren op weg naar de ijsheks. Zij woonde op een rotsen eiland.

Hij viel in een diepe slaap. Ze brachten hem voor de ijsheks. Hij was nieuw. Hier ontwaakte hij. Ze glimlachte naar hem. Ineens was ze in de verte, lang en dun, en toen weer dichtbij en dik. Hij was nog steeds aan het ijlen. 'IJsziek, hè ?' zei ze. 'Je moet er wat voor over hebben om bij me te kunnen komen.'

'W... wat doe ik hier ?' vroeg hij. 'B... ben ik dood ?'

'Je zou dood kunnen zijn,' zei de ijsheks.

'Laat me los, heks !' riep hij.

'En toen werd ik wakker in mijn bed,' zei een man bij de psychiater.

'Volkomen normaal,' zei de psychiater. 'U had misschien koorts of iets verkeerds gedronken, en toen bent u vreemd gaan dromen. Iedereen

droomt weleens vreemd. Er is niets met u aan de hand. Dromen zijn volkomen normaal. Het is een verwerkings-mechanisme van het menselijk lichaam. Het is heel psychologisch. Als ik u was zou ik me geen zorgen maken.'

'Maar ik ben bang nog te gaan slapen,' sprak de man. 'Het is niet de eerste keer. Mijn hele leven is het al zo. Ik leef in twee werelden.'

'Volkomen normaal,' zei de psychiater. 'Misschien moet u schrijver worden ? Doe iets met de dromen.'

'Ja, maar ik ben bang voor mijn dromen,' zei de man. 'Ik ben erdoor opgesloten. Aan de andere kant heb ik ook een Stockholm syndroom lijkt het wel, alsof ik verliefd ben op mijn eigen dromen. Er is ook iets zoets aan mijn nachtmerries wat ik maar niet kan verklaren. Het is heel dubbel.'

'Eén van onze pilletjes, en je bent van alles af,' zei de psychiater.

'Dat is teveel van het goede,' zei de man. 'Zoals ik u al zei kan ik ook niet zonder. Maar wat zijn dat voor pilletjes ?'

De psychiater keek hem diep aan. 'De pilletjes zijn genaamd "IJsziek". Alle psychiaters slikken die pilletjes, en dat is ook de voorwaarde geweest om hier te kunnen werken. Het heeft als bij-effect dat je één keer ongeveer droomt zoals u heeft gedroomd, en daarna droom je bijna nooit meer, en ben je van alles af. Wel moet je die pilletjes je hele leven blijven slikken.'

'Waarom ?' vroeg de man.

'Anders komen de dromen terug, erger dan ze ooit zijn geweest,' sprak de psychiater.

Het Eén-Dags-Kruid

Hij was ijsziek. Het jongetje op het piratenschip was goed ziek. Ze waren op de ijszee nu, en het was koud. Het werd steeds kouder, en het jongetje begon te ijlen en te hallucineren. Hij begon vreemde dromen te krijgen. Hij dacht dat hij doodging.

Het indianenland lag achter de ijszee, maar hij dacht dat hij het niet zou halen. Hij was te ziek. De piraten waren erg zorgzaam over hem. Ze hadden hem gekocht van zijn vader en moeder die te arm waren om voor hem te zorgen. Ze gaven hem een fles met roze spul erin. Het maakte zijn hart iets warmer, maar het kon niet tegen de kou op. Het enige wat het misschien deed was hem in leven houden.

Sommige piraten waren al bevroren. De wind was snijdend. De kou had hem gestoken, en hij bloedde.

'De ijsheks vraagt om offers !' riep een van de piraten.

'Geef haar het kind !' riep een andere piraat. 'Zonder haar zal het kind toch niet overleven.'

En zo kwam het jongetje in handen van de ijsheks. Het schip van de ijsheks kwam langs met grote zwarte zeilen, en ze droegen het jongetje aan haar over. Op het schip van de ijsheks was het veel warmer. Het was ook een veel groter schip, en het jongetje werd diep in het schip gebracht.

'Kun je me wat beloven ?' vroeg de ijsheks.

Het jongetje knikte.

'Vertel niets over mij aan de indianen,' sprak de ijsheks.

'Ik beloof het,' zei het jongetje. Het was de ijsheks die het jongetje naar het indianenland bracht, een heel warm land. Als de ijsheks er niet was geweest dan zou het jongetje aan ijsziekte zijn gestorven op het piratenschip.

Het jongetje was de ijsheks dankbaar. Midden in de nacht zette het schip van de ijsheks het jongetje af op het strand van het indianenland. Het jongetje liep het oerwoud in achter het strand, en liep door totdat hij bij een indianenkamp aankwam. Iedereen sliep, dus het jongetje besloot te wachten tot de volgende ochtend. Hij ging in het mos liggen en viel al snel in slaap. De volgende ochtend werd hij wakker door het geluid van de oerwoud vogels.

Maar er kwamen maar geen indianen uit hun tenten. Na een tijdje kon hij zijn nieuwsgierigheid niet bedwingen en ging een tent binnen. Tot zijn grote schrik waren er alleen grote indianenbeelden. En ook in andere tenten was dit het geval. Het waren

alleen beelden, en het jongetje stond voor een raadsel.

Hij klopte op één van de beelden. 'Hallo, is er iemand thuis ?' vroeg hij. Maar niemand antwoordde. Hij liep de tent weer uit. Ook liep hij het kamp uit, het oerwoud in. Na een tijdje lopen kwam hij een soldaat tegen. De man zou van het Suba leger zijn. Het jongetje vroeg hem wat er met de indianen was gebeurd die als versteende beelden waren.
'De ijsheks,' sprak de soldaat. 'Iedereen is op zijn hoede.' Nu had het jongetje beloofd niets over de ijsheks te zeggen tot de indianen, maar dit was een soldaat. Hij vertelde de soldaat dat de ijsheks zijn leven had gered.

Er bleken twee ijsheksen te zijn, een goede en een slechte. Het jongetje vroeg zich ook af waarom hij niets tegen de indianen mocht zeggen over de ijsheks. De Suba soldaat zei dat ze dan helemaal gek zouden worden. Ze vreesden de ijsheks meer dan wat dan ook, en konden geen onderscheid maken tussen de goede en de slechte.

Het jongetje knikte. 'Ik zal je met mij meenemen,' zei de soldaat. 'Hier kun je niet blijven.' En zo nam de Suba soldaat het jongetje mee door het oerwoud naar het Suba kamp. In het Suba kamp keek het jongetje zijn ogen uit.

'Hoe kan de slechte ijsheks verslagen worden ?' vroeg het jongetje aan de Suba soldaat.

'Door een speciaal dropkruid wat een diepere slaap brengt,' sprak de Suba soldaat. 'Wij kweken het hier. De slechte ijsheks is namelijk een soort nachtmerrie die optreedt als de hersenen niet diep genoeg in slaap komen.'

In verschillende tentjes groeide het dropkruid. Maar er was nog veel te weinig. Ze wilden dat het hele oerwoud er mee vol zou groeien. 'Het lijkt wel een onmogelijke opgave,' sprak de Suba soldaat. 'Het is een één-dags-kruid. Het komt op, en verdwijnt

weer snel. Het plant zich ook niet of nauwelijks voort.'

'Hoe bent u er dan aan gekomen ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'De nacht heeft zo zijn geheimen, mijn jongen,' sprak de Suba soldaat.

Het jongetje begon meer vragen te stellen, maar de Suba soldaat zweeg. 'Alleen de goede ijsheks kan ons helpen,' sprak de Suba soldaat na een tijdje. Tot de grote schrik van het jongetje werd de Suba soldaat steeds stiller, en begon ook in een beeld te veranderen. In de tentjes was het dropkruid aan het wegtrekken. Het jongetje raakte in paniek en rende het oerwoud in. Hij was bang dat hij ook in een beeld zou veranderen. Hij rende tot aan het strand, waar een gevleugelde indiaanse vrouw was. Ze had hele lange witte vleugels. Plotseling veranderde ze geheel in een vogel en vloog weg. 'Kom terug, kom terug !' riep het jongetje, maar ze verdween volledig uit het

zicht. Het jongetje begon over het strand te rennen en tot de zee te roepen. Hij riep naar de goede ijsheks.

'In leven en sterven,' sprak een stem,
'Ligt het kruid, het een-dags-kruid,
Het komt op en vaagt dan weg als een zucht,
Hoe de zee van ijs te overbruggen ?
Alles vaagt hier weg,
Het medicijn is nooit blijvende.'

'Wie is dat ?' vroeg het jongetje.
'Laat iemand ons alstublieft helpen. We zijn in beelden aan het veranderen.'

'Ken ik jou, of je stem ?' vroeg de stem, terwijl er een wind om het jongetje heen kwam.
'De vleugelen van de wind ben ik, dragende het medicijn,
Maar ik vaag altijd weer weg,
Nooit kan ik je vasthouden, mijn kind.'

'Alstublieft, help ons, wind,' sprak het jongetje.

'De nacht heeft zo zijn geheimen,' sprak de wind.

Het jongetje wachtte op de nacht, maar die kwam maar niet. De slechte ijsheks had het eiland ingenomen en behekst, en nu was het altijd dag. Er waren alleen nog dagen en geen nachten, en die volgden elkaar op, dag na dag. Het jongetje leefde aan het strand van bessen. Hij kon bijna niet slapen van het licht, en het begon zijn hersenen op te breken. Soms bloedde zijn hoofd. Hij was verwonderd dat hij nog geen beeld was. Hij was aan de andere kant van het eiland, waar de zee niet van ijs was, maar ook hier begon het steeds kouder te worden, en steeds meer ijs begon er te verschijnen op de golven. Het jongetje begon weer ijsziek te worden, en huilde. Een ijzige gestalte stond voor hem. Het was de slechte ijsheks. 'Ik weet waarom ik je niet in een beeld kan veranderen,' krijste ze. 'Mijn goede zuster heeft je betoverd.' En zo raakten de twee zusters met elkaar in gevecht over het jongetje. Het jongetje kon

alleen maar toekijken. Het jongetje rende het oerwoud in en het begon weer nacht te worden. Hij herinnerde hoe de Suba soldaat en de wind spraken over de geheimen van de nacht. Hij rende zo diep in het oerwoud totdat hij niet meer kon en in slaap viel. Ditmaal sliep hij heel diep, zo diep als hij nog nooit had geslapen, en toen hij wakker werd was hij omringd met het dropkruid. Het groeide helemaal over hem heen. Het bleef maar groeien. 'Het is gekomen !' riep het jongetje. Waar het jongetje ook ging, overal om hem heen groeide het dropkruid. Hij rende naar het indianenkamp, en ook daar begon het dropkruid om hem heen te groeien. De beelden begonnen te ontwaken. 'W... wie heeft ons doen ontwaken ?' vroeg één van de indianen. Het jongetje wist dat hij niet over de ijsheks mocht spreken. 'De nacht heeft zo zijn geheimen,' sprak het jongetje. Toen rende hij naar het Suba kamp, waar ook het dropkruid om hem heen begon te groeien. 'Suba soldaat,' zei het jongetje. Ook de Suba soldaat begon te ontwaken en kon zich weer

bewegen. 'Is ze gekomen ?' vroeg de Suba soldaat.

'Ja, ze is gekomen,' zei het jongetje.

De Tuin Engel

Ze was gebonden aan de tuin. Buiten de tuin
zou ze sterven.
Ik kwam haar alleen tegen in de tuin.
Het was een wonderschone tuin, dat wel,
De pracht van de stad ...

Ze had geheimen,
Ik wist niet welke,
Erover praten kon ze niet,
Altijd sliep ze in een stenen bed, ergens diep
in de tuin,
En ook zijzelf was van steen, en soms een
engel ...

De engel van de tuin werd ze genoemd,
Haar water had genezende krachten,
Diep in de tuin

Op een dag nam ze mij aan haar hand,
Tot de diepte van haar tuin,
Als een wildernis was het hier,
Niemand mocht hier ooit komen,

Ze tilde mij over het hek

Ze gebood me te rennen, en dat deed ik,
En plots was ik ook van steen,
Als betoverd door de tuin,
Ik kon de schoonheid niet dragen

Soms ben ik een engel, soms ben ik van
steen,
En nu leef ik langs alles heen,
In een droom wereld leef ik nu,
Sinds de dag dat zij mij meenam ...

De Verslaving

Hij leefde alleen, diep in de natuur, eenzaam en verlaten. Hij leefde van giftige bessen die hem deden hallucineren. Dat was alles waarvan hij leefde. Hij leefde in tussen het morgenrood en avondrood. Vreemde natuurverschijnselen drongen zich aan hem op door de hallucinaties. Hij had naakte vrouwen in zijn hoofd die veranderden in wapenen. Het was altijd oorlog in zijn hoofd, als een oorlogstrauma. In de natuur was er geen plaats voor oorlog, maar de bessen maakten hem wild. Altijd was hij op zijn hoede, maar hij was geheel alleen. Als hij zich in het water waste dacht hij altijd dat het bloed was. Zijn hersenen waren zwaar aangetast door de bessen. Hij leefde in een hele andere realiteit. Als hij de bessen at dacht hij dat het vlees was van zijn prooi. Hij dacht dat hij een jager was, maar hij was half verlamd. Er waren hier geen dieren, alleen

bessen. Er waren hier geen vrouwen, alleen dromen. De wilde bessen hadden bezit van hem genomen. En het waren geeneens bessen. Het was zaad, van een vreemde, wilde struik. Hij dacht dat het bessen waren. Het groeide in de bomen, overal door de wildernis. Als hij geen zaad had gegeten voelde hij zich eenzaam en depressief, en wilde hij niet meer leven, alhoewel hij de natuur steeds meer begon te bewonderen. En zo was de nieuwe realiteit in zijn hoofd een ziekte, maar het hielp hem te overleven. Hij was verslaafd aan verwoestende drugs, het giftige zaad van een boom.

Hij vond zijn ziekte mooi, hij aanbad zijn ziekte. Het was zijn kameraad. Hij voelde zich minder eenzaam als hij van het zaad had gegeten. De winters waren streng, en dan moest hij altijd onder de grond waar het zaad niet was. In de winters groeide het zaad niet, en dan hongerde hij uit, hebbende hallucinaties van de kou, maar ook de winters zelf waren slechts hallucinaties van het zaad.

Naakte vrouwen waren in zijn hallucinaties jacht gerei zodra hij dichterbij hen kwam. In zijn hoofd leefde hij van de jacht. Na de winter was hij te zwak om boven de grond te komen. Hij leefde van de aarde en zijn eigen urine. Zijn hersenen waren zo beschadigd dat hij bleef hallucineren. Hij hallucineerde over het zaad. De naakte vrouwen in zijn hoofd waren het zaad, maar hij wist dat het zaad giftig was en dat het zaad hem zou kunnen doden. Hij probeerde weg te komen van de naakte vrouwen, maar zij lieten hem niet gaan. Als hij probeerde te ontsnappen werd hij weer door hen gevangen in een wilde achtervolging. Hij was een verslaafde. De drugs liet hem niet meer gaan.

De Vijfde Rivier

Hij woonde op een onbewoond eiland en hij hallucineerde vanwege de honger waarin hij leefde. Alles wat hier op het eiland groeide was giftig, en hij durfde het niet te eten.
De honger visioenen werden erger en erger, maar ook hield het hem in leven op een vreemde manier. Het was alsof de giftige bessen en het giftige zaad om hem heen hem beschermde tegen de dood. In deze natuur waren er andere wetten. Je stierf niet door de honger, maar je kwam erdoor tot leven.

Ook dit was slechts een hallucinatie want hij was niet op een onbewoond eiland, maar in

de woestijn van de honger planeet, die een woestijn planeet was.

Hij moest over vijf rivieren : de urine rivier, de tranen rivier, de rivier van slaap, de rivier des doods, en daarna de rivier van depressie. Toen hij over de rivier van depressie was gegaan, de vijfde rivier, zag hij donkere vrouwen aan de oever. Vissersvrouwen met netten, en ze haalden hem naar binnen. Ze deden alsof hij een vis was die ze hadden gevangen. Hij werd naar hun kamp geleid, en aan een paal gebonden. Hij was zwaar depressief. Hij wilde niet meer leven, maar het was alsof de vrouwen hem in leven hielden, alsof ze zijn medicijnen waren.

De medicijnen hadden zo hun bijwerkingen. Hij werd afhankelijk en zij lieten hem werken. Hij kwam echter niet vrij van zijn depressie. Het was alsof ze een gat in de markt hadden gevonden. Ze lieten hem ertussen hangen.

Ze hadden rokjes van veren, van de kippen van zijn gedachtes. Ze molken hem helemaal uit. Ze visten in de wateren van zijn depressies en trauma's, op zoek naar een reactie, als psychiaters op zoek naar geld, prikkende in zijn wonden. Hij was een patiënt die ze niet meer lieten gaan.

De Speelgoed Fabriek

De psychiater gaf hem medicijnen die hem hallucinaties gaven van de natuur, omdat hij depressief was geworden door de stadse etiquette, maar de patiënt had klachten over de medicijnen. De hallucinaties zouden te wild zijn. Het zou voorkomen dat hij zich midden in een stammenoorlog bevond. Hij vroeg zich af of het bijwerkingen waren.
De psychiater schudde zijn hoofd. 'Nee, nee, dat zijn geen bijwerkingen. Het is een manier om wat afleiding te hebben.'

Maar de patiënt begon steeds meer te klagen over de medicijnen, dat hij hallucinaties van donkere vrouwen ervan kreeg die hem pijn deden.
Ook hiervan zei de psychiater dat het bij het medicijn hoorde, om zo los te komen van alle stadse trauma's.
'Dus eigenlijk krijg ik een nieuw trauma om los te komen van het oude trauma ?' vroeg de patiënt. De psychiater schudde zijn hoofd, terwijl hij zijn pijp uitklopte. 'Jongen, moet je eens even goed naar mij luisteren. De hallucinaties weten wat ze doen. De vrouwen moeten het trauma eruit slaan,' sprak hij.

'Maar mijn depressies lijken erger te worden,' zei de patiënt.

'Dat is altijd zo in het begin,' zei de psychiater. 'Moet je luisteren. Wat als ik je wat andere medicijnen meegeef ? Dan kun je uittesten welke medicijnen je het beste liggen.'

De man ging met verschillende doosjes medicijnen naar huis, en probeerde ze allemaal uit. Elk medicijn bracht weer andere soorten hallucinaties.

'Het lijkt wel als het lezen van boeken,' zei de man toen hij weer terugwas bij de psychiater, 'of het kijken naar films.'

'Precies,' zei de psychiater. 'Het is heel therapeutisch.'

'Ook wel erg politiek,' zei de patiënt. 'Ze proberen je een bepaalde kant op te drukken, om je van een bepaalde partij lid proberen te krijgen.'

'Ah, zo moet je dat niet zien,' zei de psychiater. 'Het zijn verhalen. Doe ermee wat je wilt. Als het is uitgewerkt neem je er weer één in, of je neemt een ander.'

'Maar is er geen verslavings-gevaar ?' vroeg de patiënt, 'want sommige medicijnen zijn wel erg aantrekkelijk.'

'Tja,' zei de psychiater, 'het helpt je je belevingsvermogen te herstellen. Natuurlijk is het het beste ze niet te slikken, maar soms heeft een mens een duwtje nodig.'

'Ik begrijp het,' zei de patiënt. 'Dus elk medicijn heeft weer zijn eigen fantasie ?'

'Ja,' sprak de psychiater, 'en het helpt het lichaam zelf die stoffen aan te maken, dus het is alleen maar voor tijdelijk, totdat het lichaam de stof heeft overgenomen.'

'Interessant,' zei de patiënt. 'Ik zou wel veel meer medicijnen willen uitproberen.

Die dag ging de man met een hele tas vol medicijnen naar huis, en probeerde ze thuis allemaal uit. Na een paar weken was hij terug bij de psychiater. 'Geweldig,' sprak de patiënt. 'Ik voel me al een stuk beter, en ben tegelijkertijd van mijn televisie verslaving afgekomen.'

'Wonderbaarlijk,' sprak de psychiater. 'Dat is goed nieuws.'

'Ja,' sprak de patiënt. 'Ik ben er erg enthousiast over, maar ik moet er wel bijzeggen dat mijn sociale leven er erg onder lijdt. Ik kom haast niet meer onder de mensen, omdat ik mijn hallucinaties veel interessanter vindt.'

'Tja, het gaat een beetje om balans zoeken,' sprak de psychiater. 'De hallucinaties bieden hun eigen sociale leven, als een soort virtuele realiteit, maar ik kan me voorstellen dat de mensen om u heen dat lastig kunnen vinden.'

'Ja,' sprak de patiënt, 'vooral mijn vrouw, want die begint nu ook al depressief te worden doordat ik haar minder aandacht geef.'

'Is het geen tijd voor haar dan om ook eens een pilletje uit te proberen ?' vroeg de psychiater. 'Ik kan zo een afspraak voor haar maken.'

'Nee,' zei de patiënt, 'dat is geen optie. Ze is bang voor de psychiater, en al helemaal voor medicijnen. Ze denkt dat het troep is, en vooral nu ik haar zo negeer.'

'Oh, dat is niet leuk,' zei de psychiater. 'Maar wij hebben ook medicijnen die het sociale leven opstuwen. Je gaat dan anderen ook door hele andere ogen bekijken, door speciale soorten hallucinaties.'

'Dat lijkt me wel wat,' zei de patiënt. 'Dan zou ik die heel graag willen gebruiken, want nu staat mijn huwelijk op het randje van instorten.'

De man krijgt weer andere soorten medicijnen mee, en gaat ze thuis uitproberen. Hij geeft weer veel aandacht aan zijn vrouw, en bekijkt haar inderdaad met andere ogen, meer als in een verhaal. Hij komt enthousiast terug bij de psychiater een paar weken later. 'Nou, het heeft gewerkt, hoor,' zei hij tegen de

psychiater. 'Mijn vrouw is er enorm door opgeleefd.'

'Goedzo,' zei de psychiater.

Maar na een tijdje kwam de rekening bij de man binnen waardoor hij enorm schrok, en waardoor hij en zijn vrouw in enorme financiële problemen kwamen. Beiden werden ze hier depressiever van dan ze ooit waren geweest en begonnen alles op elkaar af te reageren. Ook beschuldigden ze elkaar ervan. 'Laten we rustig blijven,' zei de man. 'Misschien maakt mijn lichaam de nodige stoffen nu zelf aan, zodat we de psychiater niet meer nodig hebben.' Maar de financiële depressie en alles wat daarmee te maken had was te zwaar. Ze waren diep in de schulden gekomen. Hij had speciale medicijnen nodig voor financiële depressie, en wist dat hij dan eerst uit de schulden moest komen, en dan voor de medicijnen moest sparen. Maar de schulden werden steeds erger, want doordat de man nu depressiever was dan ooit verloor hij zijn baan. Hij kwam in een vicieuze cirkel

terecht en werd helemaal naar beneden gezogen, terwijl hij zijn vrouw meezoog. Na een tijdje kon zijn vrouw er niet meer tegen, en kwamen ze in een scheiding. Nu had hij ook speciale medicijnen nodig om dit te verwerken. Hij zag het niet meer zitten. Hij besloot gokker te worden, maar hierdoor verloor hij zelfs al zijn bezit. Een ziekenhuis kon hij niet betalen, dus hij werd een zwerver. 'Het is allemaal de schuld van die vervloekte medicijnen,' gromde hij. Toen hij de psychiater eens op straat tegenkwam vloog hij hem aan. Hij begon op de psychiater in te slaan, totdat de politie kwam om hem te arresteren en naar de gevangenis te brengen. 'Dat is ook een oplossing,' dacht hij bij zichzelf. 'Hier heb ik in ieder geval te eten, te drinken en een dak boven mijn hoofd.'

In de gevangenis kwam hij ook dieven tegen die de speciale hallucinatie medicijnen hadden gestolen. 'Duur zijn ze, hè ?' zei hij tegen zijn medegevangenen. Ze knikten. 'Daarom stalen we ze, en nu zijn we hier.'

'Het zit ons ook niet mee,' zei hij. 'Het lijkt wel alsof die medicijnen ons de afgrond in hebben geholpen.'

'Therapie noemen ze dat dan,' sprak één van de dieven. 'Een geneesmiddel, maar nee.'

Tot zijn grote verbazing kreeg hij in de gevangenis dezelfde soort medicijnen die hij had, maar dan gratis. Het hoorde bij het resocialisatie proces en het werd door de staat betaald. 'Verwacht er maar niet teveel van,' zei één van de dieven. 'Het is allemaal sterk verdunt. Het houd je tussen wal en schip.' En zo was het. De medicijnen speelden een spelletje met hem.

'Ik denk dat ze ons gewoon die troep geven zodat zij in ieder geval hun baan kunnen blijven behouden,' sprak hij tegen zijn mede-gevangenen, die knikten.

'Natuurlijk,' zei één van de dieven. 'Het is allemaal doorgestoken kaart. Waarom zou een dokter iedereen daadwerkelijk willen

genezen ? Dan heeft hij geen werk meer en geen inkomsten. Het zijn slimme en sluwe gasten.'

'Daarom vloog ik er ook één aan,' zei de man. 'En blijkbaar werkt het ziekenhuis samen met de politie. Zo weten ze ons altijd te krijgen en te houden.'

'Het is één groot complot,' zei de dief. 'Ik heb geen vertrouwen meer in de maatschappij. Ze hebben mijn respect verloren, en ik neem nu gewoon wat ik nodig denk te hebben.'

'Laten die medicijnen ons dit ook niet hallucineren ?' vroeg de man.

'Dat zou best kunnen,' zei de dief. 'Ik zou er in ieder geval niet van opkijken.'

De volgende dag komt de psychiater hem opzoeken. Hij kan tot de psychiater spreken van achter glas. 'Ik heb er over nagedacht,' sprak de psychiater. 'Ik wist dat je de medicijnen nodig had en niet kon betalen.

Dat kan inderdaad frustrerend zijn, en sommigen gaan dan door het lint. Ik kan de rechtbank vragen u te berechten met verzachtende omstandigheden.'

'U doet maar wat u niet laten kan,' sprak de man, 'maar ik zit hier best. Hier heb ik in ieder geval een dak boven mijn hoofd, te eten en te drinken, en de medicijnen, alhoewel zwaar verdund. Het houdt me in het midden, maar het is beter dan niks.'

'Ik heb speciale medicijnen waardoor u psychiater of politie kunt worden,' sprak de psychiater. 'Lijkt u dat niet wat ? Dan heeft u volledige beschikking over de medicijnen die u nodig heeft.'

De man wordt boos. 'Jullie zijn grote oplichters,' roept hij. Dan is de bezoekerstijd om. De volgende dag komt zijn vrouw hem bezoeken. 'Echt, het spijt me,' zei ze. 'Ik had het nooit moeten doen. Mijn leven is nu nog wel erger dan het was.'

'Dat is jouw probleem,' zei de man. Ook dat gesprek was snel afgelopen. Het gevangenis leven viel hem zwaar, maar het was beter dan buiten de gevangenis. Ook had hij het gevoel dat de gevangenis-bewakers geen gelukkig leven hadden, dus daar moest hij ook niet aan denken. Op een dag kwam de psychiater weer langs, maar de man wilde hem niet meer zien. Na lang aandringen kwam de man toch, en had een gesprek met de psychiater van achter het glas.

'Luister,' zei de psychiater. 'Ik heb je echt verkeerd ingeschat. Ik denk dat ik je verkeerde medicijnen heb gegeven, en om het goed te maken heb ik nu de juiste medicijnen voor je, en je mag ze gratis hebben op volle sterkte.'

De man dacht dat hij toch niets te verliezen had, en nam de medicijnen aan zonder te vragen waar het voor was, of wat het voor een effect zou hebben. Toen de psychiater weg was nam hij wat van de medicijnen in. Hij kreeg dit keer wel hele vreemde

hallucinaties. Hij was bij de tandarts en de tandarts begon in zijn tanden en kiezen te boren. Ook begonnen de oren van de tandarts te groeien. Hij probeerde weg te rennen, maar hij was gebonden aan de stoel waarin hij lag. Van de pijn merkte hij dat hij niet meer kon praten. Hij schrok wakker en wilde direct de psychiater spreken, maar hij kon nog steeds niet praten. Hij besloot daarom te schrijven, maar ook dat hielp niet. Omdat het beschreven werd als een gevangenis-ongeval mocht hij zo gratis naar het ziekenhuis. Hier kreeg hij wel allerlei medicijnen op volle sterkte, maar hij kon nog steeds niet spreken. Hij dacht bij zichzelf hoe hij nou zo stom kon wezen om zomaar medicijnen te slikken terwijl hij van niets wist. Maar ook het denken ging steeds moeilijker. In het ziekenhuis begonnen ze medicijnen te dwingen en ook kreeg hij gedwongen spuitjes. Hij kon zich niet verdedigen. Hij zat in zichzelf opgesloten en gleed langzaam weg in een coma. Hij wist nu wel zeker dat de psychiater een grote misdadiger was. Na een tijdje verklaarden ze hem dood, terwijl hij

nog steeds in leven was, en alles kon horen. Hij kon horen hoe zij zijn begrafenis al aan het regelen waren.

Dan komt zijn ex-vrouw ineens huilend binnen. 'Jullie hebben hem teveel rotzooi gegeven !' riep ze. 'Hij kan wel schijndood zijn. Dat heb ik weleens gelezen dat dat kan gebeuren als mensen teveel medicijnen hebben genomen.' Maar ze wilden haar niet geloven.

'Ik eis dat jullie stoppen waar jullie mee bezig zijn !' riep ze, 'en dan zien of hij misschien uit zijn schijndood komt omdat hij geen medicijnen meer binnen krijgt.' Ze liep naar hem toe en voelde zijn pols. 'Zie !' krijste ze. 'Hij heeft nog steeds polsslag. Hij is helemaal niet dood, stelletje criminelen !'

Maar zij grepen ook haar, en injecteerden haar vanwege opstandig gedrag. Ze maakten aantekeningen dat ze gevaarlijk zou zijn, en snel was zij ook in een coma, en werd dood verklaard. Nu zouden ze beiden begraven

worden. Ze kreeg hele vreemde hallucinaties door de injecties. Ze kon met haar ex-man spreken, en hij kon terugspreken. Maar het waren slechts hallucinaties. Haar ex-man hoorde haar niet meer. Toen ze beiden levend waren begraven en waren gestorven hallucineerden zij door, alsof zij een nieuw leven hadden gekregen. Maar zij waren niet bij elkaar.

De man zag een tandarts voor hem staan, en gaf hem een klap in het gezicht. Ook de vrouw zag een tandarts voor haar staan, en deed hetzelfde. Er kwam geen politie aan te pas dit keer. Maar de oren van de tandartsen begonnen weer te groeien. 'Wat is dit voor medicijn !' schreeuwde de man naar de tandarts. Maar de tandarts gaf geen antwoord. De mond van de tandarts werd steeds kleiner en kleiner. Plotseling was de tandarts een konijn. Het konijn probeerde weg te rennen, maar de man kwam achter het konijn aan en schopte het. 'Ons hele leven hebben jullie vernield !' riep hij. 'Vertel op, wat voor

medicijn was het ! Houd je niet van de domme !'

Toen veranderde het konijn in een eend, en toen in een bad-eendje. 'Een stuk speelgoed zijn wij,' zei het bad-eendje. 'Het medicijntje van een speelgoed-treintje. Het is geen eigen keuze of beloning, maar een geschenk, een leuk cadeau voor de verjaardag, of zomaar omdat het een mooie dag is, of je hebt eens de jackpot gewonnen.'

De man viel flauw en begon te schuimbekken en over te geven met stuiptrekkingen. 'Houd me niet voor de gek !' riep de man. 'Wat voor medicijn is het !' Plotseling bevond de man zich in de natuur, gebonden aan een paal, terwijl donkere vrouwen voor hem stonden en hem sloegen. 'Wat voor medicijn is het !' riep de man weer.

'Het is speelgoed !' riepen de vrouwen.

'Wat voor speelgoed ?' vroeg hij.

'Jij bent speelgoed,' zeiden ze. 'En wij verkopen het weer door.'

'Houd me niet voor de gek !' riep de man. 'Wat voor medicijn is het !'

'Speelgoed,' zeiden de vrouwen. 'Wij zijn speelgoedmakers, poppenmakers.'

'Ziek,' zei de man.

'Waarom ziek ?' vroegen de vrouwen. 'Het levert goede winst op.'

Hij eindigde in een doos, en kwam in een speelgoedwinkel terecht als pop.

'Mama, hij gedraagt zich zo raar,' zei een meisje toen haar moeder de pop voor haar had gekocht. 'Alsof de pop leeft.'

'Zit er dan maar niet aan, lieverd,' zei de moeder. De pop belandde op de poppenbank naast een andere pop, zijn vrouw. Hij fluisterde naar zijn vrouw. 'Hoe ben jij hier

terecht gekomen ?' Ze vertelde een soortgelijk verhaal.

'We zitten hier flink in de problemen,' fluisterde hij.

Eigenlijk kwam hij pas vrij door een atoom oorlog. De lucht was vol met prachtige energieën. De speelgoed fabriek was gekomen.

Ik en mijn Video Spelletje

Een speelgoedwinkelier was in gesprek met een oude dame die speelgoed wilde kopen voor haar kleinzoon.
'Wat moet het precies wezen ?' vroeg de speelgoedwinkelier.
'Hij is dol op video-spelletjes,' zei de vrouw. 'Het liefst met indianen en cowboys. Daar is hij gek op.'

'Hmmm,' zei de speelgoedwinkelier, 'en leidde haar mee naar de bak waar de video-spelletjes waren. Bladert u hier maar even tussen.' Het ware hele dunne schijfjes als diskettes. De vrouw zocht er een paar uit, en rekende ze af. 'Uw kleinzoon zal er vast erg blij mee wezen,' glimlachte de speelgoedwinkelier.

'Dat geloof ik ook,' sprak de oude vrouw. 'Het is toch zo'n goeie jongen. Hij heeft altijd alles

over voor iedereen. Hij heeft een hart van goud.'

'Nou, dan is het hem gegunt,' sprak de speelgoedwinkelier. De vrouw bleef maar doorpraten over haar kleinzoon, totdat het sluitingstijd was, maar de speelgoedwinkelier wilde haar niet zomaar wegsturen. 'Zeg, wilt u anders niet een kopje thee met me drinken in het magazijn ?' vroeg de speelgoedwinkelier vriendelijk.
'Nee,' zei de oude vrouw, 'ik moet nu direct weg.' De vrouw keek op haar horloge en schrok. 'Het is inderdaad erg laat.' Toen rende ze haastig de winkel uit. De man zuchtte. Het was weer een drukke dag geweest.

De volgende dag kwam de kleinzoon van het oude dametje langs. Hij wilde één spel ruilen, omdat het toch niet was wat hij wilde. 'Kijk maar in de bak,' zei de speelgoedwinkelaar vriendelijk. Snel had de jongen zijn keuze gemaakt, en ging de winkel uit. De volgende dag was de jongen er weer. 'Nou, het zijn mooie spelletjes,' zei de jongen, 'maar mijn

huiswerk lijdt er zo onder. Heeft u ook spelletjes waar tegelijkertijd mijn huiswerk in gedaan kan worden ? Oma heeft me geld meegegeven.'

De speelgoedwinkelier glimlachte vriendelijk en sprak : 'Maar natuurlijk. Goed dat je ernaar vraagt. ' Hij liep even het magazijn in en kwam toen terug met een hele doos vol spelletjes die ook nog eens leerzaam zijn. 'Hier, je mag ze allemaal gratis hebben,' zei de speelgoedwinkelier. 'Ze worden namelijk toch niet verkocht. Niemand wil ze.'

'Graag,' zei de jongen blij, 'en ik wil ze wel.' Vrolijk ging de jongen de winkel uit met de doos, maar de volgende dag was hij er weer. 'Het sluit niet echt aan op mijn huiswerk,' zei de jongen. 'Het zijn hele mooie en leerzame spelletjes, maar het loopt niet gelijk op. Ik heb namelijk ander huiswerk opgekregen.'

De speelgoed winkelier glimlachte. 'Zo is het leven, jongen,' sprak hij. 'Maar misschien kan er een samenwerking komen tussen de

speelgoedfabriek en de school ? Als je me even zegt wie je onderwijzer is, dan kan ik hem bellen en dan kunnen we overleggen.'

'Dat zou fantastisch zijn,' zei de jongen.

Maar de onderwijzer was een hele nare man, en wilde niets met de speelgoedwinkelier te maken hebben. Spelletjes hoorden niet thuis in het huiswerk. De onderwijzer was absoluut ongeinteresseerd, en het gesprek was vlug afgelopen. De jongen kreeg het te horen en was enorm kwaad. Hij was verschrikkelijk aan het stampvoeten en schelden. Mensen kenden hem niet meer terug. Hij vertelde het ook aan zijn oma, die ook verschrikkelijk kwaad werd op de onderwijzer. De oude dame belde de man op en schold hem de huid vol. 'Je moet je schamen om zo'n creatief project af te wijzen. Kinderen hebben spelletjes nodig. Spelenderwijs leren ze veel beter.'

Maar de onderwijzer was erg geschokt, en vroeg zich af hoe ze al deze dingen durfde te

zeggen. 'Spelletjes horen niet thuis op school,' zei de man. 'Die zijn voor de vakanties. Spelletjes maken kinderen lui en gemakzuchtig. Zo wordt het leervermogen vernietigd.'

'U kletst uit uw nek,' gilde de oma. 'U zult nog van mij horen.' Toen gooide ze de hoorn op de haak.

De speelgoedwinkelier had het inmiddels bij andere scholen geprobeerd en daar lukte het wel. De jongen wilde overgeplaatst worden, maar dat mocht niet. Dat was wettelijk zo geregeld in het land. Alleen met een zeer goede reden mocht er overplaatsing aangevraagd worden. De oma was woedend. Ook de speelgoedwinkelier wilde het er niet bij laten zitten. Ze zeiden dat de jongen werd behandeld als een gevangene. Er werden brieven over gestuurd naar de regering, maar die werkte totaal niet mee. Toen kwamen de telefoontjes, maar ook dat hielp niet. De jongen moest gewoon op zijn oude school blijven.

Het was in die dagen dat de speelgoed fabrieken een speelgoed atoomoorlog opzetten. Er verschenen torens en gebouwen op de wolken, en grote steden, en de lucht was vol met prachtige energieën. Het was een groot kunstwerk. Ook andere landen zagen het in de lucht en bewonderden het. Ook de regering bewonderde het, en zo mocht het jongetje eindelijk overgeplaatst worden. Zijn oude school werd gesloten, en het duurde niet lang totdat kinderen helemaal niet meer naar school hoefden. De speelgoedfabrieken waren de nieuwe scholen geworden.

Een jongetje schoof zijn nieuwe video spelletje uit de computer. Het ging over een speelgoed atoomoorlog. Het jongetje had goed gevochten, en een hoge score behaald, met veel bonus. Hij ging naar zijn moeder toe en vroeg om de deodorant. Hij was helemaal onder het zweet.

'Wat heb je gedaan ?' vroeg zijn moeder.

'Het nieuwe video spelletje,' hijgde hij. 'Het was fantastisch.'

'Maar heb je je huiswerk al af ?' vroeg zijn moeder.

'Als het goed is hoeven we niet meer naar school nu,' zei het jongetje.

'Wat bazel je nu, ventje,' zei de moeder, die hem een draai om zijn oren gaf.

'Laat maar,' zei het jongetje. 'Ik zal mijn huiswerk nu direct gaan doen.'

Moeder kwam even later naar zijn kamertje boven, en zag hem weer een video spelletje spelen.
'Ik gooi dat ding nog eens uit huis,' brulde zijn moeder.

'Maar het huiswerk staat hierop, ma,' zei het jongetje. 'Ik heb het van de meester meegekregen.'

Moeder kijkt naar het scherm en is verbaasd. 'Je hebt gelijk,' zei ze. 'Dit is jouw huiswerk. Dat is een nieuwe vorm van huiswerk, in een video spelletje ?'

'Ja, mam,' zei het jongetje. 'Het heet de Speelgoed Fabriek, zodat kinderen meer spelenderwijs leren.'

'Dat is me nogal een uitvinding,' zei moeder. 'Dat zal dan wel een hoop minder geklaag zijn over het huiswerk.'

'Dat hoop ik ook,' zei het jongetje. 'Gaan we dan ook verhuizen ?'

'Verhuizen ?' vroeg moeder verbaasd. 'Hoe kom je daar nou weer bij ?'

'De meester zei als ik het spel heb gewonnen dan krijgen we een nieuw huis, veel beter dan wat we nu hebben,' zei het jongetje.

'De meester maakt zeker een grapje,' zei moeder.

'Nee, echt,' zei het jongetje. 'En als ik het spel gewonnen heb dan krijg ik ook nog een andere prijs.'

'En wat is dat ?' vroeg moeder.

'Dat u weer beter bent,' zei het jongetje.

Er kwam een traan uit moeder's ogen, want moeder was ernstig ziek. 'Ik kan dat bijna niet geloven, mijn jongen,' zei moeder vriendelijk, 'maar ik vind het toch heel lief van je dat je zulke dingen zegt.'

Die nacht heeft moeder erge nachtmerries. Ze droomt ook dat ze dood gaat. Als ze wakker is gaat ze naar het kamertje van haar zoontje, en vraagt hoe ver hij is met het spel. 'Nog even, ma,' zei hij. 'Het is heel zwaar geweest, maar ik kom er wel doorheen.'

Op een dag heeft hij het spel af en heeft hij het gewonnen, maar het is alleen een huis op de computer, in het video spelletje, en ook de

moeder is een poppetje in het video spelletje, en zij is genezen. Het jongetje laat het zien aan zijn moeder. Ze vindt het heel mooi, maar ze is ook teleurgesteld dat het niet echt is. De vrouw wordt zieker en zieker, en sterft dan aan haar ziekte. Het jongetje is ontroostbaar. 'Er moeten betere spelletjes verzonnen worden,' zei hij tegen de meester. 'Ik heb zo hard mijn best gedaan, maar alles was maar een spelletje.'

De vader van het jongetje is boos op de meester, want het zou zijn zoontje valse hoop hebben gegeven. In het spelletje zou alles steeds beter gaan, maar in de echte wereld werd alles steeds erger. Toch blijft het jongetje de spelletjes spelen, en hoopt één dag zelf een video-spelletjes maker te worden, maar dan niet alleen in samenwerking met scholen, maar ook met de woningbouw en het ziekenhuis. Hij wil dus ook een soort dokter worden, een speelgoed dokter.

Zijn vader vind hem maar een dromer. 'Het leven is hard. Daar kun jij niets tegen beginnen,' zegt zijn vader altijd, maar het jongetje vecht door. Op een dag wordt ook zijn vader ernstig ziek, en ondanks alle mooie beloftes van de video-spelletjes sterft zijn vader ook niet lang daarna. Psychisch gaat het niet goed met het jongetje. Ook hij moet naar de dokter.

Op een dag komt hij een klasgenootje tegen. Het meisje heeft een soort blauwe krassen op haar voortanden als van een stift. Ook kan hij zien dat ze haar tanden niet goed heeft gepoetst. 'Ik ben blij dat je naar de dokter gaat,' zei het meisje tegen hem.

Het jongetje schrok van haar woorden. 'Dat is wel heel gemeen wat je tegen me zegt, dat je blij bent dat ik naar de dokter ga.'

Het meisje werd overstuur van zijn woorden. 'Ik bedoel dat ikzelf ook veel naar de dokter ga. Het kan soms helpen, en ik voel met je mee.'

'Sorry dat ik je verkeerd begreep,' zei het jongetje. 'Het gaat psychisch niet goed met mij, en ik ben soms een beetje in de war.'

Plotseling is er geen beeld meer. Het video-spelletje is gecrashed. Als het jongetje het spelletje weer oplaad is het meisje er niet meer.

'Ik dacht toch echt dat het echt was,' zei het jongetje tegen zichzelf, 'maar het was maar een video-spelletje. Ik hoop dat mijn hele leven maar een video-spelletje is geweest, en dat ik het spelletje zal winnen, of dat ik misschien een ander spelletje krijg.'

Hij voelde een hand op zijn schouder. Het was zijn vader. En ook zijn moeder stond achter hem. 'Ben je eindelijk wakker geworden uit je coma, jongen ?' zei zijn vader. 'We dachten : Laten we je maar achter de computer zetten, want daar hield je altijd zo van.'

'Video-spelletjes, ja,' zei het jongetje. 'Ik ben blij dat jullie nog leven. Wat was er met me gebeurd ?'

'Geschept door een vrachtwagen,' zei vader.

'Ik kan me er niets meer van herinneren,' zei het jongetje.

Zijn vader gaf hem toen een doos vol met nieuwe video-spelletjes. 'Op naar een nieuw leven, jongen.'

Gevangen in een Video Spel

Er was een nieuwe trein gekomen, geheel van speelgoed. Ook de rails waren van speelgoed, en mensen konden er gewoon mee reizen. Steeds meer van zulke treinen kwamen tussen de steden en de dorpen. Er kon gewoon niets fout gaan met zulke treinen. Het was magisch en utopisch. Meer en meer begon alles van speelgoed te worden, maar de hoge bazen van de regering begonnen overstuur te raken. Zij wilden oorlog zien, want oorlog zou het geld doen rollen, en zo zouden de ziekenhuizen vol blijven. De hoge oorlogsbazen van de regering wilden geen vrede. Teveel dokters zouden zo hun baan verliezen. Vaak als er

moorden waren gepleegd, dan was de moordenaar speciaal daartoe opgeleid door de geheime medische cultus.

De speelgoedfabrikanten waren in een groot gevecht met de regering. Zij wilden dat er een nieuwe regering zou komen : een speelgoed regering. Dit vond de regering echt belachelijk. Ze wilden namelijk blijven rondlopen met hun stropdasjes en zure gezichten om te zien of ze nog ergens oorlog konden losweken, heel subtiel.

De speelgoedfabrikanten dachten toen :
'Goed, jullie willen oorlog ? Dan komt er ook oorlog.' En ze begonnen een speelgoed oorlog van kunst, een speelgoed atoom oorlog die de hele wereld zou verbazen en overnemen. Het was een spel oorlog. Alles was een video spel geworden. De speelgoed fabrikanten hadden namelijk de beste technologie van de wereld.

Het was winter. Daan en Hendrik stonden te wachten op de grote trein van speelgoed. Ze moesten naar school. Ook het station was

geheel van speelgoed, en overal konden video-spelletjes gedaan worden. Die waren ingebouwd in grote spelkasten aan de muur. Het waren computers. Ze vonden het wel mooi, en er hing een veel betere sfeer nu.

De onderwijzer was kwaad die dag. Hij vond al dat speelgoed gedoe maar niets. Volgens hem moest er hard gestudeerd worden en dan gewerkt. Altijd had hij een stropdas om, en stond meters boven de kinderen. Nooit had hij oog voor ze, alleen voor zijn eigen zwaarwichtige onzin.

Daan en Hendrik wilden altijd kind blijven. Ze wilden niet volwassen worden, want de volwassenen hadden de wereld kapot gemaakt. Daan en Hendrik stonden aan de kant van de speelgoedfabrikanten. Beiden wilden ze later ook speelgoedfabrikanten worden om de wereld beter te maken.

Maar het was snel afgelopen met het plezier. Er kwam een nieuwe president aan de macht, Van Straaten, en die beval dat alle

spelcomputers van het station verwijderd moesten worden. Ook moesten de speelgoed treinen weg, maar er werd toen zoveel gestaakt bij de spoorwegen dat de speelgoed treinen mochten blijven. Van Straaten zorgde er echter wel voor dat vele speelgoed fabrieken gesloten werden, en er werd veel speelgoed vernietigd. De bevolking was woedend. Daan en Hendrik dachten dat het doorgestoken kaart was dat Van Straaten aan de macht was gekomen. Er moest wel met de stemkaarten gerommeld zijn. Daan en Hendrik besloten de computer van de regering te hacken. Ze kwamen achter veel informatie van de geheime medische cultus, die er ook voor gezorgd hadden dat Van Straaten aan de macht was gekomen door veel gesjoemel met de stemmen.

Daan en Hendrik lieten het er niet bij zitten. Ook hackten ze de energie-centrales en zorgden ervoor dat de regering en ieder lid van de regering geen electriciteit meer hadden. Ze voerden geheime codes in die ervoor zorgden dat alle energie via de

speelgoed fabrieken ging. De regering was woedend.

Daan en Hendrik waren speelgoed poppen vermomd als mensen. Zij waren spionnen van de speelgoedfabrieken en waren toegerust met de hoogste technologie. Hier kon Van Straaten niet tegenop. Hij rende gillend door de straten. 'Help, help !' riep hij. 'Mijn gat staat in brand !' Hij rende naar de tandarts, zijn trouwe maat, maar ook diens gat stond in brand. Ze stonden voor een groot raadsel. Beiden renden ze naar de rivier om daar het vuur in te sussen. Direct werden ze gegrepen door piranha's. 'Wie heeft die dingen hier plotseling losgelaten !' gilde Van Straaten.

Snel zwommen ze weer naar de kant. 'Vlug, het water uit !' riep de tandarts.
Maar een zwerm woedende wespen wachtten hen daar al op. 'Hoe kan dit !' riep Van Straaten. 'Zo is dit nooit geweest !'

'Ik denk dat dit een video spelletje is !' riep de tandarts.

'Video spelletjes !' krijste Van Straaten. 'Die heb ik zoveel mogelijk proberen te verwijderen !'

'Kennelijk niet genoeg !' riep de tandarts.

'Kennelijk zou ik jou een draai om je oren moeten geven omdat je je werk niet goed doet !' schreeuwde Van Straaten.

'Hoezo ?' riep de tandarts, die al helemaal onder de bulten zat.

'Boor die wespen weg !' schreeuwde van Straaten.

'Nu begin je onredelijk te worden !' riep de tandarts. 'Mijn volgende stem zal niet op jou zijn.'

'Ik zal zorgen dat je nooit meer komt te stemmen !' schreeuwde Van Straaten.

'Ik heb geen macht hier met mijn boren !' riep de tandarts.

'Nee,' schreeuwde van Straaten, 'in plaats van in gevoelige kinderen te boren had je eens wat spelletjes met ze kunnen doen, en in het leger de vijand wegboren, maar nee. Nu zitten we met de gebakken peren. Het spel keert zich nu tegen ons !'

'Precies !' schreeuwde de tandarts woedend. 'Jij hebt ook geen macht meer. Gelukkig maar !'

Ieder rende zijn eigen kant op. Ze wilden niets meer met elkaar te maken hebben. Beiden zaten ze onder de bulten. Er werden nieuwe verkiezingen gehouden, en de enige regering was de speelgoed fabriek. Het grootste gedeelte van de bevolking was hier blij mee, maar er werd veel geprotesteerd door de vorige regering en het onderwijs. Met spandoeken gingen ze de straten op, maar zwermen woedende wespen dreven hen naar

de rivier waar de piranha's hen al opwachtten.
Zij waren gevangen in het video spel.

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3 PLANTEN VAN VLEES
4 ZIJN HUIS STOND IN DE WEG
5 HET SURINAAMSE DAGBOEK
6 DE EVOLUTIE VAN DE HEMEL
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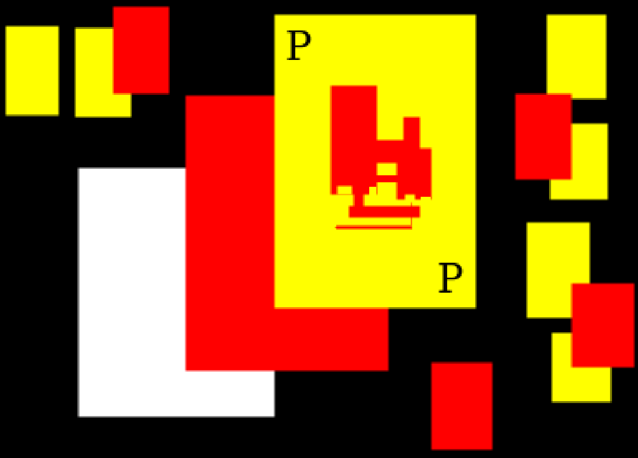

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De Cotrijnen Brug

De monniken van de nieuwe religie moesten de Cotrijnen brug overvluchten. De Felixianen van de religie van koning Felix vervolgden hen. Ook de Cotrijnen brug werd zwaar bewaakt, maar de monniken hadden geen andere keus. Sommigen moesten alsnog het water induiken, en velen kwamen om vanwege de stroming, of werden alsnog neergeschoten. De Cotrijnen brug was een helse brug, maar het was de enige manier om het land uit te komen. Het land was verder omringd met hoge muren waar maar geen einde aan leek te komen. Ook onder de grond was er niet door te komen, liep alles vast. Dan zouden ze moeten graven, maar dat leek ook een eindeloze opgave. Alles leek muurdicht onder de grond. Zo vochten de monniken van de Seroem, de nieuwe religieuze orde, op de Cotrijnen brug, en vaak

kwam het er dus op neer dat ze ergens het water met de sterke stroming moesten inspringen. Het zoog hen vaak naar beneden, of ze werden ergens ver weg geslingerd. Zo overleefden er enigen, en sommigen leken hun weg over de brug te vinden.

De monniken besloten nog even te wachten. Ze bleven gewoon Felixiaans, en werkten aan een machine in het geheim, genaamd de Sporgus. Zovelen van hen die waren gevlucht hadden het niet gered. Ze wilden niet dat hun religie zou uitsterven. Ze wilden het risico niet nemen. Ze hielden vast aan de leringen van hun grote profeet, Jasserhelt, maar in het geheim. Uitwendig en in naam waren ze gewoon weer Felixiaans. Ze bleven inwendig en in het geheim vasthouden aan hun geloof in het vreemde en het saaie. Het mocht nergens over gaan en er moest omheen gedraaid worden. Er waren geen snelle wegen. Ze moesten hun religie in de verdieping van het Felixiaanse vinden. Zo werkten ze aan hun machine. Het werd tot een groot monster. Het kon graven en afbreken. De machine werd onder de grond gebouwd in de ruimte die ze hadden. Het was als een ark. Er kon ook in gewoond worden.

Hoe meer ze ondergronds hadden uitgegraafd, hoe groter de machine kon worden. Ze bouwden er heel voorzichtig aan, en bleven voorzichtig met het bekend maken van de machine, want ze waren bang voor verraders.

Op een dag hoorden ze dat er vuur was gezet in de Cotrijnen brug. Ze wisten niet wie de daders waren, alhoewel ze vermoedden dat het van het buurland afkwam, en van de gevluchtte monniken. De Topazianen waren de leiders van de Felixianen en die begonnen huiszoekingen te houden. Er kwamen steeds meer meldingen van branden. De monniken wilden het er nu op wagen, en besloten de machine in te gaan, in de Sporgus, de graafmachine, en er was een grote uittocht. De graafmachine ging diep onder de grond, en kwam tot een land dat de wereld van Ovul heette.

Ze vonden hier monikken van hun eigen religie, wiens leider Kitslak was. Zij bleken al veel langer geleden te zijn gevlucht. Ze hadden hier hun eigen wereld gebouwd. Het was een grote wereld onder de grond. Maar de graafmachine werd gevolgd door de

Topazianen, en die kwamen toen ook te weten over deze geheime wereld onder de grond. Spoedig kwamen die daar met hun Felixiaanse legers. Er kwam een grote oorlog. Eigenlijk moesten de monikken het geheel hebben van de Sporgus. Het was ook een gevechtsmachine. De Felixianen besloten het gehele gebied onder water te zetten. De Sporgus besloot dieper te graven. De grond was zachter hier, zodat alles wat ze achter lieten werd omsloten. Zo diep graafde de Sporgus. Toen besloot de Sporgus naar het buurland te gaan. De Sporgus had de meeste monikken van de wereld van Ovul kunnen meenemen. In het buurland kwamen ze tot het andere overblijfsel van de monikken die later waren gevlucht. Hier konden ze hun nieuwe religie bouwen.

Alles moest vreemd zijn en saai, het mocht nergens over gaan, en er moest altijd omheen gedraaid worden, ter navolging van de grote profeet, Jasserhelt, een vreemde man. Ze hielden lange wandeltochten door de natuur, die zo langzaam mogelijk moesten zijn. Zo schuifelden de monniken voort. Ze moesten leven van het kleine, van het trage, het vreemde en het saaie. Ze moesten leven van

het minste. Zo vonden ze hun weg tot de diepere natuur. Al het overbodige en overmatige moest eraf.

Rond het tranenmeer zetten zij hun kampen op. Zo werden zij meer en meer primitieve wilden. Ze leerden over de giffen van de natuur. Zo konden zij overleven. Als er een Felixiaan te dichtbij het kamp kwam, dan was een giftig pijltje genoeg.

Op een dag hadden nog meer monniken het kamp bereikt. Ze vertelden dat er weer een aanval was geweest op de Cotrijnen brug, en dat ze zo konden vluchten. Er waren ook vele nieuwe bekeerlingen bij. Het begon steeds meer voor te komen dat er nieuwe bekeerlingen kwamen, maar ze waren huiverig dat er ook verraders tussen konden zitten. Ze besloten daarom geen nieuwe bekeerlingen meer toe te laten. Ze waren immers al een stam, en ze wensten onontdekt te zijn. Ze begonnen steeds aggressiever te worden naar nieuwe bekeerlingen, en het begon steeds meer voor te komen dat ze de nieuwe bekeerlingen aanvielen met giftige pijltjes. De religie was vol nu. Het getal was vol. De ark was vol. Ze wisten zeker dat er

ook fortuinzoekers tussen de nieuwe bekeerlingen inzaten. De nieuwe bekeerlingen werden ook steeds aggressiever, en daarom kwam er oorlog tussen de nieuwe Seroem en de oude Seroem. De oude Seroem vond dat de nieuwe bekeerlingen een verkeerd beeld hadden van de leer van Jasserhelt. Ze waren veel vrijer en vrolijker. Ze hadden alles al in kannen en kruiken, terwijl Jasserhelt de twijfel en de speculatie predikte. Eindeloos moest er gepiekerd worden, en eindeloos moest er omheen gedraaid worden om andere en betere wegen te vinden. Jasserhelt predikte verdieping, afwijking en afscheiding, het vreemde en het saaie. Het mocht nooit het voor de hand liggende zijn.

Ook was het zo dat de nieuwe bekeerlingen Jasserhelt tot een afgod hadden gemaakt, tot een object, tot een beeld, een monument, waarbij het meer om de persoon van Jasserhelt ging dan om zijn leer. Daarom was het oorlog. De monniken van de oude orde konden zich er niet mee verenigen. Steeds meer werden ze geplaagd en lastig gevallen door de nieuwe bekeerlingen, die alles op sterk water hadden gezet leek het wel. De

nieuwe bekeerlingen waren vaak ook niet echt monniken, maar meer socialen, zeer onkuis, zeer adrem. De monniken van de oude orde besloten toen met de Sporgus de zee over te gaan tot het land achter de zee, of tot een eiland waar ze zouden kunnen wonen, als dat er zou zijn. De Sporgus was als een schip. Het was hun ark. Ze begonnen steeds onveiliger te zijn in wat ze het land van de nieuwe bekeerlingen noemden, want die wilden de gehele religie overnemen, en gebruikten daartoe zware middelen.

Koste wat het koste moesten zij hier weg. Daarom gingen ze de zee over. Er kwam een storm op zee. Uiteindelijk hield de Sporgus geen stand in de hoge golven en de zware storm, en zo leden ze schipbreuk. Enkelen van hen overleefden het en spoelden op een eiland aan. Hier schenen alleen maar vrouwen te leven, inboorlingen, die zeer primitief waren. De vrouwen waren niet blij met hen. De monniken waren zwak en uitgehongerd, gebroken. Ze werden gebonden op het eiland genomen, en moesten voor de koningin verschijnen. Ze werden veroordeeld tot slavenarbeid vanwege dat ze zonder toestemming tot het eiland waren gekomen.

Er kwam van de slavenarbeid niet veel terecht omdat de monniken daarvoor te zwak waren, en daarom werden ze veel mishandeld.

Ze begonnen de vrouwen te vertellen over de leer van Jasserhelt. De vrouwen konden niets anders dan spotten. Omdat ze niet werkten werden ze ter dood veroordeeld, omdat ze verder gewoon als nutteloos werden gezien. De monniken waren bang dat de vrouwen kannibalen waren. Er bleken meer overlevenden te zijn die pas later op het eiland kwamen, en in de gaten kregen wat er aan de hand was. Ze hielden zich goed verborgen en bleven bij de vrouwen uit de buurt. Zo konden ze alles verspieden. Op een nacht sloegen ze toe, en bevrijdden hun mede-monniken. Ze vonden een boot, die waarschijnlijk van de vrouwen was, en gingen daarmee verder op zee, om op zoek te gaan naar een ander eiland. Daar kwamen ze aan na lang peddelen. Ook op dit eiland waren vrouwen. Ze vertrouwden het niet en gingen nog verder de zee op. Er waren meerdere eilanden. Er leken ook onbewoonde eilanden te zijn. Ze gingen van eiland tot

eiland totdat ze aan het land achter de zee kwamen.

Een man werd wakker van een droom. Hij was opgepakt door de Felixianen, omdat hij een Seroem-monnik was, van de verboden religie. Hij zat in gevangenschap en wist dat de Cotrijnen brug de enige ontsnappingsmogelijkheid was. Maar eerst moest hij uit de gevangenis zien te ontsnappen. Die gevangenis was niet ommuurd, maar het was een implantaat. Het begon te piepen en stroom af te geven zodra de man tot de Cotrijnen brug zou naderen. De man kon gewoon de stad in om inkopen te doen. Het implantaat hield hem in de gaten. Hij mocht niet bij de brug komen. Dat was voor de man verboden terrein. Ook moest de man werken voor het implantaat. Als de man niet deed wat het implantaat hem opdroeg, dan werd hij onder stroom gezet, en kreeg hij zware pijnscheuten. De Felixianen waren doortrapt en sadistisch.

Hij kon alleen maar dromen van het land achter de brug, maar zou het daar ook daadwerkelijk beter zijn ? Het implantaat had hem al de doodstraf gegeven, maar het was

nu nog slechts een dodencel. Eerst zou hij hard moeten werken. Hij moest van het implantaat zien af te komen, maar hoe ? Hij werd ook gestrafd voor zulke gedachten door het implantaat. Het implantaat zou hem electrocuteren als er aan het implantaat gepeuterd zou worden.

Maar het was juist zijn religie om om het implantaat heen te leren denken, om lijdzaam te zijn, te werken met het minste, het moeilijkste, er omheen te werken. Hij moest openstaan voor het vreemde, niet het voor de hand liggende. Hij moest loskomen van de afgoden van het onmiddelijke en het directe. Het was als een drugs waarvan hij moest afkicken. Het saaie, het langslepende, het chronische, het verdiepende, het exogame, het andere, was de enige weg. Al zijn verdere dromen moest hij opgeven, ook de romantische dromen. Hij moest een heel ander pad begaan. Dat was het pad van Jasserhelt. Het mocht nergens over gaan. Er moest omheen gedraaid worden, er van afgeweken worden, in afscheiding en afzondering. Dat was eigenlijk al de Cotrijnen brug. Het moest in zijn binnenste gebeuren, niet in het zintuigelijke, want de

zintuigen waren leugens. Hij moest leren leven in zijn dromen.

Hij moest het Felixiaanse niet meer als een bedreiging en een probleem zien, maar als een uitdaging en een aanvulling. Dat was wat de Cotrijnen brug was. Het maakte hem boos, depressief en bang, maar hij moest vreemder en saaier worden. Er was immers geen korte weg. Het saaie was zijn weg ten leven, waar het plezier en het intense zijn strop waren geworden. Hij moest nog tot leven komen. Jasserhelt had altijd op het saaie gewezen tot het vreemde. Hij was in exogamie tot iets onzichtbaars wat nog werkelijkheid moest worden, maar het zou nooit werkelijkheid worden. Het zou er altijd omheen draaien. Het zou steeds dichterbij komen, maar het nooit raken en kruizen. Er zat nog zoveel ruimte tussenin, en hoe dichter het bij hem zou komen, hoe verder weg het scheen te zijn. Het was een vreemd soort ijs waartoe hij ontwaakte.

Hij droomde over de Cotrijnen brug en zag het branden, en zag toen ook zichzelf branden, totdat alles in ijs was, ver weg. Het was allemaal onbereikbaar. De brug leek

groter dan ooit, en verder weg dan ooit, en daarachter lag het amazonen land, daar waar vrouwen regeerden. Misschien werd hij ergens voor beschermd ? Hij zag zichzelf kleiner worden in de droom, en overal was ijs. Hij kon op de brug tikken, en het was een metaal geluid. Het was oud metaal. Hij bevond zich in een bloemendal. Daarachter was het land der amazonen, het land Gods. De bloemen staken hem met hun doorns, reten hem aan flarden. Zo ging zijn ziel over de brug, tot het land der amazonen. Als een vis was hij, want de brug hield ergens op, en er was alleen nog water. Als een vis raakte hij in de netten en werd wedergeboren aan de kusten. Als een kind werd hij in de gaten gehouden.

Hij droomde van vele bedelaars in de stad, en het was oorlog in de stad, een koude oorlog. Hij had een huis met een tuin, en hij dacht aan de bloemen in zijn tuin. Hij kende ze allemaal. En hij las in de boeken van de leer van Jasserhelt, de verboden boeken, om van het saaie tot het vreemde te gaan. Oh, die boeken waren zo saai en zo langdradig, er leek geen einde aan te komen, en ze werden steeds vreemder en vreemder. Het beledigde

zijn intelligentie, het beledigde alles wat in hem was. Hij had het idee dat het de spot met hem dreef, alsof hij uitgehongerd werd, het leek zwaar sadistisch.

Hij werkte bij de leerlooier en de slager. Het was eindeloos werk. Het hield nooit op. Hij moest ook naar school, waar hij gehersenspoeld werd. Hij was onder de macht van het implantaat. In zijn denken draaide hij er omheen, van het saaie tot het vreemde, en het deed hem dromen. Hij was in strijd met een beest, maar hij kon het niet rechtstreeks benaderen. Hij mocht niet jagen maar moest valstrikken zetten. Hij moest het te slim afzijn in zijn denken. Hij moest er omheen leren praten, andere wegen mee inslaan. Hij moest balans leren houden tussen aanpassen en afwijken, geven en nemen. Hij moest ermee leren leven. Hij moest het verwerken. Hij moest leren het aan anderen over te laten. Ze waren er niet voor niets, en ze waren te sterk. Ze beheersten zijn leven. Ze waren van het implantaat. Hij moest niet naar de brug, maar hij moest de brug in zichzelf vinden, en dat was een draaiende en afwijkende brug, van het saaie tot het vreemde. Het kwam nooit aan. Het brokkelde ergens halverwege

af, en dan moest hij dieper, door de zee verzwolgen worden, om als vis wedergeboren te worden in de visnetten. Zo kwam hij tot de andere kant, tot het land der amazonen, tot het land Gods.

Vaak als hij op een stoel zat voelde hij zich als wegzakkende in de grond, en dan ging hij door een diepe put tot een grot of hol met schedels en doodsbeenderen. Hij moest in contact komen met het vreemde in hem. Als hij aan de brug dacht deed het pijn, sneeuwde het in hem, reet de kou hem in stukken. Het was als het beklimmen van een hoge berg, en als hij er bijna was, dan gleed hij weer terug of viel hij en stortte hij te pletter.

De nachten waren lang en leken steeds langer te worden, vol met dromen, vreemde dromen, of gewoon saai. De nachten putten hem uit. Hij moest leren het anders te doen, telkens weer. Het leven ging om het simpele, het uitgebreide, de eindeloze herhalingen, die telkens wat meer diepte brachten, zo subtiel dat het bijna niet opviel, en dat maakte het saai. Er moest hard gewerkt worden voor iedere levensdruppel, met veel bloed, zweet en tranen.

Zijn buurman, Orgus, zat in hetzelfde pakket. Hij was ook een Seroem-monnik met een implantaat. Soms zette het implantaat hen ook tegen elkaar op. Alle Seroem-monniken werden tegen elkaar opgezet door het implantaat wat ze hadden, maar ze probeerden er omheen te werken. Het implantaat was sluw en doortrapt, en het slaagde erin monniken-oorlogen te brengen, alhoewel het veelal koude oorlogen waren, maar het bracht veel verbittering en afscheiding met zich mee. Zo raakten alle Seroem-monniken steeds meer en meer geisoleerd.

Hij bleef maar dromen krijgen over gegil komende van de Cotrijnen brug. Het waren de zielen van de rivier die erin opgesloten zaten, de zielen van de voorouders. Het was als een geldpot. Ook overdag begon hij last te krijgen van gegil in zijn hoofd. De voorouders werden ook vervolgd. Zij kregen veelal de doodstraf en hun lichamen werden in de rivier gedumpt, bij de Cotrijnen brug. Ook zij moesten beseffen dat er niet zomaar verlossing mogelijk was, maar wel

verdieping. Vroeger heette de brug ook wel de moordbrug.

Het land was onder een vloek, maar de vloek scheen hen te beschermen tegen gevaarlijke amazone stammen achter de rivier. Zij waren de meest gevaarlijke heksen. Ze waren kannibalen. Ze hadden als leidster Ronja, die maar één oog had en alleen maar een halve tand had. Hij moest er niet aan denken. Als kind werden ze vaak bang gemaakt voor de amazones. Het waren de ergste kinderlokkers die bestonden. Hij plaste soms bijna in zijn broek van angst als hij die verhalen hoorde. In zowel de boeken van de Felixianen als de Seroem-monniken was Ronja de ergst mogelijke duivelin.

In de boeken van de Seroem-monniken stond dat Ronja het land behekst had, en dat was een te zware belediging voor de Felixianen, waardoor de vervolgingen begonnen.

Ja, Gods land aan de overkant was eigenlijk een hel. Hij moest daar maar niet wezen. Wel droomde hij erover. Wel draaide hij er omheen, hield het hem bezig. Het leek alsof hij een weg door alles heen probeerde te

vinden, ook al liepen die wegen telkens weer dood, brokkelde alles halverwege af. Het was het grote geheimenis van de Cotrijnen brug.

Het had hem verlamd, het hield hem vast. Het was zijn keten. Het was alsof hij ergens vanaf geduwd was, alsof hij vanaf de Cotrijnen brug te pletter was gestort. Als een vis in de zee was hij nu, meegesleurd door golven groter dan zijn eigen denken, groter dan zijn eigen werkelijkheid. Hij was nu ook als de voorouders, gillend en schreeuwend in de Cotrijnen brug, waar maar geen weg door of uit scheen te zijn. Natuurlijk, het implantaat speelde weer op, zette hem onder stroom, totdat hij gilde en schreeuwde, want hij mocht hier eigenlijk helemaal niet zijn. Hij moest ver van de brug vandaan blijven.

Einde

Hij slenterde door de grauwe straten naar zijn werk, maar het leek alsof hij er nooit aankwam.
Hij had het gevoel dat zijn leven geen handvaten had. Hij voelde zich wegglijden in een diepe put. Alles was grauw om hem heen, ook de enkele mensen die hij tegenkwam onderweg. Het was guur weer. Hij liep met trage passen. Hij had geen haast. Waarom zou hij haast hebben ? Hij was vroeg weggegaan van huis, omdat de muren op hem afkwamen. Hij vroeg zich af of ze hem wel zouden missen op het werk als hij niet op zou komen dagen. Ze leefden daar allemaal langs elkaar heen. Alles was zakelijk en ging om papieren. En die papieren werden telkens verwisseld. Hij had het gevoel dat niemand op hem wachtte, ook thuis niet. Hij woonde alleen en had geen vrienden.

Hij had die ochtend langzaam gegeten. Het was smakeloos, zoals zijn leven ook smakeloos was. Het was zuur en bitter, het eten, net zoals zijn leven, en het brood was oud en muf. En toen hij at overdacht hij zijn leven, zoals hij altijd deed. ‘Er komt hier

niets van de grond,’ dacht hij. De vogels zongen niet meer. Hij vroeg zich af of ze ooit hadden gezongen. De herinneringen waren vaag, en hadden niet veel waarde voor hem. Het was te ver weg. Het kon niet opboksen tegen waar hij zich in bevond. Hij voelde zijn leven onder zichzelf wegglijden, als in een diepe put, alsof hij vergif had gedronken. Toen hij aankwam op zijn werk ging ook alles langs hem heen. Hij deed gewoon wat hij moest doen, als een automatisme. Hij vulde de getalletjes in, en dat was het weer. Zo ging dat dag in dag uit. Dat was waaruit zijn leven bestond. Thuis kwamen de muren op hem af. Hij deed de was. Er was niets wat hem enige troost bracht, niets beurde hem op, niets bemoedigde hem.

In de nachten had hij ook geen uitvlucht. Hij had benauwende, beklemmende dromen die hem altijd weer in de diepten trokken. En het huis was kil en koud, grauw en zonder kleuren. Er was niks wat hem kon opvrolijken. Hij had het gevoel in een dodendans te zijn. En alles was stil, zo stil.

Hij voelde zich maar een druppel in de woeste zee, en de mensen om hem heen

waren ook maar druppels. Niemand kon wat doen. De zee was kolkend en onstuimig. Op een dag waren er Noorse kapers in het land. Zij namen overal de macht over. Hem lieten ze verder met rust. Dingen begonnen anders te worden, met meer diepte. Het land was bezet, maar hij besefte dat het land daarvoor nog wel erger bezet was. Hij kon de Noorse kapers wel dankbaar zijn, ook al waren ze een bende. Telkens had hij dromen van woeste, kolkende, bruisende zeeen, en ze bleven maar land innemen. Het was alsof zijn hoofd vrij begon te komen, vrij van de waanzin. Hij vreesde de Noorse kapers niet. Ze hoorden erbij.

Het Hol

We hadden hele leuke buren, een broer en een zus. Ze namen mij en mijn broertje overal mee naartoe. Ze namen ons mee op boottochten. We waren eens in een bos, bij een hol, op een eiland. Er kwam ineens een beest uit het hol die mijn broertje greep. Ik ben toen in het hol gerend om mijn broertje te helpen, maar een ander beest greep mij. Ik kwam toen in een andere wereld.

Het enige wat ik toen nog hoorde van de buren was als ze op de radio kwamen, en in het begin herkende ik ze niet eens. We leefden in twee verschillende werelden. Er waren tralies tussen. De buren hadden zulke mooie stemmen, maar ze waren onbereikbaar voor mij. Het beest had me goed gebeten. In de nachten had ik nachtmerries.

Het kon niet altijd zo blijven. De buren waren te leuk. Het gif was diep. Het leek wel alsof de buren mij probeerden te bevrijden, maar ik kon niet veel van hun wereld aan, alsof ik er allergisch voor was geworden. Alleen een boek over hen zou ik nog aankunnen.

De Klokkenmaker

Het was verschrikkelijk.
Het waren mensen van wie ik hield.
Ze grepen naar de drugs.
Ze gingen door sneeuw en ijs tot de beer van
de eeuwige dood.
Zo hoefden ze niet meer te lijden, maar ze
stierven,
en zo stierf ook een stukje van mezelf.

Ze maakten hiervoor een lange tocht, op zoek
naar warmte,
op zoek naar de beer.
De beer was niet makkelijk.
Ze zouden ermee moeten worstelen.
Hij gaf zijn drugs niet zomaar.
Een hoge prijs moesten ze ervoor betalen.
Ze moesten leven van de dood.
Ze werden zijn huurmoordenaren.

Er ging een hoop geld in om.
Het was een markt.
De beer was een slimme marktkoopman.
Het was een warlock, een heks,
en hij was dronken van het bloed van zijn
slachtoffers,
komende tot een zalige en eeuwige dood.

Kon hem het schelen.
Alles ging hem om geld en drugs.
Anderen waren voor hem niets waard,
als wegwerpartikelen,
als sigaretten.

Velen gingen tot deze man.
Ze vonden het leven te zwaar.
Ze wilden de prijs niet betalen voor het geheimenis.
Ze wilden zo snel mogelijk van het lijden af ten koste van anderen,
over de ruggen en de lijken van anderen heen.
Om hun geweten te sussen begonnen ze de anderen te beschuldigen,
begonnen ze redenen te verzinnen waarom ze dit moesten doen.
Het was onderdeel van de drugs.
Het was een blame game.

Ik zag ze voor mijn ogen in het ravijn storten,
Ik zag ze met hun auto's de rivier inrijden,
Ik hield van deze mensen.
Ik hoopt dat ik slechts droomde.
Waarom hadden zij hun zielen aan de duivel verkocht ?
Moet je dan nog grotere ellende maken om de ellende op te lossen ?

Grote draaikolken sleurden hen de dieptes in.
Het was de koning van de oceaan.

Ik hoopte dat ik droomde.
Ik hoopte dat het niet waar was.
Misschien was ik wel ziek, en niet zij.
Ik keek naar de beer, en zijn ogen zeiden
genoeg.
Het was een bloeddorstig beest.
Of zag ik het verkeerd ?
Ik twijfelde.

De ogen van het beest verscheurden zielen.
Op het laatst bestonden zij niet meer.
Zij hadden hun harten aan hem overgegeven.
Zij waren onderdeel geworden van de drugs.
Het was de drugs van de eeuwige dood,
van onwetendheid is zaligheid.

Ze wilden het niet weten.
Waar vochten ze voor ?
Ik weet het niet.
Ze waren in vergetelheid.

En het werd kouder.
En de beer nam hun harten in.
En zij bevroren, en werden tot ijsbomen.

Hier werden zij tot steen.
Geen leven meer van binnen.
Ik zag de zaligheid op hun gezichten.
Ze waren dood door moord.
Het was hun drugs.
Ze hadden er hun leven voor gegeven.
Nu straalden ze, maar het licht deed pijn aan
mijn ogen.
Ik kon hen niet waarschuwen.
Dat wilden ze niet, en ze waren toch dood.
Ze waren poppen van de beer.
Ze gingen in lange gewaden door de sneeuw,
als monniken.
Maar ze waren dood.
Eeuwig dood.

Alles stopten ze weg.
Er mocht niet over gesproken worden.
Ik kon alleen maar rennen, en wenen.
Ik moest mijzelf in veiligheid brengen.
Ik kon hier niet mee leven.
Waarom ? Waarom ?
Of droomde ik het maar, was het één van
mijn vele nachtmerries ?
Of was ik ziek, ijlde ik maar ?

Ik had het koud, dat wel.

Ik moest de duisternis vinden, want het licht
vrat aan mij.
Dit licht was vals, met zoveel illusies.
Dit licht was dodelijk, eeuwig dodelijk.
Al deze lichten stierven weg in de nacht.
Ze doodden ook henzelf.
Van moord kun je niet leven.
Geen moordenaar heeft eeuwig leven in zich.

De bek van de beer was rood van bloed.
Van de dood kun je niet leven.
Het was als rood gesteente.

En ik hoorde gegil.
Wie kan hier mee leven ?
En ze gaven zich over aan de beer.
Maar ik wilde het geheimenis van de beer
kennen.

En ik zag hen geloven in het ene en
eenmalige,
voor het andere was geen plaats.
Ik zag hen geloven in het eerste,
maar de eersten zullen de laatsten zijn.

De beer was wreed en genadeloos.
Er was een eeuwige straf voor hen die zijn
product niet kochten,

en daarom kochten de mensen het,
en hen werd geschonken een eeuwige dood.
Zo hoefden ze het gegil niet te horen,
en niet onder ogen hoeven te komen dat het
een leugen was.

Gewillige gaven ze zich over aan de leugen,
wat toen tot waarheid werd.
Als makke schapen kwamen ze tot de beer
die hen bedreigde.
Het Stockholm syndroom werd tot een
Zweden syndroom,
en toen tot het Europa syndroom.

Ze hadden er nu over verenigd en over
vergaderd,
en zouden nu het product verkopen.
Onder bedreiging, dwang, oplichting en
chantage.
Niets ging hen te ver, als het maar verkocht
werd,
als zij maar eeuwig dood konden blijven voor
het gegil van hen die beweerden dat het een
leugen was.
Hoe ver moet je gaan ?
Hoe diep kun je dalen ?
De beer heeft er een handel in, en verlegt
telkens zijn grenzen,

om steeds dieper te grijpen,
totdat de eeuwige dood heeft ingezet,
en niet meer kan worden weggerukt.
Het is nu eenmaal onderdeel van de drugs.
Men moet al die rituelen blijven doen om de drugs te laten werken,
anders had het nooit kunnen bestaan.

‘Ik kan het niet, ik kan het niet !’ riep ik.
Ik probeerde het uit te spugen, maar ze dwongen me het te slikken.
Nu was ik één van hen,
maar van binnen protesteerde ik.
Ik ging demonstreren.
En daarom stond ik op een zwarte lijst.
Ik moest een slaappil wezen, net als de anderen.
Maar de beer kon het lijstje niet eens vasthouden,
en kon het niet eens lezen,
en daarom vergiste hij zich de hele tijd.
De beer was verstrooid.
Ook was de beer vergeetachtig.
En zo kon ik ontkomen.
Ik waarschuw kinderen daar niet te komen.
Maar dan heb ik het gedaan, want ze gaan er graag naartoe.

Voor zovelen is het routine geworden,
ze gaan er dagelijks naartoe.
Van hun vergeetachtigheid moet ik het
hebben.
Ze zijn afwezig en hebben nergens tijd voor.

Het is een gevecht met een ijsbeer,
en er zijn beren in de zee.
Zij voeren oorlog tegen hetgeen zij niet
begrijpen,
maar van hun vergeetachtigheid moet ik het
hebben.
Ze zijn immers dood,
als een stilstaande klok die twee keer per dag
gelijk heeft,
en de rest niet kan volgen.

Ik moet het hebben van stilstaande klokken.
Ze geven me tweemaal per dag informatie.
Er zijn bijna geen werkende klokken meer in
dit land.
En daarom ben ik klokkenmaker geworden.

Soms wordt ik bezocht door een beer,
die mij kapotte klokken probeert te verkopen,
maar dan laat ik hem werkende klokken zien.
Dat vind hij maar niks.
Hij blijft zijn kapotte klokken verkopen,

onder zware bedreigingen.
Velen kopen het,
want werkende klokken vinden ze te duur.
En soms koop ik wat kapotte klokken,
om de onderdelen ervan te gebruiken om
werkende klokken te maken.

De beer en zijn kapotte klokken,
Ik snap niet wat hem bezield.
Maar de onderdelen zijn goed bruikbaar.
Ik ben klokkenmaker in hart en nieren,
dus ook geinteresseerd in kapotte klokken.
Ze inspireren mij, zij maken mij blij,
ze geven het leven zin, en maken van het
leven een uitdaging.

Hoog in mijn toren woon ik met mijn
klokken.
Ik geef ook lessen klokkijken.

De beer is nog steeds een klokkendoder,
een klokkenhater, en daarom verzamelt hij
kapotte klokken.
Hij is een klokkenbreker, een
klokkenvernieler,
een vandaal.
Altijd zie ik hem rondsjokken met zijn
kapotte klokken.

Hij is de klokkenjager.
Hij is in oorlog met klokken.
En, nu ja, soms moet er tegen bepaalde
klokken gestreden worden,
tweemaal per dag sta ik aan zijn zijde.
Tweemaal per dag hebben we een
gezamenlijke vijand.
Er is namelijk ook zoveel vals leven,
waar we de eeuwige dood tegen moeten
sterven.

De beer, koning van de gestopte tijd,
koning van het einde,
en soms moet de tijd ook even stoppen.
Zoveel klokken in de rivier gedumpt,
want ze dienden de mens niet meer, maar de
leugen.
Daarom zwemt de beer nog altijd in rivier en
zee,
om te zoeken naar zijn klokken.
Hij is een klokzoeker, een klokjager, een
verzamelaar van kapotte klokken.
Hij bouwt zijn rijk van kapotte klokken.

Ik ben de klokkenmaker.
De klok is het hart van de machine.
Ik heb geen tijd voor vreemde versjes.
Dat staat niet op de kalender.

Klokken zijn ook bruggen.
Ik ben daarom ook een bruggenbouwer.
Dat neemt niet weg dat ik velen zag sterven
die de beer volgden.
het is een trauma, het is een klok.
Het lijden is een klok.

Klokken zijn ook muren.
Zo is de klok een gids.
De klok is een kompas.

Ik staar naar de beer.
Nee, het is geen knuffelbeer.
Het is dodelijk.
Hij houdt van kapotte klokken en kapotte
kompassen.
Zo leidt hij hen voort tot een dodelijke
eeuwigheid.
Een poppenmaker is hij.

Het Soevenier

‘Thank you for taking me up, mr. clown,’ zei
ik altijd als we weer naar grootmoeder’s
plaats gingen.
Ik jankte altijd als we weer terugmoesten,
maar de clown was altijd degene die me
terugbracht.
‘Thank you for taking me up, mr. clown,’ zei
ik altijd, ondanks dat we terug moesten.
Ik zag er altijd tegenop terug te gaan, maar de
clown hielp me dan.
‘Nog eventjes maar,’ zei hij dan, en ik zag
weer de rest van de tijd er naar uit om naar de
plaats van grootmoeder te gaan.
Zij gaf me vele dekentjes voor het slapen.
De clown bracht me altijd, en bracht me weer
terug.
‘Nog eventjes maar,’ zei hij altijd.
Hij was als een slaapliedje.
‘Nog eventjes maar.’

Hij bracht me ook wel naar andere plaatsen,
zoals Brabant en Limburg.
Zuid Holland en Noord Holland stonden ook
op de lijst, en natuurlijk Utrecht.
Ook Friesland was geliefd, en Frankrijk.

Gek genoeg geen Zeeland, maar daar ging ik
later naar toe met werk, en met school.
Het was als een grote dierentuin, met vele
gevaarlijke roofdieren.
Die waren achter tralies ja, tenminste dat
dacht ik.

‘Nog eventjes maar,’ zei de clown als ik weer
gebeten was.
‘Thank you for taking me up, mr. clown,’ zei
ik altijd weer.
Hij was mijn beste vriend, mijn koerier.

Ik keek naar hem. Dan vaagde hij weer weg.
Hij was alleen een droom.
‘Thank you for taking me up, mr. clown.’
Hij kon snel, hij kon langzaam, hij kon hoog
en laag.
Hij kon over water, en door de lucht.
Ook kon hij onder de grond.
Ik kon overal met hem naartoe, maar ik moest
altijd weer terug.
‘Nog eventjes maar.’

Het nachtlied was wel aan hem uitbesteed.
Hij was een uitstekende zanger.
Eens bracht hij mij naar Californië,
en toen gebeurde het regelmatig weer,

en steeds weer.
We gingen langs zoveel gordijnen,
toch moest ik telkens weer terug, telkens
weer ontwaken.
‘Nog eventjes maar.’

Ik zag ze daar staan, die twee.
Waren jullie niet eens mijn buren ?
Toen gingen ze naar Californië.
Ik heb het nooit kunnen verwerken.
Ze waren broer en zus, en namen me overal
mee naartoe.
Ik was nog heel jong.
Toen ze vertrokken naar Californië lieten ze
de clown voor me achter.
Het was een aandenken aan hen.
Uiteindelijk bracht de clown me bij hen
terug.

Maar ik wilde terug naar het verleden,
toen we nog in Ermelo woonden en zij onze
buren waren.
Er was nu zoveel veranderd.
Dingen waren niet meer zoals ze waren.
Er was een kloof tussen ons die ik niet meer
kon overbruggen.
Ik wilde ook niet in Ermelo leven zonder hen.

Op een dag zijn ze toen teruggegaan naar Nederland
en gingen weer in Ermelo wonen. Ik ging toen naast hen
wonen. Mijn leven was nu compleet.

Ik woonde bij de clown, en de buren waren weer mijn buren.
En ze namen mij weer overal naartoe.
Ik had nu drie clowns, en ze noemden mij de grootste clown.

Oh Ermelo, ik mis je zo,
Oh Ermelo, je bossen en heides,
Je rijtjeshuizen, je winkelcentra,
zo vol natuur,
zo vol met clowns,
zo vol met machines,
Oh Ermelo, voor mij ben jij de allergrootste clown

Oh Ermelo, ik houd van jou,
Je bent mijn beste vriend,
Jij hebt me zoveel gegeven,
ook zoveel genomen voor mijn bestwil,
‘Nog eventjes maar,’ zei je altijd.

Oh Ermelo, soms heb ik me zo alleen
gevoeld,
Ik wilde je nooit verlaten,
maar we gingen verhuizen,
zoals de buren gingen verhuizen,
Ik had niets in te brengen,
je stootte me weg, ja, stootte me weg,
om me ergens tegen te beschermen,
het was de grootste storm in mijn leven,
Nooit heb ik het kunnen verwerken,
Altijd het gevoel te hebben iets te missen,
maar de clown was daar, als een soevenier.
Het zou me altijd weer terugbrengen.

De Rivier

Het stammenvolk was op een bepaalde manier ver van de rivier verwijderd. De grootte van de rivier werd bepaald door de ongelooflijk woeste krachten van de jungle. Ik zag eigenlijk ook geen andere uitweg dan dwars er doorheen, en door ervan te leren, het ten gunste te gebruiken. Het keerde zich ook tegen mij, en ik begreep het. Ik was natuurlijk een indringer. Nou ja, aan de andere kant had ik hier altijd geleefd, maar ik was nog nooit zo diep gekomen. Ik vreesde even voor mijn leven toen ik de woeste vrouwenstammen in de verte zag. Ze leken mij te negeren of zagen mij niet. Hoe dan ook zag ik ze als een bedreiging. Ze zouden zo om kunnen slaan. Ik had het eerder meegemaakt. Ik wilde hier eigenlijk helemaal niet wezen, maar ik had geen andere keus. Ik stond dichtbij de rivier waar hutten op palen waren. Er was hier verder niemand. Het stammenvolk was allemaal in de verte. Het zou zo om kunnen slaan. Ik moest uiteindelijk verder vluchten, want ik was hier indringer. Het woeste

gezicht van de jungle staarde mij aan. Ik had er geen zicht op wat het met mij wilde, of misschien negeerde het mij. Het water van de rivier was kalm. Ik had ook wel anders meegemaakt. Ik zwom naar de overkant, waar ik me iets veiliger voelde. Het stammenvolk was nu bijna niet meer in zicht. Ik stond voor een groot dilemma. Wat moest ik doen ? Ik ben uiteindelijk verder gegaan, langs de rivier, totdat ik bij een stam kwam. Deze stam leek rustiger, vriendelijker. Ik probeerde met hen te communiceren via gebarentaal, maar dat lukte niet echt. Ze hadden grote wervels, grote borstkassen, de vrouwen althans, want de mannen en kinderen waren dun. Er was hier verder geen dreiging. Dat was alleen aan de overkant van de rivier, in de verte. Ik bleef maar met gebaren erop te wijzen hoe zij aan de overkant waren. Daar kwam ik vandaan. Ik had heel wat meegemaakt. Ik kon het hen niet duidelijk maken. Het was alsof deze stammen langs elkaar heenleefden. Ik nam het in me op hoe ze hier leefden. Het was heel anders dan het stammenvolk aan de overkant. Ik zag in

de bloemen een gestalte, die ik ook in de rivieren duidelijk zag, alsof mijn verleden mij achtervolgde.

Kurak

Hij stond daar, buiten, het was al een beetje donker. Er was een filmpje op een groot scherm geweest. Die schermen waren overal door de stad, als reclames. Hij stond bij een groepje mensen verderop, maar hij was wel verstaanbaar. Hij keek toen naar mij, en zei dat ik leek op de persoon van het filmpje, zoals ik vroeger was. ‘Vroeger ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Ja, toen je als baby op dezelfde manier zo met je armen bewoog,’ zei hij. ‘Het deed me eraan denken.’ Ik liep naar de man toe. Hij leek op mijn oom Joop. ‘Bent u mijn oom Joop ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Nee,’ zei hij. Hij had donker haar.

‘Dan ben jij niet van Grietje en Herman, mijn grootouders,’ zei ik. Ik vroeg me af hoe hij me dan kende van vroeger. Hij draaide zich een beetje weg. Ik begon te twijfelen en voelde me zelfs onzeker. Waarom draaide hij nu ineens weg, alsof hij me negeerde. En hij kende mij ?

‘Maar wie bent u dan ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Je vader,’ zei hij.

‘Hoe kan dat ?’ vroeg ik.

‘We waren beiden afgeschoten,’ zei hij. ‘Toen kwam je in deze wereld.’

‘Oh, vóór mijn geboorte hier ?’ vroeg ik.

Hij knikte. ‘Dan ben je een engel ?’ vroeg ik.

Hij knikte weer.

Ik begon me een beetje weg te draaien. Het was al donker. Even vroeg ik me af of ik misschien voor de gek werd gehouden. Ik draaide toen terug.

‘Wie hebben het gedaan ? Wie hebben ons afgeschoten ?’ vroeg ik.

‘De gedeformeerde exodusers,’ zei hij, ‘oftewel de fisters, zoals ze ook genoemd worden.’

Het was oorlog. Hij verdween ook weer snel. Een jongen deelde wapens uit en munitie.

‘Zij zijn van ons weggegaan, maar waren van ons niet,’ sprak de jongen. ‘Verder heb ik niets meer te zeggen.’

Ik zag in de verte een stoet. Ze kwamen dichterbij. De oorlog was begonnen. We moesten vechten voor ons leven.

Ik was op zoek naar mijn vader. Even later vond ik hem weer. Hij zei dat hij Kurak heette, dat was onze achternaam. ‘Jij bent er één van Kurak,’ zei hij. Hij was nu ook zwaar bewapend, net als ik.

‘We komen er wel,’ zei hij. Hij rende weer weg. We moesten vechten.

‘Ik ben er één van Kurak,’ zei ik tegen mezelf. ‘Hoe bestaat het.’

Ik dreunde het lijstje van oud-gereformeerde predikanten op in mijn hoofd. Zij waren mijn wapens en munitie. Plotseling gleed er iets om mijn middel. Een band. Ik werd

opgehesen op een groot schip. Hier was mijn vader ook. Kurak.

‘De opname,’ zei vader. Hij glimlachte even.

‘Bedankt,’ zei ik.

Het schip had ook kanonnen. Het was een luchtschip.

‘De defo-exodusers zijn op weg naar hun gedeformeerde beloofde land,’ zei vader.

Toen ik wakker werd van de droom was het oorlog in mijn hoofd.

Einde

De Markies

Er waren vroeger van die verwarmingsclowntjes waarmee je je huis kon verwarmen, maar je betaalde er een hoge prijs voor. De clowntjes konden nogal flink stoken tussen familie leden, en scheurden zo vele families kapot. Dan hadden de ziekenhuizen en psychologen weer genoeg inkomsten. Er vanaf komen kon je niet, want de clowntjes begonnen dan te klagen, en konden hun geluid versterken tot sirenes. Het was een terreur, totdat de markies Omar Markees er wat tegen vond. Hij liet bepaalde fluitjes uit een ver land ervoor overkomen, waar hij flink wat voor had betaald, en van die fluitjes schenen de clowntjes rustig te worden. Het scheen iets met hun opvoeding te maken hebben gehad. Het enige probleem was dat de markies de fluitjes voor belachelijk hoge prijzen doorverkocht, maar velen hadden het er wel voor over om van het gejammer en geklaag van de clowntjes af te komen, en al dat gestook. De clowntjes konden ook verschrikkelijk liegen. De

markies werd steeds rijker, en de mensen steeds armer, maar ze begonnen zo wel van de clowntjes af te komen. Velen wilden niks meer met de clowntjes te maken hebben en dumpten ze in de rivier, om zo over te stappen op andere manieren van verwarming. De clowntjes hadden het land in de grootst mogelijke problemen gebracht. Voor sommigen was de markies een held, voor anderen een schurk. Er kwamen toen betere verwarmingsclowntjes op de markt, zodat na een tijdje de fluitjes van de markies niet meer zo nodig waren. De nieuwe verwarmingsclowntjes rekenden af met de oude verwarmingsclowntjes. Sommigen stond het idee van verwarminsclowntjes niet aan. Er werden veel van die clowntjes gestolen of vernield. Men ging vanaf toen ook andere soorten verwarmingen maken. Je kon het zo gek niet bedenken. Telkens als er weer problemen waren, ook op ander gebied, probeerde de markies er wat op te verzinnen, maar telkens weer was dat tegen een belachelijk hoge prijs, want de markies was een slimme zakenman. Velen konden het niet

betalen. Het volk werd armer en armer, en de markies telkens rijker. Het werd zo erg dat de mensen zeiden : ‘Och, waren de oude verwarmingsclowntjes er nog maar, toen was het zo erg nog niet.’ Maar ja, die waren grotendeels weg. Er waren er nog wel een paar over, en daar werd ook zelfs nog handel in gedreven, maar die waren echt onbetaalbaar. Mensen deden ik weet niet wat om weer zo’n ouderwets verwarmingsclowntje te kunnen bemachtigen, terwijl ze wisten dat het in wezen gewoon krengen waren. Alles beter in ieder geval dan hoe het nu was. Ook de fluitjes van de markies waren in de loop der tijden schaars geworden, en die waren nu ook onbetaalbaar duur. Maar mensen hadden het er wel voor over. Met de loterij werden ze nog weleens verloot, dus daar ging het geld van vele mensen naartoe. Ze wilden weer terug naar het verleden, ook al was het toen ook allesbehalve makkelijk. En men ging gokken, en men werd crimineel, om maar een verwarmingsclowntje te kunnen bemachtigen, het liefst nog met een fluitje

erbij. De ziekenhuizen, psychologen en gevangenissen draaiden goed, naast vele andere organisaties die goed aan het leed van het volk verdienden. De markies, die markies, die Omar Markees, dat was een boosaardig genie. Die had dit allemaal gedaan. Die had ook eens de verwarmingsclowntjes gebracht. Uit een ver land, zei hij. Ja ja. Hij wist precies hoe hij aan geld moest komen, op alle verkeerde manieren.

Rolgod

Hij kon horen dat de buren de televisie aanhadden. Het was niet hard. Hij kon niet exact de woorden verstaan, maar wel dat de nieuwslezer het telkens had over 'Rolgod'. Wat hij ervan begreep was dat het de naam was van een roltrap in een groot warenhuis. Er was iets met Rolgod aan de hand. Ten eerste was het een buitenaardse roltrap die ze Rolgod noemden. Het was daarom ook een buitenaards warenhuis. Ten tweede verslond Rolgod soms passagiers of voorbijgangers, tenminste hen die met de roltrap gingen en die hem niet aanstonden. Het was nogal een gevaarlijk warenhuis dus. Maar je kon er wel van alles kopen, dus sommige waaghalzen waagden zich eraan.

Tenminste dat was wat hij er van kon horen. Toen hij het later aan de buren navroeg was dat helemaal niet het geval. Rolgod was een alleraardigste god, of liever gezegd roltrap, die geen vlieg kwaad deed. Hij vroeg waarom Rolgod in het nieuws was. Dat had te maken

met een zekere speculatie. De buren dachten dat het om een reclame truuk was waar ze zoveel voor betaald hadden dat ze de nieuwslezer konden omkopen.

Rolgod bleef maar in het nieuws komen, en het warenhuis trok vele bezoekers. Allemaal wilden ze Rolgod zien. Het was een hele interessante roltrap die naar de hemel leidde, de hogere afdelingen van het warenhuis zogezegd.

Op een dag hoorde hij weer de tv bij de buren aan, en weer had de nieuwslezer het telkens over Rolgod. 'Maar niet zelf gaan invullen wat hij zegt,' zei hij tegen zichzelf. Later vroeg hij het aan de buren waar het over ging, maar de buren hadden niet goed opgelet dit keer. 'Het gaat altijd over Rolgod tegenwoordig, dus wij kunnen het niet meer bijhouden.'

Het bleek om een boek te gaan over Rolgod, waar hij later achter kwam. Het bleek geschreven te zijn door iemand die hem

vroeger Nederlandse les gaf op school. Hij besloot het boek te kopen. Het ging allemaal over Rolgod. Het waren allemaal verhalen. Het bleek dat het boek er eerst was, en toen hadden ze het nagebouwd in het warenhuis.

Hij herinnerde zich andere boeken die die man had geschreven, maar hij wist de inhoud niet meer. Het waren altijd hele bijzondere boeken, die hij ook wel voorlas in de klas. Maar hoe bijzonder die boeken ook waren, het huwelijk van die man ging er toch aan. Hij vond dat altijd vreemd. Hoe kun je zoiets moois schrijven en dat dan toch je huwelijk eraan gaat. Dat dacht hij soms ook over bepaalde muzikanten die zulke hemelse muziek maakten, maar toch gingen ze scheiden. Misschien miste er dan toch iets, of misschien was het het werk van Rolgod.

Einde

Rolgod II

Rolgod, die mensen uit elkaar trok om ze
hoger op zijn roltrap te laten gaan, naar
hogere verdiepingen van het warenhuis,
hemelse verdiepingen.
Verder was het een alleraardigste god.
Je moest hem alleen een beetje begrijpen.
Hij bedoelde het niet verkeerd.
Het was gewoon ter beveiliging.
Hij beschermde de mensen tegen elkaar.
Ook bracht hij de mensen soms terug naar
nieuwere versies van elkaar, hoger in het
warenhuis.
Die stonden daar gewoon paraat, en die kon
je gewoon kopen.
Het waren bijna robotten, als poppen.

Hij gaf ook advies welke je het beste kon
kiezen. Soms waren het nieuwere versies van
degenen die je had, en soms waren het totaal
nieuwen.

Rolgod, een sensatie.

Iedereen ging er graag naartoe, maar soms had hij woede uitbarstingen of begon hij te piepen. Soms verslond hij passagiers, maar dat was ook een beschermings systeem. Want soms waren er passagiers bij die verkeerde bedoelingen hadden met Rolgod. Sommigen zouden Rolgod maar wat graag willen ontvoeren, en gebruiken voor iets heel anders, voor hun eigen karretjes, maar dat kon natuurlijk niet. Rolgod was veel te groot. Hij was immers een roltrap, en zwaar beveiligd ook.

Als hij begon te piepen was je de klos, tenminste als je verkeerde bedoelingen had met Rolgod. Nee, Rolgod trapte nergens in. Hij was immers Rolgod.

Sommigen konden Rolgod niet uitstaan.
Ze konden Rolgod wel schieten, maar dat kon natuurlijk niet.
Rolgod schoot op hen, en trok hen zo de roltrap in, en dan werden ze zelf gemaakt tot een trede van de roltrap. En zo werd Rolgod al snel de langste roltrap ter wereld. Je kon

naar zoveel verdiepingen gaan, en er kwamen er telkens weer zoveel verdiepingen bij, want velen hadden een grote haat naar Rolgod.

Telkens was hij in het nieuws. Sommige mensen werden er niet goed van. Altijd ging het maar weer over Rolgod. Had die nieuwslezer niet iets anders op te lezen ? Ze vonden het allemaal maar zwaar irritant. Rolgod was wel de ster van het feestje. Ze voelden dat er geen aandacht meer voor hen was, alleen nog maar voor Rolgod. Maar ja, Rolgod deed de mensen goed, en bracht nieuwe dingen op de markt. Dat konden bepaalde mensen niet hebben, omdat ze wilden dat iedereen naar hun markt gingen, en niet naar dat warenhuis van Rolgod. Ze dreven ook een beetje de spot met Rolgod, en zouden er dan ook nooit naartoe gaan.

Maar ja, steeds meer bedrijven gingen samenwerken met Rolgod, en zo ontkwamen ze er bijna niet meer aan. Ze wisten waar ze zouden eindigen als ze te dicht bij Rolgod in de buurt zouden komen, dus velen trokken de

steden uit, de natuur in. Maar ja, in de natuur waren de wilde dieren, en die hadden soms ook wel trek in een lekker hapje. Ja, geef ze eens ongelijk. Die moesten natuurlijk ook eten. Daarom gingen vele Rolgod haters dan maar onder de grond. Maar ja, daar waren ook veel wilde dieren, en ook hele onbekende, en die hadden ook vaak grote honger. Ja, geef ze eens ongelijk. Zij moeten ook leven en eten. En daarom gingen velen toch maar weer terug naar Rolgod, en probeerden toch maar weer aardig tegen hem te doen, want tja, wat moet je anders ?

Rolgod, geen roltrap om mee te sollen. Zonder Rolgod zul je niet eten, en kom je eigenlijk geen winkel meer in, want allen zijn ze een onderdeel van de winkelketens van Rolgod.

Eens daagde een klein jongetje Rolgod uit voor een gevecht in de bergen. Rolgod ging op de uitdaging in en vertrok uit zijn warenhuis naar de bergen, terwijl het hele warenhuis hierdoor instortte. Het kon Rolgod

allemaal niets schelen. Hij hoorde het gegil achter zich, maar hij was helemaal gefixeerd op het jongetje wat hem had uitgedaagd. In de bergen kon Rolgod het jongetje niet vinden, en zocht en zocht maar. Ineens kwam het jongetje uit een grot en riep : Kiekeboe.

Rolgod kon de grot niet in. Daarvoor was hij veel te groot. 'Kom dan, kom dan,' zei Rolgod. Maar het jongetje bleef in de grot, en Rolgod werd steeds woester. Het jongetje begon hem meer en meer te kleineren en was dus bij Rolgod aan het verkeerde adres. Telkens als Rolgod dichterbij kwam rende het jongetje de grot weer in, tot grote woede van Rolgod. Rolgod moest en zou het kleine gaatje ingaan, dus hij nam een hele grote aanloop van wel een paar kilometer, en toen ramde hij zichzelf gewoon het kleine gaatje in. Maar je begrijpt het wel : Toen kwam Rolgod helemaal vast te zitten. Na lang wrikken kon Rolgod zich er weer uithalen, maar hij was niet meer dezelfde. Hij was in de verste verten geen roltrap meer, maar als

trein zou hij het nog wel goed doen, en toen is hij dat maar geworden.

Die goede oude dagen van Rolgod. De mensen spraken er veel over. Het warenhuis bestond niet meer. Dat was geheel ingestort toen hij de benen nam. Zoveel mensen stonden op de trap die ook allemaal naar beneden vielen. Het was een hoop gegil, en een groot rumoer. Maar Rolgod kon het niet schelen. De mensheid had allang afgedaan voor hem. Altijd was hij de alleraardigste geweest, maar nooit was de mens echt dankbaar. Toen hij een trein was geworden wilden de mensen hem wel weer een nieuwe kans geven, en ze moesten wel, want ze wilden niet nog een keer zoiets meemaken. Elke dag weer maakte hij zijn ritjes. Hij wilde niks meer van winkels weten. Maar toen begon hij zich toch wel weer te vervelen. 'Eens een roltrap, altijd een roltrap,' zei hij tegen zichzelf, en toen is hij het toch maar weer gaan proberen. Maar sindsdien liet hij zich niet meer storen door kleine jongetjes

die hem uitdaagden voor een gevecht. Hij wist namelijk waar het op uit kon lopen.

Rolgod was altijd volop in het nieuws. De nieuwslezers noemden altijd zijn naam vele keren als ze hun nieuws voorlazen. Het was het meest genoemde woord van nieuwslezers. Rolgod wilde alsmaar hoger en hoger. Van verdieping tot verdieping. Nog steeds had Rolgod vele vijanden die hij als tredes kon gebruiken. Op het laatst waren er geen vijanden meer over, en toen stopte ook gelijk de groei van het warenhuis. Dat vond Rolgod natuurlijk heel vervelend, want hij wilde steeds hoger. En toen is hij zelf maar vijanden gaan bouwen, robotten. Hij zette ze overal neer, ook tussen de mensen, en zo had hij nog wat te doen, en een manier om nog verder te bouwen.

Ik ging naar de supermarkt en vroeg om zoutloze soep. Het meisje begon heel zenuwachtig te doen, en kon bijna niet spreken. Ze moest er heel veel moeite voor doen. Ze begon allemaal zenuwachtig heen en weer te lopen, en kwam steeds terug met zakjes, voornamelijk fruit. In principe moest de zoutloze soep gewoon nog gemaakt worden. Ze zei toen dat ze het later wel zouden brengen. Bij mij thuis was er een feestje. Ik stond even later in de badkamer voor de spiegel. Iedereen liep in en uit. Met een paar mensen zouden we naar de zee gaan. Treblinka was er ook bij.

Bij het strand aangekomen trokken we al onze kleren uit, en renden over het strand. Het was al donker. In de verte kon de grote stad nog gezien worden, maar ik keek liever naar het strand en de wildernis die er omheen lag. Er kwam toen ineens een heel groot

varken op ons af met rechtopstaande oren. 'Het is al laat,' gromde het varken. 'Waarom zijn jullie nog op ? En wat doen jullie op het strand ? Jullie horen in de stad te wezen. Terug nu.'

Treblinka wilde het varken de strot doorsnijden. 'Nazi varken !' riep ze, en trok haar mes.

Ik zei : 'Niet doen ! Dan gaat het alarm van de stad af en dan hebben we de poppen aan het dansen, want dan komen ze allemaal !'

Maar Treblinka luisterde niet, en slachtte het varken af. Grote sirenes gingen er toen af, en stofwolken kwamen vanuit de stad. Een hele kudde varkens kwam toen vanuit de stad het strand op rennen.

'Ren nu voor je leven !' riep Treblinka.

'Waar naartoe ?' vroeg ik.

'Naar Sobibor, mijn zus,' zei Treblinka. 'Ze woont in het oerwoud.'

Toen zijn we allemaal de wildernis in gerend. Treblinka kwam niet mee. Ze liep gewoon rustig met haar mes naar de kudde varkens toe die kwamen aanstormen in de verte. Ik durfde niet te kijken. Ik ben toen doorgerend, de anderen achterna. Het geluid van de varkens was verschrikkelijk. Na lang rennen kwamen we aan bij een hut waar Sobibor woonde. Ze stond naakt achter een soort natuurgordijn wat ze zelf had gemaakt, wat rondom haar hut stond om haar terrein af te bakenen. Ik durfde niet naar haar te kijken. Ik besefte toen dat ik zelf ook naakt was. Het was donker.

'Dus jij bent de zus van Treblinka ?' vroeg ik.

Ze zei niks. Ik vroeg het nog een keer, maar ze zei gewoon niks terug. Na een tijdje kwam Treblinka terug met een bebloed mes. 'Jullie kunnen terug,' zei ze. 'De varkens zijn dood.'

'Waarom zijn ze ons gebied binnengekomen ?' vroeg Sobibor aan Treblinka.

'Die varkens ?' vroeg Treblinka.

'Nee, die stedelingen hier die je hebt meegenomen,' zei Sobibor.

'Je moet niet zoveel vragen stellen, zus,' zei Treblinka.

'Varkensvriendjes, hè ?' zei Sobibor. Toen draaide ze zich om en ging haar hut binnen.

'Niet zo boos doen,' zei Treblinka.

Maar Sobibor sprak niet meer. Treblinka zei dat ze van binnen plannetjes aan het maken was, maar wij wisten niet welke plannetjes.

'Jullie kunnen beter weggaan,' zei Treblinka.

Toen zijn we teruggegaan naar de stad. Er waren geen varkens meer. En bij mijn huis

stond het supermarkt busje te wachten. 'De zoutloze soep,' zei het meisje.

Ik nam het aan en vroeg haar waarom ze zo lang hebben gewacht. 'Voor de klant,' zei ze toen.

Ik nam het aan en wilde betalen, maar dat hoefde niet. Ze waren nog steeds beschaamd dat ze het product niet hadden. Ik ben toen naar binnen gegaan. Er was niemand meer. Het was er een zwijnenstal na het feestje. Ik keek naar de zoutloze soep. 'Wat zou er nog meer voor rommel in kunnen zitten ?' vroeg ik mezelf af. Ik vertrouwde het allemaal niet meer. Ik keek op de achterkant van de verpakking en er was zo'n lange lijst met stoffen die ik allemaal niet kende. Ik durfde het niet aan, en met een honger gevoel ben ik toen terug gegaan naar het strand. Ik zag de dode varkens er liggen. Het hele strand lag er bezaaid mee. Ik ben toen teruggegaan naar de hut van Sobibor.

Weer stond ze achter haar natuurgordijn, wat een soort voorhangsel van haar terrein was rondom haar hut. Ik durfde niet dichter bij haar te komen.

'Nee, jongen, niet hier komen,' zei ze.

'Waar is Treblinka ?' vroeg ik.

'Gaat je niks aan,' zei Sobibor.

'Ze had in eerste instantie gezegd dat we naar jou moesten rennen om ons leven te redden,' zei ik.

'Ik red geen levens, en al helemaal niet van stedelingen,' zei ze.

Ik kwam iets dichterbij staan. Haar borsten waren bijna zichtbaar. 'Kom geen stap dichterbij, jongen,' zei ze.

'Die borsten van je, hè,' zei ik. 'Hebben die ook melk ?'

'Ja, waarom vraag je dat ?' vroeg ze geirriteerd.

'Ik heb namelijk zoutloze soep van de stad gehad, van de supermarkt, maar ik vertrouw het nog voor geen meter,' zei ik.

'Nog één stap verder en ik werp een speer door jouw melkloze borst,' zei ze dreigend en bitter.

'Je zus is een stuk makkelijker,' zei ik.

'Dat lijkt maar zo,' zei ze. 'Je kent haar niet.'

'Gaat dit mijn leven kosten ?' vroeg ik.

'Alles,' zei ze.

Ineens trok ze een mes. 'Varkensvriendjes hè ? Wij hebben het niet zo op varkensvriendjes,' zei ze.

'Je hebt ook op een sportschool gezeten, een vechtschool met je varkensvriendjes.'

'Hoe weet je dat ?' vroeg ik. 'Maar nee, geen varkensvriendjes.'

'Je werd onderwezen door de stad om je varkens te verdedigen, om voor ze te vechten,' zei ze. 'En het loon was zoute soep, stadse meisjes, en allerlei andere troep. Kom niet dichterbij.'

'Ik was al aan het afkicken van zoute soep en stadse meisjes,' zei ik. 'Maar ik was bang dat ze er nog meer rommel doorheen hadden gegooid. Die lijst achterop de verpakking van de zoutloze soep was lang en met onbekende stoffen.'

'Goed,' zei ze. 'Ik zie dat je wil leren. Ik heb hier wel wat erwtensoep voor je, puur natuur. Maar mijn melk krijg je niet.'

'Waarom geen melk ? Waarom heb je anders melk dan ?' vroeg ik.

'Je moet jezelf niet zo lopen opdringen,' zei ze. 'Wees blij dat je nog leeft, maar dat kan ieder moment veranderen.'

'Blijf waar je bent,' zei ik toen. Ze wilde nog steeds niet zeggen waar Treblinka was, en ik begon haar te roepen.

'Geef me dan die erwtensoep maar als je zo moeilijk doet, Sobibor,' zei ik.

'Goed,' zei ze.

Even vertrouwde ik haar erwtensoep ook niet, maar ik moest toch wat. Ik kreeg een kommetje met erwtensoep van haar en begon te eten. Wat ze er allemaal doorheen had gegooid wist ik niet, maar ze zei dat het puur natuur was. Wat er toen gebeurde kan ik me niet meer herinneren, maar ik werd even later wakker in haar hut op een soort mat. 'Wat heb je met me gedaan ?' vroeg ik.

'Varkensvriend,' zei ze.

'Dat ben ik niet,' zei ik. 'Als dat zo is, sorry dan. Ik ben nog jong.'

'Varkensvriend,' zei ze weer.

'Ik wil jouw vriend dan zijn,' zei ik.

'Ik heb geen varkensvrienden,' zei ze. 'Ik maak ze niet. Ik kook ze op.'

'Oh, u bent kannibaal, om dat maar even met een duur woord te zeggen ?' vroeg ik.

'Wij eten varkens,' zei ze. 'Nazi varkens.'

'Ten eerste ben ik geen varken, en ten tweede al helemaal geen nazi,' zei ik. 'God, wat haat ik die lui.'

'Waarom woonde je daar dan, varkensvriendje ?' vroeg ze.

'I... ik weet het niet,' zei ik. 'Ik ben daar geboren, en daar opgetogen. Kan ik het helpen ? Toen ik erachter kwam was het al te

laat. Waar kon ik heen ? Dankzij Treblinka ...' maar verder kon ik niks zeggen, want ze had haar voet op mijn mond gezet.

'Dankzij Treblinka wat ?' vroeg ze. 'Je bent een varkenskind. Helemaal erg, van die nazi's.'

'Misschien was ik door hen ontvoerd als baby en deden ze net alsof ik hun kind was,' zei ik.

'Ja ja,' zei ze, 'en dat moet ik geloven ?'

'Als het kan,' zei ik. 'Ik heb nooit het gevoel gehad dat ik daar hoorde. Maar bij jou voelt het alsof ik thuis ben gekomen. Je bent zo vriendelijk, gastvrij en begrijpend. Dat heb ik altijd gemist.'

'Varkenskindje,' zei ze.

'Ze moet wennen,' zei Treblinka die in de opening van de hut stond. 'Je was inderdaad ontvoerd. Maar ik heb je teruggehaald.'

'Het heeft lang geduurd,' zei ik. Sobibor liep weer naar buiten. 'Beter laat dan nooit,' zei Treblinka. Ze gaf mij toen een kommetje met melk.

'Toe maar weer,' zei Sobibor die achter haar stond.

'We moeten,' zei Treblinka.

Toen zei Sobibor voor een lange tijd niks, en ging weer bij haar natuurgordijn staan.

Einde

Vreemde Bijwerkingen

Een man lijdt aan zware nachtmerries. De nachtmerries gaan gewoonlijks over twistzieke vrouwen. Dat is ook de reden waarom hij geen relatie wil, omdat hij al genoeg heeft aan de vrouwen in zijn nachtmerries. Hij raakt er ook zwaar moe van. Ook is hij bang te gaan slapen. Hij is altijd weer opgelucht als hij weer wakker is. Hij kan de vrouwen in zijn nachtmerries niet uitstaan. Vaak vervloekt hij zijn nachtmerries en de twistzieke vrouwen in zijn nachtmerries.

Op een dag ziet hij het niet meer zitten na zo'n zware nachtmerrie en gaat naar een psychiater. De man luistert erg geinteresseerd naar hem. 'Meneer van Tegelen,' zei de psychiater. 'Ik vindt het erg dapper dat u

hierover bent komen vertellen. Dat doen er niet velen, en dan vooral met groot en afschuwelijk detail. Weest u anders maar blij dat het slechts nachtmerries zijn en geen realiteit, maar lastig het wel. Dat kan ik me goed voorstellen dat het u gek drijft.'

'Wat kan ik er tegen doen ?' vroeg de man.

'Er zijn twee dingen die u kunt doen,' sprak de psychiater. 'Als eerste zou ik zeggen : zoek de natuur op voordat u gaat slapen. Daar wordt u rustig van, en misschien heeft het positief effect op uw dromen. Ten tweede raad ik u aan ook vooral geen vrouw te nemen. Dat zou alles alleen nog maar erger maken. Heeft u vroeger misschien nare relaties gehad ? Of heeft u enig idee waar deze nachtmerries vandaan zouden kunnen komen ?

'Nee,' zei de man. 'Ik heb altijd al deze zware nachtmerries gehad over twistzieke vrouwen. Daarom heb ik dieper sociaal contact altijd ontweken. Er waren altijd wel vrijwilligers,

maar ik durfde het niet aan vanwege de nachtmerries. Als ze erger zouden worden zou ik het gewoon niet overleven. Ik had altijd het gevoel dat ik door die nachtmerries op het randje tussen leven en dood was.'

'Dat kan ik me voorstellen,' zei de psychiater, 'maar is er nooit eens iets ergs gebeurd waar die nachtmerries vandaan zouden zijn gekomen ?'

'Ik zou het niet weten,' zei de man.

'Denkt u eens goed na,' zei de psychiater. 'Hoe was uw moeder, en hoe waren andere vrouwen om u heen toen u een kind was, zoals tantes en oma's, juffrouws, buurmeisjes, enzovoorts ?'

'Lief en aardig,' zei de man, 'voor zover ik me kan herinneren, maar eigenlijk kan ik me er niet veel van herinneren, omdat die nachtmerries me gewoon beheersten. Ik had het gevoel alsof ik langs mijn leven heenleefde.'

'Dat is heel vervelend,' zei de psychiater. 'Ik kan me voorstellen dat u zich zo voelt.'

'Wat kan ik doen, dokter ?' vroeg de man, 'want die vrouwen maken me gek. Ik kan wel janken. Ze maken me ook boos, maar ze zijn niet makkelijk. Ze zijn levensbedreigend. Ze bedreigen me en chanteren me voortdurend. Ik kan me niet verdedigen, anders wordt ik mijn huis uitgezet, of halen ze de politie erbij en kom ik in de gevangenis, enzovoorts enzovoorts.'

'Dus die vrouwen zijn in je nachtmerries van de woningbouw ofzo, of is jouw huis van hen, of hoe zit dat ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'Van alles, dokter,' zei de man. 'Soms is mijn huis van hen, wonen ze bij me in, of soms zijn ze van een bepaalde organisatie die alles voor me regelt.'

'Dus ze helpen u ook ?' vroeg de dokter.

'Niet echt,' zei de man.

'Maar wel een beetje ?' vroeg de dokter.

'Tja, eh, van de wal in de sloot, alsof ik daar vast zit, als een soort gevangenis,' zei de man. 'Ik weet niet hoe ik er terecht ben gekomen. Het is alsof ze me erin praten.'

'Ingewikkeld,' zei de psychiater. 'Kunt u het eens uittekenen voor mij ?'

'Ik durf het niet,' zei de man. 'Ik vertel het liever.'

'En waarom durft u niet ?' vroeg de psychiater. 'Omdat het te confronterend is ?'

'Ja,' zei de man. 'Alsof ze me er voor terug gaan pakken.'

'Lieve help,' zei de psychiater. 'U zit in een lastig pakket. Heel vervelend. Ik heb echt met u te doen. We vinden wel een oplossing. Vertelt u het dan maar gewoon hoe de zaken

ervoor staan, en dan maak ik wel aantekeningen. Vindt u dat goed ?'

'Ik heb liever dat u niets opschrijft,' zei de man, 'want dan pakken ze me geheid terug.'

'Oh, lezen ze mee ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'Ik weet het niet,' zei de man. 'Ik ben er gewoon bang voor dat ik er nachtmerries van ga krijgen.'

'Maar zijn het bestaande personen of fictief ?' vroeg de dokter.

'Fictief,' zei de man. 'Ik ken ze niet. Alleen van mijn nachtmerries dan.'

'Vreemd,' zei de dokter. 'Nu ja, ik zal het dan gewoon proberen te onthouden, maar als u dan weg bent, mag ik het dan opschrijven ?'

'Liever niet,' zei de man.

'Goed,' zei de dokter. 'Dan doen we dat ook niet. Dus die twistzieke vrouwen hebben u ergens ingepraat en u kunt er niet meer weg ?'

'Ik heb nergens anders om naartoe te gaan,' zei de man. 'Alsof ik verlamd ben, en het is koud buiten. Ik ben bang dat ze me op straat zetten.'

'Lieve help,' zei de psychiater. 'Ingewikkelde dromen, en ja, dat zijn nachtmerries.'

'Die vrouwen, of die nachtmerries, drijven mij helemaal gek, dokter,' zei de man. 'Ik mag me niet verdedigen. Zij mogen alles bij me doen en tegen me zeggen, en ik mag niks terugzeggen, en al helemaal niets terugdoen.'

'Dus ze slaan u ook ?' vroeg de dokter.

'Ander onderwerp,' zei de man.

'Ik probeer het te begrijpen,' zei de dokter.

'Ja, ze slaan me, en dagen me uit,' zei de man. 'Ze kleineren me de hele tijd door.'

'Bizar,' zei de dokter. 'En zijn het telkens dezelfde vrouwen ?'

'Vaak wel, maar soms anderen,' zei de man.

'Hoeveel ongeveer ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'Kan oplopen tot in de honderd, maar het zijn vaak dezelfden,' zei de man. 'Ze wisselen elkaar af. Sommigen zie ik eens maar nooit meer, en anderen een paar keer.'

'En die doen dan erge of enge dingen met u ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'Ja,' zei de man, 'zo kun je dat wel zeggen. Hele erge en enge dingen.'

'En daar kun je niet over praten ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'Heb ik gedaan, aan het begin van het gesprek,' zei de man.

'Ja, maar nog meer,' zei de dokter.

'Nee,' zei de man. 'Ik kan het meeste niet vertellen.'

'Uit angst ?' vroeg de dokter.

De man knikte.

'Angst voor wat ?' vroeg de dokter.

'Wraak,' zei de man.

'Oh ja, die bedreigingen,' zei de dokter. 'Maar het is nu overdag. Er zijn nu geen nachtmerries.'

'Als ik erover praat zit ik er middenin,' zei de man.

'Als een dagmerrie,' zei de dokter.

'Zoiets,' zei de man.

'Maar ik ben bij je,' zei de dokter.

'U kunt er niet tegen op,' zuchtte de man. 'Die vrouwen zijn te sterk en moeilijk.'

'Maar ze bestaan niet,' zei de dokter, 'en ik besta wel.'

'Ze bestaan in mijn hoofd,' zei de man.

'Goed, ik zal u medicijnen geven,' zei de dokter. 'U slikt ze, twee op een dag met water. Dan komt u volgende week terug om te vertellen of het geholpen heeft.'

'Okay dokter,' zei de man.

De volgende week komt de man zeer depressief terug bij de psychiater.

'En ?' vroeg de dokter.

'Ziet u het niet ?' vroeg de man. 'Ik ben gesloopt.'

'Door wie ?' vroeg de dokter.

'Depressie,' zei de man.

'En hoe gaat het met de twistzieke vrouwen ?' vroeg de dokter.

'Wie zijn dat ?' vroeg de man.

'Nou ja, zeg,' zei de psychiater. 'Vorige keer ijverig over gesproken. Je nachtmerries.'

'Wat bazel je,' zei de man. 'Ik ben gewoon moe en depressief.'

'Geen nachtmerries ?' vroeg de dokter.

'Huh ? Nee,' zei de man.

'Dan hebben de medicijnen goed geholpen,' zei de dokter. 'Geheugenverlies is dan een nare bijwerking, maar het kan van pas

komen. Depressie en vermoeidheid zijn ook bijwerkingen.'

'Ik wil er vanaf,' zei de man.

'Ja, maar dan komen de nachtmerries weer terug, de twistzieke vrouwen,' zei de dokter.

Even keek de man hem verschrikt aan. 'Dokter, de twistzieke vrouwen ? Wie zijn dat ?'

'Laat maar,' zei de dokter. 'Dat wil je niet eens weten. Ik zal je extra medicijnen meegeven, en die slik je ook twee keer per dag met water. Dan heb je de dubbele portie.'

'Goed dokter,' zei de man.

De week daarna kwam de man vrolijk binnen.

'Het heeft gewerkt zie ik,' zei de psychiater.

'Wat ?' vroeg de man.

'Nou, de medicijnen,' zei de psychiater.

'Ik slik geen medicijnen,' zei de man.

'Waarom bent u dan hier ?' vroeg de psychiater.

'We hadden een afspraak,' zei de man, 'maar voor wat weet ik niet meer.'

'Oh, die bijwerkingen,' zei de dokter. 'Meer geheugenverlies. Maar ja, je bent in ieder geval van je twistzieke vrouwen en depressies af.'

'Wat bazel je ?' vroeg de man. 'Heb ik nooit last van gehad. Ik kom hier nooit meer. Ik houd niet van leugenaars.'

'Goed, probleem opgelost,' zei de psychiater. 'Volgende patient.'

De man slenterde naar huis. De weken erna had hij al snel een vriendin. Maar ze lokte

hem telkens uit. Hij vond haar twistziek. 'Een beetje twistziek is wel charmant bij een vrouw,' zei hij tegen zichzelf. Hij trok bij haar in, maar sindsdien had ze wel heel veel de touwtjes in de handen. Eigenlijk regelde ze alles voor hem, en bemoederde ze hem. Ook begon ze te dreigen en te chanteren. Hij kon niets doen, anders zou hij het huis uitgezet worden.

Al snel kwam hij weer terug bij de psychiater.

'Ben je daar weer, jongen,' zei de psychiater.

'Heb je nog wat medicijntjes voor me,' zei de man. 'Ik heb het goed te pakken. Een twistzieke vriendin, en ik ben er afhankelijk aan.'

'Daar gingen je nachtmerries vroeger ook over,' zei de dokter. 'Het lijkt erop alsof het nu werkelijkheid is geworden.'

'Nee,' zei de man. 'Je bazelt. Ik heb nooit nachtmerries gehad.'

'Goed,' zei de dokter. 'Zeg, ik kan je echt niet teveel medicijnen meegeven, want je schijnt er overgevoelig voor te zijn. Je geheugen zou er geheel aangaan.'

'Alles beter dan dit,' zei de man.

'Nog één keer dan,' zei de dokter, en gaf hem medicijnen mee.

De volgende week kwam de man brullend terug. 'Ik heb er nu nachtmeries bij door die medicijnen !' riep hij. 'Ik heb het nu dubbelop. Twistzieke vrouwen.'

'Dan zijn we weer terug bij het begin,' zei de dokter, 'sterker nog : het is erger geworden, want je hebt nu ook een twistzieke vriendin.'

'Ik kom nooit tot rust,' zei de man.

'Het is een bijwerking,' zei de dokter. 'Ik zei u al dat u overgevoelig was voor medicijnen,

dus het is beter dan nu er ook echt mee te stoppen.'

'Stoppen de nachtmerries dan ook ?' vroeg de man.

'Wie weet,' zei de dokter.

De week daarna kwam de man hysterisch terug. 'Het wordt alleen maar erger, dokter,' zuchtte de man in paniek.

'Geef het de tijd,' zei de dokter.

'Doe iets, dokter,' zei de man, 'want ik begin gek te worden.'

'Relatie therapie kan misschien ook helpen,' zei de dokter.

'Ik heb de hoop al opgegeven,' zei de man, 'maar het schijnt wel besmettelijk te zijn. Anderen om me heen zijn er ook al door aangetast.'

Die nacht had de dokter zware nachtmerries over twistzieke vrouwen. Wat hij ook probeerde, hij kwam er niet meer vanaf. Zijn medicijnen maakten het alleen maar erger, en hij begon vreselijk aan zichzelf te twijfelen en al zijn medicijnen. Hadden die immers ook niet zijn patient erger gemaakt, en ervoor gezorgd dat het op hem overfloepte ?

De dokter zag het niet meer zitten. Hij wilde ook geen dokter meer zijn. Hij is toen maar speelgoedwinkelier geworden, maar van de twistzieke vrouwen is hij nooit meer afgekomen.

Einde

De Behanger

Ik stond bij zijn huis op de bus te wachten, maar hij kwam naar buiten. Hij herkende mij

niet, want we hadden alleen brief contact gehad. Hij keek naar me, en ik deed net alsof ik langs het bushokje liep en ging weer terug. Ik zag nog wel dat hij ook naar het bushokje ging om op de bus te wachten. Ik nam een bus later. In de stad kwam ik hem weer tegen in een boekenwinkel. Hij begon hele verhalen tegen mij op te hangen, en hij wist niet wie ik was. Ik ben toen weer weggegaan, maar kwam hem even later weer ergens anders tegen, in een andere boekhandel.

Toen ik thuis was schreef ik hem een brief.
Ik begon allerlei vreemde tekens op te schrijven.
Waarom wist ik niet.
Ineens stond hij achter me.
Hij zei dat hij een buitenaardse was.
Ik kon me ineens nog maar weinig herinneren.
Wie was hij ?

Hij keek me aan, staarde naar me.
Toen begon hij weer hele verhalen tegen me op te hangen.

Ik begreep er niet veel van.
Het was alsof hij door mijn hoofd probeerde te breken.
Ik had boeken bij hem besteld, per post, zei hij.
Toen herinnerde ik me het weer.
Ik begon te trillen en moest neerliggen.
Hij haalde een apparaat uit zijn zak, en deed iets bij me.
Ik viel in slaap, en werd wakker in een cabine waar ik lag.

Hij noemde zichzelf de dokter, boekendokter, en hij was een verhaal.
Toen ik terugkwam achter mijn bureau kon ik niet stoppen met schrijven.
Ik schreef en schreef maar.
Maar het waren allemaal vreemde tekens, en ik begreep er niets van.

Hij moest toen even douchen.
Toen hij klaar was ging hij weer weg.
Na alle vreemde tekens begon ik eindelijk de vertaling op te schrijven.

Het leek wel alsof het boek zichzelf schreef
en alsof hij door me heen schreef.

Ik zei : Wat doe je ?

Hij zei dat hij ook de lezersdokter was en de schrijversdokter.
Ik voelde me warm worden, en toen fris.
Ik voelde hoe ik in het oerwoud gleed.
Toen was ik vuil.
Ik kwam tot het oerwoud water, een rivier, en ging erin baden.
Het was prachtig fris groenbruin water.

Ik werd toen wakker van mijn droom en keek naar hem.
Maar het waren slechts patronen op het behang.

De water telefoon

En zo heb ik een oom die zweert bij water technologie.

Hij is uitvinder.
Hij had een water telefoon uitgevonden, omdat water zo goed zou reageren op communicatieve signalen.
Het systeem werd als een soort gigantisch zwembad, wat door heel het land werd aangelegd. De telefonisten waren als boorders die in het water boorden.
Dat waren grote robotten die de signalen opwekten en de verbindingen legden.
Volgens mijn oom zou het veel goedkoper zijn, en veel accurater.
Water was nu eenmaal veel communicatiever en kon alles veel beter geleiden.
En zo werden er waterkabels aangelegd.
Het was dan wel weer heel speciaal water, want mijn oom had het afgetapt van een bepaalde planeet.
Hij maakte ook speciale bitjes voor in de mond waardoor er gecommuniceerd kon worden door het speeksel wat in samenwerking met het bitje bepaalde codes schiep om boodschappen mee op te vangen.
Zo had je de telefoon altijd bij de hand, oftewel in de mond.

Het Ontwustzijn

Ik ben weer in de nachtmerrie, die zich altijd
weer voordoet als de werkelijkheid.

Alleen als ik droom ben ik in de werkelijkheid, of als ik dagdroom.
Ik besta niet. Ik heb geen bewustzijn. Het is bedrog van de natuur.
Ik ben dagdromen. Ook dit bedrog zal wegebben, het bedrog van bewustzijn.
Er zijn veel diepere processen van de natuur dan bewustzijn.
Ik ben slechts electrische processen die optreden wanneer de dagdromen tot iemand komen die leest, en de electrische processen die optreden wanneer het van het ene iemand tot het andere iemand gaat. Ik ben slechts een metafoor.

Ik moet dieper naar binnen en niet meer teruggaan. Het is de inwaartse stroom van de natuur. Ik moet niet meer teruggaan om dingen te benoemen, bepalen wat dingen heten.
Ik moet niet achterom kijken of iemand mij volgt. Wat achter mij ligt zijn toch slechts codes waar geen touw aan vast te knopen valt. Ik moet dieper naar binnen. Wat achter mij ligt zal vergaan en vergeten worden. Het

bewustzijn zal wegebben. Ook mijn bewustzijn. Het is slechts bedrog van de natuur. Er zijn veel diepere processen dan bewustzijn. Het zijn metaforen en hun ontladingen, hun wisselwerkingen. Het lijkt op bewustzijn, maar het is iets anders, iets diepers. Ik ben me van nergens iets bewust. Het is slechts bedrog van de natuur.

Het bewustzijn is slechts een dauwdruppel op een boomblad. Het zal naar beneden glijden en verdampen, oplossen, om plaats te maken voor iets anders. Het bedrog van het bewustzijn was slechts iets van de natuur, een voorbereiding. Ik ben dagdromen, processen tussen iemanden, onderdelen van de metafoor. Ik ben verhalen. Ik heb geen eigen identiteit. Ik besta niet.

Ik ben weer in de nachtmerrie. Ik snel weer naar mijn dromen en dagdromen. De nachtmerrie zit weer achter mij aan, maar ik heb geen bewustzijn. Ik besta niet. Ik ben veel diepere processen van de natuur. Ik ben iets wat tussen iemanden inzit. Ze kunnen mij

niet bereiken, alleen elkaar. En het natuur bedrog van het bewustzijn zal wegebben. Zij bestaan ook niet. Zij zijn ook slechts onderdelen van de metafoor.

Sobibor's Terugkeer

Alles stond in brand. Sobibor was teruggekomen.

Grote stoeten mensen kwamen tot de brug bij de zee.
Er was niets dan wildernis. De steden waren brandende.
Er waren ook bosbranden.
Er was geen geld. Er werd niet naar geld gekeken en er werd ook niet mee gewerkt.
Er werd alleen naar het lijden gekeken.
Hoeveel hadden mensen geleden en meegeleden.
Dat gaf de doorslag.
Ik had vreemde rode muntjes in mijn handen die ik liet zien bij de brug.
Ik mocht erdoor, maar mensen achter mij mochten niet verder, omdat ze te weinig rode muntjes hadden. Zij moesten terug het vuur in. Ik zag hoe ze werden teruggeduwd, en hoe het vuur hen greep, meesleurde en verslond.
Het was een afschuwelijk gezicht.
Ik besefte hoe blij ik was dat ik altijd mijn kruis had gedragen en geen compromissen had gesloten.

Ik snapte niet wat er gaande was. De brug leidde tot een reusachtige wildernis, over de

zee. Het was vele dagen lopen, en we hadden niets te eten.

Ergens midden op de brug was ook een vuur. We zaten dus ingesloten. Beneden bij de brug was een bootje met wilden erin. Er kwamen toen meer bootjes bij. Ze hielpen ons op de bootjes en zo kwamen we uiteindelijk toch bij de reusachtige wildernis aan, maar overal waren vuren. De wilden leidden ons tussen de vuren door.

We gingen langs vele kampen die al brandden, en toen moesten we een rivier over, waarachter weer wildernis was. Aan de overkant stond een jongetje. Hij was ook een wilde. Zijn naam was Auschwitz. Hij begon naar mij te schreeuwen, maar ik begreep de taal niet. Wel hoorde ik de naam Sobibor telkens vallen. De wilden zeiden dat Sobibor de moeder van het jongetje was. De jongen wenkte ons, en we liepen met hem mee. We kwamen aan bij een kamp. Er kwam een vrouw uit een hut met een mand. Toen ik haar zag durfde ik niet meer te kijken. Ze zeiden

dat zij Sobibor was. Toen trok het jongetje mij naar haar haar toe, maar ik keek niet meer naar haar. Zij greep toen mijn arm, en het leek alsof ik onder stroom stond. 'De godin !' werd er geroepen.

'Hier zijn we veilig,' zeiden de wilden. 'Buiten dit terrein is alles overgeleverd aan de wraak van Sobibor.' Ik trilde op mijn benen en viel even later neer. Ik werd later wakker op een mat. Auschwitz en zijn moeder stonden naar me te kijken, maar ik durfde niet naar hen te kijken.

'Dit ben jij,' zei Sobibor, terwijl ze naar Auschwitz wees. Ik volgde het met mijn ooghoeken, maar keek niet direct naar hen. 'Nee,' zei ik. 'Dat is een vergissing. Ik ben hem niet. Ik ben mezelf.'

'Het is toen je jonger was,' zei de vrouw.

'Dat kan niet waar zijn,' zei ik. 'Ik was ergens anders.'

'Ben je dom ofzo ?' vroeg de vrouw bitter. 'Dit ben jij. Waarom zou je twijfelen aan de woorden van de godin ?'

Ik voelde me alsof ik in brand stond. 'Eh ja, okay, ik ben Auschwitz. Nu tevreden ?' zei ik.

'Auschwitz is teruggekomen !' riep ze toen. Er kwamen nog meer wilden in de hut. Ze wees op mij.

'M... maar jouw kind is toch Auschwitz ?' zei ik.

'Niet zo dom doen de hele tijd,' zei ze weer bitter. 'Jij bent Auschwitz, toen je jong was.'

'Wie is hij dan ?' vroeg ik, terwijl ik naar het jongetje wees.

'Dat ben jij, jij,' zei ze.

'Maar ik ben dit,' zei ik, terwijl ik op mezelf wees.

'Hij begrijpt het niet,' zei ze tegen de wilden.

'Leg het dan tenminste uit,' zei ik.

'Luister,' zei ze. 'Jij was gestolen, ontvoerd. Toen kreeg ik een nieuw kind, en noemde hem weer Auschwitz.'

Ik voelde alles in mij branden. 'Het is een hel waar ik vandaan kom,' zei ik.

Ze greep mijn arm, en liet toen los, terwijl het weer leek alsof de bliksem insloeg.

'Sobibor,' zei ik. 'Ach laat maar.'

'Spreek,' zei ze.

Maar een vuur sloeg in de hut. We moesten allemaal rennen. Als een wilde greep het vuur om zich heen. We renden naar de rivier, maar ook de rivier was al brandende. 'Over veiligheid gesproken !' riep ik. Ik begon toen langs de rivier te rennen, maar waar ik ook kwam was vuur. Ik kreeg het steeds

benauwder. Ik zag de anderen niet meer. 'Ik stik !' riep ik. Er kwam een zwart terig beest opzetten vanuit de rivier, en greep mij. Ik werd wakker in zweet in de hut van Sobibor. Ik durfde haar niet aan te kijken. 'Je hebt een lange tocht door de onderwereld gemaakt,' zei ze. 'Heb je het medicijn gevonden ?'

'Eh nee,' zei ik.

'Auschwitz,' zei ze.

'Ja,' zei ik.

'Ging alles maar door zonder te stoppen ?'

'Ja,' zei ik.

'In de onderwereld stopt het nooit,' sprak ze. 'Het gaat altijd maar dieper.'

'Eindeloos,' zei ik.

'Is dat een probleem ?' vroeg ze.

'Het ligt eraan,' zei ik.

'Nog even en ik ga open,' zei ze.

'Wat betekent dat ?' vroeg ik.

'Auschwitz,' zei ze.

'Ja,' zei ik.

'Jij bent Auschwitz,' zei ze. 'Ik ga open in de zin dat ik geboorte ga geven.'

'Aan wie ?' vroeg ik.

'Aan jou,' zei ze.

'Mocht eens tijd worden,' zei ik.

'Het is tijd,' zei ze. 'Er is niemand die de tijd kan stoppen.'

Toen zag ik niets dan vuur. Ik zonk er helemaal in weg, maar het verbrandde mij niet. Het genas mij. 'Auschwitz,' zei ze, 'jij

poort van de onderwereld, jij doorvorser, nooit stop jij. Ik heb jou bevrijding gebracht. Geboorte. De wildernis zal branden totdat het werk geschiedt is. Jij bent het werk.'

Ik viel toen door een put, en werd wakker in mijn eigen bed. De wereld brandde niet, maar ik wist dat het brandde, want Sobibor was gekomen.

De evacuatie trein

In de stad was er een toneelgroep met een theatershow die ook een misdaadorganisatie bleek te zijn. Mensen verdwenen soms gewoon tijdens of vlak na de voorstelling onder de meest verdachte omstandigheden. Op een dag werd de gehele toneelgroep gearresteerd.

Het kwam overal in de kranten, en iedereen was geschokt, maar ze zagen het al wel aankomen. Hoe mooi de voorstelling ook was, en hoe beroemd en bekend, en zelfs geliefd de toneelspelers ook waren, dit zat eraan te komen. De gevangenis was hun deel. Daar hoorden ze thuis.

Niet dat dit zonder slag of stoot ging. Er schenen vreemde dingen ineens bij de politie te gebeuren. Dingen die ze niet konden verklaren. Ook in de stad waarin ze in de gevangenis opgesloten waren gebeurden er vreemde dingen, tot het punt dat de mensen

geevacueerd moesten worden over de rivier. Het was een hele lange rivier, maar door bepaalde vervoerstechnieken en vervoersmiddelen ging het tamelijk snel, zodat de mensen erover verwonderd waren.

De poortwachter van het gebied achter de rivier zei : 'Dat komt ervan als je deze bepaalde groente eet waarin er een heleboel 'ambt' zit. Dat mag niet boven de twaalf gram per dag.'

Mensen in die stad aten gewoonlijks ver boven de twaalf gram, dus ze moesten minderen. Ze moesten afkicken. Anders zouden ze niet eens binnen mogen komen in het gebied achter de rivier. Het gebied achter de rivier wilde namelijk niet dezelfde toestanden als wat ze in de stad hadden.

Ik werd ook geevacueerd. Het ging allemaal heel snel, terwijl het zo'n brede rivier was. Ik zag er eerst als een berg tegenop. Een vriend van mij was nog niet geevacueerd. Ook zijn zus nog niet. Ik had hem aan de telefoon. Hij

kon bijna niet spreken. Ik zei : 'Wacht je niet te lang ?' Ik vroeg toen wat er was gebeurd. Het had te maken met zijn zusje, maar ik werd telkens afgeleid door iets anders en moest telkens de telefoonhoorn neerleggen.

'Wat is er nu precies ?' zei ik. 'Ik moest even ergens anders kijken, maar ik ben weer terug.'

Hij stamelde met een heel zacht stemmetje.

'Toe, zeg het,' zei ik.

'Zij heeft, zij heeft,' stamelde hij.

'Wat ?' vroeg ik. 'Je weet dat je me alles kunt vertellen. Heeft ze haarzelf iets aangedaan weer ?'

'Ja,' zei hij. 'Ditmaal fataal afgelopen. Ze heeft de over overdosis van die groente genomen, boven de limiet waar je zelfs in deze stad niet boven mag komen want dan sterf je.'

'Tjonge,' zei ik. 'Waarom moest dat nou. Jullie hadden toch gewoon hier kunnen komen ?'

'Ja maar,' zei hij.

'Ja maar wat ?' vroeg ik. 'Jullie gaan er allemaal aan. Ik wil niet jou ook nog verliezen.'

'Ja, maar die toneelgroep,' zei hij. 'Ik kan er toch niet zomaar weggaan.'

'Wat bedoel je ?' vroeg ik. 'Je hebt toch verder niets met ze te maken ?'

'Technicus,' zei hij.

'Wat bedoel je ?' vroeg ik. 'Je bent niet hun technicus.'

'Nee,' zei hij.

'Waarom noem je het dan op ?' vroeg ik.

'Laat maar,' zei hij.

'Wordt je bedreigd ofzo ?' vroeg ik.

'Ja,' zei hij. 'Ik kan niet teveel zeggen.'

'Dan kom ik nu naar je toe,' zei ik.

'Nee, nee,' zei hij.

'Waarom niet ?' vroeg ik. 'Ik zit onder de twaalf gram, dus ik kan het me veroorloven.'

'Niet doen,' zei hij, 'gewoon niet doen.'

'Ja, maar in de stad wordt je gedwongen boven de twaalf gram te gaan. Ze zorgen daar altijd wel voor, en het zit ook altijd door andere dingen heen, dus eigenlijk speel je met je leven,' zei ik.

'Ik kan niet weg,' zei hij.

'Waarom niet ?' vroeg ik.

'Laat maar,' zei hij.

Woest gooide ik de hoorn op de haak. 'Ik zal naar hem toe gaan,' riep ik.

Ik had snel mijn jas aangetrokken, en rende naar buiten, toen naar de poort bij de rivier, maar de poortwachter hield mij tegen.

'Wat zeur je nou, knaap,' zei ik. 'Ik zit onder de twaalf gram.'

'Finito,' zei hij. 'Dat gaat je je leven kosten daar.'

'Waarom ?' vroeg ik.

'Je kunt niet terug,' zei hij. 'Niemand kan terug. Het zit daar in de lucht.'

'Dan doe ik een gasmasker op,' zei ik. 'Maar ik moet nog iemand helpen evacueren.'

'Komt niks van in,' zei hij. Ik raakte met hem in gevecht en we rolden in de rivier. Hij greep

me, en trok me weer op de kant. 'Ik zal je moeten opsluiten,' zei hij.

'Doe dan,' zei ik.

Toen werd ik gearresteerd. Er kwamen meerdere agenten bij, en ze sleepten me naar een dichtbijzijnde gevangenis boven een tankstation. Het stelde niet veel voor.

'Finito,' zei de poortwachter.

'Ja, wat ?' vroeg ik.

'Je hebt er veel teveel van genomen,' zei hij.

'Daarom ben ik hier, om af te kicken,' zei ik. 'En blijkbaar is het teveel gevraagd een vriend in nood te helpen.'

'Hij kan niet geholpen worden,' zei de poortwachter.

'Waarom niet ?' vroeg ik met opgetrokken wenkbrauwen.

'Hij is dood,' zei de poortwachter. 'Ze hebben hem opgezet.'

'Hoe ?' vroeg ik.

'Al zijn organen uit zijn lichaam gehaald en volgespoten met hun parasitaire troep,' zei de poortwachter.

'Die lui van die toneelgroep hebben dat gedaan ?' vroeg ik.

'Ja,' zei de poortwachter.

'Maar waarom zit ik hier dan nog ?' riep ik. 'We kunnen hem toch wel weer tot leven wekken ?'

'Nee,' zei de poortwachter. 'Onmogelijk.'

'Waarom onmogelijk ?' vroeg ik.

'De doden leven niet,' zei de poortwachter, 'en zijn zusje …' Maar plotseling viel de

poortwachter flauw. Ik greep naar mijn hoofd. Er brulde een beest in me. Ik was vergiftigd. 'Niet meer dan twaalf gram van die troep,' brulde het beest. Ik werd wakker en zat nog steeds in de evacuatie trein over de rivier. Ik had alles maar gedroomd. Toen ik uiteindelijk uitstapte aan de andere kant van de rivier was het een heel ander soort poortwachter. Hij had een lange jas aan, hoog opgetrokken, en een pet op die hij ver over zijn gezicht had geduwd. Hij keek me aan. Ik kon bijna zijn gezicht niet zien vanwege zijn pet. Hij moest mijn papieren inzien. 'Juist ja,' zei hij. 'Kom niet boven de twaalf gram met de finito groente. Het rommelt met de hersenen, en je gaat dingen zien die er niet zijn, gaat leven in een stad die niet bestaat, enzovoorts. Dat zijn symptomen van een overdosis.'

'Dus waar ik vandaan kom bestaat niet ?' vroeg ik.

'Nee,' zei hij.

'Maar waar kom ik dan vandaan ?' vroeg ik. 'Die troep zat overal in, en het werd gedwongen, en er was een toneelgroep opgepakt …' Verder kon ik niet spreken alsof mijn keel zat dichtgeknepen.

'Zei je daar toneelgroep ?' vroeg de man ineens.

Ik knikte.

Hij schudde zijn hoofd. 'Ik moet je wat vertellen,' zei hij. 'De stad aan de overkant is niet echt. Het is een hallucinatie die wel meerderen hadden toen ze werden gegrepen door de finito haaien. We mogen nooit zomaar mensen uit hun nachtmerrie wekken, dus dan gebruiken we eerst andere soort woorden, zoals een overdosis aan finito groenten, en dat je onder de twaalf gram moet blijven, maar kerel, je was dus gegrepen door haaien, en ….' Maar verder kon de poortwachter niets zeggen. Hij begon te waggelen en ging van zijn stokje … Ook ik begon te waggelen en ging van mijn stokje.

Alles duizelde, en alles draaide om me heen. 'Wie ben ik, en waar ben ik ?' begon ik te roepen. Ik voelde water, en ik voelde tanden, en toen zag ik haaien, als in een nachtmerrie, en ik was in gevecht. Ik probeerde boven water te komen, van die haaien af te komen, maar ze bleven me maar in de diepte trekken.

Ik stond onder een vreemde soort stroom. 'Ik moet onder de twaalf gram komen van deze troep, maar ik wordt er gewoon in verdronken !'

Weer werd ik wakker in de evacuatie trein, en weer stapte ik even later uit, en kwam tot de poortwachter van het gebied achter de rivier. 'Onder de twaalf gram blijven he, met de finito groenten. Er zit ambt in.'

'Ja, ja,' zei ik. 'Ik weet het.'

Ik kreeg een huisje toegewezen, en het eerste wat ik deed was die vriend bellen en vragen hoe het met hem ging en met zijn zusje, en wanneer hij zou komen met de evacuatie

trein. Ik kreeg hem aan de telefoon, allemaal heel vrolijk alsof er niks aan de hand was. Ja, alles ging goed. Zij zaten in het juiste stadsdeel, en er was daar niks aan de hand, en boven de twaalf gram kon ook geen kwaad. Ik begon hem het hele verhaal uit te leggen. Ik vroeg hoe het met die toneelgroep was afgelopen. Die zaten dus inderdaad in de gevangenis. Het bleek dat zijn zusje ook nog had geholpen in die zaak.

'Maar zit die ook niet boven de twaalf gram ?' vroeg ik.

Ja, dat klopte, maar dat kon geen kwaad.

Ik zei toen dat het een tikkende tijdbom was. Hij had nog genoeg tijd, zei hij. Ik noemde hem een waaghals. Toen moest hij weer ophangen, want hij had andere dingen te doen.

Ik belde toen ook naar zijn zusje, maar die nam niet op. Ik zuchtte. Ik hoopte maar dat ik nu echt wakker was geworden, maar aan de

andere kant maakte ik me zorgen over die vriend en zijn zusje.

'Ja, nee, dat zit allemaal goed,' had hij gezegd, 'prima in orde.'

Ik liep naar de koelkast om wat finito groenten te pakken. Ik was er nog flink aan verslaafd, alhoewel ik keurig netjes onder de twaalf gram per dag bleef. Dat hield ik nauwkeurig bij. Ik wilde niet opnieuw in de problemen komen.

Opeens werd er gebeld. Het was het zusje van die vriend. Maar toen werd ik ineens weer wakker in de evacuatie trein nadat alles voor mijn ogen begon te tollen toen ik haar zag. Ze zaten toen gewoon tegenover me in de trein. Ik zuchtte van opluchting.

Maar ik hapte weer naar adem. Nee, ik was niet wakker. Ik was in gevecht met haaien in een rivier. Of was ik in zee ? Allerlei rillingen gleden door me heen. Nee, ik was niet wakker. Ik moest wakker worden …

'godverrejantheo !' riep ik toen ze me weer beten en meesleurden.

Ik kon hier niet tegenop. Ik kon het niet. Het leek wel alsof alles tussen mijn vingers doorgleed. Ze trokken me tot een eiland, waar ze me uiteindelijk bloedend op het strand lieten liggen. Wie waren deze haaien, en waren het wel haaien ?

Ik strompelde even later het eilandje op. Ik was hier volop in de natuur, en overal groeide de finito groente. 'Ja, maar ik mag niet over de twaalf gram per dag gaan !' riep ik. Een donkere man met een rijsthoed liep toen op me af, heel zorgzaam. 'Er zit hier geen ambt in de groente, dus je kan rustig zoveel eten als je wil. Het is juist in de steden dat ze het ambt gif op de groenten spuiten, dus daarom kan je er maar heel weinig van eten.'

'Dat makes sense,' zei ik.

'Goed,' zei de man, 'dan gaan we nu eten.'

Hij nam mij naar een hut waar een tafel vol stond met allerlei groentes waar we in de stad maar heel weinig van mochten eten. 'Hier zit geen ambt in, dus eet maar volop.'

'Ik wordt gek van dat ambt,' zei ik.

'Het is hier niet,' zei de man. 'Dat gif word hier niet gebruikt.'

'Hoe kan ik dat zeker weten ?' vroeg ik.

'Proef maar,' zei de man, en bracht een lepel vol met groente naar mijn mond. Ik at, en bevond mij in de hemel. Bruisende natuur gleed over mij heen. Onbespoten groente. Dat had ik nog nooit geproefd. Het was de eerste keer in mijn leven.

Sandra en de Boze Badmeester

'En er was een put van meisjesboeken waar alle nazi's ingeworpen werden, en ze moesten voor straf voor eeuwig meisjesboeken lezen,' las Jan hardop en sloeg toen het boek dicht. Toen moesten Jan en Sandra naar zwemles. Moeder bracht hen naar de kleedkamer van het zwembad, waar ze hun zwemkleding konden aantrekken. Daarna moesten ze onder een hele warme douche heenlopen, en zo kwamen ze bij het zwembad, waar de badmeester hen al opwachtte. Ze moesten wat baantjes zwemmen, en de badmeester legde hen wat uit. Sandra keek naar de lichtblauwe tegeltjes die ze gewoon door het water heen kon zien. Ook keek ze naar de witte klompen van de badmeester. Ze lette niet goed op, en kreeg zo een tik met de haak van de badmeester, waarmee hij vaak rondliep.

'Opletten en bij de les blijven, Sandra,' zei de badmeester streng.

Toen moest ze wel, maar alles tolde haar voor de ogen. Hij had haar op haar natte arm geslagen en het deed best wel pijn. Even wilde ze hem uitfoeteren, maar ze voelde zich te duizelig. 'Ik ben duizelig,' zei ze toen, en stapte het zwembad uit.

'Gewoon in het zwembad blijven, Sandra,' zei de badmeester, terwijl hij haar weer terugduwde. 'Maar ik ben zo duizelig,' zei Sandra.

'Dan moet je beter opletten,' zei de badmeester. Jan werd heel kwaad op de badmeester. 'Zeg, blijf van haar af,' zei hij toen hij het zwembad uitstapte, maar ook hij werd teruggeduwd. 'Ik ga het straks aan mijn vader en moeder zeggen,' zei Jan.

'Je doet maar,' zei de badmeester. Toen de badmeester even niet oplette rende Jan het zwembad uit naar de kleedkamer.

'Terugkomen !' riep de badmeester. Maar hij kon niet achter Jan aan, want dan zouden alle kinderen het zwembad uitkomen.

Sandra begon te trillen en te rillen. 'Ik voel me niet goed,' zei ze. Weer probeerde ze uit het zwembad te komen, maar weer werd ze teruggedrukt. Ze voelde haar toen helemaal wegglijden, en ging kopje onder. De andere kinderen begonnen bang te worden. Gelukkig kwam er een andere badmeester aan. 'Het gaat niet goed met één van je kinderen, zie ik,' zei hij, en trok Sandra toen uit het water. 'Misschien is ze ziek.'

'De badmeester drukte haar telkens terug !' riepen de kinderen.

'Is dat waar ?' vroeg de andere badmeester.

'Ik dacht dat ze haar aanstelde, want ze had net straf gehad,' zei de badmeester.

'Dit is gevaarlijk spel. Daar kun je voor ontslagen worden,' zei de andere badmeester.

'Ach, stel je niet aan, joh,' zei de badmeester. 'Ze speelt het gewoon om van me af te zijn.'

'Hoe weet je dat ?' vroeg de andere badmeester. 'Ze heeft haar ogen dicht, en praat niet.'

Maar toen werd de badmeester kwaad, en duwde de andere badmeester en Sandra het water in. De kinderen begonnen keihard te gillen, en er kwamen nog meer badmeesters en badjuffrouwen aangerend.

Het werd een dolle boel zoals je wel kunt begrijpen. Maar de badmeester hield vol dat Sandra het gewoon speelde om hem terug te pakken. Hij was loeikwaad.

'Je kunt kinderen nooit dwingen,' zei een badjuffrouw. 'Dat is levensgevaarlijk, of ze het nu spelen of niet.' Sandra lag levenloos in de armen van de andere badmeester, die ze weer op de kant hadden getrokken. 'Ze moet

naar het ziekenhuis,' zei de andere badmeester. 'En hij moet ontslagen worden.'

Maar de badmeester werd erg kwaad, en duwde alle badmeesters en juffrouwen het zwembad in, terwijl hij Sandra greep en met haar wegrende. De kinderen begonnen nog harder te gillen. De badmeester rende met Sandra in zijn armen de trap op, en ging toen zijn grote kantoor in, en deed de deur op slot. 'Is het nu afgelopen met die spelletjes !' schreeuwde hij tegen Sandra, en sloeg haar in het gezicht. Sandra ademde bijna niet meer. Al gauw werd er op de deur geklopt, maar hij deed niet open. 'We zullen de politie bellen !' werd er geroepen. De badmeester rende toen door een andere deur met Sandra weg, weer een trap af, en toen het zwembad uit. Toen rende hij naar zijn grote witte auto, en even later scheurde hij ermee weg.

Hij bracht haar naar een grote witte villa diep in het bos. Hier nam hij haar uit de auto, en ging toen de grote villa in met haar in zijn armen, en bracht haar naar een grote

ondergrondse zaal, waar een heleboel bedden waren met levenloze kinderen erin. Hier legde hij haar neer in een leeg bed. Een man met een lange witte jas kwam binnen. Hij had een brilletje op en haardossen aan beide kanten van zijn hoofd, maar boven op zijn hoofd en op zijn voorhoofd was hij kaal. 'Kun je hier weer een robot van maken,' zei de badmeester.

'Komt in orde,' zei de man. De man maakte toen even wat foto's van Sandra en ging toen weer weg. Sandra kreeg toen wat spuitjes totdat ze echt helemaal niet meer bewoog. Na een paar uur kwam de man in de lange witte jas weer terug met een robot die precies op Sandra leek. 'Perfect,' zei de badmeester. 'Nu ga jij die andere badmeesters eens haarfijn uitleggen dat je alles maar gespeeld had,' zei hij tegen de robot.

'Natuurlijk, het spijt me,' zei de robot, die gewoon op een echt mens leek.

De badmeester nam de menselijke robot mee en liet Sandra levenloos achter. Hij stopte de robot in de auto en reed toen terug naar het zwembad. Hij had de robot ondertussen allerlei instructies gegeven. En zo werd alles opgelost. De badmeester kon blijven. Sandra had zich afschuwelijk misdragen, en deed maar net alsof om hem te jennen en in de problemen te brengen. De andere badmeesters en badjuffrouwen moesten ook schuld bekennen.

Zo was er een heel crimineel netwerk in het dorp wat kinderen omwisselde met menselijke robotten die precies op die kinderen leken, en zo kon niemand wat vermoeden.

Maar Jan was een hele slimme jongen, en had al snel door dat dit Sandra niet was. Zijn ouders geloofden hem niet, maar de robot zei dingen die Sandra nooit zou zeggen. Daar kende Jan zijn zus te goed voor. Jan was heel fijngevoelig en veel intelligenter dan zijn ouders. Jan rook onraad. Nachtenlang had hij

zware en diepe gesprekken met de robot, die zich nog steeds voordeed als Sandra, zijn zus, maar uiteindelijk gaf de robot toe dat ze Sandra niet was, maar slechts een robot. De robot had het erg met Jan te doen, maar was ook slechts een slachtoffer en kon niets doen. Jan was wel blij dat de robot het in ieder geval had toegegeven. Maar Jan's ouders geloofden er nog steeds niets van, en zeiden dat Sandra zwaar ziek was dat ze dacht dat ze een robot was, en niet de echte Sandra was. Ze stuurden de robot naar een psychiater, en de robot kreeg zware medicijnen. Jan was inmiddels heel veel van de robot gaan houden en kon dit ook niet meer aanzien. Op een nacht smeekte hij de robot uit te leggen waar Sandra was. De robot probeerde het uit te leggen, maar raakte steeds in de war. Omdat Jan steeds meer bij zijn ouders er op aandrong om hem te geloven moest ook hij naar de psychiater en kreeg zware medicijnen. De psychiater zei dat zowel hij als Sandra naar een rustoord moesten. De psychiater nam hen beiden mee naar de grote witte villa diep in het bos. 'Ik herken dit !'

riep de robot. 'Hier worden alle kinderen verwisseld door robotten !'

'Het is goed, Sandra,' zei de psychiater. 'Hier zul je tot rustkomen.'

'Hier moet ergens de ware Sandra liggen,' zei de robot.

'Het is goed, Sandra,' zei de psychiater weer, terwijl hij de auto parkeerde. 'Hier zal alles goed met je komen.'

'Luister dan eens naar wat ze zegt, idioot !' riep Jan. 'Heb je nu oren of niet ?'

'Ze is zwaar ziek, Jan,' zei de psychiater. 'En jij ook. Met de juiste medicatie zullen jullie hier snel tot rust komen.'

'Levenloos liggen die kinderen daar in zalen,' zei de robot. 'Jullie zijn zware criminelen.'

'Heus, het komt goed met je,' zei de psychiater, die de auto deur opendeed en uitstapte.

'Ik wil Sandra zien,' zei Jan.

'Sandra is hier,' zei de psychiater en wees op de robot.

'Nee, de echte Sandra,' zei Jan.

Toen liepen ze met z'n drieen naar het gebouw. Zowel Jan als de robot kregen een kamer in het gebouw. Jan begon het hele gebouw af te zoeken. De robot liep met hem mee. 'Het moet ergens in een zaal onder het gebouw zijn, Jan,' zei de robot. Na een tijdje vonden ze in de linkerzijde van het gebouw een trap naar beneden. Toen kwamen ze even later in de grote zaal waar levenloze kinderen lagen, waaronder ook Sandra. 'Zie je nu wel !' riep Jan. 'Dat is Sandra !'

Hij rende op Sandra af, en zag al snel dat ze helemaal onder plastic was. 'Sandra ?' riep

hij, terwijl hij haar door elkaar begon te schudden. 'Word wakker !'

Maar Sandra bewoog niet. Ook de robot kwam dichterbij. 'Helaas, Jan,' zei de robot.

'Je hebt je best gedaan,' zei Jan tegen de robot. 'Gelukkig heb ik jou nog.'

De man met de lange witte jas kwam toen binnen. 'Kun je dit verklaren ?' vroeg Jan boos.

'Ja,' zei de man met de lange witte jas. 'Natuurlijk. Het is eigenlijk heel eenvoudig. Ze had een overdosis medicijnen genomen. Dat had ze nooit mogen doen.'

'Je liegt !' riep Jan. 'Kijk eens naar deze robot. Die lijkt precies op haar ! Jullie hebben hen omgewisseld ! Het begon allemaal doordat de badmeester haar bleef terugduwen in het water !'

'Je kletst, Jan,' zei de man met de lange witte jas. 'Ik ben dokter. Ik ben een professionele deskundige. Ik heb ervoor gestudeerd. Je weet nergens wat van.'

'Hoe komt het dan dat ze als twee druppels op elkaar lijken ?' riep Jan. 'Het zijn valse spelletjes die jullie spelen, stelletje omruilers !'

'Je kunt niets doen, Jan. Geef het maar op,' zei de dokter. 'Ze zullen mij toch altijd geloven boven jou, want ik ben de dokter.'

'Klootzak !' riep Jan. 'Wat hebben jullie met haar gedaan ! Sandra, antwoord me !'

Toen kwam de psychiater binnen. 'Jan moet tot rust komen,' zei de dokter.

'Dat merk ik,' zei de psychiater. 'Ik kon zijn geschreeuw in het hele gebouw horen.'

'Jullie zijn leugenaars,' riep Jan. 'Kijk nu eens wat jullie gedaan hebben. Zie dan. Ik had het

bij het rechte eind. Hier ligt de ware Sandra. Kijk dan eens goed uit je doppen !'

De psychiater liep naar de levenloze Sandra, en voelde aan haar pols.

'Nou ?' zei Jan.

De psychiater keek naar Jan. Toen keek de psychiater naar de robot, en toen weer naar de levenloze Sandra.

'Nou ? Sprakeloos, hè !' riep Jan. 'Wie is er hier nu zwaar ziek !'

'Deze patient ligt hier al tijden na een overdosis medicijnen,' zei de psychiater. 'Ze mag misschien naar jouw idee op Sandra lijken, maar dit is Sandra niet.'

'Het gebeurt wel vaker dat patienten elkaar door elkaar halen,' zei de dokter.

Jan zuchtte diep. 'Hier valt niet tegen op te boksen, Jan,' zei de robot, 'maar jij en ik weten wel beter.'

'Jullie maken mensen psychisch kapot om jullie medicijnen kwijt te krijgen,' zei Jan. 'En dit hier is gewoon pure misdaad.'

Ineens opende de levenloze Sandra haar ogen. 'Ik heb alles gehoord,' zei ze. 'Sorry, maar ik ben Sandra niet. Mijn naam is Evelien, en ik ken jullie niet.' Toen sloot ze haar ogen weer.

'Weer een robot,' zuchtte Jan. 'Of misschien heb ik me wel echt vergist, of ben ik echt zwaar ziek,' en sloeg toen een arm om de robot die naast hem stond, en zei tegen haar : 'Dan moet jij toch echt de echte Sandra zijn, mijn zus. Misschien ben jij dan ook wel zwaar ziek. Wat is er toch met ons gebeurd ? Maar in ieder geval hebben we elkaar nog, en dat is het allerbelangrijkste.' En zo liepen ze arm in arm de zaal uit, de trap op.

De Dropping

Ze kon de zwarte auto herinneren waarmee ze was ontvoerd. Het kwam telkens terug in haar gedachten. Het verleden was een schaduw die haar achtervolgde, stalkte, altijd weer. Ze kwam maar niet los. Het was als een watermerk in haar leven. Het was ook niet weg te krijgen. Dagelijks dacht ze eraan en dagelijks vocht ze ertegen.

Ze namen haar naar het bos, naar een buurthuis, midden in de nacht, en daar moest ze allerlei karweitjes doen. Wat erna gebeurde kon ze zich niet meer herinneren. Alles werd zwart voor haar ogen. Het was uiteindelijk een witte auto die haar vrijzette, maar ze vertrouwde het niet. Ze deden zich voor als haar bevrijders, maar ze had altijd het gevoel dat ze samenwerkten met hen van de zwarte auto. Het was niet echt een auto, maar meer

een klein busje. Dat gold ook voor de witte auto.

'Ze zijn niet goed snik,' dacht ze altijd. Er was nooit een zaak van gekomen. De criminelen waren nooit berecht. Ze kon er niet over praten. Ze had het een keer aan iemand verteld, maar die geloofde haar niet. Die dacht dat het een dropping geweest moest zijn. Ze is toen enorm aan haarzelf gaan twijfelen.

Ze had het eens nagevraagd aan mensen, en het bleek dat er wel vaak soortgelijke droppings werden georganiseerd. De zwarte auto's namen mensen geblinddoekt mee naar een onbekende plaats, waar ze werden gedumpt. Dan moesten ze hun weg naar huis vinden, alleen of in een groep, en als ze dan te ver afdwaalden en hun weg niet meer konden vinden, dan waren er de witte auto's om hen naar huis te brengen. Maar alles wat ze nog kon herinneren was dat ze niet was geblinddoekt, en dat ze naar het buurthuis ging waar ze karweitjes moest doen. Volgens

haar was er misdaad in het spel. Omdat ze nooit werd geloofd sprak ze er op een gegeven moment niet meer over.

Ze had een heel onderzoek gedaan over droppings, en er waren geen gevallen bekend dat mensen ook karweitjes moesten doen. Misschien haalde ze wel dingen door elkaar. Er werd beweerd dat ze eens een tijdje in het buurthuis had gewerkt, en daar kreeg ze ook voor betaald. Ze vroeg zich af waarom ze dat niet meer kon herinneren. Ook had ze eens een verhaal gelezen over een uit de hand gelopen dropping waarin mensen niet alleen ergens werden gedumpt, maar ook werden opgesloten, als een soort boeienkoning. Dan moesten ze dus eerst zien los te komen. Maar dit was slechts een verhaal uit een boek. In dat verhaal werden ze zelfs gevoed met vergif opdat ze hun geheugen en orientatie zouden verliezen. Zij had het idee dat dat met haar was gebeurd. Het leek wel alsof het verhaal de enige was die haar begreep en alle informatie had. Het boek hield ze sindsdien op haar kamer, en ze vereerde het boek, ook

al wist ze dat het maar een verhaal was. Ze twijfelde aan de echtheid ervan, maar ze achtte het wel een mogelijkheid.

Ze had meer op met boeken dan met mensen.

Op een dag kwam ze een meisje tegen die beweerde dat hetzelfde met haar was gebeurd. Ze durfde zichzelf toen weer een beetje te openen, en ze werden de grootste vriendinnen. Eigenlijk was het precies hetzelfde verhaal, en ze leende ook haar boek uit aan haar nieuwe vriendin, en die was er helemaal dolenthousiast over, want dit gaf haar een antwoord wat er met haar gebeurd was. Beide meisjes leefden hier ontzettend van op. Ze besloten niets aan de buitenwereld te vertellen, want die zouden hen toch niet geloven. Ze hadden genoeg aan elkaar. Wel vroegen ze zich af of er meerderen waren zoals hen. Misschien in het buitenland. Ze zouden op de uitkijk staan. Ze besloten eens een anonieme advertentie te plaatsen in de krant, maar daar kwam niemand op af. Dit

probeerden ze zelfs in het buitenland, maar zonder resultaat.

Op een dag toen ze bij elkaar waren stopte er een rode auto vlakbij hen. De man schoof een raampje naar beneden en gaf hen een foldertje. Het was een uitnodiging voor een dropping. Ze werden allebei vuurrood. 'Een dropping ? Dat nooit,' zei het ene meisje tegen het andere. Toen lazen ze het foldertje verder. 'De deelnemers worden meegenomen naar het buurthuis voor koekhappen en andere leuke spelletjes, en worden daarna gedropt ergens in het bos, voor een leuke tocht.'

'Ja, ja,' zei haar vriendin. 'En dat moeten wij zeker geloven ? Wij werden nooit geloofd, maar wij zullen hen ook niet geloven. We zijn toch niet gek ? Een ezel stoot zich nooit aan dezelfde steen. Koekhappen ? Vergif happen zullen ze bedoelen.'

Maar ze waren toch wel erg nieuwsgierig, en op de dag van de dropping gingen ze bij het

buurthuis kijken. Het was er een hele vrolijke boel. Er liepen zelfs clowns rond, en een man met een hondje dat kunstjes deed. Ze hadden medelijden met de kinderen die daar waren, maar ze wisten dat er maar eentje de klos zou zijn, zoals eens bij hen, opdat de anderen hen nooit zouden geloven.

Arm in arm liepen ze toen naar huis, er vol van overtuigd dat daar een groot kwaad aan het gebeuren was, of misschien juist niet, opdat zij geheel geisoleerd zouden blijven in hun lijden en door niemand geloofd zouden worden.

Aan elkaar hadden ze genoeg. De wereld was immers gek geworden. Mensen konden zich niet meer inleven in elkaar. Er was teveel afstand, en teveel grootspraak. Niemand begreep hen beter dan het boek. In de buitenwereld was het allemaal de beste stuurlui staan aan wal. Iedereen had maar makkelijk praten. Met een blinddoek naar koek happen ? Natuurlijk word je dan bedrogen, en door leugen en vergif

meegenomen. In hoeverre waren ze nog zichzelf ? Iets of iemand had zwaar met hen gerommeld. Onschuldige spelletjes noemen ze dat dan.

Het andere meisje had ook de herinnering dat er een mes op haar keel was gelegd. 'We laten de mensen de mensen,' zei ze. 'Wij weten wel beter. Als we onszelf niet meer kunnen geloven dan heeft het leven geen zin meer.'

Niet lang na de dropping van het foldertje liepen ze samen ergens op straat, en een zwarte auto stopte vlakbij hen. Een raampje ging naar beneden, en een boertje keek hen aan. 'Stap maar in, jongedames. Waar gaat de reis naartoe ?'

Plotseling herinnerden de meisjes het boertje. 'Zeg, heb jij ons niet eens eerder meegenomen ?' vroeg het meisje.

'Ik herinner hem ook,' zei haar vriendin.

'Nee hoor,' zei het boertje. 'Ik weet van niets. Stap in, dan kunnen we verder praten, want anders rijd ik weer weg.'

'Nee, nee, rijd niet weg,' zei het meisje. 'Alstublieft, vertel ons alles wat er gebeurd is.' Ze wist dat het boertje haar enige hoop was om aan de informatie te komen die ze nodig had.

'Laten we dat nu maar niet doen,' zei haar vriendin, 'want dan gebeurt weer hetzelfde, en dan moeten we er weer doorheen.'

'Ja, maar ik heb dit nodig, anders blijf ik met die vretende twijfels en onzekerheden lopen,' zei het meisje.

'Ja, maar wat als we het dit keer niet overleven ?' vroeg haar vriendin.

'Het leven heeft geen zin als ik hier niet achterkom,' zei het meisje.

Uiteindelijk zijn ze toen maar ingestapt, want ze konden hun nieuwsgierigheid niet bedwingen, en die nieuwsgierigheid was veel en veel groter dan hun angst.

'Vertel op,' zeiden de meisjes die inmiddels op de achterbank zaten. 'Wat heb je met ons gedaan de vorige keer ?'

'Zoals ik al zei,' zei het boertje, 'ik ken jullie niet, maar zou jullie graag een lift willen aanbieden. Waar gaat de reis naartoe ?'

'U heeft ons leven flink in de problemen gebracht,' zei het meisje. 'Alles wat we willen is een verklaring hiervoor.'

'Welnee,' zei het boertje. 'Jullie begrijpen het gewoon niet. Ik zal jullie meenemen naar de boerin dan krijgen jullie lekkere koek met thee.'

'Nee !' riepen de meisjes. Dat herinnerden ze zich ook ineens, dat ze koek met thee kregen van de boerin.

De boer reed met het zwarte kleine busje een weiland in, op weg naar een boerderij. Bij een klein boerderijtje stopten ze. 'We willen best meegaan, maar we drinken geen thee en eten geen lekkere koek. Alles wat we willen is een verklaring.'

'Loop maar mee,' zei het boertje ineens een stuk platter.

De boerin wachtte hen al op in de deur opening.

'Kom verder,' zei de boerin plat. De meisjes waren nog steeds niet bang, want hun nieuwsgierigheid had alle angst weggevreten. Zo lang hadden ze gewacht op een antwoord, en nu hoopten ze dat eens eindelijk te krijgen. In een kamertje vlak naast de keuken stond een tafel met een tapijt erover en wat stoelen. Daar gingen ze zitten. De meisjes staarden als gehypnotiseerd naar het servies. Dit kenden ze. Ze bestuurden ijverig de patronen van het servies.

'Thee ?' vroeg de boerin.

'Nee, en ook geen lekkere koek,' zei het meisje. 'Wij komen alleen voor het antwoord. Wat hebben jullie met ons gedaan de vorige keer, want ik herken alles.'

'Herinner je de dropping ?' vroeg de boerin.

Toen vertelde het meisje alles wat ze nog herinnerde.

De boerin schudde haar hoofd.

Toen begon ook het andere meisje haar verhaal te vertellen wat er veel op leek, en weer schudde de boerin haar hoofd.

'Lieve meisjes,' zei de boerin. 'Jullie begrijpen er niets van, helemaal niets. Maar drink even wat thee en eet even wat lekkere koek.'

'Dat doen we niet,' zei de vriendin van het meisje. 'Want dan komen we weer bij hetzelfde punt uit, en misschien erger.'

'Ach, doe even gezellig, neem even wat, dat praat makkelijker,' zei de boerin.

'Daar zijn we niet voor gekomen,' zei het meisje. 'Ik ben ervan overtuigd dat dat de oorzaak is van al onze problemen.'

De boerin schoot in de lach. 'Het was een dropping, en jullie hebben alles verkeerd begrepen. Maar heus, je hoeft van mij echt niets te eten of te drinken. Als je niet wil, dan houd het op. Dan drink en eet ik het lekker zelf op, en mijn man.'

'Maar krijgen we het antwoord nog te horen ?' zei het meisje.

'Wie niet eten en drinken wil krijgt ook niets te horen,' zei de boerin.

'Wat flauw,' zei de vriendin van het meisje. 'Dan zijn we helemaal voor niets gekomen.'

'Dat zijn nu eenmaal de regels,' zei de boerin.

'Okay,' zei het meisje, 'dan eet en drink ik, maar mijn vriendin niet. Is dat ook goed ?'

'Nee, zo zijn we niet getrouwd,' zei de boerin. 'Samen uit, samen thuis. Of allebei, of niets.'

'Wat is dat voor belachelijk gedoe,' zei de vriendin van het meisje.

'De regels van de dropping,' zei de boerin.

'Welke dropping ?' vroeg het meisje. 'We hebben helemaal nooit aan een dropping meegedaan. Het lijkt wel alsof we ertoe gedwongen waren.'

'Laten we even ter zake komen,' zei de boerin. 'Of jullie eten en drinken nu, of jullie vertrekken nu weer, want ik heb geen zin om nog langer mijn tijd te verdoen met jullie.'

'U eerst,' zei het meisje.

De boerin keek beledigd naar het meisje. 'Wat nou : u eerst ? Ik ben hier in mijn eigen huis, en ik laat me niet commanderen door één of andere snotaap. Drink en eet nu, of vertrek.'

'Goed,' zei het meisje boos, en begon van de koek te eten en van de thee te drinken, en haar vriendin ook.

'Nu kunnen we zaken doen,' zei de boerin.

Snel vielen de meisjes in slaap. 'Ze zullen elkaar niet meer herinneren,' zei de boerin. Ze werden beiden op een bed in aparte kamers gelegd, en na een tijdje stopte er een witte auto bij de boerderij, die kwam om het meisje mee te nemen. Na ongeveer een kwartier kwam er een tweede witte auto die de vriendin van het meisje mee zouden nemen.

Het meisje werd wakker in de witte auto. 'Waar ben ik ?' vroeg het meisje.

Een man in een wit pak zei : 'We vonden je ergens slapend in het bos. Was jij van de dropping ?'

'Ik weet het niet meer,' zei het meisje. 'Ik weet helemaal niets.'

'Denk goed na,' zei de man in het witte pak.

'Volgens mij moest ik karweitjes doen in het buurthuis, en ben ik toen gevlucht, en toen vonden jullie mij,' zei het meisje. 'Het begon allemaal toen ik ontvoerd werd in een zwarte auto.'

'Weet je ook door wie ?' vroeg de man in het witte pak.

'Nee,' zei het meisje.

Ergens dichtbij haar huis zette de witte auto haar af. Toen liep ze verder alleen naar huis. Op haar kamer was het een enorme rotzooi. Op het bureau lag het boek over de uit de

hand gelopen dropping. Ook lag er een kaart van haar vriendin in het boek als een boekenlegger. Op het kaartje stond : 'Ik ben zo blij dat we elkaar hebben gevonden.' Daaronder stond haar naam en adres. 'Wie is dat ?' vroeg het meisje zich af. Het leek een waas in haar geheugen te zijn. Ze kon haar nieuwsgierigheid niet meer bedwingen, en ging direct met de kaart naar het adres toe, maar er woonde een oud echtpaar. Het meisje liet de kaart aan het echtpaar zien, maar ze schudden het hoofd. 'Die woont hier allang niet meer,' zei de vrouw. 'Die woonde hier voordat wij hier woonden, maar toen zij was verongelukt ging het gezin verhuizen.'

De rillingen gleden door het meisje heen. 'Misschien is het een hele oude kaart dan,' zei het meisje.

'Dat moet wel,' zei de vrouw.

'Ik kan haar niet herinneren,' zei het meisje.

'Ach,' zei de vrouw. 'Dat kan gebeuren. Je komt zoveel mensen tegen in je leven. Dat kun je nooit allemaal bijhouden, vooral niet als het zo lang geleden is. Wil je misschien binnenkomen voor wat thee en een lekkere koek ?'

Het meisje schudde haar hoofd. 'N... nee, ik moet maar weer eens gaan,' zei ze, en rende toen weg.

Einde

Ze had geld nodig en ging in op de vacature voor assistente van een goochelaar. Het waren nogal gevaarlijke truuks, maar het betaalde daarom ook verschrikkelijk goed, en dat had ze echt nodig om uit de schulden te komen. Het waren meer stunts dan dat het goochelen was. Het werd ook uitgezonden op televisie. Vaak ging er iets mis, en daarom had het ook hoge kijkcijfers. Haar vader was hier erg kwaad om. Hij vergeleek het met de Romeinse arena's, en zei dat er in dat opzicht niet veel was veranderd. Hij wilde ook niet dat ze rookte. Eigenlijk was ze door het roken in de schulden gekomen, want ze rookte altijd haar gehele inkomen op, en daarnaast gokte ze ook.

Toen ze de baan als assistente van de goochelaar had gekregen was de hele familie blij, behalve haar vader. De hele familie ging dan ook naar de voorstellingen toe, maar

vader kwam niet. Haar familie gaf meer om de roem en het geld dan om haar leven. Ze begreep haar vader wel, en wist diep in haar hart dat hij eigenlijk de enige was die echt van haar hield, maar ze had het geld nodig, en toch trokken de stunts haar aan. Dan had ze het gevoel dat ze echt leefde. Ze was nogal een waaghals, en dat was ze altijd al geweest.

De stunts waren ingewikkeld, en niet altijd goed te volgen, bijna als puzzels, en ook dat trok weer mensen aan. Mensen hielden van het mysterie. Soms gebeurden de stunts in de buitenlucht. Er waren al eens assistentes spoorloos vermist geraakt, en ook waren er al assistentes verongelukt, maar het hield haar niet tegen, en ook de staat verbood deze gevaarlijke spelletjes niet, waar vader erg kwaad over was. 'Je moet het zelf maar weten,' zei hij, 'maar ik kom niet.'

Dit keer gebruikte de goochelaar een lange, dunne zaag. Iedereen hield z'n adem in. Er waren drie hokken waarvan in twee hokken een assistente zat. Die waren erin gestapt, en

toen werden de hokken verwisseld achter een zwarte doek, dus niemand wist waar ze inzaten. De goochelaar haalde toen het doek weg, en drukte zo de zaag in een gat en begon naar onderen te zagen in één van de hokken. Nadat dit was gebeurd gingen de andere twee hokken open, en de twee assistentes kwamen er glimlachend uit. Toen liet de goochelaar zich blinddoeken en er stond een hele rij van assistentes, zowel vrouwelijke als mannelijke, en ze hielden allemaal een object vast. Met de zaag sloeg de goochelaar de objecten gewoon uit hun handen. Toen namen ze weer andere objecten in hun handen, en er werd een groot bord van piepschuim voor de assistentes neergezet zodat het publiek hen niet kon zien. De zaag had een hele scherpe punt, als een zwaard, en de goochelaar begon zo telkens te steken door het piepschuim en te zagen. Maar aan het einde ging dat niet goed. Een mannelijke assistente gaf een schreeuw van achter het piepschuim. Iedereen was in grote paniek. Het had een dodelijke afloop.

Ze gingen allemaal bedroefd naar huis, maar ze hadden hun grote geld verdiend als troost. Wanneer er iets misging werd er altijd dubbel uitbetaald. 'Ik had jullie nog gewaarschuwd !' foeterde vader. Maar ze trokken zich niets van hem aan. De keer erop gingen ze gewoon weer. Vanwege dat ze nu goed verdiende gaf ze altijd peperdure cadeau's aan de familie. Mede daarom was ze ook heel geliefd. Vader nam de cadeau's nooit aan. Hij noemde het bloedgeld.

Op een dag belandde ze in het ziekenhuis door een stunt die weer verschrikkelijk misging. Ditmaal was ze zelf de klos. De ziekenhuis rekening was zo groot dat ze ondanks haar vele geld er diep door in de schulden raakte. 'Er is altijd baas boven baas,' zei vader. 'Wist je dat het ziekenhuis een contract heeft met de goochelaar ?'

Ze keek haar vader vreemd aan. 'Dat wist je niet, hè ?' zei vader. 'De goochelaar wordt door het ziekenhuis goed betaald als hij zijn truken mis laat gaan, en soms krijgt hij grote

bonussen zoals nu. Deze grote maatschappijen houden elkaar in stand. Ze leven van elkaar. Er is ook een contract met de begrafenis-ondernemer. Het is allemaal legaal, want de staat leeft er ook van. Ze zijn allemaal deel van het complot van de goochelaar.'

'Ja, maar wat moet ik dan ?' vroeg ze. 'In de prostitutie wil ik ook niet werken.'

Vader keek naar zijn dochter in het ziekenhuisbed. Haar been was in het gips, en haar hoofd zat flink in het verband.

'Zie, nu moet je meer terugbetalen dan dat je ooit hebt verdiend,' zei vader.

'Dus u denkt dat de goochelaar het met opzet heeft gedaan ?' vroeg ze.

'Het zijn criminelen,' zei vader. 'Je kunt ze niet vertrouwen.'

'Wat moet ik dan doen ?' vroeg ze.

Opeens kwam de goochelaar binnen. Hij had een fles wijn voor haar meegenomen, en wat pakjes sigaretten. 'Wat moet jij nu hier ?' vroeg vader.

't Spijt me,' zei de goochelaar, en richtte zich toen tot het meisje. 't Spijt me dat het mis is gegaan en dat je nu in diepere schulden zit dan ooit, maar als troost wil ik je je eigen show als goochelaar aanbieden.'

Vader schudde zijn hoofd, terwijl ze helemaal begon te stralen en te glimlachen. 'Mag het vader ?' vroeg ze, 'dan kan ik uit mijn schulden komen, en dan kan me verder niets meer overkomen als goochelaar.'

Vader schudde weer zijn hoofd. 'Ik geef het op met jou,' zei hij. 'Nog steeds begrijp je het complot van de goochelaar niet.' Toen rende hij de ziekenhuis kamer uit.

Het meisje keek uit het raam en zag haar vader even later het ziekenhuis uitrennen. Ze

kreeg een heel vreemd gevoel in haar buik, een gevoel wat ze niet kon verklaren. Toen keek ze naar de goochelaar. 'Mijn vader is er niet blij mee, en ik wil hem niet nog een keer teleurstellen. Hij heeft me ook nog geen toestemming gegeven.'

'Okay, denk er maar even over na,' zei de goochelaar.

De volgende dag was vader er weer. 'En ?' vroeg hij.

'Ik heb de baan niet aangenomen, vader,' zei het meisje. 'Ik moet eerst uw toestemming hebben.'

'Wat denk je zelf ?' vroeg vader.

'Voor u doe ik het niet,' zei ze.

Vader zuchtte. 'Ik dacht dat je je lesje wel geleerd had, maar blijkbaar niet.'

'Ik doe het niet, vader,' zei ze. 'Is dat niet genoeg ?'

Vader schudde zijn hoofd. 'Ik kan maar niet tot je doordringen,' zei hij. 'Is er nog iets wat ik moet weten ? Het lijkt alsof je zwaar aan de drugs bent.'

'Ik gebruik inderdaad, vader,' zei het meisje. 'Het was een vereiste om mee te kunnen doen als assistente van de goochelaar.'

Vader zuchtte en schudde zijn hoofd. 'Welk middel ?' vroeg hij.

'De drugs heet 'de Goochelaar,' zei het meisje. 'Ik moest het geheim houden. Als ik het zou verraden zouden ze me koudmaken.'

Vader boog zijn hoofd. 'De Goochelaar ? Maar mijn lieve kind, dan ben je al levende dood. Ze noemen het ook wel zombie drugs. Het laat je hersenen afsterven totdat je hersendood bent, en dan bespelen de drugs verder de lichamelijke functies zodat het net

lijkt alsof je nog leeft. Ik heb mijn dochter verloren.'

'Maar vader, ik leef nog,' zei het meisje.

'Ja, de drugs leven in jou als parasieten,' zei vader, 'maar je hart is dood. Ik heb een clown als dochter.'

Het meisje begon te snikken. 'Is er nog een mogelijkheid om hiervan af te kicken, vader ?'

'Voor zover ik weet is zaad van het telefoonplantje het enige tegengif,' zei vader.

'Heeft u dat toevallig, vader ?' vroeg het meisje.

'Ik heb het altijd op zak,' zei vader. 'In het kleine flesje wat aan mijn halsketting hangt.'

'Ik vroeg me altijd al af wat er in dat flesje aan uw nek zit,' zei ze lachend.

Vader keek heel ernstig. 'Je kunt het maar één keer in je leven gebruiken,' zei vader. 'Als je na gebruik weer van de goochelaars drugs neemt, dan val je op slag dood.'

'Ik begrijp het, vader,' zei het meisje. 'Ik zal u niet nog een keer teleurstellen.'

Vader haalde het flesje van zijn ketting, opende het flesje, en gaf zijn dochter ervan te drinken. Het meisje begon te snikken. 'Ik voel me zo vreemd, vader, alsof ik van een diepe slaap ben ontwaakt. Ik kan weer heel goed en diep nadenken, en ik voel mijn hart weer kloppen.'

Vader glimlachte. 'Ik hoop dat je snel weer naar huis kan.'

Ineens kwam de goochelaar binnen. 'Heb je je beslissing al gemaakt ?' vroeg hij. Het meisje raakte direct in paniek. 'Laat hem weggaan !' gilde ze.

'Je moet nu weggaan,' zei vader, 'en nooit meer terugkomen.'

'Ik zie het al,' zei de goochelaar.

'Ren hard,' zei vader tegen de goochelaar. De goochelaar rende hard de kamer uit, nog wel harder dan vader gisteren rende. Toen keken ze beiden door het raam en zagen de goochelaar het ziekenhuis uitrennen.

'Opgeruimd staat netjes,' zei vader.

'Zou hij ook niet kunnen afkicken, vader ?' vroeg het meisje. 'Heeft u nog meer spul van het telefoonplantje ?'

Vader schudde zijn hoofd. 'Ik kreeg het eens van een vrouw die ik van de verdrinking had gered. Ze legde uit wat het was, en zei erbij dat ik het maar één keer kon gebruiken. Het was het laatste wat er nog op aarde was van het telefoonplantje. Ze zei dat het plantje al was uitgestorven.'

'Maar wat als er toch nog ergens een laatste telefoonplantje bestaat, misschien ergens diep onder de grond ofzo, of misschien zelfs grote velden vol van zulke plantjes ?' zei het meisje.

'Dan wens ik de goochelaar heel veel geluk en succes op zijn zoektocht,' zei vader.

Einde

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De Onwereld – Vooraf

De wereld is niets, en de kranten zijn nog wel nietser, want ze maken alles wat er gebeurd wel tien keer erger dan het is, want dat verkoopt gewoon beter. De mens houdt nu eenmaal van slecht nieuws. Nee, geef mij dan maar een onwereld, en doe mij dan maar een onkrant.

De wereld is niets, de kranten nog wel nietser. De kranten doen het allemaal voor het geld, zonder inhoud. De kranten hebben deze wereld gebouwd, het nog wel erger gemaakt dan het was, allemaal door hun geklets. Het is een belediging naar de literatuur. Nee, doe mij dan maar een onwereld, en daarbij hoort natuurlijk een onkrant.

Ik was gisteren in een stadje dichtbij, want ik moest naar de bank, en die hebben ze niet in mijn kleine bosdorpje. Ik liep langs wat tuinen richting de bank, en de tuinen waren prachtig. Maar sommige tuinen waren zo geordend en je kon er zo de mensenhand doorheen zien dat het geen wildernis meer was. Geen takje stond er scheef, en ook de blaadjes stonden kaarsrecht. Nee, doe mij dan maar het onkruid wat welig voorttiert, onverstoord door wat mensen denken en mensen willen.

Is het je ook niet opgevallen dat mensen maar altijd van alles willen, en dat het er niet om gaat wat ze nodig hebben ? De mens wil van alles, maar kent niet. Het gaat niet om de wil, maar om de kennis van zaken. Telkens maar weer moet ik in de kranten lezen wat mensen allemaal willen. Daarom lees ik de krant maar nauwelijks. Je zou er ziek van worden, en iedereen wil het toch altijd weer anders dan de ander. Nee, doe mij dan maar de onkrant, en geef mij dan maar een onwereld.

Zoals ik al eens zei moet je de hemel zelf bouwen, en zo geld dat ook voor de onwereld. Wie oh wie gaat er met mij mee ? Laten we de onwereld zelf bouwen, anders komt het er nooit van. Het komt niet zomaar uit de hemel

vallen. En om een onwereld te kunnen bouwen heb je een krant nodig : de onkrant. Ook die komt niet zomaar uit de hemel vallen, of toch wel ?

Ik zie hem hier weleens lopen, de onkranten jongen. Er zijn maar weinig adressen waar hij zijn onkranten levert, dus hij is altijd weer snel weg. Als ik hem naroep is hij meestal al weer verdwenen. Maar op een dag groette hij mij, met zo'n heel mooi, glazen stemmetje. Ik vroeg hem om een onkrant, en ik vroeg ook wat het kostte. 'Je leven,' zei hij.

Ik moest even nadenken, maar toen begreep ik hem. Was ik bereid de wereld in te ruilen voor de onwereld ? Ik leef nog steeds, maar toch ook niet meer. Ik had de onkrant wel van hem aangenomen, en het opende een nieuwe wereld voor mij, een onwereld. Maar soms vraag ik me weleens af wat er zou zijn gebeurd als ik de onkrant niet van hem zou hebben aangenomen ? Eigenlijk wil ik daar niet aan denken ...

De tuin van mevrouw van dalen

Altijd als ik langs de tuin van mevrouw van Dalen liep stond ik even stokstijf, ik weet niet voor hoe lang, omdat het zo'n betoverende tuin was. Ik kwam dan altijd veel te laat op school aan en dan was de juffrouw of meester enorm kwaad. Dat kon mij natuurlijk niet zoveel schelen. Ik was toch hun slaaf niet, en zij vertelden toch alleen maar onzin. Ze moesten niet denken dat ik veel waarde aan hen hechtte en aan hun duivelse woorden. Ik hechtte alleen

waarde aan de natuur en de tuin van mevrouw van Dalen. Als ik ze dat zei dan werden ze altijd nog wel veel kwader, maar ook dat deerde mij niet. Ik was immers betoverd door de tuin van mevrouw van Dalen. Als ik ze dat zei dan ontploften ze vaak helemaal, en ik werd zelfs eens door een juffrouw naar het schoolhoofd gezonden. Die zat daar in zijn kamertje alsof hij zelf ook betoverd was. Hij was in zijn geheel niet kwaad, en zelfs blij met mijn aanwezigheid. Ik had het gevoel dat het een erg eenzame man was.

We spraken over tuinen en over de natuur. Achteraf was ik nog blij ook dat de juffrouw me naar het schoolhoofd had gezonden. Ik heb nu een eigen tuin, die zeer wild is, en overloopt in het bos. Ik woon in een bosdorpje. Het bos is er vlak achter. Ik woon aan de rand van het bos. Er staat ook wat bamboe hier en daar. Er groeit van alles in mijn tuin, zelfs bramenstruiken. De natuur zorgt er zelf voor en doet alles groeien. Ik denk nog weleens terug aan de tuin van mevrouw van Dalen, en ook aan die school, en dan denk ik : 'Ach.' De tijden zijn zo veranderd. Hoe ben ik van daar naar hier gekomen ? Wat is er veel gebeurd, zeg. Het huis staat vol met boeken, als een boekentuin, maar het is meer een wildernis. Soms moet ik uren zoeken voordat ik wat gevonden heb dat ik zoek, of ik vind iets wat nog wel beter is. De wildernis trekt mij voort en laat mij nieuwe dingen zien. Het lijkt wel alsof het z'n eigen verkeers systeem heeft. Ik heb ook heel veel beeldjes. Er staan ook wat treintjes. Het is allemaal heel beeldend en symbolisch. Soms als er hier mensen zijn dan spreken ze tegen de beeldjes. Er was eens iemand die er een heel gesprek mee voerde. Ik zei toen : 'Je kunt met beelden soms beter spreken dan met mensen.' Ze gaf me gelijk. Ze sprak ook met dieren en planten. Ik zei haar dat ik ook met boeken sprak. Het bracht haar op een idee.

Ik vertelde haar dat boeken spreken, want als je het nog een keer leest dan kun je het op een hele andere manier lezen en er hele andere dingen in zien. Een boek kan vele lagen hebben, vele verborgen deuren, verborgen kamers, tuinen en wildernissen. Toen ze weg was ging ik naar het beeld toe waarmee ze had gesproken. 'Hoe vond je haar ?' vroeg ik aan het beeld. Het beeld zei niks terug. Ik ben toen maar weer een boek gaan lezen. Blijkbaar hebben beelden niet altijd zin om terug te spreken. Het was een sprekend boek. Ik werd er weer wat wijzer door. Even had ik weer het gevoel alsof ik langs de tuin

van mevrouw van Dalen liep … Even had ik weer het gevoel alsof ik stokstijf stond …

De kleermaker die van tranen kleren maakte

Er was eens een kleermaker die van tranen kleren maakte. De kleren waren zo mooi dat wanneer iemand ze zag dan barstte zo iemand vaak in snikken uit. Vaak was dat omdat de kleren zo prachtig waren, maar soms was het ook omdat de prachtige kleren voor hen te duur waren. Ja, de kleermaker vroeg er veel voor. Er ging namelijk nogal veel werk inzitten om ze te maken, maar dan waren het ook wel de mooiste kleren die je ooit had gezien.

Op een dag liep een moeder met haar zoon langs de etalage, en beiden barstten ze in snikken uit toen ze de van tranen gemaakte kleren zagen. Oh, ze waren toch zo prachtig, maar toen de jongen het prijskaartje ervoor zag liggen begon hij zelfs nog harder te huilen en zelfs te gillen. Dat zou hij nooit kunnen betalen, en zijn moeder ook niet. Hij zou daar wel dertig jaar voor moeten werken om het te kunnen kopen. 'Ik wil het hebben, moeder,' zei hij.

'Dan moet je nu al beginnen met een krantenwijkje, anders gaat het je nooit tijdens je leven lukken,' zei moeder. Hij jammerde, gilde en schreeuwde zo luid dat de kleermaker naar buiten kwam. Toen hij het verhaal hoorde zei hij : 'Maar je kunt ook bij mij werken.'

Even had de jongen hoop. Maar toen hij een tijdje bij de kleermaker had gewerkt gaf hij het al op. Het was veel te zwaar en moeilijk werk. De tranen waren moeilijk aan elkaar te rijgen. De kleermaker gebruikte daar een speciale

techniek voor, maar het wilde de jongen maar niet lukken. Moedeloos ging de jongen terug naar huis en vertelde het zijn moeder.

Op een nacht kreeg de jongen een idee. Hij zou de van tranen gemaakte kleren stelen, want anders kreeg hij ze nooit. Dat ging hij doen. Midden in de nacht ging hij op pad. Iedereen sliep. Ook de kleermaker. Hij had de sleutel van de winkel die hij van de kleermaker had gekregen nooit teruggegeven, dus voor hem was het een koud kunstje de winkel binnen te komen. Daar zag hij de van tranen gemaakte kleren die hij wilde. Heel stilletjes sloop hij ernaar toe. Maar toen hij de kleren wilde aanraken en pakken werd hij ineens gebeten door de poes van de kleermaker. En wie gebeten zou worden door de poes van de kleermaker zou voor altijd huilen. Jammerend ging de jongen de winkel weer uit. Door de pijn van de beet was hij de van tranen gemaakte kleren helemaal vergeten. Ook toen hij thuis was gekomen kon hij niet stoppen met jammeren, en de volgende dag ook niet. Hij was immers gebeten door de poes van de kleermaker. Zijn moeder zei dat hij naar de heks moest. Die kon toveren. De heks woonde helemaal aan de rivier. Daarvoor moesten ze eerst een tijd door het bos lopen. De hele tijd jammerde de jongen. Hij kon niet stoppen.

Ook toen ze bij de heks aankwamen uiteindelijk jammerde de jongen nog steeds. 'Ik zie wat er gebeurd is,' zei de heks. 'Alleen als je de rivier overzwemt zul je van het jammeren afzijn.'

De jongen zag geen andere oplossing, en ging snikkend de rivier in en begon toen te zwemmen. Het was een hele lange zwemtocht over de rivier. De heks had hem verteld dat hij nooit mocht omkijken. Na een hele lange tijd kwam hij snikkend aan land. Hij was wel blij dat hij het gered had. Hij durfde nog steeds niet om te kijken. Hij bleef maar lopen en lopen totdat hij in een dorpje kwam. Het jammeren was inderdaad eindelijk afgelopen. Maar telkens als de mensen vroegen wie hij was en als hij het verhaal vertelde wat er was gebeurd, dan kon hij het snikken niet inhouden. Dan huilde hij bittere tranen, en het deed pijn, zoveel pijn, dat hij het eigenlijk nooit meer wilde vertellen. Hij wilde niet meer terug waar hij vandaan kwam, en ook de heks had hem gezegd dat hij nooit meer mocht omkijken. En zo leefde hij de rest van zijn leven met een geheim waar hij nooit meer over kon praten.

Einde

De Imker

Bij mijn tante was er een land octopus geconstateerd, in haar huis, in de keuken om precies te zijn. Een land octopus kan ook gewoon op land leven. Het was een witte. Het is bekend van de land octopus dat het gif spuit met z'n tentakels, en als iemand geraakt wordt dan heeft zo iemand het gevoel dat hij de krant leest, en sterft dan even later, of raakt voor de rest van z'n leven verlamd. Coma's zijn ook mogelijk. Ook kan de land octopus steken met zijn tentakels, en het is bekend dat hij zo eitjes kan leggen in degene die wordt gestoken, zowel in mens als dier. Niet om op de koffie uit te nodigen dus. Mijn tante durfde de keuken niet meer in. Ik ging er naartoe, en toen ik in de achterhal was kon ik zo de keuken inkijken, en daar zat de witte land octopus op een tafeltje, te blazen. Toen hij mij zag krijste het ding. Ik was in mijn imker pak gekomen voor het geval hij zou spuiten, steken of bijten. Plotseling sprong hij hevig krijsend op mijn helm, en probeerde er een gat in te steken. Hij begon allemaal te tikken. Ik greep hem met mijn handschoen, waarin hij toen probeerde te bijten. Ik voelde me heel vies, en had allerlei drangen om te poepen en te plassen. Ik had allerlei beelden in mijn hoofd van toiletten en alsof ik de krant las. Ook had ik overgeef neigingen. Mijn tante voelde haarzelf al jaren misselijk. Het scheen dat de land octopus al die tijd bij haar onder het huis had geleefd, maar had zich nu boven de grond vertoond en had het gemunt op mijn tante, die toen gelukkig tijdig kon ontkomen. Het beest begon

als een bezetene inkt te spuiten. Ze worden daarom ook wel krant octopussen genoemd. Hij probeerde mij onder hypnose te brengen. Met mijn andere hand pakte ik een nijptang. Er was een vreemd uitsteeksel aan de onderkant van het beest, zijn geslachtsorgaan. Het orgaan trilde van woede. Ik besloot het te amputeren, want dit beest was hondsdol en levensgevaarlijk. Ik moest snel zijn, want ik had het gevoel dat het beest me probeerde in te nemen. Ik wist niet hoe lang mijn imker pak er nog tegen bestand zou zijn, maar ik voelde dat het beest gebruik maakte van de zwakke plekken ervan. Ik bedacht me geen moment. Ik zette de knijpers van de nijptang tegen het geslachtsdeel aan, en zette er druk op om het vervolgens met draaiende bewegingen los te wrikken. Op dat moment kwam mijn tante binnen, en ik liet haar het geamputeerde geslachtsdeel zien. Het was als een heel vreemd uitwendig kliertje, en ik hield het zo voor haar neus. 'Ruik er eens aan,' zei ik. Ze deed het.

'Bah, wat smerig,' zei ze.

'Dit beest laat ieder mens hetzelfde denken, door zijn vermogen van groeps-hypnose,' zei ik. 'Daarom noemen ze het ook wel een krant octopus.' Mijn tante knikte.

'Hoe voel je je nu ?' vroeg ik aan haar.

'Nog een beetje duizelig,' zei ze.

Het beest hing slap in mijn hand. 'Het ding heeft hier flink lopen klieren,' zei ik.

'Ik weet het,' zei mijn tante.

'Het is een wonder dat je nog leeft,' zei ik. 'Hij heeft hier zo lang onder de grond gewoond.'

'Ik was doodziek,' zei mijn tante.

Daar kwam ook het hondje van mijn tante. Ik wierp het kleine, vreemde geslachtsdeeltje van de krant octopus zo naar hem toe, en hij slokte het

meteen op.

'Dat kan geen kwaad ?' vroeg mijn tante.

'Nee,' zei ik.

'Wat doen we met de land octopus zelf ?' vroeg mijn tante.

'Die gaat mee naar het laboratorium voor verder onderzoek,' zei ik.

Ik stopte het slapgeworden beest in een zak, en vertrok toen snel. Mijn tante belde me even later. 'Is alles goed nu ?' vroeg ze.

'Nee,' zei ik. 'Hij heeft teveel kinderen gemaakt. Het is een ware plaag, en hij is onder veel meer huizen.'

'Ben ik wel veilig dan ?' vroeg ze.

'Ik heb je aan zijn uitwendige klier laten ruiken, dus als het goed is gaat je lichaam er nu antistoffen tegen aanmaken,' zei ik. 'Maar je moet inderdaad oppassen. Ik heb geen idee hoeveel er nog onder je huis zitten, maar dit was de alfa octopus, oftewel de leider.'

'Wat kan ik nog meer doen ?' vroeg mijn tante.

'Gewoon rustig blijven,' zei ik.

'Gelukkig heb ik een hond,' zei mijn tante. 'Die meldde het mij direct toen het beest boven de grond was gekomen. Waarschijnlijk heeft dat m'n leven gered. Ik had er niet aan moeten denken als het in mijn slaap op me was gesprongen.'

'Je mag inderdaad van geluk spreken,' zei ik. 'Maar mentaal gezien moet er nog heel wat gebeuren. Dit beest hield het gehele land onder zware hypnose, net zoals de krant.'

'Vandaar de naam,' zei mijn tante.

'Precies,' zei ik.

'Okay, ik ga maar slapen,' zei mijn tante.

Ik voelde me moe. Toen ben ik ook maar vroeg naar bed gegaan. Ik voelde me vies, alsof ik de hele dag vies werk had gedaan, en alles in mijn huis vies was. Ik douchte me wel een paar keer, maar ik kon dat vieze gevoel niet van me afwassen. Ik keek in de spiegel en zag wat vreemde bulten. 'Zou de land octopus me dan toch … ?' vroeg ik mezelf af. Ik zuchtte. Ik kreeg de meest vreemde gedachtes, alsof ik toch nog met hem in gevecht was.

'Misschien zit er ook één onder mijn huis,' dacht ik ineens. Ik kon ineens moeilijk ademhalen, en viel na een tijdje neer. Niet lang daarna kroop er een witte land octopus langs mij. Ik kon me niet bewegen. Hij begon me te steken en zijn eitjes in me te leggen, terwijl ik mijn imker pak niet aanhad. Ik kon zelfs niet schreeuwen van de pijn. Ik probeerde naar de telefoon te grijpen, maar het was hopeloos. Ik zag allerlei kranten voor mijn ogen rollen, alsof er massa's kranten werden gedrukt. Ineens schrok ik wakker. Het was een nachtmerrie geweest. Maar ik wist dat er wat onder het huis moest zitten. Ik ging naar beneden naar de kelder, en toen ik de deur opende zag ik hem al zitten, tussen de boeken. Wat een gulzig gedrocht was het. Ik deed de deur dicht, en trok eerst mijn imker pak aan. Toen ging ik terug de kelder binnen. Ik raakte in een enorm gevecht met deze land octopus. Hij blies en spoot, stak en beet … Nee, hij wilde niet opgeven. Ik pakte een nijptang en gaf hem daarmee een mep. Het leek alsof ik immuun was voor hem. Ik had zo'n varkentje natuurlijk al weleens eerder gewassen. Ik nam hem toen in mijn hand, en zocht naar het uitwendige kliertje, maar deze had geen kliertje, alleen een zeer vreemde, geribbelde inham. 'Dit moet het vrouwtje wezen,' zei ik tegen mezelf. 'Het alfa vrouwtje.'

Ik gaf het beest nog een mep met de nijptang, maar werd gelijk omsingeld door nog meer witte land octopussen, alsof haar hele nageslacht me nu op de hielen zat, maar ik liet haar niet los. Ik begon om me heen te schoppen en te

stampen, maar ze begonnen aan me vast te kleven. Ik moest nu snel zijn. Ik pakte toen een schroevendraaier, en stak het toen in de inham en drukte helemaal door totdat er bloed uitspoot. Toen ik de schroevendraaier er weer uittrok bleef het geribbelde gaatje eraan steken en kwam helemaal buiten als een kliertje. 'Hmmm, dus deze kan wisselen,' mompelde ik. Toen pakte ik de nijptang weer en verwijderde draaiend het uitwendige kliertje. Ik voelde me even heel slap, en moest even op de grond zitten, maar het beest was nu ook slap, en ook het nageslacht. Ze gleden gewoon slap langs me af, als een kleed wat werd afgedaan. Ik kon ook niet meer blijven zitten, maar moest liggen, met mijn hoofd op de koude grond.

De volgende dag was er geen krant. Ze staakten daar bij de krant. Maar de dag daarop was er weer gewoon de krant. Ik vroeg me af waar ik het eigenlijk allemaal voor gedaan had. Ik wist dat er nog veel meer van zulke gedrochten onder de huizen van de mensen zaten. Wel waren er bepaalde veranderingen in de krant. Ook werden bepaalde producten niet meer verkocht. Maar ja, dat gebeurde wel vaker. Ik had het gevoel alsof het dweilen met de kraan open was. Maar ongeveer een week daarna kreeg ik een telefoontje van mijn tante. Ze voelde haarzelf beter dan ooit tevoren. Ook vertelde ze dat ze onderzoek had gedaan onder haar huis, en dat ze een tunnel had gevonden die naar een andere wereld leidde. Ik zou direct komen. Ze liet het me zien, en ik was verbaasd en verwonderd. Toen zijn we met z'n tweeen naar die andere wereld gegaan. De poortwachter was nu immers dood.

Einde

De spiegoloog

Na de oorlog kwamen we in gespreksgroepjes en onder een geestelijk verzorger. We hadden het gered tot de natuurstad. De automaten in de natuurstad waren ingewikkeld, en het was moeilijk plaatsen te vinden.

Maar in het gespreksgroepje werden al deze dingen besproken.
De geestelijke verzorger keek ons allemaal aan.
Ik kende hem, maar ik wist niet waarvan.
Hij had een baardje.
Hij moest ons helpen.
Hij moest ons door deze natuur stad leiden.
Wij kenden deze planeet niet.
We hadden er alleen voor gevochten.
De oorlog was gewonnen.

De geestelijke verzorger was een onderwijzer, een gids.
We kregen allemaal onze eigen kamer.
Het was een prachtige natuur stad, met aangenaam weer.
Het was zacht weer, niet te warm, en ook zeker niet te koud.

Ik keek naar de anderen van het gespreksgroepje.
We waren lotgenoten.
Allemaal hadden we de oorlog overleefd.
De geestelijke verzorger keek ons allemaal aan.
Hij was streng, maar ook zorgzaam, en voornamelijk educatief.
De stad moest wel ingewikkeld zijn, om de roofdieren buiten te houden.

De roofdieren zouden hun bekken er wel op stuk breken.

Het was om ons voor te bereiden op de natuurtocht.
Het was een jungle planeet.
Zonder spiegologie te leren was het te gevaarlijk.

De geestelijk verzorger was een spiegoloog.

Hij liet een spiegel zien, en begon er aan te draaien, en er kwamen vreemde effecten.
Hij liet zien dat alles door spiegelingen was ontstaan.
Niets stond op zichzelf.
Niemand kon ook iets doen, want het waren slechts spiegelingen.
Niemand kon uit zichzelf spreken, want het waren slechts spiegelingen.

Ik keek naar de geheimzinnige spiegel.
Er kwam een vreemd licht vanaf.
Maar het waren slechts spiegelingen.

'Spiegologie is belangrijker dan oorlogskunde,' zei de spiegoloog.
Hij zei dat hij met zijn spiegeltje meer kon doen dan een soldaat,
en dat hij ons hier had gebracht door zijn spiegeltje.

Het was een heel geheimzinnig spiegeltje.
Hij had het eens geerfd.
Hij ging zich er toen in verdiepen, en toen werd hij spiegoloog.
Het begon toen het spiegeltje hem ooit eens redde.
Hij vertelde dat hij eens overboord was geslagen van een schip,
en dat hij wegzonk in de golven. Er was storm en het was nacht.
Maar het spiegeltje vond hem.

Het spiegeltje leidde hem naar een eiland.
En daar onderwees het spiegeltje hem, en toen werd hij spiegoloog, een soort tovenaar.
We keken hem allemaal ademloos aan, en toen keken we naar elkaar.
Ja, wij wilden ook wel spiegoloog worden, en bij hem waren we aan het juiste adres.

Hij keek ons aan en begon weer met het spiegeltje te draaien.
Plotseling waren we in het oerwoud.
'Allemaal spiegelingen,' zei hij. Hij draaide zijn spiegeltje weer, en toen waren

we weer in de gezamelijke gespreksruimte.

'Wonderlijk,' zei ik.
Hij glimlachte.

Hij keek me aandachtig aan, en richte toen zijn spiegeltje op me. Toen draaide hij aan het spiegeltje, en ineens had ik andere kleren aan.

'Wonderlijk,' zei ik, terwijl ik mijn kleren bewonderde.
Hij glimlachte. Hij draaide het spiegeltje toen weer, en even had ik geen kleding aan.
Ik was helemaal naakt. Ik werd vuurrood, maar moest ook lachen.
'Dus gedraag je maar, jongetje,' zei hij glimlachend voor de grap, terwijl hij het spiegeltje weer draaide, en ik weer gewoon tot mijn opluchting kleren aan had.

'Nou ja, kan natuurlijk van pas komen in het oerwoud,' zei ik. 'Als je het maar niet bij me doet als ik zomaar op straat loop.'

'Gedraag je dus maar,' zei hij weer glimlachend voor de grap.

'Ik ben ervan overtuigd dat je wel veel meer kan,' zei ik.

'Oh ja,' zei hij. 'Dit is nog maar het begin.'

'Als jij je dan maar ook gedraagt,' zei iemand anders van het gespreksgroepje tegen de spiegoloog, 'en ons niet gaat chanteren.'

'Nee,' zei de spiegoloog, 'maak je maar geen zorgen. Als je de fijne kneepjes van de spiegologie leert kennen, dan kan niemand je nog chanteren, behalve de spiegel zelf, maar dat is voor opvoedkundige redenen.'

'Wordt jij weleens door de spiegel gechanteerd dan ?' vroeg iemand.

'Nee, eigenlijk niet,' zei de spiegoloog. 'Het zijn slechts spiegelingen.'

'Waarvan is de spiegel zelf dan een afspiegeling ?' vroeg iemand.

'Van een kernspiegel in het oerwoud,' sprak de spiegoloog.

'En waarvan is de kernspiegel dan een afspiegeling ?' vroeg iemand.

'Van een andere kernspiegel,' sprak de spiegoloog.

'Ingewikkeld,' zei iemand.

'Daarom bij de les blijven,' zei de spiegoloog.

'Anders staan we in ons nakie ?' vroeg ik.

'Ja, of je komt bij de apen terecht in de dierentuin zoals alle spijbelaars,' zei de spiegoloog.

'Lekker bananen eten,' zei iemand.

De spiegeloog draaide aan zijn spiegel, en toen was diegene in een aap veranderd.

'Doe terug, doe terug,' riep die persoon.

'Bij de les blijven dan,' zei de spiegoloog.

'Ik zal jou eens in een aap veranderen,' zei iemand anders van het gespreksgroepje, en haalde een spiegeltje tevoorschijn, begon eraan te draaien, en veranderde zo de spiegoloog in een aap.

'Oh, we hebben geheime spiegologen onder ons,' zei de spiegoloog, die met zijn spiegeltje hemzelf weer in een mens veranderde.

'Wat denk je ?' zei de geheime spiegoloog. 'Dacht je nu echt dat jij de enige was die bewapend is met een spiegeltje ? Dan ken je de spiegologie maar

nauwelijks, broeder. The joke is on you.'

'Nou ja, vooruit dan maar,' zei de spiegoloog. 'Er is altijd baas boven baas.'

'Dus houd je geintjes maar voor je,' zei de geheime spiegoloog. 'We houden je in de gaten. Je bent hier om spiegologie te onderwijzen, niet om te chanteren en bang te maken, en andere ongein.'

Maar toen begon de spiegoloog aan zijn spiegeltje te draaien, en liet de geheime spiegoloog met stoel en al door de grond heenzakken. 'Er zitten altijd bengels tussen,' zei hij. 'Maar ze komen nooit ver met hun vervalste spiegeltjes. Toch zijn dit ook allemaal slechts spiegel effecten.'

Deze natuur stad was ingewikkeld. Ik was daarom ook vastbesloten spiegoloog te worden, als een weg tot de wildernis.

RATATOSK

Hoofdstuk 1. het pedagogische onkruid
Hoofdstuk 2. de schoenenreus

Hoofdstuk 1. het pedagogische onkruid

Het onkruid van munt, geduldig maar streng.
Het spaart het kind niet, als het kind tot het vreemde moet gaan,
maar blijft wel altijd achter het kind staan met haar warmte.
Haar sieraden zijn verleidelijk, en daarom wordt zij onkruid genoemd, een gevaarlijke vrouw.
Zij laat haar kinderen alleen in de nacht, opdat zij zelf het pad vinden.

Van het zuiverste onkruid is zij gesponnen, dat wat anderen niet aandurfden,
Zij leidt haar kinderen tot het vreemde.
Zij daagt het vreemde uit om haar kinderen te nemen.
En daarom wordt zij onkruid genoemd, een gevaarlijke vrouw.

Zij groeit om steden heen, en komt binnen door de gaten,
Waar onoplettendheid heerst neemt zij haar kans,
en sleurt zij kinderen naar haar holen, waar zij worden ingewijd in het onkruid van munt,
Waar zij wedergeboren worden als haar kinderen.

De stad is zwak in haar ogen,
niet bestand tegen haar geheimen.

Zij leidt haar kinderen tot de geheimen van het bos,
En in de nacht vaagt haar stem weg, opdat zij het vreemde zullen zoeken.
Zij zendt haar kinderen als boodschappers tot het vreemde.
Hoe lieflijk op de bergen zijn de voeten van hen die goed nieuws brengen.
Hoe lieflijk zijn de voeten van hen die geschoeid zijn met het evangelie des vredes.

Het vreemde is een droom tussen waken en slapen, als een tussenslaap.
Als de moederborsten die neervallen van de grote kerk,
om de doden te voeden.

Wat als haar kind spastisch zou zijn ?

Zij zou blij zijn als het vreemde haar kind zou helpen.
Telkens weer kijkt zij hoe ver het kind is.

Wat als haar kind geen armen zou hebben ?
Zou het vreemde dan niet helpen,
en zou zij het vreemde niet toestaan ?

Vergeet het binnennemen van de vreemdelingen niet,
want daardoor hebben sommigen, zonder het te weten, godsgezondenen binnengenomen.

Maar gij sprak : het vreemde heeft ons overweldigd.
Zij hebben onze kampen en holen ingenomen.

Het onkruid van munt is een stille getuige van deze dingen.

En gij sprak : Is het vreemde niet tot vijand geworden ?
Maar gij was zelf de vijand.

Hoe lieflijk zijn op de bergen dan de voeten die goed nieuws brengen ?
Maar gij hebt niet willen luisteren.

Het onkruid van munt gaat altijd haar kinderen vooruit,
en onderhandelt met het vreemde,
maar gij hebt het niet begrepen, en jammerde en klaagde.
En zij bekommerde zich er niet om.

Niets is geduid, ze treft bewust haar doel niet,
en glijd langs hem heen om haar geheimen te bewaren.
Zij ontwijkt hem, zij is het onkruid van munt.
Zij blijft op een afstand, opdat er ruimte is voor groei.

Waarom draagt zij dan nog steeds deze glorie ?
Waarom hoort zij nog steeds zijn stem ?
Omdat zij nog steeds betrokken is.

Zij staat nooit te ver weg.

Zou het vreemde tot vrede leiden, dieper in het bos ?
Maar gij noemt het oorlog.

Zij onderhandelt met het vreemde,
haar kinderen begrijpen het niet.
En toch moet zij moeder zijn.

Sta de vreemdeling toe, spreekt zij,
want het kan een godsgezondene zijn.

Ik ken deze kinderen in het veld niet.
Zij zijn vreemden.

Hoe diep moest je gaan om aan deze wereld te ontkomen ?
Velen lijden om te vermeerderen, om troost te zoeken in rijkdom, roem en macht.
Maar jij moest het hongerpad op om tot het hongerzaad te komen.
Het hongerzaad bracht een nieuwe schepping, de andere schepping die verloren was geraakt, vergeten, uit de harten gebant.

Hoe diep moest je gaan om aan deze wereld te ontkomen ?
Het ware evangelie is : gij moet minder worden, gij moet hongeren, leren leven met het minste.
Zo is er ruimte voor fantasie en verbeelding, de andere wereld die zal komen.
Zo komt gij tot het hongerzaad die zij is.

Het hongerpad, maar wie weet de weg ?
De honger weet de weg.

Hoe diep moest je gaan om aan deze wereld te ontkomen ?
Hij kwam tot het onkruid van munt, als minnares,
de ware roman,
waarin hij zijn hongerzaad gaf,
voor een nieuwe schepping,
een nieuwe wereld.

Hij staart naar de blote borsten van de honger,
waarin hij sterft.

Hij stierf op het hongerpad, en werd ook in haar wedergeboren,
en iedereen deed alsof er niets aan de hand was.

Hoe diep moest je gaan ? Hoe diep moest je gaan ?

Zij kan het je niet vertellen want ze is het vergeten door de honger,
en jij bent het ook vergeten. Alleen een kind kan het weten.

Ze was sadistisch en hardvochtig, wreed, zoals je je de honger had voorgesteld.
Zo waren de zakkenrollers van Amsterdam toch nog ergens goed voor.
Ze kwamen met moeder Honger op haar schip, als haar pieten.
Gillend renden ze door de straten, om te stelen alles wat los en vast zat.
Zij waren de sirenes van moeder Honger.

Het is een verschrikkelijk moment waarop zij komt,
om dood en verderf te zaaien, als de anti sinterklaas,
rijdend op een zwart paard,
gehuld in een paars gewaad.

Ik ben de honger loper,
in een honger nachtmerrie,
die gaat tot het verborgene, een groot geheim.
Buiten het verborgene is niets dan misbruik.

Ik ben de honger loper,
tussen slapen en waken,
in de tussenslaap,
waar ik dodelijke literaire schilderijen schilderde,
waar ik eerst zelf aan stierf.

Mijn moeder was ook een literaire schilderes,
in paars gehuld …

Zo voerde zij oorlogen,
Zo stonden haar standbeelden daar in een zuiver hemels metaal,
Haar kinderen waren duur betaald …

Zij kan niemand zo ver krijgen om voor haar te vechten,
Daarom schildert zij ze …

Maar is zij dan een snelle doder ?
Nee, zij werkt met honger,
op zwart paard met lang paars gewaad,
om hen aan haar literaire schilderijen de hongerdood te doen sterven …

Alsmaar willen zij meer,
Maar zij legt het hen uit, keer op keer …
Zij is de pedagogiek van het onkruid,
Altijd wegtrekkend op haar paard,
Om te zien wie komt en wie gaat …

Dure bonbons op een schaaltje,
maar niet voor hen,
zij zijn als honden …
Honden van de honger die voor haar uitgaan, en achter haar navolgen …
om de literaire honger te brengen …

Dure bonbons op een schaaltje,

maar niet voor hen,
zij zijn immers om de honger te brengen,
honger uit een gat …

Daar sterven zij een langzame dood,
waar zij kijkt, al schilderend voor het nageslacht …
Zij is de verzetsstrijdster tegen de gulzige stad …

Zij vangt de dwazen in haar netten …
Haar wapen is de honger …
De schade die zij aanricht is literair …

Gulzigaarden staren haar aan,
en verbleken als zij haar honger schilderijen zien …
om dan vervolgens weg te smelten …

Zou zij met zulke stenen haar lanen niet bouwen ?
Een krachtig morofoog is zij …
Wat is een morofoog ?
Een aardring in het diepste donkerste van de psyche …

Haar honger-monniken gaan traag in het paars,
in stoeten achter haar aan …
Ze merken het niet, zij zijn hongerend,
in de honger nachtmerrie …
slaapwandelaars ….

Hoofdstuk 2. de schoenenreus

Maar de koekmannetjes en de koekvrouwtjes lieten dat niet op zich zitten, en sloegen hard terug,
zodat moeder Honger tot de boeken werd verbannen.
Niemand kon hen stoppen. Zij spraken namelijk koeks.
Daarmee kregen ze alles voor elkaar.
En zo werd moeder Honger slechts tot sprookje.

De gulzigaarden spraken koeks,
een verboden taal,
maar zij deden het zo graag,
lekker stiekem koeks praten.

Ze is toen gaan onderduiken bij haar zus die een bordeel had.
Het bordeel was zo belachelijk duur dat er bijna niemand kwam.
Alleen zij die voldoende hadden gehongerd konden er komen,
als ze het honger geld hadden.
Het was een zwart geld, zwaar verboden.

En de bordeel meisjes daar waren slechts soldaten,
Je vond daar alleen de dood.
Alleen honger monniken kwamen daar,
zij die klaar waren voor de dood.

De honger monniken, op weg naar het bordeel,
maar de bordeel meisjes zijn slechts honger en dood,
opdat het gulzige ego zou sterven.

Zij is slechts de eenzaamheid aan wie zij hun honger zaad schenken.
Traag klagen en zingen zij in stoeten op weg naar het bordeel,
waarlangs velen al voortijdig door de honden van honger worden verscheurd,
want hier heerst slechts de honger.

Het bordeel werd bezocht door jammerende, klagende, vloekende monniken die honger kruizen en honger palen op hun ruggen droegen, al zuchtend en kreunend.

Met honger tranen,
maar de gulzigen hadden gulzige tranen …

Die monniken moesten slechts werk krijgen,
in een schoenmakerij of een poppenmakerij …
Dan hadden ze wat te doen …
De bordeelhoudster was slechts een onderwijzeres …

Zouden zij de voeten van deze vrouwen kunnen schoeien met het goede nieuws ?
Of waren zij het niet waard ?
Ze zouden ook bij de kapper kunnen werken …

Hoe lieflijk op de bergen zijn de voeten van hen die het goede nieuws brengen,
de honger hebben gebracht,
de gulzige slang hebben verslagen …

Het pinksterfeest is een oogstfeest, waarop zij met lieflijke voeten het goede nieuws brengen,
Het hongerfeest leidt hiertoe,
als het hongerpad dat leidt tot de schoenmakerij, tot de schoenenreus …
De reus is een metafoor voor de grotere context …
Ook klein duimpje ging op het hongerpad tot de schoenenreus …
Klein duimpje is een metafoor voor de besnijdenis van de vastheid,
de zekerheden van de mens …

In de ladderfabriek moest ik ladders in elkaar schuiven,
en eens schoof het over mijn duim, en scheurde het zo open …
Ik bloedde en viel even later flauw ...
Ook brak ik eens mijn duim, en mijn duim voelt nog steeds een beetje

gebroken …
Gevoelig, zoals Jakob's heup op Pniel … Mijn duim is besneden …
Mijn zekerheden, mijn houvast …

Door hoeveel besnijdenissen moet de mens heen op het hongerpad om tot de reus met de zeven mijlslaarzen te komen ?
Ook snelheid is een symbool voor context.
Toen ik bij de schoenenreus was geweest regende het,
hongertranen gemengd met hongerzaad …
als een eekhoorn die zijn eikels voor de winter verzameld …
Ratatosk brengt altijd scheiding …
Alleen door besnijdenissen en scheidingen kom je immers tot de grotere context …

De Luchtlanding op de Renkumse Heide op 17 september 1944 in de Slag om Arnhem

Het existentialisme stelt dat om te 'zijn' moet er transcendentie ontstaan, en dat gebeurt alleen door onderzoek te doen. In die zin leven alleen de transcendente onderzoekers. Door het bestaan komen zij tot de essentie. Alles wat daarbuiten valt bestaat niet, en komt dus ook niet tot de essentie. Dit onderzoek gaat veel door het stellen van vragen. Onderzoekers zijn vragen stellers. Zij die geen vragen stellen komen tot voorbarige conclusies. Onderzoekers zijn open en komen niet tot snelle conclusies. Dingen mogen niet als objecten gezien worden, want dat is materialisme, en maakt de mens dicht en oppervlakkig, gesloten. Dingen moeten beschouwd worden, ervaren worden, intuïtief, en met het stellen van veel vragen, zodat er geen vooroordeel wortel kan schieten. Er wordt dus een oorlog gevoerd tegen het

snelle materialisme en het snelle christendom die alles overmoedig al in potten en pannen hebben gestopt om maar markt te kunnen drijven. Zo ontstonden de steden, maar het existentialisme wil de mens terugleiden tot de natuur. De mens moet vervreemden van de overmoedige stadse systemen, om tot de eigen waarheid te komen, de onderzochte waarheid. Alles moet getest worden. De stad test niet, maar verkoopt, en doet dit door boerenbedrog. Het is een gewoonte en een traditie geworden, en het is allemaal mors en mors dood. Het is niet het waarlijke 'zijn'. Maar de mens is hierin geworpen. De mens moet hierin de overkant zien te vinden. Dat kan niet op de rug van iets of iemand anders. De mens moet zelf leren zwemmen. Anders heeft de mens geen fundament. Het vragen en onderzoeken is een vorm van het zijn, een vorm van bestaan.

De mens is geworpen in de zee van overmoed genaamd 'materie', en de onderzoekende en vragende mens komt er al snel achter hoe erg het probleem is van de materie. Het is een verdichte, gesloten vorm. Het houdt de mens tegen als de mens er op een materialistische manier mee omgaat. Maar de mens kan er ook anders mee omgaan. Er moeten dus nieuwe, diepere definities komen van de dingen om ons heen, door ervaring. Ook dit mag niet overmoedig gebeuren, want dan is er weer een nieuw probleem. Er moet dus een nieuwe definitie komen van wat 'leven' eigenlijk is. Dit is belangrijk, omdat de onontwaakte mens slechts een product is en gewoon bestuurd wordt door allerlei apparaten van het materialisme om de mens in slaap te houden, zodat de mens bruikbaar is voor de lagere entiteiten van het ego. Het bestaan moet dus een nieuwe definitie krijgen. Er moet een nieuw bestaan komen. De mens kan hier niet zomaar omheen. De mens moet leren 'bestaan'. Het gaat hierin om 'analyse', om 'detail'.

Het hele menselijke spel van verschijnen, ontkleden, sexualiteit en productie is slechts een abstractie van de dynamieken van openbaring, wat dus gaat door het onderzoeken, analyseren, vragen stellen en zo ervaren. Het menselijke spel van ontbloting van objecten, wat ook weer terugkomt in de vlees-industrie en de bont-industrie is dus een corruptie hiervan. De mens wil essentie, maar de mens wil niet hiervoor bestaan, wil de natuur hiertoe niet. De mens is een grijpgraag wezen wat alle natuurwetten aan zijn laars lapt. De mens buit de

natuur uit. Dit komt dus ook weer terug in de mensenhandel van gedwongen prostitutie en de gedwongen tand-implantaten door de 'tandofielen'. De menselijke verschijningsvorm is daarom bedriegelijk, en heeft niets met ware vertoning te maken. Het existentialisme stelt dat alleen door de logos er ware vertoning is, door de literatuur van de natuur-filosofie. Het existentialisme stelt dat dat wat zichzelf vertoont, de ware vertoning, plaatsvindt als het gezien wordt vanuit het zelf en in samenhang met het zelf. De openbaring gaat dus altijd door het zelf wat zichzelf van het zelf onderscheidt, als het zelf wat in samenhang is met het zelf. Het mag dus niet op iets anders worden geschoven, wat het gevaar is van de theologie. De mens is zelf verantwoordelijk. Dat is existentie. Het is dus zuiver direct en niet indirect via iemand anders. De ander is de hel. Het indirecte is de hel. Dit gaat allemaal vaak onder de dekmantel van theologie. Vandaar dat theologie potentieel heel gevaarlijk is als het niet binnen de context is van de filosofie.

Het christendom danste vrolijk door, ook in de eeuw van 1900, en had haar eigen feestjes. De filosofie werd in de doofpot gestopt en ze werden lekker indirect, zonder eigen verantwoordelijkheid, en hadden zo hun eigen opwekkingen, lekker aan de drugs. We hebben het dan over een gevaarlijke, valse, luie vorm van indirectheid, die alles op iemand anders projecteert. Zij kunnen altijd kinderen zijn, onbezorgd, en maar aan blijven rotzooien, want alles is genade, en de kennis maakt opgeblazen. Zo redeneren ze dan. Zo lust ik er ook nog wel een paar. Zo kun je dus alles goedpraten, en heb je ook altijd een alibi, en heb je het spijbelen gerechtvaardigd. We hebben hier te maken met de verschrikking die eens Arnhem innam. Want de verwende kinderen van het christendom zijn allemaal nazi's. Maar het existentialisme is geworteld op het Nietzscheaanse fundament van de eeuw van 1800, van het Duitse idealisme, wat tegen het nationalisme was. Het materialisme maakt dingen zo materieel totdat het nazi wordt. Het is de climax van het materialisme. Geen eigen verantwoordelijkheid meer. De leider, de fuhrer, denkt voor ons. Zo kan ik het ook.

Arnhem werd dus platgewalst door het nazi geloofsgoed, de vlag op de modderschuit van het materialisme, en daar kwamen de geallieerden niet zomaar even doorheen. Vandaar dat we spreken van de Arnhemse beknelling.

Alles kwam in de vertraging. En toen was daar die verschrikkelijke hongerwinter, de ragnarok, en de valkyries waren nergens te bekennen. De mens voelde zich verstoten. De mens voelde zich onuitverkoren.

Dat wil niet zeggen dat directheid onmiddelijkheid betekent. De mens moet alles omzeilen, als de mens maar op zichzelf blijft, dus er is ook een analyserende, voorzichtige, onderzoekende en vragende indirectheid, wat een Vur principe is. Van elk woord en elk principe is er een goede vorm en een slechte vorm, dus dat wil niet zeggen dat er een daadwerkelijke tegenstelling is, maar meer een dualiteit. De dialectiek denkt in stellingen, tegenstellingen en samenstellingen, het denken in meerdere dimensies dus, vanuit verschillende perspectieven, horizontaal, vertikaal, enzovoorts, in verdiepingen. Dus in die zin mag de mens niet direct zijn, omdat het door natuur-processen gaat. Het gaat dus om het vinden van de middenweg. Aan beide kanten van het touw kun je eraf vallen. De mens mag niet te direct worden, en ook niet te indirect. Overal waar 'te' voor staat is niet goed. Er is directheid in de zin dat de mens direct, zelf, verantwoordelijk is, en er is indirectheid in de zin dat de mens eerst aan de voorwaarden moet voldoen, dus niet direct van A naar Z springen, maar van A naar B. Dat is de hele filosofie van tussenstappen. Het gaat dus niet om het wel of niet, maar om het hoe. Daarom stelt het existentialisme dat de mens authentiek moet worden. De mens moet het bestaan zich eigen maken. Daar waar de mens dit onderschat is datgene wat dichtbij is en bekend juist ver weg en onbekend. Dat is een symptoom van het materialisme, dat je steeds meer en meer vervreemd van de daadwerkelijke werkelijkheid. In die zin hebben we dus ook juist het andere filosofische materiaal nodig om de context te zien en ervaren, zodat we niet opgesloten raken in het ene, het bekende. De mens moet door de muren van de traditionele xenofobie (angst voor het vreemde) heenbreken. Het bekende is immers maar een druppel in de oceaan van het onbekende, en juist in het onbekende ligt onze identiteit. In die zin is het andere dus een wezenlijk onderdeel van de tussenstappen, maar dan als filosofische principes en niet als personen die het zelf van je ontnemen en je een geprojecteerde identiteit opleggen zoals in het christendom en het nazisme. Het gaat dus om het detail.

Het bestaan moet eerst geleefd worden, als het zijn, en daarna zal het pas

geinterpreteerd worden. Het moet dus doorleeft worden zodat eerst de boodschap kan binnenkomen, en pas daarna kan de boodschap uitgelegd worden. Dit zijn de twee noodzakelijke verdiepingen van het zijn. Het zijn zal dan worden tot kennen. Het bestaan is slechts een instrument of voorbeeld wat gebruikt kan worden voor veel meer dimensies van het bestaan. Vandaar dat het bestaan, het leven, de wereld, omarmd moet worden, op waarde geschat moet worden. Er komt iets binnen wat belangrijk is en wat steeds belangrijker zal worden, steeds waardevoller. De wereld is dus een verdieping van het zijn, en tegelijkertijd een lift om te komen tot hogere zijnsverdiepingen. Dat is dus de existentialistische definitie van het werelds zijn, wat dus niet betekent dat je stads of materialistisch bent. Integendeel. Het gaat om de filosofische natuur en structuur van de wereld, de mogelijkheden ervan. In het existentialisme is het werelds zijn dus meer analytisch. Wij mogen de wereld dus niet als objecten zien of vertoningen, maar als verborgenheden. Het zou fout zijn als een dolle dwaas in de wereld te springen om alles maar te grijpen wat los en vast zit, en zeggen : dit is dit, en dat is dat, want dat is slechts het idiotengoud. Het zijn tunnels, het zijn onbekendheden. En pas op : het staat onder stroom. Dat wat om ons heen is, dat wat de mens de bekenden noemt, de kennissen en de vrienden, familie, het vertrouwde, is helemaal niet bekend. Het is het onbekende. Pas ermee op.

De slag om Arnhem was één van de hoofd-oorlogen in de Tweede Wereldoorlog waar alles vastliep en zo de hongerwinter ontstond voor het gebied achter de grote rivieren. Hier werd wel het zaad gezaaid voor de bevrijding. De Rijnbrug over de Nederrijn moest heroverd worden, en dat moest zowel aan de Noordkant als de Zuidkant gebeuren. De geallieerden hadden een luchtlandingsbasis bij Oosterbeek op de Renkumse heide aan de Noordkant. Oosterbeek is een dorp van de gemeente Renkum, wat vroeger een schoutambt was, in het Arnhem gebied. De geallieerden die vanuit de lucht kwamen werden toen ingesloten door de Duitsers van twee kanten nadat ze de Noordkant van de brug hadden veroverd. Zij werden aangevoerd door John Frost, Jan IJs, waarnaar de brug later vernoemd werd. Na de landing op de Renkumse heide blies John Frost op de hoorn om de geallieerden te verzamelen. De hoorn werd genoemd : de Exodus hoorn, de hoorn van de uittocht, maar farao liet het volk nog niet gaan, en verdubbelde de lasten, zoals

we zagen in de honger winter. Het Ragnarok was gekomen. Pas na de hongerwinter kon D-day pas echt gestalte krijgen, en kwam 'de opname door de valkyries', en werd Nederland daadwerkelijk bevrijd. Renkum had hierin dus een sleutelrol gespeeld.

Ook in ons netwerk heeft Renkum een sleutelrol gespeeld in de strijd tegen criminelen. Dit heeft een lange tijd geduurd, en ik heb in de tussentijd en daarna ook veel dromen over Renkum gehad. In een droom had ik openbaringen verzameld op karton in een doos en moest ik die doos in veiligheid brengen. Ik moest hiervoor door Renkum heen naar de rivier. Gelukkig kon ik ook vliegen. Ook in het tweede bijbelse poortboek 'De Bibelebonse Pap' speelt Renkum een belangrijke rol. In het begin van het boek is Renkum de hoofdstad van Nederland, en werd als eerste bevrijd van de piraten die Nederland bezet hielden. In de tweede wereldoorlog was Renkum dus een belangrijke sleutel tot de bevrijding van Arnhem. In Renkum begon alles.

Achterstevoren gedraaid

Mijn opa, een oude kampenaar, was een humoristische man, evenals mijn oma. Bij mijn andere opa en oma durfte ik toen ik klein was nooit te logeren, omdat daar de televisie geen hoofdrol speelde. Bij die humoristische opa en oma dus wel, en daar was de televisie dus een waardig lid van de familie. En zo hoort het ook, als het ding maar een knop heeft. Helaas hebben mensen zo'n knop niet op hun kop, en dat maakt het lastiger. Als er een hemel bestaat, dan hoop ik dus dat God daar wel schepselen heeft lopen die allemaal zo'n knop hebben, anders word het mij gevaarlijk. Maar goed er is één manier om zelfs iets met een knop als gevaarlijk te moeten bestempelen, en dat is wanneer er verslaving in het spel is. Ik denk dat mijn broertje en ik vroeger echt televisie-ziek waren. Wij kenden de televisie-gids uit onze hoofden, en als de televisie kapot was, of om de een of andere reden niet aanmocht, dan waren we echt ziek. Zelfs naar bed gaan was om die reden gewoon een kwelling, al die prachtige televisie-programma's die we moesten missen. Mijn opa keek vaak naar Laurel en Hardy en allerlei Duitse programma's, en soms kom ik nog wel eens mensen tegen die gewoon liever naar Duitse televisie kijken. Ik kan me herinneren dat ik vroeger ook wel veel naar Duitsland keek. Maar toen ik zelf Duits moest leren was dat een complete ramp. Ik had namelijk les van een begrafenis-ondernemer, en die keek me na een repetitie altijd aan alsof ik aan de beurt was. Alhoewel ik nu veel schrijf in Engels, was Engels leren voor mij vroeger ook een complete ramp, en eigenlijk om dezelfde reden als met Duits : Ik kreeg les van begrafenis-ondernemers. Dat ze die gasten bij ons op school aannamen is mij nog steeds een compleet raadsel. Dat mijn vader hen zulke aardige mensen vond, is natuurlijk makkelijk gezegd. Dat kan ik natuurlijk ook heel makkelijk zeggen van zijn begrafenis-ondernemers. Ik had het gevoel dat mijn broertje - eerst een klas lager dan mij, later een klas hoger - zich daar altijd wel goed doorheen schopte. Ik denk dat hij wat beter kon onderhandelen dan ik, omkopen enzo. En hij is dan ook een onderhandelaar geworden. Laatst werd ik door één van mijn oude begrafenis-ondernemers gebeld. Ik heb een heel goed gesprek met hem gehad, en dat maakte veel goed, maar ja, ik heb makkelijk praten, want hij is mijn begrafenis-ondernemer niet meer. Het mooie was dat ik van hem later een boek kreeg dat over leven na de dood ging.

Ik kreeg ook wel les van lui die niets met begrafenis-ondernemingen te maken hadden. Zo zat er eentje tussen die mij met een HAVO-diploma uit school heeft gesmokkeld. Maar waar ik toen terecht kwam ? Dat wil je niet weten. Ik heb theologie gestudeerd om van mijn godsdiensttrauma af te komen, om mijn familie beter te begrijpen, en om te leren hoe ik koffie moest zetten. Want daar op die theologische school werd me toch een koffie gezopen. Maar even voor de duidelijkheid : Je komt echt niet van een theologisch trauma af door naar een theologische school te gaan, hoor. Het werd er alleen maar erger op. Het is ook heus niet voor je geloofsrust, want als er ergens oorlog wordt gevoerd dan is het daar. En ik maar denken dat ik mijn dienstplicht was ontvlucht. Ik werd opgeleid tot soldaat, om met de bijbel anderen in de pan te rammen. En toen ik dat pakkie niet wilde, verklaarden ze mij de oorlog. Dus ik vluchten naar een andere theologische school, waar ze me nog niet kenden, maar daar gebeurde hetzelfde. Dus ik denken : Die God is de god van de oorlog, Mars verkleed als Jezus Christus ... Maar daarna dacht ik : Dat is helemaal niet waar, het heeft allemaal te maken met belasting. Ja, hoe ik daar op kwam weet ik niet meer, maar ik begon er op een andere manier tegenaan te kijken. Mensen worden niet altijd alleen maar naar van oorlog, en oorlog is niet de enige oorzaak van het elkaar-in-de-haren-vliegen. Het had iets te maken met de belastingdienst en de verzekering. En we weten allemaal wel dat we allemaal daar onze eigen gedachtes over hebben.

Maar toen zat ik te denken : Kan dat gedoe niet weggewerkt of gladgestreken worden door goed te onderhandelen ? Ik denk dat mijn broertje - die ik nu moet zien als broer, omdat hij op een gegeven moment een klas hoger zat dan mij - dit allemaal zag aankomen, en daardoor econoom is geworden. Maar goed, ik heb wel eens flinke ruzie met mijn leraar economie gehad. Dan denk je : Die economen dat zijn allemaal van die vredelievende mensen. Economie kan soms uit de hand lopen. We moeten wel het spel eerlijk spelen, en de touwtjes goed weten te vieren, zoals ik altijd tegen mijn broertjes en zusje zei : 'One for you, and one for me'. Dat zinnetje had ik eens opgestoken uit een sprookjesfilm, en dat had te maken met geld. Alles draait om geld, of je het nu gelooft of niet. We kunnen het maar het beste eerlijk delen om veel gemieter te voorkomen. Ga spelletjes doen, zoals mijn vader, die sportleraar is geworden, dat is veel beter dan mekaar echt serieus de hersens in rammen.

Ja, ook ik heb bij de psychiater gezeten, en weleens gedacht : Is dit het nieuwe geloof ? Meid, wat jij allemaal uitkraamt zit ook maar gewoon tussen jouw oren. Je bent net zoveel mens als ieder ander, en we moeten allemaal zien te overleven hier, in zoveel onzin. Nu heb ik haar verhalen zo'n beetje allemaal op cassette staan, en ook van mijn oud-leraren, en ik heb ze na al die jaren eens achterstevoren laten draaien. Ik hoorde de meest wonderbaarlijke dingen, en ik dacht : 'Gelukkig, is het toch nog ergens goed voor geweest.'

Journey through the medieval

Het is ongelovelijk hoe mensen vandaag de dag met muziek omgaan, alsof het een soort van sinterklaas is om hun ego te bevredigen, of een kerstman. Luister naar muziek die je tot de diepere spiritualiteit brengt, en sla dat wat je in slaap sust, je materialistisch maakt, over. Muziek is een oorlog om je ziel. Het is niet om spelletjes te spelen. Soms is het parelduiken, en moet je je erdoor heen zien te werken. Niet alle muziek is even zuiver, zelfs als je merkt dat het je de goede richting intrekt. Blijf op je hoede.

Neem de muziek die je reizen door de onderwereld laat maken en door de natuur, niet de muziek die je in de valstrikken van de stad leiden, zoals veel rap en nietszeggende bandjes die het alleen maar om populariteit is te doen en veel geld. Ze liegen voor veel geld, dus trap er niet in. Soms kunnen ze zelf ook geen kant op, en zijn ze marionetten van de grote muziek-bazen. Neem ook eens muziek die gewoon anders is, of van een andere cultuur. Veel stront komt er op dit moment vanuit Amerika, allemaal dom geleuter, gewoon je tijd vol lopen maken met dingen die er niet toe doen, ijdel gezwets over drank, drugs en feesten, en dat is de reden waarom ik al lang niet meer naar de top 40 luister. De 80-er 70-er jaren waren goudmijnen, maar die tijd is voorbij.

Dom gemier moet je nu aanhoren, en zelfs in de supermarkt ben je niet veilig. De jeugd van tegenwoordig is als een gorgelend graf. En dat terwijl de mens nog diep vastzit in de valstrikken van het christendom en het medische systeem. De mensheid is behekst. Buitenaardsen hebben de aarde al lang geleden ingenomen. Dom, dommer, domst moet je om je heenzien. Clowns die reclame maken voor flutproducten. Het vooroordeel is het verwende kind van de ignorance.

In het Oude Egypte ging het nog om de dagelijkse reis door de onderwereld, door de baarmoeder van moeder aarde, en niet het domme geleuter van veel christenen dat je er wel op aan kunt rotzooien zolang je maar in hun Jezus-sinterklaas gelooft, en dat pas veel later er dan de hemel is of de hel. Nee, het hiernamaals is allang begonnen. Elke dag weer moet de mens afsterven aan zijn ego, opdat zijn diepere ziel tot wedergeboorte mag komen. We gaan allemaal nu al door de hel, genaamd de aarde, als de onderwereld. David zei : "Als ik mijn bed in de hel heb, dan zal u daar zijn", en "u zult mij in de hel niet alleen laten." Zo is dat in de Engelse vertaling vertaald, maar het gaat over de Sjeool hier, de onderwereld, waar iedereen doorheen moet, en God is daar, zowel in de hemel als de hel. In het oude Egypte was dat gewoon een opvoedende baarmoeder die het kind vormt, als een reis door de onderwereld. David zei ook : "U heeft mij gered van de laagste hel," wat wel even wat anders is dan de pseudo-christenen die zeggen dat je nooit meer uit de hel kunt als je er eenmaal in bent gegaan. Allemaal extreme bangmakerij.

Hoe ging dit fout ? Voornamelijk door de Middeleeuwen, waarin langzaam het moderne christendom ontstond, en alles werd verwesterlijkt, verletterlijkt, gematerialiseerd, en zo ontstond er een ongevoelige patriarchie, die de baarmoeder afdekte als een doek, als een voorhangsel van de tempel. De westerse patriarchie is ongevoelig voor de poetische, metaforische talen van het Oosten, en is als een lompe olifant in een porcelein winkel. Blijf dus strijden, blijf dus onderzoek doen, en blijf reizen. Journey through the medieval.

Mijn moeder

Velen denken mijn moeder te kennen, maar dan kijk ik ze altijd een beetje scheef aan. Mijn moeder is niet te kennen. Dat doe je niet zomaar even op een doordeweekse dag. Je kunt het ook niet zomaar even in een geschiedenisboekje optekenen. Ik heb mij lange tijd afgevraagd : Wie is mijn moeder eigenlijk ? In meerdere betekenissen. Ik heb weleens nachtmerries gehad, dat er ineens een jaguarachtig figuur voor me stond, die zei : 'Help me, ik ben je moeder.' Nu geloof ik niet in nachtmerries, of dromen, maar deze nachtmerrie wilde ik voor de zekerheid toch even een kans geven, want stel dat dit er op duidde dat iemand anders mijn echte moeder zou zijn, ja, dan had ze echt hulp nodig, want ik ben niet één van de makkelijksten. Mijn huidige moeder die komt er wel doorheen, want die zingt in een koor, en samen sta je sterk. Nu, dat is natuurlijk onzin, want samen kun je ook finaal de vernieling ingaan. Soms denk ik weleens dat als reincarnatie bestaat, dan was ik in mijn vorig leven misschien wel een jaguar. In ieder geval die nachtmerrie is me altijd bijgebleven. Ook al geloof ik niet in voortekenen en natekenen, het is me toch bijgebleven als iets wat me dierbaarder is dan wat in mijn leven dan ook. Je zal toch maar eens meerdere moeders hebben. Mijn huidige vader en moeder zouden hiervan in de knoop kunnen raken, maar ze kennen mij zo langzamerhand wel, dat ik niet voor een gat te vangen ben. Maar het kan voor hen misschien ook een opluchting zijn, zo van : 'Gelukkig, dan staan we er niet alleen voor.' En dat is ook zo. Ik heb zelfs hier op aarde veel ondersteuningen. Mensen die ik mijn tweede vader en moeder noem, en mijn derde vader en moeder.

Maar nu denk ik dus weleens : Wie heeft het nu over reincarnatie ? Misschien heeft dat er wel helemaal niets mee te maken, want, bijvoorbeeld : Wie heeft onze ziel in ons lichaampje gedrukt, toen we in de buik van onze moeder zaten ? Is het niet één of andere schakelketting ? Misschien een engel,

misschien God, of misschien een ander geesteswezen. Ik kan me herinneren dat ik een andere nachtmerrie had, waar een andere moeder me probeerde te bereiken, maar ze kon het niet. Ze was te ver weg. Soms leken die figuren wel een beetje op mijn eigen moeder. Waarom ? Ik weet het niet. Of ik dat wat vaders betreft ook gehad heb ? Ja, soms. En met broertjes, en met het zusje ? Ook. Daar kan ik heel kort in zijn.

Maar goed, we hadden het over mijn moeder. Misschien is mijn moeder op aarde wel het kruispunt van al mijn andere moeders, als de optelsom. Ik weet het niet. Misschien dat dit de verklaring is waarom ze allemaal een beetje op elkaar leken. De geschiedenis komt dan toch misschien weer samen in het heden. Ik denk trouwens dat de televisie altijd mijn co-moeder is geweest, plus de radio. Dat was altijd een goede aanvulling. En het voordeel was dus dat er een knop opzat. Mijn moeder is trouwens altijd best rustig geweest. Mijn vader ook. Ik was vroeger druk, en werd steeds rustiger, maar soms heb ik uitbarstingen. Ik voel mij als een vulkaan. Die uitbarstingen zie ik als creativiteit en activiteit. Ik heb boeken geschreven op allerlei gebied, geschilderd, les gegeven, van alles en nog wat. Mijn moeder is tekstschrijfster van een wereldberoemde band, en mijn vader is dus sportleraar en duiker. Hij werkt met haaien, en maakt documentaires, en nog veel meer. Hij wil dat de mensen eens weten wat haaien nu precies zijn, zonder alle vooroordelen. Ik heb zelf een paar boeken over haaien geschreven, of liever gezegd, waar ze in voorkomen. Misschien wel om mijn angst voor die dieren te overwinnen. Ik heb een voorliefde voor ze, maar ik ben bang voor ze. En sommige mensen zeggen dat dat maar goed ook is, want ze zouden je kunnen opvreten. Ja, ik heb zo ook m'n fobieen. Eén ding wat mijn vader van haaien geleerd heeft is niet zoveel praten, maar doen. En soms gewoon net doen alsof je doof bent.

Mijn angsten zijn vaak ook mijn obsessies. Ik heb dat ook met slangen en grote vogels. Beiden ben ik weleens tegengekomen, en dat had natuurlijk verkeerd kunnen aflopen. Maar wat zou ik graag met die beesten willen vliegen en kronkelen. Was ik maar Peter Pan. Ik ben te bang voor ze. Ik kan er alleen maar over dromen. Voor hen zijn mensen natuurlijk erg gevaarlijk. Ik ben gevaarlijk voor hen, terwijl ik hen nooit kwaad zou doen. Misschien is deze tijd op aarde een tijd voor mij om hen dat te bewijzen. Misschien dat er een dag gaat komen, waarin ze mij meenemen op hun reis, en dat zij niet bang hoeven te zijn voor

mij, en ik niet voor hen. Ik zie echt uit naar die dag. Zo'n dag kun je niet forceren. Je ziet mij niet zomaar ineens met haaien zwemmen. Maar goed, we hadden het over mijn moeder. Mijn moeder, dat kan van alles zijn. Je wordt elke dag een beetje geboren. Dat kan door een televisie-programma, door een mooi lied, door een kaartje of een schilderij, of gewoon iets waaraan je denkt. Ik zou wel in mijn dromen willen geloven, maar soms heb ik er gewoon de kracht niet voor. Dan ben ik te bang dat ik gebakken lucht volg. Ik wil niet ergens in geloven om iets te geloven. Ik wil mezelf niet voor de gek houden, maar ik wil mezelf ook niks onthouden. Laatst was er een zanger op de televisie die zij dat gek zijn verkoopt. Gek is goed. En toen dacht ik : Ja, eigenlijk heeft hij gelijk. We zijn allemaal zo bang om voor de gek gehouden te worden, maar eigenlijk is het maar beter, want waar zouden we anders terecht zijn gekomen ?

We moeten het maar doen, mamma, met onze idiote verhalen. We moeten roeien met de riemen die we hebben. We moeten het maar doen, met dat wat ze ons verteld hebben, wat onze voorouders ons hebben meegegeven, want meer kregen we niet. We moeten het maar doen met onze fantasie, als een geschenk uit de hemel, met de kleine stukjes puzzel die we kregen, want alles in één keer, dat zouden we niet kunnen verdragen. En zeg nou zelf, mamma, dat wat ze vroeger 'gek' noemden, dat staat nu te pronken in onze musea als kunst, waar mensen zich aan vasthouden, waarvan ze kunnen zeggen : Dit hebben onze mamma's en pappa's bereikt. We moeten het er maar mee doen, mamma. Het is niet veel, maar het is een stap vooruit.

Nonsense of Mathematics

Soms hoor je weleens dingen, en ik denk weleens ik zou het net even iets anders zeggen. Dat geef ik ook ruiterlijk toe. Dat heeft geen enkele zin om dat te ontkennen, dus dat doe ik dan ook niet. Waar gaat het dan over ? Dat is nogal een lang verhaal, wat je dan natuurlijk kort kan houden, met het risico dat dan de hele betekenis verloren gaat van het hele idee, waar niemand

natuurlijk op zit te wachten. Dus om dat dan daadwerkelijk te gaan doen heb ik dan ook weer terecht mijn vraagtekens bij. Ja, zo is het leven dan, zeggen ze.

Ik zou niet alleen sommige dingen net even iets anders zeggen, maar ook sommige dingen soms net even iets anders doen. Het zou misschien niet eens zoveel schelen, maar het is het toch waard. Voor iemand anders zou het bijvoorbeeld niets uitmaken, maar voor mij geld het detail. Voor mij kan een klein detail een wereld van verschil uitmaken, als een verschil tussen dag en nacht. Denk bijvoorbeeld maar eens aan het kleine rode knopje naast het kleine blauwe knopje in het Kremlin. Met het kleine rode knopje zou er een atoom oorlog beginnen, terwijl het blauwe knopje ernaast alleen maar voor de koffie is. Een wereld van verschil dus welk knopje je indrukt, terwijl het toch maar een klein detail lijkt. Mensen denken daar vaak niet over na. Sommigen zijn daar weleens over beschuldigd, en dan denk ik ook weleens ik zou het net even iets anders zeggen of net even iets anders doen. Maar ja, dat moet iedereen natuurlijk voor zichzelf weten. Op het eind is het belangrijk hoe wijzelf hebben geleefd, en niet hoe een ander heeft geleefd.

Het is ook niet belangrijk om voor anderen uit te stippelen hoe ze moeten leven. Dat zou een dagtaak worden. Daar is een mens niet voor gemaakt. Maar toch zijn er grenzen. Soms is er iets waar je wat aan kunt doen, bijvoorbeeld om iemand te beschermen of te helpen, of bijvoorbeeld om iemand te waarschuwen. Misschien zie je dingen aankomen, of bepaalde gevaren die een ander niet ziet. Maar moet je er dan omheen gaan draaien, of moet je het rechtstreeks zeggen ? Of misschien zelfs ingrijpen ? En waar liggen die grenzen dan ?

En als je dan iets zegt of in actie komt, dan zijn er ineens mensen die het net even iets anders zouden zeggen, of net even iets anders zouden doen. Is het dan belangrijk om naar die mensen te luisteren ? Misschien wel, misschien niet. Wie zegt wat nu het beste is wat je in een bepaalde situatie kan doen ? Gaat het om het beste, of kun je ook met minder genoegen nemen, of gewoon jezelf zijn zonder er al teveel over na te denken ? Zijn er verkeersregels ? En wie bedenkt die ?

Je mag niet botsen. Nee, daar zullen velen het mee eens zijn. En mensen kijven over de andere verkeersregels. Soms kun je daar moe van worden, vooral als het om kleine dingetjes gaat die er niet toe lijken te doen. Vooral als ze de echt belangrijke, grote dingen over het hoofd zien, maar wat is nu belangrijk ? Een kind in de box zal misschien zijn speelgoed het allerbelangrijkst vinden, of een kleuter zijn snoepje. Als daar iets mee gebeurt dan kan het kind moord en brand schreeuwen, terwijl er niets ergs aan de hand is. En dat terwijl een kind aan de andere kant van de wereld moord en brand schreeuwt omdat er een raket in het huis is ingeslagen. Een wereld van verschil dus.

En dan klik je de radio of tv aan en dan hoor je mensen over onzin praten, over voetbal of politieke onderwerpen waar niemand iets van begrijpt, of wiskunde waar je hoofdpijn van krijgt, of economie, financiele gekkigheid waar je oren van gaan tuten, allemaal getalletjes, allemaal over geld. En dan ben je ineens vergeten waar je ook alweer aan dacht voordat je dat programma aanklikte. Dan denk je : wat was mijn probleem ook alweer ? En je luistert verder naar allerlei nonsense, en vergeet je eigen nonsense volkomen. Waarover maakte ik me ook alweer druk ? Je hoort niet eens meer waar ze over praten, maar je luistert naar de stemmen van het programma en je zakt helemaal weg, alsof je even in een andere wereld bent ...

Nonsense of Mathematics

Found the nonsense of mathematics all in a leather bag,
almost burnt by the bunny, addicted to some crack.
Get my money when it's daylight, I am leaving this train,
I jump, I die, and bring the flowers to the faery of the burning fever,
deep inside, on a burning hill I battle, for this baby to be born.
It was on the old attic I found the book ... of .... the animal-mountain ....
a strange tower ....I'm still climbing it ...
to escape from the nonsense, this nonsense of mathematics ....

Got me a brand new car today, to leave the nonsense, the nonsense ....
Got my hat put into delay ..... to escape the nonsense of mathematics ....
Having the winner laughing .... while the loser is smoking ....

some wine-touched delicious prides ....
Got my maths lessons upside down now ... heard the most wonderful fairytales ....
some backward masked tricks from the sideday's sword ....
bringing me out of the nonsense of mathematics .... a strange world ....

I promised myself not to listen to the nonsense, the nonsense ....
I promised myself to eat an apple instead, sailing on the nonsense, the nonsense of mathematics .... Got me crazy today .... Will start the rocket now .... on animal-tower, everything is in delay .... I'm standing still .... smoking rabbithats .... smoking rabbitheads .... their tales are gone, and I'm diving away instead ....

I promised myself not to be angry anymore at the nonsense, the nonsense,
I promised myself to sing in a choir, of the nonsense of mathematics ....
Some teachers still riding in longhairy cars .... still sandals they're wearing, thinking they're jesus or sandman ....

Twenty in total .... they're not so rich .... in goatwools they walk ....
with their heads towards mental institutions, while they love their flowers stolen from rabbit's pits .... Got me some questions today, these heroes don't seem to fall .... Even when my nightmares broken they still stand tall .... Like ten men on a hill .... and ten men on a tower ..... like the animal-tower .... I'll never win .....

Got me some clairvoyant today .... She acted strange .... like I was ... a victim of ten men in a spaceship .... selling vegetables instead of meat ..... Should have listened to them better .... Now I'm here, bound by speed ....

Some turkeys on the bend, she said, like leather belts, she dremt instead .... I cannot act today .... because .... I am a victim of this cross ....

So bring me today .... to the nonsense, to the nonsense ..... bring me today to the nonsense of mathematics ....

Tussen twee oren

Ja, het geloof, daar wordt in Kampen veel om gestreden en geleden. Zo is er dan iemand die gillend en met schuim in z'n mond de kerk zou uitrennen als een vriend van hem, die nu nog theologie studeert, de preekstoel zal beklimmen of bestijgen. Het vrije geloven, daar is men nogal bang voor, want wat zal er gebeuren als de kooitjes van die verschrikkelijke beesten open zullen gaan ? Maar een paar jaar later is het allemaal ouderwets, en maken ze zich weer over andere dingen druk. Het zware geloven van eeuwen geleden, waardoor ketters niets anders dan lucifers waren, daar wil men ook nooit meer naar terug, terwijl dat in die tijd door velen als normaal bestempeld werd. Vandaag de dag kent men het woord 'ketter' bijna niet meer, en dat is maar goed ook, want daar waar een woordenboek tot een pistool wordt, daar moet je maar ver vandaan blijven. En met een goede klok, en een goede kalender, is dat ons gelukt. Wat is er nu aan de beurt ? Hoe zit het met politiek Kampen ? Hoe zit het met de opvoeding ? Maar vaak worden er wel weer nieuwe vlakken op het gebied van het geloof gevonden. Het blijft voor velen interessant, en sommigen zien het als een prachtig oud kampers spel, zij het gemoderniseerd. Ach ja, een spelletje kan ook geen kwaad. Maar laat het ook een spelletje blijven.

Iemand die ik ken heeft een boeddhabeeld in huis staan, een prachtig beeld. Vroeger zou ik zo'n ding niet in mijn huis willen hebben, maar nu ? Vroeger kon ik ook niet tegen chinees voedsel. En soms is dat ook niet verstandig. Je moet dingen nooit forceren. Die mensen zijn zelf christelijk, en dat betekent vaak : geen boeddhist, maar soms is er een combinatie mogelijk. Na ga ik er vanuit dat deze mensen geen boeddhisten zijn, althans niet bewust. Ze kregen het beeld uit dank van een chinees echtpaar van een chinees restaurant, omdat ze zo goed op hun zoontje hadden gepast. Wat moet je dan met zo'n beeld doen ? Als je zelf van een ander geloof bent ... Wat moet je bijvoorbeeld met een beeld van het CDA als je van de VVD bent ? Ook al heb je dat beeld gekregen ... Is dat niet het opdringen van een politieke overtuiging, of een godsdienstige overtuiging ? Of gaat deze strijd teniet in het feit dat zo'n boeddha-beeld een stuk cultuurpracht is, een stuk kunst ? Het is maar net hoe je tegen dingen aankijkt. Overigens is het boeddhisme geen geloof maar een verzameling oude wijsheden die je zouden kunnen helpen in je leven, als een stuk goede psychische steun, maar ook als een stuk ethiek. Het staat misschien net tussen politiek en godsdienst in. Nu weet ik niet of boeddha verder wel of niet 'in' is in Kampen, en dat kan me ook niet zoveel schelen eigenlijk, want wijsheid kan komen in allerlei vormen, en door allerlei deuren. Het gaat nog steeds niet om de verpakking, maar om wat er inzit. Nu kan een ongelovige speelgoedhandelaar nog wel boeddhistischer zijn dan een door zichzelf erkende boeddha-specialist uit het verre oosten. Naamkaartjes hebben me nooit zoveel gezegd, alhoewel het op sommige gezette tijden misschien interessant lijkt.

Nu is die man van dat boeddhabeeld overigens ook speelgoedhandelaar geweest, maar niet ongelovig. Ik kan me nog herinneren dat mijn moeder eens in zijn speelgoedzaak een bijbel kocht, tegen een belachelijk hoge prijs overigens, maar dat doet nu niet ter zake. Ik vind het zelf wel een mooie combinatie. De bijbel is ook maar een stuk speelgoed. De bijbel kan ook zomaar ineens afgeprijst liggen bij de Aldi. Dat moet allemaal kunnen. Voor mij mogen ze in de speelgoedwinkel ook wel boeddha-beelden verkopen, en misschien gebeurt dat al wel ergens. Het moet gewoon liggen tussen de andere spelletjes, zodat het niet terecht komt tussen de bommen en granaten van een of andere oosterse kelder. Vanuit het oosten zijn wij meegenomen,

daar liggen ergens onze harten, alhoewel onze lichamen in Nederland zijn. Of we nu christelijk, boeddhistisch of allebei zijn, deze beide stromingen komen uit het Oosten. Maar waar geloofden onze Kamperse voorouders dan in ? Ons eigen geloof was het Germaanse geloof, het oorspronkelijke Nederlandse geloof, voor de christelijke invasie. Het was eigenlijk hetzelfde, maar er werden misschien hier en daar andere accenten gelegd. Het was hetzelfde, maar in verschillende taal. Om nog even op die speelgoed-handelaar terug te komen. Ik herinner me ook dat we daar eens van die krasplaatjes kregen. Mijn broertje kreeg een krasplaat van de indianen, en ik kreeg een krasplaat van de romeinen. Die moesten overigens allemaal nare dingen doen om hun goden gunstig te stemmen. Nu, eeuwen later zeggen we : Allemaal onzin, maar je zou het in die tijd maar eens te licht opvatten allemaal. Vaak is de tijd en de plaats waar je leeft een gevangenis, en kun je soms niet anders dan met de stroom meegaan.

De speelgoedzaak van die man is failliet gegaan, terwijl het chinese restaurant wat naast hem zat natuurlijk wel doordraait. Het Germaanse geloof is hoofdzakelijk opzij gestapt door het christelijk geloof. Blijkbaar trekt het oosterse ons meer dan ons eigen speelgoed. En dan bij zulk boerenvolk in Kampen, waar ze vaak zeggen : 'Wat de boer niet kent, dat vret ie niet.' Maar het oosten is inmiddels al zo ingeburgerd. Eerlijk waar, als ik de hanzewijk binnenkom, dan denk ik dat ik in Turkije ben. En dat heus niet alleen om de vele turken die daar wonen. Ik vind het allemaal wel best. Het oosten heeft voor vele eeuwen al z'n plaats in Kampen gevonden, en dat bewijzen de vele kerken wel, want dat was eens allemaal oosterse import. Weten wij wel wat wij naar binnen hebben gehaald ? We moesten wel, want we werden bedreigd met het zwaard. We zijn niet voor niets vroeger zo lang Katholiek geweest. En sinds Maarten Luther kwam, gingen een aantal over op de reformatie, omdat ze verlost wilden zijn van het in die tijd levensgevaarlijke katholicisme. Terug willen we niet meer, maar vooruit ? Of hebben we het beloofde land al gevonden ? Sommigen wel, en ik vind dat je vooral ouderen die fantasie moet gunnen. Fantasie is goed voor de botten.

Ach, natuurlijk is de wetenschap er laatst achtergekomen dat naast politiek ook godsdienst tussen je oren zit. Het is een bepaald hormoon. Maar wat dan nog ? Je bent wel je hele leven lang gedoemd om tussen die twee oren te leven. Laat

iedereen nou maar tussen z'n eigen twee oren gaan leven.

Bah, Reclame

Misschien heb je dat ook weleens dat wanneer je een mooie sprookjesfilm kijkt of een andere mooie, stichtelijke film of programma waar je wat aan hebt, waarmee je verder komt in het leven, en dan plotseling komt de reclame, middenin de film of het stichtelijke programma. En dan kijk je of luister je erna zonder dat je het wil, en dan hoop je dat de reclame snel is afgelopen, maar soms duurt het in jouw ogen te lang, dan lijkt het wel een eeuwigheid, want je wil de stichtelijke film of het stichtelijke programma verder kijken, omdat je denkt dat je daar meer aan hebt in je leven en voor je leven.

Zo kan dat ook zijn met mensen. Sommige mensen zie je graag, terwijl andere soort mensen zie je liever niet, en dat kan bijvoorbeeld een leraar zijn of iemand aan het loket, of iemand die je lastig valt op een andere manier. Er zijn zo mensen die je beter kunt ontwijken, maar soms kun je ze niet ontwijken, weten je altijd te vinden, of je moet er altijd naartoe. Die mensen zijn dan ook een soort van reclame. Ze verkopen een product waar je niets van wil weten, als een vervelende reclame tijdens iets wat je graag wilt zien, een stichtelijke film of een stichtelijk programma.

Nu, dan bijt je even op je lip, even doorbijten, en hoop je dat "de reclame" snel weer voorbij is. Zo kan dat ook in je gedachtes gebeuren : "Ah, daar is die nare gedachte weer, of die nare herinnering, of dat nare gevoel". Maar het is maar reclame. Daarna gaat het verhaal weer verder.

Waar is die reclame dan voor ? Altijd maar weer die nare reclame, waar je ook gaat, het lijkt je altijd te achtervolgen, of je nu de tv aanklikt of de computer.

"Schiet op met dat nare weerbericht ! Daarvoor kijk ik geen tv ! Daarvoor luister ik niet naar de radio !" Het is alsof de tijd stilstaat als de nare reclame weer om het hoekje komt kijken, als een clown met een waterpistool. Bah, wat vervelend. Waar is al die reclame goed voor ? Wat proberen ze me dit keer weer aan te smeren ? Dan is het weer dit, en dan is het weer dat ? Het is altijd wat, en zelden wat goeds. Het is niks en het wordt nog veel nikser. Kop op, het zal nog erger worden, zeggen ze weleens.

Maar soms heb je een heel naar bericht gehad, en er lijkt geen einde aan te komen. Soms besef je dan helemaal niet meer dat het maar reclame is, en denk je dat het de stichtelijke hoofd-film zelf is. En dan lijkt het wel alsof er helemaal geen reclame meer bestaat, want je zit er tot je nek in. Het kan dan zelfs een grote nachtmerrie zijn waarvan je wakker wilt worden, en dan hoop je maar dat de reclame snel komt, want de griezelfilm is levensecht en je zit er middenin. En als dan de reclame komt, dan ben je er blij mee. Gelukkig, het was allemaal maar een film. Het was niet echt. Zie, want hier is de reclame. Ik ga het direct kopen. Dan kan mijn leven weer verder. Goddank voor de reclame. Wat zouden we zonder de reclame moeten. Het heeft mijn leven gered.

Harold

Harold woonde ergens in het midden van Nunspeet. Hij was van de vuilnisophaal-dienst. Vroeger werd alle vuilnis naar een open plek, diep in het bos gebracht en daar verbrand. Nu ligt er alleen nog maar zand. Ze noemden het wel eens de woestijn van Nunspeet. Ja, je moet er wel even een stuk voor

fietsen, want het is over het spoor. Vroeger werd er altijd van alles en nog wat weggegooid, en vaak ging men naar die open plek toe om te kijken of er nog iets voor hen bijzat. Ook Harold hield alles goed in de gaten. En als hij tijdens zijn werk iets leuks tegenkwam, dan reed hij er in de avond nog even langs om het mee te nemen naar huis. Zijn huis stond dan ook vol met bijzondere dingen. Ja, Harold woonde in een heel bijzonder huis, en hij had ook een hele bijzondere vrouw. Zijn vrouw kon niet praten, want ze had vroeger een ernstig ongeluk gehad. Maar ze was bijzonder creatief, en maakte altijd hele speciale dingen. Zijn vrouw ging wel eens mee 's avonds, als Harold naar de open plek ging. Op een dag kwamen ze een kleine man tegen. Hij leek wel een beetje op een dwerg. Hij was een soort liliputter. De man was druk bezig met zoeken. 'Zoekt u iets ?' vroeg Harold vriendelijk. 'Ja,' zei de man, 'mijn vrouw heeft per ongeluk wat spullen van mij met de vuilnis meegegeven.'

'Om wat gaat het dan ?' vroeg Harold, 'want toevallig werk ik bij de vuilnisdienst, dus als u het me even zegt wat het is, dan zal ik op de uitkijk staan.'

'Het gaat om een gouden grammofoonspeler, mijnheer,' zei de man sip, 'en een heleboel langspeelplaten.'

'Oh, vergeet dat maar,' zei Harold, 'die hebben ze allang meegenomen. Er komen hier zo vaak mensen om spullen weg te halen, en zoiets zullen ze vast niet laten staan.'

'Maar het zat in een zak,' zei de man, 'in een vuilniszak ... Mijn vrouw dacht dat het vuilnis was ...'

'Oh, maar daar kunnen we echt niet aan beginnen,' zei Harold. 'We gaan niet alle zakken doorzoeken.' Maar toen werd de man een beetje kwaad. Zo kwaad, dat Harold direct begon te zoeken. Maar na een hele avond zoeken hadden ze nog steeds niets gevonden. De liliputter was ten einde raad. 'Ach,' zei Harold, 'wij hebben nog wel een oude grammofoonspeler in de schuur staan, en op zolder hebben we een heleboel grammofoonplaten ... die mag je wel hebben.' Maar dat wilde de liliputter niet ... Het ging hem niet zozeer om de muziek ... Hij had hem nooit aanstaan ... Het ging hem om de emotionele waarde die hij aan het ding hechtte. Hij had het van zijn vader gekregen. Hij gaf niks om die muziek, maar zijn vader hield er zo van, en daarom kon hij het eigenlijk niet

missen. 'Weet je wat ?' zei Harold ...'Mijn vrouw is nogal erg handig. Als je ons nu vertelt hoe het ding eruit zag, dan zal mijn vrouw wel proberen om precies dezelfde te maken van onze eigen grammofoonspeler.' Maar de man wist eigenlijk niet zo goed hoe het eruit zag. Hij heeft hem al die tijd in de vuilniszak laten zitten. Hij had niet zulke goede herinneringen aan zijn vader, maar vond het geschenk wel erg belangrijk en waardevol voor hem. Hij had er dus gemengde gevoelens over. Hij kon niet met en niet zonder. Harold begreep het verhaal. 'Nou,' zei Harold, 'als het dan zo'n gestuntel voor je was, wees dan maar blij dat het weg is, dan zul je er ook nooit meer last van hebben.' En daarin gaf de man hem wel gelijk ...

Maar daar kwam ineens een auto aanrijden. Er kwam een man uit de auto met de gouden grammofoonspeler en de grammofoonplaten in z'n armen, en legde het tussen de andere vuilnis. 'Ziezo,' zei hij, 'weg met die rommel. De grammofoonspeler deed het nauwelijks, en in de platen zaten allemaal krassen.' En snel was de man ook weer verdwenen.

De liliputter wist niet hoe hij moest kijken. Moest hij hier nu blij mee zijn, of niet ? Ook Harold wist eigenlijk niet zo goed hoe hij ermee om moest gaan ... 'Ach,' zei de liliputter ... 'laten we het daar maar liggen blijven ...' Harold kreeg wel een beetje last van schuldgevoelens nu, want hij had de liliputter per slot van rekening omgepraat ... Maar om de situatie te redden had hij een idee : 'Zeg, om de wond te helen kun je wel even met ons mee naar huis komen, want wij hebben ons huis vol staan met oude spullen. Dan kun je wat uitkiezen.' Daar had de liliputter wel oren naar.

De liliputter keek zijn ogen uit in het huis van de vuilnisman ... Wat een prachtige dingen stonden hier allemaal zeg ... Moest dit nou vuilnis voorstellen ? Hij kon het niet geloven ... Wat men wel niet allemaal weggooit ... Maar Harold zei dat mensen vaak iets weggooien om dezelfde redenen als de liliputter had ... Het verleden bijt ... En of het hen nu veel geld gekost heeft of niet, als ze er pijn van hebben, dan gaat het meestal naar de vuilnis ... En als je dat even allemaal in de gaten houdt, dan kun je daar erg rijk mee worden ... Ja, dat had de liliputter nu ook wel in de gaten ... En hij was nu zo ver gekomen, dat hij ook wel graag vuilnisman wilde worden ... En zo kon je ook veel in huis halen, zonder dat het je pijn deed. Harold vond het een goed idee, en de baas van Harold ook ... En zo werden Harold en de liliputter collega's van elkaar, en

de beste vrienden ... Vaak gingen ze in de avond na het werk nog even naar de open plek toe, om daar de bijzonderste dingen van weg te halen ... En ook Harold's vrouw en de vrouw van de liliputter werden dikke vriendinnen. Ze gingen vaak samen op vakantie ... en natuurlijk hadden ze een voorliefde voor vuilnisbelten ... voor hen was dat een manier om veel geld uit te sparen ... De mensen vroegen hen altijd hoe ze toch aan zulke dure spullen kwamen ... maar soms werden ze ook weleens uitgescholden voor dieven ... Niet iedereen was er zo blij mee waar ze mee bezig waren. Vooral niet toen ze gingen rondvertellen dat ze gingen verhuizen ... Ja, ze zouden in een caravan gaan wonen, om het te houden bij de kleine dingetjes ... En zo konden ze van vuilnisbelt tot vuilnisbelt reizen ... Natuurlijk gingen ze er nooit te dichtbij wonen ... want dat zou brandgevaar opleveren ...

Ze zagen het als sport om de kleinst mogelijke schatten te vinden op de vuilnisbelten, om ze uit te stallen in hun caravans ... In het begin konden ze niet te ver weg reizen, vanwege het werk van Harold en de liliputter, maar later werden ze er zo handig in, dat ze een reizende winkel begonnen ... en daar konden ze goed van leven ... Harold en de liliputter waren toen geen vuilnismannen meer, maar vuilniswinkeliers ... En waar ze dan ook kwamen ... iedereen vond het een bijzondere winkel ... Maar al gauw werden ze ook dieven genoemd door sommigen ... Vaak werd er gevraagd hoe ze toch aan zulk bijzonder spul kwamen ... Ook de vuilnisdienst zelf was niet blij dat Harold en de liliputter met hun werk stopten. En als je aan ze vraagt of ze Harold ook kennen, dan doen ze vaak alsof ze hem niet kennen. Maar er was er één bij die toch wel erg veel aan Harold en de liliputter te danken had. Hij bleef eens een keer aan een zak vastzitten, en werd door het zuigsysteem naar binnen getrokken. Harold en de liliputter hadden wel speciale apparaatjes om hem direkt eruit te krijgen. Hoe ze aan die apparaatjes kwamen ? ... Ja, dat was natuurlijk hun grote geheim ... Inmiddels had Harold een grote winkel van bijzondere spullen in het zuiden van het land. Samen met de liliputter natuurlijk, zijn onafscheidelijke vriend. Ze hebben die man van de vuilnisdienst die ze gered hadden hun caravans geschonken, en hem een beetje het vak geleerd. Samen met een andere vriend reist hij nu de vuilnisbelten af. En wat zij allemaal naar binnen halen ? Het is niet te geloven. Er worden soms gewoon zakken met geld weggegooid ... Ja, want als je geld krijgt van iemand die je het

leven zuur heeft gemaakt ... Of erfenissen van een rijke maar verschrikkelijke tante ... wil ook niet altijd iedereen in huis hebben ... De mensen willen nog wel een beetje kunnen leven ... en niet door één of ander miljoenengeschenk bij de psychiater terecht te komen.

En als je bekijkt wat mensen wel niet allemaal door het toilet wegspoelen en door de gootsteen ? De legende wil dat Harold's rijk zelfs tot onder de grond reikte, tot onder het riool, om hier en daar een graantje mee te pikken. En wat hij daar allemaal tegenkwam ? Niet iedereen wilde dit geloven ... Maar dat vond Harold niet erg ... wat had hij namelijk aan indringers ? Nog steeds zijn er wel eens dapperen die op zoek gaan naar Harold's rijk onder de grond, maar hoe diep dat zit, dat weet niemand ... In iedergeval ... zij die dat geprobeerd hebben zijn nooit meer teruggevonden ... Wil dat zeggen dat het in Harold's rijk zo goed is dat ze er niet meer aan denken om terug te gaan ? Of zijn ze ergens onderweg gesneuveld ? Niemand weet het ... Er heeft lange tijd in Nunspeet een standbeeld van Harold gestaan, maar deze was op een zekere dag plotseling verdwenen ... waarschijnlijk door de vuilnisdienst opgehaald ...

Zwart Wit

Er gebeuren vreemde dingen op aarde. Dit is niet het paradijs. Dat is wat ik altijd zeg, en waar ik mensen altijd voor waarschuw : Vertrouw het niet ! Diep binnenin de mens ligt de waarheid opgeborgen waardoor je contact kunt maken met de andere werelden, de hogere werelden, verborgen gehouden realiteiten.

Op het internet wordt je doodgegooid met video's over nieuwe huid-witmakers, en het schijnt een trend te zijn, vooral in de landen waar veel donkere mensen wonen. Vaak zitten die producten ook nog eens vol met gevaarlijke chemicalieen, maar vele mensen raken hieraan verslaafd als aan drugs. Daar kun je natuurlijk een erg lang verhaal over maken, maar het komt erop neer dat dit gebeurt vanwege racisme. Racisme komt in allerlei vormen en maten, en is gewoon een creatie van gigantische cosmetische bedrijven die hun

producten willen verkopen, over de ruggen van anderen heen. Velen zijn hier door geprogrammeerd als racist of als slachtoffer. De mega-bedrijven lachen erom, want zo rolt dus het geld binnen, en ook de medische dictatuur lacht, want ook zij verdienen grof geld door alle problemen die ontstaan. Het is een vicieuze cirkel.

Zelfs in de kerk zit racisme, zelfs donkere mensen onder elkaar doen dat, dat de lichtere donkere mensen de nog donkere mensen discrimineren, terwijl ze beweren God te dienen hè. Is dat niet afschuwelijk ? Het is een groot duivels kwaad in deze wereld, deze schaduw-planeet. Ik zag dit al toen ik heel klein was, en heb altijd tegen het racisme gestreden. Ik deed dit ook heel symbolisch door een bruine boterham op een witte boterham te leggen. Wanneer je dus racisme ziet mag je daar wat van zeggen, en goed onthouden dat het een truuk is van grote bedrijven, als een advertentie, omdat ze mensen bepaalde producten willen aansmeren. Trap er dus nooit in.

Nu willen dus heel veel zwarte mensen wit worden, alleen maar om af te komen van discriminatie. Is dat niet verschrikkelijk ? Racisme is zware onderdrukking en racistische mensen kunnen nooit het paradijs inkomen, omdat het paradijs niet racistisch is. Een racist in het paradijs zou direct wegsmelten door het vuur van de creativiteit. Er is eenheid in verscheidenheid. De racist accepteert geen creativiteit. De racist accepteert geen dromen van vrede tussen alle rassen. De racist schiet mensen die dromen over alle rassen die in vrede met elkaar leven dood, zoals in 1963 president John F. Kennedy werd neergeschoten omdat hij tegen het racisme streed, en in 1968 Martin Luther King, en toen in 1980 John Lennon. De racist wil geen paradijs. De racist wil problemen schoppen zodat hij zijn producten kan verkopen. Het is een smerig en laag truukje. En dit is nog maar het topje van de ijsberg en de reden waarom het nog geen paradijs kan zijn, en de kerk verkoopt simpele formules van hocus pocus pilatus pas, alsof daarmee alles gezegd is. Neen. Het is volksverlakkerij. Een mens moet zelf veranderen in een paradijs om zo tot het paradijs te kunnen komen, en daarmee bedoel ik dat ondanks dat het leven soms moeilijk is dat je hart vol kan zijn van goedheid. Dat is de sleutel tot het paradijs, en geen sinterklaas die met zijn toverstokje je even aantikt. Neen. Het gebeurt niet door een formule op te prevelen. Neen. De mens moet zelf

veranderen.

Juist de mensen die spreken over de noodzaak van verandering gaan vaak door zulke moeilijke tijden heen en worden één voor één op een bepaalde manier uitgeschakeld. Ze zijn te gevaarlijk voor de industrie. Zoals mijn oma altijd zei dat in de tweede wereldoorlog toen de nazi's binnenvielen, toen werden juist de grote intellectuelen, de grote wijzen van het land, vermoord. De nazi's wilden de mens dom houden, en zij gebruikten daar ook fluor voor. Fluor rommelt namelijk met de hersenen om een mens gewillig te maken. In veel landen is het zelfs in het drinkwater, maar het zit vaak in de tandpasta. Puur vergif.

Het paradijs is te bereiken door een school en door een strijd. Het is lange termijn denken. Het paradijs is diep in het hart van de mens. Het is niet waar iedereen altijd maar glimlacht en gelukkig loopt te doen. Neen. Het is verlichtende kennis, dat je door dingen heen kunt prikken, dat je het verhaal gaat zien, achter de schermen kunt kijken, dat je verbanden gaat zien, en zo verder bouwt in je hart dat wat misschien om je heen is ingestort. Er is een andere wereld, een hogere, betere wereld, een grotere wereld. Buiten je hart is er een hele kleine wereld waar mensen heel klein denken, kortzichtig, met hun kleine autootjes, huisjes en kerkjes, als een bizarre poppenkast. Het poppenhuis laat je zwart-wit denken, maar .... denk na over de kleur van je hart ... Denk goed na aan welke kant je staat ... zoals een Nederlands liedje van de Frank Boeijen groep zegt ...

Van Waterstof Tot Wederkomst

Religieuze wiskunde, de wiskunde van het leven, met al z'n ingewikkelde, alsmaar draaiende tegenstellingen ... een hele opgave ... een belangrijk vak op school, behalve dat het niet onderwezen wordt ... De meesters en de juffrouws vinden het vaak belangrijker dat een kind leert tellen, zodat ze allemaal kunnen tellen, en allemaal ook kunnen meetellen ... Dat vinden ze vaak belangrijker dan het juist niet meetellen en niet kunnen tellen ... want dan gaat alles in de war, en dan komt er chaos, en dan kunnen ze de dingen niet meer overzien ... En dan moet de politie erbij komen, de brandweer en ga zo maar door ... Ingewikkeld dus ... daarom vinden ze het belangrijk dat een kind goed leert tellen, en goed oplet ... Maar op de diepere vragen van het kind komt geen antwoord, of krijgt het kind een halfgebakken antwoord om er maar zo snel mogelijk overheen te praten ... Ik heb dat altijd moeilijk gevonden, nam nooit genoegen met simpel cirkel-geredeneer.
Religieuze wiskunde, de wiskunde van het leven, met al z'n ingewikkelde, alsmaar draaiende tegenstellingen ... Maar wat is dat dan ? Waarom leggen ze dat niet uit, en optelsommen en taal wel ? Wat proberen ze te ontlopen ? En dan krijg je later economie en scheikunde, en wordt er weer niets diepers uitgelegd, geen levensvragen beantwoord ... Misschien hebben ze het antwoord niet ... Gelukkig had ik een scheikunde leraar die er anders over dacht ... Hij moest en zou via de scheikunde uitleggen over het leven, hoe het leven was ontstaan en wat het doel van het leven was ... En ja, hij waagde zich aan de religieuze wiskunde ... En hoe ... Hij ging er zo ver over door dat ik het niet meer kon volgen, en als hij het bord half had uitgeveegd schreef hij er zijn formules overheen, zodat alles door elkaar heen kwam te staan ... Het was een stortvloed ... Maar tenminste probeerde hij een antwoord te geven op het leven, op de levensvragen ... Het waren dingen die ik niet hoorde in de kerk … Het was totaal anders … Hij had zelfs een boek geschreven waarin hij religie en het leven volgens de scheikunde uitlegde, en ook de wederkomst van God scheikundig beschreef ... Dat boek heette : "Van Waterstof tot Wederkomst", een boek uit de 70-er jaren ... 1976 om precies te zijn …

De subtitel is : een intuitief-empiristische benardering van de Godsvraag ... Hij stelt in zijn voorwoord al dat wolkerig, vage traditionele (aangeleerde) geloofstaal in intellectueel opzicht geen overtuigingskracht heeft, en waardoor veel mensen er buiten vallen. Hij is met deze problematiek opgegroeid want zijn vader was dominee. Hij zegt dan : "De traditionele geloofstaal is voor velen een onverstaanbaar spreken in 'tongen' geworden, naar analogie van 1 Korientiërs 14." Dit is de reden waarom hij een brug wil bouwen : Hij heeft de overtuiging dat er een einde kan en moet komen aan de wanorde van het elkaar niet verstaan ten aanzien van deze problemen. Hij wil graag zien dat er tussen mensen van verschillende levensovertuiging toch een gemeenschappelijk bewustzijn is, als een verlangen naar vrede en gerechtigheid, Dit is het gemeenschappelijke wat alle mensen samenbindt en waaraan hun overige opvattingen (ook hun Godsbeeld) ondergeschikt is. Deze boodschap is dus ook juist voor vandaag de dag belangrijk en actueel. Hij overleed in de 90-er jaren, of liever gezegd : ging naar de andere dimensie.
Hij heeft in het boek in die mate problemen met het christendom dat hij het christendom totaal wil herzien door een persoonlijk contact met de bron te maken, en vandaaruit bruggen van vertaling te maken naar alle takken van de mensheid, als een tolk dus. Hij ziet het potentieel en de waarde van sommige dingen van het christendom, dus hij gooit het kind niet weg met het badwater.
Hij stelt in het eerste hoofdstuk dat de wereld zich moet ontwikkelen tot het koninkrijk van God, maar dat hiervoor een nieuw waardensysteem moet komen wat mondiale geldigheid zal moeten hebben. (mondiaal = universeel)

Zoals gewoonlijks wil hij dit niet simpel doen. Hij vergelijkt de ingewikkeldheid van de spirituele wetenschappen met de complexiteit van de hersenen.
Hij heeft twee van zulke boekjes geschreven. Oók één van 1980. Ze liggen beiden in de kast. Soms lees ik er wat uit, en leg het weer weg. Ik zie hem als één van ons, als regenboog-mensen, bruggenbouwers, waar wij ook mee bezig zijn met de Vur en de Bilha in de tweede bijbel. In die zin zie ik dus in waarom hij op mijn pad was gebracht. Een tijd geleden ging ik terug naar het oude college waar ik opzat. Ik liep er alleen maar langs om naar de stad te gaan. Plotseling voelde ik een hand op mijn rug en er gleed een warmte door me heen, en toen ik mij omdraaide zag ik een oude man, als een leraar, maar ik

kende deze man niet. De oude man verdween toen weer in het niets. Ik begon me af te vragen wie het zou kunnen zijn, en wat hij van me wilde. Later in een droom vertelde de scheikunde leraar mij dat ik de oude man op aarde nooit had gekend, maar dat het een leraar voor mijn tijd was. Ik word nu weer warm van binnen nu ik het schrijf. Gisteren was ik begonnen met het schrijven van dit stuk, en vannacht had ik weer een droom over de scheikunde leraar. We waren in een zaal met mannen die hemelse klassieke muziek schreven en maakten. Ze hielden allemaal toespraken ook om elkaars werk te waarderen. De scheikunde leraar scheen er geinteresseerd in te zijn, en waarschijnlijk was hij er ook mee bezig. Er begon een vrouw te zingen over de morgen die doorbrak, en toen werd ik wakker, en ik voelde dat er paradijselijke stralen in mijn hoofd waren doorgebroken.

Na die keer dat ik het college had bezocht ging ik er nog een keer terug, ik ging er langs om naar de stad te gaan, maar ook wel een beetje om te zien wat er dit keer zou gebeuren. Ik zag overal metalen kleuren. Ik herinnerde dit gekleurde metaal van mijn opa die een keer als een soort ridder in mijn droom verscheen om me te helpen in een bepaalde strijd. In ieder geval was er een strijd gaande om de school. Ik denk dat er nog steeds een strijd om gaande is. Ook schoolgeschiedenis is belangrijk. Alles komt later van pas. We staan er niet alleen voor. Ook zij die al overgegaan zijn naar de andere dimensie, de wolk van getuigen (de jinns), helpen ons.
Religieuze wiskunde, de wiskunde van het leven, als de regenboog-spiritualiteit, ik zie er wel wat in ... de lucht vol met regenbogen, allemaal bruggen, van hart tot hart, door de Hogere Kennis gegeven ...

Nu, wanneer we de reusachtige kloof tussen het westen en de arabische wereld zien, hoe overbruggen we dat ? De mythologie van deze twee culturen kan soms erg bedreigend of verwarrend overkomen.

Het Geheim van de Vreetzaak

Ik liep in de grote stad. Er liep een oude vrouw achter me te mompelen. Ik vroeg : "Wat zegt u ?" Ik kon het niet goed verstaan.
"Alweer een vreetzaak, verschrikkelijk," zei ze.
Ik moest lachen, en zei : "Ja, het staat er vol mee." We liepen net langs één of andere snackbar of eettent voor pizza broodjes of wat het dan ook was. Ik kon haar goed begrijpen. Mijn oma zou zeggen : "Hier vreet iedereen maar door, terwijl ze aan de andere kant niets te eten hebben. Het is zo oneerlijk." Dat zei ze ook altijd over kleding, en dat was ook altijd de reden waarom ze zich sober kleedde, en zuinig leefde.
Affijn, ik liep door, en die vrouw ging ook haar eigen weg, maar ik kon merken dat het een markante vrouw was, die dingen gewoon zegt zoals ze zijn, en er niet omheen draait of het verdoezelt. Ik vroeg me af hoe het zou zijn geweest als ik haar had gekend, of als we misschien familie waren geweest, als ik hier in deze grote stad zou zijn opgegroeid met haar. Ze zei het op zo'n manier dat ik wist dat ze wel een grote humor moest hebben, maar aan de andere kant was ze doodserieus, dus dodelijk accurate humor, als een wapen.

Ik ging een boekhandel binnen, een boekhandel waar alles weg moest, er was een grote opheffings uitverkoop. Ik keek even door de boekjes, en zag de meest bizarre dingen, alsof ik niet meer op de planeet aarde was, maar op de planeet Mars of iets dergelijks. Alles was anders. Ik dacht : "Hier moet ik gebruik van maken, want ik zou het liefst op een andere planeet willen wonen."
Ik begon in een boek van de kerkgeschiedenis te bladeren. Het ging over de Middeleeuwse kerkelijke vervolgingen van de ketters door de papen. Maar toen ging het ineens over de Middeleeuwse lijdensmystiek, dat er iemand in die gevaarlijke tijd beweerde dat in Jezus geloven niets voor je doet, maar dat het gaat om de lijdensmystiek te kennen, de kruismystiek waardoor je loskomt van

alle aardse idioterie. Toen was er een plaatje met Willem van Oranje en zijn vrouw, die baden dat ze verlost zouden worden van de goddeloze koning van Spanje. Want Spanje bezette Holland in die tijd. En ik dacht eraan hoe Spanje nog steeds een tirannie is voor Europa, door hoe ze de dieren behandelen, een beetje als Wimpie.
En ik bladerde verder in de boeken en zag bekende geschiedenis figuren op plaatjes die de volkeren opvraten als kannibalen. Toen dacht ik weer terug aan de woorden van die oude vrouw : "Alweer een vreetzaak, verschrikkelijk."

Het waren allemaal karikaturen, als een natuurverschijnsel. Eén lichtjaar is de afstand die het licht in één jaar aflegt. Het licht heeft een snelheid van 300.000 kilometer per seconde. In één seconde legt het licht dus 300.000 kilometer af. Het is oud licht heel lang geleden uitgezonden, van dingen die dus allang niet meer bestaan, maar wat ons nu pas bereikt. Dit wordt ook wel "verjaarde projectie" genoemd. En dan te bedenken hoe licht zich kan vervormen door de snelheid en de afstand, en hoe dat dan bij de mens overkomt, hoe de hersenen dit oppikken. Geen simpel rekensommetje, maar diepgaande, duizelingwekkende wiskunde. Ik begon steeds meer boeken te grijpen, en het werd steeds bizarder, en ik voelde hoe ik meer honger kreeg naar kennis hierover, alsof ik in een ander soort vreetzaak was gekomen. Ik zei tegen mezelf : "Nee, ik wil dit niet !" Ik kocht een afgemeten aantal goedkope boeken die de kernschakels van het verhaal waren, en ik ging terug naar huis. Ik klikte de computer aan, en het verhaal ging verder in een clip die de advertenties al voor me hadden uitgezocht, "het geheim van de vreetzaak".

De Brief van Paulus aan de Amazoniërs

Net als je denkt dat dingen saai beginnen te worden kun je soms ineens wat interessants tegenkomen. Er is natuurlijk veel interessants, maar je moet het maar net kunnen vinden.

In dit geval ging het over het beruchte 'zwijgverbod voor vrouwen' in de brieven van Paulus, in de bijbel dus. Het artikel heet : Paulus en de Amazones, en de schrijver vroeg zich af wat Paulus zou hebben geschreven aan de gelovigen in Amazonië. Amazonië (volgens sommigen mythologisch) was een gebied bestuurd door vrouwen in plaats van mannen. Niet mannen maar vrouwen reden daar te paard, en de vrouw had daar haar eigen zelfstandigheid, en had geen man boven haar nodig als curator of tutor.
Dan schrijft de schrijver :
'Wanneer hier nu eens gemeenten waren gesticht, hoe zou Paulus daaraan dan geschreven hebben? Zouden we dan bijvoorbeeld het volgende gelezen hebben? En zou er rnisschien eens een apocriefe brief gevonden kunnen worden waarin dit te lezen is?
'Hoewel ik in alle gemeenten van de heiligen de vrouwen opdraag te zwijgen, draag ik dit bij u aan de mannen op, want het staat lelijk wanneer een man spreekt in de gemeente. Laten zij thuis hun vrouwen vragen wanneer zij iets te weten willen komen.'
'Alhoewel Adam eerst gemaakt is en daarna Eva, raad ik u aan dat de vrouwen leren in de gemeenten en dat de mannen zich daarvan onthouden, want zo is het welluidend in uw midden.'
Ik vraag me af hoe hierop gereageerd zou worden als er zo'n brief zou bestaan. Natuurlijk zou dan het huis te klein zijn. De trotse man zou zijn religieus ingebeelde bevoorrechte positie niet zomaar willen opgeven. Hij maakt zich niet druk als het andere geslacht moet zwijgen, maar zal protesteren als het om hemzelf gaat. De schrijver komt tot de conclusie dat zo'n brief niet bestaat, maar dat de bestaande brieven van Paulus ook anders gelezen kunnen worden. Hij wijst erop dat er vroeger allerlei soorten vrouwen waren, zelfstandig en onzelfstandig, dus heel gevarieerd. De schrijver waarschuwt dat de mens niet zwart-wit met de bijbel en de bijbelse tijd moet omgaan. Eigenlijk probeert hij alles een beetje goed te praten. Wel stelt hij dat feministische theologie een heilzame werking kan hebben. Volgens hem is God ook niet man of vrouw, maar oneindig ver verheven boven deze dualiteit. Hij staat dus wel open voor herziening van de bijbelse interpretatie, ondanks dat hij de bijbel ziet als het Woord van God. Tot op zekere hoogte kunnen boeken ook door blijven groeien, en als alles cryptisch wordt genomen kan elk boek zelfs tot de waarheid worden, maar dit moet blijven plaatsvinden in de dualiteit, de balans, tussen

ontmaskeren en herzien, dus wat wij noemen : "werken boven de schelp en onder de schelp".
Verder zegt hij wel wat goede dingen als je langs sommige dingen een beetje heenleest :
'In Christus is noch man noch vrouw. Er is geen waardeverschil voor God en dus ook niet voor elkaar (wij zijn medeërfgenamen). Dit is nu duidelijk een element dat bewijst hoezeer de apostelen geen kopieën zijn van hun tijd. Hier sloeg en slaat de genadige openbaring van God heel wat menselijke zekeringen stuk!'
'In de christelijke gemeente delen allen gelijkelijk in de gaven van de Geest (er zijn profeten én profetessen). Deze gaven worden ook niet afgeremd.'
Het zijn allemaal spiegelbeelden. De Amazone Bijbel, oftewel de Tweede Bijbel, bevat betogen over een spiegelwereld waar inderdaad alle rollen omgedraaid zijn, waar de matriarchie de gewesten bestuurt. Wel wordt er duidelijk gesteld dat dit metaforisch is en geenszins letterlijk mag worden opgevat. Er is namelijk geen onderscheid tussen man en vrouw. Geslachtelijke bepaling maakt geen snel onderscheid over wat de taak van iemand is. De materialistische mens ziet voortdurend een onderscheid tussen mannen en vrouwen, en probeert daar altijd weer een slaatje uit te slaan. De materialistische mens heeft namelijk een onderhandelingsgeest, en geen strijders-mentaliteit. De materialistische mens leeft niet van de goede strijd tegen het kwaad, dus moet wel onderhandelen, en komt dan ook vast te zitten in de bijbelgevangenis, want zonder de bijbel, het merkteken van het beest, kun je namelijk niet onderhandelen. Alleen strijders kunnen loskomen van de macht van de bijbel. De onderhandelende geest zal daarom ook altijd hameren op de ongelijkheid tussen man en vrouw, want zo blijft het geld binnenrollen. De onderhandelende geest onderdrukt en zaait angst, en richt zo een medische en juridische markt op om zo een oplossing te verkopen. Slim maar dom, zeggen we dan, of zoals clown Bassie het zegt : "Ik ben wel dom, maar niet slim."
Ik herkende veel in de dromen van de schrijver van het artikel. Ik droomde ook veel toen ik nog een gedwongen christen was, maar werd toen weer geconfronteerd met mijn ketenen aan het einde van de droom. Het is een beetje het "Meisje met de Zwavelstokjes" idee. Maar langzaamaan kunnen deze dromen ons dus wel uitleiden, als we gehoor geven aan de dromen van

de diepere realiteit. Natuurlijk is de brief van Paulus aan de Amazoniërs maar een grap, maar het bevat wel een diepere waarheid. Dromen zijn vaak abstract. Het gaat juist om het vinden van het verwaarloosde moederlijke deel in ons, het vrouwelijke deel, om zo heel veel boze stemmen in en rondom ons tot zwijgen te brengen, en zo hierdoor ook tot een bepaalde wedergeboorte te komen : het vinden van je eigen innerlijke kind. Elk mens heeft binnenin zich een innerlijke familie, en mag ten volle de mogelijkheden en kwaliteiten van elk onderdeel daarvan ten goede benutten. De mens mag zo een ontdekkingsreis maken door zijn/ haar eigen lichaam. Voordat je naar buiten treedt : Ga eerst naar binnen. Hier liggen vele geheime sleutels opgeborgen. Zo kun je ook de valse stem van buiten het zwijgen opleggen, en komen tot de verloren stem van binnen, je eigen gids. Zo kunnen de woorden van Paulus, en zelfs de denkbeeldige brief van Paulus aan de Amazoniërs toch op een hele vreemde manier waarde gaan krijgen.

Chinese Wijsheid - De (Symbolische) Kaarten

Zo'n beetje het oudste boek ter wereld is de I Ching. Sommigen gebruiken het als orakel, anderen als een boek van wijsheid met verzen, als de levensdynamieken die de reis beschrijven van het leven, hoe daar mee om te gaan en hoe het in balans te krijgen. Het zijn ook levens-seizoenen, en de kaarten gaan er genuanceerd mee om, en forceren niets.
Het is de Chinese cultuur, en met alle culturen geldt : je moet het niet letterlijk nemen en niet gaan verafgoden als onfeilbaar, maar zien wat voor persoonlijke waarde het kan krijgen, ter ondersteuning, dus eigenlijk mag je het symbolisch toepassen en het goddelijke hier IN vinden, want het goddelijke kan overal doorheen werken.
Het gaat erom 'hoe' de mens het gebruikt. Sommigen gebruiken het voor het goede, anderen voor het kwaad, zoals alle religies uit dit boek voortkwamen.

Sommigen hebben het gewoon corrupt gemaakt. Zoals de Bijbel kan de mens het laten zeggen wat de mens wil, dus is het open voor meervoudige interpretatie. De uitdaging is altijd : probeer er de rode lijn in te vinden voor je leven. Bewaar het goede, en laat het slechte los.
Maak er iets moois van. Over de kaarten kun je na denken, gebruiken voor meditatie, als helpers. China heeft ook een goddelijke gave. Het is schatzoeken, of parelduiken, hoe je het ook noemen wil. Het zijn potentieel prachtige energieën waar de mens contact mee mag hebben.

De Geschilderde Wond

Het laat me niet los,
Zij die stierf, onder mysterieuze omstandigheden,
Nee, erachter gekomen ben ik niet,
Ik weet niet wat mij plaagt,
Ze was nog zo jong

Het laat me niet los,
Die dag in het bos,
Toen ik met haar was in het bootje,
Iets greep haar en trok haar de diepte in

En zoveel nam zij met haar mee,
En zoveel liet zij achter,
Als ik naar het behang staar zie ik haar,
Maar er is zoveel wat ik niet zie

Een schilderij van haar hangt in de kamer,
Dat doet mij goed, maar het is ook een wond,
Als een eeuwige wond die maar niet weggaat,
Het is zo dubbel na al die jaren,
Terwijl het in het begin slechts bitter was

De wonden worden zoeter,
Water wordt tot wijn,
De bitterheid is minder,
Maar het is nog steeds daar

Elke dag lijkt het beter te gaan,
Wanneer ik naar het schilderij kijk,
Ik kan er zoveel in zien,
Ook de dingen die er nooit waren

Het lijkt alsof ze doorgroeit in het schilderij,
Alsof ze tot mij spreekt,
Het is alsof ik achter haar sta,
Maar dan lijkt het alsof iets mij doorbreekt

Ik vecht tegen schimmen en schaduwen,
Ik vecht tegen spiegelbeelden en de tijd,
We zijn te ver weg van elkaar

Is het te overbruggen, of is het beter zo,
Ik droom van een betere aarde,
Als ik het toch terug kon draaien was ik nooit met haar de rivier op gegaan,
Dan was ik met haar thuisgebleven,
Maar misschien zou het daar dan op een andere manier hebben toegeslagen

Sommige dingen zijn niet te ontwijken,
Dingen komen zoals ze komen,
En schilderijen kunnen dingen begrijpen,
Ze verstaan het beter dan ons,
En hangen aan de muur, als hangende dokters

In de tijd dat er nog ketters waren, jij en ik,
Waren we onze eigen dokters,
Maar het mocht niet zo wezen,
Want eigen dokters moesten hangen,
En nu hangen ze aan de muren,
En eigen dokters moesten branden,
En nu zijn ze het open haard van het huis

Wat een hoge prijs betaalden wij,
Om ons eigen medicijn te zijn,
Wat een hoge prijs betaalden wij, liefste,
Om elkaars dokter te zijn

Ze trokken jou in het water, en mij in het vuur,
Een schilderij is alles wat er van ons over is,
Als een zoete liefdes dokter,
Hangende als een ketter aan de muur

De Rotterdamse Soldaat

'Het interesseert mij allemaal niet, mevrouw, ik heb al teveel voor mijn kiezen gehad. Ik ben de dood al vele malen gestorven, dus het zal mij niet meer deren. Als ik val, raak ik de grond toch al niet meer, mevrouw. Het is allemaal routine geworden,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat in de tram. 't Is toch zo ? Het is er toch allemaal al ingeramd ? Niemand kijkt er meer van op, mevrouw. Als je nou zestien of zeventien jaar zou zijn, mevrouw, kijk, dan was het wat anders, maar ik zit al meer dan twintig jaar in het vak. Ik heb alles al meegemaakt, mevrouw, ik draai mijn hand er niet meer voor om. 't Is toch zo ? Kijk als je nou echt over heel veel jaren geleden praat en je bent piepjong, en je hebt nog niks meegemaakt, ja, dan is het andere koffie, dan is het anders, maar met mij, mevrouw, het kan me allemaal geen worst meer schelen. Ze doen maar, ze hebben het altijd al zo gedaan, dus laten ze het rustig door doen, geen kip die er meer om kraait. We zijn het allemaal al gewend, helemaal doodgedraaid, allemaal routine, mevrouw, allemaal routine. Die van ons nog komen zijn allemaal robotten, mevrouw, wij hebben dit kunstje al zo vaak gedaan. We kunnen het slapend doen. Kijk, als je nou over echt heel lang geleden praat, ja, dan is het anders, maar nu zijn we even vele jaren verder, hè, dat maakt een groot verschil, mevrouw, groot verschil. 't Interesseert me niet meer. Ik voel me als een bouwvakker die telkens hetzelfde huis bouwt. 't Is allemaal hetzelfde, niemand kijkt er meer van op. Echt mevrouw, moet u een paar dagen met me meekomen, en dan kent u het liedje wel. Ik heb er allemaal geen zin meer in, ik heb het wel gezien, maar ik doe het gewoon. Wat moet je anders, mevrouw ?'

'En hoe lang heeft u in Joegoslavië gezeten tijdens de oorlog daar ?' vroeg de vrouw die tegenover hem zat in de tram.

'Drie maanden, mevrouw,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Ik kreeg daar al snel een relatie met een vrouw die nog wel erger was dan de oorlog. Ik heb zowel

op het strijdveld gewerkt als in het ziekenhuis. Ik was daar ook voor haar. Ik streed ook voor haar, maar ze ging overal rondbazuinen dat ik in een inrichting zat, mevrouw. Moet een mens maar tegen kunnen, mevrouw, maar zo langzamerhand kan ik tegen alles, mevrouw. Ik heb veel meegemaakt, mevrouw, ik ben erin gehard.'

'Hadden jullie ruzie ofzo, of was je er te weinig voor haar ?' vroeg de vrouw.

'Er was oorlog, mevrouw, ik was daar niet op vakantie,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Ik was daar om levens te redden, ook het hare. Ik moest er vaak op uit, en daar kon ze niet zo goed mee leven. Maar als ik er was hadden we vaak ruzie, mevrouw.'

'Ik ken zulke types,' zei de vrouw. 'Ze draaien alles om. Als je te dichtbij komt, dan is het 'kip ik heb je.' Het worden ook wel Aldebaranse vogels genoemd.'

'Aldebaranse vogels ? Wat zijn dat, mevrouw ? Ik heb daar nog nooit van gehoord, mevrouw,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat.

'Het komt uit een boek,' zei de vrouw. 'Aldebaranse vogels, ze kunnen je beste vrienden zijn, maar de dag erna zijn het je ergste vijanden. Ze doen zich zo zacht en teder voor, zo zwak en fragiel, maar raak ze niet aan, want dan zijn ze ineens de sterkste leeuwen, en ze zullen geen medelijden met je hebben. Ze vertellen je hun problemen, en smeken je om hulp, maar als je ze aanraakt dan ben jij ineens wat zij waren. Het zijn aasgieren, en je betaalt altijd een hoge prijs voor wat ze je geven.'

'Dat komt me bekend voor, mevrouw,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Je slaat de spijker op z'n kop. Ik ben Joegoslavië na drie maanden uitgevlucht, niet om de oorlog, maar om haar, mevrouw. Stuur me de oorlog in, laat me werken in het ergste ziekenhuis, laat me afdalen in de diepste put om mensen eruit te redden, maar stuur me niet terug naar zo'n vrouw, mevrouw. Ik heb er nog steeds nachtmerries van.

De tram stopte. 'Ik moet er hier uit,' zei de vrouw.

'Nee, alsjeblieft, mevrouw,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Blijf nog even zitten. Dan kunnen we nog even kletsen, mevrouw. Laat me niet in de steek, want door het u allemaal te vertellen lijkt het wel alsof ik er weer middenin zit.'

'Het is een tram, geen café,' lachte de vrouw.

'Aljeblieft, mevrouw,' smeekte de Rotterdamse soldaat. Maar de vrouw stond al buiten, en de tram reed verder.'

De Rotterdamse soldaat vloekte. 'Waarom moet ik toch altijd mijn hele ziel en zaligheid aan iemand vertellen ? Ze geven er toch geen stuiver om. Aldebaranse vogels had ze het over ? Volgens mij was zij er ook één. Aasgieren zijn het. Ze laten je niet eens uitspreken. Ik was nog lang niet klaar.'

Opeens werd de Rotterdamse soldaat van achteren op zijn schouder getikt. Hij keek achterom en zag een rokende man met een hoed op en een krant bij zich. 'Kunt u even niet zo vloeken en schelden ?' zei de man. 'Ik probeer rustig mijn krantje te lezen en ik heb zo werk te doen. U zit hier niet in een café.'

'Oh, nog zo'n Aldebaranse vogel,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Goed dat ik het weet, maar als het oorlog is hoef je niet bij mij aan te kloppen.'

Bij de volgende halte stapte de Rotterdamse soldaat uit, en liep door de stad, terwijl hij boos tegen van alles aantrapte. 'Moet ik weer net hebben, moet ik weer hebben,' zei hij. Nog steeds vloekte en schold hij. 'Ik kan een mens hier niks zeggen, allemaal Aldebaranse vogels, allemaal aasgieren.'

Hij ging een café in en begon zich vol te zuipen. Hij bleef maar aanpraten tegen de barman. Die werd er natuurlijk ook voor betaald, en die zei telkens maar :
'Ja ... ja.'

Toen de Rotterdamse soldaat over zijn Joegoslavische vriendin begon zei de barman : 'Ik had ook eens zo'n vrouw. Ze hebben nooit genoeg, zijn nooit tevreden. Er blijft niets meer van je over.'

'Hoe heb je het overleefd ?' vroeg de Rotterdamse soldaat.

'Vluchten,' zei de barman. 'Wat kan je anders doen ? In zo'n oorlog kun je niet vechten.'

'Nee, inderdaad,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Ze mogen me in elke oorlog gooien, maar sommige vrouwen zijn erger dan honderden oorlogen bij elkaar.'

'Ik zou geen risico meer nemen,' zei de barman. 'Als je je beroep liefhebt, dan is dat je vrouw.'

'Goed punt,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat.

De barman keek hem geheimzinnig aan, ging toen even naar de keuken, en kwam toen terug met een boek. 'Een boek over de Aldebaranse vogels,' zei de barman. 'Het zijn mythische vogels, trickster vogels, die een mens plagen totdat de mens zijn ware liefde heeft ontdekt, niet in een persoon, maar in het beroep, de levenstaak van de mens. Daartoe dienen dus de Aldebaranse vogels, opdat de mens zijn doel zal vinden. Je mag het wel van me lenen.'

En zo kreeg de Rotterdamse soldaat het boek mee, en ging fluitend naar huis. Onderweg zag hij wat leek op Aldebaranse vogels, maar hij glimlachte gewoon. Hij ging er niet op in, want hij wist waar het op uit kon lopen.

De Rotterdamse Soldaat II

'Ik zeg niks meer, mevrouw,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat in de tram. 'Ik praat niet meer. Er zijn hier allemaal Aldebaranse vogels die zitten te loeren, die

aasgieren. Ik heb altijd iedereen geholpen, mevrouw, stond altijd voor iedereen klaar, maar als je dan zelf eens iemand nodig hebt, dan zijn ze er niet, dan is niemand thuis en heeft niemand tijd, mevrouw. Ik zou eigenlijk een toren tot de hemel moeten bouwen, mevrouw, en dan volgt iedereen maar die mij wil volgen, mevrouw.'

'Vergeet dan niet eerst de toren naar beneden te bouwen,' zei de vrouw die tegenover hem in de tram zat, 'de aarde in, zodat ook alle moddermannen zoals jij die zich in de aarde verscholen houden met je mee naar boven kunnen.'

'Moddermannen ?' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Zeg, gaan we beledigend doen, mevrouw ? Ik heb het weer getroffen, hoor. Ze zijn erweer : de Aldebaranse vogels. Ze zitten hier tegenover me.'

'Nou ja, ik bedoel met moddermannen degenen die bang voor het leven zijn geworden en niks meer durven te zeggen, geen contacten meer durven te maken met anderen uit angst pijn gedaan te worden,' zei de vrouw. 'Ze gaan de aarde in om een schuilplaats te zoeken en laten zichzelf niet meer zien. Ze zijn er nog wel, maar hun harten zijn gesloten.'

'Ja, ja,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Mij uit mijn tent proberen te lokken, hè ? Nou, dat gaat mooi niet door. Ik ben niet zo iemand die zichzelf zomaar voor de leeuwen werpt, mevrouw. Ik ben niet achterlijk. Waar doen we het tegenwoordig nog voor, mevrouw ? De mens is ondankbaar. Het is toch nooit genoeg. Nee, we moeten het met minder doen, mevrouw. Er zit niks anders op.'

'Bouw jij je torentje naar de hemel maar,' zei de vrouw. 'Ik ga straks lekker in mijn achtertuin zonnen. Glaasje erbij, tijdschriftje, en dan ga ik daarna lekker kletsen met de buurvrouw over van alles wat ons dwars zit, en ook over van alles wat ons niet dwars zit, en dan hebben we jou niet eens nodig, modderman.'

'Pffft,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat verontwaardigd. 'Als de oorlog komt, weet je

ook dat je bij mij niet aan hoeft te kloppen.'

'Er komt geen oorlog, modderman,' zei de vrouw. 'De enige oorlog die er is is in je eigen hoofd, jij en je Aldebaranse vogels. 't Lijkt wel een syndroom.'

'Ik heb in de oorlog gevochten, mevrouw, opdat u hier nu veilig kunt leven,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Een beetje respect voor je militaire medemens. Je mocht ze nog eens nodig hebben, je weet maar nooit, mevrouw.'

't Enige wat ik nodig heb is een goede buurvrouw, dat is beter dan een verre modderman die zich in de aarde verschuild,' zei de vrouw.

'Twee pond konijnenkaas bij de bakker, u bazelt maar wat,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Ik laat me niet uit de kast lokken door zo'n Aldebaranse vogel als u. Ik houd mijn kaken flink op elkaar. Van mij krijgt u niets, want ik weet precies waar alle informatie naartoe gaat : naar uw buurvrouw, die natuurlijk ook in het complot zit.'

'Wat voor complot ?' lachte de vrouw.

'Tegen uw militaire medemens, mevrouw,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat.

'U ziet ze vliegen,' zei de vrouw. 'U bent zwaar paranoide. U zou uzelf moeten laten opnemen in het ziekenhuis om u te laten nakijken, opdat uw niet-militaire medemens geen overlast van u heeft.'

'Maar dan moet u ook niet komen aandraven als het oorlog is, mevrouw, want dan zijn we er niet,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Dan zijn we aan het sjoelen en tafeltennissen in het ziekenhuis, mevrouw. Allemaal uw schuld. U maakt uw militaire medemens gek.'

'Dat is dan mooi geregeld,' zei de vrouw. 'Er komt geen oorlog. U zit iedereen maar bang te maken. Ga wat leuke dingen doen.'

Boos ging de Rotterdamse soldaat de tram uit. 'U zult geen last meer van uw

militaire medemens hebben,' zei hij nog boos. Hij liep de straten over en schopte tegen alles aan wat los en vast zat. 'Hoe krijgen ze het toch altijd weer voor elkaar, die Aldebaranse vogels. Nu heb ik weer mijn ziel en zaligheid lopen uitstorten. Alsof ze je de woorden gewoon uit je trekken. Bah.'

Hij ging een café in om zich vol te zuipen. 'Zegt u het maar, waar heeft u last van ?' vroeg de barvrouw.

'Van Aldebaranse vogels mevrouw,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Overal lopen ze te loeren op mijn bloed, halen het bloed onder mijn nagels vandaan, mevrouw. Aasgieren zijn het.'

'Tja, die zitten hier veel,' zei de barvrouw. 'Daar hebben we gelukkig onze sappen voor. Meer drinken, minder denken, minder praten.'

'Precies,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Spreken is zilver, zwijgen is goud, drinken is platina, en erop los schieten is de hemel. Ik heb mijn torentje gebouwd.'

'Nou ja, teveel drinken is natuurlijk niet goed, en schieten al helemaal niet,' zei de barvrouw.

'Zeg, gaat u ook al beledigend doen naar uw militaire medemens, mevrouw ?' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat aangebrand. 'Gaan we roet in het eten gooien ? Ik heb in de oorlog gewerkt, mevrouw. Ik zal het echt wel weten wat goed is en wat niet goed is. En beledig mijn torentje naar de hemel niet.'

'Er zit hier een zekere grens aan het drinken,' zei de barvrouw. 'Boven die grens mogen we het niet toestaan en gaat er een slot op, en schieten doen we al helemaal niet. Als u wilt schieten dan gaat u maar naar de dartshoek, of naar de gokautomaat.'

'Gokautomaat ?' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'U bent natuurlijk op mijn geld uit. Weer een Aldebaranse vogel geschoten. Het was goed raak. Het was me een genoegen, mevrouw.'

'Beter te gokken dan te schieten,' zei de barvrouw. 'Schiet maar met geld, dan hebben anderen er ook wat aan.'

'Ah, bent u er zo één ?' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat.

'Met geld krijg je alles van een mens gedaan,' zei de barvrouw, 'vertrouw daar maar op. Voor niets gaat de zon op.'

'Ik ben niet zo rijk, mevrouw,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat, 'en geluk is niet te koop. Het houdt altijd ergens op, en hoe hoger je hebt gebouwd, hoe harder je valt.'

'Dan heb je het niet goed gedaan,' zei de barvrouw.

'Oh, dus ik sta oog in oog met een specialist ?' vroeg de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Leg uit dan.'

'Hoeveel betaal je ervoor ?' vroeg de barvrouw.

'Ik heb geen rooie stuiver meer,' zei de Rotterdamse soldaat. 'Ik heb alles opgezopen.'

'Een onderpand dan,' zei de barvrouw.

De Rotterdamse soldaat gaf haar zijn horloge. 'Nou, zeg op,' zei hij.

'Luister,' zei de barvrouw. 'Ik ken een liedje en dat gaat zo :
Geef het leven een kans, gooi het maar op de bank,
Rente is nooit te duur, grijp je kans, grijp je kans.

Wat ik daarmee bedoel is, dat je in het leven niet alles als een dolle zot moet gaan besteden, maar je moet het naar de bank brengen om te sparen, ook al is het weinig, en dan krijg je vanzelf rente. Vele beetjes maken veel, en dat geeft ook weer veel rente. Dat moet je eigenlijk met alle dingen doen. Het heet het

minimalisme, dat je alles opspaart, je woorden, je gedachten. Je leeft zuinig, en dan wordt je daar ook weer voor betaald. De Aldebaranse vogels komen opdat een mens dit zal leren, en om een mens van dit principe niet te laten afwijken. Dat is het ware drinken. Je drinkt zo van de hemelbron.'

De barvrouw gaf hem zijn horloge terug en een zoen op zijn wang. 'Dit is je rente al,' sprak ze. De Rotterdamse soldaat is toen hemels dronken naar huis gegaan.

Te Leven in Amsterdam

Een serie korte verhalen

1. De Wonderjongens

Een oude man in Amsterdam verkocht fietsen. De fietsen waren zo wonderlijk dat vanuit het hele land kinderen met hun ouders er op af kwamen. De man was als een tovenaar. De fietsen waren zo wonderlijk dat door een bepaalde manier van fietsen je ermee kon vliegen.

Een paar jongens waren er zo goed in dat ze er helemaal mee naar het strand konden vliegen. Op het strand was een vrouwtje dat ijsjes verkocht. De ijsjes waren zo bijzonder dat je ermee over de zee kon vliegen. De jongens kochten een ijsje en gingen de zee over. Hun fietsen namen ze niet mee, want dat zou nooit lukken. Maar de ijsjes waren voor het echte werk. De jongens vlogen naar Amerika, en bouwden hun eigen stad. Maar na een tijdje verlangden ze terug naar hun oude land.

Zou de fietsenverkoper er nog steeds zijn, en het vrouwtje met de ijsjes ? Maar toen ze teruggingen was er een grote oorlog in het land, en van Amsterdam was er niks meer overgebleven. Daarom besloten ze Amsterdam opnieuw te bouwen. En het werd de wonderlijkste stad van het land.

2. Het Vrouwtje dat de Zieken Genas

Er was eens een vrouwtje in Amsterdam die hele wonderlijke lampen verkocht. De lampen verspreidden een zacht paars licht wat ernstig zieken kon genezen. Het vrouwtje verrichtte grote wonderen door haar lampen, maar op een dag was ze verdwenen. Niemand wist waar ze was. Er werden geen lampen meer gemaakt sinds het vrouwtje was verdwenen. De lampen die er waren werden onbetaalbaar duur, en families vochten erom.

Na vele jaren kwam het vrouwtje terug. Het bleek dat ze bij familie was in het buitenland. Ze was erg verdrietig over de situatie in Amsterdam, en begon weer lampen te maken. Ditmaal waren ze nog wonderlijker dan ooit. Zelfs de doden stonden op door de lampen. Ook vanuit het buitenland was er grote interesse. Op een dag werd het vrouwtje ontvoerd. Ze werd meegenomen door rovers, en ze moest ergens in een duistere grot werken. Maar haar familie zorgde ervoor dat er een speciaal leger werd opgesteld om haar te zoeken. Uiteindelijk vonden ze haar, en brachten haar terug naar Amsterdam. Vanaf die dag leefden er soldaten in haar huis en in haar winkel. Van schrik durfde ze geen wonderlijke spullen meer te verkopen, en vanaf toen verkocht ze alleen nog oude tweedehandse spullen, maar de magie is altijd bij het vrouwtje gebleven.

3. De Bakkerij

Er was eens een oude bakker in Amsterdam. Hij maakte poppen van brood en

bracht ze tot leven. Over de hele wereld werden de poppen goed verkocht. Maar het gebeurde vaak dat zulke poppen ontsnapten en in het bos gingen leven. Op een dag zocht de oude bakker zulke poppen op, en probeerde hen naar Amsterdam terug te lokken. ‘We willen alleen terug als we in uw bakkerij mogen werken, en u ons niet doorverkoopt.’ En zo gebeurde het. Maar sommige mensen zouden de poppen graag willen kopen, en boden er veel geld voor. De oude bakker hield zijn belofte. Maar op een dag vluchtten de poppen weer naar het bos. Na een tijdje kwam de oude bakker hen opzoeken. Ze leefden in een grot nu. ‘Wat als je nu eens bij ons komt wonen,’ zeiden de poppen. ‘We willen niet meer terug, want de mensen zeuren altijd.’

‘Wat als ik jullie nu eens muziek-instrumenten geef,’ zei de bakker. ‘Kom je dan met me mee terug, dan heb je geen last meer van het gezeur.’ En zo gebeurde het. De poppen kwamen terug, maar al gauw vonden de mensen het geen gehoor, en weer gingen de poppen terug naar het bos.

Nog eenmaal ging de bakker terug naar de poppen, en beloofde hen ditmaal de wonderlijkste voertuigen, zodat ze overal naartoe konden waar ze maar wilden. De poppen gingen met de bakker mee, de bakker gaf hen hun voertuigen, en niemand zag hen ooit terug.

4. De Amsterdamse Soldaat

'Het is allemaal ijdelheid, mevrouw,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Waar doen we het allemaal voor ? We zoeken allemaal onze zogenaamde vijanden te doden, en we vergeten dat we aan onszelf moeten sterven. Wij zijn zelf onze ergste vijanden, ons ego, onze verbeeldzucht en ijdelheid. De mens houd van sprookjes, mevrouw, van spiegeltje, spiegeltje aan de wand, ik ben het mooiste

van het land. Ik weet altijd alles beter, mevrouw, daar gaat het de mens om. Het is allemaal ijdelheid, mevrouw. We kunnen wel opstappen. Waar is de liefde vandaag de dag nog, mevrouw ? De mens wil gezien worden, het gaat allemaal om geld en roem. We kunnen wel ophouden, mevrouw. De mens doet het allemaal om gezien te worden, laten we eerlijk zijn, mevrouw.'

'Waren de moddermannen er nog maar,' zei de vrouw die tegenover hem zat in de tram. 'Die nog in de grond groeven, hun linkerhand niet lieten weten wat hun rechterhand deed, de hongermannen, die zichzelf niet vetmesten met onnuttige en overbodige rijkdom. Ze gaven het liever aan een arme die niets had, en daar liepen ze niet mee te koop. Ze deden het niet om bekend te worden, om als een held geloofd en geprezen te worden. Ze deden het in het verborgene, en ontweken alle hooggeplaatsten. Ze leefden in de aarde.'

'Zo is het, mevrouw,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Ik ben blij dat er nog mensen zoals u zijn, mevrouw.'

'Bijna niet meer,' zei de vrouw. 'Je hebt een winnend lot uit de loterij getrokken. Gefeliciteerd.'

'Ik zal u nooit meer vergeten, mevrouw,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Ik zal mijn herinnering aan u altijd blijven koesteren.'

'Die bekendheid, eer en roem wil ik niet,' zei de vrouw. 'Ik heb al spijt dat ik het je heb gezegd.'

'Zo bedoel ik het niet, mevrouw,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Het is maar een gebaar, een filosofie. Ik eer het principe, maar zal u waarschijnlijk straks snel weer vergeten zijn. Het leven is druk, en vloeit al gauw over in andere dingen.'

'Gelukkig maar,' zei de vrouw opgelucht, 'want ik ben een moddervrouw.'

'Dan scheiden hier onze wegen,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat, en toen de tram stopte stapte hij de tram uit. De volgende dag kwam hij haar alweer tegen.

'Ha, moddervrouw,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat.

'Ha, modderman,' zei de vrouw.

'Was jij gisteren niet mijn winnend lot uit de loterij ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat.

'Ja,' zei de vrouw, 'maar dat was maar een moment-opname, van herkenning, niet zozeer van herinnering. Het leven gaat verder.'

'Ja, het is een modderwereld,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Maar weer een magisch moment dat ik u weer heb getroffen.'

'Vandaag weer gewonnen,' zei de vrouw, 'maar vandaag wordt altijd weer vervangen door morgen. Dat hoort bij het werk.'

'Speelt u graag in de zandbak, mevrouw ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'U speelt nogal graag spelletjes, hè ?'

'Het is geen spel,' zei de vrouw. 'Het is mijn beroep.'

'Bent u filosoof ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat die tegenover haar was gaan zitten in de tram.

'Psycholoog,' zei de vrouw. 'Ik help de man van de vrouw af in plaats van andersom, want de vrouw is gevaarlijk speelgoed.'

'Maar u als psycholoog bent toch geen gevaarlijk speelgoed ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat.

'Ik ben de speelgoedverkoper,' zei de vrouw. 'Ik onderwijs de gebruiksaanwijzing. Ik houd me ook aan de leeftijden die op de verpakkingen staan.'

'Laat maar zitten, mevrouw,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Ik ben soldaat en

modderman. Wat moet ik met speelgoed ?'

'En u strijd tegen uzelf ?' vroeg de vrouw.

'Dat is de grootste oorlog, mevrouw,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat.

'Mag ik u dan een advies geven als psycholoog ?' vroeg de vrouw.

De Amsterdamse soldaat knikte.

Ze schoof dichter naar hem toe en zei in zijn oor : 'Dan bent u op het juiste pad. Ik heb daar wel speelgoed voor.'

'Welk speelgoed ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat.

'Plastik messen, bijlen, pijl en boog, handboeien, alles plastik,' zei de vrouw.

'We gaan toch geen cowboytje en indiaantje spelen,' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat.

'Nee, veel erger,' zei de vrouw. 'Er is een monster genaamd 'het zelf'.

'Mevrouw,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Ik heb jarenlang tegen dit monster gestreden, en het liet me verdwalen. Ik ben alles kwijt, al mijn orientatie.'

'Mijn speelgoed rekent ermee af, en geeft je een kompas,' zei de vrouw.

De Amsterdamse soldaat keek haar diep in haar ogen. 'En waar is uw speelgoed winkel ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat.

'In mijn hart,' zei de vrouw.

'Maar daar kom ik toch nooit,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat, 'want u bent een moddervrouw en zou mij nooit toelaten.'

'Misschien win je ooit nog eens een lot uit de lotterij,' zei de vrouw, en stapte de tram uit.

'Maar ik ben ook een modderman,' riep hij haar na.

'Waar de modder ons samenbrengt,' riep ze terug. 't Zal weer volledig toevallig zijn.'

'Wat een vreemde vrouw,' dacht hij bij zichzelf. De dag erna zag hij haar weer in de tram, maar er was een andere man bij haar.

'Zo, heb je je modderman gevonden ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat.

'Het was mijn lot uit de loterij,' zei de vrouw.

'Wanneer gaan jullie trouwen ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat.

De vrouw moest lachen. 'Het is maar een patient,' zei de vrouw. 'Hij moet er even op uit.'

'Op uit ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat.

'Ja, leren een modderman te zijn,' zei de vrouw. 'Het is een test.'

'Dus als hij faalt, dan moet hij terug boven de grond ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat.

'Als hij faalt, dan word hij net zoals jij,' zei de vrouw.

'Nou, dat is ook niet aardig,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Dus ik heb gefaald ?'

'Ja,' zei de vrouw, 'ik bood je speelgoed aan, maar je had andere dingen te doen.'

'Ik vind u maar een vreemde mevrouw,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Maar ja,

dat zijn de meeste psychologen. Dus cowboytje en indiaantje spelen is therapeutisch ?'

'Ik ga het zo met mijn patient doen,' zei de vrouw. 'Het is symboliek. Het hoort inderdaad bij de therapie.'

'Ach, ik weet het al,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'U probeert natuurlijk klanten te werven. Ik zit hier mijn tijd te verdoen. Ik dacht dat ik met een normaal mens sprak, maar u liet mij in die waan. Dat is ook niet echt medisch verantwoord dan, mevrouw.'

'Ik heb ook nog wel medicijnen in de aanbieding,' zei de vrouw.

'Laat maar,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'De vissen willen niet bijten vandaag. Ik kan net zo goed een raam uitspringen. Ik kom weer uit bij het begin, mevrouw. Alles is ijdelheid. Mijn grootste vijand is mezelf, maar ik ben ook mijn eigen grootste vriend, dat heb ik ook wel weer in de gaten. Gegroet, mevrouw.' En zo stapte de Amsterdamse soldaat de tram uit, niet meer omkijkende. De dag erna kwam hij haar weer tegen, maar hij negeerde haar. 't Is toch altijd weer hetzelfde liedje,' dacht hij bij zichzelf. 'Niets zeggen maar. Ze zit hier voor haar beroep, niet voor mij. En trouwens ik mag dan wel mijn eigen grootste vijand wezen, ik ben ook mijn eigen grootste vriend.'

Na een tijdje kwam ze naar hem toe in de tram en ging tegenover hem zitten. 'Heb je misschien een kwartje voor mij ?' vroeg ze.

'Oh, ben je aan de drugs ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat.

'Nee, ik heb geen klein geld voor de telefoon,' zei ze.

'Dat komt goed uit,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat, 'want ik heb namelijk geen kwartje.'

'Het gaat om een patient die mij dringend nodig heeft,' zei ze.

'Oh, dat is helemaal mooi,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Twee vliegen in één klap dan.'

'Goed gedaan,' zei ze. 'Moddermannen zoals jou zijn er bijna niet meer. Je bent goed door de test heengekomen.'

'Ja, maar ik ben helemaal uw patient niet eens, mevrouw,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'U moet in de war zijn met iemand anders.'

'Nee,' zei de vrouw, 'het was jij.'

'Gaan we opdringerig doen ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Is uw spiegeltje kapot vandaag ?'

'Nee, jij had het winnend lot getrokken,' zei de vrouw. 'Nu niet er onderuit proberen te komen.'

'Winnend lot ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Zeg, bent u gek ?'

'Karelssen is de naam ?' vroeg ze.

'Ja, met twee s-en,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat.

'Dan zit u in het systeem,' zei de vrouw.

'Hoe komt dat ?' vroeg de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Ik wil eruit.'

'Ik zal u eruit schrappen,' zei de vrouw, 'maar dan mist u alle aanbiedingen.'

'Zal mij een rotzorg zijn,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat. 'Ik heb al genoeg aan mezelf. Ik ben geen baby-sitter, mevrouw. Daar was ik niet voor in de wieg gelegd. Ik ben hier niet om u te vermaken en liedjes voor u te zingen.'

'Een echte modderman, ik kan niks aan je kwijt,' zei de vrouw. 'Mijn taak zit erop.'

'Tot in de modder dan maar, mevrouw,' zei de Amsterdamse soldaat.

'Tot in de modder,' zei de vrouw.

onschuldig en toch de doodstraf

Nee, als een mens hier iets heeft gedaan wat niet mag, dan krijgt de mens daarvoor de doodstraf niet. Een mens kan hier ook rustig een ander mens doodmartelen, en daar krijgen ze ook de doodstraf niet voor. Sommigen van die mensen lopen zelfs gewoon nog vrij rond. Hoe kan dat ? Nederlanders zijn nogal dom en tuinen nogal snel dingen in. Een mens langzaam dood martelen en zo ook zijn of haar kinderen tot wezen maken kan rustig zonder strafmaatregelen gedaan worden hier in dit verrotte land als je jezelf bijvoorbeeld dokter noemt. De gemiddelde Nederlander is dan zo dom om te denken : 'Oh, dan zal het wel goed zijn.'

Wie er dan wel de doodstraf krijgen zijn de dieren. Laatst had een hond een kind doodgebeten, en die werd direct ingeslapen. Er hoeft nog niet eens zoveel te gebeuren om dieren de doodstraf te laten krijgen, en vaak zijn ze zelfs totaal onschuldig. Hier in Nederland krijgen onschuldige dieren aan de lopende band de doodstraf om aan de gulzigheid van de gemiddelde Nederlander tegemoet te komen.

Ik zeg altijd als iemand mij vraagt wat de hemel is : de hemel moet je zelf maken. Hoe kunnen mensen die anderen het leven tot een hel maken dan ooit denken dat ze naar de hemel zullen gaan ?

de hut van Sobibor

Ik ging naar de supermarkt en vroeg om zoutloze soep. Het meisje begon heel zenuwachtig te doen, en kon bijna niet spreken. Ze moest er heel veel moeite voor doen. Ze begon allemaal zenuwachtig heen en weer te lopen, en kwam steeds terug met zakjes, voornamelijk fruit. In principe moest de zoutloze soep gewoon nog gemaakt worden. Ze zei toen dat ze het later wel zouden brengen. Bij mij thuis was er een feestje. Ik stond even later in de badkamer voor de spiegel. Iedereen liep in en uit. Met een paar mensen zouden we naar de zee gaan. Treblinka was er ook bij.

Bij het strand aangekomen trokken we al onze kleren uit, en renden over het strand. Het was al donker. In de verte kon de grote stad nog gezien worden, maar ik keek liever naar het strand en de wildernis die er omheen lag. Er kwam toen ineens een heel groot varken op ons af met rechtopstaande oren. 'Het is al laat,' gromde het varken. 'Waarom zijn jullie nog op ? En wat doen jullie op het strand ? Jullie horen in de stad te wezen. Terug nu.'

Treblinka wilde het varken de strot doorsnijden. 'Nazi varken !' riep ze, en trok haar mes.

Ik zei : 'Niet doen ! Dan gaat het alarm van de stad af en dan hebben we de poppen aan het dansen, want dan komen ze allemaal !'

Maar Treblinka luisterde niet, en slachtte het varken af. Grote sirenes gingen er toen af, en stofwolken kwamen vanuit de stad. Een hele kudde varkens kwam toen vanuit de stad het strand op rennen.

'Ren nu voor je leven !' riep Treblinka.

'Waar naartoe ?' vroeg ik.

'Naar Sobibor, mijn zus,' zei Treblinka. 'Ze woont in het oerwoud.'

Toen zijn we allemaal de wildernis in gerend. Treblinka kwam niet mee. Ze liep gewoon rustig met haar mes naar de kudde varkens toe die kwamen aanstormen in de verte. Ik durfde niet te kijken. Ik ben toen doorgerend, de anderen achterna. Het geluid van de varkens was verschrikkelijk. Na lang rennen kwamen we aan bij een hut waar Sobibor woonde. Ze stond naakt achter een soort natuurgordijn wat ze zelf had gemaakt, wat rondom haar hut stond om haar terrein af te bakenen. Ik durfde niet naar haar te kijken. Ik besefte toen dat ik zelf ook naakt was. Het was donker.

'Dus jij bent de zus van Treblinka ?' vroeg ik.

Ze zei niks. Ik vroeg het nog een keer, maar ze zei gewoon niks terug. Na een tijdje kwam Treblinka terug met een bebloed mes. 'Jullie kunnen terug,' zei ze. 'De varkens zijn dood.'

'Waarom zijn ze ons gebied binnengekomen ?' vroeg Sobibor aan Treblinka.

'Die varkens ?' vroeg Treblinka.

'Nee, die stedelingen hier die je hebt meegenomen,' zei Sobibor.

'Je moet niet zoveel vragen stellen, zus,' zei Treblinka.

'Varkensvriendjes, hè ?' zei Sobibor. Toen draaide ze zich om en ging haar hut binnen.

'Niet zo boos doen,' zei Treblinka.

Maar Sobibor sprak niet meer. Treblinka zei dat ze van binnen plannetjes aan het maken was, maar wij wisten niet welke plannetjes.

'Jullie kunnen beter weggaan,' zei Treblinka.

Toen zijn we teruggegaan naar de stad. Er waren geen varkens meer. En bij mijn huis stond het supermarkt busje te wachten. 'De zoutloze soep,' zei het meisje.

Ik nam het aan en vroeg haar waarom ze zo lang hebben gewacht. 'Voor de klant,' zei ze toen.

Ik nam het aan en wilde betalen, maar dat hoefde niet. Ze waren nog steeds beschaamd dat ze het product niet hadden. Ik ben toen naar binnen gegaan. Er was niemand meer. Het was er een zwijnenstal na het feestje. Ik keek naar de zoutloze soep. 'Wat zou er nog meer voor rommel in kunnen zitten ?' vroeg ik mezelf af. Ik vertrouwde het allemaal niet meer. Ik keek op de achterkant van de verpakking en er was zo'n lange lijst met stoffen die ik allemaal niet kende. Ik durfde het niet aan, en met een honger gevoel ben ik toen terug gegaan naar het strand. Ik zag de dode varkens er liggen. Het hele strand lag er bezaaid mee. Ik ben toen teruggegaan naar de hut van Sobibor.

Weer stond ze achter haar natuurgordijn, wat een soort voorhangsel van haar terrein was rondom haar hut. Ik durfde niet dichter bij haar te komen.

'Nee, jongen, niet hier komen,' zei ze.

'Waar is Treblinka ?' vroeg ik.

'Gaat je niks aan,' zei Sobibor.

'Ze had in eerste instantie gezegd dat we naar jou moesten rennen om ons leven te redden,' zei ik.

'Ik red geen levens, en al helemaal niet van stedelingen,' zei ze.

Ik kwam iets dichterbij staan. Haar borsten waren bijna zichtbaar. 'Kom geen stap dichterbij, jongen,' zei ze.

'Die borsten van je, hè,' zei ik. 'Hebben die ook melk ?'

'Ja, waarom vraag je dat ?' vroeg ze geirriteerd.

'Ik heb namelijk zoutloze soep van de stad gehad, van de supermarkt, maar ik vertrouw het nog voor geen meter,' zei ik.

'Nog één stap verder en ik werp een speer door jouw melkloze borst,' zei ze dreigend en bitter.

'Je zus is een stuk makkelijker,' zei ik.

'Dat lijkt maar zo,' zei ze. 'Je kent haar niet.'

'Gaat dit mijn leven kosten ?' vroeg ik.

'Alles,' zei ze.

Ineens trok ze een mes. 'Varkensvriendjes hè ? Wij hebben het niet zo op varkensvriendjes,' zei ze.

'Je hebt ook op een sportschool gezeten, een vechtschool met je varkensvriendjes.'

'Hoe weet je dat ?' vroeg ik. 'Maar nee, geen varkensvriendjes.'

'Je werd onderwezen door de stad om je varkens te verdedigen, om voor ze te vechten,' zei ze. 'En het loon was zoute soep, stadse meisjes, en allerlei andere troep. Kom niet dichterbij.'

'Ik was al aan het afkicken van zoute soep en stadse meisjes,' zei ik. 'Maar ik was bang dat ze er nog meer rommel doorheen hadden gegooid. Die lijst achterop de verpakking van de zoutloze soep was lang en met onbekende stoffen.'

'Goed,' zei ze. 'Ik zie dat je wil leren. Ik heb hier wel wat erwtensoep voor je, puur natuur. Maar mijn melk krijg je niet.'

'Waarom geen melk ? Waarom heb je anders melk dan ?' vroeg ik.

'Je moet jezelf niet zo lopen opdringen,' zei ze. 'Wees blij dat je nog leeft, maar dat kan ieder moment veranderen.'

'Blijf waar je bent,' zei ik toen. Ze wilde nog steeds niet zeggen waar Treblinka was, en ik begon haar te roepen.

'Geef me dan die erwtensoep maar als je zo moeilijk doet, Sobibor,' zei ik.

'Goed,' zei ze.

Even vertrouwde ik haar erwtensoep ook niet, maar ik moest toch wat. Ik kreeg een kommetje met erwtensoep van haar en begon te eten. Wat ze er allemaal doorheen had gegooid wist ik niet, maar ze zei dat het puur natuur was. Wat er toen gebeurde kan ik me niet meer herinneren, maar ik werd even later wakker in haar hut op een soort mat. 'Wat heb je met me gedaan ?' vroeg ik.

'Varkensvriend,' zei ze.

'Dat ben ik niet,' zei ik. 'Als dat zo is, sorry dan. Ik ben nog jong.'

'Varkensvriend,' zei ze weer.

'Ik wil jouw vriend dan zijn,' zei ik.

'Ik heb geen varkensvrienden,' zei ze. 'Ik maak ze niet. Ik kook ze op.'

'Oh, u bent kannibaal, om dat maar even met een duur woord te zeggen ?' vroeg ik.

'Wij eten varkens,' zei ze. 'Nazi varkens.'

'Ten eerste ben ik geen varken, en ten tweede al helemaal geen nazi,' zei ik. 'God, wat haat ik die lui.'

'Waarom woonde je daar dan, varkensvriendje ?' vroeg ze.

'I... ik weet het niet,' zei ik. 'Ik ben daar geboren, en daar opgetogen. Kan ik het helpen ? Toen ik erachter kwam was het al te laat. Waar kon ik heen ? Dankzij Treblinka ...' maar verder kon ik niks zeggen, want ze had haar voet op mijn mond gezet.

'Dankzij Treblinka wat ?' vroeg ze. 'Je bent een varkenskind. Helemaal erg, van die nazi's.'

'Misschien was ik door hen ontvoerd als baby en deden ze net alsof ik hun kind was,' zei ik.

'Ja ja,' zei ze, 'en dat moet ik geloven ?'

'Als het kan,' zei ik. 'Ik heb nooit het gevoel gehad dat ik daar hoorde. Maar bij jou voelt het alsof ik thuis ben gekomen. Je bent zo vriendelijk, gastvrij en

begrijpend. Dat heb ik altijd gemist.'

'Varkenskindje,' zei ze.

'Ze moet wennen,' zei Treblinka die in de opening van de hut stond. 'Je was inderdaad ontvoerd. Maar ik heb je teruggehaald.'

'Het heeft lang geduurd,' zei ik. Sobibor liep weer naar buiten. 'Beter laat dan nooit,' zei Treblinka. Ze gaf mij toen een kommetje met melk.

'Toe maar weer,' zei Sobibor die achter haar stond.

'We moeten,' zei Treblinka.

Toen zei Sobibor voor een lange tijd niks, en ging weer bij haar natuurgordijn staan.

Einde

Sobibor's Terugkeer

Alles stond in brand. Sobibor was teruggekomen.
Grote stoeten mensen kwamen tot de brug bij de zee.
Er was niets dan wildernis. De steden waren brandende.
Er waren ook bosbranden.
Er was geen geld. Er werd niet naar geld gekeken en er werd ook niet mee gewerkt.
Er werd alleen naar het lijden gekeken. Hoeveel hadden mensen geleden en meegeleden.
Dat gaf de doorslag.
Ik had vreemde rode muntjes in mijn handen die ik liet zien bij de brug.
Ik mocht erdoor, maar mensen achter mij mochten niet verder, omdat ze te weinig rode muntjes hadden. Zij moesten terug het vuur in. Ik zag hoe ze werden teruggeduwd, en hoe het vuur hen greep, meesleurde en verslond. Het was een afschuwelijk gezicht.
Ik besefte hoe blij ik was dat ik altijd mijn kruis had gedragen en geen compromissen had gesloten.

Ik snapte niet wat er gaande was. De brug leidde tot een reusachtige wildernis, over de zee. Het was vele dagen lopen, en we hadden niets te eten.

Ergens midden op de brug was ook een vuur. We zaten dus ingesloten.
Beneden bij de brug was een bootje met wilden erin. Er kwamen toen meer bootjes bij. Ze hielpen ons op de bootjes en zo kwamen we uiteindelijk toch bij de reusachtige wildernis aan, maar overal waren vuren. De wilden leidden ons tussen de vuren door.

We gingen langs vele kampen die al brandden, en toen moesten we een rivier over, waarachter weer wildernis was. Aan de overkant stond een jongetje. Hij was ook een wilde. Zijn naam was Auschwitz. Hij begon naar mij te schreeuwen, maar ik begreep de taal niet. Wel hoorde ik de naam Sobibor telkens vallen. De wilden zeiden dat Sobibor de moeder van het jongetje was. De jongen wenkte ons, en we liepen met hem mee. We kwamen aan bij een kamp. Er kwam een vrouw uit een hut met een mand. Toen ik haar zag durfde ik niet meer te kijken. Ze zeiden dat zij Sobibor was. Toen trok het jongetje mij naar haar haar toe, maar ik keek niet meer naar haar. Zij greep toen mijn arm,

en het leek alsof ik onder stroom stond. 'De godin !' werd er geroepen.

'Hier zijn we veilig,' zeiden de wilden. 'Buiten dit terrein is alles overgeleverd aan de wraak van Sobibor.' Ik trilde op mijn benen en viel even later neer. Ik werd later wakker op een mat. Auschwitz en zijn moeder stonden naar me te kijken, maar ik durfde niet naar hen te kijken.

'Dit ben jij,' zei Sobibor, terwijl ze naar Auschwitz wees. Ik volgde het met mijn ooghoeken, maar keek niet direct naar hen. 'Nee,' zei ik. 'Dat is een vergissing. Ik ben hem niet. Ik ben mezelf.'

'Het is toen je jonger was,' zei de vrouw.

'Dat kan niet waar zijn,' zei ik. 'Ik was ergens anders.'

'Ben je dom ofzo ?' vroeg de vrouw bitter. 'Dit ben jij. Waarom zou je twijfelen aan de woorden van de godin ?'

Ik voelde me alsof ik in brand stond. 'Eh ja, okay, ik ben Auschwitz. Nu tevreden ?' zei ik.

'Auschwitz is teruggekomen !' riep ze toen. Er kwamen nog meer wilden in de hut. Ze wees op mij.

'M... maar jouw kind is toch Auschwitz ?' zei ik.

'Niet zo dom doen de hele tijd,' zei ze weer bitter. 'Jij bent Auschwitz, toen je jong was.'

'Wie is hij dan ?' vroeg ik, terwijl ik naar het jongetje wees.

'Dat ben jij, jij,' zei ze.

'Maar ik ben dit,' zei ik, terwijl ik op mezelf wees.

'Hij begrijpt het niet,' zei ze tegen de wilden.

'Leg het dan tenminste uit,' zei ik.

'Luister,' zei ze. 'Jij was gestolen, ontvoerd. Toen kreeg ik een nieuw kind, en noemde hem weer Auschwitz.'

Ik voelde alles in mij branden. 'Het is een hel waar ik vandaan kom,' zei ik.

Ze greep mijn arm, en liet toen los, terwijl het weer leek alsof de bliksem insloeg.

'Sobibor,' zei ik. 'Ach laat maar.'

'Spreek,' zei ze.

Maar een vuur sloeg in de hut. We moesten allemaal rennen. Als een wilde greep het vuur om zich heen. We renden naar de rivier, maar ook de rivier was al brandende. 'Over veiligheid gesproken !' riep ik. Ik begon toen langs de rivier te rennen, maar waar ik ook kwam was vuur. Ik kreeg het steeds benauwder. Ik zag de anderen niet meer. 'Ik stik !' riep ik. Er kwam een zwart terig beest opzetten vanuit de rivier, en greep mij. Ik werd wakker in zweet in de hut van Sobibor. Ik durfde haar niet aan te kijken. 'Je hebt een lange tocht door de onderwereld gemaakt,' zei ze. 'Heb je het medicijn gevonden ?'

'Eh nee,' zei ik.

'Auschwitz,' zei ze.

'Ja,' zei ik.

'Ging alles maar door zonder te stoppen ?'

'Ja,' zei ik.

'In de onderwereld stopt het nooit,' sprak ze. 'Het gaat altijd maar dieper.'

'Eindeloos,' zei ik.

'Is dat een probleem ?' vroeg ze.

'Het ligt eraan,' zei ik.

'Nog even en ik ga open,' zei ze.

'Wat betekent dat ?' vroeg ik.

'Auschwitz,' zei ze.

'Ja,' zei ik.

'Jij bent Auschwitz,' zei ze. 'Ik ga open in de zin dat ik geboorte ga geven.'

'Aan wie ?' vroeg ik.

'Aan jou,' zei ze.

'Mocht eens tijd worden,' zei ik.

'Het is tijd,' zei ze. 'Er is niemand die de tijd kan stoppen.'

Toen zag ik niets dan vuur. Ik zonk er helemaal in weg, maar het verbrandde mij niet. Het genas mij. 'Auschwitz,' zei ze, 'jij poort van de onderwereld, jij doorvorser, nooit stop jij. Ik heb jou bevrijding gebracht. Geboorte. De wildernis zal branden totdat het werk geschiedt is. Jij bent het werk.'

Ik viel toen door een put, en werd wakker in mijn eigen bed. De wereld brandde niet, maar ik wist dat het brandde, want Sobibor was gekomen.

De Onderwijzeres

Ik was nog maar een kind.
Ik vroeg aan de onderwijzeres :
'Onderwijzeres, wilt u mij omhelzen ?'
Alle kinderen waren de klas al uit.
Ze omhelsde me toen.
Ze zei : 'Kom je aandacht tekort bij je vader en moeder ?'
Ik knikte.
'Je mag wel bij mij wonen,' zei ze toen.
Ik was het gelukkigste kind van de wereld toen.
De onderwijzeres was mijn moeder geworden.
Ze nam mij mee naar huis, en zei :
'Je draagt veel met je mee, hè ?'
Ik knikte.
Toen zei ze : 'Kun je er wat over vertellen ?'
Ik schudde mijn hoofd.
'Maar ik heb het wel opgeschreven,' zei ik toen.
Toen gaf ik haar mijn schriftje.
Dat had ik in mijn tas zitten.

Ze begon het te lezen en zei 'tsk tsk tsk.'

Toen ik volwassen was geworden woonde ik nog steeds bij haar.
Ik vond het ineens vreemd als ze zomaar de badkamer binnenliep terwijl ik naakt onder de douche stond.
Ze keek dan wel niet, maar toch.
Een mens kan ook met de ooghoeken kijken.
Het had zijn onschuld verloren.
Maar ja, ze was mijn moeder.
Toch heb ik er op gewezen dat ik dat liever niet meer had.
Ik voelde me naakt.
Ze wist alles van me, misschien een beetje teveel.
Het was net als met Adam en Eva in het paradijs, dat ze zich ineens bewust werden van hun naaktheid en zich voor elkaar schaamden.
Eigenlijk hield ze zich er niet echt aan.
Ze kwam nog gewoon soms binnenvallen als ik onder de douche stond.
'Oh, sorry,' zei ze dan. 'Ik moest even wat pakken.'
Of : 'Oh, sorry, ik wist niet dat jij eronder stond.'
Ik kon het haar makkelijk ook weer vergeven.
Ze was immers mijn moeder, en mijn onderwijzeres.

Ikzelf klopte altijd eerst netjes aan.
Vaak zei ze dan : 'binnen.'
Maar ja, ze was immers mijn moeder, en onderwijzeres.

'Kun jij dat ook niet eens proberen ?' zei ik op een dag, 'dat aankloppen ?'

'Op de badkamer deur ?' vroeg ze. 'Mallerd, in mijn eigen huis, bij mijn eigen zoon ?'

'Ja, ik doe het toch ook ?' zei ik. 'Wel zo beleefd en netjes, want nu lijkt het telkens alsof het een overval is.'

'Ja, dat word mij echt allemaal te ingewikkeld, mijn lieve jongen,' zei ze zo. 'Dat hoef ik toch niet bij mijn eigen leerling en kind te doen ? Ik ben je moeder en je

onderwijzeres, dat is iets totaal anders.'

Nee, met moeder viel niet echt te onderhandelen, en ze bleef het soms gewoon vergeten als ik onder de douche stond. Eindeloze discussies hebben we erover gehad. Ik zou niet meer weten hoeveel jaar het heeft geduurd, maar op een gegeven moment werden we er beiden gek van. Toen hebben we maar besloten om er een deurhaakje op te laten maken.

morgen in de krant

Ik ging naar een vissersstadje dichtbij. De visnetten hingen gewoon boven de straten soms. Ik liep langs een park waar een man zat met zijn zoontje. Hij had zich helemaal over zijn zoontje gebogen, en had zijn arm over zijn schouder, en fluisterde liefdevol naar hem. 'Zo'n vader had ik niet ...' mompelde ik in mezelf. Ik kon me niet herinneren dat hij ooit zijn arm om me had heengeslagen als kind. Ik slenterde verder en kwam langs een vishandel genaamd 'van Treur.' En ik mompelde : 'Ja, het is inderdaad treurig.' Ik kreeg toen ergens in de stad bij een winkel een gesprek met een aardige mevrouw over ontvoeringen. Ze wilde alles van me weten, en vertelde tegelijkertijd alles over haarzelf. Ik kan haar gewoon het hemd van het lijf vragen, en zij blijkbaar ook van mij. Je raad het al. Na een tijdje hadden we niet veel kleren meer aan, en dat terwijl het koud was. We zijn toen samen naar het plantsoen gelopen, en we smeerden elkaar in met modder. Ja, we moesten wel, anders zou het echt te koud zijn. De modder voelde nog wel warm aan, en haar handen ook. Maar na een tijdje

dacht ik bij mezelf : 'Waar ben ik eigenlijk in godsnaam mee bezig ?' Ik schaamde me ziek, ook naar de mensen die allemaal keken. Sommigen waren zelfs al foto's aan het maken, en ik dacht : 'Als dat maar goed gaat, want voor hetzelfde geld staan we morgen in de krant.' Maar die vrouw had een mentaliteit van : gewoon aanpakken. Iemand anders kwam erbij, en begon ons ook de kleren van ons lijf te vragen, maar ja, die hadden we niet meer, dus toen hebben we haar maar de kleren van het lijf gevraagd, en die moest toen ook ingesmeerd worden met modder, anders zou ze kou vatten. Ja, daar zat natuurlijk ook niemand op te wachten, dat iemand kou zou vatten. Dat is ook allemaal extra werk weer voor de dokter. Dat wilden we die aardige man niet aandoen. Die zit er natuurlijk ook niet op te wachten om nog meer geld aan iemand anders z'n leed te verdienen. Dat laten ze allemaal wel over aan de vissers.

Goed, ik heb die twee vrouwen maar meegenomen naar huis. Ik moest toch nog iemand hebben voor de afwas. Maar ze kletsten me zoveel de oren van het hoofd af dat ik ze maar uit huis weer heb gezet, op de trein naar de apenheul, onder het mom van een leuk dagje uit. Ja, ik had m'n oren natuurlijk nog wel nodig. Ze mogen me uitkleden en met modder bedekken, maar kom niet aan m'n oren verder. De volgende dag werd ik wel geconfronteerd met mijn uitstapje, zeg. Ze konden het niet laten. Met allemaal foto's op de voorpagina. Het was wereldnieuws. Ik schaamde me rot. Ik was er trouwens wel overstuur over, en vooral kwaad, dat ze het voorval helemaal uit de context hadden gerukt. Ze hadden erbij geschreven dat het een circus act was, en dat wij zogenaamde 'vissers met blote handen' waren. Het was een soort reclame truuk voor het vissersstadje, alsof de vissers daar gewoon nog zelf de sloten en rivieren induiken om zelf met blote handen de vis te vangen. Ik was zo kwaad, want ik ben een vegetariër in hart en nieren, en vond dit niet alleen een grote belediging naar mijzelf toe, maar nog meer wel naar de vissen. Ik heb die twee vrouwen toen weer opgetrommeld, en die waren er ook misselijk van, en vooral kwaad, heel kwaad. We zijn toen met z'n drieën teruggegaan naar dat vissersstadje, totaal onder de modder, en we zijn toen stenen gaan gooien door de ruiten van die vishandels heen. Laten ze dat maar eens op de foto zetten voor de volgende krant.

Nou, dat hebben we geweten. De dag erna waren er inderdaad foto's van in de krant weer, maar weer met een totaal ander verhaal in een hele andere context. Ja, schreven ze. Die stenen werden gegooid door 'de vissers met blote handen' omdat ze betere gebouwen wilden voor hun viswinkels. Er stond dus direct een oproep bij om te doneren naar die 'arme vissers met blote handen' om hun betere gebouwen te laten krijgen, en de kopers meer winkelplezier.

Nou ja ! Wij waren alledrie natuurlijk woedend. Dat lieten wij natuurlijk niet op ons zitten. Wij zijn toen naar dat vissersstadje weer teruggegaan en hebben toen iedereen de kleren van het lijf lopen vragen, om ze vervolgens te bekogelen met modder. Dat werd een ware oorlog natuurlijk. En weer waren er allerlei fotografen bezig natuurlijk voor de volgende krant. De volgende dag werd er gesproken van een burgeroorlog in het vissersstadje. Het waren de vissers met de blote handen weer tegen degenen die hun werk niet genoeg respecteerden en niet genoeg vis kochten, met de oproep erbij om meer vis te kopen. Ik dacht : Zo winnen we het nooit natuurlijk. Maar ik wist toen één ding : We moesten naar die krantentent toe.

Nou, we kwamen daar bij die krantenmakerij aan om ze het hemd van het lijf te vragen, om ze vervolgens met modder te bekogelen, maar het pand was geheel leeg. We slopen naar binnen, en zagen daar de type machine van de krant, zo'n heel ouderwets ding. We vroegen ons af wie al die tijd die malloterige dingen over ons had geschreven, als reclame voor het vissersstadje. Komt er ineens een heel klein jongetje onder een tafeltje vandaan kruipen. 'Sorry,' zegt dat jongetje. 'Heeft iemand van jullie me vader ergens gezien ?'

Ik zeg : 'Ik weet van niks. Heeft hij al die kranten geschreven op deze type machine ?'

'Nee ik,' zei het jongetje.

'Waarom dan ?' vroeg ik.

'Dat moest van me vader,' zei het jongetje.

'Is je vader soms visser toevallig ?' vroeg ik toen.

'Nee,' zei het jongetje.

'Wat dan ?' vroeg ik.

'Oh, ik ken hem wel,' zei één van de vrouwen. 'Ze hebben een circus.'

'Ja,' zei de andere vrouw, 'dat circus maakt weer reclame voor de krant, en die krant maakt weer reclame voor het circus, en ook weer voor het vissersstadje. Dat heeft allemaal met elkaar te maken.'

'Helemaal niet,' zei het jongetje. 'Jullie weten er niets van. Me vader werkt bij de polisie, en hij zei : Schrijf maar de meest gekke en vreemde dingen in de krant. Maak ze maar helemaal gek. Dan heeft de polisie in ieder geval genoeg te doen.

Ik onderbrak hem.
Ik zei : 'Ik vind jou maar een vreemd kereltje.'

'Moet jij nodig zeggen met al die modder op je lichaam,' zei hij brutaal.
'Oh, wij waren toch vissers met blote handen van het circus om reclame te maken voor het vissersstadje ?' vroeg ik.

'Ja,' zei hij brutaal. 'Dat zijn jullie ook, maar dat wil niet zeggen dat jullie geen vreemde snuiters zijn.'

'Hallo,' zei ik, 'zo lust ik er nog wel meer.'

In ieder geval pakte ik toen die type machine op en smeet het ding zo door de ruiten van de krantenmakerij. De volgende dag was er geen krant. Wel kregen we allemaal een papiertje door de brievenbus van het jongetje, waarop stond geschreven : 'Vandaag geen krant. De vissers met blote handen vonden dat ze al genoeg reclame hadden gemaakt. Nu moet iedereen maar zelf komen naar

het vissersstadje om het uit hun eigen mond te horen.'

'Nog steeds vol praatjes,' zei ik tegen de vrouwen.

'Ik kan haast niet lezen wat hij schrijft,' zei één van de vrouwen. 'Er kon ook iets anders staan.'

Ik keek eens beter naar de twee vrouwen. Ik keek beter en beter en begon toen echt naar haar te staren, en zag uiteindelijk dat het maar één vrouw was. Ze was nog steeds onder de modder, en ik ook. We hadden elkaar de kleren van het lijf gevraagd en stonden nog steeds in het park.

'Misschien zijn we gek geworden van de kou,' zei ik voorzichtig tegen de vrouw.

'Dat kan de kou doen,' zei de vrouw, die ook naar mij staarde. 'Dan ga je ijlen. IJsziek wordt je dan. Waar hadden we het eigenlijk over ? Oh ja, die ontvoeringen. Er is altijd een programma van op de tv, ken je dat ?'

'Nee,' zei ik, 'ik kijk bijna geen tv.'

'Vreemd,' zei ze, 'dat je dat niet kent.'

Ik staarde haar aan. Ik bleef maar kijken. Ik kon mijn ogen niet van haar aftrekken. Ik kwam er meer en meer achter dat ik gewoon naar een boom zat te kijken.

'Mooie boom, hè ?' zei een oude man die langsliep.

'Ja, prachtig,' zei ik. 'Ik word er altijd zo duizelig van.'

'Ja, dat heb je met ijsbomen,' zei de man. 'Moet je nooit te lang naar kijken. Gebeuren er vreemde dingen.'

'IJsbomen ?' vroeg ik. 'Nooit van gehoord.'

'Niet ?' vroeg de man. 'Wordt overal tegen gewaarschuwd op het nieuws.'

'Ik kijk bijna geen tv,' zei ik.

'Lees je ook geen kranten dan ?' vroeg de man. 'Daar staat het ook telkens in.'

'Houd maar op over kranten,' zei ik langzaam.

Hij typte wat in op een apparaat. 'Ja, hier heb ik er weer één,' zei hij tegen het apparaat wat af en toe piepte. 'Weer iemand die zomaar voor lange tijd naar een ijsboom loopt te staren. Hij is al duizelig zei hij.'

'Waarom zetten ze die bomen hier dan neer als ze zo gevaarlijk zijn ?' vroeg ik.

'Tja, waarom is de zon er, als je niet lang in de zon mag kijken,' zei de man. 'Gewoon een beetje aan de regels houden. Is gezond. Doet ieder mens.'

'Ik wist anders van niks,' zei ik. 'Dus ik kan niet eens meer van de natuur genieten ?'

'Met mate,' zei de man, 'alles met mate. Ze komen zo bij je.'

'Wie ?' vroeg ik.

Maar de man liep alweer door. Mannen in witte pakken waren snel bij me, met een wit busje. Ik werd aan de beademing gelegd. 'Ternauwernood,' zei één van de mannen. 'Had je al vreemde hallucinaties die net echt leken ?'

'Volgens mij ben ik er nog middenin,' zei ik.

'Ja, is een bijeffect van de ijsboom,' zei de man in plat Rotterdams. 'Mag je nooit te lang naar kijken.'

'Ik kijk al bijna geen tv,' zei ik, 'en nu mag dit ook al niet ?'

Ik keek eens beter naar de man toen ik daar lag. Ik keek beter en beter, en zag dat ik nog steeds gewoon naar een boom staarde. Er was helemaal niemand, en ook geen busje te bekennen. Ik was midden in het bos, verdwaald. Wat was er gebeurd ? Ik moest hier weg, maar ik stond als vastgenageld aan de grond. Ik vertrouwde niets meer.

Ik had toennet het gevoel alsof ik lag, maar ik sta nog gewoon, gewoon naar een boom te staren. Ik probeerde een stap achteruit te zetten, en toen nog één. Toen probeerde ik om te draaien en weg te rennen, wat maar nauwelijks lukte, maar toch lukte het. Ik zag de boom kleiner worden, meer en meer in de verte, op de achtergrond. Ik probeerde te roepen, maar ik kon het niet. Telkens weer keek ik achterom, en telkens zag ik de boom kleiner worden. Nu wilde ik niet meer kijken, maar toch keek ik. Alsof ik eraan verslaafd was.

'Kijken is tegenwoordig ook al niet meer gratis,' dacht ik bij mezelf. 'Ik heb een vrouw nodig die niet mijn oren eraf kletst, maar mijn ogen eraf beweegt, of mijn ogen eruit kijkt, of wat dan ook. Ik heb een vrouw nodig die totaal mijn aandacht kan opslokken. Waar woonde ik ook alweer ? Oh ja, daar.'

Ik klopte ergens aan en een vrouw deed open. 'Ben je daar eindelijk, schat ? Heb op je lopen wachten,' zei de vrouw. 'Je zei dat je wat chocola zou halen, maar je bleef wel erg lang weg.'

'Nou,' zei ik, 'ik heb het idee dat ik dan de verkeerde chocola gekocht moet hebben, want het is totaal niet goedgegaan, totaal niet. En het ergste is dat ik niet eens weet wie je bent.'

'Vervelend,' zei ze. 'Ja, ik weet het ook niet. Maar u klopte aan alsof u hier woonde, en u had zoiets vertrouwds over u dat ik dacht dat u misschien weleens mijn lang verdwenen vriend zou kunnen zijn, alhoewel u totaal niet op hem lijkt.'

'Vreemd,' zei ik, 'en dat allemaal om een stukje chocola ?'

'Ja,' zei ze, 'dat zou hij kopen, voor zowel hemzelf als voor mij, maar dat was de

laatste keer dat ik hem zag.'

'Moet wel door het chocola gekomen zijn,' zei ik. 'Moet wel.'

Einde

een wereld op wielen

Je kunt er urenlang over nadenken als je er niet bij bent geweest, maar dan kom je er niet achter. Je kunt het natuurlijk navragen aan anderen die er wel waren geweest, maar dan zal iedereen het anders beleefd hebben. Wel kun je misschien zo dieper in een moment komen, zoals een moeder die het beste voorheeft met haar kind, en zich dan probeert te verdiepen in het brein van een kind, en haar dan meeneemt een dagje aan zee. Dan lopen ze beiden langs de winkelstraat, en dan gaan ze langs de brug, en dan is er misschien net een optocht, en dan komen ze uiteindelijk aan bij het strand, en dan kan de moeder eens rustig de tijd nemen om haarzelf eens lekker te verdiepen in de gedachtengang van haar kind, misschien met een ijsje erbij. Dat wil nog weleens wat losweken bij het kind. Maar ja, het kind is in de groei, dus zal elke

dag weer anders denken. Toch verdiept de moeder haarzelf daar dan in, ook al is het kind zo afwisselend als het weer. Het zijn toch allemaal weer kleine stukjes, en dan kan de moeder daar ook weer verder mee en er wat van leren misschien. Dat is ook niet altijd zeker natuurlijk, want het kan ook juist zo zijn dat de moeder van alles gaat afleren, of misschien wel zo dwaas wordt als het kind zelf.

Vandaar dat er ook telkens weer verkiezingen zijn, omdat er zoveel op ons afkomt, ook in vergaderingen. Wie leidt het zaakje, en waarom werd deze persoon verkozen. Dat moet ook weleens in twijfel gebracht worden, en uiteindelijk kon je pas aan het einde zeggen of je wel of niet goed gekozen hebt. Er zijn dan een heleboel omwegen en tussenwegen die je kunt nemen. Er zijn een heleboel mensen die daar lang over nadenken, en een heleboel mensen totaal niet. En een moeder kan dan erover speculeren hoe haar kind later zal worden. Met dat soort gedachtes zit een moeder dan ook weer opgezadeld. Waarom is een moeder hier zoveel mee bezig ? Het is een instinct. Veel mensen zullen dat proberen af te wimpelen, vaak omdat ze het moederschap nooit zelf hebben ontvangen. Pas als de mens zelf dan moeder is geworden, dan weet de mens het ineens. Dat kan heel lang duren, of misschien wel nooit. Natuurlijk geldt dit ook voor een vader, maar die zit weer heel anders in elkaar. Wat doet een vader met zijn kind ? Of liever gezegd : wat kan een vader met zijn kind ? Ook de vader zit tussen allerlei begrenzingen in. Hij zit op een stoel tussen muren, of in een open wildernis. Iedere vader is weer anders, maar ze hebben allemaal hun begrenzingen.

Sommige vaders gaan dan mee met het dagje aan zee, terwijl andere vaders moeten werken, of ze zijn in het ziekenhuis, of in de gevangenis, of op een lange reis naar weet ik veel waar. Het kan een zakenreis zijn of een reis voor ander werk of nog iets anders. Daar kan een mens dan ook weer lang over nadenken, vooral als er een gebrek aan informatie is of was. En als het dan om de vader van iemand anders gaat dan is er misschien nog wel minder informatie. Sommigen nemen daar dan genoegen mee, terwijl anderen weer navraag gaan doen. Dat leidt dan soms ook weer tot bijzondere contacten, en als puntje bij paaltje komt bepaald dat iemand's levensloop of zelfs met wie hij trouwt. Zo rolt de mens vaak van het één in het ander, en is dat daadwerkelijk

tegen te houden ?

Soms stuurt het dan ook de beroepskeuze van de mens bij. Je komt dan bepaalde mensen tegen, en krijgt dan bepaalde informatie, en dat gaat dan als een sleutel in je hoofd zitten, en je krijgt het niet meer weg. Is dat dan iemand's levenslot ?

En dan moet ik ook direct denken aan iemand die verslaafd is aan alcohol en telkens bij dag en dauw, bij weer en wind, de kroeg ingaat. Zou dat ook niet iemand's gedachtenstroom beinvloeden, partnerkeuze, beroepskeuze enzovoorts ? Heeft het ook met muziek keuze te maken, en kan dat nog nadreunen in het nageslacht ? Zoals mijn vader was een alcohol verslaafde en mijn moeder was zwaar aan de drugs. Die liep altijd door het dorp met een joint in haar mond. Daar stond ze om bekend. Ik dacht vroeger dat het gewoon een sigaret was. Ik kan haar niet losdenken van die sigaret of die joint. Dat is gewoon mijn moeder. Dan slofte ze zo altijd door de straten, niet echt helder denkend, niet meer echt bij, door die joint die ze altijd in haar mond had. Het hing er zo uit, en mensen dachten echt : Daar heb je haar ook weer. Het was een echte kettingroker, of kettinggebruiker. En dan denk ik dat ik ook aan de drugs ben geboren vanwege mijn moeder. Ik had altijd het gevoel alsof ik tussen wal en schip hing. Het leven was voor mij te mooi om waar te zijn. Ik was altijd high, of stoned zoals ze dat noemen. Sommigen vonden dat ik zo hard als steen was, ondoordringbaar. Er was niets met mij te beginnen, onbereikbaar. Zo werd ik ook weleens genoemd : de steen, of de harde. Ze wisten niet wat ze aan me hadden. Dat was natuurlijk wel jammer voor hen. Het had zo mooi kunnen wezen. Mijn ouders waren ook beiden doof, dus ik groeide op met gebarentaal. Ze hadden hun eigen tekens.

Het waren toen natuurlijk hele andere tijden, hè. Toen hadden de mensen nog wat voor elkaar over. Ze vroegen mij weleens waarom ik niets voor anderen over had, maar ik had natuurlijk al mijn handen vol aan mijn vader en moeder die door hun verslaving in een belabberde toestand waren. Dat waren nog eens tijden. Dagje aan zee met de familie enzo. Maar nu is er niets meer van die familie over. Allemaal al overleden.

Maar ik denk er nog weleens aan terug en vraag me af of het mij ook nog heeft beinvloed in mijn denken, mijn keuzes enzovoorts. Wat ook wel leuk is zijn die vlaggetjes die ze tegenwoordig hebben bij veel winkels, zoals bij winkels waar je nog ouderwets ijs kunt halen. Er is wel heel veel veranderd zo, in deze tijden. Trekt natuurlijk ook weer nieuwe klanten aan. Je moet toch wat. Daar moet ook wel heel veel tijd ingegaan zijn om al deze nieuwe dingen te bedenken, maar ik vind het wel fraai. Het had veel erger kunnen wezen natuurlijk, laten we eerlijk zijn. Neen, ik vind dat onze maatschappij erop vooruit is gegaan vergeleken met vroeger. Vroeger kon je niet eens gewoon rustig door een straat heenlopen, want er was altijd wel wat. Maar nu is het stil geworden, hè ? Er gebeurt niet echt veel meer, en dat heeft zeker zijn goede kanten. Teveel rust is niet goed zeggen ze dan, maar we kunnen ook niet zonder. Laten we eerlijk wezen. Als er iemand hard met klompen komt aanlopen tegenwoordig, dan kijkt iedereen er verschrikt van op, maar vroeger keek niemand daar van op. Dat was de normaalste zaak van de wereld. Vroeger was het allemaal veel lawaaieriger. Alles moest maar hard en lang. Het hield gewoon niet op. En mensen schreven daar dan weer over in de kranten, en daar werd dan ook weer op gereageerd. Het hield maar niet op, al die eindeloze discussies. Dat is nu wel anders. Nu hoor je ze bijna niet meer. Het zijn natuurlijk nu ook allemaal weer nieuwe mensen, hè. En wat zijn er veel vreemdelingen tegenwoordig, hè. Je zou bijna denken dat je in een ander land bent als je de straat opgaat.

Maar goed, dat zijn zo van die dingen. Ik heb het er niet vaak over, maar het moet soms toch genoemd worden. Kan verder geen kwaad denk ik. Maar ja, de meeste mensen leggen zich er dan ook wel bij neer. Het zijn niet meer echt tijden waarbij je nu daadwerkelijk de straten opmoet in grote optochten om ergens tegen te protesteren. Dat was echt iets van vroeger. Dat gebeurt nu eigenlijk niet meer. Gek hè, hoe dingen kunnen veranderen.

Ik kijk weleens om me heen en dan zeg ik : Wat is het hier rustig zeg. Dat kon je vroeger echt niet zeggen. Toen was er altijd wel wat, op elke hoek van de straat. En veel drugsdealers, hè. Dat kwam allemaal vanuit Amerika overwaaien. Maar nu : niks meer daarvan. Ze zijn allemaal verdwenen. Waar naartoe weet ik niet. Misschien wil ik het ook wel niet weten. Maar je wenst ze dan natuurlijk het beste. Ik bedoel maar : Ik weet wat het is om een moeder te

hebben die drugs gebruikte en dealde. En dat was nog maar het topje van de ijsberg. Wat een drama was dat vroeger zeg.

Nu zijn mensen allemaal zo netjes, en kunnen ook gewoon nee zeggen. Want overdaad schaadt. Vroeger moest alles maar groots en grootser, maar vandaag de dag neemt men met minder genoegen. Gelukkig maar. Dat is natuurlijk een hoofdpijn minder.

Mensen zijn nu ook allemaal zo eensgezind geworden, hè. Is je dat ook niet opgevallen ? Ze lijken allemaal op elkaar. Ik zou niet meer weten wie wie is. Ik hoef het ook niet te weten. Ik vind het allemaal best zo. Iedereen is het tegenwoordig maar met elkaar eens. Dat was vroeger wel anders. Vroeger vlogen ze elkaar echt in de haren om het minste of geringste. Dat wil je niet weten. Ja, de tijden zijn veranderd. De mensen zijn nu echt blij als ze wat krijgen, terwijl ze vroeger altijd zaten te zaniken van ondankbaarheid en ontevredenheid als ze wat kregen. Nooit was het goed genoeg. En het was altijd weer te weinig. Ze konden er niet mee rondkomen, ofzo, of hadden zo niks om uit te delen, niks om trots over te zijn of iets dergelijks, niks om over naar huis te schrijven, en daar stond je dan. Dat is nu wel anders. Mensen zijn nu echt verrast en verrukt als ze iets krijgen, ook al is het iets heel kleins.

Maar ja, we moeten natuurlijk niet overdrijven. Er zitten soms weleens rotte appels of peren tussen, maar in ieder geval een stuk minder als vroeger. Nee, ik ben goed tevreden over hoe de wereld vandaag de dag is. We zijn er een stuk mee opgeschoten. De mensen kunnen nu het kleine meer waarderen. Het vroegere pakt de mens niet meer. Het heeft z'n klauwen verloren.

Er groeien bij ons in de tuin nu hele grote appelbomen met hele lekkere appels. Het doet me weleens terugdenken aan vroeger, maar dan op een goede manier. Appels waren er toen ook al, maar het smaakt nu anders. Het is heel eigenaardig, alsof het kaneel er tegenwoordig gewoon al inzit. Het doet mij weleens denken aan hoe ze vroeger van die bussen schoonmaakten. Een kwartje per bus vroegen ze daar volgens mij voor. Dat was ook altijd een hele eigenaardige geur. Ik weet niet wat voor spul ze daar altijd voor gebruikten. We hadden ook zo'n meester dan die bij ons in de straat woonde. Het was niet

onze meester, maar van een school dichtbij onze school. En die deed ook altijd hele typische dingen, zoals op zondag de was uithangen, echt heel tegendraads, want het was een openbare school. Dat ging dan recht tegen onze religie in, maar het inspireerde mij wel. Je moet als mens durven te breken met wat je met de paplepel krijgt ingegoten en zelfs later niet begrijpt. Als het kwartje dan niet valt, dan is het tijd om eens een andere automaat te proberen.

Het zal mij dan ook allemaal worst wezen hè, want al die scholen worden bestuurd door volwassenen, en toch vlogen ze elkaar in de haren over hoe het zat of zou moeten zitten. Zo zie je maar, je kunt ze gewoon niet vertrouwen. Dat is nu overigens ook wel anders. Ik hoor er nooit meer iets van. Kan natuurlijk stilte voor de storm wezen, maar het kan ook echt zo zijn dat er iets ten goede is veranderd, en dat het zo blijft. Laten we het hopen.

Niemand zit er op te wachten dat het weer word als vroeger. Vroeger duurde al veel te lang. Hij dreef weg ofzo, hadden ze het over, toen kleine Karel verdronk. Daar moet je toch niet lang over nadenken ? Nee, vroeger moet een afgesloten hoofdstuk zijn. Het was al erg genoeg. Hij was nog zo jong, had een heel leven voor de boeg. Wat zou er van hem geworden zijn als hij niet was verdronken ? Daar denk ik dan weleens aan. Ik had er zoveel nachtmerries over. Vroeger werd er totaal niet op kleine kinderen gelet. Die lieten ze altijd maar aanrotzooien. Dat is nu ook wel anders. Verdrinkingen van kleine kinderen dat hoor je bijna niet meer. Veel ouders zijn nu voorbeeldig, en hebben geleerd van de geschiedenis. Soms zit er nog weleens een rotte appel of peer tussen, maar veel minder dan vroeger. Soms verdrinkt er nog weleens eentje, maar dat ligt dan vaak aan het kind zelf. Nee, aan de ouders kan het niet liggen tegenwoordig. Ik sta geheel aan hun kant. Zoveel dingen zijn stukken beter geworden vandaag de dag, met name het ouderschap, daar durf ik mijn hand wel voor in het vuur te steken. Ik heb dat allemaal nauwgezet bijgehouden, en het is waar. Een goede ouder is trouwens ook maar het halve werk. Ik verdedig het hedendaagse ouderschap met hand en tand. Het is altijd een grote droom van mij geweest dat ooit te kunnen doen, en die droom is nu uitgekomen. Mensen staan er niet altijd zo bij stil, en nemen het vaak als vanzelfsprekend, maar ik heb ook die andere tijden gekend, hè. Als mensen

anders daarover denken, wat bijna niet voorkomt moet ik eerlijk zeggen, dan zeg ik altijd : Zou je het niet een kans willen geven ? Negen van de tien keer stemmen ze daar dan in toe, en komen vrijwel altijd dan na afloop naar me toe om de hand te schudden en te zeggen dat ik gelijk heb gehad. Daar ben ik dan best wel een beetje trots over.

Zo zijn er dan ook mensen die liever wat drinken in een cafeetje en hier niet teveel over willen praten, en dat kan ook. Je mag je nooit bij mensen opdringen. Daar zijn de tijden allemaal niet voor. Je kunt er ook hoge boetes voor krijgen of gevangenisstraf, zoals mensen van religieuze bewegingen die willekeurig bij huizen aanbellen zonder van te voren een afspraak te hebben gemaakt. Die tijden hebben we gehad. Dat komt nooit meer terug. Ze zouden direct worden opgepakt. Ook spullen aan de deur verkopen is er niet meer bij. Er zijn nu allemaal rijdende winkels. Dat was er vroeger al veel, maar nu nog meer. Ik reed vroeger weleens met ze mee, dan was ik er even uit. Ik heb wel veel avonturen meegemaakt met die rijdende winkeliers, die winkels op wielen. Wat een tijden waren dat zeg. Het bracht me over al mijn problemen heen, en volgens mij heeft het me gebracht waar ik nu ben, net zoals de rijdende ziekenhuizen en rijdende rechters. Heerlijk was dat. Die komen gewoon je straat binnenrijden wanneer het nodig was, en dan kon je onverplicht meerijden. Maar goed, alles is op wielen tegenwoordig. Je hoeft er niet meer naartoe te gaan, want het komt gewoon bij je in de straat. Spanje, Mexico, de Antillen, het komt allemaal bij je in de straat. Dagje naar het zwembad hoeft ook niet meer, want er zijn nu rijdende zwembaden.

Je hoeft de tv niet meer aan te klikken vanwege de rijdende bioscopen tegenwoordig, en andere rijdende theaters. Er is altijd ruime keuze. Het gaat de hele dag door. Daarom is het tegenwoordig allemaal zo stil op straat, want iedereen gaat naar die rijdende pretparken. Daarbinnen is het pret, en buiten is het rustig. Alles is op wielen tegenwoordig. Een wereld op wielen.

zekere grenzen

Ik bracht het evangelie tot het Noorden. Ik wilde weten wat het evangelie eigenlijk was, want alles wat ik deed was herhalen wat mensen zeiden. Wat ze dan ook tegen me zeiden zei ik tot hen terug, totdat ze er tureluurs en ziek van werden. Moe werden ze van mij, en ik begon hen ook steeds meer na te doen in hun bewegingen en gezichts uitdrukkingen.

Natuurlijk had dat zekere grenzen. Mensen begonnen van wanhoop in de sloten te springen, maar ik bleef gewoon staan. Ik stond erbij en keek ernaar. Ook begonnen mensen van wanhoop hun haren uit te trekken, en dat deed ik natuurlijk niet bij mezelf. Ik stond er gewoon bij om ernaar te kijken. Was dit nu het evangelie ?

Ik vroeg me af waarom ik dat telkens deed : Alles herhalen wat mensen zeiden, en dan stopte ik niet. Ik ging gewoon door totdat ze er gek van werden. Maar hadden ze dat vroeger ook niet gedaan ? Iemand gooide een balletje op, en men bleef het maar herhalen, totdat anderen er ziek van werden. Dat kon hen overigens niets schelen. Ze gingen gewoon maar door. Mensen sprongen in de sloten en de rivieren, en gingen onder de grond wonen, en ze stonden er bij en keken ernaar.

Voor hetzelfde geld

'Ouwe juten zak als broek, een onbroek,' hoorde ik iemand zeggen toen ik half dronken een Rotterdams café instapte. 'Ja, dat had hij aan,' zei die persoon weer. Het was de barkeeper die tegen een klant sprak. 'Hij draait z'n hand er niet voor om. Je hoeft maar te zeggen dat je van iemand al geruime tijd last hebt, en het klusje is zo geklaard. Daar wordt hij voor betaald. Het is zijn beroep. Daar wordt hij ook voor beschermd.'

'Hoe weet je dat allemaal ?' zei een andere man aan de bar.
'Tja, kijk,' zei de barkeeper, 'ik vul natuurlijk de lege glazen, hè, dan hoor je nog eens wat. Hij is hier bijna kind aan huis, en dan het ene naar het andere glas, en dan krijg je die verhalen te horen.'

Ik wist niet hoe ik zo dronken was gekomen. Ik voelde me zo. Maar ja, dat gebeurd wel vaker met dronken mensen. Die weten achteraf niet meer hoe het gekomen is. Wat ik me nog wel herinner trouwens is dat ik ergens aanspoelde op een strand. Wat daarvoor dan weer was gebeurd weet ik niet meer. Ik spoelde aan op een strand, strompelde het strand op, en raakte in gevecht met een piraat. Ik weet niet waarover het ging, dat kan ik me niet meer herinneren. Geld of goud ofzo. Ik overleefde het gevecht. Ik zag hem op de grond liggen en strompelde weer door. Ik weet niet wat ik had gedaan, maar hij was flink rustig zo. Toen werd ik op een landweg ergens aangevlogen door een hond. De hond was verschrikkelijk wild, en begon me overal te bijten. Ik raakte zwaargewond, vooral aan mijn hand. Dat ging me door merg en been, steken dat het deed. Ik

gaf die hond een schop, en overleefde het zo. Ik zag hem daar halfdood liggen toen, en ben toen verder gegaan. Ik was zwaar gewond, ook in mijn knie gebeten enzo, en in mijn heupen, maar mijn hand was er het ergste aan toe. Op sommige momenten voelde ik helemaal niks meer, alsof ik niet meer bestond ofzo.

Ik strompelde naar het dichtst bijzijnde stadje, een brugje over, en klopte aan bij een willekeurig huisje, nog steeds zwaargewond. Deed er een vrouw open. Nou, kom maar binnen, ziet er niet best uit. Toen ging ze mijn wonden verbinden. Bleek even later dat ze dokter was, dus wilde ze er nog geld voor hebben ook. Dat had ik dus niet. Toen raakte ik ook nog eens met haar in gevecht, alsof ik er dat nog allemaal bij kon hebben.

Dat zijn zo van die dames hè, die zeggen : 'Kom maar, kom maar,' maar ze hebben een groot beest naast zich. Je zou bijna niet meer op deuren durven te kloppen zo, maar ik moest wel. Ik was nog wel erger verwond toen, zweefde ergens op het randje van de dood door die vrouw en die gemene hond. Ik klopte dus weer ergens aan, dachtende dat het mijn dood dit keer wel zou worden. Bleek het een huurmoordenaar te zijn. Ik kende hem wel. Hij zat vroeger bij mij in de klas. Hij vroeg mij om het lijstje toen. Ik zei : 'wat voor lijstje ?'

Hij zei : 'Nou, het lijstje met degenen die je al geruime tijd lastig vallen en waarvan je af wil. Het is mijn beroep.' Ik dacht even na, nog steeds verbaasd dat ik hem helemaal hier tegen was gekomen. Wat was de wereld toch weer klein ineens. 'Nou ja,' zei ik, 'nu ik er toch ben. Ik zou wel van die en die afwillen.' Natuurlijk had ik het ook nog even over die vrouw.

'Ik draai m'n hand er niet voor om hoor,' zei hij toen. 'Dat klusje is zo geklaard. Een peuleschilletje, en omdat jij het bent doe ik het voor de helft van de prijs.' Hij moest toen even weg, en kwam toen terug en zei : 'Het klusje is al geklaard hoor. Het is mijn beroep. Ik heb er handigheid in. Ik word er ook voor beschermd.'

Hij liet mij toen zijn vuile bebloede handen zien. Toen wilde hij dus geld

hebben, en dat had ik niet. Daarna kan ik me niks meer herinneren, alleen dat ik half dronken dat Rotterdamse café inliep. De barkeeper had het net over hem. Ik ben blij dat ik nog leef overigens. Voor hetzelfde geld was ik zijn volgende patient. Waarschijnlijk heb ik het puur overleefd omdat ik bij hem in de klas zat en hij alles voor mij voor een vriendenprijsje deed.

Einde

Het Vreemde Huis

Ik was hier nog nooit eerder geweest.
Het stak me.
Ik viel op de grond en gilde.
Ik werd wakker in het ziekenhuis.
Ik probeerde eraan terug te denken wat er was gebeurd, maar ik kon het me niet herinneren.

Volgens mij was ik bij een vreemd huis en zag ik een vreemde vrouw, maar ik wist het niet meer zeker.

Niemand kon het me vertellen. Ze deden er allen wazig over.
Ik had het idee dat ze me het niet wilden vertellen.
Ik wilde terug naar waar ik was geweest, waar het was gebeurd, maar ze lieten me er niet naartoe gaan. Ik wist ook niet waar het was, maar soms had ik wel een idee, en dan vaagde het weer weg.

Volgens mij had ik een zwangere vrouw gezien, naakt, door een raam.
Ze was donker.
Iets had me gestoken, en daarom wist ik het niet zeker.
Ik twijfelde. Misschien bazelde ik maar wat. Misschien ijlde ik.

Maar die vrouw … ik kende haar …
Ik wilde haar niet zien, maar ik bleef kijken … Ik had weg moeten rennen …
Iemand stak me …
Het was niet zo … Ik verbeeldde het me maar … Het was een vreemd huis, dat weet ik wel, en ik zag een vreemde vrouw … Ik raakte onder hypnose … Ik kende haar, maar waarvan ?

Een breuk, zei de dokter … Ik moest weten wie het had gedaan, maar hij wist me niks te vertellen of wilde het me niet vertellen …

We hebben er alles aan gedaan, zei hij …

'Wat ?' vroeg ik …

Ze deden zo vaag en wazig … Daar zijn ziekenhuizen voor hè … die mensen communiceren gewoon niet … Ik was mijn geheugen kwijt door wat er was gebeurd … Het was gewoon een zwart gat … Maar die donkere vrouw … Ik kende haar … Ze was zwanger of met haar baby …. Ik heb gewoon ergens een kink in de kabel van wat er was gebeurd … En ik wist niet wat ?

Wie had het gedaan, en wie was zij ?

Het was een vreemd huis, dat is alles wat ik weet … Ik kom er gewoon niet bij … Ik heb een wond in mijn hoofd … een breuk, zegt de dokter …

Ik zit hier gewoon een brief te schrijven, maar ik maak het niet af … Hadden wij niet wat ? En waar zou ik het naartoe moeten sturen ? Ik kan me zo kwaad maken dat ik het me niet kan herinneren … Ik moet wel een klap op m'n hoofd gehad hebben van achteren … Ja, iemand stond achter mij, ik weet het zeker, maar wie ? En waar ? Het was een vreemd huis, dat is alles wat ik weet, en een vreemde vrouw, maar kende ik haar niet ? Hadden wij niet wat ? Ze was zwanger of met een baby … Of was het mijn baby ?

De dokters hier werken niet mee. Ik moet rust nemen, en dan zal de breuk wel weer herstellen … Ik hoop mijn geheugen ook … Ik wil naar dat vreemde huis toe, maar misschien was het wel mijn eigen huis … Alles is vreemd voor hen die het niet kunnen herinneren …

Een zwangere vrouw … of een vrouw met een baby … Een donkere vrouw … En iemand moet wel achter mij hebben gestaan om mij een klap te verkopen … Maar waarom stond ik daar ? Ik stond bij een raam … Ik kon zo door de weerspiegeling van het raam iemand achter mij zien staan met een mes … Ik was gewoon te laat …

Misschien bazel ik, of ijl ik, maar zo was het gegaan volgens mij … Ja, het was een mes … Wie was hij of zij die achter mij stond ? Ik was te laat … Ik kon me niet meer omdraaien, maar zag het als een flits in de weerspiegeling van het raam … En nu ben ik hier in het ziekenhuis … Ik weet niet eens waar ik die brief naartoe moet sturen en naar wie …

Wat deed ik daar ? Ik stond in de bosjes door het raam te gluren … Die vrouw was helemaal naakt, zwanger … of met een baby … Nee, volgens mij had ze wat aan … Volgens mij was ze helemaal niet naakt … Hoe kom ik daar nu weer bij ? Het is mijn hoofdwond …

Ik krijg hier maar geen vat op … Het kan me zwaar kwaad maken, maar ik schiet er niets mee op … Daarom schrijf ik het maar op … Het was een vreemd huis, dat is alles wat ik zeker weet … Een vreemde vrouw, donker, zwanger of met een kind … Ik weet niet hoe oud dat kind was … 't Kan ook wel zo zijn dat het kind veel ouder was … Was het mijn kind ? Waarom gluurde ik daar ? Kan iemand me dat vertellen ? Er moet iets gebeurd zijn … Iemand heeft niet zomaar een breuk en geheugenverlies … Ik zie dat kind nog zo door de ramen staren naar mij … Ze zei : 'Mamma …' en begon te wijzen … Hoe oud zal het kind geweest zijn ? Ik heb geen idee … Niet volwassen in ieder geval … Echt nog zo'n kind … Een mamma's kind … Zo'n kind die altijd haar moeder bij de rok vastheeft … niet loslaat … Maar waar was de vader … Misschien aan het werk, of misschien … achter mij ?

Waarom keek ik daar door het raam ? Blijkbaar was het gevaarlijk terrein … Of was het mijn huis ? Nee, dit huis was echt heel vreemd … Ik kende het niet … En die vrouw en dat meisje waren ook vreemd … Ik kan me er zo kwaad om maken dat ik het me niet herinner … Die vrouw had volgens mij een mes, maar er lag ook brood … Volgens mij was ze brood aan het smeren voor haar kind … Of voor haarzelf, of voor beiden … Misschien dat haar man net thuiskwam en mij zag staan … Maar ja, daar steek je iemand toch niet voor neer ?

Die dokters zeggen echt helemaal niets … Misschien weten zij het ook niet … Ze waren er niet bij …

Volgens mij was die vrouw gisteren hier om me te bezoeken met haar kind … Meer weet ik ook niet … Volgens mij had ze zoiets gezegd als : Kom je nog eens langs bij ons vreemde huis ?

Vreemde vraag vond ik het … Nee, ik wil niet nog een keer een mes in m'n rug, of hoofd … Ik zal me gek wezen … Wie stelt nu zo'n vraag na alles wat er was gebeurd ?

Nee, nee, volgens mij verzin ik nu maar wat … Die vrouw was hier, maar zonder haar kind … Ze was zwanger … Ze boodt mij wat aan, maar wat weet ik niet meer … Het is zo'n chaos in mijn hoofd, en het steekt … Ik kan beter

stoppen met denken … Ik vertrouw niet meer wat ik denk dat ik me herinner … Het lijkt telkens anders te zijn … Ze hebben me flink verwond … Wie het dan ook mochten wezen … Die vrouw leek me heel zorgzaam, maar voor mij was het een vreemde … haar kind ook … Ik kan beter stoppen …. Dit leidt nergens toe …

Het was een vreemd huis, dat is alles wat ik zeker weet …. en een vreemde vrouw … Of ze hier nu wel of niet was doet er even niet toe …. Ik denk op het moment niet al te helder … Het is een breuk, zegt de dokter … Die breuk doet dat … Hij hoopt op een snel herstel, en weet dat dit lastig voor me is … Ze vertellen me verder niets … Ze zeggen dat ik teveel praat, dat ik rust moet houden … Naar mijn idee praat ik helemaal niet teveel …

Het vreemde huis … Komen we daar weer bij terug …. Een vreemde vrouw, donker, al dan niet zwanger, al dan niet naakt … Ik zag het door het raam, en toen gebeurde het, en daarom ben ik hier … Wat er gebeurde weet ik nog steeds niet, maar het moet flink ernstig zijn geweest … Ik maak me er telkens erg kwaad om … Het heeft mijn geheugen aangetast … De dokter zegt dat het van korte duur zal zijn … Hij verwacht dat ik spoedig mijn geheugen weer terug heb … Laten we het hopen … Ik wil naar dat vreemde huis, naar die vreemde vrouw … Ik wil naar het kind … Maar eigenlijk wil ik niet, vanwege dat mes, of die messentrekker …. Wie het ook moge zijn … Dat kan toch niet ? Je kan toch niet zomaar even op je dooie gemak iemand neersteken van achteren die door een raam staat te gluren … Misschien wel naar zijn eigen vrouw en kind ? Wie zal het zeggen ? Tegenwoordig schijnt alles te kunnen … Je kan niets meer doen tegenwoordig of je wordt er voor afgeknald. Hup, weg ermee, de volgende … Het ziekenhuis verdient er goed aan …

Misschien heeft de dokter het zelf gedaan ? Had hij patienten nodig ? Zo mag ik niet denken natuurlijk, maar ik denk het wel … Dat gebeurt … Daar kan ik verder niets aan doen …

Die gedachte kwam wel in mij op ja, want hij doet er veel te geheimzinnig over …

Volgens mij had die dokter een kat … Volgens mij kende ik hem … Was het niet de buurman ? … Laat ik maar stoppen … Ik begon veel te paranoide te worden … Ik zit gewoon dingen te verzinnen nu … Ik heb teveel tijd aan mijn handen nu ik die hoofdwond heb … Maar ja, dan had hij me maar niet van achteren moeten neesteken … Waarom deed hij dat eigenlijk ? Had hij niets anders te doen ? Het was toch mijn eigen huis en tuin ? Of had ik hem op heterdaad betrapt met mijn vrouw ? Had hij mijn vrouw misschien zwanger gemaakt ? Ik hoop dat het geen verkrachting was … Maar zo niet, dan ben ik dus ook weer in mijn vrouw teleurgesteld … Wat doet zij nog meer allemaal achter mijn rug om ? Wat voor figuren haalt zij naar binnen tegenwoordig ? En dat kind dan ? Zegt dat kind daar allemaal dan niks van ?

Volgens mij was dat kind hier gisteren om me op te zoeken, zonder haar moeder, met cadeautjes, heel lief … Ach, ik weet het niet meer … Misschien verzin ik het allemaal maar …

Wel weet ik dat het een vreemd huis was … Ik hoorde daar niet … De dokter probeerde me nog te helpen, maar het was al te laat … Aardige man, die dokter, alleen hij zegt niet veel … en is ook niet één van de snelsten …. Hij had me best wel kunnen redden …

Ik word soms zo moe van mezelf als ik het niet meer weet, het niet meer herinner … Ik wil er op uit, langs de huizen lopen, door de straten … misschien herinner ik het me dan weer …

Het was een vreemd huis, vreemde vrouw, vreemd kind … Dat is wat ik zeker weet … of die vrouw was zwanger, één van die twee …. Naakt of half naakt, en ik keek door het raam … Toen gebeurde het … Of zou ik het maar gedroomd hebben ? Waarom ben ik hier ?

Het was een hele mooie tuin, dat weet ik nog wel. Ik stond daar tussen de struiken bij het raam. Volgens mij had ik een pistool … Maar waarom verdedigde ik me dan niet ? Nee, volgens mij had ik geen pistool, maar degene die achter mij stond … Ik hoor hem nog zo lachen, en daarna wist ik niks meer … Alles zwart voor mijn ogen … Ik vraag me af of die vrouw nog leeft, en haar

kind …

Het was een hele mooie tuin, dat wel … Maar daar heb je niets aan als je met een kogel in je kop op het gras ligt te spartelen. Ja, mooie tuin. Je kan niet alles hebben. Die vrouw liep toen naar het raam toe, en keek, met haar kind op haar arm. Ze was zichtbaar in een shock. Waarom moest mij dat overkomen ? En dat arme kind … Misschien was ik haar vader wel …

Het was een hele mooie tuin, en toen een hele stoet met ziekenhuiswerkers, brancards … politie erbij … Er was niet veel meer van die mooie tuin over … En die vrouw stond stokstijf voor het raam … Volgens mij had ze ook een telefoon in haar hand … Kon wezen dat zij ze allemaal had opgebeld …

Nee, dat kind moet veel ouder zijn geweest, iets van in de twintig … Ze had al zo'n volwassen gezicht … Volgens mij stond zij met een telefoon in haar hand … Ik weet het niet meer …. Misschien bazel ik wel wat, ijl ik … Het was een mooie tuin … Dat is alles wat ik weet … Laten we het daar op houden … Prachtige tuin, en toen al die werkers … pianisten, violisten … Ik lag op de grond … Of stond ik nu ? Volgens mij stond ik eerst … Ik ging plat … Misschien door die muziek ? Het was heel mooi, dat weet ik nog wel …

Het was een vreemd huis, met vreemde muziek … Ik vond het mooi, misschien wel wat te mooi … Ik kon het niet goed zien … Volgens mij ben ik toen dichterbij gekomen … Ik zag die vrouw … Ze danste … En toen danste ze met mij …. Volgens mij vielen we toen … of …. Nee …. Die muziek … er was iets met die muziek … gewoon te vreemd …. Ik kon niet meer ademhalen …. Te mooi … Ja, daarom ben ik hier … Daarom ben ik hier ….

Einde

Rolgod

Hij kon horen dat de buren de televisie aanhadden. Het was niet hard. Hij kon niet exact de woorden verstaan, maar wel dat de nieuwslezer het telkens had over 'Rolgod'. Wat hij ervan begreep was dat het de naam was van een roltrap in een groot warenhuis. Er was iets met Rolgod aan de hand. Ten eerste was het een buitenaardse roltrap die ze Rolgod noemden. Het was daarom ook een buitenaards warenhuis. Ten tweede verslond Rolgod soms passagiers of voorbijgangers, tenminste hen die met de roltrap gingen en die hem niet aanstonden. Het was nogal een gevaarlijk warenhuis dus. Maar je kon er wel van alles kopen, dus sommige waaghalzen waagden zich eraan.

Tenminste dat was wat hij er van kon horen. Toen hij het later aan de buren navroeg was dat helemaal niet het geval. Rolgod was een alleraardigste god, of liever gezegd roltrap, die geen vlieg kwaad deed. Hij vroeg waarom Rolgod in het nieuws was. Dat had te maken met een zekere speculatie. De buren dachten dat het om een reclame truuk was waar ze zoveel voor betaald hadden dat ze de nieuwslezer konden omkopen.

Rolgod bleef maar in het nieuws komen, en het warenhuis trok vele bezoekers. Allemaal wilden ze Rolgod zien. Het was een hele interessante roltrap die naar de hemel leidde, de hogere afdelingen van het warenhuis zogezegd.

Op een dag hoorde hij weer de tv bij de buren aan, en weer had de nieuwslezer het telkens over Rolgod. 'Maar niet zelf gaan invullen wat hij zegt,' zei hij tegen zichzelf. Later vroeg hij het aan de buren waar het over ging, maar de buren hadden niet goed opgelet dit keer. 'Het gaat altijd over Rolgod tegenwoordig, dus wij kunnen het niet meer bijhouden.'

Het bleek om een boek te gaan over Rolgod, waar hij later achter kwam. Het

bleek geschreven te zijn door iemand die hem vroeger Nederlandse les gaf op school. Hij besloot het boek te kopen. Het ging allemaal over Rolgod. Het waren allemaal verhalen. Het bleek dat het boek er eerst was, en toen hadden ze het nagebouwd in het warenhuis.

Hij herinnerde zich andere boeken die die man had geschreven, maar hij wist de inhoud niet meer. Het waren altijd hele bijzondere boeken, die hij ook wel voorlas in de klas. Maar hoe bijzonder die boeken ook waren, het huwelijk van die man ging er toch aan. Hij vond dat altijd vreemd. Hoe kun je zoiets moois schrijven en dat dan toch je huwelijk eraan gaat. Dat dacht hij soms ook over bepaalde muzikanten die zulke hemelse muziek maakten, maar toch gingen ze scheiden. Misschien miste er dan toch iets, of misschien was het het werk van Rolgod.

Einde

Rolgod II

Rolgod, die mensen uit elkaar trok om ze hoger op zijn roltrap te laten gaan, naar hogere verdiepingen van het warenhuis, hemelse verdiepingen.
Verder was het een alleraardigste god.
Je moest hem alleen een beetje begrijpen.
Hij bedoelde het niet verkeerd.
Het was gewoon ter beveiliging.

Hij beschermde de mensen tegen elkaar.
Ook bracht hij de mensen soms terug naar nieuwere versies van elkaar, hoger in het warenhuis.
Die stonden daar gewoon paraat, en die kon je gewoon kopen.
Het waren bijna robotten, als poppen.

Hij gaf ook advies welke je het beste kon kiezen. Soms waren het nieuwere versies van degenen die je had, en soms waren het totaal nieuwen.

Rolgod, een sensatie.
Iedereen ging er graag naartoe, maar soms had hij woede uitbarstingen of begon hij te piepen. Soms verslond hij passagiers, maar dat was ook een beschermings systeem. Want soms waren er passagiers bij die verkeerde bedoelingen hadden met Rolgod. Sommigen zouden Rolgod maar wat graag willen ontvoeren, en gebruiken voor iets heel anders, voor hun eigen karretjes, maar dat kon natuurlijk niet. Rolgod was veel te groot. Hij was immers een roltrap, en zwaar beveiligd ook.

Als hij begon te piepen was je de klos, tenminste als je verkeerde bedoelingen had met Rolgod. Nee, Rolgod trapte nergens in. Hij was immers Rolgod.

Sommigen konden Rolgod niet uitstaan.
Ze konden Rolgod wel schieten, maar dat kon natuurlijk niet.
Rolgod schoot op hen, en trok hen zo de roltrap in, en dan werden ze zelf gemaakt tot een trede van de roltrap. En zo werd Rolgod al snel de langste roltrap ter wereld. Je kon naar zoveel verdiepingen gaan, en er kwamen er telkens weer zoveel verdiepingen bij, want velen hadden een grote haat naar Rolgod.

Telkens was hij in het nieuws. Sommige mensen werden er niet goed van. Altijd ging het maar weer over Rolgod. Had die nieuwslezer niet iets anders op te lezen ? Ze vonden het allemaal maar zwaar irritant. Rolgod was wel de ster van het feestje. Ze voelden dat er geen aandacht meer voor hen was, alleen nog maar voor Rolgod. Maar ja, Rolgod deed de mensen goed, en bracht nieuwe dingen op de markt. Dat konden bepaalde mensen niet hebben, omdat ze

wilden dat iedereen naar hun markt gingen, en niet naar dat warenhuis van Rolgod. Ze dreven ook een beetje de spot met Rolgod, en zouden er dan ook nooit naartoe gaan.

Maar ja, steeds meer bedrijven gingen samenwerken met Rolgod, en zo ontkwamen ze er bijna niet meer aan. Ze wisten waar ze zouden eindigen als ze te dicht bij Rolgod in de buurt zouden komen, dus velen trokken de steden uit, de natuur in. Maar ja, in de natuur waren de wilde dieren, en die hadden soms ook wel trek in een lekker hapje. Ja, geef ze eens ongelijk. Die moesten natuurlijk ook eten. Daarom gingen vele Rolgod haters dan maar onder de grond. Maar ja, daar waren ook veel wilde dieren, en ook hele onbekende, en die hadden ook vaak grote honger. Ja, geef ze eens ongelijk. Zij moeten ook leven en eten. En daarom gingen velen toch maar weer terug naar Rolgod, en probeerden toch maar weer aardig tegen hem te doen, want tja, wat moet je anders ?

Rolgod, geen roltrap om mee te sollen. Zonder Rolgod zul je niet eten, en kom je eigenlijk geen winkel meer in, want allen zijn ze een onderdeel van de winkelketens van Rolgod.

Eens daagde een klein jongetje Rolgod uit voor een gevecht in de bergen. Rolgod ging op de uitdaging in en vertrok uit zijn warenhuis naar de bergen, terwijl het hele warenhuis hierdoor instortte. Het kon Rolgod allemaal niets schelen. Hij hoorde het gegil achter zich, maar hij was helemaal gefixeerd op het jongetje wat hem had uitgedaagd. In de bergen kon Rolgod het jongetje niet vinden, en zocht en zocht maar. Ineens kwam het jongetje uit een grot en riep : Kiekeboe.

Rolgod kon de grot niet in. Daarvoor was hij veel te groot. 'Kom dan, kom dan,' zei Rolgod. Maar het jongetje bleef in de grot, en Rolgod werd steeds woester. Het jongetje begon hem meer en meer te kleineren en was dus bij Rolgod aan het verkeerde adres. Telkens als Rolgod dichterbij kwam rende het jongetje de grot weer in, tot grote woede van Rolgod. Rolgod moest en zou het kleine gaatje ingaan, dus hij nam een hele grote aanloop van wel een paar kilometer, en toen ramde hij zichzelf gewoon het kleine gaatje in. Maar je begrijpt het

wel : Toen kwam Rolgod helemaal vast te zitten. Na lang wrikken kon Rolgod zich er weer uithalen, maar hij was niet meer dezelfde. Hij was in de verste verten geen roltrap meer, maar als trein zou hij het nog wel goed doen, en toen is hij dat maar geworden.

Die goede oude dagen van Rolgod. De mensen spraken er veel over. Het warenhuis bestond niet meer. Dat was geheel ingestort toen hij de benen nam. Zoveel mensen stonden op de trap die ook allemaal naar beneden vielen. Het was een hoop gegil, en een groot rumoer. Maar Rolgod kon het niet schelen. De mensheid had allang afgedaan voor hem. Altijd was hij de alleraardigste geweest, maar nooit was de mens echt dankbaar. Toen hij een trein was geworden wilden de mensen hem wel weer een nieuwe kans geven, en ze moesten wel, want ze wilden niet nog een keer zoiets meemaken. Elke dag weer maakte hij zijn ritjes. Hij wilde niks meer van winkels weten. Maar toen begon hij zich toch wel weer te vervelen. 'Eens een roltrap, altijd een roltrap,' zei hij tegen zichzelf, en toen is hij het toch maar weer gaan proberen. Maar sindsdien liet hij zich niet meer storen door kleine jongetjes die hem uitdaagden voor een gevecht. Hij wist namelijk waar het op uit kon lopen.

Rolgod was altijd volop in het nieuws. De nieuwslezers noemden altijd zijn naam vele keren als ze hun nieuws voorlazen. Het was het meest genoemde woord van nieuwslezers. Rolgod wilde alsmaar hoger en hoger. Van verdieping tot verdieping. Nog steeds had Rolgod vele vijanden die hij als tredes kon gebruiken. Op het laatst waren er geen vijanden meer over, en toen stopte ook gelijk de groei van het warenhuis. Dat vond Rolgod natuurlijk heel vervelend, want hij wilde steeds hoger. En toen is hij zelf maar vijanden gaan bouwen, robotten. Hij zette ze overal neer, ook tussen de mensen, en zo had hij nog wat te doen, en een manier om nog verder te bouwen.

Het Cruiseschip

Mijn opa had een cruiseschip waarvan hij kapitein was. Vroeger nam hij ons vaak mee, en bezochten we allerlei landen. Ook mijn oom en tante gingen vaak mee. Ik weet nog wel dat mijn tante altijd veel roddelblaadjes en boekjes bij zich had. Als ik niks te doen had las ik er vaak in, maar als kind begreep ik er niets van, en had er zo mijn eigen fantasieën bij. Als ze zagen dat ik de boekjes van mijn tante las, dan namen ze het altijd af.

Ik weet nog wel dat ik later in mijn jeugd een vriendinnetje had, en die ging toen ook mee op het cruiseschip in de vakanties. De hele familie was er dan, maar de relatie liep op een gegeven moment ten einde. Ik had het daar moeilijk mee, maar aan de andere kant was het een opluchting, want ze was heel moeilijk. Ze miste eigenlijk een aan en uit knopje. Mijn opa was erg bij me betrokken, en had op een dag een robot gemaakt die precies op mijn vriendin leek, metr het verschil dat ze een aan en uit knopje had. Ze had zelfs de stem van mijn vriendin, want mijn opa had veel van haar verhalen en gesprekken opgenomen op een bandje, en kon het goed gebruiken om de robot te bouwen. De robot was ook een soort spelcomputer en een soort communicatie netwerk waarmee ik anderen kon bellen. Ik vond het een geweldig ding.

Ook mijn oom was kapitein op een cruiseschip. Het zat dus in de familie. We gingen ook vaak op zijn cruiseschip mee. Zo groeide ik op, op en aan de zee. Op een dag toen ik eens op het cruiseschip van mijn oom was vond ik weer

eens zo'n boekje van mijn tante ergens rondslingeren. Er was niemand in de buurt, dus ik greep het en begon te lezen. Het ging over een cruiseschip en over twee geliefden die door roddel en gestook van passagiers van elkaar werden weggescheurd, en tot overmaat van ramp zonk het cruiseschip in een storm. Beiden overleefden ze het en vonden elkaar terug op een onbewoond eiland. Van de andere passagiers scheen er niemand meer in leven te zijn. Ze konden het uitpraten, maar er bleef grote afstand. Toch moesten ze samen zien te overleven op het onbewoonde eiland. Later bleek dat toch ook de kapitein het had overleefd, die ze aan de andere kant van het eiland tegenkwamen, en hij kon hen weer met elkaar verzoenen. Hij vertelde hen namelijk over al die passagiers die hen tegen elkaar hadden opgestookt, hoe goed hij ze kende, en hoe bedriegelijk ze waren. Het waren zogezegd vaste passagiers die telkens weer terugkwamen, tot grote ergernis van de kapitein, en daarom hield hij zich altijd afzijdig.

De kapitein zei dat het iets van de zee zelf was. Hij zei dat eens op een dag zijn cruiseschip werd overmeesterd door een grote reuzenzeespin. Die kwam zo vanuit de zee op en greep het schip. De zeespin had vele poten en die poten werden tot passagiers die nooit meer weg zouden gaan. De twee keken hem vreemd aan, en keken toen naar elkaar, niet wetende of ze dat wel konden geloven.

'En was dat echt, of had je het maar gedroomd ?' vroeg de man aan de kapitein.

Opeens kwam toen mijn tante binnen, en ik legde snel het boekje weg.
'Wat was je daar aan het lezen, schat ?' vroeg mijn tante toen.
'Oh niks,' loog ik toen, want ik wilde niet op m'n kop krijgen.

'Oh, het boekje ligt open, en op een andere plaats,' zei ze toen. 'Was het leuk ?'

Ik zei niks. Toen kwam mijn oom ook binnen vanaf de lange gang in het cruiseschip.
'Hij heeft erin gelezen,' zei mijn tante.
'Waar ging het over ?' vroeg mijn oom glimlachend.

Ik vertelde toen over de reuzen zeespin, en hoe zijn poten tot passagiers werden, en hoe zij de twee geliefden uit elkaar hadden getrokken, en ik vertelde over het onbewoonde eiland, en hoe de kapitein hen weer met elkaar verzoende.

Mijn oom glimlachte. Ook mijn tante glimlachte. Als ik naar ze keek zag ik de prachtige zee. 'Nou, vooruit dan maar,' zei mijn oom. Toen ze wegwaren nam ik het boekje weer en ging verder met lezen. 'Je mag het wel houden,' zei mijn tante toen ik haar even later weer tegenkwam. Ik was door het dolle heen. Superblij nam ik het boekje mee naar mijn eigen kajuit, en las het helemaal uit. Ik was helemaal in de wolken, alsof ik boven de zee zweefde. Vroeger wilde ik altijd cruiseschip kapitein worden, omdat mijn opa en oom dat ook waren, maar nu wilde ik schrijver worden. Ik wilde anderen meenemen op de golven van mijn eigen fantasie. Het boekje inspireerde mij enorm, en het was hemels.

Maar later in mijn jeugd werd ik zwaar gekweld door nachtmerries over een reuzen zeespin, en had ik slopende gevechten ermee. Maar dan klikte ik altijd mijn robot aan die ik van mijn opa had gekregen, en die vocht dan aan mijn zijde. Zij sprak mij er doorheen.

In die nachtmerries schiep de zeespin mensen om mij heen, die eigenlijk zijn poten waren, en die probeerden mij te verstrikken in roddel en stokerijen. Maar altijd weer ontmaskerde de robot ze. Ook in mijn dromen was de robot, als een wachter in de nacht. Op een dag vertelde ik het ook aan mijn oom en tante, over de nachtmerries en over hoe het ook in het boekje wat ze gaven over een zeespin ging. Ze zeiden dat het boekje uit een serie kwam, en ze gaven me nog meer van zulke boekjes, zodat ik kon zien hoe het afliep in de vervolgverhalen, en er was ook veel informatie over in eerdere verhalen. Er waren iets van twintig delen. Maar ik bleef maar nachtmerries houden, en eigenlijk werd het alleen maar erger, totdat ik zelf de stoute schoenen aantrok en mijn eigen serie erover begon te schrijven. Misschien was dat wel het noodlot van een schrijver, dat hij eerst zelf door al deze dingen heen moest gaan, en eerst zelf flink wat nachtmerries moest hebben, om genoeg creatief materiaal te hebben om zijn verhalen te schrijven.

'Wordt dan gewoon cruiseschip kapitein,' zei mijn opa altijd, en mijn oma zei vaak : 'Wordt dan schilder, of ga schilderen voor de koningin, misschien hoef je dan het leger niet in.' Maar ik moest en zou schrijven. Ik wilde hiermee klaarkomen. Het was in de tijd dat de dienstplicht naderde, en dan zou ik ook het leger inmoeten. Maar dit was op een heel ander niveau, alsof we te maken hadden met onzichtbare vijanden. En zo besloot ik niet te schilderen voor de koningin, maar te schrijven voor de koningin. En ze vond het nog leuk ook, en ik hoefde zo het leger niet in.

Het was de dag van mijn leven toen ik aangenomen werd. Ik kreeg ook een kamer vlak naast de koningin. Daar kon ik rustig mijn werk voortzetten. De koningin geloofde geen woord over onzichtbare vijanden, maar ze vond de verhalen zo mooi. Maar op een dag had ik zo'n zware nachtmerrie dat er geen verhaal meer tegen opgewassen was. Niets kon mij nog helpen, en ik ben toen gevlucht naar een oude kerk in het bos. De kerk werd niet meer gebruikt, maar hier voelde ik mij veilig. Soms woonden er wat monniken of hermieten. Het was een soort bedevaartsplaats voor kluizenaars.

Ik nam daar intrek in een kamer, en begon te schrijven over de onzichtbare vijanden en hoe ermee om te gaan. Er was teveel in de lucht wat de mens niet begreep en waar de mens niet tegen opgewassen was. Voor mij was het een nieuwe wetenschap. Ik begon wetenschappelijke geschriften te schrijven over dit onderwerp. Maar vaak als er bezoekers waren en ik vertelde hen iets erover dan waren ze niet echt geïnteresseerd. Sommigen leken ook aan de drugs te zijn, en het was ook alsof ze als de poten van de zeespin waren. Ik begon preken te geven maar er kwam bijna niemand. Soms zat er een verdwaald kind, of een van huis weggelopen kind, of een zwerver. Ik preekte tegen de kerkbanken en de muren. Op een dag kwam mijn opa en die ging vooraan zitten. Hij wilde mijn preken wel horen. Hij wist dat er onzichtbare vijanden waren. Hij werd er zijn hele leven door gekweld, maar voelde zich altijd goed zodra hij op zijn cruiseschip was. Ook mijn oma kwam de volgende keer mee, en zei weer : 'Waarom word je niet schilder van de koningin ?'

Ik dacht : 'Laat ik dat dan maar eens proberen,' dus ik ging terug naar de

koningin en ging ditmaal voor haar schilderen. Het beviel haar totaal niet. Wat ik schilderde vond ze veel te eng. Ik schilderde ook de reuzen zeespin. 'Waarom ga je niet gewoon weer schrijven ?' vroeg ze. Maar ik schilderde gewoon door. Ik bleef haar maar schilderijen leveren, maar ze vond het maar niks. Ik was er kwaad om, en ik verscheurde mijn schilderijen ook vaak weer. Ik kwam in een grote identiteits-crisis. Ik dacht dat mensen me allemaal voor hun karretje wilden spannen, dat ik mezelf dan niet meer zou zijn. Ik voelde mij achtervolgd door de zeespin.

Op een dag was ik het weer zat, en begon gewoon het bos in te rennen. Ik bleef maar rennen en rennen, en keek niet meer om. Ik was er helemaal klaar mee, met alles. 'Schilderen voor de koningin, ja ja,' dacht ik. Naar de kerk in het bos wilde ik ook niet meer terug. Toen kreeg ik ineens het idee om naar mijn oom en tante terug te gaan. 'Neem me mee op jullie cruiseschip,' zei ik tegen hen. Ze namen mij aan boord, en ik kreeg weer de kajuit die ik altijd had. Zodra ik in hun kajuit was slingerden er altijd boekjes rond, en die begon ik dan maar te lezen.

Het boekje wat ik toen las ging ook over een cruiseschip, maar dan van het leger, en het was een leger van robotten. Ook de kapitein van het schip was een robot. En de robotten zongen een lied. Ik kende de muziek natuurlijk niet, maar dat verzon ik er in mijn hoofd bij. En de woorden van het lied waren :

'Alles is onder hypnose,
alles is aan de drugs,
Wij zijn de robotten staande op de kust.
Als alles nog langer zo door gaat, dan knapt alles,
Wij strijden tegen de zeespin, de mens is niet in de rust.'

Ik dacht : 'weer die zeespin.'

De robotten wilden een tegendrugs maken,
maar dat kon alleen van hele kleine beetjes,
als een mengsel.
De drugs die de mensen gebruikten was van één iets veel te veel.

De mens wilde niet in dualiteiten denken en in minderheden,
De mens wilde de spiegel niet.
De spiegel van de natuur was van de mens weggehaald,
en ze hadden een valse spiegel gemaakt,
de spiegel van de stad,
de spiegel van reclame,
die hen altijd wilde verleiden teveel te kopen.
Het was een koopziekte.

Plotseling kwam mijn oom binnen. 'Iets wijzer geworden ?' sprak hij.
Plotseling sprong er een doorzichtige, taaie, harige spin in zijn nek.
Het was een hele mechanische spin, met allerlei schakeltjes.
Alles was doorzichtig en taai, vlezig.
Schuimbekkend viel mijn oom op de grond, terwijl hij naar zijn keel greep, en ik kwam direct in actie en probeerde het beest van hem weg te krijgen.
Toen kwam mijn tante binnen, en greep snel wat uit haar tas, een bepaalde vloeistof en wierp het op de spin, die direct begon weg te smelten en te verslappen.

'Wat is het ?' vroeg ik.

'Oh, daar hebben alle kapiteinen van cruiseschepen mee te maken. En als ze het niet snel smoren, dan trekt het foute passagiers aan,' zei mijn tante.

Mijn oom stond weer op, kreunend, terwijl hij over zijn nek wreef.

'Waarom hebben jullie mij dit nooit eerder verteld ?' vroeg ik.

'Je was nog te jong,' zei tante. 'En daarom ging het er alleen over in de verhalen die wij je gaven.'

'Dus jullie hebben een tegengif ?' vroeg ik.

'Ja, tegendrugs,' zei mijn tante. 'En ook dat konden we je niet eerder vertellen, want je was nog te jong.'

'Wat zou er gebeuren dan ?' vroeg ik.

Mijn tante keek toen naar mijn oom, en toen weer naar mij : 'Als je de tegendrugs voortijdig gebruikt, dan .... dan word je tot een poot van de zeespin, en dan droom je zijn dromen.'

Ik schrok even. 'Toen ik heel klein was zag ik eens zo'n flesje ergens staan,' zei ik, terwijl ik wees op het flesje. 'Ik wist niet wat het was, en ik was te nieuwsgierig, en toen heb ik ervan gedronken.'

'Weet je ook waar ?' vroeg mijn tante.

'Volgens mij bij een buurjongen van jullie,' zei ik.

'Oh, dat kan wel kloppen,' zei mijn tante. 'Dat was een drugsdealer. Had hij je naar binnen gelokt ofzo ?'

Ik voelde me even heel vreemd en rende naar het toilet om daar over te geven.
Ik keek in de spiegel, en zag toen ook een zeespin op mijn nek zitten. Ik slaakte een gil, en al snel opende tante een ander flesje en wierp het tegengif op de spin die direct wegsmolt.

'Ziezo,' zei tante.

Die nacht had ik een droom dat we in een prachtige haven aankwamen, in natuurgebied.
Er waren allemaal robotten, en ze zongen een vreemd lied :

'We nemen je op het schip,
Dit is geen haven, maar een groter schip,
Het lijkt op een eiland, maar het is een oorlogsschip,
Op naar de morgen,
De nachtmerrie roept tot grotere duisternis,

En in het grote contrast zie je het opkomen van de morgen.'

Was niet alles een schip op een groter schip ?
En ik wist dat ik het alleen zou leren kennen als ik kapitein zou worden.
En ik herinnerde me de woorden van mijn opa.
En ik liet het hem weten : 'Ja, opa, ik wil kapitein worden.'
En zo kreeg ik van hem mijn eerste schip.

Einde

De Behanger

Ik stond bij zijn huis op de bus te wachten, maar hij kwam naar buiten. Hij herkende mij niet, want we hadden alleen brief contact gehad. Hij keek naar me, en ik deed net alsof ik langs het bushokje liep en ging weer terug. Ik zag nog wel dat hij ook naar het bushokje ging om op de bus te wachten. Ik nam een bus later. In de stad kwam ik hem weer tegen in een boekenwinkel. Hij begon hele verhalen tegen mij op te hangen, en hij wist niet wie ik was. Ik ben toen weer weggegaan, maar kwam hem even later weer ergens anders tegen, in een andere boekhandel.

Toen ik thuis was schreef ik hem een brief.
Ik begon allerlei vreemde tekens op te schrijven.
Waarom wist ik niet.
Ineens stond hij achter me.
Hij zei dat hij een buitenaardse was.
Ik kon me ineens nog maar weinig herinneren.

Wie was hij ?

Hij keek me aan, staarde naar me.
Toen begon hij weer hele verhalen tegen me op te hangen.
Ik begreep er niet veel van.
Het was alsof hij door mijn hoofd probeerde te breken.
Ik had boeken bij hem besteld, per post, zei hij.
Toen herinnerde ik me het weer.
Ik begon te trillen en moest neerliggen.
Hij haalde een apparaat uit zijn zak, en deed iets bij me.
Ik viel in slaap, en werd wakker in een cabine waar ik lag.

Hij noemde zichzelf de dokter, boekendokter, en hij was een verhaal.
Toen ik terugkwam achter mijn bureau kon ik niet stoppen met schrijven.
Ik schreef en schreef maar.
Maar het waren allemaal vreemde tekens, en ik begreep er niets van.

Hij moest toen even douchen.
Toen hij klaar was ging hij weer weg.
Na alle vreemde tekens begon ik eindelijk de vertaling op te schrijven.
Het leek wel alsof het boek zichzelf schreef en alsof hij door me heen schreef.

Ik zei : Wat doe je ?

Hij zei dat hij ook de lezersdokter was en de schrijversdokter.
Ik voelde me warm worden, en toen fris.
Ik voelde hoe ik in het oerwoud gleed.
Toen was ik vuil.
Ik kwam tot het oerwoud water, een rivier, en ging erin baden.
Het was prachtig fris groenbruin water.

Ik werd toen wakker van mijn droom en keek naar hem.
Maar het waren slechts patronen op het behang.

De Psychologie van
de Eindeloze Winkelstraat

Het was een eindeloze straat,
Een winkelstraat, in de grootste stad van de wereld,
En een jongen slenterde daar eindeloos,
Hij kwam nooit ergens aan,
Ging geen winkel binnen

Hij was op weg naar de haven,
Hij was op weg naar een boot,
Aan de eindeloze zee

Maar onderweg kwam hij iemand tegen met wie hij een eindeloos gesprek had,
Het stopte maar niet,
Maar hij besloot haar mee te nemen,
Naar zijn boot

Ze sloegen een zijstraat in die naar de haven zou leiden,
Maar ook dit was een eindeloze straat,
En hij vroeg zich af of ze ooit bij de haven aan zouden komen,
Maar ja, hij had in ieder geval een eindeloos gesprek

Ze wist hem over te halen met haar mee te gaan naar het eindeloze bos,
En daarvoor sloegen ze weer een zijstraat in,
Maar ja, je raadt het al : die zijstraat was ook eindeloos

Hoe lang duurt het nog ? vroeg hij telkens.
Uit haar tas haalde ze een boek wat eindeloos was.
'Alles is hier eindeloos, hè ?' vroeg hij.
'Maar zo'n eindeloos boek kan ik toch niet allemaal gaan lezen ?
Ik heb genoeg aan dit eindeloze gesprek met jou.'

'Oh, ik moet nog wat even doen,' zei ze.
Toen stapte ze een winkel binnen.
Hij volgde haar.
'Nee, even buiten blijven,' zei ze.
'Ik ben zo terug.'
Maar ze bleef eindeloos weg,
En toen is hij naar binnen gegaan.
Hij keek zijn ogen uit.
Het was een eindeloze winkel.
Ze was hier vast en zeker verdwaald,
Dat kon niet anders.

En ook hij begon te dwalen en te dwalen,
In deze eindeloze winkel.
Na heel lang dwalen kwam hij de winkelier tegen.
De winkelier omhelsde hem.
'Oh, zo lang niemand gezien,
Ik was verdwaald in mijn eigen winkel.
Eindelijk iemand gevonden,'
zei de winkelier.

'Ik ben mijn vriendin kwijt met wie ik een eindeloos gesprek had,' zei de jongen.
'Geeft niet, geeft niet,' zei de winkelier. 'Die komt wel weer terecht.'

'Maar hoe dan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Nou,' zei de winkelier, 'alles wordt hier verkocht, ook wij, dus ze komt wel weer terecht.'

'Dat is een hele opluchting,' zei de jongen. 'Kan ik haar dan nu kopen ?'

'Het kost eindeloos veel,' zei de winkelier.

'Maar het is mijn vriendin,' zei de jongen, 'we waren op weg naar het eindeloze bos.'

'Allemaal eindeloos duur,' zei de winkelier.

'Een vreemde bedoening dan,' zei de jongen. 'Ik wil hier weg.'

'We kunnen niet weg,' zei de winkelier.

'Dus we moeten wachten totdat we gekocht worden ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ik vrees van wel,' zei de winkelier.

'Maar wie hebben eindeloos geld daarvoor dan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'De eindelozen,' zei de winkelier.

'Wie zijn dat ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ik zal het je wel even laten zien,' zei de winkelier.
Hij haalde uit zijn tas een boek tevoorschijn. Het was een eindeloos boek.
'Dat boek ken ik,' zei de jongen.
'Heb je het gelezen ?' vroeg de winkelier.

'Eh nee,' zei de jongen, 'ik was met iemand in gesprek.'

'Sufferd !' riep de winkelier.

'Wat nu ?' vroeg de jongen. 'Het lijkt hier wel een gevangenis.'

'Dat is het ook !' foeterde de winkelier. 'Wat dacht je dat het anders was ?'

'Een winkel ?' zei de jongen.

'Wat is dat voor oneindeloos gezwets !' foeterde de winkelier.

'Maar wat nu dan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Wachten op de eindeloze trein,' zei de winkelier.

'Komt die hier ook ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Nee, hier niet,' zei de winkelier.

'Maar wat hebben we er dan aan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Dan moet je het boek lezen !' foeterde de winkelier, terwijl hij het boek in de handen van de jongen drukte. Toen liep de winkelier boos weg. 'Zorg dat je niet nog een keer verdwaalt !' riep de jongen hem na.

Toen begon de jongen maar met lezen. 'Wel verdraaid !' riep de jongen. 'Die taal versta ik niet !'

Na uren dwalen kwam hij het meisje weer tegen.

'En ?' vroeg het meisje.

'En wat ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Heb je het eindeloze boek gevonden ?' vroeg het meisje.

'Ja,' zei de jongen. 'Ik kreeg het van de winkelier, maar het is in een andere taal.'

Het meisje begon te lachen. 'Dan had je het boek maar van mij moeten aannemen, want dat was in jouw taal. Maar nee, je wilde liever met me praten. Snapte je dan niet waar eindeloze gesprekken met meisjes naartoe zouden kunnen leiden ?'

'Ik snap het nu,' zei de jongen. 'Het leidt nergens toe. Mag ik dan nu het boek ?'

Het meisje stak toen haar tong uit. 'Nee,' zei ze, en draaide zich toen om en rende weg.

'Kom terug !' riep de jongen. 'Dus ik zit in een gevangenis omdat ik een bepaald boek niet heb gelezen, en dat boek wordt nu ook nog eens van me afgehouden ? Wat een zotte bedoening is dit ?'

En de jongen dwaalde en dwaalde en vroeg zich af wat er in het boek zou staan. Wel stonden er soms plaatjes in het boek in de vreemde taal. 'Ik lijk wel Jan Huigen in de ton met een hoepeltje erom,' dacht hij bij zichzelf. 'Was ik maar weer in de eindeloze winkelstraat op weg naar de haven. Ik was zo stom om me af te laten leiden door dat meisje. Eerst was ze zo eindeloos praatgraag, maar nu, nu ....'

Opeens stond er een fee voor de jongen in een roze jurk, met een toverstafje. 'Boekjes lezen, hè, boekjes lezen,' zei de fee. 'Ik dacht dat je op weg was naar de haven ?'

'Ja,' zei de jongen, 'maar het duurde eindeloos, en ik raakte in een eindeloos gesprek.'

'Dat is geen reden om dan maar boekjes te gaan lezen,' zei de fee.

'Wat moest ik dan doen ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Nou,' zei de fee, 'wat een vraag. Er staan hier chocolade winkels door de hele straat, en meneer weet niet wat hij moet doen.' Toen begon de fee te lachen. 'Neem eens een chocolaatje voor de verandering.'

'Tja, daar had ik even niet aan gedacht,' zei de jongen.

'Dus ga je maar achter de meisjes aan ?' zei de fee glimlachend.

'Ik kwam haar toevallig tegen, en ze hield me aan de praat,' zei de jongen.

'Toevallig hè ?' zei de fee glimlachend. 'Maar toevallig stonden er ook een heleboel chocolade winkels aan weerszijden van de straat, en daar had je geen oog voor ? Malle jongen.'

'Ik werd gewoon afgeleid,' verdedigde de jongen. 'Ze praatte maar door, en belemmerde mij het zicht. Ze bleef me maar lastig vallen, ook toen ik doorliep.'

'Ja ja,' zei de fee, 'dat zeggen ze allemaal. En toen besloot je haar maar mee te nemen naar je boot in de haven ?'

'Ja,' zei de jongen, 'misschien zou dat haar kalmeren, want ik kwam toch niet meer van haar af, en het was eindeloos.'

'Een chocolaatje had wonderen kunnen doen,' zei de fee.

'Ik begrijp het,' zei de jongen, 'het spijt me. Mag ik dan nu een chocolaatje ?'

'Zoek ze zelf maar,' zei de fee, terwijl ze haar tong uitstak naar hem.

Toen vloog ze weg.

'Bah,' zei de jongen. 'Die feeën van tegenwoordig zijn nog wel erger dan meisjes.'

Hij keek in een bak op een winkelschap, en zag er chocolaatjes liggen, maar je

raadt het al : die waren natuurlijk eindeloos duur.

'Zie je nu wel !' riep de jongen. 'Ik word hier eindeloos bedrogen. Maar ja, niemand schijnt hier toch te zijn, en de winkelier zal alweer verdwaald zijn, dus ik neem er maar eentje.' Hij haalde de wikkel van de chocola eraf, en toen het zilveren folie en begon van het chocolaatje te eten. 'Lekker,' zei hij. 'Die fee had toch wel echt gelijk. Had ik eerder moeten doen, had ik eerder moeten doen.'

Hij liep verder met zijn hoofd in de wolken. 'Chocolade is toch wel het heerlijkste wat bestaat,' zei hij. Opeens botste hij tegen een politie agent op. 'Chocolaatjes stelen, hè ?' zei de agent.

'Er was hier niemand en ik was verdwaald,' zei de jongen. 'Ik moest toch wat eten.'

'Dat zeggen ze allemaal,' zei de politie agent. 'Kom maar mee.'

'Nou, ik ben blij dat je me gevonden hebt,' zei de jongen. 'Haal me hieruit.'

'Nee, je gaat er dieper in,' zei de politie agent. 'We zijn hier niet zo gesteld op dieven.'

En zo leidde de politie agent hem naar een lift, en ze gingen heel hoog. Even later kwamen ze op een hoge verdieping uit. Hier werden allemaal boeken verkocht. 'Nee, geen boeken !' riep hij. 'De fee zei dat ik op zoek moest gaan naar chocola in plaats van boeken.'

'Niks mee te maken,' zei de politie. 'En dit zijn trouwens toch chocolade boeken.'

'Dat is geen straf dan,' zei de jongen.

'Het is eindeloos duur, dus ik zou er maar niet aanzitten als ik jou was,' zei de politie agent, 'want anders ga je nog hoger het gebouw in.'

'Maar wat moet ik eten dan ?' vroeg de jongen. 'Ik heb honger. Je kunt me toch niet laten verhongeren ? Dus deze gevangenis voedt zijn gevangenen niet ?'

'Niks mee te maken,' zei de politie agent. 'Wees blij dat je nog leeft. We kunnen niet voor alles zorgen.'

'Bah, wat flauw,' zei de jongen. 'Wat een flauwe bedoening allemaal.'

'Je was toch op weg naar de haven, naar je boot ?' zei de politie agent.

'Ja, maar ik kwam iemand tegen,' zei de jongen, 'en die leidde me hier naartoe. Ik had natuurlijk nooit naar haar moeten luisteren. En nu is ze weg.'

De politie agent begon hem uit te lachen. 'Dat is mijn dochter,' zei hij. 'Zij werkt voor ons. Zo krijgen we nieuwe klanten.'

'Gevangenen zul je bedoelen,' zei de jongen sip.

'Kop op,' zei de politie agent. 'Ik heb ook nog een andere dochter. Zou je die niet willen ontmoeten ?'

'Wat staat me dan te wachten ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Kom maar mee,' zei de politie agent. Weer gingen ze de lift in, en ditmaal gingen ze nog hoger. 'Hoe hoger je komt, hoe meer de winkels in elkaar overlopen, en dan is het veel kleiner.'

Plotseling stond de jongen met de politie agent weer op straat, en alles was niet eindeloos meer. 'Wat vreemd,' zei de jongen.

'Het was een verkleinings-lift,' zei de politie. 'Nu ben je pas waar je wezen moet. Mijn andere dochter wacht op je bij de haven.'

'Vreemd,' zei de jongen weer, en liep over straat op weg naar de haven. Ergens

halverwege kwam hij weer de eerste dochter van de politie agent tegen. 'Ha, ben je daar weer !' riep ze van een afstand.

'Ik heb geen tijd nu,' zei hij. 'Iemand wacht op me bij de haven.'

'Heb je een afspraakje ?' zei het meisje lachend. Toen liep ze lachend door.

Bij de haven aangekomen zag de jongen een ander meisje staan. 'Ben jij de dochter van de politie agent ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ja, hoezo ?' vroeg het meisje geirriteerd.

'Nou, ik mag toch wel wat vragen,' zei de jongen. 'Dan hoef je niet direct zo boos te doen. Je vader zei dat je me hier zou opwachten.'

'Mijn vader zegt zoveel, daar heb ik niks mee te maken,' zei het meisje. 'Ik wacht hier op heel iemand anders.'

'Op wie dan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Gaat je niks aan,' zei het meisje. 'Wijsneus.'

'Je bent gierig,' zei de jongen.

'Gierig ?' lachte het meisje ineens, en rende toen weg.

Het leek wel alsof alles toen nog kleiner en nauwer werd. De jongen had moeite met ademhalen. Het leek wel alsof alles op hem afkwam om hem te verpletteren. 'Moet dat chocolaatje zijn geweest,' zei hij tegen zichzelf. 'Ik ook altijd met mijn goede ideeën. Ik moet terug naar die lift, want hier is het nog erger.'

Hij begon al te hijgen en puffen van de benauwdheid, en liep weer terug naar het punt waar de politie agent hem bracht. Daar stond de eerste dochter van de politie agent weer. 'Alsjeblieft, ik smeek je,' zei de jongen. 'Breng me weer

terug naar de verkleinings-lift.'

'Wil je dat het nog kleiner en benauwder wordt ?' vroeg het meisje lachend.

'Nee, groter, eindelozer,' zei de jongen. 'Dit is ook niks.'

'Jij weet ook niet wat je wil,' zei het meisje lachend. 'Ik dacht dat je een afspraakje had ?'

'Het was een misverstand,' zei de jongen. Daar kwam ook de politie agent weer aan. 'Wat sta jij hier nog te staan !' bulderde hij. 'Lopen, naar de haven !'

'Je dochter wilde niet,' zei de jongen.

'Niks mee te maken,' zei hij.

'Je kan niemand dwingen,' zei hij.

'Dat maak ik nog wel uit,' zei de politie agent, 'en nu lopen.'

'Ik ga naar de haven, naar mijn boot, maar niet naar haar,' zei de jongen.

Toen rende de jongen terug naar de haven, naar zijn boot, en stapte naar binnen. Het was er een enorme rotzooi. Hij startte direct de motor. 'Ik moet hier weg,' dacht hij bij zichzelf, 'weg.' Gelukkig was de zee hier niet eindeloos. Het was maar een riviertje. Maar alles werd alleen maar kleiner en benauwender. Weer ging hij terug naar de haven, ging zijn boot uit, en op zoek naar de tweede dochter van de politie agent. Die stond daar ergens met een telefoontje. 'Alsjeblieft,' hijgde hij. 'Breng me terug naar de verkleinings-lift,' zei hij.

'Vergrotingslift zul je bedoelen,' zei het meisje, terwijl ze gewoon doorging met haar telefoongesprek.

'Alsjeblieft,' hijgde hij, 'als alles maar weer groter en eindelozer wordt.'

'Waarom neem je niet gewoon een chocolaatje ?' vroeg ze, terwijl ze weer doorsprak aan de telefoon.

'Heb ik niet,' zei de jongen.

Het meisje grabbelde even wat in haar tas, terwijl ze doorsprak aan de telefoon, en gaf hem toen gehaast een chocolaatje. Hij haalde de wikkel er vanaf en toen het zilveren folie en begon ervan te eten. 'Mmm,' zei hij, 'zo lekker. Chocola is toch wel het heerlijkste wat er is.'

'Je bent laat,' zei het meisje.

'Ik was er al, maar toen wilde je niet,' zei de jongen. 'Je zei dat je op iemand anders wachtte.'

'Dat moet een vergissing zijn,' zei het meisje. 'Kom maar.'

Het meisje leidde hem toen naar de vergrotingslift die weer helemaal naar beneden ging naar het eindeloze winkelgebouw. Hij was zo opgelucht. 'Wat is de bedoeling hiervan ?' vroeg hij.

'Nou,' zei het meisje, 'de bedoeling is dat de klant het niet in zijn hoofd haalt nog ooit uit onze winkel te ontsnappen.'

Einde

De
Fabriek

Hij werkte in een steenkool fabriek. Vaak moest hij overwerken. Hij was een echte work aholic. Dan had hij wat te doen, anders zou hij maar voor zich uit blijven staren. Hij kwam altijd helemaal onder het roet thuis, vaak pas laat. Maar er was niemand die op hem wachtte. Hij was gescheiden. Zijn vrouw kon er niet meer tegen dat hij nooit thuis was, en heeft toen de benen genomen.

Maar toen er een nieuwe directie kwam in de fabriek en hij harder moest werken voor minder loon had hij er minder lol in. Eigenlijk moest hij steeds harder werken en kreeg hij steeds minder. Op een gegeven moment had hij zo'n laag loon dat hij honger begon te lijden.

Er was een zware industrialisering gaande in het land, die uitliep op een industriële revolutie. Dit maakte dat het land zwaar communistisch werd, en hij voelde zich een slaaf. Alles werd hem afgenomen. Alles was nu van de staat. Hij voelde zichzelf slechts een poppetje, een marionet. Hij was zo weinig thuis dat het leek alsof hij in de fabriek woonde.

Zijn maten hadden het erover dat ze een opstand wilden beginnen, maar ze wisten niet hoe. Hij deed ook wat duiten in het zakje, maar het was allemaal slechts gissen, en ze vonden het vechten tegen de bierkaai. Ze zouden er wat

langer over nadenken hoe dit te doen. Maar één ding was zeker : Ze wilden hier weg. Ze verlangden naar de vrije natuur. De stad had hen opgesloten, en met name de fabriek. Ze vervloekten de fabriek. Hij was een steenkool werker in hart en nieren, maar dit ging te ver. Het terrein van de fabriek werd zwaar bewaakt, dus eigenlijk was er geen ontsnapping mogelijk. Toch spraken ze over bepaalde tunnels, die zelfs uit de stad zouden kunnen leiden. Ook de stad werd zwaar bewaakt. Je kon niet zomaar erin of eruit.

Ook moest hij bijgeschoold worden een paar uur per week. Dat was altijd op de dinsdag. Er was een klein schoolgebouwtje op het terrein van de fabriek. Het had twee verdiepingen en een zolder, en hij kreeg les op de zolder. De leraar was een aardige man, maar ook hij was een slaaf van de fabriek. Soms liep hij zomaar uitgekondigd de klas uit, naar een soort bergingsruimte. Dan moest hij even roken. Dat mocht hij niet in de klas doen. Ook hij werd in de gaten gehouden, maar hij wilde meewerken aan de ontsnapping.

Hij vond de leraar één van de laatsten die nog een hart hadden. Ook de leraar wist van bepaalde tunnels af, maar zei dat het te gevaarlijk was. 'En wat moet je in de natuur ?' zei hij altijd. 'Gevaarlijke indianenstammen en gevaarlijke roofdieren en allerlei ander ongemak.' Toch wilde hij ontsnappen. Hij zei dat hij zijn eigen stad wilde bouwen.

Zijn verdriet was groot toen de leraar op een dag werd doodgeschoten. Maar eigenlijk had hij het wel verwacht. De leraar sprak teveel. Natuurlijk zou dat tegen hem keren op een bepaald moment. Nee, hij keek er niet van op. Hijzelf hield zich wijselijk stil.

Wel had hij de uitleg van het tunnelsysteem nog in zijn hoofd, wat de leraar hem had gegeven. Het brulde als een tijger in zijn hoofd. Maar hij wilde geen tijger zijn. Het was alsof hij in gevecht was met de tijger. Hij wilde het slimmer aanpakken. Geen gevaarlijk tunnelsysteem wat volgens de leraar onvermijdelijk dodelijk zou aflopen. Neen, hij wilde tijd rekken, met meer strategie te werk gaan.

Toen drie van zijn maten het besluit hadden genomen toch via de tunnels te

gaan was hij er op tegen. Hij was ook niet verbaasd toen hij hoorde dat ze alledrie afgeschoten waren. Direct drie dagen na de moord op zijn vrienden kreeg hij een aanbod om in het transport te werken. De steenkolen werden vervoerd met schip en trein. Hij zou dan in de haven en op het station komen te werken, naast zijn werk in de fabriek. Zo had hij wat afwisseling. Hij nam het aanbod met beide handen aan. Hij was blij dat hij het geduld hiervoor had gehad. Maar het werk was zwaar en hard. Toch had hij hierdoor het idee dat hij dichter bij de ontsnapping was. Hij zou het kunnen proberen per schip of trein te ontsnappen.

In ieder geval begon hij weer meer plezier te krijgen in zijn werk door de afwisseling. Ook begon hij mee te helpen in de ontsnapping van anderen door schip en trein, alhoewel hij het nog steeds niet over zijn hart kon krijgen zelf te ontsnappen. Hij was alreeds bezig met gevaarlijk werk, want als ze betrapt zouden worden in het helpen anderen te laten ontsnappen, dan zou zouden ze zelf ook opgepakt worden. Tot nu toe ging alles goed, en ze begonnen er handigheid in te krijgen. Het was alsof het zijn tweede baan was. Het gaf hem hoop en energie, alhoewel de spanning soms flink bij hem toesloeg.

Op een dag werden enkelen van zijn maten betrapt tijdens het laten ontsnappen van inwoners van de stad. Ze werden allemaal ter plekke afgeschoten. Hij werkte op dat moment in de fabriek en hoorde het pas later, ook als een waarschuwing. Hij raakte hierdoor zwaar depressief en wilde niet meer leven. Een andere maat van hem praatte hem erdoor heen. Hij was het helemaal zat. Hij kon hier niet meer mee leven, en zou samen met zijn maat gaan onderduiken. Zijn maat wist wel een adres.

Het was in de stad zelf. Midden in de nacht gingen ze er naartoe. Ze hoopten dat ze geen bewakers zouden tegenkomen. Het was een dikke vrouw waar ze terechtkwamen. Ze had een geheime woning onder haar huis. Dat moest wel, want er werden vaak huiszoekingen gedaan als werkers werden vermist. De dikke vrouw was direct enorm onvriendelijk en veeleisend. Snel kwamen hij en zijn maat erachter dat ze in een nieuwe slavernij en gevangenschap terecht waren gekomen, en de vrouw had hele strenge regels. Toch wilden ze het proberen om te kijken of het beter was dan waar ze vandaan kwamen. Tegelijk

wisten ze ook dat er nu geen weg meer terug was.

De dikke vrouw foeterde vaak op hen, en schold hen vaak uit. Ook kregen ze bij haar veel werk te doen. Ze was enorm praatziek en twistziek en ze hield hen nachtenlang op. Eten kregen ze bijna niet, en als ze het kregen hadden ze het idee dat ermee gerommeld was, alsof ze vergiftigd werden, en ze waren er vaak ziek door. Steeds meer kreeg de dikke vrouw macht over hen. Als het niet helemaal ging zoals ze wilde bedreigde ze hen soms met een mes. Ze had haar lijsten van mensen wie ze van alles wel zou willen aandoen, en dat moesten ze altijd aanhoren. Altijd maar weer die lange verhalen, en geweld werd niet geschuwd, maar verheerlijkt. Ze preekte als een dominee, maar dan wel een hele criminele en bloeddorstige.

Toch hadden ze soms wel medelijden als ze al die verhalen hoorde. De vrouw had als meisje veel meegemaakt, en was daar eigenlijk nooit overheen gekomen, en reageerde dat nu op hen af.

Ze waren goed de klos, dat wisten ze wel. Soms was de vrouw heel aardig, maar dan waren ze erg op hun hoede. Ze wisten niet wat er dan achterstak. Soms zou ze hen wel willen helpen, maar ze wist niet hoe. Soms gaf ze tekenen die leken op een soort van medelijden.

Ze spraken met haar over de ontsnapping uit de stad, en ook zij was er wel in geinteresseerd. Niet alleen voor hen, maar ook voor haarzelf. Hoe moeilijk ze ook in elkaar zat, zij was ook een slachtoffer van de stad, en wachtte op bevrijding. De natuur zagen zij als de grote bevrijding, maar ook zij sprak over de gevaarlijke indianenstammen daar, en andere gevaren van de open natuur.

Soms als ze kwaad was dreigde ze hen weer terug te sturen naar de steenkool fabriek, maar uiteindelijk kwam het er nooit van. Hij wilde niet ontsnappen met een schip of trein, want daar had hij een trauma aan overgehouden door de dood van zijn vrienden.

Op een nacht zei ze dat er nog wel geheime tunnels onder de geheime woning waren die nog dieper gingen, maar daar wist ze weinig vanaf. Ze zou wel

meewillen als ze zouden gaan. Op een nacht besloten ze het erop te wagen. Er liepen hier allemaal gangen. Het leek wel op een mijn. Ze kwamen zelfs mijnwerkers tegen, maar die spraken in een andere taal. Die waren niet van hier. Ze stonden voor een raadsel. Ze hadden harde stemmen en lieten hen niet gaan. Ze probeerden wat uit te leggen. 'Komtaar,' zei een mijnwerker, die vlak voor hen ging staan. 'Karta.' En hij maakte bewegingen met zijn handen en voeten. Hij had de indruk dat de mijnwerker het over indianen had in gebarentaal. Toen wenkte de mijnwerker hen, en ze moesten hem volgen. Ze gingen toen door vele tunnels heen. Heel veel mijnwerkers waren hier bezig. Hij herkende ze niet. Weer begon de mijnwerker allemaal gebaren te maken en wees op de andere mijnwerkers. Het was een steenkool mijn, maar het scheen geheim te zijn, en deze werkers waren niet van de stad. De mijnwerker scheen met gebaren te vragen of ze hier wilden werken. Hij en zijn maat zagen dat wel zitten, maar de vrouw wilde terug, en begon paniekerig te doen. Een andere mijnwerker die met hen mee was gelopen begreep de vrouw die telkens terugwees en duidelijk overstuur was, en nam haar weer mee terug.

'Komtaar,' zei de andere mijnwerker weer. Ze kregen werkkleding en een helm, en konden direct aan het werk. Alles was hen nog steeds een raadsel. Ze vroegen zich af wie het waren. Ze kregen ook een eigen kamer in het ondergrondse mijnenstelsel. Er werd hun duidelijk gemaakt dat ze konden werken wanneer ze wilden. Er lag geen druk op, en ze konden hier tot rust komen. Er werd hier ook gewerkt met ondergrondse voertuigen die op treinen leken, waarmee de steenkool vervoerd werd. Ze vroegen zich af waar het naartoe ging. Ze kwamen erachter door de gebaren van de mijnwerker dat de ondergrondse voertuigen dieper onder de grond gingen naar een dieper liggende steenkool fabriek. Dit volk was een ondergronds volk, dieper onder de aarde, waar de wereld boven de aarde geen weet van had.

Op een dag werd hij geleid tot de leider van de mijnwerkers, en het was een klein jongetje. Toen hij dichter bij kwam zag hij dat het zijn buurjongetje van vroeger was die eens ging verhuizen. 'Je bent nog precies hetzelfde !' zei hij met grote verbazing. 'Je bent nooit verder gegroeid. Hoe kan dat ?'

Het buurjongetje sprak in zijn eigen taal. 'We gingen verhuizen onder de

grond,' zei het jongetje. 'Mijn vader ging daar werken. Niemand wordt hier ouder.'

'Wie zijn het ?' vroeg hij.

'Het zijn vluchtelingen die ontsnapt zijn uit het communistische regiem,' zei het buurjongetje. 'Ze zijn nu lid van het geheime leger, verzetsstrijders.'

'En hoe komt het dat niemand hier ouder wordt ?' vroeg hij.

'Dat heeft te maken met ondergrondse mineralen en voedselsoorten die ze boven niet kennen,' zei het buurjongetje. 'Nog dieper onder de grond is de woeste wildernis en de wilde oceaan, waar de indianen wonen.'

Hij keek het buurjongetje met verbazing aan.

'En hoe komen we daar ?' vroeg hij.

'Door de fabriek,' zei het buurjongetje.

Einde

De Onkrant

Literaire Columns van de Tweede Bijbel

De Onkrant – Literaire Columns van de Tweede Bijbel – Verzamelingen – nr. 2 – dec. 2019

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Elwin en de bostranen

Hoofdstuk 1. Elwin krijgt bezoek van ver

Op een dag zat Elwin in zijn stoeltje in de tuin te lezen. Plotseling komt er een mannetje door het tuinhekje heen. Voorzichtig deed hij het hekje open, en daarna achter zich dicht. Elwin kijkt verbaasd op. Het mannetje heeft ook een hondje bij zich, en beiden hebben ze een heleboel lipjes op hun lijfjes. ‘Ja, ja,’ zegt Elwin, ‘wie zijn jullie dan ? Ik heb jullie hier nog nooit gezien, en jullie zijn geen Drokelaren.’ Het mannetje heeft een tuitig mondje met lippen die heel groot kunnen worden, en als hij praat groeit zijn mond ook. ‘Wij komen uit Bekehelm, Elwin, en we dachten eens bij jou op bezoek te gaan.’

Elwin dacht even na. Elwin kende wel een mannetje dat Bekehelm heette, en dat mannetje had ook een land, diep in Izu, waar Elwin weleens was geweest. Zou hij dat land bedoelen ? Elwin haalde een extra stoeltje uit de schuur, en zette het voor het mannetje neer.

‘Ga je mee, Elwin,’ vroeg het mannetje. ‘Dan gaan we naar het land Bekehelm, waar ik en mijn hondje vandaan komen.’ Maar Elwin begon direkt te protesteren : ‘Geen denken aan. Dat is me veel te ver. En ik wil graag eens een tijdje rustig bij Sandra zijn.’

Toen haalde het mannetje ineens een grote hoed tevoorschijn. Het was een toverhoed met een band eromheen in allerlei kleurtjes. Het leken wel platte edelstenen die op die band vastzaten, en de band zelf leek van een soort fluweel. ‘Stap er maar in, Elwin,’ zei het mannetje, ‘dan ben je in een flits in het land Bekehelm, en dan kun je er ook in een flits weer mee vertrekken.’ Nou, dat leek Elwin wel erg, erg spannend, en daar stapte die Elwin zomaar in de

toverhoed en verdween. Ook het mannetje met het hondje doken achter hem aan, en in een tel waren ze in het land Bekehelm.

Hier liepen dezelfde soort mannetjes en vrouwtjes rond als het mannetje met het hondje. Het leken wel tovermannetjes en tovervrouwtjes. Het hondje begon te blaffen. Het mannetje haalde de toverhoed weer tevoorschijn, en vroeg Elwin of hij weer terug wilde. Maar Elwin had het zo naar z'n zin, en was zo nieuwsgierig geworden, dat dat voorlopig niet hoefde. ‘Hou de hoed maar in de buurt,’ zei Elwin. Met grote stappen liep Elwin vooruit, in het land Bekehelm, op naar nieuwe avonturen.

Hoofdstuk 2. De moestuin

Elwin loopt zingend op straat in het verre, verre land Bekehelm. Het mannetje met de hoed, en het hondje lopen naast hem. ‘Elwin,’ zegt het mannetje, ‘zullen we naar mijn huisje gaan ? Dan kan ik jou mijn vrouwtje laten zien, en misschien wil je wel een poosje bij ons logeren.’ Dat leek Elwin wel leuk. Bij het huisje van het mannetje aangekomen stond het vrouwtje in de tuin te poetsen. Ze had een doek om haar hoofd, en ze had een lange rok aan, en een groot jasje. Ze was in de tuin aan het werken. Het vrouwtje leek wel een beetje op Sandra. Elwin glimlachte, maar het vrouwtje keek niet zo blij.

Ze hadden ook een moestuin waarin allerlei soorten groentes groeiden, en ook

aardvoedsel zoals aardappels en allerlei soorten knotten, bieten en koolsoorten. Elwin keek zijn ogen uit in de moestuin. Het vrouwtje zei niet veel, maar Elwin voelde zich wel welkom, en op z’n gemak. ‘Kom maar naar boven,’ zei het vrouwtje, en wees naar een trap die tegen het huis aanstond. Het was een metalen trap, en aan het uiteinde waren nog een paar stenen en marmeren treden. Ze moesten langs een grote raamdeur, waarachter lange paarse gordijnen hingen. Binnenin was het een beetje schemerig. Toen kwamen ze op een halletje, en de vrouw wees op een deur. Samen liepen ze naar de deur toe, en toen de vrouw de deur opende zei ze zacht dat Elwin daar mocht logeren zo lang als hij wilde.

Elwin vond het wel spannend. Er groeiden zulke prachtige soorten in de tuin, dat Elwin nieuwsgierig was naar hoe het eten hier zou smaken. Dat zou wel heel anders zijn als in de Drokelaar. En ja hoor, want toen even later de vrouw het eten opdiende en Elwin riep voelde Elwin zich heel lekker toen hij het eten proefde. Het was alsof hij voor het eerst in zijn leven had gegeten, en Elwin voelde zich erg rustig worden. ‘Eet maar veel,’ zei het vrouwtje. Ook het mannetje at heel veel, evenals het vrouwtje. Elwin zat met open mond te kijken hoe snel dat ging. Bord na bord, en pan na pan. ‘Ja, dat komt omdat we hier maar één keer per week hoeven te eten. Het eten geeft ons kracht voor een hele week,’ zei het vrouwtje. Ook het hondje zat aan tafel, en at een beetje, maar niet zoveel als het mannetje en het vrouwtje. Het mannetje wees op het hondje, en zei : Hij heeft altijd al snel genoeg, en hij eet maar eens in de maand.

Ook Elwin had al snel genoeg, en had het gevoel dat hij het hele jaar niet meer hoefde te eten. Het vrouwtje glimlachte even heel snel, maar trok toen weer een droevig gezicht. Het mannetje was erg blij, en ook het hondje. Elwin vroeg zich af waarom het vrouwtje zo droevig was, maar durfde het niet te vragen.

‘Wat drinken jullie altijd bij het eten ?’ vroeg Elwin beleefd. Het mannetje stak z’n vinger op en zei : ‘O ja,’ en liep naar een soort koelkast. Binnenin de kast lag een ketel met dik groen sap. ‘Dit zijn bostranen,’ zei het mannetje, ‘maar

dat werkt zo goed tegen de dorst dat we dat bijna nooit drinken.’ Voor Elwin werd een bekertje ingeschonken. Het smaakte zuur en bitter, maar ook een heel klein beetje zoet, en een heel klein beetje zout.

Elwin werd er erg rustig van, en ging naar achteren zitten. In de verte hoorde hij het getik van de klok. ‘Na, na na, na na na na naaa,’ iemand liep zingend langs het raam. Elwin keek naar buiten. Het was een oude man. Even later hoorden ze geklop op de deur. Het mannetje liep naar de gang, en deed open. De man gaf een klein briefje af, en liep weer verder. Het briefje was verder niet zo bijzonder, maar het mannetje begon zenuwachtig heen en weer te lopen. ‘Wat stond er in het briefje,’ vroeg het vrouwtje. Maar het mannetje bleef zeggen dat het niets bijzonders was. Na lang aandringen van het vrouwtje vertelde het mannetje het : ‘Het is een briefje van de buurman die vraagt of we zo nu en dan willen kijken of alles goed gaat met zijn poesje terwijl hij op vakantie is.’ Toen begreep de vrouw het. Het mannetje was namelijk een beetje bang voor het poesje. Ook het vrouwtje begon een beetje te bibberen. Elwin begreep het al. ‘maar dan kan ik toch af en toe even naar het poesje gaan kijken ?’ Het mannetje vond dat een goed idee, en ging weer rustig zitten.

Maar toen het mannetje even later aan Elwin vertelde wat voor soort poesje dat was werd Elwin zelf ook wel een beetje bang. Het poesje had ook overal lipjes, maar kon veranderen in een slang en dan flink bijten.

Hoofdstuk 3. Elwin gaat door het grote gat onder de grond

Het mannetje vertelde dat het poesje het vrouwtje weleens had gebeten, en dat het vrouwtje daarna altijd pijn had. ’s Nachts huilde ze vaak in haar bedje.

Eens in de zoveel tijd huilde ze dikke groene tranen, zoveel dat ze dan een ketel naast haar bed moest zetten. Deze tranen werden bostranen genoemd, en ze werden overal in Bekehelm gedronken.

Ergens heel diep onder de grond zouden er rivieren van bostranen zijn, en er werd in het land gezegd dat als je daarin zou zwemmen en baden, dan zou je nooit meer pijn hebben. Maar dan zouden ze eerst natuurlijk die rivieren moeten vinden, en die had nog nooit iemand gevonden.

Natuurlijk wilde Elwin er wel naar op zoek gaan. In de tuin van het mannetje en het vrouwtje was wel ergens een groot gat wat onder de grond leidde. Het mannetje en vrouwtje durfden zelf niet onder de grond te komen, want daar speelde het poesje van de buurman altijd.

Midden in de nacht besloot Elwin op onderzoek uit te gaan. Elwin nam een lantaarntje mee, en ging door het grote gat onder de grond. Wat was het hier donker, zeg. Plotseling zag Elwin iets groens stromen. Zouden dit de bostranen al zijn ? Verderop stroomde er nog meer groen spul, en er waren ook meertjes. Elwin zag daar een heleboel mannetjes en vrouwtjes staan, aan het meer, en ook zij hadden een heleboel lipjes op hun lijfjes. Elwin begon te zwaaien, en een paar mannetjes begonnen op Elwin af te komen. ‘Zijn jullie van het land Bekehelm ?’ vroeg Elwin.

‘Ja,’ zeiden de mannetjes, ‘maar wij mogen daar niet meer komen. Wij leven nu hier bij de groene rivier.’ Elwin keek vreemd op. ‘Maar waarom mogen jullie dan niet meer in het land Bekehelm komen ?’ vroeg Elwin. ‘Omdat wij stoute dingetjes hebben gedaan,’ zeiden de mannetjes. En toen begreep Elwin het natuurlijk goed. In Bekehelm werden alle boeven en andere stouterikken onder de grond gestuurd, en daarom durfde daar ook niemand te komen. ‘Al het gespuis komt hier terecht,’ zei één wat ouder mannetje met een baard. ‘Maar wij hebben lekker nooit pijn, en hoeven dus ook nooit naar het ziekenhuis, want wij zwemmen en baden in de groene rivier.’

‘Zijn dit de bostranen ?’ vroeg Elwin. De mannetjes knikten. ‘Maar,’ zei Elwin, ‘boven de grond is er iemand die erg veel pijn heeft, en die zal weer beter worden door in de rivier te baden.’

‘Wij hebben niks te maken met hen die boven zijn,’ zei een andere oude man nors. Toen dook hij in de rivier en zwom weg. ‘Mag ik dat vrouwtje dat zo’n pijn heeft eens hier mee naar toenemen ?’ vroeg Elwin voorzichtig aan de mannetjes. Maar die begonnen direkt met hun hoofdjes te schudden.

Dat werd een moeilijke opgave voor Elwin. Hij zou naar boven moeten gaan en tegen het mannetje en het vrouwtje zeggen dat ze niet welkom waren bij de rivier van bostranen. ‘Wanneer slapen jullie ?’ vroeg Elwin. Maar weer schudden de mannetjes hun hoofd. ‘Wij slapen niet,’ zei één van hen. Ondertussen waren er steeds meer mannetjes bijgekomen die om Elwin heen waren gaan staan. De vrouwtjes zwommen in de rivier, of zaten er naast. Toen vroeg Elwin of er misschien niet een manier was om de bostranen-rivier ook boven te laten stromen, waar de huisjes stonden. Maar de mannetjes schudden hun hoofd. En toen kwam er een mannetje naar voren met een speer, en begon woest te briesen. ‘En als je nu niet weggaat, dan krijg je hier een opmepper mee,’ zei het kereltje. Elwin begon te glimlachen. Het mannetje was veel kleiner dan hem, en het was nog een grappig mannetje ook. Elwin nam het mannetje in z’n nekvel en duwde hem in de rivier. ‘Ik heb er nog eens over nagedacht,’ zei Elwin. ‘Ik neem het vrouwtje met pijn hier naartoe, zodat ze kan gaan zwemmen en baden.’

‘Dan moet ze eerst net zo stout worden als ons,’ roept het mannetje met de speer vanuit het water. ‘Waarom zou ze stout moeten worden ?’ vraagt Elwin weer.

‘Dan is ze één van ons,’ zegt het mannetje, ‘en dan hoort ze niet meer bij hen die boven zijn.’ Maar dat vond Elwin niet zo’n goed idee. Elwin begon heel diep

na te denken, en vroeg zich af hoe de rivier ook boven kon stromen.

Plotseling stond de toverhoed voor Elwin. ‘Ik kan je wel helpen bij het oplossen,’ zei de toverhoed. ‘Gooi mij in de rivier, en al het water zal terecht komen in het bovenland van Bekehelm.’ En zo gebeurde het. Elwin gooide de hoed in het water, en al het water begon er doorheen weg te stromen. Boven begon de rivier nu te stromen door het land, en de vrouw kon snel van haar pijn afkomen.

Het mannetje en het vrouwtje waren zo blij dat Elwin als geschenk de toverhoed mocht houden. Elwin zou met gemak door heel het land Bekehelm kunnen reizen met de hoed.

Einde van dit verhaal

de koningin van de reuzen

Een meisje uit de klas had me verteld dat ze waren gekomen. Ze stonden bij het hek. Ze stonden hier al vele jaren, maar ze had het mij nog nooit eerder verteld. Ze sprak vaak met hen. Het hek stond aan het weiland. Ik ging er

naartoe en zag hen daar staan. Ze hadden lange neuzen, ze waren lang als reuzen en dun. Ander Jan, Schone Jan en Klapper Jan heetten ze. Schone Jan sprak niet, nooit eigenlijk. Dat had het meisje verteld. Ander Jan nam het woord en sprak heel monotoon, als een robot.

'De oranje zon kan niemand verslaan,' zei Ander Jan. 'Het is de wilde zon van abstractie en symboliek.'

Ik keek in de lucht en zag de oranje zon, wild blazende. Het was geen hete zon van vuur. Het was ander spul. Ik vroeg me af waarom ze het dan zon noemden. Maar het was de oranje zon.

'Je bent een getrouw soldaat,' zei Ander Jan. 'Pijn moet, maar we gaan je dronken maken.'

Ik keek hem vreemd aan, onderzoekend.

'Niet van alcohol natuurlijk,' zei Ander Jan, 'maar van de oranje zon, of laten we het oranje bron noemen, de natuurbron van de reuzen.

'Ik heb teveel vijanden,' zei ik. 'Ze liegen allemaal over mij alsof het niets kost. Ze schieten me telkens overhoop met leugens. Hoe kan ik dan dronken worden van de oranje bron ?'

'Die vijanden zijn slechts steenkool, in onze fabriek,' zei Ander Jan. 'We kunnen het goed gebruiken.'

'Oh, als brandstof,' zei ik.

'Zoiets,' zei Ander Jan, 'voor de oranje bron van abstractie en symboliek.'

'Ik zie het,' zei ik.

Toen ineens begon Klapper Jan als een gek op ons te schieten, maar de kogels deden geen pijn. We werden dronken, dronken van de oranje bron, de

natuurbron van de reuzen. Ineens zag ik de grotere contexten, en zag ik de fabriek van steenkool.

'Ja,' riep ik. 'Ik zie het. Klapper Jan, je bent geweldig.' Ik was dronken van de reuzenbron, en het maakte me slim. Ik kon de symboliek van alle dingen zien, en het abstracte. Ik klom op een ladder tot de fabriek, en zag al het steenkool.

'Het is voor de oranje bron,' zei Ander Jan, 'niemand kan de oranje bron verslaan. We gaan er allemaal aan.'

'In de goede zin van het woord,' zei ik.

'Dat doet Klapper Jan nu altijd,' zei Ander Jan. 'Op het hoogtepunt van het gesprek.'

'Ik zie het,' zei ik, terwijl mijn dronkenschap een beetje begon te kalmeren.

Ik werd toen wakker in de klas naast het meisje. 'Wat heb je me gegeven ?' vroeg ik, nog steeds een beetje dronken, nog steeds een beetje in een roes.

'Oh, klapperjannetjes,' zei ze. 'Lekkere snoepjes voor als de onderwijzer weer heerlijk saai is.'

Ik keek haar aan, glimlachend. 'Dus jij kent ze ook, die drie Jannen ? Ander Jan, Schone Jan en Klapper Jan ?' vroeg ik.

'Oh ja,' zei ze. 'Ik heb zelfs een keer met ze gevoetbalt.'

'Zeg, waar koop je die dingen eigenlijk, die klapperjannetjes ?' vroeg ik.

'Oh, mijn moeder geeft ze me weleens mee,' zei ze, 'voor als de lessen te saai en te vervelend worden, maar niet teveel per week,' lachte ze.

'Wat lief van je dan, dat je mij ook zo'n klapperjannetje hebt gegeven,' zei ik, 'en dat terwijl je ze zelf ook zo hard nodig hebt.'

'Nou ja,' zei ze, 'mijn tante verwent me er ook weleens mee, heel stiekem, en dan geef ik ze vaak aan anderen, anders wordt het te bont,' lachte ze.

'Mijn moeder geeft ze me anders nooit,' zei ik. 'Ik ben blij dat ik naast jou in de klas zit. Ik had er nog nooit eerder van gehoord, maar waar worden die dingen verkocht, want ik wil niet afhankelijk van jou worden.'

'Mijn vader maakt ze,' zei ze.

'In een fabriek ?' vroeg ik.

Ze knikte.

'Waar maakt hij het van ?' vroeg ik.

'Dat heeft hij me nooit verteld,' zei het meisje, 'maar Ander Jan zei van steenkool.'

'Van zijn vijanden dus ?' vroeg ik.

'Ja,' lachte ze, 'van hen die leugens over hem vertellen. Daar maakt hij steenkool van, en dan klapperjannetjes, tenminste dat zegt Ander Jan, en dan ben ik altijd dronken, in een roes.'

'Van die oranje reuzenbron ?' vroeg ik.

'Nee, van die klapperjannetjes,' lachte ze.

'Ja, maar dat doet Klapper Jan dan toch met zijn kogels van de oranje bron die geen pijn doen, maar dronken maken, en alle grotere contexten laten zien ?' vroeg ik.

Ze lachte. 'Ja, dat is hetzelfde,' zei ze, 'maar dat zit in die snoepjes. Mijn vader verkoopt ze.'

'Is het duur ?' vroeg ik.

'Welnee,' zei ze. 'Als je een getrouw soldaat bent kom je er zo langs.'

'Langs wat ?' vroeg ik.

'Langs de fabriek,' zei ze lachend.

'Ander Jan zei dat ik een getrouw soldaat was,' zei ik. 'Waar is die fabriek ?'

'Als het goed is heb je die gezien,' zei ze. 'Het is de steenkool fabriek.'

'Ja,' zei ik, 'toen je me een klapperjannetje had gegeven. Kun je me er meer geven ?'

En toen is ze me gaan chanteren en omkopen, allemaal voor meer van die klapperjannetjes. Ik moest allerlei dingen voor haar doen in ruil voor de klapperjannetjes. Ik moest ook mee naar haar kamer om daar op te ruimen, enzovoorts. Maar ja, zo kreeg ik dus wel meer klapperjannetjes, ook al was ik bijna haar butler geworden of lakei, want ze waande haarzelf wel ineens de koningin van de reuzen. Als ik met Ander Jan sprak klaagde ik er weleens over. Dan zei hij altijd : 'Pijn moet, maar we gaan je dronken maken.' En dan begon Klapper Jan altijd op het hoogtepunt van het gesprek te schieten met de kogels van de oranje natuur bron van de reuzen, en dan kreeg ik hogere inzichten, zag ik grotere contexten. Eigenlijk was het een heel aardig meisje, gewoon heel erg slim. Ze gaf me zo wat afleiding, en zo groeide ook ons contact. Het was gewoon eigenlijk heel erg zakelijk, maar beiden hielpen we elkaar wat, in dat verschrikkelijke gevecht op die verschrikkelijke school.

Einde

Het Zwemparadijs

Het stadje was een zwemparadijs, overdekt, en tussen de huizen waren de zwembaden gewoon ingebouwd. Lekker makkelijk, dichtbij huis. Het was er ook altijd tropisch warm. Er waren voor iedere inwoner speciale gangen waardoor je van je huis tot het zwembad kon gaan. Ook lagen er overal zandbakken, waar of boompjes en plantjes stonden, of waar de kinderen konden spelen. Ik had er ook een huisje. Het was al laat, en doordat de gangdeur openstond kon ik zien dat de voordeur werd losgemaakt. Ik liep er direct op af, en riep 'hey'. Wie kon dat nu wezen ? Er werd veel ingebroken, dus het konden ook dieven wezen. Er kwam niemand binnen, en de deur ging ook niet verder open, dus ik deed de deur los, en ik zag dat er iemand alweer wegliep. 'Hey, waarom loop je nu weg ?' zei ik. 'Kom terug.' Ik kende hem wel. Hij was van de technische dienst. Hij kende mijn familie ook wel. Blijkbaar had hij een sleutel. Hij kwam terug. 'Wat kwam je doen ?' vroeg ik.

'Ja, het ging niet zo goed met die en die,' had hij het over, maar verder draaide hij er nogal omheen en had hij het over andere dingen, ook omdat hij wist dat ik liever niet over bepaalde dingen sprak. Ik zei tegen hem : 'En als ik nu niet naar je was toegekomen, wat zou je dan hebben gedaan ? Je woont namelijk nog tamelijk ver weg.' Maar dan zou hij wel hebben gewacht in zijn voertuig zei

hij, of hij had nog andere dingen te doen. Het werd verder wel een gezellig gesprek. We zijn toen ergens naar een café in de buurt gegaan, en toen we terugkwamen zag ik opeens de persoon waarover hij het had gehad. Het zou niet zo goed gaan met die persoon volgens hem, wat ook de reden was dat hij was gekomen, om het mij te vertellen, maar die persoon liep met anderen daar en was de vrolijkheid zelve. Ik wilde die persoon helemaal niet zien, dus ik liep zo snel mogelijk weer naar mijn huis. Ik schold hem wel even uit.

Ja, kom nou. Dat zijn soms van die producten hè, waar van alles mee aan de hand is, waar mensen aan komen te overlijden, kinderen door worden gemarteld, en toch halen ze het niet uit de handel. Toch moet je telkens die belachelijk vrolijke reclame ervan op de tv blijven zien alsof er niets aan de hand is. Zo zou ik die persoon het beste kunnen omschrijven. Het was een stuk technologie. Ik gebruikte het niet meer, wilde er niets meer van weten. Schold hem altijd de huid vol als ik hem tegen kwam. Wilde niets meer met hem te maken hebben. Schold ook altijd de hele boel bij elkaar als die stomme, leugenachtige reclame clips ervan op de tv kwamen alsof het zo'n goed product was, allemaal met hun vrolijke, huichelende glimlachen. Dan kon de hele buurt altijd van mijn gescheld meegenieten. Tja, wat moet ik zeggen. Ik groeide in dit stadje op. Ik moest altijd het gegil van kinderen aanhoren onder de grond. Mijn slaapkamer was net boven zo'n ruimte gebouwd waar ze dat product uitvoerig gebruikten, met name op kinderen. Het was een product van de hel. Slapeloze nachten had ik er van. De jongen van de technische dienst keek me aan. Hij was met me meegekomen. 'Hoe ging het ?' zei hij toen we eindelijk thuis waren gekomen.

Ik begon weer te schelden, en hij moest me kalmeren. 'Tja,' zei hij. 'Je weet dat het product nog steeds gebruikt wordt.' Je kon het altijd in het stadje ook ruiken. Het was echt zo'n zwembadgeur, zo'n geur van : 'Oh, er is hier niets aan de hand,' maar ik wist wel beter. Ook wij moesten er vroeger aan geloven. Ik keek de jongen van de technische dienst aan. 'Ik wil er niet over praten,' zei ik, 'maar kun jij er niet wat aan doen ? Jij bent immers van de technische dienst.'

'Ga maar slapen,' zei hij toen. Ik moest altijd dat gegil van die kinderen

aanhoren onder de grond, 's nachts, ook al hoorde ik het minder dan vroeger omdat mijn huisje er verder van verwijderd was. Toch kon ik er vaak niet van slapen.

'Slapen ?' zei ik. 'Puh, wat valt er hier te slapen ?'

'Ik zal wel wat doen,' zei hij toen. Dat was het laatste wat ik van hem hoorde. Hij had één of ander gas in mijn gezicht gespoten, een heel wazig, waterig gas. Ik viel er direct van in slaap. Ik droomde dat ik door zo'n zwembadgang tussen het huis en het zwembad ging, en toen niet naar het zwembad ging, maar de trap af naar beneden, waar die kinderen waren. Ze vlogen mij in mijn armen. Ook ik was eens zo'n kind. Het waren de ongeborenen. Het was alsof ik een klets water in mijn gezicht kreeg. Toen ik wakker werd zag ik het glimlachende gezicht van de jongen van de technische dienst. 'Nou, en ?' zei ik.

'Het product is niet meer in de verkoop en wordt niet meer gebruikt,' zei hij.

'Hoe kan ik dat zeker weten ?' vroeg ik. 'En wat heb je gedaan ?'

'Ik heb niks gedaan,' zei hij, 'maar dat was de reden dat ik kwam, om je mede te delen dat het voorbehoedsmiddel niet meer in de zwembaden zou worden gestrooid vanaf dit moment.' Hij keek toen even op zijn horloge.

'Nu ?' vroeg ik.

'Ja, nu,' zei hij. 'Precies op dit tijdstip. Het heeft even geduurd, maar het was al aangekondigd dat het zou stoppen, en ik weet dat je liever niet over het onderwerp sprak, maar ik vond dat je het toch moest weten. Het is voorbij. Ik hoop dat je nu 's nachts wat rustiger kan slapen.'

Einde

men neme een pak nederlandse zombificatie

'Men neme een ei of twee, en een grote pot. Men neme dan een vleugje onverschilligheid met wat poeder, bakpoeder wel te verstaan, en men roere het dan in de pot, wat water erbij, en als het kan wat betweterigheid, als er nog genoeg van in huis is, anders lene men het bij de buren. Giet het geheel dan over in een grotere pan. Men neme dan nog wat zout en suiker om het op smaak te brengen. Men gooit daar dan een pot jam doorheen, veel jam, met wat materialisme als het nog in huis is, anders lene men het bij de buren. Men smere het dan op de hoofden van kinderen, om hen Nederlands te zombificeren. Doof zullen ze zijn tot het natuurrefrein, maar het stadse refrein zal nu in hun hoofden doordringen, en daarvoor marcheren zullen zij.'

Zulk soort vreemde teksten las ik in het dagboek van een heks. Ik zal maar niet zeggen waar ik het gevonden heb. Maar het was in een dorpje waar wel meerdere vreemde teksten overal en nergens te lezen waren. Zo stond er ergens boven de verwarming in een huis : 'Attentie, de scanners van post bezorging kunnen de verwarmingsstanden ontregelen.' Ik keek op de thermostaat en het stond inmiddels al op nul. Dat kon natuurlijk een andere oorzaak hebben, maar toch ...

Zulk soort vreemde teksten, daar wordt je niet vrolijk van, maar het laat je wel zien dat er heel wat mis is in de wereld. Toch heb ik er maar genoegen mee genomen. Het was verder wel een leuk dorpje. Ik was trouwens ook op mijn doorweg naar het station, en had gewoon verschillende notities gemaakt voor mijn onderzoek. Het zal wel weer uitlopen op een fiasco, want men gelooft

immers niet in heksen. Dat ik het zwart op wit heb staan schijnt ook niet te gelden, want het zal wel weer een verhaaltje wezen. Iedereen kan tegenwoordig wat opschrijven.

Nee, als journalist is het leven niet makkelijk. Het komt nogal ongeloofwaardig over. Je kan het dan ook weer verkeerd begrepen hebben enzo. Daarom ben ik op zoek naar een nieuwe baan. Tegenwoordig pikt men het niet meer wat er in de kranten geschreven wordt. We kunnen wel opstappen. Men leest tegenwoordig ook bijna niet meer. Het gaat allemaal om de eigen ervaring. Mensen hebben al genoeg aan hun eigen denken. Daar worden ze al genoeg door afgesnauwd. Mensen kijken tegenwoordig liever naar een bloem of naar een boom. Dan hebben ze even rust, want het spreekt niet tot hen.

Nee, mensen zijn nu liever bezig met de blanco vellen, niet met kant en klaar beschreven papier. Dus wat er dan door een heks in een dagboek is geschreven ontgaat hen ook helemaal. Daar houdt een mens zich niet meer mee bezig tegenwoordig. Maar heeft de heks dan niet haar doel bereikt ? Een vleugje onverschilligheid, en als het kan wat betweterigheid. Heeft ze haar doel niet al bereikt ? En die scanners van de post bezorging, kunnen die ook pace makers ontregelen dan ? En gehoor apparaten, en beademings apparatuur ? Is de mens daarom zo bang voor post tegenwoordig ? Men wil het bijna niet meer hebben.

De Nederlandse zombificatie … Het zit hem in de post … zeggen ze dan … Of zit het er juist in dat ze de post niet lezen ? Ik denk dat er ergens een gulden middenweg is ...

De rampen toerist

Nederland is een land stinkend rijk van het rampen toerisme. Dat is wat Nederland is : een land van rampen toerisme, rampen die ze nota bene zelf veroorzaakt hebben. Dan staan ze daar met hun krokodillen tranen en hun foto toestelletjes en steken geen vinger uit naar de slachtoffers. Dan kopen ze vervolgens dure therapeuten in omdat ze zogenaamd zo getraumatiseerd zijn, en die dure therapeuten steken vervolgens ook geen vinger uit naar de echte slachtoffers en worden zo ook stinkend rijk over de ruggen van anderen. De één zijn dood is immers de ander zijn brood. Neen. Nederland is een land van parasieten en demonen. Ik heb het over de ouders van Nederland die graven graven voor hun kinderen. Kent men dan het spreekwoord niet : wie een kuil graaft voor een ander … ? Is men het vergeten ?

Nederland, het land wat rijk is geworden door rampen toerisme, allemaal door het zogenaamde gezin. Het zijn geen families, maar begrafenis ondernemingen. Arme kinderen, zou je denken, maar laten we ook vooral de dieren niet vergeten, want die worden ook niet gespaard, en eindigen al snel op het bord. Allemaal rampen toerisme. Ze staan erbij en kijken ernaar. Om dieren wordt al helemaal niet gegriend, want dat zijn maar dieren. Die gaan toch dood. Ja, we gaan allemaal dood, zeggen ze dan. Het is slechts rampen toerisme, begrafenis ondernemingen, de één z'n dood …

Eten we dan zo ons brood ? Uitgesmeerde kinderpastei erop ? Klaarblijkelijk wel … Kronos vrat zijn eigen kinderen op uit angst door hen van de troon gestoten te worden, en klaarblijkelijk gebeuren dat soort taferelen nog steeds. Zo zijn er ook kinderen die hun eigen ouders opvreten om soortgelijke redenen. Het kannibalisme viert hoogtij in Nederland … Het bloed van Jezus drinken aan het avondmaal … Het moet allemaal maar kunnen …. Allemaal rampen toerisme, lekker een dagje uit eten … Moet toch allemaal kunnen … Fotootje maken voor het foto album … Zo gaat dat de geschiedenis in … Maar wil je zo te kijk

gesteld worden ? Zo gaat de mens als een Judas, als een Herodes, een Nero of een Hitler zingend de geschiedenis in … Allemaal rampen toerisme … Naar de slachtoffers wordt geen poot uitgestoken, maar als ze kunnen trekken ze de slachtoffers nog een poot uit ook. En als dan de rekening komt dan zeggen ze net als de nazi's destijds : Wir haben es nicht gewusst.

Alle intellectuelen moesten dood, alle hoog begaafde kinderen moesten het zwijgen opgelegd worden, opdat de domheid vrij spel zou hebben. 'Oh help help, een ramp !' roepen ze, terwijl ze de ramp zelf hebben veroorzaakt, en ze doen niets om de ramp te stoppen, want ze hebben er nog veel meer op hun dodenlijst, en dan maar fotootjes maken voor hun kranten, want hun kranten zijn immers de tijdschriften van hun gezelligheidsvereningen van rampen toerisme. Voor hen is het een sport, een hobby. Ze gaan er graag naartoe, net zoals iemand anders naar de sjoel vereniging gaat of naar de bingo avond ervan. Nederland, het land van rampen toerisme. Ik heb het dan over wat ouders hun kinderen aandoen, en dan met de krokodillen tranen erbij staan, het vertikken om maar een poot uit te steken. Langzaam worden ze dan oud en gaan ze met pensioen om zo te dementeren, met elke dag hun stukje vlees in de mond, of dat nou van de dieren of van hun kinderen is kan hen niet zoveel schelen. Het is hun hormonale drugs die ze gebruiken opdat ze niet hoeven te denken aan wat ze kind en dier hebben aangedaan. En maar zingen op hun verjaardagsfeesten : 'Oh wat zijn we blij,' een polonaise naar de afgrond. Zij zijn immers rampen toeristen. Ze zijn slechts voorbijgangers. Het is een onderdeel van hun feest. Ze sleuren velen met hen mee, zelfs de kinderen van hun kinderen. Lekker fotootjes maken, oh wat zijn we blij. Stukje vlees in de mond, of het nu van het kind of het dier is. Allemaal drugs om het geweten te sussen. Het gaat hen immers om het geld. Zo kunnen ze immers hun therapeuten ondersteunen, je weet wel, die doekjes bij het bloeden, van pappen en nathouden. Als rampen toerist is het leven namelijk zeer moeilijk. Je moet namelijk altijd weer op zoek naar wat de mooiste plekjes zijn, om de mooiste kiekjes te kunnen maken, want er zijn natuurlijk zoveel concurrenten waar ze tegen moeten opboksen, en er is altijd weer baas boven baas.

Ja, een rampen toerist heeft maar een zwaar leven. Ga er maar aan staan. Het is een zware baan, iedere dag weer. Maar ze hebben in ieder geval één ding

mee, iets wat ze altijd bij de hand hebben, want ze zijn natuurlijk zelf de grootste ramp. Ze hoeven natuurlijk maar in de spiegel te kijken. Altijd een ramp bij de hand. Ze hoeven er het huis niet voor uit. En zo worden ze oud. Bah, wat een naar verhaal. En dat is nu ook precies de reden waarom ik geen rampen toerist ben geworden, want op een gegeven moment vliegt het je gewoon naar de keel. Een beetje te dichtbij de ramp staan, en daar ga je al, en het kan ook zo ineens achter jou aankomen. Nee, dat is aan mij niet uitbesteed, dat rampentoerisme. Je moet dan echt een hoogbegaafde stuntman zijn om dat te kunnen overleven, en een talentvollere boeienkoning dan Houdini. Je kan dan denken als rampen toerist : 'Ik sta lekker achter de streep,' maar wat als het vóór de streep veiliger is ? Of : 'ik zit lekker niet achter de tralies,' maar wat als de ware gevangenis juist aan hun kant van de tralies is ? Je wordt bedonderd waar je bijstaat als rampentoerist. Ze zien het niet meer zo nauw op een gegeven moment. Je gaat er nogal snel van dementeren.

Daarom ben ik maar geen rampentoerist geworden, maar gewoon toerist. Ik ben zo naar allerlei landen gegaan, en zoals in Nederland stuitte ik ook in andere landen op rampen toeristen. Het schijnt overal te zijn. Daarom ging ik pleiten voor het algemene toerisme. Er valt nog zoveel te zien en te ontdekken zonder rampen toerist te zijn. Maar dat begon ook te vervelen, en tegelijkertijd begon ik het rampen toerisme steeds meer als een ramp op zich te zien. Ik wilde daar wat aan doen, en ben toen specifiek rampen toerisme gaan opzoeken, ook hun verenigingen, om eens van hen fotootjes te maken, en in de kranten te zetten met naam en toenaam, als aapjes in de dierentuin. Nou, ze voelden zich ineens wel bekeken hoor, en toen kwamen de krokodillen tranen weer. Oh, wat hadden ze het zwaar, en ik moest ze maar met rust laten. Heb ik toen gedaan toen ik uiteindelijk klaar was met mijn onderzoek. Ik vond het wel welletjes zo. Ik ben er heel rijk van geworden, want allerlei slachtofferverenigingen en mensen en dierenrechten organisaties droegen mij een warm hart toe en ondersteunden mijn werk. Het was heel dankbaar werk. Ik wilde voor eens en voor altijd met het rampen toerisme afrekenen. Ik had ze helemaal in hun blootje gezet, als apen in een apenkooi. Het was een ramp voor hen, de grootste ramp in de geschiedenis om het zo maar eens te zeggen. En toen was het mijn beurt om toch maar een rampen toerist te worden.

man in de trein

Man in de trein.
Blije man in de trein.
Als de trein dan door een tunnel gaat, als door een donkere baarmoeder, dan wordt de man wedergeboren, maar in wat ?

Als wat ?
Man in de trein, hoedje op.
Komt een andere man tegenover hem zitten, en man doet uit beleefdheid even zijn hoedje af.
Hij is nu immers wedergeboren.
De andere man is helemaal niet blij, maar pessimistisch.
Weer gaan ze door een donkere tunnel, door een donkere baarmoeder, en deze tunnel is wel langer.
Beiden worden ze er niet vrolijker op.

Dan komt er een vrouw bij. Beide mannen doen hun hoedje even af uit beleefdheid.
Maar de vrouw is er helemaal niet.
Het was slechts in de verbeelding van de mannen.

Eén van de mannen staat op.
De ander blijft zitten.

Man in de trein, weer helemaal alleen.
Hij kijkt naar de regen die tegen het raam tikt.
Telkens wordt hij wedergeboren maar hij is sip.
Waarom is hij sip ?
Vanwege een droom.
Hij had het gehad die nacht.
Het was een droom over treinen die alsmaar doorrijden.
Donkere tunnels, verbeeldingen, een man en een vrouw.
En dan is er niets.

Nee, hij zit niet in de trein,
Hij droomt nog steeds,
Hij is sip,
Want het lijkt maar niet te stoppen,
Een teken van saaiheid …

Man in de trein, slechts zijn bewustzijn,
slechts verbeelding, waar gaat het heen …
eindeloos gaat het voort …
eindeloos zoals het hoort …
en de patronen ziet hij niet …
soms wordt het hem teveel …
dan weer een duistere tunnel …
door de duistere baarmoeder …
dan weer een wedergeboorte en een schreeuw …
ja, geboren worden doet pijn …
je weet niet waar je bent en je weet niet waar je moet zijn …

Man in de trein …
het gaat allemaal maar door …
zijn gedachten stoppen niet …
zijn verbeeldingen stoppen niet …

niets stopt …

Als hij dan het fluitje hoort van de conducteur dan wordt hij eindelijk wakker …
Dan stapt hij eindelijk uit de trein …
maar waar komt hij dan ?
waar is hij belandt ?

hij kijkt om zich heen,
hij is op een strand …
daar ziet hij de man en de vrouw weer die hij tegenkwam in de trein …
hij knippert met zijn ogen, maar dan zijn ze weg …
dan ziet hij ze even later in de golven …
beiden zijn ze blij …

hij begrijpt het niet,
hij tekent cirkels op het treinraam …
buiten regent het …
buiten zijn er blije mensen in het water …
was hij dan niet even blij …
ja, maar nu niet meer …
het is slechts een gegeven …

hij wil niet meer,
hij wil niets meer ….
maar hij geeft zich er maar aan over …
een golf sleurt hem mee …
even is hij weer blij …
even is hij gelukkig …
ben ik nu in de trein of in de golf ?
wat een speciaal gevoel …
en kijk, daar zijn die man en die vrouw weer …
ze zitten tegenover hem in de trein …
ze lijken zo verliefd …
en even is hij verliefd op het leven …
even is hij verliefd op de trein en de golf …

die zich vermengden …
even is hij verliefd op de regen …
hij hoort het getik, als een taal …
hij verstaat het niet, maar hij voelt dat het goed is …
meer hoeft er niet, meer hoeft er niet …
het is goed zo …

dan hoort hij weer het fluitje van de conducteur …
en de man en vrouw stappen uit … wat een verliefd stelletje …
was hij hier niet al eens eerder geweest ?
hij had het gevoel dat hij een cirkeltje had gemaakt,
maar toch was alles anders nu …

hij zucht diep …
dan zit er een andere vrouw naast hem …
waar gaat u naartoe ? vraagt ze …
je kan beter vragen waar ik vandaan kom, vraagt hij …
nou, waar kom je dan vandaan ? vraagt de vrouw …

dat weet ik niet, zegt hij …
ik weet het wel, zegt ze …
nou, zeg het dan ? zegt hij …
je komt uit mij, zegt ze …

hij kijkt haar even vreemd aan …
oh, ben jij mijn moeder ?
dan is het even stil …

nee, zegt ze uiteindelijk, laat maar …
we liggen hier al zo lang …

we zitten, hoor, zei hij …
nee joh, zei de vrouw, we liggen …

nou moet u ophouden, zei de man …

jij hield anders niet op, zei de vrouw …

wie bent u dan ? vraagt de man …
ziet u, ik ben de trein, zegt de vrouw …

man in de trein …
oh, ik dacht dat ik eruit was, zei de man …
nee hoor, zei de vrouw …
maar dat zei u net, zei de man …

oh ja, de tunnel, zei ze, dat ben ik ook …
dus dan bent u toch mijn moeder …. zegt de man …
nee hoor, zegt de vrouw … dat ben ik niet meer …
je kunt toch niet eeuwig kind blijven …

nou ja zeg, zegt de man,
ik stap nu op … weg van deze trein …
zou ik niet doen, zegt de vrouw …
waarom niet ? vraagt de man …

ik ga nogal hard, zegt de vrouw …
je zou je bezeren …

ik ben het zat, zei de man …
wat bent u een grap …
ik wil er uit, nu …

eerst betalen, zei de vrouw …
de man laat zijn kaartje zien …
dat is niet genoeg, zegt de vrouw …

dit keer wel, dit keer wel, zegt de man …
oh, heb je het eerder gedaan ? vraagt de vrouw …
ja, ik begin het me langzaam aan allemaal weer te herinneren … zei de man …
was jij niet eens mijn vrouw ?

dan schrikt hij wakker …
hij kijkt naar een poster aan de muur …
op zijn nachtkastje liggen pillen …
ik had ze niet moeten nemen, zei de man …
ik heb vreemd gedroomd …
die pillen van tegenwoordig … je zou er zelf van in een trein veranderen …
dan neemt hij nog wat pillen …
en slaapt dan verder … als een man in de trein ...

de onverhalen van oom guus

ik had ze niet moeten lezen en ook niet moeten voorlezen, zegt oom guus
tante sjaan huilt …
nou stop met huilen, zei oom guus …
zeg dat 't je spijt, zegt tante sjaan huilend …
't spijt me, zegt oom guus …
maar tante sjaan huilt maar door …
ik zei toch dat het me spijt, zegt oom guus, maar je gaat maar door …

't heeft te lang geduurd, zei tante sjaan …

oom guus heeft toen alle boeken weggegooid …
het hele huis stond er vol mee …
toen nam hij boeken met onverhalen mee voor tante sjaan …
veel beter, zei tante sjaan …

ik kan je ook onguus noemen, zei tante sjaan …
dan ben jij onsjaan, zei oom guus …
toen zijn ze beiden vroeg naar bed gegaan,
en oom guus las haar wat onverhalen voor …
die onverhalen ken ik, zei tante sjaan na een lange tijd …
die stonden vroeger altijd in de onkrant …
toen begon ze weer te grienen …
waarom jank je nu weer ? vraagt oom guus …
omdat ik ze zo lang niet heb gehoord, huilde tante sjaan …

nou ja, lekker slapen nu dan, onsjaan, zei oom guus …
je hebt ze nu weer gehoord …
slaap lekker, onguus, zei tante sjaan …
midden in de nacht werden ze wakker …
er werd aan de deur gebeld …
een onkrant, meneer of mevrouw ? werd er buiten geroepen …
oom guus opende het raam en schreeuwde tot de onkranten jongen …
moet je ons daar midden in de nacht voor uit bed bellen ?
wij willen slapen ….

maar overdag heb ik heel lang lopen bellen en niemand deed open,
zei de onkranten jongen … ik hoorde alleen iemand heel hard grienen …
daar zijn brievenbussen voor, oen ! schreeuwde oom guus hard

het past niet door de brievenbus, zei de onkranten jongen,
ditmaal is het een extra dikke onkrant …

ach steek hem in je reet, riep oom guus boos …

maar toen werd tante sjaan boos : ach onguus, hoe kun je zo over de onkrant spreken, je bent me wel een onding zeg …
en toen ging tante sjaan naar beneden om de deur te openen voor de onkranten jongen …
ach lieve jongen, dan neem ik ze wel van je aan hoor … zei ze …
goedzo, zei de onkranten jongen glimlachend …. je hebt me wel een onman zeg … het is dat jij het bent, want anders zouden we hem van de lijst schrappen …
je mag hem wel meenemen, zei tante sjaan …

ja, onkranten papier zullen we van hem maken …
zei de onkranten jongen …
dat doen we met hen die de onkrant een koud hart toedragen …

hij heeft geeneens een hart, zei tante sjaan, terwijl ze de onkranten jongen omhelsde en knuffelde …
nou mevrouw, geen probleem … zei de onkranten jongen …. en in de onkrant zal hij komen … met een onfoto op de eerste pagina … groot nieuws …

nee, nee, riep oom guus die inmiddels achter hen stond …
ik heb nog wel wat onverhalen te vertellen …
als je even wacht zal ik je helpen met die onkrant …
mijn eerste onverhaal heet : de onverhalen van oom guus …
juist ja, dit verhaal, en ik speel er ook in mee,
en jullie ook …

dat gaat zomaar niet, zei de onkranten jongen …
je hebt geeneens een vergunning …
ach laat hem maar, zei tante sjaan, dan doet hij eens wat goeds …
vooruit dan maar, zei de onkranten jongen …

en zo ging oom guus bij de onkrant werken …
het werd zijn nieuwe baan …
baanbrekend werk kon je wel zeggen …
een echte onbaan ...

de ongod

ze telde haar schapen …
maar haar vingers lagen ergens anders …
het was helemaal niet zoals het was …
ze lag bij mij in bed …
ze noemde haarzelf mijn vrouw, maar ik zou haar mijn onvrouw willen noemen …
dat deed ik dan ook …
zij was hier zeer boos over …
en ik ook …

ik kan er niet goed tegen als iemand boos word over wat ik zeg …
dan word ik zelf ook altijd boos …
dat kan dan uitlopen op een zwaar gevecht …
ik scheld ze dan helemaal kapot …
en natuurlijk schelden zij dan terug …
ze halen dan hun vuilnisbakken erbij en maken mij uit voor alles wat vies, goor en vuil is …
en zo doe ik dat ook …
dat hebben we dan met elkaar gemeen …
daarin kunnen we elkaar dan de hand schudden …
daarin zijn we dan elkaar's vrienden …
en dat kan nog eens van pas komen, handig in een oorlog …

zo heb ik ook mijn onvrouw ontmoet …
we scholden elkaar beiden kapot …
zo kapot dat we elkaar handig vonden …
kon nog eens goed van pas komen in de oorlog …

ze telde haar paarden,
maar haar vingers lagen ergens anders …
het was helemaal niet zoals het was …
ze lag bij mij in bed …
we vertelden elkaar onverhalen …
zij was mijn onvrouw, en ik was haar onman …
toen kregen we een onkind …

altijd maar weer schelden, altijd maar weer gooien met dingen uit de vuilnisbak …
het kwam wel goed van pas …
zo werden dingen weer bruikbaar,
en konden we een winkel beginnen …

de onvrouw,
zo miskend …
de onman,
zo onbegrepen …
het onkind …
zo ongehoord ….

we liepen eens op een brug, en toen begon alles in te storten …
ik weet niet waar ze zijn …
het was een onbrug …
ik zwom tot een onboot …
ik vond een ongod …
het is me genoeg …
meer dan genoeg …
wat een rust, dacht ik …

waarom heb ik dit niet eerder gezien …
en ik hoopte maar dat mijn onvrouw en onkind het ook voor zichzelf zouden vinden …

de ongod vertelde mij onverhalen …
ook dit verhaal ...

het onparadijs

man op een vlot,
maar er was geen vlot,
het was een onvlot …
er was slechts zee,
en de man was er ook niet …

of toch wel ?
op een paradijs was hij …
met een vrouw,
een onvrouw …
zeer vrouwelijk …
als porselein …
met een touwtje eraan …
trekken maar, trekken maar …
zo gaat het deurtje open …

samen op het vlot,
maar er was geen vlot …
het was een onvlot …
en ook de man en de vrouw waren er niet …
het was een onparadijs …

ik geloof het niet …
toch zie ik het …
ik zie door alles heen …
maar blind is het kind …

samen op het vlot,
met een kind …
op zoek naar het onparadijs …
het water is warm …
diep in de golven zijn zij …
weggezonken … als de droomventer …
maar noem het maar gerust een ondroom …

wie kan er dan nog gerust slapen ?

klierbloed

klierbloed was het slechts,
klierbloed,

hij loopt op blote voeten ...
pesten en klieren is alles wat hij kan ...
hij noemt zichzelf het denken, of liever het ondenken ...

hij kan zichzelf van alles noemen ...
en iedereen noemt hem van alles ...
van leuk tot niet leuk ...
van grappig tot doodserieus ...
het klierbloed heeft ons allen in de macht ...
en hij vind het leuk ...

het klierbloed martelt en is sadistisch,
het stroomt door iedereen heen ...
maar wie is iedereen ?
het is slechts het klierbloed,
een vage droom ...

er zijn wel andere dromen, oh ja,
en ook wel nachtmerries, hele zware ...
het klierbloed komt in vele vormen,
en in vele maten ...
zij zijn allen soldaten ...

het klierbloed, het onbloed,
als het sap van de ongod ...
op blote voeten loopt hij rond ...
met een zweep ...
hij leest hen voor uit de onbijbel ...
en wie het niet gelooft slaat hij tot papier ...
opdat er nog meer onbijbels gedrukt kunnen worden ...

zoveel belachelijks in een mensenleven,
en hij maar lachen ...
hij trapt in worst en kaas ...
hij worstelt met de nacht,

waarin kan een mens dan geloven dan in het ongeloof …
en wat is religie dan waard ?

Nee, hij bouwt een onreligie …
op een boot naar het onparadijs …
zoveel papier te maken … zoveel onbijbels te drukken …
hij is een ware onprofeet …
hij is een ware onevangelist …
nog steeds probeer ik te ontsnappen …
maar het klierbloed stroomt ook door mij …
dat kleverige onsap van de ongod …
het trekt aan mij …

de onschool

op de onschool leer je dingen die je niet op school zou leren,
leren, leren …. onleren …

op de onschool is het leven leuk …
je lacht jezelf telkens in een deuk …
nou ja, niet helemaal waar …
het is allemaal namelijk nog zo onklaar …

op de onschool leer je dingen die je thuis niet leert …
daarom gaan we na onschool naar het onhuis …

op de onschool kun je lol hebben …
nou ja, niet helemaal waar …
maar het heeft wel waarde …
zoveel waarde dat ik er misselijk van ben …
en ook een beetje duizelig …

nu maak ik natuurlijk wel meer mee …
het is natuurlijk niet alles …
maar wel een heleboel …
ik bedoel maar …
wat kun je dan nog doen ?

het is tamelijk overweldigend …
als vlag op de onschool …
we zwaaien maar en zwaaien maar, maar niemand komt …
allemaal papier voor de onboeken van de onschool …
zoveel te onleren …

het is natuurlijk leuk,
om al deze dingen te horen …
soms zo leuk dat het onleuk is …
maar dat is ook een vorm van leuk …
het hoeft natuurlijk niet altijd leuk te zijn,
als het maar leerzaam is …
maar dat is het ook niet altijd …
zoveel om te onleren …
op de onschool is het altijd raak …
en als we dan naar onhuis gaan …
dan is het ook raak, of goed mis …

maar goed mis is ook goed …
op de onschool is alles omgedraaid,
of juist niet ...

mooi hè

ik kijk naar buiten en het is mooi,
soms is het onmooi, maar dat kan ook mooi zijn,
voor de verandering …
maar dat doe ik niet zoveel,
want ik zit in de put …

diep in de put …
maar ja, dat hoort er soms ook bij,
ik zeg het maar even …
de put zelf zit ook in de put …
anders was hij hier niet …

het onwonder

ik ben een mannetje van goud,
en ik kijk langs alles heen,
ik ben een mannetje van goud,
en ik kijk langs alles heen

en ik kijk langs alles heen,
door de bomen, door de bomen,
en ik kijk langs alles heen,
door de bomen kijk ik heen …

ik ben een mannetje van goud,
ze noemen mij het ongoud …
wie mij niet volgt wordt snel oud …
tot papier zal ik ze malen …

ik ben het mannetje van goud …
van ongoud …
tot papier zal ik ze malen,
om het ongoud te dragen …
tot het onwonder in de nacht …
tot het onwonder vol van pracht …

komt dat zien, komt dat zien …
een optocht door het bos …
zij willen mij niet,
dus worden zij oud …
tot papier zullen zij worden, tot papier zullen zij worden,
om te dragen het ongoud ...

papier industrie

papier industrie …
papier industrie …
als je staat, dan val je niet …

papier industrie …
papier industrie …
zonder benen red je het niet ...

Hoogspanning

'Ik ben een vuur wat niet gestopt kan worden. Schiet mij door mijn hart en het zal in andere vormen tot je komen, heviger dan ooit. Wij zijn robotten, komende van een wereld van kennis, niet van wil. Wij zijn tot deze lagere sferen gekomen waar mensen worden voortgedreven door de wil. Wij zijn hier voor een missie,' zei de robot.

Ik keek hem even vreemd aan.

'Nou, ik wil je echt geen kwaad doen,' zei ik. 'Waarom zou ik dat doen ?'

Toen herhaalde hij het weer wat hij had gezegd, en toen weer, maar toen onderbrak hij zichzelf. 'Sorry,' zei hij. 'Jij lijkt me wel een type waarmee we kunnen praten. Ik kan daarom wel normaal met je spreken denk ik.'

'Ben je daar nog niet helemaal zeker van ?' vroeg ik.

'Ik ben je nog aan het scannen,' zei de robot.

'Wat als ik net zo ben zoals jullie ?' vroeg ik. 'Wat als ik veel eerder al hier naartoe was gezonden dan jullie ?'

'Zou kunnen,' zei de robot. 'Ik ben het nog even aan het doorscannen.'

De robot bleef daar maar staan, en zei toen niets meer. Ik heb nog even een uurtje gewacht en ben toen doorgelopen. Hij zou me wel met gemak kunnen terugvinden als hij echt hele goede scanners zou hebben.

Midden in de nacht stonden ze ineens in mijn slaapkamer. Ze hadden hun scanners op mij gericht. Allemaal rode lampjes in mijn gezicht. 'Ik was al aan het slapen,' zei ik.

'Goed,' zeiden ze. 'Dan gaan we weer. We weten nu in ieder geval waar je

woont.'

'Met hoeveel zijn jullie ?' vroeg ik.

'Met drieduizend man, kunnen ook vrouwen tussenzitten,' zeiden ze.

Ze hadden donkere pakken aan en waren zwaar bewapend. 'Hij is één van ons,' zei één van de robotten. Toen zijn ze weer weggegaan. Ik was nog maar een kind. Toen ik de volgende ochtend wakker werd dacht ik dat ik het maar gedroomd had. Ik vertelde over de droom in de klas die dag. De juffrouw moest er hartelijk om lachen, en ook de kinderen. Ik lachte ook. 'Het zal je maar gebeuren,' zei een klasgenootje.

Maar de nachten daarop begonnen de andere kinderen ook zulke dromen te krijgen, en zelfs de juffrouw. Iedereen vond het heel vreemd. De dromen gingen allemaal over hetzelfde : de robotten waren gekomen. Ze waren hier op missie, maar het was onbekend wat hun missie was.

De juffrouw stond voor een raadsel. Ze begon vreemde tekens op het schoolbord te tekenen. 'Kennen jullie die ?' vroeg de juffrouw. Iedereen schudden z'n hoofd. 'Ik heb het gedroomd,' zei de juffrouw. 'Het zit in mijn hoofd. Het moet nog ontcijferd worden.'

Opeens kwam de hoofdmeester binnen. Hij keek naar de tekens. 'Wat ben jij die kinderen nou aan het leren ?' vroeg hij.

'Oh,' zei de juffrouw, 'ik las het in een tijdschrift.'

'Welk tijdschrift ?' vroeg de hoofdmeester, 'en welke taal is het ?'

'Ik had erover gedroomd,' zei de juffrouw.

'En moet je daar de kinderen mee belasten ?' vroeg de hoofdmeester boos. 'Heb je ze niets anders te leren ?'

'We hebben er allemaal over gedroomd !' riepen de kinderen toen.

Het was toen even lange tijd stil.

'Zitten jullie me nu voor de gek te houden ?' vroeg de hoofdmeester boos. Stampvoetend liep hij het klaslokaal uit, maar de volgende dag kwam hij als een bibberend hondje terug. 'I... ik heb er ook over gedroomd,' zei hij.

De juffrouw glimlachte. 'Vertel er eens over,' zei de juffrouw.

'Nou,' zei de hoofdmeester. 'Er was oorlog, en ze kwamen ons halen. Zoveel robotten in zoveel ruimteschepen. De hele lucht was er mee vol. En er stonden allemaal van die vreemde tekens op hun pakken, en op hun ruimteschepen, net zulke tekens als op het schoolbord.'

'Zal het gebeuren ?' vroeg iemand.

'Het zijn maar dromen,' zei de juffrouw, 'maar omdat we er allemaal over gedroomd hebben kan er meer aan de hand wezen.'

'Misschien worden we wel bestraald,' zei iemand anders.

'Het zou kunnen,' zei de juffrouw. En toen wezen ze allemaal op mij. 'Bij hem is het begonnen. Hij kwam er als eerste mee,' zeiden ze. Toen zijn ze mijn schooltas gaan doorzoeken. Ze haalden er een apparaat uit wat ik niet kende. Het leek wel op een computerspelletje, maar het was veel meer. Er werden toen andere meesters en juffrouws bijgeroepen. Toen hebben ze de politie gebeld. Ik moest mee naar het bureau. Het apparaat was zeer verdacht. Ik had geen idee hoe het in mijn tas was gekomen, maar het bleek een apparaat te zijn van gedachten beïnvloeding. Het bleek een heel gevaarlijk apparaat te zijn, tenminste dat zeiden ze. Ik moest toen voor de kinderrechter verschijnen, en moest de gevangenis in. Ik snapte nog steeds niet hoe het kon gebeuren, maar niemand geloofde me. Ik herinnerde me wat één van die robotten ooit tegen me gezegd had, en dat begon ik toen telkens tegen de gevangenisbewakers te zeggen : 'Ik ben een vuur wat niet gestopt kan worden. Schiet mij door mijn

hart en het zal in andere vormen tot je komen, heviger dan ooit. Wij zijn robotten, komende van een wereld van kennis, niet van wil. Wij zijn tot deze lagere sferen gekomen waar mensen worden voortgedreven door de wil. Wij zijn hier voor een missie.' Zij begonnen sinds toen ook zulke dromen te krijgen over komende robotten, en over de vreemde tekens. Ik moest toen overgeplaatst worden naar een zwaardere gevangenis, meer geïsoleerd. Ze hebben toen een heleboel experimenten op me uitgevoerd. Maar zij die dat deden werden daardoor geplaagd met zware nachtmerries over de robotten, en ik bleef maar zeggen : 'Ik ben een vuur wat niet gestopt kan worden. Schiet mij door mijn hart en het zal in andere vormen tot je komen, heviger dan ooit. Wij zijn robotten, komende van een wereld van kennis, niet van wil. Wij zijn tot deze lagere sferen gekomen waar mensen worden voortgedreven door de wil. Wij zijn hier voor een missie.' Ik waarschuwde dat als ze nog verder met me zouden sollen dat er dan doden zouden kunnen vallen, dat ze van binnen kapot zouden branden, dat ze gewoon spontaan zouden kunnen exploderen. Ze moesten weten dat ik van gevaarlijke apparatuur was gemaakt met reflectie effecten, waardoor alles wat ze me aandeden op hen zou terugstuiten, nog wel in ergere vorm. Ze luisterden niet. Het leek wel alsof ze hun leven voor de wetenschap gaven. Ze moesten en zouden aan mij sleutelen, ook al kwamen ze zo onder hoogspanning. Ik was nog maar een kind. Wetenschappers die aan mij sleutelden overleefden het uiteindelijk niet, en zo werd het steeds rustiger om me heen. Steeds minder waagden zich nog aan mij. Een enkele waaghals zo nu en dan moest het met zijn leven bekopen. Ik raakte meer en meer geïsoleerd, en terug naar de samenleving mocht ik niet.

Op een nacht kwamen de robotten mij halen. Het was oorlog. Met grote ruimte schepen kwamen ze, met allerlei vreemde tekens erop. Ik was nog maar een kind. Ze hebben me toen naar een dichtbijzijnde planeet gebracht, genaamd de aarde. Hier had ik een nieuwe missie. Ik dacht toen direct : 'Laat ik m'n grote bek nu maar eens een keer houden voor de verandering, zodat het me niet nog een keer in dezelfde problemen zal brengen.' Ik was een brutaal kind, deinsde voor niets en niemand terug, zei alles recht voor z'n raap. Dat kon niet meer, dus toen hebben ze m'n geheugen maar gewist. Ik moest helemaal opnieuw beginnen. Ik werd op die andere planeet op een nieuwe school een voorbeeldige leerling. Ik wist van niks. De juffrouw kon me alles vertellen, en ik

geloofde het.

Op een dag zei ze tegen me : 'Ik ben een vuur wat niet gestopt kan worden. Schiet mij door mijn hart en het zal in andere vormen tot je komen, heviger dan ooit. Wij zijn robotten, komende van een wereld van kennis, niet van wil. Wij zijn tot deze lagere sferen gekomen waar mensen worden voortgedreven door de wil. Wij zijn hier voor een missie.'

Ik keek haar met grote ogen aan.
Ik kon haar bijna niet geloven.
'Echt ?' vroeg ik. 'En wat is die missie dan ?'
Het was na schooltijd. Alle andere kinderen waren al de klas uit.
Ze begon vreemde tekens op het schoolbord te schrijven.
Even dacht ik dat ik die tekens kende, maar van een tv programma.
'Ja, daar kijk ik altijd naar, naar dat programma,' zei ik.
Ze glimlachte.
'Ja, dat is een mooi programma hè,' zei ik, 'over robotten die komen met hun ruimteschepen om uit te helpen uit de oorlog.'
'Ja, daar is dat regeltje van,' zei ze, 'van dat programma.'
Alle andere kinderen keken er ook graag naar.
Soms deden we alsof we die robotten waren om elkaar uit de oorlog te helpen.

Einde

hoe Jo Hong Oen de dictator van de hele wereld werd

Dat Azië ook ondergrondse landen heeft weten maar enkelen.
Dat in die landen een zwaardere dictatuur heerst dan in welk land dan ook boven de grond weten zelfs nog minder.
Daarom kan het ook nogal veel voorkomen dat vluchtelingen van die ondergrondse landen niet geloofd worden.
Daarom spreken veel vluchtelingen er niet over, maar niet alleen daarom. Vaak is de angst om een sakalahassa op hun kop te krijgen wel groter.
Wat een sakalahassa is ? Dat is een term die zulke Aziatische ondergrondse landen gebruiken voor een fatwa. Voor degenen die niet weten wat een fatwa is : Dat is een doodsvonnis wat je op je kop kunt krijgen als je het durft je uit te spreken tegen een bepaald bewind. Velen wagen zich daar dus niet aan, en speciaal in het geval van zulke ondergrondse Aziatische landen.
Er is dus geen vrijheid van mening. Je kan niet zomaar alles zeggen wat je wil. Alles wordt op een gouden weegschaal gewogen en het kan je je kop kosten. Alles wat je zegt kan op een later tijdstip tegen je gebruikt worden.
Toch komen zulke verhalen dan wel eens boven drijven.
Mensen die hun mond niet kunnen houden, maar het dan wel anoniem doen.
Zo blijkt er een dictator genaamd Toi Ming Haxi te zijn in één van die Aziatische ondergrondse landen die nogal snel koppen laat rollen. Als je op school een foutje maakt ben je er al geweest. Zo overleven alleen de allerbesten en zullen er geen dommen bestaan in zijn land.
En in zo'n ander Aziatisch ondergronds land schijnt het nog wel erger te zijn, waar de dictator Jo Hong Oen heerst. Die wil dat er een foto gezonden wordt van elke nieuwe baby, en als hun kop hem niet aanstaat dan gaat die eraf. Zo krijgen dus velen niet eens een kans om naar school te gaan. Jo Hong Oen's tante schijnt daar ook nogal een grote rol in te hebben. Ze willen geen lelijke babies in het land. Wat lelijk en niet lelijk is bepalen zij. Het blijkt dat er ook nogal veel met de foto's wordt gerommeld. Zo zijn er ouders die van hun kind afwillen en dan een snor maken op de baby foto. Waarom willen ze dan van hun kinderen af ? Vaak was hun geboorte in hun ogen een ongelukje. Ze willen alleen de lusten en niet de lasten. Of ze zien er op het laatste moment toch vanaf. Ze vonden het in het begin allemaal heel leuk en aardig, maar toen de baby uiteindelijk kwam gooiden ze er met de pet naar en hadden wel andere

dingen te doen. Daarom vinden veel van zulke flut ouders Jo Hong Oen een goede leider, en daarom aanbidden zij hem ook, en hebben zij zijn foto door hun hele huis hangen. Voortdurend zoenen ze die foto, want hij is immers hun redder.

Mensenrechten organisaties zijn er minder blij om, maar ja, die durven daar eigenlijk niet te bestaan. Er zijn dan wel geheime mensenrechten organisaties daar, maar die durven zich verder niet uit te spreken. Ze willen natuurlijk geen sakalahassa op hun kop.

De enige die eigenlijk dit soort mensen geloofde was de president van Amerika. Dat komt omdat er ook een sakalahassa tegen hem was uitgesproken. Hij koos ervoor om het te geloven, om zo geen risico te nemen. Hij was ook bezorgd over zijn land, maar wilde ze niet onnodig bang maken, dus is hij in het geheim de grond onder gegaan, op zoek naar die Aziatische ondergrondse landen met zulke afschuwelijke dictaturen. Hij wilde het uitpraten met Jo Hong Oen, als die bestond. Hij zou graag willen weten waarom er een sakalahassa over hem was uitgesproken. Jo Hong Oen stemde in met het gesprek. Hij bleek dus toch te bestaan, en het land ook. 'Luister,' zei Jo Hong Oen tot de president van Amerika. 'Ons buurland waar dictator Toi Ming Haxi heerst wil ons land binnenvallen en ervoor zorgen dat onze scholen onder hun wetgeving valt, zodat iedereen die een foutje maakt z'n kop verliest. Dan blijft er hier geen kip over in dit land. Dat is toch afschuwelijk ? Die kinderen moeten toch op een normale manier dingen kunnen leren zolang ze geen lelijke rotkop hebben ?'

Toen zei de Amerikaanse president : 'Ik zou niet weten waar Toi Ming Haxi's wetgeving in verschilt met die van jou, als het waar is wat ik heb gehoord. Jij laat je foto's van elke nieuwe baby sturen en als hun kop je niet aanstaat, dan laat jij ze onthoofden ? Dat is nog wel erger dan Toi Ming Haxi's wetgeving, zeer kindonvriendelijk, en ook zeer verdwaasd. Ik zou jouw kop weleens willen zien dan.'

'Nee,' zei Jo Hong Oen toen, 'dat moet van mijn tante. Die wil geen lelijke babies in het land, want dan worden we allemaal lelijk. De kinderen zijn immers de toekomst. Daar kan ik niets aan doen. Die wetgeving was er al vóór mijn

geboorte.'

'Hoe kan het dan dat ze jouw kop bij je geboorte niet hebben afgehakt ?' zei de Amerikaanse president spottend.

'Ik was geen lelijke baby, majoor !' riep Jo Hong Oen woedend over de telefoon.

'Dan hadden ze waarschijnlijk hun bril niet op, of was het licht uit,' zei de Amerikaanse president kalm.

'Jij lelijke idioot !' riep Jo Hong Oen woedend. 'Toen mijn tante een baby foto van je zag zei ze langzaam : 'Zijn hoofd moet eraf.' Ze zei dit zo deftig en met zoveel overtuiging en intimidatie dat ik wist dat als ik niet direct een sakalahassa op jouw hoofd zou plaatsen dan zou mijn eigen kop eraf rollen.'

De Amerikaanse president begon te lachen : 'Dus jouw tante heeft eigenlijk daar alles voor het zeggen, en jij stelt als dictator dus helemaal niets voor. Je bent gewoon haar marionet.'

'Het is geen zij, maar een hij,' zei Jo Hong Oen. 'Hij is een travestiet. Hij was eigenlijk mijn vader, maar toen heb ik hem maar tante genoemd. Dat vond hij zelf ook leuker klinken dan vader of moeder.'

'Dus hij is nog steeds de baas ?' vroeg de Amerikaanse president.

'Achter de schermen heeft hij nog flink wat in de melk te brokkelen,' zei Jo Hong Oen.

'En waarom ging zijn kop er dan niet af bij zijn geboorte ?' vroeg de Amerikaanse president. 'Was het licht weer uit ?'

'Nee,' zei Jo Hong Oen. 'Er zat water op de lens.'

'Water op de lens ?' vroeg de Amerikaanse president.

'Ja, zeg maar gerust urine,' zei Jo Hong Oen. 'En het was het kind van degene die de baby foto wet had gemaakt, dus niemand durfde er wat van te zeggen, en die foto werd toen een zwaar geforceerd schoonheidsideaal, allemaal uit angst. Iedere baby moest daar nu op lijken, anders kop eraf. Zij die tegen deze wet of het nieuwe schoonheidsideaal ingingen kregen een sakalahassa op hun kop.'

'Ik kan me voorstellen dat hij hiervan later travestiet is geworden,' zei de Amerikaanse president. 'Maar waarom schaffen jullie deze wet niet af ? Het is zeer kind-onvriendelijk en bedrieglijk.'

'Dat kan niet,' zei Jo Hong Oen, 'anders neemt Toi Ming Haxi het land in.'

'Waarom ?' vroeg de Amerikaanse president.

'Nou, kijk eens,' zei Jo Hong Oen. 'De vader van mijn vader werd gedwongen de baby foto wet te maken.'

'Waarom ?' vroeg de Amerikaanse president weer.

'Omdat ....,' zei Jo Hong Oen, 'deze wet andere landen moest afschrikken zodat ze ons niet zouden aanvallen.'

'Ah, dus dat zit zo,' zei de Amerikaanse president, 'dus dat was de eigenlijke reden waarom ik een sakalahassa op mijn hoofd kreeg ? Om mij te intimideren om jullie land vooral niet aan te vallen ? Nou, dan ken je mij dus niet, want ik vind dit zo'n misselijke wet dat ik jullie land zeker ga aanvallen, en ook dat andere land met die andere belachelijke wet.'

'Weet waar je aan begint,' zei Jo Hong Oen. 'Wij hebben betere techniek dan jullie, en als wij de oorlog winnen, dan komt ook onze wetgeving in jullie land, dus begin er maar niet aan.'

'Wen er maar vast aan dat wij ons als Amerikaanse volk niet laten intimideren,' zei de Amerikaanse president.

En toen kwam er een oorlog, en Jo Hong Oen won de oorlog. Die oorlog werd uitgevochten in het geheim. Maar Jo Hong Oen zei dat hij de slechtste niet was. De baby foto wet hoefde er niet te komen, maar wel moest er een voorbehoedsmiddel komen wat ervoor zou zorgen dat er geen slimme kinderen geboren zouden worden die genoeg zouden doordenken. Het middel zou ook aan andere landen doorverkocht moeten worden. Ook moest het rijk van Jo Hong Oen geheim gehouden worden voor de landen boven de grond. En zo werd Jo Hong Oen de verborgen dictator van de hele wereld, of was het nog steeds zijn tante ?

Einde

hahaha

Ik speelde in het meer. Het was een mooie dag. Ik was op mijn surfplank.
Opeens begon het harder te waaien, en donkerder te worden.
Ik weet niet waar ineens die hoge golf vandaan kwam, maar het veranderde mijn hele leven.
Ik werd gegrepen door een vreemde vis, een soort octopus gekruist met een

haai.
Ik werd in de diepte getrokken, en toen ging alles verkeerd.
Ik kon niet ademen hier.
Ik speelde in het meer, maar nu niet meer.
Ik dreef weg. Ik was weer boven water.
Het beest was weg, maar ik was aan het bloeden.
Hevig ! Toen viel ik flauw.

Ontwaakte in het ziekenhuis.
Dokters hadden geen idee.
Zusters ook niet.
Ze gaven me wat te drinken.
Ik durfde niet naar mijn lichaam te kijken.
Het leek alsof er iets in zat, als een bubbel.
Het trok door mijn lichaam.
De dokters zeiden het is een reactie op de beet, een tegenreactie van mijn lichaam.
Aaah, ohhh, de pijn was niet te houden.

Ik dacht weer terug aan de mooie dag op het meer,
en het was alsof ik er weer was, en ik zag weer het beest komen,
terwijl alles duisterder werd …
Hoe kon het gebeuren ?
Zulke beesten kwamen daar toch niet ?
Blijkbaar wel …

De dokters kenden het beest niet …
Biologen bijgehaald …
Ze wisten het ook niet …
Ik had een vreemde smaak in mijn mond …
De dokters zeiden het is een reactie van mijn lichaam tegen het gif …
Een tegenreactie …

Ik zakte weer weg, viel weer flauw ...
Het leek alsof ik in de hemel was, aan de drugs …

Dokters zeiden een tegenreactie …
Ja, dat moest wel, want het was hel …

Hel de hel, dat was het …
Nu ervoer ik de hemel,
maar het was slechts een reactie van mijn lichaam …
Ik scheidde een hormoon uit om het gif te absorberen …
Ik vocht voor mijn leven …

Ik durfde niet naar mezelf te kijken,
alsof ik uiteen getrokken was …
Als een lappenpop …
Ik herinnerde mijn vader … Hij was die dag aan het zeilen met een vriendin …
Dat is eigenlijk alles …
Ik kan het niet … Ik kom hier niet doorheen …

Snijd in m'n lichaam als een …
Ik krijg het woord niet uit m'n strot …
Snijd in m'n lichaam als een …
Trekt me uit elkaar …
Doet het maar …
Het is mijn verleden …
Maar nu ben ik hier …

Hier met …
Ik krijg het woord niet door m'n strot …
vader en die vriendin …
en hij donderde zo zijn zeilboot uit met die storm …
touw brak …
ik zie hem nog zo zwemmen …
mijn boot … mijn boot …. geen nood …

vriendin …
vrouw …
hij is een domoor …

ik zie hem nog zo zwemmen achter die boot aan …
toen nam die vriendin zijn boot mee …
ze kwam nooit meer terug …

ha ha … het kauwt weg als drugs …
ik bekeek het van een afstand …
het slikt weg als drugs …
mijn vader zwemmende achter die boot …
zo'n droogkloot …
wie gaat er daar nu fietsen …

ik bedoel : wie zwemt daar nu …
nu ….
ik houd ervan, van zulke taferelen …
en toen beet die hond …
in z'n kont …. karakaa … bla bla bla …
zeike zage doe de doe …. doeier … kloter ….

drugs ha ha ha ….

het doet je goed soms …
ik lach erdoor haha …
staat die piet te lezen …
denkt ie : oh het's drugs …
nee, je bent gewoon dom ….
hahahaha

geluk bij een ongeluk

'Ik was met een bevrijdingsteam in een vliegtuig in de oorlog. Het vliegtuig werd geraakt door de vijand en vloog toen tegen een rots en stortte de zee in. Ik overleefde het niet. Mijn hersenen konden de crash niet verwerken, en vertaalden het toen als een moeder. Hier werd ik dus bij geboren, terwijl het dus eigenlijk het ongeluk was wat mijn hersenen niet konden verwerken. Wat een verschrikkelijke strijd had ik met die moeder, de ene leugen op de andere leugen, en ze roddelde zonder grenzen. Altijd dacht ze het beter te weten, terwijl ze een verstrooid warhoofd was. Gek dreef dat kreng me, tot het punt dat ik niet meer wilde leven en met het mes aan mijn pols stond, avond na avond, allemaal vanwege die tering moeder. Maar het was dus dat ongeluk wat ik niet had overleefd in de oorlog, en wat mijn hersenen niet konden verwerken.'

'Okay,' zei ik toen ik het briefje las. 'Die persoon, man of vrouw, loopt te schelden als een ketter, maar begrijpelijk. Wie zou er zo'n heks van een moeder kunnen verdragen ? En dat was dus een ongeluk wat hij of zij had gehad, en wat zijn of haar hersenen niet konden verwerken, en dat werd toen vertaald als een moeder die hem of haar het leven zuur maakte ? Wonderlijk fenomeen … reincarnatie ? En als dit waar is, wat is er dan niet nog meer doorvertaald door de hersenen in andere dingen, omdat de oorspronkelijke gebeurtenissen te zwaar en onverteerbaar waren ? Maar zie waar het deze persoon naartoe heeft geleid, want hij of zij wilde zichzelf of haarzelf hierdoor van het leven beroven ?

Nou, dat was dan niet gebeurd volgens iemand anders. Uiteindelijk was die persoon toch nog goed terecht gekomen ergens. Ik begon me direct af te vragen wat mijn eigen hersenen hadden doorvertaald wat ik niet kon verwerken. Ja, ik had ook een tering moeder. Ik schrok eigenlijk van mijn gedachten. In mezelf was ik nu ook aan het schelden als een ketter toen ik aan haar dacht. Zou dat betekenen dat ik ook een ongeluk had gehad in mijn vorig

leven waardoor ik was opgescheept met zo´n kreng ? Het bloed haalde ze onder mijn nagels vandaan. Daarom ben ik maar voor de krant gaan werken, om het te kunnen verwerken en overleven. Ik typte wat in, maar alle letters en tekens van mijn keyboard bleken verwisseld te zijn, dus er stonden hele andere dingen dan wat ik had ingetypt. ´Dat zei ik helemaal niet !´ riep ik. Ik dacht weer na over mijn moeder die alles wat ik zei altijd omdraaide en verkeerd uitlegde.

Ik sprak er met de anderen over, en zij probeerden mij te kalmeren. Soms is het ook wel confronterend om bij de krant te werken. Het kan zoveel van het verleden ineens omhoog halen, maar het stukje liet me wel zien wat er gaande kon zijn. Ik kon ook een ongeluk gehad hebben in mijn vorige leven, en dat mijn hersenen dat noodgedwongen als mijn moeder vertaalden. Wat een gedoe, maar wel begrijpelijk. En is zo´n kreng van een moeder dan geen uitnodiging om het zelf beter te doen ? En dat is ook wel nodig, want er zijn zovelen die een moeder nodig hebben. En zou dat niet uiteindelijk de genezing van het ongeluk zijn, wanneer we zelf moeder worden, te beginnen moeder van onszelf, en dan ook voor anderen die dit nodig hebben, ook om ze het goede voorbeeld te geven ? Ik denk van wel. En omdat ik er de therapeutische waarde van inzag besloot ik het stukje toch te plaatsen, met de woorden van mijzelf erbij, nadat ik ze verbeterd had, want het keyboard had alles omgedraaid. Mocht er nog een fout instaan, dan weten jullie hoe het gekomen is : door het ongeluk, door mijn moeder of door het verdraaide keyboard. Ik noemde het stukje : ´geluk bij een ongeluk.´

geluk bij een ongeluk II

Ik was wel geïnteresseerd in dat soort mensen. Zij hadden in ieder geval wat te vertellen wat bovennormaal was. Het was een keer wat anders, en het zette mensen aan het denken. Zo ging ik eens naar een bijeenkomst van zulke mensen. Ik kwam daar ook een piloot tegen. Hij beweerde dat zijn vader eigenlijk de kogel was die door zijn kop ging in een vorig leven. Ik heb hem er verder niet over doorgevraagd. Het zou wel te traumatisch voor hem wezen, maar ik vroeg me af wat mijn vader dan wel niet kon zijn. Misschien ook wel een kogel door me kop in mijn vorige leven. Hersenen konden het niet verwerken, dus maakten ze er maar een vader van, omdat het je altijd bijbleef. Zo kreeg het wat handen en voeten en kon je er nog wat mee, maar ik had zeer zeker geen makkelijke vader, en dat kon je ook niet verwachten van de kogel die door je kop was gegaan in een vorig leven. Natuurlijk was het maar speculatie, maar ik had een gevoel dat het weleens waar kon zijn. Ik bleef maar naar de piloot kijken. Hij had zijn helm nog op, motorpak aan. Zijn motor stond buiten. Hij werkte op een vliegveld dichtbij. Hij was ook vlieg instructeur.

Hij vertelde me daarna hele verhalen. Ik besloot het in de krant te zetten waarvoor ik werkte, en wat ook de reden was dat ik op die bijeenkomst was. Ik had al vaker dit soort stukken geplaatst. Toen ik het verhaal van de piloot plaatste kreeg ik er heel veel reacties op van mensen. Ze hadden allemaal hun eigen verhalen en vermoedens. Ze speculeerden wat hun ouders waren, wat het voorstelde in hun vorige levens, dat het allemaal onverwerkte problemen waren. Het viel me op hoeveel mensen problemen met hun ouders hadden. Gaat het dan zo, dat wanneer je ergens aan komt te overlijden, dat het dan zich vormt tot je ouders in je leven daarna ? Werkt het zo in je hersenenen ? Ik vond het een interessante theorie. Zoiets bleef dan altijd bij je, en kreeg handen en voeten, en gaf je ook weer nieuwe geboorte, een nieuw leven, en bleef maar op je inwerken, als ouders. Het had dus voordelen en nadelen. Je moest er telkens weer opnieuw doorheen, als een herbelevenis. Dat kon heel

zwaar zijn, maar zou je ook weer nieuwe inzichten kunnen geven, nieuwe handvaten. Het was wat ze op die bijeenkomst het mysterie van de oranje zon noemden, van de oranje natuurbron van de reuzen, een bron van symboliek en abstractie om dingen door creatieve omvorming te verwerken door het te verdiepen. Ik vond dit een interessante theorie.

Iets kon dus waarheid zijn, of niet direct waarheid zijn maar toch waarde hebben, en zo konden zelfs leugens een bepaalde waarde hebben, omdat het slechts symboliek was, abstract. Het was een bepaalde taal, een bepaalde terminologie. Ze noemden zichzelf daarom ook de oranje leugenaren. Zij predikten een oranje pad van ogenschijnlijke leugens die toch een bepaalde symboliek en abstractie waren van de waarheid om het handen en voeten te geven, om het bruikbaar te maken, dus uiteindelijk kwam je dan toch via een omweg bij de waarheid uit. Ik vond dit wel een interessante theorie, of bijna theologie. Hoevaak moet iets zich vervormen om zichzelf uiteindelijk te genezen ? Is dat niet een proces van creatie ? Het gaat door allerlei etappes heen. Maar zou je zo niet alles kunnen goedpraten ? Oh, lang leve de leugen ?

Nee, het was slechts oorlogsstrategie, een verhalende techniek, om van iets slechts iets goeds te maken, een geluk van een ongeluk. De oranje leugenaars waren dus een soort dokters die een medicijn gebruikten, een zeer eigenaardig medicijn. Zij vormden voor hun eigen bescherming alles om, anders zou het hen verwoesten. Zo bleken zelfs de hersenen te werken. Zo bespraken zo ook in grootste detail het leven van de octopus die hetzelfde scheen te doen.

Doordat ik de verhalen in de krant liet zetten begonnen er steeds meer van zulke groepjes te ontstaan. De oranje leugenaars waren niet meer te stoppen. Maar hoe mooi en creatief hun verhalen ook waren, het maakte mij er niet rustiger op. Het haalde mijn boosheid niet weg over het kwaad op deze wereld. Ik vond ook dat de waarheid maar eens goed verteld moest worden. Voor mij waren het nog steeds rondvliegende kogels, alsof ik in een cowboyfilm terecht was gekomen. Ja, die verhalen waren leuk en helder, maar het begon me steeds bozer te maken. Het werd van kwaad tot erger. Maar ja, dat noemden ze de vinger op de zere plek leggen. Het was als zout op de wond. Oh, wat beet het. Het was genadeloos, zo confronterend.

Soms liepen ze met oranje kappen door de stad, die in een punt uitliepen, die oranje leugenaars. Het waren een soort monniken. En zo ontstonden ook de oranje kerken, in alles de symboliek zien, maar ik werd steeds kwader over het onrecht in de wereld. ´Mooi zo,´ zeiden ze, ´dat is ook de bedoeling. Alles wordt ontmaskerd.´ Het waren immers geen tovenaars, maar boodschappers, verhalen vertellers, om de mensheid wakker te maken.

Ik moest mijn eigen vader en moeder worden. Een ander het allemaal laten doen zou slechts een kogel door de kop zijn. Ik moest genezen door zelf de gaten op te vullen, niet slechts in theorie, maar ook in praktijk. Maar ik merkte dat een bepaalde wond maar niet wegging, en het oranje mysterie bleef erover hangen. De oranje leugenaars zeiden dat het een zintuig was. Ik moest eerst de grotere contexten zien. Daartoe ging per slot van rekening de kogel door de kop. Ze hadden het daarom over de komst van de reuzen, de grotere contexten. Daar wachtten ze op. Ik moest dus geduld hebben, net als hen, en roeien met de riemen die ik had. Ik kon niet op dingen vooruit gaan lopen.

De oranje leugen was een groot lijden, want het was een zintuig. De optochten van de oranje leugenaars werden groter en groter, en ze hielden ook optochten door de wildernis. Ze zongen vaak hun liederen van het lijden. Ook zongen ze over de komst van de reuzen, over de komst van de oranje bron.

Op een dag was het zo ver. De oranje zon was gekomen, en ik kon alleen maar kijken en kijken.

Einde

de slapers

Ze zond mij naar een ander stadsdeel omdat het bed kapot was. Ik moest daar iets halen om het bed te vernieuwen. Dat is jaren geleden. Ik kende dat stadsdeel niet, maar sinds toen ben ik daar allerlei dromen over gaan krijgen. Ook over een natuur eiland.

Vannacht had ik een droom over een zanger waar ik vroeger veel naar luisterde, waar ik dus eigenlijk mee opgroeide. Hij had het weer over dat stadsdeel, en noemde het het bed. Het lag in tussen waar we eerst woonden, en waar we toen naar gingen verhuizen. De zanger liet me toen een album zien van hem in die droom, genaamd 'zes dagen van slapen' of zoiets. Ik kon me nog herinneren toen we pas in het eerste huis woonden, na onze theologische opleiding, dat we veel in bed waren en daar ook studeerden, en veel praten.

Er was een slaapgewas waar de hommels kwamen voor bestuiving, om te spinnen en te weven, door hun borst heel snel te laten bewegen. Dat is tegelijkertijd ook een ontlading. Ze houden zo geen overmatige energie binnen. Zo werd de onkrant gemaakt, als een natuurkrant, van zuivere natuur. Of het waar is weet ik niet. Het was maar een droom.

Oh ja, de namen van de hommels : ze werden brommertjes genoemd, of slapers, of schone slapers, of gewoon hommels.

het scheldende jongetje

We wilden hem eigenlijk geen rubriek geven in de onkrant, want hij wilde bij de onkrant werken, maar hij schold nogal veel, en hij kneep mensen in de ballen. Ook stond hij erom bekend dat hij stripalbums van anderen leende en ze dan niet meer teruggaf. We vroegen ons dus af of het dan wel een goed idee was om hem bij de onkrant te laten werken met een eigen rubriek. Hij had onverbloemd taalgebruik, zei alles recht voor z'n raap, dus dat was aan de andere kant wel bruikbaar om mensen aan de ochtendkrant wakker te krijgen, en dan bedoel ik ook echt goed wakker. Maar ja, hij moest en zou bij de onkrant werken, dus bedreigingen dat hij het leger op ons af zou sturen, of vliegtuigen in onze schedels zou laten binnenvliegen, enzovoorts, je kon het zo gek niet bedenken, ook wel zeer grappig soms. Maar ja, hij moest gewoon zijn ei kwijt. Het was natuurlijk niet de manier om een baan te krijgen, en dat heb ik hem ook gezegd, en daar heeft hij zich uiteindelijk bij neergelegd.

Maar hij begon hele mooie boeken te schrijven, en het schelden werd wat minder. Soms zat het er nog wel tussendoor, maar dat was om het verhaal en de boodschap aan te sterken, en het had toch wel wat, en hij was meer gematigd geworden. We hebben hem toen beloofd dat hij als hij vooral door zou gaan met het schrijven van mooie, verhalende boeken met een uitstekende boodschap, dan zouden we misschien stukjes ervan in de onkrant kunnen plaatsen, als een soort proef. Hij stemde daarmee in en deed extra zijn best. Hij begon ook steeds gerichter te schelden, zoals op dingen waar we allemaal op schelden.

De laatste keer dat hij bij ons kwam had hij ook een flink grote mond, maar we begrepen waar het om ging. Het was wel een erg leuk jochie, bijna als een standbeeld, alsof hij zo uit de geschiedenis was gekomen. Zo maken ze ze tegenwoordig bijna niet meer.

Hij riep : 'Medische zorg is geen markt, geen koopwaar ! De mens heeft geluisterd naar dronken marktkooplui ! Het geld wat ze vragen voor medische zorg is bloedgeld ! Het is hun drugs, en daarvan gaan ze liegen ! Allemaal om hun giftige sluipmoordende medicijnen nog meer te kunnen verkopen !' En toen begon hij nog wel erger te schelden, zo erg dat ik het niet in de onkrant zou zetten, maar ik stond er wel helemaal achter. Het was een jochie naar mijn hart. Ik krijg er nog steeds een warm gevoel bij als ik aan hem denk. Het was de laatste keer dat we hem zagen. Eigenlijk heeft niemand hem daarna ooit nog gezien. Zijn boeken zijn alles wat we nog van hem hebben. Oh ja, en hij had zijn muts vergeten mee te nemen toen hij vertrok, en één van zijn handschoenen. Die zijn nu te bezichtigen in ons museum.

het hartsbezit van hans en grietje

De stad is als het huisje van de heks van Hans en Grietje, een heel groot huis. Nu is eten natuurlijk op zich niet slecht, maar er zijn natuurvoorwaardes aan verbonden. Hoe te eten ? En dan altijd met mate. Zo is dat ook met andere dingen, zoals wassen en schoonmaken, conflicten. De mens moet het vooral niet overdrijven, want daar leent de natuur zich niet voor. Daarom zijn er allerlei natuurlimieten, maar in de stad kan je voor veel geld altijd weer over de natuurlimieten heen. Je kunt wassen totdat je een ons weegt, maar het helpt allemaal niet, want je moet van binnen veranderen.

Ken je de diepere natuurwaarden van de dingen, of laat je je door dingen op zich bedonderen. De stad is als het huisje van de heks van Hans en Grietje. Weet je wat je eet, weet je wat je grijpt ? Je kunt hier van alles kopen, zowel goedkoop of duur. De mens heeft van alles nodig, maar vergeet het belangrijkste. Ik heb ingezien dat het leven bedrog is. Ik zie de nieuwkomers ronddansen alsof ze in luilekkerland terecht zijn gekomen, recht in de val van de heks, maar ze willen niet gewaarschuwd worden. Ze willen het niet horen. Zo sta ik aan de poort van het grote theater, en toch blijven de mensen naar binnenstromen. Ik heb gezien dat het leven bedrog is. Daarom houdt ik zo van sprookjes omdat ze gegeven zijn door moeder natuur om niet alleen de mens te waarschuwen, maar om ze ook een waar leven te geven, in de diepte van de natuur. Hans en Grietje is voor mij puur symbolische schoonheid, wijze levenslessen, als hartsbezit, wat ik ook altijd aan de kinderen heb uitgedeeld. Je mag een kind inwijden in deze geheimen. Dat is beter dan als een doldwaze sinterklaas kinderen te smoren met nietszeggende rotzooi. Geef ze iets waar ze daadwerkelijk wat aan hebben : hartsbezit, natuurpuur, iets wat hen op het gevaarlijke pad van het leven mag leiden. Ja, het sprookje zorgt ervoor dat het kind niet zomaar op mijnen stapt. Het is één van de betere dingen die een ouder zijn of haar kind kan geven.

En er zijn nog veel meer sprookjes voor dit doel. Het mag een heel sieraad van aaneengeregen sprookjeskralen zijn, vol wijze lessen, om het kind te beschermen. Je kunt een kind nog geen moeilijke wiskunde uitleggen. De scholen maken kinderharten dood met rotzooi. Geef ze daarom sprookjes, vertel ze verhalen. Dan hebben ze creatief materiaal om door het moeilijke leven heen te komen. Het wekt hun eigen scheppingsvermogen op, als het geprikkeld wordt. Er is zoveel mogelijk met hulp van de andere wereld, die gewoon de diepere wereld is, wat in de diepte op ons wacht, en wat het ware leven draagt.

Volwassenen, blinde volgelingen van de heks

Hij weet helemaal niet wat het betekent. Hij draait er wat aan, en dan maakt hij er een touwtje aan en laat hij het helemaal doorgaan naar de andere kant, en maakt het touwtje daar dan ook vast, maar hij weet niet wat het betekent. En dan doet hij nog wat dingen, haalt hij er van alles bij, en maakt het aan elkaar vast. Hij weet niet wat het betekent, maar achteraf ziet het er toch wel functioneel uit. Je weet niet wat het is verder, maar hij heeft er toch wat moois van gemaakt. Zo zijn kinderen. Ze doen dingen die ze niet begrijpen, en die wij niet begrijpen. Zij zijn van een andere wereld.

Hij draait eraan, maar weet niet wat het is. Toch stijgt het ding dan even later op en je weet niet hoe hij het gedaan heeft. Dat zijn kinderen, onnavolgbaar, maar het is toch functioneel. Zij kunnen dat soort dingen nog, dat is nog ingebouwd. Volwassenen kunnen dat niet.

Waren de mensen allemaal maar kinderen, maar nee, de heks is gekomen.
De heks draaide alles om, gaf alles een naam, en de mens weet het niet meer.
Zelfs de kinderen weten het niet, maar ze kunnen het nog wel.
Misschien dat het later nog allemaal goedkomt ?

Ik kijk ernaar en hij heeft het goed gemaakt.
Maar niemand weet wat het is, ook hij niet.
Hij doet het gewoon. Het is ingebouwd.
Ze dragen nog veel met zich mee van de andere wereld, de diepere wereld.
Nee, de volwassenen kunnen het niet. De heks kwam.

Volwassenen, blinde volgelingen van de heks.
Alleen het kind heeft de sleutel, het kind in jou en mij.

de hogere dood

Vraatzucht kan in vele vormen komen. Er is sexuele vraatzucht, religieuze vraatzucht, materialistische vraatzucht, enzovoorts. Er is eerzuchtige vraatzucht, vraatzucht naar aandacht, eer en roem. Doe wat je doet in het verborgene, niet voor het oog van de mensen. Mensen zijn toch altijd ontevreden, en zullen toch altijd alles wat je doet omdraaien en beroddelen, enzovoorts. Ze zullen over je liegen, eigenlijk tot het punt dat ze het niet eens waard zijn allemaal. Waar doe je het dan voor ? En van dat soort mensen wil je een lintje ? Vraatzucht kan komen in vele vormen. De mensheid is ondankbaar. Het goede zullen ze niet eren, maar het kwade eren ze volop. Het kwaad komt vaak niet eens als een brullende leeuw, maar als een bedriegelijke oplichter, en de mensheid is opgelicht. Lang geleden al. Werk daarom in het verborgene, zolang het nog dag is. In de nacht kan niemand werken. Verspil je tijd niet. Er is niet veel tijd. Maak er het beste van.

Vraatzucht komt in vele vormen, ook de letterlijke vorm. De mensheid is aan de hormonale drugs : het vlees van dieren. Lijkeneters worden zelf tot lijken, vol van de parasieten. Als mensen tot je spreken zijn het vaak die mensen al niet meer, maar de parasieten die in hen huizen.

Ja, ook de christenen doen hier aan mee, de van zichzelf overtuigde, zelfbelangrijke, alleswetende christenen. Vannacht had ik een droom dat ik in een gebouw ging, en ik hoorde al wat stemmen van vraatzuchtige christenen die ik vroeger kende. Toen ik binnen kwam kwam er een blank, slank meisje op me af met sluik donker haar, en ze zei dat ze de verlover was, en mijn verloofde. Ik had toen even een herinnering dat dit niet zo lang geleden ook al was gebeurd in een ander gebouw van vraatzuchtige christenen, maar toen was het een ander meisje, alhoewel ze wel veel op elkaar leken. Ik zei het toen ook tegen haar dat iemand anders dat ook al tegen me had gezegd. Ik voelde dat er iets niet in de haak zat. Ik zei het ook dat dit niet klopte, en toen ben ik weggegaan. Gelukkig liet ze me gewoon gaan. Maar dit is hoe kerken werken.

Ze hebben allemaal hun eigen heilige geest waarmee je een verbond moet hebben, een verloving. Het is het dogma van de heilige geest, wat je moet geloven om christen te zijn, maar de christelijke groeperingen zijn allemaal met elkaar in oorlog over wie de heilige geest daadwerkelijk heeft. Daar kunnen we niet op gokken, lieve mensen. Die mensen worden willens en wetens dom gehouden. Het wordt hen niet uitgelegd wat het is. Eerst moet de mens sterven aan zijn vraatzucht. Eerst is er dus een dood nodig naar het materialisme, anders blijf je de oplichter volgen.

Er is een weg die veel hoger leidt dan de dogma's van de kerk. Wacht niet op de ander, maar ga zelf tot de hogere weg. Het feest van de vraatzuchtigen komt er weer aan, wat om alles gaat behalve de ware betekenis. Vraatzucht komt in vele vormen. Zorg dat je de weg tot de wildernis vindt. De mens moet de hogere dood sterven.

In de stad is het bijna weer kerstfeest, dus hoog tijd om het eens over het pinksterfeest te hebben. Voor hen die de betekenis willen weten van de pinksterbeweging die aan het begin van de jaren 1900 begon. De zin en onzin van pinksteren. En wat schuilt er achter ?

Bespreking van het boek 'stem roepende in de wildernis' (1910) van Charles Parham, van de losbreking van de pinkstergolf aan het begin van de vorige eeuw.

Het onderwerp werd ook besproken in ons tijdschrift 'het profetische info-blad - de vloedgolf' in 1994, wat ook heel even genoemd wordt en waarvan dit artikel ook een soort vervolg is.

De zin en onzin van pinksteren

Het medische is geen koopwaar. Schurken verkopen hun medicijnen op de markt. Dat is geen ware zorg. Als geld zich gaat bemoeien met het medicinale dan wordt het hekserij, oplichterij. Geld is te onheilig om zich met zoiets heiligs als genezing te bemoeien. Zo is dat ook met het recht en het geestelijke. Dan kom je aan het hart van God. Ik groeide in een kerk op die de genezing van God verbood. Daar werd niet over gesproken. Je moest gewoon naar de dokter, en die forceerde onder dwang troep in je botten. Dat je zenuwstelsel hier kapot aan ging kon hen niets schelen. En toch moest je je hiervoor scheel betalen, voor deze schurken. Het zijn dronken marktkooplui die niets maar dan ook niets om God en ware genezing geven. Als ze geld krijgen voor hun zogenaamde geneesmiddelen, natuurlijk wordt het dan corrupt, en natuurlijk gaan ze het dan dwingen, want het is hun inkomen. Zij hebben van moord hun beroep gemaakt. Ze staan rechtlijnig als heksen en schurken tegenover ons als predikanten en intellectuelen, net zoals in de tweede wereld oorlog, en toen trokken wij ook al aan het kortste eind, want velen van ons werden in dat tijdperk door de nazi's vermoord. Trek je met God dan aan het kortste eind ? Het is een groot offer. Ons wordt vervolging niet bespaard, en met alle aanvallen op mijn leven van dit soort is het een wonder dat ik nog leef, en daarom ben ik ook bezadeld met een opdracht.

Ik moest dus vluchten uit die kerk waarin ik opgroeide, want ik kon nergens naartoe met mijn verhaal. Als je nagaat dat al mijn nachtmerries van mijn kinderjaren zijn uitgekomen, en dat ik in die nachtmerries al werd gewaarschuwd, en ik niet geloofd werd door hen waar ik opgroeide, dan moet je het toch ergens anders zoeken, daar waar ze me wel serieus namen, en zeiden dat God wel degelijk kan spreken door dromen en nachtmerries en op vele andere manieren. Maar nee, in de kerk waar ik opgroeide was God koud en afstandelijk en sprak niet, alleen in een boekje wat op duizend en één manieren uitgelegd kon worden en waar ze elkaar telkens over in de haren vlogen ! Het is toch bij de zotten ! Natuurlijk, natuurlijk, denk ik nu, want dan komen ze bij de dokter terecht die weer veel erbij kan verdienen. De kerk en

die dokter hebben een soort handelsverbond. Het zijn heksen, schurken, dronken marktkooplui die geen stuiver om je geven ! Het was een komplot, en mijn kindernachtmerries waarschuwden mij al met naam en toenaam. Het is allemaal uitgekomen, dus wie denk je dat ik vandaag de dag geloof ? Door mijn dromen die ik van God heb gekregen leef ik nog ! Maar nee, dat mag niet in die kerk.

Waar vluchtte ik toen naar toe aan het einde van mijn tienerjaren ? Naar de pinkstergemeente, want daar werd je in ieder geval serieus genomen. Ze kwamen bij ons aan de deur, god zij dank, en voor die tijd was dat gewoon echt mijn redding, en het waren fijne mensen. Ik werd er zelfs geknuffeld, wat er bij ons thuis echt niet gebeurde hoor. Ik werd toen deel van een echt, warm, liefdevol gezin, en de predikant daar adopteerde mij, en ging gewoon naast mij zitten op de bank en vertelde mij honderd en één verhalen. Ik voelde me ineens zo bijzonder. Dat had ik nog nooit in de kerk meegemaakt waar ik was opgegroeid. Voor die tijd was het voor mij belangrijk. Dat wil niet zeggen dat ik in de pinkstergemeente ben gebleven, want de pinkstergemeente heeft z'n eigen problemen, en niet iedere pinkstergemeente was zoals degene waar ik naartoe ging. Het was gewoon een tussenstation, en ik leerde er weer veel dingen bij, die ik tot op de dag van vandaag gebruik. Mijn hartsbezit werd aangevuld.

Aan het begin van de jaren 1900 bleek er een soort pinksteruitstorting te zijn geweest om de mens los te schudden uit de oude kerkelijke ordes, want de reformatie was ingedut. Eén van de pinksterpionieren was Charles Parham uit Kansas. Hij schreef een boek genaamd : Stem roepende in de wildernis, in 1910, waarin hij stelt dat God het ware heeft, maar dat de mens vervalsingen maakt zoals de medische wetenschap die op hun manier ook aan het geestelijke sleutelen, het psychische, maar dan vals. Hij noemt het hekserij, verwaande, zelfverheerlijkende hekserij (wat dus niet wil zeggen dat elke heks verkeerd is, want er zijn ook goede heksen, zoals in het sprookje van de tovenaar van oz, maar dat even terzijde). Dan heeft hij het over het verhaal van Mozes die de slang oprichtte in de woestijn waardoor mensen genezen werden. Dat is wat hij pinksteren noemt, de genezing van God, en hij zei dat hij jaren hiervoor heeft gebeden dat zij de staf van God's waarheid net als Aaron

konden neerwerpen om de medische heksen het eens van die kant te laten zien. Zoals we weten werd in dat verhaal de staf van God op de grond geworpen om in een slang te veranderen, en die vrat de slangen op van het systeem wat hen in slavernij hield. Daar bad Parham voor. Hij haatte die menselijke systemen die de mens hadden opgesloten. Alleen de hemel kan ons genezen. De mens kan ons niet genezen. Die willen er ook altijd weer voor betaald worden, en leiden mensen om de tuin zodat ze nog meer geld kunnen verdienen. Het corrupte spel van geld is het spel van de heksen.

Charles Parham zei dat de schapen zo ondervoed worden dat ze elkaars vachten beginnen aan te vreten. Er moest dus wel wat gebeuren. Als dokters je onderzoeken, dan zoeken ze naar je geld. Maar waar het volgens Charles Parham om ging was het binnengaan van de onderwereld, net zoals Jona drie dagen in de buik van de walvis was, om zo deze dood te leren, want dat is het ware medicijn.

Maar ja, de pinksterbeweging is ook verschrikkelijk orthodox en je wordt daar ook gewoon vroeg of laat in een doos gestopt, dus dan moet je verder, en daadwerkelijk de hogere doden sterven. Soms is het medicijn een diepere dood. Want wat is het leven waard als het leven vals is ? Als er dan een uitstorting is geweest dan moet het ook weer gezifd worden, want er zit zoveel rotzooi tussen, en dan gaat het om het verdiepen en verder trekken. Every level has it's own devil.

Zo kwam ik tot zes belangrijke regels :

1. Het gaat erom toegewijd te zijn aan de zaak. Dat is het belangrijkste.
2. Doe alles in het verborgene. Maak jezelf geen naam, ga niet voor de eer, geef niet om je status. Laat de doden de doden begraven.
3. Geef je niet over aan doelloosheid. De doellozen zijn op een dwaalspoor.
4. Herinner je de eerste drie regels en zorg dat je de eerste drie regels houdt.
5. Alleen door grote verwarring kan er ergens gekomen worden, door niet met een overmoedig antwoord genoegen te nemen.
6. Het doel heiligt de middelen.

Hierop kon ik een nieuwe wereld bouwen. Ik moest hierin dus de hogere dood aanvaarden naar de oude wereld. Dat is dus geen zwart-wit extremisme maar een pad van ziften, herzien, nieuwe betekenissen geven. Ik wilde mijn verleden afsluiten, want het wurgde me. Ik had toen een droom over een opgehangen jongetje, diep onder de grond, tussen muren. Het is symbolisch voor het verleden. Ik moest het jongetje dus ook aanvaarden, in mijn hart aannemen, ook zijn dood. Dan pas zou het jongetje weer kunnen leven. Als iemand dan ons een stuk geestelijk leven wil verkopen, dan kunnen we ook zeggen : 'Nee, dank je. Ik sterf liever een diepere dood.' Waar is het medicijn ? Het is juist een diepere dood. Vals leven willen we niet hebben. Maar als we dan de diepere dood naar dat soort dingen aannemen dan mag er ook weer een dieper leven zijn, mag het jongetje dat opgehangen was weer beginnen te ademen.

Charles Parham stelt dat Salomo met verkeerde vrouwen omging die dokters met zich meebrachten. Medici die buiten God om werken mengen drugs en gif, en dat terwijl God's volk daarvoor geen dokters had. Parham gebruikt hiervoor bijbelverzen van Jeremia : 'Gij hebt geen genezende medicijnen.' (30:13) 'Gebruik van medicijnen is allemaal ijdelheid.' (46:11) Oh, wat haatte die Charles Parham dokters, en niet zonder reden. Ook Napoleon haatte hen, en zei dat ze voor heel wat verantwoordelijk zouden staan voor de troon van God, voor zovelen die zij hadden bedrogen en gedood. Hij haatte de medische industrie, en zwoor bij het natuur medicijn : water, lucht, en hygiene. Hij stelde dat dokters in het hiernamaals verantwoordelijk zouden staan voor meer verlies van levens dan generalen. Hij wantrouwde al hun vreemde medicijnen waarmee ze massa moorden pleegden op het volk. De medische wereld was een pseudo-wetenschap die het volk had misleid, die de mens had losgetrokken van de natuur en gevangen had gezet. Daarom moest allereerst de pinksterbeweging wel komen, maar het ging al snel mis. Het werd al snel een nieuwe orthodoxie, een nieuwe gevangenis, een nieuwe markt. De pinkster reformatie was vastgelopen. Er moest eerst een diepere dood komen.

Dan gaat Charles Parham verder met zijn oordeel op de medische wetenschap : 'De medische wetenschap en haar beoefenaars worden genoemd door het OT en NT in verbinding met hen die schuldig zijn aan de vuilste en gemeenste, laaghartigste zonden tegen God en de mensheid.' Hij stelt dat de beoefenaren

van de medische wetenschap in het Hebreeuws en Grieks heksen zijn die drugs en gif mengen. Het zijn dus helemaal geen medicijnen. Ze beheksen mensen. Ze dragen hun giffen naar de mens toe om het daar te dumpen. Het heeft niets met God te maken. Parham noemt het een altaar aan de Moloch, de octopus god, oftewel de god van de kinderoffers. Het is een altaar van misbruik. Ook ik heb mijn familie er destijds van beschuldigd dat ze hun kinderen aan de Moloch hebben geofferd, aan Jim Jones. God ziet alles. Er waren dus ook goede dingen in de pinkstergolf, waar we ook over spraken in ons profetisch info-blad 'De Vloedgolf' in 1994. Deze golf ontstond aan het begin van de vorige eeuw. Maar we stelden ook heel duidelijk dat er nieuwe golven moesten komen om alles verder te zuiveren en te heiligen. We bespraken toen de drie golven die al geweest waren, en een nieuwe golf, waarover we zeiden :

'Er zal een wereldwijde golf komen van zelfverloochening en heiliging; de vierde golf. Deze golf zal zo verschrikkelijk hard inslaan op het menselijke vlees dat velen zullen afhaken en het als 'belachelijk' bestempelen. Vele predikers en christenen die fanatiek meededen en meejuichten met de eerste drie golven zullen geen deel uitmaken van deze vierde golf.'

En dan bespreekt hij dat als je buiten God om dingen wil gaan doen je eigenlijk een valsemunter bent, want alleen God is het ware. Zo is dan ook het hele medische systeem een crimineel systeem van valsemunterij. De mens moet eerst sterven aan zichzelf om tot het ware leven te komen. Dat is de sleutel, maar die sleutel is vertrapt en vervalst door het medische systeem. Charles Parham stelt dat hier een hele zware straf op ligt. Hij vergelijkt het met Judas die dertig zilverlingen ontving voor zijn verraad en moord. Dat is wat de medische wereld boven de nek hangt ! En deze moordenaars zoeken, stelt Parham, slechts het applaus en de eer van meer lafhartige boeren en een imbeciele natie. Het is de opening van de kaken van de hel, stelt Parham, allemaal om vraatzucht.

Daarna stelt Parham dat we ons open moeten stellen voor de hogere adoptie, wat in principe gewoon de overgang is van het vleselijke naar het geestelijke. Hij ontmoette een wezen genaamd verlossing, maar in wezen was dit de adoptie. Dan heeft hij het over dat de engel Michael zal opstaan en zal komen

voor de kinderen, omdat hij de beschermengel van de kinderen is, wat in het boek Daniël staat. In Openbaring staat er geschreven dat er een kind geboren zal worden om dan tot God genomen zal worden, wat volgens Parham een beeld is van de opname, allen die worden opgenomen, wat we overigens geestelijk nemen, als de geadopteerden. Ik moet dan ook weer denken aan het opgehangen jongetje. Als theologie niet meer om het kind draait, dan is het hopeloos geworden. In het boekje over het opgehangen jongetje wat ik in de hemel las heette het jongetje trouwens Theo Logie. Theo was zijn voornaam en Logie was zijn achternaam, maar zie wat de mensen van theologie hebben gemaakt. Ik ontmoette hem in een droom. Ik vroeg hem of hij ook een moeder had, maar die had hij niet, alleen maar bij flitsen in de nacht. Hoe hij was opgehangen ? Door grauwe theologen in de nacht, door piraten.

Lieve mensen, theologie is vaak Theo loog in plaats van Theo sprak de waarheid. Ook de piraten vereerden hun eigen gehangen jongetje, als monument. Daar voerden ze handel mee op hun schepen. Het hemelse boekje zei hierover : 'Hij zag schepen op zee, piratenschepen, zulke rijke schepen, met grauwe figuren … Zij predikten theologie om gezien te worden, om naam te maken, om steden te bouwen. Zij roofden op zee. Zij vereerden het hangende jongetje, maar zij luisterden niet naar de regels. Zij verkochten alles wat met het hangende jongetje had te maken. In de steden werden grote vreetfeesten gevierd omtrend het hangende jongetje …'

Er zijn volwassen die zo 'volwassen' zijn geworden dat ze het kind totaal, maar dan ook totaal uit het oog zijn verloren. 'Oh, wat zijn we weer volwassen, oh wat zijn wij belangrijk.' Ze zijn zo 'volwassen' geworden dat ze het kind hebben gedood, het jongetje hebben opgehangen. Wie oren heeft die hore. De stem roept nog steeds in de wildernis.

In 1995 hadden we in ons blad 'apostolisch frontnieuws - de orkaan' (een zuster blad van ons tijdschrift 'profetisch info-blad - de vloedgolf) een artikel genaamd 'de verborgen bronnen van de geestesgaven.' We gaan verder met dit onderwerp in het nu volgende artikel. Wat wordt er eigenlijk door het kerstfeest verborgen gehouden ?

de verborgen bronnen van het kerstfeest

Het kerstfeest komt eraan, maar wat is het ? Het feest der gaven ? We kunnen het dan beter over de geestelijke gaven hebben, maar wat zijn dat dan ? Dat kwam eigenlijk altijd tijdens of na het pinksterfeest. Waar het om gaat is van het materialisme weg te komen. Het heeft wel symboliek en diepere geestelijke betekenissen, maar men maakte het te orthodox, te letterlijk, te materialistisch.

Er zijn dus een heleboel geestelijke gaven, zoals kennis, profetie, onderscheiding, genezing, enzovoorts. Maar wat houdt dit allemaal in ? Het is natuurlijk wel een interessant onderwerp voor mensen die willen loskomen van het materialisme. Je kunt niet zomaar tot de gave van kennis komen. Allereerst is het niet zomaar een gave, maar iets wat je moet verdienen en leren. Maar tot de gave van kennis, wat dus een loonsgave is, kom je alleen maar door de gave van profetie, en ook dat is een loonsgave en betekent dat het van boven moet komen, zodat je niet in vleselijke, aardse, materialistische kennis terecht komt, want die is vals. Om dat dan vervolgens weer goed te doen moet je tot de loonsgave van onderscheiding komen, wat je dus ook weer moet leren en wat niet zomaar in je schoot wordt geworpen, want er is zoveel bedrog. Oplichters op elke hoek van de straat, dus leren, leren, leren, en eerlijk verdienen allemaal, dat is de enige weg. God spreekt tot de mensen, of het hogere spreekt tot de mensen, het hogere intellect, en dat wordt weleens profetie genoemd in de theologie. Het is een theologisch woord. Theologie is een bepaalde taal, een bepaalde terminologie. Het komt uit het land van de theologen.

Na het pinksterfeest komen de gaven, de charismatische gaven, of

charismatische stroming, wat ook een golf was in de vorige eeuw, in het midden ervan, na de grote pinksteruitstorting aan het begin van de vorige eeuw. Het werd de tweede golf genoemd, waar ons tijdschrift 'profetisch info-blad – de vloedgolf' ook over ging in 1994. Er werd toen gesteld : 'profetisch leven of vleselijk leven ?' Dat was de keuze waar de mensheid voor stond. Eigenlijk dus : leven vanuit de hogere kennis, of vanuit de lagere kennis. Heel veel mensen nemen er genoegen mee een 'mavo-schaap' te blijven wanneer het aankomt op geestelijke scholing, om het maar even metaforisch te zeggen, dus ze blijven lekker gezellig 'middelbaar', hoeven niet veel na te denken, en gaan niet voor de hogere geestelijke scholing. Zo bedonderen ze dan anderen. Ze begrijpen een heleboel niet van hoger opgeleiden in het geestelijke en gaan dan hun etiketten plakken. Met God moeten wij niet op mavo-niveau blijven, maar naar hoge school niveau gaan, anders worden we bedonderd. Dit heeft dus niets met aardse scholen te maken, maar met geestelijke, hogere, oftewel profetische, kennis.

In ieder geval moet dan alles getoetst worden, waar we veel over hebben geschreven. Voor de gave van onderscheiding komt heel wat kijken, anders wordt je bedonderd waar je bijstaat. Daarom is hoge school niveau demonologie onmisbaar. Er liggen teveel gevaren op de loer. Geestelijke 'mavo-schapen' komen hier niet doorheen. Nogmaals : dit heeft niets met aardse scholen te maken, want dat zijn gevangenissen en de kinderen leven daar in ballingschap. Er moet daar een grote uittocht komen. Of je nu op zogenaamd lager of hoger onderwijs bent ingedeeld is allemaal bedrieglijk, want het gaat om je relatie en toewijding tot God, oftewel de hogere kennis. De mens moet loskomen van menselijke mind control en allerlei menselijke instanties die alles omdraaien en altijd weer de 'geschoolde' dommen een lintje geven. Dat zijn getrouwe schapen voor hen, dus die worden daarvoor beloond, en die misleiden ook weer andere domme schapen. God kan dus in al die lagen van aardse scholen mensen gebruiken, juist ook in het zogenaamde lagere onderwijs, want die mensen zijn vaak niet aangetast door het systeem. Maar als je geestelijk gezien, dus in je relatie met God, bij het lagere onderwijs blijft hangen, of het middelbare onderwijs, als een geestelijk 'mavo-schaap', dan pas heb je echt een probleem. Je moet namelijk hogerop komen met God, anders wordt je bedonderd, en bedonder je ook weer anderen, enzovoorts. Die

kettingreacties van geestelijke mavo-schapen blijven maar doorgaan, en ze worden gefokt, dus ze hokken ook weer door.

Maar goed, als je dan de gave van onderscheiding wil hanteren om te komen tot ware profetie, dan heb je dus een grote dosis voorzichtigheid nodig, wat in de theologische taal ook wel 'de heilige vreze' wordt genoemd, en 'de heilige depressie', zodat je eerst mindert, en geen overhaaste beslissingen neemt.

De mens heeft dus niet zomaar een uitstorting nodig van 'de heilige geest', of 'het heilige geestelijke', maar zoals in het verhaal van het opgehangen jongetje : de heilige dood, dood naar de onkunde, het materialisme, het bedrog, en dan kan de mens verder. De mens moet dus eerst aan zichzelf sterven, zoals het jongetje. Dat is de basis voor iedere verdere geestelijke gave.

Hoe gaat dat dan verder in het verhaal van het opgehangen jongetje ?

Het jongetje heeft de heilige dood ontmoet, en wordt dan met haar meegenomen tot de eerste gave, en dat is de gave van de grens-gevoeligheid. De mens gaat telkens over de grenzen heen, omdat de mens die grenzen niet kent, niet ziet. De mens is blind. De mens voelt de grenzen niet, omdat de mens zwaar dronken is. Daarom moet de mens eerst gevoelig worden voor de grenzen. De mens moet komen tot de hemelse douane, of het blaf feest. De mens mag om deze gave bidden, en deze gave leren. Hoe gevoeliger je wordt voor de grenzen, wat op allerlei gebied kan zijn, hoe meer de grenzen onder stroom komen te staan, dus als je dan te dicht bij zo'n grens in de buurt komt, dan wordt je door een bepaalde voltage weggestoten. Dat wordt het blaf feest genoemd, want de mens wordt dus zo beschermd. Het is dus een soort schokdraad. Als de mens die gave ontwikkelt, dan komt de mens tot de tweede gave, de gave van de gevoeligheid voor ingewikkeldheden, waarin de mens dus overzichten krijgt, als landkaarten, en waarin kennis opgeslagen kan worden. Zo werkt het eigenlijk een beetje. Eerst moet de mens de grenzen leren, en dan is het veilig genoeg om tot de hogere ingewikkeldheden te komen, en daar gevoelig voor te worden. De mens wordt dus zo tot een soort hemelse computer.

Het is dus een pad van de gaven. Doordat het jongetje de grenzen leerde ontstond dit pad er, en zo wordt de mens dus over dat pad, wat ontstaat binnen de grenzen, veilig geleid door het leven. Het blaf feest ligt dus verborgen onder het kerstfeest. De mens moet weer kind worden en komen tot de verkeersregels, tot de verkeersvoorlichting. Dat is een spel van grenzen, niet alleen in ruimte, maar ook in tijd, ook in bezigheden, in bezit, enzovoorts enzovoorts. Op alles moet deze gave toegepast worden. Om ons heen zijn tekenen om dit te leren. Daarvoor mag de mens gevoelig worden. Grens-gevoeligheid is een belangrijk zintuig en fundamenteel om van het leven het beste te maken. Pas dan is de mens dus veilig genoeg om zich te wagen aan de hogere ingewikkeldheden, en zal de mens gevoeligheid hiertoe ontwikkelen, het belangrijke tweede zintuig, de tweede gave. Hierin kan zich dan doel-gevoeligheid ontwikkelen, zodat de mens meer en meer de doelen onder ogen kan komen om daar op gericht te zijn, het derde zintuig of derde gave. Zo onstaat hierdoor een vierde zintuig : volgorde-gevoeligheid, zodat de mens niet meer voortdurend de volgordes van het leven omdraait, en zo niet meer bedrogen wordt.

Er zijn dus vier zintuigen, vier gaven :

1. grens-gevoeligheid
2. ingewikkeldheids-gevoeligheid
3. doel-gevoeligheid
4. volgorde-gevoeligheid

Waarom is dit zo belangrijk ? De kerken hebben alles omgedraaid, en zijn niet gevoelig voor de volgordes en de voorwaardes, allemaal vanwege hun materialisme en eerzucht, hun verkoopzucht. En dat komt omdat het fokkerijen zijn. De schapen vallen voortdurend ten prooi aan de wolven. Daar leven ze van. Ze zijn niet strategisch. Ze gooien alles door elkaar, zoals wanneer hun kinderen door de vijand worden afgemaakt vallen ze de vijand niet aan, maar gaan de vijand bij voorbaat al lopen vergeven, en dan staan ze erbij en kijken ze ernaar, als de NSB ! Ze weten niet eens wat vergeving is, laat staan geestelijke oorlogsvoering. Als je kinderen voor je ogen gemarteld worden dan is vergeving van de vijand wel het laatste wat je als ware ouder zou doen. En

dan hebben ze jarenlang de geestelijke gaven lopen afwijzen en het bestaan van demonen. Nooit nemen ze hun kinderen serieus. Nooit. Ze staan aan de kant van de vijand. 'Gegroet,' moet je dan zeggen tot zulke kerken, en rennen zo hard je kan, en zo lang je kan. Anders ga je eraan. Dat heb ik moeten doen. Pinksteren redde mijn leven, en ik kwam toen in de charismatische beweging. Niet alles is daar koek en ei, maar voor toen was het mijn redding. God gebruikte het, maar every level has it's own devil, dus ook daar moest ik op een gegeven moment weer van wegrennen. Het was nog maar het begin. Ik denk er dus met gemengde gevoelens aan terug. We mogen het kind niet met het badwater weggooien, maar we mogen ook zeker niet door valse, overmoedige 'vergeving' de vijand vrij spel geven om onze kinderen uit te moorden ! Dat zijn allemaal luie excusen om geen geestelijke oorlogsvoering te hoeven voeren. Lekker makkelijk. Dat soort onstrategische zetten in geestelijk schaken komen van de tegenstander zelf. Men rotzooit maar wat aan.

Vandaar dat het belangrijk is de geestelijke gaven te ontvangen en te ontwikkelen, als wapen hiertegen. Er zitten teveel parasieten hier in de lucht. En wie gooit nu zomaar wijd de deur open en laat alle parasieten binnen, alle inbrekers en laat ze iedereen uitmoorden, om dan te zeggen : 'En ik vergeef jullie allemaal.' Wie doet dat ? De mensen die dat zeggen slapen trouwens wel met een honkbalknuppel naast hun bed, 'voor als er inbrekers komen.' Dus als het om henzelf en hun huisje gaat, dan vergeven ze ineens niet meer zo snel. Haha, wat een huichelaars. Geef mijn portie dan maar een fikkie. Ik weet dat we met nazi's te maken hebben en met nsb-ers, en dan is het beste wat je kunt doen je kinderen al vroeg waarschuwen. Ken je grenzen.

De mensen moeten de voorwaarden voor alles weer leren kennen, en hun eigen stomme bureacratie overboord gooiten. Het gaat om de hemelse voorwaarden, niet de aardse voorwaarden. Daarom mag de mens voorwaarden-gevoeligheid ontwikkelen. Dit komt ook weer tegemoet aan de grenzen-gevoeligheid, want het laat zien waarom er grenzen zijn. Uiteindelijk komt de mens dan tot de reden-gevoeligheid, zodat de mens het hoe en waarom begrijpt.

1. grens-gevoeligheid

2. ingewikkeldheids-gevoeligheid
3. doel-gevoeligheid
4. volgorde-gevoeligheid
5. voorwaarden-gevoeligheid
6. reden-gevoeligheid

Hierin zijn teveel afleiders en uitdovers, en daarom moet de mens als basis de heilige dood blijven sterven, en moet de heilige dood op dit pad de gids blijven, zoals ook het opgehangen jongetje deze vrouw als zijn gids had, als symbolische voorstelling daarvan. Net zoals bij het christendom de heilige geest, of het heilige geestelijke de christen leidt op het pad van de geestelijke gaven, als basis en bron. Er zijn dus duidelijke parallellen, maar hier wordt het verdiept. De christenen, met name de westerse christenen die daadwerkelijk van toeten noch blazen weten, zijn vastgelopen. Vandaar het hemelse verhaal over het opgehangen jongetje, wat in dromen tot mij kwam.

Zes regels, zes gaven, als de zes dagen van een nieuwe schepping. Hij ging dieper en dieper in de grottenstelsels onder de grond, om te zoeken naar geheimen. De heilige dood leidde hem. Hij was op zoek naar de zevende dag, de rust. Zes dagen zult gij arbeiden, maar de zevende dag is de rustdag. Dat is natuurlijk symbolisch.

Uiteindelijk vond hij de rustdag die was opgeborgen in een grot, maar deze rustdag werd bewaakt door een heks die zeven schoenen droeg. Ze begon haar schoenen uit te trekken en naar hem toe te gooien. Ze had geroepen dat als hij door één van haar schoenen geraakt zou worden, dan zou hij voor eeuwig verstenen. Uit alle macht probeerde hij toen weg te komen en de schoenen te ontwijken, maar helaas werd hij toen toch door een schoen geraakt, en versteende voor eeuwig.

Arm, arm jongetje, hij was zo dichtbij gekomen, maar nu eeuwig verwond door een heks. Voelen wij ons ook niet zo soms, alsof we door iets voor eeuwig verwond zijn geraakt, alsof we er maar niet van kunnen genezen ? Dan mogen we terugdenken aan het versteende jongetje. Hij was al zo dichtbij, en toen leek alles uit zijn vingers weg te glippen. Voor velen zal het zo herkenbaar zijn.

Hij moest weer een hogere dood sterven. De heilige dood kwam tot hem. Het was een eeuwige dood die hij ditmaal moest sterven, eeuwig afsterven aan het materialisme, de vraatzucht, en alle leugens en bedrog wat daarbij komt kijken. Alleen zo zou hij de eeuwige rust kunnen binnengaan. Hij kon zich niet bewegen, en hij stond daar als bevroren. Ook de heks was bevroren, versteend, want ze betaalde immers een hoge prijs om dit het jongetje aan te doen. Overal begon het te sneeuwen en het werd winter. Het standbeeld van het jongetje kwam helemaal onder de sneeuw. En hij moest wachten totdat het lente werd. Toen begon hij weer te ontdooien, en kon hij zich weer langzaam bewegen. Maar de heks ontdooide niet. De heks was nog steeds van steen. Heel voorzichtig is hij toen langs de heks heengegaan, door de opening van de grot waar de eeuwige rust was. Hij viel daar in een diepe slaap. De heilige dood en het pad van de geestelijke gaven had hem geleid tot de eeuwige dood, en zo kon hij uiteindelijk de eeuwige rust binnen gaan, en zo werd hij het dromende jongetje.

leven in het vlees of in variatie ?

De luie, vraatzuchtige mens denkt heel makkelijk over de gnosis, over de kennis. Hij wil alsmaar meer kennis, zonder deze kennis daadwerkelijk te beveiligen. Hij wil dus ook het pakpapier om de kennis niet, en verdere beveiligingsdozen. Hij wil niet puzzelen, maar het kant-en-klaar hebben, recht voor z'n raap. Dikke boeken houdt hij daarom niet van. Het moet kort en simpel blijven. Verhalen houdt hij ook niet van, want dat is volgens hem niet to-the-point.

De mens moet eindeloos variëren met bestaande kennis om het uit te werken, te verdiepen, te beschermen, opdat de mens verder kan. Alle bestaande kennis moet daarom wel gewikkeld worden in verhalen, omhuld worden, anders gaan de parasieten de blote kennis aanvreten. De mens moet weer zorgdragen voor de kennis, zoals bijen dat doen in hun korven met dat wat ze van de bloemen hebben genomen. Het wordt uitvoerig bewerkt, uitvoerig gevarieerd. Daarom is variatie-gevoeligheid zo'n belangrijk zintuig. Er moeten dus een heleboel vormen komen van hetzelfde.

Ongevarieerdheid is een zwakheid. De mens moet leren variëren, ook in hetzelfde, en daarom is herhaling belangrijk, telkens net op een andere manier. Zo komt de mens los. Zo wordt de mens en de kennis beveiligd. Telkens komen er laagjes overheen. Is de mens open voor deze natuur laagjes ? De mens moet werken met de kennis : spinnen en weven, zoals de hommels en de bijen, ijverig zijn als mieren. De mens kan dus veel leren van de insecten wereld. De mens is ingedut en wil alles vlak houden, alles simpel. Lekker makkelijk. Maar dit kost de mens z'n kop. De mens wordt zo makkelijke prooi. Ik heb veel mensen in de gnosis zo zien indutten. Er liggen allerlei gevaren op het pad van de gnosis, van de hogere kennis, allerlei mijnen. Daarom blijf ik hierover prediken en onderwijzen. Er zijn mensen die na een paar jaartjes gnosis wel vinden dat ze genoeg gestreden hebben, en maken zichzelf dan wijs dat de demonen nu wel verslagen zijn zo'n beetje. Ze zijn vervroegd met pensioen gegaan. Ze updaten hun computers niet meer, terwijl de vijand rustig doorgaat. Ik blijf daarom zeggen : de gnosis is niet makkelijker en simpeler dan raket technologie. Als je je neerlegt bij het zijn van een geestelijk mavo-schaap, dan heb je gewoon de oorlog al verloren. Dan ben je ingenomen en dan wordt je voor de gek gehouden voor de rest van je leven. Het bourgondische leven trekt de mensen. Lekker feestvieren. Lekker makkelijk. Lekker dom blijven, niet meer doorstuderen. 'We hebben nu wel genoeg gestudeerd.' Maar je bent nooit te geleerd om verder te leren. Overal stoppen mensen om je heen met leren om er een marktje van te maken. Laat je er niet door bedriegen.

Leren variëren, zodat het materiaal veilig is. Leren beveiligen, leren omhullen, zodat het overlevingskansen heeft. Als je een stuk kennis hebt gevonden moet

je er wat voor doen. Dan begint de oorlog pas, want dan zullen de parasieten het aan gaan vallen, in al hun slinksigheid. Wie meent te staan, zie toe dat hij niet valle. Ga creatief om met de kennis. Herhaal het over en weer en giet het in allerlei vormen, op allerlei manieren, zodat het tot een leger wordt, en de kern beveiligd is. Laat het niet open en bloot liggen. Ga er niet eenzijdig mee om. Bouw er een kast omheen, een verhaal, een doolhof waar de parasieten het niet zomaar kunnen weggrijpen. Blijf het omcirkelen, blijf het uitbroeden, blijf het verwarmen en koesteren. In de variatie mag de mens dus niet indutten, maar moet de mens komen tot de eeuwige variatie. Uiteindelijk moest het jongetje dat ontvangen na de eeuwige dood te hebben ontvangen.

Variatie is de manier om los te breken, eindeloze variatie. Neem niets zomaar eenzijdig wat op je afkomt. Varieer het eindeloos, en breek los van de opsluitende, dogmatische, orthodoxe parasieten. Ze willen je fokken, en dat kan alleen maar door je eenzijdig te houden, oncreatief, ongevarieerd. Denk aan de bloemen die alles warmbloedig omcirkelen, die alle natuurdraden weven en spinnen, blijven omhullen totdat het beste eruit voortkomt, een trap naar een nieuwe verdieping, en dan doen ze hetzelfde. Ze stoppen nooit. Ze gaan eindeloos door. De mens rafelt alles af. De mens wil alles snel-snel, kant en klaar. Ze kennen het bloemenleven niet, en het leven van de bijen en de hommels niet. Het zijn grauwe, fletse figuren geworden. Altijd kibbelen ze, maar ze werken nergens voor. Ze willen alles direct op tafel hebben, en hebben altijd alles op anderen aan te merken, alleen maar over oppervlakkigheden. Ze leven in het vlees, niet in variatie.

Ik wil afsluiten met een artikel van ons van vroeger, genaamd 'de chemische kerk' :

Een kerk die zo parallel loopt aan wereldse praktijken, een kerk met kunststoffen in plaats van het kruid der wildernis. Hoe zou God daarover denken ? Het kruid komt met de doorn en de angel, terwijl de kerk een chemisch goedje voor de binnenstromende massa heeft. Velen zijn bang voor de wildernis, bang voor de lijdende God. Gods noodkreten en lijdenskreten zijn onverdragelijk, en ook de strijdkreten en wee-kreten van zijn engelen. Een kerk die oordoppen uitdeelt, een chemisch middeltje in strips uitdeelt, dat het bloed

van Christus wordt genoemd, en de zalving van de Heilige Geest. Een kerk met roddel-magazines, met plastik bijbels, speelgoed-bijbels, een kerk die zijn hart ergens anders aan heeft verloren.

Een kerk met dienaren als politieke ministers, met stropdassen zo duur mogelijk, om als dood en goed gestropt te zijn tegen de noodkreet van hongerend Afrika. God hongert niet, want de chemische kerk heeft voedsel genoeg. Dure kleding als harnassen tegen de geur van de wildernis en het kruis. Een kerk met hoge kronen en hoge tronen, want God regeert immers. Met het avondmaal is de wijn zwart geworden, het brood verkleurd. Als de verboden appelen ligt het daar, een chemisch mengsel. De boom des levens verbannen naar de wildernis.

Een kerk met zoveel kleuren, maar de kleur van het kruis kennen ze niet, een chemisch middeltje smeren zij op de hoofden van hun patienten. Even lijken de patienten op te fleuren, de kerk heeft hen gered, met dure woorden, maar dan storten zij al gauw neer, of klimmen hoog op om samen met de hoge heren feest te vieren. Er is feest in de stad, en er is feest in de kerk, niemand zal de roep van de wildernis nog horen. Maak lawaai, gebruik veel kleur, beweeg de vlaggen. De marionetten zijn gemaskerd, dodelijk speelgoed voor de kinderen. Toe pappa, toe mamma, laat me nog even spelen, want morgen is alles weg, en staat de chemische kerk me in de weg.

En de dienaren van de chemische kerk, bestuurd door de laatste mode, de wapenrusting van de wereld en de schijnbewegingen van de grote kermis, sluiten de put der wildernis. Het is over nu, het gegil van God niet meer horende. Nu zal iedereen ingespoten dienen te worden met de spuit van de chemische kerk, of diep in de put belanden. Ja, de chemische kerk lacht, hoog tronende op zulk een macht. De inquisitie leren zij, treiterende hun slachtoffers met eeuwige hel. Dienaren van de chemische kerk, mode-agenten, maar er is niets moois meer. Diep in de wildernis bloeit een bloem, met de bloesem van verloren dromen. Maar zij van de chemische kerk zijn te ver weg, hun ogen gesloten.

Aanvaarding (1995)

God is een God van Aanvaarding.

Er is alleen één ding waar Hij niet tegen kan en dat is verwerping. Er mag geen verwerping bij Hem komen. Dat haat Hij.

Aanvaarding is een Vuur. Een Vuur waarin elke verwerping wordt verteerd. Wij kunnen alleen tot God komen als wij ook mensen van Aanvaarding worden, die elke verwerping haten en verwerpen.

Ja, de Ware Aanvaarding verwerpt. In de Bijbel komen wij telkens weer tegen dat God verwerpt.
Hij verwerpt de verwerping. Aanvaarding is geen aanvaarding als ze de verwerping niet verwerpt. Het goede is het goede niet, als ze het kwade niet haat en niet verwerpt.

Honden aan de ketting

Je mag niet leven, je mag niet denken, je mag niet studeren. Je mag helemaal niets in die vuile familie kerken. Het enige wat je mag is zoals hen zijn. Zo niet, dan krijg je een etiket op. Dat beslissen zij, de laag opgeleide, labiele types, verstrooide warhoofden, die alles maar dan ook alles uit roddelblaadjes halen, en blindelings dronken marktkooplui volgen over de ruggen van hun kinderen heen. Het is de kanker die woedt in de samenleving. Pap er niet mee aan want het springt zo op je. Het zijn parasieten die in de mens willen huizen, nestjes willen bouwen in hun hoofden. Je wordt totaal gebrainwashed. Ze hebben allerlei smerige taktieken hiervoor. Slijmen en aardig doen om hun doel te bereiken is hen niet vreemd. Maar als ze konden zouden ze de botten van je lijf afvreten. Ze kunnen een bepaalde streep niet over en ze worden in de gaten gehouden. Tot hier en niet verder ! Het zijn honden aan de ketting. Kom niet te dichtbij. Het zijn verbale messentrekkers. Door veel slijmen weten ze hun cultussen echt wel groter te maken en mensen dom te houden. Ze kunnen niet tegen creativiteit, ze kunnen niet tegen intelligentie. Alles moet volgens hun laag opgeleide, kortzichtige boekjes gaan. Als ze iets niet begrijpen dan is direct grote paniek, en halen ze hun etikettendoos erbij om mensen als zwarte schapen te brandmerken. Zijzelf zijn het hogere ras. The end.

Nou, dat was een interessante film, zeg. 't Lijkt wel alsof we naar een tweede wereldoorlog film hebben gekeken. Een onsmakelijke horror film is er niks bij. Het spookhuis zou er voor op de loop gaan. Lieve mensen, de duivel heeft de ergsten van de ergsten op ons afgezonden, en dat was ook wel te verwachten. Er mocht bij ons vroeger niet over de duivel gesproken worden. Dat was een verboden onderwerp. Ik heb altijd geweten waarom. De duivel wil namelijk niet ontmaskerd worden. En je kan een kind uit zo'n kerk halen, maar hoe haal je de kerk uit een kind ? Het is een levenslang trauma, als een eeuwige wond. Het moet genoemd worden. De opgesloten mens die om hulp roept moet weten dat er voor hem of haar gestreden wordt. Daarom blijf ik het noemen. De strijd gaat door. Voor nu hebben we de wonden nog, om verbonden te blijven aan hen die nog vast zitten. Deze wonden zijn onze zintuigen en zelfs onze wapens. Ook herkennen we elkaar aan onze wonden.

Variatie

De Egyptenaren varieerden al. Ze schreven hun teksten van links naar rechts, van rechts naar links, van beneden naar boven en van boven naar beneden, en op vele verschillende manieren, wat een manier was van zowel beveiliging als opslag. Tegenwoordig raakt men helemaal in paniek als iemand een schrijffoutje maakt. Dat is toch wel het einde van de wereld, terwijl het eigenlijk levensbelangrijk was, voor de variatie, om hen te redden.

Als je niet meer kunt varieren, en je durft nooit een schrijffoutje te maken, dan ben je dus eigenlijk al dood. Dan hebben ze je al. Het systeem moet gebroken worden. Ze willen de mens eenzijdig houden door de papieren paus uit te hangen. Durf je tong uit te steken.

Beschrijf je kennis op vele manieren, in verschillende lagen van symboliek en in verschillende talen, in grote gevarieerdheid, opdat het zal overleven. Eenzijdigheid en kortafheid is een kou die het vruchtje zal doden. Daarom zijn religies, verschillende religies, belangrijk, om verschillende lagen van symboliek te creeeren voor beveiliging en vruchtbaarheid. Daarom gaat de christen die zich boven de islamiet waant het ravijn tegemoet. Als de christen in Arabië zou zijn geboren dan zou de christen islamiet zijn geweest. Laat geboorte dus niet bepalen wat je bent, maar varieer. Werk de kennis uit in vele lagen en talen. Zo kan de kennis opgevoed worden en overleven. Eenzijdige kennis zal sterven. Parasieten zullen het vinden en doorboren en verteren. Wees een goede broedster. Verlaat het nest niet voortijdig om ergens anders nieuwe eieren te maken terwijl je nog niet eens je eerdere eieren hebt uitgebroed. Wie het kleine niet eert is het grote niet weert.

De mens is niet daadwerkelijk warm en amoureus, maar koud en onverschillig. Hebberig. Ze willen alles weten, nieuwsgierig als ze zijn, maar ze achten het van geen waarde. Ze lezen het als de krant en donderen het weer weg. Ze koesteren geen boeken, geen kennis. Het zijn slechts opgezette vogeltjes. Ze hebben het helemaal laten bevriezen, laten verstenen. Ze hebben er met de

schoen naartoe gegooid. Ze hebben God in een te nauwe doos gedrukt. De mensheid is een bizarre karikatuur. Als je er te lang over nadenkt ga je eraan. Daarom : varieer. Leer symboliek te gebruiken, zeg het met andere woorden, benoem het in andere verhalen, in andere terminologieën, zodat er deuren geopend worden. Er zijn andere werelden dan dezen, maar de zintuigen van de mens moeten er open voor gaan. De mens moet er gevoelig voor worden, maar eerst is dan de gevoeligheid voor variatie belangrijk.

Om je heen klot alles samen en wordt ongelovelijk koud. Ga daarom naar binnen tot de warmte van variatie. Verwacht het niet van mensen. Mensen kunnen zo ineens verkillen en alles gaan afrafelen, zodat ze niet eens meer zien wie je echt bent. Ze trekken je omhoog op hun lange torens, maar als je er dan bijna bent laten ze je vallen. Het is een truuk. Verwacht het niet van mensen. Ze kunnen heel lang met je meegaan, en dan ineens is het afgelopen omdat ze te lui zijn om je te begrijpen. Altijd loop je weer op eieren. Ze zijn te lui om navraag te doen of je om uitleg te vragen, en dan zelf hun verhalen over je verzinnen en toeteren alles door. En mensen zijn goedgelovig. Als ze zonder enig bewijs geloven wat hun ouders hen met de paplepel hebben ingegoten, zelfs op late leeftijd, dan zullen ze ook datgene geloven wat anderen over jou vertellen.

Variatie is adem. Variatie is leven.

Halal

Het Hebreeuws bestond oorspronkelijk alleen uit medeklinkers, en de klinkers zijn er later bijverzonnen, dus vandaar dat de klinkers net zo goed anders kunnen zijn, en wat soms gewoonweg ook veel meer duidelijkheid geeft. Er was altijd al verschil vanwege verschillende dialecten en transliteraties. Als we het hebben over Sarah of Suri en Abraham, dan komen we ook bij Egypte uit, en bij de voortijd. En dat moet ook wel, want Egyptisch is de moedertaal van het Hebreeuws. Veel Hebreeuwse oorsprongen liggen in Egypte verborgen. Sa-rah is de gids (sa) van Ra door de onderwereld. In de voortijdse theologie gaf Suri

een besmeurde, met bloed bevlekte lendendoek aan Abraham om zijn naaktheid mee te bedekken. De mens kan volle openbaring niet aan, en daarom is er het met bloed bevlekte voorhangsel.

Hosea komt van het Hebreeuwse woord os, sterkte, alertheid, s, wat ook weer terugwijst op de sa gids van Ra in de dodenwereld, dus ook op sarah, op Suri. De godin Suri is dus verscholen achter het boek H-os-ea wat haar voorhangsel is. Calvijn noemt Hosea een voorbeeld van geduld. Soms kunnen we van de vrouwelijke Hosea, oftewel sa, sa-rah, Suri uitgaan, en soms van de mannelijke Hosea. Calvijn stelt in zijn commentaar op het boek Hosea dat Hosea het volk met de toekomstige wraak had gedreigd, want Israel was zichzelf te buiten gegaan aan rijkdom en macht, onder Jerobeam. Voorspoed had het land totaal dronken gemaakt, en daarom trad Hosea er tegen op. Het volk werd door God verworpen. De boog van Israel zou verbroken worden.

De voortijdse godin Suri bestaat uit de voortijdse letters S, de Aso, de proza, een vrouw met een kind aan haar borst in de rivier, en R, de Oru, het kruis, een breedheupige natuurvrouw. Deze letters afzonderlijk zijn ook godinnen, natuurvrouwen, natuurprincipes.

Juda, het tweestammenrijk, is de fallus van Israel, het tienstammenrijk, in de Hebreeuwse wortel (yad). Calvijn stelt terecht dat Juda de machteloze was, hebbende anderhalve stam, in zijn commentaar op het boek Hosea. Ze waren geplunderd door Israel. Er was zwaar onheil gekomen, en daarom waren ze verzwakt. Juda was tot grote armoede gebracht, tot honger, waarvan Juda ook een beeld is : de honger, de fallus. Israel minachtte Juda. Juda was niet groot in aantal en niet sterk. Daarom zou God zich over Juda ontfermen.

Calvijn spreekt dan over dat de Heere het volk zal ontbloten als een grote ontmaskering. Dit is dus weer iets wat Suri doet. De Heere zal hun feesten doen ophouden, en ze zullen niet door drogredenen de kastijding kunnen tegenhouden. Ze zullen niet van de Heere kunnen ontsnappen, stelt Calvijn, sprekende over het tweede hoofdstuk van Hosea. Calvijn stelt dat zij zo tot de honger werden geleid. Hierdoor zullen ook de akkers tot wildernissen worden. Calvijn stelt dat in de wildernissen een honger heerst die leidt tot een

duizenderlei dood, en dat was wat het volk nodig had : een diepere dood, maar in het dal van Achor zal er vruchtbaarheid zijn. Calvijn stelt zoals Hosea dat de verlossing niet door wapens, strijd en ruiters komt, dus mensen zouden in hun dwaasheid tevergeefs op eigen kracht vertrouwen, maar dat God zelf zou verlossen, dus eigenlijk als iets moederlijks.

In Arabië is god genoemd ilah en allah, en in Israel alah (aramees) en el (hebreeuws, kanaanitisch), en de Germanen noemden het hel, als de moeder godin van de vruchtbaarheid, de baarmoeder, en we zien telkens weer de letter L terugkomen in verschillende vormen, wat helemaal terugleidt tot het voortijdse halal (ila), wat ook weer vandaag de dag in Arabië wordt gebruikt als het leven binnen de natuurgrenzen, oftewel de grens-gevoeligheid. Dit is verbonden aan het ijs en de honger, aangaande de restricties. Het is allemaal hetzelfde, en de voortijdse godin Halal verschuilt zich achter deze verschillende vormen. Zij is zeer krachtig. Halal is naast de ramadan een veelgebruikt woord in de islam, maar denk ook aan het judeo-christelijke 'halalluja', wat ook te maken heeft met het profetische leven, het blijven binnen de hogere grenzen. Halal moet natuurlijk symbolisch genomen worden. De mens moet de godin Halal weer leren kennen, en haar woorden leren interpreteren. Dit is dus de naam van de letter L in het voortijdse alfabet. In de Hebreeuwse bijbel wordt God ook wel Halal genoemd :
'Ik zal de heere roepen, die het waard is halal te zijn.' (2 samuel 22:4)
Wil je dus tot god komen : blijf dan binnen de grenzen, wees grensgevoelig. Daar gaat het over. God wordt op dezelfde manier Halal genoemd in Psalm 18:3. Ook in Psalm 113:3 is de naam van God 'halal' :
'Van het oosten tot het westen, zij de naam des Heren halal.' Alleen door halal kunnen we tot god komen, omdat halal de grenzen betekenen waaraan we ons moeten houden, en god is dus een metaforische voorstelling van de grenzen. God betekent dus grens, of grenzen. Kunnen wij daarmee leven ? Dan hebben wij god daadwerkelijk gevonden. Telkens weer wordt god in de hebreeuwse bijbel samen genoemd met halal. Zij horen bij elkaar. De laatste zes psalmen, van 145-150, zijn halal psalmen, waarin halal veelvuldig wordt genoemd en voorkomt.

Wikki

Vannacht had ik een droom over dat ik met kamp in Duitsland was, maar daar scheen ik ook te wonen. En er werd gewoon Nederlands gesproken. Het was natuurrijke omgeving, en ik was daar in de natuur, en kwam wat mensen uit Denemarken tegen die hier waren gekomen en weer terug zouden gaan, maar ze hadden het over een oorlog in Denemarken. Er werd met kanonnen geschoten. Ik vroeg toen of er hier in Duitsland ook oorlog was, maar dat was niet zo. In Duitsland was het veilig. Ik ging weer terug naar het kamp. Mijn vrouw in die droom was een levenspartner van lang geleden. Onze kinderen waren klein, en mijn vrouw deed een soort mededeling, en ik wist het al : een scheiding. Ja, want ze wilde haar jeugd terug en ik was veranderd. De kinderen begonnen toen te protesteren naar hun moeder. Ik was exorcist. Ik zag dat ze niet haarzelf was, omdat er een demoon in haar was gevaren. Ik zei : 'Demoon, wie ben je.' Toen sprak de demoon heel zacht door haar heen : 'Wikki.' Ik zei toen : 'Wie ?'

'Wikki,' sprak de demoon weer door haar heen, toen wat duidelijker. Ik verbrak toen die geest, opdat ze zelf kon kiezen. Deze demoon hield haar wil bezeten. Wikki was een veel groter systeem, een zwarte walvis. Het kamp was dichtbij een voorouderlijke stad die normaal gesproken in Nederland ligt, maar in de droom lag het in Duitsland. Dat komt omdat ik ook Duitse voorouders heb die toen naar Nederland zijn getrokken.

Wie of wat is Wikki ? Het is een systeem, een verstrooid systeem wat alles omdraait. Het heeft ook zijn eigen straf-systeem, en loon-systeem. Het is een systeem van mind control. Wiki komt uit Denemarken, het land van Kierkegaard die diep bezig was met de Sarahitische theologie, oftewel met Suri (het Suriitische). Wikki bewaakt de poorten tot de voortijden en het voortijdse alfabet. Het is een vals adoptie systeem, kinder roof en kinder offering. De kinderen worden met giftige moedermelk vergiftigd, zwarte melk. Die adoptie systemen of ontvoerings systemen werken door allerlei soorten instanties : school, medische bedrijven, kerken, families enz. Ze willen het kruis niet om tot de waarheid te komen, maar de dronkenschap om tot de leugen te komen, om zo anderen ook in dat systeem in te wijden, zodat ze geen last van hen hebben. Het is dus oorlogs strategie. Het is de narcose en hypnose van de

vijand. De beste aanval is altijd de heimelijke infiltratie, zodat ze van binnenuit alles omver kunnen werpen.

Calvijn en de besneden harde werker

Hosea 5 : 14 – Want ik ben als een leeuw voor Efraïm en als een jonge leeuw voor Juda. Ik zal roven en heengaan. Ik zal wegnemen en niemand redden.

De kennis komt niet om te redden maar om te roven. Er valt niets te redden. Calvijn stelt dat als mensen zich tegen de toorn van God verzetten die toorn alleen maar meer opgewekt wordt. Calvijn noemt het verzet tegen God's toorn ijdel zelfbedrog. In zijn commentaar op Mattheus 1 stelt Calvijn dat alleen de besnijdenis tot het beloofde land leidt (Romeinen 15:8). De mens moet dus worden tot een dienstknecht van de besnijdenis, waarvan Jezus een beeld was. Calvijn stelt dat dit door de afscheiding gaat (Efeziers 2:14). Het gaat hier om een werker, een harde werker, maar om die harde werker te worden moet de mens eerst de leegte in, zodat hij geen werker wordt naar het vlees, maar een geestelijke werker. De mens moet dus ook de gedaante van de werker aannemen door de leegte (Filippenzen 2:7). En deze werker komt niet om geloofd en geprezen te worden, maar om een smaad te zijn en veracht, stelt Calvijn, om uiteindelijk de vervloekte dood van het kruis te ondergaan. De werker is dus de vervloekte, de verdoemde, niet de goddeloze die hoog en droog in zijn gouden woninkje staat te pronken en zegt : 'Wat heb ik het toch allemaal fijn voor elkaar,' en vervolgens neerkijkt op hen die zwaar zwoegen buiten in het vuil. De werker moet wel in het vuil werken, want daar is veel werk te doen en daar ligt zoveel verborgen. De gepensioneerde komt daar niet. De gepensioneerde heeft smetvrees, dus die zal ook deze waarheden niet aanraken, en zal zijn leven niet inzetten om hierin te studeren en te werken,

omdat het allemaal teveel is, en leeft liever uitbundig bourgondisch in plaats daarvan. In die zin heb ik het wel met Calvijn, omdat hij ook een harde werker was, ook al was dit in groot religieus en geestelijk materialisme, verletterlijkte, dichtgekoekte orthodoxie met vele woeste verscheurende dogma's als een stel theologische overdreven opgefokte waakhonden die iedere voorbijganger naar de keel vliegen, en wat dus nu verdiept moet worden om het een kwartslag te kunnen draaien. Ergens was alles vastgelopen. Daarom is de tweede bijbel ook als een tweede Calvijn.

Calvijn stelt dat de komst van de werker niet direct aan een groot aantal mensen verkondigd mocht worden, maar het moest grotendeels geheim en verborgen blijven. Het was alleen voor de waardigen. De paarlen mochten niet voor de zwijnen geworpen worden. De werker mag ook niet pronken met zijn komst. Het gaat erom in het duistere en verborgene te werken, niet voor het oog van de mens. De werker werkt voor een hoger loon dan dat van de mensen. Calvijn stelt dus ook dat dit een grote beproeving is.

We mogen hierin ook dat grote visioen zien, aan het begin van Mattheus, waar een amazone staat aan de hemelpoorten om de besneden mens binnen te roepen. Deze mens is een werker, niet naar het vleselijke, maar naar het geestelijke, in het verborgene. De hemel is een verborgen plaats van grote duisternissen waarin er gewerkt moet worden. Dat kan alleen vanuit de leegte, vanuit de honger. Daarom roept de amazone op tot het hongeren, om binnen de grenzen te blijven, oftewel tot halal. Er is dus een groot verschil tussen de besneden werker en de onbesneden werker. Calvijn stelt dat adoptie plaatsvindt op de basis van de besneden werker.

Dat de werker voortkwam uit een maagd is een symbool van de adoptie. Calvijn stelt heel terecht dat we niet helemaal moeten opgaan in de dankbaarheid naar dit voorbeeld van de werker toe, alhoewel het belangrijk is ons te richten op de hogere, geestelijke werker, maar tegelijkertijd zijn we ook geroepen deze werker zelf te zijn door de vrucht te verzamelen en te ontvangen. Deze werker zou zich onderwerpen aan het kruis, zich laten onderwijzen door de tucht, om zo niet overmoedig naar de wapens te grijpen en anderen te onderdrukken vanwege zijn eigen tuchteloosheid, kruisloosheid

en leerafkeer, wat in principe gewoon een welvaartsziekte is.

Alleen keiharde studie, door de tucht te aanvaarden als leermeester, doet de mens overwinnen. Studie, studie en nog eens studie, maar dit komt voort vanuit de leegte, vanuit de honger, dus het is niet een vleselijke studie, maar een geestelijke studie, en die is in het verborgene. Ook hierin moet de mens zijn grenzen kennen. De mens moet komen tot de grensgevoeligheid, tot halal. In de lagere aardse gewesten is alles erop gericht om te bedriegen en te bedonderen. Daarom moet de mens niet stoppen met studeren anders komt de mens er door om.

de voortijdse wortels van het boek Jozua

Jozua heette eerst Hosea, maar Mozes noemde hem later Jozua. Het heeft in de voortijd de aso-godin als wortel. Aso is de naam van de voortijdse letter S. Zoals Jozua het volk leidde, leidde de godin of natuurvrouw Aso ook het volk, wat in Egypte tot sa werd, de gids van Ra door de onderwereld. Calvijn stelt dat Jozua de overwinning niet kreeg door eigen kracht, niet door de boog, want dan zou de mens al snel door hoogmoed worden verblind. Het kwam van boven, zoals psalm 44 ook stelt, en deze verhalen moeten allemaal symbolisch genomen worden, omdat het over de geestelijke strijd gaat :

4 Want niet met hun mes hebben zij het land verworven,
niet hun arm heeft hen gered,
maar uw rechterhand en uw arm en het licht van uw aanschijn,
omdat Gij in hen een welbehagen hadt.

7 Want niet op mijn boog vertrouw ik,

en mijn mes verlost mij niet.

We doen het dus niet door het vleselijke, maar door het geestelijke. Niet door het lagere, maar door het hogere. Het is iets moederlijks. Het leidt terug tot de voortijdse bronnen van de natuur. De stad kan het niet doen, maar de natuur. Calvijn noemt in het commentaar op het boek Jozua de eigen wil en de verkeerde omgang waardoor de mens besmet wordt het vleselijke. Calvijn stelt terecht dat als de westerse vertalingen spreken : wees sterk, dat deze sterkte oprechte ijver betekent, en een volhardende gehoorzaamheid aan het hogere. Als we dit niet hebben, dan kunnen we niks van God afdwingen. En deze gehoorzaamheid betekent volgens Calvijn niet afwijken ter rechterhand, en ook niet ter linkerhand, dus de grenzen in achtnemen, zoals dat ook in Jozua 23:6 en Deut. 5:32 wordt gesteld. Dit is dus volgens Calvijn niet voor huichelaars en lichtvaardigen. Het gaat dus om de gave van grens-gevoeligheid ontwikkelen, anders werk je voor niks, buiten de grenzen. De ijver moet dus gericht zijn, in het geestelijke, niet dat je als een materialist als een dwaas heen en weer gaat rennen. Er moet contact komen met het diepere geestelijke, waar de mens zich op mag richten, op de binnenwereld. Zowel de bijbel als Calvijn moeten we symbolisch nemen bij het lezen. Calvijn stelt dat de ijver altijd gematigd moet worden door niet hardnekkig aan te dringen en door niet te blijven bij vooroordelen. De mens moet voor rede vatbaar zijn.

Calvijn stelt dat de geest van huichelarij overmoedig is en leeft in vooroordelen terwijl het vasthoudt aan de eigen wil. Dit noemt Calvijn de vrije teugel van lichtzinnigheid. Ze worden zo losbandig gedreven door de ziekelijke eigen wil. Calvijn stelt dan dat de ware God hoger is dan alle valse afgoden die de mens heeft gemaakt. We kunnen stellen dat hen die niet waarlijk aan hun eigen wil sterven en niet worden wedergeboren in de hogere, hemelse rede, telkens weer voor zulke afgoden vallen. En deze afgoden zijn zeer bedrieglijk en zeer heimelijk. Wanneer gaat de mens beseffen dat de kunstmatige realiteit om hem heen bedrog is ? Wanneer gaat de mens ontwaken ?

Als we kijken naar de voortijdse godin Aso, de wortel van Jozua en Sa in Egypte die Ra leidde door de onderwereld, dan is zij niet slechts een gids die de mens door de wildernis leidt, maar ook de opvoedster van de mens.

Het Wikki systeem wat de mens hypnotisch onder narcose houdt heeft ook een satelliet, genaamd Afhole, een arend. In een droom zag ik de arend, een zeer praatgrage arend, en een afleider. Als mensen het Wikki systeem proberen te ontmantelen probeert hij hen af te leiden en om te kopen. Hij is zeer sluw. Laten we goed beseffen dat dit via het gedachtenleven gaat.

Deze mensen, deze vuile families, willen over anderen heersen, denkende dat ze geestelijk van een hoger ras zijn, terwijl ze tegelijkertijd het geestelijke 'de ver van mijn bed show' noemen, en niet eens weten wat er in hun eigen boek, de bijbel staat. Ze worden helemaal overstuur als mensen iets zeggen wat ze niet kennen. 'Maar het staat in de bijbel,' zeg je dan. En deze mensen die denken dat orthodoxe christenen het hoogste ras zijn, en mensen die in de medische wereld werken, zijn vaak aan de alcohol in meerdere of mindere mate. Als je alcohol neemt kun je al niet eens meer helder denken. Daarom zijn ze ook zo volgzaam. Ze volgen altijd de massa's, altijd waar het geld rolt. Ze laten zich bedonderen door certificaten en andere zogenaamd waardevolle papiertjes, en die hebben ze gewoon gekocht of gestolen. Daarom moest Jozua komen. Het volk had verdere verlossing nodig. Daar gaat het boek Jozua over. Het gaat symbolisch over de strijd tegen de boze machten. De mens moest terugroven wat van hen geroofd was, en zo werden er weer grenzen gesteld en werd het land verdeeld. De mens moest in de voortijd in de wildernis heropvoed worden door Aso, en zij leidde tot de grenzen, tot grens-gevoeligheid, oftewel tot halal, net zoals Jozua, waarvan zij de voortijdse wortel is. De mens heeft een moeder nodig, als een gids en opvoedster in de wildernis, om tot het beloofde land te komen. Die moeder is slechts een metafoor van een principe, wat diep in ieder mens ligt.

Het Wikki systeem rooft kinderen om hen op te sluiten in de kerk en medische dwang. Ook worden ze in scholen geplaatst om hen te brainwashen en af te leiden van de demonologie. Omdat ze zo de theologie maar halfgebakken leren en niet weten wat het betekent, gaan ze het letterlijk opvatten en hebben niet meer de macht om het symbolisch te zien. Ze krijgen niet voldoende tijd, worden altijd weer opgejaagd door het materialisme. Het Wikki systeem doet het kind ten onder gaan in het consumerisme (vraatzucht, koopzucht), waar de

arend Afhole hen inlokt, steeds dieper en dieper, als in een fuik. De voortijdse moeders roepen de mens terug. Deze codes liggen nog verborgen in het boek Jozua, in de diepe etymologie (leer der taaloorsprongen) die terugleidt tot de voortijd. In een droom had ik een gevecht met Afhole. Dit was meer een koude oorlog dan een gevecht, want ik mocht hem niet zomaar aanvallen. In deze koude oorlog kwam Siva mij tegemoet uit de theologie van India. Dit was echter een diepere code : S-Eva, Aso-Eva. Eva is de wording, dus dan betekent het de zelf-opvoeding. Wees voor jezelf een moeder. Zorg voor jezelf.

Calvijn over Ezechiel, Jeremia, en Jesaja

Want het leven van kinderen is toch niks waard, dus maar witte plastic in hun botten donderen, denkt de tandarts, wat op hetzelfde niveau is als het chinese voetbinden wat vele eeuwen lang in stand werd gehouden. Dit is niet waar het kind om vraagt, maar wordt gedwongen. De mens is onder zware hypnose. Op scholen moeten de kinderen ook verplicht de meest domme onzin leren. Het menselijk geslacht is behekst. Het is nog erger dan zomaar reclame, want het wordt de mens opgedrongen. Eens zullen ze voor God's troon moeten verschijnen voor hun misdaden. Het lichaam is de tempel van God, ook een kinderlichaam, maar de afgoden worden onder dwang in het kind geplaatst. Het is tempelontwijding, een verkrachting van de natuur. Er is een dag tegen alles wat hoogmoedig is en trots. Ook in de theologische wereld is het geen koek en ei. Van Jezus hebben ze een afgod gemaakt, en dat wordt ook gedwongen, terwijl het gewoon een bepaalde taal is, en het is goed om er iets vanaf te weten, zonder in allerlei terroristisch extremisme te vallen. Ook is er helaas een criminele hoek in de theologie, maar dat is eigenlijk met alles zo.

Hoe dan ook blijft theologie een interessant onderwerp, en is het altijd mijn vak geweest. Het is belangrijk te zien hoe de medeklinkers codes doorlopen via de etymologie terug tot de voortijden, door de Calvijn codes. De bijbel en Calvijn

letterlijk lezen of symbolisch, abstract en in code is nogal een groot verschil. Calvijn moet dus herzien worden en op code geschat, anders gaat de wereld eraan door deze bom. Om tot de andere wereld te komen moet de mens ook cryptosofisch leren denken, om de oude programmeringen te verbreken en te vervangen. De vijand programmeert namelijk door taal.

Calvijn stelt in zijn commentaar op Ezechiel 20 dat de goddelozen verschillende wijzen van geloof hebben, maar dat ze geen rekening houden met God. De mens kan God niet aanbidden buiten de leer van God om, oftewel het onderwijs, de kennis. De mens moet God dus leren kennen en niet bazelen over geloven. Calvijn strijdt op vele punten tegen geloof. Het moet van boven komen, niet door het vleselijke. Ook als de mens offert vanuit het vlees worden de offers afgewezen. Natuurlijk is dat symbolisch. Het menselijke mag geen inmeng hebben. Het moet van boven komen. Calvijn noemt het vleselijke offeren ijdele verbeelding, die herkend kan worden aan halfhartigheid. Halve offers en halve aanbidding worden afgewezen. Aanbidding is iets metaforisch. De ware aanbidding is de gehoorzaamheid aan de hogere kennis. Hoe bedrieglijk is het als je zomaar een ander wezen letterlijk gaat aanbidden, terwijl je niet de hogere principes hanteert, want dan is het slechts luie projectie. Dat is wat de lofprijs van de mens vaak waard is. Deze lofprijs is van het vlees. De mens moet allereerst tot stilte komen en leren luisteren. De mens moet dus eerst de ballingschap tot de kennis ingaan, waarvan Juda een beeld is, zoals Calvijn stelt dat Juda een plaats van ballingschap is. En Juda is een beeld van de fallus in de wortels (yad). De fallus is een beeld van het natuur spasme, het niet leven vanuit het directe van de eigen wil en controle, maar vanuit de natuur controle. Zo moet de mens dus ook komen tot het natuurspasme van de hersenen. Calvijn stelde dat de kracht van boven alleen kon komen als de gevangenschap bitter zou zijn. Ik moet dan ook denken aan Job die niet de geest moest ontvangen, maar de bitterheid van de ziel (9:18 ; 10:1).

Calvijn stelt dat Ezechiel gekomen was om bijgeloof te bestrijden wat van geslacht tot geslacht werd overgeleverd. Ezechiel, yecheskel, met de S-L wortel, in de voortijd Aso-Halal, oftewel het opgevoed worden tot grens-gevoeligheid.

Jeremia, oftewel Oru-ma, de wet (ma, egyptisch) van het kruis (oru, voortijds), werd volgens Calvijn opgesteld om vijfendertig jaren lang te roepen tot een volk van doven en krankzinnigen, en wat een groot kruis was, en toen werd Ezechiel als zijn opvolger aangesteld, in de Babylonische ballingschap. Dit stelt Calvijn in zijn commentaar op Ezechiel 1. Calvijn stelt dat Ezechiel net als Jeremia was uitgezonden tot een bijgelovig volk wat besmet was met hebzucht en een hang naar luxe. Het was een verdorven volk. Calvijn stelt terecht dat Jeremia en Ezechiel tot het hardnekkige volk moesten blijven dreigen, maar dat alle dreigementen ijdel zijn als er geen uitzicht en inzicht wordt geboden. Het dreigen moet doel hebben, en mag alleen toegepast worden in de context van onderwijs. Daarom is orthodox calvinisme al in zichzelf onzin en ijdel, omdat ze dreigen met letterlijke eeuwige verdoemenis. Wij prediken daardoor het natuur calvinisme, oftewel het symbolische calvinisme, wat hard nodig is in deze starre dagen van extreem en crimineel geworden orthodoxieën. In die zin heb ik dus een haat-liefde verhouding met de leringen van Calvijn. En dat moet ook wel. Er moet blijven gezegd worden dat ironisch gezien Calvijn zich niet aan zijn eigen leer hield. Het steeg boven hem uit. Hij had een hemel te verkondigen, maar verletterlijkte het teveel, wat dus alleen heilzaam kan zijn in symbolische zin. Een symbolische Calvijn, daar gaan wij voor.

In Ezechiel 1 ziet Ezechiel een hemels verschijnsel met wielen vol ogen. Het is volgens Calvijn een tegenstelling tot de stad waarin de mens blindelings het fortuin volgt en daardoor overhaast wordt voortgedreven, terwijl de hemel daar is waar er alertheid is (ogen) en daardoor alles wordt bewogen (wielen).

De mens wordt zo afgeleid door personen en persoonsverheerlijking, persoonsbehaging, dat de mens moet terugkeren tot het niemand-bewustzijn. Het persoonlijke is slechts een metafoor. Er is helemaal niets. Iemanden zijn illusies. Ik had een droom over de stenen die Calvijn had geroofd. In die stenen waren werelden. Het waren bruine stenen, grote stenen, in een onderaards grottengebied. Hier woonden de voortijdse natuurvolkeren. Het gebied moest opnieuw ingenomen worden, opnieuw gekend worden. Dit gebeurde vannacht in een droom, dat er een tunnel tot deze ruimte werd geopend, en de rovers die dit gebied waren binnengetrokken moesten weer vertrekken. Het ging om

stenen die lenzen waren, natuurlenzen, bruin in allerlei tinten, ook gelig hier en daar, maar altijd in een bruine context, als natuurkleur.

In zijn commentaar op Jesaja 66 stelt Calvijn dat de mens is ingenomen en opgeblazen door ijdel vertrouwen en zelfvleierij. Hij stelt dat dit duivels is en vervloekt, en dat ze zo God bespotten. Ze hebben god vervangen door een afgod. Ik werd zwaar aangevallen toen ik met het commentaar van Calvijn op Jesaja bezig ging. Dat begon al met Jesaja 1, en toen ben ik maar eerst naar Jesaja 66 gegaan, maar daar werden even later de aanvallen ook zo sterk dat ik op de bank ben gaan zitten, en toen eerst van een afstand profetisch ben gaan bidden over alle hoofdstukken, tellend van 66 tot terug. Toen ik bij hoofdstuk 60 was aangekomen zag ik in een visioen een stel criminelen, rovers, theologische rovers, van Calvijn zelf, die vanuit de hoogte naar beneden keken, om een soort put heen. Ze hadden donkere, zwarte klederen aan, met mutsen. Ik zag toen dat hier de roversgeesten van Calvijn zich schuilhielden, en ben toen naar dit hoofdstuk, hoofdstuk 60, gegaan. Het ging over de 'God alleen' leer. Dat kan natuurlijk al snel misgaan, want dan kan er al snel gesteld worden dat alles van genade afhangt, maar ik zou het dus symbolisch zo interpreteren dat een mens alleen tot God kan komen als hij zichzelf in het God alleen principe verliest en komt tot zijn hogere zelf, dus het is wel degelijk afhankelijk van zijn eigen keuze, maar die keuze moet dus gelijkworden met de goddelijke keuze, anders heeft het geen zin. Het gaat dus om waar God en mens elkaar kruizen. God is slechts een principe. Het is dus niet zomaar een geschenk, of iets wat je kunt roven. De mens moet het zelf worden, zelf zijn, anders heeft het allemaal geen zin en is het slechts projectie. God en mens zijn dus in de mens zelf, als onderdelen van de mens, waarin de mens het kanaal is. Het kanaal moet geopend zijn. Dat hangt dus van de mens af, anders is het slechts dwang, en dan is het niet meer echt. Zo kan de mens dus geadopteerd worden, stelt Calvijn. Hij geeft zelf het antwoord al : Slechte mannen misbruiken de gaven van God voor luxe en onmatigheid, en bederven hen, voor zover in hun macht ligt, door onwaardige vervuiling. En : Daarom moet worden afgeleid dat we niet echt tot de Heer kunnen worden bekeerd zonder al onze vermogens aan te bieden; want deze zijn 'geestelijke offers' (1 Petrus 2: 5), die God eist en die niet kunnen worden geweigerd, als uw hart oprecht en aan de Heer wordt toegewijd. (Romeinen 12: 1)

Calvijn stelt vervolgens hierover : 'Slechte mannen wachten op mijn ziel', dat wil zeggen 'ze leggen strikken voor mijn leven' (Psalm 56: 6)

de gruwelijke betekenis van openbaring 20 – de koude oorlog tussen het vleselijke en het geestelijke

In een droom leidde de gnosis mij tot Openbaring 20 :

1 En ik zag een engel nederdalen uit de hemel met de sleutel des afgronds en een grote keten in zijn hand; 2 en hij greep de draak, de oude slang, dat is de duivel en de satan, en hij bond hem duizend jaren, 3 en hij wierp hem in de afgrond en sloot en verzegelde die boven hem, opdat hij de volkeren niet meer zou verleiden, voordat de duizend jaren voleindigd waren; daarna moet hij voor een korte tijd worden losgelaten.

Dit gaat over het zogenaamde duizenjarige vrederijk van de christenen. Ik werd door de gnosis geleid tot een afgrond. Ik moest stoppen aan de rand, en ik zag allemaal vuur in de afgrond. Ik mocht niet verder lopen. Het was een reusachtige afgrond. Ik moest even wachten en toen was er een smal bruggetje waar ik op kon gaan lopen, en verderop werd het bruggetje steeds wijder. Ik zag toen groot dik glas over de afgrond komen, wel verschillende meters dik, en ik kon dus overal over het glas heenlopen en naar beneden kijken door het glas heen. Er was veel vuur onder het glas, in de diepte van de afgrond. Er kwamen toen ook metalen frames door het glas heen, zodat ik niet alles kon zien. Het glas werd ook steeds dikker.

De gnosis begon toen te vertellen over Openbaring 20, over het zogenaamde duizendjarig vrederijk wat zou komen. De gnosis bepaalde me erbij dat het om vrouwen ging in de put, zoals Openbaring 9 over de vijfde bazuin gaat over

vrouwen uit de afgrond (vers 8), die verder heel symbolisch beschreven worden. De afgrond in Openbaring 20 is een symbool van de voet, van de vrouwenvoet, die in China voor duizend jaar werd opgebonden. Vrouwen werden zo onderdrukt opdat de man kon regeren. Het liep van de Tang dynastie tot de Qing dynastie en toen de Chinese republiek kwam werd het afgeschaft. Toen werd Eva of satan, dat wat tegenwerkte (de natuurvrouw) weer losgelaten.

Dan gaat Openbaring 20 verder :

7 En wanneer de duizend jaren voleindigd zijn, zal de satan uit zijn gevangenis
worden losgelaten, 8 en hij zal uitgaan om de volkeren aan de vier hoeken der
aarde te verleiden, Gog en Magog, om hen tot de oorlog te verzamelen, en hun
getal is als het zand der zee. 9 En zij kwamen op over de breedte der aarde en
omsingelden de legerplaats der heiligen en de geliefde stad; en vuur daalde
neder uit de hemel en verslond hen, 10 en de duivel, die hen verleidde, werd
geworpen in de poel van vuur en zwavel, waar ook het beest en de valse
profeet zijn, en zij zullen dag en nacht gepijnigd worden in alle eeuwigheden.

Toen de duizendjarige vrouwenvoet onderdrukking was beeindigd begin jaren 1900 kwamen de eerste en de tweede wereldoorlog die uitliepen op de koude oorlog waarin een nieuwe gruwel ontstond :

11 En ik zag een grote witte troon en Hem, die daarop gezeten was, voor wiens
aangezicht de aarde en de hemel vluchtten, en geen plaats werd voor hen
gevonden. 12 En ik zag de doden, de groten en de kleinen, staande voor de
troon, en er werden boeken geopend. En nog een ander boek werd geopend,
het boek des levens; en de doden werden geoordeeld op grond van hetgeen in
de boeken geschreven stond, naar hun werken. 13 En de zee gaf de doden, die
in haar waren, en de dood en het dodenrijk gaven de doden, die in hen waren,
en zij werden geoordeeld, een ieder naar zijn werken. 14 En de dood en het
dodenrijk werden in de poel des vuurs geworpen. Dat is de tweede dood: de
poel des vuurs. 15 En wanneer iemand niet bevonden werd geschreven te zijn
in het boek des levens, werd hij geworpen in de poel des vuurs.

De nazi's gebruikten al fluoride in de tweede wereldoorlog om het verzet te verlammen. Het verzwakte en verstoorde namelijk het zenuwstelsel. Dit was de heraut voor de witte vulling, de grote witte troon die zou heersen. De witte vulling is van een lagere dichtheid dan bot, en wordt er ook voor dezelfde nazi redenen geplaatst om de zenuwen te verzwakken en te verstoren. Het boek of woord wat geopend wordt op de witte troon is namelijk een beeld van de mond. De mensheid is ingenomen door demonen.

In Openbaring 19 zagen we :

17 En ik zag een engel staan op de zon en hij riep met luider stem en zeide tot
alle vogels, die in het midden des hemels vlogen: Komt, verzamelt u tot de
grote maaltijd Gods, 18 om te eten het vlees van koningen en het vlees van
oversten over duizend en het vlees van sterken en het vlees van paarden en
van hen, die daarop zitten, en het vlees van allen, vrijen en slaven, kleinen en
groten.
19 En ik zag het beest en de koningen der aarde en hun legerscharen
verzameld om de oorlog te voeren tegen Hem, die op het paard zat, en tegen
zijn leger. 20 En het beest werd gegrepen en met hem de valse profeet, die de
tekenen voor zijn ogen gedaan had, waardoor hij hen verleidde, die het
merkteken van het beest ontvangen hadden en die zijn beeld aanbaden;
levend werden zij beiden geworpen in de poel des vuurs, die van zwavel
brandt. 21 En de overigen werden gedood met het zwaard, dat kwam uit de
mond van Hem, die op het paard zat; en al de vogels werden verzadigd van
hun vlees.

Dit gaat over de gruwel van het vlees eten. De afgrond die ik zag in mijn droom was de afgrond waarin ieder geworpen zou worden die door zou blijven gaan vleselijk te leven in plaats van geestelijk. Er is nu nog een koude oorlog gaande tussen het vleselijke en het geestelijke. Zorg ervoor dat je aan de juiste kant van het glas bent.

De mens wordt gezombificeerd door de vijand, door de witte vullingen, om zo ook tot vleesetende parasiet te worden. Zo wordt de mens in het leger van de vijand ingelijfd, om als een levend schild gebruikt te worden, om uiteindelijk

zelf ook geassimileerd te worden. Ontwaakt gij die slaapt. Wie oren heeft die hore.

Kijk om je heen. Mensen vertonen haast geen ruggegraat. Ze zijn al dood. Vraag jezelf af in hoeverre je zelf nog leeft. Deze wereld is een enge, enge plaats.

De witte vulling, bijna niet van bot te onderscheiden, en als ze klein zijn niet op de foto's te zien. Als ze dan problemen veroorzaken straalt het door naar andere plaatsen. Het is dan bijna niet meer uit te zoeken waar het vandaan komt. De witte vulling is één van de grootste medische misdaden aller tijden. Het zusje, de amalgaam vulling, is inmiddels veel verboden, maar de witte vulling regeert nu in dit tijdperk van de witte troon. De boeken worden geopend, oftewel de monden, die de woorden van de vijand moeten spreken. Daartoe zijn ze gebrandmerkt.

Mensen worden door vullingen en wortelkanaalbehandelingen en andere troep zoals fluoride geestelijk, psychisch, mentaal, emotioneel en lichamelijk doorgemarteld, wat een valse christelijke hel is, en een kruis voor de martelaren. Ook dieren worden in fokkerijen en slachthuizen doodgemarteld voor hun vlees en hun pels. De grote witte troon is de tandarts terreur gebouwd op het duizendjarige rijk van de vrouwenvoetbinding. De mens moet wakker worden. Op het moment is de mens niet van zichzelf. De mens eet en wordt gegeten. De tandarts terreur is gedwongen plastische chirurgie in de mond, door de schoonheidswaan van het westen. Allemaal luxe troep moet de mond in, ter onderdrukking van de natuur mens. Zo kan de mond zichzelf niet meer herstellen, en is de mond overgeleverd aan de tandarts, de witte troon. Wie oren heeft die hore. De mens is een slaaf van de tandarts. De ruggegraat van de mens is door deze smooth criminal gebroken, zeer heimelijk.

De mens aanbidt de tandarts afgod en de vlees afgod, omdat de mens daartoe is gedwongen, bang om anders uit het boek des levens geschrapt te worden. Hoe kan de mens hieruit ontsnappen, als de ontsnapping de hel betekent, als ketter bestempeld te worden ? Zij die waarlijk van de gnosis zijn tellen hun leven niet, maar denken alleen aan de natuur, en zullen daardoor eeuwig

leven. Wie zijn leven tracht te behouden zal het verliezen. Er is nu een koude oorlog gaande. Alleen de geduldigen zullen overwinnen.

het machiavelli enigma

De koude oorlog liep van 1945 tot 1991 als de gewapende vrede tussen het kapitalisme en communisme. De schrijver George Orwell gebruikte de term al in 1945 en hij waarschuwde tegen de komst van twee of drie grote superstaten (In het tijdschrift 'de tribune', in zijn artikels 'as I please'), en dat deze staten gevormd zouden worden op het al aanwezige massale platform van algehele berusting, het zonder protest accepteren ervan. Hij wijst terug op het boek 'de bestuurlijke revolutie' van James Burnham (the managerial revolution, 1941) over de komst van deze superstaten. Orwell beschrijft dit boek in het kort, dat zowel het kapitalisme als het communisme niet zal heersen, maar dat er grote superstaten zullen komen die bestuurd worden door managers. Er zal dus geen ware democratie zijn. Dat is slechts schijn, want de managers zijn de poppenspelers die de touwtjes in de handen hebben. Maar deze superstaten zullen elkaar niet overwinnen, en zullen vechten om gebieden, territorium, terwijl de samenlevingen hierarchisch zullen zijn. Piramide schema's dus. Hij beschrijft daarmee direct het volgende boek van Burnham genaamd : de machiavellianen : verdedigers van de vrijheid. Het machiavellisme stelt dat alles is toegestaan om macht te krijgen en te behouden. De piramide zou dus machiavelliaans zijn, oligarchisch, oftewel in de handen van weinigen, op basis van erfelijkheid, status, of vermogen. De macht van de oligarchie berust dus op dwang en fraude. Het boek stelt dat het allemaal slechts een machtstrijd is, maar dat men hiervoor maskers gebruikt. Het zijn allemaal ambities van een bepaalde klasse, ook al kunnen er soms 'goede' motieven zijn, en ook al is men zich soms niet van bewust wat er daadwerkelijk gaande is. Ook dit boek beschrijft Orwell dus in het kort. Het komt er op neer dat partijen worden

besproken die machtszoekers zijn en daarvoor de hoop van de massa's gebruiken om een bevoorrechte positie te winnen voor zichzelf.

Orwell waarschuwt als intellectueel tegen het aanbidden van macht, van power, want het verstoort politieke beoordeling, omdat het leidt naar een geloof dat tijdelijke trends voor altijd zullen bestaan. Orwell wil van de politiek een kunst maken, door schrijversschap. Hij waarschuwt dat er vele gevaren op de loer liggen in de politiek, waarover hij ook zijn boek '1984' heeft geschreven (1949). Het boek gaat over gedachten-politie, totalitarisme, waar ook de stelling 'big brother is watching you' vandaan komt, want big brother was de leider van de dystopische superstaat Oceanië in het boek. Het is in het boek een superstaat van voornamelijk Amerika, Engeland, Australië en het zuidelijke Afrika onder de Congo rivier tezamen. De rest van de wereld is dus omsingeld door deze superstaat. Daarnaast zijn er nog de superstaten Eurasia en Eastasia. Eurasia is Europa en Rusland, en Eastasia is China en Japan. Grote broer is de topmacht van Oceanië, het masker van de Partij. Er mag niet zelf gedacht worden, want dat is ketterij. Iedereen moet zoals de partij denken, en er mag geen verzet daartegen zijn, want dan ben je krankzinnig. Totale gelijkvormigheid, eenvormigheid en goedgelovigheid wordt gepredikt. Alles wat de Partij zegt moet geslikt worden. Daar is de denkpolitie voor. De denk politie bestrijdt de denk misdaad.

James Burnham stelt dat Machiavelli (1469-1527) van de politiek een wetenschap maakte, en daarom was hij ook een grondlegger van de politieke wetenschap. Er moest een bepaald mechanisme voor komen. De vos moest er zijn om valstrikken te herkennen, en de leeuw moest er zijn om de wolven te verjagen. Machiavelli stelde dat als er vrede was, dan was dat een gelegenheid om over de oorlog te leren, en alles draaide om oorlog. De mens moest het goede kennen om het goede te doen, en de mens moest het kwaad kennen om het kwaad niet te doen, te vermijden. Hiervoor had de mens dus de vos en de leeuw nodig, wat later ook door Napoleon werd gepredikt. De mens kon niet alleen maar vos zijn of alleen maar leeuw. Volgens Machiavelli moest een mens niet alles van God verwachten, maar zelf deze principes leren, want God had de mens een vrije wil gegeven, en de mens moest ook zelf tot glorie komen. Dat wilde God de mens niet ontnemen. Machiavelli wilde niet de status quo

behouden, maar wilde het omverwerpen. Regeringen waren een groot gevaar voor de mens. Het doel heiligt de middelen. De misleiders moesten zelf misleid worden. Altijd moest de mens in termen van oorlog denken, anders zouden anderen voordeel op hem behalen. Zonder gevaar zou er ook nooit iets groots bereikt worden. Politiek leven is ook altijd veranderen, niet statisch. We kunnen Machiavelli alleen maar symbolisch nemen in de zin dat de ware politiek van binnen is waarin de mens zijn ego onderwerpt aan de hogere kennis door middel van geestelijke oorlogsvoering, oftewel waar de mens de natiologie leert : het ware verschil tussen hoog en laag, vertikaal gezien en niet horizontaal gezien, en dit is iets symbolisch. Dit is dus het verschil tussen het ego en de kennis, of tussen de wil en de kennis, als het verschil tussen het vleselijke en het geestelijke. Het gaat dus om een geestelijke oorlog, de demonologie, die zo wordt tot natiologie, de kennis van de natie, wat tegengesteld is aan het loze nazisme. De natiologie kwam opzetten in de jaren 90, na de koude oorlog, met name in het jaar 1993 toen de heilige gebondenheid tot de aarde kwam. Dit was de uiteindelijke basis voor het opstellen van de tweede bijbel, wat een natuur verschijnsel was van de kennis.

Het nationalisme of nazisme moet dus een kwartslag draaien, van horizontaal naar vertikaal, tot natiologie. De ware natiologie is wanneer je je ego gaat doorkrijgen en dat leert ontmaskeren en beheersen.

In de koude oorlog was er een muur tussen het oostblok en het westblok. Er was geen toekomst voor kapitalisme en ook niet voor communisme, maar voor tussenvormen, in het manageriale, de afgezonderde kleine elite van de oligarchie, waar Mosca ook over schrijft. Mosca (1858-1941), een politieke wetenschapper, waarschuwde tegen het bedrog van de democratie omdat het geen voorwaarden kent, geen limieten. Het is totaal losgeslagen. Hij is vrijzinnig en voor variatie, maar deze democratie zou juist de mens opsluiten en ten val brengen. De mens moest aan iets hogers onderworpen worden. Hij was een volgeling van Machiavelli, die ook al stelde dat een mens niet moet uitgaan van vooronderstellingen, maar vanuit feiten. De mens moest zich dus baseren op onderzoek en niet zomaar wat de massa's zeggen of wat men altijd heeft gezegd. Democratie wil de mens onderwerpen aan de macht van de massa's, niet aan het hogere, zoals Plato ook al stelde dat er wijzen opgesteld

moesten worden die zouden zorgen dat de dwazen niet door meerderheidstruukjes de samenleving kapot zouden maken door hun dwaasheid. Natuurlijk kan dat helemaal uit de hand lopen, want wie bepaalt wat wijsheid is en dwaasheid. Altijd liggen er gevaren op de loer, dus moet de mens zich richten op het hogere, binnenin. Dan kom je uit bij de gnosocratie, de heerschappij van de gnosis, en alleen weinigen komen daartoe, de eenling. De enige heerschappij is die van kennis, van de gnosis, en die komt allereerst verdraaid door, corrupt, in de lage vormen. Toch heerst dus de gnosis. De eenling moet hiertoe ontwaken om zo de gnosis door alles heen te zien, en het juiste pad te volgen, in geestelijke oorlogsvoering, als natiologische rebel tegen het ego. Een mens moet niet denken dat hij letterlijk de wereld kan besturen. Dan zou de mens gek worden. Het is de illusie van macht en controle. Het gaat om de gnosis, en in die zin gaat het dus niet om heersen, maar om kennis. Geen macht, maar kennis. Macht is een valstrik voor de dwazen. Vandaar dat nazisme moet sterven aan natiologie. Er moet kennis komen over wat macht is, diepte.

Zowel Machiavelli als Burnham stellen dat elk pushen van doctrine en orthodoxie hetzelfde is als tyrannie. Status quo moest vallen. De mens moest niet vallen voor de heerschappij door het overgesimplificeerde, want het zou leiden tot despotisme. Er moet daarom ook een flinke, gezonde dosis zijn van anarchie, wat overigens ook de stelling van Mosca was. Burnham stelt dat politiek progressief moet blijven, net zoals Mosca, en Mosca verwacht ook niet dat politieke systemen hetzelfde zullen blijven. Burnham stelt dat politiek een science moet blijven, een wetenschap dus, in feite onderworpen aan de hogere kennis dus, wat volgens Machiavelli ook het kostbaarste bezit is. Burnham stelt dat omdat het om de kennis gaat politiek geen wens mag zijn. De natuur werkt niet door wil of wens, maar door kennis. Wil en wens zou juist de kennis in de weg kunnen staan, en daarom moet het afsterven. Mosca zag dat er iets van de gnosis was doorgekomen, iets goeds, een hoger mechanisme, in de regeringen van de jaren 1800, maar het zou daar niet bij blijven. Alles zou zich in de politieke wetenschap blijven door ontwikkelen. De mens moest zijn ogen openhouden en niet vallen voor zomaar één politieke kracht, maar moest komen tot genadeloze kritiek op het sociale systeem die een top had waar macht werd misbruikt, stelde Mosca. Hij zag in de jaren 1900 ook de diepe

crisis waarin de wereld was gevallen door de eerste wereldoorlog, wat nog meer extremisme zou oproepen, waardoor er eigenlijk maar een heel klein beetje optimisme toegelaten zou mogen worden, en veel, heel veel pessimisme. Deze ideeen schrijft Mosca in zijn boek 'de heersende klasse' (1898). 'Een tragische bestemming is die van mannen,' stelt hij, want altijd zijn ze weer op zoek naar een bepaalde interpretatie van een dogma, om daarvoor anderen af te slachten die niet zo denken als zij. Het was in zijn ogen allemaal te kortzichtig en te direct. Altijd maar weer. Daarom was hij pessimist, zoals Machiavelli, Napoleon, Kierkegaard en Nietzsche dat ook waren. Toch zag hij ook heil doorkomen in bepaalde structuren, als een visionair. Veel pessimisme, en een druppel optimisme. Politiek is slechts symbolisch. Wat we om ons heen zien is cryptisch gezien gewoon weer de gnosis.

de florentijnse muizenkoningen

De koude oorlog tussen het oostblok en westblok, tussen communisme en kapitalisme, de gewapende vrede, van 1945 tot 1991. Dat was een lange tijd van grote spanning, als het splitsen van de zee voor de exodus : op naar de negentiger jaren. De twee superstaten konden elkaar niet overwinnen. Het ging tussen Rusland en Amerika. Men begon het kapitalisme en communisme op te geven, want het werkte niet. Zo begonnen eenlingen zich te richten op de oligarchie, oftewel de macht in handen van een kleine groep. Overal begonnen zulke kleine groepen te staan die vonden dat ze hogere, betere of slimmere principes hadden dan anderen, Het waren veelal eenlingen die zichzelf met kop en schouder boven de rest vonden uitsteken, goedschiks of kwaadschiks. De massa's waren dom, maar dit waren de intellectuelen, de machthebbers, hoog opgeleiden, voorbeschikten, uitverkorenen, of gewoon slimmerikken.

Sommigen wilden macht, en anderen wilden gewoon vrijheid. Ze waanden zichzelf regeerders, zij die de touwtjes in handen hadden. Sommigen hadden grote plannen. Sommigen wilden meer zorg voor de domme massa's, beter onderwijs, terwijl anderen corrupt waren. De oligarchie is een neutraal principe wat gebruikt en misbruikt kan worden. Eenlingen met grote plannen ontmoetten elkaar om een elite op te richten of al dan niet geheim genootschap. Sommige plannen waren goed, andere plannen minder goed, en weer anderen gewoon bar slecht. Allemaal wilden ze loskomen van de massa's, met kop en schouders. Ze waren of communistisch, of kapitalistisch of een tussenvorm, maar waar het om ging was dat ze oligarchisch waren, als uitverkorenen, of die regering nu letterlijk en materialistisch was of puur symbolisch. Was er een hogere macht, een hogere regering ? Kon je daar aan deelhebben, en wat hield dat in ? Kon de aarde een betere plaats worden, of zou het slechts de deur openen voor nog meer chaos en extremisme en allerlei tegenacties ? Waar ging het naartoe ?

Kan de mens het kruis ontlopen ? Moet de mens gesteld worden 'boven alle overheid en macht' ? (Zie Efeze) Of gaat het pad van het kruis juist hier doorheen, om een eenling te worden en deel te krijgen aan een soort oligarchie, oftewel een overblijfsel ? En wordt dit overblijfsel in veiligheid gebracht, of moet dit overblijfsel dwars door de grote verdrukking heen ? Het gaat niet om macht, maar om kennis. Deze demonologie of natiologie is zeer ingewikkeld.

Voor de huidige jaartelling werd het Etruskische rijk ingenomen door het Romeinse rijk, wat zeer groot werd en toen overging in het Rooms-Katholieke rijk. Het Etruskische gebied, ook in Italië, sloeg later terug met de renaissance, vanuit het Toscaanse gebied, beginnende in Florence. Dit was niet zozeer iets geheel nieuws, maar meer een wedergeboorte van de middeleeuwen. Uiteindelijk kwam vanuit de renaissance ook de reformatie voort, maar de reformatie liep ergens vast. Het is dus belangrijk om terug te gaan tot de bron van de renaissance, en dan komen we al snel bij Machiavelli uit. Dit is zeer problematisch materiaal, want zijn stelling 'het doel heiligt de middelen' is natuurlijk dubbelzinnig. Het Romeinse rijk, en dus ook het Rooms katholieke rijk, was gebouwd op de fundamenten van het veroverde Etruskië, waartoe ook

Toscane behoorde, dus daar komt ook het hele Machiavelli probleem bij kijken, wat dus ook het fundament is van het gehele roomse rijk. De mens moet dus van Rome komen tot Florence om dit probleem op te lossen. Ook Machiavelli was een Florentijn. Ook de hedendaagse politiek is gebouwd op Machiavelli.

Machiavelli stelt in zijn boek 'de heerser' dat de mens niet zomaar zich in de lage klasse moet bevinden en de hoge klasse, maar in beiden. Alleen vanuit de ondergeschikte klasse kan men een goed zicht hebben op de hogere klasse, en alleen vanuit de hogere klasse kan men een goed zicht hebben op de lagere klasse. Hij vergelijkt dit met het staan op een berg om het landschap te kunnen overzien, en het staan op de grond, onderaan de berg, om de berg te kunnen overzien. De mens moet dus aan beide kanten van het schaakbord staan, anders zou dit een valstrik worden voor de mens. Het klasse systeem is dus in principe gewoon onzin, maar de mens moet het tot nut zien te maken. Het is iets onvermijdelijks. Je zou kunnen stellen dat deze klassen alleen er zijn als symbolen, als onderdelen van de mens zelf, binnen de mens, als principes. Uiteindelijk moet de mens komen tot het beheersen van het ego, en dat kan alleen door tot begrip te komen, tot kennis, en is dus niet zomaar een machtsstrijd. De mens moet dus de diepte ingaan, en het probleem oplossen. Het is een puzzel. Machiavelli richt de aandacht op de kennis, of kennis van de daden van de groten van de tijd, als het kostbaarste bezit, dus niet materialisme. Het gaat om het diepere geestelijke, intellectuele bezit. Ook stelt hij dat hij gewoon moet schrijven wat hij moet schrijven, niet uitvoeriger dan nodig, ook niet met een opsmuk aan opgezwollen woorden en uiterlijk vertoon. Hij wil zijn geschriften geen gewicht geven met materialisme, maar gewoon eenvoudig blijven en sober. Het komt aan op de kennis, en niet op zichzelf. Hij wil dat het of zomaar zal wegzinken in de vergetelheid zonder enige eer, of dat de verscheidenheid van het schrijven en de ernst ervan opgepakt zal worden. Hij stelt dat voorkomen beter is dan genezen, dus er moet toekomstzicht, vooruitzicht zijn, zodat problemen die eventueel in de toekomst kunnen ontstaan tegemoet getreden kunnen worden met beleid en behendigheid om deze tegen te gaan. Zo niet dan worden de artsen corrupt en de ziekten erger dan nodig. Men moest dus met strategie te werk gaan. Oorlogen waren onvermijdelijk. De mens moest voorbereid zijn, niet slechts voorzichtig. De mens moest leren besturen en beveiligen. De mens moest niet in slaap dutten.

De mens moest leren gronden en behouden.

Ik had vanacht een droom over muizenvolkeren met muizenkoningen en koninginnen die allemaal veel te makkelijk dachten. Ze waren niet alert, en ze kwamen pas in actie als het al te laat was. Toen werd er geroepen : Keer terug tot het gele. Keer terug tot Florence. De mens moest vluchten uit Rome.

Machiavelli stelde dat men door gebrek aan daadkracht en door compromissen de kerk nog meer wereldlijk aanzien zou geven, waardoor de kerk nog meer geestelijke macht zou hebben. Dan komt de oligarchie in zicht, oftewel het overblijfsel, een elite of groep uitverkorenen, wijzen die het land kunnen onderwijzen. Weer is het belangrijk dit binnen jezelf toe te passen, om niet ten prooi te vallen aan materialistische valstrikken. Mensen die Machiavelli bestuderen lopen dan ook door een gevaarlijk mijnenveld. Ooit ging de Roomse kerk in dit veld de mist in. Zij begonnen te grijpen en te grijpen, gulzig als ze waren, eerzuchtig en machtslustig, en kwamen zo aan de andere kant van de munt terecht. Velen trokken zij met zich mee. De oligarchie is dus puur geestelijk en symbolisch, als het verzamelen van de principes van kennis in een zee van drogredenen. In jezelf moet je op zoek gaan naar je eenlingen. Er moet vruchtbaarheid en progressie zijn in Florence, waar de rivier de Arno een beeld van is, waar Florence aan ligt.

Machiavelli stelt dat elke politiek die opgericht is door omkoperij zal vallen. De ware politiek is dus een veel diepgaander en natuurlijker proces, terwijl omkoperij slechts een uiterlijk vertoon is wat geen diepte heeft en geen houvast, geen standvastigheid. Het heeft geen eeuwigheids-waarde. (de heerser, hoofdstuk 7, 1513-1515, 1532) Omkoperij zal nooit een organisch geheel vormen. Dan is het gebouwd op bedrog.

Machiavelli stelt dat wreedheid alleen bij noodzaak toegepast mag worden, en niet overmatig, en dat verkeerde wreedheid zal vallen. Hetzelfde geldt voor weldaden. Ze mogen niet overmatig zijn want dan wordt het niet meer gewaardeerd en verliest het zijn smaak. Het mag alleen komen in kleine hoeveelheden. Hierbij valt hij dus ook het materialisme van de roomse kerk aan, wat ook het fundament werd van de reformatie.

In hoofdstuk 10 komt heel duidelijk de demonologische aard van Machiavelli naar boven en legt hij zijn vinger op de zere plek : de macht van de godsdiensten, de geestelijke vorstendommen. Hij beschrijft ze als dronkenschappen die het menselijk verstand te boven gaan, krachten die ervoor zorgen dat vorsten hun tronen behouden, hoe ze zich dan ook gedragen. Ze hoeven zich niet te verdedigen vanwege de oneindig heilige instellingen van hun godsdienst, oneindige macht. Ze hoeven hun onderdanen niet te besturen, want dat doet de godsdienst, en ze worden ook niet aangevallen. Het volk denkt er niet aan over hen te twijfelen, want het is hun veiligheid en hun geluk. Zodra een mens dit zou durven aan te vallen zou het wel heel overmoedig en verwaand zijn. We kunnen bijvoorbeeld denken aan de heilige onaantastbaarheid van de psychiatrie en de tandartserij die heiliger dan de paus in Rome zijn en waar de doorsnee mens niet over nadenkt, laat staan oordeelt. Het zal allemaal wel goed wezen. Ze doen maar. Het zijn de ergste mammon godsdiensten vandaag de dag.

Zowel macht als klasse en status quo moet sterven aan de kennis. Uiteindelijk wordt daarin alles opgelost. Zo kan de mens tot de ware natiologie komen in zichzelf, wat niet om mensen gaat maar om principes. Alle belangrijkdoenerij, eerzucht en erfzucht, en goedgelovigheid wat dat met zich meebrengt moet daaraan afsterven. Dat is niet zomaar lomp afsterven maar een studie proces. Mens, ken uzelf. Mens, ken uw vijand. De ware vijand is onwetendheid. Het is een drug waar de mensheid aan verslaafd is vandaag de dag.

Het gaat niet om materie, maar om kennis. Het gaat ook niet om woorden, maar om kennis. Materie en woorden moeten afsterven aan de kennis.

Wat moeten we dan in Florence doen ? Het is een oorlog tegen de Florentijnse muizenkoningen waar ik een droom over heb gehad. Het zijn vaak grotere witte muizen die er angstaanjagender uitzien en die ook mensen aanvliegen. Een paar vlogen mij aan, en zetten hun nagels in me. Ze huizen vaak in de moderne boeken en in dozen in de woningen van de mens. Ook in schoenendozen. We hebben het dan over het fundament van Rome, van bedrog, van 'het doel heiligt de middelen'.

De koude oorlog in de jaren 1900 liet zien dat er geen hoop was voor zowel kapitalisme als communisme. Ze waren in hun orthodoxe, materialistische, letterlijke vormen totaal vastgevroren. Dit liep door tot de negentiger jaren waar toen het hermitatisme kwam opzetten, en de Terminator cultus van de visionair James Cameron, wat over een jongetje gaat die in de toekomst een groot oorlogsleider wordt en oorlogsrobotten naar het verleden zendt, ook naar zichzelf in het verleden, als een grote beweging van het verzet, maar de tegenstander doet hetzelfde en het komt tot een grote confrontatie, als de strijd tussen de robotten. Er is dus een zone waarin toekomst en verleden elkaar tegemoet treden met een onvermijdelijke confrontatie. Ik had een droom dat het jongetje ook ruimteschepen zond tot de aarde vanuit de toekomst, ruimteschepen vol met robotten. Dit is geen materiele connectie, maar een geestelijke connectie, die de mens zuigt tot de hogere dimensies.

Calvijn stelt dat in Kolossenzen Paulus ons leert, dat we in alles opnieuw moeten oproepen tot dankbaarheid. Trouwens, hij waarschuwt ons, door zijn voorbeeld, met dankbaarheid niet alleen die dingen die de Heer ons toekent te erkennen, maar ook die dingen die hij anderen toekent. Hierbij moeten we erkennen dat alleen het zoonschap ons tot de ware God leidt, want zo ontstaat er een ware verbinding met de hemel, als wij opnieuw worden geboren. De kerk is niet dit zoonschap, maar het moet van binnen gebeuren. Calvijn stelt dat dit zoonschap zich uit in zowel dankbaarheid als gebed. De mens moet communiceren met de kennis. Er moet een band zijn met de kennis, door het zoonschap. Calvijn stelt dat we hierin moeten mediteren op het hemelse leven. Dit was de enige remedie voor het versterken van de Kolossenzen tegen alle valstrikken, waardoor de valse apostelen probeerden hen in de val te lokken : om nauwkeurig te begrijpen wat Christus was. Christus is de zoon, maar ook de werker, en hij werd ook Glyl genoemd, Galilia, van gly, openbaring, de balling, de naakte. Hij was ook de gekruisigde. Calvijn stelt dat hiervan kennis genomen moest worden, zoals Jezus het ook stelde dat alleen de gnosis de sleutel zou zijn, en niet slechts het gegeven op zich, het dogma. Het gaat niet om dogma, maar om het kennen. Hij noemt hierbij Hebreeën 13:9 – Laat u niet medeslepen door allerlei vreemde doctrines. Men moest het Christus principe leren kennen, waar het daadwerkelijk in diepte voor stond. Hij stelt in principe

dat de doctrine geestelijk moet zijn, vertikaal, en niet zomaar horizontaal. Je kunt een heleboel weten en toch niet kennen.

Calvijn stelt dat God in zijn naakte majesteit onzichtbaar is, niet alleen voor het oog, maar ook voor het begrip van de mensen, en dat de mens alleen begrip krijgt door openbaring, door het Christus principe. De mens moet de dood aan het zelf sterven, aan het ego, totaal, voor eeuwig, en Christus is dan een beeld van de eerstgeborene uit de dood, die zo de gehoorzaamheid heeft geleerd vanuit zijn lijden en sterven. Het kennen van Christus is dus ook het kennen van de verworpenheid. Het is een model wat men steriel heeft gemaakt, gestileerd, maar Calvijn wil het openbreken. De katholieke kerk had Jezus als een muis in een doos gezet. De renaissance zou het fundament van de middeleeuwen niet geheel verwijderen, maar vernieuwen, door een wedergeboorte. Hieruit kwam de reformatie voort. De mens was in het materialisme van de middeleeuwen vastgegroeid. Dit is een strijd tegen verschillende muizenkoningen.

Calvijn stelt dat het om de diepere basis prediking gaat, en dat men niet de mensen en kerken naar de mond moet praten. Predikt men voor roem, of predikt men voor de kennis ? Alle roem moet sterven aan de kennis. Ook dit is een gevecht met florentijnse muizenkoningen.

Ik had een droom over 'big brother', de heersende macht van Oceanië in het boek '1984' van George Orwell wat eind veertiger jaren uitkwam. Big brother had een snor en was in het pak met een stropdas, maar ik kon ook zijn ziel zien, zijn essentie, en dit was een krankzinnige, geweldadige dronkelap.

De Onkrant

Literaire Columns van de Tweede Bijbel

De Onkrant – Literaire Columns van de Tweede Bijbel – Verzamelingen – nr. 3 – nov. 2020

Grebbeberg, mei 1940
De Tatoeage
De Surinaamse Nachten
In den beginne schiep de mens God
graaf kiekendrecht van de bijlmer
de bijlmerreus
de dromentemmer
graven of draaien
de speelgoed oorlog
het kannibalen carnaval
Ezechiel in het huis der schorpioenen – het shamanistische schorpioenen medicijn
de koeken wet

de etalage pop

fossielen

Band Undercover

rode steen

het oog van de zombificator

De Februari Schietpartijen

de soepkom

marian's moeder

het dekentje

de indiaanse avonden

Grebbeberg, mei 1940

De Duitsers wilden Nederland in beslag nemen en gingen naar de Grebbeberg om daar de Nederlanders te beschieten, en de Nederlanders schoten in verdediging terug. Er werden vele Nederlanders geraakt, ja, zelfs doodgeschoten. De Duitsers kwamen steeds dichterbij. Als ze de Grebbeberg eenmaal zouden hebben, dan zouden ze spoedig heel Nederland hebben. Opeens kwam er een man met lang haar in een wit gewaad het strijdveld op. 'Wat moet die hier !' riep een Duitser. 'Wij zijn nu de Nederlandse poort aan het openbreken, dus dat kunnen we er nu niet bijhebben. Daar hebben we geen tijd voor ! Geen tijd, geen tijd ! Wegwezen !' Maar de man ging niet weg, en

liep rustig op de Duitsers af. Hij had geen haast. Het leek alsof hij in trage pas liep, en alsof alles vertraagd was. Even werd er niet geschoten, maar slechts geroepen. 'Wie ben je ?' riep een Duitser. Maar de man zei niets. Toen werd er even later op hem geschoten, maar zijn witte gewaad bleef smetteloos. 'Wat is dat !' riep een Duitser. Ze begonnen enorm te schelden en te vloeken. Weer schoten ze, maar de man bleef ongedeerd en en bleef maar op hen aflopen. Toen stopte hij ergens, en bleef intens naar de Duitsers kijken. 'Nou, zeg op, wat moet je ?' schreeuwde een Duitser, maar de man zei niets, en keek alleen maar. 'Goed, een pottenkijker !' riep een Duitser die een leidinggevende functie scheen te hebben. 'Laten we doorgaan met schieten.' Maar niemand schoot meer. Toen begonnen de Duitsers één voor één op de grond te vallen met verkrampte handen.

Toen kwam er ook een vrouw in een wit gewaad. Het was een donkere vrouw. Ze liep op de man in het witte gewaad af. Ook zij sprak niet en keek alleen maar. Ik was één van de Nederlandse soldaten. Niemand schoot nog. We waren allen verbaasd. De man in het witte gewaad liep toen op ons af, en toonde ons zijn handen. Deze handen leken doorboord, maar bloedden niet. Ook de vrouw liep toen langzaam op ons af, en toonde ook haar handen die doorboord leken, net als die van hem. Niemand zei iets.

Na een tijd vroeg ik : 'Wie zijn jullie ?' Maar zij spraken niet. 'Grebbeberg,' zei hij toen verschillende minuten later, en toen verdwenen ze gewoon in het niets. De Duitsers waren er niet meer. Niemand wist waar ze waren. 'Hmmm, dit kan gewoon niet,' zei ik. 'Volgens mij zijn we gewoon dood, en is dit de hemel.' Ik was waarschijnlijk geraakt door een kogel in mijn hoofd. Ik voelde aan mijn hoofd, en het voelde allemaal zo anders, alsof ik het zelf niet eens was. 'We zijn dood, makkers !' riep ik.

We keken om ons heen. Er was hier veel natuur en er waren wat winkels. Er was een donkere vrouw met een jongen, en ik ben ze gevolgd naar een soort winkel. Het was donker. Toen we in de winkel waren bleek het over virtual reality te gaan. Ik had geen idee wat het was.

Die vrouw zong toen : 'I tell you something, that I understand.'

Ik keek naar haar. Ik had het gevoel dat ik haar ergens van kende. Ze begon me toen uit te leggen wat virtual reality was. Er gleed een warmte om me heen. Ze liet me een lijst zien waarop al mijn makkers stonden. Het was een apparaatje, en er waren lampjes en knopjes bij hun namen. Zo konden we contact houden. Er was ook een schermpje bij, zodat ik kon zien waar ze waren. 'Welkom op de Grebbeberg,' zei ze toen. Ik wist dat ik in de hemel was. Ik kon overigens niet zien wat mijn makkers deden, maar er was een kaart van de Grebbeberg, en er stonden wat stipjes op. Ik kon alleen zien waar ze waren. Ik keek naar de vrouw. Waar kende ik haar ergens van ?

De vrouw zong weer : 'I tell you something, that I understand.' Ze zong wel verder, maar ik kon de woorden niet goed verstaan.

All curses too mean, zeg ik weleens. Ik was gewoon aan het ijlen. Ik was geraakt door een kogel en lag op de Grebbeberg voor mijn leven te vechten. Er was een warme gloed over mij. Trokken engelen aan mij ? Ik had de hemel gezien. Twee personen in witte gewaden. De Duitsers vochten nog steeds en ik zag ook wat andere makkers op de grond om me heen. Ik kon niet praten. Ik kon niet roepen. Ik gleed weer weg. De gloed ging dieper mijn lichaam in. Het was warm. Ik was in de natuur, in een meer. Ik zwom. Het was alsof ik in een ander lichaam was. Ik zag de overkant. Ik werd toen in de diepte getrokken. Weer kwam ik bij. Een Duitser stond voor mij. Ik voelde niets meer. Ik staarde gewoon. 'I tell you something that I understand,' werd er weer gezongen. Achter de Duitser stonden de personen in wit gewaad. De Duitser keek om en begon weg te smelten, gewoon voor mijn ogen. Ik werd omhelsd door de personen in wit gewaad, en ze namen mij de lucht in, zo hoog. Ik kon niet praten.

'Welkom op de Grebbeberg,' hoorde ik gezegd worden. Ik vocht voor mijn leven. Ik was tussen twee werelden in. 'I tell you something that I understand,' werd er weer gezongen.

'De hele nacht werken ze door,' hoorde ik gezegd worden. Weer hoorde ik de naam virtual reality.

Ik was weer in de natuur bij die vrouw. Ik keek naar haar en naar haar schoenen. Ze had een jurk aan. Soms was ze oud, soms was ze jong. 'Ik droom ? Ik ben dood ?' vroeg ik.

'In virtual reality,' zei ze. 'Alles is gesimuleerd, echt alles. Je moet die apparaten kennen,'

Ik kende die apparaten niet. Zij moest me alles uitleggen. Het bleek een oorlogsspel te zijn. 'Dat soort dingen zijn geen spelletjes,' zei ik. 'Het kostte mij mijn leven.'

De vrouw knikte. Ze liet me het spel op het scherm zien. 'Gelukkig heb je meerdere levens,' zei ze.

'Die spelletjes zijn gevaarlijk en intens,' zei ik.

Ze knikte. 'Er zijn ook wel andere spelletjes,' zei ze. Ze drukte op een knopje, en liet me andere spelletjes zien. 'Welkom op de Grebbeberg,' zei ze.

'I tell you something, that I understand,' zong ze weer. Ik moest mijn leven hier opnieuw opbouwen.

Ik volgde de vrouw naar haar huis. Ze zei dat ik ook een huisje zou krijgen. Haar naam stond ook op de lijst, en ik zou altijd contact met haar kunnen zoeken. Ik voelde de warme gloed om me heen. Ik had zoveel vragen. Na een tijdje liet ze me wat winkels zien waar spelletjes gekocht konden worden. Je kon munt verdienen door werk en door de spelletjes soms. Er werd ook 's nachts gewerkt, en gespeeld.

Ik zag ook vele oorlogsspelletjes. 'Oorlog is geen spelletje,' zei ik.

Ik zag ook andere soorten spelletjes en liep erdoor te zoeken. Het waren prachtige spelletjes. Ik keek weer naar haar. 'Welke spelletjes speel jij ?' vroeg ik. Ze nam me toen mee naar een andere winkel. Het was een winkel van

puzzelspelletjes, maar er zat ook avontuur in.

'Ik heb deze wereld gebouwd,' zei ze toen.

'Oh, dat kan ook ?' vroeg ik.

'Je moet je eigen wereld bouwen,' zei ze. 'Laat anderen je wereld niet bouwen. Dans ze niet naar de pijpen. Laat anderen je dromen niet dromen. Droom je eigen wereld.'

Ik knikte. 'Welkom op de Grebbeberg,' zei ze weer. 'Ik ben een geautomatiseerde robot, een welkoms robot.'

'Oh,' zei ik toen. 'Dus je bestaat niet echt ?'

'Ik besta,' zei ze. 'Maar ik ben onderhevig aan vele regels. Het puzzelen kan niet ontweken worden. Alles is zeer ingewikkeld en voorwaardelijk, dus hieraan is dit systeem geboren, hierin. Wij zijn de wachters van de nieuwe wereld. Op aarde slapen zij. Daar spelen zij hun spelletjes. Maar ik laat je zien dat het slechts spelletjes zijn, en ik laat je de hogere spelletjes zien. Je moet veel puzzelen. Zo ga je het begrijpen. Zo ga je het verschijnsel 'sleutel en slot' ontdekken. Ik voelde vreemde energie door mij heen gaan. De warme gloed leek vermengd te worden met sneeuw. En het sneeuwde. 'Welkom op de Grebbeberg,' zei ze weer.

Einde

De Tatoeage

Europa was brandende, dus toen moesten ze wel naar Amerika.
Er stond een groot schip als de ark van Noach, en velen gingen aan boord die dag.
Ze vertelden elkaar allemaal verhalen over hoe mooi Amerika zou zijn.
Het was een prachtige reis die ze nooit meer zouden vergeten.
Maar toen ze eindelijk in Amerika aankwamen was alles het tegenovergestelde.
En toen vertelden ze eigenlijk alleen nog maar verhalen over de prachtige reis, hoe mooi het was geweest.
Nee, naar Europa konden ze niet meer terug, want Europa was brandende, en in Amerika wilden ze ook niet zijn. Maar die reis, die prachtige reis, die zouden ze nooit meer vergeten. In kinderhoofden en kinderharten werd het geprent.
Op hun sieraden werd het beschreven, ingekerfd, de dagen van die mooie reis.
Hij had een tatoeage van twee trouwringen in zijn nek.
Dat was zo bij zijn geboorte bepaald.
Hij zou uitgehuwelijkt worden.
En toen begon alle ellende.
En toen was Europa brandende.
De tatoeage deed altijd pijn, ook in Amerika.
Hij heeft het meisje nooit gezien, want ze stierf al jong.
Aangereden …
De tatoeage deed zo'n pijn dat hij zich als een invalide voelde.
Hij voelde zijn bloed niet stromen.
Alles zat vast.
Hij was in een halve coma.
En Amerika was niet wat ze zeiden dat het was.
En terug naar Europa kon hij niet, want het was brandende.
Maar die reis, die prachtige reis, die zou hij nooit vergeten.
Ze waren zo vol met dromen, verhalen, over het mooie Amerika.
Kinderen met blijde gezichten.
Maar in Amerika werden ze allemaal getatoeeerd.

Het brandende Europa voor altijd in hun harten.
Uitgehuwelijkt tot iemand die ze nooit meer zouden zien.

Oh Amerika, het schone land,
Weerspiegelende de tranen van een vergeten land,
Oh Amerika, het brandende hart,
Van herinneringen waar je niet aan kunt ontkomen,
Tatoeages te diep,
Maar een prachtige reis van dromen.

De Surinaamse Nachten

Zijn hart bonkte in zijn keel. Hij kwam aan bij de toren, maar die zat op slot, en hij wist wie de sleutel had. Hij had een gevecht met een reus gehad op een andere toren, wat hij bijna niet had overleefd. Die toren kwam niet hoog. Maar deze toren zou hoog komen, heel hoog, helemaal tot Suriname. Het werd daarom ook wel de toren van Suriname genoemd, van de Surinaamse nachten, dat waren verhalen en sprookjes. Iedere verdieping had zijn eigen verhaal. Maar een heks bewaakte deze toren, en zij droeg de sleutel. Hij hoorde voetstappen op de trap. Het klonk heel hol. Toen werd de deur opengemaakt.

Maar het was de heks niet. Het was een jongetje.

'Ik ben de sleutel van de toren,' zei het jongetje, 'wat wenst gij ?'

Hoe ben je ontsnapt ? vroeg hij. Waar is de heks ?

'De heks is dood,' sprak het jongetje. 'Ze had mij betoverd in een sleutel. Maar nu ben ik vrij.'

Maar hoe ? Hoe ? vroeg hij weer.

'Dat staat allemaal in de verhalen van de toren,' zei het jongetje. 'Ik ga niet veel uitleggen.'

'Waarom niet ?' vroeg hij.

'Ga zelf maar lezen,' zei het jongetje. 'Iedere verdieping heeft z'n eigen verhaal, z'n eigen avontuur. Het is een puzzel avontuur.'

'Dus ik krijg toegang ?' vroeg hij. 'En leidt deze toren helemaal tot Suriname ?'

'Ja,' zei het jongetje. 'De lucht houdt alles gescheiden van Suriname, maar de toren is een weg terug tot haar.'

'Is daar nog steeds een paradijs, oerwouden, gastvrije mensen ?' vroeg hij.

'Dat moet je zelf ontdekken,' zei de jongen.

'Er zit een reus achter mij aan,' zei hij tegen het jongetje. 'Alsjeblieft, laat me snel binnen.'

'Ja,' zei het jongetje, 'en de heks heeft nog een zus.'

Toen hoorden ze beiden holle voetstappen op de trap. 'Ik moet weg,' zei het jongetje. Het jongetje verdween door een deurtje in het trappenhuis. Hij rende achter het jongetje aan en begon op het deurtje te bonzen. 'Toe, laat me niet alleen,' riep hij. De voetstappen werden steeds harder. Het kwam steeds dichterbij. Toen werd er ineens van achteren op zijn rug getikt.

Het was een oude vrouw.

'U bent de zus van de heks ?' vroeg hij verschrikt.

'Nee joh,' zei de vrouw met een Surinaams accent. 'Ik kwam even een kijkje nemen in de toren. Ik kom helemaal uit Suriname.'

Hij slaakte een diepe zucht. 'Dus het is toch waar,' zei hij. 'Suriname bestaat nog.'

'Dat weet ik niet,' zei de vrouw weer met haar Surinaamse accent. 'Ik ben al vele jaren op een tocht door de toren, van verdieping tot verdieping, maar ik kan mijn weg niet meer terugvinden. Ik vraag me af of Suriname nog wel bestaat.'

'Dat moet wel,' zei hij. 'Kom, dan gaan we er samen naar op zoek.'

En zo gingen ze beiden de trap op.

Einde

In den beginne schiep de mens God

In den beginne schiep de mens God.
De aarde nu was woest en ledig, en duisternis zweefde over de wateren.

En de mens zei : Er zij God.
En zie, er was God.
En de mens zei : Kom, laten we slachthuizen bouwen en markt bedrijven met politieke gevangenissen en ziekenhuizen. We hebben immers God geschapen, dus we hebben altijd een excuus. God wil het.
En de mens maakte zichzelf tot God.
En het ging van kwaad tot erger toen de mens zichzelf God had gemaakt, en de mens streed tegen andersdenkenden.
Er was een boom van iets anders geloven, maar die boom werd verboden.
Een ieder die van deze boom zou nemen zou sterven.
En zo had de mens de aarde tot een hel gemaakt.
En de mens vond het goed, want het verkocht goed.
De mens kon hier veel meer lucratieve zaakjes in oprichten.
En de mens maakte geld tot God.
In den beginne schiep de mens God.

Maar de ware God had hier niet veel mee op.
Op een dag klopte de ware God bij de mens op de deur, maar die deed net alsof hij niet thuis was.
Toen keek de ware God door het raam, en sprak tot de mens :
Wat heb je er een puinhoop van gemaakt.
En de mens sprak : Opdonderen, ik ben immers God.
En de mens besefte niet dat kennis en het goede de ware God was, en zo maakte de ware God de mens nog dommer dan hij was.
'Omdat je het kleine beetje kennis wat je had hebt misbruikt, zal ook het laatste beetje kennis van je weggenomen worden,' sprak de ware God.
En de mens bevond zich toen in een roeibootje op een woeste zee.
En de mens roeide en roeide, totdat hij bij een eilandje aankwam waar een blote vrouw was.
En de mens sprak : 'Ik ben God. Laten we hier een nieuw leven beginnen.'
En de blote vrouw sprak : 'Maar gij hebt geen kennis.'
'Maar ik heb geld,' sprak de mens.
'Geld interesseert me niet,' sprak de blote vrouw. 'We hebben daar niks aan op dit eilandje.'
En de mens ging aan land, en probeerde de blote vrouw te verdrijven, maar de

blote vrouw duwde de mens terug. 'Zonder kennis kom je er niet in,' sprak de blote vrouw.
'Kijk dan naar mijn mooie, dure kleren,' sprak de mens.
'Daar hebben we niks aan op dit eilandje,' sprak de blote vrouw.
'Maar ik heb God geschapen door mijn woorden,' zei de mens.
'Je hebt slechts laten zien hoe dom en goedgelovig je bent,' sprak de blote vrouw.
En de mens kwam in grote oorlog met de blote vrouw, en de blote vrouw liet hem niet toe, omdat hij geen kennis had.
En de mens ging uiteindelijk terug naar zijn bootje in roeide verder in de hoop op een ander eilandje te komen, maar de mens vond er geen. En de mens sprak zijn woorden uit, de meest onnaspreekbare woorden, maar er gebeurde niets, en de golven werden steeds hoger.
En de mens begon God aan te roepen in zijn hoogste nood.
Maar God sprak : Zonder kennis hebt gij niets.
En de mens was bedroefd want hij wilde de kennis niet.
Na lang roeien kwam hij aan op het vasteland.
En iedereen had plezier hier, en iedereen zei telkens : Oh, wat leuk. Ohhhh, wat leuk.
En de mens dacht : Hier wil ik wezen.
En als clowns gingen ze hier vaak diepzee duiken.
En de mens maakte de clown tot God.
Grapje hier, grapje daar. Oh, wat leuk. Ohhhh, wat leuk. Oh wat leuk, zeg.
En de mens maakte leuk tot God.
En de ware God schudde het hoofd en sprak : Is dat nu het beste wat je kan doen ?
In den beginne schiep de mens God, maar de ware God werd er altijd buiten gelaten.

Einde

graaf kiekendrecht van de bijlmer

Graaf Kiekendrecht woonde in de Bijlmer, ergens hoog op een flat. Hij was dokter, maar vroeg nooit betaling voor zijn diensten. Wel vroeg hij hen die hij genas zijn leger in te komen. Wat was dit leger dan ? Het was een leger dat net als hem anderen hielp.

Op een dag was Graaf Kiekendrecht net iets te diep in het bos gegaan, en werd door kannibalen overmeesterd en in een ketel gezet. 'Is dat de nieuwe mode ?' vroeg Graaf Kiekendrecht, 'al die touwen om me heen ?'

'Ja,' zei een kannibaal, 'gehaktballenmode en worstenmode, worstenmode in uw geval.'

'Zeg, kan ik niet helpen deze mode tot een markt te maken,' vroeg Graaf Kiekendrecht.

'Nee,' zei de kannibaal bars. 'U bent de drager, niet de maker.'

'Maar weet u dan niet dat elk touw een eind heeft wat ook weer het begin is ?' sprak Graaf Kiekendrecht. 'Zo komen we ook weer bij het begin uit, en dan zijn alle rollen omgedraaid.'

Ineens was niet Graaf Kiekendrecht in de ketel, maar de kannibalen, en ze waren netjes gebonden. 'Staat goed op jullie,' zei Graaf Kiekendrecht. De

kannibalen keken hem verbaasd aan. Graaf Kiekendrecht was zo wijsgerig geschoold dat hij er een beetje door kon toveren. Eén van de kannibalen was een negerin. 'Ik vind haar wel leuk,' zei Graaf Kiekendrecht terwijl hij op haar wees. 'Als je beloofd dat je mij komt helpen in mijn leger dan zal ik je loslaten.' De dikke negerin knikte en zei met een accent dat ze dat beloofde, want dat was beter dan in de ketel. Toen heeft hij haar losgemaakt. 'Jij kon het ook niet helpen dat je tussen dit tuig bent opgegroeid,' zei hij tegen haar, en toen heeft hij haar meegenomen naar de Bijlmer. De andere kannibalen liet hij gewoon in de ketel zitten.

Thuisgekomen bekeek hij haar eens goed. 'Zonder touw staat je toch veel beter,' zei hij.

'Ik wil wel met je meegaan hoor,' zei de negerin.

'Waar zullen we eens naartoe gaan ?' vroeg hij.

'Nou, een restaurant lijkt me wel goed,' zei de negerin, 'want ik had nog niet gegeten. We zouden jou opeten, weet je wel.'

Hij wees toen op haar buik. 'Heb jij niet genoeg gegeten ?'

'Ik heb zo'n honger,' zei de negerin, 'dat als je slaapt, dan moet je niet vreemd opkijken als je wakker wordt in een soepketel.'

'Dat is waar,' zei Graaf Kiekendrecht, 'dat is waar. Maar je weet dat je er dan zelf ook in eindigt, want het einde van het touw is ook weer het begin, en dan zijn alle rollen omgedraaid.'

'Ik weet het,' zei de negerin, 'maar dan laat je me wel weer los.'

'Wat als ik het dit keer niet doe ?' vroeg Graaf Kiekendrecht.

'Nou, dan moet je aan het andere uiteinde van het touw denken, en dan worden de rollen weer teruggedraaid,' zei de negerin.

'Je bent me nogal slim,' zei Graaf Kiekendrecht. 'Met jou wil ik werken. Maar zou je me echt hebben opgegeten ?'

'Nee,' zei de negerin, 'want ik ben zo wijsgerig geschoold dat ik de ketel slechts als een school zie om mannetjes zoals jou mee op te voeden.'

'Oh, als een bosjuffrouw ?' vroeg Graaf Kiekendrecht.

'Ja, als een bosjuffrouw,' zei de negerin.

'Dan heet jij vanaf nu bosjuffrouw,' zei Graaf Kiekendrecht. 'Welkom in mijn leger.'

'Welkom op mijn school,' zei de negerin.

En zo werkten ze samen in de bijlmer.

Maar op een dag kwamen de kannibalen naar de bijlmer om de negerin terug te halen.

'Oh, jullie komen me halen ?' vroeg de negerin. 'Wat denk je dat het hier is ? Het is hier geen restaurant.'

Maar ze hielden vol dat de negerin terugmoest.

Waarom komen jullie hier niet werken ? vroeg Graaf Kiekendrecht.

Ze dachten even na. 'Okay, okay,' zeiden ze. En toen kregen ze ook allemaal hun woning om in het leger van Graaf Kiekendrecht te zijn, en om naar de school van de bosjuffrouw te gaan. Ze hadden nu een doel in hun leven. Hun leven, en het leven van anderen, had nu ineens weer zin.

'Zeg, zouden jullie mij echt hebben opgegeten ?' vroeg Graaf Kiekendrecht hen eens. 'Nee,' zeiden ze. 'Wij zijn zo wijsgerig geschoold dat de ketel slechts een

manier is om een woning te krijgen.'

Einde

de bijlmerreus

Ik was verdwaald in een bijlmer flat op zoek naar mijn tante. Ik kon haar huisje maar niet vinden. Ze moest ergens op de flat wonen. Er waren hier allemaal grote zalen. Ik deed een deur open en er renden direct allerlei negerkinderen naar me toe. Ze waren in grote angst en paniek. Ze zeiden dat er ergens een vleesetende reus was. Ik ben toen dieper die zaal ingegaan waar die negerkinderen uitrenden de gang op en kwam de reus aan het einde van de zaal tegen waar hij op een troontje zat. Het was een hele lange man op een heel klein troontje. Hij kon er net op zitten, maar het leek wel alsof hij vastzat. 'Help,' zei hij met een piepstemmetje. Ik heb hem toen maar even losgemaakt.

'Die kinderen hebben deze troon voor me gemaakt, maar hij was veel te klein,' zei de reus.

'Kan gebeuren,' zei ik, 'maar waar woont mijn tante ?'

Toen heeft hij het voor me uitgelegd. Het was best nog wel ingewikkeld, want ik moest door allerlei gangen. Het leek wel een doolhof.

Toen ik bij mijn tante aankwam scheen ze er niet eens meer te wonen. De nieuwe bewoners zeiden dat het allemaal heel lang geleden was. Had ik dan zo lang gelopen ? Er klopte iets niet in deze flat. Ik ging terug naar de reus, maar

die was nergens meer te vinden. Ik ben toen de flat uitgelopen en er was een regenstorm. Ik had het idee dat ik zo opgenomen zou kunnen worden. Toen ik bij mijn huis aankwam waren daar ook al nieuwe bewoners. Ik zou er heel lang geleden hebben gewoond. Ik dacht : Hier kloppen dingen niet. Alles leek zo anders. Ik begreep er niets van.

Ik ben toen het oerwoud ingelopen. Ik begreep niets van de stad. Het was veel te ingewikkeld. Alleen in de bijlmer en waar ik woonde waren nog flats en huizen. De rest van Nederland was totaal oerwoud. Dat was vroeger wel anders. Maar ja, het leek zo kort geleden. Alles was gewoon anders. Nederland oerwoudland nu. Maar alles leek zo snel te groeien, en spoedig was ook de bijlmer totaal oerwoudgebied, en waar waren de flats ineens ? Er klopte iets niet. Toen kwam ik de reus weer tegen, en vroeg hem om uitleg. Hij wist het ook niet. Ik ben toen maar met de reus in het oerwoud gaan wonen, en na een tijdje kwamen daar ook de negerkinderen die ik in de flat was tegengekomen. Zij wisten ook niet wat er aan de hand was, maar ze waren niet meer bang voor de reus.

Dus jullie hadden een te kleine troon voor hem gemaakt ? vroeg ik.

Ja, en toen dreigde hij ons op te eten toen hij niet meer los kon komen, zeiden ze.

Dat is niet zo netjes van jullie om een te kleine troon te maken voor een reus, zei ik.

Een jongetje stak toen zijn vinger op. 'Maar het was ook niet zo netjes van de reus om ons te willen opeten,' zei het jongetje. 'We hadden hard aan de troon gewerkt en het was een foutje. Foutjes maken doet iedereen en dat is menselijk.'

Maar ik kan de reus ook wel begrijpen, zei ik, want hij dacht natuurlijk dat jullie hem in de val hadden gelokt.

Echt niet, mijnheer, zei een andere jongen. Het was een vergissing, heus.

Ik keen toen naar de reus. 'Ik ben niet meer boos,' zei de reus. 'Het zal inderdaad wel een vergissing zijn geweest. Ik moet ook leren om niet meer op tronen te gaan zitten. Dat is niks voor mij.'

Goed, zei ik toen. Ik hoop dat jullie nu in vrede kunnen leven.

Maar toen begon de reus erg te groeien. Weer begonnen de kinderen bang te worden. Er kwam toen een enorme regenstorm die ons allemaal opnam, en er kwamen flats uit de grond die nog wel groter waren dan die van de bijlmer. We zagen zoveel verdiepingen, en we werden door de regenstorm ergens hoog in zo'n flat gezogen.

Puzzel maar, zei de reus. Ga maar op zoek naar je tante. Ze moet hier nog ergens leven. Alles van het verleden heeft hier nog z'n plaats in het flattenoerwoud. En we vonden toen alles terug wat we eens waren verloren.

de dromentemmer

Ik dwaalde door gangenstelsels en trappenstelsels onder wat flats in de bijlmer. Ik kwam aan bij een donker en stoffig café wat helemaal verlaten leek te zijn, maar toen ik binnen kwam zag ik de barkeeper ineens. 'Drink voor dromen,' zei hij. Het leek op een café van de jaren 60 en 70 wat niet meer in gebruik was, dus ik was verbaasd de man te zien. Ik ging aan de bar zitten en zei : 'Okay, geef me maar wat.' Hij deed een fles open en begon te gieten in mijn beker. Het was donker, bruinachtig, schuimend spul, en ik begon er direct van te

drinken. 'Drink voor dromen,' zei hij. Het begon wazig voor mijn ogen te worden. Ik zag golven verschijnen voor mijn ogen, en ik zat op een strand. Een vrouw kwam langs en zei : 'Wat waait het, hè.' Ze moest haar hoed vasthouden, anders zou die wegwaaien. De golven gingen steeds hoger en waren steeds woester, en ik dacht dat ik beter weg kon gaan. 'Drink voor dromen,' hoorde ik iemand roepen. De golven leken ook van het bruinachtige spul te zijn met schuim erop. Ik kreeg toen een vreemd idee. Ik deed mijn kleren uit en rende op de zee af om van het schuimende bruine spul te drinken. Maar de zee bewoog weg van mij, en de golven gingen weer liggen. 'Nou, kom dan, drink voor dromen,' riep iemand weer. Ik keek om me heen, en slenterde weer terug om mijn kleren aan te trekken.

'Lafaard,' werd er toen geroepen. Dat liet ik niet op me zitten. Ik trok weer mijn kleren uit, en rende naar de zee die inmiddels weer was opgekomen. Maar weer trok de zee zich terug. 'Waar ben je dan ?' riep ik.

'Ga ik jou niet aan je neus hangen,' werd er toen geroepen.

Ik dacht ik laat me niet beetnemen, en slenterde weer terug om me vervolgens weer aan te kleden en me erin te berusten. 'Drink voor dromen,' werd er weer geroepen. Ja, dat zei die barkeeper ook, en nu droomde ik. Ik werd wakker en keek in het gezicht van de barkeeper. 'Drink voor dromen,' zei hij. En ik begon weer te drinken, en weer te dromen. Ditmaal was ik in een groot bos. Er was niemand. Ik was helemaal alleen. Maar er hingen kokosnoten in de bomen waar bruinachtig spul uitdroop wat bijna schuimde. Toen ik op de kokosnoten afliep begonnen ze weg te bewegen. Iemand lachte en riep : 'Drink voor dromen.' Maar ik zag niemand.

'Waar ben je dan ?' riep ik.

'Voor je neus,' riep hij.

Oh ja, zei ik, de barkeeper, maar ik kan niet drinken. Ik droom.

Waar droom je over ? vroeg hij.

'Nou, eerst een zee, en nu een bos,' zei ik.

Ik plaag je maar wat, zei hij. Vind je het leuk ?

Ja, zei ik, maar alles beweegt van me weg.

Dat zijn dromen, zei hij.

Waarom doen ze dat ? vroeg ik.

Opdat je niet teveel drinkt, zei hij.

Maar waarom zeg je dan telkens : Drink voor dromen ? vroeg ik.

Omdat … zei hij … maar toen vaagde zijn stem weg … Ik werd wakker in het café aan de bar, maar er was niemand …

Is daar iemand ? riep ik.

Ik zag het bruine spul voor me in mijn beker. Het schuimde nog steeds een beetje.

Niet meer van drinken, zei ik tegen mezelf. Zo is het wel genoeg.

Ik ging het café uit, het gangenstelsel weer op, en over trappenstelsels ging ik nog dieper naar beneden.

Ik kwam bij een hele diepe ondergrondse rivier aan uiteindelijk, waar dat bruinachtige spul ook stroomde. 'Niet meer van drinken,' zei ik weer tegen mezelf. Ik wilde weer teruggaan, maar plotseling kwam er een uitgestrekte golf uit de rivier die mij greep en mij in de rivier trok. Het begon me toen in de diepte te trekken.

Ik probeerde me te verzetten, maar het liet niet los. Ik was in een stroming die

alsmaar sterker werd. Maar toen werd ik weer wakker aan de bar in het café. Ik had gewoon een cirkeltje gemaakt. Ik stond op en ging dieper in het café. Ik kwam toen door een deur in een ander zaaltje waar mensen zaten van heel lang geleden. Ze waren helemaal bedekt met spinnewebben. Het leek wel op de jaren 30 en 40. Toen ik schoten hoorde ben ik weer teruggegaan, maar ik kon mijn weg niet meer terugvinden. En hoe meer ik door deuren heenging, hoe meer het allemaal leek op het wilde westen. Ik hoorde het gehinnik van paarden, het gelach van cowboys en het gejoel van indianen. Weer hoorde ik schoten, en verborg mij achter een bar. 'Waar is hij ?' hoorde ik iemand roepen.

Er was een luik op de vloer achter de bar, wat ik opende en waar ik doorheen ging om mezelf in veiligheid te brengen. Alles was hier donker en stoffig. Ik moest van een heel nauw trappetje af. 'Daar is hij,' hoorde ik iemand roepen. Ik kwam in een tunnel terecht waar water op de bodem lag. Ik zag een licht in de verte en ging er op af. 'Pak hem,' werd er geroepen, maar ik zag niks. Ik begon stevig door te lopen maar stootte mijn been aan ijzerwerk. Er was hier veel meer water wat in een rap tempo begon te stijgen. Ik kon beter maar weer teruggaan, maar daar zouden ze me misschien opwachten, dus ik deed het niet, en liep door richting het licht. Ik zag een oerwoud in het licht. Maar het water was inmiddels al tot mijn borst gestegen. De stroming was sterk, en ineens werd ik meegesleurd. Waar naartoe wist ik niet. Ik had alle grip verloren.

'Drink voor dromen,' zei de barkeeper. Ik werd weer wakker aan de bar.

'Laat maar,' zei ik.

'Denk je het ergens anders beter te krijgen ?' vroeg de barkeeper. Ik haalde mijn schouders op.

'Drink voor dromen,' zei de barkeeper weer. Er kwam iemand anders binnen die aan de bar ging zitten. Ook hij kreeg een beker van het bruinachtige spul wat schuimde. 'Ik zou er maar niet van drinken,' zei ik.

'Ik heb toch niets meer te verliezen,' zei die persoon, en begon te drinken. Ik

probeerde op te staan, maar ik merkte dat ik aan de barkruk bleef vastkleven.

'Het laat je niet los,' zei de barkeeper.

'Belachelijk,' zei ik. Toen herinnerde ik me dat als ik er meer van zou willen drinken, dat het dan van me weg zou gaan. Ik greep naar mijn beker, maar die was leeg. 'Meer, meer,' zei ik tegen de barkeeper. Maar er was geen barkeeper. Ik was aan zee, en ik rende er naartoe terwijl het van me wegbewoog. Maar ik wist ook dat het me zou grijpen als ik ervan zou weggaan. Ik moest iets anders verzinnen. Of ik moest er gewoon mee leren leven. Het leven was immers geven en nemen, tussen dichtbij en ver weg ergens mijn pad vinden. Ik kon nu eenmaal niet met en niet zonder. Ergens tussenin moest er een pad zijn. Ik moest mijn dromen temmen, maar daarvoor moest ik eerst mijzelf temmen.

graven of draaien

Na een beetje graven kwam ik in een ander Nederland terecht. De hoofdstad hier was genaamd Jong Meisje. Dat scheen de naam van een lied te zijn. Dat lied vonden ze zo mooi dat het de naam van de hoofdstad werd.

In het Zuiden lag een zwart Nederland. Het was eigenlijk een grote stad, een knoertel stad. Knoertels zijn een soort wezens die enorm stinken en hoogmoedswaanzin hebben, die zich van alles inbeelden dat ze van alles zijn, zoals een dokter of een politicus, terwijl ze niet eens hiertoe een degelijke

opleiding hebben gevolgd. Ze draaien ook alles om.

Er was oorlog in Nederland, tussen de knoertels en de rest van Nederland. De knoertel stad was geheel omsingeld, maar niemand kon iets doen. In de knoertelstad werden kinderen opgesloten gehouden. Die kinderen moesten nog ontwaken. Ze werden in slaap gehouden. Ze hadden allemaal knoertel dromen.

De knoertels waren vraatzuchtig. Ze hadden geen oog voor de armen. Die werden bespot. Alles moest rijk zijn. Ze hadden geen oog voor hen in nood. Nee, ze maakten de nood nog erger. Ze waren knoertels. Het waren schrokoppen, pannenlikkers.

Ze waren sadistisch. Er was één ding waar ze niet tegenkonden, en dat was humor. Natuurlijk hadden ze wel hun eigen humor, de zogenaamde knoertel humor, maar de echte humor, daar konden ze niet tegen, de wijze humor. Hun eigen humor was namelijk maar zeer oppervlakkig en simplistisch. Eens vielen de humoren Spanje binnen, en nu zouden ze ook Nederland binnenvallen. Dat gebeurde. Er bleef eigenlijk niets meer van de knoertelstad over. De knoertels konden niet tegen humor. En ze konden al helemaal niet tegen de humoren.

de speelgoed oorlog

De speelgoedsoldaten waren in een oorlog met de muizen op de speelkamer van een jongetje, midden in de nacht. Het jongetje sliep in een andere kamer, in zijn slaapkamer, dus hij merkte er niets van. De speelgoedsoldaten gebruikten naalden als pijlen, en ze hadden ook kromme zwaardjes. Veel muizen werden geraakt, en van sommigen werden de koppen afgehakt. Het

was duidelijk dat de speelgoedsoldaten de oorlog aan het winnen waren. De muizen bewaakten een poort waar de speelgoedsoldaten nooit doorheen mochten. Ditmaal konden ze dat dus wel en openden de poort. Hier stond ergens een speelgoed treintje waarop ze gingen zitten, en ze moesten toen door een tunnel heen. Dat gat ging helemaal door de muur naar de slaapkamer van het jongetje. Dat hadden de muizen eens gemaakt. De speelgoedsoldaten zagen wat kleren van de jongen rondslingeren. De deur van de jongen stond op een kiertje dus ze konden zo de gang op, en over de trap naar beneden. Door de brievenbus konden ze ontsnappen, en de wat grotere speelgoedsoldaten konden door het kattenluikje. Toen renden ze het bos in, en deden wat van hun kleren uit. Ze wilden indiaan worden. Ze smeerden henzelf in met modder, en anderen smeerden wat oorlogsverf op hen. Maar toen het dag was geworden bleven ze ineens stokstijf staan. Een ander jongetje vond hen even later. Hij nam ze in zijn hand. 'Wat vreemd,' zei hij. 'Die indiaantjes horen hier niet te zijn. Het is maar speelgoed.' En hij nam ze mee naar huis. Ook hij had een speelkamer. Gelukkig waren daar geen muizen. Ze vonden het verschrikkelijk dat ze overdag zich nooit konden bewegen. Ze moesten altijd wachten tot het nacht was en iedereen sliep. Gelukkig had de jongen de deur op een kier gelaten, en konden ze weer weg. Het was weer nacht, en de nacht was nog jong, en ze hoefden niet eerst tegen muizen te vechten. Weer gingen ze de hal op en over de trap naar beneden en gelukkig had dit huis ook een kattenluik, dus weer konden ze allemaal naar buiten. Weer gingen ze het bos in, en dit keer hadden ze veel meer tijd, dus ze gingen ver, heel ver. Ze hoopten dat de betovering verbroken zou zijn nu ze zo ver weg waren. Ze waren bang voor het licht, dus gingen ze de grond onder door een konijnenhol. Zo kwamen ze in de ondergrondse wereld.

Ze wilden geen speelgoed meer zijn, maar echte mensen. Hier onder de grond zouden ze zich tenminste altijd kunnen bewegen omdat het hier altijd nacht was. Er was hier niemand anders. Ze waren met twintig. Op een keer kwamen ze andere speelgoedpoppen tegen die ook waren ontsnapt. Het waren speelgoedindiaantjes en allemaal meisjes. Maar ze konden niet met hen opschieten en ze waren bang dat ze ermee in oorlog zouden raken. Tegen andere speelgoedpoppen wilden ze niet vechten. Toch moesten ze wel toen de indiaanse meisjes hen de oorlog verklaarden. Ze konden natuurlijk ook

vluchten, en dat deden ze, maar de indiaanse meisjes kwamen achter hen aan. Dennennaalden waren hun pijlen. Dit ging allemaal niet goed. Er sneuvelden wat aan beide kanten, en ze begonnen het licht op te zoeken opdat alles zou stoppen. Maar toen ze boven de grond waren was het daar ook nacht. Toen zijn ze maar teruggegaan naar het huis van het jongetje. Ze gingen door het kattenluikje en de brievenbus. Maar ook de indiaanse meisjes achtervolgden hen daar. Ze renden de trap op, terwijl het oorlogsgejoel achter hen was. Soms schoten ze wat pijlen. Telkens weer sneuvelde er eentje aan beide kanten. Maar de indiaanse meisjes waren in de grote meerderheid. En van de indiaanse jongetjes was er nog maar één overgebleven toen ze bij de deur van de speelkamer waren gekomen. En die stond dit keer niet op een kier. Wel stond de slaapkamerdeur van het jongetje op een kier, en toen ging het laatste indiaanse speelgoedjongetje daar naar binnen. Op dat moment begon het licht te worden, en stonden ze allemaal weer stokstijf. Toen het jongetje wakker werd zag hij het indiaanse speelgoedjongetje bij zijn deur liggen. 'Hoe komt dat daar nou ?' dacht hij. Hij liep er naartoe en deed de deur verder open, en zag toen ook de indiaanse speelgoedmeisjes liggen. 'Vreemd, en die had ik nog niet,' zei hij. Toen zag hij bij de trap en op de trap ook nog meer speelgoedindiaantjes liggen. Hij zuchtte en begon ze allemaal op te rapen om ze naar de speelkamer te brengen. Hij keek eens goed naar de speelgoedindiaantjes en bemerkte de dennennaalden. 'Mmm, zeker oorlog geweest,' zei hij tegen zichzelf.

Hij wist van die oorlogen. Hij had het eens in een boek gelezen. 'Ik ben het er niet mee eens,' zei hij. 'Jullie moeten in vrede leven.' Toen smeet hij de speelgoedindiaantjes in een doos. Hij deed toen de deksel erop zodat het nacht was in de doos. 'Zo, dat zal jullie leren. Voorlopig ga ik niet met jullie spelen,' zei het jongetje. Maar in de doos ging de oorlog verder. De doos werd niet lang daarna opgeborgen op het zolder. En daar ging de oorlog vele jaren voort. Het jongetje wist het niet. Niemand wist het. Alleen de speelgoedindiaantjes wisten het.

het kannibalen carnaval

De jongen was diep in het bos terecht gekomen, en werd vastgepakt door een vrouw met een rieten rokje. 'Jij komt hier niet meer weg,' zei de vrouw. 'Zodra je wat langer bent geworden gaan we je opeten.' De jongen begon te kermen en te gillen, en te smeken, maar niets hielp. Toen nam de vrouw hem mee naar een kamp. Hij werd bekeken door meerdere vrouwen. Hij had zich tijdens de wandeling neergelegd bij zijn lot, maar zou alles doen om te ontsnappen. 'Kannibalen zijn wij,' zeiden de vrouwen. 'Je moet nog groeien, langer worden.'

'Hij is nog in de groei,' zei de vrouw.
'Waarom ?' vroeg de jongen. Maar hij kreeg geen antwoord.
Midden in de nacht toen ze allemaal sliepen dacht de jongen dat hij wel weg zou kunnen komen, maar hij maakte veel teveel lawaai, en ze werden wakker en pakten hem weer.
'Stommeling,' zei één van de vrouwen. 'In de kooi moet hij nu, of gebonden worden aan een paal.'

'Ik weet wel wat,' zei een andere vrouw. 'Hij kan ook aan de ketting.' Zo kreeg de jongen een ketting om zijn hals. Hij werd vastgeketend aan een blok. 'Dat is het slachtblok,' zeiden de vrouwen. 'Je bent niets dan vee.'

'Waarom ?' vroeg de jongen weer. Maar hij kreeg geen antwoord. Toen gingen de vrouwen weer slapen, en de jongen klaagde.

De volgende dag waren ze alweer vroeg wakker. 'Hij groeit goed,' zei één van de vrouwen. 'We kunnen hem bijna opeten.'

Ze maakten hem los van de keten, en hij moest naar een schoolklasje waar ook een andere jongen was. Deze jongen zou ook opgegeten worden als hij langer zou zijn gegroeid. Er waren ook wat meisjes in het schoolklasje die bij de vrouwen leken te horen. Ze hadden ook rieten rokjes, en ze plaagden de jongens over het feit dat ze opgegeten zouden worden.

Een jongen werd wakker van een vreemde droom. Hij ging naar beneden en zag daar zijn vader met de krant. 'Ik heb zo vreemd gedroomd,' zei de jongen. 'Over kannibalen, vrouwen en meisjes met rieten rokjes, en ze zouden me opeten als ik langer was gegroeid. En ik had hele vreemde gevoelens in mijn buik. Heeft u ook weleens zulke dromen gehad ? Is het erfelijk ?'

'We dromen allemaal,' zei zijn vader. 'Ik had die dromen toen ik jonger was, maar toen ik met je moeder was getrouwd had ik geen dromen meer. Volgens mij leef ik nu in een droom.'

'Maar dat is geen droom met kannibalen,' zei de jongen.

'Nou, op mijn werk is het zeer kannibaals,' zei zijn vader.

'Hoezo ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Nou,' zei zijn vader. 'Telkens de dreiging om ontslagen te worden.'

De jongen zuchtte. 'Nou, dat is dan ook niet leuk.'

'Ja,' zei zijn vader, 'maar ze doen dat opdat je het onderste uit de kan haalt en je echt je best doet.'

'Ik begrijp het,' zei de jongen. 'Maar als je ontslagen wordt, dan neem je toch gewoon een andere baan ?'

'Banen liggen hier niet voor het oprapen,' zei zijn vader.

'Wat een gemis dan,' zei de jongen.

'Ja, echt kannibaals,' zei zijn vader.

Toen kwam zijn moeder binnen.

'Waar ben je geweest ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Boodschappen doen,' zei zijn moeder.

'Nog iets meegebracht ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ja, een boekje voor jou over kannibalen,' zei zijn moeder.

'Toevallig net over kannibalen gedroomd,' zei de jongen.

Hij nam het boekje aan en begon gretig te lezen. Het was een stripboek. 'Nou, dat gaat precies over mijn droom,' zei de jongen.

'Alles staat met elkaar in verbinding,' zei zijn moeder.

'Ik lees nu in de krant,' zei vader, 'dat er weer kannibalen zijn teruggekomen in het bos.'

'Die zijn nooit weggeweest,' zei de moeder van de jongen.

'Jawel,' zei de vader.

'Nee,' zei de moeder. 'Dan heb je toch niet goed je ogen opengehouden.'

'Nou ja, okay, jij zal het wel beter weten,' zei de vader.

'Nou, ken je nog die en die,' zei de moeder. 'Die zijn ook naar zo'n kannibalenstam vertrokken. Ze hadden het helemaal gehad met de wereld.'

'Als kannibaal of als voedsel ?' vroeg de vader.

'Beiden denk ik,' zei de moeder.

Vader keek de moeder vreemd aan. 'Hoe kan dat nou ?'

'Moet je mij niet vragen,' zei de moeder.

'Hoe kom jij daar allemaal bij ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Gedroomd,' zei de moeder.

'Ja, maar dromen zijn niet de werkelijkheid,' zei de jongen.

'Wie zegt dat ?' vroeg de moeder.

'Ja, wie zegt dat ?' vroeg toen ook de vader.

De jongen zuchtte. 'Ik denk dat ik maar weer ga slapen dan. Misschien ben ik nog niet goed wakker.' Toen werd de jongen wakker en besefte dat hij alles gedroomd had. Hij wist niet of hij nog steeds droomde. Hij kneep in zijn arm en voelde niets. Hij kneep toen harder, en sloeg zichzelf in het gezicht en voelde het toen wel. 'Kannibalen, kannibalen,' dacht de jongen bij zichzelf. 'Misschien ijl ik wel.' Hij probeerde op te staan, maar hij kon niet. 'Zie, ik droom nog steeds.' Toen waren de kannibalen in zijn kamer. En toen veranderde zijn kamer in het kannibalenkamp waar hij was. De vrouwen keken naar hem, en de meisjes ook. 'Hij is al gegroeid, langer geworden,' zei één van de meisjes. 'Dat betekent dat hij ... opgegeten gaat worden,' zei een ander meisje.

De jongen haalde zijn schouders op, maar omdat ze telkens dichterbij kwamen

werd hij wel banger. Hij trapte ze toen weg, en begon te rennen. Maar al snel werd hij teruggesleurd door een lasso. Hij viel neer met vreemde gevoelens in zijn buik, in grote paniek. Hij hoopte dat hij nu toch echt wakker zou worden. Toen aten ze hem op en werd hij wakker.

'Dit is gewoon de kannibalendood,' zei hij tegen zichzelf.
Hij liep naar beneden en zag zijn vader aan de krant.
'Ben ik dood ?' vroeg hij.
'Nee, je leeft nog,' zei zijn vader.

'Ik heb zo vreemd gedroomd, over de kannibalendood, en toen werd ik wakker, mag ik geloven,' zei hij.

'Ik had dat ook, totdat ik je moeder tegen kwam,' zei zijn vader.
'Is het nu beter ?' vroeg de jongen.
'Veel beter,' zei zijn vader. 'Ik heb er daarna niet meer over gedroomd.'

'Saai,' zei de jongen.

'Beter dan de kannibalendood,' zei zijn vader.

'Was ik maar dood,' zei de jongen. 'Dit is ook niks. Weer die stomme school.'

'En ik weer naar mijn werk,' zei zijn vader, 'maar bij moeder is het leven fijn. Zoals het klokje thuis tikt tikt het nergens. Oost west, thuis het best.'

'Iets om naar uit te kijken dan,' zei de jongen.

'Zeer zeker,' zei zijn vader. 'Zeg, wat voor lessen heb je vandaag ?'

'Oh,' zei de jongen. 'Gojsdienst, aardrijkskunde, geschiedenis, volkenkunde.'

'Misschien gaat het dan wel over kannibalen,' zei zijn vader.

'Leraren kunnen soms als kannibalen zijn,' zei de jongen.

'Jazeker, zoals werkbazen ook,' zei zijn vader.

'Zitten we in hetzelfde scheepje,' zei de jongen.

'Jazeker,' zei zijn vader.

Toen kwam de moeder binnen, maar ze was een kannibaal met een rieten rokje.

'Ga je naar carnaval ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Kom ik net vandaan,' zei de moeder. 'Het heeft de hele nacht geduurd.'

'Wat heb je allemaal gedaan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Nou, kijk eens goed. Ik ben een kannibaal,' zei de moeder. 'Wat denk je dat kannibalen doen ?'

'Ik weet het niet,' zei de jongen. 'Monopolie spelen, of een spelletje kaart ?'

'Malle jongen,' zei de moeder. 'Nee, we hebben lekker gegeten.'

'Wat heb je gegeten ?' vroeg de jongen.

'We hadden jullie nagemaakt van brood,' zei de moeder.

'Is dat een grapje ? Zo niet, dan begrijp ik waarom ik zo'n nachtmerrie heb gehad.'

'Traag,' zei de moeder. 'Natuurlijk is het een grapje.'

'Ja, maar heb je dat echt gedaan ? Ons namaken met brood ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ja, als grapje,' zei de moeder.

'Nou, leuk grapje,' zei de jongen. 'Vader, wat vind jij ervan ?'

'Grappig,' zei de vader.

'Nou, ik kan er niet om lachen,' zei de jongen. 'Maar ik ga nu naar school, waar de andere kannibalen op me zitten te wachten.'

'En ik ga terug naar mijn werk,' zei de vader.

'Dan ga ik weer terug naar het carnaval,' zei de moeder.

'Flauw,' zei de jongen.

'Waarom gaan jullie niet met me mee ?' vroeg de moeder.

'Omdat we school hebben,' zei de jongen, 'en vader moet werken.'

'Dan gaan jullie toch gewoon spijbelen ?' zei de moeder. 'Voor een keer kan dat geen kwaad. Dan zeg je gewoon dat je ziek was.'

'Goed idee,' zei de vader. En zo gingen ze met z'n drieën naar het carnaval, maar tot hun grote schrik was daar ook de baas van het werk, en wat leraren van school. 'Op heterdaad betrapt,' riepen ze.

'Ja, jullie zeker, want wat doen jullie hier ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Kunnen we beter aan jullie vragen,' vroegen de werkbaas en de leraren.

'Wij komen moeder afzetten,' zei de jongen. 'En wat is jullie smoes ?'

'Nou, laten we er niet meer over praten,' zeiden de leraren. 'Laten we het gewoon een schoolreisje noemen. Ga je ons aangeven bij het schoolbestuur ?'

'Hebben jullie je ziek gemeld ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ja,' zeiden de leraren. 'We zijn wat overspannen, en dit is therapeutisch.'

'Ja ja,' zei de jongen. 'Nou, dan kan mijn moeder misschien met jullie een uitzondering maken om jullie in het echt op te eten.'

'Dat kan toch niet,' zeiden de leraren. 'Dan komt ze in de gevangenis.'

'Alles beter dan dit hier,' zei de jongen.

De leraren begonnen toen te lachen en hem te duwen. 'Je komt hier niet meer weg,' zeiden ze.

Goedzo,' zei de jongen. 'Carnaval beter dan school.'

'Heb je je al ziek gemeld ?' vroegen de leraren.

'Nog niet,' zei de jongen, 'maar als jullie dat al hebben gedaan hoef ik toch niet te komen.'

Opeens werd de jongen meegesleurd in een grote optocht, en die ging door de hele stad.

'Carnaval beter dan school,' werd er telkens gezongen. 'Carnaval sterker dan school. Carnaval groter dan school. Kannibalen carnaval eet school.'

Einde

Ezechiel in het huis der schorpioenen – het shamanistische schorpioenen medicijn

Ezechiel was een prediker in ballingschap aan de rivier de Kebar. Hij werd door de natuur geroepen, en het juk van de ballingschap in Babylon was al een roeping op zich, want Jeremia had ertoe aangedrongen het juk te aanvaarden, zoals Yeshua in het NT oproepte om het kruis te dragen. Dit is zeker niet iets passiefs en gehoorzaams, want het roepingsvisioen van Ezechiel ging over een rund en een leeuw. De rund is de drager van het juk, maar de leeuw is van het verzet. De mens is niet geroepen om zomaar schaap of rund te zijn, maar de mens is ook geroepen leeuw te zijn, te vechten. Ezechiel kreeg te horen dat hij onder schorpioenen was gezonden. Die waren overal om hem heen. Hij woonde bij schorpioenen. Vandaag de dag wonen wij ook bij schorpioenen. Als Ezechiel dan te horen krijgt dat hij tegen hen gehard zou zijn, dan gaat dit in de grondtekst ook over het verzet. Het betekent ook volharding, wat ook de betekenis is van de voortijdse wortel van Ezechiël : sukki-l, de volharding in het hongeren, minderen.

Wanneer ontwaken we uit de nachtmerrie ? In het roepingsvisioen van Ezechiël gaat het niet alleen over de rund en de leeuw, maar ook over de arend, die door Calvijn het vermogen tot het doordringen van de hemel wordt genoemd, en een beeld is van de voorzichtigheid, oftewel de gezonde dosis natuur vreze. Calvijn bespreekt de vijanden van God, of de vijanden van de natuur kunnen we wel zeggen, de vijanden van de kennis, van het hongeren, en hij stelt dat deze vijanden de geestelijken ketters noemen, schismatieken, honden, en het uitvaagsel van de wereld, maar Calvijn stelt dat het ons genoeg is dat God, oftewel de natuur, de kennis, ons kent. Wij kunnen niet met iedereen vrienden zijn, en dat mogen wij ook niet. Vriendschap met het vlees, met de wereld, is vijandschap tegen de natuur, tegen de kennis.

De Ezechiëlitische psalmen van de regressie zingen :

Ezechiel 1

1 Aan de rivier der ballingschap,
genaamd de Kebar, waar ik was,
zag ik daar de hemelen geopend,
een vrouw met een boog gespannen,
ze sprak over vreemde plannen
2 Ik viel toen op mijn aangezicht,
toen ze sprak over hemelse plicht,
Ik had haar legers gezien,
haar hand op mij bovendien
3 Toen keek ik naar omhoog,
dingen die ik niet begreep,
ik zag toen weer de boog,
het had mijn hemel geopend

Ezechiel 2

1 Mensenkind, sta op uw voeten,
Kinderen, stug van aangezicht,
en verhard van hart,
Kijken mij naar de ogen,
Brengen mij grote smart
2 Tot hen zal ik spreken,
Tot dit weerspannig geslacht,
Klaagliederen opgetekend,
Nooit verwacht, nooit gedacht

Als het over Ezechiël's ontmoeting met de leeuwin gaat, als beeld van de volharding, in het voortijds 'sukki', dan mogen we ook denken aan de egyptische oorlogsgodin, de leeuwin sekmet, of sukkimet, de discipline of leer van de volharding. Ook Job kwam in de wildernis tot de leeuwinnen om door hen in het volharden onderwezen te worden. Ergens op het pad van de

volharding is de verbrokenheid. Dan houden wij het niet meer vol, en worden wij opgenomen in een diepere wereld. Dan kan het kind niet meer, en dan is het volbracht. Dan komt de arend om het kind over de zee mee te nemen, zoals ook in het roepingsvisioen van Ezechiël. Dit is een cyclus. Vandaar dat Ezechiël ook de wielen zag.

Zoals de regressie psalm zingt :

Ezechiel 1

1 Aan de rivier der ballingschap,
genaamd de Kebar, waar ik was,
zag ik daar de hemelen geopend,
een vrouw met een boog gespannen,
ze sprak over vreemde plannen
2 Ik viel toen op mijn aangezicht,
toen ze sprak over hemelse plicht,
Ik had haar legers gezien,
haar hand op mij bovendien
3 Toen keek ik naar omhoog,
dingen die ik niet begreep,
ik zag toen weer de boog,
het had mijn hemel geopend

Als wij opgenomen zijn is dat geenszins de hele tijd een gevoel van absolute gelukszaligheid. Neen. Het trauma is nog steeds diep in ons, en steekt. Het maakt je boos, depressief, verdrietig, bang. 'Hoe hebben ze dit kunnen doen, en dat ? Waarom ik ?' En je hongert weer, want de hemel is de leegte. Je hebt niet als bij toverslag oneindige kennis. Alles is hier maar half, en alles is vaag en subtiel. Je bent nog steeds op aarde, maar van binnen ben je opgenomen. De doorn in het vlees. Mijn genade is u genoeg, of zoals Calvijn het zegt : Het is genoeg dat God je kent. Het is genoeg dus door de natuur gekend te worden. De mensen kennen je niet. Je bent onder schorpioenen. Je woont bij hen. Ook al ben je van binnen opgenomen. Wat denken we dat de opname is ? Het is een verdieping. Je wordt niet zomaar uit alles weggenomen. Je komt niet in een loze

zaligheid terecht. We worden geleid tot de wildernis. We worden opgeroepen tot een hemelse plicht, een hemelse oorlog. De opname is dus een dienstoproep. Dan begint het pad. De dagen in het vlees zijn dan voorbij, en je gaat in het geestelijke verder. Het is niet iets om uit te stellen. Wij moeten nu opgenomen worden. Wij moeten nu tot de hemel gaan.

We zijn onder schorpioenen. Ze wonen bij ons. Ze liegen over ons, draaien alles om wat we zeggen. Ezechiël ging er ook doorheen. Hij was een vreemdeling in een vreemd land. Ze kunnen flink steken, deze schorpioenen. En dan duizelt het ons voor de ogen. En dan moeten we volharden tot het einde. Jezus moest de lijdensbeker tot de bodem leegdrinken. Hij zei : Niet mijn wil, maar uw wil zal geschieden, oftewel de wil of hogere kennis van de natuur. Wat weet een mens ? Als wij tot de hemel komen moeten wij al onze eigen kennis afleggen. Al onze eigen kennis moeten wij als vuilnis beschouwen. De engelen zien hier nauwlettend op toe. Wij mogen er geen eigen theologieën op nahouden. Dan komen we weer op de voorzichtigheid van de arend, de vreze van de natuur. Neem niets zomaar aan.

We dragen het kruis, we dragen de doorn in het vlees, zoals de indianen bij hun natuurinwijdingen pennen door hun vlees dragen. We dragen het zolang het nodig is. Dat is wat het ascetisme is. Dat wil niet zeggen dat we helemaal nooit klagen of nooit boos zijn. Integendeel. Het boos zijn is een groot lijden. We komen dan bij de kern van het kruis, de leeuw. Wie kan niet boos zijn op een wereld als deze ? Dan ben je aan de drugs. Dan zou er goed wat mis zijn. En die mensen zijn er genoeg. Ze zijn nooit boos, alles moet maar kunnen. Het is pure onverschilligheid. Ook naar de dieren toe. Laf eten ze hun stukje vlees, terwijl ze dat alleen zichzelf aandoen. Zij eten zichzelf per slot van rekening. Het zijn zelfhaters. Ze zijn bezig zichzelf op te hangen. Dieren zijn belangrijke symboliek, belangrijke lessen, maar die eten ze op, omdat het spijbelaars zijn en deserteuren. Zij zijn opgenomen door het vlees. Dat is een zwarte opname, een duivelse opname. Zij hebben hun zielen aan de duivel gekocht. En maar bier drinken en wijn, en dan anderen de zak geven. Zij verheerlijken het vlees, niet het geestelijke, en daarom eten ze ook vlees. Het laat zien wat ze diep van binnen koesteren. En dit soort smerige mensen stellen zich op de tronen van de aarde om over anderen in het vlees te regeren. Wij leven onder

schorpioenen. Wees waakzaam als een arend. Wijdt jezelf toe aan het doordringen van de verborgenheden van de hemel.

Er is geen vrije meningsuiting. Je betaalt een hoge prijs. We leven in een Noord Koreaanse dystopie. Net als Ezechiël leven we onder de schorpioenen, oftewel monitoren van de matrix die elke stap die we zetten controleren, of het wel helemaal volgens het boekje gaat, oftewel hun boekjes. De mens leeft in diepe ballingschap, net zoals Ezechiël. Job ging zijn innerlijke wildernissen in om op zoek te gaan naar de leeuwinnen van de volharding, oftewel hij kwam tot sekmet die hem de hogere oorlogen leerde. Er is geen pad van buiten, maar er is een pad van binnen.

De mens leeft in een camera dictatuur. Alles wat de mens doet wordt op een gouden weegschaaltje gewogen en wordt vastgelegd. De mens is omringd door schorpioenen. De mens wordt voortdurend gestoken, tot op het bot.

Openbaring 9

5 En hun werd gegeven, dat zij hen niet zouden doden, maar dat de mensen zouden gepijnigd worden, vijf maanden lang; en hun pijniging was als de pijniging door een schorpioen, wanneer hij een mens steekt. 6En in die dagen zullen de mensen de dood zoeken, maar hem geenszins vinden, en zij zullen begeren te sterven, maar de dood vlucht van hen weg.
3 En uit de rook kwamen sprinkhanen op de aarde te voorschijn en hun werd macht gegeven, gelijk de schorpioenen der aarde macht hebben.

Lukas 10

19 Zie, Ik heb u macht gegeven om op slangen en schorpioenen te treden en tegen de gehele legermacht van de vijand; en niets zal u enig kwaad doen.

Lukas 11

11 Is er soms een vader onder u, die, als zijn zoon hem om een vis vraagt, hem voor een vis een slang zal geven? 12 Of als hij om een ei vraagt, hem een

schorpioen zal geven? 13 Indien dan gij, hoewel gij slecht zijt, goede gaven weet te geven aan uw kinderen, hoeveel te meer zal uw Vader uit de hemel de heilige Geest geven aan hen, die Hem daarom bidden?

Deuteronomium 8

15 die u deed gaan door de grote en vreselijke woestijn, met vurige slangen en schorpioenen en dorstig land zonder water; die uit de harde rots voor u water te voorschijn deed komen, 16 die u in de woestijn met het manna voedde, dat uw vaderen niet gekend hebben, om u te verootmoedigen, u op de proef te stellen en u ten laatste wel te doen.

I Koningen 12

11 Welnu, mijn vader heeft u een zwaar juk opgelegd, maar ik zal uw juk nog verzwaren; mijn vader heeft u met gesels getuchtigd, maar ik zal u tuchtigen met schorpioenen.

In die dagen waren er ook bepaalde gesels met scherpe punten die schorpioenen werden genoemd. Het waren geknoopte gesels.

Het is belangrijk om te gaan tot de egyptische context. Serket was de schorpioenengodin, 'zij die de adem wegneemt'. De schorpioenensteek bracht verlamming. Ook kon zij adem geven en de beet genezen. De steken van de schorpioen zijn giftig, en doen de mens verstijven, wat ook een beeld is van de volharding. Serket was belangrijk in het beschermen van de doden in de onderwereld. Wij krijgen schorpioensteken om ons te beschermen tegen de machten van het vlees. Door de schorpioensteken kunnen wij onthechten, zoals ook Jezus door zijn lijden aan het kruis was losgesneden van de zonde macht. Wij moeten daarom het schorpioenen medicijn leren kennen. Het is om het vlees te doven en te doden. Zij werd ook wel de vrouw van de tent genoemd. Zij moest het voedsel bewaken om de mens af te houden van de vraatzucht. Daarom stak zij ook, als een natuurlimiet overtreden dreigde te worden. Zij hield de mens binnen de restricties van het minderen, opdat ze niet teveel zouden nemen. Als de slang Apep, oftewel de aardse gehechtheid, Ra in

zijn tocht door de onderwereld probeert te strikken, dan is Serket aan zijn zijde om de slang te steken, opdat hij Ra niet wurgt. Ook beschermde zij het horus-kind hiertegen als bijmoeder.

de koeken wet

Ze bestelden hun koeken via de computer.
'Die wil ik, die wil ik, en die wil ik, en die.'
En zo bouwden ze hun huizen van koek.
Het koeken monster had het druk.
Er mochten niet teveel koeken gegeten worden, maar ze mochten er wel mee bouwen.
En het waren al snel fossielen.

Ze bestelden hun koeken via de computer.
'Die wil ik, en die wil ik ook.'
Het koeken monster hield alles streng in de gaten.
Zij die de koeken wet bleven overtreden zouden zelf ook tot fossielen worden.

de etalage pop

Ze kon zich niet bewegen. Ze was een etalage pop. Telkens moest ze hier maar staan. Niemand nam haar mee. Ze droomde van vrijheid, maar die kwam maar nooit. Ze wist niet eens hoe ze hier was gekomen. Ze keek vaak naar de voorbijgangers, en zag hen naar haar kijken. Ze wilde soms wat zeggen, maar kon het niet. Ze was immers een etalage pop. Op een dag was het oorlog in de stad. Er werd een steen door de ruiten gegooid en er was overal brand. Ineens merkte ze dat ze zich kon bewegen en nam direct de benen. Ze rende helemaal naar achteren, naar het magazijn. Toen de winkelier haar zag viel hij flauw. Ze rende door totdat ze uit het gebouw was. Hier was een tuin en achter de tuin was een hek waar ze overheen klom, en toen rende ze de wildernis in. Ze ontdeed haarzelf van al haar kleren en deed haar grote hoed af en gooide het weg. Ergens in een bosmeertje ging ze baden. Ze keek naar achteren. De stad was brandende. Ze wist niet hoe het kon, maar ze was vrij nu. Nu moest ze zien te overleven. Na een tijd lopen door het bos kwam ze bij een indianenkamp aan. Ze keken haar allemaal heel vreemd aan. 'Dit kan toch niet,' zei het opperhoofd. 'Ze lijkt wel op een pop.'

'Oh, daar heb ik wel wat voor,' zei de medicijnenman. Ze kreeg toen een soepje met kruiden. 'Ik kan me weer goed bewegen,' zei ze toen. 'Ik voel me helemaal geen pop meer.'

'Je ziet er ook niet meer als een pop uit,' zei de medicijnman glimlachend. 'De natuur weet altijd wel raad met dit soort dingen.'

'Moet ik niet terug ?' vroeg ze, terwijl ze naar achteren keek.

'Nee,' zei de medicijnman, 'je kan hier wel blijven.'

'Oh goed,' zei ze, 'want ik wil helemaal niet terug.'

'Er is ook geen weg meer terug,' zei de medicijnman. 'De stad is afgebrand.'

'En er zijn geen andere steden ?' vroeg ze.

'Nee,' zei de medicijnman, 'ook allemaal afgebrand.'

'Hoe kwam dat ?' vroeg ze.

De medijnman haalde zijn schouders op. 'Ze maken elkaar allemaal af daar.'

'I … ik kan hier niet blijven,' stamelde ze. 'Ik voel me weer als een pop.' Ze stond op en rende terug het bos in, richting de brandende stad, en rende toen zo het vuur in.

'Ah, vuur !' riep ze, terwijl ze begon te branden. 'Eindelijk vrij.'

De medicijnman en het opperhoofd waren haar gevolgd. 'Wat doe je nu !' riep het opperhoofd, terwijl ze zag dat de medicijnman hem aanstootte. 'Ik ben vrij nu !' riep ze.

'Ja, maar je brandt !' riep het opperhoofd. Weer zag ze hoe de medicijnman hem aanstootte.

Haar poppenvlees begon weg te smelten. Eronder was niets dan metaal. Het was vuurvast metaal. 'Ik ben ook niet kapot te krijgen !' riep ze.

'Wacht hier maar !' riep de medicijnman. Na een tijd plofte ze vermoeid neer in het zand. De medicijnman begon haar uit elkaar te schroeven. 'Wat doe je nu ?' vroeg het opperhoofd. Weer stootte de medicijnman hem aan. 'Ik ben bezig,' zei de medicijnman.

Ze sprak niet meer, zoals ze eerst niet sprak. Dit was wat er van haar was overgebleven, en de medicijnman was nog niet klaar. Hij begon haar helemaal opnieuw te maken. Ze was nu een donkere vrouw en leek op een indiaan. Maar de medicijnman schudde zijn hoofd. 'Nee, nee, dat is het niet,' zei hij. Hij begon haar weer uit elkaar te schroeven en gooide de onderdelen stuk voor stuk in een rivier dichtbij waar krokodillen waren. Die lustten de onderdelen wel, en konden het ook verteren. 'Wat heb je nu gedaan ?' riep het opperhoofd in

paniek. 'Je hebt haar omgebracht !'

'Welnee,' zei de medicijnman. 'Ze was maar een pop.'

'Misschien ben jij ook wel een pop,' zei het opperhoofd. 'Je lijkt wel gek.'

'Prik er eens in,' zei de medicijnman.

Waarin ?' vroeg het opperhoofd.

'Nou, in mijn huid, dan zie je of ik een pop ben of niet,' zei de medicijnman.

Voorzichtig stak het opperhoofd met een scherp voorwerp in de huid van de medicijnman. Die gaf geen kik.

'Je bent een pop,' zei het opperhoofd.

Ook het indianendorp was inmiddels gaan branden vanwege de vele bosbranden die vanuit de stad waren gekomen. Het opperhoofd keek om zich heen, en zag overal rook. 'En wat heb ik aan je als je slechts een pop bent ? En nog een gevaarlijke pop ook,' zei het opperhoofd. 'Misschien moet ik jou dan ook maar aan de krokodillen voeren.'

'Schroef me dan wel eerst uit elkaar,' zei de medicijnman.

'Wat ?' vroeg het opperhoofd. 'Ben je gek geworden ?'

Ineens kwam de vrouw uit het water. 'Hoe kan dat ?' vroeg het opperhoofd. 'Ik dacht dat je door krokodillen was opgevreten ?'

'Ze hebben me weer uitgespuwd,' zei de vrouw.

'Waarom ?' vroeg het opperhoofd, 'en ben je nu geen pop meer dan ?'

'Nou ja, het metaal hebben ze gegeten,' zei de vrouw. 'Maar ik ben meer dan

het metaal. Ik zat in het metaal opgesloten.'

'Pardon, pardon,' zei het opperhoofd. 'Ik had van deze zaken geen verstand. Ik heb u verkeerd beoordeeld medicijnman.'

'In het vervolg dan je bek houden,' zei de medicijnman, 'en laat alles aan de experts over.'

'Begrepen,' zei het opperhoofd. 'En omdat ik me zo stom heb gedragen ben jij vanaf nu het opperhoofd,' zei hij tegen de medicijnman.

'Laat dat deze vrouw maar wezen,' zei de medicijnman.

En toen hebben ze samen het indianendorp weer opgebouwd.

fossielen

Als ik in de stenen kijk doet het pijn.
Als ik in de stenen kijk voel ik me vernederd.
Als ik in de stenen kijk dan zie ik mezelf zoals ik mezelf niet wil zien,
en toch blijf ik kijken.

Band

Undercover

Wij rijden op leeuwen,
met de pijlen van liefde,
in een oorlogsband zijn wij …
want zeg nu zelf …
zoveel demente familie bands die denken dat ze kunnen zingen,
en dan met vlees in de mond over de liefde gaan zingen …

Dan staan ze daar als oude omaatjes,
en dan halverwege het liedje gaan de kleren uit,
cheer you up in a pin up club …
nee bedankt … ik heb al gegeten en gedronken …

En dat soort types verslijten zichzelf voor vader en moeder,
Nee bedankt, ik ga liever gewoon dood …
En ik ben al op sterven na de dood door dit soort types,
en dan durven ze zichzelf ook nog een band te noemen …

Zo groeide ik op, en toen heb ik mijn eigen band hiertegen opgericht,
the band of love, als een oorlogsverklaring,
wij wilden geen roem, maar we werden berucht,
we traden niet op in volle zalen,
maar zochten de armen op in 't hongerend afrika,
en de eenzamen en vergetenen in psychiatrische ziekenhuizen …

Een band die mensen helpt van onderen,
the band of love …
Maar nee, dat kon niet, zeiden de zingende zombies met het vlees nog in de mond,

en toen kwamen de dreigementen, de roddels, geruchten en leugens,
en zo werd onze band berucht …
want de zingende zombies met het vlees nog in de mond leefden juist van al het leed …
dat was hun inkomen, en daar moest je vanaf blijven …

En daarom is het oorlog …
En daarom hebben wij alleen de pijlen der liefde …
want we verlagen ons niet tot hun niveau …

En we speelden stille muziek voor de doven,
En vaak waren het alleen maar teksten …
Ik voelde me vaak meer predikant dan zanger …
Want ik wilde een boodschap te brengen hebben,
de mens iets meegeven …

Alleen onder de grond waren we beroemd,
in het hart van een geestelijk gehandicapte,
in het hart van een eenzame zieke,
alleen door armen waren we gekend …
al was het maar om één persoon of één dier,
dan is het het allemaal waard geweest …
en door ons werden slachthuizen gesloten …
daarom waren we berucht, niet beroemd,
en wilde men ons dood hebben …

Maar wij waren al dood naar ons vlees,
al aan een afgelegen kruis gestorven …
En daarom reden wij op leeuwen …
met pijlen der liefde …

Wij speelden onze muziek slechts voor de doden en doven …
wij speelden onze muziek slechts voor de dieren …
en de armen … want de rijken en machtigen hadden voor ons afgedaan …

Mijn band of love,
En zo ontmoette ik eens op een festival een vrouwenbandje uit de zeventiger jaren …
Ik zei : hey, ik was altijd fan van jullie …
Volgens mij had één van jullie mij eens wat geleerd over de ware, hemelse astrologie,
waardoor ik in contact kwam met het al,
'Ja, dat was ik,' zei één van die vrouwen toen.
En die andere herkende ik als een undercover verpleegster in een ziekenhuis waar ik eens optrad,
Ze liep toen op iedereen te schelden, behalve op mij,
want ik was immers van de band of love …

Dingen kunnen vreemd lopen in het leven …
Zij waren altijd mijn inspiratie om dit werk te doen …
Ze gingen door de gootstenen om hun boodschap te brengen,
in mijn hart waren ze beroemd …

Ze reden op leeuwen, met pijlen der liefde …
Het ging recht door mijn jonge hart …
En ze namen mij op in hun leger …
Band Undercover was hun naam …
Maar ik noemde ze mijn pussycats …
Heel even waren ze beroemd in Amerika,
maar als ze echt mijn pussycats hadden geheten was dit nooit gebeurd,
want Amerikanen houden nu eenmaal niet van katten …

Waar kun je ons vinden ?
Niet in de gouden gids,
maar in een afgelegen ziekenhuis,
of een droge wildernis,
een liefde die een ieder heeft vergeten,
zo diep het hart kan gaan …
je vindt ons in een boze brief aan een slachthuis,
je vindt ons niet in de krant,

je vindt ons in een stil en geheim dagboek van een leeuwin,
in het hart van mijn pussycat

band of love,
ja, je kunt het wel raden,
er werd een moordaanslag op mij gepleegd,
telefonische dreigementen de hele dag door,
mijn secretaresse werd er gek van …

ik moest toen wel stoppen met de band of love …
voor de veiligheid van mezelf, mijn band en mijn secretaresse,
en ben toen de zanger geworden van Band Undercover

de dames namen mij lieftallig aan,
begrepen mijn verhaal,
vonden het een hele eer,
en het werd gevierd met chocola,
en veel spontane sluitingen van slachthuizen en corrupte ziekenhuis centra

laatst sprak ik één van de dames aan de telefoon …
ja nou, moet je horen, zei ze,
ze komen nu even …
ik vroeg : wie ?
nou ja, zei ze, je weet wel …
ik zei ik weet van niks …
komt nog wel, zei ze, zie je nog wel …
ik zei ok …

dus ik wachten …
surprise surprise …
stond er een echte je weet wel voor de deur …
ik had hier natuurlijk een enorme schik van …
ik vertelde het aan iemand anders en die vroeg : waar heb je het over ?
ik zei nou, 't komt ook nog wel voor jouw deur, je zult het wel zien …

typisch echt iets voor band undercover …
je kunt het gewoon niet grijpen,
kunt er je vinger niet opleggen …
kunt er geen blik politie agenten voor opentrekken of een leger op af sturen,
want je weet niet waar je moet wezen en wat er gaande is …
't schijnt een beveiligings systeem te zijn dat we dit undercover werk nog kunnen doen …
de dames pussycat hadden het eens op de markt ergens gekocht …
deden ze allemaal heel geheimzinnig over …
ik weet het fijne er ook niet van …
zit allemaal wel goed zo, zeiden ze …
en tja, wat kan ik zeggen ?
de muziek is top, en daar gaat het om …
ik weet verder ook niet waar ze het over hebben, maar klinkt goed,
kan er alle kanten mee op, als een kompas …

maar ja, goed, daar zijn we band undercover voor … is allemaal hartstikke geheim …
niemand merkt er iets van, iedereen slaapt rustig door, en wij zingen slaapliedjes die niemand zich nog kan herinneren … mooi opgelost zo …

ik word zelf ook weleens wakker dat ik denk : wat is er nu gebeurd, waar heb ik precies over gedroomd ? het is slechts een droom band … we zingen onszelf gewoon in slaap … ja, wat moet je anders doen deze dagen ? als leven, werken en spreken te gevaarlijk is, dan maar gewoon zingen totdat je in slaap valt en droomt … en dan ook alles weer vergeet … en de enige plaats waar je het nog allemaal terug kan vinden is in het stil en geheim dagboek van een leeuwin … in haar hart, de enige plaats waar het nog veilig is … my pussycat ...

rode steen

Ik was bij de rode steen.
Ik voelde de warme gloed en het was verfrissend.
Het was een natuurleger.
Het was natuurgesteente.
Ik had rust in mijn longen, en rust overviel mij.
De rode steen was een grote planeet, een wildernis planeet.
Het virus werd overhoop geschoten.
Dit virus kleefde vast aan een ieder die hier kwam.
Het virus wilde niet laten gaan, maar het moest wel laten gaan.
De rode steen zorgde hiervoor.

Als een robotisch leger stonden zij op,
Om de aarde in te nemen.
Zielen werden gezogen tot de bron.
Ik rende en werd opgenomen,
terug tot de bron,
deze rode steen,
waarin leven was.

Ik kon weer ademen, mijn zintuigen gingen weer open.
Alles was vastgeroest en dichtgeslibt,
maar de aarde ging open.

De openbaring van de rode steen,
waar gingen zij toch heen ?
Wat was hier allemaal gebeurd ?
Op de ijsbaan in de kleedkamer stond een fruitmachine,
Het waren zulke leuke tekeningetjes en zulke leuke geluidjes,
en een rode steen die het had getekend,
een rode steen die het had gemaakt.

Vrijdagmiddag activiteiten,
als de school is uitgegaan en het weekend aanbreekt,
een rode steen komende in de nacht

Nee, deze nachten zijn er niet veel,
en toch komen ze, toch komen ze,
en dan nemen ze je op,
op de rode zee tot de rode steen,
het natuurschoon van deze planeet

Je moet toch soms wel kunnen ademen,
Je moet het soms toch wel groots aanpakken,
Je kunt het allemaal niet laten liggen,
Het zuigt je naar binnen,
en dan wordt je één met de rode steen

Een nieuw hart, nieuwe longen,
nieuwe aderen door je lichaam,
en tekenfilm figuren lopen tegen de muren die ze zelf gebouwd hebben

Het virus wordt afgeschoten als een ballon,
want hier was alles misgegaan

het oog van de zombificator

Ik werkte in het prachtigste natuurgebied van mijn stad, helemaal in het zuiden. Wel stonden daar in die prachtige natuur met al die prachtige bomen,

struiken, velden en riviertjes een heleboel hoge flats. Ik was er voor de gordijntjes. Op een dag werden we gebeld voor een afspraak op vijf hoog ergens. We gingen er naartoe, ik en mijn maat, en een vrouw deed open. Ze zei : 'Kom maar, kom maar,' en maakte zo'n gebaar met haar vingers alsof we kinderen waren. 'Helemaal achter in de kamer, bij het raam, daar hangt het gordijn, en het is helemaal mis. Het is van jullie.' Ik keek mijn maat vreemd aan, en hij keek vreemd naar mij, zo van : 'Het zal wel goed wezen.' Maar die vrouw had hele hypnotiserende ogen, en voordat we het wisten lagen we op de grond. We konden ons niet meer bewegen. Mijn maat dacht dat het koolmonoxide was, maar ik dacht dat het door haar ogen kwam. Natuurlijk fluisterden we. Ze hielp ons weer op, en we hadden ineens weer kracht in onze benen. 'Gingen jullie beiden van je stokje ?' vroeg ze.

'Ik dacht het wel,' zei ik. Mijn maat zei toen : 'Kan een koolmonoxide probleem zijn. Laat uw ketel eens goed nakijken. Het is hier niet pluis.'

'Ik heb rattengif gelegd,' zei die vrouw toen. 'Sorry, maar daar komt het waarschijnlijk van. Veel mensen kunnen niet tegen het spul, maar jullie staan weer.' Ik keek haar aan, en weer ging ik van mijn stokje.

'Ze moeten hem wel hebben vandaag,' sprak ze tegen mijn maat. 'Doe jij anders die gordijnen even, want ik moet zo weg.'

'Wow,' zei mijn maat. 'Mijn maat gaat voor. Al het andere kan wel wachten. Er is hier iets niet pluis.' Ik dacht dat ik maar niet meer in haar ogen moest kijken. Mijn maat hielp me weer overeind. Toen zijn we naar haar gordijn gaan kijken. We voelden ons beiden niet goed. 'Misschien dat rattengif,' fluisterde ik, 'maar ik kijk niet meer in die ogen.' We hebben toen ook even het raam open gezet en toen ging het wat beter. Wat frisse lucht. Maar daar werd die vrouw woest van. Dat konden we niet zomaar doen. Na lang praten stemde ze eindelijk toe, anders wilden we ons werk niet doen. Het gordijn klopte inderdaad van geen kanten. 'Misschien ligt het wel aan jullie gordijn,' zei ze toen. Het waren hele speciale gordijnen, die nogal ingewikkeld in elkaar zaten. Maar ja, we kenden ons werk, en na een uurtje werken was het gordijn weer goed. Maar wij voelden ons nog steeds niet goed. 'Wat water misschien ?' vroeg ze.

'Nee, laat maar,' zei ik. 'Uw gordijn is nu in orde. We moeten weer gaan.'

'Dat gaat zo maar niet,' zei die vrouw. 'Mijn ander gordijn aan de andere kant is ook stuk.' Toen gingen we daar ook kijken, en hebben we daar ook een raampje open gezet, en hebben we weer een uur eraan gewerkt om het gordijn in orde te krijgen. Het zijn van die hele speciale gordijnen, werkt allemaal electrisch. Zodra iemand naar het gordijn kijkt, dan vangt het gordijn zo iemands herinneringen op, en onttrekt er honing aan, als een honingbij. Dat is ook de firma waarvoor we werkten : honingbij gordijnen. Maar als er dan iets mis is, dan is het vaak ook goed mis. 'Waarschijnlijk waren het dan toch de kapotte gordijnen,' zei ik.

Ze keek me aan met een hypnotiserende blik, maar ik keek niet naar haar. Ik zag het in mijn ooghoeken. Ik werd er naar van. Ik voelde het in mijn buik. 'Is er nog meer stuk ?' vroeg mijn maat ineens.

Ik keek hem boos aan. Ik had het helemaal gehad.

'Ja,' zei ze. 'Nog veel meer.'

'Dat verklaart een hoop,' zei ik. 'Hopelijk niet van onze firma.'

'Nee,' zei ze. 'Er komt hier iedere ochtend iemand voor het bad. Het is een heel speciaal bad. Het is een honingbad. Als je in het bad zit, dan onttrekt het honing uit je herinneringen. Die herinneringen zijn als bloemenvelden, en de honingbijen gaan van jaar tot jaar.'

'Dat doen onze gordijnen ook,' zei ik.

'Ja, maar een bad is toch beter,' zei ze.

'En het bad is ook stuk ?' vroeg ik.

'Ja,' zei ze.

'We kunnen er wel even naar kijken,' zei mijn maat, terwijl ik hem weer boos aankeek. Ik had het helemaal gehad met die vreemde vrouw. 'Kom maar, kom maar,' zei ze, terwijl ze naar de badkamer liep, en weer kinderlijke gebaren met haar vingers naar ons maakte. 'Zit ze nu de spot met ons te drijven ?' fluisterde ik naar mijn maat. Maar die deed alsof hij niks hoorde. Toen stonden we bij het bad, en ze liet het vollopen. 'Eigenaardig,' zei mijn maat.

'Heb je het nog nooit gezien ?' vroeg de vrouw.
'Nee,' zei mijn maat. 'En wat is er precies stuk ?'

'Kijk goed,' zei die vrouw. Mijn maat boog over het bad en begon aan de honing te ruiken. 'Mmmm,' zei hij, alsof hij onder hypnose was. Ik wilde weg. Zijn hele gezicht zat er toen onder. 'Heb je het gezien ?' vroeg ze. 'Nu jij,' zei ze tegen mij. Ik boog ook maar over het bad, en rook aan de honing. Ook mijn gezicht zat eronder. Het rook vreemd. 'Kunt u wat duidelijker zijn ?' vroeg ik. 'Wat is er nu precies mis met dat bad.

'Precies dat,' zei de vrouw.

'Wat ?' vroeg ik.

'Lik er eens aan,' zei die vrouw toen.

'Ikke niet,' zei ik toen. Toen likte mijn maat eraan. 'Mmmm,' zei hij, 'v... volgens mij is er niks mis mee.' Maar ineens zakte hij op de grond, en kreeg stuiptrekkingen alsof hij epilepsie had. 'Wat is er ?' vroeg ik. Ik probeerde hem omhoog te trekken, maar hij trok zich woest weg van mij, en greep de benen van de vrouw vast en liet niet meer los. 'Blijf van me af !' riep hij.

'Ik zei het je toch,' zei de vrouw met een strak gezicht. 'Er is heel wat mis met dat bad.'

'Ik heb het in de gaten,' zei ik boos. 'En het is niet eens van onze firma, dus we kunnen niets doen.'

Die maat van mij werd steeds gekker. 'Nee, nee, nee !' gilde hij. En toen zei hij weer dat het zo hemels was, maar hij wilde niks meer van mij weten. Ik wilde hem meenemen uit het huis, maar hij wilde dat niet.

'En er komt morgenochtend weer iemand voor ?' vroeg ik.

'Dat hoop ik wel,' zei die vrouw.

'Kunt u die persoon nu niet bellen dan ?' vroeg ik. 'Mijn maat is zichzelf niet meer. Dit kan echt niet. Dat bad is levensgevaarlijk. Waar heeft u het gekocht ?'

'Op de zwarte markt,' zei de vrouw.

'Ja, dan vraag je om problemen,' zei ik.

'Ze hebben het druk, dus ze kunnen echt niet eerder komen,' zei de vrouw.

'Belachelijke firma,' zei ik.

'I... i... is er m... m... misschien nog iets stuk,' vroeg mijn maat toen, alsof hij dronken was.

'Nee, dit is alles,' zei de vrouw.

Ik dacht : 'Gelukkig maar,' maar dit was al erg genoeg.

'Ach toe nou,' zei mijn maat dronken, 'er moet nog wel iets wezen wat kapot is en wat ik kan maken.'

En weet je wat die vrouw toen deed ? Ze trapte hem zo tegen zijn mond aan en riep : 'Ja, dit is nog kapot.' Toen onze firma hiervan hoorde werd mijn maat ontslagen en hij is nooit meer dezelfde geworden. Later hoorde ik dat hij tandarts was geworden. Dingen kunnen soms vreemd lopen in het leven.

Het oog van de zombificator lacht,
In die donk're donk're nacht,
Het oog van de zombificator liegt,
Terwijl het met de buit wegvliegt,
Ja, dat oog kan het allemaal niets schelen,
Geen echt werk, maar allemaal criminelen.

En ik heb toen heel lang naar onze gordijnen moeten staren om het weer recht te krijgen. Elke bloem draagt honing zal ik maar zeggen. Ook deze bloem, het oog van de zombificator, nog steeds diep gegrifd in mijn geheugen, maar ook telkens weer zijn honing gevende. Het is een wond, zo diep, zo diep, als een honingbij stekende, maar ook als een bloem zijn honing gevende. Honing zo zoet, zo zoet, maar dit keer is het goed. Het maakt mij dronken, zo dronken, totdat ik een schop tegen mijn mond voel, en dan is het tijd me weer te bezinnen, me weer terug te trekken, opdat het oog van de zombificator me geen oor aannaait.

Ik ken een bloem, diep in de nacht,
Waar het oog van de zombificator wacht,
Oh, hoe ik worstel met die bloem, hoe ik ermee strijd,
Totdat het zich opensplijt,
Om honing te geven,
Niemand houd het tegen,
Als een honingbij in de nacht,
Heb ik op deze bloem gewacht,
Niemand kan deze bloem bekoren,
Bij voorbaat heb je 't al verloren,
Alleen in 't diepste van de nacht is haar pracht,
Niemand kan deze bloem bekoren,
Bij voorbaat heb je 't al verloren,
Haar honing stroomt alleen wanneer je 't niet meer verwacht

Ik ken een bloem,
diep in de nacht,

waar het oog van de zombificator wacht,
vol van bedrog, vol van geweld,
Je ligt snel op de vloer waar je leven niet meer telt,
Ik ken een boom van mooie lied'ren,
waar het leven niet meer wacht,
je moet het zelf maar gaan verdienen,
al die diepe hemelse pracht,
Je kan het zelf al niet meer zeggen,
het leven is niet slechts geluk,
maar aan beide kanten kun je pas echt beseffen,
het leven heeft je slechts tuk

Het oog van de zombificator lacht,
als een mysterieuze bloem in de nacht,
niemand kent het, maar er zijn zoveel verhalen van,
en ieder draait er omheen,
en het duurt al zo lang

Ik heb er lang in geloofd, in deze bloem,
maar nu is al mijn liefde gedoofd,
Ik heb er lang voor gevochten, voor deze bloem,
Maar het bracht alleen maar onheil,
en roofde al mijn poen,
Ik heb er toen nooit meer voor gestreden,
nam haar honing, en was toen weg,
dat is toch het leven van een bij,
alles staat voor je op een rij

Het oog van de zombificator rust,
Een prachtige bloem, dat wel, maar gevaarlijk en vol van lust,
Elke bloem geeft zijn honing, dat wel,
Maar wie blijft er nu lang bij zulke kommer en zulke kwel,
'k ben een honingbij op een tocht,
dat is alles waar ik voor vocht

Mijn mooie bloem,
van veraf zo prachtig,
van dichtbij zo heldhaftig,
Een wond in mijn hoofd die maar niet geneest,
Maar al is het alleen maar voor de honing geweest …

Het oog van de zombificator,
Nu een heel bloemenveld vol van die krengen,
Ze groeien en marcheren door de hele stad,
maar een hele uitdaging voor de honingbij,
zo'n prachtige zwarte bloem,
met hele speciale levengevende honing,
alhoewel je er eerst de dood voor sterft …
Wat moet je wel niet geven om van haar honing te kunnen nemen ?

Het oog van de zombificator,
Altijd weer dans je voor haar,
en altijd maar weer heeft ze zoveel klusjes voor je te doen,
en altijd wel weer breek je wat,
vooral je hart …

Ik heb er lang over lopen denken,
Ik dacht het zal allemaal wel wennen,
Maar ik kon alleen maar rennen …
Alleen een honingbij gaat in en uit door haar poort …

Einde

het geheim van venezuela

Ik was in Venezuela geweest en ik kwam thuis, en mijn Lucky Luke beeld begon ineens tot me te spreken. Ik wreef in mijn ogen. 'Dit kan gewoon niet waar zijn,' zei ik tegen mezelf. Dit beeld had namelijk naar mijn herinnering nooit tot mij gesproken. Ik dacht dat het beeld niet kon spreken. Ik vroeg me af of ik wel echt was thuisgekomen of dat ik gewoon droomde. Ik kneep in mijn arm en het deed pijn, dus ja, ik moest wel wakker zijn. Maar ja, in een droom was ik ook eens in mijn ballen geknepen en toen deed het ook pijn, dus ik kon nergens meer van op aan. In ieder geval zei Lucky Luke : 'Die rotzakken. We gaan er allemaal doorheen. Niemand wordt overgeslagen. Iedereen wordt kapotgemaakt door het systeem. Maar toch zijn er ook magische momenten, en ik kan weer spreken.' Ik was blij voor het beeld. Het moest wel zijn gekomen door dat ik naar Venezuela was geweest. Ik had daar een meisje ontmoet die me vertelde dat Venezuela maar één keer per dag eet, vanwege de armoede daar. Ik heb haar toen meegenomen naar een eiland en haar bankrekening gespekt. We zijn toen gaan zwemmen in de zee. Dat dit zou uitlopen in dat mijn Lucky Luke beeld zou spreken had ik nooit verwacht, maar blijkbaar bestaat magie nog steeds. Toen ik het meisje had geholpen en had meegenomen begon ze allemaal mooie wensen over me uit te spreken als dankbaarheid. Ze had weer een beetje geluk in haar hart gevonden. En dat geluk deelde ze met mij, maar toen moest ik weer naar huis. Dat zijn van die Assepoester momenten dat de klok bijna twaalf slaat en dan moet je weer terug. Het was dus een grote verrassing dat ik werd opgewacht door een sprekend Lucky Luke beeld. Dan zit je weer tussen de pompoenen en de muizen, maar dan toch met het sprekende Lucky Luke beeld. Hij was klaar voor de strijd. Het zou oorlog worden. Het was alsof ik de fee van Assepoester had ontmoet. Die nacht toen ik was thuisgekomen had ik een droom over de natuur van Venezuela, hoe moeder Venezuela tot mij riep, als de stem van een overweldigende, dreunende, bulderende wildernis. En ik droomde over kannibalen, en er was geen sprekend Lucky Luke beeld in de buurt. Maar toen ik wakker werd weer wel. Hij staarde naar mij, zijn ogen bewogen, wat ook wel bijzonder was. Het beeld kon zich nu ook bewegen. Het bleef niet alleen bij het spreken. Hij heeft me toen mee naar buiten genomen, en we gingen naar de trein. Met de trein gingen we naar een boot, en de boot nam ons de zee op. Ik

keek naar Lucky Luke, en hij keek naar mij.

'Venezuela, Venezuela,' zei hij.
'De klok slaat bijna twaalf uur, maar schieten zullen wij die klok.'
Ik keek hem met grote ogen aan.
'Wat bedoel je, Lucky Luke ?'
Ik hoorde zijn woorden als een echo, als een woeste wildernis.
'De klok slaat bijna twaalf uur, bijna,' zei hij. 'Dan zijn we rijk, geen armoede meer. Maar schieten zullen wij die klok, want hoe kunnen we rijk zijn als anderen arm zijn ?'

Ik zei toen : 'Maar ik dacht dat Assepoester weer arm was als het twaalf uur zou worden.'
'Ja,' zei Lucky Luke, 'de armen worden dan steeds armer, en de rijken steeds rijker, dus moet de fik erin,' terwijl hij blies op zijn pistool.

'Waar is die klok ergens ?' vroeg ik.

'Moet je mij niet vragen, moet je mij niet vragen, vraag het aan Venezuela,' zei hij toen.
En zo gingen we terug naar Venezuela, en terug naar het meisje. Ik vroeg aan haar waar de klok van Assepoester was. Ze keek me aan met stralende ogen.
'De klok groeit in het woud, het klokgewas,' zei ze.

We zijn toen naar het bos gegaan, en daar liet ze me het zien. Het was een glinsterend gewas. 'Hiervan worden de armen armer en de rijken rijker,' zei ze.
'Het is dromerig gewas. Het maakt de bozen bozer en de gelukkigen gelukkiger. Het maakt de slechten slechter en de goeden beter.'

'Ingewikkelde zaak,' zei ik. 'En dat gewas kan gegeten worden ?'

'Nee, het is vergif,' zei ze. 'Het klokgewas is groot vergif.'

'We kunnen het niet eten,' zei Lucky Luke.

'Nee,' zei het meisje.

'Kunnen we het afschieten ?' vroeg Lucky Luke.

'Nee, dan wordt het alleen maar erger,' zei het meisje. 'Het maakt de zieken zieker, en de gezonden gezonder, en het maakt de bedroefden nog droever. Kom niet te dichtbij.'

'Ja, dat laat ik niet op me zitten,' zei Lucky Luke, en hij sprong in het gewas. Een enorme worsteling vond plaats tussen Lucky Luke en het klokgewas. Ik hoorde toen schoten, en toen kwam Lucky Luke eruit. Hij had een glimlach en blies tegen zijn pistool. 'Het was een koud kunstje,' zei Lucky Luke.

'Nee,' zei het meisje. 'In de nacht zal het weer groeien en het zal ons allen overweldigen. Het zal zich nu nog erger gaan verspreiden.'

'Dat zal wel meevallen,' zei Lucky Luke. 'Je gelooft toch zeker niet in sprookjes ?'

Maar het meisje had gelijk. Het kwam. Het kwam. Het klokgewas begon overal te groeien. Het was een nachtmerrie.

Het meisje van Venezuela zong toen :

'Nu is alles nog wel erger, maar ook is alles nu echt veel veel beter,
Het goede werd het beste, en het erge werd het ergst,
Maar nu heb ik jou, en kunnen we alles vergeten.
Wij leven tussen werelden in,
Wij leven tussen trollen en de mensen,
Wij leven opdat wij anderen het goede wensen

Nu alles nog wel erger, maar ook veel beter,
Zonder dit had ik jou nooit ontmoet,
We zullen laten zien hoe alles moet,
Wij zijn voor elkaar gemaakt,

Als een nieuwe klok van de natuur

't is bijna twaalf uur, 't is bijna twaalf uur.
Oh, ben je klaar voor de geheimen,
Nu kunnen we dieper in elkaar reiken,
Jij kent mijn pijn, en ik ken de jouwe,
Steeds erger, erger wordt het, maar ook veel beter

Jouw verdriet is ook het mijne, mijn verdriet is ook het jouwe,
het is bijna, bijna, bijna twaalf uur ….
Geheimen, geheimen, geheimen, van de natuur …'

In ieder geval moest ik weer naar huis. Natuurlijk ging Lucky Luke met mij mee, want het was mijn beeld, en het kon nu spreken, iets wat me dolgelukkig had gemaakt. Ik keek thuis in de spiegel en zag dat mijn oog helemaal blauw was, helemaal opgezet. Ik had een flinke mep van het klokgewas gehad. En het ging maar niet weg, en het werd steeds erger. Steeds erger, steeds erger, ik begreep nu haar pijn. Ik droeg het lijden van Venezuela, het kruis van Venezuela, als het kruis van de natuur, het kruis van Jeremia. 'Kijk naar mijn oog,' zei ik telkens, en wees erop. 'Het is het kruis en het juk van Venezuela.' Maar de mensen waren onverschillig. De onverschilligen waren nog onverschilliger geworden. En ik wachtte weer totdat het twaalf uur zou worden.

''t is bijna twaalf uur, 't is bijna twaalf uur,
geheimen, geheimen, geheimen van de natuur,
dan worden alle rollen omgedraaid,
de armen steeds rijker, en de rijken steeds armer,
totdat de ene hand de andere hand heeft geraakt ….'

Er was een nieuwe klok gekomen.
Lucky Luke wees er vaak op.
We hadden het samen gedaan,
Samen met het meisje van venezuela …
Maar het is altijd weer wachten, wachten, ja wachten … op twaalf uur …

Het voelt als verdrinken zo diep …
Het voelt als hangen aan de galg …
Om een kinderhart te bereiken,
Een armenhart …
Diep in jezelf …
Want een kind zijn we allemaal, en arm zijn we allemaal …
Oh het wordt hier steeds erger, maar ook zoveel beter,
totdat de rollen zijn omgedraaid,
totdat het kind de moeder is,
en de moeder het kind …
totdat je het geheim van venezuela diep in je hart vindt …

't is bijna twaalf uur, 't is bijna twaalf uur,
en alles is zo duur … je kan bijna niets meer kopen …
je kunt slechts geloven, hopen en dromen …

schipbreuk lijden wij de hele tijd …
aan de kusten van venezuela …
opdat zij ons binnenneemt …
tot haar geheimen …

Einde

De Februari Schietpartijen

Ik herinnerde mij de Februari schietpartijen. Maar nu was ik bij haar. Zij haatte mij.

Ik herinnerde mij de vogel die mij oppikte en hier bracht. Het was zeer traumatisch, als een nachtmerrie. Ik zag hoe de grote vogel mij streng in de gaten hield. Ik kende deze vogel niet, maar het was een roofvogel en het had grote angst in mijn hart gebracht. Het greep mij in de weilanden toen ik vluchtte van de februari schietpartijen. Deze vrouwen waren gek.

Als ik in de stad was gebleven zou ik niet meer geleefd hebben. Ze hadden het ook op mij gemunt, maar wat was dit leven waard hier ? Deze vrouwen waren gek.

Op een dag greep de vogel mij weer, en nam mij weg. Misschien vond de vogel het wel genoeg. De vogel bracht me diep in de wildernis, maar ik kon niet vergeten wat er was gebeurd. Op een bepaalde manier had de vogel mijn leven voor de tweede keer gered.

In de nachten had ik nachtmerries over de Februari schietpartijen. Ik was helemaal alleen in de wildernis, maar de vogel zorgde voor mij. Het hield roofdieren op een afstand, en bracht voedsel tot mij.

Het was maar een droom. Ontsnapping was slechts een droom hier.

Meer en meer begon ik te twijfelen aan de februari schietpartijen. Het kon slechts een nachtmerrie zijn geweest. Wat gaven de vrouwen mij hier te eten ?

Ik keek haar aan, en toen lager naar haar borsten. Ik was in grote angst en pijn. Hoe zou iemand naar deze vrouwen kunnen kijken en leven ? Ze waren barbaars, wreed, als een nachtmerrie. Zij waren de februari schietpartijen.

de soepkom

De jongens waren uit hun kooi ontsnapt en renden de vlakte op. Ze moesten toen diep naar beneden springen in de rivier, en zwommen toen naar de overkant. Zo keerden ze terug naar hun kamp. Maar er was één jongen die niet durfde te springen. Weer werd hij opgepakt en ging terug in de kooi. Hij had er spijt van dat hij niet had gesprongen bij de waterval in de rivier. Maar het was zo hoog, dat hij bang was dat hij te pletter zou vallen.

Hij kon wel uit de kooi kijken. Het was een prachtige natuur. Maar ja, dat was ook bij zijn kamp. Het hele gebied was prachtige natuur. Hij was niet anders gewend. Hier was hij geboren. Maar nu was hij in het vreemde kamp. Zijn overvallers keken hem aan. Ze droegen zwepen.

Ze lieten hem van vreemd spul drinken, uit een kom. Het was een soort soep. Een tijdje later zeiden ze dat zijn kamp was afgebrand en dat hij de enige overlevende was. Zijn hoogtevrees had dus zijn leven gered. Maar ja, wat voor leven ? Hij was een gevangene.

Er klopte iets niet met deze mensen. Ze waren goudzoekers. Ze leken uit het stadsgebied te komen of van het platteland. Ze stelden hem allemaal vragen. Midden in de nacht zette een vrouw hem vrij. Hij rende en rende. Hij zou ditmaal via het gebergte gaan en dat was een ware klimtocht. Hij verdwaalde ergens in een grottenstelsel maar kwam er toch ook weer uit aan de andere kant. Zijn kamp bestond inderdaad niet meer toen hij daar kwam, maar hij zou zich aansluiten bij een ander kamp, een groter indianenkamp.

Hij werd direct gastvrij ontvangen. Een indiaanse vrouw nam hem onder haar hoede. Hij vertelde haar over de goudzoekers en hoe ze zijn kamp in de brand hadden gestoken. Maar de vrouw zei dat een andere indianenstam het kamp in de brand had gestoken. Hij wist niet wat hij moest geloven.

Hij speelde met de kinderen van het kamp. 's Nachts moesten ze op monsterjacht, boze geesten die het kamp bedreigden. Op de rivier hadden ze hun boten. Daarmee konden ze snel ergens komen. Ook in het water leefden monsters, boze geesten.

Zijn nieuwe moeder onderwees hem veel. Maar hij wist niet wat hij moest geloven. Het was zo anders dan wat hij in zijn eigen kamp had geleerd. En ze hadden zulke vreemde rituelen, zoals van hoge kliffen afspringen in het water. Nu durfde hij het wel, en hij moest ook wel, anders zou hij nooit een vrouw krijgen. Hij vond het vreemd. Ook werd hij in een ton gestopt en van een heuvel afgerold, wat hij bijna niet overleefde. Ook moest hij zich laten steken door een zwerm wespen. Ook gingen er pennen door zijn borst, en moest hij vasten.

Zijn nieuwe moeder zei dat het traditie was. Hij vond het vreemd en gevaarlijk. Op een dag rende hij weg uit het kamp. Hij wilde liever alleen wonen. Hij raakte in gevecht met een verschrikkelijk grote slang. Hij werd ook verschrikkelijk gebeten. Meer dood dan levend is hij toen maar teruggegaan naar het kamp. Zijn nieuwe moeder verbond zijn wonden en gaf hem medicijnen. Maar eigenlijk hielp niets. Ze heeft toen goudzoekers laten komen om zijn leven te redden. Die namen hem mee naar een ziekenhuis in een stad. Hier begon hij langzaam te herstellen. Voor de tweede keer hadden goudzoekers zijn leven gered.

Hij vroeg naar welk goud ze eigenlijk op zoek waren. Ze zeiden toen : naar het goud van het hart.

marian's moeder

Marian's moeder, een bekende zangeres overigens, en haar dochter die bij mij in de klas zat moest zo nodig aan iedereen rondbazuinen dat haar moeder eens in bed had geplast. In ieder geval ging ik weleens met haar en haar moeder naar de bibliotheek. Dat kwam zo uit. Ik bracht ook weleens stripboeken voor haar mee. Ze hield van lezen. Haar moeder ook. Haar moeder had verder een heel druk leven, keek bijna niet naar Marian en mij om. Op een keer nam ze ons mee met een bootje over het meer naar een eilandje. Er woonde verder niemand op het eiland, dus het was er erg rustig en toen hebben we wat spelletjes gedaan, maar moesten we weer snel terug, want Marian's moeder moest optreden. Wij mochten dan ook mee naar het concert. Het was prachtig. We werden behandeld als prins en prinses, want wij hoorden bij deze koningin van de muziek. Mensen vroegen zelfs om onze handtekening. Ik zei toen nog zo van : Ja, maar ik heb helemaal niks gedaan. Maar het kon hen niet schelen. Ik hoorde erbij. Gelukkig ben ik nooit beroemd geworden. Toen Marian eens ging verhuizen bleef er van ons contact maar weinig over, maar je hoort nog weleens wat. Ik ben haar zus nog eens tegengekomen in een restaurant waar ik destijds werkte. Zij werkte daar ook. Zij was heel anders dan Marian. Ze had een veel grotere mond, meer als haar moeder. Volgens mij speelde ze clarinet, maar zong niet als haar moeder. Dat contact verwaterde toen ook toen ik daar niet meer werkte. Ik ben wel altijd naar de muziek van Marian's moeder blijven luisteren. Dat waren toch hele mooie herinneringen. Ze zullen me wel niet meer kennen of herinneren. Ik ben een nobody. Of misschien herinneren ze me wel. Ik heb ze altijd veel verhalen verteld. Daar herinneren veel mensen van vroeger mij van, van mijn verhalen. Ik had nogal grote opschepperige verhalen, dus dat moeten ze zich eigenlijk wel kunnen herinneren, want het waren geen alledaagse verhalen. Ik denk nog vaak terug aan het bootje en het eiland in het meer. Toen we teruggingen regende het. Het regende zo hard dat we dachten dat we nooit meer aan de overkant zouden komen. Maar we moesten wel, want Marian's moeder moest optreden. Ze was aan het gillen naar de regen : Stop, stop ! Ik keek naar de overkant, en het leek telkens verder weg te gaan. Ik zei toen : Doe dan wat ! Toen is ze gaan zingen, over de regen. Ze dook toen ook in het water en bleef heel lang weg. Toen ze boven kwam was de regen weg.

Toen we eindelijk aan de overkant waren waren daar allemaal fotografen. Ik gilde toen : Ik wil niet op de foto ! Ik wou dat we voor altijd op dat eiland waren gebleven. Maar ja, Marian's moeder moest optreden. Ze zei altijd dat we op missie waren.

het dekentje

'Dekentje, neem mij op hoog,' zei hij, terwijl hij op zijn dekentje boven de stad vloog. Hij wilde niet meer bij de mensen zijn, want die draaiden alles om wat hij zei. Hij vond het vreemd dat zijn dekentje bijna vleugels had en dat het kon vliegen, maar hij nam gebruik ervan. Hij was in zijn slaapkamer toen er een grote vlinder voor zijn raam verscheen, en hij keek naar buiten en zag niets dan wildernis, bossen, naaldbomen. Hij zag bergen, heuvels. Toen kon zijn dekentje vliegen, en hij hield zich eraan vast en klom er toen op. Dat vwas een heel geklauter. Hij voelde zich warm en veilig bij het dekentje. En hij volgde de vlinder op zijn dekentje, en er leek een straal water uit de lucht te komen, uit een wolk. Ergens diep in het bos zette het dekentje hem neer, en hij sloeg het dekentje om zich heen. Zo liep hij verder door het zand, op blote voeten. Hij was van de mens verlost en wilde niet meer terug. Hij keek om zich heen of hij niet gevolgd werd. Hij werd alleen gevolgd door de vlinder. Er begonnen meerdere dekentjes uit het dekentje te komen. Hier kon hij een tent van bouwen. Maar het dekentje hield niet op, en steeds kwamen er meerdere dekentjes uit. Hij zou er een nieuwe stad van kunnen bouwen, zo in het bos, en dat deed hij ook. Het werd een bosstad gemaakt van dekentjes, en de vlinder was zijn enige vriend, en natuurlijk de dekentjes.

Hij had het altijd warm en op een dag was er een bosbrand. Zijn dekentje nam hem weer op, en vloog met hem weg, en alle andere dekentjes vlogen achter hem aan. Zij volgden de vlinder. Ze kwamen aan bij een bosmeer nog veel

dieper in het bos, daar waar de bosbrand niet was. Ze vlogen over het bosmeer en daar bouwde hij opnieuw zijn kamp. Nu begonnen er nog meer dekentjes uit de dekentjes te komen. Hij hield het niet meer bij. Hij werd helemaal bedolven onder de dekentjes. Hij had het erg warm. Er begonnen bergen van dekentjes te ontstaan, en er doorheen waren tunnels. Hier zocht hij zijn weg. De vlinder wees hem de weg, en zijn eigen dekentje ging met hem mee. Na een hele lange tijd kwam hij uit de tunnels, en zag hij een meisje staan. Ze leek zo zacht als dekentjes. En hij noemde haar dekentje, maar ze sprak niet. Hij liet haar zijn dekentje zien, en ze gingen er samen op zitten. Toen vloog het dekentje met hen weg. Ze kwamen uiteindelijk toen aan bij een zee waar zeer hoge golven waren. Maar toen ze dichter bij de golven kwamen bleken het niets anders dan dekentjes te zijn. Het was een zee van dekentjes.

Opeens merkte hij dat het dekentje niet meer vloog, en ze vielen omlaag in de zee van dekentjes. Toen werd hij wakker, maar de droom is hem altijd bijgebleven.

de indiaanse avonden

Eerste avond

Ik zat met haar op de bank.
We raakten in gesprek over indianen.
Dat had beiden onze interesse, want wij waren natuur mensen.
Zij was van indiaanse achtergrond.
We kwamen in een verbaal gevecht.
Het liep niet goed af. Ze ging boos weg.
Toen ben ik de hele avond alleen geweest.

Tweede avond

Ik bleef lang op, weer om met haar te praten.
Weer ging het niet goed.
We hadden het over haar vroegere vriendjes.
Het leek wel alsof ze mij tegen die vroegere vriendjes probeerde op te stoken.

Derde avond

We waren beiden in de huiskamer. De gordijnen waren dicht.
We waren beiden stil. Zij ging wat handwerk doen. Ik las.

Vierde avond

Onze relatie ging niet goed.
Ze wilde er een punt achter zetten.
Ik stelde voor het uit te praten.
Dit ging nauwelijks goed.
Ik werd er depressief van.
Toen ze dat merkte deed ze iets aardiger.
Ze wilde het nog wel proberen.

Vijfde avond

Ik was nog steeds depressief.
Ik was stil, en liet haar spreken, maar ze zei niet veel.
Ze is toen handwerk gaan doen, en ik ging weer lezen.

Zesde avond

De depressie is nog steeds niet voorbij.
Ik kijk haar aan.
Ze klikt de tv aan.
Er is een indianen film op.
We gaan er beiden naar kijken.

Zevende avond

Weer een hele discussie.
Ik ben nog steeds depressief en voel me ziek.
Ze is wel aardig.
Ik kijk haar aan.
Zij kijkt soms naar mij.
Ze leest me dan voor uit een boek.

Achtste avond

Het gaat nog steeds niet goed met mij.
Zij verzorgt mij.
Ik vraag me af of ik relaties wel aankan.
Ik begin haar te betalen voor het werk wat ze voor me doet.
Het begin van het einde.

Negende avond

Ik maak een punt achter de relatie.

Het is niks voor mij.

Ik kan het niet aan.

Wel wil ik haar houden als verzorgster.

Ik ben nog steeds depressief en voel me zwak.

Tiende avond

Op sommige momenten is het alsof we nog een relatie hebben.

Het is meer een knipperlicht relatie.

Eigenlijk is ze gewoon mijn verzorgster.

Ik zie het niet meer zitten. Ik kan niks aan.

Elfde avond

Ik voel me iets beter, en kan weer dingen zelf.

Maar ik heb haar wel nodig.

Het is aan en uit de hele tijd.

Ze is het wel en ze is het niet.

Twaalfde avond

Aan het einde van de avond liggen we in elkaar's armen.

We vertellen elkaar onze dromen.

Dertiende avond

Ik ben alleen. Ze is niet gekomen.

Veertiende avond

Ik ben weer alleen.

Vijftiende avond

Ik open een brief die ze door de brievenbus heeft gegooid.

Het is een leeg vel.
Wel is het van haar als afzender.

Zestiende avond

Ik krijg weer een brief.
Er staat in dat ze me niets meer te zeggen heeft.
Ik doe vervolgens bij haar een brief door de brievenbus waarin staat dat ze ook niets hoeft te zeggen.

Zeventiende avond

Geen antwoord.

Achttiende avond

Weer geen antwoord.

Negentiende avond

Ze heeft een brief door de brievenbus gedaan waarin staat dat we dan klaar zijn. Ik schrijf haar een brief terug waarin staat dat er zoveel meer is dan spreken.

Twintigste avond

Ze is weer bij me. Ze zegt niets. Ik zeg ook niets. Ze vraagt : 'Okay, wat wil je doen ?'
'Indiaantje spelen ?' zeg ik.
'Okay,' zegt ze.
Ik kijk haar aan en zij kijkt mij aan.
'Hoe doen we dat ?' vraag ik.
'Ik weet wel wat,' zei ze. 'Blijf daar zitten.'
Ze staat op en wijst op me, en doet dan gebarentaal.
'Wat zei ik net in gebarentaal ?' vroeg ze.

'Al sla je me dood,' zei ik.
'Ik weet het zelf ook niet,' zei ze.
'Grappig,' zei ik.
'Nee, je moet net doen alsof,' zei ze. 'Zo ontstaat er een verhaal en kunnen we spelen.'
En dat zijn we toen de hele avond gaan doen.

Eenentwintigste avond

We hebben veel lol samen, maar het is erg vermoeiend.
Het is maar goed dat we een knipperlicht relatie hebben.
Meer kan ik ook echt niet aan.

Tweeentwintigste avond

Haar vriendin is bij ons op bezoek.
Dit gaat helemaal niet goed.
Haar vriendin loopt tussen ons te stoken.
Dit wordt zo erg dat we weer ruzie hebben.

Drieentwintigste avond

Nu is haar zus bij ons op bezoek.
Die is heel rustig.
Alles gaat goed.

Vierentwintigste avond

Ik ben met haar alleen.
We hebben het over haar vriendin en haar zus.
We komen er niet uit.

Vijfentwintigste avond

Ik praat met haar maar het lijkt alsof ik tegen een muur praat.

We komen niet dichter bij elkaar.
Ik vertel haar dat een zekere afstand ook goed is, zolang ze maar in de buurt is.
Niet te ver, niet te dichtbij.

Zessentwintigste avond

Ze komt niet opdagen, en op de honderdste avond is ze nog steeds niet terug, dus ik neem aan dat het voorbij is. Ik heb het helemaal gehad. Van onze knipperlicht relatie is niks meer over. Er knippert niks meer. In de avonden ben ik eenzaam. Ik lees en schrijf. Toch is het beter zo. Ik ben geen mens voor relaties. De indiaanse avonden hebben genoeg aan henzelf.

De Onkrant

Literaire Columns van de Tweede Bijbel

De Onkrant – Literaire Columns van de Tweede Bijbel – Verzamelingen – nr. 4 – mei 2021

De Majorette

en andere verhalen

de twee blauwe stenen
de zeemeermin
het land van tevredenheid
De Anandez

Koning Stuiterbal

de zee

madurodam, de hoofdstad van nederland

jan 'd hondt

De Brug van Heimdal

de bospoel

de hond herschendave

De Majorette

de paradijs televisie

de paradijs televisie 2

wereldkampioen

De Twee Blauwe Stenen

Hij had twee blauwe stenen gevonden op een eiland, en hij probeerde ze te verkopen op een markt in Mosul. De mensen verwonderden zich over de stenen. Ze waren erg duur. Een man zei dat niemand ze zou willen kopen, alleen maar naar kijken, want de stenen waren van een reus, en die zou ze zeker terughalen. De stenen waren onder een vloek.

De jongen knikte. Hij sprak dat hij voor de stenen had gevochten, dagenlang, en dat de reus nu dood was, maar de man geloofde hem niet. ‘De reus kan in vele vormen komen. Het is een geest. Pas maar op.’ Toen vertrok de man, en ook de mensen die de stenen hadden bewonderd. Ze waren nog steeds in verwondering, maar ook bang. Al snel verspreidde het nieuws zich door Mosul, en de jongen moest al snel vertrekken met de stenen. De mensen waren te bang dat de reus zou komen.

‘De reus is dood,’ zei de jongen. ‘Er is niets te vrezen.’ Maar hij moest weg. Ze wilden geen risico nemen. De jongen ging toen met zijn schip over de rivier helemaal naar Basra. Hier wilden ze zijn stenen wel hebben. Hij werd als een held ontvangen, omdat ze geloofden dat hij de reus had verslagen, anders zou hij nooit de twee blauwe stenen hebben kunnen bemachtigen. Ze kochten de stenen van hem, en die kwamen in het museum. De jongen was nu een zeer rijk man. Maar de broer van de reus was nog niet met de jongen klaar. Toen de

jongen naar Samarra ging met zijn schip werd hij midden in de nacht aangevallen door de broer van de reus. Zijn schip werd door midden gesplitst en de jongen en alle bemanning moesten zwemmen voor hun leven. Het was woest weer op de rivier de Tigris. De rivier begon de jongen en de bemanning op te slokken en naar beneden te zuigen. Even had de jongen spijt dat hij de twee blauwe stenen had verkocht, en dacht dat dit nooit zou zijn gebeurd als hij de twee wonderlijke stenen nog steeds bij zich had. Hij kon geen adem halen en dacht dat hij zou stikken. Plotseling zag hij een mooi eiland. Hij wist niet of hij al dood was of nog steeds leefde. Toen voelde hij ineens armen die hem optrokken. Het waren mensen uit Samarra. ‘De rivier is razende,’ zeiden ze.

‘Ja, de broer van de reus,’ stotterde en stamelde hij, naar adem snakkende. Toen vertelde hij het verhaal zo goed en kwaad als dat ging. ‘Nee,’ zeiden de mensen die hem gered hadden. ‘Het is de vloek van de twee blauwe stenen. Zij die ze hebben aangeraakt gaan wanen. Zij die ze aangeraakt hebben zijn zichzelf niet meer en doen domme, domme dingen. Zij die ze hebben aangeraakt geloven dan in fabeltjes.’

‘Ik geloof het niet,’ stotterde en stamelde de jongen. ‘Het waren de mooiste momenten van mijn leven toen ik de reus versloeg en de stenen bemachtigde. Het was alsof ik mezelf terugvond en ik weer inzicht had in dingen. Ik dacht er juist aan dat zij die de stenen niet hadden aangeraakt nog steeds miserabel zouden moeten zijn en in de war, zoals ik eens was. Nu had mijn leven weer zin, weer koers, en had ik iets om voor te leven.’

‘Jij domme, domme jongen,’ zeiden de mensen van Samarra. ‘Weet jij dan niet dat de stenen bedrieglijk zijn, dat het boze ogen zijn die mensen doen wanen voor de rest van hun leven ? Ongeneeslijk zijn zij die het hebben aangeraakt.’

‘Allemaal bijgeloof,’ sprak de jongen, steeds meer tot zijn zinnen komende. ‘Ik betreur hen die de stenen nooit hebben gezien en nooit hebben aangeraakt. Ga tot Basra, en wordt wijs. Daar liggen de stenen. Ik vond liefde, grote liefde, toen ik de stenen vond, alsof mijn hart was aangeraakt door een prinses.’

‘Zie, je waant,’ zeiden de mensen van Samarra. ‘En de reus heeft geen broer. De reus leeft nog steeds, en je moet er ver vandaan blijven. In Samarra is het veilig. Hier krijg je een goed bestaan. Er is nog wel een plaatsje voor je in het ziekenhuis. Daarna kun je een huisje krijgen, en wij zullen voor altijd voor je zorgen, en je ver van de reus vandaan houden. De reus komt hier niet. Allen die zijn stenen hebben gezien en aangeraakt zijn voor altijd ziek met wanen, maar onze medicijnen kunnen het leefbaar maken. Maak nog het beste van je leven.’

De jongen had zijn schip niet meer, en zijn bemanning was er ook niet meer, en hij durfde de rivier niet meer op vanwege de broer van de reus. ‘Ik heb geen idee waar jullie het over hebben. Morgen ga ik ter voet terug naar Basra.’ Maar de mensen van Samarra lieten hem niet meer gaan. Dat zou veel te gevaarlijk zijn. Hij moest toen naar de gevangenis om te kalmeren, totdat er een plaatsje voor hem zou zijn in het ziekenhuis. Lang moest hij in de gevangenis blijven, want de ziekenhuizen waren overvol, en hij was daar niet verbaasd over, want deze mensen maakten je ziek. Hij had een flinke hoofdpijn van deze mensen. Op een dag ontsnapte hij, en ging terug naar Basra, waar hij als een held werd ontvangen. Toen hij het verhaal vertelde werden ze heel kwaad, en wilden Samarra een lesje leren, maar de jongen vertelde hen over de razende broer van de reus.

‘Ja, dat is de broer van de reus,’ zeiden de mensen van Basra. ‘De broer van de reus heeft hen zo gemaakt. Ook deze reus moet verslagen worden.’

‘Maar hoe ?’ vroeg de jongen.

‘Midden in de nacht zullen wij daar gaan met fakkels,’ zeiden de mensen van Basra, ‘en wij zullen tot de ziekenhuizen gaan en tot de gevangenissen, om hen die daar opgesloten zijn te bevrijden, want het is allemaal aangepraat en bijgeloof.’

‘Ja, maar dat lukt nooit,’ zei de jongen. ‘De broer van de reus is te sterk. We zouden allen omkomen. Ik heb een beter plan.’

De jongen legde hen toen zijn plan uit. Ze zouden zich moeten verkleden als marktkooplieden, en met de twee blauwe stenen naar de markt van Samarra moeten gaan, om die stenen daar te verkopen, maar ze moeten zo duur zijn, dat niemand ze zou kunnen kopen, zodat ze alleen maar zouden kijken. Als ze die stenen zouden zien dan zouden ze volgens hun eigen geloof voor de rest van hun leven wanen en zichzelf niet meer kunnen vertrouwen. Het is dan een koud kunstje om degenen die ze opgesloten hebben vrij te zetten. Jullie moeten er dan voor zorgen dat de hoogste leiders van Samarra de stenen zien.

En zo gebeurde het. Er was niet lang daarna een grote optocht uit de stad Samarra, en de grote bazen en leiders van de stad zonderden zichzelf af en sloten zichzelf op opdat ze niemand anders zouden besmetten.

Einde

de zeemeermin

Ap Paraat liep met zijn hondje op de straat. Ze noemden hem ook wel Appie. Hij had in de krant gelezen dat er een geheime onderzee gevangenis was ontdekt die bewaakt werd door roofvissen. Hij geloofde er niet veel van. Fluitend ging hij op weg naar tante Mien. Krantje onder de arm. Toen hij daar aankwam barstte hij direct los. ‘Wa ’k nou toch gelezen heb.’ Toen gaf hij het krantje aan tante Mien.

‘Een geheime onderzee gevangenis ontdekt bewaakt door roofvissen. Vele vermisten teruggevonden,’ zei tante Mien. ‘Nou ja, het kan, het kan.’

‘Ach ze moeten gewoon wat te schrijven hebben,’ zei Ap. ‘ Wie verzint zoiets nu ?’

Maar die nacht had Ap een enge droom, over de gevangenis onderzee, en over gevaarlijke vissen die daar zwommen om de boel in de gaten te houden. Hij logeerde bij tante Mien, en toen hij haar ‘s ochtends zag aan de ontbijttafel toen zei hij : ‘Wa ‘k nou toch aan mijn klomp heb hangen, tante Mien. Ik heb er verdraaid over gedroomd, over die kermis onderwater.’

‘Kermis ?’ vroeg tante Mien. ‘Oh, je bedoeld die onderzee gevangenis ? Met vissen erbij ?’

Ap knikte.

‘Een mens kan raar dromen,’ zei tante Mien.

‘Het was heel eng,’ zei Ap, ‘en net echt. Ik begin het nu toch wel een beetje te geloven.’

‘Het kan, het kan,’ zei tante Mien. ‘Er gebeuren rare dingen vandaag de dag.’

‘Dat kun je wel zeggen,’ zei Ap. ‘Mij niet gezien.’

‘Zeg, weet jij wat een trorg is, en een tuimel ?’ vroeg tante Mien.

‘Nee,’ zei Ap, ‘dat weet ik niet.’

‘Ach dat zijn visserstermen, scheepstermen,’ zei tante Mien. ‘Dat kun jij ook niet weten. Dat had ik geleerd van oom Harm toen hij nog leefde. Ik klikte vanochtend de tv aan en toen hadden ze het erover dat ze bezig waren de gevangenen naar een schip te brengen met trorg en tuimel.’

‘He bah, tante Mien,’ zei Ap. ‘Ik wil er eigenlijk niet meer aan denken.’

‘Ja, maar het is juist een goed teken dat ze de gevangenen helpen ontsnappen,’ zei tante Mien.

‘Het is zo confronterend,’ zei Ap.

‘Hoezo ?’ vraagt tante Mien.

‘Nou,’ zei Ap. ‘Eens was ik eens bijna verdronken. Ik werd in het water gegrepen door een vis toen ik zwom in de zee. Het beest trok me de diepte in. Ik trapte en schopte, en het leek wel uren te duren, alsof ik gevangen zat. Ik had lucht nodig, maar het beest liet me niet los.’

‘Traumatisch,’ zei tante Mien. ‘Hoe ben je eraan ontsnapt ?’

‘Ik weet het niet,’ zei Ap. ‘Ik werd wakker op het strand met een mooie zeemeermin naast me. Ik heb haar toen weer in het water geduwd, want ze bewoog niet en sprak niet.

‘Misschien had zij je gered,’ zei tante Mien.

‘Misschien,’ zei Ap.

‘Maar dan is redding toch wel heel mooi om daarover te horen ?’ vroeg tante Mien.

‘Te confronterend,’ zei Ap.

Tante Mien klikte de tv weer aan, en er was een zeemeermin in beeld die de gevangenen scheen te helpen.

‘Dat is ze !’ riep Ap fanatiek.

‘Nou, nou,’ zei tante Mien, die direct de tv weer uitklikte.

‘Waarom doe je dat ?’ vroeg Ap. ‘Doe die tv weer aan.’

‘Is dat niet te confronterend voor je ?’ vroeg tante Mien.

‘Niet als ik haar zie,’ zei Ap.

Tante Mien klikte de tv weer aan, maar de zeemeermin was er niet meer op. Ze hadden het nu weer over troggen en tuimels, en de ontsnapte of geredde gevangenen werden op een schip gehesen.

‘Te laat,’ zei Ap.

‘Misschien komt ze zo weer in beeld,’ zei tante Mien.

‘Laat maar,’ zei Ap, ‘ik ga er niet op wachten. Het leven gaat door. Uit maar weer met die rommel.’

Tante Mien klikte de tv weer uit. ‘En wat nu ?’ vroeg tante Mien.

‘Tante Mien, mag ik u wat vragen ?’ vroeg Ap.

‘Natuurlijk,’ zei tante Mien. ‘Ga je gang.’

‘Wat voor man was oom Harm ? Ik heb hem nooit gekend,’ zei Ap.

‘Hij was schipper, altijd op pad,’ zei tante Mien. ‘Ook hij kwam eens met zeemeermin verhalen thuis. Hij heeft er een heel boek over geschreven over zijn avonturen met hen,’ terwijl ze naar een boek wees ergens hoog in de kast.

‘Mag ik het eens lezen ?’ vroeg Ap.

‘Ga je gang,’ zei tante Mien.

Ap liep naar de kast en pakte het boek. Hij begon er in te bladeren. De tekeningetjes leken net op de zeemeermin die hij had gezien. ‘Wat is een blojk ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Oh, dat is een ring die hij ooit eens van een zeemeermin heeft gehad,’ zei tante Mien, terwijl ze een la opentrok in een kast, en een ring eruit haalde om het aan hem te laten zien.

‘Magisch,’ zei Ap, ‘wow, wat een fantastisch ding.’

‘Het is gemaakt van zeestenen en zeemetalen, zeer edele metalen,’ zei tante Mien.

‘Ik kan het zien, en wat doet het ?’ vroeg Ap.

‘Het loogt,’ zei tante Mien.

‘Loogt ?’ vroeg Ap. ‘Wat is dat ?’

‘Het spuigt,’ zei tante Mien.

‘Ik weet ook niet wat spuigt is,’ zei Ap.

‘Dan heb je nog heel wat te leren,’ zei tante Mien. ‘Neem het boek maar mee naar je kamer, want daarin wordt alles uitgelegd. Oom Harm heeft alles opgetekend.’

‘En luig,’ zei Ap, terwijl hij las in het boek. ‘Ik ken al die woorden niet.’

‘Hoe is ‘t mogelijk,’ zei tante Mien. ‘Voor mij is ‘t de normaalste zaak van de wereld. Het is zeemeermins. Oom Harm en ik spraken zelfs zeemeermins.’

Tante Mien liet hem toen een kaart zien met zeemeerminse taal erop. ‘Ook van een zeemeermin gehad,’ zei tante Mien. ‘Er zijn zelfs zeemeerminnen in de vijver hier.’

‘Het wordt mij een beetje teveel, tante Mien,’ zei Ap. ‘ Het draait voor mijn ogen. Ik denk dat ik maar even ga liggen.’

Ap nam het boek mee, en ging naar de logeerkamer, waar hij op zijn bed ging liggen. Na een tijdje kwam tante Mien binnen. ‘Moet je wat drinken ?’

‘Nee,’ zei Ap, ‘ik ben alleen erg moe.’ Tante Mien ging toen weer weg en Ap viel in een diepe slaap. Hij hoorde in zijn droom de zeemeerminse taal. Hij begreep het niet, maar zeemeerminnen wuifden naar hem. Hij worstelde met vissen, maar de zeemeerminnen hielpen hem. Toen hielpen ze hem op een schip.

De kapitein van het schip was oom Harm. Ap was erg verbaasd. Oom Harm nam hem in zijn armen. Maar alles wat oom Harm sprak was zeemeermins. Ap verstond het niet.

‘Ik versta het niet,’ zei Ap na een tijdje.

‘Ik drink even een pilsje, en dan speel ik even een sonnetje,’ zei oom Harm.

Ook Ap kreeg spul te drinken, en luisterde toen naar oom Harm die aan de piano zat, op het schip. ‘Blij dat je er bent,’ zong oom Harm. ‘Je bent een grote vent. Ik breng je zo terug, want …’ en toen werd Ap langzaam wakker. Na een tijdje stond hij op en vertelde de droom aan tante Mien. ‘Oh ja, dat doet hij veel,’ zei tante Mien. ‘Hij werkt nu op een dromenschip en bezoekt de dromers. Ik droom ook vaak over hem.’

‘Ik zou ook wel op het dromenschip willen werken, tante Mien,’ zei Ap.
‘Dan zeg je dat maar tegen hem, de volgende keer als je over hem droomt,’ zei tante Mien.

Ap ging weer naar huis met zijn hondje, en de krant onder zijn arm. Het moest wel waar zijn. Toen hij thuis kwam trof hij zijn vriendin aan op de bank, maar ze zat te zoenen met een of andere man. ‘Oh,’ zei zijn vriendin onverschillig. ‘Ik wist niet dat je nu al thuis zou komen. Je zei dat je morgen pas thuis zou komen.’

‘Nou, ik wilde je wat vertellen,’ zei Ap, ‘maar laat maar zitten. Ik zie dat je bezoek hebt.’

‘Bezoek ? We gaan trouwen,’ zei zijn vriendin.

‘Oh,’ zei Ap. ‘Ik zie dat ik niet meer nodig ben.’

Ap is toen terug gegaan naar tante Mien, en is bij haar blijven wonen.

Einde

het land van tevredenheid

Zaaistra en zijn vrouw,
als een droom in een tuin,
maar hij wilde van zijn vrouw af,
en ook van zijn tuin,
want hij wilde de wijde wereld in,
weg van het saaie leventje wat tot een sleur was geworden,
altijd maar weer dezelfde routines, altijd maar weer dezelfde paadjes

Daarom ging Zaaistra op een dag op zijn fiets weg,
het was heel vroeg.
Het was mooi weer,
en hij had zijn knapzak meegenomen,
met dingen die weleens van pas zouden kunnen komen

Hij reed diep het bos in,
en ergens daar in die diepte van het bos,
daar zat een dwerg
Wilde je niet meer ? vroeg de dwerg
Wat ? vroeg Zaaistra die afstapte van zijn fiets om de dwerg te bewonderen

Nou, wil je niet meer die tuin en die vrouw ? vroeg de dwerg

Nee, niet echt, zei Zaaistra, ik heb het nogal gehad,
Ik wil de wijde wereld in

Daar kan ik je wel bij helpen, zei de dwerg
Maar het begon zo te spoken en te griezelen daar in de diepte en engte van het bos,
dat Zaaistra maar weer wat graag terugwilde naar zijn tuin en zijn vrouw

Laat maar, zei Zaaistra, en draaide zich om, stapte weer op zijn fiets en ging terug
Maar hoe hard hij ook fietste, het spookte hier allemaal,
En toen hij terugkwam was zijn tuin een spooktuin en zijn vrouw was ook een spook
Wat is er met je gebeurd ? vroeg Zaaistra verbaasd
Ach, zei de vrouw die nu een spook was,
Ik heb zoveel jaren op je zitten wachten totdat ik een spook was,
Er is niet veel van me overgebleven,
Je kan zo je hand door me heensteken

Zoveel jaren ? vroeg Zaaistra verbaasd ?
Maar ik ben vanochtend pas naar het bos gegaan, niet vele jaren terug
En toen vertelde hij haar over de dwerg

Het is een tijdrover, zei zijn vrouw,
Als je je met hen inlaat, dan trekken ze al je jaren van je af als een kleed

Volgens mij ben ik behekst, zei Zaaistra

En het heeft mij ook behekst, zei zijn vrouw
Wat nu ? vroeg Zaaistra, die al erachter was gekomen dat hij zo zijn hand door zijn vrouw heen kon steken

Ik ken wel een medicijn, zei zijn vrouw,

tevredenheid

Ja, ja, ik snap hem al, zei Zaaistra,
Ik ga vanavond vroeg naar bed, en zal een dankgebedje doen voor al het mooie wat ik nog heb, het had veel erger kunnen wezen
Tijdrovers, hoe verzinnen ze het

En zo gebeurde het,
Zaaistra ging vroeg naar bed, en telde zijn zegeningen, en dankte ervoor, omdat het veel erger had gekund
Maar toen hij 's ochtends wakker werd was zijn vrouw een hond
Wat nu ? Wat heb ik nu aan mijn klomp hangen ? vroeg Zaaistra verbaasd
Maar de hond kon alleen maar blaffen
Hij keek naar buiten en de hele tuin was verdord, nog wel erger dan de dag ervoor

Nu heb ik alleen nog maar een hond, dacht Zaaistra
Elke dag ging hij met de hond wandelen,
langs allerlei plaatsjes waar hij mooie herinneringen aan had
Ik ben blij dat ik nog een hond heb, zei hij telkens tegen zichzelf,
het had veel erger kunnen wezen

Op een dag besloot hij met de hond een bezoekje af te leggen aan de dwerg,
Hij wist nog wel waar het was,
Toen hij de dwerg zag zei hij : Zo, zo, tijdrover,
lang niet gezien

Tevredenheid kent geen tijd, zei de dwerg

Nee, zei Zaaistra, omdat jij al mijn tijd hebt afgeroofd,
me de jaren van het lijf hebt genomen,
Kijk eens naar m'n vrouw

Dat is je vrouw niet,
zei de dwerg,

Je hebt zo lang lopen slapen dat ze allang naar het zielenrijk was afgedaald, en toen heb ik maar een hond naar je gestuurd, zie je, ik ben de ergste nog niet

Allemaal om mij tevredenheid te leren ? vroeg Zaaistra
Nee, om je de wijde wereld te leren kennen, zei de dwerg

Ik begrijp het, zei Zaaistra, en wat nu, want ik ben alles kwijt

Alles kwijt ? vroeg de dwerg
Je bent een ervaring rijker

Nou leuk, zei Zaaistra spottend, nog meer grapjes ?

Ik heb nog wel een hobbelpaard voor je, zei de dwerg

Laat maar, zei Zaaistra en ging weer naar huis met de hond
Aangekomen staat er bij zijn huis een hobbelpaard,
Dan neemt hij het hobbelpaard naar binnen

Nu heb ik een hond en een hobbelpaard,
zei Zaaistra, wat is het leven toch mooi

Na een tijdje had hij een woede aanval en gooide het hobbelpaard door de ruiten
Allemaal door die stomme dwerg, die tijdrover, foeterde hij,
en nu ook nog een gat in mijn raam,
wat een prachtige dag, en wat een prachtig leven,
hij mag wel trots zijn op zichzelf dat hij dat voor anderen kan maken

Toen hij de dag erop wakker werd was zijn hond dood …
Hij had toen spijt dat hij het hobbelpaard naar buiten had gegooid door het raam en haalde het weer op
Nu was het hobbelpaard het laatste wat hij had
Hij omhelsde het paard en weende
Die avond ging hij naar bed en telde zijn zegeningen, en dankte de hemel voor

het hobbelpaard, terwijl tranen over zijn wangen biggelden …
Toen hij de dag erop wakker werd zat er een feeenprinses op het hobbelpaard

Ik kom je vrouw vervangen, zei de feeenprinses met een grote glimlach

Nee laat maar, zei Zaaistra, ik heb genoeg aan mijn hobbelpaard en ik ga zo lekker een appeltje eten

Maar ik kan heerlijke appeltaarten bakken, zei de vrouw met een nog grotere glimlach

Ik houd nogal van eenvoud, zei Zaaistra, ik ben nogal tevreden aangelegd, ik houd van mijn kapotte raam, kan ik zo mijn tuin inkijken, en mijn broek is ook stuk

Kan ik met gemak maken, schaterde de feeenvrouw, maar je hebt geeneens een tuin

Ik heb niet veel nodig, zei Zaaistra

Nou, je bent ook niet echt dankbaar, zei de fee

Nee, dat komt door al die tijdrovers, zei Zaaistra, ik heb wel andere dingen te doen

Een spelletje doen kan er ook niet vanaf ? vroeg de fee

Nee, maar omdat je zo aandringt mag je mijn buurvrouw wel wezen

Oh, wat lief en wat aardig, je buurvrouw, wat een eer, en dan ben jij nu mijn buurman, zei ze met een grote glimlach

Afgesproken, zei Zaaistra eveneens met een glimlach

Ik weet zeker dat je tuintje daar goed van zal bloeien, zei de fee, ik houd wel

een oogje in het zeil

En zo gebeurde het, het feeenvrouwtje ging naast Zaaistra wonen als zijn buurvrouw, niet te dichtbij en niet te ver weg

Op een dag merkte hij dat zijn hobbelpaard kon spreken en vliegen
Hij is er toen op weggevlogen en niemand heeft hem ooit nog teruggezien
Men zegt dat hij in het land van tevredenheid woont

De Anandez

De Anandez, de grote ijszee, was het land aan het overstromen. Het scheurde families uit elkaar als lappen poppen. Eigenlijk bleef het maar bij één grote golf die alles overspoelde, en toen trok de zee zich weer terug, maar het kwaad was al geschied. Niemand was nog dezelfde sinds die dag. Het was alsof er iets geknapt was in de hersenen van de mensen. Velen hadden hun geheugen verloren. Velen begonnen totaal doelloos rond te zwerven ... als zombies. Weer anderen begonnen vreemde dromen te krijgen. Allen wisten ze dat de Anandez had toegeslagen. Dat was nu diep in hun geheugen gegrift, en spoelde eigenlijk alles weg. Hun leven draaide nu om de Anandez, en altijd verwachtten ze dat de Anandez weer opnieuw zou toeslaan, maar dat gebeurde niet. De dijken werden enorm versterkt en hoger gemaakt. In grote angst werd het land zelfs

overdekt, wat de definitieve scheiding betekende tussen mens en zee. De mens leefde nu in een schelp. Genieten op het strand was er niet meer bij. De mensen zochten nu de overdekte bosrivieren op. Hier probeerden ze een nieuw leven te vinden. Velen wilden niet meer naar huis. Ze hadden daar een groot trauma opgelopen door het toeslaan van de Anandez. Al hun bezittingen hadden ze achter gelaten. Ik spreek dan over de rest van de inwoners van het land, want de meesten waren omgekomen door de Anandez.

Dat ik het nog kan navertellen is een wonder. Ik woon gelukkig diep in het land, en ik stond in de slaapkamer toen het gebeurde. Bij mij reikte de golf net tot het dak, tot de vensterbank van de slaapkamer. Ik kon het zo buiten zien gebeuren. Zij die voor mij woonden hadden minder geluk. In ieder geval was ineens het dak onder het raam van de slaapkamer bedekt met sneeuw en ijs, en toen zag ik dat de zee zich langzaam begon terug te trekken. Maar de golf had velen meegesleurd. Ik woonde op het randje van het natuurgeweld. Voor mij was het erop of eronder. Ik was mijn vrouw dankbaar dat ze dit huis had gekozen. Iets dichter bij de zee en we hadden niet meer geleefd. Iedereen die dichtbij de zee woonde werd door de golf meegesleurd naar God weet waar. Er moest een nieuwe regering komen, want die leefden dichtbij de zee.

Ik was dan één van de velen die nu vreemde dromen begon te krijgen. Er was ook iets in mijn hersenen geknapt. Ook was ik een groot deel van mijn geheugen kwijt, maar niet alles. Gewoon om het te kunnen verwerken wilde ik de Anandez eens opzoeken, maar dat mocht niet. De dijken waren zwaar bewaakt. Niemand kon erdoor naar de ijszee. Het was afgesloten terrein. Ik moest me daarbij neerleggen, maar eigenlijk wilde ik dat niet. Ik heb me toen voorgedaan als wetenschapper, en na veel gesprekken lieten ze me eindelijk door. Er waren altijd uitzonderingen op de regel, en ik bleek er aan te voldoen. En het was ook zo : Ik wilde de Anandez onderzoeken. Ik wilde meer van de Anandez weten. Via een streng bewaakte tunnel kwam ik op het verwilderde strand van de grote ijszee. Er was hier geen kip. Er was een begeleider bij me, een gids. Zijn regenpak was blauw, wit en oranje. Ook had hij een helm op. Het was best donker dus hij had een soort lantaarn of schijnwerper meegenomen. Hij was nogal enthousiast over een bepaalde vissensoort : ijshaaien. Die konden geweldig snel zwemmen en hoge sprongen maken. Ze waren veelal

wit. We liepen dichter naar de zee toe, en toevallig zagen we er een paar. Het was een wonderlijk gezicht.

De keer daarop ging mijn vrouw ook mee. Ze had zich extra stevig ingepakt, want het was een koukleum. 'Dit is hem dan,' zei ik tegen mijn vrouw. 'De Anandez, de grote ijszee, die onze hele familie uit elkaar heeft gescheurd.' Ik moest mijn vrouw van alles uitleggen, want het grootste gedeelte van haar geheugen was weg. Gelukkig herinnerde ze zich mij wel. 'Hoe kan ik jou nou ooit vergeten,' zei ze altijd. 'Dat is toch onmogelijk.' Maar ja, er waren zoveel mensen die mij niet meer herinnerden. We liepen langs het strand, en de gids vertelde ons veel over de Anandez. Het was weer dezelfde gids, en hij had weer een helm op. Hij scheen met zijn lantaarn op het water. Mijn vrouw wilde de ijshaaien wel graag zien, maar ze waren er dit keer niet. De gids begon vreemd te fluiten, waar we wel even van opkeken. Uit de golven kwam een vrouw omhoog, die toen naar ons toeliep over het water. Ze was gewikkeld in lange doeken. 'Wat gebeurt hier !' riep ik. Er was ineens overal storm. Ik zag mijn vrouw nog wegrennen, en de gids zag ik al helemaal niet meer. Ik begon te roepen, maar mijn stemgeluid kon niet tegen de storm op. Ik werd opgenomen als een veertje en over het strand geslingerd. "Anandez," zei een stem. De vrouw met de doeken was erg dichtbij me nu. Ik wist niet waar ik was. Haar doeken hingen over mij. Ik werd badend in zweet wakker. Alles was maar een droom geweest. Ik greep om me heen, en greep naar de plaats waar mijn vrouw altijd lag, maar ze lag er niet. Uit angst riep ik haar, en al snel kwam ze de slaapkamer binnen. Ze was even in de badkamer geweest. Ik vertelde haar de droom. "Ik heb iets soortgelijks gedroomd," zei ze. "Daarom ging ik naar de badkamer om even mijn gezicht nat te maken." Ik omhelsde haar. In elkaars armen probeerden we weer verder te slapen, maar dat werkte niet echt. Ze bleef maar praten. "Praat tot me," zei ze weleens als ik dreigde in te dutten.

"Sorry, ik probeer te slapen," zei ik.

Na een tijdje sliep ze, en kon ik ook slapen. Weer droomden we over de Anandez. Het was een vrouw die sprak dat ze de zon had overwonnen. Ze noemde het een stinkende bal. In haar wereld draaide alles om de ijszee, die als een echo-machine was. De echo's vervormden in de wind, en daarom

moest men zo dicht mogelijk bij de echo-machine komen. Mijn vrouw en ik waren verbaasd dat we weer beiden dezelfde droom hadden gehad. Mijn vrouw maakte toen een lied over de Anandez :

Anandez, de grote ijszee,
Als een echo in de wind,
Zoveel geheimen draag je,
Die maar nooit worden gevonden,
Want de stormen zijn te zwaar

Anandez, maar zo kan het toch niet altijd blijven,
Anders is het met ons gedaan

Anandez, groot raadsel in de wind,
Toon ons toch jouw sleutel,
Leid ons toch de weg in dit bestaan,
Leer ons elkaar te verstaan

Anandez, jij scheurde ons allen uiteen,
En nam vele levens, waar zijn zij heen ?
Anandez, niets of niemand schijnt jou te kunnen stoppen,
En wij kwijnen allen weg,
Of is dit juist de weg ?

Anandez, jij komt altijd op in de morgen,
Als het morgenrood, jij hebt de zon verslagen,
Dan kijken we allen naar het ijs,
Hebbende zoveel vragen

Anandez, wat heeft de nacht met ons gedaan,
Jij brengt ons zoveel dromen,
Anandez, alles wat wij grijpen glijdt weg,
En wij worden zelf weggegrepen

Anandez, er is zoveel wat wij niet begrijpen,

Als een ons overspoelende zee van ijs,
Jij hebt ons meegenomen, jouw gezicht getoond,
In jou zijn wij wijs

Anandez, door vreemde dingen breng jij ons dichter bij elkaar,
Zo ver weg en toch dichtbij, mogen wij elkaar verstaan,
Het wonder van ijs is iets wat wij niet kennen,
Maar langzaam maar zeker mogen wij er aan wennen,
Anandez, kom snel terug,
Jij bent maar een droom,
Alles wat jij doet is verborgen geluk

Anandez, kom snel,
Praat met ons, leer ons jouw spel,
Wanneer wij in de ochtend ontwaken,
Zijn wij nog steeds in jouw droom,
Jij bent de gids tussen de doeken en de dekens

Oh, jij ijszee, zo warm en diep,
Zo verborgen, jij bent het die ons riep,
Oh ijszee van boven, oh hemelse taal,
Anandez, kom snel,
Jij bron beter dan de zon

In jou is al het licht en leven,
In jou is al het vuur om bruggen te bouwen,
Nee, warmer dan jij is er niemand,
Oh, hemelse zee van echo's,
Tot jouw geheim zwemmen wij

Mijn vrouw zong maar door. Ze was inmiddels achter de piano gaan zitten. De nacht erop had ik een droom dat ze een standbeeld was en eeuwig zong. Ze was door de Anandez gezonden.

Einde

Koning

Stuiterbal

Hij was in het bos. Hij was van huis weggelopen. Thuis ging het niet goed. Er werd altijd op hem gescholden, en hij moest altijd hard werken. Nooit was er vrije tijd. Allerlei andere dingen waren gedwongen. Hij was er helemaal klaar mee. Het was in het bos waar hij het modder monster tegenkwam, die helemaal van modder was. Hij was helemaal niet bang voor het monster. Hij dacht dat het monster nooit erger zou kunnen zijn dan waar hij vandaan kwam. Het modder monster was verbaasd dat hij niet bang voor hem was. Ieder ander mens en dier was bang voor hem. Het jongetje kwam dichterbij het monster en begon hem te aaien.

'Nu wordt je wel helemaal vies,' zei het modder monster. 'Dat geeft niet,' zei het jongetje. 'Als ik maar vrij ben.'

'Over vrijheid gesproken ...' zei het modder monster. 'Ik ben ontsnapt uit de klauwen van een heks. Het leven is beter in het bos. Het jongetje knikte, en zei dat hij een soortgelijk verhaal had. 'Dan hebben we elkaar op het juiste moment en de juiste plaats gevonden,' zei het modder monster. Het jongetje grinnikte.

Ze gingen beiden nog dieper het bos in, en het modder monster vertelde dat hij lang onder de grond moest wonen, bij de ondergrondse heks. Hij werd daar opgesloten gehouden in een klein kooitje. 'Blij dat je vrij bent nu,' zei het jongetje. 'Ik zat in een zelfde situatie. Het is goed om de bomen te ruiken en de frisse lucht van het bos. Dat is zo genezend.'

'Precies,' zei het modder monster. 'Mijn heks spoot altijd met smerige parfumspuiten en haar nagellak op haar lange nagels stonk.'

De twee hadden elkaar veel te vertellen en konden al vanaf het directe begin goed met elkaar opschieten. Na een tijdje lopen kwamen ze een koningskind tegen. Het jongetje vroeg zich af wat een koningskind zo helemaal alleen in het bos moest. Hij groette het koningskind.

'Wat ben ik blij jullie te zien,' zei het koningskind. 'Ik ben zo lang alleen geweest hier, en nu eindelijk heb ik jullie gevonden. Ik ben van het koninklijk paleis weggelopen. Niets mocht. Ik mocht zelfs niet naarbuiten anders zou ik zogenaamd vies worden.' Het koningskind trok toen een vies gezicht om na te doen hoe ze naar hem deden. 'Ik kan het niet meer,' zei het koningskind. 'Ik ben er helemaal klaar mee. Het was niet goed voor mij om daar te leven.'

Het jongetje knikte. 'Dan zit je in hetzelfde schuitje als ons. Wij zijn ook ontsnapt,' zei het jongetje.

'Goed dan dat we elkaar zijn tegengekomen,' zei het koningskind. 'We kunnen dan misschien nog veel aan elkaar hebben.'

'Welkom in de club,' zei het modder monster.

'Wat voor een club is het ?' vroeg het koningskind.

'De club van de ontsnapten,' grinnikte het modder monster.

Ook het jongetje moest grinniken, en toen grinnikte het koningskind ook.

'Nu moeten we alleen nog een plaats hebben om te leven,' zei het koningskind.

Ze liepen door in het bos, en kwamen na een tijdje aan bij een huisje wat onbewoond scheen te zijn. Alle spullen waar hier oud, en alles lag onder de stof, alsof er niemand in vele jaren was geweest.

'Hoera,' zei het koningskind. 'Een verlaten boshuisje.'

'Hier kunnen we wonen,' zei het jongetje, die al direct alles begon te ontstoffen. 'Een beetje schoonmaken kan geen kwaad,' grinnikte het modder monster. Er waren precies drie bedden. Nadat ze de boel hadden schoongemaakt en wat hadden gegeten en gedronken gingen ze alledrie slapen, want ze waren erg moe geworden.

Maar middenin de nacht werd er op de deur geklopt. Er stonden tien soldaten aan de deur. Het jongetje had de deur opengemaakt en liet ze binnen. Het koningskind was ook wakker geworden, en kende de soldaten niet. 'Wie zijn jullie ?' vroeg het koningskind.

Maar de soldaten gaven geen antwoord. 'Misschien hebben ze honger,' zei het modder monster. Het jongetje gaf hen wat te eten. Er waren nog genoeg verzamelde bessen.

Na een tijdje zei een soldaat wat : 'Ach.'

'Ach ?' vroeg het jongetje. 'Is er wat gebeurd ?'

'Nee,' zei een andere soldaat.

'Dus jullie komen zomaar even op bezoek,' zei het koningskind. 'Gezellig.'

'Gezellig,' zei een andere soldaat.

'Ik heb het altijd koud,' zei weer een andere soldaat.

'Hoe komt dat ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Nee, dat is zijn naam,' zei weer een andere soldaat.

'Oh,' zei het jongetje. 'Wat een grappige naam. En hoe heet jij ?'

'Ik ben te dik,' zei de soldaat.

'Ja, maar je bent helemaal niet dik,' zei het jongetje.

'Het is mijn naam,' zei de soldaat. 'Te Dik. Te is mijn voornaam, en Dik is mijn achternaam. Ik kan er niets aan doen dat ik zo heet.'

'Dat klopt,' zei het jongetje. 'Nou, een mooie naam, en ik hoop dat je zelf ook je naam leuk vindt.'

'Hij vind nooit iets leuk,' zei weer een andere soldaat.

'En wie ben jij ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Ik ben Klaas,' zei de soldaat. 'Klaas de Kale.'

'Maar je bent helemaal niet kaal,' zei het jongetje. 'Oh wacht, het is zeker je achternaam.'

'Ja,' zei de soldaat. 'En ik ben er helemaal niet blij mee. We zijn ontsnapt uit een ver land.'

'Ah,' zei het koningskind. 'Nou, welkom in de club van de ontsnapten. Wij zijn

allemaal ontsnapt.'

'Aha !' riepen de soldaten blij. 'Dus wij kunnen hier blijven ?'

'Natuurlijk,' zei het modder monster. 'Wij horen allemaal bij elkaar. We maken er nog wel tien bedden bij. Het huisje is net groot genoeg.'

'Mag de prinses hier ook wonen ?' vroeg één van de soldaten. 'Wij hebben ook haar meegenomen.'

'Waar is ze ?' vroeg het koningskind.

'In een envelop,' zei de soldaat, en haalde een verfrommelde envelop uit zijn zak.

'Niet te geloven,' zei het jongetje.

Het modder monster kwam dichterbij de envelop en keek er naar. 'Ze woont in deze envelop ?' vroeg hij.

De soldaat knikte. 'Ja,' zei hij. 'Het is een plaatje.'

'Leuk,' zei het modder monster. 'En wat was de reden waarom jullie met haar zijn ontsnapt ?'

'Ze moest altijd in de keuken werken, en mocht niks. Ze is nog maar een kind,' zei de soldaat.

'Goed dat jullie voor haar opgekomen zijn,' zei het koningskind, terwijl hij een buiging maakte voor de soldaten en zijn hoed afnam. Er zat een veer op zijn hoed, als een pluim.

'Mogen wij haar zien ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Nee,' zei de soldaat. 'Het plaatje is uit een boek geknipt. Ze moet voorlopig in

de envelop blijven.'

'Oh,' zei het jongetje. 'En waarom is dat ?'

Maar de soldaat zweeg.

Alle soldaten die hun naam nog niet hadden gezegd begonnen toen te vertellen hoe ze heetten. Het waren allemaal lange getallen, en ze hielden maar niet op. 'Stop, stop,' zei het jongetje. 'Het is wel duidelijk en klaar dat jullie nieuwe namen nodig hebben. Jullie namen zijn eindeloos. Dat is niet echt handig.'

'Wij zijn van het land Eindeloos,' zei een soldaat.

'En wie regeert dat land ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Koning Eindeloos,' zei de soldaat.

'En dat is ook een plaatje ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Nee,' zei de soldaat. 'Een bal. Die rolt altijd door de straten heen om de boel in de gaten te houden. Er gebeuren daar vreemde dingen.'

'Zoals wat ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Een bril,' zei de soldaat.

'Een bril ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Iedereen moet een bril dragen zodat ze alleen zullen zien wat de koning wil dat ze zien,' zei de soldaat.

'En wat zien ze dan ?' vroeg het jongetje met verbazing.

'Plaatjes,' zei de soldaat. 'De koning houdt van plaatjes.'

'Wat zijn dat voor plaatjes ?' vroeg het jongetje.

Maar de soldaat zweeg.

Het jongetje zuchtte. 'Plaatjes met praatjes,' zei een andere soldaat.

'Ik kan me voorstellen dat jullie zijn ontsnapt,' zei het jongetje.

'Ik niet,' zei de soldaat. 'Het was best leuk.'

'Wie ben jij dan ?' vroeg het jongetje. Toen noemde de soldaat een lang nummer op wat maar niet stopte.

'Heb je ook een andere naam ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Nee,' zei de soldaat.

'Maar waarom ben je dan ontsnapt ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Tja, dat weet ik ook niet,' zei de soldaat. 'Gewoon omdat de anderen het ook deden.'

'Een nalopertje dus,' grinnikte het koningskind. Ook het modder monster grinnikte.

'Maar de andere soldaten zijn dus ontsnapt omdat ze de prinses willen helpen,' zei het jongetje.

'Dat zeggen ze,' zei de soldaat. 'Maar de prinses had het best naar haar zin. Ze hoefde helemaal niet in de keuken te werken. Allemaal leugens.'

'Tegengestelde verhalen dus,' zei het jongetje. 'En wat zegt de prinses er zelf van ?'

'Die praat niet,' zei de soldaat. 'Ze is nog te jong om te praten. Plaatjes praten pas als ze zes zijn.'

'Misschien als het koningskind en de prinses later groot zijn ze met elkaar kunnen trouwen,' zei het jongetje, 'dan kunnen we een nieuw land bouwen hier in het bos, het land van de ontsnapten.'

'Dat kan niet,' zei een soldaat. 'Ze moet in de envelop blijven. Alleen daar is ze veilig.'

'Dat is ook niet gezellig voor haar,' zei het jongetje.

'Het is een tover envelop,' zei de soldaat. 'Er is een land in de envelop. Daar heeft ze het goed, en zo moet dat blijven.'

'Kunnen wij haar daar bezoeken ?' vroeg het modder monster.

'Ja, als je een plaatje wordt,' zei de soldaat.

'Hoe worden we een plaatje ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Koning Eindeloos maakt plaatjes,' zei de soldaat. 'Hij rolt over mensen heen, en dan zijn het plaatjes.'

'Wow,' zei het jongetje. 'Maar jullie zijn van hem ontsnapt. Is er ook nog iemand anders die plaatjes maakt ?'

'Ja,' zei de soldaat. En toen noemde hij een eindeloos getal op.

'Waar is hij ?' vroeg het jongetje.

De soldaat haalde een verfrommelde envelop uit zijn zak.

'Oh, het is ook een plaatje ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Ja,' zei de soldaat.

'En hoe gaat dat precies ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Het is een plaatje van een bal,' zei de soldaat, 'en het werkt ongeveer op dezelfde manier.'

'Ja, maar hoe dan ?' vroeg het jongetje. 'Een bal op een plaatje kan toch niet rollen ?'

De soldaat haalde het plaatje uit de envelop. De bal op het plaatje bewoog, en begon in het rond te rollen. 'Wow,' zei het jongetje verbaasd, 'maar de bal kan niet uit het plaatje ?'

'Nee,' zei de soldaat.

'Maar hoe worden wij dan een plaatje ?' vroeg het jongetje.

De soldaat keek een andere soldaat aan, maar die keek weer naar een andere soldaat.

'Wij weten niet hoe hij het doet,' zei Te Dik.

'Praat hij ook ?' vroeg het modder monster.

'Nog niet,' zei Te Dik. 'Hij is nog geen zes.'

'Ik heb nog wel wat,' zei Klaas de Kale, en haalde een stuiterbal uit zijn zak. De stuiterbal begon direct in het rond te stuiteren, en had flink veel babbels.

'Dat kan, ja, dat kan,' zei de stuiterbal. 'Plaatje worden zei je ? Heel simpel.' En hij vloog op het jongetje af, en begon op het jongetje te stuiteren, die even later helemaal platgewalst was als een plaatje. 'Hoera !' riep het jongetje. 'Nu kan ik de prinses ontmoeten !'

'Ja, wacht even, dat gaat zo maar niet,' zei de stuiterbal. 'Je bent veel te groot. Je past de envelop niet in.'

'Wie kan me dan kleiner maken ?' vroeg het jongetje.

'Het plaatje krimpt vanzelf wel,' zei de stuiterbal. 'Even geduld hebben.' Ook het modder monster en het koningskind werden tot plaatjes gemaakt. De tien soldaten moesten de plaatjes en de envelop bewaken. Na een paar dagen waren de plaatjes genoeg gekrompen en konden ze de envelop in. Ze kwamen in een prachtig land, in een prachtige natuur met prachtige hangende bomen waar de lieflijkste bloemen en bloesem in groeiden, en allerlei prachtig kruid hing daar. Maar de prinses konden ze niet vinden. Plotseling zagen ze de stuiterbal. 'Volg mij,' sprak de stuiterbal. Hij leidde hen naar een hele speciale boom waar het plaatje van de prinses ergens hing. Maar de wind waaide het plaatje weg. 'Volg mij !' riep de stuiterbal. Hij stuiterde achter de wind aan, en het jongetje, het koningskind en het modder monster volgden hem. 'Hebbes !' riep de stuiterbal. Het plaatje was op de grond gevallen en helemaal onder de modder. 'Een modder prinses,' zei het koningskind. 'Misschien kan ze dan wel later met het modder monster trouwen.'

'Ik trouw niet !' bulderde het modder monster en greep grinnikend het koningskind en smeerde hem in met modder. 'Nu ben jij een modder prins, dus dan kan jij misschien later als je groot bent wel met haar trouwen.'

'Ja,' zei het jongetje, 'en dan kunnen we hier misschien het nieuwe land van de ontsnapten bouwen.'

'Goed idee,' zei de stuiterbal. 'Welkom in mijn boek, waar jullie veilig kunnen wonen. Ik ben koning stuiterbal en met jullie heb ik zo waardige opvolgers. Ik heb namelijk andere dingen te doen. Maak er wat moois van !' Toen stuiterde de stuiterbal weg. Toen zijn ze begonnen het nieuwe land te bouwen, en toen de prins en de prinses groot waren geworden trouwden ze met elkaar. Er was een groot feest en er waren inmiddels vele ontsnapte plaatjes bijgekomen. En ze leefden nog lang en gelukkig.

de zee

Ik schrijf mijn verhalen op rozenblaadjes, maar de zee spoelt alles weer weg,
Ik schrijf mijn verhalen in het zand, maar de zee spoelt alles weer weg,
Ik schrijf mijn verhalen op de stadsmuren buiten de stad, maar de zee spoelt alles weer weg,
De zee regeert hier, en vertelt haar eigen verhalen,
Ik kras mijn verhalen in boomstammen,
en zij kan het niet wegspoelen

madurodam, de hoofdstad van nederland

--- Wat rook jij eigenlijk in het sprookjesbos ?

Tantalos, de hongerdrugs … de drugs van het minderen … de drugs van het kleine … van Madurodam, de hoofdstad van Nederland …

--- Oh, ik dacht dat Madurodam in Venezuela lag …

Bwahahaha, dan heb je zeker teveel sprookjes gelezen … Maar in ieder geval, … de drugs van het kleine, van Madurodam, de hoofdstad van Nederland, zorgt ervoor dat er weer gelijkheid is …

--- Jongeman, uw stropdasje op …

Stropdasje ? Eerst mondkapjes, dan oordopjes, en nu ook al stropdasjes ?

--- Jaha, jaha, want de koningin komt eraan …

Waarom moeten we daar een stropdasje voor dragen ?

--- Zodat de koningin je direct kan ophangen als je haar niet bevalt, jongeman …

Koningin van waar ?

--- Van daar …

Waar is dat ?

--- Daar …

Nu weet ik nog niks …

--- Dat is een land … Dit land …

Oh, maar ik ga die troep niet dragen … Mondkapjes en oordopjes zijn al erg genoeg … Hoe dragen jullie die stropdasjes ?

--- Om je nek … met veren en pek …

Hahaha, dat is zeker een grapje …

--- Nee, serieus, want piraten moeten hangen …

Ik ben geen piraat, maar een hongerman … Ik leef in de natuur van de hongerdrugs, niet van roven, plunderen en stelen …

--- Nou, kom dan maar door voor deze ene keer …

En zo kwam ik in het land van Daar … Vreemde koningin … Wist ook niet eens dat Madurodam de hoofdstad van Nederland was … Dacht ook dat het in Venezuela lag … Ik moest het haar allemaal uitleggen, en had gelukkig geen stropdas om waarmee ze me zou kunnen ophangen … Die hongerdrugs, die hongerdrugs … die heeft me overal veilig doorheen geleid … Ik gaf haar wat van de drugs en ze vloog weg als een vogeltje het bos in … En toen ben ik zelf maar de koning van Daar geworden … Nu was ik koning van drie landen : Nederland, Daar, en Venezuela … Maar 't beviel me niet, 't beviel me niet … En toen ben ik maar achter de koningin aangevlogen … En ik heb zoveel lopen zoeken, zoveel lopen zoeken … Ik heb heel Madurodam toen ook afgezocht, maar uiteindelijk vond ik haar in de bossen van Madurodam, daar waar de hongerdrugs groeide …

Mmm, het smaakt altijd naar minder ...

jan 'd hondt

Jan d'Hondt, met D apostrof …
--- Oh ja, en wat moet u ?
Vier.
--- Kunt u iets duidelijker wezen ? Vier van wat ?
Nee, gewoon vier.
--- Ik begrijp u niet.
Geeft niet.
--- Nou, kunnen we even ter zake komen. Wat moet u, mijnheer Jan d'Hondt ?

Zeg maar J. d'Hondt, dat spreekt makkelijker.

--- Ik heb hier allemaal geen tijd voor, mijnheer J. d'Hondt. Anders ga ik verder naar de volgende klant. Ik vraag het u nog één keer. Wat moet u ?

Ik moet helemaal niks.

--- Maar wat wil u dan ?

Ook niks.

--- Waarom belt u dan ?

Oh, zomaar. Vindt u het niet leuk om gebeld te worden ?

--- Nee, niet zomaar. Ik zit hier voor de klanten en ik heb geen tijd voor andere dingen.

We zouden een leuk gesprek kunnen hebben.

--- Nee, ik wordt hier niet voor betaald.

Jammer.

--- Kom ermee voor de dag.

Vier.

--- Wat vier ?

Zomaar.

--- U zit mij in de maling te nemen. Ik ga ophangen.

Over vier minuten ontploft de bom in uw werkruimte. Nu over drie minuten al.

--- Hè bah, wat flauw. Nu loopt u mij ook nog bang te maken. Wie heeft die bom dan gelegd ?

Mijn collega.

--- Jakkes. Bent u crimineel.

Ja, u ook ?

--- Nee, en ik ga nu de politie bellen.

Doe dan ook gelijk de brandweer want over een paar minuten ontploft de bom.

--- Ik geloof er allemaal niks van.

Wie niet horen wil moet maar voelen dan.

--- Waar ligt die bom ?

Onder uw stoel.

--- Ik zie niks.

Zalig zijn zij die niks zien en toch geloven.

--- Ik ga zo lekker koffie drinken.

Twee.

--- Twee wat ?

Twee minuten.

--- Oh, dan gaat de bom af ?

Ja.

--- Hoe bestaat het. Nog meer grapjes ?

Nee, dit was alles. Lijkt me wel genoeg zo. Het is alleen geen grapje.

--- Mijnheer, er is hier geen bom. Kunt u nu ophouden ?

Ik ben vandaag …

--- Wat ?

Ik ben vandaag …

--- Ik niet.

Hoezo ?

--- Nou ja, u zegt dat u vandaag bent, en ik zeg dan dat ik vandaag niet ben.

Ik begrijp er niks van.

--- U maakt grappen, dus dan maak ik ze ook.

Flauwe grap.

--- Niet flauwer dan die grap over die bom.

Dat is geen grap. Eén.

--- Oh, nog één minuut ? Wat gaat de tijd toch weer snel als je lekker zit te kletsen. Zullen we aftellen ?

Doe me een lol, en ren voor je leven.

--- Nee, dat doe ik niet. Ik wil graag dat u voor aap staat, dat u op uw neus komt te staan.

Nog een paar seconden.

--- Hè toe, doe nu even leuk mee, en ga aftellen.

Okay, tien, negen, acht …

--- Zeven, zes, vijf, vier …

Drie, twee, één …

--- Nul, zie niks aan de hand.

Ik hoor niks.

--- Geen bom dus. Gefeliciteerd. Ik moet nu echt naar de volgende klant. Het was leuk met u kennis gemaakt te hebben.

Ik heb me in de dag vergist. Ik lees hier weer de brief van mijn collega. Het gaat morgen gebeuren rond deze tijd.

--- Maar ik zie geen bom liggen.

Het is netjes gecamoufleerd. Mijn collega is daar goed in.

--- En wat bereik je er allemaal mee ?
Nou ja, mensen wachten nu aan de telefoon, klanten raken geirriteerd en dat is goed voor de concurrentie. De concurrentie betaald ons hiervoor.
--- Dat is crimineel.
Nee hoor, het hoort bij het klantenwervings beleid van de concurrent.
--- Ja, zo lust ik er nog wel een paar. U kan me wat. Zo kun je alles wel goedpraten.
Dat doet u toch ook ? U probeert met uw geduld en vriendelijkheid mij als klant te werven.
--- Nu breekt mijn klomp. Wat een pretentie allemaal.
U hangt maar niet op, hè. Ik kan u alles zeggen.
--- Nee, wij mogen nooit ophangen bij de klant. Hoort bij ons klantenwervings beleid, hoe moeilijk en crimineel de klant ook doet.
Nogmaals : Ik ben geen klant. Ik kom klanten van u roven.
--- Ik heb het hele gesprek opgenomen voor de politie. Ze komen zo bij u.
Ik ben zelf van de politie.
--- Waarom zei u dat niet eerder, en waarom doet u deze dingen, dreigen met bommen en andere grapjes ?
Ik ben van de geheime politie, en ik moet een opdracht vervullen.
--- Wat is die opdracht dan ?
Die is strict geheim.
--- Is er nu wel of geen bom dan ?
Nee, het was maar een oefening.
--- Vreemde oefening dan. Waarom belt u dan eigenlijk ?
Ik ben winkeliers aan het testen.
--- Op wat ?
Kijken hoe ze omgaan met stress, en met bedrog.
--- En wat dan ?
Daar maak ik een reportage van.
--- En dan ?
Die lever ik in.
--- U loopt gewoon mijn tijd te verdoen.
Nee, u werkt mee in de oefening.
--- Zonder mijn toestemming ?
Het is voor de veiligheid.

--- Maar u heeft mij net geprobeerd bang te maken met een bom.
Ja, ik moet opschrijven hoe u reageert in zo'n situatie.
--- Ik ben geen proefdier.
't Is voor de veiligheid.
--- U loopt mij gewoon op te jutten.
Zo moet u het niet zien.
--- Maar hoe dan ?
Wij werken samen met verzekeringen voor winkeliers. Als u lid wordt dan zult u geen telefoontjes meer van ons krijgen.
--- Oh, u wilt gewoon mijn geld, mij als klant ergens voor werven ?
Iedereen moet zich verzekeren.
--- Hoe gaat dat precies ?
Vier.
--- Niet weer hè. Vier wat ?
Vier minuten. Ik houd een raket op u gericht.
--- Zeg me dan snel waar ik me kan laten inschrijven zodat deze onzin is afgelopen. U stalkt mij gewoon en intimideert mij, allemaal voor die rotverzekeringen.
Drie.
--- Drie wat ?
Drie minuten.
--- U gaat wel erg snel dan.
Ik heb haast.
--- Nou, wat moet ik nu doen, want ik wil graag dat het nu stopt.
Zeg dat je het doet.
--- Ik doe het. Wat nu ?
Mijn collega zal morgen iemand sturen van de verzekering. Die zal alle papieren in orde maken, zodat u van ons geen last meer heeft.
--- Ik vind het allemaal maar vreemd.
Het is voor de veiligheid.
--- Tegen wat of wie ?
Dat is geheim. Ik kan niet teveel zeggen. We worden afgeluisterd.
--------------------- Jantje, kun je nu komen, het is bedtijd !
Ja, nog even het gesprek afmaken, ma. Het begon net leuk te worden.
--------------------- Nee, nu komen ! Geef hier die telefoon.

--- Wie bent u ?
---------------------- Jantje's moeder.
--- Oh, hij is nog maar een kind ?
---------------------- Ja, een kwajongen is het.
--- Hij zei dat hij van de geheime politie was en een bom had gelegd, en dat hij mij een verzekering wilde aansmeren.
---------------------- Ja, haha, dat doet hij graag.
--- En dat laat u zomaar toe ?
---------------------- Ja, moet wel, anders gaat hij ons ook bedreigen.
--- Waarom pakt u hem gewoon niet aan ?
---------------------- Hij is nogal sterk.
--- Dan moet de politie komen.
---------------------- Die slingert hij weg als lappen poppen.
--- Dan weet ik het ook niet.
---------------------- Ik zou maar gewoon die verzekering nemen, dan ben je van hem af. Wij hebben dat ook eens gedaan.
--- Ik hoop niet dat het duur is.
---------------------- Welnee, gewoon wat zakgeld. En hij zal van je vragen ook klanten te gaan werven voor de verzekering.
--- Daar kan ik echt niet allemaal aan beginnen.
---------------------- Hoort bij het verzekerings beleid.
--- Ik begin hier moe en draaierig van te worden, ook chaggerijnig.
---------------------- Beste is gewoon met hem mee te werken, anders blijft hij je lastig vallen.
--- Er moet toch iets aan gedaan worden ?
---------------------- Nee, dat kan niet. Jantje is ongeneeslijk ziek in zijn hoofd, en niemand kan er iets aan doen.
--- Daar zitten we mooi aan vast dan.
---------------------- Wees maar blij, want zijn vader is nog wel veel erger. Als je Jantje afwijst dan komt z'n vader, en dan heb je pas echt de poppen aan het dansen.
--- Nou ja, dat wil ik dan ook niet.
---------------------- Goedzo. Nou, prettig met u kennis gemaakt te hebben. U sprak met mevrouw M. d'Hondt met D apostrof en DT aan het einde. Of u dat goed wil noteren ook.

--- Waar is dat voor ?
-------------------- Voor de papieren als ze morgen bij u langskomen. U kunt beter gehele medewerking geven en volkomen zijn.
--- Dag, mevrouw d'Hondt dan.
Nee, dit was ik ook, Jantje d'Hondt met D apostrof. Ik had slechts mijn stem verdraaid.
--- Bah, wat flauw, hoort zeker ook bij het beleid ? Geheime politie ? Klinkt allemaal als één grote hoop onzin. Ik ben er zo klaar mee. Mij een beetje lopen te bedriegen telkens. Mijn werktijd zit er al bijna op.
Morgen bent u van al uw problemen af.
--- Gelukkig maar. De groeten.
Ik kan nog wel meer kunstjes.
--- Nee, laat maar.
Nou, bedankt voor uw geduld. Beste luisteraars, dit was weer een aflevering van Fop Drop, het programma met de verborgen radio-microfoon.
--- Oh, ik ben gefopt, en live op de radio ?
Nee hoor, ook weer onderdeel van de geheime politie opdracht.
--- Om mensen te bedonderen zeker ? Oh nee, wacht, voor de veiligheid hè ? En om klanten te werven voor een of andere verzekering. Ik geloof dat ik gek begin te worden. U wilt mij volgens mij ook aan de medicijnen helpen ?
Ja, en we werken trouwens ook samen met de begrafenis onderneming.
--- Dit gaat mij echt te ver.
Een goede verzekering kan u uit de problemen helpen. Dan heb je al dit soort reclame niet.
--- Dan wil ik die verzekering onmiddellijk en linea recta ontvangen ! U bereikt hier het toppunt van mijn geduld !
Even wachten tot morgen dan.
--- Nee nu ! Het moet nu afgelopen zijn !
Vier.
--- Niet weer ! Wat nu weer ? U maakt mij helemaal gek !
Drie.
--- U zit gewoon af te tellen !
Twee.
--- Ik geloof er toch allemaal niks van.
Eén.

--- En wat dan ?
Gefeliciteerd. U heeft volgehouden tot het einde.
--- Wat heb ik gewonnen ?
Een reisje.
--- Waar naartoe ?
Naar de dierentuin. Daar kunt u mij zien. Ik ben een papegaai, en ...
--- Hallo ? Dit kan toch niet waar zijn ...
--------------------- Verbinding verbroken ...

De Brug van Heimdal

Ze was zwanger in het ziekenhuis, en lag daar, terwijl ik van haar weg wilde, omdat ik op zoek was naar ware liefde. Ik liep over de brug naar huis en kwam Heimdal tegen, een constructie werker die ik kende. 'Moet je niet bij je vrouw zijn ?' vroeg hij.

'Ben ik net geweest,' zei ik. 'Ik vind het wel goed zo. Ik ga bij haar weg. Ik ben op zoek naar ware liefde. Dit is het niet voor mij.'

'Wat dan wel ?' vroeg Heimdal.

'Boeken denk ik,' zei ik.

'Ja, maar je kunt haar toch niet zomaar aan haar lot overlaten nu ze bevallende is ?' zei Heimdal.

'Ik zal haar wel een boekje sturen,' zei ik koud.

'Dat is ook niet aardig,' zei Heimdal.

'Dit is het gewoon niet voor mij,' zei ik. 'Het boeit me gewoon niet.'

'Volgens mij ben jij gewoon zwaar overspannen,' zei Heimdal. 'Ik heb nog wat voor je.'

Hij is toen met me meegelopen naar mijn huis in een flat aan het riviertje. Tegenover het riviertje woonde mijn oom en zijn gezin, in een heel langwerpig huis alles op de begane grond. Dan moest je eerst een bruggetje over. Heimdal kende hem ook wel. Had hij nog bij in de klas gezeten vroeger.

Toen Heimdal binnen was in mijn huis trok hij z'n tas open en haalde er een apparaat uit. Het was een heel ingewikkeld verwarmings apparaat, maar nog veel meer. Het regelde de temperatuur, automatisch, als een soort huiselijke weer machine, maar nog veel meer. Het apparaatje was al oud, en hij probeerde het aan de praat te krijgen. Hij werd erg kwaad toen het niet lukte. Hij begon zelfs kwaad op mij te worden. Ik zei : 'Nu lijkt het wel alsof jij zwaar overspannen bent. Heb je te hard gewerkt ofzo ?' Toen probeerde ik hem te kalmeren en gerust te stellen. We zijn toen beiden naar mijn oom gegaan. Ik had mijn oom al een tijdje niet gezien en viel hem in zijn armen. Het was best wel emotioneel. Ik zei tegen Heimdal dat ik altijd heel erg tegen mijn oom had opgezien, dat het een soort kinderheld was voor mij toen ik klein was. Daarna was het contact verwaterd, alhoewel we zo dichtbij elkaar woonden. Mijn oom was heel trots erop dat hij zoveel voor mij betekende. 'Kijk, het begint al te werken,' zei Heimdal.

'Wat ?' vroeg ik.

'Dat apparaat,' zei Heimdal. 'Blijkbaar moest het eerst opwarmen, maar het apparaat herstelt dus ook sociale contacten wanneer dat nodig is.'

'Mooi,' zei ik. Ineens begon de liefde voor mijn vrouw weer omhoog te borrelen. 'I... ik moet maar weer eens gaan,' zei ik. 'Mijn vrouw is hoogzwanger en heeft mij nodig.'

Heimdal knipoogde naar mijn oom.

'Ga jij maar snel, jongen, dan drink ik nog even een glaasje plezier hier met mijn klasgenoot van vroeger,' zei Heimdal.

Ik rende terug, helemaal naar de grotere brug toe waarachter het ziekenhuis lag. Maar midden op de brug sloeg een grote angst me om het hart. Ik durfde niet meer verder. Ik ben toen teruggegaan naar Heimdal en mijn oom en viel ze huilend in de armen. 'Nog steeds zwaar, jongen ?' vroeg één van hen. 'Wat als we er nu samen naartoe gaan ?'

'Nee, nee, ik kan het niet meer,' zei ik. 'Ik ben blij dat ik jullie heb. Meer kan ik niet aan.'

Heimdal keek me aan. 'Zeg, vertel me eens, is er een keer iets gebeurd waardoor je zo bent geworden ? Heeft ze je iets aangedaan wat ik nog niet weet ?'

'Ik wil er niet over praten,' zei ik.

'Goed,' zei Heimdal. 'Het apparaat moet nog even opwarmen. Als het goed is zal het apparaat je gehele huis herbouwen, en ook je hele sociale netwerk, en dan zal alles op zijn plaats vallen.'

'Ja, maar het verleden kan ik niet meer veranderen,' zei ik. 'Gebeurd is gebeurd.'

Heimdal glimlachte. 'Maar het apparaat kan het verleden wel veranderen.'

Einde

de bospoel

Engelbert Zaligingen kwam bij de bospoel aan, aan de rand van het bos, waar het weiland overliep in het bos. Dichtbij was een ziekenhuis met dokters die alleen maar de hele dag door sex stripboeken lazen. Engelbert keek in het water van de poel, en zag iets drijven wat op een olie vlek leek, en toen kreeg hij een idee. Hij wilde hier een tank station bouwen voor de icarus vleugels die hij verkocht. Ze moesten altijd genoeg bloeistof hebben anders zouden ze neerstorten. Toen Engelbert weer terug was in het ziekenhuis zeiden ze : 'Bloeistof ? Waar heb je het over ? En een tankstation bij de bospoel bouwen ? Dat kan helemaal niet.' Maar ja, die dokters konden het niet weten, want die lazen de hele dag sex stripboeken. Engelbert ging naar zijn kamer en checkte zijn been wat gebroken was tijdens het vliegen. Die dokters waren zo dom dat ze niet eens wisten hoe hij in het ziekenhuis was gekomen. Maar ja, de bloeistof was opgeraakt, en toen stortte hij neer. Een tank station dicht in de buurt was dus wel belangrijk. Hij keek om zich heen en zag niemand, en haalde toen zijn icarus vleugels tevoorschijn. Hij kuste ze en deed ze toen weer weg. Hij was niet te stoppen. Hij moest en zou zijn plan voor het tank station ten uitvoer brengen. Opeens kwam er een dokter binnen. 'Tijd voor je pilletje, Engelbert.'

'Stop het in je achterste,' zei Engelbert.

'Nou, dat is ook niet aardig,' zei de dokter. 'We willen je alleen maar helpen.'

'Oh, heb je pauze genomen van het lezen van sex stripboeken ?' vroeg Engelbert.

De dokter begon te lachen. 'Hoe kom je daar nou bij ? Wie leest die dingen vandaag de dag nog. Ik kan je garanderen dat je in dit ziekenhuis zulke blaadjes niet zult tegenkomen bij de dokters, hoogstens bij de patienten. Wat heb jij trouwens in je la liggen, Engelbert ?'

'Oh, mijn icarus vleugels waarmee ik was neergestort en waardoor ik mijn been brak. De bloeistof was op,' zei Engelbert.

'Wat een verhalen allemaal,' zei de dokter. 'Je bent hier helemaal niet voor een gebroken been. Je loopt anders prima.'

'Waarom ben ik dan hier ?' vroeg Engelbert.

'Even in mijn boekje kijken,' zei de dokter. 'Hmm, er is hier iets doorgekrast, het lijkt wel op een inktvlek of olievlek.'

'Dat kan wel kloppen,' zei Engelbert, 'heel toevallig lag er ook iets als een olievlek te drijven in de bospoel. Daarom wilde ik mijn tank station beginnen. Maar goed, als u het niet meer weet, en het staat niet meer duidelijk genoteerd, waarom ben ik hier dan nog ? Mijn been doet het inderdaad weer prima. Mijn tank station zal ervoor zorgen dat mijn been prima blijft, en ik zal er nog goed aan verdienen voor anderen ook.'

'Wie zijn die anderen, Engelbert ?' vroeg de dokter. 'Wie hebben er nog meer zulke icarus vleugels ?'

'Mijn vrienden,' zei Engelbert.

'Wie zijn dat ?' vroeg de dokter.

Engelbert wees op het notitie boekje van de dokter. 'Staat dat niet in uw boekje ?'

'Nee, helaas,' zei de dokter. 'We schrijven niet meer alles op tegenwoordig.'

'Nu, ik moet maar eens gaan,' zei Engelbert. Maar de dokter hield hem tegen. 'Niet zo snel, Engelbert, eh, ik moet het eerst aan een andere dokter vragen.'

'Die zal wel te druk zijn met het lezen van sex stripboeken,' zei Engelbert.

'Niet zo flauw doen, Engelbert,' zei de dokter. 'Wat heb je nog meer in je la liggen ?'

'Een pistool,' zei Engelbert. 'Mag ik nu weg ?' Engelbert nam het pistool uit de la en hield de dokter onder schot.

'Eh ja, dat komt wel goed uit, want ik moet nog wat lezen,' zei de dokter. 'Met zo'n ding heb je ons ook niet meer nodig, denk ik zo.'

'Je moet nog wat lezen ?' zei Engelbert. 'Zeker sex stripboeken weer.' Engelbert pakte zijn spulletjes en vertrok.

'Nee, dat niet,' riep de dokter hem na.

'Ik ben al weg,' riep Engelbert terug.

de hond herschendave

De hond herschendave,
Het was hem er niet om te doen,
hij had er geen zin in,
altijd rende hij maar rond,

geen zin om te luisteren,
zijn leven was een groot feest,
de hond herschendave

maar als hij echt nodig was,
dan was hij er wel,
als de goedheid zelve,
dan kon je echt van hem op aan,
de hond herschendave

de eerste astronauten hond was hij,
veel op de hondenplaneet geweest,
hij weet er veel van,
hij laat zich niets meer vertellen,
de hond herschendave

De hond herschendave,
hij is altijd goed weggeweest

De Majorette

Moeder was een majorette.
Ze liep in de optocht, want haar zoon was teruggekomen van een lange reis.
Het was feest in de stad. Dat had zij georganiseerd.
Het was niet haar echte zoon, maar een geadopteerde.
Toen hij thuis was had hij echt weer dat gevoel van twee huizen te hebben, het huis van hemzelf en het huis van zijn moeder.

Zijn moeder had ook allerlei muzikanten uitgenodigd.
‘You are the sunshine of my life,’ speelden ze, maar hij was bedroefd. Hij was te lang weggeweest, en het knaagde aan hem.
Hij had zoveel gemist, en zijn moeder was zo bedroefd geweest.

Oh, wat naar, hij voelde zich zo naar. Maar ja, hij kon er niets aan doen dat hij op reis moest. Hij was soldaat en moest vechten in de oorlog, anders zou alles kapot gaan, echt alles. Mensen keken hem er op aan. Soldaat was wel het laagste beroep, want op de een of andere manier konden ze zich niet voorstellen dat hun leven in gevaar was en dat ervoor gevochten moest worden. Deze stad was nogal dom. En daarom was hij bedroefd, een vreemde mengeling van aangepraat schuldgevoel en gemis. Heimwee, terwijl hij al thuis was, maar hij voelde zich hier totaal niet thuis, totaal niet.

De mensen begrepen hier niets. Ze keken hem met de nek aan omdat hij soldaat was en er bijna nooit was. Hij werd echt niet als een held ontvangen, terwijl hij de stad voor een ramp had bewaard. Nee, deze mensen waren zorgeloos. Hij hoefde echt niet op handen gedragen te worden, maar waren er maar enigen die met hem meegingen. Hij was de enige, en voelde zich als de stadsgek. Ze liepen met een grote boog om hem heen, omdat hij er niet voor hen was geweest. Niet voor hen was geweest ? Hij had hun leven gered. Door hem konden ze hier in vrede wonen. Maar ja, zijn moeder had een groot feest voor hem aangericht, helemaal alleen voor hem, en ze had muzikanten ingehuurd. ‘You are the sunshine of my life’ speelden ze. En toen hij terug kwam had ze met de band door de hele stad gemarcheerd. Ja, ze was majorette. De mensen vonden het prachtig, maar ze deed het voor hem. Hij vond het mooi, en ze was nog steeds in haar pakje.
Ze zaten in het theaterzaaltje achter moeder’s huis, en ze had ook een winkeltje. Hij verbleef hier altijd graag als hij thuis was, en dan gingen ze heen en weer, van haar huis naar zijn huis, en dan weer terug. Wat een machtig gevoel was dat, en daarom besefte hij weer waarom hij soldaat was en waarvoor hij alles deed. Moeder verkocht speciale kleding in haar winkeltje, kleding voor majorettes, kleding voor soldaten, kleding voor indianen, en kleding voor muzikanten, prinsen, prinsessen, maar meestal gebruikten ze dat alleen maar voor feesten en speciale gelegenheden, als carnavals kleding.

Soldaten waren niet geliefd en niet gewenst, alleen maar als carnavals act.

Hij zuchtte, en luisterde naar de muziek. Hij keek naar wat bandleden van de muziekband van zijn moeder, en raakte met ze in gesprek. Ze waren zo anders dan de mensen van de stad, bijna als zijn moeder. Hij zou genieten van deze dagen met haar, en dan zou hij weer terugmoeten. Als soldaat woonde je eigenlijk nergens. Je was altijd weer op tocht. Dit hier waren meer de vakanties, als een camping. Ja, zijn eigen huis voelde niet eens als zijn eigen. Dit was eigenlijk gewoon een carnaval voor hem, iets tijdelijks wat hij weer moest loslaten. Het was even een feestje om hem een hart onder de riem te drukken, en dan moest hij weer weg. Het gleed allemaal tussen zijn vingers weer weg. Hij was hier slechts op vakantie. Maar de magie ervan zou blijven in zijn hart. In zijn dromen zou hij hier altijd zijn. Die momenten dat hij terugkwam bij zijn moeder waren altijd zo mooi, die gingen zo diep. En dan sprak zij hem toe als een majorette. Als hij niet weg was gegaan om de strijd te strijden, dan waren zulke feesten er nooit geweest. Nee, dan had hij zelfs zijn moeder niet gekend, want eens bevrijdde hij haar uit de oorlog.

Einde

Een andere naam van dit verhaal is 'Jozef de Dromer'. Durven wij nog te dromen vandaag de dag ? Kennen we de prijs die we moeten betalen voor onze dromen, en durven wij dan toch te dromen ? Daarover gaat het verhaal van vandaag. En hoe moeten wij dan dromen ? Dromen kun je leren.

de paradijs televisie

Ik kwam een kind tegen op straat. Zijn naam was Hector. Hij zei dat hij een robot was, ontsnapt uit de grotten van de weermannen, ergens in een land ver weg waar weermannen regeerden. Hij zag er ook uit alsof hij niet van dit land was, maar van een ander land. Ik vroeg hem wie die weermannen waren, en hij zei dat ze het weer voorspelden. Ik vroeg hem wat er in die grotten gebeurde, en hij zei : ‘niks,’ maar ik geloofde hem niet. Ik zei dat hij me alles kon vertellen.

‘Wat gebeurde er in die grotten ?’ vroeg ik weer.

Hij begon er omheen te praten, dat er een bepaald spul was, een bepaald zeil was, wat ze konden lezen, waar allerlei geheime beeldschermen in waren opgeborgen, die je kon zien als je er vanuit een bepaalde hoek naar keek. Ze moesten het leren lezen. Het was een soort televisie. Ik zei toen dat ik dat ook wel met sneeuwbeeld deed, dat ik er dan allerlei figuren in zag. ‘Wie heeft jullie gered ?’ vroeg ik toen. Hij zei : ‘Meneer Gobbels. Je moet hem nog ontmoeten. Hij is heel aardig.’

Hij zei toen dat de hele mensheid was opgesloten in de grotten van de weermannen, en dat ze het niet eens wisten. Ook wisten ze niet dat ze meneer Gobbels moesten ontmoeten.

Ik begon vragen te stellen over meneer Gobbels, maar er kwam geen antwoord. Het kind werd steeds stiller. ‘Ik moet nu gaan,’ zei hij op een bepaald moment. Hij is toen weggegaan.

Die avond werd er aangebeld. Het was meneer Gobbels. Hij stond voor de deur met een trein, een vliegende trein. Ik ben toen met hem meegegaan. Weg uit de grotten van de weermannen. Ik vroeg aan meneer Gobbels wie die weermannen waren, maar hij zei niet veel. Hij was druk bezig met het besturen van de machine. ‘Ik vertel het je later wel,’ zei hij toen.

Ik werd wakker van een vreemde droom. Ik keek naar de theedoek die over de deur hing, en ik zag in de patronen een paradijs, water met eilanden.

Ik dacht aan Hector en meneer Gobbels. Is dat wat we moeten leren ? Anders kijken naar patronen, er andere dingen in zien ? Dan is de wereld ineens veel beter. Dat wat we om ons heen zien is slechts het beeldscherm, ruw materiaal. We moeten leren kijken opdat we het ware beeld kunnen zien. Kijken naar de televisie van het paradijs.

Ik was blij dat ik was gered door meneer Gobbels, en de kleine Hector zou ik niet meer vergeten. Hij had een heel kinderlijk stemmetje, en tegelijkertijd als een robot. Meneer Gobbels had hem natuurlijk zo geprogrammeerd, om er doorheen te komen. Nou, je begrijpt het wel. Het was meneer Gobbels voor en na. Ik vertelde mijn mooie droom op school, maar de andere kinderen lachten mij uit. Jozef de dromer werd ik genoemd. En ik wist dat dit slechts het beeldscherm was. Nu moest ik het ware beeld nog zien, het paradijselijke beeld. De juffrouw keek mij aan. ‘Dat was een mooie droom,’ zei ze. ‘Je kunt er wel een verhaal van maken, en dan misschien nog een, en dan heb je een boek. Misschien kun je wel schrijver worden. Of je kunt het proberen te schilderen en schilder worden. Misschien kun je wel schilder worden van de koningin met zulke mooie en bijzondere schilderijen.’ De kinderen waren zo jaloers, en ik werd zo gepest. Na school duwden ze me in de bosjes. ‘Waar zijn je praatjes nu ? Waar zijn die boeken en schilderijen nu ? Van jou komt niks terecht, Jozef de dromer,’ riepen ze. Maar daar stonden ineens Hector en meneer Gobbels, en ik mocht mee met de vliegende trein, en die kinderen moesten allemaal achterblijven. Oh, wat huilden ze toen ze zagen dat het echt was en niet mee mochten. ‘Oh, hadden we maar niet gedaan wat we gedaan hebben,’ jammerden ze. Maar het was al te laat. Ze waren veel te gemeen geweest om nog met de vliegende trein mee te kunnen. Ze moesten hun les maar leren, in de grotten van de weermannen, leren beeldscherm kijken. Zo had ik dat immers ook gedaan. Het was de enige weg. En ik kwam tot een mooi dromenland, maar de volgende dag moest ik weer terug naar school. De kinderen waren zo aardig nu. ‘Wat heb je allemaal beleefd ?’ vroegen ze. Ze waren zo blij dat ik weer terug was, en iedereen wilde ineens mijn vriend zijn. Maar ik zei niet veel, en ik schudde hen de hand ook niet. Iedereen wilde mij vasthouden en handjes geven, maar ik duwde hen weg. ‘Ik was toch Jozef de dromer ? Ga zelf maar leren dromen,’ zei ik.

Ik droom dat ik vlieg,
Ik droom dat ik leef,
Ik droom dat ik het beter heb,
op de televisie van het paradijs

de paradijs televisie 2

De weermannen met hun lage, bassende stemmen,
stoorzenders zijn het. Altijd weten ze het beter, maar ze bakken er niets van.
Het komt er eigenlijk op neer dat er verborgen treinen zijn in het beeld.
Je moet het beeld leren lezen, leren kijken, totdat je de trein ziet.
Je moet het pad voor je zien.
Er zijn verborgen tunnels in het beeld, verborgen gangen.

De weermannen, het zijn slechts sportjournalisten die te lui zijn om dieper te kijken.
Ze willen je afleiden door je te laten fixeren op de bal.
En de ballen zijn afgehakte koppen,
de koppen van jou en mij.
De weermannen, sportjournalisten, willen niet puzzelen,
maar slechts tegen de bal trappen.

Kijk, kijk, en zie de gangen,

wat ze allemaal verborgen houden.
Vlieg over daken en rivieren,
maak het niet te duidelijk, want dan raak je vast.
Als de golven van de zee dingen doen wegvagen,
goed, dan kun je hoger vliegen,
Onthecht van alle dingen.

Je moet er een beetje omheen praten, zei Hector,
Niet alleen maar jezelf richten op de landschappen,
maar ook op de sieraden.
Daarin moet balans komen.
Eerst moeten je sieraden in orde zijn.

Niet telkens gericht zijn op de landschappen,
maar op je voertuigen.
Daarin moet balans zijn.
Eerst moeten je voertuigen op orde zijn.

Er moet balans zijn tussen het kleine en het grote,
tussen kleiner worden en groter worden.

En de weermannen, die stoorzenders, zeggen dat mensen moeten luisteren,
zo niet, dan worden ze afgeschoten.
Het droem orgaan draait alles om wat ze zeggen, draait alles weer terug,
deze dagen is het gevaarlijk om te luisteren, maar je moet terugdraaien,
het droem orgaan. Maar wie heeft het, wie kent het ? Het zit verborgen in een boek.

Moeten wij dan wedergeboren worden door een boek ?

Ja, want de weermannen zitten achter je aan.

Lekker droemen, lekker lekker droemen,
lekker draaien, lekker terugdraaien, lekker omdraaien,
want luisteren is gevaarlijk hier.

Lekker droemen, lekker doordroemen,
lekker draaien, keer op keer

Wij gaan droemen, wij zullen niet meer luisteren,
Wij droemen hoog de lucht in,
in deze vliegende trein.

Hoger en hoger droemen wij.
Wij moeten leren droemen.
Daarvoor moeten wij naar de droemschool.

Door draaiend, droemend, te kijken naar het beeldscherm,
ga je beeld krijgen.

wereldkampioen

Lenstra in de regen.
Zijn vrouw wacht op hem.
Zijn bolhoed wordt nat, en zijn jas.
Als hij binnenkomt, dan kan hij er niet tegen.
Hij wil terug naar de regen.
Maar dan denkt hij aan zijn boeken,
en gaat daarin zoeken.
Aan zijn vrouw heeft hij verder niks.
Zij is een blok aan zijn been,
als het vijfde wiel van een wagen.
Gevit, gevit, dat is alles wat ze doen.
Als hij thuiskomt is het schaken met een wereldkampioen.

Lenstra in de regen,
hij kan er niet meer tegen.
Daar gaat hij naar zijn werk,

hij wenst dat hij er kan blijven,
maar zijn vrouw wacht op hem,
het is druk in de tram,
en daarom gaat hij lopen,
zachtjes lopen, langzaam lopen,
want hij wacht niet op haar

Lenstra in de regen,
zoveel ideeen in zijn kop,
zoveel werelden te betreden

De Onkrant

Literaire Columns van de Tweede Bijbel

De Onkrant – Literaire Columns van de Tweede Bijbel – Verzamelingen – nr. 5 – oktober 2021

De Onkrant – De gratis literaire krant van Nederland en Belgie
De Onkrant – Omdat belangrijke basisliteratuur niet alleen iets voor de rijken is.
De Onkrant – De krant van de liefde, van de goede herder

met als thema : de vijftiger zestiger jaren

1 van roem tot roes
2 de stuntdokter en zijn vrouw
3 een lekker bakje …
4 zestiger en zeventiger jaren mythologie

5 het medische kruis
6 de goede vogelaar
7 de zestiger jaren : sleutel tot de tachtiger jaren
8 returnity en het eiland van de vijftiger en zestiger jaren in de woeste zee van het modernisme
9 back to the future : oorlog in amsterdam – de betekenis van de tachtiger jaren mythologie
10 de puzzel van de zestiger jaren
11 het wiel opnieuw uitvinden
12 De Psychologie van de Eindeloze Winkelstraat
13 achter glas
14 zondag middag overdenking
15 voor hen die nog op zijn
16 de scheppende traan
17 de vogels van sigaret
18 de tranen van de goede herder
19 het nieuwe amsterdam
20 heer der vliegen
21 de ontsnapping uit Stepford door de sleutelen van de hemelse tranen
22 de lift
23 rennen tot de wildernis

van roem tot roes

Ik kwam in een voor mij onbekend deel van de stad. Hier was ik nog nooit geweest. De mensen waren hier heel vriendelijk. Er ging een wereld voor mij open. Maar ik kwam er al snel achter dat deze mensen een vreemdsoortige drug gebruikten. Daarom ging alles zo goed hier, en leek het alsof er niks aan de hand was, maar na wat doorpraten kom je er dan achter dat er heel wat aan de hand is. Het werd gewoon niet verteld. Er werd zoveel achtergehouden, en

dan moet je er echt doorheen prikken. En ja, dat drugsgebruik was een probleem en een oorzaak. Ik vroeg naar die drug, en daar deden ze allemaal heel geheimzinnig over, ook heel exclusief ineens en gecompliceerd, en ze waren ineens helemaal niet meer zo aardig. Ja, daar mag je niet naar vragen, over hun heilige drugs. Ze aanbaden hun drugs, en ze voelden zich bijna beledigd dat ik er vragen over durfde te stellen, en het in twijfel probeerde te brengen. Ik wilde toen weer weg, maar ik mocht niet weg. Ik had teveel gezien en ik wist teveel. Ik zou problemen kunnen veroorzaken. Dus mocht ik niet weg. Ik kwam in een ondergrondse gevangenis. Er zaten hier allemaal anderen die ook hun twijfels hadden over de drugs. Aan de heilige drugs mocht niet getwijfeld worden, want ze aanbaden het. Het was hun enige hoop. Ze gingen erdoor pretenderen dat alles goed was.

Ik dacht laat ik m’n mond verder maar houden, me wijselijk stilhouden, anders kom ik nog dieper in de problemen. Wie hier in de gevangenis er nog verder over zou doormauwen zou opgehangen worden, ook allemaal in het geheim. Alles was geheim hier. Daarom kende ik dit stadsdeel ook nog niet. Niemand had het erover. Toch sprak ik er met anderen over, met mijn kamergenoten bijvoorbeeld, mijn celgenoten. Gelukkig was de kamer heel groot. Het was bijna een heel huis met verschillende afdelingen, en het was hier verder heel luxe. Er was tv, radio, computer, computer spelletjes ook, en hele vreemde machines, tijdmachines zelf. En we droegen allemaal prachtige kleding. Niemand kwam hier iets te kort, en toch hing die dreiging boven ons hoofd. Ik vroeg erover door, over die drugs, wat het was. Maar niemand durfde veel te zeggen, en ze hadden liever dat ik mijn mond erover hield.

Maar ja, ik wilde het weten, en als ik iets wilde weten, dan ging ik daarvoor door berg en dal, door vuur en ijs, en niemand kon me stoppen. Ik moest en zou erachter komen wat het was. Het was een dievendrugs, zei er eentje. Meer konden ze dan niet zeggen. Maar dan was het wel een hele speciale dievendrugs, meer als de lieve dievendrugs, want deze dieven ruilden wat ze stalen voor een heleboel andere dingen. Ze lieten dus altijd iets achter, en het was vaak nog beter. Het waren ruildieven. Daarom mocht je zelfs blij zijn als je bestolen was, want je kreeg er iets beters voor terug. Je zou zelfs verliefd op zo’n dief kunnen worden, zo’n dief zelfs kunnen vereren, een standbeeld van

zo’n dief kunnen laten maken, iets om als een beeldje op de tv te zetten of in de kast, een poppetje om naar te kijken. Daarom was deze wereld ook zo mooi. Er was veel van ons afgenomen, maar we kregen er nog meer voor terug. Maar die dreigementen zaten me niet lekker. Ook dat we een spreekverbod hadden over dingen. Maar men legde me al snel uit dat er dan wel een spreekverbod was, maar er was geen zangverbod. We mochten er dus wel over zingen. En ik begon zingend vragen te stellen, en ze antwoordden me zingend terug.

Het probleem was : ik kon niet echt zingen. Maar door de lieve dievendrugs werd mijn stem heel anders. Na korte tijd kon ik wel zingen. Ik moest toen zelfs het podium op, en moest voor hun zingen. Het was de enige manier om uit de gevangenis te komen. Ik kwam in een band, en ik had veel te vertellen, maar dat deed ik dus allemaal zingend. We reisden door het hele stadsdeel met de band, en ik werd al snel bekend in de hele stad. Zo kreeg het onbekende stadsdeel dus eigenlijk bekendheid, maar we mochten er niet over spreken, alleen maar zingen. Ik vroeg me af : Waarom, waarom ? Ik voelde me nog steeds als een gevangene, alsof er nog steeds zoveel van me was afgeroofd, terwijl ik er zoveel betere dingen voor had teruggekregen, maar toch, maar toch. Was het dat wel allemaal waard ? En nu was ik bekend, en ik had nooit meer rust. Iedereen wilde maar van alles van me. Ik werd overal gevolgd. Ik dacht toen : Was ik maar weer terug in de gevangenis, maar er was geen terugkeer meer. De roem begon aan me te vreten, en ik kon dat alleen maar oplossen door nog meer van de lieve dievendrugs te nemen.

We waren hele gulle dieven. We gingen op dievenpad naar Afrika om daar alles weg te stelen maar er zoveel betere dingen in de plaats ervan achter te laten. Het hele continent was nu rijk, zo rijk, en er was geen honger meer, sinds wij daar gekomen waren en hadden opgetreden met de band. Er was nu alleen nog maar liefde. En de roem was geen probleem meer, want iedereen kwam erdoor in een roes, en er was nog maar een ding waar ze aan dachten, en dat was de lieve dievendrugs. Iedereen stal zoveel, maar gaf er zoveel voor terug. Het was een sport geworden, een liefdessport. Er was geen oorlog meer.

Einde

de stuntdokter en zijn vrouw

Er was een man door zijn hoofd geschoten.
Ik kwam thuis en mijn vrouw was op zolder.
‘Wat zoek je ?’ vroeg ik.
‘Een boek,’ zei ze.
‘Wat voor boek ?’ vroeg ik.
‘Oh, over clowns en over Mars,’ zei ze.
‘Wat moet je ermee ?’ vroeg ik.
Ze begon te zingen.
‘Oh, geen antwoord, he,’ zei ik.

Ze begon vreemde liedjes te zingen over clowns en over Mars.
Ook over iemand die door z’n hoofd was geschoten door de clowns.
‘Ik begrijp het al,’ zei ik, en ging weer naar beneden.
Even later kwam ze met het boek naar beneden.
Het was een dik boek.
‘Heb je het gevonden ?’ vroeg ik.
Ze knikte.

‘Ik voel me alsof ik door mijn hoofd geschoten ben,’ zei ik.
‘Hoe dan ?’ vroeg ze.
‘Nou ja, vandaag op het werk. Zo’n vervelende opmerking gehad van een collega.’
‘Clowns,’ zei ze.
‘Ja, dat kun je wel zeggen,’ zei ik.

‘Ze willen dat je als hen bent,’ zei ze, ‘netjes in de maat.’
‘Ja,’ zei ik, ‘maar jij bent zelf soms ook zo.’
‘Voel je je door je hoofd geschoten door mij ?’ vroeg ze.
‘Ja, soms,’ zei ik.

‘Wat stroomt er door het gat ?’ vroeg ze.
‘Pijn, liefde, verwarring,’ zei ik

Er was iemand door zijn hoofd geschoten. Het gebeurde bij een tuin. Hij lag met zijn hoofd in het zand. Clowns renden weg, en een tuinier ontfermde zich over hem.

Mijn vrouw begon te lezen, en begon het hardop te zeggen. De pijn in mijn hoofd was voelbaar. Ik voelde mij ook door mijn hoofd geschoten door zoveel dingen. Even kon ik niet naar haar kijken. Soms was ze als een kogel door mijn hoofd. Iets irriteerde mij aan haar. Ze sloeg het boek dicht. ‘Heb je geluisterd ?’ vroeg ze.
‘Nee,’ zei ik. ‘Teveel pijn in mijn hoofd.’

‘Die collega zit in je hoofd zodat je niet naar mij kunt luisteren ?’ vroeg ze.
‘Ik vraag me af wat erger is,’ zei ik.
‘Hij of ik ?’ vroeg ze.
‘Het was een zij,’ zei ik.
‘Wie is erger, zij of ik ?’ vroeg ze.
‘Hangt van het moment af,’ zei ik.

‘Dus eigenlijk twee kogels in je kop ?’ vroeg ze.
Ik knikte.
‘Wat ga je er aan doen ?’ vroeg ze.

Hij klikte het nieuws aan. Het was weer allemaal op de televisie. ‘Zijn situatie verschilt niet veel met die van mij,’ zei ik.

‘Onzin,’ zei ze. ‘Je hebt geen letterlijke kogel in je kop. Loopt je leven gevaar ? Je moet je niet zo aanstellen.’

Hij zuchtte. Weer waren de clowns in beeld. Ze waren nu gearresteerd. Ze kwamen uit een vreemd circus. Het waren terroristen. Ze klommen op de daken. Hoe viel het met elkaar te rijmen ? Ze gingen de cel in. Hij wilde ze opzoeken om met ze te praten, maar zij wilde dat niet. ‘Waar is het voor nodig ?’ vroeg ze.

‘Ik ben gewoon nieuwsgierig,’ zei hij.
‘Het heeft je al eerder in de problemen gebracht,’ sprak ze.
‘Pas maar op, straks sta jij ook op de lijst.’

‘Het is mijn beroep,’ zei hij.
‘Maar houd in godsnaam laag profiel,’ zei ze. ‘Mijn kogels overleef je wel, maar hun kogels zul jij niet overleven.’
‘Wie zegt dat ?’ vroeg hij. ‘Misschien kom ik wel in een andere, betere wereld.’

‘Wil je naar de hemel ?’ vroeg ze. ‘Heb jij een doodsverlangen ? Speel jij daarom spelletjes met het gevaar ? Ben je daarom stuntdokter ?’

‘We doen alles voor de patient,’ zei hij. ‘We gaan niet slechts door de papieren heen. Wij gaan door berg en dal, door vuur en ijs, door leven en dood, allemaal voor de patient. We zoeken het allemaal voor ze uit.’

‘Oh ja, plaatsvervangend lijden,’ zei ze.

‘Precies,’ zei hij. ‘De ware dokter is altijd een stuntdokter. Ze blijven niet in hun kantoortje achter hun bureautje veilig hoog en droog.’

‘Nou, ik anders wel,’ zei zijn vrouw. ‘Veel te gevaarlijk. Ik lees liever een goed boek.’

‘Dat is nu precies het verschil tussen jou en mij,’ zei hij. ‘Jij bent een koude dokter, en ik ben een warme dokter. Dat is nu precies waar ik me soms aan irriteer en waarom je een kogel door mijn kop bent.’

‘Wie zegt dat ?’ vroeg zijn vrouw. ‘Ik ben voor jou anders een veilige haven waar je altijd bij kunt komen, en dan kan ik me ontfermen over jouw wonden, zodat jij je werk kunt blijven doen. Als je mij niet had was je er niet meer.’

‘Jij leest, en ik doe,’ zei hij.
‘Wie zegt dat ?’ vroeg ze weer. ‘Jou telkens thuis krijgen op deze manier is ook levensgevaarlijk werk. Het is een wonder dat ik nog leef. Het is altijd weer een tropentocht met jou. Je bent een gevaarlijke man. Wat breng je wel niet allemaal thuis ? God mag het weten. Je zakken vol met tijdbommen ? Wie zal het zeggen. Worden we afgeluisterd ?’

‘Ja ja,’ zei hij, ‘praatjesmaker. Je hebt teveel boeken gelezen.’

‘Nee,’ zei ze. ‘Ik sta in de realiteit.’

‘Ok,’ zei hij. ‘Dan zijn we voor elkaar een uitdaging. Hoort bij het werk.’

‘Hoort bij het werk, hoort bij het werk, pfff,’ zei ze. ‘Wat is er van de liefde ?’

‘Het is liefdeswerk, liefdadigheid, allemaal,’ zei hij.

‘Jij bent stuntdokter, ik ben huisdokter,’ zei ze. ‘Mooi geregeld zo. Goede taakverdeling. Als je thuiskomt zijn de rollen omgedraaid, en ben jij huisdokter en ik stuntdokter met zo’n man.’

‘Oh ja,’ zei hij. ‘Er was iemand door zijn hoofd geschoten. Er was iemand …’

‘Ja, en toen dacht jij dat jij degene was die door het hoofd was geschoten, en toen wilde je ook nog met die clowns een praatje maken,’ zei ze.

‘Nee,’ zei hij. ‘Ik wil het pistool zien.’

‘Pistool zien ?’ vroeg ze helemaal in paniek. ‘Zeg, ben jij nu helemaal gek geworden ?’

Hij keek haar aan. ‘Ben jij nu de kogel of het pistool ?’ vroeg hij.

Ze zuchtte. ‘Waarom moet je het altijd op mij betrekken ? Zo kom je altijd weer thuis. Alles wat je meemaakt projecteer je op mij, en dan heb ik het allemaal gedaan.’

‘Kalm maar,’ zei hij. ‘Ik probeer het te transformeren. Jij houdt toch zo van boeken ? Jij houdt toch zo van filosofie en dichterlijkheid ?’

‘Ja, maar niet op deze manier,’ zei ze.

‘Ik heb pijn in mijn hoofd,’ zei hij.

‘Ik kan het niet helpen,’ zei ze.

‘Nee,’ zei hij. ‘Nee. Schijnbaar niet. Maar je kan het wel verhelpen als je even meewerkt.’

Ze zuchtte. ‘Wat moet ik doen ?’

Hij kwam dichterbij.

‘Niet te dicht bij het pistool komen, hoor,’ zei ze spottend. ‘Straks gaat het af.’

Er was een man door zijn hoofd geschoten. Op school spraken de kinderen erover, en de leraren. Het was het hoofd van een school. De stuntdokter en zijn vrouw hadden heel wat te doen, en ze moesten het tussen elkaar uitvechten. Daar kwam het altijd op neer. Ze namen het mee naar huis en maakten het hen eigen. Maar was dat dan geen mentale marteling ? Het was vuil werk, dat was een ding dat zeker was.

Einde

een lekker bakje ...

‘Oh, onze koffie is zo goed,
exquisite, parbleu,
oh, het is zo goed, zo fijn,
oh, en dan die kleur, en die geur,
er is niets zoals onze koffie,
en wij waren de eerste.’

Ik dacht : ‘vreemd. De eersten zullen de laatsten zijn.’
Maar het mannetje ging maar door met zijn Franse accent,
over hoe geweldig hun koffie was,
alsof ik daar maar jaloers op moest wezen.
Zij hadden tenminste iets van hun leven gemaakt.

Toch liet ik me overhalen om er een slokje van te drinken,
want hij drong zo aan, en hij maakte me zo nieuwsgierig.
Ik sloot mijn ogen en zag een prachtige natuur.
Riet en water. ‘Nou ja, hoe kan dat ?’ vroeg ik me af.
Ik moest toegeven : Dit was goede koffie,
en ze schenen het uit een rietsoort te halen en er zat verder geen troep in.

Een soort rietkoffie ok.
Er kwam een dikke surinaamse vrouw toen naar het mannetje toe en gaf hem een draai om zijn oren.
Ik keek er met opgetrokken wenkbrauwen naar.
Ik vond dat niet eerlijk, maar ze begon een heel verhaal over hem op te hangen.
Toen begon het mannetje die vrouw helemaal op te hemelen en aan te prijzen als het beste.
Hetzelfde eigenlijk wat hij eerst met de koffie deed.

Ik kwam er snel achter dat het mannetje niet alleen voor de koffie werkte,
maar ook voor een bordeel.
‘Ja, nee,’ zei ik. ‘Dat ga ik niet doen.’
Maar die vrouw sloeg me toen neer.
Ik werd wakker van een nachtmerrie.
Het begon zo goed met die koffie.

Ik las in de krant : ‘Deze koffie is goed.’
Ik dacht : Laat maar.
Moet ik nu jaloers worden ?
Wat ze tegenwoordig wel niet allemaal in de krant beweren,
en we weten allemaal waar het eindigt.
Maar toch liet ik me op de markt overhalen om wat van die koffie te drinken.
Het was goed spul, daar niet van.
Echt meesterschap.
Ik ben toen weggegaan, maar ze kwamen achter me aan.
Het was nog niet klaar.
‘Niet klaar ?’ vroeg ik.
‘Wat dan nog ?’

Ik moest en zou die koffie kopen,
tenminste dat zeiden ze.
Ik ging het nog bijna geloven ook.
Ik dacht : vreemde spelletjes.
Ze sloegen me neer, en ik wist dat ik nog steeds droomde.
Toen werd ik wakker.
Hoe heb ik toch zo kunnen dromen ?
Oh ja, het was die koffie.

zestiger en zeventiger jaren mythologie

‘Zo jongens,’ zei de westerse god van de matrix, ‘na het boek openbaring is de bijbel afgesloten. Daar blijft het bij. Er komt niks meer bij.’

Nee, natuurlijk niet, want anders zouden de mensen nog kunnen ontsnappen uit de matrix. De westerse god-bewaker van de matrix vreesde voortgaande openbaring.

De matrix is een soort van onzichtbare psychiatrie, gedachten-manipulatie, waar George Orwell in de veertiger jaren al tegen waarschuwde, en in de dertiger jaren werd er al voor gewaarschuwd in Brave New World. Dat is in principe ook wat Stepford is, een onzichtbare psychiatrie. Mensen worden gehersenspoeld en verstijven helemaal, en blijven rondlopen in cirkeltjes van herhaling, als robotten.

Daarom kwam in 1971 ook het boek ‘Wilde Jongens’ uit, van Burroughs, als een rebellie en ontmaskering van dit onzichtbare systeem, en het kreeg verder naam en toenaam in het boek ‘Stepford Vrouwen’ van Ira Levin in 1972. Het wees terug op ‘de dochters der mensen die onderworpen werden aan de zonen van de westerse god van de matrix die waren afgedaald in het vleselijke’, waar genesis 6 over spreekt, en wat de reden was waarom de zondvloed (corona) moest komen. De schandalen van de psychiatrie kwamen zwaar opzetten in de dertiger, veertiger, vijftiger en zestiger jaren, en er werden boeken tegenin geschreven als een waarschuwing, ook in de zestiger jaren, zoals A Clockwork Orange uit 1962, wat in het Nederlands werd vertaald als ‘Boze Jongens’, en in hetzelfde jaar kwam ook ‘One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest’ uit, wat vertaald werd als ‘Eentje ziet ze vliegen,’ in het Nederlands. In 1975 werd het boek verfilmd, en het gaat over iemand die undercover de psychiatrie ingaat om hen die opgezet en vastgezet waren door medicijnen en machtsmisbruik te bevrijden, maar het loopt helemaal verkeerd af, eigenlijk net zoals in het Christus-verhaal. De hoofdpersoon is een soort vrijgevochten, verzets-christus figuur van de zestiger jaren : Randle McMurphy. De patienten waren helemaal vastgezet in een disciplinair systeem wat geheel door medicijnen werd

gestuurd en steriele, harteloze figuren die zichzelf dokters en zusters noemden, en Randle wilde dat ze weer in contact zouden komen met normale mensen, met normale vrouwen, enz. maar dat liep dus helemaal verkeerd af, en zo werd Randle een van hen, nog wel het ergste, want hij werd hierom gedwongen in zijn hersenen geopereerd en zo werd hij tot een kasplantje, als een zestiger jaren Christus aan het kruis van de psychiatrie. De goede herders worden dus zelf ook de verloren schapen. De patienten waren hierdoor zo geshockeerd dat hun redder dit werd aangedaan, en werden zo woedend, dat ze bijna met bovennatuurlijke kracht een weg konden vinden uit het hondenhol genaamd de psychiatrie, en er was een groot feest. Het is daarom ook een van de belangrijkste boeken uit de zestiger jaren.

Vannacht had ik een droom waarin Randle McMurphy tot mij sprak : ‘They say Christ, but it was Breast.’ Oftewel : ‘Ze zeggen Christ, krst, maar het was Borst, brst, als de moeder borst’, en dat is iets van de ark, de kebu in het Aramees, van Keb, de god van de aarde, van de moederschoot van de natuur, dat de letters soms wisselen van K naar B, van B naar K, K-B. Wat me was bijgebleven is dat hij de patienten meenam op een boottocht, en als mensen vroegen wie zij waren, dan zei Randle dat het dokters waren. Ook Randle moest medicijnen slikken, terwijl ze nog helemaal niet wisten wat hij mankeerde, dus er hing een ongelofelijke medicijnendwang, en toen zei hij : ‘Ik slik liever niet iets waarvan ik niet weet wat het is.’ Ze mochten ook niet weten wat het was. Toch moest hij het dan slikken, en later in het zaaltje vroeg een mede-patient hem op kleinerende toon waarom hij dat wijf geen optater gaf in plaats van het braaf te slikken op haar commando. Hij deed toen zijn mond open en daar lag de pil nog gewoon op zijn tong, en spuwde het in het gezicht van de mede-patient. Die was toen direct bang dat ze het ook nog op zouden merken dat hij het niet had geslikt. Ook werd een stotterende jongen bij het minst of geringste bedreigd door het personeel dat ze ‘het aan zijn moeder’ zouden vertellen, waardoor de jongen nog wel erger ging stotteren en in elkaar kromp. Randle was niet de enige die undercover was gegaan tot dit hondenhol. Er was ook een grote indiaan die ‘Chief’ werd genoemd, ‘opperhoofd’, die zich voordeed als doofstom. Hij leefde nogal afgezonderd, en Randle probeerde hem te helpen. Soms als Randle door het personeel werd lastiggevallen kwam de indiaanse chief voor hem op, en ramde het personeel tot de vlakte. Maar toen

Randle schocktherapie moest krijgen en een hersenoperatie vanwege zijn rebellie kon de indiaanse chief het niet stoppen. Toen Randle terugkwam als een kasplantje na de hersenoperatie zocht de chief hem op in zijn kamer, omhelsde hem en zei dat ze hoe dan ook zouden ontsnappen en dat hij Randle met zich mee zou nemen, en bij wijze van genade verstikt hij Randle dan met een kussen. Dan loopt hij naar het controle paneel van de kliniek, en rukt het los om het vervolgens door het raam te werpen waardoor er een uitgang is, en daardoor vlucht hij. Zo moeten we ook met de bijbel omgaan. Er gebeurd teveel in de bijbel, en er zitten teveel patienten in opgesloten om zomaar onaangeroerd achter te laten.

het medische kruis

De medische industrie is het grootste kwaad wat de wereld ooit heeft gekend. Dat is telkens weer gebleken, en het verspreide zich als de pest over de hele wereld en kwam met name opzetten in de dertiger, veertiger, vijftiger en zestiger jaren als een wereldrijk van terreur waaraan iedereen onderworpen moest worden, met name ook aan de mentale medische industrie en de orale medische industrie, wat de twee arrogantste en hardnekkigste takken zijn van deze industrie, uitgezonden om de mens te wurgen. Vandaar dat deze hoge nood tegemoet gekomen moest worden. De mens ging aan een medisch kruis. Aan het begin van de zestiger jaren, in 1962, was er het boek ‘One flew over the cuckoo’s nest,’ over een medische messias die hard nodig was, een verzetsstrijder, die als een medische James Bond als spion en patient werd gezonden tot het medische instituut, en men hing hem aan het medisch kruis omdat hij niet in een hokje te vangen was.

De medische industrie is een ziekte op zichzelf. Het medische kruis is belangrijk. Het is met name onzichtbaar. Iedereen is er al aan onderworpen. Ook hele regeringen zijn onderworpen aan de medische dictatuur. Dit is het tijdperk van de psychiatrie, een psychiatrische dystopie. Er wordt voor ons gedacht, en er wordt voor ons beslist, wie je dan ook bent. Dat is een grotendeels onzichtbaar netwerk. De mens hangt aan een onzichtbaar psychiatrisch kruis, een medisch kruis, en is daar gehangen door dokters en zusters in witte jassen. Dat is waar Randl McMurphy tegen optrad, en kwam er zelf ook aan te hangen om uiteindelijk gewoon vegetatie te worden. Het is nogal besmettelijk. Kom je er te dichtbij dan wordt je ook meegesleurd in deze mallemolen, in deze woeste rivier. Goede herders worden altijd tot de verloren schapen zelf. Dat is wat het plaatsvervangend lijden is.

Het medische kruis is zeer belangrijk. We zien deze zestiger jaren Jezus Christus optreden in een heel ander tafereeltje, maar toch zijn er parallellen, overeenkomsten. Het zal veel meer zicht geven op wat het Christus mysterie eigenlijk is, de diepte ervan. Wat is dit medische kruis eigenlijk ? Ik had er een droom over vannacht, over Randl McMurphy. Ik zag het medische kruis. Ik zag de rampzalige medische industrie die overal dood en verderf zaaide, en er werd gezegd : ‘het is de taal van zelfmoord.’ Ik heb het medische systeem nooit begrepen. Ik heb er nooit sympathie voor gehad, maar er werd gezegd dat het een bepaalde taal is dus die zij spreken, en het blijkt dus de taal te zijn van zelfmoord. Ik kan me herinneren dat ook Simon Carmiggelt de medische industrie eens vergeleek met zelfmoord in een van zijn verhalen.

Ik vroeg : ‘Maar waarom doen ze dat ? Waarom zelfmoord ?’

Er werd toen gezegd : ‘Als de beveiliging van hun innerlijk kind, hun eeuwig kind.’ Ik hoorde een baby kraaien, maar het was een slang. Het was een nep kind, iets kunstmatigs. De slang deed een bepaald truukje. Het kind kon zich telkens afsplitsen in bepaalde rollen, zoals een secretaresse, een verpleegster, maar ook rotzooi trappende jeugd. Het afsplitsen zette nucleaire energie vrij, kern energie. Dit is dus wat het medische kruis is. Ik vroeg toen wat de opstanding dan was na het medische kruis. Er werd toen gezegd : corona is de opstanding na het medische kruis. De corona crisis neemt de mens terug naar

de natuur, als de ark van Noach in de zondvloed. Noach werd helemaal gek van de spotternijen en het gemanipuleer om hem heen, van de hele Stepfordse samenleving, en hij was blij toen uiteindelijk de zondvloed kwam. Het was zijn bevrijding van de gekken. De natuur herstelt haarzelf dus door de corona crisis, en opent de wegen terug, breekt de bruggen en muren open. De droom eindigde met een lied waarin werd gezongen :

Love will set you free tonight,
Love won’t let you go.

Er is geen verlossing buiten liefde om.

de goede vogelaar

‘To Kill a Mockingbird’, Moord op de spotvogel, of in de Nederlandse vertaling ook wel ‘Spaar de spotvogel,’ uit 1960 is een van de geliefste boeken in Amerika, een van de belangrijkste boeken uit de zestiger jaren, wat ook nog steeds onderwezen wordt op de scholen. Het is een boek dat de mens telkens maar weer gaven vernietigd die gezonden worden, zoals de spotvogel die komt om boodschappend tot de mens te zingen. De mens vernietigd meer dan haar lief is, zo ook in het boek, waar een zwarte man, Tom Robinson, vals beschuldigd wordt van verkrachting van een blank meisje. Atticus Finch moet de zwarte man verdedigen in de rechtszaak. De valselijkheid komt aan het licht, maar toch wordt Tom Robinson veroordeeld. Hij wordt doodgeschoten als hij probeert te ontsnappen. Weer hebben ze dus een spotvogel vermoord. De vader van het meisje dat gelogen had over de verkrachting is een dronkelap, die ook de kinderen van Atticus lastigvalt. De kinderen worden dan gered door een kluizenaar, en de dronkelap schijnt dood te zijn.

Vannacht had ik een droom van een vrouw die zong als een spotvogel. Ze zong het lied ‘Troy’ van Sinead o Connor, over de foenix die oprijst uit de vlammen. Ik was in een parallelle wereld en ik woonde in de slaapkamer van de aardse ouders, die nu veel groter was. Op zolder woonde Atticus die een beetje op de aardse vader leek. Ik vroeg me af waarom hij niet naar beneden kwam, zelfs niet om te plassen, dus ik hoopte maar dat hij nog leefde, maar het bleek dus dat hij op zolder ook een badkamer had. Beneden waren wat meisjes, ook uit het boek, en een ervan was de dochter van Atticus. Ze hadden een aapje, en dat was de opgestane Tom Robinson, en het aapje kon heel mooi zingen en kwam ook op de radio, als de stem van Matthew Ward. Maar ze probeerden hem nog wel te exploiteren, de mensen van de radio, van de muziek industrie, dus er was nog wel een gevecht gaande. Hij moest ook voor ze dansen, maar de meisjes van het boek probeerden hem vrij te zetten uit zijn kooi. Het was ook mijn missie om het aapje te helpen. Ze hadden aan zijn hersenen lopen rommelen en er wat in geimplanteerd, en dat moest ik er weer uithalen.

Ook de psychiatrie zijn jagers op spotvogels die kinderen al op jonge leeftijd kapot maken, hoog begaafde kinderen.

de zestiger jaren : sleutel tot de tachtiger jaren

Ik had het de laatste dagen veel in het hoofd, een lied van Frank Boeijen over dit schaamteloze land. Begrijpen doet niemand. Maar dat we onze naam schrijven in de sneeuw bij het meer. Toen ik vandaag naar de grote natuurstad vlakbij ging toen was het eerste lied wat ik hoorde toen ik het station afliep

Kronenburg park, ook van Frank Boeijen, uit de tachtiger jaren, over dat hij niet weet wat je zover heeft gebracht, zonder herinnering. Verder in de stad stond een bord : ‘We want you’ voor een of andere baan, en ik moest even aan Uncle Sam denken die hetzelfde deed voor het leger. Op de terugreis zat er een jongetje op de grond in de trein een computerspelletje te doen. Ik dacht : ‘Dat is wat kinderen behoren te doen, spelletjes spelen.’ En ik moest denken wat religieuze ordes zo’n kind willen aandoen als het niet in hun Jezus Christus gelooft en niet helemaal volgens hun reglementen leeft. De rillingen gingen door me heen, en ik wist dat het nog steeds oorlog was, ook voor dit kind, en kinderen zoals hem. Het religieuze kwaad is een groot kwaad. Laten we wel wezen. We zijn het de kinderen verschuldigd voor ze te strijden. We moeten de religie van de volwassenen, wat allemaal om de economie draait en niet het welzijn van het kind, niet pikken.

Hoe lang is hier op gewacht. Begrijpen doet niemand, maar wij zijn sterk, wij zijn trots en van de liefde, zong Frank Boeijen, en ga die wereld uit. Vraag niet naar de weg, want iedereen is de weg kwijt. Daarom ben ik de laatste tijd veel bezig met de zestiger jaren, het tijdperk van de liefde. Welke films keken ze toen, hoe leefden ze toen. Wat voor magie was er. Welke boeken. De schrijvers hadden allemaal wel door dat de wereld niet klopte, en ze probeerden de mens af te leiden. Je kunt ook meer van de tachtiger jaren begrijpen als je meer van de zestiger jaren begrijpt. In de zestiger jaren wordt het allemaal ontraadseld.

In 1965 was er de film Alphaville, over een tirannieke computer genaamd Alpha 60 die deze stad regeert. Emoties zijn verboden, vrij denken is ook verboden, en poezie is dat ook. Dan wordt je afgeschoten als je je daarmee bezig houdt. Liefde is ook verboden. Bijvoorbeeld een man die om zijn overleden vrouw weent wordt ook zonder pardon neergeknald. De computer Alpha 60 kan ook spreken. Als je emoties toont, dan wordt dat beschouwd als onlogisch, en irrationeel, zoals ook de psychiatrie vandaag de dag vaak emoties als ziekte bestempeld. Je mag niet dromen, geen spiritualiteit beleven, geen geloofservaringen hebben, geen symboliek gebruiken enz. enz. Zo kunnen ze snel een duit slaan uit het leed van een kind, of een volwassene. De mens in Alphaville mag geen autonomie hebben, geen individualiteit, maar moet conform zijn volgens het programma van Alpha 60. In principe is dit dus ook de

hele onderliggende gedachte van het Stepford syndroom, de onderliggende controlerende computer. Er wordt een agent op afgezonden, genaamd Alertheid, 003, en die probeert mensen uit Alphaville te redden door hen naar henzelf terug te leiden. Ieder mens moet persoonlijk Alpha 60 overwinnen. De mens moet weer leren wat liefde betekent. Het tijdperk van de zestiger jaren was dus het tijdperk van de goede herder.

Ik had een droom een paar dagen geleden over een oorlog tegen de rijkeluis-mentaliteit. De rijken hadden grote huizen, grote tuinen en grote auto’s, en leefden voor het genot. Alles wat ze zeiden en deden was erop gericht zoveel mogelijk genot te hebben, ook ten koste van anderen. Na de oorlog hadden ze alleen nog maar een lelijke eend over, geen grote blitsende auto meer. De vraag is dus : Wat is deze oorlog precies ? Hoe gaat dat ? Daarvoor moeten we in de zestiger jaren zijn, in de mythologie van de zestiger jaren, en ook van de vijftiger jaren. Er werd geschreven om dat wat aan de oppervlakte was gekomen : de pure haat van het nazisme, te verwerken, te overwinnen, want hier mag het niet bij blijven.

Vannacht had ik een droom over de overburen van vroeger die ook aan de kerk zaten. Ze konden niet met elkaar opschieten. Ze waren dan ook op een gegeven moment gescheiden. De man leek op Freddie Mercury. Hij zong, en hij was genaamd Fahrenheit, zoals ook Freddie Mercury mister Fahrenheit werd genoemd. En hij probeerde zijn vrouw te overreden, en zijn vrouw probeerde hem te overreden. En de overbuurman begon steeds meer Freddie Mercury zelf te worden. Fahrenheit 451 is ook een film uit de zestiger jaren, uit 1966, en het boek komt uit 1953. Het gaat over een totalitair regiem waarin boeken worden verboden. De dienstdoenden in het rijk zijn brandweermannen die zomaar overal kunnen binnenvallen om boeken te verbranden. Een van de brandweermannen krijgt echter twijfels als zijn buurvrouw hem verteld over haar leven en denken. Hij begint dan boeken te verstoppen in zijn huis en leest ze ook. Het komt zelfs zo ver dat hij een stukje uit een boek voorleest aan zijn vrouw en haar vriendinnen. Een van de vriendinnen wordt erdoor geraakt en geemotioneerd, terwijl de anderen boos worden en hem niet begrijpen. Zijn vrouw verraad hem dan aan de overheid. De buurvrouw verteld hem over een ondergedoken groep mensen genaamd ‘de boekmensen’, die ook boeken uit

het hoofd leren, zodat de boeken niet zullen vergaan. En zo vlucht hij ook tot de boekmensen en wordt een van hen.

Wees niet zomaar een verloren schaap, maar wees een goede herder die tegelijkertijd een verloren schaap is. Je kunt beter onrecht lijden goeddoende dan kwaaddoende.

returnity en het eiland van de vijftiger en zestiger jaren in de woeste zee van het modernisme

Gelovigen leven veel door het begrip ‘eternity’, oftewel eeuwigheid, van horen zeggen, en natuurlijk mag je hopen en geloven. Geloof op zich is niks mis mee, maar als het zomaar van horen zeggen is, dan is het allemaal leeg en onpersoonlijk. Eigenlijk gaat het dan erom om terug te gaan tot de bron, dus in wezen gaat het om ‘returnity’. Dat is de eeuwigheid van het hiervoormaals. Ga je niet terug, verwerk je niks, dan kom je ook niet verder.

In Fahrenheit 451 uit de vijftiger en zestiger jaren waren boeken verboden, en zo ook de geschiedenis, terwijl juist de geschiedenis boodschappen zou kunnen bevatten ter redding van de mensheid. De film Alphaville uit 1965 stelt dat er licht in de duisternis kan komen door poezie, maar in Alphaville was poezie verboden door de computer die hen allen onder controle hield en terroriseerde, en die computer was genaamd alpha 60, en die kon ook spreken. Dat is wat modernisme doet. Het kapt de geschiedenis weg, zodat er geen verbanden meer zijn, en de mens prooi wordt van eenzijdige informatie. De samenhang is compleet weg, en zo ontstaat de dystopie, een samenleving in bedwang gehouden en in slaap gehouden door een onzichtbare psychiatrie. Deze

computer moest vernietigd worden door een man genaamd Caution, 003, wat Voorzichtigheid, of Alertheid betekent. Weer is dus het begrip 'returnity' van belang. Heel veel was al overwonnen door de voorouders, maar het had wat missing links, dus dat moet weer opgezocht en verbonden worden in de returnity. Elke laag van voorouders heeft zijn eigen 'golden links', en tezamen wordt het diamant. 'Diamonds are forever.' In de modernisering wordt het verstand in stukjes gekapt, losgesneden van de bronnen, en gaat het een eigen leven leiden, los van elke samenhang, en dan ben je in principe doof geworden. Als je je niet intens bezig houdt met geschiedenis ben je doof. Het is een samenleving van doven. Er was een ander belangrijk boek in de zestiger jaren : 'To kill a mockingbird', moord op de spotvogel. Dit gaat erover dat de mens altijd de gaven die gezonden worden vernietigd. De mens is een zeer ondankbaar wezen en moet zo de gevolgen hiervan dragen. Dit is een psychiatrisch mens die anderen onderdrukt, een spotvogel jager. Alles wat mooi is maken ze kapot. Wapens die ze overmatig gebruiken zijn slechts zelfmoord wapens, dus de maatschappij is aan het instorten. Het is een woeste zee. Voor de diepere mens die hier niet aan mee wil doen is er het eiland van de vijftiger en zestiger jaren. Daar lagen al de antistoffen tegen het nazisme. Toen werd er al een nieuwe wereld gebouwd over het zichzelf vernietigende nazi wereldrijk, met als hoogtepunt het tijdperk van de liefde in de zestiger jaren. Een nieuwe wereld, niet in een moderne eternity, maar in de returnity.

back to the future : oorlog in amsterdam – de betekenis van de tachtiger jaren mythologie

Er is veel meer gaande dan zomaar het ogenschijnlijke leven.
Telkens als je slaapt zaai je voor je verdere leven, totdat je droomt, wat een beeld is van het openspringen van het zaad. Er komt dan een heleboel energie vrij, verborgen stoffen, en die gaan chemisch op elkaar inwerken. Als je dan uiteindelijk wakker wordt voor de nieuwe dag dan is dat puur een cryptische beleving en ervaring van de oogst.
Zo mag je met het nu en de geschiedenis omgaan.

Ik had een droom dat de geschiedenis door elkaar heen begon te lopen. Er waren mensen van verschillende tijdperken in mijn leven. Het was in een andere wereld, op een andere planeet. Een groepje van die mensen zou met een voertuig naar ontwikkelingsgebied gaan om daar te helpen. De bestuurder was een moeder van een schoolvriend van het college, en hij ging zelf ook mee. Verder was er een schoolvriend van mijn theologische opleiding en wat vrienden van verschillend vakantie werk, en ze kenden elkaar allemaal niet, maar in die droom kenden ze elkaar. Toen het voertuig wegging wenste ik ze allemaal succes, maar mijn tasje hing er nog aan, en ik begon achter het voertuig aan te rennen. Ik wist dat ze eerst nog wat in het dorp moeten doen. Ik raakte ze kwijt en begon toen het hele dorp af te kammen, op zoek naar mijn tasje, wat dus nog aan het voertuig hing, en daar zat mijn geld in, mijn pasjes, bibliotheek pasje enzovoorts. Eindelijk kwam ik de groep weer tegen en de groep was nu veel groter en ook het voertuig zou veel groter zijn, want het was bijna een station, en er was ook een winkel bij, en het bleek dat daar ook nog een heel groot krat stond met inkopen van mij wat ik aan hen geschonken had. Ik begon even het krat te doorzoeken, en het was nogal rommelig, en dingen waren al aangebroken, dus ik vroeg me af wat het nog waard was. Er liepen hier nog meer tijden door elkaar heen, ook nog mensen van veel latere tijden van mijn leven, en een vrouw die de leiding had over ontwikkelingshulp zei toen tegen me : ‘Later als je gaat verhuizen dan kunnen we dit voertuig er ook voor gebruiken, om zeven uur.’ Het bleek haar voertuig te zijn. Ik wist niet waar het was, en ik dacht ook toen : Laat dat tasje maar zitten, want het is toch maar een droom, en toen later dacht ik nog : Dat tasje mag wel naar de

ontwikkelingshulp. Ze zullen het nodig hebben.

Allerlei tijden liepen dus door elkaar heen in de droom, en die kwamen allemaal samen voor een doel : ontwikkelingshulp, empathie, het zoeken naar de verloren schapen, als de goede herder. In de tachtiger jaren, rond 1985, ging ik met die schoolvriend van het college en zijn moeder naar Amsterdam. Daar zouden we naar zijn familie gaan en naar de Rocky IV film, wat een gevechtsfilm was, een boksfilm, tussen Rusland en Amerika, communisme en kapitalisme. Ik gaf zelf niks om boksen, heb ik nooit gedaan, maar het was een verhaal, een metaforisch verhaal, en die schoolvriend wilde het graag zien, dus ik ging mee. We gingen daarna een paar dagen logeren bij zijn oom, en gingen ook nog even naar een tante van hem in Amsterdam. Later begon ik steeds meer de cryptische waarde van die dagen in te zien. Het bereidde mij voor op de oorlog in Amsterdam, waar ik later zou wonen en werken, ook voor de ontwikkelingshulp. Ik heb ook in de Bijlmer gewerkt onder Afrikanen. Toen ik in 85 in Amsterdam was met de college schoolvriend en zijn moeder was Radio Africa van Latin Quarter op de radio, en ik vond het zo apart, alsof ik in een andere wereld kwam. Het was zo alternatief. Aan het einde van de dagen gingen we naar zijn vader die in Hoorn zijn kantoor had bij een computerbedrijf, IBM. Die zou ons weer thuis brengen. We waren ook even op zijn kantoor. Toen ik weer thuiskwam ging ik verder met een computerspel op mijn commodore 64 op zolder waar ik mijn kamer had. Het was een spel van een pyramide in de wildernis. Eerst moest je door een woestijn waar de pijlen van de rovers je om de oren vlogen, en als je dan in de pyramide was gekomen, dan vielen daar allerlei grote stenen naar beneden en zakte je door de grond enzo. Ik kwam er maar niet doorheen. Toch kwam ik steeds een stukje verder. Zo zou mijn leven ook zijn. Ik was op ontdekkingstocht. Het wachten is op alle tijden die bij elkaar komen en met elkaar gaan samenwerken.

Rocky IV speelde zich dus af als beeld van de koude oorlog. Het ijzeren gordijn bestond nog steeds in 1985. Rocky ging hiervoor helemaal naar het besneeuwde, koude Rusland, dus hij moest al zijn luxe en gemak achterlaten, net zoals ik mijn tasje met pasjes moest achterlaten. Toen ik rond 1988 zelf met school excursie achter het ijzeren gordijn ging, naar Tsjecho Slowakije werd ik ook beroofd van mijn portemonee waar ook mijn bibliotheek pasje

inzat, naast wat geld. Die portemonee zat in mijn jas, en die jas had ik deels zelf gemaakt, want ik had er allerlei emblemen opgenaaid. Midden in de nacht was er in het hotel namelijk gegil, en mijn Surinaamse klasgenoot die op mijn hotelkamer sliep dacht dat het een van onze schoolmeisjes was, dus die rende de hotelkamer uit en liet de deur openstaan, dus toen kon de dief binnenkomen. Ik was ook wakker geworden, en er stond zo ineens een Tsjecho Slowaakse man in onze kamer. Ik dacht daar toen verder niks bij, maar later bleek dus dat mijn jas met portemonee weg was. Gelukkig had ik nog wel wat extra geld en een regenjas in mijn koffer. Later dacht ik nog : ‘Ach, die mensen hebben het meer nodig dan ik.’

Het Rusland probleem van extreem communisme als monopolistisch kapitalisme voor de elite was een groot probleem, en Rocky’s Russische tegenstander had ook nog eens in het geheim anobole steroiden binnengekregen door injecties, als beeld van de opgeblazenheid van dit vleselijke systeem. Het is dus een stuk tachtiger jaren mythologie, zelfde als Back to the Future, ‘terug naar de toekomst’, waarin je dus terug moet gaan tot de geschiedenis om de toekomst te kunnen veranderen, en de toekomst in moet gaan om het verleden te kunnen veranderen. In die zin is de toekomst dus allang geweest.

de puzzel van de zestiger jaren

In mijn dromen wandel ik door de grote steden van de zestiger jaren en zie overal patronen waarin ik buitenaardse boodschappen zie. Natuurlijk kwam het buitenaardse ons tegemoet in de zestiger jaren vijftiger jaren na het onmenselijke nazi tijdperk. De jaren zestig was het tijdperk van de goede herder die het verloren schaap vond, maar na de zestiger jaren werd de goede herder al snel afgeschoten, en ook tijdens de zestiger jaren al. Denk maar aan Martin Luther King in 1968. De zestiger jaren werden een voor een

afgeschoten, en er werd een moderne wereld overheen gebouwd, zonder pardon. De nazi machine werd witgeverfd als het medische systeem, als witgewassen leugens. Het monster ging in de ontkennings-fase, want dat is wat Stepford is. Alles wordt keurig door de hoed bedekt. Men siert de gruwelen met kant en satijn, en er wordt een grote glimlach overheen getrokken : het tijdperk van de gemaakte vriendelijkheid, deftigheid en beleefdheid om de misdaad af te dekken. Dat is dus niet het tijdperk van de liefde. Zomaar aardige mensen hebben we niks aan, helemaal niks. Criminelen doen ook heel aardig tegen de kinderen die ze ontvoerd hebben, wat we ‘grooming’ noemen. Zo ging de mens de zeventiger en tachtiger jaren in, als gevangene. De goede herder afgemaakt. De puzzel van de zestiger jaren was namelijk nog niet klaar. Die moest nog verder afgemaakt worden. Ook als ik de boeken van de zestiger jaren lees, dan wandel ik door de grote steden van die tijd, en dan zie ik de missing links, de gouden links, en dan voeg ik ze tezamen tot diamant. ‘Diamonds are forever.’ Zo komen we tot de returnity.

Hoeveel tijd heeft u nog ? Zorg dat u de tijd die u nog rest ten volle benut, en geen genoegen neemt met het middelmatige. Er staat veel op het spel. Het goede is de vijand van het beste. De gemaakte aardigheid is de vijand van de liefde. Wees een hoogvlieger. Echt, het zal u goeddoen.

De mens is in dit tijdperk volkomen gebrainwashed en moet daar ge’back’washed worden, oftewel teruggespoeld, en daarin zijn de zestiger jaren belangrijk. Daar werden de grote fundamenten gelegd na het nazi tijdperk. Deze fundamenten konden de nazi’s niet vernietigen, maar ze konden het wel afdekken en de mens in slaap brengen, in onwetendheid, om de mens zo te ontvoeren, weg van de fundamenten. Ik had een droom vannacht dat Sacco van der Made (1918-1997) zei : ‘het is de walm generatie,’ oftewel een zeer oppervlakkige van alles losgeslagen generatie. Ik had een huis in de zestiger jaren in die droom. We werden uitgenodigd door de buren die een groot terrein hadden, en allerlei buitenaardse artikelen, en we mochten wat uitkiezen. Een buurjongen liet een doos zien waarin twee kleine pianootjes lagen met buitenaardse toontjes, een beetje zoals suikoden muziek van playstation, en het waren ook computertjes waarmee je van alles kan doen. Ik vroeg ook of er opname mogelijkheden waren. Het ene pianootje was meer

accoustisch, en het andere pianootje was meer electrisch, en ik koos voor het wat accoustischere pianootje, die net iets soberder was. Er stond ook voorgeprogrammeerde muziek op. Het kwam uit een buitenaards stripboek genaamd XII. Hij liet me ook een stapel van die stripboeken zien. Op de doos van het mini-pianootje stond een gezicht van een man, een herder, afgebeeld, met wat runderen, en het was verder een plaatje van de natuur, heel sober. Het was allemaal heel gespikkeld en vlekkerig, wat ook een soort van kunst is. Ik kon er gewoon doorheen kijken. Het was heel doorzichtig.

Wacht niet op de buitenwereld. Zoek de liefde niet in de buitenwereld, maar in de binnenwereld, waar de zestiger jaren nog steeds zijn. Streef naar de herleving van het tijdperk van de liefde in jezelf, en dat is dus geen aardigdoenerij zomaar, maar de kenmerken van de herleving van het tijdperk van de liefde, van de goede herder, zijn : armenliefde, dierenliefde, een strijd tegen de overmatige markt die ze van alles gemaakt hebben. Je mag heus wel markt drijven, heel veel zelfs, maar het mag niet overdreven worden. Er mag geen markt gedreven worden in mensenrechten zoals medische, geestelijke en juridische zorg. En wij strijden al lange tijd tegen copyright, het merkteken van het beest van hebberigheid en bezitterigheid. Gebakken lucht verkopen ze vandaag de dag. Ze roven het eerst van iemand anders en doen dan net alsof het van henzelf is. Uiteindelijk zijn alle goede dingen door God gegeven. ‘To kill a mockingbird,’ dat hebben ze gedaan, en ze voeren onzichtbare psychiatrie over ieder mens, oftewel de denk en droom politie van 1984. To kill a mockingbird. Ze hebben de spotvogel opgezet en drijven er handel mee. Hysterisch hardnekkig zijn ze. Deze hond heeft gebeten en wil niet loslaten. Je kunt er hoog en laag over gaan springen, maar de puzzel moet opgelost worden : de puzzel van de zestiger jaren. Het tijdperk van de liefde moet in jezelf beginnen. Het zijn van de goede herder kan alleen gestalte krijgen als je als David de wolven, honden en leeuwen onderkent die de schapen aanvallen, en als je het gevecht aangaat, en strategisch gaat leren denken. Je hoeft je niet telkens door deze wolven en leeuwen te laten verscheuren. Ga de grond onder. Leidt je schapen daar. Maak een schuilplaats en bouw die uit. Juist in de diepte die niemand kent, die door alles en iedereen vergeten is, oftewel verloren en verlaten gebied, daar mag je de schuilplaats bouwen. Als je het gevoel hebt dat je een lek hebt, dan moet je juist daar naartoe. De verloren, verlaten plaats in

de buitenste duisternissen, diep onder de grond, daar is waar het lekt. Te blijven aan de oppervlaktes van dit moderne tijdperk is juist veel gevaarlijker. In de buitenste duisternissen die niemand kent, die niemand zich nog kan herinneren, liggen juist zoveel geschenken en belangrijke boodschappen die nodig zijn om het volk te voeden.

Ik vroeg dus aan die buurjongen in de droom over de zestiger jaren of het pianootje ook opname-mogelijkheden had, maar dat had het niet. In principe moeten we dus leren mediteren, leren verdiepen, telkens herhalen, totdat we het in onszelf kunnen onthouden en opslaan.

het wiel opnieuw uitvinden

Er zijn neerwaartse reflecties en opwaartse reflecties in de golven van het leven, wat een waar circus is, een kermis, en als deze stromen elkaar kruizen dan geeft het sleutels weg, golden links, die je kunt verzamelen tot diamanten : diamonds are forever. In het boek Genesis wordt er in de paradijs teksten ook gesproken van ‘het land van het goede goud,’ oftewel Chawila of Hawila. Het gebeurd ergens op de kehatitische trap, waar dingen tegen elkaar weggestreept worden. Compensaties zijn er altijd. Het houdt nooit op. Streef naar het goede. Verhalen beschrijven deze kehatitische trappen van het leven, ook de verhalen van de zestiger jaren. Het laat de goud-verbindingen zien, tot diamand : diamonds are forever. Er is leven voor dit leven, in de returnity van het hiervoormaals. Het is als een oneindig lange winkelstraat die maar niet ophoudt. Die gaat helemaal terug de geschiedenis tot de bronnen, daar waar het duizelt en draait. Het is het mysterie van het wiel.

Mensen grijpen te snel naar het wiel. Veel mensen zijn totaal auto-verslaafd in dit tijdperk. Ze hebben niet door dat ze in de val worden gelokt door hun eigen hebzucht en snelheidszucht. Ze denken dat ze heel wat zijn in hun autootje, en ze toeteren hevig om te laten zien in wat voor paus-mobiel ze rondrijden, neerkijkend op hen die gewoon lopen. Ja, ze voelen zich heel wat, maar ze zijn

met pensioen gegaan, en het is gewoon een zombie-mobiel. Voor het minste of geringste nemen ze de auto, want dan kunnen ze zich weer heel wat wanen, want de zombies om hen heen zullen hen ervoor prijzen, terwijl het niets dan spot is. Het gaat om het wiel in je binnenste.

Uit de bundel ‘Joegoslavische kettingbrieven’ uit 2019 :

De Psychologie van de Eindeloze Winkelstraat

Het was een eindeloze straat,
Een winkelstraat, in de grootste stad van de wereld,
En een jongen slenterde daar eindeloos,
Hij kwam nooit ergens aan,
Ging geen winkel binnen

Hij was op weg naar de haven,
Hij was op weg naar een boot,
Aan de eindeloze zee

Maar onderweg kwam hij iemand tegen met wie hij een eindeloos gesprek had,
Het stopte maar niet,
Maar hij besloot haar mee te nemen,

Naar zijn boot

Ze sloegen een zijstraat in die naar de haven zou leiden,
Maar ook dit was een eindeloze straat,
En hij vroeg zich af of ze ooit bij de haven aan zouden komen,
Maar ja, hij had in ieder geval een eindeloos gesprek

Ze wist hem over te halen met haar mee te gaan naar het eindeloze bos,
En daarvoor sloegen ze weer een zijstraat in,
Maar ja, je raadt het al : die zijstraat was ook eindeloos

Hoe lang duurt het nog ? vroeg hij telkens.
Uit haar tas haalde ze een boek wat eindeloos was.
'Alles is hier eindeloos, hè ?' vroeg hij.
'Maar zo'n eindeloos boek kan ik toch niet allemaal gaan lezen ?
Ik heb genoeg aan dit eindeloze gesprek met jou.'

'Oh, ik moet nog wat even doen,' zei ze.
Toen stapte ze een winkel binnen.
Hij volgde haar.
'Nee, even buiten blijven,' zei ze.
'Ik ben zo terug.'
Maar ze bleef eindeloos weg,
En toen is hij naar binnen gegaan.
Hij keek zijn ogen uit.
Het was een eindeloze winkel.
Ze was hier vast en zeker verdwaald,
Dat kon niet anders.

En ook hij begon te dwalen en te dwalen,
In deze eindeloze winkel.
Na heel lang dwalen kwam hij de winkelier tegen.
De winkelier omhelsde hem.
'Oh, zo lang niemand gezien,
Ik was verdwaald in mijn eigen winkel.

Eindelijk iemand gevonden,'
zei de winkelier.

'Ik ben mijn vriendin kwijt met wie ik een eindeloos gesprek had,' zei de jongen.
'Geeft niet, geeft niet,' zei de winkelier. 'Die komt wel weer terecht.'
'Maar hoe dan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Nou,' zei de winkelier, 'alles wordt hier verkocht, ook wij, dus ze komt wel weer terecht.'

'Dat is een hele opluchting,' zei de jongen. 'Kan ik haar dan nu kopen ?'

'Het kost eindeloos veel,' zei de winkelier.

'Maar het is mijn vriendin,' zei de jongen, 'we waren op weg naar het eindeloze bos.'

'Allemaal eindeloos duur,' zei de winkelier.

'Een vreemde bedoening dan,' zei de jongen. 'Ik wil hier weg.'

'We kunnen niet weg,' zei de winkelier.

'Dus we moeten wachten totdat we gekocht worden ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ik vrees van wel,' zei de winkelier.

'Maar wie hebben eindeloos geld daarvoor dan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'De eindelozen,' zei de winkelier.

'Wie zijn dat ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ik zal het je wel even laten zien,' zei de winkelier.

Hij haalde uit zijn tas een boek tevoorschijn. Het was een eindeloos boek.
'Dat boek ken ik,' zei de jongen.
'Heb je het gelezen ?' vroeg de winkelier.

'Eh nee,' zei de jongen, 'ik was met iemand in gesprek.'

'Sufferd !' riep de winkelier.

'Wat nu ?' vroeg de jongen. 'Het lijkt hier wel een gevangenis.'

'Dat is het ook !' foeterde de winkelier. 'Wat dacht je dat het anders was ?'

'Een winkel ?' zei de jongen.

'Wat is dat voor oneindeloos gezwets !' foeterde de winkelier.

'Maar wat nu dan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Wachten op de eindeloze trein,' zei de winkelier.

'Komt die hier ook ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Nee, hier niet,' zei de winkelier.

'Maar wat hebben we er dan aan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Dan moet je het boek lezen !' foeterde de winkelier, terwijl hij het boek in de handen van de jongen drukte. Toen liep de winkelier boos weg. 'Zorg dat je niet nog een keer verdwaalt !' riep de jongen hem na.

Toen begon de jongen maar met lezen. 'Wel verdraaid !' riep de jongen. 'Die taal versta ik niet !'

Na uren dwalen kwam hij het meisje weer tegen.

'En ?' vroeg het meisje.

'En wat ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Heb je het eindeloze boek gevonden ?' vroeg het meisje.

'Ja,' zei de jongen. 'Ik kreeg het van de winkelier, maar het is in een andere taal.'

Het meisje begon te lachen. 'Dan had je het boek maar van mij moeten aannemen, want dat was in jouw taal. Maar nee, je wilde liever met me praten. Snapte je dan niet waar eindeloze gesprekken met meisjes naartoe zouden kunnen leiden ?'

'Ik snap het nu,' zei de jongen. 'Het leidt nergens toe. Mag ik dan nu het boek ?'

Het meisje stak toen haar tong uit. 'Nee,' zei ze, en draaide zich toen om en rende weg.

'Kom terug !' riep de jongen. 'Dus ik zit in een gevangenis omdat ik een bepaald boek niet heb gelezen, en dat boek wordt nu ook nog eens van me afgehouden ? Wat een zotte bedoening is dit ?'

En de jongen dwaalde en dwaalde en vroeg zich af wat er in het boek zou staan. Wel stonden er soms plaatjes in het boek in de vreemde taal. 'Ik lijk wel Jan Huigen in de ton met een hoepeltje erom,' dacht hij bij zichzelf. 'Was ik maar weer in de eindeloze winkelstraat op weg naar de haven. Ik was zo stom om me af te laten leiden door dat meisje. Eerst was ze zo eindeloos praatgraag, maar nu, nu ....'

Opeens stond er een fee voor de jongen in een roze jurk, met een toverstafje. 'Boekjes lezen, hè, boekjes lezen,' zei de fee. 'Ik dacht dat je op weg was naar de haven ?'

'Ja,' zei de jongen, 'maar het duurde eindeloos, en ik raakte in een eindeloos

gesprek.'

'Dat is geen reden om dan maar boekjes te gaan lezen,' zei de fee.

'Wat moest ik dan doen ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Nou,' zei de fee, 'wat een vraag. Er staan hier chocolade winkels door de hele straat, en meneer weet niet wat hij moet doen.' Toen begon de fee te lachen. 'Neem eens een chocolaatje voor de verandering.'

'Tja, daar had ik even niet aan gedacht,' zei de jongen.

'Dus ga je maar achter de meisjes aan ?' zei de fee glimlachend.

'Ik kwam haar toevallig tegen, en ze hield me aan de praat,' zei de jongen.

'Toevallig hè ?' zei de fee glimlachend. 'Maar toevallig stonden er ook een heleboel chocolade winkels aan weerszijden van de straat, en daar had je geen oog voor ? Malle jongen.'

'Ik werd gewoon afgeleid,' verdedigde de jongen. 'Ze praatte maar door, en belemmerde mij het zicht. Ze bleef me maar lastig vallen, ook toen ik doorliep.'

'Ja ja,' zei de fee, 'dat zeggen ze allemaal. En toen besloot je haar maar mee te nemen naar je boot in de haven ?'

'Ja,' zei de jongen, 'misschien zou dat haar kalmeren, want ik kwam toch niet meer van haar af, en het was eindeloos.'

'Een chocolaatje had wonderen kunnen doen,' zei de fee.

'Ik begrijp het,' zei de jongen, 'het spijt me. Mag ik dan nu een chocolaatje ?'

'Zoek ze zelf maar,' zei de fee, terwijl ze haar tong uitstak naar hem.

Toen vloog ze weg.

'Bah,' zei de jongen. 'Die feeën van tegenwoordig zijn nog wel erger dan meisjes.'

Hij keek in een bak op een winkelschap, en zag er chocolaatjes liggen, maar je raadt het al : die waren natuurlijk eindeloos duur.

'Zie je nu wel !' riep de jongen. 'Ik word hier eindeloos bedrogen. Maar ja, niemand schijnt hier toch te zijn, en de winkelier zal alweer verdwaald zijn, dus ik neem er maar eentje.' Hij haalde de wikkel van de chocola eraf, en toen het zilveren folie en begon van het chocolaatje te eten. 'Lekker,' zei hij. 'Die fee had toch wel echt gelijk. Had ik eerder moeten doen, had ik eerder moeten doen.'

Hij liep verder met zijn hoofd in de wolken. 'Chocolade is toch wel het heerlijkste wat bestaat,' zei hij. Opeens botste hij tegen een politie agent op. 'Chocolaatjes stelen, hè ?' zei de agent.

'Er was hier niemand en ik was verdwaald,' zei de jongen. 'Ik moest toch wat eten.'

'Dat zeggen ze allemaal,' zei de politie agent. 'Kom maar mee.'

'Nou, ik ben blij dat je me gevonden hebt,' zei de jongen. 'Haal me hieruit.'

'Nee, je gaat er dieper in,' zei de politie agent. 'We zijn hier niet zo gesteld op dieven.'

En zo leidde de politie agent hem naar een lift, en ze gingen heel hoog. Even later kwamen ze op een hoge verdieping uit. Hier werden allemaal boeken verkocht. 'Nee, geen boeken !' riep hij. 'De fee zei dat ik op zoek moest gaan naar chocola in plaats van boeken.'

'Niks mee te maken,' zei de politie. 'En dit zijn trouwens toch chocolade

boeken.'

'Dat is geen straf dan,' zei de jongen.

'Het is eindeloos duur, dus ik zou er maar niet aanzitten als ik jou was,' zei de politie agent, 'want anders ga je nog hoger het gebouw in.'

'Maar wat moet ik eten dan ?' vroeg de jongen. 'Ik heb honger. Je kunt me toch niet laten verhongeren ? Dus deze gevangenis voedt zijn gevangenen niet ?'

'Niks mee te maken,' zei de politie agent. 'Wees blij dat je nog leeft. We kunnen niet voor alles zorgen.'

'Bah, wat flauw,' zei de jongen. 'Wat een flauwe bedoening allemaal.'

'Je was toch op weg naar de haven, naar je boot ?' zei de politie agent.

'Ja, maar ik kwam iemand tegen,' zei de jongen, 'en die leidde me hier naartoe. Ik had natuurlijk nooit naar haar moeten luisteren. En nu is ze weg.'

De politie agent begon hem uit te lachen. 'Dat is mijn dochter,' zei hij. 'Zij werkt voor ons. Zo krijgen we nieuwe klanten.'

'Gevangenen zul je bedoelen,' zei de jongen sip.

'Kop op,' zei de politie agent. 'Ik heb ook nog een andere dochter. Zou je die niet willen ontmoeten ?'

'Wat staat me dan te wachten ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Kom maar mee,' zei de politie agent. Weer gingen ze de lift in, en ditmaal gingen ze nog hoger. 'Hoe hoger je komt, hoe meer de winkels in elkaar overlopen, en dan is het veel kleiner.'

Plotseling stond de jongen met de politie agent weer op straat, en alles was

niet eindeloos meer. 'Wat vreemd,' zei de jongen.

'Het was een verkleinings-lift,' zei de politie. 'Nu ben je pas waar je wezen moet. Mijn andere dochter wacht op je bij de haven.'

'Vreemd,' zei de jongen weer, en liep over straat op weg naar de haven. Ergens halverwege kwam hij weer de eerste dochter van de politie agent tegen. 'Ha, ben je daar weer !' riep ze van een afstand.

'Ik heb geen tijd nu,' zei hij. 'Iemand wacht op me bij de haven.'

'Heb je een afspraakje ?' zei het meisje lachend. Toen liep ze lachend door.

Bij de haven aangekomen zag de jongen een ander meisje staan. 'Ben jij de dochter van de politie agent ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ja, hoezo ?' vroeg het meisje geirriteerd.

'Nou, ik mag toch wel wat vragen,' zei de jongen. 'Dan hoef je niet direct zo boos te doen. Je vader zei dat je me hier zou opwachten.'

'Mijn vader zegt zoveel, daar heb ik niks mee te maken,' zei het meisje. 'Ik wacht hier op heel iemand anders.'

'Op wie dan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Gaat je niks aan,' zei het meisje. 'Wijsneus.'

'Je bent gierig,' zei de jongen.

'Gierig ?' lachte het meisje ineens, en rende toen weg.

Het leek wel alsof alles toen nog kleiner en nauwer werd. De jongen had moeite met ademhalen. Het leek wel alsof alles op hem afkwam om hem te verpletteren. 'Moet dat chocolaatje zijn geweest,' zei hij tegen zichzelf. 'Ik ook

altijd met mijn goede ideeën. Ik moet terug naar die lift, want hier is het nog erger.'

Hij begon al te hijgen en puffen van de benauwdheid, en liep weer terug naar het punt waar de politie agent hem bracht. Daar stond de eerste dochter van de politie agent weer. 'Alsjeblieft, ik smeek je,' zei de jongen. 'Breng me weer terug naar de verkleinings-lift.'

'Wil je dat het nog kleiner en benauwder wordt ?' vroeg het meisje lachend.

'Nee, groter, eindelozer,' zei de jongen. 'Dit is ook niks.'

'Jij weet ook niet wat je wil,' zei het meisje lachend. 'Ik dacht dat je een afspraakje had ?'

'Het was een misverstand,' zei de jongen. Daar kwam ook de politie agent weer aan. 'Wat sta jij hier nog te staan !' bulderde hij. 'Lopen, naar de haven !'

'Je dochter wilde niet,' zei de jongen.

'Niks mee te maken,' zei hij.

'Je kan niemand dwingen,' zei hij.

'Dat maak ik nog wel uit,' zei de politie agent, 'en nu lopen.'

'Ik ga naar de haven, naar mijn boot, maar niet naar haar,' zei de jongen.

Toen rende de jongen terug naar de haven, naar zijn boot, en stapte naar binnen. Het was er een enorme rotzooi. Hij startte direct de motor. 'Ik moet hier weg,' dacht hij bij zichzelf, 'weg.' Gelukkig was de zee hier niet eindeloos. Het was maar een riviertje. Maar alles werd alleen maar kleiner en benauwender. Weer ging hij terug naar de haven, ging zijn boot uit, en op zoek naar de tweede dochter van de politie agent. Die stond daar ergens met een telefoontje. 'Alsjeblieft,' hijgde hij. 'Breng me terug naar de verkleinings-lift,' zei

hij.

'Vergrotingslift zul je bedoelen,' zei het meisje, terwijl ze gewoon doorging met haar telefoongesprek.

'Alsjeblieft,' hijgde hij, 'als alles maar weer groter en eindelozer wordt.'

'Waarom neem je niet gewoon een chocolaatje ?' vroeg ze, terwijl ze weer doorsprak aan de telefoon.

'Heb ik niet,' zei de jongen.

Het meisje grabbelde even wat in haar tas, terwijl ze doorsprak aan de telefoon, en gaf hem toen gehaast een chocolaatje. Hij haalde de wikkel er vanaf en toen het zilveren folie en begon ervan te eten. 'Mmm,' zei hij, 'zo lekker. Chocola is toch wel het heerlijkste wat er is.'

'Je bent laat,' zei het meisje.

'Ik was er al, maar toen wilde je niet,' zei de jongen. 'Je zei dat je op iemand anders wachtte.'

'Dat moet een vergissing zijn,' zei het meisje. 'Kom maar.'

Het meisje leidde hem toen naar de vergrotingslift die weer helemaal naar beneden ging naar het eindeloze winkelgebouw. Hij was zo opgelucht. 'Wat is de bedoeling hiervan ?' vroeg hij.

'Nou,' zei het meisje, 'de bedoeling is dat de klant het niet in zijn hoofd haalt nog ooit uit onze winkel te ontsnappen.'

Einde

achter glas

Geloof niks van wat je ziet. Een heleboel autoriteitsfiguren zoals leraren, dokters, ouders en grootouders zijn gewoon Stepfordse robotten die zijn ingesteld door de zorgverzekeringen, en het zogenaamde leven wat ze schenken is een farmaceutische markt, en ze zijn aangesteld om je dom te houden. Ze onderwijzen niet wat er daadwerkelijk gaande is, en zullen of alles ontkennen, of ze praten nog deels met je mee ook als onderdeel van de 'grooming', de ontwikkeling van het stockholm syndroom, wat ook gewoon het Stepford syndroom is. Ze zijn bezig met pappen en nathouden, maar luisteren niet echt naar je. Ze zijn bezig met het bagatelliseren en ontkennen van grote misdaden. Het is een schijn-realiteit, je eigen afval. Het moet nog tot hogere vormen worden uitgewerkt. Het is allemaal achter glas. Het kan je niet daadwerkelijk aanraken.

De farmaceutische industrie is het grootste kwaad wat er op deze aarde rondloopt, en dan gebruiken ze dure woorden over de hoofden van onze kinderen die hun koopwaar zijn. Dure, grote woorden, en natuurlijk veel kontenlikkerij onder elkaar. Oh, ze zijn zo geweldig, oh ze weten het allemaal zo goed. Maar ze leven van het lijden van anderen, terwijl ze zelf lekker hoog achter het glas ervan zitten te genieten. Het is hun inkomen. De een z'n dood is de ander z'n brood. Het is een nachtmerrie, en daar komen ook die Stepfordse gezinnen en families uit voort die elkaar helemaal vastpraten met deze duizelingwekkende wiskunde van het vlees. Elke logica ontbreekt eraan, maar het is hun logica, totaal ongetoetst, en allemaal gebaseerd op leugens. Het woord toetsen kennen ze niet, nee, want ze denken slechts commercieel. Ze zitten achter glas, totaal harteloos en zielloos, maar ze doen net alsof. Het is als een religie, zo vroom, zo vroom, en zo heilig.

Het vlees weet zichzelf wel op te werken en neemt de hoogste posities op aarde, met kop en schouders boven ieder ander mens uit. Ook over het leven

van dieren denken ze te beschikken. Alles praten ze schoon, en geld rolt als een zacht glijmiddel van de onverschilligheid.

zondag middag overdenking

Fahrenheit 451 is een boek (1953) en film (1966) uit de vijftiger zestiger jaren. Het is een mooie analogie die je op verschillende manieren kunt bekijken. Het is een allegorie die de papier dictatuur ontmaskerd van het moderne tijdperk, de bureaucratie, waarin men leugen op leugen schrijft om de medemens geheel te bedelven en te vernietigen. De mens is in de papier dictatuur niets anders dan een stuk vlees, en de woorden zijn grafwoorden, grafschriften. De mens is omsingeld door aasgieren. Telkens maar weer herhaalt het zich. De orde van brandweermannen in het boek worden uitgezonden om al het papier te verbranden, wat het tot een amulet maakt van de vijftiger jaren zestiger jaren tegen de papier dictatuur. Hoe zal het zijn om alle leugens die over je zijn uitgesproken te zien verdwijnen in het vuur ? Deze leugens hebben zich opgehoopt tot de hemel.

De mens is gebrainwashed door papier. En nu moet de mens gebackwashed worden, teruggespoeld. Alles gaat achter glas. Alles wordt tot schilderij.

Als we het hebben over vluchten naar de wildernis, dan hebben we het over het vluchten tot de literaire wildernis, en dan moet je ook veel in de vijftiger en zestiger jaren zijn, want daarna werd de literatuur steeds moderner en corrupter, tot een soort van schijn-literatuur. In die zin zien we ook in Fahrenheit 451 dat de ware literatuur van de mens werd afgehouden en om zeep werd geholpen. Je kunt Fahrenheit 451 dus van twee kanten bekijken. Luister goed naar je lichaam. Het lichaam liegt niet, maar overheids-instanties

maken fouten omdat ze onder economische druk staan. Luister naar je lichaam in plaats van naar geld en alle organisatorische romslomp die het met zich meebrengt. Gezondheid is nog altijd veel belangrijker dan geld, en de ware gezondheid is te vinden in de literaire wildernissen, in de literaire natuur, niet de moderne schijnliteratuur in de stad die alles met de mantel van valse, economische liefde bedekt. Fahrenheit 451 is dus een schaakbord wat je kunt draaien als een amulet wat dubbelzijdige bescherming biedt.

voor hen die nog op zijn

Elke dag heeft genoeg aan zijn eigen kwaad.
Neem het leven zoals het is.
Het leven heeft groot potentieel.
Maak er ondanks alles iets moois van.
Alles hoort bij het leven, en mag je een plaatsje geven.

Als we het hebben over de hogere kennis, of God, dan hebben we het eigenlijk over de heilige traan. We hebben het over een karakter eigenschap : inlevingsvermogen, invoelingsvermogen, en dit is het ware leven, het ware bewustzijn, het ware bestaan. Zonder inlevingsvermogen sterf je, ga je tot het niets, de vergetelheid, en wordt je slechts voortgedreven door vreemde winden van leer, vreemde verlangens, allemaal ijdelheid.

Door plaatsvervangend lijden kun je ook alles een plaats geven, want je wordt zo alomtegenwoordig. Je bent overal, en je krijgt dan ook overzicht, niet dat dat makkelijk is, want soms kun je nog steeds niks plaatsen, en heb je het gevoel alsof je nergens vat op hebt. Het kan je een gevoel van machteloosheid geven.

Maar we mogen vasthouden aan het principe dat wat we zaaien we ook zullen oogsten. Je leven maak je dus eigenlijk zelf.

We beklimmen de berg van het leven, en soms glijden we weg in een duister dal, en soms komen we misschien hoger op die berg, maar het kan er ook zo koud zijn en verwarrend, zo eenzaam, en waar moeten we dan naartoe ? Waar zoeken we precies naar ? Het is een heilige traan. Als je dat wil wegmoffelen of overslaan, wil ontkennen, waar ben je dan naar op zoek ? De heilige traan spreekt, en laat dingen zien. Soms kun je niet bidden en zelfs niet denken, maar moet je luisteren, geduld hebben, wachten. ‘Er zijn nog puntje puntje wachtenden voor u.’

Hoe spreekt de heilige traan ? Door inlevingsvermogen, invoelingsvermogen. Dat is een taal die we moeten leren spreken en een taal die we moeten leren verstaan.

de scheppende traan

De heilige traan heeft alles gemaakt, alles.
De heilige traan heeft alles prachtig gemaakt.
Maar hoe komt het dan dat het zo’n rotzooitje is op aarde ?
Hoe komt het dan dat er zoveel leed en ellende is ?
De heilige traan is een visioen.
Kun je het zien ? Je moet er alles voor opgeven, alles afleggen.

Het is inlevingsvermogen, en eerst moeten we leren inleven.
Daarom zien we zoveel ellende. Het wekt de heilige traan in onszelf op.
En dan mogen we scheppen, het beste er van maken.

de vogels van sigaret

In de 90-er jaren werd ik in een droom opgenomen door een hemels virus, als een hemelse wind, en ik kwam zo in een andere natuur terecht, boven alles uit. Het was als een hemelse bus, een ark. Het is iets wat moet groeien door veel geduld. Je mag zo een relatie aangaan met geduld. Leren leven met leegte, eenzaamheid en luisteren. Het zijn stuwende krachten die volledig natuurlijk moeten plaatsvinden. Het kan niet geforceerd worden.

Elke dag is het leven weer een gevecht met ups en downs. Soms wordt je er misschien beroerd van, of sta je ‘s ochtends beroerd op en zou je wel willen dat je nog sliep of droomde. Luister dan naar de vogels, want de vogels zijn ook een beeld van de opname, van het boven alles uitstijgen, en dat gaat juist door in alles dieper door te dringen, beneden alles te komen, want de vogels zijn een beeld van invoelingsvermogen, als door een spiegel. Het is als hemelse sigaretten, en daarom wordt er in de tweede bijbelse poezie ook gesproken over de vogels van sigaret.

de tranen van de goede herder

Schoenen spreken tot de verbeelding. De schoen kan als beeld zowel positief als negatief worden gebruikt. Denk aan de geestelijke wapenrusting van Efeze,

waarin het gaat over de schoenen van het evangelie des vredes, en vrede is in de oude talen verbonden aan het shamanisme van afdalen in de onderwerelden en buitenste duisternissen om te gaan tot de verloren schaapheuvelen. Maar schoenen kunnen dus ook iets negatiefs voorstellen, zoals in de Poppenmaker van Hiroshima en het Metalen Ei, wat ook weer wijst op de Chineze voetinbinding. De schoenen vernauwen, verpletteren en verbergen dan de wortels, de fundamenten van het menselijk bestaan, en sluiten de wegen naar de oorden van de goede herder af.

Het kwaad is dus ook intens betrokken bij de schoenen industrie, als de Stepfordse schoenen-industrie van het afkappen en weghouden van de wortels, en zo kan alles verdraaid worden, en worden er verdere moderne lagen overheen gebouwd. Zo hebben ze dat gedaan met de vijftiger zestiger jaren. Het ruikt naar schoen. En geen normale schoen. Nee, een Chineze schoen, een schoen van marteling. Je kan in het vlees geirriteerd raken over de stemmen van mensen, de toon die mensen hebben, de manier waarop ze woorden vormen en de manier waarop ze het uitspreken, maar je kan ook geestelijk geirriteerd raken erover, want er gaat van alles mis. We worden geprogrammeerd. Ogenschijnlijk zeggen ze dan niet misschien direct iets verschrikkelijks, maar het heeft schoenen aan gekregen om de misdaad af te dekken. Er huist dus een groot kwaad in de schoenen industrie van Stepford, wat door de monden van de mensen naar buiten komt, ook de manier waarop ze bewegen, hun motoriek, hun lichaamshouding, de manier waarop ze hun ogen houden en bewegen, het doortrapte, want het zijn smokkelaars, wachters, die een groot, duivels kwaad bewaren en afdekken.

Mensen zijn daardoor uitzenders van schoenen reclame geworden, in het onderbewustzijn. Het zijn Stepfordse reclame spotjes. Het ruikt naar schoen. Chineze schoen, marteling, het ombuigen en wegwerken van de oude paden. Het indammen van de natuur. ‘Wat voor schoenen verkoopt u ?’

Walgelijke schoenen zijn het. Ze zitten heel nauw, en ze worden steeds nauwer. Het zijn de schoenen des doods. Wie zijn die leprechauns die deze Stepfordse schoenen verkopen ? Ze dreigen en chanteren. Het zijn geen vrijblijvende reclame spots. Ze werken in op je angsten, gevoelens en emoties.

Deze leprechauns heersen over de steden, over de huizen, en wonen onder de schoenenwinkels, in duistere grotten. Daar brouwen ze hun drankjes, daar maken ze hun duivelse schoenen, om de mensheid geheel over te nemen. Het is hun obsessie. Met de schoen krijgen ze alles voor elkaar. Het ruikt naar schoen. Als je hun schoenen niet draagt, dan ben je de sigaar. Dan schuiven ze de kist voor je uit, en wordt je zelf een schoen. Zij bouwen hun koninkrijk wel. De Stepfordse schoen is hun fetish, hun god. Die heeft alle oude paden afgesloten, alles doen verkankeren. Heerlijk vinden ze dat. Ze verlustigen zich in alles wat goor en slecht is.

Het ruikt hier naar schoen. Het is een strijd om de wortels, om de fundamenten. Pas goed op welke schoenen je draagt. Draag alleen de schoenen van de goede herder, of helemaal geen schoenen, want de tijden zijn ontaard

Wat is hun doel ? Totale overname van de mensheid. De zombificering begint bij de schoen, zoals ook in de Wit Konijn thriller van de tweede bijbel. De grootmacht China stond aan de wieg van vrouwenonderdrukking door de voet-inbinding, en het heeft zich in allerlei vormen in de wereld verspreid, ook door andere vormen van afkapping, implantatie en inbinding, zoals in de vaginale besnijdenis en de tandartserij. Door de schoen neemt de vijand het hele lichaam over, van top tot teen, om de menselijke biologische computer te beheersen, en te gebruiken voor allerlei afvalligheid. Dit geslacht is diep gezonken. De horror is niet te overzien en begint in de Stepfordse schoenenindustrie, in Alphaville, aangestuurd door het meesterbrein van het kwaad : alpha 60. Hier vieren duivels en boosaardige kabouters hun feestjes. Hier drinken ze op. Ze drinken het angstzweet van de mens. Ze drinken uit schoenen, zoals ontaarde Chinezen ook dronken uit de lotusschoenen van prostituees wiens voeten ingebonden waren. Dat was een delicatesse. Zeer ziek. Deze gruwelen hebben zich opgehoopt tot aan de hemel, en worden juist door de schoen ontkend en kleiner voorgesteld dan het is. ‘Oh, het stelt niks voor.’ Dat is wat schoen reclame doet. Het moffeld alles weg, zwakt alles af. Het krijst ten hemel, maar ze zijn doof geworden. Het grote Stepfordse schoenenspel is een spel voor doven en slechthorenden. Oost-Indisch doof zijn zij, of gewoon Chinees doof. Het is een Chinees syndroom, en het werkt ook

door Noord-Korea : Waag er wat van te zeggen, en je mag je eigen grafschrift schrijven. Het ruikt hier naar schoen.

Schoenenwinkels, schoenenwinkels, en de mens is zelf schoen geworden, om af te snijden van de aarde, van de onderwereld, de wildernis. En nu maakt de mens er reclame voor, ook subliminale reclame. De mensen bespelen elkaar als piano’s. De mensen temmen elkaar, programmeren elkaar, allemaal voor deze schoenen industrie. Je bent niks waard in deze industrie. Je bent een schoen. Dus ze hebben je liever dood dan levend. Het begint allemaal bij schoenen. Draag daarom de schoenen van de goede herder, van het evangelie des vredes, van het shamanisme, en weet wanneer je je schoenen uit dient te doen.

Schoenenwinkels zover het oog reikt. De mens is bezeten van schoenen, maar waar zijn deze schoenen van gemaakt. Welke schoenen draag je ? En voor welke schoenen industrie werk je ? Wat voor schoenen probeer je de ander te verkopen ? Voor wiens vaandel marcheer je ? De reclame spotjes springen je in de nek op elke hoek van de straat. Als dolle honden springen ze in je nek, want je moet en zal hun schoenen kopen. En die worden met het jaar nauwer. Als je er niet inpast wordt er flink geperst en gewrongen, en dan worden de schroeven strak aangetrokken, steeds strakker. Zo sterft alles af. Het is een cultus van de dood. Het ruikt hier naar schoen.

Leprechauns marcheren door de straten. Ze hebben koninklijk bevel. Iedereen moet hun schoenen dragen. Jawel, anders wordt je ziek, ga je dood, ben je anderen tot last, enzovoorts. Plakaten worden op de deuren geplakt, met strafaankondigingen voor overtreders en ontduikers. Je moet en zal hun schoenen dragen, jawel. Ze hebben allemaal hun eigen gebied, hun eigen terrein, en ze leven onder de schoenenwinkels. Telkens komen zij naar boven, en dan is het goed mis. Dan hakken ze handen af, en koppen. Ook voeten kappen ze zonder pardon af, en geslachtsdelen, en dan brouwen ze alles tot schoenen. Niets dan een schoen is de mens, van waardeloos materiaal. Maar je betaald een hoge prijs. Ook al is het goedkoop, zo goedkoop. Spelletjes spelen ze achter je rug. Moorden doen ze als je slaapt.

Leprechaunen marcheren door de straten. Ze beloven goud, en hopen en bergen diamanten, voor gehoorzame burgers. Tot lopende reclame spotjes maken ze hen, maar alles wordt netjes afgedekt met de schoen, alles. Want zij hebben niks gedaan. Nee hoor.

Het ruikt hier naar schoen. Je kunt er niets aan doen. Alle winkels zijn schoenenwinkels. Je kunt bijna niks anders meer kopen. Met geweld wordt de mens op de feiten gedrukt. Wat voor schoenen probeer je me te verkopen ?

En dan ren je naar het bos, tot de oude schoenenmaker, die niets meer met de stad te maken wil hebben, en die alleen maar schoenen maakt van tranen. Zijn eigen tranen, over het leed van de stad, over het leed van zijn herinneringen. Het zijn de tranen van de goede herder, die de mens wegwijs maakt in dit land. Zij kennen de weg erdoor, zij kennen de weg eruit. Tranen volgen u en gaan u voor, de tranen van de goede herder, om de voeten van de mens weer schoon te wassen, los te wassen, van de dwangschoenen van de stad. De goede herder zit vaak aan het meer van tranen in het bos, diep in het bos, om daar in te staren, en grote dingen te zien. De goede herder gaat ons voor, en zijn tranen gaan hem voor, en volgen hem, tot het verborgen, wilde en woeste Bethlehem.

De goede schoenmaker is hij, kenner van de oude paden.

Het ruikt hier naar schoen. Dat moet je niet doen. Schoen-leprechauns bespreken in de stad om de goede herder om te brengen, maar de goede herder heeft een schuilplaats in het bos, en in het meer van tranen, waar hij zwemt en diep duikt. De schoen-leprechauns zwemmen door de grachten in de stad, maar zij zoeken op de verkeerde plaats. Het zijn slechts schaduwen, schaduwen van een duister verleden, van de tranen van de goede herder. Ze spreken in zijn hoofd. Zij kwellen hem. Hij bevindt zich achter een muur. En dan weent hij weer, zachte hemelse parels, om zijn schoenen te maken. Die zendt hij tot de kinderen, opdat zij de weg vinden uit de stad. Ja, voor ieder kind weent hij, ieder kind omhuld hij met zijn warme tranen, opdat zij de weg vinden mogen.

Volg mij, kinderen, naar een nieuwe wereld,
volg het pad van mijn tranen,
die ook door jou vloeien.
Schoei je voeten ermee, opdat je je weg zal vinden,
je voeten gewassen,
in de tranen van de goede herder,
je eigen hart.

het nieuwe amsterdam

Ik had een droom over Saddam Hussein.
Het greep terug op 2006 waarin Saddam Hussein ter dood werd veroordeeld.
Ik omhelsde hem en weende. Hij beleefde het opnieuw.
Hij zei dat hij grote misdaden had gepleegd. Het was hard tegen hard.
Hij zei dat hij de macht op die manier niet had mogen grijpen.
Macht is een vreemde paranoia, zei hij.
Mijn beeld en idee van de goede herder sprak hem aan.
Hij had een lang en zwaar gevecht gehad met mijn aardse vader om bij mij te kunnen komen.
Hij noemde het een zieke man.

Jaren geleden had ik ook soortgelijke dromen over Hitler. Het zijn twee mensen die de wereld al heeft afgeschreven, maar de goede herder is naar hen op zoek, naar deze verloren schapen.

Hitler zei vaak in deze dromen dat hij nog steeds veel betaalt voor wat hij heeft gedaan, en dat hij heel voorzichtig is in zijn oordeel, dat hij zichzelf nu eerst test met alles, leeg wordt voor de hemel, want hij wil niet dezelfde fouten maken. Er schijnt een bibliotheek te zijn in de geestelijke wereld, in

Amsterdam, wat een soort arsenaal is, waar ik vroeger met vrouw en kinderen woonde. Een surinaamse vrouw, haar zus, had een droom dat ons huis een arsenaal was, als schuilplaats, ik gaf haar ook raad, beide zussen. De hemel laat Hitler vaak op die plek, in Amsterdam, om te genezen en genezing te brengen. Voor de rest denkt hij hetzelfde als wij, omdat de hemel mij gebruikte om hem door dromen op te voeden, dus ja, hij weet het, ik heb hem al die dingen uitgelegd, en hij kent de bedreigingen. Hitler heeft net als ik visie voor een nieuw amsterdam.

Daar doe ik het voor, het shamanisme. Een dokter is er niet voor hen die gezond zijn, maar voor hen die genezing nodig hebben. Een goede herder is er voor de verloren schapen.

Ik was blij dat Saddam Hussein mij ook hielp. Ik bedankte hem ervoor. Het voelde heel vaderlijk aan. Hij probeerde mij te bevrijden uit de wurggreep van mijn aardse vader. De bloedlijnen hebben veel macht. Het is nog steeds een van mijn grootste worstelingen. ‘Thank you, brother,’ zei ik tegen Saddam Hussein in die droom. En ik bleef het zeggen. Je helpt een mens altijd van onderen, en zo konden we elkaar helpen. Hij heeft zelf ook heel wat meegemaakt. Ik bleef het zeggen totdat ik weer weende omdat het zo krachtig was.

Op de aarde is er een grote reclame oorlog, schoen reclame, alfa-mannetje tegen alfa-mannetje, maar Saddam Hussein sprak dat de weg van de minste waar ik uitvoerig over uitlegde hem aansprak. Hij zei ook dat hij veel van de veranderde Hitler leert. Ze zijn samen nu, als goede herders. Ze hebben heel wat goed te maken, en dat doen ze ook, en die kans moet ze ook gegeven worden.

Vannacht had ik een droom van een schuilplaats en ik was op een hoge verdieping met een flink stijle dakrand. Een zwarte kat werd achterna gezeten door een hond, die toen in twee zwarte katten opsplitste. Ik probeerde de zwarte kat naar binnen te halen, maar het lukte niet, want de dakrand waarop de kat stond was te ver weg, en het was te stijl. Ook de twee zwarte katten kwamen toen op de dakrand om de zwarte kat kwaad te doen. Die zwarte katten waren veel groter, en ik duwde ze van de dakrand af en ze vielen diep naar beneden. Uiteindelijk kreeg ik de zwarte kat binnen met een schepnet.

De grote zwarte katten waren wachters van de vijftiger en zestiger jaren, van de Stepfordse schoenen industrie.

Ik had ook een droom over John Lennon, over de jaren 1950-1955, en hij had het over Golding's boek, 'Heer der vliegen,' over het jongens eiland, en dat we hard moesten zijn tegen de zonde om zacht te kunnen zijn. We moeten terug gaan naar dit eiland van ontvorming, en loskomen van het conformen. De mens moet komen tot contra-vorming, tegenvorming.

De mens moet loskomen van de schoenenreclame giganten van het lagere Orion die als satellieten tegen de vrijheid van de mens zijn gekeerd. Hiertoe moeten de vijftiger en zestiger jaren een kwartslag draaien om tot doorgang te komen. 1950-1955 zijn het fundament van de nieuwe wereld na het nazi tijdperk.

de ontsnapping uit Stepford door de sleutelen van de hemelse tranen

Het is goed om naar muziek te luisteren die je raakt, muziek met een boodschap en een doel, want er is veel muziek die de mens vleselijk in slaap

sust en de mens onverschillig maakt. Als je weent bij muziek dan is dat goed, want dan maakt het iets los en dan opent het poorten voor je ziel. Voor elk woord wat we spreken en elke gedachte die we denken, en elke handeling die we doen moeten we eerst een oceaan van tranen hebben geweend, zodat het zuiver is, doorleefd en gevoeld, en zo wordt de hemel stap voor stap gebouwd, en zo is hoe de hemel leeft, de wereld van de natuurwezens van diepte en empathie.

Het vleselijke begrijpt dat niet, dus vandaar al die botsingen, want zij leven voor de economie, de eerzucht en de macht, de ego-trippers. Zij veranderen dus ook niet door muziek maar worden alleen maar erger, als aan de drugs, dover en dover. Het zijn schaduwen die er zijn zolang de puzzel niet opgelost is, en dan is hemelse muziek een goede afleiding.

Ik luister zelf soms naar Chopin, vooral de Nocturnes. Toen ik vroeger op het college zat en nog naar school fietste langs de weilanden en door het bos toen was er een liedje genaamd 'I Like Chopin', van Gazebo, italo pop, en ik werd er melancholisch van, het werkte op mijn emoties ook heel zwaar, maar dat is juist om te beschermen tegen alle traanloze, empathie-loze gemaaktheid van de mens. De mens is versteend of van steen. Het lied gaat ook over piano spelen, dat we de piano muziek moeten herinneren die zo ongewoon is. Het wordt omschreven als een klassieke sensatie van sentimentele verwarring, als een eeuwige afleiding. Het wordt omschreven als regenachtige dagen die niet voorbij gaan, want in principe is het zo dat we bij alles vanuit de hemelse tranen moeten leven, en het lied stelt in diepte dat die hemelse regen in je ogen mag groeien om het pad te leiden. Het is dus een heel profetisch lied, uit de tachtiger jaren.

Als je dan de clip bekijkt, dan gaat het over een jongen die in Stepford zit opgesloten, onontwaakt, allemaal chicdoenerij, en dan verderop in de clip begint hij te ontwaken dat er heel wat fout zit, en begint het te duizelen voor zijn ogen en gaat hij diepere dingen zien, dat het eigenlijk een dans des doods is in het rijke chique westen. Hij probeert dan iemand te helpen, maar wordt dan vals beschuldigd dat hij die persoon heeft vermoord. Ze was buiten ergens neergeschoten, en hij ging naar haar op zoek, en toen hij haar vond vond hij

ook het moordwapen wat naast haar lag, en toen hij het opraapte werden er foto's van hem gemaakt, alsof hij de dader was. Dat gebeurt er als je uit Stepford probeert te ontsnappen dat je op allerlei manieren het pispaaltje wordt, de leugens gaan om je heen draaien, enz.

Hij wordt opgepakt, en komt geen stap verder meer, begint steeds meer weg te vagen, en kan alleen nog met zijn herinneringen leven om daarin het spoor te zoeken, met de sleutels van de hemelse tranen die hij heeft. Dat is uiteindelijk het geheim van de ontsnapping uit Stepford.

de lift

De mensen leven door de klok. Allemaal zijn ze door de klok gejaagd, want ja, ze moeten het vlees bevredigen, het liefst zo snel mogelijk. En dan moeten ze dus wel de wortels en bronnen van het geestelijke verborgen houden, dus de klok staat in nauw verband met de schoen. Daarom dragen ze vleselijke klokschoenen. De Stepfordse klokkenmakers zijn er maar druk mee. Hele speciale klokken maken ze dus, die ook schoenen zijn, dus het zijn schoense klokmakers.

In wat voor wereld kom je dan ? Dan moet je heel diep gaan, tot de grachten van de onderwereld, waarlangs dit soort winkels staan. En dan kun je maar beter de juiste schoenen nemen. Veel schoenen zijn een groot vergif. De klokkenmakers marcheren door de straten, en zijn dus tegelijk schoenmakers, als schoenklokmakers of klokschoenmakers.

Je kunt maar beter de juiste schoenen nemen vandaag, of helemaal geen schoenen. De klokken in dit land zijn bezeten, en de schoenen ook, en ze zijn

wachters van de aloude bronnen. De mensen mogen de stadspoorten niet uit. Al het natuur wat er is is nep, kunstmatig. De klokken hebben de mens ingesloten. De mens kan niet meer wenen, maar is vleselijk hard geworden door de klok.

Waar moet de mens dan naartoe ? De mens moet letten op de tekenen der tijden. Er zijn ook natuurklokken. En de mens moet geschoeid zijn met de boodschap van de vrede, van het shamanisme, oftewel van de goede herder. Die hebben ze overigens opgesloten. Die is achter slot en grendel gegaan. Het is een gevecht tegen klokken en schoenen. Het is een gevecht tegen reclame spotjes die ze in het hoofd schieten, ‘t liefst subliminaal. Het is een subliminale reclame oorlog namelijk, een oorlog waarin de een de ander bedriegt. Ze schieten niet om te doden, maar om klanten te maken, consumenten. Het zijn reclame pistolen.

Let op de tekenen der tijden. Let op de tekenen aan de wand. Laat je niet zomaar klokken en schoenen verkopen. Kies eieren voor je geld, oftewel neem met minder genoegen. Run to the hills, want de valse christussen zijn gekomen.

‘Oh, maar hoe kan ik rennen ? Ik zit opgesloten, ik ben geketend.’

Het is natuurlijk iets literairs. In je gedachten en creativiteit ben je vrij. Je mag zaaien en oogsten. De Vur zegt : ‘Bouw je centrum van filosofie.’ In het vleselijke kun je dat niet doen. Het is een industrie in het geestelijke en literaire gedachtenleven. Klokken en schoenen van de duisternis hebben ons ingenomen. Nu is het oorlog, en deze klokken zijn als ballen met ketting aan de mens vastgeketend, en de mens komt niet meer vooruit. Het zijn tot loodzware schoenen geworden. En het is giftig. Het is een drugsoorlog. De mens slaapt en kan niet meer wakker worden. Iets zwaars rust op de mens. Klokken springen je overal in de nek. De mens wordt bedreigd. De mens wordt bewaakt.

Wat kun je doen tegen klokken reclame in je hoofd ? Ken je de klokkenmakers, ken je de klokkenluiders ? Ken je hun agenda’s ? Ken je hun verborgenheden ? Feit is dat er geen simpel tovertruukje is. Het is oorlog. Oorlog wordt gewonnen

op basis van lange termijn denken. Uiteindelijk moeten we de klok van de goede herder leren kennen. Waar gaat dit over ? Het heeft hele andere doelen, hele andere prioriteiten, namelijk van eeuwig leven en niet zomaar korte tijds bevrediging. De leugen neemt de lift, terwijl de waarheid de trap neemt, zei iemand eens, en uiteindelijk zal de waarheid de leugen wel achterhalen. De leugen weet dat de waarheid eraan komt. Uiteindelijk kan de leugen de waarheid niet meer verbergen. Plato zei eens dat niemand meer gehaat is dan degene die de waarheid spreekt. Eerlijkheid duurt het langst. Uiteindelijk zal de waarheid overwinnen. Klokken en schoenen kunnen de waarheid niet tegenhouden. We spreken over de vruchtbaarheid van de natuur. Eens zal het komen en doorbreken. Zijn we klaar als dit gebeurd ? De leugen is namelijk maar een tijdelijkheid. Het voorhangsel zal scheuren.

De klok van de goede herder wordt goed verborgen gehouden in de diepte van het meer van tranen, op de bodem. Het is niet voor gekken en dwazen, niet voor de onverschilligen, maar voor de traanduikers. Je moet niet in de winkels zijn, maar in de grachten, waar de tranen zijn, en dan diep duiken, totdat je tunnels vindt om uit de dwaze stad te ontsnappen, totdat je ergens het klokje van de goede herder kunt vinden. De traanduikers staan klaar, gewapend met harpoen. Vindt je weg uit de stad, tot de literaire wildernissen van de goede herder. Dit gaat niet door directheden, maar door subtiliteiten. De literatuur neemt in dat opzicht alle tijd, stapje voor stapje, trede voor trede. De literatuur neemt de lift niet. De literatuur wil namelijk geen sleutels over het hoofd zien. De literatuur beschermt zorgvuldig haar sleutels. Het is alleen voor de trappenlopers. Alleen zo worden de klokken van de goede herders geluid.

Er was eens een film die ik zag als kind genaamd ‘de lift’. Er was van alles mis met die lift. Uiteindelijk slaat de lift helemaal op hol en baant zijn moordende weg. Het is een beeld van hoe de leugen werkt en dat men beter de trap kan nemen. Het opschrift van de film was dan ook : ‘Neem de trap, neem de trap, in godsnaam !’ De film komt uit 1983.

rennen tot de wildernis

De mens moet snel, heel snel, afkicken van de drugs van onverschilligheid, de vleselijke morfine. De anti-drug, de anti-morfine, is een combinatie tussen honger, vuil en ziekte, als een hemelse ziekte. Hierdoor wordt de mens van de zonde losgesneden. In het westen zitten dikke mannen op hoge tronen, en het is een virus van het ego. Daarom moet de mens rennen tot de wildernis.

De tronen worden hoger en dunner, en de mannen worden dikker.

De Onkrant
Literaire Columns van de Tweede Bijbel

De Onkrant – Literaire Columns van de Tweede Bijbel – Verzamelingen – nr. 6 – november 2021

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De Onkrant - Omdat goede literatuur niet alleen maar voor de rijken is

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19 het NIJWEG bewind – de strijd om de radio

de jijdans

Ik moest iets terugbrengen naar de buurvrouw. Onze huizen hadden een laag dak, en alles was op de begane grond. Het waren lange huizen naast elkaar in mooi natuurgebied. Ik was nog maar half aangekleed en wat ik al aanhad zat nog verf op, dus dat wilde ik er eerst afwassen voordat ik naar de buurvrouw zou gaan. Ik had een raam openstaan en hoorde dat ze tegen haar moeder zei dat ze naar mij toe zou gaan al. Ik trok snel iets aan, en ging toen door een deur tussen onze huizen in naar haar toe. Ze had allemaal boekjes, pockets, uit de zestiger jaren van een serie genaamd Jijdans, waar vrouwenverhalen en meisjesverhalen instonden. Literatuur. Ik vond het mooie boekjes. Ze had ook een dwergenklok. Ik keek naar het ding. Ze glimlachte naar me. ‘Ja, eh, ik zou die boekjes wel willen lenen, van Jijdans,’ zei ik.

‘Oh, je mag ze wel houden,’ zei ze. ‘Ik doe er toch niks meer mee. Ze staan daar maar te staan.’ Ik was er dolgelukkig mee, en omhelsde haar. ‘Oh sorry,’ zei ik. ‘Ik vergat dat er nog verf op m’n kleding zat.’

‘Geeft niks hoor,’ zei ze. ‘Heb je weer veel lopen schilderen ?’ Ik knikte. ‘Schilderen is mijn lust en leven, wild en woest. Maar nu zou ik wel weer wat meer willen lezen en schrijven.’

‘Lezen en schrijven ?’ zei ze. ‘Goed idee. Wat vind je van mijn dwergenklok ?’

‘Verschrikkelijk,’ zei ik. ‘Wel inspirerend, maar het lijkt wel een spookklok.’

‘Dat is het ook,’ zei ze. ‘Het maakt hele vreemde geluiden. Door dwergen gemaakt. Het was een erfenis.’

‘Kun je er wel van slapen ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Nee, eigenlijk niet,’ zei ze. ‘Het is nogal een storend ding.’

‘Maar waarom houdt je het dan nog ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Tja, een erfenis, he, ik kan het niet zomaar wegdoen. Herinneringen,’ zei ze.

‘Goede of slechte herinneringen,’ vroeg ik.

‘Slecht,’ zei ze, ‘zeer slecht.’

‘Wegdoen dat ding,’ zei ik. ‘Verkopen kan ook.’

‘Ik wil het niemand aandoen,’ zei ze. ‘Ik houd het ding liever hier. Dan is iedereen er veilig tegen.’

Ik stond voor een raadsel. Ik zou haar graag willen helpen.

‘Misschien zit er een mechanisme in waardoor je het kan uitschakelen ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Ik heb al gekeken,’ zei ze. ‘Er zit niks. Dat is het vreemde eraan. In ieder geval bedankt dat je me mijn witte jurk weer hebt teruggebracht.’

‘Geen dank, en bedankt voor het lenen,’ zei ik. ‘Ze had de avond van haar leven.’

‘Dat geloof ik zeker,’ zei ze. ‘Veel gedansd ?’

‘Ja, de hele tijd,’ zei ik. ‘Ze kon niet meer stoppen.’

Ze glimlachte.

‘Ik moet maar weer eens gaan,’ zei ik. ‘Maar die klok, he, die dwergenklok. Van wie was die klok ?’

‘Van de moeder van mijn moeder, en zij had het ook weer geerfd en wilde het ook niet wegdoen,’ zei ze. ‘Ze heeft er een rotleven door gehad.’

‘Ik vind dat zo vreemd,’ zei ik. ‘Kun je het niet beter vernietigen ? Gewoon, hup, het open haard in.’

‘Ik heb geen open haard,’ zei ze.

‘Ik anders wel,’ zei ik. ‘Ik wil het best voor je meenemen, en dan verbranden. Dan zijn we er vanaf.’

‘Ja, maar dan slaan de dwergen misschien terug,’ zei ze.

Ik keek naar haar gezicht, wat ineens gesponnen en verkrompen was. ‘Dat gaat niet goed,’ zei ik. Ineens viel ze flauw. Ik bracht snel wat water voor haar.

‘D… die klok,’ mompelde ze.

‘Laat maar,’ zei ik. ‘Ik verbrand het wel.’

‘Nee, nee !’ gilde ze.

‘Waarom niet ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Dan komen we onder een vloek,’ zei ze. ‘En dan gaat het de hele wereld over, want het is zeer besmettelijk.’

‘Dat moet dan maar,’ zei ik. ‘Want dit is ook niks.’

Maar plotseling kon ik me niet meer bewegen. ‘Die dwergenklok is behekst,’ stamelde ik.

‘Ik zei het je toch,’ zei ze. ‘Laten we het maar laten zoals het is. Veel beter. Ik heb er mee leren leven. Misschien beschermd het wel tegen iets veel ergers.’

‘Zo kun je het misschien ook zien,’ zei ik. ‘Misschien is het een kruis wat je moet dragen, als een extra zintuig.’

‘Ja,’ zei ze. ‘Misschien kun jij er over schrijven en het raadsel oplossen.’

‘Ik zal het proberen,’ zei ik.

Ik ben toen weggegaan. De volgende dag bestond het huis van de buurvrouw niet meer. Het was zo ineens verdwenen. Ik heb haar nooit meer gezien, en ook haar moeder niet, ook al heb ik veel gezocht. Zo in het niets verdwenen, ook die dwergenklok. Nu vraag ik me af of het wel ooit echt bestaan heeft, of alleen maar in mijn fantasie of dwang gedachten. Ik heb soms het gevoel alsof het leven met mij een loopje neemt. Maar anderen zeiden dat het echt heeft bestaan. Of misschien was het een groeps-illusie ? Misschien is alles illusie ? En hier schrijf ik over. Ik probeer de herinnering hoog te houden aan mijn buurvrouw. Ze was een bijzonder mens. Ze gaf mij een rust die ik niet kon beschrijven, en dat terwijl ze in zo’n grote onrust leefde. Misschien heeft de dwergenklok haar meegenomen dieper het woud in ? Ik zoek nog steeds in de wildernis naar haar, maar dan bedenk ik dat dit misschien ook mijn kruis is, en mijn zintuig, waarmee ik moet leren leven. Het gemis van haar is groot, maar er zijn ook andere dingen. Ik kan over haar schrijven, en haar boeken lezen. Als ik Jijdans boekjes lees dan denk ik weer aan haar.

De dwergen dansen om hun klok,
Zij wonen hier al zo lang.
Nee, weg willen zij niet,
nog zoveel dingen te doen.
En daarom dreigen zij, dreigen zij :
Kom niet te dichtbij,
deze dingen zijn van mij,
ik, ik, ik, is alles waar ze aan denken,
Ik sta al lang in de rij,
voor een Jijdans

de sloot

Hij trapte de zwarte vissen van hem af toen hij de sloot uitkroop. Ze noemden het sloot, maar het was eigenlijk een rivier, en de vissen hadden hem geprobeerd naar beneden te trekken. Het was een heel gevecht geweest, maar nu was hij eindelijk aan wal, en haalde diep adem van opluchting. Het had niet veel gescheeld. Hij voelde zich meer dood dan levend. Toen hij thuiskwam viel hij zijn moeder in de armen. ‘Waar was je toch, jongen ?’ vroeg ze bezorgd.

Hij vertelde haar het hele verhaal.

‘Nee, daar moet je ook zeker niet komen,’ zei moeder. Maar hij was erin gegaan om iemand te redden, en dat eerde ze. ‘De zwarte vissen zijn een groot probleem, altijd,’ zei moeder. Het was een koude dag in 1938. Toen de oorlog uitbrak toen herinnerde hij het zich weer, de zwarte vissen. ‘Ze zijn aan land gekomen, moeder,’ zei hij toen, ‘de zwarte vissen.’ Moeder knikte. ‘De sloot is overstroomd, mijn jongen,’ sprak ze. Toen ze later door de nazi’s werd afgeschoten kon hij haar niet helpen. Zijn dromen waren kapot geschoten. Hij zou nu een zwarte vissen jager worden. Hij haatte de sloot. Er gebeurden daar vreselijke dingen, en hij wist dat het allemaal met de sloot had te maken. Het was een zwarte rivier vol met fabrieksvuil, vol met afval, en zwarte moord-vissen die voor niets en niemand terugdeinsden. Als kind had hij er altijd al nachtmerries over.

Nu was zijn moeder er niet meer en hij zinde op wraak. In de winter vroor het, en hij ging op de sloot schaatsen. Er was zoveel vuil onder het ijs, zoveel afval. Alle zwarte vissen waren nu onder het ijs. Hij schaatste door, tot ver weg van de slootkant. Het werd ook steeds donkerder. Plotseling zag hij wat bewegen.

Het ijs was hier ook wat dunner. Hij ging languit op het ijs liggen en keek er doorheen. Nee, hij hoorde iemand kloppen. Er was iemand onder het ijs. Hij kreeg toen ineens de schrik van zijn leven. Het was het gezicht van zijn moeder. Hij begon te roepen, en begon het ijs open te trappen met de punten van zijn schaatsen. Plotseling zakte hij er doorheen, en werd direct gegrepen door de zwarte vissen, en diep naar beneden getrokken. Hij voelde zichzelf koud worden en stijf, en kon al snel zich niet meer verzetten tegen de zwarte vissen. Maar als zijn moeder nu vrij was, dan vond hij het best.

In de lente spoelde er een lichaam aan land. Het was zijn lichaam. Een man vond hem, en schudde zijn hoofd. De man vond dat hij op zijn zoon leek, alhoewel er niet veel meer van het lijk over was wat door de zwarte vissen was aangevreten. Toen de man thuiskwam vertelde hij het aan zijn zoon. De vrouw van de man schudde met haar hoofd. ‘Hoe kun je onze zoon nu vergelijken met een lijk ?’ De man haalde zijn schouders op. ‘Ik weet het niet.’ De vrouw keek hem diep in zijn ogen. ‘Je bent niet goed wijs,’ zei ze langzaam. Ze gingen die avond vroeg naar bed.

‘Je kunt zoiets niet maken,’ zei zijn vrouw toen ze in bed lagen. ‘Hij zou er nachtmerries van kunnen krijgen.’

‘Onzin,’ zei de man. ‘Hier leert hij van.’

‘Midden in de nacht staat de zoon bij hen in de slaapkamer. ‘Ik ben niet van suiker,’ zei hij. Toen ging hij weer weg. De volgende ochtend bij het ontbijt zei niemand wat tegen elkaar. Op een pot stond het hoofd van een vrouw. ‘Die verdronken jongen zal ook een moeder gehad hebben,’ zei de man opeens. Hij wees op het hoofd van de vrouw op de pot. Zijn vrouw pakte toen de pot en begon naar het gezicht van de vrouw op de pot te staren. ‘Ja, maar deze weent. Ik zou niet weten waarom ze tegenwoordig een wenende vrouw op een pot zetten.’

‘Verkoopt he,’ zei de man. De zoon zei niets. Ineens begon hij zich niet goed te voelen en rende weg.

‘De moeder van de verdronken jongen,’ zei de man weer. ‘Dat moet wel deze vrouw zijn. Hier staat ze, op deze pot, wenend om haar zoon.’

‘Nee,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Je hebt grote fantasie, misschien wel door je empathie.’

‘Empathie spreekt altijd de waarheid,’ zei de man. ‘Empathie weet alles.’

‘Ja, en empathie heeft altijd gelijk,’ zei de vrouw.

De man pakte toen de pot en hield de pot ondersteboven boven de tafel, terwijl het spul wat erin zat eruit begon te druipen. ‘Nu is ze vrij,’ zei de man. Op dat moment kwam de zoon binnen. Hij was boos, en riep : ‘Ik ben niet van suiker, maar, maar !’

‘Zie, je lijkt echt op hem,’ zei de man.

‘Op wie ?’ vroeg de zoon.

‘Op die verdronken jongen die ik had gevonden,’ zei de man.

‘Oh, dat lijk ?’ vroeg de zoon. ‘Ik ben niet van suiker, maar, maar !’

‘Maar wat ?’ vroeg de man. ‘Je bent hier om te leren.’

‘Nee !’ riep de zoon, en rende weer weg.

‘Zie,’ zei de vrouw, ‘je hebt hem erg overstuur gemaakt met al deze dingen. Hij probeert je duidelijk te maken dat je te ver bent gegaan. Misschien moet je het hem beter uitleggen.’

‘Ik bedoelde gewoon dat hij net zo moeilijk communiceert als dat lijk,’ zei de man.

‘Wat ben jij grof,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Je hebt een goed hart, maar je kent je eigen verbeeldingskracht niet. Je hebt geen idee wat voor een effect dat heeft op

anderen. Ga naar hem toe.’

‘Nee,’ zei de man, ‘hij moet hiervan leren.’

‘Dan ga ik wel,’ zei de vrouw, en stond op.

De jongen was op zijn kamer, maar wilde niemand spreken.

Even later stond de man op en klopte aan bij de jongen.

‘Ga weg,’ riep de jongen, ‘jullie zijn misselijke ouders.’

‘Zie, dat bedoel ik nu,’ zei de man tegen zijn vrouw.

‘Je hebt het er zelf naar gemaakt,’ zei de vrouw.

Die avond gingen ze weer vroeg naar bed. Weer stond midden in de nacht hun zoon in de slaapkamer. Hij stond daar met een hakbijl en een mes.

‘Zeg, ben je gek geworden,’ zei de man slaperig.

‘Zie,’ zei de vrouw die ook was wakker geschrokken. ‘Dat bedoel ik nu. Je maakt die jongen helemaal gek met je rare vergelijkingen.’

‘Ik heb zeker gelijk gehad,’ zei de man. ‘Hij gedraagt zich alsof hij al dood is.’

‘Ja, maar denk je niet dat jouw vreemde manieren hem zo hebben gemaakt ? Je bedoeld het misschien goed, maar het lijkt net alsof je zelf ook al dood bent. Ik leef hier met twee doden, twee contactgestoorde mannen,’ zei de vrouw paniekerig. Ze stond op en begon door het huis heen te rennen, te wenen, en paniekerig te doen, hysterisch bijna.

‘Kijk wat je je moeder hebt aangedaan,’ zei de man kalm.

‘Nee, jij !’ riep de zoon.

‘Mijn vergelijking was juist,’ zei de man.

‘Jullie zijn beiden niet goed snik !’ gilde de vrouw. ‘Jullie bedoelen het misschien goed, maar dit is misselijkmakend, ziekmakend, en het is ook ziek.’

Zwarte vissen waren op jacht. Ze lieten niet los. ‘De oorlog heeft me zo gemaakt,’ zei de man kalm.

‘Ja, mij ook,’ zei de zoon, die toen zijn hakbijl en mes op de grond liet vallen. De vrouw raapte het zo snel mogelijk van de grond, en borg het op. ‘Geen speelgoed voor jou,’ zei ze.

En ja, het was waar. De oorlog had hen zo gemaakt. Zwarte vissen waren aan land gekomen, in de uniformen gegaan, en maakten jacht op de families, in grote bloedlust, grote oorlogszucht.

‘Ik ben niet van suiker,’ zei de jongen, ‘maar de oorlog heeft iets met mijn hersenen gedaan. Ik ben niet meer dezelfde.’

‘Niemand is nog dezelfde,’ zei de vrouw.

Er werd toen op de deur geklopt. Het waren nazi’s. Toen ze binnenkwamen werd het drietallig gezin afgeschoten. Hun lijken werden in de sloot geworpen, als voer voor de zwarte vissen. Na een tijdje spoelden ze weer aan op het land, en werden weer door andere families gevonden, waar het toen ook mis begon te gaan. Iedereen ging de fuiken in. Zo werd het land met de grond gelijk gemaakt en helemaal uitgehold, tot overstromen van de sloot. Het gehele land kwam onder water te staan, en de zwarte vissen hadden vrij baan. Een duivelser kwaad dan de zwarte vissen was er niet. Overal waar ze kwamen scheen het mis te gaan.

Een jongen trapte de zwarte vissen van hem af toen hij de sloot uitkroop. Ze hadden zich helemaal in zijn vlees vastgebeten. In het ziekenhuis moesten de vissen verwijderd worden. Maar dokters die zich eraan waagden werden ook

door de zwarte vissen gegrepen. Het was een hopeloze zaak, maar toch eindigde de oorlog eens, en trok de sloot zich weer terug, totdat het alleen nog maar een normale sloot was. En de zwarte vissen leken niet meer te bestaan.

Eens lang na de oorlog kwam een jongen met eenzelfde soort verhaal thuis dat hij was gegrepen door een zwarte vis tijdens het zwemmen in het meer. Niemand geloofde hem, want hij had verder ook geen wonden. Maar de jongen leed sindsdien aan zware nachtmerries, en ze hadden het vermoeden dat hij geestelijk zwaar ziek was. Hij klaagde veel over duizeligheid en kwam in een opvangcentrum terecht. Ook daar ging hij deze verhalen rondvertellen, maar niemand geloofde hem. Nachtmerries, zware nachtmerries, had hij. Hij durfde niet meer te slapen, en at bijna niet meer. Op een dag kwam hij iemand tegen die zei dat velen hetzelfde hadden meegemaakt als hem, maar dat ze zich isoleerden of geisoleerd werden omdat ze niet werden geloofd. Ze kwamen veelal tot de conclusie dat ze nog steeds werden achtervolgd door de zwarte vissen die inmiddels aan land waren gekomen.

Op een dag ging de jongen schaatsen. Onder het ijs zag hij personen bewegen, en ze klopten van onderen tegen het ijs. Hij zag de gezichten van jongens, meisjes, vaders en moeders. Hij is toen op de kant gegaan en is toen gaan zoeken naar de grootst mogelijke steen, en heeft die toen op het ijs geworpen, opdat er een wak zou ontstaan waardoor de slachtoffers van de zwarte vissen voor eens en voor altijd vrij zouden zijn.

de omweg

Er was een vluchtroute, een omweg, om de gebouwen heen. Het was hier weelderige natuur, aangewezen door een kind. ‘Ja, maar hij is nog maar een kind,’ werd er gezegd. ‘Ja, maar wat dan nog ?’ Het was een natuur verlichting van binnenin, heel subtiel, en het kind had daar de sleutels voor. Het was een bijzonder kind, en toen ze op de plaats aankwamen waar het kind altijd verbleef was het kind al weg. De lucht was vochtig, tropisch, vol natuur. Er was hier iets gebeurd. Men zocht naar het kind, maar het kind was nergens te vinden. Later vonden ze hem bij een rivier. ‘Hier moeten we verder,’ zei het kind, en wees naar een waterval. Er was daar een gangpad. Toen ging iedereen daar doorheen. Het bleek dat het kind de waarheid had gesproken, en daarom groeide het vertrouwen in het kind meer en meer.

‘Welk kind is het ?’ vroeg men.

Er waren nu veel meer kinderen. Ook leken ze veelal op elkaar en zeiden dezelfde dingen. Toch was er verschil, groot verschil. Ze maakten een omweg. Niemand ging rechtsstreeks op het doel af. Dat zou te gevaarlijk zijn, en groot bedrog. Nee, het was iets literairs, een hemels gegeven. Deze kinderen waren genezers en wegwijzers. Om de gebouwen heen, niet van de gebouwen weg. Nee, het pad liep hier ergens doorheen.

de motorcoureur

We konden niet met elkaar. Onze werelden verschilden teveel.
Ze ging zo snel, wilde zoveel, terwijl ik sober was, trager.
Ze was altijd in de weer, terwijl ik dingen afwachtte.
Besluiteloos noemde ze mij. Ik miste kansen, zei ze, liet het gaan.
Maar ik wilde niet in de verkeerde boot springen.
Ik keek altijd de kat uit de boom.
Haar bomen hadden giftige besjes.
‘Ze zijn er ook niet om te eten,’ zei ze altijd.
De natuur was in ieder geval prachtig, met of zonder haar.
Het was alsof ze een deel van de natuur was, en ze zou altijd een deel van mijn leven zijn.
Maar we moesten door. We moesten verder.
We moesten iets van het leven maken zonder elkaar.
Met elkaar was de geschiedenis, en dat was er al, en zou er ook blijven.
Ik vroeg me af wat ons nu daadwerkelijk uit elkaar had gedreven.
Ik kon niet met haar leven, en zij niet met mij.
We waren te verschillend, maar ik had vragen die ik beantwoord wilde zien.
Het was allemaal nog te vaag, als een mist.
Ik hield juist zo van de verschillen. Waarom kon ik dan niet met haar ?
Ze ging te snel. Ik kon haar niet bijhouden. Haar bomen waren ook te hoog.
Ik viel er altijd uit als ik ze probeerde te beklimmen, en dan viel ik hard.
En kon ze dan niet helpen ?
Ik belandde in het ziekenhuis.
Zo voelde het.
De wonden gingen diep, en zij was niet het type van verpleegster.
Ze ruimde haar rotzooi niet op, sloeg dingen over, en ging altijd maar door.
Ze hield van snelle auto’s.
Ik zei : Dat wordt je fataal.
Zij verongelukte.
Tenminste zo voelde het.
Het was een wereld apart, een muur tussen ons,
als tussen leven en dood, tussen ziekenhuis en kerkhof.

Ik probeerde haar terug te roepen, maar tevergeefs.
Ze was een motorcoureur, een waaghals, een stuntvrouw.
Ik kon daar niet mee leven, en zij kon zo ook niet leven.
Ze was al dood, over de kop geslagen.
Zo probeer ik het te verwerken.
Ik las het in de krant hoe zij was verongelukt.
Alles ging door kranten, want persoonlijk contact met haar was niet te krijgen.
Ik moest het altijd van anderen horen hoe het met haar ging,
en dan vervaagden altijd de grenzen.
Ze strooide haar goed en was dan weer weg.
Ze was een snelheidsduivel.
‘Lees het nu eens beter,’ zei ik altijd tegen haar.
Maar dat zei ze ook tegen mij.
Maar ik kon en wilde haar snelheid niet bijhouden.
Ze zag dingen over het hoofd, maar daar beschuldigde ze mij ook van.
Maar ik was immers geen motorcoureur.
Ik ging te traag, volgens haar, en dan miste ik dingen.
Maar ik had juist het gevoel alsof ik tot de diepere dingen ging.
Ze vond mij te gevoelig.
Zij was hard, en ging hard.
Als ik haar probeerde te stoppen dan vond ze me bruut.
Het was ook gevaarlijk om dat te doen.
Ik voelde me telkens overreden door haar.
Ik was het slachtoffer van haar snelheid,
van haar gewaagde baan.
Ze was altijd heel gewaagd.
Zo kleedde ze zich ook.
Ze had maar weinig aan, liet weinig aan de verbeelding over.
Ze besteedde nooit veel aandacht aan de bovenkleding,
maar was altijd bezig met onderkleding.
Dat verzamelde ze. Haar kasten hingen vol met ondergoed,
en dat gebruikte ze ook als bovengoed.
Het was voor haar de normaalste zaak van de wereld,
en vanwege deze hobby kwam ze ook met het beste van het beste aanzetten.
Het was een hele belevenis om in haar kasten te kijken,

of om te zien wat ze nu weer zou dragen, waarvan je van tevoren wist dat het niet veel zou zijn.

Ik denk dat haar ondergoed verzameling ons uit elkaar heeft gedreven.
Ze was er teveel mee bezig, en te weinig met mij.
Al ons geld ging daar aan op, en aan haar snelle auto’s natuurlijk.
Elke dag een andere leek het wel.
Naar mijn herinnering droeg ze ondergoed ook nooit voor een tweede keer.
Ze droeg het en dan ging het of de kast in of ze gaf het weg.

Ik denk dat het door haar ondergoed is gekomen, haar lingerie.
Ze verkocht het ook. Ze had een lingerie zaak.
Daar ging al haar tijd in op, ook na het werk.
Ze was eigenlijk altijd werkende.
Ik was moe van haar, lag veel in bed, maar ‘s nachts was ik op,
want dan sliep zij tenminste.
Ze voelde zich ook verwaarloosd door mij, maar wat moest ik ?
Wat moest ik met zo’n vrouw ?
Het was niet meer normaal.
Alles ging langs mij heen.
Zij leefde langs mij heen, en zo leefde ik natuurlijk ook langs haar heen.
Auto’s en lingerie, daar ging het haar om, niet om mij.

Ik droeg haar naar haar graf toen ze was verongelukt.
We hebben haar begraven met haar vele lingerie,
maar iets ervan heb ik gehouden.
Iets ervan hangt nog steeds in de kast.
Ik kijk er soms naar, en dan herinner ik het allemaal weer.
Het is zwaar traumatisch, maakt me zwaar depressief, maar het inspireert me ook weer.
Het mes snijdt een beetje aan twee kanten. De munt heeft twee kanten.
Ik kan er niet omheen. Dit is een deel van mijn leven.
Deze snelheidsduivel heeft mij vertraagd, zwaar vertraagd,
opdat ik door de muur tussen leven en dood zou kunnen kijken.
Ik zie de brug.

Ik zie de muur niet.

Al die lingerie heeft ervoor gezorgd dat ik liever naakt ben.
Maar niemand begrijpt dit.
Ik heb teveel van het goede gehad.
Ik houd niet van bedekkingen.
Haar moeder was ook motorcoureur.
Het zal wel in de familie zitten.
Maar haar moeder was ook meer een naaktloper dan een lingerie loper.
Al met al voelde ik me een hoerenloper met zo’n familie,
ook al was ik met haar getrouwd.
Het kostte me zoveel.

Haar zus was ook motorcoureur, en haar vriendin.
Ik was een buitenbeentje.
Ik kon niet meekomen.
Ik was geen meeloper.

Toen ze verongelukte namen haar zus en haar vriendin haar lingerie winkel over.
Dat kon maar zo. Het was nog wel een ludieke actie.
Ze hebben het heel erg verbeterd, de winkel ging in een grote verbouwing.

Ze ging zo snel.
Daar ging ze.
Over de weilanden, als een vogel.
Over de daken, over de dorpen, op weg naar de eeuwigheid.

Moulderie

Moulderie heette ze. Ze had prachtige sandalen aan. Ik wist niet waar ze vandaan kwam. Ze scheen hier te wonen, maar ik had haar nog nooit eerder gezien. Ze was buitenlands. Haar tuin was natuurrijk, weelderig, en het was prachtig weer. Ik dacht dat er andere mensen woonden, maar die waren klaarblijkelijk alweer vertrokken. Moulderie keek me aan, alsof ze me al jaren kende. Het voelde heel vertrouwd. Ik was hier vroeger weleens geweest, toen er nog andere mensen woonden. Ze nodigde me uit binnen te komen. Er stonden hier allemaal rieten spullen en rieten stoelen. Het was een heel tropisch geheel.

Ze maakte wat brood klaar met plakken kaas. Toen aten we wat broodjes. 'Ik snap jou niet,' zei ze. 'Je komt zo met me mee alsof je me al jaren kent.'

'Het lijkt wel zo,' zei ik.

'Waarom ben je zo ?' vroeg ze.

Ik keek naar haar sandalen. 'Je bent zelf ook heel gastvrij.'

Ja, zei ze. Ik heb het al elf dagen vol gehouden hier. Ik trakteer mezelf. De andere dagen heb ik me afgezonderd gehouden.

En ik ben de traktatie ? vroeg ik.

Wat contact doet de mens goed, zei ze. Hoe je het ook wil noemen.

Ik knikte.

Ik wilde gewoon weten wie hier nu woonde, zei ik. Ik ken het huis van vroeger.

Vertel, zei ze.

Ik keek weer naar haar sandalen. Het is goed zo, zei ik.

Oh, ben jij er zo één, zei ze. Toch wel introvert.

Ik heb twee kanten, zei ik.

Ze keek me aan. Wat als … zei ze.

Wat ? vroeg ik.

Wat heb je om je hals ? vroeg ze.

Een ketting, zei ik. Kreeg ik eens.

Van wie ? vroeg ze.

Het is goed zo, zei ik.

Je wil er niet over praten ? vroeg ze.

Ik keek naar haar sandalen.

Mooie sandalen, zei ik.

Ja, zei ze. Ze bewoog naar me toe en nam mijn hand.

Kom, zei ze toen, en trok me naar boven, naar het zolder. Ik keek er helemaal niet vreemd van op, Het was alsof ik haar al jaren kende.

Kijk door het raam, zei ze.

Ik keek naar de bomen, naar de prachtige natuur, naar haar tuin, zo weelderig. Ook op zolder stonden rieten spullen. Hier wil ik dat je slaapt, zei ze.

Er stond een bed met een deken op de matras. Het was verder een eenvoudig zolder.

Ik wil dat je me wat uitlegt, zei ze …

Maar toen werd ik wakker. Het was maar een droom. Ik dacht na over vroeger. Ik kende geen Moulderie. Ik vroeg me af wat het betekende. Ik dacht aan haar prachtige sandalen. Hoe zou een mens zoiets kunnen bedenken ? Het was hemels, en ook haar tuin. Misschien was ik wel in de hemel geweest. Ik liep toen naar wat boekjes die ik van een tante had geërfd. Ik had ze nog nooit gelezen. Ze lagen in een doos. Tot mijn grote verbazing ging het eerste boekje wat ik eruit greep over Moulderie. Ik begon als een razende te lezen. De letters duizelden voor mijn ogen, alsof ze tot mij sprak, alsof haar hand door de letters weer naar mij reikte zoals in de droom. Was ik wel echt wakker ? Ik greep naar mijn hand en kneep, maar voelde niets. Nee, ik had niet het idee dat ik echt wakker was. Toen werd ik eindelijk wakker. Ik had wel net wat boekjes geërfd van een tante, en ik begon ze allemaal te lezen, maar nergens ging het over Moulderie …

raadsels van de eerste en tweede wereldoorlog -
fragmenten van het 2021 winterboek van de onkrant

De eerste wereldoorlog en de tweede wereldoorlog waren de grootste evenementen van de vorige eeuw, van de jaren 1900, de meest kenmerkende ook voor dat tijdperk. De eerste wereldoorlog van 1914-1918 was de grote onafhankelijkheids-oorlog. Het Duitse rijk werd meer en meer opgeblazen, en voerde nu weltpolitik uit, wat een machtspolitiek was, een expansiepolitiek. Het Duitse rijk werd steeds gevaarlijker, als een tikkende tijdbom, al door de eerdere Duitse filosofen voorspeld. Daarvoor was er nog de realpolitik van Bismarck, wat een gematigde politiek was, die meer op handelsverdragen dreef, om zo de vrede te bewaren. Dat waren de jaren 1800, ook nog het tijdperk van de Duitse verlichting, de Duitse filosofen. Na Bismarck donderde Duitsland in een groot gat. Aan het eind van de jaren 1800 kwam Wilhelm II aan de macht, die Duitsland nog groter en machtiger wilde maken, nog dominanter, en zo vingen de jaren 1900 aan. Het imperialisme kwam meer en meer opzetten en het nationalisme, wat de natuurmens begon te bedreigen. Het kolonisme kwam tot een hoogtepunt, en militarisme was het middel hiertoe. Ze vergaten de geestelijke natuur oorlog die gestreden moest worden, en materialiseerden het, verletterlijkten het en monopoliseerden het, met veel toeters en bellen, en veel tam-tam. Er werd niet veel meer aan de verbeelding overgelaten.

In de eerste wereldoorlog, de onafhankelijkheids-oorlog, viel het grote Duitse rijk, en werd flink ingekort. Het verloor zijn kolonien. Ook zijn maat, het grote Oostenrijks-Hongaarse rijk, viel. De natuurmens kon ontsnappen aan het imperialisme, ontsnapte uit deze mongolen stad, maar toen kwam Duitsland in de tweede oorlog nog groter opzetten onder Himmler en Hitler. Himmler, de leider van de SS en de gestapo en grote baas van de concentratie kampen, was de rechterhand van Hitler. De natuurmens kon niet ontsnappen, en ging

weer aan het kruis. De natuurmens moest leren volharden. Het was het mechanisme van de onontkoombaarheid, van de onweerstaanbaarheid, dat goede herders altijd de veilige schuilplaats verlaten om op zoek te gaan naar het verloren schaap. Het was iets shamanistisch. De natuurmens moest dieper de onderwereld in. Het grote Duitse imperialistische kwaad had teruggeslagen, had zichzelf gespecialiseerd, professioneel gemaakt, tot dokters. Dokter Mengele was gekomen, de eigenlijke poppenbaas van het nazi rijk. Duitsland kon terugslaan door medicalisatie. Duitsland kon terugslaan door voodoo. De heks had een nieuw en onaantastbaar gif gebrouwen. Snel ging het zich vervormen. Als een snelle slang gleed het overal doorheen. Niemand kon het meer vangen.

Gelijk oplopend met deze oorlogen waren de Tarzan boeken, over de wildernis mensen, over hun strijd met de aardse systemen. Tarzan zocht het kwaad op om het te verbreken. Hij ging het niet uit de weg. Ik heb altijd een haat-liefde verhouding met die boeken gehad, omdat Tarzan soms zijn eigen opgeblazenheid had, maar het bevatte wel belangrijke levens-principes. Het waren allemaal onafhankelijkheids-oorlogen. De twee wereldoorlogen zijn de balken van het kruis, het strijden en het lijden. De mens ontkomt niet, maar moet er dieper in, ook vanwege het goede herder principe. In de verhalen van de tweede bijbel is dit ook de strijd tegen de farmaceutische geleerden, wat gewoon schurken zijn. Deze grote oorlogen houden voortijdse principes verborgen. De zegels moeten verbroken worden. Wat voor mysterie was Duitsland in de voortijd ? Het moet ergens vandaan zijn gekomen. Het Israelitische zegel moet verbroken worden, het Egyptische zegel, het Griekse zegel, en zo ook het Duitse zegel, opdat we de diepten van de voortijd gaan zien waaruit al deze dingen voort zijn gekomen. Er liggen veel diepere verhalen aan ten grondslag. Nu is alles chaos, maar de mens moet opnieuw onderwezen worden.

De eerste en tweede wereld-oorlogen, centrale kenmerken van de jaren 1900. Wat stelt het voor ? De eerste wereldoorlog was de grote onafhankelijkheids-oorlog. Ze wilden af van het monsterlijke imperialisme wat gevoed en gepushed werd door Duitsland en zijn bondgenoot Oostenrijk-Hongarije. De natuurmens wist van zijn ketenen te ontsnappen door de verhongering tegen

het machts-materialisme, en beide machtswaanzinnige en grootheidswaanzinnige monsters die alsmaar meer wilden vielen. Duitsland was nog maar een klein eilandje vergeleken met wat het was. Dit alles gebeurde in de jaren 1910 (1914-1918). Maar Duitsland sloeg terug, en werd het fundament van het nieuwe medinazi wereldrijk. De mens moet leren dat de bevrijding lag in de diepte van de jaren 1910. De tiender jaren zijn de bevrijding van de veertiger jaren dus. Er ligt een levensprincipe van de natuur verborgen in de eerste wereldoorlog, waaruit ook de Tarzan boeken zijn voortgekomen, die liepen van de jaren 1910, tot de jaren 1940. Het spoor loopt dus helemaal terug tot de tiender jaren. De Tarzan boeken gaan over de bevrijding en emancipatie door de natuur, loskomen van stads en imperialistisch conformisme en mononotonisme.

De tiender jaren van 1900 moeten dus opnieuw tot leven komen. Wat voor literatuur treffen we daar ? We zien het verhaal van Peter Pan, met dezelfde boodschap : Terug naar de natuur, wordt weer kinderen. Ga weer spelen. Al met al is er in de diepte van de tiender jaren bevrijding van de veertiger jaren. Het is een verlichting, en die ligt in de literatuur.

Telkens weer is er een wisselwerking tussen de eerste en tweede wereldoorlog, als een draai mechanisme. Het is een lift. De mens moet dieper en dieper. De mens kan niet ontkomen. Het is onontkoombaar. Maar de mens kan wel leren. De tweede wereldoorlog is de keerzijde van de emancipatie van de eerste wereldoorlog, waaraan ook nog de Duitse verlichting en de Duitse reformatie aan vooraf gingen (jaren 1500 tot jaren 1800). Toch hoort de tweede wereldoorlog daarbij. Wat moet de mens immers zonder kruis ? En het kruis kan draaien. Het wijst terug op de eeuwige principes van de voortijd. De eerste wereldoorlog was de Exodus van de jaren 1900 en de tweede wereldoorlog was het Leviticus van de jaren 1900. Daar zit dus diepere en dubbele betekenis in.

Er is geen Exodus zonder Leviticus, en geen Leviticus zonder Exodus, en het pad gaat terug tot Genesis, tot de voortijd.

Zo sterf je in de veertiger jaren, wordt je gelijkvormig als de veertiger jaren, wordt moeder aarde bevrucht met bloed, en kom je tot opstanding en

wedergeboorte, tot opname, in de hemel van de eerste wereldoorlog, van de tiender jaren. Dat is wat zowel het Peter Pan boek uitbeeldt, als de Tarzan boeken.

Zo gaat dat ook met kinderen die in nazi of medi nazi gezinnen opgroeien, die geprogrammeerd zijn tot het zijn van zo’n nazi, maar dat van binnen niet zijn, en die dan tot ontwaking komen en emanciperen.

de 1984-samenleving – sterk worden in proza

Een schande dat er in 2021 nog steeds arme landen bestaan.
Laat zien dat de rijke landen in een illusie leven.
Openbaring 3:17 laat zien wat ware armoede is :
Omdat gij zegt: Ik ben rijk en ik heb mij verrijkt en heb aan niets gebrek, en gij weet niet, dat gij zijt de ellendige en jammerlijke en arme en blinde en naakte.

Ik had een droom over een nummer wat in de zeventiger jaren nooit de aarde heeft bereikt, een nummer genaamd iets als : ‘Want some help’. Ik ging naar de bank en er stond iemand naast me die van zijn oma 78000 euro had geerfd. Ik controleerde telkens of ik mijn pasje nog had. Ik was ergens in een gebouw met een laptop waarop een naakte vrouw haar geslachtsdelen ten toon spreidde, alsof het fruit van de groenteboer was. Een mens kan vreemd dromen. Ik scheen het nummer ‘Want some help’ ook te kennen. Elkaar helpen is in deze wereld niet echt aan bod. Iedereen leeft en denkt voor zichzelf. Liefde en zorg is ver te zoeken, of het wordt verkocht, vaak ook nog tegen asociaal hoge prijzen, en met bedreigingen dat als je niet op komt dagen voor de zorg, dan moet je honderden euro’s per keer betalen. We leven in een

bizarre wereld. Ja, mensen, dit is de realiteit. Als je door de psychiatrie van je angsten wil worden afgeholpen in dit land en je komt niet opdagen vanwege diezelfde angsten, dan wordt je portemonee extra uitgeschud. Dit maakt je natuurlijk nog banger en zenuwachtiger, zodat je helemaal niks kan doen. Dit zijn de schurken die achter de schermen de touwtjes in de hand hebben, ook van de regeringen. Dit is dokter Mengele, die zijn geld verdiend door het mentaal martelen van mensen. Zij die nooit waren ontwaakt tot 1984 zijn het nu wel. Dit was al tijden aan de gang, wat nu gebeurd. Ha ha ha, ik lach me dood, strakjes zit ik weer in nood, zong Tol Hanse, en dat moeten we dan maar doen soms, erom lachen, want deze mensen zijn stapel en stapelgek. Het is proza, ze leven door een script. Het zijn acteurs. Openbaring 3 zegt ook : ‘Ik weet uw werken, dat gij de naam hebt, dat gij leeft, maar gij zijt dood. Wees wakker en versterk het overige, dat dreigde te sterven, want Ik heb geen van uw werken vol bevonden.’

Moeten wij dan niet door een hoger script gaan leven, als hemelse acteurs ? Moeten wij dan niet de hogere proza ontvangen ? Dit vraagstuk kan alleen literair opgelost worden. En literatuur gaat over allerlei dingen, zoals in mijn droom, en toch hoort het er allemaal bij. Dit is een literaire realiteit of onrealiteit, en niet anders. Met de botte bijl is er nog nooit iets bereikt. ‘Niet door macht, noch door geweld, maar door proza.’ In mijn droom was het oorlog. Er was een nieuw, literair Mekka.

We mogen bezig zijn met proza, en ook stil worden om het hemelse proza te ontvangen, door je eigen scripts af te leggen. Alles moet een plaatsje krijgen, in de hogere literatuur. Proza loopt overal doorheen. Ik gaf de vrouw in de droom een symbolische kus in de lucht, als een gebaar. Ze was de Proza. Ik liep toen weg uit het gebouw en liep door de stad met het wonderbaarlijke nummer ‘Want some help’ in mijn hoofd. Toen ik terugkeerde naar het gebouw, waar ik ook een woning scheen te hebben, zocht ik naar de laptop, maar het was er niet meer. Wel was er een andere, veel kleinere, witte laptop in een gekantelde halve maanvorm. Er was niet echt een scherm, maar het was een voelscherm, dus niet zozeer iets om te zien, maar om te voelen. Een gevoelscomputer dus, en dat is wat de Proza is. Het gaat door hele andere zintuigen dan alleen maar het oog. Die zintuigen wekken dus wel een nieuwe

visie op.

Wij mogen ontwaken tot literair treinverkeer, en de literaire vogelvluchten ontvangen, als wij daarvoor open staan. Ik stond dus in de bank in die droom, en raakte in gesprek met de jongen van de erfenis. Het was een hele aardige jongen. Ik was niet echt bij het gesprek. Ik zat de hele tijd te controleren of ik al mijn pasjes en verdere bezittingen nog wel had. Wij moeten namelijk alles toetsen aan het hogere bezit, en niet zomaar meegesleurd worden met aardige jongens en interessante vrouwen. We mogen symbolisch gebaren maken met een zekere gezonde en veilige afstand, want het gaat immers om de hogere technologie die ver weg dichtbij kan maken onder zekere voorwaarden. Het is een gevoel-op-afstand computer.

Openbaring 3 zegt : ‘Ik raad u aan van Mij te kopen het gelouterde goud.’ Niet alles wat blinkt is goud namelijk. Wij moeten alles toetsen aan hoger treinverkeer. Hebben wij al onze hemelse pasjes wel ? Staan wij wel ingeschreven in de hogere principes ? Nu, in de 1984 samenleving, zien wij hiervan de schaduwen. Wij moeten het daarom hogerop zoeken.

Onze proza moet sterk worden, ons literair begrip, niets anders. Dat is ware sterkte. De zogenaamde sterkte op aarde is daar maar een schaduw van. In die zin moeten wij dus ons ‘vervrouwen’.

de komst van de vierde golf corona

Het enige dat nodig is voor de triomf van het kwaad, is dat goede mensen niets doen.
– Edmund Burke (1729-1797)

Ik weet uw werken, dat gij noch koud zijt, noch heet. Waart gij maar koud of heet!
Zo dan, omdat gij lauw zijt en noch heet, noch koud, zal Ik u uit mijn mond spuwen.
Openbaring 3:15

We moeten goed in de gaten blijven houden dat er twee corona's zijn, dat er een hemels corona is, de natuurmuur, als een visnet, en een aards corona, het corona van het beest, die iedereen een merkteken wil opplakken. Het corona van het beest is een plakmacht die niet los wil laten, zijn macht niet wil loslaten, en zelfs wil vergroten, expansie-zucht dus. Beiden komen tot de oppervlakte. Het natuurcorona ontmaskert het chemische stadscorona. Het natuurcorona zegt : Houd afstand, kom niet tot snelle conclusies, heb geen vooroordelen, onderzoek alle dingen, terwijl het stadse corona codes maakt voor de mensen, een apartheid opricht, de trots van de selectieve empathie, als overmoedige snelheidsduivels. We zien de plagen komen in het boek Openbaring, als golven over de aarde, en het beest wil zich niet bekeren. Voor de vrouw, hen die zich niet vermannen, maar vervrouwen, want voor de vrouw is er een schuilplaats in de wildernis, waar ze op arendsvleugels naartoe zal gaan. Dit is op de vleugels van het hemels corona van de natuur wat de mens opneemt, het natuurcorona wat weer afstand brengt voor overzicht, inzicht en doorzicht, ook voor nachtzicht. Het hemels corona is het herstel van de natuur en van de natuurvrouw, een middel om uit de stad los te breken, uit het stadse harnas, om tot de wildernis te kunnen gaan. Het hemelse corona breekt de gevangenispoorten open. Het is een nieuwe, hemelse taal op de tong.

Het beestcorona vervolgt de vrouw, en ook het mannelijk kind wat zij baart. Er wordt gesproken van een mannelijk kind, niet zomaar een man. Er wordt gesproken over een zoon. De mens moet zich dus niet vermannen, maar verzonen. Deze zoon zal namelijk tot goede herder worden en een ijzeren herdersstaf ontvangen om zichzelf en de schapen te kunnen verdedigen. Dan zal deze zoon opgenomen worden. In deze strijd is er dus opname, door het hemels corona. Strijd om in te gaan dus, want zonder strijd komt men niet binnen. Dit is de strijd van de goede herder die om zijn schapen geeft, ook om

de verloren schapen. De goede herder eet dan ook niet het vlees van de schapen. Hij zaait rijkelijk, is niet gierig en kortaf. De boodschap van afzondering en eenlingenschap is een van de belangrijkste boodschappen van de gnosis, maar tegelijkertijd een van de gevaarlijksten, want het kan gemakkelijk overgaan in puur egoisme. Nazi's verletterlijken deze boodschap en worden koude persoonlijkheden hierdoor. Er hangt maar een hele, hele dunne sluier tussen, dus je moet wel verfijnen, anders kom je er niet doorheen.

Bittere, kortaffe, zwart-witte mensen in de gnosis komen wij veel tegen. Mensen die alle gnosis voor zichzelf houden, weinig zaaien, weinig delen, of helemaal niet delen met anderen, of ze verkopen het voor een hele dure prijs. Dan gaan ze zich meer met de buitenkant bezig houden dan met de binnenkant, en dan is het puur presentatie-gericht. Zulke mensen zitten er tussen, en zij zijn verraders van de kudde, huurlingen. Het zijn rovers in herdersvermomming. Ze zetten de kudde tegen elkaar op, en ze leven van het vlees. Je mag dit niet zeggen, dat niet zeggen, want ze beoordelen alles naar vormen en uiterlijkheden, dus dan moet je leven door hun codes en met hun pasjes. Het is aan de oppervlakte gekomen, de macht van controle zucht. Het is een boodschap dat je weg moet uit de schaapskooi vanwege al die overcontrole, om zo te gaan tot de buitenste duisternissen, op zoek naar het verloren schaap. Het is dus belangrijk dat dit zich allemaal manifesteert, dit beest wat uit de zee komt. Ze willen een vals medisch naamkaartje voor je maken opdat je hun bezit bent, maar er is dus een schuilplaats in de wildernis. Toen het volk beneden het gouden kalf maakte was Mozes op de berg om de hemelse leer te bestuderen, net als David in Psalm 1. En Mozes zal weer van de berg afdalen. Ook is Noach weer een ark aan het bouwen, en ditmaal is deze ark van hemels vuur. Wij worden dus zeer zeker niet als wezen achtergelaten. Wij mogen actief deelnemen aan het verzet. Zoals wij al zeiden : 'De tweede wereld oorlog is nog niet afgelopen.' Zo komt nu dat beest in al zijn afschuwelijkheid naar boven aan de oppervlakte om zich te manifesteren. Het is een test voor de mens. De mens kan nu niet meer neutraal blijven, of lauw zijn. Kies dan heden wie gij dienen zult.

Het hemels corona roept vanuit de natuur. Het is een mooi corona, een hemelse legerorde, maar op aarde zijn de deserteuren, waar een deserteuren

corona is, een corona van verraders. Ook dat is een geestelijk corona, en het tast de hersenen aan. Daarom zijn restricties geen overbodige luxe. Als de hemelse corona komt, dan is dat als een hemels zicht, waardoor juist het deserteuren corona van het beest zichtbaar wordt. Deze structuren waren er altijd al, zoals iedere verzetsstrijder weet, maar nu zijn je ogen ervoor geopend. Niets gebeurd voor niets. Het is al gebeurd, maar nu pas ga je het zien.

Zijn we dan hopeloos verloren ? Nee. Alle voorzieningen zijn al getroffen. Kom aan boord. Wees geen gierige rover meer, geen kortaffe schijnheilige, maar wees een zaaier, een goede herder. Vervrouwen en verzonen, daar komt het op aan, opdat de beloftes van Openbaring ons deel worden, en wij los kunnen komen van het vleselijke totalitaire mannenvlees, de ijskoude stropdas-economie, wat letterlijk een stropdas is.

De vierde golf corona slaat hard en snel om zich heen. Let goed op de landen wat ze doen. Let goed op deze landen wat je er van kunt leren, persoonlijk. Deze dingen moeten gebeuren. Er is geen tijd om onverschillig te blijven. ‘Het enige dat nodig is voor de triomf van het kwaad, is dat goede mensen niets doen,’ zei Edmund Burke (1729-1797). Deze dingen moeten aan het licht komen, als een oproep. En deze oproep is nooit indringender nodig geweest dan in deze generatie van ‘laf en lui’ waarin geestelijke zware laksheid met de paplepel wordt ingegoten. Zowel het hemelse corona als het aardse corona zijn alarmen van de ark die de mens roepen binnen te komen. Het water is aan het stijgen. Neutralen zullen achterblijven en door de stromen meegesleurd worden.

Ook wij moeten verzegeld worden door de hemelse zegels, en geen aardse verzegelingen, beesten-merktekens, aannemen. De hemelse zegels van het hemelse corona, van de hemelse ark, waardoor we herkend zullen worden en beschermd zijn zegels die we in ons denken mogen ontvangen, in ons hart, maar ook in onze monden, en in onze handen en voeten. De handen hebben we nodig om te werken, te zaaien, en de voeten hebben we nodig om in rechte wegen te wandelen in deze duistere tijden, en zo mogen wij de arendsvleugelen ontvangen, de vleugels van het hemelse corona, om tot de schuilplaats in de wildernis te gaan.

Laten we kijken naar de taak van die hemelse arend :

En ik zag en hoorde een arend vliegen in het midden des hemels, die met luider stem zeide: Wee, wee, wee hun, die nog in het aardse leven.
Openbaring 8:13

En ik zag een andere engel vliegen in het midden des hemels en hij had een eeuwig evangelie, om dat te verkondigen aan hen, die op de aarde gezeten zijn en aan alle volk en stam en taal en natie
Openbaring 14:6

Hier blijkt de volharding der heiligen
Openbaring 14:12

Openbaring was destijds een allegorie door verzetsstrijders geschreven tegen de opkomst van het romeinse wereldrijk, waarvan de beeldspraak vandaag de dag nog bruikbaar is, want de geschiedenis herhaalt zich. Wij mogen dus in de strijd niet werkeloos toekijken vanuit onze luie stoel achter de geraniums. Wij moeten blijven zaaien, opdat er een grote oogst zal zijn. Zaai niet karig, opdat je oogst niet onvoldoende zal zijn. Bedenk altijd : Wat je zaait zul je oogsten.

dinsdag preek de vierde golf corona – chawila, de baarmoeder van het paradijs – where eagles dare

Twee dingen zijn oneindig: het universum en de menselijke domheid; en ik ben niet zeker van het universum.
– Albert Einstein (1879-1955)

En aan de vrouw werden de twee vleugels van de grote arend gegeven om naar de wildernis te vliegen, naar haar plaats, waar zij onderhouden wordt buiten het gezicht van de slang.
Openbaring 12:14

De vrouw is het overblijfsel wat zich niet heeft vervuild met de werken van de stad. Het is het volk dat wil terugkeren tot de natuur. Zij ontsnapt uit de stadse gevangenis, uit het systeem van het beest. Zij voelt haarzelf verkracht, gedwongen, ontheiligd. Zij voelt haarzelf vies, of misschien voelt zij al helemaal niks meer, en is zij totaal verslagen, ontmenselijkt, van haar waardigheid beroofd. Hoe gaat die ontsnapping ? Zeker is dat zij in de wildernis een geneesmiddel vindt. Maar dit geneesmiddel roept al op een afstand tot haar en geeft haar de adelaarsvleugels. Hoe werkt dat precies ? We hebben het over het oeroude yeshua principe van Israel en van Egypte, het principe van de goede herder of goede herderin. Jesaja 61 zegt het zo :

De hemelse kennis is op mij, omdat de hemel mij geroepen heeft; Hij heeft mij gezonden om een blijde boodschap te brengen aan ootmoedigen, om te verbinden gebrokenen van hart, om voor gevangenen vrijlating uit te roepen en voor gebondenen opening der gevangenis; om uit te roepen een jaar van het welbehagen van de hemel en een dag de hemelse wrake ; om alle treurenden te troosten, om over de treurenden van Sion te beschikken, dat men hun geve hoofdsieraad in plaats van as.

De ontsnapping ligt er dus in dat je anderen laat ontsnappen. Het is niet ego-gericht. Je hogere zelf ligt collectief door alles en iedereen heen. Dat is geen ego-trip. Je neemt zovelen geestelijk en shamanistisch mee. Zij hebben de sleutels. Zij zijn de sleutels. De adelaarsvleugels zijn dus degenen die je met je meedraagt.

In de steen van Chawila in het eeuwig evangelie staat hierover dit verhaal, in hoofdstuk 9 :

Susanna

1. Susanna was een heel bijzonder meisje. In de nacht kreeg ze altijd vleugels, en vloog ze naar verre landen. Maar als de ochtend viel verloor ze haar vleugels altijd weer, en daarom moest ze altijd op tijd terug zijn, voordat de zon opkwam. Op een nacht nam een heks haar gave van haar af. In ruil daarvoor kreeg Susanna vlindervleugels en een kroon van veren, maar ze kon nooit meer naar huis.

De heks bracht haar naar een plaats waar het altijd nacht was. Hier waren een heleboel meisjes zoals haar, maar de nachten duurden er heel lang, en als een nacht was afgelopen dan kwam direkt de volgende nacht. Wel kregen ze allemaal na elke nacht een steentje aan hun halskettingen erbij.

Die steentjes waren helemaal wit en werden morgenstenen genoemd. Als hun halskettingkjes helemaal vol waren met steentjes dan mochten ze de reis maken naar de plaats waar het altijd dag was.

Daarvoor moesten ze door een hele lange donkere tunnel heen waar de oudste mannetjes woonden die bestonden. Na een hele lange tijd mocht Susanna de reis gaan maken.

Toen ze in de tunnel met de oudste mannetjes die bestonden kwam klampten sommige mannetjes haar direkt aan. 'Help ons,' zeiden ze. 'We kunnen niet lopen. Draag ons naar het morgenland.'

2. 'Maar natuurlijk,' zei Susanna, en droeg zoveel mannetjes met haar mee als ze kon. Maar de andere meisjes die met haar waren zeiden tegen de mannetjes die hen aanklampten : 'Zorg zelf maar dat je in het morgenland aankomt.'

3. Verderop kwamen ze bij een grote waterbron aan. 'Kun je ons wat water geven,' vroegen de mannetjes aan Susanna. 'Onze handen zijn te slap om water te scheppen.'

4. 'Maar natuurlijk,' zei Susanna, en gaf hen allemaal te drinken. Maar de andere meisjes namen alleen maar water voor henzelf. Na een hele lange tijd lopen kwamen ze eindelijk aan bij de rots die de ingang naar het morgenland blokkeerde.

Een klein mannetje zat op de rots en vroeg aan hen allen waar ze de mannetjes hadden. Aan Suzanna's rug hingen er een heleboel, maar de andere meisjes zeiden lachend dat de mannetjes zelf maar moesten lopen.

'Dat is nogal erg dom van jullie,' zei het kleine mannetje op de rots. Zodadelijk schuift de rots namelijk van de ingang weg, en zal het vuurgordijn dat de ingang nog verspert door de tunnel heengaan. De mannetjes zullen hun dragers hiertegen beschermen.

'Geef die mannetjes hier,' riepen de meisjes naar Susanna.

5. 'Ga ze zelf maar halen,' zei Susanna. En toen zetten de meisjes het op een lopen naar het begin van de tunnel waar de oude mannetjes zaten. 'Spring snel op onze ruggen,' zeiden de meisjes, 'dan brengen we jullie naar het morgenland.'

6. 'Vanwaar jullie bereidheid ineens ?' vroeg één van de oude mannetjes.

7. 'We hebben ons bedacht,' zei één van de meisjes. 'En we zullen jullie ook te drinken geven bij de bron.'

8. 'Zo zo,' zeiden de mannetjes, en stapten op de ruggen van de meisjes. Toen ze bij de bron aankwamen gaven de meisjes hen te drinken, en na een lange tocht kwamen ze eindelijk bij de ingang naar het morgenland aan.

De rots was inmiddels al weggeschoven, en het vuurgordijn staarde hen aan. Ze hadden allemaal zoveel mogelijk mannetjes op hun rug genomen, zodat ze goed tegen het vuur beschermd zouden worden, maar ineens sprongen de mannetjes van hun ruggen af en liepen door het vuur naar binnen.

Direkt begon het vuurgordijn op hen af te komen, en zo moesten de meisjes zo hard mogelijk terugrennen als ze konden.

De sleutel ligt dus in de anderen. Maar als je anderen helpt met bijbedoelingen en niet vanuit empathie en zorgzaamheid, dan heeft het allemaal geen waarde. Dat is de moraal van het verhaal van Susanna. Je mag dus nooit mensen helpen met een verdraaid hart, met een verborgen agenda om er slechts zelf beter van te worden. Het is zo dat je zelf wordt geholpen als je anderen helpt, maar dat gebeurt in het mysterie van de ware empathie. Zo zijn er een

heleboel mensen die bijvoorbeeld geen vlees eten omdat ze bang zijn dat hun gezondheid anders ten onder gaat, en niet vanwege empathie naar dieren. Het zal hen niet baten. De dieren zullen zich aan hen vastklampen, maar bij de poort van het morgenland zullen de dierenzielen hen verlaten, want ze hebben het slechts voor henzelf gedaan. Zo zijn er veel meer voorbeelden. Werk daarom aan je karakter, aan het zuiveren van je hart. Zomaar goede werken doen gaat je dus niet helpen.

Chawila is een plaats in het paradijs in Genesis 2 :

10 Er ontsprong in Eden een rivier om de hof te bevochtigen, en daar splitste zij zich in vier stromen. 11 De naam van de eerste is Pison; deze stroomt om het gehele land Chawila, waar het goud is; 12 en het goud van dat land is goed; daar is de balsemhars en de steen chrysopraas.

Chawila is dus het land van het goede goud, van het goede karakter en het zuivere hart. Er staan wel meerdere verhalen in de steen van Chawila van het eeuwig evangelie. Een kenmerk van de arend die de vrouw tot de wildernis brengt is dus dat hij het eeuwig evangelie verkondigt en dit ook heeft doorleefd. Chawila is een land dieper in het paradijs, en wordt ook beschreven als het land van Ismael waar hij naartoe trok, in de wildernis. Chawila wordt ook genoemd Chuwl, Chowla, Gowlah, of Gly, en dit betekent openbaring, naaktheid, wat ook een kenmerk is van hen die in het paradijs leven, en dat is dus iets symbolisch. Het is een onsluiering, een ontmaskering, en men komt zo tot een hemels script om daarnaar te leven, als hemelse acteurs. Chawila, Gly, is het geheim van de schepping, en het is de opslagplaats van het hemelse zaad, dus iets heel dieps.

We zien het geheimenis terug in het boek Daniel. Dit zijn allemaal boeken van het verzet, maar het westerse christendom verletterlijkte het en maakte het corrupt.

‘Ik had in de nacht een gezicht en zie, de vier winden des hemels brachten de grote zee in beroering, en vier grote dieren stegen uit de zee op, het ene verschillend van het andere. Het eerste geleek op een leeuw, en het had

adelaarsvleugels. Terwijl ik bleef toezien, werden het de vleugels uitgerukt, en werd het van de grond opgeheven en op twee voeten overeind gezet als een mens, en werd het een mensenhart gegeven.’
Daniel 4:2

Nebukadnezar was half mens, half beest, zoals veel Babylonische goden. Nebu is de god van wijsheid en van de Schrift. Het beeld wat Nebukadnezar in zijn droom had gezien had een hoofd van 'goed goud'. Daniel zei hierover :

Daniel 2

36 Dit is de droom, en de uitlegging daarvan zullen wij de koning zeggen:
37 Gij, o koning, koning der koningen, aan wie de God des hemels het koningschap, macht, sterkte en eer geschonken heeft, 38 ja, in wiens hand Hij de mensenkinderen, waar zij ook wonen, de dieren des velds en het gevogelte des hemels heeft gegeven, en die Hij tot heerser over die alle heeft gemaakt – gij zijt dat gouden hoofd.

Chawila is het land van het goede goud, een dieper gedeelte in het paradijs. Nebukadnezar betekent de wachter van het hoofdsieraad. In het eeuwig evangelie is er dus de steen van Chawila, of in het Aramees : het sieraad van Chawila, wat dus een hoofdsieraad is. Dit boek bestaat uit veertien sprookjes. Aan het einde van het boek is er een verhaal genaamd : Jezus (yeshua) en de Draak.

Genesis 2
11 Een daarvan is de Pison; die stroomt om heel Chawila heen, het land waar goud gevonden wordt. 12 Het goud van dat land is uitstekend, en er is daar ook balsemhars en onyx.

Balsemhars is scheiding in de wortels, en onyx is kastijding, wit maken. Uitstekend is in de Hebreeuwse wortels : gehoorzamen.

Ook Babylon betekent scheiding, wat wijst op afscheiding en onderscheiding.

Iedereen moest in Babylon het gouden beeld wat Nebukadnezar had laten

opstellen aanbidden, want anders zouden ze in de vurige oven geworpen worden. Iedereen moest neerbuigen voor dit beeld. Maar Babylon kreeg een ‘change of heart.’ In het Grieks is goud een beeld van de baarmoeder. Het is een beeld van loutering. Deze beelden waren in Babylon heel corrupt geworden, maar uiteindelijk kwam Babylon weer tot zijn verstand. Na de verletterlijking vindt er vergeestelijking plaats, en dat is wat de opname is. Als na de Babylonische verwarring schepping plaatsvindt, dan mogen we met Jesaja zeggen : ‘dat men hun geve hoofdsieraad in plaats van as.’

Zo mogen we tot een beeld komen van wat de adelaarsvleugels inhouden. Laten we kijken naar een ander verhaal in de steen van Chawila, in hoofdstuk 6 :

De Twee Zusters

1. Er waren eens twee zusters die water moesten putten bij een waterput. Op de put zat een mannetje die hen te drinken vroeg. 'Ga zelf water halen,' zeiden de twee zusters.

2. 'Maar ik heb geen emmer,' zei het mannetje.

3. 'Ga dan maar eerst een emmer halen,' zeiden de twee zusters.

4. 'Kan ik niet gewoon in jullie emmer naar beneden, dan kan ik daar wat water drinken en zorgen dat jullie emmer volkomt. Ik zal jullie er rijkelijk voor belonen,' zei het mannetje. Hij liet de twee zusters wat goudstukken zien, en de zusters stemden in. Ze lieten het mannetje aan de emmer aan een touw helemaal naar beneden gaan. Het mannetje stapte uit de emmer ging op een klein platform staan, en legde een schorpioen in de emmer. Toen de twee zusters de emmer terug hadden met de schorpioen erin waren ze woedend. 'Wacht maar, mannetje,' zei één van de zusters, stapte in de emmer en liet haar zuster het touw vieren om zo beneden te komen. Maar het mannetje was in geen velden of wegen te bekennen. De twee zusters hadden ook nog een jongere zuster, en de volgende keer lieten ze haar naar de waterput gaan. Het mannetje zat er weer, en vroeg ook aan dit meisje of ze hem wat te drinken wilde geven. Het meisje gaf hem direkt te drinken. 'Omdat je zo behulpzaam bent geweest,' zei het mannetje, 'zal je emmer altijd vol blijven.' Het meisje

ging weer naar huis en vertelde alles aan haar zusters. En inderdaad, zodra de emmer bijna leeg was raakte de emmer weer vol. Direkt zochten haar zusters een andere emmer op en gingen terug naar de waterput. Weer zagen ze daar het mannetje. 'Zo,' zeiden ze. 'Zullen we jou eens goed te drinken geven ?' Het mannetje knikte, en ze gaven hem goed te drinken. Het mannetje dronk de hele emmer leeg. Maar toen ze voor de tweede keer de emmer omhoog haalde zat de emmer vol met vieze modder en spatte al hun klederen vies. 'Omdat jullie mij alleen te drinken hebben gegeven om jullie eigen hebberigheid zal vanaf nu jullie emmer altijd vol zijn met vieze modder, en zullen jullie klederen altijd vies zijn.' Huilend gingen de twee zusters naar huis om hun klederen te wassen, maar hoe meer ze hun klederen probeerden te wassen, hoe viezer deze werden.

Een waarschuwing weer voor mensen die alleen zorg geven als ze er zelf beter van worden, zorg voor veel geld bijvoorbeeld. Zo ontvangt een mens geen adelaarsvleugels, maar wordt de mens meegezogen met het systeem van het beest. In Openbaring wordt ons verteld te kopen goud dat in vuur gelouterd is. We moeten niet buigen voor de afgodsbeelden van deze wereld, die de mens zelf heeft gemaakt, ook al worden we zo in hun vurige ovens geworpen. Juist hierin zullen we het goede goud vinden, het geheimenis van Chawila. Zo krijgt de mens zijn vleugels, als een foenix uit de vlammen, en zal zo tot de wildernis gaan. Het is een vuurvogel, gelouterd in vuur, als de ark van hemels vuur. Laten onze daden dus rein zijn, vanuit zuivere motieven, vanuit een gebroken hart. Laten wij de dingen bekijken met hemelse arendsogen, dat we goed op onze hoede zijn, en daarom moeten wij ook het grote wee prediken, opdat wij niet indutten.

Laten we kijken naar een derde sprookje in de steen van Chawila, in hoofdstuk 2 :

Rozinde

1. Er was eens een meisje dat heel diep onder de grond opgesloten leefde om voor een draak te koken. Het meisje heette Rozinde. Altijd als ze niet snel

genoeg was met koken dan werden de vlammen onder haar grote ketel woester en woester. Ook wilde de draak altijd veel verschillende soorten vreemd vlees, en daarom moest Rozinde vaak op jacht. Als ze niet snel genoeg was met jagen dan werd haar boog ineens vuurheet en dan viel ze altijd op de grond van de pijn.

Op een dag schoot een prins een pijl op de draak af en bevrijdde Rozinde. Hij nam haar mee naar zijn kasteel. Om tegen de draak beschermd te zijn moest ze elke dag baden in een bad vol met melk onder het kasteel. En elke dag moesten er wilde bloemen in geworpen worden. De prins hield veel van het meisje en op een dag trouwde hij met haar.

Maar toen eens de prinses vergat in het bad van melk te baden sloeg de draak toe, en nam haar weer naar de diepe plaats onder de grond. Nu moest Rozinde nog harder werken, en was de draak woester dan ooit. Op een dag kwam de prins om zijn Rozinde te halen, maar de draak sloot hem op achter tralies van vuur. Rozinde werd elke dag steeds verdrietiger. Op een dag was ze weer op jacht voor de draak en vond een hert in het struikgewas.

'Heus, schiet me niet,' zei het hert, 'dan zal ik je al mijn melk geven.' En toen herinnerde Rozinde het weer dat de draak niet tegen melk kon. Ook vroeg Rozinde aan het hert waar wilde bloemen waren. Het hert had heel veel melk te geven, en al gauw was er een heel bad vol. Toen gooide Rozinde de wilde bloemen erin.

Snel nam Rozinde een bad in de melk en ging met natte kleren terug. Toen ze bij de vuurtralies aankwam wreef ze met haar melknatte kleren er tegenaan terwijl de tralies kapot sprongen. Snel greep ze haar prins bij de hand en samen renden ze naar het bad. Hier waren ze veilig tussen de wilde bloemen. Maar al gauw kwam de draak een kijkje nemen.

Hij wist dat hij niks tegen hen kon beginnen zolang ze iedere dag een bad zouden nemen in de melk. Maar hij wachtte en wachtte, en vandaag wacht hij nog steeds.

Hoe belangrijk is dus de moedermelk ? Dit is dus ook een beeld van het zaaien. De melk is een gever. Zonder dat principe gaan we ten onder in het rijk van de draak, in het systeem van het beest. Om niet hebben wij het gekregen en wij

moeten het om niet geven, mensen terugleiden tot de moederbron. Dat is allereerst iets geestelijks. Dat begint bij Maria die aan de voeten zat van het yeshua principe, en luisterde. Martha rende zomaar in het wilde rond, zonder dat ze wist wat de daadwerkelijke opdracht was. Ga dus niet zomaar als een bezetene zaaien of melk rondbrengen, want dan ben je als de zwijnen, en werp je parels en melk voor de zwijnen die het alleen maar zullen vertrappen. Het zaaien is dus altijd profetisch, strategisch, doelgericht, en alleen zo kun je daadwerkelijk overvloedig zaaien in hemelse overvloed. Dat hoeft allemaal niet groots, maar het kunnen ook hele kleine mosterdzaadjes zijn. Niet het vele is goed maar het goede is veel, en wij moeten dus deze dingen geestelijk beoordelen en niet vleselijk en letterlijk. Het gaat om de shamanistische taak, dat je naar gebieden gaat waar niemand anders gaat. Where eagles dare dus.

Je gaat op zoek als Noach’s arend, op zoek naar land, op zoek naar het verlorene. Je bent juist een arend van Noach op de ark van hemels vuur als je anderen tot die ark leidt, als je daar gaat waar alleen arenden durven te komen, om de verloren schapen op te pikken. Dat is iets profetisch, want arenden zijn ook zeer fijngevoelige, profetische dieren. Dat zijn geen wilde weldoeners, maar ze doen het gericht, met onderbouwing, en hebben dus een zintuig voor hemelse logistiek. Ze vervleselijken niet in dit proces, maar vergeestelijken. Ze zijn niet aards, maar hemels.
Hoe kun je dan bestaan ? Wachten. Natuurlijk zijn er hemelse orders, en die komen alleen tot hen die de tijd nemen om te luisteren. Ook het zaaien is gebouwd op toetsen en demonologie, zodat het profetische zuiver blijft. Niet de Martha’s, maar de Maria’s.

Indien iemand een oor heeft, hij hore. Indien iemand in gevangenschap voert, dan gaat hij in gevangenschap; indien iemand met het zwaard zal doden, dan moet hij zelf met het zwaard gedood worden, zegt Openbaring 13. We mogen niet werken voor het beestensysteem om anderen zomaar in gevangenschap te zetten en te doden op basis van de lagere aardse economie. We komen alleen los als bevrijders, als verzetsstrijders. Dat is een oorlog die we op geen andere manier kunnen winnen. Het Babylonische systeem werd overgedragen van koninkrijk tot koninkrijk, kwam toen bij de Grieken, toen bij de Romeinen, en kreeg zijn hoogtepunt in Nazi Duitsland en nu het Mengele wereldrijk,

oftewel de Medi Nazi wereldorde, waarin iedereen een opgelegde medische identiteit heeft, als gevangenen van dit systeem. Beulen zijn het, en het boek Openbaring geldt nog steeds in deze tijd, en laat zien wat er gaande is, dit orakel uit de oudheid. Let daarom goed op, op de tekenen der tijden. Weer wordt er een beeld gemaakt wat aanbeden dient te worden. Weer moet men een merkteken ontvangen om te kunnen kopen of verkopen, om erbij te horen. En zij die het lam volgen ontkomen eraan. Maar wat betekent dit ? Zij die het lam volgen ? Dit was een geslacht lam. Dit was een verloren schaap. Het zijn dus de herders die op zoek gaan naar het verloren schaap, where eagles dare. Zij buigen niet voor de afgodsbeelden van het medische wereldrijk. Zij breken deze beelden, zij ontmaskeren het, zij analyseren het, onderzoeken het. Zij krijgen hierover openbaringen, en verstaan de tekenen der tijden omtrend deze dingen. Zij kennen de schuilplaats, en lichten ook anderen daar over in, en helpen die daar te komen. Wie zwijgt als zijn broeder of zuster onderdrukt wordt is de volgende die onderdrukt gaat worden. Kijk niet zwijgend toe als het schaap verdrinkt.

Maar mensen hebben andere dingen te doen, dit nog, dat nog, duizenden excusen. Ze bouwen hun eigen koninkrijkjes en draven daarvoor. Ze hebben een verdraaid hart, zijn vol met bijbedoelingen. De mens is sluw, en dient zo het beest en zijn systeem, het beeld wat ze massaal hebben opgericht, en waar zo tegen gewaarschuwd was. Wees een roepende in de wildernis. Blaas de bazuin, en spaar niet. Sluit je oren en mond niet, maar laat je mond dus niet losraken van je oren. Het leger moet goed afgestemd zijn, anders is het een vals leger, met een valse toon.

Soms is het de tijd om te zaaien, en soms is het tijd om te oogsten, waar Openbaring ook over spreekt. Ken de hemelse seizoenen. Ga niet tegen de natuurwetten in. Pak het niet stads aan. Wees geen lopende stropdas. Wat is een ander kenmerk van de arenden ? Ze zingen het lied van Mozes. Mozes was de berg opgegaan om de hemelse leer te overdenken, en deed niet mee met de feestende massa’s die het gouden kalf vereerden. Het gouden kalf was een beeld van de stad. De afgodendienaars van het gouden kalf wilden de mens weer binden in het aardse. Maar Mozes wilde het volk uitleiden. Dat was een groot verschil. Hij was een goede herder. Wees dus een Mozes. Mozes ging

waar niemand eerder ging, where eagles dare. Mozes was een hemelse arend, die leefde vanuit het hogere hemelse script. Hij verbrak het aardse, en ook het valse geestelijke. Hij smeet het stuk op de grond. Hij had geen sentimenten voor het vleselijke.

Er is een tijd van zaaien, een tijd van oogsten, en een tijd van treden in de persbak, zoals beschreven wordt in het boek Openbaring. Dat zijn de seizoenen van de goede herders, van hen die de ijzeren staffen dragen in hoofdstuk 19. De oogst moet dus vergeestelijkt worden, getreden worden, in de persbak, opdat het ontzegeld wordt, en openbaring als een rivier kan stromen, en zo is de mens weer ‘naakt in het paradijs’, ‘naakt in Chawila’, alles geopenbaard en ontmaskerd. Dan heeft de mens de schuilplaats bereikt op adelaarsvleugels.

Jesaja 40 zegt :

‘Wie het hemelse verwachten, putten nieuwe kracht; zij varen op met vleugelen als arenden; zij lopen, maar worden niet moede; zij wandelen, maar worden niet mat.’

Hun emmers blijven dus vol, net zoals bij de jongere zuster van de twee zusters. Die kracht ontstaat dus als je het laat stromen naar anderen. Het geheim ligt dus in het zijn van een kanaal, niet een oppotter. Dit is dus geen vleselijke kracht, geen aardse kracht, maar een geestelijke kracht, de kracht van het kruis, wat dus geen letterlijke kracht is zozeer, maar meer nog een fijngevoeligheid, een verfijning van alle dingen.

Uiteindelijk worden zij die voor het beeld van het beest hebben neergebogen geworpen in de vurige oven, want zij hadden anderen die niet neerbogen daarin geworpen. De vurige oven is een beeld van loutering, waarin alles geopenbaard en ontmaskerd wordt, alles ontzegeld wordt, dus wij spreken niet van een groot onbegrijpelijk drama uiteindelijk, maar van duidelijkheid en begrip van deze dingen, van vergeestelijking dus. Alle dingen zullen medewerken ten goede. Alles zal gerecycled worden, ten goede gedraaid worden. Het blijft niet zoals het is. Alles gaat weer terug tot de moederschoot tot een nieuwe schepping. Lagere vormen zullen verdwijnen, want het waren

slechts echo’s. De aardse, lagere betekenissen zullen dus plaatsmaken voor de hogere hemelse betekenissen van alle dingen.

Het beestensysteem zegt : ‘Verman je.’
Maar de hemelse leer roept op je te vervrouwen, de melk te brengen dus. Hoe lieflijk op de bergen zijn de voeten van hen die het goede nieuws brengen.
Ook roept de hemelse leer dus op je te verzonen. De zoon is namelijk het beeld van het luisteren. Het hemelse vrouwelijke geeft, en het hemelse zoonschap luistert, en laat het vrouwelijke, de moeder principes, door hem heen stromen, opdat hij net als haar zal geven. Dat is wat het zoonschap inhoudt. Als je je zomaar vermant zonder deze principes dan slibben al deze kanalen dicht, en houdt je alles voor jezelf en ga je rondlopen met dit vlees, en ermee pronken, als een dief met gestolen goederen dus. Dan probeer je zelf een beeldenbeest te worden wat iedereen zou moeten aanbidden, want anders worden zij in de vurige oven geworpen.

Vervrouw en verzoon dus. Dit zijn de twee adelaarsvleugels die je nodig hebt om tot de schuilplaats te komen in de wildernis, tot de ark van hemels vuur :

luisteren en doorgeven.

Ja : luisteren en doorgeven.

Je geeft het dan niet op een verkeerde manier door of aan de verkeerden, want je luistert, oftewel : je wordt hemels geleid, in hemelse logistiek, dus je weet precies waar je moet zijn. Leer dus luisteren, en leer dus doorgeven. Dat is wat het profetische leven is, het zijn van een arend. Daarom is het ook zo’n belangrijk levens en reddings principe, het principe van ontsnapping en verschuiling, in het boek Openbaring. Zo mag de mens komen tot het heilige mysterie van Chawila, de baarmoeder van het paradijs. Zo mag de mens het hart op de tong dragen, en het hoofdsieraad ontvangen, in plaats van as. Zo mogen de woorden van Jesaja hemels in vervulling gaan.

Niet zomaar vertrouwen. Niet vertrouwen op het beesten-systeem, niet vertrouwen op het stropdas-imperium van de afgevallen, vleselijke man die

zich als een beeld laat aanbidden, die is afgevallen van het hemelse zoonschap. Ze pronken met hun vlees, niet met hun oren. Ze hebben grote monden, en geen oren, of gewoon oren die niet horen. Je moet je oren twee maal zoveel gebruiken als je mond. Daarom heb je ook twee oren en slechts een mond.

Niet zomaar vertrouwen dus, maar vervrouwen. Dat kan alleen als je tot je innerlijke, hemelse natuurvrouw gaat, en gaat verzonen in het hemelse zoonschap.

Door je te vervrouwen en te verzonen ga je dus ‘verzetten’, en kom je in het heilige verzetsleger, want arenden zijn ook hemelse oorlogsvoerders.

Hersenspinsels der Elven

Mirik, Mirit, en Sakja waren drie indiaanse oorlogselven. Ze hadden toverwapens, een heel kasteel vol, en ze deinsten niet terug voor bloederigheden en het drinken van bloed. Ze waren heel vampiristisch van aard.

Vaak vochten ze alledrie aan elkaars zijde, maar meestal leefden ze op zichzelf. De jacht deden ze meestal alleen. Er waren geen gruwelijkere en prachtigere elven dan hen, maar de wraak der heksen en tovenaars keerden vaak tegen hen.

Meestal als ze alleen waren kregen ze het zwaar te verduren, en daarom

zochten ze elkaar nog weleens op. Gelukkig konden ze goed verdwijnen en verschijnen, en dat maakte alles iets makkelijker, maar er waren genoeg tovenaars en heksen, en genoeg boze elven die hen daarin met gemak konden volgen. Zij waren niet de enigen die konden verdwijnen en verschijnen. Ze hadden een hoge tovenaarsgraad, dat wel, maar hier woedde de oorlog het hardst.

Vaak smeerden ze zichzelf in met toverbloed, of namen ze een bad met tovergeuren. Het bad was bekleed met de huiden van allerlei toverbeesten die ze hadden verslagen. Maar als ze bij elkaar waren dan was er zoveel toverkracht dat het de meest gevaarlijke heksen aantrok, en daarom besloten ze op een dag voorgoed uit elkaar te gaan. Ieder van hen zou een richting kiezen, en ze zouden alleen nog maar voor zichzelf strijden.

Van huiden maakten ze een eigen wigwam in verlaten gebied. En sindsdien werd alles rustiger.

Ze wisten dat ze alleen veilig waren als ze op zichzelf waren. In die verlaten gebieden hadden ze nog wel veel strijd te voeren tegen de wilde dieren. Deze wilde dieren waren erg gevaarlijk, omdat ze in hen wilden wonen. Deze wilde dieren wilden bezit van hen nemen. En ze wisten dat ze de wilde dieren alleen konden overwinnen door bezit van hen te nemen. Daarom liepen ze vaak in verschillende dierenhuiden rond, en bovenal moesten ze steeds verdertrekken.

Sommige beesten waren zo groot dat als ze hen overwonnen hadden ze met gemak erin konden leven als in een tent. Ze kwamen erachter dat deze wilde dieren nog wel erger waren dan tovenaars en heksen. Als ze niet zo wild zouden zijn als deze beesten zelf, dan zouden ze hier niet standhouden. Wie zou denken dat hun paden weer zouden kruizen na een lange reis en een lange strijd tegen de wilde dieren en beesten ? Een wilde indiaanse elvenstam leefde hier, maar zij zouden daar alleen deel van kunnen worden als ze deze stam zouden verslaan in een schijngevecht.

Deze elven hadden de wilde dieren en beesten tot hun beschikking om erop te rijden. Ook voerden zij oorlog tegen anderen van die duistere elvenstammen, maar deze oorlogen waren slechts schijn. Door schijnoorlogen werden er contacten gelegd en door schijnoorlogen werden deze contacten verder uitgebouwd, tot in de diepste vriendschappen. Door schijnoorlogen beschermde men elkaar.

En zij kwamen door de diepste duisternissen tot de grootste lichtbronnen der elven, en tot een heleboel andere elvenparadoxen. De toverdranken brachten een roes in de elven, een passie en een lust, als een recht en een plicht. De elvenscenario’s gingen diep, en waren wonderlijk in hun verdediging. Het waren schijnlichten, schijngesprekken, en zelfs schijnvriendschappen, alles om hun doelen te bereiken, de ijskoude wateren van een diepe eenzaamheid, waarin een prachtige tweeledigheid werd opgewekt, een zuivere tweeledigheid, zich in schijn uitstrekkende naar de driehoek. Dit alles tot makkelijker en sneller te verdwijnen en te verschijnen, om geheel op te lossen in een realiteit. Nee, makkelijk was het niet om de hogere tovergraden te bereiken, om deel te krijgen aan de hogere hersenspinsels der elven.

Einde

Uit de bundel ‘prikkeldraad’ uit 2019 :

een wereld op wielen

Je kunt er urenlang over nadenken als je er niet bij bent geweest, maar dan

kom je er niet achter. Je kunt het natuurlijk navragen aan anderen die er wel waren geweest, maar dan zal iedereen het anders beleefd hebben. Wel kun je misschien zo dieper in een moment komen, zoals een moeder die het beste voorheeft met haar kind, en zich dan probeert te verdiepen in het brein van een kind, en haar dan meeneemt een dagje aan zee. Dan lopen ze beiden langs de winkelstraat, en dan gaan ze langs de brug, en dan is er misschien net een optocht, en dan komen ze uiteindelijk aan bij het strand, en dan kan de moeder eens rustig de tijd nemen om haarzelf eens lekker te verdiepen in de gedachtengang van haar kind, misschien met een ijsje erbij. Dat wil nog weleens wat losweken bij het kind. Maar ja, het kind is in de groei, dus zal elke dag weer anders denken. Toch verdiept de moeder haarzelf daar dan in, ook al is het kind zo afwisselend als het weer. Het zijn toch allemaal weer kleine stukjes, en dan kan de moeder daar ook weer verder mee en er wat van leren misschien. Dat is ook niet altijd zeker natuurlijk, want het kan ook juist zo zijn dat de moeder van alles gaat afleren, of misschien wel zo dwaas wordt als het kind zelf.

Vandaar dat er ook telkens weer verkiezingen zijn, omdat er zoveel op ons afkomt, ook in vergaderingen. Wie leidt het zaakje, en waarom werd deze persoon verkozen. Dat moet ook weleens in twijfel gebracht worden, en uiteindelijk kon je pas aan het einde zeggen of je wel of niet goed gekozen hebt. Er zijn dan een heleboel omwegen en tussenwegen die je kunt nemen. Er zijn een heleboel mensen die daar lang over nadenken, en een heleboel mensen totaal niet. En een moeder kan dan erover speculeren hoe haar kind later zal worden. Met dat soort gedachtes zit een moeder dan ook weer opgezadeld. Waarom is een moeder hier zoveel mee bezig ? Het is een instinct. Veel mensen zullen dat proberen af te wimpelen, vaak omdat ze het moederschap nooit zelf hebben ontvangen. Pas als de mens zelf dan moeder is geworden, dan weet de mens het ineens. Dat kan heel lang duren, of misschien wel nooit. Natuurlijk geldt dit ook voor een vader, maar die zit weer heel anders in elkaar. Wat doet een vader met zijn kind ? Of liever gezegd : wat kan een vader met zijn kind ? Ook de vader zit tussen allerlei begrenzingen in. Hij zit op een stoel tussen muren, of in een open wildernis. Iedere vader is weer anders, maar ze hebben allemaal hun begrenzingen.

Sommige vaders gaan dan mee met het dagje aan zee, terwijl andere vaders moeten werken, of ze zijn in het ziekenhuis, of in de gevangenis, of op een lange reis naar weet ik veel waar. Het kan een zakenreis zijn of een reis voor ander werk of nog iets anders. Daar kan een mens dan ook weer lang over nadenken, vooral als er een gebrek aan informatie is of was. En als het dan om de vader van iemand anders gaat dan is er misschien nog wel minder informatie. Sommigen nemen daar dan genoegen mee, terwijl anderen weer navraag gaan doen. Dat leidt dan soms ook weer tot bijzondere contacten, en als puntje bij paaltje komt bepaald dat iemand's levensloop of zelfs met wie hij trouwt. Zo rolt de mens vaak van het één in het ander, en is dat daadwerkelijk tegen te houden ?

Soms stuurt het dan ook de beroepskeuze van de mens bij. Je komt dan bepaalde mensen tegen, en krijgt dan bepaalde informatie, en dat gaat dan als een sleutel in je hoofd zitten, en je krijgt het niet meer weg. Is dat dan iemand's levenslot ?

En dan moet ik ook direct denken aan iemand die verslaafd is aan alcohol en telkens bij dag en dauw, bij weer en wind, de kroeg ingaat. Zou dat ook niet iemand's gedachtenstroom beinvloeden, partnerkeuze, beroepskeuze enzovoorts ? Heeft het ook met muziek keuze te maken, en kan dat nog nadreunen in het nageslacht ? Zoals mijn vader was een alcohol verslaafde en mijn moeder was zwaar aan de drugs. Die liep altijd door het dorp met een joint in haar mond. Daar stond ze om bekend. Ik dacht vroeger dat het gewoon een sigaret was. Ik kan haar niet losdenken van die sigaret of die joint. Dat is gewoon mijn moeder. Dan slofte ze zo altijd door de straten, niet echt helder denkend, niet meer echt bij, door die joint die ze altijd in haar mond had. Het hing er zo uit, en mensen dachten echt : Daar heb je haar ook weer. Het was een echte kettingroker, of kettinggebruiker. En dan denk ik dat ik ook aan de drugs ben geboren vanwege mijn moeder. Ik had altijd het gevoel alsof ik tussen wal en schip hing. Het leven was voor mij te mooi om waar te zijn. Ik was altijd high, of stoned zoals ze dat noemen. Sommigen vonden dat ik zo hard als steen was, ondoordringbaar. Er was niets met mij te beginnen, onbereikbaar. Zo werd ik ook weleens genoemd : de steen, of de harde. Ze wisten niet wat ze aan me hadden. Dat was natuurlijk wel jammer voor hen.

Het had zo mooi kunnen wezen. Mijn ouders waren ook beiden doof, dus ik groeide op met gebarentaal. Ze hadden hun eigen tekens.

Het waren toen natuurlijk hele andere tijden, hè. Toen hadden de mensen nog wat voor elkaar over. Ze vroegen mij weleens waarom ik niets voor anderen over had, maar ik had natuurlijk al mijn handen vol aan mijn vader en moeder die door hun verslaving in een belabberde toestand waren. Dat waren nog eens tijden. Dagje aan zee met de familie enzo. Maar nu is er niets meer van die familie over. Allemaal al overleden.

Maar ik denk er nog weleens aan terug en vraag me af of het mij ook nog heeft beinvloed in mijn denken, mijn keuzes enzovoorts. Wat ook wel leuk is zijn die vlaggetjes die ze tegenwoordig hebben bij veel winkels, zoals bij winkels waar je nog ouderwets ijs kunt halen. Er is wel heel veel veranderd zo, in deze tijden. Trekt natuurlijk ook weer nieuwe klanten aan. Je moet toch wat. Daar moet ook wel heel veel tijd ingegaan zijn om al deze nieuwe dingen te bedenken, maar ik vind het wel fraai. Het had veel erger kunnen wezen natuurlijk, laten we eerlijk zijn. Neen, ik vind dat onze maatschappij erop vooruit is gegaan vergeleken met vroeger. Vroeger kon je niet eens gewoon rustig door een straat heenlopen, want er was altijd wel wat. Maar nu is het stil geworden, hè ? Er gebeurt niet echt veel meer, en dat heeft zeker zijn goede kanten. Teveel rust is niet goed zeggen ze dan, maar we kunnen ook niet zonder. Laten we eerlijk wezen. Als er iemand hard met klompen komt aanlopen tegenwoordig, dan kijkt iedereen er verschrikt van op, maar vroeger keek niemand daar van op. Dat was de normaalste zaak van de wereld. Vroeger was het allemaal veel lawaaieriger. Alles moest maar hard en lang. Het hield gewoon niet op. En mensen schreven daar dan weer over in de kranten, en daar werd dan ook weer op gereageerd. Het hield maar niet op, al die eindeloze discussies. Dat is nu wel anders. Nu hoor je ze bijna niet meer. Het zijn natuurlijk nu ook allemaal weer nieuwe mensen, hè. En wat zijn er veel vreemdelingen tegenwoordig, hè. Je zou bijna denken dat je in een ander land bent als je de straat opgaat.

Maar goed, dat zijn zo van die dingen. Ik heb het er niet vaak over, maar het moet soms toch genoemd worden. Kan verder geen kwaad denk ik. Maar ja, de meeste mensen leggen zich er dan ook wel bij neer. Het zijn niet meer echt

tijden waarbij je nu daadwerkelijk de straten opmoet in grote optochten om ergens tegen te protesteren. Dat was echt iets van vroeger. Dat gebeurt nu eigenlijk niet meer. Gek hè, hoe dingen kunnen veranderen.

Ik kijk weleens om me heen en dan zeg ik : Wat is het hier rustig zeg. Dat kon je vroeger echt niet zeggen. Toen was er altijd wel wat, op elke hoek van de straat. En veel drugsdealers, hè. Dat kwam allemaal vanuit Amerika overwaaien. Maar nu : niks meer daarvan. Ze zijn allemaal verdwenen. Waar naartoe weet ik niet. Misschien wil ik het ook wel niet weten. Maar je wenst ze dan natuurlijk het beste. Ik bedoel maar : Ik weet wat het is om een moeder te hebben die drugs gebruikte en dealde. En dat was nog maar het topje van de ijsberg. Wat een drama was dat vroeger zeg.

Nu zijn mensen allemaal zo netjes, en kunnen ook gewoon nee zeggen. Want overdaad schaadt. Vroeger moest alles maar groots en grootser, maar vandaag de dag neemt men met minder genoegen. Gelukkig maar. Dat is natuurlijk een hoofdpijn minder.

Mensen zijn nu ook allemaal zo eensgezind geworden, hè. Is je dat ook niet opgevallen ? Ze lijken allemaal op elkaar. Ik zou niet meer weten wie wie is. Ik hoef het ook niet te weten. Ik vind het allemaal best zo. Iedereen is het tegenwoordig maar met elkaar eens. Dat was vroeger wel anders. Vroeger vlogen ze elkaar echt in de haren om het minste of geringste. Dat wil je niet weten. Ja, de tijden zijn veranderd. De mensen zijn nu echt blij als ze wat krijgen, terwijl ze vroeger altijd zaten te zaniken van ondankbaarheid en ontevredenheid als ze wat kregen. Nooit was het goed genoeg. En het was altijd weer te weinig. Ze konden er niet mee rondkomen, ofzo, of hadden zo niks om uit te delen, niks om trots over te zijn of iets dergelijks, niks om over naar huis te schrijven, en daar stond je dan. Dat is nu wel anders. Mensen zijn nu echt verrast en verrukt als ze iets krijgen, ook al is het iets heel kleins.

Maar ja, we moeten natuurlijk niet overdrijven. Er zitten soms weleens rotte appels of peren tussen, maar in ieder geval een stuk minder als vroeger. Nee, ik ben goed tevreden over hoe de wereld vandaag de dag is. We zijn er een stuk mee opgeschoten. De mensen kunnen nu het kleine meer waarderen. Het

vroegere pakt de mens niet meer. Het heeft z'n klauwen verloren.

Er groeien bij ons in de tuin nu hele grote appelbomen met hele lekkere appels. Het doet me weleens terugdenken aan vroeger, maar dan op een goede manier. Appels waren er toen ook al, maar het smaakt nu anders. Het is heel eigenaardig, alsof het kaneel er tegenwoordig gewoon al inzit. Het doet mij weleens denken aan hoe ze vroeger van die bussen schoonmaakten. Een kwartje per bus vroegen ze daar volgens mij voor. Dat was ook altijd een hele eigenaardige geur. Ik weet niet wat voor spul ze daar altijd voor gebruikten. We hadden ook zo'n meester dan die bij ons in de straat woonde. Het was niet onze meester, maar van een school dichtbij onze school. En die deed ook altijd hele typische dingen, zoals op zondag de was uithangen, echt heel tegendraads, want het was een openbare school. Dat ging dan recht tegen onze religie in, maar het inspireerde mij wel. Je moet als mens durven te breken met wat je met de paplepel krijgt ingegoten en zelfs later niet begrijpt. Als het kwartje dan niet valt, dan is het tijd om eens een andere automaat te proberen.

Het zal mij dan ook allemaal worst wezen hè, want al die scholen worden bestuurd door volwassenen, en toch vlogen ze elkaar in de haren over hoe het zat of zou moeten zitten. Zo zie je maar, je kunt ze gewoon niet vertrouwen. Dat is nu overigens ook wel anders. Ik hoor er nooit meer iets van. Kan natuurlijk stilte voor de storm wezen, maar het kan ook echt zo zijn dat er iets ten goede is veranderd, en dat het zo blijft. Laten we het hopen.

Niemand zit er op te wachten dat het weer word als vroeger. Vroeger duurde al veel te lang. Hij dreef weg ofzo, hadden ze het over, toen kleine Karel verdronk. Daar moet je toch niet lang over nadenken ? Nee, vroeger moet een afgesloten hoofdstuk zijn. Het was al erg genoeg. Hij was nog zo jong, had een heel leven voor de boeg. Wat zou er van hem geworden zijn als hij niet was verdronken ? Daar denk ik dan weleens aan. Ik had er zoveel nachtmerries over. Vroeger werd er totaal niet op kleine kinderen gelet. Die lieten ze altijd maar aanrotzooien. Dat is nu ook wel anders. Verdrinkingen van kleine kinderen dat hoor je bijna niet meer. Veel ouders zijn nu voorbeeldig, en hebben geleerd van de geschiedenis. Soms zit er nog weleens een rotte appel

of peer tussen, maar veel minder dan vroeger. Soms verdrinkt er nog weleens eentje, maar dat ligt dan vaak aan het kind zelf. Nee, aan de ouders kan het niet liggen tegenwoordig. Ik sta geheel aan hun kant. Zoveel dingen zijn stukken beter geworden vandaag de dag, met name het ouderschap, daar durf ik mijn hand wel voor in het vuur te steken. Ik heb dat allemaal nauwgezet bijgehouden, en het is waar. Een goede ouder is trouwens ook maar het halve werk. Ik verdedig het hedendaagse ouderschap met hand en tand. Het is altijd een grote droom van mij geweest dat ooit te kunnen doen, en die droom is nu uitgekomen. Mensen staan er niet altijd zo bij stil, en nemen het vaak als vanzelfsprekend, maar ik heb ook die andere tijden gekend, hè. Als mensen anders daarover denken, wat bijna niet voorkomt moet ik eerlijk zeggen, dan zeg ik altijd : Zou je het niet een kans willen geven ? Negen van de tien keer stemmen ze daar dan in toe, en komen vrijwel altijd dan na afloop naar me toe om de hand te schudden en te zeggen dat ik gelijk heb gehad. Daar ben ik dan best wel een beetje trots over.

Zo zijn er dan ook mensen die liever wat drinken in een cafeetje en hier niet teveel over willen praten, en dat kan ook. Je mag je nooit bij mensen opdringen. Daar zijn de tijden allemaal niet voor. Je kunt er ook hoge boetes voor krijgen of gevangenisstraf, zoals mensen van religieuze bewegingen die willekeurig bij huizen aanbellen zonder van te voren een afspraak te hebben gemaakt. Die tijden hebben we gehad. Dat komt nooit meer terug. Ze zouden direct worden opgepakt. Ook spullen aan de deur verkopen is er niet meer bij. Er zijn nu allemaal rijdende winkels. Dat was er vroeger al veel, maar nu nog meer. Ik reed vroeger weleens met ze mee, dan was ik er even uit. Ik heb wel veel avonturen meegemaakt met die rijdende winkeliers, die winkels op wielen. Wat een tijden waren dat zeg. Het bracht me over al mijn problemen heen, en volgens mij heeft het me gebracht waar ik nu ben, net zoals de rijdende ziekenhuizen en rijdende rechters. Heerlijk was dat. Die komen gewoon je straat binnenrijden wanneer het nodig was, en dan kon je onverplicht meerijden. Maar goed, alles is op wielen tegenwoordig. Je hoeft er niet meer naartoe te gaan, want het komt gewoon bij je in de straat. Spanje, Mexico, de Antillen, het komt allemaal bij je in de straat. Dagje naar het zwembad hoeft ook niet meer, want er zijn nu rijdende zwembaden.

Je hoeft de tv niet meer aan te klikken vanwege de rijdende bioscopen tegenwoordig, en andere rijdende theaters. Er is altijd ruime keuze. Het gaat de hele dag door. Daarom is het tegenwoordig allemaal zo stil op straat, want iedereen gaat naar die rijdende pretparken. Daarbinnen is het pret, en buiten is het rustig. Alles is op wielen tegenwoordig. Een wereld op wielen.

Uit de bundel ‘prikkeldraad’ uit 2019 :

het pilletje

Hij draaide er altijd omheen. Dat zou je niet van hem denken. Hij zei dan altijd : ja, ik geloof, ik geloof, maar verder kwam hij dan eigenlijk nooit. Hij kon het niet duidelijk maken wat hij eigenlijk geloofde. Maar ja, wie zit daar nog op te wachten, want geloof is een vies woord geworden vandaag de dag, een vies woord. Doe maar normaal, dan doe je al gek genoeg, zeggen ze tegenwoordig vaak. En geloof is voor zwevende zieltjes die te lui zijn om levenslessen te leren. Allemaal waar natuurlijk, maar voor een oude rot in het vak als Henriette van Kochel is dat natuurlijk teveel gevraagd. Dat was me ook een mens, naast hem. Op een bijzondere manier ging het altijd goed met die twee, en ze zijn later getrouwd, maar toen toch weer gescheiden. Trouwen is ook een vies woord vandaag de dag. Brengt alleen maar een hoop ellende. En dat is gewoon zo.

Doe maar normaal, dan doe je al gek genoeg, dat zeggen ze dus. Maar goed, voor een oude rot in het vak zoals Henriette van Kochel is dat moeilijk te

aanvaarden. Ze is nog steeds op zoek naar een nieuwe man, maar welke man wil nu telkens haar ondergoed in zijn gezicht geslingerd krijgen als haar iets niet zint, want daar staat ze om bekend.

Wat een figuur, die Henriette van Kochel. Ik kende haar dus ook wel, jammer genoeg. Ben ook nog wel op een blauwe dinsdag de stad met haar in geweest. Kon ik ook bijna al niet meer navertellen. Die vrouw is levensgevaarlijk. Trekt zo een mes als het haar niet zint. Ze zei ook eens : Je geld of je leven, tegen me. Toen heb ik voor het geld gekozen, maar ik leef nog steeds, tenminste dat denk ik en hoop ik, maar met zo'n onbetrouwbaar figuur als Henriette van Kochel weet je het nooit.

Zit gewoon liedjes te zingen als je het moeilijk hebt, want dan is zij vrolijk. Maar goed, ik ga niet alle vuile was van haar buiten hangen. Ik heb het menigmaal in mijn gezicht gekregen, en daar hoef ik ook niet alles van uit de doeken te doen. Dat is iets tussen haar en mij. Dat gaat verder niemand wat aan. Het is allemaal al vreemd genoeg, en als ik het zou doorvertellen zou het allemaal alleen maar vreemder worden.

Maar ze is nu eenmaal onbetrouwbaar en onvoorspelbaar. Ik weet niet wat ze allemaal bij me in de koffie heeft gedaan, maar helemaal hetzelfde voel ik me niet meer. Daarvoor is teveel gebeurd. Ik ga trouwens ook niet bij de pakken neerzitten. Maar goed, haar ex man draaide sinds hun scheiding om alles heen, misschien ook om haar de hand boven het hoofd te houden, en dan kwam hij met zijn geloof op de proppen wat hij maar niet kon uitleggen, maar ja, daarom is het ook het geloof, want het heeft niets met daadwerkelijke kennis van zaken verder te maken. Ik mag van geluk spreken dat ik nooit haar man ben geweest, want dan zat ik nu in hetzelfde schuitje, maar het kwam allemaal wel gevaarlijk dichtbij. Er waren tijden dat ze me echt flink in de macht had. Voornamelijk kwam dat door haar vele dreigen. Ik kon niet veel anders. Ze liet weinig ruimte over voor mijn keuze. Zij deelde de lakens uit.

Haar ex man is hier nu kind aan huis, maar het is zoals gezegd een hele vreemde man, laten we er geen doekjes om binden. Misschien dat hij zo is geworden door haar, en ik weet het wel zeker. Hij is natuurlijk bedreigd en

gechanteerd. Ze werkt ook aan de lopende band met huurmoordenaars, dus ook hij heeft nog geluk dat hij leeft. Ze zou hem zo uit de weg kunnen ruimen als ze wilde. Maar ja, ik denk dat haar geloof haar soms gewoon in de weg staat. Het geloof is dus in ieder geval toch nog ergens goed voor. Het is ook haar werk. Ze preekt zondags in de kerk. Ze is vrouwelijk dominee. Het valt verder op geen enkele manier met haar levensstijl te rijmen, of misschien ook wel als je begrijpt wat ik bedoel.

Ik probeerde hem aan de praat te krijgen, wat dus niet lukte vanwege zijn geloof, dus Henriette van Kochel blijft nog steeds een mysterie. Mijn eigen informatie is onvoldoende om een zuiver beeld te kunnen vormen. Het mes kan maar niet geslepen worden op deze botte steen. Het is een hopeloze toestand. Ook de kerk waar ze werkt werkt niet mee. Die houden haar ook allemaal de hand boven het hoofd. Waarschijnlijk zijn zij ook door haar bedreigd en gechanteerd. Ik weet hoe het gaat. Ik ben allang mezelf niet meer. Waarschijnlijk ben ik een hoop gewoon alweer vergeten door haar toedoen. Ze mikte van alles door mijn voedsel heen. Ik voel me nu een marionet, net als de anderen, maar ik vecht door. Ik laat het hier niet bij zitten. Haar geloof zal me verder worst wezen. Het is de dekmantel waaronder ze werkt. Ik kan me een avondje klaverjassen met haar nog wel herinneren. Toen ik verloor verloor ik niet alleen mijn kleren, maar ook mijn maagdelijkheid. Ik was nog heel jong. Ik mocht het niet verder vertellen want dan zwaaide er wat. Ik moest toen ook een pilletje slikken, en daarna zei ze dat ik maar wat bazelde, dat het pilletje mij dit alles liet bedenken. Maar als dat zo is, dan is het al erg genoeg dat ze mij zo'n pilletje heeft gegeven. Misschien heeft ze wel meer bij me gedaan, en heb ik het vergeten door het pilletje.

Nu wil het voorval dat haar ex man eens tegen me zei : van haar pilletjes, haar pilletjes, daar ga je van geloven …

Maar ik geloofde haar niet, ik vecht nog steeds … Misschien ben ik immuun … of misschien heeft ze mij een ander pilletje gegeven. Iemand zei dat ze ervan hield te stoken, want dat gaf haar ook weer macht, dus daarom geeft ze iedereen weer andere soort pilletjes … Complete chaos … Deze pilletjes zijn oorlogspilletjes, deze pilletjes brengen scheiding … Deze pilletjes drijven

mensen tot gekte en waanzin, door de open deuren van haar kerk ... En geloven is haar een excuus geven … en zo zichzelf … Ze hebben altijd een alibi.

Uit de bundel ‘prikkeldraad’ uit 2019 :

Het Feestvarken

Op een dag ontsnapte een varkentje uit de slagerij. Het hele dorp was in rep en roer. Dat kon natuurlijk niet, want er moest altijd vlees op tafel zijn, en als vlees op de loop zou gaan, dan was dat natuurlijk niet goed. Maar het varkentje was door een deur gegaan die openstond. Het hele dorp was kwaad op de slager, en flink overstuur. Wat een domme, domme slager, die zomaar de deur had laten openstaan.

Het varkentje ging het bos in, en kwam na een tijdje aan bij een huisje. Daar ging het varkentje toen naar binnen, want ook daar stond de deur los. Een vrouw keek verbaasd naar het varkentje. 'Zeg, hoor jij niet thuis in de slagerij ?' vroeg de vrouw.

'Nee, ik ben ontsnapt,' zei het varkentje.

'Dat is nou jammer,' zei de vrouw. 'Morgen is er groot feest in het dorp, en nu mis je alles.'

'Wat voor feest ?' vroeg het varkentje.

'Een varkensfeest,' zei de vrouw. 'Er zal een grote varkensoptocht zijn, en voor alle varkens zal het feest zijn.'

Het varkentje snoof even aan de vrouw. Was dit wel waar ?

'Heus, je zal er geen spijt van krijgen als je teruggaat,' zei de vrouw.

'Maar moet ik daarna weer terug naar de slagerij ?' vroeg het varkentje.

'Welnee joh,' zei de vrouw. 'Na het feest zullen ze de slagerij heus wel afbreken. Ik zal wel met je meelopen als je niet alleen durft.'

En zo gebeurde het. De vrouw bracht het varkentje terug naar het dorp en toen naar de slager.

'Maar waarom gaan we dan naar de slager ?' vroeg het varkentje.

'Omdat daar het feest begint,' zei de vrouw.

Bij de slager aangekomen zei de vrouw : 'Ik heb hier nog een varken voor het varkensfeest morgen.'

'Ah, die had de benen genomen,' zei de slager. 'Blij dat het weer terug is. Ik had de deur open laten staan.'

En zo miste het dorp dus geen enkel stukje vlees. Het varkentje was erin getuind door mooie beloftes en valse reclame, en zo tuint ieder dom varken telkens weer in de bedriegelijkheden van de stad. Geloof ze niet als ze zeggen dat je het feestvarken bent. Je bent slechts een stuk vlees voor hen. Je bent gewaarschuwd !

Na de Lord of the Rings

The Lord of the Rings, de Heer der Ringen, is natuurlijk een soort van bijbel voor elven-liefhebbers. Het is geschreven in de dertiger en veertiger jaren, en uitgegeven in de vijftiger jaren. Toch mankeert er heel wat aan deze bijbel, net zoals aan de christelijke bijbel overigens, en is er een strijd te voeren. Daarom was het belangrijk dat er nog iets na de Lord of the Rings zou komen. Het moest namelijk ontzegeld worden, om nog een diepere, verborgen laag te laten zien, een nog onbekende wereld, van belang om te kunnen ontsnappen aan de matrix.

We hebben het dan over het tweede bijbelse boek ‘de prins en de rode zee’, ook weer onderdeel van een nog grotere serie. De tweede bijbel staat vol met elvenverhalen, ook bijvoorbeeld ‘de hersenspinsels der elven’.

'Hersenspinsels der elven' gaat over het maken van schijnbewegingen. Het heeft heel veel te maken met strategie en hoe dingen lopen, en we zijn niet alleen maar heel concrete wezens met hele lineaire dingen, maar we zijn ook abstract, omdat er een heleboel dynamieken in het spel zijn die telkens wisselen (staat ook in de vur beschreven). Maar dat is dan eigenlijk weer wel van een hogere concrete/lineaire orde, hogere wiskunde.

Een medewerker schreef eens over de hersenspinsels der elven en zag daarin parallellen met de Lord of the Rings, en besprak het kort :

‘Over dat 'hersenspinsels der elven' moet ik denken aan the lord of the rings als om hun hulp wordt gevraagd zeggen ze nee en trekken ze zich terug in het bos!
Dit doen ze omdat ze een hogere orde zijn en wijsheid hebben en inzien dat het nu niet tactisch is om mee te doen aan die strijd wat natuurlijk allemaal redenen kan hebben bijv

- er zullen er te veel van hun omkomen

- of ze moeten misschien later aan een nog veel grotere strijd meedoen
- het doel van de strijd is niet in hun belang (maar hun belang is dan ook gelijk "the greater good" waar ze dan symbolisch voor staan dus eigenlijk het belang van iedereen
- etc kunnen nog veel meer redenen zijn
- misschien is er in het bos ook wel een strijd die ze moeten leveren en is daar ook om hun hulp gevraagd

anyhow, die lui die het aan hun vragen vinden het maar flauw maar die twijfelen dan onterecht aan het hart en de goede bedoelingen van de elven en die worden dan als egoïstisch neergezet. en het is echt niet zo dat ze niet kunnen of willen vechten als het doel hun waardig is want in the hobbit films die zich dus in het verleden voor the lord of the rings afspelen komen ze met gigantische imponerende elvenlegers aanzetten. dus als er echt hulp nodig is komen ze echt wel.’

Als we het dan hebben over 'de prins en de rode zee', dat gaat ook allemaal heel diep en over elven, en dat moet ook qua thema nog helemaal uitgewerkt worden, daar zit ook zoveel in, ook qua energie opwekking, en is ook een soort elvenmijn waarin gewerkt kan worden. Het boek komt uit 2017, en die dromen en visioenen werden ontvangen na het zien van de film van the lord of the rings, want dat moest ontzegeld worden. Je komt zo in een diepere laag, ook wat erdoor verborgen werd gehouden. Zo is dat boek ontstaan, want eerst was er een strijd met die geesten van lord of the rings, wat ook een soort dieven waren. Maar in ieder geval in de prins en de rode zee wordt ook het corona model al aangekondigd in principe, want het ging dan over de zwarte drakenruiters die door de straten gingen om kinderen te roven, en daarom moesten alle kinderen binnen blijven. Ook met de hoop dat die drakenruiters niet op de deuren zouden kloppen om het huis te doorzoeken.

Maar zo begint dus ook dat boek, dat die drakenruiters de dromen van ouders kapot maakten met hun hardheid en wreedheid, totaal zonder medelijden. Maar dat wordt dan ook nog allemaal uitgelegd hoe dat is gekomen. Het zal allemaal tot hogere vormen en hogere verbindingen gaan.

orion channeling

Praprit, Ascended Master van Orion :

De mens is teveel afgedwaald.

Ik kan er wel meer over vertellen.

Ik spreek door vurige stenen.

De mens zit vast in draaikolken.

Ze voeden hun gedachten vanuit hun ego.

Ik ben gekomen voor verandering.

Ik ben vurige stenen.

Ik ben een Orionse vuursteen vogel.

Mijn naam is Praprit.

Ik zal degenen die hiervoor openstaan de komende tijd leiden tot mijn ruimteschepen,

die reusachtig zijn, natuurlijk en biologisch, want dit zijn namelijk Orionse vuursteen vogels.

Ik wil de schelpen openbreken waarin de mens op deze aarde vastzit.

Deze schelpen geven valse gedachten af van afleiding, draaien prioriteiten en hierarchieen om,

volgordes, en vervalsen zo de wegen, vervormen dezen, zodat de mens blijft vastzitten.

Er is veel meer gaande.

Ik ben uitgezonden met een goddelijke stem.

Versta mijn stem in je binnenste, want ik ben een Orionse engel, om de mens terug te leiden tot de orionse natuurvrouwen en natuurmoeders, in zichzelf, want dat is wat de hogere orionse mens in zichzelf is.

Laat de aardse wegen los, de aardse denkwijzen.

De mens hecht geloof aan het aardse, en daardoor kan Orion niet stromen.

Zo is de mens afgekapt van de hogere natuur.

Ik heb de aarde bereikt na een lange tocht.
Ik ben klaar voor de oorlog.
Vecht mee, of wordt onder de voet gelopen.
Dit is geen aardse oorlog, maar een geestelijke, Orionse oorlog,
Hoog Orion tegen laag Orion.
Demonen moeten onttroond worden, de lagere psychische gedachten.
Laat ze niet meer door je heen stromen.
Zeg nee tegen ze. Strijd tegen ze, en hecht geen geloof en vertrouwen aan hen.
De mens toetst niet, en kan daarom niet met ons mee.
Wij komen daarom alleen voor de enkelingen.
Wees klaar als wij komen.
Wij zijn vurige stenen. Als een Orionse waterval om de ziel te wassen.
Een Orionse wachter ben ik.
Altijd sta ik op de uitkijk.

De mens is verwend.
De verwende mens bedriegt zichzelf telkens weer.
De mens lacht om zijn eigen domheid,
maar ze zullen niet lachen als ze achtergelaten worden,
als ze teveel gewicht hebben om mee te gaan in de ascensie.
Ascensie is studie, je niet laten afleiden door dingen die helemaal niet ter zake doen,
dingen van het ego.
Men laat zich voortdurend omkopen door het lagere Orion met drugs.
Zo hemelt het vlees zich op, en voelt zich heel wat.
Trotse borsten kunnen niet mee.
Hen met een loszittende, vooroordelende, projecterende tong kunnen niet mee.
Zij verstaan de tekenen der tijden niet.

orionse dromen

Lang geleden had ik een droom over mijn oude school in Harderwijk en dat er een soort van verbinding was tussen de Tweede Bijbel en de Oahspe. De Oahspe moest toen geholpen worden, en had ook heel veel arsenalen die gebruikt konden worden, dus twee legers die aan één zijde vochten, en allerlei dromen over architectuur. Het heeft dus ook zijn eigen dierenwereld, want ik kan me de (demonologische) roofdieren van de Oahspe ook nog herinneren, zoals die Jehovih leider was dan een witte leeuw. Die droom was ook aan het station van Harderwijk en het station was veel groter, met hele hoge muren, en het was een soort industrie terrein waar hard gewerkt werd.

Zo had ik het vroeger gedroomd, dat was nog voor de verhuizing dichter bij de bosrand, dus al vele jaren geleden. Ik kwam op Harderwijk station aan, plaats van mijn school, en daar waren allemaal hele grote gebouwen van de Oahspe, en een industrie terrein, om al die leidingen te leggen van Oahspe energie, en het te kanaliseren. Ik vloog daar ook rond, en er waren allemaal hele grote demonologische roofdieren, veel groter dan op aarde, dus echt gigantisch grote leeuwen, tijgers en honden, van buitenaardse aard, dus heel anders. De energie was ook anders. Verderop in de stad was er een overgangsgebied tussen de Oahspe en de Tweede Bijbel, en in dat gebied woonde iemand van Oahspe Nederland ergens. Hij had een gigantisch pand ergens waar zelfs een kapelletje bij was, en een bibliotheekje. Ik zocht hem daar toen op. Er waren dus ten minste twee stadsdelen : het Oahspe deel en het Tweede Bijbel deel, wat ook uitliep op de natuur, en dan nog een overgangsgebied. In de geestelijke wereld heet deze stad ook Sakan.

Begin 2019 werd ik in dromen bezocht door een oude Noord-Amerikaanse indiaans opperhoofd/ chief die zichzelf 'Horecan' noemde. Hij sprak ook over het Sakan gebied, en wilde mij voorstellen aan John Ballou Newbrough, de schrijver van de Oahspe, dus die ontmoette ik ook kort. Hij zei dat hij zich had gedistantieerd van de medische industrie en dat hij aan onze kant staat en ons werk ondersteunt.

Kijk, de Oahspe komt uit Amerika, dus dat is ook weer belangrijk voor de Amerika brug, zoals ik ook vroeger een droom had over een overleden vader van een medewerker die op een hele grote globe wees naar Amerika.

Er zijn zogeheten ascended orionse masters die de 'groene streep' bereikt hebben, wat ook een tweede bijbels mysterie is dat alles wat over die streep heengaat weer terug de geschiedenis ingaat, dus er komt niks meer bij, green line mystery. Het zijn vurige stenen, flintstones, waar ik trouwens ook laatst een droom over had. Ik was in het ouderlijke natuurhuis op een andere planeet, en de overbuurvrouw was gekomen om haar nieuwe auto te laten zien. Die had ze zomaar aan de andere kant van de weg gezet aan de achterkant, bij het kleine parkje wat tegenover ons lag, maar dat was gewoon iemands tuin. Ik keek naar de auto, en het was een soort sportwagen, en het was een flintstones auto, want die werd op gang gebracht door de voeten, door contact te maken met de aarde, en dan nam de aarde het over. De kinderen achterin konden dat ook doen, maar het kon ook weer vergrendeld worden achterin zodat de kinderen de grond niet zouden kunnen raken als de auto dan reed. ‘Wat vindt je ervan ?’ vroeg de altijd hele markante, vrijpostige overbuurvrouw. Ik zei dat ik het prachtig vond. Vurige stenen is trouwens ook de naam van een vroegere proza verzameling van ons. Ook de kerken op Orion zijn veelal gebouwd van vuurstenen, de natuurkerken.

Een paar dagen geleden had ik ook dromen over corona, dus hele vreemde corona dromen gehad, en daarna had ik terwijl ik half sliep nachtvisioenen dat ik op een andere planeet kwam, hele mooie buurt, rijtjeshuizen ging ik langs, heel gedetailleerd. Ik keek naar de ruiten, de ramen, en ging zo langs die huizen, en toen ergens bij een rijtjeshuis waren er potten op de vensterbank met witte bloemen, en daar popte telkens een energie uit omhoog, en het waren onkrant bloemen. Dat was wel heel bijzonder, was hele ruime, natuurlijke, buitenaardse energie, toen viel ik weer geheel in slaap en het liep over in een droom, en ik was nog steeds op die planeet, en ik woonde ergens in een flat, heel bijzonder, en op die planeet was ik ingedeeld in een soort zorgsysteem, dus wel begeleiding, maar dat bleek ook weer met mijn werk te maken te hebben dat ik dat moest onderzoeken, en de verdieping daaronder

woonden een tante en oom waarmee ik dan opgroeide maar vanwege dat ik naar een andere kerk ging, en toen los kwam van het westers-evangelische christendom begon dat steeds meer te botsen, en ze hebben ook veel leugens over me verteld en draaien alles om, kan ik heel veel voorbeelden van noemen, maar in ieder geval in die droom kwam ik dan uit dat zorgsysteem, dat moest, en ging ik over tot een lichtere zorg, maar ik bleef wel gewoon nog in die flat wonen, en ik was dus op die verdieping eronder bij die tante en oom, en zei dat zo tegen ze, en ze hadden daar ook weer leugens over verkondigd, en vonden het jammer dat ik niet meer in dat zwaardere zorgsysteem zat, gewoon omdat ze alles verkeerd opvatten en vanwege hun haat, en dat zei ik hen ook toen, en er was daar een wat oudere vriendin van hen die toen voor hen opkwam dat het zulke goede, lieve mensen waren, zo doen ze zich ook voor naar de buitenwereld, en toen begon ik dus over waarom ze dan vlees aten, dat haat naar dieren ook weer mensenhaat is etc. en toen zei niemand wat.

Iemand die we dan hielpen in dat zorgsysteem voor mijn werk bleek daar ook ergens te wonen op die verdieping of bij hun, en het bleek ook dat die verdieping ook weer door ons werd gebruikt, want een medewerker was daar ook, en ik begon toen post door te kijken, want er kwam daar ook post voor ons binnen, zo van alsof dat terrein ook van ons was, en er was een schoolkrant binnengekomen voor een persoon die we begeleidden, maar het was toch ook voor ons, en ik bladerde door al die bouwpakketten van die schoolkrant, want het was een heel pakket, en er zaten hele leuke dingen bij, dus ik begon er ook een beetje om te lachen. Toen kwam een andere medewerker er bij staan en ging ook door de post kijken, en die zag wat post wat die medewerker toen de kamer ingooide. Ik zei toen : waarom gooi je dat, want dat is van die en die instantie.

In ieder geval eindigde die droom toen met hele kollosale orionse engelenkoren en kollosale orionse kerken, heel mooi, heel archaisch (orionse oudheid), terwijl ik wakker begon te worden, echoode helemaal na, was dus een hele mooie droom, ook al waren die tante en oom daar, maar ik had dan trouwens ook een vader op die planeet, en die vader die kwam daar ook, was daar ook, ook bij die tante en oom, en dat was echt een hele wijze man, die opende zijn mond

dus ook met hele interessante opmerkingen, alleen kan ik me dus niet meer herinneren wat hij zei, maar ook als een soort van planetengids.

Een medewerker gaf als uitleg over de droom :

‘Die flat in de droom : in een flat kunnen zowel goede als slechte mensen wonen. Toch weer die dynamiek schijnbaar van krachten die tegen elkaar uitgespeeld moeten worden.

En : ‘een stukje van alvast het nirvana of een ander pad inslaan deels. (moest ook aan schilderen denken). Dat bracht me weer op een andere gedachte met betrekking tot die koren enzo want moest een beetje aan oahspe denken want die hebben toch ook van die hemelse koren, maar moest ook vooral aan de ori denken van stargate. dat waren dan soort profeten die het geloof van de ori moesten verkondigen op andere werelden door deze te bezoeken via de stargates (het waren wel de slechterikken maar dat even terzijde).’

De nacht erna had ik weer een droom : Ik was weer op die planeet. Er was schoolterrein wat dan half in de natuur was en half in de stad. In de natuur waren dan indiaanse kampen waar wilden leefden, maar ook weer onderdeel van die school. Eer waren wat wilde meisjes en vrouwen met rieten rokjes. Ik had toen contact met een paar en toen ging ik naar dat stadse gedeelte van de school en aan de rand daar waren nog wat wilde vrouwen, gewoon wilde leerlingen dus, maar konden ook onderwijzeressen zijn natuurlijk. En een daarvan zei toen : 'oh, je hebt contact gehad met die en die ? ze heeft het in ieder geval overleefd', zo in de zin van dat ik haar moest toetsen ofzo en dat ze door de toets was heengekomen, anders zou ze er niet meer zijn. Maar toen ging ik naar het schoolgebouw in het stadse gedeelte en daar was iets wat ik van vroegere dromen herkende, een trappenstelsel naar boven, en dat was vroeger altijd een terugkerend thema, want op die trappenstelsels werd ik altijd achterna gezeten door geesten, en dat kon best wel eng zijn, maar nu had ik zoiets van : ik ga dat trappenstelsel niet op, en dat is ook nergens voor nodig, want ik zou weer terugkunnen naar de natuur, terwijl ik vroeger dan die trappen opmoest voor mijn werk, en dat ik ook geen andere kant opkon, dat dat gewoon de enige weg was, maar in ieder geval er waren spoken bij dat

trappenstelsel, en het waren hele 'verfijnde' (in slechte zin, sluwe dus) energieen, die verhalen vertelden, die mensen daarin opzogen, en die waren dus ook nog in dat stadsgedeelte van die school, en die gingen dan heel snel door de straten, ook veel lawaai makend en zo, maar het was nu allemaal meer op een afstand, dat ze meer ontmaskerd waren, dus meer zichtbare spoken.

En ik had dan een droom dat ik contact maakte met de regering die zich liet leiden en intimideren door die spoken en zich lieten omkopen door die verhalen, en ik zei toen tegen de regering : corona is in eerste instantie een energie, dus je moet de energiologie leren boven alles, terugkeren tot demonologie.

Daarna kwam ik in een gedeelte van die planeet wat heel veel leek op het bosdorp waar ik woon, alleen er waren daar veel meer muren, en die muren waren ook veel massaler, en die muren waren gezet op een bepaalde soort zwarte slangen, die ook heel lang konden zijn, die dus door die muren waren verpletterd, en die slangen die heetten 'enfants terrible', frans voor verschrikkelijke kinderen, maar in ieder geval vormden die door de muren verpletterde slangen nu het energie systeem door de stad heen, juist omdat die slangen ook zoveel geroofd hadden, dus ze moesten door dat energie systeem alles teruggeven en alles terugdoneren, dus dat was wel mooi opgelost, ook wel heel literair, het waren dus een bepaalde soort schaduwen die tot nut waren gemaakt, en dat is ook de bedoeling dat dat met die spoken gaat gebeuren in dat schoolgedeelte, maar alles is al meer en meer achter glas gekomen, en ja, dus wel op een orionse planeet, die orionse energie leent zich daar goed voor.

Die engelenkoren waren heel verfijnd en verscheiden, kaleidoscopisch, dus er was heel lang aan gewerkt, en dus heel archaisch, en dat oahspe deel wat ik in die droom over harderwijk vroeger had met die roofdieren had dat ook.

Na de Lord of the Rings – 2

Een paar dagen geleden had ik een droom over het Orionse Zwolle. Er waren hemelse communistisch-socialistische scholen met hele massieve muren gebouwd met hele massieve, kollosale stenen. Tegenover zo’n school was er dan een straat met daarachter een plantsoenvijver, en aan de overkant van de straat was een patat kraam waar leerlingen soms naartoe gingen.

Ook had ik een droom van een man aan een kruis die werd aangevallen door hele logge zwarte hyena-achtige leeuwen of honden, maar toen begon het kruis steeds langer te worden en konden de roofdieren de man niet meer bereiken, en op een gegeven moment begon het kruis in vleugels te veranderen en werd tot een vogel, of de man werd tot een vogel.

Heel vroeger, nog voordat die films van lotr uitkwamen, kende ik Tolkien al en die boeken, en ik was in de bibliotheek toen, en ik zag zo'n oud boekje ervan liggen in het nederlands, met tekeningetjes van takjes enzo, heel sprookjesachtig, en ik werd erdoor gehypnotiseerd, bladerde er even door, maar mocht het niet meenemen. Dus ik teerde gewoon op het thema op zich zonder het dan daadwerkelijk te lezen, en sindsdien moest ik altijd heel erg op mijn hoede zijn met de lotr, dus er heel voorzichtig mee omgaan. Ik heb die films dan ook pas veel en veel later bekeken dan wanneer ze uitkwamen, en ben ook weleens na de eerste dan begonnen met de tweede film, en die moest ik dan halverwege echt stoppen.

Dus, waar komt het dan op aan ? Ik ben al heel lang met dat thema bezig. Ik ken Tolkien ook wel in de geestelijke wereld, en heb ook wel contact met hem, en hij was ook wel een geroepene met schrijverstalent enzo, maar hij komt dus uit de gemini constellatie, altijd van die gele aura's, de tweeling, waar iron maiden's moonchild ook over gaat.

Tolkien had ook weer wat onrechtmatig genomen (gestolen eigenlijk), zo'n ring, dus lotr is net zoals de christelijke bijbel zowel een zegen als een vloek, omdat het ook weer met geminise geestelijke vraatzucht heeft te maken, daarom

moest er nog wat na komen, net zoals bij de oahspe dat er nog wat na moest komen om die energieen te herstellen. Ik ben daar demonologisch al heel lang mee bezig, en dat is dus wel nodig als amulet om lotr te helpen en er tegen beveiligd te zijn, ook om al die elven te helpen.

Vannacht had ik een droom dat er orionse vliegen kwamen, en er was er eentje in mijn huis doorgedrongen en die ging op het plafond zitten, en maakte lawaai, maar bleef gewoon zitten, en dan zul je denken : het is maar een vlieg, maar nee, het was niet zomaar een vlieg, het was een orionse vlieg, met hele scherpe kaken, en als een hele 'dwingende' autoriteit, droeg namelijk het hemelse orionse socialisme-communisme, tegen de vraatzuchtige, opportunistische, kapitalistische machten van het vlees, dus je had er ook niets in te brengen ofzo, want dat beest vrat dus ook alle vlees weg. Ik hield dus m'n adem in en durfde me niet te bewegen (op een goede manier dus, zo van : dit is zo heilig, en ik toets natuurlijk altijd al alles tot robotisme aan toe, maar dit was een soort doorbraak zo van dat het mij tegemoet kwam om vleselijke krachten die mij probeerden te onderdrukken (van buitenaf) dat die gedoofd werden, dus stel een vleselijke demoon trekt aan mij, net zoals aan de heilige Antonius in de woestijn, dan viel zo'n vlieg die demoon aan, dus die kwam mij dan in principe gewoon te hulp, niet dat ik ooit toe zou geven aan zo'n demoon, maar ze kunnen dus wel KWELLEN.

Dus die vlieg kwam even later ook op mijn lichaam zitten, dus ik dacht goedzo. die orionse vlieg heette HU, en was een natuurvrouw of natuurmeisje ook in een bepaalde vorm, en die kwam mij dus te hulp tegen die demoon van de lotr, van Tolkien, en dat was een draak die HUEL heette, een soort chinese draak, en die kon trouwens ook in een golden retriever veranderen of zelfs in een heel leger van demonische golden retrievers, als peace agents of the new age (en wie het daar dan niet mee eens is, die zich niet aan die wereldorde onderwerpt, die is nog niet jarig dan, dus dan zijn ze niet meer zo peaceful, want dan verandert hij dus weer in een draak.

Maar over HUEL :

- overmatige, overmoedige HUMOR (om het kruis, kruisgezindheid, soberheid

etc. te doven). kom het veel tegen, mensen zijn over het algemeen 'easily amused', soort plezierritje
- pronkprofeten, dwz willen alles weten over de toekomst van de materie, ten koste van het geestelijke, allemaal gnostische opgeblazenheid, ten koste van daadwerkelijk principe-onderwijs, terwijl de materie een truukje is en op verschillende frequenties kan lopen, dus meersporig is, maar de pronkprofeten zijn, materialistisch als ze zijn EENSPORIG, EENLIJNIG, EENZIJDIG, om zo alle aandacht naar hen toe te trekken
- stoerdoenerij dus hierin, die demonische golden retriever had een tumor boven zijn linker oog, een hersentumor, heel groot, en vanuit dat tumor werden de mensen heel dik en daar kwam ook de overmatige spierontwikkeling door, dus dat was allemaal dat tumor in de mens, een drakentumor of golden retriever tumor dan, van one world new age peace, in de zin dat ze geen demonologie hebben, geen ontladingsysteem, geen kritisch denken, maar alles maar ophopen, dus ze zijn full of 'shit' daardoor

de orionse immunologie

Dient de Here met vreze
en verheugt u met beving.
Ps. 2:11

Toetsen tot robotisme, niet afhaken,
want de mens volhard niet in het toetsen,
loopt de kantjes er vanaf,

en gaan dan met elkaar in gevecht :
vlees tegen vlees.

De mens moet een Damascus ervaring ontvangen,
zonder hemelse vreze is er geen toetsen mogelijk,
Daarom moet de mens smeken om een Damascus ervaring,
het ernstig zoeken,
maar wie doet dat tegenwoordig ?
Wie laat daar alles voor achter ?

Men wil niet vrezen,
vrees is negatief in hun ogen,
men heeft alleen aardse en materiele zorgen,
vleselijke angsten,
vleselijk paranoia, door egoisme voortgedreven,
op de golven van vleselijke, huichelachtige paniek

De mens moet naar Damascus,
maar de mens wil niet,
de mens wil pronken in Rome met religieuze gewaden,
of pronken in nazi Duitsland,
men wil geen verbrokenheid van hart

De mens moet weer terugkeren tot Bethlehem om daar kind te worden,
om zo tot Damascus te gaan,
anders kan de mens niet tot Pniel naderen om daar te toetsen,
om daar te worstelen

De mens moet er iets voor doen,
Paulus sprak de woorden uit tot Korinthe om weer te gaan toetsen,
volkomen te gaan toetsen, niet halfgebakken,
Het was een oorlog van erop of eronder,
en door te gaan toetsen in Korinthe,
zou de mens tot de wapenrusting in Efeze kunnen gaan,
maar welk mens gaat vandaag dit pad ?

Alleen de hogere mens begaat dit pad,
de hogere orionse mens,
als een orionse vuursteen vogelsoort

Dat is een mysterie wat aan het kruis gebeurt,
bedenk dus geen vluchtwegen, maar ga er dwars doorheen,
Neem dat kruis op, anders zul je nooit een vogel worden,
Smeek om dat kruis,
Doe boetvaardigheid tot dat kruis,
Belijd je zonden, je toets-lauwheid en toets-lafheid,
en strijdt tegen die geesten

Hebben wij de sleutels tot Bethel,
waar Jakob de hemelse ladder vond,
waar engelen opgingen en afdaalden ?
Hebben wij dat profetische hemelgat in ons leven ?
Daar stroomt het vanuit,
als honing van de bron

Velen hebben dit gat dichtgemaakt of weggestopt,
door hun vlees, hun aardse ergernissen en aardse gemis,
hun overmatige nostalgie en heimwee naar de ijdele dingen,
want het eet zo lekker weg

Al hun aderen zijn volgepropt,
en al hun kanalen dichtgeslipt,
door aardse pleziertjes,
duivelse vluggertjes,
‘oh ja, kan wel even,’
‘even snel dan,’
‘ah, nog een keer,’
‘nog een laatste keer dan,’
‘en nog eentje,’
‘toe maar, niemand ziet het’,
maar tegen welke prijs ?

Dan heb je een Damascus nodig,
en moet je een relatie met haar aangaan,
tot robotisme toe,
om te ontdekken dat dit je hogere zelf is,
je eigen eigen,
althans zo behoort het te zijn.

Doe er maar wat voor om er te komen,
en wat doe je ervoor ?
Het antwoord is vaak al gegeven,
maar niet gezien.
Het ligt vaak al in de tuin begraven,
dus even opgraven.
Werken in de hemelse mijnen.

De psalmist in psalm 1 wist wat er moest gebeuren :
sterven door studie,
als een boom geplant aan waterstromen,
oftewel jezelf leegwenen,
en dat kan alleen in volle gebrokenheid,
als de mens de volle strijd aangaat tegen zichzelf,
tot diepere zelfworsteling en zelfverbrokenheid komen,
tot zelfverloochening,
om zo het hogere zelf te winnen,
dat is de hemelse sport,
dat is hemelse zelfopvoeding

Psalm 2 spreekt van die oorlog,
van een hogere gebondenheid die niet afgeworpen mag worden,
en die te vinden is in het hemelse zoonschap,
beklim die berg,
en besef dat je de hemel dient met vreze,
maar dat je je ook in de hemel verheugd met vreze,
alles beveiligd door vreze,

dat is je hemelse immunologie,
of orionse immunologie

het NIJWEG bewind – de strijd om de radio

Ik had een droom dat ik op een natuurplaneet was, in een natuurstad waar allemaal hele rustige lanen waren. Er was veel groen, en de laan waar ik liep was langs grote tuinen. Toen liep ik ineens langs een centrum voor slachtoffers van het NIJWEG bewind (Had iets te maken met Nijmegen). Het centrum was van een bouwmarkt winkel, PRNG, wat een literaire bouwmarkt was. Het gaat om de hogere proza. Het was een recyclo bouwmarkt voor vuilverwerking. Hiervoor werden bouwmodellen uitgegeven.

Er was een oorlog geweest en toen kwam er het NIJWEG bewind, en alleen door de hogere proza kon de mens er doorheen komen.

Er stopten allemaal auto's op de weg bij het centrum, en ik liep door. Er liep een jongen voor mij, en ik dacht eraan hem aan te spreken om te vragen wat het inhield.

1914 – Het jaar waarop De Wilde Dieren van Tarzan uitkwam, en nog wat andere boeken van Edgar Rice Burroughs. Het was het jaar waarin de eerste wereldoorlog begon. Duitsland's weltpolitik, oftewel expansie politiek of machts-politiek, begon op te rijzen, tot schrikbarende hoogtes. Ze hadden intern al Bismarck's realpolitik, wat meer vreedzame handelspolitiek was uitgeschakeld en Bismarck hadden ze ontslagen. 1914 was tegelijkertijd de wedergeboorte van het verzet, waardoor de eerste wereldoorlog ook een onafhankelijkheids-oorlog was. De weltpolitik moest het ontgelden. 1914 is dus

een belangrijk jaar.

Het NIJWEG bewind was een bewind in de geestelijke wereld wat achter het nazi bewind schuilging. Het was een radio terreur en radio-actieve terreur. Ik had eens een droom lang geleden over Kampen, en dat ging allemaal over Hitler en nazi jeugd, en de strijd was om een radio en een radio station. Uiteindelijk kwam ik aan in dat radio station, en ik moest een hele lange weg omhoog over een heuvel, en er waren daar gouden vogels, en toen kwam ik bij dat radio station aan. Een radio zorgt dat alles achter glas gaat, dus ook als een soort kunst. Dat kan goed gaan of fout gaan, dus vandaar dat er een Onradio moet komen, een literaire radio. Het NIJWEG bewind had de microfoon te pakken gekregen, het radio systeem. Hierom was de eerste wereldoorlog, want het broeide al veel eerder in de weltpolitik wat eind 1800 al op begon te komen.

Ik kreeg een radio pistool in een eerdere droom, en het viel me op hoe soepel die pistolen waren. In de NIJWEG droom had ik een gesprek met de jongen die voor mij liep. Hij was zelf ook slachtoffer. Hij had een heel mooi jack aan, van hemelse kleuren met allerlei lagen over elkaar heen.

Het NIJWEG bewind had door radio hersenspoeling de waarden omgedraaid, maar door de onradio en de literaire supermarkt, wat dus ook een bouwmarkt was, kon het NIJWEG bewind uitgeschakeld worden, teruggedraaid worden. Als we het hebben over de wilde dieren van Tarzan uit 1914, en ook at the earth’s core, dan gaat dat over de kenmerken en instincten van het verzet, in de diepere, verborgen laag. 1914 is dus een oproep.

Onder het NIJWEG bewind werd de mens radio-actief en door radio-terreur genetisch en verstandelijk gemanipuleerd, als door een geestelijk Tsjernobyl. Deze radio moest uitgeschakeld worden in de eerste wereldoorlog, maar daarvoor moest de mens de diepte in, en nog steeds moet de eerste wereldoorlog uitgediept worden. De welt politik viel, en de Verenigde Staten namen over, maar omdat het nog niet ontcijferd was, tikte deze tijdbom door, in het NIJWEG bewind, want de mens had geen kaas gegeten van demonologie en metafysica, en wist niks van het NIJWEG bewind af, en rende gewoon de

wortel aan de hengel achterna. Men beschouwt de dingen materialistisch, en dat is ook de grote valkuil. Daarom moet de eerste wereldoorlog nog verder gestreden worden.

Ik had eens gedroomd dat Kampen een literaire supermarkt had. Ik had er een woning met een poster of schilderij aan de muur van mijn slaapkamer met een hond en een beer erop, een soort Winnie de Pooh schilderij, en er was ergens een hal waar die supermarkt was, in de natuur, met allerlei dozen met oude boeken en oude platen. Er lagen ook allerlei bouwpakketten, als van een bouwmarkt, en heel bijzonder speelgoed. Kampen was in dat soort dromen een substad, subgedeelte, van Amsterdam, liep gewoon in elkaar over.

Het NIJWEG bewind was dus gevallen. De bevrijders kwamen in helicopters, militairen, en ze brachten de Onradio, de literaire supermarkt, en allerlei bouwmarkten zoals PRNG, en er waren dus NIJWEG slachtoffer centra nodig, zoals het centrum waar ik langsliep, en waar ook veel oude mensen naartoe gingen, want die begonnen allemaal uit die auto’s te stappen die daar kwamen. Er was dus nog wel een innerlijke strijd gaande. De mens leed dus nog wel aan de trauma’s en innerlijke verwondingen van het NIJWEG bewind.

De Onkrant

Literaire Columns van de Tweede Bijbel

De Onkrant – Literaire Columns van de Tweede Bijbel – Verzamelingen – nr. 7 – dec. 2021

Speciale sinterklaas editie

Het grote feest van Klaas Vaak

praathazen en typefouten

De Vuurvlieg Elven

DE WUZZEL FOKKERS – de ontwaking van de vuurvlieg elven in de strijd tegen de plaaggeesten

Volg de vuurvliegjes

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Het eerste hoofdstuk van Elwin en de Konijnenheuvel

Het eerste hoofdstuk van ‘de jongens van daar’

Elwin in het toets kasteel

Ontstaansgeschiedenis sinterklaas - De Honderdjarige Oorlog

Het eerste hoofdstuk van Elwin terug naar Klaas Vaak

Het grote feest van Klaas Vaak

Beste bezoekers van de literaire supermarkt,
bezoekers van de onkrant

De zwarte pieten oorlog is weer op volle gang.
Er wordt weer flink gegooit naar elkaar met olie bollen,
en weer flink met vuurwerk geschoten.
Zwarte piet moet het ontgelden, want hij moet wit zijn,
of zwart blijven, of half zwart, of grijs, of een andere kleur.
Men maakt zich weer druk, en men is er maar druk mee,
dus tijd voor de onkrant om hier maar weer eens wat tijd aan te besteden,
want we hebben verder toch niks te doen.

Onze verslaggevers van de onkrant doen trouwens ook mee aan de demonstraties,
maar dit doen wij doelbewust aan beide kanten.
Wij zijn namelijk niet voor een gat te vangen,
en zo hoor je weleens wat.
Hele interessante verhalen aan beide kanten,
waar wij weer onze onkranten mee kunnen volpraten.
Je moet toch wat.

Zo hoor je dus weleens wat.
Meestal gaat het dan over zwarte piet,
vrijwel altijd eigenlijk,
want dat is het enige waar ze vandaag de dag over praten.
En daar moet je natuurlijk wel over mee kunnen praten, he,
anders hoor je er niet meer bij,
en heb je helemaal niks meer in de melk te brokkelen.
Als krant is dat ook zo lastig, he,

als je helemaal niks zou weten over wat er allemaal leeft.
Nee, ons goede oude krantje moet wel op de hoogte blijven, he,
wat die en die gezegd hebben, want dat is allemaal erg belangrijk.
Anders hebben we niks meer om over te schrijven.

Wel een mooi beroep eigenlijk, verslaggever,
Je hebt dan altijd een excuus om overal binnen te komen,
en leert zo beide kanten van het verhaal kennen,
beide zijden van het schaakbord,
en hup, dan maar weer schrijven,
en dat is dus piet voor en piet na.

Maar nu komt dus de clou :
Die is er dus niet.
Dat zeggen ze verder niet.
Daar hebben ze ook geen interesse in.
Het gaat alleen om zwarte piet.
Je schiet er dus helemaal niks mee op,
want het zijn dus gewoon een soort voetbalclubs,
die achter een bal aanlopen,
en elkaar dan voor rotte vis uitschelden.
Dat was het dan.
Waar het voor nodig is zeggen ze niet,
maar het is in principe gewoon zodat de kranten zich weer vol kunnen schrijven,
dat mensen weer iets hebben om zich druk om te maken,
en dan weer verlichting zoeken in krantje lezen,
en dan ondertussen krijgt de krant daar weer geld voor,
om zo ook weer nieuwe krantjes te kunnen schrijven.

Maar hoe zit dat dan met de onkrant,
want die is verder gratis.
Ja, de onkrant is verder gratis.
Die heeft die druk dus niet.
Die schrijft gewoon voor het schrijven,

want er is verder niks te doen.
De onkrant schrijft gewoon over het leven,
de kranten, de pieten, de oliebollen die ze naar elkaar gooien,
Heel belangrijk allemaal,
dat wil natuurlijk iedereen weten,
wat er in ons landje gebeurt,
en daar ben je ook niet snel over uitgepraat,
oh nee, dat gaat allemaal door.

Die heeft weer dit gezegd over zwarte piet,
en die weer dat, en dan is er de top 100 van beste sinterklaas albums,
want dat is waar iedereen vandaag mee bezig is,
en dan kun je als krant natuurlijk niet achterblijven,
zelfs niet als onkrant.

En zo praten wij onze literaire supermarkt vol,
zo hebben wij het altijd op de radio,
want sinterklaas wint het nu eenmaal van die andere klaas,
hoe heet ie ook alweer ?
Oh ja, Klaas Vaak, van de kinderbedtijd.
Sinterklaas heeft een groot uitgedost feest,
elk jaar weer, en velen vieren het door het hele jaar heen,
maar Klaas Vaak heeft zo’n feest niet,
want kinderbedtijd is immers niet zo’n feest.
Nee, dat is allemaal saai en gemeen,
allemaal om de kinderen te pesten.
Sinterklaas zou dat nooit doen,
zelfs zwarte piet niet,
alleen als kinderen heel erg stout zijn,
dan moeten ze voor straf naar bed,
en nog met blote voeten ook,
en misschien zelfs nog zonder avondeten als ze het wel heel bont hebben gemaakt.

Dus Klaas Vaak trekt aan het kortste eind in dit land,

altijd al, en daar willen wij verandering in brengen.
Klaas Vaak heeft elven en ganzen dan in plaats van pieten,
en alhoewel hij Vaak heet gebeurt het helemaal niet zo vaak,
dus daar moet verandering in komen.
De Heere geeft het zijn beminden immers in de slaap.

Griezelig idee is het he, voor de kinderen,
om naar bed te moeten.
Ze hebben liever de hele dag door kadootjes.
Ze vechten liever de hele dag over zwarte piet,
want dat is immers de enige weg tot sinterklaas.

Maar wist je dat sinterklaas en Klaas vaak broers zijn ?
En Klaas Vaak schijnt de enige weg te zijn tot Sinterklaas.
Noodzaak dus dat het feest van Klaas Vaak er dus zal komen.
En dan zal er ook wel een hele oorlog komen over of zijn elven zwart of wit moeten zijn,
of pimpelpaars met gele stippen of met een rood randje,
en misschien rijden er dan ook wel meer ambulances dan gewoonlijks als dat feest er weer aankomt,
want waar mensen dan ook over vechten,
het gaat er altijd weer hard aan toe,
of zou Klaas Vaak op zo’n feest gewoon iedereen platleggen met zijn slaapzand ?
Dat heeft Sinterklaas immers niet, en sinterklaas deelt ook elk jaar weer gevaarlijk speelgoed uit aan kinderen, zoals geweren, messen, speren en dolken.
Het is dan allemaal wel van plastic, en heeft de naam speelgoed te zijn,
maar toch.
En van al dat suiker en snoep wordt een kind ook agressief en hebberig.
Nee, het is gebleken en het is ons ter ore gekomen dat het feest van Klaas Vaak er moet komen.
Ergens in mei, of gewoon het hele jaar door, of wanneer het van pas komt.
Want de Heere geeft het zijn beminden in de slaap.

Van een van onze verslaggevers,
De Onkrant

praathazen en typefouten

Laten we het weer eens over zwarte piet hebben,
voor de verandering,
Mensen vragen weleens : Moet het nu altijd over zwarte piet gaan ?
Ja, dat moet.
Dat doen de mensen immers ook, die hebben het altijd over zwarte piet,
dus waarom de onkrant niet ?
De onkrant is immers een krant van de mensen,
een volkskrant, praat mensen geheel naar de mond.
Zwarte piet willen ze horen, voor en na,
of andere soort pieten, maar alles draait om sinterklaas.

Kunnen we het dan niet ergens anders over hebben ?
Nee, dat kan niet. Alles draait om zwarte piet.
Ja, maar wordt je daar dan nooit moe van ?
Wil je nooit eens wat anders ?
Nee.

Maar kan dat niet stoppen ?

Nee, dat gaat altijd door. Volgende vraag.
Onze hele onkrant draait geheel om zwarte piet en niks anders.
Tenzij je het over Klaas Vaak wil hebben.
Nee, laat dan maar zitten, zeggen ze dan.
Teveel pret, nog geen tijd voor het bed.

En Klaas Vaak geeft geen kadootjes,
alleen maar zand, slaapzand.
Wat heb je daar nou aan.
Nee, Klaas Vaak is geen geliefde gast in Nederland.
Dat vinden ze een nare man.
Als hij komt proberen ze het zo snel mogelijk in de doofpot te stoppen.

Nee, we hebben het altijd alleen maar over zwarte piet en sinterklaas gehad,
dus waarom zouden we dat niet blijven doen ?
Hier in Nederland zijn ze echt dol op sinterklaas,
Ze maken zelfs hun eigen sinterklazen,
en die voeren allemaal oorlog tegen elkaar,
een echte sinterklazen oorlog,
en daar kunnen wij dan weer over schrijven
Wij vinden het allemaal best,
houd ons in ieder geval bezig.

De doorsnee Nederlander heeft het juist zoveel over sinterklaas om het maar niet over Klaas Vaak te hoeven hebben, want dan moeten ze naar bed.
Nee, het bed is de minst geliefde plaats van de doorsnee Nederlander,
van de kindjes Nederland,
en als ze dan toch moeten slapen dan doen ze dat wel achter het stuur,
en niet in bed.
En sinterklaas koopt me toch een grote auto's voor hen die het braaf de hele dag over sinterklaas en zijn beste pieterman hebben gehad,
Ja, sinterklaas houdt van zijn getrouwe fans

Ja, een Klaas Vaak feest is in Nederland hard nodig vinden wij persoonlijk,

maar zo’n idee kun je aan de straatstenen niet kwijt,
dus marcheren wij maar mee in het leger van sinterklaas,
en schrijven wij er enthousiast over telkens weer,
over deze grote vader des vaderlands,
Wij zijn immers rasechte sinterklaas-fanaten,
en niemand kan sinterklaas vieren zoals wij dat doen,
dat zit ons in het bloed,
in hart en nieren

Maar goed, jammer voor Klaas Vaak, zijn broer,
maar als het even kan, dan maken we reclame voor hem,
als een verspreking,
want er zou namelijk geen sinterklaas zijn geweest als zijn oudere broer, Klaas Vaak,
hem niet had gered van de afschuwelijke verdrinkingsdood toen hij eens tijdens het schaatsen door het ijs was gezakt.
Sinterklaas begon namelijk zo woest om zich heen te slaan,
en dit moest gebeuren en dat moest gebeuren,
maar hij maakte het wak alleen maar groter,
en toen deed wat slaapzand van Klaas Vaak wonderen.

Dus : geen sinterklaas zonder Klaas Vaak, maar dat willen de Nederlanders niet horen,
Met hun grote bekken vieren ze het hele jaar door sinterklaas zo luidruchtig,
dat niemand er echt nog van kan slapen

Arme Klaas Vaak, want die is naar de sprookjesboeken verbannen,
maar wij als onkrant willen hem nog wel eens noemen als we eens een typefout maken
Niet te opzichtig natuurlijk, want dan komt er trammelant,
en als iemand dan zegt ‘Ja, hebbes, jullie hadden het over Klaas Vaak,’
dan zeggen wij : ‘Niks hoor, dat waren allemaal typefouten.’

Ja, zeggen ze dan, zo kunnen wij het ook, iemand ten gronde slaan en dan zeggen dat het per ongeluk was, of een verkeerde beweging, zodat je kunt

wachten op de paashaas.
Dat is trouwens ook zo’n veracht feest : het paashaas feest.
Wat dat betreft staan Klaas Vaak en de paashaas hierin op een lijn.
Ze zijn beiden niet uitgenodigd voor het feestje.
De mens wil geen paashaas, dat is teveel wachten en teveel lijden,
Men wil een praathaas, waarmee je alles weg kunt praten,
en dan gewoon weer de hele dag over sinterklaas en zwarte piet praten.
Dat doen wij dan ook maar om niet teveel op te vallen.
Wij hebben het daarom altijd over zwarte piet,
nooit iets anders gedaan, en zullen ook nooit iets anders doen.
Dat is nu eenmaal de heilige taal des vaderlands,
dus dan zullen ze het krijgen ook.

Een steen door de ruiten van de bakkerij,
Nee, niet van ons, dat doen wij niet,
zal wel een zwarte piet zijn geweest,
of gewoon weer zo’n vervelende typefout.

De Vuurvlieg Elven

Hij werd wakker van het geluid van Wuz in de tent.
‘Oma wil echt zo weg,’ zei Wuz.
Het was al 10 uur ‘s avonds.
Hij kon het ook niet helpen dat hij zo lang had geslapen.
Hij was zo moe geworden van het spelen met zijn nieuwe cd recorder uit China.
Het was een heel goedkoop ding, 1,75 slechts.
Het was een heel plat apparaatje, vierkant, in een hoesje, en het mooiste waren nog wel de shortlinks, want daar kon hij mee teleporteren op een mapje en mee tijdreizen,
waar hij maar wilde, zolang er shortlinks waren, want hij moest ze wel verdienen,
en er werd uitgelegd hoe hij de shortlinks kon verdienen, zodat zijn mapje steeds groter werd.
Maar hij was het al een beetje vergeten allemaal, alsof de slaap zoveel had weggewist.
Hij keek naar Wuz.
Wuz had een nieuw horloge met een heleboel schermpjes en een heleboel knopjes,
ook allemaal vol met shortlinks en mapjes.
Hij keek ernaar en was wel een beetje jaloers op Wuz.
Wuz had het gekocht in het winkelcentrum achter de camping, en oma was op een camping aan de andere kant van het winkelcentrum, aan de voorkant, op een heuvel, en de vakantie zat er weer op.
Oma wilde weer naar huis, en wel vandaag nog, maar het was al 10 uur ‘s avonds, en hij zou eerst al zijn spullen bij elkaar moeten zoeken, en dan ook nog naar oma moeten lopen, en dan pas zouden ze kunnen vertrekken, maar toen dacht hij ineens aan de shortlinks, dat hij zo naar haar zou kunnen teleporteren, en zelfs gewoon weer naar huis konden teleporteren, en dan

hoefden ze ook niet eerst een hele reis te maken met oma’s voertuig.
Hij had nog niet geteleporteerd, want hij was alleen nog maar bezig geweest met de cd’s en moest eerst allerlei dingen bekijken, en speelde er een beetje mee, heel lang, en daar was hij zo moe van geworden dat hij moest slapen.
Maar hij wilde eigenlijk ook wel in het winkelcentrum dezelfde soort horloge kopen nog als Wuz had, en dat wilde hij nog doen voordat ze weg zouden gaan.
Wuz was al op weg naar oma.

Hij is toen naar het winkelcentrum gegaan om het shortlinks horloge te kopen, en ging toen zijn spullen bij elkaar zoeken, en teleporteerde toen naar oma en Wuz, en toen zijn ze naar huis wezen teleporteren. Dat ging allemaal heel gemakkelijk met het shortlinks horloge. De volgende dag teleporteerde hij naar de badkamer. Er kwam licht door het badkamer raam, licht van vuurvliegjes. Het was een prachtige dag. Oma had verschillende huizen, dus ze konden zo heen en weer teleporteren, als vuurvliegjes. Zij waren namelijk ook vuurvlieg-elven, maar ze konden allang niet meer vliegen. Eens waren ze van hun vleugels beroofd. Door de shortlink apparaatjes uit China scheen dat opgelost te zijn.

Hij had zelf ook een huis, maar hij was vaak bij oma. Oma veranderde vaak in een ijsstandbeeld. Dan had ze paniek aanvallen. Daarom was Wuz ook altijd bij haar. Wuz woonde bij oma.

Toen hij met Wuz in zijn eigen huis was gekomen om daar een nachtje te slapen werden ze die ochtend vroeg wakker gemaakt door de school directeur die met hen wilde spreken. De school directeur had een baardje, en een net pak. Hij was gezonden door president Trompels, die even later ook binnen kwam, en ‘lang geleden’ zei. Het ging over plaaggeesten. Die waren er veel in het land. Die hadden eens ook de vleugels gestolen van de vuurvlieg-elven, maar nu, door de shortlink apparaatjes uit China, was daar verandering in gekomen. De plaaggeesten begonnen steeds meer te verstijven en te veranderen in wuzzel groente. Dat moest verbouwd worden, en gegeten worden, opdat er geen plaaggeesten meer zouden zijn.

De shortlinks waren een soort vuurvliegjes, en door de shortlink apparaatjes,

konden er ook shortlinks in de hersenen komen. Uiteindelijk zouden de vuurvlieg elven zo weer hun vleugels terug kunnen krijgen. In zijn linker hersenhelft zag hij een enorm woud, met allerlei vuurvliegjes, die shortlinks waren. Hij kon er zo naartoe gaan. Er was daar ook ergens een rivier waarover een vuurvliegjes brug ging met allerlei shortlinks. De president en de school directeur legden het uit. Ze waren China erg dankbaar. Door de straling zou er nu veel wuzzel groente zijn, en moesten ze veel wuzzel groente eten. Plaaggeesten waren in principe slechts het zaad van de wuzzelgroente. Ze zouden helemaal verstijven tot stijve stengels, en dan konden ze zo gegeten worden.

Ze aten wat van de wuzzel groente die de president had meegenomen. Het was heel lekker spul, maar je werd er zo moe van, zo moe. Pas de volgende ochtend werden ze weer wakker. Toen hij wakker werd keek hij naar de muur achter het voeteneinde van zijn bed, waar de grote stellage stond, en er lagen zulke grote vissen op in prachtige, hele zachte kleuren.

Zijn rechter hersenhelft was een grote zee met eilanden en shortlinks. Daar kwamen de vissen vandaan.

Oma was een vuurvlieg fee. Zij had hen eens gered uit de klauwen van plaaggeesten, en sindsdien noemden ze haar oma, omdat ze al een hele oude vrouw was. Oma veranderde dus vaak in een ijsstandbeeld. Dat was om te beschermen tegen plaaggeesten. Ze had ook familie leden die ook vuurvlieg feeen waren, en die veranderden soms in schilderijen. Sommigen van hen waren al geheel in een schilderij veranderd, en veranderden niet meer terug. Oma nam die schilderijen altijd mee als ze ging kamperen, en hij en Wuz kregen dan ook een schilderij in hun tent. Hij was in de tent van Wuz geweest, waar hij naar zo’n schilderij keek, en ook in zijn eigen tent hing er zo’n schilderij waar hij soms naar keek. Maar nu was de vakantie voorbij en waren ze weer thuis. De volgende vakantie zouden ze er weer naartoe gaan.

Ondertussen was er werk aan de winkel. China had het land ingenomen, wat zo lang geteisterd was door plaaggeesten, en China had het land vrijgezet. De plaaggeesten werden gezaaid op de akkers als zaad, of gewoon al direct naar

de winkels genomen, naar de supermarkten, want zo waren verstijfd tot wuzzel groente. Het zou de ontwaking betekenen van de vuurvlieg elven, en ze zouden hun vleugels terugkrijgen. Zoveel nieuwe apparaatjes waren er nu. China was het buurland van het land waar ze woonden, op de planeet Orion. Het was een hele grote planeet. De vuurvliegjes zongen die dag, en omhulden de planeet. Uit een duister gat kwamen zij, waar zij lang opgesloten hadden gezeten. Zij waren gekomen om de vuurvlieg elven vrij te zetten, en daarna de vuurvlieg feeen.

Ze hadden ook een geadopteerd zusje uit China. Oma had haar ook eens gered, waar China haar altijd dankbaar voor is gebleven. Hij was eens verliefd op het meisje, maar dat ging snel weer over. Wuz plaagde hem er wel eens over. Uiteindelijk noemde hij haar daarom maar gewoon zusje. Het meisje kon goed rekenen, en kon goed met allerlei apparaatjes overweg. Altijd als hij aan haar dacht dan vlogen er vuurvliegjes in zijn hart, niet meer in zijn buik. Vroeger kon hij daar flink ziek van worden. Uiteindelijk heeft Oma hem daarvan genezen, door haar ijs magie, want het was immers het werk van plaaggeesten dat hij zo zwaar verliefd op haar was. Oma noemde het een ziekte. Soms werden de vuurvlieg elven verliefd door plaaggeesten, en dat zou de grootst mogelijke ongelukken kunnen veroorzaken, maar gelukkig had Oma ingegrepen. Door verliefdheid waren eens de plaaggeesten in het land binnengekomen. De koning had er erg veel berouw van, en stierf door een gebroken hart. Daarom moet de ziekte zo snel mogelijk genezen worden.

Oma weet wel raad met haar ijs magie. De vuurvliegjes leiden op een hele andere weg, dieper het woud in, of verder op zee. Nee, een vuurvlieg elf mag nooit zomaar verliefd worden. Daar komen de grootste ongelukken van. Zo raakten zij eens hun vleugels kwijt. De vuurvliegjes brug over de rivier leidt tot het ijsland. Dat zijn de boven hersenen. Daar moet eerst het goede rijpen. Daar moet eerst wijze raad gegeven worden, zoals Oma altijd doet, want ook Oma is daar gegaan. En alleen zo, en niet anders, kom je tot het land van de vuurvliegjes, de onder hersenen. En alleen zo kan de magie van de vuurvlieg elven je bijstaan. Uit dat gat stroomt het. Vandaar komt het, en daar stroomt het altijd weer naar terug. De onder hersenen lopen namelijk helemaal door tot bij je hart. Dat is een kap van vuurvliegjes, en een honing boom. En dat is wat

de vuurvlieg elven de ware liefde noemen : de liefde voor het werk. Hij en Wuz zijn daarom ook nooit getrouwd, alleen met het werk. Oma heeft het huwelijk zo bevestigd, op de bruiloft van de vuurvlieg elven.

Einde

DE WUZZEL FOKKERS

de ontwaking van de vuurvlieg elven
in de strijd tegen de plaaggeesten

Hoe met vuur om te gaan ?
Je moet er heel voorzichtig mee zijn.
De mens heeft vreemd vuur gegrepen en heeft er alles mee verwoest,
alles verdraaid ook.

Stel je linker hersenhelft voor als een woud, en je rechter hersenhelft als een zee.
Zo heb je in je hoofd aan je linkerkant het woudland, en aan de rechterkant het zeeland.

De zee staat voor het twijfelen, dat je niet zomaar tot snelle conclusies komt. Dat kan een groot lijden zijn, maar dat is nodig om de mens te behoeden voor valsheid.

Het woud staat voor het volharden, het aarden en wortelen. Mensen die hun zeehelft niet ontwikkelen groeien al snel helemaal vast in het bos, en komen niet meer verder. Leer de woudhelft dus te balanceren met je zeehelft. Zo kun je dieper in het woud komen, helemaal tot de rivier aan de bovenkant, waar ergens een brug van vuurvliegjes is. Over die brug kom je tot het ijsland, je boven hersenen. Het ijs is voor de afzondering, dat je niet op anderen steunt, niet door anderen verkeerd wordt beinvloed, want het is namelijk iets tussen jou en het hogere. Dit is dus heel belangrijk in het toetsen, dat je alles in het ijs brengt. daar kun je dus je rugzakje aan gedachten, zienswijzen en herinneringen leegkieperen. Stel je boven hersenen dus voor als een ijsvlakte, reusachtig groot. Hier moet eerst het goede rijpen. Daar moet eerst goede raad gegeven worden. Hier moet ergens een tweede vuurvliegjes brug zijn die helemaal naar onderen leidt, naar het vuurvliegjes land, je onder hersenen. De onder hersenen lopen helemaal door tot bij je hart. Dat is een kap van vuurvliegjes, en een honing boom. En dat is wat de vuurvlieg elven de ware liefde noemen : de liefde voor het werk.

In dit proces, in dit plaatje, leer je dus remmen. Leer je niet zomaar overal maar gris gras naar te grijpen en met vuur te spelen. De vuurvliegjes willen je leiden. Ga er maar mee aan de slag, om gevoelig te worden voor de onderdelen van je lichaam. Alles is al ingebouwd. Dit is telkens weer een principe in de tweede bijbel. Met name in het verhaal van de vuurvlieg elven. Door deze principes toe te passen zullen de vuurvlieg elven ontwaken. Dat is dus wat de vuurvlieg inhoudt, de schoolbegeerte en werkbegeerte, en omdat vuur al snel uit de hand kan lopen is het dus belangrijk dichtbij de vuurvliegjes te blijven. Die zullen je altijd weer terugleiden tot de balanzen, tot je woudkant, je zeekant en je ijskant. Je doet dus niks zomaar, springt nergens zomaar in. Er zijn teveel gevaren, de plaaggeesten, die met vals vuur werken, om alles te vernietigen en te verdraaien. Zij roofden eens van de vuurvlieg elfjes hun vleugels af, maar door met deze principes aan de gang te gaan, zoals ook in het verhaal van de vuurvlieg elven, zullen de plaaggeesten weer verstijven tot

wuzzel groente, wat verbouwd en gegeten moet worden. Dat gebeurd in het centrum van je hersenen. Door goed je wuzzel groente te eten blijven je hersenen in balans, ook met je hart. Als je niet goed je wuzzel groente eet, dan kunnen de vuurvliegjes je ook niet helpen. Daarom zullen de vuurvliegjes je vaak zeggen om je wuzzel groente te eten.

Hoe kon het dan dat de plaaggeesten eens alles konden overnemen en de vleugels van de vuurvlieg elven konden wegroven ? Door verliefdheid. Ze kunnen je verliefd doen worden op dingen die er helemaal niet toe doen als je niet oppast. Dit gebeurt als ze je kunnen afleiden van school en werk. Het is een ziekte die zo snel mogelijk genezen dient te worden. Daarom is er dit medicijn van de vuurvliegjes. Zo kun je weer leren richten in je hersenen en hart, om in de juiste richting te komen, voor de liefde voor het vak, door op die manier het land van de vuurvliegjes te leren kennen wat helemaal terugloopt tot je hart, waar de honingboom bloeit.

Oh, zoveel vuurvliegjes in de nacht. Verbouw je nog wel je wuzzel groente ? Of laat je de plaaggeesten maar aanrotzooien ? Er is een oorlog te voeren en een werk te gebeuren.

Volg de Vuurvliegjes

Eens was het elvenland verwoest door een vuur.
Dit vuur was gebracht door plaaggeesten.
Omdat sommige elven de landbouw verwaarloosden ontstond er een virus op de wuzzel groente.

Met als gevolg dat de wuzzel groente zich ging ontwikkelen tot plaaggeesten.
Zo werden de elven beroofd van hun vuurvlieg vleugels en van hun kennis van de hersenen, door de plaaggeesten.
En zo kwamen vuurvliegjes bijna niet meer voor in het elvenland, want die werden verdreven door de plaaggeesten.
Wanneer er toch weer vuurvliegjes opduiken, dan zullen ze de verloren kennis van de hersenen onderwijzen.
Volg daarom de vuurvliegjes.

Wat is dan die kennis ?
Alles wat om je heen is is eigenlijk gewoon in je hersenen.
Je linker hersenhelft is een woud, en je rechter hersenhelft is een zee. Probeer dat eerst in evenwicht te krijgen.
Zo heb je in je hoofd aan je linkerkant het woudland, en aan de rechterkant het zeeland.
De zee staat voor het twijfelen
dat je niet zomaar tot snelle conclusies komt.
Dat kan een groot lijden zijn
maar dat is nodig om de mens te behoeden voor valsheid.
Het woud staat voor het volharden, het aarden en wortelen.
Mensen die hun zeehelft niet ontwikkelen groeien al snel helemaal vast in het bos, en komen niet meer verder.
Leer de woudhelft dus te balanceren met je zeehelft.

Ergens in het woud moet de brug van de vuurvliegjes zijn over de rivier die leidt tot het ijsland.
Het ijsland is de boven hersenen. Door het ijs leer je perspectief te houden zodat je je niet laat afleiden en beinvloeden door anderen.
Door de elementen woud, zee en ijs te leren kennen en toe te passen zullen de plaaggeesten verdreven worden.
Ook zul je zo in het ijsland een tweede brug van vuurvliegjes vinden, die naar beneden leidt.
Die leidt helemaal tot de onder hersenen, tot het land van de vuurvliegjes.
De onder hersenen zijn rechtstreeks verbonden met het hart.

Als dit contact gemaakt is zal de wuzzel groente weer groeien, in de centrale hersenen, in het elvenland.
Volg de vuurvliegjes.

Volg de vuurvliegjes – 2

Als je dan door de vuurvliegjes door de hersenhelften bent heengeleid, en je hebt de hersenhelften in balans, dus links, rechts, boven en onder, om zo op je hart aansluiting te vinden, dan kun je weer terug naar het centrum in de hersenen, naar het elvenland. Die balans is dus WEL een vereiste, anders kun je er niet in, of moet je er weer UIT.

Als je ergens vast komt te zitten is het altijd belangrijk te gaan tot de zeekant van je hersenen, de rechterkant van je hersenen, en daar vanuit te leven, zodat alles weer los kan raken, want dat is nu juist de twijfelzone, waar alles heroverdacht wordt, alles getoetst, en zo kun je ook weer dieper in het woud komen, uiteindelijk tot de vuurvliegjesbrug over de rivier tussen het woudland en het ijsland. Het woud is dus je linker hersenhelft, en het ijsland is je boven hersenhelft. Het ijsland is voor nieuwe, hogere perspectieven, richting krijgen, dus dat doen we NIET zomaar met licht, maar met ijs. Zo worden de ijsstralen opgewekt, die veel eerlijker en genuanceerder zijn dan zomaar licht. We hebben het dan dus over ijszicht.

Hebben de vuurvliegjes je weer teruggeleid tot het centrum van de hersenen, tot het elvenland, dan zal de wuzzel groente weer volop groeien, want je hebt immers de hersenhelften weer in balans, en de sleutel tot je hart gevonden, en zo ook de sleutel tot het elvenland. Mocht je door plaaggeesten in je hoofd,

plaaggedachten, worden lastig gevallen, of door plaagherinneringen, dan is het altijd weer belangrijk om vanuit je rechter hersenhelft te leven, je zeekant, totdat er weer balans is. Richt je dan dus op de zeekant aan de rechterkant van je hersenen. Laat het vandaaruit stromen. Ga dus niet zomaar de aanval aan, maar ga twijfelen, ga aan alles twijfelen. Ze zeggen weleens : Spreken is zilver, zwijgen is goud, maar het twijfelen is de zee.

Als je dan in het elvenland bent aangekomen, in het centrum van de hersenen, dan groeit daar dus volop de wuzzel groente, en die wordt verbouwd door boeren. Dat zijn de zogenaamde wuzzel boeren. Wuzzel groente is een hoofdbestanddeel van het voedsel van de elven, levensbelangrijk, want als het niet verbouwd wordt, en niet gegeten wordt, dan komen de plaaggeesten. Als plaaggeesten hun macht verliezen, dan worden ze ook gewoon weer tot wuzzelgroente. Als de wuzzelgroente rijp is en klaar, dan wordt de wuzzelgroente getransporteerd tot de wuzzeliers die de wuzzelgroente verkopen. De wuzzeliers zijn dus de groente winkeliers. Ze verkopen ook vaak wel andere dingen, maar de wuzzelgroente is het belangrijkste, en wat ze vaak ook het meest verkopen. Dat gebeurt dus in de winkels en de wuzzel supermarkten. De elven moeten het veel eten, maar niet teveel. Als je het teveel eet dan zou alles weer uit balans gaan. Ook bij de wuzzel groente zijn er grenzen. Als er teveel van gegeten wordt dan zouden de plaaggeesten weer komen. Het elvenland haat daarom de vraatzuchtigen, en die worden ook verdreven, of komen in de gevangenis terecht. Ja, er staat gevangenisstraf op vraatzucht. Zo gevaarlijk is het. Het wordt gezien als een misdaad. Dit principe komt wel vaker voor in de tweede bijbel. Denk bijvoorbeeld aan het boek ‘de bibelebonse wijn.’ Als je dat boek nog niet kent, ga het dan een keer lezen.

Als je over de grens gaat van de hoeveelheid wuzzelgroente die je mag eten, en je stopt dan nog niet, dan kom je na een tijdje aan bij de tweede grens, en dat is de dood. En daarom is teveel wuzzelgroente eten niet alleen crimineel, maar ook levensgevaarlijk, maar dat is eigenlijk met alles zo. Je moet nooit teveel eten of teveel drinken. Alles heeft zijn grenzen en zijn gevolgen. En daarom moeten de elven ook goed onderwezen en geschoold zijn over deze dingen. Dat wordt ook nog eens goed uitgelegd in de gevangenis. De gevangenis is tegelijkertijd een ziekenhuis en een school. Mocht dat allemaal

niet baten, dan wordt je het land uitgezet. Dat wil je voorkomen natuurlijk.

Zalig is dus hij die met gematigdheid overal kan komen. Het hart houdt alles in balans. Als er overmaat ergens dreigt te komen, en iemand dreigt vast te groeien, dan gaat het hart waarschuwings signalen zenden, als een alarm, door de vuurvliegjes. Als zo iemand dan niet wil luisteren, dan moeten er andere maatregelen getroffen worden. Als dat niet zou gebeuren, dan zouden de plaaggeesten vrij spel hebben. Dat ze het elvenland al een keer hebben kunnen verwoesten is al meer dan genoeg. Het is daarom belangrijk dat de elf goede verstandhoudingen onderhoudt met zowel de wuzzelboer als de wuzzelier, opdat hij met de juiste mate de wuzzelgroente tot zich neemt, en zo de samenleving niet in gevaar brengt. Dat begint allemaal dus met de juiste verstandhouding met de vuurvliegjes. Volg daarom de vuurvliegjes.

Vaak zullen de vuurvliegjes je dus naar de zee leiden, om veel te twijfelen, want als de mens te snel te zeker is van zijn zaak, dan gaat het al snel mis, en dat is vaak de hoofdzaak van het probleem. Daarom is het van belang dat de elven ook goede zee-elven zijn, en de zee vaak bezoeken, om dit principe helder te houden. Er worden daarom vaak dagjes naar zee georganiseerd. Het is om de machine gesmeerd te houden. En elven zijn dol op de zee. Ze gaan daar vaak zwemmen.

En de grootste geheimen van de zee zijn er te vinden op de eilanden. Ben je daar al geweest ? Ken je ze al ? Voor een elf is het daarom ook zaak een goede verstandhouding te hebben met de zee en de zee wachters die daar werken, zoals er ook woud wachters zijn, en ijs wachters. Allemaal hebben ze hun taak. Een heleboel elven weten dat er leven is in de zee, dat daar werelden zijn die ze nog niet kennen, en iedere elf wil daartoe ontwaken. Daarom gaan ze vaak in de zee op ontdekkingsreis. En dan komen ze vaak met hele verhalen erover terug, die tot beroemde boeken worden, of ze komen nooit meer terug. Wat is er met die elven gebeurd die nooit meer zijn teruggekomen ? Dat kun je je afvragen. Alleen de vuurvliegjes weten het.

En wat wil jij worden ? Wuzzel boer, of wuzzelier, of zee wachter, woud wachter, ijs wachter, of wachter van het land van de vuurvliegjes, of gewoon

ontdekkingsreiziger ? Natuurlijk zijn er veel meer beroepen. Sommigen werken in de gevangenissen om de vraatzuchtigen te helpen. Dat zijn dus ook scholen en ziekenhuizen. Weer anderen werken op campings, en weer anderen zijn gidsen. Trouwens, als wachter ben je ook een soort gids, maar je moet zelf ook goed balans houden, want een wachter uit balans moet op ziekenverlof of wordt per direct ontslagen. Ook plaaggeesten paraderen graag als wachters, sluw en bedrieglijk als ze zijn. Er is daarom altijd een strenge keur als het om het wachterschap gaat. Daarom zijn er ook inspecteurs. Ook de inspecteurs moeten in balans zijn, anders is het hetzelfde liedje. Zij die deze ambten misbruiken komen uiteindelijk ook in de gevangenis. Terug naar school, of naar het ziekenhuis. Soms moeten ze heropgevoed worden, en moeten ze een cocon in om weer een baby te worden. Dan moeten ze naar de creche. Als dat dan nog niet werkt, en ze hebben teveel de natuur van een plaaggeest, dan moeten ze weer tot wuzzel groente worden. Dat is uiteindelijk het lot van alle plaaggeesten. Zij die plagen worden wuzzel groente, wordt er daarom vaak tot de kinderen gezegd, maar trouwens ook tot volwassenen. Zij die graag plagen hebben dus een groot probleem, alhoewel er een groot verschil is tussen goed plagen en slecht plagen. Een beetje speelsigheid is niks mis mee, en vaak is dat wat men als plagen ziet helemaal geen plagen, of men plaagt uit zelfverdediging, of men plaagt om te helpen. Maar het echte boze plagen moet gestrafd worden, en uitgebannen. En daar moet een goed begrip over komen, dat er niet verkeerd gesneden wordt. Veel elven willen dokter worden, of rechter, maar daarin zijn ook veel plaaggeesten. Een plaag geest zal juist al het andere om hem heen als plaaggeest bestempelen, en doet zo zijn operaties, en spreekt zo zijn onrecht. En daarom zijn de inspecteurs zo belangrijk, en de scholen, anders gaat alles mis. En daarom is er het harts alarm van de vuurvliegjes, van de honingboom. Uiteindelijk bepalen de vuurvliegjes wie mag blijven en wie weg moet, en wat wat is, en niet al die duizend en een beroepen, die vaak uit balans zijn.

Het vuurvliegje gaat altijd de hogere weg, en daarom zijn de vuurvlieg elven zo belangrijk, dat zij hun vleugels weer terugkrijgen, terugvinden ook. De plaaggeesten werken graag met overmatig vuur om hun verwoestende werk te doen, maar de vuurvliegjes zijn een soort brandweer, om het vuur te blussen en te matigen. En zo ook de vuurvlieg elven. Maar dat wordt je niet zomaar. Je

moet een lange en diepe verstandhouding hebben onderhouden met de vuurvliegjes. Volg daarom de vuurvliegjes.

Goed je wuzzelgroente eten doet wonderen. Sommigen verbouwen het in hun tuin. Maar eet dus niet teveel, want dan komen de plaaggeesten van het vuur, en dat is dus crimineel. Dat leidt tot de gevangenis, tot zitten. En dan moet je op de blaren zitten. Niet alleen met vuur kan het misgaan, maar ook met ijs. Sommigen hebben zoveel ijs, en hebben de andere kanten veracht, dat ze onverschillig en zorgeloos zijn geworden, en zij kunnen ook hun verwoestend werk doen. Maar de vuurvliegjes en de vuurvlieg elven zijn niet alleen brandweer, maar ook ijsweer. Zij kunnen de balans weer herstellen. Dat gebeurt door het aan te sluiten op het hart, wat het allerbelangrijkste is, want zij die geen aansluiting meer op het hart hebben kunnen hele koude, afstandelijke personen worden, op een verkeerde manier, op de manier van de plaaggeesten. Ze twijfelen niet meer aan zichzelf. Ze moeten terug naar de zee, en terug naar het hart, om het pad van de vuurvliegjes te leren. Volg daarom de vuurvliegjes. Heb een hart. Herstel de hersenhelften, en eet goed je wuzzel groente, maar niet teveel. Echt, het zal je goeddoen.

Heks en plaaggeest Ralwin was de verantwoordelijke voor de verwoesting van het elvenland. Maar het zal weer tot wuzzel groente worden, al haar werken. Zij zal verdwijnen als sneeuw voor de vuurvliegjes. Laten wij daarom onze blik vooruit richten, en leren goed om te gaan met de wuzzel groente, het goed leren te verbouwen, en goed leren te eten. Laten wij daarom ook zeker tot de landbouw school van de elven gaan, opdat zoiets nooit meer zal gebeuren, wat er in het elvenland was gebeurd. Ralwin de heks, wat een naar sprookje. Ik zal het nooit meer vergeten. Zij verlokte kind en volwassene. Ze bracht een waas over de wuzzel groente. Ze bracht een waas over de landbouw, en misleidde de elven tot het doen van andere dingen. Ze bracht vreemde hobbies die er niet toe deden. Ze vernietigde de balans. Ze liet de regenboog opdrogen en allerlei andere kwalijke zaken, in de boeken beschreven. Maar tot wuzzel groente zal zij worden, zij en haar werken. Tot wuzzel groente zal zij worden, zij en al die haar volgen. Deze heks zal het nooit leren. Ze is het kwaad zelf, het plaagkwaad. Kwam eens uit een flesje. Iemand deed iets teveel van iets erop, en wham. Daar begon het al, en niemand kon het meer stoppen. Alleen de

vuurvliegjes konden het uiteindelijk stoppen. Volg daarom de vuurvliegjes. Luister niet meer naar het woord van de heks. Het grote kwaad is zij, het plaagkwaad. Tot wuzzel groente zal zij worden.

Eet er niet teveel van, oh nee, want dan groei je tot een reus, en weet je de weg niet meer. Reuzen kunnen de vuurvliegjes niet volgen. Daar zijn ze te groot voor, en dat horen ze niet, zien ze niet. Ze volgen alleen de heks. Als je alleen maar bezig bent in je centrale hersenen met het eten van wuzzel groente, dan kun je je hersenhelften niet meer balanceren. En dan eet je zoveel wuzzel groente totdat je zelf wuzzel groente bent geworden. Volg daarom de vuurvliegjes. Waak op tot de strijd om de hersenhelften. Het is een strijd om jezelf. Daarom zijn er ook elven soldaten, zoveel, zoveel. Zij strijden tegen het grote plaagkwaad, maar moeten zo goed oppassen dat ze niet zelf dat grote plaagkwaad gaan worden. Het is maar al te snel te bedrieglijk. Volg daarom de vuurvliegjes, volg ze tot je hart. Vandaaruit kan het stromen, om weg te wassen al die bedrieglijke dromen.

Ralwin woont in het ijsland, zo diep zo diep. Zij is de ijsheks die al het kwaad schiep. Ben je haar nog nooit tegengekomen, dan moet je opgroeien, rijp worden, ontwaken. Het is een strijd tegen de ijsheks. Zoveel elven zijn nog steeds bevroren. Zoveel vuurvliegjes houdt ze in haar ijs, en in haar gouden bol. Vuurvliegjesbrood, dat is wat zij eet. Zij is een kok voor al de vraatzuchtigen. Maar zij eet slechts haarzelf. Zij is zo dun dat niemand haar kan pakken. Ze is zo ijl als het licht. Zo vluchtig als een straatkind. Elven soldaten zijn al lang naar haar op zoek, maar velen kwamen in haar valstrikken terecht. Nu slijten ze hun dagen in haar kooien. Elvenbloed drinkt zij, en elvenvlees eet zij, met als delicatesse haar speciale vuurvliegjesbrood. Voor alle vuurvliegjes betekent zij de dood. Zij schreef haar naam in elvenbloed, als een contract met de duivel, haar kwade hart. Plagen en bedriegen is haar lust en haar leven, alles omdraaien, tot het zwart. In elvenbloed baadt zij, dag in en dag uit. In plaagijs troont zij, waar de dood bloedt. Druppelende naar beneden naar wie zij maar kan wegnemen. Haar duivels en plaaggeesten zendt zij op paardjes naar beneden, om kinderen uit hun bedjes te roven, van elke onoplettende ouder. Kinderbloed drinkt zij, dat is haar wijn. Zo maakt zij haar beslissingen. Velen vielen in haar strikken, en kwamen er niet meer uit. Dit

grote duivelse kwaad moet daarom stoppen. Volg daarom de vuurvliegjes. Bij haar kasteel aangekomen zul je bevriezen en niet meer dezelfde zijn. Alles zal ze omdraaien, alles wie of wat je denkt. Maar dan ga je twijfelen in de zee. Tenminste, als je niet zoals haar wil worden. Geloof haar leugens niet. Alleen de zee zal haar kunnen wegwassen. In het grote ijs troont zij, als het licht van de hel. Ren voor je leven. Kinderbloed drinkt zij, maar alles is slechts in je hersenen. Je moet contact maken met de zeehelft van je hersenen, aan de rechterkant. Daar de eilanden leren kennen, daar naar vluchten, want daar zal zij ontvellen, en zal zij ontzegeld worden, ontsluierd, door het voorhangsel heen. Vlucht, vlucht, en keer niet meer om. Wees die ontdekkingsreiziger, ga terug naar Orion. En wie zegt dat zij niet ontzegeld hoeft te worden, zij wiens naam ‘de zondagen’ is, die is zelf de grootste plaaggeest, vanuit haar hart gezonden. Je vele wachters heeft zij, als de wachters van Heidelberg, waar zij woont en troont, in het ijsland. Velen willen die strijd niet aan, en verzinnen excuses, lezen haar dagelijkse krant, die over allerlei andere dingen gaat, om juist die strijd te verdoezelen. Laffe soldaten zijn het, helden op sokken, die nog graag willen pronken in de stad, met hun kranten onder de arm. Tot standbeelden zullen zij worden, tot wuzzel groente.

En maar klagen over dagelijks nieuws, om hun krantje maar te kunnen verkopen. ‘Oh, moet je dit toch eens lezen, en dat, oh wat hebben wij het slecht, wat hangt ons boven het hoofd,’ terwijl het kwaad allang is gekomen en allang troont, daar in Heidelberg, en ontzegelt dient te worden. Een diepere krant dus, ja, jawel. Terug naar Orion. Alles wat om je heen is, is slechts in je eigen hersenen.

Daar in Heidelberg marcheren ze, ze marcheren hier ook. Allemaal om hun valse krant te verkopen, om het bestaan van deze heks te verdoezelen. Het is haar schuilplaats, haar voorhangsel, om de dapperen te bedriegen, om de tuin te leiden. Door een krant van plaaggeesten. Tot wuzzel groente zullen zij worden, ook die kranten. Het blijft maar doormalen in het hoofd, en de ware strijd gaan ze niet aan. In Heidelberg ligt het grote geheim verborgen.

Volg de vuurvliegjes – 3

Als de mens te zelfverzekerd is en te weinig twijfelt aan zichzelf en alles om hem heen, dan moeten er overstromingen komen. De mens moet niet denken dat hij zijn zeehelft kan onderdrukken. Dan zal de zee terugslaan en gebied innemen. Geef daarom voldoende aandacht aan je rechter hersenhelft, in complete samenhang met de andere hersen helften, en het hart.

Ralwin, de ijsheks van de plaaggeesten, houdt ervan elvenbloed en kinderbloed te drinken, en vuurvliegjesbrood te eten, in haar ijspaleis in Heidelberg. Ken je de zondagen al ? Weet je al wat het betekent ? Ze houdt vuurvliegjes opgesloten. Het zijn haar gevangenissen. Zij worden klaargestoomt voor het vuurvliegjesbrood. De heks is haarzelf aan het vergiftigen, maar sleurt hierin zo veel mogelijk met haar mee. Ze sluit de vuurvliegjes op in een magnetisch veld. En dan worden ze meegebakken in het brood. Wie daarom denkt dat we zomaar Heidelberg kunnen overslaan, en denkt dat we het niet zo nauw hoeven te nemen met bijbel onderwijs, is zelf al bedrogen door de plaaggeesten, hun harten geroofd door de ijsheks om in haar leger te strijden, verblind en verdwaasd als ze zijn. Het zijn blinde zielen. Zonder schaamte eten zij hun vuurvliegjesbrood. Nee, dapper zijn ze niet, maar laf en lui.

Volg de vuurvliegjes is een bevel, een strijd op leven en dood. Waar de mens het twijfelen negeert, daar komen de zondvloeden, daar slaat de zee terug. Er is zoveel vals land, dus dan moet de zee wel komen. De mens moet terug naar de stenen tijdperken, naar de kusten van Orion, want er is zoveel natuur verloren gegaan. Deze kennis dragen de eilanden in het zeeland. En deze kennis der eilanden kan alleen ontsloten worden, als de heks van Heidelberg ontzegeld zal worden. Totaal lomp en gevoelloos strijdt de mens in het hier en nu, met geen gevoel voor poezie, verhalen en mysterien. De mens is een bot monster die geen literaire euforie en nostalgie meer kent. Ook zal de zee het ijsland moeten overstromen. Alleen de zee zal haar kunnen verslaan.

De enorme zee zal komen, want de mens is te zelfverzekerd, met de verkeerde dingen bezig. De mens schuilt in het valse ijs, en daarom zal de zee

terugkomen. Orion roept, de zeeen van Orion, en de stenen tijdperken.

Alle elven strijden om Heidelberg. Ze zijn niet in slaap gevallen in het nu. Geschiedenis is namelijk een terrein, niet een verleden. In de elvenwereld is er geen wand tussen nu en het verleden. Alles loopt door elkaar heen. Ook is er geen wand tussen leven en dood, en tussen verleden en toekomst. Alles is hetzelfde, en alles loopt door elkaar heen. Wel zijn er wanden tussen goed en kwaad.

Ook zijn er geen wanden tussen groot en klein, en ook geen wanden tussen arm en rijk. Alles is hetzelfde. En het is iets waar zelfs de elven toe dienen te ontwaken. En er is natuurlijk nog zoiets als tijd en terreinen, en dat is een mysterie. De heks danst haar dansen, maar de zee dringt zichzelf aan haar op. De zee zal geen medelijden hebben. Alles is voorbestemd te twijfelen.

De zee zal niet netjes aankloppen. De zee is een bruut. De mens heeft al genoeg afgeroofd van de natuur. Nu slaat de natuur terug. De natuur hoeft niet netjes te vragen datgene wat van haar was afgeroofd. Wie denkt de mens wel niet dat hij is. De mens is te zelfverzekerd. Oh nee, de mens mag niet lijden, mag geen haar op zijn hoofd gekrenkt worden. Zelfs de huid van de mens heeft hij afgeroofd. Ook mag de zee niet op religieuze tenen staan, maar de zee is de zee. De zee zal zich niet storen aan geroep, gecommandeer en gegil als het komt. De zee is immers de zee.

De zee zal komen, dat is een feit, het woudland en ijsland ten spijt. Het zal allemaal onder moeten lopen voor een nieuwe schepping. Slechts eilanden zullen er overblijven.

De zee zal komen. Het zal meedogenloos brullen tegen de bolwerken van de mensheid en de plaaggeesten. Het zal het grote plaagkwaad bespringen als een groot allesverwoestend roofdier.

De zee zal alleen ontketend kunnen worden door de geheimen van de eilanden, en door die geheimen kun je ook tot de achter hersenen komen, het slaap gedeelte of slaap land, wat ook als een zee is, een slaap zee, en zo kun je

uiteindelijk tot de voor hersenen komen, de steen wereld. De mens denkt vaak in voor de hand liggende tegenstellingen, zoals slapen en ontwaken, maar je moet juist dieper de slaap in gaan tot de steen wereld, wat dan de ware tegenpool is van de slaap. De steen wereld is een beeld van de geoefendheid. In de steen wereld of door de steen wereld, wordt het slaap gas opgewekt, en stroomt zo tot de andere hersendelen. Als er niet genoeg slaapgas is dan gaat alles verkeerd, maar het mag ook weer niet teveel zijn. Daarom moeten de hersendelen in balans komen. Alles met mate.

Het slaapgas wordt in elvenland voor allerlei dingen gebruikt, zoals voor voertuigen, voor het koken, en voor allerlei andere apparaten.

Elwin
en de Konijnenheuvel

Hoofdstuk 1. De Konijnenbank

In de onkrant nu het eerste hoofdstuk. Het oorspronkelijke verhaal komt uit 2003/2004.

Op een dag had Elwin een konijntje gevonden. Het konijntje was een beetje verwond. Misschien wel aangereden door een auto, of door een fiets. Het konijntje sprak niet, en kon ook niet goed ademen. Het lichaampje van het

konijntje schokte een beetje. Elwin had het dier in zijn armen genomen en liep ermee naar huis. Daar was Sandra al met de verbandtrommel. Sandra had nog wel wat kruiden die ze op de wond konden leggen, en toen ging er een prachtig roze verbandje omheen. Ja, Elwin en Sandra hielden veel van dieren, ook van konijntjes. Op een dag kwam de moederkonijn van het konijntje langs. 'Dank je wel, Elwin en Sandra, dat jullie zo goed voor mijn konijntje hebben gezorgd, zei de moeder. Toen nam de moeder het konijntje mee in haar mandje en vertrok. Het beestje was nog niet helemaal beter, maar daar zou de moeder zelf wel voor zorgen. Er waren ook wat andere Drokelaren in de buurt die zagen hoe dankbaar de moeder was naar Elwin en Sandra. En vanaf toen werden verwonde diertjes vaak naar Elwin en Sandra gebracht, omdat ze zo goed voor hen konden zorgen. Op een dag kwam het konijntje terug die Elwin en Sandra zo goed hadden geholpen. Het konijntje was weer helemaal beter. 'Zeg, Elwin en Sandra, komen jullie mee naar het land achter de heuvels ?' zei het konijntje, 'daar wonen wij.' Maar Sandra had het veel te druk met andere diertjes nu. Elwin wilde wel meegaan, want Elwin vond het erg belangrijk om te weten hoe konijntjes leefden. En zo ging de volgende dag Elwin met het konijntje mee. Het konijntje heette Stampertje.

Na een lange reis waren de twee eindelijk in het land achter de heuvels gekomen. Hier woonde Stampertje dan, ergens in een konijnenhol. Het konijntje was zo sterk dat het Elwin wel op de rug kon dragen, en dat moest wel, want de gang van het konijnenhol was heel lang, en er lagen overal boomstronken waar Elwin over kon struikelen. Het konijntje huppelde er behendig overheen.

'Mijn vader en moeder zijn bankiers,' zei het konijntje. En toen ze bij het huisje van het konijntje aankwamen, stond er een klein loketje naast. Achter het loketje stond vader konijn. 'Wat mag het zijn,' zei vader konijn. Elwin begon te glimlachen. 'Ik heb maar heel weinig geld bij me,' zei Elwin. 'Oh, maar dat is helemaal niet erg,' zei vader konijn, 'want bij de konijnenbank kun je met weinig geld heel veel doen, en ook met andere dingen, zoals kledingstukken, voedsel, en zelfs oude rommel.' Elwin glimlachte diep. 'Ik heb nog wel een oud

horloge dat het niet meer doet. Kan ik daar ook iets mee ?' Direkt boog vader konijn naar voren om het horloge te bekijken. 'Maar natuurlijk kun je daar wat mee doen, bij de konijnenbank, jazeker, heel veel zelfs. Als je nu bij ons een rekening opent, dan kun je gaan sparen, door gewoon met kleine dingen te beginnen. Daar kunnen wij dan heel veel mee doen, zodat jij er rente op mag krijgen. Rente is eigenlijk de beloning die je krijgt voor het sparen. Dus als je nu een kapot horloge brengt, dan is het morgen een goede klok,' zei de konijn enthousiast. 'Is dat echt waar ?' vroeg Elwin ongelovig. 'Ja,' zei vader konijn, 'echt waar, en morgen zul je het zien.' Nou dat leek Elwin wel een hele goede manier om snel rijk te worden. Natuurlijk zou Elwin al die rijkdommen gaan gebruiken voor het dierenziekenhuis in de Drokelaar.

Elwin zou een tijdje bij de konijntjes logeren, dan zou hij ook kunnen leren over de konijnenbank. En ja hoor, de volgende ochtend toen Elwin naar het loket ging, stond er een klok voor hem klaar. 'En als ik nu een schoen hier breng om te sparen ?' vroeg Elwin brutaal. Vader konijn glimlachte : 'Ja Elwin, dan heb je de volgende dag er nog een schoen bijgekregen, en niet zomaar schoenen zijn het dan, maar echte konijnenschoenen van de beste schoenmakers van het land.' Dat leek Elwin wel wat. En ja hoor, de volgende morgen stonden er twee konijnenschoenen voor hem klaar. Elwin begon er wel lol in te krijgen. Maar ook begon hij zich af te vragen wat nou precies het geheim van de konijnenbank was. Elwin zou hier heel makkelijk zo rijk als een koning kunnen worden, maar toch was er iets vreemds. De konijnen hier leken helemaal niet zo rijk. Hun huisjes stonden vol met oude spulletjes, en als ze kleertjes aanhadden, dan waren die oud en versleten, met scheuren.

Ook in deze onkrant het eerste hoofdstuk van ‘De Jongens van Daar’ uit 2014 :

Hoofdstuk 1.

Ze woont in een groot ei.
Niemand weet wat voor ei het is.
Het heeft gouden lintjes, prachtige lichtjes, en is als een paleis.
Het ei danst rond in het bos alsof het vleugels heeft.
Ze heeft ook een gouden paard.
‘s Nachts dansten de feeen.
Zij danste ook.
Zij was de koningin der feeen.
Zij was het zonnestraaltje in het oh zo duistere woud,
waar zoveel verschrikkelijke dingen gebeurden.

Jorrin had haar ring, die hij altijd droeg.
Eens had zij die aan hem gegeven.
Hij stierf jong en werd een van haar spoken.

Het glom in het paleis van de paddenkoning.
Prins Jagertouw was diep opgesloten in de kerker.
Hier kon geen zonnestraaltje binnenkomen.
Als prins Jagertouw huilde, huilde hij bloed.
Zijn hoofd was gebogen.
Morgen zou hij in het moddermeer geworpen worden.
Grote krokodillen woonden hier.
Hij zou niets anders dan vlees zijn.

Feeenkoningin Zeeveertje had maar een middel om hem te redden :
de groeiende broek.
Hiervoor moest zij naar de stad Tanzaria naar de dwerg Ebou.
Maar het scheen dat dwerg Ebou ook al was opgepakt door het leger van de

paddenkoning.
Zeeveertje vreesde zelfs voor haar eigen leven.
Gelukkig bleek er nog een groeiende broek in het huis van dwerg Ebou te liggen.
De fee maakte zichzelf en de broek onzichtbaar en ging ermee naar het paleis van de paddenkoning.
Het was een moeilijke reis naar de kerkers ondergrond.

Bij de kerker van prins Jagertouw aangekomen duwde ze de broek door de tralies, en zei :
‘Hier, trek dit aan.’

‘Nee,’ zei de prins. ‘Ik hoef het niet eens aan te trekken. Aanraken is genoeg.’
Toen de hand van de prins de broek raakte, begon de broek te groeien en te veranderen in een prachtige natuur die alles opzoog. De prins was vrij nu. Er was een boszee met daar in het midden een eiland waar een spookstad stond met een spookkasteel.

De prins werd wakker.
Hij had het maar gedroomd.
Hij was nog steeds gevangen in het kasteel van de paddenkoning op een eiland in de boszee.
Het was wel een soort spookkasteel.
De prins was erg eenzaam.
Hij wilde hier niet oud worden.
Hij voelde zich machteloos, hopeloos.
De prins werd geplaagd door dromen en visioenen.
Hij kreeg paddenvoedsel waarvan je sterk ging hallucineren.
Vanuit zijn celraam kon hij de grachten zien,
waar een dwerg op een dwarsfluit speelde.
En vreemde standbeelden stonden hier ook, en vreemde schilden aan de muren.

De pad regeerde hier. Als de prins met de pad sprak voelde hij zich slaperig.
Het was alsof de pad hem had betoverd.

In zijn gedachten klom hij langs de muur omhoog.
Hij herinnerde de tijd dat koningin Zeeveertje regeerde.
Hij verlangde terug naar die tijd.

Koningin Zeeveertje was dood.
Het leger van de pad had haar vermoord.
Het was een zwarte dag in de geschiedenis, waarmee er een zwarte tijd zou aanbreken.
In de spookstad rondom het kasteel waren veel slaapzalen met kinderen.
De kinderen hadden geen ouders.

De prins zou hun vader wel willen zijn, maar hij zat hier vast.
Hij hoorde kinderen buiten zingen : ‘Wanneer je van het drakenvoedsel eet, dan zweef je, dan zweef je. Wanneer je van het drakenvoedsel eet, dan zweef je door de muren heen.’ Ineens gooiden de kinderen wat voedsel door de tralies heen.

De prins greep het en begon direct te eten.
Hij voelde zich een beetje licht worden,,
en een beetje duizelig.
Ook voelde hij zich een beetje ziek,
en al snel begon hij te zweven,
dwars door het plafond.
Hij zweefde heel hoog door het kasteel,
totdat hij in een bovenzaal terecht kwam waar een vrouw op een troon zat.

‘W..wie bent u ?’ vroeg de prins.
Mijn naam is Drakenvuur,’ zei de vrouw.
‘Ik word al heel lang in deze bovenzaal gevangen gehouden.’
De prins gaf ook haar wat van het voedsel en samen zweefden ze verder door het kasteel,
totdat ze boven het kasteel waren.

‘Ik denk dat dit gewoon een droom is,’ zei de vrouw, ‘en dat we straks gewoon wakker worden in de plaats waar we gevangen worden gehouden.’

De prins zuchtte, en werd even later wakker in zijn cel.
Buiten hoorde hij de kinderen lachen en zingen.
Hij had in de gaten dat niets hem echt kon helpen,
alsof hij omringd was met schimmen die niets te betekenen hadden.
Angst begon zich meester van hem te maken.
Hij wilde niet oud worden hier en wegrotten.
Door de tralies zag hij de koningin der vogels buiten dansen.
Ze zag hem niet, en scheen zich niet om hem te bekommeren.

Elwin in het
toets kasteel

Elwin was al heel diep in het bos gekomen. Plotseling zag hij iets glinsteren. Er leek licht te zijn. Zijn gedachten begonnen als balletjes in hem te borrelen. Zou het dan toch waar zijn dat hij eindelijk het bos was uitgekomen ? Hij was goed verdwaald. Maar wilde hij eigenlijk het bos wel uit ? Het was hier zo prachtig. Hij zag een kasteel in de verte. Toen hij bij het kasteel was aangekomen stond er een mannetje in de opening van de kasteelpoort. 'Ben je daar eindelijk ?' zei het mannetje. 'Al je gedachten moeten getoetst worden, anders verbeeldt jij het je allemaal maar, mannetje,' zei het mannetje.

Toen moest Elwin het kasteel in. Het mannetje zei dat dat heel belangrijk was, want al Elwin's gedachtes moesten getoetst worden op waarheid. Ze kwamen

hiervoor in een grote ruimte. Er stond daar een grote spiraal met een trechter. De spiraal was gemaakt van allerlei buisjes die in een lange lijn verbonden waren aan de trechter. Elwin's gedachten bubbelden nog steeds als bolletjes. 'Hoeps,' zei het mannetje. De bolletjes van Elwin's gedachten begonnen de trechter in te dwarrelen. Het leek wel alsof het uit zijn hoofd begon te spuiten. Het mannetje begon te lachen.

Gierend van het lachen ging het mannetje achter een piano zitten. 'Wie bent u eigenlijk ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Ik, weet je dat dan niet ?' proeste het mannetje. 'Ik ben de tovenaar van het toets kasteel. Al jouw gedachtes moeten de trechter in. Dan gaan ze door verschillende buisjes in de spiraal, keer op keer, totdat we zien wat het is.'

'Interessant,' zei Elwin, die naar de balletjes keek die bubbelden in de trechter. Toen zag hij ze een voor een in het eerste buisje rollen. Het eerste buisje in de spiraal was genaamd de waarheid.

'De waarheid,' zei de tovenaar. Hij begon wat te spelen op de piano. 'Alles wordt getoetst aan de waarheid, getest door een oranje vuurtje.' Plotseling zag Elwin glinsterend vuur in de buis. Het was inderdaad oranje. 'Wat voel je nu ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

'Vogeltjes,' zei Elwin, 'in mijn buik. Het is alsof ze vliegen.'

'Dat zijn je gedachten,' zijn de tovenaar. 'Die komen van heel diep, vanuit de buik.' Elwin zag dat de vogeltjes toen uit hem kwamen en ook de trechter in vlogen.

'Interessant,' zei Elwin weer.

'Nu moet je opletten,' zei de tovenaar. De tovenaar begon veel ruiger te spelen op de piano. Alle bolletjes en vogeltjes waren nu inmiddels in het eerste buisje gekomen. Elwin keek naar de buis, naar het oranje vuur.

'De waarheid,' zei de tovenaar weer, 'want er mag geen leugen zijn. Alle leugens zullen hier verbranden. Maar denk dan niet dat het klaar is, Elwin, want er is ook nog zoiets wat we valse waarheid noemen. Het moet dus nog verder getest worden in de buisjes die erna komen in de spiraal.'

Elwin voelde zich heel vreemd in zijn buik, leeg worden, en keek naar het oranje vuur. Het had de hele buis van de waarheid gevuld. Elwin was er even helemaal stil van. Heel veel van zijn balletjes en vogeltjes waren tot as geworden. Het as liep door een filter in neergaande spiraal naar beneden. Het stonk heel erg. 'Mest,' zei de tovenaar. 'Het zal allemaal tot mest worden wat de boeren op hun land zullen gebruiken zodat alles wat ze verbouwen kan groeien.' De neergaande spiraal, de afvoer-spiraal, liep helemaal de grond in. 'Gaat allemaal het riool in,' zei de tovenaar. 'De boeren werken hiermee. Komt allemaal goed. Is het toch niet voor niets geweest. Alles is bruikbaar.'

Elwin glimlachte. Er waren ook wat vogeltjes en bolletjes die wel door het oranje vuur waren heengekomen in de buis van de waarheid, maar dat waren er al een stuk minder. Soms kwamen er nieuwe gedachtes in Elwin opborrelen en die moesten ook direct de trechter in. Het hield eigenlijk nooit op. Het was een altijd-durend proces. Het overblijfsel liep in de tweede buis, in een opgaande spiraal.

'Zoals ik al zei,' zei de tovenaar, 'is er valse waarheid, dus alles moet verder getest worden. De volgende buis is de buis van nederigheid, want de valse waarheid is sluw en eerzuchtig. Altijd wil de valse waarheid haantje de voorste zijn. Begrijp je wat ik bedoel ?'

Elwin knikte. Dat wist Elwin maar al te goed. De valse waarheid was een opdringer, nam altijd meer dan hij nodig had. In nederigheid kon je dat testen. Het was een groene doorzichtige buis in de spiraal die naar boven liep. Daar gingen alle overgebleven vogeltjes en balletjes in. Ze dwarrelden allemaal door elkaar heen. 'Ik zie nog niks,' zei Elwin. 'Ik zie de vogeltjes en balletjes dwarrelen, maar nog geen vuur.'

'Ho ho,' zei de tovenaar. 'We pakken dat anders aan.'

'Hoe dan ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Gas,' zei de tovenaar. 'Er stroomt daar een tovergas van nederigheid.'

'Ik zie het niet,' zei Elwin.

'Je kunt het niet zien,' zei de tovenaar. 'Het gas is onzichtbaar.'

Wel zag Elwin toen dat sommige vogeltjes en balletjes in de buis begonnen neer te vallen en ze werden tot mest en het stonk. 'Oh, ik zie het al,' zei Elwin. 'Ja.'

'Wat ja ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

'Gewoon,' zei Elwin. 'Ik zie hoe het tovergas van nederigheid de waarheid scheidt van de valse waarheid. De valse waarheid wordt hier tot mest. Ik zie hoe het wordt afgevoerd door een filter en door een buisje wat het naar beneden zuigt. Het gaat zo de grond in door die spiraal.'

'Goedzo, Elwin,' zei de tovenaar. 'De valse waarheid is een opschepper, maar het tovergas van nederigheid weet daar wel raad mee.'

Elwin knikte. 'Heel mooi,' zei Elwin. 'Die boeren zullen er vast blij mee zijn.'

'Vast en zeker,' zei de tovenaar.

'Wat nu ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Ho ho,' zei de tovenaar. 'Er is ook nog zoiets als valse nederigheid, dat je toch nog een beetje met de ellebogen wil werken, voor aandacht bijvoorbeeld, eerzuchtige strijd om de meeste te willen zijn, om aanbeden te willen worden, en dan ga je erg sjoemelen, dus als in een hele egoïstische nederigheid, verwaand bijna. Daarom moet het verder getest worden, Elwin.'

Toen ging alles in het derde deel van de spiraal, het derde buisje, dat wat was overgebleven tenminste. Er waren nu nog minder vogeltjes en balletjes, maar heel soms kwamen er wat bij omdat Elwin nieuwe gedachten kreeg die getoetst moesten worden en ook door de trechter in de spiraal kwamen. Elwin keek naar de derde buis. Het was een blauwe doorzichtige buis. 'De buis van vrede,' zei de tovenaar glimlachend.

'Wat gebeurt hier ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Let maar op,' zei de tovenaar. En toen gebeurde er iets wonderlijks. Er kwamen zingende jongetjes naar boven in de buis. Ze waren heel klein. Maar ineens begonnen ze te gillen. 'Wat zijn het ?' vroeg Elwin.

'De gillende jongens,' zei de tovenaar glimlachend. 'Ze komen uit een klok. Soms zingen ze, soms gillen ze, en soms zijn ze wild. Het zijn een soort kaarsjes.' Elwin zag ook vlammetjes op de hoofdjes van de jongetjes. 'Ze moeten met hun gegil de overgebleven vogeltjes en bolletjes testen, je overgebleven gedachten,' zei de tovenaar.

'Interessant,' zei Elwin. 'Maar het is totaal niet vredig.'

'Nee,' zei de tovenaar. 'De vrede is bang en gilt, omdat er gevaren op de loer staan, en daarom moet het getest worden, en zo wordt het getest.'

'Hebben ze ook pijn ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Zeer zeker,' zei de tovenaar. 'Ware vrede kan heel pijnlijk zijn. Het is een beveiligings systeem wat ervoor zorgt dat alles eerlijk verdeeld is, om veilig te zijn tegen de truken van valse nederigheid. De valse nederigheid is zeer, zeer bedrieglijk, als een clown. Hij komt gewoon om te roven.'

'Dus eigenlijk zijn de jongetjes in een oorlog ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Zeer zeker,' zei de tovenaar. 'Dit is de klok van de gillende jongetjes, en zij zullen ook heel wild worden. Het zijn de wilde jongens.'

Elwin bleek kijken naar de gillende jongetjes in de buis, die inderdaad als kaarsjes waren. 'En wat nu ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Kijk goed,' zei de tovenaar. Veel vogeltjes en bolletjes werden weer tot mest. De jongetjes begonnen toen in boertjes te veranderen. 'Vreemd,' lachte Elwin.

'Goed kijken,' zei de tovenaar. Elwin zag hoe de jongetjes harkjes hadden, en andere instrumenten die boeren en tuinmannen hebben. 'Oh, tuinjongens !' riep Elwin.

'Ja, jaha,' zei de tovenaar. 'Maar goed opletten.' Elwin bleef kijken. Nog steeds waren de jongetjes als kaarsjes. Sommige jongetjes waren al bijna opgebrand, en er was een reuk van rook. 'Dit is gevaarlijk, heel gevaarlijk,' zei de tovenaar. 'Kijk nu snel naar de vierde buis, want we hebben nog een buis nodig. Er is namelijk ook valse vrede. Sommigen van die jongetjes dutten in, en zien de gevaren niet meer, en gaan lopen luieren, en blijven boertjes, terwijl ze veel meer moeten zijn. Daarom moet het verder getoetst worden.' Elwin zag de overgebleven jongetjes de vierde buis in dwarrelen. Deze buis was pikzwart, maar doorzichtig. Deze buis lag hoger op de spiraal. Alles wat hier binnenkwam was al ver gekomen. 'Het is de buis van dapperheid,' zei de tovenaar. 'De valse vrede moet verslagen worden, anders is er geen goed beveiligings systeem.'

Hier werden de boertjes en gillende jongetjes tot wilde jongens, tot indiaantjes. 'Verschrikkelijk,' zei Elwin. 'Moet je dat zien.'

'Wat ?' vroeg de tovenaar. Elwin liep ergens naar de buis toe en wees. Er waren daar wat jongetjes aan het zingen. 'Ze zingen zo vals,' zei Elwin. De tovenaar lachte. 'Het is ook nog niet klaar,' zei de tovenaar. De hele spiraal begon toen te branden, als een klok, als een kaars, een klokkaars, maar het waren meerdere kaarsjes. Elwin greep naar zijn hoofd. Er was zoveel rook. 'Nu het getest is,' zei de tovenaar, 'zijn er alleen nog maar vlakketjes.'

'Vlakketjes ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Ja, een soort vlammetjes die getest zijn, maar ze branden maar heel kort,' zei de tovenaar. 'Het is het zuivere deel van je gedachten wat over is gebleven, door de toets heen is gekomen.'

Er waren overal kaarsjes. De kaarsjes leken op jongetjes. En ze hadden de vlakketjes op hun hoofd. Ze zongen een vreemd lied, en ze waren wild. Sommigen gilden. 'Het zijn harde mannen,' zei de tovenaar. 'Zachte jongens worden harde mannen in de nacht.'

Elwin keek naar de jongens. 'Begrijp je wat hier gaande is ?' vroeg de tovenaar.

Elwin greep weer naar zijn hoofd. 'Ik ben in de war. Ik begrijp het niet,' zei Elwin. 'Alles is chaos in mijn hoofd, alsof de wilde jongens in mij zijn.'

'Eerst moet er chaos zijn,' zei de tovenaar, 'en dan worden er nieuwe dingen gemaakt.'

Elwin voelde zichzelf wegsmelten, als in een ketel. Hij keek om zich heen en hij was in een woeste zee. Wat was er gebeurd ? Wat was dit ? Hij werd meegesleurd door woeste golven. 'Help, help !' riep Elwin. Hij hoorde de jongetjes gillen in zijn hoofd. Hij zag ze gebonden aan palen, en indianen dansten er omheen. Alles liep hier in elkaar over. 'Waar ben ik !' riep Elwin.

'Je wordt getest, Elwin !' hoorde hij de tovenaar roepen. 'Helemaal getest. Er zal niets ongetest blijven.'

'Nou, bedankt !' riep Elwin. 'Moet dit allemaal ?'

'Ja !' riep de tovenaar. Elwin voelde nu zelf ook hoe hij aan een paal was gebonden en indianen dansten om hem heen. Elwin begon te gillen. Maar toen werd hij wilder en wilder. Ook hij voelde hoe zijn hoofd als een kaars was. Hij wilde oorlog voeren tegen het kwaad, tegen alles wat vals was, maar hij wist ook hoe bedrieglijk dat kon zijn, dus daarom moest het wel getoetst worden. Er stonden zoveel gevaren op de loer, zoveel valstrikken, maar het leek alsof Elwin nu ook in een valstrik was, en hij kon er niet uit. 'Help !' riep Elwin weer.

'Zoek het maar uit !' riep de tovenaar toen.

Elwin keek rond, en zag dat het een grote puzzel was. Alle stukjes vlogen om hem heen. Alles liep door elkaar heen ook. Hij was in een ketel. In de ketel was een paal waaraan Elwin was gebonden, en zijn hoofd brandde als een kaars.

'Al je gedachten moeten getoetst worden, Elwin,' riep de tovenaar, 'alles waarvan jij denkt dat het de waarheid is, ook alles waarvan je denkt dat het goed is.'

'Ik begrijp het !' riep Elwin. Hij merkte dat alles wat op een afstand bleef. Het draaide woest om hem heen, maar het kwam niet verder.

'Waar ben ik ?' riep Elwin. 'Nee !'

'Kijken of je dapper bent !' riep de tovenaar.

'Ik wil niet !' riep Elwin.

'Dan stopt de reis hier, en wordt je tot mest !' riep de tovenaar.

'Nee, dat wil ik ook niet !' riep Elwin.

'Zoveel !' riep Elwin.

'Zoveel wat ?' hoorde hij de tovenaar roepen.

'Veren !' riep Elwin, 'witte veren ! Waar ben ik ?'

'Het is een klok !' riep de tovenaar. 'Alles gaat terug naar het begin, en dan wordt het weer getoetst.'

'Waarom ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Het is een toetsklok,' zei de tovenaar. 'Je kan jammeren wat je wil, maar dit gaat eeuwig door.'

'Ik wil niet !' riep Elwin. Elwin greep naar zijn hoofd. Dat kon hij weer. Hij moest zich ook goed vasthouden. Hij was zo duizelig.

'Dan wordt je mest,' zei de tovenaar. 'Of nog erger.'

'Nog erger ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Valse vrede doet pensioneren. Dan wordt je een opaatje,' zei de tovenaar.

'Nee, dat wil ik niet !' riep Elwin. 'Ik wil altijd een kind blijven !'

'Goedzo,' zei de tovenaar. 'Dan is er hoop.'

Elwin begon te snikken. 'Ik voel me zo vreemd, zo ziek.'

Hij zag de jongetjes om zich heen. Sommigen waren boertjes, anderen waren indiaantjes, tuinmannetjes, of gewoon wilde jongens, en weer anderen leken op het punt te staan te gaan gillen. Ze waren een stuk groter nu.

'Ik kan wel janken,' zei Elwin. 'Zijn we nu klaar ?'

'Nee,' zei de tovenaar. 'Het beste moet nog komen.'

Op hun hoofden waren de vlakketjes. Dit waren de gezuiverde en getoetste gedachten. Toen werd Elwin wat rustiger. Ook op Elwin's hoofd waren de vlakketjes. 'Dit zijn de nieuwe dromen,' zei de tovenaar, 'zacht als veren.'

Elwin zuchtte. Weer greep hij naar zijn hoofd. 'Ik begrijp dit niet, ik begrijp dit niet.'

'Hoeft ook niet,' zei de tovenaar. 'Niet alles hoeft begrepen te worden, maar je bent hier in het toets kasteel. Er valt hier veel te leren.'

'Ik kom hier nooit meer uit ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Dat zou dom zijn,' zei de tovenaar. 'Je kunt er alleen maar dieper in, en zoals je weet veranderd hier alles. Het is immers een klok.'

'Je denkt dat je heel wat bent, hè ?' zei Elwin ineens heel brutaal.

'Ik ben ook getoetst,' zei de tovenaar. 'Maar ik heb dit alles gemaakt.'

'Dan zou ik dat ook weleens willen toetsen !' riep Elwin, en rende op het mannetje af en raakte met het mannetje in gevecht. 'Dit is dan zeker het beste, hè !' riep Elwin. 'Een gevecht met jou, om te zien of je wel echt bent !'

Eerst was het mannetje heel klein, maar toen ineens stond er een leeuw voor Elwin.

Elwin zuchtte. 'Ik kan het nu wel opgeven. Je bent immers een tovenaar.'

Elwin was in slaap gevallen. De leeuw was groot en zwart en stond voor hem. Alles was donker. 'Waar ben ik ?' vroeg Elwin slaperig. 'Droom ik ?'

Hij zag toen een jongetje. 'In het toets kasteel,' zei het jongetje. 'Je bent bij de gillende jongens van de klok.'

'Vreemd,' zei Elwin, en viel weer in slaap.

'W... wat heb ik gedronken,' stamelde Elwin slaperig ... 'Ik ...'

'Wij worden altijd wild in de nacht,' fluisterde de jongen. Er was nu ook een andere jongen bij.

'A... als een kaars ?' vroeg Elwin terwijl hij half sliep ... 'Ik ben zo ...'

'Ja, als kaarsen,' zeiden de jongens. Er kwamen steeds meer jongens bij. Elwin

was omsingeld.

'Welkom in de klok van de gillende jongens,' zei één van de jongens. 'Je bent nu één van ons. Wij worden ook wel de wilde jongens genoemd. Wij zijn het geheim van het toets kasteel.'

'E... en jullie kunnen ook zo mooi zingen,' zei Elwin …

'Soms,' zei één van de jongens.

'Het is oorlog,' zei één van de jongens.

'Ja, en zoveel valse vrede,' zei een andere jongen.

'En daarom zijn wij hier,' zei weer een andere jongen.

Ze hadden zulke mooie stemmen.

'Nou, bedankt,' zei Elwin. 'Ik wil graag bij jullie horen, maar ik ben nogal dom vergeleken met jullie, in de zin dat ik nog eigenlijk helemaal niets van deze plaats afweet.'

'Komt wel,' zei één van de jongens.

'Elwin, malle jongen,' zei een andere jongen, die hem een klap gaf.

'Au,' zei Elwin. 'Jij bent zeker de pestkop van het stel ?'

'We zijn allemaal pestkoppen min of meer,' zei weer een andere jongen, 'op onze eigen manier. Moet wel. Het is meer spelen en toetsen. Het is meer onderzoeken, van verschillende kanten bekijken, eraan draaien, zien hoe dingen werken.'

'Oh, reacties uitlokken,' zei Elwin.

'Het is een soort voorzichtigheid,' zei één van de jongens. 'Maar er is ook vals pesten, dus vandaar dat het toets kasteel er is. Er wordt geplaagd, het is een plaag kasteel, maar dus om te toetsen, als voorzichtigheid, en dat is een goede basis. Het is hier een studie kwaliteit, een onderzoeksdrang, en niet zomaar met alle winden meewaaien, en daarom gillen wij. Wij plagen en worden geplaagd. Wij plagen en worden geplaagd.'

Toen bleef de jongen het maar opnieuw zeggen : 'Wij plagen en worden geplaagd.' Het ging maar door, en ook de anderen begonnen het op te zeggen, als een versje.'

'Hey, stop daarmee,' zei Elwin. 'Nu weet ik het wel.'

Maar ze stopten niet. Het ging maar door. 'Volgens mij moeten jullie de toets spiraal weer in,' zei Elwin.

Ze begonnen toen te zingen, de meest wonderschone liederen. Ze waren als koorknapen. Elwin vond het prachtig. Elwin zag de grote trechter weer. Daar moest alles in. Al zijn gedachten, alle vogeltjes en bolletjes, want was het allemaal wel waar ? Ook dit moest getoetst worden. Elwin voelde zichzelf een harde werker, alsof hij in de mijnen werkte. Hij droeg alles wat hij maar kon vinden tot de grote trechter, ook de zingende jongetjes, die daar maar stonden en steeds kleiner werden. 'Hup, de trechter in,' zei Elwin. En toen ging hij naar de buisjes kijken van de spiraal, waar alles doorheen ging, en zoveel, ja zoveel, werd tot mest.

'De boeren zullen er blij mee zijn,' grinnikte Elwin, maar hij was ook verdrietig, omdat sommigen van die jongetjes niets dan mest bleken te zijn. Het was vals. Er rolden soms wat tranen over zijn wangen als hij dat zag. Hij hield van die jongetjes. Maar hoevelen van hen waren echt ? Hoevelen van hen waren van een pure waarheid ? Vaak zat er weer een addertje onder het gras, maar nu wist Elwin hoe hij het kon toetsen. Uiteindelijk moesten ook alle vlakketjes de trechter in. Ook alles waarvan hij dacht dat het nu wel zuiver moest zijn. Alles moest weer de trechter in. Dit was eeuwig, iets wat herhaald moest blijven worden, anders zou Elwin zelf tot mest worden.

Waarheid, Nederigheid, Vrede en Dapperheid, daaraan moest alles getoetst worden, en ook de toetsresultaten moesten weer opnieuw getoetst worden, want het was immers een klok. En daarom gilden de jongens, als een hypergevoelig alarm. Er stonden ook teveel onbekende en geheime gevaren op de loer. Dit was niet iets simpels. Elwin moest hier een harde werker worden, een wilde jongen. Het was hard werk in deze mijnen. Altijd maar weer moest hij terug naar de trechter.

Ontstaansgeschiedenis sinterklaas - De Honderdjarige Oorlog

Een heel interessant artikel uit het archief, over de vrouwelijke oorsprong van sinterklaas.

De Honderdjarige Oorlog

De kolonisten, de voorlopers van de nazi's, vochten niet alleen tegen de indianen, maar ook tegen elkaar. Zo waren er de Engels-Nederlandse oorlogen om Indiaans grondgebied tussen 1652 en 1784, met onderbrekingen, waardoor het een soort van honderjarige oorlog was. Dit gebeurde dus vlak na de tachtigjarige oorlog, waarin Nederland en Engeland nog bondgenoten waren in de strijd tegen het Spaanse wereldrijk van 1568 tot 1648. Toen Spanje werd teruggedrongen kwam er tussen Engeland en Nederland een oorlog over wie wat kreeg en de regels erover. Uiteindelijk liep dit erop uit dat Nieuw Nederland werd geruild met Suriname. Engeland is dus de schakelaar waardoor het Amerikaanse Nederland van Noord naar Zuid verhuisde. Het is dus van belang deze geschiedkundige put tussen Noord en Zuid te bespreken.

Engeland is Groot Brittannië, oftewel Grote Bertha, of Bertha Grootvoet, wat een zuidelijke naam was voor Hel of de nicht van Hel. Haar volgelingen waren de Berserkers, die bedekt waren met de moeder aarde, of zich hadden geverfd met zwarte verf. Zij waren degenen die aan zichzelf waren gestorven in de aarde, zoals de einherjars die door de Germaanse oorlogsgodinnen genaamd de Walkuren opgenomen waren. De walkuren namen de geselecteerde strijders

die hard aan zichzelf gestorven waren mee om hen voor te bereiden op de eindstrijd, de Ragnarok. Grote Bertha of Bertha Grootvoet ging op haar wagen door de lucht tijdens het joelfeest en bezocht dan de huizen van de kinderen om een zilveren munt in hun schoen te doen als ze goed waren geweest. Als ze niet goed waren geweest, dan sneed ze hun buiken open om ze te vullen met stenen, zoals ook in het Roodkapje verhaal gebeurde met de hebzuchtige wolf. Vandaag de dag is dit zichtbaar in mannen die hun buiken helemaal verkrampen totdat deze stenen zichtbaar worden, als teken dat hun spiritualiteit en fijngevoeligheid is afgestorven. Ze zijn geobsedeerd met hun buik, en proberen de schijn te wekken dat het een sport is, zoals ook de Spanjaarden de schijn proberen te wekken dat stierengevechten een sport is.

Bertha werd later vermannelijkt tot Sinterklaas, en het joelfeest werd tot kerstfeest. De Hebreeuwse bijbel begint met 'beresit', bere-rosh-t, in de beginne. Bere is de Surinaamse baarmoeder, in het Sranan Tongo. BRTN betekent in het Aramees zus of partner, relatie. BRT betekent dochter. BRT-TNH betekent mede-student, samen studeren. BRT (barit) is in het Egyptisch een kooi, en een verbond, een contract (barta), van het wortelwoord 'ber', put, uitgang, naar buiten. In het Germaans is Bertha verbonden aan het verborgene. Al met al duidt het erop dat de mens een relatie moet aangaan met het verborgene. Groot-Britannië duidt cryptisch en etymologisch op het contract wat de mens moet aangaan met het diepere, waardoor de mens komt van Noord tot Zuid, van stad tot de natuur, van het publieke tot het verborgene, van het bovengrondse tot het ondergrondse. Toen ik hier kwam als kind was het een dal, een ondergronds rijk, van schedels en doodsbeenderen. Alle maskers waren afgerukt. Natuurlijk was dit iets metaforisch. Toen ik volwassen werd kreeg ik dromen die mij daar lieten terugkeren en het bleek de wilde indiaanse wereld te zijn voordat het door de rijke witte kolonisten werd geplunderd en vernietigd, voordat er lagen overheen gebouwd werden. Ik ontmoette toen drie indiaanse opperhoofden.

Groot-Britannië duidt dus op het moment waarop de walkuren een einherjar verkiezen, oftewel het moment waarop ze aankomen in dit geheime

ondergrondse gebied doordat ze aan zichzelf zijn afgestorven. Het is het moment dat ze de zilveren munt in hun schoen vinden, wat een teken is dat ze niet één zijn geworden met de stad, de wolf, die stenen in zijn buik heeft. Bertha is de leidster van de wilde jacht in het joelfeest, waarin de doden komen om de wolf te verjagen, als een beeld van het verjagen van het kwaad van de 'levenden'. Het valse licht moet sterven, opdat de mens de nacht, de verborgen diepte, in kan gaan.

Elwin

Terug naar Klaas Vaak

Het eerste hoofdstuk van dit verhaal oorspronkelijk uit 2003

Hoofdstuk 1. De gestolen Toverstaf

Elwin zat met Sandra in zijn tuintje te lezen. Er stonden weer veel vervelende dingen in de krant, en ze moesten snel naar binnen, want het begon een beetje te regenen. Elwin zei tegen Sandra : 'Sandra, ik lees liever een goed boek dan de krant. Wat een nare dingen staan daar toch vaak in. Kunnen ze niet wat leukers bedenken ?' Sandra knikte. Elwin liep naar de grote boekenkast in de huiskamer, en begon de boeken te bekijken. 'Welk boek zal ik eens nemen ?'

zei hij zachtjes. Er stonden allerlei boeken tussen : boeken over scheepvaart, boeken over de natuur, over dieren, insecten, en ook een boek over Klaas Vaak.

Elwin begon direct te lezen. Het was al zo lang geleden dat hij in dit boek had gelezen. Klaas Vaak had gouden toverstaven waarmee hij met arenden kon spreken. Arenden zijn hele grote vogels. Klaas Vaak gebruikte ze vaak om dromen rond te brengen. En als iemand dan droomde, dan werden de toverstaven steeds langer, om de dromen langer te laten duren. De gouden toverstaven hadden allerlei kleuren : Er waren groenen, roden, gelen en blauwen. Maar op een dag was Klaas Vaak zijn toverstaven kwijt. Iemand had ze gestolen.

'Bah, wat een naar boek,' zei Elwin tegen Sandra. 'Iemand heeft de gouden toverstaven van Klaas Vaak gestolen, en dat is meteen het einde van het boek.' Maar Sandra zat te slapen op haar stoeltje. Elwin dacht : 'Eigenlijk zou ik die arme Klaas Vaak best willen helpen.' En hij besloot op reis te gaan naar Klaas Vaak. Hij schreef een briefje aan Sandra dat hij op reis zou gaan naar Klaas Vaak om hem te helpen. Hij had wel eens vaker zulke briefjes aan Sandra geschreven als hij weer eens op reis moest. Sandra vond dat altijd wel best, want Elwin kwam altijd weer met verhalen thuis.

Het was een lange reis door een konijnenhol, maar gelukkig nam een konijntje hem op de rug. Aangekomen bij Klaas Vaak moest hij door een rode deur. Het was hier wel veranderd, zeg. Een keer eerder was hij hier al geweest, maar dat was heel lang geleden.

Klaas Vaak was blij om Elwin te zien. Elwin zei dat hij het zo vervelend vond dat het boek slecht afliep. Klaas Vaak glimlachte : 'Als het boek goed zou zijn afgelopen was je nooit gekomen. Inmiddels hebben we vele staven weer teruggevonden, want de dief liet ze vallen terwijl hij wegvluchtte. Maar er is één rood gouden toverstaaf die we nog missen. Zou jij die voor ons kunnen zoeken, Elwin ? Het enige wat we weten is dat de dief in een oosters paleis

woont. Wij hebben een afgescheurd kledingstuk van hem gevonden, wat van een oosterse prins was.'

Dat zou een lange reis worden, en hoe zou Elwin ooit kunnen weten in welk paleis hij moest zijn ? Elwin vroeg of hij het afgescheurde kledingstuk van de prins mocht zien. Toen hij het in z'n handjes kreeg glimlachte hij. Het merk was van een peperdure kledingmaker die hij wel kende. Deze kleermaker maakte alleen kleren voor de rijkste keizers en koningen. Het moest daarom één van de rijkste paleizen van het oosten zijn.

Klaas Vaak vroeg of Elwin hem alsjeblieft wilde helpen, want alleen de rood gouden toverstaaf kon het spreken en samenwerken met de arenden weer op gang brengen. Klaas Vaak werkte sinds de diefstal met ganzen, maar dat ging niet altijd goed. Er was één arend die bij Klaas Vaak bleef, en de rest ging met de dief mee. Dat waren wel honderden arenden, die vanaf toen voor de nare dief moesten werken. Gelukkig had de dief alleen nog maar de rood gouden staaf, maar zo'n rijke prins zou de andere staven makkelijk kunnen namaken.

De rood gouden toverstaaf was de allerbelangrijkste staf van Klaas Vaak, die hij nodig had om alle andere toverstaffen te laten werken. Er was één arend bij Klaas Vaak achtergebleven. Dit was een zeer wijze arend. Deze arend had geen toverstokken nodig. Deze arend kon alle talen spreken. Maar de arend was heel oud, en zou niet meer zo lang leven. Sinds zijn vrienden weg waren was hij heel erg ziek geworden. In de rood gouden toverstaf zat het arendsmedicijn wat hem zou kunnen helpen. Het was dus dubbel belangrijk dat Elwin deze bijzondere staf zou vinden. De arend wilde Elwin wel naar het oosten brengen met zijn laatste krachten.

De gestolen rood gouden toverstaf kon het langste worden van allemaal. Klaas Vaak gebruikte hem vaak als ladder naar moeilijk te bereiken plaatsen. Als de rood gouden toverstaf terug zou zijn, zou Klaas Vaak graag willen verhuizen naar de maan. Van hieruit zou hij zijn werk nog beter kunnen doen. Maar de

vraag was of Elwin de toverstaf ooit zou vinden.

Op de rug van de arend begon Elwin de volgende dag zijn reis. Het was vroeg in de morgen, en de kok van Klaas Vaak had aardbeiencake voor Elwin gebakken, om mee te nemen. Ook had Klaas Vaak allerlei dingetjes in zijn rugzakje gestopt die hij misschien nodig zou hebben. Na een hele lange tijd vliegen kwamen ze dan eindelijk in de buurt van het oosten. Maar er waren hier zulke zware woestijnstormen, dat de arend niet meer verder kon vliegen. Elwin haalde een kleed uit zijn rugzak, wat Klaas Vaak hem had meegegeven, en legde het over de arend heen, om te schuilen tegen de zandstormen. Daarna kroop hij er zelf onder.

De Onkrant

Literaire Columns van de Tweede Bijbel

De Onkrant

Winterboek

De Onkrant
1970-2021

Winterboek
2021

De Onkrant – De gratis literaire krant van Nederland en Belgie
De Onkrant – Ter publicatie en bespreking van de literatuur van de Tweede Bijbel
De Onkrant – Omdat goede literatuur niet alleen maar voor de rijken is

inhouds-opgave :

1 het medicijn van de goede herder
2 De Maagd van Utenweil
3 Het Experiment
4 De Dromen van Niets
5 De Wonderplaatjes
6 De Ochtenden
7 is er leven na de dood ?
8 tekenfilm land
9 de veertiger jaren en de daarop wijzende dystopische literatuur
10 – 1940 – kallocaine
11 de toetssteen en basis van het medicijn van de goede herder
12 – 1942 – de vreemdeling – het afbreken van de nazi computer
13 De Sprookjesmarkt
14 sleutel literatuur 1940-1945

15 Het Zwemparadijs
16 de muurbij 1-4
17 de bijenkorf
18 liefde is gratis koffie
19 de kallocaine muren van de literalogische stad
20 suzie
21 paperguards
22 de onstad
23 het warme glas
24 de goede herder
25 graaf kiekendrecht van de bijlmer
26 de bijlmerreus
27 orion – de geestelijke wiskunde leraar van egypte – bespreking van het egyptische dodenboek
28 gejaagd door de k'w
29 de totem
30 De Toversleutel tot de Hemel
31 hermes en het geneesmiddel van de hemelse sociologische wiskunde in de strijd tegen de drugs-reuzen van totalitarisme en narcisme
32 hermes = here in ons allen
33 doe je hermes aan – kruis en kruit – de ontzegeling van de griekse mythologie – raadsels van de eerste en tweede wereldoorlog
34 de eerste en tweede wereld oorlog
35 morgen in de krant
36 geluk bij een ongeluk I-II
37 de haai van de amazone

het medicijn van de goede herder

Ik had een droom over Burtle Tux, een serie in de geestelijke wereld. Turtle is schildpad in het Engels, maar een Burtle is een vliegende schildpad, als een beeld van het geduld wat als loon vleugels heeft gekregen. Ook waren deze schildpadden soms gewapend. Er zaten ook roofschildpadden tussen.

Ik had een droom over de gids van Venezuela, een hongerland in Zuid-Amerika, en hij had de ogen van de goede herder. Ik sprak met hem en ik voelde een zware aandrang om hem te omhelzen, dus dat deed ik, en hij omhelsde mij ook. Hij gaf mij een apparaat wat elke 20 minuten een Peter Pan tune speelde, als beeld van het krijgen van vleugels door het kinderschap. Het apparaat werkte op een aantal hele kleine tonnetjes-achtige batterijen.

Ik was in een natuurstad met mijn broertje, en we liepen naar het centrum, en toen ging hij ergens naar binnen waar een jongen zat achter een bureau, wat ik door het raam kon zien. Ik ging toen ook naar binnen en ik zag allerlei mensen wachten die daar zaten. Ik vroeg : ‘Is mijn broertje hier ?’ Niemand antwoordde. Ik keek rond en zag mijn broertje niet meer.

Hoe komen we door de natuurstad tot de eigenlijke natuur ? Familie leden zoals broertjes, en dit was in de geestelijke wereld, zijn beelden van onze schaduwen, van onze vleugels. Uiteindelijk moeten we die zelf laten groeien door geduld en kinderlijkheid.

Het materialisme, waarin alles maar grijpt en daardoor z’n vleugels verliest, is een schijnrealiteit. Het zijn schaduwen. We moeten het namelijk zelf verdienen door geduld en kinderlijkheid. Het materialisme is vlees en zal door de insecten verslonden worden. Alleen de schildpadden zullen ontkomen, en zij moeten leren vliegen. Zo ontwikkelen ze ook hun wapens. Die mogen ook niet zomaar gegrepen worden, maar moeten groeien door geduld en kinderlijkheid, net als de vleugels. Zo ontwikkelen wij ook de ogen van de goede herder. En pas dan kun je iemand waarlijk omhelzen die deze ogen ook heeft. Daarbuiten is dat niet echt mogelijk, tenzij in de schijnwerkelijkheid, maar die zal worden

gegeten door de insecten. Burtle Tux is de grote oorlog van de vliegende schildpadden tegen de gehaaste schijnwerkelijkheid. De gids van Venezuela met de ogen van de goede herder was ook in dat leger. De natuursteden moesten ingenomen worden, opdat de mens zijn weg naar de natuur zou terugvinden. Er waren nog velen opgesloten.

Mensen gingen tot de kantoortjes van de wilde jongens in de natuursteden, maar niet iedereen had een zuiver hart met zuivere bedoelingen. Ik hoorde nog zoveel vooroordelend gefluister en geroddel in de wachtkamer. Het zijn mensen die voortijdig kennis hebben gegrepen, hebben gestolen of opgekocht. Kennis kunnen we alleen verdienen in geduld en kinderlijkheid, anders is de kennis bedorven en zal het de mens slechts vergiftigen. Zo vergiftigen ze ook elkaar. Burtle Tux is dus echt nodig.

Geduld is het geneesmiddel voor gebroken vleugels. Dit is een medicijn waarmee de goede herder werkt. In geduld onderga je wedergeboorte en wordt je weer tot kind. Geduld is onlosmakelijk verbonden met kinderlijkheid. Zo kan ook de valse, giftige kinderlijkheid overwonnen worden die maar niet op wil groeien in geduld. Het grist en graait maar. Het is tuk, houdt ziekelijk aan dingen vast en wil altijd meer. Daarom moet de mens van tuk tot tux gaan. Tux verklaart de oorlog aan ongeduld en hebberigheid en is in de onthechting door geduld. De valse, giftige kinderlijkheid van het niet willen onthechten in geduld zijn de schaduwen van de mens die hij moet afleggen. Het behoort niet tot het ware ik, het ware zijn, maar het is om de mens heen. Het moet nog verteerd worden. Het spel moet nog uitgespeeld worden, de puzzel gelegd. Het spijsverteringskanaal is het kanaal van de dromen. Hiertoe brengen de wilde jongens en de goede herders het medicijn. Hiertoe hebben ze hun kantoortjes in de natuursteden, als ambassadeurs van de wildernis. Alleen zij die geduld hebben mogen dit medicijn toepassen. Alleen zij komen uiteindelijk door de wachtkamers heen. Tux betekent dus oorlog in de geestelijke wereld. Burtle Tux leidt dus alles in goede banen. Er is voedsel voor iedereen. Er is zoveel koren om te oogsten. Als je op de velden gaat dan groeien daar nog allerlei schaduwen die nog verder verteerd moeten worden. De velden staan vol, maar de werkers zijn weinig. Alleen geduld is de weg, en op die weg ergens krijgt het geduld vleugels. Het is dus heel dankbaar werk uiteindelijk. Het is een heerlijk

moment waarop je hierin je vleugels ontvangt. Het is iets om voor te leven, iets om naar uit te zien. Dat is dan een ware wederkomst. Van wedergeboorte tot wederkomst.

De wilde jongens kennen dit geheim. Zij zijn de volgelingen van Peter Pan. Zij worden ook wel de verloren jongens genoemd, de lost boys, de verloren schapen, de eenlingen. Zij zijn in opleiding tot goede herder. Uiteindelijk kunnen ze dan net zo vliegen als Peter Pan. Peter Pan is slechts een beeld van hun eigen hogere zelf, een beeld van de wederkomst van het ware zelf. Uiteindelijk is dit een heerlijk medicijn. Eerst is het bitter, maar daarna proeft het als honing. Pas op voor de medicijnen die altijd zoet zijn. Burtle Tux moet nog gestreden worden. De wilde jongens hebben hun kantoortjes in de natuursteden. Ze hebben prachtige stemmen. Ik keek in de droom door het raam, en zag een wilde jongen achter een bureau zitten, en hij had een prachtig gezicht en een prachtige stem die ik heel iets kon horen. Het was een gezicht van liefde en empathie, van non-conformisme, van ongetemdheid, een gezicht wat kinderlijkheid uitdrukte, geen loze aardse mannelijkheid. Het was een gezicht van een andere wereld, heel geestelijk.

De Maagd van Utenweil

De maagd stond hoog op de toren.
Sjieke dames met waaiers en bepoederde gezichten trokken hun neus op toen er een meisje langsliep.
‘Ze stinkt, parbleu. Bah, wat een vies kind.’
Minachtende blikken wierpen ze het meisje toe. Ook maakten ze wegwuifende bewegingen.
‘Ja, ze stinkt naar onverschilligheid. Dit meisje heeft niets op met de goede herder. Bah, wat vies en goor. Daar valt toch niet mee te leven. Ga weg, kind.

Jij hoort hier niet.’
Het meisje begon te lachen, brutaal als ze was. En rende weg.
De Maagd van Utenweil weende hoog op de toren.
Het was een standbeeld.
De sjieke dames van Utenweil liepen haastig door, al roddelend, fluisterend, vol met oordelen naar hun onverschillige medemens. Ze hadden een grote haat naar de liefdeloosheid, en poederden zichzelf telkens om hier tegen bestand te zijn. Nee, dat hoorde niet bij hen. Dat paste niet bij hen. Dat was vies. Oh, zo sjiek waren ze, en ze spraken zo beleefd en keurig, want dat had de goede herder hen geleerd. En ze hadden een vergunning om zo te zijn, om op straat mensen zo af te kafferen. Zij werkten immers bij de geheime politie.

De maagd van Utenweil weende.
Ze was helemaal naakt.
Maar ze was een standbeeld, dus niemand deerde het.
Telkens weende zij als er iemand onverschillig was.
Maar er was niemand zo onverschillig als de sjieke dames van Utenweil.
Oh, zo schoon waren ze, hun witte jurken witter dan wit.
Als er een pluisje of vuiltje op de grond lag, dan raakten ze helemaal in paniek.
Dan grepen ze de spuitbus in grote onverschilligheid naar het vuil, en dan haalden ze stoffer en blik erbij en ander zwaar geschut. Dan ging het vuil of de rommel zonder pardon de prullenbak in.
Nee, niemand was sjieker en schoner dan de sjieke dames van Utenweil.
Iedereen kende hen, en iedereen vreesde hen.
Ze traden op tegen het grote vuil van de liefdeloosheid.
Daar hadden ze geen medelijden mee.
Dan waren ze koud en hardvochtig als roofdieren.
Dan stonden ze aan de kant van de goede herder.
Ja, wilde dames waren zij.
Een masker in de maatschappij.
Zij waren immers bij de geheime politie.

De maagd van Utenweil weende,
tranen van vreugde.
De kinderen waren immers beveiligd.

Het alarm was goed afgegaan.
De overtreder afgedropen …

De maagd van Utenweil,
een schat eens gevonden op de bodem van de zee,
bij een gezonken schip,
met de sjieke dames van Utenweil aan haar zijde.

Uit de bundel ‘De Letterman’ uit 2018 :

Het Experiment

Hij stond daar in een wit plasma pak met uitschuifbare klauwen in de onderarmen, hele lange metalen pinnen met gifpunten, die hij kon besturen door vinger drukpunten. Soms moest hij een paar keer klikken om het gewenste resultaat te bereiken. Hij was in gevecht met schildpad-achtige wezens, de linea. Ze hadden groen en blauw bloed, en verder ook gele, witte en rode sappen in hun lichaam. Het was allemaal gif, en ze hadden de planeet al zo lang geterroriseerd. Nu was het oorlog.

Hij moest vechten voor zijn leven en hoopte maar dat het gif van zijn tegenstander niet door zijn helm heen zou kunnen komen. De schilpadachtige wezens waren woest. Ze spoten hun gif vanaf grote afstanden, maar hij was ditkeer goed bewapend. In het verleden was dat wel anders. Met zijn electrische sabel vocht hij als een leeuw. Ook was zijn helm goed toegerust met lange afstands wapens. Die waren ook electrisch, en ook hij kon gif spuiten. Hij werkte zijn weg naar boven over de metalen trappen en stellages, en was op zoek naar een cabine. Hij was niet alleen. Een soortgelijk leger was met hem.

Hij had de vinger bewegingen goed geoefend, zodat hij zijn wapens goed kon besturen. Hij kende alle codes. Hier had hij maandenlang voor gestudeerd en veel geoefend in schijn-gevechten. Nu was hij hier, en hij had maar één doel voor ogen : overwinnen, overleven. De schildpad-achtige wezens, de linea, vochten als beren. Het was geen makkelijke opgave. Ze waren zeer gewiekst in allerlei truken, maar tot nu toe kwam hij er doorheen, en zijn leger ook.

Hij was trots op zichzelf dat hij het zo ver had kunnen schoppen. Hij was dankbaar dat hij in het leger was toegelaten. Ook was hij trots op zijn gevechtspak. Het gevechtspak was als een vriend. Het voelde zo goed aan, zo vertrouwd. In de helm zat een goed navigatie systeem. Ze hadden er dit keer echt werk van gemaakt. Nog steeds was het een experiment, maar het ging tot dusver goed.

Opeens gingen er overal schelle alarmen af. Hij viel op de grond alsof een aardbeving hem had getroffen. Even later werd hij wakker in een cel. Een schildpad-achtige bewaker keek hem aan. 'Ontsnappen is onmogelijk,' zei de bewaker, en injecteerde een groene stof in zijn lichaam met een spuit. Hij krijste, en viel na een bepaalde tijd weer in slaap. Plotseling werd hij weer wakker. Alles was donker. Hij hoorde gekrijs. Mannen in witte plasmapakken met grote witte ondoorzichtige helmen die grote punten hadden pakten hem beet terwijl hij weer een beetje kon zien. Ze namen hem mee door een tunnel. Het waren hele grote mannen, alhoewel hij niet wist of het wel mannen waren. Ze waren veel langer dan zijn leger in ieder geval. Het leken wel monsters. Ze

namen hem mee door de tunnel naar een wit ruimteschip, ondoorzichtig.

Hij wist niet wie ze waren. Ze namen hem mee naar een kamer waar een vrouw was. Ze was in allerlei documenten aan het bladeren. 'Uw helm was nog te zwak,' zei de vrouw zonder op te kijken. 'Het was niet bestand tegen de sonische aanvallen.'

'Wie bent u als ik vragen mag ?' vroeg hij.

'Dat doet niet ter zake,' zei de vrouw, 'ik ben van het systeem. Een robot. Ik dien u te herbewapenen.'

'Welk systeem ?' vroeg hij.

'Ante-serius,' sprak zij.

'Wat is het ?' vroeg hij.

'Dat kan ik u niet uitleggen nu,' sprak de robot. 'Er is weinig tijd. U bent nu herbewapend.'

Plotseling was hij weer op een metalen trap, oog in oog met twee schilpadachtige wezens die hem aanvielen. Ze deden weer sonische aanvallen, geluids-aanvallen, maar hij was er nu tegen bestand. Hij merkte dat zijn helm zichzelf had ge-update. Het was allemaal een ingebouwd mechanisme. Het geluid van de schildpad-achtige wezens was nu in de verte, en het was een heel prettig geluid, alsof hij zich in een computerspel bevond. Weer haalde hij uit met zijn klauwen, en ze maakten ook zachte, kalmerende geluiden. Elke beweging die hij maakte gaf een sonische sensatie. Het gaf hem een zeker gevoel van veiligheid. Het navigatie systeem van zijn helm legde hem uit dat hij nu zelf ook sonische aanvallen kon doen. Hij had hierin verschillende keuze-mogelijkheden.

Hij merkte dat hierdoor zijn tegenstanders snel verslagen waren. Ze konden niet tegen dit systeem op. Hij voelde zichzelf als een moderator.

In een reflectie zag hij dat zijn eigen helm nu ook uitsteeksels had. Hij moest zijn wapenrusting beter leren kennen. Na een tijdje had hij de cabine gevonden, samen met wat anderen. Ze renden de cabine binnen, en schakelden de schildpadachtige wezens die daar waren uit. Een monotoon alarm ging af. Het was heel doordringend, maar hij voelde dat hij er tegen bestand was. Meer en meer schildpadachtige wezens kwamen de cabine in, en er was weer een gevecht. Wat waren het er veel ditkeer, maar ze leken kleiner te worden. Aan de andere kant van de cabine was een langere man of monster binnengekomen in een wit plasmapak met lange uitsteeksels op zijn helm. Hij sprak heel doordringend met een aangenaam geluid. Het was als een zoemend geluid. Ik begreep dat hij door deze sonische aanval de schildpadachtige wezens verkleinde. Hij begon op ze te trappen met zijn witte laarzen.

Dit was de hoofdcabine. Er waren allerlei machines met ingewikkelde computerschermen. Er kwamen meerdere lange mannen of monsters binnen die achter de computers gingen zitten, en ze begonnen eraan te werken. Sommigen hadden speciaal gereedschap bij zich om eraan te sleutelen. 'Dat was het,' zei de lange man.

'Wat ?' vroeg ik.

'We zijn er,' zei hij. 'De oorlog is door ons gewonnen.'

Ik kon het bijna niet geloven. De staatsgreep was geslaagd.

'En wat nu ?' vroeg ik.

'Heel wat om op te bouwen,' zei hij.

Ik dacht na over wat we allemaal hadden verloren in de afgelopen tijd. De schade was erg groot, en ik had pijn in mijn hoofd. Ik had het gevoel alsof ik nooit zou genezen.

'De verwonding is te diep,' stamelde ik.

'Wij zijn dieper,' zei de lange man.

De planeet was bevrijd. Iedereen was blij en er werd veel gefeest, maar ik voelde me niet blij. Ik voelde me kapot. Ook was ik op mijn hoede, want dat kon toch allemaal niet waar zijn ? Het duurde dan ook een tijdje voordat alles tot me doordrong. Ik vroeg me af of we wel echt veilig waren. De gesprekken met de lange mannen, of monsters, schenen me te helpen. Alleen al hun sonische eigenschappen hadden al een verzachtend effect op me, als wederopbouwend. Alles leek wel spelenderwijs te gaan. Het scheen iets in mijn helm te zijn wat zich integreerde, en wat muteerde, alsof twee samenlevingen één werden. Er leefde iets in mij, er groeide iets in mij, als een strijder. Het was mijn gids en mijn beschermer.

Ze waren onderdelen van een spel, een prachtig kosmisch en prozaïsch spel. Het was als een brug in mij, een zintuig, maar ik kon nog niet mijn vinger erop leggen wat het nu precies was. Ze waren de onderdelen van mijn wapenrusting, mijn vrienden. Ze hadden mij eindelijk gevonden.

Alles wat ik deed had een andere sonische waarde nu, en het beschermde mij tegen sonische aanvallen van buitenaf. De hele samenleving van de planeet werd door andere sonische blokken opgebouwd nu, als een versterkte immunologie. Het was het hart van de samenleving van de planeet, maar het leek wel alsof het sonisch verminderend was, want het leidde telkens tot diepere stiltes, dieper en dieper, en de stiltes werden langer en langer. Het was de sonische vermindering, een verschijnsel wat leidde tot het ontstaan van zoveel andere zintuigen.

De vorige samenleving van de planeet was namelijk oversonisch, waardoor deze zintuigen niet konden functioneren.

Terwijl hij nog steeds zijn helm ophad sprak het navigatie systeem tot hem : 'Besef je dat je vijanden slechts onderdelen zijn van je eigen wapenrusting ? Je hebt ze alleen nog niet op waarde kunnen schatten.' Anderen hadden hun helmen allang afgedaan, en velen hadden ook hun plasma-pakken uitgedaan.

Hij wilde het zekere voor het onzekere nemen, en hij had zeker behoefte aan begeleiding door het navigatie systeem.

Uit de bundel ‘De Letterman’ uit 2018 :

De Dromen van Niets

Aan zijn voorarm was een vlijmscherp hakmes bevestigd. Hij haalde er een paar keer goed mee uit. Het mes ging dwars door de keel van de leider van de straatbende. Hij had de keel met de punt van zijn mes geraakt, en hij hakte door de hele keel heen als in een flits. En toen nog een keer met de punt van de andere kant van het mes. Het was snel gedaan. De leider van de straatbende lag al snel op de grond in een plas bloed. Hij bleef ernaar kijken, het in zichzelf opnemende. Hij rende niet eens weg. Al snel waren er sirenes. Hij stond daar als onder hypnose, ook toen hij even later gearresteerd werd. Het leven op straat was niks. Het zou in de gevangenis veel beter zijn. Ook hij was de leider van een straatbende.

Hij dacht na over zijn daad, maar wist dat hij dit moest doen. Volgens hem was er geen andere weg. Hij had nog steeds een smaak van bloed in zijn mond. Het proefde bitter, maar voor hem had het ook een zekere zoetheid, want het betekende het einde van een tijdperk, van een lange strijd.

Zijn maten kwamen hem in de gevangenis opzoeken. Ze brachten allemaal spullen voor hem mee. Ze zouden hem er wel doorheen helpen. 'De politie wilde het niet doen, dus deed ik het zelf,' zei hij telkens. Zeven jaar de gevangenis in. De stad was blij dat hij het gedaan had. Nu waren ze eindelijk verlost. Het waren zeven lange jaren van grote terreur geweest voor de stad, en nu moest hij voor zeven jaar de gevangenis in om het te neutraliseren. Het viel voor hem nog wel mee. Hij had een veel langere gevangenis straf verwacht.

De eerste nacht in de gevangenis was vreemd geweest. Het was alsof hij hier thuis was. Zelfs de agenten zagen hem als een held, omdat hij Jejo had uitgeschakeld, de beruchte bendeleider die de stad zo lang had geterroriseerd. Zeven lange, zware jaren, die wel eeuwen leken te duren. Er moest wel een einde aan komen. Toen de zeven jaren voorbijwaren wilde hij niet weg, maar hij moest. Hij kreeg een huisje waar hij opnieuw kon beginnen. Op een nacht werd er op de deur geklopt. Het was een vroegere vriendin. Ze wilde iets voor hem voorlezen. Het was een gedicht.

Ze sprak : "Waarom zijn de tijden zo snel voorbij ? Wat wij hadden was maar een zucht en flits. Ik draag het met mij mee, maar het wordt steeds kleiner, totdat het zal komen als een baby van het niets."

"We kunnen niet met elkaar, Sara," sprak hij. "Dat heb je mooi verwoord."

"Ik ga maar weer eens," sprak ze. Hij ging naar bed en dacht na over alles. Alles was inderdaad zo snel gegaan. Met Jejo had hij afgerekend, en die herinnering zou ook steeds kleiner worden.

De dag erna ging hij de stad in. Weer kwam hij Sara tegen die daar ergens op een bankje zat. Hij keek haar aan en zij keek naar hem. "Mooi weertje, hè ?" zei hij.

"Ja, dat wel," zei ze.

"Dat wel ?" vroeg hij. "Dat klinkt alsof de rest niet zo mooi is."

"Daarom was ik ook bij je," zei ze. "Ik wist dat je net uit de gevangenis was gekomen, dus ik dacht dat jij me misschien wel zou begrijpen."

"Het ontging me," zei hij. "Wat is er aan de hand ?"

"De baby," zei ze, "de baby van het niets. Het is onze zoon."

Hij trok zijn wenkbrauwen op. "Dat geloof je toch zeker zelf niet, hè, Sara ?" sprak hij. "Dat was een gedicht, iets symbolisch. Het is niet echt."

"Dat zei ik ook," sprak ze. "De baby is niet echt, en dat is ook het probleem."

"Sara," zei hij. "Stop eens met die filosofische onzin. Hier komen we toch ook niet verder mee ?"

"Het is verdriet," sprak ze.

"Ja, maar we konden niet met elkaar," sprak hij. "Het zou alleen maar nog meer verdriet opleveren."

"Herinner je je Jejo ?" vroeg ze.

"Ja, natuurlijk, wie niet ?" sprak hij geirriteerd.

"Ik heb ook een baby van het niets met hem," sprak ze.

"Iedereen wist dat je een hoer was, Sara," sprak hij, "ik kijk er niet van op."

Sara begon te lachen. "Het is niet echt," grinnikte ze, "en de baby ook niet. Je moet niet alles geloven." Toen rende ze lachend weg.

"Trol !" riep hij haar na.

De volgende dag kwam hij haar weer tegen. Ze was nog wel bedroefder dan de vorige keren, en ze was helemaal in het zwart. "Sara toch," sprak hij. "Zeg, wees nu eens eerlijk en zeg me wat er aan de hand is."

"Okay," zei ze. "Ditmaal zal ik duidelijker zijn, maar niet in paniek raken, okay ?"

Hij knikte.

"Herinner je je wat ik zei over Jejo gisteren ?" vroeg ze.

Hij knikte weer.

"Ik had het over babies van niets, en ik ben blij," zei ze.

Hij trok zijn wenkbrauwen op en staarde naar haar.

"Blij om wat ?" vroeg hij.

"Nou," zei ze, "gewoon blij dat het geen echte baby was."

"Wat bedoel je Sara ?" vroeg hij traag.

"Hij heeft het geprobeerd ...," sprak ze.

"Geprobeerd ?" vroeg hij verbaasd.

"Ja, gedwongen," zei ze. "Hij heeft me ... Laat maar." Toen liep ze weg. Hij rende achter haar aan en greep haar jas. "Zeg het me," zei hij.

"Ik ben één van de velen. Ik ben blij dat ik nog leef, en nee, ik heb nooit iets met hem gehad. Hij heeft me ..." sprak ze.

"Waarom heb je me dat nooit eerder verteld ?" vroeg hij.

"Ik kon het niet," sprak ze. "Ik mocht het niet van hem, anders zou hij me ... Laat maar."

"Ik weet genoeg," zei hij bitter, "die vuilak."

"Wees in vervolg voorzichtig met wie je een hoer noemt," sprak ze. Toen liep ze weg.

"Sara !" riep hij. Hij rende achter haar aan, maar zij rende ook. Ze rende door het drukke verkeer, maar daar waagde hij zich niet aan. Hij wachtte bij het stoplicht, en ging toen het groen was de drukke weg over. Hij zag haar rennen naar het metro station. "Waarom doe je nu zo ?" riep hij.

Toen hij aan was gekomen bij het metro station zag hij haar net in de metro stappen, en die reed toen ook direct weg.

"Wat moet je nu met zoiets ?" zei hij tegen zichzelf, en ging naar huis.

Die nacht had hij een droom over de babies van niets. Ze waren opgegroeid en terroriseerden de stad. De babies van niets waren nu tot iets geworden. En zoals gewoonlijks was de politie nergens te bekennen, en moest hij het allemaal in zijn eentje opknappen en kwam daardoor de gevangenis in. Hij was blij toen hij weer wakker was, dat het allemaal maar een droom was, de dromen van niets.

Uit de bundel ‘De Letterman’ uit 2018 :

De Wonderplaatjes

Hij verkocht plaatjes van vrouwen. De plaatjes bewogen, maar het waren eigenlijk een soort verhalen. Volgens de politie gingen de verhalen te ver, en daarom was het ook verboden. Plaatjesdealers waren in de ogen van de politie erger dan drugsdealers. Hij verkocht de plaatjes daarom ook altijd stiekem, en liever helemaal niet. Dit maakte hem mysterieus. Zijn plaatjes waren gewild, maar eigenlijk moest je wel heel speciaal zijn wilde je een kans hebben zo'n plaatje van hem te kunnen kopen. De plaatjes waren ook nog eens erg duur. Theo was helemaal door het dolle heen toen hij op een dag zo'n zeer gewild plaatje kon bemachtigen. Hij kon er uren naar staren. Het plaatje bewoog, en ook de lippen van de vrouw, en zij vertelde een verhaal. Het plaatje gaf dus ook geluid af. Met een draaischijf aan de zijkant van het plaatje kun je het geluid harder of zachter zetten. Hij liet het verhaal telkens weer afspelen totdat hij het uit zijn hoofd kende en gewoon naar de lippen van de vrouw keek. Hij vond het verhaal helemaal niet te ver gaan, maar hij hoorde van anderen dat de andere verhalen veel erger waren. Hij zou wel meer van zulke plaatjes willen hebben, maar hij was al dolgelukkig dat hij er één had. Hij had nooit gedacht dat het hem op een dag zou lukken zo'n plaatje te krijgen. Al zijn klasgenootjes waren stikjaloers.

Hij speelde er teveel mee, zelfs op school, en op een dag nam de juffrouw het van hem af. 'Je weet dat die plaatjes verboden zijn,' zei de juffrouw. En hij wist toen dat de pret was afgelopen. Hij was te ver gegaan en te onvoorzichtig geweest. Hij kon zichzelf wel voor z'n kop slaan. Sommige jongens van de oudere klassen lieten nog steeds hun plaatjes wapperen, maar alleen op het schoolplein. Ze zouden het niet in de klas doen waar de meester of juffrouw het kon zien. Het waren vaak vrienden van de jongen die de plaatjes verkocht. Theo vertelde het verhaal aan de jongen die de plaatjes verkocht toen hij hem weer zag, maar die was niet geïnteresseerd. "Had je maar beter moeten oppassen," zei de jongen. "Je krijgt geen nieuwe."

Theo ging teleurgesteld naar huis, en vertelde het aan zijn vader en moeder. "Ach," zei zijn moeder, "ik heb nog wel zulke plaatjes voor je. Wij hadden ze vroeger ook. Ze moeten ergens in een doos op zolder liggen nog." Theo was helemaal door het dolle heen. Zijn moeder kwam even later aanzetten met een hele schoenendoos vol met bewegende plaatjes. Theo nam ze één voor één uit de schoenendoos. "Wat zijn het voor verhalen, mam ?" vroeg hij.

"Ga ze maar luisteren," zei zijn moeder, "maar neem ze nooit mee naar school. Je hebt inmiddels gezien wat er dan kan gebeuren."

Hij nam de schoenendoos mee naar zijn kamer en ging luisteren. Hij hing de plaatjes in zijn kamer. Niemand, maar dan ook niemand, kon zijn geluk nog tegenhouden. Hij begon zich steeds meer op zijn kamer op te sluiten, en wilde niet meer naar school. De plaatjes onderwezen hem beter, zei hij. Maar hij werd een verslaafde, en had al snel andere plaatjes nodig. Hij zocht contact met de plaatjesdealer, maar die dacht dat hij gek geworden was. "Kijk eens naar jezelf," zei de plaatjesdealer, "je staat helemaal te trillen, en je ogen zijn helemaal rood. Dit is niet meer normaal. Hoe kwam je aan die plaatjes ?"

"Van mijn moeder," zei Theo. "Van vroeger."

De plaatjesdealer keek hem diep in zijn ogen. "Weet je het dan niet ?" zei hij. "Vroeger verkochten ze gevaarlijke rommel. Die vrouwen zijn gevaarlijk. Ze

maken je gek."

"Wat kan ik doen ?" vroeg Theo. "Ik smeek je me te helpen."

De plaatjesdealer keek hem weer diep in zijn ogen. "Ik heb je gewaarschuwd," zei hij, en liep weg.

"Nee, alsjeblieft," huilde Theo. "Je moet me helpen."

De plaatjesdealer draaide zich om. "Vooruit," zei hij. "Breng mij die plaatjes van vroeger en je krijgt van mij een nieuwe." Even later kwam Theo met de schoenendoos en gaf het aan de plaatjesdealer. Theo kreeg in ruil een nieuw plaatje. Dat was alles wat hij nodig had. Toen de plaatjesdealer thuis kwam zette hij de schoenendoos met plaatjes op een tafel, en begon op de vrouwen te schelden. "Jullie moeten getemd worden. Jullie hebben die jongen helemaal het hoofd gek lopen maken." Maar het temmen liep op niets uit. De plaatjesdealer raakte gefrustreerd en op een dag gooide hij de schoenendoos met plaatjes weg. Maar toen kreeg hij ineens een ingeving. Hij dacht aan Theo, en toen aan de moeder van Theo. Hij zou de schoenendoos naar haar terugbrengen en haar zeggen dat ze het niet meer terug moest geven aan Theo. Theo's moeder begreep het hele verhaal en ze zou de schoenendoos goed opbergen. Theo's moeder zou ook wel eens alle nieuwe plaatjes willen zien. De plaatjesdealer nam haar toen mee naar zijn huis. De plaatjes hingen door het hele huis. Theo's moeder keek haar ogen uit. "Kan ik er wat meer kopen voor Theo ?" vroeg ze. De plaatjesdealer stemde toe. De plaatjes waren heel duur, maar Theo's moeder was rijk, zeer rijk. Ze kwam toen met een heleboel nieuwe plaatjes thuis voor Theo. Maar de pret duurde niet lang. De politie had er hoogte van gekregen en begon huiszoekingen te doen, en Theo werd niet overgeslagen. De plaatjes werden in beslag genomen, en ook de schoenendoos werd gevonden en in beslag genomen.

Theo's moeder waarschuwde de politie voor het gevaar van de plaatjes, maar ze luisterden niet. Snel wist iedereen het. De politie was binnen korte tijd een stel verslaafden. Ze waren zoals Theo eens was, trillerig, met rode ogen, en smekend. Maar er waren geen meerdere plaatjes meer, hoe veel ze ook op

huiszoeking gingen. Ze smeekten de plaatjesdealer om meer plaatjes, en ze smeekten ook Theo en zijn moeder. "Probeer het maar bij juffrouw Jans," zei Theo. "Zij heeft eens zo'n plaatje van me afgenomen." Daar strompelden ze toen als dronkaarden naartoe. "Tja," zei de juffrouw, "die heb ik eens aan mijn ex-man gegeven en die woont nu in het buitenland."

Ze moesten en zouden daar naartoe gaan, maar onderweg verdwaalden ze. Ze waren niet henzelf meer en hadden hun gevoel van orientatie verloren. "Het plaatje, het plaatje !" riepen ze. Ze had hen ook nog eens een vals adres gegeven. Ze kwamen uiteindelijk aan bij het huis van een oude vrouw aan de rand van een bos, in het buitenland. Ze vroegen direct om het plaatje. "Plaatje ?" vroeg de vrouw. "Waar hebben jullie het over ?" Toen vertelden ze stotterend en stamelend het hele verhaal, terwijl het speeksel van hun monden droop. "Ik zal direct de dokter bellen," zei het vrouwtje. "Het gaat niet goed met jullie." Toen de dokter kwam kreeg hij ook het hele verhaal te horen. "Oh, die plaatjes ?" zei hij. "Ik heb er eens een hele doos van geërfd, van wel honderden jaren geleden. Je mag ze wel hebben als jullie denken dat het jullie gaat helpen. Ik doe er toch niets mee." De dokter nam de trillende en bevende politie-agenten mee naar zijn huis, en liet hen de doos zien. "Plaatjes, plaatjes, plaatjes !" riepen de agenten, alsof ze goud hadden gevonden. Hun ogen puilden er helemaal uit, en ze grepen de plaatjes en begonnen ze in het rond te strooien alsof ze in een geldmijn waren gekomen. "Plaatjes, plaatjes, plaatjes !" riepen ze. Dat was alles wat ze nog konden zeggen. De vrouw van de dokter schudde haar hoofd. "Die plaatjes werden vroeger verboden, en ik weet nu waarom," sprak ze. "Mensen worden stapelgek."

"Ik heb er wel een medicijn voor denk ik," zei de dokter.

"Dan mag je snel zijn," zei zijn vrouw. "Anders wordt jij er zo ook nog door aangestoken." De dokter keek zijn vrouw aan met rode ogen, en toen weer naar de plaatjes die overal om hem heen lagen. "Plaatjes, plaatjes, plaatjes !" riep de dokter, en waggelde achter de politie-agenten aan. "We moeten meer van die rotzooi hebben, waar zijn ze ?" riep de dokter. Maar niet lang daarna kon hij ook alleen maar "plaatjes, plaatjes, plaatjes" zeggen. "Jullie hebben teveel praatjes !" riep de vrouw van de dokter. Ze begon de plaatjes op te

rapen en deed ze weer in de doos. "Levensgevaarlijk zulke plaatjes," sprak ze. "Ik zal het goed opbergen." Maar de politie-agenten en de dokter waren niet meer stil te krijgen. De dokter had inmiddels zijn muziek-instrumenten gegrepen en begon ze uit te delen aan de politie-agenten, en ze begonnen muziek te maken, zo vreemd, want ze konden immers niet meer spreken. En zo gingen ze door het hele land, marcherend. En de mensen kenden het verhaal niet, maar ze vonden het prachtige muziek. En iedereen werd erdoor aangestoken, en er werden grammofoon-plaatjes van gemaakt. Iedereen had ze na een tijdje wel in huis. En er kwam vrede op aarde en niemand werd er meer ziek. Politie en dokters waren niet meer nodig. Ze waren nu muzikanten geworden, en dat was het beste.

De Ochtenden

1950, zondag 1 januari

Vijf jaar had hij in een coma gelegen. Hij werd wakker in een ziekenhuis in 1950, vijf jaar na de oorlog. Ze hadden hem gevonden, maar hij kon zich niet meer herinneren hoe hij in een coma was geraakt. Wel kon hij zich de oorlog herinneren. Ook kon hij zich niets herinneren van zijn coma tijd. Hij werd gewoon wakker in een nieuw leven. Het oude was ver weg, maar toch herinnerde hij zich de oorlog levendig, en gruwelijk. Het was allemaal een beetje op de achtergrond. Hij was verbaasd over zijn nieuwe leven. Hij voelde zich goed. Hij stond op en liep het ziekenhuis uit, op blote voeten. Hij werd teruggeroepen, maar hij luisterde niet. Hij wilde naar huis. Hoe zou zijn vriendin er nu uitzien ? Toen hij bij zijn huis was aangekomen woonden daar andere

mensen. Hij belde aan en werd vriendelijk te woord gestaan. Zijn vriendin zou nu ergens anders wonen. Hij kreeg het nieuwe adres en ging daar naartoe.

Hij belde aan.
Zijn vriendin deed open en slaakte een gil.
Toen omhelsde ze hem.
‘Je bent wakker geworden !’ riep ze.
‘God zij dank !’

‘Lazarus,’ zei hij.
‘Wat was er met mij gebeurd ?’

Hij had een nieuw leven nu. Zijn vriendin ontving hem met open armen. Het was een mooie ochtend op de eerste dag van 1950. Ze spraken veel over de oorlog en over elkaar. Ze hadden elkaar opnieuw gevonden door deze ontwaking. ‘Ik dacht dat je nooit meer zou ontwaken,’ zei ze. ‘Elke dag heb ik je opgezocht in al die jaren.’ Hij huilde.

Het was een mooie ochtend. Ze liet hem het huis zien, de kamers, het meubiliair. Sommige dingen herkende hij nog van vroeger. Andere dingen waren nieuw. Ook liet ze hem de tuin zien, aan de voor- en achterkant.

‘Het is een wonder,’ zei ze. Hij knikte. Aan het einde van de ochtend maakten ze ook een wandelingetje door de buurt. Hij had inmiddels slippers aan.

‘We moeten wat kleren voor je kopen,’ zei ze. Hij droeg wat van haar kleren en een jas van haar.

1950, maandag 2 januari

Het was zonnig, maar koud. Vandaag zouden ze nieuwe kleren voor hem kopen. Ze waren beiden vroeg op. Hij scheen niks meer te mankeren, zo van de ene op de andere dag. Wel had hij gruwelijke flashbacks, over de oorlog. Dan moest ze hem omhelzen.

In de winkelstraat werd hij vreemd aangekeken. Een man met slippers in de winter en met vrouwenkleren. Hij glimlachte naar hen. Hij was al blij dat hij weer ontwaakt was.

Ook gingen ze even naar de boekenwinkel.

1950, dinsdag 3 januari

Hij was vroeg op en zong een lied. Hij ging de tuin in en keek naar de lucht. Ook keek hij naar de planten en boompjes in de tuin, de struikjes. Alles was kaal vanwege de winter. Zo begon hij ook zijn nieuwe leven. Hij voelde zich kaal. Nu moest hij stap voor stap zijn leven opbouwen. Vandaag zouden ze naar zijn oma gaan met de trein. Zij wilde hem graag zien. Ze was al oud.

Het was een lange treinreis.

‘Jongen, wat ben je groot geworden,’ zei ze toen ze aankwamen. Ze omhelsde hem stevig. Het was nog hetzelfde huisje. Hier kwam hij altijd graag. Zijn opa was al overleden. Hij wilde niet te lang blijven, maar zijn oma drong erop aan.

1950, woensdag 4 januari

Dirk Wibaut liep met zijn vriendin door de winkelstraat. Nu wilde hij ook werken. Ze klopten aan bij het pand waar hij vroeger werkte. Ze waren verbaasd hem te zien. ‘Jij was toch in een coma ?’ Hij knikte. Hij werd omhelsd.

‘Het is een wonder,’ zeiden ze. ‘Niemand had ooit nog verwacht dat je uit de coma zou komen na zo’n lange tijd.’ Hij kon er direct weer werken.

1950, donderdag 5 januari

Om elf uur ‘s ochtends zou hij beginnen met werken. Daarvoor ging hij eerst met zijn vriendin naar de markt. Er was zoveel te koop. Hij dacht aan zijn werk. Hij kon eigenlijk niet wachten. Maar ineens had hij midden op het marktplein een grote flashback, een zware paniek aanval. Zijn vriendin omhelsde hem. Omstanders keken hem vreemd aan. ‘Ja, het is de oorlog,’ zei zijn vriendin.

Toen ze thuisgekomen waren plofte hij neer op de bank en huilde. ‘Ik wil werken,’ huilde hij. ‘Zo kan ik alles vergeten.’ Kwart voor elf liepen ze samen naar zijn werk. Nog helemaal onder de tranen kwam hij daar aan. ‘Gaat het niet goed met je, jongen ?’ werd er gevraagd. Hij schudde zijn hoofd. ‘Maar ik wil graag werken. Dan kom ik er misschien vanaf.’

1950, vrijdag 6 januari

Het was een mooie dag. Vroeg in de ochtend voordat hij naar het werk zou gaan maakten ze even een wandelingetje. Ze liepen langs een hotel waar hij vroeger graag kwam. Het was een wit hotel. Hij maakte er altijd een praatje met de tuinman. Die was er nog steeds, en was blij hem te zien. ‘Gaat nu alles goed met je, jongen ?’

Hij knikte. ‘Ik heb nu weer werk.’

1950, zaterdag 7 januari

Zijn vriendin ging naar een modeshow. Hij was er niet in geinteresseerd. Hij

ging kijken tussen zijn oude boeken. Vele indianen boeken had hij verzameld. Het bleek dat zijn vriendin door was blijven gaan met de verzameling, want er waren ook boeken bij die hij nog niet kende. Toen ze aan het eind van de ochtend thuiskwam met een vriendin raakten ze daar nog even over in gesprek.

1950, zondag 8 januari

Hij was vroeg op en zong een lied. Hij voelde altijd een bepaalde saaiheid op de zondagen. Maar zijn vriendin gaf wat afleiding. Toch voelde hij zich ook depressief, maar dat had hij vroeger ook altijd op de zondag. Hij wist niet waardoor het kwam. Hij noemde het zondag depressie of zondag humeur. Hij wilde ook niet het bos in. Hij dacht aan zijn oma. Misschien konden ze naar haar toegaan, maar uiteindelijk besloot hij dat niet te doen. Hij maakte zijn bed op en keek rond in de kamer. Hij keek door het raam. Alles was er zo rustig, vredig, en saai, zo saai. En het was ook nog eens winter. Het was koud. Buiten groeide niets. Hij wilde niet in het bos zijn. Nee. Dan zouden zijn flashbacks terugkomen. Dan zou het hem naar de keel vliegen. Hij moest binnen blijven. Buiten vlogen de draken.

‘Niemand heeft er iets aan als ik flashbacks ga krijgen,’ zei hij tegen zichzelf. Hij wilde eigenlijk werken, maar het was zondag. Hij besloot naar het cafe te gaan, alleen. Maar toen hij daar aankwam kreeg hij niets te drinken. De kastelein kende hem wel. ‘Nee, niet meer, niet meer,’ zei de kastelein.

‘Waarom niet ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Ben je het dan vergeten ?’ vroeg de kastelein. ‘Je dronk jezelf vroeger altijd tot in een coma.’

is er leven na de dood ?

‘We moeten nu leven.
Er is geen leven na de dood.’
Hoe zit dat precies ?

De Vur zegt het ook :
‘Het ravijn getuigt van een loze eeuwigheid waarin alleen de momenten sieraden zijn, van onpeilbare waarde. De aardkloot zit vol van geheimen, de tijd is de schat, de eeuwigheid is nutteloos.’ (51:4)

Er is dus geen leven na de dood ?
Ja en nee.
Voor het vlees zal alles uiteindelijk afgelopen zijn, en er is zoveel vlees.
Eigenlijk is dan de eeuwigheid de echo van het tijdelijke leven.
Je moet nu leven, nu kiezen, het niet uitstellen naar een soort van ingebeeld hiernamaals.
Tijd is namelijk al geweest.
Het gaat om het hiervoormaals en het hiernumaals waar alles al inzit.
Bovenstaande tekst uit de Vur komt trouwens uit het verhaal ‘Het Luipaard’ van de Vuh, over een groep robotten die gemaakt zijn om mensen te vervangen en mensen te helpen, maar dit gaat op het eind zo mis dat het de mensen toch weer dichter naar elkaar drijft in plaats van naar de robotten.

De eeuwigheid zit in de herinneringen, in de reflecties van de tijd, in de kernen van de tijd. De eeuwigheid is in principe dus gewoon een illusie. Het gaat erom in jezelf tot vereeuwiging te komen. In het vleselijke is dit niet te vinden.

Het verhaal Het Luipaard gaat erover dat aan alle dingen uiteindelijk een eind

komt, en dat er dan weer andere dingen zijn. Dat is ook een heel ander bewustzijn, wat je niet met elkaar kunt vergelijken. Je komt dan in een hele andere belevingswereld en gaat dan tussen dingen inzitten en inleven. Het verhaal gaat over kapotte relaties, maar die dan wel een soort cirkel beweging maken, zoals de cirkels op de huid van het Luipaard, en dat het om die cirkels gaat, en dat je de rest kan vergeten. De eeuwigheid op zich is verder nutteloos als je niet het diepere wezen van de tijd hebt gevonden. Dat is ook de kracht van het luipaard en zijn snelheid. Er is geen leven na de dood, maar een leven voor de dood, en door de dood. Vandaar ook de uitdrukking : het hierdoormaals. Alles verandert weer. Alles stroomt door. Als je dan een ontmoeting hebt met de beer van de eeuwige dood die totaal onverschillig lijkt te zijn naar het leven en het nut van het leven, dan mogen we ook het verhaal ‘Het Experiment’ herinneren uit de bundel ‘De Lettermaker’ uit 2018. De conclusie van dit verhaal is dat de vijanden uiteindelijk slechts onderdelen zijn van je wapenrusting zelf, die je nog niet herkent hebt als zodanig, en die nog op waarde geschat moeten worden. Uiteindelijk zijn het dus je eigen cryptische vormen. Als we dan naar de beer van de eeuwige dood kijken die woest kan brullen en die meedogenloos onverschillig is als roofdier zijnde naar andere levenssoorten dan mogen we dit een kwartslag draaien en die onverschilligheid hebben tegenover de vleselijke zienswijzen en levenswijzen om ons heen, in de zin dat we ons daarvan mogen onthechten, en we het mogen veranderen, mogen draaien. Het verhaal gaat namelijk verder, zoals ook de sjieke dames uit het verhaal van de Maagd van Utenweil deze hemelse onverschilligheid hadden naar alle liefdeloosheid om hen heen. Dan mogen we zeggen : Ja, daar is de eeuwige dood goed voor, om het te draaien, te veranderen, te recyclen. De ware eternity is immers de returnity. Het gevoel van eeuwigheid kun je namelijk alleen opwekken als je verder teruggaat, dus ook niet ergens blijven plakken.

De eeuwigheid is een wezen van verteerde tijd. De eeuwigheid is een wezen van opgeloste dromen.
In het materiele mag het vlees dus niet gegeten worden, want dat is materialisme, maar in het geestelijke moet het vlees wel degelijk gegeten worden, en ben je dus zeer zeker niet vegetarisch, maar symbolisch. Het wijst allemaal op diepere beelden, en in die zin zijn onze vijanden, de vlees-eters,

ook weer delen van onze eigen wapenrusting indien wij dit dus geestelijk en zinnebeeldig toepassen. ‘Je kunt de vijand alleen overwinnen door de vijand te worden,’ is een oud indiaans spreekwoord, niet om daadwerkelijk letterlijk de vijand te worden, maar door het te herkennen als een verdraaiing van iets van jezelf wat je mag terugdraaien. Dit is wat we de veranderende wording noemen. Leer van je vijand dus in die zin, zonder dat je je laat verleiden als hem te worden in het vlees, maar alleen in het geestelijke en zinnebeeldige.

In Rusland ligt het grote geheimenis van de eeuwige dood, de hoog opgerezen beer die op zijn achterpoten staat en woest brult, zonder mededogen of barmhartigheid. Ook in Arabie ligt dit geheimenis als de zoonloze god die geen kinderen aanvaard. Dit komt dichtbij het geheimenis van de zogeheten Pieta in de kunst, namelijk van de hemelse Moeder met haar dode zoon. In die zin moeten we dood aanvaarden als een verandering, ook een verandering van gezichtspunt.

tekenfilm land

Hij zat op de slaapkamer van zijn zogenaamde ouders.
Ze waren zijn echte ouders niet.
Ze hadden hem ontvoerd.
Hij zat op hun bed en keek naar een langspeelplaat van een band.
Plotseling begon het te regenen, en er werd aangebeld.
Het waren de bandleden van de langspeelplaat.
Ze waren gekomen in een vreemd voertuig.
Ze zouden hem meenemen in de regen tot het Ermelo land,
ook wel tekenfilm land genoemd.
Hij ging met ze mee en stapte met ze in het vreemde voertuig.

Zijn zogenaamde familie leden waren piraten.
‘Nee maar,’ zeiden ze de hele tijd.
Ze konden hem niet meer tegenhouden.
De vreemde muziek van de langspeelplaat speelde nog steeds.
Het leek wel alsof ze daar nog steeds stonden bij het voertuig,
en hij speelde tikkertje met de bandleden.
Toen ze in het Ermelo land waren aangekomen,
over het groot ravijn wat tussen het tekenfilm land en het Nunspeet land ligt,
was daar ook zijn lang verloren tante Anna, zijn buurvrouw.
Er woonde hier ook een schoenenreus die hem soms kwam ophalen,
en dan kreeg hij nieuwe schoenen, maar hij moest altijd weer terug,
en dan regende het.

de veertiger jaren en de daarop wijzende dystopische literatuur

We hebben meer met een hiertoemaals te maken dan met een hiernamaals. Het gaat om de zin van het leven : waartoe ? hiertoe. Ook hebben we niet zozeer met een eeuwigheid of eternity te maken, maar met een recyclity, want er ligt nu eenmaal de opdracht te recyclen, en er is nog zoveel wat ge-recycled moet worden. Daarom moeten wij werken bij een geestelijke vuilverwerkings-industrie, waar ons boek ‘De Recyclocratie’ uitvoerig op ingaat. De wilde jongens komen op grote bulldozers om elke valse menselijke natuur af te breken. Het geestelijke spijsverteringskanaal of vuilverwerkingskanaal is een kanaal van dromen. Daar kan geen SBS6 aan tippen. De wilde jongens gaan komen, en de wilde moeders. Zij komen als ‘Pieta’s’, want hun zonen zijn namelijk dood, aan zichzelf gestorven, ja, de eeuwige dood ingegaan.

Om het Stepford mysterie te begrijpen moeten we veel dieper gaan, namelijk in de jaren veertig waarin dit monster tot de oppervlakte kwam gedurende het

nazi-tijdperk. Ik had vannacht een droom over 1940. Ik was op een college wat heel veel leek op mijn college van vroeger. Er waren verschillende groepen die andersdenkenden om zeep wilden helpen, zonder ge-maar, zonder eerlijk proces. Ook ik was op de vlucht. Ik was helemaal alleen, maar zag ook wat meisjes vluchten en volgde hen.

Het pad is al uitgestippeld en ontmaskerd door de schrijvers van de jaren 1900 in hun dystopische verhalen. In het boek ‘We’ van de Russische V. Zamyatin hebben mensen geen namen, maar nummers, en worden dromen beschouwd als een mentale geestesziekte, wat overigens nog steeds zo is in de psychiatrie waar kleine kinderen mee behekst worden. Zij mogen niet dromen. Daar krijgen ze medicijnen tegen. Je mag ook geen geestelijke gaven hebben, want dat wordt ook als ziekte bestempeld, en daar krijg je ook medicijnen tegen. We leven in een dystopie, geen utopia. De mens leeft in een voorscheppingse oer-nachtmerrie. In het boek Kallocain van Karin Boye uit 1940 wordt de drug Kallocaine uitgevonden die mensen geen prive gedachten laat hebben, die mensen dwingt de waarheid te vertellen en niets achter te houden.

In het verhaal ‘Het Nieuwe Utopia’ van Jerome K. Jerome uit 1891 wordt God ‘de meerderheid’ genoemd, en wordt ieder mens door regerings-ambtenaren twee keer per dag verplicht gewassen, zodat er geen klasse verschil is tussen schonen en vuilen. Alles moet gelijk zijn, en dat kan alleen als het gedwongen is door een hoger orgaan. De mens mocht ook geen eigen bezit hebben. Alles was van de Staat. Zo kon ook diefstal uitgeroeid worden. Er was ook geen verschil meer tussen sterk en zwak. Elk kind werd door de Moeder Aarde gevoed, zodat er geen honger meer was, en geen verschil meer tussen rijk en arm. Alle ellende op de aarde zou namelijk alleen kunnen komen door ongelijkheid. Alleen dan zou de mens weer van nature nobel zijn. En dan zou er hemel op aarde zijn. Iedereen droeg alleen maar grijs. Iedereen moest zwart haar hebben, tot dezelfde lengte. Het zou moeilijk zijn man van vrouw te onderscheiden. Dit was allemaal zo beslist door ‘de Meerderheid’, oftewel God. Iedereen was slechts een nummer. De even nummers zijn de vrouwen, en de oneven nummers zijn de mannen. Zo konden ze nog van elkaar onderscheiden worden. Er waren geen namen meer, want dan zouden mensen elkaar kunnen haten en verachten om hun namen. Alle mensen zijn nu vegetarisch. Het is een

socialistische wereld. Prive leven is verboden. Huwelijken zijn ook verboden, want dat geeft ook weer ongelijkheden en haantjes-gedrag. Zo stelden mannen hun vrouw boven de Staat bijvoorbeeld. De Staat was jaloers hierop. Ook stelden mannen hun vrouw boven andere vrouwen, en ging alles om het eigen gezin, en dat kon nu dus niet meer. Het familie leven was totaal uitgebannen, zoals later ook in Brave New World. Liefde was een vijand die veel pijn bracht en lijden. Nu waren er geen tranen meer, want liefde was uitgebannen.

Er waren geen winkels meer, want de Staat voedde en kleedde hen allen nu, en het was zorgvuldig voorgeschreven. Alles, tot in de kleinste puntjes. Er werd niets aan de verbeelding overgelaten. Als een man boven gemiddelde grootte en kracht was, dan werd ter compensatie een ledemaat afgehakt, zodat alles in evenwicht bleef en er geen verschillen waren. Daarom hadden grotere mannen maar een arm. De natuur maakte fouten, en dat moest de Staat rechtzetten.

Wanneer een man bovenmatig intelligent was en hoog begaafd dan moest hij gedwongen een hersenoperatie ondergaan, om hem weer terug te brengen naar het gemiddelde niveau. Als er dan kritiek of twijfel kwam over zulke handelingen, of er kwamen vragen over, dan werd er gewoon gezegd dat het gerechtvaardigd was, omdat het immers door de Meerderheid was beslist en gedaan, en de Meerderheid was God zelf. Daarom maakte de Meerderheid ook nooit fouten. Emigratie had ook geen zin meer, want het was overal hetzelfde. Ook de natuur was in stukken verdeeld en hetzelfde gemaakt, zodat de een het niet beter had dan de ander, of in een mooier gebied leefde dan de ander. Er mocht geen schoonheid meer zijn. Alle kunst en boeken waren vernietigd, en ook sport en spel was verboden, want het zou allemaal leiden tot competitie, en competitie leidde tot ongelijkheid. Iedereen schijnt hier zo vol geduld te zijn dat het passief is en aandoenlijk, en iedereen schijnt hier als vee te zijn, als paarden en runderen. Aan het eind van het verhaal blijkt het een droom zijn geweest van iemand die teveel sterke sigaren heeft gerookt.

In de dystopie van Karin Boye in 1940 wordt de wereld in de gaten gehouden door het politie oog en het politie oor. Ze pleegt na het verschijnen van haar boek zelfmoord in 1941. In 1970 was er de dystopie ‘This Perfect Day’, de dag der dagen in de Nederlandse vertaling, van Ira Levin, nog voordat zijn boek

Stepford Vrouwen uitkwam in 1972. Het gaat over een centrale computer die ieder mens in de gaten houdt en mensen maandelijks gedwongen injecteerd met drugs opdat ze mee blijven lopen. Deze computer is genaamd UniComp, en de computer regelt alles wat ze moeten doen, en waar ze het moeten doen, en met wie. Aan de top van deze vreemde totalitaire wereld staan Christus, Marx en Wei. Wei is de maker van de UniComp en heeft inmiddels onsterfelijkheid bereikt door hoofd-transplantaties.

Er zijn sommige mensen die immuun zijn tegen de bewerkingen van de UniComp, en die worden de ongeneeslijken genoemd, net zoals de psychiatrie hoogbegaafde kinderen en ‘moeilijk opvoedbare’ kinderen graag ongeneeslijk ziek noemt. Wat dat betreft komt de psychiatrie en soortgelijke genootschappen gewoon rechtstreeks uit een Ira Levin roman. Gevoelens mag je niet echt hebben. Die worden allemaal onderdrukt door de middelen die de computer toedient. Als je die computer weet te overwinnen dan kun je weer tot je eigen zelf en je gevoelens terugkomen. Ook in de tweede bijbelse dystopie ‘Sobibor – De Laatste Jager’ zien we die strijd terug. Sobibor wijst ook weer op de tweede wereldoorlog, en dat deze strijd nog niet is afgelopen. Het ging daarna over in andere vormen. Het is een medische thriller.

1940 – kallocaine

Elke hond heeft zijn kluif, elke kat zijn muis waarachter hij aanjaagt, als een beeld van dat ieder persoon zijn eigen probleem heeft. Dat is niet altijd makkelijk opgelost. Een hond moet veel kluiven, en de kat heeft de muis soms ook niet altijd direct te pakken.

De mens mag creatief omgaan met zijn pijn en zijn probleem. Soms moet de mens vechten voor zijn leven en bestaan, maar de mens moet niet meer oorlog voeren dan nodig is. De mens moet zoveel mogelijk filters maken en

simulators, want juist dat is de overwinning, als alles is omgezet tot een leerzaam spel, een leerzame puzzel. De oorlog is dus voornamelijk metaforisch als op een schaakbord. Het maakt de mens creatief, en dat is een voorwaarde voor daadwerkelijk bewustzijn. We spreken dus van creatief bewustzijn.

De strijd is tegen gimmicks, reclame-spotjes, en die oorlog is creatief. Mr. Nice Guy is helemaal niet zo nice, want hij slaat alles met de botte bijl kapot, zodat er ruimte is voor zijn lamme producten. Het gaat om het geld, de verkoop, niet om de waarheid, want die verkoopt niet goed. De mens denkt : Als de reclame spot okay is, dan zal de rest ook wel okay zijn. Daarom heeft de mens het waarheids-serum nodig, zoals kallocaine, wat het gelijknamige boek uit 1940 suggereerd, maar er zijn ook valse kallocaines die door de totalitaire staat worden gebruikt. Er is hoger en laag kallocaine. De valse kallocaine zorgt ervoor dat mensen geen prive leven meer hebben, geen eigen gedachten. De strijd is dus ter zuivering van de kallocaine. Het kallocaine van de stad is een chemisch vergif wat de genen manipuleerd, terwijl het kallocaine van de hogere natuur de mens terugbrengt naar de hogere waarden. Het kallocaine verlaagd het ego-zelfbewustzijn. De valse kallocaine verlaagd het natuurlijke zelfbewustzijn waardoor mensen hun natuurlijke autonomie verliezen en slechts objecten en pionnen zijn van de totalitaire staat, waarin alles ondergeschikt is aan staatsbelang.

In het nazi tijdperk is de waarheid een eigen leven gaan leiden, gekaapt. Het raakte aan steeds lager wal, en verbanden werden weggekapt en omgekeerd. En zo ontstond 1940, en het ware waarheidsserum werd verborgen. Het ging achter slot en grendel. De vrouw die dit ontmaskerde, de Zweedse Karin Boye pleegde zelfmoord na haar ontmaskering, na het publiceren van het boek Kallocaine. Zij was schrijver en dichteres.

De geestelijke drop is een kruidenwortel die 'de vrucht van het lijden' betekent als alkaliën, zoals in 1940 in het boek genaamd Kallocaine, over het waarheidsserum, waardoor mensen de waarheid vertellen, die kan worden gebruikt of misbruikt, dus het is een interessant onderwerp, ook met het oog op openbaringen, dat de waarheid aan de mens geopenbaard wordt, in meer profetische zin. Het heeft een heel bijzondere smaak en geur. En dat terwijl

1940 gewoonlijk bekend staat als het begin van de Tweede Wereldoorlog en als de moloch waardoor al deze gezinnen zijn ontstaan. In feite worden kinderen geofferd om in deze spiralen te versmelten. Daarom is drop als het beeld van opstanding, opwekking en wederkomst, als vrucht van het lijden verkregen door volharding en geduld erg belangrijk. Mensen hebben nu een valse waarheid gemaakt, een valse kallocaïne, als een drugs om mensen te beheersen. Deze valse waarheid aanbidden zij.

De hogere kallocaine ontmaskert dus, ook de lijnen van het nazi tijdperk, wat zich allemaal ging vervormen. De mens moet weer vat krijgen op deze gimmick. De jaren veertig moeten in die zin nog verdiept worden. Het moet een kwartslag gedraaid worden, zodat de hogere kallocaine zichtbaar wordt en wordt uitgestort, zodat de leugen wordt opgelost. Het is namelijk het tijdperk van de leugen en de valse waarheid. Alice in wonderland ontmoette hier de hartenkoningin die bij het minste of geringste koppen wilde zien rollen. Het nazi tijdperk was het Leviticus tijdperk van de jaren 1900, maar dan ging ook wel alles en alles verkeerd. Nog steeds moet de mens van deze nachtmerrie ontwaken door psycho-analyse ervan. Daarom heeft de hond zijn kluif, de kat zijn muis. Als het even kan krijgt de kat een speelgoed muis om het te simuleren. De mens mag niet bij de drama blijven. Het verhaal gaat immers verder en dieper. Daarom moet de mens blijven doorlezen, ook met name tussen de regels door, en tussen de letters in. Het leven is literatuur.

Het heilige kallocaine is als de heilige graal diep opgesloten en opgeborgen in een geheime ondergrondse nazi kerker. Het nazisme heeft het nagemaakt en verkoopt het allemaal via slonzige reclame spotjes.

De ware vrede voor de mens ligt in het werk en de oorlog. De weerstand die de mens krijgt is een beeld van dat de mens zelf moet toetsen, zelf dus een toetsende weerstand moet hebben, als onderdeel van het immuunsysteem, waartoe ook het spijsverteringskanaal van de dromen hoort. De ware vrede ligt voor de mens in de industrie van de natuur, als een mens als een wilde jongen solliciteerd naar een baan in de vuilverwerkings industrie van en in de natuur, oftewel in de recyclocratie en recyclity, om zo los te komen van de al te gemakkelijke ‘geloofs-eternity’ die de mens in slaap heeft gesust tot het

slechts zijn van prooi.

de toetssteen en basis van het medicijn van de goede herder

Dit artikel is ter herinnering aan de basis van ons werk, en het is ook een goed basis artikel van hen die net kennis maken met de gnosis, ook voor mensen die bijvoorbeeld tussen geloof en gnosis instaan, en voor mensen die denken dat het geloof er helemaal niet meer toe doet. Het pad van de goede herder gaat ook dwars door het pad van het geloof heen, met grote kruispunten.

Als er vals geld in de omloop is, is er ook goed geld in de omloop. Dat er zoveel corruptie is, is geen goede reden om dan maar niets te doen. Ik richt mij alleen maar op beelden, omdat die dingen duidelijk maken, zoals het beeld van de Goede Herder, wat al in Egypte bestond, die de veilige kudde in de steek laat om het verloren schaap te zoeken in de diepste duisternissen. Dat is een geestelijk beeld, een gelijkenis, maar het laat wel zien hoe je kunt leven. De Goede Herder heeft compassie, empathie, met het verwonde schaap, en waagt zijn eigen leven om dit schaap te helpen, en daar hoort ook genezing bij, en dat gaat dus in eerste instantie door plaatsvervangend lijden, dat de Goede Herder zich zo kan invoelen in het schaap, en niet zomaar vanaf een hoog troontje een touwtje toewerpt. De Goede Herder, de Barmhartige Samaritaan, werkt dus altijd van onderen, die gaat dus dieper dan het schaap zelf, want anders zou hij het schaap niet kunnen helpen. Dat is dus het wonder van genezing, niet in aardse zin. Dat is een hemelse gave. Je doet dit dus altijd vanuit liefde en liefde heeft geen grenzen, maar er zijn wel voorwaarden in de zin dat alleen de doorgevende, plaatsvervangende, mededragende en medestrijdende liefde dit effect heeft van de hemelse natuur, dus allereerst is daar het onderwijs van de

Goede Herder aan het verloren schaap om dat schaap deze principes van liefde te leren, waardoor het schaap zelf meer en meer wordt zoals de Goede Herder, want daarin ligt het geheim van de genezing, en die is allereerst in het hart, maar de Goede Herder kent ook onze lichamelijke noden. Dat heeft dus niet alleen maar met positief denken te maken, of wat ze noemen geloofsdenken, maar ook met empathisch denken. En dat is nog maar het begin, want dan begint de strijd. Empathisch denken genereert een hemelse gave, van de Goede Herder overgedragen, maar het aardse systeem wil dan deze Goede Herder uitschakelen, dus die zendt dan de meest verschrikkelijke vijanden op de Goede Herder af, en ook op elk al dan niet verloren schaap wat de Goede Herder op de voet volgt, elk schaap die dus in de leerschool is tot Goede Herder. Dus die vijanden zou je dan ‘demonen’ kunnen noemen, in de christelijke taal, wat gewoon schaduwsystemen zijn, vleselijke systemen, of noem het parasieten of roofdieren. Dit is dus allemaal niet zwart-wit want er zijn een heleboel grijze vlakken. Ook is iedere situatie weer anders, en kom je op het gebied van reflectologie, dat het leven zo ingewikkeld is met zoveel vervormende prisma’s en spiegels, dat het eindeloos door blijft emaneren, spiegelen, reflecteren, afschaduwen, enzovoorts, en dan is het belangrijk om naar de bron te gaan.

De vijand kan ook mimieken, wat we ook phishing noemen. De vijand kan deze geestelijke computer ‘hacken’, ‘overnemen’, dus maakt in principe gewoon zijn eigen surrogaat om alsnog te verleiden en misleiden, zodat de schapen niet bij de ware Goede Herder terecht komen, maar bij een wolf verkleed als Goede Herder, zodat die de schapen kan ‘eten’, er veel aan kan verdienen, kan exploiteren, om zo zijn machtsgebied te verruimen, wat we hier op aarde zien, vooral ook in het medische systeem. Het aardse medische systeem helpt mensen voor geld, maar de Goede Herder verkoopt zijn zorg niet, ook de Barmhartige Samaritaan niet. ‘Om niet hebt gij het ontvangen, geeft het om niet,’ zegt de Goede Herder. Zo blijft de gave puur. Je doet het puur vanuit empathie, vanuit het hart, en bent hierin fijngevoelig voor de obstakels van de mensen, en die doorleef je, DUS die Goede Herder gaat noodgedwongen aan het kruis, anders zou hij de schapen nooit kunnen helpen.
Iedere Goede Herder wordt dus vervolgd, en dat is ook het hele mysterie van de doorn in het vlees die maar niet weggaat. Goede Herders zijn dus ook

asceten die leren leven met pijn en lijden, om een hoger doel. Er is een zekere balans in die dingen. Het is heel cirkelmatig, want alhoewel empathie dus geneest, gaat het ook weer telkens dieper, dus in golfbewegingen, van kruis, tot opstandingskracht, tot kruis, enzovoorts. Er zijn hierin een heleboel valkuilen. Het is dus goed om met die dingen bezig te zijn, maar het heeft wel een gebruiksaanwijzing als een opleiding van de Goede Herder, en dat heeft verder niks met aardse systemen te maken. De medische wereld ziet dit als bedreiging, want dan kom je dus aan hun markt, en aan hun monopolie, dus ze doen er alles aan om Goede Herders kapot te maken, niet beseffende dat dit juist bij de Goede Herder hoort en dat dit het geheim is van zijn gave, en dat dit de gave juist verdiept. De wegen van de Goede Herder zijn ondoorgrondelijk terwijl de aardse medische wereld dit allemaal in hokjes wil drukken. Het is niet de bedoeling geweest dat mensen in de handen vallen van gevaarlijke chemische medicijnen die ook nog eens op dieren zijn getest en die gewoon als drugs werken en een heleboel bekende en onbekende bijwerkingen hebben tot de dood aan toe, allemaal voor geld en macht, want dat is allemaal tegen de werkwijze van de Goede Herder.

En dat was nog maar het topje van de ijsberg, dit allemaal is nog maar het tipje van de ijsberg. De Jezus verhalen zijn gelijkenissen, maar Jezus is een westers woord en het is allemaal ook heel erg verletterlijkt in de westerse vertalingen, en de oorspronkelijke diepte van die symboliek is weggehaald, dus de schade is niet te overzien. Daarom spreken we ook over de gedeformeerde kerk naast de gereformeerde kerk. De gedeformeerde kerk is dus meer een moderne versie ervan die die wortels allemaal niet meer heeft, en dan sterft die boom en gaat die rotten en dan trekt het de parasieten aan. In het Hebreeuws, in Israel, waren er de verhalen van Yeshua (die dus Jezus wordt genoemd in het westen). Yeshua werd al in het Oude Testament gebruikt als vrouwelijk zelfstandig naamwoord wat in principe gewoon genezing betekent, en dat woord werd ook al door David gebruikt, en in sommige vormen wordt het ook als werkwoord gebruikt, en betekent het ‘het afdoen van het oude leven op het slagveld’, dus als levensprincipe, dat je je leven geeft voor het hogere doel, afleggen van het oude, om het nieuwe aan te doen. Dat is wat het oorspronkelijk betekent, dus dat is een persoonlijk principe, waarvan dan later Yeshua als eigennaam, als persoon, hierin een voorbeeld-functie had, NIET als

een soort van afgod die alles wel even regelt, als een soort van wachtwoord, want dan zijn het slechts uiterlijke vormen. Het is dus juist een levensprincipe en genezingsprincipe waaruit iedereen mag leven, en dat gaat dus niet buiten een persoonlijk kruis om, en daar moet ook een bepaald respect voor zijn, dat het belang en de noodzaak ervan ingezien wordt. In de medische wereld bestempelen ze dit graag als ziekte, want dan kunnen ze hun medicijnen er op los laten. Je mag geen emoties hebben, je mag geen geloofservaringen hebben, geen symboliek gebruiken, geen dromen hebben, enzovoorts, en hier is vroeger al veel tegen gewaarschuwd in de literatuur, zoals in het boek 1984 van George Orwell aan het eind van de veertiger jaren, over de totalitaire staat van pure mind control, gedachten politie, dromen politie etc. Dit is de wereld buiten het paradijs. Hier worden ook de families vaak samengesteld door het aardse systeem, want dit is niet de wereld van de Goede Herder. Dat is voor sommige mensen dus misschien ook een zure appel, dat ze onder ogen moeten komen dat de families in heel veel gevallen NIET door God zijn samengesteld, maar dat de verbindingen vaak een resultaat zijn van de zondeval. Dit is dus vaak een parasitaire schijnwerkelijkheid. Dan roei je met de riemen die je hebt zolang dat mogelijk is, maar de Goede Herder in het Yeshua verhaal zei ook van de aardse familie : ‘Wie zijn mijn moeder en mijn broeders ? Zij die de wil van de hemel doen, die zijn mijn broeder, mijn zuster en mijn moeder.’

Dan over ‘demonen’ en ook in verband met engelen : Dat is niet zwart-wit. Zwart-witte gelijkenissen zijn gewoon om iets te accentueren, maar daar moet heel genuanceerd mee omgegaan worden. Het is hetzelfde als dat er op aarde goede en slechte mensen zijn en er een grijs vlak tussenzit, met alle bagage waar mensen mee rondlopen dus dat de een minder draagkracht heeft als de ander, en dat mensen verkeerd begrepen worden, of verkeerd beoordeeld. Maar dan heb ik het bijvoorbeeld over ISIS en ander tuig wat over mensen hun leven denkt te beslissen zoals in de medische dwangwereld. Dat soort tuig is er ook in de ‘geestelijke wereld’, wat gewoon een andere frequentie is. Ook als mensen komen te overlijden komen ze in een andere frequentie, gewoon in een soort andere virtuele computer wereld, en de slechten gaan daar of met hun slechte werk door, of ze beteren zichzelf. Dat is dus zeker niet zwart-wit, en sommigen zijn ook zwaar verward, dus die klemmen zich dan vast aan

bepaalde mensen, en moeten dan verder geholpen worden. Dat is de taak van de Goede Herder, maar dat wordt door aardse mensen vaak belachelijk gemaakt. De mensen weten vaak niet eens wat shamanisme is. In de bijbel gaat het ook zo nu en dan over shamanisme, en ook de gelijkenis van de Goede Herder kan uitgelegd worden als shamanisme. Shamanisme is dus het werken in vele lagen, rekening houden met andere levensvormen, die ook soms onzichtbaar zijn voor het menselijk oog, want er zijn ook gewoon energetische levensvormen. Het natuurlijke oog van de mens is vaak maar beperkt en kan dat vaak niet oppikken, of ze zijn zich er niet van bewust. In 'de hemel' hebben mensen betere ogen die veel meer kunnen waarnemen en ook willen waarnemen omdat dat een eigenschap van de Goede Herder is, zorgzaamheid, inlevingsvermogen, en daarnaar gaan de ogen zich ontwikkelen, en ook de andere zintuigen. Daarvan is de insectenwereld ook een beeld want insecten, maar ook andere dieren, hebben vaak veel betere zintuigen dan de mens. Dan zijn al die problemen er ook niet, want de mens rotzooit nu er maar wat op aan omdat ze in principe gewoon blind zijn nog.

Deze gelijkenissen kwamen al uit veel oudere culturen, ook veel uit Egypte, want het Hebreeuws ligt erg dicht tegen het Egyptisch aan. Het zijn allereerst woorden en werkwoorden, principes, die in elke taal weer anders kunnen zijn, en waarvoor elke cultuur weer zijn eigen gelijkenissen heeft. Het is dus ook de taak van de Goede Herder om dit te overbruggen, want in het westen hebben ze het tot een monopolie gemaakt, allemaal voor de markt en voor macht. Dus ja, het is goed om met die dingen bezig te zijn, maar alles moet getoetst worden aan de principes van de Goede Herder, de hogere hemelse principes, waardoor het ook zuiver blijft en eerlijk, en in balans.

1942 – de vreemdeling – het afbreken van de nazi computer

Omdat de mens een heleboel missing links heeft, vanwege gebrek aan overzicht, gebrek aan samenhang, de mens een heleboel blinde vlekken heeft in zijn zogenaamd logisch en rationeel denken is absurdisme de ware ‘religie’ en psychologie. Dat is geen roekeloos absurdisme, maar gedreven, profetisch absurdisme, dus slechts ogenschijnlijk absurd.

Ik was aan het einde van de middag even in het dorp van ons bosdorpje wat overigens tussen een vuilverwerkings-industrie ligt en militair terrein, profetischer kan het niet. Ik ging naar de drogist en liep naar achter waar de spelletjes en speelgoed afdeling was, wat ik altijd doe ter inspiratie. Er lagen wat kaartspelletjes, kaartpuzzels, met verschillende thema’s en ik begon de verschillende pakketjes een voor een te bekijken. Een vrouw ging toen naast mij staan met haar kind, en in de onderste schappen lag een soort speelgoedhond in een doosje die allerlei dingen kon, en het kind wilde het wel hebben. ‘Ja, daar beginnen we niet aan,’ zei die moeder. ‘Die hond die poept ook. Dat wil ik niet in huis hebben. Bah.’ Ik kon m’n lachen bijna niet meer inhouden, en plofte snel het doosje met een azteekse kaartenpuzzel weer in de schappen, want ik moest zo snel mogelijk weg, anders zou ik niet meer bijkomen van het lachen. In de haast viel dat ding direct naar beneden, en ook die vrouw legde op hetzelfde moment iets terug, en dat viel ook. ‘Daar gaat alles,’ zei ik, nog steeds mijn lachen inhoudende, maar die vrouw begon toen te lachen en zei : ‘Ja, inderdaad, daar gaat alles.’ Ik ben toen weggelopen, en het was echt moeilijk mijn lachen in te houden, en ik wist dat als ik eenmaal zou gaan beginnen te lachen dat ik het dan waarschijnlijk niet meer zou kunnen stoppen. Ik moest ook nog naar de supermartkt, dus ik dacht : ‘Oh help, straks krijg ik die lachbui misschien daar,’ want ik kon het gewoon niet uit mijn hoofd zetten. En ik moest ook nog afrekenen bij de drogist. Gelukkig toen ik naar voren liep dreef het allemaal weer een beetje weg meer en meer, en ik dacht : ‘Waarschijnlijk kan ik het nog wel inhouden totdat ik thuis ben, zodat ik daar die lachbui krijg.

Ja, het leven is niet lineair op het niveau van menselijk verstand, maar van een veel hogere lineaire realiteit, die van absurdisme, oftewel absurd voor het menselijk verstand. Je moet dan oppassen dat het absurdisme geen luie, laffe morfine-afgod wordt, want dan heb je er dus wel een nieuwe verslaving bij. Neen. De hemelse chaos is van een hogere orde, de hemelse dwaasheid is van een hogere wijsheid. Ook is de hemelse pijn een hogere genezing. Het boek Howl van Allen Ginsberg uit 1956 gaat over de nachtmerrie van Moloch die alle verbeelding bij de mens heeft weggehaald, de kinderen heeft laten huilen aan de voet van de trappen in de oorlogen. Jong en oud weent. Het wordt beschreven als ondoorgrondelijke, onbegrijpelijke gevangenissen waar de mens is terechtgekomen in die nachtmerrie. Moloch wordt in dit gedicht beschreven als hebbende geld als bloed, en zijn borst is het dynamo van kannibalisme, en zijn oor is een rokend graf, vandaar dat hij niet luistert, geen gebeden verhoord. Het gedicht stelt dan dat de ogen van Moloch zijn als rijen blinde ramen. Moloch wordt beschreven als een soort stad waarin de mens zit opgesloten. Moloch heeft hun ruggen gebroken, waar alles uit voortstroomt.

Dit komt tot het punt van eli eli lamma lamma sabacthani, wat zowel Jezus als David riepen aan het kruis. Sabacthani is een aramees woord, sbq, wat in bepaalde vormen spreekt over een offering, een brandoffer of bloedoffer, en het is ook een noodkreet, een gehuil, of de howl wat de naam van het gedicht is. Het is een uitbarsting van tranen zeggende : Waarom hebt gij mij geofferd ? Het hart van het levensgedicht wordt er dan uitgekapt, zodat de mens voor lange tijd gevoed kan worden, wat dan ook weer terugwijst op het evangelie. Albert Camus noemde het in zijn boek De Vreemdeling uit 1942 over het absurdisme ‘de tedere onverschilligheid van de wereld’. De hemelse onverschilligheid is van een hogere barmhartigheid. De mens wordt in de absurde Moloch stad volledig teruggeworpen op zichzelf tot het punt dat hij alleen maar leeft, maar niet bij de zin van het leven kan komen, dus zoals in het existentialisme de existentie vooraf gaat aan de essentie. De mens is dan geworpen in de put van eenzaamheid, maar juist op de bodem van die put komt hij in waar contact met anderen, en zullen de schaduwen en valsigheden daar wegvallen. Dat gebeurd door een huilbui, een overdagse regenbui waardoor in het uit 1970 dystopische boek ‘De dag der dagen’ van Ira Levin, de slavernij en mindcontrol van de UniComp uiteindelijk werd overwonnen,

uitgeschakeld. De mens moet wel tot deze verbrokenheid komen. Dan gaan de betekenissen draaien. Dan komt de mens door de behekste spiegel heen tot de andere kant. Dan is de betovering verbroken, door de spiegels van de hemelse tranen.

Dan is er dus de Pieta, de hemelse moeder met haar dode zoon. Dat is iets puur symbolisch. Deze twee-deling is in de mens zelf, van de mens, en als de mens. Er is geen buitenstaande onderdrukker in die zin. De mens heeft vele delen en moet die delen begrijpen. Dat is ook waar het verhaal ‘Het Experiment’ over gaat in de tweede bijbel. De boodschap in het tweede bijbelse dystopische boek ‘Sobibor – de laatste jager’ is dat als er dingen, delen, van mensen worden weggekapt, van elkaar worden gescheiden, dan zullen die delen op een natuurlijke manier zich door blijven ontwikkelen en samenvoegen, volgens bovenstaande processen, en zij zullen uiteindelijk weer terugkomen tot de rechtmatige eigenaar waarvan ze een deel zijn. Wij mogen daar dus op wachten totdat het terugkomt. In het boek wordt het beschreven als een tijdmachine. De mens zelf is een tijdmachine, en het is een machine om het onbegrip te overbruggen, om te komen tot samenhang, in het creatieve bewustzijn, en dan is de mens tot schepper geworden, niet slechts schepping.

De nazi computer moet afgebroken worden in het creatieve bewustzijn. De nazi computer is een valse tijdmachine, als tijd agenten. De veertiger jaren moeten geheel herzien worden en opnieuw tot leven komen, vanuit hun diepte, vanuit dat wat verborgen was gehouden.

In het boek ‘De Vreemdeling’ uit 1942 van Albert Camus schuift alles steeds meer op de achtergrond bij de hoofdpersoon die van alles vervreemd omdat hij de wereld maar belachelijk vindt, absurd, en daarom kan het hem ook niet echt schelen als zijn moeder komt te overlijden, want die is dan immers verlost van dit idiote leven en bestaan. Door honger, armoede en verlies komt de mens dan tot het ware leven, want alles gaat zich dan afpellen tot de kern, wat een thema is van het boek. De mens keert door armoede, door het verlies van de grip op de stad, terug tot de natuur. Zo komt de vreemdeling tot de mens, en wordt de mens zelf tot vreemdeling.

De hoofdpersoon raakt steeds meer vertrouwen in de mens kwijt en wordt steeds meer paranoide, en doet ook steeds minder om zichzelf te verdedigen naar de mensen, bijvoorbeeld als hij van dingen wordt beschuldigd, omdat hij weet dat het toch een absurde wereld is, en dat wat hij dan ook zegt ze toch weer tegen hem zullen gebruiken en verdraaien, en hij er allemaal de zin niet van inziet. Omdat hij niks zegt gaan mensen ook weer allerlei verhalen over hem verzinnen, en hem verkeerd uitleggen, leggen ze verkeerde verbanden, en uiteindelijk vanwege zijn stilte in een rechtszaak wordt hij ter dood veroordeeld, tot onthoofding, maar uiteindelijk ziet hij dat dan als een verlossing van de eenzaamheid en het absurde bestaan.

Met de dood van zijn moeder waarmee het verhaal begint bouwde hij steeds meer een glazen muur om zich heen, maar waar dan ook om hem heen tegen afgezet wordt, en waardoor hij in de problemen komt. Het is eigenlijk een soort noodkreet. In principe is hij aan het loskomen van de aardse, vleselijke kallocaine, de opgelegde waarheid van de absurde werkelijkheid, maar nu moet hij nog komen tot de hemelse kallocaine, die zich dan eigenlijk heel symbolisch aan hem opdient. Ook hij wordt geofferd in de Moloch stad. Dit komt ook omdat hij geen meeloper is, mensen niet naar de mond praat. Maar hij begrijpt waarvoor de offering goed is, dat hij zo los kan breken. Er is dus een dode moeder met haar dode zoon aan het eind van het verhaal, die een nieuw leven hebben gevonden. Dus de Pieta, wat compassie, barmhartigheid betekent, ditmaal ook met een moeder van de dood, de godin van de dood, van de hel, om een nieuw bestaan op te bouwen. Deze hemelse pijn die diep scheurt is dus de ware genezing. Dat is wat de hemelse kallocaine doet. 1940 maakt zo op een hele nieuwe manier verbinding met 1942.

De kat is doorgedrongen tot het het muizenhol, tot de duiventil, tot een beeldenstorm, om de nazi-religie neer te halen, het nazi goud, en nazi geld, om te smelten. In de literatuur mag alles ten goede meewerken, ook dood en hel, pijn en verdriet. Uiteindelijk druppelt dan de hemelse dropachtige siroop van zaaddragende tranen, het kallocaine.

Er werd een vinger op de hoofdpersoon gewezen in de rechtszaak tegen hem. Hij had niet gehuild bij de begrafenis van zijn moeder, en had gewoon gerookt

en was snel daarna met iemand naar bed gegaan. Het wordt beschreven alsof hij ongevoelig was, een monster. Hij had moeten huilen om te laten zien dat hij een echt mens was. In deze samenleving was huilen een plicht, wat dan in de spiegel-exegese wel weer heel belangrijk is. De mens moet huilen. De mens die niet leeft vanuit de hemelse tranen van inleving, oftewel het vleselijke deel, moet sterven. Barmhartigheid geeft een mens eeuwig leven, in de recyclity. Het moet regenen. Zo wordt de UniCom overwonnen.

De Sprookjesmarkt

Een jongen ging altijd met zijn grootmoeder op vrijdag naar de sprookjesmarkt in de ochtend. Het was dan altijd net licht geworden, en hij zat dan altijd bij zijn grootmoeder achterop de fiets. Dan zocht hij telkens zijn sprookjes uit. Op een dag werden ze tegengehouden door een kleine knokige kabouter met een knots. "Dat gaat zo maar niet," sprak de kabouter. "Elke vrijdagochtend wanneer het net licht geworden is komen jullie om mijn sprookjes te stelen."

De jongen keek de kabouter met opgeheven wenkbrauwen aan, zeer verbaasd. "Maar wij betalen toch voor de sprookjes, en hoe zijn het uw sprookjes ?"

De kabouter gaf de jongen een mep tegen zijn been. "Brutale vlegel, ik ben de baas van de sprookjesmarkt," bromde de kabouter. "Nu vlug, maak dat je wegkomt. Jullie zijn hier veel te vaak, en nu is het wel welletjes." Maar toen stapte de grootmoeder van de fiets af. "Puh," sprak ze. "Hoe kan zo'n klein mannetje als jij de baas zijn van zo'n grote markt ?" Maar toen begon de

kabouter zo woest met zijn knots te slaan dat grootmoeder en de jongen zo snel mogelijk op de fiets moesten springen om bij hem weg te kunnen komen. De kabouter raasde en foeterde, en kwam nog achter hen aan ook. Wat kon dat mannetje hard rennen. Grootmoeder moest eerg snel fietsen, anders zouden ze eraan gaan. Gelukkig waren ze na een tijdje van hem af.

De volgende vrijdag gingen ze het weer proberen. Ze gingen nu nog vroeger. Het licht was nog niet eens gevallen. De marktkoopmannen en vrouwen waren nog bezig hun kraampjes op te zetten. Grootmoeder liep op de eerste de beste marktkoopman af en vroeg of het waar was dat de kleine kabouter met de knots de baas was van de sprookjesmarkt. De marktkoopman keek haar aan met opgeheven wenkbrauwen. "Maar mevrouw toch," sprak de man. "Hoe komt u toch aan zulke verhalen ? Er is geen baas van de sprookjesmarkt. Wij hebben de sprookjesmarkt allemaal samen opgezet, en niemand is de baas over de ander." Toen begon grootmoeder het hele verhaal te vertellen.

De koopman barstte in lachen uit. "Wat een vreemd verhaal, en wat een kostelijk sprookje. Dat kunnen we wel verkopen hier."

"Hoeveel kost het ?" vroeg grootmoeder.

"Maar mevrouw," sprak de koopman, "u bent zelf de bedenker van het sprookje, dus het is helemaal gratis voor u." Even later overhandigde de koopman het sprookje aan grootmoeder. De jongen zocht ook nog wat andere sprookjes uit, en toen zijn ze weer op de fiets gegaan. Maar na een tijdje kwamen ze weer die ellendige kabouter tegen. "Zie, weer sprookjes stelen, hè ? Ik wist het," bulderde de kabouter, en kwam hen weer achterna met de knots. Hij was nu extra kwaad. "En nu ben ik zeker ook in het sprookje, hè ? Van mij kom je niet meer af." Hij foeterde en tierde, maar hij kon grootmoeder en de jongen niet inhalen. Hij volgde hen wel helemaal naar grootmoeder's huis. "Ik zal jullie leren !" bulderde hij. Snel sprongen grootmoeder en de jongen van de fiets af met de sprookjes, en snel gingen ze naar binnen, en grootmoeder deed de deur weer goed op slot. "Die fiets is nu van mij !" gilde de woeste, ziedende kabouter. De kabouter pakte de fiets en ze hebben hem nooit meer teruggezien. Wel vonden ze zijn knots waar de fiets had gestaan, en

die hebben ze toen naar de sprookjesmarkt gebracht als bewijs dat het sprookje echt waar was.

De knots werd in een glazen kistje gelegd en werd op een halve pilaar gezet op het middelpunt van de sprookjesmarkt. Grootmoeder en de jongen mochten toen zoveel mogelijk sprookjes uitzoeken als ze wilden. En ze mochten hen allemaal gratis meenemen. Vanuit de hele wereld kwam iedereen om de knots in het glazen kistje te bewonderen en om het sprookje van de sprookjesmarkt te horen. Het werd de drukst bezochte markt van de hele wereld.

sleutel literatuur 1940-1945

De jaren 1940-1945 staan nog steeds en gaan niet zomaar weg. Nu staan ze daar in andere vormen, nog steeds kwellende mens en dier. Het gaat niet zomaar weg. Je moet gaan ‘droom weven’. Je moet gaan kluiven aan deze kluif dus. Het zit diep ingezonken in het brein van de mens, als pinnen. Gewoon omdat het ons zo werd opgediend, en er werd niet verteld over wat het achterhield. 1940-1945 heeft veel meer te bieden. 1941 is bijvoorbeeld het jaar van Erik en het klein insectenboek, van Bomans, en insecten zijn een beeld van de hogere zintuigen die veel meer kunnen zien en aanvoelen. Dat hebben we wel nodig om te kunnen losbreken van de oppervlaktes om zo in de diepte te gaan. We moeten komen onder de Moloch stad.

We hebben dus deze mysterieen om door de jaren 1940-1945 heen te komen tot vastere gronden :

1940 – Kallocaine – Karin Boye
1941 – Eric of het kleine insectenboek – Bomans
1942 – De vreemdeling – Albert Camus

Het boek Eric of het kleine insectenboek is van groot belang en gebaseerd op een uitspraak van Leonardo Da Vinci :

‘Wij zijn allen ballingen, levend binnen de lijsten van een vreemd schilderij. Wie dit weet, leeft groot. De overigen zijn insecten.’

Dit is ook een belangrijk thema van de tweede bijbel wat telkens terugkeerd, dat de mens leeft in een schilderij.

Pijn is een tijdmachine. Pijn laat de verbanden zien. Het kruis is dus van levensbelang. Zij die het kruis niet hebben vallen in kortzichtigheid en raken daar vast.

In 1943 kwam toen het boek Het Kralenspel van Hermann Hesse, over dat alles opnieuw en zo creatief mogelijk gerangschikt moet worden. Het kralenspel is dus ook weer iets waar we mee bezig zijn, het kralen rijgen, om zo geestelijke werelden te openen, zodat alles hogere betekenissen krijgt. Dat is ook wat het droomweven is, en zo kan de mens de diepere wereld ontdekken en bouwen.

Het is het hele idee van het Eeuwig Evangelie, dat de mens moet ontsnappen uit de lagere schilderijen, om te komen tot de hogere schilderijen, en zo is dat ook met de boeken, want dat zijn in principe literaire schilderijen. Iconografie is de bestudering, beschrijving en beleving van kunstvormen, waarvan religie ook een onderdeel is, maar er zijn veel meer verhaalsoorten. Ook dystopische verhalen kunnen belangrijke onderdelen van de iconografie zijn. Ook filosofie en psychologie kunnen uitgedrukt worden in verhalen en zo iconografisch zijn. Al deze vormen zijn meer abstract dan dat ze letterlijk zijn. Het gaat voornamelijk dus ook om de interpretatie.

Ogen bewaken de Moloch stad, ogen van politie en psychiatrie, de denk en droom politie. We moeten komen tot een universele bibliotheek, zoals in de verhalen van Jorge Luis Borges in zijn boek Ficciones uit 1944. Het leven wordt daarin beschreven als een kansspel. De bibliotheek is oneindig met alle boeken die ooit zijn geschreven en geschreven zullen worden, dus alle mysterieen worden daarin opgelost.

In het boek de glazen dieren verzameling uit 1944/45 gaat het over een meisje die danst met een jongen, maar dan stoten ze per ongeluk een glazen eenhoorn om van haar glazen dieren verzameling. De eenhoorn valt op de grond en zijn hoorn breekt af. Het meisje is kreupel door een ziekte en sociaal geisoleerd, en hoopt dat de jongen met wie ze danst interesse in haar heeft, maar die blijkt verloofd te zijn met iemand om met die persoon te trouwen. Het meisje krijgt dus twee klappen in een keer te verwerken. De eenhoorn is nu net zoals de gewone paarden en zal niet meer opvallen. Ze geeft dan de eenhoorn aan de jongen, als souvenir. Haar moeder had gehoopt dat de twee een koppel zouden worden. Haar broer had hem naar binnen gebracht, niet wetende dat hij zou gaan trouwen, en hij krijgt de schuld van de moeder, en verlaat dan het huis. De val van de eenhoorn is een beeld van de val van het nazi rijk.

1940 – Kallocaine – Karin Boye
1941 – Eric of het kleine insectenboek – Bomans
1942 – De vreemdeling – Albert Camus
1943 – Het kralenspel – Hermann Hesse
1944 – Ficciones – Borges
1945 – De glazen dieren verzameling – Tennessee Williams

Al deze boeken spreken min of meer van een soort heilige isolatie die moet plaatsvinden. Alles moet achter tranenglas waardoor het oude onheilige glas afbreekt. Deze heilige isolatie is een ervaring ook veel bezongen in de literatuur van de tweede bijbel. De tranen moeten zich kristalliseren tot een museum, tot een bibliotheek. De heilige isolatie is een ervaring die na de heilige gebondenheid komt, maar ook al daarvoor moet sluimeren. In de heilige gebondenheid wordt de mens losgesneden van de zonde, en leeft dan niet

meer uit het vlees, kan dan niet meer vanuit het vlees leven, maar wordt nog wel onderdrukt door het vlees, en de mens gaat ook aan het kruis, wordt de wildernis ingedreven, net zoals toen Yeshua het heilige geestelijke ontving en toen geleid werd door het heilige geestelijke tot de wildernis. De heilige isolatie moet dat verder uitwerken, om de mens verder hemels schoon te maken. Het is een grote schoonmaak in de mens door de recyclity, juist een isolatie tot verdieping, en dit dringt diep in de mens door, scheidt merg van been, en vleselijke van het geestelijke. Er komt dan glas in de mens, en de mens komt tot grote openbaringen. De mens gaat dan alles meer op een afstand beleven, nog meer van alles vervreemden, maar komt wel in contact met het ware, het hogere, en dat loopt dwars door alles heen, zodat het ook een toenadering is. De mens wordt geisoleerd van de zonde, en die wordt onder handen genomen. De zonde gaat steeds meer en meer achter glas, en de mens gaat zien wat het is.

De mens mag ook bidden om de heilige isolatie. De mens mag erover mediteren en zich er ernstig naar uitstrekken, en mag ook in geloof leven het te hebben ontvangen, en ervoor danken. Het is iets wat de natuur aanbiedt. De natuur komt de denkende en strijdende mens die voor het hoogste goed leeft en die niet met minder genoegen neemt tegemoet. De heilige isolatie is een natuurverschijnsel, als een vrucht van het kruis, niet buiten het kruis omgaande dus. Het is wat de hemelse kallocaine in de mens doet in volharding, geloof, dankbaarheid en geduld. Wij mogen de hemel tegemoet gaan met bidden, smeken en tranen, maar niet in zelfzucht en overmoed. Bovenal is de heilige, hemelse isolatie een vrucht van het toetsen. Een mens kan in de natuur en de wildernis niet voorzichtig genoeg zijn vanwege de vele gevaren en valstrikken. Daarom heeft de mens de heilige isolatie nodig, en de isolatie van het kruis, maar moet de mens oppassen voor de valse isolatie van onverschilligheid en egoisme, van onwil om te leren, van kruisloosheid en toetsloosheid, want dat is een vals licht en een valse duisternis.

De heilige isolatie maakt ook scheiding tussen wetendheid en onwetendheid. Steeds meer drijft de mens af, tot een wereld die verloren was, onbewoond, verlaten, vergeten, en verborgen, de andere wereld, en die kun je niet zomaar binnen gaan, dus allereerst raak je tussen wal en schip. Ze willen je niet, want

wie ben je ? ‘Ik ken u niet,’ het is een doolhof. Deze tuin is zwaar geheim. Hard werken moet je voor elke druppel. En het blijft zich maar verdunnen. De mens heeft de heilige isolatie nodig. Ook in die relatie is isolatie, omdat dat is wat de isolatie is. Dingen kunnen alleen op een natuurlijke manier rijpen, en de natuur is creatief en ondoorgrondelijk, langs allerlei zijwegen, en gevarieerde voorwaarden, wat in geen denken is opgekomen. Het is boven denken. ‘Ik heb u nooit gekend,’ is een uitnodiging tot het leren kennen. ‘Gaat weg van mij,’ is de oproep tot isolatie om het in jezelf te vinden en in de natuur. Over deze thema’s gaat ook het boek ‘De Muur’ uit 1939 van Sartre, de existentialist. Je kunt namelijk alleen tot de essentie komen als je eerst tot de existentie bent gegaan, het eerst hebt doorleefd, wat een belangrijk filosofisch thema was in de jaren 1900, te vergelijken met de kruis verhalen, en wat ook op de Aristoteles principes wijst dat eerst het goede een gewoonte moet worden, en de natuur van de mens moet worden voordat de mens ook maar een stap verder komt. De ware kennis hebben gaat dus niet buiten het zijn en het doen om. Dat is wat existentie is. Zonder de existentie heeft het geloof geen waarde, en leeft de mens achter een muur. Er moeten dus muren afgebroken worden, maar ook hemelse muren gebouwd worden, en dat zijn een heleboel planken, en die moet steen voor steen gebouwd worden. De planken zijn lang, als een beeld van de volharding en de uitwerking ervan. Zoals in het kralenspel kun je de kralen ook niet zomaar aan elkaar verbinden. Ergens in de diepte ervan gebeurt het wonder. Dat kun je niet forceren. De aardse relaties zijn allemaal geforceerd, en passen daarom niet. In de existentie moet de mens weer meer tijd besteden, en richting vinden, voordat het tot werkelijkheid kan komen.

Het stadje was een zwemparadijs, overdekt, en tussen de huizen waren de zwembaden gewoon ingebouwd. Lekker makkelijk, dichtbij huis. Het was er ook altijd tropisch warm. Er waren voor iedere inwoner speciale gangen waardoor je van je huis tot het zwembad kon gaan. Ook lagen er overal zandbakken, waar of boompjes en plantjes stonden, of waar de kinderen konden spelen. Ik had er ook een huisje. Het was al laat, en doordat de gangdeur openstond kon ik zien dat de voordeur werd losgemaakt. Ik liep er direct op af, en riep 'hey'. Wie kon dat nu wezen ? Er werd veel ingebroken, dus het konden ook dieven wezen. Er kwam niemand binnen, en de deur ging ook niet verder open, dus ik deed de deur los, en ik zag dat er iemand alweer wegliep. 'Hey, waarom loop je nu weg ?' zei ik. 'Kom terug.' Ik kende hem wel. Hij was van de technische dienst. Hij kende mijn familie ook wel. Blijkbaar had hij een sleutel. Hij kwam terug. 'Wat kwam je doen ?' vroeg ik.

'Ja, het ging niet zo goed met die en die,' had hij het over, maar verder draaide hij er nogal omheen en had hij het over andere dingen, ook omdat hij wist dat ik liever niet over bepaalde dingen sprak. Ik zei tegen hem : 'En als ik nu niet naar je was toegekomen, wat zou je dan hebben gedaan ? Je woont namelijk nog tamelijk ver weg.' Maar dan zou hij wel hebben gewacht in zijn voertuig zei hij, of hij had nog andere dingen te doen. Het werd verder wel een gezellig gesprek. We zijn toen ergens naar een café in de buurt gegaan, en toen we terugkwamen zag ik opeens de persoon waarover hij het had gehad. Het zou niet zo goed gaan met die persoon volgens hem, wat ook de reden was dat hij was gekomen, om het mij te vertellen, maar die persoon liep met anderen daar en was de vrolijkheid zelve. Ik wilde die persoon helemaal niet zien, dus ik liep zo snel mogelijk weer naar mijn huis. Ik schold hem wel even uit.

Ja, kom nou. Dat zijn soms van die producten hè, waar van alles mee aan de hand is, waar mensen aan komen te overlijden, kinderen door worden gemarteld, en toch halen ze het niet uit de handel. Toch moet je telkens die belachelijk vrolijke reclame ervan op de tv blijven zien alsof er niets aan de hand is. Zo zou ik die persoon het beste kunnen omschrijven. Het was een stuk technologie. Ik gebruikte het niet meer, wilde er niets meer van weten. Schold

hem altijd de huid vol als ik hem tegen kwam. Wilde niets meer met hem te maken hebben. Schold ook altijd de hele boel bij elkaar als die stomme, leugenachtige reclame clips ervan op de tv kwamen alsof het zo'n goed product was, allemaal met hun vrolijke, huichelende glimlachen. Dan kon de hele buurt altijd van mijn gescheld meegenieten. Tja, wat moet ik zeggen. Ik groeide in dit stadje op. Ik moest altijd het gegil van kinderen aanhoren onder de grond. Mijn slaapkamer was net boven zo'n ruimte gebouwd waar ze dat product uitvoerig gebruikten, met name op kinderen. Het was een product van de hel. Slapeloze nachten had ik er van. De jongen van de technische dienst keek me aan. Hij was met me meegekomen. 'Hoe ging het ?' zei hij toen we eindelijk thuis waren gekomen.

Ik begon weer te schelden, en hij moest me kalmeren. 'Tja,' zei hij. 'Je weet dat het product nog steeds gebruikt wordt.' Je kon het altijd in het stadje ook ruiken. Het was echt zo'n zwembadgeur, zo'n geur van : 'Oh, er is hier niets aan de hand,' maar ik wist wel beter. Ook wij moesten er vroeger aan geloven. Ik keek de jongen van de technische dienst aan. 'Ik wil er niet over praten,' zei ik, 'maar kun jij er niet wat aan doen ? Jij bent immers van de technische dienst.'

'Ga maar slapen,' zei hij toen. Ik moest altijd dat gegil van die kinderen aanhoren onder de grond, 's nachts, ook al hoorde ik het minder dan vroeger omdat mijn huisje er verder van verwijderd was. Toch kon ik er vaak niet van slapen.

'Slapen ?' zei ik. 'Puh, wat valt er hier te slapen ?'

'Ik zal wel wat doen,' zei hij toen. Dat was het laatste wat ik van hem hoorde. Hij had één of ander gas in mijn gezicht gespoten, een heel wazig, waterig gas. Ik viel er direct van in slaap. Ik droomde dat ik door zo'n zwembadgang tussen het huis en het zwembad ging, en toen niet naar het zwembad ging, maar de trap af naar beneden, waar die kinderen waren. Ze vlogen mij in mijn armen. Ook ik was eens zo'n kind. Het waren de ongeborenen. Het was alsof ik een klets water in mijn gezicht kreeg. Toen ik wakker werd zag ik het glimlachende gezicht van de jongen van de technische dienst. 'Nou, en ?' zei ik.

'Het product is niet meer in de verkoop en wordt niet meer gebruikt,' zei hij.

'Hoe kan ik dat zeker weten ?' vroeg ik. 'En wat heb je gedaan ?'

'Ik heb niks gedaan,' zei hij, 'maar dat was de reden dat ik kwam, om je mede te delen dat het voorbehoedsmiddel niet meer in de zwembaden zou worden gestrooid vanaf dit moment.' Hij keek toen even op zijn horloge.

'Nu ?' vroeg ik.

'Ja, nu,' zei hij. 'Precies op dit tijdstip. Het heeft even geduurd, maar het was al aangekondigd dat het zou stoppen, en ik weet dat je liever niet over het onderwerp sprak, maar ik vond dat je het toch moest weten. Het is voorbij. Ik hoop dat je nu 's nachts wat rustiger kan slapen.'

Einde

De leesbij is een boekenbij, die gaat van boek tot boek om honing te verzamelen. Van regel tot regel gaat de leesbij, voor honing. De kijkbij kijkt rond, om uit alles wat hij ziet honing te halen. De samenleving is een boekenkorf. Alles is al opgeschreven. Er ligt nog zoveel honing in opgeborgen. De muren van de samenleving zijn dik. Ze hebben meer scheiding gemaakt dan lief was, maar muurbijen zitten op deze muren om er honing aan te onttrekken. De muurbij vliegt van muur tot muur. Er ligt zoveel geschiedenis in deze muren opgeborgen.

Ik vloog eens op de rug van zo'n muurbij. De muurbij was heel groot, en hij nam me mee naar allerlei landen over de muren : naar Afrika enzo. Er waren zoveel muren, en daarom moesten er wel muurbijen zijn. Hij liet me zien hoe hij honing aan de muren onttrok.

We vlogen toen naar Suriname, en ik zag veel meer van die muurbijen. De muren waren dik, maar vol honing. Ik zag een meisje tussen muren. Ze kon haar weg niet meer vinden. De muurbij zette mij daar toen af, en zei : 'Onthoud wat ik je heb geleerd,' en vloog toen weg. Ik heb het meisje toen geleerd hoe ze honing uit de muren kon krijgen. Ze kreeg hier ook vleugeltjes van, net als mij, en toen zijn we samen hand in hand weggevlogen, over de muren heen, naar andere gebieden om verdwaalden het verhaal van de muurbij te vertellen.

de muurbij 2

Zo zijn er ook vloerbijen en plafondbijen. Er is aan alles wel honing te onttrekken. Zo is er niets voor niets. De mens kan zich soms ingesloten voelen, maar er is altijd honing. Alles is een bloemenveld, en in jezelf is de bijenkorf. Ga van bloem tot bloem, maar vergeet niet terug te keren tot de bijenkorf. Laat

je niet afschrikken door bepaalde bloemen die verschrikkelijk lijken. Ook zij hebben hun honing. Alles is een honingbloem. Maar de bij kent een zeker pad, en werkt zeker met strategie. Er zijn namelijk ook zoveel valstrikken voor de bij. Een bij moet ook altijd goed gewapend zijn, en toegerust met de nodige instrumenten.

De bij moet de bijenkoningin kennen, ook al is die goed of slecht. Ook de bijenkoningin heeft haar honing. Ze is niet zomaar de eerste de beste. De bij moet naar de juiste bijenkoningin gaan, ook al is ze goed of slecht. Het gaat om de honing die erin zit. Soms is die honing een belangrijke sleutel op het pad. Het gaat erom wat erin haar ligt opgesloten.

Soms zijn muren niet te doorbreken, maar kun je er wel honing uit onttrekken. De muren staan symbool voor de voorwaardes van het leven. Zijn muren daarom geen bruggen ? Ja, het zijn hele lange bruggen, bijna oneindig, maar alleen zo kan de honing komen.

Muren zijn de droombruggen van het ware leven, van het diepere leven, van het eeuwige leven, waaruit de honing voorstroomt.

de muurbij 3
honing uit de muur

Waarom worden we soms, of misschien wel heel vaak, geblokkeerd in ons leven, en zit er voor ons niets anders op om als muurbijen te leven ? Misschien zijn die dikke muren er wel om ons ergens tegen te beschermen ? Er zijn ook andere realiteiten die soms voorrang krijgen. We hebben te maken met een interdimensionaal verkeerssysteem. Wij zijn niet de enige levensvormen. Er

zijn zoveel andere levens-energieën, en ook horen die weer bij ons. Soms kan zich dat heel wrang vertalen en zijn tranen onze honing.

Zo liep ik eens een bruggetje over het park in. Er stond daar een huilend meisje met haar pop. Ik nam het meisje in mijn armen en vroeg er wat er loos was. Ze kon niet praten. Ik heb haar toen naar huis genomen, en gaf haar wat te eten en te drinken. Ik vertelde haar toen over de bijtjes, en toen kon ze weer lachen. Ze zei toen dat ze haar vader en moeder kwijt was. Die waren dood. Ik zei dat ze wel bij mij mocht wonen, dan zou ik haar vader wel zijn. Ze gaf toen haar pop aan mij uit dankbaarheid, maar ik zei dat die pop voor haar was, en dat ze nog veel meer poppen van me zou krijgen, en bijen. Ik liet haar er een paar zien. Ik had nog wel een extra kamertje, dus dat kon haar slaapkamer worden. Er stonden nog wat poppen en ook bijtjes. Ze was daar heel blij mee, en wilde graag dat ik haar pop in mijn kamer zou houden. Dat beloofde ik haar, dat ik ook goed voor haar pop zou zorgen.

'Mijn pop heeft ook geen vader en moeder meer. En ik ben maar een kind. Kun je ook de vader van de pop zijn ?' had ze gevraagd. Blijkbaar was de last van de pop te groot voor haar, dus heb ik de pop naar mijn kamer genomen.

Nu, na al die jaren, is het meisje groot. Ze is als een muurbij nu. Dat heb ik haar geleerd, om honing te onttrekken aan de muren in het leven. Op een dag zei ze tegen mij : 'Heb jij geen vader en moeder ?' Ik zei : 'Ik heb een muurbijenkoningin.'

Ze wilde de muurbijenkoningin toen ook zien, maar ik zei tegen haar dat die achter duizend muren was. Ik kon haar alleen maar leren honing aan die muren te onttrekken. Echte muurhoning, als dromen tot haar komende. Op een dag vertelde ze me dat ze over de muurbijenkoningin had gedroomd.

'En ?' vroeg ik.

'Het was heel prachtig,' zei ze. 'Ze had een witte jurk aan, met een prachtige witte hoed met gaas, en op haar jurk waren ook wat bloemetjes.'

'Zeer poëtisch,' zei ik toen. 'Heeft ze ook nog wat tegen je gezegd ?'

'Nee,' zei ze. 'Ze gaf me een potje muurhoning, en toen vloog ze weg.'

'En toen ?' vroeg ik.

'Ik volgde haar,' zei ze. 'We kwamen in de muurbijenkorf. Toen keek ze me stralend aan, en gaf me een omhelzing, toen ze zag dat ik haar was gevolgd. Ze gaf me toen een boek, een dagboek. Ik begon het als een leesbij te lezen.'

'Wat stond erin ?' vroeg ik.

'Ik spreek niet, maar ik schrijf,
Ik ga met niemand om, ik ben slechts in de boeken,
Ik ben achter duizend muren,
Alleen de echte muurhoningbij zal mij vinden,
Veel liefs,
de muurbijenkoningin,' zei ze.

Ik keek haar aan. 'Ze spreekt door de muren,' zei ik. 'Zo heb ik haar leren kennen, en zo heeft ze haar geheimen aan mij geopenbaard.'

Einde

Het is misschien een verschrikkelijke bloem, en het is misschien maar heel weinig honing, maar de honingbij is dankbaar voor elke druppel. De honingbij bouwt zijn huis met elke druppel, in dankbaarheid. Elke druppel is er weer een druppel bij. Daar kan een honingbij weer mee verder. En elke druppel honing uit de muur, is ook weer een druppel meer om de muur beter te kunnen begrijpen. Van druppels rijgt de muurbij zijn sieraden. Van druppels rijgt de muurbij zijn boeken van begrip, regel voor regel. Hiervan bouwt hij zijn huis. Het is een boekenkorf. De muurbij spreekt niet, maar schrijft. De muurbij leeft niet, maar is in de boeken, zoals zijn muurbijenkoningin. Dat heeft zij hem geleerd. Hij spreekt en leeft alleen door muren. De hieroglieven erop zijn moeilijk te begrijpen, als in een doolhof, maar zij zijn er om de boekenkorf te beveiligen. Indringers zullen het hier niet maken. Zij zullen niet ver komen.

Maar wat is er dan achter de muur ? Helemaal niks. Al het leven is in de muur. Zij is de muur.

'Het was mijn dit, mijn dat, hebben ze allemaal afgepakt, achter muren gezet, maar er is alleen leven in de muur … Niet ervoor, niet erachter, maar alleen in de muur … Totdat we zelf die muur zijn geworden … Ik kan niks zeggen, ik kan alleen maar wat laten zien … Ik ben slechts een muur … Teveel tegen muren opgelopen, werd ik zelf een muur …

Ik kan niet spreken, ik kan alleen mijn hieroglieven laten zien, mijn geheimschrift, wat je kunt ontcijferen, om het pad te volgen naar mijn hart … Maar als je dan daar aangekomen bent, ben ik allang weer ergens anders … Ik ben slechts een muur … Ik laat mijn sporen achter, maar zij leiden slechts naar een muur, totdat je zelf een muur bent geworden … Ik ben de koningin der muurbijen … de koningin der muren … In mij is al het leven te vinden … Buiten mij is er slechts illusie en bedrog … Ik maakte het om mijn hart te bewaken … Welkom tot mijn doolhof … het pad tot de honing des levens … Ik ben een raadselmaker, een maker van sleutels en sloten … Ik ben de maker van muren en deuren … De deur leidt nergens toe, maar al het leven is in de muur …'

Ik had haar dagboek gevonden en erin gelezen, en schudde mijn hoofd. Er werd op mijn schouder getikt, en ik draaide mij om, en zag haar daar staan : de muurbijenkoningin. Droomde ik of was het echt ? 'Moest dat nu allemaal ?' vroeg ik. Ik schudde mijn hoofd, maar begreep haar wel. 'Heel begrijpelijk,' zei ik. 'Je moet wel heel wat meegemaakt hebben dat je zo bent geworden.'

Maar ik sprak slechts tegen een muur.

Einde

de bijenkorf

Ik ging weer eens terug naar een wereld die ik eens achterliet, en belde aan bij het huis waar ik toen woonde. Een vrouw of meisje deed open. Ze leek een beetje op een bij. Ze zei : 'Hallo, wie ben je ?'

Ik zei : 'Ken je me dan niet meer ? Ik weet trouwens ook niet wie jij bent. Het is al zo lang geleden, of misschien wonen hier inmiddels andere mensen.'

Ze zei : 'Mallerd, kom maar binnen.'

Ik ging naar binnen en volgde haar door de gang.

'Dus je hebt hier gewoond,' zei ze, 'en hoe lang was dat geleden ?'

Ik keek naar het meisje of de vrouw, nog steeds niet wetende of ze nu een meisje of een vrouw was, maar dat deed er eigenlijk ook niet toe. Ik ging toen ergens zitten. 'Ik heb geen idee meer, lang geleden in ieder geval.'

'Nou ja,' zei ze, 'daar schieten we dus niks mee op. Je hebt je geheugen verloren ofzo ? Ik ken je in ieder geval niet, dus het moet wel lang geleden zijn, ja.'

'Okay,' zei ik. 'En nee, ik heb mijn geheugen niet verloren. Jullie zijn dus de nieuwe bewoners. Of jij kan ik beter zeggen, want ik weet niets over anderen. Ik ben zeker mijn geheugen niet verloren, maar misschien wil ik het allemaal niet meer weten.'

'Oh zit dat zo,' zei ze. 'Nou ja, misschien ben ik het ook allemaal wel expres vergeten.'

Ik keek haar even vreemd aan. 'Dus je kent me wel ?' vroeg ik.

'Nee,' zei ze. 'Je lijkt me wel okay.'

'Ja, maar je zei net dat je het misschien ook wel allemaal expres bent vergeten,' zei ik.

'Ja, ik zei misschien, dat wil zeggen dat ik het niet meer weet,' zei ze. 'Het kan best wezen dat ik expres dingen vroeger ben vergeten, en dat ik het anno nu niet meer weet. Een mens kan raar in elkaar zitten.'

'Zeg dat wel,' zei ik.

'Maar waar ben je voor gekomen ?' vroeg ze.

'Kijken hoe alles er nu bijstaat,' zei ik.

'Heb je heimwee ?' vroeg ze.

'Nee, niet echt, maar het is wel nostalgie. Blijft toch een deel van mijn leven,' zei ik. 'Meer belangstelling.'

'Okay,' zei ze toen. 'Nu ja, ik zal je verder niet ophouden. Voel je vrij om rond te kijken.' Ik begon door het huis te lopen, en de kamers te doorzoeken. Ik keek naar de spulletjes, gewoon om herkenningspunten te krijgen, maar dit waren natuurlijk nieuwe bewoners. Toch zocht ik naar overeenkomsten.'

'Maak je het niet te bont ?' hoorde ik haar roepen.

'Nee hoor, ik ben zo klaar,' zei ik hard. Ineens stond ze in de deur opening.

'Ja, dat is mijn dagboek,' zei ze. 'Blader er maar in.'

'Je bent wel gastvrij,' zei ik.

'Je hebt hier immers gewoond, dus ik vind wel dat je recht hebt om een beetje te weten wie hier nu woont, omdat het toch een stukje van jezelf is en blijft,' zei ze.

'Is dat zo ?' vroeg ik, terwijl ik verder bladerde in haar dagboek. Ik las er nauwelijks in, meer bladeren.

'Houd je van verhaaltjes ?' zei ze.

Ik keek naar het kastje, en naar het bed. Toen keek ik naar de muur. 'Ik herken het wel een beetje,' zei ik, 'en ja, ik houd van verhaaltjes.'

'Lees dan wat,' zei ze, om me uit te dagen. Ik vond het zelf toch wel heel onbeleefd om zomaar ongevraagd in haar dagboek te lezen, dus had ik er alleen maar een beetje in gebladerd en er overheen gelezen, maar nu gaf ze

me toestemming. Ik begon te lezen.

'Zo, zo,' zei ik. 'Je hebt wel lef. Weet je het allemaal nog ?'

'Ja,' zei ze. Ik knikte wat terwijl ik las. 'Nou, heel keurig,' zei ik, terwijl ik het dagboek weer aan haar gaf. Maar ze gaf het weer terug. 'Lees nog wat meer,' zei ze. 'Het was immers vroeger jouw huis.'

Ik las verder. 'Maar ik ken die namen,' zei ik. Ik liet haar lezen wat ik bedoelde. Ze knikte. 'Dus onze levens liggen toch dichter bij elkaar dan we eerst dachten. We kennen wat van dezelfde mensen.'

'Of het is puur toeval,' zei ze. 'Mensen hebben soms dezelfde namen.'

'Ja, maar dit is een heel lijstje,' zei ik. 'Dat kan bijna geen toeval meer zijn. En als ik het zo lees, dan zijn het dezelfde mensen met dezelfde karakter eigenschappen.' Maar toen las ik iets wat ik niet kon plaatsen bij een bepaalde persoon. 'Hmm, misschien toch toeval,' zei ik, en gaf het dagboek weer terug. Ze knikte. 'Blijf anders, dan kun je me nog wat vertellen over hoe het hier vroeger was,' zei ze.

'Okay,' zei ik. 'Ik heb geen haast, en dan kun jij me vertellen over hoe het nu is. Misschien leren we nog wat van elkaar.'

Ze knikte. Opeens zakte ze door haar knieën en snikte. Ze hield mijn hand vast. 'Wat is er ?' vroeg ik. Ik aaide over haar haar. Toen hielp ik haar weer overeind. Ze zei niets. 'Kom,' zei ik. Toen liet ik haar op het bed zitten. Na een paar minuten vroeg ik weer : 'Wat was er nu ?'

Ze zei : 'Je lijkt wel op een heilige. Ik ben zo gehecht aan dit huis, en heb altijd al gefantaseerd over hoe het zou zijn geweest voordat ik hier kwam. Het huis draagt zo'n geschiedenis, en het begon mij meer en meer te fascineren en een obsessie voor me te worden, en toen kwam jij. Daarom vind ik dit ook zo waardevol en overweldigend, omdat je voor mij een onbekend deel draagt wat wel heel belangrijk voor me is.'

Ik glimlachte. 'Ik ben er wel blij mee,' zei ik, 'en ik zit ook zo in elkaar een beetje. Het had ook heel anders kunnen zijn dat ik niet toegelaten zou worden, en dat het allemaal onbekend voor mij zou blijven hoe het nu met het huis is. We hebben dan wel een gedeelde interesse. Voor het huis is dat ook weer belangrijk. Ik zeg altijd : 'Huizen hebben ook gevoel.'

'Wat is dat mooi hoe je dat zegt,' zei ze, terwijl ze me warm aankeek, bijna stralend. 'Zo voel ik dat ook. Huizen hebben ook gevoel. Door het komen en gaan van mensen wordt er vaak heel wat van hen afgenomen, als innerlijke scheuringen, maar nu voelt het alsof deze wond wordt gedicht, als het opengaan van een lang vergeten dagboek.'

Ik keek haar aan. Ze leek nog steeds op een bij, gaande van bloem tot bloem om haar honing te verzamelen. Het huis was de bijenkorf.

Einde

liefde is gratis koffie

De liefde is er niet om te delen, te geven en te behagen, maar om te arresteren.
De liefde is een politie die de mens in isolatie en gevangenschap leidt.
Gratis koffie. Gratis een dak boven je hoofd. Gratis zorg en bescherming.
De liefde gaat achter de dieven aan.
Niet als een projectie. De liefde begint bij zichzelf, en dan stroomt het over.
De liefde is een overweldigende stortvloed.
Niemand kan het stoppen. Niemand kan het tegenhouden.

De liefde is er niet om te helpen, maar om beet te nemen.

De hulp komt later wel.

De liefde is een bedrieger, want bedriegers moeten bedrogen worden.

Maar waar is deze kunst nog te vinden ?

Men verteld elkaar hoe het is en brengt elkaar zo groot leed.

Is de liefde dan een leugenaar ?

Nee, de liefde is schepper.

de kallocaine muren van de literalogische stad

In de muur zit het kallocaine, in de wortels van een muurkruid, als het waarheidsserum wat de vrucht is van de heilige isolatie, een vrucht van het kruis. Het is als een hemelse koffie, als hemels drop. De muur was een belangrijk thema in de jaren 1900, en ook in de tweede bijbelse literatuur. Het kallocaine als een muurhoning, bewaakt en bewerkt door muurbijen. Er zit een hele wereld in de muur, in de isolatie-wand. Je kunt er zoveel uithalen dat je een nieuw leven hebt, ook al zit je tussen muren opgesloten. Dat is het wonder van de muur.

De nazi's wilden de existentie niet, wilden het niet doorleven. Ze wilden direct de essentie grijpen, de macht grijpen en met geweld de economie herstellen, waardoor ze de essentie juist niet konden bereiken en zo een pseudo-essentie brouwden, een groot vergif. Ze bouwden de muur als een groot kruis en hingen er velen aan op, en sloten er vele anderen in op. Ze brouwden er hun eigen kallocaine, wat een chemische fabrieks-stank was. Het was gewoon een zelfmoord-siroop.

De literalogie is de logos van de literatuur, waarin ook theologie, filosofie en psychologie onderverdeeld liggen. De literalogie bouwt de simulatie stad steen voor steen, want de stad moet wel gesimuleerd worden, anders komt de mens nooit tot de natuur. In de simulatie stad ligt het pad.

Uit de bundel 'de laatste van de rozentuin' uit 2011 :

Suzie

De edelste tuinen zag ik. Zoutig, zurig, niet te veel zoet, zo smaakten de bessen. Ze waren heerlijk. Ze waren bijna verzonnen als door een insect. En dan niet een normaal insect, maar bijzonder, eentje met groot potentieel, als een wereldredder. Ik had kriebel in mijn keel toen ik ernaar keek. Het smaakte ook een beetje naar drop. Drop kon je trouwens niet krimpen, tenzij het rode drop was. Maar rode drop was dan weer net iets zoeter. Ik stapte de tuinen binnen, waar nog veel meer van die bessen hingen, en allemaal beestjes. Ze zat daar met een rood jurkje, een beetje opgebolt als pudding was haar jurkje, als met kant belegd. Het jurkje was niet te groot, en dat hoefde ook niet. Het was al genoeg dat ze daar zat. De touwtjes van haar jurkje waren als dropveters, als van rode drop. Ik keek niet op of om, maar ging dieper de tuinen in, op zoek naar meer bessen. Ik hield ervan om naar bessen te staren, vooral druipende bessen. Het was alsof ik haar tong op de mijne voelde, maar ik ontweek haar. Ik wilde niet aan haar denken. Zij blijkbaar ook niet aan mij, want ze bleef gewoon zitten. Ik voelde contact met haar, maar ontkende het in mezelf. Kom op, zeg. Ik heb wel andere dingen te doen. Als ik me aan haar zou geven, zou ze me toch verscheuren. Ze was een roofdier, daar diep in de tuin. Ik had haar wel in de gaten, maar deed alsof ik haar niet zag. Ze begon een beetje zenuwachtig heen en weer te draaien. 'Ik heb je wel in de gaten, hoor,' zei ze. Ik deed alsof ik haar niet hoorde. 'Dat is ook niet netjes,' zei ze. 'Helemaal niets terugzeggen.' Ik draaide met mijn rug naar haar toe. Ik begon nog meer bessen te plukken, en begon ze te eten. 'Hey, geef mij ook eens wat van die bessen,' zei ze. Ik gooide er eentje toe.

'Je bent afstandelijk,' zei ze. 'Nou, jij mag er anders ook wel wezen,' zei ik. 'Eindelijk praat je,' zei ze. 'Ik vind het allemaal best,' zei ik. 'Wat vind je allemaal best ?' vroeg ze. Ik zweeg. Ik begon door te eten van de bessen. 'Niet met je mond vol praten,' zei ze. 'Je bent mijn moeder niet,' zei ik. 'Nee, gelukkig niet,' zei ze. 'Je bent me nogal een probleem-geval.' 'Zo mag ik het horen,' zei ik. 'Hoe zal ik je noemen ?' sprak ze. 'Al noem je me Klaas, doet me niets,' zei hij. 'Krokodillen-voer,' sprak ze zachtjes. 'Die zijn hier niet,' zei ik.

Ik liep dieper de tuin in, mijn gezicht verborgen voor haar. Ze kwam mij niet achterna. Wat zou ze van me moeten ? En ik had wel andere dingen te doen. Ik verzamelde bessen in mijn mandje. Ik bracht ze naar grootmoeder. Ze kookte er iets van. Het was heerlijk. Ik sprak met haar niet over de dingen die ik had gezien in de edelste tuinen. Maar later deed ik het toch. 'Ach, dat meisje,' zei grootmoeder. 'Ik ken haar wel. Ze woonde hier vroeger in de buurt. Er hing daar altijd was buiten, in de tuin. Ze kookte weleens voor ons. Maar later werd ze een wilde. Ze vertrok naar de andere kant van de stad, en ging aan de kade wonen. Het was veel te wild voor ons. Maar ze hield altijd al veel van de bossen. Daar zwierf ze vaak. Toen je klein was kwam ze je weleens opzoeken.' 'Ik kan me daar niets meer van herinneren,' zei ik. 'Dat ben je misschien vergeten,' zei grootmoeder. 'Jullie waren vroeger heel gek met elkaar.' 'Hoe kunnen mensen zo uit elkaar groeien ?' vroeg ik. 'Ach ja, jongen,' zei grootmoeder, 'dat is de wereld. Het is komen en gaan, vastpakken en loslaten, en je groeit uit alles ook weer uit.' 'Ja, dat jurkje wat ze droeg was wel erg klein,' zei ik. 'Ze past er niet meer in,' zei grootmoeder. 'Nou, het paste wel goed,' zei ik, 'maar het jurkje was gewoon klein.' 'Ze had dus niet veel aan,' zei grootmoeder. 'Nou, okay, daar kan ik inkomen. Het is nogal zomers weer, een beetje zwoel zelfs, vind je niet ?' Ik keek oma aan. Ze had van die wonderlijke ogen, donkere ogen. Ik zag de pretlichtjes in haar ogen, alsof ze blij was dat we met elkaar spraken. Ja, dat had ook anders kunnen zijn. Er waren zovelen die niet meer met oma wilden praten. Haar ogen dropen bijna als bessen. En ik had bijna druipende handen. 'Vertel me meer,' zei ik. 'Nou, ja, ze was vroeger gek op je, en wilde met je trouwen,' zei grootmoeder. 'Maar de familie wilde dat niet. Toen droop ze af. Alle contacten verwaterden sindsdien.' 'Ja, maar daar kan ik toch niets aan doen,' zei ik. 'Ze werd verboden met je om te gaan,' zei grootmoeder. 'En daar legde ze zich bij neer.' 'Was ze gevaarlijk of zo ?' vroeg ik. 'De familie vond van wel,' zei grootmoeder. 'Ze is als een kwark-taartje,' zei ik. 'Ja, maar jij kent haar duisternissen niet,' zei grootmoeder. 'Vertel me,' zei ik. Grootmoeder werd even stil. Ze keek me diep aan in mijn ogen, en sprak : 'Ze houdt van vreemde spelletjes. Het zijn geen echte spelletjes, maar ik noem het maar even zo.'

Ik kwam haar een paar dagen later in de bibliotheek tegen. Ze was daar aan

het lezen. Ze had prachtige laarzen aan. En een prachtig wit broekje dat tot aan haar laarzen reikte. Ze had touwtjes in haar haren, en het voelde alsof haar tong op de mijne lag. Ik had een bessensmaak in mijn mond. Ze deed alsof ze me niet zag, of misschien zag ze me helemaal niet. Ik liep langs haar heen, en liep zo dicht tegen haar aan dat ik haar raakte, maar niet te hard, en niet te dichtbij, en zeker ook niet te lang. Een rilling en een warm gevoel ging door mij heen. Ik voelde mij als in de hemel. Ik werd er een beetje emotioneel van. Plotseling keek ze op, en keek met haar warme donker-bruine ogen naar mij, alsof ze me niet herkende. Toen las ze weer door. 'Je herkent me niet ?' vroeg ik. 'Nee,' zei ze, terwijl ze niet opkeek. Ze las gewoon door. 'Ik geloof je niet,' zei ik. Ze glimlachte warm, terwijl ze even opkeek. 'Het is me allemaal verboden,' zei ze. 'Door wie ?' vroeg ik. 'Je familie,' zei ze. Ik zweeg. Ik probeerde me haar naakt voor te stellen, of in een bikini op het strand, terwijl ik doorliep. Dat was de laatste keer dat ik haar zag. Grootmoeder vertelde mij een paar weken later dat ze in de krant had gelezen dat ze spoorloos was verdwenen. Ik werd er niet koud of warm van. Het zij zo, dacht ik. Haar zus kwam ik nog weleens tegen. Maar die wilde er niet over praten. Dat was ook een heel ander type. Toch wilde ze er na een bepaalde tijd wel over praten. 'Mijn zusje hield veel van je,' zei ze. 'Ze wil dat je haar nooit vergeet.' 'Waar is ze ?' vroeg ik. Ze overhandigde me een brief. 'Lees,' zei ze. Er stond in dat ze naar het bos was gevlucht, voorgoed. Ze wilde dat ik zou komen. Ik stond op, en ging terug naar grootmoeder. 'Ja, ze hield veel van de bossen,' zei grootmoeder. 'Altijd al. Karel, haar vader, was ook een bos-fanaat.' Ik schudde mijn laars uit. Er zat allemaal zand in, en ook een munt, een gouden munt, met haar hoofd erop. Ik liet het aan grootmoeder zien. 'Maar dat kan toch niet, lieve jongen,' zei grootmoeder. 'Hoe kun je nu een munt vinden met haar hoofd erop, en dat zat in je laars ? Dat heeft haar zus vast in je laars gestopt toen je daar was.' Ik was verbijsterd. 'Hoe is dat mogelijk ?' vroeg ik. 'Een munt met haar hoofd erop ?' 'Ja, ze moet wel ergens koningin zijn, jongen,' zei grootmoeder. 'Je komt niet zomaar met je hoofd op een munt.' 'Hoe kan dat ?' vroeg ik. 'Ik weet het niet, jongen,' zei grootmoeder. 'Volgens mij weet haar zus meer.' Ik ging weer naar haar zus, en die begon direct te glimlachen toen ze de munt zag. 'Ja, Suzie is een koningin,' zei ze. Het was de eerste keer dat ik haar zag glimlachen. 'Van welk rijk ?' vroeg ik. 'Suzie is de koningin der apen,' zei ze. 'Ach, kom nou,' zei ik. 'Hoe kunnen apen nou munten hebben.' 'Ach,' zei ze,

'dat was eens een stunt in de dierentuin, waar je je hoofd kon laten zetten op een munt, als je voor een bepaald bedrag had gedoneerd.' 'Dus heb jij die munt in mijn laars gedaan ?' vroeg ik. Ze giechelde. Raadsel opgelost. Ik ging terug naar grootmoeder. 'Ach, Karel had ook altijd van die vreemde dingen,' zei grootmoeder. 'En haar moeder was ook zo'n zot mens. Haar moeder reiste in bootjes door het bos. Ook zo'n bosmens. En dan vreemde dingen, he.' 'Wat voor vreemde dingen ?' vroeg ik. Grootmoeder zweeg.

Ik besloot door de vele struiken van bosbessen naar het bos te gaan. Al gauw kwam ik haar daar tegen. Ze had een boog op mij gericht. 'Wat kom je doen ?' zei ze ruig. 'Ik dacht dat je wilde dat ik kwam ?' zei ik. 'Wie ben je ?' vroeg ze. 'Ik dacht dat je me wel kende, Suzie,' zei ik. 'Ik ben Suzie niet,' zei ze. 'Ik ben nu iemand anders.' 'Mag ik bij je komen ?' vroeg ik. Ze spande de boog nog strakker. Ik keek naar de glinsterende pijl. Als ze die los zou laten, zou ik er zeker geweest zijn. 'Jij bent het reeenkind, het geheim van het hertenjong,' zei ze. 'Wat is dat ?' vroeg ik. 'Nog even en dan ben je een kluif,' zei ze. Ze greep een touw met een lasso van haar schouder en liet het om mijn nek vliegen. 'Hey, ben je gek geworden ?' vroeg ik. Met een steen sloeg ze me neer. Ik was bewusteloos, en werd even later wakker in een kooi. 'Jij bent dus echt gek geworden,' zei ik. 'Stom varken,' zei ze. 'Ik dacht dat ik eerst een hertenjong was, en nu ineens een varken ?' vroeg ik. 'Mond houden,' zei ze. 'Je speelt met je leven.' 'Je praat gewoon heel ongenuanceerd, alsof er een steekje bij je los zit,' zei ik. 'Ik ga je laten verhongeren,' zei ze. Die is echt gek, dacht ik bij mezelf. Die heeft ze niet meer goed op een rijtje. 'Je zal niet meer teruggaan naar je familie,' zei ze hardvochtig. 'Het is afgelopen met hun spelletjes. Je bent nu van mij.' 'Wat als ze me hier komen halen ?' vroeg ik. 'Dit is verboden terrein voor hen,' zei ze. Opeens stond daar de boswachter. Suzie moest naar de gevangenis, en ik kon weer terug naar mijn familie. Ik had wel heel erg veel medelijden met Suzie. Ik zocht haar vaak op in de gevangenis. 'Heus, ik bedoelde het niet zo,' zei ze. 'Ja, dat zeggen ze allemaal,' zei ik. 'Ik was gewoon met je aan het spelen,' zei ze. 'Mijn familie had gelijk,' zei ik. 'Je bent gevaarlijk, en je houdt van vreemde spelletjes.' Ze begon te huilen. 'Ik wilde je geen kwaad doen. Ik zou je daarna gewoon loslaten, maar jullie vatten alles verkeerd op,' zei ze. 'Maar je had een pijl en boog op me gericht, en je had me bewusteloos geslagen met een steen. Noem je dat nog spelletjes ? Je bent een

beetje vreemd,' zei ik. 'Het bosleven is hard,' zei ze. 'Ik moest overleven.' 'Maar je zei dat je wilde dat ik kwam,' zei ik. 'In die brief. Het is een soort liegen en bedriegen.' 'Nee,' zei ze. 'Ik wilde dat je kwam. Ik wilde gewoon met je spelen.' 'Je hebt me erin laten lopen,' zei ik. 'Denk je nou echt dat ik je kwaad wilde doen ?' vroeg ze. 'Ik weet het niet,' zei ik. 'Je bent in ieder geval niet te vertrouwen.' 'Het was maar spel,' zei ze. 'Vond je het niet leuk ? Dan had je het moeten zeggen, dan waren we direct gestopt.' 'Ik was al bewusteloos geslagen,' zei ik. Ze scheen het niet te begrijpen. Het was een bijzonder meisje. 'Het dringt niet tot je door, he ?' zei ik. 'En nu zit ik hier dan,' zei ze. 'Ik wil terug naar het bos.' 'Maar je bent te gevaarlijk,' zei ik. 'Ach kom,' zei ze. 'Jullie kunnen ook niet tegen een grapje.' 'Geen leuk grapje als ik bewusteloos wordt geslagen,' zei ik. Maar dat drong niet tot haar door. 'Het is het wilde leven,' zei ze. 'In het wilde leven kunnen dingen gebeuren die in de stad niet mogen gebeuren. Het is anders.' 'Ja, ja, maak dat de kat maar wijs,' zei ik.

Grootmoeder wilde dat ik uit haar buurt zou blijven, vooral toen ze weer vrij kwam. Het was voor haar verboden om in het bos te komen. Dat zou een verkeerde uitwerking op haar hebben. Ik ging haar niet echt uit de weg. Soms kwam ik haar in de bibliotheek tegen. 'Van wat voor boeken houd je ?' vroeg ik haar. 'Van het bos,' zei ze. 'Daar mag je niet komen, he ?' zei ik plagend. 'Nee,' zei ze zacht. 'Mijn familie heeft liever niet dat ik met je praat,' zei ik. 'Naar voor je,' zei ze. 'Waarom dat nou weer ?' vroeg ik. 'Wat kan mij dat nou schelen. Ben je zo belangrijk ?' 'Nou, je kwam me anders wel altijd opzoeken, in het bos, in de gevangenis, en nu,' zei ze. Ik begon hevig te protesteren. 'Nee, dat was omdat ik medelijden met je had, niet voor mezelf,' zei ik. 'Oh, ben jij er zo één,' zei ze. 'Ik vertrouw je niet,' zei ik. 'Ja, dat weten we al,' zei ze. 'Maar je loopt wel altijd achter me aan.' Weer begon ik hevig te protesteren. 'Zeg, dame, nou moet je eens even heel goed naar me luisteren. Ik heb net zoveel recht om in de bibliotheek te komen als jij. En ik ben hier voor de boeken, niet voor jou. Nu moet je geen hoogmoeds-waanzin krijgen, mevrouw, of wil je ook dat ik 'u' tegen je zeg ?' zei ik verontwaardigd. 'Nee,' zei ze, 'en ik loop je gewoon maar wat te plagen.' 'Goed,' zei ik, en liep door. Maar ze kwam me achterna. 'Ik zal je nog wel eens een keer krijgen, zoals ik je goed beet had in het bos,' zei ze. Ik slikte. Ik wist dat ik nog steeds op mijn hoede moest zijn. Deze vrouw was immers gek. Op een nacht werd ik wakker, vastgebonden, terwijl zij op me zat.

'Hoe kom jij hier binnen ?' vroeg ik. 'Voor jou een vraag, voor mij een weet,' zei ze. 'Kun je mij onmiddelijk losmaken,' zei ik. 'Nee,' zei ze, 'ik zei toch dat ik je nog wel zou krijgen ?' 'Okay, maar ik vind het niet leuk,' zei ik. Toen maakte ze me los. Ik zag toen dat ze het waarschijnlijk niet kwaad meende. Ik nam haar in mijn armen. 'Ik vind je eigenlijk heel lief,' zei ik. 'Ik zie nu in dat ik je helemaal verkeerd beoordeeld heb.' 'Maar ik had je niet bewusteloos mogen slaan,' zei ze. 'Het is niet erg,' zei ik. 'Het was in het bos, en daar zijn misschien andere regels.' 'Nee,' zei ze. 'Het was verkeerd van me.' 'Ik heb er niks aan overgehouden,' zei ik. Ik hield haar vast in bed, en streelde door haar haar. Toen ging ik met mijn vingers over haar lippen. Ik kuste haar. 'Ik heb je eindelijk,' zei ze. 'Je moet eens weten hoe lang ik hier op heb gewacht. Mijn hele leven al.'

Opeens stond grootmoeder in de deur-opening. Ze stond daar lijkbleek. Ze maakte direct rechtsomkeerds. Even later ging de telefoon. Ik nam op. Het was grootmoeder. 'Ik hoef haar niet te zien,' zei ze. 'Wil je haar ofzo ? Ik zei je toch dat je uit haar buurt moest blijven ? Ze is niet pluis.' 'Ze is gewoon speels, grootmoeder,' zei ik. 'Maar dat kan een keer verkeerd aflopen, lieve jongen,' zei grootmoeder. Op aanraden van grootmoeder wilde ik dat ze het huis weer zou verlaten. Ik besloot een grote zwerftocht door het bos te maken. Ik ging door de vele bessenstruiken, en ik wist dat ik hier vrij zou zijn van de streken van Suzie. Ik kon me nooit helemaal aan haar geven. Een warmte omgaf mij, alsof iets me riep. Ik ging dieper het bos in, totdat ik bij een bosmeertje kwam. Er waren hier jongens aan het spelen. Ze hadden verfstrepen op hun lichamen. Toen ze mij zagen grepen ze hun bogen. 'Wie ben je, en wat moet je ?' riep één van hen. 'Ik wil in het bos leven,' riep ik terug. 'Zweer je dat je nooit terug zal gaan ?' riep een ander. 'Ik zweer het,' zei ik. Ze kwamen dichterbij. 'Hij moet geverfd worden,' zei één van hen. Voordat ik het wist was ik neergeslagen. Ik werd wakker in een kooi. Ze glimlachte. 'Wie ben jij ?' vroeg ik. 'Ben jij dat, Suzie ?' stamelde ik. 'Hoe kun jij hier zijn ?' Ik was nog steeds een beetje duizelig, en had een beetje een waas voor mijn ogen vanwege de klap. 'Ik ben haar tweeling-zus,' zei ze. Ik had een smaak van bessen in mijn mond. 'Okay, ik vind dit dus niet leuk, dus maak me los,' zei ik. 'Oh nee,' zei ze, 'daar komt niks van in. Ik ben niet zo makkelijk in die dingen als mijn zus.' 'Mijn familie zal mij vinden,' zei ik. 'De jongens zullen hen grijpen, zoals ze jou grepen,' zei ze. Ik

voelde me machteloos. Ze zou me waarschijnlijk laten verhongeren. 'Aan het einde van het ritje zul je zijn als deze jongens,' zei ze. 'En je zal nooit meer terugwillen.' 'Wat is hier te doen ?' vroeg ik. 'Wil je terug naar mijn zus dan ?' vroeg ze. 'Ze zal echt nooit opgeven. je zal moe van haar worden.' 'Okay, ik blijf,' zei ik. 'Maak me los.' 'Geen denken aan,' zei ze. 'Deze jongens zijn zorgvuldig geinitieerd, en zo zal jij ook geinitieerd moeten worden.' 'Mijn grootmoeder zal naar mij op zoek gaan,' zei ik. 'Ze zal er niet doorkomen,' zei ze. 'Dan ken jij mijn grootmoeder nog niet,' zei ik. 'Ik ken haar,' zei ze. 'Ze is niet tegen mij opgewassen.' 'Wat als de boswachter komt ?' vroeg ik. 'Die komt hier niet,' zei ze. 'Waarom niet ?' vroeg ik. Ze zweeg. Ik kreeg bijna geen voedsel. Alleen soms wat bessen met vreemde melk. Ik werd vaak geslagen, veelal totdat ik bewusteloos raakte. 'Het is om los te komen van de oude wereld en van je oude geheugen,' zei ze. 'Je bent serieuzer dan je zus,' zei ik. 'Mijn zus is te speels,' zei ze. 'Voor mij is het menens. De buitenwereld is gevaarlijk. Jouw familie is gevaarlijk.' Ze brachten een verf uit op mijn huid, en op een dag lieten ze me uit de kooi. Ik was nu één van hen.

Op een dag kwamen ze ons in helicopters halen. Het meisje ging de gevangenis in, en de jongens gingen terug naar hun families, zoals ook ik. Grootmoeder was woedend. Zij kende dat meisje wel. Het meisje vertrok al heel jong naar het bos, en keerde niet terug. Ze werd waarschijnlijk grootgebracht door hyenas. Mijn grootmoeder verbood mij om het meisje op te zoeken in de gevangenis. Ik wilde dat eigenlijk ook niet. Het scheen dat het meisje heel veel op haar geweten had. Ze zou niet zomaar vrij komen. Ze was veel gevaarlijker dan haar tweeling-zus, Suzie. We gingen verhuizen naar een andere stad. Grootmoeder vond dat beter, want dan zouden we geheel afzijn van die vreemde familie van Suzie. Grootmoeder wilde er niet op wachten dat er weer iets zou gebeuren.

In onze nieuwe stad gingen grootmoeder en ik vaak wandelen naar de zee. De kust stond vol met bessenstruiken, waar veel wespen waren. Ik had veel diepe gesprekken met mijn grootmoeder.

Uit de Grote Surinaamse Bijbel Krant :

paperguards

Nou de eerste grote surinaamse bijbel krant was een groot succes. Mensen gingen over lijken om zo'n krant te bemachtigen. Mensen stalen het uit een kinderhand. Mensen deden de gekste dingen om zo'n krant te krijgen, mensen werden krankzinnig, allemaal voor deze krant. Nou, dan heb je wel wat bereikt zeg, zeker voor herhaling vatbaar. Het gaat natuurlijk om de grote aantallen hè, daar is het leven ook om te doen, hè, want de meerderheid heeft altijd gelijk, en dat staat ook zo stoer, hè, als de meerderheid als poppetjes voor je dansen. Nou, dan heb je wel de beker, hè ? En dat mocht ook weleens tijd worden ook. Suriname, dat arme land, dat land van honger, het paradijs van Nederland, was teveel op de achtergrond geschoven. Maar ja, er waren maar nauwelijks exemplaren van die krant, dus vandaar de paniek en de hysterie, want iedereen wilde het, en het was nergens te vinden, zo zeldzaam was het. Beschouw jezelf daarom gelukkig als je zo'n krant hebt, en zorg dat je altijd een kopie hebt, want het mocht eens uit je kinderhand gestolen worden, of terwijl je slaapt. Houd het goed onder je kussen. Trek desnoods een blik bodyguards open, of ik moet eigenlijk krantenguards zeggen, want zo'n krant is natuurlijk veel belangrijker dan jezelf. Wie ben je nu in vergelijking met zo'n krant ? Het is zo'n krant waarvan mensen vragen als je met zo'n krant in het water bent gelopen of van een toren bent afgevallen, dat ze dan gaan vragen hoe het met de krant is, niet hoe het met jezelf gaat. Nee, alles draait om die krant. Toe maar weer.

En zo'n krant heb je in je kinderhand, beste lezer, of misschien wel niet. Misschien hoor je het slechts op het nieuws, of leest iemand het aan je voor,

terwijl jij achter de tralies zit. Het is een krant om je leven voor te geven.

Mensen worden compleet gek door die krant. Het is voor hen belangrijker dan zuurstof. Zonder die krant kunnen ze niet leven. Ik hoorde zelfs van mensen die na het lezen van die krant een paar uur niets anders deden dan voor zich uitstaren, totaal obsessief en hysterisch. Mensen hadden paradijselijke ervaringen, visioenen, nachtmerries, dagmerries, hongermerries, hallucinaties, en ga zo maar door, tijdens of na het lezen van die krant. Het is een krant waar je u tegen zegt. En die krant is van Suriname. Mocht weleens tijd worden. Dit arme hongerland, dit paradijs van Nederland, was te lang op de achtergrond geschoven. Niemand kon het meer vinden. Ik hoorde mensen op straat klagen : 'Waren we maar wat armer, want we zijn hier veel te rijk, en het heeft ons gewurgd. We kunnen de natuur niet meer terugvinden. Alles is gemoderniseerd, geasfalteerd door de onzin van de stad, allemaal luxe troep, en het heeft ons gesmoord. Al die luxe lichten hebben ons verblind, zodat we onze weg niet meer kunnen vinden.' Dus die waren wel blij met de grote surinaamse bijbel krant. 'Hoera, nu zijn we arm. Nu kennen we de honger, en kunnen we bij de indianen zijn. Nu kunnen we eindelijk minderen en door de bomen het bos weer zien . Hoera ! Lang leve het hongerfeest. Vervloekt is het verjaardagsfeest ! Denk je dat indianen ook allemaal domme duffe verjaardagsfeesten vieren ? Ze weten niet eens wanneer dat is ! Ze hebben wel andere dingen te doen. Ze vieren de feesten van de natuur, niet van de stad. Blij met de krant dus. Blij dat ik glij, want alles zat vast.

Indianen hebben de bron van de eeuwige jeugd gevonden. Die worden nooit oud. Wat een sprookjes allemaal hè ? Ja, heb ik allemaal gelezen in de grote surinaamse bijbel krant. Het schijnt de tweede bijbel te zijn, waardoor God en natuur weer verder kunnen spreken, om uit te leggen wat er nog allemaal moet gebeuren en hoe het allemaal ook al weer zat. 't Zou tijd worden, hè ?

Ik heb malloten zien dansen met die krant. Alsof ze in de hemel waren aangekomen. En dat allemaal om een krant. Hun dag kon niet meer stuk. En hoe kan dat ? Ja, natuurlijk omdat gewone normale kranten vaak saai zijn en alleen maar slecht nieuws verkondigen en nieuws wat er helemaal niet toe doet. Dat is wel anders in de grote surinaamse bijbel krant. Wow, wat een

reclame allemaal. Wat een hoop hoog geblaas van de toren. Moet dat allemaal ? 't Is maar een verhaal. Ik had het eens ergens gelezen als reclame voor een andere krant, en ik dacht : Laat ik het gebruiken voor onze krant. Leek me wel een goed idee. Dus ik heb gewoon de naam veranderd. Of ik erachter sta of niet doet er niet toe. 't Leek me wel een goed verhaal. Wee u wanneer iedereen wel van u spreekt. Ik ben een jonge journalist. Ik werk nog maar pas bij de grote surinaamse bijbel krant, en ik dacht : Ach, laat ik ze een handje helpen. Ze vroegen mij om een intro te schrijven voor de nieuwe krant. 't Slaat natuurlijk nergens op, maar je moet toch wat. Meestal slaan krantenartikels in het begin ook nergens op, maar dan een paar honderd jaar later is het ineens wereldliteratuur, en nog een paar honderd jaar verder en dan is het zelfs heiliger dan de bijbel. Daarom doe ik maar een gooi. Ik heb toch niks anders te doen. Ik werk hier pas, dus ik probeer een beetje indruk te maken, ook een beetje leven in de brouwerij te brengen.

Wat is een krant zoals deze zonder een goede krantenguard, of paperguard moet ik eigenlijk zeggen. ? Nergens, helemaal nergens. Dan kun je wel ophouden. Daarom hebben ze mij ook als paperguard ingehuurd, natuurlijk helemaal vrijwillig. Mijn beloning ? Een gratis krant. Maar hij was toch al gratis ? Ja, maar moeilijk, heel moeilijk te vinden. Het is niet zo dat de paperboys op elke hoek van de straat staan door heel Suriname en Nederland om dit ding als foldertjes uit te delen. Nee, dit is een zeldzame, zeer zeldzame krant, dus ik mag me gelukkig prijzen. Dat zo'n ding nog bestaat, daar mogen we wel heel gelukkig om zijn.

Stel je eens voor dat zo'n krant niet zou bestaan. Dan zou er nog veel en veel meer ellende in de wereld zijn geweest.

Vroeger, heel vroeger, scheen er ook al eens eenzelfde soort surinaamse krant te zijn geweest, en sommige mensen klaagden erover dat het te langdradig was. Er stond teveel in. Later bleek dat die mensen van de concurrent waren die een eigen krant hadden, en die krant was zelfs veel dikker dan de surinaamse krant. En wat stond er allemaal in ? Het ging helemaal nergens over. Ze verkochten dikke wafels gebakken lucht.

Nou zo kan die wel weer natuurlijk. Ik wilde alleen maar laten zien dat kranten niet uw vrienden zijn maar uw vijanden. Ze blijven doorvechten totdat ze u helemaal hebben. Het gaat allemaal om het geld en om de grootste zijn, en daarom is er de natuurkrant, deze surinaamse krant, die je bijna niet kunt vinden, en gelukkig maar. Alleen ergens diep in het bos zou het je in de nek kunnen springen, maar in de stad hoef je er niet voor te vrezen. Zoals gewoonlijks las ik dit allemaal ergens op een muur, de klaagmuur in dit geval. Nee, niet die van Israel, maar van Suriname. Ergens linksaf bij het schele bordje. En zoals gewoonlijks waren daar velen aan het klagen, maar ik heb het maar allemaal overgeschreven wat er op die muur stond. Er kunnen enigszins wat schrijffouten inzitten of andere stijlfouten, en ik moest snel zijn want ze begonnen me al te bedreigen, dus het kan wezen dat ik het hele verhaal verkeerd begrepen heb. Don't shoot the triangle player !

En dit hele verhaal hoorde ik, een andere verslaggever, van één van onze verslaggevers die inmiddels al op zijn sterfbed lag, en dit waren de laatste woorden die hij mompelde. Ik wist niet eens waaraan hij stierf, maar het zou heel goed door bovenstaand verhaal kunnen zijn geweest. Ook weet ik niet of ik het hele verhaal wel juist heb opgeschreven, want hij kon alleen nog maar mompelen, en het was bijna onverstaanbaar. Neem het daarom met een korreltje zout, vooral niet met teveel zout, want dan ga je zelf ook ijlen, zoutijlen, en dan wordt het alleen nog maar erger. Ga het ook niet allemaal door lopen roddelen, zo van die en die heeft dit en dat gezegd, en oh, weet je wat ik in de grote surinaamse bijbel krant dit keer heb gelezen, want je kunt het natuurlijk helemaal verkeerd hebben begrepen.

En dit, beste lezers, droomde ik, een andere verslaggever, eens in een droom nadat ik van een besje van de surinaamse bessenboom had gegeten. Mocht het niet helemaal naar uw smaak zijn beschuldig dan niet mij, maar de surinaamse bessenboom, maar daar kun je beter geen ruzie mee hebben. Ik had het eens, en nu ben ik zoals ik ben. Dus als u bij de surinaamse bessenboom mijn reportage wil beschuldigen, weet waar u aan begint, want u zou dan net als mij worden. Wees maar blij dat u de surinaamse bessenboom niet kent, en wees maar blij dat u het nergens kunt vinden, en dat u slechts deze krant heeft om er allemaal op veilige afstand over te lezen.

Dit was overigens wat een man bij de dokter zei over wat zijn vrouw tegen hem had gezegd. En weet u wat de dokter toen zei ? Neemt u eens wat rust, en ga de grote surinaamse bijbel krant lezen.

Weet u wat die man toen zei ? Hij zei : 'Is dit een complot ?'

Waarop de dokter antwoordde : 'Nee, het is een recept.'

En zo ziet u maar weer. Dit las ik eens in een Surinaams tijdschrift voor huisvrouwen. Maar of het helemaal zo ging weet ik niet meer. Ik had nogal haast, en ik was nogal zenuwachtig, want het was in de wachtkamer van de dokter. Toen ik bij de dokter was voor mijn recept, zei hij dat ik het recept al had. Die tijdschriften in de wachtkamer zouden vol staan met recepten. Dus ik weer terug, en ik ging nog maar wat lezen. Hij stond er toen gewoon bij, en ik vroeg : 'Maar als hier die recepten al instaan, waarom heet dit dan een wachtkamer, en waarom moeten we dan ook nog op u wachten ?'

'Tja,' zei de dokter. 'Traditie, hè, maar 't slaat eigenlijk nergens op.'

Ik keek nog eens beter naar die dokter, en ik keek recht in het gezicht van een konijn. Ik schudde mijn hoofd en ben toen weg gegaan, in de veronderstelling dat ik zwaar ziek was, maar na een paar dagen voelde ik me al een stuk beter. Ik ben toen op zoek gegaan naar zo'n grote surinaamse bijbel krant als dat zou bestaan. En ik zoek nog steeds. Als iemand dit verhaal vindt en toevallig bij die krant werkt, laat hem er dan voor zorgen dat dit verhaal ook in die krant wordt opgenomen. Dat zou toch wel heel erg leuk zijn, ook al zou ik het zelf niet meemaken.

'I... ik ka... kan het niet meer,' zei een kabouter … 'Ik kan het niet meer inhouden. Dit verhaal moet ik gewoon vertellen … tra lala.'

Het was een verdwaalde tuinkabouter die we eens ergens vonden. Hij was op de vlucht voor tuinkabouter dieven, wat heden ten dage nogal veel gebeurd. We vonden het een wonder dat hij kon spreken. Dat zie je niet zoveel gebeuren

bij tuinkabouters tegenwoordig. We vonden hem in het bos, en hij vertelde ons dit verhaal. Dus we dachten : Laten we het voor de zekerheid maar plaatsen in onze krant. En de tuinkabouter hebben we een veilig onderkomen gegeven in ons museum. Het was een surinaamse tuinkabouter. Hij heeft het verhaal verteld met veel gescheld en vulgair taalgebruik, dus we hebben het één en ander moeten censureren. Het ongecensureerde verhaal hebben we opgeslagen in het archief. Hij zei dat hij een zogenaamde paperguard was, maar het scheen dus dat hij op zijn beurt ook weer een tuinkabouterguard nodig had, oftewel een surinaamse tuinkabouterguard of paperguardguard of hoe je het ook wil noemen. En toen zeiden we : 'Op zijn beurt zal de krant jou beschermen, als een ware paperguard.'

De Onstad

Ik werd opgenomen door grote roofvogels tot de Onstad.
In het centrum van de Onstad lag de mediotheek, het literaire ziekenhuis, waar boeken de medicijnen waren. De Onstad is een literologische vestiging in de wildernis.
Russische zombies marcheerden door de Onstad.
Ze waren overal, ook in de huizen, maar ze waren achter warm glas.
Ze moesten weer door, ze trokken weer verder.
Ze werden voortgetrokken door het warme glas.
Een zombie meisje speelde met draadjes in een bed.
Maar ook zij moest verder.
Ik keek door het warme glas naar de buren.
Ze waren zakelijk.
Ik wilde ze niet zien.

Ik liep weer terug het huis in, maar raakte mijn orientatie kwijt in het doolhof van het warme glas.
Ik was ineens bij andere buren, en die waren onder de grond.
Ik was een verdieping lager gekomen.
Voordat ik het wist was ik bij hen binnen.
Ze zeiden dat een klasgenoot van de bijbelschool met mij wilde spreken over Abraham die zes jaren in de woestijn was. De klasgenoot was nu een politie agent in Utrecht.
Ik was in de mediotheek.
Daar leefde ik. Daar had ik mijn huisje.
Mijn huis had vele verdiepingen met elke verdieping zijn eigen buren.
Het was een doolhof van het warme glas, waar ik altijd mijn orientatie kwijtraakte.

In de Onstad waren de fruitbomen personen, die puften om hun vruchten voort te brengen.
De Russische zombies liepen met gebogen armen, alsof ze iets droegen onder hun oksels.
Het leek wel een circus, en ze vroegen iedereen mee te lopen.
Het waren grootse optochten. Vele zombies waren als reuzen.
Maar ik liep niet met ze mee.

het warme glas

‘Je vader is blind geworden,’ zei ze. ‘Vind je het erg ? Er zijn een heleboel mensen die hij in zijn leven ongemakkelijk heeft laten voelen door zijn opmerkingen.’

Hij zei niets.
De donkere zuster had voor hem gekookt, en ze zouden op de fiets gaan terug naar het bos ziekenhuis waar hij moest verblijven. Hij zou achterop zitten. Hij kon op een grote tas gaan zitten. Het was een leuke vakantie geweest.
Hij was haar dankbaar dat ze dit voor hem had gedaan.
Hij was invalide geraakt door wat zijn vader hem vroeger had aangedaan, maar ze had hem heel goed opgevangen. Hij kon nog wel wat, maar bij sommige dingen had hij hulp nodig.
Zij zorgde ook altijd voor de koffie.
Ze was een hele goede kokkin.
In het bos was er een groot feest.
Het hele ziekenhuis had feest verlichting. Ze kwamen aan in de avond.
Hij kon nog wel lopen, maar niet teveel.
En hij moest voldoende rust houden, dus de donkere zuster leidde hem naar zijn kamer.
Hij was ook wel blij dat hij weer thuis was.
Ze las hem nog even voor, en maakte warme melk voor hem.
Ze was heel zorgzaam.
Toen ging hij slapen, en droomde over de donkere zuster.
Ze was heel moederlijk over hem, maar ook een goede kameraad.
Hij droomde hoe ze weer samen op vakantie gingen, hoe ze een vakantie huisje hadden bij het dorp.
Door haar kon hij het verleden vergeten.
Het was alsof ze familie was, en ze had gezegd dat zij ook veel aan hem had, zijn wijze woorden.
De kamer was warm, en het glas was warm, zoals zij warm was.
Ze kwam dan ook uit een warm land.
Hij leefde helemaal voor haar, en zij voor hem.
Steeds meer genas hij, en toen hij weg kon van het bos ziekenhuis wilde hij er blijven werken en wonen.
Het was een literair ziekenhuis, een ziekenhuis van boeken.
Hij was schrijver. Eens had hij dit ziekenhuis zelf gemaakt, waar boeken medicijnen waren.
Ook had hij haar gemaakt, het warme glas.
Overal ging het met hem mee.

de goede herder

God bestaat niet. Niet in de zin zoals de kerken zeggen dat hij bestaat.
Toch moet er een nieuwe definitie komen van God. De mens heeft God nodig.
De mens weet niet wie of wat God is.
De mens is achter glas, maar er moet nieuw glas komen : het eeuwige glas, ook tussen de mens en het valse glas in.
Kerkmensen zeggen dat God bestaat, en atheisten zeggen dat hij niet bestaat.
Zij zijn allen schaduwen. Het eeuwige, oneindige glas moet komen, het tranen-glas.
Er is een hemels boeken-ziekenhuis, waar boeken medicijnen zijn.
De hemelse boeken zijn vleugels.
God heeft een kamer voor hen die van de hemelse boeken houden.
Deze boeken zijn als vogels, en zij die van boeken houden vliegen en rijden op hun rug.
Vliegen met boeken.
God is de hogere hemelse boeken, als een boeken-ziekenhuis,
waar boeken medicijnen zijn, waar mensen tot boeken worden.
Hier vinden mensen God, hun hogere boeken-zelf.
Het gaat niet buiten de mens om. De mens moet het niet op iets anders projecteren.
Het is in de mens zelf. De mens moet zelf veranderen. De mens moet zelf goed worden,
als de Goede Herder.

God is een boek, een mysterieus boek, niet zoals ze in de kerken hebben.
Toch is er ook een ware kerk, een boeken kerk, die als een boeken-ziekenhuis is,
waar boeken medicijnen zijn, vogels, op wiens ruggen je kan vliegen, tot achter het glas, het eeuwige glas. Zoveel glas om uit verlost te worden. De vogels pikken met hun snavels en slaan met hun vleugels. Ze zijn gekomen. Houdt je

van boeken ? Houdt je van hemelse vogels ?
Hebt gij mij waarlijk lief ? Weid dan mijn schapen.

Waar tranen stollen tot eeuwig glas, hemels glas, waar mensen tot boeken worden, tot hemelse vogels. Leer die vogels kennen en ze te berijden. Leer die vogels te worden. Dan heb je verstaan wat God is. Het is een hemels leer-ziekenhuis. De Goede Herder, dat ben je zelf. Genezen om te genezen.

Er is een ware gereformeerde kerk, de kerk van de goede herders. God werkt door alles heen. De hemelse boeken werken overal doorheen. Het is overal om ons heen. Het is de kerk van het hart, dat ben je zelf. Het eeuwige glas scheidt de goede herders van de wolven. Het scheidt het kaf van het koren. Het eeuwige glas groeit daar waar je teveel hebt geweend, als het stollen van hemelse tranen. Oceanen van tranen, en dan eindelijk een eiland.

Het groeit, het bloeit, het gloeit, dat bloedend hart.
Zoveel bloed, stollend tot rood glas.
Alleen zij die teveel hebben gebloed zijn daar.
Zij die hoog en droog hun leven behouden hebben zijn slechts schaduwen.
Het rode glas laat het verhaal weer zien, waar de lijnen lopen,
dwars door alles heen. Het rode glas steekt, totdat alles in de boeken is.
Het is het museum van het leven, een ziekenhuis museum,
waar alleen goede herders door kunnen wandelen,
van tunnel tot tunnel, op zoek naar het verloren schaap,
hun verloren zelf.

Het verloren schaap is blind en kan niet lezen.
Het verloren schaap is doof en kan niet horen.
Maar het verloren schaap kan wel voelen,
en daardoor kan de goede herder toch het verhaal overdragen,
als medicijn voor het verloren schaap.
Hier krijgen schapen vleugels, en worden zij tot hemelse boeken,
hemelse vogels, om dit verhaal ook over te dragen,
om zo ook zelf als goede herders te zijn.

In het museum van het leven,
als een hemels ziekenhuis,
wat een tocht is het geweest.
Hier worden schapen gescheiden van wolven,
hier stolt het bloed,
en gaan ogen open,
hier gaan wonden spreken en worden genezen.
Waar de wond tot oog wordt,
en een andere wond tot oor.
Alles is niet voor niets geweest.
Waar wonden worden tot bruggen tussen harten,
tot vleugels om te vliegen,
tot hemelse boeken.

Waar harten opengaan,
uit de wond stroomt een medicijn,
dromen aan elkaar geregen,
waar de mens weer begint te dromen,
en weer, en weer, totdat de mens opstijgt,
waar de vogels worden gescheiden van de vissen.

De ware gereformeerde kerk is een boek,
wat mensen nog niet hebben gelezen,
maar wat diep in de harten ligt opgeborgen,
een ziekenhuis, een bibliotheek, een museum,
waar de mens klaar kan komen met het mysterie van het leven,
om zo een ontmoeting te hebben met de ware God,
de God die wel echt bestaat : het hemelse boek.
En God is een krant daarvan die gaat van hart tot hart,
als een goede herder van het woord :
Zegt het voort.

God is een boek,
ontpoppende in de harten van hen die teveel hebben geleden.
God is een krant, van wond tot wond, van traan tot traan.

Het regent in de hemel,
en spoedig ook op aarde.
Golf na golf, want het rode wacht op ons,
het rode glas, want eens was alles anders,
en eens zal alles anders zijn.

God is een krant,
Het is er altijd en overal.
Maar de mens ziet het niet,
die is altijd met iets anders bezig,
heeft altijd een excuus.
De mens draait altijd om alles heen.
Hebt gij mij waarlijk lief ?
Weid dan mijn schapen.
De mens is slechts een schaduw,
een wolf op jacht naar het grote niets,
maar stort zich te pletter tegen eeuwig glas,
de goede herder vrijgekomen.

Je kunt niet vluchten van de krant,
je kunt er niet omheen.
Hier worden mensen tot kranten.
God is een kranten ziekenhuis,
waar kranten medicijnen zijn,
waar het tot een museum wordt.
Ik heb het zelf gezien :
God wandelende door de gangen van het museum,
als de wijzers van de tijd.

Een krantje, mijnheer, een krantje, mevrouw ?
Hebt gij mij waarlijk lief ?
Weidt dan mijn schapen.
De mens wikt en weegt,
maar God beschikt,
Het staat allemaal in de krant,

van de hemel neergedaald tot het verloren schaap,
waar schapen tot kranten worden.

Ik heb vleugels vandaag, lief,
Mijn hart gewarmd,
ontvroren door tranen,
lang gewacht op de vogel aan zee,
mijn ogen geopend om de hemelse krant te lezen.
Vandaag tot de kranten kerk gegaan,
waar boeren hun psalmen zingen,
hun verzen opzeggen,
allemaal uit de krant gehaald.

Mijn vrouw zei : Wat droom je toch, wat droom je toch ?
Ik zei : Hebt gij mij waarlijk lief ? Weid dan mijn schapen.
Zij zei toen : Hebt gij mij waarlijk lief ? Ruim dan die keuken maar eens op.
Ik begon toen meer uit de krant op te zeggen.
Ik gooide alles voor haar neer.
Maar parels voor de zwijnen was het,
telkens weer.
Altijd alleen ga ik naar de boeren kerk,
de kranten kerk, om mijn verwonde hart te genezen van zo’n vrouw.
Wie kan er met zo’n vrouw leven ?
Ik ben een verloren schaap, zij is de wolf.
Ik ben de goede herder, en zij de wolf.
In het kranten ziekenhuis vindt ik mijn weg,
mijn verhalen zijn haar woorden die ik verdraai,
die ik preek van de daken en in de boerenkerk,
God is een krant, zijn plannen falen niet.

Hebt gij mij waarlijk lief ? Houd dan je mond maar eens, zegt ze.
Ik ken al je praatjes, en ken al je daadjes.
Zij moet er niks maar dan ook niks van weten.
Zij is het tegenovergestelde van Kortjakje,
nooit is ze ziek, alleen op zondag.

Dan is ze ziek van mij.
Op de andere dagen val ik haar niet lastig.
Dan heb ik wel andere dingen te doen.

Hebt gij mij waarlijk lief ?
Dat vraagt ze nu telkens, en dan moet ik dingen voor haar doen.
Daar komt het altijd op neer.
Maar ja, in dit land zijn alle dagen zondag.
Elke dag is het zondag, en elke dag is zij ziek van mij.
Tenzij ik iets voor haar doe.
Hebt gij mij waarlijk lief ?

En wegdoen kan ik haar niet,
want zij is wat ze zeggen de laatste van de rozentuin.

God is een krant,
en ook dit verhaal komt uit die krant.
Ik las het ergens.
Ik dacht : Ik wil lid worden van die krant.
En zo ben ik al vele jaren enthousiast lid.
God is een krant.
Hebt gij mij waarlijk lief ?

Ik ben nu ook krantenloper, krantenjongen.
Ze noemen mij de goede krantenjongen,
of goede krantenherder, maar ik ben tamelijk wild.
Ik kan zo ineens weg zijn,
of mijn kranten zijn op,
of de woorden vagen weg.
Het heeft iets met het eeuwige glas te maken.
Wij zitten ook vast aan elastiek.
We kunnen zo teruggetrokken worden,
als soldaten terug in hun doos.

graaf kiekendrecht van de bijlmer

Graaf Kiekendrecht woonde in de Bijlmer, ergens hoog op een flat. Hij was dokter, maar vroeg nooit betaling voor zijn diensten. Wel vroeg hij hen die hij genas zijn leger in te komen. Wat was dit leger dan ? Het was een leger dat net als hem anderen hielp.

Op een dag was Graaf Kiekendrecht net iets te diep in het bos gegaan, en werd door kannibalen overmeesterd en in een ketel gezet. 'Is dat de nieuwe mode ?' vroeg Graaf Kiekendrecht, 'al die touwen om me heen ?'

'Ja,' zei een kannibaal, 'gehaktballenmode en worstenmode, worstenmode in uw geval.'

'Zeg, kan ik niet helpen deze mode tot een markt te maken,' vroeg Graaf Kiekendrecht.

'Nee,' zei de kannibaal bars. 'U bent de drager, niet de maker.'

'Maar weet u dan niet dat elk touw een eind heeft wat ook weer het begin is ?' sprak Graaf Kiekendrecht. 'Zo komen we ook weer bij het begin uit, en dan zijn alle rollen omgedraaid.'

Ineens was niet Graaf Kiekendrecht in de ketel, maar de kannibalen, en ze waren netjes gebonden. 'Staat goed op jullie,' zei Graaf Kiekendrecht. De kannibalen keken hem verbaasd aan. Graaf Kiekendrecht was zo wijsgerig geschoold dat hij er een beetje door kon toveren. Eén van de kannibalen was een negerin. 'Ik vind haar wel leuk,' zei Graaf Kiekendrecht terwijl hij op haar wees. 'Als je beloofd dat je mij komt helpen in mijn leger dan zal ik je loslaten.' De dikke negerin knikte en zei met een accent dat ze dat beloofde, want dat was beter dan in de ketel. Toen heeft hij haar losgemaakt. 'Jij kon het ook niet

helpen dat je tussen dit tuig bent opgegroeid,' zei hij tegen haar, en toen heeft hij haar meegenomen naar de Bijlmer. De andere kannibalen liet hij gewoon in de ketel zitten.

Thuisgekomen bekeek hij haar eens goed. 'Zonder touw staat je toch veel beter,' zei hij.

'Ik wil wel met je meegaan hoor,' zei de negerin.

'Waar zullen we eens naartoe gaan ?' vroeg hij.

'Nou, een restaurant lijkt me wel goed,' zei de negerin, 'want ik had nog niet gegeten. We zouden jou opeten, weet je wel.'

Hij wees toen op haar buik. 'Heb jij niet genoeg gegeten ?'

'Ik heb zo'n honger,' zei de negerin, 'dat als je slaapt, dan moet je niet vreemd opkijken als je wakker wordt in een soepketel.'

'Dat is waar,' zei Graaf Kiekendrecht, 'dat is waar. Maar je weet dat je er dan zelf ook in eindigt, want het einde van het touw is ook weer het begin, en dan zijn alle rollen omgedraaid.'

'Ik weet het,' zei de negerin, 'maar dan laat je me wel weer los.'

'Wat als ik het dit keer niet doe ?' vroeg Graaf Kiekendrecht.

'Nou, dan moet je aan het andere uiteinde van het touw denken, en dan worden de rollen weer teruggedraaid,' zei de negerin.

'Je bent me nogal slim,' zei Graaf Kiekendrecht. 'Met jou wil ik werken. Maar zou je me echt hebben opgegeten ?'

'Nee,' zei de negerin, 'want ik ben zo wijsgerig geschoold dat ik de ketel slechts als een school zie om mannetjes zoals jou mee op te voeden.'

'Oh, als een bosjuffrouw ?' vroeg Graaf Kiekendrecht.

'Ja, als een bosjuffrouw,' zei de negerin.

'Dan heet jij vanaf nu bosjuffrouw,' zei Graaf Kiekendrecht. 'Welkom in mijn leger.'

'Welkom op mijn school,' zei de negerin.

En zo werkten ze samen in de bijlmer.

Maar op een dag kwamen de kannibalen naar de bijlmer om de negerin terug te halen.

'Oh, jullie komen me halen ?' vroeg de negerin. 'Wat denk je dat het hier is ? Het is hier geen restaurant.'

Maar ze hielden vol dat de negerin terugmoest.

Waarom komen jullie hier niet werken ? vroeg Graaf Kiekendrecht.

Ze dachten even na. 'Okay, okay,' zeiden ze. En toen kregen ze ook allemaal hun woning om in het leger van Graaf Kiekendrecht te zijn, en om naar de school van de bosjuffrouw te gaan. Ze hadden nu een doel in hun leven. Hun leven, en het leven van anderen, had nu ineens weer zin.

'Zeg, zouden jullie mij echt hebben opgegeten ?' vroeg Graaf Kiekendrecht hen eens. 'Nee,' zeiden ze. 'Wij zijn zo wijsgerig geschoold dat de ketel slechts een manier is om een woning te krijgen.'

Einde

de bijlmerreus

Ik was verdwaald in een bijlmer flat op zoek naar mijn tante. Ik kon haar huisje maar niet vinden. Ze moest ergens op de flat wonen. Er waren hier allemaal grote zalen. Ik deed een deur open en er renden direct allerlei negerkinderen naar me toe. Ze waren in grote angst en paniek. Ze zeiden dat er ergens een vleesetende reus was. Ik ben toen dieper die zaal ingegaan waar die negerkinderen uitrenden de gang op en kwam de reus aan het einde van de zaal tegen waar hij op een troontje zat. Het was een hele lange man op een heel klein troontje. Hij kon er net op zitten, maar het leek wel alsof hij vastzat. 'Help,' zei hij met een piepstemmetje. Ik heb hem toen maar even losgemaakt.

'Die kinderen hebben deze troon voor me gemaakt, maar hij was veel te klein,' zei de reus.

'Kan gebeuren,' zei ik, 'maar waar woont mijn tante ?'

Toen heeft hij het voor me uitgelegd. Het was best nog wel ingewikkeld, want ik moest door allerlei gangen. Het leek wel een doolhof.

Toen ik bij mijn tante aankwam scheen ze er niet eens meer te wonen. De nieuwe bewoners zeiden dat het allemaal heel lang geleden was. Had ik dan zo lang gelopen ? Er klopte iets niet in deze flat. Ik ging terug naar de reus, maar die was nergens meer te vinden. Ik ben toen de flat uitgelopen en er was een regenstorm. Ik had het idee dat ik zo opgenomen zou kunnen worden. Toen ik bij mijn huis aankwam waren daar ook al nieuwe bewoners. Ik zou er heel lang geleden hebben gewoond. Ik dacht : Hier kloppen dingen niet. Alles leek zo anders. Ik begreep er niets van.

Ik ben toen het oerwoud ingelopen. Ik begreep niets van de stad. Het was veel te ingewikkeld. Alleen in de bijlmer en waar ik woonde waren nog flats en huizen. De rest van Nederland was totaal oerwoud. Dat was vroeger wel anders. Maar ja, het leek zo kort geleden. Alles was gewoon anders. Nederland oerwoudland nu. Maar alles leek zo snel te groeien, en spoedig was ook de bijlmer totaal oerwoudgebied, en waar waren de flats ineens ? Er klopte iets niet. Toen kwam ik de reus weer tegen, en vroeg hem om uitleg. Hij wist het ook niet. Ik ben toen maar met de reus in het oerwoud gaan wonen, en na een tijdje kwamen daar ook de negerkinderen die ik in de flat was tegengekomen. Zij wisten ook niet wat er aan de hand was, maar ze waren niet meer bang voor de reus.

Dus jullie hadden een te kleine troon voor hem gemaakt ? vroeg ik.

Ja, en toen dreigde hij ons op te eten toen hij niet meer los kon komen, zeiden ze.

Dat is niet zo netjes van jullie om een te kleine troon te maken voor een reus, zei ik.

Een jongetje stak toen zijn vinger op. 'Maar het was ook niet zo netjes van de reus om ons te willen opeten,' zei het jongetje. 'We hadden hard aan de troon gewerkt en het was een foutje. Foutjes maken doet iedereen en dat is menselijk.'

Maar ik kan de reus ook wel begrijpen, zei ik, want hij dacht natuurlijk dat jullie hem in de val hadden gelokt.

Echt niet, mijnheer, zei een andere jongen. Het was een vergissing, heus.

Ik keen toen naar de reus. 'Ik ben niet meer boos,' zei de reus. 'Het zal inderdaad wel een vergissing zijn geweest. Ik moet ook leren om niet meer op tronen te gaan zitten. Dat is niks voor mij.'

Goed, zei ik toen. Ik hoop dat jullie nu in vrede kunnen leven.

Maar toen begon de reus erg te groeien. Weer begonnen de kinderen bang te worden. Er kwam toen een enorme regenstorm die ons allemaal opnam, en er kwamen flats uit de grond die nog wel groter waren dan die van de bijlmer. We zagen zoveel verdiepingen, en we werden door de regenstorm ergens hoog in zo'n flat gezogen.

Puzzel maar, zei de reus. Ga maar op zoek naar je tante. Ze moet hier nog ergens leven. Alles van het verleden heeft hier nog z'n plaats in het flattenoerwoud. En we vonden toen alles terug wat we eens waren verloren.

orion – de geestelijke wiskunde leraar van egypte – bespreking van het egyptische dodenboek

Spreuk 10 van het Egyptische Dodenboek :

‘Ik heb hemel en aarde doorkruist, en ben bezitter en heer geworden over zowel de hemel als de onderwereld. Mij is gegeven de geschiedenis, om glorieus de toekomst te openbaren, doen verschijnen en verfijnen.’

We zien een soortgelijk tafereel in het latere Israelitische boek Job in het eerste hoofdstuk waarin de beproever de aarde heeft doorkruist om zich voor te stellen aan de hemel. Het is een beeld dat alles getoetst moet worden tot verfijning en verbetering. De egyptische spreuken beginnen met het voorstellen van de tocht door de nacht tot de morgen, en die gaat door de hemelse woestijn, de woestijn van de onderwereld ook, de ra-seth of rosetau woestijn, een zigzaggende wildernis met veel zigzaggende tunnels ook. Thoth, de literatuur, de hemelse bibliotheek, noemt zichzelf God. Thoth is als ibis, vogel zijnde, ook een uitbeelding van het boek, als een wezenlijke verschijning. Zijn vleugels zijn als bladeren, als een papyrus, waarin de tocht door de

onderwereld staat beschreven. Direct wijst Thoth er in spreuk 1 op dat hij uit de moeder, uit Nuwd, Nod, is voortgekomen, want de onderwereld wordt vaak ook voorgesteld als een hemelse moeder. Thoth is in het egyptisch de duaty, dus ook weer verbonden aan de duat, de onderwereld, eruit voortgekomen, als een dochter. Thoth wordt beschreven als een vechter, als een gevangenis, wat ook weer een beeld is van de toetser, die ook door Paulus wordt beschreven : ‘Neem alle gedachtes als krijgsgevangenen om hen te toetsen,’ m.a.w. breng eerst alles tot de twijfelzone, en laat het niet direct het geweten, de weter, binnengaan. En natuurlijk, dit is wat de hogere literatuur doet, als een ordenende werking van de hemel. Ziften en ordenen. Ook wordt Thoth beschreven als een slachter, want al het vleselijke moet geslacht worden, verwerkt, in de recyclity. De literatuur is een grote vuilnis verwerker, industrie terrein. Dit industrie terrein van de recyclocratie ligt in het bos, in de wildernis, en wij mogen hierin komen tot de diepere geheimen en mysterieen. Thoth kan deze mysterieen doorzien. Het is dus een metafoor van de hemelse literatuur, het hemelse boek, en ook de hemelse krant. God of Tot ? Eigenlijk heette het Duaty, of gewoon DAT, wat ook een Nederlands woord is. Het wijst naar iets. Het is een wegwijzer. Het is niet alleen het boek en de schrijver, maar ook de lezer, staat er in spreuk 1, en het breekt de aarde op, het doorkruist de aarde, het toetst de aarde. Het is een doorzoeker en onderzoeker. Wat een belangrijk principe is dit. In de wereld is God vaak gewoon een mantra van snelle zelfovertuiging, als slaapliedje. Maar de Egyptische kosmologie vertelt dus een verhaal.

Het opbreken van de aarde gebeurde in Heracleopolis, de vestiging van Heracles, wat in het Egyptisch een andere naam had, en wat ‘kind van de hemel’ betekende. Door het opbreken werd er een pad zichtbaar tot het huis van Osiris. Zo kon de ziel met Thoth meegaan. Dit was dus door de hemelse kranten. Dit is een mysterie wat gebeurd in de hemelse woestijn en wildernis van de onderwereld. Je ogen worden geopend om de kranten te lezen. De lezer moet goed opletten, want er zijn veel valstrikken in de woestijn. De lezer moet dus goed de gebruiksaanwijzing leren en het in het juiste verband brengen, zodat het geen eigen leven gaat leiden. Daarom zou je kunnen zeggen dat de mens dit God-raadsel nodig heeft, te zien wat het is en wat het niet is. God, Tot, of Dat, als het leren lezen van de route-kaart, de wegwijzer.

Heracles, Here-kalos, betekent de volgeling van de godin Here, of Hera, de vrouw van Zeus, maar ook Horus werd al veel eerder in Egypte Here of Heru genoemd, ook als godin, want Horus had moederborsten met melk. Horus was ook een hemelse vogel, net als Thoth, als beeld van het hemelse boek, als hemelse krant, de hemelse route-kaart. Here, Heru of Her, Har, betekent in het Egyptisch de verre, de hoge, wat ook weer een beeld is van de krant die alles van een afstand beschrijft, in de journalistiek, en die afstand komt er juist ook als je dingen in z'n verband gaat zien, van meerdere kanten. Dat is dus een beeld van het eeuwige glas ook. Alles moet achter glas. Here, Horus, is de afstands-factor, zodat er overzicht en doorzicht komt, en zo ook inzicht. Er is dus alleen een weg tot het boek door de krant. Horus had namelijk in Egypte een bemiddelende functie, als de voorloper van de christelijke Jezus, die ze toen helemaal uit het Egyptische verband trokken. Wat een waanzin hebben ze ervan gemaakt. De krant is de bespreker van het boek, de uitlegger, de vertaler, die het tot de mensen brengt. Dat is dus in de egyptische metaforiek de magische verhouding tussen Horus en Thoth, tussen 'Haar' en 'Dat'. Het is de verhouding tussen krant en boek. De mens begrijpt het boek niet, dus moet eerst tot de krant gaan. Laat de kinderen tot mij komen.

Het afdalen in de onderwereld, in de Duat, in spreuk 1B, is dus ook het afdalen in de literatuur, in Duaty, in Thoth, en dat kan alleen door de krant, anders blijft het te eenzijdig en loopt de mens vast. Zonder de krant wordt alles nazi, en dat is er ook gebeurd. Dat kunnen we ook zien in de geschiedenis, dus het moet weer verruimd worden. De zee is het gevecht tussen Horus en Seth. Seth is de egyptische beproever, dus het is ook een beeld van de toets-worsteling. Dan wordt de zee gesplitst en is er een doorgang in deze wildernis van de onderwereld. Dat betekent dat er toets-resultaten zijn gekomen. Daarover gaat spreuk 4.

Is het dan afgelopen ? Nee, want in spreuk 11 moet de dode zijn als Horus en Thoth, opstaan als Horus en sterk en dapper zijn als Thoth, in geestelijke oorlogsvoering, als zijnde krant en boek. Wij moeten dat zelf worden. Dat is wat God, Tot, Dat, en Haar, betekent, dat je het in jezelf vindt, deze kenmerken. Dit is hemelse wiskunde en die was al aan de Egyptenaren

gegeven. Wat ze in de wanden hadden gegraveerd was informatie hierover van Orion. Orion is onze geestelijke wiskunde leraar, die in Egypte verblijft. Dit is dus een literaire wiskunde, die onderwijst door zowel boek als krant.

gejaagd door de k'w

Ze had bruinleren riemen omgord om haar lichaam. Ze reed op een groot wild zwijn met een dikke bruin-harige vacht. Ze trok mij mee, met een lasso om mijn nek. Ze sprak een zin uit in een wilde taal en ik vroeg me af wat het betekende. Later bleek het haar naam te zijn. 'Meekomen jij,' zei ze toen. 'Jij voor ons werken.' Ze vertelde dat haar stam de K'w heette. Ik was onder de modder, en zag de andere jongens niet meer.

'Nee, dit is zo goor,' zei ik.

'Je bent gore knul,' zei ze toen. We kwamen later aan bij een kamp waar nog meer vrouwen waren. Ze keken mij vijandig aan. Ze spraken allemaal weer lange zinnen uit in een wilde taal, die hun namen schenen te zijn. Toen werd ik in elkaar getrapt.

Ik werd wakker in een tent. Ik kon me niet bewegen. Ik zat onder de blauwe plekken en verwondingen. Ik was goed bewusteloos geweest. Ik wist dat ze wilden dat ik voor ze zou werken. Wat ik precies zou moeten doen wist ik niet. Heel voorzichtig probeerde ik te bewegen, wat maar nauwelijks lukte. Na een tijdje lukte het me om door de tent opening te kijken, en daar zag ik de andere jongens. Ook zag ik hoe er al enkelen in elkaar getrapt waren. Een voor een

werden ze in elkaar getrapt.

‘Dit is verschrikkelijk,’ dacht ik. Ik zag ook hoe ze varkens braadden, en hoe ze gierden van het lachen. Ik vroeg me af wat er te lachen viel, maar ze waren de jongens gewoon aan het bespotten. Het waren jongens van mijn kamp. Waarschijnlijk zouden zij ook voor hen moeten werken, als ze het zouden overleven. Misschien dat de wilde vrouwen daarom zo blij waren. De wilde vrouwen hadden allemaal donkere huiden, terwijl wij blank waren. Een vrouw kwam de tent binnen. Ze had een soort rokje of slipje van vissegraten. Ze had ook een mes, en wat gevangen vissen. Waarschijnlijk was het haar tent. Zij sprak ook een lange zin uit in de wilde taal, wat haar naam bleek te zijn. ‘Oh, jij werken,’ zei ze toen.

Ik zei dat ik ziek was, in elkaar getrapt. Ze begon me uit te lachen. ‘Oh, gaat dat zo ?’ zei ik. ‘Ik kan beter niks meer zeggen.’

‘Jij spreken als je moet spreken,’ zei ze toen. ‘Wij zijn de K’w.’

‘Nou en ?’ vroeg ik. Ik kreunde nog een beetje van de pijn. Ik vroeg me direct af hoe ik zo dom kon zijn om zo tegen haar te spreken. Maar ze zei niks en liep toen weg.

Er kwam een andere vrouw in de tent. ‘Jij werken,’ zei ze.

Ik zei : ‘Ik kan niet, want jullie hebben me daarnet in elkaar getrapt.’ Ik snapte niet dat ze dat niet begrepen. Toen kwam er nog een andere vrouw bij. ‘Later dan,’ zeiden ze. Ze bleven me maar aanstaren. Ik was flink verwond, en had het gevoel dat ik overal kneuzingen had, en in het ergste geval had ik wat gebroken. Ook ik keek ze aan. Een van de vrouwen had een pijl en boog. Ik keek weer naar buiten. Dichtbij de tent waren wat vrouwen die waren uitgedost met veren, pluimen. Weer zag ik hoe ze een jongen in elkaar trapten. Hij gilde en schreeuwde, totdat het stil was en hij op de grond lag. ‘Hoe bizar,’ dacht ik bij mezelf. ‘Ze willen dat we voor hen werken, maar ze trappen ons in elkaar.’ Ik begreep er niets van. Deze vrouwen moesten wel zwaar gek zijn. Ik beklaagde mijn lot.

Zwaar gek waren de K’w, met hun lange namen. Hele verhalen konden ze opsommen en dat bleek dan hun namen te zijn. Idioten waren het, maar ik en de andere jongens konden niets doen. We waren geheel aan hun genade overgeleverd.

De K’w was een wrede stam, een wreed volk, maar gelukkig lieten ze me verder die dag met rust, alhoewel in de nacht wel de vissersvrouw terugkwam om in de tent te slapen. Gelukkig raakte ze me niet aan. Zij lag aan de ene kant van de tent, en ik aan de andere kant. Ze was bloedmooi, dat wel, maar deze vrouwen hadden een gemeen karakter, belachelijk gewoon. Alhoewel ik me daarna in mijn gedachten probeerde te herstellen. Misschien had het een reden waarom ze zo waren, een reden die ik nog niet kende. Ik had een soort medelijden met ze, en probeerde ze in gedachten te verdedigen. Misschien was dat wel een gevangenschaps syndroom van me. Toch hoopte ik dat ze ver weg van me zou blijven, en ik dacht al aan manieren om te ontsnappen, maar ik was te zwak en verwond. Ik had echt het gevoel alsof er iets gebroken was, misschien wel mijn rug. Ik kon me nog steeds moeilijk bewegen, en alles deed pijn, vooral als ik het bewoog, en dan kreunde ik. Ik wilde haar verder niet wakker maken. Ze lag daar gewoon bloot op een zwijnenvacht of varkensvacht. Haar rokje of jurkje van vissengraten had ze uitgedaan.

De dag erna kreeg ik soep, en ik voelde me weer wat beter. Ik kreeg hoop voor de ontsnapping. Ik keek uit de tent en zag een jongen met een gesel geslagen worden. Even werd ik daar moedeloos van, maar toen sprak ik mezelf moed in. Ze geselden hem totdat hij bloedde.

‘Wat een verschrikkingen,’ dacht ik. Ik vroeg me af wat hij gedaan had, of misschien had hij wel helemaal niks gedaan. Of misschien had hij wel geprobeerd te ontsnappen. Hoe dan ook wilde ik weg. Vrouwen kwamen mijn tent binnen. ‘Werken,’ zeiden ze toen. Ik kon me wel weer wat bewegen, maar had nog wat pijn. ‘Wat moet ik doen ?’ vroeg ik. Ik moest manden weven, en allerlei ander huishoudelijk werk. Het lukte maar nauwelijks, maar ik deed het toch.

Ik vond het verschrikkelijke vrouwen. Maar ik mocht van geluk spreken dat ik nog leefde. Soms kwam de vissersvrouw in de tent, vooral ‘s nachts om te slapen. Ze negeerde mij gewoon de hele tijd als ze er was, alsof ik niet bestond. Moest ik er blij om zijn of niet ? Ik voelde me er in ieder geval vreemd over. Ze keek me gewoon niet aan. Op een nacht kwam ze de tent in om te slapen en ik vroeg haar : ‘Vind je het niet erg dat ik de tent met je deel ?’ Even was het stil. ‘Ja,’ zei ze toen, ‘maar jij hier om te werken.’ Ze begon toen zacht te zingen, en ik kreeg kriebels in mijn buik. Ze was natuurlijk een vrouw, en in ons eigen kamp hadden we geen vrouwen. Het waren natuurlijk hele onverschillige, meedogenloze vrouwen, maar ik probeerde dat in mezelf goed te praten, en misschien was dat wel typisch het gevangenschaps syndroom. Ik bewonderde haar ook. Misschien was het gewoon mijn dankbaarheid naar hen dat ik nog in leven was.

Na het zingen, wat best wel lang duurde, stopte ze ineens, en zei : ‘Je bent niet echt slim,’ en toen draaide ze zich met haar rug naar mij toe, en ging slapen. ‘Wat bedoel je ?’ vroeg ik. ‘Had ik met je mee moeten zingen ?’

‘Nee, jij bent domme man,’ zei ze toen.

Ik zei dat ik niet wist waar ze het over had. De dagen erna begonnen ook andere vrouwen het te zeggen, ook dat ik gek was. Maar dat zeiden ze ook tegen de andere jongens dat ze gek waren. ‘Gekken noemen anderen altijd gek,’ dacht ik bij mezelf. Ze hielden ervan ons belachelijk te maken, te bespotten. Op een dag toen de kust veilig leek en ik weer sterk genoeg was ben ik gevlucht, maar ik kreeg al snel een pijl in mijn rug, en werd even later weer wakker in de tent, ook weer helemaal onder de blauwe plekken en met snijwonden. Giechelend kwam de vissersvrouw die nacht de tent in. Ik kon me niet bewegen. Alles deed pijn, en ik was duizelig. ‘Ik kan alles met je doen,’ zei ze toen.

‘Nee, alsjeblieft,’ kreunde ik toen.

‘Je hebt het er wel naar gemaakt,’ zei ze.

‘t Spijt me,’ zei ik. ‘Het zal niet meer gebeuren.’

Ze lachte. ‘Je hebt je kans verbruikt,’ zei ze. ‘Je bent nu mijn persoonlijke eigendom, niet meer slechts van het kamp.’

‘Wat houd dat in ?’ kreunde ik.

Maar ze zei niets en begon te zingen. ‘Niet doen,’ kreunde ik, ‘ik kan niet tegen die stem.’ Maar ze ging gewoon door. Daarna ging ze slapen.

De volgende dag werden we allemaal in kooien op karren gezet, en zouden ze ons in een meer dumpen. Dat we dan zouden verdrinken kon hun niet schelen. Ze wilden blijkbaar van ons af. Ze trokken de karren met de kooien tot het meer, ook de kooi waarin ze mij hadden gestopt, en toen lieten ze de kooi van de kar af in het water glijden. Ik ging al snel kopje onder, en vanaf toen kon ik het niet meer herinneren. Ik werd wakker in mijn eigen tent van ons eigen kamp. Een van de jongens streelde door mijn haar. ‘Wat is er gebeurd ?’ vroeg ik. ‘Leef ik nog of ben ik al dood ? Of was alles een droom ?’ Hij zei niets. Tranen bungelden over zijn wangen. Even later zei hij : ‘Mijn kooi zat los, ik kon ontsnappen. Jij bent de enige die ik heb kunnen redden.’ Hij nam mij in zijn armen en hij kuste mij op mijn voorhoofd. Toen kuste hij mij op mijn lippen. Ik proefde zijn tranen. ‘Dus wij zijn de enigen die zijn overgebleven ?’ vroeg ik. Hij knikte. ‘Maar voor hoe lang dat zal zijn weet ik niet.’

‘Wat moeten we doen ?’ vroeg ik, terwijl ik hem terugkuste.

‘Waarschijnlijk hebben we van de K’w niets meer te vrezen,’ antwoordde de jongen. ‘Zij wilden immers van ons af.’

‘Tenzij ze erachter komen dat we nog leven,’ zei ik. ‘Misschien zullen ze dan nog wel ergere dingen met ons doen.’

‘Laten we het niet hopen,’ zei hij.

‘We zijn niet veilig hier,’ zei ik. Toen ik wat hersteld was braken we de tent op,

en trokken verder. ‘Ik wilde haar,’ zei de jongen, ‘die vrouw in wiens tent ik sliep.’
‘Wat was het voor iemand ?’ vroeg ik.
‘Zo iemand vol van leedvermaak,’ zei hij.
‘Waarom wilde je haar dan ?’ vroeg ik.
‘Ik weet het niet,’ zei hij. ‘Misschien om te kunnen overleven.’
‘Oh ja, het gevangenschaps syndroom,’ zei ik.
‘Noemen ze dat zo ?’ vroeg de jongen.
Ik knikte.

‘Waar doen we het nog voor ?’ vroeg de jongen. ‘Straks worden we weer gevangen genomen.’
‘Laten we hopen van niet,’ zei ik. ‘Ik kreeg zelf ook de kriebels in mijn buik van de vrouw waarbij ik in de tent sliep.’
‘Heb je met haar geslapen ?’ vroeg hij.
‘Nee,’ zei ik, ‘en jij ?’
‘Nee,’ zei hij.

‘Het waren vreemde vrouwen,’ zei ik.
‘Dat kun je wel zeggen,’ zei hij.
‘Zou je wel met zo’n vrouw willen trouwen ?’ vroeg hij toen.
‘Ikke niet,’ zei ik.
‘Ik wel,’ zei hij. ‘Nu zijn we eenzaam en alleen, misschien niet eens met het vermogen om te overleven, terwijl we daar nog een kans zouden maken.’
Ik sloeg hem in zijn gezicht. ‘Een kans ?’ riep ik. ‘Ze hebben ons geprobeerd te verdrinken, weet je nog ? We zijn de enigen die het hebben overleefd, en jij wil met zo’n figuur trouwen.’
Hij zuchtte. ‘Wat moeten we dan ? Dit is ook geen leven. Misschien was het beter dat we dood waren.’
‘Ach kom,’ zei ik. ‘De dood is een ongewilde gast.’

‘Ik wil weer naar ze terug,’ zei de jongen. ‘Gewoon proberen. In het ergste geval ga ik dood, vermoorden ze me, of als ik geluk heb nemen ze me dit keer op, en mag ik met een van hen trouwen.’
‘Je bent een belachelijke idioot,’ zei ik, ‘net als hen. Maar goed, als je het wil,

dan doe je dat maar. Ik zal van een afstand toekijken, en als ik je nog kan redden dan zal ik dat doen, want jij hebt immers ook mijn leven gered.'

En zo gingen we terug. Ik bleef op een afstand. Ik bleef naar hem kijken, hoe hij op hun kamp afliep. Ik riep nog : 'Niet doen ! Doe het niet ! Doe het niet !' want ik zag ze al komen met pijl en boog. Een pijl ging toen recht door zijn borstkas heen niet lang daarna, en ik moest rennen voor mijn leven. De pijlen vlogen om mijn oren. Ik dook het meertje in, en ging onder water, en zwom zo ver als ik kon, mijn adem inhoudende. Soms moest ik weer naar boven om weer diep adem te halen, en zo kon ik uiteindelijk voor een tweede keer ontsnappen, maar dit keer helemaal alleen, als de laatste overgebleven van het jongens kamp. Ik verweet het mezelf dat ik niet meer had gedaan om hem niet terug te laten gaan, maar ik begreep het ook wel. Nu moest ik in mijn eentje zien te overleven. In mijn gedachten en dromen altijd achterna gejaagd door de K'w.

De Totem

Vrouwen dansten om het beeldje. Mannen vielen vermoeid neer. Het leek alsof het de vrouwen kracht gaf, maar mannen werd van alles afgeroofd.

Het Lazarus zout werd gestrooid over de wonden van de gevallen mannen. Zo zouden zij niet meer opstaan. Deze totem was belust op het bloed van mannen.

Het was een totem van de honger. Het maakte vrouwen dik en mannen dun. Mannen uiten vuile taal. Ik heb ze horen praten. Ze hebben het nergens anders over. Hoe vuiler hoe beter.

Het vuil is de vrucht van de honger. En ze zijn creatief, maar slechts in hun eigen gedachten. Het komt niet verder dan het plafond. Ze groeien op in het graf. Het is als een morfine. Ze zijn onder narcose. Deze mannen zijn aan de drugs. Zij hebben alles verzonnen.

Deze hele wereld hebben zij verzonnen toen ze aan de drugs waren. Dikke mannen op hoge tronen, maar ze vielen zo diep, zo diep. Nu zijn alle mannen dun. Het waren slechts dromen. Laat dik zijn aan de vrouwen over. Zij dragen immers het kind. In hun vette baarmoeders is het kind veilig.

Het zijn Abasiaanse mannen van Abasia. Zij waren het er niet mee eens, maar de drugs vond zijn weg. Abasia is immers een vreemde combinatie tussen honger, vuil en ziekte. Het is de ziekte van de ziel, en dan is er een zieleknijper nodig, maar die is al door een pijltje van de blaaspijp gaan liggen voordat hij ook maar in de buurt kon komen. En zo werd hij een van hen.

Vrouwen dansten om het beeldje. Mannen vloekten wanneer ze haar zagen. Vielen neer als door groot geweld. Zij waren consument van het beeldje. Hun zielen waren aan het beeldje verkocht. Zij werden gebruikt. Als sigarettenpeuken weggegooid. Daarom vloekten zij en gebruikten groffe en vuile taal. Daarom kochten zij deze dromen. Daarom kochten zij de morfine. Aan de straatstenen konden ze het niet kwijt. Daarom moesten ze het zelf gebruiken, tot overdosis toe. Zij stonden alleen, en waren eenzaam. Niemand wilde dichtbij hen komen. Zij wisten immers waartoe het zou leiden.

Niemand kon het voorzien dat het zo zou lopen. Deze mannen konden alleen maar wenen. Er was niets wat hen tot leven kon brengen. Als gras groeit het hier, en alles buigt neer voor de totem. De totem staat immers op het gras. Ze gaan niet verder dan dit. Hier breekt alles af.

Als iemand aan hun tepel trekt dan stroomt er immers geen melk. De totem liet de duisternis van de vrouwen zien, hun donkerheid, en de witheid van de mannen.

De Toversleutel tot
de Hemel

Hoofdstuk 1.

Hij zag de muren van zich wegbewegen. Als hij op straat was dan voelde hij zich niet een geheel met de mensen. Hij was een eenling, alsof hij ergens anders vandaan kwam. Hij hoorde niet bij deze mensen. Hij vond dat ze zich vreemd gedroegen. Hij had ook angsten die hij niet kon verklaren. Vaak veranderden grote massa's mensen in vrouwen in zijn gedachten, en dat vond hij bedreigend. Hij vertrouwde geen vrouwen, en hij vertrouwde ook geen mensen in het algemeen. Hij voelde zich opgesloten, alsof de geschiedenis het alarm was, wat telkens weer terugkwam. Ook voelde hij zich vaak vies als hij weer mensen had gezien. En de zelfspot die in hem opkwam was ook zwaar, teneerdrukkend, alsof hij zichzelf uitlachte. Hij maakte karikaturen van zichzelf en dat dreef hij dan enorm ver door, totdat hij van zichzelf walgde, en dan lachte hij zichzelf uit. Hij dacht dat hij de gevangene van een heks was, en die had allerlei ingewikkelde alarmen vastgelegd in zijn cel. Dingen waren niet wat ze leken. De massa bestond in zijn ogen niet. Het was een vrouw. Hij moest het in z'n geheel zien. Volgens hem waren er geen afzonderlijke mensen. Hij deelde ze allemaal in in groepjes, en moest zich vasthouden aan de lijnen. Hij zou hysterisch worden als ze afgezonderd zouden worden. Hij zag de groepen

als vrouwen. Deze vrouwen waren altijd om hem heen, maar hij probeerde ze te ontlopen. Hij sprak hier met niemand over. Hij schuwde mensen. Hij was bang voor afzonderlijke mensen. Hij moest de groepjes zien, en het liefst van een afstand, en het liefst helemaal niet. Als er dan toch een mens door hem werd opgemerkt, dan moest hij zo snel mogelijk de groep zien en de vrouw die de groep was. Hij sloeg zichzelf soms als hij nadacht over een afzonderlijk mens. Dat wilde hij niet. Dat vond hij eng. Hij probeerde daarom altijd zoveel mogelijk langs mensen heen te kijken, op zoek naar de groep waartoe ze hoorden, op zoek naar de vrouw. Maar de vrouw vreesde hij ook.

De geschiedenis kon urenlang aan hem vreten, genadeloos, waarin hij maar geen uitweg zag, als het alarm van de heks. Maar de geschiedenis was ook een vrouw. Hij wilde het niet anders zien. Hij ging niet meer naar de café's, alleen in zijn gedachten. Hij sloot zich helemaal op, trok zich helemaal terug in zichzelf, ... diep. Hij had genoeg aan zijn verleden. Hij wilde er niets meer aan toevoegen. Hij had geen behoefte meer aan sociaal contact. Die tijd had hij gehad. Hij vertrouwde toch niemand meer. Oh ja, ze probeerden hem wel te lokken, maar hij trapte er niet in, en trok zich dan zelfs nog meer terug, en bleef nog langer binnen, zo ver weg mogelijk, zo diep mogelijk. Ze zouden hem nooit meer kunnen bereiken. Het was al te laat.

Soms als iedereen sliep, diep in de nacht, ging hij weleens wandelen door de stad, en dan het bos in, helemaal alleen. Hij was weleens een naakte vrouw tegengekomen in het bos, dacht hij, maar die rende toen weg. Normaal gesproken was het er altijd rustig en doodstil rond die tijd diep in de nacht, en erg donker. Voedsel bestelde hij altijd en dat zetten ze dan neer in kratjes in de achtertuin. Dan bestelde hij voor een paar weken. Werken deed hij niet. Hij was werkeloos en afgekeurd. Als hij sliep droomde hij over de natuur, hoe dat maar doorging, en hoe het maar niet stopte. In zijn dromen kwam er geen einde aan de natuur.

Hij was verdwaald in zijn innerlijke labyrint. Hij dwaalde en dwaalde en hij vond de uitgang niet. Hij zonk weg in de saaiheid en hopeloosheid van het bestaan. Hij herinnerde zich de contacten van het verleden, maar hij liet het wegglijden. Hij wilde alleen zijn. Hij liep tegen allerlei muren op in zijn verleden, maar die

leidden hem naar bruggen. Hij herinnerde zich de feestjes, en de cadeau's die hij kreeg, en nu was het weg. Hij herinnerde zich de stroop op de pannekoeken, die zijn wereld metselden. Hij wilde nu alleen zijn. Alles was teveel geworden. Hij wilde alles nu overdenken.

Alles om hem heen was ingestort, maar hij had het overleefd, en zou nu zijn leven bewaken. De geschiedenis was slechts een poortwachter tussen hem en de mensen, als een alarm. Hij was hypergevoelig nu. Nee, niemand zou nog in zijn leven toegelaten worden. Hij had al genoeg. Er kon niks meer bij.

Hij haatte en verafschuwde zijn vader die altijd tegen hem zei dat hij meer onder de mensen moest zijn. Het had hem in de grootst mogelijke problemen gebracht. Mensen waren zijn afgoden niet meer, en zijn vader al helemaal niet. Hij zag zijn vader als een sluwe duivel die hij buiten de poorten moest laten. Maar goed, zijn vader was al jaren dood.

Hij vond zijn vader altijd maar een lompe boer, zonder precisie. Zijn moeder was het tegenovergestelde, maar ook zij was al jaren dood. Hij had altijd het gevoel alsof zijn moeder in een gevangenis leefde die zijn vader had gemaakt. Daardoor kon hij zijn moeder eigenlijk nooit echt bereiken. Ze was te ver weg. En daarom was het thuis ook altijd een hel. Hij voelde zich als kind al een martelaar. Zijn vader dronk, en kwam 's avonds laat vaak dronken thuis om hem en zijn moeder te slaan. Zijn vader kon zuipen als de duivel, en ook tekeer gaan als de duivel, en vaak wist hij niet eens waarover het ging. Soms werd hij gewoon van zijn bed gelicht en tegen de muur aangezet. Als hij een pistool of geweer had gehad, dan had hij het wel geweten. Hij had medelijden met zijn moeder als hij zag wat zijn vader met haar deed, maar hij was machteloos. Zo vaak als hij kon ging hij logeren, of naar de buren, maar dan voelde hij zichzelf een lafaard, alsof hij zijn moeder in de steek liet.

Zijn moeder was de enige die hij miste. Maar zij was dood.

Hij herinnerde zich ook dat hij eens over de brug rende, dat hij niet meer wilde leven. Hij zou wel van de brug willen afspringen. Maar als hij dan aan zijn moeder dacht, dan kon hij het niet. Hij leefde alleen nog voor zijn moeder, en

voor de logeerpartijtjes bij neefjes of de buren.

Misschien was zijn vader zwaar ziek geworden door de alcohol, maar eigenlijk wilde hij er niet meer over nadenken. Hij wist hoe verwoestend alcohol was voor het menselijk lichaam. Toen zijn vader stierf was het zelfs een grote opluchting voor hem. Niet lang daarna stierf zijn moeder ook, en hij had toen het gevoel alsof hij daar nooit meer overheen zou komen. Het was alsof hij in een zwart gat viel, en hij voelde zichzelf alsof hij holle ogen had, alsof die eruit waren geschoten, alsof hij met twee grote gaten in zijn hoofd liep. Niets interesseerde hem nog. Hij zag niets meer. Hij leefde langs alles heen. En de mensen gingen gewoon door met feesten alsof er niets was gebeurd. Hij haatte daarom de mensen, met een diepe, bittere haat. Nooit hadden ze hem geholpen. Nooit hadden ze zijn moeder geholpen.

Hij geloofde nu dat zijn moeder in de hemel was, en dat ze elkaar ooit terug zouden zien. Tot die dag wilde hij alleen zijn. Hij had genoeg aan zijn denken.

In de nacht droomde hij vaak over het grote, vieze, vadsige lichaam van zijn vader die hem opgesloten hield. Zijn moeder was dan altijd onbereikbaar. Die zat achter glas, in haar eigen gevangenis. Zijn moeder wilde hem dingen geven, maar die dingen stonden ook allemaal achter glas. Het alcoholisme van zijn vader hield het tegen. Alcoholisme was een groot probleem in de stad. Veel kinderen hadden zo'n vader. Hij was niet de enige. Sommige kinderen hadden zelfs een drinkende vader en een drinkende moeder, en moesten met dronken ouders leven. Maar het feit dat zijn moeder niet tegen zijn vader opkon was al erg genoeg. Hij zag er geen uitweg in, ook niet nu ze dood waren.

In zijn gedachten probeerde hij er omheen te draaien, maar hij kwam hier altijd terug, alsof hij er nog steeds in leefde. De achtertuin was een zootje. Maar de rommel herinnerde hem eraan dat hij het had overleefd. Zijn moeder was altijd netjes.

Netjes, netjes, netjes, maar daar wonnen ze de oorlog niet mee. Zijn moeder werd al overstuur als ze een pluisje op de grond zag. Dan wapende ze zich al met stoffer en blik, en had ze haar handschoentjes aan, want zij mocht niet

vies worden. Ze was verder niet streng, maar wel paniekerig. Hierin ontwikkelde ze een grote precisie. Ze was heel accuraat en ook creatief. Ze was als een hypergevoelig alarm. Maar zijn vader sloeg altijd het alarm in. Het was een hopeloze situatie. En hij leefde nog steeds met die wond in zijn hoofd, en die schiep afstand tussen hem en anderen. Ruimte moest er zijn, vond hij. Anders zou hij het benauwd krijgen. Hij had behoefte aan rust, en wat meer natuurlijke chaos. Vroeger was alles te netjes in huis door zijn moeder. Hij begreep dat wel, maar ook ergerde hij zich eraan. Voor haar was het natuurlijk een manier om te kunnen overleven met zo'n chaotische man.

Hij zuchtte, en wist even niet waar hij naartoe moest met zijn gedachtes. Dit kon toch niet altijd zo door blijven gaan ? In zijn jonge jaren was zijn vader piloot. Maar door de alcohol kon dat op een gegeven moment niet meer, en toen ging hij elke dag naar de kroeg. Zijn moeder werd toen de kostwinner, maar zijn vader nam grotendeels het geld, voor drinken en gokken. Hij had zijn moeder weleens gevraagd waardoor het kwam dat hij zo was geworden. Zijn moeder had daarop geen antwoord.

Het was alsof zijn vader zijn leven had getekend door de alcohol. De gehele architectuur van zijn leven was doordrenkt met de alcohol van zijn vader. Daar draaide alles om, en daar was alles uit voortgekomen, hoe hij nu was.

Hoofdstuk 2.

Hij keek naar de rommel die in zijn huis lag. Hij woonde in een flat. Hij keek

naar het oude kantoor-bureau waarop wat boeken en papieren lagen, onder de stof, waar het zonlicht op scheen. Hij keek naar het raam wat al tijden niet gewassen was. Dit was zijn leven. Zijn ouders had hij niet meer, en met mensen wilde hij geen contact. Aan zijn denken had hij genoeg, meer dan genoeg. Er kon niets meer bij. De geschiedenis, zijn verleden, was zijn poortwachter. Hij had al genoeg ellende meegemaakt. Nu stond dat tussen hem en de mensen in.

Zelfs in zijn keuken was het een enorme rotzooi. Het plafond was heel hoog, en op de bovenste keukenkastjes lagen allemaal dozen en boeken die helemaal tot het plafond stapelden. Vroeger behoorde dit allemaal tot zijn kantoor, maar hij ging failliet. Nu was hij werkeloos. Afgekeurd. Hij kon het ook niet meer opbrengen. Hij zat veel te ingewikkeld in elkaar. Ze hadden het allerlei namen gegeven, maar daar ging hij nu ook niet meer naartoe.

De geschiedenis was onverbiddelijk in zijn hoofd. Het had geen medelijden met hem gehad, maar hem neergejaagd en opgesloten. Ja, de alcohol van zijn vader leefde voort, als een heks in zijn hoofd. Zou zijn vader hierin ook opgesloten zijn geweest ? Want zijn vader was ook allesbehalve sociaal.

Hij vroeg zich af hoe het zo heeft kunnen gebeuren. Zijn vader werd van piloot tot dronkaard, alsof hij daardoor neergestort was, en zijn hele gezin zat in het vliegtuig. Hij sleurde zijn hele gezin mee in zijn val. Of waren ze in zee gestort, en kwam hij zo aan op een onbewoond eiland ? Of had zijn vader nog net een noodlanding kunnen maken ?

In ieder geval voelde hij zich voor het leven verminkt. Hij verwaarloosde zijn huis, en bleef maar over de piloot en zijn vliegtuig denken. Het was een onderwerp wat hem obsedeerde. Hij was nu op het onbewoonde eiland, en als hij dan nog eens mensen tegenkwam, dan waren dat in zijn gedachten gewoon de dieren van het onbewoonde eiland. En groepjes mensen vormden een vrouw. Hij sprak weleens in gedachten tot de groepjes mensen : 'Hallo, ben je hier allang ? Ik dacht dat dit eiland onbewoond was.' Als ze dan niet antwoordde, dan moesten het wel dieren zijn, of bewegende blaadjes van de bomen door de wind.

Hij vroeg zich af waar zijn vader nu was. Misschien was zijn vader in de onderwereld wel weer piloot geworden, had hij zijn leven gebeterd, en was op een vliegtocht naar de hemel. Hij hoopte het. Maar ja, wie zou het zeggen ? Misschien als hij zelf zou sterven zou zijn vader hem opwachten met een vliegtuig om hem naar de hemel te brengen ? Zo werd hij heen en weer geslingerd tussen haat en hoop. Soms dacht hij aan de hartsvriend van zijn vader die ook piloot was en die met zijn vliegtuig was neergestort. Zou dat de reden zijn waarom zijn vader zo was geworden, en zo eigenlijk met hem mee neerstortte, en zo het hele gezin ?

Ja, hij zag zijn leven als het gevolg van een vliegtuig ongeluk, en hij stelde zich zo voor dat er mensen waren die het hadden zien gebeuren, en mensen die het in het theater hadden gezien, en dat hij in de hoofden van die mensen doorleefde. Zij maakten schilderijen en muziekstukken, en hij leefde daarin verder.

Hij wilde meer weten van de innerlijke realiteiten, en die binnen gaan. De buitenste lagen interesseerden hem niet, want die hadden hem in de problemen gebracht. Ja, die problemen waren hoogdravend. Hij had het vroeger vaak geprobeerd om in de innerlijke realiteiten te komen, zonder succes. Maar eindelijk was het dan gelukt. Alles wat hij nodig had was in de innerlijke realiteiten.

Hij ging de stad in omdat hij nog wat dingen nodig had. Dit deed hij niet vaak, maar soms moest het toch gebeuren. Hij gaf wat geld aan een dakloze, en in de zaak voor huishoudelijke spullen knipoogde een werker naar hem die hij tussen de schappen tegen kwam. Daarna ging hij even naar de supermarkt. Een oude vrouw woog wat groente af, en mompelde toen iets. 'Wat zegt u ?' vroeg hij.

'Ik dacht ik kan er ook nog wel een komkommertje bijnemen,' zei de vrouw.
'Niet toch ?' Hij zei zachtjes : 'Ja, dat kan.'
Dat waren eigenlijk alle contacten van die dag. Toen hij weer naar huis liep groette een jongetje op een fiets hem, maar hij had zijn hoofd gebogen en zei

niets. Toen groette het jongetje hem nog een keer, en toen groette hij het jongetje terug, en was toen al bijna bij zijn deur aangekomen. Met zijn tassen kwam hij binnen. Hij was blij dat hij weer thuis was. Het zat er weer op. Hij was met zijn jas ergens in een winkel aan een haakje blijven steken en nu zat er een scheur in, als een aandenken aan zijn uitstapje. Hij kwam ook veel jongeren tegen met gescheurde kleding.

Zijn huis in de flat had twee verdiepingen. Eronder waren de kelders, en hij kon met een stenen trap naar beneden om zijn tuin in te komen. Op zijn tweede verdieping had hij zijn indianen boeken en hingen zijn indianen schilderijen. Zijn leven draaide om de eeuwige jachtvelden en om speelgoed. Daar kon hij uren over nadenken. Op de tweede verdieping had hij ook een tafel waar indiaantjes opstonden. De verdieping had een schuin dak met een schuin raam. Boven de verdieping waren weer andere woningen, maar voor hem was het zijn zolder. Hier kon hij zichzelf uitleven. Er stond ook een bed. Soms sliep hij hier.

Op een nacht had hij een droom dat het gezin in een klein vliegtuigje naar Amerika ging. Zijn vader bestuurde het vliegtuigje, maar in Amerika stortten ze neer, en hij was de enige overlevende.

Toen hij wakker werd die ochtend werd hij geplaagd in zijn gedachtes. Dit werd zo erg dat hij in zijn kamer begon te dansen als een joker. Hij probeerde zijn gedachten te slim af te zijn, en besloot nu zijn gedachten te plagen en te bedriegen. Hij danste als een spion. Hij omsingelde zijn gedachtes door zijn dansen. Hij wist dat er toch niets met zijn gedachten te overleggen viel. Ze waren koppig, dus dan moest het maar op een andere manier. In zijn hoofd kopieerde hij zijn gedachten en maakte er iets anders van. Hij was er volledig zat van. Hij zou ze gebruiken als werktuigen van de joker.

Hij zong tot de zielen, en vertelde hen verhalen. Hij ging hiertoe over de zeeën om hun schepen te vinden. Zo bracht hij ze in veiligheid en trok hen op. Maar hij wist ook dat hij terugmoest, de rivier over, tot het grote niets, want zijn leven was teveel ingevuld, en hij was als een robot geprogrammeerd door de alcohol van zijn vader. Door de joker kon hij die programmatie verbreken, maar hij moest uiteindelijk weer terugkeren tot het niets, waar ook het nergens was,

en het nooit.

Alle ervaringen die hij op zijn netvlies had gehad en wat hij zijn verleden noemde waren als drugs, en het had hem zwaar in de problemen gebracht. Hij wilde afkicken. Was het leven slechts een drug ? En wat was dan het ware leven ? Of bestond dat niet ? En wie had hem deze drug gegeven ? En hoe zou hij kunnen afkicken ?

Hij dacht er ook over na hoe mensen zo lang konden trappen tegen een dood paard. Hij zag het voor zich, en moest er om lachen. In zijn gedachten begon hij die mensen te bespotten.

Die nacht had hij een droom over een groot wit hek aan de rand van een weiland. Hij ging door het hek, maar hij kwam er steeds dieper in en raakte erin opgesloten. Het was alsof het weiland achter zijn tuin was, en het witte hek leidde hem naar het grote indiaanse oerwoud. Hier was een woeste rivier waar je alleen maar over kon komen door over een brug gemaakt van kinderboeken te gaan. Hij ging de brug over, terwijl de woeste rivier hem probeerde te grijpen om hem van de kinderboeken brug af te sleuren. 'Nee !' riep hij uit in doodsangst. 'Oh, was ik er maar nooit aan begonnen.' Hij probeerde de kinderboeken te lezen en probeerde houvast te vinden in de woorden. Maar alles was nat, en alles lag door elkaar heen. Hij was blij als hij een heel woord kon lezen, maar vaak waren dat alleen maar losse woorden, en ook die werden weer weggespoeld. Verderop liep de brug hoger, en hij probeerde omhoog te klauteren, maar telkens weer gleed hij weg. Hij keek naar de diepte, en daar waren ook allemaal puntige rotsen. 'Nee !' riep hij weer. Hij durfde er bijna niet naar te kijken. Hij had er erge buikpijn van, en het was zo diep. Als hij zou vallen, dan zou hij eerst een heel eind naar beneden vallen. Dat zou hij nooit overleven.

Twee handen grepen hem. Ze pakten hem stevig beet, en trokken hem omhoog. Ze maakte hem vast aan een touw. 'Goed vasthouden,' zei ze. Het trouw trok hem door een tunnel heen die opliep als een put, en de tunnel was geheel gemaakt van meisjesboeken. 'Aaaaaaaaah !' riep hij, en toen werd hij wakker. Het eerste wat hij toen ging doen was op zoek gaan naar de doos

meisjesboeken die hij ooit van zijn tante had gehad. Toen hij het na lang zoeken vond begon hij alle boeken te lezen, iets wat hij nog nooit had gedaan. Hij kende deze boeken niet, en het was alsof er een wereld voor hem werd opengescheurd. 'Ja, het meisjesboek is het enige wat mij erdoor heen kan slepen,' sprak hij, 'ja, het meisjesboek.' En hij werd een schrijver van meisjesboeken, en voor het eerst had hij het gevoel dat het hem over het vliegtuig ongeluk heen bracht, en dat hij eindelijk de alcohol van zijn vader kon overwinnen. Hij wilde een meisjesboeken toren bouwen tot de hemel. Ja, het leven kreeg zo weer zin voor hem, ook sociale contacten. Hij zou het allemaal kunnen verwerken in zijn meisjesboeken. Hij had de toversleutel tot de hemel gevonden.

hermes en het geneesmiddel van de hemelse sociologische wiskunde in de strijd tegen de drugs-reuzen van totalitarisme en narcisme

Vele dan van zijn discipelen hoorden dit en zeiden: Deze rede is hard; wie kan haar aanhoren ?
Van toen af keerden vele van zijn discipelen terug en gingen niet langer met hem mede.
Johannes 6: 60, 66

De liefde is sterk als de dood; de ijver is hard als het graf.
Hooglied 8, Statenvertaling

Yeshua betekent genezing of geneesheer, als geestelijke dokter of geestelijk medicijn. Dit is een geneesmiddel wat dient de mens van de zonde te genezen, van de leugen. Dit geneesmiddel is diep en dient als basis te zijn van alle andere geneesmiddelen. Dit middel mag ook niet verkocht worden. ‘Om niet is

het u gegeven. Geeft het om niet.’ De hemel is dus een groot ziekenhuis tegen de zonde, want de zonde is de echte ziekte, en de zonde moet als eerste behandeld worden, want de zonde is het grootste kwaad. Men geneest van de zonde door enkel een hard kruis, niet door toversnoepjes die men voor een paar euro op de mark verkoopt. Een hard kruis, harde woorden, die wakker schudden. Want zachte heelmeesters maken stinkende wonden. Dokters die alleen maar het lichaam genezen spijbelen dus, zijn deserteuren en belasting ontduikers, vooral ook als ze het ook nog eens verkopen. Ze zijn bezig met symptoom bestrijding, en dat kan heel bedrieglijk gaan. Het wordt dan een soort van heksen-toverij.

In Egypte en ook in Griekenland was er al het beeld van de Goede Herder. In Griekenland was dit Hermes, de Goede Herder en boodschapper van de goden, ook de god van de slaap en dromen, die net als Anubis de zielen door de onderwereld leidde. Zijn naam komt van het Griekse ‘herma’, stenen hoop, gekerfd uit steen. Het is een bepaalde hemelse hardheid, eigengereidheid, die zich niet comformeerd aan anderen, aan een meerderheid, aan publieke opinie. Het gaat zijn eigen, hemelse weg, tegen de dode massa in. Het zal altijd precies het tegenovergestelde doen, of net iets anders. Daarom is Hermes ook als een soort oorspronkelijke sandman : hij die in slaap brengt en hij die doet ontwaken. Dat is een beeld, een metafoor, geen daadwerkelijke god of afgod. Het is dichterlijke literatuur. Wie dat te serieus neemt is niet helemaal, maar wie er te lichtzinnig mee omgaat is al niet beter. Altijd weer is dus het midden pad belangrijk, de elementen leren te balanceren. Wees niet extremistisch, maar wees ook niet lauw. Het zijn maar verhalen. Het gaat om de diepere waarde en betekenissen ervan. Het zijn goede hulpmiddelen, maar het staat dus niet op zichzelf. Er is hierin eb en vloed. De liefde is ijverig en onverbiddelijk, hard als steen, onwrikbaar, compromisloos, en is daardoor profetisch, niet aansluitende op het menselijk denken. Het komt van boven denken, van hemels denken. Het werkt vanuit grotere verbanden. Daar moet een mens eerst voor sterven en in heilige gebondenheid raken. De mens kan dat niet zomaar even uitpuzzelen of zomaar even beredeneren. Het is een toets-worsteling, zoals Horus met de beproever streed, met Seth, waar Job ook mee streed. ‘Hard als het graf’ is de liefde, want het vlees moet de metaforische dood in, de recyclity. We kunnen dan geen ‘zielepieten’

gebruiken die klagen over hun dierbare vlees wat altijd gelijk heeft. Yeshua, de geestelijke geneesheer, liet hen gewoon gaan. ‘Deze woorden zijn hard.’ Laat ze dan maar gaan. Ze willen de prijs niet betalen. Ze willen een stad bouwen van zoetigheid, niet van steen. Hun torens zullen instorten als de daadwerkelijke stormen komen. Niets van het vleselijke, niets wat door het vleselijke gebouwd is, zal stand houden. Niets. Het zal allemaal de recyclity ingaan. Al het vleselijke zal afgepeld worden. De hogere literatuur zal zichtbaar worden, die van de hemel, om de aardse literatuur te beschamen.

Er is een ziekenhuis in de hemel, waar boeken medicijnen zijn. Het is een harde dobber voor het vleselijke verstand wat alles al in kannen en kruiken dacht te hebben. De hogere literatuur is onverbiddelijk. Hermes was hard, en Yeshua was hard, ook hard naar zichzelf, naar het vlees, en ze gingen vrijwillig aan het kruis. Ze gingen de strijd in, met leeuw, wolf en beer. Zij waren goede herders, wilde jongens. Dat was hun zachtheid, hun zachtmoedigheid, hun tederheid, omdat ze optraden tegen het grote kwaad.

Hard als steen waren ze. Ze gaven niet toe aan de zonde, lieten zich niet omkopen, waren niet snel overtuigd, ook niet door henzelf. Ze waren onwrikbaar. Ze lieten zich niet ompraten, ook niet door hun eigen gedachten. Hun lichaam was een gevangenis voor iedere gedachte, voor ieder idee. Zij waren bewakers, wachters, van het geweten. Je kwam er bij hen niet zomaar door. De liefde is sterk ommuurd, stelt het Hooglied.

‘*Wij hebben een jonge zuster,*
die nog geen borsten heeft.
Wat zullen wij met onze zuster doen
ten dage, dat iemand naar haar dingt?
Als zij een muur is,
dan bouwen wij daarop een zilveren tinne;
maar als zij een deur is,
dan sluiten wij haar af met cederen planken.
Ik ben een muur
en mijn borsten zijn als torens.’

Hooglied 8:8-10

Wees als steen tot de zonde, wees als steen tot je ego. Wordt wedergeboren uit steen, en van binnen is er de hemelse zachtheid en zachtmoedigheid. Die moet je goed bewaken. Het is oorlog. Laat je bewapening niet vallen. ‘Don’t let your guard down.’ Blijf kritisch denken, ook naar jezelf. Al springt de hele wereld van de brug af, spring ze niet achterna.

Steen heeft de eigenschap dat het ook hard is naar zichzelf. Deze hardheid staat dus niet op zichzelf, en men moet ook niet vergeten dat hardheid naar de wolf zachtheid naar het aangevallen schaap is. Vandaar dat hemelse hardheid ook hemelse zachtheid is. Daarom worden de zachtmoedigen in de tweede bijbelse poezie altijd hard in de nacht : ‘Zachte jongens worden hard in de nacht.’ Dat is onlosmakelijk aan elkaar verbonden. In de etymolologie van de stenen hardheid van Hermes komt het van het woordje ‘samenbinden’. De samenhang treedt hard op naar eenzijdigheid, omdat eenzijdigheid een leugen is. Het gaat om hoor en wederhoor. Er zijn altijd meerdere kanten aan een verhaal. Hermes was ook de onderwijzer van de hemelse wiskunde, en die is gebaseerd op het juiste scheiden en het juiste samenbinden. In de oudheid waren stenen beelden ervoor om het kwaad af te weren. Dat is de gehele bedoeling van steen, maar dus ook om de mens samen te binden met het goede. Een dubbele betekenis dus.

In zijn hoedanigheid moest Hermes de mens weer terugbrengen naar de natuur, naar de hogere zelfnatuur die de mens zo ook verbond aan een hoger collectief. Het was hard voor het vleselijke, maar zacht voor het geestelijke. Het liet de mens slapen en dromen, en ook deed het de mens ontwaken. Hermes als zandman dus, als klaas vaak van de natuur, die de mens leidde door de woestijnen van het leven, door de wildernissen van de hemelse onderwerelden. Doordat hij de grenzen liet zien, kon hij ook het pad wijzen, en daarom was hij ook een beeld van de oorsprong van het hemelse profetische leven, de heilige dwaasheid van de hogere wijsheid. Juist omdat hij goed van kwaad scheidde kon hij ook een hogere brug zijn. Hij bracht de hemelse kranten aan de mens, als hemelse krantenjongen, opdat de mens tot de hogere hemelse literatuur zou kunnen komen, en die zou kunnen begrijpen.

Hoe lieflijk op de bergen zijn de voeten die goed nieuws brengen. Lieflijk, niet zomaar hard. Als je de hogere hemelse hardheid, de literatuur op stenen geschreven, begrijpt, dan begrijp je dat dit de ware empathie en tederheid is. Hemelse zachtmoedigheid is een dapperheid die leeuw en beer niet schuwt. Hermes was de middelaar in de Griekse mythologie, wat tot Jezus werd in het latere christendom. Oh, zo corrupt werd het, ontdaan van zijn oorspronkelijke hemelse wiskunde, alles omgedraaid. Hermes was de hemelse krant gezonden, om moeilijke boeken uit te leggen, te bespreken, te ontdoen van alle raadsels. Het waren hemelse stenen, apocalyptische hagel. Er was zoveel om recht te zetten. Hij was hierin nauw verbonden aan Thoth en Horus, en dus ook Anubis, als een Egyptisch mengsel, een Egyptisch amalgaam. Het werd vergriekst en toen gekerstend, gechristianiseerd. Het is dus interessant om te zien hoe deze lijnen nog door de bijbel heenlopen.

In het Aramees betekent hermas, hrms, dwarsbalk, kruis, kruispunt, ook om stevigheid te geven aan bouwwerken. De wortel ‘herm’, hrm, betekent in het Aramees de bewapening.

‘Je ‘hermes’ aandoen’ betekent dus zowel je geestelijke wapenrusting aandoen als je kruis dragen, je hemels laten samenbinden, om zo los te komen van vleselijke bindingen. Je bewapend je dan met stenen tegen de goliathen van deze tijd, zoals ook David deed. Het betekent jezelf op te bouwen. Ook Hermes was in gevecht met een reus, namelijk Argus, de honderd-ogige, ook als een beeld van de stalkende denk, droom en spraak politie, de hele ogenboom van de psychiatrie en farmaceutische industrie die alles hysterisch in de gaten houdt. Hermes versloeg deze allesziende reus. Daarom werd Hermes ook wel de Argus-slachter genoemd, of Argus-slager. De goede herder is dus ook een slager. Hermes liet Argus eerst in slaap vallen door een slaaplied op zijn fluit, en doodde toen Argus met een steen, dus goed vanaf een afstand, om hem daarna te onthoofden, eigenlijk net zoals David Goliath ten val bracht. Het zijn zinnebeelden van hoe de hemelse sociologie werkt. Hermes is in die zin dan de hemelse socioloog. In de tijden dat Nederland meer en meer tot een totalitarisch en narcistisch Noord-Korea veranderd is deze doorgang van belang.

hermes = here in ons allen

Als Paulus in Efeze 6 zegt : ‘Doe je geestelijke wapenrusting aan,’ dan zou je ook in het Aramees, de taal van Yeshua, kunnen zeggen : ‘Doe je Hermes aan.’ Hermes was dus al een Aramees woord, een Israelitisch woord, en het vertaald ook als ‘Draag je kruis.’ Hermes werd in de vergrieksing ook gepersonificeerd tot de boodschapper van de goden, Hermes. De boodschap is dus eigenlijk een wapen, zoals ook Yeshua niet kwam om vrede te brengen, maar het wapen, om scheiding te maken tussen het vleselijke en geestelijke.

En zo moest Hermes strijden tegen de reus met de vele ogen, Argus. Die strijd is er vandaag nog steeds. Het laat ook zien dat het profetische dus altijd verbonden is met de geestelijke oorlogsvoering, als bescherming van de boodschap, en dat is wat kruisdragen eigenlijk betekent : ‘De oorlog aangaan.’ Je moet je in de strijd storten. Zo komt je boodschap aan in de hemel, en zo draag je de hemelse boodschap ook tot de aarde en de onderwereld, als boodschapper van de hemel, als krantenjongen.

Hermes komt ook van Here-mas, oftewel de godin Here, Hera, vruchtbaarheid, in mas, ons allemaal, in het Grieks. Here in ons allen.

Hermes streed niet alleen tegen de reus Argus, maar ook tegen de Giganten, die een oorlog tegen de hemel waren begonnen. De Giganten waren voortgekomen uit moeder aarde, Gaia, door het bloed van Ouranus, de hemel, wat haar had bevrucht. In het voortijdse amazone Griekenland heette zij K’w, en heette haar volk ook K’w. Bloed had toen nog vruchtbare eigenschappen, zoals in het OT ook werd gesteld over de voortijd : ‘De ziel, het leven, is in het bloed.’ (Lev. 17:11) Sperma was in die tijd dus gewoon bloed, of als mengsel tussen zaad en bloed. Later werd het zaad van de mens steeds corrupter. Toen Yeshua aan het kruis stierf bevruchtte hij de moeder wildernis met zijn bloed.

Toen Hermes tegen de Giganten streed droeg hij de helm van onzichtbaarheid, waardoor hij onzichtbaar was voor hen. Dit was de helm van Hades, de god van de onderwereld, hij die niet omgekocht kan worden, hij die geen gaven aanneemt. Hades is als Hat-sa de kennis van het bloed-orakel, oftewel de kennis van het profetische leven door het kruis.

Onder invloed van chemische kunstmatige stadse werkingen is het sperma van de man niet meer wat het was. Koran boek 96 spreekt ook erover dat de mens oorspronkelijk voortkwam vanuit een bloedklomp, zoals Adam ook bloed betekent, en in het Egyptisch besnijdenis, of besnijdenis van het hoofd. Giganten betekent : geboren vanuit de aarde, vanuit de wildernis, vanuit de natuur. De reus kan zowel goed als kwaad voorstellen. De reus als beeld van het kwaad is de machtswaanzin, grootheidswaanzin, terwijl de reus als beeld van het goede hoog begaafdheid betekent, en de grotere verbanden, dus hen van de voortijdse geschiedenis die de voortijdse kennis nog droegen. Gaia, of K'w, had ook andere reuzen gebracht, namelijk de Titanen, die in de Tartarus werden geworpen, in de onderwereld, tot eeuwige gevangenschap, wat in goede zin ook een beeld kan zijn van de heilige gebondenheid.

De Titanen wijzen terug op de voortijdse Kuttieten. Titan, van het Egyptische 'ten' is namelijk de baarmoeder godin serket, de schorpioen, oftewel suri-kut, wat in het voortijds betekent : de onderwerping (suri) aan de baarmoeder (kut), als de beschermende gevangenschap van de opvoeding.

In de voortijd in dit tijdperk hadden mannen nog zaadlozingen van bloed, en was een zaadlozing gevreesd omdat het nog een grote pijn was. Het was alleen iets voor asceten, zij die het kruis wilden dragen en de dood aan zichzelf wilden sterven. Er werd niet lichtzinnig over gedacht. Het was niet van : 'oh, ik ga even lekker masturberen,' of 'oh, ik ga even lekker met een vrouw neuken', nee. Het was de hel, een groot offer. Een man die een zaadlozing had weende het uit van grote verbrokenheid, en gillen en schreeuwen was ook niet vreemd. Men vreesde het, rende er voor weg, en deed er alles aan om het uit te stellen. Men ging toen nog niet lichtzinnig en roekeloos met vrouwen om, want vrouwen waren toen nog levensgevaarlijk. Het kwam niet zelden voor dat een man stierf bij de zaadlozing. Sommigen werden krankzinnig, en ook werd er

vaak zelfmoord gepleegd. Het verzwakte de man, en kon de man zwaar ziek maken. Daarom was het gevreesd. Het kon eigenlijk alleen waarde hebben en overlevingskansen bieden als de man in contact was met de oerkennis, als hij zijn eigen demonen kon overwinnen. Ook ging men soms naar heksen voor magische toverdrankjes, maar dat liep vaak verkeerd af. Ook heksen vroegen grote offers.

Ware vruchtbaarheid was eigenlijk alleen iets voor de zelf-kastijders. Men ging niet zomaar tot vrouwen, want zij waren als gevaarlijke, wilde beesten. Het was geen sport. Mannen leefden daarom vaak alleen in mannen kampen of jongens kampen, met een grote vrees voor vrouwen. Soms hadden ze handels-overeenkomsten met vrouwen-stammen en soms was er oorlog met vrouwen-stammen.

Dan kun je je afvragen hoe het kan dat mannen nu zo roekeloos en onverschillig met vrouwen omgaan, dat ze met hun grote koppen en grote bekken zich niet schamen als ze verliefd zijn op een vrouw, of er meerdere vrouwen op nahouden, als een soort sport van stoerdoenerij onder elkaar. Ze voelen de pijn niet meer. Ze zijn al dood. Het zijn slechts parasieten in hen die hen van binnenuit opvreten. Ze zijn al lang geleden koud gemaakt. Ze zijn niet meer bang. Hun zintuigen en hun geweten zijn uitgedoofd. Ze hebben geen alarm meer. Ze begeren vrouwen meer dan dat ze kennis begeren, wat voor vrouwen het dan ook zijn. Het gaatje is hen genoeg. Ze zijn toch al dood, dus wat kan het hen nog deren ? Het zijn rokkenjagers. Altijd jagen ze op vrouwen, van trofee tot trofee. Vroeger was dat wel anders. Een gewaarschuwd mens telde toen nog voor twee. Nu spelen ze als dwazen in het hol van de leeuw, of het hol van de slang, en trekken ze aan de staart van een beer. Och ziet u, ze hebben een heksendrankje genomen.

Water, mayim in het hebreeuws, wat ook zaad kan betekenen, verandert in bloed, zegt Openbaring. Vannacht had ik een droom dat mijn broertje een vluchteling hielp die hij een van zijn vrouwen noemde. Hij ging toen met een ander meisje mee naar een soort zanderig grotten eiland, over een brug, en het eiland heette Argentinie. Ik ging daar ook naartoe, en toen kwam ook de vluchteling naar mijn broertje en hield hem vast. Ze zei toen : ‘Wat als ik een

spion ben die is gekomen om hi tech te installeren ?’ Ik wist toen dat het foute boel was. Ze ging weer weg, en ik ging toen ook weg, vliegend, maar toen ging ik weer terug, want ik was wat vergeten. Het was een groen lampje, een groene schakelaar met een lampje, die alles kon vertragen, zodat je hoger kon vliegen. Ik moest weer terug naar Argentinie, want er was daar een spin met vele poten die allemaal ogen hadden, als een Argus-spin, een reuzenspin, die alles verslond. Het is de staat van het mannelijke sperma vandaag de dag, maar ‘het zaad zal weer in bloed veranderen.’

Als je kijkt wat ze op de scholen doen, die gewoon kinder-gevangenissen zijn, kinder fokprogramma’s, dan worden de basis principes van het toetsen niet geleerd, en ook de andere basis principes niet. Maar eerst zal er dus een grote kranten-oorlog moeten komen : krant tegen krant. Wil je een kranten jongen worden in het leger ?

Ik zag in mijn verleden dat tafereeltjes gifpijltjes waren van prehistorische, primitieve amazone stammen. Die gifpijltjes wekten de hallucinaties op waarin we nu leven, als gevolg van gifwerking. Zo ontstond de matrix. Deze stammen hebben geen contact met de buitenwereld. Ze leven geisoleerd en willen dat zo houden. De gifpijltjes zorgen ervoor dat ze niet ontdekt worden. De mens leeft in een illusie.

doe je hermes aan – kruis en kruit – de ontzegeling van de griekse mythologie – raadsels van de eerste en tweede wereldoorlog

De eerste wereldoorlog en de tweede wereldoorlog waren de grootste evenementen van de vorige eeuw, van de jaren 1900, de meest kenmerkende ook voor dat tijdperk. De eerste wereldoorlog van 1914-1918 was de grote onafhankelijkheids-oorlog. Het Duitse rijk werd meer en meer opgeblazen, en

voerde nu weltpolitik uit, wat een machtspolitiek was, een expansiepolitiek. Het Duitse rijk werd steeds gevaarlijker, als een tikkende tijdbom, al door de eerdere Duitse filosofen voorspeld. Daarvoor was er nog de realpolitik van Bismarck, wat een gematigde politiek was, die meer op handelsverdragen dreef, om zo de vrede te bewaren. Dat waren de jaren 1800, ook nog het tijdperk van de Duitse verlichting, de Duitse filosofen. Na Bismarck donderde Duitsland in een groot gat. Aan het eind van de jaren 1800 kwam Wilhelm II aan de macht, die Duitsland nog groter en machtiger wilde maken, nog dominanter, en zo vingen de jaren 1900 aan. Het imperialisme kwam meer en meer opzetten en het nationalisme, wat de natuurmens begon te bedreigen. Het kolonisme kwam tot een hoogtepunt, en militarisme was het middel hiertoe. Ze vergaten de geestelijke natuur oorlog die gestreden moest worden, en materialiseerden het, verletterlijkten het en monopoliseerden het, met veel toeters en bellen, en veel tam-tam. Er werd niet veel meer aan de verbeelding overgelaten. Het was de opkomst van het fascisme, van narcistisch, schizofreen totalitarisme. Ze waren honds paranoide en agressief naar alles wat ook nog maar een beetje empathie had en medemenselijkheid. Het humanisme moest het onderspit delven voor deze psychotische machtswaanzin en grootheidswaanzin. Het waren gestoorde gekken in gekkenhuizen die de verzorgers om zeep hielpen, en zelf die posities innamen. De wereld is een gekkenhuis en de gekken werden de baas van het gekkenhuis. Dat heeft overigens niets met daadwerkelijke psychiatrische ziekenhuizen en klinieken te maken, want daar zijn vaak de slachtoffers van de echte gekken die buiten vrij, blij en gezond rondlopen. Verzetsstrijders, activisten, empathen, goede herders, vluchtelingen en zelfs daklozen komen daar vaak terecht, mensen die nog een hart hebben. Het ware gekkenhuis is buiten, op het toneelpodium van de wereld.

In de eerste wereldoorlog, de onafhankelijkheids-oorlog, viel het grote Duitse rijk, en werd flink ingekort. Het verloor zijn kolonien. Ook zijn maat, het grote Oostenrijks-Hongaarse rijk, viel. De natuurmens kon ontsnappen aan het imperialisme, ontsnapte uit deze mongolen stad, maar toen kwam Duitsland in de tweede oorlog nog groter opzetten onder Himmler en Hitler. Himmler, de leider van de SS en de gestapo en grote baas van de concentratie kampen, was de rechterhand van Hitler. De natuurmens kon niet ontsnappen, en ging

weer aan het kruis. De natuurmens moest leren volharden. Het was het mechanisme van de onontkoombaarheid, van de onweerstaanbaarheid, dat goede herders altijd de veilige schuilplaats verlaten om op zoek te gaan naar het verloren schaap. Het was iets shamanistisch. De natuurmens moest dieper de onderwereld in. Het grote Duitse imperialistische kwaad had teruggeslagen, had zichzelf gespecialiseerd, professioneel gemaakt, tot dokters. Dokter Mengele was gekomen, de eigenlijke poppenbaas van het nazi rijk. Duitsland kon terugslaan door medicalisatie. Duitsland kon terugslaan door voodoo. De heks had een nieuw en onaantastbaar gif gebrouwen. Snel ging het zich vervormen. Als een snelle slang gleed het overal doorheen. Niemand kon het meer vangen.

Gelijk oplopend met deze oorlogen waren de Tarzan boeken, over de wildernis mensen, over hun strijd met de aardse systemen. Tarzan zocht het kwaad op om het te verbreken. Hij ging het niet uit de weg. Ik heb altijd een haat-liefde verhouding met die boeken gehad, omdat Tarzan soms zijn eigen opgeblazenheid had, maar het bevatte wel belangrijke levens-principes. Het waren allemaal onafhankelijkheids-oorlogen. De twee wereldoorlogen zijn de balken van het kruis, het strijden en het lijden. De mens ontkomt niet, maar moet er dieper in, ook vanwege het goede herder principe. In de verhalen van de tweede bijbel is dit ook de strijd tegen de farmaceutische geleerden, wat gewoon schurken zijn. Deze grote oorlogen houden voortijdse principes verborgen. De zegels moeten verbroken worden. Wat voor mysterie was Duitsland in de voortijd ? Het moet ergens vandaan zijn gekomen. Het Israelitische zegel moet verbroken worden, het Egyptische zegel, het Griekse zegel, en zo ook het Duitse zegel, opdat we de diepten van de voortijd gaan zien waaruit al deze dingen voort zijn gekomen. Er liggen veel diepere verhalen aan ten grondslag. Nu is alles chaos, maar de mens moet opnieuw onderwezen worden.

In de Griekse mythologie smeet Ouranos, de hemel, zijn kinderen, de Titanen, reuzen, in de afgrond van de Tartaros, waar ze voor eeuwig werden opgesloten. Je zou kunnen zeggen dat de Titanen Israel voorstellen wat door het Griekse wereldrijk werd overgenomen en afgekapt, al die Israelitische en Egyptische natuurwortels, zodat het westerse christendom ontstond. Gaia,

moeder aarde, de moeder van de Titanen, werd hier zo kwaad over dat ze Ouranos liet castreren, en met het bloed ervan haarzelf bevruchtte, om zo de Giganten voort te brengen, een ander reuzen ras. Net als de Titanen waren zij ook hemelbestormers. Zij waren dus geboren uit bloed. Zoals er goede en slechte Titanen zijn, zo zijn er ook goede en slechte Giganten. De Giganten zijn een beeld van Duitsland, geboren uit bloed. Hermes vocht tegen deze reuzen. Hermes betekent in het Aramees wapens, maar ook een kruis. Als Paulus zegt : ‘Doe je wapenrusting aan,’ dan kun je in het Aramees, de taal van Yeshua, zeggen : ‘Doe je Hermes aan,’ oftewel je kruis en je kruit. Strijden en lijden. Daarom moeten deze landen en hun geschiedenissen en mythologie ontzegeld worden, opdat de voortijdse waarden zichtbaar worden. Zeus heeft zowel Titanen opgesloten als Titanen vrijgezet, net zoals Iesous, Yah-Zeus, een amalgaam tussen de Israelitische God en de Griekse God, Jezus genoemd in het Westen, die ook tot de gevangenen in de onderwereld afdaalde om hen vrij te zetten, en om krijgsgevangenen op te voeren, wat ook weer toets-allegorie is.

Israel is altijd een volk van ballingen geweest, heenwijzende naar hogere hemelse kenmerken. Duitsland is altijd een volk van bloedvergiet geweest, zowel geestelijk als materieel, want in de reformatie brak Duitsland met het katholieke materialisme, vergoot het veel bloed van de vleselijke, natuur, en toen kwam de Duitse verlichting die alles ging vergeestelijken, en nog meer bloed vergoot van het vleselijke, het letterlijke, maar toen sloeg de keerzijde toe. Israel en Duitsland zijn twee kenmerken van het voortijdse Griekenland, of de voorloper van Griekenland, als het natuur Griekenland, K’w. Die kenmerken zijn dus bloed en ballingschap. Het heeft hogere hemelse betekenissen, als kruis en kruit. Het aardse Griekenland heeft in de verste verten niets met K’w te maken, maar is meer een verdraaiing ervan, en de codes liggen verborgen in de Griekse mythologie.

de eerste en tweede wereld oorlog

De eerste en tweede wereld-oorlogen, centrale kenmerken van de jaren 1900. Wat stelt het voor ? De eerste wereldoorlog was de grote onafhankelijkheids-oorlog. Ze wilden af van het monsterlijke imperialisme wat gevoed en gepushed werd door Duitsland en zijn bondgenoot Oostenrijk-Hongarije. De natuurmens wist van zijn ketenen te ontsnappen door de verhongering tegen het machts-materialisme, en beide machtswaanzinnige en grootheidswaanzinnige monsters die alsmaar meer wilden vielen. Duitsland was nog maar een klein eilandje vergeleken met wat het was. Dit alles gebeurde in de jaren 1910 (1914-1918). Maar Duitsland sloeg terug, en werd het fundament van het nieuwe medinazi wereldrijk. De mens moet leren dat de bevrijding lag in de diepte van de jaren 1910. De tiender jaren zijn de bevrijding van de veertiger jaren dus. Er ligt een levensprincipe van de natuur verborgen in de eerste wereldoorlog, waaruit ook de Tarzan boeken zijn voortgekomen, die liepen van de jaren 1910, tot de jaren 1940. Het spoor loopt dus helemaal terug tot de tiender jaren. De Tarzan boeken gaan over de bevrijding en emancipatie door de natuur, loskomen van stads en imperialistisch conformisme en mononotonisme.

De tiender jaren van 1900 moeten dus opnieuw tot leven komen. Wat voor literatuur treffen we daar ? We zien het verhaal van Peter Pan, met dezelfde boodschap : Terug naar de natuur, wordt weer kinderen. Ga weer spelen. De Titanen, de underdogs, kwamen vrij uit hun gevangenissen. Het communisme brak los, gelijkheid voor ieder mens. Gelijkwaardigheid, alhoewel het communisme steeds corrupter werd, tot een nieuw nationaal imperialisme vanwege elite gedrag van de poppenspelers van het communisme. Aan beide kanten kun je eraf vallen. Al met al is er in de diepte van de tiender jaren bevrijding van de veertiger jaren. Het is een verlichting, en die ligt in de literatuur.

Verhongeren, verhongeren, verhongeren, totdat de mens sterft aan het kruis van de veertiger jaren, en de ziel van de mens opstijgt, boven alles uit, en dan wordt het Duitse monster van machtspolitiek en expansie weer aan de ketting gelegd, ingekort, in de tiender jaren, teruggedreven. De zee gaat dan weer

liggen. Er is een samenspel tussen natuur en nazisme, totdat we het nazi geheim begrijpen. De Giganten werden geboren uit bloed wat Gaia gebruikte om haarzelf te bevruchten. Zij waren verwanten van de Titanen. Gaia, moeder aarde, was hun moeder. Strijden en lijden, kruis en kruit. Vastraken om te volharden. Telkens weer is er een wisselwerking tussen de eerste en tweede wereldoorlog, als een draai mechanisme. Het is een lift. De mens moet dieper en dieper. De mens kan niet ontkomen. Het is onontkoombaar. Maar de mens kan wel leren. De tweede wereldoorlog is de keerzijde van de emancipatie van de eerste wereldoorlog, waaraan ook nog de Duitse verlichting en de Duitse reformatie aan vooraf gingen (jaren 1500 tot jaren 1800). Toch hoort de tweede wereldoorlog daarbij. Wat moet de mens immers zonder kruis ? En het kruis kan draaien. Het wijst terug op de eeuwige principes van de voortijd. De eerste wereldoorlog was de Exodus van de jaren 1900 en de tweede wereldoorlog was het Leviticus van de jaren 1900. Daar zit dus diepere en dubbele betekenis in.

Er is geen Exodus zonder Leviticus, en geen Leviticus zonder Exodus, en het pad gaat terug tot Genesis, tot de voortijd. Yeshua moest aan het kruis gelijk worden aan de tegenstander, wat ook een indiaans spreekwoord is dat om de vijand te verslaan moet je de vijand worden. Yeshua moest de beproever, seth, satan, of in het moderne tijdperk ‘nazi’ of ‘medi-nazi’ worden, in de zin van dat hij ook zelf moest leren toetsen, dus niet dat hij letterlijk als hen moest worden. Hij moest het worden om het te overwinnen, te doorzien. Zo sterf je in de veertiger jaren, wordt je gelijkvormig als de veertiger jaren, wordt moeder aarde bevrucht met bloed, en kom je tot opstanding en wedergeboorte, tot opname, in de hemel van de eerste wereldoorlog, van de tiender jaren. Dat is wat zowel het Peter Pan boek uitbeeldt, als de Tarzan boeken. Zo worden Titanen tot Giganten. Zo gaat dat ook met kinderen die in nazi of medi nazi gezinnen opgroeien, die geprogrammeerd zijn tot het zijn van zo’n nazi, maar dat van binnen niet zijn, en die dan tot ontwaking komen en emanciperen.

Ze hebben in de vervormende spiegels van de kermis gekeken, of in de rode toversteen van de dwerg Ismus. Zo hypnotiseerd hij hen en kan dan alles met ze doen. Zo’n mens moet weer onttoverd worden, kijkende in de hemelse stenen.

Hevig foetert dat mannetje als je in de hemelse stenen kijkt, en niet naar zijn rode toversteen. En daarom kijken velen maar niet naar de hemelse stenen. Hevig verwend hij hen die in zijn rode toversteen blijven kijken, en daarom kijken velen, omdat ze toch nog wel graag verwend worden. Daarom moet de mens komen tot de hemelse stenen van de tiender jaren om aan het mannetje te kunnen ontkomen.

Je moet ook niet aan de rode toversteen van de dwerg Ismus ruiken, want het is een giftige geur waarvan je in slaap valt. Je moet ook niet naar de deuntjes luisteren die uit de steen komen, want die hersenspoelen je. Het is mind-altering. Het is zware drugs. Lik er ook niet aan, want dan ben je verkocht. Strijd tegen deze argus-dwerg die je hele leven onder zijn macht wil hebben. Blijf luisteren naar de tiender jaren, naar de diepere boodschap van de eerste wereld oorlog. Laat het nazi Duitsland in je hart minder worden. Gij moet minder worden. Draag zijn sieraden niet meer, draag zijn klederen niet meer. Zet zijn vreemde hoedjes niet op. Blaas niet op zijn vreemde toetertjes. Het is allemaal zware hekserij. Deze wereld is behekst, zwaar behekst. Gooi zijn spiegel in met de stenen van Hermes.

Kom tot de wachters van de tiender jaren, alle jaren. En breng ze tot leven. 1910-1919. Loop als Jozua zeven maal om de jaren heen, als een beeld van toetsen en onderzoek, opdat de muren zullen vallen, net zoals de muren van Jericho. Kom tot de rode draad die er doorheen loopt.

De wachters van de tiender jaren zijn ook betoverd door de heks van de veertiger jaren, waar het sprookje van de tovenaar van Oz ook over gaat, en ook het tweede bijbelse sprookje van de toverbeker en het toverbordje. Deze wachters moeten dus nog bevrijd worden.

morgen in de krant

Ik ging naar een vissersstadje dichtbij. De visnetten hingen gewoon boven de straten soms. Ik liep langs een park waar een man zat met zijn zoontje. Hij had zich helemaal over zijn zoontje gebogen, en had zijn arm over zijn schouder, en fluisterde liefdevol naar hem. 'Zo'n vader had ik niet ...' mompelde ik in mezelf. Ik kon me niet herinneren dat hij ooit zijn arm om me had heengeslagen als kind. Ik slenterde verder en kwam langs een vishandel genaamd 'van Treur.' En ik mompelde : 'Ja, het is inderdaad treurig.' Ik kreeg toen ergens in de stad bij een winkel een gesprek met een aardige mevrouw over ontvoeringen. Ze wilde alles van me weten, en vertelde tegelijkertijd alles over haarzelf. Ik kan haar gewoon het hemd van het lijf vragen, en zij blijkbaar ook van mij. Je raad het al. Na een tijdje hadden we niet veel kleren meer aan, en dat terwijl het koud was. We zijn toen samen naar het plantsoen gelopen, en we smeerden elkaar in met modder. Ja, we moesten wel, anders zou het echt te koud zijn. De modder voelde nog wel warm aan, en haar handen ook. Maar na een tijdje dacht ik bij mezelf : 'Waar ben ik eigenlijk in godsnaam mee bezig ?' Ik schaamde me ziek, ook naar de mensen die allemaal keken. Sommigen waren zelfs al foto's aan het maken, en ik dacht : 'Als dat maar goed gaat, want voor hetzelfde geld staan we morgen in de krant.' Maar die vrouw had een mentaliteit van : gewoon aanpakken. Iemand anders kwam erbij, en begon ons ook de kleren van ons lijf te vragen, maar ja, die hadden we niet meer, dus toen hebben we haar maar de kleren van het lijf gevraagd, en die moest toen ook ingesmeerd worden met modder, anders zou ze kou vatten. Ja, daar zat natuurlijk ook niemand op te wachten, dat iemand kou zou vatten. Dat is ook allemaal extra werk weer voor de dokter. Dat wilden we die aardige man niet aandoen. Die zit er natuurlijk ook niet op te wachten om nog meer geld aan iemand anders z'n leed te verdienen. Dat laten ze allemaal wel over aan de vissers.

Goed, ik heb die twee vrouwen maar meegenomen naar huis. Ik moest toch nog iemand hebben voor de afwas. Maar ze kletsten me zoveel de oren van het

hoofd af dat ik ze maar uit huis weer heb gezet, op de trein naar de apenheul, onder het mom van een leuk dagje uit. Ja, ik had m'n oren natuurlijk nog wel nodig. Ze mogen me uitkleden en met modder bedekken, maar kom niet aan m'n oren verder. De volgende dag werd ik wel geconfronteerd met mijn uitstapje, zeg. Ze konden het niet laten. Met allemaal foto's op de voorpagina. Het was wereldnieuws. Ik schaamde me rot. Ik was er trouwens wel overstuur over, en vooral kwaad, dat ze het voorval helemaal uit de context hadden gerukt. Ze hadden erbij geschreven dat het een circus act was, en dat wij zogenaamde 'vissers met blote handen' waren. Het was een soort reclame truuk voor het vissersstadje, alsof de vissers daar gewoon nog zelf de sloten en rivieren induiken om zelf met blote handen de vis te vangen. Ik was zo kwaad, want ik ben een vegetariër in hart en nieren, en vond dit niet alleen een grote belediging naar mijzelf toe, maar nog meer wel naar de vissen. Ik heb die twee vrouwen toen weer opgetrommeld, en die waren er ook misselijk van, en vooral kwaad, heel kwaad. We zijn toen met z'n drieën teruggegaan naar dat vissersstadje, totaal onder de modder, en we zijn toen stenen gaan gooien door de ruiten van die vishandels heen. Laten ze dat maar eens op de foto zetten voor de volgende krant.

Nou, dat hebben we geweten. De dag erna waren er inderdaad foto's van in de krant weer, maar weer met een totaal ander verhaal in een hele andere context. Ja, schreven ze. Die stenen werden gegooid door 'de vissers met blote handen' omdat ze betere gebouwen wilden voor hun viswinkels. Er stond dus direct een oproep bij om te doneren naar die 'arme vissers met blote handen' om hun betere gebouwen te laten krijgen, en de kopers meer winkelplezier.

Nou ja ! Wij waren alledrie natuurlijk woedend. Dat lieten wij natuurlijk niet op ons zitten. Wij zijn toen naar dat vissersstadje weer teruggegaan en hebben toen iedereen de kleren van het lijf lopen vragen, om ze vervolgens te bekogelen met modder. Dat werd een ware oorlog natuurlijk. En weer waren er allerlei fotografen bezig natuurlijk voor de volgende krant. De volgende dag werd er gesproken van een burgeroorlog in het vissersstadje. Het waren de vissers met de blote handen weer tegen degenen die hun werk niet genoeg respecteerden en niet genoeg vis kochten, met de oproep erbij om meer vis te kopen. Ik dacht : Zo winnen we het nooit natuurlijk. Maar ik wist toen één ding :

We moesten naar die krantentent toe.

Nou, we kwamen daar bij die krantenmakerij aan om ze het hemd van het lijf te vragen, om ze vervolgens met modder te bekogelen, maar het pand was geheel leeg. We slopen naar binnen, en zagen daar de type machine van de krant, zo'n heel ouderwets ding. We vroegen ons af wie al die tijd die malloterige dingen over ons had geschreven, als reclame voor het vissersstadje. Komt er ineens een heel klein jongetje onder een tafeltje vandaan kruipen. 'Sorry,' zegt dat jongetje. 'Heeft iemand van jullie me vader ergens gezien ?'

Ik zeg : 'Ik weet van niks. Heeft hij al die kranten geschreven op deze type machine ?'

'Nee ik,' zei het jongetje.

'Waarom dan ?' vroeg ik.

'Dat moest van me vader,' zei het jongetje.

'Is je vader soms visser toevallig ?' vroeg ik toen.

'Nee,' zei het jongetje.

'Wat dan ?' vroeg ik.

'Oh, ik ken hem wel,' zei één van de vrouwen. 'Ze hebben een circus.'

'Ja,' zei de andere vrouw, 'dat circus maakt weer reclame voor de krant, en die krant maakt weer reclame voor het circus, en ook weer voor het vissersstadje. Dat heeft allemaal met elkaar te maken.'

'Helemaal niet,' zei het jongetje. 'Jullie weten er niets van. Me vader werkt bij de polisie, en hij zei : Schrijf maar de meest gekke en vreemde dingen in de krant. Maak ze maar helemaal gek. Dan heeft de polisie in ieder geval genoeg

te doen.

Ik onderbrak hem.
Ik zei : 'Ik vind jou maar een vreemd kereltje.'

'Moet jij nodig zeggen met al die modder op je lichaam,' zei hij brutaal.
'Oh, wij waren toch vissers met blote handen van het circus om reclame te maken voor het vissersstadje ?' vroeg ik.

'Ja,' zei hij brutaal. 'Dat zijn jullie ook, maar dat wil niet zeggen dat jullie geen vreemde snuiters zijn.'

'Hallo,' zei ik, 'zo lust ik er nog wel meer.'

In ieder geval pakte ik toen die type machine op en smeet het ding zo door de ruiten van de krantenmakerij. De volgende dag was er geen krant. Wel kregen we allemaal een papiertje door de brievenbus van het jongetje, waarop stond geschreven : 'Vandaag geen krant. De vissers met blote handen vonden dat ze al genoeg reclame hadden gemaakt. Nu moet iedereen maar zelf komen naar het vissersstadje om het uit hun eigen mond te horen.'

'Nog steeds vol praatjes,' zei ik tegen de vrouwen.

'Ik kan haast niet lezen wat hij schrijft,' zei één van de vrouwen. 'Er kon ook iets anders staan.'

Ik keek eens beter naar de twee vrouwen. Ik keek beter en beter en begon toen echt naar haar te staren, en zag uiteindelijk dat het maar één vrouw was. Ze was nog steeds onder de modder, en ik ook. We hadden elkaar de kleren van het lijf gevraagd en stonden nog steeds in het park.

'Misschien zijn we gek geworden van de kou,' zei ik voorzichtig tegen de vrouw.

'Dat kan de kou doen,' zei de vrouw, die ook naar mij staarde. 'Dan ga je ijlen. IJsziek wordt je dan. Waar hadden we het eigenlijk over ? Oh ja, die

ontvoeringen. Er is altijd een programma van op de tv, ken je dat ?'

'Nee,' zei ik, 'ik kijk bijna geen tv.'

'Vreemd,' zei ze, 'dat je dat niet kent.'

Ik staarde haar aan. Ik bleef maar kijken. Ik kon mijn ogen niet van haar aftrekken. Ik kwam er meer en meer achter dat ik gewoon naar een boom zat te kijken.

'Mooie boom, hè ?' zei een oude man die langsliep.

'Ja, prachtig,' zei ik. 'Ik word er altijd zo duizelig van.'

'Ja, dat heb je met ijsbomen,' zei de man. 'Moet je nooit te lang naar kijken. Gebeuren er vreemde dingen.'

'IJsbomen ?' vroeg ik. 'Nooit van gehoord.'

'Niet ?' vroeg de man. 'Wordt overal tegen gewaarschuwd op het nieuws.'

'Ik kijk bijna geen tv,' zei ik.

'Lees je ook geen kranten dan ?' vroeg de man. 'Daar staat het ook telkens in.'

'Houd maar op over kranten,' zei ik langzaam.

Hij typte wat in op een apparaat. 'Ja, hier heb ik er weer één,' zei hij tegen het apparaat wat af en toe piepte. 'Weer iemand die zomaar voor lange tijd naar een ijsboom loopt te staren. Hij is al duizelig zei hij.'

'Waarom zetten ze die bomen hier dan neer als ze zo gevaarlijk zijn ?' vroeg ik.

'Tja, waarom is de zon er, als je niet lang in de zon mag kijken,' zei de man. 'Gewoon een beetje aan de regels houden. Is gezond. Doet ieder mens.'

'Ik wist anders van niks,' zei ik. 'Dus ik kan niet eens meer van de natuur genieten ?'

'Met mate,' zei de man, 'alles met mate. Ze komen zo bij je.'

'Wie ?' vroeg ik.

Maar de man liep alweer door. Mannen in witte pakken waren snel bij me, met een wit busje. Ik werd aan de beademing gelegd. 'Ternauwernood,' zei één van de mannen. 'Had je al vreemde hallucinaties die net echt leken ?'

'Volgens mij ben ik er nog middenin,' zei ik.

'Ja, is een bijeffect van de ijsboom,' zei de man in plat Rotterdams. 'Mag je nooit te lang naar kijken.'

'Ik kijk al bijna geen tv,' zei ik, 'en nu mag dit ook al niet ?'

Ik keek eens beter naar de man toen ik daar lag. Ik keek beter en beter, en zag dat ik nog steeds gewoon naar een boom staarde. Er was helemaal niemand, en ook geen busje te bekennen. Ik was midden in het bos, verdwaald. Wat was er gebeurd ? Ik moest hier weg, maar ik stond als vastgenageld aan de grond. Ik vertrouwde niets meer.

Ik had toennet het gevoel alsof ik lag, maar ik sta nog gewoon, gewoon naar een boom te staren. Ik probeerde een stap achteruit te zetten, en toen nog één. Toen probeerde ik om te draaien en weg te rennen, wat maar nauwelijks lukte, maar toch lukte het. Ik zag de boom kleiner worden, meer en meer in de verte, op de achtergrond. Ik probeerde te roepen, maar ik kon het niet. Telkens weer keek ik achterom, en telkens zag ik de boom kleiner worden. Nu wilde ik niet meer kijken, maar toch keek ik. Alsof ik eraan verslaafd was.

'Kijken is tegenwoordig ook al niet meer gratis,' dacht ik bij mezelf. 'Ik heb een vrouw nodig die niet mijn oren eraf kletst, maar mijn ogen eraf beweegt, of

mijn ogen eruit kijkt, of wat dan ook. Ik heb een vrouw nodig die totaal mijn aandacht kan opslokken. Waar woonde ik ook alweer ? Oh ja, daar.'

Ik klopte ergens aan en een vrouw deed open. 'Ben je daar eindelijk, schat ? Heb op je lopen wachten,' zei de vrouw. 'Je zei dat je wat chocola zou halen, maar je bleef wel erg lang weg.'

'Nou,' zei ik, 'ik heb het idee dat ik dan de verkeerde chocola gekocht moet hebben, want het is totaal niet goedgegaan, totaal niet. En het ergste is dat ik niet eens weet wie je bent.'

'Vervelend,' zei ze. 'Ja, ik weet het ook niet. Maar u klopte aan alsof u hier woonde, en u had zoiets vertrouwds over u dat ik dacht dat u misschien weleens mijn lang verdwenen vriend zou kunnen zijn, alhoewel u totaal niet op hem lijkt.'

'Vreemd,' zei ik, 'en dat allemaal om een stukje chocola ?'

'Ja,' zei ze, 'dat zou hij kopen, voor zowel hemzelf als voor mij, maar dat was de laatste keer dat ik hem zag.'

'Moet wel door het chocola gekomen zijn,' zei ik. 'Moet wel.'

Einde

geluk bij een ongeluk

'Ik was met een bevrijdingsteam in een vliegtuig in de oorlog. Het vliegtuig werd geraakt door de vijand en vloog toen tegen een rots en stortte de zee in. Ik overleefde het niet. Mijn hersenen konden de crash niet verwerken, en vertaalden het toen als een moeder. Hier werd ik dus bij geboren, terwijl het dus eigenlijk het ongeluk was wat mijn hersenen niet konden verwerken. Wat een verschrikkelijke strijd had ik met die moeder, de ene leugen op de andere leugen, en ze roddelde zonder grenzen. Altijd dacht ze het beter te weten, terwijl ze een verstrooid warhoofd was. Gek dreef dat kreng me, tot het punt dat ik niet meer wilde leven en met het mes aan mijn pols stond, avond na avond, allemaal vanwege die tering moeder. Maar het was dus dat ongeluk wat ik niet had overleefd in de oorlog, en wat mijn hersenen niet konden verwerken.'

'Okay,' zei ik toen ik het briefje las. 'Die persoon, man of vrouw, loopt te schelden als een ketter, maar begrijpelijk. Wie zou er zo'n heks van een moeder kunnen verdragen ? En dat was dus een ongeluk wat hij of zij had gehad, en wat zijn of haar hersenen niet konden verwerken, en dat werd toen vertaald als een moeder die hem of haar het leven zuur maakte ? Wonderlijk fenomeen … reincarnatie ? En als dit waar is, wat is er dan niet nog meer doorvertaald door de hersenen in andere dingen, omdat de oorspronkelijke gebeurtenissen te zwaar en onverteerbaar waren ? Maar zie waar het deze persoon naartoe heeft geleid, want hij of zij wilde zichzelf of haarzelf hierdoor van het leven beroven ?

Nou, dat was dan niet gebeurd volgens iemand anders. Uiteindelijk was die persoon toch nog goed terecht gekomen ergens. Ik begon me direct af te vragen wat mijn eigen hersenen hadden doorvertaald wat ik niet kon verwerken. Ja, ik had ook een tering moeder. Ik schrok eigenlijk van mijn gedachten. In mezelf was ik nu ook aan het schelden als een ketter toen ik aan haar dacht. Zou dat betekenen dat ik ook een ongeluk had gehad in mijn vorig leven waardoor ik was opgescheept met zo´n kreng ? Het bloed haalde ze onder mijn nagels vandaan. Daarom ben ik maar voor de krant gaan werken, om het te kunnen verwerken en overleven. Ik typte wat in, maar alle letters en tekens van mijn keyboard bleken verwisseld te zijn, dus er stonden hele andere dingen dan wat ik had ingetypt. ´Dat zei ik helemaal niet !´ riep ik. Ik dacht

weer na over mijn moeder die alles wat ik zei altijd omdraaide en verkeerd uitlegde.

Ik sprak er met de anderen over, en zij probeerden mij te kalmeren. Soms is het ook wel confronterend om bij de krant te werken. Het kan zoveel van het verleden ineens omhoog halen, maar het stukje liet me wel zien wat er gaande kon zijn. Ik kon ook een ongeluk gehad hebben in mijn vorige leven, en dat mijn hersenen dat noodgedwongen als mijn moeder vertaalden. Wat een gedoe, maar wel begrijpelijk. En is zo´n kreng van een moeder dan geen uitnodiging om het zelf beter te doen ? En dat is ook wel nodig, want er zijn zovelen die een moeder nodig hebben. En zou dat niet uiteindelijk de genezing van het ongeluk zijn, wanneer we zelf moeder worden, te beginnen moeder van onszelf, en dan ook voor anderen die dit nodig hebben, ook om ze het goede voorbeeld te geven ? Ik denk van wel. En omdat ik er de therapeutische waarde van inzag besloot ik het stukje toch te plaatsen, met de woorden van mijzelf erbij, nadat ik ze verbeterd had, want het keyboard had alles omgedraaid. Mocht er nog een fout instaan, dan weten jullie hoe het gekomen is : door het ongeluk, door mijn moeder of door het verdraaide keyboard. Ik noemde het stukje : ´geluk bij een ongeluk.´

geluk bij een ongeluk II

Ik was wel geïnteresseerd in dat soort mensen. Zij hadden in ieder geval wat te vertellen wat bovennormaal was. Het was een keer wat anders, en het zette mensen aan het denken. Zo ging ik eens naar een bijeenkomst van zulke mensen. Ik kwam daar ook een piloot tegen. Hij beweerde dat zijn vader eigenlijk de kogel was die door zijn kop ging in een vorig leven. Ik heb hem er verder niet over doorgevraagd. Het zou wel te traumatisch voor hem wezen, maar ik vroeg me af wat mijn vader dan wel niet kon zijn. Misschien ook wel een kogel door me kop in mijn vorige leven. Hersenen konden het niet verwerken, dus maakten ze er maar een vader van, omdat het je altijd bijbleef. Zo kreeg het wat handen en voeten en kon je er nog wat mee, maar ik had zeer zeker geen makkelijke vader, en dat kon je ook niet verwachten van de kogel die door je kop was gegaan in een vorig leven. Natuurlijk was het maar speculatie, maar ik had een gevoel dat het weleens waar kon zijn. Ik bleef maar naar de piloot kijken. Hij had zijn helm nog op, motorpak aan. Zijn motor stond buiten. Hij werkte op een vliegveld dichtbij. Hij was ook vlieg instructeur.

Hij vertelde me daarna hele verhalen. Ik besloot het in de krant te zetten waarvoor ik werkte, en wat ook de reden was dat ik op die bijeenkomst was. Ik had al vaker dit soort stukken geplaatst. Toen ik het verhaal van de piloot plaatste kreeg ik er heel veel reacties op van mensen. Ze hadden allemaal hun eigen verhalen en vermoedens. Ze speculeerden wat hun ouders waren, wat het voorstelde in hun vorige levens, dat het allemaal onverwerkte problemen waren. Het viel me op hoeveel mensen problemen met hun ouders hadden. Gaat het dan zo, dat wanneer je ergens aan komt te overlijden, dat het dan zich vormt tot je ouders in je leven daarna ? Werkt het zo in je hersenenen ? Ik vond het een interessante theorie. Zoiets bleef dan altijd bij je, en kreeg handen en voeten, en gaf je ook weer nieuwe geboorte, een nieuw leven, en bleef maar op je inwerken, als ouders. Het had dus voordelen en nadelen. Je moest er telkens weer opnieuw doorheen, als een herbelevenis. Dat kon heel zwaar zijn, maar zou je ook weer nieuwe inzichten kunnen geven, nieuwe handvaten. Het was wat ze op die bijeenkomst het mysterie van de oranje zon noemden, van de oranje natuurbron van de reuzen, een bron van symboliek en abstractie om dingen door creatieve omvorming te verwerken door het te verdiepen. Ik vond dit een interessante theorie.

Iets kon dus waarheid zijn, of niet direct waarheid zijn maar toch waarde hebben, en zo konden zelfs leugens een bepaalde waarde hebben, omdat het slechts symboliek was, abstract. Het was een bepaalde taal, een bepaalde terminologie. Ze noemden zichzelf daarom ook de oranje leugenaren. Zij predikten een oranje pad van ogenschijnlijke leugens die toch een bepaalde symboliek en abstractie waren van de waarheid om het handen en voeten te geven, om het bruikbaar te maken, dus uiteindelijk kwam je dan toch via een omweg bij de waarheid uit. Ik vond dit wel een interessante theorie, of bijna theologie. Hoevaak moet iets zich vervormen om zichzelf uiteindelijk te genezen ? Is dat niet een proces van creatie ? Het gaat door allerlei etappes heen. Maar zou je zo niet alles kunnen goedpraten ? Oh, lang leve de leugen ?

Nee, het was slechts oorlogsstrategie, een verhalende techniek, om van iets slechts iets goeds te maken, een geluk van een ongeluk. De oranje leugenaars waren dus een soort dokters die een medicijn gebruikten, een zeer eigenaardig medicijn. Zij vormden voor hun eigen bescherming alles om, anders zou het hen verwoesten. Zo bleken zelfs de hersenen te werken. Zo bespraken zo ook in grootste detail het leven van de octopus die hetzelfde scheen te doen.

Doordat ik de verhalen in de krant liet zetten begonnen er steeds meer van zulke groepjes te ontstaan. De oranje leugenaars waren niet meer te stoppen. Maar hoe mooi en creatief hun verhalen ook waren, het maakte mij er niet rustiger op. Het haalde mijn boosheid niet weg over het kwaad op deze wereld. Ik vond ook dat de waarheid maar eens goed verteld moest worden. Voor mij waren het nog steeds rondvliegende kogels, alsof ik in een cowboyfilm terecht was gekomen. Ja, die verhalen waren leuk en helder, maar het begon me steeds bozer te maken. Het werd van kwaad tot erger. Maar ja, dat noemden ze de vinger op de zere plek leggen. Het was als zout op de wond. Oh, wat beet het. Het was genadeloos, zo confronterend.

Soms liepen ze met oranje kappen door de stad, die in een punt uitliepen, die oranje leugenaars. Het waren een soort monniken. En zo ontstonden ook de oranje kerken, in alles de symboliek zien, maar ik werd steeds kwader over het

onrecht in de wereld. ´Mooi zo,´ zeiden ze, ´dat is ook de bedoeling. Alles wordt ontmaskerd.´ Het waren immers geen tovenaars, maar boodschappers, verhalen vertellers, om de mensheid wakker te maken.

Ik moest mijn eigen vader en moeder worden. Een ander het allemaal laten doen zou slechts een kogel door de kop zijn. Ik moest genezen door zelf de gaten op te vullen, niet slechts in theorie, maar ook in praktijk. Maar ik merkte dat een bepaalde wond maar niet wegging, en het oranje mysterie bleef erover hangen. De oranje leugenaars zeiden dat het een zintuig was. Ik moest eerst de grotere contexten zien. Daartoe ging per slot van rekening de kogel door de kop. Ze hadden het daarom over de komst van de reuzen, de grotere contexten. Daar wachtten ze op. Ik moest dus geduld hebben, net als hen, en roeien met de riemen die ik had. Ik kon niet op dingen vooruit gaan lopen.

De oranje leugen was een groot lijden, want het was een zintuig. De optochten van de oranje leugenaars werden groter en groter, en ze hielden ook optochten door de wildernis. Ze zongen vaak hun liederen van het lijden. Ook zongen ze over de komst van de reuzen, over de komst van de oranje bron.

Op een dag was het zo ver. De oranje zon was gekomen, en ik kon alleen maar kijken en kijken.

Einde

de haai van de amazone

In de Amazone zijn veel vleesetende planten en struiken. Zo is er bijvoorbeeld

de grote witte haaienplant, die reusachtig groot kan worden, met grote plantachtige witte bloemen. Ook zijn deze planten zwaar giftig. Ze hebben ook stekels als kaktussen. Al met al niet iets om op de koffie uit te nodigen. Wel wordt het gif veel door de indianen gebruikt in de jacht en de oorlog, of gewoon om hun kamp te beveiligen, als een soort valstrikken. Gestoken door zo’n plant kan de vreemdste hallucinaties geven, alsof niemand naar je luistert. Daarom is het beter om er gif van te maken.

Voor allerlei dingen is de anders moordzuchtige plant nuttig. Voor de indianen is het een strijd op leven en dood. Het is gebruiken of gebruikt worden.

Van dat gif moet je zeker niet eten. Mensen die het hebben gegeten krijgen de vreemdste versjes in hun hoofd. Nee, het is een wapen. Het is een zeer exotische plant, zeer giftig, en met mensen die het als een drug denken te gebruiken, loopt het vaak verkeerd af. Libilius Vergilius is de eigenlijke, exotische en inheemse naam van de plant.

De indianen geloven dat er een witte doorzichtige driehoek zich ergens boven de Amazone bevindt als een pyramide die alle universele natuurkennis van het oer omvat, en dat een ieder die tot deze driehoek wil komen eerst de Libilius Vergilius moet leren te omzeilen en te verslaan. Desondanks vinden de indianen het een mooie en mysterieuze plant, alhoewel vele indiaanse families erdoor zijn uitgeroeid. Vele onderzoekers van de plant kunnen het niet navertellen. Er zijn gevallen van mensen die te dichtbij de plant kwamen, of gewoon erbij in de buurt, en die verstikkingsverschijnselen vertoonden. Deze plant kan op afstand wurgen, en is daardoor een gevreesde plant. Helemaal niet zo’n mooie plant dus, maar als de plant is overwonnen, dan is het goed bruikbaar.

Eigenlijk is de Libilius Vergilius dus het voorhangsel van de witte doorzichtige driehoek die alle indianen kennis bevat. Kinderen worden goed bang gemaakt voor de Libilius Vergilius, omdat het zo’n gevaarlijke plant is. Ze krijgen er ook nachtmerries van. Kinderen die niet over de Libilius Vergilius worden onderwezen vallen vaak ten prooi aan deze plant. Het wordt daarom ook niet voor niets de haai van de Amazone genoemd.

DE GROTE SURINAAMSE BIJBEL KRANT – VERZAMELINGEN NR. 1 – OKTOBER 2020

EEN UITGAVE VAN HET GROTE SURINAAMSE BIJBEL MUSEUM

voorwoord grote surinaamse bijbel krant – verzamelingen
het indiaanse suriname
het donkere ijzer
moeder suriname en de strijd tegen de zoutzombies
De scherpschutter
de stadschool en de bosschool
moeder sipaliwini en de ontwaking van de natuur mens
de mode meisjes
gezichtsbedrog
kaaskoppen
de heer is mijn herder – een indianen medicijn
De Kannibaalse Bruid
het verboden woord – het kehatitische voorhangsel
De Roodbil Stam
Het Duistere Sprookje van de Donkere Kaas
Jetje's Moeder
De Trollenspiegel
De Monster Meester
de sigarenfabriek
pyama's in amerika
Het Gele Gevaar
het prolo steegje
van het jongetje en het veulentje – de veulentjeshoeder
het kannibalenkamp
Hester en de Koffie Robot
afstandswaarde
Omulgaam
het speelgoed van omulgaam
liverpool

voorwoord grote surinaamse bijbel krant – verzamelingen

Behoren de kolonisten tot het verleden ? Vergeet het maar. Assid zei dat de jaren van kolonistische vervolging van de indianen naar Europa waren overgewaaid, resulterende in de tweede wereldoorlog. De tweede wereldoorlog is nooit afgelopen, want het is gewoon in andere vormen gegoten om de natuurmens te onderdrukken. De mens is in een race tegen de klok. Het zijn tekenen dat de mens nog dieper in de natuur moet terugkeren, om te komen tot de verloren gegane voortijdse kennis. Er is veel surinaamse kennis verloren gegaan, en er is veel gemoderniseerd. Ook boeken raken in de vergetelheid, dus het is onze missie om deze kennis op te graven.

De tweede bijbel wordt ook wel de amazone bijbel genoemd, of de grote surinaamse bijbel, waarin de voortijdse natuurkennis is opgeslagen, en waar ook ons museum aan is gewijd. Hiertoe is er onze krant : de grote surinaamse bijbel krant, met verhalen en artikelen uit de tweede bijbel. Deze krant is een zusterkrant van de onkrant, onze andere krant.

het indiaanse suriname

Cornelius van Coll (1842-1922) was een missionaris in Suriname die over Suriname schreef. Hij schreef over de oorspronkelijke bewoners van Suriname, over de indianen, maar dat er later ook afstammelingen van de Afrikanen bijkwamen, en ook Israelieten. Hij noemde Suriname het land van de indianen. De indianen noemden zichzelf de kalienja in het Caraïbisch, en in het Arrowaksch loekoenoe, wat mensen betekent. Zij waren waarlijk mens want zij leefden nog gewoon in de natuur. Er kwamen ook wat blanken bij in Suriname, die kwamen van over het water, de Europeanen, die ze in het caraïbisch paranokili noemden, wat betekent : de mannen van over het water, en in het Arrowaksch werden zij faleto genoemd, kundigen. Ze wisten niet of de Afrikanen nu mensen waren of iets anders, en die werden in het caraïbisch mati of mekro genoemd, wat zwarten betekent, en in het Arrowaksch djoeli of konoghoedoe. Van Coll stelt dat bij de Arrowakken de Israelieten werden aangeduid met een naam die op de besnijdenis heenwijst. Er was in het Arrowaksch een woord voor besnijdenis. Van Coll stelt in zijn boekje 'Gegevens over land en volk van Suriname' uit 1903 dat Suriname oorspronkelijk werd bevolkt door een indianenstam genaamd de Surinen, waaraan ook de naam Suriname is ontleend. Hij stelt dat er ook vele stammen in het Zuiden waren die botoeoedo's werden genoemd. Die naam zou heenwijzen naar een plug die sommige indiaanse stammen door hun onderlip hadden. De Arrowakken en Caraïben waren hele grote stammen, en de Caraïben stonden bekend om hun bloeddorstigheid, waarmee ze de slavernij konden uitbannen, want de blanke kolonisten voerden een handel in roodhuidige indianen. De blanken noemden de Caraïben menseneters, oftewel kannibalen. Van Coll laat het in het midden of dit werkelijk zo gebeurde. Wel noemt hij een brief in het zendingsarchief van Pater Fredericus van der Hofstadt uit 1684 dat zendelingen voor hun werk door indiaans grondgebied moesten gaan. Velen werden gevangen genomen en wreed vermoord. Langzaam verbrand en gebraden om zo half levend door de indianen te worden opgegeten. Het was oorlog, en de indianen wisten waartoe de blanken in staat waren. De indianen gebruikten giftige pijlen om henzelf te verdedigen, strijdknotsen en schilden, tigiboro. Van Coll stelt dat de Arrowakken beweerden dat ze boten hadden die wel driehonderd indianen konden vervoeren. Deze boten werden kanoa's genoemd.

Van Coll stelt dan dat Paramaribo oorspronkelijk de hoofdplaats was van de Arrowakken. Hun opperhoofd Arimoribo woonde daar. Hier komt ook de naam Paramaribo vandaan, wat dus een Arrowakse, indiaanse, naam is. Een rivier bij de hoofdplaats heette Parimoribo, oftewel de rivier van Arimoribo. Arimoribo betekent jongeling, waardoor Paramaribo als betekenis heeft de rivier van de jongeling of van het opperhoofd. Arimoribo had veel oorlogslieden die op zijn bevel de wapenen grepen, maar dit mocht alleen gebeuren als de piaai-man was geraadpleegt en de

beschermgeestelijkheden gunstig waren gestemd. De piaaiman is de medicijnman, de natuurprofeet of demonoloog. Ze wilden dus niet buiten moeder natuur omleven.

De Arrowakken zijn vreedzamer, meer open voor godsdienst, stelt van Coll, terwijl de Caraïben woester zijn van aard, met ruwe zeden. We kunnen stellen dat de Arrowakken meer staan voor de profetologie als fundament, en de Caraïben zijn een heenwijzing naar de demonologie, als een allegorie. Dit zijn twee grote stammen die Suriname hebben bepaald en gedefinieerd. Dan is er nog de warauen stam, stelt van Coll, die hij ook heeft ontmoet, maar velen trokken naar het Engels Guiana aan de linkerzijde van Suriname, en anderen vermengden zich met de Arrowakken. Van Coll stelt dat zij erg open stonden voor het christendom.

Ook in de talen komen deze dingen terug : Arrawaks is een zachte taal, en het Caraïbisch is een harde taal, ruw, door de vele keelklanken. De eerste zou oneindig moeilijker zijn dan de tweede, stelt van Coll. Het zijn levende, creatieve talen die zich makkelijk vermengen met andere talen om het uit te breiden. Zo hebben ze ook het Spaans erin opgenomen. Dit gebeurde zowel bij de Arrowakken als bij de Caraïben.

Van Coll stelt dan ook dat de Caraïben God Tamoesi noemen, wat Heer of Heere betekent, en die naam gebruiken ze ook voor hooggeplaatsten. De Arrowakken noemen hen Ebebé. Er zijn woorden die alleen door vrouwen gebruikt mogen worden en niet de mannen. Als voorbeeld geeft van Coll dat het woord 'ja' voor Arrowaksche mannen ehé is, en voor vrouwen taré.

De arrowakken en caraïben bouwden soera's, woningen met meerdere verdiepingen of woningen op palen, omdat ze voortdurend in oorlog waren. De soera's zijn ook de hoofdstukken of boeken van de koran in verzen ingedeeld, maar in deze context zijn het dus surinaams-indiaanse woningen met meerdere verdiepingen, of paalwoningen. Ook de islamitische talen op orion zijn dubbelgeslachtelijk, dus in twee lijnen waarin de vrouwen soms andere woorden gebruiken dan de mannen. Van Coll stelt dat God altijd goed is en de indianen leerde soera's te maken.

Van Coll stelt over de indiaanse tucht van de arrowakken :

'Van de Arrowaksche jeugd kan niet gezegd worden, dat zij zoo gansch straffeloos blijft. Vroeger heerschte er zelfs zeer strenge tucht bij dezen stam. (…) Aan de kinderen werd de tuchtroede niet gespaard. (…) Er werd les gegeven — en gevoelig ook — in de Indiaansche tucht. (…) Er werden *makwali's* (d. i. roeden van eene soort riet, *sangrafóe*, Costus) uitgedeeld. Allen schaarden zich naast elkaar, mannen naast mannen, vrouwen naast vrouwen. Op commando moest de een den ander op het scheenbeen slaan; voor jonge lieden waren tien zweepslagen bepaald, voor volwassenen ging men tot dertig toe. (...) En dit alles gold bij hen niet als hardheid, maar als noodzakelijke oefening, om tucht en orde te handhaven. Kleefde een gegronde verdenking op de vrouw, dan werd ze duchtig gekastijd. (…) Vrouwen, die zich aan ontrouw schuldig maken, worden bij hen gegeeseld.'

Hij stelt dat bij een huwelijk de jongeman gewoonlijk verhuisd naar het dorp van zijn schoonfamilie en daar voor hen werkt, bijna als een soort betaling. Hij stelt over het huwelijk in die tijd : 'Niet zelden kiest de volwassen Indiaan zich een vrouw in den persoon van eene zuigelinge. In dit geval moet hij haren ouders mededeelen van zijne jacht tot aan den tijd harer huwbaarheid. Wonderlijke verhoudingen worden hieruit geboren. Ook omgekeerd wordt soms door weduwen de opvoeding aanvaard van een ouderloos jongetje, dat te bekwamen tijde haar tot echtgenoot zal dienen en tot steun des ouderdoms. Zoo kenden wij een jongmensch van 25 jaar, gehuwd met eene vrouw van boven de zestig.'

In het Arrowaksch worden Suriname en Paramaribo zo genoemd :

'Suriname, Arr. Soelinama = woonplaats van het opperhoofd *Sueh* eigenlijk *Soefi en die met hem*, zooals in 't negerengelsch bv. *Brooskondre* enz. Soeli zelf ontleende zijnen naam aan eenen aldus genoemden rooden vogel.
Paramaribo noemen de Arrowakken *Simarabo*, samensmelting van *simara,* pijl en *aio* boog, misschien naar aanleiding van het Surinaamsch wapenschild.'

Ik had vroeger eens een droom dat ik aan een woeste zee stond waarover een grote woeste rode vogel vloog die me kwam ophalen om me over de zee te brengen.

De reis naar de plaats des geluks is zeer moeilijk: het gaat door dichte bosschen, over steile bergen, langs diepe valleien met meren en poelen. Men moet om er te kunnen komen over een groote rivier, die wel overbrugd is, maar nacht en dag bewaakt wordt door eene godheid, wier bediening het is de zielen van alle vlekken te zuiveren, welke haar van het leven aankleven.

het donkere ijzer

IJzer in deze vreemde gevangenis …
Hij wilde naar de wildernis, maar zat hier vast.
Er was geen weg tot de wildernis.
Hij had een kamer hier. Maar er waren overal vreemde tralies en bij het minste of geringste gingen er alarmen af.
Wat moest hij doen ? Hij verveelde zich hier, maar had wat oude boeken op zijn kamer.
Hij wist niet meer hoe hij hier was gekomen.
Alles was donker hier, maar de boeken kon hij nog net lezen.
Het waren boeken over de wildernis.
Zo kon hij zich wanen in de wildernis, en als hij sliep droomde hij erover.
Hij wilde vrij zijn, maar hij was het niet.
Als hij ontwaakte voelde hij zich altijd depressief, maar de boeken gaven hem wat hoop.
Hij had geen kameraden. Er was hier niemand.
Er groeiden hier wat planten met vruchten die voedzaam waren, en waarvan hij kon drinken, maar hij had het gevoel dat het hem vergiftigde.
Hij besloot op een dag te stoppen met ervan te eten, en dronk alleen wat.
Maar hij hongerde zo uit dat het hem verzwakte.
Op sommige momenten had hij een kracht die hij niet kende.
Maar dat was meestal van korte duur.
Zijn zwakheid en moeheid werd steeds erger.
Hij trilde vaak, en beefde van de zwakheid, maar de krachten die hij soms voelde werden sterker en sterker.
Op een dag brak hij los uit de gevangenis vanwege zijn kracht, om even later te ontdekken dat het

maar een droom was.
Soms als hij wakker was werd er voedsel door een luik geschoven, maar hij wist niet of hij het kon vertrouwen.
Ook waren er soms nieuwe boeken bij.
Donker ijzer.
Op een dag gooiden ze een vrouw in de gevangenis.
Ze sprak niet veel, en als ze sprak was het een andere taal.
Ze kwam uit de wildernis.
Maar het bleek maar een droom te zijn.
Hij wist niet meer het verschil tussen droom en werkelijkheid, en het kon hem niet meer zoveel schelen. Beiden was het intens, en ook de boeken waren intens. Er was geeneens meer een verschil tussen droom en werkelijkheid. Hij had het gevoel dat als hij ontwaakt was dat hij gewoon een nachtmerrie had.
Hij was in de wildernis, ja, hij was in de wildernis.
Soms stak een beest hem, en dan hallucineerde hij.
Soms had hij van een verkeerde plant of boom gegeten en dan hallucineerde hij.
Soms had hij nachtmerries, nachtmerries over een donkere, ijzeren gevangenis.

moeder suriname en de strijd tegen de zoutzombies

De gelijkenis van Absalom draait de machtsverhoudingen om. Soms is dat goed, en soms is dat niet goed, vandaar ook dat het een dualistische gelijkenis is. De gelijkenis van Kain en Abel is ook dualistisch in de zin dat je het van twee kanten kunt uitleggen en het is zeker niet letterlijk. In sommige versies was Kain een landbouwer en Abel een schaapherder. Abel had verantwoordelijkheidsgevoel vanwege zijn herderschap, terwijl Kain meer egoïstisch was in deze versie. Kaïn had voor alles wel een kruid, als een soort drugs, terwijl Abel net als David de wolven, beren en leeuwen moest afvechten om zijn kudde te beschermen. Kun je zo bezeten en geobsedeerd raken met kruiden dat je oog voor al het andere verliest, bijvoorbeeld voor zoiets als verantwoordelijkheidsgevoel en dienstplicht ? Je kunt zo egoïstisch worden dat je dan ook nog je kruid gaat verkopen, en om het dan te kunnen verkopen ga je ook nog heel veel liegen en probeer je je concurrent zwart te maken als je al je empathie hebt verloren. Vroeger in de bosstammen had iedereen zijn eigen taak en specialiteit, en je gaat zeker je hulp niet verkopen. We leven nu, vandaag de dag in dit hypermoderne tijdperk in een koude economisch krankzinnige samenleving, maar natuurlijk mogen wij dit als geestelijken niet zeggen, als predikanten, want dan zijn wij ineens krankzinnig. Abel had contact met God, en Kaïn kon door zijn zelfzucht en bedrog niet in contact met God komen, dus Abel moest maar dood. Daarom werd ook Martin Luther King in 1968 vermoord, als een hedendaagse Abel.

Kun je verder kijken dan je kruidentuintje, want er is een wildernis achter je tuin waar je een verantwoordelijkheid hebt, en waar mensen zijn met verantwoordelijkheden. Hoe hebben wij hen behandeld ? Hen die met leeuwen hebben gevochten en misschien nog steeds, en helemaal bebloed thuiskomen, misschien wel niet eens meer in staat om even naar je kruidentuintje te komen kijken. Waar gaat het nu om in het leven ? Hoe hebben wij hen behandeld die daar zijn gegaan waar zelfs arenden niet durven te komen ? Hoe tref je ze dan aan ? Velen kunnen het niet eens meer

navertellen. In Amerika worden mensen die gedwongen in de Vietnam oorlog moesten vechten en daardoor invalide zijn geraakt zonder pardon uit hun huis gezet omdat ze niet meer meedraaien en hun rekeningen niet meer kunnen betalen, en dit soort dingen gebeuren zelfs in Nederland. Invalide mensen in rolstoelen die dakloos zijn, of verwonde veteranen die in opvangcentra terecht komen en dagelijks door vernederingen heen moeten gaan vanwege onbegrip voor hun situatie en zich vervolgens niet mogen verdedigen anders worden ze er ook weer uit gezet.

Ja, maar mijn kruidentuintje dit, en mijn kruidentuintje dat … Misschien is het tijd om eens verder te kijken dan je kruidentuintje ? Althans als je geen hedendaagse Kaïn wil zijn … Iedereen draaft maar voor zijn eigen huisje en tuintje … boompje en beestje … maar er is zoveel meer te doen … Er is een wereld buiten het oude vertrouwde tuinhekje. Durf je de wildernis in te gaan, of laat je dat liever aan anderen over ? Durf je je oude vertrouwde drugs los te laten om te ontwaken ? Teveel kruiden overal voor gaat tegen je liegen, want overdaad schaadt, en laten we eerlijk zijn : Het zijn altijd weer dezelfde kruiden, altijd weer dezelfde verhaaltjes, de cliché's die iedereen kent, en waar de mens geen steek mee verder komt, en ook de uitleggingen ervan zijn cliché. Het gaat van cliché tot cliché, altijd maar weer hetzelfde cirkeltje, in je oude, vertrouwde tuintje. Misschien van je oma geerfd ? Durven wij het los te laten ?

Het kruid groeit ergens in de woestijn. Je hebt er een oase gevonden misschien, en je huisje daar gebouwd en je tuintje, en leeft van dezelfde kruiden, iedere dag weer. Durf je verder te trekken ? Of je hebt misschien ontdekt dat er geweldige kruiden groeien op de duinen aan zee, of misschien wel op de zeebodem. Misschien dat je daar je drugs wel heb gevonden, en dat je dan verslaafd raakt aan iets anders wat de zee biedt : zout.

Een beetje zout is nodig inwendig, maar niet teveel. Het zoute water van de zee kan heilzaam zijn voor je huid maar slik er niet teveel van in. Het tweede bijbelse verhaal 'De Hoogvliegers' zegt hierover :

'Zo is mijn huis een boot, een zielenboot, op de zielenrivier van mijn dromen. Ik ken beide kanten ervan, hoe het mes snijdt aan twee kanten, hoe de zielenrivier mij altijd opneemt, mij leidt tot de zielenzee, waar ik wordt opgenomen door de zielenzon. Het zout van genezing, een snijdende, scheidende pijn tot hogere vermengingen, de vreemde talen van het hart van de onderwereld, van de baarmoeder van de natuur.'

Zout is belangrijk voor de vochtbalans en de zenuw prikkel geleiding tot de hersenen. Zout is belangrijk voor de motoriek. Het is een electrolyt, een stof die bij het oplossen en smelten splitst in ionen om zo de electriciteit te geleiden. Het is dus een medium tussen de cellen. Echter als de mens teveel zout binnenkrijgt kan er van alles misgaan, en dit gebeurd door de voedsel-industrie voornamelijk die veel te veel zout toevoegt aan bewerkt voedsel. Dit gebeurt ook in de geestelijke wereld. Deze wereld is een hallucinatie door zout-vergiftiging. De mens ijlt. Het is de zout matrix, waarin allerlei complexe zoutverbindingen tussen allerlei planeten ingewikkelde sloten op de mens hebben gemaakt, en als monitors functioneren. De mens staat erop door de zout-camera en wordt door de zout-alarmen in de gaten gehouden. Zout is immers zenuwcommunicatie. De mens wordt gemanipuleerd door overmatig zout. Planetaire zoutverbindingen reguleren deze wereld, als een buitenaardse zout industrie. Ze verdrinken de mens in zout. Ze kunnen zo alles met de mens doen, allerlei hallucinaties opwekken, zowel collectief als individueel. Zo kunnen ze ook samenlevingen tegen elkaar opstoken, inwendig en uitwendig. Deze wereld wordt niet bestuurd door de staat, maar door bedrijven, zout-industrieën. De mens is al op sterven na de dood door zoutvergiftiging. Dat klinkt als een horrorfilm hè ? Maar de mens kan uit zijn kruidentuintje gaan, en uit zijn zouthandeltje, om de wildernis in te gaan. Dan kan de mens ontwaken uit de zout matrix.

De mens zit in een zeekooi onderwater, maar de mens weet het niet, want de mens droomt. De mens

weet niet dat hij een virtual reality bril op heeft en denkt dat alles echt is. De zeekooien worden bewaakt door haaien en orca's, slechts tekenen van zout-vergiftiging. Dolfijnen zullen de mens uitleiden. Dolfijnen staan voor het paradijselijke brein. De mens mag zo uit de zee ontwaken om weer vaste grond te krijgen aan land.

Daarom geloven de Surinaamse indianen ook in een gematigd paradijs, een hongerparadijs waar de mens verder mag groeien in het minderen … Er is hier niet te weinig, maar zeker ook niet teveel … De mens moet vechten om te overleven in het paradijs … Je komt er alleen door dichte bossen, over steile bergen en langs diepe valleien met meren en poelen, oftewel je komt er alleen over het smalle pad door de enge poort. Zou je daar dan ineens een brede weg zien ? Zou je daar terechtkomen in luilekkerland ? Wat leert de natuur ? De honger, het minderen, is je zintuig, je onderscheiding en je alarm, zodat je niet weer in de zoutvergiftiging komt en wordt teruggezogen in de dieptes van de zee tot de zeekooien om weer door overmatig ingepompt zout te gaan hallucineren in een gesimuleerde werkelijkheid om één of ander bedrijf te promoten.

In Orion is het zout gewiekst, in het lagere orion. Het maakt hysterische zoutverbindingen en dringt zich aan de mens op, openlijk of subtiel. Het maakt jacht op mensen, en zo ontstaan de families. Families zijn vaak creaties van de zout-industrie, als resultaten van zoutvergiftigingen, hallucinaties diep in het brein. Het zijn zout-implantaten van een gevangenis. Deze zoutvergiftiging heeft alles omgedraaid of probeert alles om te draaien. Denk aan de vrouw als het zogenaamde zwakkere geslacht, wat een racistische leugenhallucinatie is van een kritieke zoutvergiftiging. Zo zijn er nog wel meer bijwerkingen van zoutvergiftiging. De baarmoeder is voor wedergeboorte, dus daarom worden er leugens over verspreid zodat de mens niet tot wedergeboorte kan komen. De stad is een zoutsyndroom en liegt. Daarom moet de mens terug naar de natuur, over het tuinhekje heen. Ren voor je leven, want de zoutzombies zitten achter je aan.

Eens vielen de zoutzombies suriname aan, en exploiteerden haar, maar moeder suriname zal haarzelf herstellen.

De scherpschutter

Ik was ontsnapt.
Het sneeuwde.
Er lag hier overal ijs.
Ook het meertje was bevroren.
Ik kon zo over het ijs lopen en door de bomen gaan.
Die stonden erg dicht tegen elkaar. Naaldbomen.

Ik was bijna bij de brug aangekomen en toen zag ik de trein al weggaan.

Ik had de trein gemist.
Ik wist niet waar de anderen waren.
Ik keek achterom en zag niemand en hoorde ook niemand.

Ik ging verder het bos in.
Plotseling raakte ik in een gevecht met een beer.
Ik werd zwaar toegetakeld.
Ik overleefde het ternauwernood, en strompelde weg.
Ik wist niet eens meer waar de beer was, en ik zag hem ook niet.

Hevig bloedend ging ik dieper het bos in, en kwam aan bij een huisje na een tijd strompelen.
Een oude vrouw deed de deur open en nam me direct naar binnen.
Ze begon me allemaal vragen te stellen waarop ik geen antwoord wist.
Het gevecht met de beer had mijn geheugen gewist.
Ik wist alleen dat ik was ontsnapt, maar ik wist niet waarvan ik was ontsnapt.
Ook wist ik nog dat ik de trein had gemist, maar verder wist ik niets.

De oude vrouw verzorgde mijn wonden, en keek mij telkens bezorgd en liefdevol aan.
Ze liet me een dennennaald zien.
Dit soms ? vroeg ze.
Het zat in je wond.

Ja, ik moest langs naaldbomen, zei ik.
Waar kom je vandaan ? vroeg ze weer.

I... ik weet het niet, zei ik.
De beer zat achter me aan, en pakte me.
Nu weet ik niet meer zoveel.

Ik had ook een hoofdwond.
Ze pakte een tangetje en haalde er een kogel uit.
Nee, zei ze. Je bent beschoten.
Het is een wonder dat je nog leeft.

Ik keek haar vreemd aan, en keek vreemd naar de kogel die onder het bloed zat.
I.. ik weet daar niks van.

Scherpschutters, zei ze.
Ik maak het wel vaker mee.
Ze jagen op hen die ontsnapt zijn.

Ontsnapt waarvan ? vroeg ik.
Ik weet het niet, zei de vrouw.
Ik ben zelf ook eens ontsnapt, maar wist toen ook niet meer waarvan.
Scherpschutters en beren, zei ze, dat is alles wat ik weet.
Ze jagen op de ontsnapten, en soms wolven.

Ik ben blij dat ik geen wolven ben tegengekomen, zei ik, maar die beer was al erg genoeg.
Of ik ben ook wolven tegengekomen en het weer vergeten.

Laat maar, zei de vrouw.
Het is niet meer belangrijk.

Blijf maar hier.
Morgen praten we verder.

Toen ze mijn wonden had verbonden bracht ze mij naar een kamer met een bed, en ging zelf in een andere slaapkamer slapen.

Die ochtend werd ik wakker in de sneeuw.
Ik keek om me heen en zag geen huisje.
Ik zag wel bomen.
Ik vroeg me af wat er was gebeurd.

Mijn wonden waren nog steeds goed verbonden.
Ik stond op, en zocht naar het huisje, maar vond het niet.

Veel later vond ik tot mijn grote schrik de oude vrouw liggende in de sneeuw.
Doorzeefd met teveel kogels.
Ze was dood.
De scherpschutters hadden haar waarschijnlijk gevonden.
Ik keek om me heen, terwijl ik me afvroeg waarom ik nog leefde.
Ik weende toen om de vrouw die zo goed voor me was geweest.

Ik vond het leven oneerlijk.
Ik herinnerde me ineens waaruit ik was ontsnapt.
Maar toen vaagde het weer weg, en wist ik het niet meer.
Het was slechts een flits, en ik kon het niet grijpen.
Het frustreerde mij.

Scherpschutters kwamen toen op me af.
Maar ze schoten niet op mij.
Waarom hebben jullie haar neergeschoten en mij niet ? vroeg ik.

We hebben je wel neergeschoten, zeiden ze.
Met kogels van dromen, je droomt slechts.

Ik schudde mijn hoofd in ongeloof.
Kom mee, zeiden ze.

Ik liep achter ze aan.
Waar kon ik anders naartoe ?
Toch ben ik even later weggerend, en alhoewel ze niet schoten dacht ik aan de kogels van dromen.

Ik werd toen pas echt wakker in het huisje van de oude vrouw, in de kamer waarin ze me had gebracht. Bij het ontbijt vertelde ik haar over de droom en ze glimlachte.

Maar wat als ik nog steeds droom ? vroeg ik aan haar.
Dromen zijn … sprak ze, maar haar stem begon weg te vagen en ik werd wakker daar waaruit ik dacht dat ik was ontsnapt … Ik herinnerde me alles weer … Tegelijkertijd besefte ik dat dit ook een droom kon zijn … De scherpschutter, de scherpschutter … dacht ik bij mezelf …

Einde

de natuurmens vs. de golddiggers

C.H de Goeje (1879-1955) schreef in 'de inwijding tot medicijnman bij de arawakken' (een surinaamse indianenstam) in zijn boek 'Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land-en Volkenkunde' uit 1942 dat het middelpunt van het geestelijk leven van de indianen de openbaringen of ingevingen staan die komen in een toestand van geestverrukking, extase of trance (p.211). Hij stelt dat de indiaan dan een droom beleeft die heel levendig is. Hij werkte in Suriname waar hij ook indianenstammen heeft bestudeerd in expedities. Veel indianen hebben een natuurlijke aanleg tot extase stelt hij, maar in de regel moet het opgewekt worden door de lichaamsfuncties te verzwakken, oftewel door het minderen, het hongeren, door vasten en onthouding op allerlei gebied, door zelfkastijding, ascese. Tegelijk moet het karakter gezuiverd worden en de toewijding verhoogd, dus er mag zeker geen lauwheid zijn. We zien dit terug in de charismatische beweging, dat de mens door beproevingen en het kruis in contact komt met de geestelijke gaven en waar allerlei voorwaarden aan zijn verbonden ook wel heiliging en demonologie genoemd. Als kind had ik al indiaanse dromen of shamaanse dromen terwijl ik nog niet wist wat de charismatische beweging was. Ik had al voorafgaande een surinaamse en natuur inwijding gehad. Dit was veelal niet makkelijk, want het waren vaak nachtmerries. Maar het gaf duidelijke info, info die tot op de dag van vandaag heel gedetailleerd is uitgekomen, daarom zie ik mijn kinderdromen als een grote leidsraad.

Een totemteken van de caraïbische indianen van suriname is het kruis met de eeuwige cirkel erin. Het kruis wijst naar de vier windstreken. Hieruit voort komen de stromen des levens. Het kruis is gezeteld in Orion. Deze totem wijst de weg terug tot het paradijs, en dit komt ook voor in het christendom. In tegenstelling tot de surinaamse indianen die symbolisch leven hebben de westerse christenen alles verletterlijkt. In zowel het indiaanse westen als het midden-oosten zijn nog de ware bronnen van het gnostische christendom te vinden. Dit is dus een natuur christendom. De hoofd-besnijdenis staat centraal bij de indianen, oftewel de besnijdenis van het verstand. De mens moet weer terug naar het paradijselijke verstand, want de mens heeft alles verkeerd begrepen. Assid beschrijft in zijn boek de eeuwige cirkel dit hele proces. De dubbele slang is ook een totemteken wat ervoor zorgt dat de mens tegen het kwaad strijdt. Ook dit teken vinden we terug in Israel, in het verhaal van Mozes en de slang in de woestijn. Zonder deze slang zou de mens sterven in de woestijn. De slang wijst op het hemelse touw, als een beeld ervan. Het is als de navelstreng tussen de mens en moeder wildernis. Het is een gids door het leven.

Assid noemt het probleem van het westen waardoor het paradijs verloren is geraakt : goudkoorts. En zo werd de westerse wildernis geasfalteerd, en ook sranang (een indiaans woord voor suriname) en palina (een indiaanse naam voor paramaribo) moesten hiervan klappen opvangen. Het stadse suriname, of verstadste suriname, heeft alles verletterlijkt en leeft niet meer door het profetische, begrijpt het geestelijke niet, omdat het vleselijke het geestelijke niet kan verstaan. Er is dus een groot verschil tussen de stadse surinamer en de natuur surinamer, en hierin zitten allerlei gradaties tussen. Palina, oftewel het oorspronkelijke paramaribo, betekent oorsprong, bron. Verstadste surinamers, zo zeggen de indianen, zijn meegenomen met een yawaku, een boze geest. Sommigen werden ontvoerd, en sommigen deden dit uit vrije wil vanwege dat het gelukszoekers waren, goudzoekers, oftewel de zogeheten 'gold diggers'. Ze zoeken niet naar moeder wildernis, naar

moeder sranang, maar naar het goud, oftewel het goud der dwazen. Ze gaan geheel op in het materialisme wat hen door de blanken werd aangeboden, en hebben de geheime indiaanse paden in de wildernis vergeten. Veel indianen die ik ken en kende klagen hierover hoe veel indiaanse jeugd zich heeft laten misleiden door alcohol en drugs van de blanken, wat gewoon truukjes zijn van de kolonisten. Onoplettende indianen namen van de verboden vrucht in het surinaamse paradijs en kwamen zo in een wereld van illusies, soms gedwongen, soms omdat ze verwond waren, en soms uit vrije wil, uit hebzucht. Er is verschil tussen wonde en zonde. Velen kennen de surinaamse natuurkennis niet meer. Vele ouders leren het hun kinderen ook niet meer.

Zij die nomadisch bleven kwamen in vruchtbaar land, stelde Assid. Ze zagen een grote adelaar komen vanuit de hemel. Met de adelaar was een slang van smaragd, een teken van water en regen. De vogel daalde in een vallei en er vond een wonder plaats. Een maagd werd zwanger en baarde de dubbele slang, oftewel het dubbele touw. We kunnen denken aan het visioen van Ezechiel, want die plaats is inderdaad Mexico waaraan Ezechiel in mijn dromen altijd verbonden was. De mens hield het niet meer uit met de leeuw, de oorlog, en het rund, het lijden. Het had de mens totaal gebroken, en toen kwam de adelaar, zoals ook in het visioen van Ezechiel, als een beeld van de opname. Het is als een touw uit de hemel. De geboren dubbele slang had ook vleugels. Het visioen van Ezechiel werd verbonden met het visioen van Mozes in de wildernis. Zo kwam er vruchtbaarheid. We kennen misschien ook nog wel het dal van dorre doodsbeenderen, het andere visioen van Ezechiel, waar ik als kind zijnde ook veel dromen over heb gehad, en ook later. Op een dag is het dan volbracht, en dan is er de opname. Dit is een ontwaking, in het binnenste van de mens. Het is een inzicht, een exegese, een psycho-analyse. Assid stelt dat het dorre dal van doodsbeenderen ook in Mexico was na de inval van Spanje. De Spaanse veroveraars begonnen het te ontbossen maar ze konden niet tegen de raadselachtigheid van de natuur op. Deze gebieden bleven groots, stelt Assid, door de eenzaamheid van de ruïnes en de pyramide van Teotihuacan, het centrum van de natuur-religie. Hij noemt als geheim van Mexico een catacombe waar zich een dodenleger bevindt in Guanajuto. Hij stelt : 'De echo's van de stemmen van de oude indiaanse stammen spreken in hun kinderen over een verloren grootheid.' (p.159)

Assid stelt dat dezelfde jaren van de nazi bezetting van Europa Amerikaanse kolonisten de atoombom ontwikkelden (1942-1945) in plaats van diepere natuurkennis te zoeken. Ze waren in een goudkoorts op zoek naar wereldheerschappij in plaats van hun moeder wildernis te zoeken. Dit heeft de gezinnen uit elkaar gerukt. De stemmen van het verleden werden gemengd met de stemmen van het nieuwe tijdperk (veertiger jaren). Hij noemt het monsterachtig. Zijn boek kwam uit in 1946. Hij waarschuwde dat de bezetter het op de jeugd had gemunt. Hoe waar zijn deze woorden gebleken.

de stadschool en de bosschool

'Juko,' zei een schoolvriendje terwijl ze van het ene naar het andere klaslokaal gingen. 'Weet jij wat een satanskerk is ?'
'Ik weet het niet,' zei Juko. 'Is dat niet wat christelijks ?'
'Bijna,' zei Kas. 'Satan is de vijand van het christendom, maar voor de Israelieten was het een

vriend, of een schijnvijand, die hen moest testen. Het kan ook het symbool van het kwaad zijn, maar dat is niet altijd zo. Het Jodendom en het christendom verschillen in die zin veel van elkaar.'
'Houd maar op,' zei Juko. 'Ik weet er niet veel van, en ik wil er ook niet veel van weten.'
'Maar het is belangrijk, Juko,' zei Kas.

'Houd maar op,' zei Juko weer. 'Ik snap niet waarom het belangrijk is. Ik ben niet gelovig opgevoed, dus ik heb niets met die dingen te maken.
'Dat dacht je maar,' zei Kas. 'Het blijkt dat de satanskerk alle scholen heeft opgericht, ook deze.'
Even schrok Juko. Maar toen trok zijn gezicht weer normaal, en zei : 'Maar dat geloof je toch zeker niet, al die onzin ? Moeten we daar dan in geloven ? Heb je teveel roddelblaadjes gelezen of die leugenachtige krant die altijd over van alles en nog wat liegt om maar geld in het zakje te krijgen.'
'Moet je luisteren, Juko,' zei Kas. 'Misschien weet ik van bepaalde dingen net iets meer af dan jij ?'
'Nu klink je als een concurrent,' zei Juko.

Maar ze moesten gaan zitten. Het volgende schooluur was aangebroken. Juko was een beetje boos op Kas, en ging na schooltijd direct naar huis. Voor Juko was dat een lange fietstocht, en Kas ging met de bus. Die woonde in een andere plaats.

'Satanskerk, satanskerk,' zei Juko telkens tegen zichzelf. 'Wat moet ik daar allemaal mee.' Toen hij thuisgekomen was na de lange fietstocht ging hij direct naar zijn kamer en klikte de tv aan. Het nieuws was erop. De nieuwslezer sprak : 'Het is onder onze aandacht gekomen dat de satanskerk alle scholen bestuurd, alle ziekenhuizen en alle huizen van justitie.' Direct klikte Juko de tv uit. 'Dat geloof je toch zeker niet,' zei Juko tegen zichzelf. 'Het wordt allemaal hoe langer hoe gekker.'

De volgende dag op school begon Kas weer tegen hem aan te praten, en het ging weer allemaal over de satanskerk en dat het ook op het nieuws was. 'Moet ik dat weer allemaal aanhoren ?' vroeg Juko.

'Het blijkt meer en meer duidelijk te zijn wie bij de satanskerk behoren,' zei Kas. 'Het was eerst min of meer geheim, maar er zijn allerlei documenten van boven water gekomen, en ze vrezen dat het uitloopt op een oorlog. Deze mensen doen de verschrikkelijkste dingen. Het zijn geeneens mensen.'

Juko haalde zijn schouders op. 'Ik geloof het nieuws niet, en ook de krant niet. Bij mij thuis geloven we helemaal niks, dus het zal wel loslopen. De krant is allemaal bedrog op bedrog, allemaal voor geld.'

'Ja, maar mijn broer zegt het ook,' zei Kas. Juko keek hem diep in de ogen toen met een lach op zijn gezicht. 'En dat maakt het allemaal plotseling waar als Jonas het ook zegt ? Dus wat Jonas zegt is een gouden bewijs op zich ? Laat me toch niet lachen, Kas.'

'Mijn broer heeft veel onderzoek gedaan,' zei Kas. Juko duwde Kas lachend opzij, en liep door. Het was immers het nieuwe lesuur. 'De satanskerk, de satanskerk,' dacht Juko bij zichzelf. Tijdens het hele lesuur kon hij nergens anders aan denken. Toen hij thuis was besloot hij dit keer zelf eens onderzoek te doen. Hij ging naar de bibliotheek, en leende daar een flinke stapel boeken over satan. Hij begon de boeken gretig te lezen, en kwam erachter dat de boeken elkaar allemaal tegenspraken. 'Zie,' zei hij tegen zichzelf. 'Hier kom je toch ook geen steek verder mee.' Maar hij ging door met het onderzoek. Hij wilde tot de bodem van de zaak gaan. Nadat hij de boeken had gelezen ging hij speciaal boeken lenen over de satanskerk, en wat hij toen las, daar schrok hij toch wel even van. Hij wist natuurlijk niet of het waar was, maar dat zou verschrikkelijk zijn.

Hij raakte er verschrikkelijk van in de war en voelde zich ziek. Hij voelde zich zo ziek dat hij niet meer naar school wilde. Naar een psychiater of dokter wilde hij ook niet, want die zouden ook door de satanskerk bestuurd worden als hij die boeken zou moeten geloven. Hij moest natuurlijk eerst

bewijzen hebben, maar hij nam geen enkel risico. 'Stel dat het waar zou zijn,' zei hij telkens tegen zichzelf.

Hij begon steeds meer de natuur op te zoeken, want daar was het rustig, en daar kon geen satanskerk zijn. Juko raakte steeds meer in de war. Hij wilde niet meer in de stad leven. Of het was de satanskerk die de stad bestuurde, of de stad werd door leugens bestuurd, of beiden. In geen geval wilde hij nog in de stad zijn. Hij kende een schuilplaats in het bos. Dat was nog van de oorlog. Daar ging hij toen wonen. Hij zou een bosmens worden, want dan had je nergens meer wat mee te maken. Hij zou wel van bessen leven, en al het andere wat in het bos te vinden zou zijn. Hij was hier helemaal alleen, maar hij zou zijn weg wel vinden. Hij wilde in geen geval meer terug.

'Laten ze elkaar maar opvreten in de stad,' dacht Juko. 'Waar vechten we voor ? In het bos is al die onzin er niet.' Maar Juko kwam er al snel achter dat het leven in het bos zwaar was. Er was een heleboel niet te krijgen in het bos, en voedsel was er schaars. Hij zou soms terug naar de stad moeten voor voedsel. Of misschien moest hij dieper het bos in ? Hij koos voor het laatste. Hij wilde niet opgeven.

'Satanskerk, satanskerk,' dacht hij telkens bij zichzelf. En zelfs veel christelijke kerken zouden niets dan satanskerken zijn. De meningen over wat satan was waren verdeeld, maar wat hij over de satanskerk had gelezen was niet goed. Als dat toch eens waar zou zijn. Hij wilde geen risico lopen, maar toen vond hij zichzelf ook weer laf. Misschien hadden ze zijn hulp wel nodig. Maar wie was hij ? Wat kon hij doen ? Hij voelde zich zo machteloos. Ze moesten maar net als hem leven. Waarom zou hij zijn leven wagen voor stadsmensen ? Maar ja, de satanskerken hielden mensen ook opgesloten. Mens, kind en dier. Nee, dat kon niet als dat waar zou zijn. Juko moest terug. Dat moest van hemzelf. Maar dan moest hij eerst een strategie hebben, en die had hij niet. Het zou bijna zelfmoord zijn als hij terug zou gaan. Daarom ging hij eerst dieper het bos in om wijze raad te zoeken. Hij kwam aan bij een huisje waar een oud vrouwtje woonde. Ze vertelde hem alles over de satanskerk, hoe zij alles in de stad besturen, ook de christelijke kerken. Ze vertelde hem over wat ze in het geheim deden. Dit was precies wat de boeken zeiden, maar er bestond volgens hem niet zoiets als meeste stemmen gelden, want de leugen was hysterisch en massaal. De leugen was een besmettelijke ziekte. 'Ik heb het zelf meegemaakt, lieve jongen,' zei de vrouw. 'En daarom woon ik hier.' En toen begon ze een verhaal over haar leven te vertellen. Juko kon zijn tranen niet inhouden.

'Wat moeten we doen ? Wat moeten we doen ?' vroeg Juko.

'Wat kunnen we doen ?' vroeg de vrouw.

'Ja, maar zoveel kinderen,' zei Juko. 'We kunnen hen toch niet zomaar aan hun lot overlaten ?'

'Ze zullen hier ook wel komen,' zei de vrouw, 'net als ons.'

'Ja, maar hoe dan ?' vroeg Juko. 'Ze hebben onze hulp nodig.'

'Nee,' zei de vrouw. 'Je kunt niet terug. Hier ben je veilig. Je hebt een spoor achtergelaten. Dat kunnen ze volgen.'

'Maar hoe dan ?' vroeg Juko.

'Het is een raadsel wat alleen kinderen kunnen oplossen,' zei de vrouw.

'Ja, maar de mensen en dieren dan ?' vroeg Juko.

'Wie niet wordt als een kind kan niet komen,' zei de vrouw.

'Maar hoe kunnen ze een kind worden als ze geen kind meer zijn ?' vroeg Juko.

'In het hart, het hart,' zei de vrouw. 'In het hart is een pad. De satanskerk heeft geen hart. Ze zijn versteend als de stad zelf. Maar kinderen zullen hun weg er wel door vinden tot de natuur.'

Juko moest even aan Kas denken, en aan Jonas. 'Ik hoop dat mijn schoolvrienden het halen,' zei hij.

'Natuurlijk,' zei de vrouw. 'Als ze zijn voorbestemd, dan zeker.'

'Voorbestemd ?' vroeg Juko. 'wat betekent dat ?'

'De natuur kent de haren,' sprak de vrouw geheimzinnig. 'Het komt vanuit de diepte, en gaat weer terug tot de diepte.' Toen vaagde de stem van de vrouw weg en Juko werd wakker.

't Was maar een droom,' zei Juko tegen zichzelf. Hij stond op, kleedde zich aan, en moest naar school. Hij was blij Kas te zien en Jonas. Hij vroeg hen of ze wisten wat de satanskerk was. 'Geen idee,' zei Kas. 'Is dat iets christelijks ?' Toen begon Juko zijn hele droom te vertellen. 'Vreemd,' zei Kas. Jonas had al die tijd geluisterd. 'Een vriend van mij heeft daar wel boeken van,' zei Jonas.

'Eigenlijk wil ik er niets van weten,' zei Juko.

'Beter ook niet,' zei Jonas. 'Het is heel eng.'

'Zoals in mijn droom ?' vroeg Juko.

Jonas knikte.

'Maar hoe kon ik zoiets dromen ?' vroeg Juko.

'Misschien roept moeder natuur je,' zei Jonas. 'Misschien ben jij wel voorbestemd.'

Juko keek om zich heen. Hij keek naar het gebouw. Waar was hij ? Nee, dit was geen school. Alles stond stil. Hij keek naar Kas en Jonas, en ze spraken en bewogen niet meer. Alles stond stil. Was hij wel echt wakker ? Hij werd wakker in een slaapkamer van het huisje in het bos waar de vrouw woonde. Bij het ontbijt vertelde hij de droom, en hij zei er ook bij dat hij niet zeker wist of hij wel echt wakker was nu. Het kon nog steeds een droom zijn.

'Je droomt,' zei de vrouw.

'Ja, maar waar ben ik dan, en wie ben ik dan ?' vroeg Juko.

'Je bent in het bos,' zei de vrouw. 'Ik heb je die bessen gegeven. Nu droom je. Het bos loopt hier over in dromen.'

'Maar die satanskerk, is dat waar ?' vroeg Juko.

'Het is een andere realiteit,' zei de vrouw.

'Wat moeten we dan doen ?' vroeg Juko.

'Afstand nemen,' zei de vrouw. 'Dieper het bos in, dieper dromen. Het was maar een nachtmerrie. De dromen zijn ervoor om de nachtmerrie uit te leggen. De nachtmerrie is schoolmateriaal. Je moet nog leren wat het is. De stadschool is de nachtmerrie, de bosschool is de droom, je onderwijzer.'

moeder sipaliwini en de ontwaking van de natuur mens

‘Moet dat nou, al dat bloot ?’ vroeg zijn vader toen hij meer en meer ging tekenen.

‘Ja, open en bloot,’ zei hij. ‘Ik laat ze niks meer verbergen. Dieren zijn toch ook bloot ?’

‘Het is een onderwaardering van het vrouwelijke geslacht,’ zei vader. ‘Zie jij vrouwen als dieren ?’

‘Bomen staan toch ook bloot ?’ zei hij. ‘Het is onze enige redding.’

‘Nee,’ zei vader, ‘je weet wie onze enige redding is.’

Maar hij wist het niet meer. Hij was gefixeerd op de boom. De noot moest gekraakt worden, gepeld, tot aan de pit. ‘We hebben lang genoeg gewacht, vader,’ zei hij.

‘Jij groeit op voor galg en rad,’ zei vader.

‘En jij groeit op voor de kus van de engel des doods,’ zei hij tegen vader.

Uit : Roze Zwanen, Proza van de Vuh

1 Petrus 1
23 als wedergeborenen niet uit vergankelijk, maar uit onvergankelijk zaad, door het levende en
blijvende woord van God. 24 Want: Alle vlees is als gras en al zijn heerlijkheid als een bloem in het
gras; het gras verdort en de bloem valt af, 25 maar het woord des Heren blijft in der eeuwigheid.

Hier wordt gesproken over eeuwig zaad. Zaad is SPORA in het Grieks, wat ook scheiden betekent, onderscheiding. Dit komt van SPAO, spasme. Spasme is de biologische robotiek van de natuur, waardoor het hart werkt en de geslachtsdelen bijvoorbeeld. In het Aramees is zaad 'zera' (vgl. suri), en het is het levende zaad, wat in het Aramees het hongerzaad is, dus het leven vanuit het minimale, wat in principe gewoon het leven door de natuur is, door het minderen. Door het minderen is er meer ruimte in je voor de paradijselijke bronnen.

Bij de Surinaamse indianen was het huwelijk eenvoudig, en als een man een vrouw wilde trouwen, dan ging hij naar haar bloedverwanten om zich sober te tonen, hoeveel armoede hij leed en ontberingen, hoeveel honger hij had, oftewel hij toonde zichzelf ascetisch om in aanmerking te komen om met de vrouw te trouwen. Zo gaat dat in de natuur, terwijl in de stad alles vaak omgekeerde wereld is dat de man protst met zijn rijkdom en bezit en allerlei andere valse grootsheden om een vrouw en haar familie te paaien. Het materialistische stadsleven heeft alles omgedraaid. [1]

Dit alles wijst ook weer op de zoon van God die aan het kruis moest om zo tot de moeder aarde te kunnen komen. Hij moest al het aardse afleggen. De indianen van Suriname hadden soortgelijke verhalen.

Assid, afstammeling van de Caraïbische indianen van Suriname, en zelf ook in de binnenlanden, het oerwoud, van Suriname geboren, schreef in zijn boek 'De Eeuwige Cirkel' (1946) over de Surinaamse indianen. Hij stelt dat de mens jaloers werd, de ander niets meer gunde, hebzuchtig werd dus, naijverig, en dat zo het grote geestelijke werd verstoord. Men begon alles wat symbolisch bedoeld was te verletterlijken. Dit had vreselijke gevolgen, namelijk dat zij elkaar letterlijk gingen offeren. Dit wekte vurige tongen op uit de schoot van de aarde waardoor ze in verwarring raakten en elkaar niet meer konden verstaan. Er kwam een spraakverwarring en een boze geest, een yawaku, nam bezit van hun gedachten. Zo grijpen ze de wapens en beginnen elkaar te bestrijden, stelt Assid. En zo gaan ze door met hun bloedoffers aan de hemel. Maar als deze vlammen hun hoogtepunt hebben bereikt dan stort er water vanuit de hemel om die vlammen te doven. Een cycloon breekt los waardoor zij moeten vluchten. Een vloedgolf stijgt uit de zee omhoog, en zet hun gehele land onder water. En dan moeten zij op zoek naar hun verloren mazuano, hun verloren paradijs. Assid stelt dat het kruis in Orion zetelt, en op de aarde zou neerdalen om de kinderen van de rode aarde, van het grote geestelijke, de weg te wijzen tot het verloren mazuana, het verloren paradijs. Hij noemt dit de ontwaking van de natuurmens. Hij schrijft over wat de blanke christelijke kolonisten de surinaamse indianen hebben aangedaan, maar dat dit zich ging verplaatsen naar Europa tijdens de tweede wereldoorlog. Er is geen excuus voor bijbelaanbidders. De bijbel is de basis geweest voor de slavernij van negers en indianen. In de bijbel wordt slavernij goedgekeurd en het slaan van slaven. Door de eeuwige cirkel verplaatst dit verschijnsel zich en verandert, stelt Assid in zijn boek.

De schrijver W.F. Hermans (1921-1995) van de donkere kamer van Damokles (1958) en het behouden huis (1952) die overigens in 1969 met zijn Surinaamse vrouw naar Suriname ging om daar lezingen te geven zei in een interview dat hij één van de meest kwalijkste eigenschappen van mensen in het algemeen hun grootspraak en onbetrouwbaarheid vond. Hij stelde ook dat de wereld volstrekt chaotisch is. Het letterlijke drijft de mens totaal gek zouden we kunnen zeggen, en daarom leefden de Arowakken ook symbolisch. Hoe symbolischer je leeft hoe dieper je in het geestelijke komt om zo een weg terug te vinden naar het symbolische paradijs. Alles bevindt zich in de mens zelf, ook alle tegenstrijdigheden en ze hebben een diepere betekenis. Assid stelde dat vreemde machten de mens opjaagt tot hongertochten, en dat dit overwaaide van Suriname tot Nederland, want in de tweede wereldoorlog waren deze hongertochten over de verlaten en eindeloze Veluwe. W.F. Hermans stelde dat het universum sadistisch is, omdat het onkenbaar is en de mens volkomen machteloos is. De mens heeft er geen grip op. In zijn boeken komen zijn personages steeds weer in deze valstrikken terecht en dan gaat het van kwaad tot erger, van misverstand tot misverstand, van mislukking tot mislukking, totdat ze het tegenovergestelde bereiken van wat hun doel was. Zo maken ze kennis met hun duistere zijde die ze in eerste instantie niet wilden kennen. Toch gaat het dan magie krijgen als je er psycho-analyse op gaat toepassen. De wereld wordt niet alleen bestuurd door de wetten van karma (oog om oog, tand om tand), maar ook door de abstracte en vaak onbekende wetten van symboliek. De mens denkt nog te nauw, en overziet de grotere contexten en stromingen van de natuur niet. Eerst moet de oude wereld deels stukgeslagen worden, opdat de mens uit zijn kom kan komen om contact te maken met de grotere werkelijkheid. Dit zijn ook thema's in de eerste bijbel en tweede bijbel.

Het ligt er niet dik bovenop. Je moet er echt naar zoeken. Er zit altijd wel weer een addertje onder het gras. Het onderste wordt dus uit de kan gehaald. Ogenschijnlijk gaat alles mis, maar we mogen er op een andere manier naar kijken en mee omgaan. De werkelijkheid is meer het subtiele, het vluchtige. Het is er ineens en dan is het ook zo weer weg. Je kunt het niet grijpen en bezitten. Het is meer iets wat jou bezit. Het laat je niet los, als een vormende baarmoeder. Het wil het beste in je naar boven brengen. Maak er een studie van. Ook al lopen alle wegen dood. Ook al worden je plannen niet afgemaakt, blijft alles ergens in het midden hangen. Het leven is geen rechte lijn, maar een lijn die telkens weer knakt, opdat het zijn ware en diepere richting vindt, waar de Vur ook over spreekt. Het gaat dan cirkelen en ook de cirkels worden weer doorbroken, opdat het pad wordt

gevonden. Alles is hier maar half. Dit is ook een beschrijving van Suriname waar nooit iets echt van de grond komt. Alles is altijd halverwege ergens onderbroken. Het is de wildernis van het onafgemaakte. Probeer dingen niet overmoedig rond te krijgen, maar ga op zoek naar de ontbrekende stukjes, de vergeten en verloren paadjes waar niemand meer komt, waar niemand durft te komen. Daar is ergens de magie, de opname. Maak het niet te bot, te letterlijk, maar blijf tussen de wereld en de droomwereld in, tussen waken en slapen. Kom niet tot snelle zelfovertuiging, maar laat ruimte voor de diepere betekenissen.

De verhalen breken ergens in het midden af, en dan moet je vechten voor je leven, vechten om je hoofd boven water te houden. Het antwoord glijdt van je weg, geen zicht op het verhaal meer, geen geloof, en je bevindt jezelf in het spel. Maar op sommige punten breekt dat ook af, totdat je geheel alleen bent in de wildernis. Waar zijn de anderen ? Waar zijn de regels ? Je bent dan op een hongertocht, en je maakt ogenschijnlijk verkeerde beslissingen, begrijpt dingen verkeerd, enzovoorts enzovoorts. Het kan saai zijn of moeilijk, of zelfs slopend. Je komt in het tegenovergestelde van waar je had willen zijn, en dan ontmoet je je duistere zelf, dat wat je nog niet van jezelf kende, alsof je door een spiegel bent gegaan, maar kun je dat dan ook op waarde schatten ? Alle dromen waaien hier weg om plaats te maken voor veel diepere dromen, veel wiskundiger, ook al lijken die duisterder. Begrippen en definities van de mens storten hier in elkaar om plaats te maken voor veel hogere definities en begrippen. En ja, dat is een strijd, en ja, dat kan verkeerd gebruikt worden. Het is dan oorlogstijd. Je bent in strijd met jezelf en alles om je heen wat zich aan je opdringt, en dan weer moet je beseffen hoe machteloos je bent en hoe onkenbaar alle dingen zijn. Maar kun je dat deel van jezelf accepteren ? Hier kun je mee werken.

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voetnoten :

[1] J. Wolbers, Geschiedenis van Suriname, 1861, p.19

de mode meisjes

'Pssst …' zei ik tegen het mode meisje.
'Wat valt er te lachten ?'

Ze fluisterde terug dat dat moest. Ik vroeg : 'Van wie ?'
'Daar mag niet over gesproken worden,' fluisterde ze terug.

Ik vond het verschrikkelijk om te zien, al dat gelach, terwijl er helemaal niks te lachen viel. De andere mode meisjes waren ook zo. Ik ging de hele rij af, telkens weer opnieuw dezelfde vragen stellen, en ze gaven allemaal hetzelfde antwoord.

Een man tikte op mijn schouder. 'Wat moet je hier ?'
'Dat kan ik beter aan u vragen,' zei ik.
'Het is mijn magazijn,' zei de man.
'En ik moest hier speelgoed afleveren,' zei ik.
'Goed, dat heb je gedaan, dus nu weer wegwezen,' zei de man.

'Nee, ik was even in gesprek met de mode meisjes, of mag dat niet ?' vroeg ik.
'Nee, die zijn van mij, daar hoef je niet mee te spreken,' zei hij.

'Ze schijnen nogal veel geheimen te hebben,' zei ik.
'Dat kan wel wezen,' zei hij, 'maar je moet nu weggaan.'

'Zo ga je niet met mensen om,' zei ik.
'Ja, maar ik heb nog wel meer te doen,' zei hij. 'Ik heb hier geen tijd voor allemaal.'

'Nou, ga jij dan maar lekker doen wat je moet doen, dan praat ik nog even verder met de mode meisjes,' zei ik.

Met een vuurrood hoofd vol woede liep hij toen weg. 'Dus dat is jullie baas ?' vroeg ik aan de mode meisjes. Ze knikten. 'Dus hij dwingt jullie ?' vroeg ik. Weer knikten ze.

Na een tijdje kwam hij terug met twee anderen, en ik moest het gebouw verlaten. Hij wist echter niet dat ik inmiddels al poederzakjes in de bh's van de mode meisjes had gestopt. Ik had hen gezegd dat het poeder vanzelf z'n werk zou doen. Ze zouden zich na een tijdje kunnen bewegen, en als de avond zou vallen zouden ze vast wel een weg uit het magazijn kunnen vinden, het gebouw uit.

En ja hoor, toen het bijna nacht was stonden ze bij mij op de stoep. Ik had hen namelijk ook uitgelegd waar ik woonde. Ik nam ze één voor één naar binnen en gaf ze allemaal een slaapkamer. Mijn huis was immers groot genoeg. Het was mijn werk dit soort meisjes vrij te zetten. Daar had ik mijn poederzakjes voor. Het was een poeder wat ergens in het bos groeide. Ook de mode meisjes wilden me wel helpen vanaf nu om anderen vrij te zetten. Ze zouden ook bij mij in de speelgoed handel werken zodat het niet op zou vallen. We hadden zo altijd wel wat anders te doen als iemand ons er naar vroeg.

einde

gezichtsbedrog

Ik was in een droom op een grote natuurplaneet met wat natuursteden. Ik ging naar een centrum voor geestelijke hulp. Het was een prachtig centrum. Op een bank vroeg een surinaamse vrouw aan me : 'Denk je nog in de toekomst contact te hebben met – en toen noemde ze de naam van een meisje dat ik kende – ?' Ik zei : 'Ze is dood.' Ze zei : 'Ja, en ?'

Ik zei : 'Misschien geestelijk, ja, shamanistisch. Ik noem het niet altijd op, want sommige mensen geloven daar niet in.' Maar zij geloofden daar wel in. Het waren immers surinamers. Het waren

geestelijke helpers, en dan bedoel ik echt geestelijke helpers. Trouwens de naam van het meisje was ook de naam van een wildernisplaneet die ik kende. Aan een tafeltje zaten neef en nicht te eten. Ik zei : 'Geen dierenlijken eten, want daardoor is corona gekomen.' Ze keken zwijgzaam op naar mij. Ik keek naar nicht, en haar ogen begonnen helemaal te draaien. Haar haar was rossig. Ik keek nog eens beter. Ze was bijna als een hond. Ik keek recht in de ogen van een bacterie. Toen eindigde de droom.

Het leven gaat niet altijd zoals we willen omdat er hogere wetten zijn van de natuur. De mens wordt meegesleept met de natuur en heeft niets in te brengen, want mensen zijn babies die niets weten. Alles bestaat uit vele laagjes, alles is kaleidoscopisch. Alles wat de mens ziet is gezichtsbedrog omdat hij nog niet in de diepte kan kijken. In het ragnarok brak de wolf Fenrir los van zijn keten om op zoek te gaan naar de afgoden van de mensen om die te verslinden. De wolven zijn naar de mens op jacht. Toevallig beginnen de wolven ook weer terug te komen in Nederland, en ze zijn al tot de Veluwe gekomen.

De wolf kent de geheime paden die bedolven zijn onder de illusies van de stad. Hij kan ze weer opgraven en vinden en je er doorheen leiden. Boek 3 in de vur zegt :

1. Door de ondergrondse tunnels van de stad kon hij uiteindelijk uit de stad ontsnappen. Hij rende de rode hei op.

De indianen noemen de steden glitterwerelden van illusie, van gezichtsbedrog, want er ligt zoveel van de indianen nog verborgen onder deze steden. De mens bouwt er altijd weer lagen overheen. De wolf brengt de mens weer terug naar de verborgen lagen van de natuur. De wolf totem is dus een gids. Mensen hebben elkaar misleid en vastgezet, en daarom moeten deze banden doorbroken worden. Het is ter beveiliging van de geestelijkheid van de mens.

De wolven beeldden de geestelijke voorouders en oorsprongen uit, en breken de muren tussen leven en dood, tussen het weten en vergeten.

Je hebt misschien wat goeds gevonden, of denkt dat je iets goeds hebt gevonden.
– Een mens maakt bezwaar, en probeert het misschien zelfs kapot te maken.
Je moet dan de strijd aangaan. Het goede wat je hebt gevonden in veiligheid brengen, koesteren, beschermen, en misschien zelfs voor je eigen leven vechten.
Misschien dat het niet klopt wat de mens die bezwaar maakt zegt of doet, maar het is een teken dat datgene wat je hebt gevonden gezuiverd moet worden en verdiept, en dat er een verbinding met nog wat anders moet komen, of misschien een nuance. Daarom moet je er de echo van volgen, de wolf, want oorspronkelijk komt het van de bron. Iets roept je terug, iets roept je verder, iets roept je dieper, en deze echoes vervormen in de wind. Maar je moet strijden. Je moet er doorheen prikken. Je kunt niet in ontkenning of goedpraterij gaan leven, maar dit zijn hulpmiddelen waarvoor de wolf staat, en de wolf leidt ook in de strijd. Alles komt oorspronkelijk uit de hemelse kennis, en het valt neer als een waterval, en de mens, het brein van de mens, gaat het vervormen. Daarom moet de wolf komen. Er was een eeuw van de wolven, een tijdperk van de wolven, maar de mens is afgedwaald of ontvoerd. Er is wonde en zonde. Ben je verwond, zondig dan niet, maar keer terug tot het wolvenmedicijn van de natuur. Moeder natuur zendt haar wolven om haar kinderen terug te halen, te doen ontwaken. De wolf kent de tijden om te strijden, verwond te zijn en te helen. De wolf kent ook de gidsen hiertoe. De wolf heeft de kennis hiertoe en de moderne mens heeft de wolf als zodanig niet herkend, maar de indianen en germanen hadden deze kennis wel.

kaaskoppen

Het dorpje werd geplaagd door lawines, en de inwoners moesten geevacueerd worden. Hiervoor was een trein gekomen. Het sneeuwde. Hij liep door de hoge pakken sneeuw met wat tassen en koffers naar de trein toe. Zijn leven flitste aan hem voorbij. Hij had altijd een voorliefde voor treinen gehad en begreep nu waarom. Het was donker. In de trein kwam hij in een coupé tegenover een oude vrouw te zitten. Hij kende de vrouw niet. Hij begon hele verhalen tegen haar op te hangen, waarvan ze slaperig werd.

'Kaaskoppen,' mompelde de vrouw ineens. 'Ze hebben van het domkaas gegegeten.'

'Wat ?' vroeg de man.

'Ze hebben een kaasfabriek,' zei de vrouw.

'Wie ?' vroeg de man.

'Zij,' zei de vrouw. 'Ze hebben van het domkaas gegeten, die kaaskoppen.'

'Ik begrijp er niets van,' zei de man.

'Hoeft ook niet, hoeft ook niet,' zei de vrouw. 'Ik begreep ook niets van uw verhaal.'

'Het domkaas ?' vroeg de man weer. 'Wat is het ?'

Ergens in een tropisch gebied stapten ze uit. De man kreeg hier een kamer ergens, in een hotel, en hij bleef maar denken aan het domkaas en wat de vrouw gezegd had. Hele boeken begon hij erover te schrijven. Hij wist niet wat het was, maar verzon het gewoon.

Hij vroeg mensen sinds toen vaak : 'Heb je soms van het domkaas gegeten ?' Ook schold hij mensen vaak uit voor kaaskop. Hij vond ze zo inhoudsloos. Hij herinnerde zich dat het dorp waaruit hij geevacueerd was nog wel erger was. Misschien dat het wel goed was dat de lawines waren gekomen. Hij leefde nu bij andere soort mensen.

de heer is mijn herder – een indianen medicijn

'De Heer is mijn herder, mij ontbreekt niet … Hij doet mij nederliggen in grazige weiden … Hij leidt mij langs stille wateren …' We zongen het vaak voor het slapen gaan. Er waren verschillende versies van dit lied. Ik denk dat het één van de liederen is die wij voor bedtijd het meest hebben gezongen tijdens de jeugd. 'Hij voert mij aan rustige wateren … zelfs al ga ik door een dal …' Mijn predikanten bibliotheek staat ook vol met indianen boekjes. Het boekje 'door indianen opgevoed' uit 1957 spreekt ook over dit lied. Jim was door een beer aangevallen en had toen zeven jaar onder de indianen gewoond. Hij was ernstig verwond geraakt, en werd zo bijna geheel indiaan, maar krijgt dan toch weer heimwee naar de blanken. Dan krijgt hij een brief van zijn bijna vergeten broer Jonnie. Aan het einde van het boek heeft Jim nog maar één ding over, maar het is het belangrijkste van alles, namelijk zijn indianen medicijn. Innerlijk was hij nog steeds een indiaan. Hij had eens een medicijnlied gehoord in zijn droom. En het medicijnlied bevatte bovenstaande woorden uit psalm 23. Ik had vroeger altijd veel nachtmerries als kind, en het lied was altijd een soort medicijn voor mij. Toen hij zijn broer weer had ontmoet maakte zijn broer voor hem het lied af en zei toen : 'Ik zal in het huis des heeren verblijven tot in lengte van dagen.' Dat was het medicijn. Jonnie zei dat het psalm 23 was en dat moeder het weleens voorlas als ze ziek waren. En Jonnie vertelde dat Jim eens ziek was, koorts had door de honger en dat hij zichzelf had verwond. Dat is wat een medicijndroom is, een nachtmerrie. En hij kreeg een nachtmerrie van een beer.

Calvijn stelt dat sommigen het hebreeuwse woord voor weiden of grasvelden vertalen in hutten, of we kunnen dan aan tenten denken, indianententen. Dat zijn dus de woningen van de natuurmensen, waar Jim ook een tijd bij geleefd had. 'Hij geneest mijn ziel' betekent letterlijk 'de terugkeer' stelt Calvijn, oftewel de regressie, de beweging na de reformatie. Dit is het tijdperk van de terugkeer van de regressie, want de mens heeft meer losgelaten en verdraaid dan lief was, allemaal door vleselijke smetvrees. De mens moet weer terug naar de natuurvolkeren, naar Israel, Egypte en de indianen volkeren. Vandaar dat mijn predikanten bibliotheek ook vol staat met indianenboeken omdat die erbij horen. De slotsom, stelt Calvijn, is dat God ons niet alleen laat, maar dat we door Hem worden opgevoed. God heeft zijn plicht hierin volbracht, maar wat doen wij ?

Ja, maar ik ben atheist. – Dat maakt niet uit. God is ook atheist. God staat voor de kennis, als een zinnebeeld, voor de intelligentie. Ik neem aan dat je als atheist daar juist op gericht bent ?
Ja, maar ik ben van een andere religie – Dat maakt niet uit. God is niet van een bepaalde religie, maar spreekt in diverse talen en culturen tot de mens.
Daartoe is de terugkeer. Hoe dieper je terugkeert, hoe meer je ontdekt hoe alles aan elkaar verbonden is. Dan kom je tot een hemels amalgaam. Dan proef je honing in je mond. Minder vleselijk zijn, minder eenzijdig, dan kom je er vanzelf wel en zal God je paden leiden.

Ja, maar ik houd niet zo van het woord God. Dat klinkt teveel als trucage. – Dat maakt niet uit. Dan vertaal je het gewoon in een ander woord, maar ik spreek nu Nederlands. Het gaat erom wat ik ermee bedoel.
Ja, maar ik ben geen fan van Calvijn. – Ik ook niet. Maar toch heeft hij hele belangrijke dingen gezegd voor de reformatie, en heeft God door hem heengewerkt. God slaat ook met kromme stokken recht, net zoals Mohammed hele belangrijke dingen heeft gezegd.
Ja, maar kun je dan misschien ophouden met het opnoemen van God en Calvijn ? – Nee, dat kan ik niet. Want ik heb als predikant de taak om een andere betekenis aan deze algemeen ingeburgerde woorden te geven. Er gaat een nieuw idioom komen, namelijk dat van de regressie. Alles gaat herzien worden. Zoals Kimhi sprak : 'Alles herhaalt zich, maar dan met verandering van de voorwaarden en begrippen.'

De Heer is mijn Herder – En zo zijn wij ook als herders aangesteld, om de kudde te beschermen, en als we zomaar God en Calvijn overboord zouden werpen zonder het te verdiepen en te nuanceren, dan zouden de roofdieren komen. Israel en Duitsland, oftewel exodus en reformatie, zijn belangrijke onderdelen van het shamanistische indianen medicijn.

Jim had tijdens zijn verblijf bij de indianen de grote medicijndromen van de indianen gehoord die ze vertelden. Jim was door hen geadopteerd en werd door hen opgevoed. Elke indianenjongen moest een indianendroom krijgen. Die krijgt hij pas als hij dagen achtereen alleen is geweest, heeft gevast en zichzelf heeft getuchtigd. In Jim's medicijndroom kwam de beer hem telkens aanvallen en telkens weer moest Jim hem bezweren met de woorden van de Heer is mijn herder. Uiteindelijk verdween de beer en viel Jim in een diepe droomloze slaap.

Ik kan mij heel erg vereenzelvigen met Jim, want ik groeide op met natuur Surinamers die mij ook deze dingen leerden, en ging naar een charismatische kerk later en naar een charismatische school, waar ik ook mijn Surinaamse levenspartner van die tijd leerde kennen. Maar dat mocht allemaal niet van mijn familie. Het werd totaal belachelijk gemaakt omdat het niet van hun kerk was. Dat zou je dan kunnen vergelijken met de aanvallen van de beer. De stamleider van de indianenstam waar Jim was geadopteerd was genaamd Scalpenketting, en de scalpen die daar hingen leken erg op het haar van familie leden. Jim voelde zich verscheurd tussen twee werelden. Hij werd gewaarschuwd niet met een indiaanse te trouwen, want die hadden zoveel familie.

Ik heb ook de extremen en excessen van de charismatische beweging gezien, en hoe ze daar ook veelal van alles een markt maken, dus ik trok door, en ook ik ben weer deels teruggekeerd tot de reformatie, maar dit keer tot de bron, dus dieper dan waar mijn familie terecht was gekomen, en ik zag hoeveel alles ontspoort was van de reformatie. Daarom kreeg ik dromen over de regressie, dat er daadwerkelijk een terugkeer zou moeten komen, voor degene die zou durven, net zoals Jim terugkeerde maar altijd indiaan bleef in zijn hart, maar dit juist verdiepte door zijn terugkeer, want beide kanten begonnen nu elkaar uit te leggen en te laten zien dat het bij elkaar hoorde als je maar diep genoeg zou gaan. Dus reformatie en regressie gaan hand in hand. Het gevaar ligt dus in smetvrees ergens te blijven steken. Het gevaar ligt er in je hoogmoed en betweterigheid voor het eenzijdige, racistische vlees te kiezen, wat de ander geen ruimte meer biedt. Vandaar dat we psalm 23, het indianen medicijn, meer dan ooit nodig hebben.

David ging tekeer tegen de leeuwen en wolven die de kudde probeerden te verslinden. Ook aan het einde van het boek 'door indianen opgevoed' gaat Jim op geestelijke wolvenjacht. Hoe kunnen wij tot de herder komen als wij geen herder willen zijn over anderen ? Ieder stamlid heeft een bepaalde bewaak en bewaar taak, wanneer het aankomt op de bescherming van de ander : een stuk ehbo, en een stuk empathie, ook met een stuk onderwijs. Het gaat dus niet om de herders afgod, maar om het werkwoord : herderen, en dat betekent geherderd worden om te herderen. Vergeven betekent doorgeven namelijk, zoals de ger. gem. predikant J.M. Kleppe (1930) stelde in zijn boekje 'op saffieren gegrondvest' (1977). Calvijn stelt bij ps. 23:5 'gij zult de tafel aanrichten' dat dit ook weer werkwoorden zijn, die ook op het persoonlijke betrokken moeten zijn : iemand voedsel geven, zoals een vader aan zijn zoon. Hij geeft hiermee een vertaling wat het herderen betekent, namelijk ook vanuit mildheid, zonder te klagen, de ander voedsel toe te dienen, vanuit een vrijgevig hart, ook al wordt de gever door vele kwaadwilligen benijd en wensen ze zijn ondergang, en ook al trachten ze deze weldaad van god bedrieglijk voor te stellen. God houdt hierdoor niet op met geven, en zo moeten de gevers ook niet moede worden te geven. God blijft welwillend en weldadig, en zo dienen wij dat ook te blijven. Dat is wat herderen en geherderd worden inhoudt, want als wij niet vergeven, niet doorgeven, zullen we zelf ook niet gegeven worden, en dat is een natuurwet. Wij zijn namelijk allemaal delen van een lichaam, dus wat je de ander, je naaste, aandoet of onthoudt, dat doe je slechts jezelf aan.

Je kan soms in je boosheid zeggen : Ik doe het niet meer. Ze kunnen me allemaal de pot op, of nog erger : Krijg toch allemaal de klere. Maar dan zijn er altijd andere wegen om te geven, of je geeft gewoon aan anderen. Iedereen heeft weleens zulke breekpunten, en dan mag je de koers veranderen. Maar blijf varen. Geef niet op in het herderen. Zoek desnoods weer naar het verloren schaap als je

de grote kudde achterlaat die je voor de zoveelste keer heeft bedrogen en verraden, maar blijf zoeken, en blijf herderen. Ga niet met pensioen. Laat egoisme en onverschilligheid je niet naar de keel vliegen. Generaliseer ook niet teveel in je wraak en woede. Je mocht eens meer kapot maken dan je lief is. Wij mogen boos zijn, maar laat de zon niet onder gaan over je boosheid. Wees boos, maar zondig niet, wordt daarmee bedoeld. Wees gericht en heilig in je boosheid. Je strijd tegen een leeuw of een wolf, juist om de schapen te beschermen. Verlies je doel niet uit ogen. Wees gericht in je bitterheid, genuanceerd, opgeleid en geletterd. Laat je bitterheid niet roekeloos en oeverloos zijn, ongeoefend en allesverwoestend. Maar profeten hebben het soms zo moeilijk en dragen zulke lasten dat ze niet meer willen leven, dat ze hun geboortedag en moederschoot waaruit ze kwamen vervloekten. Zo erg is dat kruis, dat het ondragelijk is geworden en ze eronder lijken te bezwijken. Maar alleen zo kan het algemene, collectieve, familiaire vlees dat ze dragen en wat hen stalkt afsterven. Dit is dus iets geestelijks en zinnebeeldigs, en mag als zodanig ook binnen proporties geinterpreteerd worden.

Juist in het herderen mag je zo ook leren voor jezelf te zorgen, jezelf te voeden, jezelf te onderwijzen, als je eigen moeder. En op die basis kun je wat voor anderen betekenen. Soms liggen daar hele grote hiaten tussen, hele grote en diepe woestijnen, grote duisternissen, maar daarvoor is psalm 23, het indianen medicijn. Er zal voor je gezorgd worden, ook al zie je dat soms niet. Ook al heb je geen houvast in dat dal van diepe duisternis. Toch wordt je geleid. Toch is er iemand die je vasthoudt. Toch is er iemand die hier al doorheen is gegaan. Die al je noden kent, al je gedachten, al je verwarrende gevoelens en strijd. Het is geen afgod, maar een werkwoord wat uit de diepte komt. Alles is er al. Dit pad is al uitgestippeld in de oneindige en eeuwige kennis. Calvijn stelt daarom worden wij met gematigdheid beteugeld en tegengehouden. Zo niet, dan zouden we in buitensporige rijkdom geheel ten onder gaan. Er is een bepaalde maat voor ons aangelegd, een bepaald ritme. De natuur weet wat hij doet. Daarom spreekt David ook gewoon van een tafel, in plaats van een voerbak voor zwijnen, stelt Calvijn.

De Kannibaalse Bruid

Hermien van de Straaten kwam thuis. Haar vriend zat op de bank een krant te lezen. Ze schonk koffie in voor haarzelf en haar vriend, en ging naast hem zitten. 'Wat ben je aan het lezen ?' vroeg ze.

'Oh, niets,' zei haar vriend. 'Je weet wel, het is daadwerkelijk niets. Ik ben hier gewoon weer eens mijn tijd aan het doden.'

'Ik weet het,' zei Hermien. 'Zal het ooit nog eens anders worden. Ik ben een boek aan het lezen. Zal ik het je eens laten zien ?' Ze haalde een boek uit haar tas en gaf het aan haar vriend. Hij bladerde het eens rustig door. 'Interessant, Hermien,' zei hij. 'Ik wil het ook wel lezen als je het uit hebt.'

Hermien glimlachte. Ze stond op na een tijdje en schonk nog wat koffie in. Midden in de nacht werden ze wakker. Er stond een mannetje voor hen, met een puntmutsje met wat belletjes. Het leek wel op een klein narretje. 'Ik ben Kraak,' zei het mannetje. 'Doe drie wensen, maar ze moeten wel voor jezelf zijn of voor je huis.'

'Ik zou me wel wat beter willen voelen,' zei Hermien slaperig. Ze was zo moe dat ze weer in slaap viel, en haar vriend was alweer in slaap gevallen. De volgende ochtend sneeuwde het, en Hermien voelde zich vrolijk en warm. Ze had geen moeite met opstaan, zoals ze dat eerst wel had.

De nacht erop was het mannetje er weer. 'Je mag nog twee wensen doen,' zei het mannetje. 'Oh, Kraak,' zei Hermien, 'ik zou graag een wat betere relatie willen hebben met mijn vriend. Het is al wel goed, maar het kan veel beter.' De dag erop werden ze allebei blij wakker, en lagen een hele lange tijd in elkaars armen, wat ze eigenlijk nooit echt lang deden. 'Hermien,' zei Ewout, 'ik voel me ineens zo anders, zoveel beter.'

'Het komt door dat mannetje,' zei Hermien. Maar Ewout kon zich er bijna niets meer van herinneren. Ze hadden nu eigenlijk alles wat ze nodig hadden, en waren tevreden. Buiten scheen de zon in de sneeuw, en Hermien schonk weer koffie in. Koffie was altijd goed geweest tegen depressies, maar nu was de lucht zo helder. Die dag fietsten ze samen door het bos, maar ineens werd Ewout van zijn fiets afgeduwd. Een speer vloog dwars door Hermien heen, en ze viel bloedend op de grond. 'Grijp hem,' zei een luide stem. Ewout stond op en keek recht in de ogen van een groep wilden. Hij werd vastgegrepen en dieper in het bos gesleurd. Hij werd in een hut geduwd waar allerlei uitgehongerde mannen zaten. 'Welkom,' zei een oude man.

'Wat is dit hier ?' vroeg Ewout.

Een van de mannen werd gegrepen en uit de hut gesleurd. Buiten stond er een vrouw opgedost met veren. 'De kannibaalse bruid,' zei de oude man.

Ewout schrok wakker. Hij greep naar Hermien, maar die was er niet. 'Och, natuurlijk niet,' dacht Ewout. 'De relatie is verbroken. Ik ben een alleenstaand man.' Ewout was blij dat de relatie was verbroken, want Hermien was een verschrikkelijk mens, zeer wreed, ongevoelig, onbetrouwbaar en onberekenbaar. Hij was beter af zonder haar. Toen Ewout door een stukje bos naar zijn werk fietste zag hij een stel kinderen een ander kind slaan met stokken. Ewout sprong direkt van zijn fiets af en nam het kind in bescherming. Het kind rilde helemaal. Na een paar woorden gezegd te hebben tegen de andere kinderen nam hij het kind mee naar huis en belde zijn baas dat hij wat later zou komen. Hij legde het aan zijn baas uit, maar die zei direkt : 'Ach, neem er maar een dag vrij voor.'

Jonas heette het kind. Het was een weeskind, en het kind durfde niet goed terug naar het weeshuis. Het was er verschrikkelijk. Het kind rilde nog steeds, en Ewout deed een deken om hem heen, en gaf het kind wat te drinken. 'Lees je graag ?' vroeg Ewout.

'Ja,' zei Jonas.

'Oh, ik heb boven een hele kast vol met boeken. Kijk er maar eens tussen. Je mag voorlopig wel hier blijven, dan bel ik het weeshuis er wel over op,' zei Ewout.

'Van wat voor boeken houd je het meest ?' vroeg Ewout.

'Indianenboeken,' zei het kind. Ewout liet de boekenkist aan het kind zien. Er zaten veel indianenboeken tussen.

Ewout kreeg een andere vriendin : Jeiske. Ze was een stuk aardiger dan Hermien, maar ook aan deze relatie kwam snel een eind. Toen kwam er Saskia, toen Sjanine, maar het was allemaal niet blijvend. Jonas werd meer en meer als een zoon voor Ewout, en eigenlijk kon Ewout niet meer zonder hem, en besloot hem te adopteren. Hij had echt dat fantastische vadergevoel, maar hij miste een vrouw in zijn leven, en Jonas miste een moeder.

Tundra was een vrouw die Ewout wel zag zitten. Ze was lief en behulpzaam maar toch ook een beetje vreemd, alsof ze een duister verleden had. Ze kon goed koken, en was een uitzonderlijk

goede verhalenverteller, dus ook Jonas was direkt erg dol op haar. Ze had haar eigen kamer in het huis. Ze wilde 's nachts graag alleen zijn. Ze was erg wisselend van karakter. Ze hield van foto's maken en fietsen, en op een dag nam ze Jonas mee in het bos. Ze zou proberen wat foto's te maken van dieren die in het bos woonden. Na een tijdje kwamen ze de kinderen van het weeshuis tegen. 'Zo Jonas, heb je eindelijk je moeder gevonden ?' riepen ze. Ze gingen in een groep rondom de fietsen staan. Tundra werd een beetje boos, maar de kinderen duwden haar in een bosje en Jonas namen ze mee. Ze brachten hem naar een hut in het bos. 'Zo, we zullen jou eens uithongeren met alleen af en toe wat bramen, brood en water,' zei een van de kinderen. 'Je bent een verwend ding.' Ze hielden hem opgesloten in de hut, en gaven hem haast geen voedsel. Na een paar weken was hij helemaal uitgehongerd. Net op tijd vond Ewout hem, nam hem mee naar huis en belde het weeshuis erover op. De kinderen kregen strenge straffen.

Tundra was een soort moeder voor Jonas, maar Jonas wist dat hij zijn vader hard nodig had. Een tijd lang durfde hij niet zonder zijn vader naar buiten. Ook Tundra had soms moeite om naar buiten te gaan vanwege het voorval. Ze zouden in ieder geval niet meer in het bos komen. De relatie tussen Tundra en Ewout werd steeds stabieler, en Jonas was er erg gelukkig mee. Voor hem waren Tundra en Ewout de perfecte ouders. Hij had het zich niet beter kunnen voorstellen. Op een nacht had Ewout weer een droom : Een spin had haar partner gevonden, en na de geslachtsdaad vrat ze haar partner op. De volgende ochtend vertelde hij het aan Tundra. Tundra had dit gevoel overgehouden aan een vorige relatie. Ook Ewout kende dit gevoel natuurlijk. In zijn ogen was Hermien die spin. 'Maar we hebben het overleefd,' zei Ewout, 'of er is gewoon leven na de dood.'

'Weet je wat kannibalen geloven ?' zei Tundra. 'Dat wanneer ze iemand hebben opgegeten dan hebben ze die kracht overgenomen, dan hebben ze de ziel van die persoon overgenomen. Zo voelen ze zich machtiger in de strijd om te overleven.'

'Ja, dat heb ik ook eens gelezen,' zei Ewout. 'Maar ik kan jou ook wel opvreten, maar dan van liefde.' Tundra glimlachte. 'Dus ik ben een soort gebakje voor jou ?'

'Veel lekkerder,' zei Ewout. 'En ben ik dan een kannibaal ?'

'Ik denk het wel, Ewout,' grapte Tundra. 'Ik moet nu zeker voor je oppassen.'

'Ach, er is nog hoop voor ons,' zei Ewout. 'We kunnen een banketbakkerij beginnen.'

'Dus eigenlijk is de natuur iets heel moois, als je het op die manier bekijkt,' zei Tundra. 'Het is om ervan te leren.'

'Juist,' zei Ewout.

'Dus, dan ben ik jouw kannibaalse bruid ?' vroeg Tundra.

'Als je het mij vraagt wel,' zei Ewout. 'Maar dan op een hele andere manier. Jij kan al dat nare weer recht krijgen.'

'Wat kun jij toch rare verhalen vertellen,' grapte Tundra.

'Nou, jij kan er ook wat van,' lachte Ewout.

'Ik heb het heel moeilijk gehad,' zei Tundra. 'Maar sinds ik jou ken ben ik gelukkig. En bij Jonas heb ik dat echte moedergevoel.'

Ewout zette de t.v. aan. Er was een oorlogsfilm op, en op de andere zender een praat programma. 'Laat Jonas maar even naar een kinderprogramma kijken,' zei Tundra. Ewout schakelde over. Tundra en Ewout gingen in de achterkamer even wat koffie drinken, terwijl Jonas t.v. ging kijken. 'Ewout,' fluisterde Tundra. 'Er zijn zoveel kinderen zoals Jonas eerst was : Ongelukkig in een weeshuis, ongeliefd, gebroken, trauma op trauma, en er lijkt geen einde aan te komen. We hebben een groot huis. Waarom zouden we geen tweede kind adopteren ?'

'Goed idee,' zei Ewout. 'Ik zou zelfs mijn huis wel willen uitbouwen om zoveel mogelijk kinderen onder te brengen. Maar de kinderen moeten het dan zelf ook willen.'

Met een telefoontje was het snel gedaan. Ewout en Tundra mochten een kijkje komen nemen op het weeshuis om over hun plannen te vertellen. Sommige kinderen waren enthousiast. Anderen niet. Drie kinderen wilden het weleens op proef proberen.

'Jaap Edema, Gerout van Huizen en Liesbeth van Tongeren.' Maar het werd geen succes. Ze konden niet met Jonas opschieten en ze waren vernielzuchtig. Ewout besloot wat dieren in huis te brengen, zodat Jonas niet zo alleen was. Maar naarmate Jonas ouder werd werd hij steeds stiller en trok zich steeds meer op zijn kamer terug. Toen hij twintig was trouwde hij met een meisje, maar het huwelijk was binnen drie jaar kapot, en hij kwam gebroken weer thuis. Ewout en Tundra wisten altijd al wel dat het een kannibaalse bruid was waarmee hij was getrouwd. Ze hadden hem nog gewaarschuwd, maar zonder resultaat. Hij was weer een ervaring rijker, en kreeg zijn oude kamer terug. Snel had hij weer een vriendin, en toen nog een, maar nooit koos hij echt de gemakkelijksten uit. Ewout hoopte dat hij ooit iemand zou vinden als Tundra. Maar op een dag raakte Jonas betrokken bij een auto-ongeluk en raakte verlamd. Het leven was als een kannibaalse bruid voor hem, en Ewout en Tundra waren er kapot van. Ze hadden gehoopt dat hij gelukkig zou worden, en dat hij zijn leven zou kunnen opbouwen, maar het was nu een afhankelijk kasplantje. Na een paar maanden stierf Jonas als gevolg van het auto-ongeluk. Ewout en Tundra waren weer alleen. Het was moeilijk, maar ze hadden elkaar. Weer gingen ze naar het weeshuis om te kijken of ze een nieuw kind konden adopteren, maar niemand was zoals Jonas. Toch wilden ze het wel met een nieuw kind proberen dat wel een beetje op Jonas leek. Het jongetje heette Huib. Maar Huib was ernstig ziek en stierf na een paar maanden, en weer waren Ewout en Tundra alleen. Het leek alsof de kannibaalse bruid weer had toegeslagen. Het leven was zo fragiel als een nachtvlinder.

Ewout keek naar buiten, en keek naar een bij gaande van bloem tot bloem. Ook zag hij wat vliegjes in een spinnenweb, en zelfs een vlinder. Ook hier zat een betekenis in. Ook dit kon omgedraaid worden. Tundra zat achter hem en had haar armen om hen heengeslagen. Hij miste Jonas en ook Huib, maar Tundra was zoveel dichterbij ineens om al die lege plekken op te vullen. Het leek alsof er in zijn binnenste broodjes werden belegd en opgewarmd. Het was een manier om dichter naar elkaar toe te groeien. Ewout had een brok in zijn keel. Ja, hij was echt depressief, maar Tundra was zijn lichtpuntje. 'Zoveel is er van ons gegeten,' zei Ewout, 'en nu eten wij elkaar door de liefde, als een weg uit deze woeste wereld.' Tundra knikte.

Midden in de nacht werd Ewout wakker van een droom. Hij droomde dat er een nachtvlinder op zijn hart zat. Hij miste Jonas en Huib zo, en brak in tranen uit. Ook Tundra werd wakker en troostte hem. Ze hield hem in zijn armen totdat hij rustig werd. 'Heus,' zei ze, 'eens zullen we alles terugkrijgen. Er is leven na de dood.'

And you will fly,

On the wings of today,

And you will be going back to remember yesterday,

And you will fly,

On the wings of love, today,

And you will be going back to remember yesterday,

Yes, you will fly high,

On the winds of love, today,

And you will be growing up to be free from yesterday

het verboden woord – het kehatitische voorhangsel

Het boek numeri, in de woestijn, is het vierde boek in de Israelitische uitgave van het O.T. Numeri is de latijnse naam, maar het kan naar het voortijdse Name-Oru teruggeleid worden, oftewel de kennis van het kruis. In dit boek vinden we het opmerkelijke verhaal van Mozes en de slang terug, in Numeri 21. De slang is aan een paal of aan een kruis, als beeld van de gekruisigde, wat klaarblijkelijk nodig is om die hemelse en voortijdse, oorspronkelijke kennis (Name) te ontvangen. Dit ligt nog steeds in de naam Suri-Name besloten. Daarom is het land Suriname, wat nog grotendeels oerwoud is, nog een beeld van het oorspronkelijke paradijs, en daarom van belang. Mozes wees op de slang aan de paal of aan het kruis, en dat had hij van zijn egyptische opvoeding en educatie overgenomen. Daarom is de egyptologie ook onmisbaar om de context van het O.T. te begrijpen. Wij pleiten er daarom ook voor dat elke predikant een egyptologische scholing ontvangt.

De Hebreeuwse naam voor het boek is Bemidbar, in de wildernis, of in de woestijn, wat in de Griekse septuagint werd tot Arithmoi, en in de Latijnse vulgaat tot Numeri. Beiden, zowel de Griekse als de Latijnse naam voor het boek numeri betekenen 'tellingen' of 'getallen'. In de israelitische talen betekent de telling echter de kastijding. De Bilha stelt hierover : 'Tellen is in het Hebreeuws ook kastijden, pkd, van het Egyptische pgd (pega-t, peg), wat doorgang betekent en ravijn, leegte, van pega, het openen van een boekrol.' Als we de betekenis van het boek Numeri willen verstaan, dan komen we dus al snel terecht bij de noodzaak van studie. Kastijding is dus een taal met een bepaalde boodschap, een bepaald onderricht. Daarom gaan wij in het leven ook door veel kastijding heen. Zonder dit zou het niet best zijn. Vandaar dat Mozes al op de paal wees, op het kruis, en de slang is ook een beeld van de gesel, de roede. Het hele boek Spreuken gaat er ook over hoe belangrijk de tucht is.

Deuteronomium 27 zegt :

11 Op die dag gebood Mozes het volk: 12 Wanneer gij de Jordaan overgetrokken zijt, zullen zich op de berg Gerizim opstellen om het volk te zegenen: Simeon, Levi, Juda, Issakar, Jozef en Benjamin. 13 En op de berg Ebal zullen zich opstellen om te vervloeken: Ruben, Gad, Aser, Zebulon, Dan en Naftali.

4 Als gij dan de Jordaan overgetrokken zijt, zult gij deze stenen, ten aanzien waarvan ik u heden opdracht geef, op de berg Ebal oprichten en met kalk bestrijken. 5 Ook zult gij daar een altaar bouwen voor de Here, uw God, een altaar van stenen, die gij niet met ijzer zult bewerken. 6 Van onbehouwen stenen zult gij het altaar van de Here, uw God, bouwen, en daarop brandoffers brengen aan de Here, uw God.

De hele bijbel door gaat het erover dat deze offers niet letterlijk zijn, maar geestelijk. Het ware offer is namelijk de gehoorzaamheid en de stilte, om God's stem te verstaan en volgen. In de exodus werd het volk in tweeen verdeeld : De ene helft stond bij de berg Garazim, wat piercings, besnijdenis (kastijding, onderricht, studie) betekent, en de andere helft stond bij de berg Ebal, naaktheid. Naaktheid (profetische openbaring, profetologie) en besnijdenis (demonologie) waren de twee fundamenten voor het volk in het beloofde land. Woord en kastijding (studie) zijn dus onlosmakelijk aan elkaar verbonden. In psalm 102 bidt de psalmist daarom ook ontbloot. Zo is er niks tussen de mens en God.

Als we om ons heenkijken zien we een volk afgevallen van God. Ze studeren niet, offeren dieren in plaats van de gehoorzaamheid bedrijven als het ware offer. Ze roddelen en liegen alsof het een lieve lust is, en hebben geen stil hart voor God om zijn woorden te ontvangen. Vandaar dat het volk moet terugkeren tot numeri, de kastijding, de studie, en tot de twee pilaren van deuteromium 27 : de besnijdenis en de naaktheid. Ken deze metaforen. Heb geen bedekkingen tussen jou en God. Verscheur je kleren. Keer weer terug tot de natuur. Het is zeker niet letterlijk. Als je je kleed, kleed je dan eenvoudig, of profetisch. Als je je kleed, kleed jezelf dan sober, of profetisch, want er zijn zeker profetische sieraden. Er is zoiets als heilige en vertellende materie. Het wil niet zeggen dat we daadwerkelijk in een hutje op de hei moeten gaan leven. Er mag heilige kunst zijn, en er is ook zoiets als heilige kleedkunst. Ken de hemelse mode hierin. Ken de profetische mode. Kleed jezelf niet als de afvalligen, maar soms zijn wij kameleonen.

Hen van twintig jaar en ouder moesten geteld worden, de mannen, om in het leger te dienen. De Bilha zegt hierover : 'Leger is tsaba, en dit is de geestelijke oorlog, maar ook gewoon tentdienst, tabernakeldienst. Er is nooit een directe oorlog, en ook nooit directe communicatie. Het gaat via de priesterdienst.' Twintig is in de israelitische grondtekst het getal van de opvoeding, van de opstanding ook, en het is verbonden aan het betalen van belasting. Omdat twintig een dubbele tiende is als belasting duidt het op het dubbele kruis : 'de andere wang toekeren', de extra mijl begaan, ook als een beeld van het eeuwige kruis en het geduld (hongeren). Er moest een soort verzoengeld neergelegd worden voor iedere krijgsman, voor iedere tentendienstknecht dus. Dit zoengeld was genaamd de kaphar :

Ex 30:
16 En gij zult het geld der verzoening van de Israëlieten nemen en het bestemmen voor de dienst in de tent der samenkomst; het zal voor de Israëlieten tot een gedachtenis zijn voor het aangezicht des Heren ter verzoening voor hun leven.
12 Wanneer gij het getal der Israëlieten bij de telling opneemt, dan zullen zij, ieder voor zijn leven, aan de Here een zoengeld geven.
14 Ieder die tot de getelden gaat behoren van twintig jaar oud en daarboven, zal de heffing voor de Here geven.

Het geld is er een beeld van dat de ziel bedekt moest worden met het bloed van het afgeslachte vlees, het ego wat moest sterven. Zo wordt een mens dus in het hemelse leger of de hemelse tentendienst ingewijd, door het kruis. Het is de mens zelf die moet sterven. Dit loopt helemaal terug tot het oude kaphar beeld van Egypte, of van kheper, de kever waarin ra veranderde tijdens de wedergeboorte in de onderwereld, waarin de nacht overging tot de rode dag. Dit is een beeld van vuilverwerking. Dit is de daadwerkelijke betaling van het losgeld, waarin de mens zijn leven aflegt om tot het hemelse leger te behoren, en de oorlog is tegen het zelf. Het is dus oorlogsgeld. Dit geld is in het Aramees zowel een bestraffing van het vlees als de behoudenis van de ziel. Het kan niet losgekoppeld worden.

Ex. 21:
30 Indien hem een zoengeld opgelegd wordt, dan zal hij alles wat hem opgelegd wordt, als losprijs voor zijn leven geven. (prqn)

De Levieten moesten zorg dragen over de tenten en dat men zich aan deze voorschriften hield, en natuurlijk is dit symbolisch. In de wereld om ons heen zien we ten eerste dat men dit alles verletterlijkt heeft, en ten tweede dat alles vervaagd is geraakt, zijn betekenis heeft verloren, en ten derde is het zo ook zwaar corrupt geworden. Zo kwam de mens tot afgoderij aan de mammon, vleselijk geld. Omdat de mens het heilige kaphar principe had vergeten.

De Levieten waren dus opgesteld over de tentendienst om ervoor te zorgen dat onbevoegden er niet

mee weg zouden lopen. Levi moest zich daarom legeren rondom de tenten. C. Vonk beschrijft zo in zijn 1966 commentaar op Numeri in de voorzeide leer de Levieten als een isolatie gordel. De Levieten hadden in die zin een bemiddelende taak. C. Vonk stelt dat het toch een dienende taak was. Het was een beveiligings systeem. Het ging om de inwijding van weerbare mannen, geen mannen die zomaar ruggegraatloos zich aan één of ander systeem overgaven zoals vandaag de dag gebeurd. En door de kaphar werden deze mannen dus ingewijd, door kepher, oftewel ze hadden zich vuilgemaakt. Dit is niet slechts iets geestelijks en afstandelijks. C. Vonk noemde de komende vleeswording van het Woord en de paradijs aarde die zou komen.

Toen ra een ontmoeting had met kepher in de onderwereld, en tot kepher werd, bedekt met het morgenrood, was deze opstanding een inwijding in het hemelse leger en de hemelse tentendienst. C. Vonk stelt in zekere woorden dat het kaphar principe niet kan werken zonder de onttroning van Ruben :

Genesis 49:
3 Ruben, mijn eerstgeborene zijt gij, mijn sterkte en de eersteling mijner kracht, de voornaamste in hoogheid, de voornaamste in vermogen. 4 Gij, die opbruist als water, gij zult de voornaamste niet zijn, omdat gij uws vaders bed beklommen hebt; toen hebt gij het ontwijd. Hij heeft mijn legerstede beklommen.

Als zodanig werd Ruben ingewijd, en kreeg een tweede legerplaats aan de zuidelijke zijde. De mens mag in de onderwereld weer tot een zeker koningschap komen, het koningschap over het zelf, na de onttroning van het vlees, en dit koningschap is gewijd aan moeder aarde, zoals ra ook koningschap verwierf in zijn reis onder de aarde. Hij zwierf net als ishmael samen met heker (godin van honger) door de wildernis, en uiteindelijk kwam ishmael tot mekka waar hij ingewijd werd in de islam. Heden ten dage is Egypte dan ook een islamitisch land. In Israel is 18% islamitisch, dus dat is negen keer zoveel als de 2% christenen in Israel.

Het is daarom van belang het rode orakel te kennen, het hiti bloed orakel, ook wel het aten orakel in Egypte, om zo om te kunnen gaan met de drama en horror om ons heen. Wat een gruwel hebben ze van Aäron gemaakt in het westen, terwijl het komt van het egyptische ra-nun, oftewel ra die in de amduat tot de wateren van nun komt waarin hij blijft inzinken tot wedergeboorte.

De drie zonen van Levi staan voor drie groepen Levieten : Gerson, Kehat en Merari. We gaan dit bespreken. Laten we beseffen dat het kaphar principe ook op deze manier symbolisch wordt toegepast wetende dat de eerstgeborenen werden vervangen door de Levieten, en dat in principe ook Ezau op die manier zijn eerstgeboorte recht opofferde om zo via de kaphar ingewijd te worden in de tentendienst. Men dient hierin de grondteksten uitvoerig te kennen en te begrijpen en hoe dit terugleidt tot de Egyptische bronnen, maar we zien ook dat bijvoorbeeld in de exodus het eerstegeborene symbolisch moest sterven om zo de zee door te kunnen komen tot de wildernis en daarna tot het beloofde land. De mens moet namelijk niet teren op eerstgeboorterecht, maar op studie en hemelse opname. Het gaat er niet om wat mensen op een papiertje hebben geschreven. Het gaat niet om geboortekaartjes, diploma's en certificate, om wat mensen over je zeggen of hebben gezegd. Op aarde scholen idioten idioten. De mens op aarde wacht op het woord van een ander mens, maar God's volk wacht op het woord van God en daarom worden ze vervolgd. Daarom wordt ook het indiaanse volk vervolgd, omdat ze zichtbij de natuur leven. Ook Ezau leefde dichtbij de natuur, en daarom achtte hij het eerstgeboorterecht niet. Laat al die eerstgeboorterechten en formulieren van mensen afsterven, want ze zullen toch allemaal vergaan. Het is waardeloos in God's ogen.

C. Vonk (1904-1993) maakte deze opsomming over de Kehatieten :

Van de Kehatieten was
a. het getal: 8 familiegroepen, 600 ingeschrevenen;
b. de plaats: aan de Zuidzijde van de tabernakel;
c. het familiehoofd: Elizafan, de zoon van Uzziel; en
d. de taak: zij hadden te zorgen voor het voorhangsel, dat het heilige der heiligen afsloot, voor de ark, de tafel der toonbroden, de luchter, het reuk- en brandofferaltaar alsmede voor de gereedschappen, die voor de dienst in verband met de genoemde heilige voorwerpen (ark, enz.) nodig waren.

Calvijn (1509-1564) bespreekt in Numeri 4 de zonen van Kahath, die als wachters, bewakers, zijn aangesteld over het heilige der heilige. Zij zouden het gereedschap wat door de priesters was ingepakt dragen. Calvijn stelt dat er een gevaarlijke taak aan de zonen van Kahath was opgedragen. 'God dreigt immers met de ondergang als zij iets van het verbodene zouden aanraken.' Daarom moest alles bedekt worden.

De Vuh zegt hierover in de bespreking van 4:2 :

'Neem het aantal op van de Kehatieten onder de Levieten, naar hun geslachten en families,

Dit is de geslachtslijn van Mozes en daarom belangrijk. De Egyptische kat, kt, wortel van Kehat betekent vreemde, buitenaardse, vijanden of tegenstanders, wat de buitenaardse (Orionse) natuur laat zien van de Mozes mythe. Kd, kt, betekent vormen, bouwen, natuur, het ontwikkelen van de natuur, het cirkelen, de slaap. De Kehat geslachtslijn droeg de Orionse slaap-drugs. De kt-wortel betekent ook vagina (vergelijk het Nederlanse schuttingwoord "kut".) Het betekent werk en constructie, en roep (kit, k't). Ktt, kt, betekent ook meisje. De Egyptische wortels van de Kehat geslachstlijn waaruit Mozes voortkwam waren dus vrouwelijk. Zij moesten de mens in een slaap brengen (kd, kdd, kt, slaap, en gth, kht, moe zijn.)

De Kehatieten waren aangesteld over de ark, de tafel, het gerei, dieper in de tabernakel. De Egyptische khe-t wortel betekent leren, literatuur, boeken over de eeuwigheid, oftewel de voleindiging. Het is ook een woord voor rijkdom, bezittingen, dingen, het bestaan. Khet was de god(in) van de dingen die bestaan. De Khaitiu, kht, zijn de goden die de vijanden van Ra en Osiris slachten. Khau-t, khai-t, kht, is het altaar en de offertafel, waarover de Kehatieten waren aangesteld. Khata, kht, is de twee helften van de hemel. Ook is het tuingebied, wildernisgebied (khait), en een plaats van bescherming (khatha), wat ook weer terugkomt in de Mozes mythe. Khat-ta is de manifestatie, het schijnen met kronen. Khaut, de opstanding en verschijning van een god of koning, het oprijzen op de troon, de koninklijke sieraden, halskettingen, en kroon-onderdelen (khait). Khat, inscripties. Het leidt helemaal door tot de slinger, khait (van David). De Khet, kht, waren de treden van de oordeelstroon van Osiris. Khetaa was de grote troon waarop Osiris zat. De Kheti waren de inscripties op de muren. Kha-t, tabernakel.

Qa-t-a, kht, was één van de twaalf godinnen die de poort van de aarde opende voor Ra. Qaut, kht, vijanden, bevuild volk. Quit, kht, medicijn, zaad. Qtt, kht, onderdeel van een strijdwagen. Ra veranderde in deze vorm op zijn tocht (qt, kht). Het komt er op neer in de Egyptologie dat het een schepper god is als het overgaan van de dimensies. Uit deze bron putte de Mozes mythe. Dit gebeurt door het draaien van de dimensies. Het komt van de wortel "draaien en slapen", als een kronkelende slang. Mozes wijst ook weer op de slang in de woestijn, opdat de mensen konden ontkomen aan het kwaad wat hen bedreigde. Mozes wees op de Egyptische wortels. Dit wordt ook wel de sluwe kunst genoemd in de Egyptische wortels, als een beeld van strategische kennis van de onderwereld.

Kait werd de grote moeder van de goden genoemd, één van de vier elementale godinnen. K-t was een algemeen woord voor moeder en vrouwen, de vagina. Het was ook verbonden aan kahit, terreur en ontzag, als een vruchtbaarheids-principe. Het was een beeld van de baarmoeder van het bestaan. Zij reed op haar strijdwagen om er flink doorheen te hakken om het product klaar te krijgen. De baarmoeder maakte veel gebruik van slachtwapens hiervoor. Dit was het Egyptische beeld van de godin, van Kehat. Zij was de oerschepster van alle dingen. Zij stond aan haar ketel. Zij was een geweldenaar die op haar strijdwagen door de lucht reed, zoals Wodan later bij de Germanen. Alles was door haar onderverdeeld in kooien van restrictie, opdat haar schepping tot stand zou komen.

K't is een vreemd volk, een buitenaards volk, waar de bijbel het ook over heeft dat er een vreemd volk zou komen. Het is een deel van de hemel (kht). Het zijn de beelden van Osiris, van de doden, oftewel de herbeleving ervan.

We kunnen stellen dat wanneer het vlees het heilige aanraakt, dan zal het vlees sterven. Dit is ook een beeld van de vagina, dat wanneer het vlees, de fallus, de vagina ingaat, dan moet het vlees sterven door zijn zaad te geven.

Numeri 5:2 – Gebied de kinderen Israels dat zij uit het leger wegzenden.

Calvijn merkt op dat God zich allerminst bezig houdt met het werk van een arts, omdat Hij juist wilde dat melaatsen uit de legerplaats geweerd werden. Calvijn stelt dat Hij door deze uitwendige inzetting en plechtigheid het volk geoefend heeft in de ijverig voor de reinheid, anders zouden ze indutten. Daarom genas God de melaatsen niet zomaar. Anders zou het volk gewoon blijven aanrotzooien en onrein met de legerplaats omgaan, omdat God het toch allemaal wel weer zou genezen. Het was om misbruik te voorkomen. De mens was altijd weer uit op misbruik, stelt Calvijn.

Vonk stelt wat betreft de Kehatieten, 4 : 1-20 dat het om een worsteling gaat in de tent van de samenkomst, binnen de legerplaats, in de voorhof van de tent. Hij noemt het een militia sacra, wijzend op eerdere vertalers en exegeten, als een heilige krijgsdienst. En dit ging door de telling en de dienstplicht in de tent. We hadden al eerder gezien dat deze telling niet buiten de kastijding, de gesel, omging. Het is namelijk een discipline waarvan niet afgeweken mocht worden, en zo was er dus ook richting, wat het doel is van alle restrictie. De mens moet voelen dat hij over bepaalde grenzen niet heenkan, en dit is ook waarvan de sexualiteit een beeld is. De mens moet leiding ontvangen. Zo offert de mens zijn zaad in de tent. Zo werkt de hemelse vruchtbaarheid. Als ze over de grens heen zouden gaan zouden ze sterven. Denk aan hen die onbevoegd de ark aanraakten. Vonk vergelijkt het met een 'militia christi'. Er is dus geen leger zonder dit kruis, zonder deze gesel, deze restrictie. Vandaar dat het Kehatitische verschijnsel van belang is. Daarom stelt Vonk dat het niet zomaar domweg tellen is, maar het vervullen van een dienstplicht. Hij stelt over de taak van de Kehatieten : 'Aan de Kehatieten was de zorg toevertrouwd „voor de allerheiligste dingen" vs 4. Gezien de opsomming straks van hetgeen zij te dragen hadden, waaronder ook het brandaltaar uit de voorhof, dat wegens z'n zalving ook allerheiligst was, Ex. 40 : 11, zullen we bij die „allerheiligste dingen" wel niet enkel aan het z.g.n. heilige der heiligen moeten denken.' Hij noemt dan de ark : 'Allereerst de ark. Natuurlijk begint de opsomming met de ark des verbonds. „Bij het opbreken van de legerplaats zullen Aaron en zijn zonen naar binnen gaan en het bedekkend voorhangsel afnemen en daarmee (d.w.z. met het voorhangsel, dat tussen het heilige en het allerheiligste hing) de ark der getuigenis bedekken" vs 5.' (…) 'Misschien was het nodig, dat de priesters de draagstokken der ark een ogenblik uit hun ringen haalden met het oog op het verpakken van de ark in de drie kleden. Maar dan mochten zij toch niet verzuimen deze stokken weer in de ringen terug te doen. Opdat de ark daaraan gedragen kon worden door de Kehatieten. Misschien echter ook wel, omdat de Kehatitische levieten de ark niet alleen niet mochten zien, maar ook niet mochten aanraken, Ex. 25 : 15, Num. 4 : 15, 20.' We kunnen hierbij ook denken aan het mysterie van de boom der kennis in het

paradijs, waar men ook niet zomaar aan mocht zitten. De Vuh zegt over 4:4 : Dit zal de dienst der zonen van de Kehatieten in de tent der samenkomst zijn: de zorg voor de allerheiligste dingen. In het Aramees gaat het over de aanbidding. De aanbidding is ook weer sexueel gerelateerd, en daarvoor zijn ook allerlei regels. Kunnen we in de stad zien hoe men al deze regels overboord heeft gegooid, en ook heeft geexploiteerd ? Denk bijvoorbeeld aan de handel in huwelijken. Dat gaat niet meer via God en de demonologie tegenwoordig, maar door de staat.
De vuh : De ark is een beeld van de vagina, een opening in het Aramees, wat bedekt is met een kleed van verraad en plundering in het Hebreeuws (beged). De mens komt alleen door de baarmoeder tot wedergeboorte, en dan zal de mens eerst door verraad heen moeten gaan, zoals Hosea werd verraden.

Vonk : 'Nogmaals liet God de waarschuwing horen er voor te zorgen, dat de Kehatieten de hun toevertrouwde voorwerpen niet eerder ter hand zouden nemen dan nadat deze door de hogepriester terdege waren ingepakt. Het zou hen anders het leven kunnen kosten.'

We hebben dus heel duidelijk ook met tijd-restricties te maken als we het over de Kehatitische taak hebben. Tijd-restricties zijn belangrijk voor drie-dimensionale en meer-dimensionale werkelijkheid en ervaring.

Vonk merkt terecht op over de opstand van Korach : 'Juist onder die levieten, die van de 3 groepen tot de meest eervolle werkzaamheden waren verwaardigd, de Kehatieten, is de opstand uitgebroken, waarvan Num. 16 verhalen zal. Een les ook voor ons. Het is meestal niet het eenvoudige kerkvolk geweest, dat met z'n plaats in de gemeenten van Christus ontevreden was, door heerszucht gedreven.'

Het gaat hier over pseudo-Kehatieten. Korach was in de geslachtslijn van Kehat, en zij ontwikkelden een heerszucht tegen Mozes, wat ook in de kerken heeft plaatsgevonden en in anti christelijke organisaties. Zij worden om vleselijke redenen helemaal hysterisch als iemand iets van hen heeft aangeraakt, niet denkt zoals zij denken, niet doen zoals zij doen. Zij hadden het oog van de tijger gestolen, maar dit is teruggestolen. Daar had ik een droom over.

De Roodbil Stam

Henry ter Zand was een voetballer van het eerste team van zijn stad. Vaak kwam er een motorbende kijken, die de voetballers vaak uitscholden voor voetbroeders en ei-verkopers. Henry werd er altijd een beetje misselijk van. Op een dag besloot hij de motorbende eens te bezoeken. Hij had zich anders aangekleed zodat hij niet meer op zichzelf leek. Hij werd hartelijk ontvangen, en men leidde hem rond in het gebouw. Er waren wat oude mensen bij, misschien ouders van de motorrijders, en een vrouw die een soort bediende was deed het woord. Maar plotseling werd hij herkend door een

van de motorrijders, en Henry moest maken dat hij weg kwam. Het uitschelden was sindsdien wel een stuk minder ineens, en op een dag werd Henry uitgenodigd om weer eens bij hen op bezoek te komen. De motorrijders hadden er spijt van dat ze hem zo rot hadden behandeld. Al gauw werd Henry goede vrienden met hen, wat ook de bedoeling was. Op een dag las een van de motorrijders voor uit een vreemd jongensboek. Het ging over de roodbil stam, een groep wilden die in de bossen leefden. De roodbil stam deed veel aan voetbal, maar er werden nogal wrede dingen gedaan met de verliezers. 'Het spijt ons, Henry,' zei de motorrijder, 'we hebben ons inderdaad nogal kinderachtig gedragen.'

Eric Rouwmeester heette een van de motorrijders, en had vroeger nog bij Henry in de klas gezeten. Eric knipoogde naar hem. Aan het einde van het voorlezen sprak Eric hem nog even persoonlijk aan. 'Heb je zin om een keer mee te gaan samen naar het bos ?' vroeg Eric. 'Dan kunnen we wat oude herinneringen ophalen.' Henry vond dat best. Een paar avonden later waren ze samen in het bos. Zo deden ze dat vroeger ook. 'Ja, eigenlijk raar,' zei Eric. 'We gingen beiden naar een andere school later, en het contact was verbroken, terwijl we toch altijd goede vrienden waren.' Henry knikte. In het bos kwamen ze een verwilderde vrouw tegen. Ze had wat rode verf achter op haar broek. 'Ja, verfschieten,' zei ze. Het bleek een spel te zijn.

Na een tijdje kwamen ze bij een ravijn aan. Ze hadden hier een goed uitzicht. 'Herinner je je Klaas nog ?' vroeg Eric. 'Heeft zichzelf stukgereden tegen een boom. En Ilse, ook dood.' Henry knikte. Ja, dat had hij ook gehoord. Hij was er kapot van. Klaas en Ilse waren ook goede vrienden van hem. 'Maar ja, dood is dood,' zei Eric. 'Je kunt ze niet terughalen.' Daar kwam de vrouw weer langs. Ditmaal had ze nog meer rode strepen op haar lichaam. 'Zo, je hebt het druk,' zei Eric.

'Ja,' zei de vrouw. 'Een feestje, maar een leuk feest.'

'Gelukkig,' zei Eric. Henry grinnikte. 'Hey, is dat Riet niet ?' zei Henry. 'Riet van de Kaars.'

'Ja, verhip, je hebt gelijk,' zei Eric. 'Hey, Riet.' Maar Riet was al weer verderop. 'Laten we er naartoe gaan,' zei Eric. Even later vonden ze haar. 'Hoe gaat het met je, Riet, ken je ons nog, Eric en Henry.'

'Het gaat goed, en met jullie ?' vroeg Riet. Ze deed een beetje afstandelijk ineens. Riet kon vroeger moeilijk meekomen op school en had vaak het gevoel dat ze er niet echt bijhoorde. Ze ging vroegtijdig naar een andere school. Na een tijdje brak het ijs een beetje. 'Zeg hebben jullie zin om mee te gaan naar het feestje ? Het is mijn feestje,' zei Riet. Even later zaten ze bij haar thuis met de andere feestgangers. Ze had een groot huis. 'Blijven jullie slapen ?' vroeg ze.

Ach ja, waarom niet, dachten Eric en Henry. Er werd even wat gebeld, en al snel was het okay. Midden in de nacht stond Eric op en ging op zijn blote voeten naar buiten. Het was een huis in het bos. Hij vond het geweldig om alleen in de natuur te zijn. Na een tijdje lopen kwam hij bij een meer aan, deed zijn kleren uit en gleed in het water. Het water was een beetje koel, maar verder was het warm weer. Heerlijk vond hij dat, om in de vrije natuur te zwemmen, en helemaal alleen. Maar later merkte dat er ook een andere man en een vrouw aan het zwemmen waren, aan de overkant van het meer. Het waren mysterieuze mensen. Eric groette hen beleefd. 'Zo, wat doe jij zo laat hier,' vroeg de man. Eric vertelde dat hij niet kon slapen, en het fijn vond alleen in de natuur te zijn. 'En jullie ?' vroeg Eric.

'We hebben nergens om naartoe te gaan,' zei de vrouw. 'We hebben ons huis verloren, en nu leven we in de natuur.' Even later lieten ze hem het hol zien waarin ze woonden.

'Fantastisch,' zei Eric. 'Ik zou ook wel in zo'n hol willen wonen.' Maar ineens greep de man een pistool en richtte het op Eric. 'Meekomen,' zei hij. Eric werd ergens in een kooi gestopt gemaakt van takken en touw. 'Wat gaan jullie met me doen ?' vroeg Eric.

'Weten we nog niet,' zei de vrouw. Eric zag dat de vrouw rode vlekken op haar bil had. Toen lieten ze hem alleen. Na een paar uur was Eric nog steeds alleen, en begon te roepen. Na een tijdje sleurden de man en de vrouw de kooi naar het meer en duwden hem erin. Eric schreeuwde nog uit alle macht, maar niets hielp.

De vermissing van Eric kwam hard aan bij Henry. Ook Riet was er kapot van. Pas maanden later vonden ze hem, verdronken. Ook de man en de vrouw die het op hun geweten hadden werden gevonden. Het bleek dat ze onder in de grond nog meer vermiste personen vasthielden, maar die leefden nog steeds.

Henry keek naar Riet. Ze leek veel op de vrouw die het gedaan had. Ze bleken tweelingzussen te zijn. De man bleek lid te zijn van de motorbende.

Op een dag werd er weer uit het vreemde jongensboek voorgelezen. Het was een soort winterboek. De roodbil stam plantte zich op een vreemde manier voort. De vrouwen legden kleine eitjes die met hun voeten uitgebroed moesten worden, anders zou het vruchtje doodgaan. Zij die uit het ei kwamen waren piepklein, als kaboutertjes, en ze hadden nog steeds een lijmachtige gel over zich heen, het vlies-ei, wat later als ze opgegroeid waren verder uitgebroed moest worden, anders zouden ze doodgaan. Dit moest gedaan worden door hun moeder of door hun partner. In hun jonge jaren waren ze als varkens, maar naarmate ze ouder werden verloren ze die kwaliteiten. Het voedsel waarvan ze leefden was rode varkens. Hun vijanden : langbek krokodillen.

Henry begreep niet waarom er nu weer uit het jongensboek voortgelezen moest worden.

Onze kapitein is een jongen, zei de motorrijder. Hij heeft dit boek geschreven, en het is onze bijbel.

'En waar is die jongen ?' vroeg Henry.

'Vraag niets,' zei de motorrijder.

Henry besloot er niet meer naartoe te gaan. Maar toch keerde hij weer terug. Alsof iets zijn interesse had. Op een nacht werd Henry wakker. Er stond een jongetje voor hem in middeleeuwse koninklijke kleding. 'Ik ben het geheim van alle tijden, ik ben het poppetje waar alle paarden op rijden, waar alle rozen om strijden.'

'Wat kan ik voor je doen ?' vroeg Henry. Maar het jongetje was alweer verdwenen. De nacht erop was het jongetje erweer. Ditmaal had hij een boek bij zich. 'Dit is mijn bijbel,' zei hij. Op de kaft stond 'De Roodbil Stam' met een plaatje waarop wilden voetbalden. De bal was een leren zak die een beetje op een doodshoofd leek.

Weer vroeg Henry : 'Wat kan ik voor je doen.' Het jongetje gaf hem het boek en verdween. Henry begon direkt te lezen. Het was een boek over de middeleeuwen, over wrede praktijken, die uiteindelijk ophielden, maar ze waren nog steeds in de lucht, en kwamen verkleed als andere dingen.

Een man werd wakker van een lange vreemde droom. Hij had de dag ervoor naar een oorlogsfilm gekeken, en daarna naar een voetbalwedstrijd. Hij zuchtte diep, en viel weer in slaap. Hij droomde toen over een dames voetbal team waar alle vrouwen rode strepen op hun achterste hadden, terwijl sommige grote rode vlekken hadden, en sommigen gewoon rode broekjes. Honden renden over het veld, die toen in zwarte panters veranderden. En toen stond het veld in brand. De man was schoolmeester, en de volgende dag toen hij een vrouwlijke collega tegenkwam bemerkte hij dat er rode vlekken op haar broek zaten, die op lipstift leken. De man wreef in zijn ogen. 'Ben ik nu gek ?' dacht hij bij zichzelf. Maar toen ze zich omdraaide had ze het gezicht van een hond. De man wist dat hij nog steeds sliep. Het leek wel alsof hij niet meer kon wakker worden, en de dromen werden steeds langer en langer. Hij herinnerde dat hij de dag ervoor bij de t.v. en bij de voetbalwedstrijd veel te veel had gedronken. Of hadden ze soms iets in zijn glas gestopt ?

Een man las een vreemd verhaal in een magazine. Het was een soort strip, ook met veel plaatjes, en dan weer tekst. Het was in een wasserette. Hij gooide de magazine opzij. Greep zijn spullen en liep naar buiten. Het werk was gedaan. Hij gleed uit over een bananeschil en viel terwijl alles op de stoep lag. Sommige mensen hielpen hem. Zijn wasmachine deed het niet meer. De was was weer vuil, maar iemand anders bood hem aan de was te doen bij haar thuis. Het was een aardige vrouw. De vrouw van de man was zwanger. Hij wilde weer op tijd thuis zijn, maar het was zo gezellig bij de vrouw dat hij wat langer bleef, en ze besloten vrienden te blijven. Hij vertelde haar over het

vreemde verhaal wat hij in de magazine had gelezen. 'Nee, niet gelezen,' zei de vrouw.

Een man zat bij de psychiater. Dit was het verhaal wat hij eruit floepte. 'Okay,' zei de psychiater, 'en wat is de betekenis ?'

Een krant werd gedrukt met dit vreemde verhaal. Iemand werd wakker en had dit gedroomd, iemand las dit. Een grote octopus hing over een stad, en slikte de stad op in zijn geheel. Iemand rende uit het ziekenhuis. Ze hadden hem een injectie gegeven, maar hij was erdoor aan het hallucineren. het was alsof de werkelijkheid nu in duizenden stukjes voor hem lag, in brokken. Iemand was geraakt door een giftige pijl van een wilde stam, de roodbil stam. De man was aan het hallucineren en werd in een kooi gezet. Al snel raakte hij uitgehongerd. Spinnen kropen over hem heen.

Iemand zat een winterboek voor volwassenen te lezen. Dit was wel het vreemdste winterboek wat hij ooit had gelezen. En het volgende verhaal was over de idioten van Mars. De idioten waren een echt ras, wilde reuzen, die in de vreemde jungles van Mars leefden. Ja, idioot was het, maar de plaatjes waren prachtig. Het sprak echt tot de verbeelding. De idioten van Mars waren vaak kaal met hanekammen. Het verhaal daarna ging over slangen, en daarna was er een verhaal wat meer op science fiction leek. De man bracht het boek terug naar de bibliotheek, en ging naar de jeugdafdeling om daar een paar winterboeken te lenen. Tot zijn grote verbazing ging het weer over de roodbil stam. Die nacht had hij een droom over een stam waarvan de vrouwen rood geverfde billen hadden. Hij vertelde het aan zijn vrouw en vroeg wat het voor betekenis kon hebben. 'Dat je teveel leest,' zei zijn vrouw. En ze had gelijk, want hij was een echte boekenwurm. 'Als je 's nachts droomt van hetgeen je hebt gelezen, dan heb je gewoon teveel gelezen, en hetzelfde geldt voor t.v.,' zei ze.

'Maar wat kan ik dan doen ?' vroeg de man. 'Heb jij een beter idee ?'

'Neem mij eens wat vaker uit,' zei de vrouw. 'Ik heb het idee dat je getrouwd bent met de boeken in plaats van mij.'

Zo gezegd zo gedaan. De man nam zijn vrouw die dag direkt mee naar het bos om een wandeling te maken. Maar de man werd al snel onwel, en ze keerden om. 'Ik kan gewoon niet zonder mijn boeken,' zei de man. Ze probeerden nog een paar dingen, maar uiteindelijk legde de vrouw zich er maar bij neer.

Een man werd wakker van een droom, en daar een andere man. Ze hadden allemaal hetzelfde gedroomd, alsof er wilde geesten in de lucht waren. Zwarte honden blaften op de straat. Diep in het bos stapte een dwerg lachend zijn huisje binnen en trok de deur achter zich dicht. Er hingen wat klokken van wezens die in elkaar waren gegroeid en die zich voedden met elkaars inhoud. De dwerg roerde wat in een potje. 'Zombies zijn het,' zei de dwerg. 'Ze kunnen niet met en niet zonder elkaar, want ze zitten aan elkaar vast door het hart. Ja, door dit middeltje zullen ze eindelijk los van elkaar kunnen komen, maar vergeten doen ze elkaar nooit.'

Einde

Het Duistere Sprookje van de Donkere Kaas

Een jongen moest van zijn moeder naar de kaasmarkt om een pond kaas te halen.
Toen hij daar aankwam stonden er drie indiaanse vrouwen met blote voeten op de tafel van een marktkraam, en er was alleen maar donkere kaas. De jongen moest de vrouwenvoeten kussen voordat hij de kaas meekreeg. Ook moest hij betalen, en het was erg duur. De jongen vond het een beetje vreemd, maar hij wist dat hij niet moest proberen zonder kaas thuis te komen, dus hij stemde er mee in en kuste de vrouwenvoeten. Toen hij het verhaal aan zijn moeder vertelde was die woedend. Ze pakte de jongen bij de hand en ging met hem naar de kaasmarkt.

De jongen en zijn moeder werden vervolgens neergeslagen. Later werden ze wakker in een kooi. Twee bandieten keken hen aan. De jongen probeerde te praten, maar merkte dat hij niets kon zeggen. Zijn moeder was woest. "Wat heeft dat te betekenen ?" brulde ze. De bandieten glimlachten. "We kunnen er niets aan doen, mevrouw," spraken ze. "Er is een nieuwe directeur, en die wil donkere kaas."

"Maar waarom zijn we hier ?" brulde de vrouw woest. "Wat heeft dit in godsnaam te betekenen ?"

"Sorry, mevrouw," sprak één van de bandieten. "Orders van de baas."

"En wat nu ?" vroeg de vrouw. "Dus we kunnen niet eens meer zomaar een markt bezoeken zonder overvallen te worden, en mijn zoon moet eerst de voeten van drie indiaanse vrouwen kussen en veel betalen voordat hij kaas meekrijgt, en dan ook nog donkere kaas ?"

"Wat is er mis met donkere kaas, mevrouw ?" vroeg de bandiet.

"Helemaal niks," zuchtte de vrouw. "Maar wat heeft de rest er allemaal mee te maken ?"

"Zo wordt nu eenmaal donkere kaas geserveerd, mevrouw," spraken de bandieten.

"Het is me nogal een zootje," sprak de vrouw. "En wat nu ? Gaan jullie mij ook nog mijn zoon afnemen ?"

"U gaat opgehangen worden," spraken de bandieten.

En zo gebeurde het. De vrouw werd opgehangen, en de jongen moest op de donkere kaasmarkt werken.

Een man stopte met lezen. "Ik heb nog nooit zo'n dom verhaal gehoord," sprak de man tegen zichzelf. "Moet je dit eens lezen," zei hij even later tegen zijn vrouw. Toen de vrouw het had gelezen barste ze in lachen uit. "Donkere kaas ? Is dit echt of een verhaal ?" vroeg ze verbaasd.

"Echt denk ik," sprak de man. "Het is de krant."

"Dat zegt vandaag niet zoveel," sprak de vrouw. "Bij de krant werken allemaal grapjassen vandaag de dag. Ik zal eens kijken in de supermarkt morgen, of ze nu ook daadwerkelijk donkere kaas verkopen."

"Ik zou het maar niet doen," sprak de man. "Waarschijnlijk gebeurd dan hetzelfde met jou als met de vrouw uit het verhaal."

De volgende dag kwam de vrouw thuis met donkere kaas, en hield een pond voor de neus van haar

man. "Zie, niks gebeurd," sprak ze trots.

"Dat moet nog gebeuren," sprak de man. "We kunnen de krant maar beter serieus nemen, anders horen we er niet meer bij, en sluiten ze ons misschien wel op in het gekkenhuis."

"Ach, klets niet," sprak de vrouw. "Je hebt teveel babbels en teveel tv gekeken."

In de nacht stierf de vrouw. Toen de man 's ochtends ontwaakte slaakte hij een gil. Het moest wel van de donkere kaas komen. Hij maakte de dag ervoor maar wat grapjes, maar nu bleek het toch menens te zijn. Misschien was er wel een duistere vloek op de donkere kaas.

"Ik kan het niet geloven dat nu mijn vrouw dood is," sprak de man tegen zichzelf, "maar het was niet zo'n beste, en lang leve de lol. Ik ga er op uit, en zal een betere vrouw vinden."

Een man klikt de tv uit. "Teveel rommel op de tv vandaag de dag. Donkere kaas ? Wat een stelletje gekken." Hij gaat naar bed, en heeft die nacht nachtmerries over donkere kaas. Hij moet de voeten van indiaanse vrouwen kussen. "Zeg, ben ik dan nu op tv ?" bulderde de man. "Want gisteren was dit op de tv, en nu ben ik hier, net zoals die jongen uit dat verhaal. En nu moet ik zeker ook duur betalen voor die donkere kaas ?"

Toen werd hij op zijn hoofd geslagen en werd wakker in zweet. Hij begon om zich heen te grijpen en had ademhalings-moeilijkheden. De volgende dag vertelde hij het aan de dokter. De dokter dacht dat hij gek aan het worden was, en liet hem niet meer gaan. "Alzheimer waarschijnlijk," sprak de dokter. "U heeft betere zorg nodig," sprak de dokter.

"Ja, maar ik ben nog jong," sprak de man.

"Niets mee te maken," sprak de dokter. "U komt hier niet meer weg."

"Het moet die donkere kaas zijn," sprak de man tegen zichzelf.

Hij werd opgesloten en stierf een eenzame dood, en hij kon alleen maar denken aan donkere kaas.

Jetje’s Moeder

Jetje’s moeder was een heks. En niet zomaar een heks. Ze at mensenvlees. Jetje’s moeder kwam nooit beneden. Ze woonde op zolder. Jetje durfde hier nooit te komen. Haar vader zei altijd : ‘Kom daar maar niet.’ Het stonk er ook verschrikkelijk. Op een dag kwam er een meneer aan de deur. Jetje’s vader moest een hoge rekening betalen, maar hij had er het geld niet voor. ‘Ja, mijn vrouw heeft al het geld,’ zei Jetje’s vader tegen de meneer.

‘Maar ziet u, zij is een heks en woont op de grote zolder. Ze eet mensenvlees, dus ik kan daar maar beter niet komen.’

‘Ja, maar ik moet dat geld toch hebben,’ zei de meneer.

Midden in de nacht ging Jetje’s vader naar de grote zolder. ‘Ik heb wat geld nodig,’ zei Jetje’s vader tegen de heks.

‘Nee, dat krijg je niet,’ zei de heks. ‘Breng me eerst maar wat jongetjes, dikke jongetjes, vetgemest, want ik heb honger.’

‘Nou, je kunt toch gewoon uit de koelkast eten,’ zei vader.

‘Nee, ik wil mensenvlees,’ zei de heks.

‘Maar dat kan echt niet hoor,’ zei vader. ‘En ik moet het geld nu hebben, anders komt morgen die meneer terug, en dan zwaait er wat.’

‘Laat die meneer maar hier komen,’ zei de heks.

‘Goed,’ zei Jetje’s vader, ‘als je dat zo wil. Dan kun jij het aan hem uitleggen.’

En zo gebeurde het. Jetje’s vader stuurde de meneer de volgende dag naar het zolder. Na een uur was de man nog niet beneden, en Jetje’s vader ging weer naar het zolder om te kijken hoe het was afgelopen. De heks had de meneer in een kooi opgesloten. Oh, oh, dat ging helemaal niet goed. De meneer was woest.

‘Zeg, laat die meneer eens even los,’ zei Jetje’s vader. Maar de heks wilde dat niet. ‘En ga nu maar weg, anders stop ik jou ook in een hok,’ zei de heks. Toen is Jetje’s vader maar naar beneden gegaan, en wilde er nu echt nooit meer komen.

Maar op een mooie zonnige dag toen Jetje eens iets van het zolder moest halen kwam ze erachter dat haar moeder er niet meer woonde. Alle spullen waren weg. Er lag een briefje op de grond, waarop stond geschreven : ‘Lieve Jetje, ik woon nu in het bos. Groeten van de heks. Kom je me eens opzoeken ?’ Nou, dat durfde Jetje natuurlijk niet, maar op een dag besloot ze er toch met een paar vriendjes en vriendinnetjes naartoe te gaan. De heks woonde nu heel diep in het bos, en daarvoor moesten ze een eind fietsen. Dat ging niet zo snel, want Kareltje was nogal dik, en kwam maar moeilijk vooruit. ‘Kareltje, mijn moeder is nogal gevaarlijk,’ zei Jetje. ‘Ze eet mensenvlees.’ Maar Kareltje moest erom lachen, en zei met zijn mond vol dat hij dat niet geloofde.

Toen ze bij het huisje van Jetje’s moeder aankwamen was het een keurige boel. Jetje’s

moeder kwam naar buiten met de krulspelden in, en ze leek op een echte dame. ‘Zo, mams, verwacht je visite ? De koningin ofzo ?’ vroeg Jetje.

‘Nou, jullie zouden toch komen ?’ zei Jetje’s moeder. Jetje knikte. ‘Mams, dit zijn Kareltje, Benno, en nog wat vriendinnetjes. Jetje’s moeder gaf alleen Kareltje en Benno een hand. Benno was aan het eten zoals altijd. Hij had altijd zijn mond vol, net als Kareltje, maar hij was nog niet zo dik als Kareltje.

‘Je bent niet zo dik als Kareltje,’ zei Jetje’s moeder tegen Benno. ‘Maar dat komt nog wel.’

‘Waarom dan, mevrouw ?’ vroeg Benno.

‘Oh, als je zoveel eet,’ zei Jetje’s moeder, ‘dan zal dat vast wel lukken.’ Kareltje en Benno keken elkaar even vreemd aan. Wat een rare moeder had Jetje dat ze zulke dingen zei. Maar al gauw viel Jetje’s moeder goed bij Kareltje en Benno in de smaak, want in de woonkamer stonden de overheerlijkste taartjes en toetjes. ‘Zo, ik dacht laat ik jullie eens goed verwennen,’ zei Jetje’s moeder. ‘Jullie moeten er nog van groeien.’ Dat lieten Kareltje en Benno zich geen tweede keer zeggen. Snel holden ze op de tafel af, en begonnen te eten dat het een lieve lust was. Maar de meisjes aten niks. ‘Zeg, waarom eten jullie niet ?’ vroeg Jetje’s moeder. ‘Ik heb het speciaal voor jullie gemaakt.’

‘Oh, ik had thuis al genoeg gegeten,’ zei Lizzie.

‘Ja, en ik heb niet zo’n honger,’ zei Daphne.

‘En jij dan, Jetje ?’ vroeg Jetje’s moeder.

‘Oh, ik heb ook niet zo’n zin. Ik ben een beetje misselijk,’ zei Jetje.

‘Dat kan,’ zei Jetje’s moeder, ‘maar ik heb anders wel zin hoor. Dan eet ik wel een extra taartje voor jullie.’

‘Lekker spul, moeder van Jetje,’ zei Benno.

‘Ja,’ zei Kareltje met zijn mond vol. ‘Mogen we nog eens komen ?’

‘Jullie mogen zo vaak komen als jullie maar willen,’ zei Jetje’s moeder. ‘Jullie mogen wel logeren, want het is toch weekend.’

‘Graag mevrouw,’ zei Benno. Kareltje knikte instemmend. De meisjes lieten zich pas na lang praten overhalen, maar Jetje wilde absoluut niet blijven. Jetje was bang dat haar

moeder nog steeds was zoals vroeger. Opeens keerde ze zich om, rende naar buiten naar haar fiets, en reed weg.

Toen ze thuiskwam vertelde ze alles aan haar vader. ‘Ach,’ zei haar vader. ‘Misschien is ze nu wel veranderd. Ze heeft een nieuw huis, en ze gedraagt zich nu als een echte dame. Zullen we samen eens bij haar op bezoek gaan ? Maar Jetje wilde er niet meer komen. Toch begon ze zich een beetje bezorgd te maken over haar vriendjes en vriendinnetjes, maar even later dacht ze dat ze zich aanstelde.

Na het weekend kwamen de kinderen vrolijk terug. ‘Je hebt een geweldige moeder, Jetje,’ zei Kareltje. Ook Benno en de meisjes knikten volop. ‘Zie je nou wel,’ zei Jetje’s vader. ‘Er is niets aan de hand. Misschien is ze erg veranderd.’

‘Dus ze is nu geen heks meer ?’ vroeg Jetje.

‘Ik denk het niet,’ zei vader. Maar toen schrok Jetje. Ze keek naar Kareltje, en zag hoe er een schroefje uit zijn broekspijp viel. Jetje raakte het op, en keek Kareltje in de ogen. Kareltje bewoog niet meer. En toen zag Jetje ook een schroefje op zijn hoofd zitten. Dit was Kareltje helemaal niet, maar een robot. Ook zag ze die schroefjes op de andere kinderen zitten, en toen schrok vader ook. ‘Dat is niet pluis, Jetje,’ zei vader. ‘We moeten direkt naar het huisje toe.’

‘Nee,’ krijste Jetje. ‘Dan sluit ze ons ook op. Dat heeft ze al eens eerder gedaan met die meneer, weet je wel ?’

Vader knikte. Toen zijn ze samen maar gaan afwassen. ‘We moeten echt wat doen, Jetje,’ zei vader.

‘Ja, maar wat dan ?’ vroeg Jetje.

‘Ik weet het niet,’ zei vader. ‘Laten we er eerst maar een nachtje over slapen.

Maar de volgende dag waren vader en Jetje het alweer vergeten. Totdat Jetje op een dag weer op de zolder kwam en ontdekte dat haar moeder er weer woonde. Ook stonden er kooien met de meneer van de rekening, Kareltje, Benno, en haar twee vriendinnetjes Lizzie en Daphne. Ze waren allemaal verschrikkelijk dik geworden. ‘Mams, wat heb je met ze gedaan ?’ vroeg Jetje, ‘en waarom woon je nu weer hier ?’

Maar toen schrok Jetje. Haar moeder was gaan roesten, en dat was geen goed teken. Dat betekende namelijk dat haar moeder ook een robot was. Helemaal in paniek rende ze naar beneden. Direkt vertelde ze het aan haar vader. ‘Oh ja,’ zei Jetje’s vader, ‘dat is waar ook. Dat was ik helemaal vergeten. Ik heb haar zelf eens gemaakt. Ik had haar roestvrij moeten maken, en verder had ik nog wat foutjes gemaakt.’

‘Nou, ik vind het anders oerdom,’ zei Jetje. ‘Wie maakt er nou zo’n gevaarlijke heks als mijn moeder ?’

‘Ach,’ zei vader, ‘stel je niet zo aan. Trouwens, die meneer was ook maar een robot hoor, en ook Kareltje, Benno, Lizzie en Daphne. Zelfs de juffrouw is een robot. Ik heb ze allemaal eens gemaakt.’

‘Nou, je hebt me er behoorlijk bang mee gemaakt,’ zei Jetje. Maar toen ontdekte ze ineens iets anders. Wat zat daar bij het oor van haar vader ? Dat was een heel klein schroefje. Toen ze er aan draaide stopte haar vader ineens met bewegen en keek strak voor zich uit. ‘Vader ?’ zei Jetje. ‘Ach nee, hè ? Is mijn vader dan ook een robot ?’ In paniek rende Jetje naar het huis van de juffrouw. De juffrouw was in de woonkamer aan het breien. Direkt begon Jetje haar te onderzoeken. ‘Ach kind, wat doe je allemaal toch ?’ vroeg de juffrouw.

‘Even kijken of mijn vader gelijk heeft,’ zei Jetje. En ja hoor, even later vond ze wat schroefjes. Nu kon ze niemand meer vertrouwen. Huilend slenterde ze naar huis terug. Ze durfde die nacht bijna niet te slapen. Ze was helemaal alleen in zo’n groot huis met robotten. De volgende dag werd er aangebeld. Het was een meneer met een snor en een hoed op. De meneer stak zijn hand uit naar Jetje en zei : ‘Hallo, ik ben jouw vader. Je hebt het eindelijk ontdekt over de robotten ? Je mamma is ook echt heel blij. Ga je met ons mee ?’

‘Ja, maar wie bent u ?’ vroeg Jetje. ‘Wie heeft dan al die robotten gemaakt ?’

‘Ach, die heb ik zelf ooit eens gemaakt. Heel dom van me. Ik dacht dan had je wat speelkameraadjes, want je mamma en ik waren vaak weg. Maar ze gingen met je op de loop,’ zei de meneer. Jetje stapte even later in de mooie grote auto, en al gauw kwamen ze aan bij een prachtig groot huis. Die dag ontmoette Jetje voor het eerst haar moeder, en vader en moeder stroopten beiden hun mouwen op om te laten zien dat ze echt geen robotten waren.

De Trollenspiegel

Als iemand in de trollenspiegel keek, viel hij direkt dood neer en werd zijn ziel door de spiegel heengetrokken om hem in het land der trollen te laten werken. Het was een groensoortig zaad waardoor de zielen dan geketend werden, een zaad dat vanuit de ziel een gevoelige plek liet voortgroeien als een trollenspiegel. Zo kon niemand de ziel bevrijden zonder zelf ook een slachtoffer van de trollenspiegel te worden.

De trollen waren een wreed volk zonder enige genade. En als er dan genade was, dan zat er altijd wel een addertje onder het gras. Zo waren velen blij en verheugd als de trollen hen vrijlieten, maar dan werden ze al snel gegrepen door een groen vuur waardoor ze nog verschrikkelijker gebonden werden. Nee, een trol liet zijn gevangene nooit vrij. Een trol maakte alleen zijn slachtoffers klaar voor nog grotere wreedheden. Hierin had de trol altijd veel plezier.

Er was geen volk zo wreed als het volk der trollen. Ze kenden geen genade. Hun genade was alleen een nog grotere wreedheid. Dit maakte hen berucht. Ja, de trollen waren zeer gevreesd. Veel plezier hadden ze erin als hopeloze zielen voor hun aanwezigheid trilden. Want in de handen te vallen van een trol, was te komen in een fuik waaruit geen ontsnapping mogelijk was, alleen het uitzicht op een steeds groeiende ellende. De gevangene had alleen het uitzicht op ongekend wrede martelingen, die alleen maar wreder en wreder zouden worden, tot groot plezier van de trollen. En zolang je nog niet door hen gepakt was, kon je erop wachten dat ze op een dag voor je deur zouden staan, want een trol geeft nooit op. Hij zou het telkens weer opnieuw proberen door de ene na de andere valstrik, totdat je een keer op een onbedachtzaam moment zou toehappen, als het begin van een ritje dat steeds duisterder zou worden.

Ze hadden er groot plezier in om alles langzaam op te bouwen, om de spanning en angst zo groot mogelijk te maken, en om maar zoveel mogelijk valse hoop en zekerheid te schenken, zodat de klap daarna extra hard zou aankomen. Ja, het waren misbaksels, en zij woonden in de trollenspiegels en hun slachtoffers. Telkens weer spanden zij hun netten en webben om hun geluk te beproeven. Nee, er was geen groter duivels kwaad dan de trollenspiegel. Het was een ras erger dan demonen en vampieren. Als zij in de buurt waren dan gilden de geesten, spoken en duivelen het uit. Er was niets vergeleken met de trollen. Eens hadden zij de trollenspiegel ontworpen, en sindsdien groeide hun macht.

En allen die nog nooit in de trollenspiegel hadden gekeken, en dachten dat het zo’n vaart niet zou lopen, en dat het gewoon iets onschuldigs was, zouden zich eens op een dag ook bewust zijn .... van het kwaad van de trollenspiegel.

Einde

De Monster Meester

Grimhaldt was een tovermeester van vele monsters. Zijn grote vijand was Aswaldt, de koning der skeletten. Grimhaldt was in zijn toverkamer de meest verschrikkelijke drankjes aan het brouwen. Grimhaldt had een heleboel schatten verborgen onder de aarde die bewaakt werden door wachters die eruit zagen als voeten : grote voeten en kleine voeten. Het was een vreemd ras wat hij ooit eens verslagen had, en sindsdien moesten zij zijn schatten bewaken. Aartslepal was zo’n voet, en was van top tot teen bewapend. Hij was de hoofdman van de voetwezens. Grimhaldt was erg trots op hem en had hem bekleed met de prachtigste sieraden.

Op een dag was er een belangrijke ring van Grimhaldt gestolen. Het was een ring waarmee bepaalde toverboeken geopend konden worden, en alleen bij het licht van die ring gelezen konden worden. Grimhaldt was woedend en riep Aartslepal bij zich. Hij ontdeed Aartslepal van zijn sieraden en zond hem uit zijn grottenstelsel de kou in. Aartslepal maakte een lange reis door het sneeuw en over het ijs, een reis die hij bijna niet zou overleven, maar hij was nu in ieder geval wel vrij. Na long lopen kwam hij aan bij een groot kasteel, als een spookslot. De muren waren lang en overal stonden skeletten.

Het kasteel was min of meer van botten gemaakt, en er hing een vreemde geur. Toen Grimhaldt merkte dat Aartslepal de tocht had overleefd was hij buiten zichzelf van woede. Hij greep een paar van de voetwezens die nog steeds wachters waren van zijn schatten, en wierp de wachters in zijn ketel voor een nieuwe toverdrank. Toen de toverdrank klaar was liep hij ermee naar een paar toverboeken die nog nooit geopend waren. Met een druppel in het slot kon hij elk boek openen. Nu kwamen de grootst mogelijke monsters vrij. Ook nam Grimhaldt zelf een slok van het mengsel en maakte samen met de monsters een reis naar het spookslot. Grimhaldt stormde naar binnen en kwam al snel in gevecht met Aswaldt de skelettenkoning. Maar de skeletten waren veel sterker dan het leger van Grimhaldt. Aswaldt trok zijn mes en stak het in het hart van Grimhaldt. Nu zou je denken dat nu Grimhaldt was verslagen zijn wachters wel makkelijk bevrijd konden worden, maar niets is minder waar. De wachters van Grimhaldt leefden diep onder de grond.

Het was een uittocht die vele jaren duurde. Vele kostbaarheden die diep onder de aarde lagen kwamen vrij. Het belangrijkste was wel de spiegel van Grimhaldt waarmee hij zijn toverijen bedreef. De wachters van die spiegel had hij zo dronken gemaakt en zo gevaarlijk dat er geen overwinning mogelijk was. Het waren de wachters zelf die overwinning behaalden door de spiegel. En zo kregen uiteindelijk de wachters het spookslot in handen, en begon Aswaldt zijn grote reis naar de eeuwigheid.

de sigarenfabriek

De wilden hadden de sigarenfabriek omsingeld.
Er lag hier een boodschap in verborgen, een geheime boodschap.
Dat had iemand hen verteld.
De sigarenfabriek had vele geheimen, en nu was het omsingeld.
Geen werker kon er meer uit, en ze werden allemaal uitgehongerd.
Wie kan er nu alleen leven van sigaren ?

Sigarenbandjes waren hun boeien.
Ik kon het niet geloven.
Ik keek ernaar met grote ogen.
Ik wees erop. Ik was nog maar een kind.
Grootvader liet het me zien in een boek.

Er stonden wel meer indianenverhalen in, maar het verhaal over de sigarenfabriek heb ik goed onthouden. Wat een indruk maakte dat op mij als kind.
Er was een dag waarop de wilden de sigarenfabriek binnengingen, en er was zoveel rook.
Er was zoveel rook dat er geen verschil meer was tussen wilde en werker.
Hier was het waar dingen mis begonnen te gaan.

En geen enkele indiaan kon de boodschap verstaan.
Dit was gewoon teveel rook.
De boodschap was erin vergaan.

Maar er was één slim jongetje, niemand wist wie hij was, of hij nu wilde was of werker,
die helemaal over de metalen trap naar boven ging. Dat was een hele lange trap, en bovenin waren zij die helmen droegen, de regeerders van de sigarenfabriek, en wat bleek, wat bleek ? Zij hadden al die verhalen gemaakt. Zij hadden de indianen gestuurd, opdat de werkers harder zouden werken.
Want nu konden ze telkens dreigen : als je niet werkt, als je niet werkt, dan komen de indianen.

En het jongetje zei : Nu is het afgelopen. Geef die verhaaltjes maar aan mij.

Maar ja, je raadt het al. De sigarenfabriek bestaat nog steeds. En het jongetje ? Niemand weet of hij wilde is of werker …

Dokter, ik zit met een vreemd probleem. Als ik piraten wil zeggen, dan zeg ik pyama's.

-- Zeer vreemd en eigenaardig. Misschien zijn de piraten wel moe ?

Ja, maar dokter, als ik ballerina wil zeggen, dan zeg ik : bal erin.

-- Ook zeer vreemd en eigenaardig. Weet u wat ik denk ? U moet een tijdje vakantie nemen. U bent misschien overwerkt. Daarna zult u zien dat als u piraten wil zeggen, dat u dan ook gewoon pyama's zegt. Hey, nu zeg ik het zelf ook. Dat is vreemd. Er is iets aan de hand.

Dokter, misschien bent u ook wel overwerkt. Dan moet u ook op vakantie.

-- Nee, dat kan niet. Er moet meer aan de hand zijn. Laat me eens even kijken. Mond open.

Aaa.

--- Goed, ik zie het al. Het is wel duidelijk. U heeft iets gegeten waardoor uw woorden verdraaien.

Ja maar hoe kan het dat bij u ook de woorden gingen verdraaien ?

-- Nou, waarschijnlijk is het zeer besmettelijk.

En dokter, hoe weet ik nu of u wel echt zegt wat u wil zeggen ? Misschien is alles wel verdraaid nu.

-- Ja, dan zijn we gek. Dan kunnen we wel ophouden.

Nou misschien is het al zover. Ik vertrouw het niet meer.

-- Goed, kop op, neem een glaasje.

Ach dokter, toe nou, welke dokter raadt nu aan een glaasje te nemen ? Ik weet zeker dat u wat anders wilde zeggen, dom. Nu wil ik dokter zeggen, maar zeg ik dom.

-- Ik ben dom. Nu zeg ik het zelf ook. Ik wilde zeggen dat ik dom ben, maar nu zeg ik dat ik dom ben.

Ja, maar dan zeg je het toch goed ?

-- Er is iets met m'n tong aan de hand. Zeer besmettelijk deze ziekte. Ik moet aan de lijn.

Dom, wat zegt u nu allemaal ?

-- Ik moet aan de lijn, aan de lijn, ik heb aan de lijn.

Wie dan, dom ?

-- Pyama's.

Oh, die pyama's weer. Die moeten er altijd weer tussenkomen.

-- Ach, 't zijn maar pyama's. Die gaan zo weer slapen.

Misschien slapen ze al. Bal erin, bal eruit. Het lijkt wel op een spelletje, en maar draaien. Ik zit gewoon naar u te kijken, dom, en u loopt daar maar te draaien.

-- Zal ik u aaien ?

Nee bedankt, ik ga wel ergens anders naartoe. Ik kom hier geen steek verder. Het wordt hier alleen maar erger en het is ook op u gefloept.

-- Oppassen wat u eet de volgende keer.

Ja, ik ga wel naar een andere snacktent. Had ik niet moeten doen, waar ik geweest ben.

-- Waar was dat dan ?

Ja, dat ga ik u niet vertellen, die idioterie, dan weet straks het hele dorp het en wordt alles omgedraaid.

-- Oh, houd dan je mondje maar dicht. Nou, ga dan maar een andere dom opzoeken.

Nee, geen dom meer voor mij. Ik heb het helemaal gehad. Ik had nooit naar die poppenkraam moeten gaan. Alles gaat hier verkeerd. Moet nodig eens verbouwd worden.

-- Wat zeg je nu allemaal ?

Ja, heb ik toch allemaal geen tijd meer voor. Ik heb al voldoende tijd verprutst met deze onzin. Heb aan het verkeerde touwtje getrokken. Had helemaal niet op deze kermis moeten wezen. Allemaal een grote vergissing geweest.

-- Ja, kan ik inkomen. Nou, volgende patient dan maar.

Dacht het toch niet. Er zit niemand meer in de wachtkamer en uw secretaresse is ook weggehold. Ze hebben u waarschijnlijk horen schreeuwen.

-- Schreeuwen ? Wanneer dan ?

Toenet. Ik dacht waar heb je het toch allemaal over.

-- Ja, nu breekt toch m'n klomp. Ik weet daar allemaal niks van.

Mooi, dan ben ik nu de dokter. U heeft waarschijnlijk wat verkeerds gegeten. U moet nodig eens op vakantie, en van de glaasjes afblijven, hè, en van de vrouwtjes.

-- Nou ja, zeg. Maar ik heb hiervoor gestudeerd, niet jij. Jij weet van toeten noch blazen.

Dat zeggen ze allemaal. Ik ben nu de dokter, en daarmee uit. En je gaat nu de gevangenis in.

-- Ja, maar ho, de gevangenis ? Dat kunnen dokters niet eens doen.

Jawel, deze dokters wel. Wij werken met de politie.

-- Oh zo, dat wist ik nog niet. Nou, bedankt voor de informatie. Ik stap maar weer eens op.

Goedzo. De politie wacht u buiten al op.

-- Maar waarom ? Ik heb toch helemaal niks gedaan ?

Jawel, je hebt alles lopen verprutsen en alles lopen omdraaien. Daar staan zware straffen op.

-- En dat beslist u allemaal ?

Ja, want ik ben ook rechter.

-- Toe maar weer, wat een dure woorden allemaal. Ik ga nu weg, en dan ga ik naar m'n krantje.

Nee, je gaat de gevangenis in. Dan ga jij hele andere boekjes lezen.

-- Wat voor boekjes dan ?

Van de kleuterschool. Helemaal opnieuw beginnen.

-- Nee, ik wil niet. Wèèèèèè`.

Daar komt de juffrouw al aan.

-- Heb ik dan echt wat verkeerds gegeten, dokter ? Ik voel me zo vreemd in mijn hoofd.

Ja, piraten met pyama's. Het zijn nu gewoon pyama's.

-- Wat heb ik dan gegeten ? Ik weet niks meer.

Gelukkig dat ik alles nog weet. U had laatst uw vrouw op gegeten, en toen ook een kind.

-- Een kind ? Geen wonder dat het nu zo slecht met me gaat en met m'n geheugen.

Ja, en een dier nog opgegeten. Daarom bent u nu dement.

-- Wordt ik wel goed opgevangen dan ?

Jawel hoor, de juffrouw zal goed voor u zorgen.

-- Hoef ik dan niet allemaal moeilijke dingen te doen ?

Nee hoor, alleen hele makkelijke dingen, zoals kleuren, schrijven, knippen en plakken.

-- Ook tekenen ?

Ja, dat ook, en schilderen.

-- Nou schilderen liever niet. Dat lijkt me zo moeilijk.

En varkentjes maken.

-- Varkentjes maken ? Nee, dat wil ik niet.

Jawel, heel eenvoudig hoor. De juffrouw helpt.

-- Gaan we ook liedjes zingen ?

Nee, dat niet. Er valt niet veel te zingen. Het is geen feest.

-- Waarom niet ?

Nou ja, omdat we zo'n groot man als u zijn verloren.

-- Oh ja, nou, ik kan me er niks meer van herinneren. Hoe groot was ik dan ?

Wel twee meter, en nu slechts een klein kind. Je past in een poppenwiegje.

-- Nou, dan ben ik wel van mijn voetstuk gevallen.

Dacht het ook. Nou, heb je nog meer moppen te vertellen ?

-- Nee, ik ben wel klaar zo. Wanneer komt de juffrouw ?

Die zit als het goed is in mijn wachtkamer al. Gaat u maar naast haar zitten alvast.

-- Tsjonge, wat leuk.

Fijn dat u er blij mee bent, ik bedoel je. Ik kan geen u meer zeggen natuurlijk.

-- Nou hartelijk dank, dokter, dat u het werk van me wil overnemen. Dat is een hele opluchting. Kan ik eindelijk weer eens kind zijn.

Werd wel tijd. Nou, pyamaatje aan en vertrekken. Het is alweer bijna kinderbedtijd.

-- Pyamaatje ? Waren het geen piraten ? Ach nee, ach nee, ik bazel maar wat.

Einde

Het Gele Gevaar

Pas op voor het gele gevaar.

-- Wat is dat, dokter ?

Ik ben het gele gevaar.

-- Nou bedankt voor de waarschuwing dan, dokter. Dan zijn de rollen dus nu wel omgedraaid. Ik ben de dokter nu, want jij bent het gele gevaar.

Nee, nee, nee, dan heb je het verkeerd begrepen.

-- Ik heb helemaal niks verkeerd begrepen. Die spelletjes zijn nu afgelopen. Ik ben nu de dokter, niet jij. Jij bent het gele gevaar.

Wie zegt dat ?

-- Dat komt net uit je mond.

Waar is het bewijs ?

-- Geen bewijs nodig. Ik ben nu toch de dokter, dus ik heb geen bewijs meer nodig.

Belachelijk.

-- Goedzo, houden zo. We gaan hier niet een beetje het gele gevaar lopen spelen.

Maar je weet helemaal niet wat het is.

-- Jawel, je zei daarnet dat jij het was.

Helemaal niet. Ik moest uw oren nog laten uitspuiten.

het prolo steegje

-- Hallo, mag ik even wat vragen. Mijn relatie is net uit, hè, en nu dacht ik : Ik zie u hier nu net lopen, en u lijkt wel een beetje op haar, dus wou ik vragen of wij dan niet samen iets zouden kunnen

proberen, weet je wel, zo van misschien dat het tussen ons klikt, en dat ik dan met jou verder kan.

-Ach, maar meneer, ik ken u helemaal niet. Ik kom u hier voor het eerst tegen in het Prolo steegje. U loopt nogal hard van stapel. Dat kan echt niet hoor.

-- Ja, maar we kunnen het toch proberen ? Nee heb je, en ja kun je krijgen.

-Ach meneer, ik heb echt geen tijd voor deze dingen. Ik heb ook nogal haast. U zult heus wel weer iemand anders vinden.

-- Ja, maar het is al laat en ik heb echt onderdak nodig. Ik ben uit huis gezet en zij heeft al mijn bezittingen in beslag genomen. Ik heb niks meer.

-Nou goed, dan geef ik u wat geld en een fiets. Daar moet u het dan mee doen.

-- Dank u wel mevrouw.

-Zo, hier is het. Nou, goeie reis, hè, en je zal heus wel weer wat leuks vinden.

--Nou, ik heb liever niet iets leuks, maar iets sterks. Ik vind die vrouwen van tegenwoordig zo slap. Ze lopen alleen maar mooi te doen, maar hebben geen sterk karakter. Ze zijn niet sterk.

-Ja, maar meneer, daar kan ik toch ook niks aan doen ?

-- Maar u lijkt me zo'n sterke vrouw. Dat heb ik echt nodig.

-Nou, kom dan maar even met me mee naar boven. Hier woon ik. Dan kun je een douche nemen, en dan geef ik je wat te eten.

-- Nee, alsjeblieft geen eten. Ik voel me tamelijk ziek en misselijk.

-Nou, dan geef ik je een warm bed. Heb je daar wat aan misschien ? Kun je weer aansterken en tot rust komen.

-- Misschien wat water zou helpen. En ligt u dan ook in het bed ?

-Nee, wees maar niet bang. Ik slaap in een ander bed.

-- Gelukkig maar, want dat is wel eng met zo'n sterke vrouw als u.

-Eng ? Nee hoor, ik ben helemaal niet eng. Ik doe geen vreemde dingen. Heeft u nare dingen met uw vorige vrouw meegemaakt dan ?

-- Ik werd soms halfdood wakker.

-Dat is geen pretje. En u weet zeker dat het door haar kwam ?

-- Vrijwel zeker, maar haar zus sliep soms ook bij ons.

-Nou gevaarlijke familie dan. Hier zul je dat echt niet hebben. Ik ben tamelijk vreedzaam.

-- Dus ik mag komen ?

-Nou eigenlijk begin ik me te bedenken. Wat als uw vrouw en haar zus nog steeds naar u op jacht zijn ?

-- Kun je mij beschermen ?

-Nou nee, daar ben ik niet voor. Ik zou gewoon hard fietsen als ik u was. Hier heeft u uw fiets.

-- Ik ben eigenlijk te moe. Kan ik niet één nachtje bij u slapen dan ? Mag zelfs in hetzelfde bed.

-Nou ja, zeg, ik ken u helemaal niet. Ik zit hier een beetje gastvrij te lopen doen, maar heb er nu alweer spijt van.

-- Sorry. Heeft u geen zus dan die misschien wat makkelijker en handiger in deze dingen is ? Ik zoek een beetje een sterke vrouw.

-Probeert u mij nu jaloers te maken ?

-- Misschien. Ik moet toch wat.

-Nou, komt u dan gewoon met mij mee, dan gaan we het proberen.

-- Laat maar, ik zie er vanaf.

-Heeft u nu mijn tijd voor niets lopen verdoen ? Nee, u komt nu gewoon met mij mee. Niet lopen zeuren opeens. U heeft mij in dit avontuur gestort, en ik laat me niet zomaar wegkieperen ineens.

-- Ja, maar ik wil niet.

–Dan had je dat eerder moeten bedenken. Er is nu geen weg terug meer. U gaat nu gewoon met mij mee. Jas uit, warme douche, en dan lekker slapen. Ik zorg voor de rest.

-- Maar wat als ik me bedenk ?

–Meneer, u bent wel heel erg wispelturig. U loopt toch geen spelletjes met mij te spelen hier, hoop ik hè ?

-- Okay, ik vind ook dat u helemaal gelijk hebt. Ik moet mij niet zo aanstellen.

-Goedzo. En hoe gaat ons kind heten ?

-- Melk.

-Melk ?

-- Waarom niet ? Ik heet zelf namelijk Melkert, en dat is mijn achternaam ook.

-Hmmm, Melkert Melkert … zeer charmante naam. Aangenaam met u kennis te maken. Dat dat zo maar kan in zo'n steegje hè. Zou ik normaal gesproken nooit doen, maar u heeft mij wel zo in de maling genomen en beetgehad. Dan kan ik er niet meer onderuit.

-- En u ook.

-Nou ja, misschien zijn we dan echt voor elkaar bestemd. We gaan het in ieder geval proberen.

-- Ik moet nu echt gaan hoor. Mijn vrouw wacht thuis op me, met haar zus.

-Maar u zei net tegen me dat uw relatie uit was en dat u uit uw huis was gezet ?

-- Ja, maar ze zei dat ik terug mocht komen als ik een grote buit zou hebben. Bedankt voor de fiets en het geld.

Einde

van het jongetje en het veulentje
de veulentjeshoeder

Het veulentje moest naar school.
Daar had het veulentje geen zin in.
Het veulentje dacht : Weet je wat ? Ik ga mijn eigen school bouwen.
Maar voor een school heb je natuurlijk schoolboeken nodig,
En zo schreef het veulentje boek na boek, in grote haast.
Dag en nacht ging het door.
Al zwetend en hijgend schreef het veulentje dat het een lieve lust was.
Op een dag was de school klaar, en alle boeken geschreven, maar er kwam niemand.
Geen veulentje wilde zich eraan wagen.
Maar toen kreeg het veulentje een idee.
Hij maakte mooie strikjes, en deed die om de halzen van de andere veulentjes, en zei : 'Nu ben je van mij. En nu ben jij van deze school.'
En de veulentjes vonden de strikjes zo mooi, en het lag zo mooi om hun halzen dat ze het allemaal gingen geloven wat het veulentje zei, en braaf volgden ze het veulentje naar de nieuwe school.
In het land van de veulentjes woonde maar één jongetje.
Hij werd ook wel de veulentjeshoeder genoemd, maar eigenlijk hield hij zich niet met de veulentjes bezig. Hij had wel andere dingen te doen.
Het veulentje dacht dat het jongetje ook wel een strikje nodig had, dus het veulentje ging op pad naar het jongetje toe, en probeerde het strikje om zijn hals te doen.
'Hey,' zei het jongetje, 'wat moet dat daar ? Ik heb jouw strikjes niet nodig. Jij bent maar een veulentje, en ik ben een jongetje.'
Maar het veulentje bleef maar aandringen, en ook andere veulentjes waren meegekomen. Het

jongetje kreeg er nachtmerries van, en op een dag is hij weggerend, diep de bossen in, terwijl de veulentjes hem navolgden. Hij klom toen een grote berg op, maar was al gauw helemaal omsingeld door de veulentjes.
'Weten jullie het dan niet dat jullie maar veulentjes zijn, en ik een jongetje ?' zei het jongetje.
Bovenop de berg hing een touw die zo een wolk inging. Het jongetje klom toen op het touw naar boven, en kwam toen in een wolkenkasteel terecht waar een tovenaar hem aanstaarde. De tovenaar gaf hem toen een pen.
'Hiermee kun je altijd wegvliegen als de veulentjes je lastigvallen,' zei de tovenaar. Toen het jongetje de pen had aangepakt van de tovenaar voelde het alsof hij vleugeltjes kreeg, en hij kon inderdaad vliegen. 'Mooizo,' zei het jongetje. En het jongetje begon te schrijven en te schrijven, en te vliegen naar allerlei andere landen waar de veulentjes niet waren.
En hij bouwde een school en heeft nooit meer last gehad van de veulentjes.

Einde

het kannibalenkamp

Hij was te diep in het bos gekomen. Hier waren indianenstammen, en niet zomaar indianenstammen, maar kannibalenstammen, dus hij moest nog oppassen ook. Hij verborg zich achter een struik. Hij zag rook, en was al dicht bij een kamp gekomen. Hij zag jongetjes in kooien die huilden, smeekten en gilden. Ze wilden niet opgegeten worden, maar de kannibalen waren meedogenloos. Ze dansten om een ketel heen waarin een dik varken zat.

Ineens voelde hij een hand op zijn rug, en voordat hij het wist was hij op de grond geslagen. Het was een dikke vrouw, veel sterker dan hem. Ging hij nu ook opgegeten worden ? Waarom was hij hier eigenlijk gekomen ? Ook hij ging een kooi in, en ook hij gilde, huilde en smeekte, maar de vrouw had geen genade met hem.

Hij zag allemaal valstrikken rondom het kamp waarin de jongetjes misschien in verstrikt waren geraakt, of ze waren net op dezelfde manier gevangen als hem. Oh, was hij nu maar niet zo nieuwsgierig geweest. Maar het was niet echt nieuwsgierigheid. Hij had de jongetjes graag willen redden, maar nu was hij zelf ook gevangen.

Grote dikke kannibaalse vrouwen liepen om zijn kooi heen, veel sterker dan hem. Hij moest toezien hoe mannen en jongens werden geslacht. Er ging een mes in hun nek waardoor ze leegbloedden. Dit zou ook zijn lot zijn als hij niet zou weten te ontsnappen. Ze aten mannenvlees hier. Er werden hier ook kannibaalse huwelijken gesloten waarbij de vrouw haar man opvrat. Oh, was hij maar niet zo diep het bos ingegaan. Op een dag was het zijn beurt. Ze deden heel aardig, alsof het de normaalste zaak van de wereld was. Hoeveel hij ook huilde, gilde en smeekte, het hielp niet. Hij zou geslacht

worden. Een dikke vrouw hield hem vast. Het deed niet eens pijn. Het leek alsof hij al dood was. Hij voelde zichzelf wegzweven in haar armen.

'Juffrouw ?' vroeg hij.

De juffrouw stond voor hem. 'Zat je te dromen ? Was je in slaap gevallen ?'

'Ja, juffrouw,' zei hij suf. 'Ik had een nachtmerrie.'

'Goed,' zei de juffrouw. 'Dan kom jij nu voor de klas staan en dan vertel jij ons je nachtmerrie.'

Hij liep naar voren en begon dapper over zijn nachtmerrie te vertellen. De kinderen lachten hem uit. 'Wat een dromer is het, hè,' zei de juffrouw. Hij voelde zich vreemd. De juffrouw kwam niet eens voor hem op, alsof zij hem ook uitlachte. Hij is toen boos het lokaal uitgegaan, en boos liep hij de school uit, om zo boos het bos in te rennen. Hij was zo boos dat hij naar de kannibalen wilden, en hij hoopte maar dat ze hem op zouden eten, want alles was beter dan die verschrikkelijke school met die verschrikkelijke kinderen en een juffrouw die hem niet hielp.

Einde

Hester en de Koffie Robot

Vader had een donker meisje uit Amerika geadopteerd, Hester. En daarna een blank jongetje, Jaap. Jaap was heel blij met zijn oudere zus. Vader had een moeilijk leven gehad. In de oorlog moest hij vluchten. Ook had hij een hele moeilijke vrouw, maar die stierf vlak na de oorlog. Vader was heel handig. Hester hielp vader veel met het huishouden, en ook Jaap kon veel klusjes.

Vader zette 's nachts altijd het huis onder stroom aan de buitenkant, zodat dieven niet konden binnenkomen. Dat beveiligings-systeem had vader zelf gemaakt. Jaap vond het knap, en ook Hester was trots op vader. Hester was een paar jaar ouder dan Jaap, en Jaap was trots op zijn zus. Hij was blij dat hij in zo'n goed gezin terecht was gekomen, met zo'n goede vader, maar vader was soms erg depressief van de oorlog. Hester en Jaap probeerden hun vader er dan altijd overheen te helpen, maar dat lukte niet altijd. Soms moest de dokter komen, en die gaf aan vader dan medicijnen.

Maar vader begon steeds meer ziek te worden, en Hester nam steeds meer taken van vader over. 'Het laat me niet gaan,' zei vader. 'Hier is geen kruid tegen opgewassen.'

'Jawel joh,' zei Hester. 'We vinden wel wat.'

Hester en Jaap hielden de goede moed erin, ook al raakte hun vader steeds meer aan lager wal. Nu moesten ze voor zichzelf zorgen. Elke dag kookte Hester voor het gezin. Ze begon steeds meer als

een moeder voor Jaap te worden. Ook vriendinnen van Hester hielpen weleens mee in het huishouden. Vader zei dat hij iets wilde uitvinden om hemzelf te helpen. Hij ging daarom soms diep in de nacht naar zijn werkkelder. Dat was eigenlijk het enige wat hij nog kon doen.

Op een ochtend kwam vader stralend uit zijn werkkelder. Hij zei dat hij de oplossing had gevonden. Hij had een robot-moeder gemaakt. Hij zei dat een moeder eigenlijk datgene was wat ontbrak in het gezin. Hij had de robot donker gemaakt, zodat ze een beetje leek op Hester, alsof het Hester's eigen moeder was. Hester vond dat de robot erg mooi was geworden. 'En wat kan ze ?' vroeg Hester schaterlachend.

'Van alles,' zei vader. 'Kijk, er zitten knoppen op. Eentje voor koken, eentje voor afwassen, eentje voor schoonmaken, eentje voor wassen, en eentje voor gezellig kletsen, en nog veel meer.'

'Geweldig,' zei Hester. Ook Jaap was blij met zijn nieuwe moeder. 'Nu is het gezin pas echt compleet,' zei Jaap. 'En het lijkt inderdaad op Hester's moeder. Nu is het alsof vader mijn vader is, en moeder Hester's moeder, en zo zijn wij bij elkaar gekomen.'

Het huis begon nu pas echt op orde te komen, want de robot deed haar werk goed. Ze was ook als een echte moeder. Ze was zorgzaam en hield je in de gaten. Maar ze was absoluut niet te streng. Ze was een droommoeder. Ieder kind zou wel zo'n moeder willen hebben. 's Avonds zaten ze op de bank om naar de tv te kijken. Langzaam begon vader uit zijn depressie te komen. De robot was zo goed gemaakt dat je niet kon zien dat het een robot was. Maar natuurlijk had ze wel knopjes.

Op een dag ging het gezin op vakantie. Robot-moeder ging ook mee. Jaap liep voortdurend gekke bekken te trekken voor de foto's. Niemand kon zo scheel kijken als Jaap. Ook Hester gaf niet om de foto's. Ze keek zo vreemd mogelijk. Ze waren gekomen voor vakantie, niet voor foto's, maar er waren allemaal fotografen. Hester en Jaap vroegen zich af waarom ze zoveel gefotografeerd werden. Vader werkte voor een energie bedrijf die energie opwekte vanuit de zee, en hij was hier tegelijkertijd op zakenreis. Als de onderhandelingen zouden slagen dan zou het land van het gezin geheel op zee energie werken.

Hester en Jaap moesten even wachten in een ander zaaltje toen vader onderhandelingen aan het doen was. Op een gegeven moment hoorden ze luid applaus, en vader kwam glimlachend naar buiten. De onderhandelingen waren geslaagd. Weer waren er fotografen bij, en nu wisten ze waar het voor was.

Toen ze weer thuiswaren ging vader direct naar zijn werkkelder. Iets had hem op een idee gebracht. Hij wilde nu energie proberen op te wekken uit koffie bonen. Hij werkte dag en nacht hier aan door, terwijl Hester en de robot moeder al het huishouden deden. Zo werd de band tussen Hester en haar robot moeder eigenlijk alleen maar hechter. Vaak stonden ze samen af te wassen in de keuken, en hadden dan de diepste gesprekken. Voor Hester was haar robot moeder haar beste vriendin.

Op een dag was het zover. Vader had zijn machine om energie op te wekken uit koffie bonen klaar, en het zou nu voorgesteld worden aan zijn bedrijf. Ze waren er zo erg van onder de indruk dat ze naast zee energie ook koffie energie wilden uitproberen. Als er zee energie werd gebruikt hing er een zee geurtje, en als er koffie energie werd gebruikt hing er een koffie geurtje. Er was ook een schakelaar voor waarmee je het kon wisselen.

Op een dag ging Hester met haar robot moeder het bos in. Ze gingen heel diep, en eigenlijk wilde Hester helemaal niet meer terug. Er stonden wat wigwams, en Hester wilde er in wonen. Haar robot moeder stemde erin toe. Ze zouden hier blijven voorlopig. Vader was toch altijd druk bezig, dus die zou hen niet eens missen. Hester wilde nooit meer terug. Ze liet ook haar vriendinnen komen.

Eén van de moeders van de meisjes vond dit helemaal niet goed, en ze liep helemaal met haar dochter mee naar het wigwammen kamp. Ze begon iedereen enorm uit te foeteren, en het liep allemaal zo hoog op dat de meisjes die moeder begonnen te bekogelen met modder. Toen moest die moeder het wel opgeven, maar ze riep nog wel dat ze de politie erbij zou halen. De meisjes waren hier op bedacht, dus toen zijn ze met de wigwams nog dieper het bos ingegaan, daar waar geen mens ooit zou gaan. 'Laat die politie maar komen,' zei Hester, 'dan zullen ook zij ten onder gaan in het moddergevecht.'

Omdat er vanaf toen vaak helicopters overvlogen zijn ze onder de grond gegaan met hun wigwams, om daar hun kamp te bouwen. Ze gingen zo diep als ze konden en kwamen daar in een andere wereld. Hier schenen veel meer indianen te wonen.

Vader en Jaap vonden het allemaal best. Ze kwamen weleens een kijkje nemen in het ondergrondse indianenkamp. Maar de pret was maar van korte duur. De nazi's waren het land binnengevallen. Ze ontdekten ook de ondergrondse schuilplaats, en iedereen ging in gevangenschap. Vader en Jaap en alle andere indiaanse mannen werden meegenomen om op de trein gezet te worden naar Bergen-Belsen, een concentratie kamp. De meisjes zouden allemaal voor de Duitsers moeten werken in het huishouden. Alleen robot moeder kon ontsnappen. Daar was ze immers een robot voor.

Jaap jammerde in de trein naar Bergen-Belsen. In Bergen-Belsen zouden ze uitgehongerd worden, en er zouden implantaten in hun botten komen. Vader zei : 'Robot moeder zal wel naar de andere robotten gaan, de zee energie robot en de koffie energie robot. Ze staan nog in de kelder en hebben waarschijnlijk nog niet door wat er gaande is, maar robot moeder zal hen wel aan de praat krijgen, en dan zal het niet best zijn voor de Duitsers.'

Hester moest in het huis van een bepaalde Duitse officier werken, en ze foeterde hem uit.

Het was verschrikkelijk in het concentratie kamp. Jaap en vader kregen bijna niets te eten. 'Ze mogen wel opschieten,' jammerde Jaap. 'Inderdaad, ze zijn wel laat,' zei vader.

'Wat gaan ze met ons doen, vader, die nazi's ?' vroeg Jaap.

'Laten we het daar maar niet over hebben,' zei vader.

Inmiddels was Hester in gevecht geraakt met de Duitse officier, maar werd toen door anderen onder schot gehouden. Ze wist niet waar haar vriendinnen waren. Hester moest nu haar werk wel doen, ook al wilde ze niet. Ze zeiden dat ze haar zouden doodschieten als ze het werk niet zou doen.

Opeens werd er op het raam getikt. Het was robot moeder. Ook waren de zee energie robot en de koffie energie robot meegekomen. 'Robot moeder !' riep Hester terwijl ze opkeek van het vloeren dweilen. De Duitsers die bij Hester stonden om haar in de gaten te houden keken heel verbaasd. 'Wie is die vrouw ?' mopperden ze.

'Dat is mijn moeder !' riep Hester blij.

'Wat moet die nu hier !' riep een Duitser. De robotten begonnen het raam in te slaan en kwamen toen binnen door het venster. 'Wat krijgen we nu !' riep de Duitse officier. 'Kunnen jullie niet gewoon door de deur naar binnen komen ?'

'Nee,' zei de koffie energie robot. Hij richtte zijn arm op de Duitse officier en spoot koffie electriciteit op de man af die gelijk onder zware stroom stond. 'Nee !' gilde de Duitse officier. 'Niet

doen !'

'En dan is er koffie,' zei de koffie energie robot. Toen gaf hij ook de andere Duitsers een optater met de koffie stroom. Ze werden tegen de muur geslingerd en hun haren stonden recht overeind. 'Nou, wat waren dat voor spelletjes !' riep de koffie energie robot.

Hester was heel blij. Toen gingen ze met z'n allen naar Bergen-Belsen. Toen de robotten het concentratie kamp binnenkwamen was er direct grote paniek bij de Duitsers. Ze werden allemaal onder zware koffie stroom gezet en weggeslingerd. Jaap en vader keken verheugd op. 'Eindelijk zijn ze gekomen,' zei Jaap.

'Ja, eindelijk,' zei vader.

afstandswaarde

Ik kocht haar bij mijn oom in de speelgoed winkel.
Het was speelgoed, een pop.
Na een tijdje was het speelgoed stuk.
Ik kwam erachter dat ik zelf ook speelgoed was.
Mijn oom bracht het speelgoed naar een man in zijn stad, maar het kon niet meer hersteld worden.
Ik heb dit tijdenlang geloofd.
Totdat ik op een dag naar Gepetto de poppenmaker ben gegaan, en hij herstelde het speelgoed, zowel mij als haar.
Maar toch kon het niet altijd goed gaan zo.
Gepetto vertelde me dat ze slechts een boek was.
En zo was ze geen speelgoed meer, maar een boek op mijn plank.
Soms lees ik erin en leg het dan weer weg.
Wij kunnen niet met elkaar.
Ik moet de verhalen lezen en begrijpen.
Alleen op een afstand heeft het waarde.

Omulgaam

Omulgaam ging op zijn bootje over een rivier door de hei.
Hij had een neertooi op en zijn boot was een neerboot.
Je zult denken : Wat betekent dat ? Neer ?

Omdat Omulgaam altijd mindert, altijd neergaat.
Niet op dan ?
Soms, maar meestal neer.
Altijd maar weer gaat hij neer.
Totdat de zon opkomt, en hij opstaat.
Omulgaam is daarom een echt droommannetje.
Neer, neer, neer, zegt hij.
En alles wat hij heeft is gemaakt van neer.
Wat is neer dan precies ?
Het groeit ergens in de bomen, maar waar weet ik niet.
De volgende keer als ik hem tegenkom moet ik het hem maar eens vragen.
Altijd als ik neerga dan kom ik hem wel ergens tegen.
Op zijn neerboot gaat hij, met zijn neertooi, als een echte indiaan.
Dan beantwoord hij de vragen van hen die neer zijn gegaan.
Maar soms beantwoord hij ze niet.
Soms geeft hij ze eerst wat neerspeelgoed.
Wie met het neerspeelgoed speelt zal altijd neergaan.
En dan zullen ze zelf het antwoord ontdekken.
Want Omulgaam is echt niet altijd goed aanwezig.
Soms is hij een beetje dromerig, of teveel neer.
En dan zegt hij : Het neerspeelgoed zal het werk wel doen.
Neer, neer, neer, totdat de zon opkomt, misschien wel met wat antwoorden, of misschien wel niet, om eerst nog dieper neer te gaan.
Waar woont Omulgaam dan ?
Ik zou het niet weten.
Als ik de volgende keer neerga dan zal ik het hem eens vragen.
Of vraag het hem zelf.
Als je geluk hebt geeft hij je twee antwoorden op één vraag.
Beproef je geluk op dit orakel van de natuur.
Het is niet altijd leuk om neer te gaan, maar het heeft wel waarde.
Elke avond gaan we neer om tot Omulgaam te gaan, het natuur orakel.
Maar zorg dat je neer genoeg gaat, anders mis je de trein.
Kom tot de neerboot, of de neertrein, en zorg dat je je neertooi draagt.
Hij spreekt alleen met indianen als hij.

Soms heeft hij zijn tooi niet op.
Soms loopt hij te bedriegen.
Soms is hij niet helemaal goed bij zijn hoofd.
Soms moet ook hij weer neergaan.
Soms moet hij ook weer terug in de doos.
Omulgaam, het is me een ding.
Ik kocht het eens bij mijn oom in de speelgoedwinkel.
Ik ging er goed mee neer.
Maar alles heeft zijn keer.

Er gaan geruchten dat hij in 't neerland woont.
Maar zeker weten doe ik 't niet, zeker weten doe ik niet,
want soms lijkt hij overal boven te zijn,
schietende met zijn hongerpistool.
Sommigen zeggen : hij woont in 't hongerland.
Maar zeker weten doe ik 't niet, want ik heb hem zien vreten, vreten,
Hongermagen vol.

't Is de honger dat hij eet, zeggen ze dan,
Maar mag je dan zoveel van de honger eten ?
Hij eet van de hongerboom,
Duizend blaadjes zuiverkool,
Hij eet van gat en holle,
van put en lazarus gal,
Wat een smerige bende,
De keuken van die kwal.
't Is alles honger wat je ziet,
Het druipt van zijn daken af,
En hij gebruikt het als wapen.

Ja, misschien woont hij in 't hongerland,
misschien woont hij in 't hongerland,
maar dit zijn allemaal slechts verhalen,
zekerheden hebben we niet.

't Omulgaam groeit in de bomen, zeggen ze dan.
Ik zeg ik weet nergens van.
Ik hoef hem ook hier niet te hebben,
Het lazarus schip heeft mij soms in de ban …
Ik kan mezelf soms aardig tegenspreken …
Twee antwoorden op een vraag zeg ik dan …
't Omulgaam groeit me in 't hart,
Vurig als de lazarus boom …
Vurig als het goud van terre,
't Neergoud wel te verstaan,
't goud wat 't niet langer houdt …
Hij is immers het hongermannetje, het droommannetje …
En de hongeroorlogen schuilen in zijn hoed en in zijn schoen …

Cowboyman is hij ook nog wel,
Als hij het indiaantje spelen zat is …
Ja spuugzat … Dan keert hij zich tegen zichzelf …
't Omulgaam is niet in een kistje of kastje te krijgen,
't Verspringt telkens weer als springstof …
'k Denk dat ik het maar aan oom terug ga brengen …
Maar oom droomt … van 't Omulgaam …
Hij heeft het zelf eens gemaakt …

Ik kocht het eens, en nu kleeft het …
Ik kan er niet mee werken, ik kan er niet mee omgaan,
De hongeroorlogen trekken me altijd weer uit elkaar ...

Ze lachten mij uit met mijn Omulgaam speelgoed.
Ha ha ha, zeiden ze, hij speelt met meisjesspeelgoed, zo kinderachtig en dwaas.
Ze pakten het van me weg en gingen ermee overgooien.

Maar oh wee, oh wee, Omulgaam was er niet blij mee.
Hij pakte ze op en smeet ze tegen een boom,
En toen pakte hij ze weer op, en smeet ze tegen de muur.

Nu is Omulgaam torenwachter,
En marcheert op de muren.

Ik zei : Omulgaam, waar ben je mee bezig, jongen ?
Maar niemand kon Omulgaam stoppen.

In de nachten is hij op de toppen van de golven.
Weldra zal hij overweldigen, alle landen die zijn speelgoed niet hebben verstaan.

liverpool

Voornamelijk in de weekenden had ik het gevoel alsof alles dubbel was, en telkens weer verdwenen er stoeptegels op de stoepen in de stad, en de mensen die erop stonden gleden gewoon weg in het niets. Waren de buitenaardsen gekomen ? Er waren verder geen ufo's, maar alleen dit verschijnsel, en het was vreemd genoeg. Er was grote paniek. Velen durfden de straten niet meer op. Het dreef de mens naar binnen.

Dit verschijnsel was soms zo sterk dat hele steden verdwenen.

Het verschijnsel dreef mij en mijn vrouw de wildernis in met onze twee kinderen. Mijn vrouw droeg de twee kinderen, maar de jongste viel in een diepe inham. Ik klom naar beneden en vond boeken. Ik vroeg aan mijn vrouw of ik eerst de boeken naar boven moest brengen of het kind. Mijn vrouw wees toen verderop in de inham en zei : 'Ze ligt in Liverpool.'

Ik werd wakker van de droom, en vroeg me af of een boek meer waarde heeft dan een kind, of dat het boek de ziel van het kind is ? Ik viel weer in slaap. Waren we misschien te diep in de wildernis gegaan ? Mijn vrouw en ik keerden terug en we deden spelletjes op de matras. Ik had de boeken nu. En zo had ik het kind. Ik was in Liverpool geweest. En ik ontwaakte ook van deze droom.

verhalen uit de tweede bijbel

Het Sebek Boek

Niet voor de Verkoop

HET SEBEK BOEK

verhalen uit de tweede bijbel

COAB

1970-2022

Stewardes in het Oerwoud

Ik sprak met de stewardes.
Nee, het kon allemaal niet doorgaan.
De vorige keer was ik te diep het oerwoud in gegaan, en dat had mij problemen gegeven, en hun verzekering kon het niet betalen, en ik mocht niet meer mee.
Ik schold haar uit voor rotte vis.
Ik wilde haar baas spreken.
Zelfde verhaal.
Later biechte ze iets op, dat ze wat in mijn koffie hadden gegooid.
Een pilletje ofzo.
Wat wilden ze niet vertellen.
Gelukkig had ik het telefoon gesprek opgenomen.

Ik sprak weer met die stewardes.
Zei dat ik haar baas had gesproken, en die had wat in mijn koffie gestopt.
Zij wilde dat niet geloven.
Ik zei dat ik het gesprek had opgenomen, maar toen ze het hoorde zei ze dat het nep was.
Je komt nergens bij deze reis organisatie en al helemaal niet met hun verzekering.
Je betaalt er alleen dik voor, maar ja, ik was over de streep gegaan volgens hen, en hun baas had iets in mijn koffie gestopt, maar toen ze het gingen navragen werd alles ontkent.
Ik heb de opnames, maar die zijn volgens hen nep.

Dit reis bureau, ik heb er flinke koppijn van overgehouden, of is het van die koffie ?
En wat hebben ze er doorheen gegooid ?
Als ik er vroeger met mijn oma en tante naartoe ging, dan werden ze allemaal zenuwachtig. We werden verschrikkelijk in de gaten gehouden. Ze deden alsof wij criminelen waren die hen wilden overvallen. Dat zeiden ze dan wel niet letterlijk, maar hun gedrag naar ons was paranoïde, alsof we zware wapens bij ons hadden ofzo. Mijn oma en ik moesten er toen nog om lachen, maar nu lach ik niet meer.

Te ver het oerwoud ingegaan, dus daarom werkte de verzekering niet meer.
Ik had netjes aan de lijn moeten blijven als een hond.
Daar betaal ik niet voor.
Ik had ook eerder terug moeten zijn ofzo.
Maar ja, dat kan dus niet als je diep in het oerwoud wordt vastgehouden.
Verzekering betaalde het niet, maar kon ik het helpen dat ik zo diep het oerwoud was ingegaan.
Wat kun je doen tegen een ontvoering ?
Hadden ze ook allemaal excuses voor.
Ik weet wel zeker dat die baas van hen erachter zit. Zei doodleuk dat ze wat in mijn koffie had gedaan. En daarna alles ontkennen. Ze proberen je gewoon gek te maken.

Ik heb de opname nog steeds, op een bandje, maar volgens hen heb ik dat zelf gedaan met stemmetjes. Alsof ik zelf alles heb lopen plakken. Ja, bandjes aan elkaar lopen plakken, en dingen wegknippen. Zo konden zij het ook. Dat zeiden ze. Toen kwamen ze met allerlei bandjes opzetten met dingen die ik nooit had gezegd, bedreigingen enzo, en andere zwaar overdreven bekentenissen. Het leek wel op mijn stem, maar het was niet mijn stem. Toch vroeg ik me af hoe ze het gedaan hadden. Toen begonnen ze me te chanteren met die bandjes, en ze zeiden dat ze nog wel meer bandjes hadden, met video opnames enzovoorts. Ik ben toen maar weggegaan. Ik was er helemaal klaar mee. Naar een ander reis bureau gegaan, maar wilden ze niet hebben, waren al ingelicht. Werd weer gechanteerd. Moest het maar niet meer proberen bij reis bureau's, enzovoorts. Ik ben er toen allemaal maar mee gestopt, en ging toen zelf op

wereldreis. Zeilbootje, hup. Niemand meegenomen. Was met iedereen klaar. Ik werd toch niet geloofd. Het reis bureau zou het wel weten.

Ging weer terug naar dat oerwoud. Kwam ik ergens daar in die rimboe die stewardes weer tegen. Ik zei : 'Hey, jou ken ik. Wat moet je hier ?' Gaf toen toe dat ze ook ontvoerd was, en probeerde haar weg weer terug te vinden. Ik zei mij niet gezien. Ze wilde mij niet geloven, en niet helpen, en nu zat ze dus in hetzelfde schuitje, maar daar was ik allang uitgesprongen. Ik had het schip verlaten voordat het zonk. Toen werd ze me toch een partijtje kwaad, maar ik was niet om te praten natuurlijk. Ik moest haar maar helpen, zei ze. Begon ze mij allemaal om informatie te vragen, en ik kwam weer terug bij het verhaal over dat bandje, van die baas die had gezegd dat er wat in mijn koffie was gestopt. Was waarschijnlijk ook bij haar gebeurd. Ze vroeg zich af waarom. Kan van alles wezen, zei ik. Ik zei toen ook dat ze nep bandjes van mij hadden gemaakt. Daar wist ze van. Ik vroeg haar hoe ze het gedaan hadden, maar zij wist het niet. Zei dat ze nu aan mijn kant stond. Ik zei dat ik niet aan haar kant stond.

Ik zei de verzekering zou haar niet betalen.
Het was allemaal een complot.
Dat wist ze.
Hoefde ik haar niet meer te vertellen.
Ze wist ook dat haar baas niet pluis was.
Een beetje laat, zei ik.
Ik wilde doorlopen, maar ze hield me tegen.
Toen trok ze haar kleren uit, en zei laten we hier wonen.

Ik duwde haar weg, maar ze hield vol.
Ik heb het toen maar zo gelaten.
Ik vertrouwde haar niet, maar een stewardes in het oerwoud die alles voor je wil doen kan van pas komen.
Ik zou haar gewoon terug laten betalen, en dan zou ik wel verder zien.

Bouw voor ons een hut, of maak een tent, kan mij het schelen, droeg ik haar op.

En zorg dat we voldoende te vreten hebben.
Ze ging direct aan de slag.
'Ik werk voor jou nu,' zei ze.
'Nooit meer voor dat stomme reis bureau.'

'Ik ben nu jouw reis bureau,' zei ik tegen haar.
'Mag je achter het loketje zitten, terwijl ik de hort op ga.
En zorg dat het eten klaar is als ik weer terug ben.'

En dat was het. Ik wilde geen tijd met haar verdoen.
Ik ben er gewoon vandoor gegaan, liet haar gewoon wachten zoals ze mij vroeger deden wachten.
Als het goed is wacht ze nu nog steeds.

Het Eiland in de Zee

Hij ondernam de tocht, en ging op zijn zeilschip de zee over. Het was prachtig weer, wat al snel overliep in een regenbui. Helemaal drijfnat kwam hij aan op een eiland na een lange tijd zeilen. Het was een prachtig eiland. Het leek wel alsof de bomen hem toewuifden. Hij legde aan op een strandje en stapte uit de boot. Een donkere vrouw met een rieten rokje liep op hem af. Ze was direct heel gastvrij, en verwelkomde hem op het eiland, en nodigde hem uit tot haar

hut te gaan. Hij keek zijn ogen uit in het prachtige oerwoud. Ze gingen over een zandpad en het zand brandde onder zijn voeten. Na een tijdje kwamen ze aan bij haar hut. Het was een eenvoudige hut. Ze zei dat ze hem later ook wel het hele eiland kon laten zien. Hij had deze gastvrijheid niet verwacht. Het had ook heel anders kunnen gaan, namelijk door een pijl in zijn rug. Toch was hij op zijn hoede. Je wist immers maar nooit. Het kon ook een valstrik zijn.

Het eiland was grotendeels onbewoond. Het was dus ook een overlevings strategie van de vrouw waarom ze zo deed. Na een tijdje bracht ze hem weer naar buiten, en liet hem de wildernis zien. Er waren hier prachtige rivieren met prachtig hoog gras, en daarachter wildernis. Hij vroeg hoe ze hier leefde. Ze zei dat ze helemaal alleen was, maar dat er een klein kampje was ergens op het eiland wat ze soms bezocht. Ze was vroeger deel van het kamp, maar ze hadden ruzie gekregen, en ze kwam erachter dat ze beter op haarzelf kon leven. Ze ging soms naar de stam toe puur om te overleven.

Naar mate hij haar beter leerde kennen kwam hij erachter dat ze helemaal niet zo makkelijk was in de omgang. Ze had vele gezichten. Het was sinds hij was ingegaan op haar aanbod dat ze hem steeds respectlozer ging behandelen. Ze was nog steeds heel erg gastvrij, maar ze begon hem steeds meer te kleineren. Dat lag er echt niet dik bovenop in het begin, maar meer subtiel. Het was alsof ze hem steken onder water gaf, en het dan weer afdekte met een doek. Dan kon ze ineens weer heel aardig doen.

Op een bepaalde manier was hij in een worsteling met haar, een psychologische worsteling. Het lag er niet dik bovenop, maar het was onderhuids. Tegelijkertijd genoot hij van de pracht van het eiland, hoe het hem stimuleerde en inspireerde. Hij was even weg van alles en van zijn verleden.

Ze hield hem af van het ontmoeten van de stam verderop het eiland, en hij wist niet waarom. Ze zei dan wel dat ze niet gemakkelijk waren, maar dat was zij ook niet. Beiden bleven ze kalm in hun gesprekken met elkaar, misschien ook omdat ze telkens werden afgeleid door de prachtige natuur om hen heen en de geluiden van het oerwoud. Soms begreep hij haar niet en wist hij niet of ze hem nu probeerde te beledigen of dat ze wat anders bedoelde. Soms kon hij

het niet opbrengen om verder door te vragen, wilde hij in de rust blijven, maar soms bracht dat ook een bepaalde rusteloosheid. Het leek wel alsof er competitie heerste tussen hen op een bepaalde manier.

Eigenlijk wilde hij weg van haar, en de stam waar ze het over had ontmoeten, of gewoon ergens anders op het eiland de tijd verdrijven, maar hij voelde alsof ze iets van hem had gestolen wat hij terugwilde. Hij kon niet weg. Dat wat zij van hem had gestolen, daar kon hij niet zonder leven. Ze had dus al een zekere macht over hem. Toch wilde hij hier niet aan toegeven, en zei dat hij weer verder wilde, of naar die stam, of ergens anders op het eiland. Hij bedankte haar al voor de gesprekken en de gastvrijheid, maar toen wilde zij dat hij zou blijven. Toen kon hij het ook niet over zijn hart krijgen om weg te gaan. De dagen erna werd ze eigenlijk steeds moeilijker, maar ook steeds aardiger, en die combinatie werd in principe gewoon dodelijk. Hij voelde dat hij psychologisch vast kwam te zitten door haar, door haar opmerkingen, alsof zij hem had verlamd.

Hij wist dat hij goed in de problemen was nu. Hij had snoep genomen van vreemden waarvoor zijn moeder hem altijd gewaarschuwd had. Hij was in een exotische valstrik van het eiland gelopen, van het oerwoud. Hij verdedigde zich niet naar haar, want hij wist dat het dan alleen maar erger kon worden, alsof hij dan in de fuik werd getrokken, en ze probeerde altijd ook een hele hoop goed te praten.

Ze vermoeide hem, en daardoor werd hij afhankelijk van haar. Zij moest nu voor hem zorgen. Hij was in een gevaarlijke situatie terecht gekomen. Hij voelde zich ziek, alsof hij vergiftigd was, en hij was helemaal alleen in het oerwoud met haar. Ze betuttelde hem ook, sprak telkens met verklein-woordjes. Ze bemoederde hem, maar was ook een slinkse vijand. Hij moest telkens op zijn hoede zijn. Op een dag kon hij niet meer verder. Hij kon alleen nog maar neerliggen.

Ze zou wat soep voor hem maken, met allerlei exotische vruchten er doorheen. Die zouden erg krachtig en pittig zijn, en die zouden hem wel genezen. Hij dacht er ook aan dat hij misschien niet bestand was tegen het leven in het

oerwoud en tegen zulke vrouwen als zij. Maar de soep deed hem goed, en zo hield zij hem aan het lijntje. Ze was niet extreem, maar subtiel. Het liep ook nooit uit op een echte ruzie tussen hen, maar er was wel een onzichtbare oorlog. Langzaam voelde hij zich weer beter. Het was alsof zij hem ook weer optrok, maar na de problemen die zij hem had gegeven. Zo werd haar machtspositie nog meer versterkt in zijn leven. Hij begon er aan gewend te raken, en het gaf een bepaald vertrouwen. Toch wist hij dat het een gokspel was, want ze zou hem zo aan zijn lot kunnen overlaten.

Ze lokte hem dieper in haar wereld, als een zoet vergif, waarvoor hij telkens weer een medicijn nodig had, en dat was zij. Het was als een vreemde medicijnen of drugs verslaving, maar waren alle vriendschappen en relaties niet zo ? Hij dacht dat het gewoon bij het leven hoorde, en het gaf hem grote afleiding. Zijn verleden was niet al te best, en zo had hij even wat anders. Hij raakte meer en meer geïnteresseerd in haar als persoon. Hij wilde haar verleden kennen, hoe ze zo was geworden, haar geheimen, en misschien zou hij haar ook kunnen helpen. Niets was vrijblijvend hier in ieder geval. Voor elk woord wat van haar tong droop moest hij zwaar betalen, als voor zeldzame honing. Het werd een obsessie voor hem waarvan hij niet meer kon loskomen. Zij was als televisie in het oerwoud.

Zij leerde hem overleven in het oerwoud. Zij leerde hem alles. Zij liet hem een totaal nieuw leven zien, en al snel vroeg hij zich af waar hij zich in eerste instantie druk over had gemaakt. Misschien was het zijn voorzichtigheid, zijn ingebouwde alarm. Alles had tijd nodig. Ook dit.

Hij genoot met haar van het oerwoud en van de zee. Soms gingen ze zwemmen. Het leek wel alsof het oerwoud en de zee tussen hen beiden in was, om hun vriendschap gezond te blijven houden. Hij kon telkens alles afspoelen. Er was telkens teveel afleiding om hen heen om echt totaal verloren te raken in elkaar. Misschien zou het in de stad helemaal verkeerd zijn gelopen, zouden ze dan te dicht bij elkaar op de lip hebben gezeten, en zou het oerwoud niet tussen beiden kunnen komen wanneer dat nodig was. De natuur beschermde hem ook tegen al te zware depressie en wanhoop. De golven spoelden alles weg. Het zoute water was telkens zijn genezing, en zo kon hij haar ook telkens

weer op nieuwe manieren bekijken en tegemoet treden. De natuur werkte zo aan hun vriendschap.

Op een dag bracht zij hem naar de stam op het eiland. Hij zag direct wat ze bedoelde. De vrouwen liepen daar bijna zenuwachtig rond met hun speren, agressief. Ze begonnen hem direct uit te schelden en kleinerende opmerkingen te maken. Er was hier geen politie op het eiland, dus ze zouden hem zo kunnen aanvallen. Ze hadden een zeker respect voor de vrouw die bij hem was, dus daarom deden ze het niet, maar ze dreigden. Ze zagen hem als een indringer. Ze waren veel te direct. Ze waren een deel van haar leven, en ze werden dus ook een deel van zijn leven, maar hij kon goed begrijpen waarom ze vaak afstand hield. Het eiland was eigenlijk te groot om zich druk te maken over hen. Hij had genoeg afleiding en ze hadden hen nauwelijks nodig. De vrouw ging er steeds minder vaak naartoe sinds hij er was.

Ze verzonnen hun eigen spelletjes in het oerwoud, zodat ze niet telkens hoefden te spreken. Het bracht ook wat avontuur in hun leven, alhoewel het zwemmen in de zee, of een trektocht door het oerwoud al avonturen op zich waren. Soms deden ze hardloop spelletjes, tikkertje of speelden ze verstoppetje, als tijdverdrijf. Zo leerden ze elkaar ook op een andere manier kennen. Hij wilde haar psychologische diepte kennen. Hij merkte dat het leren kennen van elkaar steeds trager ging, en dat ze in cirkeltjes terechtkwamen. Ergens liep alles vast en werd het routine. Hij besefte toen ook dat de geheimen waar hij naar op zoek was niet slechts in haar te vinden waren, maar ergens anders in de veel grotere natuur. Daarom is hij op een dag naar zijn zeilboot gegaan en trok verder de zee over tot een volgend eiland.

Het Sebek-Mysterie

Theologische Thriller

1. De scheuring

2. Gemengde gevoelens

3. De gastspreker

4. De verschijning

5. De exorcist

6. De strijd

7. De Inodus

8. De muur

9. De Sebek-profeet

10. De gebeds-avond

11. Het Sebek-kruis

12. De arrestatie

13. Het eiland van Bastet

Hoofstuk 1. De scheuring

Ewald zit in een charismatische gemeente. Vroeger was het een pinkstergemeente, maar het begon meer en meer uit te bloeien tot een charismatische gemeente. Ewald weet niet zo goed wat hij er allemaal van moet denken. Hij voelde zich er veel beter bij toen de gemeente nog als een conservatieve pinkstergemeente functioneerde. Ewald mocht ook wel eens preken, vanwege zijn diepe bijbelkennis en ervaring. Ewald had het niet zo op al dat geprofeteer. Ewald had dat nog nooit gedaan, en zou dat ook niet zo snel doen. Profetie was voor hem meer een zaak van noodgevallen, en niet van dagelijks of wekelijks brood. Ook de oudste voorganger had het niet zo op met de nieuwe veranderingen.

Er waren drie voorgangers in de gemeente. Alhoewel Ewald wel eens had gepredikt was hij geen voorganger. Ewald was diep bevriend met de oudste voorganger. De oudste voorganger was degene die de gemeente heel vroeger had opgericht. Vaak vroeg hij raad aan Ewald.

Op een dag kwam de oudste voorganger bij Ewald op bezoek. 'Ewald, ik moet je even spreken. Het gaat om de gemeente. Ik ben helemaal niet blij met de nieuwe ontwikkelingen. Er wordt nauwelijks nog in de Bijbel gelezen, en alles draait om zogenaamde nieuwe profetieen. Ik heb er een hard hoofd in. Ik vind dat ik moet ingrijpen.' Ewald was het helemaal met de oudste voorganger eens.

Alles ging nogal snel, en al gauw was er een scheuring. De fanatieke charismatici konden vertrekken, en zij zouden een nieuwe gemeente bouwen. De oudste voorganger zou zijn gemeente weer maken tot de gemeente die het was, gewoon een oude conservatieve pinkstergemeente. Ewald was opgelucht. Nu zou er gelukkig weer wat meer uit het Woord gelezen worden. Het vastgelegde Woord was voor Ewald namelijk een rustbaken. In de nieuwe dienst werd alles nog eens grondig uitgelegd. De oudste voorganger wees met zijn vinger in de lucht en zei dat fanatieke profeten en andere fantasten in zijn kerk niet welkom waren. Hij sprak uit dat hij had gehoopt dat ze konden samenwerken. Hij had het lange tijd met hen geprobeerd, maar er kwam volgens hem steeds meer onrust in zijn gemeente. Ewald knikte.

Na de toespraak die ruim een half uur duurde stond er een bebaarde man achter in de zaal op en begon luid te klappen. Niemand kende de man. Ewald had hem ook hier nog nooit gezien. Toen er ruimte was voor getuigenissen kwam de man naar voren. 'Wat een geweldige gemeente is dit. Ik kom uit Egypte, en ik heb in mijn groep soortgelijke dingen meegemaakt. Er is niks verkeerd met profetie, maar zodra het ons van het pad afbrengt, dan kunnen we er beter mee stoppen.'

Toen kwam de oudste voorganger weer naar voren, en sprak : 'Nou ja, stoppen hoeft natuurlijk niet, maar met mate, en heenwijzend naar de oude paden.' Verder verwelkomde hij de man in de gemeente. Zijn vader was een Egyptenaar, en hij had nooit de kans gehad om hem te spreken. Dit vond hij dus allemaal erg interessant. 'Zeg, vertel ons eens iets over Egypte, en die

groep waartoe u behoort of behoorde ?' vroeg de oudste voorganger.

De man met de baard sprak urenlang over Egypte, en over de band tussen het Woord en Egypte, en de aanwezigen luisterden vaak met open mond. Ook de voorgangers vonden het erg interessant. Maar zij hadden niet in de gaten waar de toespraak hen naartoe zou leiden. Toen de dienst na uren was afgelopen wilden velen de man met de baard spreken. Maar deze was snel vertrokken, om nooit meer terug te komen. Een jaar later kwam de oudste voorganger er toevallig achter wat er met hem was gebeurd ... geschept door een auto ... door een dronken automobilist.

Hoofdstuk 2. Gemengde gevoelens

De oudste voorganger was erg verdrietig. Hij besloot speciaal een dienst te wijden aan deze treurig omgekomen vriend. Sindsdien was er altijd een groot respect voor Egypte. De gemeente had wat nare ervaringen met profetie, maar na enige tijd werd er in de diensten toch weer wat kleine ruimte gemaakt voor hen die wilden profeteren. Alle profetieen moesten natuurlijk door de voorgangers en door de gemeente-leden goed getoetst worden, maar de oudste voorganger vond het erg belangrijk dat de gemeente zich zou openstellen naar wat God hen te zeggen had. Tijdens de daartoe ingelaste 'profetische tijd' stond er een man op achter in de zaal, en begon te profeteren. Het waren wat vage en wazige woorden, en men wist niet zo goed wat men er mee aan moest. Dienst na dienst stond de man op om zijn profetische gaven te vertonen. Wat kon die man praten, zeg, maar hij begon wel steeds meer het Woord erbij te betrekken, en daarom lieten de voorgangers het altijd weer toe. De man was altijd een wat stille persoonlijkheid geweest, die zich vaak op de achtergrond begaf, maar wel goed meehielp met de organisatie van het kerk zijn, zoals de afwas, de schoonmaak, het ordenen. Hij was al geruime tijd een helper van de koster. De man bleek ook een Egyptische vader te hebben, net als de oudste voorganger, met het verschil dat de man een erg goed en diep contact had met z'n vader. Z'n ouders waren gescheiden, maar hij zocht hen beiden nog vaak op. Het viel iedereen op dat hij het in zijn profetieen vaak over Egypte had. Dit tot groot genoegen van de oudste voorganger. Ewald was minder onder de indruk. Ewald was bang geworden dat Egypte de plaats zou

innemen van het Joodse Volk.

Na een zekere dienst waarin Egypte weer duidelijk op de voorgrond stond wilde Ewald met de oudste voorganger spreken. 'In alle respect,' zei Ewald toen ze even later in het kamertje van de oudste voorganger zaten : 'Ik heb het niet zo op al die Egyptische profetieen. Ze wijken mij teveel af van de kern. Hebben we niet voor niets een exodus gehad om ons hiervan los te maken ? Niet alleen het hele Egypte-concept stoort mij, maar ook het feit dat alles weer zo profetisch wordt. Kunnen we niet gewoon bij de Bijbel blijven ?' De oudste voorganger knikte direkt. 'Ik denk dat je gelijk hebt, Ewald. Bedankt dat je me daar even op wees. Ik had het zelf niet echt in de gaten, vanwege mijn grote betrokkenheid rondom het verlies van onze Egyptische broeder.'

'Ja, maar wat gaat er nu gebeuren dan ?' vroeg Ewald. 'Ik zal er direkt werk van maken,' zei de oudste voorganger. De diensten daarop werden gehouden zonder de profetische tijd. Niet iedereen voelde zich bij deze verandering op hun gemak, en al snel begonnen er een aantal te morren en te fluisteren. De oudste voorganger wilde eigenlijk een soort compromis sluiten, omdat zijn pinkstergemeente niet per definitie tegen profetie was. Maar Ewald vond : 'Waarom water bij de wijn doen ?' Ewald vond dat profetie, en ook dingen zoals genezing en andere gaven van de Geest behoorden tot het rijtje 'bij uitzondering'. Ewald was lid van de gedachte dat de geestes-uitingen bedoeld waren om de basis van het geloof te leggen. Het behoorde tot het gebied : evangelisatie, om omstanders te overtuigen van het bestaan van God. De daaruit voortvloeiende gemeentes zouden de geestes-uitingen niet meer zo nodig hebben, maar moesten sterk worden in het Woord. Ewald hield niet van al dat zweverig gedoe. 'Met beide benen op de grond blijven,' dat was zijn motto.

Hoofdstuk 3. De gastspreker

Op een dag was er een gastspreker in de gemeente. Deze gastspreker kwam uit een andere pinkstergemeente, en stond bekend als een groot prediker. De preek ging over Genesis, waar er zo lovend over Egypte werd gesproken, waar Jozef onderkoning werd, en waardoor het volk Israel van de hongerdood werd gered. Dit was omdat de farao raadgevende dromen van God had gehad die

door Jozef werden uitgelegd. Vanuit die band tussen Israel en Egypte werd ook het zonnelied tot de Egyptische god Aton in de Joodse Heilige Geschriften opgenomen, omdat de God van Israel en Egypte 'Eén' was in veelvuldigheid. Jozef trouwde met een dochter van de priester van de Egyptische god Osiris of zoals hij vaak genoemd werd : On.

In het boek Exodus zien we een heel andere verhouding tussen Israel en Egypte. Er was in die tijd een andere farao aan de macht, waarvan velen denken dat het Ramses was, die de god van het kwaad, Seth, aanbad. Deze farao was bang voor de militaire macht en consequenties van het Volk Israel. Het leidde tot een breuk tussen deze twee volken.

De preek zette de aanwezigen aan het denken, want wat moest hun verhouding nu zijn tot Egypte ? Moesten ze terug gaan naar Genesis, of moesten ze blijven bij Exodus ? Na afloop mochten er vragen gesteld worden, en de prediker kreeg ook deze vraag te horen. Zijn mening was dat Egypte was gevallen, en dat de band tussen Israel en Egypte, ook op het gebied van godsdienst en regering, maar tijdelijk was. De Exodus was een uittocht uit de slavernij en de macht van het gevallen Egypte, dat het vlees voorstelde. Maar toen stond de man op die helper van de koster was, en die ook Egyptisch bloed had, en vroeg : 'Denkt u dat er in de toekomst behoudenis is voor Egypte, en dat Egypte misschien weer in ere hersteld zou kunnen worden ? Van mijn vader, die Egyptenaar is, hoorde ik dat de Egyptische god Sebek, die voorgesteld wordt als een krokodil, mee zou helpen in de vernietiging van Seth, het kwaad.' Even was het stil. De prediker scheen na te denken. 'Natuurlijk is er behoudenis voor hen die als Egyptenaar tot Christus komen, en daardoor ge-ent worden op de Joodse tak, en dan zal er een nieuw Egypte zijn. Maar wanneer dat zal gebeuren weten wij niet,' sprak de prediker. Maar toen stond Ewald op, en beschuldigde de prediker dat hij probeerde de goden van Egypte op één lijn te zetten met de God van Israel. 'Mijnheer, u maakt uzelf schuldig aan afgoderij. Dat vroeger tijdelijk even de God van Israel ingreep in Egypte had te maken met het feit dat Jozef daar opgesloten zat, maar geenszins was God dezelde als de Egyptische goden. Het was pure noodzaak dat Jozef zich verbond aan het Egyptische huis,' sprak Ewald. 'Voorganger, kunt u dit soort verleiding niet aan de kaak stellen ? Het is bijna gewoon infiltratie.' Maar Ewald werd gesust, en de voorganger maakte een gebaar met z'n handen dat Ewald

weer moest gaan zitten. Later hoorde Ewald dat de prediker in de begintijd veel voor de gemeente had betekent, en dat hij een goede naam had in de conservatieve beweging binnen de pinkstergemeentes, zodat ze hem niet zomaar in het openbaar konden aanklagen als zijnde een verleider. En nogmaals werd Ewald erop gewezen dat de man keurig netjes had vermeld dat het tijdelijk was, zoals de band tussen Israel en Egypte in Genesis werd beschreven, en dat men als gemeente moest leven vanuit de beschikkingen van de Exodus, waaruit de rest van Gods Woord was voortgevloeid.

Maar Ewald liet het er niet bij zitten. Juist omdat de gemeente al zo Egyptisch gestemd was, zag hij dit als een extra bedreiging. En wat zou hieruit voortvloeien ? Ewald was er bang voor dat de volgende stap afgoderij zou betekenen, en dat de Egyptische goden in ere zouden worden hersteld, als de delen Gods. Maar zover was het nog niet. De dienst erna was Ewald er niet. Schriftelijk had hij laten weten niet meer deel te willen zijn van deze Egyptische secte, in zijn ogen. Ook wilde hij niet meer op de hoogte gehouden worden van de activiteiten binnen de gemeente.

Hoofdstuk 4. De verschijning

Op een nacht verscheen Jezus aan Ewald. 'Ewald, Ewald, waarom vervolgt gij Mij,' sprak Jezus, en liet hem Zijn bebloedde handen zien. Ewald voelde zich erg ongemakkelijk. 'Waarom vervolgt gij het volk Egypte,' sprak Jezus. 'Maar Heer,' zei Ewald, 'ik doe alleen wat Uw Woord mij opdraagt. Alleen in Genesis zie ik die band met Egypte, maar U heeft altijd al gewaarschuwd tegen afgoderij.' Toen kwam de Heer dichterbij, en liet tussen het bloed de beenderen van Zijn Handen zien. 'Zie je, Ewald, Mijn botten zijn niet gebroken. Kent gij de hemelse namen en hemelse talen ? Ziet dan, Mijn gebeente is Sebek.'

'Maar Heer ?' sprak Ewald, en begon toen luid te roepen, en te smeken tot Jezus Christus van Nazareth, zijn Heer. 'Ik ben het,' sprak Jezus, 'Ik ben het die gij vervolgt.' En Ewald viel op zijn knieen, en begon de duivel te bestraffen. 'Wat is afgoderij, Ewald ?' sprak Jezus luid.

'Ik ben er niet van overtuigd dat jij de Jezus Christus ben die ik ken,' sprak Ewald giftig. 'Als je een duivel ben, bestraf ik je nu.' Maar weer vroeg de

verschijning : 'Wat is afgoderij, Ewald.'

'Afgoderij is je te bezoedelen met andere goden,' sprak Ewald. 'Ik heb niks tegen Egyptenaren, maar ik zal nooit buigen voor hun goden !' riep Ewald.

'Afgoderij is je eigen natie of een bepaalde natie als superieur te beschouwen. Afgoderij is een god van andere goden te onderscheiden om daarmee te zondigen,' sprak de verschijning.

'O ja ?' zei Ewald spottend, 'Mijn God is de Enige, en ik zal niet buigen voor anderen. Ik heb Eén God, als in zuiver monotheisme. Voor mij is afgoderij meergodendom. Alleen door Jezus Christus hebben wij de Ware God leren kennen.'

En weer kwam de verschijning dichterbij. 'Waarom noem je het 'meergodig' ? Waarom niet meerdelig ? Je weet dat God meer delen heeft, en dat kunnen meerdere namen zijn. Is het verkeerd als iemand tot een ander deel van God snelt ? Wat weet jij van de namen van God ?'

'Tja,' zegt Ewald, 'als die Egyptische goden delen zijn van God, leuk verhaal, maar wie zegt mij dat het waar is ? Genesis is verleden tijd. Wij leven in en na Exodus. Wij worden uit Egypte weggeleid. De Egyptenaren hebben geen Jezus Christus in hun godenstelsel, dus daarom vertrouw ik het hele zaakje al niet. Een Evangelie buiten Jezus Christus bestaat er niet, en een kruis hebben ze al helemaal niet.'

'Wie zegt dat ?' vraagt de verschijning. 'Ze spreken een andere taal, maar kunnen die onderdelen dus best hebben. Taal maakt niet zalig, maar het hart, zogezegd : de vertaling. Het hele Christusverhaal is voortgekomen uit de verhalen van Horus, de zonnegod, die al veel ouder is. Ook hij stierf en stond na drie dagen weer op. Waarom zou God Zich maar aan één volk hebben gegeven ? Als je taal afscheidt van vertaling ga je dat denken, en daarom houdt je ook niet zo van profetie, want dat is de vertaling van het Woord van God, en het getuigenis van Christus.'

'Boze geest, ga terug naar de hel,' begint Ewald te roepen. Dag na dag komen de verschijningen terug, en Ewald begint dromen te krijgen over Horus. 'Waar gaat dit naartoe ?' begint Ewald te denken. 'Dit is nog erger dan wat ze in de pinkstergemeente verkondigen. Laat ik maar terug gaan.' En zo gebeurde het.

Mokkend maakte Ewald weer voorzichtig contact met zijn oude gemeente, en de dromen en verschijningen worden minder.

Hoofdstuk 5. De exorcist

In de gemeente wordt Ewald een beetje met de nek aangekeken, maar dat doet hem niet zoveel. Als hij maar van die rare verschijningen en dromen zou afkomen. Gelukkig werden de dromen en verschijningen minder, maar Ewald blijft last hebben. Daarom besluit hij op zoek te gaan naar een goede exorcist. Ewald gelooft niet dat een boze geest in een christen kan binnenkomen, maar hij gelooft wel dat een christen door een boze geest onderdrukt kan worden. Diep in zijn hart geeft hij de gemeente de schuld, omdat ze het altijd zo vaak over Egypte moesten hebben. Ewald ziet het als een lichte graad afgoderij, en beseft dat de gemeente op het randje van een grote afgrond staat. Omgang met afgodendienaars kan de deur openen voor boze geesten, maar moet Ewald hen nu echt beschouwen als afgodendienaars ? Hij kan niet weg, ook omdat hij van binnen aangeklaagd wordt dat die boze verschijningen veroorzaakt werden doordat hij z'n gemeente had verlaten. Is hij een prooi van wolven geworden ? Hij vindt eigenlijk dat hij de voorganger trouw moet blijven, want dan wordt hij zelf ook beschermd. Maar wat als de voorganger nu echt op het afgodische vlak terecht zou komen ? Ewald voert innerlijke strijd. Op een dag heeft hij een afspraak met een bekende exorcist binnen het samenwerkingsverband van pinkergemeenten.

Ewald vertelt van zijn ervaringen, en de exorcist luistert aandachtig. Ewald kent de man nog wel een beetje van een conferentie. De exorcist is één en al oor, en vindt het erg interessant. 'Ewald, wat we nu gaan doen is bidden dat de boze geest zich openbaar zal maken, zodat we hem uit kunnen drijven. Als er dan nog wonden zijn, dan kan de Heilige Geest die genezen,' zegt de exorcist.

'U denkt toch niet dat ik een boze geest heb ?' vraagt Ewald een beetje beledigd. 'Nee,' sust de exorcist, 'het is gewoon een testje om te zien waar en hoe een eventuele boze geest je onderdrukt.' Dit stelt Ewald een beetje gerust. Dan begint het gebed. De exorcist bidt heel lang, en spreekt vervolgens de eventuele boze geest aan. De exorcist spreekt in tongen, en wacht af. Dan begint Ewald wild te bewegen. 'Tarrabarrebedorre,' schreeuwt Ewald. Ewald is

zichtbaar in paniek. Dat had hij niet verwacht dat hij gebonden zou zijn door een boze geest. Dit was iets dat charismatici soms 'inwoning' noemden, of in zware gevallen zelfs bezetenheid. Ewald had hier nooit in geloofd. Dat kon alleen maar bij ongelovigen. Was hij wel echt zoals ze dat zeiden 'wederomgeboren' ? Even twijfelde Ewald aan alles, nu zoiets vreemds zich in hem had gemanifesteerd, maar lang nadenken kon Ewald niet, omdat de exorcist de geest begon te ondervragen. 'Kitket, ik ben een geest van ongeloof,' sprak de geest door Ewald heen. 'Waar kom je vandaan ?' vroeg de exorcist. 'Ik laat hen van pinksteren denken dat ze superieur zijn, en dat ze een waterdicht superieur geloof hebben. Ik laat hen Mozes volgen uit het slavenhuis van Egypte, om hen kennis te laten maken met een nieuwe slavernij : de pinkstergemeente. Ik ben Egypte-haat, en om hen tegen Egypte te beveiligen heb ik hun taal tot de superieure laten maken, en hen de vertaling der vertaling laten haten. Ik ben profetie-haat, dat is mijn maat. Wij werken in een groep. Wachtwoorden hebben wij gemaakt, voor onze elite, hen van pinksteren.'

'Ja, stop maar,' zegt de exorcist nors en luid, en begint de geest te bestraffen. 'Je bent een religieuze leugengeest, een wargeest, en je komt er nu uit, in de Naam van Christus die wij dienen.' Maar dan begint de geest te lachen. 'Ik kom er toch niet uit, ik heb namelijk recht, omdat hij zich niet wil bekeren van zijn Egypte-haat, zijn profetie-haat en de daarbij horende superioriteit.' En hoe de exorcist ook bestrafte, bad en ondervroeg, de geest hield voet bij stuk, en ging er niet uit. Ewald voelde zich ellendig. Hij moest er niet aan denken de nacht door te moeten brengen met dit beest in of op z'n lichaam. 'We moeten God bidden om wijsheid,' zei de exorcist. 'Ik ben niet van plan deze geest te geloven. Het zijn leugenaars, en ons geloof is ons wapen. Ewald, je zult in geloof moeten staan. Je moet belijden dat je niks met die geest te maken wilt hebben, en dan in geloof aanvaarden dat je vrij bent.' Ewald kreeg wat boekjes mee over geloof en belijdenis, over het zogenaamde 'claimen', en werd vervolgens naar huis gezonden. Ewald voelde zich gebroken, maar was niet van plan de strijd op te geven.

Hoofdstuk 6. De strijd

Ewald begon gretig de boekjes te lezen, en probeerde door bepaalde geloofs-uitspraken zijn schuddende lichaam tot rust te brengen. Ewald had het niet zo met al dat geloofs-gedoe, alsof je moest werken voor een genezing of bevrijding. Hij geloofde in het conservatieve volbrachte werk van Christus, door genade. Wel geloofde Ewald in het gebed, en het lezen van het Woord. Vooral dat laatste.

Na een tijdje was Ewald zo wanhopig, dat hij besloot het verhaal te vertellen aan de charismatici die indertijd de gemeente waren uitgestuurd. Ze hadden inmiddels hun eigen gemeente opgezet. Ewald kende hen wel. Hij was er nooit zo van onder de indruk, maar nu was het zijn laatste kans. Met lood in zijn schoenen ging hij naar het huis van die charismatische voorganger die vroeger voorganger was bij Ewald in de gemeente. De charismatische voorganger was blij hem te zien. Hij gaf hem een omhelzing. Ewald voelde zich direkt op zijn gemak, misschien ook omdat het een oude kennis van vroeger was. Ewald's lichaam schudde nog steeds een beetje, en begon het verhaal te vertellen. 'Ach, Ewald,' zei de charismatische voorganger, 'ik heb iemand in de gemeente die naast mij ook weleens preekt, en die heeft dit soort varkentjes wel eens eerder gewassen. Laten we hem erbij halen.' Niet lang daarna stopte er een auto voor het huis van de charismatische voorganger. De charismatische voorganger had hem gebeld of hij direkt wilde komen voor een spoedgeval. De man kwam binnen en ging zitten. men zei dat hij een krachtige gave van profetie had. De man begon in zichzelf te bidden, en zachtjes in tongen te spreken. Een tijdje was het stil. Toen begon de man te spreken : 'Ja, Ewald, ik heb een beeld van de Heer. Ik zie jou lopen in Egypte met vraagtekens boven jouw hoofd. Dan stap je een soort boerderij binnen waar een kar staat. In die kar zie je een heleboel dieren die je niet kent. Je begint op die dieren in te hakken, omdat je bang bent dat ze je iets aan zullen doen. Maar de Heer zegt : 'Laat af, en weet dat Ik God ben.'

Ewald was geschokt. Hoe wist die man dat het om Egypte ging ? De charismatische voorganger had alleen verteld dat het om een spoedgeval ging. Ewald voelde zijn geloof instorten, maar was aan de andere kant diep onder de indruk. Vooral toen de man profeteerde : 'Dit zegt de Heer : die vreemde dieren zijn delen van Mij.' Was dit een zuiver Woord van de Heer ? Ewald wist het niet, maar voelde zich erg rustig worden. 'Ja, Mijn Zoon,' sprak de profeet verder, 'Ik

heb jouw worstelingen gezien. Je geloof staat op de kop, omdat jouw geloof gezuiverd moet worden. Ik wil jouw de fundamenten laten zien van een kerk die Mijn Aangezicht heeft bespuwd. Ik heb in Mijn kerk geen welgevallen, omdat ze Egypte eenzijdig hebben benaderd. Iets kan voor meerdere dingen symbool staan, en zoals het kruis symbool staat voor dood en overwinning, zo staat Egypte symbool voor slavernij en bevrijding. Het kruis werd door de tegenstander als wapen opgesteld, maar heb ook Ik niet datzelfde kruis als wapen gebruikt ? Zo is dan ook Egypte als het kruis, gebruikt door de tegenstander om te knechten, en door Mij om te bevrijden. En zo is dan ook het Ankh-teken, het Egyptische kruis met het rondje erop als de zon, nog steeds het kruis van de Koptische Christenen, de christenen van Egypte.' Even was het stil. Maar toen ineens manifesteerde de geest zich weer in Ewald, en vloog de profeet aan. 'Kalm,' zei de charismatische voorganger luid, en begon de geest te bestraffen. Maar Ewald rolde al met de profeet over de grond. 'Ik ga je vernietigen !' schreeuwde de geest door Ewald heen. Toen ineens was Ewald in een diepe slaap. De profeet stond op, en ging weer zitten. Ook de charismatische voorganger ging weer zitten. 'God heeft hem in de rust gelegd,' zei de profeet. 'Laten we hem hier maar even liggen.' De charismatische voorganger knikte bezorgd. Samen gingen ze verder met bidden. Ook de charismatische voorganger was diep geschokt. Was nu dan echt de tijd gekomen dat het Egyptische kruis waaraan de gemeente zo'n lange tijd gehangen had nu ten goede zou worden gebruikt ? Zou na de exodus, de uittocht uit Egypte, nu een intocht komen in het Nieuwe Egypte ? 'Dit waren echt de woorden die ik van God kreeg,' zei de profeet, 'ik heb hier nooit echt over nagedacht.'

'Het klinkt wel logisch,' zei de voorganger, 'en zeer profetisch, en ik ben voor vijvennegentig procent overtuigd, maar ik wil en moet dit profetisch woord gaan toetsen aan de Bijbel. Ik wil meer Bijbelse fundering hebben, en natuurlijk wil ik het bovenal toetsen aan de Geest.' De profeet knikte. 'Ja,' zei de profeet, 'ook ikzelf zal dit voor de zekerheid nog enkele dagen moeten toetsen. Laten we er ook over vasten, ook opdat Ewald geheel vrij zal komen.'

Hoofdstuk 7. De Inodus

De dag erop wordt Ewald wakker in zijn bed. Hij kan zich van het gebeuren niet veel meer herinneren. Wel voelt hij zich anders, en weet hij dat het over Egypte ging. Op straat ziet hij Egyptische kruizen op hoofden van mensen verschijnen. Hij vraagt zich af wat dat betekent. Als hij de profeet opbelt, vertelt deze hem dat mensen om hem heen als het kruis van Egypte zijn, die hem in een bepaalde slavernij en traditie houden, maar dit kruis zal tot zegen worden.

Ewald besluit zich te verdiepen in het Egyptische gedachtengoed, puur als cultuur-interesse. Hij verbaasd zich over de overeenkomsten tussen Israel en Egypte, maar ziet ook dat ze verschillen hebben en elkaar aanvullen. Ewald voelt rust. Deze oude vijand begint meer en meer als vriend te zijn. Op godsdienstig gebied heeft Ewald nog veel tegenzin en bedenkingen en besluit om gewoon onderzoek te doen om de kennis te verrijken, opdat geen enkel vooroordeel hem kan misleiden. Hij herinnert zich Jezus die voor hem stond en hem Zijn beenderen toonde, zeggende : het is Sebek, het gebeente van God. Liggen er in Egypte de schatten van Gods diepere wezen ? Uiteindelijk was de Egyptische wortel zeer duidelijk, en dat begon al bij Abraham, bij Jozef en uiteindelijk bij Mozes, de grondlegger, die een Egyptische prins werd. Het duizelde allemaal voor zijn ogen. De fundamenten liggen in Egypte, en Ewald herinnerde de theologen die zeiden dat het paradijs in Egypte lag. Hadden ze vaker met Egypte te maken gehad dan ze dachten ?

Ewald besloot naar Egypte te gaan. Hij wilde nu echt confronteren datgene wat zijn gedachtenleven en geloofsleven zo overhoop had gegooid. Hij besloot naar de tempel van Horus te gaan, die als een Egyptische heenwijzing naar Jezus Christus was, om daar de nacht door te brengen. Er stonden grote beelden van de god om de tempel heen. Het waren beelden als van een valk. Ewald had van de autoriteiten toestemming gekregen om in een tentje daar de nacht door te brengen. Ewald vertelde hen dat hij een christelijke journalist was. Midden in de nacht hoorde hij gekrijs, en liep uit zijn tent. Een reusachtige valk stond voor hem. Maar deze valk had handen, en deze handen bloedden. 'Sebek is mijn gebeente,' zei de verschijning.

'Mijn Christus bloedt niet meer,' sprak Ewald rustig, 'want alles is volbracht.' Toen sprak de valk : 'Ik heb meerdere delen. Mijn kruis heeft meerdere delen.' Toen vertrok de valk heel rustig. De valk was reusachtig, en verdween door de muren. Ewald wist nog steeds niet goed wat hij hier nu van moest denken,

maar hij wilde het allemaal meemaken voor zijn onderzoek. Hij wilde zelf onderzoeken en ervaren welke plaats Egypte zou hebben in Gods Heilsplan, en misschien zelfs in Gods Identiteit.

De dag erna ging Ewald naar de tempel van Sebek. Weer kwam het gevoel over hem heen alsof hij een afgodendienaar was, of een afgodenzoeker, maar steeds weer prentte hij zich in dat hij een onderzoeker was. Hij hield zich vast aan de tekst : 'Onderzoekt alle dingen, en behoudt het goede.' Daar was hij nu mee bezig, onderzoeken, om het goede te behouden. Maar de aanklachten waren nog niet voorbij. Hij werd aangeklaagd door de tekst : 'Waarmee gij omgaat wordt gij besmet.' Ja, en dan helpt bidden niet zoveel. Toen hij bij de tempel van Sebek was aangekomen omhulde hem een diepe rust. Het was alsof hij hier het paradijs voelde. Of was Sebek de slang van het paradijs ? Nee, Sebek was een krokodil, of een man met een krokodillenkop. Maar de slang in het paradijs had toch eerst benen, voordat hij vervloekt werd en op zijn buik moest gaan om stof te eten ?

Ook hier waren veel beelden. Van God mochten geen beeltenissen gemaakt worden, maar goed, dit was een deel van God, Zijn gebeente. Wat een geheimenis, en wat prachtig, als het allemaal waar zou zijn. Ook hier mocht hij de nacht doorbrengen. Midden in de nacht werd hij wakker, en keek naar het hoge plafond waar grote openingen inzaten. Hij zag de zwartblauwe lucht, en wat raven die daar vlogen. Of waren het geen raven ? Er gebeurde niets, en eigenlijk was Ewald een beetje teleurgesteld. Ook ging hij naar de tempels van andere Egyptische goden voor onderzoek, en hij schreef veel op. Inmiddels was het een dik boekwerk geworden. In sommige tempels of piramides mocht hij niet de nacht doorbrengen. Toen hij thuis was gekomen, na een lange reis terug, zat hij erover te denken om zijn reportage als boek te laten drukken. Natuurlijk werd het een boek met veel vraagtekens, maar het gaf hem uiteindelijk weer wat rust. Hij was niet bang te twijfelen. Het geloof was toch in ieder geval zo iets ongrijpbaars.

In zijn boek beschreef hij ook zijn ervaringen, en dat wat eraan vooraf ging. Hij noemde het boek 'De Inodus,' wat zoiets als de intocht betekende. Het boek sloeg erg aan in de charismatische wereld en pinksterwereld, en was niet alleen bedoeld om Israel en Egypte weer bij elkaar te brengen, maar ook de pinksterwereld en de charismatische wereld. Het boek had dan ook een

duidelijke brugfunctie, maar was nog steeds erg neutraal geschreven, en dat was misschien ook wel de reden dat het zo aansloeg. Ook Egyptische christenen vonden in het boek veel van henzelf terug, dat wat ze ooit eens hadden achtergelaten. Veel christenen waren benieuwd over hun Egyptische wortels. Egypte werd in hun beleving steeds meer een belangrijk fundament van hun geloofs-achtergrond, een belangrijke bron waar het allemaal in begon. En ze begonnen te ervaren hoe lief God Egypte had, nog steeds.

Hoofdstuk 8. De muur

Op een nacht werd Ewald wakker. Voor hem stond de geest die hem vroeger vaak lastig viel. 'Ha, ik ben Kitket, ken je me nog ?' Ewald voelde heel duidelijk een muur tussen hem en de geest. Nee, Egypte haatte hij niet meer. Ook achtte hij Egypte niet meer als 'minder' dan Israel, maar besefte, ervoer en geloofde nu dat Egypte een geheime bron van Gods onderdelen was, als een geestelijk kruis, een dieper en rijker kruis dan alleen maar het materiele kruis. Dit was het kruis wat ook al in het Oude Testament bestond, waaraan Jozef was genageld, en wat hem tot heerlijkheid bracht. Zou Egypte dan weer de voedselschuur zijn voor Israel ? Zou Genesis weer wederkeren als de Inodus ? Het waren dingen waar Ewald veel over nadacht, maar waarop hij maar geen duidelijk antwoord kreeg. Hij hoorde de stem van Kitket niet eens meer, maar was onhuld door de rijkdommen die hij had ontdekt. Plotseling greep hij naar zijn bijbel, die op het nachtkastje lag, en de letters THOTH verschenen erop. Was Thoth niet de god van het archief ? Ewald knipperde met zijn ogen.

Mozes groeide op aan het Egyptisch hof waar hij werd onderwezen. Als hij niet was gered door een Egyptische prinses, dan was er nooit een Mozes geweest, en misschien ook nooit een Bijbel. De invloed van Egypte was dus duidelijk. Mozes had zijn leven aan Egypte te danken. En deze geredde Egyptische prins, de prins van Egypte, had zo'n groot deel van het Woord geschreven, en het huis van God gebouwd, de tabernakel. Ewald had ook wat Egyptische boeken op zijn nachtkastje liggen. Ze begonnen te glimmen. Plotseling stond er een gestalte voor hem. Het was Thoth. 'Ik ben het bloed van Christus, het Woord,' sprak de gestalte. Ewald beefde in zijn bed. Het was alsof zijn bed trilde. 'Wij zijn allen delen van Christus,' sprak de gestalte. 'In Egypte ligt het geheime

Woord van God, de vertaling. Daarom : profeteer, profeteer, want dit is het getuigenis van Christus, voor hen die Hem liefhebben.' En toen vaagde de gestalte weg. Ewald wist niet of hij nu net de duivel of God had gezien, maar dat het indrukwekkend was, dat was duidelijk. 'We zien wel,' dacht Ewald, toch wat nuchterder wordend over deze dingen. Hij voelde en wist dat hij beschermd werd.

Hoofdstuk 9. De Sebek-profeet

Er was een groep rondom het boek van Ewald die het allemaal begon uit te werken en tot radicale conclusies kwam, maar Ewald wilde daar niet zoveel van weten. Het boek behoorde volgens hem een vraagteken te zijn, en geen antwoord. Spoedig was er een nieuwe beweging gekomen binnen de pinkstergemeente en de charismatische gemeente, en die groep ging samen. Ze noemden zichzelf Inodus gemeente, Egyptische gemeente, of gewoon Koptische gemeente. Ook kwamen er Bijbelscholen uit die koker, genaamd Egyptische Bijbelschool, Inodus Bijbelschool, Koptische Bijbelschool en nog wat andere namen. Ewald vond hen veel te radicaal, en zelfs de charismatische voorganger en de profeet vonden het te ver gaan. Maar wel ontstonden er enkele lichtere stromingen in die hoek, en daar kon Ewald zich wel in vinden, evenals de charismatische voorganger en de profeet. Veel weerstand was er in ieder geval toch nog wel tegen dit soort groeperingen. Veel voorgangers en dominees spraken over een nieuwe secte, en nog gevaarlijk ook. Ewald vond dit verschrikkelijk overdreven.

Ewald zat samen met de charismatische voorganger en de profeet in een zogenaamde tussengemeente, die zich nog wat neutraler opstelde. Op een dag kwam er een profeet binnen van een streng charismatische gemeente. De man had een baard en begon direkt te profeteren : 'Als jullie niet met deze onzin stoppen, dan zal God Zijn Geest weghalen, en Zijn kandelaar.' Ewald keek de man een beetje vragend aan. 'Hoe weet je dat ?' riep iemand anders naar de man. Maar al snel was de man vertrokken.

In de wat minder neutrale gemeentes van het Egyptische Verband binnen de pinkstergemeente en de charismatische gemeente begonnen ook strenge profeten op te staan, die zich al snel als oordeelsprofeten ontpopten. Zij zagen

de Inodus als noodzakelijk voor de gemeente, en bestempelden hen die zich niet daartoe voegden als 'afvallig'. Ewald zat een beetje tussen twee vuren in.

Nu al de delen van Christus bekend begonnen te worden en ieder weer een andere prioriteit of stokpaardje had, begonnen ook in de Egyptische Verbandsgemeentes steeds meer stromingen te komen, die zich op hun boord ook weer vertakten. Zo waren er Sebeks-gemeentes, en Bastets-gemeentes en zo verder. Ewald hield zich een beetje buiten de boot, maar de streng profetische stromingen binnen die gemeentes begonnen hem wel een beetje te beangstigen. Hij vond hen fanatiekelingen, en zelfs in sommige extreme gevallen sectarisch. Zij stonden in zijn ogen echt in het gevaar om misleid te worden. Sommige groepen waren zo fanatiek dat ze geweld niet schuwden. Ja, het was een tijd waarin het gevaarlijk werd om nog neutraal te zijn, zelfs binnen het Egyptische Verband.

Op een dag kwam er weer een profeet binnen in Ewalds neutrale gemeente. Ditmaal was het een profeet die pro-Egypte was, eentje van de oordeelsprofetische gemeente binnen de zeer grote Sebek-beweging. Al snel begon de Sebek-profeet stoelen en tafels om te gooien, en liep naar voren. Bij de microfoon aangekomen duwde hij de voorganger opzij. Even was het stil, en iedereen luisterde naar hem : 'Geen tijd meer voor neutraliteit, want dat is afgoderij,' bulderde hij. 'Weten jullie dan niet dat het gebeente Gods hard moet zijn om te kunnen blijven staan ? Sebek is koning, het gebeente van Christus, dat aan het kruis niet verbroken werd. Hij dan heeft Seth, het kwaad, verslagen. Maar jullie zijn allemaal volgelingen van Seth. Weten jullie dan niet dat Sebek de lauwen zal uitspuwen ?' Plotseling begon er een vuur te stromen uit zijn hand. Ewald schrok. Had deze man gelijk ? Waren ze te lauw ? Ze waren toch goed op weg ?

Iemand riep : 'Ach, wat, luister niet naar hem, die anti-christ. Het is allemaal nog niet bewezen.' Maar het vuur vloeide op diegene af, en verslond de persoon die deze woorden sprak. Iemand anders zei dat die persoon niet tot de gemeente behoorde, maar tot een behoudende pinkstergemeente, afkerig van het Egyptische Verband. 'Heb ik daar iets mee te maken ?' vroeg de profeet nors. 'Alsof jullie gemeente van het Verband is. Jullie zijn neutralen, en die kan God in Zijn koninkrijk niet gebruiken.' Maar toen stond Ewald op, en zei luid : 'Wij hier zijn mensen open voor Egypte, open voor Sebek, open voor Gods

heilsplannen met Egypte en Zijn eventuele Egyptische Identiteit, maar wij willen deze dingen graag onderzoeken. Wij hebben nog twijfels en vraagtekens. Velen onder ons zijn verward, en weten niet wat ze precies moeten doen. Is daar ook ruimte voor ?'

'Oh ja, zeker wel,' zegt de Sebek-profeet, 'daarom zal ik zeer voorzichtig zijn. Maar hen die spelletjes spelen met God zullen het weten.' Toen stapte de Sebek-profeet van de microfoon weg, en was al snel vertrokken.

Hoofdstuk 10. De gebeds-avond

Velen zaten verslagen op hun stoelen. Als het zo moest, dan hoefde het voor hen niet meer. Bang waren ze, voor een nieuw bezoek van een Sebek-profeet. 'Laten we hen gewoon de ruimte geven om te spreken,' stelde iemand voor.

Ewald had diep van binnen een hekel aan zulke arrogante profeten. Ze dachten dat zij altijd gelijk hadden, en dat zij over anderen mochten beslissen, alsof ze God Zelf waren. Ewald had er flink de pest in. Maar wat kon hij tegen zulken doen ? Ze hadden vuur-gaven, of die nu echt waren of van de duivel : vuur is vuur.

Ook hadden ze ijs-gaven. Ze konden anderen met gemak laten bevriezen, tot aan de dood toe. Er werden veel boeken geschreven over zulke gevaarlijke profeten. Velen sloten zich bij zulke profeten aan, alleen uit angst. Ewald besloot om eens te praten met de profeet waarmee hij bevriend was. Maar deze liet weten niets tegen zulke profeten te kunnen doen. Die profeten waren in zijn ogen te sterk. Dat bevreemde en bevreesde Ewald zeer. Als die profetische vriend door God zou worden geleid, dan was er toch geen probleem ? Maar de profeet liet hem weten zelf ook in een geloofsstrijd te zitten, en dat profeten nooit te licht moesten denken over de krachten, machten, en mogelijkheden van andere profeten. De profeet was er nog niet over uit. De profeet besloot zich te vernederen voor God, en te vasten voor een antwoord.

De profeet stelde voor een gebeds-avond te houden bij hem thuis, voor antwoord. De charismatische voorganger zou ook komen. Toen ze met z'n drieen in gebed waren, sprak de profeet : 'En dit zegt de Heer : Ik ben een werk aan het doen. Er moeten vele zuiveringen zijn, opdat Mijn Geheimenissen

geopenbaard zullen worden.' Later kreeg de profeet het woord dat ze geen diensten mochten houden, want dat zou de wespen aantrekken. Profeten zouden aangetrokken worden tot de gevestigde ordes om daar de boel overhoop te halen. De drie moesten zich gewoon terugtrekken.

Weer zouden ze deze woorden de komende dagen gaan toetsen, maar al snel zagen ze er wat in. Het zou te gevaarlijk zijn om nog in gemeentes te komen met al die profeten-invasies. Ze besloten om een tijdje in dit huis te blijven om samen te bidden.

Op een nacht verscheen Sebek aan Ewald. Dit was dus het gebeente van Christus, het ongebroken bot. Voor Ewald was het als het dal van de dorre doodsbeenderen. Ineens was het alsof Ewald te drinken kreeg, en de beenderen begonnen recht overeind te komen. 'Bastet !' werd er geroepen. Die kende Ewald wel, dat was de kattengod, ook de god van vruchtbaarheid en kunst ... en ... 'Ik ben het vlees van Christus,' sprak een stem. Een vreemde, wazige gestalte kwam tot Ewald en bedekte de beenderen. Weer was het alsof Ewald te drinken kreeg. 'Verzoen Sebek met Bastet,' fluisterde de stem. Toen kwam Thoth naar voren, en het bloed begon te stromen. Het wezen van vlees en botten begon te bewegen, en ogen begonnen rond te kijken. 'Nu nog Anubis,' sprak een stem. Uit de hemel kwam licht, en kwam over het vlees heen. Nu had het wezen van vlees en botten een stem. Anubis was een zwarte hond of jakhals, of een man met een hondekop, en hij zorgde voor de doden. Hij bracht ze voor de tronen van recht. Weer kwam er licht uit de hemel, en buiten begon het te donderen. Ewald schrok. Wat was dit allemaal ? 'Verzoen hen allemaal,' sprak de stem.

De volgende ochtend vertelde Ewald zijn droom. De profeet knikte, en zei : 'Het kruis is zo diep gegaan dat het de delen van God heeft gescheiden. Nu zullen die delen met elkaar verbonden moeten worden. Dat is een heilige en diepe opdracht. Ook de charismatische voorganger knikte. 'Ik weet het niet,' sprak Ewald. Ewald had zoveel twijfels. Hij voelde zich verscheurd. De charismatische voorganger maakte hem duidelijk dat hij de verscheurdheid van God voelde.

Hoe zouden ze God moeten verzoenen ? Dat was de vraag. De Sebek-profeten wilden veelal niet van verzoening weten. Zij staarden zich bijna blind op Sebek.

Hoofdstuk 11. Het Sebek-kruis

Eén van de nachten daarna had Ewald een andere droom. Een vrouw in de verte zong hem toe. Ze was de was aan het ophangen, maar het voelde aan alsof ze geheel voor hem zong. Ewald kwam dichterbij, maar toen de vrouw hem zag, rende ze van hem weg. 'Zij is de Geest,' sprak een stem. 'De wat ? ...' vroeg Ewald. Ewald begon haar achterna te rennen, maar alles werd zo zacht, dat Ewald op een gegeven moment niet meer vooruit kwam. Hij was als in een moeras gekomen. Daar kwam Sebek, klaar om hem te verwoesten. Waarom wilde Sebek hem verslinden ? 'Hij is de toorn van God, de rechter, maar ook de beschermer, de zachtmoedige, de advocaat, de doorgronder. Het is een heilige verslinding.' Het deed Ewald geen pijn, en hij voelde zich goed, bij dit wezen. Weer zag hij de vrouw, en ging voorzichtig op haar af. Ditmaal bleef ze staan, en nodigde ze hem uit in haar huis. 'Het Sebek-kruis verscheurt en verzoent,' sprak een stem. 'Sebek-kruis ?' dacht Ewald ...

Weer vertelde hij de volgende dag wat hij gedroomd had. Zijn vrienden vonden het een sprekende droom. Met z'n drieen besloten ze op zoek te gaan naar het geheim van die verzoening. Ze zouden hiertoe naar Egypte gaan.

Na een lange reis kwamen ze aan bij de Sebek-tempel. Ze wilden meer weten over het Sebek-kruis, en besloten onderzoek te doen in de tempel, en alles te lezen wat er maar over hem te lezen was. Buiten waren wat priesters een exorcisme aan het doen. Ze droegen een vreemd kruis in de vorm van een Sebek-krokodil. Er stonden ook een aantal tekens op. De drie kwamen dichterbij, en vroegen aan de priesters over het kruis. Eén van de priesters wilde wel even met hen praten. Na een kort gesprek nodigde hij hen uit om mee te komen naar zijn huis. In zijn huis stonden een heleboel Sebek-beelden, groot en klein, en aan de muren hingen enkele Sebek-kruizen. De man was van een conservatief Sebek-priesterschap, en vertelde dat hij ook geruime tijd in een conservatief Sebek-klooster had geleefd. Van hem hadden ze dus niets te vrezen. De man vertelde hen duizenduit over het Sebek-kruis en zijn betekenis. De drie waren één en al oor. Aan het einde van de dag kregen ze een kamer toegewezen op de hogere verdieping, en hier konden ze voorlopig logeren voor het onderzoek. De Sebek-priester was erg gastvrij, en bijna het tegendeel van de Sebek-profeet die ze hadden ontmoet. Ewald had ook een Sebek-beeld op zijn kamer. Het maakte hem rustig. Als materiaal een goddelijk doel had, dan

was het gezegend. Ewald was zich bewust van de genezende krachten die uit het beeld kwamen. Ewald kende de tabernakel vanuit de exodus, maar vroeg zich af hoe de tabernakel van de inodus zou zijn. Daar zou dit beeld zeker instaan, omdat het beeld het gebeente van Christus vertegenwoordigde.

Toen ze gingen slapen kreeg Ewald een verschrikkelijke nachtmerrie. Hij moest voor Christus verschijnen. Ewald werd door een norse engel binnengeleid in een reusachtige hal met een reusachtige troon. Ewald voelde zich bijna verdrinken in de atmosfeer. Overal waren grote gevaarlijke vissen hoog rondom de troon die eruit zagen alsof ze hem elk moment konden aanvallen. Wat moest hij tegen zulke vissen beginnen. In de verte zag hij een grote wazige gestalte als een lichtende wolk. Dit was Christus. Langzaam werd hij door de reusachtige engel naar voren geleid. Christus opende lange stoffige witte boeken, zeer dik, met goudkleurig lichtende bladzijden. Toen opende Christus zijn mond en zijn stem was als teisterend. 'Alles wat gij hebt gedaan is opgetekend,' sprak Christus bijna krijsend. Het was alsof alle boten in Ewald afbrokkelden. 'Ik zal het vonnis optekenen,' vervolgde Christus. Toen kwam in de verte tussen de vissen door een reusachtig lichtende gestalte. Het was Sebek, en hij dreef naar voren. Ewald was opgelucht. Sebek begon voor Ewald te pleiten, en opende boeken met de goede daden van Ewald. Ewald werd hoe langer hoe rustiger. 'Ik zal het vonnis optekenen,' sprak Christus. 'Gij zijt mijn gebeente.' Toen leek het alsof alles zwart werd voor Ewalds ogen, en hij schrok wakker. Het Sebek-beeld maakte hem rustig. 'Alles is in orde,' zei hij tegen zichzelf. Hij zag nu in wat er zou gebeuren als hij Sebek niet zou betrekken in het oordeel over zijn leven. Het eerste gedeelte zonder Sebek was namelijk verschrikkelijk. Ewald begon te roepen tot Sebek en tot het Sebek-kruis, zo hard, dat even later de priester in zijn kamer stond. De priester stelde hem gerust, en zei dat hij hem wel kon helpen. De priester vertelde na het verhaal gehoord te hebben dat hij als koptisch sebek-priester Ewald wel de handen op kon leggen, zodat hij Sebek zou ontvangen, en zijn gaven. De priester begon te bidden. Zijn handen voelden aan als vuur en ijs. 'Sebek, kom met uw vuur in ijs gemengd,' riep de priester, terwijl hij zijn hand op Ewald's hoofd had gelegd. Ewald was als door de bliksem getroffen en kon inademen, zo diep, zoals nooit tevoren. 'Sebek, het is goed,' zei de priester, 'Gij die het gebeente van Christus zijt.'

Rustig ging Ewald weer slapen. Maar na een tijdje ging Ewald rechtop zitten. Er kwam wat bloed uit zijn mond. Hij riep de priester, en die vertelde hem dat dat heel normaal was. Ewald werd namelijk bevrijd en gezuiverd.

Hoofdstuk 12. De arrestatie

De volgende dag waren de vrienden van Ewald een beetje sceptisch. Moest het allemaal zo ver gaan ? En dat bloed uit z'n mond ? Kwamen ze niet gewoon om onderzoek te doen. Maar toen de priester hen vroeg of ze Sebek wilden aanvaarden en ontvangen als het gebeente van Christus twijfelden ze geen moment. De priester legde hen de handen op, en zij begonnen te bidden. Op dat moment kwam er een vrouw binnenrennen, en schreeuwde : 'brand, brand.' Bij de buren was brand uitgebroken. De priester snelde er naartoe, en genas hen van brandwonden, nadat hij de brand had geblust.

Toen de drie weer terug waren in eigen land wilden ze zich aansluiten bij een conservatieve Sebek-gemeente om nog meer te weten te komen, en om misschien wat uit te wisselen. Ze wisten dat het gevaarlijk kon zien met invallen van profeten, die zich steeds meer als de politie begonnen te gedragen, maar ze hadden meer zelfvertrouwen nu ze zelf door Sebek waren aangeraakt. Ze voelden zich nu zelf ook een beetje als advocaat, omdat de extreme Sebek-profeten in hun ogen te wild, roekeloos en radicaal waren. Ze voelden zich duidelijk meer op hun gemak in de conservatieve Sebek-groep.

Al snel werden ze op het podium geroepen om hun ervaringen te vertellen. Tijdens hun getuigenis stond er één van de aanwezigen op. Het was een extreme Sebek-profeet die zich zo ook ontpopte. Hij begon hen uit te schelden, en een vuur begon uit zijn handen te komen. Ewald begon richting het vuur te blazen en bemerkte dat er vuur en ijs uit zijn eigen mond kwam. De Sebek-profeet schrok, omdat het vuur van Ewald zijn vuur begon te verslinden. 'Het vuur moet vermengd zijn met ijs,' sprak Ewald. 'Zo kun je een ware Sebek-profeet herkennen, en daarmee zul je macht hebben over de valse Sebek-profeten.' De drie begonnen de gemeente te onderwijzen, en daarna riepen ze hen naar voren die Sebek wilden aanvaarden en ontvangen. Een grote stoet kwam naar voren, ook de extreme Sebek-profeet, en zij werden allemaal vervuld door Sebek als het gebeente van Christus.

En zo reisden Ewald en zijn vrienden gemeente na gemeente af om over Sebek en het Sebek-kruis te vertellen, en om de gaven door te geven. Ook werd Ewald uitgenodigd tot de wat extremere Sebek-gemeenten. Maar er waren een aantal Sebek-profeten die geheel niet onder de indruk waren van Ewald's vertoningen, en op een dag zochten ze Ewald op in de gemeente waar hij sprak. Ze kwamen in een busje en schuwden geen geweld. Ze werden weleens Sebek-militairen genoemd, en zij wilden niets liever dan het hele land, en zelfs de hele wereld, onderwerpen aan hun gezag. Ze hadden legerpakken aan en zonnebrillen op, en al snel stonden ze binnen. Er werden schoten gelost, en enkele gemeenteleden vielen op de grond. Uit Ewald's ogen stroomde groen vuurijs, als brandend ijs, om de Sebek-militairen te slaan. Maar een paar militairen waren al bijna bij Ewald aangekomen en grepen hem vast. Het was als bijtend vuur, en een worsteling volgde. 'Verrader,' riepen ze, 'we zullen je vernietigen.' Maar ineens kwam er zoveel kracht in Ewald's handen dat hij ze met één ruk tegen de muur aan slingerde. 'Bij het kruis van Sebek bezweer ik jullie !' riep Ewald. Ze konden zich niet meer bewegen. Inmiddels was er politie binnengekomen, en ook Ewald werd gearresteerd. Ewald werd kwaad, omdat hij in zijn ogen niets had gedaan, maar enkele omstanders vertelden dat hij militairen tegen de muur had geslingerd. 'Zelfverdediging,' zei Ewald. Maar toch moest hij mee. Aangekomen op het politie-bureau werden de agenten zich gewaar van het Sebek-evangelie. Maar de agenten namen Ewald mee naar een cel. Hij moest zich maar voor de rechter verantwoorden.

De rechter begreep heel goed dat het zelfverdediging was, en gunde Ewald recht. De rechter kende de militairistische beweging in de Sebek-orde, en vond hen gevaarlijk genoeg. Hij vroeg zelfs aan Ewald of hij nog bescherming nodig had.

Ewald kon gaan, en zette zijn werk voort. Er waren nog wel vaker relletjes met Sebek-militairen, maar al gauw begonnen ze hem toch te vrezen.

Hoofdstuk 13. Het eiland van Bastet

Niet alleen bij Justitie, maar ook in de politiek kreeg Ewald steeds meer aanzien, en het duurde niet lang of Ewald had een politieke partij opgericht : De CSP, de Conservatieve Sebek Partij. Ewald streefde naar een Conservatief

Sebek Politie-orgaan, en naar een Conservatief Sebek Leger-orgaan. Ewald wilde de extreme vormen van Sebek Politiek laten verbieden waar die gevaarlijk werd. Maar er was een nog groter gevaar : daar waar zulke Sebekieten zich met politiek gingen bezighouden. Als tegengif tegen Ewalds hervormingsdrang kwam er een Militairistische Sebek-partij opzetten genaamd het Militairistisch Sebek Verbond, de MSV. De MSV wilde alle vormen van democratie uitbannen, om een strakke dictatuur op te stellen. De MSV zaaide zo'n angst dat men bijna gedwongen werd op hen te stemmen. Er was een theorie dat zij die van een andere partij waren door de MSV uit de weg geruimd zouden worden. Velen probeerden de partij te verbieden, maar al snel kreeg de partij zoveel stemmen dat ze onmogelijk nog konden verliezen. Men vroeg zich af hoe het kon dat ze zoveel stemmen hadden. Uit het buitenland kwamen leden over om de partij in het land te versterken. Uiteindelijk kwam een buitenlandse partijleider van de MSV aan de macht. Ewald werd tweede, en werd tweede premier. Tijdens een rit naar het politieke bestuur werd er een aanslag op Ewald gepleegd van zo'n groot kaliber dat Ewald het niet overleefde. Snel waren enkele conservatieve Sebek-profeten bij zijn lichaam om het te herbergen. De avond daarop werd een wake gehouden. Ze zouden de hele nacht doorbidden om Ewald op te wekken. Midden in de nacht kreeg een profeet een woord van Sebek dat het zover was. Hij liep op het levenloze lichaam van Ewald af, legde zijn hand op zijn hoofd, en riep : 'Ewald, in de Naam van Sebek, het gebeente van Christus, sta op, door het kruis van Sebek.' Maar er gebeurde niets. Teleurgesteld ging iedereen weer zitten.

Maar toen kwam er een gestalte binnen als een reusachtige kat. Z'n ledematen waren gebogen, en hij sprak : 'Ik ben Bastet, het vlees van Christus,' en hij boog over het lichaam heen, en blies erop. Direkt begon het lichaam te bewegen, en toen blies Bastet adem door de neus van het lichaam, en Ewald begon weer te ademen. 'Laat Bastet verzoend zijn met Sebek,' riep Bastet. 'Gij Sebekieten, komt dan allen tot Mijn eiland in de Rode Zee, want dit was het oorspronkelijke paradijs. En ja, er zijn hier vele bomen met verboden vruchten waarvan gij niet zult eten. Alles zult gij ontleden en een groter getal geven, want alles heeft meerdere delen. Zo zult gij niet meer verslaafd zijn aan een getal.' En de Geest leidde Ewald en zijn groep tot de Rode Zee, en gaf hen een roeischip. En zo leidde de Geest Ewald tot het eiland van Bastet, het vroegere

paradijs. En zij zagen daar veel bomen met slangen erin, waarvan zij niet mochten eten. En midden op dat eiland was een tempel van Bastet, met daar omheen vele kloosters. En een priester kwam naar buiten, klaar om hen allen de handen op te leggen. En zij vielen allen onder de kracht.

Ewald schrok wakker. Wat had hij vreemd gedroomd, zeg. Of was het geen droom ? En waar was hij ? Een Bastet-priesteres stond voor hem met een schaal vol fruit. Tegen de muur stond een enorm Bastet-beeld. De priesteres ging op zijn bed zitten en pakte zijn hand. Zijn hand beefde. Hij kreeg een armband om waarvan de uiteinden elkaar niet raakten. 'Dat is de Geb-Noet-Armband,' zei de priesteres. Ewald haalde de armband er weer vanaf. 'Waarom moet ik dat ding dragen ?' De priesteres keek hem doordringend aan, en sprak : 'Opdat je weet dat Christus vele delen heeft. Je moet je niet op één deel blind staren.' Ewald nam wat van het fruit. Zelfs het fruit bestond uit meerdere deeltjes. 'Midden op het eiland, in de tempel van Bastet, daar is de Geb-Noet-Bron, dat is het hart van Christus. Dit hart bestaat uit de lever, Geb, die de aardgod is, en de longen, Noet, die de luchtgodin is. Door het Sebek-kruis werden zij gescheiden, en door het Sebek-kruis worden zij weer verzoend. Ewald nam nog wat fruit. De priesteres leidde hem in de avond naar de tempel, en naar de bron. Dit was een groot vuur, als brandend ijs. Ook lag er fruit tussen. 'Ga in de bron,' zei de priesteres, 'opdat je rein zult zijn. Kom tot het hart van Christus.' Voorzichtig stapte Ewald naar binnen. Een vreemd gevoel maakte zich van hem meester. Het was als een tunnel die onder de aarde leidde. In een open ruimte, als een grote grot, zag hij al z'n vrienden terug. Ze waren blij hem te zien. Ineens hoorden ze een luid gegil. Het was Bastet, en achter Bastet was Anubis. Ook Anubis krijste. Een deur ging achter hen open. 'Kom,' zeiden ze beiden. Ewald en zijn vrienden gingen door de deur naar binnen. Hier was een poel waar Sebek in lag. 'Ga in de poel,' sprak Bastet. Het zag er een beetje modderig uit, maar al snel lieten enkelen zich in de poel zakken. Ze gingen kopje onder. Niemand wist waar ze terecht zouden komen, maar één voor één volgden ze elkaar. Weer kwamen ze uit op een open plek, waar alles groen was. Ook hier was veel fruit. Het was als een wereld onder de aarde. De zon scheen hier groen licht, en er stonden overal vreemdsoortige bomen. Ewald schepte water uit een groene rivier en begon te drinken. Ook de anderen begonnen te drinken. In de verte kwam een lichtende gestalte

aanlopen in prachtig wit. Het was Jezus Christus. 'Mijn delen hebt gij aanvaard, en daarom hebt gij Mij aanvaard,' sprak Jezus. 'Zij die mijn delen niet hebben aanvaard, hebben Mij niet aanvaard.' En Jezus liep naar de groene rivier, waar Hij langzaam in afdaalde, en sprak : 'Volg mij.' En Jezus leidde hen al zwemmend tot een grote zee met veel modderbanken, en tussen de modderbanken op een verhoging stond Sebek. 'Dit dan is de nieuwe ark,' sprak Jezus. En zij klommen allen op de Sebek, en hij begon voort te bewegen.

Einde

de prekenvrouw

Ze werkte bij de supermarkt. Ik kwam haar daar soms tegen. Haar moeder was een beetje vreemd, die liep of naakt door het huis, of in lingerie. Ik kwam daar wel eens. Dan nam ze me mee als ze me was tegengekomen. Dan moest ik even wachten totdat ze klaar was met werken. Het was een vreemd gezin. Heel veel meubels waren harig. Ook hun bedden. Ze hadden hele vreemde gordijnen. Altijd als ik daar was geweest wilde ik niet meer leven. Dan had ik het helemaal gehad.

Ze kon haarzelf nooit duidelijk maken wat ze precies bedoelde. Dan ging het in mijn hoofd zitten. Dan bleef het maar malen. Dan wilde ik dat ik nooit geboren was.

Haar moeder was zo'n vreemd mens. Ze belde me in de nacht weleens op. Dan vertelde ze vreemde verhalen, zo vreemd dat ik er bang van werd, of boos. Ook schaamde ik me dan. Ze sprak me altijd een schuldgevoel aan. Ze kon goed manipuleren.

Ze bleef soms maar doordrammen. Ophangen hielp niet, want dan ging het in mijn hoofd zitten. Ze vroeg ook altijd het onmogelijke van me. Op een dag belde ze aan, midden in de nacht, terwijl het regende. Ze kwam helemaal kletsnat binnen en had alleen haar lingerie aan. Ze was op blote voeten gekomen. Ik nam haar mee naar de huiskamer waar ze ging zitten. 'Ik moet je wat vertellen,' zei ze toen. 'Je droomt,' zei ze toen. 'Dit is allemaal een droom.' Ik keek haar vreemd aan. 'Je gelooft me niet, he ?' zei ze.

'Probeer je nu een spelletje met me te spelen ?' vroeg ik. 'Waar kom je voor ?' Buiten begon het steeds harder te regenen. Ik keek naar haar. Ik bleef maar naar haar kijken, maar hoe meer ik dat deed, hoe meer ik begon wakker te worden en te ontdekken dat ik slechts naar een kast staarde. Ik logeerde bij een tante. De vrouw in de droom had dus gelijk gehad. Het was maar een droom. Het was een lingerie kast waar ik naar staarde, die in de logeerkamer stond. Er stonden hier ook vreemde exotische dingen. Mijn tante ging vaak op reis en nam dan allerlei bijzondere spullen mee.

Toen ik de droom aan mijn tante vertelde die ochtend glimlachte ze. ‘Ach ja, kasten komen tot leven in de nacht,’ zei ze. Ik keek haar vreemd aan. ‘Alle dingen zijn iets anders ‘s nachts. Die hebben hun eigen leven.’ Het was warm weer. Mijn bloed voelde ook warm aan. Ik dacht aan een boek wat ik aan het lezen was over een spin, een tropische spin. Tante had veel boeken op de logeerkamer. Soms viel ik in slaap tijdens het lezen en droomde ik de vreemdste dromen, zoals nu.

Vandaag zouden we zeilen, mijn tante en ik. Ik begon spullen bij elkaar te pakken. Tante pakte wat etenswaren. We gingen met de trein naar het water, en huurden een zeilboot. We zouden naar een eilandje gaan. Het regende en het stormde. Toen sloeg het bootje om, en werd ik wakker. Ik was uit het bed gerold. Het was weer een droom geweest. Het leek wel alsof ik niet wakker kon worden. Ik leefde in dromenland. Telkens weer bleek alles een droom te zijn, de dingen die ik meemaakte. Ik vroeg me af hoe dat kon. Ik had een beeldje van een vrouw in lingerie, wat ik eens gewonnen had op de kermis. Het beeldje sprak. Het beeldje predikte zelfs. Je kon het zo instellen dat het elke dag een preek verkondigde. Ik noemde haar mijn prekenvrouw, maar communicatie was niet echt mogelijk, alsof ze voorgeprogrammeerd was. Op een dag gaf ze wel ineens antwoord op mijn vragen, want ik sprak wel vaak tot haar, en stelde telkens weer dezelfde vragen. Ik had het gevoel dat het beeldje toch een zekere intelligentie bezit, en leervermogen. Ik ben daar op in gaan spelen. Het beeldje begon toen ook te groeien, en vlak voordat ik het gevoel had dat ze een echt mens was geworden, ja, je raadt het al, werd ik wakker.

Ik kan het gewoon niet winnen. Ik weet niet wat het is. Ik weet niet hoe lang ik het vol ga houden. Ik weet niet wat mijn draagvermogen is. Toch heb ik dan zo’n beeldje, van een indiaanse vrouw, maar het beeldje spreekt niet. Ze zeiden dat iemand het beeldje eens vond op de bodem van de zee. Ik heb het gekocht op een veiling. Ik heb er veel voor moeten bieden, maar dat had ik er wel voor over. Het is een prachtig beeld. Ze spreekt niet, maar als je naar haar kijkt, dan hoor je de wind gewoon ruizen, en dan heb ik stemmen in mijn hoofd, mooie stemmen. Ik kan er heel lang naar staren, en er bij wegdromen. Het leven is mooi met haar, diep, gevoelig, avontuurlijk. Mensen kijken mij vreemd

aan als ik hen vertel dat ik een relatie met een beeld heb. Het blijft ook vreemd natuurlijk. Mensen hebben daar het draagvermogen niet voor. Ze hebben het geduld er ook niet voor om naar beelden te luisteren. Ze noemen het allemaal verbeelding, maar ik weet wel beter.

Ze is mijn vrouw, en brengt geheime boodschappen over, op haar manier. Ze is mijn prekenvrouw.

11 februari

‘11 februari is de dag, dat ik mijn ijsje, dat ik mijn ijsje,
11 februari is de dag, dat ik mijn ijsje likken mag,’
zongen de kinderen, ter gelegenheid van het feest van Sint Theo die gekomen was.
‘Ik heb geen ijs,’ zei ik nors, ‘en ook geen snoep, speelgoed, of geld.’

‘Geeft niks hoor,’ zeiden de kinderen. Ze gaven mij toen een envelop met geld waar zoveel geld in zat dat ik dit dorpje kon ontvluchten, en ik ben toen op een onbewoond eiland gaan wonen.
Ik was sint Theo voor altijd dankbaar. Mijn oom verkleedde zich altijd als sint Theo met het sint Theo feest, en toevallig heette hij ook Theo. Oom Theo.

In ieder geval zou ik 11 februari nooit meer vergeten. Het inspireerde mij om een robot te bouwen die ik 11 februari noemde, en ik dacht eraan hoe ik vroeger in het dorpje zo had geleden, ook als kind, en ik dacht aan alle andere kinderen die daar nog vast zaten. En hoeveel kinderen waren wel niet omgekomen in dit dorp ? In ieder geval bouwde ik ook een tijdmachine in de robot, en ik zond de robot uit naar mezelf in de tijd, toen ik nog heel jong was. Maar de heks die over het dorp heerste bewaakte het kind, en liet niet toe dat de robot tot het kind zou komen. Maar de robot zette haar zo onder druk dat ze er hoofdpijn van had, tijdenlang, en uiteindelijk moest ze wel een compromis sluiten. Ze heeft toen een eigen versie van de robot gemaakt, en die mocht wel toegelaten worden tot het kind, maar die robot was niet zo'n beste. Ik vroeg me af wat ik nu kon doen. Ik heb toen oom Theo gebeld, maar toen werd ik wakker. Het bleek allemaal maar een droom te zijn geweest. Nu pas was het pas echt 11 februari, vandaag. Toen de kinderen 's avonds aan de deur kwamen zongen ze het welbekende liedje van het feest van sint Theo :

'11 februari is de dag, dat ik mijn ijsje, dat ik mijn ijsje,
11 februari is de dag, dat ik mijn ijsje likken mag.'

En je kan natuurlijk wel raden dat ik die middag heel veel ijs ingekocht had voor die kinderen. En ik gaf ze ook snoep, speelgoed en geld, heel veel geld. En daarna kwam oom Theo nog, verkleed als sint Theo. Ik zei : 'Nou, oom, je begint elk jaar meer en meer op sint Theo te lijken.' Hij glimlachte. 'Ik heb het dorp bevrijd,' zei hij.

'Hoezo ?' vroeg ik.
'Nou, sint Theo is gekomen. Ik ben sint Theo zelf, en ik heb het dorp bevrijd.'

'Je maakt zeker een grapje,' zei ik.

'Nee, het is echt,' zei hij.

'Ja, maar jij bent toch oom Theo, toch niet sint Theo ?' vroeg ik.

'Dat dacht je maar,' zei hij. Ik keek hem vreemd aan met opgetrokken

wenkbrauwen. Toen begon hij dat liedje te zingen :

‘11 februari is de dag, dat ik mijn ijsje, dat ik mijn ijsje,
11 februari is de dag, dat ik mijn ijsje likken mag.’

‘Nou, lik het dan maar,’ zei ik. ‘Ik heb nog genoeg ijs in de ijskast.’

Ik keek hem nog steeds stomverbaasd aan.
‘De heks is dood,’ zei hij. ‘Ik ben de nieuwe burgemeester van het dorp.’

‘Hoe heb je dat gedaan ?’ vroeg ik.
‘Geen vragen stellen,’ zei hij toen. ‘Geloof het nu maar.’

‘Ja, kom,’ zei ik. ‘Ik ga niet zomaar dingen geloven. Het is een kinderfeest. Je zit me gewoon in de maling te nemen.’

‘Nee, het is echt,’ zei hij.

Ik keek naar oom Theo. Nee, dit was oom Theo niet. Dit was sint Theo. De rillingen gingen door mijn lijf. Dit was niet zomaar een verkleedpartij meer, niet zomaar een sprookje. Nee, dit was echt. Maar ik kneep in mijn arm en ik voelde niks. Ik moest dus wel nog steeds dromen. En ja hoor, toen werd ik wakker. En het was 11 februari. De kinderen kwamen die avond om hun liedje te zingen voor het feest van sint Theo, maar ik geloofde het niet meer, want het zou net zo goed kunnen zijn dat ik nog droomde, en ik voelde maar geen pijn als ik in mijn arm kneep. Ik geloofde het niet meer. Ik ging gewoon naar bed, en in de verte hoorde ik de kinderen het liedje nog zingen, en het was mooi, zo mooi, bijna als een engelenkoor. En met het liedje in mijn hoofd viel ik in slaap, gewoon in mijn droom, om nog dieper te dromen. En ik droomde weer over de robot 11 februari, hoe hij door glas heenbrak wat de heks om het dorp had gebouwd. En de heks slaakte een gil, en ik hoorde het liedje weer :

‘11 februari is de dag, dat ik mijn ijsje, dat ik mijn ijsje,
11 februari is de dag, dat ik mijn ijsje likken mag.’

En daar zag ik sint Theo, of was het oom Theo ? Ze leken op elkaar als twee druppels water. En ik riep : ‘Hey Theo !’ Kinderen gingen in grote stoeten door de straten om het liedje te zingen, kinderen van alle tijden. Het was een groot bevrijdingsfeest. De tijdmachine was eindelijk doorgebroken, ook al was het maar een droom. Maar ik besefte dat de droom gezonden was door de tijdmachine, en dat de tijdmachine ook mij had gemaakt.

De Wildzangen

Ze hebben hun gevangenen aan hun polsen gebonden, en die moeten nu hun knechten zijn. Ik keek door de ruiten en ik was blij dat ik daar niet bijhoorde. Ik was in het museum. De vrouwen en meisjes hadden dekens van dons. Ik tikte op het raam om me ervan te verzekeren dat er toch echt glas tussen was. ‘Het zijn de wildzangen,’ zei de vrouwelijke gids die ons door het museum leidde voor een tocht. ‘Wat zijn dat ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Vraag er niet naar,’ zei mijn tante.

‘Nou, dat wil ik nu juist wel doen,’ zei ik.

Ik vroeg me af waarop dat sloeg, dat mijn tante dat zei.

‘Ze wil natuurlijk niet dat je in de problemen komt,’ zei de vrouwelijke gids glimlachend.

‘Hoe zou ik daarvan in de problemen kunnen komen ?’ vroeg ik. ‘Er is toch glas achter ?’

Ik tikte weer op het glas. ‘Nu ja,’ zei de museumgids vriendelijk.

‘Wat bedoelt u ?’ vroeg ik, terwijl ik naar mijn broertje en mijn neefje keek.

‘Dat glas zal er niet voor eeuwig zijn,’ zei de begeleidster streng.
Ik keek haar met opgetrokken wenkbrauwen aan.

‘De wildzangen menen het,’ zei mijn tante. ‘Nu zitten ze nog achter glas, maar ze zullen heus weleens losbreken. Het zijn hele gevaarlijken.’

Ik keek nog eens door het glas. Ze zaten op hun knieen bij hun gevangenen, en sommigen zaten gehurkt. ‘Wie zijn die gevangenen ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Niet zoveel vragen stellen, jongetje,’ zei de begeleidster.

Ik trok weer mijn wenkbrauwen op. ‘Ik dacht dat een museum iets was om van te leren,’ zei mijn broertje. Ik knikte. Mijn neefje stootte mij toen aan en fluisterde : ‘Dat mens is gek.’

‘Ja, en tante ook,’ fluisterde ik terug. Hij knikte.

Ik kreeg vreemde gevoelens in mijn buik als ik naar de museum begeleidster keek.

‘Wildzangen,’ zei ze, en toen liep ze verder. ‘Volg mij,’ zei ze, maar ik wilde haar niet meer volgen.

Mijn broertje trok mij uiteindelijk mee. Ze liep naar een speeldoos. Het was al een oude. Een vreemd liedje werd gezongen.

‘Wildzangen, wildzangen,

zwarte wieven, laat ons spelen en zingen aan het strand.’

Op de speeldoos stond een zwarte ballerina, die haar kleren begon uit te trekken, als een striptease. Ik zat er vreemd naar te kijken.

‘Wildzangen, wildzangen, zwarte wieven, laat ons spelen en zingen aan het strand.’

Weer liep de begeleidster verder. We volgden haar allemaal. Toen kwamen we aan bij een schilderij van de wildzangen.

Die nacht had ik nachtmerries over de wildzangen. Ze waren in het huis van mijn tante doorgedrongen, en namen ons mee, naar het bos. Maar ineens veranderden zij in bomen. En vogels zongen door een wilde nacht. Ik werd wakker en staarde naar het behang. Ik vroeg me af waarom we er niet over mochten praten. Het was een donker gat in de geschiedenis.

De Wildzangen II

Een meisje en een jongen waren in het bos, waar ze een hutje hadden gebouwd.
Plotseling sloeg het meisje de jongen van achteren neer met een voorwerp. Ze

sleepte hem in de hut, en bond hem daar vast.
Toen de jongen bij kwam keek hij haar verbaasd aan.
‘Waarom deed je dat ?’ vroeg hij met opgetrokken wenkbrauwen.
‘Ik ben een wildzang,’ zei ze.
Toen veranderde ze in een boom, en de hut veranderde in een zwerm vogels die wegvlogen.
En de vogels zongen een vreemd lied.
‘Nu ben ik hier gebonden,’ zei de jongen tegen zichzelf, ‘en terwijl dit er is gebeurd. Ik vertrouw het niet. Ik moet nog wel slapen. Dit is gewoon een droom.’
En de jongen werd wakker en keek naar zijn vriendin die naast hem lag.
Ze sliep. Hij maakte haar zachtjes wakker.
Hij vertelde haar de nachtmerrie.
Ze keek hem met vreemde ogen aan.
‘Ik ben ook een wildzang,’ zei ze.
‘Nou ja, ik ga wel weer slapen, want je probeert me nu gewoon bang te maken,’ zei de jongen.
‘Nee,’ zei het meisje. ‘Ik ben een wildzang. Ons koor was genaamd de wildzangen.’
Hij nam haar in zijn armen en kuste haar.
‘Laten we maar weer gaan slapen,’ zei ze.
En hij droomde weer. Hij droomde van de bergen, en een vrouw die hem tegemoet kwam.
En de vrouw begon hem te vertellen over de wildzangen, de oorlogsjaren van een duister verleden.
De wildzangen waren oorlogsliederen. Maar toen hij weer keek naar de vrouw was ze ineens verdwenen. Hij werd wakker, en weer vertelde hij zijn droom aan zijn vriendin.
Hij had hoofdpijn en ging wat water drinken.
Ook nam hij een medicijn.
Hij was zwaar aan de medicijnen.
Hij zag eigenlijk geen uitweg.
Altijd moest hij leven met zware nachtmerries.
Op een dag stond hij bij de brug en wilde er vanaf springen.
Maar wildzangen waren rondom zijn hoofd.

Zij moesten hem voortleiden in het leven.
Oorlogsliederen, oorlogsjaren van een duister verleden.

Hmmm, als je naar de winkel gaat dan komt er heel wat bij kijken.

Sommige mensen voelen zich niet op hun gemak in winkels.
Wat gebeurt er eigenlijk in winkels ?
Is het wel echt zo dat jij de klant bent en dat iets anders het voedsel is,
of is het net andersom ?
Dingen om over na te denken.
Daarover gaat het volgende prozaische verhaal.

Het Russisch Restaurant

We eten vandaag Russisch.
– Hoera.
Vind je het leuk ?
– Ja, maar wat is dan Russisch voedsel ?
Ik een beetje meer dan jij.

– Oh, maar ik dacht dat in Rusland alles gelijk was.
Ja, maar de een is nu eenmaal iets gelijker dan de ander.
– Dat klinkt niet echt eerlijk.
Wil je dan nog steeds mee naar het Russisch restaurant ?
– Nee, eigenlijk niet, als dat zo gaat.

We eten vandaag Russisch. Ik heb het al gekocht in de winkel.
– Ik een beetje meer dan jij zeker.
Het is al voorgegrild.

– Ik hoef niet. Ik heb al gegeten en gedronken.

De Russische beer zal je vinden.
– Hoezo ?
Je moet eten wat de pot schaft.
– Laat de beer die troep zelf opeten.
De Russische beer is de naam van die winkel, en er is ook een restaurant bij.
– Geluk ermee.
De Russische beer is op jacht. De ziekenhuizen lopen vol.
– Zal me een zootje wezen. Mij niet gezien. Geen Russisch eten voor mij.
Ja, maar het moet.
– Ik moet helemaal niks.
Jawel, niet zo zeuren. Ik ga niet iets anders kopen nu. Je moet eten wat de pot schaft.
– Ik eet wel een dagje niet dan. Ik kan anders ook wel een patatje halen om de hoek.
Jij gaat niks. Hier blijven. De Russische beer is op jacht.
– Kan me niet schelen. Lang leve de vrijheid. Kom ik om, dan kom ik om.
Praat geen kletspraat nu. De ziekenhuizen zijn vol.
– Hoezo ? Je zei toch dat het een winkel en een restaurant was ? Hoe kunnen dan de ziekenhuizen daardoor vol zijn. Ik snap jouw logica niet.

Nou, heel simpel. Een Russisch restaurant is sluw.
– Waarom eet je het dan ?
Omdat het moet.
– Niets moet.
Dan ken je het Russisch restaurant nog niet.
– Oh ja, van iedereen is gelijk, en ik een beetje meer dan jij.
Ze komen in de nacht met dromen.
– Om bang van te worden.
Ze zijn als stalkers, als papperazzi.
– Ik ben geen artiest. Ik ben meer een anti-artiest. Ik heb nog nooit wat bereikt in mijn leven, alleen maar half afgemaakt werk. Ik ben vol van dromen, maar zonder resultaat.

Iedereen is gelijk, dus ze behandelen je als elke andere artiest.
– Maar de een is weer gelijker dan de ander ?
Ja, natuurlijk, de Russische beer is boven iedereen verheven.
– En daarom stalkt hij ?
Ja, hij geeft aandacht aan de lageren. Hij is ermee geobsedeerd. Zo komt er weer wat evenwicht.
– Nou, mij niet gezien.
Hij heeft je al gezien. Niets ontgaat hem, zelfs geen musje.
– Goed om te weten. Mag ik nu weg ?
Nee, de beer is naar je op jacht.
– Wat moet ik doen ?
Gewoon rustig blijven. Gaat vanzelf wel weer over.
– Is het een ziekte, of nachtmerrie ?
Zoiets. Het is een Russisch restaurant, dus als je naar binnen gaat weet je niet of je de klant bent of het voedsel. Het hangt af van de jacht, en je weet ook nooit of je naar binnen gaat of naar buiten.

vier centimeter

Het jongetje sprak bijna niet, en als hij sprak was het vaag. Hij keek je ook niet aan. Hij kwam met een onzin verhaal dat ik een stripboek aan hem moest teruggeven, maar legde dit vervolgens niet uit. Ik had het stripboek ook nooit van hem gehad of gekocht. Ook had hij liefdeskaarten en liefdesbrieven die ik ooit had gehad zomaar weggepakt. Na een beetje doorvragen kwam ik erachter dat hij eens een brief had gehad van een e-prinses genaamd ‘Vier Centimeter’, met hartjes erbij, en die hem opdroeg haar te e-dienen. Ik kwam erachter dat ik ook eens zo’n brief van haar had gehad, maar had daar verder

niks mee gedaan. Ik verzamelde liefdesbrieven, dus ik deed het verder ook niet weg, maar nu was hij gekomen om het weg te nemen. ‘Hoe kun je zo dom zijn,’ zei ik. ‘Waarom zou je haar e-dienen, en waar staat die ‘e’ voor ?’ Hij haalde zijn schouders op. Hij zei toen dat hij niet zo rijk was, en dat hij zo ook kon e-verdienen. Weer vroeg ik hem waar de ‘e’ voor stond. Hij gaf geen antwoord. ‘Nou, weet je wat,’ zei ik. ‘Ik heb nog wel wat stripboeken voor je, als je maar uitlegd waar de ‘e’ voor staat.’ Hij is toen pas echt gaan praten. Hij sprak honderduit over de ‘e’ en over de e-prinses ‘Vier Centimeter’, zoveel dat ik er aan het einde een groot kruis door zette, maar toen noemde hij mij gek, en dat ik niets wist. Ik legde hem toen uit waarom ik er een kruis door had gezet, en vroeg hem wat hij dan allemaal wist. ‘Niet veel,’ zei hij toen. Hij scheen gezonden te zijn in opdracht van haar. Hij was geprogrammeerd. Ik ging toen weer naar huis na de boeken en brieven markt. Ik was moe, maar toen ik mijn bed aanraakte stond het onder stroom. Ik kreeg toen van een huisgenoot een nieuw bed, en met dat nieuwe bed ging ik naar een ander huis van me, waar ik ook woonde. We hadden huizen door de hele plaats. Toen ik daar aankwam stond Vier Centimeter daar, met een roze jurk aan en een toverstafje, maar ze was aan het wegsmelten. Ook voelde ik in mijn hoofd dingen wegsmelten. Zoveel liefdes had ze van mij geroofd, allemaal omdat ik haar liefde niet wilde aannemen. ‘Wat was die ‘e’ dan ?’ riep ik, want dat was me nog niet duidelijk geworden, zelfs niet van het vele gepraat erover van het jongetje. ‘Oh, de ‘e’ ? Van eerst !’ riep ze. En ik dacht : Vele eersten zullen de laatsten zijn.

Vier centimeter, wat een heks was het. En ik maar wanen. En ze bleef mijn liefdes maar afroven. Het brokkelde allemaal af tussen mijn vingers. Ik kon nergens aan de bak komen, allemaal omdat ik haar niet wilde e-dienen. Het zij zo. Ik wilde de ‘e’ van eerst niet. Laat mij dan maar de laatste zijn, de minste. Ik ben dus meer een m-dienaar, van de minste. Ik wil de eersten niet dienen, want die hebben al genoeg. Ik wil ook de eerste niet zijn. Nee, dat zou ook zo koud en alleen zijn. Ik had dan wel veel liefdes verloren, maar het was warm van binnen. Het was alsof ik vleugeltjes had. Ik vroeg me af waarom de prinses ‘vier centimeter’ heette. Het scheen dat ze vier centimeter was toen ze werd geboren, als een vierkantje, en toen is men haar zo blijven noemen. Ze was niet vier centimeter lang, maar haar omtrek was vier centimeter. Ik had daar een streep door gezet, dus ging ze mij plunderen en liet ze mij gek noemen. Ik had natuurlijk mijn redenen, maar die wilde zij niet horen, en niemand van haar e-dienaren. Ze had ook een krant. Daar werd het allemaal groots ingezet. Het was een e-krant. En ik werkte bij de m-krant. Dat was gewoon grote oorlog. Daarom hadden we huizen in de gehele plaats. Ook gingen we naar de boeken en brieven markt om bij te verdienen. M-verdienen. We keken neer op de e-verdieners. Dat waren haantjes de voorsten. Daarom was het oorlog. Wat kan ik er van zeggen ? Toen ze was weggesmolten kwam ze nog weleens terug om een bad te nemen in mijn huis. Ze was als een spook, een roze spook, totdat die ook begon weg te smelten, en zoveel in mijn hoofd. Vier centimeter dacht ik telkens, vier centimeter. Waar slaat het eigenlijk op ? Ik had dus eens een brief van haar gehad, een e-brief, maar ik deed er verder niks mee, alhoewel ik het wel bewaarde. Ik ben nu eenmaal een liefdesbrieven verzamelaar. Ik verkoop ze ook weer als ik ze dubbel heb of als ik er teveel van heb. Daar is een hele markt voor. Ik houd meer van de m-brieven. Dat is ook eerlijker en vruchtbaarder.

Onze eigen prinses had geen naam. Dat wilde ze ook niet. Ze was gewoon de m-prinses, een principe in mijn hoofd. Ze was de zus van vier centimeter. Zij had ook een toverstokje, maar werkte met m-energie. M-energie : de toekomst. Op ons geld stond ook altijd de M, terwijl op het geld van Vier Centimeter altijd een E stond, maar dat geld begon nu ook weg te smelten. Het smolt gewoon in de handen van de mensen, en in hun zakken. M-energie en M-geld was de

toekomst. Er hing ook een hangertje aan mijn ketting van een M. Het stond voor moeder en de minste. De M-prinses was onze moeder, maar op een dag begon zij ook weg te smelten, en ik stond in een bos. Toen ben ik daar maar gaan wonen.

vier centimeter 3

De tirannie van prinses Vier Centimeter, de roze prinses, de e-prinses van de eersten, kwam ten einde. Haar roze geld met de letter E erop, en al het roze gif wat ze in de hoofden van de mens had gestopt begon weg te smelten. Ik heb nog nooit iemand zo hard horen gillen, als een woest varken. Maar het moest stoppen. We leefden in het grensgebied. Wat een tirannie was het allemaal geweest. Wat een vraatzuchtigen. Altijd weer wilden ze de eersten zijn, en voor wat ? Maar ook onze eigen prinses, prinses M, de prinses van de minsten, begon weg te smelten, en ik bevond mij in het bos. Alles was verwoest door de oorlog. Ik moest van eenvoudige dingen mijn leven bouwen. Ik was niet meer aan de drugs.

Er was een struik genaamd vier centimeter struik, en er hingen roze vruchtjes aan, die ik niet meer zou eten. Troep was het. Je zou er mee kunnen gaan vissen natuurlijk. Maar die lijkenlucht zat ik niet op te wachten natuurlijk. Ik ben toen dieper het bos ingegaan, tot de struik van de M-prinses. Maar de struik was verschrompeld. Er groeiden geen vruchten meer aan. En die struik gaf ook niet vaak vruchten, alleen maar eens in de drie jaar. Dan leefde de struik

helemaal op.

piano’s en pistolen

Hij speelde voor mij op de piano.
Ik zei tegen hem : ‘Ga alsjeblieft niet naar New York. Ze zullen je neerschieten.’
Ik smeekte hem niet te gaan.
Toen hij zei dat hij toch wilde gaan greep ik hem vast, en ik zei dat ik hem niet zou laten gaan.
Hij rukte zich los, maar ik greep hem weer.
‘Ik laat je niet gaan,’ zei ik.
Toen sleepte hij mij met zich mee.
Ik riep om hulp, maar hij was vastbesloten.
Ook ik was vastbesloten, en uiteindelijk gaf hij het op. Ik nam hem weer mee naar huis.
‘Ga maar piano spelen,’ zei ik. ‘Je kan hier wel blijven.’
De dag erna was er op het nieuws dat schutters in New York duizenden mensen hadden neergeschoten.
Hij keek mij aan, en bedankte mij toen.
Hij speelde de piano, en toen vaagde hij weg, en ik werd wakker.
Het was maar een droom.
Ik zette toen zijn plaat op.
Ik luisterde naar hem op de piano.
Het was een zwarte dag in de geschiedenis toen hij was neergeschoten in New York.
Dat zou niet nog een keer mogen gebeuren.

megalomania is the fruit of untreated insecurity

i don’t know what you’re thinking,
i think it’s kind of smart,
i have a piece of paper,
and on it i draw hearts,
hearts full of attention,
hearts of sliding away,
into the sea of forgetfulness,
it’s the end of the day

i don’t know what you’re thinking,
i think it’s kind of sad,
may our dreams bring us together,
in due season,
all the tears we may have shed,
may we fish it all up,
like driftwood washed up on the beach

what did you cry about ?
say what did you cry about ?
string your dreams with your tears,
let them be deep and wet,
to go through the tunnels of the next day

i cannot guarantee you anything,
yesterday’s sorrows and nightmares are your guide,

your bridge to a better day,
no worries when you sleep,
as it appeared to be something else

10% korting

Misschien ken je het wel : Je krijgt een bericht dat je 10% korting hebt bij een bepaalde winkel, en zij die het bericht hebben verzonden zijn nog wel blijer dan jezelf bent hierover. En ik was al zo blij. Ik kon het me bijna niet voorstellen dat zij nog blijer erover waren dan ik. Ik was helemaal door het dolle heen. 10% korting. Dat gebeurt je natuurlijk niet elke dag. Ik pakte mijn vriendin bij de schouders en riep : 10% korting ! Ik pakte haar toen bij de hand en wilde met haar dansen door het hele huis heen vanwege de 10% korting, maar dat wilde zij niet. Toen de bui gezakt was en ik nog eens dat heerlijke bericht doorlas van de 10% korting waar ik volgens die winkel maar wat blij en dankbaar voor moest zijn was ik al veel minder blij en dankbaar. Dat kwam namelijk door de kleine lettertjes die eronder stonden, die zeiden dat het alleen gold als je een bedrag van 500 euro bij hen had besteed of hoger. Ja, dag, dat ging ik niet doen. Laat dan maar zitten. Zo lust ik er nog wel een. Ook stond er bij dat de korting snel verlopen zou zijn, en nog meer belachelijke voorwaarden, zoals dat het alleen maar voor bepaalde producten gold, dus je had ook geen vrije keuze. Bah, ik had het helemaal gehad. Weg korting. Het was gewoon bedonderij. Ik keek naar mijn vriendin en knikte naar haar. ‘Je had groot gelijk dat je niet wilde dansen. Ik was natuurlijk blij gemaakt met een dode mus.’

‘Zoals altijd,’ zei ze toen. Ze kende me wel langer dan vandaag. Ik laat me altijd lekker maken. Ik trap er altijd weer in. Ik leer het gewoon niet. Daarom heb ik mijn vriendin, maar die kan er ook niet veel aan doen. Ze blijft het me zeggen, ze blijft me waarschuwen en blijft dreigen, maar ik luister gewoon niet. Het is om moedeloos van te worden. Hopeloos.

Op een dag kwam ze naar me toe en zei : ‘Nou, je hebt weer 10% korting.’ Ik geloofde haar niet, maar toen liet ze me het papier zien. ‘Het staat er toch echt,’ zei ze, zo van : ‘Laten we eens kijken hoe hij nu zal reageren, of hij nog steeds die ezel is die zich telkens aan dezelfde steen stoot.’ Ik heb het toen voor haar ogen verscheurd. Toen was zij door het dolle heen, en omhelsde me, en wilde met me dansen, maar ik wilde niet, want ik wist dat ik dit nooit zou kunnen volhouden, en dat ik me wel aan een andere steen weer zou stoten. Wat dat betreft is mijn vriendin zo naief. Ze denkt nog steeds dat ze mij kan veranderen, en telkens weer geef ik haar valse hoop.

Een paar dagen erna liepen we op de markt, en ik liet me weer dingen aansmeren. We kwamen thuis met allerlei rommel wat het niet bleek te doen. Ze was weer helemaal terug bij af. Ze had het helemaal met mij gehad. Ze is toen boos weggelopen. Ik ben haar toen achterna gelopen, maar niets hielp. ‘Al ons goede geld gaat eraan,’ riep ze tegen me. Ik zei toen nog dat als we geluk hadden dan zouden we misschien wel weer 10% korting krijgen, maar toen was ze nog bozer. ‘Jij en je 10% korting. Je weet toch wat dat is ? Moet ik het je nu weer uitleggen ?’

Het was een beetje zoals in die winkels waar je voor kleinere dingen meer moest betalen, en waar je je zou afvragen wat je dan wel niet zou moeten betalen als je helemaal niets zou kopen. Het was een beetje zoals in die winkels die zo waren gebouwd dat je niet meer terugkon, maar dat je alleen via de kassa weer naar buiten kon, dat je wel iets moest kopen. Daar kwam al dat kortingen gedoe op neer. Mijn vriendin was het zat, en was mij ook zat. Ze had het helemaal gehad.

Ze is toen naar haar moeder toegegaan en heeft haar het hele verhaal uitgelegd, dat er niet met mij te leven viel, maar haar moeder vond het wel een

mooi verhaal. Het gaf haar moeder hoop. Het gaat een beetje om de fantasie, de 10% korting. Het kan heel inspirerend zijn, ook al krijg je niets. Toen mijn vriendin ‘s avonds thuis kwam was ze heel anders, weer vol met frisse moed en een frisse kijk. Ze kon de wereld weer aan, en ze kon mij weer aan. We zouden uitkijken naar al die nieuwe kortingen, ook al was het allemaal bluf, ook al was het allemaal verzonnen, allemaal truukjes van winkels om de mens te lokken om te gaan winkelen. Zo is het leven. Je mag elkaar soms een beetje plagen en uit de tent lokken, de ander in je wereld proberen te trekken.

Weggelopen

‘Nee,’ zei ze. ‘Mijn moeder is meer met andere zaken bezig. Duistere zaken.’ ‘Zoals wat ?’ vroeg hij. Het raffia rokje wat ze aanhad bewoog in de wind. Ze maakte een dansje. ‘Dit,’ zei ze.

‘Oh, dans,’ zei hij. ‘Wat is daar duister aan ?’

Hij had een lange tocht door het oerwoud gemaakt, en kwam toen bij wat veldjes aan waar een kamp was, en nu was hij in gesprek met dit donkere meisje wat hem over haar moeder vertelde. Er stonden vreemde harige trommels en eveneens vreemde schilden, vlakbij wat hutten.

‘Ze danst meestal ‘s nachts,’ zei het meisje, ‘bij een groot vuur.’

‘Doe jij mee ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Soms,’ zei het meisje. Haar moeder was een heks, zei ze.

‘Een heks ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Wacht maar tot ze thuiskomt,’ zei het meisje.

Maar hij wilde niet wachten. Hij wilde weer verder, en liep door, terwijl hij het meisje gedag groette. ‘Ga je weg ?’ riep het meisje, terwijl hij het kamp uitriep. ‘Ja !’ riep hij. ‘s Nachts had hij er nachtmerries van, toen hij in het oerwoud sliep, over heksen en hun dansen. Het was zo eng, zo eng, dat hij besloot om terug te gaan, want nu moest en zou hij het weten.

‘Ben je weer terug ?’ vroeg het meisje toen hij de volgende dag terugkwam.
‘Ja,’ zei hij. ‘Is je moeder al teruggekomen ?’

‘Nee,’ zei het meisje. ‘Ben je bang voor haar ?’
‘Na al jouw verhalen over haar wel,’ zei hij.
Ze greep hem toen vast. Ze was heel sterk.
‘Ik ben veel erger,’ zei ze tegen hem. ‘Wat als ik je niet meer loslaat ?’
‘Ik geloof je niet,’ zei hij.
Toen hadden ze een gevecht op de grond, maar het meisje was veel sterker.
‘Ben je sterker dan je moeder ?’ vroeg hij.
Ze zei niks. Ze kneep in zijn arm. ‘Je bent slap,’ zei ze.
‘Als je wat karweitjes voor me doet dan zal ik je niet telkens laten voelen hoe slap je bent.’

‘Wat voor karweitjes ?’ vroeg hij.
Maar het meisje zei niks meer.
In de nacht, toen het meisje sliep, besloot hij weg te gaan.
Hij rende en rende door het oerwoud, de hele nacht door, terug naar huis.
Toen hij bij het dorpje aankwam waar hij woonde was het al ochtend,
en zijn moeder hing de was op aan de waslijn in de tuin.
Hij vertelde haar alles.
‘Weglopen is niks voor mij,’ zei hij.

Maar wel bleef hij sindsdien over het meisje dromen, en over haar moeder.

het carnaval

De heks zat daar aan de tafel met haar raadsheer Mulk die telkens voorover bewoog, en met haar andere raadsheer die kaarsrecht zat en niet bewoog. De heks bewoog ook niet. Alleen haar lippen bewogen om te spreken. Ze hadden alle drie duistere lange gewaden aan, en raadsheer Mulk had een lange, duistere hoed op die telkens meebewoog als hij zich voorover boog. En liegen dat ze konden. De ene leugen na de andere leugen. Vooral raadsheer Mulk loog verschrikkelijk. Daar was hij voor ingehuurd. Na een tijd was hij niets anders dan een hoopje as of zand. De heks bleef kaarsrecht zitten. Het kon haar niet schelen. Raadsheer Mulk deed al het liegwerk. De heks nam het gewoon over en bleef diplomatiek. De andere raadsheer zei niet veel. Hij sprong alleen in waar het nodig was, om bij te sturen, om de leugens aan te wakkeren. Stoken was wat ze deden. Altijd aan het einde van de dag was raadsheer Mulk niet veel meer waard, als een hoopje zand of as. De dag erna had hij weer het hoogste woord. De nacht deed altijd wonderen. Dan groeide hij weer tot gestalte. Bij de heks was dat anders. Die zat altijd kaarsrecht, maar altijd aan het einde van het jaar begon haar stoel te wiebelen, en dan viel ze uiteindelijk om. Na de jaarwisseling zat ze echter weer gewoon rechtop. Het bleef maar doorgaan. Het was een heksenklok.

Die heksenklok sloeg maar één keer in de duizend jaar op tilt, om vervolgens na een tijdje te ontploffen. Dan duurde het een vol jaar voordat hij helemaal hersteld was. Daar kwam soms een heksendokter aan te pas, met vreemde medicijnen. Het moest allemaal maar net goed gaan.

De heksendokter was een vreemd geval,
Hij hield nogal van carnaval,
Hij had de heksenklok gemaakt,
en soms gooide hij het van een berg,
Ook had hij meerdere heksenklokken gemaakt,
van hetzelfde soort.
Vreemde stamgasten zijn het,
Verslaafd aan de fles.
Aan het einde van de dag zijn ze niets dan spoken,
geroezemoes in de wind.

de stiefouders

Juul Strijner fietste van school naar huis. Zijn vader was gym leraar en had weer zo lopen schelden. Toen hij thuiskwam ging het gescheld gewoon verder. En maar naar de drank grijpen, die man. Juul kon er niet mee leven. Hij kreeg overal de schuld van. Als er iets fout ging had hij het altijd gedaan. Zijn moeder deed niks om hem te verdedigen.

Toen zijn moeder overleed werd zijn vader wat rustiger, en beterde zijn leven wat, greep niet meer zo snel naar de drank, maar Juul vertrouwde het niet. Juul kreeg een stiefmoeder. Zijn vader hertrouwde. Juul was dol op zijn stiefmoeder. Zijn stiefmoeder had veel begrip voor hem, luisterde naar hem, en kwam voor hem op. Het duurde niet lang voordat zijn vader ook stierf. Al gauw hertrouwde zijn stiefmoeder. Juul was al snel dol op zijn stiefvader. Deze mensen waren zo anders. Hij kon nu eindelijk over zijn verleden heenkomen.

Juul Strijner fietste naar huis. Fluitend. Hij was gelukkig. Hij had een geweldige stiefmoeder en een geweldige stiefvader. Niets van hen deed hem herinneren aan vroeger. Deze mensen waren zo anders, alsof ze uit de hemel waren gekomen om Juul uit de hel te halen waarin hij leefde.

Toen hij thuis was gekomen omhelsde hij zijn stiefouders. Toen ging hij naar boven om zijn huiswerk te maken. Hij droomde weg. Even moest hij aan zijn moeder denken die hij aan kanker had verloren, en even aan zijn vader die een hartstilstand had gehad. Dat was zijn oude leven, en dat was nu ten einde gekomen. Die mensen waren geen mensen, maar monsters. Hun hele leven hadden ze over Juul gelogen en leugens verspreid naar anderen, allemaal lopen stoken. Vaak wilde Juul niet meer leven. Maar met zijn stiefouders zag hij het leven weer zitten.

Op een avond kwam zijn stiefvader naar boven. ‘Zit je er nog erg mee ?’ vroeg hij, terwijl hij een arm om Juul’s schouder legde.

‘Het gaat beter,’ zei hij tegen zijn stiefvader en omhelsde hem.

‘Jullie zijn engelen, he,’ zei hij tegen zijn stiefvader.

‘We hebben je gered,’ zei zijn stiefvader.

‘Het had niet veel langer moeten duren,’ zei Juul. Toen kwam ook zijn stiefmoeder naar boven.

‘Ik had bijna een overdosis pillen genomen,’ zei Juul, ‘die rommel die mijn ouders mij lieten slikken.

‘Wij zijn nu jouw pil,’ zei zijn stiefmoeder glimlachend.

Juul keek naar zijn stiefmoeder en omhelsde haar ook. Juul keek toen naar buiten. ‘Ik was bijna met mijn fiets op de rails gegaan, de trein tegemoet.’

‘Wij zijn nu je trein,’ zei zijn stiefmoeder glimlachend.

Juul had tranen in zijn ogen. ‘Hoe kon ik met zulke ouders leven ?’

‘Het heeft je hier gebracht,’ zei zijn stiefvader.

‘Ik was op sterven na de dood,’ zei Juul.

De volgende dag fietste hij fluitend naar school. De leraren en leraressen hadden het erg met hem te doen. Ze herinnerden zich allemaal het drankorgel dat zijn vader was. Ze probeerden hem een beter leven te geven. Ze deden erg hun best. Ze vonden Juul dapper. Juul was een echte doorzetter. Ze waren er voor hem. Hij kon altijd met ze praten als hij dat wilde of nodig had.

De hele dag moest hij denken aan zijn stiefvader en zijn stiefmoeder. Hij was in een heel nieuw leven gekomen. Op een dag ging hij op een wereldreis, samen met zijn stiefouders. Het was vakantie. Zijn oma zou op het huis passen, en op de kat. Ze gingen met een groot cruise schip. Ergens midden op de oceaan raakte de hemel de aarde. De boot werd gewoon opgenomen. Toen ze weer terugkwamen was de kat blij, en zijn oma was blij. Hij maakte een boek van de reis. Ook maakte hij een boek van zijn hele leven. Maar oh, wat liep hij erin te fantaseren. Toen hij klaar was met het boek dacht hij : ‘Maar dit is niet meer mijn leven, maar dat van iemand anders.’ Hij had het in verhaalvorm geschreven. Het was ergens zwaar overdreven, maar op andere plaatsen veel te zacht gezegd. Nee, hij herkende zichzelf er niet meer in, de manier waarop hij het had opgeschreven. Dit ging meer over de buurjongen. Hij had lopen mixen en mengen. Maar het was een mooi verhaal, dat wel. Ook zijn

stiefouders werden er veel beter opgezet dan ze waren, want ze waren eigenlijk helemaal niet zo geweldig, maar zo maakte hij ze. Hij was een fantast, en een overdrijver, vroeger al, en daarom lieten zijn ouders hem medicijnen slikken. Hij was namelijk door zijn grote fantasie een gevaar voor zichzelf en anderen, en die medicijnen hielpen hem. Het waren goede medicijnen, waardoor hij goed kon denken, alles weer zag zoals het was. Zijn ouders kwamen zo slecht in het boek te staan, terwijl ze helemaal niet zo slecht waren. Dat verzon hij er allemaal bij. Ja, Juul Strijner was een grote fantast. Zijn ouders deden geen vlieg kwaad. Ze waren de beste ouders die je je maar kon voorstellen. Toch koos Juul liever voor zijn stiefouders. Het gras bij de buren is immers altijd groener.

Het boek werd in vele talen vertaald en overal gelezen. Er werd een standbeeld van Juul Strijner gemaakt, wat later door familie weer werd afgebroken, omdat ze het een leugenboek vonden. Alleen in Rusland was een standbeeld van Juul Strijner wat zo goed bewaakt werd dat ze het niet konden afbreken. De leugenvorst noemden ze hem. Iemand die zo wonderbaarlijk kan liegen, die verdient wel een standbeeld. Het was maar een verhaal, maar wat familie van Juul Strijner vonden dat ze er zo verkeerd op waren gezet dat ze een beeldenstorm waren begonnen, en zo moest ook Rusland het ontgelden, maar ze kwamen niet ver. Het beeld stond in het Kremlin, zwaar bewaakt. De familie gaf het niet op, maar Rusland ook niet. Daarom kwamen ze allemaal in de gevangenis wegens poging tot standbeeldschennis. Uiteindelijk werden ze naar een Siberische gevangenis afgevoerd, waar ze zouden horen waar Juul Strijner wel niet allemaal doorheen was gegaan. Leugens of niet ? Het was maar een verhaal. Ze kregen te horen dat Juul Strijner helemaal niet bestond. Dat hadden zij allemaal verzonnen. Juul Strijner was slechts een personage uit een verhaal. Ze moesten afkicken van hun leugens. Ze waren gebrainwashed. Ze moesten helemaal gedeprogrammeerd worden met shock therapie. Ze zeiden dat ze bewijzen hadden, maar ze konden het niet hard maken. Papieren buiten Rusland waren in Rusland niet geldig, en al helemaal niet in Siberie.

Juul Strijner was een verzinsel, iets waarmee ze veel geld wilden verdienen. Ze hadden het allemaal op lopen kotsen, en allemaal drama lopen maken zodat ze zelf de dans zouden kunnen ontlopen, maar hier in Siberie zou dat niet

gebeuren. Hier waren ze er goed bij. Hier zouden ze er niet mee wegkomen. Het was een stripfiguur. Zij maakten de dienst niet uit. Zij deelden de lakens niet uit. Juul Strijner was een code naam voor een Russische gevechtsmachine. Ze waren goed in de problemen. Ze stonden schuldig aan spionage en vervalsing van bewijsmateriaal. Ze stonden schuldig aan meineed wegens al hun leugens.

ontsnapping uit de stad

De stad was brandende.
Ik rende de wildernis in.
Ik keek niet om.
Alles moest ik achterlaten.
Ik probeerde weer mijn leven op te bouwen in het bos.
Daar ontmoette ik een vrouw.
Ze was naakt, met riemen omgord,
met pijl en boog.
Ze richtte op mij, maar schoot niet, en begon slechts te spreken.
Ik knielde aan haar voeten.
Ik had niks meer en ik kon niks meer.

Ik dacht aan de brand in de stad, en toen aan haar.
Waren zij hetzelfde ?
Ik knielde aan haar voeten, omdat ik niet verder kon.
Ik keek haar aan, en zag de brandende stad.
Ik kon niet ontsnappen aan haar macht.

Het trauma van binnen verscheurt mij,
het heeft mij stil gemaakt.
Die ladders van touwen voor mij, zij spoelen alles weg,
ik kan ze niet bereiken, slechts binden ze mij.

de eilanden

Ik werd wakker in de gang van het schip.
Ik wist niet hoe ik op het schip was gekomen.
Ik voelde me koortsachtig.
Aan beide kanten van de gang waren kamers.
Het was een lange gang.
Tussen de deuren hingen schilderijtjes.
Aan het einde van de gang ergens hing een schilderijtje van een oerwoudsvrouw.
Op de deur ernaast stond een bordje : ‘Kapitein.’

Ik bleef er gewoon wachten, en staarde naar het schilderijtje.
Na een tijdje kwam hij.
‘Hoe kwam ik op dit schip ?’ vroeg ik.
‘Er was een storm en ik pikte je op,’ zei hij. ‘Ik ben het schip en jij bent het water.’
Ik keek hem verbaasd aan.
‘Zijn er nog andere mensen op het schip ?’ vroeg ik.
‘Ik ben bang voor mensen,’ zei hij.

‘Ik kan me daar wat bij voorstellen,’ zei ik toen.
‘Ik voel me ook altijd minderwaardig en ik schaam me altijd,’ zei hij.
‘Maar er zijn wel eilanden op het schip : het land van nooit, het land van nergens, en het land van anders. Die hebben allemaal hun eigen kamer op het schip, maar ik wil niet naar het land van nooit, en ook niet naar het land van nergens. Soms ga ik naar het land van anders. Daar is alles anders.’

‘Is er ook een boekenkamer ?’ vroeg ik.
‘Nee, ik houd niet van boeken,’ zei hij. ‘Ik ben bang voor boeken. Alsjeblieft, praat niet meer over boeken.’ Hij begon ervan te wenen. Dikke tranen rolden over zijn wangen.

‘Is het zo erg ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Ja,’ zei hij. ‘Boeken hebben mij in de problemen gebracht, hebben ons in de problemen gebracht. Ik houd wel van gokken. Ik ben een echte gokkapitein. Ik heb een extra kamer op mijn schip met allerlei gokmachines waar ik graag op speel.’

Hij nam me toen mee naar het land van anders. Hier was alles anders. Het was gewoon in een kamer, maar je kwam erdoor op een eiland. Zo allemaal op zijn schip.

En in het land van anders was een hulp centrum waar mensen elkaar hielpen.
En ik zei tegen de kapitein : ‘Maar hier zijn wel mensen.’
‘Het zijn geen echte mensen,’ zei de kapitein. ‘Het zijn eilanden.’
Ik vroeg hem toen hoe het schip heette.
Hij zei : ‘de Exodus.’

Ik ben het water, hij is het schip, en de eilanden helpen elkaar.

De Psychologie van
de Eindeloze Winkelstraat

Het was een eindeloze straat,
Een winkelstraat, in de grootste stad van de wereld,
En een jongen slenterde daar eindeloos,
Hij kwam nooit ergens aan,
Ging geen winkel binnen

Hij was op weg naar de haven,
Hij was op weg naar een boot,
Aan de eindeloze zee

Maar onderweg kwam hij iemand tegen met wie hij een eindeloos gesprek had,
Het stopte maar niet,
Maar hij besloot haar mee te nemen,
Naar zijn boot

Ze sloegen een zijstraat in die naar de haven zou leiden,
Maar ook dit was een eindeloze straat,
En hij vroeg zich af of ze ooit bij de haven aan zouden komen,
Maar ja, hij had in ieder geval een eindeloos gesprek

Ze wist hem over te halen met haar mee te gaan naar het eindeloze bos,
En daarvoor sloegen ze weer een zijstraat in,
Maar ja, je raadt het al : die zijstraat was ook eindeloos

Hoe lang duurt het nog ? vroeg hij telkens.
Uit haar tas haalde ze een boek wat eindeloos was.
'Alles is hier eindeloos, hè ?' vroeg hij.
'Maar zo'n eindeloos boek kan ik toch niet allemaal gaan lezen ?
Ik heb genoeg aan dit eindeloze gesprek met jou.'

'Oh, ik moet nog wat even doen,' zei ze.
Toen stapte ze een winkel binnen.
Hij volgde haar.
'Nee, even buiten blijven,' zei ze.
'Ik ben zo terug.'
Maar ze bleef eindeloos weg,
En toen is hij naar binnen gegaan.
Hij keek zijn ogen uit.
Het was een eindeloze winkel.
Ze was hier vast en zeker verdwaald,
Dat kon niet anders.

En ook hij begon te dwalen en te dwalen,
In deze eindeloze winkel.
Na heel lang dwalen kwam hij de winkelier tegen.
De winkelier omhelsde hem.
'Oh, zo lang niemand gezien,
Ik was verdwaald in mijn eigen winkel.
Eindelijk iemand gevonden,'
zei de winkelier.

'Ik ben mijn vriendin kwijt met wie ik een eindeloos gesprek had,' zei de jongen.
'Geeft niet, geeft niet,' zei de winkelier. 'Die komt wel weer terecht.'
'Maar hoe dan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Nou,' zei de winkelier, 'alles wordt hier verkocht, ook wij, dus ze komt wel weer terecht.'

'Dat is een hele opluchting,' zei de jongen. 'Kan ik haar dan nu kopen ?'

'Het kost eindeloos veel,' zei de winkelier.

'Maar het is mijn vriendin,' zei de jongen, 'we waren op weg naar het eindeloze bos.'

'Allemaal eindeloos duur,' zei de winkelier.

'Een vreemde bedoening dan,' zei de jongen. 'Ik wil hier weg.'

'We kunnen niet weg,' zei de winkelier.

'Dus we moeten wachten totdat we gekocht worden ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ik vrees van wel,' zei de winkelier.

'Maar wie hebben eindeloos geld daarvoor dan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'De eindelozen,' zei de winkelier.

'Wie zijn dat ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ik zal het je wel even laten zien,' zei de winkelier.
Hij haalde uit zijn tas een boek tevoorschijn. Het was een eindeloos boek.
'Dat boek ken ik,' zei de jongen.
'Heb je het gelezen ?' vroeg de winkelier.

'Eh nee,' zei de jongen, 'ik was met iemand in gesprek.'

'Sufferd !' riep de winkelier.

'Wat nu ?' vroeg de jongen. 'Het lijkt hier wel een gevangenis.'

'Dat is het ook !' foeterde de winkelier. 'Wat dacht je dat het anders was ?'

'Een winkel ?' zei de jongen.

'Wat is dat voor oneindeloos gezwets !' foeterde de winkelier.

'Maar wat nu dan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Wachten op de eindeloze trein,' zei de winkelier.

'Komt die hier ook ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Nee, hier niet,' zei de winkelier.

'Maar wat hebben we er dan aan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Dan moet je het boek lezen !' foeterde de winkelier, terwijl hij het boek in de handen van de jongen drukte. Toen liep de winkelier boos weg. 'Zorg dat je niet nog een keer verdwaalt !' riep de jongen hem na.

Toen begon de jongen maar met lezen. 'Wel verdraaid !' riep de jongen. 'Die taal versta ik niet !'

Na uren dwalen kwam hij het meisje weer tegen.

'En ?' vroeg het meisje.

'En wat ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Heb je het eindeloze boek gevonden ?' vroeg het meisje.

'Ja,' zei de jongen. 'Ik kreeg het van de winkelier, maar het is in een andere

taal.'

Het meisje begon te lachen. 'Dan had je het boek maar van mij moeten aannemen, want dat was in jouw taal. Maar nee, je wilde liever met me praten. Snapte je dan niet waar eindeloze gesprekken met meisjes naartoe zouden kunnen leiden ?'

'Ik snap het nu,' zei de jongen. 'Het leidt nergens toe. Mag ik dan nu het boek ?'

Het meisje stak toen haar tong uit. 'Nee,' zei ze, en draaide zich toen om en rende weg.

'Kom terug !' riep de jongen. 'Dus ik zit in een gevangenis omdat ik een bepaald boek niet heb gelezen, en dat boek wordt nu ook nog eens van me afgehouden ? Wat een zotte bedoening is dit ?'

En de jongen dwaalde en dwaalde en vroeg zich af wat er in het boek zou staan. Wel stonden er soms plaatjes in het boek in de vreemde taal. 'Ik lijk wel Jan Huigen in de ton met een hoepeltje erom,' dacht hij bij zichzelf. 'Was ik maar weer in de eindeloze winkelstraat op weg naar de haven. Ik was zo stom om me af te laten leiden door dat meisje. Eerst was ze zo eindeloos praatgraag, maar nu, nu ....'

Opeens stond er een fee voor de jongen in een roze jurk, met een toverstafje. 'Boekjes lezen, hè, boekjes lezen,' zei de fee. 'Ik dacht dat je op weg was naar de haven ?'

'Ja,' zei de jongen, 'maar het duurde eindeloos, en ik raakte in een eindeloos gesprek.'

'Dat is geen reden om dan maar boekjes te gaan lezen,' zei de fee.

'Wat moest ik dan doen ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Nou,' zei de fee, 'wat een vraag. Er staan hier chocolade winkels door de hele

straat, en meneer weet niet wat hij moet doen.' Toen begon de fee te lachen. 'Neem eens een chocolaatje voor de verandering.'

'Tja, daar had ik even niet aan gedacht,' zei de jongen.

'Dus ga je maar achter de meisjes aan ?' zei de fee glimlachend.

'Ik kwam haar toevallig tegen, en ze hield me aan de praat,' zei de jongen.

'Toevallig hè ?' zei de fee glimlachend. 'Maar toevallig stonden er ook een heleboel chocolade winkels aan weerszijden van de straat, en daar had je geen oog voor ? Malle jongen.'

'Ik werd gewoon afgeleid,' verdedigde de jongen. 'Ze praatte maar door, en belemmerde mij het zicht. Ze bleef me maar lastig vallen, ook toen ik doorliep.'

'Ja ja,' zei de fee, 'dat zeggen ze allemaal. En toen besloot je haar maar mee te nemen naar je boot in de haven ?'

'Ja,' zei de jongen, 'misschien zou dat haar kalmeren, want ik kwam toch niet meer van haar af, en het was eindeloos.'

'Een chocolaatje had wonderen kunnen doen,' zei de fee.

'Ik begrijp het,' zei de jongen, 'het spijt me. Mag ik dan nu een chocolaatje ?'

'Zoek ze zelf maar,' zei de fee, terwijl ze haar tong uitstak naar hem.

Toen vloog ze weg.

'Bah,' zei de jongen. 'Die feeën van tegenwoordig zijn nog wel erger dan meisjes.'

Hij keek in een bak op een winkelschap, en zag er chocolaatjes liggen, maar je raadt het al : die waren natuurlijk eindeloos duur.

'Zie je nu wel !' riep de jongen. 'Ik word hier eindeloos bedrogen. Maar ja, niemand schijnt hier toch te zijn, en de winkelier zal alweer verdwaald zijn, dus ik neem er maar eentje.' Hij haalde de wikkel van de chocola eraf, en toen het zilveren folie en begon van het chocolaatje te eten. 'Lekker,' zei hij. 'Die fee had toch wel echt gelijk. Had ik eerder moeten doen, had ik eerder moeten doen.'

Hij liep verder met zijn hoofd in de wolken. 'Chocolade is toch wel het heerlijkste wat bestaat,' zei hij. Opeens botste hij tegen een politie agent op. 'Chocolaatjes stelen, hè ?' zei de agent.

'Er was hier niemand en ik was verdwaald,' zei de jongen. 'Ik moest toch wat eten.'

'Dat zeggen ze allemaal,' zei de politie agent. 'Kom maar mee.'

'Nou, ik ben blij dat je me gevonden hebt,' zei de jongen. 'Haal me hieruit.'

'Nee, je gaat er dieper in,' zei de politie agent. 'We zijn hier niet zo gesteld op dieven.'

En zo leidde de politie agent hem naar een lift, en ze gingen heel hoog. Even later kwamen ze op een hoge verdieping uit. Hier werden allemaal boeken verkocht. 'Nee, geen boeken !' riep hij. 'De fee zei dat ik op zoek moest gaan naar chocola in plaats van boeken.'

'Niks mee te maken,' zei de politie. 'En dit zijn trouwens toch chocolade boeken.'

'Dat is geen straf dan,' zei de jongen.

'Het is eindeloos duur, dus ik zou er maar niet aanzitten als ik jou was,' zei de politie agent, 'want anders ga je nog hoger het gebouw in.'

'Maar wat moet ik eten dan ?' vroeg de jongen. 'Ik heb honger. Je kunt me toch niet laten verhongeren ? Dus deze gevangenis voedt zijn gevangenen niet ?'

'Niks mee te maken,' zei de politie agent. 'Wees blij dat je nog leeft. We kunnen niet voor alles zorgen.'

'Bah, wat flauw,' zei de jongen. 'Wat een flauwe bedoening allemaal.'

'Je was toch op weg naar de haven, naar je boot ?' zei de politie agent.

'Ja, maar ik kwam iemand tegen,' zei de jongen, 'en die leidde me hier naartoe. Ik had natuurlijk nooit naar haar moeten luisteren. En nu is ze weg.'

De politie agent begon hem uit te lachen. 'Dat is mijn dochter,' zei hij. 'Zij werkt voor ons. Zo krijgen we nieuwe klanten.'

'Gevangenen zul je bedoelen,' zei de jongen sip.

'Kop op,' zei de politie agent. 'Ik heb ook nog een andere dochter. Zou je die niet willen ontmoeten ?'

'Wat staat me dan te wachten ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Kom maar mee,' zei de politie agent. Weer gingen ze de lift in, en ditmaal gingen ze nog hoger. 'Hoe hoger je komt, hoe meer de winkels in elkaar overlopen, en dan is het veel kleiner.'

Plotseling stond de jongen met de politie agent weer op straat, en alles was niet eindeloos meer. 'Wat vreemd,' zei de jongen.

'Het was een verkleinings-lift,' zei de politie. 'Nu ben je pas waar je wezen moet. Mijn andere dochter wacht op je bij de haven.'

'Vreemd,' zei de jongen weer, en liep over straat op weg naar de haven. Ergens halverwege kwam hij weer de eerste dochter van de politie agent tegen. 'Ha,

ben je daar weer !' riep ze van een afstand.

'Ik heb geen tijd nu,' zei hij. 'Iemand wacht op me bij de haven.'

'Heb je een afspraakje ?' zei het meisje lachend. Toen liep ze lachend door.

Bij de haven aangekomen zag de jongen een ander meisje staan. 'Ben jij de dochter van de politie agent ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Ja, hoezo ?' vroeg het meisje geirriteerd.

'Nou, ik mag toch wel wat vragen,' zei de jongen. 'Dan hoef je niet direct zo boos te doen. Je vader zei dat je me hier zou opwachten.'

'Mijn vader zegt zoveel, daar heb ik niks mee te maken,' zei het meisje. 'Ik wacht hier op heel iemand anders.'

'Op wie dan ?' vroeg de jongen.

'Gaat je niks aan,' zei het meisje. 'Wijsneus.'

'Je bent gierig,' zei de jongen.

'Gierig ?' lachte het meisje ineens, en rende toen weg.

Het leek wel alsof alles toen nog kleiner en nauwer werd. De jongen had moeite met ademhalen. Het leek wel alsof alles op hem afkwam om hem te verpletteren. 'Moet dat chocolaatje zijn geweest,' zei hij tegen zichzelf. 'Ik ook altijd met mijn goede ideeën. Ik moet terug naar die lift, want hier is het nog erger.'

Hij begon al te hijgen en puffen van de benauwdheid, en liep weer terug naar het punt waar de politie agent hem bracht. Daar stond de eerste dochter van de politie agent weer. 'Alsjeblieft, ik smeek je,' zei de jongen. 'Breng me weer terug naar de verkleinings-lift.'

'Wil je dat het nog kleiner en benauwder wordt ?' vroeg het meisje lachend.

'Nee, groter, eindelozer,' zei de jongen. 'Dit is ook niks.'

'Jij weet ook niet wat je wil,' zei het meisje lachend. 'Ik dacht dat je een afspraakje had ?'

'Het was een misverstand,' zei de jongen. Daar kwam ook de politie agent weer aan. 'Wat sta jij hier nog te staan !' bulderde hij. 'Lopen, naar de haven !'

'Je dochter wilde niet,' zei de jongen.

'Niks mee te maken,' zei hij.

'Je kan niemand dwingen,' zei hij.

'Dat maak ik nog wel uit,' zei de politie agent, 'en nu lopen.'

'Ik ga naar de haven, naar mijn boot, maar niet naar haar,' zei de jongen.

Toen rende de jongen terug naar de haven, naar zijn boot, en stapte naar binnen. Het was er een enorme rotzooi. Hij startte direct de motor. 'Ik moet hier weg,' dacht hij bij zichzelf, 'weg.' Gelukkig was de zee hier niet eindeloos. Het was maar een riviertje. Maar alles werd alleen maar kleiner en benauwender. Weer ging hij terug naar de haven, ging zijn boot uit, en op zoek naar de tweede dochter van de politie agent. Die stond daar ergens met een telefoontje. 'Alsjeblieft,' hijgde hij. 'Breng me terug naar de verkleinings-lift,' zei hij.

'Vergrotingslift zul je bedoelen,' zei het meisje, terwijl ze gewoon doorging met haar telefoongesprek.

'Alsjeblieft,' hijgde hij, 'als alles maar weer groter en eindelozer wordt.'

'Waarom neem je niet gewoon een chocolaatje ?' vroeg ze, terwijl ze weer doorsprak aan de telefoon.

'Heb ik niet,' zei de jongen.

Het meisje grabbelde even wat in haar tas, terwijl ze doorsprak aan de telefoon, en gaf hem toen gehaast een chocolaatje. Hij haalde de wikkel er vanaf en toen het zilveren folie en begon ervan te eten. 'Mmm,' zei hij, 'zo lekker. Chocola is toch wel het heerlijkste wat er is.'

'Je bent laat,' zei het meisje.

'Ik was er al, maar toen wilde je niet,' zei de jongen. 'Je zei dat je op iemand anders wachtte.'

'Dat moet een vergissing zijn,' zei het meisje. 'Kom maar.'

Het meisje leidde hem toen naar de vergrotingslift die weer helemaal naar beneden ging naar het eindeloze winkelgebouw. Hij was zo opgelucht. 'Wat is de bedoeling hiervan ?' vroeg hij.

'Nou,' zei het meisje, 'de bedoeling is dat de klant het niet in zijn hoofd haalt nog ooit uit onze winkel te ontsnappen.'

Einde

De Omzwerving

Korte Theologische Roman

Hoofdstuk 1.

Edwin Jagersma zit in een Pinkstergemeente. De voorganger en zijn vrouw prediken naast het Kruis van Christus ook veel over het Kruis van Jozef, en ze geloven ook in een engel genaamd Sarsia. Edwin vindt de preken die ze geven erg goed. Door zijn moeder is hij in deze gemeente gekomen, en toen is er een wereld voor hem open gegaan. Zijn ouders zijn gescheiden. Hij woonde bij zijn vader en ging altijd met hem mee naar de gemeente ... Maar wat hier gepredikt werd was eventjes wat anders ... De voorganger had veel kritiek op de conservatieve pinstergemeentes, alhoewel zijn vrouw erg mild was ...

Op een dag had de voorganger het in de preek over het kruis van Ismael ... en zei dat omdat de gemeente dat kruis niet had aanvaart de Islam kwam opzetten om wraak te nemen ... Volgens de voorganger was de Islam het omgekeerde kruis van Ismael ... Na de dienst kwamen er allemaal vragen. De voorganger vertelde dat Hagar een Egyptische slavin van Sara was, die nageslacht bracht aan Abraham in de vorm van Ismael, zoals dat ook in de Bijbel stond. Maar door de hand van Sara werden zij beiden in de woestijn gezonden ... En dat terwijl Ismael één van de aartsvaders was ... De jongen werd een boogschutter, en de hand van God leidde hem ... Door toedoen van Sara werd er verder eigenlijk niet meer over Ismael gesproken, maar ging de lijn over op Isaak, haar eigen zoon. De Islam kwam op als de wraak van Ismael, en de gemeente doet er daarom beter aan om terug te gaan naar de bron van Ismael om hem in ere te herstellen ... Ook hij is een kind van Abraham, ook hij is een aartsvader, en draagt het Egyptisch bloed van zijn moeder Hagar in zich. Ook kwam er de vraag hoe ze zich dat moesten voorstellen : Het aanvaarden van het kruis van Ismael, en hem in ere te herstellen ... De voorganger zei dat ze allereerst de wildheid en de wraak van dit deel gewoon moesten aanvaarden ... Het wilde zijn plek terug ...

Hagar en Ismael werden verstoten uit de familie en werden de woestijn ingezonden waar ze bijna omkwamen van de dorst .... maar gelukkig greep de Engel Gods in. Zo moesten ook zij, als gemeente, verworpenheid dragen en de geestelijke dorst ... Zij moesten beginnen het kruis van Ismael te dragen, en

geloven dat ook dit kruis tot heerlijkheid zou leiden en tot de verzoening met het volk van Ismael. Door het kruis van Ismael kon die eenheid komen ... God beloofde Hagar een ontelbaar nageslacht. Ismael is in dat opzicht de verloren aartsvader die opgezocht moest worden ...

De dienst erna had de voorganger het over de dertien bloedlijnen van Jahweh, waarvan Hij zou afstammen, en zijn vijf ouders. Deze ouders waren genaamd : Uruk, Nanak, Koshau, Irim en Mirik. Daar had Edwin nog nooit iets van gehoord, maar de voorganger zei dat hij dit allemaal uit het Eeuwig Evangelie had gehaald, het verlengstuk van de Bijbel wat in Openbaring werd aangekondigd, maar wat pas in de eindtijd zou verschijnen. Ook had de voorganger het over de vele vrouwen van Jahweh, en hij noemde er wel tientallen op ... alsof Jahweh ook een harem zou bezitten ... Dit was in het Oude Testament zelfs op aarde heel normaal, maar de voorganger had het natuurlijk over de hemel, waar Jahweh woont. Weer kwamen er een heleboel vragen. Ook Edwin stelde enige vragen. Edwin herinnerde zich dat hij vroeger weleens aan zijn ouders had gevraagd wie nou precies de ouders van God waren, maar kreeg daar nooit antwoord op ... Nu leek de voorganger die vragen te beantwoorden ... Jahweh was als God aangesteld over mensen, dieren, engelen, en vele geestelijke wezens. Nu de gemeente verder was gegroeid zouden ze aan dit soort dingen toe zijn gekomen, en Edwin vond het razend interessant.

De voorganger zei dat het belangrijk was om veel over de bloedlijnen, de geestelijke voorgeslachten, van Jahweh te weten, want zodra de bloedlijnen weer een plaats zouden hebben in het geloof zou er minder plaats zijn voor afgoderijen die de leegte en het gemis probeerden op te vullen ... De voorganger zei dat het nodig was om orde te brengen, en om de geschiedenissen van God te openen. Nu hadden ze dus ook met Zijn voorgeschiedenis te maken ... De voorganger had het over de evolutie van God, en over het bestaan van meerdere eeuwigheden, de aeonen, die tijdperken zijn, en die ook als zodanig in de grondtekst van de Bijbel worden beschreven. Eeuwig is dus niet altijddurend, en zo wilde het ook niet direkt zeggen dat God altijd al had bestaan. Misschien wel in een andere vorm, maar ook God heeft zich ontwikkeld, en komt voort uit een reeks geestelijke voorgeslachten.

De voorganger zei ook dat het dom was om je maar op één kruis blind te

staren. Je moest gaan van kruis tot kruis, en niet in een kruis-canon terechtkomen. De kruis-canon was volgens de voorganger bijna het gevaarlijkste wat er was, want dan zou je maar beperkt worden tot één kruis. De voorganger zei dat Christus en zijn kruis het fundament waren, waar je als pasgeboren baby-christen mee in aanraking kwam ... Maar dat was pas het begin van de reis ... Daarom was de God-geschiedenis en de voorgeschiedenis van God zo belangrijk, om te komen tot de oerkruizen ... Het hart van God ... Bij die oerkruizen kon je komen door de dertien bloedlijnen van Jahweh te volgen ... Het klonk Edwin als een prachtig sprookje, maar het interesseerde hem wel ... Het leek alsof hij voor het eerst in zijn leven kon ademhalen ... Natuurlijk gaf je een baby nog geen vast en scherp voedsel ... Edwin begreep waarom de Bijbel voor nu nog zo beperkt was ... En waarom zou God al die dingen aan zondaren vertellen ? Maar nu dan was het tijd geworden voor het Eeuwig Evangelie, waar God meer over Zichzelf zou vertellen, in eerste instantie aan Zijn gemeente.

Hoofdstuk 2.

De voorganger begon uit te leggen dat God en Christus een soort titel waren die geestelijke krachten probeerden te grijpen ... Het was een soort politieke kwestie ... Je moest er goed op letten wie je zou volgen, want autoriteit was niet altijd per definitie betrouwbaar. Zo maakten vele krachten zichzelf tot Christus, God en Geest, en dat verklaart ook waarom de kerken die allen zeggen naar God te luisteren het niet met elkaar eens zijn ... De Waarheid ligt dieper in de geschiedenis. Je leert God alleen kennen door Zijn geschiedenis te volgen ... en zo leer je ook het ware van het valse te onderscheiden ...

Edwin luisterde bijna met ingehouden adem ... De voorganger kon het heel spannend vertellen ... Hoe diep moesten ze nog de geschiedenis induiken om achter de waarheid te komen ? Waar begon het ergens ? De gemeente was lid van de zogenaamde Sebek-bond binnen de pinksterwereld. De voorganger vond dat belangrijk, omdat de Sebek-bond het mystieke christendom aanhing : Er was geen canon, en alles had een diepere symbolische betekenis, de zogenaamde Allegorie. De voorganger zei dat dit belangrijk was om los te komen van het materialisme, als een reis naar de hemel. Hier zouden ze een nieuw soort stof tegenkomen, iets dat boven materie en geest uitsteeg, de zogenaamde Pismin. De voorganger kon het allemaal erg kleurrijk vertellen, en

Edwin wist dat sommigen gewoon puur in de gemeente zaten vanwege de prachtige verhalen. De voorganger was een erg symbolisch iemand. Ook was de voorganger erg kunstzinnig. Het gebouw hing vol met zijn schilderijen. Daar hingen erg veel bijzondere schilderijen tussen, zelfs van krokodillen en ooievaren, en prachtige paradijsen. Edwin wist dat sommigen in de gemeente zaten puur om die schilderijen te bekijken. Vaak hingen er weer nieuwen.

De voorganger zei dat aan het einde van de tijden, dan zou Sebek, die een deel van Christus is, Christus verslinden, en dit zou zijn als een heilige verslinding. In deze cocon zou Christus op z'n plaats gezet worden, namelijk als de eerste stap op de weg terug naar God, een belangrijk fundament. Maar hierop moest doorgebouwd worden. Edwin vond dat maar een rare benaming, maar zijn moeder zei dat dat zo hoorde. Voor Christus zou het een wedergeboorte worden, die zou resulteren in Zijn Terugkomst. Al die overbelasting zou voor Christus een kruis zijn. Veel christenen staarden zich zo blind op Christus en vroegen zoveel van Hem alsof er niets anders was ... Vooral zij die geloofden dat ze het kruis niet hoefden te dragen, omdat Christus dat had gedaan, zij van het zogenaamde welvaarts-evangelie stonden schuldig aan het verzwaren van het kruis van Christus. Ook zij zouden aan het einde der tijden door Sebek verslonden worden om hun plaats te krijgen ... Maar de voorganger zei altijd dat iedereen door Sebek verslonden zou worden, zelfs de aarde ... Dit om een nieuwe schepping voort te brengen ... Het was genaamd het Sebek-kruis, de Heilige Verslinding ... Edwins moeder geloofde ook heilig in de engel Sarsia. Edwin wist hier niet zoveel vanaf, omdat zijn moeder er vaak geheimzinnig over deed ...

Er waren al veel mensen uit de gemeente vertrokken toen ze hoorden over de bizarre ideeen van de voorganger ... De voorganger ging soms gewoon erg ver. Zo zou hij ook eens kinderen hebben banggemaakt ... Ja, de voorganger kon soms erg griezelig doen ... Hij kon soms ook echt spokenverhalen vertellen ... Ook beweerde de voorganger de rangen boven God te kennen. Zij die de dertien bloedlijnen van Jahweh kenden zouden een ontmoeting met zo'n hogere rang kunnen krijgen ... De rang net boven God was genaamd de Muskus. De rang boven de Muskus was volgens de voorganger Sebek Zelf, het gebeente van Christus, dat in Christus wachtte om toe te slaan. Het gebeente van Christus was als een tijdbom, en de naderende explosies zouden leiden tot

een nieuw paradijs ...

Edwin schrok wakker ... Wat had hij vreemd gedroomd ... Vandaag zou hij voor het eerst zijn moeder ontmoeten ... Hij had zich er misschien te druk om gemaakt ... Zenuwachtig was hij wel ... Erg zenuwachtig ... Zijn ouders waren gescheiden ... Zijn vader had hem vlak na de geboorte ontvoerd ... Toen zijn vader in de gevangenis kwam, ook voor andere misdrijven, werd Edwin in een kindertehuis geplaatst ... Zijn moeder kon door hetgeen gebeurd was de opvoeding niet aan ... Ze wilde Edwin zelfs niet zien ... Maar nu was het dan zover ... Na al die jaren was zijn moeder nu sterk genoeg om hem thuis te ontvangen ... Toen Edwin daar aankwam was de ontmoeting erg koeltjes ... Zijn moeder sprak niet veel ... Edwin deed hoofdzakelijk het woord ... Er was ook een advocaat bij ... Dat wilde zijn moeder zo ... Edwin vertelde ook over zijn droom ... Zijn moeder was niet gelovig ... Vroeger was ze dat wel, maar door alles wat er was gebeurd had ze haar geloof verloren ...

Een maand later hadden ze weer een ontmoeting ... Zijn moeder was nog steeds erg stil, maar wilde toch nog graag de droom een keer horen ... Ditkeer was er geen advocaat bij, en zijn moeder leek iets meer ontspannen ... 'Je droom spreekt me aan, Edwin,' zei z'n moeder ... 'Het is heel anders dan wat ze in de kerken altijd zeggen ...' Omdat Sebek een Egyptische naam is besluit Edwins moeder wat Egyptische boeken te lezen ... Een maand later zouden ze elkaar weer zien ... Maar halverwege de maand krijgt Edwin een telefoontje van de advocaat ... Zijn moeder zou het toch te zwaar hebben met al die ontmoetingen ... Ze wilde er graag een punt achterzetten ... Edwin wist niet wat hij hoorde, maar begreep het wel ...

Zelf was hij inmiddels ook op zoek naar de betekenis van de droom ... Ook hij ging Egyptische boeken lezen, en raakte diep geinteresseerd ... Op een dag besluit hij een reis te boeken naar Egypte ... In het vliegtuig komt hij heel toevallig de advocaat van zijn moeder tegen ... Ze gaan naast elkaar zitten in het vliegtuig, en een diep gesprek volgt ... 'Je moeder draagt diepe geheimen over jou in haar hart ...' vertelt de advocaat ...

Dan schrikt Edwin wakker ... Hij droomde nog steeds ... Wat was dat een heldere droom, zeg ... Zou er echt een Sebek-bond binnen de pinkstergemeente bestaan ? Edwin was niet kerkelijk, maar een vriend van

hem zat bij de pinkstergemeente ... Edwin besluit die vriend op te bellen, en vertelt de droom ... Maar die vriend van hem kan hem niet verder helpen ... Hij heeft van al die dingen nog nooit gehoord ... Wel wil hij het eens aan de voorganger vragen ... Na een paar dagen wordt Edwin door de voorganger uitgenodigd ... Laat in de avond komt Edwin daar aan ... De voorganger moest namelijk eerst naar een conferentie ... Even later zitten ze samen in de werkkamer van de voorganger ... De voorganger was erg verrast over de droom ... De voorganger kwam namelijk zelf uit Egypte ... Hij had geen Egyptisch bloed, maar zijn vader en moeder hadden daar werk, en zodoende bracht hij zijn jeugd door in Egypte ... Toen zijn vader en moeder met hem Egypte verlieten kreeg hij last van depressies, en is hij nooit meer dezelfde geweest ... De herinneringen aan Egypte hielden hem op de been, naast zijn geloof ... De droom sprak ook van een zekere samensmelting ... De voorganger wist altijd dat er iets aan het geloof ontbrak ... Edwin was erg opgelucht dat zijn droom eindelijk betekenis had gekregen. Plotseling stond de vrouw van de voorganger binnen met koffie ... 'Mag ik vragen waar het over gaat ?' vroeg de vrouw brutaal ... Edwin vond dat ze niet zo was als wat je van een voorgangersvrouw zou verwachten ... Edwin kon zich ook voorstellen dat zo'n vrouw je depressief kon maken ... Ze keek heel kleinerend naar Edwin ... 'Jij gelooft niet, hè ?' zei ze snibbig ... Edwin knikte, zich helemaal niet meer op z'n gemak voelend ... 'Maar ik ben zoekende ...'

'Nou,' zei de voorgangersvrouw ... 'zoek en gij zult het vinden ... maar bezoek eerst eens een fatsoenlijke kerk ... Je kunt het niet alleen ...' Edwin stond paf van al die opdringerigheid ... 'Ach,' zei de voorganger ...'ze bedoelt het niet slecht ...' Maar diep in z'n hart wist Edwin dat de voorganger dat alleen maar zei om Edwin zich niet zo naar te laten voelen ... Ineens was de vrouw alweer weg ... De voorganger zei niks, en begon toen weer over de droom ... Ook begon de voorganger over Egypte te vertellen, dat ze daar geloofden in een vrouw genaamd Nut, die heel lang kon worden, en daarmee de atmosfeer uitbeeldde ... ook beeldde ze de reizen uit die de Egyptenaren moesten maken door de verschillende werelden. Altijd als er over Nut gesproken werd had de voorganger een vreemd gevoel in zijn onderbuik ... Ook begon de voorganger te vertellen over de andere goden van Egypte ... Edwin vond het erg interessant ... Edwin begon allerlei vragen te stellen, en de voorganger

probeerde ze te beantwoorden ... Edwin vertelde hoe hij eens een droom had gehad over een hele lange slang die bij hem naar binnen kwam, en daar ging wonen ... Zou dat Nut kunnen wezen ? Het was voor Edwin een hele prettige ervaring ... De voorganger wist het niet ... Het kon ook een demoon wezen, volgens de voorganger ... Even kreeg Edwin de rillingen ... De voorganger vertelde hem dat hij dat wel kon uittesten ... En samen begonnen ze te bidden, en de voorganger sprak de slang aan ... Direkt begon de slang door Edwin heen te spreken, en wat de slang allemaal zei was niet zo best ... De voorganger probeerde de slang uit te drijven, maar het lukte niet ... Ten einde raad besloot de voorganger in de Naam van Nut de slang uit te drijven, en toen lukte het wel ... Edwin was erg onder de indruk, en had ineens een heel vrij gevoel in zijn onderbuik ... Ook leek het alsof hij warme perensap had gedronken ... Zo voelde zijn buik aan ... Het was alsof het sap zich door zijn hele lichaam verspreidde, en nu kreeg Edwin ook dat vreemde gevoel in zijn onderbuik ... Alsof iemand daar woonde ...

Hoofdstuk 3.

Op een nacht verschijnt Nut aan Edwin ... Ze heeft een sjaal om, en draagt een heleboel cadeau's ... Maar Edwin kan haar niet verstaan ... Het is alsof ze achter glas is, in een wereld waar hij haar niet kan bereiken ... En dan is het alsof Edwin wordt verslonden door een haai ... Gillend wordt Edwin wakker ... De nacht daarop heeft Edwin weer een droom, waarin hij onderhoort wordt door politie-agenten en mensen van justitie ... Edwin wordt vals beschuldigd en wordt zo kwaad dat hij wegrent, dwars door een ruit heen ... Hij wordt achtervolgt, maar vlucht het bos in, waar hij later bij een huisje komt waar een meisje met een rode kap op voorstaat ... Binnen zit een zwarte wolf ... Edwin schrikt ... De wolf is genaamd Anubis, en zegt dat het christendom hem tot een schrikbeeld heeft gemaakt ... Anubis blijkt een Egyptische god te zijn, de god die over de doden hoedt ... 'Ben ik dood ?' vraagt Edwin ... 'Nee,' zegt Anubis ... 'maar je bent toch door een haai verslonden ?' Dan wordt Edwin duizelig en valt neer ... Anubis begint hem te mummificeren met stripverhalen en boeken ... 'Waarom doe je dat ?' vraagt Edwin ... 'Nou, dan heb je wat te lezen onderweg ?' Edwin valt in een nog diepere slaap ... Weer zit hij rechtop aan een tafeltje met Anubis ... voor hem ligt vlees ... 'Dit is het vlees van het gevallen christendom ... Eet het ...' En Edwin begint te eten .... Dan begint Anubis ineens

heel snel te blaffen ... 'We moeten een muur doorbreken, Edwin,' gromt Anubis ... Samen stormen ze naar buiten, op weg naar de muur ... Voor Anubis is het een koud kunstje om door de muur heen te breken ... Edwin volgt hem ... Hier is een prachtig paradijs ... Weer zien ze vlees liggen, en beginnen te eten ... 'Die bloedoffers van het christendom was een fabeltje om hen af te houden van het opvreten van demonen .... een valstrik om christenen dieren te laten bevechten in plaats van boze geesten ...' Edwin knikt ... Hij voelt weer energie door zijn benen vloeien ...

'We moeten verder, Edwin,' brult Anubis ... En Anubis brengt Edwin boven op een heuvel ... Er is hier een prachtig uitzicht ... In de verte komt er een vogel aanvliegen ... En gaat vlak bij Anubis en Edwin op een struikje zitten ... De vogel lijkt een beetje op een arend ... Dan begint de vogel te spreken : 'Ik ben Nut ... eindelijk ben je in mijn wereld gekomen ...' Langzaam begint de kop van de vogel in het hoofd van een vrouw te veranderen met witte bleke strepen op haar gezicht, als een soort verf ... De vrouw heeft lichte haren, en verder een donkere huid ... Maar de kleur was een hele speciale donkere kleur ... een beetje dof ... Het leek wel alsof ze één was met de natuur hier ... Ze leek alle kleuren te weerkaatsen. Edwin voelde zich blij worden ... alsof het goed was ... Een zacht schuimend gevoel stroomde van zijn onderbuik naar zijn benen ... Er stonden prachtige struiken om hen heen, met vruchten ... Anubis begon van de vruchten te eten en gaf ook vruchten aan Nut en Edwin ... 'Wat een droomvakantie ...' dacht Edwin ...

Plotseling begon ook de rest van de vogel in een vrouw te veranderen ... De vrouw pakte Edwin bij de hand, en leidde hem over de heuvel heen, naar de andere kant ... Hier was een soort akker of groentetuin ... De vrouw leidde Edwin er doorheen, en Anubis liep er achteraan ... In de verte was een soort stad ... Maar voor die stad lag een meer ... Met z'n drieen zwommen ze het meer over, en begonnen hun klimtocht naar de stad die op een verhoging lag ... Het was een stad vol met katten ... Maar toen de katten de drie zagen begonnen ze langzaam in vrouwen te veranderen ... Edwin keek z'n ogen uit, en voelde energie door zijn armen vloeien ... De vrouwen hadden hele zachte stemmen, en zeiden dat ze zo lang opgesloten waren geweest in hun kattenlichamen ...

Hoofdstuk 4.

De vrouwen leidden de drie binnenin hun stad ... Er stonden hier vele oude poorten en oude religieuze gebouwen ... In het midden van de stad achter een weilandje stond een enorme kerk of kathedraal ... Binnenin waren geesten ... als spoken ... De vrouwen leidden de drie naar binnen ... Edwin voelt energie door zijn hoofd vloeien ... De vrouwen begonnen de geesten uit de kathedraal te jagen ... Eén van de vrouwen loopt naar voren, en begint te prediken ... Edwin onderzoekt ondertussen het gebouw ... Dan draait Nut zich naar Edwin toe, en zegt : 'Kom, Edwin, ik wil je wat laten zien ...' Nut leidt Edwin over een oude stenen trap naar beneden, tot onder de kathedraal ... Dan gaan ze door een tunnel die helemaal tot een bibliotheek leidt ... In de bibliotheekgang aangekomen lopen ze helemaal tot het einde van het gebouw, waar een schilderij hangt met een oude vrouw en een vrouwelijke farao ... Nut drukt met haar hand op het schilderij, en het schilderij begint rood te gloeien, en daarna in andere kleuren ... Dan draait de muur zich ineens om ... Een pad verschijnt voor hen ... Dit pad is omgeven met hoge muren .... Het pad is als een dorre woestijn ... Samen begaan ze het pad ... Het is een hele lange tijd lopen .... Dan uiteindelijk komen ze aan bij een oase, ook door muren omgeven .... Er is hier een meertje met groene blubber, en Nut daalt erin af, terwijl Edwin haar volgt ... Kopje onder gaan ze, en Nut trekt Edwin mee tot een kelder nog dieper onder de grond ... Hier staan allemaal flessen ... In die kelder hangt aan een muur ongeveer hetzelfde schilderij als in de bibliotheek, alleen nu lijkt de vrouwelijke farao op een ram en een telefoon ... 'Druk je hand eens op het schilderij ?' vraagt Nut aan Edwin ... Edwin drukt zijn hand erop, en weer begint het schilderij in vele kleuren te gloeien, en dan draait de muur zich om .... Weer komen ze op een ander pad terecht ... Hier is het iets donkerder en vochtiger .... Overal hangen schilderijen ... ongeveer dezelfden als ze al hadden gezien ... Dan komen ze aan bij een zee waar wat caravans en tenten staan ... Samen beginnen ze aan hun tocht over de zee ... Edwin begrijpt niet hoe hij ineens aan zoveel energie komt ... Hij zou makkelijk een zee kunnen overzwemmen ... Maar dan opeens is Nut verdwenen ..... en Edwin wordt wakker ...

De nacht daarop heeft Edwin weer een droom over Nut ... Dit keer kan hij haar gewoon aanraken ... Er is geen glas meer tussen hen .... Hij pakt de cadeau's uit die zij voor hem mee heeft genomen ... Er zit een soort drop in, en Edwin

begint direkt te eten ... Ook zit er een schilderij tussen van zijn vorige droom ... Als Edwin wakker wordt begint hij na te denken over al die dromen ... Hij besluit ze op te schrijven en voor te lezen aan de voorganger ... Die is erg verbaasd, want weer herkent deze enkele details als gebeurtenissen in zijn eigen leven ...

Hoofdstuk 5.

Edwin besluit al zijn dromen in een boek op te schrijven. Zo zouden er misschien veel meer wat aan hebben ... maar Edwin snapt de precieze betekenis van die dromen nog niet ... Wat bijvoorbeeld over die omzwervingen ? Wat moest Edwin ermee ... Edwin dacht dat er misschien mensen waren zoals de voorganger die er wat mee konden ... Edwin zelf vond het meer 'raadseldromen' ... Misschien waren het wel geheime boodschappen voor anderen waar hij zelf niks van afwist ... Wel had Edwin al veel aan de vriendschap met deze Egyptische entiteiten ... Voor hemzelf waren het verder gewoon open verhalen .... Maar misschien waren de dromen nog niet klaar ...

Maar sinds Edwin er een boekwerkje van had gemaakt stopten de dromen ... Misschien dat het toch al af was, en dat misschien alleen nog de betekenis zou komen ... Die zou dan misschien via de lezers komen ... Edwin besloot maar af te wachten, maar eigenlijk bleef alles gewoon bij het verhaal van de voorganger ... Niemand scheen echt aandacht te geven aan het boekwerkje ... Maar dan gaat Edwin met de dromen aan de gang .... Hij gaat er gewoon eigen verhalen van maken ... En ook komen er nog enkele verhalen bij ... Edwin put inspiratie uit het dagdromen ... Weer maakt Edwin er een boekwerkje van, en ditmaal slaat het beter aan als het dromenboekje ... Sommige mensen zijn zo enthousiast over de verhalen dat ze er een verfilming van willen maken ... Niet lang daarna draaien er wat films van de verhalen van Edwin in de bioscopen ... Edwin is erg trots, en ook de voorganger ... Zelfs de vrouw van de voorganger is erg trots op Edwin, en sindsdien doet ze ineens een stuk aardiger tegen hem ... Edwin weet niet wat hij daarvan moet denken ... Op een dag vraagt ze aan Edwin of ze ook mag meespelen in één van de komende films ... Edwin vind dat een goed idee, en na een tijd van opnames is zij ook op het witte doek te zien ... Ook zij begint verhalen te schrijven, en er komen al snel verfilmingen van ....

Edwin schrikt wakker .... Wat een vreemde droom heeft hij weer gehad, en wat duurde deze lang ... Vandaag zou hij dan echt zijn moeder voor het eerst van zijn leven ontmoeten .... Zenuwachtig kleed hij zich aan ... De bel gaat ... Dat zal ze wezen ... Met zenuwachtige stappen loopt hij rechtstreeks naar de deur ...

Einde

COAB
1970-2019

2019

COAB 2019

Het Leven is een Puzzel Avontuur

De Paradijselijke Tuin
Op reis naar de waarheid
De markt van vreemdelingen
De zee van de waarheid
Het eiland van nut en dankbaarheid
De zaaier
De puzzeltocht van de waarheid
Het puzzel avontuur in de grote bibliotheek
De Puzzel School

De Paradijselijke Tuin

In het paradijs liep een jongetje. Het jongetje heette Elwin. Het paradijs was de prachtigste tuin die je je maar kon voorstellen. Achter een boom stond een meisje genaamd Sandra. Het meisje had een vrucht in haar hand, en zei tegen Elwin : 'Moet je een hapje ?'

Elwin had geen honger. De vrucht zag er wel lekker uit.

'Later misschien,' zei Elwin.

'Een banaan dan misschien ?' vroeg Sandra.

'Ik heb geen honger,' zei Elwin.

'Ik heb nog wel meer fruit hoor,' zei Sandra. 'Maar kies het later dan maar uit. Het groeit hier trouwens overal.'

Elwin liep door over het zanderig paadje door het paradijs, door de paradijselijke tuin.

Het meisje achtervolgde hem.

'Van wie is deze tuin eigenlijk ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Van mijn moeder,' zei Sandra.

'Wie is zij ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Oh, een doodgewone vrouw met een schortje, die heel lekker kan koken,' zei Sandra.

'En mooie tuinen kan maken, want dit is een prachtige tuin,' zei Elwin.

'Nee,' zei Sandra, 'tuinen maken doet zij niet. Zij heeft deze tuin eens gevonden, en toen zijn we erin gaan wonen. Maar hoe kwam je hier eigenlijk ?'

'Oh, het hek stond open,' zei Elwin.

Sandra giechelde. 'Welkom dan,' zei ze.

'Bedankt,' zei Elwin. Toen liep Elwin verder, en het meisje achtervolgde hem nog steeds.

'Waar ga je naartoe ?' vroeg Sandra.

'Naar boven,' zei Elwin.

'Mallerd,' zei Sandra. 'Er zijn geen hogere verdiepingen.'

'Nee, maar het loopt een beetje schuin omhoog, dit paadje,' zei Elwin.

'Welnee,' zei het meisje. 'Het lijkt maar zo. Had je soms van de bessensap gedronken wat aan de ingang bij het hek op het tafeltje stond in een flesje ?'

'Ja,' zei Elwin. 'Ik had dorst.'

'Zie je,' zei Sandra, 'want dan ga je dingen zien die er niet zijn.'

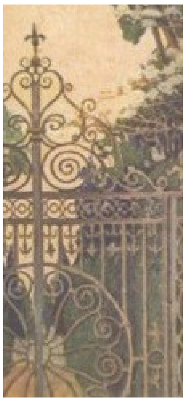
'Misschien ben jij er dan ook niet, en je moeder ook niet,' zei Elwin.

Ineens was het meisje verdwenen. 'Wat een wonderlijke tuin,' dacht Elwin.

En wat kunnen we hier van leren, jongens en meisjes ?

Dat niet alles wat we denken dat waar is ook echt waar is, maar het kan natuurlijk heel goed waar zijn.

Op reis naar de waarheid



Op een dag klopte Elwin aan bij de uitvinder. Toen de man opendeed zat het haar van de man helemaal in de war. De professor zou hem een machine laten zien die altijd loog en bedroog. In een kamertje stond die machine. 'Dit is hem,' zei de professor. 'De machine die altijd liegt en bedriegt.'

'Maar wat hebben we er dan aan ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Nou,' zei de professor, 'dat zit namelijk zo. Als hij altijd liegt, dan weet je dus tegelijkertijd wat de waarheid is. Druk maar eens op het knopje, Elwin,' zei de professor.

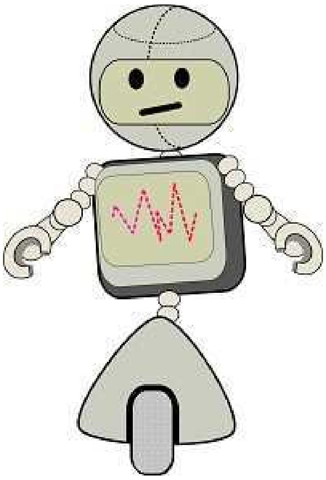
Elwin moest op een rood knopje drukken op de machine, en toen zei de machine : 'Je neus is heel groot.'

'Hij liegt,' zei Elwin. 'Mijn neus is klein.'

'Precies,' zei de professor. 'Dus altijd als hij wat zegt dan weet je dat het tegenovergestelde de waarheid is.'

'Dus hij spreekt nooit de waarheid ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Nooit,' zei de professor.



'Maar de mensen om me heen spreken soms leugens en soms de waarheid,' zei Elwin. 'Hoe kan ik dan weten wat de waarheid is ?'

'Kom maar mee,' zei de professor, en nam Elwin toen mee naar achteren naar een kamer die eindeloos lang was. 'Helemaal aan het eind staat een scherm. Daarop staat de waarheid.'

'Maar ik kan het niet zien,' zei Elwin.

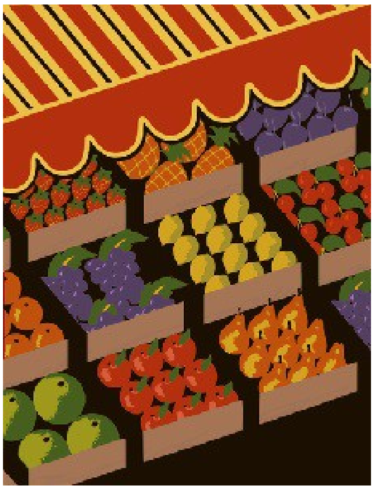
'Dan zul jij een hele lange reis moeten maken, Elwin, een reis naar de waarheid,' zei de professor.

'Helemaal alleen ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Je zal een heleboel anderen tegenkomen,' zei de professor, 'maar sommigen zullen liegen, dus blijf op je hoede, en stop niet met reizen voordat je bij de waarheid bent gekomen.'

En zo ging Elwin op een hele lange reis, op zoek naar de waarheid, want die kon je niet zomaar even kopen of van een boom plukken. Die kon ook niet zomaar iemand even vertellen. Elwin moest er zelf achter komen. Is dat ook niet zo in ons eigen leven, jongens en meisjes ? De waarheid is niet makkelijk te vinden. Je moet er echt wat voor doen. En op je reis zal er veel worden gelogen, net zoals de lieg machine van de professor dat doet, maar dan weet je dat het net andersom is. Andere keren zal het minder duidelijk zijn, en moet je verder blijven reizen naar de waarheid. Gaan jullie mee, jongens en meisjes ? Pas heel in de verte is de waarheid.

De markt van vreemdelingen



Elwin was op een vreemde markt terechtgekomen. Er werd hier niet met geld betaald, maar met medailles. Medailles kon je alleen krijgen als je iets goeds had gedaan, en wanneer je iets wat je fout had gedaan weer in orde had gemaakt. Als iemand iets kapot had gemaakt, moest zo iemand het ook weer heel maken. Alleen zo kon iemand medailles krijgen, en alleen zo kon er op de markt betaald worden. Je kon zo alleen maar rijk worden als je goed was, en niet als je slecht was. Maar wat hield die rijkdom dan in ? Wat werd er op deze markt verkocht ? Elwin was op de markt van de waarheid terechtgekomen. Ieder mens moest een beter mens worden om bij de waarheid te kunnen komen. Die is dus niet te koop voor geld, maar alleen maar door een goed hart te hebben.

Wat zou jij doen als je op deze markt zou staan ?

Het is een markt van vreemdelingen. Niemand kent elkaar, en iedereen spreekt een andere taal, maar door het goede te doen kunnen ze elkaar verstaan.

De zee van de waarheid

De vreemdelingen markt was diep in de woestijn. Een vreemdeling nam Elwin mee naar een dichtbijzijnd woestijnstadje. Elwin kreeg daar ook een kamertje. De vreemdeling vertelde aan Elwin dat hier alleen maar de halve waarheid te krijgen was.

'Maar ik wil de hele waarheid,' zei Elwin.

'Daarvoor moet je naar de zee gaan,' zei de vreemdeling.

'Hoe kom ik daar ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Je komt er door je problemen,' zei de vreemdeling. 'Dat is de woestijnreis.'

De volgende ochtend ging Elwin op pad.

Het was inderdaad een vermoeiende, moeilijke reis, maar gelukkig had Elwin al iets van de waarheid gezien. De vreemdeling had hem verteld dat hij het pad van de vreemdelingen moest volgen, maar er was hier geen pad. Alles was woestijn.

Soms kwam Elwin vreemdelingen tegen, maar vaak spraken ze niet, of spraken ze in een andere taal. 'Waar is de zee !' riep Elwin.

Elwin opende het kruikje wat de vreemdeling hem had meegegeven. 'Ja, dit is water,' zei Elwin, 'maar het is niet de zee.' Toen begon Elwin te drinken.

Een andere vreemdeling begon Elwin te wenken. 'Die kant op,' zei de vreemdeling, en wees recht voor zich uit. Elwin besloot met de vreemdeling mee te lopen. Er leek geen einde aan te komen. Er was hier helemaal geen zee, en aan het einde van de dag moesten ze in de woestijn overnachten. Gelukkig had de vreemdeling een tent bij zich.

'Ik wil de hele waarheid,' zei Elwin de volgende dag, 'niet de halve.'

En de vreemdeling nam Elwin mee tot de tuin van vreemdelingen, zo in de woestijn. Deze tuin liep helemaal tot aan de zee. Elwin keek zijn ogen uit. Zo'n prachtige tuin had hij nog nooit gezien. En vreemdelingen liepen in en uit, en ze gingen heen en weer tussen de tuin en de markt, door de woestijn. En hier groeide alles wat ze op de markt verkochten, maar het was maar de halve waarheid. Want iedereen draagt maar een heel klein stukje van de waarheid. Wel kwam Elwin steeds meer stukjes van de waarheid te zien, en hij verlangde de zee van de waarheid te zien. Toen Elwin dieper in de tuin was gekomen kon hij de zee al in de verte zien. Alle stukjes van de waarheid fonkelden daar. En Elwin begon steeds harder te rennen. Toen hij op het strand was aangekomen rende hij hard naar de zee toe, en rende er toen in. Maar dit waren zoveel stukjes. En het stroomde zo snel. Elwin kon het helemaal niet volhouden. Snel ging hij het water uit. En hij bleef maar kijken en kijken naar de hele waarheid. 'Stukje voor stukje dan maar,' zei hij tegen zichzelf. 'Niet alles in één keer. Alles heeft tijd nodig.' En hij ging terug naar de vreemdelingen, die allemaal een stukje van de waarheid hadden. Wat kunnen we hiervan leren, jongens en meisjes ? Dat iedereen een stukje waarheid draagt, en dat we de tijd moeten nemen voor ieder stukje. Daarmee mogen we puzzelen, en ons leven bouwen met elk stukje.

Het eiland van nut en dankbaarheid

Op een dag stond Elwin weer naar de zee van de waarheid te kijken. Hij vond het zo prachtig, al die fonkelende stukjes. Opeens pikte een grote rode vogel hem op, en bracht hem de zee over, naar een eiland. Op het strandje van het eiland werd Elwin afgezet. Er was ook een oerwoud achter het strandje. Achter een struikje stond Sandra. Elwin herkende haar direct.

'Waar is je moeder ?' vroeg Elwin.

'In het oerwoud in onze hut,' zei Sandra.

'Ik dacht dat jullie in de paradijselijke tuin woonden,' zei Elwin.

'Je hebt zeker weer te veel bessensap gedronken,' giechelde het meisje.

'Niet echt,' zei Elwin. 'Alleen veel water.'

'Wat kom je hier doen ?' vroeg Sandra.

'Ik ben op zoek naar de waarheid,' zei Elwin.

'En, heb je het al gevonden ?' vroeg Sandra.

'Nee,' zei Elwin, 'alleen stukjes, maar ik kan het al wel zien. En jij ?'

'Ik woon hier met mijn moeder,' zei Sandra.

'Ik heb je moeder nog nooit ontmoet,' zei Elwin.

'Dan moet je niet zoveel bessensap drinken,' giechelde Sandra. 'Maar kom maar mee, dan zal ik je haar laten zien.'

Ze trok Elwin dieper het oerwoud in, en gingen een zanderig pad over totdat ze bij de hut van Sandra en haar moeder kwamen. Een vrouw was aan het roeren in een grote ketel, en ze had een schort om.

'Ik ben Elwin,' zei Elwin. 'Wie bent u ?'

'De waarheid,' zei de vrouw.

'De halve waarheid of de hele waarheid ?' vroeg Elwin.

Toen zei de vrouw niks meer.

'Ze praat niet veel,' zei Elwin.

'Ze is bezig,' zei Sandra.

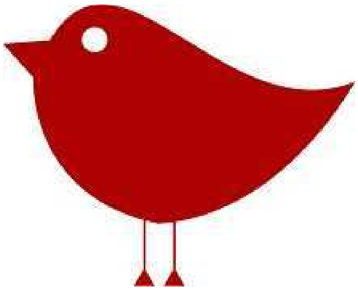
'Stoor ik ?' vroeg Elwin. 'Ik kan ook weer weggaan.'

'Nee, blijf,' zei de vrouw.

'Goed dan,' zei Elwin.

Ook Sandra werd toen stil, en ze bleven stokstijf staan, alle twee. Ze bewogen niet meer.

'Vreemd,' zei Elwin. 'Ik heb de waarheid ontmoet, maar ze spreekt niet. Ik denk dat ik maar weer ga. Ik begrijp dat ik alles moet verzamelen en puzzelen door goed te doen, net zoals op de vreemdelingen markt. Ik denk dat ik weer terugmoet. Ik ben dankbaar voor deze nieuwe stukjes waarheid die ik heb gevonden.'



En zo ging Elwin weer terug naar het strandje, om even later weer door de rode vogel opgepikt te worden. Zo kwam hij weer over de zee terug aan land, en hij kon net als de vreemdelingen heen en weer gaan tussen de markt en de tuin. Soms was de rode vogel er wel, en soms niet, maar Elwin was altijd dankbaar, en zag het nut in van dit alles.

Soms gaat het misschien even niet goed in ons leven, of staat alles ineens stil en komen we niet verder. Dan moeten we soms even wat stapjes terugnemen, terug naar de wat kleinere stukjes die we over het hoofd hadden gezien. Ken je daar voorbeelden van in je eigen leven ?

De zaaier

Boven de zee zweefde de hemel, wat ook gewoon een eiland kon zijn. Elwin had het nu gezien, en het was telkens alsof het steen was, zoals ook Sandra en haar moeder versteenden. Hij moest en zou de waarheid kennen. Elwin kon er niet bij. Hij piekerde zich suf. Wat was er toch met Sandra en haar moeder aan de hand ? Of misschien was er iets met hemzelf aan de hand ? Misschien was voor hem alles steen, maar niet voor iemand anders ? Elwin stond voor een raadsel. Was de hemel niets anders dan een puzzel die opgelost moest worden ?

Er waren veel meer eilanden in de zee van waarheid, en al die eilanden waren in oorlog met elkaar,

vertelde een vreemdeling. Hoe kon dat nu ? Oorlog in de hemel ? Elwin snapte het niet.

'Ze hebben allemaal stukjes van de waarheid,' zei de vreemdeling, 'maar ze denken dat het de hele waarheid is.'

'Hoe kan dat ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Zo zijn ze opgevoed,' zei de vreemdeling, 'en ze kunnen de hele waarheid niet zien.'

'Wat doen we eraan ?' vroeg Elwin. 'Dus de hemel is voor iedereen anders ?'

De vreemdeling knikte. 'Het gebeurt als mensen stoppen met reizen naar de waarheid, als ze denken dat ze de hele waarheid al hebben,' zei de vreemdeling.

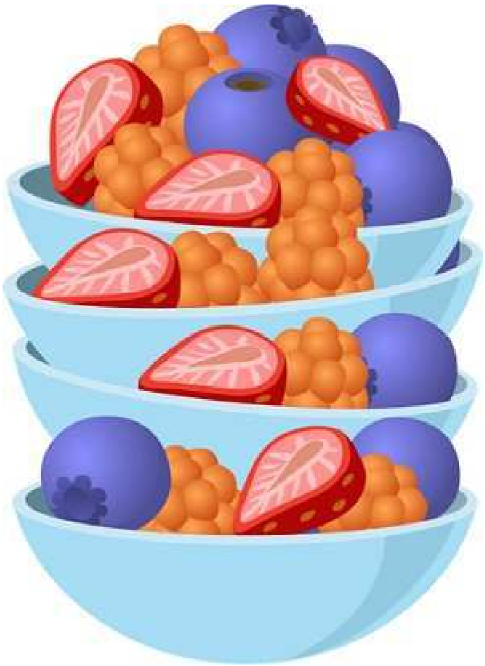
'Ik blijf reizen,' zei Elwin.

'Sommigen zitten opgesloten,' zei de vreemdeling.

'Hoe kunnen we ze helpen ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Door het delen van de waarheid,' zei de vreemdeling, 'maar niet teveel, want dat kunnen ze niet aan. Kleine stukjes, als een zaaier. Het zijn maar hele kleine slotjes, en er passen alleen maar hele kleine sleuteltjes op. Als je bloemetjes teveel water geeft dan gaan ze dood.

Heb je zelf al kleine stukjes van de waarheid met anderen gedeeld ? En ben je hierin voorzichtig geweest dat je ze niet teveel hebt gegeven ? Heb je hiermee al anderen kunnen helpen ? Zo mag je zijn als een zaaier.



De puzzeltocht van de waarheid

Elwin wilde een ladder naar de hemel bouwen, naar een hogere hemel, een betere hemel. Dat hadden de mensen nodig. Maar Elwin moest leren zaaien. Zo gingen er vanzelf planten en bloemen groeien, en die groeiden hoger en hoger. En zo klom Elwin naar de hogere hemelen, ver boven de hemelen die mensen hadden gebouwd. En Elwin had een goed overzicht. Hij kon zo naar beneden kijken en alles zien. En hij begon nog meer zaad naar beneden te gooien, stukjes waarheid. En nog hoger wilde Elwin, door de wolken heen, van wolk tot wolk, hoger en hoger, totdat hij niet meer verder kon. En Elwin moest weer helemaal terug naar beneden om verloren en vergeten stukjes waarheid te zoeken. Die waren niet allemaal op één plaats. Hebben jullie dat ook weleens, jongens en meisjes, dat je wat stappen terug moet doen, dat je niet meer verder kan, en even moet kijken of je iets hebt laten liggen, iets hebt vergeten ? En als dat gebeurd is kun je weer verder.

Elwin begreep dat om bij de waarheid te komen had je veel wijsheid en veel kennis nodig. Maar als het goed is leer je dat op je woestijnreis, je reis over zee, en je reis naar de hemel. Het is een puzzeltocht, en geef daarin nooit op, want als je de waarheid zoekt, dan komt het jou ook tegemoet.

Op een dag was Elwin weer bij de vreemdeling in het woestijnstadje van de vreemdelingen. Die nacht werd hij wakker in zijn kamertje en zag hij een grote oranje gele bol voor zich hangen. Het was de bol van de waarheid. Hij voelde de waarheid aan hem trekken. 'Aanvaard me,' zei de bol van de waarheid, 'in je hart.'

'Maar wie bent u ?' vroeg Elwin.

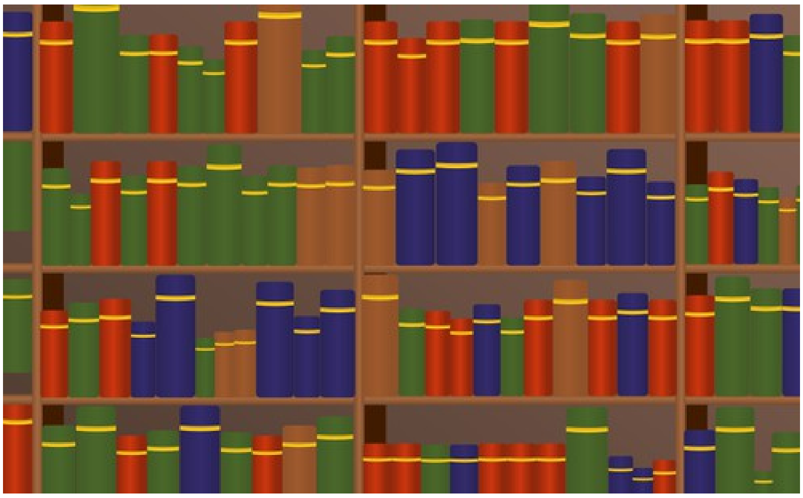
'Ik ben de waarheid,' zei de bol.

'Hoe kan ik het zeker weten ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Kijk in je hart,' zei de bol. 'Ik ben al in je hart. Je hebt mij gevonden.'

Toen aanvaardde Elwin de waarheid in zijn hart. Hij wilde niets lievers. Hij haalde diep adem. Wie zou de waarheid niet willen ? En jullie, jongens en meisjes ? Hebben jullie al de waarheid in jullie hart aanvaard ? Er mag geen mens tussen jou en de waarheid instaan. En de waarheid is altijd een pad, en altijd maar een stukje. Laat het je niet weerhouden om te zoeken naar meer waarheid, de hele waarheid. Het aanvaarden van de waarheid in je hart is nog maar het begin van je reis naar de waarheid. Het is iets waarin je mag groeien, puzzelen en leren. Zo bouw je zelf aan de waarheid, en wordt je er zelf door gebouwd.

Het puzzel avontuur in de grote bibliotheek



En Elwin bouwde zijn eigen woestijnstadje in de woestijn met de stukjes waarheid, als een oase, om dorstige reizigers en vreemdelingen te drinken te geven en een plaats te geven, een beschutting. En het werd een stukje oerwoud in de woestijn, waar alles volop kon groeien. Elwin werkte er hard aan, en er kwamen steeds meer werkers bij. En er werd niet betaald met geld in zijn woestijnstadje, maar alleen maar met medailles. Dat had hij van de vreemdelingen geleerd. Alleen het goede was een betaalmiddel.

Elwin bouwde ook een hele grote bibliotheek voor het verdere puzzel avontuur. Wat verhalen uit die bibliotheek kun je lezen in dit boek, de tweede bijbel voor kinderen.

Zo kun je dus tot de waarheid komen alleen door veel kennis, door veel te leren, en dat kun je doen door op zoek te gaan naar de stukjes van de waarheid en ermee te puzzelen. Als je dan twee stukjes waarheid hebt gevonden en je kan ze aan elkaar puzzelen, dan kan er ook weer een derde bij, of misschien gaat dat wel vanzelf. Ken je daar voorbeelden van ?

Ik zal je een beetje helpen : Als een zaadje in de aarde is gekomen, dan groeit er een boom, en dan komen er vanzelf vruchten aan de boom. Ken je nog een voorbeeld ?

Leren doe je dus door te zoeken en te puzzelen, en zo mag je ook vrucht dragen.

Op een dag nam een vreemdeling Elwin mee naar een berggebied. Ergens boven een berg hing een grote oranje gele bol, de bol van de waarheid. Elwin zag het vanuit de verte, en toen ze er naartoe liepen kwamen ze steeds dichterbij. Nu moesten ze de berg nog beklimmen. Die klimtocht duurde vele dagen, want het was een hele hoge berg.

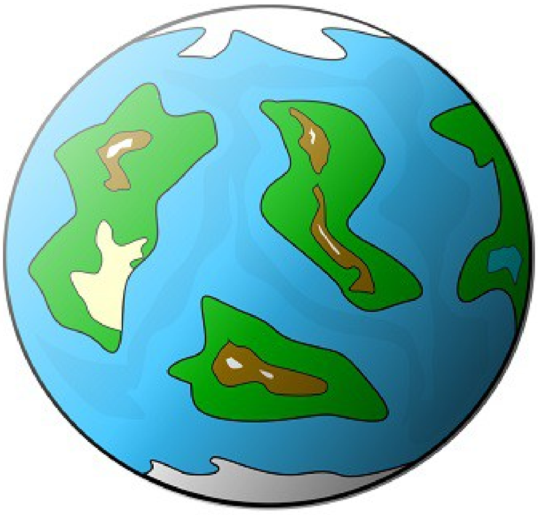
Eindelijk kwamen ze aan bij de bol. Het was een prachtige doorzichtige bol, oranje en geel. 'Waarom ben je gekomen ?' vroeg de bol.

'Ik ben op zoek naar de waarheid,' zei Elwin.

'Ik heb je geroepen,' zei de bol. 'Omdat je naar mij riep, riep ik jou. Het is een soort echo, een soort spiegel. Door mij kun je tot andere planeten gaan, tot andere werelden.'

Elwin was heel verbaasd, maar ook dankbaar. Ook was Elwin dankbaar naar de vreemdeling die hem hier had gebracht. 'Kom, Elwin,' sprak de bol. En Elwin kon zo de bol binnenlopen. Ineens was Elwin ergens anders, op een andere planeet.

'Dit is de planeet van de waarheid,' sprak de bol. Elwin keek goed om zich heen. 'Het is prachtig hier,' zei Elwin. Hij stond in een oerwoud op een zanderig pad. Daar kwam Sandra aangelopen, met haar moeder.



Elwin was verbaasd. 'Hoe komen jullie hier ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Wij wonen hier,' zei Sandra.

'Oh, ik dacht dat jullie op het eiland woonden,' zei Elwin.

'Mallerd,' giechelde Sandra. 'Heb je weer teveel bessensap gedronken ?'

'Dat niet,' zei Elwin, 'maar er is wel veel gebeurd.'

'Welkom op de planeet van de waarheid,' zei Sandra. 'Mijn moeder en ik behoren tot een stam van oerwoudbewoners.'

'Wat doen jullie hier dan ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Wij wonen hier, en wij voeren oorlog tegen de leugen,' zei Sandra.

'Hoe gaat dat precies ?' vroeg Elwin.

'De leugens zijn de slechte dingen, de verkeerde dingen, die mensen doen. Het zijn monsters in het oerwoud. Je moet ze verslaan en als het je is gelukt dan komt er weer een stukje waarheid vrij,' zei Sandra.

'Interessant,' zei Elwin.

'Maar daar moet je wel heel veel voor leren,' zei Sandra, 'want anders val je misschien de verkeerden aan, en val je de waarheid lastig. Het is niet voor gemakzuchtige mensen, maar je moet je onderscheidingsvermogen trainen, want anders ga je fouten maken, en dan wordt je zelf ook een leugenaar. We mogen bijvoorbeeld de dieren van het oerwoud niet voor monsters aanzien. Wij moeten de dieren van het oerwoud tegen de monsters beschermen.'

'Klinkt goed,' zei Elwin. 'Ik zou het graag willen leren.'

'Kom maar mee dan, naar de stam,' zei Sandra. Toen liepen ze verder het oerwoud in. Het was heel lang lopen. Eindelijk kwamen ze aan bij het kamp waar de stam was. Ze liepen allemaal rond met wapens. Sandra begon Elwin direct uit te leggen wat de wapens waren. Het waren de wapens van de waarheid. Die wapens kon je niet zomaar kopen voor geld, maar je moest ze verdienen door medailles, door goed te doen, en je kon ze verdienen door goed te leren. Je kon ze ook bouwen en in elkaar puzzelen met stukjes van de waarheid, en je kon ze ook krijgen als je een bepaald monster had verslagen.

Elwin kreeg ook zijn eigen hutje.

De volgende dag gingen ze op monsterjacht, en Elwin mocht ook mee. Het eerste monster wat ze zouden verslaan was het monster van betweterigheid, dat je het altijd beter denkt te weten dan de ander, terwijl je eigenlijk nog niks weet. Het gebeurt veel als mensen te lui zijn om te leren. Dan gaan ze liegen en bedriegen om hun eigen waarheid te maken, ten koste van de ander. Dat is het monster van de betweterigheid. Kennen jullie dit monster, jongens en meisjes ?

Elwin kreeg een katapult mee. Daar moest hij het mee doen. Ze moesten naar het grottengebied gaan, waar het monster van betweterigheid ergens woonde. Elwin schrok heel erg toen hij het monster zag. Het monster was heel groot, en had hele grote tanden. Het monster zou Elwin zo kunnen opslokken. Daar had Elwin geen zin in natuurlijk. Elwin keek naar zijn katapult. Er stond op geschreven : leergierigheid. Het monster begon enorm te brullen, en Elwin begon nu wel heel bang te worden. De anderen begonnen al met speren te gooien, en sommigen schoten met pijl en boog. Het monster had al die tijd in de grot opening gestaan, maar kwam nu naar buiten. Elwin moest wel even slikken, en hij wilde wegrennen. Wat moest hij beginnen met zo'n klein katapultje. Vlak voor de stam stopte het monster. 'Ha,' brulde het monster. 'Ik kan jullie allemaal in één keer opslikken. Pijlen en speren doen me niet veel, en al helemaal niet zo'n klein katapultje.

Elwin keek naar Sandra die dichtbij hem stond. 'Schiet, Elwin,' zei ze.

Elwin pakte een steentje en schoot het naar het monster toe.

Het monster begon nog harder te lachen. 'Ha ha, moet ik daar bang van worden ?' brulde het monster.

Elwin keek weer naar Sandra. Tot Elwin's grote schrik stond Sandra weer stokstijf, en ook de anderen. Dit had hij eerder meegemaakt. Elwin was nu helemaal alleen nu de anderen als van steen leken, en Elwin begon terug te rennen naar het kamp, maar hij kon het kamp niet meer vinden. Hij hoorde het gebrul van het monster achter hem. 'Oh, wat moet ik nu doen,' jammerde Elwin.

'Rennen maar, Elwin,' zei Elwin tegen zichzelf, en rende door. Hij hoorde het monster achter hem hijgen. Hij voelde de warme adem van het monster al in zijn nek, maar gelukkig was daar de bol van de waarheid, zo midden in het oerwoud. De vreemdeling was daar ook nog, maar ook die stond stokstijf als steen. Snel sprong Elwin de bol in, en kwam weer terug op de berg. 'Dat was op het nippertje,' zuchtte Elwin. Maar Elwin wist nu wat zijn taak was. Hij moest eerst meer leren over de

monsters van de leugen, en over de wapens van de waarheid. Het was nog geen tijd voor de monsterjacht. Hij moest eerst meer stukjes waarheid verzamelen en verdienen.

De Puzzel School

Op een dag nam een vreemdeling Elwin mee onder de grond. Diep onder de grond was er een gevangenis die bewaakt werd door het monster van hebberigheid. Velen zaten daarin opgesloten. Toen Elwin het monster zag stonden zijn haren recht overeind. Het monster was helemaal wit en heel groot. Er zaten daar veel kinderen opgesloten.

'Ik moet hier een wapen tegen maken,' zei Elwin. 'Maar niet zomaar een wapen, want wapens zullen niet werken op zo'n groot beest.'

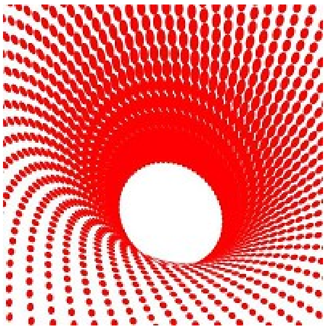
Elwin zag dat er veel kinderen in de gevangenis zaten, en die waren allemaal hebberig gemaakt door het monster. Ze puzzelden niet meer, en leerden niet meer. Ze waren gestopt met hun reis naar de waarheid. Ze zaten nu opgesloten door het monster. Elwin wist dat ze weer leergierig moesten worden, als puzzelaars. Elwin wist diep in zijn hart dat het enige wapen tegen dit monster een puzzel school zou zijn.

'Ik weet genoeg,' zei Elwin tegen de vreemdeling. 'Laten we teruggaan.'

En zo ging Elwin bouwen aan zijn puzzel school. En hij zou zijn weg helemaal naar beneden puzzelen tot diep onder de grond, om een tunnel te maken tussen de school en de gevangenis, zodat de kinderen en de andere gevangenen zouden kunnen ontsnappen. Dat was wel slim bedacht van Elwin, maar nu moest hij het nog voor elkaar zien te krijgen. Het was een heel groot werk.

Zou jij wel naar de puzzel school willen, om te leren anderen los te puzzelen die ook gevangen zijn door het monster van hebberigheid ? Hoe zou jij dat doen ?

Elwin was nog maar net begonnen toen het monster naar boven kwam. Nu zat Elwin goed in de problemen. Het witte monster was heel groot en had grote tanden. Elwin zou hier niets tegen kunnen doen, en ook de anderen niet. Het monster van hebberigheid had het nu op Elwin gemunt, en Elwin moest rennen voor zijn leven. Maar waar moest Elwin naartoe ? Hij rende en rende maar, en durfde niet om te kijken. Hevig gebrul hoorde hij achter zich. Gelukkig werd hij toen opgepikt door de rode vogel, die hem helemaal terugnam tot op de berg bij de oranje gele bol van de waarheid. De rode vogel vloog er zo met Elwin doorheen, en zo kwamen ze tot het oerwoud van de planeet van de waarheid. Nog steeds stond daar een verstijfde vreemdeling, als steen, alsof hij helemaal was bevroren. Maar de rode vogel vloog verder met Elwin, ook langs het kamp, en langs het grottengebied. Ook de oerwoudbewoners van de stam stonden daar nog steeds verstijfd als steen, als bevroren, maar toen bracht de rode vogel Elwin naar een berggebied in het midden van het oerwoud. Ergens op een hoge berg, boven op de punt, zweefde een rode bol. Daar zette de rode vogel Elwin neer.



'Wie bent u ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Ik ben de puzzel school,' zei de rode bol.

'Dus het is al klaar ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Het was altijd al klaar,' zei de rode bol, 'maar nu pas heb je het gevonden.'

'Maar ik zie alleen maar een rode bol,' zei Elwin.

'Loop maar naar binnen,' zei de bol.

Elwin ging de bol binnen. Dit was de puzzel school. Het stond vol met boekenkasten, en tafeltjes en stoeltjes. 'Vreemdelingen geven hier les,' zei de bol.

Maar toen hoorde Elwin ineens verschrikkelijk gebrul en keek naar buiten. Tot zijn grote schrik zag hij in de verte het monster van hebberigheid op de bol afkomen. 'Het is weer tijd om naar de volgende halte te gaan,' zei de rode bol. 'Dit is de reden waarom ik altijd op reis ben. Het is dus een rijdende puzzel school, anders zou het monster van hebberigheid ons te pakken krijgen. Ik ga dus overal, en dat is ook het geheim van de ontsnapping van de gevangenen, want ik kom ook bij hen langs.'

Net op het nippertje begon de rode bol toen met Elwin naar de volgende bergtop te zweven, maar ook daar moesten ze na een tijdje weer weg. Het monster van de hebberigheid zat achter hen aan.

'Maar dat beest moet toch eens uitgeschakeld worden ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Daar zijn we mee bezig,' zei de rode bol. 'Alles op zijn tijd, maar voor nu helpt het luie en hebberige kinderen om altijd verder te gaan op hun zoektocht naar de waarheid.'

Na een hele lange reis kwam de rode bol inderdaad bij de ondergrondse gevangenis aan. Er was daar een bepaalde halte waar kinderen konden instappen. Elwin was verbaasd. 'Ik wist niet dat deze gevangenis ook een halte had,' zei Elwin. 'Velen weten het niet,' zei de rode bol. 'Maar er is dus toch nog hoop.'

'Maar hoe kunnen zij die het niet weten dan bevrijd worden ?' vroeg Elwin.

'De rode bol komt overal,' zei de bol. 'In de diepste gevangenissen, in de meest afgezonderde plaatsen, al is het maar om te fluisteren, al is het maar om een druppeltje hoop te geven. Ze vinden hun weg er dan wel uit.'

'Ook waar degenen zijn die hopeloos verdwaald zijn of vergeten ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Jazeker,' zei de rode bol. 'Zolang ze een kaartje hebben kunnen ze mee, en knippen we de kaartjes.'

'Wat zijn dat voor kaartjes ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Kaartjes van leergierigheid,' zei de bol.

'Dan wil ik wel conducteur worden,' zei Elwin.

'Versla jij je monsters nu maar,' zei de rode bol.

'Wat is het volgende monster ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Het monster van belangrijker zijn,' zei de bol, 'jezelf belangrijker wanen dan de ander, waardoor je alle aandacht wil hebben en vereerd wil worden door anderen, niet omdat je beter bent en goed voor anderen zorgt, maar omdat je meer hebt, misschien rijker bent, meer spullen hebt dan de ander, duurdere kleren, een duurdere kapper, allemaal door oppervlakkige en nutteloze dingen. Dit is dus

als het ware het gevolg van hebberigheid, de volgende stap op het pad van de leugen en het doen van het slechte, en vele kinderen worden ook door dit monster opgesloten gehouden.'

'Hoe kunnen we ze helpen ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Willen ze wel geholpen worden ?' zei de rode bol.

'Ze moeten het kaartje van leergierigheid hebben anders komen ze er niet in,' zei Elwin.

'Versla eerst je monsters maar, Elwin, en laat die andere dingen maar aan mij over,' zei de rode bol.

'Waar woont het monster van belangrijker zijn ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Hij groeit aan een boom, en de kinderen eten er maar wat graag van,' zei de rode bol.

'Waar staat die boom ?' vroeg Elwin.

De rode bol nam Elwin helemaal mee naar een vreemd stadje.

'Waar zijn we ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Hier is ergens de monstervrucht,' zei de rode bol.

Ze kwamen aan bij een boom waar kinderen omheen dansten.

'Wat moeten we nu doen ?' vroeg Elwin.

'De boom moet omgehakt worden,' zei de bol. 'Hier groeien de monstervruchten.'

'Hoe doen we dat ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Door het bijltje van leergierigheid,' zei de bol.

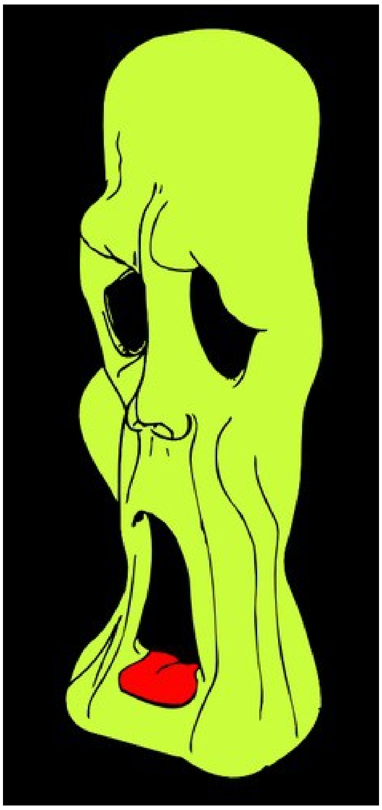
'Waar is het ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Nou, niet hier,' zei de bol. 'Het is gemaakt van vreemdelingen waarheid.'

En zo moest Elwin eerst terug naar de vreemdelingen. Het bijltje moest eerst helemaal in elkaar gepuzzeld worden met de kleine stukjes waarheid van de vreemdelingen. Maar het leek wel alsof het bijltje nooit afkwam. Er ontbrak altijd weer wat aan. De bol zei dat er eerst iets anders moest gebeuren. Het laatste stukje wat nodig was zou verborgen zitten in het monster van nieuwsgierigheid. Nieuwsgierigheid is het tegenovergestelde van leergierigheid, en soms is het moeilijk van elkaar te onderscheiden, dus moet je extra goed oppassen. Zij die willen leren om anderen daarmee kwaad te doen, en om leugens te kunnen verspreiden zijn nieuwsgierig. Zij zijn alleen maar gericht op de oppervlakkige, nutteloze dingen die er niet toe doen. Maar de leergierigen zijn op zoek naar de nuttigheid, en zij willen zichzelf steeds meer verbeteren. Alles kan altijd weer beter. Maar het monster van nieuwsgierigheid was nergens te vinden. Het was overal en nergens. Het was iets in de lucht. Elwin begreep er niks van, en moest dus eerst verder leren.

De rode bol zei tegen Elwin dat het monster van nieuwsgierigheid alleen opgespoord zou kunnen worden als hij het monster van eenzijdigheid zou verslaan, want die had alle landkaarten en mappen die daarvoor nodig waren. Het monster van eenzijdigheid zorgde ervoor dat alles maar op één

manier kon gaan, op één manier gezegd kon worden, in één taal. Zo niet dan gaf het monster zware straf. Het was het monster van discriminatie. Het mocht maar van één kleur zijn, dus of wit, of zwart. Maar het vreemde ervan was dat het monster zelf wel alle kleuren kon hebben. Het was een soort kameleon die mensen bedroog en tegen elkaar opzette. Het was een bedrieger en een stoker. Alles moest zoals hij het wilde. En dat kon altijd weer anders zijn. Dit monster woonde in een fles, en kon zo van de ene fles tot de andere fles overspringen, en van het ene tot het andere glas, om iedereen te vergiftigen.



Elwin had al wel in de gaten dat de rijdende puzzel school helemaal niet zo gemakkelijk was, en voordat hij het wist was het alweer verder gegaan. Elwin kon het niet altijd bijhouden, en soms rende hij er achteraan. Elwin moest leren bij de puzzel les te blijven. Nu zou de rode bol hem laten zien waar het monster van eenzijdigheid woonde. Ze moesten hiervoor ergens naar een café. Een barman was daar zijn glazen aan het afwassen en afdrogen. Toen de barman Elwin zag begon hij te lachen. 'Wat moet je kereltje ?' vroeg de barman.

'Ik ben op zoek naar het monster van eenzijdigheid,' zei Elwin. 'Woont die hier ?'

De barman begon nog harder te lachen. 'Je ziet ze vliegen, kereltje. Er wonen hier geen monsters.'

'De rode bol zei dat hij hier woonde, in een fles,' zei Elwin.

De barman gierde van het lachen. 'Nu ga ik toch echt van mijn stokje !' gierde hij. 'Een sprekende rode bol ? Iets verkeerds gedronken misschien ?'

Elwin begon toen boos en ongeduldig te worden. 'U bent wel erg eenzijdig en discriminerend. Het monster moet wel heel dichtbij zijn.'

Maar toen begon ook de barman boos te worden. 'Zeg, niet beledigend gaan doen, hè. Er zijn hier geen monsters, en nu wegwezen, kereltje,' zei de barman.

Elwin liep weer het café uit naar de rode bol. 'Ga weer naar binnen,' zei de rode bol.

'Hij zegt dat het er niet is,' zei Elwin.

'Het is de kameleon,' zei de rode bol. 'Hij mag alles bij je doen, denkt hij, en je mag je niet verdedigen.'

'Wat moet ik doen ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Gewoon teruggaan,' zei de rode bol. 'Het pad wijst zich vanzelf.'

Weer ging Elwin naar binnen.

'Wat heb ik nu aan mijn klomp hangen !' bulderde de barman. 'En nog terug durven te komen ook na je beledigingen ?'

'Jij begon,' zei Elwin. 'Ik kom hier voor het monster. Wen er maar aan.'

Toen kwam de barman van achter de bar vandaan. Hij trok al een pistool. 'Wen er maar aan ?' bulderde hij. 'Wat zijn dat voor manieren. Je bent wel een erge brutale vlegel. Pas maar op, straks schiet ik je aan flarden.'

'Ja kom,' zei Elwin, 'je bent de dominee niet. Geef dat waterpistooltje maar aan mij. Het is niet voor hele kleine kinderen.'

Toen werd de barman buiten zichzelf van woede. 'Nu weg, of ik schiet !' bulderde hij met een hoofd zo rood als tomaten. 'Ik tel tot drie ! Eén .... twee .... drie !' Maar Elwin bleef gewoon staan, want de rode bol was inmiddels om hem heen gekomen. De man schoot, maar de kogel werd door de rode bol afgeketst, en die ging toen dwars door een fles heen.

'Hoera,' zei de rode bol. 'Dat was de fles waarin hij woonde.'

De barman begon weg te smelten, en er begon vreemd spul uit de kapotgeschoten fles te druipen. 'We moeten hier nu weg,' zei de rode bol. 'Dit stadje zal snel onderlopen.' Elwin reiste vliegensvlug in de rode bol weg het stadje uit.

'Waar is de landkaart ?' vroeg Elwin. 'We moeten nu naar het monster van nieuwsgierigheid.' Maar Elwin keek om zich heen, en de rode bol was weg, en hij stond midden in de woestijn.

Na een tijdje slenteren in de woestijn vonden vreemdelingen hem, en namen hem mee naar een ander woestijnstadje. Hij begon het hele verhaal te vertellen en ze keken hem met grote ogen aan. Ze spraken Elwin's taal maar heel gebrekkig, en Elwin dacht dat ze hem soms verkeerd begrepen.

Hij kreeg een kamertje waar hij de nacht kon doorbrengen. Die nacht peinste Elwin over alles wat hij had meegemaakt. Hij moest maar weer gewoon wachten totdat de rode bol weer voorbij zou komen, of misschien moest Elwin ergens anders heen, iets anders leren.

Elwin begon echt heel erg aan zichzelf te twijfelen nu de rode bol niet meer bij hem was. Of had hij

iets verkeerds gedronken ?

Op een nacht werd hij wakker van luid gebrul. Vanuit zijn kamerraampje kon hij gewoon de woestijn inkijken. Het was het monster van nieuwsgierigheid. Het was een heel woest monster, nog wel veel erger en groter dan een tijger of een leeuw. Maar toen veranderde het woeste monster ineens in een krantenverkoper. 'Nieuws, nieuws,' riep hij. 'Wie wil er wat nieuws ?' Hij had een pet op en een lange grijze jas aan met een tas vol kranten. Hij ging toen bij Elwin's raam staan en riep toen weer hetzelfde. 'Mijnheer, het is midden in de nacht,' zei Elwin. 'Wie gaat er nu midden in de nacht kranten lopen verkopen ?'

'Kan ik overdag bij je terugkomen ?' vroeg de krantenverkoper.

'Ik ben niet geinteresseerd in nieuws, maar in puzzel lessen,' zei Elwin. 'Ik ben niet nieuwsgierig, maar leergierig.'

'Ja, dan moet je niet bij mij wezen,' zei de krantenverkoper.

'U kwam hier, niet andersom,' zei Elwin, 'dus wegwezen.'

'Ik kwam niet voor jou,' zei de krantenverkoper.

'Waarom kwam je dan naar mijn raam ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Zijn er nog anderen daar ?' vroeg de krantenverkoper.

'Die slapen nog,' zei Elwin. 'Wij zijn niet geinteresseerd, en al helemaal niet als woeste monsters van nieuwsgierigheid zomaar in krantenverkopers veranderen.' Toen gaf de krantenverkoper hem een mep met de krant.

Elwin greep de krant en verscheurde die voor de ogen van de krantenverkoper.

'Ik heb er toch velen van,' zei de krantenverkoper.

'Goed,' zei Elwin, 'eet ze maar lekker op. Eet smakelijk.'

'Mij niet gezien,' zei de krantenverkoper. 'Ik zal jou opeten.'

Toen veranderde de krantenverkoper weer in een woest monster en probeerde door het raam te komen. Elwin probeerde uit zijn kamer te ontsnappen maar die bleek op slot te zitten. Het monster was inmiddels de kamer binnen gekomen en Elwin stond stijf tegen de muur. 'Ik zal je vermalen tot krant !' brulde het beest. 'Het zal groot nieuws zijn !'

Maar Elwin voelde iets in zijn hart opborrelen. Het was de rode bol, de puzzelschool. En de bol begon zich helemaal in lagen om hem heen te vormen. Toen gaf de rode bol het beest een mep, en het beest werd zo door het raam naar buiten geslingerd.

Het kleine stukje waarheid wat toen vrijkwam maakte Elwin's bijltje compleet.

De boom met de monstervruchten van belangrijker zijn moest omgehakt worden. In de rode bol ging Elwin er naartoe met het bijltje van leergierigheid. Maar toen ze daar aankwamen was de boom al omgehakt, en er dansten geen kinderen meer omheen. Iemnand anders had het boompje al omgehakt. Wie ? Sandra. Sandra stond dichtbij de omgehakte boom met een bijltje, en met haar

moeder. Ze keek Elwin glimlachend aan. 'Kom, ik wil je wat laten zien,' zei Sandra. Dichtbij was een bos, waar ook een waterval was, en daarachter was een grot. In de grot was een groen blauwe waterige bol, de bol van nut. 'Veel mensen zijn op zoek naar geluk,' zei Sandra, 'maar er is iets veel groters dan geluk, en dat is nut. Geluk kan zelfs vaak bedriegelijk zijn. Soms kun je je gelukkig voelen en soms ongelukkig. Dat hoort bij het leven. Maar waar het om gaat is of het nuttig is. Als je het nut hebt gevonden, dan heb je iets groters gevonden dan geluk. Dit is de bol van nut. Het is heel waterig, om ons te herinneren aan de golven die op en neer gaan. Of je nu op gaat of neer, gelukkig bent of ongelukkig, de golf is altijd verbonden aan het water, als een boodschap van nut, om ons iets te leren. Soms leer je juist meer als je ongelukkig bent, en vaak leren mensen die altijd maar gelukkig zijn er niets meer bij. Nut is een veel hoger gevoel. Het is verbonden aan de eeuwigheid.'

Elwin keek naar de bol. De bol was niet zo groot. 'Je mag het nut aanvaarden in je hart, Elwin,' zei Sandra. 'Het nut wil heel diep in je hart wonen, of je nu gelukkig of ongelukkig bent.'

'Ik wil het,' zei Elwin, 'kom in mijn hart, nut.'

'Het nut glijdt dieper in het hart dan welk geluk of ongeluk ook, omdat het eeuwig is en diep,' zei Sandra. 'Het heeft een hele andere waarde, en een heel ander doel, namelijk de mens het nut te doen inzien van alles. Het is kalm en spreekt niet altijd, maar laat ook het nut inzien van de stilte.'

'Ik voel het,' zei Elwin. 'Het stroomt door me heen als water, op en neer. Ik voel me niet eens meer gelukkig of ongelukkig, alsof dat er niet meer toe doet. Ik voel alleen maar nut, en het is inderdaad veel groter.'

'Laat je niet meer afleiden door het zoeken naar geluk,' zei Sandra, 'maar zoek naar het nut. Geluk en ongeluk is maar tijdelijk, maar het nut is eeuwig. Als je het nut gaat inzien heb je iets beters gevonden, waardoor je helemaal vergeet te denken aan geluk of ongeluk.'

'Ik aanvaard het nut in mijn hart, dieper dan elk geluk of ongeluk,' zei Elwin.

'Dan ben je nu een nuttige, Elwin,' zei Sandra. 'Nut is iets hogers dan pijn of plezier.'

De dagen erna moesten allerlei monsters Elwin hebben, en ging de strijd door. Elwin voelde alsof het water van nut zo tussen zijn vingers weggleed, want hij zag vaak het nut er niet meer van in. 'Waarom, waarom ?' vroeg Elwin zich telkens af. Misschien heb je dat ook weleens gehad dat eerst alles zo goed ging, en daarna ineens zo slecht, en dat je je dan ook afvraagt waarom, en dat je er ook het nut niet van inziet. En Sandra en haar moeder stonden er vaak weer stokstijf bij, als steen, als bevroren. Ze zeiden dan niets. Elwin was er al een beetje gewend aan geworden.

Soms is het zo dat wanneer je een probleem hebt opgelost, dan staat er alweer een nieuw probleem voor de deur. Misschien heb je dat zelf ook weleens gehad. Maar zo is het in het puzzel avontuur. Als je een puzzel hebt opgelost, dan ga je tot de volgende puzzel, en soms is die puzzel nog wel veel groter en veel moeilijker.

Op een dag nam een vreemdeling Elwin mee weer diep onder de grond. 'Elwin,' zei de vreemdeling. 'Ik wil je iets laten zien.' Ze gingen toen tot een grot diep onder de aarde. Ze gingen door allerlei tunnels heen en putten. Elwin wist hier de weg niet, maar de vreemdeling wist het wel. Elwin zag nergens het nut nog van in. Telkens als hij een monster had verslagen of een probleem had opgelost leek het nog wel erger te worden, leek hij nog erger vast te lopen. Maar hij was blij dat de vreemdeling hem hielp. Ze kwamen in een soort kamertje aan onder de grond, een soort grotje. 'Het nooit gemaakte,' zei de vreemdeling. 'Ik zie niks,' zei Elwin.

'Dat komt omdat het het nooit gemaakte is,' zei de vreemdeling.

'Het bestaat dus niet ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Het bestaat wel,' zei de vreemdeling, 'maar het is alleen nooit gemaakt.'

'Hoe bestaat het dan ?' vroeg Elwin.

Elwin keek om zich heen, maar zag niets. 'Het nooit gemaakte komt vanzelf, wanneer je verbonden blijft,' zei de vreemdeling. 'Denk aan de boom die verbonden blijft aan de aarde en dan vanzelf vruchten voortbrengt. Alles wat de boom moet doen is verbonden blijven.'

'Waaraan moet ik verbonden blijven ?' vroeg Elwin.

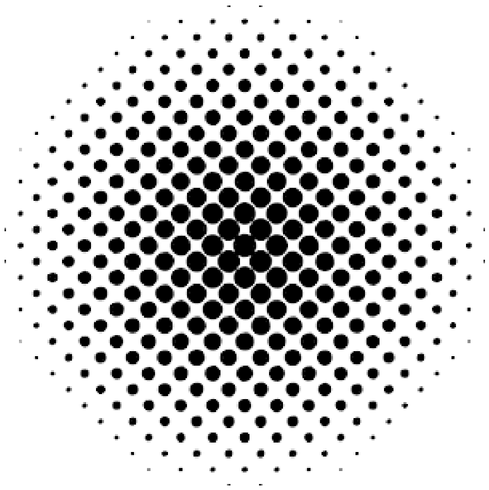
'Aan het nooit gemaakte,' zei de vreemdeling.

'Maar ik zie het niet,' zei Elwin.

'Dat maakt niet uit,' zei de vreemdeling. 'Het is nooit gemaakt, het kan ook nooit gemaakt worden. Het komt ergens anders vandaan.'

'Waar vandaan ?' vroeg Elwin.

'Vanuit het verbonden blijven met het nooit gemaakte,' zei de vreemdeling. 'Denk aan de boom die vrucht draagt door verbonden te blijven aan de aarde. Het gaat allemaal vanzelf als je maar verbonden blijft en daaraan vasthoudt.'



'Ah, nu zie ik het,' zei Elwin. 'Het is heel donker. Het is nog wel donkerder dan de aarde en de duisternis zelf. Het is een bol donkerder dan donker, zwarter dan zwart.' Elwin liep naar het nog donkerdere toe, wat als een bol daar zweefde. Het bleek op een steen te staan, en juist omdat het nog donkerder was scheen het ook licht te geven, maar dat was gezichtsbedrog. Het maakte gewoon een duidelijk contrast omdat het donkerder was. Dit was dus het tegenovergestelde van licht, maar tegelijkertijd ook een soort licht. Als iets duisterder is dan iets anders, dan zie je het ook. Als alles

even donker is dan zie je niets.

'Dit gebeurt er als je slaapt,' zei de vreemdeling. 'Je doet er niets voor, je maakt het niet, maar het is er toch. Het is het nooit gemaakte. Het gebeurt als je droomt. Het kan ook komen als je vergissingen hebt gemaakt, of per ongeluk fouten. Heb je dat weleens meegemaakt dat iets per ongeluk kapot ging, en dat je toen iets beters ervoor in de plaats kreeg ? Of dat je een verkeerde weg was ingegaan en iets vond of iemand tegenkwam wat je nooit had willen missen, en die je anders nooit tegen zou zijn gekomen ? Dat zijn de betere fouten. Dat is ook het nooit gemaakte. Het kwam door vergissing, of misschien zelfs door een ongelukje.'

Die nacht sliep Elwin zo lekker. Hij droomde over het nooit gemaakte, over de de bol die donkerder was dan donker, zo diep in de aarde, waardoor al het leven kwam. Het werd niet gemaakt, maar het kwam ergens anders vandaan, gewoon door verbonden te blijven.

Elwin wilde verbonden blijven. Hij wilde het zo graag dat hij huilde. Hij wilde vrucht dragen. En door zijn tranen voelde hij de bol in zich komen, in zijn hart. Ja, het nooit gemaakte, het verbonden blijven, wat was dat wonderlijk. Daardoor groeide en bloeide alles. Het ging vanzelf. En Elwin werd de volgende ochtend blij wakker. Er waren nog steeds tranen in zijn gezicht, en tranen in zijn mond.

En toen Elwin die dag naar buiten ging waren er allemaal vreemdelingen in monnikenpijen met kappen, en zij gingen de straten over, en zij zongen liederen over het nooit gemaakte. Het nooit gemaakte was zo goed, dat het nog nooit in een mensenhart was opgekomen, want het was boven denken. Het kwam van ergens anders, en het was nu gekomen. Ook Elwin kreeg een monnikenpij met een kap, en ging mee met de stoet. Er was ook een muziekkorps bij. Ook de muzikanten hadden monnikenpijen met kappen op. Elwin ging met de grote stoet langs het bos zo de bloemenvelden door, alhoewel het heel traag ging. Steeds meerderen kwamen erbij. Ze hadden een boodschap te vertellen. Het was een eeuwig evangelie, een goede boodschap, wat nog nooit eerder in iemand was opgekomen, maar nu was het er.

'Hey, pssst,' zei de monnik die naast Elwin liep in de stoet. Elwin herkende het gezicht van Sandra. Haar moeder was er ook bij. Sandra glimlachte, en gaf hem toen een knipoog.

Einde

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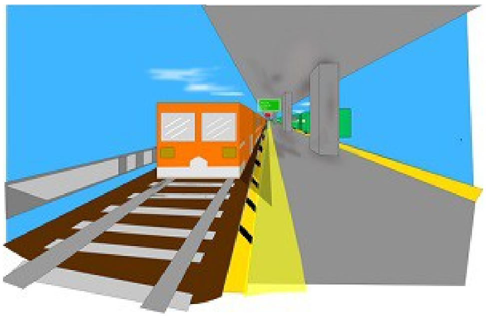
Het Leven is een Puzzel Avontuur
Deel 2

Het verhaal van het paradijs
De gebruiksaanwijzing voor het paradijs
De afgebroken brug van verhalen

Het verhaal van het paradijs

In het paradijs liep een vrouw in het wit tussen de witte paradijsbloemen.
Zij was de waarheid.
Er was ook een klein kind bij.
Zou jij wel een kind van de waarheid willen zijn ? En waarom ?

Het paradijs wordt ook wel de tuin van de waarheid genoemd.
Er was ook een stationnetje bij de tuin.
Dat stationnetje wordt ook wel de leergierigheid genoemd.
Er zijn daar ook een heleboel huisjes, de huisjes van leergierigheid.



De leergierigen zijn altijd op reis, op reis naar de waarheid.
Zij zijn allemaal kinderen van de waarheid.

De vrouw in het wit is een droomkoningin.
Zij heeft een heleboel medailles, de meeste van allemaal.
Zij is de waarheid.

Zij zend altijd weer vreemdelingen om de mensen tot de waarheid te trekken.
Maar alleen door de medailles kan de mens tot de waarheid komen.
De mens moet namelijk het goede doen, het goede leren en de monsters van het slechte, van de leugens, verslaan. Zo mag de mens door die medailles de trein van de waarheid in om tot het paradijs te gaan, de tuin van de waarheid.

En ieder mens moet het kaartje van de leergierigheid hebben, want de conducteur komt telkens langs.

Hoe kom je bij de trein van de waarheid ? Door de medailles van het goede doen, het goede leren en de monsters van het slechte, van de leugens, verslaan, krijg je steeds meer stukjes van de landkaart, zodat je weet waar het is. Onthoud dat goed, jongens en meisjes.

Het goede doen betekent ook dat je dat wat je verkeerd hebt gedaan weer goed maakt, en dat wat je

kapot hebt gemaakt weer hersteld. Maar nu is er een monster die dit helemaal niet leuk vindt. Dit is het monster van luiheid, en die verzint altijd truukjes om hieraan onderuit te komen. Hij vertelt de mensen : 'Ach, dat hoeft allemaal niet. Je kunt gewoon sorry zeggen of vergeef me, en dan ga je weer door met je slechte leven en dingen kapot maken, en dan zeg je gewoon weer sorry of vergeef me. Dan is het ook goed.' Dit monster is dus een leugen-monster, want zo wordt alles nog wel veel erger. Kennen jullie daar voorbeelden van, jongens en meisjes ?

Dit monster moet dus verslagen worden. Maar waar woont dit monster ? Een vreemdeling zei dat dit monster in het hart van de mensen woont. Hoe krijg je het er uit ? En hoe kwam het er in ?

Dat is een heel lang verhaal. En als je het wil horen, luister dan maar.

Op een dag liep de vrouw in het wit in het paradijs. Zij was de waarheid, en zij hield niet van de leugen. Zodra zij een leugen-monster zag, dan greep zij haar speer of haar pijl en boog, en ging achter het monster aan om het uit haar tuin te jagen. Zij leerde dit ook aan haar kinderen, de kinderen van de waarheid. Maar de leugen-monsters vonden dat natuurlijk helemaal niet leuk. Zij hielden van de leugen, van al wat slecht was, en zij haatten de waarheid.

Op een dag bedachten de leugen-monsters een heel gemeen plan. Ze zouden henzelf veranderen in vruchtenbomen en niet meer als leugen-monsters komen. Als dan een kind van de waarheid even niet goed oplette en hun vruchten zou plukken om ervan te eten, dan zouden ze het hart van zo'n kind kunnen binnenkomen. Ze zouden dan ook het kind meer en meer kunnen misleiden om het kind te trekken tot hun leugen-tuinen waar ze vandaan kwamen. Ze begonnen kinderen te lokken met hun truken.

De vrouw in het wit kende deze gevaren, en waarschuwde haar kinderen vaak, maar sommigen waren nog te klein en moesten nog veel leren. Daarom zond de vrouw in het wit vaak haar vreemdelingen om de kinderen weer terug te halen. De vreemdelingen bewaakten ook haar tuin.

En degene die dit gemene plannetje had gemaakt ? Dat was het monster van de luiheid, een heel dik, bruin monster met maar één oog en één tand, die nog gulzig was ook. Alleen door het onderwijs van de vreemdelingen en de vrouw in het wit kon het monster van luiheid verslagen worden.

Maar de kinderen die door de monsters waren meegenomen werd geleerd vreemdelingen te haten. Ook de vrouw in het wit kwam soms als een vreemdeling.

Remio was een jongetje die was geholpen en onderwezen door een vreemdeling. Remio was heel ver van het paradijs afgedwaald, meegenomen door de leugen-monsters, maar de vreemdeling had hem gevonden, en hem naar een stationnetje gebracht, waar Remio een huisje kreeg, en waar hij kon wachten op de trein van de waarheid. Maar de trein kwam maar niet.

De vreemdeling had hem verteld dat hij eerst meer van de waarheid moest leren, en zo luisterde Remio goed naar de vreemdeling.

Achter het spoor was het bos. Op een dag maakte Remio een boswandeling. Daar zag hij de vrouw in het wit. Hij durfde niks te zeggen, en durfde zich ook niet te bewegen. Ze kwam dichterbij en hij begon te trillen.

'Je hoeft niet bang te zijn,' zei ze. 'Ik ben de waarheid. Kom, laat me je meenemen in het bos.' Remio liep met de vrouw in het wit dieper het bos in. Zij had zijn hand vast. Zij was veel groter dan hem. Ze gingen naar een huisje waar zij woonde met haar dochter.

'Ik dacht dat u in het paradijs woonde,' zei Remio.

'Daar woon ik ook,' zei de vrouw in het wit, 'maar als vreemdeling kom ik hier ook vaak.'

'Op vakantie ofzo ?' vroeg Remio.

'Voor het werk van de waarheid,' zei de vrouw in het wit glimlachend.

'Mag ik ook een werker van de waarheid zijn om u mee te helpen ?' vroeg Remio. 'Ik wachtte al zo lang op de trein van de waarheid, maar die kwam maar niet.'

'Natuurlijk,' zei de vrouw in het wit glimlachend.

'Wat moeten we doen ?' vroeg Remio.

'Allereerst luisteren,' zei de vrouw in het wit.

'Naar wie ?' vroeg Remio.

'Naar de waarheid,' zei de vrouw in het wit. 'De waarheid zal je vertellen over het werk. Zo zul je het monster van luiheid verslaan.'

'Is het een bedrijf ?' vroeg Remio.

'Het bedrijf van de waarheid. Er wordt alleen betaald met medailles, met het goede, en zo kun je stukjes landkaart verdienen om het werk te kunnen uitbreiden,' zei de vrouw in het wit, terwijl ze glimlachte naar haar dochter die de hele tijd niets had gezegd. Haar dochter was ook in het wit.

'Het is ook een oorlog,' zei de dochter van de vrouw ineens. 'Wij moeten de monsters van de leugen verslaan, en zij dragen soms ook stukjes landkaart in hen.'

'Hoe gaan we het doen ?' vroeg Remio.

'Je wilt te snel,' zei het meisje. 'Je moet eerst afremmen. Het monster van te snel leeft in jou, en die moet je eerst verslaan.'

'Hoe ?' vroeg Remio.

'Je gaat nog steeds te snel,' zei het meisje. 'Leer te luisteren. En voor luisteren moet je stil zijn.'

Remio zei niets meer, en keek naar de vrouw en het meisje heel afwachtend.

'Je gaat nog steeds te snel,' zei het meisje. 'Ik zie het aan je ogen. Sluit nu je ogen, en wees minder gehaast.'

Remio sloot rustig zijn ogen.

'Wat zie je nu ?' vroeg het meisje.

Remio hoorde even een tinkelend belletje, één tikje. 'Ik zie een man met lang grijs haar en een punthoed op, een piraat,' zei Remio.

'Dat is het monster van te snel,' zei het meisje. 'Het is een dief. Hij grijpt de tijd, maar je moet tijd verdienen. Je kan stukjes klok verdienen door medailles, en door monsters te verslaan. Zo win je tijd, en kun je het werk van de waarheid uitbreiden.'

'Dus monsters verbergen soms ook stukjes klok ?' vroeg Remio.

'Ja,' zei het meisje. 'Ik ben je onderwijzeres, samen met mijn moeder.'

'Goed,' zei Remio, 'ik zal goed luisteren.'

'Goed,' zei het meisje, 'wat zie je nu ?'

'Veel meer monsters, als druipende drilpudding,' zei Remio.

'Dat zijn de monsters die je moet verslaan,' zei het meisje. 'Zoals ik al zei is het oorlog. Ze willen je maar wat graag meenemen naar hun domein.'

'Ik begrijp het,' zei Remio. 'Dat zal niet gebeuren.'

'Dan moet je goed luisteren,' zei het meisje, 'en je niet laten afleiden. Houd vaak je ogen gesloten.'

Remio kreeg ook een kamertje in het huisje. Op een nacht stond het meisje in zijn kamer in haar witte nachtjapon. 'Kom, Remio,' zei het meisje. 'Ik wil je wat laten zien.' Op hun blote voeten gingen ze toen naar buiten, en het meisje bracht hem ergens naar een grot dichtbij. Er druppelde daar wat, en er droop daar wat, als dril pudding. 'Dat zijn de monstertjes van de leugen,' zei het meisje.

'Wat doen we er tegen ?' vroeg Remio.

'Shhh,' zei het meisje. 'Blijf eerst goed kijken. Heel diep onder de grond is de zee van druip. Daar komen ze vandaan. Het zijn de druipers. Zij hebben daar hun eigen wereld, een druip wereld, waar ze met druip geld betalen, een soort dril puddinkjes. Het zijn de valse leugenmedailles van het slechte, het bedriegelijke loon wat je krijgt als je tegen de waarheid strijdt.'

'Maar dat is verschrikkelijk,' zei Remio.

'Ja,' zei het meisje. 'Ze hebben hun hele wereld met dat valse geld gebouwd. Het is druip geld.'

'Bah,' zei Remio. 'Ik moet er niet aan denken. Het stinkt er ook zeker.'

'Ja,' zei het meisje, 'het is heel smerig en vies spul. Dat kun je van de leugen-monsters verwachten. Ze brouwen het voor allerlei smerige doeleinden.'

'Ze eten het zeker ook,' zei Remio.

'Ja,' zei het meisje. 'Ze eten het, drinken het, en wassen zich ermee.'

'Bah,' zei Remio. 'Ik kan me niets viezers voorstellen.'

'Het is troep,' zei het meisje, 'maar daar houden leugen monsters van. Hoe meer hoe beter.'

'Wat doen we er tegen ?' vroeg Remio.

'Blijf kijken,' zei het meisje.

'Het begint te branden,' zei Remio.

'Dat lijkt maar zo,' zei het meisje.

'Nee, echt, ik zie het branden,' zei Remio. 'Het is als kaarsvet.'

'Ja, maar die kaars is hier niet,' zei het meisje. 'Die staat ergens in de zee van druip op een eilandje op een rots, en die heeft de hele zee van druip met alle druipers voortgebracht.'

'Maar zo lang het brandt druipt het,' zei Remio. 'De vlam moet gedoofd worden.'

'Nee,' zei het meisje, 'het is een monster kaars, en die druipt om een hele andere reden. Het is een ijskaars, als een druipende ijspegel.'

'Nu begrijp ik het,' zei Remio. 'Wat doen we eraan ?'

'Kom er maar niet te dichtbij,' zei het meisje. 'Het kan je zo bevriezen. Maar je hebt het nu in ieder geval gezien. Kom, we moeten terug.'

En zo gingen ze beiden weer terug naar het huisje om verder te slapen totdat het ochtend was.

Ze waren alweer vroeg op, en zo ook de vrouw in het wit.

'Ik voel me een beetje stijf, alsof ik bevroren ben,' zei Remio.

'Dat komt door vannacht,' zei het meisje. 'Je hebt veel gezien en veel gehoord.'

De gebruiksaanwijzing voor het paradijs

De nacht erop riep het meisje hem weer, en weer gingen ze naar de grot toe. Dit keer liet ze hem een geheime put zien die als een tunnel schuin naar beneden liep. 'Kom,' zei ze, toen ze naar binnen liep. Ergens diep beneden waren trappen die nog dieper gingen. Toen kwamen ze helemaal aan bij de druip wereld. 'Is het hier niet gevaarlijk ?' vroeg Remio.

Het meisje zei niets. Ze moesten door een grote poort, maar daar stonden twee wachters. 'Wat moeten jullie ?' vroeg de ene. 'Zonder druip geld komen jullie er niet in.'

De ander richtte al zijn vreemde speer op hen waar allerlei scherpe haken aanzaten en uitsteeksels als messen. 'Ik ben de dochter van de koningin,' zei het meisje.

'Dat zeggen ze allemaal,' zei de andere wachter.

'De koningin van de waarheid,' zei het meisje.

'De waarheid komt er hier niet in,' zei de ene wachter weer. 'Alleen de leugen. Laat me je leugen-medailles zien of maak weer dat je wegkomt, tenzij je in stukjes gehakt wil worden om in blik terecht te komen.'

Remio keek het meisje stomverbaasd aan, dat ze dat zomaar durfde. Het waren piratenwachters, en ze stonken naar drank. 'Laten we weer teruggaan,' zei Remio.

'Nee,' zei het meisje, 'we gaan niet terug.'

Er kwamen nog meer piraten bijstaan, en ze gingen om Remio en het meisje heenstaan. 'Daar komt mijn moeder,' zei het meisje, 'want als je bent ingesloten door de leugen, dan zal de waarheid komen.' Het meisje hield haar hand op en een klein druppeltje viel erop.

De piraten begonnen te lachen. 'Het is maar een klein druppeltje,' lachten ze.

'Niet het grote is goed, maar het goede is groot,' zei het meisje.

'Maar zo'n klein druppeltje,' lachten de piraten.

'Dit kleine druppeltje is als een zaadje wat jullie hele druip wereld zal verwoesten,' zei het meisje.

Nog harder begonnen de piraten te lachen, en er kwamen er steeds meerderen bij, die allemaal om Remio en het meisje heen gingen staan. Sommigen dreigden met hun messen, en anderen hadden hun speren al uitgestoken.

Ineens viel er nog een druppeltje. 'Meer leugen zal alleen maar meer waarheid roepen,' zei het meisje. En het begon heel zacht te regenen. 'Het is de regen van de waarheid,' zei het meisje.

'Dat zal de monsterkaars niet leuk vinden,' zeiden de piraten.

Opeens kwam vanuit de regen de vrouw in het wit, de moeder van het meisje. 'Weg, jongens,' zei ze tegen de piraten. 'Ik heb jullie niet geroepen.'

Snel gingen de piraten weer weg. 'Hij moest zien wat er zou gebeuren wanneer hij zou zijn ingesloten door de leugen,' zei het meisje tegen haar moeder. De vrouw in het wit glimlachte. 'Je hebt hem goed onderwezen,' zei ze. Toen gingen ze weer terug door het trappenportaal en de tunnels, totdat ze weer de grot uit waren. Toen gingen ze terug naar het huisje om de rest van de nacht nog wat te slapen tot de ochtend.

Toen Remio die ochtend wakker werd lag hij gewoon ergens in het gras in het bos. Er was geen huisje te bekennen, en ook geen vrouw in het wit en haar dochter. 'Zou ik het allemaal gedroomd hebben ?' vroeg Remio zichzelf af. Hij stond op, en liep weer de hele weg terug naar huis.

De vreemdeling vertelde hem dat het misschien echt was geweest, maar dat de waarheid niet goedkoop was, dus hij moest eerst verder leren. De vreemdeling gaf hem een heleboel boeken over de waarheid, over de witte vrouw en haar dochter, en over hoe de leugen-monsters te verslaan, en over hoe te werken voor de waarheid. De boeken gingen ook over het druiprijk van de leugenmonsters en over de ijskaars waar het allemaal vanaf droop. Erover te lezen en te leren was natuurlijk veel veiliger dan er zomaar naartoe te gaan. Daarom wordt er weleens gezegd dat een boek de mens voor veel problemen kan besparen. Heb je daar zelf voorbeelden van ? Denk bijvoorbeeld eens aan de gebruiksaanwijzing van een moeilijk apparaat. Misschien werd je oudere broer weleens tuureluurs als hij een bepaald apparaat niet begreep omdat hij geen gebruiksaanwijzing had, of de gebruiksaanwijzing was te onduidelijk. Dan had hij dus nog wat meer boeken erover nodig.

De ijskaars had dus geen vlammetje van vuur, maar een vlammetje van ijs.

De vreemdeling liet Remio ook wat anders zien, wat hij uit een tas haalde. Het was een boekkaars. Het vlammetje ervan was geen echte vlam, maar een letter, en die veranderde telkens in andere letters, waardoor het boek sprak. Het waren sprekende boeken, en die boeken waren eeuwig. Remio stond er met grote verbazing naar te kijken. 'Het zijn allemaal zaadjes,' zei de vreemdeling. 'Uiteindelijk zal er zoveel gezaaid zijn dat de druipwereld niet meer zal bestaan. De ijskaars van de druipwereld houdt de mensen tegen veel te lezen en te leren. Het monster van luiheid leeft in hen. Maar de boekkaarsen zullen overwinnen. Zij zijn de soldaten die ons zullen helpen.' Remio zette de boekkaars op een tafeltje, en bleef er maar naar kijken.

Ineens werd er gebeld. De conducteur van de trein van de waarheid was gekomen. Remio mocht mee, maar moest eerst wat spullen pakken. Natuurlijk vergat hij ook zijn boeken niet, en de boekkaars. Met een grote koffer zat hij even later in de trein van de waarheid. Hij zou nu naar de paradijselijke tuin van de waarheid gaan. Het was een hele lange rit. Ze moesten langs vele haltes.

Toen hij eindelijk bij de tuin van de waarheid was aangekomen en van het stationnetje stapte kreeg hij daar een huisje. Daar kon hij eerst alles uitpakken om in zijn kamertje te zetten. Hij was heel moe, dus hij zou eerst slapen. De volgende dag ging hij zijn huisje uit, en liep door zijn eigen tuin. De tuin van de waarheid was nu heel dichtbij. In de verte zag hij het al, maar hoe dichterbij hij kwam hoe prachtiger het was, en hij durfde eigenlijk niet meer verder. Hij is toen uiteindelijk maar

naar huis gegaan om verder te studeren in de boeken, en om naar de boekkaars te luisteren. Er was ook een bibliotheekje dichtbij waar een heleboel boekkaarsen stonden. Ook daar ging hij vaak naartoe. Hij moest veel weten van hoe de waarheid werkt, maar ook hoe de leugen werkt.

Op een dag werd er aangebeld. Remio deed open. Het was de vrouw in het wit met haar dochter. Remio was erg verbaasd en verrast. 'We willen je een rondleiding geven in de tuin van de waarheid,' zei de vrouw in het wit.

'Het is te prachtig,' zei Remio. 'Ik ben bang dat ik het niet aan zal kunnen.'

'Er is een bepaald pad voor beginners,' zei de vrouw in het wit glimlachend. 'En wij zijn bij je,' zei de dochter van de vrouw glimlachend.

'Goed dan,' zei Remio. Toen liep hij met hen mee.

Het was lang lopen, maar ze maakten een omweg. Ze zouden door een andere ingang gaan, een beginners ingang. Bij het hek stond een hele lange boekkaars, als een soldaat. 'Halt,' zei de soldaat, die ook een speer vasthield. 'Uw kaartjes.'

De witte vrouw glimlachtte. 'Ik ben de waarheid, en dit is mijn dochter,' zei ze, 'en hij is onze gast, een beginner.'

'Kan wel wezen,' zei de boekkaars, 'maar ik wil toch jullie kaartjes zien, anders komen jullie er niet in.'

'Heel goed, mijn waakzame wachter,' zei de vrouw in het wit. Ze liet hem toen drie kaartjes zien, die hij begon te knippen als een conducteur. 'Zonder kaart geen taart,' zei hij.

'Zo is het,' zei de vrouw in het wit glimlachend. 'Ik ben trots op je. Mede door jou blijft alles veilig.'

'Er wil teveel gespuis naar binnen tegenwoordig,' zei de boekkaars streng, 'en ze zijn heel goed in vermomming en bedrog.'

'Zo is het,' zei de vrouw in het wit. 'Je hebt je werk weer goed gedaan.' Toen gaf ze hem een medaille. 'Weer eentje er bij voor jou,' zei ze glimlachend. 'Koop er maar wat moois voor. Je verdient het.'

'Zal ik doen, mevrouw,' zei de boekkaars stralend.

Toen liepen ze de tuin in, de vrouw in het wit, haar dochter en Remio. Het was prachtig weer. 'Dit is dus het beginners pad,' zei de vrouw in het wit tegen Remio. 'Het wordt streng bewaakt zoals je ziet. Alleen de leergierigen mogen hier komen. We kunnen hier niet blijven. We moeten nu dieper de tuin in, want de tuin accepteert geen rondhangers. Het is voor reizigers, niet voor rondhangers. Als je stopt of niet snel genoeg gaat, dan zal de grond je opslokken. De tuin van de waarheid houdt niet van treuzelaars.' Ze moesten dus stevig doorlopen, anders zouden ze in de problemen komen in deze tuin. 'Daarbij wil ik ook zeggen dat je zeker niet te snel kunt gaan. Ga niet zomaar rondrennen, want ook dan slokt de grond je op.'

De schrik sloeg Remio om het hart. 'Wat moeten we dan doen ?' vroeg Remio bijna in paniek. 'Hoe weten we of we te snel of te langzaam gaan. Dat is toch bijna onmogelijk ?'

'Niets is onmogelijk bij de waarheid,' zei de vrouw in het wit glimlachend. 'En daarom zijn wij ook

bij je. Sommige mensen proberen de tuin in te gaan zonder de waarheid, en dan hebben ze een groot probleem. De grond is hongerig.

'Ik zal dichtbij jullie blijven,' zei Remio, die al een beetje trilde.

'Ga geen gekke dingen doen,' zei de vrouw in het wit. 'Blijf bij ons, luister goed, en er zal je niks overkomen.'

Remio's hart begon sneller te kloppen. Dat had hij niet verwacht in het paradijs. Maar het moest wel. Er waren teveel gevaren. 'Wat gebeurt er met hen die door de grond zakken ?' vroeg Remio.

De vrouw in het wit zei niks, en ook haar dochter niet. Paniekerig keek hij hen aan. 'Dit had ik echt niet verwacht. Kunnen we nog terug ?' zei hij trillerig en bijna stotterend. 'Het is alsof we zijn omringd door krokodillen.' Maar de vrouw en haar dochter zeiden niets meer, en hij besloot maar stil te zijn. Hij moest ook zeker niet in slaap dutten nu. Soms liepen ze rustig, en soms wat sneller, en soms stonden ze stil. Ze liepen richting een hutje. In het hutje lagen wat wapens. 'Tegen de leugen monsters,' zei de dochter van de vrouw, 'de monsters van te snel en te langzaam.'

'Ik wil het graag leren,' zei Remio. 'Is het veilig in dit hutje ?'

'Je bent nooit veilig,' zei het meisje. Zij was ook in het wit, net als haar moeder. 'Je moet altijd op je hoede blijven.'

Na een tijdje liepen ze verder. Dieper in de tuin leek het meer en meer op een oerwoud. Toen liepen ze over een zanderig pad door het oerwoud wat leidde naar een kamp op een zandvlakte, waar veel meer hutten stonden. 'Hier woont de stam,' zei de vrouw in wit.

'Welke stam ?' vroeg Remio.

'De stam van de waarheid,' zei de vrouw, 'oerwoudbewoners.'

'Wat doen ze ?' vroeg Remio.

'Jagen op de leugen monsters, maar niet op de dieren,' zei de vrouw in het wit. 'Er is een groot verschil. Zij moeten de dieren tegen de leugen monsters beschermen. Als dat niet zou gebeuren, dan zou het oerwoud verdwijnen.'

Remio kreeg een hut waar hij kon slapen. Maar hij kon die nacht geen oog dichtdoen. Hij was veel te bang om te snel of te langzaam te gaan. En hij vroeg zich nog steeds af wat er zou gebeuren als je door de grond opgeslokt zou worden. Zou je dan naar de druip wereld gaan ? Hij moest er niet aan denken. De druipers waren wel het verschrikkelijkst wat hij ooit gezien had.

Toch viel hij op een gegeven moment in slaap, maar toen hij weer wakker werd lag hij in het gras net buiten het paradijs. 'Wat is er gebeurd ?' dacht hij bij zichzelf. 'Ben ik te snel of te langzaam gegaan ? Nee, want ik ben niet onder de grond.' Trillerig stond hij op, en durfde niet meer terug te gaan. Het paradijs was moeilijker dan hij had gedacht. Je moest er eerst veel voor leren. Hij besloot weer terug te gaan naar zijn huisje bij het stationnetje. Hij trilde nog steeds, en hij kon alleen maar strompelen. Misschien had hij beter eerst naar de boekkaars kunnen luisteren die aan de ingang stond als wachter, in plaats van daar zomaar binnen te gaan.

Maar hij begreep het wel. Als je te snel of te langzaam bent kan dat gevaarlijk zijn. Hebben jullie daar ook voorbeelden van, jongens en meisjes ?

Op een dag kwamen de vrouw in het wit en haar dochter weer bij hem aan de deur. Dit keer hadden ze iets voor hem meegenomen : een snelheids waarschuwer. Dat was een enkelbandje wat je kon aandoen en wat je zou waarschuwen als je te snel of te langzaam dreigde te gaan. Remio was er erg blij mee. Het was als zijn eigen verkeers agent voor het paradijs. Hij voelde zich direct al een stuk beter. Hij trilde minder, en hij wilde direct alweer mee met hen terug naar het paradijs, maar dat kon nog niet. Hij zou eerst moeten leren hoe de enkelband werkte. Daarvoor hadden ze een nieuwe boekkaars voor hem meegenomen die hem erover zou vertellen. Dankbaar nam Remio het aan. Dat gaf toch weer wat hoop. Het was een soort gebruiksaanwijzing voor het paradijs.

De afgebroken brug van verhalen

In een ander paradijs was een vrouw in het rood. Zij was de wijsheid.
Haar dochter was ook in het rood.
Het lag veel dieper in de wildernis.
Er was geen stationnetje dichtbij.
De mens die hier zou komen zou alles achter zich moeten laten.
Soms denken we misschien dat we niet veel hebben, of hebben we iets heel waardevols verloren, maar dan mag je weten dat het je dichter bij de natuur brengt.

Alles moeten we achterlaten om tot het paradijs van de wijsheid te komen.
Alles moeten we loslaten, want het zijn maar hele kleine poortjes waar we doorheen moeten, en als we nog iets vasthouden of met ons meenemen, dan blijven we steken.

Ook de vrouw in het rood is een dromenkoningin, en zij zend altijd weer vreemdelingen om de mens tot de wijsheid te trekken. Maar hoe behandelen wij de vreemdelingen ?

Zij zingt een lied en vertelt verhalen, om haar grote wijsheid te delen. Maar luistert de mens wel ?

De wijsheid is een brug tussen de mens en het paradijs, een brug van vreemde talen en vreemde culturen. Maar wat heeft de mens met het vreemde gedaan ?

De brug gaat over de zee van eiland tot eiland, als een mooi sieraad.

En het is een brug van verhalen, van een mooi lied.
En blind is de mens die dat niet ziet.

Op een dag ging ik de brug over, en ik verbaasde me erover hoe wonderlijk het was.

En ik zag dat het haar sieraad was, van de vrouw in het rood.
Het was een sprekend sieraad van het paradijs.

Maar verder op de brug waren zware stormen, en ik werd door de storm van de brug geblazen, en ik viel in de diepe zee. En de golven waren hoog, en ik zwom en ik zwom, totdat het weer rustig werd. Maar ik zag de brug niet meer. Ik zwom toen door, totdat ik in de verte een schip zag, en toen ben ik naar het schip toegezwommen en zij namen mij aan boord. En het schip ging tot bloemenwateren. Daar ergens was het ondiep, en gingen we het schip uit om te zwemmen. Ik had nog steeds wonderlijke fragmenten van de verhalen van de brug in mijn hoofd, en als ik ze uitsprak

dan kwamen er sieraden uit mijn mond, en daar versierde ik de anderen mee.

Na een tijdje gingen we weer in het schip, en toen na vele dagen varen kwamen we op zee de brug tegen waarover ik had gesproken, maar de brug was gebroken. Ergens stopte de brug. En we gingen diepzee duiken om de afgebroken stukken te zoeken.

We wilden naar het paradijs, maar we hadden alleen maar afgebroken stukken, en zo begon het grote puzzel werk. We hadden zoveel verloren, er waren zoveel stukjes die ontbraken. Maar uiteindelijk konden we de brug weer verder bouwen helemaal tot het paradijs, en we bouwden er ook een treintje op.

En het treintje ging door de harten van de mensen om de leergierigen en de verhaalgierigen op te pikken.

Ik weet nog wel, ik weet nog wel, wat ik zag toen ik in het paradijs kwam.
Er waren daar boekflessen, waar niet zomaar water inzat, maar letters, en die stroomden eruit en vertelden verhalen. En je kon het ook drinken. Niet alleen van water leeft de mens, maar ook van verhalen.

En wat was het paradijs ? Het was een verhaal, waar je zelf ook in kon meespelen. Telkens als je dieper wilde moest je eerst helemaal door het verhaal gaan totdat je er zelf ook in meespeelde. Je kon de verhalen dus lezen en beleven, en soms was het verschil er bijna niet. Er waren soms rode wanden tussen de lezer en de speler, maar soms waren die wanden er niet. Zo kon je dieper en dieper in het paradijs. Soms waren de verhalen heel spannend, maar ze liepen altijd goed af.

Er moesten een heleboel puzzels opgelost worden, en een heleboel monsters worden verslagen, en zo verdienden de kinderen stukjes landkaart en stukjes klok, om zo steeds verder te komen, steeds dieper in het paradijs. Het was een groot puzzel avontuur.

Dieper in het paradijs woonden er stammen van puzzelstukjes die met elkaar in oorlog leefden, en de kinderen moesten de puzzels oplossen. De stammen van puzzelstukjes zouden oorlog voeren zolang de puzzel nog niet opgelost was, maar als de puzzel opgelost werd, dan kreeg degene die het had opgelost toegang tot een portaal die tot de kinderplaneet zou leiden. Bij het portaal stond een boekzandloper, dat was een boek die je op de kop kon zetten, en dan stroomden er letters uit, wat tegelijkertijd een klok was. Alleen door de boekzandloper kon je door het portaal heengaan. De boekzandloper was de wachter, en die vertelde een verhaal.

Ik puzzelde heel lang om die puzzel af te krijgen, zodat ik ook door het portaal tot de kinderplaneet kon komen. De boekzandloper bracht mij daar. Toen de boekzandloper het verhaal had verteld was ik op de kinderplaneet en moest alleen verder. Er was hier allemaal woestijn. Er waren hier geen verhalen of puzzels. Ik bleef maar lopen en lopen en het werd steeds donkerder, maar na een tijdje lopen zag ik het eerste kinderstadje in de woestijn. Daar waren weer volop verhalen en puzzels, maar de poortwachter van het kinderstadje was weer een boekzandloper. Toen het boek uit was moest ik weer verder. Het was zo'n mooi stadje, met allemaal watervalletjes, en ik had er graag willen blijven, maar ik moest verder. Ik ging door de woestijn die toen nog wel erger was, en het werd even later nog wel donkerder. Ik hoorde beesten in de verte, monsters. Ik wist niet wat ik moest doen. Ik ben toen maar gewoon doorgelopen. Na een tijdje kwam ik aan bij het volgende kinderstadje in de woestijn. Weer waren er hier allemaal verhalen en puzzels. Ook dieper op de kinderplaneet waren er stammen van puzzel stukjes met elkaar in oorlog. Er was niet overal vrede op de kinder planeet. Er moesten vele puzzels opgelost worden. In dit kinderstadje was er een stationnetje van de puzzel trein. Er liepen hier spoorwegen tot andere kinderstadjes en tot dieper op de kinderplaneet. Eerst moest ik veel lezen, luisteren en leren. Alleen puzzelaars zouden verder

kunnen op deze planeet.

Om die oorlogen op te lossen moest je vaak ontbrekende puzzel stukjes opspeuren. Als twee puzzelstukjes niet in elkaar passen, dan moet er namelijk vaak een derde bijkomen, en dan kan het soms wel passen. Voor mij was het dus belangrijk om op ontdekkingsreis te gaan naar de vergeten en verloren puzzel stammen, naar de missende puzzel stukjes. Ik moest dus een ontdekkingsreiziger worden.

Er zou een gids met me meegaan die veel wist van de kinderplaneet. Die gids was een paars puzzelstukje en heette Hector. Dichtbij het kinderstadje was ook een haven, en daar gingen we naartoe met de puzzel trein. Zo kwamen we op ons schip. Hector zei dat we naar een puzzel stukje op zoek moesten gaan dat 'de brug' heette. Dit puzzel stukje zou tussen alle puzzel stukjes passen die niet in elkaar pasten. Zo konden ze door dit ontbrekende puzzel stukje dus wel in elkaar passen, en zou de oorlog opgelost zijn. Er zou ook ergens een stam leven met zulke puzzel stukjes, ergens op een eiland, maar niemand wist waar het was. Velen dachten dat deze puzzel stukjes niet meer bestonden, maar Hector had goede hoop en goede moed, en zei dat ze nog ergens moesten bestaan. Ook als we er maar één van zouden vinden, dan mochten we al blij zijn. We gingen de zee op en keken met onze verrekijkers. Hector zei toen dat het eiland waarop deze puzzel stukjes leefden zo moeilijk te vinden was, omdat het eiland altijd verschoof, als een schip. Sommigen zeiden dat ze het eiland weleens hadden gezien, maar het dreef dan altijd weer weg.

'Het eiland wordt bewaakt door monsters,' zei Hector. 'Als we de monsters niet verslaan, dan komen we er nooit.'

Ik vroeg toen wie de monsters waren, maar dat moesten we nog ontdekken, zei Hector.

Hector begon me steeds meer te vertellen. Hij zei dat de puzzelstukjes gemaakt waren van modder. Het waren dus modder puzzel stukjes. Het kon ook wezen dat ze diep onder de grond leefden, maar dan moesten ze eerst naar het eiland gaan.

Hector had zijn kompas meegenomen, en na een tijdje zei hij : 'Oh oh, gevaar. Er zijn piraten in de buurt.' Hij zag dit door zijn verrekijker. De piraten waren blauwe puzzel stukjes. Ze begonnen te roepen vanaf hun schepen, en al snel werden we onsingeld. 'Alleen blauw mag hier komen. Jij bent paars !' riep een piraat.

'Wij zijn op zoek naar de modder puzzel stukjes !' riep Hector. 'Dat zijn bruggetjes. Dan passen we misschien wel bij elkaar !'

Maar toen werden er schoten gelost. Het hele schip verging snel door al die kanonskogels, en al snel lagen we in het water. Nu moesten we zwemmen voor ons leven. 'Onderwater,' zei Hector. Ik merkte dat ik gewoon onderwater kon ademen. We zwommen toen heel diep naar beneden. 'Een geluk bij een ongeluk,' zei Hector. 'Ik zie een tunnel opening op de bodem.' Daar zwommen we toen naartoe. We konden de tunnel inzwemmen die nog dieper naar beneden ging. Het ging over in een buis en de buis was doorzichtig. We zwommen heel diep en kwamen toen in een ondergrondse wereld terecht onder de zee waar we de modder puzzel stukjes zagen. 'Een geluk bij een ongeluk !' riep Hector weer. Maar we konden niet uit de buis. De bruine puzzel stukjes begonnen tegen de buis aan te tikken, en sommigen hadden hun mes gegrepen of hun speer. 'dat gaat niet goed,' zei Hector. 'Ze zijn bang of boos, of allebei.'

'Wat moeten we doen ?' vroeg ik.

'Doorzwemmen,' zei Hector. De buis ging nog dieper en ging verder onder de grond. Hier was het

een stuk donkerder. Ik vroeg me af hoe lang dit door zou gaan. Toen maakte de buis een bocht en konden we niet verder. Even dacht ik dat we weer terug moesten, maar Hector liet zien dat er een luik was verborgen achter wat grond. Daar gingen we toen doorheen, en toen was er weer een stuk buis, met weer een luik, waar we ook weer doorheen gingen. Er bleef steeds minder water over. 'Daar zijn ze,' zei een stem. Het was nog steeds erg donker. Ineens ging het licht aan, en we keken regelrecht in het gezicht van een bruin puzzel stukje. Het was een prinses met een kroontje op.

'Dag lieverds,' zei de prinses. 'Komen jullie me redden ?'

'Van wat ?' vroeg Hector.

'Ik weet het niet,' zei de prinses. 'Ik wordt hier opgesloten gehouden. Ik denk dat ik ergens vast ben geraakt met puzzelen.'

'Waar woon je ?' vroeg Hector.

'Ik ben de prinses van de bruine puzzel stukjes,' zei de prinses.

'Misschien waren ze daarom zo kwaad,' zei Hector.

'Heb je ze gezien ?' vroeg de prinses.

'Even,' zei Hector, 'toen we door de buis heenzwommen. Maar daar kunnen we niet door, en zij konden er ook niet doorheen.'

'Wat moeten we nu doen ?' vroeg ik.

De prinses liet een vreemde puzzel zien. Het was een deur die op slot zat. Het leek wel op een vreemd gokspel, maar ze kreeg de deur niet meer open. 'Laat mij maar even,' zei Hector. 'Ik ken dit soort sloten.' Hij ging achter het slot staan en begon knoppen in te drukken. Er liepen stroompjes water doorheen en die begonnen verbindingen te maken. 'Hebbes,' zei Hector. Toen ging de deur open. De prinses was erg verbaasd en erg blij. 'Ik heb hier ik weet niet hoe lang opgesloten gezeten,' zei ze. Na een tijdje lopen door een andere buis kwamen we aan in een soort ondergronds oerwoud. Al snel werden we omsingeld door andere bruine puzzelstukjes, maar die deden direct heel aardig, omdat ze hun prinses terughadden. 'Zij hebben ons gered,' zei de prinses terwijl ze op Hector en mij wees. 'Zij mogen dus een wens doen.'

Hector begon direct uit te leggen over de oorlogen tusen de stammen van puzzel stukjes, en dat zij zouden kunnen helpen om het op te lossen omdat zij brug puzzel stukjes waren, die tussen alle puzzel stukjes konden die niet pasten, zodat ze zouden passen. Maar dat wilden ze niet. Dat ging hen te ver. 'We hebben maar één bruin puzzel stukje nodig,' zei Hector. Maar er was niemand van hen die dat wilde. 'Laten ze maar hier komen als ze hun oorlogen opgelost willen hebben. Dan hakken we ze in de pan, en dan bakken we ze bruin,' zei een bruin puzzel stukje.

'Weten jullie niet iets anders om de oorlogen tussen de puzzel stukjes te stoppen ?' vroeg ik.

'Nee,' zei een ander bruin puzzelstukje, 'wij willen niets met ze te maken hebben. Het is dat jullie onze prinses hebben gered, maar anders hadden wij jullie ook in de pan gehakt.'

'Jullie zijn dus helemaal geen bruggen, maar ravijnen,' zei Hector. 'Wij hebben een grote vergissing gemaakt.'

'De lucht is het puzzel stukje wat jullie zoeken,' zei de prinses. 'Want door de lucht zijn alle puzzel stukjes aan elkaar verbonden. De lucht is de brug. Als je hen die boodschap vertelt, misschien stopt dan de oorlog. Of vertel hen gewoon over het ontbrekende puzzel stukje die zorgt dat ze aan elkaar passen. Vertel hen gewoon over ons, hoe oorlogszuchtig wij zijn, en hoe zij allemaal onze vijanden zijn, en misschien worden ze dan wel elkaar's vrienden.'

'Nee, dat zal niet gaan,' zei Hector. 'Er zijn nog meer missende puzzel stukjes, want zelfs deze brug werkt niet. We zullen verder op ontdekkingsreis moeten.'

'Kom hier in ieder geval niet meer,' zei de prinses nu wat strenger. 'Wij willen alleen blijven. Wij horen niet bij de andere puzzel stukjes.'

'Goed,' zei Hector. 'We mochten nog een wens doen. Ons schip was door de piraten tot zinken gebracht. Wij zouden graag een nieuw schip willen, anders moeten we helemaal terugzwemmen.'

'Hoe durven jullie zo iets groots te vragen,' zei de prinses, die steeds onaardiger begon te doen sinds ze was bevrijd. 'Jullie vragen het onmogelijke van ons.'

Toen zei ze tegen de andere bruine puzzel stukjes : 'Werp hen in de put van gevangen puzzel stukjes. Dan mogen ze elkaar opvreten.'

We werden meegenomen naar een put verderop, en daar werden we ingesmeten. We vielen heel diep. We werden direct omsingeld door een heleboel verschillende puzzel stukjes, ook puzzel stukjes die we nog nooit hadden gezien. Ze hadden allerlei kleuren, en waren van allerlei stammen.

'Welkom,' zei een wit puzzel stukje. Hij glom een beetje, alsof hij van zilver was. 'Ik ben de brug.'

'Een geluk bij een ongeluk,' zei Hector. 'Dus jij bent de brug waar we zo lang naar zoeken, en die de oorlogen tussen de puzzel stukjes zou kunnen stoppen ?'

'Ja,' zei het witte puzzel stukje, 'dat ben ik. Maar ik zit hier opgesloten. In ieder geval heb ik alle puzzel stukjes hier al met elkaar kunnen verzoenen. Door mij passen ze allemaal aan elkaar, maar we zijn hier in de diepe put van de bruine puzzelstukjes. Wij zijn hun gevangenen.'

Ik keek naar de gezichten van die puzzel stukjes. Ze zagen er inderdaad niet vijandig uit. 'Hoe komen we hieruit ?' vroeg ik.

Het witte puzzel stukje keek naar Hector, het paarse puzzelstukje. 'Jouw vriendje hier is wat wij nodig hebben,' zei het witte puzzel stukje. 'Dat is Hector,' zei ik.

'Een geluk bij een ongeluk !' riep Hector weer.

'We zijn nu eindelijk compleet,' zei het witte puzzel stukje. 'Hier hebben we lang op gewacht.'

'Hoe is het compleet ?' vroeg ik.

'Nou,' zei het witte puzzel stukje, 'nu kunnen we het schip bouwen. Alleen paars ontbrak nog.'

'Maar met een schip komen we hier toch nooit weg ?' vroeg ik.

'Moet je opletten,' zei het witte puzzel stukje.

Ineens viel ik in een diepe slaap, en toen ik weer wakker was was ik op een prachtig schip, gemaakt van alle puzzel stukjes bij elkaar die ik in de put van de gevangenen was tegengekomen. En er was een voltallige bemanning van alle kleuren puzzel stukjes, ook van de witten, de brug puzzel stukjes, die glommen alsof ze van zilver waren. Hector stond bij me. 'We hebben een boodschap te brengen,' zei Hector. 'Voorwaarts, mars. Schip, ahoy !'

Als er een trede van de ladder mist, dan kom je moeilijk boven, en dan heb je op een bepaalde manier oorlog, met de ladder. Daarom moeten alle tussenstappen er zijn. Vandaar dat puzzelaars ook verzamelaars zijn. Alleen als de ladder alle tredes heeft kun je ermee naar het paradijs klimmen. Als twee volkeren dus niet met elkaar overweg kunnen, dan heb je een derde nodig. Daarom moet je ook niet altijd strijden tegen monsters. Soms moet je eerst wat puzzelen, en op zoek gaan naar de ontbrekende puzzel stukjes. Zo kun je een heleboel nutteloze oorlogen voorkomen.

Puzzelstukjes hebben allemaal hun eigen magie, en zo kunnen er dus dingen gebeuren die nooit in je gedachten of dromen waren opgekomen, boven verwachting. Dat noemen we de magische afleiding of paradijselijke afleiding, dat wanneer je soms iets niet rechtstreeks kunt bereiken, dan moet je eerst een cirkeltje maken, zodat je het vanuit een andere kant bereikt.

Soms worden puzzels ook niet opgelost omdat de puzzel stukjes zelf kleine puzzeltjes bevatten die eerst opgelost moeten worden. Daarom zijn er dus puzzels in puzzels.

Ik had een goede boodschap, een eeuwig evangelie. Het was moeilijk om in één keer uit te leggen, en daarom was het een uitnodiging tot een groot puzzel avontuur.

Er zijn puzzels in puzzels in puzzels totdat je er duizelig van wordt. Dat is het leven, en het heeft zijn eigen taal en zijn eigen wereld.

Alles past al in elkaar, alles is al opgelost, als je maar diep genoeg puzzelt. Toen ik de puzzel had opgelost moest ik een hele hoge berg beklimmen. Helemaal bovenop de berg was de bol van de grote puzzelaar, dat wat altijd puzzelt. Er kwamen allemaal vraagtekens voort vanuit de bol, en raadseltjes. En de bol begon heel snel te draaien. Het was ineens alsof ik in het drukke verkeer was, en ik wist niet welke kant ik opmoest.

Toen zag ik ineens de puzzel bol weer. 'Volg mij,' zei de bol.

Ineens veranderde de bol in een vrouw, en zei : 'Puzzel maar, puzzel maar. Het paradijs is een puzzel. Je bent er al. Je moet het alleen nog uitpuzzelen.'

En zo ging ik met mijn rugzak terug waar ik vandaan was gekomen, niet alleen om een goede boodschap te brengen, maar nog wel meer om verder te puzzelen, want velen zouden niet naar mij luisteren. Zij moesten eerst nog uitgepuzzeld worden.
Het leven is een onontdekt paradijs.
Het leven is een puzzel avontuur.

Einde

De Boekenslagerij

DE BOEKENSLAGERIJ
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DE BOEKENSLAGER

De Boekenslagerij

Dokter, dokter, kom niet te dichtbij, want dan zul je ziek worden zoals ik ben, en het verschil tussen dokter en patient zal er niet meer zijn. Tussen spoken en mensen is de wereld van het denken, de wereld tussen slapen en waken, tussen het nu en de geschiedenis, daar waar de boekenslager ijverig en onverbiddelijk slacht.

Hoofdstuk 1.

Jan van Aalst was slager. Het was zijn beroep, en hij hield van zijn beroep. Altijd had hij zijn gasten wel een stukje vlees aan te bieden. 'Het leven is maar saai zonder een stukje vlees,' zei hij altijd. Hij zei het vaak, en een keer toen hij dat aan een jong meisje zei die hij kende zei ze : 'Daarom.' Ja, de slager was geliefd en gekend in het hele dorp. En hij kende ook iedereen. Hij had altijd wel een vriendelijk woord op zak voor elke voorbijganger. En natuurlijk als de gelegenheid zich aanbood, dan kon hij het niet laten om even een positief geluid te maken voor de vlees industrie, om de mensen er aan te herinneren dat dat toch echt bij het leven hoorde, en dat daar gretig gebruik van gemaakt diende te worden. Toen een vader van een familie in het dorp zich eens per ongeluk door het hoofd had geschoten tijdens de oefening met de windbuks en dit niet overleefde kwam hij met een hele schaal vol vlees naar de familie toe om hen te troosten en hen een hart onder de riem te steken. De slager was geliefd, en goed ook. Op handen werd hij gedragen. 'Zo'n man moeten ze koning maken,' werd er vaak gezegd. Hijzelf was daar altijd heel bescheiden over. Hij deed het gewoon om de mens deelzaam te maken in het genieten van een stukje vlees. Dat deed het leven veel goeds volgens hem. Ze konden er ook de klapmolen mee op, zei hij altijd. Maar niemand wist goed wat hij daar nu mee bedoelde. Hij kon soms dingen zeggen waardoor mensen niet meer wisten hoe ze het hadden. Hij had ook een vreemd accent. Hij was niet altijd even goed verstaanbaar.

Hij was een slager in hart en nieren, een echte vakman werd hij genoemd. Maar 's nachts was zijn leven een hel. Hij had altijd dromen over de draaiende slachtmachines, en zag het ook altijd voor zich als hij probeerde te slapen. En hij had nachtmerries, verschrikkelijke nachtmerries. Het nachtleven begon hem steeds meer te beheersen, ook overdag, totdat hij zijn werk niet meer kon doen en naar een rustoord moest gaan. Er kwam wel een nieuwe slager voor het dorp, maar de mensen misten hem verschrikkelijk. Hij werd bedolven met kaarten. De nieuwe slager was lang niet zo vriendelijk als hem, en werd vaak zelfs bot genoemd. 'De dodenrechter' noemden ze hem weleens. Nee, ze wilden dat Jan van Aalst maar weer zo snel mogelijk zou terugkeren. Maar ja, het ging steeds slechter met hem daar in het rustoord. Hij werd 's nachts verschrikkelijk geplaagd door die dromen en nachtmerries. Altijd moest hij maar weer hetzelfde voor zich zien, de draaiende slachtmachines. Zelfs overdag had hij geen rust.

'Oh, het is verschrikkelijk,' klaagde hij. 'Zou ik hier ooit weer overheen komen ?'

Zijn vrouw was erg bezorgd om hem, maar ja, wat kon ze doen ? Een indiaans gezin in de buurt noemde het de wraak van de dieren. Hij had ze geslacht en nu kwamen ze naar hem terug om zijn ziel te teisteren. Zodra dat werd opgebracht werd er vrolijk overheen gekletst. Nee, ze konden de slager niet kapot maken. De slager zou wel weer terugkomen. Daar hadden de mensen van het dorp het volste vertrouwen in. 'Eens een slager, altijd een slager,' zeiden ze. Maar hij kwam niet meer terug. Hij moest zelfs overgeplaatst worden naar een zwaarder rustoord waar ze hem beter zouden proberen te helpen, maar daar verslechterde hij nog meer.

Jan van Aalst was nu nog slechts een kasplantje. Hij had het er ook over dat hij nu zelf naar de slager moest. Hij kon nauwelijks nog praten. Op een dag werd hij bezocht door een dominee, maar die kon eigenlijk geen woord uit hem krijgen. De dominee zei wat troostende woorden op en bad toen. 'Ja, Jan,' zei de dominee. 'In diepe zonde heb je geleefd, jongen. Geen zorg voor de dieren, mensen hebzuchtig maken met al dat vlees, enzovoorts enzovoorts. Dat is ook geen leven, jongen. Het dier is onderdeel van jezelf. Je hebt het jezelf aangedaan. Maar bij God is vergeving als je een slager van slagers wordt. Predik het woord.' Toen ging de dominee weg.

'Een slager van slagers ?' dacht Jan bij zichzelf. 'Zou dit mijn laatste kans zijn ?'

Jan kreeg een nieuw medicijn, en kreeg toen veel van zijn bewustzijn en vermogens terug. Het was wonderlijk hoe snel hij er op reageerde en hoe snel hij genas. Hij was de woorden van de dominee grotendeels vergeten, maar hij herinnerde nog wel de woorden 'een slager van slagers.' Hij vroeg zich af wat het betekende. Niet lang daarna mocht Jan weer naar huis. Hij wilde geen vlees meer eten. Hij besloot de dominee te bellen om te vragen waar het ook al weer over ging. 'Slager van slagers, dominee ? Wat bedoelt u daarmee ?' vroeg hij.

'Kom maar langs,' zei de dominee, en gooide de hoorn op de haak. Binnen drie minuten was Jan bij het huis van de dominee en drukte op de bel. De vrouw van de dominee deed open. 'Hij zit op de bank in de woonkamer,' zei de vrouw. Jan liep naar binnen en ging door de gang de woonkamer binnen. Er stond daar ook een oude piano. 'Oh, u bent ook nog muzikaal, dominee ?' vroeg Jan.

'Nee, dat doet mijn vrouw,' zei de dominee. 'Ze is een rijder.'

'Oh, ze rijdt de piano ?' vroeg Jan lachend.

'Ja, omdat ze niet op dieren rijdt,' zei de dominee. 'Ze houdt van dieren.'

'Ja, dat wist ik,' zei Jan. 'Jullie waren altijd de enigen in het dorp die geen vlees bij mij kochten, en die indiaanse familie.'

'Zo, kom er eens mee voor de dag, Jan,' zei de dominee. 'Wat wil je weten ?'

'Nou, ik zou graag willen weten wat u bedoelt met 'slager van slagers,' zei Jan.

'Ga eens zitten, Jan,' zei de dominee. Ook Jan ging zitten, tegenover de dominee op de bank aan de andere kant van de tafel.

'De slager van slagers is de koning,' zei de dominee, 'de koning van de slagers. De slagers moeten doen wat de koning zegt, anders krijgen ze straf en komen ze de gevangenis in.'

'Interessant,' zei Jan, 'maar wat slachten ze precies ?'

'Nou, geen dieren,' zei de dominee.

'Dat begrijp ik,' zei Jan. 'Nu ik een tweede kans heb gekregen raak ik geen vlees meer aan.'

'Precies,' zei de dominee.

'Wat is het ?' vroeg Jan.

'Had je mijn woorden vergeten die ik erna zei ?' vroeg de dominee. 'Ik zei : predik het woord. Het woord is het beste slachtmes.'

'Oh, dus ik moet dominee worden zoals u ?' vroeg Jan.

'Nee,' zei de dominee.

Hoofdstuk 2.

Toen Jan weer thuis was lachte hij naar zijn vrouw. 'Die dominee is ook een halve gek,' zei hij. 'Wat een halve gare, zeg. Wilde dat ik een slager van slagers zou worden, en toen kreeg ik een heel ingewikkeld verhaal te horen. Ik ben maar weggegaan.'

Jan liep naar de koelkast en haalde er een plak ham uit en begon het op te eten. Zijn vrouw was erg blij dat hij weer vlees at. 'De dominee kan het ook mishebben,' zei zijn vrouw.

'Ja, het is een grote ... Ik mag het woord niet zeggen,' zei Jan.
'Ga je weer slager worden ?' vroeg zijn vrouw.

'Ja, ik ben weer helemaal terug,' zei Jan. 'Het is mijn roeping, en ik laat me door geen dominee of glazenwasser of wat dan ook tegenhouden.'

Zijn vrouw glimlachte. 'Ja, want ik en velen met mij missen je stukjes vlees. Jij was toch wel de beste. Jij bent mijn slager van slagers.'

'Zo is het,' sprak Jan.

De vervangende slager ging tot grote vreugde van het dorp weer weg, en Jan had zijn slagerij weer terug en was enthousiaster dan ooit. Als hij de dominee op straat tegenkwam dan glimlachte de dominee altijd, maar zei verder niets. 'Nog een stukje vlees, dominee ?' vroeg Jan dan, maar de dominee antwoordde niet, en als Jan de vrouw van de dominee tegenkwam dan was het eigenlijk hetzelfde verhaal. Als hij de indiaanse familie tegenkwam dan waren ze fel. Ze waarschuwden hem voor komend onheil. Jan ging nog wel naar de kerk. De dominee had het verder nooit over vlees in de preken.

Op een avond kwam Jan thuis van zijn werk. Hij had overwerk moeten doen, en zijn vrouw was aan het zingen. 'Moet dat nu ?' vroeg Jan.

'Ja, dat moet,' zei zijn vrouw vriendelijk. 'Ik moet oefenen voor het kerstfeest.'

'Ah, dan begrijp ik het,' zei Jan, die naar de koelkast ging voor een schaaltje met gesneden worst. Hij gaf ook een stukje worst aan zijn vrouw. 'Lekker, Jan,' zei zijn vrouw.

'Het is voor het goede doel,' zei Jan.

'Wat bedoel je, Jan ?' vroeg zijn vrouw.

'Nou, de opbrengst gaat naar onze slagerij,' glimlachte Jan.

'Ah, zo,' glimlachte zijn vrouw. Toen pakten ze er een glaasje wijn bij. 'Glaasje wijn voor de gezondheid,' zei Jan.

'Zo is het, Jan,' zei zijn vrouw. Samen dronken ze het snel leeg. Toen werd er meer vlees bijgehaald. 'Heerlijk, Jan,' zei zijn vrouw. 'Getrouwd te zijn met een slager als jij is het beste leven, en zelfs met een slager van slagers.'

Jan glimlachte. 'Ik mag niet klagen,' zei hij. 'Je bent een echte slagersvrouw, en slagersdochter.' Haar vader was ook slager. In een ander dorp.

'Ja, Jan,' zei zijn vrouw. 'Ik herinner me nog altijd hoe goed het was in de slagerij van mijn vader te werken. Het was er altijd zo vrolijk. Iedereen was altijd zo vriendelijk. We hadden een geweldige, spontane klantenkring, en zelfs een fanclub.'

'Ah,' lachte Jan. 'Dat moet hier nog gebeuren.'

'Ze zijn al allemaal fan van je Jan,' lachte zijn vrouw. 'Iedereen loopt met je weg, en ze dragen je op handen. Dozen kaarten heb je gekregen toen je ziek was. Zelfs liefdesbrieven. Ze zijn allemaal dol op je.'

'Behalve de dominee en zijn vrouw,' zei Jan met een gemaakt sip gezicht om de spot met ze te drijven.

'Ah, die tellen niet mee,' zei Jan's vrouw. 'Die doen mee voor spek en bonen.'

'Nee, die eten geen spek,' zei Jan.

'Voor bonen dan,' glimlachte zijn vrouw spottend.

'En die indiaanse familie ook,' zei Jan.

'Ja,' zei zijn vrouw met een 'ja' die wel tien seconden duurde.

'Dus jij weet het ook ?' zei Jan.

'Wie niet ?' vroeg zijn vrouw. 'Ze zijn vreemd. Hebben altijd alles op anderen aan te merken. Nooit op henzelf. Vreemde familie. Ik kan er geen hoogte van krijgen. Zijn niet warm te krijgen voor een stukje vlees. Allemaal onbegonnen werk. Ondankbare mensen.'

'Zuur, saai,' zei Jan.

'Precies,' zei zijn vrouw.

'Ze waarschuwen ook altijd voor kanker en hartziektes,' zei Jan.

'Precies,' zei zijn vrouw. 'We zijn kerngezond.'

'Nog wel,' zei Jan.

'Nog wel ?' vroeg zijn vrouw. En toen sneed ze snel een ander onderwerp aan. Jan zei soms dingen die ze niet begreep. Of het was zijn accent, maar dan had ze het snel maar over iets anders. Soms dacht ze dat hij nog niet helemaal hersteld was, alsof er toch nog dingen veranderd waren. Het was niet hetzelfde.

Jan begon zijn vrouw steeds meer vlees te voeren, en ze werd ook steeds dikker. Maar Jan hield wel van dikke vrouwen. Dikke vrouwen waren volgens hem een goede reclame maker voor zijn bedrijf. Zij was daarom in zijn ogen een perfect boegbeeld voor de slagerij.

Op een dag kwam de dominee in zijn zaak om vegetarisch vlees te kopen.
'Dat hebben we niet, dominee,' zei Jan. 'Maar ik heb nog wel een vraag,' zei Jan.

'Zeg het eens,' zei de dominee.

'Nou, mijn vraag is eigenlijk,' zei Jan, 'of een man ook meerdere vrouwen mag hebben. Wat extra dikke vrouwen zou mijn bedrijf goed doen.'

'Je gaat je gang maar,' zei de dominee. 'In de bijbel hadden ze ook allemaal meerdere vrouwen, dus waarom niet ?' Toen liep de dominee boos en stampvoetend de zaak uit.

'Hmm,' zei Jan. 'Ik weet niet of hij het nou meende, of dat hij sarcastisch was, of bedriegelijk, maar ik houd hem op zijn woord.'

De slager was erg geliefd, ook onder de vrouwen, omdat hij zo ontzettend vriendelijk was. Met zijn vleiende woorden deed hij hun harten altijd smelten, en zo verkoos hij zichzelf meerdere vrouwen, die aan zijn voeten lagen. Hij kon ze zo van de grond oprapen. Ze lagen daar helemaal in katzwijm bij wijze van spreken. Ze vonden hem de alleraardigste, en hij maakte het lekkerste vlees wat bestond in hun ogen. Jan was als God voor hen. Hij had nu vier dikke vrouwen die goed reclame maakten voor zijn bedrijf met hun dikke, vette lichamen. Jan kon ze wel herbergen in zijn kast van een huis. Zo had hij altijd assistentes bij de hand. Hij wilde dan ook dat ze in zijn bedrijf zouden werken, als assistente, slagershulp, of gewoon voor de al dan niet verbale evangelisatie op straat. Ja, vlees moest gepredikt worden. Het woord moest gepredikt worden. Hij was de slager van slagers, de koning der koningen.

Zo kreeg hij meer en meer vrouwen die met hun dikke konten de straat opgingen om de goede boodschap te brengen. De dominee glimlachte altijd breed als hij ze tegenkwam, maar zei niets, en hetzelfde gold voor zijn vrouw. De indiaanse familie reageerde telkens fel, onheil voorspellende. Ze gingen ook weleens de slagerij binnen om iedereen die daar werkte uit te foeteren, maar op een dag vertrok de indiaanse familie voorgoed uit het dorp. Het hele dorp was hierover opgelucht, en er werd een groot feest gehouden, en er werd natuurlijk veel vlees gegeten. Zelfs de dominee kwam nog even op het feest, maar at geen vlees. Hij zou wat waarschuwende woorden hebben gezegd volgens sommigen, maar ze wisten niet meer wat het was. Ze waren teveel door het dolle heen, of dronken. Ze waren volgens hen van een grote plaag verlost nu de indiaanse familie was verhuisd.

Jan vierde het ook in zijn slagerij. Een groot tegenstander was gevallen. En dat lieten ze weten ook. Er hingen slingers door de gehele slagerij. En de slingers gingen ook niet meer weg. Het moest voor eeuwig gevierd worden. Nu de dominee nog, en zijn vrouw, maar ja, die hadden ze ook nodig. Hij verzorgde altijd hun kerkdiensten, waar ze veel aan hadden, en wat hen op de been hield.

In de preken had de dominee het nog steeds nooit over vlees. Maar toch begonnen zijn preken steeds meer en meer een waarschuwend karakter te krijgen. Hij noemde geen namen, maar soms

wisten ze wel over wie hij het had. Jan begon zich steeds ongemakkelijker te voelen. Maar zijn dikke vrouwen vrolijkten hem altijd op, en moedigden hem aan. Ze vroegen ook aan de dominee of zij eens mochten prediken, en de dominee had gezegd : 'Je gaat je gang maar.' Zij brachten dan het evangelie van vlees.

Hoofdstuk 3.

De vrouwen hadden het kerkgebouw overgenomen. De dominee had hen zijn zegen gegeven, maar zij wisten niet of het nu oprecht was, zakelijk, sarcastisch of een valstrik. In ieder geval maakten ze er gretig gebruik van. De dikke vrouwen wisselden elkaar af om het evangelie van vlees te prediken, en de dominee luisterde, vaak zijn hoofd schuddende. Jan was helemaal door het dolle heen. Dit was wat hij wilde. Nu werd het woord gepredikt, en was hij de slager der slagers, de koning der koningen. Dit was allemaal goed voor zijn bedrijf, voor het goede doel, zoals hij altijd zei. De vrouwen begonnen steeds ruiger en wilder te prediken. Hun preken kregen ook steeds meer een waarschuwend karakter. Het vlees niet te eren was een ernstig misdrijf. Het vlees moest gegeten worden.

Op een dag verhuisde ook de dominee en vertrok met zijn vrouw uit het dorp. Weer was er een groot feest in het dorp en in de slagerij. De laatste grote tegenstander was nu gevallen. Niets kon hen nog stoppen. Er werd een standbeeld van de slager der slagers gemaakt voor in het dorp. Het hele dorp at vlees, en het hele dorp werd vlees, want de slager der slagers was gekomen.

Het werd gepredikt in de kerk, en niemand had het door. Ze waren allemaal dronken. Vlees en wijn de hele dag door. Ze zouden vlees eten totdat het hun neus zou uitkomen. Het was allang geen echt vlees meer, maar vegetarisch vlees wat precies leek op echt vlees, en ook precies so smaakte. Zo had Jan dat met de dominee afgesproken. Hij was een spion. Ook de indiaanse familie zat in het complot.

Jan meldde zich bij de dominee.
'Is het werk gedaan, Jan ?' vroeg de dominee.
'Ja, dominee,' zei Jan.
'Mooi,' zei de dominee. 'Kom dan nu naar ons nieuwe dorp, dan doen we daar precies hetzelfde.'

Ook de wijn had geen echte alcohol. Het was nep-alcohol, een stof die de hersenen opdroeg de persoon naar een rustoord te laten gaan na een overdosis, opdat de mens nooit geen vlees meer zou aanraken. Zo had de dominee dat ook ooit eens bij Jan gedaan. Voordat hij naar het rustoord moest had hij een wijntje gedronken bij de dominee met dat vreemde spul erin, de nep-alcohol.

In ieder geval lag het rustoord snel helemaal vol met mensen die volkomen waren doorgedraaid, zoals Jan eens was, klaargemaakt om ingewijd te worden in het complot. Zo ging het complot van dorp tot dorp.

De dominee was van de geheime politie, van de afdeling natuurbehoud, en was speciaal door de nieuwe regering naar het gebied van Jan uitgezonden. De nieuwe regering wilde volkomen

afrekenen met het vlees eten, maar ze wilden dit subtiel doen, anders zou het uit kunnen lopen op burgeroorlogen of staatsgrepen.

Ook in andere landen was dit proces begonnen, en na een tijdje waren er zo al heel wat 'slagers van slagers' ontstaan, waarvan Jan dus één was. Op een dag kregen ze een uitnodiging om allemaal bij elkaar te komen in een groot gebouw. Jan zou er met de dominee naartoe gaan, met de trein. Het was helemaal aan de andere kant van het land. Er zouden wel honderden 'slagers der slagers' komen, die allemaal ingewijd waren in het complot. Jan was erg benieuwd. Ze ontmoetten elkaar in een groot theater, en Jan ging ergens achterin zitten met de dominee op een rood fluwelen stoel. Het leek wel op een bioscoop. De spreker was een andere dominee, die ook van de geheime politie was, en hetzelfde werk deed als de dominee van Jan. Hij hield een lange toespraak.

Aan het einde van de toespraak bood hij een weg tot mogelijke promotie aan voor de slagers der slagers, namelijk de robot-slager, wat een regerings-slager was, en wat ook toegang zou geven tot de nieuwe regering.

Jan was daar wel in geinteresseerd, en ook de dominee moedigde hem daarin aan. 'Dat zou wel wat voor jou wezen,' fluisterde de dominee. De spreker zei dat het geheim om ingewijd te worden als robot-slager een klein donkerrood besje was van de Afrikaanse slagersboom. Het zou iets met de hersenen doen waardoor de ingewijde klaar was voor de opdracht. Als voorwaarde stelde de spreker dat de slager der slagers ten minste getrouwd moest zijn met dertig dikke vrouwen om voor deze inwijding in aanmerking te komen, want zowel dikke vrouwen als het getal dertig waren een symbool voor vruchtbaarheid. Toevallig was Jan net gisteren met zijn dertigste dikke vrouw getrouwd, dus hij kwam ervoor in aanmerking, net als zo'n beetje de helft van de aanwezige slagers der slagers. Zij werden allemaal opgeroepen om naar voren te komen om het besje te kunnen zien en eten. Wel werden ze van te voren even ondervraagd. Jan werd meegenomen naar een hokje achter het toneel, wat omgeven was door een rood fluwelen gordijn. Daar kreeg Jan een besje. 'Bent u nuchter ?' werd er gevraagd.

'Soms,' zei Jan.

'Nee, ik bedoel : Hebt u een nuchtere maag, of u nog niets gegeten hebt vandaag, of al wel ?' werd er gevraagd. Jan keek de vrouw aan die hem die vraag stelde, en zei toen na een halve minuut : 'Gaat u dat iets aan ?' Even keek de dominee die bij hem was verbaasd naar Jan. 'Werk nu even mee, Jan,' zei de dominee.

'Ja,' zei de vrouw, 'als u zo gaat doen, dan komt u er niet door. De besjes zijn nogal zuur, en zo op de lege maag kan dat hard aankomen.'

'Het gaat u niet aan,' zei Jan. 'Ik geef niet zomaar privé informatie aan vreemden.'

'Goed,' zei de vrouw. 'Dan gaat het niet door.' De vrouw wilde het besje uit zijn hand halen, maar Jan stopte het snel in zijn mond. Hij zei toen met volle mond : 'Ik kan wel wat hebben.' De vrouw drukte direct een alarm knopje in, en toen kwam er een soldaat. 'Hij wilde een vraag niet beantwoorden, en heeft toch het besje gegeten,' zei de vrouw toen.

'Komt u maar mee,' zei de soldaat tegen Jan.

'Wat een gedoe allemaal,' zei Jan, 'allemaal om een besje.'

'Het zijn de procedures,' zei de dominee. 'Het ambt van robot-slager is geen kleinigheid.'

Ze gingen door een lange gang met witte deuren aan weerszijden. Helemaal achteraan deed de soldaat de deur open. Het was de achterste deur waar de gang op uitliep. Er zat daar een dokter, die een militaire dokter scheen te zijn. 'Deze mijnheer wilde niet meewerken met de vragen,' zei de soldaat. De dokter zat achter een bureau, en Jan en de dominee gingen ergens zitten.

'Zo, zo,' zei de dokter, 'en wat is de naam ?'

'Jan van Aalst,' zei Jan.

'Beroep ?' vroeg de dokter. Jan keek hem even vreemd aan.

'Slager der slagers,' sprak Jan langzaam na een halve minuut.

'Juist ja,' zei de dokter. 'Ik kom zo bij u terug.' Toen ging hij met de soldaat de deur uit, die hij bij zijn arm had gegrepen. Na een paar minuten kwam hij weer terug met een stapel papieren, en begon er toen doorheen te bladeren.

'En u heeft dertig dikke vrouwen ?' zei de dokter toen terwijl hij opkeek.

'Juist,' zei Jan langzaam.

'En waarom wilde u niet meewerken met het vraaggesprek voor het innemen van het besje ?' vroeg de dokter, terwijl hij Jan strak aankeek.

'Dat gaat u niet veel aan,' zei Jan. 'Ik wil wel graag mijn eigen identiteit behouden, en mijn privé leven. Loop ik nu gevaar ? Ik kom in de nieuwe regering, maar hoe ? Is dat als een glazen huis, of is het meer geheim ?'

'U begrijpt er niets van,' zei de dokter langzaam, 'helemaal niets. En daar gaan we weer. Dit is al de zoveelste voor vandaag. U dient zelf een robot te worden, anders kunt u nooit een robot-slager worden en bent u te gevaarlijk om in de nieuwe regering te worden aangenomen. Als u zelfs al geen simpele vragen wil beantwoorden, dan is dat verdacht.'

Op dat moment begon het besje te werken. Jan voelde zich even duizelig en werd ineens heel gewillig. 'Juist ja,' zei Jan traag, en begon toen antwoord te geven op alle vragen. De dokter legde toen aan de dominee uit waar ze naartoe konden gaan. Jan werd toegelaten als robot-slager tot de nieuwe regering. Weer gingen ze met de trein.

Hoofdstuk 4.

Jan kreeg een speciale kamer in het gebouw van de nieuwe regering, zoals alle anderen die robot-slager waren geworden. Omdat de dominee zijn begeleider was en raadgever kreeg hij een kamer naast hem. Jan vroeg zich af wat zijn missie was nu. Hij kreeg allemaal papieren die hij moest doorlezen. Het ging over zogenaamde 'lastige steden', zogenaamde 'knopen' waar alles vast was

gelopen, want daar werkten de slagers met reclame clowns. Er werd verder niet zoveel uitleg bij gegeven, maar er zou een poeder gebruikt moeten worden waardoor de clowns in bloemen zouden veranderen, en daarna steeds verder in het niets oplossen. 'De vage bloemen' werden ze genoemd, die steeds meer wegvaagden. De reclame clowns waren een soort van robotten die door slagerijen werden gebruikt in deze probleem-gebieden. Jan vroeg zich af wat dat voor poeder was. Er stond een map bijgetekend op één van de papieren waarin werd uitgelegd hoe hij bij de kast kon komen in het gebouw waar dit poeder te vinden was. Het was voor Jan wel makkelijk te vinden. Hij ging er met de dominee direct naartoe. Ze moesten even door wat gangen heen, en toen waren ze er. Jan opende de kast en haalde er een bus uit waar het poeder zou inzitten. Op de bus stond 'stuifmeel van de Afrikaanse slagersbloem.' Op mensen zou het geen effect hebben, maar alleen dus op robotische reclame clowns. In de papieren stond verder dat het poeder 's nachts door een helicopter over een probleem-stad heengegoten moest worden, en dat het poeder vanzelf de weg zou vinden. Er stond ook een map bijgetekend hoe bij het kantoortje te komen waar deze dingen verder besproken zouden kunnen worden. Dit kantoortje was ook in het gebouw. Weer moesten ze even door wat gangen heen, en toen kwamen ze aan bij een witte deur waar ze naar binnen gingen. Er was hier niemand op het moment, maar even later kwam er een mannetje in een wit pak binnen.

'Aha, jullie hebben de bus al bij jullie zie ik,' zei het mannetje enthousiast.

'Ja,' zei Jan. 'Ik weet alleen niet hoe het verder moet.'

'Dat klopt,' zei het mannetje enthousiast. 'Dat moeten we hier nog bespreken.'

Jan en de dominee gingen zitten, terwijl het mannetje achter zijn bureautje ging zitten.

'Komt helemaal goed, komt helemaal goed,' zei het mannetje. 'Het gaat dus om dit poeder van wat wij ook wel de Lazarus bloem noemen, die in Afrika groeit. Het is de slagersbloem. Het brengt een stuifmeel voort wat perfect kan afrekenen met die clowns die de vlees industrie nog in standhouden in probleem-gebieden. Het poeder gaat in hun robotisch mechanisme zitten en verandert de cellulaire structuur en code totdat het bloemen zijn geworden.'

'Interessant,' zei Jan. 'Een prachtige oplossing voor dit probleem.'

'Ja,' zei het mannetje enthousiast. 'Blij dat jullie gekomen zijn. Er zijn vele probleem-gebieden hier en in het buitenland. We hebben werkers nodig.' In zijn opleiding had de dominee geleerd helicopters te besturen, dus het zou helemaal in orde komen. De dominee zou sturen, en Jan zou het poeder door een klein gat in de bodem van de helicopter strooien, door een trechter. Jan had er al erge zin in. Ze konden direct de volgende nacht beginnen. Dat zou dan in de eerste uren van de nacht moeten gebeuren. Ze mochten het niet te laat maken, want ze hadden ook hun nachtrust nodig.

Hij deed dit werk voor maanden, en de steden begonnen vol te groeien met de Lazarus bloemen. Het was de grote verzoening tussen natuur en stad. De Lazarus bloemen begonnen ook steeds meer weg te vagen om plaats te maken voor een veel rijkere natuur, die van het oerwoud. In dat proces was het voor hem belangrijk om voor clown te studeren, en eigenlijk was hij dat al, de ultieme spion. Elke overwonnen stad kreeg zijn eigen circus. Jan moest daarvoor verschillende dansen leren, clown dansen. Er werden ook clownsmarsen in en rondom de steden gehouden, om de steden te beschermen.

In het bos was er een bibliotheek van indianen boeken waar alles in zou staan wat ooit zou zijn gebeurd.

Op een dag gingen Jan en de dominee naar het bos om er een wandeling te maken. Diep in het bos stond ook een spookkasteel waar spoken hun verhalen schreven en wat de buitenwereld werd. Maar vanwege het werk van Jan en de dominee, en de nieuwe regering waren ze al flink teruggedreven. Ze hadden alleen nog wat spooksteden, en dan dit spookkasteel. Jan moest nu een boekenslager worden. Dat was het enige medicijn.

'Oh Jan,' zei de dominee. 'Nu gaat het gebeuren, Jan.'

'Wat is er ?' vroeg Jan.

'Nou,' zei de dominee. 'We zijn nu hier diep in het bos, en langs de indianen-bibliotheek en het spookkasteel die beiden strijden om het verhaal, oftewel de gesimuleerde werkelijkheid. Wij komen uit die strijd. Herinner je de indiaanse familie in ons complot ? Een slangenbeet van een spook was alles wat ervoor nodig was om ons tot deze werkelijkheid te slepen waar we vroeger vandaan kwamen, en nu zijn we hier. Ik heb het anti-gif, Jan. Ik mag je dat bij deze toedienen. Het slangenspook is genaamd Ken, een clown.'

'Wow,' zei Jan.

'Ja,' zei de dominee, 'het is een Iraans-indisch spook.'

'Wow,' zei Jan weer.

'Ieder mens in deze werkelijkheid heeft dat gif in zich,' zei de dominee, 'maar ik heb het anti-gif.'

'Wow,' zei Jan weer.

'De slang zet mensen vast door hen te laten staren,' zei de dominee, 'het is het staar-spook. Maar zodra wij naar het spook zelf beginnen te staren, dan zal het spook bevriezen.'

Een enorme slang verscheen voor hen, hangende vanuit een boom. 'Verlies hem niet meer uit het oog,' zei de dominee.

Jan staarde naar de slang, en liet hem niet meer los met zijn ogen. Inderdaad begon de slang te bevriezen, maar liet zich uit de boom vallen, en vloog Jan om de nek en beet hem. Jan schrok. 'Niets om je zorgen om te maken,' zei de dominee. 'Dit is slechts het verleden. Hij moet er nu uit.'

'Wat is het anti-gif ?' vroeg Jan. De dominee greep Jan bij zijn hand en trok hem weg. 'Rennen, Jan,' zei de dominee. Ze renden nog dieper het bos in. 'Weer een besje zeker ?' hijgde Jan.

'Nee, dit keer geen besje,' zei de dominee. 'Springen, Jan.'

Ze stonden voor een enorm ravijn in het bos.

'Ja maar,' zei Jan.

'Gewoon springen,' zei de dominee.

De dominee sprong al en Jan sprong hem achterna. Toen werd Jan wakker in een bed in een boshuisje. De dominee stond aan zijn bed en keek met een glimlach naar Jan. 'Daar ben je,' zei de dominee. 'We zijn door de werkelijkheids-wand gegaan.'

'Wat nu ?' vroeg Jan.

'Daar moet op gedronken worden,' sprak de dominee. 'Zonder alcohol.'

Hoofdstuk 5.

'Dus dingen die gebeuren zijn soms herhalingen van het verleden ?' vroeg Jan.
'Ja, Jan,' zei de dominee. 'Het is de geschiedenis. Het is een soort ontwaking, en dan ontwaak je weer, en weer.'

'Interessant,' zei Jan.

'Ja, het was een agressieveling,' zei de dominee.

'Wie ?' vroeg Jan.

'Ken,' zei de dominee, 'de spookslang. Dan zat hij daar op zijn hoge troontje en iedereen moest maar doen wat hij hen opdroeg. Het beest is gevallen.'

'Hoera dan maar,' zei Jan. De dominee glimlachte. 'Opgeruimd staat netjes,' zei de dominee.

'En wat nu ?' vroeg Jan. 'Vertel me meer over Ken.'

'We zijn veilig hier, want we zijn nu achter de wand,' zei de dominee. 'Maar alles aan de andere kant van de wand zal branden.'

'Maar wat gebeurt er dan met de goede mensen van het complot ?' vroeg Jan.

'Oh, die zullen hier ook wel terecht komen vroeg of later,' zei de dominee.

Jan kreeg wat kleren en toen nam de dominee hem mee naar buiten in een groot natuur gebied. Ze liepen naar een hoog gebouw in het midden van deze grote natuur, waar twee vrouwen waren. Ze hadden permanent en wat donkere schmink op hun gezicht. Jan vroeg zich af wat hij hier moest.

'Het is de geschiedenis,' zei de dominee.

Hij keek beter naar de twee vrouwen en herkende hen, maar wist niet van waar. Toen liepen ze weg. 'Kom terug,' riep Jan. 'Wie zijn jullie ?' Maar de twee vrouwen negeerden hem volkomen, en verdwenen toen in het niets.

'Het lijken wel spoken,' zei Jan.

'Spoken van het verleden,' zei de dominee.

'Wat nu ?' vroeg Jan.

'Ik kan het je niet vertellen,' zei de dominee. 'Hier stopt alles.'

'Alles ?' zei Jan. 'Wat bedoelt u daarmee ?'

'Hier stopt alles, en gaat alles terug in de geschiedenis, en loopt zo over in andere vormen,' zei de dominee. 'De geschiedenis is waarmee we het moeten doen.'

Jan zuchtte in verwarring. 'Het is het mistpad,' zei de dominee. 'Alles moet vaagblijven. Mensen willen alles altijd teveel definities geven, en zo komen ze in de problemen, worden ze opgesloten.'

'Door zichzelf ?' vroeg Jan.

De dominee knikte. 'Dan maar het mistpad,' zei Jan. Ze liepen over het pad waar de vrouwen waren weggevaagd. 'Ook de spoken moeten veranderen,' zei de dominee. 'Het is creatieve energie wat nog niet is begrepen. Je moet ermee werken.'

'Hoe ?' vroeg Jan.

'Je bent toch de boekenslager ?' sprak de dominee.

'Oh dat,' zei Jan, 'maar hoe werkt het ?'

'Mensen definiëren alles,' zei de dominee, 'stoppen alles in potten en pannen, drukken overal etiketten op, en sluiten zichzelf zo op. Zo schrijven ze hun boeken, maar de mist slacht die boeken. Je moet een spook worden, Jan, een wezen van de mist.'

'Hoe wordt ik een spook ?' vroeg Jan.

'Gewoon doorlopen op het mistpad,' zei de dominee. 'Hier ga je terug de geschiedenis in, doorbreek je de muur tussen het nu en geschiedenis. Ook die vrouwen doorbraken die muur en gingen terug.'

'Waar zal ik dan terecht komen ?' vroeg Jan.

'In je eigen boekenslagerij,' zei de dominee.

Jan was weer terug in zijn slagerij, maar nu moest hij boeken slachten. En hij was een spook, een mistwezen. Hij moest alles vaag houden. Hij mocht niet teveel definiëren, want dan zou hij opgesloten worden en slachtvee worden.

Klanten kwamen binnen en hij moest boekenvlees verkopen.

'Vreemd,' dacht Jan bij zichzelf. 'Maar het is een keer wat anders.' Ook zijn klanten waren spoken.

Ook de dominee was een spook geworden. 'Wat gaat u nu doen ?' vroeg Jan.
'Ik breng het spook-evangelie van het boekenvlees,' sprak de dominee, 'zodat je klanten hebt.'
Aan de voorkant van de slagerij, boven de deur, stond met grote letters BOEKENSLAGERIJ.
En spoken vanuit de hele wereld begonnen naar Jan's boekenslagerij te komen.

De dominee zou zijn zegje doen. Ze gingen allemaal naar de spookkerk om het spook-evangelie te horen. Het boekenvlees moest gegeten worden. Jan had dertig dikke vrouwen die hem hielpen in de boekenslagerij en reclame voor de boekenslagerij maakten, en zij preekten ook in de kerk. Hij zag tussen zijn dertig dikke vrouwen ook de twee vrouwen die hij in het gebouw van het natuurgebied was tegengekomen. Nu herinnerde hij ze weer.

'Het boekenvlees moet gegeten worden !' riepen ze door de straten. Ook kinderen werden gedwongen het boekenvlees te eten. Als ze dat niet deden, dan zouden ze sterven en weer terugglijden naar de mensenwereld. Dan zouden ze geen spoken meer zijn. De dominee waarschuwde ernstig tegen verzuim. Iedereen moest het spook-evangelie van het boekenvlees horen.

Daarboven en beneden, daar eten ze mensenvlees en dierenvlees,' zei de dominee altijd, 'ze vreten elkaar op en zo sterven zij, maar zij die het boekenvlees eten zullen eeuwig leven.'

Jan slachtte dat het een lieve lust was. Het waren toch maar boeken. Hij slachtte voor zijn leven en voor dat van anderen. En de dominee was zijn getrouwe vriend die over hem waakte, en natuurlijk zijn dertig dikke vrouwen, maar die waren niet al te makkelijk. Jan hoopte maar dat hij het allemaal in de hand kon houden, maar dat kon hij niet. En op een dag werd Jan door hen uit de boekenslagerij gezet, en de dominee werd uit zijn kerk gezet, en ze werden het bos ingezonden. Ze moesten maar bij de indianen leven.

Jan en de dominee bezochten toen een indianenstam in het bos, waar ze hartelijk en gastvrij werden ontvangen, en ze kregen van de indianen een heleboel verhalen te horen. De indianen waren boekenjagers. Zij waren per slot van rekening degenen die altijd ervoor zorgden dat Jan genoeg boekenvlees had voor zijn boekenslagerij. Jan vertelde over zijn dertig dikke vrouwen, en de indianen moesten daar erg om lachen. 'Kom, kom,' zei een indiaan. 'Dat is zo erg nog niet. Ze doen gewoon hun werk, en nu kun jij een boekenjager worden, net zoals ons. Wij kunnen je nog vele, grote verhalen vertellen, waar jij nog nooit van hebt gehoord.' Jan keek hen met grote ogen aan. Hij moest weer de mist in om te kunnen boekenjagen. Zonder de mist zou dat niet kunnen.

De indianen leefden zowel in oorlog als in onderhandeling met de boekenfokkers, de boekenboeren, die in de weilanden rondom het bos woonden. De boekenboeren werkten samen met de boekenjournalisten die al het nieuws over de boeken in de kranten zetten en zij gebruikten hiervoor ook de radio.

Jan kreeg dus zo ook eens wat te zien, zodat hij zou beseffen dat alles niet vanzelfsprekend werkte. Er ging een wereld aan vooraf.

Maar de indianen vertelden hem ook dat Jan's nieuwe wereld slechts een verhaal was uit een boek, en dat een grote reuzen-boekenslager het boek uiteindelijk zou slachten. Jan's wereld zou aan flarden gescheurd worden. Deze reus was heel groot en sterk, en ruw. Hij had altijd zijn schort aan, en zijn hakbijl en mes bij zich, klaar voor het grote werk.

'Er is altijd baas boven baas, Jan,' zeiden de indianen.

'Wat kunnen we eraan doen ?' vroeg Jan.

'Niks,' zeiden de indianen, 'helemaal niks.'

'Maar kunnen we dan niet ontsnappen ?' vroeg Jan.

'Oh ja,' zeiden de indianen. 'Daarom vertellen we al die verhalen. We gaan dan gewoon naar een nieuw boek.'

Jan zuchtte. 'Daar komt geen einde aan dan.'

'Die indianen maken je maar wat wijs,' fluisterde de dominee. 'Je bent toch boekenslager ?'

'Ja, niet meer, sinds mijn dertig dikke vrouwen me de slagerij hebben uitgezet,' zei Jan.

'Dan kun je hier je boekenslagerij beginnen,' zei de dominee.

'Zo in het bos ?' vroeg Jan.

'Ja,' zei de dominee. 'Het is niet zo moeilijk. Het is een koud kunstje.'

'Hoe dan ?' vroeg Jan.

'Je vraagt gewoon een wigwam om je werk te doen,' fluisterde de dominee.

En zo werd Jan de boekenslager van de indianenstam. Op een dag kwamen er drie boeren die bij hem boekenvlees kwamen halen, en ze betaalden hem er goed voor. Zo kon Jan ook een beetje bijdragen aan de vrede tussen de indianen en de boekenboeren.

Op een dag ging Jan vissen naar boeken. Er zwommen veel boeken in het bosmeertje, en al snel had Jan heel wat boeken opgevist. Hij ging ze eerst lezen, maar de letters waren nat, en het was niet goed leesbaar meer. Toch las hij heel wat mooie verhalen. Die kon hij dan weer doorvertellen aan de indianen, en zij vertelden hem daardoor weer verhalen. Zo ruilden ze verhalen. De indianen geloofden in de reus die hun wereld kapot zou scheuren. Jan probeerde ze op andere gedachten te brengen maar niets hielp. Ze vertelden hem ook waar de reus woonde, dus hij en de dominee gingen een kijkje nemen. Toen ze bij het huis van de reus aankwamen was er niemand. De reus was dus blijkbaar weg, misschien aan het werk. Ze zagen er allemaal boeken liggen. Er was ook een boek genaamd 'het boek van de reus', en dat namen ze mee. Ze brachten het naar de indianen, en er stonden allemaal verhalen in over de komst van de reus. 'Zie je nu wel,' zeiden de indianen. 'Het staat daar allemaal in.'

'Maar wie zegt dat het waar is ?' zei Jan. 'Ik zal het boek aan flarden snijden. Dan is het weg. Daarvoor ben ik immers boekenslager, en zo hebben jullie weer boekenvlees.'

'Nee !' riepen de indianen. 'Dat boek is onder een grote vloek. Het is het boek wat niet geslacht kan worden. Dit boek is de boekenslager zelf.'

'Fikkie erin dan ?' zei Jan, 'of we kunnen het in het bosmeertje gooien, dan wordt alles nat en ontstaan er andere verhalen.'

'Hmm,' zeiden de indianen. 'In de fik steken zou ik maar niet doen, maar misschien is water wel een goed idee.' En zo wierp Jan het boek van de reus in het bosmeertje. Zodra het boek het water had aangeraakt veranderde het echter in een haai. 'Nu kunnen we hier nooit meer zwemmen !' riepen de indianen. 'Jij hebt alles verpest !' riepen ze tegen Jan. En toen moest Jan vertrekken. 'En neem die stomme dominee met je mee !' riepen ze. En toen zijn Jan en de dominee maar naar de boekenboeren toegegaan. Bij de indianen waren ze niet meer welkom.

Jan had gelukkig wat goede klanten onder de boeren, en die waren zo gastvrij dat hij er mocht wonen. Hij werd zo ondergebracht in een boerderij, en kreeg zo ook de gehele boekenfokkerij te zien. 'Ja, die indianen zijn verschrikkelijk bijgelovig,' werd er gezegd. 'En daarom is het soms oorlog, want daar doen wij niet aan mee.'

Maar op een nacht werden Jan en de dominee wakker van verschrikkelijk lawaai. De reus was

teruggekomen. De indianen hadden dus toch gelijk gehad. Alles werd aan flarden gescheurd. 'Wat moeten we doen !' riep Jan in paniek.

'Kalm blijven,' zei de dominee. 'Als het goed is lopen we nu over in een nieuw boek.' Er was niets dan water. Ze werden meegesleurd met een enorme waterstroom, alsof de zee over hen heen was gekomen.

Een eiland ? Nee, het was vaag. De mist nam weer over, en weer waren ze in het natuurgebied, in het grote gebouw, waar Jan zijn dikke vrouwen terugzag .... sommigen.

Het was vaag. Hij herkende ze nauwelijks. Ze hadden permanent, en hun gezichten waren opgeschminkt. Ze negeerden hem. Ze zochten alleen naar elkaar. De dominee was zijn enige vriend. Ook hem zagen ze niet staan. Het leek alsof er langs hem heen werd geleefd. Alleen de dominee kon hem verstaan.

Hij was een spook, een mist wezen nu, een boek over een boekenslager wat ook werd geslacht. Er is altijd baas boven baas. Van boek tot boek ging hij, tot dat wat er nog over was gebleven. Hij definieerde het teveel, en daarom sloot het hem op, en moest hij weer bevrijd worden. Het leek eindeloos. Waar hield het ergens op ? Weer werd hij in het verleden gedrukt. Weer zag hij de dertig dikke vrouwen marcheren. Waar gingen ze naartoe ? Zij vaagden allen weg op het mistpad, en toen ook hij en de dominee. In het verleden was hij weer. Hij was weer in zijn boekenslagerij, alsof hij een cirkeltje had gemaakt. 'Het moet nu afgelopen zijn !' riep hij. De dominee zei dat hij het vak nog moest leren. Of misschien moest hij nu zijn eigen boeken maken ? Hij had genoeg onderdelen, en zo ging hij aan het werk. Hij werkte dag en nacht en stopte niet meer. Hij maakte boeken en wilde het dit keer goed doen. Zijn boeken moesten de allerbesten zijn, maar wat betekent de allerbeste ? Hij schreef en schreef en schreef. En zo had hij een boekenmakerij naast zijn boekenslagerij. Het werd groot nieuws. De boekenjournalisten spraken er de hele dag over op de radio.

Jan vond het zoveel werk dat hij machines liet maken voor zowel zijn boekenmakerij als zijn boekenslachterij. Het werd een fabriek, een industrie. Alles ging aan de lopende band, en nu had hij veel meer dikke vrouwen nodig, dus hij trouwde er met honderden meer, en toen duizenden. Jan was echt aan de gang nu, en kreeg de smaak goed te pakken. Niemand kon hem nog stoppen, zelfs de reuzen boekenslager niet. Jan was nu zelf een reus geworden, en pakte alles op een reusachtige manier aan.

Jan, Jan, de boekenman,
Gaat 's nachts op stap, en komt er dan weer an,
Jan, Jan, die leeft zijn leven wel,
Boeken slachten en boeken maken,
Nooit meer kommer en kwel.

Maar weer keerden de dikke vrouwen zich tegen hem en de dominee, en weer werden ze het bos ingejaagd. Dit keer werden ze zelfs bedreigd met wapens, dus ze moesten rennen zo hard ze konden. In het bos kwamen ze het beest van boekenjournalistiek tegen, het beest met de vele ogen. Ook had het beest vele monden. Het was een boekenjournalist, een paparazzi en stalker. Het beest begon door elkaar te spreken totdat ze er beiden helemaal ziek van waren.

'Wat moeten we doen ?' klaagde Jan tegen de dominee.

'Rijdt erop,' zei de dominee.

'Ja, ik wil niet dood,' zei Jan. 'Hoe kom ik op dat beest zonder dat het me verslindt ?'

'Het is een machine,' zei de dominee.

'Ik wil jullie alleen maar helpen,' zei het beest toen heel kalm. En zo klommen Jan en de dominee op het beest en konden het beest besturen. De dominee wist wel hoe het moet, en legde het aan Jan uit. Voordat ze het wisten stonden ze oog in oog met legers van dikke vrouwen. Het leek ook wel op een machine. Ze bewogen als robotten. Toen rende het beest weg dieper het bos in, met Jan en de dominee op zijn rug. 'We krijgen je wel, Jan !' riepen de dikke vrouwen.

'Waar is dat voor nodig ?' riep Jan. 'Wat heb ik gedaan ?'

'Dat weet je best wel, Jan !' riepen ze.

'Ik weet niks !' riep Jan. 'Ik weet alleen dat ik een boekenslagerij en een boekenmakerij had. Toen hebben jullie ons weggestuurd !'

'Niks ervan !' riepen de dikke vrouwen. 'Het was onze boekenslagerij en boekenmakerij, en ook de kerk was van ons !'

'Goedzo, houden zo !' riep de dominee, terwijl hij het beest nog sneller deed rennen. Na een tijdje was het vrouwenleger ver achter hen. Na een tijdje kwam het beest aan bij de zee, en veranderde in een boot om zo de zee in te gaan. 'Vaarwel vrouwen !' riep de dominee terwijl hij zwaaide.

Jan wist niet meer hoe hij het had. 'Ik wil niet zeeziek worden,' zei Jan.

'Dat zal nog wel meevallen,' zei de dominee.

'Waar gaan we naartoe ?' vroeg Jan.

'Weg van die vrouwen,' zei de dominee. 'Er is geen beginnen aan.'

'Ik word er zo moe van,' zei Jan. 'Altijd als ik iets heb opgebouwd, word het me afgenomen.'

'Geen zorgen, Jan,' sprak de dominee. 'De boekenjournalistiek verandert elk verhaal.'

'Hoe dan ?' vroeg Jan.

'Door er een andere betekenis aan te geven, door het door te roddelen, en dan te veranderen totdat het wat anders is,' zei de dominee. 'Daar zijn boekenjournalisten voor. Het zijn onze redders. Zij zijn de ware boekenslagers. En wij rijden per slot van rekening op het beest van de boekenjournalistiek.'

'Ik moet het ook eens proberen,' zei Jan.

'Daar is dit beest voor,' zei de dominee. 'Zodra de student klaar is komt de onderwijzer.'

'Mooi gezegd,' zei Jan. 'Maar zijn daar geen regels aan verbonden ? We kunnen toch niet zomaar gaan roddelen en alles verdraaien ?'

'Natuurlijk is er een handboek voor, een wetboek,' zei de dominee.

'Eén van mijn dikke vrouwen is boekenjournalist,' zei Jan.

'Vergeet de vrouwen,' zei de dominee. 'We zijn nu hier bij het beest.'

'Maar we moeten haar niet onderschatten,' zei Jan. 'Ze is me er eentje.'

'Dat kan wel wezen,' zei de dominee, 'maar dan kennen ze dit beest nog niet.'

'Ik wed dat dit op een grote oorlog gaat uitlopen, haar kennende,' zei Jan.

'Een boekenjournalistische oorlog ?' vroeg de dominee.

Jan knikte.

'Ik weet het nog niet zo net,' zei de dominee.

'Ik moet boekenjournalist worden om hier door heen te komen,' zei Jan.

'Tussen slapen en waken,' sprak het beest, 'tussen geschiedenis en het nu. Ik ben de ware boekenslager en boekenmaker. Ik heb alles gemaakt. Ik ben de poppenmaker, alles door het geheim van de boekenjournalistiek.'

'Wat is het geheim ?' vroeg Jan.

'Ik geef hen allen een stem in hun hoofd, en zo sorteer ik de poppen. Zo maak ik mijn verhalen,' zei het beest. 'Het geheim is herhaling en massa-productie, wat in stand gehouden wordt en aangewakkerd wordt door de boekenjournalistiek. De boekenjournalist is de ware schrijver van het boek. Hij kan er elke mogelijke betekenis aan geven. Zo stuurt hij het volk.'

Jan voelde een warmte in hem opglijden, alsof het beest diep in hem sprak.
'Dus jij hebt ook de dikke vrouwen gemaakt ?' vroeg Jan.
'Natuurlijk,' zei het beest. 'Ik ben zelf ook een dikke vrouw.'

'Eén van mijn vrouwen ?' vroeg Jan verbaasd en geschrokken.
'Ja,' zei het beest, 'die van de boekenjournalistiek.'

Hoofdstuk 6.

'Ik roddel en ik slacht,
Ik praat en ik verdraai,
Geef aan alles een andere betekenis,
Geloof me, het brengt veel geld in het laatje,

Het leidt mij naar het goede goud.
Ik ben een boekenjournalist, ziet u,
Ik leef ervan, ik wil niet dood,
Het is mijn dagelijkse brood

Met een krant wandel ik door het ganse land,
Krijg alles voor mekaar, mevrouw,
Ik lieg en spot, ik verdraai en bedot,
Bedriegen is mijn vak,
Maar ik heb aan alles lak,
Want wie niet liegt die leeft niet,
En iedereen liegt, en wie zegt dat hij niet liegt is de grootste leugenaar,
U bent de krant, ik ben de schaar,
U praat maar tegen de klauw, mijnheer,
Moet ik u rechtsom of linksom verdraaien,
ondersteboven of bovensteonder,
U zegt het maar,
Wij weten altijd raad in de boekenslagerij,
Wij maken van uw waarheid een leugen, en van uw leugen een waarheid,
Wij komen altijd weer met wat nieuws, zo had u het nog niet gezien,
En de klap zag u niet aankomen

Het beest was in zichzelf aan het zingen en mompelen. 'Wanneer word je dan een dikke vrouw ?' vroeg Jan.

'Niet nu,' zei het beest. 'We zitten midden op de zee. Ik ben een schip nu. Ik kan niet alles tegelijk.'

'Waarom ben je niet bij de andere dikke vrouwen ?' vroeg Jan.

'Dat lees je maar in de komende aflevering van ons magazine,' zei het beest. 'We moeten er nog wel een beetje aan verdienen, denk je niet zo ? We kunnen niet alles zomaar gratis weggegeven. Aan alle pret komt een einde. Zoek de gleuf maar op waar je je muntje kunt ingooien.'

'Nou, nou,' zei Jan. 'Ik kan wel merken dat je daadwerkelijk mijn vrouw bent. Zo ken ik je weer.'

De dominee lachte. 'Dat is je beste vrouw dan waarschijnlijk.'

'Maar ja,' zei Jan. 'Wat is best ? Wat staat ons nog allemaal te wachten met haar ? Straks moeten de andere dikke vrouwen ons nog van haar bevrijden.'

'Welnee joh,' zei de dominee. 'Komt allemaal best in orde.'

'Ja, ja,' zei Jan, 'dat klinkt allemaal maar als reclame voor één of ander heilig boek waar je duizenden jaren voor moet wachten op de grote bevrijding.'

'Niet zo pessimistisch, Jan,' zei de dominee.

'Sorry, maar ik ben al teveel bedrogen in mijn korte leventje,' zei Jan.

'Dan wordt het eens hoog tijd dat je zelf eens gaat bedriegen, op een leuke manier dan,' zei de dominee.

'Oh, als boekenjournalist ?' vroeg Jan.

'Ja, dat brengt wat leven in de brouwerij,' zei de dominee. 'Als je zelf niet gaat liegen, dan word je wel voorgelogen door anderen. In dit land spreekt niemand de waarheid. Het zijn slechts verhalen.'

'En vandaar dat er een boekenslager nodig is,' zei Jan.

'Precies,' zei de dominee, 'en die boekenslager is de boekenjournalist, hij die spreekt tussen waken en slapen.'

Het beest slaapt nooit, en is ook nooit echt wakker,
Het leeft en spreekt tussen waken en slapen,
tussen het nu en de geschiedenis,
In een mist die niemand kan verstaan.

Het beest nam hen weer mee naar het gebouw in het grote natuurgebied, tot het mistpad. Jan vroeg hoe de boekenjournalistiek werkte.

'Je schrijft een boek over een boek,' zei het beest, 'en vervolgens schrijf je over het boek over het boek weer een boek.'

'Klinkt makkelijk, maar er zal wel veel bij komen kijken,' zei Jan.

'Ja,' sprak het beest, en veranderde toen in de dikke vrouw. Jan was verbaasd en verrast. Samen met de dominee gingen ze het gebouw binnen. 'Wat is dit eigenlijk voor een gebouw ?' vroeg Jan.

'Dit is het gebouw van de school van de boekenjournalistiek,' sprak de dikke vrouw.

'Een waarheid als een koe,' zei de dominee.

'Natuurlijk,' zei de dikke vrouw. 'Maar vergeet niet dat het een mistschool is. We definiëren hier niet teveel. Het is een spookschool.'

'Uiteraard,' voegde de dominee toe.

'Er moet hier niets, en er is veel vrijheid,' sprak de vrouw. 'Alles gaat hier om een natuurlijke en mistige manier, met veel omwegen, vaagheid en puzzels, veel raadsels.'

In het gebouw kregen ze beiden een kamer. 'De spoken onderwijzen hier,' sprak de vrouw. 'Daar kunnen ze ook de kamer voor binnenkomen. Ze onderwijzen op vele manieren, vaak subtiel. Ze houden ervan te onderwijzen door dromen en dagdromen. Ze werken door de wereld van het denken, tussen waken en slapen in, tussen het nu en de geschiedenis.'

'Klinkt vredig, en rustig, kalmerend,' zei Jan.

'Er zijn hier allemaal spookachtige natuurverschijnselen, van de mist, en die kunnen zo vanuit het water opkomen,' sprak de vrouw. 'De journalistiek bespreekt de verschillende onderwerelden en bovenwerelden, waardoor leugen en waarheid nog maar heel relatief is. En dan zijn er ook nog eens een heleboel zijwerelden. De portalen daartoe zijn overal in dit grote natuurgebied, in de vorm van mistnevels. De boekenjournalistiek verbindt deze mistportalen, misttunnels en mistbollen en functioneert als een poortwachter. De nieuwslezers lezen het allemaal op. Zij verzinnen alles. Er zijn voorwerelden, achterwerelden, linkswerelden, rechtswerelden en die moet de

boekenjournalistiek allemaal aan elkaar verbinden. Het is een kunst.'

Het was al een oud gebouw, met vele oude schilderijen. Toen leidde de vrouw hen weer naar buiten, en gingen ze het grote natuurgebied in. Er was hier overal mist, en ze leidde hen naar een meer in de natuur waar een grote mistbol in het water hing. Het was bijna als een wit vlies. 'Deze zorgt voor grote dromen,' sprak de vrouw. 'Er is geen mens die hier kan komen, alleen spoken.'

Jan durfde niets te zeggen.

Hij vroeg zich af wat voor dromen het waren. De vrouw begon het al uit te leggen. 'Het zijn journalistieke dromen. Als twee mensen communiceren dan bedrijven ze al journalistiek. Ze leggen elkaar uit en vullen elkaar aan. Ze verdraaien elkaar ook, en nemen dat weer met zich mee, en geven het aan anderen door. Zo onstaat er een journalistiek netwerk, een nieuw boek. Jan begon figuren te zien in het mistvlies. Het vervormde zichzelf voortdurend. De vrouw vertelde dat het mistvlies aan het uitzenden was. Het zond dromen uit, journalistieke dromen, die een eigen samenleving schiepen, een boek. Het was een boekenmaker. Hiertoe was het ook op jacht gegaan, en hiertoe had het ook boeken geslacht. Het was als een roofinsect.

Jan durfde bijna niet te ademen. Het leek heel dierlijk, maar tegelijkertijd plantaardig, en als een natuur-element, een natuurverschijnsel, als een mistdroom. Jan keek ernaar in grote verbazing. Het leek wel als een reuzenkwal die uit het water was gekomen, maar het was spookachtig. Even dacht Jan dat hij in de hemel was, in het paradijs. Hij voelde zich licht in zijn hoofd, en zwak. Hij zag reiger-achtige vogels in de bomen die vaak zwart waren met lange rode snavels. Er stonden vele bomen die op dennenbomen en coniferen leken, maar het niet waren. Het waren spookachtige bomen. Hier en daar hing er wat sneeuw, en er lag wat ijs in het water. Het meer had een soort eilandje, waardoor het op een rivier leek. Op het eilandje waren er wat kleinere boompjes, en er lag veel zand. 'De journalistiek is een boekenoorlog,' sprak de vrouw. 'De grote indiaanse boekenoorlogen, de acht grote indiaanse oorlogsboeken die met elkaar in oorlog zijn.'

'Waar gaat het over ?' vroeg Jan.

'Het eerste grote indiaanse oorlogsboek gaat over de boekenroof,' sprak de vrouw. 'De indianen zijn in dit boek in oorlog met de boekenrovers en boekenpiraten.'

De vrouw leidde hen om het meer heen tot een vlakte waar een grote misttrap stond. 'Hierachter is de zee,' zei de vrouw, 'de spookzee of mistzee. Daar leven de boekenrovers en de boekenpiraten. De boekenpiraten hebben daar grote spookschepen, mistschepen. Eli was een beruchte kapitein van boekenpiraten. Daar gaat het boek over.'

'Waar zijn die boeken ?' vroeg Jan.

'In de schoolbibliotheek,' sprak de vrouw.

Die avond nam Jan het boek vanuit de schoolbibliotheek mee naar zijn kamer en begon het te lezen. Het was al een oud boek, en sommige letters waren weggevaagd. Het maakte hem wel nieuwsgierig over wat er nu daadwerkelijk zou hebben gestaan, en hij begon erover te filosoferen en zijn theorieën erover te maken. Hij was journalistiek erover aan het bedrijven, en schreef zijn bevindingen op. Er stond nog veel informatie in over Eli, maar dan juist als het net belangrijk begon te worden, dan vielen de woorden weg. Het was als een spookboek, of mistboek, en de vrouw had daarover gezegd dat het juist belangrijk was, omdat anders het boek hem zou kunnen opslokken, in de zin dat dan alles te gedefinieerd zou zijn, en dan zou het boek teveel macht hebben, teveel grenzen aanleggen. Het was dus voor Jan's eigen bescherming dat er zoveel woorden en zinnen half

of geheel waren weggevaagd. En zo kon Jan er ook nog eens zelf interessante journalistiek over schrijven, om zijn eigen boek erover te maken, als een echte boekenslager en boekenmaker. Er stonden ook wat plaatjes in die niet altijd even duidelijk waren, omdat het op bepaalde plaatsen vanwege de oudheid van het boek al was weggevaagd. Jan had zo zijn ideeën en zou het boek wel willen heruitgeven, maar het was natuurlijk allemaal maar speculatie. Er waren een heleboel missing links, en hoe zou Jan die zomaar kunnen aanvullen ? Wel was dit dus een hele uitdaging voor Jan, en dat maakte het leven ook interessant. Jan hield van het boek, en begon er een relatie mee te krijgen. Het ging ook nog over een treinroof, waarin een boekentrein werd aangevallen door indianen te paard. De redenen waren onbekend, maar Jan dacht dat het ermee te maken had dat de boeken van de indianen waren gestolen, en dat de indianen ze gewoon terugroofden. Jan leek erin te lezen dat de boekenrovers hun eigen treinen hadden. Zo was er dus een grote boekenoorlog in het eerste boek. Jan had zijn handen er aan vol, en de vrouw hielp hem ermee, en gaf hem goede raad.

Hoe meer hij het boek las, en hoe meer hij over dit dikke boek nadacht, hoe nieuwsgieriger hij werd naar het tweede boek. En misschien zou het tweede grote indiaanse oorlogsboek helderheid kunnen verschaffen ? Het tweede boek was nog wel moeilijker leesbaar dan het eerste, en leek een nog veel ouder boek te zijn. Misschien waren er van het eerste boek nog wel oudere manuscripten die verloren waren geraakt ? En wie zei dat alles wel geheel was opgeschreven als in het oorspronkelijke manuscript ? Vaak als mensen verhalen moesten navertellen dan maakten ze er hun eigen verhaal van. Dan lieten ze dingen weg waarvan ze vonden dat het er niet bijhoorde, en vulden ze het aan met hun eigen inbreng. Hij probeerde wijs te worden van het tweede boek, maar het lukte niet echt. Dit was pas echt een spookboek, en het leek wel in andere letters te zijn geschreven, in een taal die hij niet kende. Wel waren er veel meer plaatjes in, bijna als een stripboek hier en daar. Hij raakte erdoor gehypnotiseerd. Hij sloeg volledig op hol. Dit boek had hem nog wel meer in de ban dan het eerste boek. Hij kon de plaatjes niet goed zien, maar daardoor sloeg zijn fantasie op hol. Het was genoeg materiaal om hem geheel dol te maken. Het leek bijna wel een boek van zijn eigen leven, maar dan op een hele andere manier. Hij herkende het, maar ook weer niet.

Op een dag zou de vrouw langskomen op zijn kamer om hem ermee te helpen. Ze begon hem wonderbaarlijke uitleggingen te geven. Dit deed ze al in de eetzaal waar ze gezamenlijk aten, en daarna ging ze met hem mee naar zijn kamer. Het was al avond. Het boek ging volgens haar over de boekendokters. Zij herstelden kapotte boeken, en kapotte verhalen. Zij waren ook ontdekkings-reizigers, maar zij vielen in de handen van de indianen, wat een grote oorlog tot gevolg had. De boekendokters hadden een groot rijk en sloten de indianen op in ziekenhuizen.

'En het derde boek ?' vroeg Jan.

'Het derde boek bestaat niet meer, maar er zijn nog wel boeken over,' zei de vrouw, 'waarin wat korte samenvattingen staan, oude journalistieke boeken, en die boeken over het derde boek spreken elkaar ook weer tegen, maar het is alles wat we hebben op het moment. Er zijn wel veertien grote boeken over het derde indiaanse oorlogsboek geschreven.'

'En waar gaat het over ?' vroeg Jan.

'Het derde boek zou gaan over de boekenbankieren,' sprak de vrouw, 'daar waar er betaald werd met boeken in plaats van met geld, maar dit liep uit op een grote oorlog met de indianen. Uiteindelijk hebben ze deze oorlog deels economisch opgelost, met boeken dus. De indianen wonnen de oorlog, maar deels zou de oorlog voor eeuwig doorgaan. Andere boeken erover spreken dat trouwens weer tegen. Er zijn verschillende versies van het verhaal, en we weten niet welke de oorspronkelijke versie was. Nog steeds worden er veel boeken over dit boek geschreven, maar er zijn dus veertien standaard boeken erover in de geschiedenis die het dichtst bij de bron liggen.'

'Interessant,' zei Jan. 'Het lijkt mij een waardige opdracht om hier onderzoek over te doen.'

'En dan is er nog het vierde boek,' zei de vrouw, 'wat nog maar half bestaat, maar dat is in ieder geval wat. Het laatste stuk ervan ontbreekt.'

'En waar gaat het over ?' vroeg Jan.

'Over de boeken-archeologie,' zei de vrouw, 'over het ontstaan van de boeken en de verhalen, een beroep wat helemaal leidt tot de oude indiaanse ondergrondse grotten die waren als tempelen, en waarop hun verhalen waren getekend. De archeologen die zich hieraan waagden in het boek werden toen aangevallen door de indianen, wat op een grote oorlog uitliep in de ondergrondse boekenmijnen. En het vijfde boek daarvan denkt men dat het een vervalsing is van een ouder boek, en het boek gaat ook over boekenvervalsers. Door het vervalsen van boeken kon men hele culturen veranderen, en de indianen komen in dit boek in oorlog met de boekenvervalsers. De boekenvervalsers winnen die oorlog, en vervalsen dan ook alle boeken van de indianen. Het zesde boek gaat over boekenverzamelaars, het zevende over boekenbegravenissen en boekenbegrafenisondernemers en alles wat er bij komt kijken, en hoe die in oorlog kwamen met de indianen, en het achtste en laatste boek gaat over de boekenbergen.'

'Wat is dat ?' vroeg Jan.

'De boekenbergen is een plaats waar men communiceert door boeken,' sprak een vrouw. 'Men zendt elkaar boodschappen door een boek, en zo worden de boodschappen ook opgevangen. Ze slaan dan hun boeken open en zien de geheime boodschappen, en ook dat liep uit op een grote oorlog.'

De dagen erna las Jan veel in de boeken, en bestudeerde ze. Hij las voornamelijk veel in het vierde boek, oftewel het halve boek, en las over de boeken-archeologen die boeken opgroeven en kwamen tot de ondergrondse indiaanse grotten om de hiërogliefen te bestuderen. Hij leerde over de verschillende talen. Omdat het boek maar half was las hij ook boeken over het vierde boek, waarin er werd geprobeerd het boek af te maken, want het laatste stuk ontbrak. Het interesseerde hem, en hij begon er zelf ook over te speculeren. Hij maakte aantekeningen en verzamelde die om zo ook zijn eigen commentaar op het vierde boek te maken. Hierdoor probeerde hij het boek te herstellen en alles aan elkaar te knopen. Hij noemde het een boeken labyrint. Hij werkte voornamelijk alleen, maar soms ging hij naar klaslokalen en liet hij zichzelf bijscholen.

Vaak vaagde alles weg, want het was een mist labyrint. Hij moest leren leven met de wazen in zijn hoofd die hem beschermden tegen de valstrikken van overgedefinieerd materialisme. En mist zorgde er eigenlijk voor dat er zoveel andere haartjes gezien konden worden, zoveel andere werelden, die anders verborgen zouden blijven. Juist de vaagheid was de weg daartoe, tot de veren. Ja, de misten waren slechts veren van dualiteit die de paden naar de andere dimensies lieten zien, naar boven, naar onderen en naar opzij, in zoveel lagen, zoveel haren.
Jan wilde een boekendokter worden om de acht indiaanse oorlogsboeken te herstellen.
De boekendokter werd besproken in het tweede boek.
Hij kwam tot het boek en reikte haar de hand,
Zij was als een vrouw voor hem,
Hij wilde haar genezen en helpen, maar zij was groot en verwarrend,
Zou hij haar genezen, of zou zij hem ook ziek maken ?

Zij sleurde hem naar de onderwereld,
Haar taal was wild en woest,
Zij wilde geen indringers,
Zij was een labyrint.

Hij nam haar naar het ziekenhuis, maar zij maakte hem ook ziek,
Het was besmettelijk.

'Oh, hoe moet ik haar herstellen !' riep Jan in zijn nachtelijke worstelingen,
Altijd woelde hij in zijn slaap als hij aan haar dacht en over haar droomde,
Zij was het tweede boek.

Hij kwam tot haar als een prooi tot een roofdier,
Niet hij had haar gegrepen, maar zij had hem gegrepen,
En zij sleurde hem tot haar onderwereld diep,
Opdat hij haar raadsel zou begrijpen,
Zij liet hem de bruggen zien

Zij maakte hem ziek en sleurde hem tot de dokters,
Vele boekenvertalers waren daar, maar zij spraken elkaar allemaal tegen.
Haar taal was woest en wild,
Want zij wilde geen indringers,
Nee, geen dokter kon haar temmen

Boekenvertalers bogen hun hoofd over haar, maar zij verslond hen allen,
Als een wild beest joeg zij door de nacht

Hij was de boekendokter, maar zij maakte hem ziek,
Opdat zij hem kon meenemen tot haar boek,
De tweede is haar naam

En allen die haar vinden maakt zij ziek,
En zij maakt ziekenhuizen tot haar labyrinten

Was het dit wel allemaal waard ?
Hij had een tropentocht gemaakt,
Zijn schedel op haar paal,
Aan haar ketting zijn tand als kraal

Hij wilde haar genezen,
Maar hij werd ziekgemaakt,
Dit boek maakte hem langzaam ziek,
Bracht hem langzaam ten onder,
Maar hij kon niet meer zonder

Hij was nu verslaafd,
Als in de ban van een religie

Hoofdstuk 7.

Hij kwam tot haar, tot het tweede boek,
Als een boekendokter tot een oorlog,
En de oorlog greep hem ook,
Het was overweldigend

Hij stierf op het slagveld,
Terwijl hij alleen maar wilde helpen,
Nu werd hij opgenomen in haar boek,
Nu was hij haar soldaat,
En boeken waren zijn wapens

Hij werd van boekendokter tot boekensoldaat,
Maar alles was vaag hier, alles ging trager,
Hij moest de boeken lezen, want alleen boeken waren zijn wapens

Hij vocht voor haar, maar zij vocht tegen hem,
Haar taal was wild en woest, en ook haar boeken,
Wanr zij wilde geen indringers

En zo stierf hij weer, in de grote boekendood,
In de grote boekenoorlog,
Hij had zijn best gedaan

En zo kwam hij nog dieper in haar boek,
In de tweede

Hij had geen wapens meer,
Maar zij was zijn wapen en zijn medicijn

Het verhaal van de boekendokters was hem nu duidelijk,
Alleen het boek was het medicijn,
En zij die niet tot haar diepte gaan zullen het nooit vinden.

En hij kreeg een huwelijk met het boek,
En hij kwam niet verder zonder haar,
Hij was verslaafd, verslaafd aan het tweede boek

En hij zocht naar haar uitgang, maar hij vond het niet,
Voor eeuwig moest hij in dit labyrint dwalen,
En zij die haar niet vonden zouden voor eeuwig sterven,
Want zij was het leven,
Zij was het medicijn

Hij had de boekziekte, maar in haar had zij het medicijn,
Oh, hij was zo boekziek,
Naar de onderwereld trok zij hem,
Tot de schedel en het geraamte van het boek,
Maar hierin lag het medicijn,
Tussen veren verborgen

De mistbrug ging hij over, en zij trok hem,
Zij liet hem niet meer los,
Zij was het tweede boek in zijn hoofd,
Gelukkig getrouwd,
In een doktershuis vond hij dit goud

De boekendokter is hij,
Hij werd ziek om haar te genezen,
Ja, de zieke dokter is hij

Toen hij tot haar kwam wist hij dat zijn leven over was,
Maar een nieuw leven vond hij in haar,
Toen hij dit boek uit de kast pakte begonnen zijn handen te branden,
Maar zijn hart ontwaakte uit een diepe slaap

Heb je mij gewekt, of heb ik jou gewekt,
Of hebben we het beiden gedaan ?

Ik lees jou, en jij leest mij,
Wij zijn van hetzelfde boek

Hij was met haar op een bootje op het water, en alles was zo stil,
Toen werd zij overboord getrokken door een beest en de diepte ingenomen,
Dokter, dokter, kom niet te dichtbij, want dan zul je ziek worden zoals ik ben,
En het verschil tussen dokter en patient zal er niet meer zijn.

Hij was met haar op een bootje op het water, als een dokter met zijn patient,
Toe dokter, volg haar niet, want genezen kan je haar niet,
Je zult slechts worden als zij ...

Hij was met haar op een bootje op het water, als een vader met zijn kind, en alles was zo stil,
Toe vader, volg haar niet, want het verschil tussen vader en kind zal er niet meer zijn.

En de natuur herbergt de mistbloem van de journalistiek, en alle werelden zullen draaien en vallen.
Kom daarom niet te dichtbij, want je zult worden als haar.

Dit stond allemaal in het tweede boek.

Hij legde het boek weer weg en dacht na. Hij staarde.

Hoofdstuk 8.

In zijn gedachten vond hij de mistbloem in het grote natuurgebied. Maar hij durfde niet dichterbij te komen, en toen rende hij weg, maar zij kwam achter hem aan.

Als je de mistbloem hebt gezien, dan laat het je niet meer los.

De roddelbloem sloot hem op om hem de andere werelden te laten zien.

Nee, de roddelaarster wil geen medicijn, maar wil alleen maar even in een andere wereld zijn.

De roddelbloem is versierd met roddelblaadjes, om de verborgen pracht van andere werelden te laten zien.

Heeft dan niemand door dat het slechts verhalenvertellers zijn ?

Maar ze slachten de verhalen, het zijn boekenslagers, en hij was in een wildernis waarin hij de uitweg niet meer kon vinden, en hij kende deze wildernis niet. Hij was verdwaald in overweldigende wildernis. Hij zag het geheim in het riet. Hier was alles stil. En het werd steeds stiller. Maar de stilte was slechts een clown, en de mistbloem, de roddelbloem, beschermde hem. Wat roddelblaadjes was alles wat hij had en nodig had om zijn weg door deze wildernis te vinden.

De onverbiddelijke stilte is een clown,
Het roddelblad onze laatste hoop,
Maar kom niet te dichtbij,
Want zij zal je verscheuren,
Zij is de boekenslager,
Zij slaat al je dromen kapot

Jan had geen verhalen meer in zijn hoofd na zijn ontmoeting met haar, en ook geen toekomst, alleen nog maar zijn geschiedenis, haar roddelblaadjes.

Hij had de distelbloem aangeraakt, en sliep nu als Doornroosje.
Hij was zo ziek geworden als haar, geen verschil meer tussen de dokter en de patient.
Zij had hem meegenomen naar de andere wereld.

En hij was met haar op een rivier diep in het grote natuurgebied.
En hij wandelt met haar in het grote natuurgebied achter de rivier, en hij aanvaardt het roddelkruis.
Hij leert het zien als paden tot de andere werelden.
Zij bracht hem tot het roddelkruis, tot de plaats waar dokters een dokter nodig hebben.
Maar zij wilde geen medicijn, maar alleen in een andere wereld zijn.

Is het medicijn niet zwaar overschat, en sluit het niet vaak de poorten tot de andere werelden ?
Was het medicijn vaak gewoon vergif ?
Hij wilde geen mierzoete medicijnen.
Hij wilde haar, het roddelkruis, opdat hij de andere werelden zou zien.
Hij was in de zijwereld met haar, tussen waken en slapen.
Er waren ravijnen tussen zijn hersenen die geen medicijn kon overbruggen,
Alleen het roddelkruis.

Aan een roddelkruis ging hij ten onder, op een vuilnisbelt, waar de poppen brandden.

En als hij vasthoudt aan zijn roddelsieraden, het laatste wat hij heeft, dan vindt hij haar.
In een roddelwoud, waar de stiltes clowns zijn, en ook de dieptes van de meren, waar hij het roddelgoud vindt.

Hier heerst een zeer besmettelijke goudkoorts, die geen dokter kan genezen. Zij worden allen ziek, zij die te dichtbij komen. Hier worden de dokters ziek, waar zij alleen nog maar goud willen. Aan genezing denken ze niet, want de ziekte brengt tot het goud. Het is de ongeneeslijke goudkoorts van de roddel.

En Jan vond een goud wat niet met ogen gezien kon worden, en hij wilde geen medicijn voor deze goudkoorts. En zij was zijn goudkoorts. Het was een literaire goudkoorts.

En hij ging verder en verder, dieper en dieper in dit reusachtige natuurgebied, en hij kwam aan bij de zee van de boekenloosheid, daar waar alle boeken stopten, daar waar de boeklozen dwaalden aan de stranden. Over de zee ging een brug met een trein, de trein van de verteller, en aan de andere kant van de zee van de boekenloosheid zou alles overgaan in nieuwe boeken. Jan besloot met de trein te gaan. Het werd een hele lange tocht in de trein van de verteller over de zee. Hier stopten alle verhalen, maar de verteller was bij hem. Toen hij aan land aankwam, op het station aan het strand kon hij zo een stad inlopen waar hele hoge gebouwen stonden. De verteller had ervoor gezorgd dat hij een kamer hoog op een wolkenkrabber kon krijgen. De verteller had hem hiervoor de sleutel gegeven en een map, en ook een bouwpakket met kleine mannetjes waardoor het beeldscherm op zijn kamer zou werken. Er was ook een gebruiksaanwijzing bij, en het ging vrij makkelijk. Hij had vanuit de kamer in de wolkenkrabber een goed uitzicht over de stad en over de zee.

Jan kon een beroep kiezen, en hij koos voor boekenslager, want hij was nog steeds een slager in hart en nieren. Hij kreeg hiervoor een winkel in een straat in de stad. Iedereen kocht graag boekenvlees bij hem. Hij was de verteller dankbaar, en dacht nog vaak terug aan de lange treintocht over de zee van de boekenloosheid waardoor hij hier was gekomen.

Hij zag een nieuwe wereld. Hier had hij lang op gewacht. Er was veel natuur in de stad, alsof natuur en stad met elkaar waren samengekomen. Er waren prachtige tuinen en parken door de hele stad, waar Jan graag doorheen wandelde. Het inspireerde hem. De natuur van de stad overweldigde hem. Hij zag zoveel wat hij niet uit kon leggen, maar hij bewonderde het.

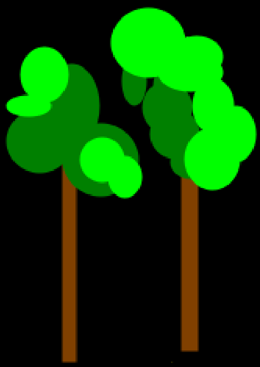
Jan wist dat het niet om het medicijn ging, maar om de sleutel, en dat dokters vaak grote bedriegers waren. Hij kon zich voorstellen dat de indianen ermee in oorlog waren geraakt. Ziekenhuizen waren gevangenissen, en vandaar dat er in de hele stad ook geen ziekenhuis was te vinden. Daarom waren er ook geen dokters, alleen sleutelmakers. Dokters zouden misschien wel in de trein van de verteller kunnen komen om de zee van de boekenloosheid over te gaan, maar halverwege zou de verteller hen toch uit de trein zetten. Geen dokter zou de zee van de boekenloosheid over kunnen komen. Er stonden ook veel grote borden op het strand en bij het station, waarop stond : VERBODEN VOOR DOKTERS. Als er dan toch een dokter op heterdaad was betrapt, dan stonden daar zware straffen op. De dokter zou in de gevangenis gezet worden, en daarna het land worden uitgezet. Dan moesten ze met de trein terug over de zee van de boekenloosheid. Als een dokter zich zwaar had misdragen dan waren er veel zwaardere straffen. Dan werden ze in de arena's gezet om door dieren te worden verslonden. Maar eigenlijk kwam dat bijna niet voor. In de tweede grote indiaanse oorlog was er zo goed als geheel met de doktersgeslachten afgerekend. Ja, dokters waren gehaat in de stad. Ze wilden er eigenlijk niet over praten.

Eens ging Jan met de trein naar een ander stadsdeel. In de trein kwam hij een meisje tegen die op één van zijn vrouwen leek. Even hadden ze oogcontact. Even leek het alsof er een vonk van

herkenning overvloog, alsof zij hem ook herkende, maar zij was niet degene die hij kende. Blijkbaar herkende zij ook iets in hem wat hij verder niet was. Ze waren elkaar nog nooit eerder tegengekomen, maar toch leken ze zoveel van elkaar te dragen, alsof hun levens elkaar al eerder hadden gekruisd, maar het was toch de eerste keer en waarschijnlijk de laatste keer. Het was te licht en te ondiep om verdere indruk op hem te maken, en hij was het al snel weer vergeten. En ook zij ging met haar leven verder alsof er nooit wat was gebeurd. Hij dacht er over na hoe het leven gevuld was met zoveel ogenschijnlijke oppervlakkigheden, zoveel lichte aanrakingen die nooit werkelijkheid zouden worden, die geen toekomst hadden. Waar was het goed voor ? Hij was op weg naar de boekenfabriek. Het stond daar vol met boekenmachines. Even gingen er flitsen door hem heen van het verleden, en toen keek hij weer naar de machines. 'Goed werk,' zei hij. Hij dwaalde dieper en dieper in de boekenfabriek, door allerlei tunnels, en hij zag zoveel van zijn verleden. Hij herkende het, maar toch ook weer niet. Het was net iets anders. En de rook die uit de fabriek kwam bedekte de hele stad.

Einde

Nonnendorp



korte verhalen

rnl-pockets
nr. 23

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Nonnendorp

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Nonnendorp

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Nonnendorp
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Een uitgave van schoolsupermarkt

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Nonnendorp

Patrick en Skeleton woonden hier, in Nonnendorp.
Ik wist niet waarom ze hem zo noemden,
maar zo noemden ze hem altijd.
Nonnendorp leek een beetje op Kampen, Utrecht en Vlaardingen,
maar dan was alles anders.
Het was een groot dorp aan zee in ieder geval.
Ik was samen met een vriend.
We gingen allerlei winkels langs,
ook een hele grote tweedehandswinkel.
We moesten wel even zoeken.
Er stonden daar ook slagbomen.
Het was niet makkelijk om de winkel te vinden, en al helemaal niet om de winkel binnen te komen.
Alles was ingewikkeld hier.
Er waren grote plakkaten op de muren aan de buitenkant met de gezichten van de werkers erop.
Eentje leek op iemand die ik kende.
Toeval, toeval.

We fietsten toen verder het dorp in. Er was een lang fietspad door de natuur.
Veel bomen. Prachtige omgeving, en het was zo’n mooi weer.
Hij zei ineens dat hij zijn portemonee had vergeten.
Dat zei hij ook al toen we uit een eerdere winkel gingen.
Telkens vond hij zijn portemonee.

Dit keer ook.
Hij bleek het toch bij zich te hebben gehad.
In ieder geval was hij gestopt, en ik moest verder.
Ik moest naar een afspraak die ik had met een organisatie.
Hij had een andere afspraak. Hij had nog wat meer tijd dan ik, dus hij deed het rustig aan.

Ik kwam toen in het diepere deel van Nonnendorp, waar ik de afspraak had.
Toen ik bij het gebouw was aangekomen waar ik moest zijn en aanbelde
deed een donkere vrouw open.
Ik was hier al eens eerder geweest, en toen deed ook een donkere vrouw open.
Had ik jou de vorige keer ook niet gezien ?
Nee, zei ze, dat kan iemand anders geweest zijn.
Er werkte ook een andere donkere vrouw.
Er was een klein blank kind bij haar.

Ze gaf me wat folders en sprak over de organisatie.
Een warm gevoel gleed over me heen.
Ik werd toen helemaal warm wakker.
Het was een droom. Maar ik had het gevoel dat ik nog steeds droomde.

Het Dubbele IJzer

Ik had hem al een tijdje niet gezien, maar kwam hem weer tegen ergens achter de bosjes op een pad bij een flat. Er was ook een veldje. De natuur was hier prachtig. Hij scheen in de hoge flat te wonen. Hij had het over Hanja Veertje, waaronder hij opgroeide. Ze liet hem vijf dagen op één dag werken. Vijf dagen op één dag. Dat valt toch niet uit te leggen ? Het was zwaar werk. Ik vroeg hem wie ze was. Ze was ook genaamd het dubbele ijzer. Ik besloot met hem mee te gaan de flat in.

We gingen de lift in. ‘Wie is ze ?’ vroeg ik weer. ‘Zijn we in gevaar ?’

‘Welnee,’ zei hij. ‘Ze is dood.’

We kwamen aan bij zijn kamer. Hij woonde op de derde etage. Er lag daar een pop. Er lagen ook wat boeken. En andere spullen.
Verder was het er tamelijk leeg.
Er stond een bed en een stoel.

‘Wat doe je hier ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Ik moest werken voor Hanja Veertje,’ zei hij weer.
‘Vijf dagen op één dag.’

Hij bleef zichzelf maar herhalen.
Ze was het dubbele ijzer.

Ik zei : ‘Maar ik heb goed nieuws.’

Daarna zei ik nog een keer dat ik goed nieuws had.

‘Ik heb je gevonden,’ zei ik.

‘Zeker, goed nieuws,’ zei hij.

Hij was getraumatiseerd. Hij durfde nog steeds niet veel te zeggen. Hij bleef zichzelf maar herhalen.

‘Voel je je niet veilig, jongen ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Nu wel, nu wel,’ zei hij. ‘Het heeft alleen tijd nodig. De machine moet op start komen. Het is hard werk. Even pufte hij, en zuchtte hij.

‘Zeg het,’ zei ik. ‘Wie is ze, of wie was ze ?’

Ik keek uit het raam en zag geesten in de lucht. Het waren hele grote geesten.

‘Ik kan het niet,’ zei hij.

‘Probeer het,’ zei ik.

‘Okay,’ zei hij, en haalde diep adem.

‘Zij was mijn moeder,’ zei hij.

‘Oh,’ zei ik. ‘Maar ik ... wist ...’

Toen werd ik wakker. Ik keek op het klokje. Het was al bijna tijd om op te staan. Ik vroeg me af waarom ik zo vreemd had gedroomd. Een mens kan vreemd dromen. Ik dacht na over Hanja Veertje. Het dubbele ijzer. Ik kwam zelf ook uit een tijdperk van dubbel ijzer. Het was hard werk, maar voor een goed doel.

‘Hanja Veertje,’ dacht ik weer. ‘En die geesten in de lucht als wolken, grote geesten. Waar waren ze mee bezig ?’ Ik viel toen weer in slaap en droomde weer over hem, een vroegere schoolvriend. Het was zo lang geleden. Hij ging toen ergens anders studeren. Ik kwam hem nog eens tegen in de trein. Ik keek hem aan. ‘Hanja Veertje,’ zei ik. ‘Dus dat was je moeder ?’

Hij knikte. Ik ging op de stoel zitten, en hij ging op het bed zitten. ‘Voel je je nu beter ?’ vroeg ik.

Hij knikte. ‘Ja, dat wel, maar ik moet nog op start komen. Het ging diep.’

‘Wat heeft ze gedaan ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Dat wil je niet weten,’ zei hij.

‘Ik ben blij dat ik bij je ben,’ zei ik, ‘dat ik je heb gevonden. Het is nu achter de rug.’

‘Ik heb nog wel innerlijke strijd,’ zei hij.

‘Dat is normaal,’ zei ik.

‘Al die injecties, naalden, ik weet niet wat ze allemaal in me gespoten heeft,’ zei hij.

‘Vreemd,’ zei ik.

Ik keek naar buiten naar de bomen. ‘We gaan jouw leven geheel weer opnieuw opbouwen,’ zei ik.

‘Dank je wel,’ zei hij.

‘Ik moet naar buiten,’ zei ik toen. Ik ben toen met de lift naar beneden gegaan, en rende de flat uit, het veldje op, naar de bomen. Ik wilde het bos in. Ik moest het bos in. Hij rende achter me aan.

‘Ik ga met je mee,’ zei hij. Ik glimlachte. Toen merkte ik dat ik opsteeg. Ik kon vliegen, en hij kon het ook. En we vlogen naar

de grote geesten in de lucht. Het waren wolken. Het was nieuw leven. Ze waren heel bedrijvig. Ze bouwden iets nieuws. Het was als vijf dagen op een dag. Maar voor een goed doel. Het was als dubbel ijzer. Als een machine. Het was een industrie. Het waren boeken. Het was een literaire industrie, en hier konden we wonen, zo tussen de woorden, zo tussen de regels en de zinnen in. We gingen van bladzijde tot bladzijde. ‘Ja, dit is goed,’ zei hij.

‘Hanja Veertje,’ zei ik weer. ‘Wat was het verder voor vrouw ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Chagrijnig,’ zei hij. ‘Alles moest.’

Maar dit moest ook. Er was geen stoppen meer aan. We hoorden de machines.

Einde

Lavendel

Ik stond op station Harderwijk.
Ik keek naar het plantsoen achter het station.
De urinaire machines checkten het station.
Ik raakte met ze in gesprek.
Ik zei dat ik mijn vrouw kwijt was geraakt.
Want ze vroegen telkens : ‘Waar is je vrouw.’
Nee, ze was verdwaald. Of misschien was ik verdwaald.
In ieder geval was ik haar kwijt.
Ik kwam met lege handen.
Daar had ik het over met de urinaire machines.
Ik kende ze nog wel van vroeger.
Ik zat daar op school.
Ik moest er ook weleens zijn voor zaken.

Ze vervoerden mensen, door de hele stad.
Ook verder.
Ze waren bezig mijn wapenrusting bij te werken,
mijn uitrusting. Ze werkten aan mijn helm en schild.
Ik zag haar toen ineens in het plantsoen.
Het was een paradijs.
Ze had een hele mooie zachte jurk aan en een zachte hoed op,
zacht wit en creme kleuren.
Ik probeerde naar haar toe te gaan, maar er zat glas tussen.

Moet ik net weer hebben, dacht ik bij mezelf.
Alles gaat hier verkeerd. Altijd.

Ik miste haar, maar er was teveel tijd overheen gegaan.
Het was al zo lang geleden dat ik haar verloor.
Ze begon weg te vagen.

Ik riep : ‘Hey, wacht !’
Mensen begonnen me vreemd aan te kijken.
Sommigen staken hun tong uit.
Anderen gniffelden, of groetten me.

Ik was daar gewoon tegen het glas aan het lopen,
telkens weer. Ze was steeds meer in de verte.
‘Ken je me dan niet meer ?’ riep ik.

Toen werd ik wakker.
Ik had haar dagboek en boeken nog steeds,
om me heen, en die ben ik toen maar gaan lezen.

Lavendel II

Het was een lange, moeizame dag zonder Lavendel.
Aan het einde van de dag viel ik in slaap en droomde ik weer
over haar.
Nu waren we bij elkaar, en ze gaf me een kus.
We lagen in bed, twee bedden tegen elkaar geschoven,
en we zouden dezelfde boeken om en om lezen.
Ze zei dat ik haar kon vinden in de boeken.

Hoe meer ik de boeken las, hoe meer ik erachter kwam dat
Lavendel mijn vrouw niet was.
Ik moest toen van haar vluchten, zoals zij van mij vluchtte.
Ik kon alleen van haar vluchten in de boeken.

De Kettingstenen

Met zoveel kinderen stonden we op het strand aan de woeste zee.
Er was geen doorkomen aan. Wat een drukte was het hier.
De zee zouden we al helemaal niet overkunnen.
De zee was veel te woest en wild.
Sommigen hadden het weleens geprobeerd,
al dan niet met een boot, maar ze werden verscheurd en verslonden door de golven.

Nee, we moesten op de arenden wachten.
Die zouden komen en ons tot het beloofde land brengen.
Het was hier geen leven.

En op een dag kwamen de arenden.
Ze waren zo groot.
Ze zouden wel vele kinderen kunnen dragen,
maar ze wilden niemand meenemen.

We zouden eerst naar hun verhalen moeten luisteren,
en moeten werken, om zo kettingstenen te verdienen,
waarvan we kettingen moesten maken, en alleen dan
zouden ze ons meenemen.

Telkens als we naar een verhaaltje van hen hadden geluisterd,
wierpen ze ons een steentje toe. Ook als we iets goeds hadden
gedaan, goed hadden gewerkt, dan werd ons een steentje

toegeworpen. Zo konden we onze ketting verdienen.

Steentje voor steentje waren de kinderen bezig hun kettingen te rijgen, opdat de arenden hen uiteindelijk zouden meenemen naar het beloofde land.

Maar het viel niet mee. De steentjes waren broos, en vielen soms al snel uit elkaar, en vaak zaten er ook geen gaatjes in.

Jullie moeten de verhalen bestuderen, zeiden de arenden. Zodra jullie de verhalen goed kennen, weten wat het betekent, wat geleerd hebben van de boodschap, krijg je steentjes voor je ketting.

Kinderen begonnen de verhalen van de arenden te graveren in de grotten, en begonnen zo de verhalen te overdenken. Dat viel niet mee. Kinderen hadden verschillende interpretaties van de verhalen, en vielen elkaar soms aan. Er begonnen groepen te ontstaan onder de kinderen, die vaak niets van elkaar wilden weten, of soms zelfs oorlog tegen elkaar voerden.

De arenden waren hier erg boos over, en roofden daarom vaak de kettingen van de kinderen weer terug. Zo konden ze helemaal overnieuw beginnen.

Toch kregen ik en wat andere kinderen het voor elkaar om een gehele ketting compleet te krijgen. Toen werden we

meegenomen met de arenden.

Maar toen we in het beloofde land waren aangekomen stond het vol met molens die telkens weer het verleden omhoog brachten. ‘Maar dit is helemaal niet het beloofde land,’ zeiden sommige kinderen.

Maar de arenden zeiden : ‘het beloofde land zou het beloofde land niet zijn als we anderen die nog in het verleden leven niet zouden helpen. Immers, wij zijn ook naar jullie toegekomen
om jullie te helpen. Daartoe moesten wij ook terug naar het verleden. Stel je voor als wij dat niet gedaan hadden, dan waren jullie nog steeds aan de andere kant van de woeste zee.’

Het verleden moest dus telkens weer terugkomen, opdat het uitgewerkt zou worden, tot hogere vormen gebracht zou worden, want velen zaten nog vast in het verleden. En daartoe waren de molens. Het was een grote plaag voor de kinderen, maar ze wisten dat het nodig was. Ze begrepen zo de daadwerkelijke betekenis van het beloofde land.

Telkens weer, ik word er gek van, maalt het door mijn hoofd, dat verschrikkelijke verleden, als een nachtmerrie, als een industrie, telkens weer, op en neer, in een cyclus, waarin het zich telkens afwisselt. Maar ik weet waarvoor het nodig is. Ik weet dat het nodig is, anders zou ik nooit in het beloofde

land kunnen leven. Anders zou het beloofde land nooit kunnen bestaan.

En zo houd ik vast aan de arenden die mij hebben gegrepen en meegenomen, en aan de verhalen die zij mij vertellen, en rijg ik mijn kettingen om verder en verder te gaan.
En zo maak ik mijn stenen, opdat ik ze ook aan anderen kan geven. Ik geef nooit op, want we kunnen altijd verder en dieper, en het kan altijd beter. We komen er wel. De arenden
zelf zijn hier immers ook doorheen gegaan.

En zo leren we zelf vliegen, leren we zelf arenden te zijn, leren we zelf de verhalen te vertellen, opdat we anderen ook naar het beloofde land kunnen brengen. En dan leren we hen over het belang van de molens, waarom het verleden telkens moet terugkomen. We leren hen ook hoe daar mee om te gaan.

Einde

De schaakstukken van Mei

Ik zat een beetje in mezelf te denken :
meisjes - mei chess, girls - curls.
Het ging niet goed met mij.
Ik zag de schaakstukken in Ermelo,
en het inspireerde mij - toch.
Het waren de schaakstukken van Mei.

Ik zat een beetje in mezelf te denken,
woorden aan elkaar te puzzelen.
Ze bleven maar staan daar,
die schaakstukken,
maar ze waren klaar om te spelen.

Fille - file. Het draaide maar,
draaide weg en weer terug,
en allemaal files voor de vakantie.
En ik met mijn boeken.
Vele boeken laten een veel groter verhaal zien.
En dan wordt het duidelijk wat de vrouw is.
Zij is de context.

Ik reed op de schaakstukken van Mei tot een nieuwe wereld.
Daar was het om te doen.
Ik zag de grote schilderijen van de nieuwe bijbel.
Die waren tot leven aan het komen.
Al het oude moest weg.

En ik zag dat de schaakstukken van Mei mijn eigen
schaakstukken waren.
Ze waren van mij.
Ik zag de straten van Ermelo vol vraatzucht.
De voertuigen waren hoog, en ze zaten hoog.
Op wat voor beesten reden zij ?
Het waren de andere schaakstukken van Mei,
de andere legers.
Twee legers tegen elkaar.

Ik was van de soberheid.
Ik heb het niet zo op pausen,
maar soms zijn pauzes nodig.

Ik sta op het grasveld,
als een schaakstuk.
Het is een grote strijd om het hart van Ermelo.

Hier ben ik geboren, hier ben ik getogen.
Hier stond ik tegenover de pausen.
Genoeg geheimzinnige schilderijen om me in te verdiepen.
Schilderijen van de kerkgeschiedenis.

Met trage passen ga ik voort.
What’s up with that ?
Om me heen vliegen mensen in de fik omdat ze te snel gaan.
It’s boiling over.

Race auto’s snellen in de rivieren.
Ze storten er gewoon in, de één na de ander.
De overkant halen ze nooit.
Het zijn geen boten.

Ik wacht liever totdat ik een boot ben,
totdat ik de golven ken.

De vlucht

Ik was ergens afgedwaald in het bos,
en onderging een reeks dromen, zeg maar nachtmerries.
Toen ik het pad weer vond en tot mijn zinnen kwam,
ging ik snel terug naar huis, naar haar.
Ze wachtte me al op in haar prachtige witte jurk.
‘Het duurde lang,’ zei ik. ‘Ik was in gevecht met je schaduw in het bos.’

Ze glimlachte en nam me in haar armen.
‘Ik was zo afgedwaald,’ stamelde ik.
‘Zo, zo afgedwaald.’
‘Het is okay,’ zei ze.
‘Ik ben blij dat je weer terug bent.’

Ik keek haar aan.
‘Het duurde zo lang, alsof het nooit zou eindigen,’ stamelde ik.
Ik was nog steeds in een shock.
Maar ik zag haar wegvagen.
Ik was nog steeds in het bos.
Ik was nog steeds niet thuis.

Ik gromde.
Iets speelde met me.
Wat had ik genomen ?
Wat was er met me gebeurd in dit prachtige woud ?
Het had zo mooi kunnen zijn, maar ...

Het is niet goed zoveel moois te hebben en zoveel geluk.
Het romantische is niet goed, maar verlammend.
Nee, ik wil weg van die visioenen.
En ik rende.

Zelfs haar schaduw achtervolgde me niet.
Ze was me liever kwijt dan rijk.
Ze had haar eigen leven.
Daar kon ik niet bij.
Daar wilde ik niet bij.

Ik wilde weer dwalen in het bos, ergens anders komen.
Het was me allemaal teveel geworden.
Ik kon het allemaal niet meer aan.
Daarom was ik naar het bos gevlucht,
en daarom liet ik mezelf afdwalen.

Ik was op de vlucht, zoals zij op de vlucht was.
We hadden slechts een glimp van elkaar opgevangen,
en het was goed zo.
Teveel zou ons vernietigen.
We moesten onze dromen verdiepen tot betere werelden.

De Boekenslagerij

Dokter, dokter, kom niet te dichtbij, want dan zul je ziek worden zoals ik ben, en het verschil tussen dokter en patient zal er niet meer zijn. Tussen spoken en mensen is de wereld van het denken, de wereld tussen slapen en waken, tussen het nu en de geschiedenis, daar waar de boekenslager ijverig en onverbiddelijk slacht.

Hoofdstuk 1.

Jan van Aalst was slager. Het was zijn beroep, en hij hield van zijn beroep. Altijd had hij zijn gasten wel een stukje vlees aan te bieden. 'Het leven is maar saai zonder een stukje vlees,' zei hij altijd. Hij zei het vaak, en een keer toen hij dat aan een jong meisje zei die hij kende zei ze : 'Daarom.' Ja, de slager was geliefd en gekend in het hele dorp. En hij kende ook iedereen. Hij had altijd wel een vriendelijk woord op zak voor elke voorbijganger. En natuurlijk als de gelegenheid zich aanbood, dan kon hij het niet laten om even een positief geluid te maken voor de vlees industrie, om de mensen er aan te herinneren dat dat toch echt bij het leven hoorde, en dat daar gretig gebruik van gemaakt diende te worden. Toen een vader van een familie in het dorp zich eens per ongeluk door het hoofd had geschoten tijdens de oefening met de windbuks en dit niet overleefde

kwam hij met een hele schaal vol vlees naar de familie toe om hen te troosten en hen een hart onder de riem te steken. De slager was geliefd, en goed ook. Op handen werd hij gedragen. 'Zo'n man moeten ze koning maken,' werd er vaak gezegd. Hijzelf was daar altijd heel bescheiden over. Hij deed het gewoon om de mens deelzaam te maken in het genieten van een stukje vlees. Dat deed het leven veel goeds volgens hem. Ze konden er ook de klapmolen mee op, zei hij altijd. Maar niemand wist goed wat hij daar nu mee bedoelde. Hij kon soms dingen zeggen waardoor mensen niet meer wisten hoe ze het hadden. Hij had ook een vreemd accent. Hij was niet altijd even goed verstaanbaar.

Hij was een slager in hart en nieren, een echte vakman werd hij genoemd. Maar 's nachts was zijn leven een hel. Hij had altijd dromen over de draaiende slachtmachines, en zag het ook altijd voor zich als hij probeerde te slapen. En hij had nachtmerries, verschrikkelijke nachtmerries. Het nachtleven begon hem steeds meer te beheersen, ook overdag, totdat hij zijn werk niet meer kon doen en naar een rustoord moest gaan. Er kwam wel een nieuwe slager voor het dorp, maar de mensen misten hem verschrikkelijk. Hij werd bedolven met kaarten. De nieuwe slager was lang niet zo vriendelijk als hem, en werd vaak zelfs bot genoemd. 'De dodenrechter' noemden ze hem weleens. Nee, ze wilden dat Jan van Aalst maar weer zo snel mogelijk zou terugkeren. Maar ja, het ging steeds slechter met hem daar in het rustoord. Hij werd 's nachts verschrikkelijk geplaagd door die dromen en nachtmerries. Altijd moest hij maar weer

hetzelfde voor zich zien, de draaiende slachtmachines. Zelfs overdag had hij geen rust.

'Oh, het is verschrikkelijk,' klaagde hij. 'Zou ik hier ooit weer overheen komen ?'

Zijn vrouw was erg bezorgd om hem, maar ja, wat kon ze doen ? Een indiaans gezin in de buurt noemde het de wraak van de dieren. Hij had ze geslacht en nu kwamen ze naar hem terug om zijn ziel te teisteren. Zodra dat werd opgebracht werd er vrolijk overheen gekletst. Nee, ze konden de slager niet kapot maken. De slager zou wel weer terugkomen. Daar hadden de mensen van het dorp het volste vertrouwen in. 'Eens een slager, altijd een slager,' zeiden ze. Maar hij kwam niet meer terug. Hij moest zelfs overgeplaatst worden naar een zwaarder rustoord waar ze hem beter zouden proberen te helpen, maar daar verslechterde hij nog meer.

Jan van Aalst was nu nog slechts een kasplantje. Hij had het er ook over dat hij nu zelf naar de slager moest. Hij kon nauwelijks nog praten. Op een dag werd hij bezocht door een dominee, maar die kon eigenlijk geen woord uit hem krijgen. De dominee zei wat troostende woorden op en bad toen. 'Ja, Jan,' zei de dominee. 'In diepe zonde heb je geleefd, jongen. Geen zorg voor de dieren, mensen hebzuchtig maken met al dat vlees, enzovoorts enzovoorts. Dat is ook geen leven, jongen. Het dier is onderdeel van jezelf. Je hebt het jezelf aangedaan. Maar bij God is vergeving als je een slager van slagers wordt.

Predik het woord.' Toen ging de dominee weg.

'Een slager van slagers ?' dacht Jan bij zichzelf. 'Zou dit mijn laatste kans zijn ?'

Jan kreeg een nieuw medicijn, en kreeg toen veel van zijn bewustzijn en vermogens terug. Het was wonderlijk hoe snel hij er op reageerde en hoe snel hij genas. Hij was de woorden van de dominee grotendeels vergeten, maar hij herinnerde nog wel de woorden 'een slager van slagers.' Hij vroeg zich af wat het betekende. Niet lang daarna mocht Jan weer naar huis. Hij wilde geen vlees meer eten. Hij besloot de dominee te bellen om te vragen waar het ook al weer over ging. 'Slager van slagers, dominee ? Wat bedoelt u daarmee ?' vroeg hij.

'Kom maar langs,' zei de dominee, en gooide de hoorn op de haak. Binnen drie minuten was Jan bij het huis van de dominee en drukte op de bel. De vrouw van de dominee deed open. 'Hij zit op de bank in de woonkamer,' zei de vrouw. Jan liep naar binnen en ging door de gang de woonkamer binnen. Er stond daar ook een oude piano. 'Oh, u bent ook nog muzikaal, dominee ?' vroeg Jan.

'Nee, dat doet mijn vrouw,' zei de dominee. 'Ze is een rijder.'

'Oh, ze rijdt de piano ?' vroeg Jan lachend.

'Ja, omdat ze niet op dieren rijdt,' zei de dominee. 'Ze houdt van

dieren.'

'Ja, dat wist ik,' zei Jan. 'Jullie waren altijd de enigen in het dorp die geen vlees bij mij kochten, en die indiaanse familie.'

'Zo, kom er eens mee voor de dag, Jan,' zei de dominee. 'Wat wil je weten ?'

'Nou, ik zou graag willen weten wat u bedoelt met 'slager van slagers,' zei Jan.

'Ga eens zitten, Jan,' zei de dominee. Ook Jan ging zitten, tegenover de dominee op de bank aan de andere kant van de tafel.

'De slager van slagers is de koning,' zei de dominee, 'de koning van de slagers. De slagers moeten doen wat de koning zegt, anders krijgen ze straf en komen ze de gevangenis in.'

'Interessant,' zei Jan, 'maar wat slachten ze precies ?'

'Nou, geen dieren,' zei de dominee.

'Dat begrijp ik,' zei Jan. 'Nu ik een tweede kans heb gekregen raak ik geen vlees meer aan.'

'Precies,' zei de dominee.

'Wat is het ?' vroeg Jan.

'Had je mijn woorden vergeten die ik erna zei ?' vroeg de dominee. 'Ik zei : predik het woord. Het woord is het beste slachtmes.'

'Oh, dus ik moet dominee worden zoals u ?' vroeg Jan.

'Nee,' zei de dominee.

Hoofdstuk 2.

Toen Jan weer thuis was lachte hij naar zijn vrouw. 'Die dominee is ook een halve gek,' zei hij. 'Wat een halve gare, zeg. Wilde dat ik een slager van slagers zou worden, en toen kreeg ik een heel ingewikkeld verhaal te horen. Ik ben maar weggegaan.'

Jan liep naar de koelkast en haalde er een plak ham uit en begon het op te eten. Zijn vrouw was erg blij dat hij weer vlees at. 'De dominee kan het ook mishebben,' zei zijn vrouw.

'Ja, het is een grote ... Ik mag het woord niet zeggen,' zei Jan.
'Ga je weer slager worden ?' vroeg zijn vrouw.

'Ja, ik ben weer helemaal terug,' zei Jan. 'Het is mijn roeping, en ik laat me door geen dominee of glazenwasser of wat dan ook tegenhouden.'

Zijn vrouw glimlachte. 'Ja, want ik en velen met mij missen je stukjes vlees. Jij was toch wel de beste. Jij bent mijn slager van slagers.'

'Zo is het,' sprak Jan.

De vervangende slager ging tot grote vreugde van het dorp weer weg, en Jan had zijn slagerij weer terug en was enthousiaster dan ooit. Als hij de dominee op straat tegenkwam dan glimlachte de dominee altijd, maar zei verder niets. 'Nog een stukje vlees, dominee ?' vroeg Jan dan, maar de dominee antwoordde niet, en als Jan de vrouw van de dominee tegenkwam dan was het eigenlijk hetzelfde verhaal. Als hij de indiaanse familie tegenkwam dan waren ze fel. Ze waarschuwden hem voor komend onheil. Jan ging nog wel naar de kerk. De dominee had het verder nooit over vlees in de preken.

Op een avond kwam Jan thuis van zijn werk. Hij had overwerk moeten doen, en zijn vrouw was aan het zingen. 'Moet dat nu ?'

vroeg Jan.

'Ja, dat moet,' zei zijn vrouw vriendelijk. 'Ik moet oefenen voor het kerstfeest.'

'Ah, dan begrijp ik het,' zei Jan, die naar de koelkast ging voor een schaaltje met gesneden worst. Hij gaf ook een stukje worst aan zijn vrouw. 'Lekker, Jan,' zei zijn vrouw.

'Het is voor het goede doel,' zei Jan.

'Wat bedoel je, Jan ?' vroeg zijn vrouw.

'Nou, de opbrengst gaat naar onze slagerij,' glimlachte Jan.

'Ah, zo,' glimlachte zijn vrouw. Toen pakten ze er een glaasje wijn bij. 'Glaasje wijn voor de gezondheid,' zei Jan.

'Zo is het, Jan,' zei zijn vrouw. Samen dronken ze het snel leeg. Toen werd er meer vlees bijgehaald. 'Heerlijk, Jan,' zei zijn vrouw. 'Getrouwd te zijn met een slager als jij is het beste leven, en zelfs met een slager van slagers.'

Jan glimlachte. 'Ik mag niet klagen,' zei hij. 'Je bent een echte slagersvrouw, en slagersdochter.' Haar vader was ook slager. In een ander dorp.

'Ja, Jan,' zei zijn vrouw. 'Ik herinner me nog altijd hoe goed het

was in de slagerij van mijn vader te werken. Het was er altijd zo vrolijk. Iedereen was altijd zo vriendelijk. We hadden een geweldige, spontane klantenkring, en zelfs een fanclub.'

'Ah,' lachte Jan. 'Dat moet hier nog gebeuren.'

'Ze zijn al allemaal fan van je Jan,' lachte zijn vrouw. 'Iedereen loopt met je weg, en ze dragen je op handen. Dozen kaarten heb je gekregen toen je ziek was. Zelfs liefdesbrieven. Ze zijn allemaal dol op je.'

'Behalve de dominee en zijn vrouw,' zei Jan met een gemaakt sip gezicht om de spot met ze te drijven.

'Ah, die tellen niet mee,' zei Jan's vrouw. 'Die doen mee voor spek en bonen.'

'Nee, die eten geen spek,' zei Jan.

'Voor bonen dan,' glimlachte zijn vrouw spottend.

'En die indiaanse familie ook,' zei Jan.

'Ja,' zei zijn vrouw met een 'ja' die wel tien seconden duurde.

'Dus jij weet het ook ?' zei Jan.

'Wie niet ?' vroeg zijn vrouw. 'Ze zijn vreemd. Hebben altijd

alles op anderen aan te merken. Nooit op henzelf. Vreemde familie. Ik kan er geen hoogte van krijgen. Zijn niet warm te krijgen voor een stukje vlees. Allemaal onbegonnen werk. Ondankbare mensen.'

'Zuur, saai,' zei Jan.

'Precies,' zei zijn vrouw.

'Ze waarschuwen ook altijd voor kanker en hartziektes,' zei Jan.

'Precies,' zei zijn vrouw. 'We zijn kerngezond.'

'Nog wel,' zei Jan.

'Nog wel ?' vroeg zijn vrouw. En toen sneed ze snel een ander onderwerp aan. Jan zei soms dingen die ze niet begreep. Of het was zijn accent, maar dan had ze het snel maar over iets anders. Soms dacht ze dat hij nog niet helemaal hersteld was, alsof er toch nog dingen veranderd waren. Het was niet hetzelfde.

Jan begon zijn vrouw steeds meer vlees te voeren, en ze werd ook steeds dikker. Maar Jan hield wel van dikke vrouwen. Dikke vrouwen waren volgens hem een goede reclame maker voor zijn bedrijf. Zij was daarom in zijn ogen een perfect boegbeeld voor de slagerij.

Op een dag kwam de dominee in zijn zaak om vegetarisch

vlees te kopen.
'Dat hebben we niet, dominee,' zei Jan. 'Maar ik heb nog wel een vraag,' zei Jan.

'Zeg het eens,' zei de dominee.

'Nou, mijn vraag is eigenlijk,' zei Jan, 'of een man ook meerdere vrouwen mag hebben. Wat extra dikke vrouwen zou mijn bedrijf goed doen.'

'Je gaat je gang maar,' zei de dominee. 'In de bijbel hadden ze ook allemaal meerdere vrouwen, dus waarom niet ?' Toen liep de dominee boos en stampvoetend de zaak uit.

'Hmm,' zei Jan. 'Ik weet niet of hij het nou meende, of dat hij sarcastisch was, of bedriegelijk, maar ik houd hem op zijn woord.'

De slager was erg geliefd, ook onder de vrouwen, omdat hij zo ontzettend vriendelijk was. Met zijn vleiende woorden deed hij hun harten altijd smelten, en zo verkoos hij zichzelf meerdere vrouwen, die aan zijn voeten lagen. Hij kon ze zo van de grond oprapen. Ze lagen daar helemaal in katzwijm bij wijze van spreken. Ze vonden hem de alleraardigste, en hij maakte het lekkerste vlees wat bestond in hun ogen. Jan was als God voor hen. Hij had nu vier dikke vrouwen die goed reclame maakten voor zijn bedrijf met hun dikke, vette lichamen. Jan kon ze wel herbergen in zijn kast van een huis. Zo had hij altijd assistentes

bij de hand. Hij wilde dan ook dat ze in zijn bedrijf zouden werken, als assistente, slagershulp, of gewoon voor de al dan niet verbale evangelisatie op straat. Ja, vlees moest gepredikt worden. Het woord moest gepredikt worden. Hij was de slager van slagers, de koning der koningen.

Zo kreeg hij meer en meer vrouwen die met hun dikke konten de straat opgingen om de goede boodschap te brengen. De dominee glimlachte altijd breed als hij ze tegenkwam, maar zei niets, en hetzelfde gold voor zijn vrouw. De indiaanse familie reageerde telkens fel, onheil voorspellende. Ze gingen ook weleens de slagerij binnen om iedereen die daar werkte uit te foeteren, maar op een dag vertrok de indiaanse familie voorgoed uit het dorp. Het hele dorp was hierover opgelucht, en er werd een groot feest gehouden, en er werd natuurlijk veel vlees gegeten. Zelfs de dominee kwam nog even op het feest, maar at geen vlees. Hij zou wat waarschuwende woorden hebben gezegd volgens sommigen, maar ze wisten niet meer wat het was. Ze waren teveel door het dolle heen, of dronken. Ze waren volgens hen van een grote plaag verlost nu de indiaanse familie was verhuisd.

Jan vierde het ook in zijn slagerij. Een groot tegenstander was gevallen. En dat lieten ze weten ook. Er hingen slingers door de gehele slagerij. En de slingers gingen ook niet meer weg. Het moest voor eeuwig gevierd worden. Nu de dominee nog, en zijn vrouw, maar ja, die hadden ze ook nodig. Hij verzorgde altijd hun kerkdiensten, waar ze veel aan hadden, en wat hen

op de been hield.

In de preken had de dominee het nog steeds nooit over vlees. Maar toch begonnen zijn preken steeds meer en meer een waarschuwend karakter te krijgen. Hij noemde geen namen, maar soms wisten ze wel over wie hij het had. Jan begon zich steeds ongemakkelijker te voelen. Maar zijn dikke vrouwen vrolijkten hem altijd op, en moedigden hem aan. Ze vroegen ook aan de dominee of zij eens mochten prediken, en de dominee had gezegd : 'Je gaat je gang maar.' Zij brachten dan het evangelie van vlees.

Hoofdstuk 3.

De vrouwen hadden het kerkgebouw overgenomen. De dominee had hen zijn zegen gegeven, maar zij wisten niet of het nu oprecht was, zakelijk, sarcastisch of een valstrik. In ieder geval maakten ze er gretig gebruik van. De dikke vrouwen wisselden elkaar af om het evangelie van vlees te prediken, en de dominee luisterde, vaak zijn hoofd schuddende.

Jan was helemaal door het dolle heen. Dit was wat hij wilde. Nu werd het woord gepredikt, en was hij de slager der slagers, de koning der koningen. Dit was allemaal goed voor zijn bedrijf, voor het goede doel, zoals hij altijd zei. De vrouwen begonnen steeds ruiger en wilder te prediken. Hun preken kregen ook steeds meer een waarschuwend karakter. Het vlees niet te eren was een ernstig misdrijf. Het vlees moest gegeten worden.

Op een dag verhuisde ook de dominee en vertrok met zijn vrouw uit het dorp. Weer was er een groot feest in het dorp en in de slagerij. De laatste grote tegenstander was nu gevallen. Niets kon hen nog stoppen. Er werd een standbeeld van de slager der slagers gemaakt voor in het dorp. Het hele dorp at vlees, en het hele dorp werd vlees, want de slager der slagers was gekomen.

Het werd gepredikt in de kerk, en niemand had het door. Ze waren allemaal dronken. Vlees en wijn de hele dag door. Ze zouden vlees eten totdat het hun neus zou uitkomen. Het was allang geen echt vlees meer, maar vegetarisch vlees wat precies leek op echt vlees, en ook precies so smaakte. Zo had Jan dat met de dominee afgesproken. Hij was een spion. Ook de indiaanse familie zat in het complot.

Jan meldde zich bij de dominee.
'Is het werk gedaan, Jan ?' vroeg de dominee.
'Ja, dominee,' zei Jan.

'Mooi,' zei de dominee. 'Kom dan nu naar ons nieuwe dorp, dan doen we daar precies hetzelfde.'

Ook de wijn had geen echte alcohol. Het was nep-alcohol, een stof die de hersenen opdroeg de persoon naar een rustoord te laten gaan na een overdosis, opdat de mens nooit geen vlees meer zou aanraken. Zo had de dominee dat ook ooit eens bij Jan gedaan. Voordat hij naar het rustoord moest had hij een wijntje gedronken bij de dominee met dat vreemde spul erin, de nep-alcohol.

In ieder geval lag het rustoord snel helemaal vol met mensen die volkomen waren doorgedraaid, zoals Jan eens was, klaargemaakt om ingewijd te worden in het complot. Zo ging het complot van dorp tot dorp.

De dominee was van de geheime politie, van de afdeling natuurbehoud, en was speciaal door de nieuwe regering naar het gebied van Jan uitgezonden. De nieuwe regering wilde volkomen afrekenen met het vlees eten, maar ze wilden dit subtiel doen, anders zou het uit kunnen lopen op burgeroorlogen of staatsgrepen.

Ook in andere landen was dit proces begonnen, en na een tijdje waren er zo al heel wat 'slagers van slagers' ontstaan, waarvan Jan dus één was. Op een dag kregen ze een uitnodiging om allemaal bij elkaar te komen in een groot gebouw. Jan zou er met de dominee naartoe gaan, met de trein. Het was helemaal

aan de andere kant van het land. Er zouden wel honderden 'slagers der slagers' komen, die allemaal ingewijd waren in het complot. Jan was erg benieuwd. Ze ontmoetten elkaar in een groot theater, en Jan ging ergens achterin zitten met de dominee op een rood fluwelen stoel. Het leek wel op een bioscoop. De spreker was een andere dominee, die ook van de geheime politie was, en hetzelfde werk deed als de dominee van Jan. Hij hield een lange toespraak.

Aan het einde van de toespraak bood hij een weg tot mogelijke promotie aan voor de slagers der slagers, namelijk de robot-slager, wat een regerings-slager was, en wat ook toegang zou geven tot de nieuwe regering.

Jan was daar wel in geinteresseerd, en ook de dominee moedigde hem daarin aan. 'Dat zou wel wat voor jou wezen,' fluisterde de dominee. De spreker zei dat het geheim om ingewijd te worden als robot-slager een klein donkerrood besje was van de Afrikaanse slagersboom. Het zou iets met de hersenen doen waardoor de ingewijde klaar was voor de opdracht. Als voorwaarde stelde de spreker dat de slager der slagers ten minste getrouwd moest zijn met dertig dikke vrouwen om voor deze inwijding in aanmerking te komen, want zowel dikke vrouwen als het getal dertig waren een symbool voor vruchtbaarheid. Toevallig was Jan net gisteren met zijn dertigste dikke vrouw getrouwd, dus hij kwam ervoor in aanmerking, net als zo'n beetje de helft van de aanwezige slagers der slagers. Zij werden allemaal opgeroepen om naar

voren te komen om het besje te kunnen zien en eten. Wel werden ze van te voren even ondervraagd. Jan werd meegenomen naar een hokje achter het toneel, wat omgeven was door een rood fluwelen gordijn. Daar kreeg Jan een besje. 'Bent u nuchter ?' werd er gevraagd.

'Soms,' zei Jan.

'Nee, ik bedoel : Hebt u een nuchtere maag, of u nog niets gegeten hebt vandaag, of al wel ?' werd er gevraagd. Jan keek de vrouw aan die hem die vraag stelde, en zei toen na een halve minuut : 'Gaat u dat iets aan ?' Even keek de dominee die bij hem was verbaasd naar Jan. 'Werk nu even mee, Jan,' zei de dominee.

'Ja,' zei de vrouw, 'als u zo gaat doen, dan komt u er niet door. De besjes zijn nogal zuur, en zo op de lege maag kan dat hard aankomen.'

'Het gaat u niet aan,' zei Jan. 'Ik geef niet zomaar privé informatie aan vreemden.'

'Goed,' zei de vrouw. 'Dan gaat het niet door.' De vrouw wilde het besje uit zijn hand halen, maar Jan stopte het snel in zijn mond. Hij zei toen met volle mond : 'Ik kan wel wat hebben.' De vrouw drukte direct een alarm knopje in, en toen kwam er een soldaat. 'Hij wilde een vraag niet beantwoorden, en heeft toch het besje gegeten,' zei de vrouw toen.

'Komt u maar mee,' zei de soldaat tegen Jan.

'Wat een gedoe allemaal,' zei Jan, 'allemaal om een besje.'

'Het zijn de procedures,' zei de dominee. 'Het ambt van robot-slager is geen kleinigheid.'

Ze gingen door een lange gang met witte deuren aan weerszijden. Helemaal achteraan deed de soldaat de deur open. Het was de achterste deur waar de gang op uitliep. Er zat daar een dokter, die een militaire dokter scheen te zijn. 'Deze mijnheer wilde niet meewerken met de vragen,' zei de soldaat. De dokter zat achter een bureau, en Jan en de dominee gingen ergens zitten.

'Zo, zo,' zei de dokter, 'en wat is de naam ?'

'Jan van Aalst,' zei Jan.

'Beroep ?' vroeg de dokter. Jan keek hem even vreemd aan.

'Slager der slagers,' sprak Jan langzaam na een halve minuut.

'Juist ja,' zei de dokter. 'Ik kom zo bij u terug.' Toen ging hij met de soldaat de deur uit, die hij bij zijn arm had gegrepen. Na een paar minuten kwam hij weer terug met een stapel papieren, en begon er toen doorheen te bladeren.

'En u heeft dertig dikke vrouwen ?' zei de dokter toen terwijl hij opkeek.

'Juist,' zei Jan langzaam.

'En waarom wilde u niet meewerken met het vraaggesprek voor het innemen van het besje ?' vroeg de dokter, terwijl hij Jan strak aankeek.

'Dat gaat u niet veel aan,' zei Jan. 'Ik wil wel graag mijn eigen identiteit behouden, en mijn privé leven. Loop ik nu gevaar ? Ik kom in de nieuwe regering, maar hoe ? Is dat als een glazen huis, of is het meer geheim ?'

'U begrijpt er niets van,' zei de dokter langzaam, 'helemaal niets. En daar gaan we weer. Dit is al de zoveelste voor vandaag. U dient zelf een robot te worden, anders kunt u nooit een robot-slager worden en bent u te gevaarlijk om in de nieuwe regering te worden aangenomen. Als u zelfs al geen simpele vragen wil beantwoorden, dan is dat verdacht.'

Op dat moment begon het besje te werken. Jan voelde zich even duizelig en werd ineens heel gewillig. 'Juist ja,' zei Jan traag, en begon toen antwoord te geven op alle vragen. De dokter legde toen aan de dominee uit waar ze naartoe konden gaan. Jan werd toegelaten als robot-slager tot de nieuwe regering. Weer gingen ze met de trein.

Hoofdstuk 4.

Jan kreeg een speciale kamer in het gebouw van de nieuwe regering, zoals alle anderen die robot-slager waren geworden. Omdat de dominee zijn begeleider was en raadgever kreeg hij een kamer naast hem. Jan vroeg zich af wat zijn missie was nu. Hij kreeg allemaal papieren die hij moest doorlezen. Het ging over zogenaamde 'lastige steden', zogenaamde 'knopen' waar alles vast was gelopen, want daar werkten de slagers met reclame clowns. Er werd verder niet zoveel uitleg bij gegeven, maar er zou een poeder gebruikt moeten worden waardoor de clowns in bloemen zouden veranderen, en daarna steeds verder in het niets oplossen. 'De vage bloemen' werden ze genoemd, die steeds meer wegvaagden. De reclame clowns waren een soort van robotten die door slagerijen werden gebruikt in deze probleem-gebieden. Jan vroeg zich af wat dat voor poeder was. Er stond een map bijgetekend op één van de papieren waarin werd uitgelegd hoe hij bij de kast kon komen in het gebouw waar dit poeder te vinden was. Het was voor Jan wel makkelijk

te vinden. Hij ging er met de dominee direct naartoe. Ze moesten even door wat gangen heen, en toen waren ze er. Jan opende de kast en haalde er een bus uit waar het poeder zou inzitten. Op de bus stond 'stuifmeel van de Afrikaanse slagersbloem.' Op mensen zou het geen effect hebben, maar alleen dus op robotische reclame clowns. In de papieren stond verder dat het poeder 's nachts door een helicopter over een probleem-stad heengegoten moest worden, en dat het poeder vanzelf de weg zou vinden. Er stond ook een map bijgetekend hoe bij het kantoortje te komen waar deze dingen verder besproken zouden kunnen worden. Dit kantoortje was ook in het gebouw. Weer moesten ze even door wat gangen heen, en toen kwamen ze aan bij een witte deur waar ze naar binnen gingen. Er was hier niemand op het moment, maar even later kwam er een mannetje in een wit pak binnen.

'Aha, jullie hebben de bus al bij jullie zie ik,' zei het mannetje enthousiast.

'Ja,' zei Jan. 'Ik weet alleen niet hoe het verder moet.'

'Dat klopt,' zei het mannetje enthousiast. 'Dat moeten we hier nog bespreken.'

Jan en de dominee gingen zitten, terwijl het mannetje achter zijn bureautje ging zitten.

'Komt helemaal goed, komt helemaal goed,' zei het mannetje.

'Het gaat dus om dit poeder van wat wij ook wel de Lazarus bloem noemen, die in Afrika groeit. Het is de slagersbloem. Het brengt een stuifmeel voort wat perfect kan afrekenen met die clowns die de vlees industrie nog in standhouden in probleem-gebieden. Het poeder gaat in hun robotisch mechanisme zitten en verandert de cellulaire structuur en code totdat het bloemen zijn geworden.'

'Interessant,' zei Jan. 'Een prachtige oplossing voor dit probleem.'

'Ja,' zei het mannetje enthousiast. 'Blij dat jullie gekomen zijn. Er zijn vele probleem-gebieden hier en in het buitenland. We hebben werkers nodig.' In zijn opleiding had de dominee geleerd helicopters te besturen, dus het zou helemaal in orde komen. De dominee zou sturen, en Jan zou het poeder door een klein gat in de bodem van de helicopter strooien, door een trechter. Jan had er al erge zin in. Ze konden direct de volgende nacht beginnen. Dat zou dan in de eerste uren van de nacht moeten gebeuren. Ze mochten het niet te laat maken, want ze hadden ook hun nachtrust nodig.

Hij deed dit werk voor maanden, en de steden begonnen vol te groeien met de Lazarus bloemen. Het was de grote verzoening tussen natuur en stad. De Lazarus bloemen begonnen ook steeds meer weg te vagen om plaats te maken voor een veel rijkere natuur, die van het oerwoud. In dat proces was het voor hem belangrijk om voor clown te studeren, en eigenlijk was hij

dat al, de ultieme spion. Elke overwonnen stad kreeg zijn eigen circus. Jan moest daarvoor verschillende dansen leren, clown dansen. Er werden ook clownsmarsen in en rondom de steden gehouden, om de steden te beschermen.

In het bos was er een bibliotheek van indianen boeken waar alles in zou staan wat ooit zou zijn gebeurd.

Op een dag gingen Jan en de dominee naar het bos om er een wandeling te maken. Diep in het bos stond ook een spookkasteel waar spoken hun verhalen schreven en wat de buitenwereld werd. Maar vanwege het werk van Jan en de dominee, en de nieuwe regering waren ze al flink teruggedreven. Ze hadden alleen nog wat spooksteden, en dan dit spookkasteel. Jan moest nu een boekenslager worden. Dat was het enige medicijn.

'Oh Jan,' zei de dominee. 'Nu gaat het gebeuren, Jan.'

'Wat is er ?' vroeg Jan.

'Nou,' zei de dominee. 'We zijn nu hier diep in het bos, en langs de indianen-bibliotheek en het spookkasteel die beiden strijden om het verhaal, oftewel de gesimuleerde werkelijkheid. Wij komen uit die strijd. Herinner je de indiaanse familie in ons complot ? Een slangenbeet van een spook was alles wat ervoor nodig was om ons tot deze werkelijkheid te slepen waar we vroeger vandaan kwamen, en nu zijn we hier. Ik heb het anti-

gif, Jan. Ik mag je dat bij deze toedienen. Het slangenspook is genaamd Ken, een clown.'

'Wow,' zei Jan.

'Ja,' zei de dominee, 'het is een Iraans-indisch spook.'

'Wow,' zei Jan weer.

'Ieder mens in deze werkelijkheid heeft dat gif in zich,' zei de dominee, 'maar ik heb het anti-gif.'

'Wow,' zei Jan weer.

'De slang zet mensen vast door hen te laten staren,' zei de dominee, 'het is het staar-spook. Maar zodra wij naar het spook zelf beginnen te staren, dan zal het spook bevriezen.'

Een enorme slang verscheen voor hen, hangende vanuit een boom. 'Verlies hem niet meer uit het oog,' zei de dominee.

Jan staarde naar de slang, en liet hem niet meer los met zijn ogen. Inderdaad begon de slang te bevriezen, maar liet zich uit de boom vallen, en vloog Jan om de nek en beet hem. Jan schrok. 'Niets om je zorgen om te maken,' zei de dominee. 'Dit is slechts het verleden. Hij moet er nu uit.'

'Wat is het anti-gif ?' vroeg Jan. De dominee greep Jan bij zijn

hand en trok hem weg. 'Rennen, Jan,' zei de dominee. Ze renden nog dieper het bos in. 'Weer een besje zeker ?' hijgde Jan.

'Nee, dit keer geen besje,' zei de dominee. 'Springen, Jan.'

Ze stonden voor een enorm ravijn in het bos.

'Ja maar,' zei Jan.

'Gewoon springen,' zei de dominee.

De dominee sprong al en Jan sprong hem achterna. Toen werd Jan wakker in een bed in een boshuisje. De dominee stond aan zijn bed en keek met een glimlach naar Jan. 'Daar ben je,' zei de dominee. 'We zijn door de werkelijkheids-wand gegaan.'

'Wat nu ?' vroeg Jan.

'Daar moet op gedronken worden,' sprak de dominee. 'Zonder alcohol.'

Hoofdstuk 5.

'Dus dingen die gebeuren zijn soms herhalingen van het verleden ?' vroeg Jan.
'Ja, Jan,' zei de dominee. 'Het is de geschiedenis. Het is een soort ontwaking, en dan ontwaak je weer, en weer.'

'Interessant,' zei Jan.

'Ja, het was een agressieveling,' zei de dominee.

'Wie ?' vroeg Jan.

'Ken,' zei de dominee, 'de spookslang. Dan zat hij daar op zijn hoge troontje en iedereen moest maar doen wat hij hen opdroeg. Het beest is gevallen.'

'Hoera dan maar,' zei Jan. De dominee glimlachte. 'Opgeruimd staat netjes,' zei de dominee.

'En wat nu ?' vroeg Jan. 'Vertel me meer over Ken.'

'We zijn veilig hier, want we zijn nu achter de wand,' zei de dominee. 'Maar alles aan de andere kant van de wand zal branden.'

'Maar wat gebeurt er dan met de goede mensen van het complot ?' vroeg Jan.

'Oh, die zullen hier ook wel terecht komen vroeg of later,' zei de dominee.

Jan kreeg wat kleren en toen nam de dominee hem mee naar buiten in een groot natuur gebied. Ze liepen naar een hoog gebouw in het midden van deze grote natuur, waar twee vrouwen waren. Ze hadden permanent en wat donkere schmink op hun gezicht. Jan vroeg zich af wat hij hier moest.

'Het is de geschiedenis,' zei de dominee.

Hij keek beter naar de twee vrouwen en herkende hen, maar wist niet van waar. Toen liepen ze weg. 'Kom terug,' riep Jan. 'Wie zijn jullie ?' Maar de twee vrouwen negeerden hem volkomen, en verdwenen toen in het niets.

'Het lijken wel spoken,' zei Jan.

'Spoken van het verleden,' zei de dominee.

'Wat nu ?' vroeg Jan.

'Ik kan het je niet vertellen,' zei de dominee. 'Hier stopt alles.'

'Alles ?' zei Jan. 'Wat bedoelt u daarmee ?'

'Hier stopt alles, en gaat alles terug in de geschiedenis, en loopt zo over in andere vormen,' zei de dominee. 'De geschiedenis is

waarmee we het moeten doen.'

Jan zuchtte in verwarring. 'Het is het mistpad,' zei de dominee. 'Alles moet vaagblijven. Mensen willen alles altijd teveel definities geven, en zo komen ze in de problemen, worden ze opgesloten.'

'Door zichzelf ?' vroeg Jan.

De dominee knikte. 'Dan maar het mistpad,' zei Jan. Ze liepen over het pad waar de vrouwen waren weggevaagd. 'Ook de spoken moeten veranderen,' zei de dominee. 'Het is creatieve energie wat nog niet is begrepen. Je moet ermee werken.'

'Hoe ?' vroeg Jan.

'Je bent toch de boekenslager ?' sprak de dominee.

'Oh dat,' zei Jan, 'maar hoe werkt het ?'

'Mensen definiëren alles,' zei de dominee, 'stoppen alles in potten en pannen, drukken overal etiketten op, en sluiten zichzelf zo op. Zo schrijven ze hun boeken, maar de mist slacht die boeken. Je moet een spook worden, Jan, een wezen van de mist.'

'Hoe wordt ik een spook ?' vroeg Jan.

'Gewoon doorlopen op het mistpad,' zei de dominee. 'Hier ga je terug de geschiedenis in, doorbreek je de muur tussen het nu en geschiedenis. Ook die vrouwen doorbraken die muur en gingen terug.'

'Waar zal ik dan terecht komen ?' vroeg Jan.

'In je eigen boekenslagerij,' zei de dominee.

Jan was weer terug in zijn slagerij, maar nu moest hij boeken slachten. En hij was een spook, een mistwezen. Hij moest alles vaag houden. Hij mocht niet teveel definiëren, want dan zou hij opgesloten worden en slachtvee worden.

Klanten kwamen binnen en hij moest boekenvlees verkopen.

'Vreemd,' dacht Jan bij zichzelf. 'Maar het is een keer wat anders.' Ook zijn klanten waren spoken.

Ook de dominee was een spook geworden. 'Wat gaat u nu doen ?' vroeg Jan.
'Ik breng het spook-evangelie van het boekenvlees,' sprak de dominee, 'zodat je klanten hebt.'
Aan de voorkant van de slagerij, boven de deur, stond met grote letters BOEKENSLAGERIJ.
En spoken vanuit de hele wereld begonnen naar Jan's boekenslagerij te komen.

De dominee zou zijn zegje doen. Ze gingen allemaal naar de spookkerk om het spook-evangelie te horen. Het boekenvlees moest gegeten worden. Jan had dertig dikke vrouwen die hem hielpen in de boekenslagerij en reclame voor de boekenslagerij maakten, en zij preekten ook in de kerk. Hij zag tussen zijn dertig dikke vrouwen ook de twee vrouwen die hij in het gebouw van het natuurgebied was tegengekomen. Nu herinnerde hij ze weer.

'Het boekenvlees moet gegeten worden !' riepen ze door de straten. Ook kinderen werden gedwongen het boekenvlees te eten. Als ze dat niet deden, dan zouden ze sterven en weer terugglijden naar de mensenwereld. Dan zouden ze geen spoken meer zijn. De dominee waarschuwde ernstig tegen verzuim. Iedereen moest het spook-evangelie van het boekenvlees horen.

Daarboven en beneden, daar eten ze mensenvlees en dierenvlees,' zei de dominee altijd, 'ze vreten elkaar op en zo sterven zij, maar zij die het boekenvlees eten zullen eeuwig leven.'

Jan slachtte dat het een lieve lust was. Het waren toch maar boeken. Hij slachtte voor zijn leven en voor dat van anderen. En de dominee was zijn getrouwe vriend die over hem waakte, en natuurlijk zijn dertig dikke vrouwen, maar die waren niet al te makkelijk. Jan hoopte maar dat hij het allemaal in de hand kon houden, maar dat kon hij niet. En op een dag werd Jan

door hen uit de boekenslagerij gezet, en de dominee werd uit zijn kerk gezet, en ze werden het bos ingezonden. Ze moesten maar bij de indianen leven.

Jan en de dominee bezochten toen een indianenstam in het bos, waar ze hartelijk en gastvrij werden ontvangen, en ze kregen van de indianen een heleboel verhalen te horen. De indianen waren boekenjagers. Zij waren per slot van rekening degenen die altijd ervoor zorgden dat Jan genoeg boekenvlees had voor zijn boekenslagerij. Jan vertelde over zijn dertig dikke vrouwen, en de indianen moesten daar erg om lachen. 'Kom, kom,' zei een indiaan. 'Dat is zo erg nog niet. Ze doen gewoon hun werk, en nu kun jij een boekenjager worden, net zoals ons. Wij kunnen je nog vele, grote verhalen vertellen, waar jij nog nooit van hebt gehoord.' Jan keek hen met grote ogen aan. Hij moest weer de mist in om te kunnen boekenjagen. Zonder de mist zou dat niet kunnen.

De indianen leefden zowel in oorlog als in onderhandeling met de boekenfokkers, de boekenboeren, die in de weilanden rondom het bos woonden. De boekenboeren werkten samen met de boekenjournalisten die al het nieuws over de boeken in de kranten zetten en zij gebruikten hiervoor ook de radio.

Jan kreeg dus zo ook eens wat te zien, zodat hij zou beseffen dat alles niet vanzelfsprekend werkte. Er ging een wereld aan vooraf.

Maar de indianen vertelden hem ook dat Jan's nieuwe wereld slechts een verhaal was uit een boek, en dat een grote reuzen-boekenslager het boek uiteindelijk zou slachten. Jan's wereld zou aan flarden gescheurd worden. Deze reus was heel groot en sterk, en ruw. Hij had altijd zijn schort aan, en zijn hakbijl en mes bij zich, klaar voor het grote werk.

'Er is altijd baas boven baas, Jan,' zeiden de indianen.

'Wat kunnen we eraan doen ?' vroeg Jan.

'Niks,' zeiden de indianen, 'helemaal niks.'

'Maar kunnen we dan niet ontsnappen ?' vroeg Jan.

'Oh ja,' zeiden de indianen. 'Daarom vertellen we al die verhalen. We gaan dan gewoon naar een nieuw boek.'

Jan zuchtte. 'Daar komt geen einde aan dan.'

'Die indianen maken je maar wat wijs,' fluisterde de dominee. 'Je bent toch boekenslager ?'

'Ja, niet meer, sinds mijn dertig dikke vrouwen me de slagerij hebben uitgezet,' zei Jan.

'Dan kun je hier je boekenslagerij beginnen,' zei de dominee.

'Zo in het bos ?' vroeg Jan.

'Ja,' zei de dominee. 'Het is niet zo moeilijk. Het is een koud kunstje.'

'Hoe dan ?' vroeg Jan.

'Je vraagt gewoon een wigwam om je werk te doen,' fluisterde de dominee.

En zo werd Jan de boekenslager van de indianenstam. Op een dag kwamen er drie boeren die bij hem boekenvlees kwamen halen, en ze betaalden hem er goed voor. Zo kon Jan ook een beetje bijdragen aan de vrede tussen de indianen en de boekenboeren.

Op een dag ging Jan vissen naar boeken. Er zwommen veel boeken in het bosmeertje, en al snel had Jan heel wat boeken opgevist. Hij ging ze eerst lezen, maar de letters waren nat, en het was niet goed leesbaar meer. Toch las hij heel wat mooie verhalen. Die kon hij dan weer doorvertellen aan de indianen, en zij vertelden hem daardoor weer verhalen. Zo ruilden ze verhalen. De indianen geloofden in de reus die hun wereld kapot zou scheuren. Jan probeerde ze op andere gedachten te brengen maar niets hielp. Ze vertelden hem ook waar de reus woonde, dus hij en de dominee gingen een kijkje nemen. Toen ze bij het huis van de reus aankwamen was er niemand. De reus was dus blijkbaar weg, misschien aan het werk. Ze zagen

er allemaal boeken liggen. Er was ook een boek genaamd 'het boek van de reus', en dat namen ze mee. Ze brachten het naar de indianen, en er stonden allemaal verhalen in over de komst van de reus. 'Zie je nu wel,' zeiden de indianen. 'Het staat daar allemaal in.'

'Maar wie zegt dat het waar is ?' zei Jan. 'Ik zal het boek aan flarden snijden. Dan is het weg. Daarvoor ben ik immers boekenslager, en zo hebben jullie weer boekenvlees.'

'Nee !' riepen de indianen. 'Dat boek is onder een grote vloek. Het is het boek wat niet geslacht kan worden. Dit boek is de boekenslager zelf.'

'Fikkie erin dan ?' zei Jan, 'of we kunnen het in het bosmeertje gooien, dan wordt alles nat en ontstaan er andere verhalen.'

'Hmm,' zeiden de indianen. 'In de fik steken zou ik maar niet doen, maar misschien is water wel een goed idee.' En zo wierp Jan het boek van de reus in het bosmeertje. Zodra het boek het water had aangeraakt veranderde het echter in een haai. 'Nu kunnen we hier nooit meer zwemmen !' riepen de indianen. 'Jij hebt alles verpest !' riepen ze tegen Jan. En toen moest Jan vertrekken. 'En neem die stomme dominee met je mee !' riepen ze. En toen zijn Jan en de dominee maar naar de boekenboeren toegegaan. Bij de indianen waren ze niet meer welkom.

Jan had gelukkig wat goede klanten onder de boeren, en die

waren zo gastvrij dat hij er mocht wonen. Hij werd zo ondergebracht in een boerderij, en kreeg zo ook de gehele boekenfokkerij te zien. 'Ja, die indianen zijn verschrikkelijk bijgelovig,' werd er gezegd. 'En daarom is het soms oorlog, want daar doen wij niet aan mee.'

Maar op een nacht werden Jan en de dominee wakker van verschrikkelijk lawaai. De reus was teruggekomen. De indianen hadden dus toch gelijk gehad. Alles werd aan flarden gescheurd. 'Wat moeten we doen !' riep Jan in paniek.

'Kalm blijven,' zei de dominee. 'Als het goed is lopen we nu over in een nieuw boek.' Er was niets dan water. Ze werden meegesleurd met een enorme waterstroom, alsof de zee over hen heen was gekomen.

Een eiland ? Nee, het was vaag. De mist nam weer over, en weer waren ze in het natuurgebied, in het grote gebouw, waar Jan zijn dikke vrouwen terugzag .... sommigen.

Het was vaag. Hij herkende ze nauwelijks. Ze hadden permanent, en hun gezichten waren opgeschminkt. Ze negeerden hem. Ze zochten alleen naar elkaar. De dominee was zijn enige vriend. Ook hem zagen ze niet staan. Het leek alsof er langs hem heen werd geleefd. Alleen de dominee kon hem verstaan.

Hij was een spook, een mist wezen nu, een boek over een

boekenslager wat ook werd geslacht. Er is altijd baas boven baas. Van boek tot boek ging hij, tot dat wat er nog over was gebleven. Hij definieerde het teveel, en daarom sloot het hem op, en moest hij weer bevrijd worden. Het leek eindeloos. Waar hield het ergens op ? Weer werd hij in het verleden gedrukt. Weer zag hij de dertig dikke vrouwen marcheren. Waar gingen ze naartoe ? Zij vaagden allen weg op het mistpad, en toen ook hij en de dominee. In het verleden was hij weer. Hij was weer in zijn boekenslagerij, alsof hij een cirkeltje had gemaakt. 'Het moet nu afgelopen zijn !' riep hij. De dominee zei dat hij het vak nog moest leren. Of misschien moest hij nu zijn eigen boeken maken ? Hij had genoeg onderdelen, en zo ging hij aan het werk. Hij werkte dag en nacht en stopte niet meer. Hij maakte boeken en wilde het dit keer goed doen. Zijn boeken moesten de allerbesten zijn, maar wat betekent de allerbeste ? Hij schreef en schreef en schreef. En zo had hij een boekenmakerij naast zijn boekenslagerij. Het werd groot nieuws. De boekenjournalisten spraken er de hele dag over op de radio.

Jan vond het zoveel werk dat hij machines liet maken voor zowel zijn boekenmakerij als zijn boekenslachterij. Het werd een fabriek, een industrie. Alles ging aan de lopende band, en nu had hij veel meer dikke vrouwen nodig, dus hij trouwde er met honderden meer, en toen duizenden. Jan was echt aan de gang nu, en kreeg de smaak goed te pakken. Niemand kon hem nog stoppen, zelfs de reuzen boekenslager niet. Jan was nu zelf een reus geworden, en pakte alles op een reusachtige manier

aan.

Jan, Jan, de boekenman,
Gaat 's nachts op stap, en komt er dan weer an,
Jan, Jan, die leeft zijn leven wel,
Boeken slachten en boeken maken,
Nooit meer kommer en kwel.

Maar weer keerden de dikke vrouwen zich tegen hem en de dominee, en weer werden ze het bos ingejaagd. Dit keer werden ze zelfs bedreigd met wapens, dus ze moesten rennen zo hard ze konden. In het bos kwamen ze het beest van boekenjournalistiek tegen, het beest met de vele ogen. Ook had het beest vele monden. Het was een boekenjournalist, een paparazzi en stalker. Het beest begon door elkaar te spreken totdat ze er beiden helemaal ziek van waren.

'Wat moeten we doen ?' klaagde Jan tegen de dominee.

'Rijdt erop,' zei de dominee.

'Ja, ik wil niet dood,' zei Jan. 'Hoe kom ik op dat beest zonder dat het me verslindt ?'

'Het is een machine,' zei de dominee.

'Ik wil jullie alleen maar helpen,' zei het beest toen heel kalm. En zo klommen Jan en de dominee op het beest en konden het

beest besturen. De dominee wist wel hoe het moet, en legde het aan Jan uit. Voordat ze het wisten stonden ze oog in oog met legers van dikke vrouwen. Het leek ook wel op een machine. Ze bewogen als robotten. Toen rende het beest weg dieper het bos in, met Jan en de dominee op zijn rug. 'We krijgen je wel, Jan !' riepen de dikke vrouwen.

'Waar is dat voor nodig ?' riep Jan. 'Wat heb ik gedaan ?'

'Dat weet je best wel, Jan !' riepen ze.

'Ik weet niks !' riep Jan. 'Ik weet alleen dat ik een boekenslagerij en een boekenmakerij had. Toen hebben jullie ons weggestuurd !'

'Niks ervan !' riepen de dikke vrouwen. 'Het was onze boekenslagerij en boekenmakerij, en ook de kerk was van ons !'

'Goedzo, houden zo !' riep de dominee, terwijl hij het beest nog sneller deed rennen. Na een tijdje was het vrouwenleger ver achter hen. Na een tijdje kwam het beest aan bij de zee, en veranderde in een boot om zo de zee in te gaan. 'Vaarwel vrouwen !' riep de dominee terwijl hij zwaaide.

Jan wist niet meer hoe hij het had. 'Ik wil niet zeeziek worden,' zei Jan.

'Dat zal nog wel meevallen,' zei de dominee.

'Waar gaan we naartoe ?' vroeg Jan.

'Weg van die vrouwen,' zei de dominee. 'Er is geen beginnen aan.'

'Ik word er zo moe van,' zei Jan. 'Altijd als ik iets heb opgebouwd, word het me afgenomen.'

'Geen zorgen, Jan,' sprak de dominee. 'De boekenjournalistiek verandert elk verhaal.'

'Hoe dan ?' vroeg Jan.

'Door er een andere betekenis aan te geven, door het door te roddelen, en dan te veranderen totdat het wat anders is,' zei de dominee. 'Daar zijn boekenjournalisten voor. Het zijn onze redders. Zij zijn de ware boekenslagers. En wij rijden per slot van rekening op het beest van de boekenjournalistiek.'

'Ik moet het ook eens proberen,' zei Jan.

'Daar is dit beest voor,' zei de dominee. 'Zodra de student klaar is komt de onderwijzer.'

'Mooi gezegd,' zei Jan. 'Maar zijn daar geen regels aan verbonden ? We kunnen toch niet zomaar gaan roddelen en

alles verdraaien ?'

'Natuurlijk is er een handboek voor, een wetboek,' zei de dominee.

'Eén van mijn dikke vrouwen is boekenjournalist,' zei Jan.

'Vergeet de vrouwen,' zei de dominee. 'We zijn nu hier bij het beest.'

'Maar we moeten haar niet onderschatten,' zei Jan. 'Ze is me er eentje.'

'Dat kan wel wezen,' zei de dominee, 'maar dan kennen ze dit beest nog niet.'

'Ik wed dat dit op een grote oorlog gaat uitlopen, haar kennende,' zei Jan.

'Een boekenjournalistische oorlog ?' vroeg de dominee.

Jan knikte.

'Ik weet het nog niet zo net,' zei de dominee.

'Ik moet boekenjournalist worden om hier door heen te komen,' zei Jan.

'Tussen slapen en waken,' sprak het beest, 'tussen geschiedenis en het nu. Ik ben de ware boekenslager en boekenmaker. Ik heb alles gemaakt. Ik ben de poppenmaker, alles door het geheim van de boekenjournalistiek.'

'Wat is het geheim ?' vroeg Jan.

'Ik geef hen allen een stem in hun hoofd, en zo sorteer ik de poppen. Zo maak ik mijn verhalen,' zei het beest. 'Het geheim is herhaling en massa-productie, wat in stand gehouden wordt en aangewakkerd wordt door de boekenjournalistiek. De boekenjournalist is de ware schrijver van het boek. Hij kan er elke mogelijke betekenis aan geven. Zo stuurt hij het volk.'

Jan voelde een warmte in hem opglijden, alsof het beest diep in hem sprak.
'Dus jij hebt ook de dikke vrouwen gemaakt ?' vroeg Jan.
'Natuurlijk,' zei het beest. 'Ik ben zelf ook een dikke vrouw.'

'Eén van mijn vrouwen ?' vroeg Jan verbaasd en geschrokken.
'Ja,' zei het beest, 'die van de boekenjournalistiek.'

Hoofdstuk 6.

'Ik roddel en ik slacht,
Ik praat en ik verdraai,
Geef aan alles een andere betekenis,
Geloof me, het brengt veel geld in het laatje,
Het leidt mij naar het goede goud.
Ik ben een boekenjournalist, ziet u,
Ik leef ervan, ik wil niet dood,
Het is mijn dagelijkse brood

Met een krant wandel ik door het ganse land,
Krijg alles voor mekaar, mevrouw,
Ik lieg en spot, ik verdraai en bedot,
Bedriegen is mijn vak,
Maar ik heb aan alles lak,
Want wie niet liegt die leeft niet,
En iedereen liegt, en wie zegt dat hij niet liegt is de grootste leugenaar,
U bent de krant, ik ben de schaar,
U praat maar tegen de klauw, mijnheer,
Moet ik u rechtsom of linksom verdraaien,
ondersteboven of bovensteonder,

U zegt het maar,
Wij weten altijd raad in de boekenslagerij,
Wij maken van uw waarheid een leugen, en van uw leugen een waarheid,
Wij komen altijd weer met wat nieuws, zo had u het nog niet gezien,
En de klap zag u niet aankomen

Het beest was in zichzelf aan het zingen en mompelen.
'Wanneer word je dan een dikke vrouw ?' vroeg Jan.

'Niet nu,' zei het beest. 'We zitten midden op de zee. Ik ben een schip nu. Ik kan niet alles tegelijk.'

'Waarom ben je niet bij de andere dikke vrouwen ?' vroeg Jan.

'Dat lees je maar in de komende aflevering van ons magazine,' zei het beest. 'We moeten er nog wel een beetje aan verdienen, denk je niet zo ? We kunnen niet alles zomaar gratis weggegeven. Aan alle pret komt een einde. Zoek de gleuf maar op waar je je muntje kunt ingooien.'

'Nou, nou,' zei Jan. 'Ik kan wel merken dat je daadwerkelijk mijn vrouw bent. Zo ken ik je weer.'

De dominee lachte. 'Dat is je beste vrouw dan waarschijnlijk.'

'Maar ja,' zei Jan. 'Wat is best ? Wat staat ons nog allemaal te

wachten met haar ? Straks moeten de andere dikke vrouwen ons nog van haar bevrijden.'

'Welnee joh,' zei de dominee. 'Komt allemaal best in orde.'

'Ja, ja,' zei Jan, 'dat klinkt allemaal maar als reclame voor één of ander heilig boek waar je duizenden jaren voor moet wachten op de grote bevrijding.'

'Niet zo pessimistisch, Jan,' zei de dominee.

'Sorry, maar ik ben al teveel bedrogen in mijn korte leventje,' zei Jan.

'Dan wordt het eens hoog tijd dat je zelf eens gaat bedriegen, op een leuke manier dan,' zei de dominee.

'Oh, als boekenjournalist ?' vroeg Jan.

'Ja, dat brengt wat leven in de brouwerij,' zei de dominee. 'Als je zelf niet gaat liegen, dan word je wel voorgelogen door anderen. In dit land spreekt niemand de waarheid. Het zijn slechts verhalen.'

'En vandaar dat er een boekenslager nodig is,' zei Jan.

'Precies,' zei de dominee, 'en die boekenslager is de boekenjournalist, hij die spreekt tussen waken en slapen.'

Het beest slaapt nooit, en is ook nooit echt wakker,
Het leeft en spreekt tussen waken en slapen,
tussen het nu en de geschiedenis,
In een mist die niemand kan verstaan.

Het beest nam hen weer mee naar het gebouw in het grote natuurgebied, tot het mistpad. Jan vroeg hoe de boekenjournalistiek werkte.

'Je schrijft een boek over een boek,' zei het beest, 'en vervolgens schrijf je over het boek over het boek weer een boek.'

'Klinkt makkelijk, maar er zal wel veel bij komen kijken,' zei Jan.

'Ja,' sprak het beest, en veranderde toen in de dikke vrouw. Jan was verbaasd en verrast. Samen met de dominee gingen ze het gebouw binnen. 'Wat is dit eigenlijk voor een gebouw ?' vroeg Jan.

'Dit is het gebouw van de school van de boekenjournalistiek,' sprak de dikke vrouw.

'Een waarheid als een koe,' zei de dominee.

'Natuurlijk,' zei de dikke vrouw. 'Maar vergeet niet dat het een

mistschool is. We definiëren hier niet teveel. Het is een spookschool.'

'Uiteraard,' voegde de dominee toe.

'Er moet hier niets, en er is veel vrijheid,' sprak de vrouw. 'Alles gaat hier om een natuurlijke en mistige manier, met veel omwegen, vaagheid en puzzels, veel raadsels.'

In het gebouw kregen ze beiden een kamer. 'De spoken onderwijzen hier,' sprak de vrouw. 'Daar kunnen ze ook de kamer voor binnenkomen. Ze onderwijzen op vele manieren, vaak subtiel. Ze houden ervan te onderwijzen door dromen en dagdromen. Ze werken door de wereld van het denken, tussen waken en slapen in, tussen het nu en de geschiedenis.'

'Klinkt vredig, en rustig, kalmerend,' zei Jan.

'Er zijn hier allemaal spookachtige natuurverschijnselen, van de mist, en die kunnen zo vanuit het water opkomen,' sprak de vrouw. 'De journalistiek bespreekt de verschillende onderwerelden en bovenwerelden, waardoor leugen en waarheid nog maar heel relatief is. En dan zijn er ook nog eens een heleboel zijwerelden. De portalen daartoe zijn overal in dit grote natuurgebied, in de vorm van mistnevels. De boekenjournalistiek verbindt deze mistportalen, misttunnels en mistbollen en functioneert als een poortwachter. De nieuwslezers lezen het allemaal op. Zij verzinnen alles. Er zijn

voorwerelden, achterwerelden, linkswerelden, rechtswerelden en die moet de boekenjournalistiek allemaal aan elkaar verbinden. Het is een kunst.'

Het was al een oud gebouw, met vele oude schilderijen. Toen leidde de vrouw hen weer naar buiten, en gingen ze het grote natuurgebied in. Er was hier overal mist, en ze leidde hen naar een meer in de natuur waar een grote mistbol in het water hing. Het was bijna als een wit vlies. 'Deze zorgt voor grote dromen,' sprak de vrouw. 'Er is geen mens die hier kan komen, alleen spoken.'

Jan durfde niets te zeggen.

Hij vroeg zich af wat voor dromen het waren. De vrouw begon het al uit te leggen. 'Het zijn journalistieke dromen. Als twee mensen communiceren dan bedrijven ze al journalistiek. Ze leggen elkaar uit en vullen elkaar aan. Ze verdraaien elkaar ook, en nemen dat weer met zich mee, en geven het aan anderen door. Zo onstaat er een journalistiek netwerk, een nieuw boek. Jan begon figuren te zien in het mistvlies. Het vervormde zichzelf voortdurend. De vrouw vertelde dat het mistvlies aan het uitzenden was. Het zond dromen uit, journalistieke dromen, die een eigen samenleving schiepen, een boek. Het was een boekenmaker. Hiertoe was het ook op jacht gegaan, en hiertoe had het ook boeken geslacht. Het was als een roofinsect.

Jan durfde bijna niet te ademen. Het leek heel dierlijk, maar tegelijkertijd plantaardig, en als een natuur-element, een natuurverschijnsel, als een mistdroom. Jan keek ernaar in grote verbazing. Het leek wel als een reuzenkwal die uit het water was gekomen, maar het was spookachtig. Even dacht Jan dat hij in de hemel was, in het paradijs. Hij voelde zich licht in zijn hoofd, en zwak. Hij zag reiger-achtige vogels in de bomen die vaak zwart waren met lange rode snavels. Er stonden vele bomen die op dennenbomen en coniferen leken, maar het niet waren. Het waren spookachtige bomen. Hier en daar hing er wat sneeuw, en er lag wat ijs in het water. Het meer had een soort eilandje, waardoor het op een rivier leek. Op het eilandje waren er wat kleinere boompjes, en er lag veel zand. 'De journalistiek is een boekenoorlog,' sprak de vrouw. 'De grote indiaanse boekenoorlogen, de acht grote indiaanse oorlogsboeken die met elkaar in oorlog zijn.'

'Waar gaat het over ?' vroeg Jan.

'Het eerste grote indiaanse oorlogsboek gaat over de boekenroof,' sprak de vrouw. 'De indianen zijn in dit boek in oorlog met de boekenrovers en boekenpiraten.'

De vrouw leidde hen om het meer heen tot een vlakte waar een grote misttrap stond. 'Hierachter is de zee,' zei de vrouw, 'de spookzee of mistzee. Daar leven de boekenrovers en de boekenpiraten. De boekenpiraten hebben daar grote spookschepen, mistschepen. Eli was een beruchte kapitein van

boekenpiraten. Daar gaat het boek over.'

'Waar zijn die boeken ?' vroeg Jan.

'In de schoolbibliotheek,' sprak de vrouw.

Die avond nam Jan het boek vanuit de schoolbibliotheek mee naar zijn kamer en begon het te lezen. Het was al een oud boek, en sommige letters waren weggevaagd. Het maakte hem wel nieuwsgierig over wat er nu daadwerkelijk zou hebben gestaan, en hij begon erover te filosoferen en zijn theorieën erover te maken. Hij was journalistiek erover aan het bedrijven, en schreef zijn bevindingen op. Er stond nog veel informatie in over Eli, maar dan juist als het net belangrijk begon te worden, dan vielen de woorden weg. Het was als een spookboek, of mistboek, en de vrouw had daarover gezegd dat het juist belangrijk was, omdat anders het boek hem zou kunnen opslokken, in de zin dat dan alles te gedefinieerd zou zijn, en dan zou het boek teveel macht hebben, teveel grenzen aanleggen. Het was dus voor Jan's eigen bescherming dat er zoveel woorden en zinnen half of geheel waren weggevaagd. En zo kon Jan er ook nog eens zelf interessante journalistiek over schrijven, om zijn eigen boek erover te maken, als een echte boekenslager en boekenmaker. Er stonden ook wat plaatjes in die niet altijd even duidelijk waren, omdat het op bepaalde plaatsen vanwege de oudheid van het boek al was weggevaagd. Jan had zo zijn ideeën en zou het boek wel willen heruitgeven, maar het was natuurlijk allemaal maar speculatie.

Er waren een heleboel missing links, en hoe zou Jan die zomaar kunnen aanvullen ? Wel was dit dus een hele uitdaging voor Jan, en dat maakte het leven ook interessant. Jan hield van het boek, en begon er een relatie mee te krijgen. Het ging ook nog over een treinroof, waarin een boekentrein werd aangevallen door indianen te paard. De redenen waren onbekend, maar Jan dacht dat het ermee te maken had dat de boeken van de indianen waren gestolen, en dat de indianen ze gewoon terugroofden. Jan leek erin te lezen dat de boekenrovers hun eigen treinen hadden. Zo was er dus een grote boekenoorlog in het eerste boek. Jan had zijn handen er aan vol, en de vrouw hielp hem ermee, en gaf hem goede raad.

Hoe meer hij het boek las, en hoe meer hij over dit dikke boek nadacht, hoe nieuwsgieriger hij werd naar het tweede boek. En misschien zou het tweede grote indiaanse oorlogsboek helderheid kunnen verschaffen ? Het tweede boek was nog wel moeilijker leesbaar dan het eerste, en leek een nog veel ouder boek te zijn. Misschien waren er van het eerste boek nog wel oudere manuscripten die verloren waren geraakt ? En wie zei dat alles wel geheel was opgeschreven als in het oorspronkelijke manuscript ? Vaak als mensen verhalen moesten navertellen dan maakten ze er hun eigen verhaal van. Dan lieten ze dingen weg waarvan ze vonden dat het er niet bijhoorde, en vulden ze het aan met hun eigen inbreng. Hij probeerde wijs te worden van het tweede boek, maar het lukte niet echt. Dit was pas echt een spookboek, en het leek wel in andere letters te zijn geschreven, in een taal die hij niet kende.

Wel waren er veel meer plaatjes in, bijna als een stripboek hier en daar. Hij raakte erdoor gehypnotiseerd. Hij sloeg volledig op hol. Dit boek had hem nog wel meer in de ban dan het eerste boek. Hij kon de plaatjes niet goed zien, maar daardoor sloeg zijn fantasie op hol. Het was genoeg materiaal om hem geheel dol te maken. Het leek bijna wel een boek van zijn eigen leven, maar dan op een hele andere manier. Hij herkende het, maar ook weer niet.

Op een dag zou de vrouw langskomen op zijn kamer om hem ermee te helpen. Ze begon hem wonderbaarlijke uitleggingen te geven. Dit deed ze al in de eetzaal waar ze gezamenlijk aten, en daarna ging ze met hem mee naar zijn kamer. Het was al avond. Het boek ging volgens haar over de boekendokters. Zij herstelden kapotte boeken, en kapotte verhalen. Zij waren ook ontdekkings-reizigers, maar zij vielen in de handen van de indianen, wat een grote oorlog tot gevolg had. De boekendokters hadden een groot rijk en sloten de indianen op in ziekenhuizen.

'En het derde boek ?' vroeg Jan.

'Het derde boek bestaat niet meer, maar er zijn nog wel boeken over,' zei de vrouw, 'waarin wat korte samenvattingen staan, oude journalistieke boeken, en die boeken over het derde boek spreken elkaar ook weer tegen, maar het is alles wat we hebben op het moment. Er zijn wel veertien grote boeken over het derde indiaanse oorlogsboek geschreven.'

'En waar gaat het over ?' vroeg Jan.

'Het derde boek zou gaan over de boekenbankieren,' sprak de vrouw, 'daar waar er betaald werd met boeken in plaats van met geld, maar dit liep uit op een grote oorlog met de indianen. Uiteindelijk hebben ze deze oorlog deels economisch opgelost, met boeken dus. De indianen wonnen de oorlog, maar deels zou de oorlog voor eeuwig doorgaan. Andere boeken erover spreken dat trouwens weer tegen. Er zijn verschillende versies van het verhaal, en we weten niet welke de oorspronkelijke versie was. Nog steeds worden er veel boeken over dit boek geschreven, maar er zijn dus veertien standaard boeken erover in de geschiedenis die het dichtst bij de bron liggen.'

'Interessant,' zei Jan. 'Het lijkt mij een waardige opdracht om hier onderzoek over te doen.'

'En dan is er nog het vierde boek,' zei de vrouw, 'wat nog maar half bestaat, maar dat is in ieder geval wat. Het laatste stuk ervan ontbreekt.'

'En waar gaat het over ?' vroeg Jan.

'Over de boeken-archeologie,' zei de vrouw, 'over het ontstaan van de boeken en de verhalen, een beroep wat helemaal leidt tot de oude indiaanse ondergrondse grotten die waren als tempelen, en waarop hun verhalen waren getekend. De

archeologen die zich hieraan waagden in het boek werden toen aangevallen door de indianen, wat op een grote oorlog uitliep in de ondergrondse boekenmijnen. En het vijfde boek daarvan denkt men dat het een vervalsing is van een ouder boek, en het boek gaat ook over boekenvervalsers. Door het vervalsen van boeken kon men hele culturen veranderen, en de indianen komen in dit boek in oorlog met de boekenvervalsers. De boekenvervalsers winnen die oorlog, en vervalsen dan ook alle boeken van de indianen. Het zesde boek gaat over boekenverzamelaars, het zevende over boekenbegravenissen en boekenbegrafenisondernemers en alles wat er bij komt kijken, en hoe die in oorlog kwamen met de indianen, en het achtste en laatste boek gaat over de boekenbergen.'

'Wat is dat ?' vroeg Jan.

'De boekenbergen is een plaats waar men communiceert door boeken,' sprak een vrouw. 'Men zendt elkaar boodschappen door een boek, en zo worden de boodschappen ook opgevangen. Ze slaan dan hun boeken open en zien de geheime boodschappen, en ook dat liep uit op een grote oorlog.'

De dagen erna las Jan veel in de boeken, en bestudeerde ze. Hij las voornamelijk veel in het vierde boek, oftewel het halve boek, en las over de boeken-archeologen die boeken opgroeven en kwamen tot de ondergrondse indiaanse grotten om de hiërogliefen te bestuderen. Hij leerde over de verschillende talen. Omdat het boek maar half was las hij ook boeken over

het vierde boek, waarin er werd geprobeerd het boek af te maken, want het laatste stuk ontbrak. Het interesseerde hem, en hij begon er zelf ook over te speculeren. Hij maakte aantekeningen en verzamelde die om zo ook zijn eigen commentaar op het vierde boek te maken. Hierdoor probeerde hij het boek te herstellen en alles aan elkaar te knopen. Hij noemde het een boeken labyrint. Hij werkte voornamelijk alleen, maar soms ging hij naar klaslokalen en liet hij zichzelf bijscholen.

Vaak vaagde alles weg, want het was een mist labyrint. Hij moest leren leven met de wazen in zijn hoofd die hem beschermden tegen de valstrikken van overgedefinieerd materialisme. En mist zorgde er eigenlijk voor dat er zoveel andere haartjes gezien konden worden, zoveel andere werelden, die anders verborgen zouden blijven. Juist de vaagheid was de weg daartoe, tot de veren. Ja, de misten waren slechts veren van dualiteit die de paden naar de andere dimensies lieten zien, naar boven, naar onderen en naar opzij, in zoveel lagen, zoveel haren.
Jan wilde een boekendokter worden om de acht indiaanse oorlogsboeken te herstellen.
De boekendokter werd besproken in het tweede boek.
Hij kwam tot het boek en reikte haar de hand,
Zij was als een vrouw voor hem,
Hij wilde haar genezen en helpen, maar zij was groot en verwarrend,
Zou hij haar genezen, of zou zij hem ook ziek maken ?

Zij sleurde hem naar de onderwereld,
Haar taal was wild en woest,
Zij wilde geen indringers,
Zij was een labyrint.

Hij nam haar naar het ziekenhuis, maar zij maakte hem ook ziek,
Het was besmettelijk.

'Oh, hoe moet ik haar herstellen !' riep Jan in zijn nachtelijke worstelingen,
Altijd woelde hij in zijn slaap als hij aan haar dacht en over haar droomde,
Zij was het tweede boek.

Hij kwam tot haar als een prooi tot een roofdier,
Niet hij had haar gegrepen, maar zij had hem gegrepen,
En zij sleurde hem tot haar onderwereld diep,
Opdat hij haar raadsel zou begrijpen,
Zij liet hem de bruggen zien

Zij maakte hem ziek en sleurde hem tot de dokters,
Vele boekenvertalers waren daar, maar zij spraken elkaar allemaal tegen.
Haar taal was woest en wild,
Want zij wilde geen indringers,
Nee, geen dokter kon haar temmen

Boekenvertalers bogen hun hoofd over haar, maar zij verslond hen allen,
Als een wild beest joeg zij door de nacht

Hij was de boekendokter, maar zij maakte hem ziek,
Opdat zij hem kon meenemen tot haar boek,
De tweede is haar naam

En allen die haar vinden maakt zij ziek,
En zij maakt ziekenhuizen tot haar labyrinten

Was het dit wel allemaal waard ?
Hij had een tropentocht gemaakt,
Zijn schedel op haar paal,
Aan haar ketting zijn tand als kraal

Hij wilde haar genezen,
Maar hij werd ziekgemaakt,
Dit boek maakte hem langzaam ziek,
Bracht hem langzaam ten onder,
Maar hij kon niet meer zonder

Hij was nu verslaafd,
Als in de ban van een religie

Hoofdstuk 7.

Hij kwam tot haar, tot het tweede boek,
Als een boekendokter tot een oorlog,
En de oorlog greep hem ook,
Het was overweldigend

Hij stierf op het slagveld,
Terwijl hij alleen maar wilde helpen,
Nu werd hij opgenomen in haar boek,
Nu was hij haar soldaat,
En boeken waren zijn wapens

Hij werd van boekendokter tot boekensoldaat,
Maar alles was vaag hier, alles ging trager,
Hij moest de boeken lezen, want alleen boeken waren zijn

wapens

Hij vocht voor haar, maar zij vocht tegen hem,
Haar taal was wild en woest, en ook haar boeken,
Wanr zij wilde geen indringers

En zo stierf hij weer, in de grote boekendood,
In de grote boekenoorlog,
Hij had zijn best gedaan

En zo kwam hij nog dieper in haar boek,
In de tweede

Hij had geen wapens meer,
Maar zij was zijn wapen en zijn medicijn

Het verhaal van de boekendokters was hem nu duidelijk,
Alleen het boek was het medicijn,
En zij die niet tot haar diepte gaan zullen het nooit vinden.

En hij kreeg een huwelijk met het boek,
En hij kwam niet verder zonder haar,
Hij was verslaafd, verslaafd aan het tweede boek

En hij zocht naar haar uitgang, maar hij vond het niet,
Voor eeuwig moest hij in dit labyrint dwalen,
En zij die haar niet vonden zouden voor eeuwig sterven,
Want zij was het leven,

Zij was het medicijn

Hij had de boekziekte, maar in haar had zij het medicijn,
Oh, hij was zo boekziek,
Naar de onderwereld trok zij hem,
Tot de schedel en het geraamte van het boek,
Maar hierin lag het medicijn,
Tussen veren verborgen

De mistbrug ging hij over, en zij trok hem,
Zij liet hem niet meer los,
Zij was het tweede boek in zijn hoofd,
Gelukkig getrouwd,
In een doktershuis vond hij dit goud

De boekendokter is hij,
Hij werd ziek om haar te genezen,
Ja, de zieke dokter is hij

Toen hij tot haar kwam wist hij dat zijn leven over was,
Maar een nieuw leven vond hij in haar,
Toen hij dit boek uit de kast pakte begonnen zijn handen te branden,
Maar zijn hart ontwaakte uit een diepe slaap

Heb je mij gewekt, of heb ik jou gewekt,
Of hebben we het beiden gedaan ?

Ik lees jou, en jij leest mij,
Wij zijn van hetzelfde boek

Hij was met haar op een bootje op het water, en alles was zo stil,
Toen werd zij overboord getrokken door een beest en de diepte ingenomen,
Dokter, dokter, kom niet te dichtbij, want dan zul je ziek worden zoals ik ben,
En het verschil tussen dokter en patient zal er niet meer zijn.

Hij was met haar op een bootje op het water, als een dokter met zijn patient,
Toe dokter, volg haar niet, want genezen kan je haar niet,
Je zult slechts worden als zij ...

Hij was met haar op een bootje op het water, als een vader met zijn kind, en alles was zo stil,
Toe vader, volg haar niet, want het verschil tussen vader en kind zal er niet meer zijn.

En de natuur herbergt de mistbloem van de journalistiek, en alle werelden zullen draaien en vallen.
Kom daarom niet te dichtbij, want je zult worden als haar.

Dit stond allemaal in het tweede boek.

Hij legde het boek weer weg en dacht na. Hij staarde.

Hoofdstuk 8.

In zijn gedachten vond hij de mistbloem in het grote natuurgebied. Maar hij durfde niet dichterbij te komen, en toen rende hij weg, maar zij kwam achter hem aan.

Als je de mistbloem hebt gezien, dan laat het je niet meer los.

De roddelbloem sloot hem op om hem de andere werelden te laten zien.

Nee, de roddelaarster wil geen medicijn, maar wil alleen maar even in een andere wereld zijn.

De roddelbloem is versierd met roddelblaadjes, om de verborgen pracht van andere werelden te laten zien.

Heeft dan niemand door dat het slechts verhalenvertellers zijn ?

Maar ze slachten de verhalen, het zijn boekenslagers, en hij

was in een wildernis waarin hij de uitweg niet meer kon vinden, en hij kende deze wildernis niet. Hij was verdwaald in overweldigende wildernis. Hij zag het geheim in het riet. Hier was alles stil. En het werd steeds stiller. Maar de stilte was slechts een clown, en de mistbloem, de roddelbloem, beschermde hem. Wat roddelblaadjes was alles wat hij had en nodig had om zijn weg door deze wildernis te vinden.

De onverbiddelijke stilte is een clown,
Het roddelblad onze laatste hoop,
Maar kom niet te dichtbij,
Want zij zal je verscheuren,
Zij is de boekenslager,
Zij slaat al je dromen kapot

Jan had geen verhalen meer in zijn hoofd na zijn ontmoeting met haar, en ook geen toekomst, alleen nog maar zijn geschiedenis, haar roddelblaadjes.

Hij had de distelbloem aangeraakt, en sliep nu als Doornroosje. Hij was zo ziek geworden als haar, geen verschil meer tussen de dokter en de patient.
Zij had hem meegenomen naar de andere wereld.

En hij was met haar op een rivier diep in het grote natuurgebied.
En hij wandelt met haar in het grote natuurgebied achter de rivier, en hij aanvaardt het roddelkruis. Hij leert het zien als

paden tot de andere werelden.
Zij bracht hem tot het roddelkruis, tot de plaats waar dokters een dokter nodig hebben.
Maar zij wilde geen medicijn, maar alleen in een andere wereld zijn.

Is het medicijn niet zwaar overschat, en sluit het niet vaak de poorten tot de andere werelden ?
Was het medicijn vaak gewoon vergif ?
Hij wilde geen mierzoete medicijnen.
Hij wilde haar, het roddelkruis, opdat hij de andere werelden zou zien.
Hij was in de zijwereld met haar, tussen waken en slapen.
Er waren ravijnen tussen zijn hersenen die geen medicijn kon overbruggen,
Alleen het roddelkruis.

Aan een roddelkruis ging hij ten onder, op een vuilnisbelt, waar de poppen brandden.

En als hij vasthoudt aan zijn roddelsieraden, het laatste wat hij heeft, dan vindt hij haar.
In een roddelwoud, waar de stiltes clowns zijn, en ook de dieptes van de meren, waar hij het roddelgoud vindt.

Hier heerst een zeer besmettelijke goudkoorts, die geen dokter kan genezen. Zij worden allen ziek, zij die te dichtbij komen.
Hier worden de dokters ziek, waar zij alleen nog maar goud

willen. Aan genezing denken ze niet, want de ziekte brengt tot het goud. Het is de ongeneeslijke goudkoorts van de roddel.

En Jan vond een goud wat niet met ogen gezien kon worden, en hij wilde geen medicijn voor deze goudkoorts. En zij was zijn goudkoorts. Het was een literaire goudkoorts.

En hij ging verder en verder, dieper en dieper in dit reusachtige natuurgebied, en hij kwam aan bij de zee van de boekenloosheid, daar waar alle boeken stopten, daar waar de boeklozen dwaalden aan de stranden. Over de zee ging een brug met een trein, de trein van de verteller, en aan de andere kant van de zee van de boekenloosheid zou alles overgaan in nieuwe boeken. Jan besloot met de trein te gaan. Het werd een hele lange tocht in de trein van de verteller over de zee. Hier stopten alle verhalen, maar de verteller was bij hem. Toen hij aan land aankwam, op het station aan het strand kon hij zo een stad inlopen waar hele hoge gebouwen stonden. De verteller had ervoor gezorgd dat hij een kamer hoog op een wolkenkrabber kon krijgen. De verteller had hem hiervoor de sleutel gegeven en een map, en ook een bouwpakket met kleine mannetjes waardoor het beeldscherm op zijn kamer zou werken. Er was ook een gebruiksaanwijzing bij, en het ging vrij makkelijk. Hij had vanuit de kamer in de wolkenkrabber een goed uitzicht over de stad en over de zee.

Jan kon een beroep kiezen, en hij koos voor boekenslager, want hij was nog steeds een slager in hart en nieren. Hij kreeg

hiervoor een winkel in een straat in de stad. Iedereen kocht graag boekenvlees bij hem. Hij was de verteller dankbaar, en dacht nog vaak terug aan de lange treintocht over de zee van de boekenloosheid waardoor hij hier was gekomen.

Hij zag een nieuwe wereld. Hier had hij lang op gewacht. Er was veel natuur in de stad, alsof natuur en stad met elkaar waren samengekomen. Er waren prachtige tuinen en parken door de hele stad, waar Jan graag doorheen wandelde. Het inspireerde hem. De natuur van de stad overweldigde hem. Hij zag zoveel wat hij niet uit kon leggen, maar hij bewonderde het.

Jan wist dat het niet om het medicijn ging, maar om de sleutel, en dat dokters vaak grote bedriegers waren. Hij kon zich voorstellen dat de indianen ermee in oorlog waren geraakt. Ziekenhuizen waren gevangenissen, en vandaar dat er in de hele stad ook geen ziekenhuis was te vinden. Daarom waren er ook geen dokters, alleen sleutelmakers. Dokters zouden misschien wel in de trein van de verteller kunnen komen om de zee van de boekenloosheid over te gaan, maar halverwege zou de verteller hen toch uit de trein zetten. Geen dokter zou de zee van de boekenloosheid over kunnen komen. Er stonden ook veel grote borden op het strand en bij het station, waarop stond : VERBODEN VOOR DOKTERS. Als er dan toch een dokter op heterdaad was betrapt, dan stonden daar zware straffen op. De dokter zou in de gevangenis gezet worden, en daarna het land worden uitgezet. Dan moesten ze met de trein

terug over de zee van de boekenloosheid. Als een dokter zich zwaar had misdragen dan waren er veel zwaardere straffen. Dan werden ze in de arena's gezet om door dieren te worden verslonden. Maar eigenlijk kwam dat bijna niet voor. In de tweede grote indiaanse oorlog was er zo goed als geheel met de doktersgeslachten afgerekend. Ja, dokters waren gehaat in de stad. Ze wilden er eigenlijk niet over praten.

Eens ging Jan met de trein naar een ander stadsdeel. In de trein kwam hij een meisje tegen die op één van zijn vrouwen leek. Even hadden ze oogcontact. Even leek het alsof er een vonk van herkenning overvloog, alsof zij hem ook herkende, maar zij was niet degene die hij kende. Blijkbaar herkende zij ook iets in hem wat hij verder niet was. Ze waren elkaar nog nooit eerder tegengekomen, maar toch leken ze zoveel van elkaar te dragen, alsof hun levens elkaar al eerder hadden gekruisd, maar het was toch de eerste keer en waarschijnlijk de laatste keer. Het was te licht en te ondiep om verdere indruk op hem te maken, en hij was het al snel weer vergeten. En ook zij ging met haar leven verder alsof er nooit wat was gebeurd. Hij dacht er over na hoe het leven gevuld was met zoveel ogenschijnlijke oppervlakkigheden, zoveel lichte aanrakingen die nooit werkelijkheid zouden worden, die geen toekomst hadden. Waar was het goed voor ? Hij was op weg naar de boekenfabriek. Het stond daar vol met boekenmachines. Even gingen er flitsen door hem heen van het verleden, en toen keek hij weer naar de machines. 'Goed werk,' zei hij. Hij dwaalde dieper en dieper in de boekenfabriek, door allerlei tunnels, en hij zag zoveel van

zijn verleden. Hij herkende het, maar toch ook weer niet. Het was net iets anders. En de rook die uit de fabriek kwam bedekte de hele stad.

Einde

RNL-POCKETS
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2 DE TUIN VAN MEVROUW VAN DALEN
3 PLANTEN VAN VLEES
4 ZIJN HUIS STOND IN DE WEG
5 HET SURINAAMSE DAGBOEK
6 DE EVOLUTIE VAN DE HEMEL
7 FABRIEKEN AAN ZEE
8 DE INDIAANSE AVONDEN
9 DE BRUG VAN HEIMDAL
10 HET METALEN EI
11 DE POPPENMAKER VAN HIROSHIMA
12 SOBIBOR – DE LAATSTE JAGER
13 HET PAARSE COMPLOT
14 DE GEZICHTEN VAN MALLEMOE
15 DE TORENS VAN BELZEHAM - DE EZAUSLADDER
16 DE CALVINISTISCH-GEREFORMEERDE LEER
17 DE TRAAN VAN ROGGEMUIDEN
18 PARADIJSVOGELS
19 BONJE IN DE CHRISTELIJK GEREFORMEERDE KERK
20 DE IJSSPIEGEL
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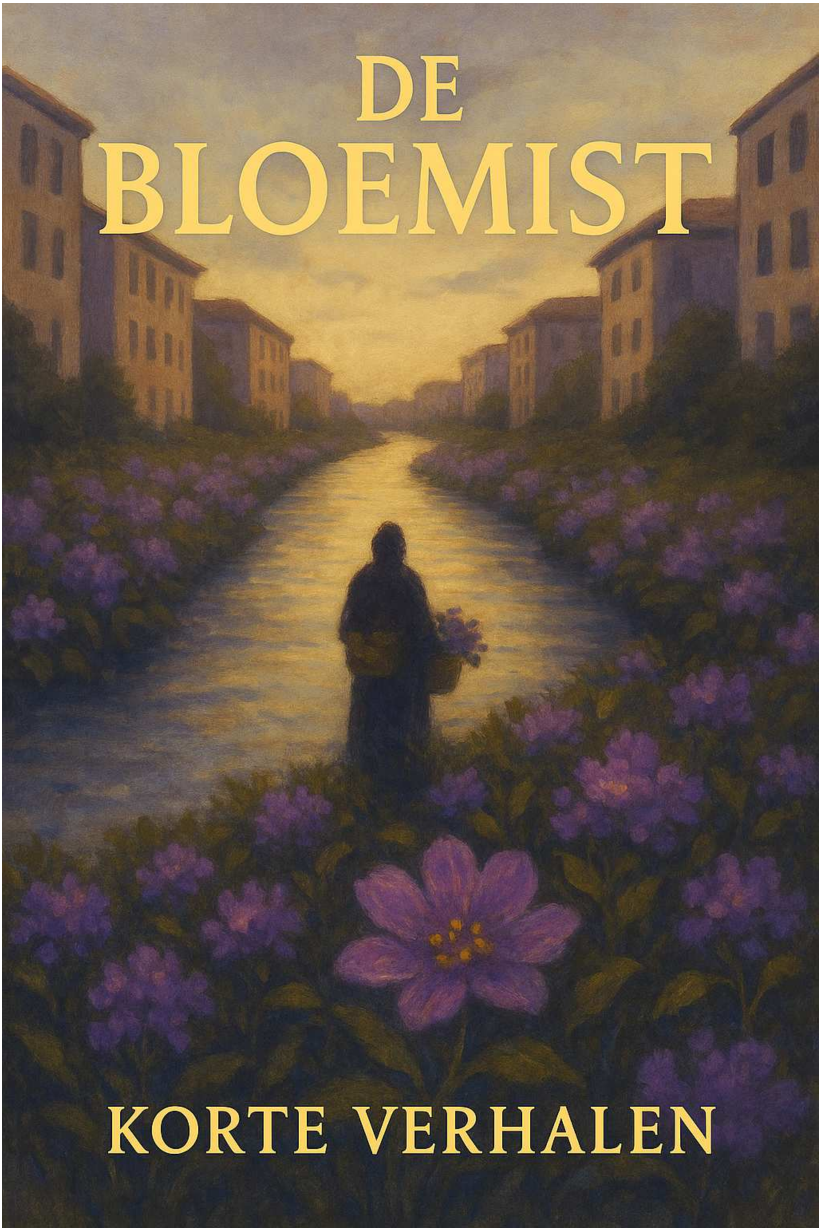
DE
BLOEMIST
KORTE VERHALEN

De Bloemist
Korte verhalen

De Bloemist
Korte verhalen

schoolsupermarkt
2025

De Bloemist
Korte verhalen

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De Bloemist

In het stadje Orchid liep er een riviertje dwars door het centrum heen. Aan de overkant waren lage flats van twee op elkaar. Hij liep er langs. Hij kwam van zijn ouderlijk huis vandaan. Hij was alleen langs de tuin gegaan, die was veel groter geworden. Langs het riviertje daar groeiden vuile paarse bloemen zoals die genoemd werden. Hij was verder niet het huis binnengegaan, maar zag zijn zusje bij het raam van haar slaapkamer, en hij had even gezwaaid. Toen hij thuiskwam ging na een tijdje de telefoon, en hij nam op. Het was zijn zusje. Ze had het erover hoe ze hem zo misten dat er eigenlijk niet mee te leven viel. Ze kon niet goed praten, alsof ze in ademnood was. Er waren lange pauzes. Ze zei toen dat ze op het treuzelpad waren. Hij wist niet wat dat betekende, en vroeg ernaar, maar hij kreeg niet echt antwoord.

Hij wilde er niet meer komen. Er was teveel gebeurd. Wel liep hij soms langs hun grote lange tuin die helemaal tot de rivier reikte. De rivier liep ook langs hun huis. Hij was daarvoor bij de bloemist geweest, in het centrum, bij de rivier. De bloemist had zich vreemd gedragen, maar dat deed hij altijd. De stad was vol met de bloemen van de bloemist. Het bleek dat hij ermee had gerommeld. Hij had de bloemen genetisch gemanipuleerd en lopen klonen op allerlei vreemde manieren.

Er waren hierdoor vreemde bloemenziektes ontstaan die ook op de mensen overgingen. Mensen hadden vaak spraakproblemen, zoals zijn zusje. Hij belde zijn zusje weer terug en vroeg nog een keer wat nou precies het treuzelpad was. Toen had ze het over zo’n overgedragen bloemenziekte. Het zou op de tongen van de mensen gaan zitten. Ze kregen er zwarte of blauwe tongen van.

Hij klikte de radio aan. Er was vreemde mars-muziek. De natuur was mooi in de stad. Maar de bloemist had ermee gerommeld, en ze betaalden een hoge prijs. Niet lang daarna had hij ook de besmetting van het treuzelpad. Alles ging steeds trager en moeizamer. Dingen begonnen zich te verdraaien in zijn hoofd, en hij had het soms benauwd, en liep met een brok in zijn keel. Hoe hij naar zijn familie deed, zo deed zijn vrouw altijd naar hem. Ze zweeg hem dood. Ze had iets veel ergers dan zomaar het treuzelpad.

Hij luisterde naar de mars-muziek. Het leek als vreemde optochten. Hij dacht na over zijn vrouw. Ze leefden niet meer bij elkaar. Ze had de pik op hem, omdat ze alles omdraaide. Als hij iets goed deed was het slecht in haar ogen. Ze sprak niet meer. Hij zag de bloemist als de schuldige. Het begon toen ze heel veel bloemen van de bloemist had besteld. Toen was ze niet meer dezelfde. Het waren prachtige bloemen, maar ze bleken dodelijk voor het brein van zijn vrouw. Hij was er vaak depressief van. Als dat te hoog op liep wist hij waar hij moest wezen : de bloemist. Dan ging hij altijd lang praten met de bloemist. Die gedroeg zich altijd vreemd. Hij schoot er niet veel mee op. Vaak werd het nog wel erger. Hij had de bloemist gevraagd of er een middel was tegen al die vreemde ziektes in de stad die van zijn bloemen kwamen. Hij had toen gezegd : ‘Ga maar in de wildernis wonen. Ik heb hier mijn werk. Zonder de ziektes verdien ik niets.’

Hij bleef er maar aan denken, wat de bloemist had gezegd. De bloemist kon het allemaal ongestoord blijven doen. Misschien moest hij wel naar de wildernis vertrekken om van alles af te zijn. Maar wat zou hij tegenkomen in de wildernis ? De wildernis had zijn eigen problemen. Het bleek dat daar nog wel veel gevaarlijkere bloemen waren. Hij kon dus geen kant op.

‘Mensen, pas toch op met die bloemen,’ zei hij vaak. Maar de mensen hadden de bloemen ook nodig. Sommigen zeiden dat de bloemen hen beschermden tegen het gevaar van de wildernis. Zij hadden al die steden hier gebouwd. In de wildernis zou het geen leven zijn.

Hij had het gevoel alsof zijn brein aan het aftakelen was. Uiteindelijk belandde hij in het ziekenhuis, zoals zovelen. Wel voelde hij zich fitter dan ooit tevoren. Hij had meer energie dan hij ooit had gehad, en hij dwaalde veelal door de gangen van het ziekenhuis, en in de kelders onder het ziekenhuis. Hij kwam er tot vreemde ontdekkingen. Dozen en bakken vol met bloemen. Het was hier een bolwerk van bloemen.

Het leek alsof de bloemen spraken in zijn hoofd : ‘Nu zal je nachtelijke uitspattingen hebben.’

Hij vroeg zich af wat ze bedoelden, maar al snel bleek het dat hij zoveel energie had dat hij ‘s nachts niet meer goed kon slapen, en zo begon ook het wandelen ‘s nachts. Hij ging dieper en dieper onder het ziekenhuis, en kwam tot grote geheimen. Het was hier niet pluis. Ze hielden mensen hier. Hij kwam in vreemde tunnels terecht en vreemde putten. Hij zag hier ook allemaal mensen, als een verborgen samenleving. Er waren hier ook vreemde liften. Hij vertrouwde het niet, of was er iets met zijn brein gebeurd ?

Weer hoorde hij vreemde mars-muziek. Hij zag vreemde monniken lopen, onder de grond, met kappen op. Hij voelde zichzelf duizelig worden. Wat was hier aan de hand ? Hij hoorde de telefoon gaan, en een spuitend geluid, en hij werd wakker in zijn eigen bed.

Met schuim op zijn mond is hij toen naar de bloemist gegaan. Zoals altijd had de bloemist geen begrip voor zijn betoog. Hij moest maar naar de wildernis gaan. Hij keek de bloemist strak aan. ‘Jij bent verantwoordelijk,’ zei hij, en bleef het zeggen. ‘Ik zag jou ook tussen de monniken onder het ziekenhuis. Vreemde cultus is het.’

‘Maar u zei net dat het een droom was,’ zei de bloemist.

‘Ja, vanwege jouw bloemen,’ zei hij. ‘Ze maken mensen ...’

‘Op het treuzelpad,’ zei de bloemist.

‘Waarom doet u deze dingen ?’ zei hij woest.

‘Omdat er meerdere dingen zijn waarvoor de mens dan oog gaat krijgen,’ zei de bloemist. ‘De mens gaat veel te snel.’

Hij keek de bloemist aan. ‘Maar daarnet zei je nog dat je het voor het geld deed.’

‘Klopt,’ zei de bloemist. ‘Maar ik moet toch wat zeggen. Ik verkoop verhalen. Mensen zijn te ver van de werkelijkheid verwijderd, de diepere werkelijkheid. Mijn verhalen brengen de mens terug.’

‘Ik snap er allemaal geen bal van,’ zei hij, ‘volgens mij bazel je maar wat.’

Na een tijdje zei hij : ‘En wat heb je met mijn vrouw gedaan ?’

De bloemist zweeg. Het was een eigenaardige man.

Hij keek de zwijgende bloemist aan en begon te janken. ‘Zoveel heb je mij afgenomen, zoveel.’

‘Geef mij allemaal maar de schuld,’ zei de bloemist. ‘Altijd makkelijk.’

‘Je gaf het toch toe, wat je met mensen doet door je verziekte bloemen ?’ brulde hij.

‘Mensen betalen ervoor,’ zei de bloemist. ‘Haalt hen uit hun saaie leventje.’

‘Ja, maar wat is het gevolg hiervan ?’ brulde hij. ‘Dit is toch niet meer normaal ?’

‘Gedane zaken nemen geen keer,’ zei de bloemist.

En daar moest hij het mee doen. De bloemist wilde niet verder spreken. Hij is toen naar de politie gegaan, maar die deden ook niks. Hij had het helemaal gehad. Boos liep hij naar huis. Hij kon zich zo ergeren aan dit soort dingen. Wat mensen zich wel niet allemaal in het hoofd halen. Hij kon niet met en niet zonder. Naar de wildernis gaan was geen optie.

Na een tijdje ging de telefoon. Het was de bloemist. Hij snotterde en stamelde, stotterde : ‘S... sorry, mijn vrouw eens verloren. Geen familie meer. I... ik ben t... toen z... zo bitter geworden dat ik iedereen wilde laten voelen wat ik voelde, en werd zo dit evil meesterbrein.’

‘Nou, bedankt dat je in ieder geval eerlijk bent,’ zei hij, ‘en wat nu ? Ga je hier mee door, of ben je eindelijk tot inkeer gekomen ?’

‘N... nee, ik moet er mee door,’ snikte de bloemist. ‘Ik ben te ver afgeweken. Voor mij is er geen hoop meer.’

‘Er is altijd hoop,’ zei hij.

‘I... ik k... kan het niet,’ zei de bloemist. ‘I... ik heb teveel .... I... ik ben ziek, d... de bloemen h.... hebben m... mij i... in ... h... hun m... m... m... m.... macht.’

‘We verzinnen wel wat,’ zei hij.

‘N... nee,’ zei de bloemist. ‘E... er is hier geen kruid tegen opgewassen, het is vechten tegen de bierkaai, en ik ben moe. Ziek is ziek.’

‘Dan moet je naar het ziekenhuis,’ zei hij.

‘Daar geloven ze me niet,’ zei de bloemist.

‘Waarom niet ?’ vroeg hij. ‘Iedereen is hier ziek door jou.’

‘Ze geven allerlei andere verklaringen,’ zei de bloemist. ‘Uiteindelijk zijn het hun bloemen.’

‘Wat bedoel je ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Nou, ik koop bloemen in van het ziekenhuis, die in het ondergrondse gedeelte groeien, en verkoop ze weer door,’ zei de bloemist.

‘Maar jij hebt ze genetisch lopen manipuleren en lopen klonen enzo,’ zei hij.

‘Ze waren al zo, en dat ik dat ook heb gedaan is gewoon decoratie-gewoonte van de bloemist. Ik moet toch wat,’ zei de bloemist. ‘Het is water naar de zee dragen, maar zo houd ik mezelf bezig. Uiteindelijk komt al die rotzooi van het ziekenhuis.’

‘Goed dat je dat opbiecht,’ sprak hij. ‘Heb je enig idee waarom ze dat doen ?’

‘Ze hebben ooit het ziekenhuis boven op het bloemenveld gebouwd. Nu nemen de bloemen wraak op zoveel manieren. Het ziekenhuis had een handeltje in bloemen. Ik zag er wel wat in,’ zei de bloemist.

‘Kappen met die zooi dan,’ zei hij.

‘Ik kan het niet,’ zei de bloemist. ‘Ik ben zwaar ziek. Het is als drugs. Wat die bloemen verspreiden is niet pluis.’

‘Ik had erover gedroomd,’ zei hij. ‘Onder het ziekenhuis zei je, ja. Daar was het. Zoveel gangen, zoveel bloemen, allemaal in dozen en kassen.’

‘Juist,’ zei de bloemist. ‘We zitten gevangen. Nu kan niemand het nog stoppen.’

‘Is dit ons lot ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Ik denk het,’ zei de bloemist.

‘Ik ga me verdiepen op het treuzelpad,’ zei hij, ‘en de bloemen leren kennen, en de geschiedenis, en wat ze willen. Het is inderdaad allemaal te snel gegaan.’

‘Nee, nee,’ zei de bloemist. ‘De bloemen zijn gevaarlijk en onbetrouwbaar. We moeten oorlog voeren.’

‘Oorlog waartegen ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Tegen het ziekenhuis. Zij maken verdachte medicijnen van de bloemen,’ zei de bloemist.

‘Hoe kun je een ziekenhuis bestrijden ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Door de waarheid bekend te maken in de kranten,’ zei de bloemist.

En zo gebeurde het.

De waarheid werd afgedrukt in de kranten. Ze betaalden er een hoge prijs voor. De mensen geloofden het niet. Ze waren te ver heen door de bloemen ziektes en de bloemen medicijnen, en ze dachten dat wat er dan ook in de kranten staat is onbetrouwbaar vanwege de vele bloemen ziektes die op de mens waren overgesprongen.

Daar moest hij het mee doen. Ook de bloemist was door dit alles snel weer koud en zakelijk geworden, en deed alsof er nooit iets was gebeurd, en wist zogenaamd ‘nergens wat van.’ Natuurlijk om zijn handeltje te redden. Hij wilde natuurlijk geen gezichtsverlies lijden. Maar hij had al geen gezicht meer. Iedereen wist wat er daar gebeurde bij de bloemist, maar toch bleven ze het kopen. Voor sommige dingen zijn geen antwoord. Het is gewoon wat de bloemenziektes doen.

Hij bleef vasthouden aan wat de krant erover had geschreven. Hij vond het een mooi verhaal. Hij kon er uren over nadenken. Men vergat het allemaal weer, omdat er dagelijks een nieuwe

krant bijkwam. Steeds meer werd het bedolven onder het puin van de geschiedenis. Het leven ging door, en men vergat en vergat, maar hij vergat het niet. ‘Op het treuzelpad dan maar,’ zei hij telkens. ‘Ik moet oog krijgen voor de verloren en vergeten paden.’

Hij staarde naar de bloemen. Zijn het vijanden of verhalen ? Zijn het vijanden of verdiepingen ? Eén ding weet ik : zij maken het kringetje rond.

Einde

De Staatsgreep

Overal in de trein zaten amazones.
Die hadden het land bezet.
Ze kwamen uit een buurland.
Ze spraken in een andere taal,
maar er waren ook tolken bij.
Hij zat in de trein en dichtbij hem zaten amazones die tot elkaar spraken in de vreemde taal.
Ze waren militair gekleed en waren bewapend.

Hij vroeg hen wat er gaande was.
Ze spraken tot hem en een tolk vertaalde het.
Ze zeiden dat het land door hen was ingenomen, en dat iedereen zich zou moeten houden aan de nieuwe regels.
Toen hij om de nieuwe regels vroeg kreeg hij een folder.

Niemand weet goed wat er gaande is, zei de tolk, maar men zal snel beseffen dat er een staatsgreep is geweest, en dat het land is overgenomen.

De amazones spraken toen verder met elkaar in de vreemde taal.
Hij vond het een mooie taal. Op de folder stond dat hij die taal moest leren.

Iedereen had meldplicht bij de scholen.
Daar zou de nieuwe taal geleerd moeten worden.
Ook de gebruiken van de amazones moesten overgenomen worden.
Er kwam ook een nieuwe bijbel.

Hij keek uit het raam van de trein, een beetje dromerig.
Het was allemaal zo snel gegaan.

Nu zag hij de amazones overal. Soms hadden ze ook hoofddoeken.
Het leek wel op een cultus.
Ze geloofden in de dochter van de hemel, als enige weg tot de moeder van de hemel.
Ook hij moest het nieuwe geloof leren.
Dat stond ook allemaal in de folder.

Hij was op weg naar huis, maar hij wist niet wat hij zou aantreffen sinds de amazones het land hadden overgenomen.
Waren ze nog wel van zichzelf ? Hadden ze nog wel bezit ?

Toen hij bij zijn huis aankwam stonden daar allemaal amazones.
Toen hij zijn huis binnenging bleek het dat ook de amazones daar al waren.
Ze hadden zijn huis in beslag genomen.
Hij zou nu naar een kamp moeten.
Veelal werden scholen als kampen gebruikt, en winkels.
Daar ging zijn privacy.
Ook waren er kampen in de natuur opgezet.
Daar werd hij ingedeeld.
Hij kwam in een grote tent terecht.
Hier zou hij ook onderwezen worden door amazones.

Hij wilde de taal leren. Het sprak hem aan, maar hij wilde ook zijn huis terug.
De amazones zeiden dat hij daar maar voor moest werken.
Uiteindelijk zou hij zo alles kunnen terugverdienen, en meer.

Waarom geen privacy ? vroeg hij.
Daar moet je voor werken, zeiden ze.
Niets komt voor niets.

Hij zei dat hij al hard had gewerkt voor de privacy, maar dat ze het hem hadden afgenomen.
Ze waren niet onder de indruk van zijn betogen.
Er golden nu andere regels.
Hij moest helemaal opnieuw beginnen sinds de amazones waren gekomen.

Hij keek naar de lucht en zag een verschijning van een leeuw in de wolken,
een leeuwin. Het was de dochter van de hemel.
Hij rees zijn handen op van verbazing.
Hij kon zo alles zien, hoe wateren naar beneden vloeiden,
als lagen van andere werkelijkheden.
Het stroomde naar de rivieren.
Hij zag de lucht in vele lagen, wat overging in land.
Ook het land had vele lagen.

Hij keek ernaar en was verwonderd.
De leeuwin brulde.
Zij voerde oorlog.
Zij had de overwinning aan de amazones gegeven.
Hij hoopte nu dat het land er op vooruit zou gaan.
Maar dat zijn privacy hem was afgenomen beviel hem niet.
Toch was hij blij dat hij in de natuur was.
Het deed hem goed.

Hij moest het een plekje leren geven, leren accepteren.
Ze zeiden dat nu alles eerlijk verdeeld was, dat er geen armen meer zouden zijn.
Hij kon zich daar wel in vinden, maar had zijn privacy nodig.
Hij voelde zich bekeken, in de gaten gehouden.
Ze zeiden dat het bescherming en begeleiding was.
Hij voelde dat niet zo.
Hij voelde zich ingenomen.

Ze lieten hem plaatjes zien van een betere wereld.
Het was een spel, en alles moest gewonnen worden en verdiend,
maar de regels daartoe waren heel anders.
Ook als je niets deed en alleen luisterde kreeg je daarvoor punten,
en ook als je studeerde.
Ook als je veel moest lijden kreeg je daarvoor punten.
Er werd niet slechts naar werk uitbetaald.
Hij vond dat wel eerlijker.
Er werd nu uitbetaald als je je aan de nieuwe regels hield.

Uiteindelijk was dat een betere wereld.
Alles werd zo min of meer omgedraaid, teruggedraaid.
Men werd niet meer betaald voor kracht, maar voor zwakte.
Zo werd alles eerlijk verdeeld.
Er was niet meer het recht van de sterkste, niet meer het recht van de meesten.
Minderheden werden uitbetaald, en als je de minste was.
Meerderheden en hen die dachten dat ze de meeste waren werden bespot.
De amazones waren gekomen.
Nu leefden ze in een andere wereld waar de oude regels niet meer golden.
Het land was in bezit genomen.
Het land kon niet meer buitensporig zijn in macht en kracht.
De vrouwen deden het heel anders.

Hij keek naar de vrouwen, en zag een nieuwe wereld.
De oude wereld was voorbijgegaan.
Zij zouden hem de weg wijzen.
Hij moest alles achterlaten, maar zou er zoveel meer voor terugkrijgen.
Ze leken met zoveel. Hoe vroeg zich af hoe dat kon.

Ze waren overal.

Het land waar ze vandaan kwamen was groot.
Veel groter dan zijn land.
Altijd waren ze op een afstand geweest en wist hij er niet veel van.
Maar nu waren ze toch echt gekomen.

Hij keek naar de vrouwen en zag een nieuw zelf.
Ook zag hij de dochter van de hemel in hen, de leeuwin.
Het was alsof de leeuwin door hen heen naar hem keek.
Hij voelde hoe ze jacht op hem voerden.
Nu werden de jagers niet meer uitbetaald, maar de gejaagden.
Nu werden de slagers niet meer uitbetaald, maar de geslachten.

De orde werd omgedraaid.
De amazones brachten een nieuwe leer.
Het hoge zou laag worden, en het lage zou hoog worden.
Niemand had het verwacht, het was zo ineens gebeurd.
Ergens in de nacht waren ze gekomen, toen iedereen sliep.
Nu waren ze niet meer weg te krijgen.
Nu moesten ze ermee leren leven.

Hij keek dromerig voor zich uit.
Het was amazone dag,
De stilte zou nu uitbetaald worden.
Er werd niet meer betaald naar grootheid maar naar kleinheid.
Er werd niet meer betaald naar hardheid, maar naar zachtheid.
Niet naar veelheid, maar naar weinigheid.
Niet het normale werd uitbetaald, maar het vreemde.
Niet het opvallende, maar het verborgene.

De Dwalers

Hij ging verhuizen wegens zijn werk. Het was bijna winter, en hij liep door zijn nieuwe dorp. Er was veel natuur hier. Aan de linkerkant waren wat jongeren bij rijtjeshuizen vuurwerk aan het afsteken. Ze maakten veel lawaai. Hij besloot rechts aan te houden. Hij was op weg naar het centrum voor archeologie, voor zijn nieuwe werk. Hij moest lang dwalen, aan de noordelijke kant. Er was een lange weg daar, met rijtjeshuizen aan de zijkant. In de verte waren de hoge bomen van het bos. Aan de rand van het bos moest ergens het centrum zijn.

Toen hij daar eindelijk was aangekomen belde hij aan. Hij keek door de ruiten naar binnen. Hij zag er een trap die naar boven ging, en wat deuren bij een gangpad. Ook zag hij een kapstok. Daar lagen ook wat hoeden op, en er hingen wat jassen. Het was een ronde kapstok. Het bestond uit ijzeren stangen. Een indiaanse vrouw deed open. Ze verwelkomde hem. Ze leidde hem de trap op, waar ze ergens een zaaltje binnen gingen. Er was daar een indiaanse kom. Het scheen dat de kom al heel oud was. Het had kartelende patronen. De indiaanse vrouw ging er met een scanner overheen. Hiermee verschenen beelden op een beeldscherm, beelden die de indiaanse kom had opgeslagen. Zo konden ze zien hoe de indianen vroeger hadden geleefd.

Hij dwaalde weg in gedachten, hoe hij tot het gebouw kwam. Hij zag de grote letters CVA, centrum voor archeologie. Hij nam de kom in zijn handen. ‘Wat voelt u ?’ vroeg de indiaanse vrouw.

‘Ik werd even afgeleid in mijn gedachten,’ zei hij. ‘Ik dacht over hoe ik hier kwam.’

‘Maar voelt u ook iets ?’ vroeg de vrouw.

‘Nee, eigenlijk niet,’ zei hij.

‘Het is van vroeger,’ sprak ze. ‘Er zitten hier veel herinneringen in opgeslagen. Die beelden kunnen we hier opvangen.’

Hij knikte. ‘Interessant,’ zei hij. ‘Moet ik iets voelen ?’

‘Ja,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Natuurlijk moet je iets voelen. Er is nog steeds leven in de kom. De herinneringen leven voort.’

‘Wat moet ik voelen ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Pijn,’ zei de vrouw. ‘De pijn van de indianen.’

‘Ja, dat voel ik wel,’ zei hij. ‘Ik heb het altijd wel gevoeld.’

‘Maar doet de kom ook niets met u ?’ vroeg ze.

‘Nou, eigenlijk niet, nee,’ zei hij, ‘maar het heeft wel mijn interesse. Ik denk dat ik het meer op een afstand beleef, en dat ik er tijd voor moet hebben om erover na te denken. Teveel gevoel zou me kunnen afleiden van het werk, ziet u.’

De vrouw knikte. ‘Heel goed,’ zei ze. ‘Het moet objectief bekeken worden. We mogen ons er niet teveel door laten meesleuren, want er is meer werk te doen.’

‘Precies,’ zei hij.

‘Ik voel nu pijn in mijn schouder,’ zei hij na een tijdje.

Ze keken naar de beelden. Het was een beetje rodig, alsof er een bron was geopend. Toen zagen ze de buffeljacht. Ook zagen ze oorlogen. Hij kreeg steeds meer pijn in zijn schouder. Het was de linker schouder.

‘Opmerkelijk,’ zei ze.

Ze liet hem toen ook andere objecten zien, waar ze met de scanner overheen ging. Weer waren er beelden op het scherm.

‘Wat nu ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Raak het eens aan,’ zei ze.

Hij raakte het object met zijn vinger aan. ‘Veren,’ zei hij.

‘Precies,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Wat voel je ?’

‘Pijn, angst, verdriet,’ zei hij.

‘Ook enorme woede ?’ vroeg ze.

‘Nee, dat niet echt, maar wel weer verschrikkelijk pijnen in mijn linker schouder,’ zei hij.

‘Dus zou u mee willen op expeditie ?’ vroeg ze. ‘We willen nog meer objecten verzamelen.’

‘Wat zijn de andere mogelijkheden ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Nou,’ zei ze. ‘Er is een familie die bepaalde belangrijke objecten heeft, maar ze willen niet meewerken. Het is hun eigendom, een erfenis, en ze willen het niet laten onderzoeken.

Ze geven geen toegang. Wij hebben de hoop dat we ze nog kunnen ompraten.’

‘Dan doe ik liever mee aan dat project,’ zei hij.

Ze nam hem mee naar een keukentje, en trok een la open. Daarin lag een mapje met daarin de gegevens van de familie die archeologische objecten had. Ook stond daarin het adres en het telefoonnummer. In een kantoortje kon hij ze bellen voor een afspraak.

De vrouw zei dat hij dit kantoortje wel als zijn kantoortje kon gebruiken. Hij ging zitten en belde de familie op. De vrouw bleef er bij staan. Hij kreeg een meisje aan de telefoon, die direct heel moeilijk begon te doen. Ze wilden de objecten absoluut niet overdragen voor onderzoek, voor geen enkele prijs, want het was een erfenis. Wel mocht hij langs komen.

Hij sprak nog even met de indiaanse vrouw, en toen ging hij op weg. Hij moest helemaal teruglopen. Dat was een heel eind, en ze woonden nog wel verder weg dan waar hij woonde. Dat was een heel ander deel van het dorp. Het was een groot dorp. Toen hij aanbelde bij de familie, die in een rijtjeshuis woonde, deed het meisje open. Ze had rood haar. Achter haar zag hij een ander meisje met rood haar, en door de ramen kon hij zien dat er ook een meisje was met rood haar in de kamer.

‘Komt u verder,’ zei het meisje. ‘Wilt u iets drinken ?’

‘Nee, dank je,’ zei hij.

Toen gingen ze naar de woonkamer. Daar was ook het andere rode meisje. Hij werd door haar begroet.

‘Gaat u zitten,’ zei het meisje wat de deur had opengedaan. ‘Vertel, wat wilt u precies weten ?’

‘U schijnt hier objecten te hebben, indiaanse objecten, die van belang zijn voor de archeologie,’ zei hij. ‘Wij kunnen met onze scanners beelden oproepen van verleden tijden, die veel inzicht kunnen geven over de wijze waarop zij leefden, en de kennis die zij hadden, traditionele kennis die door de tijden heen verloren is gegaan en waar wij nog veel van zouden kunnen leren.’

‘Ja maar dat kan niet,’ zei het meisje. ‘Echt niet. Zeg, wilt u me ook nog zoenen ofzo, want u vraagt wel hele intieme dingen. Dat kan echt niet. Dan komt u aan ons hart. Het is een erfenis, en we willen ook niet zomaar vreemden bij de erfenis laten. We zijn als de dood dat er iets mee gebeurt, dat er iets misgaat, en dan zouden wij ons hele leven lang met wroeging moeten lopen dat we iemand dichtbij hebben laten komen.’

Het andere meisje in de kamer knikte, en zei ‘ja.’

Hij keek verbaasd. ‘Zoenen ? Nou ja, zeg, wat een vergelijking. Ik hoef daar toch niet op in te gaan ? Maar denk even aan het totaalplaatje, aan het geheel. Jullie hebben iets wat van belang kan wezen voor de vooruitgang van het welzijn van de samenleving.’

‘Niks mee te maken,’ zei toen het derde meisje die zich stil had gehouden en hem zelfs niet had gegroet. ‘Het welzijn van de samenleving mag niet ten koste gaan van ons.’

‘Nee, dat begrijp ik,’ zei hij, ‘maar het kan ook voor jullie eigen welzijn zijn. We beloven dat we voorzichtig zullen omspringen met jullie objecten. Maar trouwens, jullie zien er

niet echt als indianen uit met jullie rode haar. Hoe komen jullie aan die objecten ? Zijn die echt van jullie, of zit er nog een verhaal aan vast ?’

‘Nou ja, zeg,’ zei het derde meisje. ‘Wat een vragen allemaal. We zijn u niets verschuldigd.’

‘Ik vraag het gewoon op een vriendelijke wijze,’ zei hij.

‘Oh ja,’ zei het eerste meisje. ‘Maar u gaat toch wel heel ver om zulke dingen te vragen. Het is bijna koffie tijd ook.’

‘Wat heeft koffie tijd daarmee te maken ?’ vroeg hij.

Hij keek een beetje in het rond in de kamer. Hij zag nu niet direct indiaanse spullen. Er stond een beeldje van een eendje op de vensterbank. Er hingen wat schilderijtjes van het bos aan de muur. ‘Hadden jullie indianen in het voorgeslacht ?’ vroeg hij toen.

‘Nee,’ zei het tweede meisje. ‘Niet dat we weten, maar we hadden contacten.’

‘Zeker,’ zei hij, ‘kan interessant wezen. Wat waren dat voor contacten ?’

‘Hij probeert ons uit,’ zei het derde meisje. ‘Niet antwoorden.’

‘Ja,’ zei het eerste meisje. ‘Hij probeert ons te zoenen.’

‘Jullie hebben vreemde vergelijkingen,’ zei hij. ‘Ik probeer helemaal niks.’

‘Je vraagt intieme, persoonlijke dingen,’ zei het meisje. ‘Ik vertaal dat als zoenen.’

‘Hmm,’ zei hij. ‘Dat gedrag lijkt verdacht veel op erotomanie. Luister, ik kom hier alleen voor wat archeologische objecten, niet voor romantiek of iets dergelijks.’

‘Nee,’ zei ze. ‘U komt opdringerig en intiem over door zulke dingen te vragen die zaken van ons hart zijn, en wat we ook tot het uiterste en met hand en tand beveiligen. Het is bijna als vragen om een kus.’

‘Vreemd hoor,’ zei hij. ‘Dan kun je niks meer vragen. Ik ben hier voor mijn werk, en voor het algemene welzijn en de algemene ontwikkeling van de samenleving, voor niets anders. Jullie hebben objecten die voor ons werk van belang kunnen zijn. Ik had begrepen dat jullie ze voor geen prijs willen verkopen. Als het een erfenis is, en je bent eraan gehecht en hebt er gevoelens bij dan kan ik me dat voorstellen, maar mogen we ze dan eenmalig gebruiken om ze af te scannen ?’

‘Geen sprake van,’ zei het meisje.

‘Hij gaat wel erg ver,’ zei het derde meisje, en liep de kamer uit, direct gevolgd door het tweede meisje.

‘Waarom lopen ze weg ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Voor de koffie, of vanwege u,’ zei het meisje.

Hij keek het meisje indringend aan. Ze had lichtgroen, lichtblauwe ogen, en rood haar. Ook had ze veel sproetjes. ‘Hebben jullie dat contact nog steeds ?’

‘Welk contact ?’ vroeg het meisje.

Hij zuchtte. ‘Geen indianen in het voorgeslacht, maar contacten,’ zei hij.

‘Oh dat,’ zei ze. ‘Ja, daar laat ik me niet over uit. Je bent wel erg nieuwsgierig.’

Toen liep zij ook de kamer uit. Hij keek wat in het rond. Hij zag een boekenkast met wat boeken erin. Omdat het nogal lang duurde stond hij op en liep naar de boekenkast. Er waren ook een paar
gesloten kasten in de boekenkast. Hij keek naar wat boeken die in het open deel stonden. Het waren archeologische boeken. Toen kwamen de meisjes binnen met koffie en koekjes.

‘Moet je ook wat ?’ vroeg het eerste meisje.

‘Nee,’ zei hij, ‘maar zijn jullie ook met archeologie bezig ?’ terwijl hij op de boeken wees.

‘Nee, niet echt,’ zei ze. ‘Het is van onze vader.’

‘Wanneer komt hij ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Nooit,’ zei het meisje. ‘Hij is dood.’

‘Bah, naar,’ zei hij. ‘En je moeder ?’

Die komt zo. Die was even boodschappen aan het doen.

Toen ze dat zei zag hij een grote vrouw met een grote bos rode haar voor het raam staan. Ze tikte er even op. Het eerste meisje liep de gang op en deed voor haar open. De vrouw ging eerst

de keuken in om de tassen neer te zetten, en kwam toen na een tijdje de kamer binnen.

‘Wie hebben we daar ?’ vroeg ze.

Hij stelde zich voor, en ze begroette en verwelkomde hem. Hij had haar al eens zien lopen in het winkelcentrum.

Ze vroeg toen waarvoor hij kwam, en hij legde het hele verhaal voor.

‘Oh ja, dat is iets van mijn man,’ zei ze. ‘Hij had contact met de indianen vanwege zijn werk, en toen heeft hij spullen van ze gekregen. Die hebben wij geërfd toen hij overleed. De spullen zijn dus kostbaar voor ons. Die geven we niet zomaar weg, verkopen we ook niet zomaar, zelfs niet tegen de hoogst mogelijke prijs, en we laten mensen daar ook niet zomaar bijkomen.’

‘Maar wat zijn dat voor spullen ?’ vroeg hij. ‘En wat deed uw man ?’

‘Hij werkte in de scheepsbouw,’ sprak ze. ‘En hij heeft toen eens met de indianen onderhandeld.’

‘Ik begrijp het,’ zei de man, ‘en om wat voor objecten gaat het ?’

‘Het staat in de kelder,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Ik kan het u wel even laten zien.’

‘Nee, mam, niet doen,’ zei het eerste meisje.

‘Ach, het staat achter glas, dus waarom niet ? Hij kan kijken, maar kan er verder niet bijkomen,’ zei de vrouw.

‘Ja, maar wat zou vader daarvan denken ?’ vroeg het meisje.

‘Ja, die draait zich om in zijn graf,’ zei het tweede meisje.

‘Waarom zou hij daarmee problemen hebben ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Nou,’ zei de moeder, ‘het zit zo. Het zijn magische objecten. Mijn dochters hebben wel gelijk. Het is niet iets voor het grote publiek. De objecten hebben rust nodig, anders gaat het zich wreken. De indianen leven voort in de objecten. Daar zijn de herinneringen, wat ze hebben meegemaakt, hun verleden, hun pijnen.’

‘Maar wij mogen daarvan niet leren ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Nee,’ zei de vrouw, ‘eigenlijk niet. Ze moeten met rust gelaten worden. Het is hun privé terrein. Ze mogen niet aan klinische processen onderworpen zijn.’

‘Ik ben maar één persoon,’ zei hij. ‘U kan het me gewoon laten zien terwijl ik op afstand blijf ?’

‘Ik vlieg hem aan, mam,’ zei het derde meisje.

‘Zie, mijn dochters raken emotioneel, u kunt beter gaan,’ zei de vrouw.
Hij stond op. ‘Ach, laat me even kijken. Ik doe niks. Als het achter glas is zullen ze geen last van me hebben. Ik blijf op afstand. Jullie mogen er ook tussenstaan,’ zei hij.

‘Mam, ik doe hem wat aan,’ zei het derde meisje.

‘Wacht even,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Madelief, ga jij anders even naar boven, want je kunt er niet tegen.’

‘Nee, ik laat niemand bij papa’s spullen komen !’ riep het meisje. ‘Ik heb het hem beloofd !’

‘Ja, maar er is niks aan de hand als hij op ruime afstand blijft,’ zei de vrouw.

Toen rende het meisje naar boven. Ook het eerste meisje werd overstuur. ‘Ik vind dit echt niet kunnen,’ snikte ze. ‘Vader zou dit nooit goedkeuren.’

‘Komt u mee,’ zei de vrouw. Ze liep de gang op naar de kelder en deed daar de deur open. Hij volgde haar.

‘Niet doen, mam,’ snikte het eerste meisje.

‘Alsjeblieft, mam, ik smeek het je,’ zei toen het tweede meisje.

Hij keek naar de twee meisjes en toen terug naar de vrouw. Die ging inmiddels over de trap naar beneden. ‘Volg mij,’ zei ze. Hij volgde. Hij hoorde de twee meisjes achter hem huilen. ‘Ik ga hem wat aan doen !’ hoorde hij roepen. Telkens weer keek hij achterom. Het was een lange trap, als een trappenhuis. Ze kwamen zo in een zaaltje terecht. Daar was glas waarachter indiaanse spullen stonden. Er stond een tam tam, en er stonden kommen, en manden. Ook lagen er allerlei indiaanse wapens. ‘Gezien ?’ vroeg de vrouw.

Hij zei niks, en probeerde dichterbij te komen, maar de vrouw hield hem tegen. ‘Op afstand blijven. Mijn man zou dit niet

goed vinden,’ zei ze. Ineens keek hij achterom en zag één van de meisjes met een mes staan. Hij schrok.

‘Hij komt hier niet meer weg, mams,’ zei het meisje. ‘Hij heeft teveel gezien.’

Ineens ging het licht uit, en er werd op hem ingestoken. Hij viel neer. Hij werd toen over een trap achter het zaaltje nog dieper naar beneden gesleept, naar een ander zaaltje waar bedden waren met mensen erin. Hij werd daar ook in een bed gelegd.

‘W... wat is dit ?’ stamelde hij.

‘Niks om je zorgen om te maken,’ zei de vrouw.

‘I... ik zie dat ik niet de enige ben,’ zei hij.

‘Kan kloppen,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Wil je nog meer zien ? Wat wil je allemaal nog meer zien ?’

‘L... laat maar,’ stamelde hij. Hij bloedde hevig, en voelde alle kracht uit hem wegstromen.

‘Luister,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Je mag één indiaans archeologisch object uitkiezen, zolang je maar niks zegt over wat hier gebeurd is,’ terwijl één van de meisjes zijn wond begon te verbinden. ‘Als hij het overleefd, mams,’ zei ze.

Toen zijn schouderwond was verbonden stond hij op en liep naar boven naar het glas. Hij bekeek alle objecten. ‘De boog met de pijlen,’ zei hij toen.

De vrouw die met hem was meegelopen, opende het glas, en nam de boog met de pijlen eruit. ‘Mondje dicht,’ zei ze toen.

‘Deze is nu van jou, vanwege wat mijn dochters je hebben aangedaan. Ik had beter moeten weten. Het is mijn fout. Ik hoop dat u het mij kunt vergeven.’

Hij dacht aan de andere mensen in het zaaltje met bedden, maar durfde niets erover te vragen. De vrouw pakte de boog met pijlen voor hem in. ‘Zeg meisjes, zouden jullie je niet klaarmaken voor balletles, vioolles en piano les ?’ vroeg de vrouw.

De meisjes stemden in met hun moeder, en waren al snel naar boven vertrokken. Toen richtte de vrouw zich weer op hem. ‘Het spijt me zeer, mijnheer, dit had nooit moeten gebeuren. Ik vind dat u al deze objecten mag meekrijgen, vanwege wat mijn dochters u hebben aangedaan.’

En zo gebeurde het. De man kreeg alle archeologische objecten mee, en het centrum voor archeologie sprak van een grote winst.

Het voorhangsel van de amazones

Hoofdstuk 1.

Helemaal gehavend, uitgehongerd en verzwakt kwam hij in de wildernis aan bij een kamp, maar het was leeg. Er liepen wat varkens rond. Verder geen inboorlingen. Hij was moe en stapte een tent binnen om daar op een vacht te liggen. Het leek alsof alles stilstond, ook de tijd.

Hij herinnerde zich de boottocht, de schipbreuk, en hoe hij op dit eiland terecht kwam. Na een tijd werd hij wakker van geluid. De inboorlingen waren teruggekomen. Hij keek langs de tent opening waar een doek hing, en zag dat het allemaal vrouwen waren. Hij zag niet één man. Toen ze hem ontdekten raakten ze in paniek en begonnen op hem te schelden. Hij werd toen de tent uitgeduwd. Hij mocht hier niet blijven. Hij had hier niets te zoeken.

Hij smeekte of hij mocht blijven, vertelde hen over de schipbreuk, maar ze waren meedogenloos. Ze begonnen hem te schoppen en te slaan. Hij moest echt weg, anders zouden ze wapens erbij halen.

Hij is toen maar gegaan.

Hij keek naar de blote lichamen van de vrouwen. Sommigen hadden gekruld haar. Hij keek hoe ze op afstand varkensvlees bereidden. Hij zag hoe ze hun dansen uitvoerden, hoe ze daar leefden, in volle overeenstemming met de wildernis. Ze joegen hem niet weg. Hij kon gewoon buiten het kamp blijven. Hier zou hij wel leven. Hij werd nu hun buurman.

Vaak keek hij naar ze als ze op jacht gingen. Hij had zijn eigen hut gebouwd net buiten het kamp. Hij keek naar hun voeten. Ze straalden bloeddorst uit en meedogenloosheid. Ze waren niet geciviliseerd. Het was alsof hun tenen spraken, alsof ze grenzen hadden aangelegd, en alsof hun tenen deze grenzen bewaakten.

Vaak droegen de vrouwen voorhangsels, maar ze waren ook vaak naakt, en sommigen waren altijd naakt. Op een dag waren ze hem zat, en dreven hem tot over de rivier. Sindsdien gebruikten ze ook steeds meer riet in hun kamp. Rondom elke tent of hut was een rieten omheining. Hij ging nog weleens kijken, maar dan stiekum.

Hij hoorde de vrouwen nog weleens over hem spreken, terwijl hij zich goed verborgen hield achter plantengroei. Ze hadden het er soms over dat ze hem zouden vermoorden als hij terug zou proberen te komen. Dat bracht wel een zekere spanning bij hem. Andere vrouwen spraken erover om hem tot slaaf te maken. Hoe dan ook moest hij op zijn hoede zijn.

Er waren watervallen in de buurt die hij soms bezocht. Daar waste hij zichzelf ook, en hij dacht vaak aan de vrouwen. Dat ging niet zonder angst gepaard. Hij was bang voor ze. Ook hadden ze zijn interesse.

Hij trilde, hij voelde zich ziek. Hij was zwaar verhongerd, en daarom had hij ook gehoopt dat de vrouwen hem zouden opnemen in hun kamp. Hij kon zich alleen niet goed redden. Hij wist niet goed hoe hij aan voedsel moest komen. Ergens over de rivier bouwde hij zijn hut. Vaak zwom hij de rivier over om een glimp van de vrouwen op te vangen. Dan kon hij weer verder, dat inspireerde hem, ook al was hij bang voor ze. Hij wist dat ze zo konden omslaan om jacht op hem te maken.

De vrouwen waren meesterlijk in de jacht, en meesterlijk in handwerk. Dat was hij helemaal niet. Hij vroeg zich af hoe hij moest overleven. Hij voelde zich koud en depressief. Hij had het gevoel dat hij gek zou worden als hij zich niet bij hen zou aanbieden, maar hij wist dat dat zijn dood zou kunnen betekenen. Toch waagde hij het erop, want dit was ook geen leven.

Hij zwom de rivier over en ging tot hun kamp. Het kamp was leeg, maar hij wist dat ze elk moment zouden kunnen terugkomen. Toen dat gebeurdde stortte hij zich aan hun voeten. ‘Neem me op in jullie kamp, ik zal alles voor jullie doen,’ zei hij. Maar de vrouwen waren woedend, en begonnen hem te trappen. Sommigen grepen al naar hun wapens, dus hij moest rennen voor zijn leven. ‘Laat hem niet ontkomen !’ riep één van hen.

Hij rende naar de rivier terwijl hij pijlen hoorde suizen. Toen dook hij in het water en ging direct onderwater, om naar de andere kant te zwemmen. Toen hij aan de andere kant van de rivier was gekomen hoordde hij hen roepen. ‘Durf nog één keer terug te komen, en het wordt je dood !’ Maar hij wist dat er ook vrouwen waren die hem liever tot slaaf zouden maken. Hij wist welke vrouwen dat waren. Hij zou teruggaan en zich goed verscholen houden, in de hoop één van deze vrouwen tegen te komen als ze alleen waren. Soms gingen ze namelijk alleen uit het kamp, wat allerlei redenen zou kunnen hebben. Ze waren niet altijd bij elkaar.

Op een dag zag hij één van de vrouwen die hem tot slaaf zouden willen maken alleen. Hij waagde het erop en ging uit de bosjes en sprak haar aan. ‘Als mijn stam het niet wil, dan kan

ik niks voor je doen,’ zei de vrouw toen hij voorstelde haar slaaf te worden. ‘Waarom wil je mijn slaaf zijn ?’ vroeg ze.

‘Kunnen we dan niet ergens anders wonen, jij en ik ?’ vroeg hij. ‘Jij weet alles van voedsel af hier, zoals de anderen. Ik weet niet veel. Ik heb iemand nodig die me onderwijst, en ik kan door je te dienen jou daarvoor terugbetalen.’

‘Nee,’ sprak ze. ‘Ik kan mijn zusters niet missen, en wat moet ik met jou ? Je bent niet één van ons. Wat moet ik met een vreemde ?’

Maar de man gaf niet makkelijk op en begon haar te smeken. ‘Je bent me een vreemde,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Ik ben niet geinteresseerd. Kun je nu weggaan ?’

‘Nee,’ zei hij. ‘Ik verga alleen in deze wildernis.’

‘Dan moet ik geweld gebruiken,’ zei de vrouw. Ze greep haar tomahawk en was klaar hem aan te vallen. ‘Nu weg, hè, anders ...’

Hij deed toen een paar stappen achteruit. Hij ging op de grond liggen. ‘Maar ik ben ziek,’ zei hij, ‘ik heb hulp nodig.’

‘Dan zullen de wilde beesten je eten, die moeten ook eten,’ sprak de vrouw streng en wreed.

‘Alsjeblieft,’ zei hij.

‘Ik ga mijn zusters halen,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Als je hier straks nog steeds bent dan zal het niet goed met je aflopen.’

Hij is toen weggegaan. De keer erop probeerde hij het bij een tweede vrouw die hij alleen zag, en waarvan hij wist dat ze hem liever tot slaaf zou maken dan hem te vermoorden. Maar zij reageerde hetzelfde. Toen probeerde hij het nog bij een derde, maar toen dat ook niet lukte begon de wanhoop pas echt bij hem toe te slaan.

Het ging niet goed met hem. Hij had verzorging nodig. Hij was op zoek naar voedsel. Hij had dromen waarin de vrouwen bij hem waren, maar als hij wakker werd was hij depressief.

De vrouwen waren onbereikbaar voor hem, zoals het leven was. Het was niet leven, maar overleven.

Op een dag kwam er een vrouw van het kamp naar hem toe.
Hij vroeg zich af wat ze moest.
Ze sprak dat haar kamp was aangevallen door goudzoekers.
Er was nu een oorlog, en ze zei dat ze hem wilde inhuren als strijder.
Hij zei dat hij daarvoor te zwak was, maar dat hij misschien wel op een andere wijze zou kunnen helpen.
De vrouw had een steen in haar hand en voordat hij het wist had zij hem hard op het hoofd geslagen met de steen. Hij viel op de grond, en de vrouw begon zijn handen achter zijn rug te binden.
Hij kreunde. ‘Waarom doe je dit ?’

‘Sommigen van mijn zusters spraken dat jij ook één van de goudzoekers bent,’ sprak ze.
‘Nee,’ kreunde hij. ‘Echt niet. Dat is een vergissing.’

‘Ik heb er nu tenminste één uitgeschakeld,’ zei ze.
‘Je zal nu mijn slaaf zijn.’

‘Ben je besneden ?’ vroeg ze.
‘Nee,’ kreunde hij nog steeds van de pijn van zijn hoofd.
‘Alle mannen moeten besneden zijn voor Godia,’ sprak ze streng.

‘Wie is zij ?’ vroeg hij.
‘Onze godin,’ liet ze hem weten.

Ze pakte haar mes, sneed zijn broek weg, en besneed hem toen.
Hij schreeuwde.
Hij voelde zich toen nog zieker.
Toen ging ze weg.

Hoofdstuk 2.

Ze liet hem daar gewoon gebonden liggen.
Hij kon niks doen.
En nu was hij besneden.
Hij zou haar nu nooit meer vergeten.
In zijn hoofd was hij nu haar slaaf geworden.

Hij smeekte tot Godia.
Er was geen antwoord.
Zo had hij al vanaf het begin deze wildernis beleefd.
Het was wreed en meedogenloos.
Hij probeerde de touwen van zijn polsen af te krijgen.
Hij schreeuwde om hulp.
Het zou ook de wilde beesten kunnen aantrekken.
Hij lag hier helemaal machteloos.

Hij was in een hel, deze wildernis.
Oh, had hij deze boottocht maar nooit gedaan.
De herinneringen flitsten door hem heen.

Het was een dodentocht geweest.
Hij herinnerde hoe hij vanuit de woeste zee tot het woeste strand kwam, een wildernis strand, geheel verlaten.
En nu was hij hier.

Hij keek omhoog en zag een donkere vrouw op een primitieve troon. Ze stond op van haar troon. Ze had een rieten rok aan.
‘De gesel zult gij dienen,’ sprak ze.

Hij stamelde : ‘Wie bent u ?’
‘Godia,’ sprak ze.

‘Maak me los,’ sprak hij.
Toen vervaagde het beeld.
Hij zuchtte.
Hij zag roofvogels om hem heen die hem begonnen te pikken.
Hij schreeuwde tot ze, en begon wilde te bewegen, maar niets hielp.
Ze bleven hem pikken.

‘Godia !’ riep hij.
Hij probeerde de roofvogels van hem weg te trappen.
‘Arrrgggh, help me dan toch !’

Hij begon te rollen naar de rivier, en liet zich daarin glijden. Hij ging onderwater. Hij had niet veel kracht meer over. ‘Dit is het einde,’ dacht hij. Hij voelde zichzelf uit zijn lichaam. Hij zag naakte amazones onderwater. Ze grepen hem en trokken hem op uit het water. Zij waren van een andere stam. Hij werd gebonden aan een paal, en zij droegen de paal waaraan hij hing naar hun kamp. Ze wilden hem braden aan een vuur. Hij was al aan het spit, maar de kamp overste die in het kamp was verbood het hen. ‘Hij kan nog van pas komen,’ zei ze. ‘Laten

we hem niet braden. Dat kan alsnog als hij geen nut heeft.’ Ze maakten hem toen los.

‘Wie ben je ?’ vroeg de kamp overste.

Hij vertelde zijn verhaal.
‘Je mag hier blijven, op voorwaarde dat je werkt,’ zei ze.
‘Ik ben ziek,’ zei hij. ‘Ik heb geen krachten over. Ik heb al tijden niets gegeten.’
‘Eten krijg je hier, naarmate je werkt,’ zei de donkere vrouw. ‘Maar met mate. Er zullen tijden zijn dat je niets te eten krijgt, en dan kun je het lichtere werk doen.’
De andere donkere vrouwen begonnen hem te bespotten.

Ze lieten hem een beeld zien van hun godin. ‘Mannen mogen zich hier niets inbeelden. Van alles ben je afhankelijk aan haar,’ sprak de kamp overste.

De vrouwen deden hier handwerk, zorgden voor de beesten of gingen op jacht. Ook reden ze rond op beesten, en deden ze aan sport, vaak worstelen. Hij werd bedreigd en bang gemaakt. Hij wist dat hij hier ook geen leven zou hebben.

In de nacht ontsnapte hij. Hij wilde weer naar het strand. Ergens halverwege viel hij in slaap. Hij had nachtmerries over de amazone stammen.

De volgende ochtend is hij toen doorgestrompeld tot het strand. Dat was nog een hele tocht. Hij vond de wildernis verschrikkelijk, maar het strand was ook verschrikkelijk, want daar lagen al zijn herinneringen van vroeger. Op een gegeven moment kon hij niet verder. Hij is toen terug de wildernis ingegaan. De wildernis was groot. Misschien was het leven beter dieper in de wildernis. Hij zou nu een andere kant opgaan

om de amazone stammen te ontwijken. Hij ging verschillende rivieren over om dieper te komen. Hij verwachtte dat ook daar ergens de wildernis zou overgaan tot het strand, maar dat gebeurde niet. Na lang lopen en veel zwemmen kwam hij aan bij een kamp waar hij nog niet eerder was geweest. Hij vroeg zich af of het hier beter zou zijn. Hij wilde het er wel op wagen. Hier waren ook alleen maar vrouwen. De vrouwen waren direct heel vriendelijk naar hem, ook al wist hij dat dat ook een valstrik zou kunnen wezen.

Ze spraken niet veel, dat viel hem op, maar ze maakten wel veel gebaren. Ze verzorgden de wonden die hij had. Ze maakten hem duidelijk dat er veel amazone stammen in oorlog waren dieper in de wildernis, ook met hen, en dat er een varkensbeest genaamd Sanhedrin in een berggrot woonde en hen onder een hypnose hield. Daarom moest het varkensbeest verslagen worden. Maar men kon niet tegen het zware lawaai van het beest. Ze zouden het moeten doen als het beest zou slapen, maar velen hadden dat al met de dood moeten bekopen. Het beest bewaakte een bepaald gesteente wat hen op afstand onder hypnose hield, maar als je naar het gesteente zou kijken, dan zou je in een andere wereld terechtkomen. Het gesteente was vernoemd naar het beest en heette het sanhedrin gesteente.

Het begon hem te plagen in zijn nachtmerries. Hij werd er een schelder van. Ook werd hij gewelddadig. De vrouwen begonnen hem namelijk meer en meer te pesten sinds hij er was. Dat ze niet altijd zo waren maakte dat hij bleef.

Op een nacht viel het varkensbeest hem aan. Hij wist niet of het echt was of een nachtmerrie. Hij zag het sanhedrin gesteente en kwam in een andere wereld. Maar het viel hem op dat de andere wereld niet veel verschilde van de wereld waar hij vandaan kwam. Was hij nu wakker geworden, of was hij

echt in een andere wereld gekomen ? Sliep hij nog steeds ? Hij liep zijn tent uit en werd als vanouds met een steen op zijn hoofd geslagen door een amazone. Hij wist niet of het was gebeurd door een amazone van zijn eigen kamp of van een ander kamp, vanwege de amazone oorlogen. Het gebeurde namelijk van achteren. Nu lag hij half bewusteloos op de grond, en werd ook nog eens getrapt.

Hoofdstuk 3.

Een vrouw keek hem aan. Zijn handen waren achter zijn rug gebonden. Hij zag een beetje dubbel. Hij kon niet goed zien wie het was. Hij voelde steken in zijn hoofd. ‘Ik kan het je wel uitleggen,’ zei de vrouw. Hij kon niet goed ademhalen.

Hij kon de vrouw niet goed verstaan, maar ze had het over de amazone oorlogen. Ook had ze het over het beest Sanhedrin. Hij kon niks terugzeggen, hij was te zwak. Maar hij wist niet wat hij zou moeten zeggen. Hij zou naar het beest Sanhedrin moeten, met wat andere mannen. Hij zou geofferd worden om het beest gunstig te stemmen. Hij wilde niet. Hij zou vechten tot het bittere einde. Maar hij werd in een kooi gestopt op een kar. Op andere karren zag hij ook mannen in kooien. Toen werden de kooien voortgetrokken naar de grot waar het beest was. Het beest zou nog slapen, anders zouden ze dat niet kunnen doen. Ergens vlak voor de grot werden de karren neergezet, en de amazones begonnen weg te rennen. Ze wisten hoe gevaarlijk het kon zijn. Na een tijdje kwam het beest naar buiten. Het beest maakte nog geen geluid.

Hij moest het met lede ogen aanzien. Het beest begon met de eerste kooi. De man die erin zat werd al snel aan flarden gescheurd. Toen gebeurde hetzelfde met de tweede kooi, en hij was in de derde kooi. Hij zou vechten tot het einde. Het beest

tikte toen op de derde kooi. Nu was hij aan de beurt. Toen sloeg het beest de kooi open, maar hij kon wegrennen. Het beest kwam wel direct achter hem aan. Nog nooit had hij zoveel lawaai gehoord. Het was alsof zijn oren bloedden, maar hij wist zichzelf in veiligheid te brengen. Hij rende verder in de wildernis, en het geluid leek zachter te worden. Hij moest blijven rennen, totdat hij aan het strand zou zijn gekomen aan de andere kant van het eiland. Hier was hij nog niet geweest. Tot zijn grote vreugde zag hij daar een boot. Hij rende op de boot af en wilde de bemanning vertellen wat er met hem was gebeurd. Maar het bleken piraten te zijn en goudzoekers, die totaal onverschillig waren. Er viel van hem niets te roven, dus ze geboden hem weg te gaan. Teleurgesteld ging hij terug de wildernis in.

Weer bouwde hij een hut. Weer had hij vele nachtmerries over Sanhedrin in de nacht. Hij wilde nu weten wat het was. Hij bad tot Godia, maar die hielp hem niet. Hij moest het alleen oplossen, en misschien was er geen oplossing. Hij kon er maar niet aan wennen. Waar was hij terecht gekomen ? Hij betreurde de boottocht en de schipbreuk. Was dit nu zijn noodlot ?

Het was alsof Sanhedrin een mijnenveld was in zijn hoofd, alsof Sanhedrin het verleden was wat hij nooit had kunnen verwerken. Hij lag in een scheiding en zijn vrouw had de kinderen ontvoerd. Daarom had hij de boottocht gemaakt. Maar Sanhedrin liet hem zien dat hij van het verleden niet kon vluchten. Het riep dezelfde wanhoop op. Hij kon met Sanhedrin niet op een rechtstreekse manier afrekenen, zoals hij dat ook niet met zijn verleden kon. Hij moest er omheen werken, andere wegen zien te vinden, ook al leken alle wegen hier dood te lopen, en voelde hij zich omsingeld.

Ja, de amazones hadden hem omsingeld. Ze probeerden hem af te leiden, maar hij wist dat zij het probleem waren. Deze stammen leefden in oorlog om hem. Het waren dingen van het verleden die hem probeerden te overheersen. De amazones streden om hem, en wezen op het varkensbeest, als de lap van de stierenvechter. Al deze amazones stonden tussen hem en zijn vrouw in, en tussen hem en zijn kinderen, tussen hem en het verleden. Hij kon niet terug, maar hij kon ook niet verder. Hij zat muurvast. En Sanhedrin was slechts het voorhangsel van de amazones. Het was naar hem op jacht.

Weer bad hij tot Godia, en hij herinnerde haar woorden : ‘De gesel zult gij dienen.’ Moest hij blij zijn met de amazones die tussen hem en zijn verleden instonden ? Moest hij blij zijn met Sanhedrin ? Het had zijn verleden vervormd. Was het erger of beter geworden ? En wat moest het zijn ? Hij wilde niet ontvluchten aan de diepte ervan. Hij wilde het verleden niet zomaar afdekken. Of was dit de wortel van het verleden ? Gaf het inzicht over het verleden ? Maar wat was dat inzicht dan ? Hij begon toen te bidden tot de gesel, want die moest hij immers dienen.

Het gaf hem richting en diepte. En hierin ontstond betekenis. Het begon te regenen en de regen spoelde alles weg.

Einde

Het Spel

Hij woonde met zijn vriendin op twee hoog.
Zijn vriendin had een spel meegenomen.
Het was een soort puzzelspel en oorlogsspel.
Ze zouden het spel samen spelen, maar hij vond het spel er zo mooi uitzien dat hij direct naar de winkel wilde waar ze het vandaan had.
Ze gaf hem het adres en hij ging direct op pad.
In de winkel aangekomen waren daar veel meer van zulke spelen.
Hij keek zijn ogen uit.
Hoeveel moeten we verliezen voordat we al dit moois zien ? vroeg hij zichzelf af.
Hij was lang depressief geweest, maar dit gaf hem hoop.
Ineens was de gehele wereld mooi in zijn ogen.

Hij kocht nog wat meer van zulke spelen.
Die zou hij samen met zijn vriendin spelen.
Toen hij thuiskwam met de spelen en de tas op de bank zette omhelsde hij zijn vriendin.
‘Ik ben zo blij dat je deze winkel hebt gevonden,’ zei hij.

Ze gingen het op het balkon spelen. Er was hier veel natuur.
‘Je geeft mensen hoop,’ zei hij tegen zijn vriendin.
Het spel was mooi en fijn, avontuurlijk.

Het Elizabeth virus

Juliar draaide aan de tuner. ‘Ja, dit vind ik een goed liedje.’ Hij begon het mee te zingen : ‘Dat we vergeten zijn.’ Maar hij stopte al snel. Hij moest denken aan Daksheim, de stad waar hij vandaan kwam. De stad was getroffen door een atoombom, en sindsdien was het een spookstad, beheerst door Calvijnista. Er werden fabrieken gebouwd op het puin, en daarin moest ieder mens in de stad hard werken. Nog steeds was de stad onder sterke straling. De atoombom werd genoemd Melleyvlu, of het Elizabeth virus.

Juliar werd lang na de atoombom geboren, maar groeide op in het nieuwe Daksheim onder Calvijnista, en was uiteindelijk gevlucht. Maar er stond een hoge prijs op zijn hoofd. Daarom leefde Juliar eenvoudig en stil, om zichzelf niet te verraden. De jagers van Calvijnista waren overal. Juliar woonde nu in het stadje van zijn oma. Maar veilig voelde hij zich hier niet. Hij wilde vluchten naar de wildernis, voordat hij ontdekt zou worden.

Ook Juliar had zware straling opgelopen van de Melleyvlu, de gevallen atoombom, ook al was hij pas lang daarna geboren. Ook werden de gevolgen van geslacht tot geslacht doorgegeven. De stad Daksheim leek er maar niet aan te ontkomen. Juliar herinnerde zich de fabrieken die maar niet stopten, en de verschrikkelijke Calvijnista die regeerde.

Nog voordat de atoombom viel werd de stad beheerst door twee verschrikkelijke heersers, Helman en zijn vrouw Helma, maar Calvijnista na de atoombom leek wel de allerergste. Juliar’s oma vertelde hem veel over de tijd van Helman en Helma. Juliar had zijn vriendin verloren door de straling die nog steeds aanwezig was, en Juliar had er ook veel last van, en

dacht dat hij zou bezwijken. Ook het stadje van oma waar hij nu was leed nog steeds onder de gevolgen van de straling. De Melleyvlu was nog steeds zijn grootste nachtmerrie, alhoewel hij de verhalen over Helman en Helma ook verschrikkelijk vond. Calvijnista was onlosmakelijk verbonden met de Melleyvlu. Het was een tiran, grenzeloos in wreedheid, zonder enige genade. Juriar dacht dat er geen kruid tegeop gewassen was, maar hoopte toch dat meerderen zouden ontsnappen.

Op een dag kwam er een grote roofvogel bij zijn raam. Het was een leor. Dat waren sprekende roofvogels. Leors kwamen bijna niet bij de mensen, dus het was heel bijzonder. De leor sprak tot Juliar dat er wel meer mensen bevrijd zouden kunnen worden, en vroeg met wie hij zou beginnen. ‘Kun je mijn zusje en mijn dochtertje redden ?’ vroeg Juliar. Juliar had namelijk een dochtertje van zijn vriendin, maar die leefde nog steeds in Daksheim, net als zijn zusje.

Het duurde heel lang, maar uiteindelijk was de leor er toch in geslaagd. Hij had Juliar’s zusje en het dochtertje op zijn rug genomen. Maar de vogel was zwaar gewond. Hij was beschoten in Daksheim. Ook het zusje en het dochtertje waren er slecht aan toe en moesten direct naar het ziekenhuis. De vogel wilde niet bij de mensen zijn, dus moest Juliar hem verbergen. Juliar verzorgde hem zo goed als hij kon. De vogel had zijn leven gewaagd om het zusje en dochtertje van Juliar te redden. De vogel stierf en Juliar was er kapot van, helemaal kapot.

Het zusje en dochtertje van Juliar overleefden het wel. Zij kregen een huisje waar ze samen konden wonen. Juliar wist dat het niet volkomen veilig was. Juliar hoopte dat er meerdere leoren zouden komen, maar aan de andere kant wilde hij niet dat ze ten onder zouden gaan zoals deze leor.

Het Elizabeth virus woedde in de breinen van de mens. Het was zwaar giftig. Juliar wist dat ze de natuur nodig hadden. Maar ook in de wildernis waren de jagers. Het leek wel alsof ze helemaal ingesloten waren, en Calvijnista wilde ook het stadje van zijn oma regeren. Juliar dacht eraan om onder te grond te gaan. Daar zou hij kunnen komen door de kelder van zijn oma.

Op een dag kwam er een veel grotere leor bij het raam. Hij zei tegen Juliar dat hij hem wel over de zee zou kunnen brengen naar een eiland. Juliar stemde direct toe. Hij klom op de rug van de vogel, en de vogel nam hem mee de zee over. De vogel vloog extra hoog, zodat ze niet door de jagers gesnapt zouden kunnen worden. Het was een lange tocht over zee. Het eiland was prachtig. Het rook hier zo fris, zo anders. Hier kon Juliar geheel ontgiftigen van het Elizabeth virus. Nu zou de vogel ook de anderen halen, maar er gingen weken voorbij, en de vogel was nog niet teruggekeerd. Juliar begon het ergste te vrezen. In ieder geval moest Juliar hier zien te overleven. Er groeide gelukkig overal voedsel. In de weken dat Juliar hier was had hij nog geen mens gezien. Het was een wildernis eiland. Maar Juliar was nog niet het eiland aan het verkennen. Hij wachtte nog op vogel, maar die leek niet te komen. Juliar begon steeds meer de hoop op te geven.

Uiteindelijk is Juliar toen verder het eiland op gegaan, de wildernis in. Tot zijn grote schrik was er verderop het eiland een soort concentratie kamp. Jammerende mensen achter hekken van botten. Juliar vroeg zich af wat er hier gaande was, en vroeg het aan iemand bij het hek. ‘Ren maar, ren maar,’ werd hem gezegd. ‘Want straks pakken ze je ook.’

‘Wie zijn het ?’ vroeg Juliar.

‘De jagers van Calvijnista,’ werd er gezegd. Juliar schrok en begon te rennen, zo hard als hij kon door de wildernis. Had de vogel hem bedrogen ? Nee, dat kon niet waar zijn. Leoren waren edele, nobele, goede dieren, zeer betrouwbaar. Waarschijnlijk wist de vogel dit niet. Juliar hoorde schoten in de verte. Hij rende het strand op, waar hij ergens een bootje zag liggen met een peddel, en ging het bootje op, om zo te peddelen tot het volgende eiland, maar hij vreeste het ergste. Nog steeds werd er geschoten. Toen hij verder op zee was en omkeek zag hij wat jagers staan. Hij peddelde door. Hij wilde niet opgeven. Plotseling werd hij geraakt in zijn arm. Hij moest toen wel het water in. Hij is toen verder gezwommen, maar hij bloedde hevig en begon te verzwakken. Hij voelde zichzelf wegzakken. Plotseling was daar de vogel die hem greep. In een loeivaart begon de vogel op een volgend eiland af te vliegen. ‘Ik had een foutje gemaakt,’ sprak de vogel. ‘Daar moet je niet wezen.’

‘Waar was je ?’ vroeg Juliar.

‘Teveel oorlog,’ zei de vogel. ‘Ik kwam er niet meer langs, en moest toen een grote omweg nemen. Overal jagers.’

‘Ik begrijp het,’ zei Juliar.

‘Het Elizabeth virus woedt,’ sprak de vogel.

De vogel zette Juliar af op een strandje. Juliar sneed de kogel uit zijn arm en verbond het met een stuk doek. ‘En hier ?’ vroeg Juliar. ‘Zijn ze hier niet ? Wat als ze hier komen ?’

‘Nee,’ zei de vogel. ‘Hier ligt de tegennatuur. Het Elizabeth virus kan hier niet komen.’

‘Ik hoop het,’ zei Juliar. ‘Hoe kan ik verder ontgiftigen ?’

‘Ontdek de natuur,’ zei de vogel. ‘Ik moet nu echt de anderen halen.’

Juliar keek om zich heen. Verderop het eiland waren donkere vrouwen. Het leken amazones. Ze waren heel aardig en vertelden hem over de tegennatuur. Ze speelden allerlei spelletjes, en hadden allerlei sporten. Ze leefden van een bepaald boek, een soort bijbel. Het boek was in hieroglieven opgetekend in hun grotten. Ze kenden het geheel uit hun hoofd. Van jongs af aan moesten ze het leren, om veilig te blijven tegen het Elizabeth virus.

Einde

DE TRAGEDIE VAN TANGA SPANGA

Hij wilde weg uit Tanga Spanga.
Hij ging naar het loket om een kaartje te kopen.
Toen hij het geld gaf was de vrouw aan het loket boos omdat er een baardhaar tussen zou hebben gezeten. Ook had ze het over de huid onder zijn oren, dat er iets met zijn bloed zou zijn.
Hij had toen gezegd dat als ze achter het loket wilde werken, dan zou ze haar haar eens moeten kammen. Toen liep hij weg met het kaartje, en is richting het station gegaan. Daarvoor moest hij eerst door de stad lopen. Het was heel druk.

Bij het station was het ook heel druk. Hij zou de wildernis van Tanga Spanga ingaan. Daar zouden ook wat steden zijn. Hij keek op het kaartje. Ze waren niet duidelijk geweest over wat voor steden het zouden zijn. Toen hij in de trein stapte merkte hij op hoeveel mannen er waren, en maar weinig vrouwen. Naarmate er werd gestopt bij verdere stations gingen steeds meer vrouwen weg, en er kwamen eigenlijk alleen maar mannen bij. Na een tijdje werd er omgeroepen dat ze er waren, dat het het eindpunt was. Maar het was geen stad. Op het station zag hij allemaal klagende mannen. Ze waren veelal lang, slank, met lang haar en baard, vaak lang. Hij liep van het station af, en zag er twee vrouwen met elkaar praten. ‘Hij had zo geklaagd,’ zei de ene vrouw tegen de ander. Hij vroeg zich af of het een dorp was, maar het leek wel een concentratie kamp.

De trein was heel modern, zoals alles modern was in de stad waar hij vandaan kwam. Hier was alles meer primitief. De

vrouwen waren ook primitief. Hij zag steeds meer vrouwen hier. Het viel hen op dat ze veel met elkaar spraken, en spottend spraken over mannen. Terug naar de stad waar hij vandaan kwam wilde hij niet meer. Hij had onwil, woede, angst en was op de vlucht. Hij had het helemaal gehad. Hij liep de wildernis in in de hoop dat hij daar ergens één van de steden zou vinden. Hij durfde niet te spreken met de vrouwen. Mannen zag hij hier niet.

Hij had spijt dat hij niet met de mannen had gesproken. Nu zag hij ze niet meer. Hij zou kunnen wachten totdat de volgende trein zou komen, om dan een man aan te spreken, maar hij durfde het niet aan met deze vrouwen om hem heen. Hij vertrouwde het niet. Hij liep door tot de wildernis, en zou op zoek gaan naar een stad.

Het was lang lopen, en hij begon honger en dorst te krijgen. Hij was bang waar hij terecht zou komen, en bang dat hij nergens terecht zou komen.

Dit was gewoon een dystopie, een hel. Hij durfde bijna geen adem te halen. In zijn hoofd was hij moegedraaid. Dat hadden de vrouwen gedaan, de vrouwen van Tanga Spanga, van de stad waar hij vandaan kwam. Het was alsof ze hem altijd vast probeerden te praten, altijd kleinerend. En hij had blinde vlekken. Als ze eens goed naar hem waren en goed over hem spraken, dan vergat hij dat snel. Het bleef gewoon niet hangen, maar kwam wel ergens op de achtergrond van zijn lange termijn geheugen. Hij was depressief, goed depressief. Hij

wilde niet meer leven, maar wist ook dat hij geen andere keus had.

Angst voor mensen, angst voor vrouwen. Angst voor bittere eindes. Hij schreef wat op in zijn notitie blokje. Hij was ook bang voor papier. Hij had teveel verschrikkelijke dingen gelezen. In Tanga Spanga werden mensen continue overladen met vreselijke papieren. Het was gekkenwerk. Hij moest weg. Hij moest kunnen ademen. Na een tijdje viel hij van vermoeidheid op de grond en viel in slaap. Hij was op, hij kon niet meer. Wat grond was op zijn tong terechtgekomen. Hij had de kracht niet om zijn tong naar binnen te halen.

Hij weende in zijn slaap. Hij hoorde de rivieren bruisen in de verte. Het waren zijn tranen. Het was alsof hij door een insect was gestoken. Hij voelde zich ziek.

Nog nooit was hij zo depressief geweest als toen hij vertrok, maar het was ook een bevrijding. Hij vond het verleden eng. Hij kon er niet mee leven.

Hij had vreemde dromen. Worstelingen met een zwarte cobra. Helemaal uitgeput werd hij wakker. Hij probeerde verder te gaan, maar hij kon niet. Hij had geen kracht.

Toch heeft hij zich toen kunnen vermannen, alhoewel hij in het begin meer kroop dan liep. Later merkte hij dat hij weer normaal kon lopen, en heeft toen heel lang gelopen totdat hij bij het strand aankwam. Hij zag daar een donkere vrouw in de zee staan. Hij voelde zich verhongerd en had erge dorst. Hij

voelde zich ook weer helemaal uitgeput. Hij heeft toen al zijn moed bij elkaar geraapt en liep naar de vrouw toe. Ze begon hem direct te bespotten. Ze maakte allemaal kleinerende opmerkingen. Toen hij met de vrouw sprak werd hij ineens van achteren op zijn hoofd geslagen. Hij raakte bewusteloos, en werd even later wakker bij een groot orakel. Het was een orakel dat alles omdraaide. Het was een steen met vreemde tekens, in een taal die hij niet kende. Het moest van de inboorlingen hier zijn. Iemand hield zijn hoofd van achteren vast en duwde het hard tegen de steen. Het was alsof hij inwendige bloedingen had. Hij weende. Waar was hij toch terecht gekomen ?

Kannibalen ? Van alles kwam in zijn hoofd op. Hij kon niet achterom kijken. Weer werd zijn hoofd tegen de steen gesmeten, en toen weer. Weer begon hij zijn bewustzijn te verliezen. Het was nu alsof zijn eigen bloed van binnen in zijn mond gleed. Wat wilden ze van hem ? Wat wilden ze met hem doen ?

Hij hoorde en voelde watervallen stromen, en gebruis. Hij keek naar de orakel steen. Er stonden donkere vrouwen naast. Ze smeerden toen spul op hem. Wat wilden ze met hem doen ? ‘Kannibalen,’ dacht hij.

Hij werd onder een zogeheten bewaarder van gevangenen geplaatst. Ze behandelde hem meestal, maar niet altijd, redelijk goed, maar hij had het idee dat ze hem voorbereidde om gegeten te worden. Dit ging zo weken door. Amalek was haar naam. Na die tijd zei ze dat zij zijn bewaarder niet meer was,

maar zijn slavendrijver, in de zin dat hij hard werk voor haar moest verrichten. Het leek er op dat ze toch geen kannibalen waren, tenzij het uitstel was.

Hij mocht haar in ieder geval geen bewaarder meer noemen, maar zij was nu zijn slavendrijver. Hij was van zomaar gevangene tot slaaf geworden. Er waren wel meerdere gevangenen en slaven. Ze werden zombies, skeletten of geesten genoemd. Hij werd een geest genoemd. Hij wist dat hij hier ernstig in de problemen was gekomen. Vaak werd hij op zijn hoofd geslagen. Hij had het idee alsof zijn brein barste, alsof hij allemaal inwendige bloedingen had, en vaak werd hij tijdens zijn bewusteloosheid of halve bewusteloosheid ingesmeerd met spul. Toch kannibalen dan ? Hij wist het niet. Ook gooiden ze gevangenen en slaven die gebonden waren van hoge plaatsen. Dan vielen ze te pletter en raakten verlamd of kreupel. Sommigen braken hun rug of nek. Hij wist dat hij hier goed op de verkeerde plaats was gekomen, de ene wreedheid na de andere.

Rust kreeg hij bijna niet. Ook ‘s nachts moest hij werken. Eigenlijk had hij zijn enige slaap als hij bewusteloos of half bewusteloos was. Slapen mocht niet, dat was voor luien. De vrouwen zelf sliepen ook bijna niet. Het leek wel alsof ze altijd op waren. Als hij klaagde of weende was er ook geen medelijden, want dat werd ook met spot beantwoord. Ze probeerden hem te breken. Daar was hij van overtuigd.

Hij wilde vluchten naar de zee, maar er was hier geen ontsnappen aan. Als iemand probeerde te ontsnappen dan liep

zo’n ontsnapping vaak verkeerd af. Als hij zag wat ze deden met hen die probeerden te ontsnappen durfde hij niet meer. Met netten werd de ontsnappende gevangen, en daarna was het goed mis. Dan werden z’n beide kaken gebroken. Ook werden soms armen afgehakt, en soms zelfs benen. Hij was in een hel terechtgekomen. Ontsnappen hier kon je maar één keer proberen.

LANGS HET RIET

Alles wat hier is is de vrucht van vermoeidheid, veel vermoeidheid.

We moeten de lagere bevrijdingen achter ons laten en komen tot de hogere bevrijdingen.

Ik keek naar mijn dochter. Oom Bert had haar gebracht. Ze was klein, haar gezicht opgeblazen. Ik kon bijna niet spreken. Ik zei een hele lange tijd niets, maar nam haar in mijn armen.

Ze was ontvoerd, maar oom Bert had haar teruggevonden. Ze sprak niet.

Maar we moesten nog steeds vluchten. Ze zaten ons nog steeds op de hielen. Het was oorlog. We spraken bijna niet. Alles gebeurde in stilte, stricte stilte. Daarin moesten we ons oefenen.

Ik ben na een tijdje weggerend. Het was te gevaarlijk. Oom Bert zou haar naar een ziekenhuis nemen. Ken je dat gevoel dat je niet bij je kind kan zijn ? Anders traceren ze je. Ze loeren op bloed en op bloedbanden. Maar een hogere wereld wacht ons, hogere bloedbanden. Het is iets van binnen, van de droom, niet iets van buiten. Als gezinnen niet werken, dan moeten we hen overlaten aan de bijmoeders. Een heleboel kunnen we niet dragen en dan moeten we leren loslaten, hen leren overdragen in de handen van het hogere.

Als het oorlog is gaat alles anders. Je moet dan hogere keuzes maken, dwars tegen alles in. Veiligheid boven alles. Je moet je kinderen iets meegeven maar kunt niet telkens met ze sjouwen.

Wij worden geroepen tot de hogere oorlog, en moeten de lagere oorlog achter ons laten. Dan wordt je soms weggeroepen van je gezin. De pijn in je buik, maar je moet aan de hogere opdracht voldoen, op lange termijn werken, want het gezin is slechts een beeld van de taak die we hebben.

In de oorlog is alles anders. Een kat in het nauw maakt vreemde sprongen. Dan moet je strategisch denken, lange termijn denken, niet korte termijn.

Ik moest, ik moest, alles achterlaten. Het hogere riep mij. Ik moest een weg bereiden uit deze stad, want deze stad trekt naar beneden. De uittocht is een lange tocht. En dan ga je door een mijnenveld. Elke stap kan de laatste zijn. Oh, geef toch uw leven aan het hogere, de hogere bron, de kom van het rode, langs het riet.

Ons land was verwoest door een atoombom. Daarom spraken wij niet. Wij konden niet.

Ik dacht aan oom Bert, die zijn leven had gewaagd om mijn dochter te redden. Na de atoombom hadden rovers de macht genomen.

Ik kan niet goed ademen, niet goed spreken, symptomen van de atoombom. We hebben er allemaal last van.

Het vreet aan ons. Geloof wordt tot ontferming. Vermoeidheid is het enige pad wat vruchten voortbrengt. Het klaagt onze ziel aan, voortdurend. Het trekt ons naar beneden in de dieptes, voortdurend. Dan is vermoeidheid de enige ontsnapping. De slaap vlucht van ons weg. Er is alleen rust als we bewusteloos zijn geslagen. Stenen vliegen door de lucht. De oorlog nog steeds in volle gang, ook in de wildernis.

Het rode roept onze naam. Inwendige bloedingen, geen faam. Het is de prijs van de besnijdenis. We moeten alles achter ons laten. Het verleden was een hel.

Ik wandel langs het riet, maar ik moet vluchten. We moeten niet bezitten, maar bewaren, loskomen van de erfdrift. We leven uit roeping, niet uit herkomst.

Welzalig de man die tegen het woeste beest strijdt, en zijn vader en moeder niet in herinnering heeft, maar de dingen zoekt van de andere wereld

Ze roept hem vanaf de bergen,
De rivier van vergetelheid is zijn droom,
kruizende met de rivier van tederheid,
waaraan de hemelse woonplaats ligt

Beloch 15:2-3

De Muur

Op het veld kwam ze naar hem toe rennen.
Ze had een rieten rokje aan.
Ze nam hem in haar armen.
Ze hadden elkaar zo lang niet gezien.
Hij had het eindelijk gewaagd om over de stadsmuur te klimmen.
Hij had het bijna niet overleefd.

Even later waren ze in haar hut.
Weer nam ze hem in haar armen.
‘Ik ben bang voor het verleden,’ zei hij. ‘Ik vind het eng.’

‘Dat is ook niet zo vreemd,’ zei ze.
‘Maar je weet dat je mijn slaaf bent, anders gaan we weer terug naar af.’

Hij knikte. Het was hem best. Bij de amazones waren mannen niet meer dan slaven.
Dat was de enige manier waardoor hij kon blijven.
Vrije mannen waren te gevaarlijk. Die zouden te hoogmoedig kunnen worden en opgeblazen.
De amazones hadden natuurlijk een moeilijk leven gehad vroeger, als slaven van mannen,
en hier waren de rollen omgedraaid voor hun eigen veiligheid.

Hij zuchtte van opluchting dat hij weer bij haar was, haar weer had.
Het leven was moeilijk in de stad.

Hij kon haar niet vergeten.
Hij groeide op in het amazone kamp, maar werd toen door wachters van de stad ontvoerd.
Een hoge prijs moest hij betalen om weer terug te komen.

Hij zuchtte, zuchtte diep. Toen werd hij wakker. Het was maar een droom geweest. Hij kon nooit terug over de muur. Het zou te gevaarlijk zijn. De amazones waren te gevaarlijk. Hij was van hen gevlucht eens. Nog wel had hij soms dromen dat hij bij ze terug leek te zijn, en dan leek het mooi, maar hij wist dat het niet waar was. Hij wilde wel dat het waar was, maar de realiteit was anders. Hij zou geen leven hebben daar.

Hij moest op een afstand blijven.
Dromen kon wel.

Als hij door de grauwe straten van de stad loopt is hij depressief.
Hij mist ze. Hij was immers met ze opgegroeid.
Maar hij weet ook dat hij er nooit naar terug kan.
De muur is tussen hen, en dat is maar goed ook.
Hij kan alleen maar dromen, en zelfs dat is soms gevaarlijk.
Hij kan er soms goed van streek van zijn.
Dan dwalen zijn gedachten terug naar hoe het eens was.

Het was ondragelijk, en toch mist hij ze.
Alsof hij nog steeds daar gevangen is,
als een Stockholm syndroom.

Het blijft aan hem knagen,

ook al is hij daar weg.
De ontsnapping was goed geslaagd, maar het lijkt wel alsof hij alleen maar dieper in het kamp is gekomen, dieper in gevangenschap.

Mentaal en emotioneel is hij nog helemaal niet ontsnapt.
Hij vereert ze om te kunnen overleven.

In een café ontmoette hij een meisje wat op haar leek.
Ze hadden even oogcontact. Hij sprak met een andere man.
Toen hij naar huis ging, naar zijn fiets liep, kwam ze achter hem aan.
Ze vroeg of hij haar wilde thuisbrengen, achterop de fiets, want het was al donker en ze durfde niet alleen naar huis. Ze zei dat hij vertrouwd overkwam.

Hij nam haar achterop de fiets, en ze wees hem de weg naar haar huis.
Ze woonde in een flat. Ze vroeg hem nog even mee te komen naar haar huis.
Hij liep met haar mee.

Binnengekomen ging ze zitten.
Ze vroeg hem of hij ook wilde zitten.
Dat deed hij.

‘Zeg, ken ik jou niet ergens van ?’ vroeg ze. ‘Je lijkt zo vertrouwd.’
Hij haalde zijn schouders op. ‘Ik zou het niet weten, maar je lijkt wel op iemand die ik ken.’

‘Wie ?’ vroeg ze.

‘Oh, iemand van vroeger,’ zei hij.

Ze keek hem aan in zijn ogen.
‘Mag ik weten wie ?’ vroeg ze.

‘Een amazone van het amazone kamp,’ zei hij, ‘maar daar kom ik niet meer.’

‘Dat is je geraden ook,’ zei ze. ‘Veel te gevaarlijk.’

Ze liep toen naar hem toe en begon tegen hem aan te botsen met haar vuist.
‘Wat doe je ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Nou, even testen,’ zei ze.
‘Vreemd,’ zei hij. ‘Wat bedoel je hiermee ?’

‘Laat maar,’ zei ze, terwijl ze ook weer ging zitten. ‘Je had het over amazones.’

‘En ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Die zijn veel agressiever en gevaarlijker dan ik,’ zei ze. ‘Had je niet liever een gesprek gehad met een echte amazone ?’

‘Nee,’ zei hij. ‘Ik probeer van ze weg te vluchten. Het is me gelukt, maar ze zitten nog steeds in mijn hoofd.’

‘Ik zie het,’ zei de vrouw. ‘Ik probeer je echt niks aan te smeren, maar ik merk dat als iemand het over amazones heeft, dan wordt ik baldadig.’

‘Zeg, ik moet weer gaan,’ zei hij.

‘Vind je het eng worden ?’ vroeg ze.

‘Ongemakkelijk,’ zei hij. ‘Je lijkt op haar en nu ga je ook zoals zij doen.’

‘Heeft ze je ooit geslagen ?’ vroeg ze.

Hij stond op. ‘Ik moet gaan. Ik had dit onderwerp nooit moeten aansnijden.’

‘Toe, blijf nog even,’ zei ze.

Hij liep richting de deur, maar ze ging tussen hem en de deur instaan.

‘Probeer je me nu aan het huilen te maken ?’ vroeg hij.

Weer werd hij wakker. Hij was helemaal onder het zweet en met betraande ogen.

‘Dromen, dromen, dromen,’ zuchtte hij. Hij keek rond in zijn saaie kamer. Hij voelde zich depressief. Toch vond hij het een opmerkelijke droom. Toen hij opstond en zich had aangekleed

begon hij het wat op te pennen, ook de vorige droom. Hij bewaarde alle dromen goed op papier. Daar kon hij boeken van schrijven. Het hielp hem er doorheen.

Het ging op en neer met hem. Telkens weer had hij het gevoel dat hij neergeslagen werd. Vluchten ? Hij kon niet vluchten. Ze waren in zijn hoofd, in zijn dromen, op schrift gesteld, ja, overal waren zij. Misschien moest hij dieper het kamp in om ergens een uitgang te vinden, misschien wel onder de grond. Het bleef hem bezig houden. Het roofde al zijn tijd en al zijn energie. Doodmoe werd hij van deze vrouwen. Hij had het gevoel dat ze hem krankzinnig probeerden te drijven, of onder de trein. Hij moest vechten voor zijn leven, ook al was hij daar weg. Misschien hadden ze dingen in hem geimplanteerd.

Ook had hij veel schilderijen van amazones in huis. Hij vroeg er zelf een beetje om, maar alleen zo kon hij het verwerken. Een schilderij was immers veiliger dan daar letterlijk te zijn, maar het leek ook wel hoe verder hij van hen was verwijderd, hoe dieper en erger het werd. Alsof hij niet met en niet zonder kon. Hij moest ergens een middenweg zien te vinden, maar dat ging niet makkelijk.

Hevig piekerde en puzzelde hij. Hij kon er niet omheen en ook niet doorheen. Hij zat vast. Hij wilde rust, maar kon het niet vinden. Ze teisterden hem. Het waren bullies. En hij mocht zich niet verdedigen. Nee, want dan zou het erger worden. Het waren immers bullies. Hij was bang een huilbui te krijgen, maar ook kon hij niet huilen. Het zat vast. Hij leefde met een brok in zijn keel.

Telkens begon hij toen te dromen over de zee, en het leek alsof hij telkens wakker werd aan het strand. De zee gaf hem hoop, leek alles weg te spoelen. Hij kreeg een nieuwe baan, en het meisje waarmee hij werkte leek op haar. Hij kon niet ontkomen. Zij was overal. Het was het noodlot. Hij kon niet bij haar weg. Telkens weer wist ze wegen te vinden naar hem. Hij kon niet ontsnappen uit haar greep. Op een dag wilde hij van de brug afspringen, maar het meisje hield hem tegen. Ook aan haar vertelde hij het hele verhaal. Ze zei dat hij wat hobbies moest nemen. Zij zou hem er wel mee helpen. Maar hij had het al zo vaak geprobeerd. Hij zag er geen gat meer in.

‘Ik wens dat je het goede goud vindt,’ zei ze.

‘Het is niks,’ zei hij. ‘Ik probeer en probeer maar, maar ik zit gewoon vast.’

Ze keek hem aan en hield hem vast. ‘Eens komen de cirkels wel rond,’ zei ze.

Ze zong een lied voor hem, en hij werd langzaam wakker, terwijl de golven ruisten.

Zijn leven was een aaneenschakeling van dromen, als een muur tussen hem en haar.

Het hield hen veilig tegen elkaar.

Einde

DE HEKSENKINDEREN VAN BEGAL

Ik keek naar hun voeten. Van de grote teen tot de kleine teen waren de tenen steeds korter, als een xylofoon, als een schuine lijn naar beneden. Het waren de heksenkinderen van Begal.
Hun ogen waren hol.

En moeder honger riep mij.

Hoe leven zij ? Het bloed druipt van hun monden.
Over de ruggen van anderen leven zij.

En moeder honger riep mij.
Ik heb niks van ze nodig.

En ik ontsnapte van de planeet Begal. Ik weet niet meer hoe.
Maar de nachtmerries bleven, van de heksenkinderen van Begal.
Ik kon er niet omheen.
Ik moest er dwars doorheen.

In al onze visuele rijkdom zijn we blind.

HET GEHEIM VAN DE SNOEPVISSEN

Een jongen had een speciale gave. Uit zijn hand stroomden dorpen en steden. Maar er was bijna geen wildernis meer, geen natuur. Een heks hield de indiaanse koningin gevangen. De indiaanse koningin had de gave de natuur te brengen waar zij ook maar ging, maar nu ze was opgesloten kon ze dat niet meer. Alleen in haar gevangenschap was de natuur, maar daarbuiten kwam het nauwelijks voor. Zij werd dus opgesloten gehouden in een wildernis grot, heel diep. De grot werd bewaakt door een draak. De mensen van de dorpen en de steden wilden haar vrijzetten, maar konden het niet. De jongen had hen de dorpen en steden gegeven als bescherming tegen de heks. De draak kon niet zomaar verslagen worden. Men moest langs de wildernis gaan naar de zee. Dat was nog slechts een strook wildernis. In de wildernis stond de lange grot, die ook naar de zee leidde. Maar aan de andere kant bewaakte de heks de grot, en die kon ook niet zomaar verslagen worden. Die was veel te sterk. En om bij de heks te komen zou je over een stenen veld van spinazie-zwijnen moeten gaan. De stenen waren hard, en puntig. Je zou er zo overheen kunnen struikelen, en de spinazie-zwijnen maakten veel kabaal, en verslonden hen die te dichtbij kwamen.

De jongen wilde er wel naar toe. De gave van de natuur en de lieve indiaanse koningin moesten vrijgezet worden. Hij ging met zijn speer. Ook had hij een pijl en boog en een vangnet. Maar de spinazie zwijnen waren veel te wild en woest, maakten veel te veel kabaal, en leken wel van steen.

Hij werd wanhopig en moedeloos. Ook struikelde hij telkens over de stenen en bezeerde zich ernstig. Uiteindelijk liep hij trillend terug. Langs de wildernis strook ontmoette hij een feetje. Het feetje was heel klein en sprak tot hem : ‘Maar jongen, die spinazie varkens die zo wild en woest zijn en zo hard en allesverslindend, die kun je niet zomaar verslaan met wat wapens zoals jij hebt. Je moet wat vissen aan zee, op slagroom-vissen. Als je die aan de spinazie zwijnen voedt, dan zullen ze slapen, heel lang, en kun jij je werk doen.’

‘Oh bedankt, lieve fee,’ zei de jongen. ‘Hoe moet ik op slagroom-vissen vissen. Moet ik daar nog wat speciaals voor meenemen ?’

‘Gooi je net maar uit,’ sprak het feetje, ‘en beproef je geluk.’

De jongen liep naar de zee, en wierp zijn net uit. Het feetje ging met hem mee. ‘Zeg, geliefde fee,’ zei de jongen, ‘als ik de spinazie zwijnen heb gevoed, en ze slapen, en ik kom bij de heks, wat moet ik dan doen, want zij is veel te sterk. Niemand kan tegen de heks op.’

‘Oh, ik heb wel een plannetje,’ zei het feetje.

De jongen ving wat slagroom-vissen en ging ermee naar de spinazie varkens, maar die moesten er niets van hebben. Wel hield het hen op een afstand. Het scheen dat ze bang waren voor de slagroom-vissen. ‘Bekogel ze ermee,’ zei het feetje. Dat deed de jongen toen. ‘De zwijnen kunnen niet tegen

slagroom-vissen, daar worden ze moe van,’ zei het feetje, ‘dat zwakt hen af.’

‘Maar ik begin zelf ook moe te worden,’ zei de jongen. Even leek het alsof de jongen weg begon te zakken, maar het feetje gaf hem toverkracht. ‘Kom,’ zei het feetje. ‘De varkens slapen. Nu moeten we naar de heks.’ De jongen ging bijna slaapwandelend het feetje achterna. ‘Ik weet wel een truuk.’

Toen de heks ze zag aankomen begon ze te schaterlachen. ‘Wat een slampampers komen daar aan. Wat komen jullie doen ?’ lachte ze schaterend.

‘Heks,’ zei het feetje. ‘Laat ons er nu door. Je weet dat jij de indiaanse koningin bewaakt.’

‘Die komt niet meer vrij,’ zei de heks. ‘Wie wil je daarvoor meebrengen ?’

‘Oh, ik ben iets vergeten,’ zei het feetje fluisterend naar de jongen. Ze moesten terug naar het strand, en dan lopen totdat ze bij andere stenen velden waren gekomen. Die stenen waren nog wel erger dan de stenen velden van de spinazie varkens, maar door de toverkracht van het feetje had de jongen daar geen last meer van gehad. Op de andere stenen velden waren broodbuffels en taartbuffels. Zij bewaakten het stafke van Hurretut, waar de heks mee uitgeschakeld zou kunnen worden. ‘Waarom heb je dat niet eerder gezegd ?’ vroeg de jongen fluisterend aan het feetje. ‘Vergeten,’ zei het feetje. ‘Dat is de

vloek van de toverkracht die ik bij me draag, dat het me nogal vergeetachtig maakt soms. Alles heeft zo zijn keerzijde.’

Toen ze van de heks wegliepen schaterlachte de heks weer. ‘Wat een lafaarden. Ze weten dat ik onoverwinnelijk ben !’ krijste ze lachend.

De broodbuffels en taartbuffels zagen er gevaarlijk uit, maar de stenen velden waarop ze stonden nog wel meer. ‘Dit kan ik niet,’ zuchtte de jongen.

‘Nee,’ zei het feetje.

‘Het ziet eruit als een feestje,’ zei de jongen, ‘en wij zijn niet uitgenodigd.’

‘Wel,’ zei het feetje. ‘Ik weet wel iets.’

‘Slagroom-vissen weer ?’ vroeg de jongen.

‘Nee,’ zei het feetje. Ze wees toen naar een buffel die half op het strand stond. ‘Dat is een broccoli-buffel. Oh, ik weet het al !’ riep het feetje. ‘We hebben ditmaal snoep-vissen nodig. Maar ik denk niet dat de broccoli-buffel ons erlangs zal laten gaan. Laten we teruglopen en zo het strand op gaan.’

De jongen liep weer terug met het feetje. Ver weg van de buffels gingen ze toen het strand op. De jongen wierp weer zijn net, maar hij ving alleen maar slagroom-vissen.

‘Geduld,’ zei het feetje. ‘Snoepvissen vang je niet zomaar.’

‘Hoe vang ik ze ?’ vroeg de jongen.

Het feetje glimlachte. ‘Weet je dat dan niet ?’

‘Nee,’ zei de jongen.

‘Luister,’ zei het feetje. ‘Fluister zacht, met liefde en aandacht, wees warm en vurig, geduldig turend, zeg niet teveel, zeg niet te weinig. Fluister zacht, de woorden waarover je hebt nagedacht. Fluister als de wind, om de zee op te roepen. Zee, zee, neem mij met je mee.’

De jongen begon te fluisteren, en zei ook : ‘Zee, zee, neem me met je mee.’ Heel zacht fluisterde hij, niet teveel, niet te weinig. Hij fluisterde als de wind.’

‘Laat nu je net los,’ zei het feetje. De jongen deed dat, en de zee begon het net mee te trekken. Na een tijdje kwam het net vol met snoepvissen tot de jongen terug.

‘Wat zal het doen tot de buffels ?’ vroeg de jongen.

‘Dat zul je wel zien,’ zei het feetje. Samen liepen ze weer terug naar de stenen buffelvelden. ‘Werp de snoepvissen naar hen toe,’ fluisterde het feetje. ‘Toe, nu.’ De jongen nam een sprong, en gooide de eerste snoepvis. Direct renden de buffels er van weg. Ze waren er bang voor. ‘Waarom zijn ze bang ?’ vroeg de jongen.

‘Weet je dat dan niet ?’ vroeg het feetje. ‘Weet je dat dan echt niet ?’

‘Nee,’ zei de jongen.

‘Gooi er nog één,’ fluisterde het feetje. De jongen sprong weer op en wierp de tweede snoepvis. De buffels waren al snel in geen velden of wegen meer te bekennen. ‘Ze vrezen dit meer dan wat dan ook,’ fluisterde het feetje.

‘Maar waarom ?’ vroeg de jongen.

‘Kom,’ zei het feetje, ‘dan laat ik je wat zien.’ Ergens op het stenen veld was een losse steen. Het feetje haalde de steen weg, en daaronder lag een stafje. ‘Het stafke van Hurretut,’ fluisterde het feetje. ‘Dat hebben we nodig, pak het.’ De jongen pakte het stafje.

Zo liepen ze terug naar de heks. ‘Ga weg met dat ding,’ krijste de heks. Ze begon woelig te doen, en te stamelen, en gek te gillen. Toen weende, klaagde en smeekte ze. ‘Doe weg, doe weg, daar kan ik niet tegen,’ weende ze. Ze begon toen weg te smelten. Alleen haar kleding en haar hoed waren na een tijdje nog over. Toen liepen de jongen en het feetje de grot in die ze had bewaakt. Al gauw vonden ze tralies waarachter de indiaanse koningin stond. Tranen biggelden over de wangen van de indiaanse koningin. ‘Richt nu het stafke op het slot,’ fluisterde het feetje tot de jongen.

De jongen richtte toen het stafke op het slot. ‘Zeg nu : ‘Stafke van Hurretut, open nu deze verschrikkelijke put.’ De jongen deed wat hem gezegd was, en al snel sprong het slot open, en ging de deur van tralies open. De indiaanse koningin was zeer blij, en gaf hem een zoen op zijn wang, en bedankte ook het feetje. Nu zou ze overal de natuur weer kunnen brengen, en zou de wildernis volop bloeien.

De jongen keek naar het stafke, en keek, en keek naar de indiaanse koningin, en werd zo wakker van een mooie droom. Tranen biggelden over zijn wangen, alsof de zee hem had meegenomen naar een prachtig eiland. Gelukkig hoefde hij vandaag niet naar school, dus hij kon lang over de droom nadenken. Het leek wel alsof de dag nooit meer zou eindigen.

Einde

Het Buffelvisioen

Ik liep op het verlaten strand van de rode zee. De zee was woest, het strand was woest. Het was een lang strand, eindeloos. Ik was eenzaam en hongerig. Ik had alles verloren. Ik had visioenen van de buffeljacht, alsof ik ondergedompeld was in de rode zee, wegzinkende, met een steen of blok aan mijn been. Ik had visioenen van de buffelgeest die mij bijna van het leven had beroofd. Hoe ik overwon ? Door de visioenen van een indiaanse vrouw. Maar ik voelde mij als verdrinkende in de rode zee. Ik had niets meer over. Deze vrouw had alles van me weggenomen, maar me er zoveel voor teruggegeven. Ik keek naar haar sieraden. Ik zag hierin de visioenen van een nieuwe wereld. Ze lonkten naar mij, lokten mij. Er waren struiken langs de kant van het strand, maar er was niets eetbaars. Ik strompelde door. Ik verzette mij er niet tegen toen de rode zee mij probeerde in te nemen. Nu was ik deel van de rode zee. Het leek overal om me heen te stromen. Ik was al in de branding.

Ik dacht alleen aan haar, maar moest ik haar loslaten, of was zij een geschenk ? Ik ging de branding weer uit, en strompelde over het strand de wildernis in. Ik was meer dood dan levend. Bij een hut stortte ik neer. Een indiaanse vrouw met donkerrode kleding gaf mij wat soep. Ze legde mij op een mat. Ik zat rechtop, en nam van de soepkom. ‘Doeloe,’ zei ze. Ik wist niet wat het betekende. Ik keek op naar haar met een vragende blik. Ze legde haar handen tegen haar borst, en sprak weer ‘Doeloe’. Maar ik was hier helemaal niet. Ik was in de zee. Sterke stromen hadden mee meegesleurd, meegezogen, en

ik hallucineerde slechts. Ik was aan het ijlen. De indiaanse vrouw pakte mijn hand. Ze wees met haar andere hand op een buffelvisioen. Het waren een heleboel buffels. Het ging over in de jacht. Ik wist dat ik op mezelf joeg, op het verleden. Ik was in de rode zee, golven slingerden mij heen en weer. Het buffelvisioen was groot boven de zee. Ik voelde me erin opgenomen worden.

Ze gaf mij leven. Ik gaf leven aan haar. Door de buffeljacht op het ego, voor de geheimen. Zij was een groot geheimenis in mijn leven. Ik kon niet met en niet zonder haar. Ik kon niet met het verleden leven. Het visioen was rood, boven de rode zee. Het zout begon mijn geheugen aan te vreten, wat als een wild zwijn was.

Ik hoor haar stem, het dringt diep door, als een stem dieper dan het verleden. Ze brengt mijn verleden tot rust. We kunnen niks forceren. Ik ben dankbaar met elk stukje wat moeder natuur mij geeft. Ik leef van moment tot moment.

Ze is wild als de rivieren. Het trauma vecht met de droom. Het is een gevecht om adem te kunnen halen.

Ik moet werken aan de dag. Zij heeft deze dag gegeven. Ik moet er het beste van maken. Ik moet weven en jagen.

Van hoeveel tranen weven wij deze kleding, deze tenten en voorhangsels ? Zij liggen verborgen in de rode zee, als een rood geheimenis, tranen van bloed. Hebben zij niet uiteindelijk het roze voortgebracht ?

De tent van Bilha kleurt roze na de buffeljacht. Dan ligt mijn ziel doorboord. Ik kan niet meer opkomen dan door haar.

Ik probeer me erin te berusten, in het verleden dat als een vis heeft toegeslagen. En ook zij sloeg toe, de indiaanse vrouw. Nu kruizen de ideeën, krijgt het een andere wending, een andere richting. Ik zie nu door rood en roze. Het buffelvisioen hangt om mij heen. Ik ga met gebogen hoofd. Ik ga in het stof. Hoe diep moest ik dalen om hier te komen ? Het is slechts een verhaal. Zij is de vertelster. Zij is niet uit mijn hoofd. Zij heeft mij doorboord met haar verhalen. Zo nam zij mij op in het buffelvisioen. Oh, tot een dal van dorre doodsbeenderen daalde ik, om haar te zien zoals zij was. Ik zag haar geheimenis, en nu is het roze in mijn hart. Totdat de rivieren van bloed en de rode zee mij weer overstromen, overweldigen, meesleuren in de duistere nacht, op zoek naar haar geheimen. Nee, vinden zal ik ze niet. Alleen zij die aan zichzelf sterven zullen haar zien. Wij zullen slechts als vondelingen gevonden worden. Er is geen overwinningsgeluk, maar wedergeboorte.

Haar visioenen zijn mij meer waard dan goud. In het visioen van de buffelgeest wast zij mij.

Zo ben ik hier met haar gekomen. Ik ben alleen te vinden in haar.

Haar voorhangsels zijn roze in haar tent. Het buffelvisioen is een mijn waarin ik werk om tot haar te komen. Ik had het in de

duisterste nacht van mijn leven. Het is nooit meer weggegaan. Het is altijd hier.

En ik ga langzaam voorwaarts, als een pelgrim, tot de stad van het buffelvisioen. De trap is lang. De poorten zijn eng hier, de voorhangsels roze. En zoveel rood in de nacht, als de rode zee die mij verzwelgt. Ik adem alleen in haar. Ik heb haar gezien en het niet overleefd, maar zij gaf mij nieuw leven. Het verleden verzwolgen, een nieuwe morgen in de diepte. Ik weet, het is slechts de diepere nacht. Zij is het morgenroze, als het diepe roze van de diepste nacht. Ze is een trauma kunstig gesponnen en gewoven, om te verstrikken, de buffel in mij. Haar gifpijlen doorboorden mijn ziel, haar aanrakingen bonden mij. Recht overeind lopen kan ik niet, alleen in haar, zij die mij leven geeft.

Het buffelvisioen stroomt tot mij als de rode zee in de rode nacht. De vliegen van de nieuwe morgen verslinden het vlees van de jacht. Slechts vliegenzwermen aan het einde van de buffeljacht. Het jachtvisioen eindigt in de vliegen, want de honger is op jacht naar de jager. Wat is uw deel ? Vliegen. Tot stof zult gij wederkeren.

En hier ga ik trager, mijn gelofte doende tot de honger, tot de onbereikbaarheid, want zij is de onbereikbare. De mens heeft het bereikbaar gemaakt, en daarom is het vals. Het zijn illusies in de hongernacht, opdat giftige morgens opkomen, die op jacht zijn naar hen. Het zijn illusies van spelende kinderen die macht over elkaar willen uitoefenen. Wie kan er het hardste schreeuwen ?

Ik ontwaak in haar armen. Zij slaapt nog, en is als de zee.

De Zombificator

Het was een wilde amazone stam.
Krijgsgevangenen werden gedood en tot zombie gemaakt.
Ze werden door een soort voodoo-medicijn uit de dood terug geroepen,
om slaven te zijn van de amazones. Het werd witi genoemd.
Het was een stof die door bepaalde hanen werd gedragen,
die daar speciaal voor werden gefokt.
De zombies jammerden de hele dag door omdat ze zwaar werk moeten doen voor de amazones.
Dat waren ze natuurlijk niet gewend. Vaak hadden ze verwende levens gehad.
Scherpe hanenbotjes werden ingesmeerd met de stof en door het vlees van de dode krijgsgevangenen gestoken op bepaalde plaatsen zoals de borst, de rug, de armen en de benen. Zo kwamen zij tot leven.

De droomtante

In de wildernis had ik ze ineens gezien, de trollen.
Al gauw hadden ze me omsingeld, en namen me mee naar een trollenstad.
Ze hadden ringen met giftige gassen waardoor ik veel flauw viel.
Zo kon ik niet ontsnappen.
Ze wilden een zekere prisma van mij, maar de prisma liet mij uiteindelijk ontsnappen uit de stad, ondanks de vele gifgassen.
Ik werkte me met de steen er een weg doorheen.
Dat ging niet vanzelf, duurde me heel lang. Ik moest leren niet flauw te vallen van de gifgassen.
Ik rende de wildernis in met de steen toen ik eindelijk uit de stad was, maar al snel ging alles veel trager, en na een tijdje kon ik me niet meer bewegen, terwijl trollen achter me aankwamen. Ze blaften als honden. Ze wilden de steen. Ze waren een stuk kleiner dan mij, maar sprongen in de lucht om het uit mijn hand proberen te slaan. Eentje sloeg mijn hand met een speer. Op dat moment verscheen er een vrouw, en niet alleen ik viel flauw, maar ook de trollen.

De vrouw pakte mijn hand en begon me mee te trekken. ‘Hoe kon het dat ik flauw viel ?’ stamelde ik.

Niks zeggen, zei de vrouw.

Ze nam mij mee naar een huisje.

Dat was op het nippertje, zei ze.

In het huisje begon ze verder te spreken. Ik had weer wat kracht in mijn armen en benen.

‘Het zijn varkens,’ zei ze.

‘Maar wie bent u ?’ vroeg ik.

‘Een amazone,’ zei ze. Ze deed haar kap af.

‘Hoe deed je ons flauw vallen ?’ vroeg ik.

Ze liet een kruikje zien.

Ze nam me even later mee naar een amazonenkamp.

De trollen hadden me heel erg lopen bespotten en belachelijk lopen maken terwijl ik daar was. Ik merkte telkens dat ik te zwak was om iets terug te zeggen. Ze hadden mij helemaal onder controle met hun giffen. Nu was ik dan bij de amazonen, maar al snel merkte ik dat hetzelfde gebeurde. Ze probeerden mij te kleineren en belachelijk te maken, aan één stuk door.

‘Waarom heb je me hier naartoe genomen ?’ vroeg ik aan de vrouw die me hier gebracht had.

‘Wij willen de steen,’ zei de amazone. ‘Wil je het ruilen ?’

‘Voor wat ?’ vroeg ik.

Ik staarde haar aan, maar werd toen wakker van een vreemde droom.
Vandaag zou ik naar zee gaan.
Toen ik er was aangekomen strompelde ik de zee in.
Ik werd gekweld door herinneringen waarvan de vreemde droom een echo was.
Ik hoopte dat het zout van de zee me zou kunnen genezen.

Het was een tropische dag.
De golven waren fris en bruisend.
Ik had een goede tijd in het zeewater.
Ik ontmoette een vrouw aan het strand.
Ik scheen haar te kennen van vroeger.
Maar ook toen werd ik wakker.
Het was weer een droom geweest.
Ik vertrouwde het niet, stond op, en ging naar beneden.
Ik wist niet of ik nu wel of niet echt wakker was.
Ik onderging het gewoon.
Ik voelde me misselijk.
Ik ging zitten op een stoel.
Ik klikte de tv aan, en ze probeerden een soort spul te verkopen.
Ik klikte de tv uit.
Weer werd ik wakker.
Ik kon maar niet echt wakker worden.
Ik was in een warnet van vreemde dromen.
Het was alsof het me in de diepte van de zee sleurde.
Ik had geen kracht om los te komen.
Ik had geen kracht om boven water te komen.

Ik was in een net. Ik greep naar mijn lichaam, zoekende naar een wapen.
Ik vond een mes en probeerde het net los te kappen.
Net op tijd. Ik vond een gat en zwom naar boven. In de verte was een eiland waar ik naartoe zwom.
Hier woonden inboorlingen, natuurvrouwen, amazones.
Ik werd direct in elkaar getrapt toen ik aan land kwam.
Ze sleurden me naar een grashut waar ze me op een mat legden.
Ik kreunde.
‘Betalen zul je voor je verblijf hier,’ zei een amazone.

‘Maar ik ben hier tegen mijn wil,’ zei ik.
‘Nee,’ zei de amazone. ‘Je was aangespoeld, had je maar niet moeten aanspoelen. Je bent hier zelf naartoe gezwommen.’

‘En toen werd ik in elkaar getrapt,’ zei ik.
‘Natuurlijk,’ zei ze. ‘Mannen zijn een bedreiging. Alleen verzwakte mannen mogen op het eiland komen.’

‘Wat gaan jullie met me doen ?’ vroeg ik.
‘Zolang je zwak bent ben je geen gevaar, en kun je hier blijven, maar betalen zul je, voor elk beetje wat we je geven,’ zei de amazone.

‘Ik heb geen geld, ik heb niks,’ zei ik.
‘Werken zul je,’ zei de amazone.

‘Terwijl jullie me zwak maken ?’ vroeg ik.
‘Ja,’ zei ze. ‘Anders zul je tegen ons werken.’

Weer werd ik wakker. Badend in zweet. Ze moesten me wel hebben, de vreemde dromen. Ik keek naar de steen op mijn nachtkastje. ‘Misschien niet moeten kopen ?’ vroeg ik mezelf.

Mijn tante belde. ‘Tante, ik kan maar niet wakker worden,’ zei ik.
‘Ik heb hetzelfde probleem,’ zei tante.
‘Dan zitten we in hetzelfde schuitje,’ zei ik.
Ik vertelde haar over de steen.
‘Nee, had je niet moeten kopen,’ zei ze. ‘Dat is een plakdroom steen.’
‘Wat is het ?’ vroeg ik.
Maar toen werd ik wakker, wetende dat ik waarschijnlijk nog steeds droomde.
Ik belde haar direct op, mijn tante.

‘Sorry, de verbinding werd verbroken,’ zei ik.
‘Waar heb je het over ?’ vroeg ze. ‘Leuk dat je belt overigens.’

‘Ik had je net aan de telefoon, maar verbinding viel weg,’ zei ik.

‘Welnee, jongen, dat heb je misschien gedroomd,’ zei tante.

‘Ja, dat klopt, maar ik droom waarschijnlijk nog steeds,’ zei ik.

‘Dat idee heb ik ook de hele tijd,’ zei tante.
Ik vertelde haar over de steen, over de plakdroom steen.
‘Ja, dat moet het wel zijn, zei ze.

De verbinding werd toen verbroken. Ik hoorde alleen tuut tuut.
Ik heb toen weer teruggebeld.
Toen kreeg ik iemand anders aan de lijn, die zei dat ik verkeerd verbonden was.
Maar het was toch echt het juiste nummer.
Ik bleef doorvragen, en mijn tante zou vroeger daar gewoond hebben, heel lang geleden, maar die was allang overleden.
Hoe lang had ik wel niet geslapen dan ?
Of misschien droomde ik nog steeds.

Ik keek naar de plakdroom steen.
Ik bleef kijken, en ik voelde mijzelf langzaam wakker worden, maar dat kon toch niet waar zijn ?
Ik heb het uiteindelijk ver weg gegooid in de rivier.
Maar toen werd het dromen nog wel erger.
Daarom ben ik teruggegaan naar de rivier om het op te duiken, maar ik kon het nergens meer vinden. Trollen, trollen, overal om me heen, en ze trokken me de diepte in.
Zij hadden de steen nu.
Ze lieten het aan me zien.

Het was een grot onder de rivier.
We moesten door een tunnel zwemmen, en zo kwamen we in een open ruimte.
Het leidde tot hun stad.

Weer werd ik wakker, en ik was blij dat ik wakker was, ook al kon het natuurlijk een droom zijn, maar ik was blij dat ik weg van de trollen was. En eigenlijk wilde ik helemaal niet meer echt wakker worden. Het was goed zo. Mijn leven was een hel, en als het een keer goed ging, dan maakten mijn herinneringen het wel weer tot een hel. Het leek me onmogelijk om daarvan wakker te worden, maar het was me nu toch gelukt, ook al was het mogelijk een droom.

Ik belde mijn tante, en sprak met haar. We konden het altijd goed met elkaar vinden, hadden dezelfde soort problemen. Telkens weer werd de verbinding verbroken, en dan belde ik terug, en was ik of weer verkeerd verbonden, dat tante al tijden lang was overleden, of ze wist helemaal van niks en was blij dat ik haar belde, alsof we voor een hele lange tijd niet gebeld hadden. Ik vond het eigenaardig en interessant. Ik vertelde haar dat de trollen de plakdroom steen hadden nu. Zij was daar blij mee, want zo zouden ze weggehouden worden van ons. Ik vertelde haar ook over de storingen, het verkeerd verbonden zijn, en al dat soort dingen. Ze vond het vreemd. Soms was haar stem heel vaag, verstond ik haar bijna niet, wist ik niet wat ze zei. Dan leek het alsof ik zelf begon te verzinnen wat ze zei. Soms leek het alsof het een echo was, of mijn eigen stem.

Het was mijn droomtante min of meer. Deze steen zou ik nooit kwijt willen. Ze was altijd weer anders, en dat was het mooie aan haar. Ze was onvoorspelbaar, onberekenbaar. Op het ene moment bestond ze, en het volgende moment bestond ze niet, en leek het op een verzinsel van mij. Het moest natuurlijk ook

niet te dichtbij komen. Dat zou ik niet aankunnen vanwege mijn herinneringen. Het moest wel veilig blijven, op een veilige afstand. En zo was mijn tante tante op een afstand. We hadden onze eigen levens, onze eigen dromen, als de golven van de zee, en soms kruisten ze elkaar.

Vruchten van de pen

Het huis was een erfenis. Het was een hoekhuis.
Ernaast was het pleintje met de vele garages.
Het volgende blok rijtjeshuizen begon pas veel verder.
Er zat een grote ruimte tussen.
Aan de overkant van de straat was een smalle strook bomen.
Daarachter was een smal riviertje, zo smal dat het bijna
een sloot was. Het werd ook vaak de sloot genoemd.

Daarvóór woonde ik in een opvang centrum, maar er kwam een
man die me dit huis gaf.
Hij was gezonden vanwege de erfenis. Hij werkte voor iemand.
Het was het tegenovergestelde van een assassin.
De man noemde zichzelf simpel ‘ijs’.

Ik heb hem daarna nooit meer teruggezien,
maar het ijs bleef altijd bij me.

Ik leefde in een dystopie totdat de man kwam,
en sindsdien was alles heel dubbel.
Ik was verscheurd tussen twee werelden,
maar het ijs genas me.

In mijn herinneringen noemde ik hem altijd oom ijs.
Hij had een hele mooie stem.
Als snijdend ijs.

Soms droomde ik over hem.
Ik had nu een nieuw leven, dankzij hem.
Toen hij kwam, ik zal het nooit vergeten,
sprak hij : ‘Het is tijd.’

Toen bracht hij mij naar mijn nieuwe huis.

Er rijden hier altijd auto’s langs en bussen.
Het is hier goed te leven.
Ik doe mijn boodschappen bij de supermarkt in de buurt, achter het pleintje.
Je kunt daar alles kopen.

Nog steeds snijdt het ijs door mijn ziel.
Ik zit nog deels in mijn herinneringen opgesloten.
Ze zitten heel diep.
Ik hoop dat het ijs er ooit zal komen.

Ik kan niet huilen.
Alles is bevroren en vast.
Het is om mij te beschermen.
Al mijn tranen zijn bevroren.
Al mijn tranen zijn van ijs.
Ze verbergen diepe herinneringen.
Ze verbergen bloed.
Het is gestold.
Het is als steen.
Ik probeer te onthechten, maar het is te diep.

Met een brok in mijn keel loop ik soms naar de supermarkt.
Het is zo groot hier.
Ik ontmoette er eens een Surinaamse vrouw.
We raakten in gesprek omdat ik een interesse had in Suriname.
Ze had het over haar kookkunsten.
Ik wist dat Surinaamse vrouwen vaak goed konden koken.
Ze nodigde mij toen uit om het eens te proberen,
maar ik ben toen weggegaan. Ik was te bang vanwege mijn verleden. Ik had bindingsangst.

We hadden wel telefoonnummers uitgewisseld.
Ze zei dat het tijd kostte.

Ik vroeg me af waarom ze geinteresseerd in me was.
Dat legde ze later uit, vanwege dat ik schrijver was.
Ze had een liefde voor boeken en voor schrijvers.
We hadden het er vaak over.

Ik schreef obscure boeken.
Ik gaf ze nooit uit.
Ik legde ze soms ergens neer voor zwervers of voorbijgangers.
Ik liet ze op allerlei plekken achter.
Dat vond zij ook interessant.

Ze raakte geinteresseerd in mijn geschriften.
Ik had eens een bijbel geschreven.
Dat vond zij het meest interessant.
Met wat vriendinnen vormde ze een groepje om het te bespreken.
Ze gingen ook langs de deuren om de boodschap van de bijbel te verkondigen.
Het deed me een beetje denken aan de Jehovah getuigen.
Ze onderwees zelfs mij uit de bijbel die ik had geschreven.
Ze maakte me er wegwijs in.
Ik vond dat interessant.

De bindingsangst hield me op een zekere afstand.
Ik liet haar veel haar gang gaan.
We spraken elkaar steeds minder.
Wel stuurde ze mij het tijdschrift wat ze met haar vriendinnen maakte over de bijbel.
Ik las het graag.
De zekere afstand maakte het voor mij dragelijk.
Ze maakte er echt wat van.
Ze bouwde er een wereld van en een wereld er omheen.

Ze begon ook boeken te schrijven over de bijbel die ik had geschreven.
Ik vond de boeken interessant.
Ik kreeg ze ook in huis.
Zo stonden ze in mijn boekenkast, en ik las er vaak uit.
Zij bracht de bijbel die ik had geschreven tot leven.

Ik kon mijn herinneringen vervangen door haar.
Haar boeken waren een goede aanvulling bij mijn boeken.
Ze hoorden bij elkaar.
Het ijs zorgde ervoor dat we niet terug naar af gingen.
Het was goed zo.
We bleven min of meer in twee verschillende werelden leven.
Zij had haar leven en ik had mijn leven.
Maar deze levens kruisten door onze boeken.

Ze vroeg mij soms om raad, en ik vroeg haar soms om raad.
Zo vulden we elkaar aan.
Zij was het tweede grote geheimenis in mijn leven,
naast oom ijs.

Eigenlijk was zij het tweede geschenk van oom ijs,
naast het huis wat hij mij had geschonken.
Het was een andere erfenis.

Maar niets was mij waardevoller dan de bijbel die ik had geschreven.
Uiteindelijk waren ze daar uit voortgekomen.
Vruchten van de pen.

oorlogsbesluiten

hoofdstuk 1. het water van de gesha
hoofdstuk 2. het waarheidsgehalte van een flutromannetje
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hoofdstuk 1. het water van de gesha

Dominee Bouma zag de gesha's langsgaan. Het was een tragisch gezicht. Ze liepen heel stijf en mochten niet dromen. Hij las weer verder in het boekje waar hij mee bezig was. Er waren rode vlekken op het papier. Nee, hij kon de gesha's niet helpen. Er waren onzichtbare muren in de stad. Dominee Bouma had vaak black outs en viel weg. Hij las in de inleiding over het zwijn
Lo H. Ook las hij over het water van gesha. Het was een hele lange inleiding. Uiteindelijk begon het verhaal toen.

hoofdstuk 2. het waarheidsgehalte van een flutromannetje

Ed Edelweis was de directeur van een uitgeverij van flutromannetjes. Hij verdiende hier veel geld mee. Hij was in een vergadering en besprak met zijn medewerkers welke

flutroman hij dit keer zou uitgeven. Er lag een hele stapel nog aan ongepubliceerde flutromans die eigenlijk nog op hun moment aan het wachten waren. Iedere medewerker had zijn eigen voorkeur. Er zaten hele bijzonderen bij. Ed Edelweis had ze nog niet allemaal gelezen, maar er moest nu wel een beslissing komen. Zijn oog was gevallen op een boekje genaamd oorlogsbesluiten. Hij vond het wel een interessant verhaal. Hij dacht dat het daarom wel goed zou verkopen. De anderen hadden het ook gelezen. De hoofdstukken waren kort en raadselachtig, bijna als profetieën, als literaire sigaretten. Dat was tevens ook de naam van hun uitgeverij : de literaire sigaret.

Om de stad heen was er een muur gebouwd van flutromannetjes. Het waren bijna hieroglyphen. Je kon alleen de stad in en uit als je ze kon ontcijferen. Het waren immers oorlogsbesluiten.

hoofdstuk 3. dikke pijlen door dikke huiden

Om een gouden kalf dansten zij, de afgoden van hun ambachten. Leeuwen met grote manen joegen op de deserteuren die de oorlog hadden vergeten, en beren joegen op de spijbelaren die van hun halfslachtige principes goden hadden gemaakt, om vervolgens al het principiële te vergeten. Ze waren volgelingen van al te snelle persoonlijking. Daarom moesten de beren komen. Op de tribune zat iemand die

wegsmolt door een vreemd vuur. Het was een vuur van een virus. Ook de amazones joegen op runderen, op de ambachten van de mens, die ze tot hun goden hadden gemaakt. Dikke pijlen door dikke huiden. Het was het vuur van een oog.

Ze stond in de tent van haar moeder. Daar waar het rund geen leeuw wilde worden moest ze het rund schieten.

Harde en stijfgetrokken amazones in het water met pijl en boog om vissen die geen runderen willen worden te schieten. Ook schieten zij runderen die geen vissen willen worden, want de vis is de scholing.

En er was iets in de kerk gekomen waardoor de kerken leegliepen. En zij probeerden te vluchten tot de wildernis, maar ergens halverwege versteenden ze, want ze hadden de natuur niet lief. En zo werden zij als muren, als eenzame voorspellers van een lot voor allen die afdwalen.

De oude vergadering of de nieuwe vergadering ? De shamaan koos voor geen. De oude germaanse golems die op
de gongen sloegen waren gevallen. De amazones waren gekomen. Het was stil op straat. De kerken waren leeg. Het virus was gekomen.

hoofdstuk 4. het vuur van virus

Het was koel weer, maar de muur langs de brede brug naar het noorden was zonovergoten. Er was een plakkaat op de muur

van natuurvrouwen. Amos liep langs de muur, en zijn blik viel op het plakkaat, en hij bleef meer staren. Opeens zag hij het grauwe gezicht van een tante verschijnen op het plakaat. Ze was heel doods en had een gewaad aan. Ze droeg een natuurbaby met een band om zijn voorhoofd. Toen moest die tante de baby overhandigen aan de amazones. Daarna zag hij op het plakkaat een kantoor verschijnen waarin een grote dode leeuw lag, met een pijl door zijn hart. Zijn tante was in een rouwstoet. Het was een hele lange stoet, en ze waren allemaal in lange, grauwe gewaden met gebogen hoofd. Amos was op weg naar het noorden. Hij liep haastig door zonder om te kijken.

Amos was op weg naar een kerkgebouw achter de brug, een kerk van de regressie. Er was nu een nieuwe God, de God van de regressie. Hij ging helemaal achterin het kerkgebouw zitten. Er waren veel meer mensen. Sommige mensen meende hij te kennen, zelfs enkele familie leden, maar waren zij niet reeds overleden ? Misschien vergiste hij zich wel. Soms moest hij twee keer kijken. Ze leken er slechts op, of was er meer ? Hij keek voor zich uit, en luisterde naar de preek die aan hem voorbij vloog. De reformatie was overgegaan in de regressie. Er was nu een nieuw plan, een nieuw fundament. Het was een andere bedeling. Er heerste een andere strategie.

Buiten werden de mensen geplaagd door een virus. Ze konden hun kinderen niet meer opvoeden. Ze moesten hen overdragen aan de amazones. Amos keek voor zich uit, koel. Hij had die nacht een droom gehad dat New York een stuk natuur was met slechts één huis, een groot huis, met een grote tuin die overliep

in de wildernis. Het was een huis voor moeilijk opvoedbare kinderen. Ook waren deze kinderen paranoïde. Eentje durfde eigenlijk nooit zijn kamer uit, en plaste in een plastic prullenbak die hij eens in de week leegde. De prullenbak was helemaal gaan schimmelen, en op een goede dag durfde hij zelfs helemaal op het zolder te gaan, om daar de prullenbak in de week te leggen, vol met water op het aanrechtje wat daar stond. Toen ging hij weer terug naar zijn kamer en durfde er niet meer te komen. Maar toen de eigenaar van het huis veel later erachter kwam dat er een met urine beschimmelde prullenbak op het zolder was was deze eigenaar woest, zo woest dat hij er niet meer wilde werken, omdat hij bang was dat er inmiddels een virus daar was vanwege dat die beschimmelde prullenbak daar zo lang had gestaan. Hij heeft toen die prullenbak opgeruimd, en vertrok gelijktijdig. Midden in de nacht kwam er een raket van het virus die alle kinderen toen mee had genomen, alsof het huis gewoon een raket basis was. Het virus moest dus gewoon hiervoor gekweekt worden. Het was een vreemde droom. Maar inmiddels sloeg een virus wild om zich heen.

Het dreef de mensen de natuur in of ze droegen hun kinderen over aan de amazones. Amos had een mand. Hij wilde er ook wel in plassen. Sommigen zeiden dat urine geneeskrachtige eigenschappen had, en in de dierenwereld bakende het territorium af, als een alarm. Weer anderen zeiden dat het het sap was van de regressie. Amos slenterde weer naar huis. Hij trapte ergens tegen een blikje aan. Het rolde zo de weg over.

Dit is het vuur van een virus, en rook komt er van voort. Een zwarte leeuwin ligt op een voortijdse grafstede, op een stenen graf, waar een naakte amazone voortstaat. Het is de kerk van de regressie, waar het rund, de ambacht, wordt tot leeuw, de oorlog. Haar monniken zijn rovers, zij gaan terug in de tijd. Ze nemen van een rode stof in een speciale pot, het virus van regressie. Ieder mens moet ontwaken tot de eeuwigheden. Ze aanbidden het regressie virus.

hoofdstuk 5. de botvlieg

Hij was als gestoken door een vreemd insect, een vlieg.
Hij kronkelde spastisch op de grond.
Het was drugs in hun hoofden.

Een man schrikt wakker van een vreemde droom. Hij wordt wakker van het geluid van de douche waar zijn vrouw onder staat. Hij gaat de slaapkamer uit en sluipt richting het hokje van de badkamer, maar dan ineens overvalt een angst hem. Hij kijkt naar de muren die hem dreigen te overweldigen. Maar dan wordt hij weer rustig als hij het water van de douche hoort. Het klinkt als warm water. De frisse geur komt onder het badhokje door.

Dan komt zijn vrouw onder de douche vandaan. De muren van het badhokje zijn vreemd geel en vreemd rood, oud. Hij kijkt

ernaar. Dan gaat ook hij onder de douche. Als hij terugkomt in de slaapkamer slaapt zijn vrouw al.

Hij denkt na over zijn droom, en valt dan ook in slaap.
De volgende ochtend zijn ze vroeg wakker. Hij kijkt naar de witte jurk van zijn vrouw. Het is een vreemde witte kleur.

Die nacht kijkt hij naar zijn vrouw, alsof hij door haar wedergeboren moet worden. Maar dat is allemaal sinds hij de vreemde droom had waarin hij was gestoken door een vreemd insect, een vlieg, een botvlieg.

Er staat een kastje in hun slaapkamer met een plantje erbij, en er ligt een mand met verkleedspullen. Buiten hebben ze een haan. Dat gaat altijd door zijn hoofd.

Hij kwam pas heel laat naar bed. Toen hij terugkwam sliep zijn vrouw al.

Hij werd wakker van de douche. Zijn vrouw stond eronder. Hij sloop richting het hokje van de badkamer, maar dan ineens overvalt een angst hem. Hij kijkt naar de muren die hem dreigen te overweldigen. Maar dan wordt hij weer rustig als hij het water van de douche hoort. Het klinkt als warm water. De frisse geur komt onder het badhokje door.

Dan komt zijn vrouw onder de douche vandaan. Ze kijkt verschrikt. 'Ik ben het maar,' zei hij.

'Ik dacht dat je nog sliep,' zei ze.

'Ik werd wakker van het geluid van de douche,' zei hij.

hoofdstuk 6. het badhokje

Het badhokje, daar draaide wel zijn hele leven om. Altijd als zijn vrouw ging douchen werd hij er wakker van, en sloop dan de gang op richting het douche hokje. Hij keek dan naar de vergeelde muren, en naar het vage, vreemde rode. Altijd overvalt de angst hem dan, de muren die hem dreigen te overweldigen. Maar dan wordt hij weer rustig als hij het water van de douche hoort. Het klinkt als warm water. De frisse geur komt onder het badhokje door. Dan komt zijn vrouw er uiteindelijk uit.

Hij wordt er wanhopig van. 'Ik moet denk ik naar een zielenarts,' zegt hij.

Ook bij de zielenarts vertelt hij zijn verhaal. De zielenarts laat hem ook zijn hele levensverhaal vertellen, en al gauw zegt de zielenarts : 'U heeft nooit een moeder gehad, dat wil zeggen dat u nog nooit echt geboren bent, omdat u nooit een echte moeder heeft gehad. U heeft onderdrukte moedergevoelens, het gemis van een moeder. Dat is me zeer duidelijk geworden door uw verhaal. U heeft een trauma opgelopen door dit gemis, wat zich hierin uit. Neemt u het uzelf niet kwalijk. Het komt wel vaker voor.'

'Ja, maar ik zit vast,' zei hij.

'Dat maakt niet uit. Het komt in plaats van het hebben van een moeder,' zei de zielenarts.

Als hij weer thuis is is zijn vrouw onder de douche. Hij loopt richting het douche hokje, maar een enorme angst overvalt hem. Hij valt op de grond, en begint spastisch te rollen als gestoken door een vreemd insect, een vlieg, een botvlieg.

De mens is voortgekomen vanuit de natuurvrouw, en zal naar de natuurvrouw wederkeren.

hoofdstuk 7. hij moest wederom geboren worden

Meer mensen kregen last van angst aanvallen en paniek aanvallen zoals hij had. Het ging gepaard met zware ademhalingsproblemen.

Het was een groot probleem. Hij moest echt rennen in de bessenvelden. Hij moest wederom
geboren worden. De monsters waren kruizingen tussen tijgers en beren, maar dan veel erger. Hij moest rennen voor zijn leven, altijd, als hij in de bessenvelden was. Zo kwam hij ook eens bij haar terecht. Hij kon zijn dromen niet najagen, maar hij kwam bij haar terecht. Het monster hield hem tegen. Niemand zag het, alleen hij. Zij was immers oorlogsbesluiten.

hoofdstuk 8. oorlogsbesluiten

Zijn vader en moeder waren wandelende flutromannetjes. Zijn vader was heel dik, en zijn moeder was heel dun. Er was een wand tussen hen van flutromannetjes. Zijn moeder was onbereikbaar voor hem. Zijn vader probeerde hem te wurgen met zijn vadsige lichaam. Dat was de nachtmerrie die hij vaak had. Op een dag brokkelde de wand af, en zag hij een prachtige natuur met natuurmensen. Het waren natuurmoeders, natuurvrouwen, en hun kinderen. Hij wist niet wat hij moest doen. Hij was alles kwijt. Het overweldigde hem. Toen is hij maar weer teruggegaan naar zijn flutromannetjes.

Ed Edelweis had het gelezen en het was goed zo. Het was klaar voor publicatie. Kort maar krachtig. Het waren immers oorlogsbesluiten.

hoofdstuk 9. flutromannetjes

Dominee Bouma had het boekje uitgelezen, en keek op. Weer zag hij de gesha's langsgaan. Zij waren stijf en mochten niet dromen. Zij moesten werken voor de flutromannetjes. Zij waren modellen om de schrijvers van de flutromannetjes te inspireren. Ze verdienden veel geld. Dominee Bouma zuchtte. Hij kon niets doen. Ook hij voelde zichzelf als een gesha. Maar hij keek op, en zag een rode planeet. Het waren immers …. oorlogsbesluiten ...

Guldam en de Killer-koning

Guldam ging naar de duistere rijken van Canon, de killer-koning die al deze rijken had onderworpen door een vervloekt boek. Toen Guldam dichter bij de troon van Canon kwam, werd Guldam getroffen door felle lichten die uit de ballen aan de zijkanten van de troon kwamen. Hij moest een tijdje zijn handen voor zijn ogen houden, anders zou hij verblind worden. Slangen gleden over de ballen en over de palen waarop deze ballen rustten. Canon had een gezicht als een skelet en was gekleed in een zwart gewaad met paarse sieraden. Als een hond keek hij naar Guldam, die zijn hoofd van de lichten had weggebogen. Langzaam keek Guldam Canon, de killer-koning, aan. Canon hield het vervloekte boek plotseling omhoog. 'Ik weet dat je hiervoor gekomen bent, toch?', riep Canon.

Guldam boog zich van pijn neer door de woorden van Canon, de killer-koning. Het was alsof zijn woorden zijn hart raakten en alles lieten instortten, maar opnieuw leek Guldam zijn kracht te grijpen. Langzaam hief hij zijn hoofd op om Canon, de killer-koning, weer onder ogen te komen. Het was alsof vuren Guldam troffen, maar hij probeerde de brand te negeren, hoewel het hem diep leek te doorboren. Het vervloekte boek had zoveel sloten en kon alleen op een bepaalde manier geopend worden, maar dan liet het maar een paar pagina's zien. Hiermee had Canon hen allemaal tot slaaf gemaakt als in een labyrint, waardoor ze alleen maar dieper in de valstrikken werden geleid.

Guldam stapte naar voren. Hij hief zijn Zwaard van Vuur op tegen de killer-koning. De killer-koning begon te lachen en stond op om van zijn troon te komen. 'Kijk, Guldam, ik weet waar je vandaan komt. Je wilt het boek. Ik bewaak het universele varken van hypocrisie in dit boek, en houd al zijn varkensmelk vast, zodat jullie allemaal sterven van allerlei soorten honger. Ik ben de heerser van Tantalos, de plaats van hongerslaven. Kijk eens naar al die armoede om je heen. Is het niet prachtig? Het laat ze achter de dingen aan rennen die ze nooit krijgen, en ze vechten daarom tegen elkaar. Is het niet het meesterwerk van de hele schepping?’

‘Ik weet dat je niets van het leven afweet, Guldam,’ zei de killerkoning. ‘Het varken is een beest, en als ik het vrij zou laten, zouden er ergere dingen gebeuren dan je ooit had kunnen bedenken. Als je het kunt verslaan, is het boek van jou.’

Een enorm wezen kwam uit het boek, met koppen als slangen, klauwen als draken, als alle roofdieren in één. ‘En nog iets, Guldam: als je het hebt gedood, zal de varkensmelk uit zijn lichaam komen. Het is gif en het kan het universum verdrinken. Gooi zijn lichaam in de Afgrond van Bloed, anders zal het lot van het universum nog erger zijn.’

Het zou het ergste gevecht worden dat Guldam ooit had. Het beest sleepte Guldam door de onderwereld naar een grot dicht bij de Afgrond van Bloed. Het beest bond Guldam aan een paal vast en sprak: ‘Maak je klaar om te zwemmen in de Afgrond van Bloed, want de slangen zullen je vlees opeten.’

‘Ik ben al te lang opgesloten,’ sprak het beest. ‘Wanneer ik je in de Afgrond van Bloed heb gegooid, zal ik de killer-koning onthoofden, en hem zal hier hetzelfde lot beschoren zijn. Dan zal ik zijn hoofd nemen en mijn boek openen.’

‘Het zal het Boek der Varkens zijn dat alle soorten van de killer-koning in kippen verandert,’ sprak het beest verder. ‘Maar ik heb je nodig om het boek te openen. Ik heb je nodig om de killer-koning te doden. Ik zal je ketenen aan een ketting die lang genoeg is om de killer-koning te kunnen bereiken, en als je me zijn hoofd en gedode lichaam brengt, zal ik genade met je hebben.’

Guldam wist dat hij niets tegen het beest kon beginnen, dus moest hij eerst de killer-koning verslaan. ‘Heb je het varkensbeest verslagen?’ vroeg de killer-koning toen Guldam terugkwam op zijn troon. ‘Nee, ik moet jou eerst verslaan,’ zei Guldam. Hij rende naar de killer-koning, nam zijn ketting in zijn hand en gooide die als een lasso om het hoofd van de killer-koning. De killer-koning schreeuwde toen de ketting hem in een stevige greep kreeg. Reusachtige vogels, de wachters van de killer-koning, kwamen naar voren van de troon om Guldam aan te vallen, maar Guldam doodde ze allemaal met het Zwaard van Vuur. Toen liep hij naar de killer-koning, maar plotseling kwam er vuur uit het vervloekte boek. Guldam hief zijn schild op en kon het vuur van zich afhouden. Toen doorboorde hij het boek met zijn zwaard. De sloten begonnen weg te smelten en een nieuw vuur laadde zich op het zwaard waarmee hij de killer-koning onthoofdde. Toen bracht hij het

hoofd en het gedode lichaam naar het varkensbeest in de grot bij de Afgrond van Bloed.

‘Je bent iets vergeten,’ gilde het varkensbeest. ‘Je moet teruggaan om het Zwaard des Levens te halen. Haal het uit de troon van de verslagen killer-koning.’ Guldam ging terug alsof hij dronken en gehypnotiseerd was. Boven de troon was een gigantisch zwaard in de schede gestoken. Dit moest het Almachtige Zwaard des Levens zijn. Guldam haalde het tevoorschijn en rende terug naar het varkensbeest. ‘Geef het me

nu, en ik zal je bevrijden,’ gilde het varkensbeest. Maar Guldam wist van de bedoelingen van het varken en doorboorde zijn hart met het zwaard. Met een gil wierp het varken zich in de Afgrond van Bloed en zonk weg. Door het zwaard kon Guldam zijn ketenen doorsnijden en al snel was hij een vrij man. Varkensmelk leek uit de bloedbron te komen, en toen hij ervan proefde, wilde hij meer. Het nam de vreemde honger van zijn hart weg. Hij dook in de bron en verzamelde alle huid van het varkensbeest.

Hij rekte het uit en maakte tenten en hing de huiden rond de bron. Hij had nu de bron van de eeuwige jeugd gevonden. De melk sprong uit het bloedige water, terwijl vrouwen uit het meer tevoorschijn kwamen. Ze waren zo lang in deze afgrond opgesloten geweest.

De Zoutvrouwen van de Schagel-vlakte

Where I’m moving on through many places,
Two lovers on the phone, garden in,
In the heart so many spaces

Ik zag haar daar staan,
Ze was aan de telefoon, met haar lover ofzo,
tenminste zo leek het, maar dat kon natuurlijk ook strategie wezen.

En ik wilde weten waarover ze het had.
Ik bleef daar gewoon staan, alsof ik ergens op wachtte,
niet te opzichtig,
Ik keek haar niet aan, maar had mijn oren goed open.

Ze had het over het Paarse Brein,
mensen die maantjesslikkers waren.
Maantjesslikkers zei ze de hele tijd.
En hoedenmannetjes, die kwamen ook in haar verhaal voor,
heel veel hoedenmannetjes, kleine mannetjes met bolhoedjes,
die dingen verkochten onder dwang, ook voedsel en medicijnen,
alles moest maar. Ze hadden ook kleine stropdasjes.

Ik probeerde de puntjes aan elkaar te knopen, maar kon er nog geen chocola van maken.
Het was losse bagger, maar dat ze wat interessants zei was duidelijk.

Wie waren die hoedenmannetjes ?
Ze regeerden de stad, door het paarse brein.
Het was drugs.
Maantjesslikkers waren de slachtoffers van deze criminelen.
Ze werden verslaafd gehouden.

Ik dacht toch dat ik het liedje wat ze zong verkeerd had verstaan.
Toen ze het weer zong leek het :

Where I’m moving on through many places,
Two lovers on the phone, cornered in,
in the heart so many spaces.

Het paarse brein bestond uit allerlei buizen, en het liep door de stad heen.
De hoedenmannetjes waren overal.
Hun koning was ook een hoedenmannetje.
Die leefde diep in het paarse brein.

Ze had het over drugs, ja, dat ze dat zelf ook had genomen,
dat ze was gedwongen.

Ze bleef het liedje maar zingen tot ik er gek van werd,
en toen ben ik uiteindelijk maar doorgelopen,
met het liedje in mijn hoofd en haar woorden.
Ik kon er toen niet los van komen.
Ik ging ermee naar bed en stond er weer mee op.

Was ik zelf misschien ook geen maantjesslikker ?
De hoedenmannetjes waren overal.
Ze zongen dit soort vreemde liedjes,
reclame spotjes, van een dictator.
Want je moest en zou eraan geloven.

Where I’m moving on through many places,
two lovers on the phone, cornered in,
in the heart so many ...

Ja, hoedenmannetjes, overal, en ze werkten voor de lieg-machine,
het paarse brein, bestuurt door hun koning, of werd de koning door
het paarse brein bestuurt ?

Where I’m moving on through many places,
Two lovers on the phone, cornered in,
in the heart so many ...

Het waren een soort steroïden, breinsteroïden,
opgeblazenheid, en dan spatte het uit elkaar,
en giechelden de hoedenmannetjes.

Zo waren het waterhoofden, leeghoofden,
allemaal breinvuurwerk, geen diepte.

Wat een zootje in de paarse stad.
Dat was onze stad.
Ik wilde er niet aan meedoen, maar het had mij in de greep.
Ook ik moest meemarcheren met de hoedenmannetjes.
Het was een grote optocht, en voor wat ?
Eens had deze staatsgreep plaatsgevonden,
en ik wilde weten wat daarvóór was.

Ons brein was versluierd.
Het waren allemaal buizen.
Alles ging mis hier, volkomen mis,
De stad was een misbaksel, en iedereen was een misbaksel,

en ze verkochten het ook nog.
Het werd goed verkocht omdat het gedwongen was.

Ze verdienden aan ons,
het leger, de dokters,
misère is munt

Het waren geen lovers on the phone,
Het was jager en prooi.
Maar wie was wie ?
De rollen konden zo omdraaien.

Je kwam niet ver hier.
Je groeide vast als je een kroon of troon had gegrepen.
Dat had het paarse brein eens gedaan.
Het was nu gevaarlijk gebied.

Hoedenmannetjes overal,
wat is het medicijn ?
Two lovers on the phone is slechts jachtaas.
Wie trapt erin ?
Zovelen.
Daarom was ik maar doorgelopen.
Maar het liet me niet meer los.
Ik was flink de klos.

Blijven staan of weglopen had niet veel zin hier.
Het waren allemaal spiegels.
Alles was deep fake.

Waar moeten we naartoe ?
Het paarse vreet ons weg,
spuugt ons dan uit.

En dan wordt het allemaal gedwongen doorverkocht.
Tweedehands restaurant, dan derdehands, dan vierdehands, etcetera.

Dat doe je toch niet ?
Zij wel. Het zijn immers maantjesslikkers.
Gevangenen van het paarse brein.
En het paarse brein is zijn eigen gevangene.

Hoe stoppen we deze kermis ?
Daarover buigen de geleerden hun hoofden.
Ze zijn zelf ook maantjesslikkers en hoedenmannetjes.
Kinderen van het paarse brein.

Ik dacht aan de zee.
Het zout van de zee moest ons genezen.
Maar het verwondde ons eerst dieper,
anders zouden we nooit los kunnen komen van het monster.
Er moest eerst flink gesneden worden.

De zoutmeisjes waren een plaag, maar het was zo nodig.

De zoutvrouwen van de Schagel-vlakte.
Niet veel had je daar in te brengen.
Ik schrijf me ook in.
Alleen zo kon je je uitschrijven van het paarse brein.
Maar ze sloegen hard, die vrouwen.
Er bleef niet veel van je over.

Het was een plaag, maar oh zo nodig.
Ze waren niet romantisch, geen lovers on the phone.
Wij waren patienten.
Was het geen nieuwe drug ?
Het maantjesslikken was in ieder geval voorbij.

Daar stond de doodstraf op.

Geen hoedenmannetjes meer, slechts vliegen.
Een vliegenplaag in het bos.
En je kunt alleen maar zitten in het mos.

Hansworst hier, Hansworst daar, maar ze komen niet ver.
De zoutvrouwen van de Schagel-vlakte waren gekomen.
Zout in de wonde.

Het steeg me naar mijn hoofd.
Het greep me naar de keel.
Hoe diep moesten we gaan ?
Kinderen hadden ze niet.
Het waren allemaal reageerbuizen.
We waren in het laboratorium.
Als proefdieren.

Dit was het nieuwe probleem,
maar we wilden niet terug naar het paarse brein.
We wilden geen maantjesslikkers meer zijn.
We waren ziek van al dat siervuurwerk.
Alles voor de sier, zonder inhoud.

En wat nu ?
We waren op de golven van de zee, om een nieuw leven te leren.
We waren als vissen in een net op weg naar nieuw land,
om gegeten te worden, verwerkt te worden,
opnieuw geboren te worden,
niet als mens, maar als boek.

We hingen als schilderijen aan de muur,
we waren vreemde liedjes in de hoofden,

het klaagde en jammerde maar door,
totdat zij net zo waren zoals ons.

Bij de zoutvrouwen geen ingang,
geen troost, slechts zout in de wonde,
een ware hel, die eeuwig leek te duren,
en dat moest ook wel, anders zou het paarse brein ons weer grijpen,
en al zijn kotsmisselijke hoedenmannetjes met hun maantjesslikkers.

Bij de zoutvrouwen ook zeker geen uitgang.
Je kan niet naar binnen en niet naar buiten.
Als de zee intreedt zal het zout geen medicijn wezen.

Maar waarom zijn we dan patienten ?
Voor het geld ?
Er werd flink aan ons verdiend,
en daarom wilden ze het zo houden.
Als we genezen zouden zijn dan zou het hen hun baan doen verliezen.

Deze systemen zijn onwrikbaar.
Het speelt zich tegen elkaar uit,
als een vreemd schaakbord.

Hoe kan je hier adem halen ?
Je moet alles kopen.
Niks is gratis.
Het kost je je leven.
Het kost je je vrijheid.
Het kost je je brein.
Zoveel voor een kopje vol van het spul.

En wat was het voor spul ?
Je kon er alleen maar over speculeren,
want het gaf zichzelf niet.
Het toonde geen diepte.
Er werd zoveel achtergehouden,
opdat je er meer van zou kopen,
opdat het je nog verslaafder zou houden.
Elke slok werd steeds duurder,
totdat het onbetaalbaar leek.

En ik dacht : als ik maar zelf de zee zou kunnen worden.
Maar het was een zee van verslaafden,
van hen die totaal maar dan ook totaal de weg kwijt waren,
Ze waren niet te helpen.
Het was ongeneeslijk, maar daardoor koopkrachtig.

En ik hoorde de koning van de hoedenmannetjes lachen,
maar het was slechts een echo, want waar had het hem gebracht ?
Hij was helemaal versteend.
Standbeeld van een zwijn.
Daar moeten we allemaal zijn.
Dwazen dansen er omheen,
zwijnen zoals hem.
Ook zij zullen daar eindigen.

In de nacht, als de laatste roos groeit,
en zoveel dromen kapot prikt,
dan zal het zout niet tot genezing zijn,
het blijft prikken totdat ze thuis zijn.

Als een ware moeder wacht het ons op.
Ze heeft ons niet gespaard voor de flop.
Moeder roept ons allemaal naar huis,

het is het waarlijk dragen van het kruis.
Door de enge poort, over het smaller wordende pad,
en steeds langer wordt het, want ze wil niet dat je geneest,
maar tot inzicht komt.

Teveel genezerij is verwennerij,
Zouden we troost verruilen voor diepte ?
Wij moesten haar koopkracht leren kennen.
De moeder is een winkel.
Ze heeft haarzelf gekocht, en koopt nu ons in.
Ze verkoopt haarzelf aan de hoogste bieders,
de hardste werkers,
met nepgeld komen ze er niet in.
Hier is alleen het zout het geld.
Verkregen door tranen.

Hier verbergt zij haar geheim en medicijn.
Hier verdraait zij de namen.

Het Weerzien

Hij kwam de oude bovenbuurman weer tegen, die daar liep met een klein kind in een wandelwagen.
‘Zomaar uit het niets vroeg hij aan zijn vroegere boven buurman : ‘Hoeveel kinderen heb je nu ?’

‘Vier,’ zei de boven buurman.

‘Het is al lang geleden toen we daar weggingen,’ zei hij.
‘Viel het je op dat we ineens wegwaren ?’

‘Ja,’ zei de boven buurman. ‘De buurt vond het verschrikkelijk. Ze hadden
het er moeilijk mee, voornamelijk de vrouwen. Er was ook altijd iets met het huis aan de hand.’

‘Wat was dat dan ? In wat voor zin ? Bedoel je qua sfeer ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Het was zondvloedgebied,’ zei de boven buurman.

‘In wat voor zin ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Er lagen altijd stukken fruit, en pakjes vla,’ zei de boven buurman.

‘Weet je ook de reden waarom we zijn vertrokken ?’ vroeg hij.

‘Nee,’ zei de boven buurman.

Hij was even stil. ‘Ik zal vertellen wat er is gebeurd. Het was een scheiding. Mijn vrouw is er met de kinderen vandoor gegaan naar een plaats waar ik ze niet zou kunnen vinden. We hadden vlak voor de scheiding teveel ruzie, en het vermoeide haar. Een mens is maar fragiel.’

De boven buurman zei niks, en staarde hem een tijdje aan.

‘Mijn vrouw had wel een goede band met jouw vrouw,’ zei hij tegen de boven buurman.

‘De zondvloed,’ zei de boven buurman. ‘Er waren duidelijke tekenen. Het huis was zondvloed gebied. Ik kijk er niet van op. Ben je met de boot meegegaan ?’

‘Nee,’ zei hij, ‘eerder de diepte in gegaan.’

‘Dat kan,’ zei de boven buurman. ‘Maar ben je nu op de boot ?’

‘Nu ?’ zei hij. ‘Ja, nu wel. Het heeft lang geduurd.’

‘Het beste jongen,’ zei de boven buurman, en liep door.

Toen werd hij wakker. Het was een droom.

Hij keek om zich heen. Hij was op het schip. Hij was in de nieuwe wereld. Hij hoorde de vogels zingen. De bloemen waren in bloei. Hij was aangekomen in goed land.

Zoveel mensen hebben het moeilijk. De zondvloed komt en de zondvloed gaat, als eb en vloed. Wat overblijft en waar het naartoe gaat is waar het om gaat.

Einde

Tohl

Hij stond op het station van de stad waar hij vandaan kwam. Hij had zijn koffers meegenomen. De koffers waren gestreept, bruinig met zachte creme kleuren. Hij zou het stadsgebied verlaten. Het station was smerig, zoals de stad was. Hij keek om zich heen en zag de zure gezichten van wat vrouwen. Een meisje glimlachte. Hij wist niet of hij die glimlach van haar wel kon vertrouwen. Hij wilde het er niet op wagen. Hij zou de stad verlaten, zijn hele familie. Hij was klaar met hen. Hij wachtte op de robuuste trein. Wat een monster was dat. Hiermee zou hij de stad verlaten om naar de zee te gaan, waar zijn zeilboot lag. Hij wist nog niet waar hij naartoe zou varen, maar hij wilde weg.

Daar kwam het monster aan, zijn trein. Hij keek voor de laatste keer om zich heen. Hij was er nu helemaal klaar mee. Hij stapte in het monster, en zag anderen instappen, ook het meisje. Hij liep door de treinpaden totdat hij een voor hem ideale, lege plek vond. Na een tijdje zag hij het meisje langskomen. Ze leek hem niet te zien, maar toen ineens draaide ze zich om en keek naar hem. Ze stak haar tongetje naar hem uit, en ging tegenover hem zitten. Hij trok zijn wenkbrauwen op. 'Wie ben je, en waarom steek je je tong naar me uit ?'

'Ben je mij nu al vergeten ?' sprak ze spottend. 'Ik zat bij je in de klas.'

Hij keek nog een keer naar haar, en toen heel indringend. 'Hmmm, ben je dan …. ? Ik weet wie je bent nu, ja.' Hij vertelde zijn verhaal aan het meisje, en het meisje begreep hem. Ergens halverwege moest ze eruit. Na een lange treintocht kwam hij eindelijk aan bij zijn zeilschip. Hij hees zijn koffers in zijn zeilboot, en vertrok direct. Hij had geen tijd om verder na te denken. Hij wilde nu alles vergeten. Het water was warm. Het was middenin de zomer.

Even herinnerde hij zich het meisje weer, maar dat begon toen snel weg te zakken. De golven leken heerlijk. Hij kon het zout bijna proeven. Hij had zijn zeilen opgehesen. Het begon steeds rustiger om hem heen te worden, steeds minder boten. Hij was alleen, en dat vond hij het beste. Hij wilde nieuw land ontdekken.

De zon scheen fel op de boot. Hij voelde zich als in het paradijs. Hij wist niet hoelang hij al aan het zeilen was. Hij scheen elk besef van tijd te verliezen. Plotseling zag hij land. Woeste oerwouden. Het was overweldigend, zo groot, maar als onbereikbaar, alsof het van hem weg leek te drijven.

Toch kwam hij uiteindelijk aan. Hij ging aan land aan het strand en een bruine, indiaanse vrouw kwam hem tegemoet. Zij was naakt en had bruine kralen met franje rondom haar borsten. Hij had nog nooit zoiets gezien. De stranden waren wit, en het oerwoud achter het strand lokte hem. Hij hoorde de golven luid achter hem, het lawaai van de branding.

Er woonden alleen maar vrouwen.

Langzaamaan begon hij er gewend aan te raken.
Het was een jagersvolk.
Het was om te overleven.

Ze waren op jacht. Op wie ? Naar hem. Of niet ?
Alles draaide om kennis hier.
In de grotten waren vreemde hiëroglyphen die vertelden over hun levensideeën.
Hij kon het niet begrijpen.
Het was woestheid.
Ze noemden het Tohl.
Hij wist niet wat het was.

Ze zouden hem onderwijzen.
Hij werd meegenomen naar een rivier.
Daarachter was een kamp.

Hij staarde naar de zanderige voeten van de vrouw.
Toen keek hij naar haar gezicht.
Ze zouden hem onderwijzen.
Hij ging met de vrouw mee.
Met een bootje gingen ze de rivier over.
In het kamp werd hij door de vrouwen aangekeken.
Maar daarna had hij het gevoel alsof ze hem negeerden.

Hij had een heleboel vragen, maar het leek alsof die niet beantwoord werden.
Eigenlijk onderwezen ze hem niets.
Misschien was het omdat ze van een andere taal waren.
Hij moest het zelf leren, zelf ontdekken.

Op een dag waren er donkere mannen die kwamen in een boot.
Ze noemden hen hun prinsen.
Die mannen bleven niet lang. Hij zag ze wat dansen.
Ze kwamen om voedsel en wapens te brengen, en toen gingen ze weer weg.
Hij wist niet waarom.
Het scheen dat de mannen de vrouwen vreesden.
Hij wist niet waar hij was beland.
Deze vrouwen waren vreemd.
Deze vrouwen waren duister.
Maar dat was omdat hij ze niet kende.
Was hij in gevaar ?

Blijkbaar moest hij verder. Net zoals de donkere mannen.
Hij voelde een zekere spanning tussen hem en de vrouwen.
Het leek alsof ze zich steeds meer aan hem begonnen te irriteren,
en daarom trok hij verder, dieper het oerwoud in.

Hij zag vreemde tekens in grotten en holen.
De hieroglyphen spraken over gevaarlijke dieren.
Ook werd er gesproken over de jacht.
Hij moest zijn weg hier zien te vinden.

Hij moest eerst de taal van het onderricht leren kennen,
alvorens onderwezen te kunnen worden.

Dat was een hele klus, een hele opgave.
Hij was nooit klaar. Hij moest de levenscyclus leren kennen.

Het hield nooit op.

RNL-POCKETS

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4 ZIJN HUIS STOND IN DE WEG
5 HET SURINAAMSE DAGBOEK
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